



Top 6 Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Middle School ASP

Growing. Learning. Leading.

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#1. Pre-Program Recruitment

- Feeder School Presentations, Orientation Events
- Tele-Parent; Mailers; E-Blasts (yes they're online!)
- Surveying new and returning students
- Program Ambassador/Mentor/ Buddy System
- Sell a spot/opp. as an educational scholarship
- Get your finger on the pulse of your school (what's hot vs. what's not, favorite teachers, popular student/cliques, where kids congregate, multi-media resources, etc.) and use this knowledge to inform your strategies and tactics!

#2. Incentives & Referrals

- Both long-term and short-term recognition
- Celebrate and reward attendance and participation (Ideally participation is its own...)
- Bring-a-Friend or Refer-A-Friend Day
- Prize for the individual or group that obtains most app's. or repeat customers (ADA spike)
- Tap teachers, parents, admin, support staff to refer and connect kids with program.

Tip: Prizes don't always have to be tangible or costly items. Mix it up and find what works so its not always expected.

#3. Creating Bomb Enrichment

- Make it Relevant! Kid-Tested Kid-Approved
- Be responsive to the ever changing interests and unique needs of older-youth.
- Tie it to something bigger! Real-World Club
- Hands On and Project Based Learning
- Infuse what we know is important for kids to be exposed to (STEM, YD/Ldrshp., Culture-ARTS, LIT, MVPA, etc.)But respect the fact that this is not our time to do "to" kids but rather design programs "for" and "with" kids.

#4. Noon-Time Recruitment

- Exhibits, Demonstrations, Tournaments, Rally Games, Dance Battles, Video Game Contests, Staff Vs. Student Challenges, Relay Races, Musical Performances, Multi-Media Presentations
- Any class or program component can be packaged and put on display for kids during the lunch period(s)= **Marketing 101**
- Kids are a captive audience at this time.
- They are typically concentrated in large groupings for easier event coordination and supervision. Manage the crowd and safety
- A **taste test**, let them try before they buy!

#5. Structural Collaborations

- Create an E.R.R. or A.D.A. SMART program design. Partnerships and strategic planning of services, resources, and opportunities to serve more kids and better is key to successful R&R
- Anything happening after school let's out should be seamlessly integrated into ASP
- (sports, tutorials, clubs, academies, intramurals, targeted intervention services, etc.)

#6. Culminating Events

- Every class, lesson or unit should be designed with this culminating "end" in mind.
- Events, Award Shows, Talent Exhibitions, Contests, Pageants, Tournies/Championships, Final Projects, Portfolios, Movie Debuts, Fashion Shows, Social Functions/Dances, Parties, Field Trips, Holiday Celebrations
- All too often in ASP's we spend an exhaustive amount of time in a perpetual state of practice! This is the **GAME**, big pay-off or grand finale!