

### AFTERSCHOOL *news*



#### What Does Your High School Afterschool Program Look Like?

SEDL recently conducted a study exploring the current landscape of promising afterschool high school programs. Evaluations of various high school programs and phone interviews with leaders of eight promising high school afterschool programs that surfaced in a study by the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning gave SEDL a better understanding of high school afterschool programs and the policies that support these efforts. While the study does not qualify as scientifically based research, the findings indicate that high school afterschool programs considered most successful had the following characteristics:

1. They give high school students a voice in planning activities and a choice in what they do.
2. They feature activities that are relevant to the students' lives and prepare them for future education and work. Teens must believe that what they do in afterschool programs is relevant.
3. They give teens a sense of community or belonging. Teenagers want to interact with their peers in positive ways, and they also value relationships with caring adults.
4. They utilize technology to teach teens new skills and provide a creative environment.
5. They have flexible programming that meets the needs of teenagers. Due to busy schedules and the need to make money, most teenagers cannot attend afterschool programs every day.
6. They have creative, supportive, specialized, and high-quality staff. Volunteers, who often serve as mentors to students, are provided professional development prior to working with the students.
7. They have an adequate, safe facility equipped as needed to meet program goals.
8. They are dependent on school relationships, community relationships, parental relationships, and active partnerships.
9. They have visionary leaders who leverage funding and solicit support and partnership from educators, community leaders, parents, and students.



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The SEDL National Center for Quality Afterschool helps state education agencies and local practitioners develop high-quality programs for academic enrichment as well as youth development activities.

[www.sedl.org/afterschool](http://www.sedl.org/afterschool)



### RECOMMENDED *resource*

#### USING THE AFTERSCHOOL TRAINING TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Afterschool Training Toolkit professional development sessions that were offered this summer were so popular that SEDL is offering them again. The next 2-day training session will be held in Austin, Texas, on January 14–15, 2009. Space is limited, so register now!

[www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/news.cgi?announcement=44](http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/news.cgi?announcement=44)



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**KIM MISNER**  
grant coordinator

## Harlowton Advantage Program for Youth

HARLOWTON, MONTANA

Harlowton Advantage Program for Youth (H.A.P.Y.) is a 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool program that offers tutoring and homework assistance to more than 120 junior high and high school students in Wheatland County.

The program offers a variety of activities such as a study hall for homework help and a mentoring program where the high school students mentor elementary students. Students at H.A.P.Y. particularly enjoy the Chill Zone, which features computers, cable television, movies, video games, foosball, a pool table, air hockey, darts, and a jukebox. "It gives students a safe and socially acceptable place to 'hang out,'" says Kim Misner, the grant coordinator of H.A.P.Y.

Last year H.A.P.Y. held town hall meetings for the community. More than 200 youth and adults participated, as well as Chill Zone staff, librarian specialists, and representatives from the school and community. Funding was provided by a grant from the program's alcohol prevention specialist. For Misner, the biggest challenges are sustaining the students' attention and keeping up with current trends. "Whatever we do here has to be 'cool' (for lack of a better term) for the students to get involved and stay involved," says Misner. "We have to keep up with their quickly changing interests and let them know they have a voice, even when we don't accomplish exactly what they want. We let them know that we care and are interested in their views."

## IN YOUR words

What do think keeps high school students involved in afterschool? (Select all that apply.)

- The opportunity to play leadership roles and shape the program
- Job training
- The chance to earn class credits to graduate on time
- The chance to hang out with their friends
- Help with homework
- Other

To participate in this survey and view results, submit your vote at [www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200812.html](http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200812.html).

Produced by

## NATIONAL CENTER FOR QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL

Advancing Research, Improving Education



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## TRAINING tip

### The "Three Rs" for High School

In high school reform literature, the "three Rs" have been redefined to mean *relationships*, *rigor*, and *relevance*, and some believe that these Rs are also critical to afterschool programs. Positive relationships between instructors and students can be critical, and so can the sense that activities relate to real-world skills like job skills and life skills. What about rigor? You don't have to create an afterschool version of second-period algebra class, but it is important to keep students academically engaged.

## EVENTS calendar

Jan. 14–15 Using the Afterschool Training Toolkit for Professional Development  
[www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/news.cgi?announcement=44](http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/news.cgi?announcement=44)  
AUSTIN, TX

For more events, visit our calendar at [www.sedl.org/afterschool/training/calendar.html](http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/training/calendar.html).

Newsletter available online at [www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords](http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords)