

#### A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance

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# MATHEMATICA AFTERSCHOOL STUDY

#### Phase Two – More of the Same

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. released the second wave of its evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers initiative on October 6, examining pre-No Child Left Behind Act afterschool programs once again.

The report comes 20 months after the first phase of the controversial research reached a number of negative conclusions about afterschool students' academic achievement and behavior. Phase One was widely criticized for relying on methodology that was considered suspect by academics and afterschool advocates alike.

Phase Two of the study has many of the same negative findings and most of the same methodological problems.

"This is old news about an old program that no longer exists," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson. "This information is no surprise, nor will it be of much help, to the afterschool community, especially given that the data were collected more than two years ago and the program has changed dramatically since then."

Among the findings in When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program, New Findings:

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# ALLIANCE NAMES 23 'AFTERSCHOOL AMBASSADORS'

The Afterschool Alliance has selected 23 local leaders around the nation to serve as Afterschool Ambassadors for the 2004-2005 school year. Each Ambassador runs, directs or provides support to a local afterschool program, and will serve a one-year term organizing public events, communicating with policy makers, and building support for afterschool programs. The JCPenney Afterschool Fund sponsors the ambassadorships.

"Afterschool programs help kids succeed in school and in life," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson. "At the local and state levels, Afterschool Ambassadors lead the effort to make afterschool programs available to all children who need them. They know first-hand that afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working parents, and inspire students to learn. And they carry the message of afterschool's great value to lawmakers and the public. We are proud to have these talented men and women join our team."

"Afterschool Ambassadors do a terrific job building support for quality afterschool programs in their communities and from lawmakers," said JCPenney Afterschool Fund Executive Vice President Ed Solczak. "We've seen the need for these programs across the country and the way children blossom from their involvement. It's our pleasure to continue to fund the ambassadorships for the 2004/2005 school year."

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#### **OUTREACH**

Please let your Senators and Representative in Congress know that the Mathematica findings are not reflective of your afterschool program. Contact information for Members of Congress is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org. Enter your zip code in the "Contact Congress" box located on the left-hand side of the homepage. A sample message follows.

[Date]

Dear [Senator/Representative Name]:

Last weekend, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger joined the Afterschool Alliance in kicking off *Lights On Afterschool*, a national rally for afterschool that this year will involve hundreds of thousand of people at more than 6,000 events across the nation. Afterschool programs enjoy such strong support because Americans know they keep kids safe, help working families, and inspire children to learn.

Unfortunately, amidst this groundswell of public support, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. has released the second phase of its controversial evaluation of the federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers afterschool initiative. The report offers a negative assessment of afterschool programs – an assessment that has been challenged by numerous highly regarded researchers who have studied afterschool for decades. Among other problems, the data were collected more than two years ago, before the No Child Left Behind Act significantly changed the program. Simply put, Mathematica's information is old news about an old program that no longer exists. Its negative findings certainly do not reflect the great work being done by afterschool programs here in [your city. Add a sentence on the impact of your local programs.]

There is an enormous need for afterschool programs in our community and across the nation. A household survey released in May by the Afterschool Alliance (supported by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund) found that 14.3 million children care for themselves after the school day ends. This is precisely the time of day when juvenile crime, drug and alcohol abuse and other risky behaviors by youth increase.

I hope that you will help give all our children access to quality afterschool programs by helping to close the funding gap between the \$2 billion promised in the No Child Left Behind Act for next year and the \$1 billion in the current budget. We must ensure that every child is safe and supervised, with opportunities to learn, in the afternoons. Thank you.

Sincerely,
[Name]
[Program]
[City, State]
[Phone and/or email]

#### Ambassadors, Continued from Page One...

Each Ambassador will plan a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*.

Generous support from the JCPenney Afterschool Fund has allowed the Afterschool Alliance to support some 80 Afterschool Ambassadors throughout the nation over the last four years.

