



**GRASA ASSESSMENT
2006-07 SECOND ANNUAL REPORT**

WALT GRAMIAK, M.S.
LAURI BRUGGER, M.S.
GILLIAN M. YOUNG-MILLER, M.Ed.

SEPTEMBER 2007

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STRENGTHENING SOCIAL AND
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Financial support was provided by an Anonymous Donor, City of Rochester, Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau, and Rochester Area Community Foundation. Other contributing partners include Boys and Girls Club of Greater Rochester, Inc.; Cameron Community Ministries; Children’s Institute, Inc.; City of Rochester Bureau of Parks, Recreation and Human Services; The Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc.; Cornell Cooperative Extension; Generations Child and Elder Care; Greater Rochester After-School Alliance (GRASA); Ibero-American Action League, Inc., School-Age Program; North East Area Development/Children’s Defense Fund Freedom School; Quad A for Kids; Railroad Junction School-Age Program and Summer Day Camp; Rochester After-School Academy (RASA); Rochester Childfirst Network (RCN); Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau; Rush-Henrietta School District’s School-Age Child Care Programs; Society for the Protection and Care of Children (SPCC); United Way of Greater Rochester; YMCA of Greater Rochester and Youth Services Quality Council of Rochester and Monroe County.

We express thanks to the program staff and administrators of Monroe County who work closely, on a daily basis, with thousands of children when they are not in school. Their personal attention to the children’s health, safety, development, and enjoyment is a major contributor to the overall well-being of our community. Many of these program staff offered their time freely to this pilot project by participating in trainings, focus groups, and/or observations.

We are also grateful to the youths, parents, and policymakers who took time to participate in focus groups. Special thanks are extended to Railroad Junction School-Age Program and Rochester Childfirst Network for generously hosting and supporting the necessary arrangements for focus groups held at their program sites. Special thanks are extended to Children’s Institute staff members Rusti Berent, Stephanie Fernandez and Hasana Martin, for facilitating the eight focus groups. Special thanks are also extended to Railroad Junction School-Age Program and Rochester Childfirst Network for their contributions to our work on Form B of the Youth PQA. Their generosity of time and expertise are greatly appreciated.

We appreciate GRASA and its Assessment Policy Advisory Group who provided feedback and helpful insights to inform our processes and overall support of our work in the youth program community. We express gratitude to the entire assessment team for their contributions to the project and this report. This project could not be a success without the skillful Master Observers who observed 40 program offerings, achieving a high level of inter-rater reliability. We are very excited about the GRASA Assessment and its impact on youths and the quality of after-school programs. With a shared vision, we will continue to work towards a unified standard of quality for after-school programs that will enrich the experiences of children, parents and staff.

INTRODUCTION

The GRASA Assessment began in Rochester, New York in 2005 in an effort to learn about the quality of after-school programs in Monroe County. This community-wide partnership is supported by the Greater Rochester After-School Alliance (GRASA), which comprises program staff members, administrators, parents, policymakers, and funders. The three-fold mission of GRASA is to improve the quality of after-school programming, to increase children's access to quality programs, and to understand the funding streams that are available to improve quality and access.

The GRASA Assessment provides an integrated process for ensuring that after-school programs have the information they need for making informed decisions that can be used to improve practice and outcomes. It provides useful data analysis on the status of after-school program quality. Confidentiality of all participants is maintained in all areas and is of the utmost importance to our partnership.

Forty after-school program observations took place within thirteen organizations:

- Boys and Girls Club of Rochester, Inc.
- Cameron Community Ministries
- City of Rochester Bureau of Parks, Recreation and Human Services
- The Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc.
- Generations Child and Elder Care
- Ibero-American Action League, Inc. School-Age Program
- North East Area Development Children's Defense Fund Freedom School
- Quad A for Kids
- Railroad Junction School-Age Program and Summer Day Camp
- Rochester After-School Academy (RASA)
- Rochester Childfirst Network (RCN)
- Rush-Henrietta School District's School-Age Child Care Program
- Society for the Protection and Care of Children (SPCC)

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRASA ASSESSMENT

Program Observations

Program observations occurred in the months of April through June. Each program offering was observed one time using the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA). The observations take approximately two hours followed by a brief interview with the program staff member. Scoring of the measure is completed off-site and requires one additional hour of the Master Observer's time. The Master Observers submit the observation score sheets to Children's Institute within two business days. Within five days, the score sheet is reviewed for accuracy and is processed. A report is generated and returned to the program staff members that were observed, along with a photocopy of the score sheet. Program staff members are able to immediately access observation feedback and use the information to affirm good practice and to identify areas for improvement and goal setting.

Program Observation Process

- Master Observer contacts the program staff member to schedule the observation date
- Program observation occurs (2 hours)
- Observer(s) conducts an interview (10-15 minutes) with program staff member(s) immediately after the observation to obtain information not evident during observation
- Observer(s) completes the score sheet and submits it to Children's Institute for processing
- Project coordinator reviews the score sheet for accuracy, follows up with observer if necessary
- Score sheet is checked again for accuracy by a data clerk, the information is entered into the database; a summary report is produced
- Photocopy of original score sheet and summary report are mailed directly to program staff member
- Program staff member reviews information and shares with supervisor (optional)
- If program staff member disagrees with any item(s) in the report and wants to formally address this, he or she may initiate a collaborative review process (outlined below).

Collaborative Review Process

As part of the classroom observation process using the Youth PQA, Children's Institute provides a review process so that if any program staff member believes that the report does not accurately represent the program there is a formal mechanism to address this. In the collaborative review, program staff members are welcome and encouraged to raise questions they have about the score of any of the quality indicators. *For the second year in a row, there were no formal collaborative review requests.*

-
1. After an observation is complete, the independent observer returns the completed score sheet to Children's Institute for processing. A copy of the score sheet and summary report is returned directly to the program staff member along with a cover letter that serves as a guide in reviewing the report. Included in this letter is an invitation to contact the project coordinator if he or she feels a score does not accurately represent the program.
 2. If a program staff member disagrees with the scoring of any item(s) and wishes to formally address this, he or she contacts the project coordinator to obtain a Collaborative Review Request Form. In this form the staff member outlines the details of the item(s) in question with additional supporting information. This must be submitted within 15 days of receipt of the original score sheet.
 3. Upon receipt of the Collaborative Review Request, the project coordinator reviews the information provided by the staff member, consults the independent observer who completed the observation, and conducts a detailed re-examination of each quality indicator score. After consideration of these references, a determination is made whether any items may be scored differently.
 4. In a detailed letter to the program staff member, the project coordinator formally addresses each questioned indicator and whether the indicator score has been changed. A revised copy of the score sheet is returned with any applicable adjusted scores as well as a new summary report.
 5. The revised scores are entered into the database.
 6. If the staff member remains dissatisfied with the results of the process thus far, the project coordinator will make arrangements for a second independent observer to conduct a complete observation and submit a formal report.

Partner Development

Introductory YPQA Training

All program and administrative staff members are invited to attend an Introductory Training session in which they are introduced to the Youth PQA. This session provides history and background of GRASA, the GRASA Assessment and in-depth overview of the scale. Participants learn observation and scoring techniques, discuss the benefits of using the scale in program assessment and quality improvement processes, and review the observation process/logistics overall. Program providers are encouraged to complete a self assessment on their program as part of their familiarization with the scale. *This year, twenty program staff members and administrators participated in introductory training sessions.*

Master Observer Training

Master observers are selected on the basis of their experience in youth programming, program observation, and interest in participating. The training includes a fifteen-hour program in the first year of participation. Knowledge of the scale, refinement of observation skills, inter-rater reliability standards, logistics of the observation process, observation guidelines, and protocol are studied in depth.

Master observers are trained to attain and maintain a high level of inter-rater reliability ($\kappa > .85$). For observers beginning a second year of training and in each subsequent year, an additional training of four to five hours is required. *This year, three new master observers participated in the fifteen-hour training program. Seven master observers returned from year one for debriefing and retraining.*

Focus Groups

Another component of the GRASA Assessment is to determine the assessment needs of youth-program participants, their parents, youth-program staff, and policymakers. By understanding various constituents' needs a systematic evaluation can be planned, developed, and implemented in future years. Focus groups are one method to obtain this information. Focus groups provide a general direction and give information about relevant issues that can be further explored in greater detail via surveys and literature reviews. Eight focus groups were held over a one-year period. There were two groups each in the following categories: youths, parents, providers, and policymakers. There were 50 participants: 16 youths, 8 parents, 20 providers, and 6 policymakers.

Notes were taken while the groups were being facilitated. Each session was audio-recorded. The notes were revised using recordings. Themes, ideas, and quotes emerged from line-by-line coding of the transcripts.

All eight of the groups cited safety as one of the most important factors in successful after-school programs. The parents, providers, and policymakers (in other words, the adults) all raised the importance of a well-trained, consistent staff that connects with youths. Ideal program staff members should serve as role models and mentors who know youth development, conflict resolution, and have strong senses of identity and clear boundaries. Participants (including youths) listed other requirements for high quality after-school programs:

- providing choices/variety of activities that meet the youths' needs
- youth input in planning and decision-making
- age/developmentally-appropriate learning and growth
- structure – “the kids know what to expect”
- comfortable, positive environment – “a place where they can be kids”
- “healthy food”

Participants across groups indicated that there is no one-size-fits-all model. Program staff members commented that so many of the positive outcomes from consistent attendance in after-school programs are “intangibles” that cannot be measured with a survey or a rubric—yet policymakers need these measures.

Each of the focus groups valued plenty of space for programs indoors and outdoors. Unfortunately, this can be challenging for many sites for different reasons – either they are in an urban center where space is not available, or in a suburban or rural center where visual supervision can be challenging at times.

The assessment interests/needs of groups were quite varied. However, all adults were interested in what youths were thinking and feeling. Youths were concerned with knowing they were in a safe place and that their needs were met.

Parents wanted to learn more about program staff: what are their skills? Are they able to use and build upon them? What could they improve? Do they have training in age-appropriate development for the youths they work with? Do they keep up-to-date with the latest research and innovative programming? They also wanted to know youths' and parents' satisfaction levels.

Program representatives were interested in how information and innovation are shared throughout the youth program community. They felt it was important to measure the staff and child relationships, the program environment, and to evaluate program quality to set goals for continuous improvement. They want to know how physically healthy children are, and whether they have healthy habits and necessary life skills.

Policymakers wanted a clear definition of the types and quantity of programs available. Are they located in areas that need them? Are they accessible? They wanted to know if the programs were meeting the needs of the individual children and the community as a whole. Do the programs do needs assessments with the families they serve? Policymakers were very interested in outcomes, both for the youths and the community.

Many of the groups discussed whether after-school programs should be linked to the schools the children attend. Parents were the most opposed to this, but they were not alone in their opposition. They preferred a place where youths do not have the pressure and expectations that school can place on them, which highlighted the cultural shift in public schools post-No Child Left Behind. Policymakers were the strongest group to want to find a way to evaluate whether consistent participation in after-school programs improved academic outcomes for youths. This led to discussions about the expected academic outcomes that some parents and many policymakers put on after-school programs. One program provider wondered: "If you have to hold after-school programs responsible for what kids do during the day, shouldn't it be reversed too?"

The focus groups were rich and lively discussions that presented many avenues to follow in future research on after-school programs. These discussions were the beginning of ongoing conversations focused on improving the quality of after-school programs and outcomes for the youths who attend them.

Quality of After-School Programs

Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA)

The Youth PQA was developed by High/Scope Educational Research Foundation (2005). The tool is a landmark in the emerging field of youth program quality assessment, both in validity and reliability. The tool has two scales, Form A and Form B. Form A covers “Program Offering Items” which is scored based on observations and focuses on the experiences of youths. Form B covers “Organization Items” which is scored using a survey and interview with an administrator and assesses the organization’s infrastructure. Both scales use rubrics for scoring. Independent, well-trained observers rated the quality of after-school programs in Monroe County using the Youth PQA.

Form A measures four subscales:

- I. Safe Environment
- II. Supportive Environment
- III. Interaction
- IV. Engagement

Each subscale contains three to six items. There are 18 items. Each item contains two to six indicator rows. There are 60 indicator rows. Each indicator row is scored 1, 3, or 5. The indicator row scores are then added and averaged to determine the item’s score. The item scores are then added and averaged to find the subscale score.

After a Master Observer is trained and meets the inter-rater reliability rate of .85 with a Master Trainer using Form A, he or she is assigned sites for observation. During a typical observation, an observer spends two hours observing the program, writing a running narrative focusing on the 60 quality indicators that make up the Youth PQA Form A. After the observation, the observer needs approximately 15 minutes to interview the program staff member(s) with questions scripted on the score sheet for indicators that were not observed. Each observer will subsequently spend about one hour scoring the indicator rows.

There are no direct correlations between indicators on Form A and Form B, although the authors indicate that the two measures should inform each other and reflect quality or opportunities for growth in similar areas. The two measures are completely separate tools and scales. Form A uses observations of programs to score the items, while Form B uses interviews with administrators to score.

