University of Northern Iowa

UNI ScholarWorks

2016

After-school success: Associations between youth participants and youth outcomes

Dana Miller
University of Northern Iowa

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp

Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, and the Health and Physical Education Commons

Recommended Citation

After-school success: Associations between youth participants and youth outcomes

Abstract

After-school programs (ASPs) are becoming more and more popular among children and their parents, with an abundance of children lacking access to ASPs. Participation in ASPs has been proven to positively impact participants. The positive impacts of ASPs include higher grades, less behavioral problems, and healthy youth development. After-school programs that provide a structural environment, influential leaders, goals, and evaluation of the program are characteristically proven to be more successful than programs who do not have these characteristics. Funding of ASPs can come from various sources and can be classified into one of three sectors; private for-profit, non-profit, and public.

This Study by: Dana Miller

Entitled: AFTER SCHOOL SUCCESS: ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN YOUTH AND YOUTH OUTCOMES

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the

Degree of Master of Arts

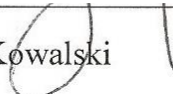12/12/16
Date   Dr. Disa Cornish, Chair

12 Dec 16
Date   Dr. Christopher Kowalski

AFTER-SCHOOL SUCCESS: ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN

YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

AND

YOUTH OUTCOMES

A Research Paper

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

Dana Miller

University of Northern Iowa

December, 2016

ABSTRACT

After-school programs (ASPs) are becoming more and more popular among children and

their parents, with an abundance of children lacking access to ASPs. Participation in

ASPs has been proven to positively impact participants. The positive impacts of ASPs

include higher grades, less behavioral problems, and healthy youth development. After-

school programs that provide a structural environment, influential leaders, goals, and

evaluation of the program are characteristically proven to be more successful than

programs who do not have these characteristics. Funding of ASPs can come from various

sources and can be classified into one of three sectors; private for-profit, non-profit, and

public.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are roughly 7.5 million students, aged 5-14, in the United States who are left unsupervised after school (Weisman & Gottfredson, 2001). During these hours, students may find themselves engaging in negative behaviors such as drug use, criminal behavior, risky sexual behaviors, and failing to complete homework. Providing students with a structured, positive environment after school may be beneficial to their physical, mental, emotional, and social health (Springer & Diffily, 2010). After-school programs have gained popularity among parents and their children in the past two decades (Weisman & Gottfredson, 2001). There are various kinds of after-school programs offered nationally that include primary components such as academic support, physical activity, and others. Some organized clubs that may provide homework and physical activities, as well as other services include; YMCA, Boys and Girls Club of America, Boy/Girl Scouts, and 4-H (Weisman & Gottfredson, 2001).

Previous studies have found mixed results regarding benefits of after-school programs on student outcomes such as grades, attendance, behavioral issues, drop-out rates, and grade point average (GPA). Some results have shown to be significant and others insignificant, as well as results that were inconclusive. For example, Darling, Caldwell, and Smith (2005) conducted a study to determine whether participation in school-based extracurricular activities (ECAs) yielded any benefits on adolescent adjustment. The conclusions from that study found differences among youth, but the results do not explain the direct relationship between ECAs and adolescent adjustment.

However, Springer and Diffily (2010) conducted a short-term longitudinal study among the participants of the Greater Dallas Boys and Girls Club of America. The conclusions from that study found participation in the Boys and Girls Club of America had a positive impact on grades for those individuals who attended.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss potential academic, physical, and psychosocial outcomes from participating in after-school programs, identify common characteristics of successful ASPs, and the best practices in planning and implementation that can aid future ASP development and improvement. Potential outcomes include: improved grades, GPA, improved youth outcomes that include greater attendance in school, improved feelings related to school, and decreases in negative social behaviors.

Research questions

1. What are the academic, physical, and psychosocial impacts of ASP participation?
2. What are the common characteristics of successful ASPs?
3. What best practices in planning and implementation can aid future ASP development and improvement?

Significance of the Review

This review of the literature is important to highlight the potential outcomes of after-school programs among youth who participate. Children need structure after school to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviors. Those risky behaviors include drug use, engagement in unprotected sex which may lead to teen pregnancy, and truancy (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, & Ferrari, 2003; Hallfors et al., 2002; Kremer, Maynard, Polanin, Vaughn, & Sarteschi, 2015). When children are provided with an opportunity to

engage in ASPs, the involvement in risky behaviors significantly decreases. If children are supervised by role-modeling adults who help them with homework, the children's grades are likely to be higher. When children have higher grades they have more opportunities to attend college which leads to better paying jobs in the future (Afterschool Alliance, 2014; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003; Cosden, Morrison, Gutierrez, & Brown, 2004; Darling, Caldwell, & Smith, 2005; Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010). After-school programs also provide children and adolescents with the opportunity to engage in physical activity. The recent increase in childhood obesity has put some burden on schools to provide children with adequate time to participate in physical activity, but most schools do not have the time needed to provide this service to their students. However, ASPs do not interfere with school time and can provide this to children and adolescents (Afterschool Alliance, 2014; Sallis et al., 1997; Schuna, Lauersdorf, Behrens, Liguori, & Liebert, 2013).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Methods

Research for this paper was carried out entirely through review of secondary data, which was comprised of scientific peer reviewed journal articles. Articles used for this review were found using searches of online databases including EbscoHost and Google Scholar. The peer reviewed articles used in this paper came from various sources, including; *Journal of Community Psychology*; *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*; *Child Development*; *Journal of Educational Psychology*; *Theory into Practice*; *Journal of Leisure Research*; and *American Journal of Community Psychology*. Websites and other print materials were used for background material and further understanding of the way after-school programs function in their communities. Online sources included Afterschool Alliance, YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Club of America, and Youth.gov.

After-School Programs

This section outlines the different types of ASPs as described by Edginton, C.R., Lankford, S.V., Dieser, R.B., and Kowalski, C.L. (in press) as well as additional characteristics of ASPs. In the past 20 years, the number and types of after-school programs in the United States have greatly increased (Kremer et al., 2015). Some examples of after-school programs include: YMCA, Boys and Girls Club of America, Boy/Girl Scouts, and 4-H (Weisman & Gottfredson, 2001). According to Weisman and Gottfredson (2001), after-school programs have gained national popularity among children and their parents. These programs provide a structured environment for children

after school hours while their parents are at work. After-school programs that provide youth development promote positive and healthy development for participating children (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003). There are various after-school programs that provide an assortment of activities in which adolescents can participate in while providing adult supervision. These include dance; drama; the visual arts; crafts; the new arts; literary activities; self-improvement/educational activities; sports, games, and athletics; aquatics; outdoor recreation/education; wellness/fitness; hobbies; social recreation; and travel and tourism.

Dance programs provide numerous activities to children of all skill levels and ages in after school programs. These activities can be participated in individually, with a partner, or in a group. Dance can be a way of expressing oneself creatively and can be important to youth development through physical activity, creative problem-solving, and social interaction. (Edginton, et al., in press). Drama programs and activities incorporate multiple recreation and leisure opportunities for partakers. These programs and activities can be participated in individually or in a group and at all skill levels. By engaging in these activities children are able to tap into their thoughts, feelings, and ideas through expression in plays, musicals, and creative storytelling thus having a positive impact on other participants (Edginton, et al., in press).

Examples of the visual arts include decorative arts or the making of beautiful and eye-catching items for participants' own pleasure. Perception or interpretation is the core function of visual arts and provide the chance for participants to communicate their feelings, thoughts, and impressions of objects to others. The visual arts encourages self-

expression through art. (Edginton, et al., in press). Crafts are objects which have a physical or useful significance. Offering crafts at ASPs can have multiple benefits for the participants which includes a sense of pride and accomplishment for finishing a craft, developing a new skill, and a chance to interact with others. Offering crafts to younger children can improve their skill of using two hands at once and fine motor coordination. The developmental opportunities provided to younger participants are essential to their growth (Edginton, et al., in press).

The new arts uses technological tools to help expand participants' creative desires. Digital arts recreation and leisure programs are also included in the new arts. Participants can engage in these programs individually or in groups (Edginton, et al., in press). Literary activities are designed to mentally stimulate participants. Participants can engage in these activities individually or in groups and at all skill levels. Literary activities can be done virtually anywhere, not just at an ASP location and at any time convenient to the participant (Edginton, et al., in press). Self-improvement/educational activities can stimulate cognitive, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual development. Participation in this type of activity can be done individually or in groups. Combining digital technology and interaction with others in "real-time" creates learning opportunities in a variety of arrangements (Edginton, et al., in press).

Sports, games and athletics programs are most common among activities at ASPs. Children of all skill level can participate in this area, while competing individually, with a group, or on a small team. (Edginton, et al., in press). Aquatic programs can include swimming, diving, snorkeling, water aerobics, and many others. These activities can be

competitive, non-competitive casual participation, and aerobic exercise in a teacher-learner setting. Children and youth participating in aquatics can range in skill level (Edginton, et al., in press).

The outdoor recreation/education area goes beyond playing outdoors; educators in outdoor recreation believe in an interactive connection with nature. The programs in this area children and youth participate in should increase their knowledge in connection with the importance of the natural environment, while implanting an appreciation for conservation and preservation. Children and youth can participate in these activities individually or with others and at all skill levels (Edginton, et al., in press). The main objective of activities and events in the wellness/fitness area is to emphasize the importance of overall health and well-being of participants. The health and well-being of an individual can include their emotional, social, physical, psychological, or mental capabilities. The activities provided in the wellness/fitness area can be therapeutic or energizing and can deliver precise information related to the importance of positive health and well-being. These programs and activity groups provides chances to participants in order to live a healthy, active lifestyle to confidently influence themselves and others (Edginton, et al., in press).

Hobbies are an excellent way for individuals to recognize a positive outlet for recreation and leisure. Hobbies can instill social interaction and personal development. Hobbies can be chosen by the individual according to what interests them the most (Edginton, et al., in press). Social recreation programs are designed to provide a relaxing, comfortable environment to interact with others. In order to create this environment,

facilitators should not play inappropriate music, dancing, and games to avoid awkward situations (Edginton, et al., in press). Travel and tourism has expanded since the beginning of the digital era. Examples of travel and tourism include field trips and day trips. These activities can be done individually or in a group and can include all skill levels (Edginton, et al., in press).

After-school program organizations can fall under one of three sectors; private for-profit, non-profit, or public. Private for-profit organizations are businesses established by individuals to make a profit. There are five forms of ownership that can occur; sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, limited liability corporation (LLC), and franchises (van der Smissen, Moiseichik, Hartenburg, & Twardzik, 1999). An example of a private for-profit organization is the Ocean Reef Club (Edginton, et al., in press). Non-profit organizations' revenue does not get circulated to members, directors, or officers. Non-profit organizations are created to achieve specific mission(s) (van der Smissen, et al., 1999). Examples of non-profit funded organizations include the YMCA, YWCA, and Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA). After-school program organizations that fall into the public sector are composed of tax-supported organizations at the federal, state, and local levels (van der Smissen, et al., 1999). An example of a publicly funded ASP organization is the City of Columbus, Ohio Recreation and Parks Department (Edginton, et al., in press).

Many after-school programs are funded by federal grants. In a span of 6 years, from 1998 to 2004 federal funding increased from $40 million to exceeding $1 billion. The increase in funding of ASPs is due largely in part of the No Child Left Behind Act of

2001 (Kremer et al., 2015). Without sufficient funding, individuals who need a safe, structured place after school is dismissed might not have these programs available to them. The amount of funding does not determine how successful a program will be. When a program is successful, the funding increases for that particular program in an attempt to maintain participation rates (Springer & Diffily, 2010).

