



**GRASA ASSESSMENT
2007-08 THIRD ANNUAL REPORT**

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SEPTEMBER 2008

children's
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STRENGTHENING SOCIAL AND
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This report would not be possible without the noteworthy contributions of many partners. Such partners include programs, foundations and other organizations – each consisting of individuals who gave freely of their time, ideas, hard work, energy, resources, and support to this exciting initiative, the GRASA Assessment pilot project.

An Anonymous Donor, City of Rochester, Monroe County Youth Bureau, and Rochester Area Community Foundation provided financial support. Other contributing partners include The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Rochester, Inc.; Cameron Community Ministries; Charles Settlement House; Children’s Institute, Inc.; City of Rochester Bureau of Parks, Recreation and Human Services; The Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc.; 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 Childfirst Network (RCN); Rush-Henrietta School District’s School-Age Child Care Programs; Society for the Protection and Care of Children (SPCC); Two Doors Community Resource Center; Wilson Commencement Park Early Learning Center; and YMCA of Greater Rochester.

We thank the program staff and administrators in 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 members offered their time freely to this pilot project by participating in trainings, focus groups, interviews, and/or observations.

Special thanks are extended to the center representatives and Master Observers who participated in informal interviews about their experiences with the Youth PQA. Their generosity of time and expertise is greatly appreciated.

This project could not be a success without the skillful Master Observers who, over three years completed 141 observations and achieved a highly respectable level of inter-rater reliability.

We appreciate GRASA members 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.

We are very excited about the GRASA Assessment and its impact on youth through improving 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 as part of a community-wide initiative to learn about the quality of after-school programs in Monroe County. This 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 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-seven after-school program observations took place at 15 organizations:

- The Boys and Girls Club of Rochester, Inc.
- Cameron Community Ministries
- Charles Settlement House
- City of Rochester Department of Recreation and Youth 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 Childfirst Network (RCN)
- Rush-Henrietta School District's School-Age Child Care Program
- Society for the Protection and Care of Children (SPCC)
- Two Doors Community Resource Center
- Wilson Commencement Park Early Learning Center

DESCRIPTION OF GRASA ASSESSMENT

Program Observations

Program observations occurred in the months of March 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 in order to score indicators that were not observed. Scoring of the measure is completed off-site and requires approximately one additional hour. 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 processed. A report is generated and returned to the program staff members that were observed, along with a photocopy of the score sheet. 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)
- Two observers may be present to achieve inter-rater reliability
- Observer(s) may need to conduct 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(s)
- 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. *This is the first year we received a formal collaborative review request.*

-
1. 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.
 2. 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.
 3. 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.
 4. The revised scores are entered into the database.
 5. 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 project and an 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, four program staff members and administrators completed introductory training sessions.*

Master Observer Training

Master observers are selected on the basis of their experience in youth programming, program observation, and interest to participate. The training includes a fifteen-hour program in the first year of participation. Knowledge of the measure, 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 ($a/a+d > .85$). They do not conduct independent observations without achieving 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, four new master observers participated in the fifteen-hour training program. Six master observers returned from year two for debriefing and retraining.*

QUALITY OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth 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 program observations and focuses on the experiences of youth. Form B covers “Organization Items” which is scored using a survey and interview with an administrator and assesses the organization’s infrastructure. 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.

Both scales use rubrics for scoring. There are multiple items with multiple indicator rows. Each indicator row is scored 1, 3, or 5. The indicator row scores are added and averaged to determine the item’s score. The item scores are then added and averaged to find the subscale score. 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 of the four subscales in Form A contains three to six items for a total of 18 items. Each item contains two to six indicator rows for a total of 60 indicator rows.

Form B measures three subscales:

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

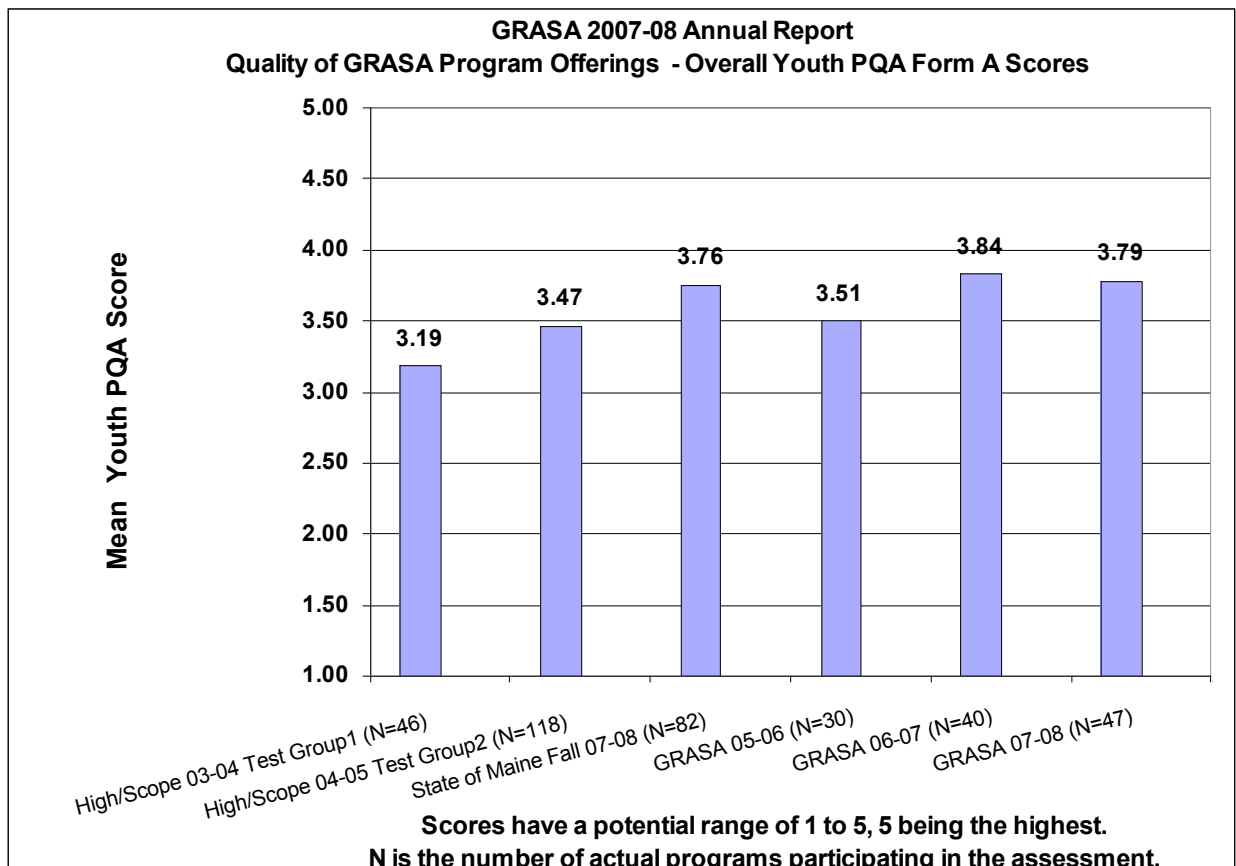
Each subscale contains four items for a total of 12 items. Each item contains two to six indicator rows for a total of 43 indicator rows. Form B was not used in 2007-08.

