PROMISING PRACTICES

Showcase of Award-Winning Afterschool Programs

FIFTH ANNUAL JUNE 2011
Welcome to New Jersey After 3’s Promising Practices Showcase!

We are delighted that you are joining us at our 5th annual showcase and award reception honoring the very best of what New Jersey After 3’s statewide network of afterschool programs has to offer.

The goal of the Promising Practices Competition and Showcase is to promote sustainability and high quality programming in the field of afterschool by sharing practices that expand learning time opportunities and foster positive academic achievement, while better preparing students for the 21st Century workforce.

The winning practices were nominated by our nonprofit partners, evaluated independently, and found to work best across New Jersey After 3’s network. This collection of successful strategies and activities are presented to you through presentations, and are accompanied by this booklet, so that other organizations can replicate them easily.

The combined efforts of the winning practices featured here today ultimately lead to high quality programs that benefit New Jersey’s children and families in four main areas:

- Keeping Kids Safe
- Inspiring Student Learning
- Promoting Positive Youth Development
- Supporting Working Families

We encourage you to call the winning site coordinators to learn more details about their particular practice and to help you with your own efforts.

Thank you again for being here today and for your continued support to New Jersey After 3 afterschool programs!

Sincerely,

Mark Valli
President & CEO,
New Jersey After 3

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Promising Practices 2011
New Jersey After 3

New Jersey After 3 is a private, non-profit corporation dedicated to expanding and improving afterschool programming for New Jersey’s kids. Its vision is to ensure that all New Jersey children have the opportunity to participate in high-quality, comprehensive, structured, supervised and enriching after-school activities. New Jersey After 3 was formed as a public-private partnership to maximize the resources available to afterschool programs for New Jersey kids. New Jersey After 3 funds an extensive network of 28 non-profit run, school-based afterschool programs statewide. Currently those programs serve almost 5,000 children in 34 public schools throughout the state.

What is a Promising Practice?

A Promising Practice is a system, process, or activity in a program that works and leads to good results. Promising Practices capture some of the most innovative, creative and successful ways that programs serve youth.

This publication provides a selection of these strong, effective and replicable practices that are currently being utilized in New Jersey After 3 afterschool programs. By sharing these practices, New Jersey After 3 hopes to assist all programs in incorporating approaches and strategies that have been already field tested and refined by their peers, leading to an expansion of quality services throughout the field.

How can Promising Practices help you?

Promising Practices can help afterschool programs in two distinct ways. First, by examining its structure to see which activities could be considered Promising Practices, a program engages in a reflection process that can help it define its strengths and weaknesses and set program priorities. Second, by learning about other programs’ Promising Practices, a program can adapt activities or processes that are proven to work rather than create them entirely from scratch. Furthermore, sharing Promising Practices among programs promotes community-wide improvement and offers the opportunity for recognition.

NJA3’s Selection Process

The practices included in this publication were submitted by New Jersey After 3 site coordinators as part of a Promising Practices Annual Competition facilitated by New Jersey After 3 and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. A panel of reviewers read and discussed more than 20 submissions, which addressed a wide variety of program activities and strategies. Seven practices were selected for further review. This included a verification site visit from staff at the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Finalists demonstrated their practice in action or some representation of their practice as part of the site visit. Each practice summary in this book contains a description of the practice and strategies for implementing the practice. We have also included six additional activities as Program Tips, which may also prove helpful to those seeking to develop high quality afterschool programs.
Promising Practice 1

Girls Empowerment Group

Morristown Neighborhood House
Frelinghuysen Middle School
Morristown, New Jersey

Practice: Family, School, and Community Partnerships

Partners
Morristown Neighborhood House (MNH), founded in 1898, was a settlement house that helped Italian immigrants become acclimated to a new culture. Over the years the core mission has remained the same: fostering cross cultural acceptance while helping new immigrants and families who are confronting economic challenges. Currently, on an average day, over 1,500 children, youth, and adults receive services from MNH. Programs are designed to support individuals and families as they strive to become self-sufficient. Some of the resources offered include preschool programs, before and afterschool programs, summer day camps, recreation enrichment, career center, and GED programs.

