

Expanding Learning: Making a Difference for Children and Youth

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Exciting Times

1. Key ingredients of powerful after-school programming have been identified
2. Meta-analyses indicate robust short-term effects
3. Emerging evidence of meaningful long-term outcomes

1. Key Ingredients That Make a Difference

- Early studies looked simply at participation—*scored as yes or no*
- Now we are assessing & analyzing:
 - **Program Quality**—*How good is the program*
 - **Intensity**— *How many hrs/wk & days/yr*
 - **Breadth** – *How many different types of activities*
 - **Cumulative Participation**—*% of participation over time*

1. Meta-analyses show robust short-term effects of program quality

- **Meta-analysis** is a statistical technique that combines results of multiple studies.
- Each study provides a data point, and studies are weighted by their sample size.

Meta-analyses...

- Enable us to look at the weight of the evidence across studies
- Offset the likelihood of a single study having undue influence
- Can help to provide more generalizable evidence
- Provide a common metric so that effects can be compared across studies

AN IMPORTANT META-ANALYSIS

- Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2010). *American Journal of Community Psychology*
 - 49 reports of 73 programs
 - Evaluated studies for evidence that programs offered **S**equential and **A**ctive activities with **F**ocused and **E**xplicit content—**SAFE**

DOCUMENTED SHORT-TERM EFFECTS OF HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMS

Durlak, Weissberg and Pachan (2010). *American Journal of Community Psychology*.

Outcomes	# of Studies	Significant Effects
School achievement	20	.31
Grades	25	.24
School attendance	20	.31
School bonding	28	.26
Self perceptions	22	.35
Positive social behaviors	35	.30
Problem behaviors	42	.26
Drug use	27	.22

So, are these effects “meaningful”?

Aspirin on heart disease, $d = .03$

School-based substance abuse prevention programs on drug & alcohol use, $d = .09$

Early child care & math achievement, $d = .09 - .12$

Class size reductions on math achievement, $d = .23$

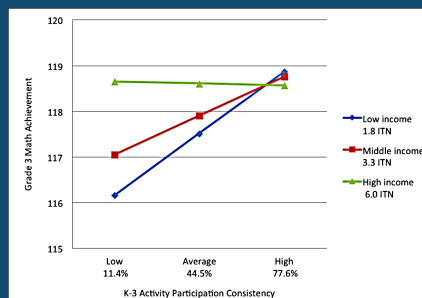
2. LONG-TERM & CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

STUDY OF EARLY CHILD CARE AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

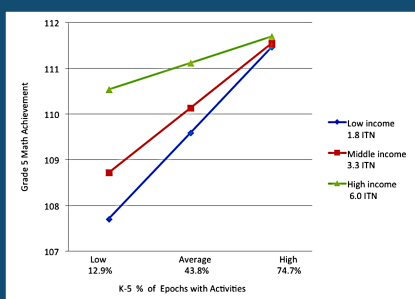
1360 children studied from birth through high school, included:

- Measures of afterschool activities
- Measures of school, early child care and families
- Multiple covariates
- A "value-added" analytic approach

FINDINGS: CUMULATIVE EFFECTS CLOSING THE MATH ACHIEVEMENT GAP GRADE 3



CUMULATIVE EFFECTS CLOSING THE MATH ACHIEVEMENT GAP GRADE 5

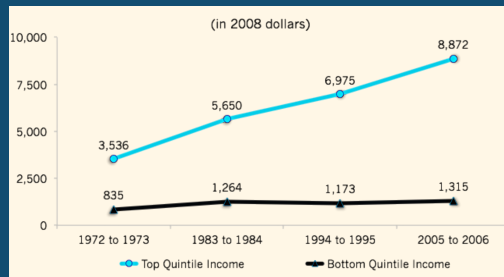


ENDURING EFFECTS

Breadth of Activities Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher math achievement (age 15) ▪ More confident and assertive ▪ Less substance use
Intensity Hours/Week Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More task persistence (age 15) ▪ Less substance use
Quality of Activities Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More confident and assertive (age 15) ▪ Fewer behavior problems (externalizing)

INCREASING OPPORTUNITY GAP

SPENDING ON ENRICHMENT (1972-2008)
Duncan and Murnane (2011). *Whither Opportunity?*



Final Reflections

- Unprecedented opportunities for afterschool programs to make a difference
- Move beyond participation: yes/no
- Incorporate measures of intensity, duration and quality in metrics
- Expanded student outcomes (academic as well as social, behavioral, and health outcomes)
- Critical to expand access for low-income youth who are less likely to have access to programs and who may most benefit from these programs