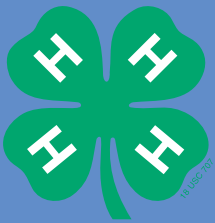
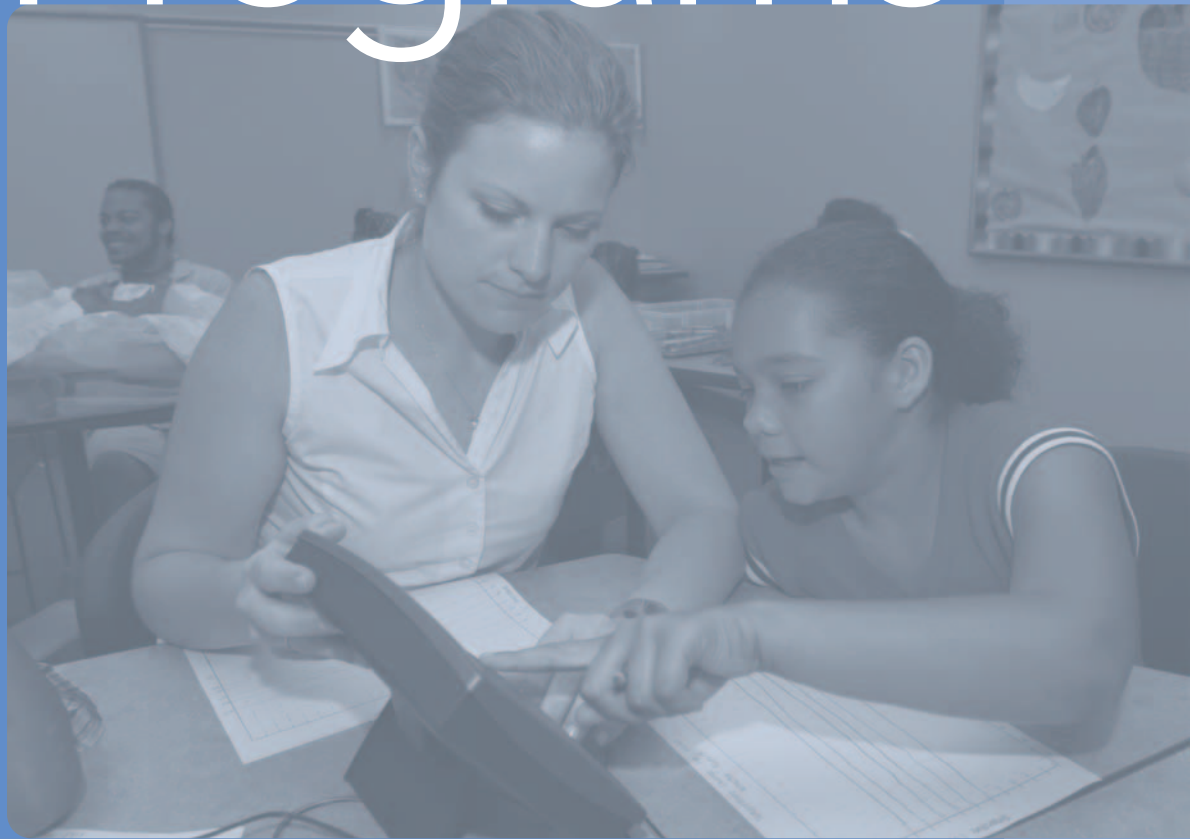


# Increasing the Quantity of After-School Programs



***A Guide for Extension  
Professionals to Establish  
Community-Based  
After-School Programs***

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JCPenney Afterschool Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports programs designed to keep kids safely and constructively engaged during out-of-school time. As part of its mission to ensure that all children have access to the world of opportunities that awaits them after school, the JCPenney Afterschool Fund provides vital financial support to 4-H Afterschool. This generous funding has enabled 4-H to create and launch 4-H Afterschool as a focused nationwide initiative.

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4-H Afterschool is a collaborative effort of the Cooperative Extension System — state land-grant universities, state and county governments and the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture — and National 4-H Council.



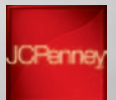
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# Increasing the Quantity of After-School Programs



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***A Guide for Extension  
Professionals to Establish  
Community-Based  
After-School Programs***



**4-H AFTERSCHOOL**  
INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

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# The Case for 4-H Afterschool

The evidence is overwhelming. Research studies, national surveys and public opinion polls show that young people need and benefit from participation in organized activities after school, and the young people themselves believe this to be true.

According to a survey completed by Public Agenda (2004):

- 85 percent of young people in organized after-school activities say they are better off than those not participating in such an activity;
- 91 percent say that belonging to a club or team gives them “a good feeling;”
- 86 percent claim they learn a lot in their after-school activity; and
- 77 percent agree that “a lot of kids get into trouble when they are bored and have nothing to do.”



American voters agree! As a result of conducting a poll of voters, the Afterschool Alliance reported in 2003 that:

- 90 percent of voters surveyed are concerned that children are unsupervised after school with too much unstructured time;
- 90 percent agree that children need some type of organized activity or place for children and teens to go after school every day, and they want to see all levels of government make a commitment to after-school programs.

In a 2002 Afterschool Alliance poll of registered voters:

- 72 percent believed that after-school programs are an absolute necessity for their community;
- 95 percent of parents with children in after-school programs say their children are safer and less likely to be involved with juvenile crime than children not in programs; and
- 92 percent felt that their children do better in reading, writing and math as a result of their participation in after-school programs.



## The Case for 4-H Afterschool

During the course of their developmental years, children and youth will spend more time in child care and after-school programs than in the formal school system. The after-school hours, including summer months, have often been referred to as a time of risk or opportunity. Since approximately 14.2 million youth in America are in need of after-school programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2004), it is vitally important for public and private agencies and organizations to focus attention and resources on

increasing the quality and quantity of after-school programs.

The research tells us that youth development programs in which youth are engaged in intensive, long-term experiences—or have the most intensive treatment—will have the greatest chances of having positive impact and outcomes for youth. (See Appendix on Page 63.)

Due to the frequency of youth engagement and opportunities for

intense, sequentially-planned learning experiences, after-school programs provide a delivery system in which 4-H youth development programs can have a strong impact.

The Cooperative Extension System (CES) mission always has been to help people put knowledge to work to meet their needs and solve their own problems. In today's society, after-school programs significantly impact issues of employment, education, environment and economics. CES—with a presence in every county in the United States and a trained staff in a broad range of academic disciplines—is uniquely positioned to provide leadership for the after-school needs of families and communities. 4-H is well positioned for attracting new partners and financial resources through leadership in the after-school field because of its extensive, county-based delivery system, highly-trained youth development professionals, relationships with land-grant universities and extensive library of experiential learning curricula.



Children and youth currently only spend about 20 percent of their time in school. What happens in the other 80 percent of their time is critical to positive cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. After-school programs are important in filling this gap.



The following questions point to the same answers. After-school programs provide critical youth development opportunities in the 21st century, and CES has an important role to play.

Q: When is the greatest need for youth development programs today?

A: In the after-school hours.

Q: When are young people in most need of quality programs?

A: In the after-school hours.

Q: When do families have the most need of quality, safe, enriching programs for their children?

A: In the after-school hours.

Q: What delivery system provides a great opportunity for impacting youth outcomes?

A: After-school programs.

Q: What delivery system provides a great opportunity for providing the "Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development?"

A: After-school programs.



## The Case for 4-H Afterschool

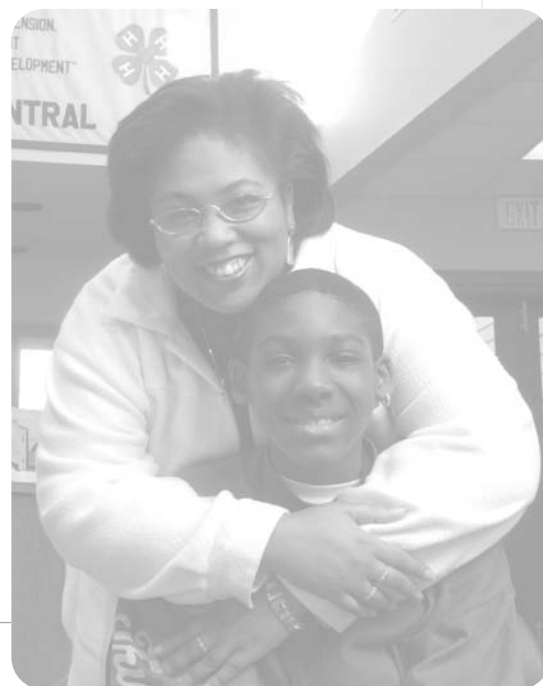
Some have called for youth organizations like 4-H to reinvent themselves into the youth development programs for the 21st century by putting a priority on after-school delivery systems. Extension has a vitally important role to play in this important national issue.

A group of CES professionals developed a Program Development Model (see Page 17) to outline the specific roles and leadership Extension can play in strengthening both the quality and quantity of after-school programs. This guide focuses on helping Extension professionals address the quantity issues by establishing new after-school programs in communities by either:

- Helping to establish community-managed programs (i.e. a community organization takes the responsibility for managing and operating the program), or
- Establishing an Extension-managed model (i.e. Extension professionals are responsible for the management and operation of the program).

Although both approaches exist within CES, the Extension-managed model usually will require significant time and resource commitments. Extension staff will want to consider the many issues involved with an Extension-managed model before electing this option. Regardless of the model used, the information in Chapters 1-11 can assist Extension professionals in creating new programs to serve the needs of youth and families. Additional information about the Extension and community-managed models is provided in Chapter 1.

Summary findings from several evaluation and/or research projects document that young people involved in after-school activities do better academically, socially and emotionally than young people not involved in after-school programs. After-school programs also equip young people with skills to avoid high-risk behaviors. In addition, the research shows that the quality of the program, the quality and variety of activities and experiences and the quality of staff are important variables in producing quality outcomes for youth. (See Appendix on Page 63 for a full discussion.)



# What is 4-H Afterschool?

4-H Afterschool is a programmatic delivery vehicle through which Extension professionals train after-school staff, develop quality programs, infuse experiential learning curriculum, and create after-school communities of children across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills

Over the past three decades, CES professionals have provided significant leadership and support to improve the quality and availability of after-school programs in America. In 2002, with funding from the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, CES representatives in collaboration with National 4-H Council developed the concept, logo and image to capture this extensive work: 4-H Afterschool. 4-H Afterschool is built on the theoretical model, conceptual framework, goals and objectives developed by the Extension CARES...for America's Children and Youth National Extension Initiative. For information, visit [www.csrees.usda.gov/extensioncares](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/extensioncares).

4-H Afterschool is a focused effort within the 4-H Youth Development Program to raise the public awareness of the significant contributions 4-H has made to the field of after-school. With a vision that *"all children and youth are in safe, healthy, caring and enriching environments when they are away from their parents,"* CES is working to increase the capacity of Extension staff to work in after-school programs and strengthen collaborations with other youth-serving organizations.

The overarching goals of 4-H Afterschool are to increase the quality, accessibility, sustainability and availability of after-school programs in communities throughout the United States. With 4-H's presence in all 3,150 counties in the United States, every staff member and youth in an after-school program can benefit from the hands-on, learn by doing approach used by 4-H and the vast resources of the land-grant university system.



## 4-H Afterschool programs:

- Are offered during the times children and youth are not in school and their parents are in need of safe, healthy, caring and enriching environments for their children. They include before- and after-school hours, teacher workdays, school holidays, summer months and, in some cases, weekends.
- Reach children and youth from kindergarten to twelfth grades.
- Engage children and youth in long-term, structured and sequentially-planned learning experiences in partnerships with adults.
- Are designed on principles of youth development, address the interests of children and youth and help develop their physical, cognitive, social and emotional skills and abilities.

## How to Use This Resource Guide

The purpose of this guide, the fourth in the 4-H Afterschool resource guide series, is to assist CES professionals in establishing new after-school programs in communities where there are insufficient programs available for school-age youth.

However, this guide is not designed to provide all the materials and tools needed to establish a program. It only provides basic information to help professionals get started. Important resources that do provide more in-depth information and most of the tools needed are listed below. They are available as downloadable PDF files on the 4-H Afterschool Web site at [www.4hafterschool.org](http://www.4hafterschool.org) or accessible through [www.4husa.org](http://www.4husa.org):

- *A Guide to Quality School-Age Care for the Public School Principal, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, North Carolina State University, 1996.* (Posted as “Guide to Quality School-Age Care.”)
- *4-H Afterschool Program Management Manual, University of California Cooperative Extension, circa 1995.* (Posted as “Management Manual.”)
- *4-H Afterschool Rationale, Program Delivery Models, and Theoretical Base: A Reference for Extension Professionals.* Ferrari, T., Linville, I., and Valentine, N. 2003. (Posted as “4-H Afterschool Theoretical Base.”)

Additional resources can be found at the Afterschool Alliance Web site [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org) under “Starting a Program.” Other Web sites that may be helpful are [www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org), [www.niost.org](http://www.niost.org), [www.4hafterschool.org](http://www.4hafterschool.org), [www.schoolagenotes.com](http://www.schoolagenotes.com) and [www.afterschool.gov](http://www.afterschool.gov).



## Other Guides in the 4-H Afterschool Series

The 4-H Afterschool Leadership Team developed three 4-H Afterschool resource guides in 2003:

- *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities*
- *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs*
- *Starting 4-H Clubs in After-School Programs*

These guides were designed to assist Extension professionals working in after-school programs to:

- Provide hands-on experiential learning curricula to youth in after-school programs;
- Train after-school staff, and;
- Organize 4-H clubs in after-school programs.

These resource guides can be ordered as printed guides from the National 4-H Supply Service at [www.4hmall.org](http://www.4hmall.org) or downloaded as PDF files from the 4-H Afterschool Web site at [www.4hafterschool.org](http://www.4hafterschool.org) or accessible through [www.4husa.org](http://www.4husa.org). Compact discs of the guides were distributed to county and state 4-H offices in early 2005 through the generosity of John Deere Company.



### 4-H'S MISSION IN THE AFTERSCHOOL FIELD

The mission of 4-H's work in the after-school arena is to improve the quality and availability of after-school programs by linking the teaching, research, outreach education, technology and 4-H youth development resources of National 4-H Headquarters at CSREES, USDA, National 4-H Council, land-grant universities and county Cooperative Extension offices to local communities across America.

GET READY



# Chapter

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



# Get Ready

## Assess Readiness of Citizens, CES

Gaining an understanding of CES is the best place to begin when you are thinking of starting an after-school program. What are the interests, priorities and capacity of the county and state (as viewed by the organization and local citizens) and the skills and interests of the county Extension professionals (from the personal staff view) in delivering the 4-H Youth Development Program in after-school settings?

If the state or county is new to the after-school program arena, Extension professionals may need to build the case for the importance of Extension's work in after-school programs with current stakeholders. This guide provides ample information to develop a strong rationale for the importance of Extension's work in this area.

## Extension or Community-Managed Model?

Once you determine that the organization, staff and stakeholders are supportive of delivering 4-H through the after-school market, you'll need to decide if Extension staff will establish or manage the after-school programs or if Extension staff will work with community groups to establish and/or strengthen after-school programs.

If you choose a community-managed model, Pages 14-16 provide a helpful checklist and narrative that will guide some of the key points you'll need to consider. The information in Chapters 2-11 will help guide the process of starting an after-school program after you choose your program management model.





## Community-Managed Model for After-School Programs



The number of after-school programs is increasing, but many areas of the country still do not have sufficient out-of-school time options. Using a community-managed model is one way to increase the quantity of after-school programs in a particular locale.

This model organizes concerned individuals to address the need for after-school programs in the community with the Extension professional as the facilitator in many cases. The Extension professional guides the community through identifying problems and possible solutions, creating a plan of action, acquiring necessary resources and implementing and evaluating programs. This role may involve bringing community leaders and concerned citizens together around the issue of after-school programs, perhaps to conduct the needs assessment process. Or, it may mean working with an existing group, such as the PTA, that has identified a need but is not sure how to proceed.

The culmination of such a process may result in locating a community agency willing to undertake the responsibility of running the program or, if no such organizations are available, in creating a non-profit board with parent and community representatives to manage the program. As a result, quality after-school programs will be established or expanded to serve more children.

Adapted from:

Dixon, D., & Ferrari, T. M. (2000, May). *It takes a village to start a SAC program*. Presentation at the Extension CARES Initiative Rollout Conference, Overland Park, KS.

Ferrari, T. M., Linville, I. M., & Valentine, N. (2003). *4-H Afterschool: Rationale, program delivery models, and theoretical base. A reference for Extension professionals*. Paper distributed at 4-H Afterschool Roll-Out Conference, St. Louis, MO. Available from [www.4hafterschool.org/Rollout\\_Conference/FerrariPaper.doc](http://www.4hafterschool.org/Rollout_Conference/FerrariPaper.doc)

Ferrari, T. M. (1999, April). *School-age child care: Research and rationale*. Invited presentation at Louisiana Cooperative Extension school-age care in-service training, Alexandria, LA.

# Community-Managed Model for After-School Programs

The Extension professional may continue to work in a support role as the group is established or provide support in sustaining the program through areas such as grant proposal writing and evaluation, which shifts the program to the quality side of the model. (See Page 17.) Those involved often find themselves in a role of informing public policy when they work with local school personnel on issues such as building use and transportation.

Community-managed programs do not appear overnight. They are the result of the work of dedicated individuals who believe they can make a difference. Community ownership increases the likelihood of creating sustainability because those involved in such a process often feel tremendous commitment toward the program. Nevertheless, a community-managed program requires significant time and energy because the facilitator is guiding a community group's work toward a long-term goal.

Undertaking the community-managed model does not preclude the Extension professional from addressing the need for quality school-age programs. Indeed, any program that is established also must be of high quality. Regardless of the model used, the Extension professional's role is to raise awareness of the elements of program quality.

This project will call upon all the skills you already have and some you didn't know you had. However, the payoff is big and well worth the effort.



## Assess Yourself

Are you ready for a community-managed program?

TASKS	HAVE DONE TASK OR HAVE WHAT'S NEEDED	PLAN TO; KNOW HOW OR WHERE TO GET WHAT'S NEEDED	NEED MORE HELP
<b>Community Assessment:</b> Obtain relevant existing data about school-age children and programs in your community.			
<b>Community Assessment:</b> Identify individuals and groups who have an interest in the needs of school-age children.			
<b>Community Assessment:</b> Conduct an assessment of school-age care needs in your community.			
<b>Interpersonal Skills:</b> Possess collaborative leadership style and ability to take community input and assist in formulating those ideas into an action plan.			
<b>Interpersonal Skills:</b> Possess group facilitation skills.			
<b>Technical Skills:</b> Possess knowledge of community needs assessment and program evaluation techniques.			
<b>Technical Skills:</b> Possess grant-writing skills.			
<b>Program Management:</b> Obtain child care regulations and other relevant regulations in your state relating to school-age programs.			
<b>Program Management:</b> Understand guidelines for how to start and maintain a business including developing a business plan, operating budget and non-profit regulations.			
<b>Program Management:</b> Understand how to set up a school-age care program including staffing, management, policies, curriculum and quality indicators.			
<b>Youth Development:</b> Understand the important elements of youth development programs that can address these needs.			
<b>Youth Development:</b> Understand the needs of the whole child — physical, cognitive, social and emotional.			
<b>Time:</b> Able to commit to regular, frequent and significant amounts of time as the project is launched.			
<b>Time:</b> Able to commit the time to working on a long-term project.			
<b>Time:</b> Willing to commit time to develop necessary expertise.			
<b>Resources:</b> Able to provide resources (time, money, materials) during program start up or able to find sources for this support.			
<b>Commitment:</b> What are you prepared to do to sustain this project?			

Deciding the Appropriate Role for County Extension Engagement in After-School Programs:

# The Extension Program Development Model

A group of Cooperative Extension System professionals created the Program Development Model in 1993 to outline the specific leadership roles Extension professionals can provide to strengthen both the quality and quantity of after-school programming.

