



## **Out-of-School Time Literature Review**

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## **OST Literature Review**

### **I. Introduction**

This document identifies and surveys best practices for out-of-school time (OST) programs and services. The elements of an effective OST program can be grouped into two main categories: 1) content oriented practices that impact the experience of children and youth directly and 2) structural and institutional elements that establish the setting and context for high quality activities and positive relationships between adults, youth and their peers. Process and content oriented practices speak to the quality of interactions and relationships among and between staff and youth participants, program content and content delivery strategies. Structural elements typically include financial and physical resources, external affiliations and sustainability efforts. These practices respond to the core developmental needs of children and youth for affiliation, identity, and mastery (Vandell 2004).

However, the diverse needs of each community have led researchers to conclude that no single set of promising practices can be used to define a high quality OST program. Additionally, the overall lack of resources system-wide has made it difficult for programs to implement best practices and meet the demands of program standards. Despite these challenges, it is important for all OST programs to acknowledge and internalize these elements to the greatest extent possible. At the very least, programs must do no harm in each of these areas (Vandell 2004, Harvard Family Research Project Spring 2004).

### **II. Elements of a High Quality Out-of-School Time Program**

There is enormous consensus across research and practice communities about what it takes to engage young people and what high quality supportive settings look and feel like. Both the Forum for Youth Investment (FYI) and Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) recently examined a variety of program assessment tools across the out-of-school time field to determine whether commonalities existed across program standards. (Harvard Family Research Project, 2004) Despite the wide variety of program activities and types within the field, a common set of program standards is identifiable and can be organized into three distinct areas- youth opportunities, staff practices and supports, and administrative and management policies as outlined below: (Eccles and Gootman 2002, Connell 2000, Forum for Youth Investment 2001, Yohalem 2004).

## **A. A Common Set of Program Standards (Yohalem 2001)**

### ***Youth Opportunities for:***

- Positive relationships
- Safety and belonging
- Exploration and skill building
- Meaningful involvement
- Expression/reflection
- Service and work

### ***Staff practices and supports that promote:***

- Youth as partners
- Safe, fair environments
- Supportive relationships
- Personalized participation
- Learning opportunities/intentional skill building
- Continuity within program and across settings

### ***Organizational policies and structures that promote:***

- Consistent, safe, living environments
- High Quality Staffing
- Effective leadership and management
- Range of diverse, interesting skill building activities
- Meaningful linkages with family and community
- Youth involvement
- Family Engagement

While these elements are the gold standard for out-of-school time programs, mere participation in an OST program does not guarantee positive developmental outcomes for youth. In fact, emerging research suggests that participation in poor quality programs can be detrimental to youth development. (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002). This finding underscores the important role that evaluations and quality assessments play in ensuring that OST practices lead to positive outcomes.

## **B. Effective curriculum and program approaches in out-of-school time <sup>1</sup>**

One of the hallmarks of out-of-school time programs is the diversity of activities and approaches that have been used to engage children and youth. Researchers have begun to sort through the variations to derive a collection of effective program practices, curriculum and implementation strategies that positively influence the out-of-school time experiences of children and youth.

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<sup>1</sup> The AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research ([www.afterschool.org](http://www.afterschool.org)) maintains a searchable web database of effective program approaches and practices that began in 1999 with funding from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

These features respond to their core developmental needs of children and youth for “affiliation, identity and mastery” (Vandell 2004) Some of the more widely recognized approaches include:

**Using strategic recruitment tactics and tailoring program schedules** (Lauver 2004).

- Reach out directly to youth and parents through phone calls and visits to student classrooms particularly with current student participants. Recruit participants in pairs, youth with friends who participate are more likely to participate themselves.
- Match program schedules to youth needs- While elementary school students can commit to a five-day a week program, older youth may not want to or be able to. Programs that cater to a variety of age groups should provide a range of options from drop in activities to programs that run in eight-week blocks to offer greater flexibility to students who participate in more than one activity.

**Increasing engagement and positive impact by offering both recreation and academic activities within an OST program** (Lauver 2004).

Research has shown that arts and social recreation activities had the greatest positive impact during out-of-school time across age groups. Examples of effective activities include: (Vandell)

- A middle school activity that blended writing, web design and research skills
- An elementary school leadership council
- A middle school chess club
- A cooperative story-telling activity that combined sculpture, computer skills and graphics.
- An outdoor cooperative math activity

**Implement project-based learning.**

Project-based activities bridge the gap between play and academics and support cognitive skill building as well as youth development. Project-based activities share the following characteristics (Alexander 2000):

- The project is designed so that each task can be successfully accomplished by youth on a variety of skill levels. Youth are encouraged to use existing skills to understand and meet the challenges along the way.
- Although project-based learning may begin with an open-ended question or idea, adult staff are there to guide the learning process by sequencing and outlining the steps towards completion. Adults are there to help children guide the experimentation and not to direct them to the “right answer.”
- The major lesson of project-based learning is to provide children with the confidence to turn “instruction into mastery”.

**Youth leadership and civic engagement programs have successfully engaged youth who were not interested or involved in conventional OST programs** (Hall 2003, Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development 2003, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2002).

Many of their activities are youth-driven, and typically offer a mix of community activism, service learning, and opportunities for self and group expression on a particular issue. Some

activities include engaging in community mapping projects, with students choosing a particular issue or project to work on within the community. Examples include programs that provide service learning, student exchange opportunities, or youth leadership councils. At the center of these programs is a structure for youth decision-making and input that is guided by the adult. Often students feel a stronger sense of purpose because they work in groups towards a specific goal with tangible results in the community

### **C. Serving Special Populations**

The out-of-school time field has long been criticized for its failure to reach those in greatest need of OST programs and services. Older youth, immigrant youth and disabled youth have more complex needs that require specifically trained staff and/or facilities to provide adequate care. Most OST programs do not have adequate resources to meet these needs and consequently under-serve these populations. As a result of efforts by the Boys and Girls Club of America in Boston and New York, the Teen Study Committee of Boston's After school-for-All Partnership, Baltimore's The After School Institute (which provides training to staff on teen participation and retention), and TASC, greater attention has been paid to the out-of-school time needs of these youth.

#### **Older Youth**

Traditionally, the out-of-school time community has had greater difficulty attracting and retaining the participation of older (middle and high school) youth. Research indicates that the decrease in participation stems from a lack of programming that engages older youth, interest in free time outside of structured activities, as well as entry into the workforce through after school and summer employment. (Herrera). A three-city survey of older youth and OST participation demonstrated that only half of 16 and 17 year olds were engaged in constructive after school activities and two thirds said that they would participate if programs were available. (Hall) Boston's After School for All Partnership released data indicating that only 22% of teens were engaged in out-of-school time activities (Afterschool for All Partnership 2003).

Increasing participation in out-of-school time activities for older youth is critical given research indicating that the peak hours for involvement in high risk behaviors is during the hours between 3-6 pm. (Newman). Moreover, there is broad consensus that participation in positive out-of-school time activities for older youth correlates to higher levels of motivation, leadership, communication, academic and social competencies (Hall 2004).

The challenge in serving older youth begins with the ability of programs to attract teens and sustain participation. In surveys across the country, teens overwhelming state that they want to participate in programs that (are) (Hall 2004, Technical Development Corporation 2004):

***Fun and engaging-*** Teens generally define fun as an activity that gives them the opportunity to learn something new and the ability to do it with their friends or something that their friends would think is acceptable. Additionally, older youth want their own space, one that is separate and apart from their younger peers in which to express their own ideas and thoughts freely.

**Accessible-** For older youth, this means the ability to find programming with a variety of schedules and programming. This can be difficult when many traditional OST programs require mandatory five day a week participation which is better suited for elementary school-aged children. Older youth have more control over their free time and want the ability to make independent decisions about their participation. Additionally, for older youth who may have more than one interest, flexibility in participation requirements provides youth with an opportunity to actively engage in more than one program.

***Provide opportunities for positive relationships with adult mentors and peers.*** Older youth want opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions and activities with adult staff and peers. Teens also look for support and guidance from staff in addition to sharing in challenging and productive experiences with their peers.

***Prepare them for their futures.*** Older youth want programs that provide opportunities for leadership, expression, and community engagement. Most importantly, older youth want experiences that will prepare them for life post-high school including college prep, career exploration, technology skills and job experience as well as broader opportunities outside of their immediate neighborhoods.

Although, the broader out-of-school time community shares in the frustrations around the scarce resources, the distinct needs of older youth make capacity building an even more critical challenge for out-of-school time programs. The Boys and Girls Club of Boston and New York developed teen programs with the goal of attracting and retaining 50 new participants over a three-year period. Each program hired two new staff dedicated to serving teens, increased staff time available for recruitment, provided case management services for each new recruit, extended club hours and developed job training and academic programs. Both programs exceeded their original recruitment numbers. However, there was no corresponding increase in staffing and as a result, youth reported lower levels of satisfaction with adult support and guidance (Herrera 2003).

The program models that have been effective with older youth mirror the diversity of their needs and range broadly in topic, setting and required level of participation. Some examples include (Hall 2004):

***Apprenticeship programs and internships with stipends-***These programs provide youth with an opportunity to experience potential career environments, as well as gain specific academic and job skills. After School Matters is a non-profit program in Chicago that partners with the City of Chicago, the Chicago Public Schools, Park District and Public Library to offer hands on training to teens in the arts, sports, technology and communications fields. Youth participants receive 10-week apprenticeships with a stipend that lead to summer jobs.

***Academic Support-***The Denver Mayor's Office provides Homework Labs that give students access to computers supplies and library resources. Additional activities include SAT prep classes, college readiness, financial aid and career exploration workshops.

***Youth leadership, government and civic programs-*** The El Pomar Foundation’s Youth in Community Service program is an interactive, service learning project that engages teens in community surveys, identifying a service need within a community and organizing fundraising efforts in addition to meeting with a philanthropic board to match funds raised by their own efforts.

***Social and creative expression programs-*** Teen Central located in a public library in Phoenix is a program that was created for teens by teens that provides a safe space for youth to engage in performance activities, computer work, or just to “hang out” and socialize with peers.

***Non-academic skill-building-*** Engaging Young Women is a Beacon program that offers builds their program around sewing and business skills in addition to counseling, dance classes and group trips to college fairs.

### **Immigrant Youth**

Immigrant youth are faced with several stress factors including exclusion, poverty, separation and cultural dislocations, and identity formation as part of their transition into a new community. These factors leave immigrant youth more vulnerable to academic failure, delinquency, peer pressure and low self-esteem (Harris 2004).

