NAA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL IN

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Afterschool Meals are GETTING HEALTHIER!

Promoting Healthy Eating & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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What Afterschool Leaders Need to Know

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What childhood memories contribute to your health and wellness today?
I often say I was raised by Parks and Rec—then joke sarcastically that my parents love that statement. This is no slight to my father: When I was young, he enrolled me in gymnastics, baseball (my brother’s Little League team, pre-Title IX), basketball and swimming lessons, and made sure I had transportation to and from these activities—all offered through our town’s parks and recreation department.

As I got older, I was often the only girl at basketball camp or open gym. The support of caring adults—through opportunities and words of encouragement—kept me going.

I’ve benefited greatly from afterschool sports programs. Not only did I finance my college education through a basketball scholarship, I learned many lessons that help me as an adult: teamwork, patience, accepting my uniqueness, how to talk sports, listening, learning and being coachable. And, of course, how to handle being the only female in a group of males. (I’m often the sole woman on the golf course on a weekend morning!)

Afterschool activities gave me something to do until my dad was done with work. They helped me develop important skills I use today. This is my story of the positive impact of afterschool programs. There are tons of stories out there from others who benefited—and continue to benefit—from the work of people like you.

Last year, during a #girlsare campaign interview, I was asked: “If you could, what would you go back and tell your 10-year-old self?” My answer? “Be grateful!”

Thank you, to the parks and rec professionals and school district employees who held programs afterschool and on weekends—even when my brother and I were the only ones there; to those who kept nets on the park basketball courts; to the community pool lifeguards who watched over our safety every summer day; to those who opened the gym every weekend; to my dad, who provided all the transportation.

These folks provided opportunities and experiences I’d have never had otherwise. Although I didn’t realize the significance then, I do now. I also know the work of our newly identified Most Influential in Health & Wellness, our magazine contributors and the organizations featured in this issue—and all who fight the good fight, ensuring equity and supporting the health and wellness of kids, families and communities—makes a difference in shaping positive memories and a great future for all!
Flight Lessons & Other Stories / Last Stop on Market Street / On Wings & Whimsy: http://smile.amazon.com/
Child and Adult Care Food Program | Afterschool Meals: bit.ly/AfterschoolMealsCACFP
Food Research & Action Center (FRAC): http://frac.org
Alliance for a Healthier Generation: www.healthiergeneration.org
Plan for Success: Afterschool Meal Programs and the Updated CACFP Meal Pattern: bit.ly/Plan-for-Success
USDA School Meals Contacts: bit.ly/SchoolMealsContacts
Afterschool Alliance: www.afterschoolalliance.org
Using State Laws & Regulations to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs: bit.ly/RTIPromote

RTI International: www.rti.org
HOST Coalition: www.niost.org/HOST-Site
Every Monday Matters (EMM): www.everymondaymatters.org
EMM Educator Material: http://everymondaymatters.org/educators
Alliance for a Healthier Generation: www.healthiergeneration.org
Culture of Health: bit.ly/CultureOfHealth
America After 3PM: Afterschool Programs in Demand: bit.ly/After3PMKeyFindings
Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST): http://mdoutofschooltime.org
Giant Food: http://giantfood.com
Giant Food Nutritionist Program, Classes, Tours: http://giantfood.com/live-well

MORE: HELPFUL RESOURCES
**BOOK REVIEW: READ ALOUD**  
**LAST STOP ON MARKET STREET**  
By Matt de la Rosa Peña

This virtual field trip whisks the reader off to see the sights and experiences of CJ and his nana, going about their daily routine via the city bus. CJ questions “Why?” and “How come?”, wondering about the world, curious about interactions with his surroundings and his role within. Nana is quick-witted and wise, providing the right perspective on a world that may not seem shiny, but glimmers upon the touch of her words—words that comfort CJ and the reader, knowing the world is a good place to be, and better if we move about it with care and thoughtful intent.  

**BOOK REVIEW: LEADERSHIP**  
**ON WINGS & WHIMSY**  
By Erika Petrelli

On Wings & Whimsy is a fun, humorous book that involves serious thinking. It’s an easy read, full of delightful anecdotes called “Sparks,” but packs a punch with thought-provoking questions. These questions and accompanying journal activities—“Opportunities”—encourage self-reflection, providing a great reminder for all who are trying to be extraordinary to step back and remember that first we must be extraordinary. One of the best ways to learn is through stories, humor and reflection. This book has it all!  
*Contributed by Heidi Ham, Vice President of Programs and Strategy, National AfterSchool Association.*

**BOOK REVIEW: YOUTH**  
**FLYING LESSONS & OTHER STORIES**  
Edited by Ellen Oh, co-founder of We Need Diverse Books

Who am I? Who are you? What common thread unites us? People are driven to answer these questions, and teens are no exception! Observing how others strive and thrive—or fail—can be a secondhand learning experience, a source of empowerment or an inspiration to chase a dream. This collection, featuring stamina, determination and perseverance, encourages teen readers to dream, then DO! A wonderful anthology of stories, it can be a perfect springboard to help guide discussion, providing fuel that shapes powerful character development among program youth.  

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**WHEN YOU PURCHASE VIA AMAZON SMILE, YOU’RE ABLE TO HELP SUPPORT THE NATIONAL AFTERSCHOOL ASSOCIATION. HTTP://SMILE.AMAZON.COM/**
Food is the one afterschool and summer learning program component necessary for survival. Food security is something we deal with daily.

Students or staff might on any given day ask themselves:

**DID I EAT?**

**DID I HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT?**

**WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO EAT?**

Increasingly, students rely on school cafeteria food for food security. Many in our programs eat breakfast, lunch and a snack or meal during our care; many have nothing to eat when they go home. We have opportunities to play a vital role in the food security of the students we serve.

A staff member approached me one Friday with a third-grader who’d been caught stuffing snacks from our goodie box into her backpack—against program regulations. I sat down with the student, not asking her, “Why did you steal?” but saying, “Tell me what’s happening.” I’m glad I took this approach, as I learned a valuable lesson on why I do what I do and how I run and implement programs.

The snack was for the student’s little brother, who was on the waiting list for his grade level. Those six ounces of juice and Goldfish crackers often were the last thing the third-grader ate until returning to school Monday for the breakfast program. Her brother wasn’t as fortunate: His school lunch—at 11:30 a.m.—was often his last meal. Saturday mornings, they looked forward to the snacks she’d gathered to get them through.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal program launched in 2010. It’s my mission to let people know about this amazing opportunity to serve students a heartier meal during afterschool—and the importance it could play in food security. Since 2010, we’ve seen California sites serving the meal program increase to about 2,600, serving approximately 7 million meals monthly. There’s much work to do.

Think about food security as not just about food. Consider adding layers to your program-time food security approach:

- **Provide nutrition education activities or curriculum.** Offer your students a nutrition-related question of the day: “What is the second ingredient in your grain component?” “How many grams of sugar are in your juice?”
- **Provide resources for families during sign-out**—information about farmer’s markets or Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) offices, food banks and services for year-round help.
- **Create partnerships with food banks, farmers and neighborhood stores to provide families additional food.** Have students create recipe cards and learn to prepare what they take home.
- **A school site garden adds nutrition education using garden boxes, pallets against a fence or portable wheelbarrow gardens.** Help students understand where foods come from and how they grow. Allow opportunities for students to eat throughout your program offerings.
- **Add physical activity.** Music and exercise or dance opportunities build happier, healthier students throughout your program day.
- **Continue talking about your role in students’ food security and how it could help them achieve the goals and vision your program has identified to help address community needs.**

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*Bruno Marchesi, Chief Operating Officer, Center for Collaborative Solutions, has more than 20 years of afterschool experience at all levels. Marchesi holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Spanish/Latin American Literature, and is a Fellow of the University of Southern California and Sierra Health Foundation Health Leadership Program. Bruno Marchesi is lauded among NAA’s Most Influential in Health and Wellness 2017.*
To participate in the Afterschool Meal Program, afterschool programs must meet eligibility requirements (see sidebar) and ensure that meals and snacks served meet federal nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS). In April 2016, USDA-FNS issued rules updating the nutrition standards for meals served through CACFP to include a greater variety of vegetables and fruit, more whole grains, and less added sugar and saturated fat. All providers must have the new meal pattern in place by October 1, 2017.

Providing a healthy and nutritious meal alongside afterschool programming has numerous benefits for children, families and afterschool programs—and the new meal pattern makes a good program even better. By offering meals consistent with U.S. Dietary Guidelines, afterschool programs will provide millions of low-income children with better access to healthy, balanced...
meals throughout the day—all of which help support children’s health and fuel them for activity and learning during afterschool programming.

Some of the updates to the meal pattern:

**GO FOR WHOLE GRAINS**

Whole grains are an important source of dietary fiber, B vitamins and minerals; soon, the Afterschool Meal Program will include more of them. At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich. Additionally, grain-based desserts (including items such as cookies and granola bars) will no longer count toward the grains component.

**VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

The new meal pattern places fruits and vegetables into separate meal components, and allows programs to serve two different types of either vegetables or fruits at meals. Juice can only be served to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal per day, including snacks.

**HEALTHY BONES AND HYDRATION**

Milk served to children 6 years and older can be unflavored low-fat (1 percent), unflavored fat-free (skim) or flavored fat-free (skim) milk. The new meal pattern also requires drinking water to be offered to children throughout the day, in addition to the current requirement to make it available at meal times.

**MORE CHOICE, LESS WASTE**

The new meal pattern extends Offer Versus Serve (OVS) to the Afterschool Meal Program. OVS allows students to decline some of the food offered in an afterschool meal, giving students the ability to choose their preferred foods, which helps programs reduce food waste.

