EMPOWER

Out-of-School Time

Technical Assistance Manual

for Empower Out-of-School Time Programs in Arizona

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Introduction

Greetings!

Who is this manual designed for?

This manual is for anyone who supports quality practices and policies in out-of-school time (OOST) settings, from technical assistance (TA) providers to program directors. This can be a position within an OOST program or an external program that provides support to OOST programs.

What is Empower?

The Empower Standards are an Arizona brand. The Empower Standards were developed, piloted, and finally implemented statewide in 2010 when state funding decisions created a financial crisis for the child care and OOST community. The solution was the creation of the Empower Standards. Arizona's child care centers, OOST programs, and child care small group homes, which are licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Bureau of Child Care Licensing (BCCL), now had an alternative to paying increased fees. They could voluntarily agree to implement the Empower Standards in exchange for a 50% discounted licensing fee. This agreement with ADHS continues today and is revisited every three years when licensing fees are renewed. The Empower Standards are also embedded in Arizona's Quality First program, administered by First Things First (FTF) and the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), which requires all contractors (including certified homes) to adopt Empower Standards.

What is the Empower Out-of-School Time Guidebook?

In 2021, the Empower Program created a specific guidebook for OOST programs that provide care only for school-age children. While all Empower Standards apply to these programs, the components that apply to infant and toddler care were removed in the Empower OOST Guidebook. The Empower OOST Guidebook provides clear guidance on how to implement each Empower Standard in OOST programs.

How do I use this manual?

This manual is a supplement to the Empower OOST Guidebook. It is meant to support TA providers working in or with OOST programs to improve the health and wellbeing of children and youth in their care. This manual provides supportive resources and tools to help implement the Empower Standards in OOST programs. TA providers may want to print specific Standards or sections from the Empower OOST Guidebook when working with programs.

10 WAYS TO EMPOWER CHILDREN TO LIVE HEALTHY LIVES

⭐ **Standard 1:** Provide daily physical activity (15 minutes for every 2 hours of programming), including adult led and free play. Limit screen time to 3 hours or less per week and no more than 60 minutes of sedentary activity at a time.

⭐ **Standard 2:** Practice sun safety.

⭐ **Standard 3:** Provide a breastfeeding-friendly environment.

⭐ **Standard 4:** Determine whether the facility is eligible for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and participate if eligible.

⭐ **Standard 5:** Limit serving fruit juice to no more than 2 times per week.

⭐ **Standard 6:** Serve meals family style and do not use food as a reward.

⭐ **Standard 7:** Provide monthly oral health education or implement a toothbrushing program.

⭐ **Standard 8:** Ensure that staff members receive 3 hours of training annually on Empower topics.

⭐ **Standard 9:** Make Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine) education materials available at all times.

⭐ **Standard 10:** Maintain a smoke-free environment.

Empower out-of-school time programs will develop and implement written policy for each Standard that meets the needs of all children served.