Form B measures three subscales:

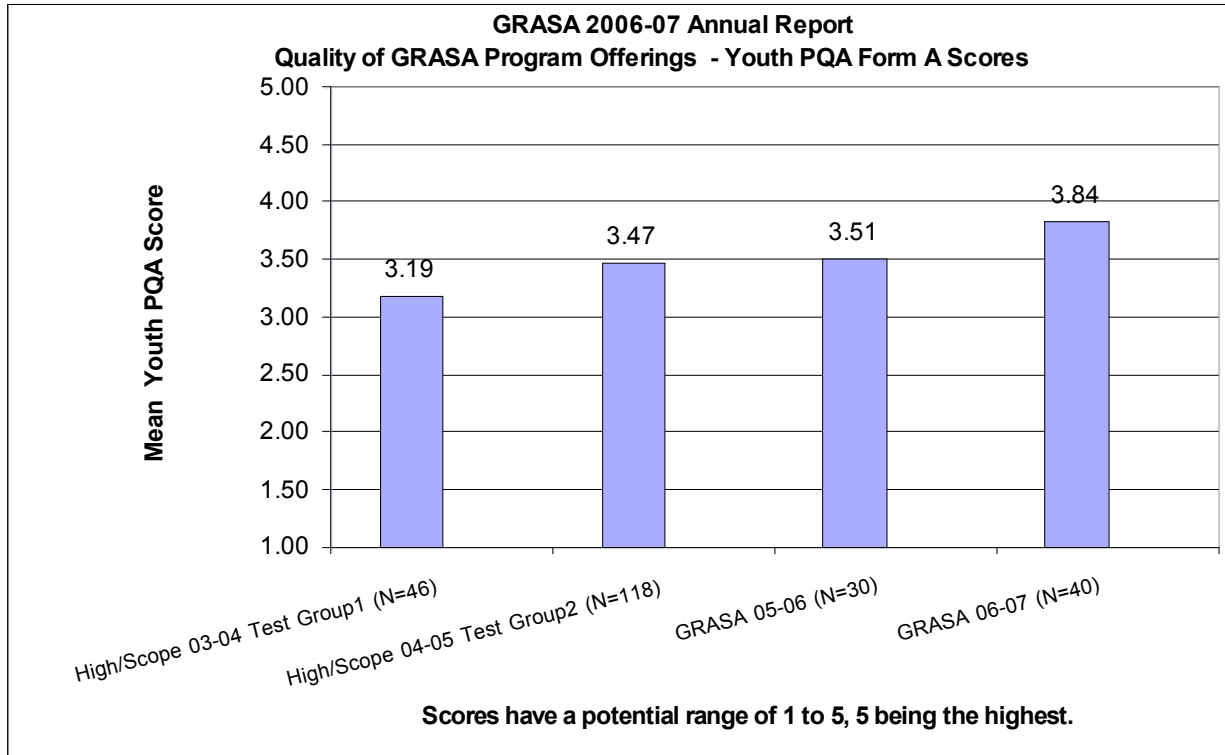
- I. Youth Centered Policies and Practices
- II. High Expectations for Youth and Staff
- III. Access

Each subscale contains four items. There are 12 items. Each item contains two to six indicator rows. There are 43 indicator rows. Each indicator row is scored 1, 3, or 5. The indicator row scores are then added and averaged to determine the item's score. The item scores are then added and averaged to find the subscale score.

Overall Quality of GRASA Program Offerings

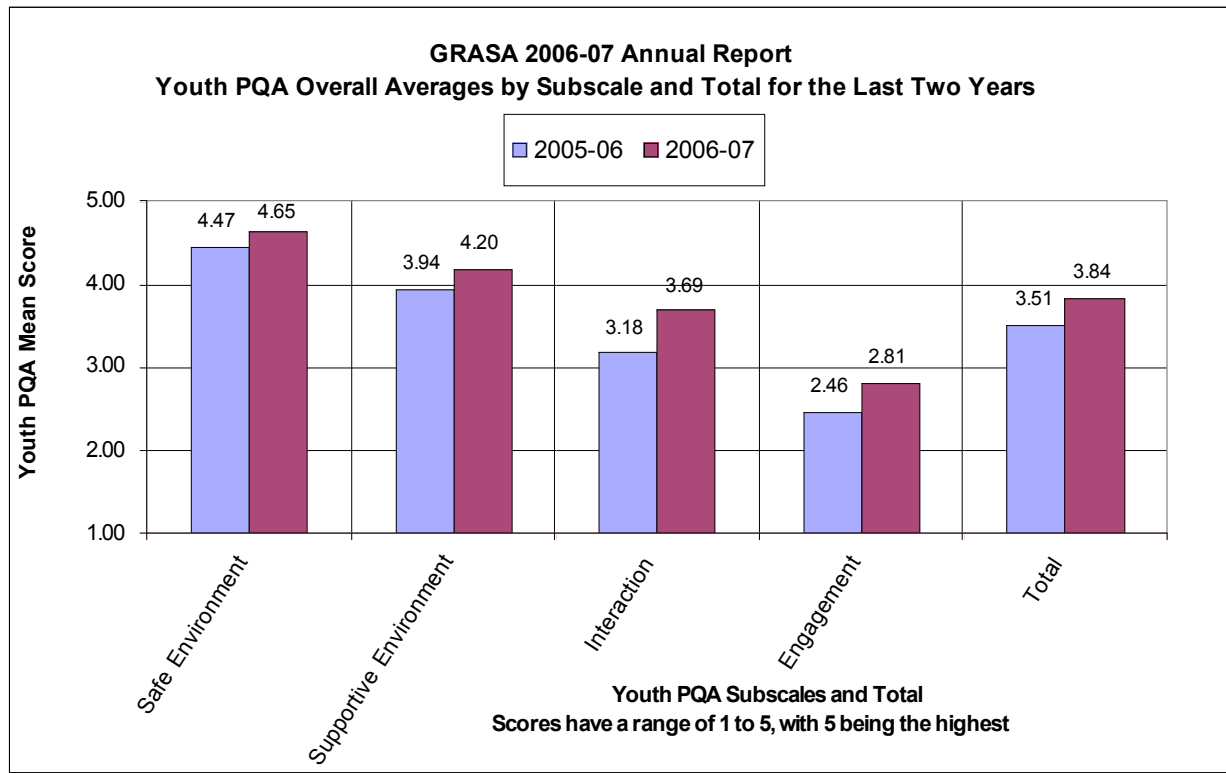
The overall quality of 40 GRASA program offerings in grades four through six was 3.84 in 2006-07. Last year the mean score for 30 programs was 3.51. High/Scope Educational Research Foundation (the authors of Youth PQA) performed a Youth PQA validation study during 2003-2005. They reported results on “two waves of data,” or in other words for two test groups, over two years. For comparison purposes, the resulting mean scores using the Youth PQA Form A are shown for both GRASA and High/Scope’s findings in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Overall Quality of GRASA program Offerings



