



The Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

Communities across the country are not only building out-of-school-time (OST) systems to respond to public demand for a stable supply of youth programs, they are also building quality improvement systems (QIS) to ensure that these programs are places where children and youth thrive.

The David P. Weikart Center is a field leader in at-scale performance-based accountability systems for OST programs and other settings focused on positive youth development. We build system- and site-level capacity for continuous improvement by focusing on three things: quality improvement system design, effective performance data, and lower stakes accountability. Validated training and technical assistance in these three key areas has helped OST networks across the country be successful, scalable and sustainable. The Weikart Center is a technical assistance center of the Forum for Youth Investment, and a critical part of our overall effort to build leadership capacity to advance readiness and equity.

Weikart's Partner/Client Base

Our client base is large, diverse and loyal. They are more than clients, they are partners. Under the leadership of Charles Smith, Joe Bertolotti and a dynamic staff team based in Ypsilanti, Michigan, the Weikart Center is facilitating the use of the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) model in 125 systems or networks in 35 states.

These networks represent a total of:

- 4,250 sites
- 27,625 staff
- More than 340,000 children and youth of all ages

The YPQI is a comprehensive system for improving program quality, built around the research-validated Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA). The YPQI targets three levels of setting: policy, organizational and instructional, with the intent to make structural differences throughout a network or system to improve quality in every youth experience.

These client networks share a common commitment to quality improvement—whether they are independent non-profit intermediaries, multisite providers, or are in mayors' offices, United Ways, school systems or other systems. They benefit from our ongoing commitment to push lessons learned back into our research, products and services and forward into public policy.

Get Strategic Support

Our portfolio of supports has matured to keep up with demand from clients and the field. Starting this spring, we are working to “push practice” by offering pathways for increasing the supply and demand for high-quality out-of-school time offerings, including:

- » A Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention to improve access to quality offerings throughout the entire year, and to ensure that quality expansion doesn't lag behind quantity.
- » SEL training in best practices and measures to augment the YPQI, to ensure that SEL principles are translated into intentional and consistent practices in programs that have already made a general commitment to improving program quality.
- » Weikart Center tools and TA to lower the cost of quality-outcomes evaluation design that links management, instructional practice, skill growth and school day success.



Interested in learning more? Please contact Joe Bertolotti (joe@cypq.org) and he'll connect you to the right member of the Weikart team.

