

Staffing and Volunteer Considerations

Recruiting high quality staff is key to your program's success. You will want to seek out, hire, train, support, and retain individuals who have the passion for working with youth but also the motivation to improve themselves. This section includes some food for thought on the steps you will want to take to bring those individuals into your program.

Staff Recruitment

Many programs find that recruitment of high quality staff goes much more smoothly when you start with a high quality source. Consider the following when hiring staff for your program:

- » Your local elementary, middle or high school. Many para-educators or associates look for ways to supplement their income.
- » Local colleges and universities including students in the early childhood, education or human services fields as well as the work-study program.
- » Job fairs.
- » Businesses in your community in which employees work in shifts. Many of these workers are often looking for secondary positions.
- » Parents.
- » Current program volunteers.
- » Service Organizations such as Kiwanis, Lions Club, or Rotary.
- » Consider participating in an AmeriCorps or VISTA program. For a fraction of the cost, you can find an individual who will commit a designated number of hours to your program.

- » Senior members of your community. There are often groups that work with engaging retired members of the community and matching them to programs that need help. Some of the names these programs use include RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), 55+ Initiative, Foster Grandparents, and others that may be connected to a church or service organizations.

Background Checks

When making your employee decisions, don't forget that background checks are best practice, and should be required for anyone working with children. There are many companies that you can contract with to provide background checks. Remember to incorporate these fees into your budget! Regardless of which company you choose, you will want to be able to check a potential hire for past criminal activity as well as the child abuse and sexual offender registry. Your organization will also need to consider internal policy for what happens when a check returns an issue. For example, if a person is applying for a job but had an incident that popped up on their background check, you will want to consider the severity of the crime, the penalty that person received and whether or not it was successfully completed, and how long ago it occurred. Your organization will also want to consider what your "deal-breakers" are. For example, anyone on the child abuse or sexual offender registry or anyone with a driving under the influence charge when a part of their job will be to transport youth.

Retaining Staff

After you hire great staff, the next step is to keep them! Retaining staff can be key to not only your program's success, but the success of the youth enrolled. Research says that when a child feels connected to just one adult who is not an immediate member of their family, great things happen. Consider the following to help guide you in retaining your staff:

- » One of the most common reasons employees leave a job is a feeling that there is a breakdown in the sense of team. To build a high quality team you'll need to put in the time to learn about your staff. Schedule meet and greets, lunches, coffees, and other informal gatherings. Take an interest in your staff and they will treat your program well. In other words, make your program a fun place for kids, but also for the staff.
- » A well-run program has the supports in place to make employees feel taken care of, safe, and valued. Make sure you review your procedures and protocols and have discussions about boundaries that are in place to protect youth and staff.
- » Develop a high quality on-boarding system. When you start an employee off on the right foot, you are more likely to have a better experience.
- » Out-of-school time programs often run lean budgets which means that you might not be able to pay your staff what you would like, but make sure your staff feel valued in other ways. Give shout-outs at staff meetings, consider potlucks for birthdays, and give other incentives that fit with the dynamics of your team.
- » Build in opportunities for your staff to develop their skills, interests, and education if possible.

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Staffing and Volunteer Considerations for After School

The skills, abilities, and attitudes of the staff will directly affect the quality of the afterschool program. Recruit and hire qualified individuals, because your preparations and hard work depend on those you hire. It will be impossible to have a successful, quality program without training and managing quality staff.

1. **Recruiting and Hiring:** The first step in recruiting and hiring a quality staff is to analyze your program's needs. The following are some common staff positions in afterschool programs:
 - Afterschool director: responsible for staff supervision and administrative operation of the program.
 - Site coordinator: responsible for supervising the day-to-day operations of the programs.
 - Group worker: supervises children, plans the curriculum, and has certain administrative responsibilities.
 - Staff assistant leader: works under the group leader in planning and carrying out activities with the children.

Meet with your planning committee and decide what positions need to be filled. Once you have a basic framework for your future staff, develop a selection process. Decide if you will require applications, cover letters or resumes and who will review the submitted information. Next, choose a person to select applicants to interview and another to conduct the interviews. It is helpful to have more than one person involved in the interview process; you will be less likely to overlook key information.