MODEL
FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Empower is a program that focuses on quality improvement in child care and OOST programs to support the health and wellbeing of children and youth. It is not a regulatory program, but rather a TA approach to facilitating change towards best practices. As such, it is important that TA providers use a collaborative and coordinated approach with Empower OOST programs that builds on the capacity of both the program and the staff to develop improved ways of implementing Empower Standards and, ultimately, achieving agreed-upon goals. The TA model that is used in this manual is as follows:
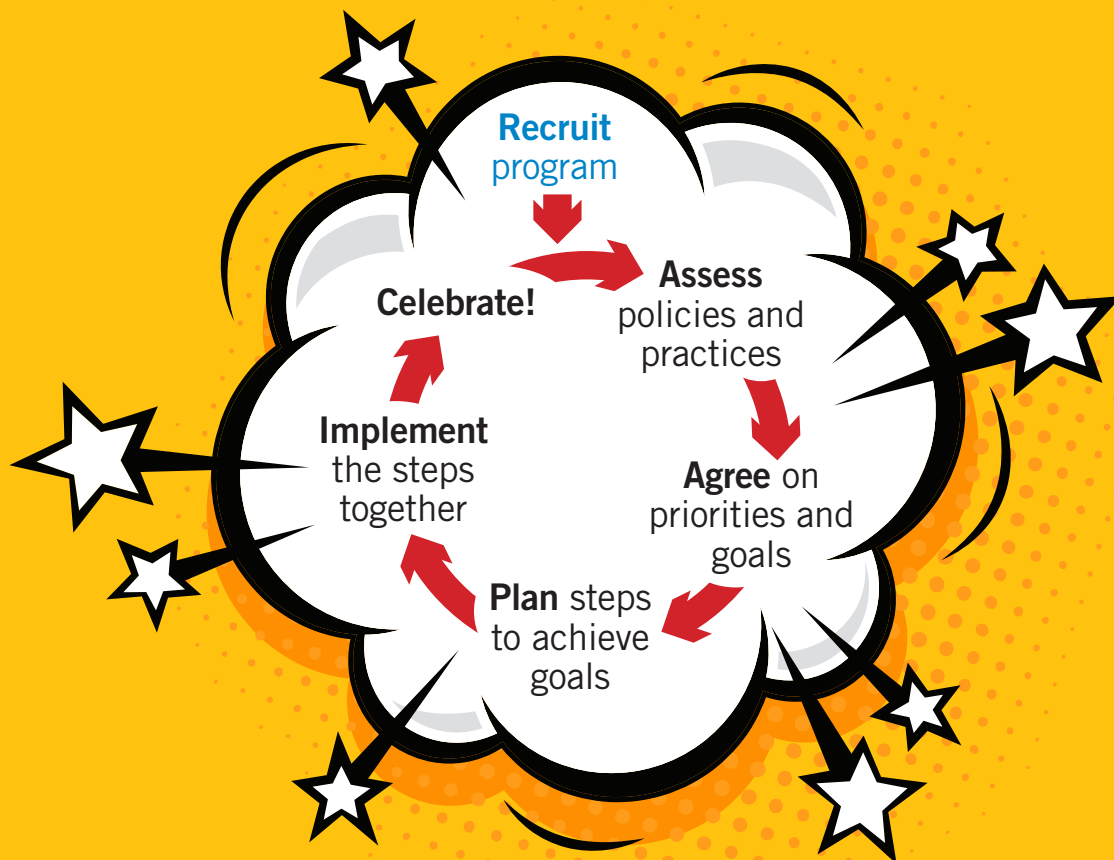
This model is meant to be an iterative or repeated cycle. Programs may identify many areas that can benefit from improvement. Remind them that not everything needs to be addressed at the same time. In fact, it is suggested to work on no more than three goals at one time. As the cycle is completed and goals are met, reassess and mutually identify the next set of goals. The amount of time it will take to complete each cycle can vary, but it will likely take between 3-6 months. This keeps the pace of improvement manageable while keeping forward momentum.

Step 1

Step 1
RECRUIT PROGRAMS

OOST programs provide care for school-age children who are in kindergarten through junior high school. These programs can be offered in conjunction with early care (children ages 0-5) in a family child care home or in a child care center. OOST programs can also be school-age-only care that is commonly provided in other locations, such as public schools, community centers, city parks and recreation programs, or summer camps. These school-age-only programs may be licensed or license-exempt, depending on the facility.

WHAT PROGRAMS SHOULD I REACH OUT TO?

Depending on what program you work for, you may have limitations on what types of programs you can support. Please make sure to follow your program's eligibility criteria. This section will help you identify: A) OOST programs in our community; B) OOST programs that are licensed by ADHS; and C) how to find out if an OOST program is already enrolled in Empower.

Step A: Find OOST programs in your area

The Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence offers a free Arizona Afterschool Directory for families and community partners to look for school-age and/or recreation programs in their area. Programs enter their information in the directory and the Center for Afterschool Excellence reaches out to these programs twice a year to update their information. The map-based interface allows you to search for OOST programs by location, services, and ages of the youth served. While you will be able to locate nearby OOST programs in your area, the directory will not identify if a site is licensed.

All OOST programs can participate in Empower, regardless of whether they are licensed and/or accept DES scholarships. However, most OOST programs that participate in Empower do so because they are licensed and/or accept DES scholarships. Finding programs that are already licensed can help you find programs that are participating in Empower.

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Step B: Find licensed OOST programs in your area:
Use one of the following methods to identify if a program is licensed.
1) Use the AZ Care Check searchable database that has information about licensed child care centers and homes. Records may be searched by facility/provider name, location, and provider type. The best way to search for a program is by address, as some providers' licensed names are different than their operating names.
2) Download a list of licensed providers across the state. This includes all licensed child care centers, homes, and out-of-school time facilities. Once downloaded, the file indicates if a facility is licensed for school-age children. OOST programs that only serve school-age children will only have 'licensed' marked under the school-age column.
3) Call to ask the program if they have a licensing certificate.