To learn more about planning for the new meal pattern and identifying nutrition enrichment activities to empower families, support staff and engage children at the same time, check out the Food Research & Action Center and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s resource: Plan for Success: Afterschool Meal Programs and the Updated CACFP Meal Pattern.

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Clarissa Hayes is a Child Nutrition Policy Analyst for the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC).
what AFTERSCHOOL LEADERS NEED TO know

build budgets

Leaders know quality is worth paying for, and that high-quality programs are the ones that can keep kids engaged and produce real benefits. Understanding quality program cost and building responsible budgets are key to ensuring the delivery of quality services. Use the Out-of-School Time Cost of Quality Calculator to help you!

[website]

understand finances

Leaders with strong financial management skills are better able to fulfill their organization’s mission and deliver high-quality services. Here’s a library of resources to help your organization become “fiscally fit.”

[website]

develop staff

Quality staff are the backbone of high-quality organizations. NAA’s Core Knowledge and Competencies Self-Assessment tool is designed to support continuous staff improvement plans as well as on-going professional development.

[website]

use data

Data, smartly employed, can help leaders with everything from allocating resources fairly to improving program quality. But what information is needed? How should it be collected? And what are the best ways to put it to use? A set of easy-to-read tip sheets answers these questions and more. Also, read this report on early findings from a study of how afterschool systems build their capacity to understand and improve their practices through their data systems.

[website]

coordinate resources

Many cities are expressing interest in afterschool system-building and more useful information on how to do so is available. This digest offers some of the latest thinking on how to build and sustain an afterschool system, focusing on the four components of system-building that current evidence and experience suggest are essential.
DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION?

Creativity in learning is a skill essential for career success but is often left out of the classroom. Destination Imagination has worked for more than 30 years to provide educators, parents and students with access to affordable educational programming that blends STEM with the arts and teaches the very skills needed to thrive in the 21st century.

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HEALTHY EATING AND

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN OST

AN INVESTMENT IN THE CURRENT AND FUTURE HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE.
BY SARAH SLIWA, PH.D.

Healthy kids learn better. That’s not really news. Yet you may be surprised at how large a role you and your out-of-school time (OST) program can play in supporting youth health and wellness. For millions of youth, most waking hours are spent at school and in OST programs.

The opportunity for OST providers to make a difference in young people’s health is massive. The passion and creativity of OST providers make this challenge exciting. Many use inventive partnerships and approaches to adopt Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards and increase the visibility of HEPA. Emerging evidence suggests these efforts may be paying off. For example, one evaluation of YMCA sites in South Carolina found that youth accumulated more minutes of physical activity (PA) if they attended a program that scheduled PA for at least 30 minutes, limited sedentary choices during activity time, and trained staff on promoting PA. Studies also highlight multiple challenges to implementing these standards, including high staff turnover rates and competing priorities.
To provide additional support for HEPA Standards adoption, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Alliance for a Healthier Generation, and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America are partnering to develop resources, professional development and trainings for OST providers.

CDC is excited about working with OST programs. In the long term, sound nutrition and an active lifestyle help youth grow up at a healthy weight and reduce their risk of developing multiple chronic diseases. In the short term, eating well and being active are associated with better mood, sleep quality and academic achievement. The last piece—the connection to learning—is especially important.

Education and the economic stability it can bring are social determinants of health. The CDC’s Community Preventive Services Task Force recognizes that academic OST programs can improve student reading and math achievement, and reach many children of color and children from low-income families. For these reasons, the Task Force recommends such programs to improve health equity. Integrating nutrition and PA into all OST settings may help reduce health disparities, by supporting academic achievement and healthy lifestyle behaviors known to reduce chronic disease risk.

Additional research links insufficient food intake with lower grades, higher absenteeism rates and an inability to focus. It’s not just about quantity: Food quality is important. When youth don’t get enough of specific nutrients, including many found in fruits, vegetables and whole grains (such as vitamins A, B6, B12, C, folate, iron and zinc), it negatively impacts attendance and academic achievement. Data from the CDC’s 2014 School Health Policies and Practices Study show that one-third of elementary schools start serving lunch before 11 a.m., and more than 60 percent start between 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. By the time youth arrive at an afterschool program, it’s often been hours since they’ve last eaten.

Physically active youth tend to have better school attendance, concentration, memory, on-task behavior and grades. All OST settings can provide opportunities for students to be active—even programs without a gym, a designated play space or much equipment. We’ve seen from research in school settings that brief physical activity breaks (5 to 10 minutes) are associated with improved cognitive performance (such as attention and concentration), on-task behavior, and educational outcomes (such as standardized test, reading literacy, math fluency scores) among students. Integrating movement during enrichment programs may also benefit students’ cognitive performance.