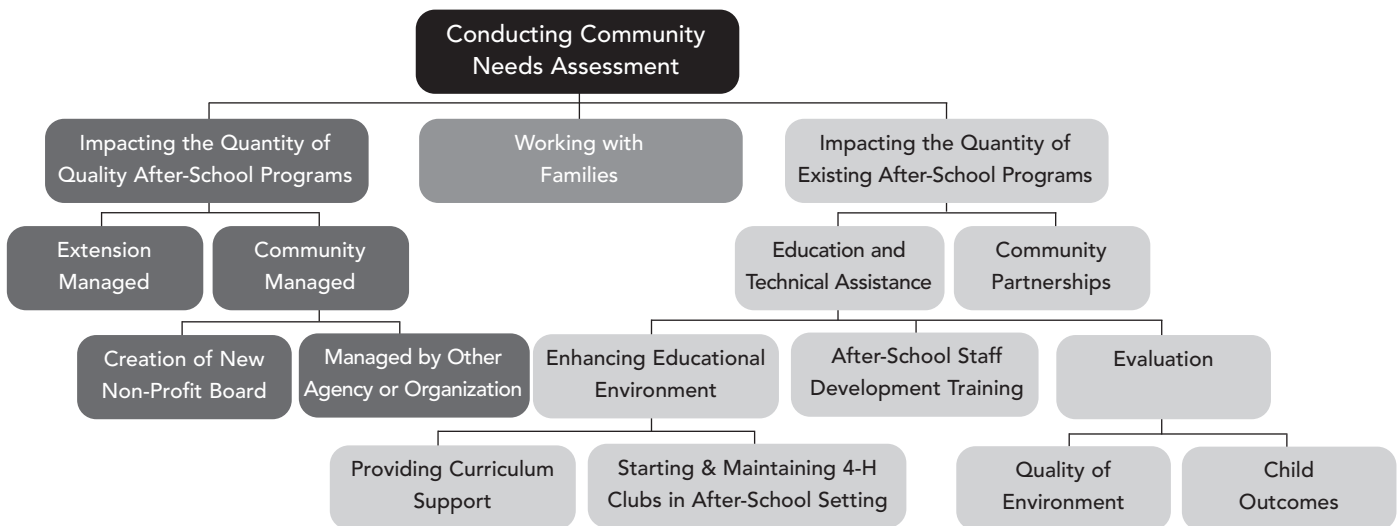


FIGURE 1

An Extension Program Development Model adapted from the Extension School-Age Child Care Consortium, 1993. For additional details about the model see [www.4hafterschool.org/rsTraining.aspx](http://www.4hafterschool.org/rsTraining.aspx). Select 4-H Afterschool Program Development Model from the list on this web page.

Extension staff can provide resources and expertise to after-school programs in areas such as:

- Training after-school staff in a wide range of topics
- Providing experiential learning curricula for programs
- Conducting local needs assessments
- Assisting with program evaluation
- Bringing resources to communities
- Building community collaborations
- Working with parents
- Providing interpretation of research to improve program quality and influence policy
- Linking state formal educational standards with after-school outcomes
- Starting 4-H clubs in after-school programs

## CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT



## Chapter

# 2

# Conduct a Needs Assessment

Sizing up the current situation in a community is the first task of a needs assessment. You can do that by asking several community-level questions including:

- Do these communities already have sufficient after-school programs?
- Do all children and youth have access to affordable, quality programs?
- Do programs exist in economically-deprived communities and communities with high minority populations?
- Where can Extension have the greatest impact and serve the greatest need?



The Extension CARES...for America's Children and Youth National Initiative Web site at [www.csrees.usda.gov/extensioncares](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/extensioncares) has an excellent tool that can provide information for county profiles you'll need for the needs assessment. Also, a database developed by the University of Georgia includes a variety of 2000 Census data on factors that may impact the county's need for and capacity to provide early care and education, after-school and teen programs. Local decision-makers can use this database to compare county statistics to state and national figures

on key variables such as child population by age group, child poverty rates, parental employment and mean travel time to work. Short narratives explain how the data relates to determining the need for after-school programs. This two-page customized handout provides an easy-to-read snapshot of the county that can be used as part of a comprehensive needs assessment process. Other Census data, schools and other public data sources also can provide valuable information.

You'll need to pose additional questions to parents, children and youth like:

- If we offer after-school programs, would you enroll your children?
- How would you determine whether or not a program is appropriate for your child?
- What kinds of programs would children and youth prefer?
- When do these programs need to be offered?

It may appear that a community needs after-school programs, but keep in mind that parents may have other options for the after-school hours such as relatives, friends or older youth to take care of younger children.

## Conduct a Needs Assessment

The needs assessment is the best way to prioritize the communities and locations for Extension's work. Define the scope of the assessment by the amount of programming you intend. Time and funding considerations most likely will prompt you to focus on individual communities in the county.

Positive response to a needs assessment should help insure “buy-in” from parents, schools, community and businesses leaders and financial and in-kind sources of support. Make sure to involve a broad array of community members—including those who are in decision-making roles—in the needs assessment by organizing an advisory committee or expanding an existing committee that will play a key role.

Your needs assessment should have community support and program participation, which are two keys to sustainability. Insure greater accuracy by using a variety of sources of information.

Needs assessments can take many forms so you will want to figure out how to conduct yours before you start. The methods used to collect the information can be very simple and done on a very limited budget, or they can be more formalized and costly.

**TIP:**

Extension staff should check university policies regarding the involvement of the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to developing the needs assessment and throughout the process. Many universities require IRB approval prior to the administration of survey, research and/or evaluation instruments in order to protect the rights of human subjects. The policies, procedures and requirements of the IRB may impact your timelines, content and survey methods.



# Conduct a Needs Assessment

Regardless of the method you use, the following questions will prompt the type of data you need to collect for the needs assessment:

- How many children/youth are in the community/county?
- How many programs currently provide services for youth during non-school time?
- Do parents perceive a need for the program?
- What ages are the children who need the program?
- Do any of the youth have special needs? What type of needs do they have?
- If the program is established, will parents allow their children to attend?
- How much are parents willing to pay for the program? Parents need to indicate on the assessment the maximum amount they can afford.
- Can parents afford the cost?
- What other funding sources are available?
- When should the program be offered?
  - Before and after school?
  - On teacher workdays?
  - Holidays?
  - Summer?
- What times should the program be open?
- What is the most convenient location for the program?
- Will transportation be a need for parents?
- What type of activities do parents prefer in the program?
  - Homework assistance?
  - Recreation?
  - Enrichment activities?
  - Something else?
  - A combination of some or all?
- Are any parents willing to assist with developing and implementing the program?



## Conduct a Needs Assessment

The local resource and referral agency or department of social services may be able to provide data regarding the number of after-school programs in the county and specifics about the youth served by the program.

You also might want to consider the following to find answers:

- Conduct focus group meetings
- Attend PTA/PTO meetings
- Talk with school principals and teachers
- Talk with law enforcement officers
- Interview people who work with city and county agencies (department of health and human services, department of social services, etc.)
- Conduct telephone or door to door surveys, if feasible

Another approach is to use a survey instrument. Examples of needs assessment surveys are located on the CYFERNet Web site at [www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org) under the school-age care category. Survey examples also are included in *A Guide to Quality School-Age Care for the Public School Principal and the 4-H Afterschool Program Management Manual* mentioned on Page 10.



# Conduct a Needs Assessment

Be sure to include a cover letter with the survey that clearly explains its purpose and use. Let respondents know that the information is confidential and will only be used by authorized individuals working on the project. Provide respondents with a timeline for when the survey will be completed and a decision made about starting a program. Make sure sufficient time is allocated for all steps to be completed.

It may take several months to a year between the administration of the survey and the first day of the program. Don't create expectations among parents about starting a program without a clear idea of when or if the program will begin.

You might want to consider using an outside source to conduct the survey like faculty or students from a local university or community college. If you use an outside source, ask about cost and be sure to work closely with them to ensure the information needed to make a decision is included in the survey. Prior to administering the survey, conduct a small pilot test to determine if the questions are clear and understandable. This test will help identify problem questions and refine the survey. Finally, include details like who is sponsoring the survey and contact information in the survey's cover letter.

If your survey is custom designed, keep these suggestions in mind:

- Decide how the survey will be administered (i.e. through school, mail, telephone survey, booth at the shopping center, etc.).
- Keep the survey as short as possible.
- Only ask questions that are necessary. Avoid the tendency to add other questions of interest that are not needed to determine the need for the program.
- Keep wording simple and sentences short.
- Allow respondents to add comments.
- Sensitive personal information, such as income, should be placed at the end of the survey.
- Ensure respondents that the information is confidential and explain how the information will be used.
- Determine how the information will be analyzed.
- Consider the cost for developing, administering and analyzing the data and make sure you have funds available to complete the process.

DECIDE NEXT STEPS



## Chapter

# 3

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

# Decide Next Steps

You've completed the needs assessment. Now, it's time to make a decision. If the results show that parents do not want a program or sufficient programs are available to address the need, then it is not necessary to pursue the development of a program in that particular community. Move on to another community to conduct a needs assessment or consider working with the existing programs to train staff, provide 4-H curricula to youth in those programs and organize after-school 4-H clubs. The three 4-H Afterschool resource guides listed on Page 11 can assist you with these strategies.



If the results indicate a need for an after-school program, and the support base is adequate, it is time to work with an existing community group, form a new committee and/or help strengthen an existing committee to start the process of establishing the program and its administrative processes and responsibilities. Iowa State University has developed a manual to guide community groups as they establish child care programs. This resource, *Child Care: An Action Manual for Communities* is available at [www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1739.pdf](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1739.pdf). It has great applicability for groups establishing after-school programs and provides supplemental information to support this resource guide.

## Decide Next Steps

### Establishing Governing Structures

Youth development professionals, business people and other professionals like lawyers, accountants, county and city officials and school personnel are all important to involve on the program's governing board and its related committees. Since an after-school program is a small business, be sure to involve people who can help address all the business-related issues as well as program development concepts.

Although some people with specific expertise may not be willing to serve on the governing board or committees, many may be able to offer limited service to the work. For example, a city inspector may be willing to assist with building requirements. A consultant may be able to give advice about school-age care licensing laws, if any exist in the state. A lawyer may be willing to provide pro bono legal services to the group.

The following list offers suggestions for the types of people that might serve on the board and/or committees:

- Cooperative Extension staff and faculty
- School personnel (superintendent, principals, teachers, school board members)
- PTA/PTO members
- Parents
- Business leaders
- Department of health and human services staff
- Department of social services staff
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Public and private child care providers
- Licensing groups such as fire, health, building, etc.
- Other youth service organizations (YMCA of the USA, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, etc.)
- Department of parks and recreation staff
- State, city and county government representatives
- Church leaders
- Civic group members
- Representatives from foundations and other potential funding partners

This list is not all-inclusive, but it is a good beginning.





# Decide Next Steps

## Questions for Governing Board

Some of the first questions the governing board will need to consider include, but are not limited to:

### 1 LEGAL

- What is the appropriate legal structure to protect all parties, provide the best structure for taxes and other considerations?
- Who needs to be involved (e.g. lawyers, accountants, investment counselors)?
- Will the group organize as a 501(c) (3) organization?

### 2 GOVERNANCE

- What is the size, function, role and responsibility of the governing board?
- Will there be auxiliary committees to determine such things as curriculum, schedules, etc.?
- What role will parents play?