Step C: Verify that the OOST provider is participating in Empower

Nearly 99% of licensed programs participate in Empower. Therefore, if the OOST program is licensed, it is likely they are enrolled in Empower. Currently, there is not a public database that can tell you if a program is participating in Empower. The best way to find out is to do one of the following:
1) Ask the program director/supervisor of the OOST program
2) Contact the Arizona Department of Health Services to find out the Empower participation status. You can either:
   a. Call Empower staff: 480-294-2792 or Licensing staff: 602-364-2539
   b. Email: BCCL@azdhs.gov

Now you have a list of potential programs that will benefit from your TA. You may want to start with the programs you identified in Step C that are already enrolled in Empower. However, if you do not have any programs in your area that are participating in Empower, you can support any willing OOST program as long as it meets your program's requirements.

HOW DO I RECRUIT AN OOST PROGRAM?

Once you've identified the programs you think will be a good fit for your TA, it is time to recruit the program to which you can provide your services. Unfortunately, there is not a magic formula to use to recruit programs. It can take a single phone call or multiple forms of communication to engage an OOST program.

Tips to recruit:

⭐ **Use your connections and network:** Relationships can be very helpful when recruiting programs. Do you know someone who works at the program or does someone in your network have a connection? That may be a good place to start. Ask them to introduce you to the director.

⭐ **Highlight the benefits to the program:** There are many benefits for OOST programs to using your services.

- **Free training hours:** If a facility is a licensed program, each staff member who provides child care services must complete 18 or more hours of training every 12 months. In addition, Empower Standards require that 3 training hours be dedicated to Empower topics. Therefore, your services provide free training hours that count towards Empower Standards and licensing requirements.

- **Family engagement:** Many programs look for opportunities to engage families with materials or even family-focused trainings that you may be able to provide. This enhances the care they provide for the children and their families.

- **Programming for children and youth:** Can you offer a class or activity as a guest presenter in the classroom for the OOST program? This helps ease some planning and administrative duties of the program staff while providing quality care and educational experiences for the children.

- **Educational reinforcement items:** This is a good time to use items that might incentivize a program to use your services. What educational reinforcement items do you have that support the Empower Standards? Do you have physical activity equipment, mealtime supplies, sunscreen, or even family handouts? You can create a sample packet of your resources to send to the program. This could be sent via email with photos or delivered as a package through mail.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE?

The best method of communication varies, depending on the facility's staffing capacity. It is best to contact a program using more than one method. For example, call the program and send an email to the program director. A sample email is included in appendix A. Be patient when engaging with new programs. Caring for children and youth can be a time-intensive job.

THEY AGREED! NOW WHAT?

Once a program has agreed to work with you, it is a good idea to set clear expectations with the program. A partnership agreement is a great tool to use. You can document what services you will provide and what the program will commit to completing in return. Once you have this agreement, you are ready to move on to the next step: assessing policies and practices. See the appendix B for a sample partnership agreement.

Step 2

Step 2
POLICIES & PRACTICES

Assess policies and practices.

OOST providers are in a special position to empower children and youth to learn habits that can keep them healthy for life. The Empower Program is designed to help OOST programs move beyond rules and regulations and towards best practices to better support children's health.

One of the best ways to start working with programs is to help them complete the Empower OOST self-assessment tool. If the program is licensed, this is the same tool that is used by licensing staff for their monitoring visits. The results will help illustrate how well the program is implementing each Empower Standard. It will also help the program prioritize areas for improvement.

Example of Self-Assessment Tool:

Staff select response

Standard

Components

Fruit Juice				
Provides water throughout the day both inside and outside	Fully	Partially	None	Don't Know
Offers water as the first choice for thirst	Fully	Partially	None	Don't Know
Does not serve fruit juice more than twice per week	Fully	Partially	None	Don't Know
Limits serving more than 6-8 ounces of fruit juice at one time	Fully	Partially	None	Don't Know

The OOST self-assessment has a staff member self-report how the program is implementing the components for each Empower Standard. The Empower OOST Guidebook outlines all Standards and their corresponding components that programs must implement to meet the Standard.

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THE SELF-ASSESSMENT?