Scores by Subscale

Figure 2. GRASA Overall Mean Scores by Subscale



GRASA 2006-07 Annual Report					
Youth PQA Overall Averages by Subscale for the Last 2 Years					
Subscale					
School Year	Safe Environment	Supportive Environment	Interaction	Engagement	Total
2005-06 (n=30)	4.47	3.94	3.18	2.46	3.51
2006-07 (n=40)	4.65	4.20	3.69	2.81	3.84

Table 1					
Greater Rochester After-School Alliance (GRASA)					
Overall Youth PQA Scores by Subscale*					
Last 2 Years Results					
Subscale	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
2005-06 GRASA Results					
Safe Environment	30	4.47	0.37	3.82	5.00
Supportive Environment	30	3.94	0.71	2.06	5.00
Interaction	30	3.18	0.97	1.29	4.67
Engagement	30	2.46	1.02	1.00	5.00
Total – 4 Subscales	30	3.51	0.61	2.29	4.86
2006-07 GRASA Results					
Safe Environment	40	4.65	0.36	3.40	5.00
Supportive Environment	40	4.20	0.68	2.14	5.00
Interaction	40	3.69	1.01	1.13	5.00
Engagement	40	2.81	1.30	1.00	5.00
Total – 4 Subscales	40	3.84	0.72	2.04	4.93

Note: * Scores have a potential range of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest.

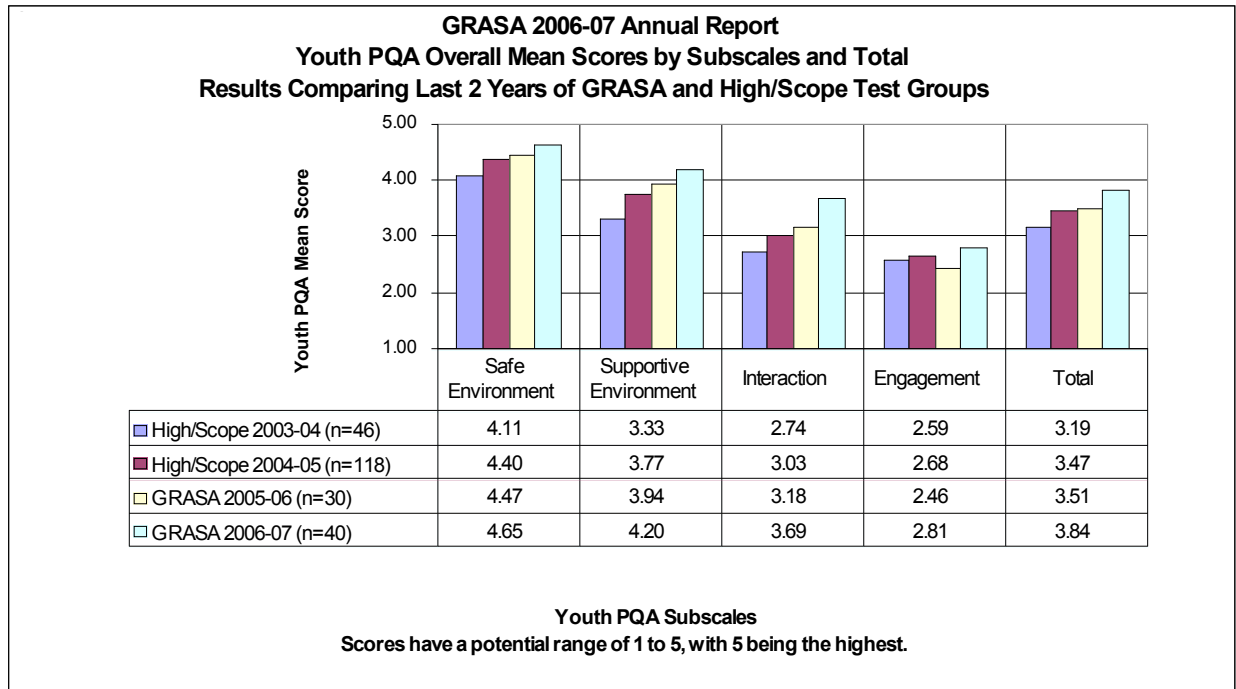
For comparison purposes: High/Scope's reported results for two test groups, collected over two years, are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2					
2003-05 High/Scope Reported Results¹					
Overall Youth PQA Scores by Subscale²					
Subscale	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
2003-04 H/S Test Group					
Safe Environment	46	4.11	0.92	1.00	5.00
Supportive Environment	46	3.33	0.85	1.87	4.78
Interaction	46	2.74	1.03	1.00	5.00
Engagement	46	2.59	0.99	1.00	4.67
Total – 4 Subscales	46	3.19	0.79	1.63	4.49
2004-05 H/S Test Group					
Safe Environment	118	4.40	0.62	1.00	5.00
Supportive Environment	118	3.77	0.83	1.68	5.00
Interaction	118	3.03	0.90	1.00	4.83
Engagement	118	2.68	1.11	1.00	5.00
Total – 4 Subscales	118	3.47	0.66	2.05	4.77

Notes: ¹The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation is the author of the Youth PQA measure. The High/Scope Test group's results were reported in the Youth PQA Administration Manual, published by High/Scope Press 2005.

²Scores have a potential range of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest.

Figure 3. Comparing GRASA and High/Scope Scores by Subscale



Significance of Differences in Figure 3 above:

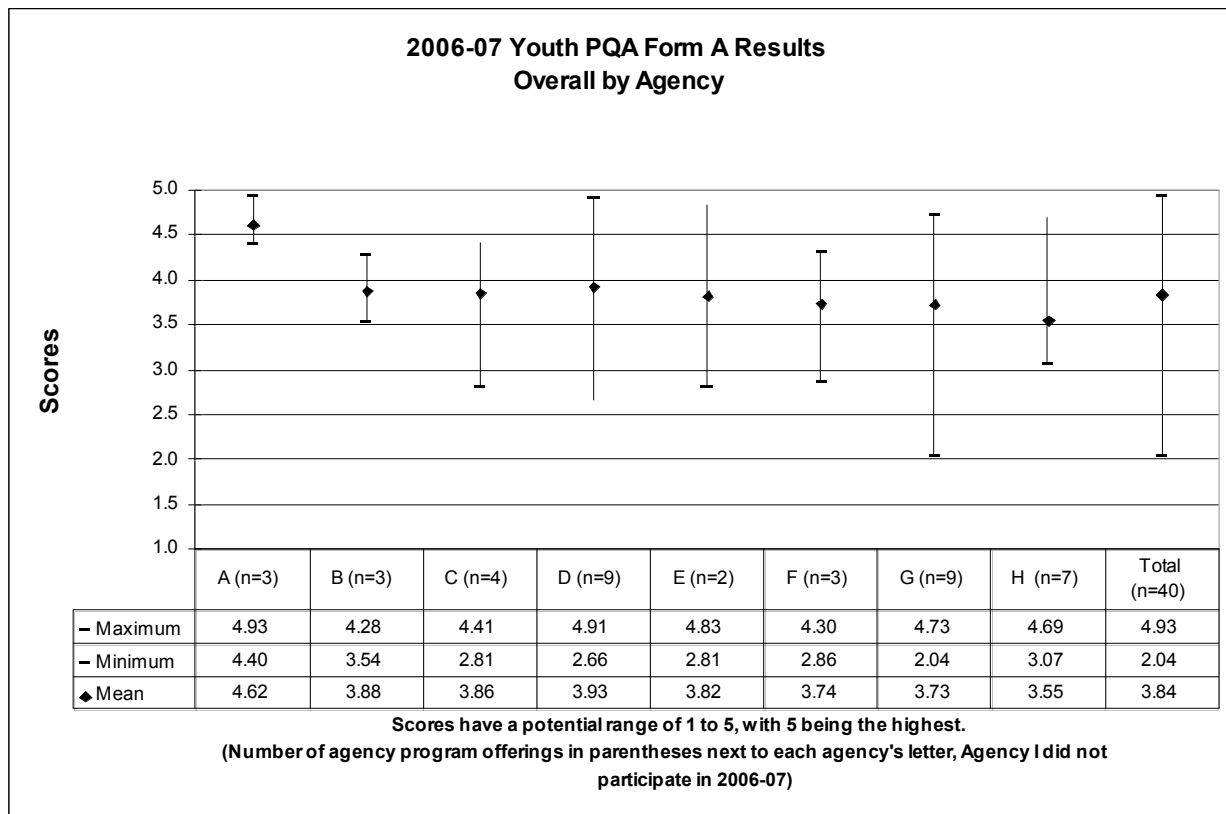
When comparing the 2005-06 GRASA scores to the High/Scope 2003-04 Study scores in Figure 3 above, all of the GRASA scores *except for Engagement* were significantly above the High/Scope 2003-04 Study (Based upon one-sample t-Tests, significance at $p < .05$). However, none of the 2005-06 GRASA scores were significantly different than the High/Scope 2004-05 Study (based upon one-sample t-Tests, not significant at $p > .05$).

Comparing the 2006-07 GRASA scores to the two High/Scope studies scores in Figure 3 above, all of the 2006-07 GRASA scores *except for Engagement* were significantly above both the High/Scope 2003-04 and the High/Scope 2004-05 study scores (Based upon one-sample t-Tests, significance at $p < .05$).

Comparing the 2006-07 GRASA scores to the 2005-06 GRASA scores in Figure 3 above, all of the 2006-07 GRASA scores *except for Engagement* were significantly above the GRASA 2005-06 scores (Based upon one-sample t-Tests, significance at $p < .05$).

