
Afterschool Programs in America: Origins, Growth, Popularity, and Politics

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Abstract: The historical and recent growth of afterschool program (ASPs) in the U.S. is discussed in this article. Particular attention is given to the recent history of social and political influences that have led to growth and current popularity of ASPs. The article begins by reviewing changes in schooling and the labor force that created a supervision gap between the school day of children and work day of parents. This gap contributed to the need for afterschool child care. Next, influences leading to a growing recognition of the significance of school-age childcare for working families and their children, including research on the potential risks of self care and benefits of well-designed ASPs, are described. These discussions are contextualized alongside decades of social and political action and debate over the development of and funding for ASPs in America. Several key factors likely to affect afterschool programming in the near future are discussed.

Introduction

Although considerable attention has been devoted to afterschool programs (ASPs) over the last two decades (e.g., Mahoney, Parente, & Zigler, in press; Vandell, Pierce, & Dadisman, 2005), these contexts have been part of American culture for over a century. This article discusses the origins of ASPs and overviews the history of social and political influences that have led to their growth and current popularity. We cover some of the most salient factors affecting the emergence and expansion of ASPs including: changes in the adult labor force, the disappearance of child labor, increasing worry over children's safety in dangerous neighborhoods, recognition that (a lack of) supervision for children during the hours following school dismissal has consequences for their in-school success and psychosocial well-being. We

also examine social-political efforts to expand – or in some cases thwart – the growth of these afterschool programs.

Origins of Afterschool Programs

ASPs emerged primarily from historical changes in children's participation in the labor force and formal schooling (Halpern, 2002). During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the need and desire for American children to participate in the growing industrialized labor force decreased. Groups such as the Children's Bureau, religious institutions, and labor unions worked diligently to end child labor force participation, believing it morally wrong for children to work, especially in dangerous occupations.

Simultaneously, educational expectations for children increased and were bolstered by compulsory education laws passed in the late 1800s. The creation of universal, compulsory education led to an extended period of discretionary time during the afterschool hours for children in the U.S. (Kleiber & Powell, 2005). This fact, coupled with the decrease in child labor, led to what Halpern (2002) described as a "distinct childhood culture" resulting from the larger period between childhood/adolescence and the transition to early adulthood. Drop-in afterschool centers, first called "boys' clubs," appeared in the latter part of the 1800s to fill this idle time. The turn of the century, however, brought with it the idea that more structured play activities would be beneficial for children's growth and development (Lee, 1915). ASPs were subsequently created with mission statements and purposes beyond those of basic child care (e.g., to provide developmental supports to working families, build children's social and academic competencies).

Factors Affecting the Growth of Afterschool Programs

Changes in the American labor force. From their origins to the present, a major factor accelerating the growth of ASPs has been changes in family and labor force participation. Specifically, the rise in women's participation in the paid labor force created a need for child supervision that was no longer being met by traditional family roles and structure. This increase rose sharply in the years during and following World War II. By 1955, 38% of mothers with children 6-17 were employed (U.S. Department of Labor, 2005). Since then, the percentage has continued to increase, with 46%, 55%, 70%, and 76% of mothers employed in 1965, 1975, 1985, and 1995, respectively. In 2004, 78% of mothers with school age children were working (U.S. Department of Labor, 2005). These changes in labor force participation were driven by several factors including economic necessity and the rise in single-parent families.

Rising rates of maternal employment had a significant impact on child care in America. As a result of the gap between the end of the school day for children and the work day of their parents, direct parental supervision of children during the afterschool hours became impossible for many working families. The supervision gap, along with the growing child study movement, (White, 2000) increased attention on the need for adult-supervised and safe afterschool activities for school-aged children (Halpern, 2002; Kleiber & Powell, 2005).

More recently, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (i.e., welfare reform) has specifically affected parental employment among low-income families. This legislation eliminated cash assistance to families with children as an entitlement program (i.e., AFDC) and provided strong incentive for adults to move from welfare to participation in the paid labor force (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (NRC-IOM), 2003).

Although it is difficult to demonstrate causation, rates of employment among poor, single mothers did increase in the years following welfare reform and a considerable amount of the recent political and scientific attention surrounding ASPs has focused on the safety and supervision needs for low-income working families with children (Casey, Ripke, & Huston, 2005; Halpern, 1999; Vandell & Shumow, 1999). Despite this recent attention, the current provision of ASPs does not meet the needs of many working families in America (Stonehill, 2005) and parents continue to struggle with afterschool childcare needs as a result. We discuss the issue of supply and demand for ASPs and the current status of funding for families in more detail later in this section.

