
When School Is Out: Analysis and Recommendations

What do America's schoolchildren do when school is out? Are they safe? Do they use their free time wisely? Do they have enough contact with adults and enough structure in their lives? These questions have recently moved from the worry lists of parents onto the national agenda. Terms like "after-school programs" and "out-of-school time" now appear in the speeches of presidential candidates and law enforcement officials, bills put forward in Congress and state legislatures, and articles in the popular press.¹

When many of today's adults were between the ages of 6 and 14, their time outside of school was spent at home bent over homework, doing chores, gathered at the dinner table or television set; or it was spent with friends in the neighborhood jumping rope, talking, or exploring a vacant lot or a ravine. Today, however, widespread shifts in family and community life have changed the lives of school-age children. Because more parents are working, fewer familiar adults are home or nearby when children are dismissed from school. Neighborhoods seem less safe; they are crisscrossed by traffic, plagued by street violence, and peopled by strangers. School shootings have heightened public concern about the many forms of trouble that teens and younger children are finding after school—whether it comes in the form of alcohol, drugs, or sexual activity; or takes the shape of vandalism, gang membership, or online relationships with Internet-based hate groups. Americans are becoming increasingly concerned about what the nation's youngsters are doing—and not doing—after school lets out.

Familiar activities like sports, piano lessons, religious classes, and scout troops still dot the afternoons and weekends of many children, but other youngsters are adrift after school. Too many fend for themselves in libraries, congregate in subway stations and neighborhood stores, or spend their afternoons behind the locked doors of city apartments and suburban houses. Growing numbers of children with working parents attend programs in schools or community organizations that provide a range of activities in one place. These programs bear the broad label of "after-school programs"

because they offer supervised activities and a safe place to spend time when school is not in session (including holidays and summer vacations).

Decisions about children's activities outside of school have long been a family matter, and many of the activities that occupy children's free time are organized by parents and voluntary organizations. Nevertheless, a consensus is now emerging that the wider society should share with parents the responsibility for providing programs and activities, safe places, and transportation options to make "out-of-school time" productive for children and teens. A poll of 2,000 adults taken in 1997 found that the majority held negative views of American children, but 60% of those polled endorsed the idea that more after-school programs would provide an effective way of addressing the problems of "kids these days."² Indeed, increased funds are flowing from public and private coffers to create new after-school programs and to expand and strengthen existing ones.

The articles in this journal issue explain the roots of the new consensus that after-school programs are important and examine the programs that exist and that are being created across the United States. The first five articles consider the lives and concerns of school-age children and their parents. The next four articles examine the major types of programs and activities that have evolved to occupy youngsters when school is not in session. Finally, four commentaries give a flavor of the policy climate that surrounds after-school and youth programs.

This Analysis and Recommendations article reviews how after-school programs and activities respond to the interests of children, parents, and policy-makers; and it examines challenges to program delivery. The article focuses not at the program level but at the community level where, we believe, effective solutions to problems of program availability and design should be sought. Based on that analysis, the article highlights the opportunity that community leaders, program designers, advocates, and parents now have to create attractive, purposeful, and sustainable activity options for school-agers.

A New Interest in After-School Programs

A variety of social goals lie behind the new public investments in the after-school programs mentioned above. Some funders hope to promote learning, while others seek to protect children from hazards on the streets or to keep them from risky experi-

mentation. Still others want to see youngsters explore new interests and forge bonds with caring adults.³

In fact, the loosely constructed after-school field is made up of a heterogeneous mix of offerings that sprang from different roots and exhibit different strengths and limitations. Some programs began at or

before the turn of the century (for instance, the YMCA, Scouts, urban settlement houses, and rural Grange or 4H associations).⁴ Some are modern versions of the child care centers that opened during World War II to allow mothers to work in wartime factories and shipyards without worrying that their children were safe when the school day ended. Other programs have emerged in response to new demands. For instance, a growing number of private tutoring programs in wealthy suburbs and urban neighborhoods are operated by for-profit companies;⁵ and comprehensive efforts like the Beacon Schools described in the article by Dryfoos bring community groups, health professionals, youth programs, and social service organizations into a school that remains open 12 hours a day.⁶

As varied as after-school opportunities can be, they are unevenly distributed across and within communities.^{7,8} The low-income neighborhoods where children are most in need of safe, interesting, challenging activities offer few after-school options, and the programs that do exist tend to address risks and problems rather than cultivating children's skills and talents.⁷ Free programs, offered in low-income neighborhoods, usually rely on government and charitable funding that focuses on problems. By contrast, enrichment activities typically charge participant fees, and so are more prevalent in affluent communities.⁴ Even public schools in low-income and wealthy neighborhoods differ in their extracurricular offerings, exacerbating the disparity in opportunities for children.⁸ At last, recent federal, state, local, and private after-school initiatives have begun to counteract this imbalance by launching programs in disadvantaged communities.

The largest new after-school initiative provides grant funding through the U.S. Department of Education to enable schools to establish 21st Century Community Learning Centers. This program grew from a \$1 million demonstration effort in 1997, to a \$40 million program in 1998, to a \$200 million program in 1999. It is likely to double in size in the year 2000. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers are school-based programs offering varied activities for children and community members after regular school hours in a safe, drug-free, supervised environment. The activities offered

range from tutoring and homework assistance; to enrichment projects in literacy, science, and math; to time in the gym, computer lab, or art studio, although the main goal of the funders is to help children succeed academically.⁹

Many other after-school programs draw funds from child care, crime prevention, public safety, and recreation budgets. For instance, in April 1999, the Clinton administration announced a Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative that will provide \$3 million annually from education, mental health, and juvenile justice allocations to help 50 communities provide after-school programs, mentoring, and other violence prevention activities. The federal Child Care and Development Block Grant offers subsidies to pay for child care for low-income children up to age 13. States as diverse as California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, New Hampshire, and New Jersey have made significant investments in programs for school-age children,¹⁰⁻¹² as have cities like San Diego, New York, and Seattle, and private foundations. These new funding streams provide a unique opportunity for community leaders to design local systems of after-school options.

Periods of rapid program expansion entail practical challenges as well as opportunities, however. It is no small feat even now to find appropriate space for program activities, identify trained staff, and secure ongoing funding. Following an examination of the goals that children, parents, and the public have for the out-of-school time of children ages 6 to 14, this Analysis article raises key challenges confronting after-school programs today. It discusses the need for a detailed analysis of supply and demand, and for stable funding to support ongoing operations. It examines the challenges of finding trained staff and appropriate space to support program expansion, and it discusses the role that rigorous evaluation studies should play in clarifying what is reasonable to expect after-school programs to achieve.

