GRASP

Greater Resources for After-School Programming

# Moving an Out-of-School Agenda:

## Lessons and Challenges Across Cities

Joel Tolman, Karen Pittman, Nicole Yohalem, Jean Thomases & Ming Trammel

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON **MOVING AN OUT-OF-SCHOOL AGENDA,** SEE THE TEN TASK BRIEFS THAT ACCOMPANY THIS PUBLICATION

the forum FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

Helping organizations that invest in **youth**, invest in **change**

with the support of the **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**

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**The Forum for Youth Investment** (The Forum) was created to increase the quality and quantity of youth investment and youth involvement by promoting a "big picture" approach to planning, research, advocacy and policy development among the broad range of organizations that help constituents and communities invest in children, youth and families. To do this, the Forum builds connections, increases capacity and tackles persistent challenges across the allied youth fields.

Relationships are at the core of the Forum work. The Forum builds connections by developing relationships with organizations and individuals throughout the allied youth fields, and by identifying, facilitating and brokering relationships among these contacts. The Forum builds capacity by offering tools, training, advice, presentations, papers, commentary and international perspectives. The Forum tackles challenges by offering fresh ways of looking at old issues, synthesizing information about current efforts and creating neutral forums for diverse leaders to share experiences, develop joint strategies and align efforts.

Communities are where change really happens. The Forum believes that the information, tools and insights generated at the national level must be shaped by and useful to local communities and practitioners. The Forum also believe that all of these efforts are best undertaken by a range of organizations who are interested in increasing collective learning and action on "big picture" issues.

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AMERICAN YOUTH POLICY FORUM

This publication is printed and distributed in partnership with the **American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF)**, a nonprofit professional development organization based in Washington, D.C. AYPF provides nonpartisan learning opportunities for individuals working on youth policy issues at the national, state and local levels. Participants in our learning activities include Congressional staff, policymakers and Executive Branch aides; officers of professional and national associations; Washington-based state office staff; researchers and evaluators; education and public affairs media.

AYPF's goal is to enable policymakers and their aides to be more effective in their professional duties and of greater service — to Congress, the Administration, state legislatures, governors and national organizations — in the development, enactment and implementation of sound policies affecting our nation's young people. AYPF believes that knowing more about youth issues — both intellectually and experientially — will help participants formulate better policies and do their jobs more effectively. AYPF does not lobby or take positions on pending legislation. Rather, it works to develop better communication, greater understanding and enhanced trust among these professionals, and to create a climate that will result in constructive action. Each year AYPF conducts 40–45 learning events (forums, discussion groups and study tours) and develops policy reports disseminated nationally. For more information about these activities and other publications, visit www.aypf.org.

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# INTRODUCTION

The after-school movement is pushing forward with remarkable speed and force — not just at the national level, but also in communities around the country. More and more states and localities are making after-school programming a top priority, and are beginning to make significant investments in new opportunities and infrastructure. This new momentum is cause for celebration. It represents a remarkable possibility for children and youth around the country.

But, as with any movement, there are reasons to pause. Is this train moving in the right direction? Are sufficient tracks in place to make sure it doesn't come to a sudden stop? Are all the right passengers on board? Are they doing the right things? Is anyone being run over?

These questions are particularly critical at the community level. Communities are where the "steel meets the rails" — where supports and opportunities are or aren't available, where young people are or aren't being fully prepared for adult life and fully engaged in meaningful work, learning and contribution. Communities are also where innovation happens — where new solutions to persistent challenges bubble to the surface, where innovative programs and structures first develop. And communities are where all the pieces come together — where diverse agendas, funding streams, policy realities and societal forces join to shape young people's pathways through development. In short, community is where the action is. But how much action is there?

## *Learning from Communities: The GRASP Project*

Recognizing the critical role of community-level change in moving an out-of-school agenda, the Forum for Youth Investment began the GRASP Project — Greater Resources for After-School Programming — with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Through GRASP, the Forum helped four cities — Chicago, Kansas City, Little Rock and Sacramento — assess their current work and deepen community discussions about the out-of-school opportunities that should be available to young people *(see* The GRASP Cities and Partners, *pg. vi)*. From its inception in 1999, the GRASP Project has had three closely connected goals:

1. **To develop tools that broaden the conversation — locally and nationally — from after-school programs to out-of-school opportunities.** The Forum embarked on the GRASP Project believing that after-school programs are critical, but only part of the bigger picture of what young people are doing throughout their waking hours, from early childhood through late adolescence, to achieve a range of positive outcomes.[1] We worked with communities to understand and use this bigger picture.
2. **To partner with several cities to take a snapshot of their out-of-school landscapes.** GRASP was an effort to map local activities and document local stories — aiming to both inform national policy and support other communities

[1] We use the term "young people" throughout this publication to cover at least the first two decades of life. "Early childhood" and "young children" refer to young people 0–5; "children" and "elementary-age children" refer to young people age 6–11; "youth" range in age from 12 to the mid-twenties; "adolescents" are defined by their entrance into puberty, roughly corresponding to the teen years; "older youth" are considered to be roughly age 17 to 24. The use of these terms is somewhat arbitrary, but is meant to reflect both existing policy realities and developmentally meaningful time periods.

as they make new commitments to out-of- school programming. Rather than collecting the data and writing case studies ourselves, the Forum looked to local agencies and institutions, offering them the resources to tell their cities' stories. The Forum asked its city partners to marshal the existing data, filling the gaps with new data collection efforts when necessary, in order to create a rough picture of the programming currently available to young people. City partners also took on the tasks of profiling innovative initiatives and identifying, in partnership with a range of local stakeholders, the most important tasks and challenges facing their efforts. The result: status reports from each of the four cities, varying in their content and format to reflect local needs and contexts. These city reports, and the Forum's on-site experience in each of the four cities, represent the major source of data for this publication.[2]

3. **To engage communities in a time-limited planning process, using better information to rally stakeholders and make better decisions about the out-of-school hours.** GRASP also acted as a light community organizing process. Though the process varied across the cities, Forum staff generally traveled to each city twice to participate in a series of meetings, bringing together a range of public and private players to participate in a "big picture" discussion, share the results of data collection, and discuss challenges and opportunities facing the city. Out of these meetings, and the impromptu relationships that the GRASP process facilitated, emerged a number of new commitments, long-term partnerships and possible steps forward.

While its goals were broad, GRASP was a time-limited, focused project. It was not a long-term technical assistance effort. Nor was it a major research or evaluation endeavor. It was, instead, an attempt to test some new ways of thinking, understand how the after-school movement is playing out in particular places, and offer an opportunity for local planning.

### THE GRASP CITIES AND PARTNERS

The Forum sought out cities and partnering organizations that demonstrated a commitment to a broad vision of out-of-school programming, and a capacity within the city to collect data, convene stakeholders and move an agenda. Conversations with national leaders and a national scan of cities and potential partners lead us to focus on four communities — Chicago, the Kansas City metropolitan area, Little Rock, and Sacramento County. By intention, the partner organizations looked very different in the different cities:

In Chicago, a public entity — the Youth Services Division within the Chicago Department of Human Services — stepped forward as the lead partner. The Youth Services Division saw GRASP as an opportunity to bring community-based organizations, funders and public providers together around a shared agenda of better coordination, quality standards and youth worker certification.

In Kansas City, a child advocacy organization — the Partnership for Children — saw GRASP as an opportunity to cement an emerging commitment to youth programming among the city's civic leadership.

In Little Rock, New Futures for Youth — a local intermediary organization with a long history as a convener, program incubator and public partner — responded to the Forum's call. New Futures staff recognized a ground swell of interest in after-school programming, and wanted to make sure the city made the most of its current and emerging commitments.

In Sacramento County, an ad hoc coalition of organizations — including the Sacramento Youth Services Provider Network, the Community Services Planning Council, Child Action, Inc., a local park district and the California Foundation Consortium — came together to steer the GRASP process. Galvanized by a children's report card, which identified out-of-school time as one of ten key indicators in which stakeholders are passionate about making a difference, this coalition jumped at the opportunity to better understand the current "unassembled puzzle" of out-of-school investments.

## Lessons and Challenges across Cities

Each community created its own report and charted its own course for using the information and momentum that it accumulated with the support of the GRASP Project. The story lines in each community were similar, however. Communities began with conversations about the big picture — the range of supports and

[2] The city reports produced through the GRASP process are available on the Forum's Web site, www.forumforyouthinvestment.org.

opportunities young people should have available in the out-of-school hours. Community partners then went to work to compile information in order to compare the ideal of what should be with the reality of what is available. Time was tight and resources were limited. The pictures created were neither as full or accurate as they need to be to make decisions, but they were stark enough to spark discussions about what it would take to make things better.

*Moving an Out-of-School Agenda* synthesizes and shares the high notes and emergent patterns across the four GRASP cities. The three major sections of the report follow the main story lines just described — framing the challenge, mapping the landscape, facing the challenges. Lessons from the four GRASP cities are complemented by anecdotes and data from other communities and national efforts in order to present a fuller picture of the out-of-school landscape.

As a whole, this publication tells a story that is hopeful in places, troubling in others. This is its story line: ***Communities* are where the action is — literally.** Opportunities for learning and engagement exist in multiple places and programs found in communities — youth organizations, libraries, parks, homes, schools, faith institutions, city halls, community organizations, dance studios, workplaces. These places are open and active in the hours immediately after school, but also in the evenings, on weekends, in the summers.

Schools should be the anchor learning institution in young people's lives. But they occupy less than a quarter of their waking hours each year. And they focus heavily on building strong academic skills — skills that are critical but not sufficient. This means that, developmentally, there is a lot of space that schools don't fill. Cognitive development is critical for productive adolescence and productive adulthood. But cognitive skills are of only limited value if young people cannot function socially, emotionally or physically; if they lack the broader work skills and work ethic required to do well vocationally; or if they have neither the motivation nor the knowledge to be effective contributors to community and civic life.

Schools can and do contribute in all of these areas, but are not held accountable for broader social, civic and vocational development. If no one fills these roles, young people lose out. Children and youth are looking for learning experiences — things to do, places to go, people to talk to across a range of areas from academic to social to civic. What happens when they don't find them in school or out?

The bottom line: young people need and deserve support throughout their waking hours, through at least the first two decades of life, focused on social, civic, vocational, physical and emotional development as well as academics. Think about three dimensions: Time. Age. Outcomes. After-school programs — often defined as opportunities for 6 to 12 year olds with an academic focus in the hours directly after the school day — are a critical piece of the puzzle. But they are only one piece — and cities committed to young people will need to create opportunities throughout the out-of-school hours if they hope to realize their commitment. This is the argument of Section I: Framing the Challenge.

**There are significant recurring gaps in the out-of-school hours.** Good data about out-of-school opportunities are in remarkably short supply. In each of the GRASP cities, a close look at the available information generated more questions than it did answers, leaving our city partners to shape and move their own agendas. There were common findings across the four cities, however, which echo those reported from other cities:

- Opportunities are in short supply across the board, but get particularly thin during later adolescence, and are almost non-existent after age 18.
- Opportunities are unevenly distributed. Because of where they live and who they are, some young people have remarkably few choices.
- Programming drops off dramatically during the evening hours, and weekend programs are in particularly short supply.
- Only a small percentage of young people are enrolled in consistent, daily programs — critical especially for elementary-age children and during early adolescence.

- Many providers are striving to provide well-balanced programming, focusing on a range of outcomes, but many of the largest programs take on a much narrower focus.
- Civic outcomes are consistently neglected, and the programs that do support them tend to be smaller and focused on older age groups.

The gaps are apparent. Nonetheless, a diverse and growing set of organizations and agencies is providing supports and opportunities to young people — including community-based organizations, schools, parks, workforce development programs, child care providers and a myriad of others. The question is how to better align, leverage and build on these commitments so that all young people are getting what they need and deserve. Section II: Mapping the Programmatic Landscape focuses on these trends in out-of-school programming.

**Consistent themes emerge as cities come to grips with what it would take to improve out-of-school opportunities.** Large or small, it appears that cities ready to raise the bar — to saturate their neighborhoods with high-quality supports and opportunities, and to ensure that young people experience a seamless web of opportunities for learning and development — have several tasks ahead of them. Creating the quality, quantity and continuity of opportunities for young people will require:

1. Ensuring adequate **coordination, collaboration and networking** among those working with young people — within sectors, across sectors, and between organizations and community/family stakeholders.
2. Building a **stable, high-quality workforce** through credentialing, staff development, training and compensation.
3. Creating **quality standards, assessments and supports** that result in effective organizations and programs.
4. Developing the **physical infrastructure** — the transportation and physical space — that is the necessary context for accessible and high quality out-of-school opportunities.
5. Marshaling adequate **funding streams** — local, state and national, public and private — to guarantee stable and sufficient resources for programming.
6. Building **leadership and political will** — engaging champions in the public and private sectors, and at the highest levels of city government — to create and move an agenda.
7. Ensuring consistent, meaningful **youth engagement** in decision making at the program, organization and city levels.
8. Building **public will and constituency engagement** in order to support stakeholder involvement, promote public commitment and awareness, and leverage meaningful action.
9. Developing **planning and visioning** processes, structures and products to build alignment, intentionality and comprehensiveness within out-of-school programming.
10. Strengthening **mapping, monitoring and research** systems to collect, analyze and disseminate information about programs, providers, funding and young people.

No city has successfully tackled all of the challenges. Progress is uneven. But progress is being made. These critical tasks — and the status of cities in addressing them — are the focus of Section III: Facing the Challenges. They are also given fuller treatment — along with quotes, city profiles and other resources — in the four-page Task Briefs that accompany this publication.

## *Acknowledgments*

This publication and the GRASP Project in which it is rooted were made possible through the sustained support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Our thanks to Chris Sturgis, program officer at the Foundation, who approached the Forum with the idea for GRASP and helped us design an effort that both supported community-level work and informed national policy. Thanks also to An-Me Chung, the program officer who guided and supported GRASP through its

implementation. The Mott Foundation and its Pathways Out of Poverty Program staff deserve much credit for their remarkable work to advance the national after-school movement.

We owe our thanks, as well, to the lead organizations and stakeholders in each of the four GRASP cities. The leadership of Renae Ogletree and her staff in Chicago; Deborah Craig, Kerry Scott and Janice Ellis in Kansas City; the entire staff of New Futures for Youth in Little Rock; and Bina Lefkovitz in Sacramento was particularly critical. Their willingness to welcome us into their cities, to share their experiences honestly, and to augment the Forum's modest support for their efforts with their own hard work made this project possible. The experiences and perspectives of these four cities are at the heart of the pages that follow.

SECTION I

# Framing the Challenge

## Broad Possibilities, Narrower Realities

*Risk can be transformed into opportunity for our youth by turning their nonschool hours into the time of their lives.*

*— A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours*
(Carnegie Corporation, 1992)

## The National Context: A New Urgency

Over the last decade, national attention to programs in the out-of-school hours has increased dramatically. With new urgency, actors at all levels of decision making are calling for safe spaces in the hours between 3 P.M. and 6 P.M., extended opportunities for academic learning, additional services for young people at risk, and improved supports for families with two working parents *(see* What Is Driving the Commitment? *for some reasons behind the urgency).* These calls have caused a significant shift in public will, policy, philanthropy and research.

**Public will is growing.** The public provides a clear mandate for after-school programming, declaring overwhelming support in national polls. For instance, 94 percent of voters polled — up 6 percent from last year — "believe that there is a need for

### WHAT IS DRIVING THE COMMITMENT?

Foundations, policy makers, practitioners and researchers are turning their attention to the after-school hours for a huge array of reasons. As momentum builds, they are trying hard to attach their own agendas to this quickly moving train. But beneath these diverse agendas and commitments, two emerging realities seem to be most powerfully making the case for investments in after-school programs:

- Changing families and workplaces, teamed with concerns about children's safety. All evidence points to the fact that parents are increasingly at work, rather than at home with their children, during the afternoon hours. According to a 1997 workforce study, employees spend an average of 44 hours per week working and still have day-to-day family responsibilities (Families and Work Institute). A Casey Foundation study found that there is a gap of about 20 to 25 hours per week between children's school schedules and their parents' work schedules (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1997). The meaning of these gap hours is different for different age groups. When children have unsupervised time, the public worries about the children. But when adolescents and older youth have free time, the public worries about themselves — driven by statistics that point to the hours after school as the epicenter of juvenile criminal activity.
- New focus on student achievement, driven by standards and weariness with school reform. As schools face the challenge of high-stakes accountability, and as many districts struggle to enact genuine school reform, educators look increasingly to the after-school hours for additional "time on task." It is not only schools, however, that are bringing an academic focus to the after-school hours; youth-serving organizations and school-age care providers alike are increasingly declaring that they, too, are in the business of helping students meet high academic standards.

Together, these two sets of circumstances lend powerful momentum to after-school programs. They also lend a particular direction to the after-school movement — toward children under age 12 (for whom concerns about supervision are the greatest), and toward academic remediation and enrichment.

This focus on safety and academics is understandable and necessary — but is it sufficient?

some type of organized activity or place where children can go after school every day that provides opportunities to learn." And 67 percent are willing to pay $100 in additional state taxes each year to expand after-school programs, up 5 percent from last year (Afterschool Alliance, 2001). Whether it comes from concerns about safety, academic achievement or something else, there is a new commitment — bolstered by large-scale public relations work by organizations such as the Afterschool Alliance and Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

**New public dollars are available.** A small federal community schools initiative — the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program — has been transformed into a significant public-private partnership targeting money primarily for school-based, after-school programs in communities across the country. Funded at $860 million in fiscal year 2001, the program received an appropriation of $1 billion for fiscal year 2002. When combined with other important funding sources — the Child Care and Development Fund and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in particular — this federal investment represents an unprecedented funding stream for school-age child care and after-school programs. In all, The Finance Project has identified more than 120 federal programs that can fund out-of-school programming (Reder, 2000).

**New private dollars are flowing.** 21st Century dollars are accompanied by new investments from national and local foundations. A scan of private foundation grant making reveals some important trends. Investments are still categorical — outcome-specific (civic, academic and, to a lesser extent, vocational), time-specific (after school) and age-specific. Foundations like the Mott Foundation and the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds are once again looking toward major public institutions (parks, schools, libraries) as the delivery system for out-of-school programming, after mixed success in building the infrastructure of community-based organization providers. At the same time, foundations are recognizing increased investments in out-of-school time as a way to advance long-

### *NATIONAL TRENDS, LOCAL REALITIES*

National trends often are echoed in individual communities — local public funding streams complement new federal investments, local parent organizing efforts repeat the message of national public awareness campaigns — but the alignment is not always so precise. Only by charting state, national and local forces side-by-side is it possible to understand why city-level landscapes shape up as they do.

- Public will. While none of the cities engaged in GRASP have measured local public support for after school programming, all can speak anecdotally to the public's commitment. Local public will campaigns shape the specific tone of this commitment — for instance, broad citywide visioning in Chicago and Little Rock fuel significant buy-in for investments in programming for adolescents.
- Public investments. In each of the GRASP cities, funding from 21st Century mingles with significant state or local public investments — often with different goals than those of federal resources. The alignment is perhaps highest in Sacramento, where the combination of 21st Century and state after-school dollars fuel a major focus on school-based elementary-aged programs, and in Kansas City, where state agencies have helped leverage the use of a number of federal funding streams. In other communities, youth-focused funding streams help support a broadened focus on out-of-school opportunities for all young people.
- Private dollars. Every one of the GRASP cities has experienced investments from major national foundations with local ties — the James Irvine Foundation in Sacramento, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in Chicago, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City, the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation in Little Rock. National and local foundations bring their historic priorities to local after-school funding. Often these agendas involve a focus on major investments in individual after-school program providers — perhaps to the detriment of other organizations and a shared infrastructure.
- New research initiatives. Access to research capacity is uneven across localities. Chicago, for instance, is home to a combination of national efforts with local legs (for instance, Chicago MOST and Fight Crime: Invest in Kids) and Chicago-based research centers with national-scale horsepower (Chapin Hall and the Erikson Institute). As a result, most of the city's major initiatives are informed by the growing national research base, and local experiences inform national knowledge. But research and researchers are this accessible in few other cities.

standing commitments — the Carnegie Corporation, the Annenberg Foundation and others with school reform; the Mott Foundation with community schools; and the Open Society Institute with an urban renewal focus (Pittman, 2000).

**New research questions and initiatives are fueling the movement.** Research on after-school programs — called for by *A Matter of Time*, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's landmark 1992 report on out-of-school opportunities — is coming into its own. The work of institutions like the Chapin Hall Center for Children, Stanford University's John Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities, and the MacArthur Task Force on Middle Childhood is focusing new attention on out-of-school programming. In addition, the evaluation of the 21st Century program is one of a number of major national evaluation efforts shedding new light on the impact and status of out-of-school programming. Indicating the significance of these efforts, the Harvard Family Research Project has identified 12 major after-school "evaluations to watch" (2000), and has observed enough momentum to justify the creation of a major new online database of after-school evaluations. Perhaps most important, the new National Research Council report (2001), *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*, marshals the existing data to underscore the critical role of community-based programs in young people's learning and development.

These forces have created a long-overdue opportunity to build a solid infrastructure for supports during the out-of-school hours *(see* National Trends, Local Realities, *pg. 2)*. However, it is unclear whether they are sufficiently powerful to knit together a patchwork delivery system weakened by two persistent challenges: fragmentation and insufficient funding.

Diverse funding sources, each with its own target population and outcome focus, have created a patchwork system of services. Much of the funding for elementary-age children comes through the child care door. Funding for middle school age young people is often provided in the name of supervision, problem prevention (delinquency, pregnancy, substance abuse) and remediation. Funding for older youth tends to be attached to prevention, remediation, diversion and employment efforts.

Inadequate and unstable funding has compounded the fragmentation problem. Programs trying to deliver a broad base of out-of-school opportunities for young people have not only had to cobble funding together across multiple funding streams; they have had to do this on an annual basis. The result has been a lack of investment in infrastructure. Few programs have gone to scale. Even fewer communities have a comprehensive plan for developing services and supports to meet the needs of young residents. As a consequence, there is enormous variation in the extent to which neighborhoods are saturated with out-of-school supports (Littell and Wynn, 1989).

Fragmentation and inadequate funding are serious challenges. But narrow visions may be the most serious threats to capitalizing on the enormous public and political will that has been created.

## The Reality: An Uneven Commitment

Most adults would realize that something was wrong if they spent a day in an early childhood center and saw the children doing only one activity, focused on one domain of development — e.g., playing with alphabet blocks — and did not see them also eating a healthy snack, playing outside, involved in a creative activity and interacting with each other. As a child enters school, most people would still expect to see a range of developmental activities woven throughout the school day. But as children get older, the understanding of what kind of environment and opportunities they need to fully develop gets fuzzier.

Would most adults know to be appalled if they walked into a poorly run school or youth center? Would they realize that a community was not youth-friendly? Would adults be able to name the things they expect a 15-year-old (or a 10-year-old or an 18-year-old) to know and be able to do as well as they can name the things they do not want a young person to do? Despite concerted, long-term work on the part of youth advocates, public understanding of what

young people need and can do — and public commitment to support young people's development — remains incomplete.

It is possible to name a half-dozen reasons why public understanding and commitment to young people weakens as they get older. Supporting young people simply gets more complicated with age, as young people move across more and more diverse settings. Keeping track of who provides what, and developing consistent standards of quality across settings with different principles and practices, are both Herculean tasks. In the face of such complexity, policy makers and everyday citizens are likely to gravitate to simple answers — even if they only provide a piece of what young people need. At the same time, most adults start to get a little anxious as young people enter adolescence, spurred by widespread perceptions that youth is a time of crisis, instability and risky behavior. Media messages and political posturing only reinforce these negative public perceptions — and thus fuel investments aimed at solving problems rather than supporting positive development.

Whatever the constellation of reasons, the bottom line is the same: we need a clearer picture of what youth need and can do. More work is needed to paint a picture of youths' multiple developmental needs and explain why these needs interconnect — too often discussions are framed in either/or language (academic remediation or engaging activities) rather than both/and. There is also an urgent need to find clear and accessible ways to discuss their progress and define minimum levels of proactive support (as opposed to reactive strategies enacted after problems occur). Often missing from discussions about policy and practice is a full sense of how young people's needs change over time (across the different stages of development) and even throughout the day and year as young people move from one setting to another, from one opportunity to the next. It is critically important that discussions about expanding opportunities for after-school programming be set in the broader context of understanding opportunities for out-of-school learning. This requires a "big picture" of out-of-school time — a full sense of what young people should know and do, supported throughout the day and year, and through at least the first two decades of life.

## The Vision: More Opportunities for Learning and Development

The focus on out-of-school hours requires both careful scrutiny and a clear vision if it is to help young people grow, learn and develop. If we are going to make progress in providing the supports that young people need during the out-of-school hours, we first need a shared sense of what we are talking about. Over the last two decades, youth advocates have made solid progress in advancing three critical concepts that have now gained widespread acceptance. These three concepts help define what we mean by "the developmental imperative":

- **Young people need and deserve supports *throughout their waking hours.*** In early childhood the charge is clear. Infants and young children need constant care and attention. Leaving them alone for several hours is seen as negligence. As young people grow, they reach an age when they should have time by themselves. Still, out of sight does not mean out of mind. Parents work hard to ensure that their children have safe places to go and supportive people to be with. Increasingly, advocates have successfully made the case that the wisdom of parents should be reinforced — development does not end when young people step outside their houses, nor does it end with the closing school bell. Children and youth are influenced at all hours of the day. The number of waking hours grows as young people get older. The percentage of those hours that are unstructured and unsupervised increases exponentially.
- **Young people deserve early and sustained investments *throughout the first two decades of life.*** While research may indicate that some ages witness particularly crucial stages of development, all ages are critical *(see* What the Research Says: The Impact of Out-of-School Opportunities, *pg. 5).* Investing in early child-

### WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS: THE IMPACT OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

The research is conclusive. When young people, whatever their age, have high-quality supports and opportunities in the out-of-school hours, they do better and are better at avoiding problems. According to a new landmark report from the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2001):

> *Studies indicate that participation in voluntary structured activities during nonschool time is associated with the development of positive identity, increased initiative, and positive relationships with diverse peers and adults, better school achievement, reduced rates of dropping out of school, reduced delinquency, and more positive outcomes in adulthood.*

Participation in out-of-school programs is associated with positive cognitive, physical, emotional, social, civic, and vocational development:

- Adolescents who participate regularly in community-based programs have better academic and social outcomes, including higher education and career aspirations, than other similar teens (McLaughlin, 2000).
- Several long-term studies conducted by Deborah Vandell and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin point to a host of positive benefits that after-school programs have on elementary school students — such as better grades, work habits, and emotional adjustment (Posner & Vandell, 1999).
- The National Longitudinal Study of Youth, a large ongoing public survey, finds that students who reported spending no time in extracurricular activities were 57 percent more likely than those spending 1 to 4 hours in such activities to have dropped out before they reached 12th grade. Studies by Eccles and Barber (1999) and Vandell and Shumow (1999) have echoed these findings.
- Reginald Clark (1988) found that economically disadvantaged children and youth in poor performing schools who participate from 20–35 hours per week in constructive learning activities during free time get better grades in school than their more passive peers.

There can be no doubt: young people need and deserve early and sustained supports throughout their waking hours to achieve a broad range of positive outcomes.

hood is necessary but not sufficient — there is no way to sufficiently "inoculate" children so they will be immune to later developmental challenges and tasks. Development is ongoing, and does not stop because program funds run out or because a certain age is reached.

