

Afterschool Matters

Number 11 • June 2010



High-Impact Afterschool for All by Jennifer L. Siaca

Getting the Right Mix by Christine Proffitt

Project Exploration's Sisters4Science

by Gabrielle Lyon and Jameela Jafri

Promoting Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs by Aaron Beighle, Michael W. Beets, Heather E. Erwin, Jennifer Huberty, Justin B. Moore, and Megan Stellino

The Arts Matter in Afterschool by Lori L. Hager

Nana for a New Generation by Denise Sellers

The
Robert
Bowne
Foundation

**The Robert Bowne Foundation
Board of Trustees**

Jennifer Stanley, President
Suzanne C. Carothers, Vice President
Susan Cummiskey, Treasurer
Jane Quinn, Secretary
Andrew Fisher
Dianne Kangisser
Mitchell Lee
Robert Stonehill
Cecelia Traugh

National
Institute on
Out-of-School
Time

**AT THE WELLESLEY
CENTERS FOR WOMEN**

**Afterschool Matters
Editorial Review Board**

Donna Alvermann
University of Georgia School of Education

Matt Calvert
University of Wisconsin Extension
4-H Youth Development

Graham Cochran
Ohio State University Extension

David Fleming
Eugene T. Moore School of Education
Clemson University

Alice Hall
Child and Family Development
Georgia Southern University
National Afterschool Association Representative to the Board

Cathy Jordan
Southwest Educational Regional Lab

Mira-Lisa Katz
English Department
Sonoma State University

Anne Lawrence
The Robert Bowne Foundation

Ellen Markowitz
University of Virginia

Brenda McLaughlin
National Summer Learning Association

Carol Strickland
Consultant
DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation

Nicole Yohalem
Forum for Youth Investment

Guest Reviewers

Julie Dennehy
Alice Frye
Falvia Perea
Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College

Helen Malone
Harvard Graduate School of Education

table of contents

Afterschool Matters Number 11, June 2010

ii Welcome

High-Impact Afterschool for All: A Statewide Quality Framework

by Jennifer L. Siaca

Building on increasing consensus on the definition of quality in afterschool programming, the New York State Afterschool Network developed a quality framework and related assessment tools that can be used to promote program quality.



1

Getting the Right Mix: Sustainability and Resource Development Strategies in Out-of-School Time Youth Arts Programs in Massachusetts by Christine Proffitt

A study of high-quality youth arts programs, supported by the literature on sustainability, suggests strategies OST programs can use to build a solid financial foundation.



Project Exploration's Sisters4Science: Involving Urban Girls of Color in Science Out of School by Gabrielle Lyon and Jameela Jafri

Getting girls from historically underrepresented groups involved in science means learning from the girls themselves and from girl-centered theory and practice.



15

Promoting Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs

by Aaron Beighle, Michael W. Beets, Heather E. Erwin, Jennifer Huberty, Justin B. Moore, and Megan Stellino

Even with limited space and equipment, afterschool programs can fight childhood obesity and contribute to the public health by promoting participation in physical activity.



The Arts Matter in Afterschool Community Youth Arts and Out-of-School Time

by Lori L. Hager

Awareness of the value of community youth arts could help support more formal partnerships between arts learning and afterschool organizations.

Nana for a New Generation by Denise Sellers

The author's "Nana" was grandmother to an entire neighborhood of children. Today, her afterschool program fulfills a similar set of needs for 21st century children and their parents.



46

Photo credits

See the inside back cover for the call for papers for the Spring 2011 issue of *Afterschool Matters*.

Welcome

Because the term *Renaissance* delineates the historical-cultural movement that followed the Middle Ages, we have traditionally used the term *Renaissance person* to describe someone who has many accomplishments and knows something about

everything. Afterschool programs in many ways are helping to sustain a Renaissance learning model! As needed academic-focused time in schools has left less time for specialties and electives, afterschool programs have continued to contribute valuable experiences in the arts, physical activity, and hands-on science. The afterschool hours offer a fitting opportunity to introduce youth to a variety of learning domains that connect to school and career success.

I was acutely reminded of the essential role afterschool programs can play in supporting and stretching youth creativity, imagination, confidence, and skill-building at the National AfterSchool Association convention in June. Attendees were treated to an awe-inspiring original rap performance by two middle school youth from the Carolina Studios afterschool program in Charleston, SC.

This issue of *Afterschool Matters* ranges across the variety of learning domains that quality afterschool programs support. We open with “High Impact Afterschool for All: A Statewide Quality Framework,” in which Jennifer Siaca outlines the development by the New York State Afterschool Network of a set of program quality tools built to promote continuous program improvement and better support for out-of-school time programs. “Getting the Right Mix” by Christine Proffitt describes a small Massachusetts study to identify effective strategies for developing resources and sustaining funding to support youth arts programs. In “Project Exploration’s Sisters4Science: Involving Urban Girls of Color in Science Out of School,” Gabrielle Lyon and Jameela Jafri give us a comprehensive look at an afterschool program that promotes science learning for girls of color by putting girls at the center.

Since NIOST is currently engaged in several research projects focused on wellness practices in afterschool programs, we are delighted to include in this issue “Promoting Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs.” Aaron Beighle and colleagues recommend many ways that afterschool programs, even those with space and equipment limitations, can support youth wellness by facilitating physical activity. Next, in “The Arts Matter in Afterschool,” Lori Hager makes the case for advancing partnerships between afterschool programs and arts and cultural organizations.

Our final essay, “Nana for a New Generation,” comes to us from a participant in NIOST’s Afterschool Matters Fellowship. Denise Sellers shares her journey to recreate the caring community that she experienced during her own growing-up years. Now her afterschool program serves as custodian for children’s wellbeing as her Nana did. It is good to be reminded that, to achieve our own Renaissance, we all need someone to look out for us.



GEORGIA HALL, PH.D.
Senior Research Scientist, NIOST
Managing Editor, *Afterschool Matters*

Afterschool Matters

Georgia Hall
Managing Editor

Sara Hill
Senior Research Consultant

Jan Gallagher
Editor

Daniella van Gennep
Designer

Afterschool Matters is a national, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to promoting professionalism, scholarship, and consciousness in the field of afterschool education. Published by the Robert Bowne Foundation and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, the journal serves those involved in developing and running programs for youth during the out-of-school hours, in addition to those engaged in research and shaping policy. For information on *Afterschool Matters* and the Afterschool Matters Initiative, contact

Karen Lachance
Assistant Director
National Institute on
Out-of-School Time
Wellesley Centers for Women
Wellesley College
106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02481
klachanc@wellesley.edu



high-impact afterschool for all

A Statewide Quality Framework

by Jennifer L. Siaca

The need for afterschool programs is clear: Research and practice demonstrate that quality afterschool programs keep youth safe; support working families; and provide critical learning, personal development, arts, and recreational opportunities. New York State alone uses nearly \$300 million in local, state, and federal funds for afterschool programs; it delivers public funds to organizations

using a wide array of program models that serve many different populations (New York State Afterschool Network [NYSAN], 2008). However, universal definition of “quality afterschool programs” has not always been evident. The diversity of the afterschool field allows young people to have valuable, varied experiences. Still, the field must articulate common elements that all programs should incorporate into their work in order to maximize positive outcomes for youth.

The critical importance of *quality* afterschool programs in supporting youth is well documented. As reported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services (2006), high-quality afterschool programs can “have significant, positive effects” on youth, yet low-quality programs can “fail to show positive effects or even have negative impacts.” Additional studies on the importance of afterschool program quality have been conducted by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007), the Intercultural Center for Research in Education and National Institute on Out-of-School Time (Miller, 2005), and the Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out-of-School Time (Hall & Gruber, 2007).

In order to advance the afterschool field, the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) developed a

JENNIFER L. SIACA is project manager at the New York State Afterschool Network. NYSAN, a public-private partnership dedicated to increasing the quality and availability of afterschool programs, is one of 39 statewide afterschool networks across the country. NYSAN defines afterschool broadly to include programs that support young people’s intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development outside the traditional school day. Jennifer works on projects related to quality, professional supports and networks, and public policy and funding. She holds a master’s of Public Administration from the NYU Wagner School for Public Service.

THE CAT UP THE STREET

A scene from the community. Feeding and taking care of the cats in my community is something that I love to do.

OUR WORLD
IN PICTURES

ten-element framework for program quality that has been widely adopted throughout the state and across the country. The framework hinges on the recognition that program quality is the best lever to realize the positive student outcomes that programs seek. The elements and corresponding indicators of quality in NYSAN's framework provide a structure to promote continuous program improvement and professional development design for out-of-school time programs. The framework has had great impact on how programs provide services and on how government agencies, intermediaries, and technical assistance specialists view program quality.

This article follows NYSAN's journey from developing the first iteration of the framework through implementing complex strategies to promote quality throughout the state. It suggests ways in which this framework can be useful to afterschool practitioners, technical assistance professionals, intermediaries, and policymakers nationwide.

Program Quality: A Universal Framework

The program quality framework was developed over two years and published in 2005 by NYSAN, a public-private partnership and one of 39 statewide afterschool networks (National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks, n.d.). NYSAN's Quality Assurance Committee, a group of statewide afterschool experts, developed the framework with input and feedback from a larger group of afterschool practitioners and national experts. Because NYSAN is a partnership of multiple stakeholders, the quality framework reflects the consensus of a wide range of partners, including state agencies, large intermediaries, and small community-based organizations. The framework transcends a program's model, geography, and host setting, yet provides a detailed structure for what high-quality programs should aim to achieve. The framework can be used by school- and community-based programs—licensed or legally exempt—whether they operate before school, after school, or during the summer.

NYSAN structured the framework around ten essential elements of program quality, each of which is defined by a list of specific quality indicators. The framework incorporates national and local standards and research, including the National AfterSchool

Association standards (National School-Age Care Alliance, 1998), with local work done across the country, such as frameworks developed in Baltimore (Baltimore Safe and Sound Campaign, 1999), Boston (Achieve Boston, 2003), and Los Angeles (Freeman & Redding, 1999).

NYSAN partners considered factors unique to New York; they subsequently added concepts derived from the New York State School-Age Child Care regulations (NYS Office of Children and Family Services, 2005) and feedback from New York-based program providers. The resulting framework includes a full spectrum of criteria, including point-of-service, administrative, and management elements. Some of the indicators are observable, while others might be written

into policies or documented in program records. The ten essential elements of program quality are:

- Environment and climate
- Administration and organization
- Relationships
- Staffing and professional development
- Programming and activities
- Linkages between school and afterschool
- Youth participation and engagement
- Parent, family, and community partnerships
- Program growth and sustainability
- Measuring outcomes and evaluation

A recent meta-analysis of eight research studies and existing program quality frameworks (Palmer, Anderson, & Sabatelli, 2009) affirmed that the field is beginning to agree on what makes a high-quality program.

Six domains—supportive relationships, intentional programming, strong community partnerships, promotion of youth engagement, physical safety, and continuous program improvement—represent clear points of convergence across the various definitions of program quality. The field is reaching consensus regarding what aspects of program quality are important and how these dimensions of program quality fit into the overall picture of afterschool programming. (Palmer, Anderson, & Sabatelli, 2009, p. 9)

Though the language and structure of the categories is nuanced, NYSAN's quality framework includes each of these domains; it is relevant to and aligned with the most current research on afterschool program quality.

The framework transcends a program's model, geography, and host setting, yet provides a detailed structure for what high-quality programs should aim to achieve.

Strategies for Promoting High-Impact Afterschool for All

Highlighted below are the tools, strategies, and activities that agencies and organizations have employed to support program improvements using the NYSAN quality framework.

Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool

NYSAN member organizations realized that defining quality and its component parts was but one step in making a contribution to the field. Therefore, NYSAN developed the Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool. Use of the QSA Tool is a critical component of many programs' quality improvement strategies. The self-assessment process uses the quality framework to provide structure for afterschool professionals to reflect on their practice through dialogue and to own the process of continuously improving their programs. Unlike from many other assessment tools, the QSA Tool is designed to be used by program staff and other stakeholders, including youth, family members, and school and community partners, without an external observer. Programs may use the QSA Tool to assess their program along all ten elements of program quality at one time, or they may use parts of the QSA Tool over several weeks or even throughout the program year.

In August and September 2009, NYSAN used a web-based instrument to survey New York State afterschool providers about their use of the QSA Tool (NYSAN, 2009). Respondents included 106 program providers from all regions of the state, including large and small programs in rural, suburban, and urban communities. Users of the QSA Tool reported numerous benefits to their programs. First and foremost, the self-assessment successfully guided users through the processes of both assessing quality and creating an action plan that fosters a shared sense of ownership and accountability among program stakeholders, while also building consensus about what constitutes a high-quality program. Program providers also reported unanticipated results of use of the tool, including attracting funding and improving relationships between programs and schools. Eighty-three percent of QSA Tool users reported reaping benefits from use of the QSA Tool, and 75 percent reported one or more distinct changes in their program after using the QSA Tool for self-assessment. Moreover, 55 percent of

Having a common assessment tool allows each program to work toward the same goals and share a common vision despite geographic distance.

respondents identified quality improvements in their program as a result their self-assessment.

Loretta McCormick oversees the Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership (CROP), a consortium of sixteen rural school districts that collectively aim to provide afterschool environments that are safe and supportive; promote student achievement; foster learning through personal, social, and positive youth development opportunities; and engage parents and guardians in experiences that foster a greater connection with their school and community. McCormick said that CROP, a 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grantee, uses the QSA Tool to identify strengths and areas in need of improvement across multiple program sites,

many of which are separated by long distances. CROP uses the results to focus its biannual professional development offerings on topics identified through the self-assessment process. Having a common assessment tool allows each program to work toward the same goals and share a common vision despite geographic distance (NYSAN, 2007).

In New York City, Doreen Teh of the Child Center of New York's program at P.S. 24 asserts that the self-assessment process allows her to develop stronger partnerships and improve the sustainability of her program:

[The QSA Tool] has strengthened the communication between the afterschool program and the school; all staff members have a clear understanding of program goals and can identify real opportunities for working together. We are speaking the same language and are more focused and intentional in our practice. It has created a common framework to guide our work. (NYSAN, 2007, p. 32)

Technical Assistance

In addition to the QSA Tool itself, programs have access to the QSA Tool User's Guide, which provides practical strategies and examples from afterschool practitioners on best practices in self-assessment and program improvement. The user's guide includes information on beginning a self-assessment, engaging stakeholders in the process, and using assessment findings to create an action plan for addressing areas in need of improvement.

Moreover, NYSAN developed an online version of the user's guide, which provides direct links to dozens of resources organized around the ten elements of program

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The second edition of the NYSAN quality framework and QSA Tool is being released in 2010. For more information on using or adapting the quality framework, user's guide, or QSA Tool, please contact NYSAN at 646-943-8670 or info@nysan.org.

quality. This user's guide helps afterschool practitioners assess their programs and make feasible, effective changes to improve program quality. The user's guide booklet and website are available, free of charge, at www.nysan.org.

Additional supports include conference workshops, trainings, and program supports designed around the quality framework. Two annual statewide conferences, designed for 21st CCLC grantees but attended by a wide audience, are structured using the ten elements of program quality. Several NYSAN partner organizations, including The After-School Corporation and the Partnership for After School Education, provide program quality elements from the quality framework in their training menus. Regional afterschool networks throughout the state also use the quality framework to offer professional learning opportunities on program quality. Collectively, these supports are part of a growing consensus across the state regarding building capacity for quality programming.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) contracts with six Regional Student Support Services Centers; each of the centers employs a regional coordinator who is trained in and has experience with the QSA Tool. The regional coordinators often facilitate programs' use of the QSA Tool or design program supports based on the results of their self-assessments. At the Hudson Valley Student Support Services Center, Regional Coordinator Tammy Rhein shapes region-wide technical assistance and professional development plans around common areas in need of improvement as recognized through local programs' self-assessment results (personal communication, July 6, 2009).

Carol Marshall, a teacher trainer with the Mid-State Student Support Services Center, facilitates conversations about quality by starting with two elements identified by a program's leaders as most relevant to the success and sustainability of their work. According to Marshall, one of the most useful purposes of the quality framework is to help programs become familiar with best practices.

Marshall noted, "I encourage them to learn and use the language when writing objectives for their activities, or for applying for grants that require a comprehensive, research-based approach to making a program successful and sustainable. The QSA Tool is an effective resource for so much more than self-assessment" (personal communication, July 6, 2009).

Statewide Institute for Public Agencies

As part of a long-term effort to build a coordinated, statewide system to support afterschool programs, NYSAN led a two-year professional development experience for the program managers of the major public funding streams for afterschool programs in which the QSA Tool was a central component.

Participating program managers represented staff from NYSED and NYS Office of Children and Family Services, as well as the New York City Departments of Education and of Youth and Community Development. The quality framework provided structure for events throughout the two-year initiative. NYSAN conducted a needs assessment and provided training and support in the areas of program quality requested most by institute participants. As a result, all of the state and city agency staff members who oversee large afterschool grants are equipped to use the quality framework and QSA Tool with the hundreds of publicly funded programs they oversee and support.

Statewide Policy Development

Approaching program quality through policy development has proved to be an effective strategy to support the development and sustainability of high-impact afterschool programs. NYSED has adopted the quality framework in two ways: requiring that agencies seeking 21st CCLC funds design their programs around the ten elements of quality and subsequently requiring grantees to use the QSA Tool twice each year. These requirements are written into the 21st CCLC request for proposals as well as other NYSED documents (NYS Education Department, 2009). In New York City, the Department of Youth and Community Development used the self-assessment tool to monitor grantees of the agency's Out-of-School Time Initiative, the largest municipally funded out-of-school time system in the nation. The agency tells programs that they will be held accountable to the QSA standards, thereby encouraging them to use the QSA Tool to design programs, maintain program quality, and fulfill agency mandates. By using these policy strategies, New York State is building a highly-effective afterschool

system based on *common* quality standards in which continuous improvement and self-assessment are linked with reporting and accountability requirements.

National Use of the QSA Tool

As a result of its relevance to a myriad of programs, New York's quality framework has been adapted in several states including Missouri, California, Ohio, and New Mexico, each of which used NYSAN's advice and experience in creating their frameworks and self-assessment tools. In some cases, states used the framework and QSA Tool and simply edited them to reflect local regulations and promising practices. For some states, the statewide afterschool network led the process, while in others the state education agency or local groups took the lead and have been successful in promoting wide adoption of their new tool. Data collected through the aforementioned survey (NYSAN, 2009) and anecdotes from across the nation suggest that the framework and the self-assessment tool are a powerful pair, providing both research-based standards and an accessible instrument to help programs meet them.

Lessons Learned

NYSAN has documented the development of the quality framework and QSA Tool to disseminate information about the process to other states and organizations. NYSAN has found that raising awareness and providing training in the use of the quality framework and the self-assessment tool are critical to promoting wide adoption of both elements. In our survey, 37 percent of respondents had never used the QSA Tool, and 40 percent reported lack of understanding as a barrier to its use in their programs. Many such respondents reported that education and training would support their programs' use of the QSA Tool (NYSAN, 2009).

NYSAN has also learned that the quality framework and QSA Tool must continuously evolve in response to new research and changes in the field. The NYSAN Quality Assurance Committee is currently revisiting all quality indicators to be sure they remain essential to program quality. Perhaps more importantly, the committee has discussed adding several indicators that either provide new concepts or address aspects of program quality more explicitly. For example, one new indicator would address a current priority for the afterschool and early childcare communities by specifically

linking afterschool and early learning programs and policies. Another planned addition will incorporate language regarding inclusion of youth of all levels of ability. Additionally, several new indicators will be added to increase alignment between the QSA Tool and other quality assessment tools, such as the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, 2005).

Achieving High-Impact Afterschool for All

Access to afterschool programs alone is insufficient; *quality* counts in ensuring that youth have access to supportive, effective afterschool programming. The field is recognizing this tenet more and more, as evidenced by a growing investment in quality assessment. As described by the Forum for Youth Investment (Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2009):

From a research perspective, more evaluations are including an assessment of program quality and

many have incorporated setting-level measures (where the object of measurement is the program, not the participants) in their designs....

At the policy level, decision-makers are looking for ways to ensure that resources are allocated to programs likely to have an impact....

At the practice level, programs, organizations and systems are looking for tools that help concretize what effective practice looks like

and allow practitioners to assess, reflect on and improve their programs. (p. 6)

The NYSAN quality framework and QSA Tool have moved programs in New York State closer to meeting quality standards and have created a stronger culture of continuous improvement in local and statewide afterschool systems.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to recognize NYSAN Steering Committee and Quality Assurance Committee members and NYSAN's funders, past and present, without whom the QSA Tool would not have been developed. The author would like to thank Sanjiv Rao, NYSAN director, for support and guidance in developing this article. Moreover, the author thanks afterschool program providers across New York State for their tireless efforts to support youth in their communities.

Access to afterschool programs alone is insufficient; *quality* counts in ensuring that youth have access to supportive, effective afterschool programming.

Works Cited

- Achieve Boston. (2003). *Self-assessment questionnaire*. Retrieved from <http://achieveboston.org/self.asp>
- Baltimore Safe and Sound Campaign. (1999). *Standards for Baltimore after-school opportunities in youth places: Workbook*. Retrieved from <http://safeandsound.org/files/public/documents/workbook.pdf>
- Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2007). *The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills*. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.
- Freeman, K., & Redding, B. (1999). *Replication manual*. Los Angeles, CA: LA's Best.
- Hall, G., & Gruber, D. (2007). *Making the case: Quality after-school programs matter*. Boston, MA: Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out-of-School Time.
- Miller, B. M. (2005). *Pathways to success for youth: What counts in after-school*. Boston, MA: Intercultural Center for Research in Education and National Institute on Out-of-School Time.
- National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks. (n.d.). *About the national network*. Retrieved from http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/about_national_network/index.html
- National School-Age Care Alliance. (1998). *The NSACA standards for quality school-age care*. Hollis, NH: Puritan Press.
- New York State Afterschool Network. (2007). *NYSAN program quality self-assessment tool and user's guide*. New York, NY: Author.
- New York State Afterschool Network. (2008). *NYSAN policy brief: Afterschool funding in New York State: The case for a more coordinated system*. New York, NY: Author.
- New York State Afterschool Network. (2009). *NYSAN program quality self-assessment (QSA) tool survey report*. New York, NY: Author.
- New York State Education Department. (2009). *21st Century Community Learning Centers request for proposals*. Albany, NY: Author.
- New York State Office of Children and Family Services. (2005). *School-age child care regulations (part 414)*. Retrieved from http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/childcare/regs/414_SACC_regs.asp
- Palmer, K. L., Anderson, S. A., & Sabatelli, R. M. (2009). How is the afterschool field defining quality? A review of effective program practices and definitions of program quality. *Afterschool Matters*, 9, 1–12.
- United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2006). *Afterschool investments project: National profile*. Retrieved from <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/nationalprofile.html>
- Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. (2005). *Youth program quality assessment*. Retrieved from http://www.cypq.org/products_and_services/assessment_tools
- Yohalem, N., & Wilson-Ahlstrom, A. (2009). *Measuring youth program quality: A guide to assessment tools* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Forum for Youth Investment.



getting the right mix

Sustainability and Resource Development Strategies in Out-of-School Time Youth Arts Programs in Massachusetts

by Christine Proffitt

High-quality youth arts programs that take place outside the formal education system play a vital role in supporting the developmental needs and well-being of today's youth, particularly youth at risk of negative outcomes.

Out-of-school time (OST) youth arts programs provide opportunities for youth to learn about themselves and their world while cultivating skills they may be unable to fully develop at home or at school. Research from the past two decades shows that OST programs provide safe and productive alternatives to the streets, gangs, and jail; bolster academic performance, self-esteem, and community involvement; prevent or minimize adverse risk-taking behaviors; and teach skills essential for the 21st century workforce including creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration (Americans for the Arts, 2006; Fiske, 1999; Gargarella, 2007; Heath & Soep, 1998; Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1998; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2002; Wright, John, Offord, & Rowe, 2004). By extension, these studies point to the importance of funding youth arts programs.

Despite the evidence that the arts support positive youth development, nonprofit arts organizations face, in their never-ending search for funding, a shrinking economy, a continuing decline in philanthropic contributions to the arts, and increased competition to raise funds from the same pool of dwindling resources (Americans for the Arts, 2006; Keating, Pradhan, Wassall, & DeNatale, 2008). It seems surprising, then, that so little attention has been paid to understanding the methods by which OST youth arts programs develop the resources necessary to serve their intended audiences in both the short and long terms.

CHRISTINE PROFFITT has nearly 15 years of experience in the nonprofit cultural sector in Worcester, MA. In 2000, she was named the City of Worcester's first cultural development officer and executive director of the Worcester Cultural Coalition, a unique dual position created to ensure that arts and culture play a vital role in Worcester's planning and development. She was honored in 2001 by Centro Las Americas with the Outstanding Community Leader Award. In 2002, she received *Worcester Business Journal's* "40 Under 40" Young Leader Award. Christine holds an undergraduate degree in Studio Art and a master's degree in Nonprofit Management from Clark University.

CHICKENS
We were studying composition, which is where things are placed in the picture.
OUR WORLD IN PICTURES

The research reported in this article focuses on understanding the strategies employed by OST youth arts programs in Massachusetts to promote financial sustainability and resource development. Using a comparative case-study methodology, the research team examined a non-random sample of five high-quality OST youth arts programs intended to be reasonably representative of those operating in Massachusetts (see Figure 1). The team identified commonalities, particularities, themes, trends, and variations in the strategies used to fund and sustain these programs. The findings were juxtaposed with state and national expert testimony and compared to the relatively small body of research on best-practice strategies for sustainability and resource development of OST youth programs. The research team hopes that the practices for sustainability and resource development revealed in this study will resonate with OST youth arts programs that are seeking funding and will serve as a resource for youth program developers, administrators, and leaders. This study can also help to guide donors and funders—from foundations and government agencies to businesses and philanthropists—who are looking for ways to support youth arts programming.

Research Design and Methods

The findings reported here were drawn from 13 categories of data on strategies for sustainability and resource development used by a non-random sample of community-based OST youth arts programs in Massachusetts. The data were collected primarily through in-person interviews with a total of 13 key program staff and organizational leaders from five programs. Additional sources of data included limited on-site observations; follow-up telephone interviews with participants; and a review of related documents, including financial documents, program brochures, and organization websites.

The research team used these data to attempt to answer the following central research questions:

1. What strategies for sustainability and resource development do high-quality OST youth arts programs in Massachusetts employ?
2. To what extent do these programs use best-practice methods of sustainability and resource development, as identified in extant literature?

In order to provide a statewide and national perspective, we also asked related questions of two field experts: H. Mark Smith, YouthReach program manager of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and Traci Slater-Rigaud, program manager of the Coming Up Taller Awards pro-



PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA

- High-quality youth arts program funded, in part, by the MCC's YouthReach Program
- Operates as an established 501(c)(3) arts and cultural organization in Massachusetts (an out-of-school time environment)
- Program budget less than \$300,000
- Age range of youth served is 12–20 years

Figure 1. Selected OST youth arts programs in Massachusetts

gram of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. We asked them about the issues, challenges, and opportunities that nonprofit arts organizations face in maintaining and sustaining their youth programs.

This study examined youth arts programs that function outside the formal school environment and within 501(c)(3) nonprofits that classify themselves as arts and cultural organizations. The criteria for selection focused on the following key program attributes: quality, age range of youth served (primarily teens), geographic location, community context (rural, urban, and suburban), program budget size, creative discipline, years in operation, operating context, and ability to participate. We purposely selected programs outside of Boston due to the dramatic disproportion of funding available in the capital compared to other parts of the state. In addition, all programs selected were funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

In this study, *high quality* is defined according to the standards of the YouthReach program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC, 2010), as described in its application for funding. Indicators of high-quality programming include strong credentials of instructors and mentors as artists and as educators; such credentials might include graduate degrees or extensive experience as practicing artists. Other indicators are use of high-quality materials and space, youth engagement in creative inquiry, ample opportunity for reflection on process and product, a sequential curriculum that fosters accomplishment and mastery, and opportunities to work toward a culminating event such as

an exhibition or performance (MCC, 2010). The MCC's YouthReach program is a nationally recognized state art agency model program, supported since its inception by the National Endowment for the Arts. Youth arts programs that receive YouthReach funding have met a rigorous standard of excellence, demonstrating high-quality program design, community need and participation, and fiscal management and evaluation. Their funding applications have been vetted by an intensive peer-review process using experts in the field. For all of these reasons, YouthReach funding provided a legitimate and practical criterion for selecting high-quality OST youth arts programs for our study.

Effective Strategies for Resource Development and Program Sustainability

A synthesis of the literature reveals many similarities among best-practice strategies used by OST youth programs of various types. A careful distillation of research, including reports by The Finance Project (Anuszkiewicz, Salomon, Schmid, & Torrico, 2008; Deich & Hayes, 2007; Sandel, 2007), the Hamilton Fish Institute and the National Mentoring Center (2007), and the Human Interaction Research Institute (Backer & Barbell, 2006), identifies 13 strategies as the most common and effective best practices used by successful OST youth programs across the country:

- Maximizing public support*
- Building community support*
- Cultivating key champions*
- Creating earned revenue*
- Maximizing in-kind resources*
- Demonstrating and communicating results*
- Building partnerships with the public and private sectors
- Conducting community fundraising to promote individual giving*
- Advocating for public legislation to create more flexibility in existing funding streams
- Making better use of existing resources
- Diversifying to build capacity*
- Charging sliding-scale participation fees
- Planning for sustainability and creating a formal plan

The strategies marked with an asterisk are those identified by our 13 participants as being used by this study's sample, in some cases with variations. One additional strategy, hiring and training exceptional staff and mentors, was revealed in study participant interviews as a key practice that contributes to program funding and sustainability. Thus, our study revealed nine strategies

used by the sample Massachusetts OST youth arts programs for resource development and sustainability.

1. Building Community Support

Developing relationships and a positive public image in the communities that the youth arts programs serve was a recurring theme among study participants. Four of the five programs employed this strategy, recognizing that building relationships with community leaders and other organizations can contribute to developing and maintaining a healthy public image which can, in turn, lead to new sources of financial and non-monetary support.

2. Cultivating and Stewarding Key Program Champions

Administrators and staff from every program in this study appeared to have actively cultivated and stewarded program champions as part of their funding strategy. Responses from study participants indicated that this strategy helped to attract public attention and led to new funding opportunities. Champions included not only legislators and other influencers outside the organization—business leaders, community leaders, public school system administrators, funders, and donors—but also people within the organization such as the executive director, education director, and program manager, as well as staff, parents or guardians of participating teens, participants, alumni, and teachers.

3. Hiring and Training Exceptional Staff and Mentors

High-quality staff and mentors who can nurture relationships with youth, create an environment of trust and security, and provide in-depth artistic experiences were identified as key contributors to successful youth arts program fundraising. According to six respondents, the quality of the program's staff and mentors—both those who run the program and those who work with students—directly influenced the effectiveness of the program. Ensuring that qualified, committed staff and mentors implement programs and actively engage youth was viewed as an important strategy for achieving positive youth development outcomes, which, in turn, were seen as helping programs to secure funding.

4. Raising Funds from a Variety of Sources

The data indicate that all programs received a mix of financial support from a variety of sources, including federal arts and non-arts funders, state and municipal agencies including the Massachusetts Cultural Council, foundations, corporations, individuals, and, in one program, earned income. (See Table 1.) Parent organizations

Table 1. Funding Sources

| | FEDERAL SUPPORT ¹ | STATE SUPPORT ² | MUNICIPAL SUPPORT ³ | FOUNDATIONS | CORPORATE SUPPORT | INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS | EARNED INCOME | INTERNAL ORGANIZATION CONTRIBUTION |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Program A | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Program B | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | |
| Program C ⁴ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Program D | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Program E | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |

¹Federal support represents, for Programs B and C, funding from the NEA and the Coming Up Taller Awards program. Program E has also received federal support from the U.S. Departments of Labor and Justice and through Community Development Block Grant funds.

²State support in all cases is provided by the YouthReach program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

³Municipal support is provided through the local cultural council, an arts-related funder.

⁴Program C was funded, in part, by the parent organization's educational endowment.

Table 2. Non-monetary Support

| | TECHNICAL SUPPORT | VOLUNTEERS | ADVERTISING & PROMOTION | PROGRAM SUPPLIES | EQUIPMENT | FACILITY & SPACE | HOSPITALITY & FOOD | OTHER GIFTS |
|-----------|-------------------|------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Program A | | | | | | | | |
| Program B | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | |
| Program C | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Program D | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Program E | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |

Table 3. Strategies for Sustainability and Resource Development

| | BUILDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT | CULTIVATING & STEWARDING KEY CHAMPIONS* | | | HIRING & TRAINING STAFF & MENTORS | RAISING FUNDS FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES | MAXIMIZING FEDERAL, STATE & MUNICIPAL SUPPORT | GENERATING IN-KIND SUPPORT | CREATING EARNED INCOME | DEMONSTRATING & COMMUNICATING RESULTS | PROMOTING INDIVIDUAL GIVING |
|-----------|----------------------------|---|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | LEGISLATORS | INTERNAL | EXTERNAL | | | | | | | |
| Program A | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | |
| Program B | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Program C | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Program D | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Program E | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |

*Cultivating and stewarding key champions is a widely used strategy among case programs. This strategy is further broken down into three components to reflect study participants' distinctions between cultivating, on the one hand, elected officials and other external champions such as community leaders, business leaders, and media; and, on the other, stewarding internal champions including board members, key staff, students, teachers, and parents.

of four of the five programs contributed internal financial resources to support their programs. Only one organization reported having a permanent endowment.

This approach of seeking funds from a variety of sources, whether used intentionally or not, enabled programs to be less dependent on any one source of funding and, in theory, more sustainable. If one funder reduces its support or cuts funding altogether—a possibility cited by a majority of respondents as a major obstacle to program sustainability and growth—other funding sources are likely already in the pipeline.

5. Maximizing Public Funding

Programs B and C experienced success in accessing public funds from federal, state, and municipal arts agencies such as the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Massachusetts Cultural Council's YouthReach program, and the local cultural council. Program E was successful in accessing federal funding from both arts and non-arts agencies alike, including the NEA, National Endowment for the Humanities, U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, and the Community Development Block Grant program, in addition to receiving funding from the state cultural council.

6. Generating In-kind Support

In addition to financial support, organizational leaders and program staff of four of the five programs secured non-monetary support as a deliberate strategy to reduce operating costs. The resources obtained included facilities, volunteers, technical support, advertising and promotion, program supplies and equipment, hospitality and food, and other gifts. (See Table 2.) For Programs B and C, in-kind support in the form of pro-bono use of facilities represented *core* support for the program.

7. Creating Earned Income

Program D was the only program that created earned income; it hosted occasional auctions of participating youths' artwork. Though this strategy produced a modest amount of funding, it was an intentional strategy to supplement contributed income.

8. Demonstrating and Communicating Program Results

Program evaluation was viewed by the vast majority of study participants as an important factor in program funding and sustainability for two reasons: It provides evidence that the program produces positive youth development results, making the case for funding need, and it provides information on ways program leaders can

EVALUATING AND COMMUNICATING PROGRAM RESULTS

"It's up to the organization to do the translation; not all non-arts funders are going to get it—that's why I say a specific strategy is being able to talk about your youth development program. Other funders want to hear the other side.... You need to be able to be fluent in all languages, in the funders' language."

—H. MARK SMITH, YOUTHREACH PROGRAM MANAGER, MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL

"The best bet is building a solid model and making [program assessment] an inherent part of that model. One funder is not going to last forever, and you have to be able to move quickly. Developing a solid model that can be presented in front of a variety of funders, whether they be small local foundations or corporate sponsorships or state funding—it's necessary to have all pieces in order so you're able to shop your program."

—TRACI SLATER-RIGAUD, PROGRAM MANAGER, COMING UP TALLER AWARDS PROGRAM OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

improve their programs. All five programs used their evaluation results in a variety of ways to promote the effectiveness of their programs to potential and existing funders. For example, administrators and staff included the information in grant applications, brochures, media stories, and personal websites.

9. Promoting Individual Giving

Capital campaigns, annual fund appeals, and special events were some of the ways in which organizations promoted individual giving. Four of the five study programs received individual contributions in direct support of their youth arts programs.

Key Findings

Table 3 illustrates the strategies for sustainability and resource development employed by the five sample OST youth arts programs in Massachusetts. Cultivating and stewarding program champions, hiring and training exceptional staff and mentors, and demonstrating and communicating program results appeared to be the most widely practiced strategies. The strategy of creating earned income was used only by Program D. This may suggest an opportunity for study participants to explore the potential for earned income as a new source of revenue.

The data in Table 3 and other responses from study participants suggest several key findings related to our research questions.

Fundraising a Challenge

Study participants rated the responsibility of fundraising for their youth arts programs to be either "a significant

challenge” (six respondents) or “somewhat of a challenge” (seven respondents). In most instances, the program managers, executive directors, and artistic directors were the ones who viewed fundraising as “a significant challenge,” while development directors and business managers, who work directly with raising and managing funds, perceived it as “somewhat of a challenge.” Development directors tended to agree that more resources are available to support youth-related programming than other areas of organizational operations.

In all five programs, fundraising appeared to be a shared responsibility among staff, including executive and artistic directors, development directors, program managers, and grantwriters; none of the five youth arts programs relied solely on one person to raise the necessary resources to fund the program.

The majority of the programs’ parent organizations employed full-time professional development staff to help raise funds for the youth arts programs. The one program that did not employ full-time development staff was the only one to recruit volunteer fundraising assistance. Notably, the only parent organization that did not employ development staff had the broadest base of financial and in-kind support among the study programs.

Mix of Sources

OST youth arts programs included in this study generated a diverse mix of support from government sources, foundations, businesses, individuals, earned income, in-kind gifts, and their own organizations’ internal contributions.

All five programs generated income from three to six different funding sources, including public and private

sources. The mix varied among programs. A recent study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation and conducted by Public/Private Ventures and The Finance Project shared a similar finding. *The Cost of Quality Out-of-School-Time Programs* (Grossman, Lind, Hayes, McMaken, & Gersick, 2009) concluded that “OST programs typically relied on three to five sources of funding, balancing public and private sources” (p. v).

