

Afterschool Advocate

A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance

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YOUTH TO ATTEND AFTERSCHOOL CHALLENGE

On May 19 and 20, the Afterschool Alliance will host its third annual *Afterschool Challenge* in Washington, DC. This year, more than 50 students – from states including Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Texas, Utah and Virginia – will join afterschool providers, parents, business leaders and other advocates to urge Members of Congress to support full funding for afterschool programs. The students will share personal stories with their Congressional representatives about how afterschool programs have helped them become better students and more active community members.

The two-day event will include special activities planned specifically for the youth – including a tour of national monuments and historic sites and a message training session to assist with the Congressional visits. Students will attend a digital camera training organized by Nortel Networks Kidz Online and will record messages about the importance of afterschool that will then be delivered to Members of Congress and posted on the Afterschool Alliance's youth web site. Youth will also hold discussions with afterschool practitioners, voicing their opinions about the need for and structure of afterschool programs.

There will also be a welcome reception on Wednesday, May 19 for all participants. On Thursday, May 20, the day will kick off with the Alliance's third annual "Breakfast of Champions" with Members of Congress, youth and afterschool program providers from

around the nation. Following the breakfast, providers, advocates and youth will fan out across Capitol Hill for meetings with their elected representatives.

Youth from Across the Nation

For many students participating in the Challenge, this is their first visit to the nation's Capitol and for some, the first time they have traveled out of their home states. The youth will have the rare opportunity to talk directly with their Senators and Representative about the exciting activities and projects they do at their afterschool programs and to ask for more adequate funding for these programs.

In some states, students were asked to participate in the Challenge and in others, the students participated in contests that determined who would come.

In New Hampshire, PlusTime New Hampshire and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development sponsored a writing contest with students in fifth through tenth grades to select which students come to Washington, DC. Afterschool students at the Pittsfield Youth Workshop and the Danbury Community Center wrote essays about why afterschool programs are important to them and what they would be doing each afternoon if they were not in a program. Seven students were selected and they will present their essays, along with those written by other students, to their Members of Congress.

The Logan Alliance for Youth in Logan, Utah held a media contest to promote afterschool programs, selecting four winners to attend the events in Washington. Students from 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs, the school district's afterschool program, and Logan

Parks and Recreation submitted television, radio and billboard public service announcements that encouraged support for afterschool programs. One senior, two sophomores and an eighth grader were awarded the grand prize of a trip to Washington, DC.

Two members of the Missouri Governor's Youth Cabinet will accompany Sherry Comer, an Afterschool Ambassador and Director of Project PASS at the Camdenton R-III Schools, to the *Afterschool for All Challenge*. Governor Bob Holden created the Youth Cabinet in October of 2002 to increase youth involvement in state and local issues. The Youth Cabinet members have helped make state policy decisions that positively affect young people and will share their unique experiences and perspectives with their Members of Congress. Also accompanying them will be two Hurricane Deck Elementary students from Project PASS.

Register Today

For more information and/or to register for the *Afterschool for All Challenge*, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org. Upon successful registration, you will receive an email confirming your participation.

While there is no cost for this event, you will be responsible for your own travel costs and arrangements. Space is limited at this year's *Afterschool for All Challenge*, so please respond today. For additional information, contact the Alliance via email at challenge@afterschoolalliance.org.

PARTICIPATE FROM YOUR HOME STATE

Everyone's participation is crucial to growing afterschool funding. If Congress funds the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative at the \$2 billion level authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act this year, rather than the \$1 billion level the

President proposed for next year, twice as many children will be served and the country will come closer to meeting the demand for afterschool.

If you cannot come to Washington, D.C., you can participate from home! Invite students and parents to contact their Members of Congress about the importance of afterschool programs to Congress on May 20. Have a postcard or letter writing party at which parents send messages to state and federal officials about why afterschool matters to their family and community. Or arrange for students to visit the district office of one of your senators or your congressional representative on May 20, to share information about why afterschool programs are important.

Contact information for Members of Congress is available on the Afterschool Alliance web site, www.afterschoolalliance.org. Enter your zip code in the "Contact Congress" box located on the left-hand side of the homepage.



MANY CHILDREN IN NONPARENTAL CARE BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL, SURVEY FINDS

In 2001, half of children in kindergarten through eighth grade participated in extracurricular activities or were cared for after school by someone other than their parent. One in five children had regularly scheduled nonparental arrangements before school. Those are among the findings of a report released in April by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education.

The report, *Before- and After-School Care, Programs, and Activities of Children in Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade: 2001*, is

based on the findings from the 2001 Before- and After-School Programs and Activities Survey of the National Household Education Survey. It provides an overview of the varying activities and care kindergarten through eighth graders received both before school and after school.

