



## **Afterschool Programs: Making a Difference in America's Communities by Improving Academic Achievement, Keeping Kids Safe and Helping Working Families**

### **Improved School Attendance and Engagement in Learning**

- Elementary school students attending LA's BEST afterschool program improved their regular school day attendance and reported higher aspirations regarding finishing school and going to college. Additionally, LA's BEST participants are 20 percent less likely to drop out of school compared to matched nonparticipants. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, June 2000, December 2005 and September 2007)
- High school students participating in Chicago's After School Matters program—which offers paid internships in the arts, technology, sports, and communications to teenagers in some of the city's most underserved schools—have higher class attendance, lower course failures and higher graduation rates than similar students who do not participate in the program. (University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children, 2007)
- Ninth grade students who, in middle school, formerly participated in The After-School Corporation (TASC) funded afterschool programs had higher daily attendance and credit accumulation than matched nonparticipants. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., October 2007)
- Participants in the Breakthrough Collaborative program enrolled in college-preparatory mathematics courses at double the national average, and were accepted to college-preparatory high schools by more than 80 percent. (Breakthrough Collaborative, 2006)
- Fifty-nine percent of former Citizen Schools 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy participants enrolled in high-quality high schools compared to 28 percent of matched nonparticipants. Former Citizen Schools participants were also significantly more likely to graduate from high school in four years than were Boston Public Schools students overall. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., July 2009)
- A New Hampshire statewide study of students participating in academically focused afterschool programs found that more than half of regular attendees improved both behaviorally and academically. (RMC Research, 2005)

### **Improved Test Scores and Grades**

- Researchers at MDRC found that as little as 45 minutes of focused academic instruction during afterschool, using specially created materials, resulted in a statistically significant increase in students' math scores. (MDRC and the William T. Grant Foundation, Evaluation of Enhanced Academic Instruction in Afterschool Programs, 2008)
- Annual performance report data from 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grantees across the country demonstrated that students attending 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs improved their reading (43 percent) and math grades (42 percent). Students who attended more regularly were more likely to improve their grades and their performance on state assessments. (Learning Point Associates, November 2007)
- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study, a study of about 3,000 low-income, ethnically-diverse elementary and middle school students found that regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs is linked to significant gains in standardized test scores and work habits. (University of California at Irvine, 2007)
- Participants in North Carolina's Young Scholars Program with at least 280 hours in the program averaged double-digit increases annually for proficiency in both math and reading. Promotion rates rose by 38 percent. Furthermore, the number of Young Scholars receiving A's and B's increased an average of 38 percent, while the number receiving F's decreased an average of 50 percent. (Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, 2006)
- Active participants in programs offered by The After-School Corporation (TASC) were more likely to take and pass the Regents Math Sequential 1 exam by ninth grade than were nonparticipants. Thirty-two percent of active ninth grade participants took and passed the exam, compared to one percent of ninth grade nonparticipants. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., November 2004)
- Participants of St. Paul Minnesota's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Pathways to Progress program received better grades in English and math than nonparticipants. (University of Minnesota, Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, March 2004)

### **Students at Greatest Risk Show Greatest Gains**

- The James Irvine Foundation's Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) initiative found that students' reading success was strongly linked to the quality of literacy programming. Children in low-performing schools in California who participated in CORAL read more, enjoyed reading more, and had



higher levels of engagement in school overall. (Public/Private Ventures and the James Irvine Foundation, Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning, 2008)

- Researchers at Johns Hopkins University concluded that two-thirds of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth results from unequal access to summer learning opportunities. (American Sociological Review, Vol. 72, April 2007)
- Citizen Schools reported significant improvements in achievement among high-risk students, including English learners and those with initially low standardized test scores. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., November 2005)

## **Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe, Healthy and On Track for Success**

- Early childhood education expert James Heckman concluded that a compliment of early education and participation in afterschool programs reduces initiating drug use among youth by nearly 50 percent and also reduces the likelihood of skipping school by half. (Investing in Our Young People, University of Chicago, 2006)
- A Northeastern University study found a sharp increase in homicides involving African American youth, both as victims and perpetrators, between 2000 and 2007. The study found risk spiked during afterschool hours, indicating that out-of-school-time is primetime for juvenile crime for those youth who do not have access to afterschool programs. (Fox and Swatt, Northeastern University, December 2008)
- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study, a study of about 3,000 low-income, ethnically-diverse elementary and middle school students, found that students reported improved social and behavioral outcomes: elementary students reported reductions in aggressive behavior towards other students and skipping school, and middle school students reported reduced use of drugs and alcohol, compared to their routinely unsupervised peers. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2007)
- A meta-analysis of 73 afterschool evaluations concluded that afterschool programs employing evidence-based approaches to improving students' personal and social skills were consistently successful in producing multiple benefits for youth including improvements in children's personal, social and academic skills, as well as their self-esteem. (University of Illinois at Chicago, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2007)
- A study found that children who attended LA's BEST were 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities than their peers who did not attend the program. Researchers estimate that every dollar invested in the LA's BEST program saves the city \$2.50 in crime-related costs. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, September 2007)
- A study measuring the health and social benefits of afterschool programs found that controlling for baseline obesity, poverty status, and race and ethnicity, the prevalence of obesity was significantly lower for afterschool program participants (21 percent) compared to nonparticipants (33 percent). (Mahoney, J., Lord, H., & Carryl, E., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2005)
- Youth attending 23-40 or more days of Maryland's After School Opportunity Fund Program showed positive gains on such measures as commitment to education and academic performance, and a reduction in delinquency and contact with the police. (University of Maryland, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, June 2004)
- Teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes than teens who do participate. They are also three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs, and they are more likely to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and engage in sexual activity. (YMCA of the USA, March 2001)

## **Afterschool Programs Help Working Families**

- Parents who are concerned about their children's afterschool care miss an average of eight days of work per year. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about afterschool care costs businesses up to \$300 billion per year. (Brandeis University, Community, Families and Work Program, 2004 and Catalyst & Brandeis University, December 2006)
- In an evaluation of LA's BEST, three quarters of the parents surveyed indicated that since enrolling their children in the program, they worried significantly less about their children's safety and had more energy in the evening. A majority also indicated the program sizably saved their time. (UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, June 2000 and December 2005)
- An evaluation of New York City's Out-of-School Time Programs for Youth initiative found that 74 percent of parents of participants agreed that the program made it easier for them to keep their job, and 73 percent agreed that they miss less work than they had previously because their children attended the program. In addition, 71 percent of parents reported that they were able to work more hours because their children were in the program. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., September 2009)