



Professional Development Catalog

Please check our online PD Calendar for scheduled sessions or available dates and times.

<https://www.alabamaafterschoolqualitystandards.com/training-calendar>

All trainings can be adapted to meet your specific needs and can be presented in-person, virtually, or on-demand.

- ***Amplify Family Engagement and Student Success through Communication and Collaboration***
- ***Being Strategic in the Midst of Conflict - Conflict Resolution and Bullying Prevention***
- ***Beyond Burnout: Rebooting for the New Challenges of Life for School-Age Providers***
- ***Bolster Executive Functioning Skills to Prepare Kids for School and Beyond***
- ***Bridging the Gap with Parents***
- ***Build a Positive Culture: We are Better Together!***
- ***Building Capacity from Within, Shifting from Leadership to Buildership***
- ***Building Stronger Connections with Families***
- ***Building Teams and Relationships***
- ***Build Your Dream Team! Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Outstanding Educators***
- ***Challenge Kids with Robots and Coding***
- ***Commit to Be Fit! Routines and Practices to Offer Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles***
- ***Communicate, Collaborate, Celebrate! How Out-of-School Can Support Regular School Day Learning***
- ***Community: Building Partnerships for Sustainability***
- ***Conquering Challenging Conversations with Parents and Caregivers***
- ***Cultivating Empathy: Helping Sensitivity and Kindness Blossom***
- ***Differences in You and Me; Embracing the Differences You See***
- ***Do All Stakeholders Feel Safe? Creation of a Safe, Supportive Environment***
- ***Don't Reinvent the Wheel: Resources to Improve and Enhance Learning Opportunities***
- ***Empowering Children through Voice and Choice***



Click on a title to jump to the description.

All trainings can be adapted to meet your specific needs and can be presented in-person, virtually, or on-demand.

- *Engaged: Building Intentional Partnerships with Families*
- *Equity in STEM Education*
- *Everyone can STEM!*
- *Feel the Power of Positivity! Promoting a Positive Mindset to Achieve Positive Outcomes*
- *Financial Literacy: Prepare Our Youth in Money Management*
- *Fostering Positive Relationships to Build an Effective Team*
- *Fun Hands-On Activities (STEM)*
- *Fun in the Sun with STEM*
- *Growing Tomorrow's Leaders: Cultivating Habits and Skills for Success*
- *Heroes Get Tired Too: Caring for Self and Staff*
- *How to Engage Your Parents in Your Activities*
- *Imagine, Create, Innovate with Engineering Design Challenges*
- *Implementing Best Practices to Increase Engagement*
- *Integrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Lasting Impact*
- *It's All About Relationships: Build and Support Others*
- *Keeping Kids Safe: Physically, Socially and Emotionally*
- *Learning Styles to Engage and Support Learners*
- *Leveraging Partnerships through Afterschool*
- *Morale - The Foundation for Building and Sustaining a Healthy Work Environment*
- *Motivate, Captivate, Educate! Strategies for Increasing Student Engagement*
- *Noticing, Naming, and Navigating Emotions*
- *Nurturing Resilience for Success in School and Beyond*
- *Opening Doors to STEM Learning through Literature*
- *Pathways to New Experiences through Service-Learning in Afterschool*
- *Perception vs Reality – Are your mission, goals, and objectives aligned for quality improvement?*
- *Planning Lessons for Afterschool (Parts 1, 2, and 3)*
- *Planning Memorable and Engaging Family Nights*



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All trainings can be adapted to meet your specific needs and can be presented in-person, virtually, or on-demand.