To support this connection between health and academic achievement, CDC uses the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model as a framework. The WSCC model illustrates connections between academic achievement, school environment and a young person’s physical, social and emotional health. The Whole Child is literally at the center of WSCC, surrounded by supportive structures in school and in the broader community. OST programs are an integral part of the community that can reinforce the supports present during the school day, while providing youth with safe spaces to learn, play and thrive. WSCC draws attention to a range of nonacademic barriers to learning and can be used for action planning. This issue of AfterSchool Today takes a closer look at two supportive structures outlined in the model: the nutrition environment and opportunities for physical activity, and their importance in OST programs.

Sarah Sliwa, Ph.D., is a Health Scientist in the School Health Branch, part of the Division of Population Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She can be reached at sслиwa@cdc.gov. The conclusions, findings, and opinions expressed by the author contributing to this journal do not necessarily reflect the official position for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Most of us know physical activity is essential to good physical and mental health.

ON THE FLIP SIDE,

NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE KNOW THE DANGERS OF PHYSICAL INACTIVITY.

Physical inactivity in adults and children—regardless of weight—increases risk of heart disease, diabetes, asthma, liver disease, stroke, arthritis, sleep apnea, depression and psychological stress.

That’s why proximity to safe, accessible places to walk and play is so important.

Latino youth have less opportunity for physical activity in and out of school than their white peers, which contributes to their higher rates of obesity and disease, according to a recent research review, video and curated content from Salud America!, a national obesity prevention research network based at UT Health San Antonio and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The good news is that school recreational facilities—such as playgrounds, sports fields and pools—can be an excellent healthy resource for Latino and all families to move more and sit less, especially in underserved communities where there is limited access to parks and green spaces.

School districts, however, often close their property to the public after school hours due to concerns around liability, security, maintenance and other costs.

Shared, open or joint use agreements can open school facilities to the public after hours, thus boosting youth and families’ physical activity after school, on weekends and during the summer. According to our friends at ChangeLab Solutions, all 50 states have some form of governmental immunity that protects public entities from liability, thus relieving schools of liability.

We share resources and stories across the nation about how schools are responding to Latino health needs and opening their gates and doors to the public after school, on weekends and during the summer.

We have found that parks departments make excellent school partners.

For example, the SWIM Central program in Broward County buses students to park pools during the school day for water safety classes. When kids know how to swim, they can participate in numerous water activities after school and throughout the summer, especially in Florida where pools are open year-round.

City leaders also make excellent partners.

In San Antonio, Texas, an elementary school worked with city officials and the community to establish a shared use agreement, update some equipment, install some lights and open its schoolyard as a neighborhood park.

Additionally, research shows that scheduling park programs later into the evening keeps parks occupied with people engaging in positive activities, which deters undesirable activities.

Lights and people can drastically reduce safety concerns and encourage families to walk and play.

Visit bit.ly/ActiveSpaces2016 to see how you can get more active spaces for kids!

Contributed by Amanda Merck, MPH, Content Curator/Research Area Specialist for Salud America! at the Institute for Health Promotion Research at UT Health San Antonio.
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In 2017, the National AfterSchool Association’s annual Most Influential Award focuses on health and wellness. Honorees and honorable mentions are distinguished for their strong advocacy for and support of health and wellness in afterschool. Those honored represent individuals and organizations whose service, action and leadership align with and support NAA Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards and affect large numbers of youth, families or afterschool professionals.

NAA’s Most Influential in Health and Wellness 2017 is proudly sponsored by The Walking Classroom, a nonprofit organization that helps youth get fresh air and exercise while reinforcing academic subjects, health literacy and character values.

Congratulations and thank you to those lauded as our 2017 Most Influential!
AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE  Washington, D.C.  |  afterschoolalliance.org

Afterschool Alliance supports NAA HEPA Standards by bringing together national, state and local organizations to promote these standards within state-level policies and legislation. The organization embraces federal policy analysis and advocacy at all levels.

ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION  Portland, Oregon,  |  New York, New York  |  healthiergeneration.org

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, through the work of Daniel Hatcher, Director of Community Partnerships, has led youth-focused initiatives and significantly guided the development of the Healthy Out-of-School Time (HOST) Initiative. The Alliance has served as a bridge between national-level out-of-school time stakeholders convened by the HOST Coalition and field staff supporting hundreds of OST sites across the country to adopt HEPA standards.

BRUNO MARCHESI  Chief Operating Officer,  Center for Collaborative Solutions  |  Sacramento, California  |  ccscenter.org

As a Program Supervisor with the City of Sacramento, Bruno Marchesi led the AmeriCorps Get Fit Now! Program, providing 61 Sacramento County afterschool programs serving more than 5,100 students daily with nutrition education and physical activity. As the Program Coordinator with the California AfterSchool Network (CAN), he led the efforts of the statewide Nutrition and Physical Activity Committee. Marchesi’s transformative work continues with Center for Collaborative Solutions.

CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS  Sacramento, California  |  ccscenter.org

The Healthy Behaviors Initiative (HBI) was originated by Center for Collaborative Solutions to fundamentally change the policies, systems, design and staff behaviors of publicly funded afterschool programs to improve health, by increasing healthy eating, physical activity and food security of its students and families.

FOOD RESEARCH AND ACTION CENTER (FRAC)  Washington, D.C.  |  frac.org

FRAC works tirelessly to ensure afterschool programs have access to federal nutrition programs, including snacks, meals and summer meals. Its "Hunger Doesn’t Take a Vacation" report provides essential research for afterschool providers to understand the impact of hunger in their communities.

GIRLS ON THE RUN  Charlotte, North Carolina  |  girlsontherun.org

Girls on the Run inspires girls ages 8 to 13 to be joyful, healthy and confident, using a fun, experience-based curriculum that creatively integrates running. As an innovative physical activity-based, positive youth development program, the intentional Girls on the Run curricula teaches young girls essential life skills designed to successfully navigate their worlds and develop a lifetime appreciation for health and fitness.
Live Healthy Gwinnett takes aggressive steps to improve health and wellness in its community and out-of-school time services, and engages Gwinnett County residents through year-round active programs and events. It encourages residents to invest in personal wellness through simple lifestyle choices such as eating more vegetables, increasing physical activity and reducing stress, and has expanded its community partnerships and child wellness collaborations with more than 70 organizations.

NIOST at the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College envisions a world where all youth have access to high-quality, sustainable out-of-school time programs that help them develop into effective members of society. Georgia Hall, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist, has dedicated her career to researching and implementing opportunities in OST in support of children's health and well-being and leads NIOST's work in this area. Dr. Hall is co-founder of the Healthy Out-of-School Time (HOST) Coalition and a collaborator in authoring the National AfterSchool Association HEPA Standards.

National Recreation and Park Association has been working to implement the HEPA Standards in out-of-school time programs at local park and recreation agencies through a national campaign called Commit to Health. NRPA has provided numerous professional development opportunities to the field through webinars and in-person trainings. In addition, NRPA has developed a Foods of the Month nutrition education curriculum that introduces children to new foods and teaches them and their families the importance of healthy eating.

Jean Wiecha, Ph.D., played an integral role in the founding of the National Healthy Out-of-School Time (HOST) Coalition. Her research on the impact of state policies efforts ensures the implementation of HEPA Standards is done in the most equitable way without penalizing the most under-resourced sites. Dr. Wiecha’s goal of making the standards “aspirational” creates an opportunity for all out-of-school time providers to contribute to the healthy OST movement.

The YMCA is committed to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA). Organizationaly, YMCA of the USA has integrated HEPA Standards in 2,800 Ys across the county, through the support of Lauren Marciszyn, Technical Advisor, Healthy Living for Early Childhood & Afterschool Programs. The YMCA of South Florida, Meeting Waters YMCA and the North Carolina Alliance of YMCAs all stand out for their work in making an impact on children, youth, families and communities through HEPA implementation and advocacy.
5210 LET’S GO!  Portland, Maine | letsgo.org

5210 Let’s Go! works with out-of-school programs across Maine to increase healthy eating and physical activity opportunities for youth. The program is part of the larger Let’s Go! initiative at The Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital at Maine Medical Center. Let’s Go! has grown into a nationally recognized childhood obesity prevention program that helps create healthier communities, reaching youth and their families wherever they live, learn, work and play.

ARIZONA EMPOWER PROGRAM  Phoenix, Arizona | azdhs.gov/empower-program/

Arizona Empower Program developed and implemented 10 Empower Standards, half of them related to HEPA. The Empower Standards are for all licensed child care facilities throughout Arizona, and represent out-of-school-age children through the age of 12.

EDITH BALLESTEROS  Director of BEST Fit, LA’s BEST | Los Angeles, California | lasbest.org

Edith Ballesteros, a visionary champion of children’s health and wellness, has influenced hundreds of thousands of students to lead healthier, more active lives. Ballesteros developed BEST Fit, the department for health-centered, culturally relevant programs that help children develop healthy eating and physical activity habits as part of their daily lives, and encourages them to act as advocates for healthy lifestyles in their homes, schools and communities.

HUNGER SOLUTIONS NY  Albany, New York | hungersolutionsny.org

The nonprofit Hunger Solutions NY organization serves to eradicate hunger from public schools, afterschool programs, day care centers and early care centers in New York. Especial to the promotion of HEPA in afterschool, Hunger Solutions NY has supported and partnered with New York State Network for Youth Success in its work to increase awareness of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that supports afterschool programs to provide healthy and nutritious meals in afterschool.

MARYLAND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME NETWORK (MOST)  Baltimore, Maryland | http://mdoutofschooltime.org

MOST works as an intermediary organization implementing NAA HEPA Standards across the state. Staff have been instrumental in raising awareness of the linkages between healthy behaviors and quality afterschool. MOST provides training and support to out-of-school time sites to implement HEPA Standards and Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s Healthy Out-of-School Time Framework.


