



IN REACH, INC.
*helping young people
 reach their potential*

REVEALED!

Community-based organizations, educators, county officials and others helping students pursue and achieve academic excellence in Prince George's County, Maryland

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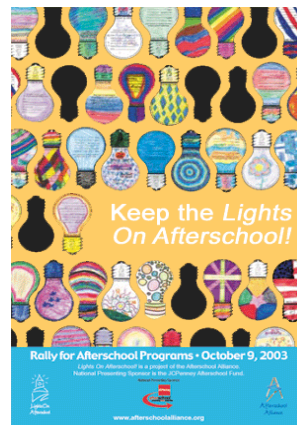
FYI

It's that time of the year. When parents near and far are in a frenzy trying to find after-school care for their children. In many communities in Prince George's County, after-school programs are a hard to come by commodity—for some it's money, for others it's location, and still for others it's hours of operation.

An excellent resource for parents, centers, and child care providers is the Prince George's Child Resource Center (PGCRC). PGCRC is a non-profit organization that exists to promote secure, quality child care and family support services for residents of Prince George's County, Maryland. They provide referrals of licensed child care providers and centers to parents, conduct training for child care providers and parents, and operate a family support center. Visit the Prince George's Child Resource Center at www.childresource.org.

The Afterschool Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of after-school programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children is in its third year of celebrating Lights On Afterschool!. The only nationwide event celebrating after-school, Lights On Afterschool! aims to bring attention to the need for after-school programs that keep kids safe, help working

families, and improve academic achievement. The Afterschool Alliance is supported by a group of public, private and nonprofit organizations that share the Alliance's vision of ensuring that all children have access to after-school programs by 2010. Visit the Afterschool Alliance on the web at www.afterschoolalliance.org.



In support of the Lights On Afterschool! Event, the National PTA declared October 6-10th Doors Open After School week. Find out more at www.pta.org/parentinvolvement.

On any given Friday night or Saturday evening, Prince George's Plaza, in Hyattsville, is filled with teenagers not shopping, but hanging out.

While there are some opportunities available for young people, few appear to be engaged in, interested in or aware of these opportunities. And too few opportunities exist. On Our Shelves (page 5) highlights engaging older youth in after-school programming.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATIONS

Marye Wells-Harley, Director

Ms. Wells-Harley has been with the Department of Parks and Recreations (the Department) for thirty-seven years, serving in a variety of positions. She spent three years as the acting director before becoming its permanent director.

IN REACH interviewed Ms. Wells-Harley about the Department's after-school and weekend opportunities for children and youth in Prince George's County.

1. What is the Department of Parks and Recreation's role in providing after-school programs to children and youth?

The Department of Parks and Recreation's overall mission is to provide recreational opportunities for all ages. After school and weekends are prime hours during the school year for working with children and youth.

2. How does the Department work with communities to determine what type of programs would be suitable for its children and youth?

The Department works closely with the Parks and Recreation Council to ensure that opportunities in all communities are being met. The Parks and Recreation Council serves as the community's voice to keep the Department informed about its needs.

We work with civic associations, municipalities and other partners year round, usually meeting monthly, to plan programs.

3. How does the Department collaborate with community or faith-based organizations, schools or other nonprofits to advance its mission?

We are closely aligned with the Prince George's County Public School System on a number of activities. We have a formal agreement that outlines special concerns such as the use of school space. Another example is providing buses for field trips. We are very collaborative with the school system.

We have a close working relationship with the Community School Task Force.

Our relationship with education is best modeled through our Park-School Partnerships. Some examples are the Kettering-Largo and Perrywood schools where a community center already existed and a school was later built on the land owned by Park and Planning. Park-School Partners share such spaces as the gymnasium and computer rooms.

Samuel P. Massie Park Elementary School, opened in August 2003, is another shining example of this type of collaborative effort. We take care of the outside of the building and the school system handles inside and provides policing.

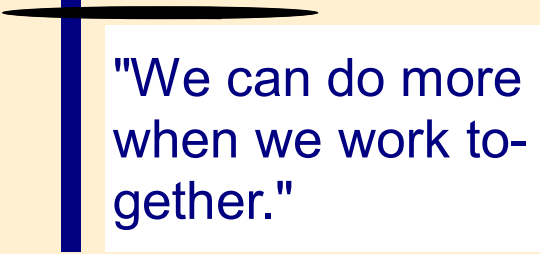
4. How can community-based organizations partner with the department to implement a special event?

To collaborate with the Department on a local or county-wide project, start by calling my office, 301.699.2582.

5. In what areas do more attention need to be given?

We are always looking for opportunities to work together to provide services for children.

It is important that agencies that focus on youth work together to ensure that no child falls through the cracks, to avoid duplication of services, and to provide services where there is a gap. Community-based organizations have a very important role in providing services. We seek partnerships with them to advance our work.



"We can do more
when we work together."

Q: What are some of the top issues facing the (after-school) field right now and how is the Institute approaching them?

A: Because of money, one of the biggest focal points is on evaluations. Funders want to know what their return on investment is and how training is really affecting the quality of after-school programming.

We provide follow-up training, technical assistance, and distribute surveys before and after discussion groups to support system building.

After-school programs are doing great things. How the quality of after-school programs is being affected through training, and technical assistance is important.

Q: What can community-based organizations operating out-of-school programs do to improve the work of the field?

A: The biggest thing that these programs can do is to get training, training and more training for their staff. Programs need to have change strategies to connect around the youth development language. Funders are looking for meaningful ways to advance youth development. We have a core group of 30 providers. These providers come together to learn the language of youth development and to begin to understand how this development affects young people.