- ***Playing Nice with the School Staff***
- ***Positive Behavior Supports in Out-of-School***
- ***Poverty Simulation***
- ***The Power of Thank You: Promoting Gratitude to Enhance Your Program Culture***
- ***Preparation + Communication = Staff Success***
- ***Project-Based Learning to Engage and Provide Voice and Choice***
- ***Promising Practices to Provide Positive Outcomes***
- ***Protective Factors: Empowering Children to Thrive***
- ***Rain or Shine, It's Playtime! Finding Fun on Rainy Days***
- ***Re-Energize, Refresh, and Reboot: Remembering the Why***
- ***Reimagining Homework Time to Maximize the Potential for Academic Growth***
- ***Relationships with Children are Essential: How to Build, Maintain, and Strengthen***
- ***Relationships with Families are Crucial: How to Build, Maintain, and Strengthen***
- ***Robotics for Beginners***
- ***Share Your Story: Marketing Strategies to Sustain a Quality Program***
- ***Spark Curiosity and Interest through STEM***
- ***STEM Family Night: Why, How, and Activities to Include***
- ***STEM: Inexpensive, Easy Activities to Implement and Engage our Youth***
- ***Supervising Staff through Effective and Positive Practices***
- ***Taming Troublesome Behaviors***
- ***Time to Tinker! Nurturing Curiosity and Creative Problem Solving***
- ***Trauma-Informed Practices: Nurturing Resilience for Success***
- ***Triumph with Teamwork! Be Connected and Build Community through Teambuilding***
- ***Unlocking Individual Potential by Supporting Diverse Learners***
- ***We're All in this Together! Creating a Culture in which Staff feel Heard, Valued, and Supported***
- ***What's Next? Make Memories!***
- ***Work Smarter, Not Harder: Record Keeping and Financial Management***



SESSION DESCRIPTIONS:

Amplify Family Engagement and Student Success through Communication and Collaboration

Parents and families are a crucial component of children's lives. Effective guidance from childcare and afterschool professionals enhances the academic and social-emotional support they provide their children. Research shows that children do better in school, improve their attitudes and behaviors, and are less likely to drop out of school when parents are involved in their education. Childcare and afterschool professionals can build parents' knowledge and confidence and serve as an important liaison between families and regular school day staff. Join us as we discuss strategies for encouraging open, two-way conversation between parents and educators and providing essential resources by connecting families to community services and supports. Celebrate what is good about your current family engagement framework and discover how you can amplify it to a new level!

Being Strategic in the Midst of Conflict - Conflict Resolution and Bullying Prevention

"The quality of our lives depends not on whether or not we have conflicts, but on how we respond to them." (Thomas Crum) This session will provide tools and strategies that youth and staff can use when conflicts arise. We will share activity ideas that promote cooperation and respect to help youth interact in positive ways. We will also talk about creating anti-bullying policies and communicating those policies and expectations clearly and concisely with youth, families, and staff.

Beyond Burnout: Rebooting for the New Challenges of Life for School-Age Providers

The world of afterschool is currently facing unique challenges. With staff shortages, hiring challenges, and returns to COVID safe practices, afterschool educators are beyond burn out. This training will provide information about practical considerations for refueling and rebooting. Self-preservation and staff care continue to be critical elements of daily success. The stress level of afterschool providers can affect their health and well-being as well as their job satisfaction and teacher retention. It is essential that educators take time to tackle ongoing burnout, promote health, and protect themselves from the negative effects of stress. Discover strategies and practices to continue to take care of self and staff and create a positive environment for your program.

Bolster Executive Functioning Skills to Prepare Kids for School and Beyond

Do you have students who struggle with self-regulation and impulse control? What about organization and time management? These and other executive functioning skills are important aspects of early learning and development. Join us as we share practical, age-appropriate strategies for promoting and coaching the development of executive functioning skills for children of all ages, thus setting students up for social and academic success.

Bridging the Gap with Parents

Parents and families are a crucial component of children's lives. Effective guidance from childcare and afterschool professionals can enhance the academic and social support they provide for their children. Research shows that children do better in school, improve their attitudes and behaviors, and are less likely to drop out of school when parents are involved in their education. Afterschool teachers can serve as an important liaison between families and regular school day staff. Join us as we discuss strategies that encourage open, two-way conversation between parents and childcare/afterschool staff and ways to provide essential resources for families by connecting them to services and supports in the community.

Build a Positive Culture: We are Better Together!

Positivity is powerful! Recruit and retain well-prepared and committed staff to serve our children by building a positive culture, or personality. The culture of an afterschool program can have a great effect on youth development. Establishing an effective communication plan keeps all stakeholders informed and can clarify and unite for a common goal. Building trust and collaboration is beneficial to fostering a caring staff. Creating positive relationships with stakeholders, establishing a shared vision, and setting the tone are essential. Join us

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to review and discuss the three Cs of positive culture: caring, communication, and collaboration. We are certainly better together!

Building Capacity from Within, Shifting from Leadership to Buildership

Building on a previous session, *Building Teams and Relationships*, this session will help turn your center/school into a success story with the people and resources you already have. We will discuss your purpose, people, plan, pathway, and pulling it all together so that you can begin to write your success story today!

