

TOOLS & RESOURCES THAT BENEFIT BUSINESS

# Afterschool Toolkit

COMMUNITY TO BUSINESS



**CORPORATE VOICES**  
*for* WORKING FAMILIES



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## About This Toolkit

After school programs need the support of their whole community to thrive, and businesses are always a big part of a community. These are the companies that employ the working parents whose children need a safe place to learn and grow after school. However, the business community is a different world with its own vocabulary and culture, and that can be intimidating for after school program providers and advocates who want to work with businesses.

This toolkit has been designed by Corporate Voices for Working Families to serve as a resource that will help after school advocates, be they local providers or statewide networks, navigate the business world and form lasting partnerships that will benefit the business community, the after school programs, the parents and, most important, the youth who need these programs.

### 1. QUALITY MATTERS

This piece will introduce you to “After School for All: A Call to Action from the Business Community,” Corporate Voices’ second policy statement. The statement outlines the critical role high-quality after school programs play in improving young people’s chances of success in both school and life. The seven principles outlined in the statement reflect Corporate Voices’ recommendations for policy initiatives that will contribute to the creation of quality after school systems.

### 2. BASIC FACTS ABOUT AFTER SCHOOL IN AMERICA

Learn the basic who, what, why, where and how much of after school programs.

### 3. WHY BUSINESS SHOULD CARE ABOUT AFTER SCHOOL

Use these facts to explain in your outreach how quality after school

programs — or the lack of them— affect the business community today and tomorrow.

### 4. TIPS ON ENGAGING BUSINESS

Donna Klein, President & CEO of Corporate Voices for Working Families, offers tips and insights that will guide advocates through the process, from what to do before the first meeting to how to keep a partnership healthy.

### 5. CASE STUDIES AND PROFILES

Read about what some Corporate Voices members and other top companies in the U.S. are already doing to support their working parents and after school programs:

**New Case Studies:** After school advocates working with business.

- \* Case Study: Baltimore BOOST
- \* Case Study: North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs (Includes:

NC CAP’s “Working Parents and Afterschool Survey.”)

- \* Case Study: South Carolina Afterschool Alliance

**Background Case Studies:** What some businesses are already doing to support after school programs.

- \* Case Study: Agilent Technologies
- \* Case Study: GlaxoSmithKline & Corporate Leadership
- \* Case Study: The Northern Illinois Collaboration
- \* Case Study: South Carolina Chamber of Commerce

## 6. AFTER SCHOOL RESOURCES

Here you will find a list of organizations that can provide you with information on after school programs and working families, including research and policy updates from around the country, to help you make your case.



## Quality Matters

Have you ever noticed what happens around 3:00 in the afternoon? Students all across the country are dismissed from school, and what they do upon dismissal is cause for anxiety among working parents who cannot be home after the school day ends. Parents in the workplace often begin to receive distracting phone calls from their children or their children's caregivers. These calls affect the ability of that parent to concentrate on work and be productive.

Quality after school programs can reduce the anxiety of working parents during the hours after school and clearly contribute to increased employee engagement. They can provide safe, engaging environments that motivate and inspire learning outside of the regular school day. While there is no single formula for success in after school programs, both practitioners and researchers have found that effective programs combine academic, enrichment, cultural, and recreational activities to guide learning and engage children and youth in wholesome activities.

Successful, high-quality after school programs also respond to community needs. Their creation is the result of a community effort to respond to the needs of its school-age children when school is not in session.

The types of activities found in a high-quality after school program include

tutoring and supplemental instruction in basic skills such as reading, math, and science; drug- and violence-prevention curricula and counseling; youth leadership activities (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, academic clubs); volunteer and community service opportunities; college awareness and preparation; homework assistance centers; courses and enrichment in the arts and culture; computer instruction; language instruction, including English as a second language; employment preparation or training; mentoring; activities linked to law enforcement; and supervised recreation and athletic programs and events.

However, many programs allow children to spend far too much time in passive activities such as television or video viewing. One reason for poor-quality after school activities may be inadequate facilities. Most after school programs do not have the use of a library, computers, museum, art room, music room, or game room on a weekly basis. Too many programs do not have access to a playground or park.<sup>1</sup> Other reasons for poor-quality after school programs include large ratios of children to staff, inadequately trained staff, and high staff turnover caused by poor wages and compensation.

Corporate Voices for Working Families has developed a statement of principles that outlines the necessary components of a high-quality after school system. A copy of "After School for All: A

Call to Action from the Business Community” is included in this kit. The principles outlined in our statement define the business perspective on the criteria for quality after school. These criteria for after school programs, when implemented, would ensure that such programs serve as key components of a world-class system of quality education.

The 52 companies that constitute Corporate Voices’ membership believe that parents are their children’s primary teachers; high-quality after school programs, however, can play a critical role in improving young people’s chances of success both in school and in life. In the policy statement, we outline seven principle elements necessary for a successful after school system. You are welcome to distribute this policy agenda throughout your own network of business partners.

### LEARNING.

A successful after school system views learning as the central mission.

### PARENTS.

A successful after school system provides links between parents, schools and programs, and provides high-quality program options.

### PROVIDERS.

A successful after school system recruits, trains and compensates a professional staff that has the skills, knowledge

and attitudes needed to support young people.

### INFRASTRUCTURE.

A successful after school system depends upon the creation and support of infrastructure built on public/private collaborations at the local, state and national level.

### OUTCOMES.

A successful after school system articulates outcomes for children’s learning and program quality that are appropriate to the after school setting.

### ACCOUNTABILITY.

A successful after school system will embrace accountability for measurable results.

### PARTNERSHIPS.

A successful after school system will build crosscutting partnerships to govern, finance, sustain, and improve the system.

### ENDNOTES

- 1 P. Seppanen, J. Love, D. deVries, and L. Bernstein, National Study of Before- and After-School Programs (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1993).

## Basic Facts about After School in America

### THE NEED: YOUTH TODAY NEED SAFE, STIMULATING PLACES TO GO AFTER SCHOOL.

- \* The parents of more than 28 million school-age children work outside the home. (U.S. Department of Labor)
- \* In communities today, 14.3 million school-age children take care of themselves after the school day ends. (America After 3 PM, May 2004)
- \* 96 percent of working parents pay the full costs of child care. Low-income families who pay for child care spend 35 percent of their income on it. (National Catholic Reporter, 2003)
- \* On school days, the hours between 3p.m. and 6p.m. are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex. (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2002)

### VOTER SUPPORT: AMERICANS AGREE THAT AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE VITAL.

- \* Nine in ten Americans think children need organized activities or a program to go to after school where they have learning opportunities. (Afterschool Alliance Poll, September 2003)
- \* Nearly 90 percent of Americans support funding for quality after school programs in low-income neighborhoods as an important

aspect of government welfare reform programs. (David and Lucile Packard Foundation Poll of Public Views on Welfare Reform and Children in the Current Economy, February 2002)

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND: THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

- \* Only 6.5 million K-12 children (11 percent) participate in after school programs. An additional 15 million would participate if a quality program were available in their community. (America After 3 PM, May 2004)
- \* More than half of voters (55 percent) think that there are not enough after school programs available for children in America today. (Afterschool Alliance Poll, September 2003)
- \* Three-quarters of voters (76 percent) are concerned that there will not be new after school programs and some existing programs may have to reduce their services or close their doors because no new federal funds were allocated in 2003. (Afterschool Alliance Poll, September 2003)
- \* 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the only federal funding source dedicated solely to after school programs, is drastically under-funded.
- \* After hitting a plateau in 2002 at \$1

billion, funding continues to hover at that level, despite the No Child Left Behind Act's authorization of \$2.25 billion for Fiscal Year 2006. The President's proposed \$991 million for 2006 would only serve about one million youth.

- \* Mayors surveyed in 86 cities reported that only one-third of the children needing after school care were receiving it. (U.S. Conference of Mayors, January 2003)
- \* 71 percent of principals who reported not having after school programs in their schools cite a lack of funding as the reason for not having a program. (National Association of Elementary School Principals, September 2001)

#### THE BENEFITS: EVALUATIONS PROVE THAT AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS KEEP KIDS SAFE, HELP WORKING FAMILIES AND IMPROVE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.

- \* A report on 21st Century Community Learning Centers showed that in 2003-2004, 45 percent of all participants had improved their reading grades, and 41 percent had improved their math grades. (U.S. Department of Education, 2005)
- \* Teens who do not participate in after school 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)

- \* Students who participate in extracurricular activities have better grades, feel greater attachment to school, have lower truancy rates and reach higher levels of achievement in college, as documented by a 17-year study that followed 1,800 sixth-graders in 10 Michigan schools through high school and college. ("Extra Benefits Tied to Extracurriculars," Education Week, October 2000)
- \* Students in a statewide after school program in California improved their standardized test scores (SAT-9) in both reading and math by percentages almost twice that of other students and also had better school attendance. (University of California Irvine, May 2001)
- \* The boys and girls randomly selected from welfare households to participate in the Quantum Opportunities after school program were half as likely to drop out of high school and two and one half times more likely to go on to further education after high school than students not selected to participate. (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2000)

## Why Business Should Care about After School

After school programs have been proven to keep kids safe, increase academic success and help working families. So what does all that do for the business community? Plenty. Not only do businesses have to worry about current employees' productivity, satisfaction and skills, but they must also worry about the development of the workforce of tomorrow. When current employees are absent because of child care issues and new employees need remedial training because of an inadequate education, businesses lose money. After school programs can address both of these problems. So businesses should ask themselves not what will it cost to invest in after school, but what will it cost not to?

### CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES PLACE EXTRA BURDENS ON BOTH PARENTS AND THEIR EMPLOYERS.

- \* Today, fewer than one-fourth of American families portray the “traditional” image of one parent at home, caring for children full-time, while the other parent provides financial support.
- \* 77 percent of mothers with school-age children are employed.<sup>1</sup>
- \* Both men and women are working more hours. Average work hours per adult increased 7.9 percent between 1960 and 1998,<sup>2</sup> and nearly three-fourths of working adults say they have little or no control over their work schedule.<sup>3</sup>

- \* The gap between work and school schedules amounts to as much as 25 hours per week.<sup>4</sup>
- \* Polling shows that 87 percent of working mothers say the hours after school are when they are most concerned about their children's safety,<sup>5</sup> and this “after school stress” can lead to distraction that causes lower productivity, high turnover and absenteeism.
- \* 80 percent of employees with children miss work because of child care problems.<sup>6</sup>
- \* It is estimated that decreases in employee productivity and increases in absenteeism cost businesses from \$496 to \$1,984 per employee, per year, depending on the employee's annual salary.
- \* Child care-related absences cost U.S. companies an estimated \$3 billion annually.

### QUALITY AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS ALLEVIATE PARENTS' BURDENS.

Because of that [after school] program, I can stay at work and I can earn extra hours. I work two jobs, and that program allows my kids to stay in school while I get the necessities taken care of.

—Irma Villarreal, parent of two sons in the after school program at Harms Elementary in Detroit.

After school programs provide a safe, enriching environment for kids while

their parents are still at work, allowing them to focus on work and ultimately improve family life.

- \* Parents in a study from The After-School Corporation (TASC) said after school programs helped them balance work and family life, with 60 percent saying they missed less work than before their child was in the program, and 59 percent saying it supported them in keeping their job.<sup>7</sup>
- \* An evaluation of LA's BEST found that three-quarters of the parents [surveyed] indicated that they worried significantly less about their children's safety and that they had more energy in the evening since enrolling their children in the program. A clear majority also indicated that the program resulted in sizeable time savings.<sup>8</sup>

### **BUSINESSES NEED A WORKFORCE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.**

As manufacturing jobs dwindle in 21st century America, the next generation of workers will need far more education and advanced skills in order to succeed as productive members of the workforce. Unfortunately, too many graduates lack basic skills in reading, writing and math, as well as skills in creative thinking, problem solving, teamwork, communication, self-direction and technology. If future workers come out the end of the "education pipeline" unable to meet these standards,

businesses bear the cost of retraining them.

- \* In 1950, 80 percent of jobs were classified as "unskilled."
- \* Today, 80 percent of jobs are classified as "skilled," and employment growth is expected to be fastest for positions that require some type of formal postsecondary education, such as database administrator, physician's assistant, or computer software engineer.<sup>9</sup>
- \* Only 40 percent of adults in the workforce in 2000 had any postsecondary degree, and fewer than half of all high school graduates who go on to college obtain a degree.
- \* Only 32 percent of high school graduates are prepared for college coursework, meaning they require no remedial classes.<sup>10</sup>
- \* More than 70 percent of both college professors and employers said that recent high school graduates were unable to write clearly and had only poor or fair grammar and spelling skills.<sup>11</sup>
- \* American business currently spends more than \$60 billion each year on training, much of that on remedial reading, writing, and mathematics.<sup>12</sup>
- \* Remedial education costs Alabama colleges and businesses an estimated \$304 million annually.<sup>13</sup>

## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE FUTURE.

- \* Of the middle-grade students participating in a TASC program, 56 percent feel the program is giving them the leadership opportunities and life skills they need to become productive members of society. Half of the participants say the program exposes them to important new places, ideas, and activities and gives them a chance to master skills, and 62 percent report a high level of academic self-esteem.<sup>14</sup>
- \* Teens who do not engage in after school activities are five times more likely to be “D” students than teens who do.<sup>15</sup>
- \* The boys and girls randomly assigned to participate in the Quantum Opportunities program were half as likely to drop out of high school and two and one half times more likely to go on to further education after high school.<sup>16</sup>
- \* Most principals with TASC programs at their schools say the programs boost school attendance and increase students’ interest in learning, and 90 percent say the benefits of hosting the program outweigh the costs.<sup>17</sup>

