

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMMING: A VISUAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE

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As unsupervised, after-school time increases for America's youth, negative and risky opportunities await them. Recent studies find that as many as 15.1 million children in the United States are left unsupervised after school. Unsupervised children are significantly at risk for truancy, poor academics and risk-taking behavior. These negative forces have been targeted by many intervention efforts over the years, primarily through after-school programs. The literature defines quality programs as those with distinct elements connected to positive outcomes such as student achievement, motivation/engagement, critical/creative thinking, social competencies, and communication. Such outcomes are also evident in arts-related literature and connected to specific exposure to the visual arts. While benefits of arts programs are well documented, less is known about visual arts programs, especially those offered outside of school.

To respond to this gap in the literature, this study investigated a visual-arts after-school program for middle school students. The research questions were a) what are the demographic characteristics of student participants in a visual arts-based after-school program? and b) what possible impact does attendance in an arts-based after-school program have on its mentors? To answer these questions, data were collected on participants' gender, age, grade, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, Title 1 eligibility, discipline records, family status, program and school attendance. Participating high school mentors' perceptions were measured through a survey with scaled and open-ended items. When compared with all students in the district, participants were

disproportionately female. On other demographic measures no significant differences were found. Mentors (n=16) described benefits including academic skill development, social and personal identity, intrapersonal and peer relations, positive environment, stress relief, and inspiration. Implications for the development of youths' social capital, for future research and for practice are offered.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	XII
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	3
1.1.1 Context and Importance of the Problem.....	7
2.0 WHAT IS AN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM AS DEFINED BY THE RESEARCH LITERATURE?	12
2.1 EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION	14
2.2 WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES?	15
2.3 BASED ON EMPIRICAL LITERATURE, WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.? 20	
2.4 WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT ARTS-BASED AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN PARTICULAR?.....	28
3.0 METHODOLOGY.....	39
3.1.1 Background for the Study.....	39
3.1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	42
3.1.3 Rationale.....	43

3.1.4	The Relevant Hypotheses	43
3.1.5	Research Questions.....	44
3.1.6	Methods	44
3.1.7	Setting	45
3.1.8	Participants	46
3.1.9	Data Collection.....	48
3.1.10	Data Collection Plan to Address Research Question 1	59
3.1.11	Data Collection Plan to Address Research Question 2	60
3.2	DATA ANALYSIS PLAN.....	62
3.2.1	Program Attendance	63
3.2.2	Student Demographic Data.....	63
3.2.3	Mentor Survey	64
3.3	LIMITATIONS.....	64
4.0	FINDINGS	66
4.1	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENT PARTICIPANTS	
	66	
4.1.1	Attendance.....	67
4.1.2	Gender	68
4.1.3	Age/Grade.....	68
4.1.4	Race.....	69
4.1.5	Free or Reduced Lunch.....	69
4.1.6	Title 1 Eligibility	70
4.1.7	Discipline	70

4.1.8	Family Status.....	70
4.1.9	Summary of Demographic Data.....	71
4.2	IMPACT OF ATTENDANCE ON MENTORS: QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS.....	72
4.2.1	Participation/engagement	78
4.2.2	Academic Achievement	80
4.2.3	Transfer of Learning.....	82
4.2.4	Interpersonal Skills.....	83
4.3	IMPACT OF ATTENDANCE ON MENTORS: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS.....	85
4.3.1	Academic Achievement	85
4.3.1.1	Skill Development	87
4.3.1.2	Personal and Social Identity.....	89
4.3.1.3	Interpersonal Skills (the need to form healthy social relationships)	91
4.3.1.4	Environment	92
4.4	SUMMARY	94
5.0	DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS	96
5.1	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	96
5.1.1	Gender	97
5.1.2	Parental Employment Landscape of Participants.....	97
5.1.3	Attendance.....	98
5.2	MENTOR DISCUSSION.....	101

5.2.1	Gender	102
5.2.2	Positive Themes.....	103
5.3	IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE.....	106
5.4	IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	107
APPENDIX A		109
APPENDIX B		111
APPENDIX C		113
APPENDIX D.....		117
BIBLIOGRAPHY		119

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics Identified in After-school Literature	50
Table 2 Impact of After-school or Arts Education Programs on Students	54
Table 3 Demographic Characteristic and correlating data source	60
Table 4 Comparison of two samples by gender, ethnicity and other measures.....	71
Table 5 Descriptive statistics for the Studio Life mentor sample (N = 16)	73
Table 6 Distribution of responses for the Studio Life mentor survey items (N = 16)	74
Table 7 Domain Definitions for qualitative codes.....	76
Table 8 Number of own children in families by type, race, and Hispanic origin of family, of family, labor force status of mothers and men who maintain families, by age of children in family, March 2011 ASEC	109
Table 9 Number of own children in families by type, race, and Hispanic origin of family, labor force status of mothers and men who maintain families, by age of children in family, March 2011 ASEC	109

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Percent of Violent Juvenile Crime Occurring Each Hour, Source: FBI National Incident Based Reporting System. 1997.....	9
Figure 2. Theory of Change for the Study of Promising After-School Programs. Source: Vandell, Reisner and Pierce, p. 1 (2007).....	27
Figure 3. Data recording tool for collecting student attendance in the ASP.....	61
Figure 4. Data recording tool for collecting student demographics.....	62
Figure 5. Overall attendance for Studio Life by school year.....	67
Figure 6. Number of study participants by grade and gender.....	69
Figure 7. Students are more likely to attend school on a day the ASP meets.....	79
Figure 8. Student responses to relationship between ASP and new learning.	81
Figure 9. Student responses to relationship between ASP and transfer of learning.	83
Figure 10. Student responses to the relationship between the ASP and social/peer interactions.	84

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The sounds of rustling papers, book bag zippers and impatient chatter fill the air. Students push their way towards the door in anticipation of something familiar, something they've been waiting for. The teacher talks above the din, reminding the kids that such and such is due Thursday—and yes, they'll need to know dates for the test on Monday.

Then it happens. The bell rings, and school is out for the day. Like a stampede of cattle, the students exit the building, filling the streets, and within minutes most of the building is empty. Most of the kids are off to do what they will with their free time. But in this particular story, there is an anomaly: one of the rooms in the school has not emptied out. Instead, kids congregate there. Interestingly, some students are actually entering the building, apparently drawn to this particular room.

It is the art room.

Some of the kids making their way back inside the middle school are high school students, and as they arrive in the art room, they greet small groups of younger students. Suddenly, the air fills with the tantalizing smell of food. A group of proud students comes marching through the door with a stack of hot pizzas, eager to distribute them to all of the tables, which are now fully occupied with students.

The room is packed—there are sixty or more students, all of them present, hungry, and attentive. They come from different backgrounds, and their ages vary. Some are laughing, while

others engage in deeper discussions. Is this a classroom? Or are we seeing a large family gathering at dinnertime?

After the bread has been broken and all are comfortable, the teacher engages the group in a discussion. He offers the group several challenging opportunities for the daily activities. Within minutes, the large group breaks into five smaller groups, each led by a high school student. They spread out, some in the classroom, some in the hallway, and a few outside. Soon enough, the smaller groups are intensely focused on the task assigned by the teacher, diligently attempting to create a visual design that evokes the perspective or voice of each group member. With great interest and excitement, each group assesses individual talents, prioritizes their goals, and starts the art-making process. The five groups work collaboratively to solve the same problem in very different ways.

Meanwhile, back in the classroom, some of the students are working on individual pieces of art while others are completing homework. Ironically, the common theme of the classroom seems to be “students helping students,” and the authoritarian “teacher figure” steps back and becomes facilitator. As the clock works as hard as the group, five o'clock comes sooner than desired to fulfill the saying, *time flies when having fun*.

In what seems to be a matter of minutes, an organized, cooperative cleanup takes place. The same high school students that were leading the small groups also coordinate the cleanup. The entire group closes the daily session with a quick discussion of the day's activities and expectations for the next meeting. And just like that, the group disperses. The few stragglers that stay behind are all high school students, who stick around to have some laughs, and discuss their interactions with the younger students. It seems like they simply don't want to go home. But

after a while, they all start toward the door. “Who wants to go to the library?” one says. Then the high school mentors disappear, heading for the local library, a half mile away.

The phenomenon is an interesting one. By choosing to participate in an arts-based, after-school program, these students willingly extended their school day. They decided to engage in activities with relevant, authentic connections than those from earlier in the school day. They took advantage of an opportunity to fill their previously empty “out-of-school-time” with something that was personal, meaningful, educational, and—most importantly, perhaps—they had fun doing something unusual: Learning.

This is the story of an after-school program called “Studio Life,” a story that inspired an in-depth investigation into after-school programming.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In September of 2000, Capizzano, Tout and Adams, from the Urban Institute in Washington DC, conducted a study on after-school pursuits and activities among K-12 students in the United States. The study concluded that more than 14 million of these students are left unsupervised after school. “Approximately 4 million of these children attend middle school” (p. 29). Afterschool Alliance, the national organization, commissioned a similar study¹ in 2004 and again in 2009. Their findings indicate that, “The number of children who are unsupervised in the

¹ After School Alliance is an organization focused in advocacy and awareness for America’s youth and afterschool programming. America after 3 PM was funded by the JC Penny afterschool fund. “The Afterschool Alliance worked with researchers at RTI to collect data via U.S. mail surveys from 29,754 households. The findings are nationally representative. In some instances, the findings have been projected to represent the 57.3 million K-12 youth in the country based on 2007 U.S. Census data. All of the projected estimates are based on data that were weighted by income and ethnicity. The overall margin of error is +/- 0.56 percent” (p. 1).

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Although it is simple to understand the implications of these figures, attempts to address them have often generated mixed reviews. Many of these students impose a significant burden on their communities and their families. Such children are classified as “at risk” youths—students who have not mastered the basic academic, vocational, social and behavioral skills that are required in order to function successfully in a school, the workplace and the community

² After School Alliance is an organization focused in advocacy and awareness for America’s youth and afterschool programming. America after 3 PM was funded by the JC Penny afterschool fund. “The Afterschool Alliance worked with researchers at RTI to collect data via U.S. mail surveys from 29,754 households. The findings are nationally representative. In some instances, the findings have been projected to represent the 57.3 million K-12 youth in the country based on 2007 U.S. Census data. All of the projected estimates are based on data that were weighted by income and ethnicity. The overall margin of error is +/- 0.56 percent” (p. 1).

(Meisel, Henderson, Cohen & Leone, 1998). More importantly this large population of children is left to fend for themselves due to lack of supervision.

Many factors contribute to children being at risk. Lack of supervision is one contributor to danger in which children are placed. Contributors ranging from a changing parental employment landscape to an unpredictable home life have made after-school supervision more complex. In 2003, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services published a report titled *Trends in the Well-Being of America's Children and Youth*. This report highlighted the changing dynamics of American families in relation to the work force. The brief states:

Between 1985 and 2001, the percentage of children who have both parents or only the resident parent in the labor force increased from 59 percent to 68 percent. Between 1990 and 1996, this percentage was similar for married-couple families and single-mother families; however, the rate for single-mother families increased sharply from 66 percent in 1996 to 79 percent in 2001, while the rate for married-couple families had little variation over the same time period (64 percent in 1996 and 64 percent in 2001). The rate for children in single-father families was much higher, at 91 percent in 2001. Between 1994 and 2001, there was a large decline in the proportion of children living in families in which no resident parent was attached to the labor force (p.96).

Although the data above was most recently published in 2003, it remains commonly cited throughout the research literature, and it remains relevant as a way to depict the evolving American family landscape. More recently, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics conducted an annual national survey, the Current Population Survey (CPS). The annual marital and family supplement to the CPS reveals a current representation of parents in the work force. By 2011, the percentage of single-mother families in the work force had decreased slightly from 79% in

2001 to 75%. The percentage of married families increased slightly from 64% in 2001 to 65% in 2011.

Finally, the percentage of single-father families decreased from 91% in 2001 to 88% in 2011. Although there was a slight decline in both single-mother and single-father families, it is interesting to note that the total average remains at 69%. The total number of families represented in the work force is calculated by dividing the total number of single-mother, single-father and married families in the work force (45,561) by the total number of families in the survey (65,931). The percentage of children who have both parents and only the resident parent in the labor force increased from 68% in 2001 to 69% in 2011. (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2011) (See Appendix A).

Since multiple-income households are now the norm in the United States, the average student returns from school to an empty house each day, unsupervised and free to follow his or her whims (Benson, 2003, p.82). Another factor pertaining to the “at risk” profile in children is the growth of poverty. Over the past decade several government agencies have worked together to publish America’s *Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*, an annual report. One of the claims outlined in the brief sheds light on the number of children living in poverty. “In 2010, 22 percent of children ages 0–17 (16.4 million) lived in poverty. This is up from a low of 16 percent in 2000 and 2001. Consistent with expectations related to the economic downturn, child poverty has increased annually since 2006, when the rate was 17 percent” (Wallman K., 2012, p. 6). Little debate exists regarding poverty as a risk factor for children. Therefore, the increasing number of children living in poverty contributes to kids being at risk. Childhood poverty compounded with large numbers of single and both working parent households are

contributing to lack of supervision. In summary, the challenge of positively engaging and protecting America's children after school has reached a tipping point.

The research labels unsupervised time as both after-school and out-of-school time. Both terms imply a fundamental link to the issue of lack of supervision, "school." The structure of the traditional public school system drastically limits opportunity for students as they strive for a quality education in the United States of America. Educational opportunities continue to be limited by time constraints, substandard facilities and narrow curriculums. While it can be argued that poor facilities, poor curriculums, poor teaching, child health and welfare, and other variables can limit educational opportunity, this paper will investigate the limitation of educational opportunity through the lens of time constraints and safe environments, i.e., why does the school day end at 3:00 and can schools fill the "unsupervised time" gap?³

1.1.1 Context and Importance of the Problem

Child poverty and a lack of supervision for children after school hours are both on the rise. The number of single-parent households continues to grow, as does the number of households with two working parents. These are some of the issues correlated with the rising number of unsupervised children and teens at a national and state level:

- Benson (2003), from the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, claims, "between 1985 and 2001, the percentage of children who have both parents or

³ Across the United States, public school start time and end time may fluctuate, but the required time is determined by the State. According to Pennsylvania school code (Pa. code) section 11.3, the minimum required instructional hours for students in grades 1-6 must receive 900 hours of instruction at minimum, and for grades 7-12 the total is 990. Additionally, as section 11.1 states, "elementary and secondary schools shall be kept open each school year for a minimum of 180 days of instruction for students" (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2011). Therefore, using the above figures, daily instructional time is 5 hours for grades 1-6 and 5.5 hours for grades 7-12. For the sake of clarity, this brief will characterize the average school day as beginning at 8:00 am and commencing at 3:00 pm, with the understanding that some schools may start earlier and end earlier and that some may start later and end later.

only the resident parent in the labor force increased from 59 percent to 68 percent” (p. 82).

- *The State of the Child in Pennsylvania* was published in an attempt to create awareness about underserved youth. Steketee and Bergsten (1997) claim, that “1.27 million Pennsylvania children are in families where all parents are working” (p. 12).
- The time between when a child leaves school and when a parent gets home from work can amount to multiple hours per day.
- According to The National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC), “There is no age threshold in Pennsylvania for when it is permissible to leave a child or children at home unattended” (NCCIC, 2011).
- In a brief titled, *Fight Crime; Invest in Kids*, Newman, Fox, Flynn and Christeson (2000) claim, “In the hour after the school bell rings, turning millions of children and teens out on the streets with neither constructive activities nor adult supervision, violent juvenile crime suddenly triples and the prime time for juvenile crime begins” (p.2).
- During the hours of 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. kids are most likely to:
 - Become victims of a violent crime.
 - Be in or cause a car crash (for 16- or 17-year-olds), the leading cause of death for teens.
 - Experiment with dangerous drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
 - Teens are most likely to engage in sexual behavior.

Kids are most likely to get hooked playing video games that provide training for violent behavior (Newman, Fox, Flynn and Christeson, 2000, p.2).

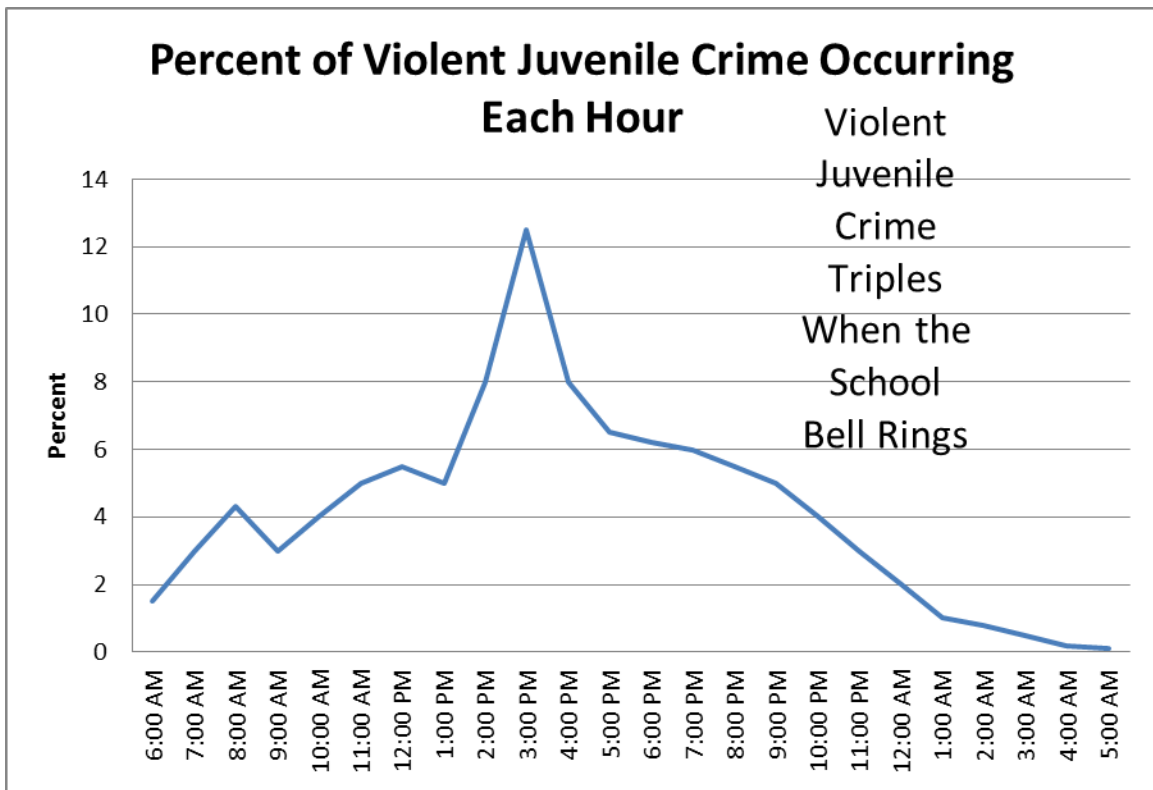


Figure 1. Percent of Violent Juvenile Crime Occurring Each Hour, Source: FBI National Incident Based Reporting System. 1997.

It is important to note the findings in a study conducted in 2008, where researchers contradicted the data on law enforcement responses to crime, referring to the data that indicates a spike in crime after the hours of 3:00 p.m. In this particular study the researchers compared law enforcement responses to National Victimization Surveys. Soulé, Gottfredson and Bauer claim, “Our research suggests that the most prevalent violent offense for both victimization and delinquency, simple assault, is most prominent during the school hours, but that more serious crimes are elevated during the afterschool hours. The results suggest that simply providing a place for youth to go after school would not likely reduce the offense which juveniles are most

likely to experience” (p.644). Although there is debate regarding the time and frequency of juvenile crime, this study unveils implications regarding the relevance of outcomes and the effectiveness of afterschool opportunities.

The failure to supervise America’s youth is a national, state, and local issue. Children today are significantly at risk for truancy, poor academic performance and risk-taking behavior. Without an intervention, these students will lack the skills and competencies necessary to succeed at a university level or in the workforce. The solution can be as simple as providing opportunities for supervised activities. As the United States Department of Education (1997) states:

The need for increased opportunities for children to learn and develop in safe and drug-free environments outside of regular school hours is clear. Without affordable, high-quality afterschool [sic] care available to parents who work, many children must care for themselves or be supervised by older siblings, responsibilities that distract them from schoolwork. Lacking constructive community activities to engage them after school, children are vulnerable to drug use and gang involvement outside of school hours. In communities without libraries, many children do not have access to books and other information resources or adults who can help with challenging homework; as a result, some of these students may not learn the skills they need to become productive citizens. (p. 11).

The absence of after-school supervision is a growing problem, and far too many children and teens are leaving America’s schools ill-equipped to utilize or positively transform their circumstance to their advantage (Hall, Yohalem, Tolman &Wilson, 2003). What if kids began to see the end of the school day not as the end of the day itself, but as a continuation of their

educational journey or a transition time while learning? It's a nice thought, but before this paper ventures down that path, an overview of the research literature is necessary.

It has been established that large numbers of American children are living in poverty and that many go unsupervised after traditional school hours. Furthermore, the implication of contributing factors to the children at risk has also been covered. However, viable solutions have yet to be addressed. Therefore this paper will ask the following questions of the research literature:

- What is an 'after-school program' as defined in the research literature?
- What is the history of after-school programs in the U.S.?
- Based on empirical literature, what are the characteristics of effective after-school programs in the U.S.?
- What does the research say about arts-based after-school programs in particular?

The final bell of the day elicits a Pavlovian response in kids: for some, it means freedom, unstructured time, and all the hazards and temptations that go along with it. For others, the final bell of the day signifies a new beginning and an opportunity.

2.0 WHAT IS AN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM AS DEFINED BY THE RESEARCH LITERATURE?

“American school-age youth spend a larger portion of their weekly waking hours in discretionary activities than in school” (Roth, Malone & Brooks-Gunn, 2010, p.310). One would think that the definition of an after-school program could be reached through common sense if it is not already embedded in the word itself. Perhaps a more appropriate question is this: “What is the function of an after-school program as defined by the literature?” Leaders have been debating the purpose of after-school programming, or leisure time, since its inception (Cross, 1990). The notion of using after-school time to help solve community needs came about during the Industrial Revolution. Program founders started by introducing the notion of “play.” Their purpose was twofold: Experts believed that play was a method children used to make sense of the world, and play was seen as a viable escape from the rugged, colorless life of the industrial age (Halpern, 2002).

As program leaders debated what their purpose should be, they opened their doors to children through the concept of play. Quickly, programs evolved to adjust to the needs of those in attendance and also the needs of the community (Kadzielski, 1977 & Halpern, 2002). This concept led to the notion of organizing the activities after school hours. The literature defines organized activities as formal activities for children 6-18 years of age that are not part of the school curriculum. Organized activities are also characterized by structure, adult supervision,

and emphasis on skill building (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Larson 2000; Roth Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

Participation in unsupervised and unconstructive activities during after-school hours typically is associated with risky choices and poor adjustment, whereas participation in supervised, organized activities often results in increased educational achievement, reduced problem behaviors and heightened psychosocial competencies (Mahoney, Larson & Eccles, 2005).

The current state of affairs in ASPs is to embrace the concept of diversity in that no program is the same. “The positive potential of after-school programs to contribute to youth development, combined with the reality that all programs are not created equal, make defining what high quality programs look like and learning how to improve program quality key challenges in the field” (Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010, p. 350).

The key elements in the composition of ASPs as described by the research are: the participants (students may have a wide variety of needs), community contexts (some programs may function in socioeconomically mixed communities, and there may be urban, suburban and rural variances as well), and what happens inside the program (process, content and structure) (Yohalem, Granger & Pittman, 2009). Another key element is program staffing. As Mahoney and others have said, “Available research indicates that competencies of adult staff who lead ASPs are a critical determinant” (Mahoney, Levine & Hinga, 2010). Although this has implications for program quality, staffing also affects the program process, content delivery and structure. These ASP elements vary from program to program, and that is the reason that no two programs are the same.

To better illustrate the challenges that one specific youth population may face, Zinmeister (1990) conducted a study. A total of 168 inner city teenagers from Baltimore were asked about their exposure to violence. A stunning 24 percent had witnessed a murder, and 72 percent knew someone who had been shot. These teenagers themselves had been victims of some type of violence an average of one and a half times each, and they had witnessed an average of five serious criminal episodes. One out of five had had their lives threatened, and almost one out of eleven had been raped (p. 50).

2.1 EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION

The unique set of circumstances associated with every youth population makes it a challenge to serve the needs of students. Every student lives with circumstances that may be either positive or negative, but these circumstances define the individual. Dewey (1938) discusses this phenomenon in his book *Experience and Education*:

An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness. Then the possibilities of having rich experience in the future are restricted. Again, a given experience may increase a person's automatic skill in a particular direction and yet tend to land him in a groove or rut; the effect again is to narrow the field of further experience. An experience may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote the formation of a slack and careless attitude; this attitude then operates to modify the quality of subsequent experiences so as to prevent a person from getting out of them what they have to give. Again, experiences may be so disconnected from one

another that, while each is agreeable or even exciting in itself, they are not linked cumulatively to one another (p.7).

If individuals are defined by their experiences, and if people experience things in different ways, then collectively a greater understanding in the diversity of youth cultures can be identified. The purpose of discussing Dewey's theory on experience and education is to help generate a greater understanding as to why no two after-school programs are the same. Each ASP is located in a community that comes along with a specific culture. That culture is partially defined by the individuals that participate in it, and those individuals are all uniquely different because of the way that personal experiences have shaped them. What does this mean for after-school programs? It means that ASPs are unique to the community, culture and individuals that they serve.

2.2 WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES?

After-school programs (ASPs) emerged in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and they have been a part of U.S. culture in one way or another ever since. They started as small, distinctive boys clubs that operated in churches, storefronts and other community buildings (Halpern, 2002). Historically, two events set the stage for after-school programming. "The first was a gradual decline in the need for children's paid labor in the urban economy and in working-class families' own micro-economies. The second was the growth of schooling, fueled by passage of compulsory education laws, large scale investment in school construction, and the

greater availability of children to attend school” (Halpern, 2002, p.180). Therefore, the history of after-school programs was primarily defined by labor and education in contemporary society.

The Industrial Revolution forever changed the economic landscape and was an acting contributor to the evolving family dynamic. The preindustrial family was typically rural, and the father, mother and children all worked to support the family as a whole—for example, by sharing the labors of farming a field. A post-industrial family might include a father who worked in a factory, children who stayed at home or who worked outside the home, and finally a mother who worked at home or as a servant for another family. The father evolved into a distant breadwinner, while the mother took on a nurturing role and the children did what they could to take care of the family's needs (Cross, 1990). Emerging from the wake of the Industrial Revolution was a clear definition of work for both adults and children.

A societal definition for “leisure” began to surface as well, according to Cross. “Industrialization drove play from labor and eliminated the seasonal ebbs in the flow of work so characteristic of artisanal and agricultural life; it also made possible new forms of leisure time, including the typically modern notions of free evenings, the weekend, paid summer vacations, as well as lengthy childhood and retirement” (Cross, 1990, p. 73). The concept of a lengthy childhood was an important component in the history of after-school programs. With a lengthy childhood came new, undefined periods of free time—leisure time, in other words.

The notion of “leisure activities” helped open the door to the idea of after-school programs. Indeed, the Industrial Revolution redefined the idea of leisure (Kleiber & Powell, 2005): “The emergence of distinguishable and identifiable free time periods has resulted from the dedication of other periods of time to obligatory purposes, in particular to work and school.

Changing social institutions and the resulting changes in expectations for time use are thus central elements in the evolutions of after-school activities for youth” (p.23).

Essentially, the Industrial Revolution forever changed work-related expectations in society, and this in turn changed expectations regarding the use of free time. In fact, the growth of schooling (which was fueled by compulsory education laws) also contributed to the increase in leisure time. This had a two-tiered effect. First was the drastic change in child labor laws. Prior to this change many children were employed for various reasons. As Zelizer (1985) says, “At the turn of the century some 20 to 25 percent of urban children were gainfully employed” (p. 57). The second effect of compulsory education laws was an increase in school participation rates, which resulted in large declines in paid child labor (Halpern, 2002). “In 1900, 59 percent of children aged 5 to 17 attended school; by 1928, 80 percent did so” (Brenzel, Roberts-Gersch & Wittner, 1985, p. 480). As child labor laws removed children from the paid labor market combined with compulsory education laws moving children into schools a new market in after-school programming was emerging.

In the mid to late 1800’s, the first ASPs started to appear. They were boys clubs. It is important to note that these “settlements” or “settlement houses,” as they were called, started with the purpose of teaching the large incoming groups of immigrants how to be Americans—although the term “solid citizens” was more commonly used. Halpern discusses this in his 2002 paper: “The first after-school programs were developed by individual men and women intent on rescuing children from the physical and moral hazards posed by growing up in the immigrant neighborhoods of major cities.” (Halpern, 2002, p. 182). Organized recreational sports were seen as a way to further this goal, and they evolved as an offshoot of the settlement houses (Reiss, 1979). The settlements and boys clubs offered specific programming that grew based on the

needs and desires of the attending population (Zane, 1990), and by 1910 most sponsors of programming were serving girls and boys (Halpern, 2002).

Between 1920 and 1950, programs were mostly sponsored by settlements and boys clubs, but churches also launched a number of programs. The common goal for ASPs during this time involved “solidifying the human service system” and establishing child-rearing institutions (Halpern, 2002, p. 189). During this time period, programs struggled to identify with their purpose. Some people felt it was their role to mold individuals in specific ways. Others felt it was their role to offer opportunities so that individuals could find their way. This struggle was similar to the age-old argument of nature vs. nurture. (Kleiber & Powell, 2005 & Halpern, 2002). The result was an increase in diverse programming based on the vision of leaders and the needs of communities. By the late 1970s and 1980s, ASPs were receiving new attention from government leaders and legislators, primarily due to the sudden increase in maternal employment.

Whether the federal government contributed to the initial growth of ASPs or simply responded to their growth is still being debated, but what is important is that ASPs continue to grow, and the federal government continues to provide opportunities for funding and assistance. In the 1930s, New Deal funding and resources helped provide opportunities through the Works Progress Administration, the Federal Arts Project and the National Youth Administration. In the 1940’s, the U.S. Office of Education funded the Community Facilities Act (commonly known as the Lanhan Act), and in the 1990s, federal funds were provided through the Federal Child Care and Development Program (Halpern, 2002).

More recently, in 1994 the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) was authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

(ESEA), as amended. The purpose of the federal program was to provide “lifelong learning opportunities to children and adults” and to keep the country's workforce competitive in the 21st century. In 2002, the program was amended by reauthorization of ESEA in order to provide before-school, after-school and summer enrichment for the purpose of helping to meet academic standards (Penuel & Mcghee, 2010). According to Penuel and Mcghee (2010), “In FY 2009, Congress appropriated more than \$1.1 billion for the 21st CCLC program. Currently, the federal program supports 1,585 local programs within more than 9,500 centers in 53 states and U.S. territories” (p. 3). In 2002, estimates suggested that the federal government alone invested \$3.6 billion in after-school programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2004 & Padgette, 2003). Therefore, evidence has surfaced supporting the investment in after-school programming.

Currently, the growth of ASPs can be largely attributed to increased maternal employment and the fact that dual-income households now serve over 7 million children with working parents (Capizzano, Tout, & Adams, 2000). ASP growth can be illustrated by comparing the participation of 7 million children in 2000 to the nearly 1.7 million children enrolled in 49,500 programs in 1991 (Seppanen, Love, de Vries, & Bernstein, 1993). According to data in the 2005 Afterschool Programs and Activities Survey of the National Household Education Survey, 20 percent of children ages 5 through 12 are involved in after-school programs (Lawrence, Kreader & National Center for Children in Poverty, 2006). In 2009, The After School Alliance indicated in their findings that the number of children participating in after-school programs significantly increased in the past five years to 8.4 million children (After School Alliance). History shows that after-school care for America’s children is on the rise.

Kleiber and Powell (2005) eloquently summed up Halpern’s (2000) historical perspective of ASPs when they said that the programs offer “care and protection of children, the opportunity for

creativity and self-expression, the deterrence of crime and delinquency, the cultivation of vocational talents (albeit differently for girls and boys) and the ‘Americanization’ of immigrants were all reflected (though not all at once) in the implicit or explicit missions and common practices of these programs” (p. 25). The vast majority of this summation continues to remain the core of after-school care for America’s youth.

2.3 BASED ON EMPIRICAL LITERATURE, WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.?

Approximately 8.4 million or 15% of K-12 students are enrolled in after-school programs (After School Alliance, 2009). Historically, the primary goal of ASPs has been to provide supervision for children while their parents were working, but the purpose of after-school programming is changing as a result of philanthropic funding as well as federal, state and local government policies (Pierce, Bolt & Vandell, 2010). Some stakeholders see an opportunity to impact the achievement gap by targeting low-income children through ASPs (Pierce et al. 2010), whereas others may seek to investigate the effects of child and adolescent development (Mahoney, Levine & Hinga, 2010).

Regardless of their underlying purpose, all child advocacy stakeholders are seeking programs that work. Defining what quality programs look like and learning how to improve programming, however, are central challenges for the field (Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010). The three main youth advocacy stakeholder groups—the researchers, the policy makers and the practitioners—each have a different opinion on the matter of what constitutes a quality after-school program:

From a research perspective, more evaluations are including assessments of program quality and many have incorporated setting-level measures (where the object of measurement is the program, not the participants) in their designs. At the policy level, decision-makers are looking for ways to ensure that resources are allocated to programs most likely to have an impact, and building quality assessment and improvement expectations into requests for proposals and program regulations. At the practice level, programs, organizations and systems are looking for tools that capture effective practice and can aid practitioners in assessing, reflecting on and improving their programs (Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010, p.350-351).

Although the three main stakeholder groups define “quality” differently, each group seeks to better understanding programming as a whole in order to advance its cause.

The dynamics of an after-school program can vary, dependent on a multitude of factors. For example, a program in an urban setting may look very different from a program in a suburban setting. Also, the desired outcomes of an ASP affect the outward appearance or content of the program. As the focus turns from program content to program outcomes, the variables become more numerous and more complex as a result of the diversity of the participants. Dryfoos (1999) described the phenomenon as “perhaps the thorniest problem in attributing outcomes to the afterschool program itself, as distinguished from the influences that family, school and community all have on young people” (p. 130).

The outcomes of a program can be determined by a whole host of factors, such as population demographics, community culture, environment and location and program content and curriculum. Successful programs, however, will have some commonalities (e.g., Vandall 2007; Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010; Pierce, Bolt & Vandell, 2010). A positive youth

outcome is commonly perceived to be one of the most important. The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002) published a list of common program settings that, if provided by the ASP, will correlate to youth benefits:

- Physical and psychological safety
- Appropriate structure
- Supportive relationships
- Opportunities to belong
- Positive social norms
- Support for efficacy and mattering
- Opportunities for skill building
- Integration of family, school, and community efforts (Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

Researchers are not alone in their quest to identify benchmarks for the efficacy of after-school programs. The National Institute on Out-of-School Time was commissioned in 2003 by the Boston After-School for All Partnership in order to evaluate and report on the effectiveness of their after-school programs. Its report, entitled *How Afterschool Programs Can Most Effectively Promote Positive Youth Development as a Support to Academic Achievement*, is a matrix that encompasses the commonalities of success within the Boston area programs evaluated. The matrix also includes age-appropriate examples linked to specific programs for each common element of success. The matrix categorized the following common essentials.

- Safe, stable places
- Basic care and services
- Healthy, caring relationships
- High expectations and standards

- Role models, resources, and networks
- Voice choice and contribution
- Challenging and relevant experiences
- High-quality, personalized instruction (The National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2003, p.44-45 & Mahoney et al., 2010)

Beckett and Jackowitz (2001) synthesized the conclusions of the after-school literature, expert panels and workshops in order to convey the best practices in ASPs. According to their paper, three program components have the potential to have positive child outcomes. These program features have a strong vs. moderate endorsement from the field: “(1) Positive staff-child relationships, (2) a diverse array of developmentally appropriate activities that provide opportunities to build skills, and (3) flexible programming that allows student choice and autonomy in the selection of activities” (p. 30-31). One thing that remains clear is that although the particulars of after-school programs may vary, the components that determine the success of a program are becoming more universal. How positive settings impact ASP participants, and to what degree, is another question for the literature.

When discussing how the program affected the individual participant or the other stakeholders, the results are framed in terms of outcomes. Outcomes can be positive or negative. It is important to note that some researchers have in some cases found little effect—or even a negative effect— pertaining to the ASP and outcomes on the participant. A 2005 study attempted to measure the effects of 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The researchers concluded that “students who were randomly assigned to attend the 21st Century Community Learning Centers after-school program were more likely to feel safe after school, no more likely to have higher academic achievement, no less likely to be in self-care, more likely to engage in

some negative behaviors, and experience mixed effects on developmental outcomes relative to students who were not randomly assigned to attend the centers” (James-Burdumy et al., 2005, p. xii). For other studies that found little or no positive effects, see Pettit, Laird, Bates and Dodge, (1997) and NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, (2004). Although some studies have found programming that causes little to no effect on the participants, to date more studies are connected to some positive outcomes for participating youth.

When discussing positive outcomes, the results are framed in different terms. “The terms *program effectiveness* and *program quality* are helpful in communicating the basic but important idea that program-related variables contribute to the achievement of desired outcomes. Effectiveness and quality get clarified when tied to particular outcomes and youth served” (Yohalem, Granger and Pittman, 2009, p. 130). In other words, the effectiveness of a specific program variable (positive relationships) becomes clarified when tied to an outcome (academic achievement) and also connected to a specific program population. If this is true then a specific variable is the cause of a positive outcome for a participating youth in the program. In addition, if a program caused a participant “to achieve positive outcomes, children and youth require opportunities and supports in multiple developmental domains, including academic, social, psychological, and behavioral areas” (Vandell et al., 2007, p. 4). It is also important to offer a variety of program content, thus providing opportunities for kids to be successful in multiple areas. Programs require appropriate structural and institutional features in order to support high-quality outcomes (Vandell et al., 2007). Research also supports an increase in the dosage of the programming, because kids that receive an increase in positive programming are more likely to see an increase in positive outcomes (Beckett, et al., 2001).

Vandell's (2007) research team studied and identified over 200 highly effective after-school programs, and they have identified several commonalities. "The programs offered services four or five days a week and were free of charge to students," she says. "Program leaders expected students to participate regularly throughout the school year. Each of the selected programs served at least 30 students. The programs had strong partnerships with neighborhoods, schools, and community organizations" (p. 2).

Recently, increased attention has been focused on the participation in ASPs and other activities and their correlation to the effects of child and adolescent development. According to Mahoney, Levine and Hinga (2010), "The evidence suggests that participation in ASPs *can* positively affect the academic, social-emotional, and physical well-being of young people, including long-term educational attainment and occupational success. However, both the direction and magnitude of associated effects depends on program quality" (p. 89). Therefore, positive youth outcomes are strongly dependent on program quality. According to Vandell, et al., (2007), "Promising programs are those that offer high-quality after-school environments for youth, manifest sustainability, and exhibit characteristics believed to promote positive youth outcomes" (p. 3).

The success of an after-school program is dependent upon the outcomes of the program, as measured against expectations. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) best describe some of the major expectations. These programs "provide youth with enriching experiences that broaden their perspectives, improve their socialization, and enhance their skills" (p. 95). On the surface, many experts claim that participants of quality programs choose to do so for multiple reasons. "Common reasons included learning new skills, developing existing skills, competing with other members of organized teams or groups, exploring and solidifying one's personal identities, being

with one's friends, having fun, filling time, escaping alternative bad situations, and gaining skills needed for unrelated short- and long-term goals" (Eccles, 2005, p. 354).

Researchers further claim that taking a wide range of approaches to develop some of these competencies can lead to positive behavioral outcomes. The prevention of problem behaviors is one, and, in fact, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (2003), cites a significant amount of research on behavioral outcomes. "Participation in after-school programs," the Institute says, "is positively associated with better school attendance, more positive attitude towards school work, higher aspirations for college, finer work habits, better interpersonal skills, reduced dropout rates, higher quality homework completion, less time spent in unhealthy behaviors, and improved grades" (p. 6). Simply stated, effective after-school programs create a community-like environment, an environment that provides countless opportunities for individual and collaborative success. But one question still remains; how is success measured?

Student attendance is a simple indicator of a successful program. (It is quite difficult to achieve positive outcomes if the kids aren't using the program.) Sustainability is the next logical metric. If the attendance rate is stable or growing, the implication is that something is attracting kids to the program and keeping them involved. Of course, further indicators are necessary in order to claim that the program is the reason for attendance growth.

