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2010 to 2015 Strategy Guidance Letter B-102 After-School Programs

United Way Windsor-Essex County
300 Giles Blvd. East, Windsor, ON N9A 4C4

A. Priority Area: Positioning kids and families for success.

B. Strategic Area of Focus: After-school programs. **Strategy Definition:** Integrated and comprehensive after-school programs that:

- o Promote youth engagement and leadership development;
- o Build social and interpersonal skills;
- o Strengthen cognitive skills (e.g., literacy); and
- o Include academic, arts, and culture enrichment and physical activity.

C. Priority Population

All strategies that receive funding must serve the following population (s):

- o School-aged "at-risk" youth in under-serviced areas of Windsor-Essex County.

D. Intended Outcome: School-aged "at-risk" youth in under-serviced areas of Windsor-Essex County will participate in after-school programs where they will improve social/cognitive skills, improve school engagement and/or academic performance, develop healthy habits promoting positive choices and develop opportunities for leadership.

Outcome Definition: School-aged "at-risk" youth participating in after-school programs are shown to have improved academic performance and school engagement, success in developing new skills and interests; show healthier social adjustment, including self-confidence and conflict-resolution skills; and greater cooperation with adults and peers. The intended outcome focuses on *Adaptation* and *Engagement* as described by Torjman's (2007) Resilience Framework.

E. Strategy Paths

To be considered for funding, strategies must address all Strategy paths, as indicated below:

Strategy paths	Initial results
Enrich learning opportunities through a variety of programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participating youth are provided with a variety of programs to enrich their learning, accommodating individual needs and building on individual interests and strengths. Such programs could include art activities, reading for pleasure, drama, music, dance, sports, field trips and clubs.



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Develop leadership and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow opportunities for young people to gain a sense of ownership and to develop responsibility by helping to plan and lead activities that reflect their interests. Allow for mentoring relationships between adult staff and older youth for supportive and positive role modeling. • Connect youth to the broader community through experiences that foster community involvement and have tangible results.
Build social/cognitive skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer programming that promotes positive peer and adult interactions and discussions, the development of new skills and interests as well as opportunities to improve literacy and language development. • Incorporate physical activity in all programming in ways that are inclusive of all levels of skill development and interests.

F. Preferred Strategy Components

In addition to the required components, preference will be given to those strategies that are able to demonstrate Preferred Strategy Components, as indicated below:

Preferred Strategy Components— (policies, practices and/or activities)	Examples
Program goal setting and strong program management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs should be clear about their intended goals and communicate these goals effectively. Goals are linked to specific program activities, structure and staffing.
Attention to safety and nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be adequate available space for a variety of activities with proper supervision at all times. Nutritious snacks and/or meals should be offered to promote healthy alternatives.



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Effective collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on the all resources within the community including community-based organizations, schools, libraries, law enforcement, and other youth serving organizations.
Strong Family Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve parents and youth in program planning and provide concrete ways for families to interact with their children.
Diversity is acknowledged and appreciated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active efforts must be made to be inclusive of and appealing to all cultures within the given community. Staff must be culturally competent and aware of diversity issues.

F. (cont'd) Preferred Strategy Components for all strategies

Preferred Program Components for all strategies	Examples
Staff/volunteers are trained and well-prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers have relevant training, knowledge and skills • Staff keep up-to-date with current developments in the field, including promising and evidence-based practices • Volunteers are provided with strong supervision including screening, orientation and recognition.
Client-centered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active efforts to be inclusive and to connect with client populations in program planning, delivery, evaluation • Services provided are determined by participant needs and priorities • Operate from an accessible, identifiable location that facilitates access to other participant opportunities.



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Diversity is acknowledged and respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive to issues of diversity, transportation and childcare • Staff must be culturally competent and aware of diversity issues. • Staff and volunteers reflect the community
Monitor progress and evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct ongoing program evaluations to ensure program effectiveness • The evaluation includes various methods for measuring potential results as outlined in the strategy paths • Willing to participate in organized learning communities with other strategy partners.
Maintaining success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures will be taken to encourage continue positive results after initial implementation ▪ E.g., by offering “booster” sessions; providing follow-up resources; tying the strategy with activities of other relevant community groups & programs.
Demonstrate effective collaboration and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve a range of community partners • Leverage resources and support from an array of stakeholders, e.g., other not-for-profit organizations, private or public sector organizations, and other groups. • Written memoranda of understanding with other organizations to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear.
Integrated and coordinated approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy is linked with other community services, group, and initiatives in an effort to enhance services.
Standard safety policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols are in place that ensure the safety of children/youth and address family situations of abuse and neglect • Conduct screenings for family violence issues & provide participant links to appropriate services. • Establish specific policies of what constitutes acceptable and non-acceptable interactions, e.g., standards of volunteer behaviour



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Accessible / affordable / wrap around services that are place-based, strength-based & family-focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered in accessible locations with availability of transportation• Emphasis that builds on individual and family strengths
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Recommended Resources:

Kumpfer, K. L. and Alvarado, R. (June/July 2003). Family Strengthening Approaches for the Prevention of Youth Problem Behaviours. *American Psychologist*.

Perkins, D.F. (2003, May). *Practice and programming issues: After-school programs for children*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, Dept. of Agricultural and Extension Education.

Vandell, D. L., Reisner, E. R. and Pierce, K. (October 2007). *Outcomes Linked to High-Quality Afterschool Programs: Longitudinal Findings from the Study of Promising Afterschool Programs*.