Six 2003-2004 Ambassadors were chosen to continue as Ambassadors in the new school year: Julie Jimenez, Maricopa, Arizona; Debra Ballinger, St. Petersburg, Florida; Matthew Tullis, Marshalltown, Iowa; Kima Reed, New York, New York; Claire Tate, Charlotte, North Carolina; and Sue Matkin, Fort Worth, Texas. New 2004-2005 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- ➤ Bonnie Hardy, Anchorage, Alaska;
- CynDee Zandes, Bakersfield, California;
- ➤ John Poch, San Jose, California;
- Martha Garcia-Gardinali, Miami, Florida;
- ➤ Debra Mikulka, Chanute, Kansas;
- Pamela L. Stearns, Edmonton, Kentucky;
- Jenny Wright, Minneapolis, Minnesota;
- Manola C. Erby, Raymond, Mississippi;
- > Rose Woodford, Superior, Montana;
- ➤ Keith Pressey, Orange, New Jersey;
- > Shaun Frecska, Dayton, Ohio;
- > Erin Wirtz, Beaverton, Oregon;
- Alana S. Kulesa, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania;
- Christine Gingerella, Central Falls, Rhode Island;
- Cynthia M. Bennett, Columbia, South Carolina:
- ➤ Illia Moore, Nashville, Tennessee; and

Karen Walz-Fuentes, Fairfax, Virginia.



# NEW LEGISLATION MAKES IT EASIER TO FEED CHILDREN IN AFTERSCHOOL

On June 30, 2004, President Bush signed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 into law, reports the Food Research and Action Center, a national nonprofit organization working to eradicate hunger and under-nutrition in the United States. The Act increases the availability of nutritious meals and snacks to more children, including those in afterschool programs.

The new law includes a number of provisions that streamline administrative procedures and expand eligibility for federal food programs, allowing more afterschool programs to feed children. Changes to initiatives such as the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the National School Lunch Program, and the Summer Food Service Program, which provide crucial funding for meals and snacks, make it easier for programs to participate and ensure that participants receive the maximum federal support available. For more information, visit www.frac.org/html/federal\_food\_programs/cn reauthor/cnrc.htm.



# Mathematica, Continued from Page One...

 Students in programs were more likely to be with adults who were not their parents after school and less likely to be with their parents or older siblings.

- In addition, the rate of children in selfcare was unaffected by afterschool.
- Programs had little impact on students' academic achievement or homework completion rates, but they did cut down on middle school absenteeism and increase the likelihood that middle school students aspired to go to college.
- Elementary students in afterschool programs felt safer during the afternoon hours than their counterparts not in programs. Middle school students did not.
- Parental involvement increased for elementary students, but was unchanged for middle school students.
- More than half of middle school students (53 percent) who had access to programs that were in their second year did not attend. Average attendance was low for those who did attend.

#### A Study Mired in Controversy

The first wave of the research, released in February 2003, suffered from significant methodological difficulties – problems severe enough to call the study's validity into question. Indeed, even Mathematica's own advisory group challenged the first set of findings.

The second wave of the research corrected few of the methodological problems. But, perhaps more importantly, the study looks only at programs in the period before the No Child Left Behind Act significantly revised the mission of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century initiative, focusing it tightly on academic achievement. "Not a single program funded since the No Child Left Behind Act made major changes to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative is included in the study released today," Samelson noted.

The other methodological problems that experts have cited include, but are not limited to:

- Middle school "treatment" and "comparison" groups were different in significant ways, because comparison students had higher test scores and higher socioeconomic status. Despite attempts to adjust for these differences, contrasts between the two groups are deeply suspect.
- Middle school comparison students participated in afterschool programs not funded by 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grants and significant crossover occurred, again casting great doubt on the study's conclusions.
- To be included in the study, elementary afterschool programs had to have sizeable waiting lists. Most do not. Thus, participating programs differed significantly from the norm.

#### A Call for Unity

"Afterschool programs enjoy overwhelming public support," Samelson said, "because Americans know they keep kids safe, help working families, and inspire children to learn. A household survey released in May by the Afterschool Alliance and supported by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund found that 14.3 million children care for themselves after the school day ends. The parents of more than 15 million children say their children would participate if an afterschool program were available."