The Value of Out-of-School Time

As advocates, professionals, and community leaders set out to build a sustainable system of after-school options, they must begin by

considering the interests held by three key constituencies: children, parents, and—increasingly—policymakers and the public. Programs can work only if they attract children and are trusted by parents. Those that receive public support must also be able to justify the expenditure of tax dollars in the eyes of policymakers and voters. All three groups are concerned about the time that the nation’s young people spend outside of school—not only after classes end in the afternoon but also on weekends, teacher conference days, holidays, and during the long summer vacations.

To a large extent, the habits and expectations that surround out-of-school time today were shaped by patterns of family life that existed in earlier eras.¹³ The school day and school year were planned around the needs of farming families, but now schools release children to empty houses and neighborhoods. After-school activities that grew in popularity during the prosperous, family-oriented 1950s and 1960s, such as Scouts, religious classes, and Little League, find now that few parents are available to provide transportation or to serve as volunteer leaders and coaches because most hold jobs.¹⁴ New programs and policies that reflect current social conditions are needed. Drawing from the articles by Eccles; by Jarrett; by Cooper, Denner, and Lopez; and by Parke and O’Neil, in this journal issue, the following section reviews the current meaning that out-of-school time holds for children, their parents, and policymakers.

To Children: Competence, Relationships, Autonomy

To children, out-of-school time is when they are most free to be with friends, explore their surroundings, pursue their own interests, and retreat with their private thoughts. The activities that promote this self-definition may seem trivial to adults, but they are critical during the early school years when children move outside the family to define a place for themselves in the broader social world. It is during the school-age years that adults hope children will discover and develop their individual talents, learn to recognize and overcome their limitations, and choose activities that will prepare them for satisfying adult lives. They must also learn how to juggle a volatile mix of emotions, hormones, and social pressures while creat-

ing positive relationships with the peers and adults with whom they interact.

No one can give youngsters a recipe for successful identity-building, but as the article by Eccles reports, it is the major task that school-age children confront. They grapple with it both during the structured school day and during the plentiful time they spend away from the school’s routines and requirements. One study found that approximately 40% of the waking hours of a sample of high school children was spent in leisure time.¹⁵ American youngsters spend more time watching television than they spend on anything but school or sleep. In 1999, a national sample of 12-year-olds spent 15 hours per week watching television, compared with 24 hours in school and 74 hours sleeping.¹⁶ Such statistics have prompted calls for more after-school programs to engage youngsters in constructive activities during that large portion of their waking hours.^{4,14}

During the school-age years, new cognitive skills combine with the school’s competitive environment to heighten children’s awareness of how well they perform and how they compare with others. Some expect to succeed, while others become accustomed to failing and may eventually turn their backs on the school culture. Nonschool programs can help by providing a separate environment in which children can explore new skill areas, discover talents within themselves, and experience the thrill of doing something just because they love doing it.¹⁵ These programs can build children’s self-esteem, as well as the personality traits that one observer called the “other three Rs”—resourcefulness, responsibility, and reliability.¹⁷

The process of identity formation is even more complex for young adolescents who are trying to answer the question, “What kind of a person am I turning out to be?”¹⁵ while they cope simultaneously with physical, cognitive, and emotional changes. During middle school (ages 10 to 14), the balance of power between parents and children begins to shift from the adult control that is appropriate during the preschool years, to a period of “co-regulation” when adults remain vigilant but give their school-age children more room to make decisions to prepare for the independence that lies just a few years ahead.¹⁸ Not surprisingly, decision

making, autonomy, and social relationships are high priorities for teenagers.

Accordingly, when teens approach after-school programs, the article by Quinn reports that they are seeking fun and friends, voice and choice. During their out-of-school time, teens seek out places where they can gather with friends and interact with adults on a relatively equal footing,¹⁹ gain recognition for their efforts and skills, and make choices about what they will do and how they will do it. As one 14-year-old with a busy after-school schedule commented to an interviewer, "I liked everything I did 'cause I chose it."²⁰ Programs that provide these opportunities are likely to be popular with young people, while programs that do not may struggle to attract any participants.¹⁹

To Parents: Supervision and Enrichment

The parent perspective on out-of-school time is a blend of anxiety and optimism. It is the responsibility of parents to protect their youngsters and launch them successfully into independent roles in the broader community. Compared with the school day that is controlled by educators, parents set the tone for their children's experiences during out-of-school time. That is the time in which they can communicate their love, values, and expectations, and during which they can impose the rules and controls that they believe are warranted.

The articles by Jarrett; by Cooper, Denner, and Lopez; and by Parke and O'Neil testify to the efforts parents make to ensure that children escape harm, resist temptation, and master valuable skills. Jarrett describes the strategies that success-oriented African-American parents living in impoverished urban neighborhoods adopt to keep their youngsters focused on educational goals and away from the snares of the street culture. These parents closely monitor their children's actions and social contacts to keep the youngsters busy in "insulated and enriching niches" at home or in neighborhood institutions like the church. The articles by Parke and O'Neil, and by Cooper, Denner, and Lopez, echo these themes when discussing how families from varied backgrounds try to guide their children's experiences in the neighborhood, since the neighborhood is a

force that may either support or undermine the family's values.⁸

Increasingly, parents are trying to protect and encourage their children by remote control, as they work outside the home. To them, out-of-school time is a source of anxiety, concern, and expense. The article by Cappella and Lerner reports that 76% of mothers with children ages 6 to 17 were employed in 1996, and two-thirds of them (or half of all mothers with school-age children) worked full time.²¹ The greatest financial and time pressures confront single-parent households, where 28% of children lived in 1996. The number of single mothers who are working has risen as a result of welfare reform, and they have joined the search for after-school care.

For the past 20 years, as the commentary by Seligson explains, parents and community groups have organized school-age child care programs to meet the needs of working parents with older children. Despite the growing awareness of these programs, however, a 1991 national household survey that focused on child care use found that only 8% of children ages 5 to 12 were cared for primarily in centers that met regularly before and after school, and another 21% attended lessons or activities like sports or clubs that were more episodic.²² The majority of children (65%) spent their time in home settings, with parents, family members, or family child care providers, while 5% were in other arrangements including self-care. Cost is a key reason why many children do not attend centers or formal activities: Center fees in 1991 averaged \$35 to \$45 per week per child,²³ imposing a stiff burden on families with limited incomes or several children.

