



I·SAC
accreditation

Continuous Improvement for
School Age Care Programs

quality navigator

igniteafterschool.org/I-SAC

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POWERED BY



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LET'S BEGIN WITH THE quality navigator

The Quality Navigator is one of the most critical tools to success in this process. It's a detailed guide to accreditation and evidence requirements, it's a place to track your documentation, and later it will even be submitted as part of your evidence.

It's one powerhouse of a chart.

Take some time to review the Quality Navigator. Note the far-right columns, where you will catalogue your evidence right in the Quality Navigator – Organization Wide (i.e. Policies and Procedures Manual) and Site Specific (i.e. daily schedules).

Great News! That Organizational evidence only needs to be uploaded once. *See more details in Step 7 of the Guide Book.*

Get familiar with the **Six Building Blocks**:

1. Intentional Program Design
2. Supportive Relationships and Environment
3. Youth Voice and Leadership
4. Responsiveness to Culture and Identity
5. Community and Family Engagement
6. Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

Each **Building Block** is broken down into **Effective Practices** with accompanying **Benchmarks** of proficiency.

Your mission? Gather evidence that demonstrates proficiency of each benchmark.

We know it can be lot – *but don't worry*, alongside each benchmark, you'll find examples of the types of evidence required for accreditation. And, there are **three ways** you can present your evidence:

1. **Virtual Evidence Portfolio:** These are records and documents demonstrating proficiency that will be uploaded to a Virtual Evidence Portfolio prior to your accreditation Site Visit (For example, written safety policies). Documents that contain data about individual staff or young people should NOT be part of the Virtual Evidence Portfolio.

IMPORTANT: *As you Gather Evidence, note the exact name of each supporting document(s) and its corresponding page number(s). Enter the name and page number in the appropriate column on the Quality Navigator. This will be essential when you get to Step 7 and need to upload documentation to your Virtual Evidence Portfolio!*

- 2. On Site Portfolio:** These are physical or electronic records and documents demonstrating proficiency that may contain identifying information about staff and/or young people (For example, records of staff who received CPR certification). This evidence should be gathered in one place so that Ignite Afterschool may review it in person during your Site Visit.
- 3. Site Visit Observations:** This is evidence that can't be demonstrated through documents. This might be physical items on site (like a first aid kit) or interactions between staff and youth participants that are observed on site. It also includes conversations about items that are best discussed in person.

About that evidence...

Some Benchmarks require more than one kind of evidence. For example, some will require evidence for the Virtual Evidence Portfolio *and* the On-Site Portfolio. Others might require a submission to the Virtual Evidence Portfolio *and* will be observed during the Site Visit, and so on.

And here's the good news!
Some evidence (**like your DHS Certificate**, for example) will cover more than one Benchmark.

And those Benchmarks...

In order to achieve accreditation, sites must achieve a YES on all Required Benchmarks and **MEETS REQUIREMENTS** or above on at least 80% of the Remaining Benchmarks. What does that look like in terms of numbers? There are 91 total benchmark; 20 of which are required. That leaves 71 remaining benchmarks to meet. You must meet 80% (57) of the remaining benchmarks to achieve accreditation.

You'll find the Quality Navigator on the [I-SAC website](#). You may want to bookmark this page – you'll probably refer to it frequently throughout this process!

Are you DHS Certified? Great! These Benchmarks are (fully or partially) covered by your DHS Certification!

Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support	Benchmarks covered by DHS Certification
EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1: Our program has written policies, systems and documentation in place to ensure a safe, appropriate environment and a response for day-to-day needs as well as emergencies	6.1.B (partially) 6.1.D 6.1.G 6.1.K 6.1.L 6.1.M 6.1.O
EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3: Our program has solid oversight: a clearly defined decision-making process, set policies that are understood and followed, and competent supervision of staff/ volunteers	6.3.C 6.3.F



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1

Our program has clear, focused goals that align with the organization's mission				
	<p>Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?</p>	<p>Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark</p>	<p>Organizational submitted evidence</p>	<p>Site specific submitted evidence</p>
1.1.A	Our program has a clearly written mission statement and a set of aligned goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of written mission and goals • Staff or family handbook with mission and goals clearly stated 		



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 2

Our program explicitly connects activities to our desired goals				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
1.2.A	Activities reflect the goals of the program through their design and implementation	Narrative to show how this is accomplished. Demonstrated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily/weekly schedule • Lesson plans • Written goals 		



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3

Our program activities build upon each other sequentially to support young people’s ability to expand skills or gain new knowledge

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
1.3.A	Young people have at least one opportunity each program session to participate in activity(ies) that build upon each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff or family handbook • Daily/weekly schedule • Lesson plans 		



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 4

Our program supports engagement through multiple learning techniques, such as project-based, hands-on experiences that relate to everyday life

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
1.4.A	Young people have opportunities for indoor and outdoor physical activity every day (weather permitting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
1.4.B	Digital devices and screens are used sparingly, and only when they are part of active learning and/or intentionally relate to a specific learning objective. Television and movies are reserved for special occasions (unless they are tied to a specific learning objective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Staff or family handbook • Lesson plans <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
1.4.C	The daily schedule includes times for individual, small group and large group activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
1.4.D	Daily activities include opportunities for young people of all physical abilities, ranging from sedentary to physically active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
1.4.E	Young people have opportunities for hands-on learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5

Our program activities are flexible enough to meet the various needs and skills of youth, while still meeting the intended program goals

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
1.5.A	The daily routine is predictable and adapted to young people’s various needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans • Observation • Written narrative explaining and providing examples of adaptations <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
1.5.B	Program materials are age appropriate and accessible to the young people being served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 6

Our program activities are flexible enough to meet the various needs and skills of youth, while still meeting the intended program goals

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
1.6.A	Our programming takes place for at least two (2) hours each day and at least 60 days per year in order to reach a high enough “dosage” to positively impact the young people we serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual program schedule 		



Building Block 1: Intentional Program Design

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 7

Our program activities are flexible enough to meet the various needs and skills of youth, while still meeting the intended program goals

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
1.7.A	Young people have time and space to reflect on their experiences in the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Lesson plans that incorporate reflection time • Youth feedback forms and evaluations <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 2: Supportive Relationships and Environment

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1

Our program structure provides opportunities for staff and youth to build trusting, appropriate relationships				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
2.1.A	Staff are engaged in all program activities with young people, and know when to facilitate and when to take a step back and let young people shine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff or family handbook <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 2: Supportive Relationships and Environment

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 2

Our program fosters a sense of community. Staff are welcoming, and encourage youth to connect with one another

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
2.2.A	<p>Staff provides a welcoming atmosphere:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are greeted by staff as they arrive and/or at the start of the session • Staff mainly uses a warm tone of voice and respectful language • Staff generally smiles, uses friendly gestures, and makes eye contact when appropriate • Staff and volunteers treat youth with respect and listen to what they say. The program promotes a culture of mutual respect, support and belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff or family handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual • Participant surveys <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
2.2.B	<p>Program spaces (both indoor and outdoor) are comfortable, respectful and representative of young people and their families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photos <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 2: Supportive Relationships and Environment

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3

Our staff and youth have shared high expectations and consistency of appropriate norms and behaviors				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
2.3.A	Norms and behaviors expectations are clear and developed in collaboration with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Narrative explaining how young people are involved in setting expectations • Poster in program space listing norms and behavior expectations 		
2.3.B	Our program's behavior and consequences policies are shared with staff, families, and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 		
2.3.C	Policies include ways to address and support challenging behaviors. Staff, families and youth understand that sometimes consequences may vary based on developmental needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 		



Building Block 2: Supportive Relationships and Environment

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 4

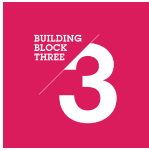
Our staff uses positive guidance to direct youth behavior and model positive behaviors to youth and to each other				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
2.4.A	Staff and volunteers are positive role models who demonstrate cooperation, courteous relationships and positive conflict resolution with one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
2.4.B	Young people are encouraged to have positive, respectful physical and verbal interactions with one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbook <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
2.4.C	Our program actively addresses bullying and has clear policies for preventing and responding to bullying. This includes being aware of behaviors that indicate bullying, intervening immediately when bullying is suspected, and documenting instances of bullying behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures Manual • Staff and family handbooks <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 2: Supportive Relationships and Environment

