

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

submitted to

Communities In Schools (CIS)

prepared by

Cathy Hammond
Mary Reimer



National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

College of Health, Education, and Human Development
Clemson University, 209 Martin Street, Clemson, SC 29631-1555
Telephone: 864-656-2599 Email: ndpc@clemson.edu

Web site: <http://www.dropoutprevention.org>

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Literature Review: Quality Afterschool Programs

Afterschool programs form a part of the comprehensive support systems that Communities In Schools (CIS) provides to local schools to help kids stay in school and prepare for life. As a part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen these support systems, CIS has determined that evidence-based information is needed about the core elements of afterschool programs to ensure the design and implementation of effective and accountable strategies.

CIS contracted with the National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) at Clemson University to identify for CIS and its local affiliates (1) afterschool programs that have been found through scientific studies to be effective and (2) the core elements that contributed to their effectiveness. To accomplish this, a comprehensive search and review was conducted of major studies, prior reviews, and meta-analyses on afterschool programming for elements and programs proven to be effective through empirical research. This document provides a summary of the search strategy and the results of this review.

It should be noted here, before moving on to the summary, that it became clear during the search that there were a number of issues related to the quality of research evidence on afterschool programs that make it difficult to conclusively identify core elements or effective programs. Elements outlined in the charts, therefore, are based on what was deemed the best evidence from the sources reviewed and should be seen as preliminary.

Search Strategy

To begin to identify major studies and reports related to afterschool programs and their critical elements, the ERIC and PsychInfo databases were searched because they were most likely to contain information about afterschool programs. Both databases were searched using the term “afterschool programs” as a major descriptor for the years 1980-2005. This search yielded 610 citations. These citations were then reviewed for their research base and relevance. Items in languages other than English were eliminated. Items that could not be retrieved via full text from the databases or from the Clemson University Library were also eliminated because of time constraints. Sixty-eight items were judged worthy of further review. Bibliographies and reference lists from the documents chosen for review were also scanned for relevant items. Materials from the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network Library were included in the review.

A number of Web sites were also scanned for pertinent literature. These sites included:

Afterschool Alliance www.afterschoolalliance.org

Harvard Family Research Project www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/

MENTOR After School Web Resources
www.mentoring.org/program_staff/afterschool/after_school_web_resources.php

National After-School Association www.naaweb.org



National Collaboration for Youth www.nydic.org/after-school%20research%201.doc

National Institute for Out-Of-School Time www.niost.org

New York City Department of Youth and Community Development Beacon Program
www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/services-afterschool-beacon.html

Office of Juvenile Justice and Dropout Prevention Model Programs Guide for
Afterschool/Recreation Programs
www.dsgonline.com/mpg2.5/afterschool_recreation_prevention.htm

Promising Practices in Afterschool www.afterschool.org/featured.cfm

The Forum for Youth Investment www.forumfyi.org

The literature review focused primarily on research-based documents, including reviews of current research, program evaluations, and meta-analyses, but program descriptions as well as anecdotal information were also included. Research on both youth development and afterschool research and evaluation were included.

Limitations of Research on Afterschool “Best Practices”

Before summarizing findings from the literature review, it is important to discuss the limitations of available research and evaluation on afterschool programs found during the search. Many reviewers noted that, although afterschool programs have been around a long time and there is research to support the need for these programs, quality program evaluation of these programs is limited (Fashola, 1998; Harvard Family Research Project [HFRP], 2003; The Forum for Youth Investment [FYI], 2002). Identification of “best practices” or “core elements” of programs requires that causal links be established between specific program elements and desired outcomes for youth participants. This type of rigorous evaluation and measurement of impact is lacking on afterschool programs (Beckett, Hawken & Jackowitz, 2001; Brown, McComb & Scott-Little, 2003; Fashola, 1998; FYI, 2002; HFRP, 2003; Hollister, 2003; Office of Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention [OJJDP], 2005). For afterschool programs, it is not known with certainty “what features of programs lead to what outcomes, what levels of participation are optimal for which participants” and “what activities are most effective under what circumstances” (FYI, 2002, p. 1).

As a RAND research team pointed out, the research evidence is not sufficient to identify “model” practices with definitive causal linkages to positive outcomes (Beckett et al., 2001). Instead, they discuss “good” practices “that have been shown or upheld by experts in the field to be associated with high-quality after-school programs or with positive child outcomes” (Beckett et al., 2001, p. xii). This review proceeded with the same caution and will describe basic elements identified in “quality” programs. Further research in the area is required before truly “effective” or “model” afterschool programs can be identified and definitive lists of core elements of these programs put forward.



Given these limitations, it was decided to follow the lead of other sources and first sort the literature by level of rigor to identify sources based on the most solid research and then identify a tentative list of elements cited in these sources that most influence program quality (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003; HFRP, 2003).

Tier Schema for Classifying Documents

To identify the resources based on the most solid research evidence, a four group “tier” classification schema, adapted from one developed by the RAND research team (Beckett et al., 2001, pp. 6-8) for its meta-analysis of afterschool program evaluations, was utilized.

Tier 1 resources are those based on the most solid research evidence. They include meta-analyses or quasi-meta-analyses of program evaluations and empirical research on afterschool or youth development programs. The authors specify stringent criteria for inclusion in their review, most often including only those studies based on experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation designs.

Tier 2 resources are based on less solid research evidence than those in Tier 1. They contain reviews of a mixture of types of information including at least two of the following: program evaluation data reviewed with level of rigor of data collection outlined; review of general research on afterschool or youth development; information from expert panels, workshops, or professional associations; expertise and findings from multiple experts/practitioners. Criteria for selection for inclusion in these reviews are outlined, and the information is synthesized by experts in the field.

Tier 3 resources include a summary of perspectives from secondary sources on afterschool programs, trends, and issues and do not specify criteria for selection of sources for the review. These articles are often developed and published through state or federal government agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education or advocacy groups, like the Afterschool Alliance. Little to no statistical evidence is provided to support points, and if evidence is provided, the level of rigor of data collection for this evidence is not specified. Usually the agency is given as the author, thus making it difficult to judge the expertise or background of the writer.

Tier 4 sources include discussions of assumptions or experiences of a single expert or practitioner without literature references. These sources were not included in the literature review because they lacked sufficient rigor.

One of the Tier 1 articles identified through the search, *Out-of-School Time Evaluation Snapshot: A Review of Out-of-School Time Program Quasi-Experimental and Experimental Evaluation Results*, published by the Harvard Family Research Project in 2003, included an analysis of afterschool program evaluations that reported statistically significant results using experimental and quasi-experimental designs. The article also listed 11 recent meta-analyses and reviews of out-of-school time evaluations that were published between 2001 and 2003. Due to the rigor of this review and to expedite the literature search for critical elements of afterschool programs, information from these articles served as the core of this review.



Reasons for Growth of Afterschool Programs

To understand issues of program quality and challenges to gathering rigorous evidence on afterschool programs, it is important to understand some of the forces behind the growth in interest and funding for education beyond the regular school day over the past few decades. First, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of parents at home after school, increasing the numbers of youth at home without adult supervision in the afternoon (Beckett et al., 2001; Gayl, 2004; Hollister, 2003). One study found that 34% of middle school and 51% of high school youth reported taking care of themselves after school (study by Afterschool Alliance, as cited in National Institute on Out-of-School Time [NIOST], 2005).

Being unsupervised after school and in self-care has been found to increase the likelihood that a youth will: (a) commit a delinquent act (Fashola, 1998; OJJDP, 2005), (b) become a victim of crime (OJJDP, 2005), (c) get injured (NIOST, 2005), (d) use alcohol and/or other drugs (NIOST, 2005; OJJDP, 2005), (e) perform poorly in school (NIOST, 2005; OJJDP, 2005), (f) drop out of school (OJJDP, 2005), or (g) become a teen parent (NIOST, 2005).

Second, this lack of supervision after school was brought to the public's attention after some highly publicized violent incidents were perpetrated by youth in the after-school hours (Beckett et al., 2001; Gayl, 2004) and release of evidence documenting a spike in youth crime after school, between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. (Snyder & Sickmund study as cited in OJJDP, 2005).

Third, the move toward academic accountability and the search for a means to improve academic achievement has resulted in an increase in afterschool programs extending the school day to enhance academic performance (Beckett et al., 2001; Gayl, 2004; Hollister, 2003). Eccles and Templeton (2002) also argue that some view afterschool programs as a means of addressing continuing achievement disparities between ethnic groups in the U.S. and between American students and their counterparts in other countries.

These societal concerns have in turn produced widely varying goals and expectations for afterschool programs, which require diverse means of evaluating program success. Afterschool programs have been seen as a means of:

- Providing a "safe haven" for youth (Fashola, 1998)
- Keeping youth out of trouble/reducing risk behaviors (Fashola, 1998; Hollister, 2003)
- Improving academic performance (Fashola, 1998; Hollister, 2003)
- Providing enriching experiences (Fashola, 1998)
- Providing social, cultural, and recreational activities (Fashola, 1998)

Evidence of Positive Outcomes from Afterschool Programs

Outcomes found in available scientific studies indicate that these programs appear to have been able to successfully address some of the concerns outlined above. A team of researchers from SERVE (Brown et al., 2003), after carrying out a modified meta-analysis of evaluations of afterschool programs, concluded that "after-school programs do seem to be associated with



increases in positive social outcomes, decreases in risky behavior, and more positive attitudes toward school and learning” (p. 16).