Overall Quality of GRASA Program Offerings Year Three

The overall quality of 47 GRASA program offerings in grades four through six was 3.79 in 2007-08. For 2006-07, the mean score for 40 programs was 3.84. High/Scope Educational Research Foundation (the authors of Youth PQA) performed a Youth PQA validation study during 2003-05. They reported results on two waves of data from 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. Also included in Figure 1 are recently reported Youth PQA results in the state of Maine.

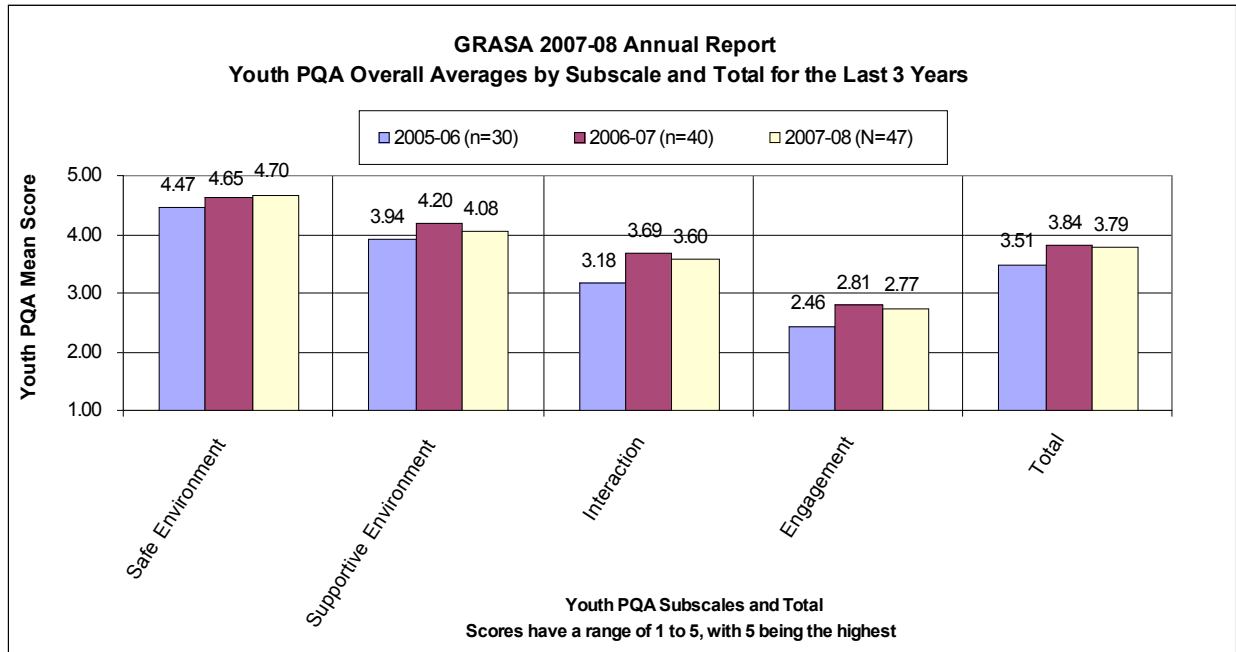
When comparing the GRASA programs to the High/Scope programs, the scores for Year One are not statistically significant. However, there is statistical significance (at or equal to .05) in the scores from GRASA Years Two and Three, which are both higher than either High/Scope years (significant at $\leq .05$ in t-Tests). This indicates that GRASA pilot participating agencies are providing quality experiences for the youth who attend their programs.

