



Estimating Supply and Demand for Afterschool Programs:

A Tool for State and Local Policymakers



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Child Care Bureau





ESTIMATING SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



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The Afterschool Investments Project

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides federal resources for child care that support both direct services and quality enhancements. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Child Care Bureau awards CCDF grants to states, territories, and Indian tribes. With nearly half of the children receiving services being of school or kindergarten age, CCDF provides significant funding for afterschool care in a variety of settings. The majority of CCDF dollars are used to provide subsidies to eligible low-income children under age 13. A portion of CCDF funding is also used for quality improvement initiatives such as professional development and technical assistance with the goal of building the capacity of states to deliver quality services including programs before and after-school, during summers, and on school holidays.

To support state efforts to provide quality afterschool opportunities, the Child Care Bureau awarded a technical assistance contract on out-of-school time to The Finance Project and their partner, The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. The Afterschool Investments project provides technical assistance to Child Care and Development Fund grantees and other state and local leaders supporting afterschool efforts. The goals of the project include:

- Identifying ways that states and communities are using Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy and quality dollars to support out-of-school time programs, and sharing these practices and approaches with other states;
- Identifying administrative and implementation issues related to CCDF investments in out-of-school time programs, and providing information and context (about barriers, problems, opportunities) as well as practical tools that will help CCDF administrators make decisions; and
- Identifying other major programs and sectors that are potential partners for CCDF in supporting out-of-school time programs, and providing models, strategies, and tools for coordination with other programs and sectors.

To meet these goals, the Afterschool Investments project:

- Develops state profiles of afterschool resources, policies, and issues;
- Creates tools and materials to support the development and sustainability of afterschool efforts; and
- Provides technical assistance at meetings and conferences around building state collaborations for afterschool.

For more information about the project or to submit a request for technical assistance or information, contact The Finance Project at (202) 587-1000 or by email at afterschool@financeproject.org, or visit <http://www.nccic.org/afterschool>.



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Executive Summary

Many states and communities struggle to quantify and describe the need for and availability of after-school programs that provide enriching activities to children and keep them safe and engaged during nonschool hours. This tool provides a framework—from basic steps to an in-depth process—for estimating afterschool program supply and demand by summarizing and highlighting experiences in a number of states and communities. The process includes the following steps:

- Determining a process that meets specific, expressed needs;
- Convening a planning group;
- Utilizing existing state and local data;
- Collecting new data through use of a variety of survey tools; and
- Analyzing and applying gathered information.

The tool also includes lessons learned from pioneers in the field, including the following advice to state and community leaders:

- Have a solid plan for applying the data;
- Involve a range of partners;
- Share the data widely; and
- Remember that collecting supply and demand information is one of many steps in building a system of afterschool programs.

Introduction

In communities all over the country, afterschool programs play an important role in keeping children and youth safe, providing them with important learning opportunities, and helping them become successful adults. Federal, state, local, and private investments in afterschool programs have grown in recent years due both to widespread public support and a better understanding of the crucial role such programs play in serving children and youth and the communities in which they live.¹ Afterschool programs come in many different shapes and sizes, from tutoring to drop-in sports leagues to more comprehensive programs that provide an array of activities for children as well as their families. Positive youth development, prevention, child care, education, skills development, mentoring—whatever the program approach, a growing body of evidence points to the important role quality afterschool programs play in helping children succeed both academically and socially.²

Despite the growth in attention and funding for afterschool programs, many questions remain about availability and accessibility. As policymakers consider funding for afterschool programs, they often want to know more about the current need for these services—especially among low-income families. Among the questions policymakers ask are: What programs are currently out there? How many children are being served? How many children would like to be in afterschool programs but for one reason or another are not? What resources currently support existing programs, and are they sufficient?

The answers to these questions can enable state and local leaders to identify gaps between the supply and demand for care and assist policymakers in considering where and how to best target scarce resources. Several states and communities have already begun to collect and analyze this information. This tool draws upon those experiences to outline concrete steps in the process of estimating supply and demand. It provides examples of states and communities that have undertaken this task, outlines a five-step process for planning and collecting data, and offers guidance and lessons learned from the field.

¹ For polling information, see *Afterschool Alert Poll Report*. Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance, 2003. Available http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/poll_2003_oct.cfm. Also see *What PTA Members Think about Afterschool Programs*. Chicago, IL: National PTA. Available <http://www.pta.org/parentinvolvement/afterschool/think.asp>. *School Board Presidents' Views of Afterschool Programs in American Schools*. Washington, DC: National School Board Association. Available at <http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/11800/11768.pdf>.

² See, for example, Miller, B. *Critical Hours: Afterschool Programs and Educational Success*. Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation. Available <http://www.nmefdn.org/CriticalHours.htm>.



Estimating Supply and Demand for Afterschool Programs: Purpose and Use in States and Communities

A growing number of states and communities are developing estimates of supply and demand for afterschool programs—often as part of a larger effort to create systems of afterschool care. As the following examples show, the methods and approaches differ according to identified needs and available resources.

- In 2000, Alabama’s governor asked the **Program for Rural Services and Research (PRSR)** at the University of Alabama to gather information on the supply of afterschool programs across the state. County-by-county information was collected by survey and presented in an online format to assist parents in finding available programs in their communities. Visit <http://afterschool.state.al.us/index.html> for more information.
- In the spring of 2001, the Illinois General Assembly passed a resolution establishing the **Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force**, convened and co-chaired by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Human Services. The task force was charged with developing recommendations for enhancing and expanding out-of-school time services across the state. To inform their recommendations, the 60-member task force set out to understand the availability and conditions of afterschool programs. The project’s data working group counted school-age children in working parent families and collected information on program funding, program characteristics and activities, and family and youth perspectives on afterschool services. The final report was presented to the legislature in 2002. View the report at <http://www.isbe.net/pdf/afterschool.pdf>.
- The **Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network**, as part of its state School-Age Care Task Force, gathered supply and demand information in order to 1) create a detailed description of programs across the state, and 2) inform and improve afterschool policies. The Network used the data to generate county-by-county supply and demand maps that show where programs are available and what percentage of school-age children with working parents are served. For more information, visit <http://www.montanachildcare.com>.
- In South Carolina, several agencies led by the Department of Social Services came together in 2001 to identify existing afterschool resources. The process was one of the catalyzing forces behind the formalization of the **South Carolina Afterschool Alliance**, a network composed of these agencies and many others, to support afterschool programs across the state. Existing afterschool programs, statewide achievement test scores, and poverty levels are being mapped for each of the state’s regions. The information has been used to create a program database and to identify training and technical assistance needs.



- In 1999, the Boston-based **Parents United for Childcare** launched the **Out-of-School Time Financing Initiative** to consider options for funding a statewide system of out-of-school time care in Massachusetts. A working group composed of parents, public school educators, out-of-school time providers, and representatives from state and local health care, juvenile justice, business, child welfare, and mental health agencies set out to 1) assess supply and demand, 2) analyze existing funding, 3) develop a system for estimating annual cost per child, and 4) research financing strategies based on collected information. The work was compiled into a report, *Meeting the Challenge: Financing Out-of-School Time Programming in Boston and Massachusetts*, complete with recommended action steps.
- In New York City, **The After-School Corporation (TASC)** surveyed Brooklyn parents to better understand supply and demand in one community school district with the intention of using the information to develop larger-scale surveys in the future. The survey gauged demand for afterschool programs and the extent to which parents knew about and utilized existing ones.
- In 2002, the Missouri legislature adopted a resolution creating the **Joint Interim Committee on Afterschool Programs** to review afterschool programs in the state. The resolution called on the committee to 1) analyze the quantity and quality of Missouri afterschool programs, through solicitation of appropriate state agencies, public schools, youth development organizations, law enforcement agencies and juvenile officers, youth development and education experts, and the public (including youth) and 2) recommend a plan to provide and sustain afterschool programs to school-age children in Missouri (For more information, see “Informing State Policymakers: State Legislation and Afterschool Programs” on pg. 9.)

Getting Started and Collecting Information

Assessing supply and demand can be accomplished in a variety of ways, all of which require gathering and analyzing data to develop well-informed estimates. As with all estimation processes, the more resources available to the process, the more precise the estimates will be. But even the simplest estimates require sufficient resources and staff time to produce information that is logical, defensible, and as accurate as possible. In some instances, you may choose to refer to available data, perhaps from resource and referral agencies or census collections. Even in the best case, it is likely that some new data will have to be gathered. The amount and quality of the data and the processes needed to collect it will drive the timeline, cost, and precision of the estimates.



Step 1: Determine A Process That Will Meet Your Needs

Before beginning the process of collecting and analyzing supply and demand data, you should be very clear about exactly what data you need and how you will use it. The following questions can help clarify this process:

- What is the driving purpose?
- What is the scope?
- What resources, including time, are available?

What is the driving purpose?

Supply and demand information may be used for one or more of the following purposes:

- Identifying gaps in available afterschool services (for all children or for certain populations, such as low-income youth).
- Supplying information to policymakers that will inform decisions.
- Mapping the variety and amount of federal, state, and local funding that supports afterschool programming across the state.
- Providing information to parents and youth to help them identify programs in their communities.
- Engaging business leaders in public-private partnerships.
- Identifying common technical assistance needs for afterschool programs.

The type of information that will be collected and presented is determined in large part by the driving force behind the survey—is this a grassroots effort, a legislative mandate, or an executive order? Answering this question will help you remain focused on needs and goals.



Informing State Policymakers: State Legislation and Afterschool Programs

Increasingly, state legislatures and other policymakers are calling for estimates of the supply and demand for afterschool programming. Most commonly, a state-level task force or other working group is established and charged with providing needed data.

In 2002, the Missouri legislature adopted a resolution creating the **Joint Interim Committee on Afterschool Programs** to review the afterschool programs in the state. The resolution called on the committee to:

- Analyze the quantity and quality of Missouri afterschool programs, through solicitation of appropriate state agencies, public schools, youth development organizations, law enforcement agencies and juvenile officers, youth development and education experts, and the public (including youth); and
- Recommend, in consultation with the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education and Social Services, a plan to “provide the opportunity for every Missouri school-age child to access quality afterschool programs and design a system to train, mentor, and support afterschool programs, and thereby guarantee their sustainability.”

View the Missouri resolution at <http://www.house.state.mo.us/bills02/bills02/sc073.htm>.