Building Connections: Engaging Ideas for Teambuilding and Get-to-Know Activities

Children who feel safe and secure are more able to focus their energy on learning. Co-workers who enjoy each other's company and feel a sense of belonging often experience a boost in morale and motivation. Join us for this interactive session as we explore a variety of engaging activities designed to foster teamwork, enhance communication, and deepen interpersonal relationships. Try these activities with children or with colleagues to promote collaboration and strengthen your program culture! *(Note: This session is most impactful when done face-to-face.)*

Building Teams and Relationships

How can you build positive, productive, caring teams in the workplace? It begins with building positive relationships and setting clear expectations within your organization along with injecting a bit of humor along the way. Team building has several major objectives, one of which is enhancing good communication with participants as team members and individuals. There is also increased productivity and creativity which only supports the morale and positive rapport within your organization. Research has found when teams are at their personal best, they follow these five practices: *model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart*. This training offers a powerful opportunity for you to reflect on each essential element, think beyond your personal agenda, and to involve others in the planning and the doing while having fun along the way.

Build Your Dream Team! Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Outstanding Educators

Skilled and knowledgeable program staff are the key to having a quality program that leads to positive youth outcomes. In this session, we will discuss effective ways to use local resources to find and attract talent that fits the culture and needs of your program. We will also provide tips for improving the effectiveness of your interviewing process and ensuring that your onboarding practices prepare your new staff members for success.

Challenge Kids with Robots and Coding

Robots teach kids how to code while they play. Using cool, free apps and a compatible tablet or smartphone, kids learn to code while they make Dash sing, dance, and move all around the room. Dash and Dot are exciting, hands-on learning tools for students in grades K-5! Targeted at teaching creative problem solving and computational thinking, Dash and Dot help students learn fundamental processes relevant for all 21st-century skills. Students send commands to the robots to move them, light them up, and have them detect the world around them using free coding applications available on iPad and Android tablets. Join us to learn more! *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Commit to Be Fit! Routines and Practices to Offer Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles

Be active! Be healthy! Be happy! These are habits we want to instill in our youth. Join us as we share ideas about how to encourage youth to be physically active by planning and implementing a variety of physical activities that can be integrated across programming. We will address meeting the needs, interests, abilities, and talents of all youth and even how to engage families in physical activity! We will also discuss strategies for promoting hygiene best practices and precautions and for protecting youth from spreading illness.

Communicate, Collaborate, Celebrate! How Out-of-School Can Support Regular School Day Learning

Challenge children intellectually, creatively, and physically by weaving learning into your programming and linking program activities to the school day curriculum. During this session, we will share ideas for offering

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deep experiential activities not usually available during the school day and how to foster regular conversations between out-of-school staff and regular school day staff.

Community: Building Partnerships for Sustainability

Would you like to see additional programs at your site without having to plan them? Or maybe get free treats for your students and staff? Join us as we discuss how to leverage partners in your community to create more successful programs. Topics discussed will include how to find partners, the initial ask for partnership, including your partners in planning, and more.

Conquering Challenging Conversations with Parents and Caregivers

Working as a team with parents and caregivers when students face academic or behavioral challenges can have a huge impact on helping students overcome obstacles and achieve success. But getting the conversation started can be a bit daunting. In this session, we will share strategies for engaging with families in a constructive manner and navigating through tough dialogues effectively. By fostering understanding and building strong partnerships, you can successfully address challenging topics so that students can thrive.

Cultivating Empathy: Helping Sensitivity and Kindness Blossom

Empathy is a fundamental part of building positive friendships and relationships. Moreover, it significantly contributes to overall well-being and mental health. Join us as we share age-specific strategies designed to help children learn empathic skills. Build an environment in which sensitivity and kindness thrive, thus creating a positive ripple effect that will enrich your entire classroom culture.

Differences in You and Me; Embracing the Differences You See

This session will help childcare providers understand the importance of embracing cultural diversity within their school setting. We live in a diverse society, and it is important that educators help students navigate the differences we see, along with understanding how important culture is to our overall growth.

Do All Stakeholders Feel Safe? Creation of a Safe, Supportive Environment

Does your program have structures and strategies in place to create a safe and supportive environment for all? It is important to foster a safe physical environment coupled with a comfortable learning environment in which children feel safe, relaxed, and willing to take risks, especially for learners who may have had negative experiences. Children often describe supportive learning environments as places that expand their sense of family and in which they feel safe to take risks. We will explore routines and strategies to employ to provide a safe, supportive environment where children can grow.

