

It's **About** Time!

A Look at Out-of-School Time for Urban Teens

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Funding provided by the [Time Warner Foundation](#)

Acknowledgments

The Time Warner Foundation generously provided funding for this investigation and paper. The National Institute on Out-of-School Time wishes to especially thank Pam Stevens for her thoughtful advice and feedback.

We would also like to thank the members of the Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide Afterschool Initiatives and the many program and city leaders we contacted for interviews and surveys.

The opinions expressed in this paper are solely those of the authors based on their research.

Suggested citation:

Hall, G., Israel, L., & Shortt, J. (2004). *It's about time: A look at out-of-school time for urban teens*. Wellesley, MA: National Institute on Out-of-School Time.

About The National Institute on Out-of-School Time

For over 25 years, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) has successfully brought national attention to the importance of youth's out-of-school time, influenced policy, increased standards and professional recognition, and spearheaded community action aimed at improving the availability, quality and viability of programs serving children and youth. NIOST's work entails: Research, Evaluation and Consultation; Policy Development and Public Awareness; and Training and Curriculum Development.

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February 2004

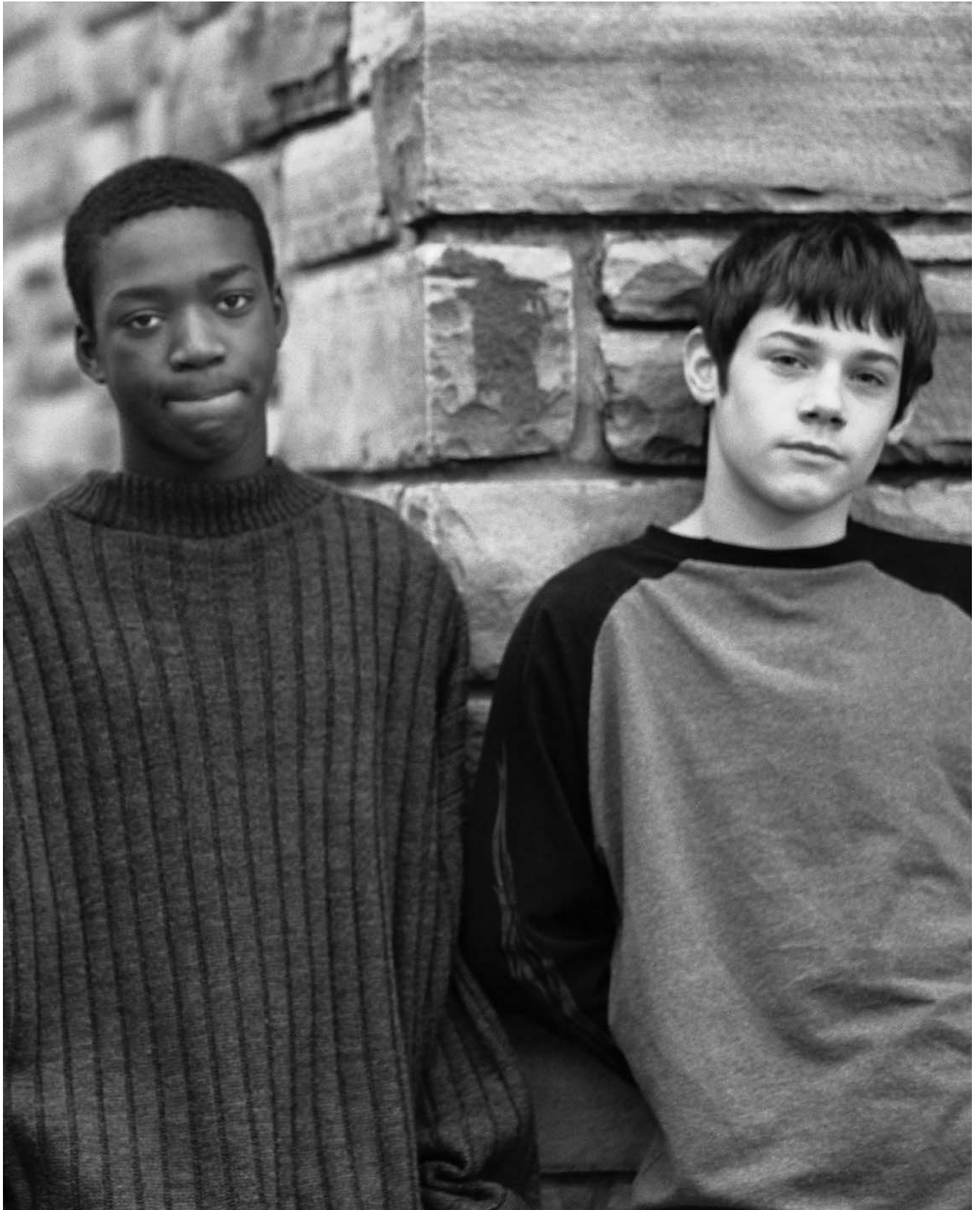
It's About Time!