The changing American neighborhood. Changes and concerns over the neighborhood context have also affected the growth of afterschool programs. The expansion of urban areas and tenement housing in the early part of the twentieth century extended children's play environments into the surrounding streets and raised new concerns about child health and safety. By the 1960s, inner-city neighborhoods were becoming more dangerous settings for children as a reflection of what Halpern described as "a breakdown of traditional social organization, a decline in informal social control, and shift from turf-focused gang conflict to drug-related violence" (Halpern, 2002, p. 200). Concerns over the impact of exposure to neighborhood crime and violence continues to the present and the potentially deleterious effects of such exposure for children's academic and social development are now well documented (e.g., Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998; Greenberg, Lengua, Coie, & Pinderhughes, 1999; Salzinger, Feldman, Stockhammer, & Hood, 2002).

With regard to afterschool time, gang violence and juvenile crime peak between 3pm-6pm (Newman, Fox, Flynn, & Christenson, 2000). As a result, organizations such as Fight Crime: Invest in Kids have argued that ASPs can play an important role in protecting children from exposure to crime and violence through the provision of safe and adult-supervised setting. In support of this contention, Lord and Mahoney (2007) found higher rates of aggression in the school classroom and lower academic achievement for children exposed to high amounts of violent crime during the afterschool hours. The academic and social consequences of exposure to violence were particularly problematic for children whose afterschool arrangement was self care. However, attending an ASP appeared to partially buffer children against the development of such problems.

Concerns over self care. Although many parents have managed to find adult-supervised arrangements for their children during the afterschool hours, an alternative for millions of American families is self care (i.e. an afterschool arrangement where the child is not under the direct supervision of an adult for extended periods of time). Though the term is seldom used today, children in self care were once called "latchkey children" for the house key they wore around their necks. Today, data from the 2005 Census indicates that 14% (5.2 million) of 5- to 14-year-olds experience an average of 2-9 hours/week in self care (U.S. Census, 2005). The National Household Education Surveys Program of 2005 reports that 7% and 27% of students in Grades 3-5 and 6-8, respectively, spend time in self care at least once a week (Carver & Iruka, 2006). The America After 3pm national household survey reports that 7% (1.3 million), 34% (3.9 million), and 52% (6 million) students in grades 1-5, 6-8, and 9-12, respectively, take care of themselves after school (Afterschool Alliance, 2004).

Although historical documentation of rates in self care is scarce, U.S. Census data indicate that this arrangement has become more common for American families over recent decades (e.g., Johnson, 2005; Smith, 2000; 2002). The increase in self care likely reflects the rise in rates of

maternal employment and longer working hours, increases in the proportion of single parent families, and the lack of availability/affordable alternative afterschool arrangements for working families (e.g., Mahoney & Parente, in press; NRC-IOM, 2002; Vandell & Shumow, 1999).

One impetus for expanding ASPs is the concern that children in self care are at-risk for the development of academic and social adjustment problems. However, the developmental implications of self care for school-aged children have been a source of debate in the scientific literature and across political initiatives to intervene in afterschool child care (Mahoney & Parente, in press). On the one hand, self care was, and to some extent still is, viewed as a way of facilitating responsibility and independence. For example, along with the risks of self care, Riley and Steinberg (2004) acknowledge some possible benefits including opportunities for children to experience autonomy and develop skills apart from adults, and providing an arrangement that (without a supervised alternative) allows parents to work and earn income for the family. Scholars also note that self care is often defined poorly in the literature and may involve care from older siblings or other adults, and that some families employ communication and monitoring strategies that could reduce risks associated with self care (Mahoney & Parente, in press).

On the other hand, for decades scholars have pointed out possible dangers of self care. Indeed, the first Congressional Children's Caucus in 1983 focused on the issue of latchkey children. Child development experts who testified at this Caucus noted that, as opposed to learning through extended periods of solitude, age appropriate forms of responsibility in small increments were how children learned responsibility (Zigler, 1983). It was argued that self care could be both physically dangerous and have negative developmental outcomes, especially for pre-adolescent children.

Since the 1983 Caucus, findings from several studies support these early contentions. For example, net of demographic controls, children experiencing in-home self care have been shown to be at increased risk for:

- 1) stress, loneliness, and fear at home (e.g., Long & Long, 1983),
- 2) low social competence, grades, and academic achievement at school (e.g., Pettit et al., 1997), and
- 3) high cigarette, alcohol and marijuana use among middle school children (e.g., Richardson, Dwyer, McGuigan, Hansen, Dent & Johnson, 1989).

In addition, some research groups have found that, for low-income elementary school children, self care is linked to higher ratings of school-based externalizing behavior problems (Marshall et al., 1997; Pettit et al., 1997; Posner & Vandell, 1994). Moreover, out-of-home self care for early adolescents, which can include any unsupervised afterschool arrangement out of the home and includes activities with peers, has also been associated with low academic achievement (e.g., McHale et al., 2001), high externalizing behavior problems in the school setting (e.g., Pettit et al., 1999), and susceptibility to peer pressure (Steinberg, 1986).

These general associations vary according to the amount of self care experienced, the individual considered, and the ecological conditions in which self care takes place. For example, self care is more consistently related to adjustment problems for younger children as opposed to adolescents (e.g., Galambos & Maggs, 1991; Pettit et al., 1997; Steinberg, 1986), children with pre-existing behavior problems (Pettit et al., 1997), and youth experiencing low levels of parental monitoring (Mahoney & Parente, in press). In addition to individual characteristics, socioeconomic status and neighborhood conditions appear to moderate this relation. Negative

social and academic outcomes associated with self care are more evident among children from low-income families (e.g., Kerrebrock & Lewit, 1999; Marshall et al., 1997) and for poor children living in neighborhoods with high levels of crime and violence (e.g., Levine Coley, Morris, & Hernandez, 2004; Lord & Mahoney, 2007).

Overall, several scholars agree that unsupervised afterschool time offers fewer possibilities for developing academic and social competencies and places children at increased risk for developing adjustment problems compared to adult-supervised settings such as ASPs (Hayes, Palmer & Zaslow 1990; Mahoney & Parente, in press). This general conclusion, along with supporting scientific evidence, both helped to move the afterschool child care issue into the forefront of political discussions and bolster the demand for, and popularity of, ASPs.

Social and political influences (1969-1990). The struggle to support early and school-age child care has historically been a difficult one. Many politicians, especially conservatives, view child care as a family matter rather than a government concern. This perspective can be contrasted with the notion that government should provide child care assistance to support working mothers with young children. In response to such opposing viewpoints and the perceived needs of working families, child care has been part of the political discussions in Washington since the late 1960s. Chaired by President Nixon, the first White House Conference on Children and Youth was held in 1969. This conference led to the development of the Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971 (also known as the Mondale-Brademas Bill), the most comprehensive child care policy ever proposed in U.S. (Morgan, 2001). As proposed, this legislation provided the right to quality child care services for all children regardless of socioeconomic status (H.R. 6748). The bill also included an emphasis on children from low-income families and offered standards for strengthening quality and evaluation for child care programs.

If passed, the Comprehensive Child Development Act would have provided \$2 billion in funding annually for child care (Morgan, 2001; Zigler, Marsland & Lord, 2009), that would meet "... the needs of children... including infant care and before and afterschool programs for children in school" (H.R. 6748, page 16). The bill aimed to ensure that any child care program, including those serving school-age children, would be available to all families, with poor families receiving full support, and others receiving funds calibrated to family income level.

However, the early release of "Windows on Daycare" in 1970, the first national report of the quality of child care developed by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) (Keyserling, 1972; NCJW, 1999), emphasized severe limitations to quality child care in programs throughout the U.S. It was evident the nation was not prepared to implement a national child care system that would ensure quality programming for children from any age group. In the light of this information, the 1970 Conference on Child Care was organized by then-chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau, Prof. Edward Zigler (Yale University) in order to provide information on quality child care to prepare the country for the 1971 Comprehensive Child Development Act. Involving about one thousand participants, including leading national experts on childcare for children, conference discussions revolved around child care needs and solutions for three age groups – infant/toddler, preschool, and school-age children. The conference produced "cookbooks" of how to mount quality programs for all three of these groups, noting that the provision ASPs for school-age children represented the largest of opportunities for quality child care because of its relatively low cost. The informational books were distributed by the Office of Child Development, where the Children's Bureau was housed, and which would have taken the management role in the 1971 Comprehensive Development Act.

Unfortunately, the Comprehensive Development Act was vetoed by President Nixon after passing Congress. The veto sent a vitriolic message to those striving to develop quality, universal system of child care. Notably, no new legislation passed through Congress until twenty years later with the 1990 Child Care and Development Block Grant (Zigler, Marsland, & Lord, 2009).

However, Congressional discussions of afterschool time did not end with the Nixon veto in 1971. As mentioned previously, concerns about children in self care continued to grow with increasing rates of maternal employment and rising numbers of single parent families across the 1970s and early 1980s. In response, Senator Dodd (D-CT) initiated and chaired the first Congressional Children's Caucus in 1983. The topic of the first Caucus was latchkey children. At the time, testimony from experts including, Thomas Long, Evelyn Moore, Michelle Seligson and Edward Zigler, identified the provision of adult-supervised alternatives for these children as one of the most critical needs facing the American family. In addition, latchkey children themselves provided testimony on the variety of fears and risks they experienced while unsupervised during the afternoon hours. The Caucus, however, did not result in any immediate changes in funding for afterschool child care, in general, or for ASPs, specifically.