Figure 1. Overall Quality of GRASA Program Offerings



Scores by Subscale

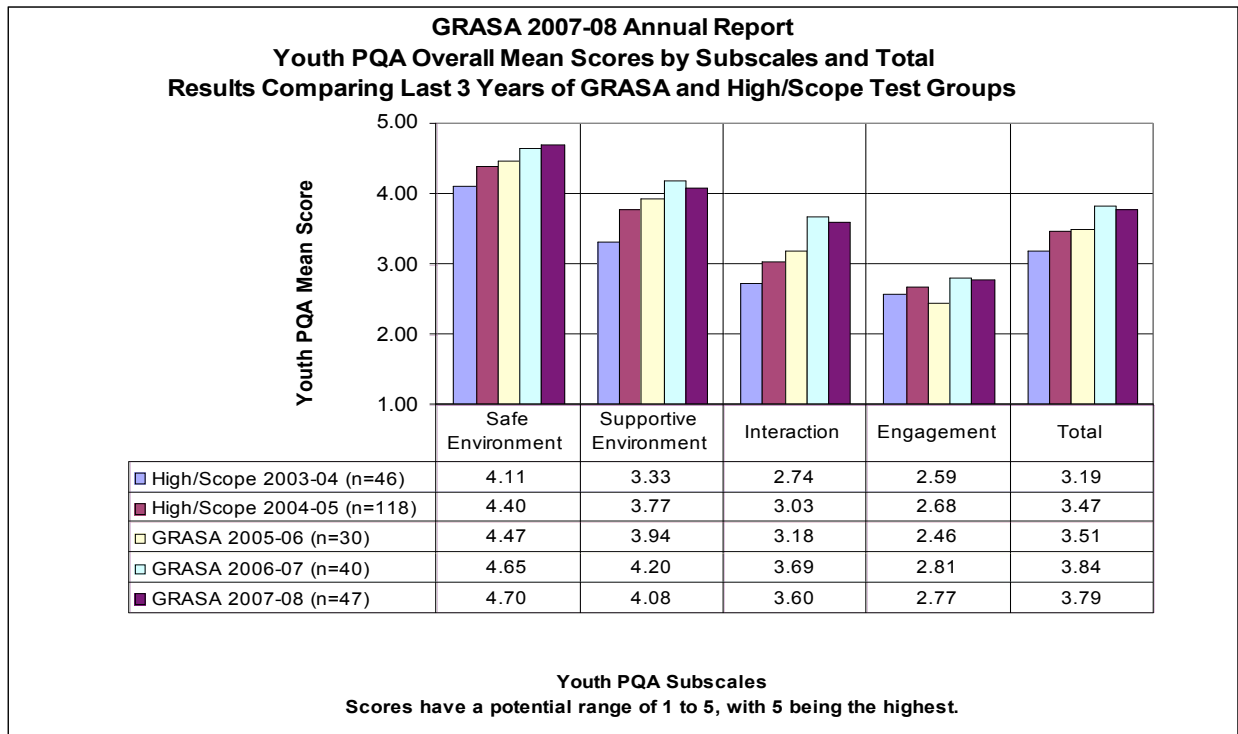
Figure 2. GRASA Overall Mean Scores by Subscale



GRASA 2007-08 Annual Report					
Youth PQA Overall Averages by Subscale for Three 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
2007-08 (N=47)	4.70	4.08	3.60	2.77	3.79

In general, first year scores were lower on each subscale and total. There were improvements in all subscales from Year One to Year Two. The only improvement from Year Two to Year Three is found in the Safe Environment subscale, but all Year Three scores were higher than Year One. The decrease in scores in Year Three could be explained by an influx of programs new to the Youth PQA.

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



Significance of Differences in Figure 3 above:

2005-06 Results

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 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 t-Tests, not significant at $p > .05$).

2006-07 Results

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 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 t-Tests, significance at $p < .05$).

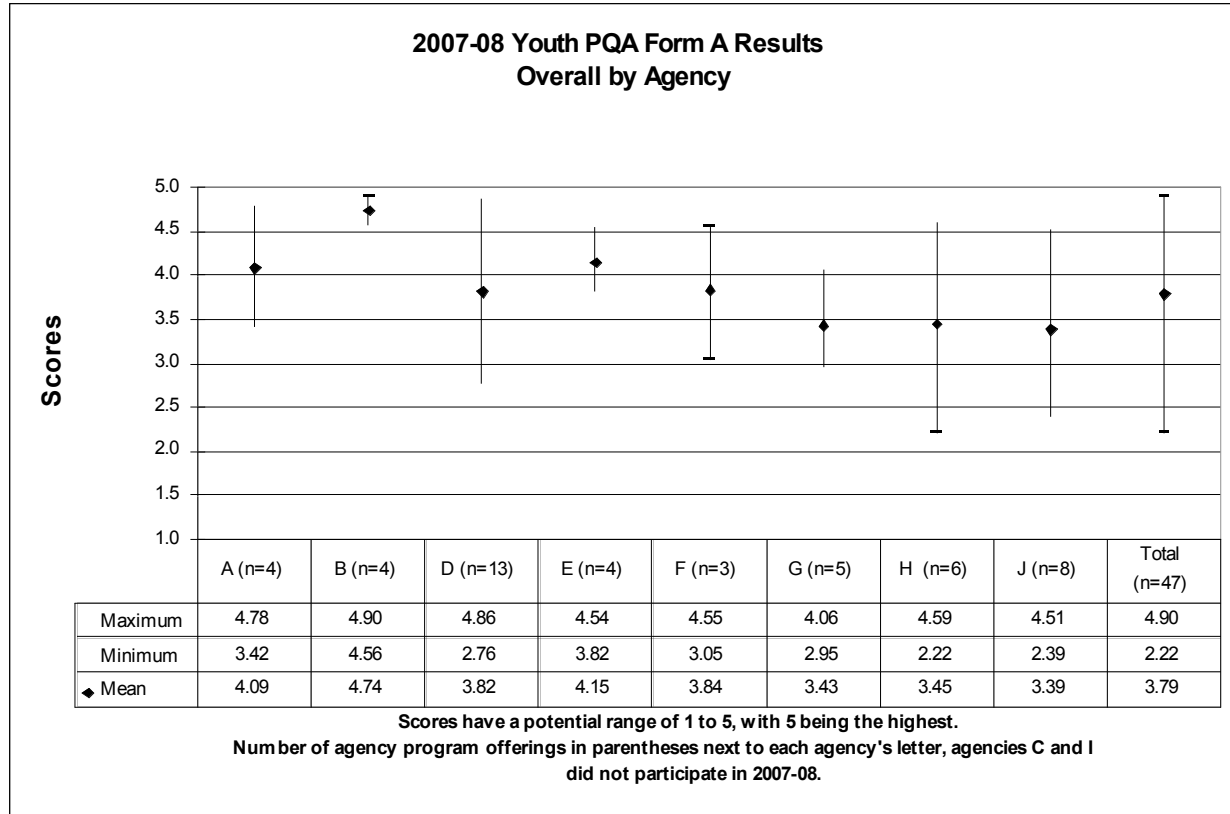
2007-08 Results

Comparing the 2007-08 GRASA scores to the two High/Scope studies scores in Figure 3 above, all of the 2007-08 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 2007-08 GRASA scores to the 2006-07 GRASA scores in Figure 3 above, none of the 2007-08 scores were significantly different than the 2006-07 scores (Based upon t-Tests, significance at $p > .05$).