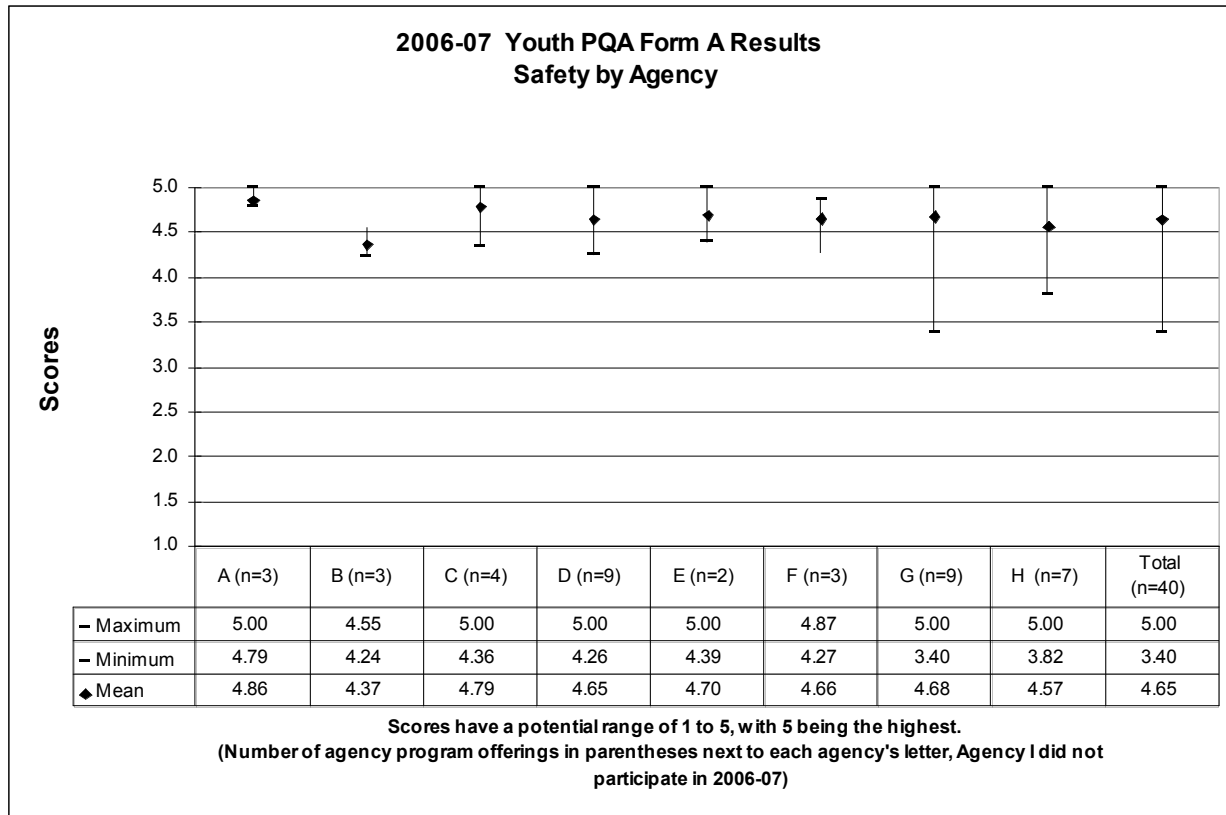
Scores by Agency

Figure 4. Overall Score for all 4 Subscales Combined



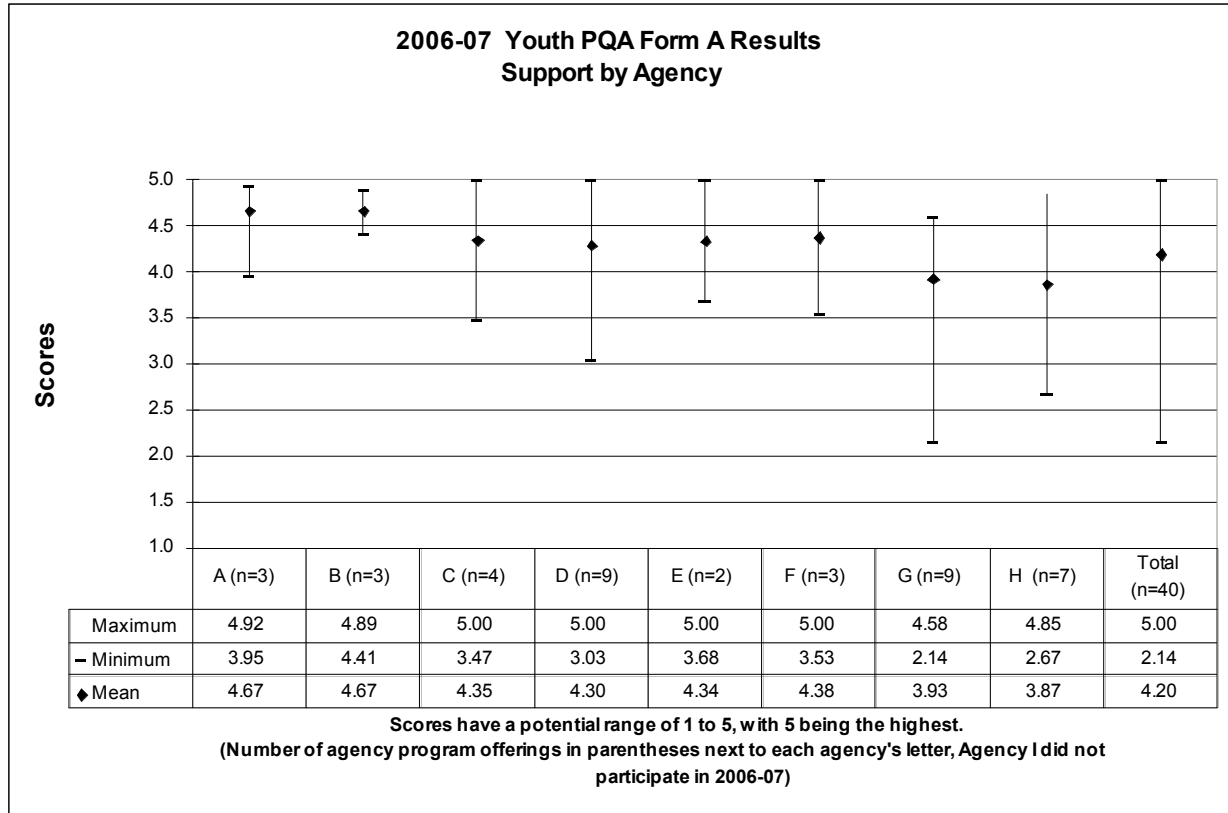
Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
2-2.9	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	5	12.5%
3-3.9	0	2	1	4	0	0	4	5	16	40.0%
4-4.9	3	1	2	4	1	2	4	2	19	47.5%
5.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total	3	3	4	9	2	3	9	7	40	100.0%

Figure 5. Safe Environment Subscale



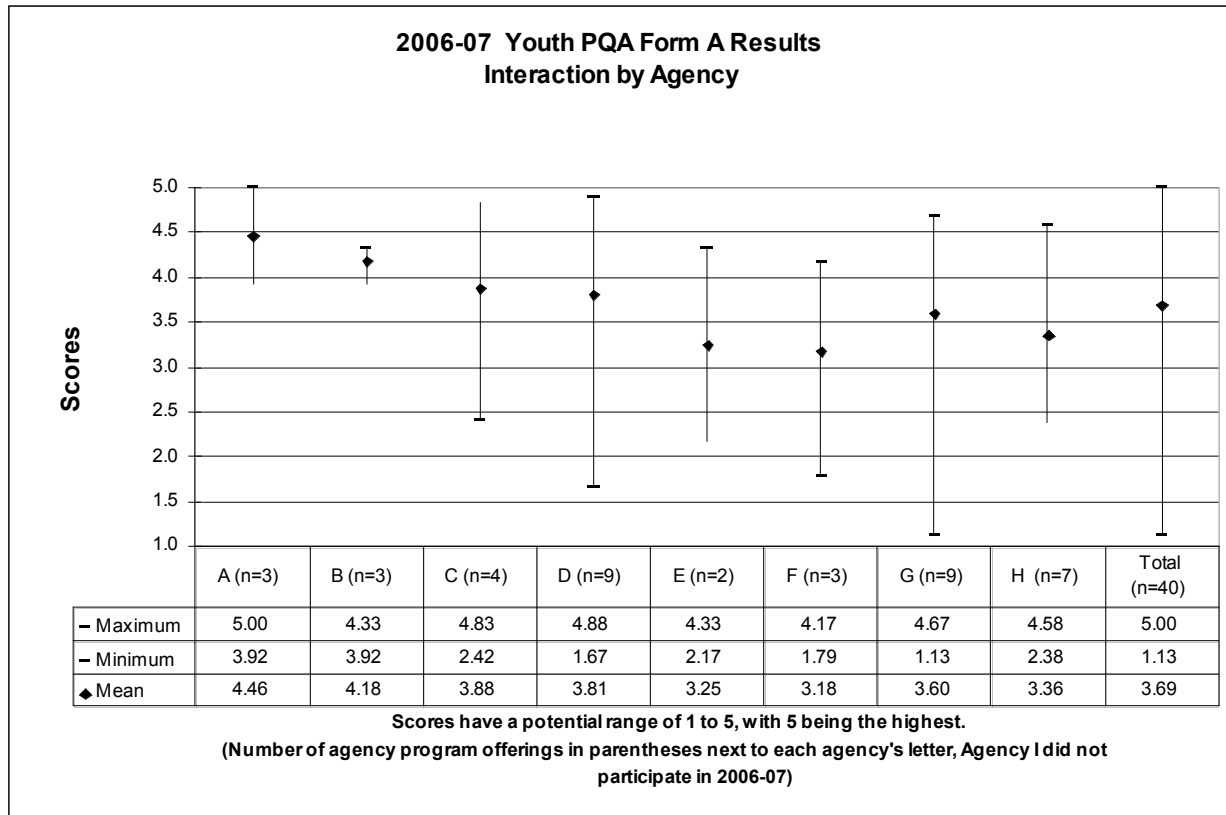
Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
2-2.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
3-3.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	5.0%
4-4.9	2	3	2	8	1	3	6	4	29	72.5%
5.0	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	2	9	22.5%
Total	3	3	4	9	2	3	9	7	40	100.0%

