

MANUAL FOR AFTACOOOL MOMS



A PROGRAMME BY BOOST AFRICA FOUNDATION

WHAT IS AN AFTACOOOL CLUB?

Aftacool is not just an afterschool program but it is a chance for children to be part of a loving community. An Aftacool mom intentionally builds a relationship with the children in her group that goes beyond just teaching content. They spend time getting to know the individual children and reach out to the parents. In doing so they can meet the children where they are at and encourage them individually.

An Aftacool club is hosted by a mother in the community who has been trained to run after school clubs twice a week from their homes with 10-15 children in their area. The AfterCool clubs ideally cater to Grade 4-7 learners although some content can be tweaked for younger children.

A box with educational but fun content based on a picture book is delivered to a mom every two weeks with resources and activities focusing on critical thinking, emotional intelligence and curiosity.

THE VISION OF THE AFTACOOOL PROGRAMME IS TO SUPPORT LEARNING IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES, HELPING CHILDREN BECOME RESILIENT AND MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS SO THAT THEY CAN SUCCEED IN REACHING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, DESPITE POVERTY AND ADVERSITY. TO DO THIS WE NURTURE LOVING CONNECTIONS, LINK THEM TO OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUIP THEM WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SKILLS THAT ARE CRITICAL FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND BUILDING RESILIENCE.



STARTING A CLUB

1

FIND AN AFTACOOOL MOM

Finding the right AftaCool mom is the MOST important part of any club. An Aftacool club is just about facilitating a loving space so the person who hosts it needs to share the values shared on the next page.

2

SIGN CHILDREN UP

Ideally the Mom needs to register 10 -15 children that live close to her then:

- Collect Indemnity form
- Collect last school report
- Fill in the 'Aftacool Tracking' Google sheet
- Create Attendance Sheet

3

GET EQUIPMENT

- Table
- Chairs
- White Board
- Tablet (when possible)
- Calm Down box

4

Prepare Resources

- Check the syllabus
- Order the books
- Print the Instructions
- Use the 'Resource' Spreadsheet and buy/print the resources
- Pack the boxes

COMMITMENTS FOR AN AFTACOOOL MOM:

- Find a secure place to run the club
- Run sessions twice a week for 2 hours
- Try to connect with all the children's caregivers and start a whatsapp group for those that have phones
- Collect the reports of the children each term and encourage them when they show improvements
- Take note of how the children interact and apply the emotional skills we teach and provide termly reports for each child



Pledge:

As an Aftacool Mom I want to help the children in my group to become resilient and motivated individuals that can succeed in reaching their full potential despite poverty and adversity.

To do this I will put my best efforts into:

- **nurturing loving connections** with the children and their parents, **link children to opportunities** whenever I can, exposing them to the world beyond our community, **promote reading and maths** as much as I can AND equip them with **emotional intelligence skills** that are critical for them to build relationships and resilience.



VALUES

- *Love unconditionally
- *Be Kind and Nurture
 - *Be Inquisitive
- *Make learning a lifestyle
 - *Take ownership
- *Keep your bucket full
- *Do the right thing even when no one is watching

RUNNING THE CLUB

THE BOX

Every two weeks a box full of resources should be delivered to the Aftacool Mom. Each box will have the instructions and resources for 4 days worth of activities themed around a book. After the 4th session the Box should get picked up with the attendance register and swapped out for a new box.



The Aftacool Mom should start preparing 15 - 30 min before by going over the activity and packing out the resources.

There are some 'Aftacool' songs on our website but you can choose any child appropriate song each term.

During check-in the children should sit in a circle and try their best to put words to what they are feeling. You can also ask questions like - what was your highlight or lowlight of the past few days? Or What have you learnt over the last few days? Try your best to create a safe space for the children to process what they feeling so that they can be present minded for the rest of the time.

Remember to read the book and to play the Maths/Vocab game every session - repetition is key for learning!

We want to create a positive family environment so a nice way to do this is to choose one child to get encouraged each session. Get everyone to stand around them and let a few children share some encouraging words about them. You can end by everyone shouting 'We got your back!'

Check out can be used for children to share what they have learn't or enjoyed.

DAILY STRUCTURE

- Preparation
- Welcome and Register
- Song
- Check-in
- Read the Book
- Vocab/Maths Game
- Daily Activity
- Encourage
- Check out

MOBILE LIBRARY

Every two weeks an AftaCool Manager should visit the group with the Mobile Library. Encourage the children to take out books to read by themselves. When they return the books the Manager should ask a few questions about the book to see that the children have read and understood the book. If the child has read and understood they can receive 'reading points' which can be exchanged for prizes at the end of term.



CASE FORMS:

As an AftaCool Mom your responsibility is to love the children as best you can. Sometimes you will notice that the children have needs that may require assistance from someone else or a professional.