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Have you been to your local public library lately? Today’s libraries are probably different from the ones you knew growing up. They still have books, but even those have changed. They are colorful and culturally diverse. Many are digital and downloadable. Remember using encyclopedias to do reports when you were in school? Libraries now offer a vast array of online reference books and databases to help you find the information you need. Often, students don’t even need to step a foot in the library to get their homework done. They simply go to the library’s website, and with a few clicks find what they need.

It’s great to be able to do research from the convenience of home or a classroom, but if you haven’t visited the library recently, chances are you’re missing out. Increasingly, libraries are becoming community spaces where people meet and gather. The Central Arkansas Library System (CALS) where I work has 14 locations. Each day after school, students stream in to study, use the Internet, charge their phones, get snacks, participate in activities or just hang out.

We have traditional programs such as book clubs and tutoring, but on any given day there are also cooking and gardening classes, music and movement programs, art, dance, yoga, meditation, martial arts, bike repair, filmmaking,
knitting—the list goes on. We even have Tail Waggin’ Tutors, therapy dogs that visit the library so children can practice reading with them.

Our Hillary Rodham Clinton Children’s Library and Learning Center has a teaching kitchen, a greenhouse, gardens and walking trails. Nutrition and cooking classes are offered through a partnership with Arkansas Children’s Hospital and No Kid Hungry. Youth help grow and give away thousands of pounds of fresh produce. Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance sponsors a mobile farmers market that visits the library with fresh local produce on Saturday mornings. Each child receives free tokens to spend, and the market accepts SNAP benefits.

The Arkansas Dream Center, a local nonprofit organization, provides Food for Good programs in our libraries, where afterschool snacks and meals are served throughout the week. The programs are part of the USDA Summer Food Service Program, even though meals are served year-round. More and more libraries across the country are becoming sites for these food programs.

As our focus on hunger increases, so does our interest in providing the healthiest options for our patrons. Just over a year ago, CALS became involved with the Healthy Out of School Time movement and started collaborating with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Through this collaboration, we’ve completed self-assessments, attended workshops and utilized the Alliance’s resources. Our involvement in the movement has raised awareness within our organization, and made us even more dedicated to helping kids who visit the library grow and learn to be as healthy as possible.

The best thing about all of this is that libraries are free and open to everyone: All are welcome. I challenge you to explore your local library. Give it a call. Visit its website. And find out what exciting things are waiting for you there.

Lisa Donovan is Director of Literacy and Learning at the Central Arkansas Library System.
APPLETON AFTERSCHOOL LABS

Appleton’s Afterschool Labs program helps transition existing extended learning programs into STEAM-based, hands-on learning adventures for pre-K through eighth-grade students. Afterschool Labs is designed to encourage interest in STEAM disciplines, promote knowledge acquisition and foster critical thinking skills. Students attending the program design a roller coaster, develop a computer game, synthesize “crystal flowers” from coal and more. They’re also provided with homework help, a snack, and free and guided play. The curriculum is aligned to common core, next-generation science and workforce readiness standards and helps build upon school-day learning. The best part? The program is no-cost for K-12 school districts, completely managed by Appleton and generates revenue. Learn more at HelloAfterschool.com.

THE ABCS OF THE NEW EZCARE

Introducing the new EZCare, the next generation in child care management software for today’s child care professional! Automate time-consuming administrative tasks and access all the information you need, 24/7, on ANY device. Communicate more effectively using our online parent portal. Give parents the freedom to update records and personal information, access important messages and make tuition payments whenever they like. The EZSmiles app allows staff to engage parents in real-time, sharing photos and short videos, and texting them special announcements, updates and reminders. Only EZCare is backed by 30-plus years of expertise in providing software solutions for the child care community. Let EZCare help you take care of business in a personal, professional and—best of all—easy way! For a free demo, visit www.ezcaresoftware.com or call 800.220.4111.

CREATIVE ALCOHOL EDUCATION: ASK, LISTEN, LEARN

The free Ask, Listen, Learn: Kids and Alcohol Don’t Mix program encourages kids to say “yes” to a healthy lifestyle and “no” to underage drinking. Its new animated video series and corresponding lesson plans designed for grades five and six examine the scientific effects of alcohol on the developing brain. Animations are engaging and funny, and the unique activities get kids thinking and moving. Content supports National Health Education Standards, Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Visit www.AskListenLearn.org to explore these free resources and join their community of educators, afterschool professionals and caregivers dedicated to preventing underage drinking.
Afterschool Labs is an extended learning program provided by Appleton, a school HR software and services company. The program includes STEAM-based, hands-on learning adventures for Pre-K–8th grade students at no cost to school districts.