Scores by Agency

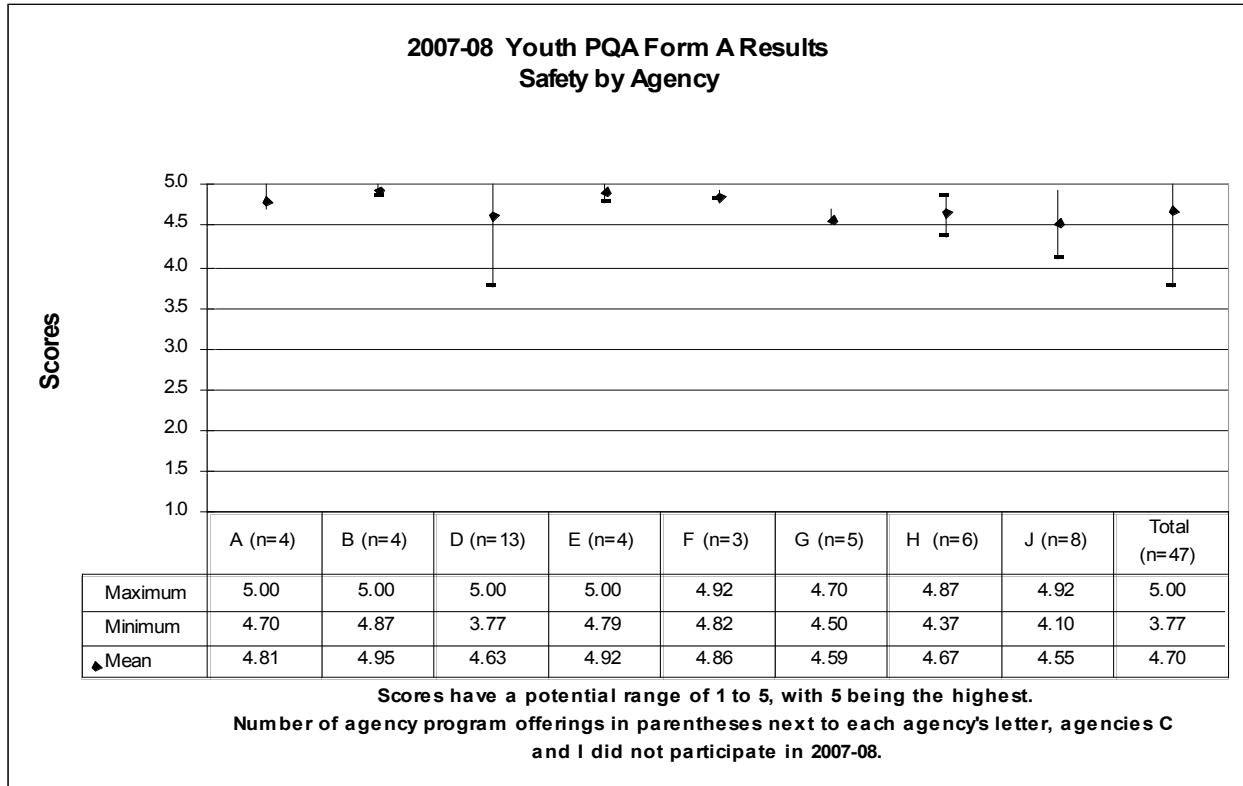
Figure 4. Overall Score for all Four Subscales Combined



Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	D	E	F	G	H	J	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
2-2.9	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	2	6	12.8%
3-3.9	2	0	7	2	2	3	2	4	22	46.8%
4-4.9	2	4	5	2	1	1	2	2	19	40.4%
5.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total	4	4	13	4	3	5	6	8	47	100.0%

The graph makes it appear as if there is a wide variety of subscale scores overall by agency, but the table shows that the frequencies are concentrated in the middle of the range of 2.22 to 4.9. The range basically reflects a bell curve, although the majority of maximum scores are on the higher end. That means that no program had any subscale scores at the lowest or highest possible scores, although all of the agencies had maximum scores above 4.0, with many above 4.5. Half of the agencies' lowest scores were below 3.0/average, but not close to the lowest possible score of 1.0. The other half of agencies had their lowest scores above average, which is a clear indicator of quality.

