



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

Improved School Attendance and Engagement in Learning

- Elementary school students attending LA's BEST afterschool program improved their regular school day attendance and reported higher aspirations regarding finishing school and going to college. Additionally, LA's BEST participants are 20 percent less likely to drop out of school compared to matched nonparticipants. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, June 2000, December 2005 and September 2007)
- High school students participating in Chicago's After School Matters program—which offers paid internships in the arts, technology, sports, and communications to teenagers in some of the city's most underserved schools—have higher class attendance, lower course failures and higher graduation rates than similar students who do not participate in the program. (University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children, 2007)
- Ninth grade students who formerly participated in The After-School Corporation (TASC) funded afterschool programs as middle schoolers had higher daily attendance and credit accumulation than matched nonparticipants. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., October 2007)
- Participants in the Breakthrough Collaborative program enroll in college-preparatory mathematics courses at double the national average, and are accepted to college-preparatory high schools by more than 80 percent. (Breakthrough Collaborative, 2006)
- Sixty-five percent of former Citizen Schools 8th Grade Academy participants enrolled in high-quality high schools compared to 26 percent of matched nonparticipants. Ninety-two percent of high exposure participants were promoted on time to the tenth grade compared to 81 percent of matched nonparticipants. This is critical, since earning promotion to tenth grade on time is a key predictor of high school graduation (i.e. preventing drop out). (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., December 2006)
- A New Hampshire statewide study of students participating in academically focused afterschool programs, including those funded by the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program (21st CCLC), found that more than half of regular attendees improved both behaviorally and academically. (RMC Research, 2005)

Improved Test Scores and Grades

- Annual performance report data from 21st CCLC grantees across the country demonstrate that students attending 21st CCLC programs improve their reading (43%) and math grades (42%). Students who attend 21st CCLC programs more regularly are more likely to improve their grades and their performance on state assessments. (Learning Point Associates, November 2007)
- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study, a study of about 3,000 low-income, ethnically-diverse elementary and middle school students, found that those who regularly attended high-quality programs over two years demonstrated gains of up to 20 percentiles and 12 percentiles in standardized math test scores respectively, compared to their peers who were routinely unsupervised during the afterschool hours. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2007)
- Participants in North Carolina's Young Scholars Program with at least 280 hours in the program averaged double-digit increases annually for proficiency in both math and reading. Promotion rates rose by 38 percent. Furthermore, the number of Young Scholars receiving A's and B's increased an average of 38 percent, while the number receiving F's decreased an average of 50 percent. (Z Smith Reynolds Foundation, 2006)
- Active participants in programs offered by The After-School Corporation (TASC) were more likely to take and pass the Regents Math Sequential 1 exam by ninth grade than were nonparticipants. Thirty-two percent of active ninth grade participants took and passed the exam, compared to one percent of ninth grade nonparticipants. Fifty-two percent of active participants took and passed the Math Sequential 2 and 3 exams, compared to 15 percent of nonparticipants in the same grades. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2004)
- Participants of St. Paul Minnesota's 21st CCLC Pathways to Progress program received better grades in English and math than nonparticipants. (University of Minnesota, Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, March 2004)

Students at Greatest Risk Show Greatest Gains

- Researchers at Johns Hopkins University conclude that two-thirds of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. The summer learning gap begins in elementary school, accumulates over the years and, once students get to high school,



results in unequal placements in college preparatory tracks and increases the chance that children from low socio-economic families will drop out. (American Sociological Review, Vol. 72, April 2007)

- Citizen Schools reported especially large improvements in achievement among the most high-risk students, including those initially in the lowest quartile on standardized test scores and English language learners. In the primary grades, there was a 53.4 percent decrease in grade retention associated with the program. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., November 2005)
- The CORAL initiative in California found that reading gains were greatest for participant youth who were two or more grade levels behind at the time of the first assessment. This improvement represents approximately three quarters of a grade level in reading (0.78). (Public/Private Ventures, December 2005)

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

- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study, a study of about 3,000 low-income, ethnically-diverse elementary and middle school students, found that students reported improved social and behavioral outcomes: elementary students reported reductions in aggressive behavior towards other students and skipping school, and middle school students reported reduced use of drugs and alcohol, compared to their routinely unsupervised peers. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2007)
- A meta-analysis of 73 afterschool evaluations concluded that afterschool programs employing evidence-based approaches to improving students' personal and social skills were consistently successful in producing multiple benefits for youth including improvements in children's personal, social and academic skills, as well as their self-esteem. (University of Illinois at Chicago, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2007)
- Children attending LA's BEST Afterschool program are 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities than their peers who do not attend the program. Researchers estimate that every dollar invested in the LA's BEST program saves the city \$2.50 in crime-related costs. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, September 2007)
- A study measuring the health and social benefits of afterschool programs found that controlling for baseline obesity, poverty status, and race and ethnicity, the prevalence of obesity was significantly lower for afterschool program participants (21 percent) compared to nonparticipants (33 percent) at follow-up. (Mahoney, J., Lord, H., & Carryl, E., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2005)
- Youth attending 23-40 or more days of Maryland's After School Opportunity Fund Program showed a more positive gain on such measures as commitment to education and academic performance, and a reduction in delinquency and contact with the police. (University of Maryland, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, June 2004)
- Teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes than teens who do participate. They are also three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs, and they are more likely to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and engage in sexual activity. (YMCA of the USA, March 2001)

Afterschool Programs Help Working Families

- Parents who are concerned about their children's after-school care miss an average of eight days of work per year. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about after-school care costs businesses up to \$300 billion per year. (Brandeis University, Community, Families and Work Program, 2004 and Catalyst & Brandeis University, December 2006)
- In an evaluation of LA's BEST, three quarters of the parents surveyed indicated that since enrolling their children in the program, they worried significantly less about their children's safety and had more energy in the evening. A majority also indicated the program sizably saved their time. (UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, June 2000 and December 2005)
- Parents in the TASC study said that the program helped them balance work and family life: 94 percent said the program was convenient, 60 percent said they missed less work than before because of the program, 59 percent said it supported them in keeping their job, and 54 percent said it allowed them to work more hours. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2004)