



## STARTING POINT OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION PROTOCOL

### Introduction

In an effort to provide clarity and consistency while explaining and using Starting Point's *Parental Consent to Release Information Form*, Starting Point and the evaluation team from Kent State University, have developed the following Protocol for you to use when you talk with parents and/or guardians about their child's participation in the MyCom Out-of-School Time (OST) evaluation component.

### Background Information

MyCOM stands for My Commitment, My Community, and is a vast network of people and programs designed to increase access to existing opportunities for youth, kindergarten through grade twelve. MyCOM is funded, in part, by the Cleveland Foundation and the Board of Cuyahoga County Commissioners. Starting Point is the lead agency under the MyCOM Initiative for the Out-of-School time component, and provides leadership to ensure that young people in eight (8) pilot neighborhoods have access to a broad array of services during the before, after school and weekend hours. To ensure that this component of the initiative is effective, Starting Point is working with researchers from Kent State University to collect information about the programs that we fund. As a result, the information we collect will help Starting Point learn more about the impact these out-of-school time activities have on youth and their families.

To comply with funding guidelines, Starting Point OST Providers must register each youth into the MyCOM system, and secure a *Parental Consent to Release Information Form* for every participant served. While completing the Parental Consent Form is a requirement for all participants, please note that if parents check the "No" box on the form, youth may **NOT** be denied services. Starting Point will only release data to Kent State University if their parents agree (indicated by checking the "Yes" box on the Parental Consent Form).

Included with this protocol are two sample letters to be used by agencies to explain this protocol and provide parents and/or guardians with background information on why completing the Parental Consent Form is necessary.

## **Protocol**

- The Starting Point *Parental Consent to Release Information Form* must be completed, signed and returned for all children and youth being served (whether their parents/guardians agree to release their information or not).

**NOTE: It is critical that the form be signed and dated by both the parent/guardian and the agency staff representative.**

- The Parental Consent Form must be signed as soon as the child is registered for the out-of-school time activity.
- When reviewing the Parental Consent Form with the parent/guardian, please be sure that the entire top portion of the form is complete.
- A separate consent form must be signed for each child, even if they are siblings.
- When a child is being served by multiple OST Agencies, each agency will need to have a complete Parental Consent Form signed by the parent/guardian.
- The original Parental Consent Form (white copy) should be kept on file with your agency, one copy (pink) should be given to the parent/guardian, and the other copy (yellow) should be returned to Starting Point, to the attention of Aletha Adams, MyCOM Administrative Assistant.

## **Confidentiality and Voluntary Nature of Study**

*Records of this research study will be kept private.  
It will not be possible to identify an individual participant in  
any report that may be published.*

Youth participation is completely voluntary and refusal to participate will not affect the services your child or your childcare provider receives from the agency. You may choose to end your participation at any time by requesting a Revocation of Release of Information form from the agency that requested your consent.