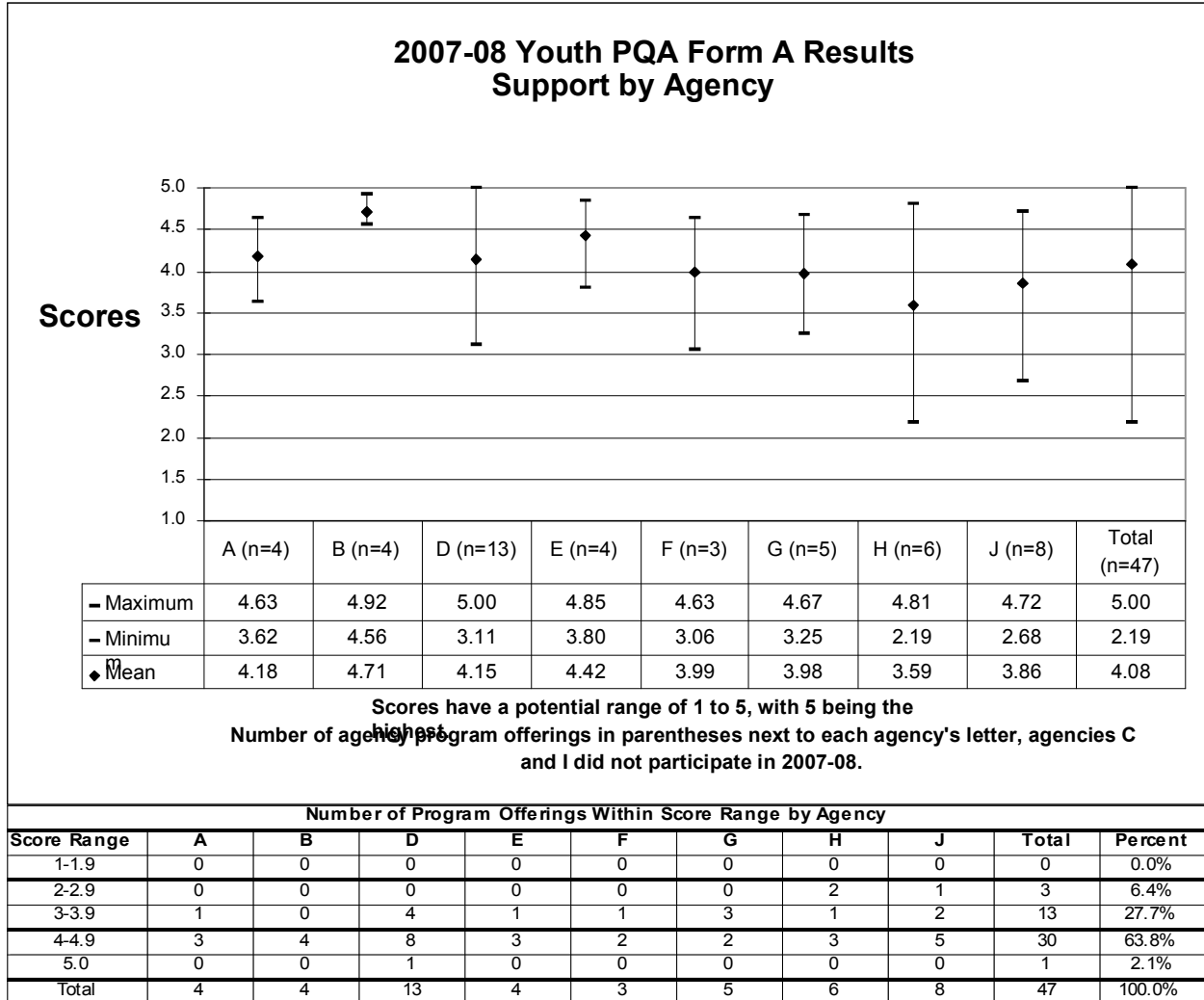
Figure 5. Safe Environment Subscale



Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	D	E	F	G	H	J	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	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.1%
4-4.9	3	2	11	2	3	5	6	8	40	85.1%
5.0	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	6	12.8%
Total	4	4	13	4	3	5	6	8	47	100.0%

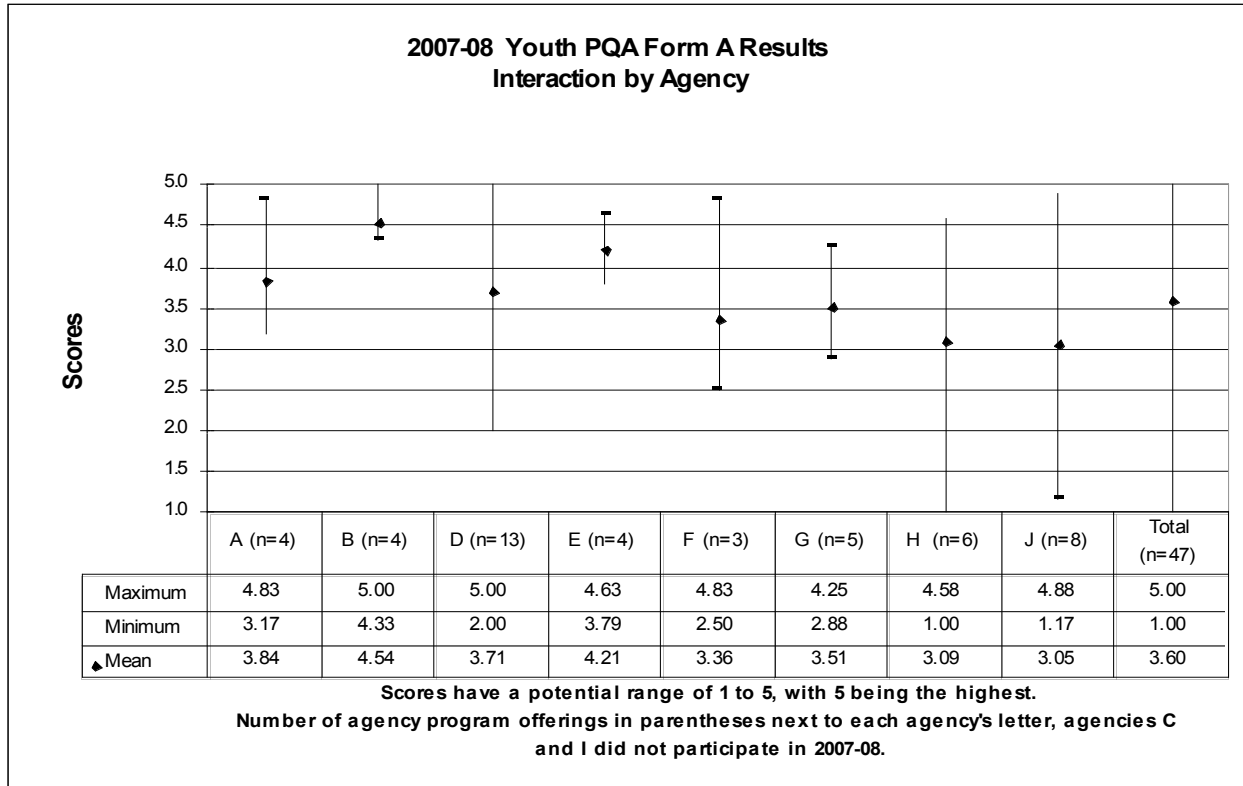
Agencies are providing safe after-school options for youth in grades four through six. The lowest score of 3.77 and the lowest mean of 4.55 indicate that the quality is fairly high across the board in this subscale.

Figure 6. Supportive Environment Subscale



In general, agencies scored fairly well in the Support subscale. The minimum item score of 2.19 indicates that there is room for improvement, but the overall mean of 4.08 shows that most programs are supporting the development of the young people in their programs.