## SUPPORTING AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS IS A SMART INVESTMENT FOR BUSINESS.

For 18 years, Working Mother magazine has published a list of “100 Best Companies for Working Mothers.” A slot on the list is a coveted designation — companies have to apply, and child care options, including after school care, are a significant factor. Companies see these programs as an investment. As the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care (ABC) notes in its 10th Anniversary Report, “The companies view their investments in dependent care in the community not as charity, but as sound business practice.”<sup>18</sup> The First Tennessee Bank echoed that sentiment in noting the benefits of its work/life programs. Namely, employee satisfaction impacts the service-profit chain: increase employee satisfaction, increase customer retention, increase profit.<sup>19</sup>

### ENDNOTES

- 1 10th Anniversary Report, American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care (ABC), 2002.
- 2 Bailyn, et al.
- 3 AFL-CIO, Website: Work & Family, <http://www.aflcio.org/issuespolitics/worknfamily>, accessed October 3, 2003.
- 4 Barnett, Rosalind Chait, Ph.D. “Working Parents Sweat It Out Over Unsupervised Children,” Community, Families & Work Program, Women’s Studies Research Center, Brandeis University, PowerPoint presentation, 2003.

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- 7 Policy Studies Associates, Inc., February 2001.
- 8 Huang, Denise et al. A Decade of Results: The Impact of the LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program, UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, June 2000.
- 9 "2002-12 Employment Projections," Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.t04.htm>, 2004.
- 10 Buehlmann, Beth B., VP and Executive Director, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, "Careers for the 21st Century: The Importance of Education and Worker Training for Small Businesses," testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee, June 2, 2004.
- 11 Duffett, Ann & Johnson, Jean; Reality Check 2002, Public Agenda, [www.publicagenda.org/research/research\\_reports\\_details.cfm?list=20](http://www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=20).
- 12 "The Impact of Education on: The Economy," Alliance for Excellent Education, November 2003, [www.all4ed.org/publications/FactSheets.html](http://www.all4ed.org/publications/FactSheets.html).
- 13 Hammons, Christopher, The Cost of Remedial Education: How Much Alabama Pays When Students Fail to Learn Basic Skills, Alabama Policy Institute, April 2004.
- 14 TASC: The After-School Corporation, Quality, Scale and Effectiveness in After-School Programs, summary of 2004 Policy Studies Associates' evaluations, 2005.
- 15 After School for America's Teens: A national survey of teen attitudes and behaviors in the hours after school, YMCA of the USA 2001.
- 16 Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2000.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 10th Anniversary Report, ABC.
- 19 Ibid.

## TIPS ON ENGAGING BUSINESS: A Q & A with Donna Klein

The business world is a unique place, with its own culture and language that can seem incredibly foreign to people on the outside, including those who work in the nonprofit world. Advocates who want to engage the business world in supporting after school programs may find it to be a daunting task without guidance and advice from someone who knows the terrain, someone like Donna Klein, the president and founder of Corporate Voices for Working Families. Ms. Klein uses her years of experience in the corporate world to engage businesses to address the issues working families face every day.

Corporate Voices asked a group of after school advocates and providers from around the country about their own experiences in working with businesses and what information they need to know about businesses in order to form successful partnerships. In this Q&A, Donna Klein answers their questions and adds her own advice to guide after school advocates through the process of engaging businesses, from the initial search for partners through the long-term activities involved in keeping a relationship going.

### 1. RESEARCHING PROSPECTS FOR COLLABORATION (WHERE TO LOOK AND WHOM TO APPROACH).

**Q:** How is the business world structured? (E.g. What kinds of associations are they part of? Is a

Chamber of Commerce always the best place to start when looking for businesses to connect with?)

**A:** If you are starting from ground zero with no business knowledge, a chamber of commerce is okay to start with, especially if you are focusing on local, city-based businesses. However, chambers tend to be more about convening members and aren't as interested in initiatives, so it might not be the most fruitful place to look for businesses that might want to partner with local nonprofits.

If you're looking at big national or international businesses, the best place to start is with the company's community relations function. If it's a good-sized manufacturing plant with human resources [HR] staff, the HR staff or plant manager will have responsibility for community relations. Do some internet research to find out how the company is organized and what presence it has in the state.

**Q:** How does one find out a business's past and current funding priorities so one can appeal to its existing interests?

**A:** This won't be a matter of public record for smaller companies, but they'll tell you if you call and ask them. If it's a big company, it is public record in the form of an annual report or a community relations or social responsibility report.

**Q:** To whom does one talk at a company or a business association when making a first contact?

**A:** Try the community relations or corporate giving departments. Before you call, send a packet of information about your program and what you want. If they have no interest, they won't get back to you. However, if you have a relationship with someone in another department, start there first. Relationships are always better than cold calls. Be prepared for rejection if it's a cold call. Try to find someone you know, such as a parent who uses your program who works for the company.

**Q:** How do after school advocates learn to speak the business language and hold a business's interest? Are there special "buzzwords" advocates need to know or terms to help frame the discussion? Is there a best way to phrase questions?

**A:** It is tough. Begin it as a conversation, rather than a proposal, to discuss your program and explain the need and how it relates to the area workforce and their employees. Relating it to the needs of the company's workforce is more important than talking about the visibility opportunity your event or program is offering, unless what you're discussing is a really big event that will garner a lot of publicity for the company! Companies that sell big, consumer brands will be more interested in publicity because they want to promote their brand. Essentially, appeal to the company's self-interest,

which you can learn about from doing your research.

## 2. GETTING READY FOR AN APPROACH (WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BEFORE A FIRST CONTACT).

**Q:** What kind of homework should one do before approaching a company?

**A:** A homework list:

- \* Look through a company's annual report or strategic plan to find out what their giving interests are. You can also try Lexis-Nexis or Google News to find press coverage from local papers. If they had success in one kind of community giving, that's a good launch point.
- \* Prepare to discuss your program's strengths and what it can offer the company. You should also be well-informed about the company and able to articulate clearly your goals and the desired extent of the company's involvement, whether it's participating in a six-month project or attending one meeting a month for a year. If you're after a financial contribution, tell them exactly what the money is going to pay for, such as programs for 10 kids in a certain area.
- \* Be ready to define "after school" in a way that doesn't involve jargon. Define it in terms of what's available in the community or the state and what's missing. Talk about

it as a gap between the school day and work day that is a concern to the parents who work for the company.

- \* Have information on how after school can help their current workforce. Businesses will be most interested in the current workforce because it's hard to know what their future workforce needs will be. Don't step into territory that you don't know. Talk about what the program can provide that isn't available right now, such as filling in gaps in the local high school's curriculum that have been created by program budget cuts.

**Q:** Is it worthwhile to appeal to companies' competitive natures by telling them who else in the city/state/nation is involved in after school?

**A:** If you do that, be subtle and classy about it. You might work it into a second conversation or put it in a document that lists other participating companies. Just don't say, "You should do this because your competitor is."

**Q:** How do you know what a company identifies as its "community"? Is it statewide or local? Is it the location of its headquarters, its plants, or where its employees and customers live?

**A:** This depends on the kind of company. If it's a service company such as a hotel, it would look at the whole state as a community. If it's a restaurant, the city is the community, as it is for manufacturing

because that's where they are drawing their employees from. It's also a function of where the workforce resides, and a service company will also consider where its customers are from.

### 3. FINALLY, THERE'S A MEETING.

**Q:** How do you project the right image? What is the right image?

**A:** The right image is business. Wear business attire, be professional, have your talking points well-rehearsed, have handouts ready, and focus on your key messages and details for the ask. Be well-organized.

**Q:** Who should attend/who is the right messenger (e.g. one-on-one, group, parent, provider)?

**A:** If you have a parent, who is also an employee, in your program, that person might be useful to have in the meeting. Otherwise, just do a one-on-one meeting with the highest-level professional person in your program's organization.

**Q:** How much time should you expect to get for a first meeting? Is it appropriate to ask how long the meeting will be?

**A:** Don't ask for more than a half hour.

**Q:** What kinds of questions will they ask?

**A:** They'll want to know about the program, how it applies to their workforce, how long it's been around, who else funds it and whether the company will get credit for its

contribution. The company might also want to know who's on your board, especially if it includes community leaders, elected officials, other business leaders, academics, etc. That information should be prominent in your materials.

**Q:** What can you expect to walk away with?

**A:** First of all, be prepared to hear “No.” You want to get to your ultimate “yes,” but in order to achieve that, you have to have a series of small, incremental “yes” answers along the way. You want to build the relationship and cultivate a sense of ownership or interest in what your program is. You can do that by not starting with the big ask, but by creating something that will get you to the next step, which is the next meeting. Plot out small steps to the big ask, and never do it cold.

For example, say you want to ask for \$20,000. Your first ask should just be for a meeting to get the company acquainted with the program. Then use that meeting to convince them there should be a second meeting. Ask staff to serve on a committee or a task force or be on your program's board. As you get these engagements going, the company will be much more likely to fund you.

Keep one thing in mind during process of engagement: You must do good work or you'll get nothing fast. If you promise something, do it promptly. If you are including them in a task force or community committee, you must do the

leg work for them so they are prepared and informed of the tasks at hand. The company won't use its own staff to do research or other preparation for the person you're working with. If you're doing a task force of some kind, you need to be on top of their needs so that they feel their participation is a good use of their time.

