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Introduction

The ACT Now Coalition is a diverse statewide network of more than 2,400 Illinois afterschool providers, families, business leaders, community advocates, youth organizations, and policymakers from across the state. We believe that an increased commitment to young people beyond the traditional school day is a crucial part of their growth into productive, healthy adults.

As part of a larger national afterschool network, ACT Now leverages best practices, resources, and partnerships in order to ensure that young people in Illinois have access to quality, affordable afterschool and youth development programs.

ACT Now’s commitment to this work and our deeply rooted connection to communities across Illinois has afforded us the opportunity to expand our reach and begin providing targeted technical assistance to Teen REACH practitioners and providers across Illinois.

In collaboration with DHS, ACT Now is conducting Site Visits to ensure program quality through compliance monitoring and work as a team to prioritize your voice and uplift your work. We are elated to learn more about your programs and see firsthand the impactful work providers are doing on the ground. We hope to identify your needs and provide support through technical assistance and professional development.
Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL

What will my Site Visit look like?
Your Site Visit will be conducted by ACT Now staff and may be conducted either in-person or in a virtual setting, pending COVID-19 state and federal health guidelines. Your program’s main point of contact, and any additional program staff that can help tell your program’s Teen REACH story, are invited to participate. Whether scheduled for in-person or virtual, you can expect your Site Visit to be approximately 2 hours.

If your Site Visit is in-person, it will take place at your center. If virtual, it will be conducted over Zoom.

Will I receive any materials to prepare for my Site Visit?
Yes! Prior to your Site Visit, you will receive the following items:

- **Agency DropBox link**: You will use this link to submit required compliance documentation.
- **A FY23 Site Visit Portfolio**: A fillable PDF to track your program’s Teen REACH compliance and highlight your program’s needs and opportunities for support from ACT Now and DHS.
- **A Site Visit Handbook**: This handbook will provide supplemental information to guide you in preparation for your Site Visit.
- **A FY23 Site Visit Rubric**: In preparation for, during, and after your Site Visit, ACT Now will use an accompanying Rubric to score your Site Visit and monitor your compliance progress. This rubric will inform your FY23 Scorecard which will outline recommendations and resources for improvement, and a deadline for any outstanding documentation.

What is ACT Now expecting me to have prepared for the Site Visit?
Three days before your Site Visit, you will be expected to have completed the entirety of your Site Visit Portfolio. This includes completing the PDF and uploading all requested documentation to your DropBox account. ACT Now staff will review your compliance documentation prior to your Site Visit and discuss your portfolio responses during your Site Visit.

If you have any issues with the applications or your documentation uploads, please contact Chelsea Corbett: Corbetetch@actnowillinois.org

If my Site Visit is in person, will I need to provide a tour of my program space?
First, we will conduct the conversational aspect of the Site Visit, so please reserve space to gather for material review and questions. Then, ACT Now would welcome the opportunity to tour your program space and observe your activities in real time.

If my Site Visit is during the first quarter, how will I submit a PPR if it is not due to DHS yet?
If your Site Visit is during the first quarter, you will be required to submit Business Object reports which can accurately represent the data that is typically captured in your quarterly PPR’s.
If I have questions during the Site Visit ACT Now staff cannot answer, how will my questions or concerns get addressed?
A member of the ACT Now team will contact DHS and relay any appropriate questions or concerns to them. ACT Now staff will do their best to get you updates promptly and will reach out to you directly with further information. ACT Now staff hope to return all technical assistance requests and DHS / Grant Management inquiries within one week of your Site Visit. If you have not received an update within this time frame, please contact Chelsea Corbett: Corbettch@actnowillinois.org

If I have outstanding documents, will there be corrective action?
Based on your Site Visit Scorecard, ACT Now will determine an appropriate deadline for any outstanding documentation. Deadline extensions will be approved on a case-by-case basis. ACT Now staff will follow up with you directly if outstanding documents have not been received by the due date. Other corrective action measures will be discussed on a case-by-case basis and as needed.

PORTFOLIO
What is the Teen REACH Site Visit Portfolio?
This is a digital document created by ACT Now to track and monitor your Teen REACH compliance documentation and practices. It will be reviewed in detail during your Site Visit.

How do I complete the portfolio?
In an effort to make this process as seamless as possible for providers, ACT Now created a Teen REACH Site Visit Portfolio which can be completed digitally. Once you receive the portfolio, you will be able to get started right away and answer prompts directly on the PDF.

Unlike last year, this year each Teen REACH agency will receive a personalized Site Visit portfolio that outlines not only the required compliance documentation that is required for all Teen REACH grantees annually but also any specific exhibits that were included in your FY23 contract as a result of your FY22 Site Visit. Any required compliance documentation that was not submitted during the FY22 Site Visit process is still required to be submitted this fiscal year.

When does the portfolio need to be completed?
ACT Now staff will reach out to each Teen REACH agency to inform agencies of their assigned Site Visit date and time. In this communication you will receive your DropBox link where you will submit your required compliance documentation. Once received, you will be able to begin working on the portfolio and uploading the requested documentation right away. ACT Now asks that the Site Visit Portfolio be completed no later than THREE business days before your
Site Visit. However, the best practice would be to complete the portfolio as soon as possible to allow time for questions and for ACT Now to provide support, if needed.

**How are compliance documentation and data reports submitted?**  
All required documentation should be uploaded to your agency’s private DropBox account. During the Site Visit, ACT Now staff will review these materials with you and will be able to address issues and questions in the moment.

**How can I track my progress with the portfolio?**  
At ACT Now, we recognize how extensive this process may seem and want to honor your team’s capacity to participate, keeping high workloads in mind. To make this process as easy as possible, there is an interactive checklist embedded throughout your Site Visit portfolio which can be used to keep yourself organized and track progress as you complete the portfolio and upload the required documentation.

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**Site Visit Policies**

**Preparing for your Site Visit**

- **ACT Now** staff will reach out to each Teen REACH agency via email which will include your agency’s assigned Site Visit date, time, DropBox link and any other necessary information pertaining to your Site Visit will be included.
- Once your Site Visit confirmation email has been sent, **ACT Now** staff will follow up with a formal calendar invite which will include all required attendees from your team.
- Once your Site Visit is scheduled, ensure that the appropriate team members have been informed and are available to attend the Site Visit.
- **ACT Now** recommends that at minimum the individual who is responsible for uploading the requested documentation be present at the Site Visit in order to best guide **ACT Now** through the material review.
- All required documentation must be uploaded, at minimum, **three business days** prior to your scheduled Site Visit.
- **Three business days** before your Site Visit you will receive a reminder email regarding your upcoming Site Visit, including the time and location of your Site Visit.

**During your Site Visit**

- Please see page 7 of this handbook to review the general Site Visit agenda you can expect to follow during your visit with **ACT Now**.
- We will discuss a myriad of topics including Teen REACH compliance activities, your agency’s policies and procedures, and technical assistance and support needs.
After your Site Visit

- **ACT Now** will be using a Site Visit rubric to track and score your progress during the Site Visit which will be used to inform your agency’s next steps and action items for programming and compliance.
- Before the end of the quarter in which your Site Visit was conducted, **ACT Now** will send you your Site Visit ‘Scorecard’ which will outline the information mentioned above via email.
- You and your Teen REACH team should meet to discuss and review your results and reach out to **ACT Now** should you have any questions or concerns regarding your score.

Rescheduling Policy

As you know, the expectation is that all grantees participate in a Teen REACH Site Visit to highlight program successes and assess quality. **ACT Now** recognizes the lift that preparing for Site Visits has on providers and we want to ensure we are doing our best to support you all in these efforts. In order to do so, ample notice regarding Site Visit schedule changes is required to account for our varying schedules as well as the time and capacity of all providers.

Please work with your team to complete and upload all required documentation for your Site Visit to the best of your ability. Rescheduled Site Visits will **only** be granted on a case-by-case basis. In order for a Site Visit reschedule to be considered, **ACT Now** needs to be given adequate reasoning and provided with at least one week’s notice. Please do not operate under the assumption that your Site Visit can be rescheduled due to lack of preparation. If you are experiencing barriers to completing your Site Visit preparation on time, please reach out to Chelsea Corbett at Corbettch@actnowillinois.org

If at any point during this process you experience issues or barriers which could impact your ability to properly complete your Site Visit, please inform **ACT Now** staff right away.

We are here to help!

**Site Visit Agenda**

**Welcome & Introductions**

- Provider welcomes **ACT Now** into programming space
- All participants introduce themselves:
  - Name
  - Pronouns
  - Role
  - Ice breaker question
Overview of Visit

- ACT Now’s role in quality assurance and compliance monitoring
- ACT Now staff will establish expectations for the day

eCornerstone Review

- ACT Now staff will request a walk-through of your PPR and other business objects reports, highlight areas of strength and improvement, and discuss any barriers to meeting performance measures.

IL-QPSA

- ACT Now staff will review your experience with the IL-QPSA process and will confirm you have completed the necessary Quality Initiative steps for your cohort.

CBAT-O

- ACT Now staff will confirm your engagement with the CBAT-O process, including trauma-informed training engagement, action plans, and overall CBAT-O experience.

Staff Professional Development Activities:

- ACT Now staff will confirm what professional development trainings and other activities you and your team have participated in this fiscal year.
- We will also review what professional development areas you have identified needing additional support in.

Staffing

- In this section, ACT Now staff will aim to gain a better understanding of any staffing challenges you are experiencing.
- Additionally, we explore how the health and wellness of your team are prioritized and what resources may be needed in order to make this a priority.

Core Services:

- This will be your opportunity as a provider to highlight the work you are doing, what upcoming program initiatives are exciting to agency staff, and what barriers you may be experiencing to providing services in each core area.
- ACT Now staff will have specific questions prepared regarding your Core Service activities based on your portfolio responses.

Compliance Documentation Review

- ACT Now staff will walk through each required attachment as outlined in your Teen REACH Site Visit Portfolio.
- ACT Now staff will primarily focus on any outstanding documentation and will provide additional context regarding what sufficient documentation should entail.

Next Steps

- We will recap the next steps and confirm when the Site Visit follow-up can be expected.
Teen REACH Policy Glossary

Organizational Chart: This will show your agency’s staffing structure from CEO or executive leadership, down. Teen REACH staff, including program managers and site coordinators, should be represented on the chart.

Teen REACH Program Plan: The program plan was submitted with your original DHS NOFO application and is also known as the Executive Summary. This outlines your program’s hours of operation, target demographics, collaborative partners, performance goals, and measures, along with additional program expectations. The Program Plan will also provide the basis for assessing contractual and program compliance for Teen REACH providers. It is critical that the program plan reflects the day-to-day operations of the program, as it will be used by Teen REACH staff, partners, and IDHS staff to assess ongoing operations and performance of the program.

Teen REACH Spending Plan: This is your projected budget for the fiscal year which forecasts your projected expenses per expenditure line. This is captured in the budget submitted in CSA. The CSA is the Community Services Agreement which is the Teen REACH grantees agreement to ensure lawful and responsible operation of IDHS programs.

Job Descriptions (for each staff member, volunteer, intern): All Teen REACH job descriptions must be included with the annual program plan and be on file with IDHS. A file must be made for each employee, containing at a minimum, his/her job description, resume, results of background check, and verification of training attended. During programmatic audits and Site Visits, your Technical Assistance and Support provider will request job descriptions for staff, volunteers, and interns to review annually.

- **Teen REACH Program Staff:** At a minimum, a .5 FTE Teen REACH coordinator must be committed to the program. This is especially true of multi-agency sites and collaborations. Teen REACH program staff create the design and fundamental principles of the program, establish program guidelines for operations and performance standards, develop specific training for program content, collect and analyze program performance and participant outcome data. Program Staff serve as a resource to Community Services Support Consultants and providers in the planning, implementation, assessment, and evaluation of the program.
  - Program must have a staff contact who is responsible for STEM programming
- **Volunteers:** Volunteers are defined as adults over 18 years old whose talents and time are given to the program, but who do not receive an hourly rate or salary. Volunteers can be recruited from faith-based organizations, parents, local schools, local businesses, and the provider’s board of directors.
- **Mentors:** Adult mentors are considered volunteers, and should have the same information and structure as do other program volunteers.
- **Interns:** Interns are individuals over the age of 16 whose role in the program is to assist staff while they are learning a specific aspect of the program. Each intern must have a file containing a basic job description, sign-in/sign-out sheets, documentation of an orientation to the Teen REACH program and its goals. Interns must meet at least monthly with the program director or direct supervisor about their work and any issues involving individual children. The program director must have the sign in sheet and name of the intern’s supervising teacher.
• **Teen Employment:** Paid student aide positions to assist adult group leaders should be treated as employees, complete with job descriptions; qualifications; supervision; evaluations; and time sheets. Employed teens are not considered as program participants, but should appear on the program plan, under staff. Teens may be employed at age 16 or more; those with a work permit can be employed at age 14 or 15. Local high schools can be instrumental in helping teens obtain this document.
  - TR participants who work for the program are counted in eCornerstone attendance under “Employment”

**New Staff Orientation Agenda:** Teen REACH grantees are required to keep record of New Staff orientation, documented through agendas and attendance sheets. This information should be kept in the employee file.

**Individual Supervision Agenda:** As Teen REACH providers, it is critical that program staff monitoring, training, and supervision time be scheduled on a regular basis. A standardized log or tool used for each employee should be developed and implemented, and include areas of focus, success, and next steps or expectations. Some topics to include in your supervision log include, but are not limited to:

- Performance Goals
- Areas for Growth, Improvement, and/or Focus
- Program Challenges and Successes
- Professional Development Needs
- Program Update
- **Teen Supervision Requirement:**
  - Teen employees (group aides, teacher assistants, etc.) still in high school and/or under 18 years old cannot be used in place of adult employees and must not be left alone with groups of younger children. Teen volunteers or interns must not be left unsupervised with younger participants.

**Team Meeting Agendas:** As a Teen REACH provider, it is critical that program staff are supported and supervised not only individually but as a team. This practice should be documented through agendas and attendance sheets. Agendas that include programmatic planning are developed for staff meetings, results in organizational leadership being well-informed about program and participant issues.

**Subcontractor/School Agreements:** If your program utilizes subcontractors or school partnerships to recruit students or conduct programs, you will need to provide documentation that outlines those agreements.

- **Subcontractors:** A sub-contractor is an entity with which the provider enters into an agreement for the subcontractor to provide all or a specified portion of the services required in the original contract, and is bound by all contractual obligations of the original DHS contract:
  - All sub-contracts have been signed by both parties and are renewed every year.
  - Subcontractor Agreement(s) and budgets must be pre-approved by the Department
Subcontractor Agreement(s) and budgets must be on file with the Department
Any subcontractor shall be subject to all provisions of this Agreement
The provider shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of the subcontractors

- **School Agreements**: Written letters of collaboration between the Teen REACH program and collaborating schools must be on file in the Teen REACH office. These agreements facilitate collection of data on academic achievement as well as coordination of homework assistance and tutoring efforts. Programs will be required to submit information about students’ progress, based on grade reports and attendance and suspension records, to the Department
  - Copies of signed linkage agreements with every school where participants are attending must be on file indicating an acknowledgment of the schools’ willingness to provide copies of the above information.
  - Linkage Agreements must be updated annually and include coordinated use of facilities and resources where necessary, and the school’s agreement to furnish grades/academic progress information for all students enrolled in Teen REACH.
  - Please note that schools will need to obtain parental/guardian consent before school records can be submitted to the Teen REACH program.

**Subcontracts Monitoring Process**: If your agency utilizes subcontractors, there must be written policies that outline how those entities are onboarded including language regarding background checks, mandated reporting, contract writing, payment and approval, and W-9 submission and approval.

**Teen REACH Advisory Board**: Programs must form and utilize a Community Advisory Council or board in conducting Teen REACH activities to integrate active partners who can devote time and resources to the program. Existing councils may be utilized if they properly represent the positive youth development concept of Teen REACH. The Community Advisory Council must include at least two youth who are current or former Teen REACH participants. The Advisory Council must meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis. Minutes, agendas, and attendance lists must be maintained on file to evidence this activity:

- Parents and youth are active partners and decision makers in the advisory council.
- Membership of the council mirrors the makeup of the community in which the program is located.
- School representatives participate in the council.
- The advisory council meets quarterly. Subcommittees meet monthly to network, identify resources, and discuss issues around the Teen REACH program.
- The council includes at least 2 youth participants.
- The council includes at least 2 parent representatives.
- Monthly communication among council members occurs through meeting minutes and other standard updates.
- Work, activities and accomplishments of the council are communicated to the community.

**Teen REACH Service Days & Hours**: Programs must be operational for 12 consecutive months (240 days per year, which is an average of 20 days per month). Each program must operate a minimum of 720
hours per year, which is an average of 15 hours per week. Providers are required to document their hours of operation through monthly activity calendars which are shared with participants, family, and staff.

**Activity Calendars:** Activity Calendars should demonstrate that planned program activities will address all seven core services and are carried out on a regular basis.

- An Activity Calendar must be completed for each program site.
- Please note that if a site is planned to have a varied scheduled, please complete additional activity calendars to demonstrate that planned variance.
  - Example: School-Year schedule vs. a summer schedule.

**Family and Student Surveys:** Teen REACH grantees must conduct a comprehensive needs and resources assessment which includes local youth, family, school and community surveys. Assessment and survey results will be analyzed to determine the level of need in the community and to provide a foundation for developing carefully planned and thoughtful service provision:

- The assessment should utilize existing data sources that reflect the target population
- The assessment should use multiple data sources and is broad in scope.
- The assessment should be specific to the site locations at which the agency delivers direct services to participants.
- The assessment data should be reviewed and updated as needed annually.
- Decisions to maintain or change programming are based on the results of the assessment and review.
- A direct correlation of these identified needs and activity planned should be indicated using Activity Calendars.

**Proof of Insurance:** Liability insurance is covered either by the program or the subcontractor, and verification of current coverage is on file at the agency. Liability insurance is not limited to transportation but is adequate to ensure coverage of all Teen REACH activities and events Liability insurance should also cover adults working with children and youth.

**Proof of Staff Background Check:** Background checks are required for all program staff and volunteers who have the potential for contact with youth under 18. These background checks must be completed in advance of individuals working directly with youth. Such individuals will authorize such checks in writing and submit to fingerprinting when required. The agency shall retain the signed form authorizing the background check. All background check information, including the signed authorizing forms shall be maintained separately in a confidential file, apart from the employee's personnel records.

**Participant Sign In/Sign Out Sheets:** Daily sign-in sheets are required for each site. These daily sign-in sheets must clearly identify the site name and program location (If activities are conducted at an off-site location this must be identified.) and must keep track of the name of the youth, date of attendance, time in and time out as well as the staff member verifying the actual attendance for each youth. Sign-In sheets must be kept on file. It is imperative that the method of signing in and out results in an unduplicated and staff verified count of enrolled participants. These sign-in sheets could also track
additional items such as core service participation times, meals / snacks, the individual picking up the youth from the program, etc.

**Marketing Plan:** Promoting Teen REACH programs at the local level is the provider’s responsibility. The goal of marketing is to make the program more visible, attract new participants, engage volunteers and community partners, and to raise awareness of positive youth development. Each Teen REACH program is required to develop a comprehensive, written marketing plan. A comprehensive plan will identify the target audience, goals, strategies, and timeline. To be effective, it will include a variety of strategies and delivery methods. The Marketing Plan must include:

- Hosting and arranging at least one community awareness event on an annual basis. The event should involve community leaders, parents, and Teen REACH youth in an effort to promote the positive impact of the program and to create linkages to other agencies serving youth.

- Teen REACH programs are encouraged to participate in the national “Lights on After-School” Awareness Event. More information on this activity can be found at www.afterschoolalliance.org.
  - All community awareness events should be described in the annual program plan.

- Additional outreach strategies may include but are not limited to:
  - Distribution of flyers to agencies, businesses, parents, schools, faith-based organizations and the community to increase participation.
  - Parent newsletters listing events and opportunities to volunteer/participate.
  - Teen REACH youth recruiting other youth through special events or incentive programs.
  - Participation in school registrations and open houses.
  - Presentations at teacher and parent meetings to recruit program participants.
  - Hosting a site open house event to introduce families and community members to the Teen REACH program.
  - Fostering partnerships with schools, regional offices of education, DCFS, Probation, Health Department, Child and Adolescent Local Area Networks, Foster Care Alliance, faith-based agencies and other private agencies to promote referrals of youth who are having academic difficulties; truant, reside in a single-parent home; receive TANF; are latchkey children; have siblings who dropped out of school or are involved with the juvenile justice system, are victims of violent crimes, have parents who are incarcerated or are teen parents.
  - Sending regular press releases and announcements to the media to increase Teen REACH public presence.
  - Recording regular public service announcements on TV and radio- use youth and parents as spokespersons.
  - Sending letters to all participants from the prior school year inviting them to return.
  - Meeting with key members of school systems, including counselors, administrators and teachers to introduce the program and initiate lines of communication.
  - Promotion of Teen REACH through business partnerships.
Participation in community events, such as street fairs, parades and other events to promote Teen REACH.

Teen REACH Policy and Procedure Manual:
Each Teen REACH provider must develop and implement policies and procedures required to deliver program services, collect data on participant outcomes and program performance, program administration; daily operations etc. These will be kept in a Teen REACH Policy and Procedure Manual. The following must be included in this manual many of these items have minimum requirements outlined in this document and will be incorporated into the manual.

Medical
- **Dispensing Medications:** Teen REACH programs are discouraged from administering over-the-counter medications to participants. If the Teen REACH program decides to handle and dispense prescription drugs, a protocol must be added and adhere to the Illinois Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers Section 407.360 Medications. The protocol must include:
  - Prescription medication shall be accepted only in its original container.
  - Prescription medications shall be labeled with the full pharmacy label.
  - Medication shall be administered in a manner that protects the safety of the child.
  - A specific staff person shall be designated to administer and properly document the dispensation of the medication each day.
  - Prescription medication shall be administered as required by a physician, subject to the receipt of appropriate releases from parents which shall be on file and regularly updated.
  - Prescription medication shall be used only for the child named on the label.
  - The program site shall maintain a record of the dates, times administered, dosage, prescription number, and the name of the person administering the medication.
  - Medications shall be safely stored.
  - Medication containers shall have child-protection caps whenever possible.
  - All medication, whether refrigerated or unrefrigerated, shall be kept in locked cabinets or other containers that are inaccessible to children and that are designated and used only for this purpose.
  - Medications shall be kept in a well-lighted area.
  - Medications shall be kept out of the reach of children.
  - Medications shall not be kept in rooms where food is prepared or stored, unless refrigerated in a separate locked container.
  - Medication shall not be used beyond the date of expiration.
  - When a child no longer needs to receive medication, the unused portion or empty bottle shall be returned to the parent.
  - Any topical products, such as sunscreen, or insect repellant, whether supplied by the parent or by the program site, shall be approved by the parent in writing prior to use by the child.

- **Asthma:** Each Teen REACH program site is required to have a protocol that addresses asthmatic participants and the management of asthma. Protocols should include:
  - Written Parental Consent form that identifies health issues that may keep a participant from fully participating in physical sports and recreation.
○ Staff training on environmental triggers for asthma.
○ Staff training on early signs of asthma episodes and appropriate interpersonal responses.
○ All participants who are identified with asthma must have a written Asthma Action Plan before participating in the program. This action plan must include what to do in case of mild, moderate, and severe episodes, as well as who to call. These contacts should include doctor, hospital, ambulance or paramedic service used, and family member.
○ Agency protocol must also include what staff will do the intervention during an asthma episode.

**Head Lice:** Each Teen REACH program site must have a protocol for addressing infestations of head lice in the Teen REACH population. The protocol must include:
○ Frequency of regular head checks.
○ Informing families of those affected with head lice.
○ Referrals for treatment.
○ Exclusion of those affected with head lice and program re-entry procedures.
○ Informing all other families in the program about the infestation.
○ Ensuring the cleanliness of the Teen REACH participants and decreasing incidents of shared hair grooming products and head gear.
○ Parent education on head lice: identification, treatment of the children, and household extermination of head lice.
○ Teen REACH funds cannot be used to purchase prescription or over-the-counter pediculicides to treat lice.

**Illness:** A written policy outlining the protocols for if and/or when a participant arrives to programming ill including language on contacting their caregivers and dismissal.

**Injury:** A written policy outlining the protocols for if/when a participant gets injured during programming including language around the conditions for incident reporting, the incident report process, and caregiver follow-up.

**Emergency Procedures:** Written policies on the proper procedures for program staff to follow in the event of an emergency event during programming. Examples of emergency procedures include, but are not limited to:
○ Fire Drills
○ Intruder
○ Missing Child
○ Severe Weather

**Washing Hands (Posted):** Written policies that outline handwashing procedures for participants and staff. These procedures should also be posted throughout the program space. A picture of your agency’s policy posted around the space is also requested.

**Behavioral or Safety**

**Discipline and Conflict Resolution Procedure:** A written policy that outlines staff expectations in mitigating student behavior disruptions and discipline with a focus on conflict resolution.
Disciplinary procedures should include language around youth having conflict with one another, youth having conflict with staff, and any zero-tolerance policies that may be grounds for dismissal from the program. Program staff use positive techniques to guide behavior of participants and handle conflict in positive ways:

- Specific training on conflict resolution and appropriate discipline techniques is provided to all staff during orientation, and on an on-going basis.
- Problem solving approaches, including peer mediation and formal conflict resolution, are utilized to reduce peer conflict.

**Transportation Procedure and Criteria:** Teen REACH programs will be required to keep a written plan for transporting youth in their files. This plan should have the approval of the agency’s governing body and be available for review by the Department upon request. These policies outline travel procedures to and from programs, if applicable, and field trips. This policy should include language on arriving and departure, staff supervision of participants, field trip approval processes, and protocols for inclement weather.

- All persons designated as drivers have a valid driver’s license appropriate to the type of vehicle used. Evidence of current licensure is on file.
- If a Teen REACH program coordinates an educational field trip or excursion for Teen REACH participants that is located 60 miles away or more from the Teen REACH site or out of state, and/or exceeds a Spending Plan of $1,000, prior approval of IDHS is required.

**Staff Supervision of Arrival and Departure of Participants:** Policies related to how participants arrive and depart from programs, including language around under what conditions students are permitted to walk home, who is permitted to pick participants up, and any other protocols related to participant dismissal. It is very important that participants sign in and out of programming each day, particularly noting the times they arrive and when they depart, and agency sign-in/out sheets should reflect this.

**Visitor Policy: Sign-In and Sign Out:** A written policy regarding the protocols if / when a visitor arrives at your center. Language should include what conditions visitors are permitted to be on the premises and the process for visitors to sign in and out.

**Serving Snacks and Meals:** Each day, Teen REACH programs must offer nutritious snacks to the participants and policies regarding this must be documented. All food must be served in accordance with relevant local and state health standards for food preparation and handling and meet the standards of the Council on Accreditation(http://www.coanet.org):

- Drinking water is available at all times.
- The program integrates snacks/food into a nutritional curriculum/educational program involving both youth and their families.
- The program’s snacks/food and nutritional education are designed to address childhood obesity, and includes components on:
  - Increasing physical activity
  - Increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables
  - Limiting television viewing
  - Participation in regular family meal
While program funds may be used to purchase food, programs must demonstrate that they researched and applied for assistance through the food programs sponsored through:

- The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), [http://www.isbe.state.il.us](http://www.isbe.state.il.us)
- America’s Second Harvest, [http://www.secondharvest.org](http://www.secondharvest.org)

● **Enrollment & Termination:** A written policy which outlines participant eligibility requirements, how to apply and enroll in programs and the conditions under which a participant may be terminated from the program
  - Termination procedures in eCornerstone must also be outlined.

● **Following Up with Absent Youth:** Teen REACH grantees must have a written policy in place that outlines the procedures that are in place for following up with participants and families regarding unexpected and/or chronic absences, and the process regarding termination for chronically absent youth and the conditions under which a participant may be discharged. Program attendance data should be reviewed to identify patterns of attendance and potential issues.

● **Internet Blocking Software for Youth Accessible PCs:** Written policy on what software is used to limit internet access, what sites and content are blocked, and when the software was implemented. A Technology Acceptable Use Policy is also acceptable but please ensure the above information related to software is also present.

**Staff**

● **Staff Screening:** Teen REACH providers must have written procedures for hiring and screening staff and volunteers who work with children ages 18 and under. Each program site must determine the level of background check that will be utilized for staff, volunteers, and interns over 18 years of age.

● **Background Check Policy:** Funded programs will be required to have a written protocol in place detailing the requirement for background checks; evidence of their completion; the protocol for reviewing and making determinations regarding results; etc. In no case shall a Person who has been indicated as the perpetrator of any of the child abuse/neglect allegations identified in 89 Ill. Adm. Code Section 385.50(a) be deemed fit for service that allows access to children.
  - Types of Background Checks and Screenings:
    - The following resources are available to programs in establishing protocols for background checks and screenings:
      - The Illinois State Police Department provides fingerprints and Sexual Offender listings: [www.isp.state.il.us](http://www.isp.state.il.us)
      - CANTS:
        - The Child Abuse and Neglect tracking system determines whether an individual is currently alleged or has been indicated as a perpetrator of child abuse or neglect.
Illinois Department of Children and Family Service CANTS listings can be obtained through:
- Processing Control Unit and Background Checks Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, 1-217-785-4010

**Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting:**
The following protocols must appear in the Teen REACH Policy and Procedures Manual:
- **Mandated Reporting:** Per the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act of 1975, those adults working with children and youth under the age of 18 years old having reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services’ (DCFS) Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-2873). Mandated reporters include recreational program or facility personnel and human service personnel who work with children under the age of 18 years old.

- **Suspected Family Cases of Abuse or Neglect:** All Teen REACH providers and program sites must have a written procedure for reporting suspected cases of abuse and neglect that take place outside the center. The procedure must include:
  - Informing parents of the provider’s role as mandated reporter: This may be included in orientation packets and information to parents
  - Identifying the person(s) on staff who will be responsible for filing such reports and informing the parents
  - Identifying the roles and responsibilities of group workers and volunteers in reporting such cases
  - Documenting all such incidents in a child’s file
  - Identifying the person(s) responsible for following up on reports made to the DCFS Hotline and with the family

- **Suspected Agency Cases of Abuse or Neglect:** All Teen REACH providers and program sites must have a written procedure that covers expectations for the safe management of children and youth by staff and program volunteers, as well as handling cases of suspected abuse or neglect that may have occurred while the participant is on program site. The procedure must include
  - Supervision of staff in contact with children and youth
  - Clearly established norms of behavior for staff, especially training and procedures for handling children and youth with problem behaviors
  - A method for identifying, documenting, and reporting suspected cases of abuse or neglect within the agency
  - Interim plans for the employee and child(ren) involved in the report while such an investigation is occurring
  - Disciplinary action for employees in such cases that are founded by DCFS.

**eCornerstone Policies and Procedures**
- **Data Entry:** A written policy that outlines the frequency in which eCornerstone data is updated and who is responsible for data entry and eCornerstone security.
○ **Tracking Youth Participation:** A written policy outlining how student participation is tracked and updated in eCornerstone.

- **Tracking Inventory:** Any item with an acquisition cost of $100 or more and with a useful life of one year or more must have a tag and be listed on the Inventory Sheet. Any equipment with an acquisition cost of $500 or more and a useful life of 2 years or more must adhere to the requirements of the Community Services Agreement when it comes to transfer at the termination of the agreement. Any item costing $1200 or more must be approved before purchase by the Teen REACH Program Coordinator. These policies and practices must be well documented and outlined in your Policy and Procedure manual.

○ For more information regarding Inventory Tracking and Documentation please visit: IDHS: Teen REACH Equipment Inventory Instructions & Form (state.il.us)

○ Additional equipment and inventory considerations:
  - Leasing of transportation is allowed on a case-by-case basis. The need to transport participants as a condition of program attendance must appear in the description of the community served by the program in the Annual Program Plan. Other sources of transportation (i.e., schools) should be explored before using Teen REACH funds.
  - Program equipment purchases must reflect the on-going activities of the program and be indicated in the Program Plan. For example, the Life Skills component uses an evidence-based program model that includes videotapes for discussion. Therefore, a TV-VCR would be an appropriate purchase.
  - Updating or adding modules to a provider’s existing computer center is allowed on a case-by-case basis. Opening a computer lab for participants solely for Teen REACH is discouraged, due to the expense and future maintenance. For computer usage, IDHS encourages Teen REACH programs to contact the participants’ schools and other agencies to negotiate use of labs. Software may be purchased and shared with cooperating schools and agencies.
  - Purchase of sports equipment is allowed, as is the purchase of other leisure time supplies, such as board games, ping-pong, football, etc. Camping must appear as an on-going activity in the provider’s overall youth program if equipment is to be purchased. Such equipment requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
**ACT Now Site Visit Contact List**

**Chelsea Corbett, Afterschool Resources and Support Specialist, Teen REACH**

Chelsea is the lead staff for all Teen REACH Site Visits, primarily responsible for Site Visit scheduling and facilitation, compliance monitoring, direct technical assistance and support, and Site Visit follow-up.

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Emma Vibber provides Teen REACH Site Visit support for the IL-QPSA process, and additional Quality Initiatives as needed.

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**Jackie Tichler, Afterschool Resources and Support Specialist, Quality Initiatives**

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**Kasey Brown, Afterschool Resources and Support Specialist for Teen REACH & RPSA**

Kasey Brown provides Teen REACH Site Visit support through co-facilitation, resource sharing and policy improvement recommendations.

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Nikki Gillani, Afterschool Resources and Support Specialist, School Partnerships

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