### 3 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- Who will manage the day-to-day operations of the program?
- When will the program begin?
- How much will the program cost?
- What are the funding sources for the program?
  - Parent fees
  - Grant funds
  - School funds
  - Donations
  - In-kind support
  - A blending of sources
  - Other
- How many youth will be enrolled in the program?
- Will there be a sliding fee scale for families with more than one child and/or who have very limited resources?
- What ages will the program serve?
- What is the operational schedule of the program?
  - Weekdays before and after school?
  - What are the hours of operation?
  - Will the program be available on:
    - Weekends
    - Holidays
    - Teacher work days
    - Summer
- What are the licensing and other requirements for operating a program?
- What is the enrollment policy? Must children and youth attend every day or is “dropping-in” allowed?
- Will nutritious meals and snacks be provided? Will existing staff or contractors prepare them?
- Will transportation be provided?
- Will field trips be a part of the program?
- What other facilities will be used? (e.g. local parks and recreation swimming pool, recreation facilities, a tour of a farm, etc.)
- How many staff will be hired?
- What qualifications will staff need?

- Will background checks be made? If so, how will they be conducted?
- Will college students and teens be allowed to work in the program?
- How much will staff be paid?
- Where will the program be located?
  - School
  - Community building
  - Church, synagogue, mosque, etc.
  - Boys & Girls Clubs of America
  - YMCA of the USA
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Cooperative Extension Office





## Decide Next Steps



### SPACE CONSIDERATIONS

The location of the program and the space made available to it are very important. Here are a few other issues to consider:

- Make sure the space is safe, clean and in good condition. Check with the building inspector or fire marshal to determine if a license is required to open the program. If licensing is required, you'll need the specifications for the building.
- The best situation is to have designated space for the program. If you must use shared space, try to ensure consistency and minimize disruption for the program staff. Staff and youth need a space they can consider their own. Also, if the program is in a school building, try to get access to other areas such as the library, cafeteria and gym.
- Does the facility have sufficient indoor and outdoor space?
- Does the facility have drinking water, restrooms, heating and cooling, a place to serve meals and snacks, a telephone that is accessible at all times, a place where youth and staff can put their personal belongings?
- Is there water for cleaning, cooking, preparing snacks and activities and projects that require water?
- Is the furniture and play equipment inside and outside safe and age-appropriate?
- Is there storage space for supplies and materials?
- Is there sufficient space for a variety of activities such as active play, a quiet space for resting, a place to read and do homework, a place to socialize with friends, a place to play indoor games and board games? You should try to have five activity areas in a program. Do you have sufficient space for activity areas?
- Does the facility meet the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements? (Visit [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm) for those requirements.)

This list is just a beginning. Talk with committee members and explore other questions that need to be answered before starting the program.

# Decide Next Steps

## Program Development

Program development has several elements that include, but are not limited to, developing a vision, mission and philosophy statement, as goals and objectives, and program design and curriculum. The quality of the program is extremely important, and Extension staff can play a vital role in making sure program components are based on youth development principles, are of high quality, address appropriate content and offer a broad variety of educational experiences

Process, outcome and impact evaluation, discussed in Chapter 10, are important to put into place in this early developmental stage. Plans for sustaining the program, particularly if it is started by grant funds, is another important component of program development. It is extremely important to develop and articulate measurable outcomes, establish program strategies to achieve those outcomes and design a methodology to evaluate them.



## Decide Next Steps

### Mission, Goals and Philosophy

As you develop the program, you'll want to write a mission statement and goals. These will drive program design so it meets the needs of the youth and families you are trying to help as well as the needs of staff, community and funders. For example, if academic improvement is a major need, include it as part of the mission of the program. An example of a mission statement is in the North Carolina manual identified on Page 10.

In addition to the mission statement and goals, community members should agree on program philosophy. The CES philosophy for after-school programs is included in the "Overview and Program Theory" of Extension 'CARES' for America's Children and Youth Initiative at [www.csrees.usda.gov/extensioncares](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/extensioncares). The philosophy maintains that all quality programs need to have dimensions of youth development, education and care. Understanding and addressing individual needs and maturation of children and youth also are essential.



# Decide Next Steps

## Goals, Objectives and Program and Evaluation Design

Once the vision, mission and philosophy are established, it is time to develop the goals, objectives, and program and evaluation designs. Several tools are available to assist with the program development effort.

One method is to develop a logic model. The logic model guides thinking around short, medium and long-term outcomes and the inputs and outputs of the effort. Information about how to develop a logic model is available at the University of Wisconsin and Kellogg Foundation Web sites listed in the “Suggested Evaluation Resources” in Chapter 10.

A few questions and examples that will guide the thinking include:

- What are the primary goals of the program?
- What are the specific measurable outcomes the program hopes to accomplish with and for the children and youth (e.g. Of the 50 children in the program, 85 percent will improve their grades)?
- What are the program strategies that will be used to meet the outcomes (e.g. The program will offer experiential learning activities that will excite children about

learning and increase their ability to learn, especially in the academic areas the school reports the lowest achievement; assistance with homework; tutoring and mentoring; guided educational experiences via computers; field trips that will reinforce program content.)?

- How will the objectives or outcomes be measured (e.g. The degree to which the objectives are measured will involve comparison of school grades from the beginning and end of the year, pre-and-post-test scores on instruments especially designed to measure knowledge gain in program areas, improvement on standardized test scores.)?

Extension staff can provide valuable training, resources and technical assistance to help after-school staff develop high quality, research-based, age-appropriate programs. You might want to: train after-school staff on the experiential learning model. (See *Heads-on, Hands-on: The Power of Experiential Learning*, 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System [4-HCCS].) or provide 4-H curriculum from the National 4-H Juried Collection at [www.national4-hheadquarters.gov](http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov), National 4-H CCS at [www.n4hccs.org](http://www.n4hccs.org) or other peer-reviewed curriculum. *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities* also is a good starting point.

Extension staff also might organize 4-H clubs within an on-going after-school program. Take into consideration the age of the young people to make sure a club structure is developmentally appropriate. The 4-H Afterschool resource guide, *Starting 4-H Clubs in After-School Programs*, provides most of the information needed to start 4-H clubs in after-school programs. This approach will increase the enrollment in 4-H clubs and afford youth the benefits of 4-H membership in local, county, state and national programs.



## After-School Programs and the Essential Elements of Youth Development

Programming in the after-school hours is an effective method for delivering the 4-H Youth Development Program. A quality after-school program can easily achieve the eight essential elements of youth development, organized into the four Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development, outlined below:

### BELONGING

- 1** *A positive relationship with a caring adult.* After-school programs provide a wonderful opportunity for youth to develop positive relationships with caring adults. Staff and 4-H volunteers can work with youth on an ongoing, long-term, consistent basis to develop these important relationships.
- 2** *A safe environment.* 4-H professionals can help after-school staff design physical program spaces and positive, respectful, psychological environments that are safe for youth.
- 3** *An inclusive environment.* Through curricula offerings and positive environments, after-school programs provide a kaleidoscope of opportunities for youth to learn to respect and value different cultures and individuals who are different from themselves.



**MASTERY**

- 4 *Engagement in learning.* After-school programs provide a wonderful learning laboratory for youth to develop their cognitive, social, emotional and physical domains. Of course, 4-H professionals provide the experiential learning experiences that are core to the 4-H program and vital to “turning youth on to” learning.
- 5 *Opportunity for mastery.* Given the extended time youth spend in after-school programs, sufficient time exists for youth to master many skills and gain tremendous knowledge in many content areas. 4-H curricula make a great contribution in this area.

**INDEPENDENCE**

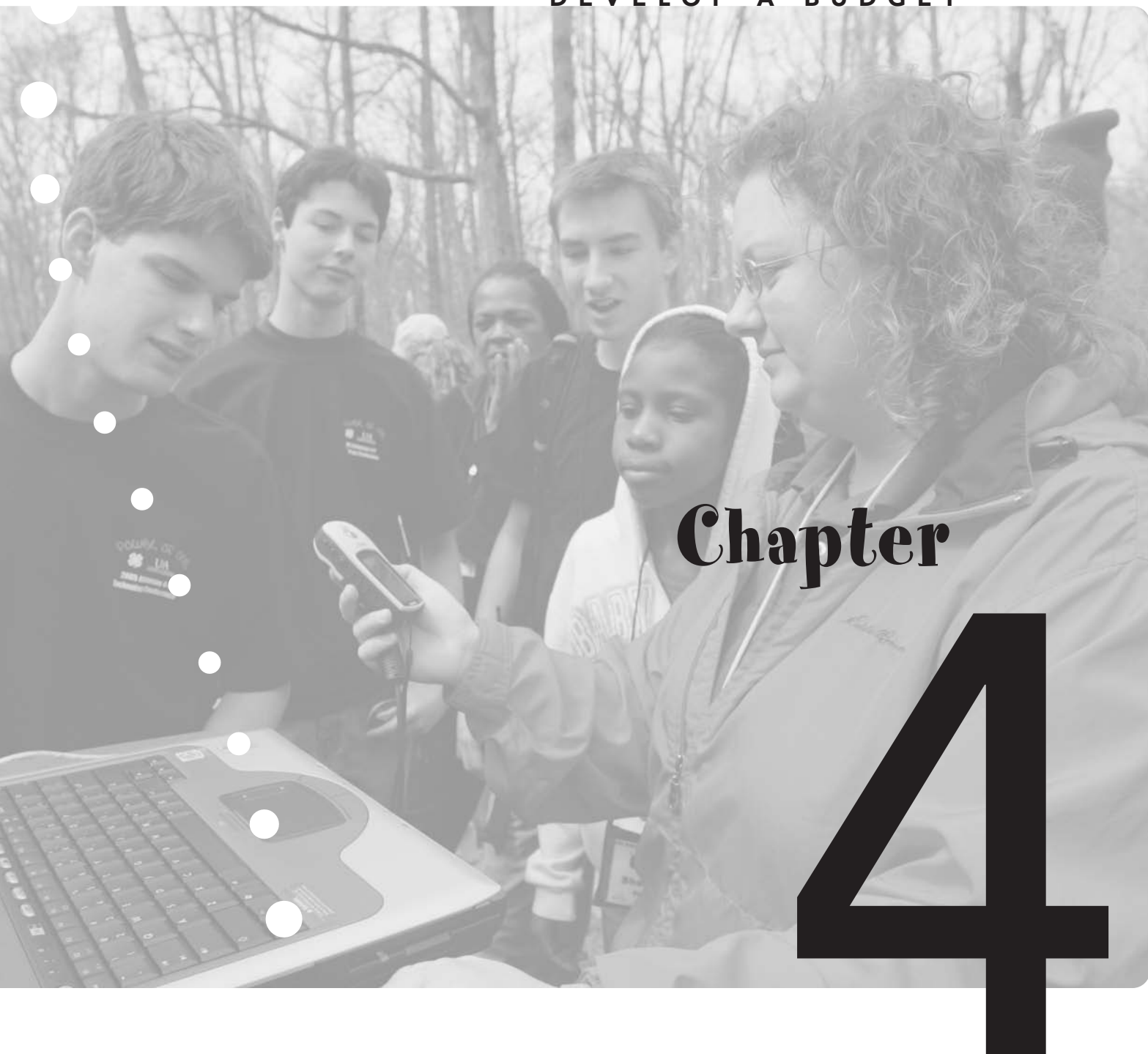
- 6 *Opportunity to see one self as an active participant in the future.* 4-H values youth-adult partnerships. After-school programs provide many opportunities for youth to influence people and events through their involvement in decision-making and other intentionally-planned experiences.
- 7 *Opportunity for self-determination.* By assisting with designing activities and serving as mentors and teachers in after-school programs, youth learn leadership, citizenship and life skills that help them mature and develop discipline and responsibility. Through planned program designs, youth learn more about their abilities and interests and become independent thinkers.