Frelinghuysen Middle School serves approximately 933 students in grades 6–8. The school provides a supportive and challenging educational environment. Along with academics, extracurricular programs are an integral part of student life, and every student is encouraged to become involved in the athletic, artistic, literary, musical, or philanthropic offerings. Frelinghuysen School strives to offer a learning environment that inspires all students to perform to their full potential while respecting the uniqueness of individual differences. Other goals include forming strong partnerships with the community and preparing students for responsible citizenship.

Program Enrollment: 150 (Grades 6–8)

Practice Description
Three years ago, a Girls Empowerment group was developed through a partnership between the Morristown Neighborhood House and the Frelinghuysen Middle School. Facilitated each year by a social work graduate student, the empowerment group features discussion and self-awareness exercises and is available to all sixth- through eighth-grade girls attending the afterschool program. Three ten-week sessions are offered during the year. All girls are strongly encouraged to participate in the empowerment group for at least one session. This year 34 girls have participated with 10–13 girls attending per session.

For one hour each week, following homework and free time, the girls meet in the cafeteria to discuss issues important to them. Discussion subjects vary depending on the girls’ interests. Topics are chosen to potentially contribute to building girls’ self-esteem, and pride. Some of the topics discussed this year include: 1) identifying feelings and emotions and how to control them; 2) relationships with friends/parents, especially the mother/daughter relationship; 3) improving interpersonal communication; 4) body image; 5) personal hygiene; and 6) personal and academic goal-setting.

Each session starts with a review of previous activities and an introduction to the day’s topic. Handouts, questionnaires, and interactive activities are part of each class and help facilitate learning and discussion. Guest speakers are often brought in, giving the girls an opportunity to listen and ask questions about issues they have been discussing. Recently Girl Scouts from the high school facilitated a conversation about friendship, self-image, and role models. The Girl Scouts will return to lead a discussion about their high school experiences and answer questions about transitioning from middle to high school. Other guest facilitators have included martial arts, yoga, and rumba specialists, reinforcing the importance of physical fitness and safety.

The best endorsement of the Girls Empowerment group has been that many of the girls who attended the first session have returned for a post-participation survey completed by the girls. Participating girls report learning more about themselves and the world, and growing in self-confidence. Staff members believe the group has positively developed the girls’ self-expression and self-respect.

Rationale for the Practice
Staff in the afterschool program noticed there was a need for girls to have a place where they could talk openly about growing up and speaking out on topics that affect them...

Tips for Adaptation
Reaching Out: Connect with local colleges with social work graduate programs for potential group facilitators.

Planning: Meet with the potential facilitator to discuss and prepare lesson plans that would be appropriate for the students in your program. Be flexible and adjust the curriculum based on student interests and ideas. Make sure you have a large enough space (cafeteria or gym) where students can spread out for experiential exercises.

Resources: Integrate surveys and other handouts for students to complete that promote discussion. Engage the group in role-playing and other interactive exercises. Enhance the program by inviting guest speakers. Research girl-related publications, poems, and other original writing in such sources as Teen Voices magazine (adapt as needed for the middle school age group). Other useful resources can be found on the web:

- New Moon magazine, http://www.newmoon.com/
- What’s the Right Weight for Me?, http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/get/fit/fit_thin.html

Observation: Have the site coordinator observe the group and look for ways to further enhance the girls’ experiences.

Marketing and Documentation: Encourage all girls to participate in the group during the school year. Consider having a specific pre- and post-participation survey geared toward the subject matters you will cover. A survey helps document the students’ learning and the potential impacts of participation.

Contact Information
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Promising Practice 1
Pay It Forward: Service Learning Activities

Education Information and Resource Center (EIRC)
Lindenwold Middle School
Lindenwold, New Jersey

Practice: Program Content

Pay It Forward is a service learning program designed to foster a sense of community among students. It encourages students to think beyond their own needs and contribute to the needs of others. The program is an extension of the core curriculum, providing an opportunity for students to apply their academic skills in a practical context.