For a licensing visit, the site director, supervisor, or designated lead staff member will typically complete the tool. However, you may invite multiple staff members to complete the self-assessment and then synthesize the results. It is important to work with staff members who are familiar with the policies and procedures as well as the daily practices of the program.

HOW DO YOU COMPLETE THE SELF-ASSESSMENT?

First, be clear about how the self-assessment is used. The main purpose is to help programs improve. The information gathered from the assessment will never be used in a punitive way and will remain confidential. Encourage the program to complete the assessment honestly. You are not there to give them a rating or a test grade. You are there to support their goals of providing quality care for children and youth. Once they have a clear understanding of how the self-assessment is used, there are two ways you can work with programs to complete the self-assessment tool: together or on their own.

If time permits, complete the self-assessment tool together with the staff member(s). As a TA provider, the more time you spend connecting with the program, the better you will be able to support them. This time allows for more conversation and helpful context as you work to support the program. It also gives you time to establish rapport and build trust with the staff. Remember, your role during this assessment is to ask questions and help the staff member(s) complete the tool. It may be tempting to give advice or TA, but refrain from doing so during the assessment. Instead, focus on completing an honest self-assessment so you can better support the program once their areas for improvement become clear.

Alternatively, you can ask the designated staff member to complete the self-assessment on their own and then review it with them when you work together to set priorities.

> **Tip:**
> If you are visiting the site in-person to complete this step, bring 2 or more copies of the OOST self-assessment tool with you. One copy is yours to use as a reference and the others are for the program's staff to complete.

ASSESSING PRACTICES

The OOST self-assessment tool first asks staff members to identity how well the program is implementing the components for each Empower Standard. Components are listed under each Standard. You can refer to the corresponding section for each Standard in the Empower OOST Guidebook to understand what each component means. Staff will have the option to select: fully, partially, none, or don't know.

⭐ Fully indicates the component is implemented all the time.

⭐ Partially means the component is implemented some of the time

⭐ None means the component is not being implemented.

Occasionally, staff may not know if a component is implemented. When this happens, they can select "don't know;" however, if you can work with staff to get the answer, you will have a more meaningful assessment.

ASSESSING POLICIES

The last section of the self-assessment tool asks staff if there is a written policy for each Standard. Policies are typically documented in employee handbooks, family handbooks, policy and procedure manuals, or the statement of services. Before you meet with staff to complete the self-assessment, ask them to gather a copy of all handbooks/manuals that contain the program's written policies. This may take staff a bit of time to gather, which is why it is important to give them advance notice. Then work with staff to review the written policies and record whether the program has a written policy for the Standard.

Tip:
You will want to have the sample policies from the OOST Empower Guidebook on hand to compare the program's policies with the Standard's sample policies to make sure all components are addressed.

Example of Written Policy:

WRITTEN POLICY			
For the following Standards, please choose either "Yes", "No," or "Don't Know" indicating whether or not your facility has written policies. Samples of written policies can be found in the Out-of-School Time Empower Guidebook and the website: www.theempowerpack.org.			
Do you have a WRITTEN POLICY for the following Empower Standards?			
Physical activity and screen time	Yes	No	Don't Know

Step 3

Agree on Priorities and Goals

Based on the self-assessment results and your conversations with staff, you can work with the program to identify priority areas or goals. It is recommended to choose no more than three goals to work on at one time. It is helpful to have at least one short-term goal that is relatively easy to achieve. This may be a component that is partially implemented and the program is ready to fully implement the component. Having one goal that the program can quickly achieve will help them stay motivated to work towards best practices. The remaining goals may be a little harder to achieve and take more time to work towards full implementation. These may be practices or policies that are not yet in place. While the goal is to have all components and policies fully implemented, it is not expected to happen immediately. You will know best how to help a program move towards their goals once you have agreed on priority areas together.

IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES

Use the results of the self-assessment to identify which Standards the OOST program would like to improve. First, identify the Standards for which the program does not have policies or have "partially" or "none" responses for any of the components listed under the Standard. Next, have an open discussion with them about the areas for improvement. Encourage the staff to choose no more than three priorities to focus on to make it manageable and feasible.

Questions you can ask staff to help them select their priorities:

⭐ What Standard/component are you most excited to work on?

⭐ What Standards/components feel easy to work on?

⭐ What Standards/components feel hard to work on?

⭐ What Standards/components do you think staff will be most willing to work on?