**GENEROSITY**

- 8 *Opportunity to value and practice service to others.* After-school programs can give youth opportunities to participate in community service projects and develop citizenship skills. Enlisting the support of community resources and bringing the community to the after-school program helps youth learn about their roles in society.



DEVELOP A BUDGET



4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



# Develop a Budget

Developing the budget really puts a cost value on the mission, goals, activities and outcomes that will be accomplished in the program. Iowa State University has developed an excellent resource that provides supplemental information about financing and budgeting for community-based child care programs. *Child Care: Financial Basics*, available at [www.extension.ias-tate.edu/Publications/PM1751.pdf](http://www.extension.ias-tate.edu/Publications/PM1751.pdf), is an excellent resource for communities developing after-school programs.



Many questions under “Establishing Governing Structures” in Chapter 3 factor heavily into budget development. The following list represents important budget development considerations to ask and ultimately budget expenditure categories:

- Number of youth to be served
- Staff to child ratios and number of staff needed
- Staff working hours
- Professional development costs (orientation and in-service training)
- Staff salary and benefits
- Snacks and meals
- Transportation
- Facility costs (rent, utilities, etc.)
- Liability and accident insurance
- Activities and resource materials
- Audit
- Other

## Start-Up Versus Operational Budgets

Start-up costs will exceed operational costs. Therefore, developing two budgets—one for starting the program and one for operating it—is important. The start-up budget should cover at least six months. You should include one-time purchases in the start-up costs such as furniture, equipment, supplies, activities and games, building repairs, telephone installation, other installation costs, and any extra staff time needed to get the program started. When developing the start-up budget, be sure to consider in-kind donations that may help to

reduce the start-up costs. For example, a local business may donate computers to the program.

You might want to develop the budget based on under-projected enrollment for the first six to nine months as it may take that much time for the program to reach its anticipated enrollment. Plan for inconsistent income due to such things as youth dropping out of the program, length of time it will take to replace the children who leave, family vacations, children who get sick and have to miss days and the time it will take to become fully operational. It also is good practice to have a waiting list.

## Develop a Budget



### Income Sources and Considerations

Next, you must locate sources of revenue for start-up and operational costs. Securing grants is one option for the first year. In some cases, grants are available for several years like the Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov). The Finance Project at [www.financeproject.org](http://www.financeproject.org) has a compendium of close to 200 pages of funding sources. In addition, [Afterschool.gov](http://Afterschool.gov) offers multiple funding sources from the federal government.

In-kind support is another source of revenue. Although in-kind support is good for start up costs, it is not a good way to pay for operational costs month after month. In-kind support is great for field trips or using a local swimming pool without direct costs. However, staff salaries require hard cash.

#### TIP:

The Child and Adult Care Food Program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture is available to provide subsidized meals and snacks for limited resource children. It also provides commodity foods to certain programs. This assistance can significantly reduce budgets and insure nutritious meals and snacks that are so important to the healthy development of children and youth. If the after-school program is located in a school, the school may be willing to sponsor the CACFP program for the after-school program. See [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov). National 4-H Headquarters Staff also can assist in linking Extension professionals to these resources.

# Develop a Budget

In most programs, parents provide the majority of financial support to the program. Therefore, the cost for children to participate needs to be what families can and will pay.

You can figure the cost per youth served after you determine the cost of the program based on weekly, monthly or yearly expense estimates. The cost per youth is calculated by dividing the number of young people that will participate by the total cost. For example, if the weekly cost for the program is \$750, and 15 youth are registered, the cost per youth is \$750 divided by 15 youth or \$50 per child.

Be sure that parents understand the fee structure and attendance requirements. The program could start running a deficit if parents only plan to use the program once or twice per week, but the estimated cost of the child to use the program was calculated on attendance five days a week.

Developing a good budget is critical to the success of the program. Involve people with budget development and management expertise in the process. Before starting a program, be sure a financial sustainability plan is in place and enough full-time equivalent children and youth will participate to insure a financially healthy program.

Consider the following when developing your operational budget as it will affect the cost per child to participate:

- Is this cost in line with what the needs assessment said about how much parents are willing to pay?
- Is it in line with other similar programs offered in the county?
- Will the program be available to part-time users? Will they pay more?
- Is there a registration fee? Will the rate be a reduced for early registrations?
- Will limited resource families access the program? Are scholarships available?
- Will a sliding fee scale for multiple children in a family and/or limited resource families be available?
- Will fees be based on a families' income? Does everyone pay the same?
- Will fee penalties for late pick up or early drop offs be assessed?
- Will a fee for late payments be assessed?
- Will fees for youth who don't attend because of sickness or family vacations be refunded?
- Is the cost too high?
- Can some cost be cut or eliminated from the budget?
- Are funds available from state or federal agencies that can help subsidize the cost of the program?



WRITE POLICIES  
AND PROCEDURES

Chapter

5

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

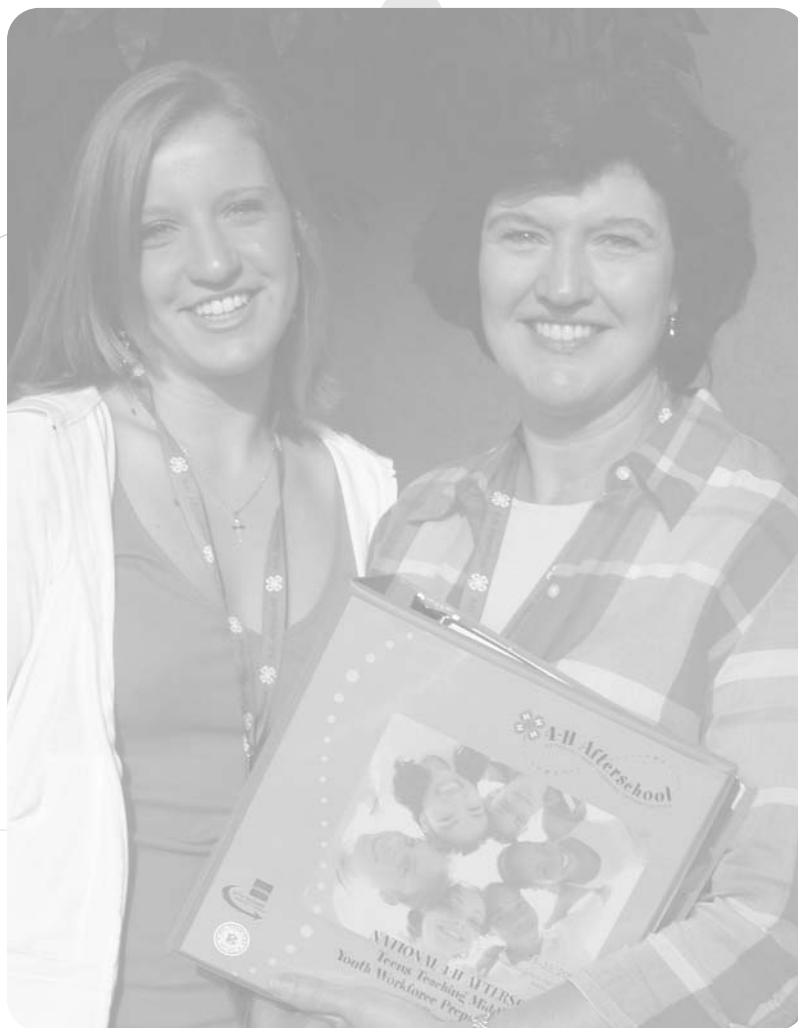
# Write Policies and Procedures

Another critical aspect is development of policies and procedures for your program. Staff who already operate programs are a great source of ideas for policies and procedures. Identifying and articulating the policies and procedures before starting the program will help reduce misunderstanding and confusion once the program begins.

You'll need to write specific policies and procedures around these areas:

- Staffing (front line staff, food service, janitorial/maintenance, administration, etc.)
- Fee collection (how much, when due, penalty for late payment, etc.)
- Discipline
- Dismissal
- Attendance requirements and documentation
- Participants check-in and check-out
- Program philosophy, mission and goals
- Schedule posting
- Daily operation
- Insurance coverage
- Off-site activities
- Parental visitation
- Snacks and meals
- Missing youth
- Licensing requirements

Consider all aspects of the program and develop appropriate policies to ensure the safety of the participants and staff. Each item listed above must have an outline of very specific procedures including budget implications.



PUT A STAFF IN PLACE



## Chapter

# 6

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



# Put a Staff in Place

## Write a Staffing Plan

Staff play an important role in after-school programs. Research shows that the quality of staff makes a big difference in the outcomes for youth in the program. (See Appendix, Page 69.) Therefore, decisions regarding staffing are extremely important. A staffing plan should include, but is not limited to, salary, benefits, recruiting, orientation, training, professional development, performance evaluation and recognition.

When creating your staffing plan, you must:

- Budget for recruiting and training staff.
- Hire qualified staff and pay a good salary.
- Offer benefits if possible.
- Ensure a quality work environment for staff.
- Keep staff to child ratios as low as possible. (The ratio should be 1 to 15 or smaller if the audience being served requires more supervision and support.)
- If the state requires a license for the program, be sure to check the requirements before finalizing the budget. Staff with specialized qualifications may require higher salaries.
- Provide opportunities for salary adjustments.
- Develop a staff handbook and provide orientation to all staff.
- Provide opportunities for professional development and/or training for staff
- Conduct regular staff evaluations.
- Develop a plan for substitutes when staff must miss work, especially for unexpected absences due to emergencies.



## Put a Staff in Place

You also should consider the following in a staffing plan. Include committee members when researching the answers to these questions:

- What recruitment strategy will be used to find staff?
- What are the minimum qualifications for staff (education, experience, age, etc.)?
- Who will hire staff?
- What is the supervisory structure for the program? Who supervises the director?
- Will background checks (criminal and/or other) be made? If so, how will costs be covered and who will conduct them?
- Who will develop the staff application?
- Who will interview staff?
- What questions will be asked in the interview process? Who conducts the interviews?
- Do all staff have written job descriptions, including volunteers?
- What is the evaluation plan for staff?
- What is the staff development plan?
- Has a staff handbook been developed? Who develops the handbook?
- Will staff be paid for planning time, additional education and professional development meetings? How much time is allocated for each?
- Who conducts the staff orientation? How long does it take? What is the content of the orientation?
- How often will staff meetings be held?
- Will the cost of membership to professional organizations be covered for staff?
- What educational resources and reference materials will be available to staff?