Research findings point to the positive impact these programs have on youth development and the reduction of negative behaviors (FYI, 2002). Participation in afterschool programs is associated with (a) better work and interpersonal skills (Brown et al., 2003; Hall, Yohalem, Tolman & Wilson, 2003; Miller, 2003; Vandell in FYI, 2002); (b) improved school attendance (Brown et al., 2003; Hall et al., 2003; Miller, 2003; Vandell in FYI, 2002); (c) improved behavior in school (Miller, 2003); (d) reduced dropout rates (Hall et al., 2003; OJJDP, 2005); (e) better grades/achievement (Brown et al., 2003; Hall et al., 2003; Miller, 2003; OJJDP, 2005; Vandell in FYI, 2002); (f) reduced grade retention (Miller, 2003; OJJDP, 2005); (g) more positive attitudes toward school (Brown et al., 2003; Hall et al., 2003; Miller, 2003); (h) improved homework quality (Hall et al., 2003; Miller, 2003; OJJDP, 2005); (i) reduced delinquency (OJJDP, 2005); (j) better relations with peers (Brown et al., 2003); and (k) reduced substance use and violence (Brown et al., 2003).

Several reviewers noted that the impact of these programs is often greater for low income as compared to middle income students (Brown et al., 2003; Miller, 2003; Vandell in FYI, 2002) and that afterschool programs can increase educational equity (Miller, 2003).

There is also some consensus that afterschool programs can meet needs not met in school or the community (e.g., engaging activities or positive peer group), that when met can result in increased engagement in learning (Miller, 2003; NIOST, 2005).

Competing Approaches

Hollister (2003) argues that there are two basic approaches to afterschool programming. One approach, what he labels “time on task,” reflects the use of afterschool programs to extend the school day and focus on skill development to enhance education performance. This approach would encompass one of the functions listed above, “improving academic performance.”

The other general approach he describes (Hollister, 2003), “home alone,” focuses on increasing the supervision of youth after school and providing a safe place where youth feel like they belong and can grow and have positive relationships with adults. This approach encompasses a wide array of programs and the rest of the functions of afterschool programs described earlier. Some of these programs focus primarily on keeping youth safe and providing some variety of recreational activities to occupy their time. They do not necessarily focus on developing youth in any way and may focus on managing problem behaviors.

Other programs taking this approach are developed through the youth development perspective. From this perspective, youth are seen as resources to be developed and not problems to be managed (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray & Foster, 1998). Being problem-free doesn’t necessarily lead to success as an adult and so the focus is on lowering the chance of later negative outcomes and behaviors through the promotion of healthy physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social development (Eccles & Gootman, 2001; Gambone, Klem & Connell, 2002).



Afterschool and other out-of-school time programs are seen as presenting opportunities for this focus.

Hollister (2003) sees tension between the “time on task” and “home alone” approaches which reflects an on-going struggle within the “afterschool movement” and competition for funding. Some groups argue that research points to a link between social and emotional development and academic success and that the two approaches should be merged (Hall et al., 2003).

Issues in Quality of Research on Afterschool Programs

The above outcomes are a positive sign that some afterschool programs are successful. However, with increasing expectations and pressure for accountability from these programs, particularly for those programs tied to academic performance, definitive links between program practices and outcomes are required (Brown et al., 2003; Eccles & Gootman, 2002). There is increasing pressure to make sure that effective programs are provided for youth and proven effective through scientific research. This requires experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research. Several conditions in the afterschool field make it difficult to obtain this level of research on programs.

One condition relates to the fact that the afterschool field is just emerging and only recently has begun to focus on accountability (FYI, 2002; HFRP, 2003). The growth of these programs has been so rapid, that there has been little time to build high quality programs based on solid research and evaluation (Beckett et al., 2001). It is often difficult to pinpoint the model on which any of these programs are based or find definitive links between theory and program characteristics or strategies (Hollister, 2003). In fact, Hollister (2003) argues that the characteristics of the afterschool field and programming are more reflective of a social movement than educational policy. Practitioners and researchers are just beginning to remedy this through an increasing focus on the design and implementation of afterschool evaluations (FYI, 2002; HFRP, 2003).

Evaluation is also problematic for afterschool programs due to the wide array of programs included in the grouping “afterschool.” This array resulted from the diversity of concerns about youth development that programs address and disagreements over the best means to intervene in this development (Lauer et al., 2004). This leads to highly varied goals and practices which results in difficulties in generalizing about the overall impact of afterschool programs (Lauer et al., 2004).

In order to achieve desired outcomes from afterschool programs, it is essential to know what types of practices produce what types of results for which groups under what circumstances. This information is important not only to assure positive outcomes for youth but also to avoid having a negative impact on youth through program efforts. There is increasing research evidence that not only are some programs not producing expected results, some poor quality afterschool programs are actually causing more harm than good (FYI, 2002). This fact highlights a “gap between the need to do something and the need to do it right” in afterschool programming (FYI, 2002, p. 3).



This diversity of afterschool programs and the lack of quality, rigorous evaluation, and empirical evidence that identifies the most effective program elements make it difficult to identify with any certainty “core elements” of programs.

Generalizations About Afterschool Program Quality

There were some consistent themes and observations about the quality of afterschool programs throughout the literature reviewed. These are summarized below.

Practices in quality afterschool programs, according to Fashola (1998), appear to fall into three main groups, regardless of whether the program focus is academic enhancement or safety/youth development. They include (Fashola, 1998):

1. Academic
 - Activities are either enrichment activities or linked to the school curriculum
 - Need qualified instructors, who are held accountable for student outcomes
 - May hire regular teachers to ensure alignment and continuity (but need to maintain separation between regular day and afterschool and may be hard to retain due to overload)
 - To align to school curriculum without regular teachers, can provide “homework assistance and activities that promote basic skills learning” (p. 50)
2. Recreational
 - Activities are implemented after academic ones
 - May include team sports, arts and science clubs
3. Cultural
 - Activities include “opportunities to develop important skills that are not taught in classroom” (p. 50), such as hobbies (sewing, skating), life skills (conflict resolution, respect), and other aspects of human development

Noam, Biancarosa, and Dechausay (2003) argue that afterschool activities also reflect different types of learning and that the most effective programs balance the three:

1. Extended learning from activities that are aligned to the regular school day, such as homework help and tutoring;
2. Enriched learning that is project-based, more hands-on and experiential than regular classroom, such as service-learning, and can be aligned with or disconnected from school curricula; and
3. Intentional learning, which includes all nonacademic activities that foster social and other nonacademic types of skills, like through sports (pp. 3-4).

There is evidence as well that offering a variety of activities (Beckett et al., 2001; Miller, 2003) and combining academic and social activities in afterschool programs can have positive effects on student achievement (Lauer et al., 2004).

“Within the after-school field, there is reasonable agreement on the key ingredients required for success: interesting activities, supportive relationships, and the capacity to deliver such things”



(Granger & Kane, 2004, p. 2). What is not as clear, and where there is less agreement, is on the means to develop these ingredients and put them together into a successful program (Granger & Kane, 2004).

From the youth development perspective: “what matters in any setting for achieving developmental outcomes” includes opportunities for youth to (Gambone et al, 2002, p. 40):

- Establish relationships that provide emotional and practical support from adults;
- Participate in challenging and interesting activities that are relevant to life experiences of youth; and
- Participate in decision making.

There seems to be agreement that there is no consensus on key practices required to produce specific outcomes. “There is no straightforward answer to the question of what works best in after-school programs. The answer depends on why the program was set up, the extent to which the program designed addresses the needs of the participants, and the extent to which the program shows positive outcomes when evaluated for evidence of effectiveness” (Fashola, 2002, p. 54).

Indications are that “one size doesn’t fit all” when it comes to quality afterschool programs (Lauer et al., 2004). Programs need to take into account youth and community needs and be age/developmentally-appropriate, and that will require different activities and goals for different age groups.

In addition, achieving different content outcomes might require different kinds of activities or practices, as was the case for reading and math programs in a meta-analysis carried out by Lauer and her colleagues (2004).

Issue of “Dosage.” It is becoming clearer through recent research that positive outcomes from afterschool programs are linked to levels of participation of youth (Granger & Kane, 2004; HFRP, 2003; Miller, 2003). Both duration and frequency of participation have been found to impact outcomes from these types of programs (HFRP, 2003). Since afterschool programs are voluntary, consistency of attendance has always been problematic (HFRP, 2003). If changing outcomes for youth depends on impacting their daily lives, as Granger and Kane (2004) argue, then daily attendance in afterschool programs is essential. This requires programs to provide engaging and age-appropriate activities to ensure that youth will opt to enroll and continue in afterschool programs (Granger & Kane, 2004). Without increasing attendance, programs cannot expect to achieve objectives (Granger & Kane, 2004).

Elements of Quality Programs

The 11 recent meta-analyses and reviews of out-of-school time evaluations, published between 2001 and 2003, cited in the article by the Harvard Family Research Project in 2003, served as the core of the search for elements of quality programs. A few additional sources referred to in these documents were also reviewed. Sources were grouped into the four tiers and any sources falling into Tier 4 were excluded. The sources with the highest level of rigor in their review, those in Tier 1, were relied on most heavily, followed by Tier 2 and then Tier 3 sources.



Some reviewers grouped elements into program dimensions. For the purposes of this review, these dimensions were synthesized into the following three dimensions: (1) Infrastructure—Program resources, staff management practices, and program administration; (2) Partnerships—Collaborative relationships with school, families and communities; and (3) Program/Practice—Quality program components, strategies and activities.

Thirteen of the sources reviewed contained lists of elements of quality afterschool programs. Four of these sources were categorized as Tier 1 sources; eight as Tier 2 sources—six that focused specifically on afterschool programs and two that analyzed youth development programs, including afterschool ones; and one as a Tier 3 source, produced by two federal agencies that summarized trends in afterschool research and programming.

Elements from these sources were then synthesized and grouped into the three program dimensions. From these sources, 20 elements that fell into the Infrastructure dimension were identified in at least one of the sources; four elements that fell into the Partnership dimension; and 26 elements that fell into the Program/Practice dimension.

