



## **SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS BOOST STUDENT SUCCESS**

A significant body of research shows that children lose much of the information they learned in school over the summer, but new studies reveal that summer programs not only stem those losses, but help improve students' grades the following school year.

A new Issue Brief from the Afterschool Alliance and the Center for Summer Learning highlights the ways summer programs help students academically, and keep them healthy and safe during the months when schools are closed. It also identifies several programs that do this work especially well.

*Summer: A Season When Learning is Essential* notes that studies dating back to 1906 find that children score lower on standardized tests at the end of summer than they do in the spring when schools close. Summer programs that address the needs of the whole child seem to be most successful at boosting academic achievement. They also motivate students to want to learn, and help them develop new skills and talents.

### **Afterschool Programs Become Summer Programs**

In more and more communities, the afterschool programs that operate during the school year are morphing into summer programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give working parents confidence that their children are safe and supervised during the months when schools are closed. The kind of "summer learning" programs that afterschool-turned-summer programs create

can help prevent "summer learning loss," the Issue Brief says.

In addition, these programs help children get nutritious meals. The federal Summer Food Service Program helps programs at YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs and elsewhere provide the meals and snacks that children from low-income families get in school lunch programs during the school year, but might otherwise go without during the summer months. Summer programs also give some children who might otherwise be kept indoors to ensure their safety the chance to engage in physical activity, which can help to combat obesity.

Safety is a serious concern for many parents during the summer, when child care and fees for summer day and overnight camps may be out of many parents' reach. For these children, summer programs offer affordable and safe alternatives to self- and sibling-care.

"Given the vast, well-documented benefits offered by quality summer programs, we are asking policy makers, corporate leaders and the philanthropic community to make funding for these programs a priority," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Doing so can help mitigate the summer learning gap that plagues so many low-income children, and give many more children and youth the chance to be in safe, supervised settings where they can learn and participate in sports and other activities."

"If we increase funding for afterschool programs," Grant added, "these programs will be able to serve more kids during the school year and continue operating in the summer to support children who otherwise would be unsupervised and at risk for summer learning loss."

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## OUTREACH

Afterschool providers know that the end of the school year isn't necessarily synonymous with vacation. Many afterschool programs provide services in the summer, offering critical support to families by giving youth safe and enriching activities while parents are at work. Summer also can be a key time for advocacy, when advocates and providers can effectively demonstrate to lawmakers that afterschool and summer programs offer tremendous benefits.

Congress recesses during the summer, so there are many weeks during which lawmakers are in their states or districts with time to meet with constituents and visit programs. This year, Senators and Representatives will have the week of July 4<sup>th</sup> off, as well as from August 8 through Labor Day. Similarly, many state legislatures have either adjourned for the year by summer, or take long breaks during the summer months. These recess dates provide a great opportunity for providers to invite lawmakers to visit programs.

Advocates can find contact information for their federal lawmakers through [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). Before extending an invitation, it is a good idea to check whether the lawmaker is a member of the Congressional Afterschool Caucus, and thank him or her if s/he is, and encourage him/her to join if not. *A list of Caucus members is available at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/caucuses.cfm>.*

In addition, [usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov) at [http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/State\\_and\\_Territories.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/State_and_Territories.shtml) offers a portal to state government websites, where often it is easy to get contact information for state lawmakers.

Lawmaker tours of afterschool programs nearly always prove to be enriching for everyone involved. The lawmaker can see first-hand the vital services the program provides, while youth have the chance to engage in civic discourse. Parents, too, can be powerful advocates for afterschool and summer programs if they are invited to participate.

To prepare, providers should also have packets of information ready for the lawmaker to take away after the visit. This packet can include program handouts, facts about afterschool in the city/state and youth art. *For state-specific afterschool data, visit [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/america\\_3pm.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/america_3pm.cfm) and for information on planning a site visit, go to [www.afterschoolalliance.org/action\\_hero\\_voice.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/action_hero_voice.cfm).*

Following up after a visit with lawmakers is key. Always remember to send a thank you note, and continue sending lawmakers program updates throughout the year!

## AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL

School's out and that means millions of children will need a safe place to play and learn this summer. The Afterschool Alliance is continuing to collect success stories from *Afterschool for All* partners on how they are using the *Afterschool for All* campaign to advance local afterschool initiatives. *Afterschool for All* can help grow your database, engage parents and increase awareness about services in the community. Don't forget to encourage friends, family members and colleagues to sign on to *Afterschool for All* at [www.afterschool2010.org](http://www.afterschool2010.org).

