



the evaluation exchange

A PERIODICAL ON EMERGING STRATEGIES IN EVALUATING CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

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from the director's desk



Heather Weiss

For the past decade, Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has contributed to the national dialogue about out-of-school time (OST) as a critical support for young people's learning and development. But OST programs—like

schools, families, community-based institutions, or any other single place where children learn and develop—cannot alone achieve optimal outcomes for children and youth. Instead, OST programs are one key component in a network of supports that HFRP calls *complementary learning*. Complementary learning takes place when two or more institutions intentionally link with each other to improve learning and developmental outcomes for children and youth.

Our spring 2005 issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* introduced the concept of complementary learning, and your subsequent feedback has demonstrated that many in the OST field understand its importance and are actively pursuing opportunities to put it into practice. This issue is devoted to understanding how OST programs build, evaluate, and sustain linkages with many other institutions in order to support high-quality programming and contribute to a rich network of learning supports. Given the enormity of this task, we chose to produce a double issue of *The Evaluation Exchange*. We thank the C. S. Mott Foundation, as well as other funders listed in the masthead, for enabling us to do so.

We begin with a Theory & Practice article that addresses the “why” of complementary learning by discussing how recent research builds the case for linking OST programs with other institutions. Our Promising Practices articles examine the “what” and “where” of complementary learning, providing case-based examples of OST programs and initiatives that link with other learning settings.

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In *Beyond Basic Training* and *Ask the Expert*, multiple voices describe the “how” of building linkages. These sections feature field experts such as Audrey Hutchinson from the National League of Cities, who talks about how to evaluate complex citywide systems of support, and C. S. Mott Program Officer An-Me Chung and C. S. Mott grantees, who discuss the role of Statewide Afterschool Networks in promoting program quality.

One goal of this issue is to highlight promising evaluation approaches within the OST arena and build the knowledge base and agenda for new studies. Our Spotlight section describes new tools and methods for evaluating linkages, while our Evaluations to Watch articles illustrate emerging evaluation approaches and preview relevant new research findings.

A second goal of this issue is to illustrate the array of institutions with which innovative OST programs are partnering. Articles in this issue feature a variety of linkage strategies that target a range of goals. For example, with support from Time Warner Inc., three articles spotlight the importance of OST programs linking to support postsecondary success. Meanwhile, support from City Year has enabled us to document another key link: OST and business partnerships.

This issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* has benefited from considerable reader feedback on complementary learning. We hope that future feedback will enable us to discover more examples of innovative initiatives and the ways they are being evaluated—results we plan to use in a series of papers and tools on complementary learning and its key linkages and evaluation challenges in the coming year.

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the

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> theory & practice

Building and Evaluating Out-of-School Time Connections

Suzanne Bouffard, Priscilla Little, and Heather Weiss build a research-based case that a network of supports, with out-of-school time programs as a key component, are critical to positive learning and developmental outcomes for children and youth.

Out-of-school time (OST) programs are in the spotlight more than ever before due to calls for nonschool services to address achievement gaps, interest in promoting “21st century skills” such as critical thinking and technological fluency, and the upcoming reauthorization process for the No Child Left Behind Act, which includes the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and other supplementary education services. Recent research studies have contributed to the growing evidence base about the benefits of OST programs for youth.¹ Policymakers and the public see the value of OST programs, and parents report continued unmet demand for services.² All of these trends make the case for continued investments in OST—not only in services for children and youth, but also in continued research and evaluation to support knowledge development and best practices.

Research and evaluation investments over the past several years have moved researchers, practitioners, and policymakers beyond the question of whether OST programs matter for youth to questions about *why, how, and for whom* these programs matter and matter most. As this issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* demonstrates, there has been a growing emphasis on understanding and promoting quality in OST programs. Increased investments in quality are evident in the growth of quality standards and assessment tools, professional development and resources for program staff, and new research and evaluation studies such as those featured in *Evaluations to Watch* (pages 28 through 34). Stakeholders of all backgrounds now acknowledge that youth need access to not just any programs, but to well-designed, high-quality programs. In fact, recent research shows that poor-quality programs potentially can do harm to participants.³

The emerging consensus on what constitutes quality includes positive staff–youth relationships; opportunities for skill-building and mastery; opportunities for youth engagement, voice, and decision making; and positive peer relationships. A cross-cutting theme among findings on quality is that *connections matter*. Relationships among staff, schools, families, youth, and communities are crucial. In addition, access to and equity of participation are critical issues and require the collaborative efforts of many stakeholders.⁴ Intentional linkages among the many settings and institutions in which youth learn and grow can improve recruitment and retention, contribute to program quality, and promote better youth outcomes.⁵

1. Lauer, P. A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S. B., Apthorp, H. S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. L. (2006). Out-of-school time programs: A meta-analysis of effects for at-risk students. *Review of Educational Research*, 76, 275–313; Mahoney, J. L., Lord, H., & Carryl, E. (2005). Afterschool program participation and the development of child obesity and peer acceptance. *Applied Developmental Science*, 9, 202–215; Zief, S. G., Lauer, S., & Maynard, R. A. (2006). *Impacts of after-school programs on student outcomes: A systematic review for the Campbell Collaboration*. Philadelphia: Campbell Collaboration.
2. Afterschool Alliance. (2004). *America After 3 pm*. Washington: Author; Duffet, A., Johnson, J., Farkas, S., Kung, S., & Ott, A. (2004). *All work and no play? Listening to what kids and parents really want from out-of-school time*. New York: Public Agenda.
3. Mahoney, J. L., Stattin, H., & Lord, H. (2004). Unstructured youth recreation centre participation and antisocial behaviour development: Selection influences and the moderating role of antisocial peers. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 28, 553–560.
4. Weiss, H. B., Little, P. M. D., & Bouffard, S. M. (2005). More than just being there: Balancing the participation equation. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 105, 15–32.
5. Lauer, S., Little, P. M. D., & Weiss, H. B. (2004). *Moving beyond the barriers: Attracting and sustaining youth participation in out-of-school time programs*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project; Vandell, D. L., Reisner, E. R., Brown, B. B., Dadisman, K., Pierce, K. M., Lee, D., et al. (2005). *The study of promissig after-school programs: Examination of intermediate outcomes in year 2*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Education Research; Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. (2005). *Pathways to success for youth: What counts in after-school: Massachusetts After-School Research Study (MARS) report*. Boston, MA: United Way of Massachusetts Bay.

Complementary Learning

Such linkages are at the heart of what HFRP calls *complementary learning*. Complementary learning occurs when two or more institutions intentionally link with each other to improve learning and developmental outcomes for children and youth. These institutions include families, early childhood programs, schools, OST programs and activities, higher education, health and social service agencies, businesses, libraries, museums, and other community-based institutions.

Many after school programs link with schools by aligning curricula and sharing resources. Head Start and other early childhood programs connect with families through outreach and parenting workshops. Comprehensive initiatives like the Harlem Children's Zone in New York City link many services for children, youth, and families under one umbrella. Complementary learning can include linkages of many different types and scopes. Stakeholders may aim to achieve one strong linkage, several linkages of varying degrees, or a comprehensive system of supports. What is common to these approaches is that they all have an intentional strategy for linking multiple nonschool supports with each other and with schools in the service of shared goals for improving child and youth outcomes.

The complementary learning framework is part of a larger, more cohesive agenda for improving learning and development. For decades, researchers have acknowledged the importance of supports across multiple contexts in children's lives.⁶ Recent research has also begun to account for the constellation of settings and activities within the OST hours⁷ and the fact that different settings provide different developmental opportunities.⁸ Just as schools cannot do it alone,⁹ OST programs are necessary but not solely sufficient to support learning and development. Rather, they are one integral part of families' lives, of communities, and of education. Operating from a complementary learning framework can lead OST programs to be intentional about how they connect with these other institutions. Through complementary learning, OST programs can build shared missions and goals with other institutions, share resources and ideas, build stakeholder buy-in, and provide more coordinated services. They can build linkages—with schools, families, community-based institutions, and higher education—that are equal to more than the sum of their parts.

Complementary learning initiatives are growing—and so is the

evidence that they have tangible benefits for youth, families, and communities. Recent research, much of it from the OST arena, points to the benefits of linking many different institutions and supports. Below, we describe recent research on linkages between OST programs and initiatives and other complementary learning agents. Each type of linkage has unique goals and implementation challenges. However, all types of linkages are associated with a common set of benefits, including recruitment and retention, improved program quality, and academic and social benefits. After reviewing the research on these benefits and on how to facilitate each type of linkage, we describe how multiple linkages can be integrated into a cohesive network of supports, which goes beyond two-way partnerships to a full vision of complementary learning.

OST–School Linkages

The Goals. In the context of a national dialogue about improving academic achievement and reducing achievement gaps, there is widespread interest in linking OST programs with schools. Such linkages can facilitate continuity of academic goals and approaches, provide remediation and enrichment, present academic content in nontraditional and experiential ways, and address implementation challenges by promoting resource-sharing. OST–school linkages come in many varieties. For example, programs share staff, resources, and curricula; encourage regular communication between program and school staff; align goals and curricula to state and school standards; and coordinate their academic content with school work.

The Benefits. Recent research supports the benefits of OST–school linkages. Several studies have found that such linkages are one of the common characteristics of high-quality, high-performing OST programs. Youth whose OST programs are linked with their schools demonstrate better academic and social outcomes.¹⁰ For example, one recent study found that when program staff had positive relationships with school principals, youth demonstrated greater improvements in homework completion, initiative-taking, peer relationships, and positive behaviors.¹¹ OST–school linkages are also a successful strategy for recruitment.¹² For example, school-based programs often eliminate transportation barriers, and many programs rely on school staff to identify eligible youth.

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among the many settings
and institutions in which
youth learn and grow can
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recruitment and retention,
contribute to program
quality, and promote better
youth outcomes.*

6. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32, 513–531.

7. Vandell, Reisner, Brown, Dadisman, Pierce, Lee, et al., 2005.

8. Hansen, D., Larson, R., & Dworkin, J. (2003). What adolescents learn in organized youth activities: A survey of self-reported developmental experiences. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 13, 25–56.

9. Gordon, E. W., Brigidlall, B. L., & Meroe, A. S. (2004). Supplementary education: The hidden curriculum of high academic achievement. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield; Rothstein, R. (2005). *Class and schools: Using social, economic, and educational reform to close the black-white achievement gap*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

10. Birmingham, J., Pechman, E. M., Russell, C. A., & Mielke, M. (2005). *Shared features of high-performing after-school programs: A follow-up to the TASC evaluation*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates; Russell, C. A., & Reisner, E. R. (with Johnson, J. C., Rouk, Ü., & White, R. N.). (2005). *Supporting social and cognitive growth among disadvantaged middle-grades students in TASC after-school projects*. Washington DC: Policy Studies Associates.

11. Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2005.

12. Arbretton, A. J. A., Sheldon, J., & Herrera, C. (2005). *Beyond safe havens: A synthesis of 20 years of research on the Boys & Girls Clubs*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures; Lauver, Little, & Weiss, 2004.

Tackling the Challenges. Despite the potential benefits of OST–school links, many programs find that linking with schools is challenging¹³ and some express concern about replicating the school day after school. However, recent initiatives aim to tackle implementation challenges (see, for example, the Evaluations to Watch article by Jennifer Maltby, page 30), and many new resources, as featured throughout this issue, share strategies for linking OST with school in ways that are engaging, effective, and sustainable.

OST–Family Linkages

The Goals. Facilitating positive relationships between families and OST programs is increasingly a focus of both practice and research. Many programs target a range of goals to engage and support families,¹⁴ and some new evaluation studies report rates of parent involvement (e.g., the Citizen Schools evaluation). One unique advantage is that OST–family linkages can provide an additional entry point for families to the many institutions in which their children learn. For example, OST staff can serve as liaisons between families and schools and between families and social service providers.

The Benefits. As with OST–school linkages, positive relationships between programs and families are one of the common features of high-quality programs¹⁵ and have multiple benefits. Families play an important role in determining whether youth participate in programs.¹⁶ As Suzanne Bouffard, Sandra Simpkins, and Carrie-Anne DeDeo describe in the Evaluations to Watch article on page 31 of this issue, a new study from HFRP shows that youth are more likely to participate when their parents are engaged in their lives and schooling, and are less likely to participate when their parents show low levels of support, involvement, and cognitive stimulation. OST–family linkages benefit not only youth but family members. They can increase family involvement in education, which is associated with improved academic achievement, and are associated with improved family relationships.¹⁷

Tackling the Challenges. In addition to providing evidence that connections with families matter, recent research and evaluation provide the following lessons and strategies for developing such connections: create program environments and events that welcome families;¹⁸ support families’ needs as well as youth’s; com-

municate and build trusting relationships with families; respect cultural diversity; hire and develop a family-focused staff reflective of the parent population; and build linkages between families, schools, and communities (e.g., by serving as a liaison between parents and school staff and by involving the PTA). This research demonstrates that OST–family linkages are feasible and need not require extensive resources. For example, one of the most common ways for staff to engage families is to initiate frequent informal conversations at pick-up time.¹⁹

OST–Community Linkages

The Goals. The category of “community” is broader than those of “school” and “family,” and we use the term inclusively. Community includes neighborhoods—both their organizations and individual members; youth-related services and agencies (e.g., the Department of Social Services, community health clinics, etc.); businesses; and cultural institutions, such as museums, libraries, and arts centers. By linking with these organizations, OST programs can avoid overlap of services, provide more choices for youth,²⁰ and can leverage resources. For example, businesses provide financial support, volunteers, and apprenticeship opportunities; cultural institutions contribute innovative programming and field trip sites; and neighborhood organizations provide feedback and guidance on the support their members want and need. A unique goal of OST–community linkages is to promote better outcomes not just for youth, but also for other community members and institutions.

The Benefits. There is less research on the benefits of OST–community connections than on the other linkages described above. However, similar themes are emerging about quality and recruitment, and a few key studies have shaped our understanding of relationships between OST and communities. For example, we know that neighborhoods exert an influence on youth participation. Lower participation rates among low-income children are largely explained by the fact that they tend to live in disadvantaged, underresourced neighborhoods.²¹ They are also partly explained by the influence of neighborhood conditions on parenting behaviors and strategies: Parents in more dangerous neighborhoods are more restrictive of their children’s activities and less likely to enroll them in OST activities.²² At the same time, community factors can have potentially *positive* effects on par-

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OST–community
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better outcomes not just
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institutions.*

13. Miller, 2003.

14. Weiss, A. R., & Brigham, R. A. (2003). *The family participation in after-school study*. Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education.

15. Vandell, Reisner, Brown, Dadisman, Pierce, Lee, et al., 2005.

16. Lauer, Little, & Weiss, 2004.

17. U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Under Secretary. (2003). *When schools stay open late: The national evaluation of the 21st-Century Learning Centers program, first year findings*. Washington, DC: Author.

18. Kakli, Z., Kreider, H., & Little, P. M. D. (2006). Focus on families! How to build and support family-centered practices in after school. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project, United Way of Massachusetts Bay, and BOSTnet; Weiss, A. R., & Brigham, R. A. (2003). *The family participation in after-school study*. Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education.

19. Weiss & Brigham, 2003.

20. Policy Studies Associates. (2006). *Everyone plays: A review of research on the integration of sports and physical activity into out-of-school time programs*. Washington, DC: Author.

21. Wimer, C., & Dearing, E. (2005). *Selection into out-of-school time activities: The role of family contexts within and across neighborhoods*. Poster session submitted to Society for Research on Adolescence 2006 Biennial Meeting, San Francisco, CA.

22. Furstenberg, F. F., Jr., Cook, T. D., Eccles, J., & Elder, G. H. (1998). *Managing to make it: Urban families and adolescent success*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

ticipation—for example, by serving as target recruitment areas for youth and staff.²³ Some cities, like New York and Providence, are tracking the availability of OST experiences by neighborhood, in order to target resources and recruitment efforts accordingly, and to connect the most in-need youth with services (see the Spotlight article about Providence, page 22). Other potential benefits of OST–community linkages include helping community members to work together, and integrating OST programs into the fabric of the community.

Tackling the Challenges. Evaluation studies show that OST programs can link with community institutions in many ways and that thinking creatively about these linkages can leverage additional resources. For example, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries can provide innovative and efficient programming. An initial report from the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development initiative concluded that structured programs that train youth to work in libraries cannot only promote youth and workforce development, but can also benefit the community by increasing adults’ awareness of, positive views about, and leadership around issues affecting youth.²⁴ Research is also beginning to emerge on the positive role of linkages between OST programs and community businesses (see Ask the Expert, page 15). Although research on this topic is new, connections between OST and businesses are not, and they have long served as an important complementary learning linkage.²⁵

OST–Higher Education Linkages

The Goals. Complementary learning means not only linking multiple supports at a single point in time, but linking over time. As such, one of the functions of complementary learning is to facilitate smooth transitions across developmental stages and contexts—from preschool to kindergarten, from elementary school to

23. Lauver, Little, & Weiss, 2004.

24. Spielberger, J., Horton, C., & Michels, L. (2004). *New on the shelf: Teens in the library*. Chicago: University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children.

25. Mitchell, L. (2005). Increasing the bottom line by supporting families. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 11(1), 15.

Complementary Learning Activities and Programs

Learning Points Associates has begun a complementary learning database, which collects information on high-quality nonschool programs and innovations that complement school day activities. To be included, programs and activities must demonstrate that they enhance participants’ engagement, build participant capacity for improved outcomes, and offer continuity in their services.

To access the database, visit www.learningpt.org/page.php?pageID=212.

Beyond the Tunnel Series

The Youth Transitions Funders Group released a series of two publications in 2005 addressing the way that youth-serving institutions contribute to distinct inequities for low-income, urban youth of color. *The Typology of the Tunnel Problem* brief identifies four cross-cutting factors that harm at-risk youth: service tunnels, lack of communication, unclear roles and responsibilities, and shifting problem cases elsewhere. *The School-to-Prison Pipeline* brief unpacks these factors and highlights promising practices that connect youth-serving institutions.

Read the Beyond the Tunnel briefs online at www.ytfg.org/knowledge_papers.html.

middle school, and from high school to college. Linkages between OST and universities can facilitate the postsecondary transition by educating youth about their options for the future and preparing them to apply to and succeed in college.

The Benefits. In a recent ACT survey of eighth through tenth graders, 78% of respondents reported that extracurricular activities were helpful in exploring postsecondary opportunities.²⁶ A survey in Rhode Island found that adolescents were interested in OST opportunities that are focused on “future goals and aspirations.”²⁷ Some OST programs help youth begin this exploration and preparation process early on, in middle school or even elementary school, which is critical for ensuring that college aspirations become a reality.²⁸ OST–university linkages also provide other benefits to programs, including staff and volunteers, curriculum advice, and evaluation support.