Samelson noted that this widespread public support for afterschool was one of the reasons the Republican-led Congress "repudiated the Administration's effort to use the first phase of the Mathematica afterschool study to justify debilitating cuts to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative. Since that time, the U.S. Department of Education has undertaken sweeping new efforts aimed at discovering what is working well in afterschool programs, so they can contribute even more to America's youth and their families."

Samelson also invited the Administration to work with the Afterschool Alliance to make afterschool available to all

and to close the funding gap between the \$2 billion promised in the No Child Left Behind Act for fiscal year 2005 and the \$1 billion in the current budget. "Together we must ensure that every child is safe and supervised," she said, "with opportunities to learn, in the afternoons. Let's work together to get to the day when every family has access to an afterschool program."

The new Mathematica report is available at www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/redirect\_PubsDB.asp?s trSite=PDFs/21stnewfindings.pdf.

Samelson's statement is available in the media room of the Afterschool Alliance's web site at

www.afterschoolalliance.org/press\_archives/math\_oct\_2004.pdf.



#### IN THE NEWS...

**National** – A new survey released by TD Waterhouse USA finds that one-third of Americans view illiteracy as the greatest threat to our children's future, and one in five say lack of access to books is the leading cause of illiteracy in children. In conjunction with the survey, and prompted by U.S. Department of Education statistics showing that more than 80 percent of the preschool and afterschool programs serving at-risk children have no books at all, TD Waterhouse USA has launched a nationwide, online book drive for disadvantaged children. The First Book Campaign 2004 was developed with First Book, a nonprofit organization that provides low-income children, including those in afterschool programs, with their first books. To learn more about TD Waterhouse USA's First Book Campaign, visit www.tdwaterhouse.com/firstbook. For more information on First Book, visit www.firstbook.org.

California – Santa Rosa residents have raised \$20,500 over the last year for afterschool programs by rounding up their monthly sewer and water bills to the nearest dollar, according to the *Associated Press State & Local Wire*. Approximately 3,100 residents have signed up for the program, adding a penny to 99 cents to monthly bills. Proceeds go to the "Change for Kids" program, which funds afterschool programs in low-income neighborhoods.

# LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL! 2004

On October 14, turn on the lights and join *Lights On Afterschool*, the nationwide rally for afterschool programs! Whether you're a new program or a long-term neighborhood or school fixture, *Lights On Afterschool* offers a great way to showcase your students' activities and honor what your program brings to the community. Join afterschool advocates around the country in shining a spotlight on the need for quality afterschool programs for all children.

To learn how to participate, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org. Help turn the lights on at afterschool programs! Please also remember to **REGISTER YOUR EVENT** online.

California – Construction began last month on the Tiger Woods Learning Center, a 35,000-square-foot complex on the grounds of the H.G. "Dad" Miller Golf Course in Anaheim, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Scheduled to open in spring 2005, the year-round center will be free to all students from grades four through 12 and will feature afterschool programs. Woods has donated \$5 million of the \$20 million raised to build and operate the center; other funds have come

from corporations such as American Express and Target. "I was very fortunate to have teachers in my life that took the time to help me, and I want to build something that will give these kids the same opportunities," Woods said.

Florida – The Florida Children's Forum has established a Hurricane Relief Fund that is soliciting donations of food, infant care items, books and activities materials, and money for child care and afterschool programs in the state that have been affected by hurricanes. Parks and recreation facilities, YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs and other private programs that are trying to accommodate children who can no longer attend the afterschool programs in their schools will also benefit. For more information, visit www.flchild.com.

Michigan – This month, Detroit Pistons president and former star Joe Dumars will open the Joe Dumars Fieldhouse at the Michigan State Fairgrounds, reports the Detroit Free Press. The initiative will transform the Agriculture Building currently on the site into a recreational center for city residents. The facility's focus on the community has been hailed as a unique and laudable gesture in the midst of Detroit's revitalization efforts. It will include afterschool programs as well as sports, church and community facilities.