A Look at Out-of-School Time for Urban Teens

Introduction

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) was commissioned by the Time Warner Foundation to investigate afterschool opportunities and experiences for high school age youth in 21 major cities. Particular emphasis was focused on five of the cities: Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, and Fort Worth.

There is solid consensus among researchers, program providers, and families that participation in constructive activities during out-of-school time hours can contribute to a youth's healthy and positive development. This paper explores some of the key issues and challenges facing program and city leaders in creating and sustaining afterschool program opportunities that engage the interest and participation of high school age youth. The authors discuss effective program characteristics and strategies for citywide collaboration, along with steps for cities and organizations to build their capacity to meet the needs of today's teen youth during the out-of-school time hours.



Photograph by Nick Vedros, Vedros & Associates

High School After School

Being in the midst of such dramatic personal and social change, it is not surprising that high school age youth are in great need of support and at the same time challenging to engage and organize. Afterschool providers and youth development professionals have confirmed the difficulty of creating out-of-school time programs that can support positive developmental outcomes and sustain the interest of high school age youth.

There are many youth involved regularly in activities and programs offered through their high schools during the out-of-school time hours, or employed for as many as 20 hours a week. However, recent research (Sipe, Ma, & Gambone, 1998) indicates that in a three-city study, only half of 16- to 17-year-olds and one third of 18- to 19-year-olds reported being engaged constructively after school. Program participation drops off in middle school, ostensibly because older youth are not interested in formal afterschool programs (Forum for Youth Investment, 2003). But in fact, many youth would actually prefer to participate in structured activities should they be available. Nationally, more than half of teens wish there were more community or neighborhood-based programs available after school, and two thirds of those surveyed said they would participate in such programs if they were available (Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, 2001).

There are several contributing factors as to why older youth are underserved in out-of-school time. Funding sources have tended to adhere to a philosophy that investments are most worthwhile when made at the earliest possible intervention level. Therefore funding for out-of-school time programs is skewed much more towards younger school age and middle school youth with the expectation that impacts are more likely and visible. Afterschool has also been framed in the public eye as a support to working parents (Forum for Youth Investment, 2003). The apparent need for parent support diminishes as youth age and are considered capable of caring for themselves. The high school itself has historically been seen as a source of multiple and diverse afterschool opportunities including sports teams, music groups, arts, etc. However, budget shortfalls have decimated high school extracurricular activities or in many cases attached participation fees that eliminate participation for many lower income youth.

Despite the fact that many youth development professionals and afterschool providers have become very savvy when it comes to creating engaging programs; the high school age population is particularly challenging. Several conditions that make the high school afterschool arena different from elementary/middle are: **(1)** it is more difficult to attract high school students to programs; **(2)** high school students are less likely to want to stay in the school building; **(3)** high school students have busier schedules, i.e., work, family, sibling, or home responsibilities; **(4)** high school students are less likely to attend a program several days a week;

(5) high school students often need to work to earn money and contribute to family income; and (6) high school students are more independent and mobile, so vote with their feet and have the power to do that (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2003).

These conditions create a thorny quagmire for afterschool providers and youth development professionals. In many cases, as Granger (2002) explains “we know better how to describe the trajectory of youth development than how to intentionally help youth succeed.” High school age youth are in need of supports, and apparently desire them, but do not come to the table easily. Plausible interventions have to consider the will and capacity (Granger, 2002) of the youth in addition to the resources, staffing, physical environment, and the time available of program providers.

