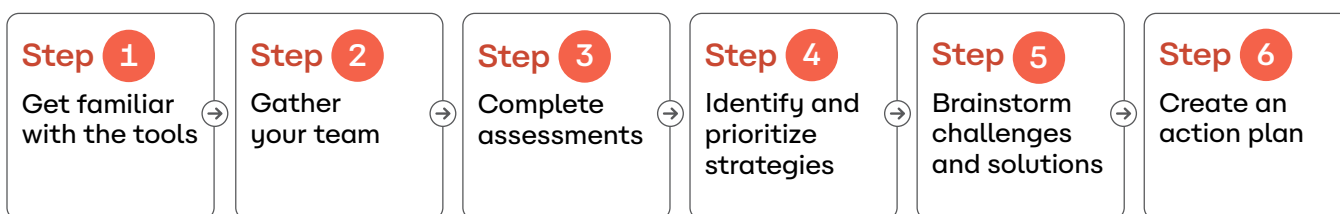


Collaborative for
**Advancing Healthy Experiences
in Out-of-School Time**

Assessment to Action

Six steps for implementing the National AfterSchool Association's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards for Out-of-School Time (OST).

This guide is designed to support OST professionals with implementing the [National AfterSchool Association's \(NAA\) HEPA Standards](#). The guide walks through six steps to help you gather a team to assist with this work, take stock of what you are already doing well, prioritize focus areas, and break your plan into actionable steps.



Keep in mind that fully implementing the HEPA standards is aspirational. While we know that programs in varied settings and contexts have had success in adopting these standards, not all standards apply to all OST programs. Resources, control over certain programmatic features, and conditions of the physical spaces in which programs are implemented may influence which standards you consider adopting.

Step 1: Get familiar with the tools.

The following tools, when used together, will help you see what you are already doing well and identify areas where you want to improve or try something new.

[HEPA Standards 2.0, National AfterSchool Association](#)

The NAA HEPA Standards provide practical, comprehensive guidance for OST programs. They translate nutrition and physical activity science into actions OST programs can take to offer healthy foods, beverages, and physical activity. The standards also address program and organizational policy and implementation, including staff training, social supports, and environmental supports.

[HEPA Self-Assessment Tool, National AfterSchool Association](#)

The HEPA Self-Assessment Tool can be used to assess areas of strength and areas for improvement and help determine continuous program improvement plans for adopting the HEPA Standards.

Step 2: Gather your team.

Even if you already have a strong team ready to take on this work, it can be helpful to utilize this section to ensure that you have the right partners needed to bring your implementation of the HEPA Standards all the way through assessment to action planning and implementation.

Building a team with broad representation:

- **Creates an early feedback loop for assessment, planning, and implementation challenges.** For instance, partners can readily identify when something is not going as planned and can help brainstorm changes to test to reach your goals.
- **Builds buy-in with needed partners.** For example, those whose input and permissions you may need to enact policy changes, provide resources, or share space. Bringing them into the process early allows them to see the “why” behind your efforts and be part of the planning and decision making. This increases the likelihood they will be able to commit resources and enact policy changes when you are ready for implementation.

GO FURTHER →

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s [Healthy Out-of-School Time Roadmaps](#) introduce the NAA HEPA standards’ content areas and what each prioritizes. They also include tips for taking action and additional resources to explore.



Invite others to support this assessment to action process, including:

- **Those directly impacted by your services; think youth, families, and direct service staff.** Bring voices to the table that represent the demographics for those already participating in your program.
- **Representation from underserved or disproportionately impacted populations in your community:**
 - Review available data to see who you may not be reaching in your community. Some helpful sources include the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#) and your local or state Department of Public Health.
 - Consider those in your community who have additional barriers to participation or are impacted by social factors that lead to worse health outcomes. As described in [Explaining the Social Determinants of Health from the Frameworks Institute](#), “People’s incomes and surroundings play a large role in health outcomes, because these factors affect access to nutritious food, clean air and water, opportunities for physical activity, and more.” Examples include, but are not limited to, those in your community who live in areas that have less access to fresh fruits and vegetables or safe spaces for physical activity. Or those who do not have reliable access to transportation to participate in program offerings.
- **Those who can help you collect, organize, and interpret your findings and share your results.** Many organizations have found partnering with a local college or university is a good source of technical expertise, but you may also find someone already connected to your work who has these skills.
- **Partners who have shared or similar goals.** Working together can help you leverage resources and expertise. For example, inviting someone from another community-based organization who shares the goal of improving health outcomes for youth.