Best Practices in Resource Development

Programs were found to have employed a diverse mix of best-practice strategies for resource development and sustainability as identified in the literature. Of the nine strategies identified in this study, three programs employed eight, one employed seven, and one program used only three. The most widely practiced strategies appeared to be cultivating and stewarding key champions, hiring and training exceptional staff and mentors, and demonstrating and communicating program results. The program that employed the least diverse set of strategies also had the least diverse base of support and was at the greatest risk for discontinuance due to major challenges in securing outside funding.

Unreliable and Unpredictable

Study participants perceived their greatest challenges to sustainability and resource development to be the unreliability and unpredictability of funding. Most respondents indicated that they could not predict *where* the money would come from to continue their programs. Several respondents noted that the *level* of support was unreliable. Several questioned why funders tend to decrease or eliminate funding for seasoned and effective programs in favor of new, unproven ones.

Exceptional Staff as Key

Study participants viewed hiring and training exceptional staff and mentors to be the most important single factor in successful fundraising and program sustainability. We interpreted this practice, described repeatedly by study participants, to be a key strategy for enhancing program effectiveness and thereby promoting resource development and sustainability. Study participants—even development directors whose primary responsibility is fundraising—revealed a noticeable preference to talk more about the content of the program than about the funding and sustainability strategies we were researching. This preference reinforced the finding that a majority of participants strongly felt that program effectiveness is the cornerstone of effective fundraising.

FACTORS IN SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Study participants often named factors in program effectiveness when asked to identify successful resource development strategies:

...getting to the kids and being able to help them.

Success in resource development... It's human resources mostly.... That's the resource that is most important.

...hiring good people. If you hire somebody that's not good, say goodbye quickly.... Really listen to the kids. See if they are building real relationships with the kids. [We] need a staff that appreciates what it's like to fundraise.... [We] always have to figure out what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong.

Have a deeply meaningful mission and then live it.... Make sure everything works and relates back to the mission.

WHY SOME HIGH-QUALITY OST YOUTH ARTS PROGRAMS FAIL

No Written Plan

Though a formal process for sustainability planning was described in the literature as being central to successful resource development and sustainability (Backer & Barbell, 2006; Hamilton Fish Institute & National Mentoring Center, 2007), we found that study participants did not regularly engage in written planning.

Interpreting the Data

The findings of this limited-sample study suggest some conclusions about resource development and sustainability for OST youth arts programs.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach. While we saw a high degree of overlap in the resource development strategies used, each program included in this study employed a customized combination of three to eight best-practice strategies. This finding suggests that programs tailored their approaches based on a variety of factors, including human and financial resources, the surrounding community and its funders, and the program's specific needs.

A written plan may not be crucial. A consistent lack of resource development and sustainability plans in the programs studied may indicate that such a plan is not necessary for successful youth arts fundraising. The key to successful development might lie not in organized efforts, but rather in *consistent* and *creative* efforts. The strategies identified by study participants seemed to be exercised as part of an intuitive approach to resource development and sustainability rather than a formal, systematic one. Study participants seemed to view the fundraising approaches they described less as *strategies* than as integrated *activities* that nonprofit organizations naturally engage in to support their mission-based work.

Program quality does not guarantee funding. Three of the five programs involved in this study received national recognition for their excellence in innovative programming from the highly competitive Coming Up Taller Awards program of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. Yet even for these high-quality, effective programs, funding remains a constant challenge. Accolades, name recognition, and a solid track record of positive program results seemed to help programs leverage funding, but they did not replace the need for resource development strategies.

Size—of the budget or the program—doesn't matter. In this study, the program that had by far the smallest budget, and the only one of the five programs that did not employ a director of development, seemed to be the most successful in securing a broad base of financial and in-kind support. What makes this program

"Good intentions don't pay the bills.... There are a lot of great teaching artists, historians, caring adults who are willing to leap head first into these community-based programs but don't understand the necessity of building an infrastructure that is sustainable."

—TRACI SLATER-RIGAUD, *COMING UP TALLER*

"Some of the programs that don't exist anymore—they were projects of an individual or small group of people and the organization acted like a fiscal agent. Not a lot of the institution's efforts went into supporting the program. Then there's another whole group of programs that don't exist because the institution itself did not have the strength and was on shaky ground. Program strength is strongly linked to the strength of the institution."

—H. MARK SMITH, *YOUTHREACH, MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL*

successful? Is it the content of the program, the nature of its community, or the ingenuity of the staff? Or does the program simply employ the right mix of strategies? Further inquiry may provide a better understanding of the reasons.

Best practices prove their worth. The high degree of overlap in best-practice strategies for resource development and sustainability found in the literature and used by this study's sample suggests that, whether or not program leaders recognized it, their fundraising success could be attributed to their use of these best-practice strategies.

Programs tend to combine a variety of funding sources and fundraising approaches. A broad base of support, both financial and in-kind, is important to resource development and sustainability. The unpredictability and unreliability of funding encouraged fundraisers to seek support from a variety of sources, including foundations, corporations, individuals, and government agencies. Program leaders and staff also tended to secure support not only from a variety of sources, but in a variety of ways, including grantwriting, soliciting corporate sponsorships, generating earned income, seeking in-kind donations, and contributing their own organization's cash. Nonmonetary or in-kind support, typically in the form of facility space, equipment and supplies, marketing and advertising, professional expertise, volunteers, and hospitality and food, often helped programs reduce operating costs. For two programs that received rent-free facilities, in-kind support represented *core* support.

Opportunities exist for further diversification. The study results suggest that programs may find additional funding opportunities, particularly in the categories of individual giving and earned income. A 2007 report from the Giving USA Foundation said that

individual giving accounted for 75.6 percent of total U.S. philanthropic contributions, or \$223 billion, with foundations accounting for 12.6 percent, and corporations and corporate foundations representing 7.6 percent, or \$12.7 billion (“Charitable Giving Reached \$295 Billion,” 2007). Thus, the practice of promoting individual giving warrants closer consideration. In addition, creation of earned income was the least practiced strategy among the programs in this study, with only one program implementing it. These two areas seem to offer opportunities for new avenues of support for the OST youth arts programs in this study.

Acknowledgements

This article was drawn from research conducted in spring 2009 as part of a capstone research project for the master’s of Public Administration program at Clark University, Worcester, MA. The research team consisted of Christine M. Proffitt, primary author; Kate O. Rafey; and Charlye M. Cunningham. This research was successfully defended in April 2009.

Works Cited

Americans for the Arts. (2006). *The future of private sector giving to the arts in America: National arts policy roundtable 2006 final report*. Retrieved from http://www.artsusa.org/pdf/information_services/research/policy_roundtable/2006NAPRFinalReport.pdf

Anuszkiewicz, B., Salomon, N., Schmid, W., & Torrico, R. (2008). *Finding resources to support mentoring programs and services for youth*. The Finance Project. Retrieved from <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/FindingResources-MentoringPrograms.pdf>

Backer, T. E., & Barbell, I. (2006). *Keeping a good program going: Five steps to engage local philanthropy*. Human Interaction Research Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.humaninteract.org/images/casey-sustainabilityguide.pdf>

Charitable giving reached \$295 billion in 2006, report finds. (2007, June 25). *Philanthropy News Digest*. Retrieved from <http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/news/story.jhtml?id=181000026>

Deich, S., & Hayes, C. (2007). *Thinking broadly: Financing strategies for youth programs*. The Finance Project. Retrieved from http://www.financeproject.org/publications/Thinkingbroadly_PM.pdf

Fiske, E. (1999). *Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning*. Arts Education Partnership. Retrieved from <http://aep-arts.org/files/publications/ChampsReport.pdf>

Gargarella, E. (2007). *Landmarks for change: A case study examining the impact of a community-based art education program on adolescents*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Akron, Akron, OH.

Grossman, J., Lind, C., Hayes, C., McMaken, J., & Gersick, A. (2009). *The cost of quality out-of-school time programs*. Public/Private Ventures and The Finance Project. Retrieved from <http://www.financeproject.org/index.cfm?page=2>

Hamilton Fish Institute & National Mentoring Center. (2007). *Sustainability planning and resource development for youth mentoring programs*. Retrieved from <http://www.hamfish.org>

Heath, S. B., & Soep, E. M., (1998). Youth development and the arts in nonschool hours. *Grantmakers in the Arts*, 9(1), 9–16.

Heath, S. B., Soep, E. M., & Roach, A. (1998). Living the arts through language + learning: A report on community-based youth organizations. *Americans for the Arts Monographs*, 2(7), 1–20.

Keating, E., Pradhan, G., Wassall, G., & DeNatale, D. (2008). *Passion & purpose: Raising the fiscal fitness bar for Massachusetts nonprofits*. The Boston Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.tbf.org/uploadedFiles/tbforg/Utility_Navigation/Multimedia_Library/Reports/Passion&Purpose_ExecSummary.pdf

Massachusetts Cultural Council. (2010). *YouthReach program guidelines*. Retrieved from http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/applications/yr_guidelines.html

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. (2002). *The impact of arts education on workforce preparation*. Issue Brief: Economic & Technology Policy Studies. Retrieved from <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/050102ARTSED.pdf>

Sandel, K. (2007). *Snapshots of sustainability: Profiles of successful strategies for financing out-of-school time programs*. The Finance Project. Retrieved from <http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/SustainabilityProfilesOST.pdf>

Wright, R., John, L., Offord, D., & Rowe, W. (2004). *National Arts & Youth Demonstration Project: Highlights*. School of Social Work, McGill University, Montreal. Retrieved from <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/naydp/NAYDPBooklet.pdf>



Project Exploration's Sisters4Science

Involving Urban Girls of Color in Science Out of School

by Gabrielle Lyon and Jameela Jafri

Project Exploration's Sisters4Science (S4S) is an after-school program for middle and high school urban girls of color. Designed to *get* girls interested in science, *keep* girls interested in science, and *equip* girls with skills and experiences that enable them to pursue science, S4S creates a science-rich learning environment that puts girls at the center.

This paper sketches the context for participation in science by girls from historically underrepresented populations and offers a detailed description of S4S and its personalized, girl-centered pedagogy. The S4S example suggests a need to complement current out-of-school science programs with lessons from girl-centered practice and research.

S4S in Context

Participants in Sisters4Science represent the young people least likely to participate or achieve in science. Sisters are primarily African-American and Latina girls

GABRIELLE LYON is the cofounder and executive director of Project Exploration, a Chicago-based nonprofit science education organization that works to ensure that communities traditionally overlooked by science—particularly minority youth and girls—have access to personalized experiences with science and scientists. Gabrielle leads Project Exploration to fulfill its mission and champions the belief that science can and should be accessible to everyone. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in history from the University of Chicago and her Ph.D. in curriculum studies from the University of Illinois, Chicago. In 2009 she was named a leadership fellow with the Chicago Community Trust. She has participated in seven international paleontology expeditions and discovered the African dinosaur *Deltadromeus*.

JAMEELA JAFRI is manager of girls programs at Project Exploration, where she combines her love of science with her passion for youth development programs for girls. For over ten years, she has been writing Internet-based lesson plans for the teacher resource site of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She has taught middle and high school science in both public and private schools. She holds a master's degree in secondary science education from Teachers College. In addition to gender-specific science programming, her interests include ensuring that comprehensive health and sexual education resources are available to Muslim youth in America.

Sisters4Science

**Special
Intelligent
Satisfied
Terrific
Envy us
Real
Scientifically smart**

4ever and always

**Social
Caring
Indifferent [to social norms]
Elegant
Nice
Courageous
Emotional**

—*Jasmine*

(Jafri, 2007, p. 1)

who attend schools where the majority of students (upwards of 80 percent) come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore, many of our girls join S4S at a time when they are struggling academically.

Populations historically underrepresented in science are discouraged from participating in out-of-school science experiences by multiple factors including lack of transportation, money for pay program fees, a sense of “welcome” at the program, and accessibility to students with disabilities. Intermittent or non-existent programming acutely affects participation by students from historically underrepresented populations; most high-caliber science programs are restricted to academic high achievers or to students from families with the means to pay for programs (Campbell, Denes, & Morrison, 2000; Jolly, Campbell, & Perlman, 2004; Lynch, 2000; Lyon, 2009; Scharf & Woodlief, 2000). A lack of personal connection to science can give students the feeling that what is taught is not relevant to them (Bouillon & Gomez, 2001), particularly when they come from communities traditionally marginalized in science, including minorities, new immigrants, low-income students, and students who do not perform well in school.

Urban minority girls also face social and cultural stereotypes that can steer them away from science, engineering, and math—both in and out of school. The middle school years have emerged as a critical period for engaging and sustaining girls’ interest in science. Extensive research suggests that a lack of self-efficacy, not mental ability, hinders girls’ participation in science as they move from elementary to middle and high school (Halpern, et al., 2007; Simpkins & Davis-Kean, 2005).

Design Issues

Encouraging minority youth—particularly girls—to pursue science has been on the national education policy

agenda for nearly three decades. Gender-specific programming has been a focal point for encouraging girls’ engagement in science (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

The late 1990s and the 2000s saw a growth in case studies describing programs that effectively engage girls and minority youth in science. Introducing girls to role models, such as female scientists, has been identified as one way to encourage girls to envision a career in science (Basu & Barton, 2007; Cachaper, et al., 2008; Fancsali, 2003; Ferreira, 2001; Zacharia & Barton, 2004). Other strategies have focused on fostering girls’ sense of ability and self-efficacy in science and technology (Denner, Bean, & Martinez, 2009). These recommendations emerge from studies showing that girls tend to underestimate their abilities in science and math, even when they perform well in these subjects (Halpern, et al., 2007).

Decades of focused attention and development of specific programs that engage girls in science have not led to the anticipated increases in participation at the college, graduate school, or professional levels. Recent reports suggest that women make up only 25 percent of the over 5 million scientists in the United States, and women of color make up just 2 percent of that group (Girls Coalition of Greater Boston, 2009).

Engagement, Capacity and Continuity: A Trilogy for Student Success (Jolly, et al., 2004) explores why successes in individual programs are not translating into more progress at the systemic level. In summary:

Stand-alone efforts that try to improve student academic performance or increase student interest in certain careers will only have limited success. It is the combination of “engagement, capacity, and continuity” that’s essential to real progress. We’ve often said to children, “You can be whatever you want, as long as you work hard enough.” But children need

access and support in order for that to happen. The ECC [engagement, capacity, continuity] Trilogy focuses on not just the child's will, but on the structures that are needed to support that will, to ensure that all children do get to become whatever they want. (Jolly, et al., 2004, p. iii)

We propose an additional observation: Case studies examining science programs designed to target girls fail to incorporate lessons learned from local and national studies of “best practices” for (non-science) girls’ programming. By and large, these studies indicate single-sex youth development programs for girls are of the highest quality when grounded in a philosophy that recognizes that girls have unique needs. That is, effective, high-quality girls’ programs are characterized not simply by the absence of boys, but rather by the presence of specific youth development strategies that are gender-sensitive (Mead & Boston Women’s Fund, 2000; Roychoudhury, Tippins, & Nichols, 1995).

Much of this research is grounded in an approach that asks girls what matters from their perspectives. For example, in *Integrating Vision and Reality: Possibilities for Urban Girls Programs*, Molly Mead and the Young Sisters for Justice—a program of the Boston Women’s Fund—undertook a research project to understand what makes an ideal girls program (2000). They conducted case studies of three programs in urban communities that worked with girls of color, the majority of whom came from low-income families. Based on their case studies, the researchers summarized key benefits of single-sex programs for girls:

- Programs are designed with girls’ experiences and strengths in mind.
- Programs for girls are run by adult women, who simultaneously serve as role models.
- Programs help girls recognize the inequities they face in the world and help them develop strategies to overcome those inequities.
- Girls learn to respect themselves and one another.
- Girls learn the importance of connecting with other girls and focusing on issues of joint concern.
- Girls learn to develop positive relationships with their

female relatives and with other adult women and young women.

- Girls learn about the different roles women can play in families, in communities, and the workplace.
- In terms of girls’ development, programs take on a role that other institutions such as schools, communities, and families do not. (Mead & Boston Women’s Fund, 2000)

The experience of Project Exploration’s Sisters4Science suggests that science programs that want to recruit and retain urban girls of color need to tap into this base of practice and research.

The middle school years have emerged as a critical period for engaging and sustaining girls’ interest in science. Extensive research suggests that a lack of self-efficacy, not mental ability, hinders girls’ participation in science as they move from elementary to middle and high school.

Nuts and Bolts of S4S

Project Exploration (see www.projectexploration.org) is a Chicago-based nonprofit science education organization whose mission is to make science accessible to the public—especially minority youth and girls—through personalized experiences with science and scientists. In 1999, Project Exploration launched an afterschool program for middle and high school African-American and Latina girls to connect girls’ lives and experiences to science and the natural world. Sisters4Science is intended to:

- Help girls develop self-esteem about their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and decisions
- Encourage girls to explore natural science in a safe environment
- Expose participants to the wide variety of roles played by women in science
- Improve girls’ overall school performance by developing goal-setting, decision-making, and communication skills
- Combine science learning with leadership development

Drawing on philosophy and pedagogy inherent in girl-only youth programs (Fullwood, Davis, & Debold, 2000; Mead & Boston Women’s Fund, 2000; Ms. Foundation for Women, 2001; Phillips, 2007), S4S puts girls at the center of its endeavors. S4S facilitators are responsible for creating experiences that speak to girls’ interests and experiences. S4S is run after school between October and May at five sites. In 2007, 73 girls participated in the program; 93 percent were African American

S4S Portrait in Practice

"Girls, welcome, welcome! Do you remember where we're going this weekend? That's right! Ingleside, Illinois!"

Jameela, the Project Exploration program facilitator, is ushering in a dozen middle school girls. At the front of the room, the visiting scientist, Lisa, is unpacking supplies for the day's activity with the help of two girls. On the wall is a poster with a photo of each Sister and her handwritten name.

"Dr. Shakaya, come on, grab your snack, we're just starting. Girls, if you haven't signed the thank-you notes to the scientists who were with us last week, do that while you're getting snack." Jameela calls the girls "doctor" and hugs them as they arrive.

The girls are familiar with the routine: grab a snack, sign thank-you cards, find their journals, take a seat. The energy of the classroom is lighthearted and comfortable.

"Jameela! At Ingleside will we still get to eat all we want at the meals?" This weekend, S4S will travel to a nature center for a leadership retreat.

"That's a good question. I remember when we went to Lake Geneva, it was a buffet. I don't know if it will be the same set-up. I will check and let you know."

As the girls get settled, the room quiets. The girls stop shuffling their things, put away lip gloss, and turn to the front of the room.

"OK," Jameela says, shifting gears, "journal time. What do we write?"

"Date, time, place." The girls have their journals open and are flipping to a new page.

"Are we 'a.m.' or 'p.m.'?"

"p.m.!"

"Right, p.m. We're scientists—we love using our units! Today I have a special prompt because we're starting a new exploration. Do you remember how a few weeks ago we were wondering during snack time, 'What the heck is in what I am eating?' Well, that's what we're going to get into today."

