



NATIONAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COALITION

PEPNet MINI Quality Self Assessment Tool

**Based on the PEPNet Quality Standards for Youth Programs
that Link Youth to Work and Education
to Promote a Successful Transition to Adulthood**

PEPNet

Youth employment, youth development and education programs provide valuable services, support and opportunities to young people preparing for work and adulthood. Programs must be of high quality to successfully achieve desired outcomes. With so much competition for public and private funding, these youth programs must also be able to demonstrate and document that the money they receive is doing what it is supposed to—helping young people, especially vulnerable young people, to become life-long learners, productive workers and self-sufficient citizens.

The **PEPNet Improvement Process** can help youth programs meet research- and field-based standards of program quality and improve how they measure and document performance outcomes. The PEPNet Quality Standards reflect both current research and 10 years of practical experience from exemplary local programs.

Audience

The PEPNet Quality Standards and related tools are designed for youth employment, youth development and education programs and practitioners (leadership and staff) who work directly with young people, especially vulnerable youth, ages 12 to 25, to link them to work and education to promote a successful transition to adulthood. **The standards may be applied to a program** that is a “stand-alone” effort, one that is a part of a multi-site operation, or one that is part of a larger organization whose mission is broader than youth. The PEPNet Quality Standards use the terms “program” and “initiative” interchangeably.

PEPNet Quality Self Assessment

The first step in the PEPNet Improvement Process is the organizational Quality Self Assessment (QSA). From the QSA results, a program can determine its strengths and areas needing attention or improvement. This information can be used to develop a strategy for program improvement. The standards are organized into four categories that create a natural progression for program operations, design, offerings, and results:

- **Management for Quality:** Standards for program management—The foundation for program direction, systems and operations.
- **Programmatic Approach:** Standards for program design—How the program looks, how the young person experiences the program, how the pieces work together.
- **Youth Development Competencies:** Standards for program offerings—What youth need to know and be able to do to successfully transition to work and adulthood and how to help them gain those skills, knowledge and abilities.
- **Focus on Youth Results:** Standards for performance measurement—Measuring, documenting, and reporting youth outcomes and progress toward those outcomes.

Using the PEPNet Quality Self Assessment – Rating and Scoring

Rating Scale: The PEPNet Quality Self Assessment (QSA) tool uses the following 10-point rating scale:

To what degree does the program (or do we) consistently satisfy this indicator (or standard)?										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all		Below Average			Somewhat			Above Average		Completely

How to Score the Standards and Indicators: Read each indicator under the standard in the self assessment and ask yourself, "To what degree does the program (or do we) consistently satisfy this indicator?" Select a rating score from 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely), as illustrated on the scale above, that most closely matches your perception of where the program is at **currently** with respect to meeting the specific indicator. Place a check mark or X in the box below the score you choose.

Once you have selected a rating score for each indicator, consider how you would score the program on the standard overall, by asking yourself, "To what degree does the program (or do we) consistently satisfy this standard?" Again, select a rating score from 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely), and place a check mark or X in the box below the score you choose in the last row labeled "How would you rate this standard overall?"

Repeat this process for all standards and indicators.

Indicating when you Don't Know: In the case that you feel you lack the knowledge or experience to rate the program on a particular standard or indicator, select *Don't Know* (the last column).

Please note that this MINI Quality Self Assessment is an excerpted version of the full PEPNet Quality Self Assessment and contains indicators for two standards from Categories I – III of the PEPNet Quality Standards for Youth Programs. To learn more about the full PEPNet Quality Assessment, visit www.nyec.org/pepnet.

CATEGORY I. MANAGEMENT FOR QUALITY

Standard: 1.1. Mission: Quality programs have a clearly stated purpose that is consistent with their goals and activities and is based on the needs of the community and youth they serve.

Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't Know
1.1.1. The program has a written mission statement that accurately reflects the initiative's purpose as it relates to the needs of target youth and the community.												
1.1.2. Staff, youth participants and other stakeholders can easily articulate the purpose of the program.												
1.1.3. All aspects of the program form a coherent strategy for supporting and accomplishing the mission.												
1.1.4. The allocation of the budget and other resources supports the mission.												
1.1.5. Staff, youth and other appropriate stakeholders revisit the mission every three to five years to ensure its continued relevance.												
How would you rate this standard overall?												

Standard: 1.6. Information Management: Quality programs develop systems to collect, store, analyze and report complete and accurate data on operational and program performance, participant demographics, services, progress and outcomes.

Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't Know
1.6.1. The program has a user-friendly and effective system for collecting and sharing data on individual youth and program activities.												
1.6.2. The program collects data that is relevant to documenting progress and measuring performance outcomes.												
1.6.3. Staff can easily and accurately describe who the program serves, the kinds of activities and services each youth is receiving, and what these services accomplish.												
1.6.4. The program implements procedures to follow and collect data on a youth's progress for at least one year after completing intensive services from the program.												
1.6.5. The program collects, uses and reports organizational performance data.												
How would you rate this standard overall?												

CATEGORY II. PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

Standard: 2.2. Environment & Climate: Quality programs offer a safe, structured environment and a climate that promotes and sustains young people's development and successful transition to work and adulthood.

Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't Know
2.2.1. The program implements policies and procedures to ensure the physical and emotional safety of participating youth.												
2.2.2. The program maintains an environment in which youth feel comfortable, cared for and challenged to reach their potential.												
2.2.3. The program involves staff and youth in setting and promoting standards of behavior that include clear, consistent and fair rules, limits, expectations and consequences for misconduct.												
2.2.4. The program enforces standards of behavior consistently.												
2.2.5. The physical space, programs and services allow youth with and without disabilities to participate and benefit fully.												
2.2.6. The program identifies and counteracts any instances of racism and discrimination of any type that may occur within its own organization.												
How would you rate this standard overall?												

Standard: 2.7. Youth Engagement: Quality programs engage youth as active, respected contributors to the program and the community.

Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't Know
2.7.1. The program provides progressive opportunities for all participants to make meaningful contributions to program development, decision making and continuous improvement activities.												
2.7.2. The program provides training and support to staff, volunteers and/or other adults in how to develop youth-adult partnerships and support youth engagement.												
2.7.3. The program provides youth with training and support, including logistical resources, to enable and enhance their engagement.												
2.7.4. The program regularly solicits and uses input from youth to tailor program offerings to youth interests and needs.												
How would you rate this standard overall?												

CATEGORY III. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES

Standard: 3.3. Connecting: Quality programs, on their own or through collaborative partnerships, help youth develop competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) important to establishing positive social relationships.

Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't Know
3.3.1. The program develops and nurtures sustained relationships between youth and caring, knowledgeable adults.												
3.3.2. The program provides youth with opportunities to forge positive peer-to-peer and peer group relationships.												
3.3.3. The program ensures that activities, materials, tools and organizational structures promote acceptance and awareness of diverse groups, races and cultures.												
3.3.4. The program provides youth with opportunities to work cooperatively with others.												
3.3.5. The program works to increase youths' support from family and/or other responsible adults for meeting goals.												
3.3.6. The program ensures that youth learn how to successfully navigate the community.												
How would you rate this standard overall?												

Standard: 3.5. Thriving: Quality programs, on their own or through collaborative partnerships, help youth develop competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) necessary for optimal physical and emotional well being.

Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't Know
3.5.1. The program takes steps to prevent or divert young people's engagement in risky behaviors.												
3.5.2. The program supports youth in accessing physical and mental health-related services.												
3.5.3. The program supports youth in developing independent living skills, including financial and computer literacy.												
3.5.4. The program uses multiple strategies to promote healthy decision-making and teaches youth how to address societal, peer and familial pressures.												
How would you rate this standard overall?												