When you are first working with a program, encourage them to start with goals that feel easier and/or more exciting to them. As your work with the program continues, you can tackle the harder goals. Initially, you may want to focus on one Standard and improve the components within that Standard. Over time, you can add more Standards to the list of goals. Ultimately, what the program works on is up to the program. You are there to guide them as they make their decisions and to honor their priorities.

AGREEING ON GOALS

Now that you have the agreed-upon priorities, make sure that they are framed as a goal.

You can ask these questions to write a clear goal statement:

⭐ Once you make the changes, what will be different?

⭐ What is the outcome you are seeking to achieve?

⭐ What is the desired result of our work together?

Once you have no more than three goals to work on, it is time to plan steps to achieve the goals.

Step 4

IMPROVEMENT

Plan Steps for Improvement

CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

Now it's time to work with the OOST program to create an action plan. An action plan is simply a document that lists the steps needed to reach goals, breaking down the goal into manageable tasks. With Empower, there are four types of actions that you can encourage the program to address for each Standard: policy, practice, staff training, and family engagement. You can find a sample action plan in Appendix C.

★ **Policy** actions refer to changes made to the program's rules and procedures. These actions will impact written documents, like employee and family handbooks, program policy and procedures manuals, and contracts. A well-written policy will state the practices that the program will do for each Standard, why the practices are important, and how it aligns with the program's values.

★ **Practice** actions refer to changes to the program's day-to-day operations. It is what the director or staff do each day to support the policy for each Standard. This is where you might work on increasing implementation of the components of each Standard.

★ **Staff training** actions identify ways in which the organization will support the staff in their knowledge, ability, and comfort in understanding the policies and practices for each Standard.

★ **Family engagement** actions outline how families will know how to support and understand each policy and practice for each Standard. This may be done in orientation, monthly newsletters, parent flyers, parent information boards, and more. Remember that family engagement is a component of every Standard except Standard 8: Staff Training.

Not all goals need to have action steps for each of the categories. This is just a helpful way to organize your work with the program.

As they work through steps, you can ask them questions like:

★ Do the policy manuals need to be updated? If so, which ones?

★ What needs to change in your daily schedule to fully implement this Standard/component?

★ How will staff know and feel confident in implementing any changes?

★ How will families know about and support the changes you are making?

One thing that is critical for any change the program seeks to make is to make sure it is communicated with staff and families.

Let's see an example

You are working with a licensed OOST provider in your community. They agree to explore the Empower Standards with your help. You work with them to complete the Empower OOST self-assessment tool. Through this process, you identify three potential Standards in which the program has the most opportunity to improve. As you discuss setting priorities, it becomes clear that the program only has capacity to work on one Standard at a time.

The Standard they choose to work on first is Standard 1: Physical Activity, Screen Time and Sedentary Time. The program does well with limiting screen time but they are not providing enough physical activity time. They identify that six out of nine components were either being partially or not implemented. Together, you create an action plan that outlines the tasks and timeline to increase their ability to fully implement the Empower Standard 1.

Sample Action Plan

Goal 1: Fully implement physical activity components outlined in Empower Standard 1.
• Provides at least 15 minutes of physical activity per 2 hours of programming
• Includes adult-led activities
• Includes free-play opportunities
• Includes outdoor and indoor physical activity
• Includes moderate physical activity (for example: dancing, bouncing a ball)
• Includes vigorous physical activity (for example: running, skipping)

	Task	Who needs to be involved?	What are the resources?	Are there any barriers?	Timeline
Policy	• Update the language in the policy and procedure manual, and staff and family handbooks to match the Empower Physical Activity Standard components	Director	Sample policy in the Empower OOST Guidebook	No	December
Practice	• Ensure staff add appropriate physical activity time to weekly schedules • Ensure the scheduled physical activity includes outdoor and indoor activity • Ensure the types of activities planned encourage kids to get moderate to vigorous activity	Site supervisor and staff	Empower OOST Guidebook	There are staff that do not like change	January
Staff Training	• Share information and train staff on the changes: 1) increase in physical activity time and 2) types of physical activity to offer (planned, free play, indoor, outdoor, moderate and vigorous physical activity level) • Offer 2 staff trainings on leading physical activities and how to include youth of all abilities	Site supervisor and staff	**Training Resources** • Empower website • AZ Health Zone • Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence • Activity resources for school-age children		Inform staff in January. Offer trainings in February and March.
Family Engagement	• Share the changes to the program's physical activity time with families in our monthly newsletter • Share a family handout annually on how families can be active at home • Post weekly schedule with physical activity time and types of activities on parent information board	Site supervisor	Empower website	No	**Newsletter:** March **Family Handout:** Annually **Posting weekly schedule:** Weekly

See the action plan template (appendix C) to work on this with your OOST programs.