And so the session begins. In the next hour and forty-five minutes, the girls will introduce themselves to Lisa by playing a name game in which they identify their favorite ice cream, will disaggregate fat from milk and observe the rates of diffusion of food coloring in different fat-quantity milks, and will make their own ice cream.

As Lisa, a food scientist, takes students through a lab protocol that mimics one she's working on in her state health department lab, Jameela connects the dots and keeps the activities from becoming abstract: "What is the cup like that we're pouring into? Our stomachs, right. What is the vinegar like? The acid in our stomachs." (Jameela had prepped the girls the previous week about food processing in the human body.)

Jameela checks on the girls' observations as they work in pairs at desks around the room, "How much vinegar did you stir in? How much liquid do you have now? How much did you start with? You can always make notes, don't forget—your journal is your friend."

Jameela builds real-life connections between Lisa and the Sisters. She has worked with Lisa in advance to ensure the activity will be authentic: something that taps into what Lisa is working on and wondering about as a scientist and that connects directly with the girls' questions.

"Just 20 minutes left, and we need to make ice cream."

The ingredients have been pre-measured to save time. The girls pour salt and ice into large sealable plastic bags, add bags with ice-cream ingredients, wrap the package with newspaper, and shake. They toss the taped bundles for five minutes, and it's ready to eat. Already their rides are waiting; parents are calling girls' cell phones.

"8:45 a.m. sharp on Saturday for the retreat! Don't be late!" Jameela's voice trickles after them.

and 5 percent Latina. Seventh-graders made up 47 percent of participants, eighth-graders 44 percent, ninth-graders 8 percent, and sixth-graders 1 percent (Jafri, 2007).

S4S anchors Project Exploration's Services for Girls programs, which enable staff to foster long-term relationships with girls and give them ongoing opportunities to develop the skills and experience they need to consider pursuing science in, and beyond, college. The All Girls Expedition is an intensive two-week immersion experience that allows a dozen high school girls to learn practical geology, biology, evaluation, and field science. Girls' Health and Science Day is an annual conference designed by S4S to provide information on girls' health issues. Each spring 120 girls in grades 7–10, including but not limited to S4S girls, participate in a day-long conference that includes workshops on self-defense, puberty, sexually transmitted diseases, teen dating, and violence. Finally, Project Exploration's Women in Science supports female scientists to lead science activities across these programs.

Research into out-of-school time science programs lacks detailed descriptions of programs that are effective at recruiting and retaining girls and minority youth to science (Lee & Luykx, 2006; McClure, Rodriguez, Cummings, Falkenberg, & McComb, 2007). The following description of the program structure and curriculum of Sisters4Science may help fill the gap.

Program Structure

School Partnership

Project Exploration establishes written contracts with partner schools outlining roles and responsibilities. Project Exploration agrees, for example, to provide a given number of sessions, to develop and document the S4S curriculum, and to provide materials and supplies. We also recruit and train the scientists who work with the girls and facilitate a year-end event for the school community. The school, in turn, provides a meeting room with secure storage, contributes financially to help cover a portion of the program cost, and designates a contact teacher who ensures that the room is open and ready and that the girls are reminded about sessions.

Recruitment

Project Exploration works with each contact teacher to recruit 12–15 girls who are willing to experience something new and are curious about science. They need not be academically successful or excel at science. Recruitment typically consists of posting flyers and an-

nouncements and sending information home with all the girls in a school. Project Exploration staff and S4S alumna visit classes and run hands-on activities or set up a booth at a back-to-school open house. We work closely with the contact teacher to ensure that girls who sign up are informed about weekly sessions and are supported to participate. S4S maintains an open-door policy: Any girl in the school can come to any session; however, to be eligible for field trips, girls need to attend three sessions in a row.

Working with Scientists

Introducing youth to scientists is built into the mission of Project Exploration. The U.S. Department of Education (2007) says that exposing girls to female role models who are successful in math and science can counteract “stereotype threat”—negative stereotypes that girls may develop about themselves. Our own anecdotal experience in S4S reveals that students often do not know what their possible future selves and careers could be. Since Project Exploration began ten years ago, we have been working with scientists who are dedicated to public outreach. Since then, Project Exploration has developed a cadre of approximately 50 professional women scientists and graduate students who are part of a formal Project Exploration Women in Science program. Recruitment happens through word-of-mouth as well as through established partnerships with universities, corporations, local informal science institutions, and museums. An annual training for Women in Science members orients them to Project Exploration's personalized approach to science as well as to constructivist and youth development strategies for teaching science.

Identity as a Foundation

At the heart of the narrative of S4S is an effort to enable girls to feel special and to be trailblazers. For example, the “S4S True/False Quiz: A Statistical Glimpse of Girls and Women in Science and in Life” explores careers, school, and self-image. Sample questions include:

- 98% of secretaries are women. (True.)
- 40% of computer scientists are women. (False. Only 4% are women.)
- 34% of high school girls are advised by teachers not to take senior math. (True.)

Girls document their collective responses. As the group reviews answers and graphs data, participants talk about what surprised them and why. A discussion about data and statistics also begins to foster a sense of identity: Sisters are working to change the face of science.

Girls at the Center

Putting girls at the center means enabling girls to shape what is most worth knowing and experiencing by co-creating curriculum. S4S exemplifies this co-creation with two launch activities that shape the year's learning environment and curriculum: a code of conduct and an interest survey.

At the beginning of the year, each group of girls creates a code of conduct that reflects what they think is necessary to create a safe space where they can explore science and leadership together. From this activity, one group of girls developed the mantra “One Diva, One Mic” as a way to express the importance of allowing a girl to speak without interruption from her peers. The saying was subsequently adopted across program sites (Jafri, 2007).

The interest survey serves as a needs assessment at the beginning of the program. It surfaces scientific topics of interest as well as the girls' social and cultural interests—how they like to spend their time, their hopes and expectations for the year, and so on. The results of the survey materialize as the year's program units.

Program Overview

A typical 90-minute S4S session begins with girls signing in, taking a healthy snack, and picking up their journals. Warm-ups or brainteasers create a positive group dynamic and get the girls energized and focused. Most sessions center around an activity presented by a visiting scientist during which girls learn about the scientist's personal career path and explore a specific scientific topic in depth. Each session includes journaling and personal reflection.

The first unit of the year at each site is dedicated to understanding the nature of science. Girls work through ideas about how science works: data and data collection, differences between evidence and opinion, science as something observable, and so on. They build on these ideas throughout the year as they explore two or three additional units, each lasting two or three sessions, based on their interests. In 2007, units ranged from engineering to evolutionary biology, chemistry, and forensics.

Personalized Curriculum

Project Exploration has developed a personalized curriculum model designed to foster access and equity in out-of-school science programming. S4S employs this approach across activities.

Putting girls at the center means enabling girls to shape what is most worth knowing and experiencing by co-creating curriculum.

Long-term Relationships

Project Exploration fosters and supports long-term relationships with participants in all our programs. Students who participate in a Project Exploration program are invited to science explorations, special events, and leadership opportunities throughout middle and high school. Project Exploration offers a minimum of four programs each year; S4S participants are invited to extend their connections to science and scientists with students from

other Project Exploration programs. Practically, this means that girls who are no longer in S4S because they have completed middle school continue to have opportunities to interact meaningfully with Project Exploration staff and students. This emphasis on developing long-term relationships is encapsulated in a saying repeated by

both staff and students: “Once a Project Exploration student, always a Project Exploration student!”

Personalized Experiences with Science and Scientists

One of the goals of S4S is to introduce girls to professional women scientists whose presence can help girls envision careers in science. Working with Women in Science exposes Sisters to the roles played by women in the scientific world and challenges perceptions about what women can and cannot do. Girls have opportunities to ask scientists questions about their lives, educational and career paths, and families and home lives.

Journaling

Writing and discussion create “safe spaces” in which girls can explore personal experiences as well as scientific ideas. S4S journaling sessions are conducted within the framework of the code of conduct created by the girls. Journaling enables girls to document their learning, thoughts, and ideas as well as to practice communication skills. Sharing entries with one another reinforces the development of girls' identities as Sisters and can help facilitators to personalize otherwise abstract concepts.

Students' Lived Experiences as Entry Points

Finding ways to make abstract scientific ideas accessible is at the heart of Project Exploration's approach. All of our programs help students to make choices and to develop projects based on their interests and curiosity.

For example, one topic girls often express interest in learning about is “life through time.” Conceptualizing

4.5 billion years of evolution is challenging for students and teachers alike. How to render ancient periods, eras, and epochs relevant?

We begin with a journal prompt: “Write about a moment in your life when something changed and you were different afterward.” The girls construct a timeline of these moments using paper, glue, glitter, and markers; then they share their work. In a subsequent session we broach the history of life on earth and the geologic timeline in terms of moments of change and difference, using our personal timelines as an access point. This exploration includes a field trip to a lab or a museum collection, or sometimes a rock-hounding trip alongside an evolutionary biologist or geologist.

Culminating Event

Project Exploration’s personalized curriculum calls for opportunities to publicly and visibly celebrate students’ growth. S4S concludes with a Reflection of Knowledge, a culminating event in which girls showcase their leadership skills and scientific knowledge to parents, teachers, scientists, and peers. For the facilitator, the Reflection of Knowledge serves as a performance assessment of core concepts and content knowledge. Each Reflection concludes with a certificate ceremony during which each girl is recognized and celebrated for her contributions. Acknowledging girls’ work and interest in science publicly reinforces the narrative of Sisters as trailblazers, emphasizing that their interests are valuable to a diverse community.

How Are We Doing?

An emphasis on evaluation and feedback has helped S4S evolve over time. The program uses a variety of tools to assess program delivery and impact:

- **Participation tracking.** We track how many different girls attend as well as which girls come consistently.

- **Pre- and post-participation assessment.** We gauge girls’ evolving comfort with science and familiarity with science concepts.
- **Year-end performance assessment.** Tied to our culminating Reflection of Knowledge, this assessment is grounded in the girls’ actual work and presentations.

Each year girls evaluate the program in terms of three S4S themes: what it means to be a leader, science skills, and the growth of scientific content knowledge drawn from personal experience. Girls respond to questions such as, “What specific skills in science do you feel you have gained? Based on your experiences, what are the characteristics of a leader?” Year-end evaluations from 2007 suggest that girls demonstrated growth in leadership and decision-making skills as well as positive shifts in attitudes towards science, including an increased ability to do science (Jafri, 2007).

When asked “What is the best part of being in S4S?” Sisters responded:

- *We get to learn new things that wouldn’t come to you every day.*
- *I feel that I am more interested in science because of S4S.*
- *It’s just girls and we can do things cooperatively together.*
- *Having time away from my family and learning about science.*
- *We get to answer questions and ask questions and we really learn stuff we didn’t even know. (Jafri, 2007)*

While S4S is not the only experience in a program year that helps girls to think of themselves as capable leaders, participants regularly tell staff they overcome personal obstacles, including peer pressure and lack of parental support, to choose S4S over other afterschool opportunities.

Project Exploration is working to better understand what motivates girls to return to S4S every year as well as what hinders or encourages their participation in science activities both in and out of S4S. Girls make up more than 70 percent of all Project Exploration program participants, and S4S participants make up approximately 30 percent of our more than 250 students. We know anecdotally that many S4S girls participate in other Project Exploration programs beyond middle school, through high school and into college. We anticipate undertaking a longitudinal study that disaggregates S4S data from cu-

Working with Women in Science exposes Sisters to the roles played by women in the scientific world and challenges perceptions about what women can and cannot do.

MAKING ROOM

Our “timeline” prompt has regularly elicited highly personal stories from our writers. Girls have written about when they changed schools or had an accident such as falling down the stairs, but they also write about deaths in their family or the trauma of losing family members to prison or violence. During a journaling session like this one, facilitators work to ensure that girls have time to share and discuss whatever emerges. Sometimes whatever else we might have had planned for the day is put on hold.

mulative Project Exploration data. Until then, we track a selection of indicators for all Project Exploration students including retention, high school graduation, and college majors. This aggregated data shows that 43 percent of all girls who graduate from high school as Project Exploration field alumnae have gone on to major in science.

Consistent participation and demonstrated growth in science skills and motivation by girls in S4S suggests that girls who have traditionally not been encouraged to pursue science—particularly girls of color who may not be academically successful—are interested in science, can do science, and will stick with science when given personalized opportunities to explore it.

Drawing Girls into Science

Decades of national policies calling for the recruitment and retention of minority youth and girls to science have had little impact on participation by women of color in most fields of science. Obstacles such as fees, tuitions, and academic prerequisites continue to keep students in historically underrepresented populations from participating or achieving in science programs.

Most research into urban minority girls' participation in out-of-school science offers anecdotal evidence in the form of descriptions of individual programs while providing little in the way of curricular framework that could be applied in other settings.

The framework of engagement, capacity, and continuity, as suggested by Jolly and colleagues (2004), is a starting point for changing the status quo, but it is not sufficient.

Project Exploration's personalized curriculum—which focuses on fostering and supporting long-term relationships, knowing students for what they are interested in as well as what they can do, and bringing young people from historically underserved communities together with scientists—is inherent in Sisters4Science. Project Exploration's orientation to making science accessible to urban girls of color is grounded in a girl-centered research base (Fullwood, Davis, & Debold, 2000; Mead & Boston Women's Fund, 2000; Ms. Foundation for Women, 2001; Roychoudhury et al. 1995). Running an effective girls-only science program requires more than simply not inviting boys. In S4S, putting girls at the center of science includes:

- Allowing girls to co-create curriculum based on their interests and strengths
- Enabling girls to engage in high-caliber, hands-on, authentic science explorations tied to personal experiences

- Enabling girls to work directly with women scientists, who serve as teachers and role models
- Using leadership development to equip girls with skills and experiences critical for advancement in science
- Creating a culminating public event that enables girls to reflect on individual and group growth and to share reflections with a diverse community

Practitioners and researchers need to draw on what we know matters for girls when creating girls-only science learning environments. This approach, as we're learning from Sister4Science, may offer a new blueprint for involving girls from historically underrepresented populations in science out of school.

Works Cited

Basu, S. J., & Barton, A. C. (2007). Developing a sustained interest in science among urban minority youth. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 44(3), 466.

Bouillon, L. M., & Gomez, L. M. (2001). Connecting school and community with science learning: Real world problems and school/community partnerships as contextual scaffolds. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 38(8), 878–898.

Cachaper, C., Spielman, L. J., Soendergaard, B. D., Dietrich, C. B., Rosenzweig, M., Tabor, L., et al.

(March, 2008). *Universities as catalysts for community building among informal STEM educators: The story of POISED*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference, New York. Retrieved from http://www.aera.net/uploadedFiles/SIGs/Out-of-School_Time_%28160%29/Annual_Meeting/UnivAsCatalysts40908.pdf

Campbell, G., Denes, R., & Morrison, C. (2000). *Access denied: Race, ethnicity, and the scientific enterprise*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Denner, J., Bean, S., & Martinez, J. (2009). The Girl Game Company: Engaging Latina girls in information technology. *Afterschool Matters*, 8, 26–35. Retrieved from http://www.robertbownefoundation.org/pdf_files/2009_asm_spring.pdf

Fancsali, C. (2003). *What we know about girls, STEM, and afterschool programs: A summary*. Educational Equity Concepts. Retrieved from <http://www.jhuapl.edu/mesa/resources/docs/whatweknow.pdf>

Running an effective girls-only science program requires more than simply not inviting boys.

Ferreira, M. M. (2001). The effect of an after-school program addressing the gender and minority achievement gaps in science, mathematics, and engineering. *ERS Spectrum*, 19(2), 11–18.

Fullwood, C., Davis, D., & Debold, E. (2000). *The New Girls Movement: New assessment tools for youth programs*. New York, NY: Ms. Foundation for Women.

Girls Coalition of Greater Boston. (2009). *Key learnings from the Girls Coalition funder briefing*. Retrieved from <http://www.girlscoalition.org/girls-coalition/2009/10/key-learnings-from-the-girls-coalition-funder-briefing.html>

Halpern, D. F., Aronson, J., Reimer, N., Simpkins, S., Star, J. R., & Wentzel, K. (2007). *Encouraging girls in math and science. IES practice guide*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Research, U.S. Department of Education.

Jafri, J. (2007). *S4S: 2007 year end report*. Chicago, IL: Project Exploration. Unpublished report.

Jolly, E., Campbell, P., & Perlman, L. (2004). *Engagement, capacity, continuity: A trilogy for student success*. GE Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.campbell-kibler.com/trilogy.pdf>

Lee, O., & Luykx, A. (2006). *Science education and student diversity: Synthesis and research agenda*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lynch, S. J. (2000). *Equity and science education reform*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Lyon, G. (2009). The onus is on us. In *A Watershed Moment: The First National Conference on Science and Technology in Out-of-School Time*. Retrieved from http://www.projectexploration.org/PDF/watershed-2009.pdf?utm_source=PE&utm_medium=Web&utm_content=PDF&utm_campaign=04-08-09

McClure, P., Rodriguez, D. A., Cummings, F., Falkenberg, K., & McComb, E. M. (2007). *Factors related to advanced course-taking patterns, persistence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and the role of out-of-school-time programs: A literature review*. Coalition for Science After School. Retrieved from http://afterschoolscience.org/pdf/member_publications/LiteratureReview-factorsrelated.pdf

Mead, M., & Boston Women's Fund. (2000). *Integrating vision and reality: Possibilities for urban girls programs*. Boston, MA: Boston Women's Fund.



Ms. Foundation for Women. (2001). *The New Girls Movement: Implications for youth programs*. New York, NY: Ms. Foundation for Women.

Phillips, L. (2007). *The girls report: What we know and need to know about growing up female*. New York, NY: National Council on Research for Women.