In 2001, the Illinois General Assembly passed HR0063 directing the State Board of Education and the Department of Human Services to convene and co-chair the **Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force**. The legislation called on the Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force, comprised of other related state agencies and private organizations, to assess the state of afterschool services in Illinois, including identification of the:

- Number of children and youth served in afterschool programs statewide;
- Number and location of children and youth in need of programs; and
- Various funding streams supporting afterschool programs.

Finally, the bill called upon the initiative to develop “a plan for coordinating afterschool services and for achieving a goal of providing afterschool services for every school-age child,” including state strategies to promote best practices for programs as well as to “promote coordination and collaboration of afterschool services at the local level.”

View Illinois HR0063 at <http://www.legis.state.il.us/legislation/legisnet92/status/920HR0063.html>.

(For more information on the work of the Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force, see “Estimating Supply and Demand for Afterschool: Purpose and Use in States and Communities” on p.6.) For additional information on other state legislation, visit the National Conference of State Legislatures searchable database at <http://www.ncsl.org/public/leglinks.cfm>.



What is the scope of work?

Determining the scope of work will influence the way supply and demand information is gathered and documented. The scope of work ultimately depends on three factors: the stated purpose of the effort, the kinds of information partners want to collect (supply, demand, or both), and the available resources (see below). In all likelihood, state leaders will be seeking to collect broad information on both the supply and demand for afterschool programming in order to get a fuller picture of the afterschool landscape. However, there may be cases where it is necessary or desirable to collect only some portion of this information. For example, in some communities there may exist a strong recognition that demand for services is high but that information about available programs is scant. In this case, survey administrators may determine that resources be targeted largely to assess the supply of afterschool programs. In a similar way, survey administrators must decide which types of programs will be included in the supply and demand analysis. If the decision is to look broadly at all available services, the resulting information will give a fuller picture of the afterschool landscape. On one hand, collecting and analyzing information from a broad range of programs is costly and complicated. On the other hand, restricting the analysis to a subset of programs (e.g., school-based) will simplify the collection and analysis of data and keep costs down, but will produce a more limited view of afterschool programs. Being clear about the ultimate uses of the data can help guide decisions about investing scarce resources.

What resources, including time, are available?

In addition to the purpose and scope, the available resources and timeline are critical determinants of the process. In general, the tighter the timeline and fewer the resources, the more you will need to use available data.

The following considerations can help to determine the type of process necessary to develop supply and demand estimates:

- Will this analysis result in a one-time snapshot of supply and demand for afterschool or will information be updated on a regular basis? The resources needed to update and track information over time are very different from those needed for a one-time collection.
- Is this effort designed to address the quality of care that is currently available (such as optimal staff-child ratios or the number of programs that are licensed or accredited)?
- How frequently will these estimates be updated? If supply and demand data are to be updated regularly, survey administrators will have to determine who will be the keeper and manager of the data and where the resources will come from to support ongoing work.



- Can new partners be engaged in this effort? The call to collect information on the supply of, and demand for, afterschool programs provides an opportunity to draw in new partners (such as resource and referral agencies or state agencies) that have been thinking about adding this type of collection to their own ongoing efforts.
- How much new information needs to be collected? Surveys of parents and providers take time and resources to develop, administer, process, and analyze.
- What geographic area will the estimates cover? Consider the size, geography, and diversity of your state and localities when developing resource estimates. Larger states and cities, rural areas, and those with diverse populations (perhaps requiring language translation) will take longer to survey.
- Even under the best of circumstances, data collection and analysis may take longer than originally planned. Be sure to build a time cushion into efforts with a tight or definite timeline.

“Developing maps of Montana’s school-age care supply and demand by county is our most labor-intensive, time-consuming task each year! But it gives us a tool to illustrate the lack of services statewide, especially in rural counties. And local programs use our maps to demonstrate need when they apply for new funding.”

Janet Bush, Executive Director, Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network

What Do You Mean by “Afterschool”?

“Afterschool” means different things to different people and can be used to describe such activities as academic enrichment and tutoring, school-age care, youth development, mentoring, arts and music, technology, conflict resolution, community service, recreation/sports, substance abuse prevention, and literacy. “Afterschool” may encompass formal school-sponsored clubs and groups, such as team practices or music rehearsals; it can also include programs that occur before as well as after school, on weekends, holidays, and during summer months. Every state, city, or locality has to begin the process of assessing supply and demand by adopting a clear definition of “afterschool.”



Step 2: Put Together a Team

Those experienced in collecting and analyzing supply and demand data for afterschool programs all agree that the success of this exercise depends on the efforts of many people. To this end, they unanimously suggest convening a planning group early in the process.

Convene a Planning Group

Sometimes the decision to gauge supply and demand comes out of the work of a state task force or other collaborative body where partners are already around the table. Whether or not a planning entity exists or a new one must be convened, it is important to take a step back and be sure that the group comprises all stakeholders needed to reach the full range of afterschool providers, including school-based programs, family child care homes, licensed child care centers, community-based providers, and any other providers within your definition of “afterschool.” State or local agency officials, representatives from networks of afterschool providers, school officials, researchers, foundation partners, and business leaders are all good choices for the membership of an effective planning group. The planning partners can help refine the early thinking about the process and will likely have resources to share—both technical and financial—to help get the work done.

Who Will Bring the Pieces Together?

States have utilized the resources of different partners—from public agencies to universities to community-based organizations—to collect data on the supply of and demand for afterschool programs.