We want to shine the spotlight on your community advocacy for afterschool, so please send your stories to [mcoichy@afterschoolallaince.org](mailto:mcoichy@afterschoolallaince.org) or call 646/943-8662.



## FUNDING NEWS

The Afterschool Alliance's website has resources for afterschool providers, including tips for initiating relationships with funders and businesses, and for identifying funding opportunities. *To learn more, visit [www.afterschoolalliance.org/funding\\_main.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/funding_main.cfm).*

### Utilizing Tobacco Settlement Revenue to Sustain Programs

The Finance Project recently launched a new website that offers providers and policy makers insight on how to best utilize funding from the tobacco Master Settlement Agreement to support programs for youth. The website includes state by state funding charts, findings from initial research and audio conferences. It will soon include promising practices as well. *For more information, visit <http://www.financeproject.org/tobacco/>.*

## GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

### Grant for Children in Need

The Mattel Children's Foundation works to improve the lives of children in need. Its Domestic Grantmaking Program offers \$5,000 to \$25,000 grants to local nonprofit organizations that use creative methods to serve children up to age 12. Applications are due by July 15. *To apply and to get more information on this program, visit [http://www.mattel.com/about\\_us/philanthropy/ci\\_mcf\\_philanthropy\\_grantmaking.asp](http://www.mattel.com/about_us/philanthropy/ci_mcf_philanthropy_grantmaking.asp).*

### Grants for Responsible Sports Programs

Liberty Mutual is sponsoring the Responsible Sports Community Grants to honor youth sports organizations across the country. To be eligible, organizations must participate in online coursework and involve as many youth, coaches and parents as possible. Twenty organizations – ten large and ten small – will each receive a \$2,500 grant. Programs should complete all coursework by July 16. *For more information, visit [www.responsiblesports.com/community\\_grants/default.aspx](http://www.responsiblesports.com/community_grants/default.aspx).*

### Grants for Nonprofit Collaboration

The Lodestar Foundation is offering the Collaboration Prize grant to a team of community nonprofit organizations that provide similar services, and choose to collaborate with one another instead of compete for similar clients, resources and staff. The practices of the prize winner will be used to identify promising practices that others can emulate. The grant is for \$250,000. The application deadline is July 21. *For more information, visit <http://www.thecollaborationprize.org/About-the-Prize.aspx>.*

### Grants for Nonprofit Organizations

The Wal-Mart Corporation is offering the Wal-Mart Community Grant Program to local organizations. Wal-Mart will match funding for any nonprofit organization that fundraises at its local Wal-Mart store or Sam's Club. The grant will match up to \$1,000 raised by the organization. To apply, contact the Community Involvement Coordinator at a local Wal-Mart, Sam's Club or Wal-Mart Distribution Center. *For more information, visit <http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/238.aspx>.*



## **PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT FOR AFTERSCHOOL AND ITS METHODS**

Newly released survey research data and focus group findings show that less than half of parents of school-age children are satisfied with the learning opportunities available outside the regular school day. The finding is one of many from the research indicating that parents are dissatisfied with the direction of education in the United States, and see afterschool programs and the kinds of learning opportunities they create as promising solutions. Peter D. Hart Research Associates conducted the research for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

According to the survey, parents and education policy leaders recognize the need to increase the availability of high-quality learning opportunities outside the regular school day. More than two in three parents (68 percent) say they are satisfied that there are sufficient educational and enrichment opportunities available for their children in school, but just under half (49 percent) say the same about learning opportunities outside of the regular school day and school year by way of afterschool, weekend, and summer programs. In fact, just 14 percent of parents say “there are plenty of educational and enrichment programs for young people in my community,” while nearly three times as many (39 percent) cite “a serious lack of educational and enrichment programs for young people in my community.”

The research also explores parents’ views of other significant educational issues, revealing that parents are wary of the heightened focus on standardized testing. Nearly three-quarters of parents (73 percent) believe schools are forced to spend too much time “teaching to the test,” while half disagree that the *No Child Left Behind Act* has improved education in the United States. Specifically, an overwhelming majority of

parents (91 percent) say schools should make problem-solving, teamwork and critical thinking as high a priority as reading, writing, math and science.

The research also finds strong support for the ideas championed by the Mott Foundation’s “New Day for Learning” initiative to reform how, when and where children learn. When asked to identify reforms that would improve education, parents give strongest support to three reform measures: expanding project-based and hands-on learning; giving students more real-world learning opportunities, such as internships and out-of-classroom learning; and increasing access to afterschool and summer learning programs.