GO FURTHER →

The places where people live, learn, and play shape health in many ways. Learn more about these factors in the CDC video, [Social Determinants of Health](#).



GO FURTHER →

You can find additional resources for identifying partners and building capacity in the Education Development Center’s [Prevention Collaboration in Action Toolkit](#).

Build Capacity Example

What data, skills, or resources do we need?	Who has access/can give permission?	How do their goals/mission/work align with ours?	What's in it for them?	Who can make this connection?
Local demographic data	Jennifer Smith leads our County Public Health	Their goal of creating a "safe and healthy community" aligns with our goals	Our work increases the health of youth and families in our community and can help them reach their goals	Mark Fox is on a school committee with Jennifer Smith and can invite her to our next meeting
Someone to help build buy-in with the direct service staff	Marcus Murphy loves doing outdoor games with the youth in our program and the other staff get excited about his ideas	Marcus is invested in helping the youth in our program form healthy habits	Getting buy in from staff to increase the amount of physical activity that is built into our program policies and schedules would make planning and staffing easier in the long run	Lisa Walker is the program supervisor and can ask Marcus to join our planning team at their next meeting

Use the Build Capacity table (see Appendix A) to think through who you want to connect with and how to approach them for involvement.

Step 3: Complete the HEPA Self-Assessment Tool as a team.

Completing the assessment has several benefits:

- Helping to identify specific areas of strengths.
- Determining action steps that will lead to improvement.

EXAMPLE:

When planning staff development activities, consider:

Can all staff participate, or only staff who do not hold additional jobs or have caretaker responsibilities at home? What about staff who need to use public transportation, are they able to attend staff development if it is scheduled outside regular work hours?

Step 4: Identify and prioritize strategies.

With your planning team, reflect on your assessment responses:

- **What do you want to celebrate that you are already doing well?** How will you build on this?
- **Where do you see opportunities for improvement?** Remember, this work is aspirational—it is about starting where you are, making steady progress toward your outcomes, and celebrating your successes!



Choose practices, programs, and/or policies to address each standard or priority area you want to work on.

- Once you have completed the **Prioritize Your Strategies chart**, go through it as a team and choose what you will address first.
- Can you balance some “low-hanging fruit” that would give you some early wins (buy-in and momentum) with goals that may stretch your project a little more but have a longer-term impact?

KEY QUESTIONS

1. **When considering capacity and resources, include fiscal and people resources** such as needed skills, decision-makers, community expertise, time, etc. Do you have the needed resources and capacity for this? If no, is it possible to build them in the time you need to implement?
2. **What are the potential barriers to implementation?** Can you overcome these to reach successful implementation in the current timeframe you are planning for?
3. **Would implementation of this be a good fit for your program, those you serve, and the community?**
4. **Will successful strategies be sustainable once funding ends?** Are there other partners who can potentially take this on in the future? How much time, capacity, and resources would be needed to sustain? For example, policy changes may take more work to build support for, craft, and implement, but take less work to monitor once implemented.

Prioritize Your Strategies Example

Standard/Priority	Include a fruit or vegetable at every snack or meal
Capacity and Resources	We do not currently have the funding for this, but we believe we will be able to partner with the local community foundation and work collaboration with school district
Potential Barriers	Fiscal resources Training staff to use positive methods to encourage youth to try new foods (taste tests, writing food reviews, etc)
Program Fit	Yes—if we seek input on fruits and vegetables that are familiar to our youth and include new foods to try Yes—this fits well with what we are already doing; serving snacks daily
Community Considerations	We want this strategy to carry over to home—we will explore resources for providing fruits and vegetables for youth to take home because our area has a lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables for about 1/3 of families served
Sustainability	Share results and stories back with grant funders to demonstrate success, leverage additional funding

Use the **Prioritize Your Strategies** (see Appendix B) to work through each potential standard or priority issue you want to address.