Multiple Linkages: Putting It All Together

The growing research base cited above makes a strong case for many of the single-link components of complementary learning. However, complementary learning is broader than just bidirectional linkages between two institutions. It is a framework that includes a network of linkages. This is a unique contribution of complementary learning that distinguishes it from partnerships and other two-way connections. Understanding and acknowledging the constellation of possible complementary learning linkages can allow stakeholders to assess their current work within a larger vision and to help them reflect on and strategize about ways to build their linkages moving forward. Likewise, complementary learning linkages vary not only in their constellation, but also along dimensions such as depth or innovation. Consider a

26. Wimberly, G. L., & Noeth, R. J. (2005). *College readiness begins in middle school: ACT policy report*. Iowa City, IA: ACT.

27. Forum for Youth Investment (2003). *High school after-school: What is it? What might it be? Why is it important?* Washington, DC: Author.

28. Wimberly & Noeth, 2005.

complementary learning example with one strong and innovative link with a focused objective, such as the Providence Children's Museum's family program (see box). Then consider a different example from New York City or New Jersey, where large-scale comprehensive initiatives are emerging that link OST programs with communities, cultural institutions, schools, families, and other contexts.²⁹ All of these examples fit within the complementary learning framework.

Evaluating OST Connections

Amid these strides, the OST field faces a new challenge: building and evaluating OST linkages to create the connections that are necessary for turning knowledge and experience into quality and sustainability of OST programming. As the availability and sophistication of OST research and evaluation grows, there is more need than ever before to make connections across research and evaluation efforts, to connect the many stakeholders working to improve the nonschool-hours experiences for youth, and to connect research with policy and practice. These needs are reflected in two of the key tasks facing the OST field today: to build systems of support for OST and to promote effective connections between the many settings in which children and youth learn, including schools, OST programs, community institutions, and families. As we and others continue to document examples of complementary learning initiatives around the country, developing new evaluation approaches and conducting more assessment are critical to our understanding of how, when, and under what conditions linkages between OST programs and other institutions can add value to learning and development. Of particular interest and need are evaluations of multiple linkages—that is, initiatives that intentionally connect more than two institutions.

This work raises several challenging evaluation questions that require researchers, evaluators, and other stakeholders to think creatively about evaluation in order to learn important implementation lessons and to evaluate effectiveness and added value:

- With multiple components, how can the value-added of each institution and linkage be evaluated individually and collectively? In other words, is the whole greater than the sum of the parts?
- What would a theory of change for an evaluation of a multi-component complementary learning effort look like?
- What would be the shared goals of a multicomponent complementary learning effort?
- How can existing self-assessment tools help programs to evaluate and improve their complementary learning efforts? How can they be modified to accommodate a complementary learning approach?
- Can OST programs and initiatives support school reform efforts? And, if so, how?

29. For information on the evaluations of the New York Department of Youth and Child Development's OST initiative and the New Jersey After 3 initiative, visit the Policy Studies Associates website at www.policystudies.com/studies/indexyouth.html.

As the articles in this issue demonstrate, research and evaluation have played a critical part in the growth of OST programs and improvements in program quality. Over the past several years, the field has benefited from increasingly sophisticated research methods and knowledge. The value of research and evaluation for the field is clear, and the role of evaluation for both continuous program improvement and accountability is now well established. The field has learned valuable lessons from both large-scale rigorous studies and small-scale program evaluation and is actively applying this knowledge to policy and practice. As this article has documented, one clear lesson from a decade of research is that just as “schools can't do it alone,” neither can OST programs. However, there is growing consensus that a rich network of supports—one that includes OST programs along with families and community-based organizations—*can* make a difference. In the coming months, Harvard Family Research Project will continue to document places where OST connections, especially between after school programs and schools, are strong, effective, and replicable.

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Families Together

Begun in 1992, the Families Together program is a collaborative effort between the Providence Children's Museum and the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) that helps “build and rebuild” families through a variety of visitation programs. Families Together supports healthy homes for youth who are in foster care by connecting family clinicians based at the museum with youth, parents, and foster caretakers. Guided family visitations connect parents and youth who have been separated by the courts and for whom reunification is a goal by using museum visits as a vehicle to build parenting skills and foster health relationships. In addition, pre-adoptive visitations at the museum provide a safe and enriching space for potential adoptive families and youth to get to know one another. Other visits can be scheduled with museum therapists or DCYF caseworkers.

For more information, visit www.childrenmuseum.org/btdocs/familiestogether.html.

This issue's Promising Practices section illustrates the diverse approaches that OST programs use to link with other institutions, including universities, social and health services, families, schools, and museums. They demonstrate that initiatives vary in the number and scope of their linkages, from one strong partnership to multicomponent supports, as well as in their methods for building and evaluating linkages.

It's Never Too Early: Promoting College Prep in Middle School After School Programs

Lucy Friedman describes how a collaborative after school initiative links with universities and families to promote college and career preparation among middle school youth.

In 2005, The After-School Corporation (TASC), the College Board, and the Partnership for Afterschool Education (PASE), with support from Time Warner Inc., introduced After-School CollegeEd as a pilot program in 16 school-based after school programs. CollegeEd is a research-based curriculum designed by the College Board to encourage middle and high school students and their families to actively plan for college, careers, and life after high school. Originally designed as an in-school program, the curriculum is associated with high educational aspirations and improved knowledge about the importance of planning early for college, particularly for less educated and immigrant populations.

Through our collaborative efforts, we are adapting this successful program to the after school hours and implementing it in TASC sites in New York State, with Time Warner Inc. resources targeted for programs in New York City. Founded in 1998, TASC currently supports more than 250 high-quality after school programs, which expose more than 40,000 students to activities that promote their social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and creative development. TASC programs complement school curricula and provide supplementary activities that may not be available during the school day.

Through this pilot project, we aim to demonstrate that after school is an untapped but effective venue for supporting and encouraging youth on the path to college. We focus on youth and families who are not familiar with the college planning process—particularly middle school students from low-income minority communities. One way the program accomplishes this goal is by connecting colleges and universities with after school programs in communities that normally have little access to higher education. For example, in the Bronx College Town program, six middle school TASC programs work with institutions of higher education in the Bronx to introduce students to the benefits of attending college through campus tours, lectures, and mentoring partnerships. We have also developed relationships with Brooklyn College, Medgar Evers College, New York University, and Teachers College at

Columbia University, which now manage after school programs.

The addition of After-School CollegeEd to TASC programs formalizes a continuum of services for youth to become and stay college bound. These services include PSAT and SAT prep, college visits, and application assistance. After-School CollegeEd emphasizes that college is affordable and accessible for everyone, that planning for college starts in middle school and continues in high school, and that family involvement is key.

Introducing middle and high school students to the college planning process through after school programs has unique benefits.

After school's more informal, interactive setting can get youth more engaged and motivated—for example, through creative and diverse staffing. Staff include well-trained college students who use their own college experiences to serve as mentors and encourage youth to plan for college. Our small student-teacher ratios ensure that participants also develop strong relationships with adult instructors. The after school environment can also be more inviting and accessible to parents, which helps to connect families to the college planning process.

College prep activities can also lead to stronger relationships between the after school program and school administrators and teachers because they demonstrate that the after school and day school programs share at least one common goal: students' college enrollment and attendance.

By working together, after school programs and schools can also leverage resources from multiple nonprofits and educational institutions and serve youth more cost-effectively.

TASC uses three systems to assess sites participating in After-School CollegeEd: routine site visits and annual assessments by program officers to assure quality and program improvements; TASC's data management system, which collects enrollment and attendance figures; and the New York State Afterschool Network Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool, which TASC trains programs to use, to help sites reflect on progress and plan program improvements. Now in the pilot phase of the After-School CollegeEd program, we are conducting a formative evaluation focused on recruitment and attendance.

So far, results have been positive. After the first year of the program, After-School CollegeEd participants and staff expressed

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The Posse Foundation: Moving Beyond Test Scores to Identify High-Potential Youth

Rassan Salandy of the Posse Foundation explains how one after school program works with universities and businesses to prepare high school students for success in college and beyond.

I never would have dropped out of college if I'd had my posse with me." That statement by a former student inspired the founding of The Posse Foundation in 1989. Since then, The Posse Foundation has sent over 1,500 public high school students—in multicultural teams called "posses"—to selective universities and colleges across the country. To date, Posse Scholars have won over \$140 million in scholarships from Posse partner colleges and universities and are persisting and graduating at a rate of over 90%.

Building Relationships

Posse collaborates with public high school systems and community-based organizations (CBOs) in Boston, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, to identify students of promise who, despite their abilities, may be overlooked by traditional college selection processes. Very often these are students whose SAT scores are less than competitive but who have demonstrated a serious commitment to their academic studies and exhibited extraordinary leadership qualities.

Posse has developed partnerships with 26 top-tier universities and colleges, which provide Posse Scholars with full-tuition scholarships, on-campus mentors, and valuable educational experience. Over the next decade, Posse expects its list of university partners to grow to include 80 of the best-ranked schools in the U.S.

Selecting Posse Scholars

Winning a Posse Scholarship is a highly competitive process, with roughly 6,500 candidates competing for 305 scholarship slots in 2005. First, representatives from Posse meet with high school college counselors and other administrators to discuss the program and to describe the type of student whom the program looks to serve. Then, high schools and CBOs in each of the five Posse sites nominate students who are beginning their senior year of high school.

Posse uses a unique evaluative tool—the Dynamic Assessment Process (DAP)—to identify the best candidates from among the nominees. DAP consists of large- and small-group interviews, in which students participate in interactive workshops designed to showcase their problem-solving skills and their ability to work in groups. DAP also incorporates individual interviews, in which students present their transcripts and discuss their academic and leadership histories. Through this interview process, a comprehensive picture of the student emerges—one that would be difficult to glean from transcripts, test scores, and essays alone.

In the last stage of DAP, The Posse Foundation assembles a finalist pool for each partner college. Each university partner

selects a group of 10 scholarship recipients, who will make up a posse that will attend that university together beginning the following year. After the winners are announced, The Posse Foundation holds award ceremonies celebrating the newest scholarship recipients from each of its five sites.

Supporting Posse Scholars

One of Posse's distinctive features is the breadth of educational support it provides to Posse Scholars. An important component of this support is Posse's 8-month Pre-Collegiate Training Program. From January to August of their senior year in high school, Posse Scholars meet weekly with staff trainers and their peers at The Posse Foundation's site offices for a series of intensive training workshops designed to sharpen skills related to leadership, cross-cultural dialogue, team building, and academic excellence. The goal of the training program is to prepare Posse Scholars for the academic expectations of their colleges and for leadership roles on campus.

Posse further supports Scholars once they arrive on campus by making regular campus visits to meet with the students, their on-campus mentors, and university liaisons. In addition, Posse facilitates annual, weekend-long events, known as PossePlus Retreats, for each of its university partners. These retreats, which typically involve more than 100 participants, bring together members of the campus community—including Posse Scholars, college administrators, other students, and faculty members—to discuss important campus issues identified by Posse Scholars. In 2006, almost 2,000 people participated in these events across the nation.

Posse contributes to the professional development of its students through its Career Program, which assists Posse Scholars as they transition from their roles as campus leaders to leaders in the workforce. One of the ways the program achieves this is by partnering with exceptional companies and organizations, both nationally and abroad. Through these partnerships, Posse Scholars are offered internships and other career-enhancing opportunities.

How We Know That Posse is Effective

According to Posse President and Founder Deborah Bial, over 70% of Posse Scholars have either started new campus organizations or become presidents at existing organizations. The program has proven so effective that several universities now accept two Posse cohorts—20 students total—each year. Perhaps the greatest testaments to the program's success are the scores of Posse alumni who remark upon graduating from college, "I couldn't have done it without my posse."

Rassan Salandy

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Connecting Latino Families With Out-of-School Time Opportunities

Nathaniel Riggs describes the implementation and evaluation of the Generación Diez program, which connects Latino families with after school programming, social services, and the school community.¹

Community leaders throughout the country face two common challenges: identifying the populations in greatest need of social services, and providing and evaluating appealing, culturally relevant services for these populations. Generación Diez (G-10), a comprehensive, school-based after school program, addresses these challenges for Latino children and families in one Pennsylvania county. Established in 1999 in response to an influx of primarily Mexican immigrants—whose children had limited English proficiency and were often at risk for academic and behavioral problems—G-10 operates through a highly integrated collaboration between a Pennsylvania community-based organization, Hempfield Behavioral Health (HBH), and multiple community and state agencies.

By working closely with area schools, HBH learned that schools were struggling to meet the needs of new Latino students, most of whom were eligible for free lunches, missed as many as 89 school days per year, and were academically behind their peers. Upon discovering that few existing local resources addressed the after school needs of this population, HBH responded by connecting with area schools, social service providers, and Pennsylvania State University's Prevention Research Center to create the G-10 after school program.

As designed by HBH, G-10 has three specific aims: (a) to improve Latino children's academic achievement through an intensive academic curriculum that parallels lessons taught during the school day; (b) to improve social adjustment through the Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS) Curriculum, developed by researchers at Penn State and the University of Washington;² and (c) to promote school success and well-being through home visits by Latina social workers. These home visits establish linkages between families and the schools, which often face linguistic and cultural barriers to communication. They also provide parents with information about the American educational system, their children's educational needs, and strategies for promoting school success at home. When necessary, the home visits provide social services to families experiencing poverty, illness, abuse, and other stresses.

Led by bilingual staff, the G-10 program operates for 3 hours per day from Monday through Friday, provides supplementary Saturday art and music sessions, and offers an all-day summer session. From 2002–2006, G-10 home visitors provided an aver-

age of 22 contacts per year for each G-10 family. The program currently serves more than 225 children and families from four school districts.

To evaluate the effects of G-10 on children and families, HBH and the G-10 program have partnered with an external evaluator. To ensure objectivity, the evaluator conducts data analysis and produces annual reports, while HBH helps collect data, distributes reports to state funders and policymakers, and uses the findings for program improvement. University researchers extend the impact of the evaluation by distributing the findings to the academic community.

The aims of the evaluation and the use of its findings for program improvement correspond with the three aims of the program. Standardized measures of proficiency, administered in the fall and spring of each school year, assess G-10's effect on youth academic performance. Comparisons among these surveys over time show significant growth in children's academic development. Upon entry into G-10, children typically score in the bottom 15% when compared to their peers in reading and spelling. Those scores generally increase to the bottom third by spring, with students demonstrating average reading and spelling proficiency by the end of the second year. As a result of these evaluation findings, G-10 makes every attempt to ensure program enrollment for at least 2 years.

Teacher surveys, meanwhile, assess the effect of G-10 on youth social competence. Findings from these surveys highlight the importance of taking strict attendance data. When youth were separated into three groups by attendance rates (infrequent, moderate, and frequent attendees), those who attended G-10 frequently (more than 100 days) demonstrated significant increases in standardized measures of prosocial behavior.

Parent surveys provide insight into the link between the family's well-being and the child's school success. Initially, most G-10 parents report little connection with their children's school. However, over 2 years of enrollment, parents whose children frequently attend G-10 are significantly more likely to report increased quality of relationships with their children's teachers, frequency of parent-teacher contact, and engagement with their children's schooling. These findings suggests that G-10 is succeeding in connecting parents with their children's regular-day school context.

Over the past 7 years, HBH has learned a great deal about supporting the Latino community—thanks to the hard work of HBH leaders, G-10 after school teachers, and external evaluators. Integral to this support are G-10's connections with local schools, social service providers, and institutions of higher education, which have greatly facilitated the positive effects of G-10 on the lives of youth and their families.

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1. The author wishes to acknowledge Dr. Howard Rosen of Hempfield Behavioral Health, Dr. Mark Greenberg of the Prevention Research Center at Pennsylvania State University, and Ms. Carmen Medina of the Pennsylvania Department of Education for their contributions to this work.

2. Kusché, C. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (1994). *The PATHS Curriculum: Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies*. Seattle: Developmental Research and Programs.

Evaluating BEST Fit: A Program to Promote Child and Family Health After School

Jim Sass and Craig Blumenthal from LA's BEST describe how the BEST Fit initiative links with multiple organizations to support child and family health.

BEST Fit is a child and family health initiative within the LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program in Los Angeles. A variety of partners have provided integral program components and guidance in BEST Fit's development and implementation. One area in which partnerships have been particularly vital to our success is evaluation.

BEST Fit began with limited-term pilot projects in 2003 and has evolved into an ongoing initiative with multiple components and funders. The primary component of BEST Fit is Healthy Children Healthy Futures (HCHF), developed by Strang Cancer Prevention Center with support from the MetLife Foundation. HCHF consists of both child and parent elements and focuses on "The 8 Habits of Healthy Kids" (e.g., physical activity, healthy snacks, smaller portions).¹

To emphasize a balanced approach to children's health, BEST Fit combines its implementation of HCHF with supplementary physical activity components. Our after school sites have the option of implementing HCHF and/or physical activities such as Hooping (fitness through hula hoop play), LunaStix (coordination and rhythm through stick juggling), and Sport for All (physical skills for sports participation).

Partner organizations provide valuable guidance and support. Major funders—including the California Endowment, the Queens-Care Foundation, and the Kraft Foundation—have directed BEST Fit toward specific populations and program objectives, while Strang, La Vida Medical Group, the National Latino Children's Institute, Sportime, and the University of California Cooperative Extension provide curriculum and materials.

Developing BEST Fit has meant building an integrated initiative in conjunction with partners and funders who have their own expectations and goals. Our partners have sought to include components addressing several different activity areas (e.g., physical exercise, animation workshops, media awareness, parent advocacy) and three different populations (children, parents, and staff). They initially expected participants to learn everything from stress management to academic skills to nutrition. One challenge we faced in developing BEST Fit was contending with our partners' varying expectations about program components and outcomes.

Ultimately, conversations among LA's BEST management, BEST Fit leaders, internal evaluation staff members, trainers and researchers from partner organizations, and funders succeeded in identifying primary outcomes areas, practical means for measuring outcomes, and outcome targets reasonable for the scope and characteristics of the initiative. Program outcomes now include those for staff members (component-related knowledge and

skills), children (knowledge, attitudes, and behavior related to nutrition and physical activity), and parents (knowledge regarding healthy food preparation and physical activity).

Throughout the initiative, partnerships have played a key role in the evaluation of BEST Fit. Early evaluation activities—in the form of a site-coordinator survey, designed by the BEST Fit director with consultation from our internal evaluation department—identified interested sites and the program components important to them. Evaluation, therefore, informed our decisions regarding which core components to include in the program and which potential partners to approach.

Reports to funders show positive results. In self-reports and trainers' observations, more than 90% of staff participating in trainings gained knowledge and the ability to implement the HCHF program. Children's self-reports included increases in physical activity, talking with parents about healthy eating and exercise, drinking water, and eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables "most days." Parents reported notable increases in their own physical activity and in reading food labels.

An ongoing challenge has been developing a relationship with an external evaluation partner. Although conversations with public health researchers at local universities have provided BEST Fit with feedback on community factors, components, and credible outcomes, we have also encountered differences in perspective regarding rigor and program appropriateness. These researchers emphasize experimental control and outcome measures, while LA's BEST values "kids' choice"—that is, allowing children to participate in activities that interest them, rather than requiring mandatory participation. Moreover, some common measures in childhood obesity research (e.g., children's weight, body composition, physical fitness tests, blood samples) are not consistent with our philosophy or program model. Still, BEST Fit continues to seek common ground with public health researchers while maintaining our program goals.

