



## *Technical Aid Packet*

# ***After-School Programs and Addressing Barriers to Learning***

(Revised 2016)

**2017 Note: Also see the Information Resource:**

***About Programs for After School Hours and Non-school Days***

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/aftersch.pdf>



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# ***After-School Programs and Addressing Barriers to Learning***

***Risk can be transformed into opportunity  
for our youth by turning their non-school  
hours into the time of their lives***

*A Matter of Time*

*Carnegie Task Force on Education*

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## ***Introduction***

Recent trends have resulted in schools implementing an extensive range of preventive and corrective activity oriented to students' needs and problems. Some programs are provided through a school district, others are carried out at, or linked to, targeted schools. Some are owned and operated by schools; some are owned by community agencies. Few schools, however, come close to having enough resources to respond when confronted with a large number of students who are experiencing a wide range of barriers that interfere with their learning and performance. At the same time, there has been increasing interest in school community collaborations as one way to provide more support for schools, students and families.

***One of the fastest growing examples of school-community collaborations is occurring in the expansion of after-school programs.***

This venue allows schools to address several of the most important aspects for enhancing student success:

- safety/violence prevention
- augmentation of academic supports to enhance classroom success
- outreach to community recreation and social service programs
- opportunities for families to participate in learning activities.

Formal and informal after-school programs occur throughout every community, at agencies and other neighborhood venues, as well as on school campuses. The focus of this document is on opportunities for after-school involvement offered at school sites. However, it should be evident that many of the ideas covered are useful for planning before-school programs, improving recess and lunch periods, thinking about schools as sites for weekend and holiday/vacation community hubs to enrich learning opportunities and provide recreation in a safe environment.

As schools develop a full range of opportunities, they can anticipate a range of important results, including reduced alienation, enhanced positive attitudes toward and involvement in school and learning, and an increased perception of school as a caring place.



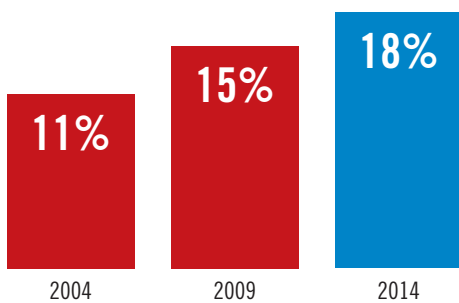
*America After 3PM* surveyed parents across the country to examine how children spend the hours between 3 and 6 p.m.—the hours after school ends and before parents typically return home from work. It highlights the trends in afterschool program participation, documents the benefits associated with participation in afterschool programs, and measures public support for afterschool programs.

*America After 3PM* revealed that nationally **10.2 million children (18%) participate** in an afterschool program, yet **19.4 million children (41%) would be enrolled** in a program if one were available to them.

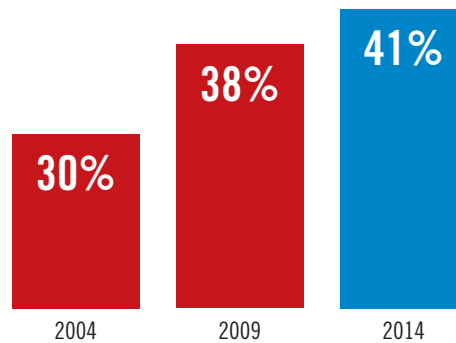
With **89% of parents satisfied with their child’s afterschool program** and **75% agreeing that afterschool programs give working parents peace of mind**, more work needs to be done to ensure that all children are able to take part in an afterschool program that keeps them safe, inspires learning and supports working parents.

## OVERALL DEMAND FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

National Afterschool Program Participation



National Demand for Afterschool Programs



**20%**  
of children are unsupervised after school in 2014 for an average of 7.34 hours per week.

On average, children spend **7.37** hours and **3.62** days per week in an afterschool program.

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## Parents are Satisfied with their Child's Afterschool Program

- 89% are satisfied with their child's afterschool program overall.
- 88% are satisfied with their child's afterschool program's safe environment.
- 88% are satisfied with their child's afterschool program's quality of care.
- Parents cited as their top five reasons for selecting an afterschool program: the program is a safe haven (81%), quality of care (81%), their child enjoys the afterschool program (81%), location is convenient (80%) and knowledgeable and well-trained program staff (80%).

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## Afterschool Programs Provide a Wide Range of Benefits to Children and Families

- 64% of parents agree that afterschool programs can help excite children about learning.
- 67% of parents agree that afterschool programs help children gain workforce skills, such as teamwork, leadership and critical thinking.
- 73% of parents agree that afterschool programs can help reduce the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors, such as commit a crime, use drugs or become a teen parent.
- The top five activities parents report are offered by their child's afterschool program are opportunities for physical activity (80%), homework assistance (77%), opportunities for reading or writing (72%), beverages, snacks and/or meals (72%) and STEM learning opportunities (69%).

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## Parents Support Public Funding for Afterschool Programs

- Nationally 84% of parents support public funding for afterschool programs, while just 20% report receiving government assistance with the cost of their child's program.
- Nationally 75% of parents agree that afterschool programs help give working parents peace of mind about their children when they are at work.
- Nationally 74% of parents agree that afterschool programs help working parents keep their jobs.

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### ABOUT THE SURVEY

The percentages and projected numbers of children and families in *America After 3PM* are based on survey responses from parents. The Afterschool Alliance contracted with Shugoll Research to collect the data. Nationally, 30,720 households were screened, and 13,709 households completed in-depth interviews via an online survey using a blend of national consumer panels. At least 200 households completed interviews in every state and the District of Columbia, between Feb. 28 and April 17, 2014. For additional information about *America After 3PM*, visit: <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM>.

*America After 3PM* is funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Noyce Foundation, with additional support from the Heinz Endowments, The Robert Bowne Foundation and the Samueli Foundation.



## Snapshot of Afterschool Programs Across the Country



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**45%** of children in an afterschool program qualify for the Federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program.

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Nationally, the top three providers of afterschool programs are afterschool programs run by a public school, Boys & Girls Club afterschool programs and YMCA afterschool programs.

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**73%** of afterschool programs are located in a public school building.

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On average, families who pay for their child's afterschool program spend \$114 per week.

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After lack of need, the predominant obstacles to enrollment include:

*Preference for alternative activities.*

*The afterschool programs are too expensive.*

## ***I. After-school Programs as Part of a Broad, School Wide Component to Address Barriers to Learning and Promote Healthy Development***

An important context for understanding after-school programs is provided by two aims:

- the desire to ***promote healthy development*** and
- the need to ***address barriers to learning and development***.

Ultimately, addressing barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development must be viewed from a societal perspective and requires fundamental systemic reforms.

From this perspective, ***it becomes clear that schools and communities must work together to develop a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated continuum of interventions for each neighborhood.***

The framework for such a continuum emerges from analyses of social, economic, political, and cultural factors associated with the needs of youth and from promising practices. The result is a continuum that includes systems of youth development, systems of prevention, systems of early intervention, and systems of care (see Figure 1). Fleshing out the framework requires a significant range of programs focused on individuals, families, and environments.

To establish the essential interventions, there must be inter-program collaboration on a daily basis and over a long period of time focused on:

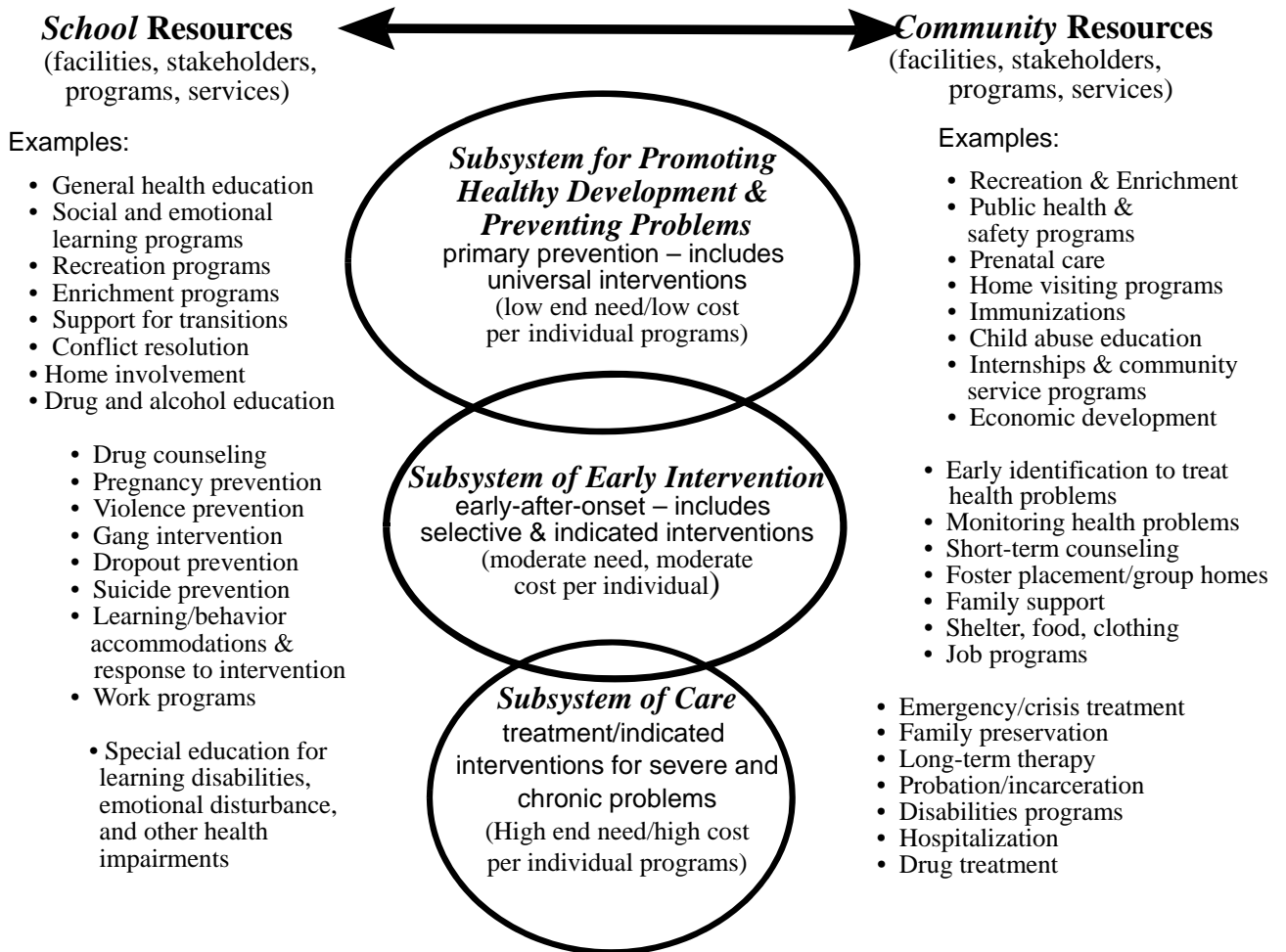
- ***weaving together what is available at a school***
- ***expanding this through integrating school, community, and home resources***
- ***enhancing access to community resources by linking as many as feasible to programs at the school.***

Within the context of a comprehensive approach, after-school programs are understood to have multiple facets. They not only provide opportunities to foster healthy development, they are essential to preventing many problems. They also provide opportunities for addressing some problems as early-after-onset as feasible, and they can offer invaluable support for efforts to meet the needs of youngsters with chronic/severe problems.

For a discussion of policy and practice implications related to establishing a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development, see Appendix A.

**Prototype for Clarifying Levels of Intervention Continuum:\***  
**Interconnected Subsystems for Meeting the Needs of All Students**

*One Key Facet of a Unified and Comprehensive Framework*



Systemic collaboration is essential to establish interprogram connections on a daily basis and over time to ensure seamless intervention within each system and among *systems for promoting healthy development and preventing problems, systems of early intervention, and systems of care.*

Such collaboration involves horizontal and vertical restructuring of programs and services

(a) within jurisdictions, school districts, and community agencies (e.g., among departments, divisions, units, schools, clusters of schools)

(b) between jurisdictions, school and community agencies, public and private sectors; among schools; among community agencies

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\*Various venues, concepts, and initiatives permeate this continuum of intervention *systems*. For example, venues such as day care and preschools, concepts such as social and emotional learning and development, and initiatives such as positive behavior support, response to intervention, and coordinated school health. Also, a considerable variety of staff are involved. Finally, *note that this illustration of an essential continuum of intervention systems differs in significant ways from the three tier pyramid that is widely referred to in discussing universal, selective, and indicated interventions.*



## **II. About Afterschool Programs**

### **A. The Need and Some Findings**

Various stakeholders have identified needs and desired outcomes relevant to after-school programs. These are summarized below. To maximize the benefits of such programs, it is recommended that program planners create a strong collaborative partnership among concerned stakeholder groups to ensure the needs of all are fully addressed.

#### ***For Children***

Provides a safe place for after-school hours

Provides opportunities for social contacts and a range of recreation and enrichment opportunities.

Provides academic supports for helping with homework, exploring new ways to learn and enhanced motivation for learning, and tutoring to help “catch up”

#### ***For Youth***

Provides a rich array of opportunities for social contacts and enrichment activities, especially related to sports, arts, and student directed projects.

Provides positive interactions with mentors (volunteers from business, professions, colleges) who can engender planning for career and future opportunities.

Provides opportunities to “catch up” in academic areas with alternative strategies and more individualized supports

#### ***For Families***

Provides low or no cost care for children and youth

Provides enrichment opportunities for families who might not be able to afford them otherwise (for both children and adults)

Provides academic support and opportunities for children, youth, and adults

#### ***For Schools***

Provides the school staff and programs with opportunities to integrate with community personnel and programs to enhance positive outcomes for schools

Provides a “second shift” to help students “catch up” with academics through augmented efforts and alternative teaching approaches

Provides extended job opportunities for school staff who are interested and available in alternative contacts with students and families.

