



PASE Research Series: Relational Engagement Needs Among Black and Latino Boys
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IMPLICATIONS TO PRACTICE HIGHLIGHTS

Afterschool practitioners often noted the **importance of funding**. Specifically, that in order to positively enforce youth development, there needs to be a budget that allows for appropriate number of staff, higher wages, staff trainings and activities. There is also a great need for **support from leadership** to prioritize the depth and multilayered approach needed to support Black and Latino boys. This document includes other highlights of implications to practice generated by practitioners.

- 1. STAFF HIRING PRACTICES AND SKILLS.** Afterschool programs need appropriate, motivated, and skilled staff who are willing to talk about race, class and gender. Mentors are needed who can help develop/build resilience of young men who can navigate the world even if they are not prepared academically.
- 2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT.** Staff need on-going training in a variety of topics including: social emotional learning (SEL), relational engagement, trauma and healing, how to have difficult conversations (about race, class), creating a protective environment, and cultural competence, among other topics to support positive identity and resilience. Staff also need professional development through staff meetings, modeling, coaching and a language “tool box” as well as opportunities to deal with their own personal stories.
- 3. PROGRAM DESIGN AND CURRICULUM.** Afterschool programs need to consider curriculum content to support Black and Latino boys (e.g. leadership, financial literacy, self-identity, non-traditional activities, and activities that teach how to be “good at school”) as well as process (e.g. mentoring, open discussions, child-centered, using positive language). It is also important for afterschool programs to authentically incorporate youth voice (e.g. focus groups, survey ideas for curriculum development, feedback on program strengths and weaknesses.)
- 4. ENVIRONMENT.** The afterschool environment should be supportive, affirming, safe and respectful. Conduct policies can reflect “more do’s instead of don’ts”. Youth should be allowed to reflect on their behavior and know that it’s okay to ask for help. The environment should allow for open discussion and dialogue about race and culture. Finally, it is ideal if there is a collective understanding and agreement among the adults in the building on how to best serve youth in positive ways.
- 5. COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS.** Partnerships with parents and families, schools, colleges, and other CBOs can strengthen programming for Black and Latino boys. Examples include bringing parents in to teach about their culture and share their stories; include language on persistence, grit and resilience when pitching a collaboration with schools; and share resources and develop programs with other organizations.