

The Study of Promising After-School Programs

Descriptive Report of the Promising Programs

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2002, the poverty rate for American children and youth under the age of 18 was 16.3% (Proctor & Dalakar, 2003). Studies suggest that education remains a critical pathway out of poverty for these young people, but activities within the school classroom alone cannot provide youth with the educational, social, and personal resources they need to overcome economically disadvantaged backgrounds. A coordinated, community-wide effort is required to address the needs of these youth. Part of this effort should be focused on providing high-quality opportunities to build academic and social skills as well as self-awareness in the after-school hours.

Accordingly, in recent years policymakers have increased funding for after-school programs to achieve changes for children and youth in three areas: (1) to increase child safety in the after-school hours and reduce the incidence of risk behaviors, (2) to raise children's academic achievement, and (3) to promote positive youth development. These public investments are based on evidence of the following:

- Problem behaviors often occur in the after-school hours (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999).
- Many children do not receive the stimulation and adult support they need to succeed in school (Eccles et al., 1993).
- Extracurricular and after-school programs for children and youth at risk can increase their likelihood of achieving long-term economic success and making positive contributions to society (Carnegie Corporation, 1992).

Several studies have attempted to assess the impact of participation in after-school programs on young people's lives. In most cases, however, they have considered only one or two programs, focused on a narrow set of outcomes, and/or failed to follow young people over time.

Scholars have called for more sophisticated studies that can address these shortcomings in previous research. The Study of Promising After-School Programs takes an important step in that direction by examining longitudinally the effects of participation in high-quality after-school programs on various outcomes among economically disadvantaged youth in both the elementary school and middle school years.

Study Goals

The Study of Promising After-School Programs has two major goals: (1) to identify elementary school and middle school programs that feature promising practices for enhancing students' academic and social development and their emotional and physical well-being, and (2) to test the hypothesis that disadvantaged youth between the ages of 8 and 14 who participate in high-quality after-school programs achieve significantly greater developmental and learning gains over a two-year period than do disadvantaged youth who do not participate in similar opportunities. We focus on **promising** after-school programs, rather than a random or representative sample of programs, in order to assess the potential for programs to exert positive effects on youth and to identify common elements that might account for their ability to foster positive youth development. Promising programs are those that offer high-quality after-school environments for youth, manifest sustainability, and exhibit characteristics believed to promote positive youth outcomes. We concentrate on low-income children, families, and communities that are among those in greatest need for external supports of all types, including after-school programming. We target school-based or school-linked after-school programs that are consistent with the program model of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. These foci reflect the priorities of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Foundation's special interest in seeking "pathways out of poverty" for the vulnerable populations whose youth have the greatest claim on public and philanthropic resources.

Purpose of This Report

This report presents information on the first year of the Study of Promising After-School Programs, during which the emphasis was on locating and evaluating potentially promising after-school programs. We present information on the features of the programs selected for the study and evidence that they meet our criteria for promising after-school environments. Data are derived from observations of participating programs and interviews with program directors, program staff, and principals of elementary or middle schools associated with the programs.

In Chapter 2 we describe the conceptual background of the study, emphasizing the theory of change that guided our study design. Following a description of our methods for identifying and selecting promising after-school programs (Chapter 3), we present our findings on the structural and institutional features of the participating programs (Chapter 4) and on program processes and content (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 presents conclusions drawn from this phase of our work and outlines the second phase of the study, during which we will gather information on participants from the students and their parents, teachers, and after-school program staff.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Background and Theory of Change

Research on the effects of after-school programs on youth has yielded inconsistent results. Some investigators have found that participation in after-school programs can improve academic and risk behavior outcomes, including school grades, school attendance, and achievement test scores (Baker & Witt, 1996; Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999; Hamilton & Klein, 1999; Huang, Gribbons, Kim, Lee, & Baker, 2000; Mahoney, Stattin, & Magnusson, 2001; Posner & Vandell, 1994; Schinke, Cole, & Poulin, 2000; Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995; University of California at Irvine & California Department of Education, 2002; White, Reisner, Welsh, & Russell, 2001). Other researchers have reported no effects or, in some cases, negative consequences of program participation (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 1998; Grossman et al., 2002; Vandell & Corasaniti, 1988; Vandell & Pierce, 1995; Welsh, Russell, Williams, Reisner, & White, 2002). These inconsistent findings underscore the need to identify the types of after-school programs or the program characteristics that are most conducive to positive youth development.

Effective after-school programs are desirable for all young people during the elementary and middle school years, and current programs serve a tremendous variety of clientele. The need for effective after-school programs is especially acute, however, for economically and socially disadvantaged youth who typically have few options for constructive activities after the regular school day ends. In recognition of this fact, as well as because of the C. S. Mott Foundation's focus on impoverished youth, this study concentrates on programs whose primary clientele are economically disadvantaged youth. A disproportionate share of such programs' clientele is comprised of youth from ethnic minority groups.

Key Features of Promising Programs

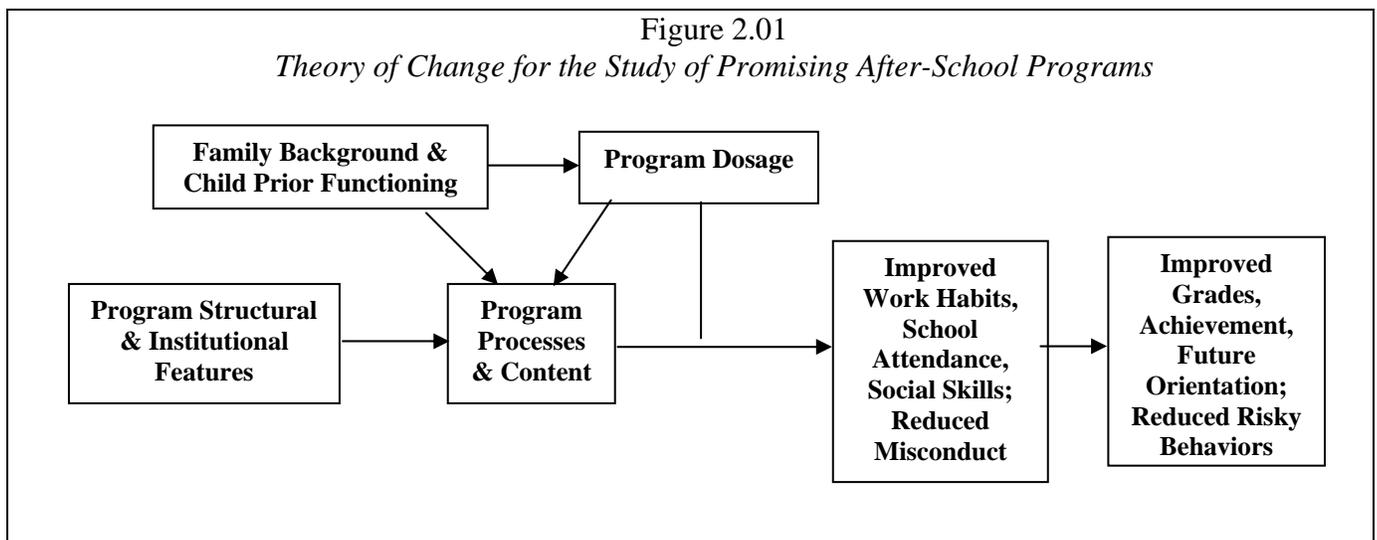
Recent efforts to distill research findings into program and policy guidance have concluded that children and youth need varied opportunities, experiences, and supports after school. Program features and practices that are associated with positive youth development outcomes have been identified (American Youth Policy Forum, 1997, 1999; Beckett, Hawken, & Jackowitz, 2001; Catalano et al., 1998; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; MacDonald & Valdivieso, 2000; McLaughlin, 2000; Pittman, Irby, & Ferby, 2000; Scales & Leffert, 1999). For example, Pierce, Hamm, and Vandell (1999) cited several features in their study of first-grade children: positive relationships with staff, positive relationships with peers, diverse activities, and opportunities to exercise choice and autonomy. Rosenthal and Vandell (1996) found similar elements to be important for children in third, fourth, and fifth grades. Key features of programs that serve adolescents are presented in a recent report of the National Research Council's Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). This report lists eight features of positive developmental settings: physical and psychological safety; appropriate structure; supportive relationships; opportunities to belong; positive social norms; support for efficacy and mattering; opportunities for skill building; and integration of family, school, and community efforts.

Theory of Change

The identified features of positive after-school experiences point to both structural and organizational aspects of programs as well as the type of activities they offer to children and youth. Mindful of these findings, we derived a theory of change (see Figure 2.01) that includes the following propositions:

- To achieve positive life outcomes, children and youth require opportunities and supports in multiple developmental domains, including academic, social,

- psychological, and behavioral areas.
- High-quality after-school programs can stimulate positive experiences and outcomes for children and youth in these core developmental areas, employing varied program content foci (e.g., arts, academics, sports).
 - Certain structural and institutional features support the implementation of high-quality programs.
 - Children and youth who participate in high-quality programs more often, thus receiving a higher “dosage” of programming, will derive greater benefits than children and youth who participate less often.
 - Because pre-existing family and child differences may affect the participation of children and youth in voluntary after-school programs, the examination of program effects must take these differences into account.



As shown in Figure 2.01, the study’s theory of change cites both structural and institutional features as well as process and content features that characterize effective programs for children and youth. **Structural and institutional** features are those elements of a program

that establish the setting and context for positive relationships and high-quality activities. These features include staff qualifications and support, program size and group configuration, financial and physical resources, external affiliations, and sustainability efforts. **Process and content** features are those practices that participating children and youth experience directly. They include adults' interactions and relationships with participants, relationships among participants, program content and activities, and content delivery strategies.

The elements of our theoretical framework are reflected in the study's design and implementation, including:

- The criteria for screening nominated programs for potential selection into the study.
- The sampling plan that guides recruitment of study participants into the treatment and comparison groups.
- The domains to be measured and the types of instruments used to gauge the implementation and outcomes of targeted after-school programs.
- The analysis plan, which will use research data to trace the unfolding operation of the elements that make up the change theory.

The Study of Promising After-School Programs has been designed with the understanding that effective after-school programs must incorporate certain process and content features and also certain structural and institutional features in order to achieve positive effects for at-risk children and youth. The study is *not* designed to examine the effects of variations in program quality, nor is it designed to ascertain the effects of programs that are strong in some areas and not others. Instead, the study is examining the impact of sustained participation in high-quality programs on the academic, social, and behavioral development of participants.

Process and Content Features

The Study of Promising After-School Programs defines essential process and content

features in terms of practices that prior research and theory indicate most directly shape the after-school program experiences of children and youth. These features respond to the core developmental needs of children and youth for affiliation, identity, and mastery. They include:

- **Positive relationships**, including positive staff-child and peer relationships
- **Rich content-based program activities**, including a mix of academic and nonacademic (physical and recreational) enrichment activities that build skills
- **Learning- and mastery-oriented content delivery strategies** that provide both structured and unstructured learning opportunities, and promote participant autonomy, choice, and leadership

Our identification of these process and content features as core elements of high-quality programs reflects evidence from youth development research and also from teaching and learning research about the content and instructional strategies that promote learning.

McLaughlin (2000) observed that after-school programs that capture youths' interest and promote learning are "not happenstance." Positive outcomes emerge when adults deliberately create opportunities in which both the content of activities and the instructional processes are "knowledge-centered" and "youth-centered." More generally, researchers investigating human learning point to the importance of providing learners with rich content-based experiences, led by teachers or coaches who encourage mastery and use both structured and unstructured instructional strategies to promote learning (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999).

Structural and Institutional Supports

The extent to which after-school programs can provide the types of high-quality relationships and activities described above depends on certain structural and institutional features, including:

- **Staff qualifications and support**, including education and training, planning time

- and assistance provided to staff, and staff satisfaction with the work environment
- **Program configuration**, including child-staff ratios and group size
 - **Program resources**, including funding, space, and materials
 - **Program partnerships, linkages, and connections** to other individuals and institutions that affect children's lives, including parents, schools, and the community
 - **Program sustainability** over the long term, based on program relationships with local agencies and its funding base

Numerous child care studies have reported relationships between structural program features and either process quality or child outcomes. For example, child-staff ratio and staff education are associated with preschool children's cognitive and social development (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Network [NICHD ECCRN], 2002; Vandell and Wolfe, 2000). Likewise, existing evidence indicates that structural features of after-school programs affect staff practices. For example, Rosenthal and Vandell (1996) found that (1) higher child-staff ratios are associated with more negative staff-child interactions; (2) larger group sizes are associated with lower child ratings of program climate, emotional support, and support for autonomy and privacy; and (3) higher levels of staff education are associated with fewer negative staff-child interactions.

There is evidence in the early childhood literature that structural program features indirectly affect child outcomes by influencing the quality of caregiving in child care settings (NICHD ECCRN, 2004). The evidence connecting program structures, practices, and outcomes in the after-school literature is less developed, although limited reports from studies of after-school programs suggest similar connections between structural and institutional supports and outcomes (Beckett et al., 2001; Grossman, Walker, & Raley, 2001; Merry, 2000).

In this report and in our larger study, we present data on structural and institutional

supports descriptively because we believe they will be of interest to researchers, practitioners, and policy makers. We do not plan to test relations between structural features and process quality because, by selecting only high-quality programs to study, we do not expect much variability among participating programs on these variables.

Chapter 3

Identification and Selection of Participating Programs

Program Identification

Because the individual service delivery site and its students are the focus of this study, the identification and selection of programs also focused at that level and not at the large, multi-site initiatives that deliver program services after school (e.g., LA's BEST, Citizen Schools, The After-School Corporation, Boys and Girls Clubs of America). The process did, however, lead to the examination of individual program sites affiliated with these larger initiatives, as well as independent programs not affiliated with larger initiatives or models.

Our first step in identifying promising programs was to develop a master list of 222 programs located in 35 states, based on a review of published materials (for more information, see <http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/childcare/>). We then prioritized these programs based on several criteria, including evidence that the program:

- was school-linked or school-based
- served elementary or middle school students from low-income families
- met at least three days a week
- was free of charge or charged only a modest fee
- anticipated being sustained for the next three years, consistent with the longitudinal focus of our design

Fourteen programs or systems of programs met all of these criteria; 11 additional programs or systems met three or four of the criteria.

In addition, 60 experts in the after-school field (academics, practitioners, youth-serving organizations, consultants, federal and state officials) were contacted and asked to recommend “specific after-school programs that provide substantial opportunities for skill development and

mastery and that foster positive supportive relationships with staff and peers.” Eighty-five percent of these individuals responded to our request, recommending 125 specific program sites (63 serving elementary school students, 46 serving middle school youth, 16 serving both elementary and middle school students).

Based on the published sources and recommendations from experts, we contacted 116 programs for additional information. Seventy-five program directors consented to a telephone interview (see Appendix A) in which we confirmed that the program met our five selection criteria and evaluated the program’s suitability for the study based on the following factors:

- had been in operation for at least three years
- offered students opportunities for sustained involvement in substantive activities
- had access to resources and materials to support substantive activities
- employed staffing patterns (low participant-staff ratios, low staff turnover, staff with training and expertise) that are conducive to students having positive and supportive relationships with staff and peers
- served a minimum of 30 students in the targeted age group—elementary students in third or fourth grade, middle school youth in sixth or seventh grade
- presented evidence of a previous evaluation

From the information obtained in the telephone interviews, 35 elementary programs and 28 middle school programs were identified as potential study sites.

Program Selection

Selection of potentially suitable programs began with an examination of geographic diversity and the accessibility of the program locations to research staff. Based on these considerations, 29 elementary programs and 28 middle school programs were selected for site visits in Fall 2002 so that we could examine program quality and obtain other information about

each program's suitability for the study.

During the Fall 2002 visits, we observed program activities and conducted interviews with program directors, activity leaders, and school principals. We used four assessment tools developed for this study during these visits: Promising Practices Rating System, Director Interview, Activity Leader Interview, and School Principal Interview.

The **Promising Practices Rating System** (PPRS; see Appendix B) is an observational measure that quantifies program processes related to program quality on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (highly uncharacteristic) to 4 (highly characteristic). During Fall 2002, we observed each after-school program during two afternoons and rated seven program processes:

- supportive relations with staff
- supportive relations with peers
- student engagement in program activities
- appropriate program structure
- opportunities for cognitive growth
- opportunities for autonomy
- mastery orientation

Additionally, observers completed a checklist of the spaces occupied by the program, the resources used (e.g., computers, art supplies, science materials, musical instruments), and the activities in which the participants were engaged.

The **Director Interview** (see Appendix C) obtains information about program goals; student enrollment and attendance; program activities and schedules; student opportunities for autonomy, choice, and leadership; staff education and training; program connections with other agencies in the community; and funding.

The **Activity Leader Interview** (see Appendix D) collects information about program

activities and schedules; student opportunities for autonomy, choice, and leadership; training and planning opportunities; and relations with the partner school.

The **School Principal Interview** (see Appendix E) obtains information about school enrollment and demographics, as well as the principal's perspective on the after-school program. We also asked the principal for information related to practical data collection issues in the second and third years of the study.

During Spring 2003, research team members returned to 37 programs that appeared especially promising. During these visits, we collected data with the After-School Activity Observation Instrument, a measure based on previous research by Policy Studies Associates and modified for use in this study, and with program director and activity leader surveys developed for this study.

We conducted systematic observations of program activities using the **After-School Activity Observation Instrument** (AOI; see Appendix F). The AOI is an observational and interview measure that obtains information about activity content and skill areas, use of space and materials, youth interactions with peers and staff, student engagement, and activity structure in a series of 15-minute observation periods.

The program director at each site completed the **Director Survey** (see Appendix G). This measure obtains information about student enrollment and attendance; space and material resources; staff meetings; program relations with parents, the partner school, and community organizations; program funding; and background and training of the director and program staff.

One activity leader at each program site completed the **Activity Leader Survey** (see Appendix H). This survey collects data about staff background and experience, training and planning opportunities, job satisfaction and support, and relations with the school and parents.

Based on the information obtained during the site visits (described in Chapters 4 and 5),

we selected 19 elementary and 18 middle school programs for the study. One elementary program subsequently was dropped from the study due to its loss of funding.

