

Creating Positive Learning Environments

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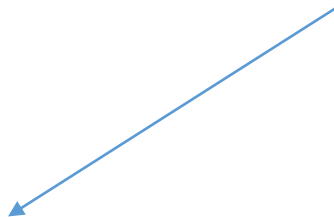


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Reactions menu: Clapping hands, Thumbs up, Heart, Laughing face, Shocked face, Confetti, Yes (checkmark), No (X), Slower (left arrows), Faster (right arrows), Raise Hand



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Objectives

- Assess program climate in relation to clearly defined values and culture.
- Implement strategies to create and sustain a positive learning environment where students, families, and program staff feel safe and supported.
- Identify Y4Y resources that assist with facilitating positive relationships among staff and students.





Listen. Is this a positive environment? How do you know?





Six Key Strategies

Strategy 1

Define organizational culture and climate.

Strategy 2

Assess your current culture and climate.

Strategy 3

Plan for behavior management.

Strategy 4

Build relationships.

Strategy 5

Be intentional in your program design.

Strategy 6

Plan for continuous improvement.



Key Strategy 1:

Define Organizational Culture and Climate

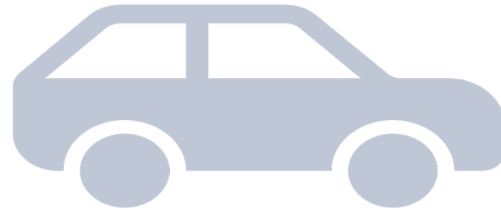




Key Strategy 1



**Vision and
Mission
Statements**



**Program's
Driving Values**



**Culture and
Climate
Statements**



Vision Statement



Purpose



Problem



Outcome



Mission Statement

What will we do?

Who will we serve?

How will we serve them?





Mission Statement Supporting the Vision

Vision

All students who are in circumstances that put them at risk will be safe, healthy and supported, graduate from high school, and grow into mature, successful adults.

Mission

ABC 21st CCLC program will provide evidence-based, out-of-school time activities five days a week and hold monthly family events to support all participants and meet their social, emotional, physical and academic needs.



Values and Culture Statements

Values

What your organization believes.

Culture Statements

Describe the culture you want to create.

Brainstorm: Values



Respect

Kindness

Cooperation

Honesty

Empathy

Inclusiveness

Diversity

Dedication

Collaboration

Integrity



Value:

Respect

Culture Statement:

We will build respectful relationships
with all stakeholders.



Climate Statement in Action

Value

Respect

Culture Statement




We will build respectful relationships with all stakeholders

Climate Statement

- We will not discipline a student in front of others
- We'll show work collaboratively with each other.



Creating a Vision and Mission

 You for Youth Summer Learning Initiative 1		
Creating Vision and Mission		
Use the chart below to create a vision and mission for your summer learning program.		
Vision		
1. In the box below answer: What do you want to achieve? <i>(Example: Impact all students.)</i>	2. In the box below answer: What will change for the better? <i>(Example: Students will be happy, engaged and learning.)</i>	
3. Write your Vision Statement: <i>(Example: "All students are happy, engaged and learning.")</i>		
Mission		
1. What will you do? <i>(Example: Meet the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of our students.)</i>	2. Who will be impacted? <i>(Example: Students)</i>	3. How will you get it done? <i>(Example: Provide a high-quality summer learning program.)</i>
4. Mission statement: <i>(Example: "Provide a high-quality summer learning program that meets the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of all students.")</i>		
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Key Strategy 2:

Assess your Culture and Climate





Methods for Assessing

Observe



Analyze



Reflect



Assessing Culture and Climate



Culture and Climate Perception Survey



State or Territory Guidance on Program Evaluation



Partnering School or District Framework



Observation Tools: checklists, consultation



Observation Checklist



You for Youth | Positive Learning Environment

1

Positive Learning Environment Observation Checklist

This checklist includes indicators of a positive learning environment across six program components: safety, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning, student engagement, staff interactions, and family and community engagement. You and your staff may use the checklist “as is” or customize it by adding target indicators of a positive learning environment that reflect your desired program culture and climate. The checklist can then be used as an observation tool to help identify challenges and areas of strength, reflect on findings, and set priorities as you seek to create a safe, supportive, welcoming space.

Site or Center: _____ Date: _____ Observer: _____

Time period/activity(ies) observed: _____
(e.g., full afternoon session; first hour of program session; second of six weekly STEM activity sessions)

Observation Checklist

For each indicator, rate the extent to which it’s evident on a scale of 1 (*Low*) to 3 (*High*). Use the Notes column to record details or ideas you’d like to discuss with others on your program team.

