



Our Vision & Goals

Vision: All Iowa children, youth, and families will have access to quality out-of-school-time opportunities.

Goals:

- **Partnership:** Create a sustainable structure of statewide, regional, local and school-community partnerships focused on supporting high quality afterschool programs.
- **Policy:** Support the development and growth of statewide policies to secure resources needed to sustain new and existing afterschool programs.
- **Program Quality:** Support statewide systems to ensure programs are of high quality.

How We Work

- **Executive Board:**
 - Comprised of representatives of key stakeholder organizations
 - Provides overall coordination of Alliance activities
- **Policy Work Group:**
 - Develops annual policy agenda and assembles grassroots coalition to support it
 - Identifies barriers for afterschool programs in policy and funding and works with appropriate partners to resolve them
- **Data Work Group:**
 - Determines research priorities and assists staff in analysis of existing data
 - Develops research instruments and methodology
 - Disseminates data about afterschool in a practical way
 - Provides basic resources for programs to track outcome data
- **Quality Work Group:**
 - Advocates for increasing coordinated quality efforts across systems
 - Identifies best practices, core competencies, and program models, as appropriate
 - Creates opportunities for professional development
 - Works with the Data Work Group to help programs measure quality and youth outcomes

How We Can Help You

- Links to regional, state, and local afterschool partners
- Information center on all things afterschool
- Support and advice for your own Afterschool Alliance
- For more information on how the Iowa Afterschool Alliance can help you, please visit our website at <http://www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/iasa/index.html>.

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance is staffed by SPPG, Inc., a company with over 23 years of experience working with non-profits, government agencies, and business. SPPG prides itself as “a company with a mission of social responsibility,” and is committed to promoting a healthy and prosperous Iowa in all its work. For more information on SPPG, please visit <http://www.sppg.com/>.

Contact the Iowa Afterschool Alliance:



IOWA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE ISSUE BRIEF

Afterschool Programs Help Working Families

This issue brief is the first in a series developed by the Iowa Afterschool Alliance. Each issue brief is designed to educate policymakers about important issues relating to Iowa's afterschool programs in an effort to encourage well-informed policies for those programs. Please note, however, that the views and opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the organizations employing the Alliance members.

Family Structures Are Changing

Today's families in Iowa and across the nation are very different from the family image of 50 years ago. While women are still the primary caregivers, either as single mothers or part of a two-parent family, they are entering the workforce in greater numbers than ever. According to a 2003 study by the Children's Defense Fund, Iowa has the greatest percentage of families in the nation with both parents (or the only parent) in the workforce.

Making Up the Difference

While the work day grows longer for working parents, the school day has not. The gap between work and school schedules amounts to as much as 25 hours per week, which presents working parents with the challenge of finding someone to care for their children while they are at work. Working parents often find themselves with limited options: child care, which can be costly; care from friends and relatives, when it's available; or allowing their child to stay home alone. The number of available afterschool programs to serve as a viable option is decreasing. It is estimated there are over 300,000 children ages 5 through 12 in Iowa who could benefit from afterschool programs.

Child care can be prohibitively expensive for some working families. Families in Iowa often report that they pay more each month for child care than they pay for shelter for the family. Nearly half of America's working families with a child younger than 13 have child care expenses that consume, on average, 9 percent of their monthly earnings, and families with earnings below the federal poverty level spend an average of 23 percent of their monthly earnings on childcare, says research by The Urban Institute.

The Three O'Clock Dilemma

Studies show that children are most at risk during the hours after school—the time of day when juvenile crime triples and children are most likely to be involved in risky behavior, such as drug use or sexual activity. Even if unsupervised kids are not getting into trouble, they are oftentimes at home eating, playing video games or watching TV, which is a major contributing factor to childhood obesity.

While concerns about unsupervised children pressure families, they also profoundly affect employers. Polling by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids shows that 87 percent of working mothers say the hours after school are when they are most concerned about their children's safety, and other studies demonstrate this "afterschool stress" can lead to distraction that causes lower productivity, high turnover, and absenteeism. In fact, 80 percent of employees with children miss work because of child care problems, according to Policy Research Associates.

Quality afterschool programs are proven to alleviate these burdens. For many parents and children, afterschool activities are much more than a luxury.

- Parents in a study from The After School Corporation said afterschool programs helped them balance work and family life, with 60 percent saying they missed less work than before their child was in the program, and 59 percent saying it supported them.

- One parent from Marshalltown explains how afterschool programs help her family:
 “It is imperative for my children to be in a safe environment. The added benefit is that afterschool activities have taught them other languages, given them a place to do their homework with a teacher available for questions, and provided recreational activities to give them additional exercise.”

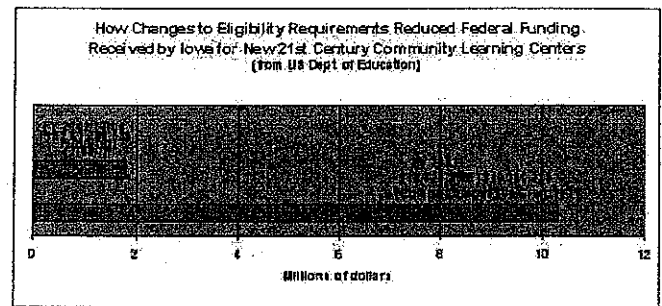
Afterschool as a Workforce and Economic Issue
 Corporate Voices for Working Families, a philanthropic organization made up of major corporations, highlights a study that estimates the cost to business due to parental stress about their children after school to be anywhere from \$496.00 to \$1,984.00 per employee, per year, depending on the employee's annual salary. The study confirms what the business community has known for some time: when employees have access to high quality afterschool programs for their children, employees are better able to concentrate on their work, increase productivity and decrease absenteeism, and ultimately, create higher profitability for the employer.

Many companies across the country see afterschool as an investment in their workforce, both current and future. As the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care (ABC) notes in its 10th Anniversary Report, “The companies view their investments in dependent care in the community not as charity, but as sound business practice.” Although some large corporations may be able to contribute to the cost of providing quality afterschool care for their employees' families, many Iowa-based businesses would find it difficult to do so.

Iowa's Unmet Needs for Afterschool

Despite the many school districts, cities, businesses, and faith- and community-based organizations taking steps to help provide quality afterschool programming, there are still plenty of gaps in care. In 2003, Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral estimated that for the 226,056 children age 6-12 who potentially needed child care, only 49,690 slots for that age group could be identified.

Federal funding to Iowa for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), afterschool programs across the state that are a crucial component of the No Child Left Behind Act,



has taken significant cuts. Previously, when states applied for competitive grants, Iowa fared well in receiving federal funds. However, changes to the eligibility requirements now say the funds must go to programs with 40% or more of the students who receive free and reduced lunch. The current Title I formula requirements mean that fewer school districts across the state qualify for 21st CCLC funds, and that a number of communities with programs previously funded are now left to scale back, close, or obtain funding from other private and public sources to preserve their afterschool programs. Both rural and urban areas have been significantly affected.

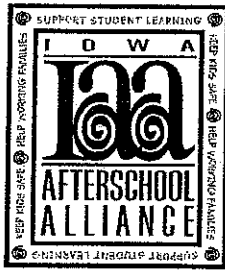
Summary

Supporting families is a part of healthy businesses and a healthy Iowa economy. Investments at all levels, federal to local, and from all sectors, public to private, are crucial to ensuring that Iowa's children do not fall through the cracks while their parents are at work and they are out of school.

What is the Iowa Afterschool Alliance?

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) is a statewide coalition of networks and interest groups who support, advocate, train, and work to advance afterschool and out-of-school time experiences which are meaningful and beneficial for children, youth, families, and communities. The IAA is a project of the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development and receives financial support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Statewide Afterschool Network grant and the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust.

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IOWA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE ISSUE BRIEF

Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe

This issue brief is the second in a series developed by the Iowa Afterschool Alliance. Each issue brief is designed to educate policymakers about important issues relating to Iowa's afterschool programs in an effort to encourage well-informed policies for those programs. Please note, however, that the views and opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the organizations employing the Alliance members.