*A summary of key findings from the research, conducted in 2007, is available at <http://www.newdayforlearning.org/docs/Key%20Findings%20Hart%20Research.pdf>.*



## **CHALLENGE UPDATE**

While the 2008 *Afterschool for All Challenge* may have come to a close in May, the relationships created and groundwork laid by advocates continues to pay dividends. Already, through visits with lawmakers on Capital Hill and advocacy from home, advocates have recruited six new members of the House Afterschool Caucus.

The new members are Representatives Rick Boucher of Virginia, Andre Carson of Indiana, Ben Chandler of Kentucky, Susan Davis of California, Solomon Ortiz of Texas, and Ed Whitfield of Kentucky.

*To see whether your Representative and Senators have joined the House and Senate Afterschool Caucuses, please visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/caucuses.cfm>.*



## **AFTERSCHOOL IS BRIGHTER, BOLDER APPROACH**

The Economic Policy Institute recently convened a task force of education leaders across the country, with the goal of devising a new approach to education. A Brighter, Bolder Approach is the result of the task force meeting, emphasizing four pillars of education – one of which is afterschool. The coalition is encouraging others to sign-on to A Brighter, Bolder Approach and support education reform.

The four pillars of the Approach are an aggressive school improvement strategy; developmentally appropriate and high quality early childhood education; routine children’s health assessments; and improving the quality of out-of-school time. The Approach notes that, “Low-income students learn rapidly in school but often lose ground after school and during summers. Successful out-of-school and extended day programs not only focus on remediation but also provide cultural, organizational, athletic, and academic enrichment that middle-class children routinely enjoy.”

A Brighter, Bolder Approach launched its campaign with full-page advertisements in the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*. To sign onto the project, and to learn more about it, visit <http://www.boldapproach.org>.



## **USDA SEEKS FEEDBACK ON NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will hold listening sessions concerning the reauthorization of Afterschool and Summer Nutrition Programs. The USDA would like to hear from providers regarding their suggested improvements to the programs, in advance of reauthorization.

Six of seven listening sessions will occur this summer. The first of which will take

place on July 15<sup>th</sup> in Austin, Texas. Other listening sessions will take place in Baltimore, Maryland; San Francisco, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; and Denver, Colorado. For those who cannot attend the sessions in person, the USDA is accepting submissions of written comments.

For more information, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/Sessions/default.htm>.



## **IN THE NEWS...**

**Florida** - Mid-sized cities like Daytona Beach are facing chronically high juvenile crime rates that are far above the national average, according to the *Associated Press*. It reports that felonies are on the rise and are sometimes committed by children as young as seven. Local afterschool programs that provide safe places for children are struggling for funds because of the economic crisis. “A lot of these latchkey kids need boundaries [so they know] how to act, how to behave. They need somebody to pay attention to them,” said Joe Sullivan, who oversees 11 Boys & Girls Clubs in east-central Florida. While Sullivan’s programs provide mentoring that children do not get at home, he will soon be forced to shut down two programs because of budget constraints.

**Kentucky** – Leaders of Warren County Schools in Bowling Green are planning a joint bus transit program with the public transit authority, according to *Bowling Green Daily News*. With parental consent, students will be able to take the school bus to a public transit stop and then use public transportation to get to afterschool programs, doctor’s appointments and jobs. The architects of the program believe it will be most beneficial to middle and high school students who attend extra curricular activities.

**Kentucky** – The YMCA’s afterschool program at Ryland Heights Elementary School recently received the Kentucky Department of Education’s Excellence Award. The program involves more than one-third of the school’s students, and is a big part of the reason the school’s performance on state mandated proficiency tests improved 19 percent last year. One-third of the program’s students improved their math and reading by at least one letter grade. *For more information, go to [http://www.ryland.kenton.k12.ky.us/after\\_school.html](http://www.ryland.kenton.k12.ky.us/after_school.html)*

**Maryland** – Afterschool programs will play a key role in the Baltimore City Schools new plan to get more parents involved in their children’s education and the governance of their schools, according to the *Baltimore Sun*. Baltimore City Schools CEO Andres Alonso believes parents’ involvement is imperative to school success, and that it is often limited in inner city areas like Baltimore. A total of \$1 million of public and private money will be dispersed to approximately 60 schools to improve PTA, afterschool and online programs.

**Maryland** – The Baltimore City Orchestra recently introduced OrchKids, a new afterschool music program targeted to 25 first graders at Harriet Tubman Elementary School. The program is modeled after El Sistema, a music program for low-income school aged children in Venezuela, which provides musical training and a positive social environment. OrchKids will not emphasize musical talent as much as social bonds and responsibilities, according to the *Baltimore Sun*. *For more information, go to [http://www.bsomusic.org/main.taf?p=5,2,1,1&prid=20080520\\_1&type=featured](http://www.bsomusic.org/main.taf?p=5,2,1,1&prid=20080520_1&type=featured)*.