Don't Reinvent the Wheel: Resources to Improve and Enhance Learning Opportunities

Great teachers and childcare providers are always reflecting upon lessons and wish to provide quality experiences for children. Finding resources and lessons takes time. Join us to discover strategies and resources to enrich your program. Working together sure makes us smarter! *(Note: This session is most impactful when participants have access to devices that can be used to explore online resources.)*

Empowering Children through Voice and Choice

Sometimes it is difficult to let go, but if we want children to be independent thinkers and learners, that is exactly what we need to do. Allowing children to direct some aspects of their learning and giving them opportunities to learn the way they learn best will encourage them to be more invested in the learning process, which will result in more meaningful learning. In this session, we will share strategies for creating an environment that invites children to share their ideas and take ownership of their learning. Empowered students are engaged students!

Engaged: Building Intentional Partnerships with Families

Successfully engaging families in your programs can result in positive learning and social emotional outcomes for children and their families, but it can also positively impact program staff and communities. In this session, we will focus on key points from the book *Engaged: Building Intentional Partnerships with Families*, from the

Parents as Teachers National Center. We will look at family engagement as it relates to 10 key values including trust, compassion, and generosity. Through targeted discussions during this session, celebrate what is good about your current family engagement framework and discover what you can do to elevate it to a new level.

Equity in STEM Education

Children are often exposed to gender and ethnic stereotypes in STEM education from an early age. These stereotypes can be unintentionally reinforced through routines and practices. By increasing our awareness of these stereotypes and recognizing and respecting the diversity in our out-of-school programs, we can learn to cultivate an environment in which all students are empowered, challenged, supported, and provided full access to STEM education. Join us as we explore ways to bridge the gender and ethnic gaps often found in STEM fields. Increasing excitement about STEM and improving accessibility to STEM learning will boost student confidence and ultimately have a positive impact on students' future life choices.

Everyone can STEM!

In today's world, it is important for children from preschool through adolescence to be regularly engaged in STEM learning. But facilitating STEM activities can be a bit intimidating for many educators. The goal of this session is to increase teachers' confidence in their ability to incorporate STEM learning activities into their regular programming. Together, we will explore the basic guidelines for STEM learning and share several simple, inexpensive ideas that you can try with your students. Uncover the joy of exploration and discovery that you and your students can experience by engaging in the STEM learning process together! *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Feel the Power of Positivity! Promoting a Positive Mindset to Achieve Positive Outcomes

Students and teachers alike will benefit when you boost the positive energy of your afterschool or childcare program. Join us as we discuss strategies for creating a culture of positivity among students and staff. Talking points will include the benefits of shifting from punishment to positive guidance, the importance of highlighting student and staff successes, and ideas for program activities that inspire positive behavior, cooperative learning, and positive peer-to-peer interactions.

Financial Literacy: Prepare Our Youth in Money Management

Financial literacy lessons teach children the basics of money management: budgeting, saving, debt, investing, and giving. That knowledge lays a foundation for our youth to build strong money habits early on and avoid many of the mistakes that lead to lifelong money struggles. Explore the benefits and importance of teaching financial literacy to our youth. Learn about resources to employ and steps you can implement to ensure an impactful experience to prepare our children for life.

Fostering Positive Relationships to Build an Effective Team

Part of being an effective team is forming and maintaining positive relationships among staff. Positivity is contagious, but so is negativity. In this session, we will examine strategies for engaging in important coaching discussions, tackling those difficult conversations when necessary, and breaking down barriers to communication. Creating a culture of collaboration will help you build trust and foster positive relationships among staff, which will positively impact the overall quality of your childcare or afterschool program.

Fun, Hands-On Activities (STEM)

Children learn best through fun, hands-on activities. We'll share interactive activity ideas that encourage children to think creatively, solve problems, and learn important life skills. Come join in the fun! *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Fun in the Sun with STEM

Want to add some sizzle to your summer programming? This session will introduce educators to engaging activities that can be implemented during summertime learning experiences, leveraging the unique opportunities that the summer season provides. Participants will explore a range of activities and will leave

with a toolkit of creative and effective activities that will inspire and excite their students about STEM, both during the summer and throughout the school year. *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Growing Tomorrow's Leaders: Cultivating Habits and Skills for Success

Building leadership skills in youth will create habits that will benefit them for life. These same skills can also significantly impact student self-confidence and belief in their abilities. Join us as we share practices for planting the seeds of effective communication, responsibility and accountability, teamwork and collaboration, and creative problem-solving to help your students blossom on their way to becoming well-rounded, successful adults.

