



Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Observation Tool

This observation tool can be a valuable resource for assessing afterschool environments. When completing the tool, it is important to honestly assess what you see during the afterschool day so that the results can be used to help you set and meet goals for improving nutrition and physical activity practices. You should make sure to observe children at snack time and when they are physically active. It should take 5-10 minutes to fill out the form at the end of the day.

Getting started

Before you begin, take some time to plan how you can best observe the physical activity and eating practices and behaviors of the children in your program. You may not be able to see *everything* that's going on in the program, but this planning will ensure you prioritize when to be where. It is important that the person who completes this assessment can observe all or most of the snack and physical activity time during your program. Review the questions and the glossary to make sure you know what information you'll need to report on. Also, make sure to consider the following questions as you plan your self-assessment:

- *When is physical activity offered? Is it offered at different times or all at once?*
- *Do kids break out into different groups for physical activity? If so, where in the building do these groups meet?*
- *When is snack served? Do all the kids eat together or at different times?*

If you have a schedule of the program day you may want to use it to plan out your observations. But, do not use your schedule to fill in this tool. What you record should be a measure of what actually happened during the afterschool day.

Instructions

Complete this self-assessment tool each day, Monday through Friday, to get the best assessment of our program offerings. Make sure to answer all questions on the form by the end of each day. It is important that you answer the questions to the best of your ability. If the children in your program split into groups, work with group leaders to make sure to accurately report the activities and participation of all children at your site. It is best to complete the tool for 5 days in a row to get an accurate picture of the nutrition and physical activity offerings at your program.

You can also visit [foodandfun.org](http://www.foodandfun.org) to record your observations on our interactive website:

<http://www.foodandfun.org/?p=change&user=staff&tool=Program+Observation+Tool&category=Change+Tools>

Based on your responses, you will be linked to helpful tip sheets for ideas on how to start making healthy changes in your program. When you complete this program observation tool for 5 days, you can click on the “Graph” link to record your results. The interactive graph will illustrate how your weekly practices align with the Environmental Standards Goals!

Nutrition and Physical Activity Glossary of Terms

Physical activity is any activity more than sitting or standing (includes activities such as walking, stretching, running, throwing, etc.).

Vigorous physical activity is any activity more than a walk (includes activities such as playground free play, jogging, swimming, etc.).

Groups of children are those that are formally designated by the program, such sites that break children into groups by age, grade, gender etc. for activities. Questions that refer to groups of children do NOT mean smaller, more informal friend groups etc.

Screen Time includes time watching television and DVDs, using computers, and playing video games.

Commercial Broadcast TV/Movies is any screen time shown primarily for entertainment purposes; this includes shows or movies without commercials but shown for entertainment purposes.

Recreational Computer Use is time on the computer primarily for entertainment purposes. Any time on the internet is considered recreational computer use. In contrast, educational computer use is use of computers that emphasizes academics & formal instruction, such as games that promote acquisition of math skills or use of word processing application to write a paper or story.

Sugary drinks include soda, sweetened ice teas, fruit punches, fruit drinks, sports drinks, sweetened water (e.g. Vitamin water), and any juice greater than 4 ounces (a half a cup) in size.

Whole grains are foods that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient on the label. Examples of whole grains are whole wheat, whole corn, barley, oats, and rye.

Water served refers to water that is distributed as part of the program snack, either via pitchers, a cooler/Cambro in the snack area, or in bottles. This does NOT include water children drink from a water fountains or from coolers outside of the snack room/period.

Outside drinks and food are those items that are brought in from home, outside restaurants or convenience stores, purchased from vending machines on site, or distributed by program partners during activity outside of the snack period. This would include any food or drink that is not part of the afterschool snack program.

Instructions: Throughout the afterschool day, take time to observe how nutrition and physical activity are being promoted at your program. Check the boxes to mark what you see. If you're not sure about an answer, take your best guess.

Physical Activity & Screen time

1. Did your program offer any physical activity today? Yes No

2. How much total physical activity (PA) time was provided to any group of children?
 No PA offered 1-14 minutes 15-29 minutes 30-44 minutes 45-59 minutes 60 minutes or more

3. How much physical activity time was provided to all groups of children?
 No PA offered 1-14 minutes 15-29 minutes 30-44 minutes 45-59 minutes 60 minutes or more

4. How many children do you think were active when they attended physical activity time?
 No PA offered None to 1/4 of kids More than 1/4 to half of kids More than half to 3/4 of kids More than 3/4 to all kids

5. Did your program offer any vigorous physical activity (i.e. activity more than a walk) today? Yes No

6. How much total vigorous physical activity time was offered?
 No vig PA offered 1-9 minutes 10-19 minutes 20-29 minutes 30-59 minutes 60 minutes or more

7. Did your program offer any recreational (i.e. on the internet, entertainment) computer time today? Yes No

8. Did you see any children using hand-held devices (for uses other than homework/instruction)? Yes No

9. How much recreational computer time was allowed for each child?
 No computer time 1-14 minutes 15-29 minutes 30-44 minutes 45-59 minutes 60 minutes or more

10. Did your program show any broadcast or cable TV or movies today? Yes No

Nutrition

11. Was a fruit or vegetable served at snack? Yes No
12. Were any grains served at snack? Yes No
13. If grains were served at snack, were they snacks that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient?
 NA (no grains served) Yes (whole grains served) No (grain served but not a whole grain)
14. Were drinks with sugar added like soda, sweetened teas, fruit punches, or sports drinks served at snack? Yes No
15. Was 100% juice served at snack? Yes No
16. If 100% juice was served at snack, was it served in a container greater than 4oz?
 NA (no juice served) Yes (>4oz of juice was served) No (juice was served in a small container)
17. Was water served (with a pitcher or from a cooler) at snack? *If no, skip to question 18.* Yes No
18. For ***the children who were served water***, how much do you think they drank?
 None Some Most All
19. How many kids consumed sugary drinks from outside the snack program (e.g. vending, home, etc.) during the afterschool day?
 None Few (1-5 kids) Some (6-10 kids) Many (>10 kids)
20. How many kids consumed food from outside the snack program during the afterschool day?
 None Few (1-5 kids) Some (6-10 kids) Many (>10 kids)

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Notes Page

This notes page is a place for you to keep track of any important nutrition or physical activity related observations you make during the afterschool day. You may find it useful to jot down things like the start and end times of physical activity, tallies of kids you see eating or drinking outside food etc. This can be a good reference for accurately filling out the self-assessment at the end of the day.

Things to remember about physical activity...

Things to remember about computer, TV or movies...

Things to remember about food and drinks at snack...

Things to remember about outside foods and drinks...