Step 5

Step 5
IMPLEMENTATION

Implement the Action Plan

Now it's time to make that action plan a reality. Implementing action plans is not an exact science. Some action steps are straightforward and require one or two people to complete it. Others require numerous steps and multiple groups of people to complete it. As a technical assistance provider, your support is invaluable to programs trying to make the changes they've put in their action plan. This section will provide you with some resources and tools to help you support the OOST program. Below you will find a variety of existing resources to assist the OOST program in updating policies, making changes to practices, communicating changes, and sharing information with parents and children.

POLICY SUPPORTS

Written policies inform everyone about the practices followed by a program to support children and families. Policies should be located in multiple places to make sure administrators, staff, and families are aware. This helps keep everyone accountable to the practices that best serve children in the program. It also helps keep the practices in place when staff changes happen over time. If the program does not have a written policy for an Empower Standard or is missing key components of the Standard, help the program improve their documentation by using the sample policies. In the OOST Empower Guidebook, you can find sample policies at the end of each Standard's section. Programs can make adaptations to the sample policy language as long as all the key components of the Empower Standard are included in the policy.

CURRICULUM

The list of curricula on the following pages is approved for use by the AZ Health Zone. Many of these curricula have family handouts, activities to do with children enrolled in the program, and support the implementation of the Empower Standards indicated in the chart below.

Curriculum	Corresponding Empower Standard	Audience	Description
Botany on Your Plate	**Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	K-4	Botany on Your Plate is a life science unit that inspires children to explore the fascinating realm of plants we eat. Every lesson begins with plant tastings that spark curiosity, interesting questions, and social dialogue to fuel the learning process. This inquiry approach engages children as botanists observing and collecting data, discussing findings, and reflecting on what they learn as they study edible roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds.
Cooking Matters Chefs and Kids	**Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	K-12	Cooking Matters is an easy-to-use guide that helps chefs, nutrition educators, and food service professionals provide hands-on instruction that will help kids develop a love of cooking and the skills to make healthy food choices wherever they go. Within the guide you will find a variety of resources to help you engage kids, including tips and advice for planning fun activities, materials lists and activity instructions, appealing and interactive recipes for kids, and fun handouts that supplement the lessons of each activity.
Discover MyPlate	**Standard 1: Physical Activity, Screen Time and Sedentary time** **Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	K	Discover MyPlate is fun and inquiry-based nutrition education that fosters the development of healthy food choices and physically active lifestyles for children. Kindergarten teachers can meet education standards for math, science, English language arts, and health using the 6 ready-to-go and interactive lessons. Children become food-smart as they practice counting, reading, writing, and more.
Eat Together, Eat Better	**Standard 6: Family-Style Meals**	Kids and Adults	The Eat Together, Eat Better lessons support nutrition educators, parents, and youth educators in teaching the importance of family meals. The lessons use a mix of interactive learning formats, including small-and large-group discussions, brainstorming, planning, and cooking activities. All of these activities create discussion, encourage problem solving, and develop skills to support family meals.

Curriculum	Corresponding Empower Standard	Audience	Description
Food Smarts	**Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice** **Standard 6: Family-Style Meals**	3-12	Interactive, learner-centered curriculum for nutrition educators bringing programs to low-income audiences. Ideally a recipe is prepared during each lesson.
Growing Healthy Habits	**Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	K-5	Growing Healthy Habits is a gardening and nutrition education curriculum for elementary-aged kids. This resource focuses on integrating nutrition into the classroom through gardening and scripted lessons that meet science, language arts, social studies, health, and math objectives. Growing Healthy Habits uses gardening as a tool for encouraging students to consume more fruits and vegetables and whole grains, and increase physical activity.
Healthy Classrooms, Healthy Schools	**Standard 1: Physical Activity, Screen Time, and Sedentary Time** **Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	K-5	Healthy Classrooms, Healthy Schools helps teachers transform their classroom and school into environments promoting healthy eating and physical activity. This curriculum includes two sets of supplemental lessons, one for grades K-2 and one for grades 3-5. Healthy Classrooms, Healthy Schools can also be ordered with companion books that have nutrition and physical activity themes tailored to individual grades, ranging from K-5. The curriculum includes 8 lessons incorporating 27 activities. FitBit™ is a best practice resource component that gets students up out of their seats and moving while, at the same time, reinforcing nutrition and health concepts that are aligned with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, grade-level National Health Standards, and USDA's MyPlate. Another accompanying resource is Health Through Literacy, which is a set of five to six books, age-appropriate for each grade K–5. Each set includes books with nutrition or physical activity themes.