In 2004, Afterschool Alliance started *America After 3PM* in an attempt to provide dependable data to answer questions regarding how children spent their time after school. Afterschool Alliance conducted surveys again in 2009 and 2014. Surveys were provided to parents with questions that included; what students do after school hours, who attends ASPs, and how many children would attend an ASP if one were available to them. In 2014, 10.2 million children attended an after-school program, a number that continues to grow (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Children from low-income households are more likely to attend an ASP than children from high-income households. African American and Hispanic students are twice as likely to attend an after-school program. Nationally, boys and girls are similar regarding how they spend their time after school hours; 20 percent of girls and 17 percent of boys attend an afterschool program and 15 percent of girls and 17 percent of boys are not supervised by an adult after school. Over the past decade, the demand of providing ASPs to students has been unmet. Roughly 19.4 million students are not participating in ASPs, but would if a program was available to them, according to parents (Afterschool Alliance, 2014).

<u>After-School Program Organization Spotlight</u>

Examples of well-known organizations that offer some or all of the aforementioned programs include the YMCA, YWCA, and the Boys and Girls Club of America (BCGA). The next paragraphs will explain the history, mission, areas of focus, and funding of these organizations.

<u>YMCA</u>

The Young Men's Christian Association, or better known as the YMCA was founded in 1844 by George Williams in London. Williams along with 11 counterparts created a Bible study and prayer program for men who were looking for a way to avoid the harsh life on the streets ("History-Founding," 2016). This unique program for its time provided social need in the community was fascinating and created an acceptance to its members, crossing firm lines that separated the English classes ("History-Founding," 2016). Near the end of 1851, the first YMCA in the United States was opened by Thomas Valentine Sullivan in Boston after Sullivan recognized a need for a safe haven for sailors and merchants ("History-Founding," 2016).

The mission of the YMCA is an organization that aims to strengthening communities. The YMCA is cause-driven for youth development, for healthy living and for social responsibility ("Our Focus," 2016). Youth development is defined as "nurturing the potential of every child and teen" ("Areas of Focus," 2016). Healthy living is defined as "improving the nation's health and well-being" ("Areas of Focus," 2016). Social responsibility is defined as "giving back and providing support to our neighbors" ("Areas of Focus," 2016). Programs offered for youth development includes camps, child

care, education and leadership, food programs, the "Let's Move! Outside" program, summer buzz, and swim, sports, and play ("Youth Development," 2016). Programs offered for healthy living includes healthy kids day, family time, health, well-being, and fitness, sports and recreation, group interests, and the healthier community initiatives ("Healthy Living," 2016). Programs offered for social responsibility includes social services, global services, volunteerism and giving, and advocacy ("Social Responsibility," 2016).

The YMCA is a non-profit organization funded by many donors to help provide services to youth and teens across America. Some well-known organizations that donate to the YMCA includes the Center for Disease Control (CDC), CVS Health, National Basketball Association (NBA), Wells Fargo, and many others ("Donors and Partners," 2016).

YWCA

The sister agency of the YMCA is the Young Women's Christian Association, or better known as YWCA. In 1858 the first Ladies Christian Association was founded in New York City. What started as a boarding house for female students, teachers, and factory workers evolved into an association dedicated to serving young women in Northeastern United States ("History," 2016). The first time YWCA was used was in 1866 in Boston, Massachusetts. From 1870, the YWCA expanded its services from operating as a boarding house to a gym, student association, medical service provider, leading the way for the Visiting Nurses Association. The YWCA started providing services to African Americans in 1889 and to Native Americans in 1890 ("History,"

2016). The mission of the YWCA, "Is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all" ("Mission & Vision," 2016).

The YWCA does not specifically have programs like the YMCA, but the YWCA does provide initiatives and those initiatives includes racial justice and civil rights; empowerment and economic advancement of women and girls; and health and safety of women and girls ("What We Do," 2016). The racial justice and civil rights initiative aims to increase equal protections and opportunities for people of color. Through this initiative the YWCA strives to build alliances and change local and national inequalities ("Racial Justice and Civil Rights," 2016). The empowerment and economic advancement of women and girls initiative is designed to increase economic chances for women and girls in underserved populations. Through programs provided every year, the YWCA is able to serve over 100,000 women with empowerment programs ("Empowerment and Economic Advancement," 2016). The health and safety of women and girls is extremely important to the YWCA and through the health and safety initiative, the YWCA is able to provide services to women and girls in underserved populations. This initiative aims to provide health and wellness programs that would be otherwise unavailable to disadvantaged populations, women especially ("Health and Safety," 2016).

Boys and Girls Club of America

The Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA) was founded in 1860 in Hartford, Connecticut by Mary Goodwin, Alice Goodwin, and Elizabeth Hammersley. The Boys and Girls Club of America started because the Goodwin's and Hammersley saw a need to

provide a constructive substitute for boys "wandering" the streets. The organization saw numerous name changes through the years, while joining with other boys clubs to start a national movement. It was not until 1990 that the organization changed its name to the Boys and Girls Club of America after recognizing girls were a part of the cause. ("Our History," n.d.).

The mission of the Boys and Girls Club of America is, "To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens" ("Our Mission," n.d.). The core beliefs of the BCGA are to provide, "A safe place to learn and grow, ongoing relationships with caring, professional adults, life-enhancing programs and character development experiences, and hope and opportunity" ("Our Mission," n.d.). Boys and Girls Club of America provide character and leadership, education and career, health and life skills, art, sports, fitness, and recreation, and specialized programs to members. Examples of specialized programs include Delinquency and Gang Prevention/Intervention Initiative, Youth for Unity, and Teen Initiative ("Specialized Programs," n.d.).

