



Out-of-School Time Resource Center (OSTRC)
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Promising Practices for Out-of-School Time Professional Development Workshops March, 2005

- **Provide comfortable learning environments.** Attention should be given to the physical climate, materials, equipment, and layout necessary to maximize workshop participants' comfort, attentiveness, and engagement.
- **Provide respectful learning environments.** OST workshops should provide environments in which all needs, opinions, backgrounds, and cultures are valued and respected.
- **Incorporate participant experiences.** Adult learners enter workshops with genuine, diverse, and practical experiences. Through pre-workshop surveys and/or on-going opportunities, OST workshops should solicit and build upon participants' professional backgrounds.
- **Include opportunities for self-direction and self-reflection.** When possible, OST workshops should allow participants to set their own learning objectives, assimilate new information at different rates, and plan for individual usages.
- **Encourage real-life applications.** Incorporating state standards, addressing school district curriculum, and allowing time for participants to develop application models are three ways of maximizing the relevance and usefulness of OST workshops.
- **Facilitate active involvement.** Adults, as well as children, assimilate information more successfully when they are actively involved. OST workshops should include hands-on activities and, when possible, opportunities for participants to "teach" one another during the training session.
- **Promote teamwork.** Teamwork in OST workshops includes recruiting teams of participants from individual sites, facilitating small-group activities within the training, and/or encouraging teams of participants to work together after the workshop sessions.
- **Address different learning styles.** Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences proposes that different people synthesize knowledge in different ways. Varying activities, media, formats and "textures" helps engage all participants as well as keep the interest of individuals throughout workshop sessions.