Curriculum	Corresponding Empower Standard	Audience	Description
Junior Master Gardener - Level 1	**Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	3-5	The 2016 revised Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Level 1 curriculum provides elementary teachers with the tools to teach the world of gardening with 8 chapters of novel, hands-on, and proven lessons. The curriculum also helps develop life skills, includes career exploration, and provides opportunities for students to culminate the JMG experience with service-learning projects. As students complete areas of study, they can earn different recognition certifications, including designation as Certified Junior Master Gardeners. Each chapter is divided into sections called teaching concepts. Then, there are multiple activities within each teaching concept.
The Great Garden Detective	**Standard 4: CACFP** **Standard 5: Fruit Juice**	3-4	Discover which fruits and vegetables are sweetest, crunchiest, and juiciest through a series of investigations and fun experiences connecting the school garden to the classroom, school cafeteria, and home. This 11-lesson curriculum for grades 3 and 4 includes bulletin board materials, veggie dice, fruit and vegetable flash cards, and 10 issues of Garden Detective News for parents/caregivers.
Learn Grow Eat & Go!	**Standard 1: Physical Activity, Screen Time, and Sedentary Time**	2-5	Learn, Grow, Eat & Go! (LGEG) is a 10-week unit of study (two lessons per week) that is hands-on, multifaceted, and academically rich. It combines the interdisciplinary elements of nutrition, garden science, physical activity, food preparation, and fresh vegetable tastings to improve the health and wellness of children, families, and the school community.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

You can find additional information to support the implementation of Empower on these websites.

Empower Program	You will find lots of Empower-specific resources on this website, including the OOST Guidebook and the OOST self-assessment tool. There is a dedicated webpage for each Standard, with activities and tools to help implement the Standard. This includes ways to engage families, activities to do with children and youth, ways to involve children and youth of all abilities, as well as other helpful websites. Please note: resources on this site are not limited to OOST programs, and some may be geared towards programs that serve infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Use your discretion when reviewing the resources to make sure it is appropriate for OOST programs and school-age children.
AZ Health Zone	AZ Health Zone provides nutrition and physical activity technical support and resources to OOST staff, children, and parents. The program is for families who are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or school meals programs. Search for the partner in your community on the website to start services.
Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence	Arizona's leading statewide advocacy and information resource for promoting high quality, affordable, and accessible out-of-school time programs as an essential component in the positive development of Arizona's youth. You can find resources, professional development and more on this site.
ADHS Licensing	Here you can find OOST programs that are licensed by ADHS as well as the rules and regulations they follow. Call the licensing office to ask questions or contact the surveyor in your community. Licensing provides TA on Empower and is a great resource.
Arizona SunWise Program	The SunWise Skin Cancer Prevention School Program provides free curriculum, school assemblies, staff training, and resources to reduce the risk for skin cancer. The curriculum features educational activities that incorporate math, science, health, social studies, language arts, and critical thinking. These fun-filled activities average 20 minutes in length and are divided into 3 student-age groups: K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Minimal time is required to implement a SunWise School Program.

Step 6

Step 6
CELEBRATE

Once goals and action steps are completed, it's time to celebrate. The first step is to involve everyone in the celebration. Work with the program to find ways to communicate these accomplishments to staff, parents, and children via newsletters, meetings, and celebrations. Pay special attention to staff, especially those that played a significant role in the success.

Here are some brainstorming questions you can use to help the program celebrate their milestones:

★ Can the program plan a fun activity for staff, like bowling or a picnic?

★ How can staff meetings be a place for celebration?

★ How are program staff honored and recognized?

★ Can a staff member who deserves recognition be highlighted on the parent information board for the week?

★ Can you bring in a few fun items that the staff need to continue meeting the goal, like physical activity equipment or serving utensils?