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5

Our staff engages with youth as individuals to help them learn and develop				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
2.5.A	Staff take time to learn young people's interests and personal goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Goal setting activity documentation <u>AND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		

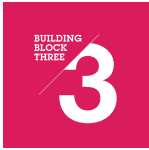


Building Block 3: Youth Voice and Leadership

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1

Our staff value and encourage youth voice and expression. Youth have the opportunity to make significant choices about activities in the program

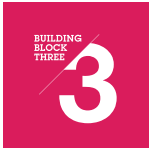
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
3.1.A	Young people's interests are reflected in the physical program space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photos <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
3.1.B	Young people's work and accomplishments are on display (when appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photos <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
3.1.C	Young people are able to choose from a variety of program activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily and weekly schedule • Lesson plans (only if they show multiple activity choices) <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 3: Youth Voice and Leadership

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 2

Youth serve as leaders and mentors to each other				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
3.2.A	Our program includes opportunities for youth to lead and/or mentor each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans • Program description • Staff and family handbooks <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 3: Youth Voice and Leadership

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3

Our staff support youth’s leadership development through appropriate skill-building opportunities (e.g. goals setting, planning)

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
3.3.A	Our program includes opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills (goal setting, facilitation, program planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
3.3.B	Our program includes opportunities for young people to try out their emerging leadership skills (could be in the program, at home, in the community, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans • Family newsletter • Photos <u>OR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		

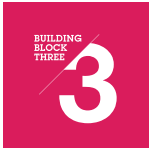


Building Block 3: Youth Voice and Leadership

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 4

Youth input and contributions are encouraged in activity planning, implementation and evaluation. As young people gain experience, their input and contributions become increasingly sophisticated

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
3.4.A	Young people are involved in planning program activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans • Staff handbook • Family handbook OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
3.4.B	Young people are involved in evaluation of program activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans • Evaluation plans and/or results • Narrative description of process OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 3: Youth Voice and Leadership

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5

Our staff provide opportunities for reflection and for youth to showcase their work				
	<p>Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?</p>	<p>Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark</p>	<p>Organizational submitted evidence</p>	<p>Site specific submitted evidence</p>
3.5.A	<p>Our program provides opportunities for young people to demonstrate their knowledge and/or showcase their work through performances, projects, open house nights, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson plans • Event flyers • Photos • Family newsletter <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 4: Responsiveness to Culture and Identity

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1

Our program cultivates an inclusive environment where all youth and families are welcome and respected				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
4.1.A	Our program values and respects the backgrounds and cultures of young people and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Written narrative 		
4.1.B	Our staff recognizes that young people are shaped by their lived experiences, and is committed to understanding them as unique individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Documentation of activity plans • Training documentation • Written narrative <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
4.1.C	Our program’s activities and materials accurately and respectfully reflect the language, art, music, stories, and games from young people’s cultural traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Lesson and activity plans • Policies and Procedures Manual <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 4: Responsiveness to Culture and Identity

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 2

Staff create a safe atmosphere for children and youth to explore their own identity, including cultural beliefs and practices

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
4.2.A	Our program promotes positive identity development and cross-cultural understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Staff and family handbooks • Lesson plans • Policies and Procedures Manual <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
4.2.B	Our staff plan and implement activities that promote awareness and acceptance of similarities and differences, including culture, gender identity, abilities and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Lesson plans • Policies and Procedures Manual <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 4: Responsiveness to Culture and Identity

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3

Youth are encouraged to be their whole selves, honoring their culture, sense of self and life experiences				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
4.3.A	When appropriate, young people have opportunities to share about their culture and/or lived experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Lesson plans • Agendas and/or flyers from family nights and other special events <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 4: Responsiveness to Culture and Identity

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 4

Our program makes a genuine effort to ensure staff reflect the diverse race, gender, culture, sexual orientation, language and special needs of the young people being served

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
4.4.A	Our program actively promotes open positions to multiple audiences in ways that are welcoming and encourage all to apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures Manual • Narrative description of hiring practices • Sample list of places where job openings are posted • Sample recruitment/ open position advertisement 		
4.4.B	We take steps to reduce bias in hiring and seek to hire staff who reflect the identities of the young people we serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices and procedures policy 		



Building Block 4: Responsiveness to Culture and Identity

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5

Staff meet youth “where they’re at” and respond to their unique interests, needs and abilities				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
4.5.A	Our staff support and respect all ability levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policy and procedures handbook <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		
4.5.B	Our staff adapts activities to meet the developmental needs of young people. That includes using school assessment data (like IEPs) and other program data to inform changes to activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Lesson plans • Policies and Procedures Manual 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1

Our program proactively builds meaningful community partnerships that have a logical fit and bring mutual value to each partner

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
5.1.A	Our program is intentional about developing and nurturing collaborative partnerships with families, schools, and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily schedule • Photos • Field trips • Guest speakers • Partnership agreements • Flyer for class led by partner organization • Family handbook with caregiver engagement opportunities • Family newsletter 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 2

Our program actively embraces the culture(s) of young people, their families, and their communities				
	<p>Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?</p>	<p>Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark</p>	<p>Organizational submitted evidence</p>	<p>Site specific submitted evidence</p>
5.2.A	<p>Our staff's interactions with families are consistently culturally-appropriate, respectful, and welcoming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family newsletter • Samples of parent communications • Narrative detailing communications approaches, including specific examples of how those methods are put into practice with families. <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3

Our program encourages and welcomes family and community involvement (as volunteers, presenters, partners, etc.)				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
5.3.A	Our program actively engages our families and communities through events and activities that promote collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Photos • Family events • Guest speakers (especially from families) • Newsletters • Sample communications (emails, family information board, phone calls, conferences, one-on-one conversations with family members, family meetings, etc.) 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 4

Our program and families regularly communicate with each other about things like the youth’s progress, opportunities to get involved, and feedback on the program

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
5.4.A	Our program has a plan to ensure regular communication with families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters • Sample communications (meeting agendas, schedules, email communications, etc.) 		
5.4.B	Our program provides families with clear, regular opportunities to share feedback (written or verbal) about the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant surveys • Newsletters • Sample communications • Family handbook 		
5.4.C	Our program has a clear, written policy for addressing any concerns from young people and/or families in a constructive, fair manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5

Our program encourages and acknowledges young people's contributions to the community				
	<p>Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?</p>	<p>Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark</p>	<p>Organizational submitted evidence</p>	<p>Site specific submitted evidence</p>
5.5.A	Our program highlights young people's accomplishments within our program as well as in the larger community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photos • Newsletters • Sample communications • Family events 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 6

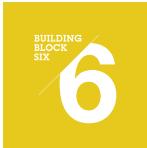
Our program communicates with and is visible in our local community				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
5.6.A	Our program proactively reaches out to the community to share what we do and ways we contribute to the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plans • Photos • Newsletters • Sample communications • Program advertisements and flyers 		



Building Block 5: Community and Family Engagement

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 7

Communication takes place in multiple languages (when appropriate) and through multiple channels				
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
5.7.A	We make every effort to provide information in families' preferred language(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Newsletters • Sample communications 		
5.7.B	Our staff members use multiple communication tools and channels to share information with families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Newsletters • Sample communications 		

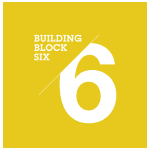


Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY)

Our program has written policies, systems and documentation in place to ensure a safe, appropriate environment and a response for day-to-day needs as well as emergencies.

