

Protocol for Implementing the Observation Feedback Form

Purpose of the Observation Feedback Form

- For supervisors to have a tool to record their observations of the **quality** with which youth programs are being implemented.
- For supervisors to have a structured process for gathering information and giving constructive feedback to their staff and educators to improve the quality of implementation.

Find the form as a Word document or PDF file here:

Word: <http://www.actforyouth.net/resources/supervisors/observation-feedback-form.docx>

PDF (note that this is not an interactive form):

<http://www.actforyouth.net/resources/supervisors/observation-feedback-form.pdf>

Protocol

The Basic Process

1. Prepare the educator for the visit so they understand it is intended to be a learning experience, to give behavior-specific feedback, and to facilitate achieving the best outcomes possible.
2. Make arrangements with the educator to provide feedback right after the observation or as soon as possible **in person**.
3. Familiarize yourself ahead of time with a) the plan for the session you will observe and b) the Observation Feedback Form.
4. Observe the session, taking notes. Use a blank piece of paper (not the form itself) to jot down notes of observed behaviors of the educator and participants.
5. Use your notes to complete the Observation Feedback Form.
6. Meet with the educator to discuss what you observed.
7. Give a copy of the completed form to the educator.

The Observation

- You are there to observe the educator's and participants' *behaviors* during the program activities and that should be your only focus throughout.
- The purpose of observing youth participants is solely to gain clarity about what the educator does well and where improvements are needed - youth themselves are not being rated.
- The staff should introduce the observer to the participants, tell participants why the program is being observed, and reassure them that the discussion will be kept totally confidential.

Recording Your Notes

- It is very important to remember you are observing staff behaviors that are indicative of the quality of implementation as described in all areas on the Form, as well as youths' actions. Please try to remain as objective as possible. The focus is on what the educator actually does and how well they do it.
- During the observation make notes of what the educator does. Write a detailed description of what the educator did exceptionally well, did competently, and what needs improvement.

Completing the Observation Feedback Form

- Immediately after the observation, complete the feedback form drawing from your notes. It is not recommended to complete the form during the observation, since it distracts from observing behaviors and interactions and leads to prematurely interpreting and judging behaviors.
- When completing the form, circle your rating and the behaviors that you saw that led you to your rating, and add comments to each section as needed.

Giving Feedback after the Program Session is Completed

- Once the program session is completed, and the observer has completed the feedback form, the observer and educator should spend some time together for feedback. It is very important to conduct this session in person and not put it off to another day.
- The feedback session should be conducted in a friendly manner with lots of give and take discussion. It should include:
 - Time for the staff to describe how they felt about the program activities and what went well, did not go so well, and how they might do it differently another time.
 - Positive feedback from the observer about what went well and what went exceptionally well interspersed with a discussion of what needs improvement, all provided in a constructive and conversational tone.
 - Time for the staff to suggest how they might do things differently in the future, including modeling some examples. The observer/educator can role play (practice) different ways of approaching the issue. Practicing the new skills is important to learning and changing behavior.
- The observer should keep notes about any agreements for changes that are reached during the feedback session.
- If possible, the observer can arrange with the educator to observe another program activity soon after this session to examine how new skills/approaches are implemented and continue giving feedback and coaching. This is especially important when an observer identifies that multiple improvements are needed.