#### ***For Communities***

Provides opportunities to integrate community resources and programs with the school during “non peak hours” when space and students are more accessible

Provides safe and supervised recreation and enrichment opportunities to reduce juvenile crime and victimization of unsupervised children and youth

Provides opportunities for personnel from a range of family serving organizations that have a vested interest in improving the outcomes for the neighborhood and community to create systemic changes



## II. About Afterschool Programs

### A. The Need and Some Findings (cont.)

#### *American After 3 PM: Afterschool Programs in Demand*



The past decade has seen much progress in the number of children who are able to take advantage of the opportunities and activities afterschool programs have to offer, transforming the hours between 3 and 6 p.m. from a time of concern for working parents to a time of learning and advancement for students. The 2014 *America After 3PM* edition—which spans a decade of data chronicling how children spend the hours between 3 and 6 p.m.—has found that overall participation in afterschool programs has increased by nearly 60 percent from 2004 to 2014, with nearly 4 million more children in afterschool programs today. In addition to more children participating in afterschool programs, parents' satisfaction with specific aspects of afterschool programs—such as the quality of care, staff and program activities—has significantly increased over the last five years.

Although sizeable gains have been made in afterschool program quality and participation, the unmet demand for afterschool programs continues to rise. In 2004, the parents of 15.3 million children said they would enroll their child in an afterschool program if one were available; today that number stands at 19.4 million children. And, while the number of children alone and unsupervised after school has decreased over the last 10 years, there are still 11.3 million children headed for an unsupervised environment after the last school bell rings.

The data in this report show that parents are increasingly turning to afterschool programs to meet their own and their children's needs in the hours after school. The combined demand for afterschool, both met and unmet, exceeds 50 percent of school-age children in the United States. Parents who are fortunate enough to have access to afterschool programs are highly satisfied with those programs and are increasingly satisfied with aspects of the programs that are linked to quality.

Increased federal, state, local and private investments are essential to ensure that quality afterschool programs are available, accessible and affordable to all children, regardless of income level or geographic area. Public support for federal funding of afterschool programs is strong, with a high-level of support across political party identification and geographic region. Yet federal investment in the primary funding stream for afterschool programs has

remained relatively flat over the past five years—growing less than 2 percent, from \$1.13 billion in 2009 to \$1.15 billion in 2014. Despite the growing call for afterschool programs, \$4 billion in local grant requests have been denied due to insufficient federal funds and an increasing number of requests over the course of 10 years.<sup>1</sup>

Taken together, the 2004, 2009 and 2014 editions of *America After 3PM* illustrate how much progress has been made in the afterschool hours, but at the same time, they make clear that as a nation, we have much more work ahead of us to ensure that all children are afforded the supports and opportunities afterschool programs have to offer. It will take a united effort to increase the availability of quality afterschool programs that help children reach their full potential and succeed in school, college, career and beyond. To help families and the approximately 19.4 million children across the United States who would participate in an afterschool program if one were available to them, it will take a concerted effort by the public and private sectors—as well as educators, families and communities—to tackle the challenge of meeting the demand for afterschool programs.

## KEY FINDINGS

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**Participation in afterschool programs has consistently increased over the past 10 years, rising by nearly 2 million children in the last five years alone.** Today, 10.2 million children (18 percent) participate in an afterschool program, an increase from 2009 (8.4 million; 15 percent) and 2004 (6.5 million; 11 percent).<sup>2</sup> Nearly 1 in 4 families (23 percent) currently has a child enrolled in an afterschool program.

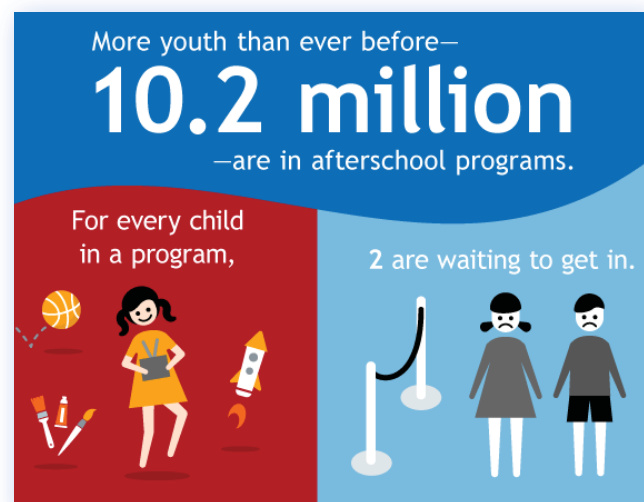
**However, the number of children unsupervised in the hours after school, while on the decline, remains high.** In communities across the United States, 11.3 million children are without supervision between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m. That number is down from 15.1 million in 2009 and 14.3 million in 2004, but 1 in 5 children still do not have someone to care for them after school.

**While participation in afterschool programs has increased, the unmet demand for afterschool programs continues to rise.** In 2014, approximately 19.4 million children (41 percent) not currently in an afterschool program would be enrolled in a program if one were available to them, according to their parents. By comparison, in 2009, parents of 18.5 million children (38 percent) said they would enroll their child in an afterschool program if one were available, up from parents of 15.3 million children (30 percent) in 2004.

**Together, the rates of participation and unmet demand show that more than half of all school-age children in 2014 have some measure of demand (either met or unmet) for afterschool programs.** In fact, for every child in an afterschool program, approximately two more children would be enrolled if a program were available to them.

**As the economy continues to recover, afterschool programs are an essential source of support for working parents—giving them peace of mind when at work and helping them to keep their jobs.** More than 8 in 10 parents (83 percent) of children in afterschool programs agree that afterschool programs help working parents keep their jobs. Overall, 3 in 4 parents agree that afterschool programs help give working parents peace of mind about their children when they are at work, and among parents with children in an afterschool program, agreement jumps to 85 percent.

There are distinct differences in afterschool program participation and demand across income levels and ethnicity. Participation in and demand for afterschool programs are much higher among children from low-income households compared to higher-income households, as well as higher among African-American and Hispanic children than Caucasian children. Children from low-income households are more likely than their higher-income peers to participate in an afterschool program (20 percent versus 18 percent) and the demand for afterschool programs is much higher among low-income families than families that do not qualify for the Federal Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program (50 percent versus 34 percent).



Similarly, Hispanic and African-American children are at least two times more likely to participate in an afterschool program than Caucasian children. Twenty-nine percent of Hispanic children are in programs, as are 24 percent of African-American children and 12 percent of Caucasian children. At the same time, unmet demand for afterschool programs is also higher among African-American and Hispanic children (60 percent and 57 percent, respectively) compared to Caucasian children (35 percent), according to their parents.

**Cost and lack of a safe way for their children to get to and come home from afterschool programs are among the barriers that low-income households, African-American families and Hispanic families report keep them from enrolling their children in an afterschool program.** Among parents who would enroll their child in an afterschool program if one were available to them, obstacles to enrollment differed by income and by race and ethnicity. The lack of a safe way for their child to get to and come home from an afterschool program was cited as barrier to enrolling their child in a program by 55 percent of African-American parents, 53 percent of Hispanic parents and 54 percent of low-income households, compared to 48 percent of higher-income households and half of Caucasian parents. Fifty-six percent of low-income households report that the cost of afterschool programs was a factor in their decision not to enroll their child in a program, compared to 48 percent of higher-income households. And, close to half of Hispanic parents (48 percent) and 46 percent of African-American parents report that a very important factor in their decision not to enroll their child in an afterschool program is that afterschool programs are not available in their community, compared to 38 percent of Caucasian parents.

**Parents' overall satisfaction with their child's afterschool program remains high; in fact, parents today are much more satisfied than in the past with specific aspects of afterschool programs and hold stronger positive feelings regarding the benefits of afterschool programs.** Nine in 10 parents (89 percent) are satisfied with their afterschool program, similar to parents' responses in 2009 (89 percent) and in 2004 (91 percent). However, satisfaction with specific afterschool program qualities has significantly increased. For instance, satisfaction with the quality of care increased nine points, from 79 percent in 2009 to 88 percent in 2014; satisfaction with homework assistance increased 16 points, from 64 percent in 2009 to 80 percent in 2014; and satisfaction with workforce skill development—such as teamwork, leadership and critical thinking—increased 14 points, from 57 percent in 2009 to 71 percent in 2014.

Parents view afterschool programs as more than just a safe environment for children. They recognize that programs provide a wide range of activities and enriching learning opportunities for children. Four in 5 parents say that their child's afterschool program offers opportunities for physical activity, 72 percent of parents say their child has opportunities for reading or writing, and 69 percent of parents say that their afterschool program offers a STEM learning opportunity. Nine in 10 parents (88 percent) with a child in an afterschool program agree that programs can help children develop social skills through interaction with their peers and 83 percent agree that afterschool programs can help reduce the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors, such as commit a crime or use drugs, or become a teen parent.

Many afterschool programs extend beyond the traditional school year and provide valuable summer learning programs as well. Public funding for summer learning programs is strongly supported by parents and participation in summer learning programs is on the rise. One-third of families report at least one child participated in a summer learning program in 2013, up from the 25 percent of families in the 2009 survey. More than half of families (51 percent) wanted their child to participate in a summer learning program in 2014. Additionally, 85 percent of parents indicate support for public funding for summer learning programs, an increase of two percentage points over the already very strong support registered in 2009.

Support for public funding of afterschool programs remains strong and broad-based. Overall, 84 percent of parents report that they favor public funding for afterschool opportunities in communities that have few opportunities for children and youth, a slight increase from 83 percent in 2009. More than 9 in 10 parents who identify as Democrats (91 percent), 86 percent of parents who self-identify as Independents and 80 percent of parents identifying as Republicans report that they favor public funding for afterschool programs.



For more information about the national and state-specific *America After 3PM* survey findings, visit <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM>.

*The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

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1. O'Donnell, P. and Ford, J. (2013). *The Continuing Demand for 21st Century Community Learning Centers across America: More than four billion dollars of unmet need*; Peterson, T., Fowler, S. and Dunham, T.F. (2013). "Creating the Recent Force Field: A Growing Infrastructure for Quality Afterschool and Summer Learning Opportunities." *Expanding Minds and Opportunities: Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summer Learning for Student Success*. Washington, D.C.: Collaborative Communications Group.

2. Due to the change in survey collection, the projected numbers and percentages reported on this year for participation in afterschool programs, children in self-care, and children not in an afterschool program but whose parent would enroll them if one were available, is based on child level data rather than household level data that was reported on in previous years. The household level percentages are included in the topline questionnaire.



## II. About Afterschool Programs

### A. The Need and Some Findings (cont.)



### *Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe, Engage Kids in Learning and Help Working Families*

[http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/National\\_fact\\_sheet\\_04\\_03\\_13.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/National_fact_sheet_04_03_13.pdf)

A powerful convergence of factors—including a lack of federal, state and local funding, and families and communities beset by tight budgets—leaves 15.1 million school-age children alone and unsupervised in the hours after school. Afterschool programs are essential to keep kids safe, engage children in enriching activities, and give peace of mind to moms and dads during the out-of-school hours. There are approximately 8.4 million school-age children in afterschool programs. This includes 1.6 million kids who attend 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC), programs that serve children living in high-poverty areas and attending low-performing schools. At a time when families and communities are struggling financially and kids are falling behind academically, afterschool programs are needed more than ever.

#### **Afterschool Programs Offer a Range of Benefits:**

Afterschool programs not only keep kids safe, they also help improve students' academic performance, school attendance, behavior and health, and support working families:

- An analysis of 68 afterschool studies found that students participating in high-quality afterschool programs went to school more, behaved better, received better grades and performed better on tests compared to non-participants. (Weissberg, R.P., et.al, 2010)
- A study of nearly 3,000 low-income students at 35 high-quality afterschool programs across the U.S. found students who regularly attended programs over the course of two years, compared to their peers who were routinely unsupervised during the afterschool hours:
  - Made significant improvements academically and behaviorally;
  - Demonstrated gains in their standardized math test scores; and
  - Saw reductions in teacher-reported misconduct and reduced use of drugs and alcohol. (Vandell, D.L., et. al., 2007)

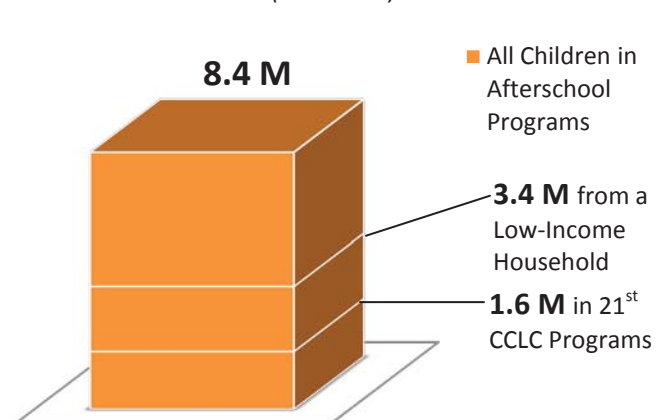
#### **Need for Afterschool Programs by the Numbers:**

**18.5** million kids would participate in an afterschool program if one were available to them.

**15.1** million kids on their own in the hours after school.

**23** million parents of school-age children work outside of the home full time.

**Children in Afterschool Programs**  
(in millions)



- Students who attended 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs made significant improvements in their classroom behavior, completion of their homework and participation in class. Gains were also made in students' math and English grades. (Learning Point Associates, 2011).
- Evaluations of LA's BEST revealed that participation in the afterschool program improved students' regular school day attendance. Students also reported higher aspirations regarding finishing school and going to college. (Huang, D., et.al., 2005)
- A study found that—after controlling for baseline obesity, poverty, race and ethnicity—the prevalence of obesity was significantly lower for children participating in an afterschool program when compared to nonparticipants. (Mahoney, et. al., 2005)
- An evaluation of New York City's Out-of-School Time Programs found that 74 percent of parents agreed that afterschool programs made it easier to keep their jobs, and 73 percent agreed with the statement that they missed less work now compared to before their child became involved in the program. (Russell, C.A., et. al., 2009)

Students who drop out of school and do not obtain a high school diploma are more likely to live in poverty, be unemployed and earn less when in the workforce.