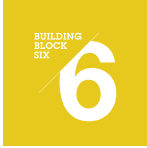
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.A	<p>Our program complies with all regulations necessary for lawful operation</p> <p><i>Our program status with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is (please select one):</i></p> <p>Licensed</p> <p>Certified</p> <p>License Exempt</p>	<p>License Exempt programs must provide documentation from local governing bodies that your program meets all:</p> <p>State Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local fire codes • Local safety codes • Local health/food codes <p><i>No additional documentation is required for DHS Licensed and Certified programs, as they demonstrated the above as a condition of being licensed/certified.</i></p>	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

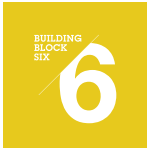
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.B	<p>Our program’s written Policies and Procedures include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident and incident reporting • Emergency drills and emergency situations • Chronic health conditions • Communicable diseases • Mandated reporting • Behavior guidance (including specification of negative approaches not allowed) • Supervision (including high-risk activities) • Open door policy for families • Youth to staff ratios and group maximums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid and CPR certification requirements • Bullying (addressing and preventing) • Confidentiality • Locating missing or lost youth (including young people who are scheduled to attend but do not arrive) • Releasing youth to authorized/ unauthorized adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification (covers the non-bolded areas) <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Governing Body handbook/guidelines • HR policies • Program website 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

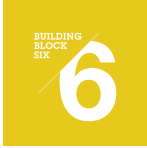
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.C	<p>Our health and safety policies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly written • Shared with families • Understood by young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Photos of posted policies • Newsletters • Sample communications to families 			
6.1.D	<p>For all young people, our program has the following records, either in hard copy or electronic files, available to staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical information (including allergies, medications and limitations, and parental permission for administering medication as necessary) • Immunizations • Emergency contact information (updated annually) • Names and contact information for individuals who are permitted to release/pick up youth • IEPs or other special needs (if the family makes this information available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <u>OR</u> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Governing body handbook/guidelines • Youth files and/or HR files 			



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

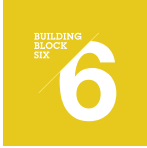
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.E	<p>The program has each of the following types of first aid kits and directions for their use, and all are accessible to all staff members at all times</p> <p>Each kit contains the following:</p> <p>Onsite: One kit in each space where youth are (e.g., traveling backpack)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhesive bandages of assorted sizes • Sterile compresses/gauze pads • Adhesive tape • Instant ice bag or cold pack • Disposable, latex-free gloves • Charged cell phone (only in the absence of walkie-talkies) • Pencil/pen and notepad • Hand sanitizer • Tissues • Plastic garbage bags/biohazard bags • Current first aid manual • Medical Scissors • Oral or surface thermometer • Battery operated flashlight (at least one for the site) • Antiseptic wipes <p><i>6.1.E continues on next page</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

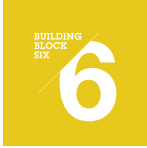
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.E (con- tinued)	<p>Onsite: One main kit located in an area that all staff have access to and know where it is. <i>Contents are in addition to those in above kit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottled water • Emergency information for all youth and staff • Pocket face mask • All medications (prescription, non-prescription, Epi-Pens, etc) locked up or supervised by staff at all times <p>Offsite: To be taken on field trips or in the case of an emergency evacuation. <i>Contents are in addition to those in above kits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charged cell phone • Child medications/Epi-Pens • Youth allergy records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

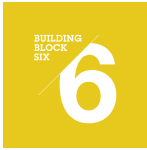
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.F	Our staff always has access to a phone (or other two-way communications device) for communication between staff and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures Manual <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.G	<p>Our program has and follows a written procedure for medication administration that describes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How medications will be stored • Under what circumstances medications will be given • What types of medications can and cannot be given • Who can administer medication • Documentation for medication administration that is required by the program, Host/Governing body, or regulatory agencies • Parental permission to administer each medication • Specialized training provided to any staff who will administer medication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

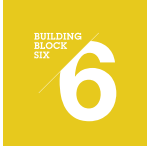
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.H	<p>Our program's mandated reporting policy includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are mandated reporters • What to report • How to report • Who to report to • Failure to report • How to deal with a staff member who is accused of abusing or neglecting a child in the program • Protections for mandated reporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 			
6.1.I	<p>Our staff know how to recognize Youth Suicide Warning Signs, and how to access the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training description • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual 			
6.1.J	<p>Our program follows a written acceptable use policy for technology, which includes computer use and internet safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 			