Step 5: Brainstorm implementation challenges and solutions to test.

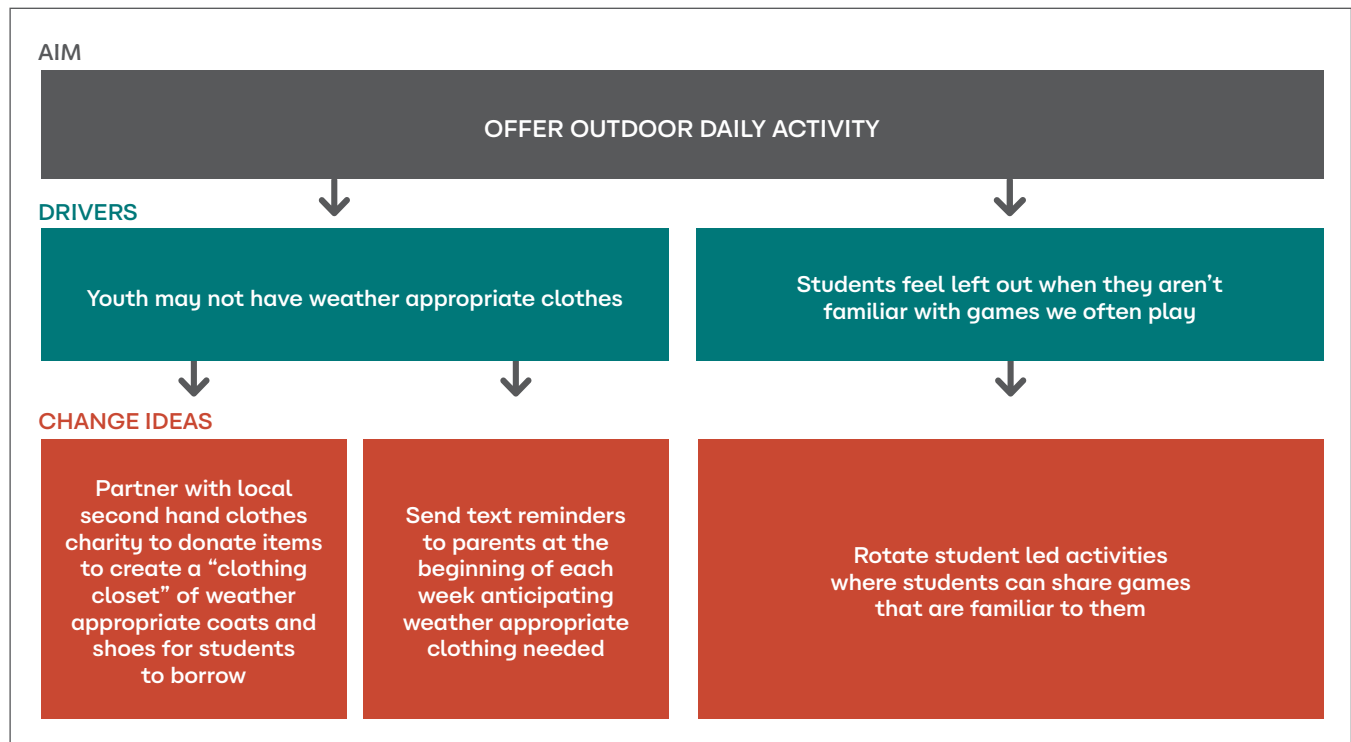
Before you create a plan and start putting it into action, it is helpful to anticipate challenges to implementation and brainstorm solutions and changes to test. Consider trying these test changes on a small scale. For example, you can pilot test changes by starting with one program site, with a small group, or on certain days of the week. After trying the change for some time, you can meet with your team and decide if the change is working and if you want to keep doing it, spread it to a larger group, make changes, or try something else.