To further narrow the list of elements into those most essential to quality programs, it was decided that elements had to be identified as key or essential elements by at least one Tier 1 source and three other sources, including at least two Tier 2 sources.

As was emphasized earlier, due to the lack of quality research in the area of afterschool programming, these lists are by no means definitive and should be viewed accordingly. The resulting elements are summarized in Charts 1, 3, and 4.

Notes on charts. Before moving on to discussion about the content of the charts, the overall organization of the charts needs explanation. There are three primary element charts: one with elements categorized for this review as related to program **infrastructure** (Chart 1); one with elements categorized for this review as related to program **partnerships** (Chart 3); and one with elements categorized for this review as related to program **program/practice** (Chart 4).

Each of the three primary element charts contains a synthesis of elements identified by the 13 sources. These elements are contained in the first column of each chart. The remainder of each chart includes a column for each of the 13 identified sources. An “x” or “X” in the column indicates that the element was reported as an essential ingredient for a quality afterschool program by that source. Two of the sources, Beckett et al. (2001) and Hollister (2003), made distinctions between elements with moderate research support and those with strong research support. These distinctions are indicated in the table by a small “x” for moderate research support and a large “X” for strong research support.

The fourth chart (Chart 2) outlines elements of reading- and math-focused afterschool programs that were identified as being effective through a meta-analysis of 53 studies measuring student achievement after participation in these types of afterschool programs (Lauer et al., 2004). Elements are listed by content area and by program dimension.



Infrastructure Elements

There was general recognition among sources reviewed that a solid infrastructure is key to successful implementation of any quality program, including those that take place after school. In many sources, infrastructure elements were assumed to be important but they were not measured or tracked by programs and could not be directly linked to successful outcomes. These elements, such as effective leadership, adequate facilities, or quality staff development, will therefore not be reported in rigorous meta-analyses. This means that they will be underreported in any chart of essential elements even though they may be important to the implementation of a successful program.

All but one (Hollister, 2003) of the 13 sources reporting elements included at least one infrastructure element as essential to implementing a good or quality afterschool program. In most sources, these were included in an overall list of key elements (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003; Eccles & Gootman, 2001; FYI, 2003; Gambone et al., 2002; Hall et al., 2003; High/Scope, 2005; Miller, 2003; OJJDP, 2005). A few other sources made it clear that, regardless of program content, these were necessary prerequisites for successful implementation of programs (Fashola, 1998; Noam et al., 2003; Vandell et al., 2004).

Although elements reported varied, there was a higher degree of consensus on important infrastructure elements than for partnership or program/practice elements. Seven of the 20 elements synthesized from the 13 sources and categorized as “infrastructure” for this review met the criteria for inclusion in the final infrastructure chart, Chart 1.

Three of the seven infrastructure elements coming out of the review involve program staffing, including the need to maintain low adult-participant ratios, to hire qualified staff, and to train staff and volunteers to work with program participants. Training staff and volunteers received the most support in reviewed sources of any infrastructure element, including reports in three of the four Tier 1 sources and in five Tier 2 sources.

There was also strong support across sources for the need for continuous and effective program evaluation to ensure quality programs. “To be most valuable, these assessments should evaluate the gains of after-school program students by comparing them with a control or comparison group” (Fashola, 1998). Quality evaluation necessitates the establishment of clear goals (Beckett et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998), another element highlighted in these sources that is also essential for successful program implementation.

Many reviewers, particularly in Tier 2 sources, reported ensuring the physical and/or psychological safety of participants as a major element. Programs should “foster a sense of safety and security among children” (Beckett et al., 2001, p. 26) and be an inviting and caring place for students to spend time (FYI, 2003). Programs should decrease conflict among peer groups and ensure positive peer interactions (Eccles & Gootman, 2001). Safety also should extend to safe transit and facilities (OJJDP, 2005) and stability and consistency in programming and staff (Hall et al., 2003).



Chart 1. Infrastructure Elements

Infrastructure Elements	Tier 1: Meta-analysis–afterschool evaluation				Tier 2: Mix of lit and research review, expert opinion/panel review, professional experience on afterschool and some combined with youth development						Tier 3: Secondary afterschool sources	General youth programs, including afterschool	
	Beckett et al. 2001*	Brown et al. 2003	Fashola 1998	Hollister 2003	Eccles & Gootman 2001	Miller 2003	Gambone et al. 2002	Hall et al. 2003	Vandell et al. 2004	Noam et al. 2003	USDOJ-USED 2000	High/Scope 2005 (YPQA)	FYI 2003
Train staff/volunteers	x	X	X			X			X	X		X	X
Maintain low adult-child ratio	x	X				X			X		X		
Carry out continuous program evaluation of progress and effectiveness	x		X			X				X	X		
Hire/retain educated/qualified staff	x		X			X					X		X
Ensure physical/psychological safety of participants	x				X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Support health/mental health of participants	x						X			X		X	X
Establish clear goals	x					X					X		X

*A small “x” indicates moderate research support for the element; a large “X” indicates strong research support for the element.

Note. Selection criteria for inclusion in the chart: The element had to be reported as a key element in afterschool programs in at least one Tier 1 source and three additional sources, including at least two Tier 2 sources.



Finally, programs should support the physical and mental health of participants not only during the program (Beckett et al., 2001; FYI, 2003; High/Scope, 2005) but also help youth “grow up to be physically and mentally healthy” (Gambone et al., 2002, p. 6). Programs should provide nutritious snacks or meals (Beckett et al., 2001; FYI, 2003) and address issues of personal hygiene (FYI, 2003). Programs can also improve outcomes by supporting “children’s developmental and learning capacities by reducing their health and mental health risks”(Noam et al., 2003, p. 73). Afterschool programs can also serve as links to vital health and mental health services available for youth in the community (Hall et al., 2003).

Reading afterschool programs. Lauer and her colleagues (2004) found that staff quality was an important element in reading afterschool programs. Staff needed to have training in the curriculum being used, have content knowledge, as well as the ability to modify program components as needed to adjust to student assessed needs (Chart 2).

Chart 2. Elements Identified in Quality Reading and Math Afterschool Programs*

	Reading Afterschool Programs	Math Afterschool Programs
Infrastructure	Staff quality	
Program/Practice	Student attendance important	
	Early elementary students–best outcomes	High school students–best outcomes
	One-on-one tutoring for low-achieving/high-risk students	Tutoring
	Development of academic and social skills	Combination of recreation with instruction
	Well-defined reading curriculum	Counseling and mentoring
	Prevention of learning loss	Additional time for remediation
	Duration of 45 hours up to 210 hours	Duration of 45 hours up to 100 hours

*As identified by Lauer et al., 2004 in a meta-analysis of 53 studies measuring student achievement in reading- and math-focused afterschool programs.



Partnership

There was general agreement that there should be collaboration of afterschool programs with communities and families. Nine of the 13 sources, including three Tier 1 sources, reported that collaboration with families was an important ingredient to quality afterschool programs (Chart 3). Families were seen as potential volunteers to support staff and assist with acquisition of resources (Beckett et al., 2001) and as important players on stakeholder advisory boards (Beckett et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998). Involvement of family members in planning and evaluation was shown to help ensure that programs meet family and youth needs (Beckett et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998). Communication with families is also important and regular meetings between staff and parents are beneficial (Beckett et al., 2001).

Nine of the 13 sources also reported that meaningful linkages and collaborative relationships should be developed with communities to assist in implementing quality programs (Chart 3). This included involving community-based organizations as partners, such as youth groups, parks and recreation services, and law enforcement (Beckett et al., 2001; FYI, 2003; High/Scope, 2005) to: (a) help recruit volunteers (Beckett et al., 2001); (b) use their facilities or get other types of material support of programs (Beckett et al., 2001); and (c) provide educational opportunities for participants (Beckett et al., 2001). Fashola (1998) found that having stakeholder advisory boards helped to facilitate communication and ties between communities, families, the school, and community-based organizations. Noam and his colleagues (2003) recommend reinserting the community into learning by “helping children acquire knowledge about their environment and their heritage” (p. 73).

As was the case for elements of program infrastructure, there was some recognition in these sources that collaboration of afterschool programs with schools might be desirable and/or necessary to achieve outcomes. However, there was not enough solid research evidence for it to be cited consistently as a key to program implementation.

Program/practice

The least amount of agreement appeared in reports of essential program or practice elements of afterschool programs. Out of 26 elements identified in the 13 sources, only five met the criteria for inclusion in the chart for program/practice elements (Chart 4). This is not surprising given the vast array of program goals, structure, staffing, and target audiences as well as evidence that essential elements depend on desired outcomes and type of content targeted. Academic programs geared toward improving participants’ reading skills have been found to require different elements than those focusing on math skills (Lauer et al., 2004). The same may be true for other subject areas (Lauer et al., 2004). Quality programs focusing on general youth development as opposed to those just providing homework help or recreation after school also seem to include different elements.



Chart 3. Partnership Elements

Partnership Elements	Tier 1: Meta-analysis–afterschool evaluation				Tier 2: Mix of literature and research review, expert opinion/panel review, professional experience on afterschool and some combined with youth development						Tier 3: Secondary afterschool sources	General youth programs, including afterschool	
	Beckett et al. 2001*	Brown et al. 2003	Fashola 1998	Hollister 2003*	Eccles & Gootman 2001	Miller 2003	Gambone et al. 2002	Hall et al. 2003	Vandell et al. 2004	Noam et al. 2003	USDOJ-USED 2000	High/Scope 2005 (YPQA)	FYI 2003
Ensure strong involvement of families in planning and activities	x		X	x	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Establish meaningful linkages/ collaboration with community	x		X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X

*A small “x” indicates moderate research support for the element; a large “X” indicates strong research support for the element.