Children's own preferences play a role in family choices of after-school options, as well. As they grow older, many children resist the idea of "day care" and lobby for the right to look after themselves after school. The articles by Vandell and Shumow, and by Kerrebrock and Lewit, point out that there is little consensus on the age at which self-care becomes an appropriate choice for parents to make. Instead, families make highly individual choices after weighing their child's age and personality, the characteristics of the neighborhood, the quality of available alternatives, and the resources the family can use

to pay for after-school care or activities. There is not always a good solution. One single mother who had to leave her eight-year-old home alone while she worked commented to an interviewer, “All I do after 3:00 is worry.”²⁴

To the Public: Prevention, Learning, and Guidance

The primary question that policymakers and voters are likely to ask about out-of-school time is not whether it is important in the lives of children and families but whether it is the rightful concern of government. For more than a century, the main public commitment to children ages 6 to 18 in the United States has been the promise of a free public education. Fulfilling that promise consumes about \$265 billion per year, or \$6,000 per school child, in local, state, and federal tax dollars.²⁵ Is that not enough assistance for government to offer children and families? The answer to that question has begun to change as the public and policymakers have paid more attention to children’s lives and activities after school lets out. After-school programs are increasingly seen as relevant to two broad policy agendas: (1) preventing crime, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy, and (2) promoting school achievement.

Government agencies concerned with physical and mental health worry that children experiment with tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and sex when they are unsupervised in the afternoons.^{26–28} As a result, significant funding has gone to programs that teach adolescents and younger children the values and skills needed to steer clear of these risky behaviors. As the commentary by Walker explains, however, evaluations have shown that such narrowly gauged programs have limited effectiveness. These findings have fueled the growing support for more positive and comprehensive approaches that do not just address youth problems but that promote youth development.^{29,30}

To law enforcement officials, the hours after school are when schoolchildren stir up trouble on the streets, in the malls, or in schoolyards. Widely reported FBI statistics indicate that 47% of violent juvenile crimes take place on weekdays between the hours of 2:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M.³¹ Statistics like these have turned local police into vocal advocates for after-school programs.³² For instance, the Police Athletic League in some cities pro-

vides recreational programs to keep children off the streets, away from gangs, and out of trouble.³³ At the national level, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funds mentoring and after-school programs that provide safe havens, adult guidance, and help in resolving conflicts peacefully.³⁴

For their part, educators tend to see the after-school hours as an opportunity for learning that must not be wasted. The article by Dryfoos points out that American high school children spend only half as many hours in academic instruction each day as do their peers in Japan, France, and Germany.³⁵ The commentary by Brown explains the view of educators who are concerned with lagging and uneven achievement among students despite school reform efforts. They see after-school programs that offer remedial instruction, tutoring, homework assistance, and enrichment projects in math, science, drama, and computers as a valuable way to help students who are disadvantaged or struggling in school. This vision lies behind the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program mentioned earlier that is funding innovative program development in 468 school systems across the United States.

Public opinion polls reveal that Americans endorse the use of government funds to support school-age children and their families, especially to provide structure and moral guidance to children. A national poll of 800 registered voters in 1998 found that adults fear that children who are alone and unsupervised after school are too influenced by their peers and are too tempted by risk.³⁶ Fully 80% said they would be willing to pay \$10 more in taxes to fund community after-school programs that cost \$1,000 per year per child.³⁷ While high-quality programs that meet daily often cost twice that (see the article by Halpern), voter support for government funding in this area is an important step forward. The challenge now is to build that first step into a sustainable movement to meet the out-of-school needs of the nation’s youngsters.

National Commitment, Local Planning

This discussion of stakeholder values regarding out-of-school time reveals both common and divergent interests. A crucial

common thread is the sense that the nation now pays too little attention to the experiences that schoolchildren have in their neighborhoods and homes when school is not in session. Children and their parents need more support from their communities, and recent trends suggest that Americans increasingly see a role for public-sector leadership in this arena.

Of course, because the specific interests of children, families, and policymakers differ, no one program or approach will be sufficient. Children want interesting activities, autonomy, and time with friends. Parents are looking for safe, supervised, goal-directed programs. Policymakers and voters see the value in programs that prevent problem behaviors, promote learning, and provide guidance. But are these the same programs? Will the skateboard parks and teen clubs that youngsters request satisfy their parents' need for an after-school program they can trust as a form of supervision? Will either activity provide the educational benefits that policymakers are seeking? No answers to these questions are available today, but one can easily see that communities need an array of programs and services that are carefully planned and adequately funded.

The first step toward a sustainable new system of after-school solutions is securing a stable national commitment to invest resources in such programming. A critical second step involves local-level planning efforts to balance the interests of youngsters, parents, and the public; to assess local resources; and to strategically invest available funds in ways that will matter the most to the community's school-age children. Designing communities in which children can thrive will likely involve not only funds for programs but also efforts to create child-friendly public transportation systems, restore safety to the streets, and reinvigorate public facilities for children.

RECOMMENDATION

■ Nationally, continue advocacy and public education efforts to strengthen the willingness of voters to support the use of government resources to address children's out-of-school time. Locally, undertake com-

munity planning efforts to identify needs, establish priorities, mobilize resources, and guide investments to create a community in which children can thrive.

Documenting Supply and Demand

The community-planning processes suggested above will likely uncover a haphazard collection of local programs that are popular but underfunded, hard to categorize, challenging to expand, and uneven in quality. Moreover, while their overall value may be accepted, their specific impacts on children are uncertain. While these problems are implementation challenges at the program level, their impacts reverberate through the system of options for school-age children at both the local and national levels. Therefore, solutions are best sought by taking a systemwide view, beginning with an objective analysis of the supply of, and the demand for, different types of after-school programs and activities.

The ability of planners and researchers to estimate the supply of after-school programs and the demand for them is woefully weak. Only a few major efforts have been made to count and describe the supply of after-school programs and activities, and studies of demand are even more scarce.^{4,23} The systematic assessment of needs and options for children's out-of-school time is hampered by the lack of clear, universal terminology to use in categorizing after-school programs and activities. The omnibus term "after-school program" may mean anything from an extended-day program at school to a dance group to a YMCA basketball league. Such imprecision confuses efforts to document supply and demand, to plan new initiatives, to target program improvement efforts, and to create appropriate expectations for program impact.

