

After-School Programs Initiative Executive Summary

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This report was prepared in consultation with the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation by Putnam Community Investment Consulting

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DEAR COLLEAGUE,

In California there are over 1.2 million children ages 5 to 14 in low-income families who need subsidized after-school care. However, fewer than 500,000 after-school slots are subsidized with state and federal funding. Additionally, the hours from 3 to 6 p.m. are when juvenile crime is at its peak, when children are most likely to become victims of crime, when 16- and 17-year-olds are most likely to be in a car crash, and when youth are most likely to engage in drug use and sex.

Meanwhile, studies show that participation in well-run after-school programs is linked to greater engagement in school, improved academic achievement, increased educational equity and community savings due to the reduction in crime-related costs. In response to these alarming statistics and the overwhelming evidence of this research, we have allocated \$500,000 toward an After-School Programs Initiative designed to increase the access of low-income children to high-quality after-school programs in California and to support the successful statewide implementation of Proposition 49, the After-School Education and Safety Program (ASESP).

We are distributing this report to assist other foundations that have an interest in supporting youth development, particularly after-school programming in California. The report describes the need for and impact of such programming, as well as California's unique opportunity to provide after-school programs to every elementary school and middle school student.

There is much work to be done to increase the availability of quality after-school programs and to prepare the state and communities for the implementation of the ASEP. For example:

- ★The ASEP provides only \$7.50 per child per day, but studies show that \$10 per child per day is needed to provide a quality after-school experience.
- ★More than 15,000 new staff need to be hired and 5,400 new programs need to be created in order to fulfill the intent of the ASEP.
- ★It will be challenging for many communities, school districts and schools to raise the \$25,000 matching fund that the ASEP requires.

We hope you find this report helpful and compelling. I would be pleased to hear your comments, answer your questions and provide additional information that would assist you in choosing to support this critical area of youth development. You can reach me at 650.655.2529 or rwilliams@schwabfoundation.org.



Rick Williams
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THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS INITIATIVE

The Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation’s After-School Programs Initiative is designed to increase the access of low-income children to high-quality after-school programs in California and to support the successful statewide implementation of Proposition 49, the After-School Education and Safety Program (ASESP) approved by voters in November 2002.

This report is designed to assist other foundations that might be interested in supporting after-school programming in California. The report describes the need for after-school programs (especially those serving low-income communities), the impact of after-school programs on children, California’s unique opportunity to provide after-school programs to every elementary and middle school student, and a variety of funding strategies that foundations can use to support the successful implementation of the ASESP. While our focus is on California, the movement to increase after-school programs using proven youth development strategies is nationwide, and national organizations are provided in the Resources section of this document.

I. THE NEED FOR AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA

In California there are over 1.2 million children ages 5 to 14 in low-income families who need subsidized after-school care. However, fewer than 500,000 after-school slots are subsidized with state and federal funding.¹ A tremendous amount of research during the past two decades highlights the need for and benefits of after-school programming for youth and identifies the key elements of effective youth development.²

AFTER-SCHOOL HOURS ARE CRITICAL

★ **Students who lack adult supervision after school are at greater risk —**

Students who spend three or more hours at home alone after school are significantly more likely to be depressed, use alcohol and drugs, experience high stress and anger, and perform less well academically.

★ **The after-school hours are the most dangerous for youth —** The hours from 3 to 6 p.m. are when juvenile crime is at its peak, when children are most likely to become victims of crime, when 16- and 17-year-olds are most likely to be in a car crash, and when youth are most likely to engage in drug use and sex.

PARTICIPATION IN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IS LINKED TO

★ **Greater engagement in learning —** This includes improved behavior in school, stronger motivation to achieve, higher educational aspirations, improved attitudes toward school, and increased belief that being able to work with others is important. For example, youth participating in the Boys and Girls Clubs' Educational Enhancement Program reported greater enjoyment of tutoring, reading and writing even 30 months after entering the program.

¹ Teare, C., Children Now, and Lee, B., Fight Crime: Invest in Kids *California* (personal communication, 2003).

² Sources cited in Section I include: (1) Miller, B.M. (2003). "Critical hours: After-school programs and educational success. Commissioned by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation." Available at www.nmefdn.org; (2) Children Now (2001). "After-school care for children: Challenges for California." Available from www.childrennow.org; (3) Fight Crime, Invest in Kids California (2001). "California's after-school choice: Juvenile crime or safe learning time." Available from www.fightcrime.org/ca; and (4) Community Network for Youth Development (2001). Youth Development Guide. Available from www.cnyd.org.

- ★ **Higher academic achievement** — Participation in structured, extracurricular activities is more strongly linked to academic outcomes than study habits, family background or academic ability. Students participating in after-school programs report higher grades and test scores, improved homework completion and fewer school absences. For example, 83 percent of the 18,000 students in Los Angeles’ BEST program reported increasing grade-point averages by 24 and 32 percent in math, science, social studies, reading and writing.
- ★ **Increased educational equity** — Race and class remain powerful predictors of school achievement. However, several research studies suggest that many circumstances linked to poor achievement, such as low expectations of teachers and poor quality schools, can be partially ameliorated by participation in after-school programs.
- ★ **Cost savings to communities** — The RAND Corporation compared the cost effectiveness of the Quantum Opportunities after-school program to California’s “Three Strikes” law. It found that, per dollar spent, Quantum Opportunities was over five times more cost effective at preventing crimes. This savings did not even take into account the benefit of supporting youth to become more responsible, successful, tax-paying adults.³

CONSISTENT PARTICIPATION IN WELL-RUN, QUALITY AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IS KEY

Positive outcomes for after-school programs are closely linked to participation for months and often years. Programs must be structured, consistent and high-quality. They must utilize curricula and program models proven effective for youth development. The Youth Development Guide below identifies organizational practices, key experiences and outcomes for youth development.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING	KEY EXPERIENCES FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENTAL YOUTH OUTCOMES	EARLY ADULT OUTCOMES
	<i>Young People Must Experience:</i>	<i>So That They Can Learn:</i>	<i>So That As Young Adults They Can:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Low ratio of youth to staff/ volunteers ★ Safe, reliable and accessible activities ★ Flexibility in allocating available resources ★ Continuity and consistency of care ★ High, clear and fair standards ★ Ongoing, results-based staff and organizational improvement processes ★ Youth involvement ★ Community involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ A sense of physical and emotional safety ★ Multiple supportive relationships ★ Meaningful participation ★ Community involvement ★ Challenging and engaging learning experiences that build skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ To be productive ★ To connect with others ★ To navigate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Achieve economic self-sufficiency ★ Maintain healthy family and social relationships ★ Contribute to the community

Source: *Community Network for Youth Development (2001). Youth Development Guide, p. 24*

³ Greenwood, P.W., et al. (1996). “Diverting children from a life of crime: Measuring costs and benefits.” RAND. Santa Monica, CA. As cited in Fight Crime: Invest in Kids *California* (2001). “California’s after-school choice: Juvenile crime or safe learning time.” Available from www.fightcrime.org/ca.

LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES ARE AT GREATEST RISK

Students in high-income families are twice as likely to spend five or more hours per week in extracurricular activities as students in low-income families. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are six times less likely to drop out, two times less likely to be arrested, and 75 percent less likely to smoke or use drugs. After-school programs serving low-income youth can help reduce this gap.