Still, growth still remains a good starting point when making the case for a program's positive impact. The vast majority of other indicators are directly correlated to variables embedded in specific programs. For example, a program in an urban setting may look quite different when compared to a program in a sub-urban or even a rural setting. Although programs in varying settings all work with youths, the program content and the goals often differ, therefore, outcomes may be different. Furthermore, while different programs may set similar

long-term goals, the processes by which the goals are reached are directly correlated to program content, environment, dosage, population/demographics and other variables embedded in the program's culture and community.

Vandell, et al., (2007) illustrated the process of reaching sustainable outcomes in the following diagram.

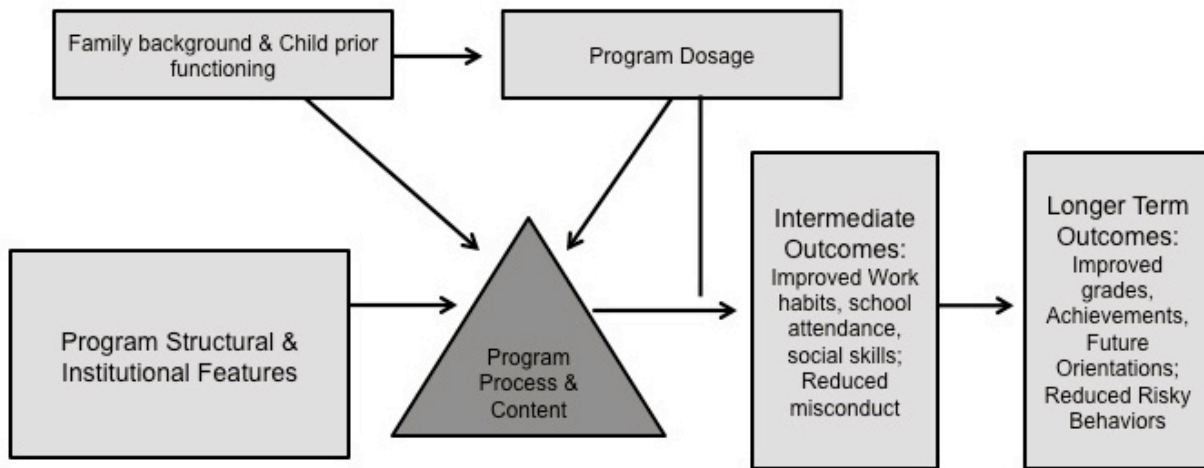


Figure 2. Theory of Change for the Study of Promising After-School Programs. Source: Vandell, Reisner and Pierce, p. 1 (2007).

At the heart of the diagram are the program processes and the content of a given program. These are the areas that can most easily be controlled or built upon, and focusing on these things provides the most flexibility. For example, in a given community the program cannot change the family backgrounds of the participants, and rarely can structural or institutional features be adjusted. That leaves the content, process and delivery of the program, features which can be adjusted via dosage.

The how and what of an after-school program is everything. What is the program content or curriculum? What are the goals of a program? How is a program going to

deliver? If a program achieves successful long-term outcomes, its success is directly correlated to the appropriate dosage of content for the specific individual or community.

2.4 WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT ARTS-BASED AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN PARTICULAR?

The vast majority of research literature in this search focuses on arts-based programs with no clear separation regarding in-school programs (programs which take place during the school day) or after-school programs. Little peer-reviewed literature exists on arts-based after-school programs. However, some common themes do emerge from the literature linking effective practices in ASPs and the benefits resulting from exposure to the arts. Therefore, a historical perspective is first needed to ground the connection between ASPs and arts-based learning.

In the early 1980s, the United States started to embrace the arts and began to acknowledge the educational impact that the arts can have upon students. Howard Gardner (1983) published his multiple intelligence theory, which led to an increase in arts education. According to Gardner, different people learn in different ways or through different “intelligences.” The multiple intelligences were labeled visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic and logical-mathematical. Gardner’s multiple intelligence theory was rapidly integrated into school curricula. Another prominent and instrumental change in arts education occurred in 1982, when President Ronald Regan created the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities (PCAH) by executive order. Since its inception the PCAH has impacted the research fields of the arts, humanities and education in many ways. In 1995, a report produced by the committee claimed that “teaching the arts has a

significant effect on overall success in school,” and noted that SAT scores—both quantitative and verbal—are higher in high school students that take arts courses than those that do not (Murfee, p. 3). Shortly after that, The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) and the PCAH developed a report entitled *Champions of Change*. The report discussed seven research teams that examined a diverse collection of arts programs. Both in-school and out-of-school programs were evaluated using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The teams of researchers conducted their studies independently, but they collectively arrived at a consensus regarding how and why the arts change the learning experience. These were the seven themes that emerged:

- The arts reach students that are otherwise not being reached
- The arts reach students in ways that had not been tapped into before
- The arts connect students to themselves and with each other
- The arts transform the environment for learning
- The arts provide learning opportunities for the adults in young people’s lives
- The arts provide new challenges for those students already considered successful
- The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work (Fiske, 1999, p. ix-x).

The group of researchers also established, collectively, that to be effective, quality arts-based programs should:

- Enable young people to have direct involvement with the arts and artists
- Require significant staff development
- Support extended engagement in the artistic process
- Encourage self-directed learning
- Promote complexity in the learning experience
- Allow management of risk by the learners

- Engage in community leaders and resources (Fiske, 1999, p. x).

More recently, in 2011, the PCAH developed a report entitled *Reinvesting in Arts Education, Winning America's Future through Creative Schools*. This report claims that experts correlate positive outcomes derived from “quality arts education” in one or more of the following categories:

- Student achievement, typically as represented by reading and mathematics performance on high stakes tests, including transfer of skills learning from the arts to learning in other academic areas—for example, the spatial-temporal reasoning skills developed by music instruction;
- Student motivation and engagement, including improved attendance, persistence, focused attention, heightened educational aspirations, and intellectual risk taking;
- Development of habits of mind including problem solving, critical and creative thinking, dealing with ambiguity and complexity, integration of multiple skill sets, and working with others; and
- Development of social competencies, including collaboration and team work skills, social tolerance, and self-confidence (Dwyer, 2011, p. 16).

The PCAH is not alone in linking academic achievement to the arts. In 2002, the AEP put out a report that found a strong link between the arts and transfer of skills to learning in other academic content areas. This report compiled the research of 62 peer-reviewed and separate research studies (Deasy, 2002). Positive links have also been discovered in other studies. For example, in *Doing well and doing good by doing art: The effects of education in the visual and performing arts on the achievements and values of young adult* there is a strong correlation between arts learning in early years and overall academic success. Instruction in the arts

correlates to pro-social outcomes as well. This 12-year-long national study of education found that arts-engaged, low-income students are more likely than non-engaged students to attend and do well in college, find gainful employment, volunteer in their communities and participate in the political process (Catterall, 2009). In a 2010 study, *Creative learning: People and pathways*, similar links were made between experiences in the arts and academic outcomes. This particular study showed that students who focused on creative activities made greater strides in reading and math. The study focused on extended arts activities, or arts instruction that goes beyond the in-school curriculum, thus making a connection into out-of-school time or arts-based ASPs (Bransom, et al.). Linking the outcomes of student exposure in the arts with academic outcomes is closely aligned with effective ASPs as previously discussed in this literature review.

Arts-based education shares commonalities with effective ASPs in terms of student achievement and program outcomes. Art-making can act as a platform for achieving shared goals. For example, artistic expression is a form of communication and developing communication skills is a desired outcome of ASPs. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1999) seems to subscribe to the same philosophy when it states that “the knowledge and skills that students develop in learning to respond to, perform and create works of art constitute a fundamental form of literacy students must have if they are to communicate successfully and function in today’s new media and information technology society” (p. 25).

Elliot Eisner (2002) argued, in reference to the ideas of Sir Herbert Read, that:

The aim of education ought to be conceived as the preparation of artists. By the term artist neither he nor I mean necessarily painters and dancers, poets and playwrights. We mean individuals who have developed the ideas, the sensibilities, the skills and Imagination to create work that is well proportioned, skillfully executed, and imaginative

regardless of the domain in which an individual works. The highest accolade we can offer upon someone is to say that he or she is an artist whether as a carpenter or a surgeon, a cook or an engineer, a physicist or a teacher” (p.8).

To be an artist is to be an inquirer, a creator, a communicator, and—most importantly—an individual. The arts offer opportunities for students to seek their individuality and become creative communicators of their own personal values. According to Green and Kindseth (2011), “The artistic process is particularly suited to key outcomes of personal growth and interpersonal connection due to its integration of discussion and critical reflection in context of individual and group learning. Whether taking place through individual or collective acts of creation, the artistic process is inherently learner centered” (p. 338). Furthermore, the arts possess a natural ability to cut across content and perspectives while linking learning and outcomes. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1999) claims that a “quality arts education can help students develop the four C’s”:

- **Cognition:** the arts expand our knowledge and contribute to intellectual comprehension. Studies have shown that the arts teach children how to think critically, solve problems, analyze and synthesize information, evaluate and make decisions.
- **Culture:** The arts help us understand people and the traditions and symbols that have meaning for them. The arts are international and transcend the limits of different languages, and help to bridge the gaps in a diverse and complicated world.
- **Communication:** The arts help us send and receive messages in a variety of media that are their own form of literacy. The arts use sights, sounds, and movement to convey meaning beyond the power of words. Arts education develops the ability to interpret and understand complex symbols in the same manner as language and mathematics.

- Creativity: The arts teach the skills associated with imagination, invention and innovation-skills. Creativity, learned through the arts, is likened to the process of scientific discovery, business planning and negotiation (p. 25).

The visual arts offer the opportunity to make the process of learning personal and relevant through inquiry. Alfonso Montuori (2008) describes the process of inquiry as an experience that “opens up worlds” (p. 16). This somewhat abstract description may sound nebulous on the surface, but it is a powerful insight. For too many students, “answers” are meaningless when those answers lack the context that a meaningful question provides. The challenge for educators is how to engage that curious spirit that dwells within each student. One way to begin to introduce students, especially younger students, to the process of meaningful inquiry is to make it personally relevant.

Inquiry is not exclusively an aid used to reveal what is already known; it is a gift that develops throughout one's journey into the unknown. Montuori (2008) interestingly noted that inquiry alone should not question the essence of self. He reminded us that it is the responsibility of every individual to ponder his or her own capacity for great potential. The arts offer a logical platform for self-discovery through relevant experiences, providing a pathway for individuals to discover their great potential

The arts mesh with the components of a highly effective program, resulting in positive youth outcomes. For example, individualized instruction is evident in both the arts and effective programs. Through the very nature of the arts, students receive personalized, hands-on experience. This process happens as an individual transfers an original idea into a work of art. As John Dewey argued in 1938, “Basing education upon personal experiences may mean more multiplied and more intimate contacts between the mature and the immature than ever existed in

the traditional school, and consequently more, rather than less, guidance by others” (p. 21). Dewey’s argument implies that learning through personal experience (as opposed to the type of learning that occurs when the teacher merely imparts knowledge to the student) is significantly advantageous. The student will gain a more valuable and authentic education when relevant, personal experiences can be associated with the material.

By no means are the arts the only way to make learning personally relevant, but the arts do provide a way to reach a wide variety students. Through the arts, students are encouraged to engage their minds, communicate their philosophies and create new knowledge. In 2004, Franklin, Fernandez, Mosby and Fernando studied the impact the arts have on engaging student minds and concluded that participation in the arts positively influences brain performance. Painting, music, dance and drama were linked to improved academic and emotional development. They further indicate that arts engagement reduces stress, enhances motivation, regulates brain chemistry and literally rewires neural pathways in the brain. Brain-based research has been on the rise as it relates to student achievement and arts-based education. According to Respress and Lufti (2006), states are increasingly looking to fund strategies that improve student achievement. The “one size fits all” approach to learning styles is no longer relevant, and that is why educators are beginning to use nontraditional pedagogical approaches (like brain-based learning) to address the individual needs of students (p. 24). Some recent findings in brain-based research as it pertains to students and arts participation are as follows.

- Music lessons or listening to music can increase spatial reasoning ability. Solving math problems, the creative scientific process and general planning each utilize spatial reasoning (Catterall, 2002).
- Drama develops spontaneous thinking, conceptual and analytical thinking skills and

problem-solving ability. Participation in drama also affects narrative understanding and component skills such as understanding conflict and identifying character motivation. Reading, writing and interpersonal skills also improve (Catterall, 2002, Dickson, 2002, & Respress, et al., 2006).

- Dance contributes to increased self-confidence, social tolerance and appreciation of individual and group social development (Catterall, 2002).
- The visual arts improve student motivation, learning and retention (Respress et al., 2006).

“The creative power of the brain,” according to Respress and Lutfu, “is released when human beings are in environments that are positive, nurturing, and stimulating and that encourage action and interaction” (Respress & Lutfi, 2006, p. 24). It could be argued that the environment needed to ignite the creative power of the brain is also the environment of an effective arts program.

The literature does reveal a few visual arts-based programs that meet these requirements. An art education professor from Virginia Commonwealth University developed a unique arts-based after-school program that provides relevance for all participants. This visual arts-based program has evolved into a real-world teaching lab for pre-service teachers. Functioning as both a research study as well as a service-learning course for college students, it has been successful in investigating “whether an inquiry-based arts curriculum delivered through the after-school program impacts on critical thinking ability in both children enrolled in the program and the college students participating in implementing it” (Lampert, 2007, p. 265).

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Bill Strickland founded a successful program that has been evolving for 40 years, one that focuses on educating and inspiring urban youth through the arts. The Manchester Craftsman Guild (MCG) “grew from one man’s vision into a nationally recognized model for Out-of-School Time (OST) learning through visual arts” (Green &

Kindseth, 2011, p.338). MCG is known for offering an arts environment designed to welcome and engage learners through after-school courses in ceramics, design, digital arts and photography. MCG has most recently been noted for their Apprenticeship Training Program (ATP). Through the ATP they have modeled innovative methods for student assessments. “Afterschool arts programs like ATP also aim to improve students’ technical and artistic skills, and we value craftsmanship and design. However, our assessments extend to intangibles – like representation of identity, interpersonal collaboration, personal resiliency – present in the artwork and the art making process, of our students” (Green & Kindseth, 2011, p. 338).

According to Bitz, (2004) the Comic Book Project was an effort to launch an arts-based literacy initiative for youths in urban after-school programs, so it was not an arts-based ASP. It was designed instead as arts-based curriculum—or a kind of programming—to be infused into existing ASPs. Bitz partnered with the Teachers College at Columbia University. His collaborators included teachers, students, administrators, local ASPs, artists and a publishing company. The study worked with 733 students and 33 ASPs, and the primary goal was to build literacy through the development of artistic skills and by encouraging a sense of personal ownership. The outcomes of the study were:

- 86% of the participants believe they are improving their writing as a result of the Comic Book Project
- 88% of the participants look at pictures for clues to the story as a result of the Comic Book Project
- 92% of the participants like to write their own stories as a result of the Comic Book Project
- 94% of the participants like to draw pictures that accompany their stories as a result of

the Comic Book Project

Bitz summarized the project in this way: “The Comic Book Project covered many areas of literacy. However, communication and expression are key components of any definition of literacy. The conjunction of building communication skills, being artistically creative, and expressing oneself is a powerful combination realized through the comic book project format, specifically, and the process of making art in general” (Bitz, 2004, p. 585).

Although the research does document effective ASPs and effective practices in the arts, the literature has yet to document enough visual arts-based ASPs to establish an argument for effectiveness. The research literature does make the case that the arts are integral to the development of the whole child, socially and emotionally as well as academically. It also makes a strong case for after-school programming by outlining specific components that increase a program's ability to achieve student outcomes. Unfortunately, the research has yet to outline clearly the combination of the two concepts of effective ASPs and effective practices in the arts, in arts-based, after-school programming.

In 2004, Eisner said:

Artistry, therefore, can serve as a regulative ideal for education, a vision that adumbrates what really matters in schools. To conceive of students as artists who do their art in science, in the arts, or the humanities, is, after all, a daunting and a profound aspiration. It may be that by shifting the paradigm of education reform and teaching from one modeled after the clocklike character of the assembly line into one that is closer to the studio or innovative science laboratory might provide us with a vision that better suits the capacities and the futures of the students we teach. It is in this sense, I believe, that the

field of education has much to learn from the arts about the practice of education. It is time to embrace a new model for improving our schools (Smith, 2005).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 Background for the Study

In September of 2000, Capizzano, Tout and Adams, from the Urban Institute in Washington, DC, conducted a study on after-school pursuits and activities among K-12 students in the United States. The study concluded that more than 14 million of these students are left unsupervised after school. “Approximately 4 million of these children attend middle school” (p. 29). Afterschool Alliance, the national organization, commissioned a similar study⁴ in 2004 and again in 2009. Their findings indicate that, “The number of children who are unsupervised in the afternoons has risen from 14.3 million (25 percent) in 2004 to 15.1 million (26 percent) in 2009” (p. 2). In 2004, Afterschool Alliance claims, “30 percent of middle school students (3,722,219) and four percent of elementary school children (1,133,989) are unsupervised after the school bell rings” (p. 2).

Although it is simple to understand the implications of these figures, attempts to address them often have generated mixed reviews. Many of these students impose a significant burden on their communities and their families. Such children are classified as “at risk” youths—

⁴ After School Alliance is an organization focused in advocacy and awareness for America’s youth and afterschool programming. America after 3 PM was funded by the JC Penny afterschool fund. “The Afterschool Alliance worked with researchers at RTI to collect data via U.S. mail surveys from 29,754 households. The findings are nationally representative. In some instances, the findings have been projected to represent the 57.3 million K-12 youth in the country based on 2007 U.S. Census data. All of the projected estimates are based on data that were weighted by income and ethnicity. The overall margin of error is +/- 0.56 percent” (p. 1).

students who have not mastered the basic academic, vocational, social and behavioral skills that are required in order to function successfully in a school, the workplace and the community (Meisel, Henderson, Cohen & Leone, 1998). More importantly this large population of children is left to fend for themselves due to lack of supervision.

Many factors contribute to children being at risk. Lack of supervision is one contributor to danger in which children are placed. Contributors ranging from a changing parental employment landscape to an unpredictable home life have made after-school supervision more complex. In 2003, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services published a report titled, *Trends in the Well-Being of America's Children and Youth*. This report highlighted the changing dynamics of American families in relation to the work force. The brief states:

Between 1985 and 2001,. Between 1990 and 1996, this percentage was similar for married-couple families and single-mother families; however, the rate for single-mother families increased sharply from 66 percent in 1996 to 79 percent in 2001, while the rate for married-couple families had little variation over the same time period (64 percent in 1996 and 64 percent in 2001). The rate for children in single-father families was much higher, at 91 percent in 2001. Between 1994 and 2001, there was a large decline in the proportion of children living in families in which no resident parent was attached to the labor force (p.96).

Although the data above was most recently published in 2003, it remains commonly cited throughout the research literature, and it remains relevant as a way to depict the evolving American family landscape. More recently, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics conducted an annual national survey, the Current Population Survey (CPS). The annual marital and family supplement to the CPS reveals a current representation of parents in the work force. By 2011,

the percentage of single-mother families in the work force had decreased slightly from 79% in 2001 to 75%. The percentage of married families increased slightly from 64% in 2001 to 65% in 2011. Finally, the percentage of single-father families decreased from 91% in 2001 to 88% in 2011. Although there was a slight decline in both single-mother and single-father families, it is interesting to note that the total average remains at 69%. The total families represented in the work force is calculated by dividing the total number of single-mother, single-father and married families in the work force (45561) by the total number of families in the survey (65,931). The percentage of children who have both parents and only the resident parent in the labor force increased from 68% in 2001 to 69% in 2011. (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2011) (See Figure 3).

Since multiple-income households are now the norm in the United States, the average student returns from school to an empty house each day, unsupervised and free to follow his or her whims (Benson, 2003, p. 82). Another factor pertaining to the “at risk” profile in children is the growth of poverty. Over the past decade, several government agencies have worked together to publish America’s *Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*, an annual report. One of the claims outlined in the brief sheds light on the number of children living in poverty. “In 2010, 22 percent of children ages 0–17 (16.4 million) lived in poverty. This is up from a low of 16 percent in 2000 and 2001. Consistent with expectations related to the economic downturn, child poverty has increased annually since 2006, when the rate was 17 percent” (Wallman K., 2012, p. 6). Little debate exists regarding poverty as a risk factor for children. Therefore, the increasing number of children living in poverty contributes to kids being at risk. Childhood poverty compounded with large numbers of single and both working parent households are contributing to lack of supervision. In summary, the challenge of positively engaging and

protecting America's children after school has reached a tipping point, therefore paving the way for after school opportunities.