Who is Supervising Kids After School in Iowa?

Afterschool programs provide safe places for youth after school, in addition to supporting student learning and helping working families. Research has shown that participation in afterschool programs helps students develop academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. But these programs also provide youth a safe, supervised environment that reduces their risk of committing or becoming a victim of violent crime.

A recent report from Fight Crime: Invest in Kids has found that violent juvenile crime is most likely to occur between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and that youth are more likely to smoke, drink or do drugs during these hours. Afterschool programs promote safety by preventing youth violence, providing safe places for kids to stay after school and educating youth about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.

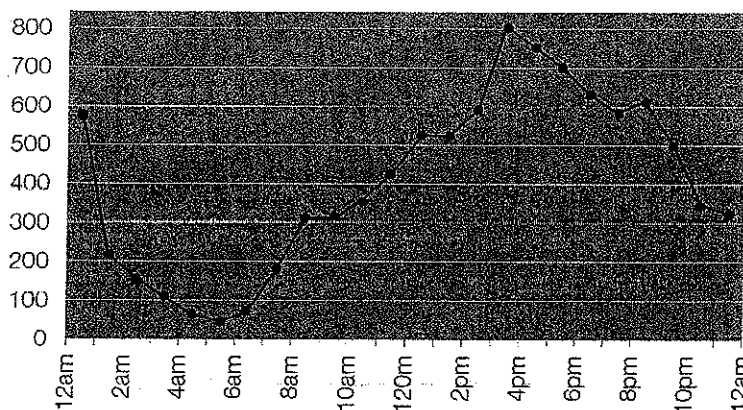
Between the Hours of 3:00 and 6:00 PM

Since Iowa is ranked second in the nation as having the most families with both parents (or the sole parent) in the workforce, we cannot afford to ignore the question of what Iowa's youth are doing from the time school is dismissed until their parents return from work (Children's Defense Fund, 2003). According to the America After 3 PM survey, about 29% of Iowa's K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves after school. This can be a dangerous situation.

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids found the chances an Iowa youth will become a victim of violent crime more than triples between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

In a survey of American teens, the YMCA of the USA found that youth who are unsupervised after school are three times more likely to use drugs than their peers who are supervised.

Average Number of Juvenile Arrests in Iowa by Time of Day in 2003



Source: Iowa Department of Public Safety's Uniform Crime Reporting System

Iowa's children and youth are not immune to the dangers of unsupervised activity after school. Data from the Iowa Department of Public Safety's Uniform Crime Reporting System show that juvenile arrests peak at 3 p.m.

Law Enforcement Supports Afterschool

Investments in afterschool programs as crime prevention measures have been endorsed by national and local law enforcement associations including the Iowa Police Executive Forum, the Iowa State Sheriffs' and Deputies' Association, the Iowa County Attorneys Association,

the Fraternal Order of Police, the International Association of Police, and the National District Attorneys Association.

At a Fight Crime: Invest in Kids event in Iowa, Des Moines Police Chief Bill McCarthy asked, "Will Congress continue to entrust millions of kids to the afterschool teachings of Jerry Springer and violent video games? Or will it invest in afterschool programs proven to teach kids the values and skills they need to succeed in school and life?" Dallas County Attorney Wayne Reisetter added that quality afterschool programs are proven to cut youth crime and reduce risky behavior.

Who Will Invest in Afterschool Programs for Iowa's Youth?

According to the Afterschool Alliance, nearly 35,600 of Iowa's youth participate in programs supported by the US Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC). Because of changes to the federal funding eligibility requirements, Iowa is receiving far fewer 21st CCLC grants than when it fared much better under a competitive grant process. According to the National School Boards Association, in 2001 alone, 40 Iowa communities who applied for 21st CCLC grants did not receive funding. Those applications represent a potential \$27.2 million investment in Iowa's kids and could provide roughly 56,000 additional kids safe, stimulating afterschool programs. Iowa has already begun to lose afterschool programs due to lack of funds and stands to lose more if other funding sources are not identified.

