BE SAFE
Program Climate
Self-Assessment Observation Tool

Please check the box of the best answer.

1. What is your role at the agency?

   □ Youth   □ Staff person   □ Volunteer   □ Other: _____

2. **OPTIONAL**: May someone from BE SAFE contact you if we have more specific questions about any of your answers? Your information wil
kept confidential.

   □ Yes   □ No

Name: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Introduction

BE SAFE is a project that focuses on helping youth serving programs better address the interconnected issues of sexual health, mental health, substance use, healthy relationships, and sexual violence. These issues represent significant barriers to healthy adolescent development for many youth.

The Program Climate Self-Assessment Observation Tool was developed to assist programs to examine the components of their program that support a positive and healthy program climate related to the BE SAFE issues. The tool focuses on the areas of:

- Facilities
- Youth Interactions with Staff and Peers
- Staff Interactions with Peers
- Policy and Program Activities

The tool has been field-tested by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time and has worked well in helping programs to identify strengths and areas that need improvement related to the BE SAFE issues.

How to Use this Tool

An observer may complete the entire tool in one two-hour observation or select particular sections on which to focus at a time. It is recommended that the observer review the tool prior to an observation and observe for 15 minutes prior to scoring.

Scoring

The observation tool uses a "how frequent" rating scale. The scale is designed to answer the question, "How frequently does this statement describe our program?"

>   1= Never
>   2= Infrequently
>   3= Frequently
>   4= Always
>   N/A = Not Applicable

Tip on Assigning Ratings:

- This tool is intended to measure the overall quality of experiences for youth in the program. You should consider your overall observed experience rather than just an isolated incident when assigning ratings.
- If you find that you cannot answer a question because it does not apply to your program at all, you can use the rating of "N/A." However, we suggest that you use this code as little as possible. When you use it, please leave a comment and/or explanation as to why you could not answer the question.
- The last section of the tool does not require observation for completion and uses a yes/no or "How True" rating scale.

Challenges

Programs that (a) serve youth in shared spaces, (b) operate on more than one floor, or (c) serve multi-age youth may need to additionally think through how best to overcome these infrastructure challenges in meeting the needs of all youth. If this is the case, please make a note of it in the comment section.

Using the Findings

- Compare and discuss observations at a staff meeting.
- Inform program planning and improvement.
- Update or develop program policies.

- Identify safety concerns and implement changes.
- Increase staff knowledge and skills around the BE SAFE issues.
- Identify training needs.

Section I. Facilities

Item	How Often?	Notes
A. When materials are available, they reflect a wide variety of cultures, ethnicities, races, and languages.	1 2 3 4 NA	
B. Books, pamphlets and/or materials about the following topics are easily accessible to youth: • safe sex practices, HIV AIDS, STIs, and GLBT gender identity issues…………………………….... • sexual violence ……………………………… • healthy relationships, including trust, respect, support, and positive communications, etc…….. • mental health issues (e.g. depression, anxiety, etc.)…………………………………………..... • the negative effect of drug and alcohol use……..	1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA	
C. Posters about the following topics are clearly visible to youth in public program spaces: • sexual health, including teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and STIs, and GLBT gender identity • sexual violence, including date rape, sexual harassment, threats, intimidation, peeping, taking nude photos and unwanted touching, etc. • healthy relationships……………………………... • proactive messages about mental health issues… • drug/alcohol/tobacco use……………………….	1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA	
D. Cards/materials about the following are available, with contact information or hotline numbers listed for program youth/staff: • sexual health issues including teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and STIs…………………………… • drug/alcohol/tobacco help and treatment locations……………………………………....	1 2 3 4 NA 1 2 3 4 NA	
E. Information and materials go beyond the negatives and include normalizing sexuality.	1 2 3 4 NA	

F. The doors to the program are secure and monitored.	1 2 3 4 NA
G. Programs have check-in and check-out/pickup procedures.	1 2 3 4 NA
H. Programs have lighting in and out of the building.	1 2 3 4 NA
I. First aid kits are visible at program site.	1 2 3 4 NA
J. Computers are in open spaces where staff can see what youth are viewing.	1 2 3 4 NA
K. Programs are free of private spaces where youth can go in secret (i.e. closed doors have a window, stairwells are open or have windows, other spaces are locked).	1 2 3 4 NA
L. Program has gender-neutral bathrooms.	1 2 3 4 NA
M. If program does not have gender-neutral bathrooms, there are doors on all stalls in both male and female bathrooms.	1 2 3 4 NA

Section II. Youth-Youth Interactions

Item	How Often? Notes
A. Youth use appropriate tone and body language when interacting with each other.	1 2 3 4 NA
B. Youth self-correct peers who use sexually derogatory language.	1 2 3 4 NA
C. Youth listen to each other (i.e. they pay attention and do not interrupt).	1 2 3 4 NA
D. Youth cooperate with each other (e.g. share materials/space and help each other).**	1 2 3 4 NA
E. When minor conflicts occur, youth are able to problem-solve together to resolve conflicts without adult interventions.**	1 2 3 4 NA
F. Youth are kind and respectful to each other.	1 2 3 4 NA
G. Youth have a low degree of conflict.	1 2 3 4 NA
H. Youth appear relaxed and in control of themselves and enjoying each other's company.**	1 2 3 4 NA