3.1.2 Statement of the Problem

After an extensive review of the after-school programming, out-of-school time and arts-based, education literature, an anomaly surfaced. Little peer reviewed research literature is written on the two combined concepts, visual arts-based, after-school programming. Much has been researched and documented regarding effective ASPs as well as the impact of the arts on student achievement. It is important to note that emerging themes or commonalities are present in effective ASPs as defined by the literature. These common themes are: safety, structure, relationships, connectivity, high expectations, positive social norms, relevant skill building, personalized instruction and community orientation (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; The National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2003; Mahoney, et al., 2010). Furthermore, in the arts-related literature, common positive student outcomes are evident in specific exposure to the arts, including visual arts.

The common outcomes are: student achievement, motivation/engagement, critical/creative thinking, social competencies, and communication (Dwyer, 2011; The Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). However, little is known about the combination of the two practices of after-school programming with arts education. Are art-based ASPs effective thus promoting positive student outcomes? Before questions can be answered regarding the effect of programming it is important to gain a greater understanding of visual arts ASPs in general. For example, who is participating in these types of programs and to what

frequency are specific individuals participating in arts ASPs? Why are students participating in these programs and what do the programs offer?

To respond to these gaps in the literature, this case study will describe (identify) a visual arts-based after-school program and its participants.

3.1.3 Rationale

The primary purpose for the study was to develop a better understanding of who participates in visual arts-based after-school programs. More specifically, the purpose was to use secondary data analysis of district-collected data to identify the variance in the student demographics of those youths that are attracted to the ASP "Studio Life." Additionally, this study also aimed to investigate the perceptions of the program's teen mentors about how their participation as mentors has affected their learning, volunteerism, and social communications.

3.1.4 The Relevant Hypotheses

There will be a negative correlation between program participation rate and socio-economic status, e.g., the adolescents who participate more frequently will have lower socio-economic status. Additionally, there will be a negative correlation between program participation and family landscape, e.g., adolescents who participate more frequently will reside in a household where the family landscape is either a single working parent or both working parents/guardians, as compared to households where one of the parents/guardians or both are not working.

Finally, the program mentors will describe positive perceptions about how the program has had an impact on them. Specifically, mentors will indicate through survey responses that the

program has had a positive influence on their learning, volunteerism, and social communications. Coding and analyzing the survey responses as well as the open-ended questions will document student perceptions.

3.1.5 Research Questions

The current study investigated two research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of student participants in a visual arts-based after-school program?
2. What possible impact does attendance in an arts-based after-school program have on its mentors?

3.1.6 Methods

This study is an embedded single-case design, with two units of analysis: the program participants and the program mentors. According to Yin, in the revelatory case as a single case study “the investigator has access to a situation previously inaccessible to scientific observation. The case study is therefore worth conducting because the descriptive information alone will be revelatory” (2009, p. 49). In this particular case the investigator had access to a visual arts-based after-school program and studied two embedded units of analysis. The first was the overall population of the program during two years of program operation. The second embedded unit of analysis was a subgroup of the program population, identified as the program mentors. All participants in the program were students who range in age from 11-19 years in grades 6-12.

3.1.7 Setting

The visual arts-based ASP is formally titled “Studio Life” and informally referred to as art club. The program claims to utilize a curriculum that delivers visual arts-based instruction through the following program structures:

- Student contracts (outlining student expectations)
- Mentoring (high school students mentor middle school students)
- Visiting adult helpers/artists
- Sketchbook and journals (assist in documentation of progress)
- Cooperative learning opportunities (multi-age and skill grouping)
- Art production activities
- Culminating exhibits and events
- Providing food (eat a meal/snack as a group)

The ASP is currently in its fifth year of operation. During that time it has operated out of multiple locations; it was housed in the middle school art room for the first three years. As a result of a lengthy middle school renovation it was moved to the two high school art rooms. The program remained at the high school for the entire 2011-2012 school year through the first half of the 2012-2013 school year. More recently, the program moved back into the newly renovated middle school where it operates out of two visual art classrooms. This study will focus on the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 years of program operation. The ASP has been associated with one school district for the entire five years of operation.

The ASP is mostly comprised of middle school students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. During the 2011-2012 school-year, the total student population in the middle school was

446 students. The sixth grade had 73 males and 81 females, the seventh grade had 70 males and 84 females and the eighth grade had 59 males and 79 females. Fifteen percent, 66 of the 446 middle school student population received free and reduced lunches.

The program also benefits from the participation of high school mentors, ranging from ninth grade through twelfth grade. The mentor population is significantly smaller than the group of middle school students. In order for a student to become a mentor in the program they are required to sign a contract that defines their expectation. The mentors participate with regular attendance and receive academic credit for their efforts.

The ASP has been operating out of one school district for the entire five years of operation. The school district is a suburban community comprised of 11 municipalities located northwest of a larger U.S. city. The district population represents a wide range in socioeconomic status, with median household incomes ranging from \$28,672 in one borough to \$115,672 in a neighboring borough. It is important to point out this unique characteristic of diversity within the district community. Although the school district population is relatively small, serving nearly 2,000 students, its population represents noticeable economic diversity. This is just one of the many characteristics that separate this community from other suburban populations.

3.1.8 Participants

This study examined a specific population of students who participated in a visual arts-based ASP during the 2011-2012 through 2012-2013 years of program operation. The program participants' grade levels ranged from 6th to 12th. The criteria for selecting the students participating in the after-school program are done on a voluntary basis. A brief presentation is presented to all students interested, followed by a descriptive handout of the program and a

parent/guardian permission slip. No student is turned away and all are eligible to participate. Upon arrival at the program, students mark their attendance by signing the sign-in sheet. Attendance is verified by a student mentor, whose expectation is to verbally ask all participants if they signed-in. Attendance is then cross-checked with a headcount by the program facilitator. This process is repeated for all sessions.

The total number of participating students during the 2011-2012 school-year was 159. Their participation ranges from attending 1 session to attending 45 sessions, while a grand total of 50 program sessions was offered. The total number of participating students during the 2012-2013 school-year was 137. Their participation ranges from attending 1 session to attending 43 sessions, while a grand total of 49 program sessions was offered. Therefore, the 228 eligible participants for this study was represented by any youth who participated a minimum of 1 session in either the 2011-2012, 2012-2013 or both years of program operation. According to the student sign-in sheets during the year of 2011-2012, participation ranges from 70 students to 24 students on a given day. During the year of 2012-2013, participation ranges from 51 students to 20 students on a given day. The participant population is mixed in gender, age, ethnicity and other demographic measures.

In order for a student to participate in this study, signed parental consent and signed student assent was required. (See Appendix B for the consent/assent form).

The procedure for collecting consent and assent forms was as follows: First, the researcher attempted to collect as many informed consent letters as possible by talking to students currently participating in the program. Next, a mailing with a postage-paid, return envelope was sent to the household of all eligible study participants. The final attempt to receive signed consent forms was to send letters home with students followed by phone calls to parents

and guardians. Once I received enough signed consent letters, I met with the students whose parents have agreed and asked for signed assent.

3.1.9 Data Collection

The school district archival records were used as the primary source of data as it pertains to the collection procedures in the study. The following is a summary of the data collection research methods:

- First, the researcher used the ASP daily attendance sign-in sheets to collect and record participant attendance. The participant attendance was then exported into Spreadsheet 1. The spreadsheet reflected the total number of program sessions offered as well as the daily totals for those attending. After the spreadsheet was completed individual participant attendance was categorized into high, middle and low attendance rates.
- Next the researcher gathered parental consent and student assent forms from as many eligible participants as possible (see consent procedure). Once the consent/assent forms were collected, verified, sorted and stored, the researcher used a school district database to collect student demographic data on the participants who provided consent and assent. The program attendance data was then merged with the student demographic data. The demographic characteristic data included [gender, age, grade, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch (yes/no), Title 1 services (yes/no), discipline on file (yes/no), family status (mother and father HOH, mother HOH and father HOH, program attendance and program attendance rate)]. If some of the student demographic characteristics were not indicated in the school district database they were categorized as not on file. All available demographic data was collected and logged in Spreadsheet 2.

- The final spreadsheet (merger of spreadsheet 1 and 2) was then ready for statistical analysis and represents program attendance rates with correlating demographic characteristic data.
- The final data collection method pertained to only the program mentors. The researcher surveyed the program mentors in order to gather data pertaining to their participation in the after-school program and possible correlation to student impact. The survey questions were generated from a literature review and thus informing a theoretical framework.

The following tables represent a theoretical framework from the research literature that informed the data collection process. Table 1 illustrates the demographic characteristics to be collected from those that participated in the ASP “Studio Life.” After a review of the research literature, common themes emerged from several studies. The themes indicate specific demographic characteristics that were collected in multiple studies of after-school programs and thus informed the demographic characteristics to be collected of the Studio Life program participants in this study.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics Identified in After-school Literature

Citation Authors and year	Study and	Type of Study	Gender	Socio-economics	Age	Child Ethnicity	Special Needs	Discipline	Family
Vandell, D. L., Reisner, E. R., Brown, B. B., Dadisman, K., Pierce, K. M., Lee, D., & Pechman, E. M. (2005).		This study examined longitudinally the effects of participation in high-quality ASPs on various outcomes among economically disadvantaged youth in both elementary schools and middle school years	Male/Female	Free/reduced priced lunch	The students were categorized into two groups elementary students and middle school students	Asian/other, Black, Hispanic, White	No	Child behavioral adjustment	Family structure Family income Parent/guardian education
Pierce, K. M. Bolt, D. M Vandell, D. L. (2010)		This longitudinal study examined associations between three program quality features: Positive staff/child relations, available activities, and program flexibility. The study additionally examined child developmental outcomes. This study surveyed 92 ASP's in a mid-size Midwestern city ant a 98% response rate.	Male/Female	Family Income (in the thousands)	The students were categorized in groups of grades:1,2 and 3) However, its children's ages were also collected indicating an average age of 6.5 years (SD=0.3)	Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, Other, White	No	No	Single-parent household (y/n) Maternal education (less than high school or GED, High school or GED, Associates degree or some college, Bachelor's degree, Graduate degree) Income (in thousands) Firm/responsive parenting (Y/N)

Citation Study Authors and year	Type of Study	Gender	Socio-economics	Age	Child Ethnicity	Special Needs	Discipline	Family
Halpern, R. 1992	This is a study of Urban Youth Network (UYN) in Chicago's most deprived neighborhoods with the purpose of examining inner-city children and the difficulties reaching them and holding their attendance. During the study the UYN served about 500 children with some degree of regularity.	Male/Female	Employment status of parent or guardian	5-7 years of age, 8-10 years of age and 11-12 years of age	No	No	No	Child living with mother, Child living with both parents, Child living with grandparents
Respress, T. Lutfi, G (2006)	Program Evaluation "The analysis of this program examines the extent to which the fine arts improves academic achievement, school bonding, and reduces violence" (p. 28). The sample population consisted of 66 middle school students	Male/Female (Both the participant group and the comparison groups consisted of 16 males and 17 females)	Participants were selected based upon baseline data regarding socio-economic background.	Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 (between the ages of 11 and 14)	"The racial makeup of both groups was 94 percent African American, six percent bi-racial, and one percent other" (p. 28).	No	The students were selected based upon baseline data regarding problem behaviors, family problems, and problems in the community	The students were selected based upon baseline data regarding family problems.

Citation Study Authors and year	Type of Study	Gender	Socio-economics	Age	Child Ethnicity	Special Needs	Discipline	Family
Vandell, D. L. Reisner, E. R. Pierce, K. M. (2007)	The study of Promising Afterschool Programs was designed to examine relations between high-quality ASP's and desired academic and behavioral outcomes for low-income students. A total of 2,914 students (1,796 elementary school and 1,118 middle school) were studied.	Male/ Female	Free or reduced lunch	Elementary sample (3 rd and 4 th grade) Middle school sample (sixth or seventh grade)	Students of color: Hispanic, Black, Asian	No	Classroom teachers and participating youth completed surveys to measure problematic (misconduct, substance abuse, aggression)	Mothers level of educational attainment Average annual family income

Table 2 illustrates the common themes that emerged from the research literature regarding positive correlations from art and after-school programs and student impact. The themes from the literature are: academic achievement, attendance in school, behavior/discipline, social skills/peer interaction and work habits. This theoretical framework informed the design of the mentor survey including the open-ended questions.

Table 2 Impact of After-school or Arts Education Programs on Students

Citation	Arts or ASP	Description	Academic Achievement/ Transfer of skills	Attendance in School	Behavior/ Discipline	Social Skills/ Peer interaction	Comments	Other
Pierce, K. M., Bolt, D. M. & Vandell, D. L. (2010).	ASP	This longitudinal study examined associations between three after-school program quality features (positive staff-child relations, available activities, programming flexibility) and developmental outcomes (reading and math grades, work habits, and social skills with peers) in grade 2 and then in grade 3.	Academic Grades; classroom teachers reported children's grades in (Reading and Math) they were measured on a 5 point scale from (1) failing to (5) excellent	No	Classroom teachers reported children's work habits by using six items on the Mock Report Card (Pierce et al., 1999) they were measured on a 5-point scale from (1) very poor to (5) very good. Ex. "Follows classroom procedures", "Uses time wisely"	Classroom teachers completed one subscale of the Teacher Checklist of Peer Relations (Coie and Dodge, 1988) 5 point scale from (1) very poor to (5) very good		Student work habits, child developmental outcomes

Citation	Arts or ASP	Description	Academic Achievement/ Transfer of skills	Attendance in School	Behavior/ Discipline	Social Skills/ Peer interaction	Comments	Other
Vandell, D. L. Reisner, E. R. Pierce, K. M. (2007)	ASP	The study of Promising Afterschool Programs was designed to examine relations between high-quality ASP's and desired academic and behavioral outcomes for low-income students	Comparison of ASP participants with regular attendance to peers who were regularly unsupervised. The study examined standardized math and reading scores over a 2-year period. Classroom teachers and participating youth completed surveys to measure (grades, task persistence and work habits)	No	Classroom teachers and participating youth completed surveys to measure problematic (misconduct, substance abuse, aggression)	Classroom teachers and participating youth completed surveys to measure (social skills with peers, pro-social conduct with peers)	Elementary and middle school students that participated in the ASPs approximately 2 or more days per week showed significant gains in mathematics standardized test scores.	

Citation	Arts or ASP	Description	Academic Achievement/ Transfer of skills	Attendance in School	Behavior/ Discipline	Social Skills/ Peer interaction	Comments	Other
Catterall, J. S. (2009)	Arts	<i>Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art</i> is a 12-year National Study of Education in the Visual and Performing Arts. The purpose of the study is to examine the effects on the achievements and values of young adults. The longitudinal study that follows more than 12,000 students from high school to age 26, examining comparative achievements and values development for those highly involved in the arts during school vs. those with little arts engagement. The study focuses on children from low-income families, but reports average outcomes for all students as well as similar outcomes for children from high-income families.	On the NELS questionnaire students reported on a range of topics including school. Coursework and grades from students' high school and postsecondary transcripts are also available in the restricted use dataset.	No	No	Because this is an extensive study stretching over 12-years that follows students from high school to age 26 some of the common school impact indicators maybe lacking. However, the findings indicate that intensive involvement in the arts during middle and high school associates with higher levels of achievement, college attainment and pro-social behaviors such as volunteerism and political participation. (Brouillette, 2009)	The data used in this study comes from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88). A nationally representative of 8 th graders were first surveyed in 1988, a sample of the respondents were resurveyed in 1990, 1992, 1994 and 2000. Of the original 25,000 students in the study just over 12,000 participated in all 5 panels. Catterall uses the data from those who participated in all 5 panels.	

Citation	Arts or ASP	Description	Academic Achievement/ Transfer of skills	Attendance in School	Behavior/ Discipline	Social Skills/ Peer interaction	Comments	Other
Tishman, S. MacGillivaray, D. Palmer, P. (1999) "Critical Links"	Arts	A Visual Thinking Curriculum (VTC) was used in which 162 9- and 10-year-olds were trained to look closely at works of art and talk about what they saw in the works. The students in both the control group (204 students) and experimental group were comparable ages, grades and socio-economic circumstances.	Over the course of a year, the students participated in an average of seven to eight VTC lessons of about 40 minutes each. This study used a pre and post assessment where the students were shown an art image followed by asked reasoning questions about the image. This process was immediately followed by a science image and asked the same questions. The result is a transfer of art skills to other academic content areas. (Transfer of reasoning)	No	No	No	It's important to note that this particular study was only examining the transfer of skills from art to other academic areas.	

Citation	Arts or ASP	Description	Academic Achievement/ Transfer of skills	Attendance in School	Behavior/ Discipline	Social Skills/ Peer interaction	Comments	Other
Respress, T. Ghazwan, L. (2006)	Arts	This study examined impact of the Health, Education, in the Arts, Refining Talented Students (HEARTS) Family Life Center which is an after school violence prevention project. The study sample consisted of sixty-six middle school students, grades sixth- eighth. Half of the participants were placed in the participant group (33) and half in the comparison group. The sample population represented sixteen males and seventeen females in both groups between the ages eleven and fourteen. The population represented ninety-four percent African American, six percent bi-racial, and one percent other. All participants were selected from baseline data regarding problem behaviors, grades, attendance, socio-economics, and problems in the family/community.	<p>This study compared the participant's to the comparison group based on grade point average (GPA) and Math/Spelling standardized test scores.</p> <p>The participant group show a .5 increase in their GPA as measured by report card and show a statistical significance (p=.05) over the comparison group.</p> <p>The participant group increases by one grade level in math and spelling as measured by WRAT III and show a statistical significance (p=. 05) over the comparison group.</p>	<p>This study compared the participants to the comparison group based on attitude towards school by the Family Bonding Index.</p> <p>The participant group increased their attitude towards school by ten percent.</p>	<p>This study compared the participants to the comparison group by a Violence Risk Assessment.</p> <p>The participant group will reduce their violent risk index and the high-risk assessments reveal a statistical significance.</p>	<p>This study compared the participants to the comparison group, measured by Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE).</p> <p>The participant group reveals that 37% improved their total self-esteem scores. However in the comparison group only 7% showed improvement. The difference between the two groups was statistically significant.</p>		

3.1.10 Data Collection Plan to Address Research Question 1

What are the characteristics of student participants in an arts-based after-school program?

A total of 91 parental consent and student assent forms were collected, thus establishing the sample population for the demographic characteristic portion of the study. An Excel spreadsheet was created with all of 91 participants listed. The ASP attendance data for all participants was added to the spreadsheet. Using a district database, the researcher filled in the spreadsheet with the following demographic measures: gender, age, grade, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch (yes/no), Title 1 services (yes/no), discipline on file (yes/no), family status (mother and father HOH, mother HOH and father HOH. If data were missing from the district database the demographic measure was represented by 'not on file.'

Table 3 illustrates the specific demographic characteristics that were collected and analyzed in this study. Also, the table highlights the data source where each demographic characteristic was collected.

Table 3 Demographic Characteristic and correlating data source

Characteristic	Source of Data
Program Attendance	Student sign-in sheets
Gender	School District Database
Age	School District Database
Grade Level	School District Database
Socio-Economic Status (Free and Reduced Lunch)	School District Database
Special Needs (Title 1 services)	School District Database
Discipline	School District Database
Family (parental employment)	School District Database

3.1.11 Data Collection Plan to Address Research Question 2

To review, Research Question 2 asked, “What possible impact does attendance in a visual arts-based after-school program have on mentors?” To assess impact, this study used a self-report measure in the form of an on-line survey. This section outlines that process.