Others findings include:

- The most common afterschool arrangements for children were center- or school-based programs (19 percent), relative care (17 percent), and self-care (13 percent).
- Twenty-one percent of relative care providers were siblings; of the children with sibling care providers, 14 percent were cared for by a sibling between the ages of ten and 12.
- Children who had regular weekly scheduled arrangements (before and/or afterschool) spent an average 10.4 hours per week in them or about two hours per day.
- Fifty-five percent of children attending center- or school-based programs participated in programs located at public school.
- On average, for those children whose arrangements required a fee, parents paid \$5.60 per hour for relative care, \$7.60 per hour for nonrelative care, and \$5.60 per house for center- or school-based programs.

The telephone survey included parents of 9,583 children.

Before- and After-School Care, Programs, and Activities of Children in Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade: 2001 is available online at nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004008.



CALIFORNIA AFTERSCHOOL AT A GLANCE

Nearly 45 percent of California's elementary and middle school children currently attend afterschool programs. Roughly 15 percent of the children in afterschool care participate in government-funded programs that were a model for Proposition 49 – the 2002 ballot initiative sponsored by Arnold Schwarzenegger to make afterschool programs available to every elementary and middle school in the state. These are among the findings from the California School-Age Consortium's study, *California Afterschool at a Glance*.

“Data in this study provide new insight about where kids go after school, which programs families rely on and where opportunities may exist to bring the larger afterschool field into the successful implementation of Prop. 49,” said Darci Smith, Executive Director of the California School-Age Consortium.

Other key finding of the study include:

- Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of children ages five to 13 in afterschool care are in programs their families pay for them to attend; 14 percent receive government-subsidized child care; nine percent attend 21st Century Community Learning Centers; eight percent attend community-based programs like Boys and Girls Clubs; and six percent attend After School Education and Safety Programs.
- The afterschool and school-age child care industry employs about 122,000 Californians – more than the state's telecommunications industry. Its public and private expenditures total \$5.9 billion, making it larger than the California livestock or vegetable industries.

The study recommends that, in anticipation of the Proposition 49 funding, the

state “should commit now to building upon the existing afterschool infrastructure by strengthening and refining an already strong system of care for California’s school-age children.”

For more information on the California School-Age Consortium and a copy of the research brief, visit www.calsac.org/news.asp.



SUSTAINABILITY PROFILE:

Rural Ohio Program on Road to Fiscal Stability

For Warren Fauver, director of the Community Learning Centers of Wood County, the key to building a stable funding base for afterschool programs in this largely rural area of Ohio is to develop long-term or renewable funding sources, instead of simply relying on a series of short-term grants.

The program, a service of the Wood County Educational Service Center, launched out-of-school programs in June 2000, with initial time-limited funds from the county Department of Job and Family Services. Three centers opened that summer, and two more opened the following year. Today, the five centers serve nearly 500 kindergarten through sixth grade students each year with five-day-a-week programming, 12 months a year.

As with many rural programs, transportation issues are a critical factor. The county operates no system of public transportation, and taxis do not venture beyond the city limits of Bowling Green, the small university town in the center of the county. The lack of public transportation has forced important, and potentially expensive decisions about the program’s use of resources. For example, the program operates five sites with modest enrollment, rather than

fewer sites with larger enrollment; and programming during the summer months operates from 7 AM until 6 PM so that parents are able to transport their children before and after work.

A related resource-consuming decision was to provide summer programs starting the Monday after schools close in June, and continuing through to the beginning of the following school year, without a break. “Our original plan was to provide summer programming for six to eight weeks,” Fauver explains, “but we realized that to really meet the family needs, we had to be open all summer. It’s a challenge for the staff, of course, so we have morning and afternoon shifts at each site to make it workable.”

Fauver, named an Afterschool Ambassador by the Afterschool Alliance and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund last summer, spends much of his time keeping dollars flowing to the program. He highlights three important strategies:

Diversify funding sources. Fauver notes that many afterschool programs become dependent on a single funding source – a federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant, funds from some other government entity, or support from some other single source. “It is hard but important,” he says, “for programs to develop multiple funding streams, even if some of them are fairly small, to help carry through as other funding subsides.” He notes that the Community Learning Centers of Wood County has had luck funding component parts of its services, thus sustaining the program when other funding tapered off. For example, it received local funding for literacy efforts and pregnancy-prevention initiatives.

Seek long-term funding. “Short-term or year-to-year grants, even a lot of them, are not nearly as stabilizing as renewable funding,” Fauver notes. “That’s no secret,” he acknowledges, “but the challenge is to make it a priority to identify and secure longer-term

support.” So the program instituted a modest participation fee. He notes that the fee is discounted, by way of partial scholarships, for families with incomes under 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. In fact, the program twice adjusted its fee scale to make sure it wasn’t making it impossible for children to participate because their families could not afford it. “In addition to creating a steady funding stream,” he notes, “the fee fosters attachment to the program for families. I realize many programs struggle with the idea of charging a fee, but I see fees as an important sustainable revenue stream for afterschool programs.”