Heroes Get Tired Too: Caring for Self and Staff

Educators work hard to bring their best selves to the classroom every day while they juggle individual student needs, set ambitious goals, and often work long hours. Many providers also face escalating job demands with few resources while they work with students who face complex trauma, behavioral difficulties and learning challenges. The stress level of teachers can affect their health and well-being as well as their job satisfaction and teacher retention. It is essential for educators to take time to prevent burnout, promote health, and protect themselves from the negative effects of stress. Discover strategies and practices to take care self and staff, creating a positive environment for all.

How to Engage Your Parents in Your Activities

Have you ever had a family engagement activity where no parents showed up? This session will help educators learn different ways to engage with families in their programs. We will also discuss scheduling and partners who can help with providing these activities.

Imagine, Create, Innovate with Engineering Design Challenges

Today's youth are the innovators of tomorrow who will shape our future! Through engineering design challenges, you can inspire children to imagine and create and build a foundation for future STEM learning. These engaging, student-centered activities are great opportunities for you and your students to explore, learn, and grow together and can help children of all ages practice important problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills. Join us as we share essential strategies and insights needed to effectively guide students through the stages of the design process and help them discover capabilities they didn't know they had. Are you ready to empower the engineers of tomorrow? *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Implementing Best Practices to Increase Engagement

Are you seeking new strategies to engage your school-age children? Let's explore best practices to help increase achievement for struggling students, reduce disruption and allow a positive, productive environment.

Integrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Lasting Impact

Every child deserves to feel seen and valued. Working to improve your diversity, equity, and inclusion practices can help develop a child's sense of confidence in their personal and social identities and help them feel grounded in who they are, while also helping them comfortably and empathetically engage with people from all backgrounds. In this session, we will share strategies for creating a more welcoming, inclusive, and equitable classroom culture. We will also discuss ways to encourage children to understand, appreciate, include, and advocate for themselves and those around them. Join us for valuable resources and information that will help you improve your program and create a positive, lasting impact for children, families, and staff.

It's All About Relationships: Build and Support Others

Building and supporting relationships is crucial for personal and professional growth. It involves effective communication, active listening, empathy, and being there for others. Strong relationships can lead to mutual

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benefits and a positive environment for everyone involved. How do you build relationships with colleagues? This session will offer ideas and allow participants to share their successes.

Keeping Kids Safe: Physically, Socially and Emotionally

A safe environment is essential for children of all ages. The gap in time between the ringing of the school bell and when adults arrive home from work has long been a concern of families and community members due to the potential dangers and risky behaviors that take place after school. In this session, we will explore the revisions and additions to the “Health and Safety Guidelines, Requirements and Procedures for Out-of-School Time Facilities Participating in the Child Care Subsidy Program” that were made so that a greater number of children may be served in our state. In addition, we will examine strategies and best practices to address student needs and increase engagement to offer a better experience for all.

Learning Styles to Engage and Support Learners

This session will introduce childcare providers to the various learning styles and inventories that are available to help differentiate information to help support and engage students in the classroom. Even our youngest learners have unique learning styles, and it is important to recognize those to help them continue to grow in their academic and social needs.

Leveraging Partnerships through Afterschool

Partnerships are a fundamental part of the success of a community. Schools, businesses, organizations, and people are all pieces of a community. In this session, we will discuss key ways to leverage partnerships throughout your community through afterschool. Afterschool programs are a fun place to engage students, but they also are a gateway to your community. Be prepared to network and share resources with other participants, as well as learn new strategies to build a strong afterschool program and strengthen community partnerships along the way.

Morale - The Foundation for Building and Sustaining a Healthy Work Environment

A healthy culture boosts morale. Healthy interpersonal relationships, management styles, HR, and many more factors influence culture. Focusing on the 3Ts: Tone, Time, Talent Support and Development will help leaders/directors set the tone of the culture in their building and boost the morale of employees. This session will help leaders/directors understand the need to be inclusive and to create a voice for employees to boost the morale of their organization and in turn strengthen the work of their employees.

Motivate, Captivate, Educate! Strategies for Increasing Student Engagement

When children are engaged in the learning process, motivation and achievement increase. Keeping students engaged is a common challenge faced by educators at any level. Join us as we share best practices and strategies for increasing student engagement in out-of-school time, reducing disruptions, and creating a positive, productive learning environment.

