

Overview of Measurement Tools

Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT) by the National Institute on Out of School Time (NIOST)

The **Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT)** is an observation tool designed to offer a “snap shot” of a program’s quality in areas linked to youth skill outcomes. These ratings are intended to be viewed as a guide for reflection and to provide direction in quality improvement planning.

Each item in the tool is a statement describing a desired practice/behavior. The four-point rating scale is designed to answer the question “how true is it that this statement describes the behavior/practice that I observed?” For each item, a **bolded statement** describes the criteria for a rating of “4”, followed by further explanation. The criteria for a rating of “1” is also included in *italics*. These are examples of what an observer *might* see, not what they *must* see.

Sample Item	Rating
<p>4. When youth behavior is inappropriate, staff use simple reminders to redirect behavior. Staff are always calm and straightforward. (Ex: Let youth know what is inappropriate and remind them of rules and behavioral expectations.)</p> <p><i>1 = Staff always over-react to youth’s behavior. (Ex: Staff are visibly short-fused: “How many times do I have to tell you not to...?”)</i></p>	<p>1 2 3 4</p>

Rating Scale

- 1- Not True
- 2- Somewhat True
- 3- Mostly True
- 4- Very True

Domain	Examples of Items Measured
<p><i>Program Organization and Structure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of Activity Nature of Activity Arrival Logistics and Greetings Transitions Schedule and Offering Space Adequacy 	<p>Activities begin promptly; sufficient materials and supplies; activity time free from interruptions/distractions</p> <p>Challenging, stimulating; offers youth choice, decision-making; opportunity for youth to work collaboratively</p> <p>Staff greet/converse with youth as they arrive; youth know/follow the arrival routine; activities are available</p> <p>Transitions are smooth, quick; staff communicate what is expected; staff properly address behavior issues</p> <p>Organized; variety of experiences; balance of activities and instructional approaches; balance of group sizes</p> <p>Equipment in good condition; organized, inclusive space that reflects youths’ work; conducive to learning</p>
<p><i>Supportive Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social-Emotional Environment Staff Build Relationships with and Support Youth Staff Positively Guide Behavior Informal Time: Staff Performance* Youth Relations with Adults Youth Relations with Peers 	<p>Positive, respectful, supportive staff-staff, staff-youth and youth-youth interactions; conflict resolution</p> <p>Professional conduct; friendly, encouraging, patient interactions; staff listen to and help youth when asked</p> <p>Fair, respectful behavior management; elicit youth attention, cooperation; supervision; allow youth flexibility</p> <p>Staff-youth interactions and conversations; staff intervene during peer conflicts; staff apply rules fairly</p> <p>Youth are cooperative, attentive; youth show interest in staff and seek out positive interactions with staff</p> <p>Positive, cooperative peer interactions; youth enjoy each other’s company; youth listen to each other</p>
<p><i>Engagement in Activities and Learning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Promote Engagement and Stimulate Thinking Youth Participation Informal Time: Youth Engagement and Behavior* 	<p>Staff energy, enthusiasm; facilitate discussion and reflection; encourage problem solving, decision-making</p> <p>Youth are busy and engaged; follow rules and behavioral expectations; contribute to and focus on activities</p> <p>Quality of peer interactions: cooperative, respectful, kind; youth follow rules, participate, control behavior</p>

*These two domains correspond to the staff and youth items on the informal program/social time section of the APT. Not all programs have “informal time” and may not be rated in these areas.

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Holistic Student Assessment (HSA) by the Program in Education, Afterschool & Resiliency

The **Holistic Student Assessment (HSA)*** is an early-detection self-report tool for program planning that provides a profile of a student’s social-emotional strengths and challenges. Each of the constructs measured (listed and defined below) is standardized by gender and grade-level and converted to a standard deviation score (Z-score). If a student scores one or more standard deviations (SD) in either direction from the norm for their gender and grade-level, they are assigned a strength or challenge depending on the direction of that construct. Based on their number of strengths and challenges, students are assigned to a tier of low, moderate or high social-emotional support need. Data can be reported at individual, classroom, program, school and district levels.

Construct	Definition	Sample Question
<i>Resiliencies</i> Action Orientation Emotional Control Assertiveness Trust Empathy Reflection Optimism	Engagement in physical and hands-on activities. Self-regulation of distress; management of anger. Confidence in putting oneself forward; standing up for what one believes. Perception of other people as helpful and trustworthy. Recognition of other’s feelings and experiences. Inner thought process, self-awareness; responsive toward societal issues. Enthusiasm for and hopefulness about one’s life.	I like being active and moving my body. I react to things so quickly I get in trouble. I stand up for things that matter to me. People will help someone who is in trouble. I like to help people with their problems. I try to understand the world I live in. I am happy with the choices I make in my life.
<i>Relationships</i> Relationships with Peers Relationships with Adults	Positive, supportive social connections with friends and classmates. Positive connections and attitudes toward interactions with adults.	I have friends who care about me. There are adults I look up to and admire.
<i>Learning & School Engagement</i> Learning Interest Critical Thinking Perseverance Academic Motivation School Bonding	Desire to learn and acquire new knowledge. Examination of information, exploration of ideas, independent thought. Persistence in work and problem solving despite obstacles. Incentive to succeed in school. Positive personal connections and the sense of belonging in one’s school.	I am curious about new ideas. I like to figure out how things work. When I try to accomplish something, I achieve it. I will get good grades on school exams. I feel like people understand me at my school.