- **Young people need investments to help them achieve *a broad range of outcomes*.** For young people, academic success is critical, but it is not enough. While they may not use these terms, young people and their families realize that becoming fully prepared for adulthood also requires vocational, physical, emotional, social and civic development. Ideas like confidence, competence, character, connection and opportunities to contribute may hit closer to home for some young people.[3]

These statements sound like truisms. They are. But it is the basic logic of these statements that makes them powerful. From the time that young people are small until they are fully grown, they wake up every morning looking for things to do, people to talk to, and places to be and explore. The more intentional communities and governments are about helping families provide these people, places and possibilities — not only in the pre-school years but throughout childhood and the transitional years — the better the child and youth outcomes.

It is ironic, then, that support for the idea that it is in the best interest of communities and society to provide *full* coverage — all times, all outcomes — dwindles as young people move through the developmental stages.

- **During many times of the day, in many communities and neighborhoods, there is literally nothing for young people to do.** The landmarks findings of *A Matter of Time* still hold true: "about 40 percent of young people's waking hours are discretionary — not committed to other activities . . . . Many young adolescents

[3] For more discussion about the broad set of areas in which young people are developing, and about youth development broadly, see *Preventing Problems, Promoting Development, Encouraging Engagement: Competing Priorities or Inseparable Goals* (Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem and Ferber, 2002, updated).

spend virtually all of this discretionary time without companionship or supervision from responsible adults" (Carnegie Corporation, 1992). While the after-school movement has created opportunities during some of this discretionary time, during other hours — weekends, evenings, summers — young people continue to have very few options and opportunities. Yet, all young people's waking hours — not just those directly after school — represent an opportunity for learning and development.

- **The number of organized opportunities for young people in the out-of-school hours actually decreases as they grow older.** A three

## THE BOTTOM LINE: SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT

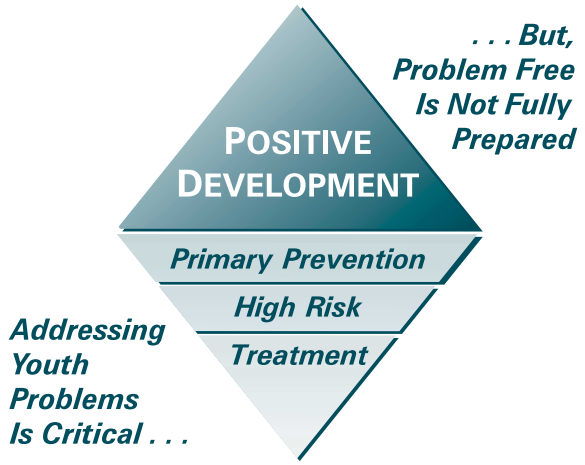
What do we mean by youth development? Youth development is a fuzzy term — often used simultaneously to describe the process of development, the outcomes of development, and the programs and organizations that focus on non-academic outcomes and operate in the non-school hours.

Behind all of these uses, however, are a set of linked ideas about the who, what, when, where, why and how of development. Together, these ideas describe a deliberate approach to working with young people. Many organizations (e.g., The Search Institute, the AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, the National Collaboration for Youth, Public/Private Ventures) have described the basic elements of this approach. Most, if not all, share a common commitment to push beyond current thinking about what outcomes, inputs, settings, strategies and actors are needed to help young people address problems, build skills and pursue opportunities for learning, work and contribution. Many of these ideas can be summed up in a handful of bumper sticker phrases:

- Problem free isn't fully prepared. We cannot afford to define what we want for young people solely in terms of what we do not want them to do — staying out of trouble, off drugs, off the streets, etc. We should be as articulate about the attitudes, skills, behaviors and values we want young people to have as we are about those we hope they avoid. Defining our hopes for young people in positive terms, with as much force and precision as we define the negatives, is critical *(see* Figure 1*).*
- Fully prepared isn't fully engaged. Young people don't wait until adulthood to engage in work, family, community and a range of other settings. Just as it is insufficient to define all our goals for young people in terms of problems avoided, it is not enough to say that we want young people "ready by 21," prepared for adulthood, and the like. Our hopes for young people should include active engagement in the here and now, as well. Focusing on youth engagement is particularly critical for adolescents and older youth, who will simply stop showing up if opportunities for real engagement aren't available.

FIGURE 1

**WHICH OUTCOMES? BEYOND PREVENTION**




- Academic competence, while critical, isn't enough. Cognitive development is absolutely essential for full preparation. But in the drive for academic achievement, other key areas of development can get overlooked. Understanding the interconnections between them, we have to demonstrate respect for development in the other key functional areas — vocational, social, physical, civic, emotional, moral *(see* Basic Functional Areas, Figure 2*).*
- Competence itself, while critical, isn't enough. We have to underscore that competence (skills, knowledge, behaviors) is only one measure of success. Young people can be good at certain tasks and know a great deal, but still lack what it takes to be good citizens, workers, family members and human beings. Confidence, character, connection and contribution are key outcomes — along with competence — that affect young people's overall ability to function *(see* Desired Outcomes, Figure 2*).*

*continues . . .*

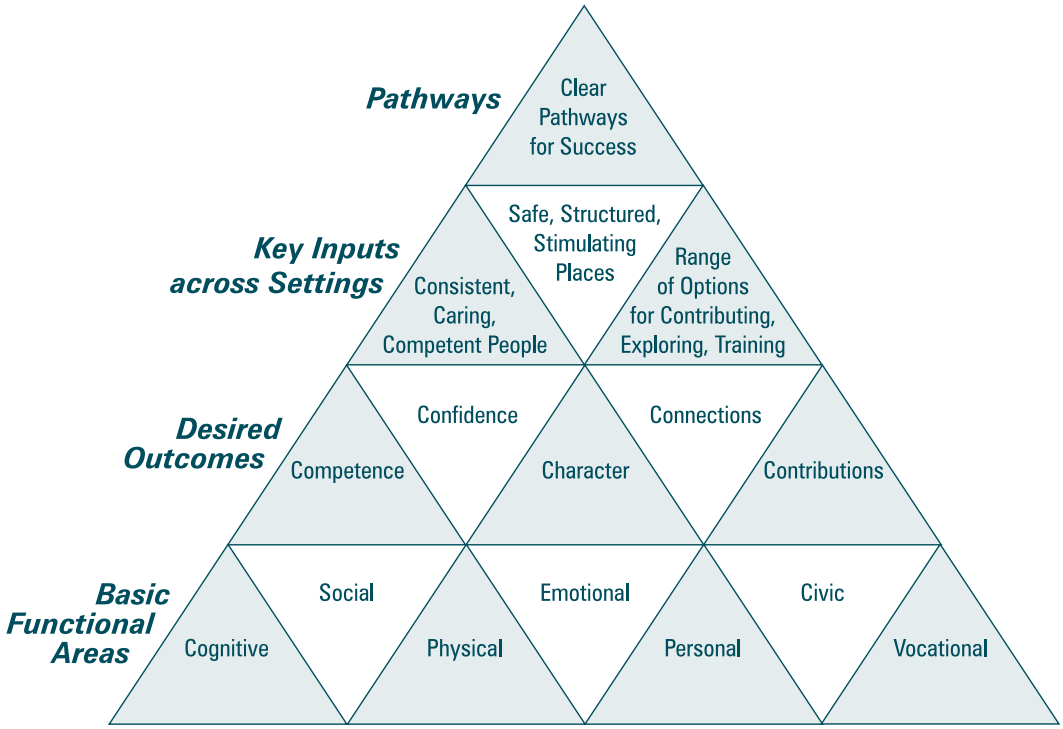
community study by Public/Private Ventures finds that while two-thirds of 13- to 15-year-olds report that they had constructive things to do in their out-of-school hours, only half of 16- to 17-year-olds and one third of 18- to 19-year-olds report being engaged. Despite the lack of opportunities, young people report they were looking for things to do and asking for more adult interaction (Sipe and Ma with Gambone, 1998). Nationally, more than half of teens wish there were more community or neighborhood-based programs available after school, and two thirds of those surveyed said they would participate in such programs if they were available (YMCA of the USA, 2001).

THE BOTTOM LINE, CONTINUED

- Services alone aren't enough. Young people need affordable, accessible care and services, safe and stable environments and high quality instruction. But they also need supports — relationships and networks that provide nurturing, standards and guidance. And they need opportunities learn, earn and contribute by trying on new roles, mastering challenges and actively participating in family and community. Whatever language is used — services, supports and opportunities; people, places and possibilities; or the America's Promise Five Promises — the bottom line is the same *(see* Key Inputs, Figure 2*).*
- Programs alone aren't enough. Young people do not grow up in programs. They grow up in families and communities composed of a range of formal and informal settings for learning and development. Programs (intentionally structured activities designed to address specific needs and outcomes) are critical. But they are offered within a broader context of intentional and natural supports or barriers found in multiple settings. Programs need to be seen as specific efforts to help young people progress along pathways through adolescence. These programs need to connect to what has come before, what goes after and what else is going on in young people's lives. This means creating pathways that link experiences and settings into part of a single developmental process *(see* Pathways, Figure 2*).*

FIGURE 2

**OUTCOMES, INPUTS, SETTINGS, PATHWAYS: THE INGREDIENTS OF DEVELOPMENT**



- **Investments in academics and in problem prevention far outstrip commitments to other youth outcomes.** The amount that communities invest in youth supporting preparation and participation pales in comparison to dollars spent on prevention and punishment. By adolescence, especially late adolescence, funding for youth programs outside of school comes into communities almost exclusively attached to mandates to prevent or address problems and punish delinquents. Even the expansion of dollars for afterschool programming is attributable to the strong link made to crime reduction and academic remediation. Simultaneously, concern about academic achievement overshadows interest in other areas of development. It is absolutely critical that young people develop the cognitive skills needed to function in the twenty-first century, but there is ample evidence that 1) academic skills are connected to skill development and basic functioning in other areas (e.g., health, vocational, civic, social), and 2) interest in building academic skills can often be fostered by focusing on the strengths or interests young people have in other areas.

In many communities, for many young people, the basic ingredients for learning and development are not available. Commitments are uneven and insufficient. Given this bleak situation, it is critical that advocates and everyday citizens turn the developmental imperative into a moral imperative — and realize the full opportunity of the out-of-school hours. How do we turn the corner?

## The Cube: A Simple Way to Frame Our Options

For a long time, youth development advocates have been talking about the "non-negotiables" — the need to offer intentional supports more of the time, across more of the developmental periods, across more outcomes. These basic premises reflect a common-sense understanding of what young people need and can do. The challenge is to build moral urgency supporting these basic statements about youth development.

A key to this is simplicity. About a year ago, the Forum discovered a simple visual aid. Take these three ideas — times, ages, outcomes — and make them the axes of a cube *(see* Figure 3*)*.

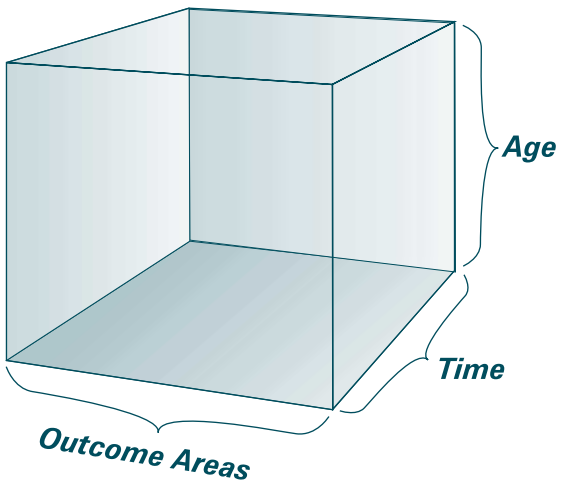
Creating a cube defines a space to be filled — a space for which all who touch the lives of young people, either directly or indirectly, share responsibility.

With the cube in hand, we can begin to tell interesting stories about the ways we support young people. Take early childhood, for instance. A concerted effort by foundations, researchers and organizations over the past decade has bolstered common sense. Young children need a range of opportunities and services throughout their waking hours that address a variety of developmental needs. They need to be monitored in order to stay safe and healthy. And they need opportunities for social and emotional learning, physical activity and the development of empathy, as well as cognitive and academic learning *(see* Figure 4, *pg. 10)*.

Public funding for early childhood supports is far from adequate and the network of public, private and family providers is far from complete. Yet there is a broad understanding that young children need this range of supports.

FIGURE 3

**THE DEVELOPMENTAL IMPERATIVE: HOW DO WE HELP YOUTH FILL THE SPACE?**



## *DIFFERENT STARTING POINTS: HOW CITIES ARRIVE AT OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME*

How are cities framing their work in the out-of-school hours? Are they taking a step back to look at the big picture, or are they narrowing in on a piece of the puzzle? In each case explored through GRASP, the city's recent history, combined with national forces outside their control, determine the terms and focus of the out-of-school conversation. All of the GRASP cities are challenged as they attempt to shift the terms of the conversation from "after-school" to "out-of-school." In addition, all are understandably reluctant to let go of the specific priorities that haves caused them to focus energy on the non-school hours.

Chicago, like the country's other large cities, is home to a messy and complex array of actions and actors in the out-of-school hours. Concerted efforts by the mayor, his wife and other public officials have sustained a two-decade, citywide investment in out-of-school infrastructure. Investments from the Chicago Community Trust and the MacArthur Foundation have helped to solidify neighborhood-based infrastructure. Strong out-of-school leadership in the parks and schools has helped to piece together what would otherwise be a jumble of activities. The community of independent youth-serving organizations is strong in the city, and a major force in supporting a broad vision of out-of-school time. Over the past five years, the MOST initiative — Making the Most of Out-of-School Time — has brought a renewed focus on school-age children, while not diluting the commitment to older youth. In such a complicated landscape, it is sometimes hard to see the forest for the trees. Yet the vision for out-of-school time is more coherent than one might expect, thanks to the leadership of this range of actors.

