Contact the Weikart Center

Environment is everything.

Young people need to feel safe and supported in order to learn and lead. As a crucial part of the Forum's mission to change the odds that young people are ready for college, work, and life, the Weikart Center helps out-of-school time (OST) systems build the safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging environments that are foundational to youth development.

Based on decades of expert research and real-world experience, the Weikart Center's pyramid of program

quality takes the abstract idea of quality and breaks it down into manageable targets for continuous improvement efforts.



The Weikart Center's signature Youth Program Quality Improvement (YPQI) approach harnesses the power of research evidence and the experience of practitioners to improve the quality of youth experiences in OST programming from the ground up. The YPQI uses evidence-based materials and practices that can be customized and applied in any program type, size, or setting.

From data-driven tools to expert trainings, we equip leaders with the positive youth development and SEL-

Youth leaders in nearly every state have used the YPQI to improve the quality of youth experiences in OST

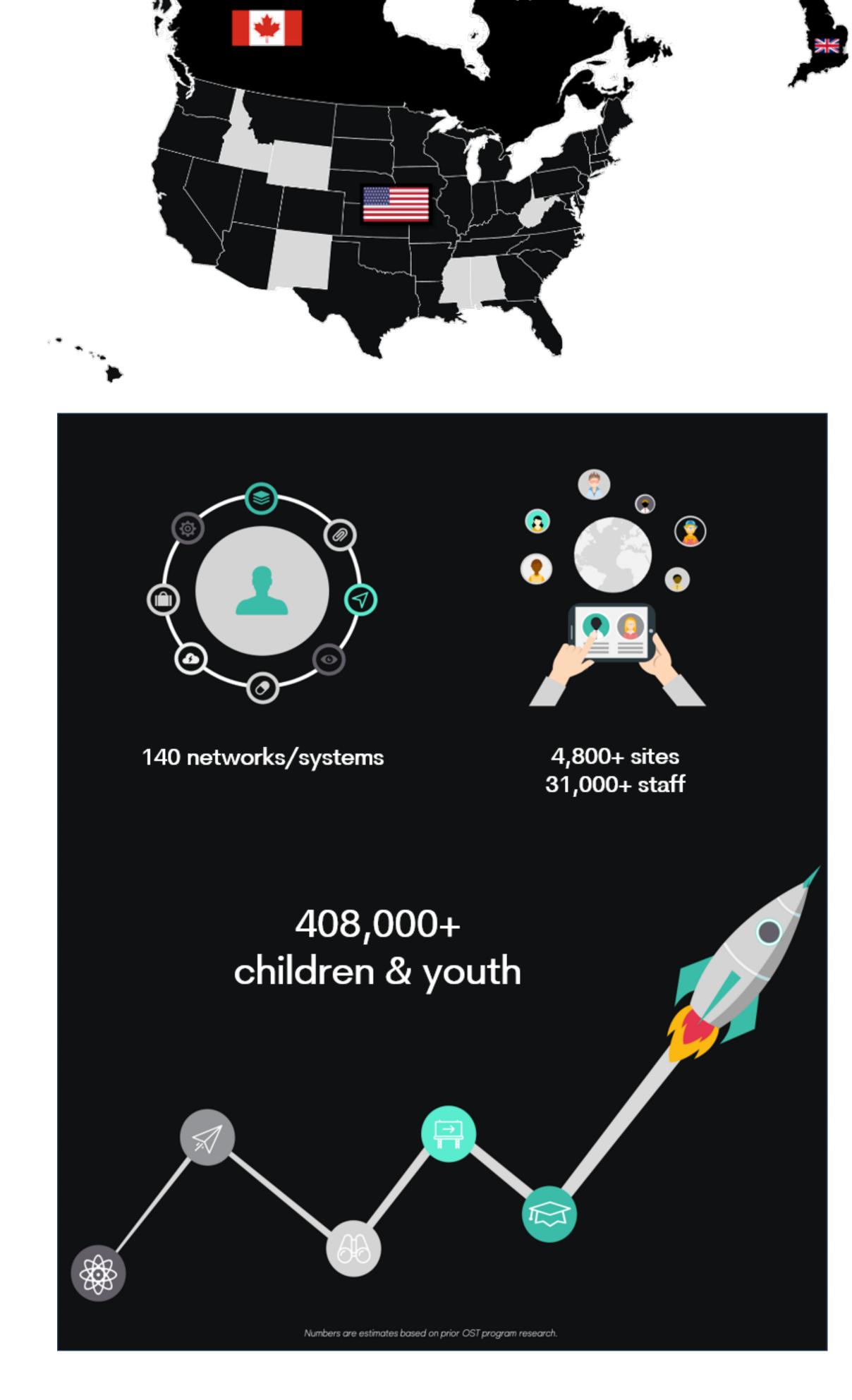
programming. The Weikart Center has worked with partners in Mexico and supports ongoing efforts in

informed resources they need to create a culture of continuous improvement for staff and young people.

Canada and the U.K. as well.

Our Reach

and reach higher-order goals.



HighScope Summer Camp (later Institute for IDEAS), pioneering a positive youth development approach in the provision of summer learning experiences in the arts & sciences to thousands of youth from diverse cultural &

We've been dedicated for decades.

we offer.

