



## ***Final Report for Skills Standards Project, June 2003***

School's Out Washington (SOWA) applied for and received funding to create a supplementary Critical Work Function H. This supplement will be added to the existing *Skills Standards for the School-age Care Professional* publication. This idea to create a supplementary critical work function came from the field. Since the publication of the original Skills Standards document in 2000, the landscape in the field has changed dramatically. The increased attention on after-school providers to support the learning that happens during the school day has created stress and frustration among providers. Hiring staff with the right skills and knowledge to support this new work is challenging without any clear direction of what this support means. It is hoped that with this new Critical Work Function, training and support will be more focused in the new skill area.

### **Process:**

School's Out hired a nationally trained DACUM process facilitator, Terryll Bailey. SOWA worked with Terryll to develop the agenda and facilitator notebook for the first meeting. The facilitator notebook was designed with the intent of SOWA staff being able to lead the three other focus group meetings across the state. Terryll included a step-by-step process with handouts and a PowerPoint presentation. This presentation was also easily adapted for other national and regional presentations.

For the original creation of Critical Work Function H, Schools' Out invited thirty diverse after-school professionals from Seattle to begin the work on this project. Of the thirty invited, twenty-seven professionals appeared at the all day meeting ready to dialogue and create. Terryll led the group through a very methodical process first identifying the name of the critical work function, moving to defining the key activity areas, and lastly the performance indicators. The process lasted well over the 7 hour allotted time frame, but members were willing to stay the course and come to consensus and conclusion. Terryll then applied her technical writing skills to the document and an email containing the work was sent to all participants for additions or corrections.

Using the Washington Regional Action Project (WRAP) Partner agencies in Spokane, Yakima and Olympia, three additional forums were scheduled during February and March. Both SOWA and WRAP did outreach to diverse providers in each of these regions. The WRAP agencies secured the space and helped with local coordination. The focus groups ranged in size from 10-25, which meant that each was very different. Each group was led through a consensus approval process of each step of creating Critical Work Function H. Suggested changes were captured on consensus forms. The three regional groups were also asked to complete the SCANS Skills survey to be included with the work.

The final step included inviting at least one member from all focus groups to sift through all suggested changes and identify which SCANS Skills were needed for each key activity area. This group went through all materials from each of the focus groups, discussed suggested changes, and listened to members as they presented the sense of the group they represented. In the end, a strong piece of work was approved by the group. The final draft was then emailed to all participants for approval.

**Next Steps:**

Critical Work Function H will be sent off to the Contract Monitor to be posted on the website as a new addition to the Skills Standards. There was no support for mass printing and distribution in the original grant proposal, but SOWA is committed to finding a way to print and distribute the document. Presentations have been done through-out this funding period to both national and regional audiences, and these presentations will continue with other resources at School's Out.

School's Out has approached the Seattle Foundation with an idea to expand the work around Skills Standards in a multi-pronged approach that would create curriculum, train both community college instructors, community based trainers, and print and distribute the complete version of the Skills Standards.