# Put a Staff in Place

## Develop a Staff Manual

You should develop a manual for salaried and volunteer staff members who give significant time to the program. The staff manual is a valuable communication tool and will help minimize misunderstandings.

Include these topics in your staff manual:

- The program's mission and goals
- Job descriptions and expectations of each staff member
- Any probationary requirements
- Attendance requirements
- Staff conduct and policies regarding smoking, drugs, alcohol, missed work and other policies governing behavior of staff
- Grievance policies
- Discipline policies
- Supervisory structure
- Risk management plan and dealing with emergencies
- Administration of medicines to children and medical emergencies
- First aid procedures and location of supplies
- Record-keeping requirements
- Administration of snacks and meals
- Accident and incident reports
- Check-in and check-out procedures (Who is authorized to sign children out?)

### TIP:

Extension professionals can play a vital role in training after-school staff on many topics. Training on youth development concepts, developmental needs of children and youth and nutrition are particularly strong areas. *Moving Ahead: Adolescent Growth and Development* available at [www.n4hccs.org](http://www.n4hccs.org) is a particularly good training series. Also, the 4-H Afterschool resource guide *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs* is a good starting point.

- Fee structure and record-keeping
- Payment processing procedures (receipts, transfer forms, deposit, etc.)
- Purchase procedures, including use of petty cash
- Work schedules
- Staff benefits, including leave policies, jury duty, voting time, additional education and professional development support and other available benefits
- Use of substitutes
- Planning time
- Staff meetings
- Evaluation plan
- Termination policy

All staff in a program will not perform every function listed above. However, all staff must have a working knowledge of all procedures and policies. Staff members—even the program director—will miss work from time to time. Other staff members must be qualified to fill the void.

The National AfterSchool Association (formerly NSACA) Accreditation Standards at [www.naaweb.org](http://www.naaweb.org) and the School-Age Care Environmental Rating Scale at [www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/) provide additional information about staff qualifications and other helpful information.



KEEP DETAILED RECORDS



## Chapter

# 7

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

# Keep Detailed Records

Keeping good financial and programmatic records is imperative. Some of the records you must keep include:

- Enrollment forms that provide details on each child and staff members (i.e. medical information, emergency contacts, authorization forms to seek medical help if needed, authorization forms for who can pick the child up from the program, etc.)
- Attendance forms
- Health forms for youth and staff
- Special needs of youth and staff
- Accident reports
- Financial records of income such as fees, registration and other sources of income
- Financial records of expenditures that detail how funds are used
- Reports of child abuse and neglect
- Personnel files on all adults (staff and volunteers) working with youth
- Evaluation records of staff and volunteers



CREATE A PARENT HANDBOOK

Chapter

8

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

INCREASING THE QUANTITY OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



# Create a Parent Handbook

Another useful tool in an after-school program is a parent handbook because it will eliminate surprises to parents involved in the program. The handbook should provide parents all the information they need to fully understand the mission, goals, philosophy, operating procedures and policies of the program.

Remember that, in addition to the children and youth in the program, parents are customers too. They have a right to know what to expect from the program, and the parent handbook is one way to achieve this goal. The handbook should be presented to parents during an orientation session.

Take time to explain each section of the handbook and answer parents' questions. The more information the parents have at the beginning, the better the experience will be for everyone involved.

Include these topics in the handbook:

- Programs goals, mission and philosophy
- Program administration including who is in charge
- Staffing design and staff qualifications
- Program location(s)
- Hours of operation
- Admission policies and procedures
- Registration and program fees and policies for refunds
- Other fee-related policies
- An enrollment contract and procedures to change the contract, if permitted
- Medical and health information requirements
- Administration of medicine and other health monitoring procedures
- Risk management plan and emergency procedures
- Discipline policy
- Snacks and meal policies
- Transportation to and from the program
- Off-site activities
- Check-in and check-out policies and procedures
- Termination notice requirements
- Subsidy support for families, if available
- Daily activities and schedule of events



GET THE WORD OUT



Chapter

9

# Get the Word Out

Now that everything is in place, it is time to let everyone know the program exists and what it is about.

How will parents know the program is available? How will the community know what the program is doing? How will funders know their contributions are producing results?

You'll need to get the word out with short-term and long-term marketing plans. These suggestions are just a few of the ways you can let the community know about your program:

- Create word of mouth from parents, school personnel, agency people, youth development professionals, etc.
- Contact local newspapers and radio and television stations
- Send announcement home in school materials
- Send letters to parents
- Provide announcement at parents' places of work
- Put contact information in the needs assessment
- Make telephone inquiries
- Place flyers and posters where parents will see them
- Contact faith-based groups
- Ask to place an article in organizational newsletters or Web sites or other information disseminated by groups
- Put inserts in electric or telephone bills
- Contact civic groups

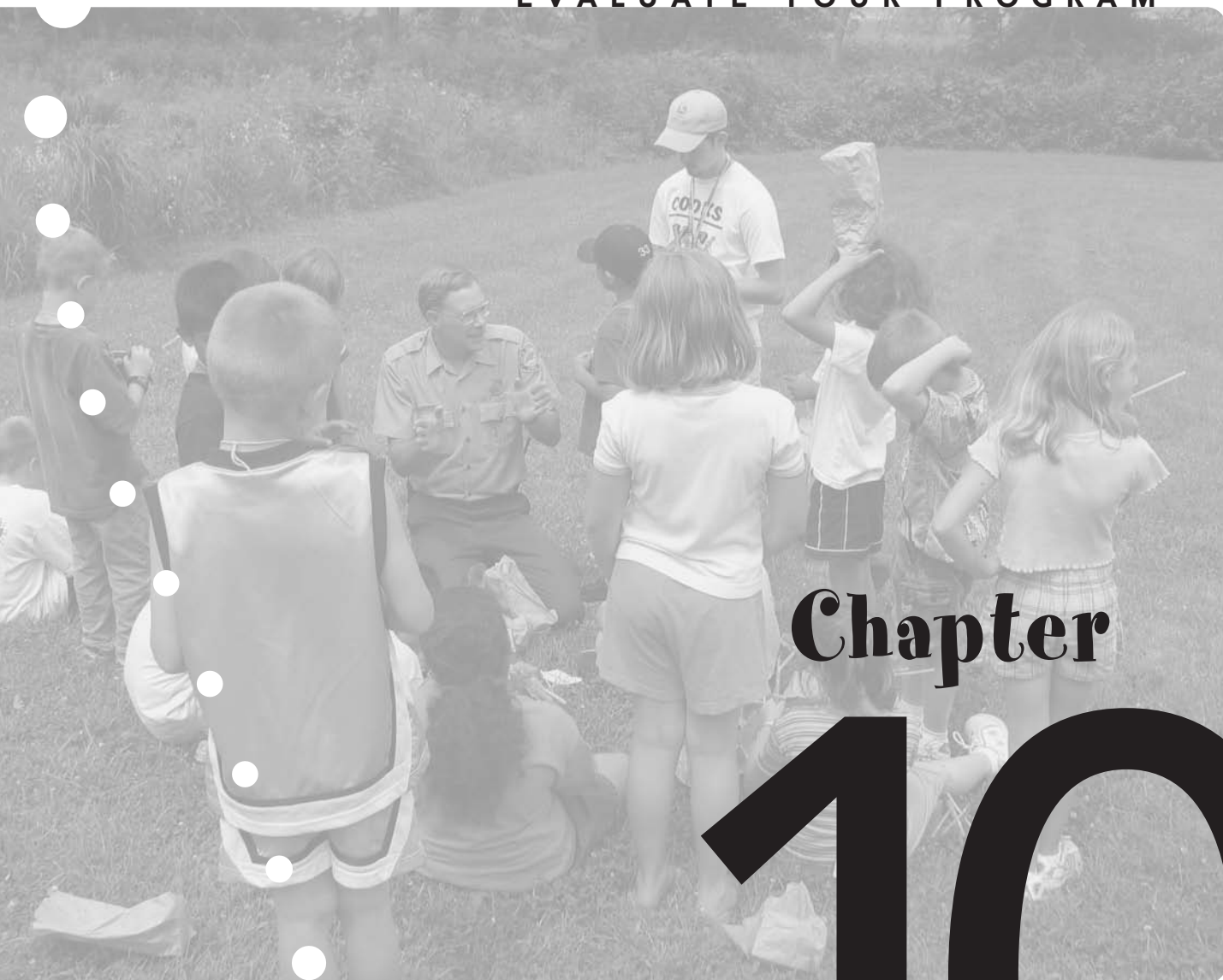


One of the easiest ways to identify those who might be interested in the program is to use contact information from everyone who expressed an interest in your program during the needs assessment process. You should try to get commitments, such as paid registration fees, before opening the program. Although some parents express an interest in the program, they may change their minds before actually enrolling their children.

**TIP:**

Resources for working with the media can be found at [www.4husa.org](http://www.4husa.org) or [www.4afterschool.org](http://www.4afterschool.org).

EVALUATE YOUR PROGRAM



Chapter

10

# Evaluate Your Program

Although it is in the last chapter, program evaluation should be one of the FIRST steps in the process! Evaluation—the process of determining whether a program is achieving desired results—is an important element throughout the process of establishing community-based after-school programs.

Your first evaluation comes when you analyze the needs assessment to determine if the need in your community is sufficient to move forward with the program. As the program is implemented, the board and staff should conduct a process evaluation that continuously seeks input from the children, parents and community stakeholders regarding their satisfaction with the program.

It will tell you if the program is being implemented as planned. It will answer questions like

- How many children do you serve?
- Did you carry out the activity as planned?
- Were participants satisfied with the activity? Why or why not?

An outcome evaluation focuses on short-term changes in knowledge, behaviors, attitudes or beliefs. It assesses immediate changes that might have occurred as a result of participation in the program. An impact evaluation examines longer-term improvements in the quality of life of children, youth, families or community members.

Steps for conducting an evaluation typically include:

1. Planning the evaluation
2. Collecting data
3. Analyzing and interpreting the data
4. Communicating results to stakeholders
5. Continuously improving the program



## Evaluate Your Program



### Plan Your Evaluation\*

*Plan* the evaluation while you develop goals and objectives for the program. Keep these goals and objectives quantifiable so success can be measured!

The planning process typically includes development of a logic model (See Page 31). Logic models concisely show how programs are designed and expected to make a difference for children, youth, families and communities. The logic model is the basic framework for your evaluation.