In Kansas City, two separate agendas — major investments in school-based after-school programs on one hand, and historic commitment to youth programming on the other — may finally be coming together. More than a decade and a half ago, Kansas City's mayor brought together a task force on youth idleness, echoing concerns about gangs in mid-sized cities around the country. This effort prompted investment of public and private dollars in prevention programs, slowly taking on a positive focus as the city decreased funding and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation upped its investment. The result is a strong network of youth-serving organizations that have embraced a positive youth development approach. At the same time, the city was trying to maintain a decade-old commitment to provide extended day opportunities at the city's elementary schools. A major investment of federal child care dollars and the partnership of a cross-agency state collaborative — LINC, the Local Investment Commission — created one of the most comprehensive school-based after-school programs in the country. Now, Kansas City is ready to put the pieces together, bringing the public and private resources available to younger age groups to older youth — while not undercutting impressive quality and connection-building efforts by YouthNet of Greater Kansas City, the network of youth agencies.

Little Rock's commitment to out-of-school programming — as in Kansas City — arose in large part out of national fears about gangs and youth crime in the 1980s. A citywide goals-setting process, begun in 1992, made possible the creation of a new local funding stream earmarked for Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment (PIT) programs. PIT provided new support to existing community-based organizations in under-resourced neighborhoods. The focus of these programs is adolescents and older youth — and only recently has the city begun to focus concerted efforts on out-of-school opportunities for elementary-aged young people. Now, though, after-school is on the tip of everyone's tongue, and is arising as the solution to a diverse set of community problems.

After-school has moved to the top of Sacramento County's agenda in just the past two years. A new mayor of the city of Sacramento made after-school programming a major part of her campaign for office, fueling momentum already building thanks to the California Department of Education's After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program. With public commitment and funding lined up, Sacramento's child advocacy community and the public have made after-school programs a centerpiece of their agenda, naming it a top priority at several recent community meetings. Perhaps most striking is how after school has been linked with a range of other issues, becoming the focal point of a new coalition of forces — including youth service providers, child care, school officials and others. In Sacramento, after school — with a focus on school-age care and learning — has become the hub of a wheel, with issues as diverse as academic achievement, juvenile crime, teen pregnancy and school safety radiating out from it.

As children move out of their early years, schools become the dominant institution in their lives. But schools tend to focus on only a subset of the competency areas (primarily academic), hours of the day (primarily 8 A.M. to 3 P.M.) and ages (primarily 5 to 18) *(see* Figure 4*)*.

This relatively narrow role of schools presents two constant challenges:

1. There is a need to think first about how schools, especially secondary schools, can aid in youth development more broadly — how, for instance, schools can intentionally aid young people's social and emotional development, or help them take on roles as capable citizens.
2. We need then to recognize that schools cannot do everything in the limited hours in which they work with students. What is the gel that surrounds schools? How do we think about the space surrounding the school day as a whole?

FIGURE 4

***WHAT FILLS THE SPACE?***

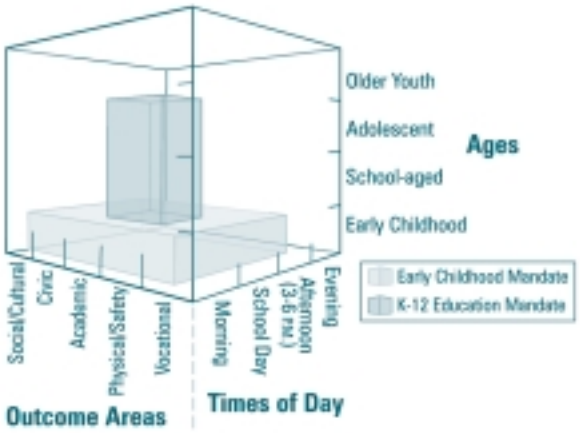
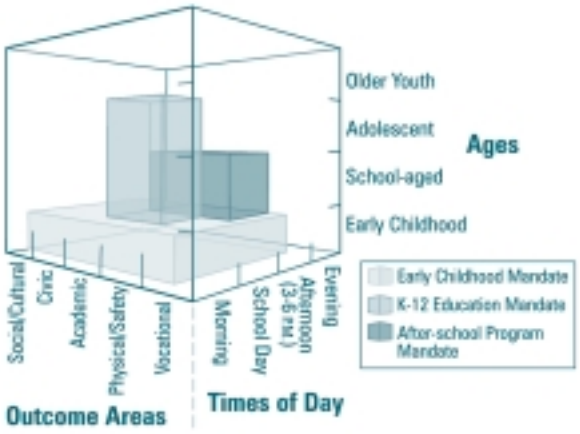



FIGURE 5

***AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS***

*Part of the Answer*




Schools occupy at best one quarter of the annual waking hours of the country's elementary and secondary students. This does not begin to count the number of young people who are not in school, not employed and in need of additional education, training and support. In cities where as many as half of the 16- to 18-year-olds are not in school, out-of-school time is nearly all the time.

Unfortunately, the current national discussion on "out-of-school time" focuses primarily on the goal of creating more "after-school programs." Many of the largest funding streams and programs are focused on the hours directly after the school day, students primarily in elementary school (and, increasingly, middle school), and outcomes directly related to academic competence and physical safety *(see* Figure 5*)*. During other hours, funding and programming are considerably less robust. Young people have few options during their mornings, evenings, weekends and summers. Just as significantly, opportunities and supports tend to phase out as young people leave early adolescence. Perhaps most importantly, those services, opportunities and supports that are available lack coherence, connection and continuity. Even in neighborhoods and cities where much is going on outside of school hours, little is being done to link programming into a continuous, intentional web of support. A lack of options is compounded by consistent fragmentation.

The focus on 3 P.M. to 6 P.M., kindergarten through 6th grade after-school programs is understandable. More than that, it is vital — elementary school students need safe places to go and stimulating things to do in the hours between when school

ends and their parent(s) get home from work. Still, it cannot be detached from a broader conversation about how we support young people throughout their waking hours. Just as importantly, after-school programs need to be informed by what we know about how young people develop and learn — including the fact that academic and physical development are tightly coupled with a range of other areas of development. Finally, as we create programs and opportunities for young people, we should keep in mind that all young people — not just 6- to 12-year-olds — should have access to these supports.

How are communities doing against this broader picture of out-of-school time? From previous research and everyday experience, we know part of the answer to this question. Some hours are empty. Some age groups have remarkably few opportunities. Some important outcomes are consistently neglected. The experiences of the four GRASP cities confirm all of these generalizations — and underscore particularly critical gaps in the supports available to young people when they are not in school. The next section shares these patterns and gaps in the fabric of out-of-school supports.

SECTION II

# Mapping the Programmatic Landscape

## Trends and Challenges

*"There is nothing to do in Oakland, absolutely nothing. Young people are killed in car crashes every night because there is nothing to do but drive around."*

— Young adult focus group participant

## The Question: What Is Available to Young People?

In every one of the GRASP cities, out-of-school programming is a citywide priority. A vast collection of agencies is engaged in offering opportunities and supports during these hours. Yet, despite all the activity, it is unclear what these efforts add up to. The most basic questions go unanswered: Who has access? Who does not? At what times? With what results? Provided by whom?

## The Challenge: Incomplete Data

Describing the programmatic reality in their communities, the GRASP participants grabbed onto a range of metaphors — a "messy web," an "unassembled puzzle." Trying to get a snapshot of the current range of out-of-school programs is complicated by several facts, true in communities across the country:

- The range of providers is increasing dramatically as a result of new funding streams and demand from parents. This means that many of the players are relatively unknown and often have limited data collection capacity in place.
- The idea of "out-of-school time" is a new and large umbrella, bringing together a range of stakeholders and providers previously not thought to be related to each other.
- Across providers, data collected is incompatible and inconsistent across time, and is often driven by the expectations of particular funders to respond to a particular question.
- Rarely does a single entity have the mandate or the capacity to collect information on the range of organizations. "Data intermediaries" are rare institutions.
- When data collection efforts are undertaken, they often aim to generate new data, rather than to synthesize or build upon the available information. This strategy reinforces the incompatibility problem and often makes it difficult to capture the whole picture.

Whatever the combination of these and other forces, the result is that communities do not have a complete or detailed sense of what is available to young people in the out-of-school hours. Quotes from the GRASP city reports are demonstrative:

*A comprehensive inventory of out-of-school programs in the metropolitan area does not exist — nor, evidently, had it been attempted until the Partnership for Children, a metropolitan-wide children's advocacy group, conducted a survey of programs in summer 2001. School-age child care leaders in the Kansas City area acknowledge that, while such an inventory is an important first step, it has been difficult to accomplish because of the diversity of programs and providers.*

— Kansas City

*Simply put, there is currently no way to get an accurate, big-picture sense of what is going on in Chicago's out-of-school hours. Data collection systems are fragmented and incompatible. The number of players is daunting. Evaluators, parents, program providers, funders and policy makers alike lack the citywide information necessary to ensure that young people are getting what they need during the out-of-school hours.*

— Chicago

*Only the roughest of estimates about the number of after-school and summer programs currently available to children and youth in Little Rock is possible at the present time. It is even more difficult to obtain information about the ages of youth served, the days and hours of operation, and the range of services, supports and opportunities offered by a given program. While data are most readily obtainable from the larger, publicly funded programs, they are kept and reported in different formats and for different purposes, making it difficult to feel at all confident about the uniformity of numbers and definitions from site to site.*

— Little Rock

To add another metaphor to the many employed by cities, the current situation is something between driving without a roadmap and constructing a building without a blueprint — those planning the future and making decisions in the present are not guided by a complete picture of what exists and what could be.

## The Strategy: Marshal What We Know, Explore What We Do Not

The GRASP process could only make a small dent in this situation. Using the modest resources that the Forum provided, GRASP city partners took a variety of routes in their effort to glean a better picture of their local programmatic landscapes. Partners in two communities distributed hundreds of surveys to providers throughout their regions, and combined these results with existing data and (in one case) youth focus groups to come up with a picture of what exists. Another city hired a consultant to contact and develop profiles of a number

### CITY SNAPSHOT: LITTLE ROCK

In Little Rock, phone calls to a variety of public agencies and individual providers, research into existing data sources and reports, and some creative sleuthing revealed a patchwork of programmatic opportunities and uneven information about existing programs. While working with incomplete and often incompatible data, the staff of New Futures for Youth in Little Rock recognized several important patterns amidst the noise.

- Most young people are not in consistent, daily programs. Only a little more than half (55 percent) of school-year programs surveyed provide five-day-per-week opportunities for children and youth. These daily programs have an average daily attendance of 4,155, or 43 percent of the average daily attendance of all programs surveyed (approximately 33,000 young people, age 5 to 17, live in Little Rock).
- Public providers and funding are the heart of the system. All of these daily school-year programs are operated by or supported wholly or substantially by the Little Rock School District or the City of Little Rock.
- A near majority of young people involved in daily programs are involved in sports programs. Almost half of the average daily attendance of 4,155 children and youth participating in daily programs involve students participating in after-school athletic programs in the Little Rock School District (2,000 participants, 48 percent).
- Many programs are striving to provide a balanced experience. Close to half of both school-year (55 percent) and summer programs (52 percent) provide program opportunities in three or four "outcome areas," an indication that there is an increased chance that participants will be exposed to an array of enriching experiences.
- Summer opportunities expand to fill the time, but are reaching fewer young people. Eighty-one percent of summer programs operate eight or more hours per day, and 84 percent operate five or more days per week. At the same time, the total number of children and youth participants in summer programs is less than the number in school-year programs (7,598 in summer programs vs. 9,650 in school-year programs).

of programs and institutions; this information was supplemented by in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and information provided by participants in citywide meetings. In the fourth community, phone conversations with organizations, public entities and other informants yielded information that was cobbled together into an impressive data set.

Each community chose to focus its efforts on a subset of all the possible organizations that might be included in such a survey. All focused on a diverse core of providers offering reasonably priced or free structured programming — publicly and privately funded, offered through schools, parks, community organizations, child care centers and dozens of other venues. All also tried to collect data in response to a basic set of questions: What sorts of opportunities were provided? At what time? To which young people? By what sorts of agencies? With what outcomes in mind? All emphasized that these data collection efforts were first attempts to paint a picture that could spark discussion and improved subsequent data collection. The results would not stand the test of scientific rigor; cities were working in the context of limited resources and limited information. But — in some cases for the first time — stakeholders were able to share some sense of what was going on when young people are not in school *(see* City Snapshots *throughout this Section).*

## The Answers: A Patchwork of Services, Supports and Opportunities

Despite the challenges and the differences in strategies among the cities, some patterns are remarkably consistent across all the data. Putting the city snapshots side-by-side reveals a composite picture of how well cities are meeting the needs of young people when they are out of school. The picture is blurry in places, and bears the thumbprints of the Forum and its city partners, to be sure. Still, it reveals the outline of a city-level landscape that is both hopeful and troubling. The picture provides partial, preliminary answers to the most basic questions about out-of-school programming:

- **Who?** Which young people have access and are engaged?
- **When?** During what hours, and at what times of year, is programming available?
- **Why?** What outcomes do programs aim to support?
- **By whom?** What mix of agencies are involved, and what are the different roles these agencies are playing?