All participants in the ASP are issued an email account provided by the school district. The email accounts are networked through a district owned and operated intranet. The program that offers student email also offers a survey tool. Therefore, the mentors were sent an email through their school issued accounts, imbedded in email was a link to the survey. After each participant

completed their survey the responses were automatically uploaded into an Excel file, which the researcher was able to monitor. Data Recording

The researcher used three Excel spreadsheets to record the data associated with research question 1. The first two spreadsheets were a collection of total annual ASP participation and correlating attendance rates. A separate spreadsheet was created for the 2011-2012 and another for 2012-2013 years of program operation. (See Figure 3) The third Excel spreadsheet was used to record all student demographic characteristic data as well as ASP attendance rates (See Figure 4).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Name	26-Oct	9-Nov	7-Nov	14-Nov	16-Nov	21-Nov	11/30/11	12/5/11	12/7/11	12/14/11
2	student 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
3	student 2			x	x		x		x		
4	student 3	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		
5	student 4				x						
6	student 5						x		x		
7	student 6	x	x	x		x					
8	student 7	x			x			x	x		
9	student 8	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	
10	student 9		x	x		x					
11	student 10	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		

Figure 3. Data recording tool for collecting student attendance in the ASP

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1																
2	Last Name	First Name	Gender	Total Attendance 11-12	Attendance Rate 11-12	Total Attendance 12-13	Attendance Rate 12-13	Free/Reduced Lunch?	Age	Grade	Special Needs (Title 1 services)	Family Status	Discipline on File	Ethnicity		
3	Student 1		female	0	Non Participant	31	High	No	14	8	No	Father HOH	No	White		
4	Student 2		male	0	Non Participant	1	Low	No	12	6	No	Mother and Father HOH	Yes	White		
5	Student 3		female	31	High	2	Low	No	14	8	No	Mother and Father HOH	No	White		
6	Student 4		female	1	Low	0	Non Participant	No	14	8	No	Mother and Father HOH	Yes	White		
7	Student 5		female	0	Non Participant	1	Low	Yes	13	7	Yes	Mother HOH	No	White		
8	Student 6		female	27	Med	24	Med	No	15	9	No	Father HOH	Yes	White		
9	Student 7		male	37	High	0	Non Participant	No	13	7	No	Father HOH	No	White		
10	Student 8		female	1	Low	0	Non Participant	No	16	10	No	Mother and Father HOH	Yes	White		
11	Student 9		female	14	Low	12	Low	No	13	8	No	Mother and Father HOH	No	White		
12	Student 10		female	36	High	17	Low	No	14	8	No	Mother and Father HOH	No	White		
13	Student 11		female	17	Med	12	Low	No	14	8	Yes	Mother and Father HOH	Yes	White		
14	Student 12		female	0	Non Participant	11	Low	No	12	7	No	Mother and Father HOH	No	White		
15	Student 13		female	1	Low	10	Low	No	14	9	No	Father HOH	No	White		
16	Student 14		female	22	Med	24	Med	No	14	8	No	Father HOH	No	White		
17	Student 15		female	0	Non Participant	21	Med	No	12	6	No	Father HOH	No	White		
18	Student 16		female	7	Low	0	Non Participant	No	15	9	No	Father HOH	No	White		
19	Student 17		female	31	High	0	Non Participant	No	12	7	No	Father HOH	No	White		
20	Student 18		female	2	Low	0	Non Participant	Yes	14	8	Yes	Not on File	Yes	White		
21	Student 19		female	3	Low	1	Low	No	14	8	No	Father HOH	No	White		
22	Student 20		female	0	Non Participant	24	Med	No	12	6	No	Father HOH	No	White		
23	Student 21		female	23	Med	43	High	No	19	12	No	Mother and Father HOH	Yes	White		
24	Student 22		male	0	Non Participant	14	Low	No	17	10	No	Mother and Father HOH	Yes	White		
25	Student 23		male	0	Non Participant	2	Low	No	14	8	Yes	Father HOH	Yes	White		
26	Student 24		female	8	Low	0	Non Participant	No	17	11	No	Mother and Father HOH	No	White		

Figure 4. Data recording tool for collecting student demographics.

The researcher used the survey method to collect data pertaining to research question 2. The participating program mentors received a survey through their school issued email accounts. (See Appendix C).

3.2 DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

In the first part of the study, descriptive statistics were presented to understand the characteristics of program attendees. Then, program attendance rates were evaluated using two-tailed t-tests to determine differences among dichotomous independent variables such as: free/reduced lunch (yes/no), Title 1 services (yes/no), discipline on file (yes/no), family status (single- vs. dual-income household). Significance threshold was set at $p < 0.05$.

In the second part of the study, the mentor responses to the survey were evaluated by coding and analyzing the data, this includes the non-dichotomous, nominal/ordinal data as well as the open-ended responses. The main outcome variables were: learning, transfer of learning,

social impact, participation/engagement, volunteerism and behavior. (See Appendix D for relationship between survey questions and theoretical framework)

3.2.1 Program Attendance

Because some participants only attended the program for one of the two years being investigated, a new variable, “best year,” was created as an overall indicator of individuals’ participation. If a participant attended both years, the higher number was used. This variable was used as the dependent variable for t-tests.

3.2.2 Student Demographic Data

The researcher coded the student population in numerical order, followed by entering the corresponding student demographic data from the district database. After the student demographic data were entered, the spreadsheet was merged with the coded program attendance data, and then the student names were dropped. The final spreadsheet contained the coded program attendance data (high, middle and low) as well as the correlating demographic data. Once the student names were dropped and spreadsheets merged, the data was ready for analysis.

An in-depth investigation for correspondence and patterns took place. According to Stake (1995), “The search for meaning often is a search for patterns, for consistency, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call ‘correspondence’” (p.78). This was followed by a detailed analysis of each demographic measure per attendance subcategory. The characteristics of students were described using descriptive statistics according to attendance group (high, medium and low).

3.2.3 Mentor Survey

For research question two, the researcher exported the data from the survey into an Excel spreadsheet. Once the data was compiled in a spreadsheet the researcher conducted a detailed and methodic search for patterns characterized through descriptive statistics as well as report on themes identified in the open-ended questions. The variables that were measured to evaluate correlation of between the program and impact on adolescents were: learning, transfer of learning, social impact, participation/engagement, volunteerism and behavior.

A semi-structured narrative inquiry approach was used to contextualize the open-ended survey responses (Chase, 2008). Glesne (2006) describes this approach as, “the researcher generates a typology of concepts, gives them names or uses ‘native’ labels, and then discusses them one by one, illustrating with descriptive detail” (p. 183). In this approach, direct quotes from the participants were organized into broad themes that were reflected in the literature, such as academic achievement, skill development, personal and social identity, et al. After broadly organizing the themes, the quotes were examined for salient sub-themes in order to synthesize more nuanced understandings of the themes under investigation. Additional, novel themes were considered as well.

3.3 LIMITATIONS

The first limitation of the study was that the researcher was involved with the program as it pertained to the creation of the ASP, the general operation, and facilitation. However, it is important to note that the researcher did not collect the student demographic data in the study

and, therefore, decreased the possibility of researcher bias. The student demographic data were entered by school district personnel and could have an error in data entry. However, a district administrator verified the process. It is possible that an error may have existed in recording the program attendance data. Because the data originated from the student sign-in sheets and were primarily controlled by the students in the program, it is possible that a slight variance of missing or illegible names were unable to be recorded.

Another limitation was the collection of parental consent and student assent. Although, some students had the preference to opt out of the study it was difficult to gather forms from the entire potential participant population. For example, some students no longer participated in the program and were not incentivized to participate in the study or motivated to return a consent form. Some students reside in a home where his or her situation may not be conducive for easily obtaining signatures and returning a consent form by mailing or in person back to the researcher. Some of the potential participants may reside in homes that are related to the hypothesis of the study (lower-socioeconomic background and single or two parent working households) in-turn creating a home situation that may be non-conducive for returning consent forms. The result was a smaller than anticipated sample size. The smaller sample size of 91 participants made statistical analysis of the quantitative data less reflective of the potential 231 participants in addition, the small sample size limits the capabilities of t-tests.

The next chapter outlines findings for each of these research questions, beginning with Question One.

4.0 FINDINGS

This chapter outlines findings for each of the following research questions, beginning with Question One. Following the results for Research Question One, the findings for Research Question Two, focusing on the program mentors, are presented.

To review, the current study investigated two research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of student participants in a visual arts-based after-school program?
2. What possible impact does attendance in an arts-based after-school program have on its mentors?

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

To recall, this study examined the following demographic measures: attendance, gender, age, grade, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch (yes/no), Title 1 services (yes/no), discipline on file (yes/no), family status (mother and father HOH, mother HOH and father HOH). The following is a description of the findings for each of these demographic variables.

4.1.1 Attendance

There were 50 Studio Life sessions in the 2011-12 school year, and 49 sessions in 2012-13. Across both years, 231 individuals attended one or more sessions. In 2011-12, the mean number of session attendants was 47.62 ($SD = 10.81$, $Min = 24$, $Max = 70$). In 2012-13, the mean number of session attendants was 33.27 ($SD = 7.33$, $Min = 20$, $Max = 51$). For both years, there was a general decrease in attendance throughout the school year (See Figure 5).

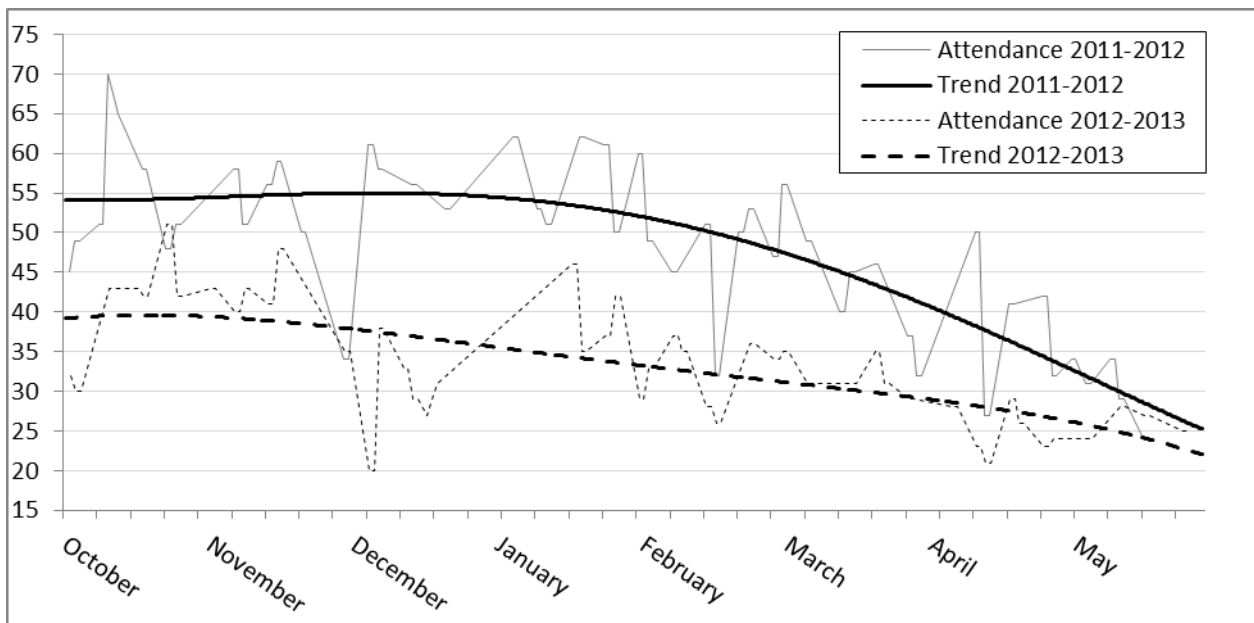


Figure 5. Overall attendance for Studio Life by school year.

Of the 91 participants, 60 attended at least one Studio Life session in the 2011-12 school year ($Mean\ sessions = 20.27$, $SD = 13.44$, $Min = 1$, $Max = 45$), 68 attended at least one session in the 2012-13 school year ($Mean\ sessions = 16.35$, $SD = 12.41$, $Min = 1$, $Max = 43$), and 37 attended at least one session in both school years. Examining the aggregate “best year” data for the 91 participants, the mean number of sessions attended was 19.65 ($SD = 13.17$, $Min = 1$, $Max = 45$).

4.1.2 Gender

Ninety-one (39%) of the 231 students who attended one or more Studio Life sessions in the 2011-12 or 2012-13 school years consented to provide school record data for analysis. Of the participant sample, seventy-two (79%) were female. For the 18 participants who were identified as mentors, fourteen (78%) were female.

4.1.3 Age/Grade

During the 2012-13 school year, participants were a mean of 14.13 years old ($SD = 1.80$; $Min = 11$; $Max = 19$) and were typically in 8th grade ($M = 8.31$, $SD = 1.64$, $Min = 6$, $Max = 12$). See Figure 6 for a detailed summary of participants by gender and grade level. During the 2012-13 school year, mentors were a mean of 16.39 years old ($SD = 1.38$; $Min = 14$; $Max = 19$) and were typically in 10th grade ($M = 10.39$, $SD = 1.14$, $Min = 9$, $Max = 12$).

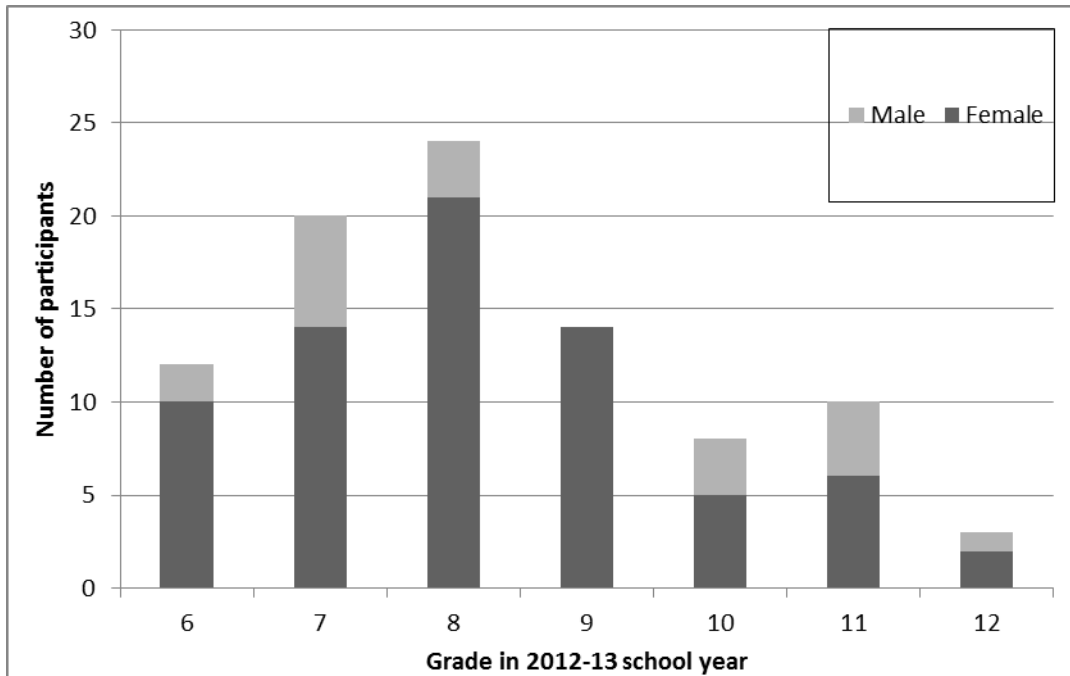


Figure 6. Number of study participants by grade and gender.

4.1.4 Race

The racial background of the participant sample is as follows: eighty-three (91%) were Caucasian, five (6%) were Asian or Pacific Islander, two (2%) were African American, and one (1%) was Hispanic. Regarding racial background of the 18 mentors in the program, sixteen (78%) were Caucasian, two (11%) were Asian or Pacific Islander.

4.1.5 Free or Reduced Lunch

A review of 2012-13 school records revealed that sixteen (18%) of the participant sample received free or reduced lunch. Regarding the 18 consenting mentors a review of 2012-13 school records revealed that four (22%) of the participants received free or reduced lunch.

4.1.6 Title 1 Eligibility

A review of the school district database revealed, fifteen participants (16%) were designated “special needs” as established by receiving Title 1 services. Regarding the 18 mentors, only one (6%) is designated “special needs.”

4.1.7 Discipline

A review of the district database revealed thirty participants (33%) of the participant sample had at least one incident in their disciplinary records on file. Regarding the 18 mentors in the study, eight (44%) have disciplinary records on file.

4.1.8 Family Status

Family composition data was available for 82 of the students and indicated that forty-nine (60%) participants come from dual-income households, twenty-nine (35%) from households with a working father only, and four (5%) with a working mother only. For the 18 mentors, family composition data was available for 16 of the students and indicated that eight (50%) participants come from dual-income households, seven (44%) from households with a working father only, and one with a working mother only.

4.1.9 Summary of Demographic Data

These figures diverge in several ways from the overall socio-demographics of the 1,086 students in grades 6-12 within the school district under investigation. For these grade levels among the entire district, 51% were female, 87% Caucasian (5% multiracial, 4 % African American, 2% Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic). Eighteen percent of the students received free or reduced lunch, and 22% were designated “special needs” as established by receiving Title 1 services. Table 7 represents a comparison of two different samples, the 2012-2013 Studio Life participant sample and the 2012-2013 school district grades 6-12 sample.

Table 4 Comparison of two samples by gender, ethnicity and other measures.

Sample	Female	Caucasian	Asian/Pacific Islander	African American	Hispanic	Special Needs	Free or Reduced
Studio Life N=91	79%	91%	5%	2%	1%	16%	18%
District grades 6-12 N=1,086	51%	87%	2%	4%	1%	22%	18%

The results revealed attendance was significantly higher for participants without disciplinary records on file ($Mean = 22.0$, $95\% CI = 18.8 - 25.1$), as compared to those with disciplinary records on file ($Mean = 14.9$, $95\% CI = 9.8 - 20.1$), $p = .02$ $t(89) = 2.46$. Using the best year variable, t-tests determined no significant difference on attendance by the variables of a) free or reduced lunch, status, b) “special needs” status, or c) number of household income earners. [To recall, because some participants only attended the program for one of the two years being investigated. A new variable, “best year,” was created as an overall indicator of

individuals' participation. If a participant attended both years, the higher number was used. This variable was used as the dependent variable for t-tests.]

In the next section we review the findings that address Research Question Two: What impact does attendance in an arts-based after-school program have on its mentors? Sixteen of the eighteen consenting mentors completed a self-report measure in the form of an online survey.

4.2 IMPACT OF ATTENDANCE ON MENTORS: QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

To review, Research Question 2 asked, "What possible impact does attendance in a visual arts-based after-school program have on mentors?" To assess impact, this study used a self-report measure in the form of an on-line survey.

Sixteen mentor students responded to the mentor survey and all associated demographic questions. Of the mentor sample, 13 (81%) were female. Respondents were a mean of 16.25 years old ($SD = 1.53$; $Min = 14$; $Max = 19$). See Table 4 for descriptive statistics regarding the program participation of the mentor sample.

Table 5 Descriptive statistics for the Studio Life mentor sample (N = 16)

Descriptor	n	
Years as a Studio Life mentor		
0-1 school years	5	
1-2 school years	1	
2-3 school years	5	
3-4 school years	4	
4-5 school years	1	
Years in Studio Life before becoming a mentor		
0-1 school years	6	
1-2 school years	5	
2-3 school years	5	
Current participation in Studio Life		
Yes, as a mentor	14	
No	2	
Attendance in Studio Life		
Regularly	6	
Regularly with some schedule conflicts	7	
Most of the time	1	
Some of the time	1	
A few sessions	2	

Overall, mentors who responded to this survey reported a range of benefits from the Studio Life program, including enhanced social, artistic and critical-thinking skills (See Table 5).

Table 6 Distribution of responses for the Studio Life mentor survey items (N = 16)

Survey item	Response frequency				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am more likely to attend school on a day that the after-school program Studio Life meets.	6	7	1	1	1
When I participate in Studio Life I feel like I am learning new skills.	12	4	-	-	-
Participating in Studio Life as a mentor has helped improve my artistic skills.	12	3	-	1	-
The skills that I gain from participating in Studio Life transfer or help me in my other academic subjects.	3	12	1	-	-
Participating in Studio Life has improved my social skills and peer interactions.	11	5	-	-	-
While participating in Studio Life I made new friends that I would not have been friends with otherwise.	13	3	-	-	-
Participating as a mentor in Studio Life has had a positive effect on my behavior.	7	8	1	-	-
My work as a mentor has taught me greater responsibility.	7	9	1	-	-
Since becoming a mentor in Studio Life my work habits have increased.	4	9	2	1	-
I participate as a mentor in the Studio Life program because I enjoy volunteering.	6	9	1	-	-
While working as mentor in the Studio Life program I feel that I am teaching others new skills.	7	7	1	1	-
I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my critical thinking or problem-solving skills.	12	2	2	-	-
I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my communication skills.	9	7	-	-	-

Throughout this survey, only one respondent answered “Strongly Disagree” to one question (“I am more likely to attend school on a day that the after-school program Studio Life meets.”).

This respondent further elaborated on his or her response:

“Studio Life does not effect [sic] my day during school hours. I just have to stay after school two days a week... It does not really affect my school classes.”

