Pyramid of Youth Program Quality
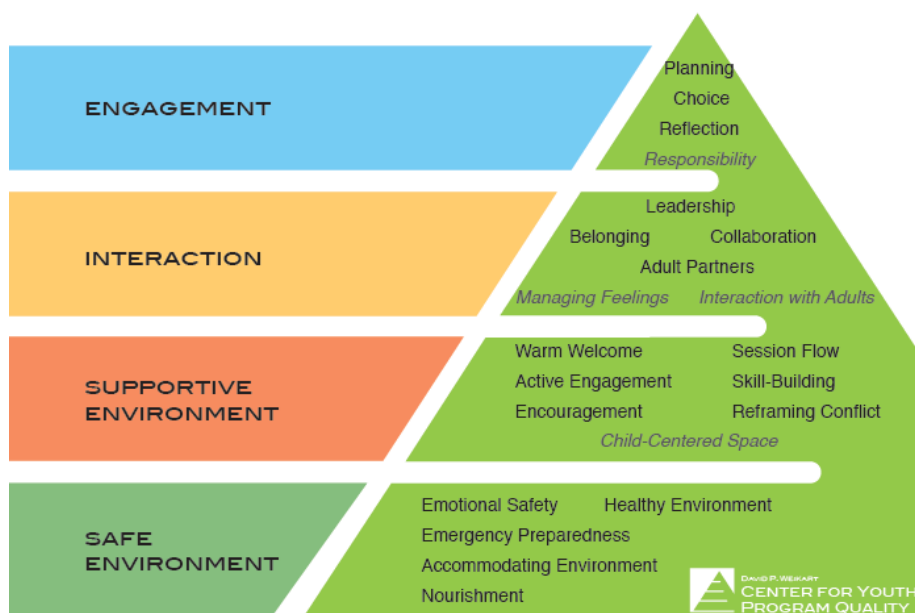

Safe Environment

Emotional Safety/Cultural Competency
1. Positive emotional climate
2. No evidence of bias

Healthy Environment
1. Free of health and safety hazards
2. Clean and sanitary
3. Adequate ventilation and lighting
4. Comfortable temperature

Emergency Preparedness
1. Written emergency procedures posted
2. Accessible fire extinguisher
3. Check out process in place
4. Youth supervised

Accommodating Environment
1. Ample program space for activities
2. Space suitable for all activities
3. Sufficient furniture (quantity and size)
4. Enough materials and supplies for all youth

Nourishment
1. Drinking water available and accessible
2. Food and drinks plentiful and available
3. One or two healthy food choices

Supportive Environment

Warm Welcome
1. Youth greeted
2. Program leader uses warm tones and respectful language
3. Program leader uses friendly gestures

Session Flow
1. Session starts and ends within 10 minutes of schedule time
2. Materials and supplies ready
3. Enough materials and supplies for all youth
4. Program leader explains all activities clearly
5. Appropriate time for activities

Active Engagement
1. Youth engage with materials or ideas or improve a skill through guided practice
2. Activities balance concrete and abstract
3. Program activities lead to tangible products or performances
4. Program leader breaks difficult tasks into smaller steps
5. Program leader provides encouragement or support to struggling youth

Supportive Environment (continued)

Skill-Building
1. Program leader states a specific learning or skill-building focus
2. Program leader encourages youth to try out skills or attempt higher levels of performance
3. Program leader models skills
4. Program leader breaks difficult tasks into smaller steps
5. Program leader provides encouragement or support to struggling youth

Encouragement
1. Program leader supports youth with specific, non-evaluative language
2. Program leader makes frequent use of open ended questions
3. Program leader is actively involved with youth

Reframing Conflict
1. Program leader approaches calmly
2. Program leader seeks youth input
3. Program leader follows up with youth after a conflict
4. Instances of bullying during programming

Interaction
Belonging
1. Program leader provides structured get to know you opportunities
2. Exclusive behavior
3. Youth identify with program offering
4. Program leader provides structured opportunities to recognize youth

Collaboration
1. Program leader provides opportunities for youth to work collaboratively
2. Activities allow interdependent roles
3. Youth work toward shared goals

Leadership
1. Youth participate in small or large group conversation
2. Youth assigned leadership roles

Adult Partners
1. Program leader shares control with youth
2. Program leader talks with youth about their lives outside of the program

Engagement
Planning
1. Youth make plans
2. Identifiable planning strategies used
3. Youth encouraged to set project or program related goals

Choice
1. Open ended content choice
2. Open ended process choice

Reflection
1. Program leader provides intentional opportunities for reflection
2. Program leader uses multiple reflection strategies
3. Program leader initiates structured opportunity for youth to give feedback