HelloAfterschool.com  AfterschoolLabs

New EZCare After School Software Makes Collecting Tuition Easy

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The Alliance for a Healthier Generation (Alliance) believes business leaders, afterschool providers and others are essential partners in building a Culture of Health. There is tremendous power in the 10.2 million children attending afterschool programs, but programs face tight budgets and limited capacity—two challenges that could be addressed through business and afterschool partnerships.

Are you interested in partnering with the business community?

Make a list of supplies you’ve purchased for your program out of your own pocket. Now, take that supply list and think of businesses that could help meet your needs. It’s not about asking for help: It’s about giving businesses an opportunity to contribute to a shared mission. Could a local hotel or bank donate pens, notepads or other basic supplies? Your partnership could start as a supply donation and grow into a signature event sponsorship.

Break silos with understanding. You may tell yourself, “I don’t know how to talk to companies.” Remember: Businesses are made up of individuals—fathers, mothers, caregivers. When reaching out, share your passion and give yourself permission to be vulnerable. Sincerity is powerful.

Provide opportunities for businesses to collaborate with you on multiple levels. Some businesses may be interested in corporate-level support; others may seek volunteer or social responsibility opportunities. Provide a menu of options; don’t be afraid to start small.

Give local business leaders an opportunity to experience your program’s mission in action. Invite company representatives to attend family nights and other special events. If we want local businesses to have a seat at the table, we must help them understand our work.

Never forget: Healthy children grow up to be consumers with increased earning and buying power. Advancing healthy out-of-school time has far-reaching effects, from a prosperous workforce to a strong military.

Create opportunities for youth to drive business strategy. Children are naturally curious and enthusiastic. Imagine if your afterschool cooking class inspired local restaurants with their healthy creations. Could local mechanics and bike shops be paired with your STEM program? Inviting guest speakers from local businesses is great. Intentionally linking business leaders with your students is even better!

To create healthier communities, we must give businesses the opportunity to co-own our stake in helping children thrive. How are you collaborating with the business community? Tweet me your ideas—let’s keep the conversation going.

Contributed by Daniel W. Hatcher, Director of Community Partnerships, Alliance for a Healthier Generation. The Alliance is lauded among NAA’s Most Influential in Health and Wellness 2017. Daniel.Hatcher@healthiergeneration.org | @hatchdw
Giant Food is passionate about improving the health and wellness of communities. Giant’s team of experienced in-store nutritionists help customers save time, save money and eat well. They also offer weight management, diabetes, cholesterol, blood pressure, food allergy and family meal-planning consultations for just $25—with fees refunded in the form of a $25 Giant gift card upon completion. Giant’s nutritionists also offer informative and engaging workshops, classes and tours in their communities.

Maryland Out-of-School Time Network (MOST) shares Giant Food’s commitment to building healthy communities, through encouragement of healthy eating and physical activity afterschool. MOST’s work to provide nutrition training to staff at afterschool meal sites easily aligns with the vision and mission of Giant’s in-store nutritionist program and outreach, making the partnership between the organizations a natural fit.

Over the past year, Giant and MOST have worked together to further this mission. Giant’s lead nutritionist, Lisa Coleman, offered the Eight Steps to a Healthier Diet workshop at MOST’s annual conference. Positive feedback from sessions spurred a partnership with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation to offer the workshop virtually. MOST participated in a panel discussion at Giant’s Healthy Kids Summit during the Cal Ripken World Series. At the 2017 MOST Conference, Giant’s role was expanded to include participation on a STEM panel and delivery of additional workshops.

How might you do something similar in your community?

Learn about MOST’s HEPA initiatives at http://mdoutofschoolt ime.org. Learn about Giant’s nutritionist program and local classes and tours, visit http://giantfood.com/live-well.
PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

THE ROLE OF STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS IN PROMOTING HEPA STANDARDS. BY CASSIE WESTRATE

According to the Afterschool Alliance, more than 10 million U.S. children participate in afterschool programs, with almost half coming from low-income households. As such, afterschool and out-of-school time (OST) programs are a promising setting for reducing child obesity risk by promoting healthy eating and providing opportunities for physical activity.

The National AfterSchool Association Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (NAA HEPA) standards help guide programs through promoting healthy eating and physical activity. NAA HEPA standards are, however, voluntary efforts, and thousands of programs are at various stages of implementing them.

State or local laws are one option to promote healthy eating and physical activity in OST, and a recent report, Using State Laws & Regulations to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs by Jean Wiecha, Ph.D., and Kristen Capogrossi, Ph.D., of RTI International, examines whether state policy approaches increase awareness, adoption and implementation of HEPA standards.

The authors of the study found that it depends—on potential benefit, jurisdictional content, funding streams and the needs of providers and children.

“In theory, state policy approaches have the potential to alter the current dynamics of NAA HEPA adoption, implementation and sustainability by shifting from a voluntary approach with a limited reach to a policy approach with universal reach, under jurisdiction,” wrote Drs. Wiecha and Capogrossi.