If any specific need comes up, especially trauma or abuse this should be reported immediately to the AftaCool Manager and a Case form should be completed. You will receive further training on how to identify and assist in the case of trauma.

Cases do not only need to be abuse/trauma related but can include behaviour issues or cases when you have picked up a specific struggle with school work.

We can not promise to solve every case but we will try our best to work with the parents to provide as much support as we can.



THE CALM DOWN BOX:

AftaCool sessions are run in the afternoons and even the most well behaved child may be frustrated after a long school day. So whilst the children do need to be respectful and listen, it should not feel like another boring school lesson. Rather the club should be a fun, chilled environment where everyone can participate and learn.

That is not always easy if children are distracted or tense. An Aftacool Mom should avoid shouting at all costs. When a child is acting up rather than shout, invite them to go sit aside to 'calm down'. The 'Calm down' box has toys and activities that are designed for children to play with and help them manage their energy, calming their brains so they can come back and participate positively.

EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS

A goal at AftaCool is to encourage the children in their potential. There are certain emotional and social skills that will help us succeed and thrive in life if we learn how to master them. The AftaCool syllabus is based on EQ-i 2.0 Model which is a widely used model of Emotional Intelligence. Below are 14 traits that we will focus on in the AftaCool clubs. It is important that AftaCool Mom's understand these traits and how the children will implement them.

1. SELF REGARD:

This is covered using the book : Red a crayon's story.

When we teach self regard we are teaching the children to accept who they are. They are unique individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses.

It is good to know what our strengths and weaknesses are. We can celebrate our strengths and accept our weaknesses. Some weaknesses we can work on but some we may always struggle with, but that's okay because everyone has weaknesses- it is part of being human.

Through the book we will consider the following questions to help us bring in Self Regard:
Sometimes it is difficult to know and accept who we are, why is this?

What are our own strengths and weaknesses?

When we have a healthy self – regard we have self confidence and inner strength to stand up for ourselves.

Children who have mastered this skill will:

- Be confident in who they are.
- Be more likely to try and answer questions you may ask and try new tasks.
- Not feel pressured to always be like the other children around them, copying what everyone else is doing or saying but have their own opinions and embrace their unique abilities.
- Know their own weaknesses and be okay with this.
- Stand up for themselves.

2. SELF ACTUALISATION

This is covered using the book : Maybe.

This is a big word for how much we are willing to learn and improve ourselves. We have all the potential to do great things but we will only be able to achieve all we can if we are willing to learn. To self actualise means that we are willing to improve ourselves and learn new things.

Children who Self Actualise:

- Are eager to learn new things. They will be the ones that try new tasks and explore different ways of doing things. They will ask questions and get excited about learning more about the world.
- They will have dreams about going to new places and trying new things.
- They will intentionally work on their own weaknesses.

3. EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

This is covered using the book : Colour Monster

Being emotionally aware means that we can recognise how we are feeling, why we are feeling that way and how this is affecting our behaviour and thoughts. We will use a feelings wheel to introduce some of the different emotions we can feel and how we experience them.

A child who is emotionally aware:

- Can identify and name what emotion they are experiencing
- Can understand how their emotions may change the way they think or behave. So when they are acting naughty they may be able to say they are feeling restless/ frustrated/ angry. Or when they say things that are negative they may identify that they are feeling depressed or angry and this is changing how they see and experience things.

4. FLEXIBILITY

We will introduce flexibility in the book 'Those Shoes' and look at how we can deal with worry in the Ruby's Worry.

Flexibility is the ability to change how you think or feel about something. When a circumstance changes, flexibility helps you have a new perspective and replace your old goal or feeling with a new goal or feeling.

Picture this: If "The Circumstance" was an object on your table, you could walk around to the other side to take a look. You would then be able to figure out a new way to respond, based on that new perspective.

For example, your goal was to make chocolate chip cookies. But then you went to the cupboard and discovered you were out of chocolate chips. Healthy flexibility allows you to see this as an opportunity to problem solve (a new perspective). Then you can change your goal to a new goal: have fun making some kind of new tasty treat, maybe you have peanut butter and can make peanut butter cookies instead.

Someone with rigid thinking may not be able to do this. People who are prone to perfectionism often struggle with flexibility because, of course, there's only one way for things to be "perfect", but learning how to be flexible with our brains and our emotions is a very important part of growing up.

A child who is flexible:

- Will not be very upset or sulk when things are not perfect and do not work out the way they want
- Will be able to adapt to a situation - so if for instance in a craft they do not have the colour they need they will easily be able to come up with a different plan
- Will be able to see things from different perspectives - in discussion times they when probed they will be able to see situations from different perspective.

5. STRESS TOLERANCE

This is covered using the book : After the Fall.

The ability to deal with stress means that we learn how to cope in situations we find stressful, believing that we can manage or influence the situation in a positive way.