Missouri – Two powerful advocacy groups have launched the "Missouri's No. 1 Question Campaign," which urges elected officials, community leaders, schools, businesses and churches to ask the question "Is it good for the children?" when considering any new policy initiative. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reports that the \$2.5 million, three-year effort, led by Citizens for Missouri's Children and the Partnership for Children, will feature voter mobilization and media spots promoting children's issues, including afterschool programs, health insurance and early learning. The campaign hopes to mobilize voters to

hold lawmakers accountable for the well being of Missouri children. For more information about Citizens for Missouri's Children visit www.mokids.org; for more information on the Partnership for Children, visit www.pfc.org.

New Mexico – After three months of work, Albuquerque artists and students from Armijo Elementary School have completed a mural depicting the history of the South Valley community, writes the *Albuquerque Journal*. The 12-foot high, 67-foot long mural, "Sunrise Over the South Valley," is a colorful depiction of the community as told by seven students who worked with three local artists. The art project is part of a larger program by the Rio Grande Educational Collaborative, which is administering a \$430,000 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant this year for several schools and afterschool programs in the area.

Texas – Children in afterschool and other programs around the country will cover one of the nation's largest passenger blimps with their artwork, report the Texas Rangers, Ameriquest Mortgage and National Mortgage News. A 40,000 square foot canvas left Arlington, Texas in August and will tour the country for the next eight months as part of the Soaring Dreams Program, a collaboration between Ameriquest Mortgage Co. and Portraits of Hope, which is dedicated to helping children overcome difficult circumstances and build self-esteem through art. Upon completion, the canvas will be installed on the Ameriquest Soaring Dreams Airship, which will embark on a nationwide tour in 2005. To learn more, visit www.soaringdreams.org.

Washington, DC – The U.S. General Services Administration will participate in the ACE Mentor Program of America to expose high school students to the fields of engineering, architecture and construction. The program will originate in GSA's Public

Buildings Service, with participation by the agency's Office of the Chief Architect and National Capital Region. These efforts will act as a "living laboratory" for the students as they complete the yearlong afterschool program, which includes an introduction to all aspects of the design industry.



### **RESOURCES**

## **Covering Kids & Families**

This fall, as part of its Back-to-School outreach campaign, Covering Kids & Families will host more than 2,000 events nationally to inform families about available low-cost and free health care coverage programs and assist with enrollment procedures. Covering Kids & Families is a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The organization's web site, at www.coveringkidsandfamilies.org, features a back-to-school action kit with information on events taking place in each state, as well as general information to help families take advantage of publicly funded health care programs.

# **Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation**

The Harvard Family Research Project has released the following new resources:

"Promoting Quality Through Professional Development: A Framework for Evaluation" (part of the "Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation" series) examines out-of-school-time professional development efforts. It is available at: www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/issuebrief8.html.

"Detangling Data Collection: Methods for Gathering Data" (part of the "Out-of-School Time Evaluation Snapshots" series) describes the common data collection methods used by current examines out-of-school-time programs to evaluate their implementation and outcomes. It is available at: www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/snapshot5.html.



### **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **Nickelodeon**

The Nickelodeon Cable Network is sponsoring the Let's Just Play grants program, which will offer awards to schools and afterschool programs to help provide resources to create and expand opportunities for physical play. Grants will be distributed equally to schools and non-profit youth-based community organizations. The deadline is November 1. For more information, visit www.nick.com/all\_nick/everything\_nick/public\_ljpgrants2.jhtml.

#### Microsoft

The Chronicle of Philanthropy reports that the Microsoft Corporation is accepting applications for in-kind support to create community-based technology and learning centers in order to bridge the "digital divide" and eliminate technology illiteracy. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. For more information on guidelines and to download an application, visit www.microsoft.com/mscorp/citizenship/giving/apply/.

#### **U.S. Soccer Foundation**

The Chronicle of Philanthropy reports that the U.S. Soccer Foundation will award grants of up to \$100,000 to support programs or projects that recruit and develop soccer players, referees, and coaches, with a special emphasis on low-income residents of urban areas. The deadline for the first phase of the application process is October 15. More information is available at www.ussoccerfoundation.org/gnt/app.html.