Program Component	Indicator	Notes on Rating Chosen	Rating 1=Low 2=Medium 3=High
Safety	Description: Indicators for this component pertain to physical, social and emotional security.		
	<i>Security procedures are implemented (e.g., securing entrances and exits, identifying visitors, taking attendance, monitoring student movement).</i>		
	<i>Program areas meet internal student-to-adult ratio goals.</i>		
	<i>Expectations for student behavior and social interactions are clearly communicated orally as well as visually where all students can see them (e.g., posted anchor charts, rules or site guidelines).</i>		
	<i>The environment appears safe and comfortable, with appropriate noise levels in each area.</i>		



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Observation: Homework Time



- Facilitator and students are separate
- Students wait in a line for help
- Students argue over materials
- Volume has steadily increased
- Facilitator calls out regular reminders to focus on homework
- At recess, students dash to the door



Gather Data



Culture and Climate Perception Survey

Culture and Climate Perception Survey: Student

This survey is voluntary. You do not need to complete it, but we hope you do! Your answers will help make this program even better.

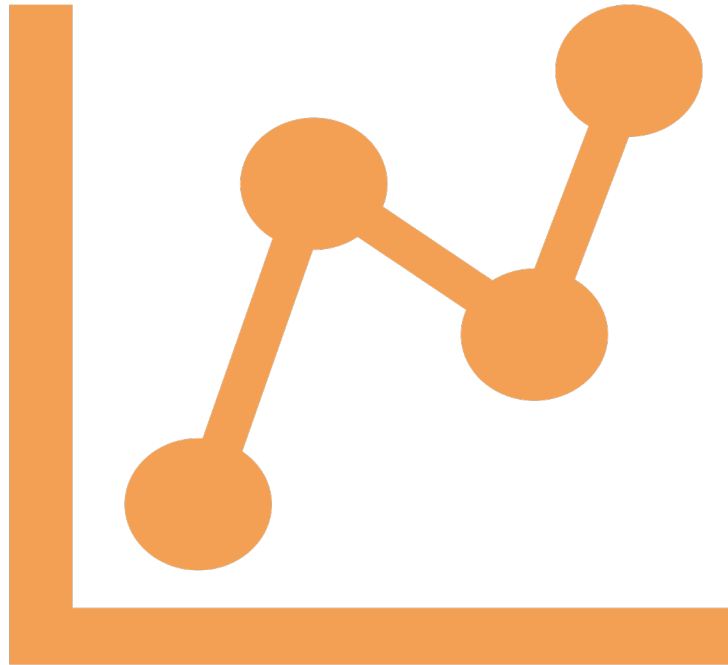
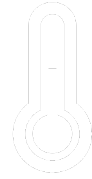
Directions: For each statement, put an X in the box that matches your response. For example, if a statement says, "Kids eat a lot of ice cream" and you agree, place an X in the Agree column box for that question. (P.S. There are no questions about ice cream.)

	In this program...	Disagree a Lot	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree a Lot
1	I feel safe in hallways.					
2	I often hear staff yell at other students.					
3	I see staff treat all students with respect.					
4	I have been taught to understand how others think and feel.					
5	I see staff listening to students.					
6	I see other students receive rewards for good behavior.					
7	I believe that students know how they are expected to act.					
8	I see students respecting others who are different from them.					
9	I feel safe in program areas.					
10	I have been taught how to identify my emotions.					
11	I try my best.					
12	I see students being friendly with each other.					
13	I believe the consequences of breaking rules are fair.					
14	I see students caring about one another.					
15	I see students being removed for breaking rules.					
16	I participate in program activities.					
17	I think students are punished a lot.					
18	I see staff praising students often.					
19	I believe program rules are fair.					
20	I see staff praising students for doing the right thing.					
21	I feel safe in bathrooms.					
22	I believe the adults who work here care about their students.					
23	I have been taught to accept the positive and negative consequences of my behavior.					
24	I complete my work.					