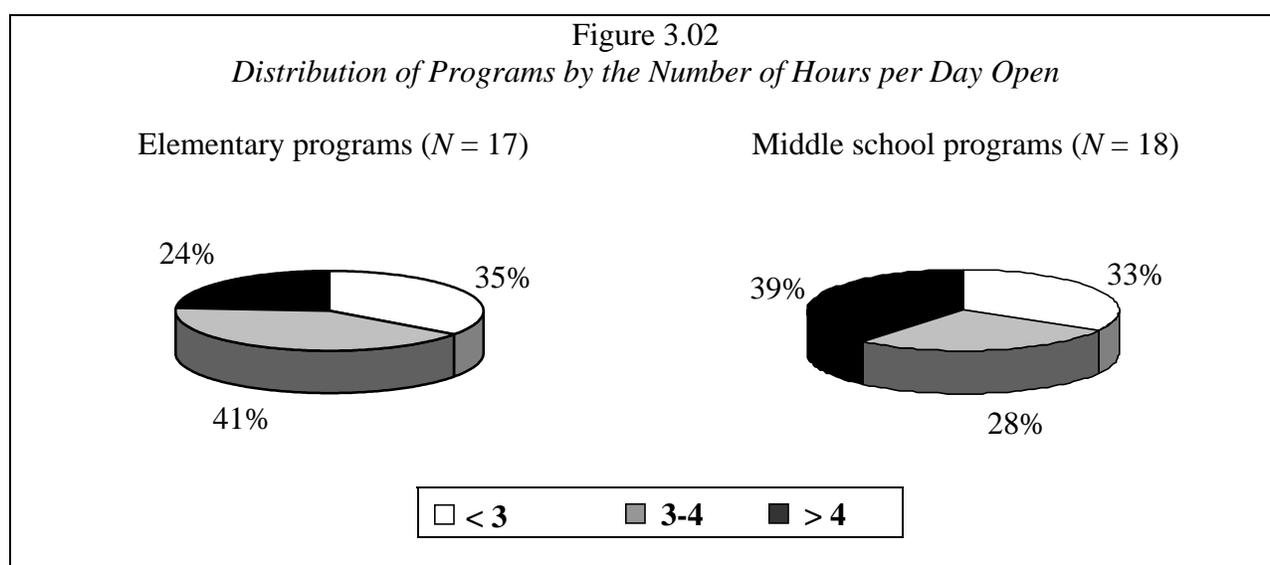
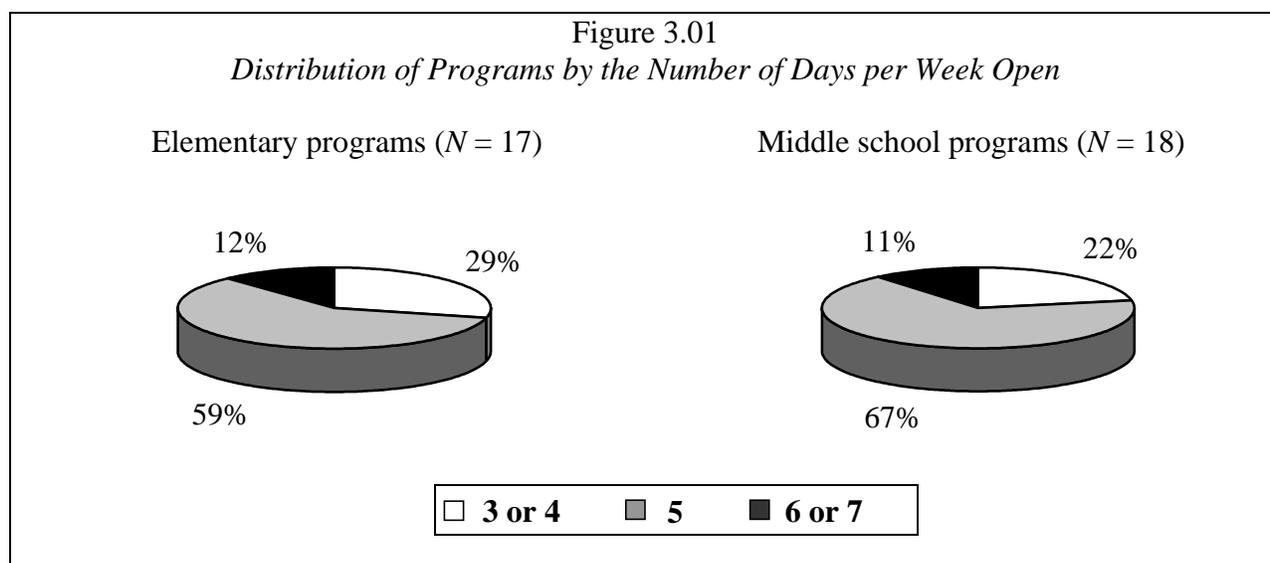
Characteristics of the Selected Programs

Geographic location. The programs that were selected for the Study of Promising After-School Programs are located across the United States. They are fairly evenly split between California, the Northeast, and the Northwest, except for two programs in the Midwest (see Table 3.01). About 40% of the programs (slightly more at the middle than elementary level) are found in major metropolitan centers, including large cities such as New York or Los Angeles. Close to half of the elementary programs and nearly 40% at the middle school level are situated in other urban areas, leaving about 15% in smaller towns or rural areas. The concentration of programs in urban areas and major cities was dictated by our research design. We sought programs serving relatively large populations of economically disadvantaged youth. Promising programs with these demographics were difficult to locate outside of urban areas.

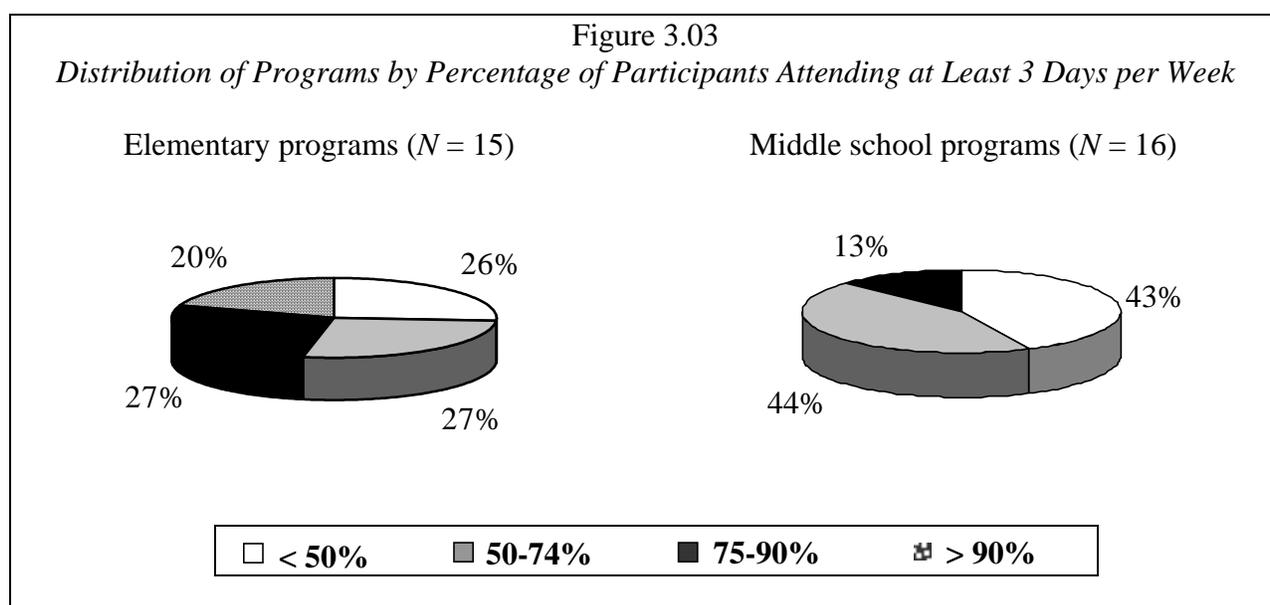
Table 3.01
Geographic and Community Size Distribution Of Selected Programs

Program location	Elementary programs (<i>N</i>)	Middle school programs (<i>N</i>)	Combined (<i>N</i>)
Northeast	6	5	11
Midwest	1	3	4
Northwest	5	4	9
California	7	6	13
Community size			
Major metro area	7	8	15
Urban area	9	7	16
Non-urban area	3	3	6

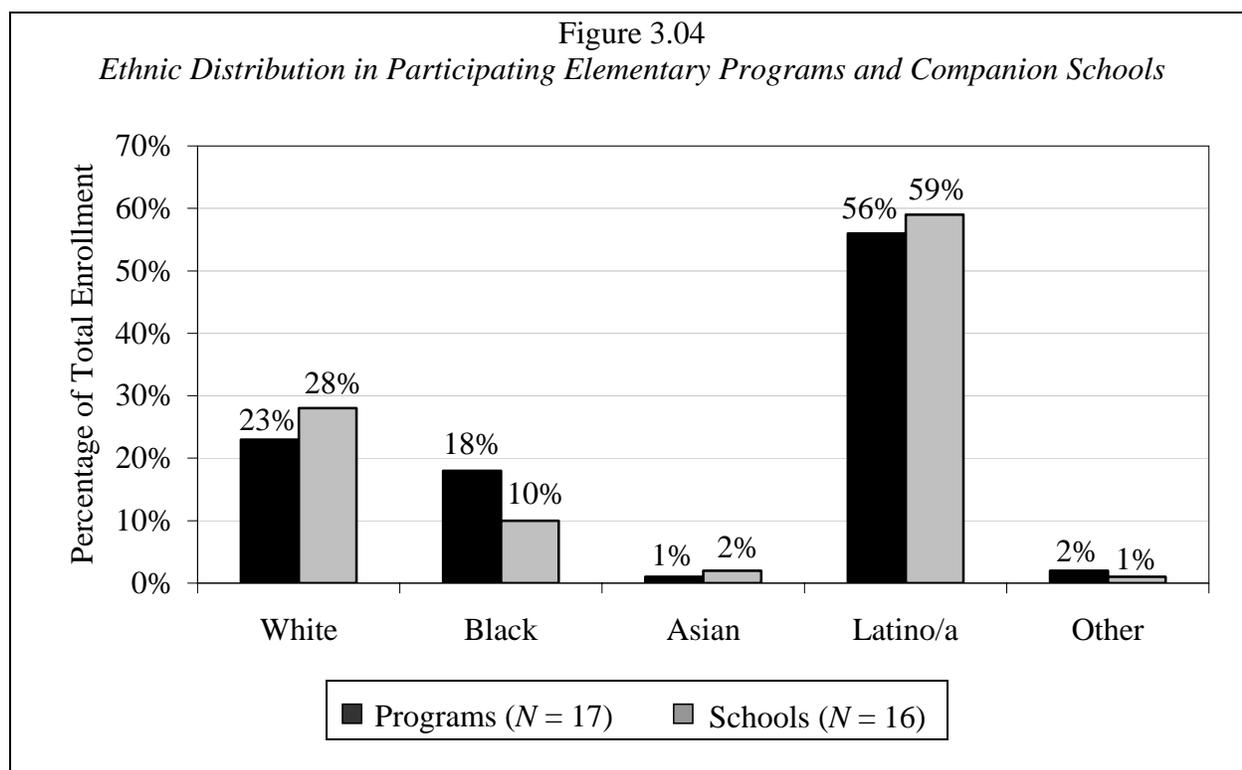
Program hours. We restricted the study to programs that were open at least three days a week. About three-fourths of the programs, however, offered activities at least five days a week (see Figure 3.01). Programs in neighborhood centers had regularly scheduled activities over the weekend as well as every weekday after school. There was some variability among programs in their hours of operation. As shown in Figure 3.02, about a third of the programs were open less than three hours a day. Almost 40% of the middle school programs and 24% of the elementary programs offered activities for four or more hours each day.

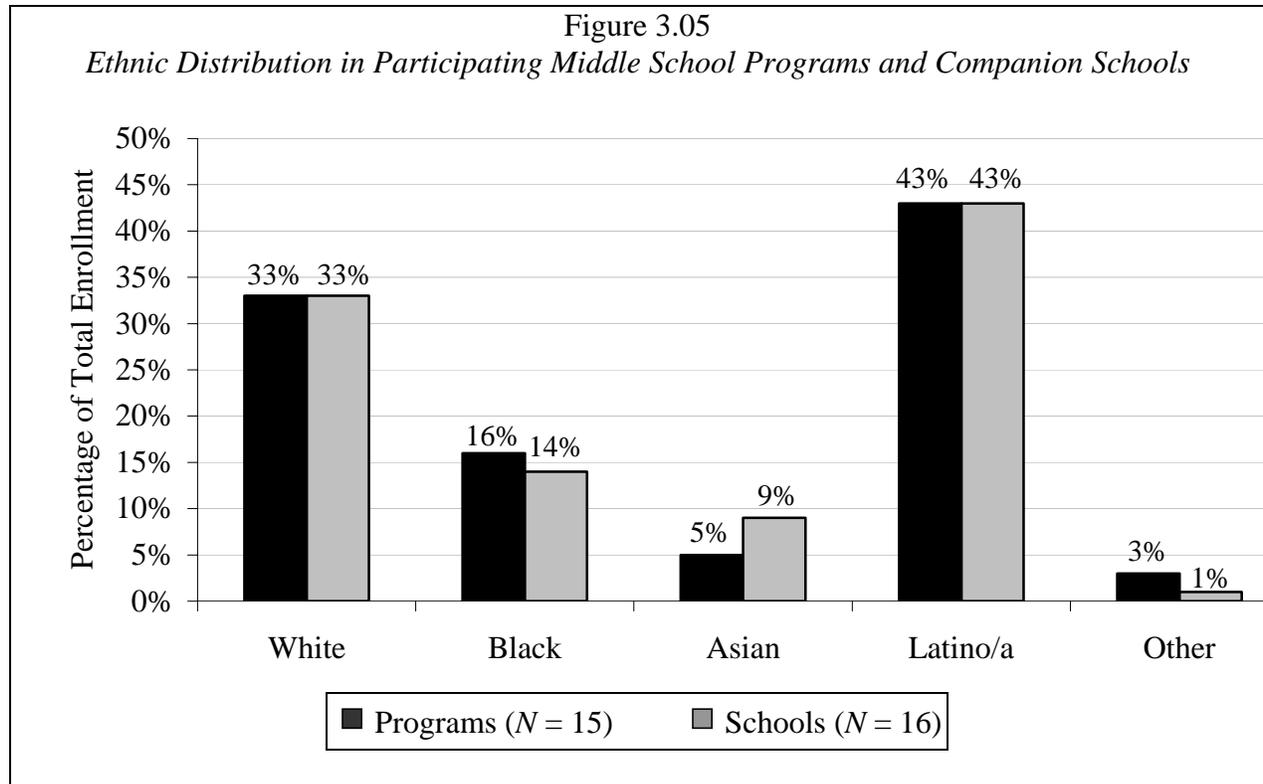


Attendance. We expect that regular attendance (dosage) will be an important factor in the impact of participation in promising after-school programs on youth. Therefore, we were interested not only in the number of days that the programs were open but also in the average number of days that youth attended. One benchmark of attendance is the proportion of registered participants who attend the program at least three days a week. Not surprisingly, elementary programs reported higher attendance rates. Three-quarters of these programs indicated that at least half of their participants attended three or more days a week, and one out of five claimed that this benchmark was achieved by more than 90% of their participants (see Figure 3.03). By contrast, only 57% of the middle school programs reported that a majority of their youth attended three or more days a week, and none of these programs indicated that 90% or more of their youth achieved this benchmark in attendance. In Phase 2 of the study, daily attendance of participants will be monitored. We will be especially interested in whether middle school youth have haphazard or intentional attendance patterns (for example, showing up only on those days when their favorite activity is offered).



Student demographics. Across the schools associated with the selected programs, the average proportion of students who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch was 83% in the elementary schools ($N = 16$) and 75% in the middle schools ($N = 14$). Nearly three out of four students in elementary schools associated with our programs, and two out of three students in the middle schools, came from ethnic minority backgrounds. The Latino population was especially high in elementary schools (59% of students); middle schools were more ethnically diverse, but a plurality (43%) came from a Latino background. Program participants closely matched the ethnic composition of the associated schools (see Figures 3.04 and 3.05). This demographic match is an advantage for the study because it reduces the likelihood that program findings can be explained by selection demographics.





Chapter 4

Structural and Institutional Features of Participating Programs

In this chapter we describe the structural and institutional features of the programs that are participating in the Study of Promising After-School Programs. We detail several features that our theory of change specifies as important to the provision of high-quality programming, including:

- Staff qualifications and support
- Program configuration in terms of student-staff ratios
- Program resources, including funding and access to space and materials
- Program partnerships, linkages, and connections to schools, the community, and parents

Staff Qualifications and Support

Staff overview. The number of staff associated with each program varied widely—from 6 to 28 among elementary programs and from 5 to 44 for middle school programs. On average, elementary programs reported 14.5 staff members, whereas the average number in middle school programs was 16.4. These numbers include paid and volunteer staff in a variety of positions, from administrators to activity leaders to clerical assistants to food service personnel and custodians.

Program directors supplied information on all staff associated with the programs, including directors, adult activity leaders, teenagers assisting with the program, and other staff. Table 4.01 summarizes staff characteristics. Directors reported working an average of nearly 30 hours a week in elementary programs and nearly 38 hours a week in middle school programs. Most had been associated with the programs for three years or more. Thirty-eight percent of the elementary program directors and 47% of the middle school program directors also were

Table 4.01
Program Staff Work Arrangements

	Director	Activity leader	Teen staff	Other staff
Elementary programs <i>N</i>	15	128	4	42
Work days/week <i>M (SD)</i>	4.9 (0.5)	3.2 (1.7)	4.0 (0.0)	3.7 (1.5)
Hours/week <i>M (SD)</i>	29.2 (11.1)	11.9 (10.9)	14.5 (1.0)	12.1 (6.7)
# years at program <i>M (SD)</i>	3.6 (2.5)	2.2 (1.8)	1.54 (0.6)	2.0 (1.2)
Paid by program	100%	80%	100%	83%
Employed by school	38%	23%	0	15%
Middle school programs <i>N</i>	16	157	13	26
Work days/week <i>M (SD)</i>	4.8 (0.4)	3.1 (1.5)	1.5 (0.0)	3.1 (1.9)
Hours/week <i>M (SD)</i>	37.8 (17.3)	9.8 (9.1)	2.5 (0.0)	14.1 (14.3)
# years at program <i>M (SD)</i>	3.6 (1.9)	1.6 (1.3)	0.3 (0.0)	2.0 (2.1)
Paid by program	100%	81%	0	69%
Employed by school	47%	44%	0	40%

employed by the school their program served.

Activity leaders devoted an average of 10 to 12 hours a week to the after-school program. On average, they had been affiliated with the program for over two years in elementary programs and 1.6 years in middle school programs. Eight of ten were paid by the program; about half of the middle school activity leaders and a fourth of those in the elementary school programs also were employed by the associated school.

Only a few directors reported having teenage staff, so the overall numbers in this category were quite small. Understandably, this group had a lower average tenure (especially in middle school programs) and fewer working hours than any other category of staff. The “other

staff' category was larger; on average, these individuals had statistics similar to those of activity leaders.

Staff education. Program directors and activity leaders in the selected programs were relatively well educated. Over 80% of the middle school program directors had obtained a four-year college degree, and nearly 20% reported a graduate degree or some graduate work beyond a bachelor's degree (see Table 4.02). Nearly 40% were certified teachers. The educational background of the elementary program directors was not quite as extensive. Nevertheless, 69% had at least a bachelor's degree, and 15% reported graduate level education; 7% were certified teachers.

About half the activity leaders at both the elementary and middle school programs had a bachelor's degree or better. Nearly one-third of the middle school activity leaders were certified teachers; this was true of 18% of the elementary activity leaders also.

Table 4.02
Program Staff Education and Training

	Elementary programs		Middle school programs	
	Director <i>N</i> = 15	Activity leader <i>N</i> = 128	Director <i>N</i> = 18	Activity leader <i>N</i> = 155
Educational attainment				
High school or less	8%	16%	0	13%
Some college	23%	28%	16%	40%
Bachelor's degree	54%	49%	67%	34%
Graduate work	15%	7%	17%	13%
Certifications				
Certified teacher	7%	18%	39%	30%
Certified in development	23%	4%	20%	7%

Staff experience. Program directors reported considerable experience working with youth prior to their current position. As detailed in Table 4.03, most of the directors had worked in youth recreation or child care positions; about three out of four had experience in elementary or secondary education classrooms. Over a third of the directors had prior administrative experience in youth programs or social service agencies.