Develop relationships in the community.

“We have worked very hard to build relationships with community organizations both for programmatic and fundraising reasons,” Fauver says, and he urges other afterschool programs to do the same. The effort has paid off significantly on the fundraising front. The program is now a local United Way recipient, and also receives significant support through the local Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board as a partner component of prevention programming. Both of these sources are renewable from year to year.

The program continues to seek new funding sources and is looking into the federal snack reimbursement program, a state-funded academic intervention fund for afterschool assistance to at-risk youth, and a state supplemental education provider program that could pay for tutoring costs.

However, Fauver says the program has not yet made as much progress with the local business community as he would like. “We have had some success – a gift of \$10,000 once, and we’re very grateful for it. But we need to expand our efforts in the business community.” He says he is considering an annual scholarship campaign, to help support the Centers’ scholarships for children from low-income families.

“The challenge is that sustainability work takes a significant amount of time,” Fauver concludes. “You must invest staff time in sustainability management. The goal is to build a valuable program that serves children well into the future. Keeping the dollars flowing is a distinct part of that task.”



IN THE NEWS...

Arkansas – During a youth summit in Pine Bluff, teenagers proposed several ideas to improve the city, including restoring abandoned buildings for afterschool programs and reviving downtown theaters, reports the *Associated Press*. The students plan to present their proposal to the Pine Bluff City Council and the Jefferson County Quorum Court.

California – On April 12, Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn announced his plans to expand the LA’s BEST After School Enrichment Program in fiscal year 2004-2005 at four existing sites to include 500 more students for a total of more than 19,500 students throughout the city. “I believe that there is no better way to improve the safety of our neighborhoods over the long term than to give our children positive opportunities after school,” Mayor Hahn said. “In the midst of tough budget decisions, I am committed to acting creatively to do more with fewer resources.” For more information on LA’s BEST, visit www.lasbest.org.

Florida – On March 30, Governor Jeb Bush awarded Ashley Berry the Points of Light Award for her work with students in afterschool programs. The Leesburg-based Berry coordinates and maintains six of the Governor’s Mentoring Initiative sites and is a mentor to 30 middle school students four days a week. The Governor’s Points of Light Award recognizes a Florida resident or organization that demonstrates exemplary service to the community. Award recipients are announced weekly.

Mississippi – On April 17, Moss Point School District’s 21st Century Learning Leaps program in Biloxi hosted its sixth annual Youth Fest Drug Awareness Rally, reports the *Biloxi Sun Herald*. “The whole purpose was to join the whole community together to support and offer some positive activities to children,” said Donna Joseph, coordinator of the afterschool program. “We try to promote positive activities to keep them away from drugs.” The event included McGruff the crime dog, Smokey the Bear, games, arts and crafts, a health fair, SWAT activities and a performance from RISQUE Business Tigers Against Drugs from South Panola High School.

North Carolina – The YMCA of Northwest North Carolina and the YWCA received a \$900,000 three-year grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust to reduce childhood obesity, reports the *Winston-Salem Journal*. The funds will help to increase participation at afterschool programs; hire a bilingual instructor to motivate students to be more active; and purchase a “fitness center on wheels” bus filled with equipment that will travel through low-income neighborhoods, providing physical activities to residents.

Wisconsin – After learning that its federal funding was to be redirected to homeland security, the Safe & Sound program in Waukesha raised \$28,000 during its first dinner/auction fundraiser, reports the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Safe & Sound develops, supports and facilitates collaborative approaches to reduce crime by blending law enforcement, neighborhood organizing and youth development. For more information about the program, visit www.safesoundwaukesha.org.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“Nonprofit organizations provide a solid return on investment. Thanks to them, the streets are safer because teenagers are in

afterschool programs. Unemployment lines are shorter because working families have child care, and families are stronger because of parent education and literacy classes. But according to a recent report by the Brookings Institution and the George Washington University, nonprofit agencies devoted to human services are being squeezed by rising demands and costs on one hand and sluggish growth in revenues on the other. Many are treading water or barely surviving. These organizations -- and the people who depend on them -- are facing a crisis...Lawmakers must pass budgets that include no additional cuts to key social services such as child care. Business, government and nonprofit leaders then need to develop a coordinated strategy to invest their resources wisely... We have to ensure that nonprofits can continue to fulfill their vital role, improving the quality of life for all of us and, in the long run, building a better society for all of us.”