Noticing, Naming, and Navigating Emotions

Children often have BIG emotions – both positive and negative. Learning how to acknowledge and label these feelings is a vital part of healthy social and emotional development. Join us as we discuss strategies for guiding students to better understand, express, and handle their emotions. Checking in emotionally with students and validating their experiences will move them forward on the path to stronger relationships and overall emotional intelligence.

Nurturing Resilience for Success in School and Beyond

Nurturing resilience is crucial for success in both school and beyond. Encouraging a growth mindset, teaching problem-solving skills, and providing emotional support can all help individuals bounce back from challenges and setbacks. Developing strong social connections and maintaining a healthy work-life balance also contribute to building resilience. Remember, setbacks are opportunities for growth! Join us to discuss practical strategies to implement that will nurture resilience.

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Opening Doors to STEM Learning through Literature

Afterschool and summer programs are tasked with building reading skills and incorporating STEM experiences into their programming. Why not combine the two? Let's talk about ways to use literature to get kids excited about STEM and use STEM activities to bring characters and stories to life. Blending STEM and reading will deepen students' reading comprehension and overall understanding of STEM concepts and help them make authentic, real-world connections. You are bound to see increased motivation, improved learning, and genuine teamwork! (*Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.*)

Pathways to New Experiences through Service-Learning in Afterschool

Picture a room full of children reading books they have written and illustrated to smiling senior citizens, a vacant lot buzzing with activity as children work to transform it into a community garden, or groups of children developing a recycling plan for their school community. When children engage in service-learning opportunities such as these, they make a positive impact on their communities while experiencing great personal growth. Service-learning is a student-centered approach to community service designed around providing as much education as possible every step of the way. Join us as we discuss ideas for incorporating service-learning into your afterschool programming as a means of engaging the community and helping youth build new skills that will help them grow into responsible, caring citizens.

Perception vs Reality – Are your mission, goals, and objectives aligned for quality improvement?

We often think that our mission, goals, and objectives are aligned for success, but have you taken the time to review these with your staff? This session will have participants review key documents (mission, goals, and objectives) to determine if alignment is there for overall quality improvement. It is also important that these items are truly a part of the overall culture and not just words on paper.

Planning Lessons for Afterschool (Part 1)

Need help with developing units of study or devising lesson plans? In Planning Lessons for Afterschool Part 1, we will brainstorm and share ideas for potential units of study and engaging lessons. We will also provide tips for writing effective lesson plans and connecting those plans to the state standards. Collaborating and sharing successes can indeed enhance the learning experience. Join us to discover strategies and resources to enrich your lessons and programs. We are better together!

Planning Lessons for Afterschool (Part 2)

Need help with sparking interest and planning activities to meet your objectives? In Planning Lessons for Afterschool Part 2, we will discuss techniques that will help you grab the attention of students and strategies for planning engaging lessons that will sustain their interest. Collaborating and sharing successes can indeed enhance the learning experience. Join us to discover strategies and resources to enrich your lessons and programs. We are better together!

Planning Lessons for Afterschool (Part 3)

Need help with checking for understanding, closure of lessons and realistic timelines? In Planning Lessons for Afterschool Part 3, we will address strategies you can use to check for understanding and effectively close lessons, as well as setting realistic timelines for units of study. Collaborating and sharing successes can indeed enhance the learning experience. Join us to discover strategies and resources to enrich your lessons and programs. We are better together!

Playing Nice with the School Staff

This session will help afterschool educators learn how to build and strengthen relationships with school day staff and administration and align afterschool programming with the regular school day. Learn how to form a true partnership between school and afterschool, show your organization is a positive for the school, and get data and other things your program needs.

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Positive Behavior Supports in Out-of-School

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) is an evidence-based approach for establishing the social, cultural, and behavioral supports needed to establish an effective learning environment for all students. Consistency is the key to success. The afterschool program can help improve the school climate and reduce behavior management issues by integrating PBS strategies beyond the school day.

Poverty Simulation

Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families, and unless one has experienced poverty, it is difficult to comprehend. The Truman Pierce Institute will work with you to conduct the Community Action Poverty Simulation to help bridge the gap from misconception to understanding through an interactive, immersive experience. The experience lasts 2.5–3 hours. It includes a brief introduction and briefing of the simulation exercise and a debriefing period after the exercise in which the participants and volunteer staffers share their feelings and experiences. (Minimum of 40 participants)

The Power of Thank You: Promoting Gratitude to Enhance Your Program Culture

Gratitude has the power to increase optimism and joy, decrease anxiety and depression, and strengthen feelings of connectedness. In this session, we will share research on the benefits of expressing gratitude and recommend strategies and resources to help you promote thankfulness in your program. Small acts and messages of gratitude can ripple outwards in big ways, and the more you practice gratitude, the more powerful it becomes!