A new taxonomy of after-school programs could focus on both program goals and structural characteristics. For instance, a program could be classified based on (1) whether it focuses most on providing child care, educational support, recreation, or youth development; (2) whether it is facility-based and open daily; (3) whether the staff

monitor children's attendance; and (4) whether the program offers a schedule of different activities or a single, time-limited activity like a class. Tradeoffs among these characteristics define what a program can easily achieve. Because no program will meet all needs, public and private investments in specific approaches should be guided by awareness of their strengths and limitations.

Estimating Supply

The universe of after-school programs has grown sharply in the past decade, although its dimensions are unknown (in part because it is unclear what should be counted). Two major reports describing programs for school-age children were published in the early 1990s: the 1991 *National Study of Before- and After-School Programs* (referred to here as the 1991 National Study, and discussed in the articles by Vandell and Shumow, and by Dryfoos),²³ and the 1992 Carnegie Corporation report, *A Matter of Time* (summarized and updated in the article by Quinn).⁴ The 1991 National Study gathered quantitative data on the characteristics of after-school programs that offer regular child care, while *A Matter of Time* assembled information describing the diverse array of regular, drop-in, and episodic activities and programs that occupy the time of youngsters.

The 1991 National Study estimated that about 49,500 after-school programs were open at least two hours per day, five days per week; these programs were attended by approximately 1.7 million children from kindergarten to grade eight.²³ Since then, many public and private initiatives have added to the number of programs. The federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program alone will launch 1,601 new programs in 1998 and 1999, serving an estimated 450,000 children. The article by Dryfoos describes additional investments in school-based programming that have been made recently by states, localities, and private foundations.

Even so, there are 39 million American children between the ages of 6 and 14, and the increasing capacity has only begun to make a dent in the need for after-school solutions, especially among low-income children. The article by Halpern reports that even after several years of supply-building efforts in

Boston, Chicago, and Seattle, there are daily full-year openings for only 35% of the children in Seattle, 14% of the children in Boston, and only 9% of the children in Chicago. Estimates by the GAO confirm Halpern's concern, as the agency found that the known supply of school-age care could cover only about one-third of the population of children with employed parents, especially in rural areas.³⁸ Key factors behind the uneven coverage are variations in parent demand, scarce and unstable funding, and the limited availability of staff and space.

Understanding Demand

Understanding the demand for after-school programs is also a challenging endeavor. The evidence cited that compares the number of program spaces with the population of eligible children suggests that too few programs exist. Indeed, a 1998 survey of parents conducted by the U.S. Department of Education revealed that 74% wanted and were willing to pay for school-based after-school programs, although only a third of those parents reported that their child attended a program.³⁹ Statistics such as these suggest that funds should go to create new or expanded programs.

Cost and Transportation

Some evidence suggests, however, that while interest in after-school programs may be great, the actual demand for existing programs is soft. The 1991 National Study found that 41% of the spaces that existed in licensed programs were unfilled.²³ Utilization rates appear to be strongly influenced by program characteristics like cost and ease of access. The article by Halpern reports that long waiting lists at free programs exist alongside empty spaces in programs that charge fees. One study of low-income families with children ages five to seven asked parents about barriers that kept them from using their preferred after-school options.⁴⁰ Nearly half (43%) of the parents cited cost, and 16% cited transportation problems. The annual cost of school-age child care programs that are open for three hours a day all year round hovers around \$2,000 to \$2,500 per child per year.^{1,41}

The lessons and activities that many parents consider for their older school-age children usually charge fees, as well. A Georgia study found that the state's daily center-

based programs cost a weekly average of \$48 per child, while lessons and activities cost \$22 per week even though they met for only a few hours.⁴¹ Some working parents cannot afford both a space in a daily program and the cost of add-on activities, so they combine the activities with self-care—as long as the child can safely walk or use public transportation to get where he or she needs to go. One single parent whose child spent her afternoons at home said in an interview, “I’d like her to go somewhere and do something. She just needs a ride.”⁴²

Child’s Age and Preferences

As these examples illustrate, the child’s age also influences the demand for after-school programs and activities. Enrollment in daily school-age child care programs drops sharply at about age 11^{22,41} when involvement in activities like lessons and sports picks up, as does the prevalence of self-care.²¹ Researchers who interviewed a sample of 53 children and families over several years found that a typical after-school pattern for youngsters of age 11 or older sounds like this: “Well, on Monday she has soccer practice, on Tuesday she is home by herself, on Wednesday and Thursday she goes to a friend’s house, and on Friday I come home early from work to be with her.”⁴³

Where they exist, drop-in programs such as community centers and Boys and Girls Clubs can play a valuable role in the lives of such independent middle-schoolers, although for many children attendance is irregular. In one national study of 15 successful youth development programs, the participants, who were about 13 years old, spent an average of five hours per week at the program.⁴⁴ As one boy explained to an interviewer, “Sometimes I feel like going to an after-school program. . . . I don’t like having to go. I want to be able to go.”⁴⁵ Designing surveys that will accurately capture this youngster’s demand for after-school options will not be easy, but it is an important task.

Accurate, current supply-and-demand studies can provide crucial information to program developers, advocates, and community leaders. Supply studies should begin by proposing a terminology to categorize after-school programs and activities. They should then identify gaps and redundancies in the array of programs for different age groups,

with different goals, on differing schedules, in different neighborhoods. Demand studies should survey families and children to determine the use they make of programs and activities, and gather information on parent and child preferences, needs, and schedules, perceptions of available options, and satisfaction with the child’s experiences.

RECOMMENDATION

- Conduct research to document the supply of, and the demand for, after-school programs by type, hours, location, and cost of care for children of different ages, to guide the deliberations of community planners, program developers, and policymakers as they allocate new funds and design new programs.

The Challenge of Program Improvement

In the after-school field, a collision is taking place between an underfunded, informally organized array of private, voluntary programs and an infusion of public funding that is changing the landscape of program sponsorship, program goals, and accountability expectations. The new funds will expand access to programs, but efforts are also required to maintain the quality of existing programs. Halpern, in this journal issue, writes of the fragility of after-school programs and the marginal conditions under which many of them operate. While an infusion of new funds would resolve some difficulties, problems of staffing, space, and supporting institutions will remain. There is no cadre of trained youth professionals ready to take up positions in new after-school programs, nor do most communities have facilities designed for children that are currently available for use. Long-term investments are needed to improve individual programs and to establish an infrastructure of facilities and training supports to uphold the quality of after-school programs in future years.

System-Building: The Case of Early Care and Education

System level analysis can help planners and advocates as they seek to maintain quality

while expanding access to programs. For instance, the foundation-supported MOST project (Making the Most of Out-of-School Time) adopted a systems approach when investing \$9.7 million over six years to improve both the availability and the quality of after-school programs in Boston, Chicago, and Seattle.⁴⁶ In the field of early care and education for younger children, a close cousin to the after-school field, system-building efforts launched in the past two decades have helped to foster the development of stronger programs and more supportive policies. Like after-school programming, the early childhood field faces challenges of limited funding, variable quality, and uncertain public support that are serious and unresolved. Nevertheless, the sprawling array of preschool and child care programs has become more organized, and some of that field's advances are described here to suggest next steps that advocates for after-school programming might consider.

Two major strands of work dominate the fragmented field of early care and education. One is a network of programs focused on educational goals that are publicly funded and held to quality standards (Head Start, preschool). The other is a private market of child care services purchased by parents that is governed only by regulations designed to prevent harm to children. Government grants and contracts support Head Start and preschool programs for disadvantaged groups, while tax credits and government subsidy programs help parents pay child care costs. Public support for these expenditures was spurred by landmark research studies that showed the long-term benefits that preschool programs yield to low-income children and that documented the growing reliance on child care by parents in all levels of society.⁴⁷

Concerted attention by researchers, advocates, and professionals to the idea that “quality matters” in early care and education has paid off in policy initiatives that designate funds for quality improvements, in consumer education campaigns that help parents choose good programs, and in accreditation standards that recognize high-quality programs.⁴⁸ The establishment of local child care resource and referral agencies promoted system-building by creating intermediary organizations that help parents

to access local child care programs, offer training to providers, and gather planning data that give a bird's-eye view of the programs in a given community. Many problems remain to be solved before the nation has a well-functioning, equitable system of early care and education, but research, advocacy, and intermediary support organizations have contributed to significant progress in ways that the after-school field might emulate.

Financing for After-School Programs

At the heart of many issues of program implementation in the after-school field lie historic and persistent funding challenges. This fact raises the hopes of advocates that new funds can improve program quality while increasing the availability of programs. To turn those hopes into reality, however, will require creativity, planning, and strategic thinking about ways of mobilizing and combining public and private resources to support programs.

No estimates of how much public funding currently goes to activities during out-of-school time exist at this time. As the commentary by Barnes-O'Connor notes, the U.S. General Accounting Office in 1996 found that 131 federal programs spend a total of more than \$4 billion per year on at-risk and delinquent youths,⁴⁹ although much of that funding went to substance-abuse intervention and job training for older teens. An estimated \$20 billion in public funds is spent annually to help parents pay for child care, but the proportion that goes to school-age children is unknown.⁵⁰ A growing number of schools operate or help support after-school programs, but, again, the extent to which education funds are used to pay program costs is not documented. This absence of information about public funding for after-school programs may reflect the American tradition of ceding responsibility for organizing and funding activities for children and youths to the private, voluntary sector.

Indeed, the 1991 National Study found that 86% of daily after-school program funds came from parent fees,²³ although programs in low-income communities understandably rely more on public and charitable funding. The article by Halpern reports that many of the programs serving low-income children in Boston, Chicago, and Seattle had

expenses that outstripped their revenues and that they relied on donated space, staff vacancies, and creative juggling of expenses to continue operating. Not all programs are this small or fragile, however. For instance, the article by Quinn reports that government funding for Boys and Girls Clubs doubled in just one year from \$4.5 million in 1995 to \$10.3 million in 1996; and the Beacon Schools in New York City operate on annual grants of \$450,000 per site, with which they are expected to serve 1,000 to 2,000 children and community members.⁶

The time is now ripe to conduct a thorough economic analysis of financing for after-school programs that would document the current situation and generate alternative financing models. Much of the new public funding for after-school programs comes in the form of two- to three-year government grants, and it is not certain where the new programs will find ongoing funding for continued operations—especially if the public investments have the effect of disrupting traditions of private charitable support for school-age services. Efforts to assure the financial sustainability of both new and expanded efforts should be high on the priority lists of policymakers and program planners.

RECOMMENDATION

■ Develop and implement new models for financing after-school programs that incorporate affordable parent fees, private-sector support and donations, and expanded government funding. A new approach to combining and balancing these funding sources is required to ensure that programs can be sustained and made accessible to low-income children and families.

Finding and Keeping Qualified Staff

Like both schools and child care, after-school programs are labor-intensive enterprises that revolve around relationships between adults and children, and personnel costs consume, on average, 60% of the budgets of daily after-school programs.²³ In those after-school programs that are licensed as child care providers, the regula-

tions typically hold the ratio of children to adults to no more than 15:1. Problems arise as programs with tight budgets attempt to meet those requirements: Some rely on volunteers or limit staff salaries to less than \$10 per hour.²³ Moreover, after-school programs are, almost by definition, part-time operations. Not surprisingly, staff working only part time for such low pay are unlikely to feel committed to their jobs, and the article by Halpern reports that the average turnover rate among the staff of daily after-school programs exceeds 40% per year—outstripping the high turnover that plagues the nation's child care programs.

School-based programs that are considered educational are not subject to the same licensing requirements and may have more financial flexibility than school-age child care to make different staffing choices, as the article by Dryfoos explains. Schools sometimes pay teachers to staff the after-school programs, with the assistance of university students or community volunteers.^{3,26} Expanding the role of teachers in this way offers advantages and poses problems. Well positioned to maximize connections between the after-school and school day learning experiences, teachers are better educated than most youth workers, although their wage scales are much higher, as well. The article by Vandell and Shumow explains that staff qualifications strongly influence the quality of children's experiences in after-school programs, which argues for efforts to engage trained teachers. On the other hand, as the commentary by Brown suggests, one might argue that teachers need the hours after their classes end for their lesson plans and record keeping.

A related staffing question concerns the specific qualifications that staff of after-school programs need most. The commentary by Seligson emphasizes that running an academic classroom and providing an optimal after-school experience require different skills. As of today, however, there is not an agreed-upon credential or skill set that can be required of after-school and youth workers. Nascent efforts are under way to develop professional standards for program quality,^{51,52} but these efforts are complicated by the differing goals of after-school programs that require staff with different skills

and training. Moreover, specifying staff qualifications cannot improve program quality unless workers also have access to appropriate training opportunities and unless programs can raise staff compensation to reduce turnover. Multifaceted efforts are needed to tackle these interrelated issues.

RECOMMENDATION

■ Invest in efforts to conceptualize the skills required for professional work with school-age children; to create tailored training courses and degree programs; and to design a career ladder that links increasing compensation to increased qualifications.

Access to Facilities and Specialized Resources

Organized programs cannot meet if they do not have safe and appropriate space where children and youths can gather together, engage in a range of activities, and spend quiet time; but facilities have proven to be a stumbling block for many programs. Leading organizations in the youth development field, such as the YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs, have long had their own facilities designed for youths to use. However, the 1991 National Study found that 48% of daily after-school programs operate in shared space that they do not control.²³ Most lack even weekly access to libraries, computer labs, art or music rooms, and playgrounds or parks. When programs do not have connections to such specialized resources, the activities they offer children can easily wear thin and become unattractive. One youngster complained to an evaluator, “Ping Pong every day gets boring.”⁵³

The article by Dryfoos focuses on the potential for locating after-school programs in school buildings—whether the programs themselves are operated by schools or by community organizations. Currently, school-based programs and school leaders negotiate whether or not the program may use school facilities from gymnasiums to computer labs, but these relationships are often difficult. A major benefit from the new after-school initiatives that are funded with grants to school systems may be a greater willing-

ness by school officials to provide after-school access to school buildings and the child-focused resources that are available there.

In addition to school buildings, many communities offer public facilities (such as parks, pools, libraries, museums, recreation centers, and playing fields) that school-age children are eager to use if they are safe, in good repair, and accessible by public transportation. Several leading youth-development organizations have developed methods that communities can use to review both youth needs and resources for youths wherever they might be located—in schools, in public buildings, or under private ownership.^{54–57} In many instances, young people take a leading role in mapping their own communities, then developing and implementing action plans to make improvements.

RECOMMENDATION

■ Establish strategic partnerships between public and private institutions to maximize the benefit derived from resources and facilities that are suited for use by school-age children.

Linking Diverse Programs

One consequence of the new public attention to children’s out-of-school time is that very different types of programs have been grouped together as examples of a communitywide set of after-school options. Diversity yields richness, but it can also lead to tension, competition, and communication difficulties. Complicating this picture is the fact that much of the new after-school funding has gone to school systems. The logic for including schools in planning for after-school services is indisputable, but disparities in power and differences in goals make balanced partnerships between schools and community-based organizations difficult to achieve.^{58,59} Nevertheless, collaborative programs are being established across the nation, and there is no doubt that the field of after-school programs will look far different in 2009 than it does in 1999.

In some instances, new intermediary institutions play a crucial role in supporting partnerships, coalitions, and cooperative

system-building efforts. For instance, Seattle boasts an independent organization called the “School’s Out Consortium/YWCA” that offers training and technical assistance to after-school programs of all types throughout the city. In New Hampshire, a nonprofit coalition called PlusTime works to expand and improve out-of-school programming by awarding start-up grants, offering technical assistance, helping to craft policy, and assisting in community planning processes to ensure that after-school issues are being addressed statewide.⁶⁰ Intermediary organizations like these, which resemble the early childhood field’s resource and referral agencies, help to make the system of independent but linked after-school programs tangible.

RECOMMENDATION

■ Create coalitions, councils, or coordinating bodies (similar to child care resource and referral agencies) to serve as network hubs, intermediaries, advocates, and support systems for after-school programs, families, and youths throughout the community.

Evaluations: Present and Future

The justification for investment in after-school programs and the intermediary organizations needed to support them is, of course, that these programs will help policymakers, parents, and children meet their goals for out-of-school time. Only within the past few years has evidence documenting the impact of after-school programs on children begun to accumulate. In the words of one reviewer, “Research on after-school programs is at a very rudimentary stage.”⁶¹ As the commentary by Walker points out, strong, long-term evaluations of after-school and youth development programs have not yet demonstrated widespread impact on the high-priority youth outcomes that matter to most policymakers and the public.

Indeed, as the article by Quinn points out, relatively few strong studies have been undertaken. Methodological challenges complicate studies of voluntary programs that offer a menu of activities and have broad

goals that are not easily measured (such as increases in self-esteem or leadership skill).^{30,61,62} Evaluation is also costly, and until recently youth program funders have not given it high priority. The past five years have brought a sharp upswing in research on after-school and youth development programs, however. New findings are emerging regularly, and new evaluations are being designed by researchers across the United States.

Studies of daily after-school programs for children under age 10 typically follow the mold of child care research, where children are observed in settings chosen by their families. Some studies compare children who attend after-school programs with those who spend their out-of-school time alone, with a parent, in activities, or with unsupervised peers; others examine children in different after-school programs.^{63,64} As the article by Vandell and Shumow explains, younger children and those in low-income neighborhoods benefit most from after-school child care programs, showing improvements in behavior with peers and adults, work habits, and performance in school. Fewer positive impacts result for older children and for those in middle-class or suburban neighborhoods that are safe and offer a variety of attractive activity options. Program characteristics influence outcomes, as well. Children do not fare well in rigidly structured programs where staff members have a harsh style of interacting, but benefit from attending flexible programs with varied activities and supportive staff.

By contrast, studies of youth development programs serving older children usually focus on individual programs that are well implemented or are testing a new program approach. Evaluations of this type are accumulating rapidly. For instance, in 1998 the American Youth Policy Forum published a volume called *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth*, which reviewed 69 evaluations, and in 1999 it published a second compendium with results from an additional 64 evaluations.⁶⁵ These and other recent reviews summarizing evaluation results^{30,61,65,66} report a collection of positive results. When compared with children who do not participate in after-school programs, the youngsters who do participate achieve higher grades in school, exhibit more positive work habits in school, engage in fewer high-risk behav-

iors, and show more social competence with peers at school and at home.³

When interpreting these positive findings, however, it is crucial to remember that the programs are voluntary and their participants are self-selected. That means that unmeasurable qualities like motivation and interest probably differentiate the children who sign up from their uninterested peers. These preexisting personal qualities could easily lead to more favorable outcomes for the active children, regardless of what specific program they happened to join. Evaluators can control the influence of self-selection by including all the children who were invited to join the program group—even those who declined or drifted away—in the analysis of program impacts. Such evaluations will permit more confident statements about the contribution that after-school programs make to the lives of young people.