The importance of ASPs again came into the spotlight in 1988. That year, Bruce Babbitt, who had championed child care as the former governor of Arizona, sought the 1988 Democratic Party nomination for president. In developing his campaign policies, Babbitt brought together a group of twelve childcare experts to inform him on the most achievable and pressing childcare issues facing the nation. The group agreed that afterschool childcare was a realistic goal to include as a plank in his political platform for president. Although Babbitt's bid for the presidency did not come to fruition, he later became Secretary of the Interior during the Clinton administration. His interest in afterschool childcare was potentially influential to members of the administration – including First Lady Hilary Rodham Clinton. Indeed, President Clinton's interest and progress in afterschool child care reflected the First Lady's orientation to improving child care in the U.S. Notably, the Clinton administration's afterschool initiative – the 21st-Century Community Learning Center's (21CCLCs) – was successful. We discuss this legislation in more detail below.

The first substantial federal initiative in school-age care was the 1990 Child Care Development and Block Grant (CCDBG), now called the Child Care Development Fund, or CCDF. The grant provides assistance to low-income households and those receiving or transitioning off public assistance, through subsidized child care expenses. Though no particular allocation of funds was specified for afterschool care, CCDF funds can be used to pay for school-age childcare (see Table 1 for recent state allocations of CCDF). Notably, the bill implementing the CCDBG originally included quality of childcare as a qualifier for receiving funding, but this component was removed before the bill was passed. Accordingly, CCDBG funds do not necessarily provide for quality ASPs. States are also allowed to use a certain portion of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I funding to subsidize childcare, including afterschool childcare (see Table 1).

Social and political influences (1991-present). The past 15 years represent a period of continued growth and interest in ASPs. The 1991 National Before and After School Study (Seppanen & deVries, 1993), that included a nationally representative sample, provided some of the first estimates as to how many American children participated in ASPs. The study reported that approximately 1.7 million children in Grades K-8 were involved in a formal before/after-

school program. When unregulated ASPs were included, the estimate climbed to 3.2 million children. A few years later, the 1997 National Survey of American Families – involving a representative sample of families in 13 states – found that roughly 6.7 million children between the ages of 6-to-12 were enrolled in an ASP (Capizzano et al., 2000). More recently, the America After 3PM survey, a national study of school-age children in Grades K-12 conducted by the Afterschool Alliance (2004), reported that 6.5 million children were involved in ASPs.

Several social and political factors during the past 15 years help to account for the recent growth. First, President Clinton's political agenda called for greater attention to school-age child care. The Clinton administration was successful in passing the 21CCLC legislation. The 21CCLCs represent the major source of Federal support for ASPs in the U.S. Federal funding for the 21CCLCs was first authorized in 1994 under the Improving America's Schools Act (P.L. 103-382) and then supported under the ESEA in 1998. Funding for the 21CCLCs increased steadily through the end of the Clinton administration (i.e., \$40 million in 1998 to \$1 billion in 2002). However, under the Bush administration, funding for the 21CCLCs was reauthorized on January 8th, 2002 as Title IV, under Part B of the Leave No Child Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. The reauthorization resulted in several changes that affected dissemination of funds, program content, and the requirements for program evaluation (e.g., program administration was transferred from the Federal to State the level, requirements for evaluation and performance indicators increased, there was a stronger focus on academic enrichment activities, funding targets shifted to low-performing schools in low-income areas).¹

On February 3rd, 2003 the requested authorization from the Bush administration proposed to cut the 21CCLC funding by 40% (\$400 million) based on stated findings from a national evaluation of the centers conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. However, the proposed funding reduction in the requested authorization was not appropriated by the Senate Appropriation Committee (Mahoney & Zigler, 2006). Since passage of NCLB Act of 2002, the funding level for the 21CCLCs has basically been frozen. Table 1 provides the current state allocations for 21CCLC funds.

Research suggests, however, that current funding provided by the 21CCLCs is not enough to meet the demand. In 2004, 3,469 organizations applied for 21CCLC grants, but only 38% (1,327 organizations) actually received funding (Stonehill, 2005). Given an average award of \$346,787, the 21CCLC budget would need to be increased by approximately \$743 million to meet all requests for new funding (cf., NRC-IOM, 2003). The need for expanding ASP funding is called for by other reports, as well. For example, Halpern (1999) estimated that only 9%, 14%, and 35% of school-aged children were served full-time by ASPs in Chicago, Boston, and Seattle, respectively. Likewise, in a national study of parents of school-age children, the Afterschool Alliance (2004) estimated that an additional 15.3 million children in the U.S. would participate in an ASP if they were available. Accordingly, despite the Federal initiative, the demand for ASPs continues to exceed the supply (Halpern, 1999; Hayes et al., 1990).