Table 4.03
Program Directors' Experience Working with Youth

	Years of experience		
	None	1-3	More than 3
Elementary program directors (<i>N</i> = 17)			
Recreation or child care worker	20%	47%	33%
Social services	40%	33%	27%
Classroom instruction	27%	47%	26%
Camp counselor/leader	56%	22%	22%
Youth/park/recreation administration	64%	7%	29%
Social service administration	75%	0	25%
Middle school program directors (<i>N</i> = 17)			
Recreation or child care worker	36%	43%	21%
Social services	39%	39%	22%
Classroom instruction	20%	47%	33%
Camp counselor/leader	39%	31%	30%
Youth/park/recreation administration	66%	17%	17%
Social service administration	83%	17%	0

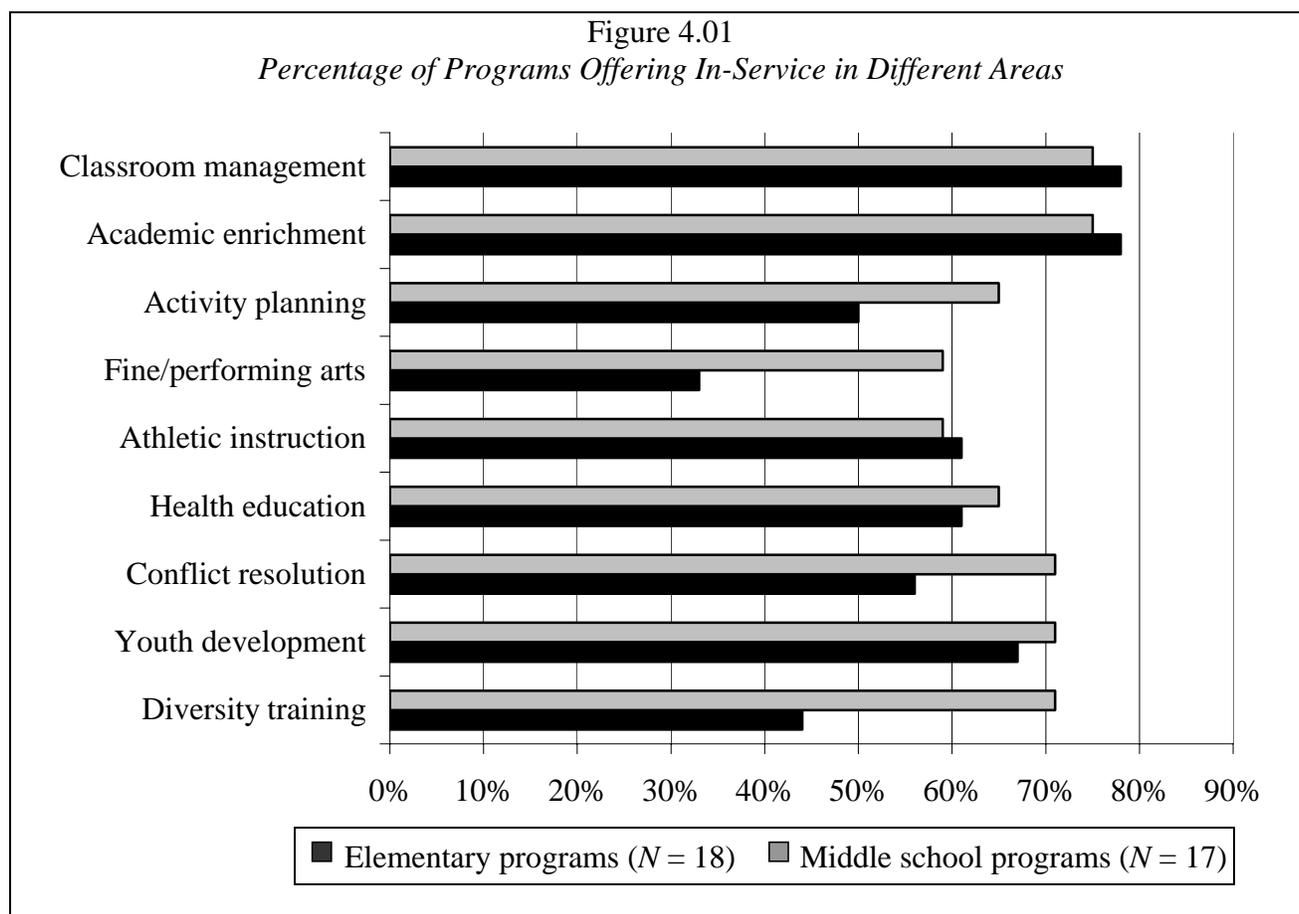
Like the directors, the activity leaders whom we surveyed reported considerable experience working with youth prior to taking a position with the after-school program (see Table 4.04). Over 60% of activity leaders in elementary programs had more than two years of experience working with youth in social or community service agencies; more than 80% had experience as a classroom teacher or teacher's aide. Among middle school activity leaders, over 90% had at least one year of experience working with youth in community agencies; half had spent more than two years as a classroom teacher or teacher's aide. No activity leaders reported a background in school administration, and few reported backgrounds in pupil support services.

Table 4.04
Activity Leaders' Experience Working with Youth

	Years of experience		
	None	1-2	More than 2
Elementary program activity leaders ($N = 11$)			
Social or youth services	18%	18%	64%
School administration	100%	0	0
Classroom instruction	18%	36%	46%
Pupil support services in schools	91%	0	9%
Middle school program activity leaders ($N = 10$)			
Social or youth services	7%	53%	40%
School administration	100%	0	0
Classroom instruction	10%	40%	50%
Pupil support services in schools	90%	10%	0

Staff training. The educational background and vocational experiences that staff brought to their positions were impressive features of the promising after-school programs in our sample. Equally impressive was the recognition by these programs of the need for in-service training of their staff. Training was provided in a variety of areas, including content areas (math, science, fine arts) and procedural issues (classroom management, conflict resolution, understanding diversity). In some cases staff members were required to attend training sessions; in other cases the sessions were voluntary. Program directors reported receiving an average of 51 hours of training during the previous 12 months; activity leaders reported an average of 21 hours.

Figure 4.01 summarizes the types of training sessions offered to staff. The most common domains for in-service sessions in both elementary and middle school programs were classroom



management and academic enrichment. Other popular topics in middle school programs were conflict resolution, diversity training, and youth development (e.g., information about normative patterns of cognitive, personal, and social development among youth). Elementary programs were less likely than middle school programs to offer training in fine and performing arts, and diversity training.

The program directors provided more detailed information on the types of in-service training that were offered for specific components of the staff (see Table 4.05). In elementary programs, training was more likely to be offered to directors and paid staff than to volunteers. Both directors and paid staff were most likely to be provided with training in academic enrichment and classroom management; youth development also was a popular training topic.

Table 4.05
Training Opportunities Provided to Program Staff

	Elementary programs ($N = 18$)			Middle school programs ($N = 17$)		
	Program director	Paid staff	Volunteer staff	Program director	Paid staff	Volunteer staff
Classroom management	56%	62%	45%	59%	60%	70%
Academic enrichment	61%	69%	36%	59%	53%	50%
Activity planning	44%	31%	36%	53%	47%	50%
Fine/performing arts	28%	25%	9%	53%	40%	30%
Athletic instruction	44%	44%	18%	47%	47%	20%
Health education	50%	38%	27%	53%	53%	30%
Conflict resolution	44%	38%	9%	65%	53%	30%
Youth development	50%	50%	18%	59%	53%	30%
Diversity training	44%	25%	18%	65%	47%	40%

Classroom management, academic enrichment, and activity planning were the areas in which training was most likely to be provided to volunteers in the elementary programs.

In the middle school programs, directors and paid staff were most likely to be provided training in conflict resolution, academic enrichment, classroom management, and youth development. Middle school programs were more likely to provide training to staff in fine and performing arts than elementary programs were. In contrast to the relatively few training opportunities for volunteers in the elementary programs, many middle school programs offered training to volunteers on multiple topics.

Generally, the promising programs in our study offered an impressive and diverse array of in-service learning opportunities for staff. They made a concerted effort to hone staff skills in the content of the activities they taught, modes of instruction, behavior management, and awareness of young people's personal or developmental characteristics.

Planning time and coordination. In the promising after-school programs selected for the study, activity leaders are invested with considerable responsibility. Nine of 10 elementary program activity leaders whom we surveyed, and 8 of 10 activity leaders in middle school programs, reported major responsibilities for planning program activities. As shown in Figure 4.02, this occurred on at least a weekly basis in nearly 80% of the cases. One out of four staff in elementary programs and over a third of middle school program staff indicated that they spent some time every day engaged in planning activities.

To some extent, staff members coordinated with each other in program planning and devising program policies and procedures. Nearly all activity leaders indicated that they met at least occasionally with other staff to discuss program issues (see Figure 4.03). About 30% said that such meetings were infrequent, not even monthly. However, a third of the elementary and close to half of the middle school leaders said that they met with other program staff weekly.

Figure 4.02
Frequency of Program Activity Planning

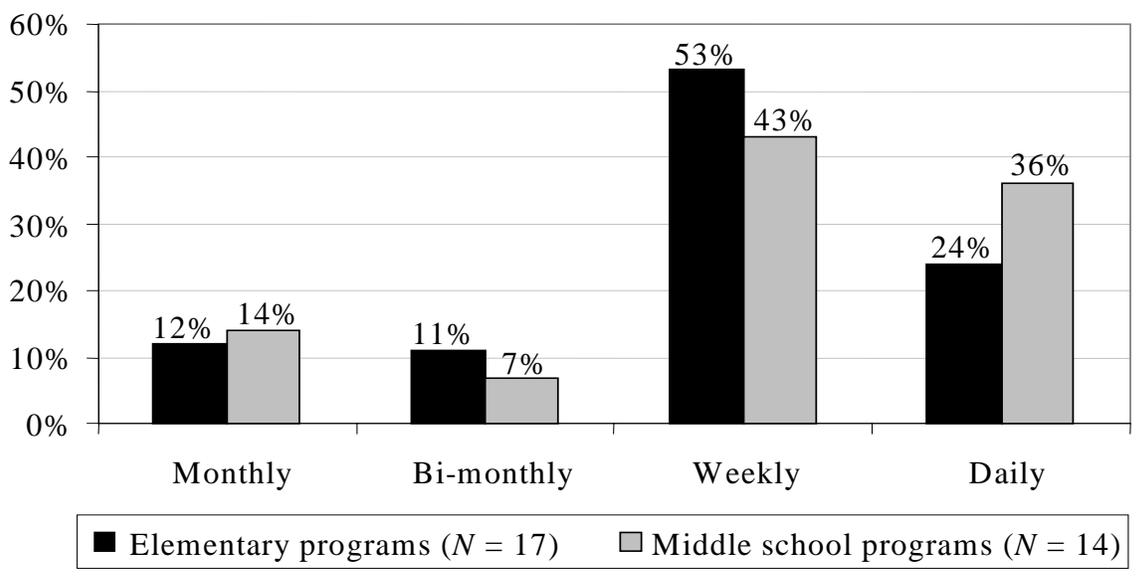
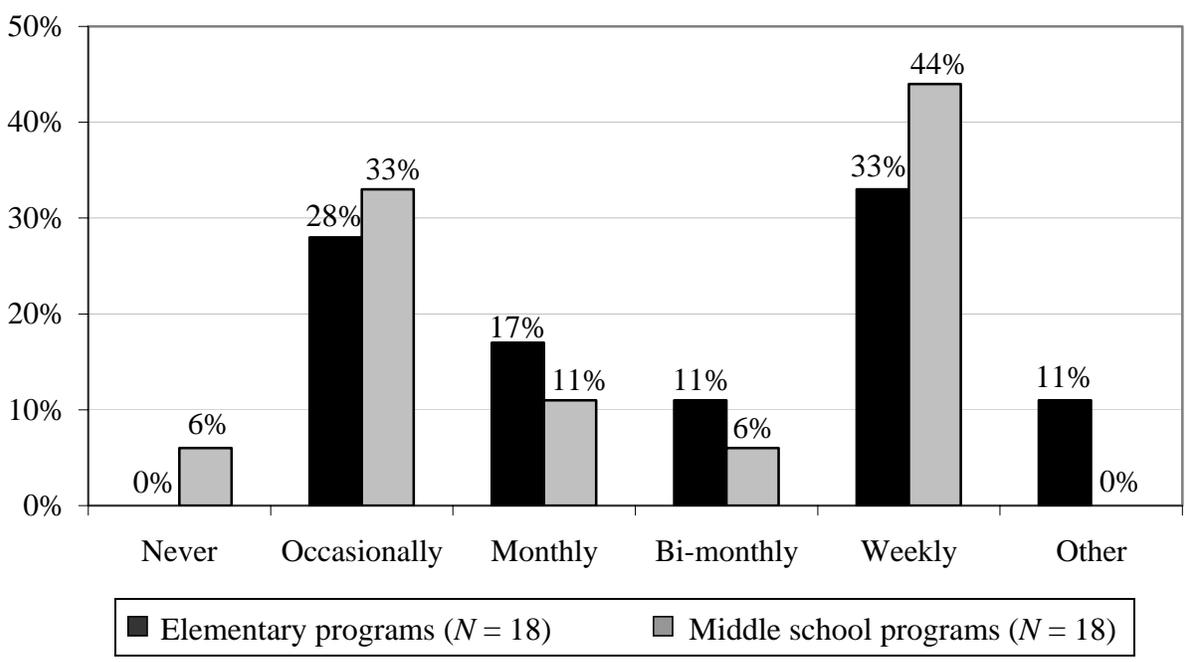


Figure 4.03
Frequency of Program Staff Planning Meetings



Staff satisfaction. The investments that the programs made in hiring qualified staff, continuing their training, and providing them with plentiful resources for their activities paid dividends in terms of staff satisfaction with their roles in the programs. We asked activity leaders to respond to a set of items about working conditions in the programs. The items were rated on a four-point scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree). As shown in Table 4.06, mean scores were highly skewed toward the positive end of the scale, indicating strong satisfaction. A majority of the activity leaders “strongly agreed” with almost every item at the elementary level and with half the items at the middle school level. Very few activity leaders expressed even modest disagreement with any of the statements.

Table 4.06
Activity Leaders’ Perceptions of Working Conditions and Staff Relations

Item	Elementary leaders <i>N</i> = 19		Middle school leaders <i>N</i> = 18	
	Mean score	Strongly agree	Mean score	Strongly agree
I enjoy working here	2.95	95%	2.78	78%
I find the work challenging and rewarding	2.68	68%	2.67	67%
I have the materials I need to do a good job	2.84	84%	2.39	44%
I have the space I need to do a good job	2.53	58%	2.50	56%
I get the support and feedback I need from my supervisor	2.63	63%	2.67	67%
I have enough opportunities to talk and share ideas with other staff	2.47	63%	2.28	33%
Staff members are committed to their work	2.53	53%	2.17	22%
Staff members support each other and work as a team	2.50	56%	2.28	39%
The director involves staff in important decisions	2.42	42%	2.11	22%

Note. The rating scale ranged from 0 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree).

Program Configuration: Student-Staff Ratios

During Spring 2003 we observed an average of 9.7 program participants per staff member in elementary programs and 8.0 participants per staff member in middle school programs. Table 4.07 shows the student-staff ratios in the various types of activities we observed using the After-School Activity Observation Instrument (AOI; see Appendix F). Most of the cases in which the ratio surpassed 10-to-1 at the elementary level involved passive pursuits (e.g., watching TV or playing computer games), transitional events (arrival or snack time), or sports practice and games. The exceptions were homework assistance, service or civic engagement, and cultural awareness. Student-staff ratios exceeded 10-to-1 for only two types of activity in middle school programs, classes focusing on health or well-being (which were observed only rarely, so this may be an anomalous finding) and sports games.

The information in Table 4.07 is based on total staff; for some programs this includes high school student volunteers. When only adult staff members were included in calculations, the average youth-staff ratios increased modestly, to 11.5 participants per staff member in elementary programs and 8.7 participants per staff member in middle school programs. For a majority of the activities observed in both the elementary and middle school programs, the ratio remained below 10 students per staff member.

Program Resources

Space. The programs selected for the study had access to varied spaces that allowed them to support diverse activities (see Table 4.08). At least three-quarters of the programs were able to make use of classrooms, outside activity space, a cafeteria, and specialty areas such as a gym, library, and art room for their programming. A majority also had access to an auditorium, computer lab, and kitchen facilities. In addition, virtually all of the programs had a storage area and facilities for staff planning and private meetings. In fact, the only type of space that was

Table 4.07
Youth/Total Staff Ratio Observed in Various Types of Activities

Activity type	Mean # youth per staff member	
	Elementary programs N = 19	Middle school programs N = 18
Homework assistance	10.2	9.8
Tutoring	5.9	4.1
Study skills/test prep	Not observed	5.0
Reading/language arts enrichment	8.7	3.4
Math/science enrichment	8.9	6.7
Recreational reading/listening to story/book	8.1	7.4
Computer skill building	6.0	4.7
Computer games	10.6	5.9
Sports: competitive and noncompetitive games	12.3	11.4
Sports: practice/drills/skill building	11.1	8.3
Fitness/exercise class (including martial arts)	11.7	6.3
Arts and/or crafts	8.2	7.6
Performing arts (dance, music, drama)	9.8	8.4
Board/table/card games or puzzles	8.7	6.8
TV/video watching	11.0	5.7
Higher education or career orientation	Not observed	6.3
Health/well-being	5.7	20.0
Service/civic (in community or program)	9.0	9.0
Snack	8.6	9.5
Arrival/dismissal	8.5	7.0
Cultural awareness clubs/projects	17.3	8.9

Note. This table defines staff members as adults or teens, whether paid or volunteers.

Table 4.08
Program Directors' Reports of Available Space for Program Activities

Type of space	Space is available		Available space is limited	
	Elementary programs N = 17	Middle school programs N = 17	Elementary programs N = 17	Middle school programs N = 17
Classrooms	100%	100%	29%	18%
Library	82%	82%	35%	41%
Gym	94%	88%	19%	29%
Outdoor activity space	100%	88%	12%	24%
Cafeteria	82%	77%	6%	12%
Computer lab	56%	100%	19%	19%
Art room	75%	88%	31%	25%
Science lab	31%	71%	12%	29%
Music room	69%	59%	44%	24%
Auditorium	63%	79%	0	14%
Kitchen	56%	50%	25%	25%
Infirmery	76%	53%	24%	29%
Office/planning space	94%	88%	35%	6%
Private meeting space	88%	94%	29%	12%
Storage area	94%	94%	41%	47%

sparse was a science lab for elementary programs.

Some program directors indicated that some spaces available to the program were limited. Over 40% of the directors said that storage space was limited, and over a third said their current library space was inadequate. Space for art and music, and office space, seemed limited to many of the elementary directors.

Materials. Program directors generally were more satisfied with their access to materials for program activities (see Table 4.09). Over 80% of the directors indicated that they had access to materials in each of the ten categories about which we inquired. Moreover, very few directors expressed that the program had only limited materials of any particular type. About 30% of elementary program directors believed that access to computers for students was inadequate. One of four middle school directors indicated that their programs could make use of more physical education equipment and expanded transportation services for field trips. All of the elementary directors, and 94% of the middle school directors, indicated that although they had games and puzzles available to students, these materials were in short supply.

Table 4.09
Program Directors' Reports of Available Materials for Program Activities

Type of materials	Materials are available		Available materials are limited	
	Elementary programs <i>N</i> = 17	Middle school programs <i>N</i> = 17	Elementary programs <i>N</i> = 17	Middle school programs <i>N</i> = 17
Calculators/math tools	93%	82%	14%	12%
Computers for student use	88%	100%	29%	12%
Computers for staff use	93%	94%	0	6%
Reference books	82%	88%	6%	18%
Leisure reading material	100%	94%	0	18%
Physical education equipment	100%	94%	12%	24%
Art supplies	100%	94%	0	6%
Games and puzzles	100%	94%	100%	94%
Transportation for field trips	88%	82%	18%	24%
Photocopier	100%	94%	12%	6%

Funding. Often, the key to sustaining programs financially is drawing from a variety of funding sources, so that if one source diminishes or disappears the program can be continued with support from the other sources. The after-school programs in our study illustrate this maxim. As seen in Table 4.10, a majority drew funds from both local and federal government programs, but they also relied upon private or corporate donations, support from local and national foundations, and the school districts in which they were located.

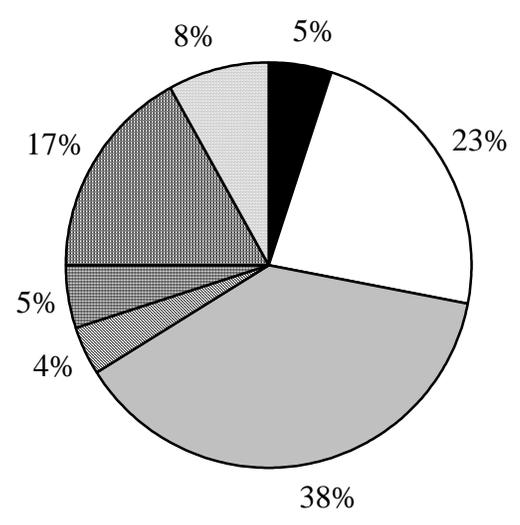
Table 4.10
Sources of Program Funding

Funding source	Elementary programs <i>N</i> = 17	Middle school programs <i>N</i> = 17
School district	40%	43%
Local government	67%	71%
Federal government	73%	79%
National foundation	33%	43%
Local foundation	33%	36%
Private donor or corporation	53%	50%

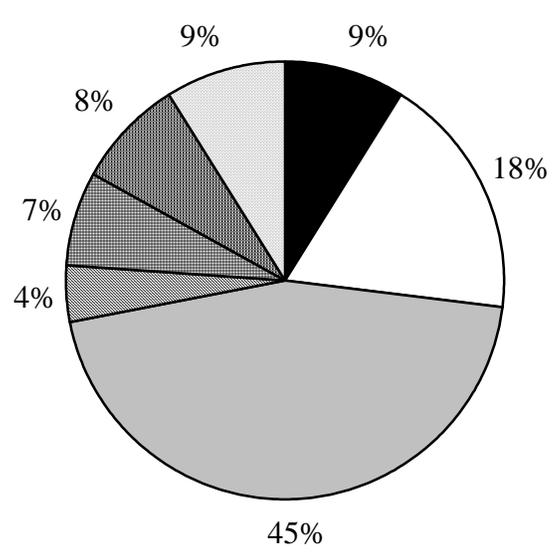
According to the program directors, the largest contributor to programs at both the elementary and middle school levels was the federal government (see Figure 4.04). Federal funds (21st Century Community Learning Centers, Title I, Safe and Drug Free Schools) accounted for over one-third of elementary program budgets and 45% of middle school program budgets. Local governments also were significant contributors, accounting for a fourth of the budget of elementary programs and nearly 20% of middle school program budgets. Private and corporate donations made up much of the rest of the elementary budgets, whereas middle school programs turned more equally to several sources for the remaining third of their budget.