- In Illinois, the After-School Initiative Task Force designated a data working group, led by the Center for Prevention Research and Development at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, that developed the survey instrument and managed the survey process. In addition to collecting new data, the working group gathered available data from state and local human services agencies; previous studies of the University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development; and participation figures from federal, state, and public school programs.³
- The Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network gathered data on the supply of programs across the state as part of its School-Age Care Task Force.
- The South Carolina Department of Social Services took the lead in developing and distributing a survey instrument for South Carolina’s statewide afterschool network.
- Parents United for Child Care devised supply and demand estimates for afterschool programs in Boston and throughout Massachusetts using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services, the Massachusetts Department of Education, and parent surveys.⁴

³ *The Illinois After-School Initiative 2002 Task Force Report*, Illinois Center for Violence Prevention on behalf of the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education, 2002. Available at <http://www.isbe.net/pdf/afterschool.pdf>.



⁴ *Meeting the Challenge: Financing Out-of-School Time Programming in Boston and Massachusetts*, Parents United for Childcare, March 2001, pages 18-19.



“The process of determining existing afterschool services in South Carolina brought together a range of state agency supporters, provider groups, and other stakeholders. Their initial work solidified the need for a statewide network that could gather and communicate information on an ongoing basis about the wide variety of afterschool programs and available resources across the state. The resulting network, the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance, continues to build upon the important work begun by the Department of Social Services and their partners.”

Zelda Quiller Waymer, Executive Director, South Carolina Afterschool Alliance

When engaging others in the planning process and identifying available resources, be sure to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each planning partner. Leaders and stakeholders need to decide who is responsible for each aspect of information gathering. What are the specific roles and responsibilities of each partner? For example, the state child care office and education agency might coordinate the process and send out provider surveys, with community stakeholders encouraging community-based organizations to respond.

Step 3: Identify Available Data

Data on supply and demand exist in a variety of places. Don't reinvent the wheel; start with any work that has been conducted by other state groups and systems. For example, state child care offices or child care resource and referral agencies usually have data on licensed child care centers that serve school-age children. Keep in mind that Federal Child Care and Development Fund regulations (45 CFR 98.43) require states to conduct a local market rate survey on the cost of child care at least every two years. Some states use these required surveys to collect more comprehensive information (about providers, technical assistance needs, and so on) in addition to information about payment rates (see Data Resources text box below).⁵ This data may be a good starting point for additional collection.

State education agencies and local school districts may be another source of data, especially for school-sponsored programs. Cities and county agencies may also have data to

⁵ For an overview of market rate surveys, see *Conducting Market Rate Surveys and Establishing Rate Policies*, July 2001 produced by the National Childcare Information Center. Available www.nccic.org.



share. Finally, state or local intermediary organizations or coalitions, such as a state affiliate of the National AfterSchool Association (www.nsaca.org), may have lists of after-school programs to contribute.

Connecting State and Local Data Collection Efforts

Many communities are already beginning the process of collecting supply and demand data with the collaboration of state entities. State agencies or state networks can help communities collect and analyze information. Doing so will enhance a community's ability to document state trends, differences within and between communities, and differences within and across the state. Such cooperation will also allow state and local leaders to more clearly identify best practices.

Data Resources

Many federal agencies and community organizations have collected information that may be useful in identifying supply and demand for afterschool.

- Information on federally mandated child care market rate surveys for many states can be accessed at <http://www.nccic.org/poptopics/mrsmethods.html>.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Map Machine (<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/sfsp>) is an Internet-based mapping utility that profiles SFSP sites by detailing characteristics both of the census tract in which they exist and of neighboring schools.
- In conjunction with the Food Research and Action Center (www.frac.org), the Fair Data 2000 project has developed a resource center for mapping Census 2000 data for the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This interactive mapping center was developed for local groups who need highly detailed (street-level) census information and lack access to desktop mapping software. The maps can be used to identify neighborhoods and communities needing these nutrition programs. Visit <http://www.fairdata2000.com/CACFP> for CACFP sites and <http://www.fairdata2000.com/SummerFood/index.html> for Summer Food Service Program information.
- The U.S. Census Bureau makes state-specific data available at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd>. Information is available for each state as well as individual counties covering such demographic information as population, educational attainment, median monthly income, race/ethnicity, and homeownership rates.
- "America After 3 PM", a report from the Afterschool Alliance, used parent surveys from all 50 states, finding that parents of over 15.3 million children say their children would participate in afterschool programs if such opportunities were available. Additional information on national and state-specific demand for availability of afterschool programs is available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/america_3pm.cfm.



When compiling available data from a range of sources, keep in mind that your definition of afterschool will affect your data needs (see “What Do You Mean by ‘Afterschool?’” on pg. 11). For example, information is often more difficult to capture on informal care settings, informal school clubs or groups that do not meet regularly, and faith- and community-based programs. Using available administrative data from state agencies, while a good place to start, may not provide a complete picture of afterschool programs if your definition is more inclusive of different care settings.

Step 4: Collect New Data

Most of the time, estimating the supply and demand for afterschool programs will require collecting at least some new data. Sometimes, it may be necessary to collect only the supply or demand data. This section provides guidance and concrete tips for gathering new information. In cases where both types of data are needed, it is strongly suggested that data collection tools and methodologies for gathering both supply and demand data be developed simultaneously to avoid any duplication of effort.