Opinion polls on the popularity and need for ASPs echo the above statistics. For instance, the Afterschool Alliance 2003 national opinion poll funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation, asked 800 registered voters if they agreed that children should be offered organized activities such as ASPs. Ninety-four percent agreed (Afterschool Alliance, 2003). In fact, 80% agreed that ASPs were an absolute necessity. Most of surveyed voters supported setting aside Federal, state, and local funding for ASPs, 77% indicated they were concerned with the level of current funding, and 52% reported a willingness to increase their state tax by \$100 so that every child could attend an ASP (Afterschool Alliance, 2003).

The funding gap and proposed budget cut for the 21CCLCs, coupled with their public popularity, again drew attention to ASPs in the Presidential election of 2004. In opposition to the Bush administration's proposal to cut Federal funding for the 21CCLCs, Senator John Edwards (D-SC) called for the Center's annual appropriations to increase to a level \$4 billion. Together, the Presidential campaign platform of Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Edwards included a proposal to increase the 21CCLC funding level to \$2.5 billion (roughly the same amount that the NCLB legislation promised by fiscal year 2007). The proposal included keeping schools open for afterschool activities until 6pm and providing transportation for program participants.

However, with the 2004 re-election of President Bush, Federal funding for the 21CCLCs generally has been frozen at an annual appropriation of about \$1 billion. An exception is Funding for 2008. On March 11, 2008, the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education held a hearing, entitled "After school programs: How the Bush administration's budget impacts children and families," which addressed the potential effects of the president's budget and its reductions in afterschool program spending. Among others, Rep. Dale Kildee (MI), Prof. Deborah Vandell (University of California, Irvine), Priscilla Little (Harvard Family Research Project), and Ladonna Gamble (Interim Project Director of Flint Community School's Bridges to the Future afterschool program) opposed the Bush administration's proposed cuts to the 21CCLCs and argued for increased funding (Committee on Education and Labor, 2008).

Although the subsequent 2008 appropriation did, in fact, represent the first sizable increase (\$999,862) since 2002, the proposed budget for FY 2009 calls for \$281 million reduction in 21CCLC funds. However, President Barack Obama's plans include expanding 21CCLC funds which we discuss more in the final section of this article.

Second, state and local governments have developed their own initiatives to support ASPs in recent years. One unique state initiative is California's Proposition 49. Led by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (R-CA), Proposition 49 (also known as the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program Act of 2002) provides funding to: (1) maintain existing before and afterschool program funding; and (2) provide eligibility to all elementary and middle schools that submit quality applications throughout California (California Department of Education, 2009). Currently this program provides \$537 million to public schools in 386 districts across the state. Recipient schools primarily serve students from low-income families. We highlight only California's state initiative here because it is unique in its scope; however, overall state-wide funding allocations for school-age programs from three major sources – 21CCLC, CCDF, and Title 1 – are provided in Table 1.

At present, the most significant ASP initiatives have occurred at the level of city and local governments. One example is Boston's After School & Beyond program, a merger of the Boston 2-6pm After-School Initiative and the Boston's After-School for All Partnerships. The program grants funding, resources, and support for qualified ASPs. Another major city initiative is New York City's (NYC) Out-of-School Time (OST), launched in October 2005. Following a two-year market research analysis to better understand child care needs in different areas of the city, NYC's OST provided free ASPs to over 550 neighborhoods throughout the city.