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

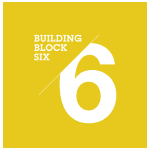
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.K	Our indoor and outdoor program spaces meet state and local requirements for health, safety, sanitation and cleanliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <u>OR</u> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Equipment check schedule and sign-off <u>AND</u> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.L	Our staff immediately removes any hazardous or dangerous materials (worn or broken materials/equipment, bodily fluids or other potentially harmful fluids) from indoor and outdoor program spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <u>OR</u> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Equipment check schedule and sign-off <u>AND</u> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.M	Our program holds hazardous or dangerous materials (medications, cleaners, chemicals, and sharp tools or objects) in places not accessible to youth, such as a locked storage area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <u>OR</u> • Policies and Procedures Manual <u>AND</u> • Observation 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

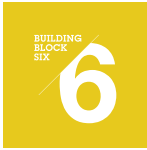
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.N	<p>Our staff members follow sufficient adult-to-youth ratios to ensure young people are well supervised. Staff members organize youth and/or program activities into clearly identifiable areas so that groups do not exceed sizes that can be safely supervised as determined by the grade level of the youth</p> <p>The minimum guidelines are*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-K ratio: 1 adult to every 10 youth • Kindergarten and older ratio: 1 adult to every 15 youth • Mixed ages that include Pre-K ratio: 1 adult to every 10 youth <p><i>*If a host or governing body requires a more rigorous standard for lawful operation, then the more rigorous standard must be followed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.O	<p>Extra staff members (beyond the minimum ratio) are present on field trips and during high-risk activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

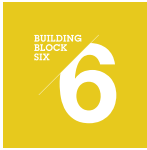
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.P	Our program ensures that at least two staff members are onsite and with young people until all youth have left the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 			
6.1.Q	Our program follows a clear attendance policy that is explained in the staff and family handbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 			
6.1.R	Our program uses a functioning, accurate tracking system so that staff always know which young people are assigned to them and where they are throughout the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative description of tracking system • Policies and Procedures Manual AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.S	Our program's check-in/check-out procedure documents young people's arrival to and departure from the program, including a record of the individual picking up the youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 1 (YOUTH SAFETY) *continued*

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.1.T	Our program takes steps to prevent unauthorized individuals from taking young people from the program, and we have a written policy that explains this. (e.g., transportation changes, authorized changes in youth release information, late arrivals, absences, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.U	Our program has clear written policies for safely transporting young people to and from any off-site activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual 			
6.1.V	Our program provides nutritious, well-balanced snacks and/or meals (when appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample menus AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 			
6.1.W	Our program follows Host/Governing Body guidelines or requirements of local regulatory agencies for food handling, including preparation and clean-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		
6.1.X	Our program participants always have access to safe drinking water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 	Yes		

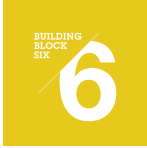


Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 2 (ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT)

Our program mission is understood by staff, board, youth and families and is aligned with the goals of the broader organization (if applicable)

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.2.A	Our program mission and goals are displayed where staff, families and young people can see and review them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Sample communications (on-site poster) 			
6.2.B	Our program follows a regular schedule that is communicated to all staff, families and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily and weekly schedules • Staff and family hand-books • Sample posters/communications 			

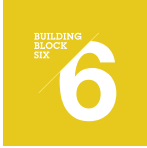


Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3 (ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT)

Our program has solid oversight: a clearly defined decision-making process, set policies that are understood and followed, and competent supervision of staff/volunteers

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.3.A	Our staff know and have access to our organization’s policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 			
6.3.B	Our staff orientation clearly and thoroughly covers job descriptions and expectations, program policies and procedures, and quality standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual • Training records 			
6.3.C	<p>The program’s background check policy states that staff and volunteers (unless under the age of 18) must have a background check prior to employment. Youth volunteers under the age of 16 and enrolled in school are exempt. Volunteers cannot be alone with minors</p> <p>Proof of a completed background check is located in each staff and volunteer file.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <u>OR</u> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Governing Body handbook/guidelines • Staff/substitute files • HR files 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3 (ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT) *continued*