The Boys and Girls Club of America is a non-profit organization funded by donors. A list of donors is unavailable because each club is a separate unit that is governed by their own board of directors and responsible for its own relationships with donors ("Our Commitment," n.d.).

<center>After-School Participation and Academic Outcomes</center>

Evidence for positive academic outcomes related to after-school programs is not conclusive (Springer & Diffily, 2010), but is optimistic. Anderson-Butcher, Newsome,

and Ferrari (2003) conducted a study to discover the influence after-school programs has on academic outcomes while controlling for age. The authors concluded that participants in after-school programs had improved grades. Through various studies, the outcomes support after-school programs and involvement in extracurricular activity participation leads to better grades, GPA, test scores, and greater involvement in school.

Several studies have shown a positive association between participating in after-school programs and academic performance including grades, greater involvement in school, test scores, and in some cases improved GPA (among older students where GPA was applicable) (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003; Kremer et al., 2015; Springer & Diffily, 2010). English grades were considerably higher among participants than non-participants while controlling for background characteristics (race, socioeconomic status, mother's highest education level) (Shernoff, 2010).

Cooper, Valentine, Nye, & Lindsay (1999) found there was a significant relationship between attending after-school programs and improved grades on assignments given by the teacher. Similarly, students who participated in an after-school program compared to non-participants reportedly had higher reading grades (Mahoney, Lord, & Carryl, 2005). The type of care an adolescent receives after school can be influential in how well the individual excels in school. For example, Mahoney, Lord, and Carryl (2005) compared academic outcomes to the type of care the adolescents received. The categories of care included; parent or legal guardian care, after-school program care, non-adult care (i.e. being home or being at a different location after school, taking care of oneself, or being watched by a sibling), and care by another adult (i.e. relatives,

babysitters, and adult friends). The study found that children who received care at ASPs had higher reading scores compared to children in the other three categories (parent or legal guardian care, taking care of oneself, and being watched by a sibling). The children who received care at ASPs also had a higher expectancy of success rating compared to children receiving care from another adult (Mahoney et al., 2005).

Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, & Mann (2001) stressed the importance of attending after-school programs at an early age because there is positive indication that entering an ASP at a younger age will lead to improved health status, decreased need for grade withholding, and services for special education later in life. (Reynolds et al., 2001). In the study, 989 children attended the Chicago Child Parent Center program in preschool and kindergarten. The study concluded preschoolers in the Chicago Child Parent Center program had a higher rate of high school completion by the age of 20, this group also had lower dropout rates, after adjusting for the covariates school-age participation, sex, race/ethnicity, and risk index. The comparison group completed less years of high school than the preschool group.

Springer and Diffily (2010) found the overall intensity of program participation was substantially related to higher GPA scores among elementary and middle school students after controlling for gender and neighborhood socioeconomic status. This correlation was greater among elementary students. The higher the intensity of participation in after-school programs, the larger the improvements were in grades among students.

While participating in after-school programs may be beneficial to youth, there is some concern that too much participation in these programs can have negative effects (Mahoney & Vest, 2012). Fredricks (2012), concluded there is a threshold in which individuals who participate in too many activities (5-7), or are spending too much time involving themselves in an activity (more than 14 hours per week) leads to negative academic outcomes. However, it is important to note that there is a correlation between negative academic outcomes and not participating in any activities. Meaning, not participating in any activities is a risk factor for negative academic outcomes. And while this study's results supported the Threshold Model, the results also revealed there is a positive association between low-to-moderate levels of participation and academic outcomes (Fredricks, 2012).

The concern for students participating in too many activities follows the Threshold Model. The Threshold Model accepts that high levels of participation in too many activities may deteriorate connections with others and identifying with school and may take time away from completing homework (Knifsend & Graham, 2012). Predictions from Springer and Diffily (2010) related to breadth of participation in after-school program activities suggested that the more activities an individual participated in, the greater the academic outcomes would be. This study did not support the Threshold Model because the Threshold Model was not tested in the study; since, at the time of the study being published, research of the Threshold Model was limited (Springer & Diffily, 2010). In Knifsend and Graham's (2012) study, the results concluded that participation in

3 or 4 activities after-school was negatively associated to GPA and the sense of belonging to school.

<div align="center">After-School Participation and Physical Activity</div>

With many after-school programs offering physical activity as a service to its members; participants should meet the recommendation of physical activity guidelines. The recommendation of physical activity per day for youth ages 7-16 is 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity, three times a week ("Physical Activity Guidelines," 2015). The *Keep it Moving* program is an example of a program that has been implemented as an ASP in disadvantaged Colorado school districts. In an objective assessment, researchers had participants wear an accelerometer to track the minutes of physical activity of children in third, fourth, and fifth grades during the 2010-2011 school year at four different schools. Assessments were completed at two sessions per school that included the use of the accelerometers and direct observations. Results showed the average time the accelerometer was worn was almost 57 minutes (Schuna et al., 2013). The percentages of children engaging in sedentary activities was 13.4, children engaging in low physical activity was 47.4 percent, 32.5 percent of the children engaged in moderate physical activity, and only 6.7 percent participated in vigorous activity. Children who were not classified as overweight/obese spent more time in vigorous physical activity, but there were not any significant differences between children who were not overweight/obese and children overweight/obese for total activity time, sedentary time, moderate physical activity, and moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Results also showed all participants in *Keep it Moving* engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity for more than 20 minutes per session (Schuna et al., 2013).

In an effort to increase physical activity in schools *Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids* (SPARK) was implemented in seven schools in the suburbs of San Diego, California. Each school was assigned to one of three settings, specialist-led setting, teacher-led setting, and a controlled setting. The specialist-led setting had certified physical education specialists executing the program. The teacher-led setting included teachers who had been trained to implement the program. The control setting was led by untrained teachers. The program was implemented three times a week for 30 minutes each session for two years to students who entered fourth grade in the fall and were fifth graders in the spring (Sallis et al., 1997). Results from the study concluded students in the specialist-led setting engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity twice as much as the control setting. While the SPARK program increased the levels of physical activity in school, the program had no significant impact with increasing physical activity outside of school. Results from the controlled setting showed students were provided with 12 percent out of the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity through the school week. Students in the teacher-led setting achieved 22 percent, while students in the specialist-led setting achieved 27 percent of the 150 minutes per school week (Sallis et al., 1997).

<div align="center">After-School Participation and Psychosocial Outcomes</div>

The psychosocial benefits of after-school programs have been well-documented in the past (Springer & Diffily, 2010). These psychosocial benefits include improved

social skills, higher motivation, and exhibiting better behaviors in the classroom. Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, and Ferrari (2003) wanted to determine what programs children participated in on a daily basis at a Boys and Girls Club of America location. Games, arts and crafts, recreation and sports, skills/prevention, service projects, and educational activities were the most common activities. Participants who attended on a monthly basis beginning at a younger age were protected from negative outcomes later on, including truancy, less favorable attitudes toward cheating, and using cigarettes. The authors also concluded that students had higher levels of enjoyment and participation in school.

Darling, Caldwell, and Smith (2005) found that students who participated in school-based extracurricular activities (activities offered by school such as band, sports, and clubs) were less likely to use marijuana and more likely to have higher grades, academic goals, and optimistic attitudes towards school compared to non-participants. However, no association was found between participating in school-based extracurricular activities and alcohol consumption. In a meta-analysis by Durlak, Weissberg, and Pachan (2010), concluded that participants in after-school programs had substantially higher positive feelings of themselves and school as well as optimistic social behaviors. Negative behaviors decreased among participants in after-school programs.

Roffman, Pagano, and Hirsch (2001) explored whether specific characteristics of the ASPs were associated with psychosocial outcomes for girls, boys, and children of different races/ethnicities. The researchers did not find a connection between frequency of program attendance and outcomes for participants. However, they did find that

positive relationships with club staff and structured activities for participants were linked with positive outcomes. Black participants and older male participants were especially likely to benefit from relationships with club staff. In addition, older male participants were more likely than females to benefit from structured activities at the ASP.(Roffman et al., 2001).

A similar hypothesis to the Threshold model is the over-scheduling hypothesis. The over-scheduling hypothesis is the worry that too much involvement in organized activities may lead to reduced developmental outcomes (Mahoney & Vest, 2012). This hypothesis is constructed upon three interconnected suggestions: (a) inspiration for participation in organized activities among youth is external (pressure from outside sources to engage in organized activities); (b) the time needed to dedicate to these activities is thought to be widespread that normal family functions (i.e., dinnertime, time spent with family members, simple communication) are disrupted; and (c) between the first two components, youths could be at risk for increasing adjustment problems and diminished relationships with their parents (Mahoney, Harris, & Eccles, 2006).

In a systematic review, the authors concluded most of the results from five other studies in regards to social and emotional outcomes were null. The studies did not support, nor did they reject the idea that after-school programs had a greater impact for a child's psychosocial development compared to children who did not attend after-school programs. These social and emotional outcomes included; feelings of being left out, feeling bad for others, sticking to one's beliefs, believing the best about others, and bonding with others (Zief, Lauver, & Maynard, 2006).

There are very few studies where the researcher's findings were contradictory to the previous paragraphs. In a meta-analysis and systematic review, thorough assessments have been shown to observe the effects after-school programs have on behaviors and school attendance. The search for studies included 24 after-school program facilitations. Of the included studies, the results found small and insignificant outcomes on expressing behaviors (and attendance in school). Overall, participants did not establish greater behavior compared with their contrast group peers (Kremer et al., 2015). Another example of a study finding negative effects between after-school programs and psychosocial benefits included: older students who participated in Boys and Girls Club of America had lower grades, greater acceptance levels of cheating, reduced enjoyment and participation in school, and greater alcohol use (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003).

Vandell and Corasaniti (1988) studied the outcomes of social emotional functioning among children and the type of care they received. The types of care compared in this study included: cared by mothers; takes care of self; stays home with a sibling (included the sibling's age); stays with a babysitter at the home of the child; stays with a babysitter at the home of the babysitter; attends day care or a community center after school (the name of the program was provided); and other (parents specified the type of care their child received). Other included a variety of replies, but the most frequent answer was that the child stayed with a family member or a combination of child care. Negative outcomes were found among children who attended day care or had a babysitter received more negative ratings from their classmates than children who were cared for by their mothers. The children attending a community center or a babysitter

received far more negative ratings from their classmates compared to children whose mothers looked after them. Children who cared for themselves received neutral ratings from their classmates. The results also found children receiving day care after school had negative peer relationship ratings from their parents compared to children whose mother watched them after school. There were not any significant results among children getting care from their mothers compared to children who took care of themselves after school (Vandell & Corasaniti, 1988).

<div align="center">Characteristics of Successful After-School Programs</div>

According to Huang and Dietel (2011), the following five characteristics collaborate together to form high-quality ASPs: goals, leadership, staff, program, and evaluation. The goals of a high-quality ASP should be clear, thorough, and reinforced throughout the program in structure and content. The leadership in a high-quality ASP has experience, they are well-educated, has been involved in the ASP for an extended amount of time, communicates well with others, sets high expectations, and uses a bottom-up managing style. An effective leader will use a bottom-up management approach to involve all members involved in the ASP. The third component, staff, is capable, has worked for or with the ASP for an extended time, the staff members can relate to participants, is a great role model with high expectations, is able to motivate and encourage participants, and can work well with leaders, coworkers, and parents of participants. The program should line-up with the school day, provide adequate time for participants to study, learn, and practice skills, the program should motivate participants through activities, and use technology, science, and arts regularly to support the

development, learning, and engagement of the participant. The final component of a high-quality ASP is the use of internal and external evaluations. Information and data from evaluations are used efficiently to measure the program's goals and then used to continuously improve the program (Huang & Dietel, 2011).

