

### AFTERSCHOOL *news*



#### Student Behavior and Discipline

Afterschool and expanded learning programs often provide a more flexible learning environment than that of the regular school day. Although students and adults alike may enjoy this more relaxed setting, managing student behavior is still a crucial part of afterschool. However, not all staff may be trained in behavior management and discipline techniques or see students often enough to learn their behavior patterns.

How can your afterschool program cultivate a flexible and stimulating learning environment while ensuring that freedom does not turn into chaos? Based on a 5-year study of high-quality afterschool programs, the following are some successful practices for managing discipline and student behavior.

**Have a discipline policy in place.** If your program does not have a written discipline policy in place, consider adopting or adapting the school-day policy or the policy of another afterschool program. The discipline policy should include a process for addressing student behavior problems and have support from program leaders and staff.

**Educate the staff.** Provide training to ensure that all staff members understand the discipline policy and how to interpret and implement it. Find mentors to provide guidance to staff who do not have training in managing students and discipline techniques. All staff need to know what to do and whom to contact when student behavior issues arise.

**Inform students and parents.** Establish a process for informing students and parents of the program's discipline policy. Students and parents need to understand the policy and the behavior expected of students.

**Work with the school-day staff.** Establish a connection with school-day staff who can provide information about students should behavior issues arise. Support and cooperation can contribute to fewer discipline problems. Program leaders can work with school-day staff to build and maintain this cooperation.



*Provide training to ensure that all staff members understand the discipline policy and how to interpret and implement it.*

The SEDL National Center for Quality Afterschool helps state education agencies and local practitioners develop high-quality programs for academic enrichment as well as youth development activities.

[www.sedl.org/afterschool](http://www.sedl.org/afterschool)



#### RECOMMENDED *resource*

##### A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PLANNING AND OPERATING AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS (3RD EDITION)

This product provides a description of resources to support afterschool and extended learning programs and is organized in the six areas necessary for the successful operation of afterschool programs: management, communication, programming, integrating K-12 and afterschool programs, community building/collaboration, and evaluation. The guide is available in print and online as a searchable database.

[www.sedl.org/pubs/fam95](http://www.sedl.org/pubs/fam95)



*Bully prevention programs can help create a safe and positive afterschool environment and give students skills to use during the school day as well.*

## Prevent Bullying During Afterschool

Although students report that most bullying happens at school, it can extend to afterschool.<sup>1</sup> Bullying is even more likely to be a problem after school if there is not sufficient supervision. Bully prevention programs can help create a safe and positive afterschool environment and give students skills to use during the school day as well.

The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center (NYVPRC) has created some resources for out-of-school time professionals and volunteers to use. NYVPRC suggests that afterschool professionals take the following steps to create a safe environment for students after the bell rings:

- Learn about bullying and its warning signs.
- Investigate if you suspect bullying.
- Establish clear rules about bullying behavior and enforce them.
- Closely supervise children in afterschool, and interrupt bullying whenever it occurs. Arrange for special interventions for children who are bullied and for children who bully. Follow up and monitor the results.
- Provide support to parents.<sup>2</sup>

To learn more, see the tip sheets on the Stop Bullying Now Web site. [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/tip-sheets/default.aspx](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/tip-sheets/default.aspx)

1. Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M. D., Haynie, D. L., Ruan W. J., & Scheidt, P. C. (2003). Relationships between bullying and violence among US youth. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 157 (4), 348–353.
2. Stop Bullying Now. (2008). *Bullying in out-of-school time programs: Tips for youth-serving professionals and volunteers*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/tip-sheets/tip-sheet-30.aspx](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adults/tip-sheets/tip-sheet-30.aspx)

## IN YOUR *words*

What kind of discipline policy does your afterschool program have? (Select one.)

- Our discipline policy is based on the school-day discipline policy.
- We have created a discipline policy that is independent of school-day rules and more appropriate for an afterschool setting.
- We are currently in the process of creating a discipline policy.

To participate in this survey and view the results, submit your vote at [www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200911.html](http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200911.html).

Produced by

### NATIONAL CENTER FOR QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL

Advancing Research, Improving Education



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## TRAINING *tip*

### Know Your Students

When communicating with parents about student behavior and your afterschool program's discipline policy, consider families' cultural backgrounds. SEDL's National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools suggests educators can have greater success in reaching diverse populations by taking the following steps:

- Build on the cultural values of families.
- Stress personal contact with families.
- Foster communication with families.
- Create a warm environment for families.
- Facilitate accommodations for family involvement, including transportation, translators, and other similar services.

To learn more, see the strategy brief *Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections?* [www.sedl.org/connections/research-briefs.html](http://www.sedl.org/connections/research-briefs.html)

## EVENTS *calendar*

Apr. 19–21, 2010 National Afterschool Association & Afterschool Alliance National Convention  
[www.naaconvention.org](http://www.naaconvention.org)  
 WASHINGTON, DC

April 28–May 1, 2010 Boost Conference  
[www.boostconference.org](http://www.boostconference.org)  
 PALM SPRINGS, CA