As of May 2006, BEST Fit was in 66 LA's BEST elementary schools with plans to be in more than 100 by the end of the year. As the initiative grows, BEST Fit's evaluation strategies and procedures also evolve. In addition to revising our evaluation measures, we are developing case study procedures to examine characteristics that distinguish successful sites from less successful sites.² With new components and new funders, we look forward to the continuing development of the BEST Fit evaluation.

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1. More information may be found at www.healthychildrenhealthyfutures.org/AboutUs.htm

2. Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2003). *The success case method: Find out quickly what's working and what's not*. San Francisco: Berrett-Kohler.

Discovery Youth: A Museum-Based Program Connecting Youth With Community

Jessica Intrator from the Children's Discovery Museum describes a program that connects youth with a community institution to promote technology skills, health awareness, and positive social and academic outcomes.

Children's Discovery Museum (CDM) of San Jose serves 300,000 visitors annually, attracting families with children to a variety of hands-on, inquiry-inspiring exhibits. CDM also provides unique learning opportunities to a smaller targeted audience through its ongoing, out-of-school time (OST) programs. Since 2001, we have served youth ages 10 to 14 through the Discovery Youth (DY) after school program and the Summer of Service program. These programs connect youth participants with the museum and with the community by enabling them to form relationships with museum educators and to create multimedia projects for museum visitors.

At the programs' core are strong youth development practices, which celebrate youth as resources and acknowledge the importance of adult role models. We use service learning and inquiry-based methods to promote youth's healthy physical and emotional development. In DY, two museum educators, supervised by CDM's director of youth programs, guide youth in a program that connects youth with technology and integrates health awareness in a learning environment distinctly different from a school health class.

DY channels youth interest in technology into multimedia projects that promote healthy behaviors to others, especially younger peers. These projects focus on such topics as promoting good hygiene, smoking prevention, and demystifying doctor visits. Youth create the projects in CDM's Multimedia Studio, where they learn how to shoot footage with digital video cameras and use multimedia software to edit and animate video. Participants have opportunities to connect with the community by showcasing their completed work at the Museum and at the San Jose Children's Health Fair.

In order to continually improve the quality of the DY and Summer of Service programs, we conduct evaluation. We believe in involving youth in all aspects of programming, including evaluation, and we therefore use surveys and focus groups, which encourage youth reflection. We also incorporate the program's technology focus into our evaluation efforts by inviting youth participants to engage in video interviews and email surveys. In addition, we engage parents in the program and its evaluation by conducting parent surveys and interviews.

Evaluation has helped our programming to evolve and improve throughout its development. A formative evaluation, conducted in the first year of DY, used interviews with staff and participants to document the program's implementation and to assess progress toward program goals. Impact evaluations have also been useful in shaping DY. An impact evaluation in the third year of DY

studied whether and how the technology-focused program provided youth with greater self-confidence, better social skills, and an increased sense that they are important resources in the community. This evaluation measured the learning gains and opinions of 35 DY youth in participant surveys, participant focus groups, end-of-year parent surveys and interviews, end-of-year staff surveys, and youth whole-group reflection activities.

Connections with the community and other institutions are integral to the success of CDM's OST programs. Both evaluations described above included an assessment of how well the program connected participating youth with other supports for healthy development, including community, families, and schools. Findings indicate that the DY program has been successful in making such linkages. Here are some examples:

- *OST–community:* Participants presented their work at the San Jose Children's Health Fair and the CDM's Safe Nights, which are parties for youth held at the museum. Several hundred non-DY youth saw the projects at these events.
- *OST–family:* As a result of DY, participants felt that they improved their relationships with family members.
- *OST–school:* In surveys, youth said that DY helped them prepare for school. One youth expressed confidence that his computer skills would help him as he enters high school. Youth also felt that their academic achievement had improved since being in DY.

Evaluations included an assessment of how well Discovery Youth connected participating youth with other supports for healthy development, including community, families, and schools.

The evaluations also assessed academic and youth development outcomes. Youth felt that their behavior, motivation, health, and academic achievement changed since being in DY. They also reported that they had made a difference in someone's life and that DY activities helped them think about who they wanted to be someday. Youth, parents, and staff reported improvements in youth's technology skills, creativity, teamwork skills, relationships with peers and adults, self-esteem, and responsibility.

The surface benefits for CDM are clear: additional volunteer support, positive engagement for younger visitors with older peers, and the development of an early employment pipeline. But the greater benefits reside in the CDM's capacity and commitment to making a deep impact on the lives of young people in our community. The programs help us to connect youth with cultural institutions and with positive adult role models from the community. The museum setting provides a unique learning environment in which to develop programs that promote youth's school achievement and positive relationships with families and the community.

Jessica Intrator

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Mayor's Time in Detroit: A Citywide System for After School

Linda Lee explains how foundations, local and state governments, schools, and other entities have formed a multimember collaboration to support the Mayor's Time after school initiative.

In response to the 1992 Los Angeles riots, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation established the Urban Health Initiative in five U.S. cities—Baltimore, Detroit, Oakland, Philadelphia, and Richmond—with the goal of changing systems to improve the health and safety of children. Detroit's strategy was to remove barriers and strengthen infrastructure in order to increase participation in after school programs.

Research conducted in 1999 indicated that less than 20% of Detroit's school-age children were participating in after school programs. The major obstacle to participation was parents' lack of awareness of programs in their neighborhoods. To remove this barrier, Mayor's Time, as part of the Urban Health Initiative, began holding citywide After-School Fairs in 2002. These annual Fairs connect parents and children with hundreds of after school programs in churches, community centers, city recreation centers, and schools. The following year, Mayor's Time provided parents with another means of locating after school programs—a Web-based program locator, searchable by zip code, program type, or day and time, listing 800 programs.

Legislators and Funders as Key Supporters

Over the past 10 years, Mayor's Time has worked to increase after school program participation by forging strong and active partnerships with the City of Detroit, the state of Michigan, and local and national foundations. In 2002, Mayor's Time established a public-private partnership with Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, who required each city department to develop and implement a plan to support a citywide after school initiative. Mayor's Time also partnered with key after school intermediaries across Michigan to advocate for the creation of a state-supported organization dedicated to developing a more cohesive system of after school opportunities for all of Michigan's children.

As a result of these efforts, the Michigan After-School Partnership (MASP) was formed by legislative action in 2004. Mayor's Time serves as its current chair. Originally sponsored by the Departments of Education and Human Services, with matching funds from the Mott and Johnson Foundations, MASP will soon gain the Departments of Community Health, Labor and Economic Growth, and History, Arts and Libraries as sponsors, thanks to new legislation to increase MASP's funding and sustainability.

Foundations have played an integral role in bringing stakeholders together in many Mayor's Time's efforts to increase after school participation. In 2004, the Skillman Foundation, the largest funder of children's programs in Detroit, established and chaired Mayor's Time with leading their After-School Roundtable. With a mission to ensure that children and youth are recognized as Detroit's top priority, the After-School Roundtable—comprised of

coordinating organizations, direct-service after school providers, and a major parent network—works to establish and strengthen connections with the business community, philanthropists, and local, state, and federal governments.

Supporting Postsecondary Preparation

Multifaceted partnerships also underscore two Mayor's Time postsecondary preparation initiatives. The Mayor's Time Public Safety Academy is a partnership between Mayor's Time; the Detroit Police, Fire, EMS, and Water Departments; Detroit Public Schools (DPS); and Wayne County Community College District that prepares high school students for entry positions as police officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, homeland and private security officers, and public service agents. Upon successful completion of a 3-year program in the Detroit Public Schools Career and Technical Center, students receive 12 credits at Wayne County Community College District toward their associate's degree. The second initiative is an 8-week paid summer internship program, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which provides hands-on experience for youth working directly with police officers, firefighters, and Personnel and Water Department engineers.

New Evaluations and Future Partnerships

Evaluation of these initiatives is facilitated by the Mayor's Time Information System, a data system funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education that tracks participation in 33 community after school programs at 93 sites, recording over 17,000 individual students' attendance by hours of participation and type of activity. Michigan State University researchers use this system, along with data obtained from Detroit Public Schools, to evaluate how outcomes are associated with after school participation. The analysis of the first year's data shows that students who attended out-of-school time programs for more days generally did better academically, with higher GPAs and higher reading and math standardized test scores.

Mayor's Time continues to maintain and foster new partnerships. Joining with U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Children's Hospital of Michigan, Wayne State University, Michigan Department of Education, Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, and Weight Watchers, Mayor's Time is creating a new initiative to address childhood obesity. It is this support from a wide range of partners that enables Mayor's Time to work toward the goals of increasing after school participation and improving outcomes for children.

Linda H. Lee

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Community Service by and for Youth: Supporting OST Programs in Seattle

City Year staff member Erika Rasmussen describes how City Year Seattle/King County works with the local school district and with community organizations to offer high-quality OST programming.

City Year Seattle/King County, a member of the AmeriCorps national network, engages young adults (ages 17 to 24) from diverse backgrounds in 10 months of full-time service in local, community-based organizations and schools. Around the country, City Year develops partnerships with agencies to promote children’s academic and social success. Through tutoring and mentoring, inspiring an ethic of community service, and supporting out-of-school time (OST) programs, City Year aims to address the critical needs of the community and its children. Over the past 7 years, Seattle/King County young adult participants, called “corps members,” have offered a variety of OST programs to Seattle’s Beacon Hill community, including:

- *Starfish Corps*, which provides third through fifth graders with safe, structured, fun activities led by corps members (e.g., field trips, arts and crafts, games, shared readings, and community service). These activities foster community-building, teamwork, and an interest in and dedication to community service.
- *Activity Clubs*, including soccer, math, games, newspaper, and homework clubs, for second through fifth graders, in which corps members emphasize teamwork and literacy skills.
- *Camp City Year*, a low-cost, school-based enrichment camp for kindergarten through fifth graders, held during spring vacation, designed and run by City Year corps members in partnership with the school district.

Working closely with schools and community organizations has helped City Year Seattle/King County to build our programming and provide “win-win” situations that benefit children, schools, and community organizations. These collaborations allow us to offer high-quality programming that extends, but does not replicate, the school day. Emphasizing play and recreation as well as academics, our programs help children experience success in new ways and develop as well-rounded individuals. Our program goals and components are consistent with the standards of quality identified by both the Washington State After School Plan and the Seattle Public Schools’ Office of Community Learning, which partners with community organizations to support OST programs.

Programs in the Wing Luke Elementary School in Seattle are one example of an effective collaboration between City Year Seattle/King County and a local school. City Year and the school work together to provide resources to support both an in-school tutoring program and a set of OST activities. Five to seven City Year

corps members serve as full-time volunteers in both the in-school and OST programs each year. These corps members—who are young, motivated, and demographically reflective of the school population—build continuity between the school day and OST and function as consistent adult role models for the students. The school provides training for the corps members to help them work effectively with children, as well as vital program resources, such as space, including full access to classrooms, the gymnasium, and a multipurpose room; materials such as arts and crafts supplies, books, and snacks; and transportation home for OST participants, via school buses, at the end of the program day. Community members also provide additional resources, coordinated by the City Year corps members. For example:

- The American Red Cross teaches children about disaster relief and readiness.
- Seattle Public Utilities, EarthCorps, and Seattle Parks and Recreation provide resources for promoting environmental awareness and community service.
- Children’s Hospital engages children in service projects to benefit patients.
- Local food banks have involved children in a variety of projects and educated them about ways to serve the hungry.
- Local businesses have provided over \$9,000 in in-kind donations for program supplies.

We evaluate our programs and partnerships in several ways, using both qualitative and quantitative data. We maintain accurate

enrollment and attendance records, which allow us to track the growth of our program over time and to see the scale of impact our program has on the school and community. We also conduct pre- and postprogram surveys with children, focusing, for example, on how participation in the Starfish Corps affects their ongoing civic engagement, civic motivation, and other program goals. In addition, our service partners (e.g., community organizations) complete midyear and end-of-year surveys to help us understand what works well and what could be improved.

Through surveys from past years, we have found that, on the postprogram survey, over 90% of the children participating in the OST programs agree with statements like “It is important to do things to help my community,” “My neighborhood needs me to help,” and “By taking action, I can help my neighborhood become a better place.” School staff, parents, and community partners have consistently been delighted by the partnerships City Year has generated on behalf of the well-being of students.

Erika Rasmussen

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Working closely with schools and community organizations has helped City Year Seattle/King County to build our programming and provide “win-win” situations that benefit children, schools, and community organizations.

The Peace Drum Project: Intergenerational Connections Through the Arts

Susan Porter, Project Director at Cooperative Artists Institute, describes how the Peace Drum Project makes connections with community members through the arts.

The Peace Drum Project is an after school program that uses the arts and community service to forge positive relationships between elderly citizens and teens from five Boston neighborhoods. Created by Cooperative Artists Institute in 2000, Peace Drum is founded on two premises. The first is that adolescents, who often struggle with issues of identity and independence, and the elderly, who often fear the unfamiliar, both experience a sense of isolation from the larger community and can benefit from forming relationships with each other. The second is that young people, particularly those in underserved urban areas, need opportunities for leadership development and positive risk taking to offset the lure of gangs and other negative peer groups.

PHOTO: JANET MALONE



A youth participant's Peace Drum is displayed at an open house.

In Peace Drum, 20 high-risk urban teens spend 3 hours each week for 30 weeks in after school sessions at a local high school. The young people take part in a variety of arts enrichment activities, including music and drama workshops, creating personal maps, museum and art-school field trips, and calligraphy, illustration, and photography lessons. Teens develop storytelling skills, including interviewing and journal writing, and learn to communicate personal narratives in a variety of artistic media. Drawing on these skills, youth participants create their own drums, which they embellish with photographs, mottos, symbols, paintings, and written stories about their lives.

Connections with members of the broader community, including elders and local artists, are a critical component of the program. Youth partner with community elders, whom they interview about their experiences and life histories. Then, the teens use their artistic and narrative skills to tell the older generation's stories in the program's culminating project—a peace drum, symbolic of the program's ability to bridge generations through the art of self-expression.

Peace Drum aims to strengthen the connections between youth, the elderly, and the larger community through the arts. We do this

by partnering with local artists, including painters, choreographers, photographers, and percussionists, who work with teens in the after school program and at their own studios. Knowledge and experiences gained from these partnerships help youth develop an understanding of the importance of teamwork as a part of self-expression. Projects such as collaborative banner-making encourage youth to practice design skills, create personal symbols, and transform their stories into visual products together.

Peace Drum also partners with a variety of arts-based organizations for in-kind support, including tickets to performances and shows in the Boston area. The end result of these diverse artistic connections is to help youth develop more positive ways to express themselves and prepare them to authentically translate the varied and profound stories of community elders into peace drums.

In addition, Peace Drum fosters linkages with other community-based institutions to sustain and enrich its program offerings. Partnerships with local health centers and public housing personnel help us to recruit youth whom affiliated social workers have identified as potential beneficiaries of Peace Drum. In addition, health center youth leaders offer peer-taught workshops on sex education and violence prevention to project participants. Perhaps the most critical community connection, however, is with local elders. Peace Drum staff work closely with resident advisors in senior housing facilities to recruit elders into the program, help coordinate the program's activities, and share the exhibition of the stories and peace drums with other elders and families in the community.

Peace Drum evaluates its success through formal and informal assessments. Youth complete self-assessment surveys at the beginning and end of each year, and staff measure teens' progress weekly in areas of self-esteem, interactions with peers and elders, leadership, respect, and artistic competence. Staff also assess youth in order to decide how to distribute several meritorious awards and stipends—which serve as strong incentives for many of the participants—at the end of each year. In addition to changes in attitudes, Peace Drum tracks teen attendance, high school graduation rates, and postsecondary pursuits. These assessments indicate that project participants improve their self-esteem and leadership skills and often remain in high school even if they previously had planned to drop out.

Staff also communicate regularly with parents and elders to identify ways to improve the program and deepen its impact. One innovative evaluation technique used by Peace Drum is its annual scrapbook, which provides a visual representation of the teens' progress both individually and as a group. These evaluation mechanisms demonstrate the successful involvement of both teens and elders in quality arts experiences and show that the program has opened new avenues for self-expression for both groups.

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Building Connections Between After School Programs and the Business Community

Andy Muñoz of City Year and Glenn Zaccara of T-Mobile talk about how their organizations link OST programs, businesses, and communities to support quality programming for youth.

How are City Year and T-Mobile collaborating to support youth?

Andy Muñoz: City Year's after school work is very important to our commitment to community, and we have grown to serve over 8,600 kids and 150 after school programs. In delivering these services, we are always looking for partners that we can work with and learn from. T-Mobile presented itself as deeply committed to community and interested in contributing to the quality of after school programming.

Glenn Zaccara: T-Mobile recently started our first national community outreach program with a focus on employee volunteerism. We decided to focus on helping kids from single-parent families and in high-need urban areas by providing access to positive people, places, and programs. We chose to collaborate with City Year because they are the "feet on the street"—their "corps members," who are young adult volunteers, work with kids on a daily basis, often during the after school time frame. Together with City Year, we have developed an employee volunteer program in which 150 to 300 T-Mobile employees perform a full day of community service work at a local school or a community center. We held eight events like this throughout the summer and plan to do more next year as we grow the program. Although our vision is to engage in a variety of projects inside and outside the school or community center building, we decided to focus on creating "T-Mobile Huddle-Up Zones." These are dedicated rooms in each school or center where after school programming can take place. They provide an environment for kids to both have fun and learn. As one of City Year's national leadership sponsors, we are also providing about \$5 million over 3 years in other forms of support, both cash and in-kind, including cell phones and free service to City Year corps members and full-time staff.

What are the benefits to a business and a youth-serving organization of collaborating to support after school programs?

GZ: We see positive impacts on several levels: for individual employees; for overall employee motivation, recruitment, and retention; and for the business. First, many of our employees are single parents, and they told us that one of their biggest concerns is what their children are doing after school while their parents are at work. Are they engaged in positive, supportive environments? Are they learning? Second, the largest benefit I would point to is connecting our employees with the communities where they live and work. This is a proven way to create a sense of pride and engagement in a workplace, which in turn really makes a difference in employee perceptions of a company being a "best place to work." Third, from a business standpoint, we become good corporate citizens and a positive addition to the community, in addition to the wireless service that we provide.



AM: The T-Mobile community service events are strongly developmental in many ways. From the standpoint of the community, the events build teamwork and empowerment. From the standpoint of the school or community organization, new projects and improvements become possible. For example, at a recent event at a Boys & Girls Club in Denver, the T-Mobile employees were so high-energy that the club received an almost total renovation, from paint to cleaning out closets. The club had been waiting 16 years to accomplish these tasks.

How do you use evaluation in this initiative, and what are you hoping to learn?