Tips for Collecting Supply Data

In almost all instances, surveying afterschool program providers is the best way to collect information about the supply of care. If information about funding, technical assistance activities, or other relevant activities is desired, it may also be necessary to survey other state or community leaders.

Determine who will be surveyed. Again, this goes back to the goals or purposes for collecting this data. For example, if the goal is to understand available licensed slots for afterschool programming in your state, program directors will be the desired respondents. If information on funding or the reliability of future funding is also needed, it may be necessary to survey state policymakers or administrators. If specific information for individual programs in a multi-site initiative is important, it is probable that directors or coordinators at each individual site will have to be surveyed. Depending on what is being asked, the respondents could be one or all of the following: program coordinators, site directors, family child care providers, informal caregivers, community members, or policymakers.

“It is critically important to ensure you have a representative and comprehensive group of programs that will serve as your basis for supply. Developing an accurate and comprehensive list requires personal engagement at the regional and community levels. You need to have contact with individuals or organizations in the major regions and communities across the state that can help you determine who provides afterschool programs.

While this is a time-consuming process, it helps build the network of people you need to enact systems change.”

Debbie Bretag, Director, Illinois Center for Violence Prevention, and Member, Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force



Create a survey. The stated purpose, project timeline, available resources, data goals, and uses of the information will determine the questions to be included in the survey. The longer the survey, the more resources it will take to ensure an adequate response. A quick survey that only asks basic information can be implemented easily and will require less time to administer and analyze. If the objective is to paint a more detailed picture of the supply of afterschool programs, the survey will need to be more comprehensive and will take more time to administer. Topics to be covered in the survey may include:

- Basic program information: Name, address, IRS status (public/nonprofit/for-profit), mission, years in operation, area served, days and hours of operation;
- Population served: age range, number of school-aged children, demographics (low-income, populations served), enrollment procedures, available slots, and waiting lists;
- Staffing: number of staff, volunteers, staff credentials, staff/child ratio, training opportunities offered, and parent involvement activities;
- Funding: annual budget, sources of funding, reliability of each funding source, fundraising activities, and what funds support;
- Other program characteristics: program philosophy, purpose, or approach; technical assistance or training needs; activities provided; connection to schools; expected outcomes; program evaluation efforts; records maintenance; and curricula.

The appendix includes a sample provider survey that captures the above information as well as additional questions for those looking to gather more specific data. State and community leaders undertaking this work should use the specific questions from this sample that most accurately reflect their information needs.



"The funding information collected by the data working group clarified how different divisions within a single agency oversee programs with some afterschool components. In addition, through the process of collecting funding data, we found that sometimes it's harder than you expect to put exact figures on funds spent specifically for afterschool. For example, programs funded by federal juvenile justice or Title I dollars may use afterschool as one program strategy, but it is difficult to determine how much of those funds support afterschool programming."

Paula Corrigan-Halpern, Consultant, Illinois Afterschool Partnership

Supply and Demand Surveys and Other Resources Available from the School-Age Needs Assessment and Training Project

Based at the University of Georgia, the America Cares for Children and Youth: School-Age Care Needs Assessment and Training Project helps local communities better understand the supply of and demand for school-age care and activities. With funding from the Child Care Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, several needs assessment tools have been developed; these include procedures for developing county profiles and geo-maps of school-age programs and activities as well as surveys and focus group protocols to determine program characteristics and staff training needs. Tools also are available for evaluating the demand for school-age care through surveys and focus groups with families.

For more information, contact Dr. Christine M. Todd, Department of Child and Family Development, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-3622, 706.542.4830, ctodd@fcs.uga.edu.

Sending out the Survey

Substantial care and attention should be paid to how the survey will reach respondents. States have employed a number of strategies to ensure that these surveys reach the right people.

- In Alabama, the **Program for Rural Services and Research** developed and mailed postcards informing providers of the forthcoming survey. A subsequent mailing that included a computer-readable survey form was sent to known providers and potential providers (including many faith-based organizations).
- In addition to using its own lists for licensed day care providers and food and nutrition program sites, the **South Carolina Department of Social Services** obtained mailing lists from other state agencies and organizations: religious organizations from the Department of Revenue, community centers from the Department of Parks and Recreation, schools from the Department of Education, and member organizations of Communities in Schools of South Carolina, Boys and Girls Clubs, the YMCA, and the YWCA. Before distributing surveys, the agency checked lists for duplication.
- In New York City, **The Afterschool Corporation (TASC)** distributed 9,600 questionnaires for elementary and middle school students to take home to their parents.
- The Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force's data working group created a Web-based provider survey to allow respondents to complete forms quickly and easily. However, working group members found that many providers did not have Internet access or had difficulty completing the survey online. In an effort to increase the response rate, surveyors mailed, faxed, and emailed surveys to these providers.

For more information on use of online survey tools, visit <http://www.npowermy.org/tools/online+survey+tools.pdf>. This guide from NPowerNY reviews several available online survey tools for use by nonprofit organizations.



When developing the survey, program providers on the planning team can help identify sensitive areas and find ways to get the needed data without causing any undue stress for the respondents. For example, some state-funded program providers may feel uncomfortable answering questions on topics such as funding sources, quality assessments, or needed technical assistance if they think their support could be jeopardized. Understanding these types of sensitivities will also help address issues of confidentiality.

Define the survey mechanism. There are a number of ways to survey afterschool program providers. These include telephone interviews, mail surveys, and Internet questionnaires. Keep in

“The program data that came from our provider survey gave us information, collected for the first time, about the type of activities that were offered for afterschool and some sense of the broad types of funding providers used to offer their programs. The information can provide guidance about best practices and help others understand what it takes in terms of financial and other resources to run quality afterschool programs.”

Doris Garrett, Illinois Department of Human Services

mind your audience when developing the survey mechanism; you may choose to develop more than one way to reach providers. The Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force used online surveys that could be filled out easily and returned by email response, but found that they missed a number of providers who lacked Internet access (see Sending out the Survey on pg. 17). In Alabama, surveyors provided respondents with a computer-readable form that allowed them to easily compile data from multiple choice questions.

Strive for a sufficient response rate. Good response rates are also critical to the success of these efforts. One of the most valuable roles stakeholders can play is to encourage their program networks at the state and community levels to respond to the survey. The key is to

communicate the importance of documenting the supply of afterschool activities and to detail how the information will be used to support the work of individual programs. Some strategies include:

- Making follow-up phone calls. Planning partners can help call or can send reminders to a subset of respondents to encourage their participation.
- Engaging community-based, faith-based, and other grassroots leaders. Include these leaders in the planning process and have them follow up in their individual communities. Again, this process can be used as an opportunity to engage new partners.
- Offering financial incentives. Sometimes, respondents are offered a small financial reward for responding to a survey (e.g., \$10 for each response).



Tips for Collecting Demand Data

Assessing the demand for afterschool programming can be a difficult task because different approaches may have to be employed to collect information on the large numbers of families that need or would use afterschool care. The goal here is to produce estimates that are sound and reliable. Two common approaches, often used in concert, include:

- *Survey stakeholders about demand for afterschool activities in individual communities.* Parents, community members, lawmakers, school administrators, and others can be surveyed about their perceptions on the need for afterschool programs. As was the case with supply surveys, demand data instruments can take a variety of forms, including questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. When deciding which stakeholders to survey or interview, keep in mind that those who participate will determine the kind of information that is produced—information from parents will produce results that differ from those of educators. Remember that community members or parents may not be fully knowledgeable about afterschool programs and their benefits. Also important to consider are the cultural context of the community and any possible language barriers.
- *Use available data to derive estimates.* Another approach is to look at available state or local data, such as program waiting lists, take-up/enrollment rates, and community needs assessment surveys, to inform estimates.

Some balance of these two approaches may be necessary in order to arrive at good estimates. No matter what your approach, keep the following principles in mind when developing a process to estimate demand:

Clearly define the target population. Be clear about what information is needed. Is information needed for all children? Children with working parents? Children at a particular percentage of the poverty line?

Establish what is meant by “demand.” The planning group must also decide how to define “demand” for survey purposes. One possibility is a communicated need from parents and families. Another is a documented lack of programs in a particular neighborhood.



Be careful about double-counting children who may be in multiple programs. In the case of children who attend more than one program, particularly drop-in or team-centered activities, it is difficult but important not to double-count.

Determine if existing programs are at full capacity. Several evaluations of afterschool programs have indicated that children often attend programs infrequently or for short periods of time. This may be an important consideration for communities that are trying to determine if the current network of afterschool programs is capable of serving additional children.

Understand how community characteristics influence take-up rates and participation. Communities and states differ in philosophies and approaches to child care and education. Understanding the unique characteristics of each community to be surveyed will ensure that estimates are as accurate as possible. For example, in some communities there is a general belief that children are best served in the home and not in formal programs or care settings. To the extent these beliefs are held community-wide, they will influence demand for programs.

Consider ways to foster a sufficient response rate. Due to competing demands, it is often difficult to elicit a sufficient survey response rate among parents and other stakeholders. Leaders will need to determine what response rate is needed to allow responses to be generalized to larger communities. To ensure data are representative, consider using small representative samples of larger populations, pursuing aggressive follow-up with non-respondents, or offering incentives for response. If resources are available, leaders may also consider conducting a small, separate study to compare respondents and non-respondents, using statistical adjustments to improve reliability of conclusions.

Don't allow estimating demand to stall other progress. While it is important to create an ongoing information base and use the data to conduct continuing needs assessments, demand for high-quality extra learning opportunities before school, afterschool, on weekends, and in the summer is very high in almost every geographical area, and it is important not to hamper progress while waiting for the results of supply and demand analysis. Building community support while simultaneously identifying need is one strategy to avoid this pitfall.

Step 5: Analyzing and Using the Data

While a particular time-limited initiative may have been the impetus for the data collection, keep in mind that once the information is compiled it may have many more uses. When shared broadly, supply and demand data can be used for the following purposes:

- *Identifying and addressing gaps in services*, including where programs are and are not available. Data can also help show who uses the services in particular neighborhoods.