When *planning* the collection of data, be sure that your evaluation design and data collection instruments have been tested for validity and reliability and will measure the youth outcomes stated for your program. Determine what kinds of information can be realistically and accurately collected as well as the best methods for collecting the information. Collection methods include strategies such as written surveys, individual or group interviews (i.e. focus groups),

observations or already existing data, such as school and health records. Observation tools designed for use in after-school and youth development programs are listed in the Suggested Evaluation Resources on Page 54.

### Analyze the Data

*Analyzing* and *interpreting* results can be simple or more complex, depending on the evaluation's design and the type of information that has been collected. In some cases, it is advisable to have someone with statistical expertise conduct the data analyses. In other cases, data analysis may be as simple as using a spreadsheet to calculate descriptive statistics such as the mean or average, frequencies or percentages. Analyze qualitative data like stories, observations or interviews by coding for common themes. A variety of software packages will analyze quantitative and qualitative data.

\*Adapted from the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Program Development and Evaluation Web site and Planning and Evaluation Resource Center.



# Evaluate Your Program

## Communicate the Results

Communicating the evaluation results is another important step in the process. Present your findings in a format that is easily understandable to a broad range of stakeholders—parents, funders, staff and many others.

The Planning and Evaluation Resource Center, listed in the References section, suggests that the following information should be included in communications with stakeholders:

- Purpose and context for the evaluation
- Evaluation questions asked
- Evaluation activities designed to answer those questions
- Types and quality of the evaluation data collected
- Findings
- Recommendations

Ways to communicate results include formal reports, newsletters, Web sites or other more informal briefings with stakeholders.

## Continue Improvement

By focusing on *continuous program improvement*, the evaluation process becomes a cycle in which an evaluation's results are “fed” back into the program so that its strengths can be identified, areas for improvement defined and goals, objectives and outcomes modified or refined.



## Evaluate Your Program

### SUGGESTED EVALUATION RESOURCES

Many resources exist to assist with developing an appropriate evaluation plan and selecting instruments and methods to measure the stated objectives. Some of the resources can be found on the Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network (CYFERNet) at [www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org):

- Beyond Data Web site. North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension, [www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/beyonddata/index.htm](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/beyonddata/index.htm). Focuses on understanding how to conduct a needs assessment and how to plan and conduct an evaluation.
- Innovation Network's Point K Learning Center, [www.innonet.org/index.php?section\\_id=64&content\\_id=185](http://www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=64&content_id=185). Features free, online tools to build evaluation plans, logic models and surveys.
- National 4-H Headquarters Web site, [www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/comm/4h\\_ydr-tools.htm](http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/comm/4h_ydr-tools.htm). Lists links to evaluation and assessment tools relevant to youth development programming.
- The Planning and Evaluation Resource Center Web site, a project of the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development and Tufts University, [www.evaluationtools.org/](http://www.evaluationtools.org/). Designed for youth development programs that want to conduct self-evaluations. Includes many tools for evaluation planning, data collection and analysis, and reporting.



- Sabatelli, R. M., Anderson, S. A., & LaMotte, V. A. (2001). *Assessing outcomes in youth programs: A practical handbook*. Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut and State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management. Available at [www.opm.state.ct.us/pdpd1/grants/JJAC/JJACPublications.htm](http://www.opm.state.ct.us/pdpd1/grants/JJAC/JJACPublications.htm). Designed to help managers and staff plan evaluations of youth programs.
- The School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale, [www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/). Observational instrument designed to assess group care settings for children ages 5-12.
- University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Program Development and Evaluation Web site, [www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/index.html](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/index.html). Includes logic model worksheets and templates, information about human subject's protection, instruments and much more.
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Toolkit, [www.wkkf.org/Programming/Overview.aspx?CID=281](http://www.wkkf.org/Programming/Overview.aspx?CID=281). Resources include developing an evaluation plan, logic models and much more.
- Youth Program Quality Assessment. Observational instrument developed by High/Scope to measure quality in community programs, schools, after-school programs, youth development programs and organizations that serve youth at [www.highscope.org/EducationalPrograms/Adolescent/YPQA.htm](http://www.highscope.org/EducationalPrograms/Adolescent/YPQA.htm).



## SUSTAIN YOUR PROGRAM

# Chapter

# 11

# Sustain Your Program

Dictionaries define sustainability as “to maintain, to endure, to withstand.” Researchers Marek & Mancini (2003) define sustainability as “a program’s ability to continue delivering intended services to their targeted audience over the long term, in keeping with their goals and objectives for the program. Programs may need to be modified and curtail certain services/activities, but if they are still able to meet their program goals, they are sustained.” This definition stemmed from Marek & Mancini’s research of 94 community-based projects over the course of six years.

The research by Marek & Mancini (2003) points to seven distinct factors that lead to sustainable programs:

- Project leadership
- Collaborators
- Community engagement
- Demonstrated program impact
- Funding
- Staffing
- Program flexibility



## Sustain Your Program



### **Collaborate, Collaborate, Collaborate!**

Where should Extension faculty begin? First, you must understand that strong relationships among collaborators and program participants influence sustainability factors.

Frequently underestimated, collaborations are an approach where all stakeholders are valued (Jakes, 2005). It is often effective to form a governing board. (See Page 26.) The community collaborative approach, with representation from target populations—including youth—improves the likelihood that:

- “Buy-in” is established prior to program implementation.
- Programs will address key community needs.
- Collaborators will assume meaningful leadership roles.
- Successful marketing plans will be created and implemented—the most common reason programs report increases in the number of volunteers.

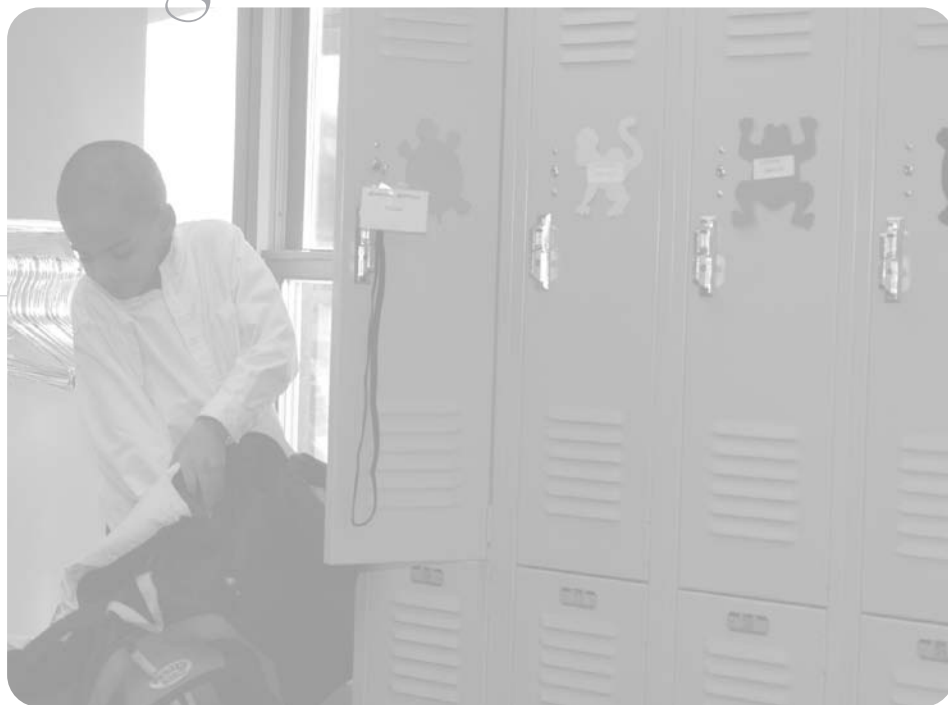


# Sustain Your Program

Programs that provide meaningful involvement of collaborators may be better equipped to overcome the common obstacles in sustaining programs: lack of funding, staffing difficulties and limited community resources.

Prior to implementing a program, address the following:

1. Is funding available long-term (at least two years)?
2. Do you have plans in place for obtaining additional funds?
3. Are staff involved in program design, evaluation and decision-making?
4. Are staff recognized and rewarded for their work?
5. Are community collaborators willing and able to provide materials/equipment, space, in-kind support and personnel who can help with program implementation?

**TIP:**

The University of Missouri's sustainability Web page, <http://extension.missouri.edu/fcrp/sustain.htm>, is an excellent collection of links to research, training and related resources to assist community groups with program sustainability.

## CONCLUSION



# Conclusion

# Conclusion

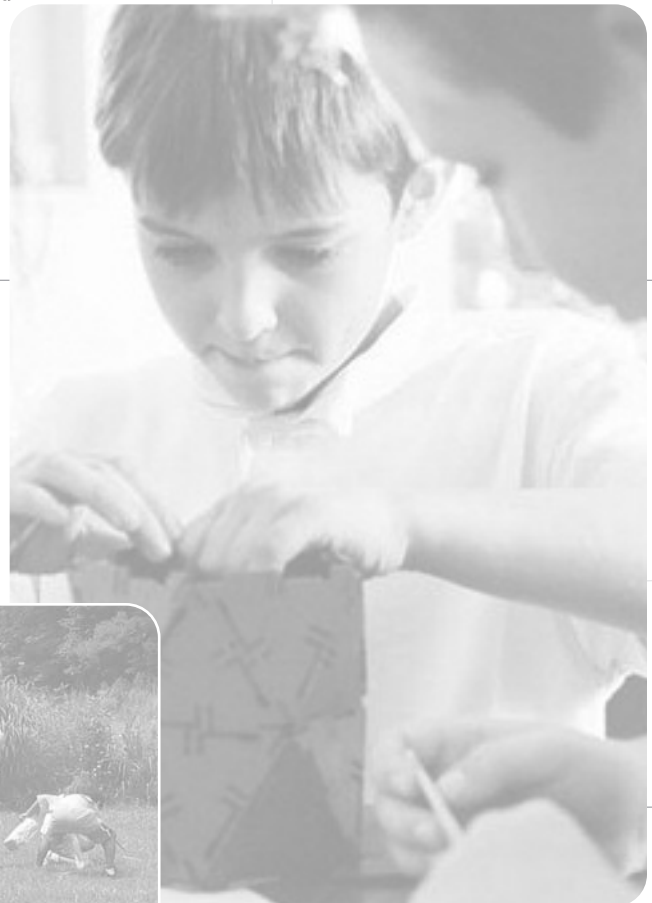
As many as 14.3 million youth leave school every day with no place to go (Afterschool Alliance, 2004). CES has been working hard—in collaboration with other agencies and organizations—to make after-school hours a time of opportunity for youth across the United States by increasing the quality and quantity of after-school programs.