Figure 6. Supportive Environment Subscale



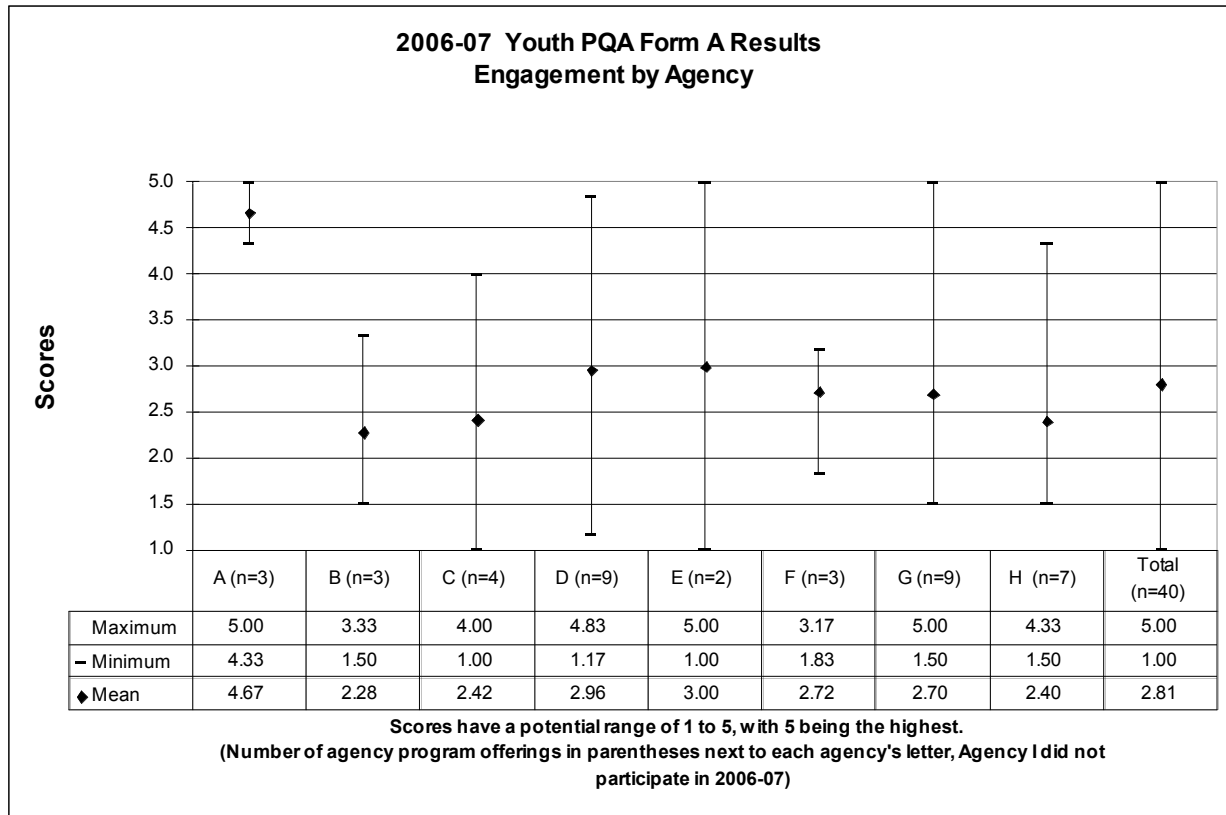
Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
2-2.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	5.0%
3-3.9	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	4	12	30.0%
4-4.9	2	3	2	6	0	1	6	2	22	55.0%
5.0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	4	10.0%
Total	3	3	4	9	2	3	9	7	40	100.0%

Figure 7. Interaction Subscale



Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	3	7.5%
2-2.9	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	7	17.5%
3-3.9	1	1	1	7	0	1	2	2	15	37.5%
4-4.9	1	2	2	0	1	1	5	2	14	35.0%
5.0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.5%
Total	3	3	4	9	2	3	9	7	40	100.0%

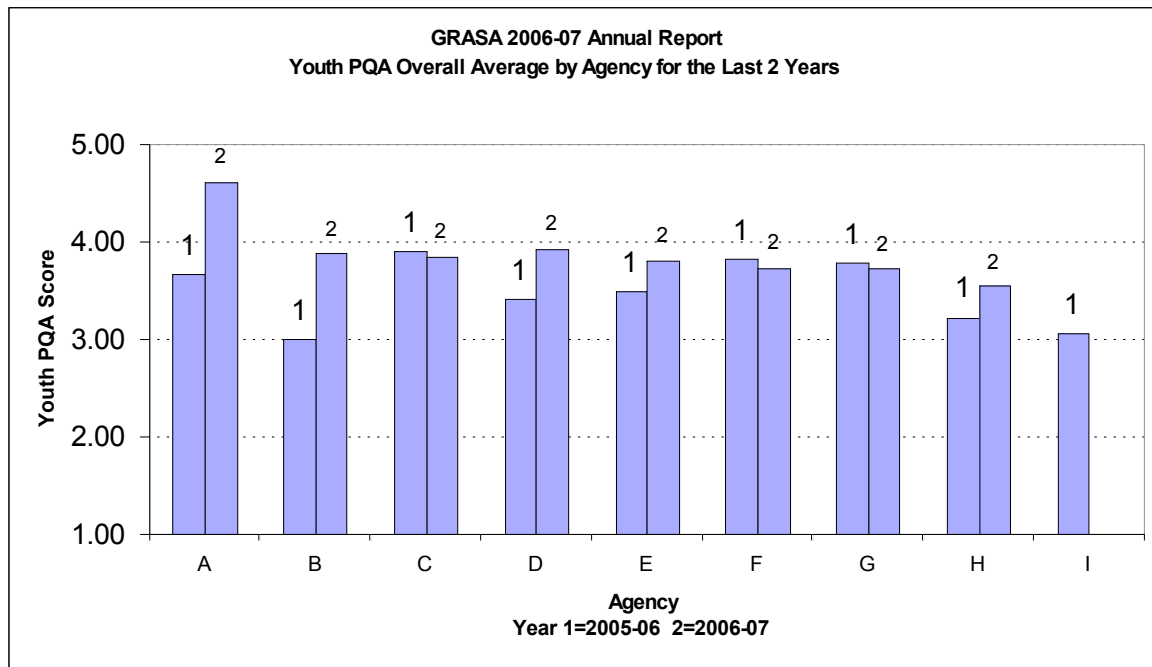
Figure 8. Engagement Subscale



Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	1	1	4	1	1	2	4	14	35.0%
2-2.9	0	1	1	1	0	0	3	1	7	17.5%
3-3.9	0	1	0	1	0	2	3	1	8	20.0%
4-4.9	2	0	2	3	0	0	0	1	8	20.0%
5.0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	7.5%
Total	3	3	4	9	2	3	9	7	40	100.0%

Overall Averages by Agency for the Last 2 Years

Figure 9. Overall Youth PQA Average by Agency for the Last 2 Years



Youth PQA Overall Average by Program for the Last 2 Years												
				Agency								
School Year	Average Overall	n	Year	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
2005-06	3.51	30	1	3.67	3.00	3.91	3.42	3.49	3.83	3.79	3.23	3.06
2006-07	3.84	40	2	4.62	3.88	3.86	3.93	3.82	3.74	3.73	3.55	.