- *Planning investments* by allowing policymakers and program leaders to target resources to areas of highest need.
- *Promoting the coordination of public and private resources.* The information that has been collected may provide policymakers with the ability to leverage new dollars that can expand program capacity.
- *Creating databases to help match parents and providers.* This could be an expansion to an existing resource and referral capability or the beginning of a new resource to meet this need.
- *Determining funding needs for programs and systems of care.* If the data include information on the cost of various programs, this can be used to develop cost estimates for expansion of programs or to estimate the fiscal needs for the afterschool infrastructure (e.g., training and technical assistance, quality standards).
- *Understanding the needs and knowledge of parents* regarding the quality and availability of programs. Based on survey results, communities can develop strategies to help parents better understand their options and how to choose quality afterschool opportunities for their children.
- *Building public awareness.* Solid data are the backbone of effective public awareness campaigns. By sharing supply and demand data broadly, public awareness efforts can better demonstrate the need for programs and services.

Lessons Learned

Whether by mandate or as part of an effort to build a statewide or community-wide system of care, many states and cities are grappling with how to best measure the supply of and demand for afterschool programming. This tool builds on the experiences of those communities and states that have already undertaken this process, providing a framework and practical guidance for planning and implementing a supply and demand analysis.

The following lessons learned are provided by supply and demand pioneers.

Have a solid plan for using the data. Being clear from the outset about how the data will be used is a key to success. This clarity will help ensure that, from planning to decision-making, the needed information will be available.

Involve a range of partners. Partnerships are a key to successfully reaching the full range of providers and truly understanding the afterschool landscape. Engaging key partners from the beginning also nurtures relationships that can help implement new programs and policies once the analysis is complete.

Share the data widely. Once the supply and demand data are available, share them widely with policymakers, providers, and state and community organizations. These data can help inform the decisions of many key partners.

Collect supply and demand data as a step toward building a system of afterschool care. While it is critical to fulfill the immediate goal of collecting these data, it is also important to keep in mind how this information can be used to help build a cohesive system of care for school-age children—usually the prime objective of this effort.

Additional Resources

Child Care Demand and Supply Under CALWORKS: The Early Impacts of Welfare Reform for California's Children, 1998-2000, PACE, October 2002. http://pace.berkeley.edu/wp_02-3.pdf.

Key Findings, America After 3 PM: A Household Survey on America After 3 PM. The Afterschool Alliance, 2004. Available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/america_3pm.cfm.

Meeting the Challenge: Financing Out-of-School Time Programming in Boston and Massachusetts, Parents United for Childcare, March 2001.

The Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force Report, Illinois Center for Violence Prevention on behalf of the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education, 2002. Available <http://www.isbe.net/pdf/afterschool.pdf>.

Understanding Child Care Demand and Supply Issues: New Lessons from Los Angeles, policy brief, PACE, June 2001. Available http://pace.berkeley.edu/policy_brief.01-2.pdf.

For additional information on state legislation pertinent to afterschool programs, visit the National Conference of State Legislatures searchable database at <http://www.ncsl.org/public/leglinks.cfm>.



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Appendix: Sample Provider Survey Instrument

This appendix contains a compilation of questions adapted from several supply and demand surveys. This survey can be used in its entirety or can be adapted to meet more specific targets. For instance, you may choose to use portions of the survey or to add questions on a particular topic that is not covered. When choosing your data elements, keep in mind the cardinal rule of data collection—only collect what you are going to use.

Basic Information

1. Name of program _____

2. Name of person completing survey _____

3. Title or role of person completing survey _____

4. Name of director/coordinator of program (if not named above)

5. Mailing address:

Street _____

City, state, zip _____

6. Phone (_____) _____

7. Fax (_____) _____

8. Email address _____

9. Website address (if applicable) _____

10. Name and type of administering agency (e.g., 501(c)(3), public) _____

11. Number of sites _____



12. Start date of program (month if known and year) _____

13. Area served (neighborhood, community, school(s))

Children and Youth

1. How does your program select children/youth (in other words, how are children/youth prioritized)? Check all that apply.

Income requirement (e.g., low-income children/youth)

Membership requirement

Formal enrollment process (If this line is checked, please be sure to answer questions 2 and 3 in this section.)

All/most children/youth attend on a mandatory basis

All/most children/youth attend on a voluntary basis

2. How many children/youth are enrolled currently (total number)? _____

3. Is enrollment for the program full? Yes No

If yes, can you expand to offer additional slots? Yes No

4. How many children/youth are served?

Elementary age (grades K-5)

Middle school age (grades 6-8)

High school age (grades 9-12)

Total

5. How many children/youth attend per day, on average?

Elementary

Middle school

High school

Total



Staffing

1. How many total staff does the program have (part-time, full-time, paid, volunteer)? ____

How many part-time staff members? _____

How many full-time staff members? _____

How many paid staff members? _____

How many volunteers? _____

2. What is the average adult/child or youth ratio in your program on a daily basis?

____ 1:5

____ 1:10

____ 1:15

____ 1:20

____ 1:25 or more

Funding

1. What are the program's funding sources? Check all that apply. If you check "federal government" or "state government," please also identify specific funding sources. If you check "local government," please write in names of specific sources. [Survey administrators: Replace general descriptions of state government sources in parentheses with names of sources specific to your state.]