Figure 4.04
Proportion of Program Budgets Received from Different Funding Sources

Elementary programs (N = 17)



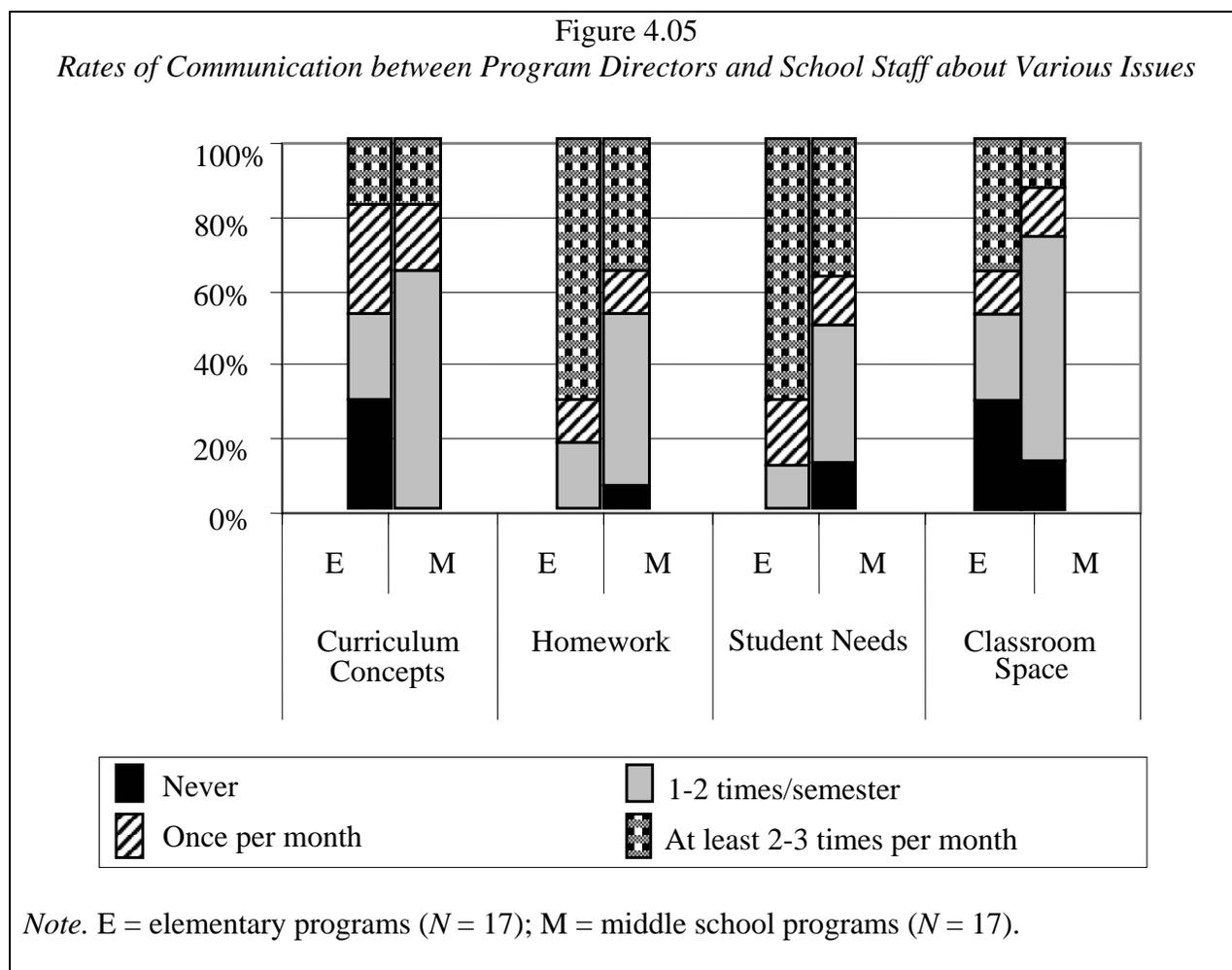
Middle school programs (N = 17)



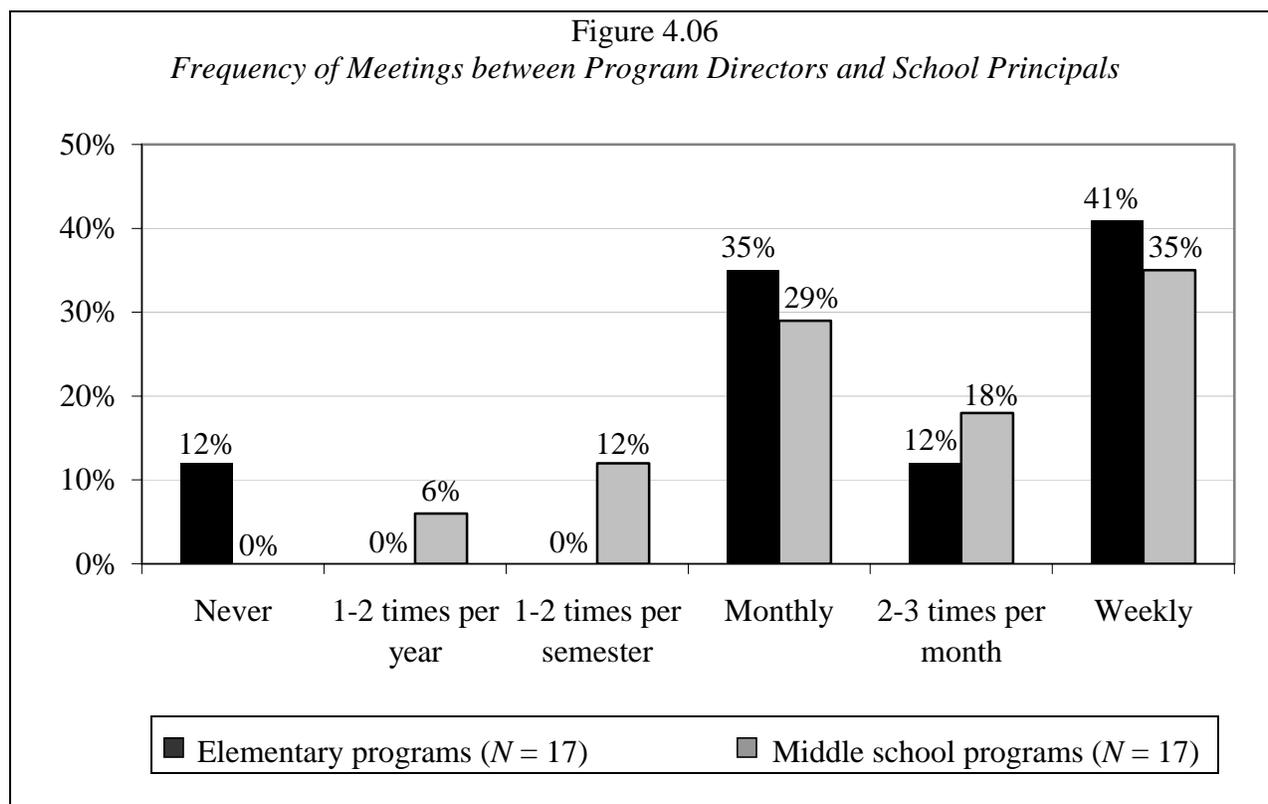
- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| ■ School district | □ Local government | ▒ Federal government |
| ▒ National foundation | ▒ Local foundation | ▒ Private donor |
| □ Other | | |

Program Partnerships and Linkages

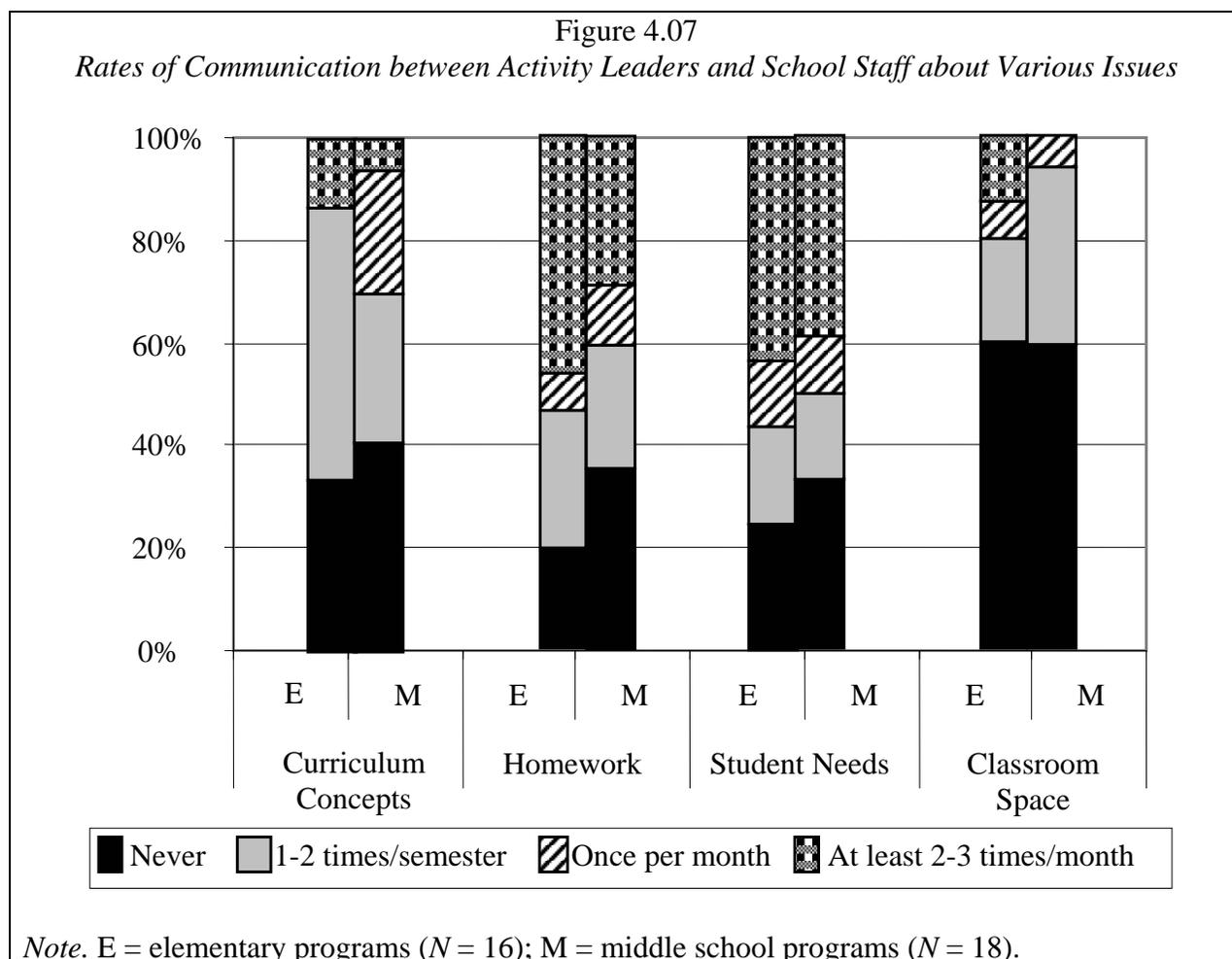
Schools. Linkages to associated schools were particularly important for the after-school programs in our sample. The school-based programs relied upon the school to provide space for program activities. For these programs as well as those located away from the school, the program-school partnership extended beyond this basic connection. As shown in Figure 4.05, over two-thirds of the elementary program directors stated that they spoke with school staff almost weekly about homework assignments and individual student needs. All of the middle school program directors and a majority of the elementary program directors indicated that they consulted with school staff about curriculum concepts at least a couple times each semester.



Program directors also met regularly with the school principal. Over half of the directors conferred with the principal at least two or three times a month; over one-third met with the principal weekly (see Figure 4.06). Meetings between these two individuals were slightly more frequent in elementary programs, even though a small portion of elementary directors indicated that they never met with the principal.



Program activity leaders also contributed to the program-school partnership. Figure 4.07 traces the frequency with which activity leaders communicated with school staff about curriculum concepts, homework assignments, individual students, and classroom space. In both elementary and middle school programs there was regular communication about all of these issues except classroom space. Over a third of the activity leaders indicated that they spoke with school staff about individual students almost weekly. Nearly half of the elementary activity



leaders whom we interviewed had this level of communication with school staff about homework assignments. Communication about curriculum concepts was less frequent, especially among elementary program staff. About 40% of the activity leaders discussed classroom space with school staff at least occasionally.

Community organizations and agencies. A common strength of the promising after-school programs in our study was their ability to draw from a variety of resources in the community. In addition to budget support (already detailed), community organizations and agencies provided programs with space, supplies, personnel, and structured activities, along with referrals of possible participants. Table 4.11 indicates the percentage of programs turning to

various numbers of community agencies for each of these different resources.

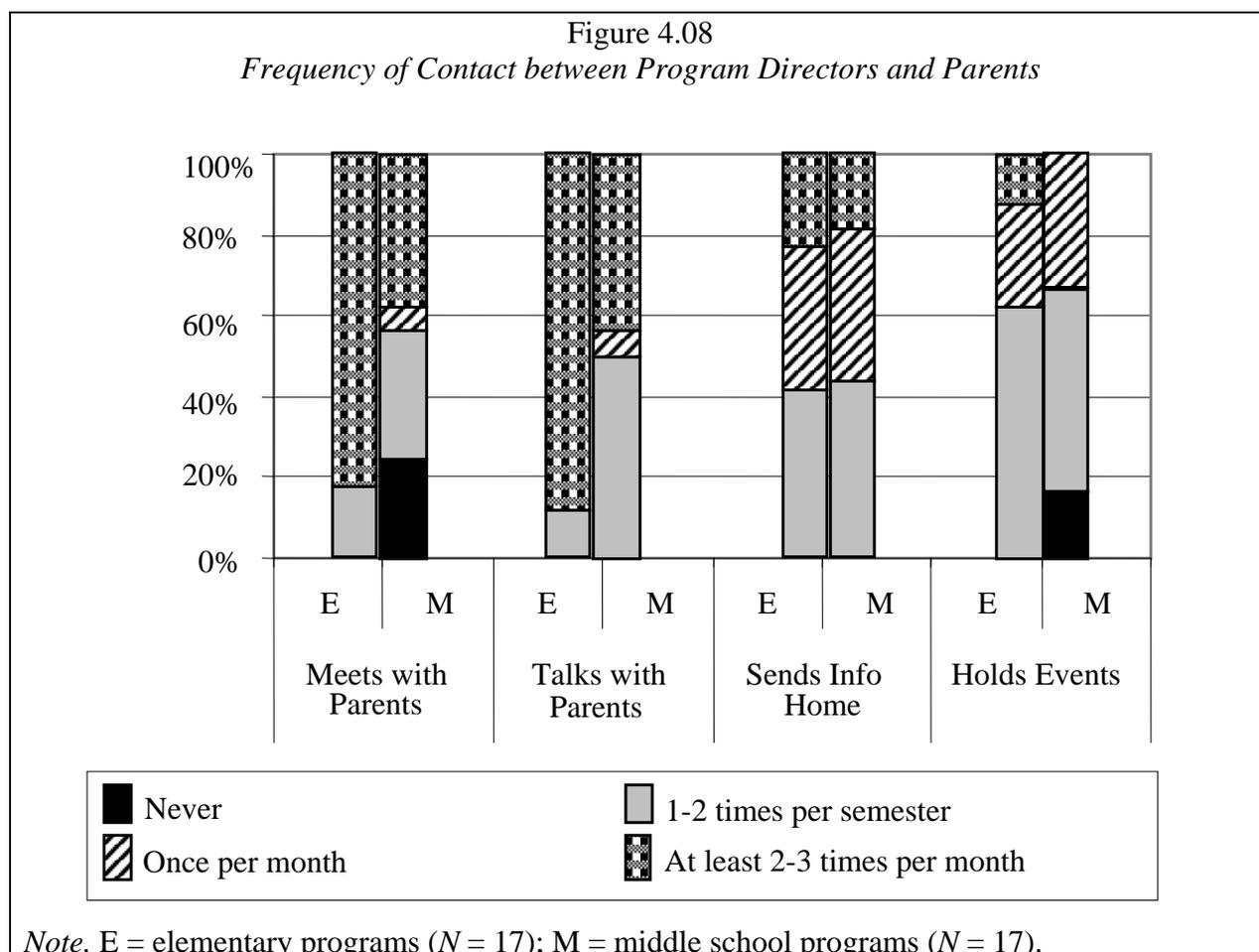
Virtually all of the elementary programs looked to community organizations to provide classes or activities for youth and parents, volunteers to lead these or other activities offered by the program, and supplies. Middle school programs relied heavily on outside organizations to provide classes for youth and donate supplies. The programs relied on multiple organizations for many resources; many programs reported associations with five or more organizations for a given resource. In general, elementary programs reported more community linkages than the middle school programs did. However, the more general message to emerge from our data is that almost all of the programs in our study had extensive community ties.