### WHO HAS ACCESS?

Whether a young person has access to out-of-school opportunities depends on a variety of factors: where they live, their background and family income, their age, their gender, whether they are in school at all, and a range of other community and individual

#### CONFIRMING EVIDENCE: A SHORTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES

A fact sheet prepared by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (2001) confirms that out-of-school opportunities are in short supply in many communities:

> *According to a recent poll, 71 percent of voters say it is difficult for parents to find after-school programs in America; 60 percent say it is difficult for parents to find after-school programs in their communities.*
>
> — Afterschool Alliance, June 2000

> *The U.S. General Accounting Office estimates that in the year 2002, the current number of out-of-school time programs for school-age children will meet as little as 25 percent of the demand in some urban areas.*
>
> — U.S. General Accounting Office, 1998

> *The National Institute on Out-of-School Time indicates that there are approximately 8 million children ages 5 to 14 that spend time without adult supervision on a regular basis. This number includes 4 million children between the ages of 5 and 12 and another estimated 4 million children ages 13 and 14. These figures rise markedly as children age.*
>
> — Miller, 1995, Hofferth & Jankuniene, 2000

characteristics *(see* Confirming Evidence: A Shortage of Opportunities, *pg. 15)*. Data from the GRASP cities indicate that, while supports and opportunities need to be extended across the board, certain young people are particularly unlikely to be engaged.

**Opportunities are in short supply across the board.** None of the cities examined through GRASP has saturated its neighborhoods with out-of-school opportunities. Kansas City could account for more of its young people than any other community. Even there, only 40 percent of school-age children and youth, ages 6 through 18, are enrolled in out-of-school programs or activities, and only a quarter of these are enrolled in daily programs. In Little Rock, by comparison, the average daily attendance of all the school-year programs reporting was less than a third of the city's total population of young people *(see* City Snapshot: Little Rock, *pg. 14)*. Some cities have come close to creating an "after-school opportunity for every child." For example, in San Diego, the mayor's "6 to 6" Extended School Day Program has launched before- and after-school programs in every one of the city's elementary and middle schools over a three-year period. But in most communities, there is still much work to be done.

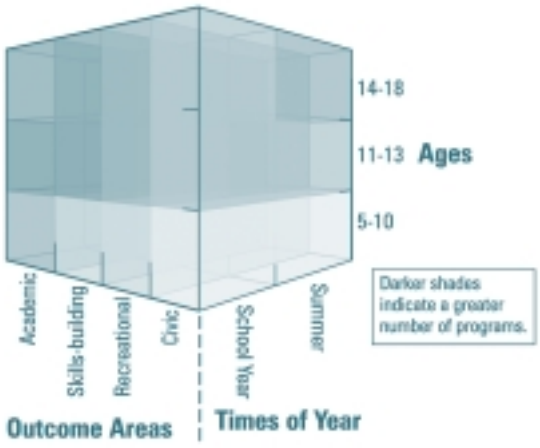
**The supply of programming begins to get thin as young people enter adolescence.** In Kansas City, less than one fourth of organizations report they provide out-of-school activities and supervision for youth age 16 or older. In Little Rock, the only city where numbers of young people participating are available on an age-group-by-age-group basis, an interesting pattern emerges. A larger number of programs open their doors to middle and high-school-aged youth than to elementary-aged young people *(see* Figure 6A*)*. These programs offer a greater diversity of choices, tend to focus on a broader range of outcomes, and are available during more hours. But, because many of the largest programs focus on the elementary grades, *fewer opportunities actually exist the older a young person gets*. The number of spaces in programs actually gets smaller, even though the number of programs increases *(see* Figure 6B*)*. This data is supported by a decade's worth of evidence on the shortage of out-of-school opportunity for young adolescents (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992).

FIGURE 6

### *WHO? IN LITTLE ROCK*

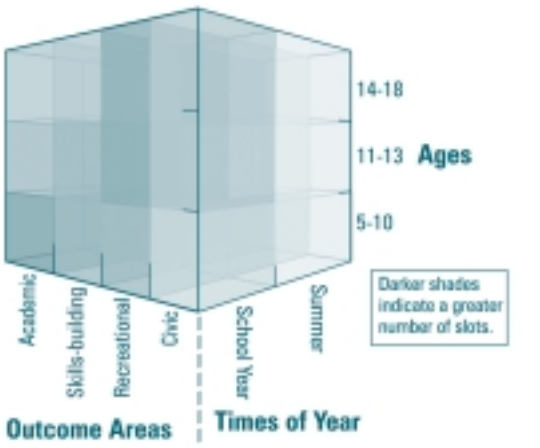
*More Programs for Adolescents...*

A




*...But More Slots for Elementary Students*

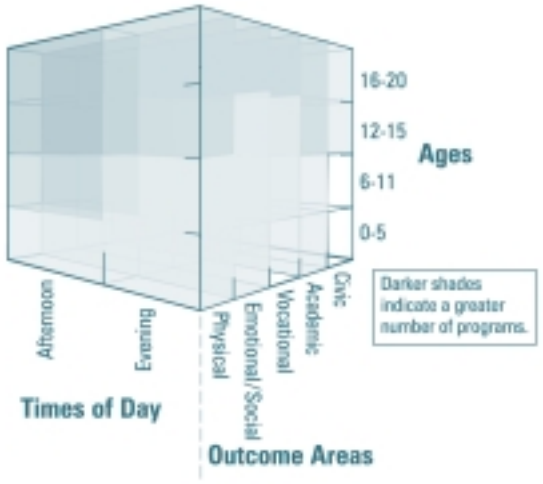
B




In Little Rock, an interesting pattern emerges. A larger number of programs open their doors to middle- and high-school-aged young people than to elementary-aged young people. These programs offer a greater diversity of choices, tend to focus on a broader range of outcomes, and are available during more hours. However, because many of the largest programs focus on the elementary grades, fewer opportunities actually exist as young people get older. The number of spaces actually gets smaller, even though the number of programs increases.

FIGURE 7

### *WHEN? IN CHICAGO, FAR FEWER EVENING OPPORTUNITIES*




Evening programs are far less plentiful than afternoon programs regardless of age group or outcome area. This is true even when comparing programs with physical safety outcomes and those focused on older youth.

**Opportunities for older youth are in remarkably short supply.** The limited availability of opportunities affects older youth the most. In Chicago, less than 30 percent of the organizations reporting indicated that they offer any structured opportunities to youth after age 18. More than 85 percent, on the other hand, offer programming for elementary-aged young people. Programming is almost non-existent by the time young people reach age 21. In Little Rock, the GRASP city partner did not collect data on programs for young people older than age 18 — simply because they could not identify any programs for this age group. A survey conducted as part of Public/Private Ventures' (P/PV) Community Change for Youth Development initiative on youth in three cities (Austin, Texas; Savannah, Georgia; and St. Petersburg, Florida) confirms the GRASP findings. "The number of youth who are disconnected increases as youth get older," according to Sipe and Ma with Gambone (1998). "This drop-off in supports and opportunities that are available to older youth occurs simultaneously with an increase in negative activities, suggesting that older adolescents are a crucial group for communities to target when developing new activities in these neighborhoods."

**Because of where they live and who they are, some young people have very few opportunities.** Out-of-school opportunities are anything but evenly distributed across individual cities. In the counties making up the Kansas City metro area, for instance, the percentage of 6- to 11-year-olds engaged in daily out-of-school programs varies from less than 3 percent to nearly 12 percent. A YouthMapping project in Little Rock found that some parts of the city are chronically under-resourced and have the fewest opportunities regardless of type of opportunity measured — programs and services, employment, youth leadership, volunteering, or scholarships and donations. In Chicago, a study by Littell and Wynn (1989) indicates that both the quantity and variety of programs is dramatically higher in a suburban neighborhood (71 activities per 1,000 youth) than in an urban one (23 activities per 1,000 youth). Geographic inequities sometimes mean that the places with the most young people have the fewest opportunities. In Detroit, for instance, a study commissioned by the Skillman Foundation (1995) found that "fifteen (of the city's 38 recreation centers) are located in communities with the lowest population densities; 16 of the communities in the three highest categories of population density do not have a center. Only one center is in a community with a high density of youth."

## *WHEN ARE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE?*

Many of the new programs generated by the after-school movement are exactly that: opportunities in the hours directly after school. Clearly, after-school programs are critical — especially when they are available every day of the week, thereby ensuring that children are safe and supervised when their parents are not around. But young people need and deserve supports throughout their waking hours. Many times of the day and year — evenings, weekends, summers — are being left behind by the after-school movement, as data from the GRASP cities demonstrate.

**Programming drops off dramatically during the evening hours.** Results from Chicago are demonstrative *(see* Figure 7*)*. Even for young people ages 16 to 20, the number of programs decreases by about

one third from afternoon to evening. For elementary students, the drop is close to 80 percent — meaning that almost no opportunities are available for elementary school children whose parents work during the evenings, or in which children and working parents can engage together. Even fewer programs are available in the mornings. Backing up this Chicago data, only 16 percent of school-year programs in Little Rock operate more than three hours a day, and only one of the surveyed programs operates more than four hours a day. The bottom line: during many hours, there are almost no structured, positive opportunities available for young people.

**Weekend programs are in remarkably short supply.** In Sacramento, for instance, 87 percent of the organizations reported running programs Monday through Friday, while only 13 percent operated on the weekend. Though faith-based institutions returned surveys at low rates, such a large gap is still significant, as contributions from religious institutions are unlikely to make up for the large drop off in opportunities. In Little Rock, no program reported that it operates seven days a week during the school year, and only one indicated that it is open six days a week.

**Only a small percentage of young people are enrolled in consistent, daily programs.** In the metropolitan Kansas City area, almost 40 percent of young people, ages 6 through 18, are enrolled in out-of-school programs and activities. However, the number of young people who are enrolled in daily, supervised programs when school is out is a mere 11 percent of the entire age group *(see* City Snapshot: Kansas City*)*. While not quite as dramatic, data from Little Rock reveal a similar trend. Only a little more than half (55 percent) of the school-year programs surveyed provide daily (five days per week) opportunities for children and youth to participate. These daily programs have an average daily attendance of 4,155, or 43 percent of the average daily attendance of all programs surveyed. Equivalent data were not collected in Chicago and Sacramento. Public resources seem to play an essential role in providing daily opportunities; all of the daily school-year programs in Little Rock are operated by, or supported wholly or substantially by, the school district or the city.

### *CITY SNAPSHOT: KANSAS CITY*

In keeping with national trends, school-based programs are primary providers of school-age child care in Kansas City. These programs lack the transportation obstacles experienced by many other programs. The largest school districts in the metropolitan area either provide services through their own programming or contract with community-based organizations, such as the YMCA.

The overwhelming majority — 78 percent — of children enrolled in school-based programs are elementary school age. Nonetheless, the 28 school-based providers, which serve more than 27,000 children in the area, reach less than 9 percent of the target population of 6- to 18-year-olds and less than 15 percent of elementary school-age children. Approximately 6 percent of school-age children and youth participate in voluntary, activity-based programs, such as Boys & Girls Clubs and scouting, which often complement school-based programs. The balance of children and youth — less than 1 percent — are served in smaller programs provided by child care centers, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.

Among school-based programs, all but one serve children ages 6 to 11. Slightly less than half serve middle school students, ages 12 to15, and a mere 17 percent serve youth, ages 16 and older. It is worth noting that the 46 percent of school-based programs that serve students ages 12 to 15 seems to suggest an increase in the number of such programs since 1998, when a limited scan of school-based programs revealed that few provided services to middle-school youth. At the time, approximately 75 percent of the school districts surveyed reported their intention to develop out-of-school programs for middle school students — a pledge that many seem to have fulfilled.

The out-of-school time picture is only somewhat brighter when part-time "activity based" programs are added to the mix. Those activity-based programs reporting, such as Boys & Girls Clubs, Camp Fire, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Kansas City Parks and Recreation, reach 8 percent of the target population and a much larger percentage of older youth. While it is true that these voluntary programs rarely offer daily care and supervision, and often augment programming in school-age child care settings, many families rely on such programs to create a network of out-of-school-time supervision for older children.

## WHY ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES BEING OFFERED?

Programs are designed with a range of goals in mind. Some aim simply to keep young people safe — to provide supervision and a stable place — or beyond this to provide high-quality care. Others offer social and recreational opportunities. Still others set their sights on academic remediation or enrichment. Some aim for civic outcomes, helping young people become engaged community members and active citizens. And some support young people's vocational development, helping them prepare for, and engage in, the workplace. Program providers set their sights on these and dozens of other outcomes, all of which shape the nature and content of programs.

Despite this diversity, organizations and agencies — pushed by a number of forces and constituencies — are setting some common goals across communities.

**Many providers are striving to provide well-balanced programming, focusing on a range of outcomes.** In Little Rock, for instance, more than half of both school-year (55 percent) and summer programs (52 percent) report that they provide program opportunities in three or four of the four "outcome areas" identified in the data collection (academic, skills-building, recreational and civic) (*see* Figure 8B). In Kansas City, as well, upwards of 80 percent of programs identified care and supervision, socialization and recreation, and academics as primary outcomes. When asked to name the primary activities available to children and youth, Kansas City agencies named five areas at about equal levels of priority:

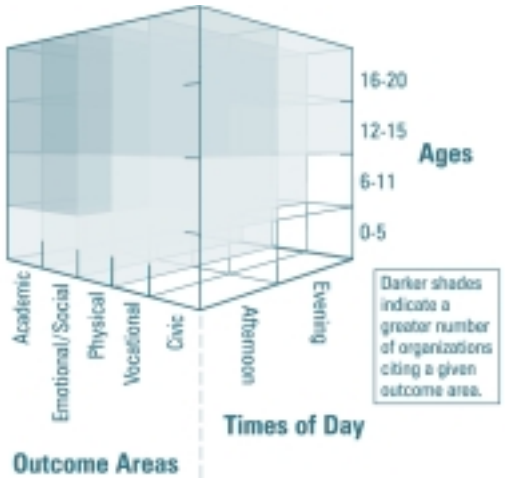
1. hobbies (52 percent);
2. tutoring (51 percent);
3. physical exercise (48 percent);
4. academic enrichment (46 percent); and
5. unstructured time (44 percent).

Data from Chicago and Sacramento indicate a similarly broad focus in many programs. In Chicago, for instance, while the number of programs with a single focus (sports, leadership) increases with the age of the young people involved, a majority still name four or five of five outcomes as program foci (academic, social, physical, civic, vocational). Together, these data indicate that most providers are striving to offer balanced programs, which hopefully correlates with an increased chance that participants will be exposed to a range of enriching experiences.

