



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER
“Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success”

After School Program

- **What first steps do I need to take to establish a good after-school program?**

The first step in planning a new after school program, or for enhancing an existing one, is to look closely at the needs of the families in your community, and then establish goals for your program based on those needs.

- **Set goals that reflect the needs of the children and families in your community. Establish strong leadership and a clear organizational structure.**

Along with clear goals, after-school programs must have a solid organizational structure that allows for effective communication between all parties, for flexibility, and for accountability.

- **Develop a budget and financial plan that provides for long-term sustainability.**

Every after-school program needs to establish an annual operating budget, accurate bookkeeping systems, and affordable fee structures.

- **Understand the legal requirements and liability issues for your after school programs, and be sure your plan addresses them.**

Legal requirements for after school programs vary from state to state, and also depend on the age group your program serves. If you run a program exclusively for older children, or if your program is church-run or school-run, you may be exempt from specific licensing requirements.

- **Address the safety, health, and nutritional issues that face the children in your program.**

Basic safety and health issues must be addressed in the planning stages and monitored continuously.

- **Carefully consider staffing needs.**

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