**Practice Description**

Every month youth in the afterschool program at Lindenwold Middle School spend several afternoons “paying it forward” by implementing a service project to benefit their school or local community. During Pay It Forward, youth work in grade groups with program staff and community organization volunteers invited into the program by the program leader given their connection to the service project. They brainstorm ideas for service projects, organize resources and materials needed to implement the projects, and promote the projects in and outside of the afterschool program. Since its inception in 2008, Lindenwold afterschool program participants have undertaken a variety of projects:

- Clothing drive
- Toy drive and gift wrapping
- Letters to soldiers
- Recognition dinner for school custodians
- Self-designed storybooks for younger children
- Canned food drive and Zumba party
- Classroom clean-ups

In their activities, youth use academic skills including web-based research, reading, and writing. Web-based research, for example, may inform project planning as youth investigate a community issue such as poverty or homelessness. Several projects engaged youth in composing and promoting the projects in and outside of the afterschool program. For most projects, participants create posters and written invitations to promote culminating events.

**Rationale for Practice**

Pay It Forward was implemented to demonstrate to youth that they can make a difference in their school and local community. Youth have expressed great pride in their accomplishments. Pay It Forward has been a meaningful and effective approach to helping youth see beyond their own needs and fostering a philanthropic spirit.

**Tips for Adaptation**

Youth Involvement: Youth involvement in selecting service projects is critical. Program staff can facilitate brainstorming sessions and provide guidance to help youth select appropriate and manageable projects.

Preparation Time: Provide adequate time for youth to engage in brainstorming, researching, and planning. Some projects may require scheduling time with community organizations or local time for events that include families or the school community.

Community Connection: Connections with community organizations and community workers can enhance and personalize youths’ service experience. Community organizations can also provide guest speakers who have firsthand knowledge of pressing community issues that can validate the need for service projects. Examples of community organizations may include local United Ways, Food Banks, Animal Shelters, Nursing and Elder Care Facilities, Community Gardens or Audubon Societies, Homeless Shelters, and AmeriCorps Red Cross Chapters.

Storage Space: Projects that involve collecting materials such as food, clothing, or books require storage space, possibly for an extended time.

**Contact Information**

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856-346-3330 x2340
kliano@lindenwold.k12.nj.us

Lindenwold Middle School, serving grades 5–8, is committed to preparing all students to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and providing a safe, academically challenging, child-centered environment. This commitment involves ensuring that all students can solve problems, develop a sense of self-worth, and embrace lifelong learning so that they become productive members of their communities. Lindenwold Middle School is currently in Phase IV of a four-year Implementing New Curricular Learning with Universally Designed Experiences (INCLUDE) grant from the New Jersey Department of Education to improve academic achievement in mathematics by using education technology effectively.

Program Enrollment: 166 (Grades 5–8)
Take-It-Home Express Workshops

New Jersey Community Development Corporation
Paterson Public School #5
Paterson, New Jersey

Program Content: Family, School, and Community Partnerships

Partners
New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC) is a private, nonprofit community development and social service agency founded in 1994 with a mission of creating opportunities to transform lives, with a particular focus in Paterson, New Jersey. The core work and organizational focus of NJCDC is providing community development, affordable/supportive housing, educational initiatives, and youth development. In helping to foster the next generation of productive Paterson citizens, NJCDC reaches beyond the classroom by serving young people during the afterschool hours in youth and teen centers, in non-traditional educational programs, and through unique leadership opportunities.

Paterson Public School #5 serves almost 1,000 students in grades 1–7. The school strives to reach a level of excellence that will allow all students to become successful learners. Paterson Public School #5’s mission is to prepare students academically and socially to develop their full potential to meet high academic expectations in the present and in their future secondary education experience. This year, the school was designated as the first in the district to become a Full-Service Community School. As a result, in partnership with NJCDC, the school provides comprehensive social and health services and programs to benefit students, teachers, and parents as well as the surrounding community.

Program Enrollment: 225 (Grades 1–7)

Practice Description
All School #5 parents are invited to attend “Take-It-Home Express Workshops,” that are mostly spoken by parents: English, Spanish, and Bengali. Audio translation is also available at all the workshops.

Presentations are developed by evaluations completed by parents at the end of each session. Eighty percent (80%) of parent participants have reported taking away a new skill or knowledge from the workshops.

Outcomes of the Take-It-Home Express Workshops are documented by event evaluations completed by parents at the end of each session. Staff report that some parents have shared how grateful they are to receive the new information as it has made a positive impact on their lives. Staff members believe the workshops deliver vital information to parents and help them better communicate with their children, focus on educational objectives, and lead healthier and more balanced lives.