Item	How Often?	Notes
I. Youth do not spend the majority of their time together in cliques to the exclusion of others.	1 2 3 4 NA	
J. Youth appear happy and involved in activity or engaged in conversation.	1 2 3 4 NA	
K. Youth do not discriminate against other youth because of physical differences or appearances, race, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, or religious differences.*	1 2 3 4 NA	
L. Interactions between youth are free from putdowns, slurs, power struggles, profane language, and gestures (e.g. "that's so gay," etc.).*	1 2 3 4 NA	
M. Youth do not engage in drug culture jargon.	1 2 3 4 NA	

Section III. Youth-Staff Interactions

Item	How Often?	Notes
A. In youth-staff conversations, both youth and staff use respectful and appropriate vocabulary that is free from sexual putdowns.**	1 2 3 4 NA	
B. Youth and staff treat each other with respect and equality regardless of sexual orientation.	1 2 3 4 NA	
C. When youth/staff interact with each other, they refrain from using punishment, shame, or humiliation.*	1 2 3 4 NA	
D. Youth seek out positive contact/interactions with staff (e.g. youth initiate dialogue, ask their opinions, initiate friendly verbal or physical interactions, or stand close to staff when talking). **	1 2 3 4 NA	
E. Youth are cooperative with staff's requests or directions. (Older youth may probe or even challenge staff directives before agreeing to go along with staff plans. 1= refuse to comply or get into power struggle).**	1 2 3 4 NA	
F. When staff talk, youth listen attentively.**	1 2 3 4 NA	
G. Staff use a neutral (or positive) tone of voice. (1= Staff use a negative, punitive, or harsh tone of voice).**	1 2 3 4 NA	
H. Staff are relaxed and respectful in their interactions with youth. **	1 2 3 4 NA	
I. When youth behavior is inappropriate, staff use simple reminders to redirect behavior. **	1 2 3 4 NA	
J. When addressing behavioral issues, staff use time-out, loss of privileges, and other consequences sparingly.**	1 2 3 4 NA	
K. Staff serve as good role models by showing respect and support to youth.	1 2 3 4 NA	
L. Staff encourage youth by using affirming language.	1 2 3 4 NA	
M. Staff do not discriminate against youth because of	1 2 3 4 NA	

Item	How Often?	Notes
physical differences or appearances, racial, sexual orientation, or religious differences.		
N. When youth appear withdrawn or seem unhappy, staff take the initiative to engage youth in conversation.	1 2 3 4 NA	
O. When youth are acting out, staff try to engage youth in conversation.	1 2 3 4 NA	
P. When youth are disengaged, staff help youth to join in a group or activity.	1 2 3 4 NA	
Q. When negative peer interactions occur (that are not resolved constructively by youth), staff intervene by speaking to youth privately.	1 2 3 4 NA	
R. Staff pay attention to changes in tone of voice and/or body language (between youth) and intervene before situation escalates. *	1 2 3 4 NA	
S. Youth and staff do not engage in affectionate behaviors with each other in public program spaces.	1 2 3 4 NA	
T. When interacting with each other, both staff and youth refrain from using language containing slurs and putdowns (e.g. "that's so gay," etc).	1 2 3 4 NA	
U. There are enough staff members present to meet the needs of youth.	1 2 3 4 NA	
V. Staff appear to enjoy being with program youth.	1 2 3 4 NA	
W. Youth appear comfortable with staff.	1 2 3 4 NA	

Section IV. Staff-Staff Interactions

Item	How Often? Notes
Staff members serve as good role models by showing respect and support to one another.	1 2 3 4 NA
When interacting amongst themselves, staff refrain from using language containing slurs and putdowns (e.g. "that's so gay," etc).	1 2 3 4 NA

Section V. Policy and Program Activity Supplement

Policy/Program Question	Response
There are written program policies regarding the following:	
• touching and personal space between peers as well as staff-to-peer contact (hugs, handshakes, and boundaries)	Yes No
▪ known mental and physical challenges	Yes No
▪ what to do if youth appear under the influence of drugs/alcohol	Yes No
▪ youth/staff and youth/youth engaging in romantic behaviors while on program grounds	Yes No
▪ procedures for mandated reporting/51A	Yes No

Policy/Program Question	Response
▪ sexual bullying and inappropriate sexual behaviors	Yes No
▪ sharing/distributing condoms/ birth control information to program youth	Yes No
During this current program year, program staff (some or all) have participated in trainings related to one or more of the following issues: sexual health, sexual violence, healthy relationships, mental health, and substance use.	Yes No
The program provides a copy of all program policies and procedures to participating families (not just to the youth).	Yes No
Staff have access to hotline numbers for referring youth.	Yes No
Youth are included in developing program rules and policies.	Yes No
	How True? **Notes**
Program activities encourage positive and healthy interactions within and between gender groups.	1 2 3 4 NA
Program utilizes strategies or approaches that build youth self-esteem, youth autonomy, youth leadership.	1 2 3 4 NA
Youth participate in leadership roles (e.g. help distribute materials, help lead projects, etc.).	1 2 3 4 NA

*Used or Adapted from J. Bluestein's survey "Is your school and emotionally safe place" at Janebluestein.com
** Used or Adapted from Afterschool Program Practices Tool (APT), NIOST