

Discussion guide for Youth focus groups: Element 5 Programming/Activities

Directions: Plan for at least 45 minutes, including time to introduce the students to the purpose of the session. Also make sure you have appropriate permissions to allow students to take part in these discussions.

There are four questions for element 5. They are numbered and bold faced. Each question is followed by a series of follow up questions. Finally, the follow up questions have a list of the indicators from the NYSAN QSA that are addressed by the questions so that you can see what information we are trying to get at with the questions. Ask the primary question and then lead the discussion by asking the follow up questions until it seems that the students have run out of things to say (or time). Have someone act as a recorder to capture the main points from the discussion. The students' comments should then be used to provide data that will assist your stakeholder groups as they complete the NYSAN QSA.

1. When you get to the after school program, what is the schedule of the activities?

What do you do first? Second? Etc? (i.e. can they walk you through the program?)

Are all of the activities in English? If not, what other languages?

Are there staff members who speak Spanish? (Ask about languages appropriate to the community.)

Are there any holidays or cultural events that you celebrate with the program? What are they?

These questions address the following indicators:

Activities that take language and culture into account (7)

Establishes and follows a schedule that is known to all staff, participants, and their families (8)

2. What are some of the activities you do at this program?

List the things you do at the program.

What are your favorites? Why?

Are there things you did for the first time at the program? What things did you try for the first time?

What have you learned how to do at this program?

These questions address the following indicators:

Activities that reflect the mission of the program (1)

Activities that address academic, physical, social, and emotional needs of participants (2)

Activities that are age appropriate and build skills (3)

Opportunities for development of personal responsibility, self-direction, & leadership (10)

3. What projects have you completed at the program?

Can you think of any projects you have completed during the program?

Have you made anything at the program that you worked on for more than one day?

Where was your work displayed? Who got to see it?

Have you prepared for any performances during the program? What were they?

These questions address the following indicators:

Project-based, experiential activities that promote creativity and self-expression (4)

Provides a range of opportunities in which participants work can be showcased (9)

4. How has the program helped you with your school work?

Do program staff help you with your homework?

Do you usually finish all of your homework at the program?

In school, you study subjects like math, English, social studies (can have the children list them.)

What activities do you do at the program that relate to these subjects? Do you do math, etc?

What activities do you do at the program that relate to art? Technology? etc

What are some activities you've done where you learn about cultures around the world?

These questions address the following indicators:

Academic support, including tutoring and homework help (5)

Enrichment activities in core areas as well as arts, technology, recreation, and health (6)

Activities that take language and culture into account (7)