Rationale for the Practice
The Take-It-Home Express Workshops were developed to enhance the presence of NJCDC within the school community, ultimately supporting the Full-Service Community School’s objective of creating a bridge between the school and community. As a newly designated Full-Service Community School, NJCDC expects their contributions go beyond just managing the afterschool program to having a larger role in supporting school, community, and family partnerships. In addition to providing parent workshops, the Full-Service Community School offers tutoring, counseling, health and nutritional services, ESL classes, and other resources to students and parents beyond normal school hours. The Take-It-Home Express Workshops were specifically implemented to increase parent involvement and engagement by reaching out and sharing pertinent health and educational information with them.

Although parents of afterschool program students are particularly encouraged to attend, the workshops are open to all parents in the school community. Scheduling, length, and content are thoughtfully planned to maximize attendance.

Tips for Adaptation

Presenters: Enlist enthusiastic, dedicated program staff. Consider contacting AmeriCorps to determine if your program is eligible to host members. Ensure staff are skilled in presenting information clearly, concisely, and in an engaging manner. Some resources for contacting the AmeriCorps Program and for making presentations can be found on the web:

• AmeriCorps Overview - For Organizations, http://www.americorps.gov/or_organizations/overview/index.asp
• Presenting Information to an Audience, http://www.buzzle.com/articles/presenting-information-to-an-audience.html

Marketing: Increase awareness of programs offered by advertising in the local newspaper or putting up flyers at convenience stores and other places around town. Consider incentives such as refreshments/light dinner and childcare.

Evaluation: Provide a sign-in sheet to monitor parent attendance. Utilize an evaluation tool to measure workshop satisfaction and solicit new ideas.

Contact Information
New Jersey Community Development Corporation
32 Spruce Street
Paterson, New Jersey 07501
(646) 235-7825
Contact: Ronald Cope, rcope@njcdc.org

Screenings. Workshops are presented by a group of eight Paterson Community School Corps AmeriCorps members under the supervision of the afterschool program director. In addition to preparing and delivering the workshops, AmeriCorps members work as group leaders in the afterschool program and as aides in third- and fourth-grade classrooms during the school day.

When developing educational workshop topics, the AmeriCorps members and program director take into consideration parent “needs assessment” data previously collected by the school. AmeriCorps members research potential topics suggested by the data, and work closely with the site director, school literacy coach, and a classroom teacher to prepare the presentation content and process. Most workshops take place in conjunction with scheduled school or community events, such as Parent Orientation, Books and Breakfast for Read Across America, and the school’s Fall Festival. Stand-alone workshops are offered at different times during the week and occasionally on weekends. Depending on the expected turnout (ranging between 10 and 120 parents), workshops are held in a small multi-service room, the gym, or the school auditorium.

An example of the activity is a 20-minute early literacy workshop. It was presented to parents of first- and second-graders at the school’s Books and Breakfast for Read Across America, a year-round reading motivation and awareness program from the National Education Association. The AmeriCorps members gave a PowerPoint presentation that focused on:

• Parent reading time with children
• Suggestion of books and authors
• Reading tips for fostering literacy skills
• School and community library resources

There was an opportunity for parents to ask questions after the presentation. In an effort to make the workshop comprehensible for all those attending, handouts were translated into three languages

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Promising Practice 3

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Promising Practices 11
Mental Health Services and “PEACE” Project

The Mental Health Clinic of Passaic
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School #6
Passaic, New Jersey

Practice: Partnerships

The Mental Health Clinic of Passaic was incorporated in July 1967 as a merger of St. Mary’s Hospital Child Guidance Clinic and a branch office of the Clinic for Mental Health Services in Paterson. Over the years the Clinic established a number of programs for children such as a therapeutic children’s program, a treatment unit for child abuse and neglect, intensive specialized outpatient mental health services, youth case management, and school-based youth services.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School #6 serves children in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, with an enrollment of over 1,100 students. The mission of the school, in partnership with the home and community, is to create a safe and nurturing environment in which students will become life-long learners who can successfully meet the challenges of the future. The goal is for students to become productive and responsible members of a global society within our diverse culture. Children are engaged with a challenging and rigorous curriculum focusing on project-based learning.

Program Enrollment: 153 (Grades K–6)

Practice Description

The Mental Health Clinic partners with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School #6 to provide two types of mental health services in the context of a traditional afterschool program: individual/small group counseling and a class called Peers Ending Anger and making better choices.