Another great way for TA providers to recognize a program's success is to submit their success stories to the Empower Program.

A celebration does not need to be big or expensive. What is most important is recognizing the work behind the scenes that led to the success.

WE MET OUR GOALS! NOW WHAT?

Once goals are met and celebrations are held, it is time to re-evaluate and create new goals. Re-evaluating means going back to Step 2: Assess Policies and Practices. You can work with the program to reassess their program with the OOST self-assessment tool, starting with Step 2: Assess Policies and Practices. Alternatively, a program may want to keep working with the results from their first self-assessment. In this case, you will use those results and start with Step 3: Agree on Priorities and Goals. In some scenarios, it may be important to encourage programs to complete a new self-assessment. For example, if there are staff changes, especially with leadership, it will be helpful to start again with their perspective included in the process. Once new goals are established, work with the program to create and implement a new action plan.

Thank you for supporting OOST programs and the children they serve!

Appendices

Empower Out-of-School Time Draft Email

Draft Email:

Dear {Site Director or Contact name},

My name is (your name) and I am the (your title) at (place of work}. We are working closely with out-of-school time programs to implement the Empower program and improve the health and wellness of children in (your community). If your program is licensed, chances are you participate in Empower. Empower offers a 50% reduction in your licensing fees in exchange for voluntarily adopting 10 Standards. If your program is not licensed, Empower is a great opportunity to strengthen the health of the children in your care. We would like to offer our services at no cost to your program and staff.

    What do our services offer you?

- Free staff training hours that can meet licensing and Empower Program requirements

- Resources to support healthy practices for staff and youth

- Support in strengthening the quality of your care, especially when it comes to creating healthy futures

We hope you will reach out to us to talk further about how our services can benefit your program.

Thank you for your time. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. I can be reached by phone at {phone number} or by email at {email address}. I will reach out to you next week if I don't hear from you first.

Sincerely,

{name}

{your title}

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CONTENTS

APPENDIX B

Empower Out-of-School Time Partnership Agreement

Empower Out-of-School Time
Partnership Agreement
<mark>DATE</mark>

This Partnership Agreement (PA) is entered by and between (name of agency/program) and (name of OOST site). This collaboration's purpose is to support the implementation of Empower Standards in out-of-school time (OOST) programs, including access to professional development, technical assistance, and resources. These resources will support participating programs in the community's efforts to achieve its goal of improving children's health and wellbeing by adopting and implementing the Empower Standards.

The *{your agency}* is committed to supporting your OOST program's efforts to implement the Empower Standards. In an effort to support your program, **the *{your agency}* agrees to:**

- Work with your staff to assess current practices and policies related to the Empower program.
- Co-create goals to improve Empower-related practices and policies at your OOST program.
- Provide training, materials, technical assistance, and support on Empower Standards for OOST program and its staff.

The **{OOST program name}** agrees to complete the following
- Provide staff time and program handbooks to assess current Empower practices and policies.
- Co-create goals to improve Empower-related practices and policies.
- Allow staff to attend professional development opportunities.
- Share resources and materials with staff.
- Make changes to policies and practices to improve the implementation of Empower Standards.

This Partnership Agreement (PA) is an agreement between the *{your agency}* and the {**OOST program name**} for {duration of time – e.g., School year 2022-2023}; the activities in this agreement shall be completed by {June 202X}.

_____

Program Director Signature

_____   _____

Program Director Printed Name   Date

_____   _____

{your agency} Signature   Date

_____

{your agency} Printed Name

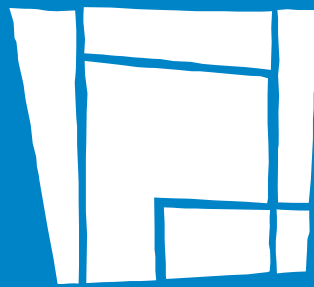---

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APPENDIX C

Empower Out-of-School Time Action Plan

EMPOWER *Out-of-School Time* ACTION PLAN

GOAL: ...

	Task	Who needs to be involved?	What are the resources?	Are there any barriers?	Who is the lead?	When will this be completed?
Policy	★ Policy					
Practice	★ Practice					
Staff Training	★ Training					
Family Engagement	★ Family					

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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theempowerpack.org
June 2022

AZ HEALTH ZONE

HEALTHY STARTS HERE