Table 1*State-level Funding for Afterschool Programs and School-age Child Care*

U.S. Dollars (FY 2007)				
	21CCLC	ESEA Title I ^a	CCDF ^a	Total
Alabama	14,799,892	194,251,412	348,903	209,400,207
Alaska	4,807,715	34,024,598	35,066	38,867,379
Arizona	19,312,777	263,204,306	436,613	282,953,696
Arkansas	9,246,706	122,031,484	217,497	131,495,687
California	127,685,271	1,643,496,281	2,005,003	1,773,186,555
Colorado	9,545,174	123,928,378	207,475	133,681,027
Connecticut	7,050,269	111,879,468	124,481	119,054,218
Delaware	4,807,715	34,110,286	38,288	38,956,289
District of Columbia	4,807,715	46,025,737	26,556	50,860,008
Florida	48,863,242	589,157,126	990,953	639,011,321
Georgia	30,787,858	410,011,238	676,750	441,475,846
Hawaii	4,807,715	39,638,957	67,210	44,513,882
Idaho	4,807,715	41,327,392	100,538	46,235,645
Illinois	40,166,693	593,136,349	665,932	633,968,974
Indiana	13,740,151	230,085,248	362,086	244,187,485
Iowa	4,807,715	69,213,583	154,298	74,175,596
Kansas	5,985,739	88,061,074	162,060	94,208,873
Kentucky	13,656,071	185,854,297	306,684	199,817,052
Louisiana	20,942,359	277,649,636	399,201	298,991,196
Maine	4,807,715	43,870,320	58,239	48,736,274
Maryland	12,897,299	188,034,165	222,283	201,153,747
Massachusetts	14,406,511	211,607,027	221,777	226,235,315
Michigan	31,486,088	460,301,629	504,414	492,292,131
Minnesota	7,952,424	114,582,991	222,236	122,757,651
Mississippi	12,251,891	174,679,246	276,920	187,208,057
Missouri	13,789,699	201,451,741	335,998	215,577,438
Montana	4,807,715	38,634,910	49,077	43,491,702
Nebraska	4,807,715	50,662,136	99,945	55,569,796
Nevada	5,783,321	80,298,566	122,367	86,204,254
New Hampshire	4,807,715	34,248,186	40,951	39,096,852
New Jersey	19,230,836	252,408,502	319,053	271,958,391
New Mexico	8,382,367	103,846,928	159,016	112,388,311
New York	89,955,104	1,210,071,290	935,220	1,300,961,614
North Carolina	21,953,841	301,103,680	578,075	323,635,596
North Dakota	4,807,715	29,825,087	31,658	34,664,460

Ohio	30,630,985	449,254,685	584,436	480,470,106
Oklahoma	10,379,111	128,266,400	269,779	138,915,290
Oregon	9,752,332	121,425,431	195,142	131,372,905
Pennsylvania	36,073,986	516,459,476	544,030	553,077,492
Rhode Island	4,807,715	50,390,387	47,750	55,245,852
South Carolina	13,349,772	187,901,935	320,931	201,572,638
South Dakota	4,807,715	37,273,903	47,046	42,128,664
Tennessee	15,443,547	205,727,619	385,914	221,557,080
Texas	87,931,754	1,169,499,588	1,877,230	1,259,308,572
Utah	4,807,715	58,196,911	194,135	63,198,761
Vermont	4,807,715	27,198,995	25,172	32,031,882
Virginia	15,391,238	204,733,095	337,932	220,462,265
Washington	13,007,033	182,795,119	287,259	196,089,411
West Virginia	7,341,628	89,220,610	117,700	96,679,938
Wisconsin	11,315,527	201,600,575	257,389	213,173,491
Wyoming	4,807,715	28,094,060	23,402	32,925,177
American Samoa	684,738	8,626,477	n/a	
Guam	829,561	9,261,007	n/a	
Northern Mariana Islands	248,725	3,302,856	n/a	
Puerto Rico	34,130,970	455,589,077	n/a	
Virgin Islands	920,114	11,591,805	n/a	
Indian set-aside	7,128,524	91,753,636	n/a	
Other (non-State allocations)	9,811,662	7,248,099	n/a	
Total (all States)	981,166,230	12,838,125,000	17,018,070	13,836,617,083

^a School-age resource and referral earmark funds.

Note: 21CCLC=21st Century Community Learning Centers, CCDF=Child Care and Development Fund, ESEA=Education and Secondary Education Act.

Providence, Rhode Island has also made substantive investments in ASPs over the past several years. Along with Mayor Cicilline's Providence After School Alliance (PASA) and under the city's Education Partnership group, the city has put forth a network of afterschool activities in five neighborhoods, called AfterZones. These AfterZones expand established community, school, and recreation centers to provide additional ASPs and related activities. Moreover, in 2005, Providence allocated \$2 million dollars in funding for qualified ASPs. Chicago's initiatives include expanding After School Matters, a citywide afterschool program, through Mayor Daley's KidStart initiative. KidStart is a network of children's programs offered by the Chicago Park District, Chicago Department of Human Services, Chicago Public Library, After School Matters, the Chicago Public Schools and others.

Third, although few rigorous studies of ASPs were conducted prior to 1990, quasi-experimental and experimental research concerning the impact of program participation on children's development has grown markedly over the past 15 years (Mahoney, Parente, & Zigler, in press;

Mahoney, Vandell, Simpkins, & Zarrett, 2009). These studies suggest that ASP participation can have important consequences for children's academic performance, social behaviors and relationships, and physical health. One result has been a transformation in the perception and goals of ASPs from one of basic child care and recreation to that of developmental contexts with the potential to contribute significantly to children's positive development (e.g., Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005; Lerner, Lerner, & Almerigi, 2005; NRC-IOM, 2002; Riggs & Greenberg, 2004; Vandell, Pierce, & Dadisman, 2005).