Support staff also need more training!

The After-School Institute, other nonprofits in Maryland, and community and faith-based organizations need to increase their networking and stop competing

for the same resources. We need to refocus our energy on building partnership to help us sustain ourselves and to free up resources so that each agency can do what it does well collaboratively. This consists of partnering, connecting, sharing resources and staff training.

Q: How can interested organizations become involved in the work of the Institute?

A: The first stop is our website. It is always available. Information about the Institute and on national resources can be found on the site. Although the Institute was founded in Baltimore, the need for support of out-of-school programs are similar to those in most other places. We publish a quarterly newsletter, *The After-Scoop*, and provide technical assistance.

There is also an electronic listserv which includes local, regional, and national information and resources.

Q: How is the Institute involved in the Lights On Afterschool! event this year?

A: In the past, we have participated in recognition luncheons, provided training, and held press conferences. Last year, we created schedules of all Lights On! events happening around the city.

This year, we are participating by disseminating information and helping to organize Maryland Opportunity Sites.

Read more about the After-School Institute and its initiatives in detail at www.afterschoolinstitute.org.

THE AFTER-SCHOOL INSTITUTE

Lori Carter
Coordinator, Technical Assistance

The After-School Institute is a Baltimore-based capacity-building organization. Our mission is to provide after-school programs with the training and support they need to offer children and youth quality after-school and out-of-school opportunities.

Prince George's County Public Schools Before and After School Care Program

Under the supervision of the Department of Student Support Programs, the Prince George's County Public School System, (PGCPSS) administers a school-age child care program. Its goal is to provide a safe, enriching environment for Prince George's County elementary school students at the request of the community. The program provides a combination of academic and youth development support, as well as meet the needs of parents by offering a safe, accessible, and affordable school-based program.

Although many states exempt their county school systems from having to be licensed for child care, Maryland Programs are licensed by the State Child Care Administration. As a result of a commitment to quality child care, the PGCPSS program frequently exceeds Maryland State requirements.

Each program is housed at an elementary school, which means parents don't have to provide transportation between the school and child care. An allotment of school space and other general resources are made available for program use.

If you would like to know how to get a program started at your school, write or call: Before and After School Care Program, Ager Road Center, 6111 Ager Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Office Phone #: 301.408.5593, Fax: 301.408.6881. Kaye Stumb is the director of Student Support Programs. Read more at www.pgcps.org.

Issue to Watch: Mentoring Children of Prisoners

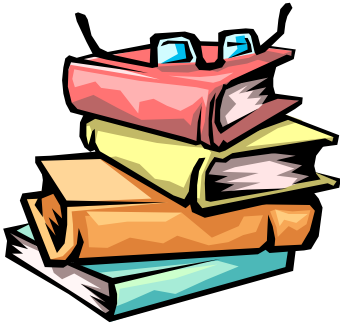
Across the United States, an estimated two million children, ages 5 to 18, have a parent who is incarcerated in a federal or state prison or a local jail. The majority of these children are very young: over half are less than 10 years old, and more than 20 percent are younger than age 5. Many of them share the challenges faced by the larger population of this country's at-risk young people: poverty, violence, limited opportunities for an adequate education, and a future that appears to hold very little promise.

In comes mentoring.

Amachi: Mentoring Children of Prisoners in Philadelphia is a report that documents the programs early years of operation in Philadelphia, its birthplace. The report not only looks at data regarding program quality and effectiveness, but also the strategies and mechanics of setting up, operating, and maintaining an Amachi program. It is meant to be helpful to those interested in supporting or operating an Amachi program; it will be enlightening to those who think that mentoring is a simple intervention.

For more information on this topic visit the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, www.nicic.org; the Family Corrections Network, www.fcnetwork.org; and the Federal Resource Center for Children of Prisoners, www.cwla.org/programs/incarcerated/cop_getinvolved.htm. Additional resources can be found on these pages.

ON OUR SHELVES



Critical Hours: Afterschool Programs and Educational Success by Beth M. Miller, Ph.D., May 2003, examines the effects of out-of-school time on children during the fragile, hectic and often neglected period of development: early adolescence, spanning the years from 10 to 14. Seeks answers to questions such as, “What role can after-school programs play in helping young people navigate early adolescence to successful adulthood?” and “What help students become motivated to succeed?” This report argues that after-school programs can make a difference in building the “prerequisites” to learning, supporting not only school achievement, but long-term competence and success as well. Download at www.nmefdn.org.

Increasing Opportunities for Older Youth in After-School Programs by Carla Herrera and Amy J.A. Arbreton, January 2003. Few after-school programs have developed strategies for attracting large numbers of teens, especially older and harder-to-serve youth. In response to this need, Madison Square Boys & Girls Club in New York City and Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston participated in a three-year initiative to enhance services to under-served teens. This report documents the successes and challenges the Clubs experienced as the initiative unfolded. They recruited large numbers of teens, involved them in a variety of activities, and provided them with emotional support, leadership opportunities, and programming in two critical areas, academics and job training. Download at www.ppv.org.

Out-of-School Time Policy Commentary #2 High School After-School: What is it? What might it be? Why is it important? by The Forum for Youth Investment, January 2003. The title speaks for itself. The End Notes contain excellent resources. Download at www.forumforyouthinvestment.org.

PUBLISHER

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Toni A. Smith, Founder and President



IN REACH believes that young people should always be *in reach* of a quality education, opportunities in their community for development, and, ultimately, their dreams.

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