**Missouri** – Congressman Roy Blunt recently announced a \$300,000 grant for the Marion C. Early School District in Morrisville, to help develop programs to eliminate underage

drinking. According to *States News Service*, the grant will fund afterschool programs, an internet café and other activities that educate students on the dangers of alcohol consumption and steer youth towards positive enrichment activities.

**New Jersey** - Enrich and Grow Academy, a 10-week afterschool program at Brooklake Elementary School in Florham Park, recently provided an outlet for budding fashion designers through its new class, “Project Webkinz Runway.” In “Runway,” students make clothing for their Webkinz, a stuffed animal that includes an online game, and model them in a runway show. Co-Founder Lee Brickman told the *Daily Herald*, “I’m looking for the afterschool program to teach them not only what the class is about, but also to develop other skill sets as well.” *For more information, visit <http://enrichandgrow.com/>*.

**New York** – Some 40 New York City high school students with a passion for sports are completing an intensive eight-week program of training in sports instruction and general work skills this summer. The program, run by The After-School Corporation (TASC), was made possible by a generous, \$410,000 grant from the MetLife Foundation. It is based on an exemplary Chicago high school internship program run by After School Matters. TASC will expand the New York City program to include apprenticeships for 100 high school students in the upcoming school year, and take it to two more cities. Asphalt Green in Manhattan and the Samuel Field YM and YWHA in Queens are training the first 40 students this summer.

**Oklahoma** – The vast increase in gasoline prices is forcing the Guthrie Public School District to alter its bus system and afterschool program hours this fall, reports the *Associated Press*. The district plans to curtail some bus services, but in exchange will extend before- and afterschool programs for children. “Our intent is to open those up early, keep them

open late,” said School Superintendent Terry Simpson. The school system had hoped to use the funds to hire more teachers to serve its increasing number of students, but has instead been forced to direct the funds to meeting its rising transportation costs.

**Oregon** – Springfield’s Maple’s Family Bridges/Puentes de Familias in Maple Elementary School is a special program directed at the school’s Hispanic students and parents. According to the *Lewistown Morning Tribune*, the program uses activities like bilingual classroom readings to integrate Hispanic families into school life. Children are also learning more about Latino culture and language through the program. “We’ve found it to be a really powerful tool in making connections with this part of our demographic,” said Maple Principal Jay Carter. The program grew out of a once a month meeting of parents and children in the afterschool program.

## **9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL IS OCTOBER 16**

Have you started planning your *Lights On Afterschool* event? For the second year in a row, the Empire State Building – a New York City landmark – will be lit a vivid yellow in honor of *Lights On Afterschool* day. This year’s celebration will mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers federal afterschool initiative. Visit the Afterschool Alliance’s website at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org) for planning tips, links to new tools, and posters from the Afterschool Alliance.

## **IN THEIR OWN WORDS...**

“After-school programs are very important, and our elected leaders should know just whom they are affecting – young people like me... Before I attended Young Voices, I felt like a failure who would never amount to anything. I felt that the best thing I could do was just stay quiet. I didn’t really care much about school. My grades were horrible and I wasn’t even sure that I could consider going to college. Because I joined an after-school program, all that changed.”

-- Keyla Gonzalez, 17, opinion piece, *Providence Journal Bulletin*, May 17, 2008. (The newspaper notes that Gonzalez has received several college acceptances.)

“Public safety studies have shown that recreation programs that include active and interesting after-school and summer activities can greatly reduce juvenile crime in a community. It is becoming increasingly clear that parks and recreation services are not luxuries, but investments in our youth and for safe neighborhoods.”

--Don Horsley, retired sheriff for San Mateo County, *Contra Costa Times*, June 2, 2008

“The most dangerous time in a young person’s life is between the hours of three p.m. to nine p.m. This is when you have – the schools are closed. And so that’s when we see a lot of the problems happening with young people. That’s why it’s critically important that mayors are doing all across the country, opening up schools and afterschool programs so that there can be a caring adult that’s involved in these young people’s lives. That works better than curfews. And that’s what we need to continue to do, to continue to provide more afterschool programs and having positive things for young people to do to keep them out of trouble.”