Holistic Student Assessment Retrospective (HSA-R) by the Program in Education, Afterschool & Resiliency

The **Holistic Student Assessment Retrospective (HSA-R)*** measures the same constructs as the HSA. It is administered to students at the end of their programming and asks them to think about a variety of statements in relation to their participation in the program. This allows students to self-report their growth in social-emotional skills. Some sample HSA-R questions are listed below.

<i>Because of my summer program...</i>	<i>Much less now</i>		<i>About the same</i>			<i>Much more now</i>	
I like to learn new things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I see someone being bullied, I feel sorry for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I fail to solve a problem, I try again until I find the solution.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I like to figure out how things work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is at least one adult I can talk to about my problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*For consistency between scales on the PRISM report, Boston Beyond has rescaled items to be out of a 1-4 scale.

Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes – Youth Version (SAYO Y) by the National Institute on Out of School Time (NIOST)

The **Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes – Youth Version (SAYO Y)** is a survey filled out by youth on the following three areas: youth’s experience in the out-of-school-time program, youth’s sense of competence, and youth’s future planning and expectations. There are two versions of the tool: one for Grades 4-8 and one for Grades 9-12. Due to the reading level required, SAYO Y might not be appropriate for children under Grade 4.

Boston After School & Beyond employs the program experience portion of the tool as a retrospective survey that youth fill out at the end of their program. This provides an essential youth perspective on program experiences and quality that complements the APT.

Each item in the tool is a statement or question related to the youth’s experience in the program or how they felt the program helped them. Depending on the item, the four-point rating scale is on a range of “No to Yes” or “Don’t agree to Agree a lot.” For Sample Item 1 shown below, the rating scale is from “No to Yes”, and for Sample Item 2 the rating scale is from “Don’t agree to Agree a lot.”

Sample Item	1	2	3	4
1. Is there an adult here who is interested in what you think about things?	No	Mostly No	Mostly Yes	Yes
2. Coming here has helped me to try harder in school.	Don’t Agree	Agree a little	Mostly agree	Agree a lot

Domain	Examples of Items Measured
<i>Supportive Environment</i> Helps Youth Socially Supportive Social Environment Supportive Adults Present	Program helps youth feel good about him/herself, find out what they are good at, and make new friends Youth interactions: friendly, respectful, listen to each other; does teasing occur; has friends in the program Adults are interested in youth’s thoughts, talk to them, help with problems; youth respects, listens to adults
<i>Engagement in Activities and Learning</i> Youth Enjoy and Feel Engaged Youth Feel Challenged Helps Youth Academically Opportunities for Leadership and Responsibility Youth Have Choice and Autonomy	Youth likes coming to the program and has fun; isn’t bored at the program; can find things they like to do Learns new things; feels challenged in a good way; does new things Program helps youth get homework done; helps them try harder and do better in school Youth gets to help plan and lead activities; is in charge of things and helps make decisions; helps community Youth can suggest ideas for activities; choose which activities they do and with whom; can spend time alone

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Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes – Teacher/Staff Version (SAYO T/S) by the National Institute on Out of School Time (NIOST)

The **Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes – Teacher/Staff Version (SAYO T/S)** uses brief pre- and post-participation outcome surveys to collect data about youth from regular education teachers (SAYO T) and afterschool staff (SAYO S). The survey is based on a menu approach in which programs collect data on the social-emotional and academic outcomes that are most aligned with their goals for the youth that they serve.

Each outcome area is measured by asking teachers and staff to respond to four to seven questions related to observable youth behaviors. These items have been extensively tested and found to work as a single scale that effectively captures the outcome being measured. Teacher and/or staff responses to these surveys can be completed for all participating youth or for a sample of youth in a program. The pre-post design allows student skill growth to be measured.

With the exception of the academic performance outcomes, each item in the tool is a statement describing a desired practice/behavior. The five-point rating scale asks teachers/staff to answer the question “How often does this student do the described behavior?” Sample questions are shown in the box below.

Please indicate how often this student:	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1. Shows consideration for peers.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Makes own effort to begin assignment before asking for assistance.	1	2	3	4	5

The academic performance outcomes are only included on the SAYO T. For these, teachers are asked to rate the student’s performance in relation to grade level standards in each subject area. This four-point scale (1-4) classifies a student’s performance as poor (significantly below grade level standards), needs improvement (somewhat below grade level standards), satisfactory (at grade level standards), or very good (above grade level standards).

Outcomes	Examples of Items Measured
<i>Social-emotional and Intermediary Skills*</i> Behavior in the Program/Classroom Communication Skills Relations with Adults Relations with Peers Initiative Engagement in Learning Problem Solving	Regains control of behavior; contributes to the class/classroom; accepts when things don’t go their way Asks and answers questions; contributes relevant ideas and information effectively; speaks loudly and clearly Shows respect and acknowledges praise; seeks appropriate assistance and support Gets along with other students; shows consideration; forms friendships Sets goals and prioritizes tasks; persists on task even when experiencing difficulty Level of alertness and focus; interested in learning new things; contribution to class discussion Supports statements with evidence; identifies, describes and generates multiple solutions to problems
<i>Academic</i> Homework Academic Performance	Completeness, neatness, organization, accuracy, application of concepts and skills Significantly below, somewhat below, at or above grade level standards for the subject area.

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