In a longitudinal study, researchers at UCLA found that dropout rates among LA's BEST students were significantly lower than the overall district dropout rate.

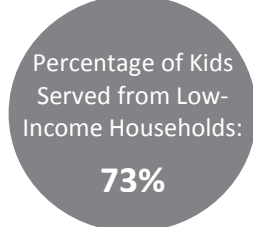
### State of Federal Funding for Afterschool Programs:

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative is the only federal funding source dedicated exclusively to before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs. Investment in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs helps ensure children from high-poverty and low-performing schools have access to a safe and supervised space; keeps kids involved in interest-driven academic enrichment activities that put them on the road to become lifelong learners; and helps support working families. Currently, 22 million kids across the country are eligible to participate in a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. However, just 1.6 million kids attend a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program due to lack of federal funding.

### A Closer Look at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC)

- The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative is authorized to be funded at \$2.5 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. The current amount appropriated is less than half of the authorization level, at \$1.1 billion.
- Over the last 10 years, \$4 billion in local grant requests were denied because of the lack of adequate federal funding and intense competition.
- More than 4,000 additional grants could be awarded if full funding for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC were available.

Estimated Number of Children Participating in 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC Programs*	
2011	1,154,000
2012	1,152,000
2013	1,094,090
*Numbers are based on the cost of \$1,000 per child	
2013 figure incorporates the 5% sequester cut	



## II. About Afterschool Programs

### A. The Need and Some Findings (cont.)

#### **Youth Outcomes Associated with Differing After-School Experiences**

The findings of these analyses indicated that elementary- and middle-grades youth benefitted from an array of after-school experiences that included participation in high-quality after-school programs and structured school- and community-based activities that were supervised by adults. Findings also pointed to the comparative risks young people faced when they were inadequately supervised, even when they occasionally participated in sports teams, after-school academic and arts lessons, or activities at neighborhood community centers.

#### **Summary Findings**

***Outcomes data on both elementary- and middle-grades youth showed that program-based and other structured after-school experiences, along with adult supervision, improved youths' conduct and work habits during the two-year study period.*** Survey data indicated reduced misconduct among those in structured, supervised settings, compared with their unsupervised peers. When elementary-grades youth assessed their work habits, all three supervised clusters reported improvements over two years, in comparison with youth in the self-care plus activities cluster. Among middle-grades youth, the three supervised clusters reported relatively less substance abuse at the end of the second year, compared with the self-care group. Middle-grades youth in the program plus activities and program only clusters showed moderate improvements in work habits, relative to youth in the self-care plus activities cluster.

***Teachers of elementary-grades youth confirmed that those who participated in high quality after-school programs and other adult-supervised experiences fared significantly better than did their peers who were unsupervised after school.*** In particular, compared with the youth who were unsupervised and rarely attended the after-school programs (the *self-care plus activities* group), teachers reported that youth in the *program plus activities* group and the *supervised at home* cluster (1) had more positive work habits, (2) were more persistent in completing tasks, (3) performed better academically, (4) had better social skills in relating to their peers, and (5) were less aggressive with their peers after two years of participation in the selected after-school program and in supplementary activities. The *program only* cluster had the same range of improved outcomes, relative to the *self-care plus activities* group, except that there were no differences between these two groups on long-term academic performance. Teachers of middle-grades youth reported small improvements in task persistence for the *program plus activities* group, but did not report comparable evidence of outcomes associated with different after-school experiences.

***Parent reports of youth relationships with adults were more positive among parents of elementary- and middle-grades youth who attended the targeted after-school programs or were supervised at home, compared with the reports of other parents.*** Parent reports did not indicate changes in other outcome areas of interest in the study.

***The advantages of high-quality programming plus additional supervised experiences differed across age groups and within cluster groups, but the disadvantages of self-care, even with additional activities, were consistent.*** In a noteworthy distinction between teacher-reported elementary- and middle-grades youth outcomes, the elementary *program plus activities* group experienced larger relative gains in work habits but smaller reductions in misconduct, compared with the other supervised groups. Among middle-grades youth, the key benefit was seen in youth self-reports of improved work habits and reduced misbehavior, although neither teachers nor parents reported these outcome differences. For older youth, the research found a slight advantage in combining attendance in the high-quality programs with participation in other activities compared with other after-school options.

***High-quality after-school experiences over two years exerted a stronger benefit for youth than did only one year of such experiences.*** While benefits were evident from a single year of involvement, the strongest benefits accrued when children were supervised in various sets of activities over multiple years.

From: Charting the Benefits of High-Quality After-School Program Experiences: Evidence from New Research on Improving After-School Opportunities for Disadvantaged Youth  
<http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/dat/promisingprograms.pdf>



## II. About Afterschool Programs

### A. The Need and Some Findings (cont.)

*The Intersection of Afterschool and Competency-Based Learning: Emerging Trends, Policy Considerations, and Questions for the Future. AYPF White Paper* (2016)

J.B. Lerner, J. Tomasello, B. Brand, & G. Knowles

American Youth Policy Forum

<http://www.aypf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/AS.CBL-Paper-FINAL-1.6.pdf>

Afterschool and competency-based learning are increasingly emerging as student-centered, supportive learning models to prepare students for college and career. This white paper explores the intersection and relationship between these two fields, recommends ideal policy environments for implementing successful programs, provides real-world examples, and shines a spotlight on emerging trends for the future.

## II. About Afterschool Programs

### B. Research and Action

15 JAN 2016 | SPOTLIGHT

# Beyond the Bell: Turning Research into Action in Afterschool and Expanded Learning

<http://www.air.org/resource/beyond-bell-turning-research-action-afterschool-and-expanded-learning>



How can we better support young people as they develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in school, work, and life? What knowledge, attitudes, and skills do young people need to be ready for work? How do afterschool programs contribute to the development of social and emotional competencies in young people and how can we prove it?

To address these and other key questions, AIR released a series of briefs and tools focused on how afterschool programs can support the social and emotional development of young people. *Beyond the Bell: Research to Action in the Afterschool and Expanded Learning Field* was designed to make research on the afterschool and expanded learning field accessible, easy to read, and ultimately useful in practice.

#### DEFINING AND ASSESSING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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***Supporting Social and Emotional Development Through Quality Afterschool Programs*** </resource/supporting-social-and-emotional-development-through-quality-afterschool-programs> is an overview of work done both in afterschool and school-based settings to define social and emotional learning. It includes recent research on how afterschool programs support the development of social and emotional competencies, and offers some next step recommendations to both practitioners and researchers.

***Social and Emotional Learning Practices: A Self-Reflection Tool for Afterschool Staff*** </resource/social-and-emotional-learning-practices-self-reflection-tool-afterschool-staff> is designed to help afterschool program staff reflect upon their own social and emotional competencies and their ability to support young people's social and emotional learning through program practices.

#### HOW SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AFFECTS EMPLOYABILITY

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Over the past decade, afterschool programs have focused on preparing young people for the workforce by developing good work habits and a strong work ethic. ***Ready for Work? How Afterschool Programs Can Support Employability Through Social and Emotional Learning*** </resource/ready-work-how-afterschool-programs-can-support-employability-through-social-and-emotional> addresses the importance of those programs also supporting the development of social and emotional learning competencies.

The related **planning tool** </resource/how-afterschool-programs-can-support-employability-through-social-and-emotional-learning> is designed to help afterschool staff identify priority areas for employability skills building based on youth and employer input, and plan next steps based on that input.

## CONNECTING SCHOOLS AND AFTERSCHOOL THROUGH SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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School-day and afterschool programs must work together to support young people as they develop. **Linking Schools and Afterschool Through Social and Emotional Learning** </resource/linking-schools-and-afterschool-through-social-and-emotional-learning> covers the policy context reflecting a growing interest in social and emotional learning and discusses how afterschool and in-school educators can work together. </resource/school-and-out-school-time-social-and-emotional-learning-connection-planning-tool>

**The In-School and Afterschool Social and Emotional Learning Connection planning tool** </resource/school-and-out-school-time-social-and-emotional-learning-connection-planning-tool> is designed for afterschool and in-school staff to reflect independently on their goals for social and emotional learning and discuss how best to work collaboratively toward a common goal.

*A core mission of the Afterschool and Expanded Learning team at AIR is to be both consumers and producers of rigorous research and to share with the field what we learn. Practitioners help young people grow and learn every day. Researchers study this work to understand how it helps youth, families, and communities. Our work is designed to connect the dots so that we can learn from one another. **Read more about our services in Afterschool and Expanded Learning.*** </resource/client-services-afterschool-and-expanded-learning>

## FURTHER READING

- Linking Schools and Afterschool Through Social and Emotional Learning </resource/linking-schools-and-afterschool-through-social-and-emotional-learning>
- The In-School and Afterschool Social and Emotional Learning Connection: A Planning Tool </resource/school-and-afterschool-social-and-emotional-learning-connection-planning-tool>
- Ready for Work? How Afterschool Programs Can Support Employability Through Social and Emotional Learning </resource/ready-work-how-afterschool-programs-can-support-employability-through-social-and-emotional>
- Supporting Social and Emotional Development Through Quality Afterschool Programs </resource/supporting-social-and-emotional-development-through-quality-afterschool-programs>
- Are You Ready to Assess Social and Emotional Development? </resource/are-you-ready-assess-social-and-emotional-development>

## II. About Afterschool Programs

### B. Research and Action (cont.)

#### What Works Clearinghouse



### Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide.aspx?sid=10>

#### Summary

Out-of-school time programs can enhance academic achievement by helping students learn outside the classroom. The five recommendations in this guide are intended to help district and school administrators, out-of-school program providers, and educators design out-of-school time programs that will increase learning for students. The guide also describes the research supporting each recommendation, how to carry out each recommendation, and how to address roadblocks that might arise in implementing them.

#### Recommendations

##### Design

Recommendation	Level of Evidence
1. Align the OST program academically with the school day. <i>Source</i> – (4.9 MB)	Minimal
2. Maximize student participation and attendance. <i>Source</i> – (4.9 MB)	Minimal

##### Instruction

Recommendation	Level of Evidence
3. Adapt instruction to individual and small group needs. <i>Source</i> – (4.9 MB)	Moderate
4. Provide engaging learning experiences. <i>Source</i> – (4.9 MB)	Minimal

##### Evaluation

Recommendation	Level of Evidence
5. Assess program performance and use the results to improve the quality of the program. <i>Source</i> – (4.9 MB)	Minimal



#### Practice Guide Details

Released: July 2009

Topic: [Teacher and Leader Effectiveness](#)

Education Level: Elementary, Middle Grades

Audience: Administrator, Parent/Family, Policymaker, Researcher, School Specialist, Student, Teacher

This practice guide was prepared for the WWC by Mathematica Policy Research under contract ED-07-CO-0062.

## II. About Afterschool Programs

### B. Research and Action (cont.)

#### **Recreation and Enrichment**

*After-school programs provide opportunities for children to work and play together in a more informal setting than during the regular school day. The increased interaction with peers contributes to the development of social skills. ..Children also benefit from increased interaction with caring adults, who serve as role models and mentors. Overall, studies have found that the beneficial effects of after-school programs are strongest for low-income children, children in urban or high-crime neighborhoods, younger children, and boys.*

“Working for Children and Families:

Safe and Smart After-School Programs” (2000)

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/archives/pubs/parents/SafeSmart/index.html>

After-school most students want the chance to leave the confines of chairs, desks, and classrooms and release energy through athletics (including but not limited to organized sports), arts and crafts, music, interest groups/clubs, and other social activities. Besides what the school staff can offer, some youth development organizations come to school sites to expand the number of options. Creating a cadre of teen assistants also helps maximize the range of youth involvement and minimize the number of adults needed for supervision

#### **The Engagement Gap: Social Mobility and Extracurricular Participation among American Youth (2015)**

K. Snellman, J.M.Silva, C.B. Frederick, & R.d. Putnam

*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 657, 194-207

<http://ann.sagepub.com/content/657/1/194.abstract>

Participation in extracurricular activities is associated with positive youth outcomes such as higher education attainment and greater future earnings. We present new analyses of four national longitudinal surveys of American high school students that reveal a sharp increase in the class gap in extracurricular involvement. Since the 1970s, upper-middle-class students have become increasingly active in school clubs and sport teams, while participation among working-class students has veered in the opposite direction. These growing gaps have emerged in the wake of rising income inequality, the introduction of “pay to play” programs, and increasing time and money investments by upper-middle-class parents in children’s development. These trends need to be taken into account in any new initiative to monitor mobility. They also present a challenge to the American ideal of equal opportunity insofar as participation in organized activities shapes patterns of social mobility.

## II. About Afterschool Programs

### B. Research and Action (cont.)

#### Quality Daycare

#### The Impact of after-School Childcare Arrangements on the Employment Status of Low-Income Working Mothers

<https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2015/webprogram/Paper24787.html>

Sunday, January 18, 2015: 10:30 AM

\* presented by

*Hyejoon Park, MSW, EdM, PhD, Assistant Professor, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS*  
*Chennan Liu, PhD, Assistant Professor, Renmin University of China, Beijing, China*

**Backgrounds:** 75% of all employed mothers have dependent children under age 18 and 60% of working parents have children under age 6. While many studies have agreed upon the importance of after-school childcare arrangements for low-income working mothers, there is a paucity of studies addressing low-income working mothers whose children are ranged between six and 17 years old, even though the percentage of working mothers with children of these ages has rapidly increased from 33% to 79%. In addition, while numerous studies have shed light on the childcare issues of younger aged children related to maternal employment, few research projects have given any attention to after-school childcare matters concerning mothers with older children. Furthermore, as opposed to the numerous studies that have focused on finding the impact of maternal employment on selecting childcare types, there is little study of how childcare settings impact employed mothers' job status. Therefore, research about low-income working mothers and their children in after-school care arrangements should be as widely conducted as the studies regarding after-school childcare settings, not only to help determine children's developmental outcomes, but also to examine mothers' employment status (working hours, hours for education/training).

**Methods:** This study used the National Household Education Surveys Programs: After-School Programs and Activities Survey (2005) developed by the U. S. Department of Education. The sample included 1900 low-income households whose children were attending any type of after-school care arrangements (after-school programs, relative-, parental-, self-, and some combination of care). We employed multiple regressions to detect if there are associations between independent (five different types of childcare) and dependent variables (maternal employment status) particularly, working hours per week, month, and training/education hours per week controlling for ethnicity.

**Results:** Compared to a reference group (after-school programs), working mothers in relative-care showed longer working hours per week ( $B=3.10, p<0.05$ ) and month ( $B=3.11, p<0.001$ ). In addition, working mothers in self-care (children taken care by themselves) showed lower working hours per week ( $B=-2.67, p<0.05$ ) and month ( $B=-1.23, p<0.001$ ) compared to the reference. However, while controlling for race/ethnicity, some combination care type (attending more than one type of care) showed a significant difference ( $B=10.76, p<0.001$ ). Furthermore, White ( $B=5.82, p<0.05$ ), African-American ( $B=3.67, p<0.05$ ), and Asian mothers ( $B=9.01, p<0.05$ ) showed longer working hours than Latino mothers.

**Implications:** Our study implied that low-income working mothers' job status, in particular working hours, are significantly associated with different types of care. For instance, employed mothers who put their children in relative-care are more likely to spend their time at workplace than those in after-school programs. This suggests that the government should provide childcare subsidies to low-income parents who put their children in relative-care other than after-school programs, which helps increase mothers' working hours outside the home. In addition, for employed mothers who are likely to spend more hours at work outside the home, practitioners should assist these mothers who need to put their children in some combination of care through improving the quality of after-school programs in poor communities which have a lack of resources and affordable childcare settings.

## II. About Afterschool Programs

### B. Research and Action (cont.)

#### **National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment (NCASE)** <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/national-center-afterschool-summer-enrichment>

In October 2015, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Child Care (OCC) launched the new National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment (NCASE). This center is one of nine national training and technical assistance centers funded by the Office of Head Start and/or the Office of Child Care as part of an integrated Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System.<sup>1</sup> Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) will lead NCASE, along with its partners the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) at Wellesley College, the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA), and WRMA, Inc. The goal of NCASE is to ensure that school-age children in families of low-income have increased access to high-quality afterschool and summer learning experiences that contribute to their overall development and academic achievement.

**For more on the focus on day care, see guides, toolkits, case studies, fact sheets, etc., at:**

>National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies – <http://www.naccrra.org>

>National School-Age Care Association – <http://www.nsaca.org>

>National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care – <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>





## II. About Afterschool Programs

### B. Research and Action (cont.)

#### *Adult Learning*

Schools as the hubs of neighborhoods can provide valuable resources to parents and other community members with evening and weekend classes and training. Adult education programs at the school can include English language classes, literacy, job skills, child care certification program, citizenship exam preparation classes, parenting classes.

On one level, adult learning in extended day programs provide venues for schools and communities to work together to enrich the quality of life in the community. The focus can be on life long learning, active involvement in the arts, and general community involvement.

Resources and partnerships for adult learning are found in the efforts of schools and communities to enhance adult literacy and to provide job training. Of note are the efforts of community colleges. In recent years, community colleges have reached out to collaborate in providing adult literacy programs and more.

#### **Parental involvement in afterschool programs and children's academic and socioemotional outcomes**

L.J. Low (2014) – <http://hdl.handle.net/10211.3/122018>

*Abstract:* Previous literature on parent involvement as well as afterschool programs has found positive relations to children's developmental outcomes. However, there is little empirical research that has considered parents' involvement in children's afterschool programs. The purpose of the current study is to extend the current research to address the influence of parental involvement in afterschool programs. Participants were comprised of parents or primary caregivers of children who were currently enrolled in the target afterschool program at the time of data collection. Fifty-four participants completed self-report surveys regarding their involvement in children's afterschool programs. In addition, participants rated items based on children's emotional and behavioral outcomes as well as children's overall academic performance during the last report card period. A combination of correlations and regressions were conducted to test the hypotheses. Results indicated a significant negative association between parent-child communication and children's total difficulties, hyperactive tendencies, and conduct problems. Additionally, findings illustrated parent-child communication as positively associated with participants' reports of children's overall academic performance.

### ***III. Key Components of Successful Programs***

#### ***Growing Together, Learning Together: What Cities Have Discovered about Building Afterschool Systems. Perspective***

D. Browne (2008) *Wallace Foundation* – <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED559934>

With many cities showing an interest in afterschool system building and research providing a growing body of useful information, this Wallace Perspective offers a digest of the latest thinking on how to build and sustain an afterschool system, and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for this promising work. The report (a follow-up to a 2008 Perspective) focuses on the four components of system building that the most current evidence and experience suggest are essential: (1) "Strong leadership from major players": There is no substitute for a committed mayor or superintendent, but for a system to thrive long term, city agencies, private funders, schools, program providers and families all need to "own" the effort to some degree; (2) "Coordination that fits local context": A system's coordinating entity can be a single public agency, multiple agencies working together, a nonprofit intermediary or a network of partners, depending on local needs; (3) "Effective use of data": Gathering and sharing data on a large scale takes both technology to track and organize information and a skilled staff to interpret and act on it; and (4) "A comprehensive approach to quality": Cities must decide what program quality means to them, how "high stakes" to make their assessments of it and how to support continuous improvement of programs. An infographic illustrates the elements and offers key facts about afterschool and systems building today.

[For the 2008 report, "A Place to Grow and Learn: A Citywide Approach to Building and Sustaining Out-of-School Time Learning Opportunities. Perspective", see <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/coordinating-after-school-resources/Documents/Growing-Together-Learning-Together.pdf> ]

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#### **21st Century Community Learning Centers, U.S. Department of Education**

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stccclc/applicant.html>

#### **TYPES OF PROJECTS**

Each eligible entity that receives an award from the state may use the funds to carry out a broad array of before- and after-school activities (including those held during summer recess periods) to advance student achievement. These activities include:

- Remedial education activities and academic enrichment learning programs, including those which provide additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement;
- Mathematics and science education activities;
- Arts and music education activities;
- Entrepreneurial education programs;
- Tutoring services, including those provided by senior citizen volunteers, and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English proficient (LEP) students and that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;
- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled to allow them to improve their academic achievement;
- Drug and violence prevention programs;
- Counseling programs; and
- Character education programs.

### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### A. About Components

As the Afterschool Alliance reports, the number of students attending afterschool programs has skyrocketed in recent years. Current estimates indicate 8.4 million children. To enhance program quality, it is important to learning from high quality programs.

Although afterschool programs differ in order to fit the local community, evaluations of many afterschool programs have identified several key components essential to program success.

Drawing from research and more than a dozen afterschool evaluations, CRESST identifies five key components of effective afterschool programs:

- (1) **Goals** are clear, rigorous, and supported across the program in structure and content. Funding is adequate to support goals.
- (2) **Leadership** is experienced, well-educated, has longevity at the current site, uses effective communications, sets high expectations, and has a bottoms-up management style.
- (3) **Staff** is experienced, has longevity at current program, relates well to students, models high expectations, motivates and engages students, and works well with leaders, colleagues, and parents.
- (4) **Program** aligns to the day school, provides time for students to study, learn and practice; includes motivational activities, frequently uses technology, science and the arts to support youth development, student learning, and engagement.
- (5) **Evaluation** uses both internal (formative) and external (summative) methods. Evaluative information and data accurately measure goals; results are applied to continuous program improvement.

These five components work together to produce a high quality afterschool program

See: *Making Afterschool Programs Better* (2011) by D. Huang, & R. Dietel (CRESST Policy Brief). Los Angeles, CA: University of California. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED525043.pdf>

Based on available research, the Afterschool Training Toolkit (<https://y4y.ed.gov/toolkits/afterschool/>) states that students get the most out of afterschool programs that:

- Develop thoughtful, fun, accessible, activities
- Survey and build on students' interests
- Motivate and engage all students to participate
- Connect to grade-level benchmarks, standards, and the school-day curriculum to increase achievement
- Provide real-world activities that connect to the broader community
- Provide effective tutoring and differentiated instruction for all skill levels
- Integrate technology
- Provide homework help
- Plan activities that engage students and enhance skills across the curriculum
- Provide staff training and professional development

Note the toolkit offers research-based practices, sample lessons, video examples, and resources.

### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### ***B. School-Community Collaboration – families, students, school staff, community agencies and organizations***

As suggested, after-school programs (like any new program at a school site) can be a *catalyst for enhancing the overall school program*. To do so, they must involve key stakeholders and establish an effective structure for working together on a shared action agenda. Schools must be willing to outreach to the community and be responsive to community needs.

The first step is for all participating stakeholders to *map the resources* at the school and in the community and identify other important stakeholders. Based on an analysis of what currently exists, the school and community can enhance linkages in ways that fill gaps. This should be done with clearly set priorities and in ways that reduce redundancy and use existing personnel and other resources in the most effective manner.

Where previous school-community planning has been done, it provides a foundation for enhancing relationships and establishing a strategic plan. Where there has been no previous joint planning, mutual outreach is desirable. In either case, it is essential to establish an effective structure for building capacity and working together – one that enables all participants to make productive contributions and to do so in ways that sustains the work over time.

(See our Center for: *Addressing Barriers to Learning: A Set of Surveys to Map What a School Has and What it Needs* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>)

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#### ***Examining the Quality of 21st Century Community Learning Center After-school Programs: Current Practices and Their Relationship to Outcomes*** (2016)

L.M. Paluta, L. Lower, D.A. Anderson-Butcher, A. Gibson, & A.L. Iachini  
Children Schools, 38, 49-56.

<http://cs.oxfordjournals.org/content/38/1/49.full.pdf+html>

Abstract. Although many youths participate in afterschool programs, the research is unclear about which aspects of afterschool program quality contribute most to positive outcomes. This article examines the relationship among quality and outcomes of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLCCs) afterschool programs, as perceived by 3,388 stakeholders from 337 21st CLCCs in one midwestern state. Perceptions were gathered using the Ohio Quality Assessment Rubric. Descriptive frequencies were generated to identify cross-site strengths and weaknesses, and a canonical correlation was conducted to identify which quality indicators were most related to perceived outcomes. Stakeholders perceived quality across multiple program areas, but the indicator most strongly correlated to outcomes was that of family engagement strategies, an area of relatively poor performance among participating sites. Perceptions of the quality of general youth development strategies and of facilities, space, and equipment were the most favorable among stakeholders. These factors held the weakest correlations with outcomes. These patterns have implications for 21st CLCCs, schools, afterschool partners, and school social workers looking to improve the quality of programs to achieve better youth outcomes.

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### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### B. School-Community Collaboration – families, students, school staff, community agencies and organizations (cont.)

From:

#### *Addressing Barriers to Learning: Closing Gaps in School/Community Policy and Practice*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

Bringing community organizations (and after-school personnel) onto a school campus calls for *institutional cultural sensitivity*. That is, often, the *school culture* is just beginning to experiment with linking with community providers. These initial explorations need careful guidance on the part of all stakeholders to consider *changes in practice and policy*. For example, many teachers have not had the experience of sharing their classrooms with other programs; responsibility for the safety of students is usually the school's and discussions of liability are sure to arise; joint efforts to maintain the physical environment need to be spelled out; shared standards for student behavior need to be explored, and procedures for sharing information about students must be clarified.

The process of school and community working together not only can enhance what happens after-school, but can help link a great many resources to the school on an ongoing basis (e.g., health and human services, business partnerships, mentors, library and parks, etc) and can help strengthen the surrounding neighborhood.

Ultimately, a broad range of community resources can partner with schools to enhance healthy development and address barriers. (For a sample, see *Who in the Community might Partner with Schools* on the next page.) As partnerships develop, more resources can be shared, and new resources can be pursued in a joint manner; responsibilities can be shared, as can the celebration of successes. All this helps to build a sense of community.



### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### B. School-Community Collaboration – families, students, school staff, community agencies and organizations (cont.)

##### Who in the Community Might Partner with Schools?\*

###### *County Agencies and Bodies*

(e.g., Depts. of Health, Mental Health, Children & Family Services, Public Social Services, Probation, Sheriff, Office of Education, Fire, Service Planning Area Councils, Recreation & Parks, Library, courts, housing)

###### *Municipal Agencies and Bodies*

(e.g., parks & recreation, library, police, fire, courts, civic event units)

###### *Physical and Mental Health & Psychosocial Concerns Facilities and Groups*

(e.g., hospitals, clinics, guidance centers, Planned Parenthood, Aid to Victims, MADD, “Friends of” groups; family crisis and support centers, helplines, hotlines, shelters, mediation and dispute resolution centers)

###### *Mutual Support/Self-Help Groups*

(e.g., for almost every problem and many other activities)

###### *Child Care/Preschool Centers*

###### *Post Secondary Education Institutions/Students*

(e.g., community colleges, state universities, public and private colleges and universities, vocational colleges; specific schools within these such as Schools of Law, Education, Nursing, Dentistry)

###### *Service Agencies*

(e.g., PTA/PTSA, United Way, clothing and food pantry, Visiting Nurses Association, Cancer Society, Catholic Charities, Red Cross, Salvation Army, volunteer agencies, legal aid society)

###### *Service Clubs and Philanthropic Organizations*

(e.g., Lions Club, Rotary Club, Optimists, Assistance League, men’s and women’s clubs, League of Women Voters, veteran’s groups, foundations)

###### *Youth Agencies and Groups*

(e.g., Boys and Girls Clubs, Y’s, scouts, 4-H, Woodcraft Rangers)

###### *Sports/Health/Fitness/Outdoor Groups*

(e.g., sports teams, athletic leagues, local gyms, conservation associations, Audubon Society)

###### *Community Based Organizations*

(e.g., neighborhood and homeowners’ associations, Neighborhood Watch, block clubs, housing project associations, economic development groups, civic associations)

###### *Faith Community Institutions*

(e.g., congregations and subgroups, clergy associations, Interfaith Hunger Coalition)

###### *Legal Assistance Groups*

(e.g., Public Counsel, schools of law)

###### *Ethnic Associations*

(e.g., Committee for Armenian Students in Public Schools, Korean Youth Center, United Cambodian Community, African-American, Latino, Asian-Pacific, Native American Organizations)

###### *Special Interest Associations and Clubs*

(e.g., Future Scientists and Engineers of America, pet owner and other animal-oriented groups)

###### *Artists and Cultural Institutions*

(e.g., museums, art galleries, zoo, theater groups, motion picture studios, TV and radio stations, writers’ organizations, instrumental/choral, drawing/painting, technology-based arts, literary clubs, collector’s groups)

###### *Businesses/Corporations/Unions*

(e.g., neighborhood business associations, chambers of commerce, local shops, restaurants, banks, AAA, Teamsters, school employee unions)

###### *Media*

(e.g., newspapers, TV & radio, local assess cable)

###### *Family members, local residents, senior citizens groups*

\*See our Center for: *School-Community Partnerships: A guide* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>



### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### C. Systemic Change to Maximize the Benefits of After-school Programs

As the importance of extending the school day by providing safe and enriched after-school programs is demonstrated, it becomes clear that such efforts cannot be seen as a small, time-limited project available to only a few students or a few schools. The initial demonstrations of success call for *system-wide changes*. This offers the opportunity for an increasing range of partnerships between public institutions and schools (e.g., city/county/state/federal governments, libraries, parks, juvenile justice, public health, etc.) and for *advocacy for equitable resources for all* children, youth, and families. In some areas, this may mean after-school programs are centrally located for use by students from multiple schools. Securing a commitment for funding and expanding resources becomes *a policy commitment of community leaders*.

##### Creating Mechanisms to Initiate and Maintain System Change

A *Resource Coordinating Team* at a school can be an important linking mechanism for after school programs. If the school doesn't have such a mechanism, it might use the opportunity of the after-school program to initiate one. A school resource team provides a good starting place to enhance integration of programs and for reaching out to District and community resources to enhance learner supports.

Schools in the same neighborhood have a number of shared concerns and may want to consider a *multischool Resource Coordinating Council* to plan in ways that reduce redundancy and costs. Some programs and personnel can be shared by several neighboring schools. A multi-school team can also help ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of resources. With respect to linking with community resources, multischool teams are especially attractive to community agencies who often don't have the time or personnel to link with each individual school.

(See our Center report: *Resource-oriented teams: key infrastructure mechanisms for enhancing education supports* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> )

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Resources from the many partners can be braided into a strong financial base with the highest levels of multi-agency administrative support and commitment. Funding may include grants (federal, state, local), school in-kind resources, user fees, contributions, general funds from the school district or city, rental fees for private use of facilities, employer contributions.

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“The key to leveraging resources is being keenly aware of the interests, priorities, and expectations of each of your partners and linking them directly with resources that your program must have to be successful...There are many existing and potential connections in your community that can encourage financial and in-kind investments. The more strategically you approach these, the more effective your collaboration will be . . . .”

*After School Learning and Safe Neighborhood Partnerships*  
California Wellness Foundation [www.tcwf.org](http://www.tcwf.org)



### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### C. Systemic Change to Maximize the Benefits of After-school Programs (cont.)

##### **Tough Times, Tough Choices in After-school Funding: Pathways to Protecting Quality (2012)**

J.S. McCombs, S. Nataraj Kirby, & J. Cordes

RAND Corporation

<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/quality-and-cost/Documents/Tough-Times-Tough-Choices-in-After-school-Funding.pdf>

*Abstract.* Cities, sometimes with the help of private funders, have made investments to improve the quality of the after-school programs that they fund. However, the prolonged financial crisis faced by cities has greatly reduced city agency budgets, forcing agency leaders to make difficult choices between cutting student slots or reducing the quality of programming through cuts to professional development and technical assistance given to after-school providers. Drawing on interview data with agency leaders in three major cities, this paper explores how leaders make these decisions, the extent to which they protect quality investments, and the factors that influence their decisions. Authors identified a number of factors influencing these agencies' ability to maintain investments in quality, including agency authority over budget decisions, how city leaders weigh quantity and quality, strategic consideration of political and public interests, and the size of the budget shortfall. Lessons from interviews suggest that 1) private funds and associated public-private partnerships can shift the preference of city agencies 2) agency heads can make strategic budgetary decisions to help protect quality investments and 3) improving public understanding about the supports needed to achieve quality can help protect investments in quality.

### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### ***D. Leadership, Management, Staff Training and Support***

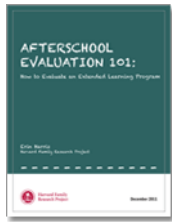
When innovative efforts to address problems are initiated, there is considerable scrutiny and pressure on those leading the way. The leadership for afterschool programs might best be ***a team of school and community partners*** with the designated manager of the after-school program carrying out the intentions of this ***steering group***. Sharing the responsibility strengthens the partners' commitment to success. Setting goals and timetables, including monitoring and evaluation plans, keeps expectations realistic.

After-school programs often are eager to reduce student to staff ratios by including volunteers, work-study students, or national services personnel (e.g., AmeriCorp, VISTA). Clearly, the training and support of such personnel is crucial. Orientation sessions need to focus on best practices in working with students, including information about making accommodations as needed. Staff should be provided with ongoing support and supervision. Good supervisors match skills and interests of the students with the right staff. Making the experience a success for both the students and staff makes a significant difference in retaining personnel and enhancing program quality.

(See our Center for: *Volunteers to Help Teachers and Schools Address Barriers to Learning* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> )

### III. Key Components of Successful Programs

#### *E. Ongoing Evaluation to Improve Outcomes*



## Afterschool Evaluation 101: How to Evaluate an Expanded Learning Program

Erin Harris      December 12, 2011

[Download a PDF of this publication \(453 kb\)](http://www.hfrp.org/content/download/4124/110328/file/Eval101-120911-FINAL.pdf)  
<http://www.hfrp.org/content/download/4124/110328/file/Eval101-120911-FINAL.pdf>

*Afterschool Evaluation 101* is a how-to guide for conducting an evaluation. It is designed to help out-of-school time (OST) program directors who have little or no evaluation experience develop an evaluation strategy. The guide will walk you through the early planning stages, help you select the evaluation design and data collection methods that are best suited to your program, and help you analyze the data and present the results.

Evaluation helps your OST program measure how successfully it has been implemented and how well it is achieving its goals. You can do this by comparing the activities you intended to implement and the outcomes you intended to accomplish to the activities you actually implemented and the outcomes you actually achieved.

#### **HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT**

This toolkit stresses the need to create a larger evaluation strategy to guide your evaluation plans. An evaluation strategy involves developing a well-thought out plan for evaluating your program, with the goal of incorporating the lessons learned from the evaluation into program activities. As part of this larger strategy, evaluation is not viewed merely as a one-time event to demonstrate results, but instead as an important part of an ongoing process of learning and continuous improvement. This toolkit will walk you through creating an evaluation strategy, planning an evaluation, and working with evaluation data.

*Afterschool Evaluation 101* is structured in a series of nine steps:

- Step 1 helps you to determine the overall purpose of your evaluation.
- Step 2 outlines how to create a logic model, which is a visual representation of your program strategy that can guide your evaluation.
- Step 3 describes how to think through what resources you have available (staffing, etc.) to actually conduct an evaluation.
- Step 4 discusses how best to focus your evaluation, based on your program's needs, resources, and developmental stage.
- Steps 5 and 6 cover selecting the evaluation design and data collection methods that are best suited to your program.
- Steps 7, 8, and 9 contain information about what to do with the data once you have it, including how to conduct and write up the analysis and, perhaps most importantly, how to use the data that you have analyzed.

#### **TELL US WHAT YOU THINK**

Recognizing the benefits of learning and continuous improvement, we view *Afterschool Evaluation 101* as a work in progress and have called it "Version 1.0" as a result. We welcome feedback about your experience using the toolkit and any other improvements you would like to see in a future version. Please direct your feedback to Erin Harris at [erin\\_harris@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:erin_harris@gse.harvard.edu).

## IV. From Projects to Community-Wide Programs

### About The Afterschool Toolkit

<http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/about.html>

#### The Vision

The best afterschool programs do two things: they engage students in fun activities that create a desire to learn, and they build on what students are learning during the school day to extend the knowledge they already have. But with large groups and varied ages, accomplishing both of these things is often easier said than done.

This toolkit is designed to give afterschool program directors and instructors the resources they need to build fun, innovative, and academically enriching activities that not only engage students, but extend their knowledge in new ways and increase academic achievement.

#### What You Get

From math and science to literacy and the arts, this toolkit has everything you need to engage students in fun afterschool activities while extending content knowledge across the curriculum. Each subject area is filled with standards-based multi-media resources including: research-based practices, sample lessons, interactive activities, and video segments taken from afterschool programs across the country. Whether you're an experienced afterschool program director or a new volunteer, you will find a range of user-friendly practices and sample lessons, the research that tells you what works, specific how-to instructions, and outcomes to look for.

The toolkit includes promising practices and sample lessons in:

- A r t s
- L i t e r a c y
- M a t h
- S c i e n c e
- Technology
- Homework Help

Use these toolkits to build your afterschool program, in professional development settings, for activities and ideas, and as a research base in effective afterschool programming.

From: The National Center for Quality Afterschool



#### IV. From Projects to Community-Wide Programs (cont.)

### *Afterschool Programs Can Create Opportunities for Involvement in a Lifelong Learning Community*

Used as a catalyst for enhancing healthy development and addressing barriers to learning, the impact of after-school programs can be much greater than another add-on effort in which community and school staff and programs compete with each other for sparse, time-limited resources. School and community partnerships can be a powerful tool for change, and after-school times are among the best (and least disruptive) for connecting and enhancing school-community resources and services.

When after-school programs are well-designed and integrated into a comprehensive continuum of interventions, such programs have the potential to ***strengthen students, schools, families, and neighborhoods.***

As an after-school program develops, it provides safe and enriched child care, access to adult education training and vocational programs, and much more. When after-school programs are fully integrated with the school-day program (at school site and district-wide), the potential for increasing ***equity of opportunity for all students*** is enhanced and this ***benefits the school*** in many ways.

As the program evolves, it can be a force in ***strengthening families and communities*** by training and recruiting adults in the local community for positions in the after-school program, at the school during the day, and in the larger workplace. Beyond these first rungs on a career ladder, the program can establish training links with higher education to support aides and junior staff in moving toward more advanced positions (e.g., certificate and diploma programs -- including teaching).

Used as a catalyst for enhancing the healthy development and addressing barriers to learning for all children and youth in a community, with support for families included, and after-school partnership of community and school .

*BUT . . .*

*. . . a chronic shortage of quality after-school programs exists.*

*According to parents, the need far exceeds the current supply . . .*

“Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart After-School Programs” (2000)  
U.S. Depts. Of Education/Justice –

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/archives/pubs/parents/SafeSmart/index.html>

*AND . . .*

**Projects and demonstrations are only the first step toward ensuring equity of access and opportunity.**

For programs to develop and evolve over time and expand their impact for *all*, efforts must be made not only to maintain/sustain existing projects. Attention must be paid to moving from a specific project focus to a community-wide scale-up agenda.

**\*Projects must be evolved through community-wide scale-up.**

**THE MEANS** – *pulling partnerships together*

As the National Assembly stresses: “. . . ‘Glue money’ is needed to link new and existing programs together into a community-wide system, which results in greater cost-effectiveness and accessibility. Collaboration between all segments of the community should be mandated . . . [and] Public Policy Recommendations [are needed]. . . . Federal, state, and local governments should take action to ensure accessible, affordable, high quality programs for school-age youth . . .” (See *After School and Summer Programs* (2000) on the National Assembly’s website – <http://www.nassembly.org>)

**POLICY AND RESOURCE SUPPORT**

There is a growing policy commitment and resources for after-school initiatives. At the federal level, the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers* initiative has provided policy direction and glue money (<http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc/>). At the state level, the National Governors’ Association has established the *Extra Learning Opportunities Regional Forum* consisting of Governors’ advisors, state legislators, representatives from departments of child care, juvenile justice, and education (<http://www.nga.org/center>). Its stated purpose is to help states identify goals and plans for advancing the state role in supporting a full-range of extra learning opportunities.

*Clearly, the need for after-school programs continues to be widespread, the potential benefits of well-designed and implemented programs are considerable, and the policy climate for moving forward is present. The challenge is to avoid setting in motion another set of fragmented programs, and instead to use the opportunity to help fill gaps in school-community efforts to create comprehensive, multifaceted approaches to promoting healthy development and addressing barriers.*

## V. Sources for Information and Supports

There are a great number of excellent guides available that provide information about afterschool programs. Below are a sample.

### A. For Planning

*After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnership Program.* Summary of recommendations from a series of regional meetings in California. Available from the CA Dept. of Education <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ba/as/execsummary.asp>

*After-School Program Evaluation Guide.* (2000). After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program. Healthy Start and After School Partnerships. See: [http://www.nwrel.org/ecc/21century/publications/ost\\_tools.pdf](http://www.nwrel.org/ecc/21century/publications/ost_tools.pdf)

*Bringing Education to After-School Programs.* (1999). Office of Educational Research and Improvement. U.S. Dept. of Education. See: [http://www.ed.gov/pubs/After\\_School\\_Programs/](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/After_School_Programs/)

*Getting Started with Extended Service Schools: Early Lessons from the field.* DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. See: <http://www.wallacefunds.org>

*Healthy Start and after school partnerships: After school programs evaluation guide* (2000) See: <http://www.nassembly.org>

*The National Program for Playground Safety.* See: <http://www.uni.edu/playground>

*Transforming Schools into Community Learning Centers.* S. Partson. See: <http://www.eyoneducation.com>

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers,* U. S. Department of Education. See: <http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc/> Also see: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning <http://www.mcrel.org>

### B. For Funding Information

#### 1. Federal Sources

General info – <http://www.afterschool.gov>  
Federal resources that support children and youth during out of school time.

#### U.S. Department of Education

*Title I* – <http://www.ed.gov/> – supports extended learning time for targeted schools



## **U. S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) administers the Child Care and Development Block Grant – <http://www.hhs.gov>  
Funds flow to states to provide help for parents by subsidizing care of the parent's choice, including after-school programs. Funds are also used for quality-improvement initiatives to communities that are developing and improving school-age programming.

The ACF also administers the Family and Youth Services Bureau which funds safe alternatives for homeless youth.

Also see: National Child Care Information Center – <http://www.nccic.org> and the National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth – <http://www.ncfy.com>

## **U.S. Department of Justice**

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org>  
See Out-of-School Activities page.

## **U. S. Department of Agriculture**

Food and Nutrition services can be used in before and after school and extended learning programs – <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/default.htm>

After-School Adventures, Youth Mentoring, Teen Program – <http://www.usda.gov>

National 4-H Council – <http://fourhcouncil.edu/>

## **U.S. Department of Commerce**

Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements (Fall 1995) – <http://www.doc.gov>

## **U. S. Department of Labor**

Employment and Training Administration – <http://www.doleta.gov/>  
Youth training programs for schools.

### **2. Examples of State government funding**

National Governors Association Extra Learning Opportunities –  
<http://www.nga.org/center>

### **3. Examples of Municipal government funding**

LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow). Partnership of Los Angeles Unified Schools District, the City of Los Angeles, California Department of Education and Private sector companies -- <http://www.lasbest.org/>

### **4. Foundations interested in this area**

DeWitt-Wallace Reader's Digest Fund: Extended Service Schools. Two Park Avenue, NY, NY 10016 (212) 251-9800 <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/>

United Way: Bridges to Success – <http://www.unitedway.org>

C.S. Mott Foundation – <http://www.mott.org>

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## *Appendix A*

### A School-wide Component to Address Barriers to Learning

Emergence of a cohesive component to address barriers and enable learning means weaving together what is available at a school, expanding this through integrating school, community, and home resources, and enhancing access to community resources by linking as many as feasible to programs at the school. In the process mechanisms must be developed to coordinate and eventually integrate school-owned enabling activity and school and community-owned resources. Restructuring also must ensure that the learning supports (or enabling) component is well integrated with the instructional and management components.

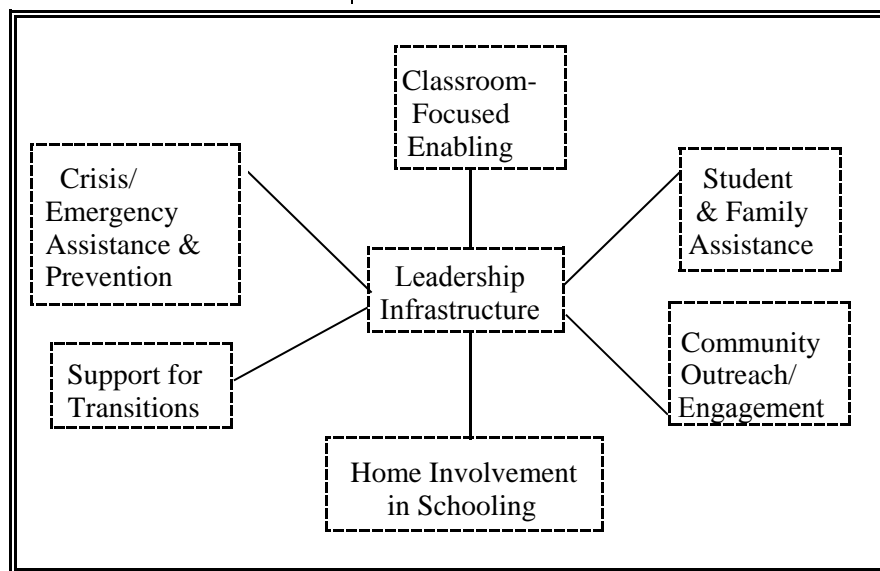
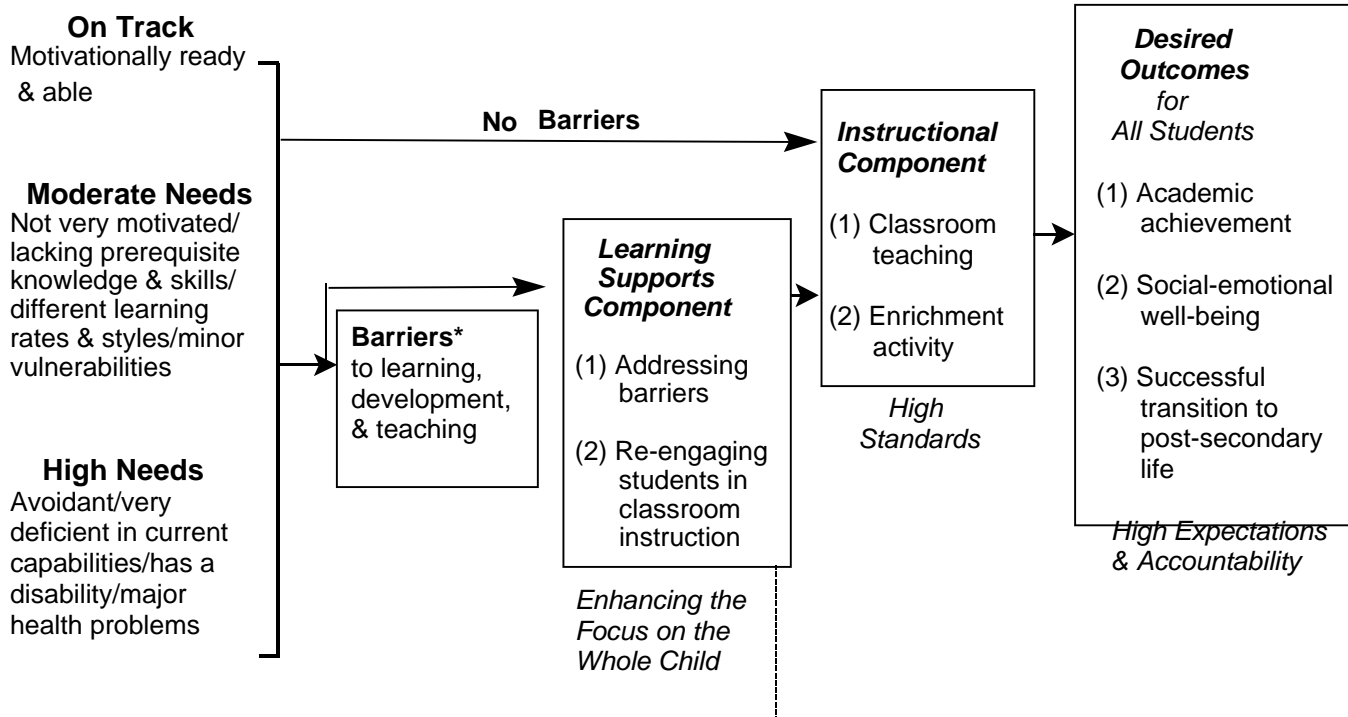
Operationalizing such a component requires formulating a framework of basic programmatic areas and creating an infrastructure to restructure enabling activity. Based on an extensive analysis of activity used to address barriers to learning, these activities may be clustered into six interrelated activities. (See figure).

- Classroom focused enabling are activities to enhance classroom based efforts to increase teacher effectiveness for preventing and handling problems. Personalized help is provided to increase a teacher's array of strategies for working with a wider range of individual differences. As appropriate, support in the classroom is provided by resource and itinerant teachers and counselors.
- Support for transitions are activities for planning, implementing, and maintaining programs to establish a welcoming and socially supportive school community for new arrivals, articulation programs to support grade-to-grade and school-to-school transitions, moving to and from special education, school to work and higher education, and programs for before, **after-school**, and intersession to enrich learning and provide recreation in a safe environment.
- Home involvement and engagement in school includes programs for specific learning and support needs of adults in the home, programs to help those in the home meet basic obligations to a student, such as providing parents instruction for parenting and for helping with schooling, systems to improve communications that is essential to the students and family, programs to enhance the home-school connection and sense of community, interventions to enhance participation in making decisions essential to a student's wellbeing, programs to enhance home support of a students' basic learning and development, interventions to mobilize those at home to problem solve related to student needs, and intervention to elicit collaborations and partnerships with those at home with respect to meeting classroom, school, and community needs.
- Student and family special assistance should be reserved for the relatively few problems that cannot be handled without adding special interventions. Activities emphasize providing special services in a personalized way through social, physical, and mental health programs in the school and community. Attention is paid to enhancing systems for triage, case, and resource management; direct services for immediate needs; and referral for special services and special education resources as appropriate.
- Crisis assistance and prevention includes systems and programs for emergency/crisis response at a school and community-wide, prevention programs for school and community to address school safety and violence reduction to ensure there is a safe and productive environment for students and their families.
- Community outreach for involvement and support includes recruitment, training, and support to develop greater involvement in school of public and private agencies, higher education, businesses, volunteer organizations.

## A Learning Supports Component to Address Barriers and Re-engage Students in Classroom Instruction\*

### Range of Learners

(based on their response to academic instruction at any given point in time)



\*A learning supports component is operationalized as a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. In keeping with public education and public health perspectives, interventions are designed to provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports to enable learning and engagement for *all* students and especially those experiencing behavior, learning, emotional, and physical problems. The interventions are meant to play out in the classroom and school-wide at every school and in every community. In promoting engagement and re-engagement, the interventions stress a reduced emphasis on using extrinsic reinforcers and an enhanced focus on intrinsic motivation as a process and outcome consideration.

A well-designed and supported infrastructure is needed to establish, maintain, and evolve this type of a comprehensive programmatic approach. Such an infrastructure includes mechanisms for coordinating among enabling activity, for enhancing resources by developing direct linkages between school and community programs, for moving toward increased integration of school and community resources, and for integrating the instructional, enabling, and management components.

To these ends, the focus needs to be on all school resources (e.g., compensatory and special education activity supported by general funds, support services, adult education, recreation and enrichment programs extended use of facility) and all community resources (e.g., public and private agencies, families, businesses, services). The aim is to weave all these resources together into the fabric of every school and evolve a comprehensive, integrated approach that effectively addresses barriers to development, learning, and teaching.

A *Learning Supports Leadership Team* at a school can be an important linking mechanism for after school programs. If the school doesn't have such a mechanism, it might use the opportunity of the after-school program to initiate one. A school resource team provides a good starting place to enhance integration of programs and for reaching out to District and community resources to enhance learner supports.

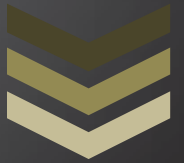
Schools in the same neighborhood have a number of shared concerns and may want to consider a *multi-school Learning Supports Leadership Council* to plan in ways that reduce redundancy and costs. Some programs and personnel can be shared by several neighboring schools. A multi-school team can also help ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of resources. With respect to linking with community resources, multi-school teams are especially attractive to community agencies who often don't have the time or personnel to link with each individual school.

When resources are combined properly, the end product can be cohesive and potent school-community partnerships. Such partnerships seem essential if we are to strengthen neighborhoods and communities and create caring and supportive environments that maximize learning and well being.

For a more in-depth discussion of these matters, see *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System* (2015)  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf>

*Appendix B*

# Taking a Deeper Dive into Afterschool: Positive Outcomes and Promising Practices



Afterschool Alliance

Afterschool Alliance  
1616 H St., NW, Suite 820  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
February 2014



# Introduction

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Over the past 15 years, knowledge of the afterschool field has grown substantially. A large body of evidence exists that confirms quality afterschool programs help children become more engaged in school, reduce their likelihood of taking part in at-risk behaviors or acting out in school, and help raise their academic performance.

A greater emphasis on evidence-based practices has increased the number of evaluations of afterschool programs, which in turn has helped parents, educators, business leaders and policy makers alike to see the range of positive outcomes associated with participation in afterschool programs. The growth of afterschool program evaluation has also helped the afterschool field understand the elements of quality afterschool programs, spurring continuous improvements in programs and a growing sophistication of the field.

Yet despite the existing evidence that afterschool programs can positively influence the children participating in their programs and support working families in their communities who are struggling in the current economic climate, there are more than 15 million children who have no adult supervision when the school day ends.<sup>1</sup>

To better understand promising practices in the afterschool field, this report is divided into three sections. The first section—Exploring Outcomes—reviews outcomes associated with participation in afterschool programs, synthesizing high-quality evaluations of 10 afterschool programs—a majority of which employ a quasi-experimental or experimental design. Section II—Promising Practices—steps out from the program level and explores research spanning hundreds of programs to present a summary of promising practices of afterschool programs, analyzing and distilling the findings into key components of quality programs. The third section—Promising Practices in Action—brings the focus back to the program level, linking the afterschool programs highlighted in Section I and the promising practices outlined in Section II. This last section provides specific examples of ways in which the afterschool programs employ each promising practice.

# Section I – Exploring Outcomes

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At the outset, afterschool programs emerged as a space to provide children with a safe and supervised environment during the out-of-school hours—first, as a place for youth when labor laws changed regarding children’s participation in the workforce, and later, to support the needs of working parents.<sup>2</sup> Through the years, afterschool programs have evolved and taken on a larger and more complex role, continuing to provide a safe and supervised environment, but also incorporating academic enrichment, skill building, positive youth development, and adult role models who offer support and guidance. As afterschool programs broaden and tailor their program goals to support the academic, social, emotional and health needs of young people in their communities, numerous studies have been conducted to determine if afterschool programs have the intended impact on the children who take part in their activities. A review of the literature on afterschool program evaluations finds that several positive outcomes are in fact associated with participation in quality afterschool programs.<sup>1</sup> This section divides the outcomes into three categories:

- School engagement, including school day attendance and likelihood of staying in school.
- Behavior, including participation in at-risk behaviors, such as criminal activity, gang involvement, drug and alcohol use, or sexual activity.
- Academic performance, including test scores, grades, graduation rates and college enrollment.

Each category begins with the discussion of a larger scale research study—such as a meta-analysis or multi-program evaluation—and then proceeds to research findings at the individual program level to allow for a closer examination of practices in action in Section III of the paper.

## School Engagement

Quality afterschool programs have the ability to excite children about learning, spark their curiosity and connect school-day lessons to their everyday lives. They have the capacity to strengthen students’ engagement in school and help them set higher educational aspirations for themselves. And, research has shown this to be true. The “Study of Promising After-School Programs,” a landmark study for the out-of-school-time field that spanned 35 quality

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the substantial number of afterschool program evaluations that have been written and published over the years, only a select number of afterschool programs evaluations were included in this paper. The evaluations of afterschool programs selected for inclusion in this report were conducted within the past decade; primarily experimental or quasi-experimental in design; and conducted by a research organization, university or an educational consulting firm. With the large number of evaluations on afterschool programs, there are studies that document little to no effect on children’s outcomes. However, a strong and significant number of evaluations do show that quality afterschool programs have a positive impact on students’ school engagement, behavior and academic performance.

afterschool programs and will be discussed in greater detail in Section II, found that students regularly participating in the programs improved their work habits; demonstrated higher levels of persistence; and saw reductions in reports of misconduct, such as skipping school.<sup>3</sup> The following evaluations look specifically at individual program results, as related to the impact on students' school engagement, expanding on the findings of the "Study of Promising After-School Programs."

**After School Matters—Chicago, IL:** After School Matters is a program that offers paid internships to Chicago high school students in a variety of areas, such as arts and technology, to help them build a skill set that will benefit them when they enter the workforce. The program also helps motivate students in school by demonstrating that the skills they learn during the school day will help them to succeed in the future. The experimental design evaluation of After School Matters found that students participating in the program had a more positive outlook toward school and were more likely to see the value of school compared to students not participating in the afterschool program.<sup>4</sup> An earlier quasi-experimental study of the afterschool program found that students participating in After School Matters had fewer school day absences than similar non-participating students.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, students who attended After School Matters for more than 27 days saw greater improvements in their school day attendance than students with lower levels of participation. *(For further information on all studies included in this section, see Appendix A.)*

**AfterZone—Providence, RI:** The AfterZone is a network of community-based afterschool programs for middle school youth that offers programming year-round. Activities available through AfterZone are divided into three categories: 1) arts, which include writing, performing and design; 2) skill building, which allows youth to partake in academic enrichment opportunities; and 3) sports.<sup>6</sup> After participating in the AfterZone for one year, students were more likely than their non-participating peers to share that they felt more connected to school. However, there was no change in regard to time spent studying or homework habits. Students participating in the AfterZone also missed 1.8 fewer school days than students who didn't

#### After School Matters (ASM)

**Evaluator:** Northwestern University and University of Wisconsin-Extension

**Evaluation Design:** Experimental

#### School Engagement Findings:

- ASM students see the extrinsic value of school more so than nonparticipants ( $p = .007$ )
- Compared to the control group, ASM students were able to better focus on tasks, control their emotions and concentrate ( $p = .03$ )
- ASM students identified with school more so than the control group ( $p = .023$ )

**Evaluator:** Chapin Hall Center for Children

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

#### School Engagement Findings:

- ASM students had fewer school day absences than nonparticipating peers ( $p = n/a$ )

#### AfterZone (AZ)

**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

#### School Engagement Findings:

- AZ students were more likely to share that they felt more connected to school ( $p < .05$ )
- AZ students missed 1.8 fewer days of school ( $p < .05$ )
- Students participating in AZ for two years missed almost 25 percent fewer school days ( $p < .1$ )

### **Texas 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (ACE)**

**Evaluator:** American Institutes for Research

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

#### **School Engagement Findings:**

- ACE students with low levels of participation saw a 14 percent decrease in the rate of being absent ( $p = <.001$ )
- ACE students with high levels of participation saw a 15 percent decrease in the rate of being absent ( $p = <.001$ )

### **Beyond the Bell (BTB)**

**Evaluator:** Educational Resource Consultants

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

#### **School Engagement Findings:**

- 70 percent of BTB participants had a 96 percent or higher school day attendance vs. 56 percent of non-participants ( $p = n/a$ )
- 73 percent of students attending the program for more than 33 days had a 96 percent or higher school day attendance vs. 64 percent of students who attended the program six to 13 days ( $p = n/a$ )
- LAUSD high school principals gave BTB a 3.53 out of a 4 point scale regarding their satisfaction of the program's effectiveness in developing "student leaders and empowering students to make a difference at their school or in their community" ( $p = n/a$ )

participate in the program. Youth who took part in the AfterZone for two years saw even greater gains—missing approximately 25 percent fewer days than their non-participating peers.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers— Texas:**

A quasi-experimental evaluation of Texas 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, also known as Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), found that attending the program decreased students' school day absences—both for students who had low levels of participation in the program and students with high levels of participation. Students with low levels of participation in the ACE program decreased the rate of being absent by 14 percent, while students with high levels of participation saw a 15 percent decrease.<sup>7</sup>

**Beyond the Bell—Los Angeles, CA:** Results from evaluations of Beyond the Bell—an afterschool program that operates throughout the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) serving primarily low-income students—have found that their students are more likely to attend school than non-participating students. A 2012 evaluation of the afterschool program—which provides a wide variety of activities, ranging from academic help to life-skills classes to health and nutrition education—reported that students participating in the program were less likely than their non-participating peers to miss school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 70 percent of Beyond the Bell participants had a 96 percent or higher school day attendance, compared to 56 percent of non-participants. Additionally,

students who regularly attended Beyond the Bell were found to have even better school day attendance than students with lower levels of participation at the afterschool program. More than 7 in 10 students (73 percent) attending the program for more than 33 days had a 96 percent or higher school day attendance versus 64 percent of students who attended the program six to 13 days.<sup>8</sup> School administration also saw the value in the afterschool program encouraging student engagement. In a 2013 survey of LAUSD high school principals, they rated their satisfaction of the program's effectiveness in developing "student leaders and empowering students to make a difference at their school or in their community" very high—a 3.53 out of a 4 point scale, with 1 being the lowest and 4 the highest.<sup>9</sup>

**Beacon Community Centers—New York, NY:** A Policy Studies Associates, Inc.’s three-year evaluation of the Beacon Community Centers in New York—an initiative to provide middle schoolers with academic enrichment, life skills, career awareness, civic engagement, wellness, culture and art—found that overall, Beacon Center students expressed confidence in their school preparedness and were highly motivated to continue through high school and into higher education. For example, in regard to academic preparedness and attitudes toward school, more than 9 in 10 student participants reported that they tried hard in school (95 percent), did well in school (91 percent) and paid attention in class (93 percent). Close to 9 in 10 students shared that they were always prepared for class (88 percent).<sup>10</sup> Asking participants about their academic aspirations, the 2010 report on the Beacon Centers found that nearly all students wanted to graduate from high school (98 percent) and more than 8 in 10 wanted to graduate from college (83 percent).<sup>11</sup> Additionally, students participating in the afterschool program had strong school-day attendance rates. The average school attendance rate was 94 percent for participants in the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade and 93 percent for participants in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>12</sup>

**Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning Initiative (CORAL)—CA:** The CORAL Initiative, located in five cities across California, focuses on providing a balanced literacy program—which includes reading, book discussions, writing, skill development activities, as well as enrichment activities—for kids attending low-performing schools.<sup>13</sup> The evaluation of CORAL found that the afterschool program helped to foster a sense of engagement and belonging among student participants.<sup>14</sup> Almost all students shared that there was an adult at the program who they could talk to, 90 percent of children reported that they felt safe at the program, and more than 7 in 10 children (71 percent) said they felt that they belonged at CORAL. Students who had a very strong sense of belonging in the program also saw a positive change in their

### Beacon Community Centers

**Evaluator:** Policy Studies Associates

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

#### School Engagement Findings:

- 95 percent of Beacon students reported that they tried hard in school (p = n/a)
- 91 percent of participants reported that they did well in school (p = n/a)
- 93 percent of participants reported that they paid attention in class (p = n/a)
- 88 percent of participants reports that they were always prepared for class (p = n/a)
- 98 percent of participants wanted to graduate from high school (p = n/a)
- 88 percent of participants wanted to graduate from college (p = n/a)
- The average school attendance rate was 94 percent for participants in the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade and 93 percent for participants in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (p = n/a)

### Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning Initiative (CORAL)

**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

#### School Engagement Findings:

- 90 percent of children reported that they felt safe at the program (p = n/a)
- 71 percent said they felt that they belonged at CORAL (p = n/a)
- Comparing results from fall 2004 to spring 2006, students who had a very strong sense of belonging at CORAL:
  - o Liked school more (p = .001)
  - o Were better able to pay attention and concentrate in class (p = .001)
  - o Were more likely to want to go to school (p = .001)

### **Schools & Homes in Education (SHINE)**

**Evaluator:** Palko, L.

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

#### **School Engagement Findings:**

- 37 percent of students who regularly attended SHINE and demonstrated a need to improve behavior improved their school day attendance (p = n/a)
- Between 2007 and 2012, an average of 90 percent of SHINE participants attended school regularly and didn't have an attendance problem (p = n/a)
- Between 2007 and 2012, an average of 58 percent of students who regularly attended SHINE maintained "exceptionally good" school day attendance (p = n/a)

feelings toward school and in their ability to pay attention and concentrate in class. However, in regard to the likelihood of missing school and finishing their homework, changes were not significant.

#### **Schools & Homes in Education (SHINE)—**

**Nesquehoning, PA:** The Schools & Homes in Education (SHINE) afterschool program, located in Schuylkill and Carbon counties in rural Pennsylvania, focuses on engaging students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning and provides them with hands-on and project-based learning opportunities. SHINE is the only out-of-school-time program available in the county, serving students from seven rural school districts and one technical school district over 700 square miles in northeastern Pennsylvania. Close

to three-quarters of SHINE's students are low-income and 35 percent were or have been in the Children and Youth or foster care systems. A 2012 evaluation of the program found that of students who regularly attended SHINE and demonstrated a need to improve behavior, more than one-third improved their school day attendance (37 percent).<sup>15</sup> A long-term evaluation of the program, looking at data collected between 2005-2012, found that an average of 58 percent of students who regularly attended SHINE maintained "exceptionally good" school day attendance, where "exceptionally good" attendance was defined as missing nine days or less of school. It also reported that between 2007 and 2012, an average of 90 percent of SHINE participants attended school regularly and didn't have an attendance problem.<sup>16</sup>

### **Behavior**

A 2010 *American Journal of Community Psychology* article examining afterschool programs' ability to develop children's personal and social skills stated, "...many [afterschool programs] were initially created based on the idea that young people's participation in organized activities after school would be beneficial for their personal and social growth."<sup>17</sup> The capability of afterschool programs to support the social and emotional growth of students, and the genesis of afterschool programs to positively influence their personal development, is often lost in the mix in the current environment that is heavily focused on test scores and academic achievement. An often cited meta-analysis by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) that looked at 75 studies of 68 afterschool programs found that children participating in the programs saw a significant improvement in their perceptions of themselves, improved positive social behavior and a decrease in problem behaviors.<sup>18</sup> A review of individual program evaluations mirrors CASEL's findings.



**After School Matters—Chicago, IL:** An experimental design evaluation of After School Matters found that students participating in the afterschool program engaged in at-risk behaviors at a much lower rate than non-participants, specifically being less likely to be suspended from school or selling drugs.<sup>19</sup> Participants were also less likely to take part in other negative behaviors, such as gang activity and fighting, however these findings were not statistically significant.

**LA’s BEST—Los Angeles, CA:** Results from a longitudinal evaluation of LA’s BEST—an afterschool program that provides balanced enrichment activities focused on students’ academic, social and emotional development in primarily economically disadvantaged communities—shows that students who regularly attended the afterschool program were not only less likely to participate in criminal activities than non-participating students, but students who attended the program sporadically as well.<sup>20</sup> Children who had medium levels of engagement in the program saw a one-third reduction in juvenile crime, and high attending students saw a 50 percent reduction. Researchers also translated the reduction in juvenile crime to \$2.50 in costs savings to the city for every dollar of investment.

**4-H—National:** A longitudinal evaluation of 4-H—a national afterschool program that provides children in elementary school through 12<sup>th</sup> grade with hands-on learning activities in science, citizenship and healthy living—found that youth participating in their program were more likely to make positive life choices than their non-participating peers.<sup>21</sup> The most recent evaluation of 4-H—the Wave 8 report—looks at 4-H participants who are in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and finds that compared to their non-participating peers, youth who take part in 4-H programs are 3.4 times more likely to postpone having sex and are also less likely to use drugs, alcohol or cigarettes.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers—Texas:** A quasi-experimental evaluation of Texas 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, also known as Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), compared students attending the ACE program to non-participants and found that ACE students saw improvements in their school day behavior, and the positive

### After School Matters (ASM)

**Evaluator:** Northwestern University and University of Wisconsin-Extension

**Evaluation Design:** Experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- ASM students are less likely to be suspended from school than the control group (p = .046)
- ASM students are less likely to sell drugs than the control group (p = .051)

### LA’s BEST

**Evaluator:** National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing; UCLA

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- Students in LA’s BEST with high levels of engagement were 50 percent less likely to commit a crime (p < .05)
- Students in LA’s BEST with medium levels of engagement were 30 percent less likely to commit a crime (p < .05)

### 4-H

**Evaluator:** Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development, Tufts University

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- 4-H youth are 3.4 times more likely to postpone having sex (p = <.05)
- 4-H youth are less likely use drugs, alcohol and cigarettes (p = n/a)
- 4-H girls are .5 times less likely to use drugs than non 4-H girls (p = <.05)

**Texas 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (ACE)**

**Evaluator:** American Institutes for Research

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- Students in the ACE program for 30 days or more saw a 6 percent decrease in their disciplinary incidents compared to non-participants ( $p = <.001$ )
- Students in the ACE program for 60 days or more saw an 11 percent decrease in their disciplinary incidents compared to non-participants ( $p = <.001$ )

**AfterZone (AZ)**

**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- AZ students had stronger social skills and were able to interact better with their peers than non-participants ( $p < .10$ )

**Beacon Community Centers**

**Evaluator:** Policy Studies Associates

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- 77 percent of Beacon students said that the Beacon Center helped them to learn about the dangers of alcohol, drugs and other risky activities ( $p = n/a$ )
- 80 percent of Beacon students stated the Beacon was either “very helpful” or “pretty helpful” to avoid drug use ( $p = n/a$ )
- 74 percent said that in regards to avoid fighting, the Beacon was “very helpful” or “pretty helpful” ( $p = n/a$ )

**Schools & Homes in Education (SHINE)**

**Evaluator:** Palko, L.

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

**Behavior Findings:**

- 89 percent of parents reported they saw improvements in their child’s overall behavior ( $p = n/a$ )

impact grew the longer students took part in the program. Students participating in the ACE program for 30 days or more saw a 6 percent decrease in their disciplinary incidents, compared to their non-participating peers. Students taking part in the ACE program for 60 days or more saw an even greater decrease in disciplinary incidents—a decrease of 11 percent.<sup>22</sup>

**AfterZone—Providence, RI:** The evaluation of the AfterZone found that participants had stronger social skills and were able to interact better with their peers

than non-participants, however, there were no differences found when looking at misconduct, conflict management and the ability of students to prepare for the future.

**Beacon Community Centers—New York, NY:** The final evaluation of New York City’s Beacon Community Centers found that more than 3 in 4 students (77 percent) participating in the program said that the Beacon Center helped them to learn about the dangers of alcohol, drugs and other risky activities, with almost half (49 percent) reporting that they “agreed a lot” with the statement.<sup>23</sup> An earlier study of the program found that 80 percent of students who took part in the interviews reported that in regard to avoiding drug use, the Beacon was either “very helpful” or “pretty helpful,” and 74 percent said that in regard to avoiding fighting, the Beacon was “very helpful” or “pretty helpful.”<sup>24</sup>

**SHINE—Nesquehoning, PA:** Parent surveys from SHINE’s 2012 evaluation revealed that parents recognized a positive change in their child’s behavior. Close to 9 in 10 parents reported that they saw improvements in their child’s overall behavior.<sup>25</sup>

## Academic Performance

In addition to supporting a child’s development and sense of worth, building social skills, and igniting his or her passion for learning, afterschool programs have the ability to positively impact a child’s academic performance. Both the CASEL meta-analysis and the “Study of Promising After-School Programs” discussed above also find that students participating in quality afterschool programs show gains in their school-day performance. CASEL’s meta-analysis finds that youth attending afterschool programs adhering to the practice of SAFE (Sequenced, Active, Focused and Explicit)<sup>ii</sup> improved their school grades and their test scores,<sup>26</sup> while the “Study of Promising After-School Programs” found that students participating in quality afterschool programs saw gains in their math test scores compared to non-participating youth.<sup>27</sup> An experimental design evaluation by David Shernoff that looked at middle school students in eight afterschool programs in three Midwestern states found that students attending the afterschool programs had higher English grades than their peers who didn’t participate in an afterschool program.<sup>28</sup> There are a number of additional evaluations in the field that also demonstrate the ability of afterschool programs to support the learning that takes place during the school day and help boost students’ academic performance and likelihood of graduating from high school—especially students who have fallen behind in school and need the extra support and mentoring.

**Higher Achievement—Washington, D.C.:** An evaluation of Higher Achievement in Washington, D.C.—a long-term and academically focused afterschool program aimed at middle schoolers—found that after two years in the program, students showed significant academic gains. Participants saw much greater improvements in their reading and problem-solving scores than students not participating in the program.<sup>29</sup> A follow-up evaluation of the program found that although Higher Achievement youth and their non-participating peers performed similarly after one year, after two years, Higher Achievement youth performed better on standardized test scores in math problem-solving and reading comprehension.<sup>30</sup>

### Higher Achievement (HA)

**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures

**Evaluation Design:** Experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- HA students improved their reading scores ( $p = .05$ )
- HA students saw greater gains on their problem-solving scores ( $p = .05$ )

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**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures & University of Texas at Austin

**Evaluation Design:** Experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- HA students performed better on their reading comprehension standardized test scores ( $p < .1$ )
- HA students performed better on their math problem-solving standardized test scores ( $p < .05$ )

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<sup>ii</sup> SAFE is discussed in further detail in Section II.

### Save the Children (STC)

**Evaluator:** Policy Studies Associates

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- STC participants gained an equivalent of three months of additional schooling ( $p < .05$ )
- STC participants read more books ( $p < .05$ )
- STC participants read more difficult books ( $p < .05$ )
- STC participants made greater gains on standardized reading assessments ( $p < .05$ )

### LA's BEST

**Evaluator:** National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing; UCLA

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- Students in LA's BEST for at least three years were less likely to dropout than non-participants, 1999-2000 ( $p < .01$ ), 2000-2001 ( $p = < .001$ ), 2001-2002 ( $p = .001$ ), 2002-2003 ( $p < .01$ )
- Students in LA's BEST for at least two years had close to a 14 percent lower dropout rate than non-participants (not statistically significant)

### AfterZone (AZ)

**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- The average math GPA of AZ students was higher than non-participants ( $p < .05$ )
- The average ELA GPA of AZ students was higher than non-participants (not statistically significant)
- The average science GPA of AZ students was higher than non-participants (not statistically significant)

**Save the Children—National:** Save the Children is an afterschool program that provides literacy support to students in kindergarten through sixth grade who struggle with reading. It is located in high-poverty rural areas across the U.S., in states including Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Kentucky, South Carolina and Tennessee. The evaluation of Save the Children looked at students in grades 2 through 6 participating in the Developing Readers (DR) program in 18 schools across the country and found that participants made significant gains in their literacy performance.<sup>31</sup> Comparing students participating in the afterschool program to matched non-participants, the study found that on average, children participating in Save the Children gained an equivalent of three months of additional schooling, read more books, read more difficult books and made greater gains on standardized reading assessments.

**LA's BEST—Los Angeles, CA:** The evaluation of LA's BEST found that children participating in the afterschool program were less likely to drop out of school than students who did not participate. The study also found that students' dropout rates decreased even further the longer students were involved in the program. Students who participated in the program for at least two years had close to 14 percent lower dropout rates than non-participants. The difference was even greater between students who were involved in the program for at least three years and non-participants.<sup>32</sup>

**AfterZone—Providence, RI:** Students who participated in the AfterZone for two years reported higher academic scores than students not participating in the program. For example, the average math grade point average (GPA) of AfterZone students was a B- compared to the C+ average of their non-participating peers. AfterZone participants also received higher English-language arts (ELA) and science GPAs than students not participating in the program, however the differences were not statistically significant.<sup>33</sup>

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers—Texas:** The evaluation of ACE found that the program positively impacted students’ school-day performance. Students attending the program—both students with low levels and high levels of participation in the program—were more likely to be promoted to the next grade. The likelihood of being promoted to the next grade increased by 43 percent for students with low levels of participation in the program, and 47 percent for students with high levels of participation.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, ACE students saw improvements in their Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading and math scores.

**Beyond the Bell—Los Angeles, CA:** The 2013 evaluation of Beyond the Bell found that in addition to promoting improved attendance at school, as discussed in the “School Engagement” section, students participating in the afterschool program were also more likely to graduate than their peers not participating in the program. The graduation rate of seniors who attended the program at least one day during each year of high school was 90 percent, compared to 86 percent of non-participating students.<sup>35</sup> Beyond the Bell students also performed better on their California Standards Test (CST) scores and the California High School Exit Exams (CAHSEE) in English-language arts (ELA) and math. For the 2011-2012 school year, the mean ELA score for Beyond the Bell participants on the CST was six points higher than non-participants (337 vs. 331) and the mean CST math score was three points higher (296 vs. 293). Beyond the Bell students were also more likely to pass the CAHSEE both in ELA and math than students not participating in the program. Close to 8 in 10 students (79 percent) in the afterschool program passed the CAHSEE in ELA compared to 73 percent of their non-participating peers, and 81 percent of Beyond the Bell students passed the math CAHSEE compared to 73 percent of students not in the program.<sup>36</sup>

**Texas 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (ACE)**

**Evaluator:** American Institutes for Research

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- Students with low levels of participation increased the likelihood of being promoted to the next grade by 43 percent (p = <.001)
- Students with high levels of participation increased the likelihood of being promoted to the next grade by 47 percent (p = <.001)
- Compared to non-participants, ACE students with low and high levels of participation improved their TAKS-ELA/Reading scores (p = <.001)
- Compared to non-participants, ACE students with low and high levels of participation improved their TAKS-Math scores (p = <.001)

**Beyond the Bell (BTB)**

**Evaluator:** Educational Resource Consultants

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-experimental

**Academic Findings:**

- The graduation rate of seniors who attended the program at least one day during each year of high school was 90 percent vs. 86 percent of non-participating students (p = n/a)
- The mean score for BTB participants in ELA on the CST was six points higher than non-participants and the mean CST math score was three points higher (p = n/a)
- 79 percent of BTB students passed the CAHSEE in ELA vs. 73 percent of non-participants (p = n/a)
- 81 percent of BTB students passed the math CAHSEE compared to 73 percent of students not in the program (p = n/a)



### **Beacon Community Centers**

**Evaluator:** Policy Studies Associates

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

#### **Academic Findings:**

- Beacon students believed that the program:
  - o Helped them finish their homework more often (81 percent),
  - o Get better grades (78 percent) and
  - o Helped them to feel better about their school work (78 percent) (p = n/a, all)

### **Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning Initiative (CORAL)**

**Evaluator:** Public/Private Ventures

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

#### **Academic Findings:**

- English language learners' average grade-level reading gain between fall 2004 and spring 2006 was 1.76 (p = n/a)
- CORAL's English proficient students' average grade-level reading gain between fall 2004 and spring 2006 was 1.61 (p = n/a)

### **Schools & Homes in Education (SHINE)**

**Evaluator:** Palko, L.

**Evaluation Design:** Non-experimental

#### **Academic Findings:**

- The average rate of promotion to the next grade level for SHINE students was 96 percent (p = n/a)
- 94 percent of parents agreed that their child had improved in reading (p = n/a)
- 95 percent of parents agreed that their child had improved in math (p = n/a)
- Between 2007 and 2012, between 79-90 percent of SHINE students received a satisfactory or passing grade in reading (p = n/a)
- Between 2007 and 2012, between 79-92 percent received a satisfactory or passing grade in math (p = n/a)

### **Beacon Community Centers—New York, NY:**

Students involved in the Beacon Center believed that the program supported their academic success. In the final report on the Beacon Centers, 81 percent of students believed that the Beacon helped them finish their homework more often, 78 percent said that they believed the Beacon helped them get better grades and more than 3 in 4 students shared that the Beacon helped them to feel better about their school work (78 percent).<sup>37</sup>

### **Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning Initiative (CORAL)—CA:**

An evaluation of the CORAL afterschool programs found that student participants designated as English language learners made the same gains in reading as their peers who were further ahead in reading.<sup>38</sup>

### **Schools & Homes in Education (SHINE)—**

**Nesquehoning, PA:** Students participating in the SHINE afterschool program—almost all of whom were referred to the program for academic reasons and a strong majority who were determined to have remedial needs—also saw improvements in their academic performance. The 2012 evaluation of the program found that close to three-quarters of students who regularly attended SHINE and showed a need for remediation made improvements in their reading and math skills.<sup>39</sup> Parents also saw their child make academic progress, with almost all parents agreeing that their child had improved in reading (94 percent) and math (95 percent). The long-term evaluation of SHINE saw similar positive results. Between 2006 and 2012, students participating in SHINE who improved their academic performance ranged from 71-83 percent. Between 2007 and 2012, between 79-90 percent of SHINE students received a satisfactory or passing grade in reading and between 79-92 percent received a satisfactory or passing grade in math. The long-term evaluation of SHINE also found that the average rate of promotion to the next grade level for SHINE students was 96 percent.<sup>40</sup>



## *Appendix C*

***For more resources on this topic, see:***

Quick Find On-line Clearinghouse

**TOPIC: After-School Programs (And Evaluation of After-School Programs)**

**<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/afterschool.htm>**