Table 4.11
Distribution of Programs Receiving Resources from Community Organizations

Resource	Elementary programs <i>N</i> = 17				Middle school programs <i>N</i> = 17			
	# community organizations				# community organizations			
	0	1	2-4	5 +	0	1	2-4	5 +
Classes for youth	0	6%	50%	44%	6%	24%	29%	41%
Classes for parents	7%	20%	47%	26%	31%	25%	31%	13%
Provide volunteers	6%	25%	50%	19%	29%	24%	29%	18%
Provide mentors	40%	20%	27%	13%	41%	18%	29%	12%
Donate supplies	7%	13%	60%	20%	12%	12%	47%	29%
Provide funding	27%	27%	20%	26%	20%	13%	20%	47%
Donate space	40%	40%	13%	7%	59%	23%	6%	12%
Refer students	15%	57%	14%	14%	38%	31%	6%	25%
Other	18%	37%	18%	27%	60%	20%	0	20%

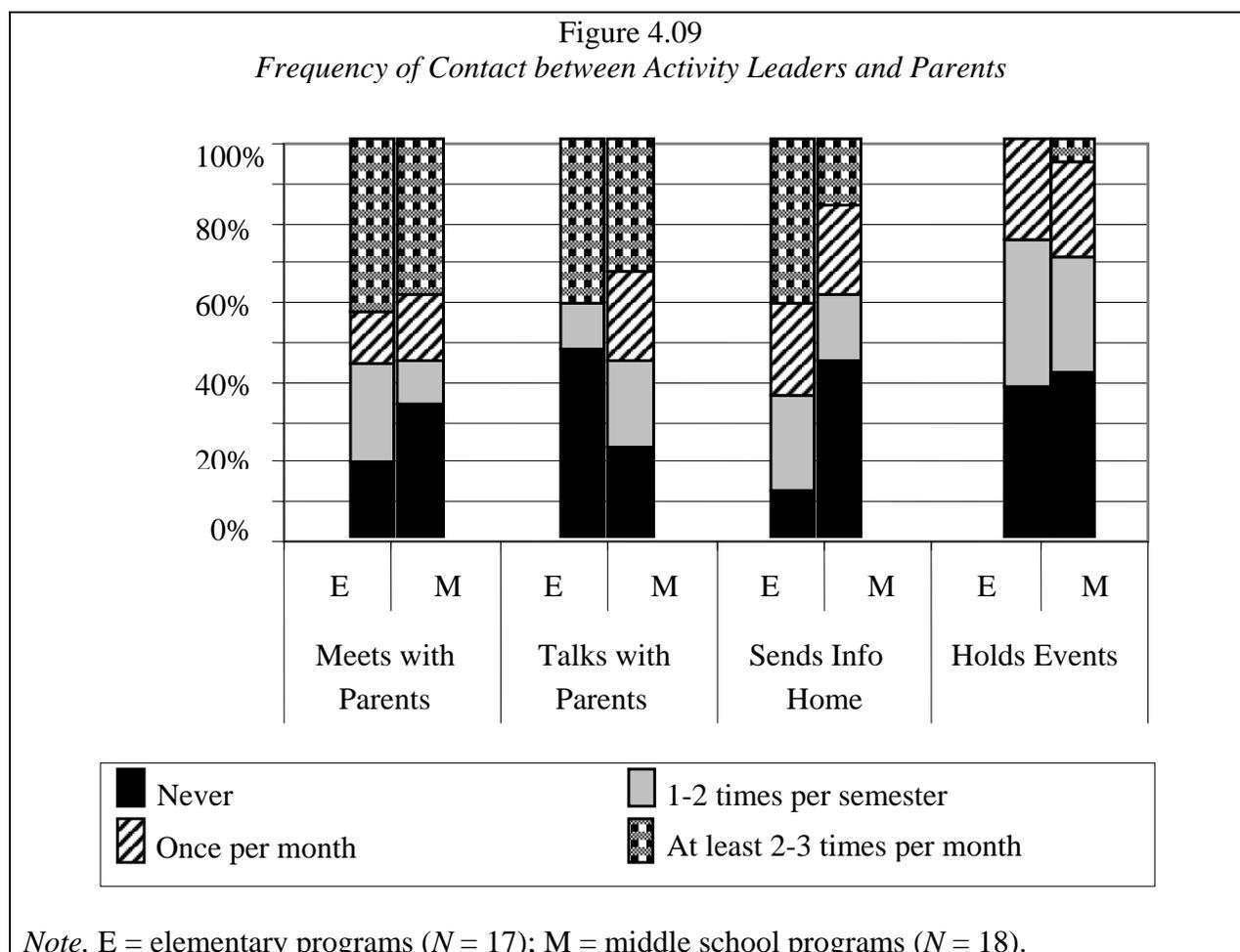
Parents. Another important linkage that the programs routinely forged was with the families of program participants. Many programs offered classes explicitly for parents, dealing with child rearing, health care, employment skills, and English language learning. These classes provided direct contact between parents and program staff and strengthened the adults' commitment to the program. The connection was enhanced by numerous other activities. In interviews with program directors and activity leaders, we asked how often they met individually with parents of participants, had phone conversations with a parent, sent information about program activities home for parents to read, or held events for parents and/or the entire family.

As shown in Figure 4.08, elementary program directors reported frequent discussions and meetings with parents; close to 90% talked with parents, and about 80% met with parents,



several times each month. The elementary program directors also reported that they sent information home and held events for parents at least once or twice each semester. The middle school program directors were less likely to talk and meet with parents, but they were about as likely as the elementary program directors to report sending information home and holding events for parents.

Figure 4.09 shows the reported frequency of contact between activity leaders and parents. In contrast to the program directors, activity leaders were more likely to report never having contact with parents. About half reported frequent talks and meetings with parents; 40% of elementary activity leaders and 15% of middle school activity leaders reported sending information home to parents more than once per month.



Summary

Our theory of change emphasizes that structural and institutional features provide the foundation on which promising after-school programs can build a meaningful and enriching set of activities for youth. The programs in our study seem well rooted in this regard. They employ a stable and well-trained staff who express high levels of satisfaction with working conditions. They enhance staff background and skills with a diverse program of in-service training. They draw financial and program resources from a variety of sources, forging strong linkages with various community constituencies. They develop and maintain close partnerships with affiliated schools and with parents of program participants.

Chapter 5

Process and Content Features of Participating Programs

Having examined the staffing, organization, and funding of the programs included in the Study of Promising After-School Programs, we now turn to process and content features of the programs. We assess the extent to which the programs provide rich content-based academic and enrichment activities that build skills, and examine how often they exhibit key process features of high-quality programming, including positive relationships with staff and peers and learning- and mastery-oriented content delivery strategies. We also consider which specific types of activities were especially effective in facilitating the key process features, and provide examples from observations that illustrate how these features were embedded in activities.

Program Content

Activities. We observed considerable diversity in program activities during our visits to the programs. During the Spring 2003 visits, for example, a total of 272 different activities were observed with the After-School Activity Observation Instrument (AOI; see Appendix F). Director and activity leader surveys indicated additional activities that we did not have an opportunity to observe, including photography, small businesses operated by students, video production, outdoor skills, textile production, cooking, gardening, oral history projects, drill team, and community service projects.

The observed activities represented many varied content areas, as indicated in Table 5.01. This table indicates the percentage of programs in which we observed each general type of activity. To clarify, this table is based on the activities that we selected for observation, not necessarily on the full range of activities available to youth on the days of our Spring 2003 site visits (let alone the activities available throughout the year). Thus, any differences that emerged across school level should be interpreted with caution. However, because our research team

Table 5.01
Types of Activities Observed in the Programs during Spring 2003 Site Visits

Activity type	Elementary programs N = 19	Middle school programs N = 18
Homework assistance	90%	50%
Arts and/or crafts	74%	78%
Performing arts (dance, music, drama)	58%	67%
Board/table/card games or puzzles	58%	56%
Math/science enrichment	53%	44%
Reading/language arts enrichment	47%	28%
Sports: competitive and noncompetitive games	37%	50%
Recreational reading/listening to story or book	32%	22%
Tutoring	26%	44%
Sports: practice/drills/skill building	26%	39%
Fitness/exercise class (including martial arts)	26%	17%
Computer games	21%	50%
Cultural awareness clubs or projects	21%	33%
Snack	21%	22%
Watching videos/TV	16%	22%
Arrival/departure	16%	11%
Health and well-being	11%	6%
Computer skill building	5%	28%
Service/civic (in community or program)	5%	6%
Higher education or career orientation	0	11%
Study skills/test preparation	0	6%

made an effort to sample the range of program activities in their observations, the table provides some indication of the distribution of activities in elementary and middle school programs.

All of the programs at each school level offered an activity focused on academic assistance. At the elementary level this tended to involve homework assistance, whereas at the middle school level many programs also offered tutoring or work on study skills and preparation for tests. Working with board games or puzzles, arts and crafts projects, and activities oriented toward dance, drama, musical instruments or other performing arts also were common. Computer-oriented activities were observed more often in middle school programs, whereas elementary programs were more likely to feature reading and language arts enrichment. Otherwise, differences across the two school levels were not remarkable.

Activity schedules. As indicated in Chapter 3, most programs operated at least five days a week, with three or more hours of activity each day. The daily schedule of the programs catered to the specific needs of the communities they served, as well as constraints imposed by the setting (program location and resources), staffing, and funding. In some cases, the schedule remained consistent across days of the week and across the academic year (with changes in program content as specific classes or activities ended and new sessions began). In other cases there was a marked difference in schedule from one day to the next, or one season of the year to another. At some point in their daily schedule, most programs had multiple classes running at the same time. Boxes 5.01 and 5.02 provide sample daily schedules from elementary and middle school programs.

Box 5.01 Elementary Program Schedule					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2:15 – 2:45	Snack and Homework	Snack and Homework	Snack and Homework	Snack and Homework	Snack and Homework
2:45 – 5:30	Capoeira	Capoeira	Capoeira	Capoeira	Capoeira
	English Language Development	English Language Development	English Language Development	English Language Development	
	Art	Art	Art	Art	Scrabble
	Ceramics	Tennis	Ceramics	Tennis	
	Music in the Schools	Ecology	Music in the Schools	Choir	
	Creative Drama	Leadership Club			
	Computers	Computers		Computers	
	Tagalog	Chess		Tagalog	
	TAG			TAG	
		Art History		Art History	
	Khmer	Khmer			

Box 5.02 Middle School Program Schedule				
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
2:30 - 2:50	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack
2:50 - 4:25	Homework Help	Homework Help	Homework Help	Homework Help
	Tutoring	Tutoring	Tutoring	Tutoring
	Sports and Games	Sports and Games	Sports and Games	Sports and Games
	Youth Lounge	Youth Lounge	Youth Lounge	Youth Lounge
	Pottery	English Club	Pottery	English Club
	Performers Club	Performers Club	Dance Club	Piano Club
	Music Tutoring	Music Tutoring	Anti-Gravity Club	
		Low Rider Club	Student Council	Low Rider Club
4:30 - 6:00	Open Gym	Open Gym	Open Gym	Open Gym
		Painting		Painting
		Soccer		Soccer

Programs also tended to change specific activities on a regular basis; 65% of the elementary directors and 81% of the middle school directors indicated that their programs offered activities in distinct sessions. We asked the program directors to describe the temporal features of activities: how frequently an activity met, how long the meeting sessions were, and the number of weeks that an activity was presented. As shown in Table 5.02, most activities in the elementary programs ran 7-12 weeks, whereas nearly half the middle school programs offered activity sessions of 1-6 weeks. There was little consistency among programs in the number of days an activity was offered each week, but for the majority of the elementary programs, the daily session for an activity lasted an hour or less. Middle school programs tended to allow between one and two hours for each activity session.

Table 5.02
Temporal Features of Program Activity Modules

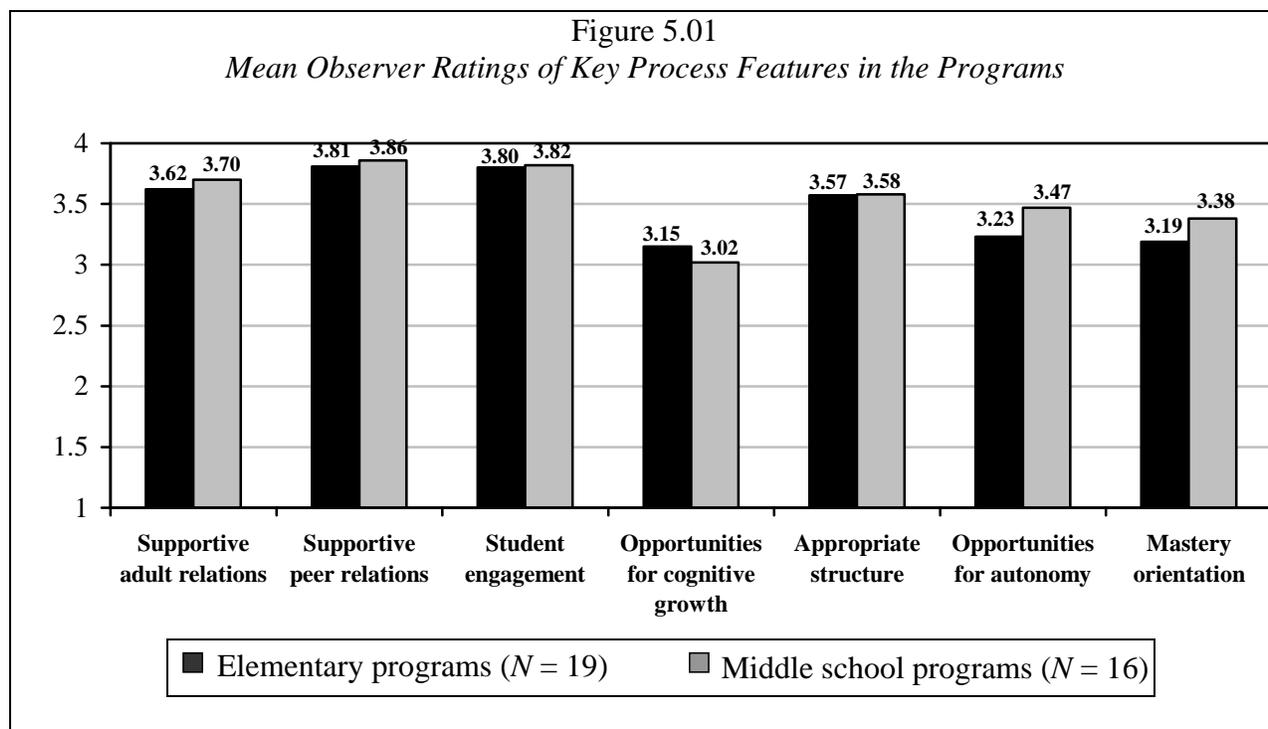
	% directors endorsing category	
	Elementary programs N = 11	Middle school programs N = 13
Frequency of activity meeting		
Once per week or less	30	30
2-3 times per week	20	40
4 or more times per week	30	0
Varies	20	30
Duration of activity meeting		
1 hour or less	64	10
1.01-2 hours	18	90
More than 2 hours	18	0
Length (weeks) of typical session		
1-6 weeks	9	45
7-12 weeks	64	18
13-18 weeks	9	10
Varies	18	27

Note. 35% of elementary programs and 19% of middle school programs did not offer activities in distinct sessions and are not included in the table.

Program Processes

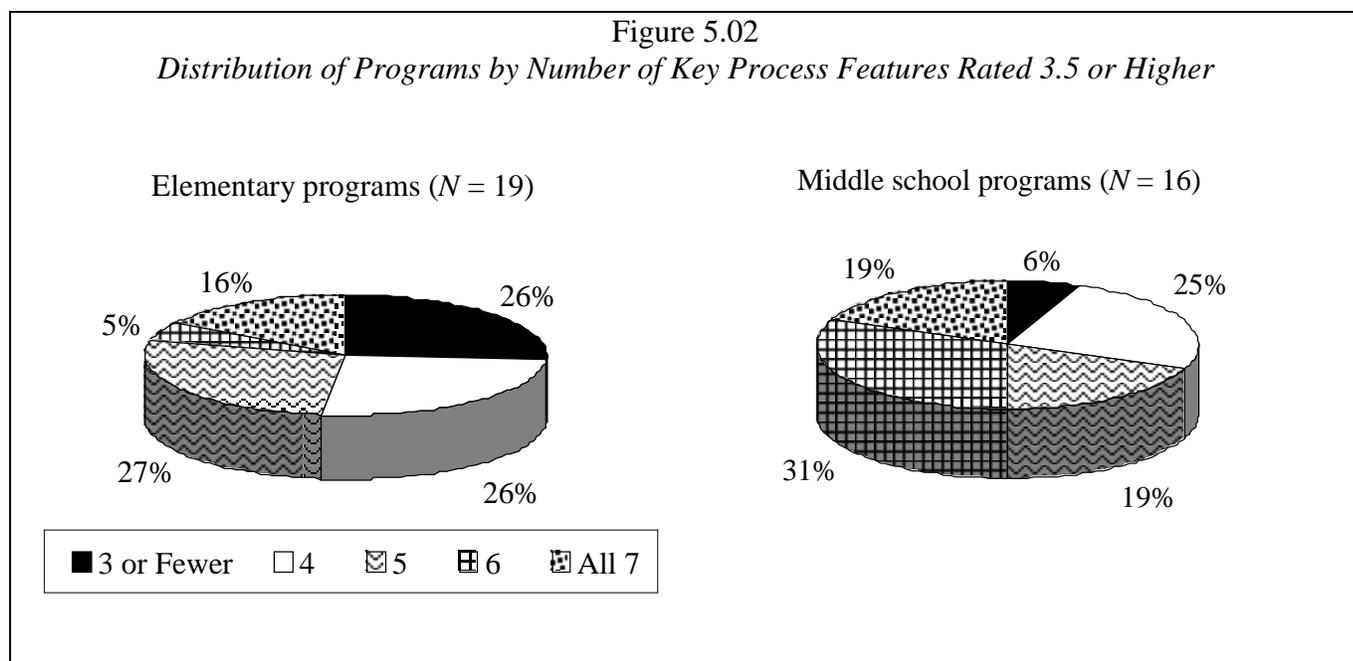
In addition to examining the number and breadth of activities offered by the programs participating in the study, we also observed the quality of interaction and stimulation that occurred within the activities. During Fall 2002, we observed the programs for two afternoons using the Promising Practices Rating System (see Appendix B) to quantify key program processes on a four-point scale (1 = highly uncharacteristic, 4 = highly characteristic): supportive relationships with staff and with peers, and learning- and mastery-oriented content delivery strategies (student engagement in activities, appropriate program structure, opportunities for cognitive growth, opportunities for autonomy, mastery orientation).

Figure 5.01 shows the mean scores on the observed process features in the elementary programs and the middle school programs. At both school levels, mean scores were highest for ratings of supportive relationships with peers, student engagement in the activities, and (to a slightly lesser degree) supportive relationships with adults. Middle school programs outscored



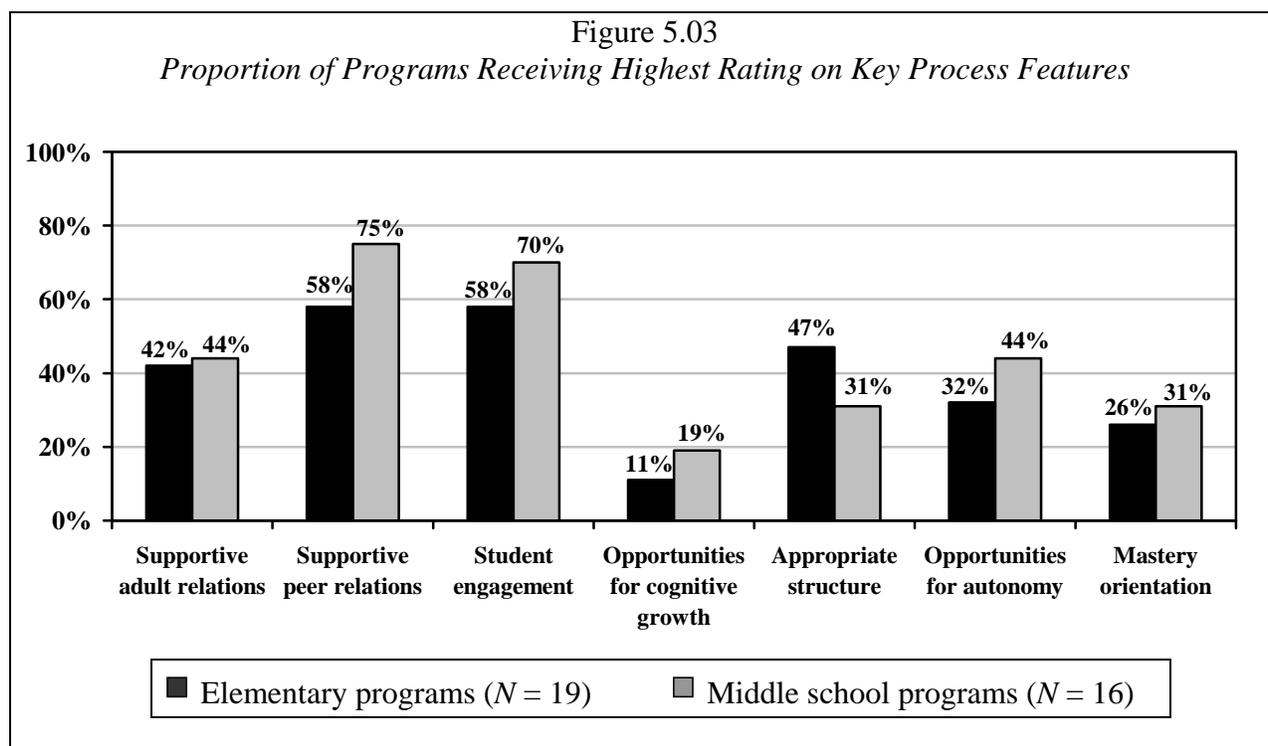
their elementary counterparts on two processes, opportunities to exert autonomy and emphasis on mastery. Opportunities for cognitive growth were comparatively limited, especially in middle school programs. This may be due in part to the way that we defined and assessed this key process feature. Giving students a chance to work on homework or setting aside time for reading was not regarded as an opportunity for cognitive growth. Rather, staff had to encourage—and students had to engage in—higher order thinking. Given these stringent requirements, it is impressive that the average rating for opportunities for cognitive growth was toward the high end of our scale. In retrospect, we wish that we had also rated the qualities of homework time (quiet concentration, effective small group work, effective one-on-one tutoring).