**Q:** What materials, if any, should an advocate have on hand?

**A:** Have duplicates of anything you sent by mail. If you're setting up a task force, you could have what the taskforce's objective is, who else is on it, etc. Basically, you should have details about whatever you're asking for.

**Q:** Should something be sent in advance of the meeting?

**A:** Yes, send an introductory packet that includes your standard materials. Impressive press clips are a good idea. Also, your packet should be professional-looking but not too slick; otherwise the company might think you have enough money.

#### 4. THE ASK.

**Q:** How do you phrase the ask?

**A:** Do not couch your ask in terms of an “investment.” That's a very concrete term for businesses. Talk about a “contribution” and be specific about what this “contribution” will buy.

**Q:** Is it a good idea to bring in a menu

of options? Is it possible to get an idea beforehand what options are likely to appeal to a particular company?

**A:** You should have a menu of options in a descending sequence of what you want. Do some research beforehand to find out what the company has contributed to others in the past. If you want to ask for money, you need multiple levels. If they say no money, try for in-kind donations, such as hosting a meeting or donating computers. As a rule of thumb, you don't want to walk out with a no. Just keep reducing the ask because that builds the relationship.

**Q:** Should recognition ideas be part of the initial ask? (For more information, see section 6, below)

**A:** Anything about recognizing the company for its work should be more of an aside. If you're too blatant about it, that can be insulting.

## 5. THE FOLLOW-UP.

**Q:** Should the initial follow-up be more than a thank you?

**A:** Obviously, do a verbal thank you at the time of the meeting and a follow-up thank you in writing that includes a discussion of a next step.

**Q:** How soon could one expect to have another meeting?

**A:** Just ask about that before you leave. If they're going to refer you to someone else, that's okay. Ask for contact information and follow up. If you're going to do a big presentation, ask about

a timeframe for when they want that to happen. Then follow up with scheduling it.

**Q:** How many meetings should it take before an initial commitment is made?

**A:** As many as it takes. There's no formula, but your goal should be to walk away every time with an ever-increasing yes, even if it's a yes to another meeting. The worst case is that you end up asking "Can I contact you next year?" at the end of the meeting. Before you resort to that, though, try to ask for some in-kind contributions.

**Q:** What are other ways besides meetings to build the relationship? Is sending a company periodic updates on the state of after school programs and inviting staff to upcoming events a good idea?

**A:** Inviting company staff is a good idea, but you need to have a role for them. They won't show up just to be in the audience. In fact, that can be part of the descending list of asks. Ask someone to speak at an event or be recognized as a supporter.

## 6. RECOGNIZING PARTNERS.

**Q:** What can after school programs realistically offer a company in exchange for help? Donna Klein comments on some examples of activities the advocates have done:

- \* Thanking business partners in the newspaper, either through an ad or an article, is a really good idea.
- \* Putting company names or logos

on your website and in publications such as conference materials is a great way to recognize partners, but be sure to get permission to do it.

- \* I really like the idea of putting company names or logos on the Lights On Afterschool T-shirt that kids wear for the event, and then sending some T-shirts as part of a post-event package that includes a copy of the press release, press clippings and a DVD of news clips and recordings from the event. Programs definitely should do this.
- \* Naming partner companies as “After School Champions” and honoring them at Lights On Afterschool or some other event is also a terrific idea, but be sure to have a physical award to give, even if it is just a paper certificate.

## 7. KEEPING THE BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP HEALTHY.

**Q:** Once you have a working relationship with a business, what should you do to keep the relationship going?

**A:** Respect their lack of time by not bugging them. Be judicious in your communications and always have a relevant point to make. In the end, they want to know how their contribution helped the program, but lay off the emotional stuff. That’s it. And you should try to embed your next ask in these communications to keep the relationship going.

**Q:** How often should you make contact

with the business?

**A:** This should be periodic, based on events. You don’t want to send them your monthly newsletter. It’s more respectful to send the occasional update that’s relevant to the company. For example, as it has been suggested in our conversation, you can send them a copy of anything you put their name or logo on (with a cover letter). Also, always invite your business partners to your Lights On Afterschool event.

## 8. MOVING FROM COLLABORATION TO FUNDING YOUR PROGRAM.

**Q:** How do you broach the subject?

**A:** It should be organic. If the company staff is on a committee or working with your program in some other way, funding will come up. But it is okay to prompt them, subtly, if they aren’t offering. For example, “In what way can [company] help us out with this?”