Note. Selection criteria for inclusion in the chart: The element had to be reported as a key element in afterschool programs in at least one Tier 1 source and three additional sources, including at least two Tier 2 sources.



Chart 4. Program/Practice Elements

Program/Practice Elements	Tier 1: Meta-analysis–afterschool evaluation				Tier 2: Mix of literature and research review, expert opinion/panel review, professional experience on afterschool and some combined with youth development						Tier 3: Secondary afterschool sources	General youth programs, including afterschool Tier 2	
	Beckett et al. 2001*	Brown et al. 2003	Fashola 1998	Hollister 2003*	Eccles & Gootman 2001	Miller 2003	Gambone et al. 2002	Hall et al. 2003	Vandell et al. 2004	Noam et al. 2003	USDOJ-USED 2000	High/Scope 2005 (YPQA)	FYI 2003
Ensure flexibility and responsiveness to needs and maturation of participants and community	X	X	X			X		X		X			X
Establish/maintain supportive, caring relations between staff and participants	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Provide “opportunities for voice, choice and contribution”** of participants			X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Create appropriate, consistent structure for program			X		X	X					X		X
Develop/utilize age and “developmentally responsive”*** activities/ materials	x					X		X		X			

*A small “x” indicates moderate research support for the element; a large “X” indicates strong research support for the element.

**Hall et al., 2003, p. 21.

***J. Eccles (1996) as cited in Hall et al., 2003, p. 41.

Note. Selection criteria for inclusion in the chart: The element had to be reported as a key element in afterschool programs in at least one Tier 1 source and three additional sources, including at least two Tier 2 sources.



This idea that “one size might not fit all” in the case of afterschool programs is reflected in the five elements outlined in Chart 4. These elements are general in nature and could easily be applied to any type of program. They refer primarily to program climate and the need to be responsive to the youth participating in the program.

The program/practice element supported by three of the four Tier 1 sources was the need to ensure flexibility in program activities and be able to respond to the often changing needs of program participants. Programs need to offer some flexibility in programming to offer choices that appeal to participants (Beckett et al., 2001) and have more flexible schedules than during the school day (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003).

This flexibility, however, needs to be balanced with some consistent structure, including materials and training for staff, particularly if the program focuses on improvement in academic performance (Fashola, 1998).

Another element supported across a wide variety of sources related to the climate of afterschool programs. Quality programs were found to have positive staff (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003) and establish and maintain caring and supportive relationships between staff and participants (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003; Eccles & Gootman, 2001; Miller, 2003). Afterschool programs can help provide personal attention to youth (Hall et al., 2003) and give them opportunities to develop positive, stable relationships with caring adults (Beckett et al., 2001; Hall et al., 2003).

“Opportunities for voice, choice and contribution,” a phrase coined by Hall and her colleagues (2003, p. 21), was found to be key to keeping youth interested and involved in afterschool programs. Youth need to be viewed as partners in the program (FYI, 2003; High/Scope, 2005), included in program planning (Fashola, 1998; High/Scope, 2005), and provided opportunities to take ownership of their program experience (Hall et al., 2003). They should be provided a range of meaningful opportunities to be involved in the program and the community (FYI, 2003; Gambone et al., 2002; Hall et al., 2003) and to feel like they belong (Eccles & Gootman, 2001; Hall et al., 2003; Miller, 2003).

Finally, sources emphasized the importance of developing or utilizing age and “developmentally responsive” activities and materials (Beckett et al., 2001; Hall et al., 2003). “While the features of positive settings remain the same, their effective implementation varies along the development trajectory. Younger children demonstrate different cognitive and social needs than their older counterparts” (Hall et al., 2003, p. 39). Considering developmental stages as programs are being developed will make it more likely that program participation will result in the desired student outcomes. In addition, age-appropriate and engaging materials and activities keep student interest and lower dropout rates, particularly for older youth (Beckett et al., 2001; Miller, 2003).

Reading afterschool programs. As can be seen in Chart 2, there were seven elements highlighted in the evaluations Lauer and her colleagues (2004) reviewed related to program/practice in reading afterschool programs. Student attendance was important and early elementary students had the best outcomes. Using a well-defined reading curriculum and



structured approach was effective for all groups of students, elementary and secondary. Statistically significant positive results occurred in programs that were implemented for at least 45 hours but not longer than 210 hours.

Math afterschool programs. Six elements of program/practice for math-focused afterschool programs were highlighted in the study by Lauer and her colleagues (2004) (Chart 2). These programs were more successful for middle and high school students than for elementary students. Tutoring has a positive effect on math achievement, particularly when combined with computer-assisted instruction. Although not producing as large an effect as those with a purely academic focus, math-focused afterschool programs that included academic as well as social enrichment activities also resulted in improved achievement.



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*Denotes document referenced in the element charts

**Denotes document referenced in the quality program charts

***Denotes document referenced in both the element and quality program charts

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Element Descriptions

Infrastructure Elements

Train staff/volunteers

“Regardless of what the goals of the program may be, if the staff are not properly trained to implement the program well, it is doomed for failure. Training includes teaching the staff and volunteers how to work well with children, how to negotiate, how to adapt to the needs of different children of different ages, and how to implement the program components” (Fashola, 1998, p. 51). Training can also show staff how to work with children of different races and/or cultures and those with disabilities; may provide new ideas for hands-on activities; can improve expertise in subject matter being taught; and provide expertise in ways to assess student progress (USDOJ/USED, 2000). Training and staff development are key to providing staff and volunteers with the skills needed to help program participants achieve desired outcomes (Beckett et al., 2001).

Training on skills and/or topics related to program goals can be provided by colleagues or program staff or by taking coursework at local colleges (Beckett et al, 2001). Recommendations for what specifically to include in training for staff and volunteers varied widely in sources reviewed by the RAND research team, and the type of training necessary for any one afterschool program may depend on the strategies and outcomes of that program (Beckett et al., 2001). At least some type of orientation for new staff and volunteers should be carried out (Beckett et al., 2001).

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Maintain low adult-child ratio

“Rosenthal and Vandell (1996) found that (1) higher child-staff ratios are associated with more negative staff-child interactions; and (2) larger group sizes are associated with lower child ratings of program climate, emotional support, and support for autonomy and privacy” (as cited in Vandell et al., 2004, p. 9). They also found that lower ratios were associated with higher parent ratings of program quality (Beckett et al., 2001).

For best program results, staff to student ratios should be low, particularly in the case of tutoring and mentoring programs (USDOJ/USED, 2000). Low ratios make it more likely that children will have the opportunity for one-on-one time with and develop a personal relationship with one of the adults in the program (Beckett et al., 2001). The appropriate ratio will vary by the age and ability of the children involved, but as a general rule, the ratio should be “between 1:10 and 1:15 for groups of children age six and older” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 39).

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Carry out continuous program evaluation of progress and effectiveness

“Effective after-school programs have a continuous evaluation component built into the design so that program planners can objectively gauge their success based on the clear goals set for the program. For example, programs specifically designed to provide safe places for children need to monitor indicators associated with safety, such as drug use and victimization, but these programs may not assess academic achievement. On the other hand, programs with a strong academic component will want to assess student progress in the after-school and regular school program” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 49).

Continuous, quality evaluation necessitates the establishment of clear goals and desired outcomes so that progress toward reaching those goals can be assessed (Beckett et al., 2001; USDOJ/USED, 2000; Fashola, 1998). “To be most valuable, these assessments should evaluate the gains of after-school program students by comparing them with a control or comparison group” of similar, nonparticipating students (Fashola, 1998). Resulting data can be used by staff and stakeholders to assess whether the program is working as intended and whether it is organized and managed in the most effective way (USDOJ/USED, 2000).

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Hire/retain educated/qualified staff

This element covers a number of aspects of staff quality and retention. Much of the research points to the importance of hiring qualified, experienced staff for afterschool programs (Beckett et al., 2001). One group of researchers found that staff with higher levels of education had fewer negative interactions with children (Rosenthal & Vandell, 1996, as cited in Beckett et al, 2001) and greater parental satisfaction (Rosenthal & Vandell, 1996, as cited in USDOJ/USED, 2000). It is also important to have staff that are skilled and have experience working with school-age children on the type of activities to be implemented in the program (USDOJ/USED, 2000). This is particularly the case for programs with an academic focus, where the employment of trained professionals is a key to achieving program outcomes (Fashola, 1998).

Staff turnover rates in afterschool programs tend to be high (Beckett et al., 2001). Quality programs need to have consistent staffing to maintain effectiveness. Adequate training is central to retaining quality staff (USDOJ/USED, 2000; Fashola, 1998). When staff is not adequately trained, attrition rates are higher (USDOJ/USED, 2000; Fashola, 1998). Other contributing factors to high staff turnover include: low compensation (Beckett et al., 2001; USDOJ/USED, 2000; Noam et al., 2003); few career development opportunities and/or no career path for afterschool staff (Beckett et al., 2001; Noam et al., 2003); long hours (Beckett et al., 2001); and inflexible scheduling (USDOJ/USED, 2000).

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Ensure physical/psychological safety of participants

Quality programs ensure the physical and psychological safety of participants and staff. Program facilities should be physically secure, safe and accessible for participants and staff (Hall et al, 2003; USDOJ/USED, 2000). To make facilities safer, they could be monitored by surveillance systems and children could sign in and out (Beckett et al., 2001). The facility should provide adequate space for a variety of activities and age ranges (USDOJ/USED, 2000). Transportation also needs to be safe and could “be provided through such methods as staff escorts and crossing guards” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 40).