Aside from the evaluation aspect in Huang and Dietel's characteristics to form a high-quality ASP; the goals, leadership, staff, and the program should be considered before the implementation of the program. According to Edginton, Hudson, and Lankford (2001) new members of the leadership staff and general staff should go through an orientation period to familiarize themselves with their job expectations including specific job duties, responsibilities, rules, regulations, and policies and procedures. The orientation program also allows leadership and staff to familiarize themselves with the program's culture and allows work relationships to be formed. When orientations are completed by leadership and staff members they have been given the tools necessary to facilitate the ASP and work together in a non-threatening environment (Edginton, C.R., Hudson, S.D., & Lankford, S.V., 2001).

According to Little, Wimer, and Weiss (2007) these three factors are important to a successful after-school program: access to the ASP with continuous attendance, quality programming and staffing, and encouraging strong partnerships between the program and other sites where students learn (school, families, and other community organizations). The quality of the staff relates hugely on program success because the staff engages the students, creates a positive environment, and provide management to the program (Cross, Gottfredson, Wilson, Rorie, & Connell, 2010).

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

Best Practices and Implementations to Aid Future ASPs

After-school programs have been proven to have significant positive outcomes on children and youth. Children need structure after school to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviors. Those risky behaviors include drug use, engagement in unprotected sex which may lead to teen pregnancy, and truancy (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, & Ferrari, 2003; Hallfors et al., 2002; Kremer, Maynard, Polanin, Vaughn, & Sarteschi, 2015). When children are provided with an opportunity to engage in ASPs, the involvement in risky behaviors significantly decreases. If children are supervised by role-modeling adults who help them with homework, the children's grades are likely to be higher. When children have higher grades they have more opportunities to attend college which leads to better paying jobs in the future (Afterschool Alliance, 2014; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003; Cosden, Morrison, Gutierrez, & Brown, 2004; Darling, Caldwell, & Smith, 2005; Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010).

Overall, there are more positive outcomes among youth who participate in ASPs compared to individuals who do not participate. Children, youth, and their families should be aware of the amount of time is spent participating in activities. As suggested by the threshold model finding a balance of activities leads to positive outcomes among youth. While some negative outcomes were found in some studies, the positives outweigh any negative effects. The research has concluded negative behaviors significantly decrease when children or youth are involved in an ASP. The structured and supportive

environment is extremely beneficial for participants in ASPs because individuals may specifically attend the program for the staff. The structured and supportive environment can be conducive to completion of homework with the help of influential staff.

The relationships an individual has with their environment may be one of many reasons why they do or do not attend an ASP. The socio-ecological model is a theory-based framework that has been used in many implementations to determine the individual and environmental factors that regulates health behaviors and any barriers an individual may have that prevents them participating in ASPs (Harris, 2010; Cottrell, Girvan, & McKenzie, 2012). In order to further explain relationships between an individual and their environment to the socio-ecological model should be used. The socio-ecological model consists of individual/intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy areas (Harris, 2010; Cottrell, Girvan, & McKenzie, 2012). The socio-ecological model can be used in evaluating ASPs to create quality programs. Knowing how each level of the socio-ecological model works together and influences individuals' attitudes towards ASPs can be beneficial to improve programs and provide more ASPs to the children that do not have access to one. The socio-ecological model would also help reinforce each infrastructure of the model through education on the importance of ASP attendance.

When the areas of the socio-ecological model work together, barriers can be determined and health promotion and educator specialists can use that information to help reduce or eliminate the barrier for the individuals who do not attend an ASP. Future development of ASPs should focus on providing youth and children with a supportive

environment by hiring experienced staff and strong leaders, as well as setting clear goals for the program and evaluating the program, as outlined by Huang and Dietel (2011).

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

Health promotion and education specialists should use the socio-ecological model when designing ASPs in order to provide the best services to youth. The type of ASP will ultimately dictate how specialists should incorporate the socio-ecological model. If the ASP is based on nutrition, but the participants' parents do not eat healthy at home, there is a dissonance between what the child is learning at the ASP and what the parents are demonstrating at home. All of the factors related to the individual/intrapersonal level on the socio-ecological model are important to consider when designing ASPs. Factors related to the individual/intrapersonal level include attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, skills, self-concept, behavior, and developmental history of the individual (Harris, 2010; Cottrell, Girvan, & McKenzie, 2012). However, specialists designing ASPs can be at a disadvantage because they do not know this information of the population attending the program unless designing a program that targets a specific population.

On the interpersonal level family and friend relationships as well as social networks are incorporated (Harris, 2010; Cottrell, Girvan, & McKenzie, 2012). As specialists design these programs acknowledging the differences from the individual/intrapersonal level and interpersonal level is important. Youth may act differently around family and friends or may not have a positive social network and these actions can reflect in an ASP. If an after-school program's goal is to decrease a negative

behavior such as drug use, but their friend or family does not encourage them to refrain from the behavior the behavior is not as likely to work.

Factors to be considered by health promotion and education specialists on the institutional include tolerances towards ASPs, the environment the ASP will be in (school, community center, etc.), and rules. On the community level health promotion and education specialists should consider relationships between organizations and institutions regarding the implementation of an ASP. The focus should remain on the kids' lives being impacted, but health promotion and education specialists should strive to build relationships and rapport with organizations and institutions in a community to successfully implement ASPs.