**Q:** Do you need to give the company a copy of your budget?

**A:** Probably not.

**Q:** How is it different from/similar to asking for money from a foundation?

**A:** This depends on who you are, how well you know the company and whether you’re getting corporate expense money (such as advertising) or corporate giving/foundation money. If it’s expense money, they might only want your 501(c)3 number. If it’s corporate foundation money, they will have paperwork, much

like philanthropy, and the amount of paperwork will be relative to the amount of money you're asking for. If it's low enough, staff can make a decision without consulting the board. Find out what their normal grant levels are.

**Q:** Is it better to ask the main company or its corporate giving arm, if it has one?

**A:** The answer used to be the giving arm because that would establish a relationship. Now companies prefer to provide start-up funding and don't want someone depending on them for long-term sustainability. Their ideal situation is one-time funding that accomplishes something. This is why it's hard to raise tuition from corporations; it implies you'll keep coming back.

## 9. MOVING FROM COLLABORATION TO POLICY ADVOCACY.

**Q:** How and with whom do you begin the discussion on asking the company to help effect policy change?

**A:** You might not have much success on your own. Companies want to hear policy discussions from other companies, and it will be hard to get a company involved unless they've already shown interest. (Corporate Voices is a good place to find companies that have already expressed an interest in affecting policy.) It matters who asks. You will have better luck if you ask a well-known community leader or a governor, mayor, legislator, or other prominent community leader to make the request.

## Q: DOES ONE HAVE TO WORK WITH A COMPANY'S LOBBYISTS?

**A:** Only a big brand company will have a lobbyist. But good places to explore relationships are through the professional organizations that lobby for lots of companies, such as the retail merchants' trade association.

**Q:** The advocates had a few suggestions on where to look for supporters and how to appeal to them. Donna Klein comments on those ideas.

- \* Looking for business leaders who are already spokespeople for education or similar issues is a good way to get in the door.
- \* Definitely research state government websites to find out whether business leaders have been appointed to and serve on education or other relevant committees or councils.
- \* Be careful if you decide to make the ask more personal by finding out whether the business leaders you are working with have kids or grandkids who need care.

## SPECIAL QUESTIONS:

**Q:** Do you have any advice for rural programs on how statewide networks can help their rural areas with business outreach?

**A:** It will matter where the people live, and the connection between rural families and the business. If it's a company that depends on rural

communities (e.g. ConAgra Foods), then you can make a rural pitch because they depend on rural workers and customers. It's an effort you will have to customize for each company, on a case-by-case basis.

**Q:** Do you have any advice on how to leverage local business partnerships such as the Northern Illinois Collaborative [See Corporate Voices' Business to Community Toolkit] to get their example to filter up to statewide and national companies, to effect a more comprehensive, system-wide change?

**A:** Businesses love to work with other businesses. Businesses love to be involved with solving community problems, and they look favorably on working with other business leaders to do it. You want to play the role of convener and make it easy for businesses to get together. Make the meeting well-planned and well-managed, with a good agenda and clear goals. Also, get a business to host the event and work with public sector partners, such as a department of education, a department of economic development, or even a school superintendent, to extend the invitations.

#### FINAL THOUGHTS:

The after school advocate community is one of the most successful I've seen in building good relationships with businesses. The creativity and innovation are very impressive, so keep up the good work! Business does indeed care about after school, and they have great respect for community advocates. Leverage both to build enduring relationships.



## After School Resources

When speaking to business leaders, it's a good idea to have a variety of arguments and messages at your disposal. These resources will help you find more information to help you make your case, including research on after school programs' effectiveness and on issues related to working parents and future workforce readiness, and some information on where to find potential business allies.

### AFTER SCHOOL RESEARCH AND NEWS

#### **Afterschool Alliance**

[www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)

This site offers the latest news on national, state and local after-school policy, research updates, advocacy tips, and tips for participating in the national movement. Visit the Research page ([www.afterschoolalliance.org/research.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/research.cfm)) for evaluations, polling data and Issue Briefs on after school outcomes.

#### **Fight Crime: Invest in Kids**

[www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a national, bipartisan, nonprofit anti-crime organization of more than 3,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders and violence survivors. Fight Crime: Invest in Kids looks at crime prevention strategies, informs the public and policymakers about those findings, and urges government investment in programs proven effective by research, including

after school programs for children and teens. To find Fight Crime's resources on after school programs, go to [www.fightcrime.org/issue\\_aftersch.php](http://www.fightcrime.org/issue_aftersch.php).

#### **National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks**

[www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net](http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net)

The National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks brings together 31 established statewide after school networks in their collective mission to build partnerships and policies that are committed to the development and sustainability of quality after school programs. This site is a gateway to information on what various states are doing around after school.

#### **National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST)**

[www.niost.org](http://www.niost.org)

For more than 20 years, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College, has successfully brought national attention to the importance of children's out-of-school time, influenced policy, increased standards and professional recognition, and spearheaded community action aimed at improving the availability, quality and viability of programs serving children and youth. The site includes information on research, evaluation, policy development and public awareness.

## BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

### **Business Roundtables**

**[www.cobrt.org](http://www.cobrt.org)**

Many companies belong to Business Roundtables, which often promote various public policy issues that are important to its members, including education. The Colorado Business Roundtable's site links to other states' Roundtables. Search here for membership lists to find out which businesses in your state are members.

### **U.S. Chamber of Commerce**

**[www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com)**

Use their directory search page to find your state's Chamber of Commerce: [www.uschamber.com/chambers/directory/default.htm](http://www.uschamber.com/chambers/directory/default.htm). The Chamber also compiles research and commentary on workforce development and education issues. (Some pages can only be accessed by Chamber members.)

## WORKFORCE AND WORK/LIFE ISSUES

### **Action Alliance for Children**

**<http://4children.org/index.htm>**

This California-based organization “exists to inform, educate, and inspire a statewide constituency of people who work with and on behalf of children by providing the most reliable information on current issues, trends, and public policies that affect children and families.”

This article from the January-February

2003 issue of their newsletter, *Children's Advocate*, is about children's advocates from around the country that have successfully partnered with businesses: <http://4children.org/news/103busi.htm>.

### **“Business Leaders as Legislative Advocates for Children”**

This report, written by Margaret Blood and Melissa Ludtke, offers reflections and lessons learned on why business leaders make effective advocates and the best ways to engage them. This executive summary, available from PreK Now, includes a link to the longer document: [www.preknow.org/documents/exec\\_summ\\_Business\\_Leaders\\_as\\_Legislative\\_Advocates.pdf](http://www.preknow.org/documents/exec_summ_Business_Leaders_as_Legislative_Advocates.pdf)

### **Community, Families & Work Program, Brandeis University**

**[www.bcfwp.org](http://www.bcfwp.org)**

The Community, Families & Work Program conducts research on a variety of work and family issues, including the topic of Parental After-School Stress, or PASS, which is the anxiety working parents feel when their children are released from school in the afternoons and do not have a safe place to go. ([www.bcfwp.org/pass.pdf](http://www.bcfwp.org/pass.pdf))

### **UC Hastings Center for WorkLife Law**

**[www.uchastings.edu/?pid=3624](http://www.uchastings.edu/?pid=3624)**

The Center for WorkLife Law is a research and advocacy center that seeks to eliminate employment discrimination

against caregivers such as parents and adult children of aging parents. The Publications section offers information on what working parents have to deal with, and the Resources section offers links to other organizations concerned with work and family issues.

## WORKFORCE READINESS

### **Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF)**

**[www.bhef.com](http://www.bhef.com)**

The Business-Higher Education Forum is an independent, nonprofit membership organization of leaders from American businesses, colleges and universities, and foundations. The Forum's mission is to engage and inform members, policymakers and the public regarding strategic national challenges of high priority to both business and higher education, and to help shape sound policy to address these challenges. One particularly useful resource is their report *A Commitment to America's Future: Responding to the Crisis in Mathematics & Science Education* (<http://www.bhef.com/publications>).

### **National Association of Manufacturers**

**[www.nam.org](http://www.nam.org)**

NAM is the nation's largest industrial trade association, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states. Their website's Information and Publications section ([www.nam.org/s\\_nam/sec.asp?CID=179&DID=177](http://www.nam.org/s_nam/sec.asp?CID=179&DID=177))

has a number of resources on workforce development. Two particularly useful resources highlighting the fact that businesses are facing a shortage of talented, American workers:

- \* 2005 NAM Annual Labor Day Report ([www.nam.org/s\\_nam/sec.asp?CID=201825&DID=230586](http://www.nam.org/s_nam/sec.asp?CID=201825&DID=230586))
- \* 2005 Skills Gap Report - A Survey of the American Manufacturing Workforce ([www.nam.org/s\\_nam/sec.asp?CID=202426&DID=235735](http://www.nam.org/s_nam/sec.asp?CID=202426&DID=235735))

### **Partnership for 21st Century Skills**

**[www.21stcenturyskills.org](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org)**

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills is an advocacy organization focused on infusing 21st century skills into education. The organization brings together the business community, education leaders, and policymakers to define a powerful vision for 21st century education to ensure every child's success as citizens and workers in the 21st century. The Partnership encourages schools, districts and states to advocate for the infusion of 21st century skills into education and provides tools and resources to help facilitate and drive change.

[http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/images/stories/otherdocs/P21\\_Report.pdf](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/images/stories/otherdocs/P21_Report.pdf)





**CORPORATE VOICES**  
*for* **WORKING FAMILIES**

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