-- Trenton, New Jersey Mayor Douglas Palmer, *National Public Radio*, June 10, 2008



## RESOURCES

### Free Promotional Game Exclusive to First 350 Respondents

For a limited time, Sports Camp Federation is offering a free trial package of the new family game coming out this fall called Guess What I Am. It is a modern twist on the classic guessing game, targeted to children age five through 12. The game includes 30 different character picture frames with four different playing games. Each free trial package will include the Guess What I Am retail game for the program, a program/game guidelines letter, and 50 picture frame magnets for children to take home. There will also be five Rubik's cubes included for older children to use during program time. Programs with children age five to seven and eight to 12 should apply before July 3. *More information is available at [www.guesswhatiamgame.com](http://www.guesswhatiamgame.com). To apply for the promotion, contact Katie Logan at [klogan@scfsports.com](mailto:klogan@scfsports.com) or 847/418-2015.*

### Program to Combat Child Obesity

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, whose mission is to stop the increase of childhood obesity by 2010, recently introduced The Healthy Schools Program (HSP). The program's goal is to improve nutrition, physical activity, and staff wellness in America's schools. The program offers tools and resources to help schools improve access to healthier foods, increase opportunities for physical activity, and establish staff wellness programs. The HSP would like to see this initiative taken beyond regular school hours and into afterschool programs' meal plans. *For more information on The Healthy Schools Program, call 1-888-KID-HLTH or visit [www.HealthierGeneration.org/Schools](http://www.HealthierGeneration.org/Schools).*

### Literacy Program to Prevent Summer Learning Loss

Reader's Theater is offering a free resource to afterschool providers to help boost literacy skills through "edu-tainment" in the form of play-acting. The "Take Center Stage" playbooks provide an interactive environment for youth to read and learn. "Mini, the Super Watermelon," is available free for download and includes game instructions, playing cards, and playing tips. *To access the materials, visit [www.readingoverthesummer.com](http://www.readingoverthesummer.com).*

### CALIFORNIA UPDATE

*Thanks to the California Afterschool Network for the following.*

#### Join the California Afterschool Network Peer to Peer Mentoring Program

The California Afterschool Network is seeking to match experienced afterschool site supervisors in each region with site supervisors who have less than two years experience in mentoring relationships.

As part of these relationships, mentees will work with their mentors to create professional development plans based on a core competency self-assessment. Mentees will visit their mentor's afterschool program sites, and have their site visited by mentors. The teams will meet twice monthly and as needed via telephone to evaluate progress on their professional development plans. Both mentors and mentees receive a small stipend upon completion of the project.

The purpose of the project is to create "cross-pollination" between afterschool program sites, and increase regional collaboration. There are only 200 mentee positions and 50 mentor positions available statewide. The deadline to apply for this program is July 15. *To learn more and to download applications for this program, go to <http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/node/1070>.*



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*Summer: A Season When Learning is Essential* is a joint publication of the Afterschool Alliance and the Center for Summer Learning. *It is available at [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue\\_br.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_br.cfm).*



### **FEDERAL EMPLOYEES CAN SUPPORT AFTERSCHOOL**

The Afterschool Alliance is part of this year's Combined Federal Campaign. Employees of the federal government can support the Afterschool Alliance by entering its code – CFC #31020 – when making contributions to the Combined Federal Campaign. *For more information on the campaign, visit <http://www.opm.gov/CFC/>.*



### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS...**

#### **July 14 – 17, 2008**

The National Institute for Out of School Time (NIOST) will host its annual summer seminar in Boston, Massachusetts. Seminar topics include Advancing School, Afterschool and Community Partnerships; Quality Advisor Training; System Building; and Afterschool Program Assessment System. The seminars are in-depth, research-based events designed to empower providers with the tools necessary to elevate their programs. *For more information, visit <http://www.niost.org/sumsem08.html>.*

#### **July 15 – 17, 2008**

The U.S. Department of Education and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, in conjunction with the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, are sponsoring the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Summer Institute in Dallas, Texas. Actor Kevin Sorbo will be among the featured speakers. *For more information, visit <http://www.sei2003.com/21stcentury/index.htm>.*

#### **August 15 – 17, 2008**

The Center for Afterschool Education and Arcadia University are sponsoring Teaching and Learning in Out-of-School-Time on the Arcadia University Campus in Glenside, Pennsylvania. Afterschool leaders attending the Institute who complete three online courses and a practicum will receive three units in an Arcadia University Graduate Certificate in Afterschool Education. *For more information, visit <http://www.caceafterschool.org/events/institute.php>.*

**\*\* And mark your calendars now for the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual *Lights On Afterschool* on October 16, 2008!**

***More information on upcoming conferences and events is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org/states/calendar\\_main.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/states/calendar_main.cfm).***



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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org). 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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