Programs should also “foster a sense of safety and security among children” (Beckett et al., 2001, p. 26) and be an inviting and caring place for students to spend time (FYI, 2003). Program staff should decrease conflict among peer groups and ensure positive peer interactions (Eccles & Gootman, 2001; Hall et al., 2003). Maintaining stability and consistency in programming and staff also helps to foster a sense of safety (Hall et al., 2003).

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Support health/mental health of participants

The physical and mental health of participants should be supported not only during the program (Beckett et al., 2001; FYI, 2003; High/Scope, 2005) but also to help youth “grow up to be physically and mentally healthy” in the long term (Gambone et al., 2002, p. 6). “Good afterschool programs provide a nutritious snack and other meals when appropriate, for relaxation and socializing and to promote sound nutrition for participants” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 41). Programs may also address issues of personal hygiene (Beckett et al., 2001; FYI, 2003). Staff should be trained in first aid (Beckett et al., 2001).



Programs can improve outcomes through “Support [of] children’s developmental and learning capacities by reducing their health and mental health risks”(Noam et al., 2003, p. 73). Afterschool programs can also serve as a link to vital health and mental health services available for youth in the community (Hall et al., 2003). “The degree to which participants’ basic needs are being met obviously affects programs’ ability to successfully engage them” (Hall et al., 2003, p. 26).

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Establish clear goals

Afterschool programs should develop a clear mission and goals (FYI, 2003; USDOJ/USED, 2000). Program goals may range from providing a “safe haven” to youth in the after-school hours to academic enrichment and recreation. Clear goals can help to communicate to parents, youth, funding agencies, and community members what the programs have to offer (USDOJ/USED, 2000).

Whatever the program goals, once they are established, they need to guide “allocation of funding, the structure of activities of the program, the overall size and staffing, plans for long-term sustainability and many other factors” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 37). The program evaluation plan can then be designed to assess progress toward these goals. In fact, quality evaluation necessitates the establishment of clear goals (Beckett et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998).

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Partnership Elements

Ensure strong involvement of families in planning and activities

Collaboration with families is an important element of quality afterschool programs. Families are seen as potential volunteers to support staff and assist with acquisition of funds and other resources (Beckett et al., 2001) and as important members of stakeholder advisory boards (Beckett et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998). Involvement of family members in planning and evaluation helps ensure that programs meet family and youth needs and include parent perceptions in program assessments (Beckett et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998). This involvement is particularly important for programs focusing on cultural and recreational activities to make sure selected activities appeal to children and capture their interest (Fashola, 1998; USDOJ/USED, 2000).

“Successful programs seek to involve parents in orientation sessions, workshops, volunteer opportunities, parent-advisory committees, and in a wide range of adult learning opportunities, such as parenting, computer, and English as a second language classes” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 44). Some programs require parents to be involved in some program aspect (Beckett et al., 2001).

Communication with families is important and higher quality programs reported more parent-staff conversations than lower quality programs (Beckett et al., 2001). Parents should also be kept informed about activities and the progress of their child, which could be carried out through a “parent information center, a family website, newsletters, information flyers, or a once-a-month family night” (USDOJ/USED, 2000, p. 44).

Programs should be sensitive to the schedules of parents, make programs affordable, provide transportation, and consider making accommodations for families with more than one child (USDOJ/USED, 2000, pp. 45).

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Establish meaningful linkages/collaboration with community

Meaningful linkages and collaborative relationships should be developed with communities to assist in implementing quality programs. This includes involving community-based organizations as partners, such as youth groups, parks and recreation services, and law enforcement (Beckett et al., 2001; High/Scope, 2005; FYI, 2003;) to: (a) help recruit volunteers (Beckett et al., 2001); (b) provide tutors or mentors (USDOJ/USED, 2000); (c) provide funding, facilities or other types of material support of programs (Beckett et al., 2001); (d) provide expertise or job observation experiences (USDOJ/USED, 2000); and (e) provide educational and service opportunities for participants (Beckett et al., 2001; USDOJ/USED, 2000). Noam and his colleagues (2003) recommend reinserting the community into learning by “helping children acquire knowledge about their environment and their heritage” (Noam et al., 2003).

Effective collaboration requires building consensus and establishing true partnerships (USDOJ/USED, 2000). Stakeholder advisory boards can help facilitate communication and strengthen ties among partner groups and help shape a common program vision (Fashola, 1998; USDOJ/USED, 2000).

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Program/Practice Elements

Ensure flexibility and responsiveness to needs and maturation of participants and community

Quality programs ensure flexibility in program activities and are able to respond to the often changing needs of program participants. Programs need to offer some flexibility in programming to offer choices that appeal to participants of different ages and abilities (Beckett et al., 2001). Programs should not be as highly scheduled as the school day (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003) and provide some time for children to be more on their own without adult direction (Beckett et al., 2001).

“In the National Study of Before- and After-School Programs (RMC Corporation, 1993), programs that were assessed as lower-quality tended to be more rigid and less likely to provide children the choice to follow their own interests or curiosity, explore other cultures, or develop hobbies. Children in these lower-quality programs were not encouraged to try new activities, think for themselves, ask questions, or test new ideas” (Beckett et al., 2001, p. 19).

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Establish/maintain supportive, caring relations between staff and participants

Quality afterschool programs were found to have positive staff (Beckett et al, 2001; Brown et al., 2003) and to establish and maintain caring and supportive relationships between staff and participants (Beckett et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2003; Eccles & Gootman, 2001; Miller, 2003) and staff and parents (Beckett et al., 2001). These relationships help serve as the foundation of a warm climate that includes encouragement and respect and makes students feel welcome and relaxed (Beckett et al., 2001). Adults providing care and support could include staff paid by the program or community or college student volunteers (Hall et al., 2003).

Good communication in these relationships is important as well as guidance and responsiveness to participants (Eccles & Gootman, 2001). These relationships help provide personal attention to youth (Hall et al., 2003) and give them opportunities to develop positive, stable relationships with caring adults (Beckett et al., 2001; Hall et al., 2003). The achievement of program outcomes often depends on the development of these supportive relationships.

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Provide “opportunities for voice, choice & contribution” of participants

“Opportunities for voice, choice and contribution,” a phrase coined by Hall and her colleagues (2003, p. 21), was found to be key to keeping youth interested and involved in afterschool programs. Youth need to be viewed as partners in the program (High/Scope, 2005; FYI, 2003), included in program planning (Fashola, 1998; High/Scope, 2005) and provided opportunities to take ownership of their program experience (Hall et al., 2003). They should be provided a range of meaningful opportunities to be involved in the program and the community (Gambone et al., 2002; FYI, 2003; Hall et al., 2003) and made to feel like they belong (Eccles & Gootman, 2001; Hall et al., 2003; Miller, 2003). Programs need to ensure meaningful inclusion for *all* participants, regardless of “gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities” (Eccles & Gootman, 2001, p. 9). Afterschool programs may be the one place where young people can develop and exercise leadership and decision-making skills and feel like productive, contributing members (Hall et al., 2003).



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Create appropriate, consistent structure for program

Program flexibility needs to be balanced with appropriate, consistent structure, including well-developed procedures, agreed upon materials, and structured professional development for staff, particularly if the program focuses on improvement in academic performance (Fashola, 1998). If programs develop their own curricula or strategies, time needs to be built in for development, planning, and training on program components (Fashola, 1998).

Eccles and Gootman (2001, p. 9) argue that programs also need to provide appropriate structure for program participation that includes setting limits, developing and enforcing clear and consistent rules, expectations, and clear boundaries.

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Develop/utilize age and “developmentally responsive” activities/materials

It is important for programs to develop or utilize age- and developmentally-appropriate activities and materials (Beckett et al., 2001; Hall et al., 2003). “While the features of positive settings remain the same, their effective implementation varies along the development trajectory. Younger children demonstrate different cognitive and social needs than their older counterparts” (Hall et al., 2003, p. 39).

Taking developmental stages into consideration in programming will make it more likely that program participation will result in the desired student outcomes. In addition, age-appropriate and engaging materials and activities keep student interest and lower dropout rates, particularly for older youth (Beckett et al., 2001; Miller, 2003).

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Quality Program Charts and Overviews

Quality Program Charts

In addition to highlighting essential elements of quality programs, the National Dropout Prevention Center was also charged by CIS to identify afterschool programs that were found through this review of scientific studies to be effective. As was discussed earlier, the scientific evidence currently available on the effectiveness of afterschool programs is insufficient to identify a definitive list of model afterschool programs. Further research is required before truly “effective” or “model” afterschool programs can be identified.

There are, however, a group of afterschool programs that do have evidence rigorous enough to allow for distinctions in levels of quality among programs. These include programs that have been assessed through experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation designs. A number of reviews and meta-analyses have identified programs with this level of evidence. Due to the rigor of the review and the amount of detail supplied on programs identified, the search for quality programs began with those included in the Harvard Family Research Family article (2003) highlighted earlier.

Twenty-seven afterschool programs were highlighted in that review (HFRP, 2003), each with independent evaluations using experimental or quasi-experimental designs and reporting statistically significant results. To corroborate the findings on the level of quality of these programs, eight other sources (Hollister, 2003; CSVP, 2005; Brown et al., 2001; Fashola, 1998; Catalano et al., 1999; Roth et al., 1998; Eccles & Templeton, 2002; Scott-Little et al., 2002) that assessed programs based on rigor of evaluation were also reviewed. From the analysis contained in these eight sources, the 27 programs were divided into three levels of quality, based on the evidence presented about the quality of evaluation and the findings on effectiveness of each program. The three levels are described below and summarized in Charts 5-7.

Level 1 quality programs, those included in Chart 5, are the highest quality programs found through the review. They are considered Level 1 quality because: (1) they had statistically significant results (as judged by the HFRP review); (2) they were cited in at least one other Tier 1 or Tier 2 source as a “quality,” “model” or “effective” program; and (3) reviews of program evaluation and results in these other sources were consistently positive.