While local ethnic communities have traditionally been responsive to the needs of immigrant youth with tutoring programs, and support services for their families, comprehensive strategies from localities, advocates, and larger youth serving entities are now just beginning to emerge. For example, California Tomorrow, funded by the C.S Mott Foundation launched a multi-year project to examine equity and access issues in after school programs that includes the experience of immigrant youth in out-of-school time. As more out-of-school time programs engage in evaluation efforts, the field has also begun to identify and isolate effective out-of-school time strategies for immigrant youth as outlined below: (Harris 2004).

- *Flexibility and responsiveness to the community’s specific culture*
- *Hiring staff who share the same culture and language as participating youth*
- *Fostering awareness and appreciation of other cultures*
- *Providing special activities and supports for minority groups to assist with the transition into new communities*

### **Youth with Special Needs**

The physical and developmental needs of disabled youth require qualified staff members that are able to provide the attention and care to meet their needs. Few mainstream after school programs are equipped to serve youth with special needs. However some programs have responded by developing strategies for inclusion and appropriate care.

In its third year evaluation, TASC was able to report serving 74% of all disabled youth who wanted to participate in programs. Earlier TASC evaluations had revealed a low level of participation due to budgetary restrictions that prevented the hiring of qualified staff, the maintenance of required staffing ratios, and a lack of appropriate transportation. Gradually,

TASC improved its capacity to serve disabled youth by hiring paraprofessionals, providing transportation options, and enhancing recruitment efforts by reaching out directly to special education teachers and making in-class presentations about TASC programs. Special education students were offered homework assistance with other students in their class but were also invited to participate in program-wide activities. TASC also provided referrals to local programs within the community if they could not appropriately meet specific needs. Together these efforts allowed TASC to begin to more fully meet the out-of-school time needs of youth with special needs (Reisner 2002).

#### **D. Staffing**

Researchers most commonly identified staff as the one element that provides the greatest impact on program quality. Program quality is primarily driven by staff choices (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002). Effective programming is not determined by the specific content or subject area of the activity per se but rather the skill of the staff member to lead, facilitate and guide youth towards positive outcomes. High quality staff have the ability create a positive social environment where relationships between adults and staff are friendly and supportive but still maintain a challenging intellectual environment where the adult staff actively facilitates and motivates youth to engage and achieve (Grossman et al 2002). To develop high quality staff, OST programs must: 1) provide regular professional development and structured supervision to all levels of staff, 2) increase opportunities for career growth both through internal structures as well as access to professional affiliations 3) provide staff with an attractive wage and benefits package to ensure recruitment and retention of high quality staff (Beckett et al 2001).

#### **Barriers to High Quality Staffing**

The ability of OST programs to maintain and increase positive outcomes for youth has long been compromised by low wages, high staff turnover and overall an inability to attract a stable workforce. With an average salary of \$25,000 per year that ranks just below that of a social worker (with a master's degree) at \$33,150 and above that of a child care worker at \$15,000, most youth workers enter the OST arena to gain their first job experiences but many leave the field because they literally cannot afford to stay (Academy for Educational Development 2002). In a third-year evaluation of New York City's The After-School Corporation (TASC) programs, although most site coordinators had college degrees, a majority of line staff were students themselves in college, high school or graduate school and making less than \$16 an hour, with some starting at \$6 an hour (Reisner 2002).

Beyond low salaries, the field as a whole has provided few opportunities for career growth and professional affiliation. Historically, youth workers did not have access to coherent education, training and professional development opportunities that prepared them for youth services work. Training was generally available through national conferences, which were too expensive or time consuming for programs to invest in. Additionally, youth training programs were fragmented with a variety of approaches and not connected in language, theory or approach (Academy for Educational Development 2002, Halpern 2003). Organizations were unable to provide the support and guidance necessary to translate and incorporate new concepts and techniques into programming (Academy for Educational Development 2002). Youth workers reported feeling isolated and unable to identify and access the support and benefits of more traditional professions

(Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002). In an online poll conducted by the National Institute for Out-of-School Time (NIOST) of 350 OST workers nation-wide, an overwhelming majority or 96 % of the respondents believed that working in the OST field is a profession. However, only a third or 38% believed that people outside of the field view it as a profession (Le Menestrel 2003).

While the need for salary increases and more professional development opportunities has been widely recognized, few funding streams allot enough resources to realistically support these efforts. Few youth providers have the resources to address structural and organizational needs such as staff retention and professional development while at the same time balancing the pressures of maximizing scarce program dollars to serve an optimal number of youth (Academy for Educational Development 2002, Vandell 2004). Programs have a difficult time rationalizing investments in professional development when faced with the opportunity to serve more youth or invest dollars to train a workforce with a high turnover rate. Without an infusion of dollars into the OST system both locally and nation-wide, these trade-offs will continue to occur.

### **Staffing Patterns**

Smaller OST programs tended to direct a greater portion of their limited resources towards personnel and programmatic costs such as staff salaries, particularly for line staff and activity specialists (Vandell 2004). As a result, significantly fewer resources both in time and money are directed at institutional building- creating partnerships, conducting outreach to potential partners and funders, strategic planning, staff development and leadership. Those engaging in these processes do so by stretching their time and dollars to meet the organization's needs.

Few OST programs can afford to pay staff for the time they spend planning and engaging in institutional development. Additionally, not many line staff are full time employees which makes it difficult for them to become invested in the organization as a whole except for the time that they spend working with children and youth which sometimes can be as few as 2-4 hours a week (Vandell 2004).

A more well-developed organizational structure that includes several layers of support with executive management, program planners, program managers, site coordinators, line staff, as well as administrative support is a core element of an effective program.

### **Staffing Ratios**

Evaluations across the after school field indicate that a high youth-to-staff ratio is associated with less effective and sometimes negative interactions between staff and youth (Gambone 2002, Grossman 2002, Walker 2004, Warren 2002, Reisner 2002). Youth in programs with a higher child to staff ratio also reported receiving less emotional support from adult staff, formed fewer positive adult and peer relationships support for autonomy and privacy. A recent survey of over 56 promising OST programs conducted by Policy Studies Associates indicated that the average program had a 9.7:1 child to staff ratio in elementary programs and 8:1 child to staff ratio in middle school programs (Vandell 2004). More passive activities such as video game playing, and TV watching averaged a 10:1 child to staff ratio. Many OST programs use high school, college and volunteers to supplement their adult staff and increase their staff-to-child ratios (Vandell 2004).

### **Models of OST Workforce Development**

Without on-going and conscious efforts to build and implement an effective and well-defined structure, and management practices, staff often experience low staff morale and high turnover. Because of high staff turnover, a plan for leadership development must be put into place in order to maintain organizational stability and capacity during times of staff transitions (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002).

Over the past five years, efforts to professionalize the field and improve the availability of professional development have included recommendations to adopt a national set of standards, the creation of compensation benchmarks, and a career ladder for OST workers. Additionally, funders have begun to invest in city and state wide professional development initiatives that combine training on theory, approach, and practice as well as broader opportunities to network, collaborate and share perspectives and experiences as youth workers.

U.S. Military's Child and Youth Services: A model of workforce development that is often cited researchers and advocates alike is the U.S. Military's Child and Youth Services program which is characterized by a clear set of standards for staff training and skills, as well as opportunities for career advancement that is linked to increased compensation (National Institute for Out-of-School Time March 2003). After years of neglect and inefficiency, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) began to focus its attention on OST for military children and youth when it became clear that the poor quality of child care negatively impacted their ability to recruit, retain and maintain a high quality military workforce. The transformation began with the passage of the Military Child Care Act of 1989, which mandated improvements in the military's child care system. Over the past ten years, child care for military families has improved greatly and today, the U.S. Military provides high quality care, at an affordable price, for over 200,000 children daily at over 300 locations worldwide through child development centers, family child care homes, and after-school programs. Caregivers in military centers are given systematic, ongoing training and their compensation is linked to training levels. The entry-level wage for a caregiver in a military facility is \$8.00 per hour. By comparison, caregivers in civilian centers average \$7.40 per hour and \$5.00 in civilian homes. As a result of these initiatives staff turnover has decreased from over 300% to less than 30% annually. Currently, military child-care centers fulfill approximately 60% of their need for child care and have in place specific timetables to attain 80% by 2005. No state currently provides high quality subsidized child-care to this many of its eligible recipients (National Institute for Out-of-School Time March 2003).

The success of the US Military Child and Youth programs can be attributed to 1) an substantial increase in funding for military child care programs and 2) an emphasis on accreditation. Funds appropriated have climbed dramatically from \$90 million in 1989 to \$352 million in FY 2000 (National Institute for Out of School Time March 2003). Without similar increases in OST, comparable improvements to the civilian system would be difficult. The U.S. Military Child and Youth programs are required to meet DoD standards of operation as well as receive outside accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Youth Children. Accreditation has provided child-care professionals with guidance on a wide range of issues including staff/child interaction, developmentally appropriate activities, potential curriculum content and program features.

However, a reform plan for a national OST system that is more heterogeneous, decentralized and fragmented than that of child care may require more flexibility in its approach, particularly in the area of accreditation (Halpern 2003). Researchers caution the uniform mandate of accreditation requirements without a careful examination of the system's capacity to achieve and maintain higher standards. Moving toward greater professionalization must begin with increased access to coursework and training opportunities, certification programs, and degrees associated youth work first before accreditation requirements are mandated (National Institute for Out-of-School Time March 2003).

*Youth Worker Competency Standards:* There is greater agreement on the qualities that all OST workers should possess. In 2004, the National Collaboration for Youth (NCY) established a set of core competencies to standardize the qualifications for both paid staff and volunteers.<sup>2</sup> According to NCY, the following core competencies are the skills and personal attributes needed by entry-level youth workers to support an effective program environment (National Collaboration for Youth 2000):

- Understands and applies the basic child and adolescent development principles and applies the fundamentals of positive youth development
- Communicates and develops positive relationships with youth
- Adapts, facilitates, and evaluates age appropriate activities with or for the group
- Respects and honors cultural and human diversity
- Involves and empowers youth
- Identifies potential risk factors in a program and takes measures to reduce those risks
- Cares for, involves and partners with families and the community
- Works as part of a team and shows professionalism
- Demonstrates the attributes and qualities of a positive role model
- Interacts with and relates to youth in ways that support asset building

*Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers (BEST):* The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work of the Academy for Educational Development (AED) funded by the Wallace foundation and other funds manages one of the few coordinated efforts to build professional development systems at the local level. The BEST initiative provides both training and technical assistance to 15 cities nation-wide including Chicago, IL, Milwaukee, WI, New York City<sup>3</sup>, Philadelphia, PA, Washington, D.C., Portland, OR, and San Francisco, CA. Since 1996, more than 5,000 youth workers have participated in BEST activities (Academy for Educational Development 2002).