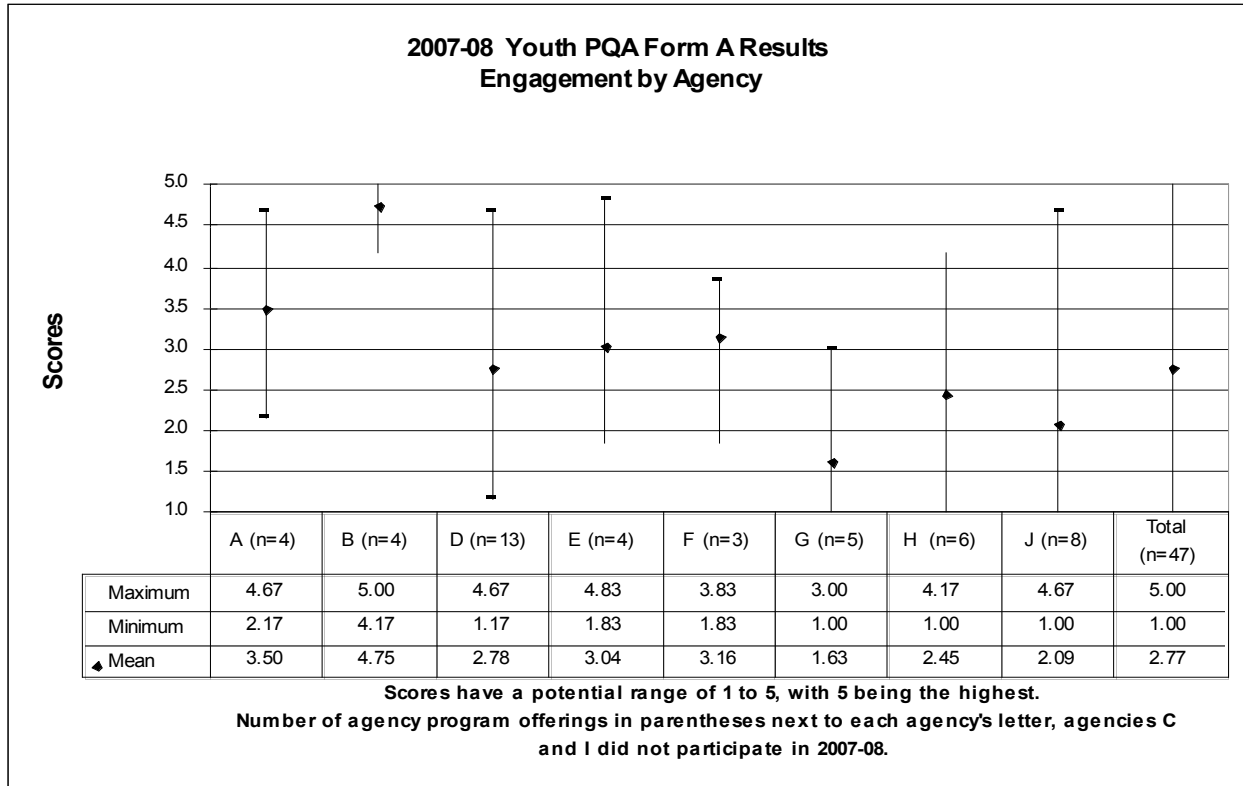
Figure 7. Interaction Subscale



Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	D	E	F	G	H	J	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	6.4%
2-2.9	0	0	3	0	2	2	2	1	10	21.3%
3-3.9	3	0	5	2	0	1	2	3	16	34.0%
4-4.9	1	3	4	2	1	2	1	2	16	34.0%
5.0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	4.3%
Total	4	4	13	4	3	5	6	8	47	100.0%

It would appear that some agencies are struggling with the items in this subscale, but it should be noted that this is where some of the items deal with small groups and those items do not fit well with child care center-based programs as they do not use small groups.

Figure 8. Engagement Subscale



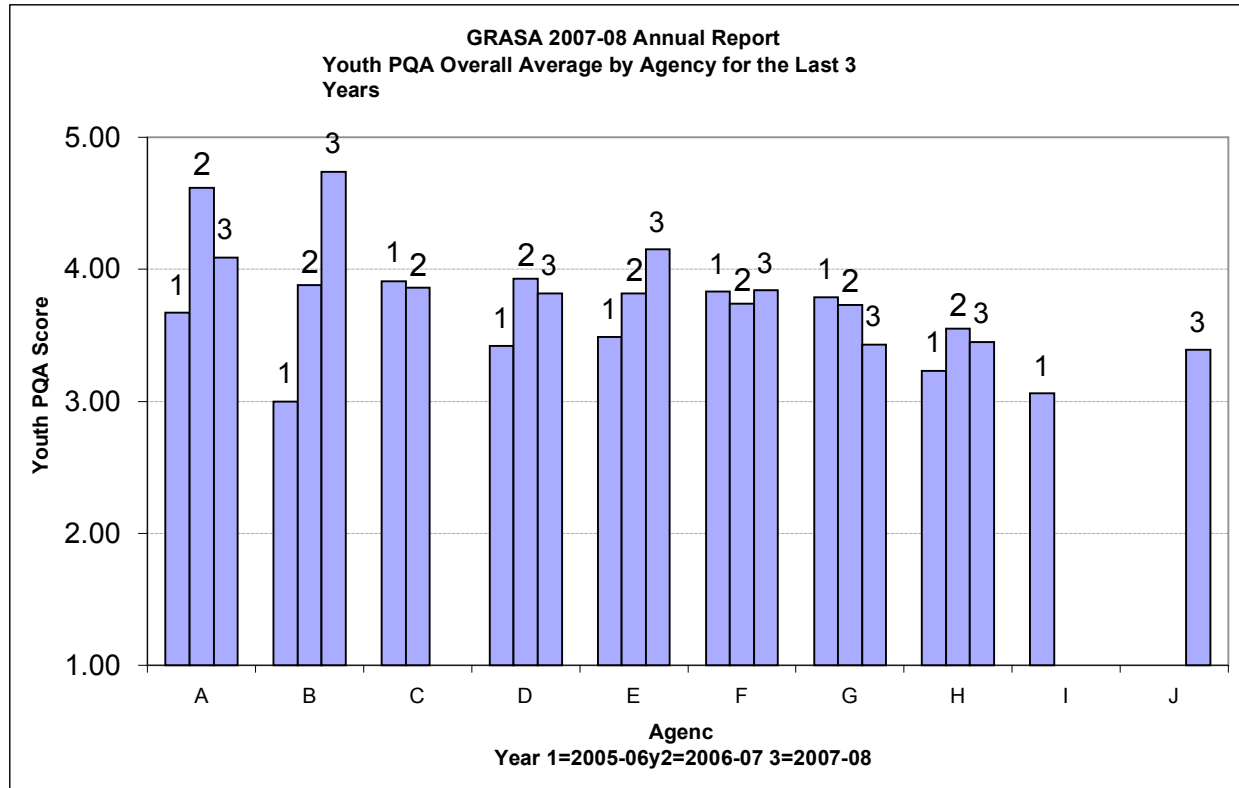
Number of Program Offerings Within Score Range by Agency										
Score Range	A	B	D	E	F	G	H	J	Total	Percent
1-1.9	0	0	5	1	1	4	3	4	18	38.3%
2-2.9	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	8	17.0%
3-3.9	0	0	5	1	2	1	0	0	9	19.1%
4-4.9	2	2	2	1	0	0	2	1	10	21.3%
5.0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4.3%
Total	4	4	13	4	3	5	6	8	47	100.0%