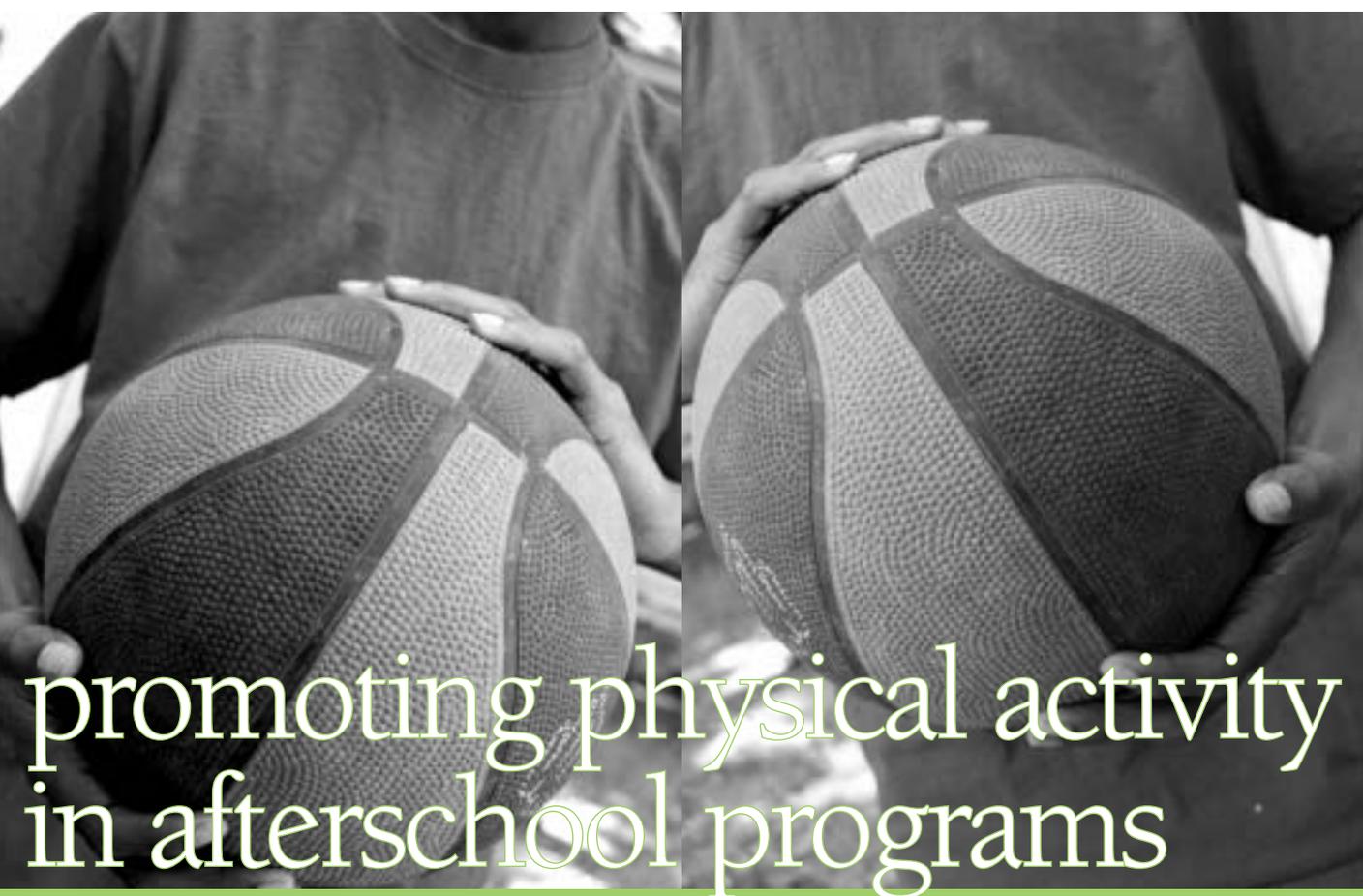
Roychoudhury, A., Tippins, D. J., & Nichols, S. E. (1995). Gender-inclusive science teaching: A feminist-constructivist approach. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 32(9), 897.

Scharf, A., & Woodlief, L. (2000). *Moving toward equity and access in after school programs: A review of the literature*. Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow.

Simpkins, S. D., & Davis-Kean, P. E. (2005). The intersection between self-concepts and values: Links between beliefs and choices in high school. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 110, 31–47.

U.S. Department of Education. (2007). *Encouraging girls in math and science: IES Practice Guide*. Institute for Education Sciences. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/20072003.pdf>

Zacharia, Z., & Barton, A. C. (2004). Urban middle-school students' attitudes toward a defined science. *Science Education*, 88(2), 197–222.



promoting physical activity in afterschool programs

**SELF-
PORTRAIT
(BASKET-
BALL)** Since
I'm into
sports,
I wanted to
take a
picture of
me with a
basketball.
*OUR WORLD
IN PICTURES*

by Aaron Beighle, Michael W. Beets, Heather E. Erwin, Jennifer Huberty, Justin B. Moore, and Megan Stellino

Children in the United States are not engaging in sufficient amounts of routine physical activity, and this lack is an emerging public health concern (Strong, Malina, Blimkie, Daniels, Dishman, Gutin, et al., 2005). Efforts to increase the physical activity levels of children and adolescents has become a national priority, attracting attention from professionals in medicine, public health,

education, recreation, economics, and health promotion (Pate, et al., 2006). In an effort to promote physical activity among all Americans, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS, 2008) created evidence-based (Strong, et al., 2005) physical activity guidelines. They recommend that children engage daily in 60 minutes or more of developmentally appropriate, enjoyable physical activities that are moderate to vigorous in intensity. Nationally, youth are not meeting these guidelines. Of particular concern are the low physical activity levels among underserved youth in, for example, rural, minority, and low-income communities (Adams, 2006; Hortz,

Stevens, Holden, & Petosa, 2009; Moore, Davis, Baxter, Lewis, & Yin, 2008; Singh, Kogan, Siahpush, & van Dyck, 2008; Treuth, Hou, Young, & Maynard, 2005; Troiano, et al., 2008).

For many years, schools were thought to have great potential for providing youth with physical activity opportunities (Sallis & McKenzie, 1991). However, increased emphasis on academic achievement has led to decreased physical activity in schools. Subjects such as art, music, and physical education, as well as recess, are being viewed as “extras” that interfere with academics

AARON BEIGHLE, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of Kinesiology and Health Promotion at the University of Kentucky.

MICHAEL W. BEETS, M.P.H., Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Exercise Science at the University of South Carolina.

HEATHER E. ERWIN, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of Kinesiology and Health Promotion at the University of Kentucky.

JENNIFER HUBERTY, Ph.D., is an associate professor in Physical Activity in Health Promotion at the University of Nebraska, Omaha.

JUSTIN B. MOORE, Ph.D., is an assistant professor and director of research at the Department of Public Health of the Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University.

MEGAN STELLINO, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the School of Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Northern Colorado.

(Andersen, Crespo, Bartlett, Cheskin, & Pratt, 1998). Many organizations and legislatures are calling on schools to expand their role in physical activity promotion (Pate, et al., 2006). Schools are ideal locations for physical activity promotion (USDHHS, 2000): They have infrastructure in place, and most U.S. children attend school. However, quality afterschool programs also offer great potential for increasing young people's physical activity levels.

Nearly 6.5 million children attend afterschool programs, and this number is rising (Afterschool Alliance, 2004). Afterschool programs can complement school-day efforts to promote physical activity; they offer a safe environment in which youth can engage in physical activity and learn healthy lifestyle habits (Booth, et al., 2001). A consensus from the "Summit on Promoting Healthy Eating and Active Living" reported that afterschool programs have great potential for a high impact on youth physical activity (Booth & Okely, 2005). Furthermore, physical activity, including that accumulated during afterschool programs, can foster cognitive, social, and academic benefits, as well physical benefits such as decreased risk for cardiovascular disease (Sibley & Etnier, 2003; Strong, et al., 2005).

This paper will provide program leaders and staff with a brief overview of what is known about physical activity in afterschool programs. Then, by integrating experience in afterschool programming with expertise in health promotion, physical education, physical activity promotion, public health, and the social psychology of sport and physical activity, we will present strategies and recommendations for promoting physical activity in afterschool settings.

Evidence of Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs

Our search of official documents of prominent national and state afterschool organizations—position statements, training manuals, pamphlets, and other publications—revealed little discussion of physical activity. While many of these documents mention the importance of physical activity and its role in obesity prevention and youth development, an in-depth presentation of policies and practices that would transfer belief to action, so that physical activity

would be integral to high-quality afterschool programming, is absent (Afterschool Alliance, 2006).

Evidence supporting the effectiveness of afterschool programs in promoting physical activity is beginning to surface; however, findings are mixed due to the methodological weaknesses in many studies (Beets, Beighle, Erwin, & Huberty, 2009; Pate & O'Neill, 2009). In a meta-analysis, Beets and colleagues (2009) found six interven-

tion studies which reported physical activity outcomes. Of these, four reported positive effects on physical activity. Pate and O'Neill (2009) reported on five randomized control trials of afterschool programs that used objective measures of physical activity. Three of these programs were effective in increasing physical activity. This same paper reviewed the findings of three studies that used self-report measures. These findings were mixed, again with many inconsistencies in methodologies. A common weakness in methodology or reporting of findings has been the lack of a detailed description of the intervention. For example, the content of staff training, the environment, and the activities used are not discussed. Little is offered regarding the

policies and practices associated with effective physical activity promotion in afterschool programs (Beets, et al., 2009).

While many of these documents mention the importance of physical activity and its role in obesity prevention and youth development, an in-depth presentation of policies and practices that would transfer belief to action, so that physical activity would be integral to high-quality afterschool programming, is absent.

About These Recommendations

In any afterschool program, decisions are made at many levels due to a variety of priorities. This paper will focus on the program and staff levels of decision making.

- **Program-level recommendations** focus on informing the decisions of organization leaders that influence physical activity promotion. Examples include the amount of time allocated for physical activity each day or the amount of staff training related to physical activity.
- **Staff-level recommendations** focus on strategies to improve staff behaviors and decisions related to physical activity. The ways in which staff members interact with youth or the physical activities they select are examples of staff-level recommendations.

The following recommendations reflect either evidence-based strategies or promising practices. **Evidence-based strategies** have been shown empirically to have a beneficial impact on physical activity levels. Some of our rec-

ommendations are evidence-based in contexts other than afterschool, such as physical education or youth sport. For example, strategies for working with children in physical education classes can easily be adapted for children engaged in physical activity in afterschool programs. **Promising practices** are not yet based on empirical evidence but are intuitively and theoretically linked to increased physical activity levels.

We do not ignore the uniqueness of afterschool programs. Some programs focus on academic enrichment, while others focus on youth sports. However, many of our recommendations could be modified to apply to a variety of settings. These recommendations are intended to be starting points for discussion on decisions that can better promote physical activity for youth in afterschool programs.

Program-level Recommendations

Our program-level recommendations focus on the amount of time for and scheduling of physical activity, staff training, staff-to-student ratios, facilities, equipment, curriculum, and evaluation.

Physical Activity Time

Current recommendations suggest children accumulate 60 minutes or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) each day (USDHHS, 2008). On average, children in an afterschool program are active 57 percent of the time that is allocated for physical activity and active at a moderate-to-vigorous level 19 percent of that time (Trost, Rosenkranz, & Dziewaltowski, 2008). Thus, if children were given opportunity to be active for 30 minutes a day, on average they would accumulate 17 minutes of activity time ($30 \times .57$) and roughly 6 minutes of MVPA ($30 \times .19$).

In a program designed to incorporate both health and academic enrichment, we recommend that at least 50 percent of the time be allocated to physical activity. For example, a 2.5-hour program would allocate 75 minutes for physical activity with the expectation that approximately 43 minutes ($75 \times .57$) would be active, with 15 minutes of that time spent in MVPA ($75 \times .19$).

Scheduling Physical Activity

One strategy to increase the amount of time children spend being physically active is to schedule activity in small, frequent bouts. Children's physical activity is sporadic; one study found that, during 15 minutes of recess, boys and girls were active on average for 11 and 9 minutes respectively, or 60 to 70 percent of the time (Beighle, Morgan, Le Masurier, & Pangrazi, 2006). Youth may spend a greater proportion of time being active if time is allocated to activ-

ity in brief increments. Thus, physical activity in afterschool time programs should be segmented into bouts of no more than 15–20 minutes (Bailey, et al., 1995). Children will tend to use the time more efficiently and be active for a greater percentage of the time.

Scheduling activity opportunities throughout the program duration can also assist with behavior problems (Mahar, et al., 2006; Pellegrini & Bohn, 2005). Since children spend a large portion of their day sedentary, they need an opportunity for release after school. An effective strategy would be to allow for 15–20 minutes of physical activity immediately on arriving at the program site (Tudor-Locke, Lee, Morgan, Beighle, & Pangrazi, 2006) and to schedule subsequent opportunities intermittently during the rest of the program time.

Staff Training

Staff who are educated about the policies, philosophy, and expectations of a specific program are much more likely to endorse the program and implement it effectively (Pate, et al., 2003). If an afterschool organization is to effectively promote physical activity, staff must be trained. They should learn best practices including principles of motivation, behavior management, and developmentally appropriate activities (see Staff-level Recommendations on p. 28). The training should be experiential: Staff can learn best practices by actively engaging in them. This approach has been found to be effective in physical education training (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2010). Training should expose individuals, particularly new staff, to program policies and expectations related to physical activity.

High staff turnover is often an issue in afterschool programs. Therefore, staff training needs to happen immediately, before the first day on the job, so that progress is maintained. Staff training can be costly, especially when conducted frequently throughout the year. However, this barrier should not inhibit afterschool programs from providing specific, timely, and thorough staff training on physical activity. Such training can often be part of a partnership process at no cost. For example, local universities may have graduate students in health promotion or physical education who can train staff as part of an internship, volunteer experience, or service learning. Partnerships with health organizations may also help with staff training.

After the initial training, staff should receive booster trainings throughout their tenure in the program (Yin, Gutin, Johnson, Hanes, Moore, Cavnar, et al., 2005a; Yin, Hanes, Moore, Humbles, Barbeau, & Gutin, 2005b). Though booster trainings can come in the form of traditional training with lectures and active participation, an-

LOW-BUDGET PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

When space and equipment are limited, try these activities adapted from Pangrazi, Beighle, & Pangrazi (2009).

HIGHER OR LOWER

Equipment: White board or sheet of paper

- A number between 1 and 100 is written on the board.
- A student who can't see the number tries to guess it.
- The class tells the guesser if the guess is high or low by jumping in the air for high or touching the toes for low. Students continue to jump or touch toes until the next guess is made.

HIDE THE BEANBAG

Equipment: One beanbag or other small object

- While the searcher covers her eyes, another child hides the beanbag.
- The class walks in place as the searcher looks for the beanbag. When the searcher gets closer to the beanbag, the class walks in place faster. When the searcher moves away, the students walk slower. When the searcher is by the beanbag, the class is jogging in place.
- The searcher then becomes the hider, and another searcher is selected.

KNOT

Equipment: None

- Groups of four or five stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle.
- Students reach both arms into the middle of the circle and grasp the hands of two different people.
- The group tries to return to a circle by twisting around and going over and under without letting go of hands.

other approach is to observe staff members working with children and provide immediate feedback. While it is not usually thought of as “training,” this approach has long been used effectively with physical education teachers.

Staff-to-Student Ratio

A low staff-to-student ratio is always desirable, but particularly during physical activity. Some studies show that quality afterschool programs have a ratio as low as 1:8 (Baldwin Grossman, Lind, Hayes, McMaken, & Gersick, 2009; National Afterschool Association, 2000). This ideal ratio may not be cost effective, particularly in a multi-purpose afterschool program that provides both academic enrichment and physical activity. In physical education, recommended student-to-teacher ratios are consistent with what is expected for classroom teachers, typically in the 1:25 or 1:30 range (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2010). However, this ratio applies to highly trained physical education teachers.

The Move More After-School Collaborative (2009) has suggested that a 1:15 staff-to-student ratio is acceptable for afterschool programs.

Facilities

To adapt to inclement weather, provide a variety of activities, and allow ample time for physical activity, afterschool programs need both indoor and outdoor physical activity spaces. A group of 20 elementary-age children needs a space 40 feet by 60 feet in order to move safely. A smaller space would be potentially hazardous, restrict movement, and ultimately detract from students' enjoyment of physical activities. Afterschool programs that do not have appropriate facilities can consult resources on physical activities in small spaces (Pangrazi, Beighle, & Pangrazi, 2009; Sutherland, 2006).

Afterschool programs must consider child safety when designating areas for physical activity. Ideally, boundaries will be marked at ample distance from walls in indoor spaces. Outdoor spaces should be void of holes, tree limbs, and other dangers. When possible, activity space should be at an appropriate temperature for physical activity and well lit, with access to drinking fountains and restrooms (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2010).

Equipment

Numerous studies in a variety of settings have found that the availability of equipment promotes youth physical activity (Hastie & Saunders, 1991; Jago & Baranowski, 2004; Verstraete, Cardon, De Clercq, & De Bourdeaudhuij, 2006). The “equipment” in these studies has been simple, inexpensive items such as playground balls, jump ropes, bean bags, and soccer balls. Ideally, a piece of equipment would be available for every child, so that, if children are playing with bean bags, every child has a bean bag. Children then have to wait less; they can be more active, develop more skills, and enjoy the activity more.

In the face of limited budgets, afterschool program leaders should develop procedures on the care and storage of equipment. Equipment that is taken care of lasts longer. Furthermore, school physical education departments may be willing to share their equipment as long as it is cared for and returned properly (Lambdin & Erwin, 2007). Finally, programs with limited resources can use games that require little or no equipment and minimal space (see box).

Curriculum

An afterschool physical activity curriculum is a series of intentionally planned activities. It should provide a list of activities that are developmentally appropriate, include all

children, and foster success in a safe, fun environment. Ideally, the curriculum itself is developmental, beginning with simple games and activities and moving to more challenging ones as the school year progresses. The pace of progression must be based on the readiness of the students (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2010; Siedentop & Tannehill, 1999).

Evaluation

A quality program must be able to demonstrate a measurable student benefit. Effective evaluation requires setting both goals and objectives. *Goals* are global statements about the desired effect of the program. For example, one goal might be to increase the number of program minutes that children are active. *Objectives* differ from goals in that they are measurable and specific. An objective could be that 80 percent of participants would achieve 30 minutes of MVPA on any given day.

Objectives can be written to evaluate either *process* or *impact* variables. *Process* variables tend to be related to the delivery of the program; they might include the number of children and staff members participating in physical activity time. *Impact* variables assess the behavior in question, such as the number of minutes spent in physical activity. Both need to be evaluated: Impact variables help to determine program effectiveness, while process variables assess the program's fidelity to its stated goals.

Numerous tools are available for evaluating physical activity, ranging from simple paper-and-pencil forms to sophisticated activity monitors (Dollman, et al., 2008; Welk, 2002). Regardless of the measurement tools, evaluation must analyze progress towards the intended goals and objectives in order to demonstrate the quality of the program.

By demonstrating the benefit to participants, an evaluation of a physical activity program can provide evidence that funders' investment in, for example, staff and equipment is well spent. Evaluation results can also help engage the community. If lack of funding or staff expertise in evaluation are issues, partnerships with local universities or health organizations may again provide an answer.

Staff-level Recommendations

Staff-level recommendations focus on best practices for working with children in a physical activity. Recommenda-

tions discussed below deal with structure and choice, active supervision, instructional strategies, behavior management, specific positive feedback, and full participation.

Structure and Choice

Physical activity in afterschool programs is typically offered in either a free play or a structured activity environment (Beets, et al., 2009; Trost, et al. 2008). A *free play* environment is like school recess: a discretionary environment with staff supervision and some playground structures or equipment such as balls and jump ropes. Youth choose which activities to engage in, for how long, and at what intensity. A *structured activity* environment, in contrast, is more like physical education class: All activity is organized and led by a staff member, and all children are expected to engage in the same or similar activities.

Another approach is an *autonomy-supportive* environment, in which students are offered choices of activities and autonomy in decision making (Deci & Ryan, 1987, Ryan & Deci, 2000). The autonomy-supportive environment differs from free play in that youth choose from a limited number of activities while the staff member facilitates choices. For example, one-half of the physical activity area could be dedicated to a game

The autonomy-supportive environment differs from free play in that youth choose from a limited number of activities while the staff member facilitates choices. For example, one-half of the physical activity area could be dedicated to a game of soccer, a quarter to tag games, and a quarter to dancing.

of soccer, a quarter to tag games, and a quarter to dancing. Another strategy is to allow children to make choices within a particular activity. For example, if the group is playing with beanbags, the staff member could allow children to choose whether to catch and toss the beanbag with one hand, two hands, or their knees, or while lying on their back. Numerous studies have found the autonomy-supportive approach to be effective in promoting physical activity (Gutin, Yin, Johnson, & Barbeau, 2008; Wilson, et al., 2008; Yin, et al., 2005b; Yin, et al., 2005c). To meet the needs of all students, we advocate creating a variety of environments including free play, structured activity, and autonomy-supportive environments.

Active Supervision

Physically active staff tend to promote physical activity among children under their watch. In physical education, teachers trained to move about the area while teaching tend to have more physically active classes (Morgan, Beighle, &

Pangrazi, 2007). Afterschool staff can similarly be taught to move randomly around the area, constantly interacting with students. This technique helps staff build rapport with students, models physical activity, and allows staff to be near all students in rotation so they can catch behavior issues and ensure that no students are “lost in the crowd.”

Instructional Strategies

Effective instructional practices will maximize physical activity, decrease behavior issues, and enhance student enjoyment. These practices include:

- Being able to stop and start students quickly
- Grouping students
- Providing concise yet thorough instructions

First, children must be taught a stop signal. The ability to stop students quickly will prove valuable when giving instructions, during emergencies, and when transitioning from one activity to another. An example of a stop signal is the staff member calling out “freeze!” Other signals, such as a whistle or a word specific to the program, could be used. Children are taught to assume a specific position—for example, hands on knees and eyes on the staff member—when they hear the stop signal. Staff and children should practice this routine at the beginning of each physical activity session. No matter what word or signal is used, staff must be consistent in using it. Once children learn to “freeze,” the signal can be used in the gym, outdoors, or in other program locations.

Grouping students is often a time when behavior problems occur. An efficient, humane routine for choosing partners and teams is critical. One approach is a game called “toe to toe.” After freezing the students, the staff member calls out “toe to toe,” and children quickly find a partner. Children without a partner within two seconds come to the middle to find a partner. This routine is quick and encourages students to choose new partners each time. Once students have partners, they can easily be divided into equal teams. The partner with the shortest hair (or another characteristic) raises her hand. When the teacher says, “Go,” the partner with her hand raised reports to one side of the area. The other partner reports to the other side. This provides equal teams, is quick, and keeps one child from being picked last. If teams are not equal in skill, the staff member can quickly ask a few children to switch teams. The key is to switch skilled and unskilled students without being obvious about the reason for switching.

When teaching skills or games, short bouts of instruction are best (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2010). Children tend to lose interest if instructions last longer than 45 seconds. Thus, games and complicated skills must be taught using a

series of short instructions rather than one lengthy bout that explains all the rules. The following is an example of a series of instructions that could be used to teach Addition-Division Tag:

1. When I say, “Go,” please skip-and-hop inside the boundaries. Go!
2. Freeze!
3. This time when I say “Go,” if Kate or José tags you, you become the tagger. Remember to stay inside the boundaries and watch where you are going. Gallop this time. Go!
4. (After 45 seconds) Freeze!
5. Okay. Nice hustle. When I say, “Go,” if Evan, Mia, Libby, or Faith tags you, you become the tagger. This time let’s skip. Go!
6. (After 45 seconds) Freeze!
7. When I say, “Go,” if Zera or Omar tags you, you join hands like this and you two try to tag someone. When you tag another person, they join hands with you and you become a group of three. Once you have four people on your team, you divide into two teams and continue tagging. So if I tag Kim we join hands. If we tag Hope, all three of us join hands. If we then tag Emily, we divide into two teams. Hope and Emily become their own team, and Kim and I are a team. Let’s try it. Go!

With this approach, combined with the ability to freeze students quickly, students learn the game and are active at the same time. Also, if the activity does not, as is often the case, go as expected with the first set of instructions, the staff leader can stop the activity and modify the directions.

Behavior Management

Even the best instructional practices cannot remove all behavior problems. The first step to effectively managing behavior is to have a plan so staff members know exactly how to react to various situations. What will they do if one student laughs at, or kicks, or curses at another student? What if students are talking while staff members are talking? A behavior management plan serves several purposes; one primary purpose is allowing staff members to avoid reacting and becoming emotional.

Staff members must know what consequences they can use to shape behavior, following the organization’s beliefs and policies. The process used to deliver consequences is also important. Yelling at students across the area is not appropriate. It can create a hostile environment and lead to an argument between the staff member and child in front of the rest of the group. It can humiliate the child, or, conversely,

give the child the precise reaction he or she was trying to provoke. An effective alternative is to engage the class in activity and quickly approach the child, deliver the consequences—“Emiliano, talking while I’m talking is unacceptable. Next time you’ll have to sit out”—and move away. This eliminates emotion, is private, and maintains the child’s dignity while the rest of the group remains active.

Specific Positive Feedback

There is considerable evidence on the relationship of self-efficacy to physical activity participation in youth (Beets, Pitetti, & Forlaw, 2007). Children who are confident about their ability to be active are more likely to be active. A major component of promoting self-efficacy is specific positive feedback (SPF), which is much more effective than general positive feedback. SPF tells the child specifically what you like. Rather than saying, “Nice work,” the staff member says, “Wow, nice work, Li, you are really working hard and sweating today.” Children who receive SPF may be more likely to be active and to enjoy physical activity.

Rather than saying, “Nice work,” the staff member says, “Wow, nice work, Li, you are really working hard and sweating today.”

Full Participation

Effective, appropriate physical activities for youth are fully inclusive and provide ample opportunities for decision making, positive social interaction, and active participation. For instance, games that do not involve elimination facilitate active participation. In tag games, students who are tagged should not sit out or become frozen; instead, they could become the new taggers while the other students become the fleers. Generally, the students who are tagged first need more opportunities to be physically active. Eliminating them or otherwise making them stop moving does them a disservice.

Another suggestion is to provide multiple practice opportunities. Providing ample equipment and having students work individually or in pairs offer maximum opportunity for student practice and participation. If the physical activity requires groups or teams of students, use small groups of three or four people to reduce the amount of time spent waiting in lines. Relay races in which only three or four students are active at a time are discouraged. If lack of equipment means that relays with long lines are the only option, keep everyone active by requiring all participants to run in place or perform jumping jacks while one member of the team is running.

Finally, physical activities must provide positive social experiences for children. As students are working together on cooperative physical activities, ensure that each member of a group has the opportunity to lead in some fashion. For example, if an activity involves taggers or students in leading positions, stop the activity often and have students rotate roles.

Promoting Our Kids’ Health

Afterschool programs can provide a safe environment for children to engage in much-needed physical activity. With a minimal amount of training, afterschool staff can deliver curriculum-based programming that can afford children the opportunity to accumulate over half of their daily recommended minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA). Barriers to implementation are becoming more surmountable as organizations rise to meet provider demands for guidelines and resources (After School Programs Office of the California Department of Education, 2009). Though afterschool programs can no more be expected to end childhood obesity than can schools, both can contribute to decreasing obesity in a multifaceted approach (Moore, 2008).

As in any other behavioral endeavor, consistency is key. Wherever children are, they should consistently receive the message that physical activity is an important part of their wellbeing. When they are active, they should be in a supportive, safe, and enjoyable setting that promotes lifelong physical activity. If afterschool programs can adapt these recommendations to their own needs and make physical activity an essential component of the program, the children will be the ultimate winners.

Works Cited

- Adams, J. (2006). Trends in physical activity and inactivity amongst US 14–18 year olds by gender, school, grade, and race, 1993–2003: Evidence from the youth risk behavior survey. *Biomedical Central Public Health*, 6(57), 1–7.
- After School Programs Office of the California Department of Education. (2009). *California after school physical activity guidelines*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.
- Afterschool Alliance. (2004). *America after 3 PM: A household survey on afterschool in America*. Washington, DC: Author.

- Afterschool Alliance. (2006). *Making the afterschool hours active hours: The Afterschool Alliance obesity prevention agenda*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Andersen, R. E., Crespo, C. J., Bartlett, S. J., Cheskin, L. J., & Pratt, M. (1998). Relationship of physical activity and television watching with body weight and level of fatness among children: Results from the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 279(12), 938–942.
- Bailey, R. C., Olson, J., Pepper, S. L., Porszasz, J., Barstow, T. J., & Cooper, D. M. (1995). The level and tempo of children's physical activities: An observational study. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 27, 1033–1041.
- Baldwin Grossman, J., Lind, C., Hayes, C., McMaken, J., & Gersick, A. (2009). *The cost of quality out-of-school-time programs*. New York, NY: Wallace Foundation.
- Beets, M. W., Beighle, A., Erwin, H. E., & Huberty, J. (2009). Impact of after-school programs to increase physical activity and fitness: A meta-analysis. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 36(6), 527–537.
- Beets, M. W., Pitetti, K. H., & Forlaw, L. (2007). The role of self-efficacy and referent specific social support in promoting rural adolescent girls' physical activity. *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 31(3), 227–237.
- Beighle, A., Morgan, C. F., Le Masurier, G., & Pangrazi, R. P. (2006). Children's physical activity during recess and outside of school. *Journal of School Health*, 76(10), 516–520.
- Booth, M. L., & Okely, A. (2005). Promoting physical activity among children and adolescents: The strengths and limitations of school-based approaches. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 16(1), 52–54.
- Booth, S. L., Sallis, J. F., Ritenbaugh, C., Hill, J. O., Birch, L. L., Frank, L. D., et al. (2001). Environmental and societal factors affect food choice and physical activity: Rationale, influences, and leverage points. *Nutrition Review*, 59(3, Pt 2), S21–39; discussion S57–65.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1987). The support of autonomy and the control of behavior. *Journal of Personal and Social Psychology*, 53(6), 1024–1037.
- Dollman, J., Okely, A. D., Hardy, L. L., Timperio, A., Salmon, J., & Hills, A. P. (2008). A hitchhiker's guide to assessing young people's physical activity: Deciding what method to use. *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sports*, 12(5), 518–525.
- Gutin, B., Yin, Z., Johnson, M., & Barbeau, P. (2008). Preliminary findings of the effect of a 3-year after-school physical activity intervention on fitness and body fat: The Medical College of Georgia Fitkid Project. *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity*, 3(Suppl. 1), 3–9.
- Hastie, P. A., & Saunders, J. E. (1991). Effects of class size and equipment availability on student involvement in physical education. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 59(3), 212–224.
- Hortz, B., Stevens, E., Holden, B., & Petosa, R. L. (2009). Rates of physical activity among Appalachian adolescents in Ohio. *Journal of Rural Health*, 25(1), 58–61.
- Jago, R., & Baranowski, T. (2004). Non-curricular approaches for increasing physical activity in youth: A review. *Preventive Medicine*, 39(1), 157–163.
- Lambdin, D., & Erwin, H. (2007). School wellness policy: Community connections. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 78(6), 29–32.
- Mahar, M. T., Murphy, S. K., Rowe, D. A., Golden, J., Shields, A. T., & Raedeke, T. D. (2006). Effects of a classroom-based program on physical activity and on-task behavior. *Medicine & Science in Sports Exercise*, 38(12), 2086–2094.
- Moore, J. B. (2008). The built environment and physical activity: Influencing physical activity through healthy design. *Journal of Public Health Management Practice*, 14(3), 209–210.
- Moore, J. B., Davis, C. L., Baxter, S. D., Lewis, R. D., & Yin, Z. (2008). Physical activity, metabolic syndrome, and overweight in rural youth. *Journal Rural Health*, 24(2), 136–142.
- Morgan, C. F., Beighle, A., & Pangrazi, R. P. (2007). What are the contributory and compensatory relationships between physical education and physical activity in children? *Research Quarterly in Exercise & Sport*, 78(5), 407–412.
- Move More After-School Collaborative. (2009). *Move More North Carolina: Recommended standards for after-school physical activity*. Raleigh, NC: Author.
- National Afterschool Association. (2000). *The National Association for Quality School-Age Care: Standards at a glance*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Pangrazi, R. P., & Beighle, A. (2010). *Dynamic physical education for elementary school children* (16th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Benjamin Cummings.
- Pangrazi, R. P., Beighle, A., & Pangrazi, D. L. (2009). *Promoting physical activity and health in the classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Benjamin Cummings.

- Pate, R., Davis, M. G., Robinson, T. N., Stone, E. J., McKenzie, T. L., & Young, J. C. (2006). Promoting physical activity in children and youth: A leadership role for schools: A scientific statement from the American Heart Association Council on Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Metabolism (Physical Activity Committee) in collaboration with the Councils on Cardiovascular Disease in the Young and Cardiovascular Nursing. *Circulation*, 114(11), 1214–1224.
- Pate, R., & O'Neill, J. R. (2009). After-school interventions to increase physical activity among youth. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 43(1), 14–18.
- Pate, R., Saunders, R. P., Ward, D. S., Felton, G., Trost, S. G., & Dowda, M. (2003). Evaluation of a community-based intervention to promote physical activity in youth: Lessons from Active Winners. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 17(3), 171–182.
- Pellegrini, A., & Bohn, C. (2005). The role of recess in children's cognitive performance and school adjustment. *Educational Researcher*, 34(1), 13.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78.
- Sallis, J., & McKenzie, T. L. (1991). Physical education's role in public health. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 62(2), 124–137.
- Sibley, B. A., & Etnier, J. L. (2003). The relationship between physical activity and cognition in children: A meta-analysis. *Pediatric Exercise Science*, 15(3), 243–256.
- Siedentop, D., & Tannehill, D. (1999). *Developing teaching skills in physical education* (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Singh, G. K., Kogan, M. D., Siahpush, M., & van Dyck, P. C. (2008). Independent and joint effects of socioeconomic, behavioral, and neighborhood characteristics on physical inactivity and activity levels among U.S. children and adolescents. *Journal of Community Health*, 33(4), 206–216.
- Strong, W. B., Malina, R. M., Blimkie, C. J., Daniels, S. R., Dishman, R. K., Gutin, B., et al. (2005). Evidence based physical activity for school-age youth. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 146(6), 732–737.
- Sutherland, C. (2006). *No gym? No problem! Physical activities for tight spaces*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Treuth, M. S., Hou, N., Young, D. R., & Maynard, L. M. (2005). Accelerometry-measured activity or sedentary time and overweight in rural boys and girls. *Obesity Research*, 13(9), 1606–1614.
- Troiano, R. P., Berrigan, D., Dodd, K. W., Masse, L. C., Tilert, T., & McDowell, M. (2008). Physical activity in the United States measured by accelerometer. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 40(1), 181–188.
- Trost, S. G., Rosenkranz, R. R., & Dziewaltowski, D. (2008). Physical activity levels among children attending after-school programs. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 40(4), 622–629.
- Tudor-Locke, C., Lee, S. M., Morgan, C. F., Beighle, A., & Pangrazi, R. P. (2006). Children's pedometer determined physical activity patterns during the segmented school day. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 38(1), 1732–1738.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). *Healthy People 2010 physical activity and fitness*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2008). *Physical activity guidelines for Americans*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Verstraete, S. J., Cardon, G. M., De Clercq, D. L., & De Bourdeaudhuij, I. M. (2006). Increasing children's physical activity levels during recess periods in elementary schools: The effects of providing game equipment. *European Journal of Public Health*, 16(4), 415–419.
- Welk, G. J. (Ed.). (2002). *Physical activity assessments for health-related research*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Wilson, D. K., Kitzman-Ulrich, H., Williams, J. E., Saunders, R., Griffin, S., Pate, R., et al. (2008). An overview of "The Active by Choice Today" (ACT) trial for increasing physical activity. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*, 29(1), 21–31.
- Yin, Z., Gutin, B., Johnson, M. H., Hanes, J., Jr., Moore, J. B., Cavnar, M., et al. (2005a). An environmental approach to obesity prevention in children: Medical College of Georgia FitKid Project Year 1 results. *Obesity Research*, 13(12), 2153–2161.
- Yin, Z., Hanes, J., Jr., Moore, J. B., Humbles, P., Barbeau, P., & Gutin, B. (2005b). An after-school physical activity program for obesity prevention in children: The Medical College of Georgia FitKid Project. *Evaluation & the Health Professions*, 28(1), 67–89.
- Yin, Z., Moore, J. B., Johnson, M. H., Barbeau, P., Cavnar, M., Thornburg, J., et al. (2005c). The Medical College of Georgia FitKid Project: The relations between program attendance and changes in outcomes in Year 1. *International Journal of Obesity*, 29(Suppl. 2), S40–45.



the arts matter in afterschool

Community Youth Arts and Out-of-School Time

by Lori L. Hager

The afterschool community has long embraced the arts as part of the constellation of services offered to youth during nonschool hours. However, there has been much less comprehensive research in, and support for, the arts outside of school. Despite the fact that the United States has many local, regional, and state examples of excellent partnerships between the arts and afterschool, as well

as model community-based afterschool youth arts programs, in the arts learning field these partnerships and programs are only beginning to foster evidence-based research and disseminate “best practices.” This paper calls attention to community youth arts in order to address the need for more formal and research-based alliances between the arts learning and afterschool fields.

In this paper, *arts learning* is a broad term that incorporates learning in and through the arts both during and after school. *Arts-in-education* takes place during school hours and has academic goals. *Community-based*

youth organizations (CYOs) focus on serving youth locally; many CYOs have the arts as central parts of their missions. *Community youth arts* (CYA) refers specifically to partnerships between arts and non-arts organizations that offer OST youth arts activities. One critical distinction is between *arts-in-education*, which takes place in school, and the broader *arts learning*, which can incorporate a variety of arts activities; serve youth both in and outside of school; and have a range of goals including academic support, community building, and social development.

LORI L. HAGER, Ph.D., has over 30 years’ experience in the community arts field. She was professionally trained as an artist-in-the-schools, as an actor, and as an arts manager. She has directed and evaluated community youth arts programs, and her research focuses on the history, policies, and programs of community youth arts development. She is now faculty in Arts and Administration at the University of Oregon, where she teaches graduate courses and conducts research in arts education policy and practice, community youth arts, and community arts development. She serves as associate director of community arts for the Center for Community Arts and Cultural Policy and is on the founding advisory board of the Community Arts Convening and Research Project.

**SPRINGTIME
(FLOWER)**
Focuses on
something
colorful.
*OUR WORLD
IN PICTURES*

Historical Perspective

In the U.S., connections among youth, arts, and community are rooted in the Progressive Movement at the turn of the 20th century (Addams, 1910; Ewell, 2000; Jackson, 2000). In Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, and other major urban areas, civic-minded philanthropists led reform efforts in child labor, family health, education, welfare, and recreation. Recognizing the importance of building healthy minds and bodies, Progressives helped to revolutionize city planning by advocating for public spaces, including playgrounds where children and neighbors could gather as well as community centers where the urban poor and recently arrived immigrants could acclimate to American urban life (Addams, 1910; Blood, 1996; Davis, 1984; Jackson, 1996). Integral to the services offered by settlement houses were activities in music, drama, dance, crafts, painting, drawing, and more. The arts were viewed as a means to bring people together to build community, share cultures, and transcend language barriers (Abookire & McNair, 1989; Dubois, 1943; Jackson, 1996). The Progressive ideal included the arts in fostering positive community relations and youth development (Addams, 1910; Kennedy, n.d.)