Child-level outcomes of the PEACE Project are documented by reports on the progression of students. After participating in the program, children report that they are more apt to communicate and discuss their feelings before acting out...

After participating in the program, children report that they are more apt to communicate and discuss their feelings before acting out...
Reading Buddies

Kids Corporation II
Newark Educators’ Community Charter School
Newark, New Jersey

Practice: Program Content

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Partners
Originally founded in 1971 to help improve the educational system, Kids Corporation re-launched in 1992 as Kids Corporation II (Kids Corp.), and has grown to provide a variety of services to almost 5,000 children in 70 schools, churches, and community centers in Newark. Educational services include after-school programs, summer schools, an environmental science and leadership camp, mentors, and educational field trips. Kids Corp also provides medical and dental exams, medical follow-up care, clothing, school supplies, books, toys, and hot meals.

Newark Educators’ Community Charter School was founded in 2009 on the principle that parents, staff, and community members can and should work together in structured and meaningful ways to promote children’s educational development. Serving 250 students in grades K-4, the school’s mission is to be a rigorous community of peers, and providing books based on student interests.

Reading Buddies in many ways including improvement in comprehension skills, ability to sound out new words, ability to read text accurately and quickly, and capacity to focus on reading. Older children who struggle with reading seem to gain more confidence by working with peers or younger children. While children are increasing their reading abilities, they also are relaxing and having fun. A relaxed atmosphere stimulates high-quality reading, discussion, and comprehension. In fact, children are often reluctant to put away their books when it is dismissal time. Staff have also observed the development of relationships between younger and older children. These special bonds formed between students who would not otherwise interact with each other often carry over into the school day.

Rationale for the Practice
Reading Buddies was developed to increase reading skills and promote positive peer interaction. Many of the children in the after-school program read below grade level. In September, while assisting children with daily homework, program staff noticed that many children were struggling to read. In fact, the reading specialist and classroom teachers confirmed that children often lose up to a full grade of reading ability over the summer. When reading skills are not well established, children struggle to participate and learn in other academic subjects. Along with improving reading skills, the program hopes to instill a lifelong love of reading by providing children with a relaxing atmosphere, encouraging a reading community of peers, and providing books based on student interests.

Tips for Adaptation
Communication: Before implementing Reading Buddies, speak to your after-school program staff to describe the importance of the program and goals. When staff understand the relevance of the program, they will be able to help implement it and make it successful.

Pairing Students: Have staff designate which grades will be paired together, then allow children to self-select their partners. Note that you can and should work together in structured and meaningful ways to promote children’s educational development. Serving 250 students in grades K–4, the school’s mission is to be a rigorous community of peers, and providing books based on student interests.

Material: Have plenty of reading materials, including chapter books and books for all grades served. If you have multiple copies of books, a lending library can be set up so that students have the option to continue reading at home. Request book/magazine donations from local libraries and other book vendors.

Program staff suggest that children benefit from participation in Reading Buddies in many ways including improvement in comprehension skills, ability to sound out new words, ability to read text accurately and quickly, and capacity to focus on reading. Older children who struggle with reading seem to gain more confidence by working with peers or younger children. While children are increasing their reading abilities, they also are relaxing and having fun. A relaxed atmosphere stimulates high-quality reading, discussion, and comprehension. In fact, children are often reluctant to put away their books when it is dismissal time. Staff have also observed the development of relationships between younger and older children. These special bonds formed between students who would not otherwise interact with each other often carry over into the school day.

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Flash Card Fun!

Glassboro Child Development Centers
Dorothy L. Bullock Elementary School
Glassboro, New Jersey

Practice: Program Content

Partners
The mission of the Glassboro Child Development Centers (GCDC) is to provide programs and enrichment for children and youth that offer opportunities that empower and assist parents with the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of their children. For more than 30 years, GCDC has shaped young minds and changed the face of early childhood education. GCDC annually serves more than 500 children by providing weekly and daily childcare for infants, toddlers, preschool, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and school-age. In its afterschool programs, GCDC strives to provide children with high-quality, comprehensive, structured, supervised, and enriching afterschool activities.