GZ: At the end of every event, we survey our employees about their experience, including their satisfaction with everything from the registration process to the opportunity to connect with colleagues to the overall quality of the experience. The initial returns on those surveys are enormously positive. For questions on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the best, our median scores are around 3.6. We also ask two open-ended questions: "How did this event make you feel about your job?" and "How did this event make you feel about T-Mobile?" An enormous number of responses use the word "pride." Employees say, "This event made me proud to work for T-Mobile," or "This event made me proud of T-Mobile for the work that they're doing in the community."

AM: At City Year, we also use evaluation in other ways—for instance, looking at the effects for kids or for communities. We recently developed a long-term evaluation plan, the first year of which will focus on three case studies of sites where we are piloting our after school work with T-Mobile. We are interested in assessing key developmental factors for the children we serve: How often do they attend? How can we use these after school activities to build stronger skills? In what ways do these stronger skills then get the kids ready for future success, both in school and in the working world? Our goal is to define our desired outcomes and move toward finding instruments to measure them for future phases of the evaluation.

We plan to share lessons learned from the evaluation across our national network, in order to share after school best practices and inform quality on a large scale. As another part of this effort, T-Mobile is equipping all of our corps members with cell phones, Blackberries, and wireless service, so that if they learn something new or have a question about a best practice, they can connect immediately with corps members in other sites across the country.

Do you have any recommendations for other businesses and organizations interested in doing this kind of collaborative work?

GZ: One of the most important things for T-Mobile was to engage the kids whom we were hoping to impact, by soliciting initial

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Promising Strategies for Connecting Out-of-School Time Programs to Schools: Learning What Works

*Priscilla Little reviews promising strategies to promote OST-school connections, culling lessons from a review of out-of-school time evaluations.*¹

In addition to recognizing the need for a “critical mass” of supports that complement the school day, there is increasing understanding that meaningful links between out-of-school time (OST) programs and schools are essential to supporting children’s learning and development in both settings.² Current 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) legislation includes language to promote partnerships and collaboration to support sustainability of programs. More recently, however, the discussion has turned to promoting partnerships, or linkages, that support learning and development *across* settings.

The National Governors Association recently profiled its efforts to support extended learning opportunities (ELOs), which provide children ages 5 to 18 with a variety of supervised activities to promote learning and development beyond the school day. They assert that high-quality ELOs have the potential for positive impacts for a variety of stakeholders: (a) for children and families, by providing an enriching supervised environment; (b) for schools, by complementing in-school instruction; (c) for communities, by preventing youth participation in crime; and (d) for states, by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a knowledge-based economy.³

Similarly, other national after school intermediaries such as Educational Development Center and Learning Points have begun to document and collect promising practices regarding OST-school connections.⁴ While the notion of linking OST programs to schools is not new, the increasing pressure on after school programs to “show results” puts a spotlight on this linkage. At the same time, there is a distinct cry from the field to make sure that the OST-school linkage does not result in “more school.”

Recognizing the potential value in linking OST programs with schools, HFRP scanned its OST Program Evaluation Database to uncover some key mechanisms that help to link and align OST programs and schools in order to better support a range of developmental outcomes. For example, the Seattle Alignment Initiative provides a framework that guides the way schools, school-based after school programs, families, and communities work collec-

tively to support children’s academic pursuits. Initiative partners engage in alignment by jointly coordinating program planning, curriculum, and training.⁵

While creating a shared framework is one approach to, or *mechanism* for, linkage, a scan of the database indicates that there are other key mechanisms that help to link and align OST programs and schools to better support learning and development. This article culls lessons from over 30 OST evaluations to offer a set of promising strategies for creating meaningful connections between OST programs and schools.⁶ While some articles in this issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* illustrate linkage mechanisms other than the five described below, the set below represents promising mechanisms identified through a review of implementation evaluations in the OST Program Evaluation Database.

While the notion of linking OST programs to schools is not new, the increasing pressure on after school programs to “show results” puts a spotlight on this linkage.

Shared Space. Many OST programs are located in schools, which can be a first step toward alignment between OST programs and schools. While sharing space can present challenges and conflicts,⁷ locating an OST program within a school can be beneficial for both the program and the school. In an evaluation of Studio 3D, school administrators noted that locating the after school technology program for disadvantaged youth in schools was helpful in terms of solving transportation issues. Specifically, locating the program in schools enabled families to enroll their children in the program without needing to worry about how

they would get them there. In addition to addressing transportation challenges, locating an OST program in a school can also help with recruitment. School staff can assist programs in identifying students who would benefit from participation and can help recruit youth into the program. Locating an OST program in a school can also result in more cost-efficient programming as schools and OST programs pool resources to enhance their facilities.

Some evaluations profiled in the database note that one benefit of school-based OST programs is that school personnel change their perceptions of students’ abilities. For example, many OST programs encourage students to participate in performances and exhibitions that tap into skills and talents that may be hidden from a classroom teacher given the nature of the school-day curriculum. School-based OST programs can host performances during the school day, enabling the entire study body and school personnel to observe students in a different light and to recognize a broader

1. The author wishes to acknowledge the research support of a former consultant, Katie Pfeiffer, who conducted a scan of the OST Program Evaluation Database in preparation for this article.

2. Harvard Family Research Project. (2005). Complementary learning. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 9(1).

3. Wright, E. (2005). *Supporting student success: A governor’s guide to extra learning opportunities*. Washington, DC: National Governors Association.

4. See, for example, Education Development Center. (2006). *Afterschool time: Choices, challenges, and new directions*. Boston: Author; see also Learning Points’ complementary learning website at www.learningpt.org/page.php?pageID=212

5. Tenney-Espinosa, S. (2005). Seattle school district’s community alignment initiative. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 11(1), 20. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

6. All evaluations referred to in this article can be found in the HFRP’s OST Program Evaluation Database, on the Web at www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html

7. Wimer, C., Post, M., & Little, P. M. D. (2004). Leveraging resources to promote positive school-CBO relationships. *Afterschool Matters*, 3, 13–21.

range of skills and talents than may be observable during the school day alone. Finally, as articulated in Holly Morehouse's article (on page 32 of this issue), sharing space can have a profound and positive impact on schools, particularly in regard to school culture. Through school-based after school programs, students and teachers can build multidimensional relationships, and students can demonstrate greater involvement in extracurricular learning.

Supportive Leadership. Supportive school leaders are considered a critical component to successful OST-school linkages.⁸ For example, they can assist in recruitment; facilitate communication between OST programs, schools, and families; help leverage resources; offer programmatic suggestions to align OST programming in support of in-school learning; and, enable school personnel to work in OST programs. An evaluation of the Hawaii After-School Plus Program (A+) reports that principals who actively supported the A+ program helped to create an environment of acceptance for the program within the school building. The Extended Service Schools Initiative evaluation similarly reported that having a principal on the after school governance team resulted in strengthened school participation in the after school initiative and could lead to greater sustainability of the initiative itself.

Shared Staff. Overlap between school and OST staff has the potential to strengthen in-school and out-of-school learning alike. Numerous evaluations point to the potential benefits of employing school-day teachers in OST programs. An evaluation of the Fort Worth Afterschool Program (FWAS) found that when school-day teachers were employed in FWAS it was more likely that there was a schoolwide strategy in place between the school and the after school program regarding homework assignments. Similarly, an evaluation of Sacramento START found that using school-day teachers as literacy coaches aided in the school's communication with the OST program leaders and site directors.

In addition to fostering better communications between the school and the OST program, employing school personnel can also provide content expertise to enhance the skill set of the OST program staff, especially in the areas of literacy and mathematics. However, an evaluation of Quest for Excellence cautions that when employing school-day teachers as tutors, coordination between the tutors and the students' regular school-day teachers is critical to ensure that the "right" skills are being reinforced. While some evaluations report that hiring school-day teachers can be problematic because of burnout,⁹ the first-year national 21st CCLC evaluation reported that middle school teachers felt their classroom teaching skills and relationships with students improved after being involved in after school programming.

The After School Corporation (TASC) evaluation reported similar results, with the majority of staff who were also school personnel reporting that their dual roles benefited the TASC program and the school alike. Increasingly, OST program leaders are observing that when school-day teachers are exposed to the inquiry-based learning approaches prevalent in OST programs,

these approaches can influence their classroom practices and improve in-school teaching and learning.

Curriculum Alignment. Curriculum alignment between schools and OST programs is perhaps the most controversial of all mechanisms to support OST-school linkage. OST providers, who have long struggled to ensure that their programs develop and maintain an identity of "not school," are concerned that aligning curriculum with schools will lead to replication of the school day. However, evaluations reveal that OST programs and schools that align—not replicate—their activities to complement each other can support student success while maintaining the identity of each institution.

For example, an evaluation of TASC, which found positive academic and development outcomes associated with sustained program participation, indicates that TASC programs had a high degree of partnership and coordination with their host schools, requesting input from teachers and principals on students' academic needs, coordinating homework with assistance from classroom teachers, and using school themes for special projects. On a more formal basis, other OST programs are establishing alignment through a shared focus on state standards and assessments. The Maryland After School Community Grants Program (MASCGRP) conducts an assessment of all its participants and then develops individualized academic plans for all its students, tying these plans to an assessment of in-school educational needs. It then provides a multicomponent program, which includes targeted academic instruction, activities to promote social skills, and bonding activities such as sports, arts, and other recreational activities that help boost participation rates.

Shared Vision. Regardless of the mechanisms that OST programs and schools use to promote connections, it is important for each institution to articulate the "exchange of value"¹⁰ enabled by the linkage. Some programs, such as The San Francisco Beacons Initiative in California, have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that clearly articulates the expectations of the schools and the Beacons centers, but most programs reviewed did not enter into a formal MOU to establish shared expectations. Whether the process is formal or informal, however, OST programs and schools should ask themselves the following questions: How will each stakeholder benefit from the linkage? What are the motivations at the individual and institutional level for developing the linkage? Will the whole be greater than the sum of the parts in terms of participant outcomes? Answering these questions will require the articulation of a joint vision statement that acknowledges the contributions of each of the partners, the work they will do collectively, and the work they will do independently.

Discussing the exchange of value and shared vision at the outset of the OST-school linkage can help identify the key ways in which the linkage will occur and the expected value-added of the linkage for the program, the school, and those who have the most to gain from the OST-school linkage—the young people.

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10. Ellis, L.-A. (2006). A presentation on the Agenda for Children given at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

8. Lauver, S., & Little, P. M. D. (2005). Finding the right hook. *The School Administrator*, 62(5), 27–30.

9. See, for example, the evaluation of the Owensboro, Kentucky 21st Century Community Learning Centers, profiled in HFRP's OST Program Evaluation Database.

Building Complementary Learning: School and 4-H Linkages

Tena St. Pierre and Claudia Mincemoyer from the Pennsylvania State University's Cooperative Extension Service¹ describe lessons learned from implementation and evaluation of a complementary learning pilot program.

Last year's issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* on complementary learning inspired us to pilot-test an after school 4-H program linked with two elementary schools. Affiliated with each state's land grant university, the Cooperative Extension Service employs 4-H Extension Educators to offer research-based youth programming in every county in the United States. We at Penn State Cooperative Extension were drawn to complementary learning because it provides a framework to help schools understand the potential for connecting with 4-H to reinforce learning, strengthen life skills, and increase parent involvement.

For our program, we selected the existing *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H* national curriculum²—designed for second through fourth graders to promote positive youth development—because it contains hands-on activities that we could align with Pennsylvania academic standards. For example, a science activity that involves creating a mud suspension corresponds to a fourth-grade science and technology standard, and writing thank-you notes as a means of communication aligns with a third-grade reading and writing standard. The program involved active collaboration among teachers (e.g., program recruitment), principals (e.g., coordinating use of school resources), and parents (e.g., attendance at family dinners).

Initially, we faced challenges in recruiting schools and enrolling children. Though we approached several schools, only two joined the project, with 18 children taking part at one school and 8 at the other. Administrators at some schools were not interested in the program because it didn't directly help students prepare for testing required by No Child Left Behind. Using formative evaluation methods, including meetings with principals, teachers, and parents after the completion of the program, we learned valuable lessons about how to address these challenges next year and how to work toward building a broader complementary learning initiative:

1. Be persistent with administrators; emphasize tailoring the program to their needs. One principal at first seemed pessimistic about integrating the program in his school. When we learned of his desire to increase parent involvement, we were able to convince him that we would work with him to tailor the initiative to this and other school needs. He soon became an enthusiastic participant and even set up meetings for us with teachers to solicit their insights and opinions.

2. Communicate that the program stands to enhance academic

1. We wish to acknowledge Nancy Stephenson and Roxanne Price, Extension Educators with Penn State Cooperative Extension, for their work in partnering with schools to implement this project.

2. The National 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System, Inc. (2005). *Exploring the treasures of 4-H helper's guide*. Washington, DC: The National 4-H Council.

learning. Although principals invited all third- and fourth-grade teachers to meet with us, just two teachers (of six) at each school agreed. At these meetings, we learned that teachers knew little about the program and did not promote it because they assumed 4-H programs consisted of activities geared toward rural youth. When they saw the diversity of program activities aligned with academic standards, they became enthusiastic. Teachers especially liked the science activities because they had eliminated hands-on science from their curriculum due to standardized test preparation.

3. Engage teachers as stakeholders in developing the program.

Teachers offered a variety of ideas for involving more children in the program. These ideas included making sure all teachers understand the program's relevance to academic learning; combining the Treasures program with other after school activities, such as tutoring; holding an assembly to demonstrate a science activity; talking about the program at open houses and at PTO meetings; and describing it in the school newsletter.

Over the course of its first year, the program succeeded in establishing the foundations of complementary learning upon which we plan to build in the future. Our formative evaluation showed that, despite some challenges, the program engaged stakeholders. In the end-of-program parent survey, parents rated the program as excellent and said that they were satisfied with the activities. Teachers sent program invitations home with children and collected registration forms. Principals provided classroom space and identified parents to assist with after school sessions. Parents volunteered, attended family dinners, and learned about the program's reinforcement of learning and development. Nearly all strongly agreed that their child enjoyed attending and felt comfortable with staff. All agreed that their child seemed happier since taking part in the program, and all but one agreed that their child had a better attitude toward going to school.

Teachers have reported interest in participating in a summer workshop to brainstorm ways to expand next year's program into a more intentional complementary learning initiative tailored to each school's needs, which will be based on but not limited to the after school curriculum. We plan to use formative evaluation strategies to document ideas that teachers propose at the workshop and how the ideas are implemented during the coming school year. We are optimistic about the potential of these efforts and have an early indicator of success: The originally pessimistic principal volunteered to host the summer workshop.

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Linking School and After School: Strategies for Success

Julie Bott reviews the strategies she and her colleagues use to link the Gardner Extended Services School's after school program with the school day.

At the Gardner Extended Services School (GESS), we integrate physical and mental health services, family support, and after school and academic enrichment services with traditional school-day programming. Throughout many changes over the years—including our upcoming transition to pilot school status¹—community partnerships have been critical to our programming. Our partners include the Oak Square YMCA, students and faculty from Boston College and Harvard University, the Joseph Smith Community Health Center, Children's Hospital, and the Brighton/Allston Mental Health Association.

Essential to extended services at GESS is our after school program, which serves approximately 50% of the student population. The program is composed of three components: homework support; month-long academic enrichment units aligned with school and state standards for each grade level; and recreational clubs, including physical education, performing arts, visual arts, home economics, and science and technology clubs. These activities complement the school day and reflect the after school program's mission and vision—that learning can be fun, engaging, and meaningful.

Facilitating continuity and intentional linkages between school-day and after school programs is one of the things GESS does very well. There are four facets to our linkage strategy:

1. Thinking strategically about staffing. Every lead teacher in our after school program has a role in the daytime program, either as a paraprofessional, parent coordinator, or extended-day teacher. Many directly support instruction in school-day classrooms (e.g., facilitating reading groups) and use that experience to inform their after school work. Many after school staff members attend common planning periods with teachers. Extended-services staff and administrators participate in all school-based committees.

Our newly appointed parent coordinator, who is culturally reflective of our population, serves as a critical liaison between the school, after school program, and parent community. She has both daytime hours, so that she can work with classroom teachers, and after school hours, so that she can communicate with and provide resources directly to parents.

2. Employing effective communication systems. We have instituted several mechanisms for facilitating intentional conversations and information-sharing among staff and between staff and our other partners. After school teachers use Homework Completion Logs to communicate with daytime teachers about specific students. Additionally, the school resource team, which consists of all internal and external partners, convenes monthly to discuss

1. Opened in 1995 to promote choice and serve as models of urban educational innovation, the Boston Pilot Schools are "a network of public schools unique in the nation in that they have autonomy over budget, staffing, governance, curriculum/assessment, and the school calendar to provide increased flexibility." For more information, please visit www.ccebos.org/pilotschools/bostonpilotschools.html.

the implementation and coordination of all extended services.

3. Aligning the after school curriculum with school standards and instruction.

Over the past year, we have intentionally and strategically developed an after school curriculum aligned with the school-day curriculum and the Massachusetts standards at each grade level. We are launching this curriculum in fall 2006. Also, we use simplified Individual Education Plans to align information regarding student performance, expectations, modifications, and accommodations across school-day and after school programs.

4. Implementing professional development. After school staff can benefit from the same professional development opportunities as school-day faculty. Our paraprofessionals attend workshops with the daytime teachers. In our grant-funded literacy coaching program, a school literacy coach models and reinforces best practices for after school teachers, while at a 2-day training institute in the fall, school-day faculty and professional development specialists will facilitate workshops with after school staff on behavior management, child development, parent and family engagement, and academic instruction.

Data and evaluation play an important role in ensuring alignment between our programs and in ensuring that we provide effective services. The school resource team uses formative assessments, taken three times a year, to identify student needs and gaps in specific content areas to inform the after school curriculum. Parent surveys—which assess what workshops parents would like to attend, what they identify as their and their children's greatest needs, and their suggestions for supporting families—also inform our programming.

Another way we use data is to assess the effectiveness of our services. Student assessments throughout the year track individual growth. By mapping this information onto after school attendance rates, we have found evidence of differences in academic performance between students who attend the after school program regularly and those who do not. Regular attendees are not sliding backwards academically, as their peers often do. One challenge in evaluating an extended-service school is identifying which specific service contributes to differences in student performance. We are currently working on strategies to address this challenge, including looking at whole-school trends in performance.

Recently, we have partnered with an external evaluator who is extracting lessons from our after school program and developing tools that can be used for the implementation of other 21st CCLC programs. These resources will enable us to share information about our program and construct new strategies for strengthening the alignment between school-day and after school programs.

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A conversation with
Audrey Hutchinson

Audrey Hutchinson is the program director of education and after school initiatives at the National League of Cities (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, a national resource that helps municipal leaders take action on behalf of children, youth, and families in five areas—education and after school, youth development, early childhood, child safety, and family economic success. The Institute assists leaders by conducting research on key challenges, disseminating promising practices, and building networks of local officials working on similar issues. Prior to joining NLC, Hutchinson held several senior positions at the White House under the Clinton administration and at the U.S. Department of Education. She has also held positions at the City University of New York, where she focused on strengthening partnerships between colleges, communities, and city and state governments, and was special assistant and policy analyst for the president of the New York City Council. She holds master's degrees in both social work and public health from Columbia University.