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<sup>2</sup> NCY is a coalition of the National Assembly of Health and Human Service Organizations, an association of 65 leading non-profit health and human service organizations. Member organizations include the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, National Youth Employment Coalition, Child Welfare League of America, YMCA of America, and United Way of America.

<sup>3</sup> The Fund for the City of New York's Youth Development Institute (YDI) is the lead agency for BEST in New York City.

The initiative is implemented in each local community by a lead intermediary organization with expertise in youth development practices and/or youth worker professional development. At the center of this effort is a youth worker training program that uses the *Advancing Youth Development (AYD)* curriculum, which is comprised of seven sessions and requires a minimum of 28 hours to complete. The curriculum covers topics such as Introduction to Youth Development, Developmental Youth Outcomes, Cultural Assumptions, Core Competencies for Youth Workers, and Youth Participation.

In addition to AYD, BEST also convenes cross network discussions about AYD training and the development of professional development for OST workers. In some cities, BEST has been able to create partnerships with local colleges and universities to offer certificate and degree programs to youth workers.

In 2000, AED conducted an evaluation of the BEST initiative and found that over 75% of the more than 1,200 youth workers surveyed indicated that the training had made a substantial impact on their ability to be an effective youth worker. (Academy for Educational Development 2002). BEST participants reported a greater understanding and ease with youth development concepts as well as an improved ability to incorporate youth development techniques into program activities. In addition to the positive impact felt by individual participants, programs involved in BEST also reported a heightened awareness and commitment to the youth development approach throughout the organization. Programs built in additional professional development support with the use of more regular and constructive feedback from supervisors, staff mentoring, and an increase in release time for staff to attend training. Program managers and executives attributed improvements in program quality to their organization's participation in BEST. This has led to the development of local systems of professional development with greater collaborations among youth organizations and broad-based support for the advancement of the field as a profession.

## **E. Safe Space and Adequate Materials**

Effective OST programs must have the materials and space necessary to meet the technical requirements of program activities as well as accommodate the number of anticipated program participants. Researchers have found that two of the major challenges OST programs face on a day-to-day basis is enormous difficulty in gaining access to and arranging for the maintenance of the space for programs.

In a recent survey conducted by Policy Studies Associates almost 75% of promising programs had access to a gym, cafeteria, classrooms and art rooms. A majority also had access to the auditorium, computer rooms, and kitchen facilities. Almost all had rooms for staff to meet in privately, and plan activities. However, more than 40% of program directors surveyed said that they did not have adequate storage room or space for science activities and over 1/3 said that current library space was inadequate. Elementary school program directors had the most difficulty accessing space- particularly space art, music, and meeting spaces (Vandell 2004).

In a separate study, by the Extended Services School Initiative, less than 25% of OST programs surveyed had access to playgrounds, parks, and special rooms for art, music and games (Grossman et al 2002).

This can be particularly challenging for OST programs that are located in schools (Grossman et al 2002, Vandell 2004). Programs sponsored by community-based organizations often find themselves in competition for space, materials and custodial services with school-sponsored extra-curricular activities. As a result, programs must limit the number of participants, the level and array of services and programs offered making it difficult for them to take root and flourish within the school community.

As noted earlier, cultivating strong, positive relationships between school principals, staff and OST program staff is the key to ensuring that programs receive the facility and material resources needed to sustain program activities. TASC, in its third-year evaluation of after school programs in New York City encouraged staff to join school-wide governing or advisory teams, and solicit input from regular school-day teachers, principals and other school administrators to facilitate the planning and scheduling activities (Reisner 2002).

Similarly, for programs located outside of schools, building strong relationships with the immediate community allows OST programs to access and leverage existing resources within the community. Effective OST programs partner with local schools, businesses, and other existing community-based organizations who can contribute and exchange in-kind support to meet the resource needs of each other's programs.

In addition to adequate space and materials, the foundation of any successful OST program is an environment that is both physically and psychologically safe for youth participants and staff (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002). To ensure the physical safety of participants and staff, a program must also meet all relevant municipal codes in addition to taking safety precautions and procedures that staff, youth and parents are comfortable with and aware of. In particular, arrival and departure times should be closely monitored by staff (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002). Programs that are located in schools, or are part of the school-age child care system must meet these standards in order to be licensed to operate as is the case with all TASC, Beacons, and San Diego's 6-to-6 programs.

A program environment that is psychologically safe speaks primarily to the quality of the relationships youth develop with adults and peers. These programs can offer both structured and unstructured activities (from tutoring to the arts) but all cultivate a young person's developmental need to cultivate mastery skills, leadership abilities, and possess a sense of belonging within the community (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002).

## **F. Evaluations, Quality Assurance and Performance Monitoring**

Evaluations, quality assurance and performance monitoring are crucial to out-of-school time programs. These tools help to ensure that program goals and targeted outcomes are met. Internally, these processes enable program managers and practitioners to maintain quality and

provide a framework for assessment and continuous improvement (Bryant 2003, Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development 2003). Externally, evaluation results can also be used strategically as part of a communications and development plan to raise the profile of the program and build public and political support (Little 2002, Bryant 2003). Quality assurance and performance monitoring strategies must be part of an OST programs organizational framework from the outset. Program leaders must ensure that performance standards are incorporated into the culture of the program and that there is an interest and expectation by all staff to be held accountable for high quality service to children and their families (Bryant 2004).

Within the past several years, as the demand for out-of-school time programs increased and public and private investments have grown, so has the demand for accountability and rigorous evaluation (Afterschool Alliance 2003). While OST programs have always engaged in self-evaluations and conformed to reporting requirements and other accountability measures required by contracts, funders have raised the stakes substantially by mandating the implementation of more rigorous evidenced and scientifically-based evaluations to link results to funding decisions (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002).

The out-of-school time community was confronted with this scenario in FY 2004 when the federal government proposed a 40% reduction in funding (from \$1 billion to \$600 million) to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), the largest federally funded after school program. The proposed cut would have resulted in the loss of 550,000 after school slots for children and youth across the country. The Bush administration used findings from a scientifically-based evaluation, conducted by Mathematica, a private research firm to justify the proposed cuts, citing that participation in after school programs did not improve either behavior or academic skills in children and youth. Congress rejected the proposal and restored the funding after widespread criticism from the out-of-school time community and organized efforts by national organizations such as the Afterschool Alliance, The After School Corporation and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time to refute both the methodology and results of the evaluation (National Institute for Out-of-School Time n.d., Afterschool Alliance August 2004).

Since then, the out-of-school time community has made considerable efforts to build a knowledge base around evaluations, quality assurance and performance monitoring in OST.

### **Measuring OST program outcomes**

Traditionally, participation has been used one dimensionally to measure program outcomes. Programs generally compare outcome data of participants with non-participants but rarely take into account the quality of youth participation. The intensity, duration and breadth of participation are three indicators that capture information about the nature of youth engagement. Emerging research suggests that by looking at the different dimensions of participation, programs can better determine the precise conditions needed to achieve positive outcomes and yield more meaningful evaluation results (Forum for Youth Investment 2004, Harvard Family Research Project 2004, Simpkins Chaput Spring 2004, Kane 2004).

- ***Intensity*** refers to the amount of time youth participate in a program during a given period and its impact on outcomes. Intensity can be quantified in terms of sessions per week, days per month and weeks per year. The majority of large-scale evaluations

reported an average of 1 to 2 days of participation per week for drop in programs. By contrast, participants in The After School Corporation's after school programs averaged between 3.9 to 2.9 days for elementary and middle school students respectively. Further research is needed to determine how intensity impacts program outcomes particularly in the area of academic achievements where the presumption is that low rates of intensity leads to less significant academic improvements (Kane 2004).

- **Duration** looks at the entire length of a young person's participation over time and its impact on outcomes. An example of the impact of duration on positive outcomes can be found with LA Best and TASC who both reported an increase in academic achievement (math, reading, writing, science grades) after two or more years of involvement (Kane 2004).
- **Breadth** examines the actual amount of participation necessary to impact outcomes for example participation in two or more activities within the same or different program versus participation in only one activity. For younger children, children who participate in three or more different activities in the same program had higher grades and academic test scores than non-participants and youth who participated in one or two activities. Non-participant outcomes were in fact not significantly different than those participating in only one or two activities. Greater positive outcomes are also associated with youth who participate in a variety of different activities in different programs. For older youth or high school students, researchers have found that the greater the number of activities, the greater the number of positive outcomes are achieved. These include an increased satisfaction with life, greater belief in one's own abilities, homework completion, presence of educational and occupational plans and university enrollment (Forum for Youth Investment 2004, Kane 2004).

Evaluators use a broad range of performance measures to monitor and evaluate out-of-school time programs. There are two types of performance measures (Little 2002, Harvard Family Research Project 2004):

- **Measures of effort** also known as outputs identify and measure the level of services generated by program strategies and activities. These measures assess how productive your program is in terms of the level of service provision (i.e. number of youth served) but do not determine the effectiveness of your efforts.
- **Measures of effect** capture the impact program services may have on skills, attitudes or knowledge of youth served. These expectations should be developed as part of a program's theory of change and reflect the changes that providers expect to result from working with youth.

Performance measures typically fall into three major categories: 1) academic progress, 2) positive youth development and 3) prevention. Data sources for these measures include parents, teachers, principals, OST staff, participant surveys and interviews, as well as school records and

standardized test results (Harvard Family Research Project 2004).

- **Academic Progress-** Performance measures include an ability to get along with others in school, academic knowledge in specific content areas, attitude towards schools, attendance, grade retention, motivation to learn as well as safety-viewing school as a safe place.
- **Positive Youth Development-** Youth development outcomes are broadly defined as those outcomes that assess the social and emotional development of program participants including standardized measures of self-esteem, interpersonal skills, decision-making skills, leadership, goal-setting and career development.
- **Prevention-** Performance measures that fall into this category include participants' changes in sexual behavior, feelings of personal safety, changes in drug and alcohol use and abuse and overall improvements in physical health. Additional data sources include police reporting and records.