Finally, in recent years, major research institutions, grant-making agencies, and advocacy and education groups have played a significant role in the development of ASPs. For example, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP; founded and directed by Heather Weiss since 1983) has published *The Evaluation Exchange* since 1995. This quarterly publication discusses current issues in program evaluation and has devoted multiple editions to innovations, challenges, and controversies in ASP research. HFRP also maintains the *Out-of-school Time Program Evaluation Database*, a searchable online resource that profiles empirical studies of ASPs.

Likewise, since the mid-1990s, the Chapin Hall Center for Children (CHCC) has included a specific focus on After-school Programs and Research. This focus has produced several publications concerning the need to expand the availability of quality ASPs, including the Making the Most of Out-of-School Time (MOST) initiative, led by Robert Halpern in collaboration with National Institute for Out-of-school Time. A main study area of the Washington DC-based research organization Policy Studies Associates (PSA) (2008) is Youth Development/After-school Programs. PSA has led several large-scale ASP evaluations including the multi-year investigation of The Afterschool Corporation's program in New York City and has developed a variety recent reports and resources concerning ASP quality, evaluation, and programming.

During the past decade, granting institutions have also made funding awards to conduct research on ASPs a priority. For example, special initiatives of the William T. Grant Foundation focus on improving the quality of ASPs and youth organizations and understanding and improving social settings. To this end, W.T. Grant has supported a variety of ASP-related research projects including experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of ASPs, innovative approaches to research design and analysis, and the development of tools to assess program quality.

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation has also supported a variety of ASP initiatives as part of its "Improving Community Education – Learning Beyond the Classroom" priority. These include sponsoring a variety of research projects and conferences concerned with ASP quality improvement, training, and promising practices. Since 2002 the Mott Foundation has supported the development of 31 statewide afterschool networks to help sustain and develop high quality ASPs (Collaborative Communications Group & C.S. Mott Foundation, 2006).

As one of its three main objectives, the recently merged Wallace Foundation focuses on the improvement of out-of-school learning opportunities. In addition to providing direct funds to support ASPs, the Wallace Foundations also supports ASP evaluation research and contributed significantly to the planning and implementation of NYC's OST initiative, discussed briefly above.

Furthermore, over the past decade, efforts from advocacy, lobbying, and education groups such as the Afterschool Alliance (est. 1999), Fight Crime Invest in Kids (est. 1996), the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (est. 1979)², the Forum for Youth Development (est. 1998), and the National Afterschool Association (est. 1987), have contributed substantively to public

and political awareness concerning initiatives that affect ASPs through research and analysis, network development, and communication of research and evaluation findings.

Lastly, in March 2005, the U.S. Congress initiated a bi-partisan Caucus on After School Programs. Chaired by Senators Dodd (D-CT) and Ensign (R-NV), and Representatives Lowey (D-NY) and Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the Caucus now includes 35 Senators and 58 Representatives. The purpose of the Caucus is to increase Congressional discussion and awareness concerning the importance of ASPs for American families. In March 2006, members of this Caucus endorsed a letter to the Senate Budget Committee Chairman, Judd Gregg (R-NH), and Senate Budget Committee Ranking Member, Kent Conrad (D-ND), in an effort to expand funding for the 21CCLCs.

Towards the Future of Afterschool Programming

Afterschool programs have become a common developmental context for young people. Nonetheless, they continue to face a variety of challenges in the current social, political, and economic climate. These include:

- 1) funding support in the midst of an economic downfall,
- 2) program sustainability and expansion,
- 3) quality improvement and maintenance, and
- 4) programming to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population of children.

We highlight these issues below.

First, at the time of writing, the U.S. Presidency has recently changed hands. President Barack Obama and Vice-President Joe Biden have been working with their transition team to prepare and begin implementing some of the new administration's initiatives. Given that federal funding for ASPs struggled in past years, there are reasons to be hopeful about the incoming Obama administration.

Rather than propose to cut the 21CCLC funding, a plank in the Obama/Biden platform is to double the funding (Office of the President-Elect, 2009). This could provide afterschool programming for another 1 million children and would move much closer the No Child Left Behind Act's promise to authorize 2.5 billion to support the 21CCLCs by 2008. Obama and Biden have also proposed to increase opportunities for youth to become involved in service learning and civic activities in the community (Office of the President-Elect, 2009). This includes requiring middle and high school students to perform 50 hours of community service each year and creating 20 "Promise Neighborhoods" in areas with high rates of poverty and crime. The Promise Neighborhoods would include a network of youth services including afterschool activities.