Please note that Agency I did not participate in GRASA during 2006-07.

Reliability of the Youth PQA Form A

Cronbach's alpha

Cronbach's alpha is a test of a measure's internal consistency. It is sometimes called a "scale-reliability coefficient." For any assessment process it is important to know whether the same set of questions measures a similar construct. Measures are declared to be reliable only when they provide consistent responses.

Cronbach's alpha assesses the internal reliability of a measure's answers. By measuring and reporting Cronbach alpha values, we have what is considered a numerical coefficient of reliability. Table 3 below displays the Cronbach's alpha values for the last 2 years of the GRASA Youth PQA measure results. For comparison purposes, the High/Scope reported results* from their testing are also included in Table 3.

Table 3								
2006-07 GRASA Annual Report								
Internal Reliability of the Youth PQA Form A Measure								
Sample Size and Cronbach Alpha Values								
	GRASA				High/Scope			
	2005-06		2006-07		Test Group 1 2003-04		Test Group 2 2004-05	
Youth PQA Form A	N	Alpha	N	Alpha	N	Alpha	N	Alpha
Total for 4 all Subscales	30	0.86	40	0.91	22	0.84	118	0.74
Safe Environment (5 Items)	30	0.55	40	0.66	22	0.38	118	0.43
Supportive Environment (6 Items)	30	0.73	40	0.79	22	0.85	118	0.84
Interaction (4 items)	30	0.81	40	0.85	22	0.72	118	0.64
Engagement (3 items)	30	0.64	40	0.84	22	0.71	118	0.70

Note: * The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation is the author of the Youth PQA measure. The High/Scope Test group's results were reported in the Youth PQA Administration Manual, published by High/Scope Press 2005.

Inter-Rater Reliability of Youth PQA Form A

As part of an ongoing effort to assure the accuracy of the measures used, 25% of program offerings are observed by two observers so that we can calculate the level of agreement or inter-rater reliability between different observers.

Table 4 below shows the inter-rater reliability of Youth PQA total score and subscales using a simple correlation (r) and the median inter-rater reliability for exact matches using a/a+d; where a=agreement and d=disagreement. The GRASA inter-rater reliability for exact matches was found to be 0.77 for eight observations this year. These findings for each subscale and total in Table 4 show that the administration of the YPQA by GRASA conforms to high standards and is of high quality. For comparison, the developers of the YPQA reported an inter-rater reliability 0.66 (N=48) for the total score of Form A (Subscales 1 through 4) in their testing. High/Scope's test findings* are included in Table 4 for comparison.

Table 4			
2006-07 GRASA Annual Report			
Inter-Rater Reliability of the Youth PQA Form A Measure			
	GRASA		High/Scope
	2005-06	2006-07	Test Group 1 2003-04
Sample size N	7	8	48
Median Inter-rater Reliability for Exact Matches ¹	0.89	0.77	0.65
Safe Environment (r)	0.86	0.53 ²	0.48
Supportive Environment (r)	0.88	0.90	0.69
Interaction (r)	0.76	0.80	0.83
Engagement (r)	0.89	0.63 ²	0.72
Total YPQA Form A (r)	0.86	0.89	0.66
Notes: ¹ Signifies that inter-rater reliability for exact matches is equal to a/a+d; where a=agreement and d=disagreement.			
² Signifies that all GRASA inter-rater reliability values are significant at p<.05 except those designated.			
(r) Signifies that these values are Pearson Correlation Coefficients.			

Note: * The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation is the author of the Youth PQA measure. The High/Scope test group's results were reported in the Youth PQA Administration Manual, published by High/Scope Press 2005.

Form B

Form B covers “Organization Items,” and is scored using a survey and interview with an administrator. This tool assesses the program’s organizational infrastructure including components such as policies, practices and staff development. The authors believe that the organizational supports must be in place in order for quality programming to occur.

Completing Form B begins with contacting the administrator to set up the logistics, including sharing the purpose of the tool and process. Ideally, this administrator does not have day-to-day youth supervision requirements, and is therefore not “front-line staff.” Once logistics are determined, the administrator will receive and complete the “Administrator Survey,” a six-page survey that is estimated to take up to an hour to complete. The survey requests a list of documents that can be collected to inform the administrator’s completion of the survey, e.g. employment records of staff. Form B is then scored using responses from the survey wherever possible to reduce the time of the interview. The interview is conducted and the rater completes and scores each indicator row. Then the indicator row scores are averaged to determine the scores on items and subscales. Copies of the score sheets are sent to the administrators within seven business days.

For piloting Form B this year, two administrators generously volunteered to participate. Both administrators graciously contributed meaningful feedback and input on the process and the tool.

The results of the Form B pilot showed that both organizations perform very well with average overall quality scores of 4.0 and 4.3 (out of a maximum of 5). Each achieved high scores on items related to youth identification with program, holding high expectations of youths and staff, supporting staff, providing structure and consistency, and conducting regular evaluations. Opportunities for improvement were identified for both programs, e.g. to include more youth input in decision-making and implementation of programs. Youths are not purposefully involved in outreach and recruitment efforts or staffing decisions. Completing the process of Form B contributed to the administrators’ consideration of how they approach youth involvement and to what extent or in what roles youths can participate in future program planning. This experience inspired both administrators to make changes with their staff on how to include youths in decision-making.

There are a number of opportunities for improvements of the tool. There was feedback from both administrators that the intent of some of the questions was not always clear. Comments included: “awkward language,” “need to clarify,” “Please define!” Additionally, there is a lack of correlation and consistency between the administrator survey and the interview tool. The questions on the survey and Form B do not match, which confuses the scoring process. The authors are currently revising the Youth PQA, and we hope that these inconsistencies will be reconciled. There is potential for future use of Form B in our community in light of the importance of organizational supports that strengthen youth programs and program quality.