There is solid consensus among researchers, program providers, and families that participation in constructive activities during out-of-school time hours can contribute to a high school age youth's healthy and positive development. Research shows that teenagers consistently experience higher levels of motivation and cognitive engagement in youth activities than in other contexts of their lives (Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003). Many characteristics of high quality afterschool programs such as youth leadership, communication, and problem-solving activities correlate with the components of the 21st Century learning and literacy skills as outlined by the 1991 SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) report and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Research has demonstrated that afterschool programs can reduce juvenile crime and violence and other risky behaviors by providing alternative environments and activities from 3 PM to 6 PM , the prime time for violent juvenile crime (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2000). The challenge to city leaders and program providers is creating and sustaining programs and collaborations that engage the interest and participation of high school age youth, and at the same time promote positive developmental outcomes and address the educational needs of the 21st century.

“The effects of concentrated poverty are seen as the biggest challenge to teens in out-of-school time in Baltimore.” – Baltimore Interviewee

Through electronic surveys NIOST collected information about high school afterschool programs from leaders of afterschool programs, community-based organizations, and youth focused municipal departments in 21 cities. Despite the geographic and size differences in the cities, there were many consistencies across the surveys.¹

General trends about high school afterschool programs based on the survey responses:

- A majority of programs are oriented toward youth mentoring, academics, community service and/or career/work/internship opportunities.
- The majority of program participants are youth of color. In fact, many organizations reported that this number was between 90-100%.
- Most programs serve both males and females, however a higher percentage of program participants are female.
- The majority of programs serve mostly youth who qualify for free or reduced lunch.
- Approximately 77% of the programs reported that participants do not pay a fee to attend program activities.
- Approximately 70% of the organizations providing programming also offer programs during the summer.
- Almost 50% of the programs lack connections between their programs and the schools that their participating youth attend (i.e. day school teachers working in afterschool programs, curriculum or thematic connections between day school and afterschool programs, etc.).

NIOST conducted additional investigation on five cities: Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Fort Worth, and Kansas City, MO. These five cities were selected for further investigation as a result of: **(a)** apparent breadth and quantity of programs as evident from the initial research; **(b)** evidence of some collaboration between stakeholder organizations; **(c)** evidence of intermediary (present or emerging) leadership; **(d)** evidence of unique approaches or program strategies; or **(e)** geographic location. Relevant demographics for each of the five cities are provided in Appendix A. Information was collected through electronic surveys, extensive phone interviews with city and program leaders, a task group meeting with six members of the Cross-Cities Network for Citywide Afterschool Initiatives (see Appendix B), and interviews with many key stakeholders in the afterschool field.

1. Findings are limited by the number of organizations represented in the survey pool and the selection process used by the researchers.

Characteristics of Effective Programs

There is strong consensus from afterschool leaders regarding components of effective high school age youth programs. Teen programs cannot be the same as middle school programs; there are certain fundamental differences between what both populations need and want. The characteristics and capabilities of the youthworker are paramount to program success, and programs for high school age youth are most successful when youthworkers are creative, well trained, skilled at building relationships, and can make long-term commitments to programs.

Finding and retaining the right staff is critical to helping youth participants develop and sustain an interest in program participation. Many programs strive to engage young people initially on a social level through interactions with staff. Once engaged, the programs then offer teens high yield learning opportunities such as computer and music technology.

Program recruitment strategies vary. Teens are often reluctant to reply to flyers, make inquiry phone calls, or pursue website investigation. What seems most effective for high school age youth is direct recruitment within school settings through contact with trusted adults.

In general, programs appear to be most successful in reaching high school age youth and sustaining their interest when:

- Older youth feel a sense of independence as part of participation in the program, particularly financial independence through earning wages or a stipend.
- Youth voices are listened to and incorporated in decision-making.
- Programs offer employable skills, such as office work skills, and include preparation for or direct connection to job training and employment.
- Youth have opportunity to interact with community and business leaders.
- Schools and principals are active partners.
- Participation includes receiving assistance in navigating the post high-school experience.
- Youth are introduced to the world outside their local neighborhood.

Program Approaches

The program approaches described in this section offer a range of activities and services to high school age teens. Some of the approaches are initiated by or partnered with city mayoral offices while others are managed by community-based or other non-profit organizations. In choosing which approaches to highlight we were primarily interested in the variation of management structures, goals of the program, variety of incentives to participation, and likelihood of replication. These approaches seemed to “fit well” with the effective

program characteristics previously outlined. These programs surfaced numerous times in our investigations and seem to reflect practices that were successful in engaging and supporting high school age youth.

Youth Apprenticeships

In Chicago, Denver, and Boston public/private partnerships have taken on significant roles in promoting and supporting opportunities for high school age youth through the model of Youth Apprenticeships. Youth apprenticeship programs use the workplace as a learning environment to provide youth with competencies in specific work skills and related school skills. After School Matters (ASM) is a non-profit organization that partners with the City of Chicago, the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago park District, and the Chicago Public Library to expand out-of-school opportunities for Chicago teens by offering teens hands-on job training in the arts, sports, technology, and communications.

After School Matters provides structured out-of-school time opportunities to teens in over 25 of Chicago's high schools. The program strives to prepare youth for jobs, in addition to providing health and fitness oriented clubs. Youth who participate in ASM apprenticeships receive a 10-week stipend. Employer/apprenticeship partners include schools, YouthNets (units in the community which coordinate youth services), Chicago Department of Human Services, and other community initiatives. Recently, ASM collaborated with local community-based organizations to hire older youth to mentor younger youth in technology skills. Younger youth begin with pre-apprenticeships that combine hands-on and academic enrichment activities and then later transition to supervised internships that focus on learning skills and producing a product. These steps then lead to actual employment for youth in summer camp programs in which they have responsibility for developing curriculum and activities. Through such initiatives, ASM provides a ladder of opportunity towards job readiness and employment to Chicago youth.

One special strand of the Denver Mayor's youth employment program, "Arts Streets" includes apprenticeships in the arts. Through the arts, the program engages youth in the acquisition of life skills, work place skills, and finds a constructive application for youth creativity. Teaching artists and arts organizations are recruited to mentor and guide youth apprentices in visual, performing, literary and media arts curricula.

Classroom in the Workplace is a partnership of the Boston Private Industry Council, the Boston Public Schools, and local Boston employers. During the summer and

"People have spent about 8 years building solid programs... It takes that much time to build these kinds of supports."

– Denver Interviewee



school year Boston employer partners provide time and space during the workday for high school students to improve their reading comprehension, writing, and mathematics skills. During the summer, classes are held at the worksite for 90 minutes, 5 days a week for 7 weeks, and are led by a Boston Public School teacher. During the school year, students work part-time after school, and one work session is reserved for class. After the classroom component, students disperse throughout various departments to complete the paid job activities assigned to them.

Homework Support

The Denver Mayor's Office provides a comprehensive set of supports to high school age through the "Scene" Homework Labs, initiated during the 2001-2002 school year. Students are given access to computers, school supplies and library resources. In fact, all of the supplies that a student might need to complete a school project are provided, i.e., markers, poster board, etc. As additional incentives for students to participate, homework labs include resume prep, job readiness seminars, SAT prep, and college selection and financial aid assistance. Eight to twenty-five youth utilize each homework lab daily.

School-based National Programs

Communities in Schools (CIS) is a national organization with a network of local community-based organizations working in schools to help meet the needs of young people. Communities in Schools provides school-based case managers in three Fort Worth High Schools. Representatives in the schools connect high school age youth to about 100 community youth serving organizations. The program is funded through the United Way, state, federal, and private dollars. Representatives will also provide high school youth with pre-employment and job awareness training --- services that strongly resonate with the needs that high school age youth express. By locating representatives at the high schools, CIS is able to "meet youth where they are." Fort Worth leaders cite the program's ability to provide consistent day in and day out caring adult relationships as an essential ingredient to effectively serving high school age youth and connecting them to other resources in the community.

Another national school-based high school afterschool program is Youth in Government managed by the YMCA. Youth in Government operates in 14 branches of the YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth and also has operated successfully in Kansas City. Participation in the Youth in Government program in Fort Worth high schools includes afterschool club meetings and weekly work nights at the downtown branch. Youth participants can select from a variety of legal strands: **(1)** judicial mock trial; **(2)** research and debate; and **(3)** media. Part of the program appeal to teens stems from the inclusion of business and community leaders, transferable skill building, and youth directed agendas. The Youth in Government Program in Kansas City high schools is a three-month program culminating in a weekend stay in the state capital and mock government experience. During the preparation period the young people learn about the state legislative process, write bills, and prepare to take on their roles as members of state government.

The Urban Debate League (UDL) was formed in 1997 by the Open Society Institute modeled on a program founded by Emory University in 1985. Local affiliate Urban Debate Leagues operate in almost 50 high schools and middle schools in Baltimore, Chicago, and Kansas City providing educational opportunities that empower teens to become engaged learners, critical thinkers, and active citizens. Youth participating in UDL take part in public policy debates learning the skills necessary for being effective advocates for themselves and their community. The Urban Debate League offers opportunities for youth to participate in: (a) all-day debate tournaments; (b) regional, national and international debate competitions; (c) public policy debates within their own communities; and (d) college counseling through UDL's College Access Program.

Baltimore's UDL is managed through a partnership of more than 12 organizations and strives to tap into the potential of both disengaged and successful students in urban schools. The Baltimore UDL organization is student led, and focuses on enhancing 21st century literacy skills including critical and analytical skills, written and oral communication, along with research and computer technology.

Youth and Philanthropy

Research by the National Research Council (2002) reiterates the importance of youth having opportunity to do things that make a real difference in their community. Involving youth in philanthropy activities can increase youth involvement in community change, promote youth service and giving, and help youth develop into healthy productive adults (Rosen & Sedonaen, 2001). The El Pomar Foundation's Youth in Community Service program is an interactive, hands-on, learning-by-doing experience that invites high school students to be a positive force in their communities. Twenty-seven public and private high schools from Denver have participated. High school students utilize in-school and out-of-school time to survey classmates, organize fundraisers, participate in a community service event, and meet as a philanthropic board to award self-raised and matched funds from El Pomar to local nonprofits. Program leaders cite the great interest high school youth express in the project. Beyond learning about the local community's needs, the youth feel the "power to do something about it."

Chicago Department of Human Service (CDHS) YouthNet grant making program has also tapped into the high school youth's leadership and philanthropy interests. YouthNets exist in each of Chicago's police districts. The programs conduct peer outreach, provide resources, develop leadership skills, hold community forums, and

"We need to see a policy and political overview that says what young people do when they're not in school – informal education – is equally important and it needs a structural approach. And it's done by a range of collaborators because we need a whole range of diverse programs so young people have choices."

– Chicago Interviewee

host culminating events. YouthNets awarded 125 grants, ranging from \$200 to \$1500, to other youth led groups. Activities that have been supported through grants in previous years include community service projects, youth exposure and exploration projects, neighborhood documentaries, and computer enrichment opportunities. These types of youth-led initiatives give Chicago and Denver youth a voice as well as an opportunity to practice leadership and receive recognition in the community for their contributions.

Social Opportunities

Teens consistently express to program leaders the desire to have a place where they can gather and have “their kind of fun.” One model for such a center is Denver's “The Spot,” a youth designed and grant supported drop-in center serving ages 14 - 24. The Spot is open Sunday - Thursday from 5:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M. and includes computer labs, GED classes, broadcasting studios, guest speaker program, photography lab, and dancing space. The Spot is located in downtown Denver in a gang neutral and easily accessible location.

“Teen Central” takes place in the Burton Barr Central Library in Phoenix and was created “for teen by teens.” Five teen focus groups were held and surveys were compiled to design the room and decide what materials would be available. Teens told staff that they wanted a space just for ages 12-18. Teen Central hours are Monday – Thursday 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM with more hours on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Regularly over 100 youth engage each day in a range of activities including individual and group computer work, small group discussions, video watching, and general “hanging out” in the canteen. “Teen Central” and “The SPOT” reflect critical features of effective programs purported by youth development researchers including exposure to caring adults, inclusion of youth voices, and hands-on learning activities.

Skills Focused

Skills focused programs can be equally attractive to program users and program providers. High school age youth are keenly interested in acquiring new skills mostly for purposes of part-time employment. Program providers can leverage skill building experiences to draw youth into the program, and then having established a connection, introduce other skill building/developmental experiences central to the program’s mission.

The New York City Beacons are community centers located in public school buildings offering a range of services and activities for children and youth. Several of the Beacons focus on providing teen youth with opportunities to create tangible products and build real-world skills. Engaging Young Women is a Beacon program in Staten Island which offers young women sewing classes. In addition to sewing classes three times a week, the program offers: (a) group and individual counseling aimed at helping girls develop future goals and plans for reaching those goals; (b) aerobics class one a week; (c) dance class once a week; and (d) group trips to college fairs and workplaces.

Learning Through the Arts is a Beacon program in the Bronx facilitated by Pathways for Youth. In 10-week semesters of afterschool and Saturday classes, between 100 and 150 teenagers at this Beacon learn artistic and expressive activities, including newspaper publishing, singing, dancing, producing a musical theatre revue, photography, filmmaking, literary criticism, creative writing, storytelling, and arts and crafts such as quilting, woodworking, and mask making.

Several of the programs previously profiled integrate 21st century learning and literacy skills into their program content. The Youth in Government Program emphasizes organization, communication, thinking, and problem-solving skills. The city facilitated high school homework labs in Denver connect youth to academic and technology resources in addition to job preparation activities. Youth learn the technology required for workplace productivity and preview the 21st century workplace experience. Urban Debate activities develop core academic skills such as: reading comprehension, critical thinking, argument organization and support, and communication skills. Afterschool activities such as book clubs, youth published newspapers, journal writing, play writing, and oral reading to younger children all can support 21st century learning and literacy development for high school age youth

Programs for high school age youth that have intensely infused 21st century learning tools into the program curriculum are less common than programs that focus on behavioral adjustments or broader developmental outcomes. Ideally, in order to respond to the full spectrum of needs of today's high school youth, program providers will need to craft programs that creatively balance both.

“Hope is a fragile thing in Kansas City. If we can deal with the hope we won’t have to focus on teen pregnancy and the other problems.”

– Kansas City Interviewee



Leadership and Citywide Collaboration

Providing high school afterschool in the context of a citywide strategy as opposed to fragmented individually operating programs creates greater opportunity for strategic mobilization of resources, greater funding leverage, evaluation and assessment consistency, and more powerful input into creating a public voice and public will for out-of-school time concerns. The delivery of program activities and opportunities to high school age youth during out-of-school time would be enhanced by a systemic approach with infrastructure elements, such as (a) funding collaborations; (b) planning and cooperation among stakeholders; (c) formal linkages between high schools, community, and local government organizations; (d) high school age program standards; (e) an agreed upon set of objectives; and (f) designated citywide leadership.

In many cities pieces of a larger system are percolating through the actions of inviting partnerships between organizations, convening obvious stakeholders, and stimulating conversations about the status of high school

“If programs weren’t struggling 24/7 for funds, maybe they wouldn’t feel so competitive and there could be more coordination and collaboration.”

– Baltimore Interviewee

youth. Establishing leadership is a critical first step. Particular agencies or organizations such as school departments, mayor’s

offices, or local intermediaries have “tried on” the convening role. Efforts by various organizations in these cities to convene stakeholders have been well received, but often considered too narrowly focused or less frequent than desired. Interviews with city leaders suggest that there is no visible consensus or process for identifying whose role it is to convene citywide conversation on high school afterschool. There is a foundation of leadership and philosophy in place in many cities, but absent is a structured and reliable forum for collaboration and consensus building. Convening efforts would be greatly enhanced by the intentional identification of one entity or leader with the role and authority to convene.

In Fort Worth, advocates and high school youth program providers have had opportunities to come together under the auspices of the 20-year-old Tarrant County Youth Collaboration (TCYC) and the former city initiative, Our City Our Children. The TCYC is a coalition of public and private organizations and individuals working as a collective voice for Tarrant County youth. The TCYC traditionally holds quarterly meetings, although organization leaders convene in sub-groups more regularly through the year.

The TCYC was a central partner in the Fort Worth Independent School District’s successful effort to open up six 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The TCYC’s work includes studies of community needs and services, as well as working with the United Way to promote developmental asset-based programming in youth serving organizations. The TCYC currently supports a half-time professional to provide training to youth organizations on the developmental assets through a four-year old initiative called, “Time for Kids.”

The Denver Mayor's Office for Education and Children along with the Department of Community Education of the Denver Public Schools have both made significant in-roads toward citywide collaboration on youth and out-of-school time concerns. The focus of their efforts is broader than high school age youth, although high school age youth are clearly included. The Mayor's Office facilitates DPACS, The Denver Partnership for Adolescent Concerns and Successes. DPACS, which originated over ten years ago, is a coalition of youth service providers that meets monthly for networking, information, and referral. There are over 150 contacts networking through DPAC.

The Department of Community Education of the Denver Public Schools convenes the "City-Wide Task Force on Out-of-School Time." Most of the large youth service providers in Denver participate regularly on the task force. The task force has been involved with developing citywide program standards, educating the public about school-based programs, and developing strategies for expanding and sustaining out-of-school time programs. Having both the school district and the Mayor's office, central and convincing stakeholders in youth issues, taking leadership on convening youth serving organizations from the city is a crucial step toward truly establishing a citywide strategy for high school age youth in Denver.

Chicago is an example of a city that has begun to very publicly and intentionally express its interest in prioritizing its teenage youth. In fact, Chicago's Mayor Daley included high school afterschool in his platform as he ran for re-election in June 2002. The Mayor's office provides substantial leadership to the city in the youth services arena. Mayor Daley's KidsStart: Positive Alternative for Kids is the rubric under which several citywide youth programs and initiatives are housed.

Kansas City's Partnership for Children (PFC) is an organization that strives to improve conditions for children and youth throughout the area by mobilizing individuals and organizations that work on children's behalf. PFC emphasizes the importance of providing youth with information regarding program options, and also guiding decisions once youth have information. The PFC has developed a detailed plan for a web-based approach to inventorying activities and opportunities, with the expectation that providing easy access to information for young people, adults, and direct service providers will lead to a more coordinated approach to service delivery.

Role for Intermediaries

Many local intermediaries such as The After School Institute, and YouthNet are positioned to play a central role in helping their cities develop and implement an action plan for high school afterschool. Baltimore's Safe and Sound Campaign, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is an effort to improve the lives of children and youth ages 6-18 in Baltimore City and works in partnership with The After School Institute (TASI), a training and technical assistance intermediary. TASI collaborates with afterschool programs that serve children and youth between



6 and 18. Some of the training topics related to teens are: **(a)** training and technical assistance on recruitment and retention of older adolescents; **(b)** developing youth leadership skills; and **(c)** establishing youth entrepreneurial projects. TASI has trained youth to be HIV/AIDS peer leaders in afterschool programs. TASI has also trained and placed older adolescents as paid interns in afterschool programs.

YouthNet, a site for the Midwest BEST Initiative, is a nonprofit organization that works to improve the life opportunities of Kansas City young people by promoting quality youth development programs that occur in the afterschool hours. YouthNet is affiliated with 18 youth serving programs, large and small, nationally and locally sponsored. YouthNet is working with these programs to implement a common set of standards of quality performance and to provide training, educational opportunities and technical assistance to support these programs as they integrate the standards into their daily operations. As standards of quality performance are implemented across programs, systemic barriers to quality are revealed which can be translated into policy and advocacy efforts. An intermediary such as YouthNet may be uniquely positioned to help bridge these different system layers, connecting on-the-ground program experiences with strategic advocacy and policy development.

Local intermediary organizations may need to build their own capacities to support and steer new teen focused citywide initiatives. With increased capacities, intermediary organizations could contribute in the following ways towards building and implementing citywide strategies and programs for high school afterschool:

- Promote community-wide dialogue about high school afterschool to develop broad-based support.
- Collect data; conduct asset mapping, analysis, and dissemination.
- Identify gaps in program participation and resource distribution patterns.
- Examine barriers to program access and possible resolutions.
- Promote a community-wide youth engagement strategy to assure opportunities for youth voice and participatory planning.
- Develop linkages between school, youth serving, community-based and employer organizations.
- Prepare reports, issue papers, and case studies.
- Create useful and appropriate program evaluation and assessment tools.

“There is a huge amount of support in conversation about high school afterschool. But the dollars flow more for younger youth.”

– Fort Worth Interviewee

Developing a Citywide Strategy -- Building Capacity

Efforts to build a citywide strategy for high school afterschool should build upon the groundwork of leadership and philosophy already in place. In some cities the mayor's office may be best positioned to have a broad convening role, having a visibility and presence already established in the schools and employer community -- two key areas of connection for high school age youth. In other cities strong leadership may already be present through a public school system or existing intermediary organization.

There are several important steps in developing a citywide approach. First, leaders and stakeholders need comprehensive information about the current landscape of high school afterschool programs. The landscape map, ideally, would categorize programs by target group served, goals of program, funding stream, and capacity for expansion both in numbers of young people served and in types of programming offered. Other essential steps for citywide planning purposes include: **(a)** an inventory of key city stakeholders already at the table with a plan to bring in others identified as essential; **(b)** a historical narrative of the city's (all the sectors/stakeholders) experience and interest in providing high school afterschool; and **(c)** a documentation of programs and practices that are recognized and identified by providers and consumers as effective (including those identified by sources outside of the city's own stakeholders and experts).

In addition to understanding the landscape of programming available for teens, it is essential to know about the current services and capacity of intermediary organizations that provide training, technical assistance, funding, advocacy for funding and policy, and help build the public's commitment and will to provide teens with the support they need to succeed in school and beyond. These necessary functions may reside within singular organizations or be spread among several agencies. Coalitions of programs sometimes fill this role and need to be seen as stakeholders.

The fiscal and political backdrops are crucial pieces of information that will inform initial strategies and the development of an action plan. It is extremely valuable to have budget sources and patterns of funding for youth services. Knowing that there are budget decreases in many states and localities, and understanding the level of support for youth issues in relation to other community needs is helpful in developing an approach to public support. Knowing and understanding the political atmosphere and relationships is powerful. Garnering the right support at the right time is key to sustainability. Balancing political know-how with community organizing and collaboration building is a delicate balance that requires time, reflection, and committed leadership.

A final major element of building a citywide model for high school afterschool is capacity building. Capacity building centers on increasing the scope and effectiveness of the youth serving programs and organizations in the city. Cities can increase the capacity of programs and organizations to support high school afterschool by: (a) clarifying the roles, strengths, and contributions of major stakeholders; (b) increasing partnerships between schools and community organizations; (c) giving increased venue and opportunity for high school age youth to contribute to a citywide conversation on youth services and regular citywide events that bring youth together for meaningful dialogue with program and city leaders and each other; (d) establishing a formal structure for staff development, professional recognition, skill requirements, and training opportunities; and (e) developing and organizing technical assistance to match the specific needs of programs and organizations.

The current availability and support of out-of-school time opportunities for urban high school age youth raises serious questions regarding local and national investment and policy priorities. There is truly hard work ahead to develop and bring together sufficient quantity of high quality out-of-school time opportunities for teens. Recognizing the alternative, however, should serve as a critical motivator and guidepost to continuously pushing forward towards a coordinated, inclusive, and informed strategy for serving high school age youth.

“The fiscal and political backdrops are crucial pieces of information that will inform initial strategies and the development of an action plan.”

Data Table with City Demographics

Appendix A

	Baltimore	Chicago	Denver	Fort Worth	Kansas City
Total population in city	651,154	2,896,016	554,636	534,694	441,545
Total population ages 12 through 17	52,273	230,363	35,330	46,026	34,448
Median income of households with own children	\$29,149	\$37,173	\$40,909	\$39,113	\$40,493
Racial breakdown of youth ages 12 through 17					
White	19.7%	29.4%	48.0%	49.9%	47.9%
Black or African American	76.8%	45.8%	16.8%	24.9%	42.6%
Asian	0.7%	3.1%	2.7%	2.4%	1.6%
Native American	0%	0.4%	2.0%	0.6%	0.5%
Hawaiian	0%	0%	0.1%	0%	0%
Other	0.8%	18.0%	24.5%	18.6%	3.7%
Two or more races	1.6%	3.3%	5.7%	3.2%	3.2%
Hispanic Origin	1.5%	33.2%	47.0%	37.6%	29.1%
Percent of children ages 12 through 17 living in poverty	27.5	26.6	20.6	19.6	17.9

(Author's Note: Census information available from www.aecf.org/kidscount/census)

Appendix B

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the opportunities available to high school age youth during the out-of-school time hours in the 21 Cross-Cities Network cities. Since 1999, NIOST has facilitated the Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide Afterschool Initiatives (CCN). The CCN is composed of 23 leaders of citywide afterschool initiatives in major cities across the United States. The membership cities of the CCN have been a major focus of much of NIOST's research work and represent diverse approaches to organizing citywide afterschool initiatives.

The methods of analysis included:

- A brief literature review on high school afterschool and adolescent development issues.
- Preliminary phone interviews with all members of the Cross-Cities Network.
- In-depth web site research on municipal, community-based, and national organizations.
- Electronic surveys.
- Phone interviews with key city stakeholders and afterschool program leaders.

The first phase of the project included the preliminary phone calls with Cross-Cities Network members and contact with multiple city and program leaders through electronic surveys. Phase two of the project involved phone interviews with selected representatives of the five cities chosen for more in-depth investigation. Phase three included interviews with key stakeholders in the afterschool field, a focus group with afterschool teens, and a task group meeting with several members of the Cross-Cities Network for Afterschool Leaders.

Members of the Cross-Cities Network come from the following cities:

Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Fort Worth, Houston, Indianapolis, Kansas City (MO), Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, DC.

Information on Phoenix is also included in this report.

Appendix C

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Appendix D

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