Summary

Afterschool programs offer children and youth safe, stimulating, and supervised activities during the times when they are most vulnerable to becoming victims of crime or to engaging in crime or other risky behaviors. Working families and law enforcement officials agree that children and youth benefit from quality afterschool programming.



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IOWA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE ISSUE BRIEF

Afterschool Programs Support Student Learning

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Afterschool Programs Make Academic Sense

Nationwide, afterschool programs have been proven to enhance students' performance in school. Studies show afterschool programs not only improve academic achievement, but they also increase attendance and interest in school and reduce grade retention. By offering a reinforcement and supplement of a school's curriculum, afterschool programs provide not only a solution to the "Three O'Clock Dilemma," the time of day when children are most likely to be involved in risky behavior, but also an enhancement of students' education.

In a national YMCA study, it was shown that 79% of teens in afterschool programs are A or B students. As a contrast, teens not involved in afterschool programs are five times more likely to be D students. They are also three times more likely to skip classes and use marijuana or other drugs than those teens in afterschool programs.

Accountability for Building Stronger Skills

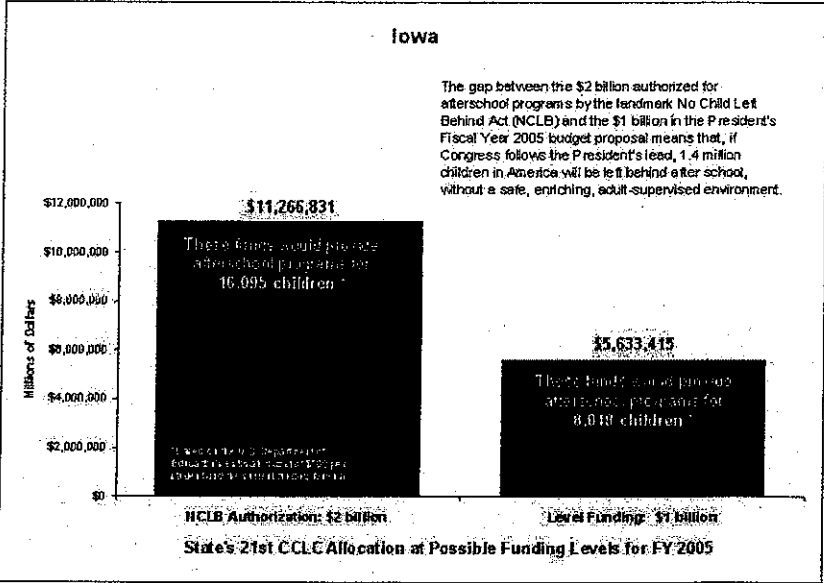
To use public and private dollars most efficiently, Iowa's 21st Century Community Learning Centers participate in a U.S. Department of Education performance reporting system. Reporting student and program data annually, Iowa's afterschool programs know exactly how they help students learn and where they must improve programs. For instance, the most recent data show that the Van Buren Community School District's afterschool programs excel in offering extended library time, tutoring, service learning opportunities, as well as math,

science, and reading activities. Based on stated goals and last year's performance, the program discovered it needs to also improve family literacy programs, mentoring, and access to English as a second language activities.

Afterschool programs provide time and assistance for youth to master reading skills. This extra time and help has been found to lead to significant increases in reading achievement. In one study, teachers reported that a third of children participating in afterschool programs earned better grades and developed a greater interest in recreational reading. Afterschool programs allow students to practice and develop these important skills in a fun, relaxed environment.

Iowa's Afterschool Programs Looking Forward

When afterschool programs in Iowa can show that they have positive academic results, keep kids



safe and out of trouble, and support working families, it is crucial that they are able to secure funds from partners at every level to continue their success. Iowa has lost eligibility for federal 21st CCLC funds over the last few years. Previously, funds were awarded on a competitive basis. Now, programs with 40% or more of the students receiving free or reduced lunch receive preference, and significantly fewer programs in Iowa qualify under such criteria. Supporting Iowa's afterschool programs to find other funds becomes imperative as the federal 21st CCLC program provides fewer and fewer resources.

Summary

Afterschool programs provide an opportunity for students to improve their academic performance and boost their lifelong interest in reading. Enhancing their education through afterschool programs keeps students from resorting to post-school risky behavior that results from being alone, unsupervised, and bored.



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Storm Lake Middle School Tornado Learning Club

In the last year, with the assistance of the 2007 Before and After School Grant...

- We were able to provide programming an additional two days per week from previous years
- We increased the number of students to serve each day
- We purchased recreational equipment for students to use since our gym is being used for sports games and practices
- We were able to host a family fun night
- We were able to contract with ISU Extension for them to provide programming, such as a 4H Club and the Eat, Fit and Be Active program
- We help provide GED classes for parents of students enrolled in the program
- We are able to assist with the school's family literacy and math night
- We are able to provide fruit twice a week for snacks from our local Fareway store
- We were able to replace our old computers that had already been rebuilt several years ago
- We are able to send two staff to an afterschool conference which we haven't been able to do in five years
- We are able to purchase trade books to use in afterschool book club
- We were able to hire a full time assistant
- We were able to hire additional afterschool staff to meet individual needs of students
- We are able to replenish worn supplies that were purchased nine years ago

Donna Queen
Director, Tornado Learning Club
Storm Lake Middle School
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Clear Creek Amana Schools
2007 Before and After School Grant
Highlights

- ☆ The elementary site program has almost tripled in attendance
- ☆ We have been able to incorporate certified staff into the program enriching student achievement and opportunities
- ☆ We have been able to accommodate some families that are in financial distress
- ☆ We have been able to accommodate more students on our early release day, including some students that otherwise do not participate in the program
- ☆ This program has provided the district the opportunity to restructure our programs for the better
- ☆ We have been able to put supervisors in place to coordinate the program to ensure accountability
- ☆ We now can provide an enriching program instead of a daycare service
- ☆ Families have given a tremendous amount of positive feedback regarding the changes in the program
- ☆ We would love to receive the grant again, it has been such a positive experience!

Lamoni SAFE Coalition Before and After School Program

The 2007 Before and After School Grants have made all of the following possible. Currently, the program is searching for options for financial sustainability.

- Grades K-8 meet 5 days per week from 3:00-5:30 pm.
- This is a new program which was created with the grant funding.
- 80+ students are enrolled.
- Special needs students are encouraged to attend. One on one aid is provided for a student with cerebral palsy who cannot walk, speak, or see.
- Teachers refer students to program and collaborate with staff in meeting special needs of students.
- Program Director is a certified teacher with a Master's Degree.
- Programs and activities are providing tutoring, academic enrichment, cultural opportunities, fitness, character education, and asset building. Service learning is an important part of the middle school program, and also included in the elementary program. A new chess club for all levels is held two times a week and is a great addition to the program during second semester.

Management and Professional Development

- Director and staff attended Iowa After School Conference in September.
- The program has created a staff handbook and parent newsletter.
- ITBS scores will be used to show academic growth of participants.
- Numerous sources of sustainability and funding are being explored.

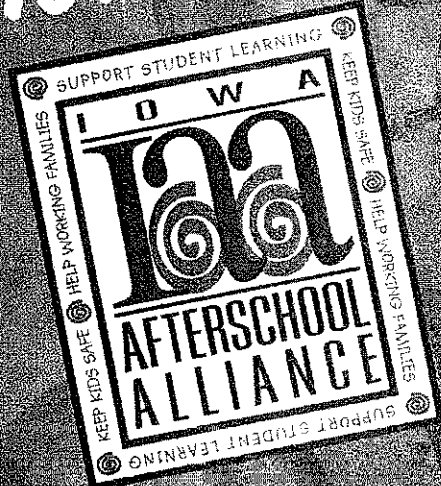
Partners

- Lamoni Community Schools and Lamoni Youth Center provide meeting sites.
- Graceland University Work Study program helps with staffing to reduce teacher/student ratio.
- AmeriCorps State of Promise provides programming for middle school students.
- Lamoni Public Library provides programming each week for every age group.
- Iowa State Extension partners to provide Clover Kids program and enrichment activities.
- Community support and collaboration is excellent!