The overall mean of 2.77 indicates that this subscale requires attention from the agencies. Engagement is an area to focus on for future quality improvement efforts. This could take place in many ways, e.g. youth participate in planning projects and activities, youth decide how activities take place, youth reflect on activities, youth publicly present their work and/or accomplishments, and youth have structured opportunities to share feedback on activities.

Three Years of Youth POA Scores

Overall Averages by Agency for the Last Three Years

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

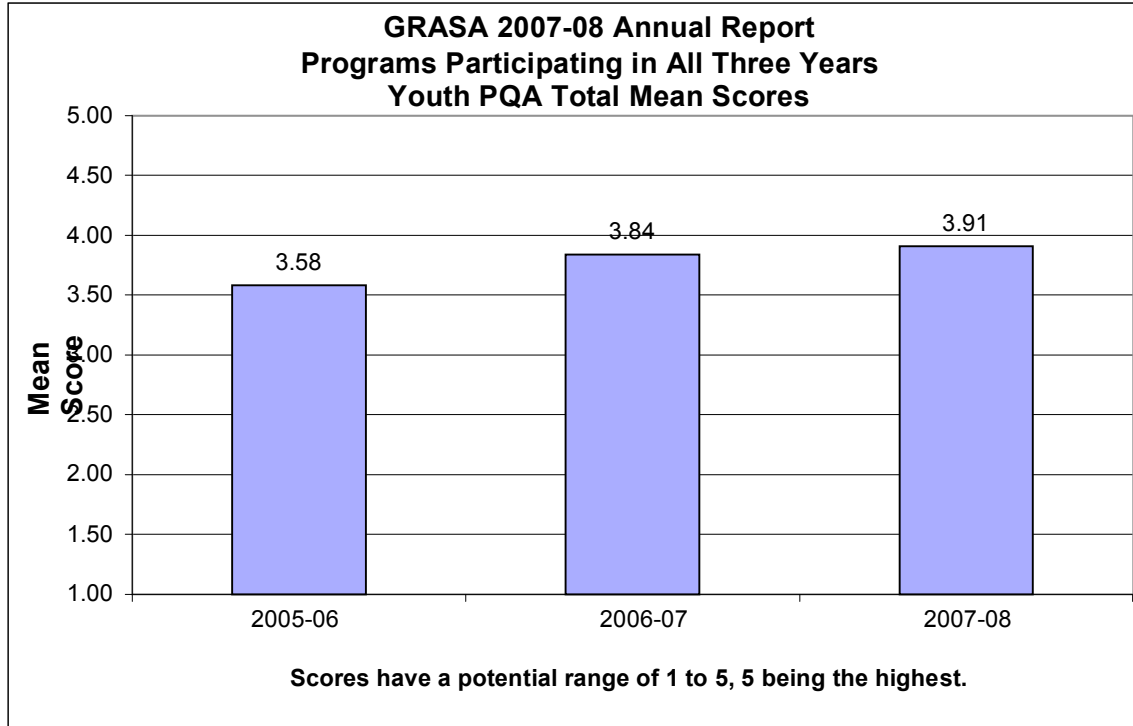


School Year	Average Overall	n	Year	Agency									
				A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2005-06	3.51	30	1	3.67	3.00	3.91	3.42	3.49	3.83	3.79	3.23	3.06	.
2006-07	3.84	40	2	4.62	3.88	3.86	3.93	3.82	3.74	3.73	3.55	.	.
2007-08	3.79	47	3	4.09	4.74	.	3.82	4.15	3.84	3.43	3.45	.	3.39

Please note that Agency C did not participate in GRASA during 2007-08. Agency I did not participate in GRASA during 2006-07 and 2007-08. Agency J did not participate in GRASA during 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Programs Participating in All Three Years

Figure 10. Programs Participating in All Three Years



For individual programs that participated in the project all three years, 2007-08 scores are significantly higher than 2005-06 scores (Based upon t-Tests, significance at $p < .05$). Differences between consecutive years (2005-06 to 2006-07 and 2006-07 to 2007-08) were not significant. (Based upon one-sample t-Tests, not significant at $p > .05$).

Programs that have applied the quality indicators to their planning and professional development clearly show quality improvements. Methods by which staff members have incorporated Youth PQA quality indicators are diverse, but the goal is universal – to best meet the needs of the youth who attend their programs. For example, some programs are involving youth more actively in planning, implementation, and evaluation. One site now includes youth in planning the whole program from themes explored to daily activities based on “what they want to do.” Another site has added a reflection component to their daily schedule. A third site gives the Youth PQA to all new staff as a part of their orientation. They use the Interaction subscale as the basis for a portion of their training on the roles that staff and youth play and how to support new skills, ask open-ended questions, and encourage reflection.

Reliability of the Youth POA 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 – do the items in the subscale hang well together? Are they talking about the same thing or are they unrelated? Are the items measuring what they are designed to?