Although there may never be a single set of performance measures for all OST programs due to the diversity of OST programs there are several principles that OST programs should take into consideration as they choose which performance measures (Harvard Family Research Project 2004).

- The selection of which performance measures are best suited to any single program or initiative should be tied to its primary goals, strategies and activities, *theory of change* or a way of articulating how the program or initiative expects to achieve its goals (Little 2002).
- Availability of data resources is another consideration. Many programs rely on parent, participant, and staff reporting as data sources, using program generated surveys and questionnaires to collect data. Although this is a less costly option, the use of standardized academic and behavioral assessments promotes greater validity in evaluation results but may require training and an investment of financial resources.

Performance measures should be selected because they yield useful information. Too often, programs that engage in performance monitoring or large scale evaluations feel both an internal and external pressure to increase the volume of data collected. Performance measures should be selected based on whether the data collected will be useful to the program and its stakeholders to avoid overburdensome reporting requirements (Reisner 2004).

### **What outcomes can we realistically expect?**

Although there is broad consensus around the hallmarks of a quality out-of-school time program, research on what OST programs can be realistically measured for and the extent of their accountability remains an emerging area of research (Yohalem 2004). Based on the quality, focus and duration of the programs and the consistency with which young people attend, what is realistic varies a great deal (Harvard Family Research Project 2004).

Based upon several large-scale out-of-school time evaluations we do know that (Afterschool Alliance 2003):

*Out-of-school time programs help kids achieve in school:* Evaluations of L.A. BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) demonstrated that students' attendance improved once they began participating in the after school program. Improved attendance led to higher academic achievement on standardized tests of math, reading and language arts.

- 57% of students participating in San Diego's 6-to-6 programs increased their reading scores and 44% increased their math scores over a course of a year.
- TASC in their third-year evaluation compared increases in math and reading test scores among participants versus non-participants who tested at the same proficiency levels. Overall, TASC found that a greater percentage of participants scored at a higher proficiency level over the course of a year as compared to non-participants. Over the course of two years, active<sup>4</sup> participants in TASC after school programs gained an average of four scale score points more on citywide standardized tests than similar non-participants. Over the three years, the increase gap widened to six points more than non-participants.

*Out-of-School Time programs keep kids safe:* An evaluation of the New York City Beacons program concluded that approximately 85% of youth reported that it was "always true" or "mostly true that they felt safe at the Beacons." 74% felt that Beacons were "very helpful" or "pretty helpful" in helping them avoid fighting (Afterschool Alliance 2003).

- Participants in Ohio's School Age Child Care program reduced school absence, latenesses, school suspensions and expulsions at a higher rate when compared with non-participants.
- TASC in their third-year evaluation reported that the most common improvements among participant behavior included a greater ability to maintain self-control, make constructive choices about behavior, as well as improved social skills and relationships with peers.

*Out-of-School Time programs help working parents:* The L.A. Best evaluation 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 (Afterschool Alliance 2003).

- Parents in the TASC evaluation said that the program helped them balance work and family life: 94% said the program was convenient; 60% said they missed less work than before because of the program; 59% said it helped them to keep their job and 54% said it allowed them to work more hours.

By contrast, the results from Mathematica's evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) entitled *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, First Year Findings* disputed the majority of these findings and initiated the current debate on outcomes and measures after the federal government proposed a 40% funding cut to this program in 2003. The evaluators collected baseline and follow up data from 4,400 middle school and 1000 elementary school participants

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<sup>4</sup> "Active" is defined as a student participating 80% or more of the days they were enrolled in and at least 80 days.

and compared outcomes with that of non participants within the same schools making it the largest evaluation to date of a school-based out-of-school time program.

**Some of the more controversial findings include** (U.S. Department of Education 2003):

*Participation in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC resulted in limited academic impact:* At the elementary school level, reading test scores and grades in most subjects were not higher for program participants than for similar students not attending the program. In addition, on average programs had no impact on whether students completed their homework or completed assignments to their teacher's satisfaction.

*While adult care increased, the number of youth in self care remain unaffected:* Findings indicated that programs reduced the proportion of students being care for by parents and by older siblings and increased the proportion of students being care for by non-parent adults.

*Participation did not increase students' feeling of safety after school:* Although incidences were low, middle school students were more likely to report that they had sold drugs "some" or "a lot" and somewhat more likely to report that they smoked marijuana "some" or "a lot." No impacts were found on other measures of behavior.

*Participation produced negligible impact on developmental outcomes.* Programs had no impacts on developmental outcomes, such as whether students felt they were better able to plan, set goal, or work with a team. At the middle school level, program participants were less likely to rate themselves as "good" or "excellent" at working out conflicts with others.

As local, state, federal and private funders engage in high stakes education reform initiatives, there has been significant pressure to link and attribute investments in out-of- school time to academic improvement and success (Afterschool Alliance 2003, Afterschool Alliance 2004).

After the Bush administration announced the 40% cut in funding to 21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs in FY 2003, the response from the out-of-school time community was swift, reasserting OST's primary role of providing positive and developmentally appropriate experiences and calling for a broader definition of academic achievement (Afterschool Alliance 2004). OST practitioners and researchers cited several limitations to *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, First Year Findings* including the sampling method, short length of study time, and the differences between the middle school comparative groups in addition to the fact that the study is primarily a first year evaluation and does not reflect the program's experience as it has matured (National Institute on Out-of-School Time n.d.).

Rather, stakeholders from around the country emphasize the supportive role out-of-school time programs have traditionally played in developing academic progress and placed the primary responsibility of improving grades and test scores squarely in the classroom (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002, Harvard Family Research Project Spring 2003, Kane 2004)

Across the field, researchers have challenged the notion of holding out-of-school time programs directly accountable for academic outcomes as measured by standardized tests and grade point averages (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002, Kane 2004). Although many large-scale evaluations, including LA Best, TASC, San Diego's 6-to-6, have demonstrated increases in grade point averages and standardized tests as a result of participation (Afterschool Alliance, 2003) researchers argue that these expectations are premature given the consensus in early childhood and youth development that substantial positive impacts such as increases in grades and test scores come from sustained involvement in addition to other variables and not mere exposure (Forum for Youth Investment 2002, Kane 2004).

Additionally, Vandell cautions against having high expectations or holding out-of-school time programs accountable for outcomes too early on within the lifespan of a program or initiative (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002). Of the large-scale evaluations that have been performed, few follow a cohort of youth for more than five years. Los Angeles' Better Educated Students for Tomorrow (L.A. Best) is one of the few to engage in a series of regularly scheduled evaluations from 1990-2000 (Afterschool Alliance 2003).

A recent examination of four large-scale OST evaluations including 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, Extended Service Schools (ESS), TASC, and San Francisco's Beacons, concluded that while there were no significant increases in grade point averages and standardized test scores as a result of program participation, all four evaluations demonstrated improved student engagement, student behavior and relationships, greater parental involvement in school, and a greater student commitment to homework. Parents of participants were also more likely to attend parent-teacher organization meetings, after-school events, open houses and more readily participate in homework sessions (Kane 2004).

Instead of defining positive academic outcomes by increases in grade point average and test scores, researchers broaden academic achievement to include three distinct areas: 1) academic skills, 2) higher order skills, and 3) content knowledge (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002). Some of these skills can be learned in multiple settings including out-of-school time. Taken together these "middle ground" goals are measurable and comprise four performance categories that out of school time programs and schools both impact upon: 1) better attendance in school classes and out of school time programs, including sports and other extracurricular activities, 2) better social skills and increases social interaction and contribution in school classes, school buildings and in out of school time programs, 3) fewer disruptive or isolating behaviors demonstrated both in and out of school time and 4) improved capacity to take initiative, plan projects and complete assignments in school or out. Middle ground goals should be included in evaluations not only because they are the building blocks towards improved grades and test scores but also because they illustrate the impact out of school time programs have in supporting learning and development (Forum for Youth Investment October 2002).

### **Designing a program evaluation – Examples of evaluation and accountability initiatives**

Large scale, "flag-ship" OST programs such as TASC, BEACONS, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC have successfully engaged in rigorous data-driven evaluations while smaller or individual out-of-school time programs typically find themselves without the resources or expertise to conduct such formal

evaluations. Nevertheless, researchers stress the importance of implementing some evaluative measures regardless of program size (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002).

Although it is generally recognized that OST programs contribute to positive outcomes for youth, more recently, evaluators have begun to examine whether specific program features and characteristics (e.g., program size, goals, activity offerings, and staff training) are associated with positive youth outcomes (Blank et al 2003). The National Council on Research (NCR) reviewed meta-analyses of youth program evaluations as well as individual program evaluations and although they were able to identify increases in positive outcomes as a result of participation, there was little evidence to connect specific program features to the outcomes produced (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2002).

Grounding an evaluation in a theory of change or logic model is an important first step towards answering questions about how and why a program may be effective.. This kind of causal analysis is critical because allows providers to identify, and target specific program features for improvement and facilitates meaningful re-design when appropriate to produce desired outcomes. The logic model describes the program's goals, strategies for achieving goals, expected outcomes, and the anticipated timetable for program implementation and results. Program theory is important because it defines the resources, interventions and conditions necessary for the program to achieve its intended results. Evaluators can then use this information to determine what to measure and how to collect data. The goal of an evaluation is to surface these theories and examine the extent to which the program theory holds true (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2002, Reisner 2004).

As programs mature and move through different stages of development, the size and scope of program evaluations will also evolve. Newer programs will also tend to focus on start-up concerns such as recruitment, implementation, and staff training while programs with a longer history have a greater need and ability to assess the effects of program services to support program growth (Little 2002). A program in an early program development stage may consist of a single organization delivering one or a multi-service program. At this stage the evaluation can use an intra-agency assessment and include descriptive information about the program. Programs can monitor service delivery through participant satisfaction surveys. In the latter stages of program development, a program may have developed partnerships with other agencies and be more active and invested in out-of-school time on a broader community or systemic level. Programs can examine the benefits of participating in system building efforts, partnerships, and a conduct a formal review of development and governance plans (Little 2002).

Programs must also have the financial and structural capacity to carry out program evaluations no matter the size. Resources must be set aside to allocate staff time, provide training, and ensure technical capacity (computer hardware and software). While many funding streams have reporting and evaluation requirements, few take into account the labor and expense associated with these efforts. While larger organizations can cover the cost of evaluation, many others find creative ways to obtain the resources to design and implement program evaluations. These include partnering with universities who can assist in data collecting, design and implementation, seeking out private funds from local businesses and corporations – a youth development program received resources from a local business that was interested in their job training initiative to determine whether the program could provide trained entry level staff, or becoming a part of a

larger initiative that has a technical assistance program and conducts on-going evaluations for their funded programs (i.e. The After School Corporation) (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention 2002, Little 2002).

Increasingly out-of-school time initiatives have begun to tackle the challenge of improving evaluation and streamlining accountability systems. Some examples include:

*National Out-of-School Time Frameworks:* In the United Kingdom, while the child-care field has a set of nationally prescribed standards, there had been no equivalent for out of school time. In the mid-nineties, the Department for Education and Skills developed a framework for OST activities in schools that included unifying vocabulary and a set of planning principles. Together with the Office of Standards in Education, the two organizations established a system for integrating the inspection of after school activities into the school inspection process. Although it is currently limited to school-based programs, they have developed specific tools that could also be translated for use in the broader out-of-school time field. Among these tools are (Fordham 2004):

- A quality assurance tool that includes sections on implementation, and sustainability, each consisting of multiple questions tied to standards.
- A “rating” system that uses assessment to identify and award high quality out of school time programs with special credentials.
- A self-assessment tool that examines nine essential categories including leadership, people, processes and results.

Additionally, school districts and counties now employ coordinators for quality assurance throughout the UK’s school-based OST system with a recent investment of \$1 million in a three -year quality development program.

*Using technology to link evaluation and funding-* San Francisco’s Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) funds and coordinates the city’s youth services. Specifically, DCFY supports over 200 programs and distributes over \$28 million in annual property tax set asides for children’s services. San Francisco designed Contract Management System (CMS) initially as a web-based grant management system but has since enhanced its capacity to include the collection of outcome-based data. Community-based organizations now use CMS to record their projected annual work plans, which are tied to four citywide goals for youth and to standardized performance measures. CBOs also record data on attendance, participation and demographics on a monthly basis and at the same time submit invoices and monthly reports online. However, CMS does not yet have the ability to assess the impact of participation, or disaggregate attendance data to reflect an accurate number of individual participants versus total participants over a given period (Shah 2004).

### **III. Structural Elements**

## **A. Funding**

### **The Current State of Funding**

Nation-wide there has been a demonstrated growing interest in increasing the availability of out-of-school time programs. Forty-six out of the 50 states have codified legislation explicitly supporting OST services. Collectively, state legislatures have created 214 statutes that provide some support for out-of-school time initiatives. Similar interest has been demonstrated by the plethora of local OST initiatives (Langford 2001).

OST programs and initiatives have been traditionally supported by a complex myriad of funding streams that include local, state, federal and private dollars. However, few communities have been able to marshal this interest into a long-term commitment of stable resources for out of school time. Few dedicated funding sources that are not time-limited. Of those that exist, most have not kept pace with the cost of providing OST services making it difficult for programs to operate to capacity or meet community need.

Additionally, the day-to-day business of operating an OST program leaves little room for strategic planning. Scarce dollars are directed at program costs (for example, staff salaries and materials) that maintain program quality and the number of children served often at the expense of building a stable portfolio of funding. OST programs have generally engaged in sustainability plans after programs have established strong roots in the community and/or the community's need exceeds program capacity (Grossman et al 2002).

Compounding these factors OST programs are vulnerable to changing political priorities and new trends in youth development. Programs may find themselves suddenly falling out of favor with funders. Programs that fail to plan and adapt find themselves at-risk and lose capacity or must rely on emergency fundraising tactics to serve as gap fillers. These pressures are particular grave for OST programs that rely heavily on a single source of funding, and find themselves unprepared as the initial grant periods end (Deich 2002). Although enormously helpful in providing seed money, these funds are generally time limited and may not be renewable. As a result, short-term emergency fundraising practices serve as gap fillers during budget crises, preventing programs from gaining the momentum to sustain growth (Langford 2001).

While states have actively worked to increase the supply of programs serving school-age children and youth, these expansions have not been accompanied by adequate investments in the system's infrastructure.

### **The Cost Per Participant**

Policy makers, funders and programs planners use data on *per participant costs* for an OST program in order to determine the adequacy level of OST funding. However, because a standard definition has not been established, a true comparison of the cost of OST services must take into account the myriad of variables used to define cost. For example, programs often keep the per participant cost low by including or excluding certain costs such as facilities or administrative support in order to remain competitive when seeking funds. Other variables that must be considered are the number of days a program operates, the level of staffing, whether transportation is provided and the comprehensiveness of the services offered. Below is a

sampling of per participant program costs and the variables included and/or excluded from the definition (Kane 2004):

- *Extended Service Schools (ESS)* surveyed 10 programs and determined the per participant cost for programs that ran four to five days a week to average \$15 per participant. It is important to note that the cost ranged from a low of \$8 to a high of \$36. This number did not include planning and start up costs (Grossman et al 2002).
- *The San Francisco Beacons Initiative (SFBI)* reported an average cost of \$27 per day although the costs varied widely from \$15 to \$41 per youth. These costs included matching funds provided by other organizations (Walker 2004).
- *The After-School Corporation (TASC)* reported costs of \$6.76 per youth slot per day in New York City, which is considerably lower than other programs. However, this number excludes building costs and utilities as well as some services funded by sources outside the TASC grant. If these costs had been included, the cost of the program would likely have been similar to ESS and SFBI (Reisner 2002).
- *Boys and Girls Club Teen Initiatives:* In Boston, the estimated *annual* cost of serving teens was \$499 per youth while the cost in the New York program was \$2,178. The costs reflected the different focuses of the two initiatives with the Boston club using their funds to support services for all teens and the New York club used their funds to support extensive outreach efforts as well as the use of an intensive case management approach (Herrera 2003).

### **Financing and Sustainability Strategies**

In spite of these challenges, many OST programs have been able to develop successful sustainability plans that combine, strong leadership and governance, and broad-based support from the community with long and short-term financial strategies. As outlined by the Finance Project, most successful programs use a combination of the following strategies to build a strong financial base for service delivery 1) make better use of existing resources, 2) maximize local, state and federal revenue, 3) create more flexibility in existing funding streams, 4) build public/private partnerships, and 5) generate new dedicated revenue (The Finance Project n.d.):

*Make better use of existing resources:* With the scarcity of new public and private resources, OST programs have always been faced with the challenge of making better use of existing resources. By building on initial grants, and reaching out to a broad range of potential supporters, OST programs have been able to build a portfolio of diverse resources. Making better use of existing resources can encompass a number of strategies such as streamlining services to reduce administrative costs, shifting funding from more costly to less costly programs, or realizing savings by creating economies of scale (The Finance Project n.d.). (See Appendix A for examples).

*Maximize Local, State, and Federal Revenue:* Maximizing local, state and federal revenue requires program planners to actively seek out opportunities to attract new revenue. OST programs are often able to access a broader range of funding by partnering with local school districts and tapping into their administrative and planning resources. The ability to maximize funds is particularly crucial for smaller community-based organizations that may

not have the initial ability to attract partnerships with large institutional entities. No matter the scope or size, successful programs engage in sustainability planning from day one (The Finance Project n.d.). (See Appendix A for examples).

*Create more flexibility in existing streams:* OST programs are most often funded by a patchwork of funding streams. Many of these funding streams operate with their own set of requirements making it difficult for programs to integrate funding sources and in order to fully fund programs. Some states such as Florida allow state and federal funding sources to be pooled and distributed as block grants in order to streamline contract management and reduce the administrative burdens of managing multiple funding streams (The Finance Project n.d.). (See Appendix A for examples).

*Build Public and Private Partnerships:* The creation of public-private partnerships has been one of the most successful strategies used to increase funding and build capacity in OST. By leveraging public and private dollars, and enhancing the public and political will, these partnerships have been able to significantly increase the quality of and access to OST services. However, they are not immune to fiscal realities and require careful planning to maintain and sustain growth (The Finance Project n.d.). (See appendix A for examples).

*Generate New Dedicated Revenue :* Successful OST programs have also engaged in a number of entrepreneurial strategies to supplement and increase their overall funding by implementing sliding scale parent fees, investing in interest bearing accounts, soliciting small business owners, and universities for both cash and in-kind support in addition to holding charity events. These measures have significantly increased a program's overall income with anywhere between \$20,000 to upwards of \$500,000 in additional income depending on the scope and size of the program. By generating new dedicated revenue, programs are better able to protect themselves from difficult funding cycles as well as use these additional funds to focus on expansion and growth.

- *Parent fees-* Traditionally, large youth serving organizations such as the YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and 4-H Clubs have used parental fees to support programming and fill funding gaps (Partee 2003). Most operate on a sliding scale based on a family's income to ensure that no child is turned away if their family cannot pay.
  - Hutchinson/Kids AfterSchool, Hampshire Educational Collaborative charges a small parent fee of \$5 per quarter, which provides the organization with \$30,000 annually. In cases where families cannot meet the sliding scale fee, their child or children may work at the program site to raise their fee through in-kind support activities such as administrative or janitorial services.
  - Kaleidoscope Inc. replaced a large 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant in part with \$75,000 in new income by initiating a sliding scale parent fee.
  - The Local Investment Commission's (LINC) Before and After School Program of Kansas City, Missouri also assesses a small income-based parent

fee that raises more than \$427,000 annually for a large city-wide initiative that serves over 6,500 children.

Legislative Strategies: Many OST initiatives have also waged public campaigns to actively create or access new state funding streams (The Finance Project n.d.).

- START of Sacramento County, California sought funds for expansion by teaming up with leaders of Los Angeles' After school initiative, L.A. Best in order to bring attention to the importance of after school programs and garner state funding. Together they hired a lobbyist who was able to convince a member of the state assembly to sponsor legislation, which would fund after school initiatives statewide. The legislation was timely and well-received because it followed on the heels of welfare reform, and both political parties were able to demonstrate their interest in protecting children and assisting working families. In addition, a Sacramento city council member who supported START early on became an assemblyperson and championed the legislation on the state level. The campaign included organizing site visits for legislatures at both programs. As a result, in 1997, START received almost \$1 million of the \$3.5 million allocated among give after school programs throughout California. In both Kentucky and Connecticut, the legislature made a significant investment and established comprehensive family resource centers designed to address barriers to learning for families and communities. Services include OST programming for school-age children.
- In FY 2002, Kentucky supported 765 Family resource centers with a total of \$49.3 million in tobacco settlement funds, which served approximately 96% of all eligible schools in the state. Each center is located within a school with a range of activities and services designed to meet the specific needs of the neighborhood. Many other states have also used their tobacco settlement funds for children and youth services, although few are dedicated to OST services.

Tax Levy Set-Aside: Several cities have been able to generate a stable source of funding for OST services by setting aside a portion of tax levy with varying degrees of success (The Finance Project n.d.).

- Sacramento's START received \$350,000 from unspent funds from a local hotel tax to initiate and finance START for its first six months. Kaleidoscope continues to work with county officials to allocate a portion of the Monongalia County Schools Excess Levy for OST programs.
- In Denver, a ballot referendum was recently re-introduced to implement a children's tax levy that would support OST services for children and youth. However, in both 2000 and 2001, the referendum failed to pass.
- The City of Seattle Families and Education Levy (FEL) is a 7-year, \$69 million initiative that was passed in 1997 by voters. The funds are administered by the City of Seattle's Office of Education and provide funding for programs that serve children

and their families including OST programs both in the Seattle Public Schools and in the surrounding community. The tax levy is up for reauthorization in 2004.

- The Children's Fund of San Francisco is a tax-levy set aside that has been in effect since 1991 and establishes a dedicated funding stream for children's services. In 2001, the voters of San Francisco passed Proposition D, a charter amendment extending and amending the Fund. Proposition D required San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth and Families to work with the mayor-appointed Children's Fund Citizens Advisory Committee to implement a Community Needs Assessment and a Children's Services and Allocation Plan to guide the disbursement of the funds which was released in November 2003. The Children's Fund will also be increased from 2.5% of assessed property tax to 3%. This represents a 20% increase in the Fund, or an additional \$3.5 million in funds each year. In 2001, the Fund administered \$23 million or 25% of San Francisco's expenditures on children's services. During the first nine years of the amendment, the Fund generated more than \$140 million in revenue for youth programs. Proposition D is scheduled to sunset in 2016 (San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, n.d.).

Other strategies include (The Finance Project n.d.):

- *Investing in Interest Bearing Accounts*-Individual OST programs and collaboratives alike have gained additional revenue by placing funds in interest-bearing accounts and then applying these gains to program costs. In Pennsylvania, the Family System Reform Initiative requires that county collaboratives place all grant monies in interest-bearing accounts. In South Carolina, the State Treasurer invests First Steps to School Readiness state funds as well as non-governmental gifts, grants, and donations into interest-bearing accounts (Bryant 2003).
- *Establishing Income Tax Check-offs*- Income tax check-offs allow taxpayers to direct a portion of their tax payment or refunds to particular programs. In South Carolina, taxpayers can contribute to the First Steps to School Readiness program by designating a contribution on their individual tax returns.
- *Local fund raising activities*-Each year individual OST programs reach out to the communities that they serve for additional financial support through direct fundraising efforts including annual appeals, charity golf tournaments, dining events, soliciting local business owners and universities to help with in-kind support. These activities not only yield much-needed funds, but they also help to enhance their visibility and public support for the program.
- *Consultation fees*- Programs who have experienced success and been recognized as model programs are often able to generate additional income by providing consultation services to new programs and initiatives. Services range from initial start-up assistance to on-going technical assistance as a program develops and growth. The Hampshire Educational Collaborative was able to generate approximately \$25,000 by providing implementation assistance to new programs in

the surrounding communities.

- *Performance and Innovation grants*- To reward local programs for performance and innovation many state collaboratives make incentive funds available to encourage ongoing efforts. For example, the local Multi-Purpose Collaborative Bodies (MPCB) in Michigan may receive innovation grants from the PIT Crew, a state-level governing body for outstanding community initiatives.

## **B. System Building and Design**

**An OST system can be defined by four major groups that are responsible for developing, delivering and ensuring that high quality OST programs and services are available for children and youth (Blank 2003):**

- 1) **Providers** that offer direct services to children and their families
- 2) **Intermediary organizations** that provide a range of support including technical assistance and training, brokering and leveraging public and private funds, and engaging, and convening parents, city and state agencies and other partners to promote effective policy and improve the quality of and access to OST services.
- 3) **City and state agencies, and private organizations** that fund, license and provide oversight.
- 4) **Advocacy organizations** that work independently <sup>5</sup> to promote effective policy and practices.

In the early 90's OST system building initiatives began to take hold in an effort to increase the supply and improve the quality of out-of-school time programs. Although organized OST system building initiatives have taken root in most of the major cities across the country, the broader out-of-school time landscape continues to exist as a hodgepodge of public and privately funded programs with a variety of regulatory schemes, disparate goals and few opportunities for stakeholders to participate in system-building activities (Halpern 2001).

These system-building initiatives operate with diverse governance structures with some led by public-private partnerships, city and state agencies and independent non-profits or intermediaries. For example, New York City alone has been and/or is currently involved in approximately 9 separate out-of-school time initiatives including BEST (The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work.), Community Change for Youth Development (Public/Private Ventures), Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide Afterschool Initiatives (National Institute on Out-of-School Time), and Beacons (Youth Development Institute). Other cities with a high number of out-of-school time system building activities include Baltimore, Boston, and Philadelphia each with 7 or more initiatives (Forum For Youth Investment 2002). Although system-building activities and processes may overlap and generally evolve over time in

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<sup>5</sup> Advocacy organizations are uniquely positioned to engage in planning and promoting effective policy in part because they do not accept government funding.

intensity and effectiveness, progress has been made. The short term impact of these initiatives have included city-wide frameworks for out-of-school time planning, greater communication among stakeholders, an increase in the number of out-of-school time slots, greater professional development opportunities for staff, streamlining of contract, regulatory and quality assurance measures in addition to an overall cohesive of the out-of-school time community (Halpern 2001). However, the critical question remains whether communities are able to sustain the progress and momentum generated after the completion of the initial planning process and competing community priorities emerge. The long-term impact of the many OST initiatives remains to be seen as OST system building efforts mature.

Examples of system-building efforts across the country include:

*Greater Resources for After-School Programming (GRASP)*- In 1999, the Forum for Youth Investment brought together community leaders in four cities to structure, lead, plan and implement a framework for out of school time in four cities- Chicago, Kansas City, Little Rock and Sacramento. The goals of this effort were to 1) develop tools that broaden the conversation from after school programs to out of school opportunities 2) to partner with several cities to take a snapshot of the out of school time landscapes, and 3) to engage communities in a time limited planning process to rally stakeholders, and make better decisions about out of school time for each community (Tolman et al 2002).

*Making the Most of Out-of-School Time (MOST)* was a \$9.7 million initiative funded by the Wallace Foundation, which began in 1993 in Boston, Chicago and Seattle. These three cities with assistance from the National Institute on Out-of-School-Time focused on three areas of building a cohesive school-age child care system by 1) developing a framework for system building efforts; 2) increasing the supply of out of school time opportunities; and 3) the implementation of a standard self assessment to monitor and improve the quality of MOST introduced the Assessing School Age Quality (ASQ) self assessment tool that is linked to an accreditation program sponsored by the National School Age Care Alliance (NSACA). ASQ was developed by the National Institute for Out of School Time (NIOSST) and measured program quality in 21 categories (Halpern 2001).

*Statewide Afterschool Networks* were established in 2002, with funding from the C.S. Mott Foundation. Nine states including California, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Vermont were selected to participate in a multi-state effort to develop public will for continued and increased investments, support capacity building and provide technical assistance to improve the quality of out of school time services. Partners included the Afterschool Alliance, Finance Project, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, and National League of Cities Inc. (Bryant 2003).

#### **A Framework for System Building in Out-of-School Time**

- System-building activities can be organized into three broad areas: 1) ensuring the quality and continuity of programs, 2) creating sufficient capacity and resources and 3) building a climate that supports action and investment (Hall 2002). Most OST system initiatives

such as NIOST's Cross Cities Network go through a system-building process as outlined below (Hall 2002, Forum for Youth Investment 2002):

- *Start with a Vision:* A system building approach must start with a convening of stakeholders including providers, funders, parents, youth, and city and state government to define a shared vision for out-of-school time.
- *Assess Needs, Barriers, Resources, and Assets:* The initiative must engage in a formal data collection process that assesses the current supply and demand for out-of-school time services. Additionally, initiatives must engage parents, youth and the community to ensure that out-of-school time services accurately respond to the needs of children and families. This is often accomplished through focus groups and public opinion polling (Afterschool for All Partnership 2003). The subsequent results can be used to create a message that advances the goals of the initiative. For example, communities may discover that low participation rates are tied to a lack of transportation options for youth in a specific community.
- *Plan Initiative: Process, Structure and Content:* At this stage, decisions must be made about how the initiative will be organized and governed. A leadership team forms that is charged with the authority to make basic decisions and facilitate planning among stakeholders. Most often the city, or an independent intermediary will take on this role. In a few instances, funders or funding collaboratives have assumed this role as in the case of San Francisco's Beacons Program. Sector-wide leadership teams may form in addition to individual working groups that address specific issues. As the leadership team and working groups begin tackling different aspects of the system- cost and contracting, program goals and outcomes, quality assurance and accountability systems, the interaction and exchange of information between groups begins to open stakeholders up to a collaborative process and improved working relationships. However, old tensions between stakeholders are often right under the surface making consensus-building a laborious process (Halpern 2001, Hall 2002).
- *Implement the Plan:* During this phase of the initiative, the initiative is responsible for continuing to engage stakeholders and build collaboration at all levels. For many, this is the most challenging phase of an initiative –where the commitment of the stakeholders is tested and the frustrations and stress of the collaborative process take their toll. Many initiatives lose momentum and participants over time as the conceptual work is completed and the difficult task of change and implementation begins. It is also the first opportunity for stakeholders to test the viability of their plans in the community. Initiatives turn their attention to increasing public awareness, reaching out to underserved populations and creating a mechanism for community engagement and decision-making. Initiatives also continue to secure new investments or leverage existing funds, streamline funding streams, develop performance standards and accountability measures in addition to improving program management and professional development for staff.
- *Disseminate:* OST system building initiatives take root, they must document and communicate their experiences to the broader community. Not only does this enable

other localities to benefit from lessons learned but it also allows out-of-school time programs to heighten their profile and attract new funding.