2. **Creating Job Descriptions:** Creating job descriptions will help define the roles and responsibilities of staff members. Keep in mind that rarely is any one individual perfect for a particular job. Thus, it is important to prioritize the qualifications for the positions. Start with the minimum requirements, and then add the preferred qualifications. Through effective training, on-the-job experience, and managing, an individual who initially meets the minimum requirements can exceed the preferred qualifications. It is also important to allow some flexibility. Once your program is up and running, you might find a need to shuffle or change certain positions, duties, and responsibilities.
3. **Recruit applicants:** Be clear and concise when writing the actual job announcement. List the title and the major duties, responsibilities, and qualifications desired. Provide instructions regarding how to apply for the position, starting date, schedule of shifts, pay, and the closing date. The most important role of a job announcement is to notify and persuade qualified applicants to apply. Keep the announcement positive and enticing. Once you have a good job announcement, the next step is to post it.

4. **Posting Job Announcements:** There are a variety of places to post job announcements or advertise the job. Try to place your announcements where they are most likely to be seen by your target audience. You want to reach the best potential applicants and avoid those that are not qualified. The most effective method of finding good help is not through posting an announcement, but through referrals and word of mouth. Other resources for finding employees include government employment agencies, universities, vocational schools, flyers and local newspapers. With well-placed announcements, you should soon start receiving inquiries. Review applications with those who have been selected to assist in the hiring process, and decide which applicants to interview, keeping all resumes on file for future reference.

5. **Interviewing:** Effective interviewing is essential in recruiting the best possible staff. The first step in making your interview process effective is pre-interview preparation. Checking professional references and consulting with applicants' previous employers can be very useful. Stay open-minded during the review process and prepare questions you want to ask applicants during the interview. The same interview team should complete all interviews. Prepare a variety of well-thought-out questions for the interview, such as questions to determine the applicant's overall interest in the position, and broad questions to test general knowledge and understanding regarding working with children. You may also include hypothetical scenario questions to measure skills and aptitude regarding the position, and questions related to goals and future plans.

Make sure you take notes on their answers so you can compare them later with answers given by other applicants. Encourage the interviewees to ask questions as well; it will benefit them and allow you to further assess their interests and ability.

6. **Make final decision:** The interview team will make recommendations to the hiring committee and select well-balanced staff that represents a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities. Consider a trial period in which a potential candidate would work for a day or more, allowing both the employer and applicant to assess the potential position.

7. **New Staff Training:** There are essentially two categories of training to consider: new staff training and ongoing training. Once you've hired your staff, the first step is to familiarize them with their new positions and the program. Topics you need to include in your new employee orientation include specific job responsibilities and expectations, as well as a general overview of the program. Include the program missions, goals, philosophy and history in the new staff training. Make sure the handbook includes policies and procedures such as safety measures and accident reporting. You may also want to add demonstrations of program equipment.

No employee will remember everything right away, and you should allow the employees appropriate time to learn and adjust to their new positions. Having specific job responsibilities written down in a staff handbook will help facilitate quick and effective learning of responsibilities and expectations.