FIGURE 8

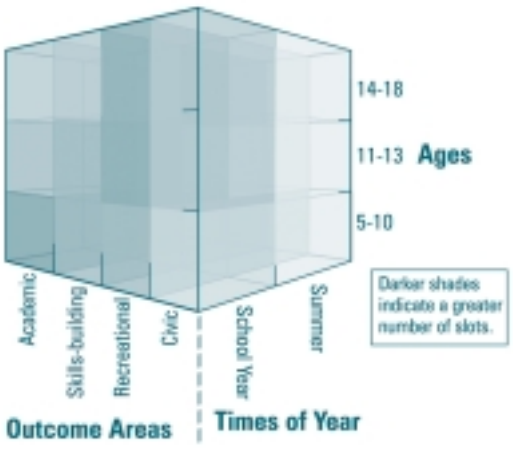
### WHY? IN CHICAGO, ACADEMICS FIRST, CIVICS LAST

A




### WHY? IN LITTLE ROCK, PRIORITIES VARY WITH AGE GROUP

B




Across cities, civic outcomes are consistently a low priority. Which outcome is the top priority varies from community to community and across age groups.

**Many of the largest programs take on a much narrower focus.** While many of Little Rock's programs focus on a broad range of activities, those that reach the most young people take a narrow focus — on sports, for instance, through high school athletic programs, or on academics through after-school programs in elementary schools. In Chicago, as well, citywide programs provided by the school district, the park district and others are far more likely to take on a single-outcome focus. The likely result is that many young people are not fully engaged or supported when participating in these programs.

**Civic outcomes are consistently neglected, and programs that do support them tend to be smaller and focused on older age groups.** In Little Rock and Chicago, civic outcomes are the least frequently cited program focus, whatever the age group or time of day. In both Kansas City and Sacramento, civic outcomes are not among the top five program foci or outcome areas cited by providers. Opportunities for civic development and growth are in particularly short supply for elementary-age children; in Chicago, for instance, three times as many after-school programs engage elementary students in academics as in civic life (*see* Figure 8A). In at least two of the cities, not a single publicly-funded elementary-age program reported that they focus on civic outcomes. In a particularly troublesome twist, it appears that leadership opportunities — among the most important civic development experiences — actually drop off just as these opportunities become most critical and relevant. According to P/PV's three-city study on Savannah, Austin and St. Petersburg, "while around two-thirds of younger adolescents experience leadership experiences, only one-half of older youth do" (Sipe and Ma with Gambone, 1998).

## *BY WHOM ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED?*

In response to overwhelming demand and need, an impressive array of organizations and institutions has come forward to offer programming during the out-of-school hours. Every GRASP city has its major players — both public and private — that serve thousands or tens of thousands of young people, and thus single-handedly fill a large part of the out-of-school space. But the number of young people is too large, and their needs too diverse, for such institutions to do the job alone. In every GRASP community, it is only through the combined efforts of many institutions, organizations and agencies that the out-of-school space is even partially filled (*see* City Snapshot: Sacramento, *pg. 22)*. A range of actors are involved:

- public school districts;
- community-based organizations;
- park districts;
- neighborhood-based collaboratives;
- city-supported programs;
- libraries and museums;
- affiliates of national organizations;
- informal networks and individuals;
- school- and community-based clubs;
- family resource centers;
- faith-based organizations;
- multi-site youth serving organizations;
- community centers;
- employers and vocational programs;
- licensed and license-exempt child care;
- colleges and universities;
- civic associations;
- police and fire departments;
- juvenile justice system;
- arts and cultural organizations; and
- private fee-for-service providers.

All of these players currently provide, or partner to provide, out-of-school programming. Some of these agencies represent under-utilized resources, and others have focused their energy squarely on out-of-school programming. To get a full picture of the programmatic landscape in any city, all of these providers need to be taken into account

— something difficult to do, given the many systems and sectors they represent. Similarly, all of these program providers are stakeholders in conversations about the out-of-school hours. While the list is impressive, it is important to ask whether it represents a patchwork quilt or scattered pieces. As individual organizations make difficult decisions about what programming to provide, to what young people and during what hours, it is important to try to understand the sum result of these individual choices. (*see* City Snapshot: Chicago*)*.

Across cities, several patterns emerge from this web of providers:

- **There is no substitute for public investments and public providers.** Publicly funded programs play an essential role in every GRASP city — as in Little Rock, where every provider of consistent daily programming is managed, or in large part supported by, the city or the school district. With federal and state funds often directed at younger age groups, municipal governments are particularly important in

### *CITY SNAPSHOT: CHICAGO*

Within its mix of programming providers, Chicago has several specific sources of strength. GRASP participants referred to these strengths again and again as they discussed how to leverage greater supports for young people in the out-of-school hours:

- Committed public delivery systems experimenting with new programmatic possibilities. Both the Chicago Park District and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) have established strong "core" out-of-school programs, consistent with the roles such public players often take on, and strengthened by their positions as anchor institutions in their communities. For a number of years, CPS had been providing a basic after-school academic enrichment and remediation program at scale through its Lighthouse Schools program. Similarly, the Park District has built on its core competencies — recreational and outdoor education programs based in a citywide infrastructure of parks and centers — to fill the growing demand for safe and consistent after-school programs through its PARK Kids program. Both institutions are now expanding into new programmatic areas through new partnerships — the schools through the Full Service Schools Initiative, in partnership with the Polk Bros. Foundation; and both schools and parks through the After School Matters initiative — aimed at expanding the scale, outcomes focus, age range, and times of existing programming. Further, CPS has recently replaced the Lighthouse Schools with a model that offers more autonomy to individual schools — while still providing a large number of program slots. The Youth Services Division's work through YouthNets Centers — community-based, youth-focused facilities located in nearly all of the city's police districts — is another sign of public infrastructure commitment, as the YouthNets continue to act as a program delivery system, as well as a coordination system.
- A rich system of community-based organizations. These organizations range from national affiliate organizations like the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs, to large networks, to multi-facility organizations, to population-focused organizations targeting gang-involved youth or programming for girls, to single-facility home-based child care centers, to youth organizing projects, to neighborhood-based collaboratives. These organizations come from a variety of "fields" — community development, school-age child care, head start and early childhood education, youth development, youth leadership and activism, family support, vocational training, problem prevention, and many others. While some take on a particular outcome focus — e.g., Gallery 37 Center for the Arts, a nationally recognized arts apprenticeship program — most are informed by an understanding of child and youth development, spanning a range of outcomes beyond academics. At the moment, there is no central repository for even the most basic information about these programs: when they are open, for what age groups and with what outcomes in mind.
- A major new programmatic initiative with a great deal of energy behind it. After School Matters, with its goal of meeting the out-of-school needs of a majority of youth (ages 14-18) in Chicago, promises to have a major impact on the landscape of Chicago. Its combination of public leadership (Mrs. Maggie Daley, the Mayor's wife), focus on older youth, base in research (through the Chapin Hall Center for Children) and an effective existing program (the Gallery 37 program), and anchor to existing public infrastructure (clusters of schools, parks and libraries) automatically makes it a major programmatic contributor. The challenge for After School Matters is to build on and connect with the array of existing out-of-school programming — particularly the large amount of work already going on through community-based organizations.

supporting programs for adolescents and older youth. This is certainly the case in Chicago and Little Rock, where city-funded programs are the mainstay of youth opportunities.

- **School districts and school-based programs are working at scale, and beginning to embrace a larger agenda.** Schools are stepping forward to meet the growing demand for out-of-school opportunities. According to research by the National Center for Educational Statistics, "Almost 30% of public schools and 50% of private schools offered before- and/or after-school care in 1993–1994, compared to only 15% and 33% in 1987–1988" (in NIOST, 2001). Echoing this national trend, in Kansas City schools are the largest provider (except families themselves) of out-of-school opportunities. As is also true around the country, the programs in Kansas City are primarily available to elementary school students — 78 percent of those enrolled are in the elementary grades. School-based programs take on an academic remediation and enrichment focus in all the GRASP cities, and in at least some of the cities, this is the only outcome on which the programs set their sights.

  It appears, however, that schools are beginning to see the broader potential of out-of-school time. In Chicago, the Lighthouse Schools program — centrally academic in its nature — has long been the centerpiece of the school district's out-of-school agenda. But the district has recently replaced the Lighthouse Schools with a model that lets individual schools provide the opportunities most vital in their communities. In addition, the district's full-service schools program — developed in a handful of elementary schools

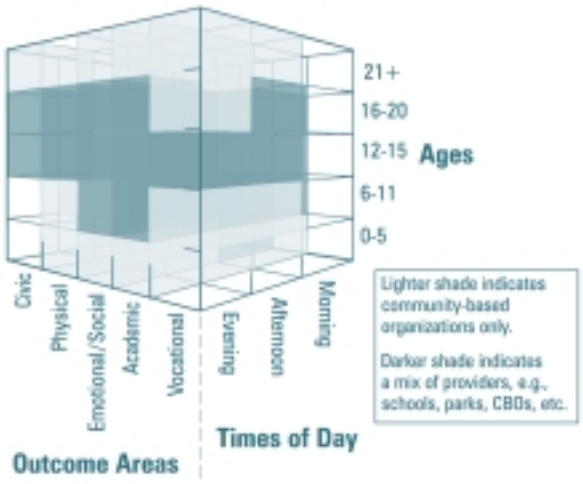
### *CITY SNAPSHOT: SACRAMENTO*

According to Sacramento stakeholders, "the current system of out-of-school services can at best be described as an unassembled puzzle. Work has to be done before the puzzle makes sense." Institutions with differing mandates and perspectives share the space, and their cumulative impact is hard to estimate, much less measure precisely. School-based programs, faith-based organizing efforts, major foundation initiatives, university partnerships, libraries, programs aimed at children in the foster system — all are features of the out-of-school landscape. The following brief descriptions give a snapshot of these diverse program providers:

- Students Today Achieving Results for Tomorrow (START): A free after-school literacy/enrichment program operated by the City of Sacramento in partnership with school districts and other community agencies. The program operates out of 38 elementary schools in low-income communities and serves approximately 6,000 youth.
- Youth ACT (Area Congregations Together): This faith-based effort trains youth in community organizing and advocacy. The youth involved have administered surveys, participated in focus groups, and also developed a vision for Sacramento. After-school programs and access to transportation for youth are top priorities of Youth ACT.
- Passages: A free after-school program in eight middle schools operated through a partnership between the City of Sacramento and the Sacramento Unified School District. The programs offer homework assistance as well as educational, recreational and social enrichment.
- Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL): This effort, funded by the James Irvine Foundation, is developing a system of out-of-school services that will support academic success of youth in two Sacramento communities. The focus is on elementary school age children, and on building the capacity of community-based organizations.
- California State University, Sacramento and Sacramento Public Libraries: Currently, two neighborhood libraries house homework centers that serve between 60 and 80 kindergarten to 8th grade students per site. The centers are staffed by CSU Sacramento students and community volunteers. Students using this service attend a minimum of two hours per week.
- Building Bridges: An initiative by the San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD) to promote school success, build developmental assets in youth and connect youth to the community. Regional school community collaborations within the SJUSD boundaries have been established to coordinate services and increase youth opportunities. Youth action teams at the elementary, middle and high school levels have been created to promote youth involvement and participation with communities.
- Casey Great Start: This effort focuses on providing transitional housing and employment services for youth leaving foster care.

FIGURE 9

### *BY WHOM? CHICAGO CBOS, FILLING THE EMPTY SPACE*




At the center of the cube, a variety of organizations are engaged in supporting young people. But around the margins, community-based organizations are often the only active players — reaching the oldest and youngest populations, focusing on vocational outcomes, taking responsibility for the latest and earliest hours.

— while limited in its scope, signals a willingness to broaden the range of outcomes on which schools focus. The role of Chicago's schools is also broadening in terms of hours and ages, as the district begins planning for an evening high school in earnest and partners in a major new citywide high school after-school initiative. Similarly, the Kansas City schools are stepping forward with a commitment to provide programs in middle schools, moving beyond the traditional age focus of after-school programs.

- **Community organizations and small organizations are essential gap-fillers.** Community-based organizations tend to offer more comprehensive programs, aimed at a range of positive outcomes, than programs that are larger and publicly funded. As a result, they tend to fill more of the out-of-school time space for those young people they touch. Community-based organizations are also more likely to focus on marginal populations, times and outcomes — consciously working to satisfy unmet needs. As a result, these organizations are often filling space where no other organizations are active. In Chicago, for instance, community-based organizations are the only ones active at certain times (mornings and evenings for some populations), with certain age groups (the youngest and the oldest populations) and with certain outcomes in mind (vocational for elementary-age young people) (*see* Figure 9*)*.

## *Conclusions: Tracing a Young Person's Path*

These cross-city patterns should be treated as what they are: sketchy generalizations based on incomplete and non-equivalent data from a limited number of city experiences. They are supported by the data available, and by the voices of young people and their supporters. But they are tentative at best. More than anything, they underscore the clear need for better information, collected and analyzed in more powerful ways.

With that caveat as an introduction, it is possible — and perhaps useful — to combine the patterns outlined above into a pathway, representing the likely experience of a young person over time. The nature of the supports and opportunities available to young people shifts as they age — in ways that appear consistent across cities:

- Programming for **young children**, before they enter school, tends to be based on a Head Start or "early childhood education" model, available throughout the day, and focusing on social, emotional physical and academic (school readiness and early literacy) outcomes. The interest is in supporting all aspects development, and there is an expectation that young children will be taken care of all the time, not just at certain times of the day.
- When children enter **elementary school**, their out-of-school options shift significantly. Those programs available to elementary-aged young people are available almost entirely in the hours directly after school, and focus most often on academics, physical health and safety, and recreation and social opportunities. Very few options

are available except in the hours directly after school. Further, the programs tend not to address the full scope of development, either individually or collectively. Few programs for elementary-aged young people report that they address civic or vocational outcomes, even though it is possible to do so in a developmentally appropriate fashion — through service-learning, community service projects, career awareness days and citizenship education, for example.