Q In the after school arena, do cities embrace the concept of complementary learning and link institutions to collectively improve outcomes for children and youth?

A The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families recognizes the unique and influential roles that mayors, city council members, and other local leaders can play in strengthening families and improving outcomes for children and youth. We help municipal officials bring organizations together across the community to partner on common issues such as after school. We find that city officials welcome the notion at the heart of our work and at the heart of complementary learning—that partnering will result in better after school systems and outcomes.

Q What challenges are there in evaluating linked after school services? What solutions have cities used to address them?

At least six challenges come to mind:

A **1. Financing the evaluation.** Often cities allocate dollars for after school programming and staff but not for evaluation. To address this, they need to partner with institutions like schools and universities, which have resources that can be used for evaluation. In cases where cities support evaluation, resources could range from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), to general funds, to in-kind support to help leverage funds to promote and support evaluation efforts. We support pooled funding for after school systems in general, and evaluation is an important piece of that pie.

In the first year of the evaluation of the Fort Worth After School program, foundation funding helped to pay for a researcher from Texas A&M University, while in subsequent years, the local school district paid for continued evaluation. In Grand Rapids, the Office of Children, Youth and Families has played a key role in orchestrating the evaluation efforts, securing grants, writing the request for proposals (RFP), ensuring a city commission resolu-

tion on how the money is being spent. That city was successful in using CDBG, general funds, other funding sources to support the staffing of the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Network, which includes the evaluation efforts.

2. Access to data. The Privacy Act makes it difficult for nonschool evaluators to access student data. Because schools play such an important role in providing after school services, those data are key to understanding the complete picture of citywide after school

**The Afterschool Hours:
A New Focus for America's Cities**

The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (IYEF) within the National League of Cities has released a report that describes the experiences of eight U.S. cities that participated in the Municipal Leadership for Expanded Learning Opportunities Project. Through this program, the IYEF provided technical assistance to help municipal leaders build broad-based teams that created action plans to improve and expand out-of-school time opportunities for youth in their communities. Serving as a guide for other cities that want to take leadership to enhance out-of-school time programming for their youth, this report profiles the work of these cities over 30 months and offers an in-depth look at their goals and strategies. It also describes key components for success within these cities and highlights a number of other lessons learned through their experiences.

To access this report, visit www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF-Lessons%20Learned%20Afterschool.pdf.

services and outcomes. There are solutions to this challenge. For example, in Indianapolis, the After School Coalition of 30 organizations hired interns from the University of Indiana who were able to access student data for the evaluation. In Fort Worth, the evaluation team included an individual from the school district who had permission to access student data. Louisville, Kentucky, bought the Kid Tracks software to give school districts and after school programs joint access to data.

3. Accountability for outcomes. Organizations are accountable for different outcomes, and therefore they measure different things. Even when partners create joint programs, they may have different ideas about outcomes. In Fort Worth, city and school district elected officials established a joint after school program called Fort Worth After School. They agreed on a common set of outcomes that included building developmental assets in children, increased attendance, and crime reduction. Their aim was to keep kids in structured enrichment programs, which could provide a safe and enriching environment for children in the after school hours. They felt the program should not be accountable for increasing state test scores, and so did not measure them. (They did, however, ask teachers and principals whether participating students were doing better in schools.) Their agreement about accountability meant that after school evaluation within the 52 programs focused on the same outcomes.

4. Data collection. Different stakeholders have different data needs. A mayor may want data on crime; schools may want data on academic achievement; parks and recreation may want data on obesity. So, they come to the table collecting data in different ways. To address this, we encourage partners to think about their data collection as part of a larger system and to coordinate and link data collection efforts. For example, parks and recreation departments traditionally do not see their work as connected to academic outcomes and therefore do not track demographic data on students. Consequently, student participation in parks and recreation programs cannot be linked to student participation in other programs and services that *as a whole* likely impact achievement. When viewed as part of a larger system, partners such as parks and recreation or faith-based organizations become more willing to collect data that can be linked and used to assess system-wide outcomes.

Confidentiality and privacy issues complicate data collection. The City of Grand Rapids ELO Network formed an Evaluation Advisory Team representing organizations such as United Way, the county, the police department, the school district, the university, and the city to develop a shared understanding of how each organization would contribute time and resources with the goal of studying the impact of after school on community indicators. This team also developed the RFP for an evaluator and will supervise and monitor the evaluation design for the Network.

5. Ensuring objectivity. This is critical for organizations that partner. Hiring a third-party evaluator to create data collection tools

that include everyone's perspectives and balance questions to get true results is a solution to this challenge—especially if trust is an issue, which often happens when diverse partners come together. Evaluators who use a participatory approach and gather input, feedback, and buy-in help build trust and avoid the potential tension involved when an “outsider” is brought in.

6. Institutional cultures and turf battles. These conflicts prevent a shared vision of success. The National League of Cities spends a lot of time making sure that partners develop a common vision for what after school or complementary learning activities will deliver. We also encourage key stakeholders who are part of a city-wide effort to build after school systems to define clear roles and responsibility for each partner. For example, mayors or prominent city leaders can function as neutral third parties to convene stakeholders and help open up the conversation. In this way, municipal leaders can play a role in both building the after school system and setting the stage for evaluation.



Audrey Hutchinson

Q What evaluation findings are needed to convince city officials that after school efforts pay off?

A The evidence has to be linked to what city leaders care about—outcomes like improved quality of life, public safety, economic development, and workforce productivity. While municipal officials care about academic outcomes, it helps to link after school benefits to their broader citywide agendas. For example, city leaders are concerned about public safety. They need to know that after school

programs keep kids safe—off the streets and away from crime.

City officials also need cost data. For example, Indianapolis found that the city spends \$66 per day per youth on juvenile delinquency costs. After school proponents made the case that it would cost less to provide a quality after school program that kept kids safe while also supporting their learning and enrichment. Data that make the case for an improved workforce also are important. We need to address the issue of absenteeism and lower productivity among working parents who worry that their kids are not safe. If kids are not in environments like after school programs, where parents know they are occupied and off the streets, what happens to productivity after school lets out?

At the same time that we link to leaders' broader agendas, we need to set realistic expectations. We have to be careful not to set up after school programs as the sole solution to all social problems. For example, after school programs in and of themselves do not *eliminate* crime, but they certainly help with factors that contribute to crime such as truancy.

Finally, city leaders need to know that organizations that run after school programs have a track record of success. If city officials are going to invest in these programs, there has to be evidence that the programs and the organizations that run them produce results.

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Using a Data Management Tool to Better Serve Middle School Youth Across a Variety of Settings

Elizabeth Devaney and Hillary Salmons from the Providence After School Alliance describe how a citywide data collection system helps track and improve after school services and strengthen linkages with community organizations, schools, and families.

Although tracking youth participation in out-of-school time (OST) programs is not a new idea, tracking enrollment, participation, and retention across an entire OST system is an innovative concept. The Providence After School Alliance (PASA), in conjunction with Cityspan Technologies of Berkeley, California, has developed an OST reporting system that serves as a citywide data collection and management tool across a variety of linked after school sites. This tool helps us to better organize the City of Providence's limited resources in order to serve the neediest youth in their home neighborhoods.

Creating an After School System

Under the leadership of Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline, PASA has established a forum in which public and private organizations and leaders come together to build high-quality, citywide after school programming. Founded 2 years ago, PASA is an initiative of The Education Partnership, Rhode Island's leading education public policy organization. Today, we are working in partnership with public and private after school providers, schools, volunteers, youth, and parents to create AfterZones—campuses of program activity that provide a variety of safe and fun learning opportunities—for hundreds of middle school-age youth not currently involved in after school programming. The AfterZones link libraries, museums, parks, recreation centers, and community-based after school organizations to provide a hub of activities for youth.

As of the summer of 2006, we have launched three of five planned AfterZones and have enrolled 695 middle school youth in two 10-week sessions. Our goal for this 5-year initiative is to eventually serve half of the city's 6,000 middle school youth in this citywide after school system. To keep track of our growing number of providers all serving this same set of clients and to examine connections and overlap among them, it has been critical for PASA to identify a utilitarian data collection and management tool for the AfterZone system.

We chose to work with Cityspan, developers of youthservices.net, to create an OST reporting system designed to allow multiple organizations to share information about one set of clients. Youthservices.net has been used successfully in San Francisco and Washington, DC, and Cityspan

helped us to adapt the system to meet the specific needs of our citywide network of providers. In Providence, 40 community organizations, recreation centers, libraries, and schools now have licenses to use the tool to access data on a central pool of AfterZone participants.

Managing Information: Practical Applications

The youthservices.net reporting system has proved valuable to PASA first and foremost because it serves as a data management tool that connects all of the institutions and programs in the system. Not only are we able to centrally enroll participants at any of our 40 provider organizations, but we are also able to keep track of attendance and dropout rates across the system on a day-to-day basis. This helps us to understand how all the sites overlap and relate to one another. Through an administrative reporting feature, PASA and the AfterZone leaders may quickly see the average daily attendance and overall enrollment percentages for all AfterZone programs. These reports enable partners to be accountable to one another for their successes (or failures) in reaching young people and to problem solve ways to fill vacant slots, reach out to recruit more youth, or find out why youth have stopped attending particular programs. PASA and its providers can also use the data to determine which sites have been most successful and popular, in order to inform decisions about the types of programs to fund in the future.

The system also makes it possible for providers to communicate easily with schools and families. PASA and its partnering organizations can keep track of parent contact information, special medical needs, and permissions for such things as riding the bus and participating in surveys. For example, the Title I after school coordinator in each school has full access to the database. If a parent calls the school with a question about where her daughter is that day after school, the coordinator can quickly enter the student's name into a central look-up device, see that student's schedule for the entire week, and let the parent know that her daughter is supposed to be at the Boys & Girls Club that afternoon. The coordinator can even enter the Boys & Girls Club system to see if the student was marked as present that day.

Similarly, the tool can be used to manage emergency situations. If PASA receives a complaint from a parent that her son was harassed on the bus on the way to the program, we can use the tool to quickly access that child's record, find out if he had permission to ride the bus, see who else was in the program that day, identify the program

“Up until now, the middle school youth of our city have too often been on their own after school. It was a cause of great anxiety for parents, but most didn't have the resources to do anything about it. Having a citywide tracking system allows providers, parents, and schools to know where youth are spending their time after school. Once we know this, we can make better decisions about programming that will keep them busy, fulfilled, and off the streets.”
—David N. Cicilline,
Mayor of Providence

staff who were on duty, and manage the situation with accurate information. As a shared, Web-based application, youthservices.net has helped us to develop strong relationships between providers and families.

The Providence Recreation Department, which offers AfterZone programming in several of its recreation centers, is using this same reporting system to track participation and attendance at all 10 of the city's recreation centers. Their data are being used as part of Mayor Cicilline's citywide accountability and reporting system, called Provstat. The city's comprehensive use of the OST reporting system sends a reinforcing message to the public and private partners of PASA—that data and information about youth participation in quality programming matter to the leaders who care about the future well-being of youth in the city.

Managing Information: Research Applications

PASA also uses youthservices.net for its own evaluation purposes. As an after school intermediary, we are accountable to both our funders and community stakeholders for the work that we do and the money that we spend. The youthservices.net reporting system is helping us determine if we are improving the lives of Providence youth by linking with multiple organizations across the city to provide a variety of services. The database uses what is known as a relational structure, which means that end users, evaluators, and funders can link external databases to software used for outcomes-based research.

This structure soon will allow PASA to connect with the Providence School Department's database using student ID numbers. Starting in fall 2006, we will follow a cohort of sixth graders to measure improvements in their school attendance, grades, and discipline records over 3 years of AfterZone participation. The tool will also enable us to store individual student survey responses, which we then will pair with school records for a greater understanding of the effectiveness of AfterZone programming for individual youth. The tool is therefore another way that we facilitate connections between AfterZone programming and schools.

Confidentiality and Security

Confidentiality and security of student data is a monumental concern because the database contains a significant amount of personal student and family information and is accessible to a variety of providers, the Providence public schools, and central administrators at PASA. In fact, many of our partners were initially reluctant to share their information in this system for fear of compromising student data. Significant measures have been put into place to ensure that student information is kept confidential.

First, we created different user levels, each with access to different types and amounts of information. User levels are assigned based on the individual's role and needs. For example, a site-level user who only needs to record attendance may have access to the attendance pages for programs but may not be able to access information about individual students or their family contact information. A second measure we put into place is a requirement that all users have background checks on file with their employers. Finally, PASA has signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding outlining confidentiality procedures with each organization using youthservices.net as part of the AfterZones.

Moving Forward

PASA is still in the early stages of using the data management and evaluation system. For the past 2 years, we have focused on identifying and customizing a tool that will serve all of our needs as well as provide all of our collaborators with a valuable resource for their own data management purposes. Providers are now recording attendance on a daily basis and are beginning to understand the greater capabilities of a citywide system.

In the coming year, we hope to take the tool to the next level with an expanded base of users. All users will receive training on how to use youthservices.net for site-based management and evaluation purposes. In addition, PASA will begin using the information available through the system for our own evaluation purposes. As a result, we hope the tool will become even more effective for both PASA and its partnering organizations, allowing us to forge stronger linkages and to improve our programming to better serve middle school youth in Providence.

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Ask the Expert

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input and ongoing feedback. Two months prior to an event, we went to the event locations and gathered kids' input on what they liked to do after school and what elements they would like to see in a dedicated after school space. We also asked each site to create a "youth advisory council," who provided feedback and worked with our employees during the event. This was particularly important for kids in the early teenage years, who tend to start dropping out of after school programs. We wanted to provide a "cool" place to be, and the "T-Mobile Huddle-Up Zone" connects very much with T-Mobile's overall identity as a "fun, young, hip brand."

Another critical factor is the need for a good cultural fit between the for-profit and the nonprofit organizations. For example, City Year focuses on national service and youth service, and we are taking our culture of customer service and turning that into a culture of community service.

AM: The cultural match with the community is also important. What makes our joint work powerful is the authentic investment that both City Year and T-Mobile make in the community. What we have here is a conscious attempt to learn in a way that not only builds the company and the nonprofit but sustains the community in a powerful way over the long term and contributes to the sharing of best practices for higher quality programs.

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Using Quality Assessment Tools to Evaluate OST Linkages

Helen Westmoreland from HFRP discusses how OST programs are using quality assessment tools to evaluate and promote linkages with families, schools, and communities.

Linkages between out-of-school time (OST) programs, families, schools, and communities are increasingly common. As other articles in this issue illustrate, these linkages exist in a variety of forms and are core indicators of program quality. They are associated with a range of positive outcomes and play a critical role in creating a network of complementary learning supports. As the consensus about the importance of linkages with families, schools, and communities grows, OST stakeholders need resources for evaluating them and for guiding program improvement efforts. One strategy for evaluating and improving linkages is the process of quality assessment.

What is Quality Assessment?

Quality assessment is a process that measures a program or initiative's adherence to agreed-upon standards of quality. One of its main purposes is to guide continuous program improvement by clearly communicating expectations, outlining goals, and providing benchmarks to track progress. Quality assessment is also useful in identifying program needs (e.g., professional development), building buy-in and shared vision among stakeholders, and meeting accountability requirements.

Many OST organizations and other stakeholders—including researchers, foundations, city and state agencies, and intermediary organizations—have created tools that support the quality assessment process. These tools range from self-assessment checklists to observation instruments and include hierarchically organized elements of program quality. Key thematic areas are called *categories* and provide an overarching framework of important quality components. Each category is supported by a set of *standards* that describe conditions of quality for the program, its participants, and all stakeholders. A few quality assessment tools also include *indicators*, which are specific measures that quantify the attainment of quality standards.¹

Quality assessment tools assess a wide range of program quality characteristics and reflect the growing consensus about the essential elements of quality (e.g., physical and psychological safety, positive relationships, and opportunities for youth voice). They increasingly include whole categories of standards related to linkages with other institutions, such as schools, and provide an opportunity for programs to assess and build these important elements of complementary learning.

1. Adapted from Little, P., DuPree, S., & Deich, S. (2002). *Documenting progress and demonstrating results: Evaluating local out-of-school time programs*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project and The Finance Project.

Quality Assessment of Linkages

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) recently conducted a national scan of OST program quality assessment tools to uncover trends in the policies and practices that programs are using to define and assess quality. Through literature and Internet searches, surveys, and key informant interviews, we identified 42 quality assessment tools.² We then conducted a content analysis to identify the kinds of standards assessed by each tool and to glean common themes across the tools. As part of the content analysis, we compiled and categorized the standards related to linkages with families, schools, and communities.

There was considerable variation in how quality assessment tools categorized and assessed linkages. Some tools designated specific categories for each type of linkage, while others included all linkages within one broad category, and still others nested linkages within other categories of standards, such as program administration. We focus our content analysis for this article on the first two types—because tools that designated a higher order category for linkages tended to include more specific standards and indicators to guide assessment.

We found that 17 of the 42 quality assessment tools included categories of standards that explicitly addressed linkages with families, schools, and communities (see Table 1). Within these 17 tools, we identified a total of 154 standards related to the three types of linkages. These standards varied in depth and breadth. For example, although fewer tools included standards about OST-school linkages, these tools often articulated more specific and varied policies and practices than those for OST-community linkages. Across these categories and despite their diversity, our review uncovered

common examples of how OST programs are defining and assessing quality linkages with families, schools, and communities.

OST-Family Linkages

- The program has a plan for family involvement, which outlines roles and has been activated, reviewed, and updated for effectiveness.
- The program effectively communicates important program information across language groups to families participating in and connected to the program.
- The program offers opportunities for staff and families to discuss individual participants.
- The program welcomes and encourages family participation in the program, through:
 - Events, activities, and celebrations.
 - Decision making and program planning.

2. Resources related to quality assessment, including summaries of scanned tools, are available on HFRP's website at www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/conference/index.html

TABLE I Quality Assessment Tools With One or More Categories for OST Linkages

Quality assessment tool	Tool developer(s)	Linkage category name(s)	For more information
Assessing Afterschool Program Practices Tool Program Questionnaire	National Institute on Out-of-School Time and the Massachusetts Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting With Families • Partnering With Schools 	www.niost.org (tool not available online)
Assessing School-Age Quality	National Institute on Out-of-School Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Partnerships With Young People, Families, Schools, & Communities 	Buy online at: www.niost.org/publications/cns_2.pdf
Continuous Improvement Process Quality Rubric for Afterschool Programs	National Community Education Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Family Involvement 	Buy site license at: www.ncea.com/about_ncea/continuous_improvement.html
DC Standards for Out-of-School Time	DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development 	www.cyitc.org/cyitc/standards/standardsguide.pdf
Desired Results for Children and Families Programmatic Standards	California Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement 	www.cde.ca.gov/ta/cr/cc/documents/childdev.doc
Established Standards of Excellence Self-Assessment Tool: K–12	North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Family, Community, and School Partnerships 	www.nccap.net/documents/NC%20CAP%20Updated%20Standards.pdf
Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development	Center for Collaborative Solutions and Community Network for Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Alignment • Neighborhood and Community Connections 	www.tcoe.org/AfterSchool/Resources/Evaluation/Rubrics.pdf
PlusTime NH Quality Instrument	PlusTime New Hampshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to Communities and Families 	www.plustime.org (tool not available online)
Program Quality Self-Assessment for Continuous Improvement Planning	District of Columbia 21st Century Community Learning Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages Between School Day and After School • Strong Partnerships and Sustainability 	www.k12.dc.us/dcps/home.html (tool not available online)
Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool	New York State After-School Network and The After-School Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages Between Day and After School • Parent, Family, Community Partnerships 	www.tascorp.org/policy_resources/advocacy_partners/nysan/NYSAN_Self_Assessment_Tool.pdf
Quality Assurance System	Foundations, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and Community Connections 	Buy site license at: http://qas.foundationsinc.org
Quality Review for the Beyond the Bell Partnerships	Los Angeles Unified School District Beyond the Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection • Collaboration 	www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/btb/BTB_quality_standards.pdf
South Carolina County 4-H Program Standards and Quality Indicators	4-H Youth Development Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and Networking 	www.clemson.edu/4H/Agents/SC4Hqualityindicators.pdf
Standards for Quality School Age Care—Memphis	Memphis City Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Involvement • Parent Involvement 	www.memphis-schools.k12.tn.us/admin/studentprogs/schoolage_care/standards_page.htm
Standards for Quality School Age Child Care	National Association of Elementary School Principals: After School Programs and the K–8 Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Involvement and Support • School and After School 	Buy online at: www.sedl.org/pubs/fam95/122.html
Task Force Standards	The Illinois After-School Initiative (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Collaboration • Family Involvement 	www.isbe.state.il.us/pdf/afterschool.pdf (no indicators beyond these standards)
Youth Development Framework for Practice (also Boys & Girls Club Program Assessment)	Community Network for Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Involvement 	www.cnyd.org/framework/index.php

> spotlight

- o Program assessment and evaluation.
- o Informal conversations with staff and visits to the site.
- The program provides youth and their families with information about community resources and assists them in connecting with these resources.
- The program provides learning opportunities for the participants' families.

OST–School Linkages

- The program incorporates programming that integrates and complements school-day activities for a holistic approach to youth development, through:
 - o An aligned vision.
 - o Funds and resources.
 - o Complementary, not competitive, scheduling, recruiting, and programming.
 - o Staffing and professional development.
 - o Curriculum and standards-based testing.
- Program staff communicate and connect with school staff regularly, regarding:
 - o Resources (funding and in-kind contributions) and facilities.
 - o Individual students and their needs.

OST–Community Linkages

- The program engages in community collaborations that enhance program activities and/or sustainability.
- The program builds links between youth in the program and

the community, by:

- o Educating youth about their community.
- o Encouraging youth to give back to their community through service projects.
- o Encouraging youth representation in community and government organizations.
- The program builds links with businesses, municipal government, and local education institutions for funding, volunteering, programming, and/or advocacy.
- Program staff reflect the ethnic, cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity of the community.

Assessing OST Linkages

HFRP's scan of quality assessment tools sheds light on the pertinent elements of quality policies and practices for building linkages with families, schools, and communities; it also documents ways in which OST programs are assessing these linkages. Using one of the many quality assessment tools that examine OST linkages can help programs identify their strong partners, uncover areas where they need to improve their connections to others, and develop a plan for program improvement. As such, they are a vital diagnostic tool on the road to developing and supporting OST linkages with families, schools, and communities and an important framework for understanding how after school programs can support complementary learning.

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Building a Road Map for OST Collaborations

Dishon Mills from the Boston Public Schools describes a new quality assessment tool that is designed to engage and facilitate collaboration among OST programs, schools, and families.

Historically, Boston's out-of-school time (OST) field has been driven by community-based organizations (CBOs), yielding a richness and diversity of services not found in many other urban centers. Upon receiving its first 21st Century Community Learning Center grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 1999, the Boston Public Schools (BPS) honored this tradition by establishing the Boston Community Learning Center (BCLC) initiative. The BCLC's mission is to cultivate meaningful collaborations among schools, community-based organizations, and families. By creating and supporting high-quality, comprehensive OST services aligned to local learning standards, BCLC aims to foster academic success and healthy development in children and youth.

After operating BCLC successfully for several years, we sought to adopt a tool to foster quality in the BCLC after school programs, as well as in the collaborations with families and communities on which these programs are based. Because of BPS's belief that no one group of stakeholders can be unilaterally responsible for ensuring youth success, the tool needed to treat parents, after school program providers, and school staff as equal partners and to be relevant to all three groups. Marta Gredler, Executive Director of the Boston Full-service Schools Roundtable, and I conducted a scan of existing evaluative tools but found none that fit our specific needs. We therefore convened a team to construct our own tool.

In July of 2004, the first edition of that tool, *The Roadmap to the 21st Century: Guidance for School, Community, and Family Collaborations*, was completed. *The Roadmap* provides a set of minimum quality "guideposts," or standards, for family, school, and CBO collaborations, as well as other elements of program quality. The guideposts intentionally place responsibility on all stakeholders—families, OST professionals, and school staff—and the tool is designed to catalyze continuous quality improvement by fostering improved collaboration among these stakeholders.

The guideposts are arranged within six content categories: child and youth development, learning, partnerships, family engagement, staff, and administration. Although collaborations are embedded in each of these categories, they are emphasized in the partnerships and family engagement categories. For example, the partnerships category includes shared vision, input and shared responsibility, and effective resource identification and use. The family engagement category includes guideposts about how well programs share information about individual youth, connect families with community resources, and solicit family input.

To facilitate the self-improvement process, we developed a digital self-assessment tool for *The Roadmap*. Because quality improvement is a gradual process, stakeholders should begin by assessing the most relevant sections and develop their activities

over time. This allows collaborators to take as narrow or wide a focus as they deem feasible. Representatives from the program staff, school staff, and families each individually complete the self-assessment. (Programs that serve older youth are encouraged to include them in the process as well.) For each guidepost, users rate themselves on the following scale: aware of importance, progressing toward indicator, meeting indicator, and able to share lessons learned. The digital tool automatically tabulates the results and presents them in two formats: a) a graph that plots the total score for each of the six major categories that allows the user to identify categories most in need of improvement and b) a set of tables that provides the total scores for each of the categories, along with a detailed accounting sheet that summarizes the ratings on each guidepost.

With this feedback in hand, the individual partners then meet to discuss their findings and assess their current status. Together, the group sets detailed quality improvement goals and priorities for the coming year. This process gives each stakeholder an equal voice and promotes mutual understanding and commitment to the quality improvement process.

To enable all parties to be open and honest, BPS made the decision to separate quality improvement efforts from compliance monitoring. We intentionally omitted an observation tool from the first edition of *The Roadmap* because we wanted the focus to be on self-directed incremental development from within the collaboration. However, because external observations can be useful (and are often required by various initiatives), we are considering developing an observation tool for inclusion in future editions of *The Roadmap*.

The Roadmap was field-tested at all 27 BCLC sites during the 2005–2006 academic year. The tool tested well, helped stakeholders to target areas for improvement, and enabled all sites to improve by 5 to 15 points in less than a year (5 points is the equivalent of half a letter grade). Engaging in the process enabled each site to identify an area of weakness and develop a strategy for addressing the issue. For example, one elementary school experienced challenges in getting its advisory council to coalesce because the parents, after school staff, and faculty representatives operated as free agents and did not see the need to share information and resources. Using *The Roadmap* changed the dynamics of the council by first informing all stakeholders about the nature of true partnership. Second, filling out the self-assessment identified weaknesses in the collaboration and showed that the weakest area was input and shared responsibility. As a result, the school restructured its advisory council to foster more dialogue and allow for more shared ownership of decisions. BPS intends to make *The Roadmap* available to the public starting in October 2006.

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After School Programs for High School Students: Launching the Evaluation of After School Matters

Barton Hirsch and Larry Hedges present their innovative design for evaluating After School Matters, a Chicago initiative that draws on connections with community members, businesses, and schools.

In the eyes of policymakers, after school programs are an increasingly important vehicle for achieving a host of objectives, from promoting positive youth development and workforce preparation to reducing rates of school dropout and community violence. We have recently launched an evaluation of the country's largest provider of after school programs for high school students: After School Matters (ASM).¹

Located primarily in 35 Chicago public high schools, ASM provides paid apprenticeships to adolescents in partnership with the public schools, libraries, park district, children and youth services, and community-based organizations. The apprenticeships last for 10 weeks (90 hours) each fall and spring and emphasize developing skills by working on challenging tasks that lead to a public final product or performance. Instructors have expertise—and often earn their livelihood—in the content areas of the apprenticeships, which focus on technology (e.g., computer repair), the arts (e.g., improvisational theater), a combination of the two (e.g., producing social documentaries), or sports (e.g., lifeguarding).

Although ASM hopes to improve academic performance and reduce problem behaviors, its primary objectives are to promote positive youth development and teach marketable job skills. Our evaluation examines outcomes in all four of these domains through a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods. The evaluation uses an experimental design, in which youth who sign up for a specific apprenticeship are randomly assigned to the intervention or control condition. Pending full funding, this first study will include 600 intervention and control group youth, across 15 apprenticeships, based in approximately nine high schools.

A Series of Evaluation Studies

The after school field has become sensitized to the political context of evaluation work since the federal government sought to slash funding for after school programs in response to the preliminary, controversial analysis of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers.² Because ASM evaluation findings are likely to have important policy implications, it is vital that a research strategy be put in place that does not prematurely lead to a summative “final” judgment about ASM's effectiveness. For that reason, we believe that it is important to conduct a sequenced series of ASM evaluation studies, rather than an all-in-one single investigation.

1. Initial funding for the evaluation is provided in part by the Searle Fund.
2. For more information on this debate, and for experts' reactions, see the following article from the spring 2003 *Evaluation Exchange*: www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue21/special.html

The first randomized controlled trial of ASM will focus on whether the intervention works when it is implemented well. We will study apprenticeships taught by experienced instructors who do a good job of implementing design features—an important and reasonable first step that will provide a good test of whether the underlying ASM model leads to significant youth gains. This strategy will give the intervention its “best shot” at demonstrating impact, while still utilizing rigorous scientific methodology.

If findings from this initial evaluation are positive, ASM will then evaluate whether the scaled-up model is effective under the range of implementation conditions that exist in a broader set of sites. This sequencing will enable us to determine whether the underlying theoretical model is sound before addressing issues of implementation during scale-up and their effects on program impact—critical knowledge that would not be available if we evaluated the scaled-up version first. Additionally, the scaled-up evaluation will be expensive, and positive findings from the initial experimental trial will help to justify the cost.

Evaluating Marketable Job Skills

In designing the ASM evaluation, we purposefully tied our methods to the program's goals and components. We were excited by the opportunity to develop an assessment of marketable job skills suitable for high school students. It became clear from our reading of relevant literature and consultations with senior human resource (HR) professionals that employers rely heavily on job interviews when hiring for entry-level positions. As part of our evaluation strategy, therefore, we designed a mock job interview conducted by HR professionals. At the end of the interview, each youth is rated on specific skills, attitudes, and behaviors. These include “soft skills,” such as problem solving, teamwork, and communication, which are increasingly important in the global economy. Interviewers also make an overall recommendation as to whether they would hire the young person for an actual entry-level position.

Ratings made by HR professionals on youth employability in private sector jobs provide the kind of hard-outcome data favored by policymakers. Given that many of the job skills assessed are also indices of adolescent development, this study may yield the kind of research evidence that can persuade policymakers of the benefit of a positive youth development approach to after school programs.

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An Impact Evaluation of Academic Instruction for After School Programs

Alison Black and Fred Doolittle from MDRC describe the evaluation of an enhanced academic instruction approach for after school programs.

As pressure for students to meet challenging academic standards grows, parents, principals, and policymakers are increasingly turning their attention to the out-of-school hours as an opportunity to provide additional academic support. Indeed, the federal government has made a substantial investment toward this goal through its 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) funding, and the Department of Education (ED) has launched a program of research seeking to strengthen the ability of 21st CCLC-funded after school programs to support academic growth.

An ED early study found that after school programs primarily provided homework help for students and that these services had little or no effect on young people's academic performance, as measured by grades and test scores.¹ There are a growing number of academic approaches in after school besides homework help but, to our knowledge, none of these approaches have scientifically sound evidence indicating that they improve academic outcomes. We are currently conducting an evaluation to determine whether there is such evidence for one academically focused approach—adapting and extending an in-school math and reading program to after school settings.

Study Goals

Because the goals of the No Child Left Behind act and ED-funded programs are to improve academic performance, the National Center for Education Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences contracted with MDRC² to develop a study of new models of academic instruction in after school programs. More specifically, this study examines instructional approaches that are a) adapted from the regular school day and b) diagnostically driven, to provide differentiated instruction on specific topics with which students need the most help. The study examines whether such approaches produce better academic outcomes than typical after school academic supports.

Harcourt School Publishers was selected to adapt and extend their existing in-school math program for use in after school programs, while the Success for All Foundation was chosen to develop reading program materials. These materials are being implemented in a randomized study begun in the 2005–2006 school year and continuing through the 2006–2007 school year,

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2. The evaluation is being conducted by MDRC in collaboration with Bloom Associates, Public/Private Ventures, and Survey Research Management.

in which half of the students are receiving the enhanced academic instruction and half are participating in the services regularly provided by their programs.

The key research questions of this study are:

1. What is the impact of the enhanced after school program on student academic performance?
2. What is the impact of the enhanced after school program once the program has been in operation for a year, when after school teachers have more experience?
3. What is the impact on student academic performance after 2 years of program implementation?

Research Methodology

Fifty after school centers—most are 21st CCLC grantees—were selected to test either the reading or math program among second- through fifth-grade students. We selected centers that could provide a “fair test” of the new math/reading program.³ Key selection criteria included: a) the program's ability to implement the models with reasonable fidelity; b) the expectation of a clear service contrast between the program and control groups; and c) the program's track record of serving low-performing students, having reasonably stable program funding and operation, and having appropriately qualified staff.

Within these programs, students were recruited who had already enrolled in the program and whom staff identified as performing below grade level and in need of academic support. Of this group, students whose parents agreed to allow them to participate were randomly assigned to either the enhanced or regular after school program for the first 45 minutes of the program. All study sites, therefore, had students in both the enhanced and control conditions.

Prior to random assignment, all students completed the reading or math Abbreviated Battery of the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT10), and parents completed application and informed consent forms. After random assignment, the following data were collected for all students, in order to examine implementation and estimate differences across groups:

- Attendance data, to examine the intensity of participation
- Field research on program implementation, to understand the methods and context of implementation, the service contrast between the enhanced and control groups, and implementation lessons
- Student surveys, to understand reactions to the after school program and any other academic supports students may have received
- Program staff surveys, to understand the background and experience of staff providing academic support

3. This analysis will not attempt to generalize statistically beyond the observed sample of centers because sites were not picked to be nationally representative.

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Evaluating Partners for Student Success

Jennifer Maltby from Boston After School & Beyond describes the evaluation design and goals of the Partners for Student Success initiative.

In fall 2006, Boston After School & Beyond (Boston Beyond) and its partners launched Partners for Student Success (PSS),¹ an alignment initiative between the city's out-of-school time (OST) service providers and the Boston Public Schools. PSS aims to improve academic outcomes and promote healthy development for struggling students by increasing the availability of, participation in, and coordination among OST programs. PSS is designed to create change within individual programs and schools, as well as to create systemic change, by promoting greater coordination between schools and OST providers.

PSS's strategies include establishing frameworks and systems to identify strengths and needs of struggling students, matching these students with appropriate OST programs, promoting effective communication and coordination between schools and OST providers, and improving the professional capacity of educators and OST providers to meet students' needs. PSS is also addressing system-wide barriers to participation in OST programs, such as insufficient transportation, and creating an integrated data system that will allow for better communication between schools and OST staff. A fundamental strategy is the creation of a new position within each participating school—the Manager for Extended Learning Services, who coordinates and oversees the implementation of PSS's strategies.

PSS will operate in 5 public elementary schools in 2006–2007 and expand to 15 schools over the next 3 years. Prior to the fall 2006 implementation, Boston Beyond staff and partners engaged in a 9-month design and planning process. Elizabeth Reisner from Policy Studies Associates (PSA) advised the design team on evaluation issues and the creation of an evaluation plan. The plan evolved through a panel discussion with three evaluators experienced in OST research,² conversations with key stakeholders and funders, and PSS team meetings. PSA began implementation of the evaluation in September.

The PSS team decided to conduct an implementation analysis during the early stages of the initiative. Due to a variety of

factors—including the anticipated start-up time for the initiative and the time and dosage that research suggests are required for OST programs to demonstrate developmental and academic outcomes—the team concluded that an outcome evaluation was not appropriate for the initial stage. Instead, an outcome evaluation will be conducted after the implementation analysis. Central to both phases of the evaluation is the theory of change, which proposes that a) barriers to learning can be mitigated by high-quality OST programs and other wrap-around services and b) services that are matched to students' unique characteristics can lead to improved developmental outcomes and ultimately to improved academic outcomes.

The implementation phase of the evaluation calls for a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, across 2 years. The first stage will consist of detailed case studies of the five sites implemented in 2006. These case studies will describe the implementation at each site and identify which sites have implemented the initiative with sufficient adherence to the theory of change. The case study approach will accommodate the unique characteristics and anticipated variation across sites and allow us to learn from the sites' diversity. Data collection methods will include parent and student surveys and focus groups, interviews with school and OST program staff, attendance data, and school records. A second stage of the implementation evaluation will be conducted with the five new sites in 2007. Through these implementation studies, PSS hopes to identify the processes and actions that lead to high-quality implementation of each of PSS's components (for example, improving program quality and increasing communication between school and OST staff).

In fall 2008, the evaluator will begin the outcome evaluation with the sites identified as having effectively implemented the initiative. Based on the theory of change, PSS predicts that sites that do not implement the initiative well cannot expect to achieve long-term outcomes. The outcome study will utilize a quasi-experimental design, which will compare outcomes for students in PSS schools with youth in similar schools that are not implementing PSS. The outcomes measured will be informed by the implementation analysis and may include school and OST program engagement, positive interactions with peers and adults, and academic measures (e.g., grade promotion, test scores). PSS anticipates having preliminary results in the summer of 2007, with final results in the fall of 2009.

Jennifer Maltby

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Partners for Student Success aims to improve academic outcomes and promote healthy development for struggling students by increasing the availability of, participation in, and coordination among OST programs.

1. Partners for Student Success is an initiative of Boston After School & Beyond in collaboration with the City of Boston, Boston Public Schools, The Boston Foundation, Full-Service Schools Roundtable, Harvard University's Program in Education, Afterschool and Resiliency (PEAR), Ludcke Foundation, Massachusetts 2020 Foundation, Nellie Mae Education Foundation, and the Wallace Foundation.

2. Boston Beyond thanks Priscilla Little of Harvard Family Research Project, Beth Miller of Miller-Midzik Research Associates, and Marty Williams of the Center for Research Management for their consultation.

Parenting Behaviors and Adolescent OST Participation

Harvard Family Research Project discusses the connection between parents' behavior and adolescents' participation in out-of-school time activities.

Research shows that participation in out-of-school time (OST) activities has academic, social, and emotional benefits for youth. However, some youth are less likely than their peers to participate—particularly adolescent, disadvantaged, and ethnic minority youth. Through a grant from the W. T. Grant Foundation, Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) is investigating the different factors—demographic characteristics, neighborhoods, schools, and families—that may predict whether and how much youth participate in OST activities. As part of this investigation, we recently looked at the role of families.

To learn about the link between families and adolescent OST participation, we analyzed data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics–Child Supplement (PSID–CDS). The PSID–CDS is a nationally representative study of children, with an oversampling of poor, African American, and Latino families. We studied data from Wave II of the study, which included 1,350 adolescents ages 10 to 19. The data, collected between fall 2003 and spring 2004, came from in-home interviews with families, a parent questionnaire, an adolescent questionnaire, and an achievement test.

Specifically, we were interested in whether five different parenting behaviors, which are theoretically important to adolescent development, were associated with OST participation. These five behaviors were:

1. Being emotionally supportive of adolescent children
2. Providing cognitive stimulation (e.g., keeping books in the home, reading together)
3. Setting rules about the adolescent's behavior
4. Being involved in the adolescent's school
5. Being involved in the community

We looked at whether each behavior, as well as different combinations of the five behaviors, were related to whether and how often adolescents participated in any the following four types of organized OST activities: school activities such as clubs or student government, community activities such as scouts or hobby clubs, school athletic or sports teams, and volunteer service activities or service clubs.

To answer this question, we used a person-centered analytic approach, which identified patterns of parenting behaviors in the data and then examined whether those patterns were related to OST participation. We used this type of analysis because parenting behaviors do not occur in isolation from each other and because we wanted to know how *combinations* of parenting behaviors impact OST participation. The person-centered analyses found five distinct combinations of parenting behaviors in the data. For example, one group of parents had particularly high levels of school involvement, while another group was low on all the parenting behaviors. Several take-home messages emerged from the analyses.

Adolescents who spent the most time in activities had parents who reported being highly involved in their schools. However,

adolescents whose parents were not highly involved in school but provided cognitive stimulation in other ways (e.g., reading together, keeping musical instruments in the home, discussing television) also reported moderate to high rates of participation. This suggests that although there may be a particularly strong link between parental involvement in the school and OST participation, supporting children's learning outside of the school also predicts participation.

On the other end of the participation spectrum, the lowest rates of participation were evident among two groups of adolescents: those whose parents were lower than average on all five parenting behaviors and those whose parents set a high number of rules but were low on the other behaviors. In other words, those adolescents whose parents did not engage in supportive parenting behaviors, or who set a lot of rules in the absence of other warm and supportive behaviors, were less likely to participate. Moreover, these may be the same youth who could benefit most from the resources and stimulation that OST activities offer.

Our findings have direct, applied implications for both families and OST activity staff. The strong, positive relationship between parental involvement in school and OST participation may imply that school involvement leads to higher participation; alternatively, it can also imply the reverse—that OST participation encourages parents to be involved in schools. The direction of this relationship is not clear from the data, but either way, our findings suggest that activity leaders may want to forge connections with both schools and parents, in order to facilitate higher youth participation rates as well as other potential outcomes, such as parental engagement and involvement in their adolescents' lives.

Our findings also suggest that activity leaders should consider focusing their recruitment efforts on youth whose families do not provide high levels of stimulation, support, and involvement, because such youth are least likely to participate and thereby experience the benefits of participation in OST activities. Overall, these findings contribute to increasing calls for activity leaders to involve parents in OST programs, for recruitment and retention, and for building high quality programming.¹

For more information about these findings, and about our participation study in general, please visit www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/ost_participation.html.

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1. Kakli, Z., Kreider, H., Little, P., Buck, T., & Coffey, M. (2006). *Focus on families! How to build and support family-centered practices in after school*. Boston and Cambridge, MA: United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Harvard Family Research Project, and BOSTnet.

Measuring Change: Out-of-School Time Programs and School Culture

Holly Morehouse describes how out-of-school time programs connected to the school day transformed one district's school culture.

Though geographically the smallest school district in Vermont, the Winooski School District (WSD) is one of the state's most diverse, with students who speak over 20 different languages. Close to 35% of the student population transfers out of or into WSD every year, and 54% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. In 2003, WSD received a 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant, which we used to build an AfterZone¹ that offers 60 different programs after school, over vacations, and during the summer.

The AfterZone programs have had a profound and welcome impact on our schools, particularly in regard to school culture. WSD teachers are working together in new ways, students and teachers are building multidimensional relationships, and students are demonstrating greater involvement in extracurricular learning. Today, approximately 46% of the K–12 student population and 35% of the teaching faculty participate in our out-of-school time (OST) programs.

To measure the effectiveness of these programs, we have devised a three-pronged evaluation. Based on evaluation resources from OST and other fields, our approach uses both *measures of effort*, which look at outputs (the products and services generated by the program and its activities) and *measures of effect*, which track “changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors in [the] target population.”² We have added a third data category—*measures of change*, which looks at changes in school culture—that is, sustained changes in how teachers, principals, and other staff “relate to each other in different ways and actually do something differently” as a result of the program.³

In evaluating our OST programs' impacts on school culture, we have identified four indicators of change:

1. Number of teachers from the district participating in OST programs. Last year, 31 out of 89 district teachers and 8 para-educators taught in the Winooski AfterZone. These teachers learned new skills, shared ideas, and engaged students. Teachers have come to perceive WSD schools as a place where they will be supported in developing innovative curricula and opportunities for learning that go beyond the regular school day.

2. Number of student-initiated programs. Twelve of Winooski's AfterZone programs this past year were initiated by students. Students developed the concepts, approached teachers to be the

instructors, and worked with the instructors to design the programs. WSD sees student initiative in identifying and developing AfterZone programs as a powerful indicator of growing student involvement.

3. Connections to the regular school day. While it is difficult to record every way that ideas, strategies, and relationships from an OST program carry over into the regular school day, last year WSD documented 14 teacher reports of such carryover. Examples include:

- Two teachers who pair up regularly for teaching AfterZone courses and now meet over lunch to discuss teaching strategies and project ideas for their classrooms
- The after school literary journal club whose monthly “magazine” is distributed throughout the school, sparking student discussions
- A science teacher who includes a unit on rockets in his high school courses after working with an outside expert over the summer

4. Opportunities for teacher collaboration. Nearly half of the programs offered in 2004–2005 and 2005–2006 were taught by teams of two or three teachers, often from different grade levels and sometimes from different schools. Research has shown that school culture benefits from teacher collaboration, communication, and direct involvement by continually renewing instructional methods and curriculum and by building an atmosphere of “collegiality, trust, and shared mission.”⁴ WSD also builds teacher collaboration by partnering with the University of Vermont to offer graduate-level summer courses to all teachers in Winooski's summer school and AfterZone summer programs.

Since establishing the AfterZone, Winooski has seen increased communication and exchange across the district's three schools. Teachers from all grade levels come together in professional development workshops and team up to develop new school-day and OST curricula, design thematic units, and try out new strategies. We have also seen a new level of excitement, with students, parents, educators, and community members participating in events and experiencing that special “ah ha!” of hands-on learning.

The next step in our evaluation is to build a comprehensive database expanding the definition of the Winooski AfterZone to include all program activities taking place after school in the district and the community. This working partnership will bring in the school's athletic programs, the Winooski Parks & Recreation Department, the Boys & Girls Club, the Teen Center, and more.

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1. For more information about the Winooski AfterZone, please contact Bruce Chatterman, Superintendent, Winooski School District, 60 Normand Street, Winooski, VT 05404. Tel: 802-655-0485. Email: bchatterman@winooski.k12.vt.us

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3. Kelleher, P., & Levenson, M. R. Can school culture change? *School Administrator*, 61(8), 54–55.

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An Emerging Assessment of College Preparation, Media, and Arts Programs

Karen Walking Eagle, Sebastian Castrechini, and Monica Mielke from Policy Studies Associates preview a new assessment of programs that connect youth with multiple out-of-school supports to promote future success.

Through its College Prep and Youth Media and Arts Fund grant programs, Time Warner Inc. supports 21 out-of-school time programs in New York City. These programs seek to strengthen the academic, creative, artistic, and life skills of underserved public-school youth and to prepare them to succeed in high school, college, and careers. The programs connect youth with academic opportunities and social exposure more frequently available to their more affluent peers. Time Warner Inc. has retained Policy Studies Associates, Inc. to assess the extent to which these programs have developed and implemented processes and features that promote positive outcomes among participating youth.

Seven of these 21 programs are funded under Time Warner Inc.'s College Prep grant program, which seeks to increase academic achievement and college enrollment among targeted students. Youth typically enroll in these programs while in middle or high school and attend academic enrichment classes after school and, in some cases, on weekends and during the summer. All seven

programs provide test preparation and instruction in key learning skills and core subjects such as math and language arts; many also provide counseling and mentoring about the college application process, as well as leadership training, internships, and travel and volunteer opportunities.

Policy Studies Associates is conducting an assessment of all 21 Time Warner Inc.-funded programs. The assessment will report on grantees' estimates of program results, obtain youth input on their program experiences and effects, and will determine the extent to which the programs funded under these initiatives possess certain features that have been shown by existing research to promote learning and other types of positive youth development. These features include practices that promote positive relationships, rich content-based program activities, and learning- and mastery-oriented content-delivery strategies, including youth choice and leadership opportunities.

The assessment will also examine key structural and institutional features that advance the desired process, as well as content features, such as recruitment and retention strategies for both participants and staff, the careful alignment of program goals and activities, and connections to family and community. For example, based on interview data collected from youth participants and program staff, we will describe how professionals in the community have shared their knowledge with participants and the reported impact of this on participants' technical expertise, content knowledge, personal aspirations, and career goals.

We have completed data collection for the assessment. The data collected include individual project reports; interviews with selected project leaders, staff, and youth participants at eight sites; a survey of all 21 project directors; and on-site observations of participant activities at the sites. Because research shows that staff play a critical role in promoting quality programs, we asked project directors about staffing issues, including recruitment practices, training opportunities, and supervision and assessment policies. We also asked program staff about the same factors, as well as about conditions that impede or facilitate their work and the strategies they use to overcome challenges. Conversations with staff have enabled us to take a closer look at the importance of partnerships and at the roles played by mentors, parents, families, and the community.

In both the surveys and site visits, we collected data on the reported academic, artistic, creative, social, and psychological outcomes among participants. For example, during interviews, we asked participants how they benefited from participating in the program and encouraged them to provide specific examples. Youth were also asked to identify those program elements that were most effective in helping them to improve academically, artistically, or socially. In surveys, program directors were also asked to describe the areas in which significant numbers of participants demonstrated desired outcomes. Our report will draw on our site visit observations and on staff and participant reports

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The Achievement Gap Initiative

Led by scholars Ronald Ferguson, Richard Murnane, and Charles Ogletree, the Achievement Gap Initiative (AGI) at Harvard University focuses on bringing together academic research and public attention to eliminate gaps in achievement between disadvantaged and minority youth and their more advantaged peers. Research suggests that a variety of factors, including early childhood education and parental involvement, explain the persistence of achievement gaps and that building complementary learning supports can help raise achievement.

With major funding from Time Warner Inc. and additional support from the Spencer Foundation, Murphy Foundation, and Harvard Graduate School of Education, AGI promotes forums for sharing research and for conducting outreach and public education. AGI recently created a website that offers a variety of resources, including multimedia coverage of past events. Additionally, the website provides an overview of the broad base of research about achievement gaps and offers suggestions for how institutions and individuals involved with youth can narrow gaps in achievement. Many of these potential solutions entail purposeful linkages to support youth.

For more information about the Achievement Gap Initiative, visit agi.harvard.edu/mission.php.

Efficacy Trials of Promising After School Programs: Supporting Experimental Studies Through a Research Consortium

Michael Vaden-Kiernan and Debra Hughes Jones from SEDL describe a U.S. Department of Education initiative to support rigorous research on the potential of after school programs to affect academic performance.

To date, rigorous attempts to gain empirical evidence concerning the impact of after school programs on student academic achievement outcomes have been mixed. An important empirical and policy-relevant question therefore remains: Can fully developed, well-implemented after school programs impact student academic achievement outcomes? Many stakeholders—from the policy, practice, and research communities—increasingly need this information.

To address this question, the U.S. Department of Education recently funded randomized controlled trials (RCT) that use rigorous methods to evaluate the benefits of promising after school interventions on student achievement in order to provide evidence that informs the national debate. The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), as part of the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning, coordinated the proposal review process and is also leading a research consortium to support the studies over the 2-year funding period. Below, we describe the awardees' projects as well as the new research consortium. The following three studies received funding:

- *A Randomized Evaluation of the Adventure Island Afterschool Reading Program With English Language Learners*, conducted by the Success for All Foundation. Adventure Island, an adaptation of the Success for All program, is currently being evaluated in a large-scale randomized experiment; however, that experiment

The Afterschool Training Toolkit

Created by The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning (NPQAL) at SEDL, *The Afterschool Training Toolkit* is a staff development resource that shows after school practitioners how to create engaging activities that target specific academic content standards. Additional components on technology and homework help are being developed.

In developing the tool kit, NPQAL researchers conducted and reviewed research, identified and visited high-quality after school sites across the U.S., and documented the connections between specific practices in each subject area and student achievement outcomes. Each subject section of the tool kit draws on all of these sources to feature sample lessons, interactive activities, and videos from after school programs that were identified by researchers as having a positive impact on student achievement.

The Afterschool Training Toolkit is available online at www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits.

includes few English language learners (ELLs). Because ELLs are a population of great interest, the new experiment will be conducted in 14 majority-Hispanic schools in Alabama, Texas, and Utah, with approximately 1260 children in grades 2–4.

- *What Works in Afterschool Programs: The Impact of a Reading Intervention on Student Achievement in the Brockton Public Schools*, undertaken by MPR Associates, Inc., in partnership with Scholastic Publications and Brockton (MA) Public Schools. This study is designed to compare Scholastic's READ 180 program, which has many characteristics that have been associated with positive academic outcomes, with Brockton's standard after school services. The study will include approximately 1,100 students in grades 4, 5, and 6, to provide methodologically rigorous information about READ 180 and to capture potential gains in reading skills and other outcomes.

- *Afterschool Randomized Controlled Trials: The Voyager Passport Program in Kentucky 21st Century Community Learning Centers*, designed by The Center for Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University, in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education. This study aims to compare the impact of previously established 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs with similar 21st CCLC programs that include the Voyager Passport Reading program (Passport). The study tests the hypothesis that economically disadvantaged youth in grades 2–5 who participate in a high-quality after school program with Passport achieve significantly greater learning gains over a 2-year period than do disadvantaged youth who participate in the same program without Passport.

SEDL will provide analytic and technical support to all three of these projects through the Afterschool Research Consortium (ARC). The ARC brings together SEDL staff, key staff from each research project, Technical Working Group (TWG) members,¹ and representatives from the Department of Education on a regular basis to facilitate cross-fertilization of ideas and provide strategies to ensure full implementation of RCT designs in after school settings. The ARC focuses on substantive content issues in the after school field, technical and analytic issues in conducting rigorous RCTs, programmatic and research-to-practice issues, and policy issues. Project teams discuss ongoing implementation, data collection, and analytic challenges presented by the work; teams also explore opportunities to collaborate and disseminate the findings to the field.

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1. The TWG members currently include Harris Cooper (Duke University), Fred Doolittle (MDRC), Rebecca Maynard (University of Pennsylvania), Robert Stonehill (DoE), Elizabeth Warner (DoE), and Peter Witt (Texas A&M).



The C. S. Mott Statewide Afterschool Networks: Statewide Collaborations to Further After School Policies

An-Me Chung of the C. S. Mott Foundation describes the Statewide Afterschool Networks, and three Statewide Afterschool Network coordinators—Jennifer Becker Moubcine from Illinois, Zelda Waymer from South Carolina, and Janet Frieling from Washington—discuss how their Networks support and promote systems of after school program quality.

What are the C. S. Mott Statewide Afterschool Networks, and how are they taking steps to build statewide after school systems?

An-Me Chung: In 2002, the C. S. Mott Foundation began supporting Statewide Afterschool Networks and providing technical assistance to these Networks through the Afterschool Technical Assistance Collaborative, which is comprised of representatives from Afterschool Alliance, Council of Chief State School Officers, The Finance Project, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, National League of Cities, Inc., and the University of South Carolina Education Foundation, with support from Learning Point Associates and Collaborative Communications Group.

The Networks provide a structure for bringing together key decision makers interested in improving outcomes for chil-

dren and youth through school-based and school-linked after school programs. The Mott Foundation's long-term goal in supporting the Networks is to provide intentional and meaningful bridges between leaders of schools, communities, and families in order to better support student learning, youth development, and lifelong learning opportunities.

Currently, 31 Statewide Afterschool Networks encourage local and state policymakers to invest resources wisely to expand quality after school opportunities focused on improving outcomes for children and families. The Networks also provide the means for joint planning, sharing of resources and best practices, building bridges to and between federal, state, and local after school initiatives, and forging partnerships necessary for comprehensive statewide after school policies.

The goals of the Statewide Afterschool Networks are:

- Creating a sustainable structure of state, regional, and local partnerships, particularly school–community partnerships, focused on supporting policy development at all levels.
- Supporting the development and growth of statewide policies to secure the resources needed to sustain new and existing after school programs.
- Supporting statewide systems to ensure programs are of high quality.

Each Network functions through common vision, collective thinking, and shared responsibility. In small and large ways, the Statewide Afterschool Networks are taking concrete steps and building systems to affect policy at the local, state, and national levels. For example, Networks are:

- Increasing awareness among governors, mayors, and other key decision makers about the impact after school programs can have on student success in the 21st century.
- Engaging after school champions who shed light on the importance of after school among legislators, businesspeople, parents, and community leaders.
- Holding forums and meetings to engage potential local and regional providers and supporters.
- Compiling and analyzing data to inform continuous improvement and policy development.
- Providing testimony and recommendations on issues of quality and sustainability.
- Developing systems and principles for effective after school programs.

The Networks are supported by a variety of organizations—for example, state departments of education, universities, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, school age care alliances, youth development organizations—who contribute their expertise and knowledge. This organizational support is contributing to the development of a national network that is

After School Evaluation Symposium

In September 2005, HFRP, with support from the C. S. Mott Foundation, convened the After School Evaluation Symposium to integrate after school researchers, practitioners, and policymakers into a “community of practice” and to discuss how to turn research into action. The C. S. Mott Statewide Afterschool Networks not only served as a model for connecting various stakeholders to expand and improve after school programs, but also sent representatives to participate and share lessons learned with others in the field.