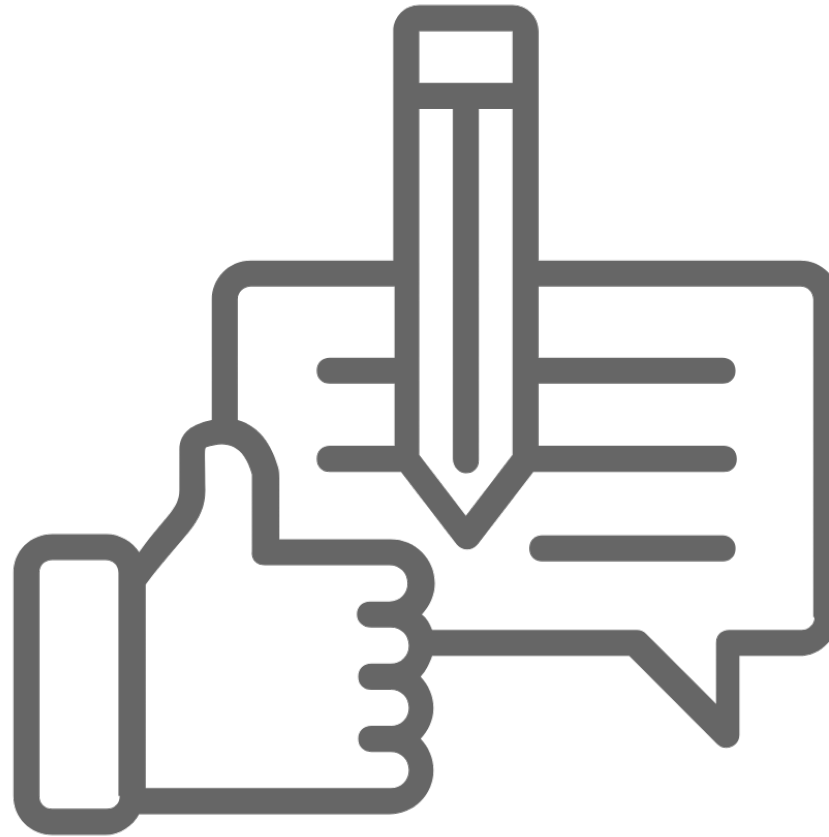
Analyze





Key Strategy 3:

Plan for Behavior Management





Scenario

Students are transitioning between activities. Two students start arguing and pushing each other. The facilitator makes everyone freeze until they stop arguing. The group loses 10 minutes of activity time while everyone quiets down.



What behavioral management intervention would you use to improve the situation?

Have the two arguing students perform acts of kindness for a few days

Set a timer or song for transitions and have all the children sing along

Have the misbehaving children journal about the reasons for their behavior



Implementation Checklist



You for Youth | Positive Learning Environment

1

Classroom Management Resources

Classroom Management Resources

<https://www.weareteachers.com/classroom-management-ideas-resource-guide/>

Effective classroom management goes a long way toward creating a positive learning environment. These resources, compiled by WeAreTeachers, offer information and tools that can help you devise goals, routines and expectations to build a classroom community where students feel comfortable and supported.

[15 Awesome Classroom Management Books](#)

This list offers online reviews of 15 books, many of which focus on positive discipline techniques to encourage improved student behavior and communication. The list aims to direct educators to practical ideas and strategies that will help build positive learning environments.

[Classroom Management Anchor Charts](#)

Anchor charts contribute to a positive learning environment by clearly displaying rules, routines and expectations. This article shares 10 examples of creative anchor charts from teachers in the field. You can also find photos and a free, downloadable PDF that includes all the emojis used on the charts.

[Procedures and Routines](#)

When you establish clear procedures, you empower students to know what to do in different situations, thereby creating a calm, cooperative learning environment. This article gathers 10 procedures that were recommended through the WeAreTeachers HELPLINE group. Suggestions include using hand signals, setting timers for transitions and greeting students at the door.

[Tips for Building a Strong Classroom Community](#)

When students work together and feel a sense of belonging, they are much less likely to engage in disruptive behavior. This article offers 10 tips for creating a sense of community, including these: create a classroom constitution, arrange desks to enable cooperative work, and assign weekly jobs.



Key Strategy 4:

Build Relationships





Steps to Building Relationships

1. Show an interest in getting to know each student

**Break the
Ice**

**Get
Personal**

**Show you
care**



Encourage Positive Interaction



Arrange student culture- and climate-building activities.



Design activities to include multiage groups.



Steps to Building Relationships

1. Show an interest in getting to know each student

**Break the
Ice**

**Get
Personal**

**Show you
care**

2. Listen to students and honor their interests and talents.

**Choice
Boards**

**Active
Listening**



Listen to Students; Honor Their Interests and Talents

Ask students
for their ideas
and opinions

Assign
classroom
roles



Steps to Building Relationships

1. Show an interest in getting to know each student

Break the Ice

Get Personal

Show you care

2. Listen to students and honor their interests and talents.

Choice Boards

Active Listening

3. Encourage students to interact positively with one another.

**Looks Like/
Sounds Like**

Practice



What strategies do you use to encourage positive relationships between children in your program?