#### **Prudential Spirit of Community Awards**

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards recognize students in grades five to twelve who have demonstrated exemplary community service. One high school and one middle level student in each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are named State Honorees, and each receives \$1,000, a silver medallion, and an all-expenses-paid trip with one parent/guardian to Washington, D.C. Ten State Honorees are then named National Honorees, and they each receive an additional \$5,000, a gold medallion, and a crystal trophy for their school. Twenty-five thousand dollars in children's products will be donated in each of the National Honoree's names to needy children in their communities by Kids In Distressed Situations, Inc. The application deadline is October 29. For more information, visit:

www.principals.org/awards/prudential.cfm.



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## October 14

Be sure to join afterschool advocates across the country for the fifth annual *Lights On Afterschool!* on October 14. Be part of this effort to save afterschool programs imperiled by funding cuts and underscore the need for quality afterschool programs for all children. To learn more about how to participate and to register your event, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa\_2003/index. cfm. Help turn the lights on at afterschool programs!

### October 14

Results for America, a project of the nonprofit Civil Society Institute, will sponsor "Listen to Kids About Learning," an event for children across America to speak out on education. The organization is encouraging people to invite legislators to schools to listen to kids, arrange student visits to city halls to meet with mayors and city council members, and organize hearings at which kids talk to policy makers about learning and education. For more information, visit www.ResultsforAmerica.org and click on Listen to Kids.

#### *№ November 4 – 6*

The California School-Age Consortium will host its National Middle School Conference, "Take Your Job and Love It!" at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco from November 4-6. The conference will provide information, activities and ideas on engaging youth in afterschool programs and empowering staff to plan programs that middle school youth will love. For more information, visit www.calsacconference.org.

#### November 10 − 13

The National Community Education Association (NCEA) will host its 39<sup>th</sup> annual conference in San Diego, California, from November 10-13. "Creating a Future Without Boundaries" is the largest national gathering of community educators. The conference is designed to help participants create comprehensive community programs, including community schools, for the 21st Century. It will include information on model programs, best practices, services and products to support participants' efforts. Join others to learn about community education management and professional development, community education programming and afterschool programs. On November 9, there is a pre-conference workshop on "Building Your Afterschool Program's Capacity to Provide Rich Academic Content." For more information, visit www.ncea.com/conferences or call 703/359-8973.

#### *№ November 18 – 20*

H2ED's 2nd ANNUAL 2004 SUMMIT: Teaching Tolerance, Health and Academics through Hip-Hop will be held at the Bronx Museum of Arts in New York. H2Ed's

annual two-day Summit offers training sessions, workshops and panel discussions on the best models and practices of using Hip-Hop culture as an educational tool in a variety of settings. Knowledgeable practitioners who use Hip-Hop culture as a learning tool will run workshops, sharing their experiences and recommending best practices. The Afterschool Alliance is proud to co-sponsor the meeting and will be offering a session on marketing programs to funders. Mention the Alliance and receive \$5 off the meeting pass (reg. \$10/wksp or \$25/all workshops). Register at www.hh2ed.net.

### February 16 − 19, 2005

FOUNDATIONS, Inc. will host its 2005 Beyond School Hours VIII® national conference in Atlanta, Georgia, from February 16-19, 2005. The Power of Partnership conference will include successful, content-rich, afterschool program models, as well as network opportunities with community, school, university and government leaders. There will be discussions on current policies and practices that impact programming and school systems and on methods to maximize resources and funding strategies for schools and afterschool programs. The conference is hosted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program and is sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the

Annenberg Foundation. For more information or to register online, visit: www.foundationsinc.org.

#### February 24 – 26, 2005

The National AfterSchool Association (formerly NSACA) will host its 2005 conference from February 24-26 in San Antonio, Texas. The conference will bring together 2,500 afterschool professionals – the largest conference of the profession – for practical, thought-provoking programs, sessions, and events. For more information, visit www.naaconference.org or call 800/606-0061.

## *№* April 15 – 17, 2005

Youth Service America will sponsor its 17<sup>th</sup> annual National Youth Service Day, a public awareness and education campaign that highlights the contributions young people make to their communities throughout the year, and mobilizes millions of young people to address the needs of their communities. To learn more, visit the organization's web site at www.ysa.org/nysd/lead\_agencies/la\_faq\_pare nt.cfm.

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, JCPenney Afterschool Fund, Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation.

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