

## **Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals**

### **Core Knowledge Areas and Subheadings**

#### **1. Child and Youth Development**

Afterschool professionals have an understanding of how children and youth develop physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally, as well as how children improve and use language skills and other forms of communication. In addition, professionals need to know about various factors that influence child development, and how individual children's development varies.

##### **Child and Youth Development Subheadings**

- A. How Children and Youth Develop
- B. Influences on Child and Youth Development
- C. Individual Variance

#### **2. Families and Communities**

Afterschool professionals understand that children and youth are members of a family and a community. Afterschool professionals work respectfully in partnership with families and communities. They value the diversity of and their unique relationships with children and youth, families and communities. They also share information and resources with children and youth and their families that support their well-being.

##### **Families and Communities Subheadings**

- A. Relationships
- B. Communication
- C. Community Involvement and Resources

#### **3. Curriculum and Learning Environment**

Afterschool professionals understand that learning occurs through the combination of interactions, structures and experiences in children's and youth's daily lives. A balanced program promotes life skills and enhances cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. A variety of strategies are needed to match children's and youth's interests and unique approaches to learning.

##### **Child and Youth Development Subheadings**

- A. Interactions
- B. Environment
- C. Curriculum and Enrichment
- D. Assessment

#### **4. Healthy and Safe Environments**

Afterschool professionals use practices that protect children's and youth's health, safety and development. This includes having knowledge of good nutrition, the importance of regular physical activity, personal decision-making, and relationship building.

##### **Healthy and Safe Environments Subheadings**

- A. Healthy Environments and Health Needs
- B. Safe Environments
- C. Nutrition & Physical Activity

#### **5. Professionalism and Program Organization**

Afterschool professionals ensure that children, youth, and their families receive high quality, developmentally appropriate services. They maintain a code of ethical conduct; articulate a vision of afterschool care and professional development; work collaboratively with colleagues, families, and organizations; maintain a solid work ethic; and implement sound administrative practices such as budgeting and evaluation as applicable.

##### **Professionalism and Program Organization Subheadings**

- A. Professionalism
- B. Working with Staff and Colleagues
- C. Program Organization and Administration