Level 2 quality programs, those included in Chart 6, are of somewhat lower quality than Level 1 quality programs. They are considered Level 2 quality because: (1) they had statistically significant results (as judged by the HFRP review); (2) they were cited in at least one other Tier 1 or Tier 2 source as a “quality,” “model” or “effective program”; but (3) the reports on these programs by other sources indicated mixed or inconclusive results.

The quality of Level 3 quality programs, those included in Chart 7, is less well documented than for Level 1 and 2 quality programs. This indicates that programs had statistically significant



results (as judged by the HFRP review), but that they were not cited in at least one other Tier 1 or Tier 2 source as a “quality,” “model” or “effective” program.



Chart 5. Level 1 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
Across Ages, Philadelphia, PA	Exp	X	X				X	X	X	
Big Brothers Big Sisters, national	Exp	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Howard Street Tutoring Program, Chicago, IL	Exp	X	X			X				
Louisiana State Youth Opportunities Unlimited, LA	Exp	X	X					X		
Teen Outreach Program, national	Exp/QExp	X					X		X	

*Exp=experimental; QExp=quasi-experimental; Non-Exp=non-experimental

Note: Level 1 quality programs, those included in this chart, are the highest quality programs found through the review. These programs were cited in the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) (2003) article: *A review of out-of-school time program quasi-experimental and experimental evaluation results*. They are considered Level 1 quality because they have all been independently evaluated with experimental and/or quasi-experimental data, had statistically significant results (as judged by the HFRP review), were cited in at least one other Tier 1 or Tier 2 source as a quality, model or effective program, and reviews of program evaluation and results in these other sources were consistently positive.



Chart 6. Level 2 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
After School Education and Safety Program—Santa Ana, CA	QExp	X			X some results sig only at certain sites; program dosage key; mixed eval results					
Boys and Girls Clubs of America Stay SMART, national	QExp	X						X Stay Smart some impact; not SMART leaders	X pos drug use/sex	
Children’s Aid Society Carrera-Model Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program	Exp	X							X effective for girls	



Chart 6. Level 2 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
Extended-day Tutoring Program, Memphis, TN	QExp	X	X poor eval design			X poor eval design; dosage key				
Foundations School-Age Enrichment Program	QExp – HFRP Non-Exp -- SERVE	X			X some pos results from non-exp data					X convenience comparison groups
Los Angeles’ Better Educated Students for Tomorrow	QExp	X			X dosage key	X poor eval design; mixed results		X		X poor eval design; pos achievement
New Orleans ADEPT Drug and Alcohol Community Prevention Project	QExp	X						X mixed results		



Chart 6. Level 2 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
Quantum Opportunities Program, Philadelphia, PA	Exp	X	X reservations about program impact on academics—limited pos results only at Phil. Site; attrition issues elsewhere	Dropped as model program			X pos on grad rate	X pos & mixed results; best at Phil. Site; implement. key	X mixed results; neg on dropout	
The After-School Corporation, NY	QExp – HFRP Non-Exp – SERVE	X			X pos self-report data; pos non-exp data					
Virtual Y, New York, NY	QExp – HFRP Non-Exp - SERVE	X			X pos results w/certain program features w/non-exp data					



Chart 6. Level 2 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
Woodrock Youth Development Project, Philadelphia, PA	Exp	X	X pos for younger group		X pos self-report data		X increase pos attitudes on drug use – older subgroup	X pos & mixed results	X increase pos attitudes on drug use – older subgroup	

*Exp=experimental; QExp=quasi-experimental; Non-Exp=non-experimental

Note: Level 2 quality programs, those included in this chart, are of somewhat lower quality than Level 1 quality programs. These programs were cited in the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) (2003) article: *A review of out-of-school time program quasi-experimental and experimental evaluation results*. They are considered Level 2 quality because, although they all have been independently evaluated with experimental and/or quasi-experimental data, had statistically significant results (as judged by the HFRP review), and were cited in at least one other Tier 1 or Tier 2 source as a quality, model or effective program, the **reports on these programs by other sources indicated mixed or inconclusive results.**



Chart 7. Level 3 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
4-H Youth Development Program--Cornell Cooperative Extension, NY	QExp	X								
After-School Achievement Program, Houston, TX	QExp	X								
Bayview Safe Haven, San Francisco, CA	QExp	X								
Beacons Initiative — San Francisco, CA	QExp	X								
Boys and Girls Clubs of America Project Learn/ Educational Enhancement Program, national	QExp	X								
Maryland After School Community Grant Program	Exp/QExp	X								



Chart 7. Level 3 Quality Programs

Program	Evaluation Design*	HFRP 2003	Hollister 2003	CSVP Blueprints 2005	Brown et al. 2001	Fashola 1998	Catalano et al. 1999	Roth et al. 1998	Eccles & Templeton 2002	Scott-Little et al. 2002
North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service	QExp	X								
San Diego’s ‘6 to 6’ Extended School Day Program	QExp	X								
Thunderbirds Teen Center Program, Phoenix, AZ	QExp	X								

*Exp=experimental; QExp=quasi-experimental; Non-Exp=non-experimental

Note: The quality of Level 3 quality programs, those included in this chart, is less well documented than for Level 1 and 2 quality programs. These programs were cited in the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) (2003) article: *A review of out-of-school time program quasi-experimental and experimental evaluation results*. This indicates that they have all been independently evaluated with experimental and/or quasi-experimental data and had statistically significant results (as judged by the HFRP review). **They were not, however, cited in at least one other Tier 1 or Tier 2 source as a quality, model or effective program.**



Quality Afterschool Program Overviews and Contacts

There are a variety of databases and listings that contain information about effective afterschool programs. The Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) Out-of-School Time (OST) Program Evaluation Database is the most comprehensive of these. The program profiles contain valuable evaluation information. The database is searchable, but an alphabetical list by the name of the program is available. (<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html>). Other resources that list quality afterschool programs are the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) (<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/modprog/modprog.htm>), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (<http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>), and Helping America's Youth (<http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programtool-ap.cfm>).

All of the programs listed below may be found in the OST Program Evaluation Database. Each program listing has a web address for the program, if available; a brief overview; and contact information. For a comprehensive profile of the program which includes evaluation information, please go to <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html>

Program Name

4-H Youth Development Program—Cornell Cooperative Extension
<http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/>

Overview

This experiential education program for young people reaches youth throughout the state of New York, and in every county in the United States. The programs create positive opportunities for youth to develop life skills and become engaged in the work of Cornell University. The four H's stand for Head (clear thinking and decision making); Heart (strong personal values, positive self-concept, and concern for others); Hands (larger service, workforce preparedness, life skills, science, and technology literacy); and Health (better living and healthy lifestyles). The New York program combines the efforts of youth, volunteer leaders, and Cornell University staff and faculty with financial resources from county, state, and federal governments; the New York State 4-H Foundation; and many organizational program partners, businesses, and individuals. The program takes place in all 58 New York State counties and serves 5-19-year olds.

Contact

New York State 4-H Youth Development
Cornell Cooperative Ext.
340 Roberts Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
(607) 255-4799
(607) 255-0788
nys4h@cornell.edu



Program Name

Across Ages

<http://templecil.org/Acrossageshome.htm>

Overview

Sponsored by Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning (CIL) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Across Ages program uses older adults as mentors for youth. Originally designed solely as a school-based program, the program's design now uses a wide-ranging prevention strategy suitable for a variety of settings during both school time and out-of-school time. The program targets its supports to five domains: the individual, the family, the school, the peer group, and the community. By acting as advocates, challengers, nurturers, role models, and friends, older (age 55 and over) mentors help “at-risk” youth develop awareness, self-confidence, and skills to help resist drugs and overcome obstacles.

Contact

Andrea Taylor, PhD

Director of Training

Across Ages Developer

Center for Intergenerational Learning

Temple University

1601 North Broad Street, USB 206

Philadelphia, PA 19122

(215) 204-6708

(215) 204-3195

ataylor@temple.edu

Program Name

After School Achievement Program (ASAP)

<http://www.houstontx.gov/parks/ASAPpage.html>

Overview

The After School Achievement Program (ASAP) was founded in 1997 by the City of Houston, with the support of the Joint City/County Commission of Children and other community leaders, to provide afterschool programming to Houston's children and youth. The ASAP program has six goals: (1) to reduce crime committed by and against juveniles; (2) to prevent delinquency; (3) to provide a safe, supervised place for youth; (4) to provide academic enhancement and enrichment; (5) to promote school attendance and discourage school drop out; and (6) to motivate youth to develop good citizenship. The program has expanded from seven sites in 1997 to 95 sites in 2000–2001.



Contact

After School Achievement Program
Houston Parks and Recreation Department
2299 South Wayside Drive
Houston, TX 77023
(713) 845-1146

Program Name

After School Education and Safety Program—Santa Ana, California

Overview

The purpose of the program is to support positive development for Santa Ana middle school students, many of whom live in unsafe neighborhoods that offer few out-of-school learning opportunities. In particular, the program aims to provide a safe environment while targeting improvements in academic achievement, attendance, and behavior. The District and its partners designed the program to integrate academics with recreational enrichment so that the multiple academic and social needs of participating students are met.

Contact

Peggy Adin
Santa Ana Unified School District
3321 South Fairview Street
Santa Ana, CA 92704
(714) 433-3484

Program Name

Bayview Safe Haven

Overview

The Bayview Safe Haven program (BVSH) is an afterschool program for at-risk youth ages 10–17. It is designed to help youth stay in school and out of the criminal justice system, while positioning them for responsible adulthood and improving the quality of life in their families and community. In a community with a dearth of programs for at-risk youth, BVSH is designed to provide a hub of structured activity and to serve as a central site where public and private collaborators can channel resources and services to the youth and families of San Francisco's Bayview/Hunter's Point neighborhood.