Because the programs selected for study had been nominated or were recognized to be of high quality, we expected ratings on the key processes to be high. As shown in Figure 5.02, 74% of the elementary programs and 94% of middle school programs received high ratings (mean scores of 3.5 or above on our 4-point scale) on at least half of the program processes. Although few programs scored this high on all of the process areas we measured, one out of five



elementary programs and half the middle school programs had exceptional ratings on at least six of the seven processes. Only three of the elementary and four of the middle school programs received a rating of 2 (somewhat characteristic) on *any* of the features. As a group, the programs had very impressive ratings in a variety of areas that indicate strong programming.

A similar pattern is observed when we examine the percentage of programs receiving outstanding ratings (the highest possible score, 4) on each key feature. Over half of the programs achieved this distinction for supportive relationships with peers and level of student engagement, although in each case the percentage was higher for middle school programs (see Figure 5.03). On the other hand, fewer than 20% of the programs received top scores on enhancing cognitive growth. Although the average rating for stimulating cognitive growth was higher in elementary school programs, fewer programs serving elementary students, compared to middle school programs, received a top rating on this feature. In fact, top ratings were more prevalent among middle school programs for all features except appropriate structure.



In addition to rating the degree to which the programs manifested the process features, we asked program directors and activity leaders to describe students' opportunities to develop and exhibit leadership. From their open-ended responses we identified six distinct categories (see Table 5.03). The most common response was that leadership arose spontaneously, without any formal organization; a participant could simply step forward or emerge as the leader of an activity. In some programs, the staff systematically encouraged older youth to take responsibility for younger participants, or for youth with relatively advanced skills in a given activity to help teach less advanced participants. Some programs called on older youth (high school age) to serve on staff and direct or assist with an activity. This leadership development effort was an important aspect of the programs' community outreach. None of the elementary directors and staff, and only a small proportion of the middle school directors and staff, reported that students had no opportunities to exhibit leadership.

Table 5.03
Staff Reports of Opportunities for Students to Exhibit Leadership

Leadership opportunity	Program directors		Activity leaders	
	Elementary <i>N</i> = 16	Middle school <i>N</i> = 13	Elementary <i>N</i> = 10	Middle school <i>N</i> = 11
Informal leadership	31%	46%	60%	18%
Older teach or lead younger	25%	8%	30%	27%
More advanced teach less advanced	13%	31%	30%	9%
Peer assistance	13%	15%	0	18%
Help staff set up activity	25%	15%	0	0
Older youth lead participants	19%	39%	10%	0
No opportunities	0	15%	0	18%
Too vague to code	25%	8%	0	18%

Differences by Type of Activity in Ratings of Program Process

Were specific types of activities especially successful in fostering the key processes? We were able to address this question, to a modest degree, on the basis of the program observations conducted in Spring 2003. During these visits, using the After-School Activity Observation Instrument (AOI) protocol, observers completed detailed checklists on several activities within each program, as they occurred during one or two days of operation. The AOI data allowed us to formulate assessments of six key processes, including supportive relations with staff and with peers, student engagement in activities, appropriate structure, opportunities for cognitive growth (literacy building and encouraging higher order thinking), and mastery orientation.

The AOI identifies 21 general types of activities. In our observations, all but two of these activity types (higher education/career orientation and study skills/test prep) were apparent in both elementary and middle school programs. In some cases our staff observed more than one activity of a given type at the same program, although we made an effort to sample a range of the activities occurring within each program on the days of our visits. To get a sense of how well each type of activity reflected the six processes we were able to assess with the AOI, we calculated mean scores on scales related to each of these features, and identified activity types in which the mean score for a given feature was especially high (half a standard deviation above the mean). Because the scales on the AOI are not assessed on the same metric, they cannot be compared directly and we therefore do not present the mean process scores.

Elementary programs. At the elementary level, fine arts activities (performing arts, arts and crafts) were most successful in facilitating the key processes (see Table 5.04). Collectively, the high ratings covered all but one of the processes that we could measure in our observations with the AOI (appropriate structure). Two patterns in the elementary programs data are noteworthy. One is that each key feature (again, excepting appropriate structure) was highly

Table 5.04
Elementary Program Activities Inspiring Exceptionally High Ratings on Key Process Features

Activity type	Supportive peers	Supportive adults	Engagement	Cognitive growth	Structure	Mastery orientation
Arts and/or crafts	H					H
Performing arts		H	H	H		H
Board/table/card games, puzzles	H					
Reading/language arts enrichment				H		
Sports: games			H			
Fitness/exercise class				H		
Computer games			H			
Cultural awareness clubs/projects		H				H
Snack		H	H	H		H
Arrival/departure		H	H			
Health/well-being		H		H		
Computer skill building			H			H

Note. H = over half a standard deviation above mean scale score.

facilitated by at least two different types of activities. Multiple opportunities for exposure to these enriching environments assured that most participants would benefit, even if they did not have time to be involved in the full range of activities that the program offered. The other finding of particular interest was that snack time rated high on several of the AOI scales. Program staff were successful in turning what might be thought of as a mundane activity into an especially enriching environment for their elementary school participants.

Middle school programs. Among middle school youth, fine arts activities were especially successful in fostering one key feature, mastery orientation (see Table 5.05). However, the more academically oriented activities also were effective in fostering key features for this age

Table 5.05
Middle School Program Activities Inspiring Exceptionally High Ratings on Key Process Features

Activity type	Supportive peers	Supportive adults	Engagement	Cognitive growth	Structure	Mastery orientation
Arts and/or crafts						H
Performing arts						H
Math/science enrichment				H		
Reading/language arts enrichment		H	H	H		H
Sports: games	H		H			
Recreational reading			H	H		
Tutoring		H	H	H		H
Watching videos/TV			H	H		
Computer skill building		H	H	H		H
Higher education/career prep	H	H	H	H		
Study skills/test preparation		H	H	H		H

Note. H = over half a standard deviation above mean scale score.

group. This was true for academic assistance activities (tutoring, work on study skills) as well as classes aimed at college/career preparation and academic enrichment. Another impressive activity category for middle school youth was computer skill building. In contrast to time spent playing computer games, efforts to enhance computer skills registered high on our measures of all key features except peer interaction and appropriate structure.

Examples of Program Process Features and Attributes in Actual Programs

We observed many good examples of activities and interactions in the programs that were consistent with the study's highlighted process and content features. A few of these are described below.

A middle school computer-based activity blending writing, Web design, and research. On the day we observed, two volunteers from a university education department worked with youth to develop a Web site about the students' countries of origin, using music as the common theme. Students learned how to plan and build a Web site at the same time that they learned how to conduct research using the Internet and to write about what they were learning. Students worked individually or in pairs at computers. During the time we observed, the students each wrote a paragraph about a musical instrument used frequently in the music of their home country, employing the Internet to learn about the instrument's history and to find pictures to include on the Web site. The two volunteer teachers questioned students about their work, offered ideas, and demonstrated Web searching and paragraph organization.

An elementary school leadership council activity. In this after-school activity, a group of 12 third, fourth, and fifth graders met on the day we observed to prepare a calendar of upcoming events for the school community and to design posters to advertise try-outs for an upcoming talent show. The talent show would celebrate Mother's Day and Cinco de Mayo, and participants would compete against other groups affiliated with the citywide after-school initiative. With the activity leader, students discussed the information that the posters needed to convey and, in the process, learned about presenting information to an audience that looked to them to learn about something important. They also said, "Remember, people need to be able to read it; don't get too fancy or too sloppy." Working in groups, the students designed and made their posters, offering suggestions and encouragement to each other as they went along.

A middle school chess club. In this activity, a chess teacher and eighth-grade expert assistant worked with ten students who displayed varying skill levels in chess. While student pairs played games, the assistant explained to a newcomer how to record chess moves, an important skill because students in this chess club must record each of their moves during

competition play, thus allowing them to review their games later. After circulating to observe play and comment on strategy and moves, the teacher challenged as many players as were interested to play him and the assistant simultaneously. The teacher played four games at once, while the assistant played three. The games were spirited and competitive, with players commenting continually on their own and others' play. Students were excited, motivated, and challenged.

A middle school sports activity. During this observation, the wrestling team and coach from the local high school taught wrestling to middle school students. The program students worked in pairs with either the coach or his players. The high school students demonstrated how to perform the moves, giving one-on-one instruction and encouraging youth to participate. One very gentle youth had a difficult time being forceful. A high school wrestler worked one-on-one with him, encouraging him, demonstrating proper stance, performing the move with him, and coaching him through performing the move with another youth. The boy smiled as his performance improved.

An elementary school language arts activity. After-school students in this program prepared *The Youth Journal* for their friends and classmates. The activity was headquartered in a conference room where a white board recorded the names of the students who signed up to participate and the article or story they had committed to write for the next issue. Students received a stipend for each article or story they submit. Students chose topics after brainstorming with the other students and the supervisors. Each student worked on his or her own. The activity leader interacted with students individually, helping them plan and organize their ideas. Multiple resources were available to the students, including encyclopedias and newspapers. Adult interactions with students emphasized positive aspects of the students' work and encouraged them to explore their subjects more fully.

A cooperative story-telling activity that combined sculpture, writing, computer skills, and graphic arts. Prior to our observation, students had written stories, created clay figures that represented characters in their stories, and prepared sets. On the day of our observation, students used digital cameras to film their stories. Next they would edit their work on the computer, add sound and graphics, and create a claymation movie. Students, who were intensely focused on their projects, worked cooperatively in pairs, with one student filming while the other moved the clay figures.

An outdoor cooperative math activity. During Outdoor Adventure, students worked in pairs to learn how to use a compass. Each pair received a compass, scorecard, and a formula for converting feet to paces. The teacher had earlier set up a course in a field outside. Each pair started at a stake; the scorecard told them to move, for example, 36 degrees N for 72 feet. The students converted feet to paces, using their compass to guide them to 36 degrees N. Each pair followed a different set of directions and the students moved around the field.

A middle school music activity. During this observation, a band consisting of two sax players, keyboards, bass guitar, drums, and tuba rehearsed a new song called “Big Daddy.” The instructor taught while the students played, asking questions such as “What does our key signature tell us?” to improve performance. The instructor asked one of the sax players to “play me the low D.” He then helped her to play the note, finger the sax, and hold the note, telling her “That’s perfect, that’s perfect.” The instructor moved around the group helping each student play his/her solo. The students were very engaged and clearly enjoyed what they were doing. They were patient when the teacher stopped the song to tutor one student; they continued to play and keep the beat. As they played the song, one boy moved between the keyboard and the bass clarinet. When the teacher left the room in search of some tuba music, the students continued to jam on their own.

Writing and producing a play with the help of a professional actor. We observed students practicing a play that they had written with an actor from a local performing arts venue, in preparation for a performance later in the month. As the students ran through the final scene, the actor helped them refine their performance. Adult leaders were supportive of the students, who practiced with seriousness and intensity. Two of the students had difficulty preparing their performance of a physical fight. After two or three unsuccessful takes, the other students offered suggestions about how they could help themselves to concentrate and make it through the dialogue with the demeanor required by the script.

Summary

As expected, the promising programs selected for study rated consistently highly on characteristics identified by other investigators as key features of programs that will foster positive youth development. They rated especially highly on the provision of supportive relationships with adults and peers, and on engagement of participants in program activities. In elementary programs, fine arts activities appeared to be particularly successful in fostering the various key features; academically oriented classes were noteworthy in this regard in middle school programs. The specific activities offered to students varied considerably among programs, but all programs featured a diverse array of activities over the course of a year—often during the course of a single week. Classes oriented toward improving academic skills and providing “hands on” experience in arts and crafts and performing arts were especially common.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

The primary objective of the first year of the Study of Promising After-School Programs was to identify and select for the study a set of programs that offered high-quality environments for elementary and middle school youth in the after-school hours. This report documents the procedures we followed to generate a pool of potential study sites and to confirm the quality of the selected programs. The selected programs were located throughout the United States. Some were in major metropolitan areas; others were located in moderate-sized cities, and still others served rural school districts. The programs varied in the size of staff and participants, in the hours or days of operation, in program focus, and in the variety of activities offered. In other words, there was no single organization or “formula” that accounted for the strong reputation these programs had established in the field.

Through use of on-site observations, interviews and surveys completed by key program personnel, and other data collection activities, we were able to identify a number of program process and content factors and also structural and institutional supports that were common across most of the programs selected for the study. These factors reflect our intentional focus on selecting programs that met certain criteria for the provision of high-quality experiences for children and youth during the after-school hours. We outline these factors below.

1. Study programs employ experienced staff and devote considerable resources to enhancing staff skills.

As a group, the directors of the programs in the study had strong educational credentials as well as extensive previous experience working with youth in educational or community settings. Although the background of activity leaders was more variable, most also had considerable experience in youth work. Program staff expressed high levels of satisfaction with

their work and working conditions, which helps to account for the high level of stability among key program personnel. Staff expertise was enhanced through a regular and elaborate set of in-service training sessions that increased staff members' knowledge in content areas related to specific program activities as well as their understanding of child and adolescent development and effective strategies for working with youth (e.g., conflict resolution, classroom management). As a result, a climate of learning pervaded these programs, not only for the youth who participated but also for adult staff members.

2. Study programs foster supportive relationships among participants and between youth and adults.

In most cases, staff took a “hands on” approach to activities, directly involving themselves with students and working to engage students in each class. They appeared to know participants well and to nurture close and caring relationships with the participants. They took a strong interest in students' lives outside the program. In turn, participants were friendly and open to staff, often relating events of the day or their plans for the evening or weekend with staff members. This same spirit of friendliness and openness was apparent in participants' interactions with each other. Disagreements were rare and were usually settled quickly and effectively—sometimes by the students themselves. As a result, the after-school programs offered students a welcoming, nurturing social environment.

3. Study programs utilize a variety of learning- and mastery-oriented content delivery strategies to create positive environments for children and youth.

Supportive social relationships were not the only characteristics on which programs rated highly. In fact, most programs had impressive scores on most of the content delivery strategies that, according to experts, enhance positive youth development: student engagement in activities, opportunities for cognitive growth, opportunities for autonomy and leadership, mastery

orientation, and program structure. Moreover, these key processes were manifest in a variety of activities within each program, so that students' well-being was nurtured no matter what types of activities they chose to pursue. Even the more mundane portions of the daily schedule, such as transition time or snack time, were regarded as opportunities to enhance students' leadership skills and sense of autonomy.

4. Study programs offer participants a variety of activities.

Although the specific activities in which students could participate varied widely among programs, a common theme was variety. Virtually all the programs offered a blend of academic pursuits, fine arts and crafts, and physical or recreational activities. Within the academic domain, some activities focused on basic skills, whereas others provided academic enrichment that extended beyond students' experiences in classes during the regular school day. Participants usually had some choice of activities during at least a portion of the after-school meeting time. They displayed high levels of engagement in most activities and took pride in their accomplishments.

5. Study programs have access to a variety of spaces for activities and adequate materials.

The breadth of activities offered by most of the programs required a variety of physical spaces. Especially among programs located within schools, staff were able to use indoor and outdoor spaces that were well-suited to the activities. Rooms could accommodate the size of the group as well as the specific activities in which students were engaging. Groups involved in different pursuits rarely interfered with each other, so that, for example, groups requiring a quiet space (e.g., a chess club or tutoring center) were not hampered by other students involved in louder or more ambulatory activities (e.g., band practice or an athletic contest). Although staff often felt they could use *more* space, they were generally pleased with the amount and variety of space that was available to the program.

6. Study programs are attentive to the needs and interests of participants' families.

Whereas the focus of all programs in the Study of Promising After-School Programs was clearly on the needs of children and youth, staff members also were attentive to the needs of the young people's families. Directors and activity leaders routinely communicated with parents about program events. They telephoned or spoke directly to parents or guardians if they had special concerns about a child, and they tried to be responsive to concerns raised by parents. In addition, several programs had classes especially for the parents or other adult family members—for example, assisting immigrants in learning English or dealing with community social services.

7. Study programs have partnerships with affiliated schools and community agencies.

Much of the success of these programs was related to their skill in drawing resources from the community. Directors maintained regular communication with staff in the affiliated schools, especially principals. In many cases, after-school staff persons were employed by the school, which made it easier to track the academic and social needs of participants. Directors also were able to broaden the range of activities available to participants by arranging for some program activities to be offered or sponsored by experts or agencies in the community. In some cases, this meant taking students to another community facility for a class; in others, it meant that the community organization provided adults who could lead an activity at the regular program site. Occasionally, students actually performed services for local businesses or community organizations. The result was a stronger sense of connection between the program and the community, or a stronger connection of the participants to the local community.

8. Study programs obtain funding from multiple sources, relying on local, state, and national funding agencies.

Another important aspect of programs' partnership with the community involved funding. Directors recognized the need to appeal to a variety of sources of funding in order to

sustain their program over the long term. Financial commitments from local organizations enhanced the program's connection to the local community and the community's commitment to assist the program in a variety of ways. State and federal grants, however, were an important additional source of funding for most programs, especially considering that they were located in communities with high poverty rates and limited financial resources. This flexible approach to funding helps to account for the programs' relatively high sustainability, an important criterion for inclusion in the Study of Promising After-School Programs.

Next Steps

During Fall 2003, Phase 2 of the Study of Promising After-School Programs began with the recruitment of elementary school children in the third and fourth grades, and middle school youth in the sixth and seventh grades, to participate in the study. Recruitment was conducted in the after-school programs selected for the study and in the schools affiliated with the programs. Parents and classroom teachers also were recruited. Following recruitment, baseline data were collected from students, parents, teachers, and after-school program staff. Short-term outcome data will be collected from students, teachers, and program staff in Spring 2004. Longer term outcome data will be collected from all participants in Spring 2005.

How will the study learn whether participation in promising programs is related to family background and prior child functioning? Our theory of change recognizes that multiple factors influence whether children and youth participate in after-school programs and whether those who participate benefit from the experience. To assess this possibility, the study collected information in Fall 2003 from students, parents, teachers, program staff, and school records about child and family characteristics and children's functioning prior to substantial involvement in the programs (see Table 6.01). Each of these characteristics has the potential to introduce selection bias into the study. For example, the child's participation in other after-

Table 6.01
*Assessment of Child and Family Characteristics Potentially Related to Children's
 Participation in Programs*

Child or family characteristic	Source of data				
	Parent	Student	Teacher	Program staff	School records
Child's participation in other after-school activities	X	X		X	
Child's prior academic proficiency					X
Child's social and behavioral adjustment	X	X	X	X	
Family income	X				
Parent employment	X				
Parent education	X				
Household size	X				
Family structure	X				
Child race/ethnicity					X
Child gender					X
Child perceptions of neighborhood safety		X			

school activities may preclude program participation. The child's prior academic proficiency (special education and ESL status, grades, standardized test scores) may lead teachers to encourage enrollment or prompt parents to enroll children in programs that include academic support. Alternatively, children with limited academic proficiency may be wary of participating, particularly if the program is perceived as an extension of school. The child's social and behavioral adjustment may affect parental decisions about the settings that are most appropriate for the child. Family income may affect the breadth and quality of after-school choices available to children. We plan to include controls for each of these as well as other potential selection

characteristics in our analyses examining program participation and children's developmental outcomes.

How will the study learn whether program attendance (dosage) is related to program effects? A key element of our theory of change is program attendance. Consistent with previous research (Vandell & Pierce, 1999; Welsh et al., 2002), we expect that children and youth who participate in high-quality after-school programs for more days will derive more benefits than less active participants. Therefore, the study is measuring the frequency of child participation in the programs in order to assess the influence of dosage on program effects.

Because the number of days that children and youth can participate in after-school programs depends in part on the number of days that programs are open, the study is collecting information each year about program availability, including months of operation, days open per week, and hours open per day. We also are collecting information about attendance requirements that might influence attendance patterns across programs.