The collective experiences of OST system building efforts suggest that the challenges in each part of the system overlap and that the process is more interdependent than linear. For example as systems begin to fund professional development opportunities, and youth workers become more effective practitioners, programs are better able to raise both the quality and rate of program participation. Additionally, progress made in one area must be protected vigilantly in order to preserve improvements system-wide (Hall and Harvey 2002).

### **OST System-Building Lessons**

While the landscape of OST system-building efforts is diverse in size, scope and focus, some common lessons can be derived as outlined below.

- *Build trust.* For many it is the first time that they have identified themselves as part of the system while for others the process is colored by past experiences at the negotiating table. Mistrust can derail and undermine the work of system building. An informed and responsive leadership will maintain a transparent decision-making process, help to manage the self-interests of each sector and create equal opportunities for participation (Halpern 2001).
- *Use existing networks and infrastructures.* OST system building efforts must recognize and acknowledge the pre-existing OST networks and infrastructures within each community. Existing networks and infrastructures serve as a foundation for further collaboration and must be held intact or improved as a result of the process. Dismantling existing service networks can be detrimental to the children and families who depend on these services (Hall 2002).
- *Achieving adequate funding for infrastructure, programs and services is the most critical challenge for OST system building initiatives.* While the conceptual frameworks and new approaches to service delivery are an important outcome, a key measure of a successful OST system building effort is the ability to implement these reforms with adequate resources.
- *Supply-building cannot be left up to system-building initiatives alone.* Planning initiatives do not generally have the ability or resources to actually create and maintain funding for new slots. Although some planning grants such as the Wallace Foundation's MOST included funds for limited program expansion, the majority are not long-term and serve more as an incentive to increase public investments. Halpern describes supply building as primarily a public will/public policy problem that requires a response from the advocacy community (Halpern 2001).

Local, and state and federal initiatives must continue to build public support and political will in order to secure adequate investments in out-of-school time. Although there are isolated efforts in almost every community, more and more local OST initiatives are working with national advocacy organizations such as the Afterschool Alliance, to

broaden and strengthen their support-base. Because the campaigns are still fairly new, it remains to be seen if stakeholders can maintain their momentum and produce tangible results. (See Appendix B for examples of effective campaigns).

- *Demonstrate Results*  
Successful OST programs make a conscious effort to document their program's accomplishments. This information is used to both build community support as well as demonstrate a program's effectiveness and worthiness for continued and new financial support. As the out-of-school time field moves towards greater professionalization, the ability to demonstrate positive outcomes has become a pre-requisite to attracting major funding. Beyond large-scale evaluation efforts, smaller programs have also conducted internal assessments of student progress through satisfaction surveys and used tools such as the Search Institute's Developmental Assets framework to evaluate the effectiveness of programs.
- *Start with a few tangible and achievable goals to build momentum and confidence in the process.* Because system building is complex by nature, it is easy to be overwhelmed by both the state of the current system as well as the work that lies ahead. Selecting a smaller set of realistic outcomes helps to focus stakeholders and ensure that system-building goals are met. For example, the Denver Public Schools' Department of Community Education led an Afterschool Task Force of 25 different stakeholder organizations and focused initially on four specific outcomes/product: 1) written guidelines for programs, 2) the creation of needs assessment plans for two Denver neighborhoods, 3) a lessons learned manual for their Beacons initiative and 4) technical assistance memorandums of understanding with community-based organizations managing the Beacons (Hall 2002).
- *Successful OST system building initiatives engage stakeholders in strategic partnerships.* OST initiatives cannot function without the financial and structural support of collaborators and partners such as intermediaries, local and state government, and private funders (Hall 2002). Below are examples strategic partnerships that have increased the capacity and quality of OST programs across the country.

*The After School Corporation (TASC)* was created in 1988 with a challenge grant from George Soro's Open Society Institute (OSI) which pledged up to \$125 million over five years with the condition that matching funds were acquired in a three-to one ratio of public to private funds. TASC is one of the most successful examples of an intermediary that uses strategic partnerships to provide school-based after school programs through a rich network of supports and services. TASC's key strength is in cultivating and managing programmatic and fiscal relationships between schools and providers. TASC offers technical assistance, including professional development, partnerships with major cultural institutions and assistance staffing special arts and cultural programs to its network of school-based programs. TASC has also raised more than \$120 million in matching funds from the New York City's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), Department of Education (DOE), state and federal agencies, in addition to private foundations and corporations.

*Seattle's Project Lift-Off* employs a community partnership model in which more than 40 businesses and community leaders, grant makers, non profit and community organizations, school districts governments, parents and faith based groups work on system building projects together. The city of Seattle funds two core project staff to coordinate and administer the project. The project started off with strong buy-in from local elected officials combined with a broad base of support from community leaders. The mayor, representatives from large corporations such as Boeing, and school superintendents all made a significant commitment to the work by attending sessions and getting involved in working groups. One example of their success was the creation of the Project Lift-Off Opportunity Fund. This is a unique partnership of 22 private grant makers and two governments (City of Seattle and King County) who since January 2001, have invested a total of more than \$5 million in out-of-school time. The first pool of \$300,000 grants was administered to six non-profits in 2002.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

***As out-of-school time continues to gain more momentum and expectations for positive outcomes increase, the OST community must be lead the effort to define realistic goals for children and youth who participate in OST programs.*** While the field has brought unparalleled attention to youth serving organizations and a formal acknowledgement of the youth development approach, researchers caution against “an expectation that the field can produce a multitude of positive skills and psychological traits in young people outside the influences of families, schools and neighborhood (Connell 2000).” This phenomenon is exacerbated by the fact that youth development as a practice has remained very broad. While the practice of youth development has been articulated and packaged in a variety of ways <sup>6</sup> there is still no widely recognized and agreed upon set of standards or “non-negotiables” that readily communicates to those outside of the community what to expect and what to hold out-of-school time providers accountable for (Connell 2000, Halpern 2003). As system-building efforts work to increase the number of available slots, researchers and practitioners need to define and articulate the contours of OST’s impact on youth development.

***OST experts across the board cite the need for long term stable funding sources as the primary obstacle to strengthening and growing the out-of-school time system across the country.*** Polls show that the public is in favor of increased investments in out of school time, however, new sources of stable funding have are scarce and year after year, communities face the threat of budget cuts to youth services. Although there have been many OST planning initiatives, there continues to be a real disconnect between the demand for out of school time and the response from government and the funding community. *Experts believe that significant long-term investments will not happen until:*

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<sup>6</sup> For example: The Search Institute has identified 40 developmental assets that produce positive outcomes for youth, The Youth Development Institute developed Beacons, a school-based community center that provides comprehensive services for youth and their families, and Gil Noam of Harvard Graduate School of Education/Harvard Medical School developed a prevention practitioner model that links the different worlds of the child: school, afterschool, home, peer, and community with an emphasis on health and mental health services.

Out-of-school time is recognized as a distinct profession supported by its own terminology, set of professional standards and a viable career ladder. This requires a significant commitment and investment from providers and funders to adequately pay and train all staff including volunteers, younger staff members (teens and college students), and provide high quality supervision and on-going professional development and support (LeMenestrel 2003, National Institute for Out-of-School Time March 2003).

OST is brought to the forefront of the public political agenda both locally and nationally. Although the public generally agrees that all children and youth should have access to out of school time programs, it is still largely an issue for working families with school age children and as not surfaced as part of a broad public agenda. The importance of out-of-school time programs and services for all children and youth must become a part of the collective conscience just as education and to some degree early childhood education and childcare has (Forum For Youth Investment Summer 2002, Citizen Schools 2004).

OST programs have the capacity to systematically collect data and engage in rigorous evaluations. As funders invest greater financial resources into out of school time they also demand greater accountability from outcome driven data. In many cases, small programs simply do not have the capacity to collect data and engage in formal evaluations and as a result are unable to compete with larger providers for much needed funds. Additionally, supply and demand data is an integral part of any system building effort because it provides the community with baseline understanding of the existing services and where resources should be targeted in the future.

***Because most OST initiatives are less than 10 years old the long-term impact of this work must be closely monitored and a transition plan developed as part of the planning process.*** By and large, OST initiatives have been successful at improving various aspects of the OST system. One of the major challenges that localities encounter is in sustaining these improvements over time. For example, MOST was a three-year system building initiative that took place in three cities X Y Z from 1999-2001. While all experienced some level of success in capacity building and collaboration between stakeholders, over time, lead agency staff and key stakeholders began to question their role in the collaborative and had a difficult time making a long-term commitment to the effort. As the formal process ends and stakeholders are once again faced with the day-to-day realities of program operation, management and funding needs, the ability for most initiatives to sustain that same level of productivity and sense of purpose quickly fades (Halpern 2004).

***Funders must account for and include evaluations, quality assurance and performance monitoring into program costs.*** These measures can only be implemented with greater capacity, dissemination and training for proper implementation and use. While most stakeholders acknowledge the cost, the funding community has been slow to respond to these realities. Promoting standards, evaluations and performance monitoring absent adequate resources can be detrimental to programs because it can entangle providers in a web of regulatory and accountability measures and force providers to divert personnel away from service provision to comply with requirements. Experts agree, “ensuring quality cost[s] but the costs of not doing so,

in a relative new and expanding field are far greater (National Institute of Out-of-School Time March 2002).”

Some initiatives have recognized the importance of building the capacity of providers to provide much needed data and have built technical assistance and support into their funding streams. In Baltimore, complying with the city’s standards for after school opportunities also means receiving funds for technical assistance. Instead of viewing this as an additional burden, providers are able to engage in data collection and evaluations as a way to strengthen and improve their programs. In New York, TASC offers a comprehensive array of technical assistance programming to its contracted programs free of charge including tailored workshops for individual programs on meeting program standards, measuring outcomes and program sustainability and growth (Reisner 2002).

***While there are many examples of local efforts to improve and build upon the existing OST workforce, there continues to be an absence of national or statewide professional development systems.*** As a result, there is little indication that the field as a whole is benefiting from these isolated efforts as programs scramble to react to threats of annual budget cuts (National Institute for Out-of-School Time 2003).

Literature suggests additional research is needed in the following areas:

- Examine the costs and benefits of developing comprehensive professional development opportunities for OST workers as well as the public and private investments needed to sustain such a commitment.
- Determine both the national and local demographics of the OST workforce in order to develop targeted strategies to heighten and strengthen the profile of youth service workers, reduce retention, and make OST a viable and attractive career path.
- Pilot and evaluate a five-city project to test the U.S. Military Child and Youth Care System model in a civilian context and adapt other successful workforce development models in the context of existing city-wide out of school time initiatives.

## Appendix A: Effective Funding Strategies

The following thematic headings and profiles on pages 36-38 are adapted from The Finance Project's *OST-Profiles of Successful Financing Strategies* available online from <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/ost/ostprofiles.asp> and are examples of effective funding strategies.

### **I. Make better use of existing resources**

- **Girls Incorporated of New Hampshire Inc.-** Girls Inc. provides both after school programming and leadership activities for young girls in some of New Hampshire's most disadvantaged neighborhoods. Over the past four years, the program grew from one site serving 60 students to seven sites with over 450 participating girls. In 1997, the budget had been decimated and during this challenging time, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) launched immediate efforts to increase funding and expand Girls Inc. through solicitations of cash and in-kind support from across the community. The governance structure was streamlined by collapsing regional and state leadership into one executive board with a regional advisory council consisting of community stakeholders that were responsive to local issues. Management also looked at each individual site as a separate cost center in order to isolate those that required additional resources to maintain and sustain growth. In addition, Girls Inc. rented out its own facility to community soccer and basketball leagues to generate additional income and secured the use of a vacant building owned by a local veterans' association rent-free with the condition that they pay for the utilities.
  
- **Sacramento's Students Achieving Results for Tomorrow (START)-** START provides a free after-school literacy and enrichment program to over 5,000 students living in low-income areas throughout Sacramento County, California. The program is a collaborative partnership of the City of Sacramento County, school districts, local colleges, corporations, foundations and community organizations. After much success with a midnight basketball program, in 1995 a city councilmember successfully obtained \$360,000 in unspent funds from a local hotel tax to initiate and finance START for the first six months. A director was immediately hired to lead the program and was able to acquire a \$500,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente. In addition, county leaders who were supportive of START allocated \$800,000 in federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds under the pregnancy prevention provision, which removed the need for income eligibility requirements. START also accessed federal funds to reimburse the cost of snacks through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) food programs. Finally, local school districts contributed \$500,000 as well as in-kind services.

### **II. Maximize Local, State, and Federal Revenue**

- **Denver Public Schools' Department of Community Education (DCE) OST initiative-** In FY 2001, with a total budget of \$5.4 million DCE in conjunction with community-based organizations supported 19 school-based after school programs, each serving between 100 to 200 youth. As part of its fundraising efforts, DCE

applied jointly with other local school districts and received \$1 million of a \$9 million grant from the Safe Schools/Healthy Students program, which is jointly funded by the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice and Health and Human Services.

- **Hampshire Educational Collaborative's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs- HEC is a collaborative of local school districts in Western Massachusetts.** HEC serves approximately 4,000 students each year through 12 after school program sites in western Massachusetts. HEC devised a sustainability plan early on to replace over \$800,000 in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds that was set to phase out for three of its sites after 2001. In addition to obtaining two additional cycles of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds, schools were able to draw down \$12,000 each year from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in snack reimbursements. Additionally, HEC's success in drawing down federal dollars helped attract new funds from the Massachusetts Department of Education to partially offset the cost of academic support and services for disabled students.
- **Self-Enhancement Inc. (SEI) Oregon-SEI** provides over 1500 youth with OST services in northeast Portland. In 1987, SEI grew out of a small faith-based community group that provided one-week long summer camp services. In 1990, SEI began providing yearlong services and became a 501© 3 organization. SEI secured start up funds from the city of Portland's Parks and Recreation Department, local foundations and corporations. However, SEI leaders knew that it was not enough and carefully documented the program's activities and effectiveness. SEI was able to catch the attention of the Multnomah County's Department of Youth and Community and Families Services, Department of Community Justice, and Youth Services Consortium who now supply SEI with \$921,596 in contracts. Over the years, SEI has continued to aggressively seek out public funding sources. Recently, it was awarded a three-year grant for \$1,267,830 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through its substance abuse and mental health grant program.
- **Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training (VIET) After-School Program-** This small program began in 2001 and primarily serves Vietnamese youth in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Louisiana Department of Education (DOE) provided \$60,000 for VIET in FY 2003, and an additional \$17,000 in the form of reimbursements for citizenship education activities for youth. Additionally, the Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS) provided \$56,000 in TANF dollars to VIET for pregnancy-prevention activities and a locally administered federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocated \$25,000 to support operating costs.

### **III. Create more flexibility in existing streams**

- **The Door-** In New York City, The Door, provides over 5,000 youth ages 12 to 21 comprehensive health, education, counseling, legal, and OST services. The Door sought to consolidate their numerous state contracts in an effort to streamline reporting requirements. The Door was able to consolidate funding sources that did not have income eligibility requirements into one master contract after 1 ½ years of negotiation with New York State. Under this new system, the Door negotiates a

master contract with multiple state agencies in a single bundled allocation totaling \$1,544,830 million. This has allowed The Door the ability to target program resources as needed and lift the administrative burden of managing multiple contracts.

- **San Diego's 6-to-6 Initiative-** The city of San Diego in conjunction with the San Diego Unified School District began the 6-to-6 initiative with the goal of achieving universal before and after school programs for elementary and middle school students. Today, the initiative has greatly expanded San Diego's OST capacity from serving 2,500 students in 31 schools to more than 25,000 in 194 schools. The Mayor's office acts as the intermediary and fiscal agent for 6-to-6 helping to coordinate and align the various funding streams used to support programming throughout the city. This enables the city to pool resources and ensure that individual programs are not devastated by cuts to a specific funding stream. The Mayor's Office also developed a central system to gather data to ensure that reporting requirements are met without duplicative efforts.

#### **IV. Build Public and Private Partnerships**

- **The After-School Corporation (TASC)-** TASC is a public-private partnership that works to enhance and sustain the quality and availability of OST programs in New York. A challenge grant from George Soros' Open Society Institute (OSI) established TASC in 1998 and provided up to \$25 million per year for each of five years. Since then, OSI extended its financial support for an additional two years for a total commitment of \$125 over seven years. The grant requires a three to one match of public to private funds. TASC's school-based model has been successfully replicated across the state for a total of 205 programs in NYC and in 30 counties in NY State. TASC builds public and political support for universal OST programs through membership in state-wide and national advocacy efforts such as Afterschool for All, Lights on! Afterschool, and the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN).
- **Boys and Girls Club of Hutchinson/Kids After School, Inc. (KAS)** provides after school programs for over 800 youth in Reno, Nevada. KAS, a small youth program began in 1989 after a community assessment revealed that one third of the elementary students in the community went home to an empty house serving. KAS was initially funded by the United Way, parent fees, in-kind support from the Reno County Extension Service, local schools and the Reno County Department of Parks and Recreation. After five years of running a successful youth program KAS, responded to the community's interest to expand its services to include a middle and high school program. KAS Inc. eventually merged with the Boys and Girls Club of Hutchinson to form the Boys and Girls Club of Hutchinson/Kids After School, Inc. This new entity allowed KAS to heighten its profile within the community and allowed them to approach city government regarding the use of a municipal facility for the program. The city donated an under-used building and the school district also pitched in by providing transportation services for participants.

## **Appendix B: Examples of Local, State, and National OST campaigns**

The following thematic headings and profiles on pages 39-30 are adapted from the C.S. Mott Foundation's *Statewide Afterschool Networks: Examples of Effective Practices* and are examples of local, state and national OST campaigns.

### **City**

**Boston's After-School for All Partnership** is a public-private partnership that was initiated by Mayor Thomas M. Menino in 2001 to develop a five-year plan to strengthen Boston's out-of-school time system. The Partnership led by members of city government, the business community as well as local community-based organizations secured \$24.1 million in new resources over a five-year period for out of school time. In addition to planning and coordinating the city's OST efforts and bringing new financial resources to OST, the partnership also manages the city's communications strategy and promotes OST interests and makes information easily accessible to programs, media, funders, researchers and other stakeholders. The public relations aspect of their work has been an integral to bringing new financial and structural resources to the city for OST. The success of their OST efforts has recently led to the development of a new organization, Boston's Afterschool Enterprise, a new organization which is created by combining Boston's 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative and Boston's After-School for All Partnership. This new entity is a public/private partnership focused on expanding, strengthening and sustaining Boston's system of out-of-school time programs to ensure high-quality opportunities for all of Boston's young people. The new organization has received start-up funding over three years from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Boston's After-School for All Partnership and has an ongoing commitment of financial support from the City of Boston.

### **State**

The **Rhode Island Out-of-School Time Alliance** is in the process of implementing a survey of parental attitudes and the need for after school programs. The results will be used to galvanize public and political support for out-of-school time in Rhode Island. The United Way of Rhode Island secured funding in partnership with the Rhode Island Out of School Time Alliance for this initiative. As they prepare to engage legislators and other policy makers, this information will enable the Rhode Island Statewide Afterschool Network to offer concrete evidence on the kinds of after school opportunities constituents need and want. The survey will be released as part of the Rhode Island Governor's Summit on Afterschool.

### **National**

**The Afterschool Alliance** is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of after school programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children. It is supported by a group of public, private and nonprofit organizations that share the Alliance's vision of ensuring that all children have access to after school programs by 2010. Recent events include:

- *Lights On Afterschool!* is an annual one-day event where children, parents and advocates raise awareness about after school issues in their local communities. Last year more than

5,000 communities held *Lights On* events. The annual event began in 2000 and has been supported by the JC Penny Afterschool Fund. The Afterschool Alliance provides a step-by-step guide to help local OST programs organize the event, complete with advice for event management, developing press releases, and how to get local politicians to take notice and be involved.

- *The Afterschool Challenge: Breakfast of Champions* where parents, children, educators and advocates from around the country to meet with legislators about the importance of after school programs in their community. In May 2004, members of the Afterschool Challenge met with 150 legislators to urge lawmakers to reject President Bush's proposal to flat-fund the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers after school initiative in Fiscal Year 2005, and provide the full \$2 billion authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.
- *Afterschool for All: Project 2010*- Recently, the Afterschool Alliance worked with the Academy for Educational Development, The After-School Corporation, the Center for Educational Renewal, LA's BEST, and the National Center for Community Education to establish this long term public campaign. Partners participate in efforts to communicate about the importance of after school as part of a national initiative. These include discussing the benefits of after school programs at events and forums, rallies, testifying at hearings and meeting with decision-makers, authoring guest editorials and letters-to-the-editor and appearing on news and talk shows, and in other ways to keep after school a top priority for the public and key opinion leaders.

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