New additions to the evaluation literature on after-school programs will soon come from multisite initiatives launched with government and foundation grants. The Department of Education is planning both broad-scale and intensive evaluations of the new 21st Century Community Learning Centers program mentioned at the outset of this article. Such multisite studies promise to yield a wealth of new knowledge about how programs with different characteristics influence the outcomes that matter to the policymakers and the public—from the prevention of risk behaviors to improved school performance, enhanced self-esteem, and higher aspirations for the future.

From a policy perspective, this is a time to concentrate substantial evaluation resources in a few ambitious and careful studies of important programs to gain the knowledge needed to guide subsequent policy and funding decisions. The value that these new studies will have for policymakers, program designers, and advocates will rest on the rigor of the evaluation design and the choice of the outcomes measured. The field-building value of evaluations is greatest if they measure a wide range of outcomes for children, not a narrow set of outcomes that the specific program expects to change. By committing to measure a broad spectrum of important life outcomes that unfold over time (such as the avoidance of early preg-

nancy or delinquency, high school graduation, and career or college choices), evaluations ensure the interest of policy audiences and the public. As a side benefit, comprehensive outcome tracking also permits analysts to detect unanticipated positive or negative changes that might emerge, and to compile and compare findings across studies. When the results of a series of well-designed, comprehensive, coordinated studies are integrated, planners and policymakers will have strong evidence as well as anecdotes on which to base their decisions.

RECOMMENDATION

- Launch a limited number of rigorous evaluations of program models that are important because they are based on strong theory or are being implemented on a wide scale. Such evaluations should be designed to estimate effects on a broad array of outcome measures that matter to planners and policymakers, so that positive results can reinforce public confidence that government has a role to play in providing after-school solutions.

Conclusion

School-age children have entered the public spotlight. They are drawing attention not only as students but as the next generation of well-rounded individuals, parents, workers, citizens, and leaders. Many young people and youth advocates might say, “It’s about time.” The challenge before today’s adults is to make the most of this window of policy opportunity. The new funding for after-school programs will significantly expand the availability of programs and may change their character. These are critical years for the growing field of after-school professionals, program developers, advocates, and researchers.

Because the new resources are public dollars, they are linked to policy goals that are salient to the voters and elected officials. But after-school programs will succeed only if they also appeal to parents and children. As long as advocacy efforts can sustain the current interest of public and private funders in after-school programs, it will fall to commu-

nity leaders to balance the interests of parents who seek child care and educational enrichment; of youngsters who are eager for recreation, skills, and autonomy; of policymakers who focus on school achievement and risk reduction; and of the public that cares about character-building and moral guidance.

This period of fresh public interest, innovation, and program expansion creates a precious opportunity to design a new system of after-school options that is coherent and well supported. This analysis has argued that major problems of program delivery cannot be well diagnosed or resolved program by program, but should be addressed systemwide. This article has touched on four major hurdles: finding ongoing funds, maintaining an able staff, securing appropriate space, and developing an accurate understanding of likely program impacts. With

new funding and widespread program expansion, progress can be made on all four fronts. There is even more reason for optimism if community and program leaders succeed in forging new partnerships and new support institutions to give after-school programs a stable financial base, a professional identity, and opportunities to strengthen overall quality. Together, advocates and professionals, children and parents, and policymakers at all levels of government can move to build an array of programs and activities that are high quality, affordable, and evenly distributed across neighborhoods, to engage children's hearts and minds during the time they spend "when school is out."

Mary B. Lerner, Ph.D.
Lorraine Zippiroli, R.N., M.S., M.H.A.
Richard E. Behrman, M.D.

1. Alter, J. Do you know where your kids are? *Newsweek*. April 27, 1998, at 28–33.
2. Public Agenda. *Kids these days: What Americans really think about the next generation*. Washington, DC: Public Agenda, 1997. See also, California Center for Health Improvement. *Growing up well: Focus on prevention. Californians favor investing in after-school, mentoring, education programs*. Sacramento, CA: CCHI, 1998.
3. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice. *Safe and smart: Making after-school hours work for kids*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Educational Resources Information Center, U.S. Department of Justice, 1998. Available online at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/SafeandSmart>.
4. Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. *A matter of time: Risk and opportunity in the nonschool hours*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992.
5. Pekow, C. Academic enrichment: The new school-age option. *Day Care U.S.A. Newsletter* (September 1, 1997) 26:18.
6. U.S. Department of Justice. *Beacons of hope: New York City's school-based community centers. National Institute of Justice program focus*. Report no. NCJ 157667. Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, January 1996, quote on p. 7.
7. Littell, J., and Wynn, J. *The availability and use of community resources for young adolescents in an inner-city and a suburban community*. Discussion paper series. The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, 1989.
8. Ianni, F.A.J. *The search for structure*. New York: The Free Press, 1990.
9. See the newsletter, *Making After-School Count*, published by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, since June 1998. Available online at <http://www.mott.org/publications>.
10. Blank, H., and Adams, G. *State developments in child care and early education, 1997*. Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 1997, see pp. 60–61.
11. California Department of Education, description of the After-School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnership Program. See Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/cyfsbranch/lsp/asp>.
12. Chung, A.M. Working together to create quality school-age care programs. *Child Care Bulletin* (November/December 1998) 20:11.
13. West, E. *Growing up in twentieth century America: A history and reference guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997.
14. Miller, B. *Out-of-school time: Effects on learning in the primary grades*. School-Age Child Care Project, Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women, Action Research Paper no. 4. Wellesley, MA: National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Wellesley College, June 1995.