Children who can tolerate stress:

- Will be able to stay calm in stressful situations
- Will be able to acknowledge the stress they feel but stay positive that they can manage the situation
- Will be proactive in dealing with the stress they feel and try find ways to manage their situation

6. OPTIMISM

This is covered using the book : A Squash and a Squeeze and Last Stop Market Street

This is the ability to see the positive side of any situation. The ability to have hope that something good can come out of any situation. People with optimism are more likely to fulfil their potential because they can learn from every situation and embrace new opportunities with hope.

A child who is optimistic:

- Will seldom complain but is more likely to make a plan
- Will be able to see and talk about the positive aspects of their lives and even their struggles
- Will have more hope in problem solving
- Is grateful for the things and opportunities they have in their life

7. EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

This is covered using the book : The boy with big, big feelings.

Being able to express our emotions in non-destructive ways is important. We should learn how to do this through speaking about our emotions or through other ways like doing physical activities or art.

Children who are able to express their emotions:

- Will not lash out when they are angry but be able to calm themselves down
- Will be able to talk about how they feel
- Will be more creative and filled with ideas

8. INDEPENDENCE

This is covered using the book : Hunter's Best Friend at School

Independence is being able to think and act by yourself without always following someone else or having people help you. As the children are growing up they will need to learn more independence. You can facilitate this by allowing them to figure things out sometimes instead of giving them step by step instructions (although this would only be appropriate for some tasks). Often children can figure things out but some may be lazy and would rather have someone else just tell them what to do. In Aftacool we want to teach the children independence, how to use their own brains to figure things out - only stepping in to help when is needed. .

An independent child:

- may be able to problem solve themselves and not just copy what others are doing
- may be confident enough to express unique thoughts and feelings
- will not wait for you to help them before they ever start a task

9. ASSERTIVENESS

This is covered using the book : Hunter's Best Friend at School.

Being assertive means that you can communicate your own beliefs to people without being rude. Sometimes this is not easy when people you like believe something different. The opposite of being assertive is being passive and this means that you just go along with everyone else even if you don't agree.

Children who are able to express their emotions:

- Will be able to express their own opinions and not just follow what their friends are doing
- Will stand up for themselves
- Will maintain healthy relationships

10. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

This is covered using the book : The Squirrels who Squabbled

It is difficult to reach our full potential if we do not get along with anyone. Learning to work and live with others is an important skill we need to succeed. Although it is good to get along with each other, it is impossible to never disagree. We need to learn to communicate in helpful ways when we disagree and find solutions to our problem. We will teach the children how to manage conflict – a skill we will always need to practise ourselves.

The first step is to calm down. When we are super emotional we will struggle to think clearly and we could say and do things that may make the situation worse. So taking a moment to breathe and calm our bodies and minds is important before we try to engage. Next we need to figure out what the actual problem is.. Sometimes we disagree because we are not talking about the same thing. This ties in with the second step which is listening. It is important to really try and listen to what the other person is saying – be curious and ask questions, try to understand the other persons opinions. Lastly we can try to come up with ways to move on and solve the problem. Sometimes we will need to compromise or share, sometimes we just need to forgive.

Children who have good interpersonal skills:

- Will get along with other children
- Will be able to have healthy disagreements without being too mean or losing friendships
- Will be able to really listen and understand other peoples perspectives even when they disagree.

11. EMPATHY

This is covered using the book : How full is your bucket?

Empathy is when we are able to understand and share someone else's feelings.

There are 3 steps in showing empathy:

- 1) Think about how others feel
- 2) Show them you understand
- 3) Offer any help you can

Children who are able to express their emotions:

- Will be concerned about other children in the group especially if they seem down
- Will take time to talk to someone that feels down and try understand what is wrong
- Will offer to help someone that is feeling down

12. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

This is covered using the book : Be Kind

Social Responsibility is when we are willing to contribute to society and the groups we are in. It means we do not only think about ourselves but are concerned with how things affect others and the environment around us. It means we take this responsibility seriously and do what we can to have a positive impact on the people and environment around us.

Children who are socially responsible:

- Will understand how their actions affect the people and environment around them
- Will be eager to help others.
- Will be less likely to litter and eager to participate in things like recycling or clean ups.

13. PROBLEM SOLVING

This is covered using the book : What to do with a problem?

Problem Solving is the ability to find solutions to problems especially when emotions are involved. It means that we need to understand that emotions play a role in how we make decisions and factor this in during our problem solving.

Children who are able to problem solve:

- Will make good decisions
- Will work well in teams
- Will find innovative solutions

14. IMPULSE CONTROL

This is covered using the book : Even Superhero's have Bad Days and My Mouth is a Volcano

When we have impulse control it means we are able to think before we act, and do not let our feelings and impulses out without thinking.

Children who practice impulse control:

- Will take responsibility for their own actions
- Will be aware of how their actions and decisions impact what's going on around them
- Focus on the task at hand
- Stay calm and not react with violence



A PROGRAMME BY:

