

MAKING THE CASE:

A FACT SHEET ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

Children and Youth Today

There are approximately 49 million children and youth, ages 6-17, living in the U.S. [1].

The racial and ethnic diversity of America's children and youth (under 18) continues to grow. According to 2000 Census data, 68.6% were white, 15.1% were black or African American, 7.6% indicated "other", 4% chose 2 or more races, 3% were Asian, and 1% were American Indian. Seventeen percent reported Hispanic ethnic origin [2].

A study of child poverty in 20 modern industrialized countries reveals that the U.S. ranks 19th at 20.3%. The poverty rate of the U.S. is two times the average rate of all the other countries combined [3].

Twelve million U.S. children live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level of \$18,400 for a family of four. Double this income is the amount for most families to afford the basic necessities, such as adequate food, steady housing, and healthcare [4].

In 68% of married-couple families with children age 6 to 17, both parents work outside the home; in 77.8% of female-headed families, and 83.7% of male-headed families, the custodial parent works outside the home [5].

There remains a profound gap between the knowledge and skills most students learn in school and the knowledge and skills they need in typical 21st century skills. Students need to learn academic content through real-world examples, applications and experiences both inside and outside of school [6].

Health and Well-being

Within the past three decades the number of overweight children between the ages of 6 and 12 has doubled [7]. Only two percent of children within this age group meet the recommended minimum number of daily servings from all five food groups [8]. The number of overweight teens (12-19 years) has tripled in the past 30 years [7]. As a result of being overweight, these children and youth are at an increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, elevated blood pressure, and low self-esteem [9-11].

Rates of participation in physical activity have declined in the past 30 years for both children and youth. Baker et al. reported that between the ages of 6 and 18, boys decrease participation in physical activities by 24%, while girls decrease participation by 36% between these same ages [12].

Opportunities for recess and physical education are disappearing from urban schools and fewer than 1 in 3 teens get an adequate amount of regular physical activity [13].

Rates of cigarette smoking among teens have been cut in half since the mid 1990s. This rate continued to decline in 2003, however the pace of declination has begun to wane [14].

2002 saw both serious and juvenile crime rates drop nationwide to levels not seen in a generation [15]. Despite this overall decrease, juvenile crime rates for females have been steadily rising. On a national level, delinquency cases involving girls increased by 83% between 1988 and 1997 [16].

The Children's Defense Fund reported that an American child or teen is killed by gunfire every 2 hours and 40 minutes; that results in 9 American children dying from gunfire every day [18].

Children and Youth Spend Time After School in a Variety of Ways

Forty-four percent of families do not have any regular after-school care for their children [19]. This results in approximately 3.3 million children between the ages of 6 and 12 regularly spending time without adult supervision. Ten percent of all children between the ages of 6 and 12 use self-care as their primary child care arrangement [20].

During the school year, more than 1 in 10 children regularly spend time alone or with a sibling under 13; but these children spend twice as much time unsupervised in the summer — 10 hours a week more on average — compared to the school year [21].

Lack of adult supervision and participation in self-care for both children and adolescents have been linked to: increased likelihood of accidents, injuries, lower social competence, lower GPAs, lower achievement test scores, and greater likelihood of participation in delinquent or other high risk activities such as experimentation with alcohol, tobacco, drugs and sex [22-25]. Teens who are unsupervised during afterschool hours are 37% more likely to become teen parents [26].

About one-third of 8th graders, one-fourth of 10th graders, and one-fifth of 12th graders watched four or more hours of television on weekdays in 2000 [27]. Researchers have associated watching violence on TV to an increased likelihood that children and teens will display physically aggressive behaviors, exhibit relational aggression (behaviors that harm others through damage or threat of damage to relationships, feelings, friendship, or group inclusion), and assume the worst in their interactions with others [28, 29].

More than half of teens say they would not watch so much TV or play video games if they had other things to do after school. Fifty-two percent of teens say they wish there were more community and neighborhood based activities during the afterschool hours [30].

In a recent survey of 94 cities conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, city leaders indicated that afterschool program capacity is growing, but only about 35% of children needing afterschool care are actually enrolled in programs [31].

Young people with nothing to do during out-of-school hours miss valuable chances for growth and development. The odds are high that youth with nothing positive to do and nowhere to go will find things to do and places to go that negatively influence their development and futures [32].

Children and Youth Benefit from Participation in Afterschool Programs

In a two year study examining literacy goals and practices in afterschool programs in three cities, Halpern concluded that programs that were exemplary in strengthening literacy were intentional about planning to integrate literacy activities into program life; create a rich literacy environment with book displays and dedicated areas for reading and writing, purposefully integrate literacy into other program activities; and strengthen children's motivation for reading and writing [33].

There is growing evidence that quality out-of-school opportunities matter — that they complement environments created by schools and families and provide important “nutrients” that deter failure and promote success — and that they matter in ways that are observable and measurable [34].

Go Grrrls in Tucson Arizona is a preventative afterschool intervention program focusing on promotion of middle school girls' positive psychosocial development. In a random assignment evaluation, the intervention group reported significantly greater increases in body image, assertiveness, positive attitudes regarding attractiveness, self-efficacy, and self-liking and competence [35].

Recent research by Gambone, Klem, and Connell identified two crucial elements to what matters most in helping youth reach healthy adult outcomes — the achievement of developmental outcomes such as learning to be productive; to connect with adults and peers; to navigate through diverse settings — and the availability of supports and opportunities such as supportive relationships with adults and peers; challenging activities and learning experiences; and meaningful opportunities for involvement and membership [36].

Afterschool programs can increase engagement in learning by providing middle school students with opportunities to meet needs that schools often can't, e.g., personal attention from adults, a positive peer group, and activities that hold their interest and build their self-esteem (Vandell, et al. 1996; Garnezy, 1991; Rutter, 1987; Clark, 1987; Masten, et al. 1990; Comer, et al., 1984; Werner, 1993; Halpern, 1992; As reported in Miller, 2003) [37].

Afterschool programs can offer intangibles such as — the opportunity to engage in activities that help young people realize they have something to contribute to the group; the opportunity to work with diverse peers and adults to create projects, performances and presentations that receive accolades from their families and the larger community; and the opportunity to develop a vision of life's possibilities that, with commitment and persistence, are attainable [37].

In New York City, afterschool programs started by Boys and Girls Clubs in selected public housing developments saw significant drops in drug use, presence of crack cocaine and police reports of drug activity. Drug activity decreased 22%, juvenile arrests dropped 13%, and vandalism in the public housing developments decreased 12.5%. At the same time, parental involvement increased, compared to public housing developments not selected to implement the afterschool programs [38].

In a meta-analysis of 56 studies of out-of-school time programs researchers at McREL found that out-of-school time strategies can have positive effects on the achievement of low-achieving or at-risk students in reading and mathematics; that the timeframes for delivering OST programs (i.e., after school or summer) do not influence their effectiveness; and that OST strategies need not focus solely on academic activities to have positive effects on student achievement [39].

Adolescent mental and emotional well-being is associated with teens' environments. Links have been found consistently between teens' well-being and environments that are emotionally positive and warm and that provide support for developing adolescent autonomy. Some research suggests that positive experiences in one area (for example, in the family, among peers, at school, through youth community service...) may lessen the effect of negative experiences in other areas. Adolescents who spend time in communities that are rich in developmental opportunities for them experience less risk and show evidence of higher rates of positive development [40, 41].

The Out-of-School Time Workforce

According to a recent survey conducted by AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, the out-of-school workforce lacks a clear professional identity. When questioned about their job title, 207 different titles were reported for 350 respondents. Direct line staff alone reported approximately 20 job titles including: child care worker, instructor/teacher, youth worker/leader, and recreation specialists. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority (97%) of OST staff believe that working in the OST field is a profession. However, only 38% think that people outside of this field view it as a profession [42].

The out-of-school time field lacks a national professional development system. However, several statewide initiatives are in pursuit of building components for a statewide system. Alaska, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Michigan, and New York are at various stages of developing core competencies, career lattices, and school-age credentials. Indiana has launched a combined school-age and youth development credential and Massachusetts has created a set of core competencies and is in the process of developing a career lattice. Local efforts are also underway in Baltimore, Chicago, Kansas City, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, DC [43].

Staff turnover rates in military child development centers have been reduced by 300% annually since the Military Child Care Act was passed by Congress in 1989. The Act paved the way for a training system in which staff receive ongoing training and education that is linked to increases in compensation [44].

Respondents to the 2001 National Career Development Survey of early childhood/school-age staff reported that stipends, wage supplement programs, scholarships, and loan forgiveness programs were among their preferred strategies to combating staff turnover [45].

In a national survey of 273 afterschool programs, California Tomorrow found that 56% of responding programs enroll youth from more than one language group, and one in four

serve English Language Learners (ELL). Very few program directors reported having enough bilingual staff to work with these youth in their home languages, and even fewer have staff who are trained to effectively serve youth who speak little English. Half the programs that enroll a significant number of English learners do not have any staff who speak the home languages of the participants and their families [46].

Economic Costs and Benefits

Findings from the MOST Initiative evaluation estimated that a full year program costs approximately \$4,000 per child. Costs drop to \$3,000 when space and utilities are donated. Administrative time and other in-kind donations are excluded from these estimates [47].

A recent report calculates the potential national cost of ensuring developmental opportunities and supports for school-age youth (6-17) would be 144 billion dollars annually. That is a cost of \$2.55 per hour or \$3,060 annually per youth. The resulting return on every dollar is a gain of \$10.51 for every dollar invested [48].

A study by the Rose Institute pertaining to California's proposition 49 concludes that afterschool programs in California are cost-effective. The study indicates that the return to taxpayers ranges from \$2.99 to \$4.03 for every dollar spent on afterschool programs and the benefit to students attending afterschool programs ranges from \$2.29 to \$3.04 for every dollar spent on afterschool programs. Expenditures produce benefits in the areas of reduced child care costs, improved school performance, increased compensation, reduced crime costs, and reduced welfare costs [49].

Public Support Continues to Grow

All 14 women in the Senate signed a bi-partisan letter to President Bush requesting the administration support adequate funding for 21st Community Learning Centers which would double the current number of children served from 1.4 million to 2.8 million [50].

In a random survey of 1178 police chiefs, sheriffs, and prosecutors, respondents were asked to rank the impact of several strategies to reduce youth violence and crime. By more than a 4 to one margin, respondents chose providing afterschool programs for school-age youngsters and more educational child care programs for preschool children rather than hiring more police officers as having the greatest impact in reducing youth violence and crime [51].

Public polling shows strong evidence of public support for afterschool. Across all demographic and party lines, Americans see afterschool as a necessity. Voters say afterschool programs are key to keeping students out of trouble, and they want gov-

ernment at all levels to provide more funds for these programs. They are willing to pay more taxes if they are certain those monies will support afterschool programs [52].

The presence of afterschool programs in public schools has risen. In 2001, 67% of principals reported that their schools offer optional afterschool programs and 60% reported that their programs began within the past five years [53].

In October 2000, “Lights on Afterschool” events were held in more than 1,200 communities nationwide and supported by more than a dozen national partners. Over the past four years, the “Lights On Afterschool” has grown to a week-long celebration. In 2003 more than 6,000 communities participated in events throughout the week and more than 120 national supporting organizations demonstrated their commitment to afterschool [50].

Trends in Public Funding

Federal funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program began at \$750,000 in 1995 and was nearly one billion dollars in FY2003. The program is now administered by the states and a database is being developed to track numbers of young people served by community. In 2003, 1.4 million children and youth were attending programs in approximately 6,800 schools in 1,597 communities across the country [54, 55].

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) represents a significant public investment — \$4.8 billion in federal dollars and an estimated \$2.2 billion in state funds in fiscal year 2003. In addition to these figures, many states are transferring significant amounts of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to CCDF, and are directly spending TANF on afterschool programs and child care [56].

In fiscal year 2001, 36% of 1.8 million children receiving CCDF subsidies were school-aged. Another 10% were kindergarten age. For school-age children receiving subsidies, half were in center-based programs, a third were in family child care homes, and 13% were in the child’s own home [57].

Despite increased funding, disparities in access and quality still persist. Programs in affluent or middle class neighborhoods are more likely to include direct instruction in the arts, enrichment activities, and sports, and are more likely to provide snacks or meals than programs in poorer neighborhoods. Wealthier communities are also more likely to have computer labs, playing fields, and gyms, open enrollment slots, and resources for art and enrichment materials. Programs in low-income areas have much tighter budgets, more facilities in need of repair, longer wait lists to get into the program, and higher staff-to-youth ratios [46].

Strengthening the Field

The delivery of program activities and opportunities to high school age youth during out-of-school time would be enhanced by a systemic approach with infrastructure elements, such as (a) funding collaborations; (b) planning and cooperation among stakeholders; (c) formal linkages between high schools, community, and local government organizations; (d) high school age program standards; (e) an agreed upon set of objectives; and (f) designated citywide leadership [58].

Available evidence suggests that the best program and policy ideas are unlikely to be effective if they do not include proper staff training, a well-developed infrastructure, and buy-in from parents and teens, including involving teens in program development [59].

The most recent wave of evaluations offers a number of valuable lessons for all the interested parties. Future programmatic reforms should focus on raising participation rates, particularly among children who would otherwise be on their own after school.... Similarly, evaluators and policymakers need to be clear about the nature and magnitude of expected effects and be sure studies are prepared to measure them [60].

Researcher T. Kane suggests that in designing future evaluations it may be important to identify intermediate outcomes on the road to student achievement — including parental involvement and homework completion, as well as other outcomes such as teacher perceptions of student engagement [61].

References

1. U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>.
2. Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2002). Kids count census data online. Summary profile for United States. Retrieved from: <http://www.aecf.org/cgi-bin/aecensus>.
3. Vleminckx, K., & Smeeding, T. (Eds.) (2001). Child well-being, child poverty and child policy in modern nations. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
4. National Center for Children in Poverty. (2003). Living at the Edge. Retrieved from: http://www.nccp.org/pub_lat.html.
5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2003. Employment Characteristics of Families Summary (Table 4). Retrieved from www.bls.gov/news.release/famee.t04.htm.
6. Partnership for 21st Century Skills. (2003). Learning for the 21st century. A report and mile guide for 21st century skills. Washington, DC: Author.
7. Odgen, C.L., Flegal, K.M., Carroll, M.D., & Clifford, L. (2002). Prevalence and trends in overweight among US children and adolescents. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 288(14), 1728-1732.
8. Gleason, P. & Sutor, C. (2001). Children's diets in the mid-1990s: Dietary intake and its relationship with school meal participation. Alexandria, VA: US Department of Agriculture.
9. Sinha, R., Risch, G., Teague, B., et al. (2002). Prevalence of impaired glucose tolerance among children and adolescents with marked obesity. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 346(22), 802-810.
10. Freedman, D.S., Dietz, W.H., Srinivasan, S.R., et al. (1999). The relation of overweight to cardiovascular risk factors among children and adolescents: The Bogalus heart study. *Pediatrics*, 103(6), 1175-1182.
11. Strauss, R.S. (2000). Childhood obesity and self-esteem. *Pediatrics*, 105(1). Retrieved from: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/105/1/e15.pdf>.
12. Baker, R., Freedman, M., K. Furano. (1997). Leveling the playing field: An exploration into youth sports for the Walter Haas Jr. Fund: Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.
13. Halpern, R. (2003). Physical activity among low-income children and youth. New York, NY: The After School Project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
14. Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., & Bachman, J. G. (2003). Teen smoking continues to decline in 2003, but declines are slowing. University of Michigan News and Information Services: Ann Arbor, MI [On-line]. Retrieved from: www.monitoringthefuture.org.
15. Butts, J.A. (2003). Juvenile crime in Washington, DC. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
16. American Bar Association (ABA). (2001). Justice by gender: The lack of appropriate prevention, diversion, and treatment alternatives for girls in the justice system. Washington, DC: Author.
17. Children's Defense Fund. (2002). The State of Children in America's Union: A 2002 Action Guide to Leave No Child Behind. Retrieved from: <http://www.childrensdefense.org/pdf/minigreenbook.pdf>.
18. Barnett, R.C., & Rivers, C. (2002, Sept. 2). Out-of-sync work shifts, out-of-sync families. *The LA Times*, p. B13.
19. Urban Institute (2003). Unsupervised time: Family and child factors associated with self-care. Washington, DC: Author.
20. Capizzano, J., Adelman, S., & Stagner, M. (2002). Who's taking care of the kids now that school's out? Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
21. Kerrebrock, N., & Lewit, E.M. (1999). Children in self-care. *Future of Children*, 9(2): 151-160.
22. Colwell, M.J., Pettit, G.S., Meece, D., Bates, J.E., & Dodge, K.A. (2001). Cumulative risk and continuity in nonparental care from infancy to early adolescence. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 47(2): 207-234.
23. Patten, P. & Robertson, A.S. (2001). Focus on after-school time for violence prevention. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.
24. Synder, H.N., & Sickmund, M. (1999). Juvenile offenders and victims: 1999 national report. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs.
25. United States Department of Education. (2002). No Child Left Behind: The facts about 21st Century Learning. Retrieved from: <http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/start/facts/21centlearn.html>.
26. Child Trends Data Bank (2002). Education and skills/behavior that affects learning/watching television. Retrieved from: <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/eduskills.behaviors/behaviors.htm>.
27. American Academy of Pediatrics (2001). Children, adolescents and television (RE0043), 107, (2). Retrieved from: <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics>.
28. Buchanan, A.M., Gentil, D.A., Nelson, D.A., Walsh, D.A., & Hensel, J. (2003). What goes in must come out: Children's media violence consumption at home and aggressive behaviors at school. Minneapolis, MN: National Institute on Media and the Family.
29. Penn, Shoen & Berland Associates. (2001). Telephone interviews with a national sample of 500 teen, 14-17 years of age. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from: <http://www.ymca.net/pdf/executiveSummary.PDF>.
30. The United States Conference of Mayors. (June 2003). After-school programs in cities across the United States. Washington, DC: Author.
31. McLaughlin, M.W. (2000). Community counts: How youth organizations matter for youth development. Washington, DC: Public Education Network.
32. Halpern, R. (2003). Supporting the literacy development of low-income children in afterschool programs. New York, NY: The Robert Bowne Foundation.
33. Forum for Youth Investment. (2003). Out-of-school research meets after-school policy. Washington, DC: Author.
34. LeCroy, C. W. (2003). Experimental evaluation of "Go Grrrls." Tucson, AZ: Author.
35. Gambone, M., Klem, A., & Connell, J. (2002). Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a community action framework for youth development. Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies, Inc., and Institute for Research and Reform in Education.
36. Miller, B. (2003). Critical hours. Boston, MA: Nellie Mae Foundation.
37. Mason-Dixon Pulling and Research. (2002). New York State survey of teens. Retrieved from: www.fightcrime.org/ny/teenpoll.
38. Lauer, P.A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S.B., Aphthorp, H.A., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. (2003). The effectiveness of out-of-school time strategies in assisting low-achieving students in reading and mathematics. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.
39. Zaff, J., Calkins, J., Bridges, L., & Margie, N. (2003). Promoting positive mental and emotional health in teens: Some lessons from research. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

41. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2002). Community programs to promote youth development. Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer A. Gootman, (Eds.), Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
42. LeMenstrel, S.L. & Dennehy, J. (Sept 2003). Building a skilled and stable workforce: Results from an on-line survey of out-of-school time professionals. AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research and National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Retrieved from: http://www.niost.org/about/strategic_plan_building_skilled.pdf.
43. National Institute on Out-of-School Time. (2003). Unpublished findings. Wellesley, MA: Author.
44. Duff Campbell, N., Appelbaum, J.C., Martinson, K., & Martin, E. (April 2000). Be all that we can be: Lessons from the military for improving our child care system. Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center.
45. Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career initiatives. (2002). 2001 Career Development Survey. Boston, MA: Author—
46. California Tomorrow. (2003). Pursuing the promise. Addressing equity, access, and diversity in after school and youth programs. Oakland, CA: Author.
47. Halpern, R., Spielberger, J., & Robb, S. (2001). Evaluation of the MOST (Making the Most of Out-of-School Time Initiative): Final report, summary of findings. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, The Chapin Hall Center for Children.
48. Newman, R., Smith, S., & Murphy, R. (2001). A matter of money: The cost and financing of youth development in America. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research.
49. Brown, W., Frates, S., Rudge, I., & Tradewell, R. (2002). The costs and benefits of after school programs: The estimated effects of the after school education and safety program act of 2002. Claremont, CA: Claremont McKenna College, Rose Institute of State and Local Government.
50. Afterschool Alliance. (2004). Retrieved from: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org>.
51. Mason-Dixon Polling and Research. (2002). National law enforcement leadership survey. Columbia, MD: Author. Retrieved from: <http://www.fightcrime.org>.
52. Lake Snell Perry & Associates, & The Tarrance Group. (2003). Telephone survey of registered voters age 18 or older. Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance. Retrieved from: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/poll_2003_oct.cfm.
53. Belden Russonello & Stewart Research and Communications. (2001). Principals and after-school programs: A survey of prek-8 principals. Washington, DC: National Association of Elementary School Principals.
54. Committee on Education and the Workforce. (2000). Examining the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, Hearing before the subcommittee on early childhood, youth and families. [February 10, 2000, Serial No. 106-85]. Retrieved from: <http://comm-docs.house.gov/committees/edu/hedcew6-85.000/hedcew6-85.htm>.
55. United States Department of Education. (2002). 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grantee Database. Retrieved from: www.ed.gov/21stcccl/awards.html.
56. Child Care Bureau, United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2002). FFY 2001 CCDF data tables and charts. Retrieved from: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/research/01acf800/ages.htm>.
57. Child Care Bureau, United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2003). Setting detail and ages chart. Retrieved from: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/research/01acf8000/list.htm>.
58. National Institute on Out-of-School Time. (2003). Afterschool for high school age youth. Manuscript in progress.
59. Moore, K., & Zaff, J. (2002). Building a better teenager: A summary of "what works" in adolescent development. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
60. Granger, R. & Kane, T. (2004). Improving the quality of after-school programs. Unpublished commentary. Available at www.wtgrantfoundation.org.
61. Kane, T. (2004). The impact of after-school programs: Interpreting the results of four recent evaluations (working paper). New York, NY: William T. Grant Foundation.