4-H professionals have been very effective at helping to improve the quality of existing programs and establishing new community and Extension managed after-school programs. This resource guide is designed to help CES professionals provide leadership and support to communities as they determine if a need for after-school programs exists, and, if so, how to meet the identified needs.

Extension, however, cannot do it alone. No one can. Community partners must come together to achieve the goal. Through collaboration, CES professionals can help create safe, fun, educational, enriching environments for youth during the time when parents are working or unavailable to care for their children. These programs will help eliminate many of

the problems associated with youth who are home alone and create opportunities where youth can gain the many benefits associated with quality after-school, adult supervised programs. Through 4-H Afterschool programs, Extension staff work hard to train after-school staff, develop quality programs, infuse experiential curriculum, and create after-school communities of children across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.

Quality after-school programs impact the educational, economic, employment and environmental conditions for children, youth and their families. They are everyone's business, and everyone benefits!



## APPENDIX



# Appendix

# Benefits of After-School Programs

After-school programs are receiving increased scrutiny regarding the outcomes they produce. Those who want to understand the effects of these programs should keep in mind that no single study can prove definitively that after-school programs benefit youth. That being said, the current body of research does make a case that youth benefit from consistent participation in well-run, quality after-school programs.

The Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) published a review of out-of-school time evaluation results (Little & Harris, 2003). This review encompassed 41 program evaluations that used quasi-experimental designs (27), experimental designs (11) or both (3). The reviewers noted two important qualifications:

- (a) The evaluations assessed overall impact and did not attempt to disentangle the various program components that may have produced these changes.
- (b) The statistically significant results often held for only one particular subgroup.

The findings from this review are summarized on the following pages of this appendix.

Those interested in a complete discussion of these evaluation results should review the HFRP publication and the companion database available at the HFRP Web site at [www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp).



# Benefits of After-School Programs

## RESULTS FROM PROGRAMS THAT ASSESSED ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

Twenty-five evaluations examined academic outcomes. Participation in out-of-school programs was linked to the following:

1. Better attitudes toward school and higher educational aspirations
2. Better performance in school, as measured by homework completion
3. Better performance in school, as measured by achievement test scores and grades
4. Higher school attendance
5. Less disciplinary actions

## RESULTS FROM PROGRAMS THAT ASSESSED SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Fifteen evaluations addressed youth development outcomes, which were broadly defined as social and emotional development of the program participants. Participation was linked to the following:

1. Decreased behavior problems
2. Improved overall well-being—confidence/self-esteem, general well-being, overall happiness/well-being, maturity, positive behavior
3. Improved social/interpersonal skills—communication skills, conflict resolution, interactions/relationships with adults, interactions/relationships with peers, decreased aggression, desire to

help others, respect for diversity, respect for others

4. Improved development of practical skills—decision-making, goal-setting, leadership skills, planning/organizing problem-solving, task orientation, computer skills, money management, public speaking skills, understanding values
5. Improved future orientation—job experience/skills, positive attitude about the future, projected success in career/future/college
6. More opportunities for exposure and experiences—opportunities for leadership roles, exposure to new experiences, broadened worldview

## RESULTS FROM PROGRAMS THAT ASSESSED PREVENTION OUTCOMES

Fewer programs focus on prevention. Twelve evaluations addressed prevention outcomes and indicated that participation was linked to the following:

1. Avoidance of drug and alcohol use
2. Decreases in delinquency and violent behaviors
3. Increased knowledge of sexuality issues
4. Increased skills for coping with peer pressure



# Benefits of After-School Programs

## Evidence-Based Practices for After-School Programs

Researchers in the after-school arena have come from several disciplines, but until recently, have not informed each other. Researchers alternately consider such youth activities as school-age child care or after-school programs, leisure activities, extracurricular activities (typically school-based), mentoring and youth development (out-of-school, community-based activities), and this distinction likely accounts, in part, for the different focus of the research questions addressed. Another situation to note is that many of the studies are related to adolescents,

whereas most of the participants in after-school programs are elementary aged. Therefore, such programs would presumably involve different activities and levels of adult supervision.

A growing body of research supports the contention that youth who participate in structured activities are better off than those who are involved in activities that are unstructured (e.g. Barkto & Eccles, 2003). In general, however, these studies have not examined the processes by which outcomes are produced.

That being said, the current body of research indicates that youth benefit from consistent participation in well-run, quality after-school programs. The elements of participation and quality are considered in the following section. As the activities and the staff are two primary factors in program quality, they are discussed as well.



# Benefits of After-School Programs

## Participation

Youth need to participate in the program before positive outcomes are observed (Granger & Kane, 2004; Kane, 2004). In a review conducted by the Harvard Family Research Project, eight of nine studies examining duration and intensity of participation found statistically significant positive relationships between time spent in the program and developmental outcomes (Little & Harris, 2003). However, Chaput (2003) noted that “we have yet to understand which aspects of the program account for the relationship between participation and outcomes” (p. 21).

Youth with greater program attendance have reported relationships with adults that are more positive (Grossman & Johnson, 1999; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Paisley & Ferrari, 2003). This report makes sense as relationships take time to develop, and those who attend a program with greater frequency would presumably have more opportunity to develop such relationships.



# Benefits of After-School Programs

## Quality

The quality of the after-school environment is an important aspect of understanding the effects of after-school programs on youth (Vandell & Posner, 1999). General agreement about elements that contribute to program quality exists (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Gootman, 2000; U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Justice, 1998, 2000). Youth in all types of programs appear to benefit from consistent structure; active community involvement, extensive training for staff and volunteers and responsiveness to participants' needs and interests (Fashola, 1998; Gootman, 2000).

## Activities

As indicated by a recent review of programs in the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) evaluation database, "most evaluations assess overall program impact, answering the question, did the combined results of the various program components result in changes in

participant outcomes? Few studies have attempted to link specific program activities with outcomes" (HFRP, 2003, pp. 1-2).

Programs should provide activities that address the physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs of youth. Several practices have strong support in the literature: a variety of activities, flexibility of programming and a positive emotional climate (Beckett, Hawken, & Jacknowitz, 2001; Rosenthal & Vandell, 1996).

Rosenthal and Vandell (1996) found that when programs offered a greater variety of different activities, staff had more positive interactions with children, the program appeared more age appropriate and children had more positive program perceptions. They noted that it was not the presence or absence of a particular activity that was important. Rather, offering children a wide array of different types of activities, such as drama, academics and homework help, snacks, and games, over the course of a week appeared to be the important feature. This finding is consistent with the concept of breadth, defined as the

participation in a variety of activities (Chaput, 2004). Variety refers to whether participation is "focused on one or more types of activities within and/or across programs" (p. 2). In one of the few studies to measure breadth, youth who participated in three or more activities with the same program had higher grades and higher academic test scores (Baker & Witt, 1996).

Other researchers also believe that the nature of the activities is important. Across samples of hundreds of youth who participated in extracurricular activities and other structured programs, Larson and his colleagues (Dworkin, Hansen, & Larson, 2003; Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2002; Larson, 2000; Larson, Hansen, & Walker, in press) found that these youth experienced high motivation and engaged attention. This finding is due in part to the voluntary nature of their participation, as well as to the novel and challenging aspects of the activities. These experiences in structured activities were in contrast to those in school, which is not voluntary, and in unstructured activities with peers, which are not perceived as challenging.



# Benefits of After-School Programs

Increasingly, organizers of after-school programs are being challenged to demonstrate that the youth who participate in their programs experience academic gains. However, direct links have been difficult to establish. Consensus is emerging that after-school programming can contribute to academic success more indirectly, by increasing student engagement in learning (Miller, 2003). This engagement is demonstrated in greater school attendance, improved work habits and behavior and positive attitudes toward school.

For a variety of reasons, expecting such programs to improve academic achievement by producing increased grades or test scores may be unrealistic. Programs operate for fewer hours per day and participation is voluntary. However, a strong research base supports the idea that engagement in learning leads to long-term academic success.

Further supporting the notion about the benefits of a variety of activities, Pittman, Irby, Yohalem and Wilson-Ahlstrom (2004, p. 29) have pictured strategies for intentionally infusing academic content in after-school programs on a continuum. While all employ innovative delivery methods, they vary based on the way the content is presented.

These approaches are as follows:

- 1 Explicit** (explicit content, innovative delivery). These programs have an intentional focus on improving academic skills such as reading or math. Students attending these programs know that they are enrolled in remedial or enrichment academic programs.
- 2 Embedded** (embedded content, innovative delivery). These programs are focused primarily on the arts, sports or service but intentionally integrate academic content throughout the curriculum. Intentionality is the operative word.
- 3 Enrichment** (authentic content, innovative delivery). Highly-intentional programs that engage young people in positive, authentic ways; though not expressly “academic,” they are certainly programs that support learning.



# Benefits of After-School Programs

## Staff

Another process believed to be at work in after-school programs is they serve as a context that connects youth with supportive adults. It is widely recognized that relationships with caring adults are essential for youth to achieve their fullest potential (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998; Blum & Rinehart, 1998; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). Thus, after-school programs “cannot produce positive results without the most critical element of program quality: a committed and competent workforce” (Shortt, 2002, p. 120).

The ability of the staff member leading the activity was more important to quality than the specific activity itself (Grossman et al., 2002).

Astroth (1996) found that beyond benefits from the relationship itself, youth gained more skills in groups where leaders were autonomy oriented compared to those with a control orientation.

Researchers have begun to examine the processes by which these relationships are built through studies involving observation and interviews.

In an after-school program where youth rated their interactions with adults as highly positive, the interactions between youth and adults offered both instrumental and emotional support (Paisley & Ferrari, 2003; Turner, 2002). The staff behaviors frequently observed were talking to a child in a positive tone, giving a child clear directions, listening to a child and using a child's name when talking to him or her (Paisley & Ferrari, 2003).



# Benefits of After-School Programs

Larson and his colleagues (Larson, Hansen & Walker, in press) have demonstrated the important facilitating role that adult leaders play. They argue that the essential ingredient of effective youth work is the intentionality with which adults carry it out. Their role is difficult because what constitutes the right amount of control and structure appears to be a delicate balance. Walker and Larson (2004, P.8) noted this paradox:

When adult leaders stand back completely, youth can get off track . . . But when adults assume control, youth will not experience the ownership that drives important developmental changes. Ownership is crucial to the growth of multicultural competence, the development of initiative and the formation of social capital, among other processes.

Skilled adult leaders have developed techniques that enable them to achieve both objectives. The key to the adults' use of these techniques was that they "were adjusted to the capabilities of the youth. . . . Each technique was deployed and adjusted according to what the students could handle" (Larson et al., in press).



These techniques include:

1. Following youths' lead
2. Asking questions
3. Providing intermediate structures
4. Monitoring to keep youth on track



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