Family Outreach

- A family night is held quarterly for over 100 participants. Families are served a light meal and games and other family activities follow.
- Parents are encouraged to volunteer to help with the program.

IOWA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE 2008 POLICY AGENDA



The Current State of Afterschool

The state has made incredible advances in supporting afterschool in Iowa with a first-ever appropriation in 2006 and increased funding in 2007, totaling \$1 million, to fund high quality, affordable programs that provide a safe place and engaging activities for youth. That funding has provided support for innovative programs that not only assist students with academic issues, but help them develop career paths and volunteer opportunities, build social skills, and become civically engaged. The funded programs in 2006 alone helped over 1100 kids improve their academic achievement and broaden their experiences in their communities and schools. Afterschool participants in Clinton utilized job shadowing programs, while in Des Moines students were able to use an Intensive Career Exploration curriculum. In six separate school districts throughout North Central Iowa, Kids Club afterschool sites beautified their communities, collected canned goods for local food pantries, and made care packages to be distributed to U.S. soldiers stationed in Iraq.

Requests for funding for the 2007 appropriation totaled \$4 million – more than four times the actual funding available. In a 2007 professional development survey conducted by the Iowa School Age Care Alliance, current afterschool programs indicated that funding and grant opportunities are a significant and ongoing concern for them. Iowa, unlike many states, relies heavily on parents to fund before and afterschool programs – families pay approximately two-thirds of the cost of afterschool programming in Iowa. The only alternative for many families who cannot afford afterschool programming is to leave their children home alone. According to the 2006 Iowa Youth Survey, 73% of 6th graders and 85% of 8th graders say they spend at least one to four hours unsupervised each day. And the reality for most programs in Iowa is that without access to a sustainable, ongoing funding source, programs are continually struggling to keep the doors open, provide new opportunities, outfit their students with proper supplies, hire appropriately trained staff, and meet the needs of their communities.

Iowa's Afterschool Spotlights

Utilizing community partnerships to succeed with limited resources

The Galaxy Youth Center of Grinnell has succeeded in utilizing community partnerships to offer a variety of beneficial programming to the youth it serves. The program brings in staff from the Faulkner Gallery and Grinnell College monthly to expand the artistic and cultural experiences of their youth participants. A partnership between the Iowa Department of Human Services, Juvenile Court Services, and Grinnell/Newburg School District provides an Aggression Replacement Training and Skill Streaming course offered free of charge to parents and teens. In addition, partnership with Grinnell Eagles Lodge #2545 has allowed the Galaxy Youth Center to expand its programming capacity to serve all Grinnell youth in grades 5-12.

Character development in action

Beyond the Bell of Sioux City, and Metro Kids Before and Afterschool Care of Des Moines both utilize the Character Counts curriculum to develop leadership skills and positive character in their students. Activities are designed to enrich youths' lives by instilling trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship as a part of their daily interaction with others. Staff of Metro Kids in Des Moines have noticed significant improvements in reducing students' negative behaviors and communication with peers.

Additionally, Beyond the Bell of Sioux City implements the Service Learning Challenge in which each of 21 schools designs, implements, evaluates, and presents a service learning project. At the end of the implementation period, teams of 2-3 students from each school gather to present their projects to a panel of community members, with all participants receiving recognition of service to the community.

Programming designed to enrich experiences of African-American students

The Jabari Gamba afterschool program at McKinstry Elementary School in Waterloo serves African-American children entering the 3rd grade with an identified family history of alcohol and/or drug use. The students remain in the program through the 5th grade. Students are taught and modeled 10 core skills that are identified to help them achieve classroom success. African history is also taught alongside the core skills. Primary components of the Jabari Gamba philosophy are pride in blackness, self-discipline, effective school skills and study habits, love and understanding, and healthy lifestyle choices. The belief is that these basic skills will develop healthy and confident children, with less dependence on substances, safer neighborhoods, less delinquency and violent crime, and better schools.

IAA 2008 Policy Agenda Supporters

A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy (AMOS)
 Athletics for Educational Success
 Best Buddies
 Children and Families Urban Ministries
 Chrysalis Foundation
 Community Corrections Improvement Association
 Coralville Parks and Recreation
 Every Child Counts
 Every Child Matters
 Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa
 Iowa Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs
 Iowa Community Education Association
 Iowa School Age Care Alliance
 Iowa State Education Association
 ISU 4-H Extension
 Junior Achievement
 School Administrators of Iowa
 Sisters on Target
 SPPG
 UNI- Classic Upward Bound
 UNI- Educational Talent Search
 YMCA of Greater Des Moines

Shelter-based program serves homeless youth in Council Bluffs

Camp Fire USA of Council Bluffs, Iowa, operates two shelter-based afterschool programs that offer a wide variety of programming to the youth it serves. In addition to two school-based programs, all Camp Fire USA programs in Council Bluffs offer a combination of recreational and educational activities that engage youth in the areas of academic excellence, cultural awareness, violence prevention, healthy lifestyles, and life skills development. All staff are trained in the areas of social work, education, and/or related fields.

Getting active to prevent childhood obesity

In partnership with Des Moines Public Schools and Des Moines Parks and Recreation, the Children's Center of Mercy Hospital in Des Moines operates a program focused on the physical fitness of youth. Activities are determined by student surveys at active middle and elementary school sites in the Des Moines area. Hip-hop dance, basketball, and yoga have been popular activities.

Partnership with local business cultivates career development programming

A partnership between the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa, Hy-Vee Corporation, and United Way has created the Hy-Vee Academy: a program designed to introduce and enable teenagers to seek and understand what is required to get and keep a job. With the help of nine Hy-Vee Store Managers, youth at the Boys & Girls Clubs at First Christian, Logan, and McCombs Middle School sites participate in an 8 week academy in the summer. The students are taught how to properly complete job applications, develop a resume, present their talents and skills, interview technique, and work ethic. The program further explores how to foster a career and what types of careers are available.

Programs for at-risk youth focus on developing positive behaviors and improving school performance

An afterschool program out of Clayton County serves high school students with problems commonly categorized as "at-risk." These problems range from eating disorders, substance abuse, and physical violence to stress management. Students can be self-referred, parent-referred, or school teacher/counselor-referred to participate. The students have the option of receiving school credit for participation in the program. In order to do so, students must submit a two-page typed or handwritten paper on the skills they acquired and how they plan to utilize their new skills. Students who attend 24 sessions must orally present about the skills they learned.

The "BLING" afterschool program in Fort Dodge serves primarily African-American students in the 5th through 8th grades. The program runs Monday through Thursday from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm, and offers students the opportunity to check grades and attendance, and offers behavior therapy when needed. Also offered are Saturday boys and girls mentoring groups. Students are rewarded with gift certificates for good grades each semester. Last year 70% of the program's students had grades of C or better and 20% had grades of As and Bs.

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) is a statewide afterschool network operating in its fifth year with funding support from the Charles and Johanna Moore Foundation, and with additional support from a number of state agencies and nonprofits. The IAA currently has over 700 individual and organizational members including afterschool programs and afterschool champions and advocates, the IAA's youth advisory group, the IAA's board of directors, and the Charles and Johanna Moore Foundation, which is the IAA's fiscal sponsor.

IAA's Recommendations

Expand state funding to \$6 million and provide a sustainable and flexible resource for afterschool programming

In 2007, thirty-eight programs requested over \$4 million in funds and only nine were funded. Many more programs reported not applying for these funds because summer programs were ineligible and/or staff resources to respond with an application were limited. The IAA recommends building increased flexibility and sustainability into current afterschool funding by:

- Identifying a single sustainable source and allowing for non-reversion of funds. Multi-year funding would not only provide a more dependable funding stream, it would make much-needed summer programs eligible to apply since the grants have typically been awarded on a nine-month, school year timeframe.
- In addition, the IAA strongly supports strengthening quality programs by requiring professional development for providers and encouraging partnerships with schools to develop joint training for school and afterschool staff. Professional development may include trainings in leadership development, community engagement, critical thinking, problem solving, and career counseling.

