

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMMING:  
ASSESSING THE IMPACT ON ASSET DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG PEOPLE

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Abstract

Current literature on youth development supports the theory that out-of-school programming has an effect on positive youth development (Carnegie Corporation, 1992; Dunham & Walker, 1994; National Institute on Out-of-School-Time, 2001). However, little research has been conducted on types of out-of-school programs and comparisons among levels of involvement in relation to specific developmental traits. Hence, the purpose of this study was to analyze relationships between students' level of program involvement and the development of positive assets. Seven indices were formed to represent assets past research has determined to be critical in the positive growth of young people (Benson, 1990; Pittman, 1996; Hendricks, 1998; Perkins & Butterfield, 1999). These indices were formed by statistically combining responses to questions related to each asset. The assets included empowerment, contact with adults, self-confidence, positive identity, social competence, character and learned skills.

The findings of this study exemplify a method that can be used to assess the effects of out-of-school programs on youth development. Also, this research examined specific programs and how different levels of involvement relate to one another and to the development of positive assets. Specifically, this study examined 4-H in an effort to find differentiation of 4-H youth development among other out-of-school programs.