

## Best Practices Summary:

### Expanding programming and access to affordable, youth development programs for children from ages 6-19, which meets an agreed upon minimum standards of quality.

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#### Best Practices Components of Youth Development Programs for Ages 6-19:

1. **Maintains a safe and orderly climate:** Program structure and support is conducive to positive development. Programs should engage in practices that increase safe peer group interaction. Follows state and local licensing requirements and guidelines. Adult-child ratios should be no higher than 1:10 or 1:15 for children over six years of age.
2. **Establishes clear goals and maintains high standards:** Program evaluates goals and outcomes regularly for purposes of quality control. Program should be monitored effectively by staff.
3. **Maintains a diverse staff who are consistent and supportive:** Program staff reflects the youth population being served and facilitates youth identification with adult role models and encourages mentoring. The staff should have strong behavioral management skills and should facilitate positive relationships with youth participants. The staff should respect diversity and be culturally proficient.
4. **Promotes self-efficacy and autonomy:** Empowers youth participants, emphasizes autonomy, and promotes positive self-esteem. Actively involves youth in planning, evaluating and implementing projects. Youth and adults collaborate in leadership decisions that affect youth's experience.
5. **Utilizes strength-based approach to skill building:** Recognizes values and individual strengths and promotes development of those strengths. Encourages learning of developmentally appropriate skills and relevant information.
6. **Creates supportive networks:** Encourages relationships and networking in the community, strengthening social capital. Provides youth participants with social connections in order to increase their opportunities.
7. **Promotes positive social norms:** Teaches rules of behavior that are appropriate to identified standards. Promotes personal integrity through the practice of responsible behavior.
8. **Promotes family and community collaboration across different settings:** Integrates efforts of family, school, and community in order to strengthen the supportive structure of the program. Facilitates access to services and activities by providing transportation for program participants. Encourages communication between all settings, giving the family opportunities for program feedback.
9. **Maintains high level of youth and parent participation:** Facilitates participation and continuous communication among families, youth and staff.

#### Primary References:

Dotterweich, J. (2006). Positive Youth Development Resource Manual. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, ACT For Youth.

Table 1: *Best Practices Programs for Youth Development Programs, Ages 6-19*

<b>Job Training Partnership Act</b>	<b>Summary/ Components</b>
<i>Developers:</i> United States_federal law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Provides a pre-employment skills training program for youth aged 14 through 21</li><li>◆ Target population: economically disadvantaged youth</li><li>◆ Improves employment status through: occupational skills, job search training</li><li>◆ on-the-job training, basic skills, and direct work experience.</li><li>◆ Significantly positive outcomes in employment, likelihood of obtaining a high school diploma or GED; arrest rates; results are for out-of-school youth ages 16-21.</li></ul>
Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.childtrends.org/Lifecourse/programs/JobTrainingPartnershipAct.htm">http://www.childtrends.org/Lifecourse/programs/JobTrainingPartnershipAct.htm</a>	

<p><b>Sponsor-A-Scholar</b>  <i>Developers:</i>  Philadelphia Futures</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Youth mentoring program; matches at-risk youth with mentors (1:1 ratio).</li> <li>◆ Students were three times more likely to attend college the first year after high school, had higher GPAs and participated in more college preparation activities compared to students who did not participate in program.</li> <li>◆ Program pays for all test fees and college level courses for participants.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.aypf.org/publications/RAA/13spons.pdf">http://www.aypf.org/publications/RAA/13spons.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Boys and Girls Club of America</b>  <i>Developers:</i> Started in Connecticut in 1860  Is currently run by Boys and Girls Club of America</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Programs and services that promote and enhance development of youth ages 6-18.</li> <li>◆ Provides a youth facility that is open seven days a week, after-school, and on weekends with trained staff and volunteers.</li> <li>◆ Site programs must provide services in 6 core areas: cultural enrichment, social recreation, personal and educational development, health and physical development, citizenship and leadership development, and environmental education.</li> <li>◆ Significant positive relationships outcomes in gang membership, juvenile detention. rate, school performance, drug use, and positive social relationships.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.bgca.org">http://www.bgca.org</a></p>
<p><b>Children at Risk</b>  <i>Developers:</i> National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Drug and delinquency prevention program for high risk youth ages 11 to 15.</li> <li>◆ Core services include: case management, family services, after- school and summer activities, mentoring, education services, incentives, community policing and criminal and juvenile justice interventions. Youth receives services for 2 years.</li> <li>◆ Significantly positive outcomes in drug use, committing violent crimes, receiving positive youth support, and attending community organized programs. For families, there were also significant increases in using community services compared to non-treatment group.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/379-5895.pdf">www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/379-5895.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Service Learning</b>  <i>Developers:</i> Evolution from many different programs</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ K-12 youth determine and meet real, defined community needs through integrating academic study and community service.</li> <li>◆ Organized through elementary school, middle school or community organizations.</li> <li>◆ Adults who volunteered as youth were twice as more likely to volunteer when compared to adults who did not volunteer.</li> <li>◆ Significant positive outcomes in the degree in which students felt they could make a difference, GPA, school engagement, absenteeism, and homework completion.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.servicelearning.org">http://www.servicelearning.org</a></p>

