After School is NOT School

Invite Richmond’s youth into a fun, creative, and engaging after-school program
Goals for After-School

- Give students something to look forward to!
- Give students a chance to find an interest or passion (SPARKS).
- Give students a chance to get to know themselves, each other, and cool college students.
“Pure IQ is stubbornly resistant to improvement after about age eight. But executive functions and the ability to handle stress and manage strong emotions can be improved, sometimes dramatically, well into adolescence and even adulthood.”

How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character, 48
MSR programs should be:

- FUN!
- Invitational
- Interactive
- Active (movement)
- Project-based
- Games/competition
- Food
MSR programs should not be:

- Like a class
- Academic worksheets
- Lecture
Role play!
Learning vs. Fun

Learning

FUN
Middle School

- Gender-specific activities have shown to successfully engage students at this age.
- Groups are generally more effective than one-on-one activities at this age because students may be looking to each other for affirmation.
Human Lawnmower Race
Physical Education
Explore Online
Make it magical
Give them a SPARK
Ignite adventure
Conclusions

- Academics don’t always feel “relevant” to students because they don’t see the connection to “real life.”

- Treat every student as important and worthy of your time no matter the size of the group.

- The beginning of each activity sets the tone for the rest of your time. (True for all ages!)

- Remember:

  Fun = Preparation + Invitation
Establish a Routine

- Ask a different student leader every week to get the group settled. UR leaders remain silent but present during this time.

- Take weekly attendance.

- List your expectations on board and review them weekly.

- Track behavior every week and tie it to a reward system.
Foster Positive Behavior

- Praise in public, criticize in private.
- Positive Youth Development
- Get students’ buy-in: Solicit feedback from program participants and really listen to what they have to say!
- Build positive relationships with your students.
A Rebel in Our Midst

- Active vs. passive disruption

- It’s not about you; there’s usually something else going on with child. Ask Deneen about what might be going on with this child.

- Remain calm and reiterate expectations.

- If rebel continues to disrupt, the classroom leader who relates best to the rebel should take the rebel out of the classroom for a walk-about.

- If extremely poor behavior persists for several weeks, ask Deneen to remove rebel from program.
Dealing with Crisis

- Call front office at extension 1120.
- If a student goes AWOL, send one of the program leaders to find Deneen or call 1120.
Role Play!
Assessment and Program Improvement

- Build It staff will visit MSR programs throughout semester to observe and offer constructive feedback.
- Weekly reflection among program leaders
- Consider a mentor training about four or five weeks into MSR.
Questions?