- As a young person enters middle school and **adolescence**, out-of-school options increase in diversity but often shrink in numbers. Programming for adolescents tends to add an emphasis on civic and vocational outcomes — responding to direct requests from youth for opportunities to work, contribute and make a difference — while continuing to address academic, social and physical development. Adolescent programming is generally offered directly after school and to a lesser extent during the evenings. On the other hand, the number of single-focus programs — sports programs, leadership development programs, and the like — also increases with the age of the target audience. But the number of spaces available in programs is likely to decrease at this time, and schools start to play a smaller role.
- Through age 16 or 17, young people continue to experience a range of opportunities. Then, **older youth** experience a sudden drop-off in the number of available programs, supports and opportunities. The programming that does exist either continues to emphasize civic and vocational outcomes, or else takes on a "remediation" or "second chance" focus. If a young person does not go on to college or move easily into the workplace, they quickly find themselves in an environment almost empty of structured supports and opportunities.

## Moving Forward

This out-of-school pathway has positive and negative aspects. Elements of it respond to developmental realities and changing needs. Still, as a whole, it indicates an inconsistent and insufficient investment in young people's learning and growth. What will it take to better fill the space? What will it take to develop a web of supports and opportunities throughout young people's non-school hours? As communities struggle with these questions, they face several common tasks. For instance, struggles to build strong relationships between public players (schools and parks) and community-based organizations challenge communities across the country. Nearly every major city is in the midst of discussions about quality standards, staff development and professional certification. Similarly, building and taking advantage of committed leadership among elected officials seems to be a universal subject of conversation. These tasks are the topic of the next section.

SECTION III

# Facing the Challenges

## Citywide Tasks and Themes

*"In 2010, transportation is no longer a problem. It's safer, so people aren't afraid to go outside. Teenagers are showing how responsible and community oriented they are, proving they can help others and themselves, and the media highlights these positive activities that teens are doing. Young people get to do what they really want to do; they put their ideas into action. I see bulletin boards or computers on every corner that have information about activities that are available. I see a whole street with just youth clubs, with lots of staff to help you, recruiting people on the streets. Youth councils that are linked together throughout the city with decision making power. Teens have control over what they do. There is enough funding in the community for all these programs. And there are job opportunities to do things teens actually like to do — arts, carpentry, computers."*

— A group of Chicago youth describing their vision for out-of-school opportunities

The communities involved in the GRASP Project come to the out-of-school issue from remarkably different starting points. Their reasons for focusing new energy on the out-of-school hours vary. Concerns about violence among older youth, renewed focus on academic success, commitment to building on major investments in young and elementary-aged children, and reactions to new outside investments and political will were just some of the many forces driving new attention. Likewise, the duration of their commitments is quantitatively different — some cities have only recently focused on this issue, while others have maintained consistent attention on it for more than a decade. The players, the populations of young people, the timing, the local context and politics all make for unique city landscapes — a fact that stakeholders in each locality are quick to reaffirm.

### The Same Questions . . .

Yet, when the Forum asked individuals in each locality what it would take to provide meaningful out-of-school opportunities to all young people, their answers were remarkably consistent. Stakeholder group after stakeholder group, in city after city, came up with largely identical lists of tasks and issues most crucial to building a citywide system of out-of-school supports[4] *(see* What Does It Take?, *pg. 26)*. This commonality was not unexpected; no one should be surprised that service providers universally — and with good reason — named lack of funding and staffing issues as major stumbling blocks to progress.

But the consensus across communities ran deeper than perennial concerns about funding streams

[4] Because the GRASP process gave cities a great deal of flexibility in creating a process that made sense locally, the strategies used in identifying these challenges varied from city to city. In Chicago, foundations, young people, service providers, public institutions, public officials and other stakeholders identified, clarified and prioritized their list of challenges over the course of several meetings. In Little Rock, the GRASP city partner gleaned the themes from one-on-one and collective conversations among a similar range of stakeholders. In Sacramento, an initial list of challenges was gleaned from a large community forum that brought together more than 200 citizens to discuss these challenges; this list was refined and defined through small group discussions among a range of stakeholders. In Kansas City, a regional task force developed and refined their action steps over a several-month process, rooted in a close analysis of available data.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

### Chicago: Critical Tasks

1. Broadening the leadership
2. Leveraging resources
3. Increasing quality, capacity and accountability
4. Building collaboration, alignment and coordination
5. Marshalling information and research
6. Building public will

### Sacramento: Challenges and Potential Strategies

1. Youth engagement
2. Funding
3. Collaboration
4. Transportation
5. Quality programs and evaluation
6. Parent involvement
7. Publicity and community awareness
8. Teen transitions
9. Diversity
10. Staffing
11. Facilities
12. Resource clearinghouse

### Little Rock: The Challenges Ahead

1. Inadequate data
2. No centralized system for planning and evaluation
3. Competing political priorities
4. Limited perspective on value and purpose
5. Insufficient funding
6. Inadequate youth development program infrastructure
7. Shortage of opportunities for older youth
8. Challenges to collaboration
9. Few opportunities for youth involvement

### Kansas City: Proposed Action Areas

1. Information gathering
2. Public awareness
3. Public funding for youth programming
4. Regional coordination
5. Public facilities use
6. Licensure standards
7. Sustained funding

that dry up and staff who do not stick around. Conversations about standards and certification that would have been unimaginable several years ago have begun in nearly every city examined. Most cities cited the critical role of local government in building a comprehensive set of supports — with a particularly concerted focus on local elected officials. Most raised concerns about the physical infrastructure issues that ripple out from new investments in out-of-school time programming — expensive and inaccessible public transportation, cost-sharing around public facilities, and the like. The consensus that we observed across communities was not a shallow one, bearing witness to the local implications of a national focus on out-of-school time.

The issues and tasks identified here are not unique to the handful of cities involved in GRASP, nor are we the first to identify them. The sea of responses to a recent request for proposals from the National League of Cities — upwards of 70 cities offered proposals, even though only technical assistance, not monetary support was on the line — confirms the growing interest in citywide thinking about out-of-school opportunities *(see* National League of Cities: Most Frequently Cited Technical Assistance Needs*)*. Their responses also reaffirm the same set of critical tasks that cities are trying to take on. The National Institute on Out-of-School Time's Cross Cities Network has tapped into the same wellspring of interest and unanswered questions being posed by city leaders around the

## NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES: MOST FREQUENTLY CITED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

1. Collaboration
2. Funding
3. Improving academic achievement
4. Strategic planning
5. Political will
6. Supporting diverse populations
7. Program and staff quality
8. Best practices
9. Evaluation

country.[5] Similarly, a Public/Private Ventures evaluation of the multi-city Extended Service Schools Initiative has surfaced many of the same issues (Grossman, Walker and Raley, 2001). In the pages that follow, we will try to complement and lightly draw on the experiences gleaned by these and other efforts — recognizing that GRASP is only one of a number of emerging efforts to chart the city-level out-of-school landscape.

## . . . Different Answers

A focus on the commonality across city-level conversations cannot, and should not, blur the very real distinctions between the out-of-school landscapes in different communities. While stakeholders in Kansas City, Little Rock and Chicago are all asking the "standards question," for instance, they are at different points in answering it. Youth organizations in Kansas City have already developed and built consensus around standards, stakeholders in Chicago — with the crucial involvement of city government, private funders and community organizations — are developing standards, and Little Rock's schools and organizations are just starting to contemplate them.

As with these localities, cities across the country are at significant different points in their development when it comes to tackling the key out-of-school challenges. There are perhaps a half-dozen "leadership" cities around the country, a second tier of communities that are asking the right questions but still struggling to find the answers, and another set that have not yet leaped aboard the "out-of-school train." Innovative cities like Boston, Seattle and Baltimore deserve credit for being among the leaders. Still, communities that are ahead in addressing some issues are far behind in others — as with young people's development, the development of out-of-school infrastructure is uneven and complex. Also as with youth development, attention to all of the developmental tasks is critical, given the interdependence of all the moving parts.

## The Common Ground: Challenges across Cities

What, then, are the common tasks facing cities committed to saturating their city with high quality out-of-school opportunities, available to every young person? While no list is definitive or complete, we identify ten critical tasks.

### TASK #1:
### *Ensuring adequate coordination, collaboration and networking among those working with young people — within sectors, across sectors, and between organizations and community/family stakeholders.*

Every city examined through the GRASP process cited "relationship-building" tasks — convening, collaboration, networking, coordination — as among the most vital tasks in strengthening out-of-school opportunities for young people. The range of stakeholders, the different fields and organizational cultures in which they do their work, and the necessity of joint efforts to satisfy unmet needs create a climate where connection is a top priority.

Several types of relationship-building efforts stood out as clear challenges. Cities struggle to build networks within sectors — most notably, coordinating bodies that bring together out-of-school program providers. They also struggle with consistent tensions between public providers (schools in particular) and community-based organizations. While several cities indicated that relationships between city governments and school districts were of particular importance, few have built effective working partnerships. Finally, in cities of any significant size, whole-city coordination infrastructures are not sufficient; coordination at the neighborhood level is equally vital.

Cities face an uphill battle in strengthening the connections among stakeholders. Few existing tables have seats for all the stakeholders — workforce development, libraries, schools, parks,

[5] The Cross Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide After-School Initiatives has brought together leaders from 25 cities around the country, unearthing a range of common challenges, many of which are highlighted in the *After School Issues* newsletter, available at www.niost.org.

youth-serving organizations, city government, juvenile justice and young people themselves, just to name a few. At the same time, structural commitment — building the right tables — is not enough. A number of cities have created structures that, on the surface, look remarkably promising but fail to make concrete contributions. One critical ingredient of effective coordination: local intermediaries — organizations by their nature in the "brokering and facilitation" business — are nearly a necessity if communities hope to sustain the relationships between the range of out-of-school players (Wynn, 2000). Unfortunately, intermediaries are as delicate as they are essential, making connection-building horsepower difficult to maintain.

### TASK #2:
### *Building a stable, high-quality workforce through credentialing, staff development, training and compensation.*

Out-of-school programming is a human business. It is first and foremost about the people who are in daily contact with young people. Yet, ensuring that staff are competent and well supported is remarkably complicated. Much of this complexity has to do with the emerging and composite nature of the out-of-school field. New funding streams have generated new jobs — few of which are well understood, appreciated or paid. And many of these new jobs sit at the juncture of previously separate professions — teaching, youth work, child care, employment training. New challenges join persistent ones. Lack of competitive wages and benefits, limited opportunities for advancement, and few opportunities for professional development combine in a recipe for high rates of turnover in most out-of-school-related professions. The good news is that a number of national and local efforts are addressing each of these problems by developing credentialing schemes, innovative pay subsidies, and truly new sorts of positions that present much-needed opportunities for job growth. In most communities, however, staffing issues have neared crisis stage.

Cities need to face these multiple challenges simultaneously. Factors like pay, professional reputation, training and advancement are too closely allied for communities to tackle one at a time. As cities work through the multiple challenges, strategies can be shared across age groups and settings. The staffing issues facing elementary school-age care providers, youth organizations, school-based programs and others are similar enough that many of the system-building tasks and lessons are the same. On the other hand, while staff competency areas are similar across the out-of-school field, specific concerns and needs vary locally. Local language fluency and cultural savvy can be among the most important skills staff can possess.

### TASK #3:
### *Creating quality standards, assessments and supports that result in effective organizations and programs.*

As cities make substantial investments in providing out-of-school opportunities at scale, an increasing number are ready for a serious discussion about how to ensure that these programs are of high quality — that is, that they live up to high standards of practice and deliver on the outcomes that they claim they will achieve. Cities are beginning to develop program standards to which they hold out-of-school programs, often adopting or adapting national models like those administered by the National School-Age Care Alliance. Communities that want their standards to last and reflect local needs are engaging a range of stakeholders into their development — as in Kansas City, where young people and providers drove the process, or in Chicago, where funders, community-based organizations and city government are all at the table. Nearly all of the resulting standards address a set of central issues related to organizational capacity, program characteristics, staffing, health and safety, and family involvement. The existing standards (with notable exceptions) much less frequently speak to the importance of meaningful youth engagement or involving the community members and resources in the program.

While the standards debate can come to dominate the quality discussion, two other ingredients cannot be left off the table. First, holding programs accountable requires a significant investment in capacity

building support. Such investments have been shown to pay off, as in the San Francisco Bay Area, where a year-long investment in organizational improvement resulted in programs that much more frequently deliver critical supports and opportunities to young people *(see* Task Brief #3 for more information). Holding programs accountable also requires assessment and evaluation capacity — currently limited in most communities. While a handful of national organizations are beginning to support small-scale evaluation work, there is much more capacity-building to be done in this area.

### TASK #4:
### *Developing the physical infrastructure — the transportation and physical space — that is the necessary context for accessible and high-quality out-of-school opportunities.*

Transportation and facilities are critical challenges, with both logistical and financial dimensions, facing cities as they attempt to build systems to support children and youth during the out-of-school hours. GRASP participants told stories of parks facilities that go unused because of insufficient funds for maintenance and staffing. Others indicated that gentrification and demographic shifts have moved young people out of neighborhoods where facilities are located — creating both a construction and transportation headache, and forcing young people to travel back to their old neighborhoods for the programs they had grown up in. Most cities are trying to overcome the infrastructure and political challenges that come with opening up school buildings and other public facilities outside their normal hours of operation. Most are barely cobbling together a combination of public transportation — sometimes almost non-existent in mid-sized cities — and school buses already stretched to the limits. Furthermore, all agreed that some facilities — churches and museums for instance — are not yet playing the role they might.