They note that while state policy could potentially disrupt OST programs by introducing additional costs and increasing disparities in quality, it could also offer four distinct benefits:

AN INCREASE IN THE PROPORTION OF PROGRAMS THAT MEET HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY QUALITY STANDARDS.

AN INCREASED AWARENESS THAT THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME FIELD IS AN ACTIVE, ORGANIZED PARTICIPANT IN CHILD OBESITY EFFORTS.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING DIRECTED TOWARD OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS.

THE POTENTIAL FOR SIMPLIFYING COMPLIANCES AND MONITORING EXPECTATIONS FOR OST BY INTEGRATING HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY QUALITY STANDARDS INTO OTHER INITIATIVES.

Wiecha and Capogrossi concluded in their study that state policy could, if crafted well, increase quality equitably among OST sites and especially benefit low-resource sites. With the risk of unintended consequences, any forays into state policy approaches should seek voluntary participation before mandatory—and should be integrated into pre-existing rules and regulations wherever possible.
HEALTHY OUT OF SCHOOL TIME (HOST) COALITION POLICY AGENDA Proposed by HOST Policy Work Group, January 2017

The HOST Coalition is a national coalition of leaders in the out-of-school time (OST) field. Its goal is to foster health and well-being practices in afterschool and summer programs nationwide, using science-based standards for healthy eating, physical activity, screen time and social supports for these behaviors including staff, family and child engagement. And it encourages the exploration and adoption of the evidence-based NAA HEPA standards.

The HOST Coalition will seek to advance the following federal, state and local policy goals over the year, with the aim of addressing at least one federal, state and local goal based on current priorities and political landscape.

FEDERAL POLICY Prevent cuts and support increase in funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and CDC funding related to school health and obesity prevention. • Support afterschool and summer meal streamlining and strengthening within Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR)*.

STATE POLICY Support and advance Voices for Healthy Kids OST policy campaigns. • Advance state funding for physical activity and healthy meals in OST programs.

LOCAL POLICY Advance policies that encourage local Shared Use/Food Storage Prep/Use Access to Kitchens as well as add physical activity/gym/playground/built environment/bike trails. • Advance favorable local procurement policies to encourage OST partnerships with Food Banks, farm-to-OST, gardens and farms.

The HOST Coalition always welcomes input on its work. To provide feedback or learn more about how you can work with the HOST Policy Work Group to advance this agenda, e-mail epeterson@afterschoolalliance or tlloyd@afterschoolalliance.org. *Currently on hold
At age 31, Matthew Emerzian was Senior Vice President for a leading music marketing company owned by Robert Kardashian. From Coldplay to U2 to Usher, Emerzian worked on projects for some of the largest artists in the world. He was living large and thought he had it all.

Then, he hit rock bottom. “I realized everything I built or tried to build didn’t really matter, and I was diagnosed with chronic anxiety and depression.”

He began seeing a therapist who, during one of their first sessions, asked Emerzian to read the first sentence of a book. It read: It’s not about you. Soon thereafter, Emerzian started a weekly community service routine that would change not only his life, but the lives of many others.

“I was picking up trash in Los Angeles one Saturday morning, and felt a joy I had not felt in a long time. A purpose. I realized that finding happiness truly lies in our ability to care for and serve one another.”

Today, Emerzian is the founder and CEO of Every Monday Matters (EMM), a nonprofit organization committed to creating a new normal, where individuals and organizations understand how much and why they matter.

“When people connect with their ‘matterness’ and their ability to do good, they make different choices—choices that can help themselves and their communities thrive,” Emerzian shared. “Feeling like you matter might be one of the most significant needs we have. There are people everywhere, including educators and students, who don’t think they matter or they think matter for all the wrong reasons.”

Where do we start when it comes to mattering? With our actions and Mondays, of course. EMM offers an annual calendar with monthly themes reflecting things they and all their community members feel the world needs more of today. Monthly themes in 2017 include Hopeful, Healthy, Selfless and Adventurous, to name a few. Then, every Monday within a month offers tangible ways for people to bring that monthly theme to life. “Make a Memory” and “Try New Stuff” are two Mondays in Adventurous month, for example.

EMM’s YOU MATTER™ Education Program offers a curriculum that over 1,800 educators in 45 states and six countries have registered for in just two years. The program’s reach is already over 500,000 students. This hands-on curriculum creates an educational climate where students and educators experience how much they matter to themselves, each other and their community.

As students participate in activities each week, they examine themes through three perspectives: “I matter.” “You matter.” “We matter.” The curriculum is built upon Social and Emotional and Service Learning models that have been proven to raise students’ level of engagement, and academic and behavioral performance.

EMM sees educators as critical partners in helping all students discover their purpose, power and how much they matter, and therefore offers the program at no cost. Visit www.everymondaymatters.org/educators to register for the cost-free curriculum. To bring “mattering” training to your team, e-mail edu@everymondaymatters.org.
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