1995

Scroll the timeline to learn more about the history of the Weikart Center & the research behind the resources

1963

Psychologist & educator David P. Weikart founds

Following a multiyear study funded by the William T. Grant

Foundation, the Youth Program Quality Assessment is

published, catalyzing the development of workshops &

forming the basis for network quality improvement

supports geared toward helping practitioners use the tool,

The Forum for Youth Investment invites the Weikart Center

Initiative, funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation &

Atlantic Philanthropies. The initiative provides community,

agency, & elected leaders from 7 cities & 5 states with an

The Weikart Center becomes an official unit of the Forum

In partnership with the National Summer Learning

science & practice of continuous improvement.

Association, the Weikart Center develops the **Summer**

on qualities of the learning experience to advance the

The Weikart Center celebrates its 10th anniversary &

announces Dr. Kimberly Robinson as new managing

The Weikart Center has adapted its active participatory

expertise to partners via Zoom & self-paced online

approach to virtual learning environments, offering our

Learning Program Quality Intervention (SLPQI), focusing

to participate in the Ready by 21 Quality Counts

socioeconomic backgrounds.

2002-2005

initiatives nationwide.

2007-2009

Quality Intervention study, a randomized control trial of our systematic approach to quality improvement.

The William T. Grant Foundation funds the Youth Program

The Weikart Center is launched as a joint venture of the

Forum for Youth Investment & HighScope Educational

The Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) is

Funded by the Susan Crown Exchange, a social investment

organization connecting talent & innovation with market

The research-validated **SEL PQA** is released along with 10

Youth Work Methods workshops focused on SEL,

workshops geared toward preparing adults to consider

their own SEL skills that inform their practices with young

including a set of Foundations & Self-Awareness

2006-2009

2008

2012

2014-2017

2019

people.

Research Foundation.

High Scope's Youth Development Group starts using this

the Youth Work Methods Series grounded in direct

experience & positive youth development research.

approach to train youth workers, laying the groundwork for

infusion of national & local momentum & a suite of policy-building and quality improvement strategies & tools. The project helped demonstrate the effectiveness of Weikart Center programming and increase demand.

2009

for Youth Investment.

2013-2016

revised to better convey the purpose of each measure, strengthen the Skill-Building scale, & make items easier to interpret & score.

Learning Challenge identifies promising practices for building SEL skills with vulnerable adolescents & develops a method for scaling these practices in thousands of OST settings, establishing the Weikart Center as a leader in the SEL movement.

2018

director.

Today

courses.

< See more of our work

Our Vision

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Home

Training Workshops

Capacity Building Workshops

Upcoming Events

Materials to make quality happen.

Partnering with the Weikart Center means you and your team will benefit from an ecosystem of engaging resources tailored to the ways in which adults learn best. It also means that our approach has been field-tested by experts like you and backed by decades of research.

Staff turnover and other challenges can make it difficult for quality improvement efforts to stick. The Weikart Center works with each partner to create a culture of continuous improvement tailored to their programs' needs.

Use the tabs above to explore the resources we offer to help build safe, supportive, interactive, & engaging environments in which young people can successfully develop higher-order learning & leadership skills.



The YPQI Theory of Change

The YPQI Process

>> YPQI Roles & Responsibilities <<

Creating a culture of continuous improvement involves engaging everyone.

The Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) is a dynamic approach to improving the quality of youth experiences that recognizes the importance of supporting all staff within the organization or system. The YPQI empowers youth workers to take charge of team & personal professional development with the goal of nurturing a safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging environment for young people.

Specifically, the YPQI engages network leaders, site leaders, program staff, external assessors, & network consultants, trainers, and coaches. The chart below offers a sample breakdown of the different roles & responsibilities involved in the YPQI in the three key phases of the process: Assess, Plan, & Improve.

	Network Leader	Site Leader	Program Staff	External Assessors	Network Consultants, Trainers, & Coaches
ASSESS	 Plan trainings Coordinate external assessment Manage program self-assessment 	 Attend PQA Basics (live or online!) Train staff & lead team program self-assessment Attend Scores Reporter Webinar Enter data into Online Scores Reporter 	 Attend PQA Basics (live or online!) Participate in program self-assessment 	 Attend External Assessor Reliability Training Conduct external assessment 	 Support site team through program self-assessment Attend Youth Work Management Training of Trainers Attend Youth Work Methods Training of Trainers Attend Coaching for Continuous Improvement Training
PLAN	 Plan trainings Activate network consultants, trainers, & coaches Manage improvement planning 	 Attend Planning with Data Lead team improvement planning Attend Improvement Planning Webinar Enter plan into Online Scores Reporter 	 Attend Planning with Data Participate in improvement planning 	Attend Planning with Data	 Support site team improvement planning Facilitate Planning with Data
IMPROVE	 Plan trainings Activate network consultants, trainers, & coaches Support sites in improvement 	 Attend Quality Coaching Lead staff in improving point-of- service practices 	 Attend Youth Work Methods workshops Improve point- of-service practices 	Conduct external assessment upon request	 Support team in improvement Deliver Youth Work Methods workshops to program staff Deliver Quality Coaching workshops to program managers & staff

the core four

YPQI SITE PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS

