

THE CHICAGO OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROJECT

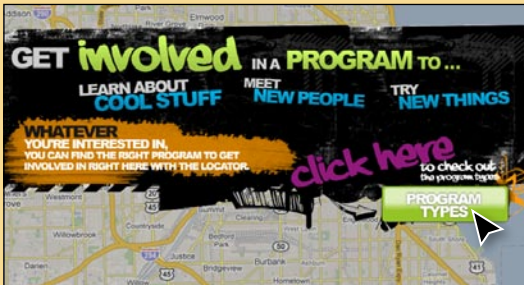
Support and Service For
Chicago's After-School Programs



The body of evidence continues to grow: teens engaged in after-school opportunities are more likely to succeed in the classroom, the workplace, and in life. There are more than 25,000 varieties of activities offered by the City's after-school providers, representing more than 380,000 annual opportunities for students. Yet needs are still not being met; 75 percent of high schoolers are estimated not to be involved in after-school programs, and more than half of the city's teens don't know where there are local programs that are safe or easily accessible.

NEW!

Afterschoolchicago.org Connecting Teens to Opportunities



Research shows that only 25 percent of Chicago teens participate in after-school programs on any given day and many believe few after-school programs appeal to their interest. **Afterschoolchicago.org** is an up-to-date website that assists Chicago's youth and the general public who want to find quality after-school programming. The website was designed with direct input from Chicago's teens after several months of data collection. **Afterschoolchicago.org** is also accessible to the public through the City's 311 call center and at local branch libraries citywide.

"If teenagers are lost, it's because we're losing them, by not giving them opportunities to show what they can do, to be their best, and to have a little fun in the process."

Mrs. Maggie Daley,
Chair, After School Matters

Created to build a citywide support system for Chicago's after-school programming, the Chicago Out-of-School Time Project is a program housed at the City's Department of Children and Youth Services. The Project was started in 2006, when Chicago was chosen by the Wallace Foundation as one of five cities to receive funding to create a stronger, sustainable public after-school system. Not unlike an industry coalition or nonprofit association, the Project brings together leaders from the city's after-school providers and works to create technical assistance and professional development opportunities meant to support the youth-serving workforce.

"The Project is helping build an after-school system that youth and families can easily understand and access, with programs that are of uniformly high quality — making us ready to respond quickly to new opportunities and resources."

Mary Ellen Caron,
Commissioner, Chicago Department of Children & Youth Services

Coordinating & Organizing

For the first time, multiple levels of staff from the five Project partner organizations meet regularly to discuss their work and coordinate decisions. The deputy commissioner of youth services at Children and Youth Services and the chief of staff for the Chicago Park District now work together in the Project's Leadership Team, for example, and local managers of after-school programs across each agency's network build complementary skills and share ideas at regular citywide professional development events. Together, these Project channels are helping to establish an effective and coordinated after-school environment.

"We're all city agencies, and we're all working with the same kids. It makes sense for us to talk regularly and set expectations and standards for our programs—but it wasn't happening. Sitting at the same table now and working together has been invaluable."

Erica Harris,
Head of CPS's Office of Extended Learning Opportunities
and member of the Project Leadership Team

The Department of Children and Youth Services coordinates city services and advocates on behalf of children and youth. Through its support, more than 300 community groups offer after-school programs to more than 18,000 children annually.

After School Matters partners with city agencies to expand out-of-school opportunities, sponsoring programs for more than 28,000 opportunities annually.

The Chicago Public Schools offers after school arts, academics, athletics and other programming at every school in the city, with more than 200,000 participants annually.

The Chicago Park District has after-school programs for Chicago's youth at more than 250 sites, serving nearly 40,000 young people annually.

The Chicago Public Library offer literacy, arts and other after-school programs at locations around the city for more than 100,000 young people.

4 Strategies Leading to Impact Citywide

The Project and its partners aim to strengthen the Chicago system of after-school supports by pursuing 4 key strategies:

- Increase coordination, access and reach of quality programming by creating a **citywide program and participant database** that can be shared across agencies and program providers;
- Increase teen participation through a **citywide communications initiative** based on direct research with Chicago teens and dissemination of best practices in teen programming, featuring the After School Matters apprenticeship model;
- Establish citywide common definitions of after-school program quality and increase **supports for continuous improvement of program quality** by offering professional development opportunities and creating common tools and technical assistance resources directly to program providers;
- Continually build support and readiness for achieving **sustainable, coordinated and dedicated funding**, in order to provide after-school program opportunities for all of Chicago's youth who want them.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT — BE IN TOUCH

afterschoolchicago@cityofchicago.org or 312.743.1511