What are the anticipated relations between participation in promising programs and child outcomes? The study will examine program effects in four domains: academic development, social development, psychological development, and behavioral development. The study is investigating both intermediate and long-term outcomes. From a long list of possible outcomes, we selected variables that can be measured reliably within the limits of the study. We will assess all outcomes in Spring 2004 (intermediate outcomes) and Spring 2005 (long-term outcomes). Table 6.02 shows the child outcomes we will measure and whom we will collect data from. The study will test intermediate effects by contrasting outcomes for treatment and comparison group members, as well as among treatment group members participating in the programs at different levels of intensity. The long-term outcomes are expected to derive from skills developed during two program years.

Table 6.02
Assessment of Child Outcomes Expected to be Influenced by Program Participation

	Source of data					
	Student		Parent	Teacher	Program staff	School records
	Elem.	Middle				
Academic						
Work habits	X	X	X	X	X	
School attendance						X
Grades				X		X
Achievement test scores						X
On-time promotion						X
Social						
Social skills				X	X	
Positive relations with peers			X	X	X	
Psychological						
Future orientation		X				
Positive emotion			X			
Efficacy	X	X		X	X	
Behavioral						
Misconduct	X	X	X			
Antisocial/delinquent behaviors		X				
Substance use		X				

We selected the intermediate outcomes for this study based on prior evidence that they can affect or translate into improved behaviors and skills in additional outcome domains over time (Posner & Vandell, 1994). We expect these effects to be more evident when children attend programs more days. Our theory of change posits that evidence for the following outcomes will manifest itself within the **school and program settings** by the end of the first year of data collection:

- **Academic development** as measured by work habits and school attendance
- **Social development** as measured by social skills and positive relationships with peers
- **Psychological development** as measured by self-efficacy and task persistence
- **Behavioral development** as measured by diminished misconduct

The targeted long-term outcomes in our theory of change are the academic variables associated with continued schooling and long-term economic productivity, as well as long-term changes in social and psychological development associated with positive well-being. As with the intermediate outcomes demonstrated in the program and at school, the study will test the programs' effects on long-term outcomes by comparing results for treatment and comparison group members, as well as among treatment group members who participate at varying levels of intensity. In addition to maintaining the intermediate effects in Year 1, we expect additional long-term outcomes to be evident in **school, program, and home settings** at the end of Year 2:

- **Academic development** as measured by grades, achievement test scores, and on-time promotion
- **Psychological development** as measured by a positive future orientation and positive emotions at home
- **Behavioral development** as measured by reduced engagement in misconduct or antisocial/delinquent behaviors, and use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

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Appendix A

Telephone Interview with Prospective Sites

STUDY OF PROMISING AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS
Telephone Interview with Prospective Sites

Interviewer's Name: _____

Interview Date: _____

Interviewee's Name: _____ **Title:** _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____ **E-mail address:** _____

NAME OF PROGRAM	
Address	
Site director's name	
PHONE AND EMAIL	
What aspects of the program do you see as being particularly strong?	
How would you describe the families of the children who attend your program?	Predominantly low-income _____ Predominantly working class _____ Predominantly middle class _____
This site serves the following age groups: (Check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary grades <input type="checkbox"/> Upper elementary <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school

Approx # of students enrolled in the after-school program	
Approx # of first grade students in the program	
# of 1 st graders who began program this year	
Approx # of third grade students in the program	
# of 3 rd graders who began program this year	
Approx # of sixth grade students in the program	
# of 6 th grade students who began program this year	
In your experience at this program, how many of the students have attended the program...	for less than 1 year? _____ for 1-2 years? _____ more than 2 years? _____
What is your attrition (mobility/drop-out) rate per year?	_____ %
Describe attendance patterns at your program this year	____ % of the children attend 5 days a week ____ % of the children attend 3-4 times a week ____ % of the children attend 1-2 times a week ____ % of the children attend sporadically ____ We don't monitor attendance at this program
Ethnicity and race of students who regularly attend this program	White, non-Hispanic % _____ African-American % _____ Asian % _____ Latino % _____ Other % _____
Year this particular program began	

Hours of operation	Monday _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Saturday _____ Sunday _____
Number of staff at the program (approximate number in each category)	Paid teachers or staff who have B.A. degrees or higher ____ Paid teachers or staff who have attended college, but do not have B.A. degrees ____ Paid teachers or staff who have a high school degree or less ____ Administrative staff ____ Adult volunteers ____ College students ____
How long have staff members worked at the program?	% of paid staff who are new this year ____ % of volunteers who are new this year ____ % of paid staff who have worked at the program for 1-3 years ____ % of paid staff who have worked at the program for more than 3 years ____
Which statement best characterizes your experience finding, hiring, and retaining staff?	No problems because staff has been very stable Some difficulties; there has been modest turnover Great deal of difficulty; high turnover is a challenge
This program is housed at:	_____ Public school _____ Private school _____ Church _____ Community center, library, etc.

<p>How would you describe your program's relation with the school or schools that serve your students? (Select one)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This program has little or no contact with school personnel or school programs.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This program is located at a school, but has minimal connections with school personnel or school programs.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This program is located at a school and works closely with school personnel to coordinate its programs with the school activities.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This program is community-based, but works closely with nearby school personnel to coordinate its programs with school activities.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This program is community-based and works with school primarily for recruitment.</p>				
<p>Has your site previously participated in a program evaluation? If yes, can we obtain a copy of this evaluation? If yes, please provide</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>		
<p>Which of these statements best describe your program's affiliation?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Part of a national youth-serving organization (BGCA, Y Programs, SAVE, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part of a national after-school model (Bridges to Success, Beacons, Foundations, Inc., etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part of a federal model/program (Gear-up, 21st Century, CCDF/CCDBG, Family Literacy, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part of a state model (CA Healthy Start, MD After-school Opportunity Fund)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part of a school district-based after-school model</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> An independent program that is not affiliated with a broader group</p>				
<p>What is the likelihood that this program will continue operation in:</p>	<p>2002-2003</p> <p>2003-2004</p> <p>2004-2005</p>	<p>Very unlikely</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Somewhat unlikely</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Somewhat likely</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Very likely</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>

Does your program charge an attendance fee or tuition? Yes No

If yes, how much and how often is this charged? _____

BUDGET INFORMATION

Annual budget: _____

Year: _____

Funding Sources

Approximate
Percent

- School district _____
- Local government _____
- Federal government _____
- National foundation _____
- Local foundation _____
- Private donor or Corporation _____
- Subcontractor _____
- OTHER: _____

TOTAL

100 %

Program Activities

For each activity, please tell me which category best describes how often your program offers a specific activity.

	Never	Every now & then	About once a week	Several times a week
Reading/writing				
Science enrichment				
Math enrichment				
Computer				
Drama				
Sports				
Recreation				
Dance				
Music				
Art				
Crafts				
Community service				
Homework time				
Tutoring				

How do students end up in particular activities?

To what extent are the activities voluntary versus mandatory?

Access to Resources

For each resource, please tell me which category best describes the access your program has to it.

	No access	Limited	Readily available
Computers			
Art room			
Art supplies			
Science materials			
Science lab space			
Music room			
Musical instruments			
Other special space (specify)			

Appendix B
Promising Practices Rating System

PROMISING PRACTICES RATING SYSTEM DAY 1
--

OBSERVER NAME	
DATE	
NAME OF PROGRAM	
LOCATION	
TIME	

1 = highly uncharacteristic; 2 = somewhat uncharacteristic; 3 = somewhat characteristic; 4 = highly characteristic		
PROMISING PRACTICES	Rating	JUSTIFICATION/NOTES
Supportive Relations with Adults		
Supportive Relations with Peers		
Level of Engagement		
Opportunities for Cognitive Growth		
Appropriate Structure		
Opportunities for Autonomy		
Mastery Orientation		

**OBSERVED ACTIVITIES, SPACE, AND MATERIALS CHECKLIST
DAY 1**

Observed Activities	√	NOTES
Language arts enrichment		
Science enrichment		
Math enrichment		
Computer		
Drama		
Sports		
Recreation		
Dance		
Music		
Art		
Crafts		
Community service		
Homework time		
Tutoring		
Games		
Career exploration		
Other		
Space and Materials	√	NOTES
Computers		
Art room		
Art supplies		
Age-appropriate reading materials		
Science materials		
Science lab space		
Music room		
Musical instruments		
Library		
Cafeteria		
Gym		
Multi-purpose room		
Auditorium		
Regular classroom		
Outdoor facilities (specify)		
Other special space (specify)		

PROMISING PRACTICES RATING SYSTEM DAY 2
--

OBSERVER NAME	
DATE	
NAME OF PROGRAM	
LOCATION	
TIME	

1 = highly uncharacteristic; 2 = somewhat uncharacteristic; 3 = somewhat characteristic; 4 = highly characteristic		
PROMISING PRACTICES	Rating	JUSTIFICATION/NOTES
Supportive Relations with Adults		
Supportive Relations with Peers		
Level of Engagement		
Opportunities for Cognitive Growth		
Appropriate Structure		
Opportunities for Autonomy		
Mastery Orientation		

**OBSERVED ACTIVITIES, SPACE, AND MATERIALS CHECKLIST
DAY 1**

Observed Activities	√	NOTES
Language arts enrichment		
Science enrichment		
Math enrichment		
Computer		
Drama		
Sports		
Recreation		
Dance		
Music		
Art		
Crafts		
Community service		
Homework time		
Tutoring		
Games		
Career exploration		
Other		
Space and Materials	√	NOTES
Computers		
Art room		
Art supplies		
Age-appropriate reading materials		
Science materials		
Science lab space		
Music room		
Musical instruments		
Library		
Cafeteria		
Gym		
Multi-purpose room		
Auditorium		
Regular classroom		
Outdoor facilities (specify)		
Other special space (specify)		

Appendix C

Fall 2002 Director Interview

Director Interview Fall 2002

Program:

Interviewer:

2nd Interviewer:

Director:

Date of Interview:

Program Hours:

Days: M T W Th F

Grades: 3rd 6th Both

Start Date:

End Date:

Program location: School Community

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. What is the primary goal of your after-school program?

2. What aspect(s) of the after-school program are you most proud of?

3. Are you aware of other after-school programs in the neighborhood that serve the same age ranges and perhaps some of the same children/youth as your program?
 No
 Yes

Could you tell us something about their size and activities?

4. (If program is not located in the school) Does the program or school district offer transportation to this after-school program from the school(s)?
 No
 Yes

5. Does the program or school district offer transportation home from this after-school program?
 No
 Yes

STUDENT ENROLLMENT & ATTENDANCE

6. What criteria does the program use to determine who can participate?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None; all students can participate | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor homework completion rates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low grades | <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior/discipline issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low test scores | <input type="checkbox"/> Low family income |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher recommendations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

7. Do students enroll in the program:

- Only at the beginning of each term or program period
 At almost any point during the term or program period

8. What is your procedure for tracking attendance? (*We will need to collect individual-level attendance data—how many days individual students attend the program.*)

9. How does attendance vary depending on time of year or the age of the students?

10. What proportion of 3rd graders and 6th graders enrolled in the program in the fall of 2003 would you expect to continue their enrollment through May 2004? May 2005?

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

11. Which best describes your program?

- All activities voluntary
 Some activities voluntary, some mandatory
 All activities mandatory (must do what staff say)

12. Do you use specific curricula to guide any of your activities/programs?

- No
 Yes

What are they called?

What subject(s)/types of activities do they cover?

Who developed them?

13. Does the program offer activities in distinct sessions?

No

Yes

How many weeks long is a typical session?

How often does the group meet during a typical session?

How long are the meetings?

14. How do programming patterns vary depending on time of year?

15. Do you offer different activities for different age groups?

16. How often are students offered structured (teacher staffed and run) activities that emphasize the following:

	Daily	Few times a week	1x/week	Few times a month	1-2x per term	Never	Varies during year
Homework time							
One-on-one tutoring							
Academic enrichment activities (reading/writing, math, science, academic enrichment projects)							
Arts enrichment activities (visual arts, drama, performing arts, music, dance)							
Social activities (focus on behavioral and interpersonal skills; social clubs, career preparation)							
Multi-cultural activities							
Sports and recreational activities							

17. How are students involved in the selection of activities offered by the program?
18. How do individual students select the specific activities they will participate in?
19. What opportunities do children/youth have to lead activities or teach younger students?
20. What does a typical program week look like for children/youth? Let's start with Monday. What is the first activity that children participate in when they arrive? How long does that last? What happens next? (Get all information for Monday schedule.) Do children follow the same schedule of activities every day? (If not, get schedule for each day.)

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	

STAFF TRAINING AND PLANNING TIME

21. Does your staff have paid time for planning their after-school activities?

No
Yes

How much planning time are they paid for each week?

22. Does your staff write down activity plans for the after-school activities they lead?

No
Yes

Do you or anyone else review their plans?

23. Do you and/or your staff participate in training or technical assistance as part of your/their job at the after-school program?

No

Yes

What types of training or assistance have been offered?

None

Classroom management

Academic enrichment and literacy development

Fine and performing arts

Athletic instruction

Health promotion/education and support services (e.g., identifying abuse, working with health and social service agencies)

Youth development (e.g., conflict resolution, leadership, mentoring, community service)

Working with a diverse, multicultural student population

Other

How useful have these training sessions been for you and/or your staff?

Very useful

Somewhat useful

Not at all useful

Are you and/or your staff compensated for the time or cost of training outside of program hours?

No

Yes

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS AND LEADERSHIP

24. What are the connections between your program and other programs, organizations, businesses, and services in the community?

25. What resources/services/opportunities do these connections make available to your participants?

26. What are the connections—formal or informal—between your after-school program and the [host school's OR nearby schools'] academic program(s)? Do program and school staff talk with one another about students' needs/progress?

27. Does your program have a leadership team or governing board, and/or an advisory board? Who are the members (what are their roles)?
28. What are the processes—again, formal or informal—for communication and coordination between you and your leadership/governance structure and the principal(s)/leadership team(s) of the [host school OR nearby schools]?

FUNDING

29. How likely is it that your program will continue to receive funding during the next two years? Do you anticipate any changes in the level of funding you currently have? Will any changes in funding lead to changes in programming?

Interview Supplement

1. 2002-2003 program enrollment
 - a. Total number of students enrolled in the after-school program _____
 - b. Total number of program attendees in each grade level:

1 st _____	5 th _____
2 nd _____	6 th _____
3 rd _____	7 th _____
4 th _____	

2. What percentage of students attend each elementary/middle school that feeds into your program? Please list the schools and percentages.

3. Attendance at your program:
 - a. % of children who attend 5 days a week _____
 - b. % of children who attend 3-4 times a week _____
 - c. % of children who attend 1-2 times a week _____
 - d. % of children who attend sporadically _____
 - e. We don't monitor attendance at this program _____

4. Ethnicity and race of students who attend program:
 - a. % White, non-Hispanic _____
 - b. % African-American _____
 - c. % Asian _____
 - d. % Latino _____
 - e. % Other _____

5. Does your program charge an attendance fee or tuition? _____

6. If yes, how much and how often is this charged? _____

Please complete the grid below regarding each staff member who works once a week or more with third/sixth grade students at the program.

First name	How many days a week does he/she work?	What is his/her level of education?*	Does he/she have specialized training in school-age child care or child development?	How long has this person been with the after-school program?	Is he/she a paid staff member?
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					

* High school, some college, technical college, bachelor's degree, master's degree, etc.

Appendix D

Fall 2002 Activity Leader Interview

Activity Leader Interview Fall 2002

Staff Name:

Interviewer:

Program Name:

Site:

Date:

1. What is your job title?

2. What are your primary responsibilities at the after-school program?

3. What does a typical program week look like for you? Let's start with Monday. How much time is allotted for each activity? (Get all information for Monday schedule.) Do you follow the same schedule each day? (If not, get schedule for each day.)

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	

4. How are students involved in the selection of activities offered in your class or group?

5. Are students able to choose what they will do and their activity partners in your class or group?

6. Do students have opportunities to lead activities or teach younger students in your class or group? (If yes, ask activity leader to describe briefly.)

7. What do you want children/youth to gain from their experience in this after-school program?

8. Do you have paid time for planning your after-school activities?
No
Yes

How much planning time are you paid for each week?

9. Do you write down activity plans for the after-school activities you lead?
No
Yes

How often do you develop written activity plans?

Does anyone review these plans? If so, who?

10. Does your position require any special skills? (If yes, ask what these skills are.)

11. How often do you participate in training or technical assistance as part of your job at the after-school program?

What types of training topics/assistance have been offered?

- None
- Classroom management
- Academic enrichment and literacy development
- Fine and performing arts
- Athletic instruction
- Health promotion/education and support services (e.g., identifying abuse, working with health and social service agencies)
- Youth development (e.g., conflict resolution, leadership, mentoring, community service)
- Working with a diverse, multicultural student population
- Other

How useful have these training sessions been for you?

- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not at all useful

Are you compensated for the time or cost of training/in-service outside of program hours?

- No
- Yes

12. Are you a teacher or other member of the regular school staff at this school or nearby school?

- No
- Yes

13. (If not a teacher): Have you talked with teachers at the school to:

Find out about school programs or curricula?

Discuss students' schoolwork or academic needs/progress?

Discuss other topics?

14. How responsive are teachers and other school staff when you ask for information or assistance?

Appendix E

Fall 2002 School Principal Interview

**Study of Promising After-School Programs
Fall 2002 School Principal Interview**

Program:

School:

Principal:

Interviewer:

Date:

1. Based on what I've just told you, do you have any additional questions or concerns about the study? Have I made clear our goals and procedures? [If not, what other questions can I answer?]

2. If a very large proportion of your students participate in the program, we may be unable to find enough non-participants at this school to include in the study. If we needed to recruit a comparable school to yours in this district--in terms of the community, student body, and general school context—which school or schools would you suggest?

3. Now I'd like to ask you a little about your experiences with the _____ after-school program. First, what do you think are the best features of the program? [If on-site program]: What are the benefits of having the program here at your school?

4. [If the after-school program is on site, ask:] Are there any challenges to having [PROGRAM NAME] after-school program here at your school? [If the program is off-site:] Tell me about any challenges to your school or to kids in having students from this school at [PROGRAM]?

5. We'll want to learn more about your school when we begin data collection next fall. First, could you tell me about any special programs, initiatives, or activities in your school that we should be aware of as we plan this study (e.g., other after-school programs, tutoring, clubs, etc.)?

6. What standardized tests do your students take? (Get information for each grade.)

7. What are current enrollment figures for each grade in your school? (If principal does not have this at hand, we will get later. If principal can provide information by ethnicity, get that.)

8. What proportion of your student body is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch?

9. What proportion of students enrolled in third (sixth) grade in the fall of 2003 would you expect to be enrolled in May of 2004? May of 2005?