8. **Ongoing Training:** Your staff will continue to grow and improve on their own as they gain valuable on-the-job experience. However, the extent to which your staff improves over time will be largely affected by ongoing training. In order to develop a quality staff, you need to provide quality training through supervision, staff meetings, and in-service training.
9. **Supervision:** The main purpose of supervising staff is to monitor and evaluate performance. Remember to be fair, consistent, and courteous, as you will have a much better response. Make expectations clear, and provide positive, constructive feedback. Your staff needs to know what they do well and where they need improvement. Don't assume that they will know for themselves. Supervising requires special skills, talents, and tact. Don't be afraid to ask for help from knowledgeable professionals and feedback from your staff.
10. **Staff Meetings:** Staff meetings are a crucial element of communication for a quality staff. They provide an opportunity for you and your staff to connect, communicate, and discuss issues. Take the opportunity to inform and be informed regarding problems, ideas, and new items of importance. Effective staff meetings are planned ahead of time with a clear purpose and written agenda but should also include an element of free discussion. Always allow time for your staff to discuss ideas and concerns. Be sure to take minutes, assign responsibilities, and follow up, otherwise you'll be more likely to talk about great ideas, but never act on any of them. Adding some food and fun is helpful.
11. **In-Service Training:** Staff in-service training is an excellent opportunity to train staff regarding essential skills and knowledge. Through in-service, the staff has the opportunity to learn and practice important techniques and skills with each other. When selecting training material for an in-service session, be sure to ask the staff for topics on which they would like more training. You may want to include topics such as building positive relationships, resolving conflicts among children, discipline, modeling respect and care, sharing among children, and connections with families. You may want to dedicate a whole session to one topic at a time. Always consider the needs of your staff and plan accordingly.
12. **Staff Evaluation:** Evaluations should be based on expectations which are clearly defined in job descriptions, personnel policies, and individual goal statements, and should take place at regularly scheduled intervals. Your evaluation process will help staff learn where they need to improve and to make those changes. Staff should also have an opportunity to evaluate the program.

Recruiting Staff and Attracting High-Quality Staff to Hard-to-Staff Schools

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality

Many schools, particularly hard-to-staff schools, continually face difficulties in recruiting enough effective teachers and school leaders for all students. Attracting high-quality staff has traditionally been especially problematic for rural and urban schools and for certain subject areas (e.g., mathematics, science, foreign languages, and special education). These subject- and geographic-specific recruitment problems result in less rigorous educational experiences for all students affected. These shortages also contribute to an inequitable distribution of teachers between high- and low-need student populations; research consistently finds that students from poor and minority backgrounds have less access to highly qualified and experienced teachers than do their peers from low-poverty, non-minority backgrounds (Imazeki & Goe, 2009).

To more successfully recruit effective educators for all students, districts must actively and strategically market their strengths (e.g., attractive compensation packages or working conditions), develop high and unyielding standards for the identification and selection of candidates, and aggressively reach out to all possible candidate pools when recruiting for difficult-to-staff positions (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Simmons et al., 2007; Spradlin & Prendergast, 2006). Districts must address some of the hidden costs of teaching in hard-to-staff areas; for example, although the cost of living in rural areas tends to be comparatively low, the lack of public transportation, suitable housing, and other services may require teachers to spend more than they would otherwise have to on an automobile, home ownership, and other expenses. In addition, the recruitment and hiring phases should be information-rich. An information-rich recruitment and hiring process allows employers and applicants to collect detailed information over time through interviews and exchanges, so as to form accurate impressions of one another. This enhances the likelihood that both the employer and teachers' expectations will be met, thereby minimizing the risk of premature attrition (Liu & Johnson, 2003).

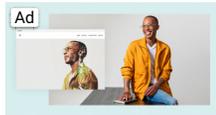
Action Principles

For District

1. Identify the characteristics of the district and its schools that are attractive to teachers and seek to both market and build upon them to recruit new staff.
2. Identify schools within the district that have challenges in teacher recruitment.
3. Establish recruitment goals in terms of teacher quality and quantity for the district as a whole.
4. Establish recruitment goals in terms of teacher quality and quantity for high poverty and high minority schools to ensure that students in those schools do not have unequal access to high-quality teachers.
5. Develop and sustain partnerships with universities and community colleges that deliver teacher preparation, particularly for the recruitment of teachers in high-need areas, such as teachers of students with disabilities and English language learners.
6. Create programs to recruit former teachers, including those recently retired, and ensure that policies related to teacher retirement do not prohibit these actions.
7. Establish “grow-your-own” programs to recruit future educators from the pool of current high school students, paraprofessionals, teacher aides, and community members.
8. Provide financial incentives (e.g., salary increases, bonuses, housing assistance, etc.) for educators willing to work in high-need schools or subject areas. This strategy might include incentives for general education teachers to switch to special education, teaching English language learners, or becoming certified in other high-need subjects.
9. Alter hiring procedures and budget timelines to ensure that the appropriate number and types of teachers can be recruited and hired before they seek employment elsewhere.