Preparation + Communication = Staff Success

Hiring and retaining quality staff is essential to achieving program excellence. Join us as we discuss strategies for preparing your staff for success. We will address topics that include how to plan effective orientation procedures for new staff and how to conduct a needs assessment in order to provide ongoing professional development that reflects individual needs and promotes personal growth. We will also share suggestions for how to provide constructive feedback regarding individual performance goals. Positive communication between program leaders and staff will help your program employ best practices to meet the needs of the whole child.

Project-Based Learning to Engage and Provide Voice and Choice

Voice and choice are an essential part of Project Based Learning that often gets overlooked. Voice and choice happen when the teacher relinquishes the leadership of the lessons and projects to students, allowing them to design their own projects that show off their learning in unique and individual ways. Join us to discover the facilitator's role, to explore techniques for facilitating youth voice and to identify steps for incorporating youth voice in project-based learning.

Promising Practices to Provide Positive Outcomes for Our Youth

With the growing need for afterschool, a large body of evidence exists that confirms quality afterschool programs help children become more engaged in school, reduce their likelihood of taking part in at-risk behaviors or acting out in school, and help raise their academic performance. Let's explore promising practices that will provide a quality program for our youth, thus improving the chance that positive outcomes will occur.

Protective Factors: Empowering Children to Thrive

"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." (Desmond Tutu)

Protective factors play a crucial role in promoting the health and emotional well-being of children and serve as a buffer to the potentially harmful effects of negative situations and events. In this session, we will discuss strategies that educators can use to strengthen protective factors and bolster the resiliency of their students. We will also discuss ways that programs can collaborate with families and support them in fostering attitudes and behaviors that empower children to thrive, even in the face of adversity.

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Rain or Shine, It's Playtime! Finding Fun on Rainy Days

Stuck inside on a rainy day? This session will fill your toolbox with ideas to keep kids happy, active, engaged, and learning while developing important social skills such as teamwork and cooperation along the way.

Re-Energize, Refresh, and Reboot: Remembering the Why

With a new year comes new possibilities! Devote some time this year to focusing on self-care and establishing healthy habits so that you can offer your best self to your students. Reignite your passion for teaching by reflecting on the difference you are making in the lives of children. Re-energize your lessons by daring to try new ideas and by collaborating with colleagues. Join us as we take some time to celebrate successes, share ideas, and remember the why!

Reimagining Homework Time to Maximize the Potential for Academic Growth

Homework often gets a bad rap, but it can offer valuable opportunities for children to reexamine new information, practice important skills, and increase their confidence. Join us as we discuss strategies for maximizing the potential of homework time by keeping it active and engaging, thus creating a program culture that embraces homework time as useful and important. We will also share ideas for incorporating games, physical activity, and cooperative learning to help children practice essential reading and math skills. Ease some of the pressure off busy families and help children become independent learners by amping up your homework time!

Relationships with Children are Essential: How to Build, Maintain, and Strengthen

Creating, maintaining, and strengthening relationships with students involves building trust, showing respect, and fostering a supportive environment. A positive teacher-student relationship enhances learning and personal growth. How do you build relationships with your students? The session will offer ideas and allow participants to share their successes.

Relationships with Families are Crucial: How to Build, Maintain, and Strengthen

Building, maintaining, and strengthening relationships with families is essential for student success. Open communication, mutual respect, and genuine care encourage engagement and support working relationships. Celebrate milestones and be present during challenges. It takes a continual effort to nurture these bonds. Join us as we discuss strategies for encouraging open, two-way conversations. The session will offer ideas and allow participants to share their successes.

Robotics for Beginners

Coding is the future! Introducing children from preschool and up to robotics and coding promotes creativity and logical thinking. Through coding activities, children learn and practice problem-solving skills, critical thinking, perseverance, and resilience. This session is intended to help teachers who are new to coding feel comfortable leading robotics and coding activities and learning alongside their students. Get hands-on practice with our kid-friendly robots – Bee-Bot, Dash, Dot, and Ozobot. *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Share Your Story: Marketing Strategies to Sustain a Quality Program

You work hard to make your program the best it can be. It's time to let people know about the great things you are doing! In this session, we will discuss strategies for marketing your program through both print and digital campaigns and social media. The more they know, the more you grow!