Similar to this respondent’s clarification, participating mentors provided a wealth of detail about the program in their responses to the open-ended questions. These responses covered a range of topics, including positive program outcomes, descriptions of the program environments and an analysis of the implications of mentoring in the program.

A semi-structured narrative inquiry approach was used to contextualize the open-ended survey responses (Chase, 2008). In this approach, direct quotes from the participants were organized into broad themes that were reflected in the literature, such as:

- Academic achievement – a respondent further elaborates on his or her response:
“Art helped me notice the mathematical quality of everything, making me want to learn more about mathematics and science.”
- Skill development – a respondent further elaborates on his or her response:
“I participate in Studio Life to improve my skills, get useful critique on my work...”
- Personal and social identity, et al., – a respondent further elaborates:
“What I like MOST about Studio Life is that we are all friends. No matter your age, race, or gender, we are all one big clique.”

After broadly organizing the themes, the quotes were examined for salient sub-themes in order to synthesize more nuanced understandings of the themes under investigation. Additional, novel themes were considered as well.

The program “Studio Life” falls into the category of organized activities and the term organized is defined by the research literature as “activities that are characterized by structure, adult-supervision, and an emphasis on skill- building (e.g., Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Larson, 2000; Roth Brooks-Gunn, 2003). These activities are generally voluntary, have regular and scheduled meetings, maintain developmentally based expectations and rules for participants (and sometimes beyond it), involve several participants, offer supervision and guidance from adults and are organized around developing particular skills and achieving goals (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles & Lord, 2005, p. 4). The core components of organized activities, defined by the

literature, surfaced in various descriptive responses to the mentor survey. Of the sixteen students who completed the mentor survey, all responded to the five open-ended questions. The resulting 80 individual responses provided a large amount of information about the program for qualitative analysis.

Thematic synthesis of these data resulted in the identification of several salient themes, including: *Social implications*, *Academic implications*, *Skill development*, *Personal implications*, and *Environmental implications*. The common themes that surfaced from the mentor responses to the open-ended questions closely align to those in the research literature that related to program quality. Stemming from the broad themes, several sub-themes emerged through the process of qualitative coding (See Table 6) and two additional themes of *inspiration* and *stress release* emerged outside of the broad thematic framework.

Table 7 Domain Definitions for qualitative codes.

Domain / Sub-domain	Definition	Example(s) (Direct quotes from respondents and may contain grammatical errors)
Academic achievement Transfer skills Work habits Motivation	“Student achievement, typically as represented by reading and mathematics performance on high stakes tests, including transfer of skills learning from the arts to learning in other academic areas” and “Student motivation and engagement, including improved attendance, persistence, focused attention, heightened educational aspirations, and intellectual risk taking” (Dwyer, 2011, p.16).	“Art helped me notice the mathematical quality of everything, making me want to learn more about mathematics and science.” “I’ve been able to focus better on my artwork, which has also helped me focus in school.” “Studio life has caused me to become more prepared and deal with problems more effectively.”
Skill development Artistic/creative Teaching & mentoring Critical thinking & problem solving	“Creativity, involves generating ideas, digging deeper into ideas, encouraging openness to exploring new ideas, and listening to your inner voice” (Seidel, et al., 2009, p. 18) “Development of habits of mind including problem solving, critical and creative thinking, dealing with ambiguity and complexity, integration of multiple skill sets, and working with others” (Dwyer, 2011, p. 16).	“I participate in Studio Life to improve my skills, get useful critique on my work...” “Studio life has caused me to become more prepared and deal with problems more effectively.” “Through being a mentor, I learned new ways to lead people while still treating them as equals. What I have found to be the most effective way of mentoring is to become more of a friend to the students. This way they won’t be worried about asking for advice. Also, when you are giving constructive criticism, they won’t feel like you are evaluating them, similar to a teacher. Instead, you are helping in the way a friend would. I have found this works not only on middle school students, but also for my class mates. This approach to leadership is very helpful on group work, such as group projects.” “It has impacted me academically by getting me to go to school more often and allowing me to logical reason and look at a problem in different ways. It has basically given me a better perspective on things.”

Table 6. Domain Definitions for qualitative codes.

Domain / Sub-domain	Definition	Example(s) (Direct quotes from respondents and may contain grammatical errors)
Personal & social identity Self-esteem Leadership Diversity Personal connections Volunteerism	“to be personally expressive and to communicate to both themselves and others that ‘This is who I am’ or ‘This is what I believe I am meant to do’” (Eccles, Barber, Stone & Hunt 2008, p.187)	“I participate in studio of life because I love art and helping others.” “What I like MOST about Studio Life is that we are all friends. No matter your age, race, or gender, we are all one big clique.” “As I continued on with the program I started to branch out and stopped worrying what others thought of me, and that was a big step from middle school.”
Interpersonal skills Opportunity to meet - others Collaboration Peer relations	The mentors that participate through service are more likely to, “come to like themselves more and have feelings of inner-directedness and self-competence, as well as more self-confidence. They tend to feel more competent to help others, and have a greater sense of social relatedness, and experience less alienation and more social connection than before” (McIntosh, Metz & Youniss, 2005, p. 132).	“Studio Life allows you to interact with people young and old which gives a person fantastic social skills that are used in everyday life.” “I think that since the first time I attended Studio Life it has altered my social skills. When I first started in middle school, I was more hesitant and less confident. As I continued on with the program I started to branch out and stopped worrying what others thought of me, and that was a big step from middle school.” “The program has had a positive impact on my peer interaction and social skills. I am able to communicate with a variety of people with ease. I have been exposed to many types of people and have learned the tricks to communicate with many kinds of people.”
Environment Comfort Expectations Nurturing Motivation	“environmental lens reveals elements of the physical environment, including the actual space in which the learning takes place, the materials that are available, and the visual display of artworks and art-making materials” (Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland & Palmer, 2009, p.42.). “the social psychological environments that surround young people “give out messages” that make them more or less concerned about improving and/or developing (as reflected in an emphasis on task goals) or proving/protecting (as reflected in an emphasis on ego goals) their level of competence” (Duda & Ntoumanis, 2005, p. 315)	“Studio Life has such a warm and inviting atmosphere. I attend this program because I do not feel out of place.” “It is relaxed, but at the same time, there are still responsibilities and standards to uphold. I am very happy to not only have a program like this at my school, but also participate in it. It is nice how it can form around other activities you are doing (sports for example).” “It’s nice to have somewhere to go to work regularly. On the days when I know I can go to the Studio Life program after school, it just makes the whole day better.” “Without Studio Life I can honestly say that I don’t know where I would be today. I have never gained so much support from any group of people like this before. As I participant I had many mentors I looked up to. Now I can mentor and hopefully become a supporter for another participant.”
Domain not otherwise specified Inspiration Stress release	Either the environment or the experience acts as an inspirational force on the individual, this may also act as stress reducer for the student.	“Art is a stress relief for me, it makes my entire week so much better. Therefore, Studio Life makes me focus more on other things.” “Usually on a Studio Life day I spend the entire day looking forward to mentoring and releasing any stressful energy there.” “I like it take part in the studio life program because i love seeing others ideas and helping people succeed at things they didnt know they could do.” “I participate in Studio Life because when I was in middle school I very much enjoyed and was inspired by my art class, which got me interested in Studio Life. Once I started attending I built strong relationships with my mentors and continued to create more advanced art and attend regularly. I am now in my first year of mentoring for Studio Life.” “Over the course of my time in Art Club as a middle school student, I meet many great people, and learned so much more about creating art. However, the largest way Art Club effected my life was the inspiration I received from watching, and being taught by mentors. When I became a mentor, my main goal was to give the students the same great experience and even inspiration that I had received from the mentors when I was their age.”

Taken together, the characteristics of program participants, and the quantitative and qualitative data from the program mentors allowed for a broader contextualization and understanding of the Studio Life program. By triangulating these data (i.e., the survey responses, the survey demographic characteristics, and the literature), the results informed several lines of inquiry that may have implications for all visual art-oriented after-school programs and are worthy of further consideration and discussion. “Thus, any case study finding or conclusion is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode” (Yin, 2009, p. 116).

The mentor survey was designed to collect data pertaining to mentor demographics as well as data pertaining to the relationship between mentoring and potential program outcomes. Overall, mentors who responded to this survey reported a range of benefits from the Studio Life program, including enhanced social, artistic and critical-thinking skills. The following section relates to the responses from the questions that were asked of the mentors and designed to target specific themes from the literature: (See appendix D for complete list of questions and themes)

4.2.1 Participation/engagement

Hirsch, Mekinda and Stawicki, (2010) claim, “Attendance is a necessary but not sufficient condition of participation. Participation is a multifaceted concept that connotes active involvement in a program” (p. 448). The following questions from the survey were designed to establish, student participation, followed by flushing out a narrative for student engagement. Hirsch, et al., further claims that, “studies in this issue have found that attendance alone does not predict youth outcomes. Further, these studies found that youth engagement is strongly related to

program design and youth outcomes, and suggest that engagement could indicate the quality of youth’s experience in these settings” (p. 448). The participants were asked to respond a participation/engagement statement to better understand the relationship of attendance between the school day and the ASP. Eighty-two percent of the mentors indicated that they either agree or strongly agree with the following statement (See Figure 7).

1. Please read the remaining statements and indicate the extent to which you agree: I am more likely to attend school on a day that the after-school program Studio Life meets.

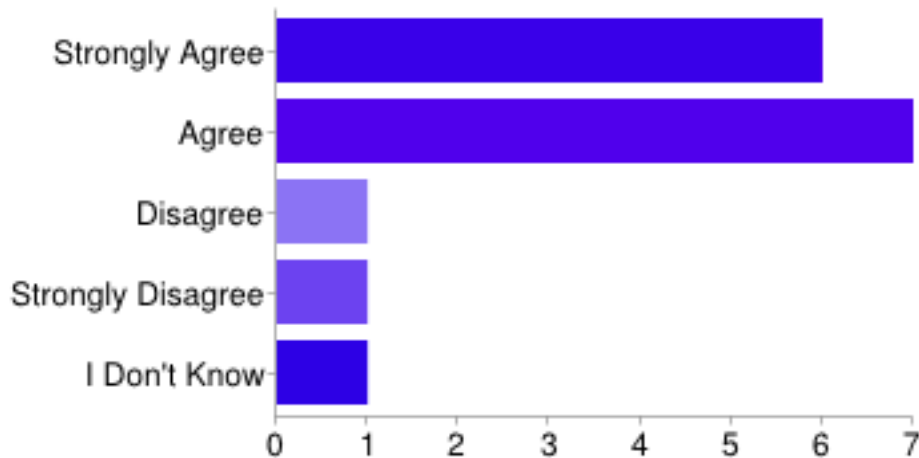


Figure 7. Students are more likely to attend school on a day the ASP meets.

Additional survey questions and responses pertaining to student participation and engagement are as follows:

2. How many years have you been participating in Studio Life as a mentor?

The respondents indicated: 31% (0-1 years), 6% (1-2 years), 31% (2-3 years), 25% (3-4 years) and 6% (4-5 years).

3. How many years did you participate in Studio Life before becoming a mentor?

The respondents indicated: 38% (0-1 year), 31% (1-2 years) and 31% (2-3 years).

4. How would you describe your attendance in the after-school program Studio Life?

The respondents indicated: 35% said they attend regularly, 41% attend regularly but have some scheduling conflicts, 6% attend most of the time, 6% attend some of the time and 12% attend a few sessions.

5. Do you still participate in Studio Life?

The respondents indicated that 88% do still participate as a mentor and 13% or 2 respondents no longer participate in the ASP.

Mentor participation in the ASP was relatively high, with 76% of the total population indicating that they attend regularly, although some have scheduling conflicts. Therefore, mentor participation has been established and according to one mentor, “I participate in the Studio Life program because I make new friends, learn new skills, and teach others. It is the best part of my Mondays and Wednesdays.” Some of the following questions were designed to inquire about why students participate in the program.

4.2.2 Academic Achievement

The relationship between learning and quality arts and after-school programs has been a common theme throughout the research literature (Fiske, 1999, Eisner, 2002, Hall, et al., 2003 & National Research Council and Institute on Medicine, 2002). The following questions were generated in order to gather data pertaining to the relationship between learning and the ASP Studio Life:

1. When I participate in Studio Life I feel like I am learning new skills:

All of the mentors either strongly agree or agree that while participating in the ASP they are learning new skills. Additionally, 75% of the respondents strongly agree with this statement and the remaining 25% agree (See Figure 8).

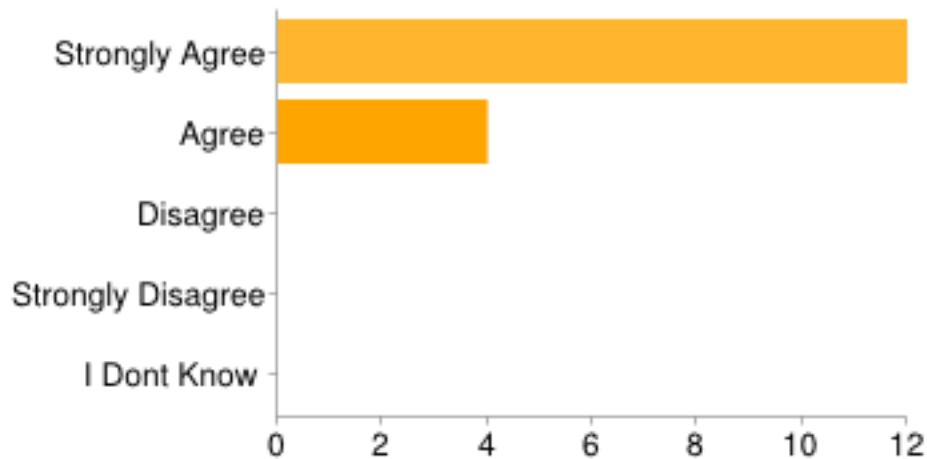


Figure 8. Student responses to relationship between ASP and new learning.

Additional survey questions and responses pertaining to the theme of learning are as follows:

2. Participating in Studio Life as a mentor has helped improve my artistic skills.

75% of the respondents strongly agree with this statement, 19% agree and one respondent disagreed.

3. Since becoming a mentor in Studio Life my work habits have increased.

81% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree with the statement, while one mentor disagreed and two mentors were unsure.

4. I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my critical thinking or problem-solving skills.

88% of the mentors either strongly agree or agree with the statement and two mentors were unsure. Additionally, 12 of the 16 mentors strongly agreed that participating in the ASP has improved their ability to solve problems.

According to one of the mentors, “Studio life has caused me to become more prepared and deal with problems more effectively.” Similar mentor responses pertaining to critical thinking relate to themes in the literature. For example, a longitudinal study of 22,000 students, conducted at the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles found a strong

connection between academic outcomes and participation in service learning. Of the positive academic outcomes, three academic areas emerged including critical thinking (Vogelgesang & Alexander, 2000). The ability to solve problems more effectively or think critically is also a perceived positive academic outcome of the ASP Studio Life. The mentor responses have established that some level of learning is taking place at the ASP; however, the next statement pertains to whether or not learning is transferred to other subjects.

4.2.3 Transfer of Learning

The concept of ‘transfer of learning’ implies that the mentors learned something in or from their experience with the ASP and the new learning transferred or is applied in another academic domain. One respondent claimed, “Art helped me notice the mathematical quality of everything, making me want to learn more about mathematics and science.” As Fiske (1999) illustrates, “Young people learn that mathematics might challenge the arts to examine relationships among objects in ways that extend their conceptions of number. Similarly, in the back and forth between science and art, pupils learn that close observation and investigation of natural phenomena can proceed either according to prescribed theories or according to personal perceptions – and that both types of investigations offer fresh understanding of the same phenomena” (p. 43). When asked to respond the following statement the mentor’s responses support the relationship between the ASP and the transfer of learning (See Figure 9).

1. The skills that I gain from participating in Studio Life transfer or help me in my other academic subjects.

75% of the respondents agree with this statement, 19% strongly agree and one mentor does not know.

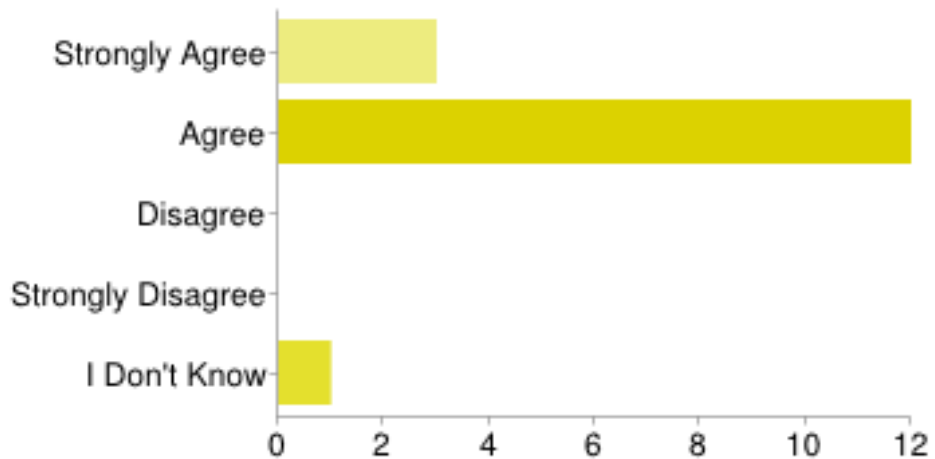


Figure 9. Student responses to relationship between ASP and transfer of learning.

4.2.4 Interpersonal Skills

The literature presents a strong link between quality in the arts and after-school programming and the positive development of social/interpersonal skills (Yohalem et al., 2009, Durlak et al., 2010, Mahoney et al., 2005 & Wright, 2007). A mentor supports this claim by responding, “I think that since the first time I attended Studio Life it has altered my social skills. When I first started in middle school, I was more hesitant and less confident. As I continued on with the program I started to branch out and stopped worrying what others thought of me, and that was a big step from middle school.” When asked to respond to the following statement all mentors either strongly agreed or agreed. (See Figure 10)

1. Participating in Studio Life has improved my social skills and peer interactions.

69% of the respondents strongly agree with this statement and 31% agree.

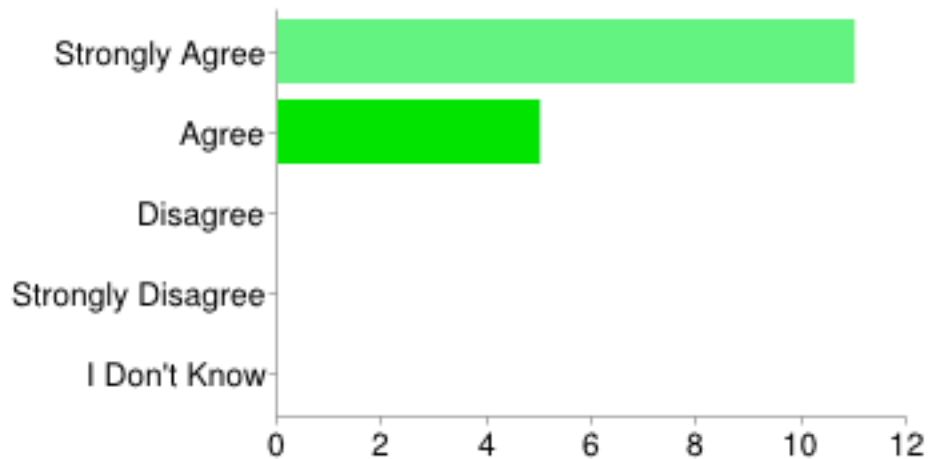


Figure 10. Student responses to the relationship between the ASP and social/peer interactions.

2. While participating in Studio Life I made new friends that I would not have been friends with otherwise.

All of the respondents either strongly agree or agree and 13 of the 16 mentors strongly agree.

3. My work as a mentor has taught me greater responsibility.

94% of respondents either strongly agree or agree and one mentor did not know.

4. I participate as a mentor in the Studio Life program because I enjoy volunteering.

94% of respondents either strongly agree or agree and one mentor did not know.

5. While working as mentor in the Studio Life program I feel that I am teaching others new skills.

88% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree, one mentor disagrees and one mentor did not know.

6. I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my communication skills.

88% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree and two mentors did not know.

7. Participating as a mentor in the program Studio Life has had a positive effect on my behavior.

Ninety-four percent of respondents either strongly agree or agree and one mentor did not know.

According to the responses from the mentor survey, a relationship exists between the ASP Studio Life and the social/interpersonal impact on the participating mentors. Therefore, the ASP shares some of the common elements associated with quality programs related to successful student outcomes cited in the research literature. Those themes, drawn from mentors' open-ended comments, are discussed in the next section.

4.3 IMPACT OF ATTENDANCE ON MENTORS: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

4.3.1 Academic Achievement

According to Fiske, "Arts, learning involving as it does the construction, interweaving, and interpretation of personal and socio-cultural meanings, call upon a constellation of capacities and dispositions which are layered and unified in the construction of forms we call paintings, poems, musical compositions and dances (1999). Many of these same competencies and dispositions extend to other subject domains where they coalesce in equally distinctive forms - mathematical, scientific, linguistic – as pupils organize different kinds of meaning, insight, and understanding" (p. 45). Therefore, the arts provide a platform for intellectual skill development that has the opportunity to bridge or transfer through other areas of learning. It is important to note that the concept of a bridge can work in multiple directions. As Fiske argues, "What is critical is not that

capacities and dispositions transfer from the arts to other subject areas, as has been often argued, but that they are exercised broadly across different knowledge domains” (p. 45). For example, in the ASP Studio Life, teaching mathematics may not have been a specific objective. However, teaching to understand proportions in drawing or chemistry in ceramics may broaden one’s understanding of a mathematical or scientific concept. Or, as one respondent stated, “Art helped me notice the mathematical quality of everything, making me want to learn more about mathematics and science.” Another respondent stated, “In English we have many assignments that require us to teach in front of the class. I am used to teaching the middle school students, so this comes naturally to me, even if it is in front of a larger group of my own peers.” An additional respondent claimed, “It has impacted me academically by getting me to go to school more often and allowing me to logical [sic] reason and look at a problem in different ways. It has basically given me a better perspective on things.”

The impact of the arts and the ASP on the participants can be more than traditional academic skills, intrapersonal impact such as work habits and motivation surface as well. Mahoney, Lord and Carryl, (2005) conducted a study that found “Aspects of academic performance and motivational attributes were significantly higher ($p < .05$) at the end of the school-year for children in ASP care compared with those in the three alternative patterns of care. Differences were marked for children rated as highly engaged in ASP activities” (p. 811).

Indeed, respondents here described their motivational attributes as:

- Studio life has been a motivator to maintain good grades in order to participate. I know that as a participant in middle school I had issues with my math courses and my mentors were supportive and offered help to me.
- Knowing that I have an after-school art program to look forward to, helps me get

through hard tests and the stress of school.

- I've been able to focus better on my artwork, which has also helped me focus in school.

The linkages between the research literature and the mentor responses are evident in the theme of skill development.

4.3.1.1 Skill Development

Highly effective after-school programs have several common elements, and the opportunity for skill development is well documented in the literature (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, Institute of Medicine, 2002, Mahoney, et al., 2010, The National Research Council and National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2003). “In terms of the actual programs, they should be physically and psychologically safe, accessible by providing transportation and food, encourage parental involvement, and collaborate with local community organizations. The content of art activities should focus on skill-development activities; be ongoing as opposed to short-term; and be age-appropriate, diverse, and tailored to the specific need of the youth involved” (Wright, 2007, p. 126).

Several of the responses to the open-ended survey questions emphasize that the Studio Life program is offering skill development opportunities that correlate to those described in the research literature. One respondent stated, “I believe that this program is very efficient in making, developing children, productive and mature. It keeps the children from becoming unproductive and lethargic, and allows the children to become more active mentally.” More specifically, a student referred to artistic skill development as, “I participate in Studio Life to improve my skills, get useful critique on my work, and make friends. It's nice to have two hours of the day to focus on art work.” Another student described their experience in developing the

skill of mentoring or teaching as, “Over the course of my time in Art Club as a middle school student, I met many great people, and learned so much more about creating art. However, the largest way Art Club effected [sic] my life was the inspiration I received from watching, and being taught by mentors. When I became a mentor, my main goal was to give the students the same great experience and even inspiration that I had received from the mentors when I was their age.” Continuing along the theme of developing mentoring skills another student described his/her experience:

Through being a mentor, I learned new ways to lead people while still treating them as equals. What I have found to be the most effective way of mentoring is to become more of a friend to the students. This way they won't be worried about asking for advice. Also, when you are giving constructive criticism, they won't feel like you are evaluating them, similar to a teacher. Instead, you are helping in the way a friend would. I have found this works not only on middle school students, but also for my class mates [sic]. This approach to leadership is very helpful on group work, such as group projects.

An additional area of skill development that surfaces in the mentor responses is the skill of problem solving or more commonly labeled, critical thinking.

In the *Champions of Change* report, Fiske (1999, p. 42) framed the relationship between the arts and what it means to think critically, “We found in schools with high-arts provision that teachers spoke of the effects of arts learning along five specific dimensions of ability. These were the ability to:

1. Express ideas and feelings openly and thoughtfully
2. Form relationships among different items of experience and layer them in thinking

through an idea or problem

3. Conceive or imagine different vantage points of an idea or problem and to work toward a resolution
4. Construct and organize thoughts and ideas into meaningful units or wholes, and
5. Focus perception on an item or items of experience, and sustain this focus over a period of time.

Mentors in the Studio Life program responded with a similar theme, for example one respondent stated, “It has impacted me academically by getting me to go to school more often and allowing me to logical [sic] reason and look at a problem in different ways. It has basically given me a better perspective on things.” Another student claimed, “Studio life has caused me to become more prepared and deal with problems more effectively.” Additionally, themes emerging from the mentor responses were the relationship between the program and the participants’ personal and social identify.

4.3.1.2 Personal and Social Identity

In 2008, Eccles, Barber, Stone and Hunt claim that, “voluntary participation in discretionary extracurricular activities provides an opportunity for adolescents to be personally expressive and to communicate to both themselves and others that ‘This is who I am’ or ‘This is what I believe I am meant to do’” (p. 187). According to one of the mentors in the ASP, “Studio Life is where I found myself and understood what I wanted to do. It's given me the tools I'm truly confident of having for the rest of my life.” Or as another states, “As I continued on with the program I started to branch out and stopped worrying what others thought of me, and that was a big step from middle school.”

Additionally, empirical research offers other evidence of a link between community service and identity formation. Based on their review of 44 studies of community service published from 1952-1994, Yates and Youniss (1996) concluded that community service enhances identity formation in three developmental areas: (a) agency (self-directedness, self-competence, self-understanding), (b) social relatedness (family and peer relationships and institutional affiliations), and (c) moral-political awareness (moral feelings and reasoning, and civic activism). The studies reviewed indicated that students who participate in service come to like themselves more and to have feelings of inner-directedness and self-competence, as well as more self-confidence. They tend to feel more competent to help others, have a greater sense of social relatedness, and experience less alienation and more social connection than before. They often develop greater tolerance and openness toward others (McIntosh, Metz & Youniss, 2005, p. 332).

Several mentors responded with experiences that reflect the research literature as it relates to self-esteem. For example, one student responded with, "I think that since the first time I attended Studio Life it has altered my social skills. When I first started in middle school, I was more hesitant and less confident. As I continued on with the program I started to branch out and stopped worrying what others thought of me, and that was a big step from middle school." The literature also connects personal leadership to social identity or as another mentor states, "It has affected my other academic classes by teaching me how to lead groups of people on things like group projects. I have been able to focus more on my class work because I have the time to do art work in Studio Life." Another refers to social identity by describing their social comfort as, "Everyone is different of course and so will their artwork be, but Studio Life allows you to jump out of your comfort zone and learn new things." Another student describes their personal

connection as, “It is nice to meet people who also enjoy art, even if it is in a different medium. It creates connections through different ages, schools, and interests.”

Empirical research associates identity formation with community service or ---as its framed in the Studio Life program--- high school students mentoring middle school students. The respondents described their volunteerism as, “I like to take part in the Studio Life program because I love seeing others ideas and helping people succeed at things they didn’t know they could do.” Another mentor stated, “It was rewarding to see kids growing with your help, and I was able to become closer to some of them.” An additional mentor simply said, “I participate in studio of life because I love art and helping others.” The social implications from the mentor responses branched into themes relating to interpersonal skills or healthy social relationships.

4.3.1.3 Interpersonal Skills (the need to form healthy social relationships)

There is a strong relationship between high quality after-school programs and outcomes that support the development of interpersonal skills in youths. High quality programs have adult supervised and challenging activities, adult support, opportunities to connect with adults, and other opportunities to help adolescents apply new skills and develop new talents. Programs that have similar characteristics to those cited in the research have been correlated to developing interpersonal skills in adolescents (Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010, Eccles & Gootman, 2002, Mahoney et al., 2010, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002).

Some of the subthemes that emerged from the survey responses were interpersonal areas of peer relations and socialization. For example, “The program has had a positive impact on my peer interaction and social skills. I am able to communicate with a variety of people with ease. I have been exposed to many types of people and have learned the tricks to communicate with many kinds of people.” Another student responded with, “I have become more socially mature

and better at interacting with younger kids, my peers, and adults.” “I’m able to improve my communication skills by interacting with other individuals who are unique.” Some of the mentors described their peer relations as, “Studio Life allows you to interact with people young and old which gives a person fantastic social skills that are used in everyday life.” or “What I like *most* about Studio Life is that we are all friends. No matter your age, race, or gender, we are all one big clique.” One student simply stated, “It showed me the importance of being open with others. It helped me learn to work in groups as well as alone.”

4.3.1.4 Environment

Many of the students describe the various components of the environment of the Studio Life program in their responses with several sub-themes. In 2009, Seidel, et al., (p. 42), conducted a study titled *The Qualities of Quality*, where they used interviews, case studies, and literature reviews to gain a greater understanding of how many U.S. arts educators were thinking and trying to achieve the characteristics of excellence in their practice. According to Seidel, et al., “The environment lens affords views of three primary elements of quality identified through our interviews and observations:

1. Functional and aesthetic space and materials
2. The arts occupy a central place in the physical environment
3. Sufficient time for authentic artistic work (p. 42).

One student reflected the implications regarding having time and space as, “It’s nice to have somewhere to go to work regularly. On the days when I know I can go to the Studio Life program after school, it just makes the whole day better.”

Bill Strickland, the Founder and CEO of the Manchester Craftsman Guild, a well-documented successful after-school and arts centered program, advocates for learning environments created with aesthetics in mind. He is known for his belief and proven success in the concept that all people deserve to live, work and learn in beautiful surroundings (Strickland, 2007). Some of the mentors' comments echoed the importance of Strickland's message. "Studio Life has such a warm and inviting atmosphere. I attend this program because I do not feel out of place." Another commented, "Studio Life mentors/managers have definitely done a great job of making newbies [sic] feel welcome and want to participate. It seems to be the only place where I (and many others) can concentrate on art and not worry about teachers watching your every brush stroke."

Some of the mentors described the nurturing aspect of the studio as, "Without Studio Life I can honestly say that I don't know where I would be today. I have never gained so much support from any group of people like this before. As a participant, I had many mentors I looked up to. Now I can mentor and hopefully become a supporter for another participant." Another mentor describes the expectations and standards of the studio as, "It is relaxed, but at the same time, there are still responsibilities and standards to uphold. I am very happy to not only have a program like this at my school, but also participate in it. It is nice how it can form around other activities you are doing (sports for example)."

There were many strong connections of program impact to both the arts and after-school related literature. However, a few noteworthy themes did emerge that did not have as strong a connection to the literature as those previously described.

Although stress relief is not mentioned as a positive youth outcome in most of the after-school literature it is associated with the arts related literature. Charmaraman and Hall (2011)

describe stress relief as a positive youth outcome as it related to how the arts and after-school community can assist with dropout prevention. A similar theme was identified in the mentor responses. Respondents described the relationship between the program and stress relief as:

- Usually on a Studio Life day I spend the entire day looking forward to mentoring and releasing any stressful energy there.
- Art is a stress relief for me, it makes my entire week so much better. Therefore, Studio Life makes me focus more on other things.
- Having gone from school all day to a place you can express your feelings on paper and socialize with amazing people is relaxing.

Inspiration appeared as an additional theme that emerged that did not specifically fit the themes from the research literature. A student was inspired by art; that experience motivated them to attend a visual arts-based after-school program. The student stated, “I participate in Studio Life because when I was in middle school I very much enjoyed and was inspired by my art class, which got me interested in Studio Life. Once I started attending I built strong relationships with my mentors and continued to create more advanced art and attend regularly. I am now in my first year of mentoring for Studio Life.”

4.4 SUMMARY

In summary, this study revealed many findings about the visual arts-based after-school program, Studio Life. The demographic characteristics and attendance data revealed that:

1. A significantly larger population of females attended the ASP.

2. The demographic characteristics of the ASP population resemble the characteristics of the district being studied with the exception of gender.
3. Sixty percent of the population came from dual-income households.
4. A significantly larger population of participants without discipline records on file attended the program at a higher frequency
5. The program attendance decreased throughout the school-year

Additionally, the survey revealed that mentors viewed the ASP as positively affecting them in the area of:

1. academics/skill development
2. social/personal identity
3. intrapersonal/peer relations
4. positive environment
5. stress relief
6. inspiration

Together these findings reflect a unique perspective of a visual arts-based after-school program.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Because there are no published studies of after-school visual-arts programs, we know little about their participants. Accordingly, Research Question One posed the question of who attends the Studio Life visual arts-based ASP.

This study used similar demographic characteristic measures of program participants as defined by the research literature and pertaining to studies of both arts and ASPs. The measures were: attendance, gender, age, grade, ethnicity, free or reduced lunch, Title 1 services, discipline history, and family employment status. Some interesting findings surfaced when the demographic characteristics of the Studio Life sample was investigated.

For example, when comparing the Studio life sample (n=91) to the school district sample in grades 6-12 (n=1086), the demographic measures were relatively equally represented across the two sample sizes with the exception of gender. For instance, when analyzing the demographic measure pertaining to socio-economics (free or reduced lunch) both sample sizes reflected the same percentage of students. Therefore, the ASP Studio Life may not attract a larger population of disadvantaged youth; however, it is comparable to the school district as well as national measures. Similar trends and implications of a normal demographic representation within the populations between the district sample and the ASP sample surfaced. They were

reflected in the demographic characteristic measures of ethnicity and Title 1 services. The exception was the demographic characteristic measure of gender.

5.1.1 Gender

A noticeable difference in gender was represented in the ASP. A significantly larger percentage of females attend the ASP than attend the school district. This finding is interesting because there is no research to date relating to the relationship between visual arts ASP participation and gender. Therefore, this comparison presents the opportunity for future research. One wonders what motivates youth to participate in programs like Studio Life. Is it possible that fewer males attend the ASP due to conflicting afterschool opportunities, such as athletics? Is it also possible that the visual arts attract more females due to connections between gender and unforeseen arts related implications? In order to address some of the questions that arise from the gender specific findings future research is necessary to investigate the relationship between females and similar after-school programs.

5.1.2 Parental Employment Landscape of Participants

According to the research literature current growth of ASPs can largely be attributed to increased maternal employment and the fact that dual income households now serve over 7 million children with working parents (Afterschool Alliance, 2004 & Padgett, 2003). Therefore, another finding worthy of discussion is the family employment composition of the participant sample. When comparing the family employment composition data to a national perspective, the percentage of children who have both parents or only the resident parent in the labor force, is

69% (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2011). Although the Studio Life sample represented a lower percentage of students that come from homes where either both parents are working or the resident parent is working, it is important to note that the studio life data was incomplete. In the Studio Life sample 60% of the participants come from dual-income homes; single working parents were not represented in the data collection process due to unavailable data. In the data collection method of the district, parents are not required to differentiate as single or married when identified as a working parent. Therefore, the 60% of Studio Life sample come from households where two parents or guardians indicated that they are both employed. However, it is still important to note that in the national representation of 69% both dual-income parents as well as single working parents are represented. The difference between the two samples (Studio Life and national representation) is small enough that it is possible the missing single working parent data could spark a new hypothesis pertaining to the relationship between similar ASPs and the family employment landscape of those who participate. Future studies are needed to reveal more about the implications relating to the evolving employment landscape of parents and guardians of those who participate in ASPs. Also, a future study involving a larger sample size from the Studio Life program could provide more additional insight.

5.1.3 Attendance

The analysis of the ASP attendance provided two themes worthy of discussion: the attendance of those with discipline records compared to those without and the general attendance trend over a two-year time period.

The discipline records of the participants were the only measure that revealed a significant difference when related to attendance. Attendance was significantly higher for

participants without disciplinary records on file as compared to those with disciplinary records on file. It is important to note that discipline referrals ranged from being “late to class” to “physical altercations” to “disrespectful behavior.” Therefore, if those without disciplinary records on file were more likely to attend at a higher frequency, then a possible implication exists that the Studio Life program attracts those more inclined to positive behavior. This finding has potential implications to the research literature relating to at risk youth.

According to the literature many ASPs are designed to attract and serve those students characterized as “at risk.” Students who have not obtained or mastered the basic academic, vocational, social and behavioral skills required to function in school, the workplace and the community are at risk (Afterschool Alliance, 2009, Capizzano, Tout and Adams, 2000, Meisel, Henderson, Cohen & Leone, 1998). Because the research defines at risk youth as individuals that have not yet mastered a multitude of skills including behavioral skills, it is important to note that this finding only pertains to discipline or behavioral skills. Therefore, in order to reflect on the potential implications of at risk students not being attracted to the Studio Life Program a few questions must be addressed. For example, if the demographic characteristic study had benefited from a larger sample size, would the significance between discipline and poor attendance be the same? Also, what does the “at risk” student population landscape for the particular school district involved in the study look like? It would be beneficial to compare the at risk students who participate in the ASP to the population of the district. This finding surfaced some additional and important issues to consider. For example, if Studio Life is not attracting at risk students and the school district has students at risk, where *are* those students going after school? Although this study did reveal a statistical significance between attendance rates and individuals without discipline records of file, additional information is needed in order to connect this finding to the

research relating to at risk youth. Therefore, additional research into the Studio Life ASP is needed to answer the questions pertaining to at risk students, as defined by their discipline records.

An additional finding relating to program attendance was discovered when two years of program participation were analyzed. During the 2011-2012 and the 2012-2013 years of the ASP's operation, there was a general decline in attendance across each school year. This indicates that the program begins the year with a larger population and as students experience the program offerings and as time passes, some drop out. By the close of the school year, a smaller population of students participated in the program. The overall decrease in annual attendance creates the platform for one to wonder about the cause. Do conflicting afterschool opportunities take place at similar times throughout the year, thus causing declining attendance? In the mentor survey, nearly half the respondents indicated that they attend regularly but also have scheduling conflicts. This statement presents the implication that the school district does have other afterschool opportunities that present a conflict for some of the program participants. Afterschool opportunities can be qualified as athletics, ASPs, clubs, employment and all opportunities presented to youth after school for the purposes of positive engagement and supervision. Future research could reveal a more comprehensive understanding related to the general impact or what each afterschool opportunity is doing for its participants. Additionally, future research can reveal the demographic characteristic landscape of participants in each afterschool opportunity. Collectively this type of future research could unveil a topographical perspective of the afterschool opportunities and their implications. Therefore, the Studio Life ASP attendance trend presents the opportunity for further research that has potential implications for the field of youth-related afterschool opportunities including ASPs like Studio Life.

Although the ASP demographic study did not have a large sample size, a few findings did surface. The ASP attracts a population that is representative of similar demographic characteristics of the school district, and, in the case of socio-economic status, the ASP equally reflects the national landscape. The ASP does attract a significantly larger female population when compared to the school district population in grades 6-12, which presents potential implications to the field of ASPs relating to gender.

Additionally, the ASP attracts a large population of students that come from dual-income homes, which is also similar to national labor force data. Where, children who have both parents and the only resident parent in the labor force are as high as 69% (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2011). Relating to program attendance, Studio Life attracts a population of students at higher attendance frequencies that do not have a discipline record on file. Finally, the attendance of the program decreases throughout the school year. These findings present the opportunity for future research relating to who attends, what programs and why? Collectively, these findings are helpful in informing the after-school and visual art field as it pertains to demographic and attendance characteristics of those who participate in similar programs.

5.2 MENTOR DISCUSSION

Little is known about the impact of visual arts-based ASPs on participants and more specifically on program mentors. Accordingly, research question two posed: what possible impact does attendance in an arts-based after-school program have on its mentors, a question that resulted in some thought-provoking findings. First, it is important to recognize that the mentor data were self-reported and associated with a small sample size (n-16). However, the respondents did have

the opportunity to disagree or strongly disagree with the survey questions. The finding from the mentors' survey related to positive themes from the research literature and the absence of negative program implications. Among the findings, the ASP mentor survey data revealed multiple connections to positive program impact. Additionally, the theme of gender inequity continued to surface in the mentor population similar to the program population as a whole.