Dorothy L. Bullock School is one of three elementary schools in the Glassboro School District and serves 475 students in grades K–3. As a diverse learning community, the Bullock School prepares students for an ever-changing world by fostering each child’s full academic potential, building each child’s self-esteem, and empowering each child to become a responsible, respectful, and contributing citizen and lifelong learner.

Program Enrollment: 146 (Grades 1–3)

Practice Description
Third-graders at the Bullock School afterschool program use flash cards to build and test their knowledge on a broad range of topics including mathematical calculations, geography, language, and the solar system. The flash card practice began in September as an instructional tool to help students master a deck, then move on to the next level. Each time children make a correct answer, they move on to the next level.

Program children express pride in their mastery of the flash card topics. Several parents have communicated to staff how much their children have learned through the flash card activity. Some families have been motivated to buy topical puzzles related to the flash cards to extend the learning at home. When surveyed, the activity feature most meaningful to child participants was that the flash cards “were fun.”

Rationale for the Practice
Recognizing that many third-grade children were struggling with basic math, spelling, grammar, and other classroom topics, program staff desired to implement a fun activity to help support their learning. Flash cards are widely used as a learning tool and exercise the mental process of active recall. Program staff expect that repetition will aid memorization of important classroom content. In addition, staff expect that experiences in school and beyond will encourage application of the knowledge gained from flash card use.

Tips for Adaptation

Developmental Stages: Make sure that the developmental level of the flash card decks is appropriate to the children’s grade level. Review grade curriculum for appropriate language, terms, and relevant topics.

Progress Tracking: Maintain an ongoing log of children’s progress on card decks and spelling quizzes to help them focus on personal goals, such as surpassing their previous scores for correct answers or mastering a deck.

Non-competitive: Keep the focus on personal achievement, not peer competition, by having children work in small groups, encouraging children to be supportive of each other, and affirming individual accomplishments for all children.

Quiz-Out: Use the “quiz-out” strategy to help a child demonstrate mastery of a particular flash card deck or spelling list and move to the next level. Children will enjoy having the opportunity to quiz-out and stretch their learning skills.

Web Resources: Resources for developing flashcard content can be found on the web:

• A to Z Teacher Stuff, http://atozteachersstuff.com/
• NASA, http://www.nasa.gov/
• National Geographic, http://www.nationalgeographic.com/
• PBS, http://www.pbs.org/teachers/
• Super Teacher Worksheets, http://www.superteacherworksheets.com/
• 50States.com, http://www.50states.com/

Contact Information:
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31 S. Main Street, Glassboro, New Jersey 08028
(856) 881-3351
Contact: Lynn Shute, lshute@gcdckids.org
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Make Me a Mogul

Bergen Family Center
Dr. John Greico Elementary School
Englewood, New Jersey

Practice: Program Content

Partners
The Bergen Family Center is the oldest family service agency in Bergen County, New Jersey. In 1898, its founding year, the organization served 12 children in an afterschool program. Today the Center supports, strengthens, and enriches family life through innovative programs and quality services to 3,000 clients in Bergen County. Services include preschool, afterschool, eldercare, counseling, and community programs. The Bergen Family Center strives to continue improving the lives of families for generations to come.

The mission of the Dr. John Greico Elementary School is to provide educational excellence to students in grades 1-3 by creating a learning environment that empowers all students to achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and to master the academic and social skills necessary for success as individuals and as members of a global community. The staff provide the school’s 580 children with enriched learning experiences that foster a love of learning and encourage creative problem-solving, risk-taking, and critical-thinking.

Program Enrollment: 160 (Grades 1–3)

Practice Description
Forty third graders in the afterschool program at the Greico Elementary School participate in a product development activity called "Make Me a Mogul." This activity allows students to express their creativity and build business awareness and skills through innovative programs and quality services to 3,000 clients in Bergen County.

Make Me a Mogul filled this need by introducing a fun, exciting learning activity introducing the process of product development. Children in the afterschool program frequently talk about money but have little understanding of earning power and the hard work behind creating a business. Make Me a Mogul has been an inexpensive way to foster children’s imagination, pride, and confidence while teaching them about advertising, comparison shopping (comparing the prices of competing brands), and the value of money.