Spark Curiosity and Interest through STEM

The curiosity and creative thinking of children produce natural STEM learners. Children construct knowledge through observation, exploration, and experimentation. STEM learning uses teachable moments and children's long-term investigations to build knowledge through developing children's inquiry, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. By cultivating these critical skills teachers can positively influence children's learning in the STEM disciplines. Join us to discover resources and strategies to prepare children for school and beyond. *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

STEM Family Night: Why, How, and Activities to Include

A STEM Family Night is an evening of hands-on science, math, and engineering activities for families to complete together. The event includes a variety of activities covering different STEM topics and connections to exciting STEM careers. Join us to discover why and how to get started planning a STEM Family Night that provides a fun, learning opportunity for children and families.

STEM: Inexpensive, Easy Activities to Implement and Engage our Youth

“Why does it rain?” “Why do boats float?” “How does an elevator work?” If you have a young child in your life, you likely hear many questions like this every day. Children are naturally curious about the world. Let’s embrace their inquisitiveness and spark their curiosity by providing a STEM-rich environment. Join us to discover inexpensive activities that will spark interest and engage learners of any age in your program. *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Supervising Staff through Effective and Positive Practices

Retaining quality teachers and staff is an ongoing challenge. Program leaders set the tone for the environment! Join us as we discuss qualities that improve the effectiveness of supervisors. We will discuss tips for successfully building collaborative teams, supporting staff, conducting staff reviews, and determining which professional development opportunities would be most beneficial to your team. By supervising staff through effective and positive practices, you will create a safe, respectful, and rewarding work environment for all!

Taming Troublesome Behaviors

Are you looking for effective solutions for managing difficult behaviors in your classroom? You are not alone! Disruptions and distractions can make learning difficult for everyone and often contribute to teacher burnout. In this session, we will discuss the benefits of being proactive instead of reactive and focusing on positive behaviors rather than negative behaviors. We will share practical strategies you can use to help minimize the frequency of challenging behaviors and will address methods for diffusing situations effectively when they do occur.

Time to Tinker! Nurturing Curiosity and Creative Problem Solving

Unlock the natural curiosity of your students through engaging hands-on exploration with a variety of tools and materials. Throughout this interactive session, you will have opportunities to first engage in tinkering from a child’s perspective and then reflect on strategies you can use to facilitate tinkering activities in your own program. Learn how to create an environment that sparks creativity and innovation and how to tailor your tinkering practice to the specific needs and goals of your program. It's time to tinker! *(Note: Due to the hands-on nature of the topic, we prefer to conduct this session face-to-face.)*

Trauma-Informed Practices: Nurturing Resilience for Success

Need strategies to respond to children who have experienced trauma? This session will review how trauma affects behavior and discuss how to respond appropriately to trauma-induced behaviors. We will share strategies for relationship-building and for nurturing the skills children need to be resilient after going through difficult circumstances, thus reducing mental stress, strengthening student outcomes, and creating a healthier learning environment.

Unlocking Individual Potential by Supporting Diverse Learners

In this training, we will share valuable insights and strategies for fostering an inclusive learning environment. Join us to learn about indicators that will help you identify the preferred learning styles of your students and practical teaching tips tailored to each learning style. We will also explore how to employ multimodal learning strategies to create a supportive and effective environment, thus empowering every student to reach their full potential.

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We're All in this Together! Creating a Culture in which Staff feel Heard, Valued, and Supported

“The best leaders are those who inspire and empower others to reach their full potential.” (Oprah Winfrey) In this training, we will explore the pivotal role of effective communication, appreciation, and support in fostering a workplace culture that thrives on collaboration and mutual respect. Strengthen your team by cultivating an environment in which every team member’s voice is not only heard but celebrated.

What’s Next? Make Memories!

Need new ideas to engage the children in your summer program? Share your plans for summer learning and gain ideas from others! (Note: This session is most impactful when participants have access to devices that can be used to explore online resources.)

Work Smarter, Not Harder: Record Keeping and Financial Management

Organization a problem? Join us for ideas about how to streamline your registration and record-keeping using programs such as Excel and Google Docs. Learn strategies for tracking income and expenses and managing budgetary constraints in a systematic way.

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