Steps to Building Relationships

1. Show an interest in getting to know each student

Break the Ice

Get Personal

Show you care

2. Listen to students and honor their interests and talents.

Choice Boards

Active Listening

3. Encourage students to interact positively with one another.

**Looks Like/
Sounds Like**

Practice

4. Be patient and consistent.

Model

Norms



Be Patient and Consistent

Provide consistent support.

Be responsive, not reactive.



1. Show an interest in getting to know each student

Break the Ice

Get Personal

Show you care

2. Listen to students and honor their interests and talents.

Choice Boards

Active Listening

3. Encourage students to interact positively with one another.

**Looks Like/
Sounds Like**

Practice

4. Be patient and consistent.

Model

Norms



Tools and Resources



You for Youth | Positive Learning Environment

1

Ice Breaker Activities

Creating a positive learning environment starts on the first day of your program. Building relationships with students helps to lay the foundation. Icebreaker activities help students to know each other and begin to feel comfortable. Here are some ideas for you to use to get students laughing!

“Find Someone Who...” Bingo

Create Bingo cards that include a different experience in each box, such as “has been to the ocean” and “has eaten chocolate ice cream.” Players find someone who fits the description, then ask the person’s name and write it in the box. Including pictures of students in this activity can help everyone relax.

Two Truths and a Lie

Give every student an index card and ask them to write down two truths and one lie about themselves. This activity works best between students who don’t know each other. They take turns sharing the three statements and have the others guess which are true and which is a lie. To follow up, you can ask students to share their truths.

Name Game

Start by having students stand in a circle. Have a student begin by saying their name followed by an adjective, animal or a gesture. Then, all the other students must repeat the student’s name. As you move around the circle, students must repeat the current student’s name followed by all of the previous students’ names. Once everyone has had a turn, they take turns to share everyone’s introduction, starting with their own. Students will learn each other’s names.

Snowball Fight

Have students write at least two facts about themselves on a piece of paper. They then gather in a circle. Tell students to crumple up their sheets of paper and throw them into the middle of the circle. Then, each student should pick up a new paper and take turns reading out loud. When someone recognizes their facts, they should raise their hand and say what they wrote.

House of Cards

Place students in small groups and have them discuss their likes and dislikes. Give each student a stack of index cards and have them write something they have in common with the group. As the cards are completed, challenge groups to see who can build the tallest tower as the cards are completed. Challenge groups to see what things they have in common to build the tallest tower.



You for Youth | Positive Learning Environment

1

Building Student/Educator Relationships Questionnaire

Use this questionnaire to help you get to know your students better. Adapt questions to fit your program needs. Use the responses to capitalize on students’ individual interests and to help build positive relationships throughout your program.

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

1. List three positive words (attributes) that describe you.

2. What do you love to do when you’re not in school?

3. What’s your favorite TV show? Movie? Book? Song?

4. Name some foods you like to eat.

5. Think about your favorite teachers. List three things that describe your favorite teachers.



Key Strategy 5:

Be Intentional in your Program Design





Creating a Welcoming Environment





Make Learning Fun

Allow students to work in teams.

Make learning hands-on.

Incorporate technology.

Limit rules.

Engaging in Learning



- Allow students to work in teams
- Make learning hands-on
- Incorporate technology
- Limit rules





Adapt Activities to Individual Needs



Provide



Give



Teach



Consider



Praise



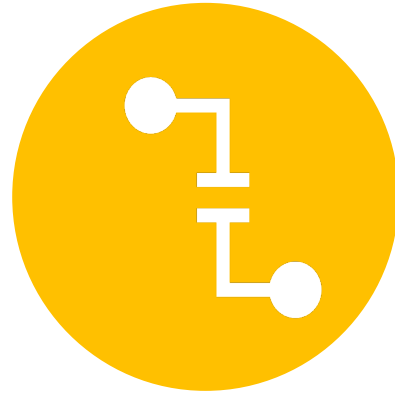
Program Space



**Effects of
Noise**



**Crowded
Spaces**



Chaos



**Positive and
negative
relationships**



**Need for
Supervision**



Implementation Checklist



You for Youth | Positive Learning Environment

1

Strategies for Creating a Positive Learning Environment

1. Greet students as they enter the program space every day.

Create a welcoming environment by personally greeting students.

- Make eye contact with students and demonstrate verbal excitement to see them. Show interest, ask questions so you can follow up, be genuine and show compassion.
- Light up with enthusiasm when students arrive. You may be one of the few sources of happiness they experience in a day. You can give every student positive human contact and show that you care about each one as a person.
- Make no exception for students with behavioral issues. Assure them that each day is a fresh, new canvas and that today will be great. Catch them doing something good, and give them a positive response. If you draw attention to the interactions you want, any negative behavior may begin to improve.

2. Create unique verbal cues and physical interactions with students.

Develop a special verbal cue or physical action that encourages positive student–adult interactions and trust.

- Create an amusing call and response for students that engages their active listening skills and participation.
- Develop a special physical action as a way of welcoming students to the program space or recognizing student successes (examples include a high five, fist bump, dance movement or special handshake).
- Encourage student input in creating the verbal cue or action.

3. Build interpersonal relationships.

- Use positive language when addressing students.
- Share appropriate personal anecdotes that show you can relate on matters big and small.
- Make notes to yourself on exchanges, and revisit those notes before the students arrive so you can demonstrate your investment in them.
- Be genuine and reflect the good you see in students' choices. Be there to actively listen when they need you.
- When dealing with discipline, ask the students what they learned and how they can do better next time, and agree on an appropriate consequence. Focus on the behavior and reassure the student that you love having them there, it's the behavior that needs to change to make a safer environment for everyone.

4. Communicate and collaborate with all team members.

- Actively participate in staff meetings and team-building activities.
- Share best practice tips and ideas with colleagues.
- Celebrate team successes.
- Have crossover events to build team collaboration.
- Write and share positive notes on the good work team members are doing.



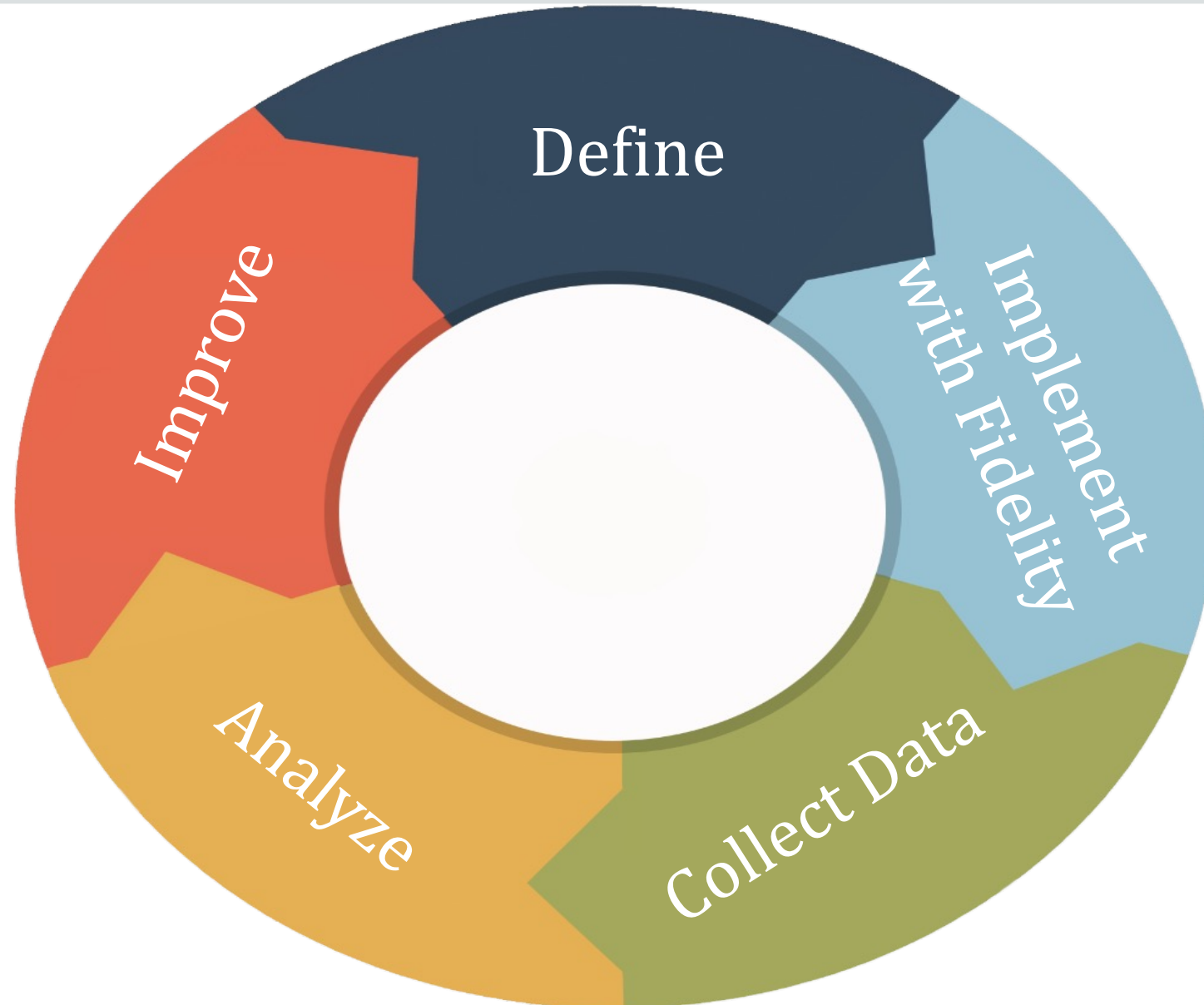
Key Strategy 6:

Plan for Continuous Improvement





Continuous Improvement Process





Implement With Fidelity

Doing what you said you would do.

Is your staff adhering to the values?

Does your climate reflect your culture?

Does your culture reflect your mission?

Does your mission reflect your vision?

Are staff intentional with program and activity design?

Are staff considering safety?

Are staff members building positive relationships with students and each other?



Six Key Strategies

Strategy 1

Define organizational culture and climate.

Strategy 2

Assess your current culture and climate.

Strategy 3

Plan for behavior management.

Strategy 4

Build relationships.

Strategy 5

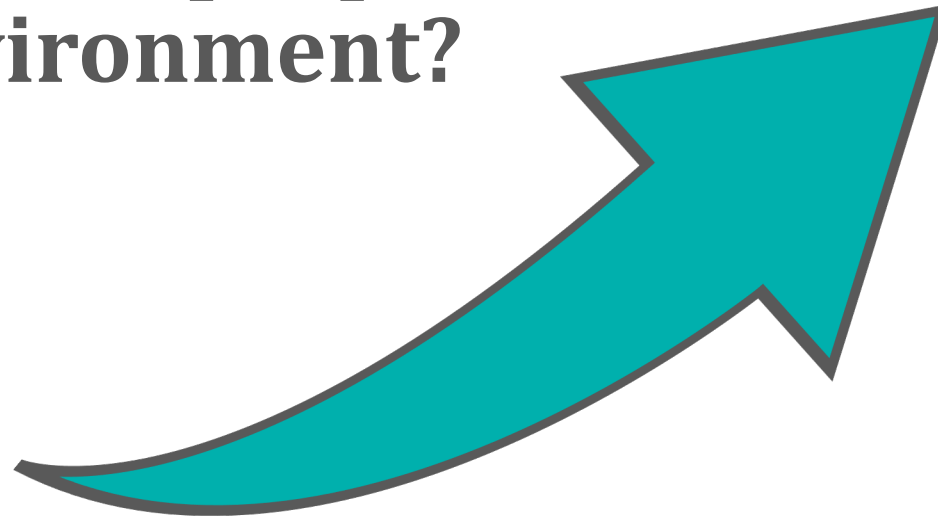
Be intentional in your program design.

Strategy 6

Plan for continuous improvement.



What specific next steps will you take to further develop a positive learning environment?





Trainings to Go



Setting Up a Positive Learning Environment

Training to Go



Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Implementation Strategies →

Estimated time to complete: 4 hours

Upon completion, you will receive an **Advanced Level** certificate of completion.

Go step-by-step through planning, designing, implementing and assessing a program environment that enables your staff and students to do their best work. You'll get tips and tools to help you create and sustain an environment where students, their families and program staff feel safe and supported, which will translate to increased engagement.

After you complete this section, you'll be able to

- Assess your program's climate needs.
- Align your program's purpose, values and climate.
- Create a positive culture that generates a safe and supportive program and learning environment for all students.
- Facilitate positive relationships among students and staff.



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Y4YINSIDER

to **22828** to get started.



Message and data rates may apply when signing up via text.



Questions





Objectives

- Assess program climate in relation to clearly defined values and culture.
- Implement strategies to create and sustain a positive learning environment where students, families, and program staff feel safe and supported.
- Identify Y4Y resources that assist with facilitating positive relationships among staff and students.





Contact Us!

<https://y4y.ed.gov/>

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