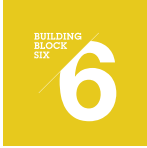
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.3.D	<p>For all staff and substitutes (short-term and long-term), our program has the following records, either in hard copy or electronic files*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background check • Screening for suitability to work with youth (i.e., resumé, job application, interviews, references) • First Aid and CPR certification • Signed acknowledgment that the employee/substitute has read and understands the content of the staff handbook and/or Policies and Procedures Manual • Signed documentation that employee/substitute completed orientation and understands their role <p><i>*If a third party manages staffing, please provide their documentation as evidence</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Governing body handbook/guidelines • Staff/substitute files • HR files 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 3 (ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT) *continued*

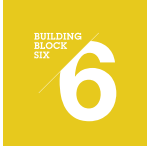
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.3.E	For all staff employed more than one year, our program also has the following records, either in hard copy or electronic files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development plan • Annual performance evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and/or HR files to be reviewed on site (not uploaded) 	Yes		
6.3.F	For all volunteers, our program has the following records, either in hard copy or electronic files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background check • Signed acknowledgement that the volunteer completed orientation and understands their role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS Certification <u>OR</u> • Volunteer files and/or HR files to be reviewed on site (not uploaded) 	Yes		
6.3.G	Our program's volunteer policies do not count volunteers toward program ratios; we do not permit volunteers to be alone with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual • Volunteer handbook and/or orientation 	Yes		



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 4 (ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT)

Our program budget is tied to program goals and supported by solid financial management					
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.4.A	Our program site has a clear budget that reflects our mission and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget records • Profit and Loss statements • Narrative of budgeting process • Meeting minutes of approved budget by community council (for community education) or board of directors if relevant 			

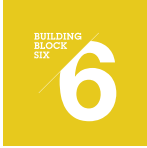


Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5 (ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT) *continued*

Our program has a system for collecting and evaluating data to support the program’s continuous growth and improvement

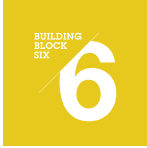
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.5.A	Our program site engages key stakeholders in annual continuous program improvement by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting data • Reflecting on that data • Making an improvement plan • Actively making program improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-SAC M3 Huddle participation documentation (Required) • Observation notes • Completed assessment tool(s) • Staff meeting agendas • Program improvement plan 	Yes		
6.5.B	Our program uses established tools and accepted best practices to understand and reflect on our program’s quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-SAC M3 Huddle participation documentation (Required) • Observation notes • Completed assessment tool(s) • Staff meeting agendas • Program improvement plan 			



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 6 (STAFF SUPPORT)

Our organization respects and supports the culture and identity of youth workers, and values them as individuals and professionals					
	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.6.A	Our staff members work together as a cohesive team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meeting schedule • Sample staff meeting agenda <p><u>AND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation 			



Building Block 6: Youth Safety, Organizational Management and Staff Support

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 7 (STAFF SUPPORT)

: Our organization provides a clear path for staff to develop and advance, and ensures access to multiple staff professional development opportunities, including research-based best practices and cultural responsiveness

	Benchmarks: What does this effective practice look like?	Suggested ways to demonstrate this benchmark	Required for accreditation	Organizational submitted evidence	Site specific submitted evidence
6.7.A	Our site leadership and staff engage in regular, ongoing professional development that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR and First Aid Certification • Bullying • Culturally competent and responsive youth work • Positive youth development • Positive behavior management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and family handbooks • Policies and Procedures Manual • Training records 			
6.7.B	Our program assesses staff training needs and uses that information to align professional development to our specific needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual • Training records 			
6.7.C	Our staff participate in multiple opportunities to receive feedback and to reflect on their work, including an annual performance review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Policies and Procedures Manual • Training records • Drop-in program observations and evaluations • Records of performance reviews for a sample of staff (not uploaded) 			



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