Recommendations for future research should consider the constraint theory, Driver's benefit approach to leisure, and inclusive programming. The constraint theory examines the constraints or barriers prohibiting individuals from participating in activities (Jackson, E.L., & Scott, D., 1999). Future research using the constraint theory should consider the reasons why individuals cannot participate in ASPs. Establishing the reasons why children and youth cannot participate in ASPs can be useful to future designing and implementation of ASPs. Future research done using the constraint theory need to be advocates for the individuals who cannot participate in activities or ASPs (Jackson, E.L., & Scott, D., 1999).

Driver's benefit approach to leisure began in 1989 after Schreyer and Driver insisted there should be more attention on the positive impacts of leisure. Future research in Driver's benefit approach to leisure should be used to further examine the positive

outcomes of ASP participation. By using Driver's benefit approach to leisure, future research can be further used to guide policies, management, research, and instruction (Driver, B.L., & Bruns, D.H., 1999).

Inclusive programming should be used in future research to examine how ASPs are providing services to individuals with disabilities. If an ASP is not being inclusive future research should determine how to allow programs to be inclusive in their implementation of the program. In the past, individuals with disabilities have not been taken into consideration when implementing ASPs. The exclusion from participation infringes the rights of individuals with disabilities (Dattilo, J., & Williams, R., 1999). Future research in inclusive programming should evaluate the actions taken by ASPs to be more inclusive and encourage participation from all individuals. The environment in inclusion ASPs should be non-threatening, welcoming, and supportive for all individuals (Dattilo, J., & Williams, R., 1999).

REFERENCES

Activities. (n.d.). Retrieved March 22, 2016, from http://www.youth.gov/youth-
topics/afterschool-programs/afterschool-activities

Afterschool Alliance. (2014). America after 3 pm: Afterschool programs in demand, 40
p. Retrieved from http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-
2014/AA3PM_National_Report.pdf\nhttp://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/

Anderson-Butcher, D., Newsome, W. S., & Ferrari, T. M. (2003). Participation in boys
and girls clubs and relationships to youth outcomes. *Journal of Community
Psychology*, *31*(1), 39–55. http://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.10036

Boys and Girls Club of America. (n.d.). *Our Commitment*. Retrieved August 31, 2016,
from
http://www.bgca.org/whatwedo/SpecializedPrograms/Pages/SpecializedPrograms.as
px

Boys and Girls Club of America. (n.d.). *Our History*. Retrieved August 31, 2016, from
http://www.bgca.org/whoweare/Pages/History.aspx

Boys and Girls Club of America. (n.d.). *Our Mission*. Retrieved August 31, 2016, from
http://www.bgca.org/whoweare/Pages/Mission.aspx

Boys and Girls Club of America. (n.d.). *Specialized Programs*. Retrieved August 31,
2016, from
http://www.bgca.org/whatwedo/SpecializedPrograms/Pages/SpecializedPrograms.as
px

Cooper, H., Valentine, J. C., Nye, B., & Lindsay, J. J. (1999). Relationships between five

after-school activities and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *91*(2), 369–378. http://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.91.2.369

Cosden, M., Morrison, G., Gutierrez, L., & Brown, M. (2004). The effects of homework programs and after-school activities on school success. *Theory Into Practice*, *43*(3), 220–226. http://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4303_8

Cottrell, R.R., Girvan, J.T., & McKenzie, J.F. (2012). *Principles and Foundations of Health Promotion and Education* (5th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.: San Francisco, CA.

Cross, A. B., Gottfredson, D. C., Wilson, D. M., Rorie, M., & Connell, N. (2010). Implementation quality and positive experiences in after-school programs. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*(3–4), 370–380. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9295-z

Darling, N., Caldwell, L. L., & Smith, R. (2005). Participation in school-based extracurricular activities and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *37*(1), 51–76. http://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.91.2.369.\n10.1177/0739986399211005\n10.1023/a:1009655611694.\n10.1037//0003-066x,55.1.170\n10.1037/0012-1649.33.2.241\n10.1111/1467-8624.00160 PMid:10834480\n10.1006/jado.2000.0302

Dattilo, J., & Williams, R. (1999). Inclusion and leisure service delivery. In E.L. Jackson & T.L. Burton (Eds.). *Leisure studies: Prospects for the twenty first century*. (pp. 451-463). Venture Publishing, Inc: State College, PA.

Driver, B.L., & Bruns, D.H. (1999). Concepts and uses of the benefits approach to

leisure. In E.L. Jackson & T.L. Burton (Eds.). *Leisure studies: Prospects for the twenty-first century*. (pp. 349-369). Venture Publishing, Inc: State College, PA.

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., & Pachan, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of after-school programs that seek to promote personal and social skills in children and adolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*(3–4), 294–309. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9300-6

Edginton, C.R., Hudson, S.D., & Lankford, S.V. (2001). *Managing recreation, parks, and leisure services*: *An introduction*. Sagamore: Champaign, IL.

Edginton, C.R., Lankford, S.V., Dieser, R.B., & Kowalski, C.L. (in press). *Leisure programming: A service-centered and benefits approach* (5th ed.). Sagamore: Champaign, IL.

Fredricks, J. A. (2012). Extracurricular participation and academic outcomes: Testing the over-scheduling hypothesis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *41*(3), 295–306. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-011-9704-0

Hallfors, D., Vevea, J. L., Iritani, B., Cho, H., Khatapoush, S., & Saxe, L. (2002). Truancy, grade point average, and sexual activity: A meta-analysis of risk indicators for youth substance use. *Journal of School Health*, *72*(5), 205–211.

Harris, M.J. (2010). *Evaluating Public and Community Health Programs*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.

Huang, D., & Dietel, R. (2011). Making afterschool programs better. *CRESST Policy Brief*, (11). Retrieved from https://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/policy/huang_MAPB_v5.pdf

Jackson, E.L., & Scott, D. (1999). Constraints to leisure. In E.L. Jackson & T.L. Burton (Eds.). *Leisure studies: Prospects for the twenty-first century* (pp. 299-321). Venture Publishing, Inc: State College, PA.