- Editorial by Chuck Bean, Executive Director of the Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington, *Washington Post*, April 11, 2004



RESOURCES

The Spring 2004 issue of Harvard Family Research Project’s *The Evaluation Exchange* periodical is now available. The new issue examines assessing and improving the quality of out-of-school time (OST) and youth development programs. It features articles on innovative methodologies and new technology systems for assessing quality, understanding and measuring participation in OST programs, and recruitment and retention strategies. *The Evaluation Exchange* also alerts readers to some of the latest research and evaluation efforts in OST quality. Additional online-only content includes a compilation of resources on assessing and improving program quality in OST and youth development programs.

Copies of The Evaluation Exchange are available online at:
www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue25.



SURFING THE WEB

Coalition for Community Schools

www.communityschools.org

The Coalition for Community Schools' web site offers an array of information, publications and resources on community schools including: a list of tools to create and sustain a community school; financial guidance and funding web sites; policies relating to community schooling; research; technical assistance; and a bibliography of terms. The Coalition for Community Schools is compiling a directory of community schools across the country. Individuals are encouraged to complete the short survey to be entered into the database.

The Coalition for Community Schools also offers an email alert that provides updates on developments in the community schools field and the work of the Coalition. To subscribe to Community Schools Online alert, email ccs@iel.org.



SCHOOLS AS CENTERS OF COMMUNITY: A NATIONAL SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE

KnowledgeWorks Foundation has launched a national search for excellent schools that captures the growing trend to build schools as centers of community – schools that welcome community use and benefit from community resources that support student and community success. Existing public schools, as well as schools that are in the process of being designed and developed, are encouraged to apply. The selected schools will then be

highlighted on the Foundation's web site and one school will receive a \$5,000 "Award for Excellence" grant.

Entries will be measured against the following criteria, with a strong emphasis placed on the community engagement used to achieve these results:

- Active community engagement in the planning and design of the school building
- Design of a school building that accommodates and enhances community use and partnerships
- Extensive and innovative community use of the facility
- A school where both design and community partnerships support teaching and learning and contribute to life-long learning for people of all ages.
- Collaboration with local government and/or community groups resulting in creative co-location models (universities, zoos, senior citizen centers, museums, etc.) and creative financing mechanisms
- Application of the principles of smart growth in the planning and design of the school to encourage community renewal
- A facility that is safe, healthy, high performing, and sustainable, and makes effective use of technology as a learning tool

Although entries will be measured against these criteria, it is not anticipated that every school will meet every criteria. The deadline for applications is **July 23, 2004**. For more information, visit www.kwfdn.org/ProgramAreas/Facilities/builder.html.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR


 **April 4 – July 25**

The Great American Bake Sale,™ sponsored by PARADE Magazine and Share Our

Strength, is a groundbreaking program to end child hunger in America. The nationwide bake sale runs from April 4 through July 25. Funds raised will translate into grants to anti-hunger organizations at the state, local and national levels. Each registered participant will receive a Great American Bake Sale Kit with a poster, tips, recipes, and iron-on decals. For more information, call 800-761-4227 or visit www.greatamericanbakesale.org.

 **May 19 - 20**

The Afterschool Alliance will convene its third annual **Afterschool for All Challenge** event in Washington, DC from May 19 to 20. Advocates, parents, youth, educators and program leaders and staff are encouraged to participate in the event, which will include a “Breakfast of Champions” with Members of Congress and afterschool program providers from around the nation the morning of May 20th. Following the breakfast, providers and advocates will fan out across Capitol Hill for a series of meetings with their elected representatives. For more information and the latest details, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org.

 **July 22-23; August 5-6**

The U.S. Department of Education is sponsoring two Summer Institutes, one in Los Angeles, CA on July 22 - 23, and one in Washington, DC on August 5 - 6. There will be a pre-conference session for 21st CCLC Project Directors held in the afternoon on the day prior to the Summer Institute. This year’s focus will be on ensuring that all programs provide exciting and effective content enrichment, and the conference will feature

high-quality reading, mathematics, science, arts, technology, and homework/tutoring programs. The program is open to current grantees (including new State-administered grantees), former 21st CCLC grantees that are still operating afterschool programs, and other interested afterschool providers. For more information or to register online, visit www.synergyentinc.com/21stcentury/index.htm.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY UPDATE

The Improving Literacy through School Libraries (LSL) program is now accepting grant applications. This competitive grant program enables eligible local education agencies (LEAs) to improve the reading achievement of students by providing them with access to up-to-date books and school library materials; technologically advanced school library media centers; and professionally certified school library media specialists. If afterschool programs partnered with their LEAs to receive these funds, the afterschool programs would be able to access school media centers, use library materials and work with certified school-library-media specialists after school. Applications for this grant are due by **May 20, 2004**. Application packages are available on the U.S. Department of Education web site, www.ed.gov/programs/lsl/applicant.html



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.

The *Afterschool Advocate* is produced for the Afterschool Alliance by PR Solutions, Inc., Washington, DC; Phone: 202/371-1999; Fax: 202/371-9142; E-mail: advocate@afterschoolalliance.org