A webpage featuring the Symposium is part of HFRP's newly redesigned conferences website. It includes summaries of key themes from each of the plenary sessions and audio recordings from the Symposium speakers, including Deborah Vandell from the University of California at Irvine, Fred Doolittle from MDRC, and Jennifer Reinhart from the Afterschool Alliance. The website highlights the dynamic contributions of both speakers and participants to discussions about professional development, research and policy, and after school systems.

To read more about the Symposium, go to www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/conference/symposium2005/index.html.

> ask the expert

increasingly well positioned to influence national policy priorities to better serve children and families.

Why is creating a statewide system of after school program quality so important?

Jennifer Becker Mouhcine, Zelda Waymer, & Janet Frieling: First, a statewide after school system can ensure that families across a state can count on receiving the same level of services, thus creating greater equity in services and funding. A statewide system enables a consistent approach to services at the local level, while at the same time enabling individual regions to get the training and services they may need that are specific to their particular region within the state. For example, a region that has a large Hispanic population may need bilingual training opportunities for after school program staff that programs in other state regions may not need.

Second, in many states, the after school field lacks education and training opportunities and access to resources. The presence of a skilled and stable workforce plays a significant role in the quality and continuity of programs for children and youth. The absence of a statewide quality system, then, is an obvious impediment to developing and maintaining such a workforce. Without a registry of after school practitioners and core competencies at the state level, it is difficult to design, offer, and fund training or professional development programs for staff.

Thirdly, a statewide quality system can provide guidance in establishing funding priorities and can direct funding to programs that are effective. Bringing various definitions of quality, measurement tools, and expectations into one system clears up confusion about what constitutes “quality” in after school programs. Developing a consensus about quality can provide clear guidance—both for programs, to assess where they are and where they need to be, and for funders, to make decisions about investments in quality programs.

Finally, having agreement across different types of after school programs about how to measure quality also helps create a common message—that quality matters—when working to build public support for funding quality after school programs.

What are some best practices from your states in creating a statewide system for quality?

JBM, ZW, & JF: The experiences in Illinois, South Carolina, and Washington have revealed a number of promising practices from these states, including:

- Involve the major funders in the state in the creation of your system, as they often drive quality expectations for significant numbers of programs, and at the same time have access to resources or tools to build on.
- Involve practitioners in the development process to ensure that the system is feasible and valuable for programs, so implementation will be successful.
- Factor in the technical assistance and training needed to help providers implement quality assessments, understand the connection to outcomes measurement, and learn how to use the data from the assessments for program improvement.
- Coordinate the definition of regions within a state with other

stakeholders working with children and families to ensure alignment of services and supports within a consistent set of geographic regions. Be sure to designate enough regions to make the task of maintaining them manageable.

- Build a stable workforce by considering your staff training needs right up front, including the identification of standards for school-age and youth workers and establishing a set of education, training, and development experiences to meet state standards and core competencies.
- Collaboration is key; hold regular meetings with agency leads in the Network to ensure that all partners understand what is happening statewide. Use a competitive process for partnerships so that organizations represent the diversity of programs in your state (e.g., one resource and referral agency, one school district, county extension offices, etc.).

Based on your experiences, what advice do you have for other states who want to implement systems to monitor program quality?

JBM, ZW, & JF: Attaining quality statewide takes time. Recognize this and approach the development of statewide system of quality incrementally and patiently. Taking the time to convene stakeholders and take stock of where you are and what you already have can save you time in the long run. Many entities in your state may be using a system for their specific programming that could be broadened to include additional programs. Allocating time for consensus-building across program and stakeholder types helps uncover what is already underway, as does utilizing an advisory group that includes after school program staff and experts in the field. Initiatives that span more than a year need to take into account shifts in leadership positions. Have a plan in place for when old leaders move on and new leaders come on board.

Tool development is a critical component of the development of a statewide system for quality. Provide tools that connect quality measurement and monitoring systems to program evaluation and improvement, so these activities are viewed along the same continuum. Make sure any quality assessment tools developed are based on research and include connections to youth outcomes. But don't start from scratch. There are a lot of good quality assessment tools already in the field from which you can draw aspects most relevant to your state context.

Finally, develop a sound marketing plan to “sell” the idea of quality to parents, practitioners, and policy makers. Develop a mindset in your state that *quality matters* and that participation in programs, without related quality initiatives, is selling the young people in your state short. Use this marketing plan to advocate for funding dedicated for quality initiatives alongside program grant dollars.

For more information about these and other statewide systems for after school program quality, see www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net.

For more information about the C. S. Mott Foundations's after school efforts, contact An-Me Chung, Program Officer, or Eugene Hillsman, Associate Program Officer, at the Foundation's Headquarters in Flint, Michigan, or visit www.mott.org.

Priscilla Little

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It's Never Too Early

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enthusiasm about their experiences, and most planned to continue in the fall, while at least 12 additional after school programs expressed interest in participating. In the future, we hope to conduct longitudinal evaluation studies, following young people through college enrollment. To date, our experiences suggest that the bridges that quality after school programs form between schools and communities and between families and schools have great potential to help put youth on the path to college.

Lucy N. Friedman

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Impact Evaluation of Academic Instruction

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- School-day teacher surveys, to understand the students' academic performance and any special support they received during the school day.
- Abbreviated battery of the SAT10 (for all students) and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) test (for second and third graders in reading sites), to measure impacts on achievement scores.

A report addressing the key questions for the first year of the study will be released in fall 2007.

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College Prep, Media, and Arts Programs

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to describe those program features and practices associated with these outcomes—in particular, the strengthening of academic and life skills that prepare youth for future success.

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New Resources From HFRP

Learning From Small-Scale Experimental Evaluations of After School Programs is a short *Out-of-School Time (OST) Evaluation Snapshot* that analyzes the methods and findings from seven small-scale experimental evaluations included in our OST Evaluation Database. This snapshot also offers suggestions for overcoming the challenges of conducting experimental evaluations in small and single-site programs. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/snapshot8.html

Harnessing Technology in Out-of-School Time Settings is an *OST Evaluation Snapshot* that draws on our OST Evaluation Database and Bibliography to review how OST programs and initiatives are using technology and evaluating its impact. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/snapshot7.html

Summer Success: Challenges and Strategies in Creating Quality Academically Focused Summer Programs is our newest *Issues and Opportunities in OST Evaluation* brief. It looks at evaluations of 34 academically focused summer programs in order to distill challenges and compile promising strategies for creating quality summer programs. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/issuebrief9.html

The *Study of Predictors of Participation in Out-of-School Time Activities* examines how youth and their parents access OST programs. New papers and presentations available on our website focus on demographic differences in OST participation, how adolescents become involved in OST activities, and the intersecting roles of parenting and neighborhood characteristics in predicting OST participation. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/ost_findings.html

Resources from the *Exploring Quality Standards for Middle School After School Programs* summit are now available online. Summary documents review how after school programs serving youth ages 9–14 are assessing quality, present key findings from HFRP's scan of quality assessment tools, and provide highlights from the summit. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/conference/index.html

Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education, the first research brief in our *Family Involvement Makes a Difference* series, synthesizes 6 years of research on family involvement during early childhood. It explores the theoretical framework for linkages between home and preschool settings and sets forth recommendations for policy, practice, and research. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/research/earlychildhood.html

This section features an annotated list of papers, organizations, initiatives, and other resources related to the issue's theme.

Active Hours Afterschool. This website from the Afterschool Alliance compiles resources, tools, and information related to obesity prevention for after school programs. It includes news and research on how after school programs can prevent obesity, as well as local, state, and federal policy briefs related to fighting the epidemic. The Afterschool Alliance has also created its own national policy agenda arguing that after school programs should receive funding and other resources to prevent childhood obesity and has produced an issue brief, *Active Hours After School: Childhood Obesity and Afterschool Prevention Programs*, also available through the website. www.afterschoolalliance.org/active_hours.cfm

The After-School Corporation. (2006). *Increasing family and parent engagement in after-school*. New York: Author. The After-School Corporation (TASC) has published this practical guide for after school staff interested in getting families and parents involved in their programs. Grounded in the experiences of 15 after school programs in the TASC network, it offers tips and materials for after school programs to promote parent engagement. www.tascorp.org/publications/catalog/parentengagement

American Youth Policy Forum. (2006). *Helping youth succeed through out-of-school time programs*. Washington, DC: Author. This American Youth Policy Forum publication reports on the state of out-of-school time (OST) programs for older youth based on research reviews, site visits, and collaborative work with policymakers across the nation. It synthesizes evidence on the benefits of OST programs and reviews research on how and why teens participate in them. Special attention is also given to understanding how OST programs are building funding streams and promoting quality through staffing. The report also highlights a number of cities that have taken leadership on OST issues for adolescents and offers lessons learned, policy recommendations, and practice recommendations based on their work. www.aypf.org/publications/HelpingYouthOST2006.pdf

Birmingham, J., Pechman, E., Russell, C., & Mielke, M. (2005). *Shared features of high-performing after-school programs: A follow-up to the TASC evaluation*. Washington, DC: Policy Study Associates. Evaluators of the TASC programs reanalyzed data to identify 10 high-performing after school programs and investigate the programs and policies they held in common that contributed to their success. The authors attribute consistent positive outcomes to five program components: breadth in enrichment activities; a variety of opportuni-

ties for mastery and skill-building; an intentional focus on building relationships with schools, families, and participants; a strong staff and management team; and support from sponsoring agencies. www.tascorp.org/publications/catalog/psa

Chaplin, D., & Capizzano, J. (2006). *Impacts of a summer learning program: A random assignment study of Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL)*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. This study tested the effects of the BELL summer learning program, which aims to improve academic skills, parental involvement, academic self-perceptions, and social behaviors for low-income children. The evaluation finds that students randomly assigned to the BELL program spent more time reading and engaged in academic activities than those students in the control group, who typically spent more time with their parents and engaged in nonacademic activities. Furthermore, early outcomes demonstrated that students participating in BELL had significantly higher literacy test scores (equivalent to about one month's additional schooling) and were significantly more likely to have parents who encouraged them to read. www.urban.org/publications/411350.html

C. S. Mott Committee on After-School Research and Practice. (2005). *Moving towards success: Framework for after-school programs*. Washington, DC: Collaborative Communications Group. This framework for start-up and existing after school programs uses a theory of change approach to guide program planning, implementation, and improvement. The framework offers examples of program elements, short-term and long-term outcomes, performance measures, and data sources for program goals related to academic and other learning, social and emotional well being, health and safety, and community engagement. www.publicengagement.com/Framework

The James Irvine Foundation. (2005). *Museums after school: How museums are reaching kids, partnering with schools, and making a difference*. San Francisco: Author. The first issue of *Insight*, which offers lessons learned from the James Irvine Foundation's grant-making programs, is dedicated to understanding how museums can build after school programs. Based on evaluations of 10 California after school museum programs, this report describes how two of their grantees implemented after school programs. It also discusses four issues for effective after school programs at museums: partnerships with schools, institutional support, programmatic approaches, and financial sustainability. www.irvine.org/assets/pdf/pubs/former/Museums_After_School.pdf

Lind, C., Relave, N., Deich, S., Grossman, J., & Gersick, A. (2006). *The costs of out-of-school-time programs: A review of the available evidence*. Washington DC: The Finance Project and Public/Private Ventures. This literature review examines how out-of-school time programs are measuring their costs. Based on this and research on the costs of early childhood education, the authors suggest ways to determine full costs, examine their relationship to program quality, and develop cost estimate models applicable across various contexts. www.wallacefoundation.org/WF/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/Out-Of-SchoolLearning/Costs_Of_OST_Programs.htm

Raley, R., Grossman, J., & Walker, K. E. (2005). *Getting it right: Strategies for after-school success*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. This report draws on lessons learned from Public/Private Ventures' evaluations of over 100 after school programs and other research over the past 10 years. It offers strategies for after school programs in the areas of youth recruitment and retention, staffing and management, and budgetary priorities. www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/190_publication.pdf

Upcoming Issue of The Evaluation Exchange

Evaluating Advocacy and Policy Change – March 2007

To subscribe, go to www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/subscribe.html.

To submit information, email hfrp_pubs@gse.harvard.edu.

Recent Issues of The Evaluation Exchange

Professional Development – Winter 2005/2006

Democratic Evaluation – Fall 2005

Evaluation Methodology – Summer 2005

Read or print these issues at www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/archives.html.

Mahoney, J., Lord, H., & Carryl, E. (2005). *An ecological analysis of after-school program participation and the development of academic performance and motivational attitudes for disadvantaged children*. *Child Development*, 76(4): 811–825. This longitudinal study of 818 students in low-income urban neighborhoods investigates the relationship between youth outcomes and patterns of after school care, including the type and frequency of care. It finds that disadvantaged youth in after school programs have significantly higher reading achievement and teacher-reported expectancies for success than those in alternative forms of after school care, and that these positive outcomes are amplified for students with high engagement in after school programs.

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices. (2005). *Supporting student success: A governor's guide to extra learning opportunities*. Washington, DC: Author. Building off the momentum of No Child Left Behind's focus on OST programs and the evidence base making the case for these programs, this report encourages governors to increase the quantity and quality of extra learning opportunities (ELOs) and offers strategies to enhance ELOs at the statewide policy level. These strategies focuses on building programmatic and systems-level connections to improve ELO structure and quality. This report also includes examples of successful state initiatives targeted at ELOs for each of these strategies. www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0509GOVGUIDEEO.PDF

National Association of Elementary School Principals. (2005). *Making the most of after-school time: Ten case studies of school-based after-school programs*. Alexandria, VA: Author. This report profiles 10 diverse after school programs that are run within school buildings. It focuses on a variety of program and administrative factors, from how each program deals with professional development to evaluation and assessment. www.naesp.org/ContentLoad.do?contentId=949

Policy Studies Associates. (2006). *Everyone plays: A review of research on the integration of sports and physical activity into out-of-school-time programs*. Washington, DC: Author. This report investigates how OST programs can be key players in combating the growing obesity epidemic in children and youth. It examines youth development and OST program research to unpack the factors that contribute to youth participation in sports and physical activity, the outcomes associated with such participation, and the characteristics of effective OST sports and physical activity programs. www.theafterschoolproject.org/RepoRese-list0.html

Walker, G., Wahl, E., & Rivas, L. (2005). *NASA and afterschool programs: Connecting to the future*. New York: American Museum of Natural History. This report makes the case for increased collaboration between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the after school community. Based on an extensive 18 month study, a scan of how after school programs use science, and curriculum development and testing, this report explores NASA resources and their use in after school programs, and ultimately offers a series of suggestions to NASA on how to improve its integration into after school programs. Three prototype curriculum units with lesson plans and activities are also available with this report. education.nasa.gov/divisions/informal/overview/R_NASA_and_Afterschool_Programs.html

Witt., P., & Caldwell, L. (Eds). (2005). *Recreation and youth development*. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc. This book offers a historical and developmental perspective on who youth are and how youth services organizations serve them. It also unpacks theoretical frameworks for positive youth development and examines the role of

recreation in meeting the multiple needs of adolescents. In particular, the authors view youth from an ecological perspective and illustrate the potential supports, opportunities, services, and programs available through recreation. Particular emphasis is also given to the diversity of youth and the context of their development.

Youth Service California. (2006). *Service-learning in afterschool programs: Resources for afterschool educators*. Oakland, CA: Author. This tool kit provides a broad array of resources to help integrate service learning into after school programs. It outlines seven elements of high-quality service learning and articulates indicators, examples, and tips to put service learning into practice. The tool kit also provides tools used in these steps by after school programs that have successfully incorporated service learning into their curriculum and activities, as well as additional resources for those interested in beginning or strengthening service-learning programs. www.yscal.org/resources/afterschool.html

Resources for Afterschool. This new website from the Collaborative Communications Group is now publicly available. The website compiles a wide range of resources related to after school: research and evaluation, promising practices, professional development, public awareness and communication, policy development, financing strategies, opportunities to consider, and a bibliography. www.publicengagement.com/AfterschoolResources/index.html

An expanded New & Noteworthy is available on our website at www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue33/newfull.html.

Audrey Hutchinson

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Q What recommendations do you have for building a complementary learning evaluation agenda?

A We need to know that partnering for results gets more bang for the buck than going it alone. Policymakers need to know that collaboration and linking resources reduce duplication and waste. They need to know that kids are better off when institutions partner and leverage their resources around a complementary learning agenda.

In addition, numbers are great but they are not sufficient. For example, one third of any audience will read a full evaluation report, but two thirds will want to hear the stories of how children and families are affected by after school or complementary learning efforts. To make sure everyone listens, both quantitative and qualitative data are important and need to be conveyed in different and creative ways that have broad-based appeal.

Finally, public awareness is important. We need to use evaluation to help the public understand after school's value and importance, so that they will demand it from their leaders. We also need to show the public that their leaders should not carry the weight alone. The public must be a partner in supporting, owning, and linking after school efforts to other services in their communities.

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Professional Development Revisited

Professional development is important for ensuring quality in out-of-school time (OST) programs. In our last issue, we examined the evaluation of professional development in OST and other human service fields. Below, we highlight new resources that have come to our attention since the publication of that issue.

Harvard Family Research Project. (2006). *Changing the conversation about workforce development*. Cambridge, MA: Author. Building on the theory of change for human service workforce development outlined in the last issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* (www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue32/theory.html), this report submitted to Cornerstones for Kids uses findings from an empirical literature review and key informant interviews to draw conclusions about the methodological and content limitations of research on workforce development and their impact on children. The report also offers 10 recommendations for research, policy, and practice. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/onlinepubs/workforce.html **Coming soon!**

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. (2006, February). *Redefining professional development: Schools can become true learning communities for teachers*. *Newsletter*. The February issue of this monthly newsletter discusses the characteristics of effective professional development, the content focus and format of delivery for professional development, active engagement of teachers, and an expansion of the definition of professional development. www.centerforcsri.org/files/Feb06newsletter.pdf

Roy, P. (2006). *Training manual: NSDC's standards for staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council. This guide-

book presents a plan and supplemental materials for conducting a 1-day workshop to educators on NSDC's standards for staff development. www.store.nsd.org

Yoo, J., Brooks, D., & Patti, R. (2004). **The role of organizational variables in predicting service effectiveness: An analysis of a multilevel model**. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 15(4), 267–277. This article uses multilevel modeling to examine the role of organizational context in predicting service effectiveness. Organizations whose workers have more routine work, strong leadership qualities, and supervisor and coworker support predict better child outcomes.

National Youth Development Learning Network. (2006, July). **Recognition and rewards for youth development workers**. *Professional Development E-Newsletter*. These 4-page e-newsletters explore promising strategies in youth development designed to further attract, develop, and retain youth development workers. The July 2006 issue presents the benefits of and strategies for providing recognition and rewards. www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/profdevelopment/documents/Recognition_and_Rewards.pdf

Out-of-School Time Resource Center. (2006). **The OSTRC Conference Evaluation Toolkit**. Philadelphia, PA: Author. Developed by OSTRC as described in the last issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* (www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue32/eval4.html), this tool kit is now available. This new resource introduces tool kit surveys, discusses how to use the tool kit for evaluation, and shares useful templates for planning conference evaluation. www.sp2.upenn.edu/ostrc/conference_eval/index.html

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