Contact

Lena Miller
Bayview Safe Haven
1395 Mendell St.
San Francisco, CA 94124



(415) 822-8894
(415) 822-7016
bayviewsafehaven@aol.com

Program Name

Beacon Initiative—San Francisco, California
<http://www.sfbeacon.org/>

Overview

The San Francisco Beacon Initiative (SFBI) was founded by a broad-based group of San Francisco leaders who wanted to transform public schools in low-income neighborhoods into youth and family centers that would serve as beacons of activity uniting communities. Stakeholder groups, facilitated by the Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD) and the Institute for Research and Reform in Education (IRRE), developed a theory of change to be used throughout the initiative to guide its action and management. At the site level, the theory of change emphasized the following four critical developmental supports and opportunities for youth development: supportive relationships, safe places to spend leisure time, interesting and challenging learning experiences, and opportunities for meaningful roles and responsibilities.

Contact

San Francisco Beacon Initiative
Cissie Lam, Program Administrative Assistant
1390 Market Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-8976
(415) 554-8965
clam@dcyf.org

Program Name

Big Brothers Big Sisters
<http://www.bbbsa.org/site/pp.asp?c=iuJ3JgO2F&b=14576>

Overview

Founded in 1904, Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) is the oldest and largest youth mentoring organization in the United States. In 2004, the organization served more than 225,000 youth ages 5-18, in 5,000 communities across the country, through a network of 470 agencies. National research has shown that the positive relationships between Big Brothers and Big Sisters and their Littles have a direct, measurable, and lasting impact on children's lives. Research and anecdotal evidence show specifically that BBBS' one-to-one mentoring helps at-risk youth overcome the many challenges they face. Little Brothers and Sisters are less likely to begin using illegal drugs, consume alcohol, skip school and classes, or engage in acts of violence. They have greater self-



esteem, confidence in their schoolwork performance, and are able to get along better with their friends and families.

Contact

Big Brothers Big Sisters National Office
230 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 567-7000
(215) 567-0394

Program Name

Boys and Girls Clubs of America Project Learn/Educational Enhancement Program
<http://www.bgca.org/programs/education.asp>

Overview

This community-based program implemented in local Boys & Girls Clubs (BGC) across the country is designed to improve academic achievement of at-risk students. The program consists of five components: (1) homework help and tutoring, (2) high-yield learning activities to help youth apply what they learn in the classroom, (3) incentives that reward participants for positive academic participation and to encourage parental involvement, (4) parental involvement, and (5) collaboration with schools to help develop individualized plans for participations to build their competency in challenging subjects.

Contact

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1230 Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 487-5765
(404) 487-5789

Program Name

Boys and Girls Clubs of America Stay SMART
<http://www.bgca.org/programs/healthlife.asp>

Overview

The SMART Moves (Skills Mastery and Resistance Training) prevention/education program addresses the problems of drug and alcohol use and premature sexual activity. Based on proven techniques, the program uses a team approach involving Club staff, peer leaders, parents and community representatives. More than simply emphasizing a "Say No" message, the program teaches young people ages 6-15 how to say no by involving them in discussion and role-playing, practicing resistance and refusal skills, developing assertiveness, strengthening decision-making skills, and analyzing media and peer influence. The ultimate goal: to promote abstinence from substance abuse and adolescent sexual involvement through the practice of responsible behavior.



Stay SMART is a component of SMART Moves, the National Prevention Program of Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA). The program is modeled after a school-based intervention designed to build personal and social competence in at-risk youth. The program seeks to teach youth a broad spectrum of social and personal competence skills and to help them identify and resist peer and other social pressures to use alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana, as well as to engage in early sexual activity. SMART Leaders I and SMART Leaders II are booster programs designed to reinforce the skills and knowledge learned during the initial program, as well as enhance the abilities of program participants to serve as leaders and role models for their peers in the area of drug and sexual activity prevention.

Contact

Sharon Hemphill
Senior Director, Health & Life Skills
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1230 W. Peachtree St, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 487-5826
(404) 487-5789
shemphill@bgca.org

Program Name

Childrens’s Aid Society Carrera-Model Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program
http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/locations_services/healthservices/teenpregnancy

Overview

Launched in 1984 in one of Children's Aid Society's (CAS) community centers in Harlem, the program practices a holistic approach aiming to empower youth, help them develop a desire for a productive future, and aid young people in improving their sexual literacy and their understanding of the consequences of sexual activity. CAS operates numerous community centers throughout New York City, while the Carrera-model has been implemented at 50 adaptation sites nationally.

Contact

Dr. Michael A. Carrera
The Children's Aid Society/National Training Center
350 E. 88th St.
New York, NY 10128
(212) 949-4800



Program Name

Extended-Day Tutoring Program

Overview

During the 1995–1996 school year, the Extended-Day Tutoring Program was implemented with first through fourth graders in Title I Memphis City Schools. The program used a curriculum based on Success For All (SFA) with the purpose of improving participating students' literacy skills. (Program was discontinued in 1997.)

Program Name

Foundations School-Age Enrichment Program

<http://www.foundationsinc.org/AfterschoolEducationFolder/programs.asp>

Overview

Foundations operates extended-day enrichment programs before school, afterschool, and during the summer. Programs are implemented in many urban and rural schools in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern portions of the United States, serving children in all grade levels. The Foundations' programs feature curricula that are focused on content-rich experiences with daily activities emphasizing academic subjects and the physical, social, and emotional development of participants. Each yearlong curriculum manual focuses on a theme designed to reinforce academic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Contact

Darryl Bundrige

Director of Programs

Foundations, Inc.

Moorestown West Corporate Center

2 Executive Dr., Ste. 1

Moorestown, NJ 08057-4245

(856) 533-1600

(856) 533-1601

DBundrige@foundationsinc.org

info@foundationsinc.org

Program Name

Howard Street Tutoring Program

Overview

The purpose of the Howard Street Tutoring Program is to improve reading and reading comprehension skills in low-ability readers in the second and third grades. An experimental evaluation shows that the Howard Street Tutoring Program improved the word recognition, reading passages, and spelling scores of its participants.



Contact

Not available

Program Name

Los Angeles' Better Educated Students for Tomorrow (LA's BEST)

<http://www.lasbest.org>

Overview

The LA's Better Educated Students for Tomorrow (LA's BEST) Program is an afterschool program created in 1988 by the mayor's office as a partnership between the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the private sector. The program has five goals: (1) a safe environment, (2) enhanced opportunities through the integration of an educational support structure, (3) educational enrichment activities to supplement and deepen the regular program, (4) recreational activities, and (5) interpersonal skills and self-esteem development. LA's BEST students receive homework assistance, library activities, and a variety of other activities, provided in safe environments.

Contact

Carla Sanger

President and CEO

LA's BEST

Office of the Mayor

200 N. Spring Street, M-120

Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 978-0801

(213) 978-0800

Carla.Sanger@lacity.org

Program Name

Louisiana State Youth Opportunities Unlimited (LSYOU)

http://calvin.ednet.lsu.edu/~lsyou/index_actual.php

Overview

The school-year component is an intense intervention into all aspects of the student's life which includes an individualized support system until the student graduates or enters an alternative environment. This support system includes tutoring, exit test preparation, mentoring, personal and family counseling, and weekend retreats on the LSU campus. The summer component is a 24 hours per day, seven days per week, six week summer residential component for middle school/ junior high students who are at high risk for dropping out of school. It consists of academics, work, counseling, and recreational activities offered in an environment that emphasizes family security and a sense of belonging.



Contact

LSYOU Program
Louisiana State University
118 William Hatcher Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803.
(225) 578-1751

Program Name

Maryland After School Community Grant Program (MASCGRP)

Overview

The goal of the Maryland After School Community Grant Program (MASCGRP), which served Maryland students in grades four through eight, was to strengthen youth resiliency and prevent substance abuse, violence, and delinquency among youth by increasing the availability of high quality, structured afterschool programs. The program's objectives were to increase participants': (1) supervised afterschool time, (2) academic performance, (3) social skills, (4) attachments to prosocial adults, (5) beliefs against substance use and illegal behavior, and (6) involvement and investment in constructive activities.

Contact

Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention
300 E. Joppa Rd, Suite 1105
Baltimore, MD 21286-3016
(410) 321-3521 ext. 356
(410) 321-3116

Program Name

New Orleans ADEPT Drug and Alcohol Community Prevention Project

Overview

The ADEPT Drug and Alcohol Community Prevention Project (ADACPP) is a primary-level alcohol and other drug-use prevention program that provided afterschool child care services to 24 different low-income area elementary schools of the New Orleans Public School District during 144 days of the school year. This project expanded on a previously existing prevention model created and administered by ADEPT and previously funded by the state of Louisiana. The program focused on building positive self-esteem and providing homework assistance and activities for social and emotional growth within a minority environment. It attempted to address precursors of substance abuse, including: environmental risk factors, the greater likelihood of solitary and peer-related trials of risky behavior, lack of parental supervision and support of homework, and associated problems of low self-esteem.



Contact

Not Available

Program Name

North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fourh/afterschool/>

Overview

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service (NC CES), a state member of the Federal Extension System/U.S. Department of Agriculture, provides training and technical assistance to school-age care (SAC) programs in North Carolina with the goal of increasing the availability and quality of the care for school-age youth.