Knifsend, C. A., & Graham, S. (2012). Too much of a good thing? How breadth of extracurricular participation relates to school-related affect and academic outcomes during adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *41*(3), 379–389. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-011-9737-4

Kremer, K. P., Maynard, B. R., Polanin, J. R., Vaughn, M. G., & Sarteschi, C. M. (2015). Effects of after-school programs with at-risk youth on attendance and externalizing behaviors: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *44*(3), 616–636. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-014-0226-4

Little, P. M. D., Wimer, C., & Weiss, H. B. (2007). Harvard family research project a decade of investments in learning what works in after school programs, (November).

Mahoney, J. L., Harris, A. L., & Eccles, J. S. (2006). Organized activity participation, positive youth development, and the over-scheduling hypothesis. *Social Policy Report*, *20*(4), 3–31.

Mahoney, J. L., Lord, H., & Carryl, E. (2005). An ecological analysis of after-school program participation and the development of academic performance and motivational attributes for disadvantaged children. *Child Development*, *76*(4), 811–825. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2005.00879.x

Mahoney, J. L., & Vest, A. E. (2012). The over-scheduling hypothesis revisited: Intensity of organized activity participation during adolescence and young adult outcomes.

Journal of Research on Adolescence, *22*(3), 409–418. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2012.00808.x

Physical Activity Guidelines. (2015). Retrieved November 18, 2016, from https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-1/

Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., Robertson, D. L., & Mann, E. A. (2001). Long-term effects of an early childhood intervention on educational achievement. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *285*(18), 2339–2347.

Roffman, J. G., Pagano, M. E., & Hirsch, B. J. (2001). Youth functioning and experiences in inner-city after-school programs among age, gender, and race groups. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *10*(1), 85–100. http://doi.org/10.1023/A

Sallis, J. F., McKenzie, T. L., Alcaraz, J. E., Kolody, B., Faucette, N., & Hovell, M. F. (1997). The effects of a 2-year physical education program (SPARK) on physical activity and fitness in elementary school students. Sports, play and active recreation for kids. *American Journal of Public Health*, *87*(8), 1328–1334. http://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.87.8.1328

Schuna, J. M., Lauersdorf, R. L., Behrens, T. K., Liguori, G., & Liebert, M. L. (2013). An objective assessment of children's physical activity during the keep it moving! *Journal of School Health*, *83*(2), 105–111.

Shernoff, D. J. (2010). Engagement in after-school programs as a predictor of social competence and academic performance. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*(3–4), 325–337. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9314-0

Springer, K., & Diffily, D. (2010). The relationship between intensity and breadth of

after-school program participation and academic achievement: Evidence from a short-term longitudinal study. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *40*(7), 785–789. http://doi.org/10.1002/jcop

Vandell, D. L., & Corasaniti, M. (1988). The relation between third graders' after-school care and social, academic, and emotional functioning. *Child Development*, *59*(4), 868–875. http://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.ep8589601

van der Smissen, B., Moiseichik, M., Hartenburg, V.J., & Twardzik, L.F. (1999). *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*. National Recreation and Park Association: Ashburn, VA.

Weisman, S. A., & Gottfredson, D. C. (2001). Attrition from after school programs: Characteristics of students who drop out. *Prevention Science: The Official Journal of the Society for Prevention Research*, *2*(3), 201–205. Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11678294

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *Areas of Focus*. (2016). Retrieved August 30, 2016, from http://www.ymca.net/our-focus/

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *Donors and Partners*. Retrieved August 30, 2016, from http://www.ymca.net/donors-partners/

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *Healthy Living*. Retrieved August 30, 2016, from http://www.ymca.net/healthy-living/

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *History-Founding*. Retrieved August 30, 2016, from http://www.ymca.net/history/founding.html

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *Our Focus*. Retrieved August 30, 2016, from

http://www.ymca.net/our-focus/

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *Social Responsibility*. Retrieved August 30,

2016, from http://www.ymca.net/social-responsibility/

Young Men's Christian Association. (2016). *Youth Development*. Retrieved August 30,

2016, from http://www.ymca.net/youth-development/

Young Women's Christian Association. (2016). *Empowerment and Economic*

Advancement. Retrieved September 22, 2016, from

http://www.ywca.org/site/c.cuIRJ7NTKrLaG/b.9360123/k.72F7/Empowerment_and

_Economic_Advancement.htm

Young Women's Christian Association. (2016). *Health and Safety*. Retrieved September

22, 2016, from

http://www.ywca.org/site/c.cuIRJ7NTKrLaG/b.9360129/k.94B5/Health_and_Safety

.htm

Young Women's Christian Association. (2016). *History*. Retrieved September 22, 2016,

from http://www.ywca.org/site/c.cuIRJ7NTKrLaG/b.7515891/k.C524/History.htm

Young Women's Christian Association. (2016). *Mission and Vision*. Retrieved September

22, 2016, from

http://www.ywca.org/site/c.cuIRJ7NTKrLaG/b.7515887/k.9633/Mission__Vision.ht

m

Young Women's Christian Associationou. (2016). *Racial Justice and Civil Rights*.

Retrieved September 22, 2016, from

http://www.ywca.org/site/c.cuIRJ7NTKrLaG/b.9360121/k.2D3E/Racial_Justice_an

d_Civil_Rights.htm

Young Women's Christian Association. (2016). *What We Do*. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from

http://www.ywca.org/site/c.cuIRJ7NTKrLaG/b.9360119/k.7BA2/Our_Mission_in_Action.htm

Zief, S. G., Lauver, S., & Maynard, R. a. (2006). Impacts of after-school programs on student outcomes: A systematic review for the Campbell Collaboration. *Campbell Collaboration*, *20*(February), 1–52. http://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2006.3