<p><b>Career Academies</b>  <i>Developers:</i>          Originated in Philadelphia in 1969</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Small learning community for high school students that combines academic and career related courses in order to enhance the relevance of high school curriculum.</li> <li>◆ 3-4 year programs for at-risk students that focuses student learning on a specific career path; local employers design program and provide mentoring to students.</li> <li>◆ Significant positive outcomes specifically for students at-risk including decreased drop-out rates, increased college applications, and increased school attendance.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.careeracademies.net">http://www.careeracademies.net</a></p>
<p><b>Big Brothers/ Big Sisters (BB/ BS) of America</b>  <i>Developers:</i> Ernest Coulter founded the program in 1904. Big Brothers /Big Sisters of America is the current developer.</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Youth mentoring program, which pairs adult volunteers with youth from single-parent households ages 6-18. The time commitment for meetings is 4 hours from 2 to 4 times per month, for a one-year minimum duration.</li> <li>◆ Volunteers are screened, matched, and supervised monthly for the first year, and are supervised quarterly for the duration of the match.</li> <li>◆ Adult: child ratio of 1:1.</li> <li>◆ Significant reductions were found in antisocial activities, including drug and alcohol initiation and youth violence and academic activities including skipping school. There were also significant decreases in frequency of lying to a parent.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.bbbsa.org">http://www.bbbsa.org</a></p>
<p><b>Teen Outreach Program (TOP)</b>  <i>Developers:</i>          Cornerstone Consulting Group</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ One year program duration. There is no requirement to use official TOP employees, but staff are evaluated and assessed.</li> <li>◆ Program focuses on classroom and group discussion, community service, and service learning for participants of ages 12-17.</li> <li>◆ Significant positive outcomes were found in reducing the rates of teenage pregnancy, course failure, and school suspension during the year of participation in the program.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.childtrends.org/Lifecourse/programs/TeenOutreachProgram.htm">http://www.childtrends.org/Lifecourse/programs/TeenOutreachProgram.htm</a></p>
<p><b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program</b>  <i>Developers:</i> U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)</p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Elementary school centers operating primarily after-school for approximately 15 hours weekly.</li> <li>◆ Staff were from the local school districts.</li> <li>◆ Program eligibility is primarily for State Education Agencies (SEA's)</li> <li>◆ Significant positive increases were found in time spent in school and time spent participating in school-related activities. There was also a significant decrease in time spent in places besides the school or home. Outcomes were not significant relating to school achievement, teacher-reported behavior, interpersonal skills, or perceptions of safety.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/pubs/21cent/firstyear">http://www.ed.gov/pubs/21cent/firstyear</a></p>

<p><b>Life Skills Training</b>  <i>Developers:</i> Dr. Gilbert J. Botvin is the program developer. National Health Promotion Associates maintains the program.</p> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.lifeskillstraining.com/">http://www.lifeskillstraining.com/</a></p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Three-year intervention designed to prevent or reduce gateway drug use which is primarily implemented in school classrooms by school teachers. The program is delivered in 15 sessions in year one, 10 sessions in year two, and 5 sessions in year three. Sessions, which last an average of 45 minutes, can be delivered once a week or as an intensive mini-course.</li> <li>◆ The program consists of three major components which teach students (1) general self-management skills, (2) social skills, and (3) information and skills specifically related to drug use. Skills are taught using training techniques such as instruction, demonstration, feedback, reinforcement, and practice.</li> <li>◆ Significant decreases were found in tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use. Long term outcomes showed significant decreases in tobacco use and polydrug use.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Drug Education</b>  <b>Classes: The Adolescent Alcohol Prevention Trial</b>  <i>Developers:</i> William B. Hansen</p> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.tanglewood.net/products/allstars/article1995.htm">http://www.tanglewood.net/products/allstars/article1995.htm</a></p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Universal classroom program designed for fifth-grade students, with booster sessions conducted in seventh grade.</li> <li>◆ Primary strategies used were Resistance Skills Training and Normative Education.</li> <li>◆ Significant reductions were found in the Normative Education program group for drinking, marijuana and smoking behaviors, between pretest and posttest evaluation.</li> <li>◆ These students reported lower smoking behavior compared to the control group. Marijuana initiation and alcohol initiation were also lower compared to the control group.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Drug Education</b>  <b>Classes: 2. Project Toward No Drug Abuse</b>  <b>Developers:</b> Steven Sussman</p> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://tnd.usc.edu/">http://tnd.usc.edu/</a></p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Classroom- based drug abuse prevention program used in “Continuation High School” youth. Employs a 9-session health motivation, social skills, decision- making curriculum specifically targeting the use of cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and drug use.</li> <li>◆ Identified as a Blueprints Model Program by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.</li> <li>◆ At one- year follow up, significant reductions in prevalence over the last 30- days included reductions in cigarette use, marijuana use, hard drug use, and alcohol use. There was also a significant reduction of one-year weapon carrying in male participants. At 5- year follow up, there was a significant reduction in hard drug use (Sussman, 2006).</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Stars Project Incorporated (ASP)</b>  <i>Developers:</i> Fred Newman and Lenora Fulani founded the All Stars Project.</p> <p>Primary Reference: <a href="http://www.allstars.org/content/06_03_iume_report.pdf">http://www.allstars.org/content/06_03_iume_report.pdf</a></p>	<p><b><u>Summary/ Components</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Nonprofit organization offers six after-school programs which encompass different areas of educational and performing arts, as well as leadership training activities.</li> <li>◆ Program offered to community members from 5- 25 years of age.</li> <li>◆ Significantly positive outcomes were found for participants’ engagement with family members.</li> <li>◆ Significant outcomes were not found in behavioral domains of self-confidence, self-preservation, and skills development. Participant reports about their perceptions of the program were overwhelmingly positive.</li> </ul>