GO FURTHER →

Learn more about continuous quality improvement and download other useful tools from [The Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#).

Use the **Key Driver Diagram** (see Appendix C) to support your continuous quality improvement process.

Key Driver Diagram Example



Step 6: Create an action plan.

Creating an action plan helps you break your work into smaller, manageable steps; identify your partners who will lead each step; monitor your timeline; and gauge if your work is having the intended impact. Revisit your action plan regularly to track your progress, make changes as needed, and celebrate your accomplishments.



Use the **Action Plan (see Appendix D)** template for each standard you want to address.

GO FURTHER →

The [Out-of-School Nutrition and Physical Activity Initiative \(OSNAP\)](#) is an evidence-based initiative that helps out-of-school time programs improve practices and policies. Their "[Fast Maps](#)" can help you identify action steps for reaching healthy eating and physical activity standards. They also offer tip sheets, policy guides, curriculum, and parent materials.

Action Plan Example

What is your goal?

By June 30th, all program youth will participate in daily outdoor physical activity as evidenced by activity logs.

What standard/priority are you addressing to help you reach your goal?

Offer daily outdoor physical activity.

What key drivers will you need to address to be able to implement this standard/address this priority?

Youth need weather-appropriate clothing, staff need ideas for outdoor activities, schedule to include time for outdoor activity everyday with clear policies on how to adapt for weather as needed (e.g. rain, extreme cold).

Action Steps	Resources	Timeline	Person Responsible	Measure	Notes
<i>What action steps are needed? Consider how you will explore/test changes for each of your key drivers. Include steps for how you will address capacity and sustainability</i>	<i>What resources are needed? Consider human, fiscal and community resources</i>	<i>When will this step be complete by?</i>	Keep in mind that this person may not be the one to carry out all of the work but who will be responsible for ensuring that this step is completed	<i>How will you know this step is completed?</i>	Use this space for any additional notes on progress, barriers and needed next steps
Secure a partner(s) to donate clothing and shoes	Financial support via donations Items needed in a variety of sizes: sneakers boots jackets gloves and hats	September 29	Angie will start by reaching out to local second-hand clothing store Richard will reach out to a local service club for financial donation	Signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with partner organization stating what they will donate, how we will recognize them Donation is received by program fiscal person	
Provide activities by sourcing ideas from staff, youth and families: Hold an outdoor family event that provides an opportunity for families to lead activities Create a system for choosing one student each day to lead an activity	Ideas from staff, youth and families	Ongoing	Kate will be lead organizer for family night planned for October 15 Lead staff each day will support students to lead an activity	Number of families who attend family night Number of new game/activity ideas generated	

Appendices

Below are blank templates of the four tables featured as examples.

Build Capacity (Appendix A)

What data, skills, or resources do we need?	Who has access/can give permission?	How do their goals/mission/work align with ours?	What's in it for them?	Who can make this connection?

Prioritize Your Strategies (Appendix B)

Standard/ Priority	
Capacity and Resources	
Potential Barriers	
Program Fit	
Community Considerations	
Sustainability	

Key Driver Diagram (Appendix C)

AIM



DRIVERS



CHANGE IDEAS

Action Plan (Appendix D)

What is your goal?

What standard/priority are you addressing to help you reach your goal?

What key drivers will you need to address to be able to implement this standard/address this priority?

Action Steps	Resources	Timeline	Person Responsible	Measure	Notes
<p><i>What action steps are needed? Consider how you will explore/test changes for each of your key drivers. Include steps for how you will address capacity and sustainability</i></p>	<p><i>What resources are needed? Consider human, fiscal, and community resources.</i></p>	<p><i>When will this step be complete by?</i></p>	<p>Keep in mind that this person may not be the one to carry out all of the work but who will be responsible for ensuring that this step is completed.</p>	<p><i>How will you know this step is completed?</i></p>	<p>Use this space for any additional notes on progress, barriers and needed next steps</p>

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For more information or questions, reach out to the project team at: healthyOST@edc.org or visit [our website](#).



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