Community youth arts also grew out of the recreation and playground movements of the early 20th century. Drama—sometimes referred to as “skits and stories”—was featured in summer camps, YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, Scout troops, and other recreation clubs (Hager, 2008; McCaslin, 1997). These early precursors to contemporary community youth arts helped to cement the arts’ position in community organizations whose purpose was to fill young people’s leisure hours with productive and worthwhile pursuits.

The settlement houses, parks and recreation programs, and Junior Leagues were instrumental in the start of professional arts organizations in the U.S. (Abookire & McNair, 1989; Bedard, 1998; Rodman, 1989). For example, Alice and Irene Lewisohn began their dramatic efforts in 1907 at the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. Henry Street Settlement still offers drama classes to youth today, as does Karamu House in Cleveland, Ohio. America’s cities and towns are dotted with theatres, which the Junior Leagues helped to found, such as Louisville Children’s Theatre, Birmingham Children’s Theatre, and the Nashville Academy Theatre

(Bedard, 1989; Comer, 1946). During the 1950s, as community and recreation centers expanded steadily, universities and community organizations increasingly relied on one another to produce children’s arts activities (Ewell, 2000; Gard, 1955, 1975; McCaslin, 1997).

The establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 1965 provided federal recognition for arts in communities and schools. Arts-in-education was formally established through partnerships between the NEA and the (then) U.S. Office of Education. Investments were made toward arts-in-education research and program development. For example, Harvard’s Project Zero received early research funding, (NEA, 1967) and is still critical to arts education through the research of Howard Gardner and many others. The artist-in-schools program established a residency model in 1966 that is the basis for arts in the schools today (see, for example, Arts Education and Americans Panel, 1977; Fowler 1988; Remer, 1996).

Early distinctions between NEA in-school and out-of-school arts learning programs had a profound effect on how each has developed. The NEA positioned community-based arts, including community youth arts, in the Expansion Arts program, which began in recognition of the country’s changing demographics and of changing arts practices and audiences (Hager, 2003). Expansion Arts sought to bring start-up money to community-based organizations that were addressing community problems through the arts, with a focus on “minority” neighborhood community centers that attracted nontraditional audiences and produced diverse American art. Many of these centers also provided educational opportunities and training in the arts for youth and adults through classes and apprenticeship or job skills training programs (Backas, 1977; Mark, 1991; NEA, 1980).

Partnership between the NEA and other federal agencies, such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, provided important revenue streams for nonschool-based youth arts that targeted marginalized populations. Job training programs with the Department of Labor focused on the transferability of skills from the cultural industry to other sectors. The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) included partnerships between the NEA and Department of Labor in

Early distinctions
between NEA in-school
and out-of-school arts
learning programs
had a profound effect
on how each
has developed.

support of the Arts and Humanities Program, which provided funding for artists to work as arts managers and teaching artists (Morgan Management Systems, 1981; Netzer, 1992; Wyzomirski, 1982). Other federal initiatives included Challenge America: Positive Alternatives for Youth (NEA, 2001a), and Creative Communities, a partnership between the NEA and Housing and Urban Development (NEA, 2000), which focused on low-income youth. Since the 1970s the arts and community youth arts have had an important role in the development of cities (Adams & Goldbard, 2001; Ewell & Ewell, 1975; Gard, 1975; Kamarck, 1975; NEA, 2001b; Regan, 1976).

Another influence on community youth arts was the activity of local arts agencies (LAAs), which are part of the state arts agency system that receives federal dollars to support arts in education, community revitalization, and youth development. By 1997, 100 percent of LAAs in the 50 largest American cities “used the arts to address community development issues,” which reflected the “fastest growing program and service area of local arts agencies” (Larson, 1997, p. 84). LAAs were working on community development with schools, parks and recreation, social service departments, law enforcement, and community-based organizations to address issues of economic development, crime prevention, illiteracy, substance abuse, homelessness, and cultural and racial awareness, particularly for youth (Gibans, 1982; Larson, 1997).

When No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was authorized in 2001, the arts were included as a core academic area (Arts Education Partnership, 2001). The NEA re-organized its arts learning category to include community-based programs, in addition to Pre-K and K–12 arts-in-education (NEA 2002a, 2002b). This shift signified an important milestone in federal recognition of arts learning that takes place outside of school.

Community Youth Arts Models

Two model programs for the arts during out-of-school time have helped to generate momentum for national recognition of community youth arts. These include Coming Up Taller and the YouthARTS Development Project.

Coming Up Taller helps to promote excellence in after-school arts programs that target youth in high-poverty communities by presenting awards that raise the profile for the arts outside of school time and by identifying and stimulating best practices. The YouthARTS Development Project was purposefully designed to study arts programs in partnership with departments of juvenile justice in order to provide hard evidence of positive effects for juvenile offenders who participate in arts programs.

Coming Up Taller

Coming Up Taller (CUT) is a high-profile national program that annually provides awards to community youth arts programs judged exceptional by a panel of peer experts. CUT is sponsored by the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The goal of CUT is to “identify community programs in the arts and humanities that reach at-risk children and youth and to describe the principles and practices that make these programs effective” (Weitz, 1996, p. 7).

CUT has identified characteristics shared by effective programs, including student engagement, provision of critical “building blocks” in healthy development, creation of safe places for children to develop sustained healthy relationships with peers and adults, opportunities for student success, and innovative teaching strategies including “hands-on learning, apprenticeships and technology” (Weitz, 1996, p. 8). Award-winning programs also build on what youth value, establish clear expectations, help children feel valued, and provide support services. Many of the programs are initiated by arts organizations, but they operate in partnership with “schools, universities, youth organizations, churches, businesses, and health, housing and social service agencies” (Weitz, 1996, p. 8). By identifying best practices and recognizing them nationally, CUT helps to define effective community youth arts practices and to expand support for arts and humanities programs for at-risk youth and children (Weitz, 1996, p. 9).

YouthARTS Development Project

The YouthARTS Development Project (YADP) was a pilot project among the Office of Juvenile Justice and

When No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was authorized in 2001, the arts were included as a core academic area. The NEA re-organized its arts learning category to include community-based programs, in addition to Pre-K and K–12 arts-in-education.

Delinquency Prevention, Americans for the Arts, and community agencies in three cities. The purpose of the development project was to “develop, test, and disseminate ‘best practice’ models of arts programs designed for youth at risk” (Farnum & Schaffer, 1998, p. vi). Though arts organizations have been providing arts programs for youth at risk of juvenile delinquency and truancy for years, most of the evidence in support of such programs was anecdotal, lacking substantive statistical evidence that arts programs can enhance youth development (Farnum & Schaffer, 1998).

YADP had seven goals:

1. To define “best practices” for at-risk youth arts programs
2. To design and test program evaluation methodologies
3. To conduct rigorous impact evaluation of the three sites on risk and protective factors in adolescent behavior
4. To design and test artist and staff development and training
5. To strengthen relationships among local and federal partners
6. To disseminate “best practices” models to arts, social service, and juvenile justice providers
7. To leverage increased funding for at-risk youth programs (Farnum & Schaffer, 1998, p. 2)

Working with information from the youth arts field, social service agencies, and justice programs, the project identified an approach to reducing risk factors while increasing protective factors by using all the community’s resources, including schools, peers, and family support networks.

Results from the YADP program evaluation provided evidence that “arts programs really can have an impact on youth. Not only can such programs enhance young peoples’ attitudes about themselves and their futures, but the programs also can increase academic achievement and decrease delinquent behavior” (Farnum & Schaffer, 1998, p. 3). Youth who participated in YADP art-centered afterschool programs showed improved anger management, increased ability to stay on task, less delinquent activity, improved attitudes toward school, and increased self-esteem and self-efficacy. They also had fewer court referrals (Farnum & Schaffer,

1998). YADP disseminated some of the first critical evidence for how the arts benefit youth at risk of juvenile delinquency and what some of the best programs are doing.

YADP remains one of the most accessible resources for designing, staffing, and evaluating arts intervention programs. Coming Up Taller brings national attention to best practices in community youth arts and OST learning. Both extend the articulated benefits of arts partnerships beyond exposure and enrichment outcomes to include excellence in the arts, as well as in youth development and civic participation. Support of these programs by federal agencies legitimizes community youth arts programming that connects with arts-based social and civic goals.

Effective national dissemination of such model national programs helps to develop best practices in program delivery and instruction and to influence funding and policy.

YouthARTS Development Project remains one of the most accessible resources for designing, staffing, and evaluating arts intervention programs. Coming Up Taller brings national attention to best practices in community youth arts and OST learning. Both extend the articulated benefits of arts partnerships beyond exposure and enrichment outcomes to include excellence in the arts, as well as in youth development and civic participation.

Challenges for Community Youth Arts

The research of Shirley Brice Heath and her collaborators provides critical evidence for the impact of the arts in nonschool settings, demonstrating that the value of youth arts programming extends beyond reform or enrichment (Heath, Soep, & Smyth, 1998). Heath describes how participating in arts-based CYOs prepares youth to engage dynamically with their communities, learn leadership skills, demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, and collaborate effectively (Heath & Roach, 1999; Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1999). The research compendium *Champions of Change* (Fiske, 1999) stimulated research that focuses on the range of arts activities that take place during out-of-school time as well as in school, providing some of the critical evidence that the emerging field needs (Deasy, 2002; Fiske, 1999). However, much of the evidence in community youth arts continues to be anecdotal and has not been formally documented or researched.

Though research and model programs for afterschool arts do exist, afterschool arts programs have often been perceived by the arts sector as “enrichment” pro-

programming that lacks the substance and rigor of in-school or conservatory arts experiences. Historically, afterschool arts programs have received scarce attention in arts education research, professional development, training, standards, policy, and assessment, when compared to in-school arts learning.

A Wallace Foundation study reported that 63 to 67 percent of “youth development, community development, education and recreational organizations are involved with the arts” (Walker, 2004, p. 4). The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program has been critical to the growth of the arts in the OST field through increased participation of artists and arts organizations as service providers for the required afterschool enrichment component. For example, the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture’s five-year 21st CCLC program worked with nine local arts organizations to provide substantive standards-based afterschool arts curriculum in partnership with some of the city’s poorest schools, putting teaching artists to work, fostering the education component of local arts organizations, and providing rigorous arts learning experiences for youth afterschool (Hager, 2004).

Arts Organizations as Partners in OST

Performing arts organizations are waking up to the importance of community-engaged programming, not just to build current and future audiences, but for a variety of other social and public purposes, including building relationships with non-arts sectors, strengthening relationships with other arts organizations, and more fully participating in the lives of their cities and communities (see, for example, Bodilly, Augustine, & Zakaras, 2008; Korza, Bacon, & Assaf, 2005; McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001; Zakaras & Lowell, 2008).

Arts organizations’ “education and outreach” programs traditionally tend toward building future audiences through free performances and exhibits education, assembly lecture demonstrations in the schools, short-term residencies that introduce the season’s offerings, or conservatory training for future arts professionals (Polin & Rich, 2007). Contemporary arts organizations are moving from this model of arts learning to more partnership-driven collaborations (Dreezen, 2001; Walker, 2004).

Training Teaching Artists

Afterschool arts programming in schools and parks and recreation programs are often revenue generators

for arts organizations and artists. Many artists will teach at some point in their careers—in schools, parks and recreation programs, or conservatories. Many artists, having started in parks and recreation programs, move on to work with arts organizations and other kinds of community-based organizations.

Some arts practitioners or teaching artists consider afterschool teaching “gigs” less than desirable for a variety of reasons, including inadequate facilities, low wages, short-term classes, lack of institutional supports including discipline and appreciation for the qualities of arts participation, and youth attendance patterns that make it difficult to sustain substantive arts programming (Hager, 2008). An evaluation of a Phoenix-based 21st CCLC program that tracked changes in the teaching artists

showed that, even in well-designed afterschool programs, otherwise highly qualified teaching artists are frequently unprepared for difficulties, including language and social barriers, institutional climates, and conflict between program and partner

goals (Hager, 2004). In fact, little has been written about the training for artists in community-based settings, though there are a few exceptions (for example, Hillman, 1996; Farnum & Schaffer, 1998), and regional and local training opportunities are emerging for teaching artists who work in out-of-school time settings.

Awareness is growing of the need for teaching artists to be highly qualified. Eric Booth, founder and editor of *Teaching Artist Journal*, writes about training for artists to teach in schools and community settings, noting that “there is an emerging set of additional skills that are essential” for the 21st century artist (Booth, 2005). The Teaching Artist Research Project is the first national study documenting the teaching artist field (Mehta, 2009).

Programs are emerging in higher education to train artists and arts managers to work in community settings. The emergence of new graduate and undergraduate community arts programs points to the need for such training and education. A few examples include community arts programs at Columbia College Chicago, Goucher College, Lesley University, Maryland Institute College of Arts, California College of the Arts, California State University Monterey Bay, University of Washington, and University of Oregon. Maryland Institute College of Arts’ Community Arts Convening and Research Project brings together academics and researchers, community-based practitioners, and students. Research emerging in conjunction with the project is published in the online journal

Awareness is growing of the need for teaching artists to be highly qualified.



THE SITUATION (LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE) A photo of something I want to change in my community. This is a scene that happens in the neighborhood all of the time. *OUR WORLD IN PICTURES*

Community Arts Perspectives on the Community Arts Network (www.communityarts.net). Similarly, Imagining America (IA), a consortium of colleges and universities concerned with civic engagement, brings together higher education institutions each year to share best practices. IA sponsors the Curriculum Project Research related to community cultural development education and training (Goldbard, 2008).

The Dana Foundation's *Transforming Arts Teaching* (Polin & Rich, 2007) discusses how critical it is to prepare artists to teach in community settings, highlighting the role of higher education in preparing artists, educators, and staff. The report presents case studies of 24 partnerships between higher education and performing arts organizations that offer classes to train artists to work in community settings in order to affect the quality of youth arts engagement over the long term. However, the community youth arts field is just beginning to document best practices, to articulate guidelines for trainings and curriculum, and to identify resources.

Challenges

The relevance of the YouthARTS Development Project for the arts sector is that it provided a framework for describing and evaluating quality for effective afterschool programs that include the arts. One important aspect of quality was that the programs focused on staff and teaching training. Most arts educator certification and training programs prepare arts teachers to work in school settings. Though the emergence of community arts programs in higher education institutions will help to identify routes for qualified arts instructors in community youth arts, this is a relatively new development. Research on teaching artist training, in conjunction with the emergence of professional and academic training programs for artists who want to teach in community settings, will likely have a long-term positive effect on community youth arts.

It is not difficult to make a case for the relevance and impact of the arts to the OST community. There are many sterling examples of community-based organizations delivering high-quality arts programming afterschool. The National Institute of Out-of-School Time (2008) reports that:

Engagement in the arts, whether the visual arts, dance, music, theatre or other disciplines, nurtures the development of cognitive, social, and personal competencies. Arts focused afterschool programs can increase academic achievement, decrease youth involvement in delinquent behavior and improve youth attitudes towards themselves and others and their futures.

Local arts agencies that administer teaching artist rosters tend to focus on school-based residencies and to foster long-term relationships with school districts and school personnel. A recent RAND report (Zakaras & Lowell, 2008) found that 80 percent of state arts agencies (SAAs) maintain artist rosters to connect artists with schools and other organizations. However, despite a growing recognition for the importance of providing arts learning for youth in communities, it can be a challenge for SAAs and arts organizations to include community youth arts, in addition to school-based programs, as part of a comprehensive arts learning strategy.

This trend may be changing as foundations and arts policy researchers document and disseminate best-practice models for the arts in afterschool. However, as the RAND authors note, “We have no data on the amount of instruction or number of K–12 children reached by afterschool programs nationwide or statewide” (Zakaras & Lowell, 2008, p. 38). Citywide afterschool programs that include the arts, such as Boston’s Afterschool for All and LA’s Best, are establishing model programs; at the same time “afterschool arts programs are housed within a large network of providers” (Zakaras & Lowell, 2008, p. 37), and, to date, there is no system-wide study documenting the community youth arts field.

Differences between in-school and afterschool programs in their staffing, funding, institutional structures, learning objectives, and access can cause arts organizations to locate education programs in schools because it is easier or more familiar or because the funding to support such programs is more readily available. Community youth arts programs require a different strategy in partnership development and organization. Instruction for in-school programs requires different skills from teaching artists as well, and these programs are usually of shorter duration due to institutional school structures. Furthermore, it can be difficult to identify teaching artists who have the kinds of expertise required for afterschool programs, especially in high-risk communities. The challenge is to bring the youth arts and OST sectors closer together to share resources and training, advance research

and evaluation, and advocate for policies in support of comprehensive, high-quality community youth arts.

The afterschool and arts communities need to work with state and local arts agencies to identify experienced arts educators and teaching artists; define high-quality arts participation; and integrate social, developmental, and academic goals with rigorous arts programming that meets 21st century goals. The expertise that characterizes highly qualified teaching artists and community artists, and a corresponding compensation structure, need to be identified. Arts-based and outcomes-based research addressing arts learning in OST is necessary in order to advance strong policies in support of community youth arts through increased formal partnerships between arts organizations and afterschool and other community-based organizations.