15. Csikszentmihalyi, M., and Larson, R. *Being adolescent: Conflict and growth in the teenage years*. New York: Basic Books, 1984.
16. Hofferth, S.L. *Healthy environments, healthy children: Children in families: A report on the 1997 Panel Study of Income Dynamics Child Development Supplement*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, November 1998.
17. See note no. 4, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, quote on p. 35.
18. Collins, W.A., ed. *Development in middle childhood: The years from six to twelve*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1984.
19. McLaughlin, M.W., Irby, M., and Langman, J. *Urban sanctuaries: Neighborhood organizations in the lives and futures of inner-city youth*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994.
20. Belle, D. *The after-school lives of children: Alone and with others while parents work*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999, quote on p. 7.
21. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Trends in the well-being of America's children and youth: 1997*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997, pp. 12–15.
22. Hofferth, S.L. Out-of-school time: Risk and opportunity. In *America's working poor*. T. Swartz and K.M. Weigert, eds. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995, pp. 123–53.
23. Seppanen, P., deVries, D., and Seligson, M. *National study of before- and after-school programs*. Washington, DC: Office of Policy and Planning, U.S. Department of Education, 1993, see p. 2 for history of after-school programs.
24. See note no. 20, Belle, quote on p. 52.
25. Terman, D.L., ed. Financing schools. *The Future of Children* (Winter 1997) 7,3:1–144.
26. Dryfoos, J. *Safe passage: Making it through adolescence in a risky society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
27. Burt, M., Resnick, G., and Novick, E. *Building supportive communities for at-risk adolescents: It takes more than services*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1998.
28. Resnick, M.D., Bearman, P.S., Blum, R., et al. Protecting adolescents from harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *Journal of the American Medical Association* (September 10, 1997) 278:823–32.
29. National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth. *Reconnecting youth and community: A youth development approach*. Silver Spring, MD: NCFY, July 1996.
30. Roth, J., Brooks-Gunn, J., Murray, L., and Foster, W. Promoting healthy adolescents: Synthesis of youth development program evaluations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* (1998) 8:423–59.
31. Snyder, H., and Sickmund, M. *Juvenile offenders and victims: 1997 update on violence*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1997.
32. Fox, J.A., and Newman, S.A. *After-school crime or after-school programs: Tuning into the prime time for violent juvenile crime and implications for national policy*. Washington, DC: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 1998.
33. Healy, M. Making after school special. *Los Angeles Times*. Washington edition. May 19, 1998, at A1, A8.
34. See note no. 26, Dryfoos, p. 237.
35. National Education Commission on Time and Learning. *Prisoners of time*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1994, p. 24.
36. The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Poll finds overwhelming support for afterschool enrichment programs to keep kids safe and smart. Press release. Flint, MI: The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, September 24, 1998. Available online at http://www.mott.org/special_report/sr_press_release.htm.
37. These findings are confirmed by a California survey indicating that 44% of a sample of 1,168 adults said they would be “very willing” to pay more in taxes to make after-school care and recreation programs available to children in their communities. See note no. 2, California Center for Health Improvement.
38. U.S. General Accounting Office. *Welfare reform: Implications of increased work participation for child care*. Report no. GAO/HEHS-97-75. Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, May 29, 1997.
39. U.S. Department of Education, Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. *Family involvement in education: A snapshot of out-of-school time*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1998.
40. Miller, B., O'Connor, S., Sirignano, S., and Joshi, P. *I wish the kids didn't watch so much TV: Out-of-school time in three low-income communities*. Wellesley, MA: National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women, 1996.

41. Herk, M. *Out-of-school time: Selected findings of the 1993 GSAC Parent Survey*. Decatur, GA: The Georgia School-Age Care Association, December 1993.
42. See note no. 40, Miller, O'Connor, Sirignano, and Joshi, quote on p. 79.
43. See note no. 20, Belle, quote on p. 43.
44. Gambone, M.A., and Arbretton, A. *Safe havens: The contributions of youth organizations to healthy adolescent development*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1997.
45. See note no. 20, Belle, quote on p. 79.
46. Halpern, R., Spielberger, J., and Robb, S. *Evaluation of MOST (Making the Most of Out-of-School Time) initiative: Interim report*. Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children, August 1998.
47. Gomby, D.S., and Lerner, M., eds. Long-term outcomes of early childhood programs. *The Future of Children* (Winter 1995) 5,3:1-221.
48. Kagan, S.L., and Cohen, N.E., eds. *Reinventing early care and education: A vision for a quality system*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.
49. U.S. General Accounting Office. *Multiple programs lack coordinated federal effort*. Report no. GAO/T-HEHS-98-38. Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1998.
50. Gomby, D.S., ed. Financing child care. *The Future of Children* (Summer/Fall 1996) 6,2:1-173.
51. Roman, J. *The NSACA standards for quality school-age care*. Boston, MA: The National School-Age Care Alliance, 1998.
52. Seligson, M. School-age child care comes of age. *Child Care ActioNews* (January/February 1997) 14:1,4.
53. Halpern, R., Barker, G., and Mollard, W. Youth programs as alternative spaces to be: A study of neighborhood youth programs in Chicago's West Town. Unpublished paper. Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago, 1998, quote on p. 26.
54. Search Institute. *Places to grow: Youth development opportunities for seven- to 14-year-olds in Minneapolis*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 1995.
55. Blyth, D., and Leffert, N. Communities as contexts for adolescent development. A coherent array of appropriate services for school-age children. *Journal of Adolescent Research* (January 1995) 10:64-87.
56. Sipe, C., and Ma, P., with Gambone, M. *Support for youth: A profile of three communities*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, Spring 1998.
57. Small, S.A. Enhancing context of adolescent development: The role of community-based action research. In *Pathways through adolescence: Individual development in relation to social contexts*. L.J. Crockett and A.C. Crouter, eds. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1995, pp. 211-33.
58. Pittman, K. An unbalanced proposition. *Youth Today* (February 1999) 8:55.
59. Boyle, P., and Wolfson, J. Youth agencies clamor to stay after school. *Youth Today* (July/August 1998) 7:1.
60. Boyle, P. Coalition helps to make programs real. *Youth Today* (July/August 1998) 7:25.
61. Fashola, O. *Review of extended-day and after-school programs and their effectiveness*. Report #24. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, October 1998, quote on p. 54.
62. Leffert, N., Saito, R., Blyth, D., and Kroenke, C. *Making the case: Measuring the impact of youth development programs*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 1996.
63. Vandell, D.L., and Posner, J. Conceptualization and measurement of children's after-school environments. In *Assessment of the environment across the lifespan*. S.L. Friedman and T.D. Wachs, eds. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press, 1999, pp. 167-97.
64. Pettit, G.S., Laird, R.D., Bates, J.E., and Dodge, K.A. Patterns of after-school care in middle childhood: Risk factors and developmental outcomes. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* (1997) 43:515-38.
65. American Youth Policy Forum. *Some things DO make a difference for youth: A compendium of evaluations of youth programs and practices*. Washington, DC: AYPF, 1997; American Youth Policy Forum. *More things DO make a difference for youth: A compendium of evaluations of youth programs and practices*. Vol. 2. Washington, DC: AYPF, 1999.
66. Catalano, R.F., Berglund, M.L., Ryan, J.A.M., et al. *Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs*. Seattle, WA: Social Development Research Group, University of Washington School of Social Work, June 1999.