Designate 25% of funds to support development of afterschool programs for middle and high school youth to increase high school graduation rates and youth preparedness for college and the workforce

Most communities in Iowa have a significant lack of afterschool opportunities for youth in middle school and high school. Corporate Voices for Working Families estimates that parents' average work week outlasts their children's school week by as much as 25 hours. These hours are a prime opportunity not only to keep older youth out of harm's way, but to develop their academic and work readiness skills to prepare them to be productive citizens and future leaders. Given Iowa's demographics and increasing employer skill requirements, it is estimated that Iowa will have over 150,000 more jobs than qualified workers to fill them by 2012 (Meeting Iowa's Workforce Challenge, Iowa Works Campaign, 2006). Though Iowa has an average high school graduation rate of nearly 90%, some school districts

continue to struggle. For instance, the Council Bluffs school district has a graduation rate of approximately 69%, and very few afterschool opportunities for youth older than elementary age.

The IAA suggests eligible older youth programs would need to demonstrate significant engagement of community partners and a comprehensive scope of supports beyond academic assistance, such as basic work skills, career development and exploration, college preparation, character development, mentoring, service learning opportunities, prevention, and gender-specific programming.

Create a Transportation Assistance Fund

Transportation is a significant issue for afterschool programs, particularly those in rural parts of the state. Compounding the issue is a recent move by many insurance companies to stop insuring 12-15 passenger vans commonly used by afterschool programs. Although school and city buses are sometimes used to transport kids to afterschool programs, the availability and cost to afterschool programs varies by district. A typical program often transports students between school and the before/afterschool site, and transports them home at the end of the day. The IAA recommends creation of a \$500,000 Transportation Assistance Fund to supplement transportation financing already secured by eligible programs. The assistance would be available to programs identifying a need and demonstrating a concerted effort in seeking partnership and other financial support from school, city, and community partners.

Repeal SILO and Create Statewide Penny

The School Infrastructure Local Option (SILO) sales tax has been approved and is currently being administered in all 99 of Iowa's counties. Twenty-two counties have extended the SILO, and no extension votes have failed. The creation of a statewide penny tax to replace the SILO would create a permanent funding source that would improve education, provide an alternative to property taxes for school infrastructure and technology, and treat all students and taxpayers fairly regardless of where they live. The IAA supports this effort because of the significant impact a sustainable source of funding can have on the infrastructure and educational supports offered by school districts and community education.

What is Afterschool?

Afterschool programs provide experiences that are meaningful and beneficial to children, youth, families, and communities by offering safe, engaging, and enriching environments for children and youth when they are not in school. Quality afterschool programs utilize a youth development philosophy that incorporates the strengths and assets of youth to build their skills and broaden their experiences. Afterschool programs not only assist youth with academic issues, but help them develop career paths and volunteer opportunities, build social skills, and become civically engaged, as well as providing preventive, gender-specific, and other specialized programming. These ongoing, continuous programs occur before school, after school, in the evenings, weekends, school and other breaks, school in-service days, or for late starts or early dismissals. They can be offered by a school, by a contractor with a school, by a community-based organization, or other partnerships at a school or other location. These programs might also be referred to as “extended learning opportunities,” “out-of-school” programs, or “enrichment” programs.

Youth development is a combination of all of the people, places, supports, opportunities, and services that young people need to be happy, healthy, and successful.

(From the Center for Youth Development Policy and Research)

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) is a state-wide afterschool network, partnering in its mission with primary support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and with additional support from a variety of state agencies and non-profits. The IAA counts more than 700 individuals and organizations in its membership including afterschool programs and afterschool champions and advocates. The IAA is staffed by State Public Policy Group, Inc. and the Charles Mott Foundation's staff.



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