Contact V

NC 4-H School-Age Care Program

Ben Silliman

Box 7638, NCSU

Raleigh, NC 27695

(919) 515-6387

(919) 515-4241

ben_silliman@ncsu.edu

Program Name

Quantum Opportunities

<http://www.oicofamerica.org/onlprog.html>

Overview

The Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) is designed to help at-risk youth make a “quantum leap” up the ladder of opportunity through academic, developmental, and community service activities, coupled with a sustained relationship with a peer group and a caring adult, offered to them over their four years of high school. The QOP framework strives to compensate for some of the deficits found in poverty areas by (a) compensating for both the perceived and real lack of opportunities, which are characteristic of disadvantaged neighborhoods, (b) providing interactions and involvement with persons who hold prosocial values and beliefs, (c) enhancing participants’ academic and functional skills to equip them for success, and (d) reinforcing positive achievements and actions.

Contact

C. Benjamin Lattimore

Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Inc.

1415 Broad Street

Philadelphia, PA 19122



(215) 236-4500
(215) 236-7480
oicofamerica@org

Program Name

San Diego's 6 to 6 Extended School Day Program
<http://www.sandiego.gov/6to6/>

Overview

The program is designed to provide access to high quality, affordable enrichment programs before and afterschool to every elementary and middle school student in the city of San Diego, California. The program provides a safe place for students while their parents are at work, one that is both academically enriching and recreationally stimulating.

Contact

The City of San Diego's "6 to 6" Extended School Day Program
1200 Third Avenue, Suite 1300
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 236-6312
sd6to6@sandiego.gov

Program Name

Teen Outreach Program
<http://www.wymancenter.org/shell.asp?id=18>

Overview

Teen Outreach Program (TOP) is a school-based program involving young people ages 12–17 in volunteer service in their communities. The program connects the volunteer work to classroom-based, curriculum-guided group discussions on various issues important to young people. Designed to increase academic success and decrease teen pregnancy, TOP helps youth develop positive self-image, learn valuable life skills, and establish future goals.

Contact

Claire Wyneken, Chief Programs Officer
Wyman Center
600 Kiwanis Drive
Eureka, MO 63025
(636) 938-5245 ext. 236
(636) 938-5289
clairew@wymancenter.org



Program Name

The After-School Corporation (TASC)

<http://www.tascorp.org/>

Overview

The After-School Corporation (TASC) has a two-part mission: (a) to enhance the quality of afterschool programs in New York by emphasizing program components associated with student success and program sustainability and (b) to increase the availability of afterschool opportunities in New York by providing resources and strategies for establishing or expanding afterschool projects. Underlying both goals is a commitment to the principle that afterschool programming is a public good and an appropriate public sector responsibility. TASC seeks to develop public and private support for high quality afterschool services.

Contact

Lucy Friedman

President

The After-School Corporation

925 9th Avenue

New York, NY

(212) 547-6951

Email: lfriedman@tascorp.org

Program Name

Thunderbirds Teen Center Program

<http://phoenix.gov/PRL/arythctr.html>

Overview

The Thunderbirds Teen Center Program is a multifunctional facility in North Phoenix, Arizona, operated through the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department. The Teen Center's mission is to promote the positive self-development of teens, ages 13 to 19, by providing a comprehensive service system during out-of-school time that focuses on the whole individual. The primary goal of the Teen Center Program is to provide students with an inventory of skills and positive experiences that will enable them to be more successful at school, and ultimately improve the chances that these students will remain in school. The Teen Center also hopes to have a long-term impact on reducing the incidence of juvenile delinquency within the surrounding community.

Contact

Esther Avila

Acting District Administrator

City of Phoenix

Northeast District



Phoenix, AZ
(602) 262-1678
(602) 495-4515

Maria Sheldon
Recreation Supervisor
(602) 262-1628

Program Name

Virtual Y

<http://www.ymcanyc.org/sub.php?p=services&sp=youth/youthvirtualy2>

Overview

Virtual Y is an initiative that brings YMCA afterschool programs and staff into New York City public elementary schools to provide youth with safe, fun-filled, and challenging activities between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 pm. It offers support for classroom learning by extending the school day and helping children achieve reading proficiency through literacy-based activities. Virtual Y is committed to building the spirit, mind, and body of all participating children and to enriching community, family, and school. The program operates at the school Monday through Friday from 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.. The Virtual Y is currently serving over 6,000 children in 85 New York City Public School.

Contact

Tammea Tyler
YMCA of Greater New York
333 Seventh Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10001
(212) 630-1544
ttyler@ymcanyc.org

Program Name

Voyager Summer Program

<http://www.iamvoyager.com/>

Overview

Voyager Expanded Learning, a company based in Dallas, Texas, offers in-school, afterschool, and summer programs to more than 750,000 children across the country each year. The Voyager Summer Program provides summer school programs for kindergarten through eighth grade students who are struggling academically and require additional support. Voyager's mission is to focus the experience and resources of its founders, board members, and staff on helping public schools ensure that every child has a successful educational experience and that no child is left behind. One main goal of the company is to close the achievement gap. The summer program



aims to prevent summer learning loss, particularly among disadvantaged urban children. The company partners with organizations like the Smithsonian Institution and the Discovery Channel in developing its curricula and in applying the latest instructional technology, such as video and online resources.

Contact

Dr. Jeri Nowakowski
Senior Vice President
Expanded Learning Voyager
1125 Longpoint Avenue
Dallas, TX 75247
(214) 932-3250
brawlinson@iamvoyager.com

Program Name

Woodrock Youth Development Project
<http://www.woodrock.org/>

Overview

The Woodrock Youth Development Project (YDP) is a coherent program of intervention strategies and support systems that aim to reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use among adolescents by improving youths' problem-solving and coping skills, raising awareness about the dangers of substance abuse, and improving self-perception through increasing academic achievement and fostering cultural pride. The YDP aims to prevent substance abuse by combining three major substance-abuse-prevention strategies: (1) psychosocial family and community supports, (2) human-relations and skills-building workshops, and (3) drug-resistance training. Woodrock is a comprehensive life skills curriculum that is utilized in schools, afterschool programs and summer camps in the Philadelphia region. The curriculum fosters self-assessment, communication and team building skills, the foundation of positive youth development and intergroup harmony.

Contact

Woodrock, Inc.
1229 Chestnut Street
Suite M7
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 231-9810
(215) 231-9815
office@woodrockinc.org



Recommendations for CIS Programs

1. **Require programs to have plans for evaluation.** Program quality impacts program effectiveness, and quality can be observed and measured (FYI, 2002). Implementing research-based, quality programs means not only selecting proven programs and/or strategies but continuing to assure quality through the use of assessment strategies to measure it (Craig, 2005).
2. **Ensure that program outcomes are realistic,** taking into account the duration and intensity of program efforts.
 - Programs cannot be expected to have any impact until at least six months after the start of program implementation (Vandell as cited in FYI, 2002)
 - It is not realistic for afterschool programs to target test scores (Granger & Kane, 2004; Vandell as cited in FYI, 2002). As Granger & Kane (2004) point out, a full year of classroom instruction and homework can produce important but still relatively small gains (one-third to one-half a standard deviation increase) in achievement test scores. Afterschool programs involve much less time and intensity. And even though they may have some impact on achievement test scores, their unique contribution to scores will be small and not statistically significant. These programs can, however, target more intermediate outcomes such as better homework completion, grades, or study habits (Granger & Kane, 2004; Vandell as cited in FYI, 2002).
3. **Require programs to develop intermediate, measurable outcomes.** Vandell (as cited in FYI, 2002, p. 6) argues that afterschool programs should work together with schools to accomplish shared goals and recommends four performance areas for both to target:
 - improving attendance, including sports/extracurricular activities;
 - improving social skills, increased social interaction and class/program contributions;
 - reducing disruptive/isolating behaviors; and
 - improving initiative-taking, planning, and project completion.

Programs could also focus on:

- improving work and study habits (Vandell, as cited in FYI, 2002)
- improving grades (Granger & Kane, 2004; Vandell as cited in FYI, 2002)
- improving performance in any of the “three distinct assets” of academics, as an alternative to grades: “basic skills (reading, writing, speaking, computing), higher order skills (planning, debating, problem-solving) and content knowledge (history, literature, engine repair)” (Vandell as cited in FYI, 2002, p. 5)
- increasing parent involvement (Granger & Kane, 2004)

For a national study of “the effects of high-quality after-school programs, on developmental and learning outcomes among children and youth who are at high risk of school failure,” Vandell and her colleagues (2004) selected the following intermediate outcomes to track in both school and program settings at the end of the first program year:



- “Academic development as measured by work habits and school attendance
 - Social development as measured by social skills and positive relationships with peers
 - Psychological development as measured by self-efficacy and task persistence
 - Behavioral development as measured by diminished misconduct” (p. 68).
4. **Develop several indicators within each of the element dimensions (infrastructure, partnerships, and program/practice) on which all local sites will be required to collect data.** For example, for infrastructure, have all programs collect data on staff turnover and for partnerships, have all programs collect the number of contacts between parents and staff about their child.
 5. **Develop several indicators that are program type specific (academic, recreational and cultural) on which local sites implementing these types will have to report.** For example, use Lauer et al. (2004) as a guide for academic indicators. Develop several for recreational and for cultural programs. Local sites implementing one or more program types, will need to collect data on all relevant indicators.
 6. **Discourage the implementation of a mix of strategies drawn from different programs. Quality programs should be implemented as designed.** Forward copies of the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy’s document, *Identifying and implementing educational practices supported by rigorous evidence: A user friendly guide* published by the U.S. Department of Education in 2003, which discusses this and other issues related to selecting and implementing evidence-based practices.
 7. **The following sources include additional information on indicators and afterschool program evaluation:**

Chung, A., & Hillsman, E. (2005, May). Evaluating after-school programs. *The School Administrator*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators. Retrieved December 5, 2005 from <http://www.aasa.org/publications/saarticledetail.cfm?mitemnumber=&titemnumber=951>

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