However, the U.S. is also now in the midst of a financial crisis. The crisis has significantly affected rates of employment, consumer spending, manufacturing, and housing markets. This situation, coupled with Obama's other priorities (e.g., troop withdrawal from Iraq, energy and climate change, health care), makes it unclear what status afterschool will ultimately hold in the new administration. Indeed, the federal budget for fiscal year 2010 provides no increase in 21CCLC funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Second, beyond the economic challenges of expanding ASP services, the sustainability and quality improvement of existing programs have become an important issue. Although federal support will be important in such efforts, action at the state and city levels is also critical. For instance, in 2002 the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation partnered with the Afterschool Technical Assistance Collaborative to develop statewide afterschool networks (Collaborative Communications Group & C.S. Mott Foundation, 2006). The majority of states are now part of the afterschool networks. The goals of the networks include:

- 1) creating a statewide structure of partnerships focused on supporting afterschool policy development,
- 2) supporting the development of statewide policies to secure resources for new and established ASPs, and
- 3) supporting statewide systems aimed at ensuring that program quality is high.

Similarly, beginning in the mid-1990s, private funders, local governments and program practitioners in cities across America engaged in developing systems to support the expansion and quality improvement of ASPs at the city-level. Understanding the community context and process by which such citywide collaborative efforts are successfully initiated and advanced is likely to be important for the future of ASPs (Holleman, Sundius, & Bruns, in press).

Third, research shows that program staff is crucial for ASP quality which, in turn, is critical for program impacts (e.g., Mahoney et al., 2009; Smith, Peck, Denault, Blazevski, & Akiva, in press). However, at present, ASP line staff often do not hold college degrees and fewer still have received a formal education in afterschool programming that would help them to provide high quality program practices (Vile, Russell, Miller, & Reisner, 2008). Efforts to engage in a broader view of education that includes professional development and training for ASP staff seems warranted. Education programs aimed at providing such training to ASP staff are beginning and may serve as important templates for the coming years.

For example, led by Professors Joseph Mahoney and Deborah Vandell, the University of California's Department of Education has initiated a Certificate in After-school Education (CASE) program (University of California, Irvine Department of Education, 2009). CASE provides a combination of classroom instruction and supervised fieldwork across a sequence of courses. Students completing CASE requirements gain:

- 1) basic knowledge in child or adolescent development and cultural diversity;
- 2) core knowledge in theory, research, and evaluation of afterschool programs and activities, and
- 3) practical skills working with, and developing quality programming for, children and adolescents in afterschool settings.

Similarly, the Center for After-school Excellence sponsors a one-year certificate program for afterschool workers to gain foundational skills and knowledge in education and youth development through college coursework (Vile et al., 2008).

Finally, ASPs will need to continue exploring ways to best meet the needs of a diverse set of stakeholders. For example, although parents and children are key stakeholders, research suggests that they do not necessarily agree on what should be the goals and curricula of ASPs. In a recent study of a low-income sample of pre- and post-adolescents and their parents, Cornelli Sanderson and Richards (in press) found that the majority of parents wanted ASPs to provide their child with homework time, tutoring, opportunities to learn new things, and work

on computers. Although children wanted time for homework and to learn new things, most of them also wanted to have fun, go on field trips, and participate in team sports. To attract and retain youth participants, finding ways to provide programming that meets the needs and interests of multiple stakeholders seems important.

The program interests of youth who differ in terms of abilities, race/ethnicity, cultural background, age and developmental level, and gender is not well understood. On this score, whether, and to what extent, ASPs have the potential to facilitate development in a positive direction depends partly on what scholars have referred to as "stage-environment fit" (e.g., Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield et al., 1993). In this view, youth development depends on the degree of match between a child's existing abilities, characteristics, and interests and the opportunities afforded to him/her in the immediate social environment. Fit is optimal when the environmental features experienced are structured according to the child's current needs and developmental level.

Accordingly, because ASPs are likely to serve increasingly diverse populations of young people in coming decades, ensuring a good fit between the individual children served and the structure, stimulation, and opportunities in the program environment represents an important goal for current and future programming. In addition, program staff must be sensitive to the reality that maintaining a good stage-environment fit requires that program ecology and offerings be adjusted over time to reflect the child's increasing maturity and changing needs and interests.

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Footnotes:

1. As originally proposed under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 21CCLC legislation provided funding only to public schools or local educational agencies. However, the 2003 Guidelines for these Centers now permit that both public and private agencies (e.g., faith-based organization) be given equal funding opportunity. The impact of expanding funding eligibility in this way has not been evaluated empirically. Source: U.S. Department of Education (2003). *21st Century Community Learning Centers: Non-regulatory guidance*. Retrieved September 1, 2006 from: <http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc/guidance2003.doc>

2. As established in January of 1979, this organization was originally named the School-Age Child Care Project. The organization was renamed the National Institute on Out-of-School Time in 1997 (personal communication, M. Seligson, September 4, 2006).