Amid these challenges, city stakeholders also told stories of innovation in the face of transportation and facilities challenges. They spoke of cities converting vacant school buildings into community centers, young people leading advocacy efforts for reduced bus fares, organizations coordinating the use of a range of community facilities — including churches and businesses — with the aim of having spaces open to young people on every block. Through a combination of such efforts, some cities are beginning to make real progress on the facilities and transportation front — as in Detroit, where up-front investments in facilities research and the creation of a new coordinating entity has helped leverage the redevelopment of dozens of park and recreation facilities (Skillman, 1995; see Task Brief #4 for more information).

### TASK #5:
### *Marshaling adequate funding streams — local, state and national, public and private — to guarantee stable and sufficient resources for programming.*

Even in the context of growing public and private investments throughout the second half of the 1990s, in no city are funds sufficient to reach all young people with quality out-of-school opportunities. With an economic slowdown putting the brakes on private and public investments, and world events shifting funders' attention, cities are struggling against retrenchment and struggling to make ends meet. Working within the context of scarce resources, each GRASP city has cobbled together a diverse set of investments and policies in order to provide programming and build the infrastructure to support that programming. This local entrepreneurship has resulted in significant innovations: dedicated resource streams, novel use of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) dollars, and investments that combine desegregation dollars, 21st Century funds, private investments and local public funds into a coherent whole. It has also resulted in uneven investments, missed opportunities and idiosyncratic programming. Many cities simply do not know what resources they could tap into — Workforce Investment Act dollars and prevention resources are consistently under-utilized, for instance. And few communities have a sense of how the multiple investments — parks dollars, programs run out of the mayor's office, and foundation investments, among many others — add up or align.

Several themes emerge from an examination of the multiple funding streams converging on out-of-school programming:

- Categorical funding continues to be a primary obstacle to alignment and innovation.
- Public investments are essential to meeting the demand for programming, and private investments cannot hope to compensate for public disinvestment.
- Private foundation dollars are critical in supporting innovation, infrastructure and young people who fall through the cracks.
- Few cities are fully leveraging the range of federal funding streams that could be used to support out-of-school programming.

### *TASK #6:*
### *Building leadership and political will — engaging champions in the public and private sectors, and at the highest levels of city government — to create and move an agenda.*

Municipal and community leaders — whether they gained their position through election, appointment or more organic community processes — have been critical in moving an out-of-school agenda in cities around the country. Elected officials, through use of their bully pulpit and their efforts to move public investments, often play the highest-profile leadership roles. Yet, in addition to this top-level leadership, a variety of other leaders and leadership bodies — city agencies and their directors, community organization and intermediary leaders, members of the business community, neighborhood leaders and spokespeople — help to focus public attention and community resources on out-of-school issues. While these leaders are important in every city, the breadth, depth and nature of leadership varies across cities. Many lack a public agency with sufficient clout to move a broad agenda. Some have built top-level leadership, but left grassroots organizations and community leaders out of important decisions. Others have a committed mayor and strong civic leadership, but a school district with a new superintendent every year.

Recognizing the diversity of leadership approaches and configurations in cities is important. But a scan of cities reveals several bottom lines. First, demonstrated commitment to the issues on the part of political decision makers and leaders of all sorts is vital, and this commitment must be rooted in an understanding of the issues. Second, the capacity of these leaders to move resources, broker connections, bring people around a common table and enact strategy is vital. These capacities are far more important than the specific positions, in or out of government, which they occupy. Third, while different cities have different leadership styles, inclusive leadership — operating from the bottom up and the top down, from inside and outside of government — is necessary in order to move an out-of-school agenda.

### *TASK #7:*
### *Ensuring consistent, meaningful youth engagement in decision making at the program, organization and city levels.*

Where are the young people? We asked this question, often repeatedly, in each of the GRASP cities. In conversations clearly about young people, it took concerted effort and deliberate focus to ensure that GRASP encouraged conversations with young people. Youth engagement is generally strongest at the program level. In each of the GRASP cities, we encountered individual programs that put young people in organizational decision-making roles, paid staff positions and meaningful volunteer roles. However, this commitment to youth engagement is not systematic; it varies dramatically among organizations, and appears to be strongest outside of the public delivery systems in which many young people spend their time. Just as important, program-level youth engagement does not consistently translate to engagement in citywide decision making. Few young people sit on the boards of citywide agencies and intermediaries, or have significant power in coalitions or on cross-organization committees. Few play important roles on the staff of citywide organizations or are invited to important convenings and conferences. In fact, we are not aware of a single major citywide out-of-school delivery system in any of the GRASP

cities that includes young people in significant organizational decision-making roles.

Why are young people so seldom involved in the out-of-school decisions that affect them? In the GRASP cities, straight-out resistance to youth involvement is not the problem. Instead, institutional realities of schools and other entities limit youth engagement. Involving young people is hard work and requires sustained commitment. And youth engagement is simply not at the top of the priority list. Responding to these obstacles and to the current reality in cities, it is important to reaffirm several "non-negotiables" that arise from the GRASP experience and from the Forum's ongoing work focused on youth engagement and action:

- Youth engagement is critical at every level — in programs, in community issues and in city-level decision making.
- A variety of roles — as planners, decision makers, paid staff, volunteers, board members, front-line youth workers, researchers and "experts" — can and should be available to young people.
- While different sorts of engagement are appropriate for different age groups and populations, all children and youth can play a role.
- Youth participation cannot be segregated as an issue apart from the other tasks facing cities — young people deserve a role in staffing, program quality issues, planning, funding and the range of other citywide out-of-school challenges.
- Young people need consistent supports and clear pathways in order to become involved and stay involved.

### *TASK #8:*
### *Building public will and constituency engagement in order to support stakeholder involvement, promote public commitment and awareness, and leverage meaningful action.*

When James Traub (1999) of the *New York Times* wrote that "parents should be more worried about how youth spend their time outside of school than inside of school," his words matched the tenor and tone of public opinion around the country. The media's continued warnings about unsupervised youth, policy makers' weariness with the pace of school reform, and families' growing challenges in addressing the needs of their children for supervision and stimulation — these are the conditions that set the stage for a national after-school movement. Public will is remarkably strong: eight out of ten voters believe access to after-school programming is extremely important, and 67 percent of all voters agreed that they would pay more taxes to support and provide after-school programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2001).

The challenge for cities, then, is not to build general commitment. Their task is to focus, leverage, sustain and mobilize the strong but often vague commitment that already exists.

- **Focus.** Perhaps the most critical challenge facing advocates is to help broaden public will — now strongly behind after-school programs — to support opportunities throughout young people's development and waking hours, focusing on civic, vocational, social and physical development as well as academic achievement. At the same time, advocates should be careful not to reinforce widespread negative perceptions of youth as they build the case for out-of-school investments.
- **Leverage.** By aligning inside advocacy strategies (building support among elected officials, building capacity inside government to move an agenda) and outside strategies (grassroots youth and citizen engagement), advocates can create the context for real change. Advocates can also learn to leverage communities' existing commitments — to school reform or civil rights, for instance — to fuel public will for out-of-school programming.
- **Sustain.** In the context of national crises and other front-burner issues, it would be easy for the momentum of the after-school movement to fade as quickly as it has grown. The goal of advocates should be to build the same consistent, lasting support for out-of-school opportunities that public education now appreciates — where the

debate is about how to make the best investments, not whether to invest.

- **Mobilize.** Advocacy is not, in the end, about commitment and awareness; it is about participation and action. The growing number of youth and community organizing efforts rallying around out-of-school issues points the way — build the power of young people, community members and community-based organizations, and support for out-of-school opportunities will be secure in the long haul.

### TASK #9:
### *Developing planning and visioning processes, structures and products that build alignment, intentionality and comprehensiveness within out-of-school programming.*

In nearly every one of the nation's cities, increased activity and resources are bringing new commitment to the out-of-school hours. Yet, the vision — the picture of what youth outcomes these programs should impact, what an effective out-of-school opportunity looks like, and what a city dedicated to providing such opportunities should have in place — remains unclear. Asking stakeholders to put on paper their assumptions about the end goal of their efforts revealed competing priorities, different goals and often an unclear focus. Perhaps more importantly, city-level visions for the out-of-school hours are seldom supported by shared plans or planning structures that ensure the existing efforts are headed in the same direction.

Planning and visioning efforts face common challenges. How do you sustain the level of commitment and alignment that comes of a one-time planning event and ensure that new planning efforts build on what has come before? Are the structures in place to provide continuity and move to action? Equally importantly, how do communities ensure that the planning includes the right mix of stakeholders, as few existing tables have seats for the relevant players? How broad is the vision? Is it focused on workforce opportunities, gang reduction, or a broad agenda of what young people need and can do? These are the critical questions for cities attempting to build a coordinated agenda in the out-of-school hours.

### TASK #10:
### *Strengthening mapping, monitoring and research systems to collect, analyze and disseminate information about programs, providers, funding and young people.*

Effective city-level systems for mapping and tracking activities during the out-of-school hours are few and far between. In many cities, only the roughest estimates of the number of programs, or number of dollars invested, are available. Obtaining information about the ages of youth served, the days and hours of operation, and the range of services, opportunities and supports provided by programs is even more difficult. Data linked to individual young people — either about their out-of-school experiences or their progress in meeting basic learning benchmarks — are almost never available outside the narrow academic measures collected by schools. While data are often available from the larger, publicly funded programs, it is often kept and reported in distinct formats for distinct purposes, not lending itself to macro observations or consistency across sites or delivery systems. Geographic issues contribute to this challenge, as different publicly-funded programs often must take into account different delivery areas.

The challenges inherent in setting up such systems were echoed consistently throughout our conversations with city leaders. So was the fact that having such a system in place is critical in that it enables cities to engage in productive planning and decision making, to advocate for the importance of after school opportunities, and to assure access. Unlike the child care field, there is no national structure that is charged with tracking and monitoring out-of-school programs, such as the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The GRASP process clearly indicated the need for additional data collection horsepower at the city level.

## The Road Ahead

An important footnote to this list of tasks: cities will face these same challenges whether they focus their attention on after-school programs narrowly or out-of-school time broadly. We urge communities to think about how to build the necessary infrastructure to support all young people throughout their waking hours, rather than repeating the same conversations about transportation or staffing in after school, workforce development, child care and a dozen other arenas. While the nuances of these conversations may be different in different sectors, the underlying principles are the same, and the opportunities for efficiency and reach are left untapped when the focus is not kept broad.

With the previous pages, we have highlighted challenges but only hinted at answers. The ten Task Briefs that accompany this publication describe in more detail the character of these challenges, the state of cities in addressing them, and the innovations and lessons that come out of their efforts. Anonymous quotes from interviews and GRASP meetings in each of the cities lend local voices and expertise to the discussion about general trends and lessons. By their nature, the snapshots that result are often blurry and capture only part of the scene. The goal of these documents is to report trends, high notes and compelling anecdotes — not to offer an exhaustive road map. For this reason, we point to longer descriptions and additional resources that address each challenge — many arising out of the efforts of Forum friends and partners who are experts in these issues.

Together, these resources, stories and trends present a daunting picture. Cities — even those who have demonstrated the most commitment and innovation — have a great deal of work ahead. However, the landscape is not altogether bleak. A ground swell of activity has resulted in genuine progress on many of the critical tasks in a number of communities. In every case, viable solutions and strategies have now been incubated and field tested. When linked to public and private investments, a coherent national support structure, and local commitment, these community-based innovations can begin to spread and take root.

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*APPENDIX*

# GRASP Partners

## *Background and Contact Information*

**The Youth Services Division, Chicago Department of Human Services,** was created to help neighborhoods coordinate their youth programs and projects. At the urging of Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1993, the Chicago Department of Human Services has revamped its attack on youth violence, moving from a strategy of direct youth gang intervention to one of prevention and youth development. Funds freed up by switching from direct intervention to a strategy of prevention and youth development were reinvested in neighborhood delegate agencies, which could operate programs more efficiently and provide needed social support services for youth and their families. More than 200 delegate agencies — including private social service providers, neighborhood churches and watch groups, and community coalitions and businesses — participate in this citywide effort. In addition to funding direct programming for young people, the Youth Services Division supports coordination, quality standards and professional development through the YouthNets (neighborhood-based coordination and service providing agencies) and a range of other initiatives.

Youth Services Division
Chicago Department of Human Services
1615 West Chicago Avenue, 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60622
Tel: 312.746.8439; Fax: 312.746.6492
www.cityofchicago.org

**New Futures for Youth** was established in 1988 as a collaborative of public and private, community and institutional representatives committed to improved outcomes for youth in Little Rock. New Futures conducts research on issues affecting youth and families, and provides training and technical assistance to individuals and organizations. New Futures also facilitates joint planning by community-based organizations, agencies and institutions regarding strategies for addressing youth issues and implementing youth services. In addition, staff and collaborative members assist public officials in developing policies that are supportive of enhanced outcomes for youth, families and communities.

New Futures for Youth
400 W. Markham, Suite 702
Little Rock, AR 72201
Tel: 501.374.1011; Fax: 501.374.9736

The **Partnership for Children** is Greater Kansas City's leading child advocacy organization, created in 1991 to improve conditions for children and youth in Kansas City's five-county metropolitan area. One of the Partnership for Children's primary responsibilities is to issue the annual Report Card on the Status of Children and Youth in metropolitan Kansas City. The Report Card measures the progress children and youth in Greater Kansas City are making in 17 benchmark areas in five categories. Grades in each category and an overall grade on children's well-being are issued every fall. The Partnership for Children works on a wide range of children's issues, with a special emphasis on early care and education, children's health, and youth violence prevention.

Partnership for Children
1021 Pennsylvania
Kansas City, MO 64105
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The **Sacramento GRASP working group** included representatives of the Sacramento County Children's Coalition, Child Action, Inc., Sunrise Recreation and Park District, the California Foundation Consortium, the Sacramento Youth Services Provider Network and the Sacramento Community Services Planning Council.

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