5.2.1 Gender

Although the *mentor* population represents a small sample size, a lack of balance is reflected in gender as it pertains to the role of a mentor in the ASP. Given that a gender balance exists district wide in grades 9-12, it is interesting to note that a larger population of females was attracted to mentoring in the ASP. The reoccurring theme of gender disproportion strengthens the need for future research relating to the role of gender in the visual arts, mentoring as well as the relationship between gender and ASP participation. This theme causes one to wonder about the potential implications of this study. Is this case an isolated anomaly pertaining to a large inequity in gender participation? If future research validates this finding, what draws females to the visual arts?

Additionally, is gender disproportionality prevalent in other opportunities of service learning? These are all questions that would benefit from future research. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted pertaining to gender and the relationship to the visual-arts as well as similar after-school programs; and no research has been conducted related to the role of gender in conjunction with visual arts and mentoring.

5.2.2 Positive Themes

Some interesting findings surfaced linking the Studio Life mentor responses to the positive youth development and social capital literature. One way to develop an understanding of these findings is to ponder the question, “Which came first, positive youth development or social capital?” In order to proceed, it is important to develop a frame pertaining to these two concepts.

Positive youth development is the phrase used to describe the positive outcomes or impact on youth relevant to a program or organizational structure. The quality of a program or organized activity is framed by the literature as a program that produces positive outcomes. In other words, how well does the program positively affect those who participate? Eccles, Barber Stone and Hunt (2005) claim that, “Scholars have suggested that activities can (a) help adolescents acquire both the educational credentials and cognitive skills needed for adult work roles, (b) work through issues of personal and social identity, (c) acquire the interpersonal skills needed to form healthy social relationships and to succeed in the world of work, and (d) refine the emotional and behavioral skills needed to become fully functioning, independent adults (p. 185). The respondents from the mentor survey describe similar themes in their responses.

Additionally, Eccles (2005) describes some of the common reasons why individuals might choose to participate in organized activities as, “learning new skills, developing existing skills, competing with members of other organized teams or groups, exploring and solidifying one’s personal identity, being with one’s friends, having fun, filling time, escaping alternative bad situations, and gaining skills needed for unrelated short-and long-term goals” (p. 354). These emerging participation themes are also reinforced in the respondents’ open-ended narratives as described in Chapter Four.

Positive youth development is framed as the outcomes produced by a certain set of factors or characteristics within a program or organization. In other words, the culture within a program such as an ASP is organized in such a way that it positively influences the development of youth. An additional common theme and potential program outcome from the Studio Life mentor findings was the emergence of the concept of social capital development.

Social capital is the term used to describe the results of social relationships formed by exchanges between members in a social structure. These structures can be identified as organizations such as religious, political, and others including ASPs. The first analysis of the concept of social capital came from the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. He defined social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu 1985, p. 248). Since Bourdieu, many theorists have aided in the evolution of the definition as well as the implications of social capital on society. For example, more recently the concept has been defined as “a term that social scientists use as shorthand for the social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trust to which those networks give rise” (Sander & Putnam, p. 9, 2010). Additionally, “No democracy and, indeed, no society, can be healthy without at least a modicum of this resource” (p. 9). Interestingly enough, this is consistent with the at risk youth literature, that includes the absence of social development in the theoretical framework for qualifying the phrase “at risk.” Another way to frame it is, youth that do not develop the capacity for social capital are inherently, at risk (Afterschool Alliance, 2009, Capizzano, Tout and Adams, 2000, Meisel, Henderson, Cohen & Leone, 1998). Therefore, social capital can be more simply defined as the positive implications of membership in a group.

More recently researchers have pondered the question, that if youth are not experiencing positive outcomes of group membership, what are the ramifications?

The decline of social capital in youth has attracted many scholars to focus on the implications. For example, in the book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, scholars and political leaders were overwhelmed by the question of how to foster the growth and nurture quality with respect to social capital (Putnam, 2000). It is also important to note that since the publication of Putnam's book, a resurgence in social capital development in youth has spawned. One of the contributing factors is the emergence of the post-9/11 generation. The horrific day left a lasting impact and "strengthened the civic conscience of young people in the United States" (Sander & Putnam, p. 10, 2010). The ebb and flow of social capital development in youth has surfaced a deeper understanding of its value in society. Therefore, the implications of fostering social capital in youth are vast because, "Social capital makes citizens happier, healthier, reduces crime, makes government more responsive and honest, and improves economic productivity" (p. 9). Furthermore, scholars and leaders are invested in the concept of social capital development. As a result, the findings from the Studio Life mentor survey data may have greater implications.

In the mentor findings, the positive themes that surfaced were: participation and engagement, academics and skill development, social and personal identity, interpersonal and peer relations, positive environment, stress relief and inspiration. All of these themes are related to membership in the group Studio Life as well as the outcomes or potential outcomes of the ASP mentor network. The mentors articulated on many levels the importance of belonging to the group. They also described the impact of membership on a personal level, thus creating a parallel relationship to the social capital literature. What are the specific program characteristics

that influence the development of social capital in the Studio Life program? Additionally, can such development of social capital be replicated with similar outcomes?

In summary, this study presented a perspective of who was participating in the ASP and what the program doing for those participant mentors. Although the small sample prohibits generalization, the findings suggest that when the concepts of quality arts education are combined with the concepts of quality after-school programming, a unique opportunity is made available for youth to develop social capital in the hours after school.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The results of this study have implications for the fields of arts education, after-school programming and general field of education as a whole. This study aimed to discover more about the population that attends a specific, visual-arts based after-school program. Although there is more to understand regarding the demographic characteristics of the ASP population, the study did offer a description of program attendance. Additionally, this study produced rich data regarding the mentor population in the ASP. It is through the mentors of the program that the researcher gained an understanding relating to the impact of the ASP on its participants. The mentors of this ASP have created a link to program outcomes and, thus, potentially identifying this APS as a quality program.

The mentors also unintentionally emphasized that they are the strongest component to the ASP. They emphasized the implications of learning extending into the after-school hours, resulting in the mentors as the connection between school and afterschool. This is an untapped resource that all educators can utilize in order to help promote content learning, social learning

and empowering students with a sense of purpose. Through the visual arts and after-school programming the mentors of the Studio Life program claimed that their experience positively affected them academically, socially, personally and artistically. This is a lesson that can be transferred into other areas of ASP concentrations. Why couldn't a science oriented ASP be developed in a school district? A middle school program that uses high school mentors as junior scientists as the keystone to the program can be another way to extend educational opportunity past the three o'clock hour.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study helped to close the gap between the visual art and after-school literature. According to the literature, the arts are integral to the development of the whole child, socially and emotionally as well as academically. Additionally, quality after-school programming increases the likelihood of a program's ability to achieve student outcomes. Therefore, quality, visual arts after-school programming has the potential to produce whole child student outcomes, socially, emotionally and academically. However, this study documented potential program outcomes through the lens of a subpopulation in the program mentors.

Future research is necessary in order to assess the impact of programs like Studio Life on non-mentors or the average participants. Additionally, if mentoring is the keystone to the findings in this study, further research is necessary regarding student mentoring and the relationship to after-school programs. It was an earlier hypothesis that the increase in child poverty as well as the growth of the dual working/single working household is creating a need for quality after-school programming. Although this study was not able to make connections to

those changing external forces in America's youth, the fact remains that millions of children are left unsupervised every day. If research can help to better understand quality programming that promotes positive youth outcomes, then more programs can be offered to those in need. The hours after the school bell rings at 3:00 p.m. can then be filled with quality after-school programs that meet the needs of, America's children.

APPENDIX A

SINGLE AND WORKING PARENTS

Table 8 Number of own children in families by type, race, and Hispanic origin of family, of family, labor force status of mothers and men who maintain families, by age of children in family, March 2011 ASEC
– Continued

Single and working parents, Source: Department of Labor and Statistics, 2011								
Age of child	In families maintained by women				In families maintained by men			
	Total children	Mother in labor force or in Armed Forces		Mother not in the labor force or in Armed Forces	Total children	Father in labor force or in Armed Forces		Father not in the labor force or in Armed forces
		Number	Percent of total children			Number	Percent of total children	
Total primary families								
Total under 18 years	15398	11504	74.7	3895	3542	3113	87.9	429
Total 6 to 17 years	10600	8195	77.3	2406	2229	1930	86.6	299
Total 14 to 17 years	3690	2948	79.9	742	792	686	86.6	106
17 years	935	759	81.2	176	206	181	87.7	25
16 years	1015	809	79.7	206	232	194	83.2	39
15 years	831	675	81.2	156	178	152	85.7	25
14 years	909	705	77.6	204	176	159	90.5	17
Total 6 to 13 years	6910	5247	75.9	1663	1438	1245	86.6	193
13 years	867	682	78.6	185	174	155	89.2	19
12 years	912	704	77.2	208	161	131	81.7	29
11 years	829	652	78.6	177	189	168	88.7	21
10 years	840	670	79.8	170	174	146	84.1	28
9 years	913	686	75.1	227	167	140	84.2	26
8 years	855	602	70.4	253	171	153	89.6	18
7 years	901	666	73.9	235	195	167	85.4	29
6 years	792	584	73.7	208	208	185	89.0	23
Total under 6 years	4798	3309	69.0	1489	1312	1183	90.1	130
Total 3 to 5 years	2590	1817	70.2	773	612	552	90.2	60
5 years	873	603	69.0	271	167	155	92.7	12
4 years	833	590	70.8	243	236	220	93.1	16
3 years	884	625	70.7	259	209	177	84.8	32
Total under 3 years	2208	1492	67.6	716	700	631	90.1	69
2 years	706	509	72.1	197	206	189	91.6	17
1 years	772	567	73.4	205	258	237	91.8	21
Under 1 year	729	416	57.0	313	236	205	86.9	31

Table 9 Number of own children in families by type, race, and Hispanic origin of family, labor force

status of mothers and men who maintain families, by age of children in family, March 2011 ASEC –

Continued

Age of child	Total	Total in married couple families and families maintained by women				In married-couple families			
		Total children	Mother in labor force or in Armed Forces		Mother not in the labor force or in Armed Forces	Total children	Mother in labor force or in Armed Forces		Mother not in the labor force or in Armed Forces
			Number	Percent of total children			Number	Percent of total children	
Total primary families									
Total under 18 years	65930	62389	42448	68.0	19941	46991	30944	65.9	16046
Total 6 to 17 years	43897	41667	29599	71.0	12068	31067	21404	68.9	9663
Total 14 to 17 years	14656	13864	10352	74.7	3512	10174	7404	72.8	2770
17 years	3693	3487	2625	75.3	862	2552	1866	73.1	686
16 years	3830	3598	2676	74.4	921	2583	1868	72.3	715
15 years	3523	3345	2527	75.5	818	2514	1852	73.7	662
14 years	3610	3434	2525	73.5	910	2525	1819	72.0	706
Total 6 to 13 years	29240	27803	19246	69.2	8556	20893	14000	67.0	6893
13 years	3560	3386	2511	74.1	875	2519	1829	72.6	690
12 years	3557	3397	2494	73.4	902	2485	1790	72.0	695
11 years	3615	3426	2391	69.8	1034	2597	1740	67.0	857
10 years	3614	3440	2492	72.4	948	2600	1822	70.1	778
9 years	3720	3554	2399	67.5	1155	2641	1713	64.9	928
8 years	3706	3535	2354	66.6	1181	2679	1751	65.4	928
7 years	3819	3624	2342	64.6	1282	2723	1676	61.6	1047
6 years	3649	3442	2263	65.8	1178	2649	1680	63.4	970
Total under 6 years	22034	20722	12849	62.0	7872	15924	9540	59.9	6383
Total 3 to 5 years	11413	10801	6797	62.9	4004	8210	4979	60.6	3231
5 years	3793	3626	2279	62.8	1347	2753	1676	60.9	1077
4 years	3780	3544	2255	63.6	1289	2711	1665	61.4	1046
3 years	3840	3631	2263	62.3	1368	2747	1638	59.6	1109
Total under 3 years	10621	9921	6053	61.0	3868	7713	4561	59.1	3152
2 years	3606	3400	2075	61.0	1325	2694	1566	58.2	1127
1 years	3565	3307	2127	64.3	1180	2535	1560	61.5	975
Under 1 year	3450	3214	1851	57.6	1363	2485	1435	57.8	1050

Single and working parents, Source: Department of Labor and Statistics, 2011

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL CONSENT AND STUDENT ASSENT FORM

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by myself, Jeff Evancho, a doctoral student from the University of Pittsburgh, School of Education. I hope to learn more about the students participating in the after-school program “Studio Life.” Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because they have attended the studio life program during the 2011-2012 or 2012-2013 school years as a participant or a mentor.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this study is to identify and answer the following questions:

Who is participating in the after-school program “Studio Life”?

How often are they participating?

What are the demographic characteristics of the participating students?

What is the impact of the program on the mentors of the program?

Who is being asked to take part in this study?

Any student that participated in the after-school program “Studio Life” during the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years will be asked to participate in this study.

What are the procedures of this study?

Participants: As a parent/guardian of a participant, if you agree to allow your child to participate in this research study, you and your child will not be asked to do anything. Your signed consent will be authorizing the researcher to access the after-school program attendance data as well your child’s demographic data from the school district database.

Mentors: As a parent/guardian of a mentor, if you agree to allow your child to participate in this research study, your child will be asked to complete a brief survey and be asked to respond to five open-ended questions. The computerized survey and open-ended questions will take your child less than 45 minutes an hour to complete. Your signed consent also will authorize the researcher to access the after-school program attendance data as well your child’s demographic data from the school district database

What are the possible risks and discomforts of this study?

There is little risk involved in this study. No invasive procedures are included. The major potential risk is a breach of confidentiality, but I will do everything possible to protect the privacy of your child. To reduce the likelihood of a breach of confidentiality, as a researcher I have been trained to maintain privacy.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with your child will remain confidential. Subject identities will be kept confidential by using the

student attendance rates to associate with demographic data. No names or identifiable information will be published in this study. Also, the researcher will keep all data pertaining to the study in a secure and locked location.

Your child's participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate will not affect your or your child's relationship with Studio Life program, (INSERT School District) or the University of Pittsburgh. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you and/or your child are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

It is my hope that this study will provide information to the field of visual arts-based education and after-school programming, thus providing greater future opportunities for children. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact (INSERT PHONE), (INSERT EMAIL). If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Office, University of Pittsburgh (1-866-212-2668).

VOLUNTARY CONSENT/ PARENTAL CERTIFICATION

The above information has been explained to me and all of my current questions have been answered. I understand that I am encouraged to ask questions about any aspect of this research study during the course of this study, and that such future questions will be answered by a qualified individual or by the investigator(s) listed on the first page of this consent document at the telephone number(s) given. I understand that I may always request that my questions, concerns or complaints be addressed by a listed investigator.

I understand that I may contact the Human Subjects Protection Advocate of the IRB Office, University of Pittsburgh (1-866-212-2668) to discuss problems, concerns, and questions; obtain information; offer input; or discuss situations in the event that the research team is unavailable.

By signing this form, I agree for my child to participate in this research study. A copy of this consent form will be given to me/my child.

Printed Name of Child-Subject

"I understand that, as a minor (age less than 18 years), the above-named child is not permitted to participate in this research study without my consent. Therefore, by signing this form, I give my consent for his/her participation in this research study."

Parent's or Guardian's Name (Print) Relationship to Participant (Child)

Parent or Guardian Signature Date

CHILD ASSENT (to be used with children who are developmentally able to sign)
This research has been explained to me, and I agree to participate.

Signature of Child-Subject Date

Printed Name of Child-Subject

APPENDIX C

STUDIO LIFE MENTOR SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This survey is designed to compile a greater understanding of your participation in the after-school program "Studio Life" as well as its impact on your academic achievement. (* Required)

What is your gender? *

Male ___ Female ___

What is your age? *

- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19

How many years have you been participating in Studio Life as a mentor? *

- 0-1 school years
- 1-2 school years
- 2-3 school years
- 3-4 school years
- 4-5 school years

How many years did you participate in Studio Life before becoming a mentor? *

- 0-1 school years
- 1-2 school years
- 2-3 school years
- 3-4 school years
- 4-5 school years

Do you still participate in Studio Life? *

- Yes, as a mentor

• Yes, as a participant

• No

How would you describe your attendance in the after-school program Studio Life? *

• I attend regularly

• I attend regularly but I have some scheduling conflicts

• I attend most of the time

• I attend some of the time

• I attend a few sessions

Please read the remaining statements and indicate the extent to which you agree: I am more likely to attend school on a day that the after-school program Studio Life meets. *

• Strongly Agree

• Agree

• Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

When I participate in Studio Life I feel like I am learning new skills. *

• Strongly Agree

• Agree

• Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

Participating in Studio Life as a mentor has helped improve my artistic skills. *

• Strongly Agree

• Agree

• Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

The skills that I gain from participating in Studio Life transfer or help me in my other academic subjects. *

• Strongly Agree

• Agree

• Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

Participating in Studio Life has improved my social skills and peer interactions. *

• Strongly Agree

• Agree

• Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

While participating in Studio Life I made new friends that I would not have been friends with otherwise. *

- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - I Don't Know
- Participating as a mentor in Studio Life has had a positive effect on my behavior. *
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - I Don't know
- My work as a mentor has taught me greater responsibility. *
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - I Don't Know
- Since becoming a mentor in Studio Life my work habits have increased. *
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - I Don't Know
- I participate as a mentor in the Studio Life program because I enjoy volunteering. *
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - I Don't Know
- While working as mentor in the Studio Life program I feel that I am teaching others new skills. *
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - I Don't Know
- I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my critical thinking or problem-solving skills. *
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my communication skills. *

• Strongly Agree

• Agree

• Disagree

• Strongly Disagree

• I Don't Know

Please explain why you participate in the Studio Life program? *

Please explain what effect the program Studio Life has on your regular school day? *

Please explain what effect the after-school program Studio Life has on your peer interaction or social skills? *

Please explain how Studio Life has impacted your other academic classes? *

If you have any additional thoughts or comments about the Studio Life Program please add them in the space below. *

APPENDIX D

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RELATIONSHIP TO SPECIFIC PROGRAM IMPACT

Research question 2: What possible impact does attendance in a visual arts-based after-school program have on participants?

Mentor Survey:

For research question two, the researcher will export the data from the survey into an Excel spreadsheet. Once the data are compiled in a spreadsheet the researcher will report a detailed and methodic search for patterns characterized through descriptive statistics and also report on themes identified in the open-ended questions. The variables that will be measured to evaluate correlation of between the program and impact on adolescents are: learning, transfer of learning, social impact, participation/engagement, volunteerism and behavior. The survey questions are specified below:

How many years have you been participating in Studio Life as a mentor?
(Participation/engagement)

How many years did you participate in Studio Life before becoming a mentor?
(Participation/engagement)

Do you still participate in Studio Life? (Participation/engagement)

How would you describe your attendance in the after-school program Studio Life?
(Participation/engagement)

Please read the remaining statements and indicate the extent to which you agree: I am more likely to attend school on a day that the after-school program Studio Life meets.
(Participation/engagement)

When I participate in Studio Life I feel like I am learning new skills. (Learning)

Participating in Studio Life as a mentor has helped improve my artistic skills. (Learning)

The skills that I gain from participating in Studio Life transfer or help me in my other academic subjects. (Transfer of learning)

Participating in Studio Life has improved my social skills and peer interactions. (Social impact)

While participating in Studio Life I made new friends that I would not have been friends with otherwise. (Social impact)

Participating as a mentor in Studio Life has had a positive effect on my behavior. (Behavior impact)

My work as a mentor has taught me greater responsibility. (Learning)

Since becoming a mentor in Studio Life my work habits have increased. (Learning)

I participate as a mentor in the Studio Life program because I enjoy volunteering. (Volunteerism)

While working as mentor in the Studio Life program I feel that I am teaching others new skills. (Volunteerism)

I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my critical thinking or problem-solving skills. (Learning)

I feel that my participation in the Studio Life program has improved my communication skills. (Learning/social impact)

Please explain why you participate in the Studio Life program? (Engagement impact)

Please explain what effect the program Studio Life has on your regular school day? (Program impact)

Please explain what effect the after-school program Studio Life has on your peer interaction or social skills? (Social impact)

Please explain how Studio Life has impacted your other academic classes? (Academic impact)

If you have any additional thoughts or comments about the Studio Life program please add them in the space below. *

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