____ Federal government (these sources may be administered by the state)

____ Child Care & Development Fund

____ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

____ 21st Century Community Learning Centers

____ Title I schoolwide dollars

____ Title I Supplemental Services

____ Workforce Investment Act



- Corporation for National and Community Service
- Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (cooperative extension, afterschool snack, or supper program)
- Other _____

- State government
 - (state department of education programs)
 - (state department of human/social services programs)
 - (governor's initiatives/programs)
 - Other _____

- Local government (e.g., libraries, parks and recreation, county government)

- Private foundation(s)
- Business
- Public donation/contribution
- Student/parent fees
- Other

2. What is your annual budget? \$ _____

Program Structure and Organization

1. What type of organization houses and runs the program (e.g., community organization; faith-based organization; school; college or university; other)? _____



2. When during the year does the program operate? Please check only one.

- Year round
- School year
- Less than full school year, more than six weeks
- Less than six weeks
- Other (please specify) _____

3. When during the week does the program operate? Check the days that apply and fill in the hours of operation.

- Monday Hours: _____
- Tuesday Hours: _____
- Wednesday Hours: _____
- Thursday Hours: _____
- Friday Hours: _____
- Saturday Hours: _____
- Sunday Hours: _____

4. What are the program components? Check all that apply.

- Academic enrichment (curriculum-driven)
- Homework help
- Tutoring
- Cultural enrichment
- Arts and crafts
- Recreation/sports
- Dance
- Music



- Theater/drama
- Technology/video
- Mentoring
- Family life education/teen pregnancy prevention
- Drug/alcohol/tobacco prevention
- Community service
- Mental wellness/counseling
- Parental involvement
- Religious/spiritual education
- Life skills
- Violence prevention
- Health/nutrition education
- Leadership skills
- Career
- College preparation
- Other _____

5. Is the program licensed?

- Yes
- No

If yes, by which agency? _____



Additional Sample Survey Questions (for more extensive surveys)

Children and Youth

What groups of children are served? Check all that apply.

- Academically at-risk
- Special education students
- Special needs (e.g., physical disability, hearing impairment, asthma)
- Specific ethnic group
- Gifted and talented
- English language learners
- Low-income children and youth
- Foster children
- Homeless children
- Alternatively educated youth
- Dropouts
- Adjudicated youth
- Other _____

Staffing

[For programs using volunteers] Your volunteers are from which groups? Check all that apply.

- Retired teachers
- High school students
- College students
- Parents
- Community members
- Other _____



What are the program's requirements for staff? Check all that apply.

- Teaching certificate
- High school diploma
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Reflect ethnicity of children/youth
- Prior experience working with children/youth
- Community resident
- Other _____

Number or percentage of staff turnover per year (approximate) _____

Average staff wage \$_____ /hour

Does the program offer training? Yes No If yes, how often? _____

Do staff receive training elsewhere? Name professional development/training opportunities and requirements. _____

Funding

[For use after Question 1 in Funding section of basic survey] What is the largest source of funding from the list of checked funding sources? If two or more sources are tied for largest, please list both or all. _____

How often must you reapply for your largest source(s) of funds? _____



Does your program charge parent fees? Yes No

If yes, how are fees assessed? Check all that apply.

Sliding fee scale

One-time payment amount: \$ _____

Payment every ___ weeks in the amount of \$ _____

Other (Please describe)

Program Structure and Organization

Does your program operate during school holidays? Yes No

If the program is school-based, please name all school(s) and district(s) served.

If the program is not school-based, does the program have a partnership with a school or schools? Yes No

If yes, which one(s)? Please list school(s) and district(s). [If the state has a strong county-based system, you can ask which county in addition to or instead of which district.]

Please check any of the following entities with which your program has a partnership (in terms of services provided or funding). Check all that apply.

Community-based organization



- Faith-based organization
- College/university
- Military organization
- Hospital or health center
- Foundation
- Local business
- Business group
- Other _____

What is/are the purpose(s) of the program? Check all that apply.

- Provide recreation
- Improve academic skills
- Provide cultural enrichment
- Provide adult supervision while parents are working
- Prevent risky behavior
- Other _____

Of the above, what is the most important purpose as defined in your mission?

Are the following expected outcomes for your program? Check all that apply.

- Increased academic achievement
- Increased school attendance



- Reduced juvenile crime
- Increased graduation rate
- Increased positive attitude toward school
- Increased positive future aspirations
- Reduced risky behaviors
- Improved social skills
- Increased positive peer relationships
- Improved relationships between youth and adults
- Improved career skills
- Enhanced spiritual development
- Other _____

Is the program formally evaluated?

- Yes
- No

Are funds appropriated in the program's budget to conduct periodic program evaluations?

- Yes
- No

What data are gathered to determine effectiveness of program? Check all that apply.

- Attendance records (program)
- Attendance records (school)
- Test scores
- Grades
- Disciplinary/behavioral incidents
- Teacher reports
- Satisfaction questionnaires



- Truancy data
- Overall program participation rates
- High school graduation data
- Information on what happens post-high school
- Parent surveys
- School administrator surveys
- Other _____

Please select the **one** sentence that best describes the structure of your program. We recognize that elements of two or more of the following descriptions may match your program, but we ask that you select only one.

- The program generally follows a specific schedule that includes multiple activities that all children/youth attend.
- All children/youth participate in an academic enrichment activity but can also select from a variety of activities based on individual interest or need.
- Participants select one or more activities in which to be involved based on their interest and/or need. There are no required elements in which all children/youth must participate.
- The program focuses on a particular area or topic. Supplementary activities are available, but the core program is centered on a particular theme.

Does the program use a particular model or curriculum?

- Yes
- No

Is the program designed to meet state academic standards?

- Yes
- No



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