Program Enrollment: 160 (Grades 1–3)

Make Me a Mogul

Promising Practice 11
strategy has resulted in positive relationship building between afterschool program staff and school faculty, quarterly could support school-day learning. To keep communication steadily rated program goals, and outlined specific ways the afterschool program school program staff provided an overview of the NJA3 program, articu- and administrators during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. After- held an introductory meeting with school teachers and effective service for students. To initiate ongo- communication, the afterschool program leader held an introductory meeting with school teachers and administrators during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. After- school program staff provided an overview of the NJA3 program, articulated goals, and outlined specific ways the after- school program could support school-day learning. To keep communication steady flowing between afterschool program staff and school faculty, quarterly surveys are distributed and collected through faculty mailboxes. Teachers use the surveys to share information about student progress, homework completion, recommended academic supports, and requests for help with parent communication. Implementing a constant communication strategy has resulted in positive relationship building between afterschool program staff and school faculty, increased after-school program referrals, and the development of program approaches that are more responsive to student needs.

Contact Information: Boys & Girls Club of Clifton 222 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07013 Telephone: (973) 773-2697 x49 Email: andreamsfowles@gmail.com

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles
Partners: EducationWorks at Cadwalader, Franklin, and Wilson Elementary Schools in Trenton, NJ
Category: Program Content
Children and youth at the Cadwalader, Franklin, and Wilson elementary afterschool programs in Trenton are learning about healthy lifestyles through CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health)—an evidence-based, coordinated health program for children in pre-school through eighth grade, designed to promote physical activity and healthy food choices. Kids participate by grade group in CATCH activities 3–5 times each week for an average of 30–minutes per session. Program staff conduct activities using CATCH materials including an activity box, nutrition book, and select gym equipment (balls, hula-hoops, scarves, etc.). Staff delivering CATCH activities participated in a CATCH training workshop sponsored by the YMCA’s Healthy Kids’ Initiative. Training workshops introduce participants to the CATCH program and a variety of strategies for effective implementation. CATCH is made available through a multi-organization partnership between EducationWorks, the YMCA, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which allows participating organizations to share program and training costs. Promotion of physical activity and healthy eating through CATCH reflects a community-wide effort in the Trenton Public Schools to encourage healthier lifestyles for students. Children and youth participating in CATCH report increased awareness about healthy food choices and more time spent in moderate to vigorous activities at the program and at home.

Contact Information: EducationWorks 884 Whitehead Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648 Telephone: (609) 581-9992 Email: Contact: Anita Wright, awright@EducationWorks.org CATCH website: http://www.catchinfo.org/aboutusmain.asp

Individual Action Plans for At-Risk Youth
Partners: Boys & Girls Club of Camden County at Octavius V. Catto Community School in Camden, NJ
Category: Partnerships (School-based)
In an effort to help students achieve academic and social success, the afterschool program staff at the Octavius V. Catto Community School developed “Individual Action Plans” for each participating student. Action plans are intended to provide extended academic and social support, particularly for children who are at-risk for failing due to poor performance or disciplinary issues. Communication with schools and parents help identify children most at-risk. Action plans are developed by keeping detailed folders for each child, which includes academic records and academic assessments conducted by the boys and Girls Club. Tutoring program to determine grade proficiency in math and language arts. Additional folder resources include: behavioral referrals, disciplinary reports, notes from contact with teachers and family members, and afterschool program staff notes. Goals such as being promoted to the next grade or upgrading codes of conduct are then developed as part of the action plan. Children receive individual support such as tutoring in areas of need from staff members in order to reach their goals. Staff continually document achievements and challenges and proactively review action plans as needed. Ultimately, as goals are reached, children develop a sense of self-worth and personal enthusiasm that motivates them to keep setting and achieving academic and personal goals for continued success.