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's alpha values, we have what is considered a numerical coefficient of reliability. Table 1 below displays the Cronbach's alpha values for the last 3 years of the GRASA Youth PQA measure results. For comparison purposes, the High/Scope reported results* from their testing are also included in Table 1.

Table 1										
2007-08 GRASA Annual Report										
Internal Reliability of the Youth PQA Form A Measure										
Sample Size and Cronbach's Alpha Values										
	GRASA						High/Scope			
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		Test Group #1 2003-04		Test Group #2 2004-05	
Youth PQA Form A	N	Alpha	N	Alpha	N	Alpha	N	Alpha	N	Alpha
Total for 4 all Subscales	30	0.86	40	0.91	47	0.88	22	0.84	118	0.74
Safe Environment (5 Items)	30	0.55	40	0.66	47	0.45	22	0.38	118	0.43
Supportive Environment (6 Items)	30	0.73	40	0.79	47	0.69	22	0.85	118	0.84
Interaction (4 items)	30	0.81	40	0.85	47	0.79	22	0.72	118	0.64
Engagement (3 items)	30	0.64	40	0.84	47	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.

The Youth PQA has consistent internal reliability with the exception of the Safety subscale. The answer comes from a quick look at the content of the five items: 1) psychological and emotional safety promoted, 2) environment free of health hazards, 3) emergency supplies and procedures present, 4) space and furniture accommodates activities, and 5) healthy food and drinks provided. These are not closely correlated, thus the subscale is not as reliable as it could be if the items were closer in content.

Inter-Rater Reliability of the Youth POA Form A

As part of an ongoing effort to assure the accuracy of the measures used, approximately 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 2 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 uses a/a+d; where a=agreement and d=disagreement. The GRASA inter-rater reliability for exact matches was found to be 0.87 for nine observations this year. For comparison, the developers of the Youth PQA reported an inter-rater reliability 0.65 (N=48). The inter-rater reliability findings for each subscale and total in Table 2 show that the administration of the Youth PQA by GRASA conforms to high standards and is of high quality. High/Scope’s test findings* are also included in Table 2 for comparison.

Table 2				
2007-08 GRASA Annual Report				
Inter-Rater Reliability of the Youth PQA Form A Measure				
	GRASA			High/Scope
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Test Group 1 2003-04
Sample size N	7	8	9	48
Median Inter-rater Reliability for Exact Matches ¹	0.89	0.79	0.87	0.65
Safe Environment (r)	0.86	0.53 ²	0.98	0.48
Supportive Environment (r)	0.88	0.90	0.95	0.69
Interaction (r)	0.76	0.80	0.92	0.83
Engagement (r)	0.89	0.63 ²	0.94	0.72
Total YPQA Form A (r)	0.86	0.89	0.96	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.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Youth Program Quality Assessment measure comes from a reputable source and is used across the nation by other organizations that find it to be useful. For this pilot project, the measure was tested in 30 observations Year One, 40 observations Year Two, and 47 observations Year Three for a total of 117. The result of that testing confirms that the measure is valid and reliable, with acceptable internal reliability, although there is an exception in the Safety subscale. In the future it may be worth considering restructuring that subscale by either moving certain indicators to different subscales, eliminating them, or creating a new subscale and adding items that are not addressed fully, e.g. social and emotional well-being.

Testing the measure would have been much more challenging had Children's Institute not had the RECAP model to inform the development of the GRASA Assessment data collection and reporting of scores. Site staff members reported that most information came back to them in a timely manner, with improvements each year. Their input informed the system development. The score reports issued to sites met many of their needs; however sites did share unmet needs that were not addressed by the goals of this pilot project. These unmet needs are described on the following page.

Scores in general have improved. Over three years, objective observations indicated that the quality of participating after-school programs increased 6.6 percent overall. Scores increased in all subscales: 4.8 percent for safe environment, 2.8 percent for supportive environment, 8.4 percent for interaction, and 6.2 percent for engagement, largely as a result of incorporating evaluation feedback of program quality provided by this project. Compared with other programs, we find that the results of GRASA Years Two and Three exceed external quality levels.

On a final note, the Youth PQA was found to be of value for continuously improving program quality by the agencies in our community who participated in this pilot project.

LIMITATIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM PROGRAM PARTNERS

Age Group

The Youth PQA is designed for use with youth in grades 4-12. This 3-year assessment included only programs serving 4th-6th graders at the request of GRASA. This plan served two purposes – 1) to obtain information on program quality for a specific segment of after-school programs in Monroe County and 2) to assess the validity and reliability of the instrument measuring programs serving a similar group of participants. This three-year effort successfully accomplished both objectives. Program quality data is available for a variety of after-school programs serving the same age group. Three years of findings indicate acceptable levels of validity and reliability in the Youth PQA. In future assessments, we recommend inclusion of programs serving students in grades 7 – 9.

Program Philosophy

Some programs indicated that the Youth PQA is not a “good fit” for some of the programming they provide for 4th – 6th grade students. Some quality indicators do not complement their program philosophy (e.g. free choice time versus group assignments). However, in other cases, programs embraced the opportunities for program modifications and improvements illuminated by the Youth PQA quality indicators and their individual program ratings. Whether this illustrates inconsistent “good fit” and/or opportunities for program structure changes remains to be seen and will be revisited in future assessment years. Inclusion of older age groups in addition to 4th – 6th grade programs will provide information to address this issue.

Frequency of Observations

Observations occur once annually. Scoring decisions are based on what takes place on that particular day in addition to a post observation interview with staff. The observation is a sample of program operation quality. However, some program staff indicated an interest in more than one observation and an additional opportunity to measure program operation and the variety of offerings within one year.

Process and use of Youth PQA

The feedback from programs and Master Observers throughout the process has been positive. One site commented that this is an “excellent model to use for self-assessment and to make improvements on program.” The Master Observer training, as well as the conduct of Master Observers in the field, received positive feedback from program supervisors and administrators.

Professional Development, Support and Networking – Continuous Quality Improvement

Many program staff members expressed the need for support and planning activities that coincide with their Youth PQA findings including opportunities to discuss results, goals, and implementation with fellow program staff. This activity did transpire within some programs. Also, there was an expressed interest in collaboration across programs for collegial partnership and sharing of resources.