Appendix F

After-School Activity Observation Instrument

After-School Activity Observation Instrument (AOD): Activity Context Coding

Site ID:	Date:	Room #:	Activity #:	Start:	End:	Observer Initials:
Description of Observed Activity:						
A. FOCUS		C. KNOWLEDGE/SKILL AREAS		F. TOTAL ADULTS/STAFF		#
1. Single activity/whole group		1. Interpersonal		1. Number of adults		
2. Primary focal activity/opt-out activity(ies)		2. Physical/athletic		2. Number of teens		
3. Multiple activities/no focal activity		3. Artistic				
B. ACTIVITY TYPE		4. Math/numeracy				
1. Homework assistance		5. Reading/language arts		G. GRADE LEVELS		
2. Tutoring		6. Problem-solving/decision making		K	1	2
3. Study skills/test preparation		7. Other (Specify on back)		3	4	5
4. Reading/language arts enrichment		8. None		6	7	8
5. Math/science enrichment		D. TYPE OF SPACE		Other:		
6. Recreational reading/ listening to story/book		1. Classroom/activity room		H. NUMBER OF YOUTH		#
7. Computer skill-building		2. Gym		1. Total number of youth		
8. Computer games		3. Auditorium		2. Number of boys		
9. Sports: competitive and non-competitive games; tournaments		4. Cafeteria		3. Number of girls		
10. Sports: practice/drills/skill-building		5. Library		I. GROUPING PATTERNS (Check all that apply)		
11. Fitness/exercise class (including martial arts)		6. Computer room		1. Large Group (15+)		
12. Arts and/or crafts		7. Outside playground/field		2. Medium (6-14)		
13. Performing arts rehearsal/ instruction (including dance, music, and drama)		8. Other (Specify on back)		3. Small groups or pairs (2-5)		
14. Board/table/card games or puzzles		E. MATERIALS USED		4. Individuals working alone		
15. TV/video watching		1. Computers				
16. Higher education or career orientation		2. Art supplies				
17. Health/well-being		3. Sports equipment				
18. Service/civic (in community or program)		4. Reading materials				
19. Snack		5. Writing materials				
20. Arrival/dismissal		6. Musical instruments				
21. Cultural awareness clubs/projects		7. Games				
22. Other (Specify on back)		8. Other (Specify on back)				

Activity Context
Other/Not Applicable Descriptions

Activity Type	
Skill Areas	
Type of Space	
Materials Used	

Activity Observation Coding

Site ID	Date	Room #:	Activity #	Start Time:	End Time:	Observer Initials:	
J. YOUTH INTERACTIONS							
Indicator Checklist (+)			Segment	Indicator Checklist (-)			Segment
YOUTH...			A B C	YOUTH...			A B C
1. Have few or no interactions							
2. Interactions are positive						6. Have disagreement/disputes that are unresolved	
3. Cooperate/share with each other						7. Harass/intimidate/threaten each other	
4. Talk informally/listen to each other							
5. Appear to enjoy each other's company							
K. STAFF-YOUTH INTERACTIONS							
Indicator Checklist (+)			Segment	Indicator Checklist (-)			Segment
STAFF...			A B C	STAFF...			A B C
1. Engage positively with youth						8. Have few or no interactions with youth	
2. Are highly engaged with youth (check both this category and the one above)						9. Use arbitrary or harsh disciplinary methods	
3. Engage informally in conversations with youth						10. Belittle youth or embarrass them in front of peers	
4. Use positive language and tone of voice with youth						11. Appear to be unaware of teasing/bullying or other serious conflicts among youth	
5. Listen actively and attentively to youth						12. Fail to encourage/facilitate participation from disengaged youth	
6. Use positive behavior management techniques OR no behavior issues observed							
7. Praise/encourage individual youth							
YOUTH...			A B C	YOUTH...			A B C
13. Respond to staff directions						16. Ignore directions/tune staff out	
14. Interact positively with staff						17. Are rude/actively negative toward staff	
15. Seek out positive contact/interactions with staff							
L. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT							
Indicator Checklist (+)			Segment	Indicator Checklist (-)			Segment
YOUTH ...			A B C	YOUTH...			A B C
1. Are on-task/actively participating						3. Are off-task/distracted/floating without purpose	
2. Are interested/focused						4. Are disruptive to the activity/prevent peers from focusing	
5. Number of youth engaged/on-task (end of segment)						6. Number of youth present (end of segment)	

Site ID:	Date:	Room #:	Activity #:	Start Time:	End Time:	Observer Initials:					
M. OPPORTUNITIES FOR SKILL-BUILDING AND MASTERY											
Indicator Checklist (+) STAFF...			Segment			Indicator Checklist (-) STAFF...			Segment		
			A	B	C				A	B	C
1. Are clearly focused on instruction /helping youth to learn something new or master a skill						22. Criticize youths' work without offering guidance					
2. Communicate goals, purpose, or expectations for activity						23. Give answers/impose solutions without encouraging youth to solve own problems					
3. Provide direct instruction/lecture /give directions						24. Provide poor answers or wrong answers to questions					
4. Demonstrate or model a concept or skill						25. Fail to respond in a timely manner to youth who ask for assistance					
5. Ask youth "why", "how", and "what if" questions that require complex answers						26. Do not notice youth who are having difficulty					
6. Actively facilitate discussion among youth											
7. Constructively critique/offer feedback to individual youth											
8. Challenge youth to push themselves intellectually, creatively and/or physically											
YOUTH ...											
9. Actively listen to/watch a lecture/presentation/ performance											
10. Write (not for homework)											
11. Read or are read to (not for homework)											
12. Use math (not for homework)											
13. Work cooperatively with each other to achieve a goal											
14. Work on projects with culminating products or events											
15. Choose what or how they do something or help determine the direction of an activity											
16. Lead activities, individuals, or groups of peers											
17. Tutor/mentor other youth											
18. Think strategically/analyze/solve complex problems											
19. Use additional information to accomplish a goal/make a decision											
20. Participate in structured discussions that contribute to completing the activity/task											
21. Discuss interpersonal needs/feelings with peers and/or adults											

Site ID:	Date:	Room #:	Activity #:	Start Time:	End Time:	Observer Initials:
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N. ACTIVITY ORGANIZATION

Indicator Checklist (+)	Segment			Indicator Checklist (-)	Segment		
	A	B	C		A	B	C
1. Youth know what they are expected to do				4. Youth do not know what is expected of them			
2. The work area is appropriately prepared and ready for youth				5. Staff are unprepared for the activity			
3. Activity is appropriate for youths' skill levels				6. Multiple staff work at cross purposes			

O. SETTING AND RESOURCES

Indicator Checklist (+)	Segment			Indicator Checklist (-)	Segment		
	A	B	C		A	B	C
1. If materials or equipment are needed, they are functional/in reasonably good condition, OR no special materials are required.				4. Materials/equipment/space is needed but not available or inadequate for the activity/task			
2. If materials are needed, there are enough for all youth to have the access they need to participate, OR no special materials are required.				5. Space is unsafe for the activity/task			
3. There is enough room for the activity/number of youth				6. External interruptions/distractions disrupt activity/prevent staff and/or youth from focusing			

Appendix G

Spring 2003 Director Survey

Study of Promising After-School Programs Spring 2003 Director Survey

Your Name: _____

Name of Program: _____

Date: _____

Present Program Information:

2002-2003 Program Hours:

M _____ T _____ W _____ Th _____ F _____

Fall 2002 Start Date: _____

Spring 2003 End Date: _____

Projected Program Information:

2003-2004 Program Hours:

M _____ T _____ W _____ Th _____ F _____

Fall 2003 Start Date: _____

Spring 2004 End Date: _____

2002-2003 program enrollment:

- a. Total number of students enrolled in the after-school program _____
- b. Total number of program attendees in the targeted grade-levels at your program:
 - Third _____ Fourth _____
 - Sixth _____ Seventh _____

Attendance at your program:

- a. % of children who attend 5 days a week _____
- b. % of children who attend 3-4 times a week _____
- c. % of children who attend 1-2 times a week _____
- d. % of children who attend sporadically _____
- e. We don't monitor attendance at this program _____

Ethnicity and race of students who attend program:

- a. % White, nonhispanic _____
- b. % African-American _____
- c. % Asian _____
- d. % Latino _____
- e. % Other _____

Questions 1 – 4 ask about your program.

1. Please complete the following two grids on space and materials that are available to your program:

Space:	Space is not available	Limited Space	Adequate Space
a. Art room			
b. Science Lab			
c. Computer Lab			
d. Classroom			
e. Music Room			
f. Cafeteria			
g. Kitchen			
h. Gym			
i. Auditorium			
j. Library			
k. Playground or outdoor activity space			
l. Nursing area or infirmary for sick children			
m. Office space for staff planning			
n. Storage space			
o. Space where I can meet privately with parents or children/youth			
p. Other			

Materials:	Materials not available	Inadequate Materials	Adequate Materials
a. Calculators and math tools			
b. Computers for student use			
c. Art supplies (crayons, paints, drawing tools, clay, etc.)			
d. Books/magazines for leisure reading			
e. Games, puzzles, etc.			
f. Physical education equipment			
g. Reference books for planning activities			
h. Transportation for field trips			
i. Computers for staff to use			
j. Photocopier			
k. Other (specify) _____			

2. **How often do Activity Leaders at this after-school program meet together to discuss program-related issues (without students) for at least 30 minutes?**
- Never (*skip to question 5*)
 - Once a year
 - Every 2-3 months or once a semester
 - Monthly
 - Bimonthly
 - Weekly
 - Other (describe)
3. **What are the most common discussion topics/agenda items at these meetings? (Circle all that apply)**
- Program logistics
 - Planning program activities
 - Individual students and/or their needs
 - Providing training/professional development to staff in a particular area
 - Other (describe)
4. **Are Activity Leaders compensated for this planning/meeting time?**
- Yes, all meetings.
 - Yes, some but not all meetings. Explain.
 - No

Questions 5 – 8 ask about relations between your program and the partner school.

5. **How often do you meet with the principal or another school official at the partner school to discuss issues related to the program or school?**
- Never
 - 1-2 times a year
 - 1-2 times a semester
 - Monthly
 - At least 2- 3 times a month
 - Weekly
6. **What are the most common topics of discussion with the principal?**

	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Planning program content			
b. Issues related to classroom space/shared space			
c. Enrollment levels/policies			
d. Student discipline issues/policies			
e. Staffing of the program			
f. Other			

7. Do you attend school faculty or school leadership team meetings?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, please complete the following grid about the frequency with which you attend the following meetings:

	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
a. School faculty meetings			
b. School leadership team meetings			
c. Other school meetings			

8. How often do you talk with teachers in the program's partner school who are not employed by the program about...

	Never	At least 2-3 times a year	1-2 times a semester	Monthly	At least 2-3 times a month	Weekly
a. Curriculum concepts being taught in school?						
b. Homework assignments?						
c. The needs or progress of individual students?						
d. Issues related to classroom space?						

Questions 9 – 10 ask about relations with parents of students and others in the community.

9. We're interested in learning about your program's relationship with parents. How often do you:

	Never	At least 2-3 times a year	1-2 times a semester	Monthly	At least 2-3 times a month	Weekly
a. Meet with parents individually (not as a group)						
b. Talk with parents over the phone						
c. Send information about the program home to parents						
d. Hold events or meetings for parents						

10. We're interested in learning about the types of support and resources your program receives from other organizations, agencies, or businesses. How many organizations, if any:

	None	1	2 – 4	5 or more
a. Provide special programs/activities/ services for children/youth (on- or off-site)				
b. Provide special programs/activities/ services for parents/ families (on- or off-site)				
c. Provide regular volunteers to the program				
d. Provide regular mentors for children/youth				
e. Donate materials or supplies				
f. Provide funding through grants or contracts				
g. Donate facilities/space				
h. Refer students to program				
i. Provide other types of support:				

Questions 11-16 ask about your background and training.

11. Do you hold another role or position within the sponsoring organization or host school, in addition to your job as site leader for this after-school program? (Circle all that apply.)

- No, I do not have another role or position within the organization or school.
- I am also the Executive Director or Assistant Director of the sponsoring organization
- I supervise other after-school programs operated by the sponsoring organization
- I am a teacher at the school where this after-school program is located
- I am a teacher at another school
- I hold some other job in addition to this one – Please specify:

12. What types of jobs did you have before you became the on-site program coordinator for this after-school program? How many years did you spend in each job?

Previous experience of the program coordinator:	None	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	More than 10 years
a. Recreation, youth, or child-care worker						
b. Social services, youth services, or health services worker						
c. Teaching or teaching assistant (paraprofessional)						
d. Camp counselor/leader						
e. Administrator at a child/youth center or at a park or recreation center						
f. Administrator in a social services organization						
g. Other (specify) _____						

13. What is your highest level of education? (Circle one.)

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school or GED
- c. Some college, other classes/training not related to a degree
- d. Completed two-year college degree
- e. Completed four-year college degree
- f. Some graduate work
- g. Master's degree or higher

14. Which best describes your race or ethnicity? (Circle one.)

- a. Black (not Hispanic)
- b. Hispanic/Latino
- c. Asian or Pacific Islander
- d. Native American or Alaskan Native
- e. White (not Hispanic)
- f. Other (Specify) _____

15. Please specify your gender:

- a. Female
- b. Male

16. What is your age? (Circle one.)

- a. Under 18
- b. Between 18 and 21
- c. Between 22 and 25
- d. Between 26 and 35
- e. Between 36 and 45
- f. Over 45

Budget Information

Check the box(s) that best describe your major funding sources.

Annual budget for 2002-2003: _____

Funding Sources	Approximate Amount or Percent of Total Budget	Is this source stable for next year? Explain if No.
<input type="checkbox"/> School district	_____	Y or N
<input type="checkbox"/> Local government	_____	Y or N
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal government	_____	Y or N
- 21 st CCLC	_____	
- GEAR UP	_____	
- Title I	_____	
- Safe and Drug Free Schools	_____	
- Other Federal	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> National foundation	_____	Y or N
<input type="checkbox"/> Local foundation	_____	Y or N
<input type="checkbox"/> Private donor or Corporation	_____	Y or N
<input type="checkbox"/> Subcontractor	_____	Y or N
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____	_____	Y or N
TOTAL	100 %	

3rd & 4th GRADE STAFF INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the following information regarding each staff member that **works at least once a week for at least 30 minutes** with 3rd and 4th grade students at the program. Include the program on-site coordinator, paid activity leaders and assistants, contracted providers, volunteers, and any others who work with program participants at least once a week for at least 30 minutes.

Name	Total days worked per week?	Total hours worked per week?	Length of time with the after-school program?	Highest level of education? High School Some College CC or Tech Bachelors Masters	Certified Teacher? Y/N	Certified in school-age child care, child development? Y/N	Is staff paid? Y/N		
1. [site coordinator's name]									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
8.									
9.									
10.									
11.									
12.									
13.									
14.									
15.									

6th & 7th GRADE STAFF INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the following information regarding each staff member that **works at least once a week for at least 30 minutes** with **6th and 7th** grade students at the program. Include the program on-site coordinator, paid activity leaders and assistants, contracted providers, volunteers, and any others who work with program participants at least once a week for at least 30 minutes.

Name	Total days worked per week?	Total hours worked per week?	Length of time with the after-school program?	Highest level of education? High School Some College CC or Tech Bachelors Masters	Certified Teacher? Y/N	Certified in school-age child care, child development? Y/N	Is staff paid? Y/N		
1. [site coordinator's name]									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
8.									
9.									
10.									
11.									
12.									
13.									
14.									
15.									

Appendix H

Spring 2003 Activity Leader Survey

Study of Promising After-School Programs Spring 2003 Activity Leader Survey

Your Name: _____

Name of Program: _____

Date: _____

A. Your Job

1. How long have you been working at this after-school program? (circle **ONE**)

- a. Less than one year
- b. 1 – 2 years
- c. 3 – 5 years
- d. 6 – 10 years
- e. More than 10 years

2. Which best describes your current primary role(s) in this after-school program?
(circle **ALL THAT APPLY**)

- a. Homework Help/Tutoring
- b. Performing or Creative Arts Instruction
- c. Athletic/Physical Education/Fitness/Martial Arts Instruction
- d. Supervision of Other Recreational Activities/Games
- e. Reading/Language Arts Instruction
- f. Math/Science Instruction
- g. Parent/Community Outreach
- h. Other: _____

3. Are you responsible for planning activities at the program?

- a. Yes
- b. No (*skip to question 9*)

4. How often do you plan activities? (circle **ONE**)

- a. Never
- b. Once a year
- c. Twice a year
- d. Monthly
- e. Bimonthly
- f. Weekly
- g. Daily

5. Are your activity plans reviewed by someone else?

- a. Yes
- b. No

6. Do you review others' activity plans?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. Is planning time provided?

- a. Yes
- b. No (*skip to question 9*)

8. Are you compensated for planning time?

- a. Yes
→ Specify number of hours: _____
- b. No

B. Job Satisfaction and Support

Below are some questions about your experience working in the after-school program.

9. How often do you meet with other staff at this after-school program to discuss program related issues (without students) for at least 30 minutes? (circle ONE)

- a. Never (*skip to question 12*)
- b. Once a year
- c. Every 2-3 months or once a semester
- d. Monthly
- e. Bimonthly
- f. Weekly
- g. Other (describe)

10. What are the most common discussion topics/agenda items at these meetings? (circle ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Program logistics
- b. Planning program activities
- c. Individual students and/or their needs
- d. Providing training/professional development to staff in a particular area
- e. Other (describe)

11. Are you compensated for this meeting time? (circle ONE)

- a. Yes, all meetings.
- b. Yes, some but not all meetings. Explain.
- c. No

12. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your experiences working at the after-school program?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I enjoy working here				
I have the materials I need to do a good job				
I have the space I need to do a good job				
I find the work here challenging and rewarding				
I get the support and feedback I need from my supervisor				
I have enough opportunities to talk and share ideas with other staff				
I generally work on my own				
After-school staff members are committed to their work				
After-school staff members support each other and work as a team				
The director involves staff in important decisions about program operations and design				

C. Training and Technical Assistance

Below are questions about the training and technical assistance available to program staff.

13. I'd like to learn about training opportunities available to you in this program. Please indicate if training was required and/or offered in the following topic areas during the past year. Check *all* that apply:

Topics	Required	Offered
Classroom management		
Academic enrichment/literacy		
Activity planning		
Conflict resolution		
Fine and performing arts		
Athletic instruction		
Health promotion/education and support services (identifying abuse, working with health/social service agencies)		
Working with a diverse, multicultural student population		
First aid		
Child and youth development (e.g., leadership, mentoring, community service)		
Other:		

14. How many total hours of training did you receive during the past year? _____

15. Are you compensated for training as part of your job at the after-school program?

- a. No, I am not compensated in any way for training.
- b. Yes, the program pays for the following training costs. (circle *all that apply*)
 - i. Time (up to ____ hours)
 - a. Regular Wage
 - b. Reduced Wage
 - ii. Registration fees
 - iii. Travel costs for out-of-town training
 - iv. Materials costs

D. Relationships with Partner School(s) and Community

Below are some questions about the relationship and communication between your after-school program and the partner school(s) and community.

16. In the past year, how often did you talk with teachers in the program's partner school about:

	Never	1 to 2 times a semester	Once a month	At least 2 to 3 times a month
d. Curriculum concepts being taught in school?				
e. Homework assignments?				
f. The needs or progress of individual students?				
d. Issues related to classroom space?				

17. We're interested in learning about your relationship with parents. In the past year, how often did you:

	Never	1 to 2 times a semester	Once a month	At least 2 to 3 times a month
e. Meet with parents individually (not as a group)				
f. Talk with parents over the phone				
g. Send information about the program home to parents				
h. Hold events or meetings for parents				

18. Are you also employed by your program's partner school?

- a. Yes
- b. No

19. If yes, what type of position do you hold at the school? (circle **ONE**)

- a. Certified Teacher/Specialist
- b. Classroom Aide/Teaching Assistant/Student Teacher
- c. School Administrator
- d. Administrative or Student Support Staff
- e. Other _____

E. Your Background and Experience

Below are some questions about your professional background and experience.

20. Prior to taking your job with this after-school program, how many years of experience did you have working in *social services, youth services, or community organization(s)*? (circle **ONE**)

- a. None (*skip to question 22*)
- b. 1 – 2 years
- c. 3 – 5 years
- d. 6 – 10 years
- e. More than 10 years

21. If you have worked in social services, youth services, or community organization(s), how many years of experience did you have *providing direct services to children or youth*? (circle **ONE**)

- a. None
- b. 1 – 2 years
- c. 3 – 5 years
- d. 6 – 10 years
- e. More than 10 years

22. Prior to taking you position with this after-school program, did you have experience *working in a school setting*?

- a. Yes
- b. No (*skip to question 24*)

23. If you had prior experience working in a school setting, how many years of experience did you have in the following types of position?

	None	1 – 2 Years	3 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	More than 10 Years
a. School Administrator					
b. Classroom Teacher					
c. Instructional Specialist (e.g., music, art, physical education, reading)					
d. Classroom Aide/Teaching Assistant					
e. Pupil Support Staff (e.g., school counselor, social worker, psychologist)					
f. Some other position in a school setting Specify: _____					

24. What is your highest level of education? (circle ONE)

- a. Less than high school
- b. High school or GED
- c. Some college, other classes/training not related to a degree
- d. Completed two-year college degree
- e. Completed four-year college degree
- f. Some graduate work
- g. Master's degree or higher

25. Which best describes your race or ethnicity? (circle ONE)

- a. Black (not Hispanic)
- b. Hispanic/Latino
- c. Asian or Pacific Islander
- d. Native American or Alaskan Native
- e. White (not Hispanic)
- f. Other (Specify) _____

26. Please specify your gender:

- a. Female
- b. Male

27. What is your age? (circle ONE)

- a. Under 18
- b. Between 18-21
- c. Between 22-25
- d. Between 26-35
- e. Between 36-45
- f. Over 45