Works Cited

- Abookire, N., & McNair, J. S. (1989). Children’s theatre activities at Karamu House, 1915–1975. In R. Bedard & J. Tolch (Eds.), *Spotlight on the Child: Studies in the History of American Children’s Theatre* (pp. 69–84). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Adams, D., & Goldbard, A. (2001). *Creative community: The art of cultural development*. New York, NY: Rockefeller Foundation.
- Addams, J. (1910). *Spirit of youth and the city streets: Twenty years at Hull House*. New York, NY: MacMillan.
- Arts Education and Americans Panel (1977). *Coming to our senses: The significance of the arts for American education*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Arts Education Partnership. (2001). *No subject left behind: A guide to arts education opportunities in the 2001 NCLB Act*. Retrieved from <http://www.aep-arts.org/files/advocacy/NoSubjectLeftBehind2005.pdf>
- Backas, J. (1977). *The arts at the community level: A report to the National Endowment for the Arts*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Bedard, R. (1989). Junior League children’s theatre: Debutantes take the stage. In R. Bedard & J. Tolch (Eds.), *Spotlight on the Child: Studies in the History of American Children’s Theatre* (pp. 35–50). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Blood, M. (1996, June). Theatre in the settlement houses: Hull House Players, Neighborhood Playhouse, and Karamu Theatre. *Theatre History Studies*, 16, 45–68.
- Bodilly, S., Augustine, C., & Zakaras, L. (2008). *Revitalizing arts education through community-wide coordination*. RAND Corporation. Retrieved from <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG702/>

- Booth, E. (2005). Training the 21st Century artist. *Julliard Journal Online*, 21(2). Retrieved from http://www.juilliard.edu/update/journal/j_articles666.html
- Comer, V. (1946, November). The arts and your town: The Junior League explores a new field for community planning. *Community Bulletin of Community Chests and Councils*. Nancy Hanks Library, National Endowment for the Arts Archives.
- Davis, A. (1984). *Spearheads for reform: The social settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890–1914*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Deasy, R. (Ed.). (2002). *Critical links: Learning in and through the arts and student academic and social development*. Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership.
- Dreezen, C. (2001). *Teaching partnerships: Report of a national forum on partnerships improving teaching of the arts*. Arts Education Partnership. Retrieved from <http://aep-arts.org/files/publications/Teaching%20Partnerships.pdf>
- Dubois, R. D. (1943). *Get together Americans: Friendly approaches to racial and cultural conflicts through the neighborhood home festival*. New York, NY: Harper.
- Ewell, M. (2000). Community arts councils: Historical perspectives. *Culturework: A Periodic Broadside for the Arts and Culture Workers*, 5(1), 1–16. Retrieved from <http://aad.uoregon.edu/culturework/culturework15.html>
- Ewell, M., & Ewell, P. (1975). Planning for grassroots arts development: A research study of nine communities in transition. *Arts in Society*, 12, 92–109.
- Farnum, M., & Schaffer, R. (1998). *YouthARTS Handbook: Arts programs for youth at risk*. Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts.
- Fiske, E. (Ed.). (1999). *Champions of change: The impact of arts on learning*. Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership and President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.
- Fowler, C. (1988). *Can we rescue the arts for America's children? Coming to our senses, 10 years later*. New York, NY: American Council for the Arts.
- Gard, R. (1955). *Grassroots theatre: A search for regional arts in America*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin.
- Gard, R. (1975). The arts in the small community. *Arts in Society*, 12, 82–91.
- Gibans, N. F. (1982). *The Community Arts Council Movement: History, opinion, issues*. New York, NY: Praeger.
- Goldbard, A. (2008). *The Curriculum Project report: Culture and community development in higher education*. Imagining America. Retrieved from <http://curriculumproject.net/pdfs/08.CP.report.pdf>
- Hager, L. (2003). Partnership, policies and programs: Ideological constructions on federal youth arts and drama. *Youth Theatre Journal*, 17, 82–89.
- Hager, L. (2004). Phoenix Arts Collaborative 21st Century Community Learning Center first-year findings. Unpublished report. Phoenix, AZ: Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture.
- Hager, L. (2008). Community arts. In D. Blandy & G. Carpenter (Eds.), *Arts and Cultural Programming: A Leisure Perspective* (pp. 159–172). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Heath, S. B., & Roach, A. (1999). Imaginative activity: Learning in the arts during nonschool hours. In E. Fiske (Ed.), *Champions of Change* (pp. 19–34). Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts.
- Heath, S. B., Soep, E., & Roach, A. (1999). *ArtShow: Youth and community development*. Washington, DC: Partners for Livable Communities.
- Heath, S. B., Soep, E., & Smyth, L. (1998). Living the arts through language-learning: A report on community-based youth organizations. *Americans for the Arts Monographs*, 2(7).
- Hillman, G. (1996). *Artists in the community: Training artists to work in alternative settings*. Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts.
- Jackson, S. (1996). Civic play housekeeping: Gender, theatre and American reform. *Theatre Journal*, 48(3), 337–361.
- Jackson, S. (2000). *Lines of activity: Performance, historiography, Hull-House domesticity*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan.
- Kamark, E. (1975). The surge of community arts: A prefatory note. *Arts in Society*, 12(1), 6–10.
- Kennedy, A. (n.d.) *The arts as a function of local community life*. Biographical Material (1920–1931). Box 1, Folder 1. Albert J. Kennedy Collection. The Social Welfare History Archives Center. University of Minnesota Libraries.
- Korza, P., Schaffer Bacon, B., & Assaf, A. (2005). *Civic dialogue, arts and culture: Findings from Animating Democracy*. Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts.

- Larson, G. O. (1997). *American canvas*. National Endowment for the Arts. Retrieved from <http://www.arts.gov/pub/AmCan/AmericanCanvas.pdf>
- McCarthy, K., & Jinnett, K. (2001). *A new framework for building participation in the arts*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
- McCaslin, N. (1997). *Historical guide to children's theatre in America*. Studio City, CA: Players Press.
- Mark, C. (1991). *Reluctant bureaucrats: The struggle to establish the National Endowment for the Arts*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- Mehta, A. (2009). *Teaching artists survey to examine background, roles, opportunities*. The Dana Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.dana.org/news/features/detail.aspx?id=22760>
- Morgan Management Systems. (1981). *CETA: Comprehensive Employment and Training Act and the arts and humanities: Fifteen case studies*. Springfield, VA: Department of Commerce National Technical Information Service.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (1967). *National Endowment for the Arts annual report 1966*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (1980). *National Endowment for the Arts annual report 1979*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (2000). *Creative communities: A Challenge America leadership initiative, application guidelines FY 2001*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (2001a). *Challenge America: Positive alternative for youth, fiscal year 2002: June announcement*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (2001b). *ArtsREACH: Strengthening communities through the arts*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (2002a). *Arts learning for children and youth: Fiscal year 2002 grants*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (2002b). *Learning through the arts: A guide to the National Endowment for the Arts and arts education*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Institute on Out-of-School Time. (2008). *Making the case: A 2008 fact sheet on children and youth in out-of-school time*. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1058.pdf
- Netzer, D. (1992). *The subsidized muse: Public support for the arts in the United States*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Polin, J., & Rich, B. (2007). *Transforming arts teaching: The role of higher education*. New York, NY: Dana Foundation.
- Regan, M. (1976). *Community development through the endowment: A report on the Community Development program of the federal-state partnership within the National Endowment for the Arts*. Unpublished report. Nancy Hanks Library, National Endowment for the Arts Archives.
- Remer, J. (1996). *Beyond enrichment: Building effective arts partnerships with schools and their community*. New York, NY: American Council for the Arts.
- Rodman, E. (1989). Edith King and Dorothy Coit and the King-Coit School and children's theatre. In R. Bedard & J. Tolch (Eds.), *Spotlight on the Child: Studies in the History of American Children's Theatre* (pp. 51–68). Westport, CA: Greenwood.
- Walker, C. (2004). *Arts and non-arts partnerships: Opportunities, challenges, and strategies*. The Urban Institute. Retrieved from http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311043_Arts_Nonarts.pdf
- Weitz, J. (1996). *Coming Up Taller: Arts and humanities programs for children and youth at risk*. Washington, DC: President's Commission on the Arts and Humanities.
- Wyszomirski, M. J. (1982). Controversies in arts policymaking. In K. V. Mulcahy & C. R. Swaim (Eds.), *Public Policy and the Arts* (pp. 21–34). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Zakaras, L., & Lowell, J. (2008). *Cultivating demand for the arts: Arts learning, arts engagement, and state arts policy*. RAND Corporation. Retrieved from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/pages/preface-cultivating-demand-for-the-arts.aspx>



Nana for a new generation

by Denise T. Sellers

When I was a child, I spent as much time as my parents would permit at my grandparents' house, a modest and cozy home in a small suburban community in New Jersey. The neighborhood was full of children of all ages. We played together outdoors all day and well into the evening. Many children were sent outside early in the morning and told not to come back indoors except for lunch and dinner.

My grandmother, Alice Duer James, was everyone's "Nana." Her doors were open all day to her own grandchildren and to all of their playmates. What was available to her grandchildren was equally accessible to the other neighborhood children: bathrooms, cold drinks, the contents of her cupboards and refrigerator—nothing was off limits.

One day, while reflecting on all I received from playing at my grandmother's house, it occurred to me that she was, in essence, a volunteer childcare provider, overseeing neighborhood children during their out-of-school

time. This was *de facto* childcare. Parents knew and trusted her, and the children loved her. Why did they flock to her house as opposed to others in the neighborhood? She knew what children enjoyed and encouraged creativity. We could run the hose and make her yard a muddy mess, shaping mud pies and building roads for toy cars. We could rearrange her outdoor furniture and build forts to be left overnight for the next day's play. Although we roamed the neighborhood and explored other interesting places, Nana was home base.

Out-of-school time programs, especially afterschool programs, have become the new "neighborhood" for millions of schoolchildren. Caring neighborhood moth-

DENISE T. SELLERS has been the executive director of Haddonfield Child Care, a private, nonprofit afterschool program in Haddonfield, NJ, for 24 years. This article is the culmination of her research as a fellow of the Afterschool Matters Practitioner Research Fellowship in 2009. As an Afterschool Ambassador for the National Afterschool Alliance, Denise recently assisted in the development of the Afterschool Code of Ethics for NAA. Her work on including children with special needs in child care earned her the John Radig Award from the NJ School-Age Care Coalition and the Rose Annussek Award from the NJ Map to Inclusive Child Care Committee.

ers and grandmothers have been replaced by paid or volunteer staff. One element of the past that frequently remains, especially in small programs, is the family grouping concept. In many afterschool programs, children attend with siblings in configurations similar to the multi-age groupings of my old neighborhood.

I now run just such a small program for children of all ages. After 24 years as executive director of Haddonfield Child Care—a private, not-for-profit organization with a parent board—this role is a large part of my identity. The title and description (“Denise is director of the afterschool program”) follow my name as I am introduced in any community gathering. It is also a piece of my life that can keep me up at night, as surely as worries about my own children or bills or other personal commitments.

It is not what I trained for. Having started college in pre-med, I switched majors to art history. Later, as a young mother, I took a different path, entering the field of education. I certainly didn’t intentionally become the director of an afterschool program. The career in some ways found me, rather than the other way around.

Yet, as I reflect on my long career in the afterschool field, I know that the circumstance that brought together my needs as a working mother and those of a community full of working parents was a happy and appropriate one. I also know that there must have been something more that drew me to this work and caused me to infuse it with my own philosophy and values—to make Haddonfield Child Care my own, my identity. This “something” comes directly from my grandmother and my mother, who made children their priority and taught me to do the same.

Nana and Afterschool

How did my grandmother, “Nana” to me and a neighborhood of children, affect my philosophy of what an afterschool program could be?

First and foremost, she modeled for me what a true advocate for children should be. As the saying goes, “All the world’s children are my children.” The children of the



Alice Duer as a young woman, “Nana”

neighborhood were Nana’s children. Children need cold drinks on a hot summer day, and Nana dispensed them with pleasure. Today’s children need adults to show them that same care and affection, so I have taken up the mantle of “Neighborhood Nana” for a new generation.

Second, having had such a warm and comfortable environment in which to spend my own precious out-of-school hours, I wanted my own children and those who attended Haddonfield Child Care to enjoy the same luxury. I have always intended that my afterschool program be the best and most naturally structured it can be for all children. I have never viewed it as a “second-best” option, where unfortunate children

have to be because they have no alternative. To me, an afterschool program is the new “neighborhood,” which can be fun and exciting while being equally safe and secure.

What is the role of the program to families and the community? No doubt, there are those who would argue that childcare is the foundation of our program, and that if it is done intentionally and well, it should be sufficient. Promises made, promises kept: *Your child is safely supervised in a secure environment during the out-of-school time.* And for some parents, that might be enough. Outside factors such as financial considerations or family culture might make a “no frills” approach their preference. If their children are happy and safe, they are satisfied that the contracted promises have been kept.

But the majority expect more. Many could not articulate it, but they know it when they see it. The child who is thrilled to run into his afterschool caregiver on the street on Saturday, the parent who is delighted that a comment to a staff member about a child’s budding interest in chess results in the appearance of a chess set at the program the next week—these are signals to caring parents that their children are enjoying relationships with the people who spend hours with them each day. These also reflect the characteristics of caring neighbors, and especially of the Nana of my own youth.

The children themselves, as they mature and “age out” of the program, value the fact that people who have been important to them in the past can be counted on to

maintain supportive relationships in the future. I frequently have the opportunity to continue these relationships even as my students move from elementary to middle school, when most no longer participate in Haddonfield Child Care. They want to spread their wings and enjoy some freedom. Yet, as parents call to report that their children will no longer be attending, they sometimes share their angst over leaving them at home alone. I often engage them in discussion about their fears, giving them an opportunity to verbalize the pros and cons of this new independence. I let them know that our program is open to older youth, and we may discuss possible benefits of a child staying in the program even though the curriculum is mostly geared towards younger children.

In other cases, I sometimes deem it appropriate to offer a second option: sending the young person to volunteer at the afterschool program a few days a week. This can provide not only some limited structure to the child's week, but also a place to do service learning (which is often needed for church or school) and gradually build responsibility for self-care. We even brainstorm strategies for making this transition work. At this point, I frequently remind parents that this solution could lead to paid employment when children reach the age of 16 and are ready for part-time work.

I encourage former participants, as they enter the high school where my office is located, to think of me and my office as a safe haven where they can find help or support in any form. Forgotten lunch money? Stop by for a no-interest loan. Failed a test or had a bad morning? Bring your lunch in and vent. Some students stop by regularly when they have a free period or are in the building for a game or event and see the light on in my office. This leads to other, later visits that I truly treasure: when returning college students take the time to stop by, say

hello, and catch us up on their lives away from home. I can only conclude that the welcome they anticipate is what leads them to make the Haddonfield Child Care office one of their stops when they are back home.

I also make a point of engaging the parents of past participants when I see them in the community. Every parent likes the chance to brag a bit about a college acceptance or vent about a boomerang child who just can't seem to find a teaching job. Many of my best staff have come from these chance encounters. Even when I don't have an opening at the moment (rare though that is!), I always end the conversation with the willingness to try to help. The offer of a personal reference, the suggestion of a center where they might seek employment, the willingness to review a résumé or just chat about interviewing skills—even just a nod and “I hear you!” show them I care.

Certainly, being in a two-square-mile community with a small-town atmosphere makes this process much easier. Relationships and roles overlap; people see one another frequently and in various venues. A good reputation spreads quickly and can be reinforced in many ways. But the opposite is also true. Word spreads quickly on the soccer sidelines if someone is dissatisfied or unhappy with their child's care. There is some inherent risk in doing more than what is expected or required, but the benefits of doing it successfully make it worthwhile.

Going the extra distance to support individual children indicates to the families in our community that Haddonfield Child Care is more than just a safe place for parents to send their children while they work. It is an integral part of a community that values children. It is their neighborhood, populated with people who care. It is a reflection of a new-generation Nana who has taken the memories of a more innocent era of childhood and re-created them in a way that can work in a very different time and place.

Although my experiences have been centered in a small, middle-class suburban community, they are no less pertinent in other environments where afterschool or out-of-school time programs operate. Urban, suburban, or rural; low income, at-risk, socially isolated—whatever the label society has chosen for a neighborhood or its residents, children are children, and all need the same supports to help them grow into healthy, fully functioning adults. Whatever the stated goals of a youth program, this should be the underpinning on which the curriculum and structure are based. If young people and their families can trust the intentions of a program and its staff

SAFE PLACE Focuses on something colorful and is specific to the E. 7th Street Center. *OUR WORLD IN PICTURES*



and administration, they will engage more fully and gain more from the experience. The program will likewise be more able to realize its intended outcomes.

Yet it may be the unintended outcomes that are ultimately more important. What more can we ask of a youth program than to be a place where parents feel so secure that they send second and third children in succession, and where the children, as they mature and go off into the world, still feel such a strong connection that they view the program as a safe haven, a place to test strengths and risk failures without fear?

Lessons Learned

What, then, did I learn from my Nana, and bring with me to Haddonfield Child Care as I became the “Nana” of a new generation?

- Children should be everyone’s priority and everyone’s responsibility.
- Trust in the caregiver is the most essential component, for both children and parents.
- Children will naturally gravitate to people who understand and meet their needs.
- Play can often be messy and need not be adult directed.
- Good role models can affect multiple generations.
- Caring for children is important work.

A caring community or “neighborhood” makes children its priority. A successful youth program can be the centerpiece of a caring community. But a truly healthy place for children to grow and develop can come only from the symbiosis of mutually committed groups and individuals for whom the children are the central focus.

Being a bit like my Nana takes this focus to the next level.

Photo Credits

Pages 1, 7, 24, 33, 38, 44: Our World in Pictures

Our World in Pictures (OWIP) is a photography program centered on the youth at the East 7th Street Center in Lexington, KY. The East 7th Street Center hosts “Kid’s Cafe,” a feeding program for youth ages 18 and under, and offers afterschool activities such as homework help, field trips, science, literacy, and art activities. The goal of OWIP is to train and inspire the participants to connect with their community and understand their worlds through the art of photography. Local professional photographers act as mentors to teach the participants techniques of photography as well as encouraging the youth to see the world in a different light while unleashing their creativity. OWIP allows youth from economically disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to learn and experience the art of photography at no cost. Learn more at www.OWIP.org or www.east7center.org.

Pages 15, 23: Project Exploration’s Sisters4Science

Afterschool Matters

Call for Papers

Spring 2011 Issue

Afterschool Matters, a national, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to promoting professionalism, scholarship and consciousness in the field of afterschool education, is seeking material for the Spring 2011 issue. Published by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time with support from the Robert Bowne Foundation, the journal serves those involved in developing and running programs for youth during the out-of-school time hours, in addition to those engaged in research and in shaping youth development policy.

Afterschool Matters seeks scholarly work, from a variety of disciplines, which can be applied to or is based on the afterschool arena. The journal also welcomes submissions that explore practical ideas for working with young people during the out-of-school hours. Articles should connect to current theory and practice in the field by relating to previously published research; a range of academic perspectives will be considered. We also welcome personal or inspirational narratives and essays, review essays, artwork, and photographs.

Any topic related to the theory and practice of out-of-school-time programming will be considered for the Spring 2011 issue. We invite you to discuss possible topics in advance with us. Suggested topics include:

- Descriptions and analyses of community-based youth organizations as institutions that support youth development through civic engagement, social and emotional development, arts development, academic achievement, or other means.
- Descriptions and analyses of programs that collaborate with a range of community institutions, such as faith-based organizations or businesses.
- Exploration of employment-related topics, including, for example, youth organizations as spaces for training and employment, youth as workers, community economic development, and youth programs.

Submission Guidelines

- Deadline is July 19, 2010, for the Spring 2011 issue of *Afterschool Matters*.
- Submissions should be double-spaced in 12-point font, including quotations and references, and submitted electronically or on a disk in Microsoft Word or Rich Text format.
- Submissions should not exceed 5,000 words.
- Include a cover sheet with the manuscript title, authors' names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- The names of the authors should not appear on the text, as submissions are reviewed anonymously by peers.
- Follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition (July 2009), for reference style guidelines. Present important information in the text and do not use extensive footnotes.

Inquiries about possible articles or topics are welcome.

To inquire or to submit articles, contact:

GEORGIA HALL, PhD

SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST, MANAGING EDITOR

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

WELLESLEY CENTERS FOR WOMEN

WELLESLEY COLLEGE

106 CENTRAL STREET

WELLESLEY, MA 02481

E-MAIL: GHALL@WELLESLEY.EDU / PHONE: 781-283-2530

NIOST
Wellesley Centers for Women
Wellesley College
106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02481

The

Foundation

55 Water Street
New York, NY 10041

**AT THE WELLESLEY
CENTERS FOR WOMEN**

106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02481



Attend NIOST's Summer Seminars in Boston July 12-15, 2010

For more information go to
www.niost.org
or call (781) 283-2546
Space is limited — act today!

Be a part of a rewarding professional
development and networking
opportunity for afterschool
professionals.