Contact Information: Boys & Girls Club of Camden County East Camden Clubhouse 2 South Dudley Street, Camden, NJ 08105 Telephone: (856) 965-8499 x227 Email: Contact: Amanda White, awhite@bgccc.org

Supporting Youth through Daily School-based Check-Ins
Partners: Boys & Girls Club of Trenton/Mercer County at Monument School, Trenton, NJ
Category: Partnerships (School-based)
Addressing students’ social and emotional needs through ongoing counseling and intervention can reduce a student’s time spent in disciplinary activities and increase time spent learning. The afterschool program director at Monument School, who has dedicated office space in the school, visits classrooms during the regular school day to check-in on students enrolled in the afterschool program. While visiting classrooms, students who are having difficulty focusing or are disruptive may be referred to the program director for brief counseling. Once the student is able to identify positive ways to change their behavior, they are allowed to return to the classroom. If needed, the program director makes referrals for additional support services. Having this additional layer of intervention prior to dismissal to the principal’s office has reduced the number of school suspension days and streamlined the referral of students to other appropriate community resources and counseling. Students are surrounded by a unified team of adults who support them during the day and after school. Strong relationships between the afterschool program director, faculty, principal, and students are critical to the success of this intervention approach. Daily interaction between the afterschool program director and teachers has contributed to improved rates of homework completion, greater cooperation between faculty and afterschool program staff, and less disruptive behaviors in the afterschool program and school.

Contact Information: Boys & Girls Club of Trenton/Mercer County 212 Center Street, Trenton, NJ 08611 Telephone: (609) 392-3194 Email: Contact: Alan Johnson, ajohnson@bgctrenton.org

Enhancing Communication with School Teachers and Administrators
Partners: Boys & Girls Club of Clifton, Clifton School #17 in Clifton, NJ
Category: Partnerships (School-based)
The afterschool program staff at Clifton School #17 value constant communication with school teachers and administrators during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. After- school program staff provided an overview of the NJA3 program, articulated goals, and outlined specific ways the after- school program could support school-day learning. To keep communication steady flowing between afterschool program staff and school faculty, quarterly surveys are distributed and collected through faculty mailboxes. Teachers use the surveys to share information about student progress, homework completion, recommended academic supports, and requests for help with parent communication. Implementing a constant communication strategy has resulted in positive relationship building between afterschool program staff and school faculty, increased after-school program referrals, and the development of program approaches that are more responsive to student needs.

Contact Information: Boys & Girls Club of Clifton 222 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07013 Telephone: (973) 773-2697 x49 Email: Contact: Andrea Fowles, mfowles@gmail.com

Special Programming – Fun Friday!
Partners: Educational Information and Resource Center (EIRC), Cold Springs School in Gloucester City, NJ
Category: Program Content
Each week elementary school-aged children at the Cold Springs School afterschool program look forward to “Fun Friday,” an innovative program that includes community service projects, service learning, and special subject initiatives. Through a quarterly questionnaire youth offer suggestions for special programming that becomes the basis for many Friday themes. Examples of recent Fun Fridays include:

- Holiday Sing Along: a family event showcasing artwork, performances, and a canned food drive
- NJA3 Goes to the Dogs: a visit from Seeing-Eye® dogs along with a presentation by a 4-H trainer
- Planting for a Cause: planting seedlings to donate to the Gloucester City Community Garden
- NJA3 Movie Theatre: a favorite film shown with ticket takers, ushers, and popcorn

In existence for several years, Fun Friday was originally developed to provide youth with incentives linked to regular attendance, homework completion, and appropriate behavior. Program staff believe providing special Friday programming has improved student behavior and helped students become more responsible for their homework. Parents express strong enthusiasm for Fun Fridays and frequently participate in activities. Materials and costs for Fun Fridays are minimal, while staff engagement and support are high.

Contact Information: EIRC 107 Gilberth Parkway, Suite 210, Mullica Hill, New Jersey 08062-4446 Telephone: (856) 436-7000 x3124 Email: Contact: Meghan O’Connor, mmconorom@gsd.k12.nj.us

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We thank Assemblyman Greenwald for his continued support of high quality afterschool programs in New Jersey. He is a thoughtful leader whose advocacy has resulted in expanded learning opportunities for thousands of children throughout the State. Because of his leadership, New Jersey After 3 continues to serve a diverse array of children in urban, rural, and suburban communities.

New Jersey After 3 proudly acknowledges

**ASSEMBLYMAN**

**Lou Greenwald**

as our **2011 Afterschool Champion**

We thank Bank of America for their continued support and commitment to providing high quality afterschool to thousands of children and families throughout New Jersey. Their generous funding has strengthened New Jersey After 3’s ability to support working families by expanding learning time and providing a safe place for children between the hours of 3pm and 6pm.

New Jersey After 3 proudly acknowledges

**Bank of America**

as our **2011 Corporate Afterschool Champion**