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Job Description

Clinton Iowa is a beautifully historic town located along the banks of the Mississippi River. The community of approximately 25,000 offers beautiful scenery, endless recreation, and a variety of cultural activities. Only a short distance from the Quad Cities and 2 hours from the Chicago suburbs, you can always find all you need without straying too far from home.

Clinton Community School District has an enrollment of approximately 3,625 students within our award winning schools. Our district offers unique programs to address the educational, social, and emotional needs of our diverse student population. Some of the district highlights include:

- Teacher student loan assistance
- All of our schools are newly built or renovated – the high school is currently under construction for a total rebuild
- Capturing Kid's Hearts
- PK-12, plus Project SEARCH
- On-Site Licensed Therapists in all schools
- Ranked top 40 on annual AP Index
- Offer over 30 college-credit courses
- Fine Arts Programs: Orchestra (beginning in 4th Grade), Band (Beginning in 5th Grade), HS Marching Band, Theatre, Choir, Show Choir
- Home to 48 State Championship teams

Position Type: Full-time

• Job Category : Athletics & Activities > After School Programs

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Contact Information

Theresa Williams
1401 12th Ave N
Clinton, Iowa 52732

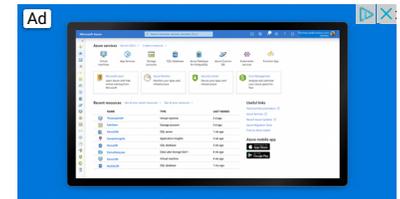
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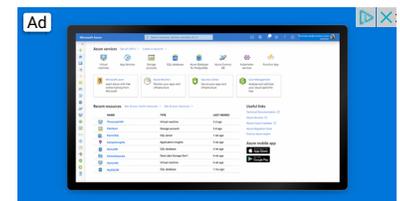
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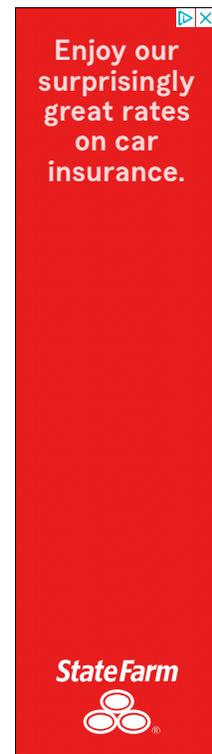
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VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

After School Program Helper

Term: September to June

Hours: Monday-Friday, 4-5:30pm (7.5 hours/week)

Reports to: Manager of Language, Child & Youth Programs

Position Summary: The After-School Program Helper assists the Lead Youth Workers & Program Assistants in helping deliver the After-School Programs, especially in the areas of snack preparation and cleaning. Supervision on occasional field trips may also be required and weekend work for special events.

Main Responsibilities:

- Reminding participants to sign-in and out of the program
- Preparing and serving healthy snacks for program participants (menu is pre-determined and food is supplied)
- Cleaning snack and table areas with approved disinfectant
- General area cleanliness and safety
- Making phone calls to families to notify them if children are absent from the program
- Completing monthly sheet of volunteer hours and submitting to Program Manager
- Reports any safety or other concerns immediately to the After-School Program Lead Youth Worker
- Must be able to take direction from the After-School Program Lead Youth Worker
- Adhering to Caldwell Family Centre Policies & Procedures

Qualifications:

- Successful completion of a criminal reference check for the vulnerable sector is needed
- A minimum of 1 years' experience with children and youth is needed
- Excellent English language skills are needed
- Knowledge of other languages is considered an asset
- Food Handler Safety Training Certificate is desirable
- WHMIS Certificate is desirable
- Current First Aid/CPR Certificate is needed

Please contact Kathy: 613-728-1800 extension 332 if you have the qualifications that are needed, above, to arrange an interview.