



@fterschool advisor - December 17, 2012

Announcements from the Center

Spring Training Series Kicks Off with Diana Brown's Conscious Discipline!

We know that the Arizona afterschool community is dedicated to quality and professional development - over 700 people from across the state attended the 2012 Arizona Afterschool Conference last month, hungry for ongoing learning opportunities. You told us you want behavior management trainings and that you loved Diana Brown, and we listened!

Diana Brown, a star of the 2012 Arizona Afterschool Conference, will be delivering her high-energy, engaging Conscious Discipline workshop on four dates across the state. She got rave reviews for her session at the November conference - attendees loved how fun, funny, and useful her session was. Behavior management can be a challenge; let Diana show you how to effectively handle conflict so staff and kids can spend less time addressing behavior and more time learning!

This fast-paced workshop, empowering staff to effectively handle behavior issues and conflicts, will be presented with the learning brain in mind and will include music, movement, and interaction between participants.

You will walk away from this training energized and able to...

- understand the emotional brain and recognize "brain states"
- keep your cool when interacting with children
- see conflict as an opportunity to teach
- respond constructively to kids tattling
- deliver effective consequences

This is a fantastic training that no one will want to miss!

Choose from four training dates across the state:

PHOENIX

West Valley: January 24

9 AM - Noon

Deer Valley Governing Board Room
20402 N. 15th Ave., Phoenix

\$30 a person

East Valley: January 30

9 AM - Noon

Kyrene Governing Board Room
Ben Furlong Education Center
8700 S. Kyrene Road, Tempe

\$30 a person

TUCSON

January 29

9 AM - Noon

Donna Liggins Rec Center
2160 N 6th Ave., Tucson

\$30 a person

FLAGSTAFF

January 31

9 AM - Noon

Coconino Community College 4th Street Campus
3000 N. Fourth St., Flagstaff

\$30 a person

REGISTER NOW!

Questions? Contact 602.496.3308 or info@azafterschool.org

Standards Committee Update: What Does a Quality Improvement System Look Like?

The Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence and the Valley of the Sun United Way have joined forces to ensure all Arizona kids have access to quality afterschool programming by embarking on a three year process to develop and implement a Continuous Quality Improvement System. The 30-member [Standards Committee](#), made up of providers, policy makers, funders, and other stakeholders from across the state held its second meeting this month. The Committee continued its work of considering where the bar for quality should be, and how to make sure Arizona programs not only meet but aspire to exceed those standards in serving our state's children and youth.

What is a continuous quality improvement system?

One of the most important questions that comes up in the course of developing a quality improvement system is what does such a program look like? The Arizona process is structured as a three year, three part undertaking.



The standards currently being written represent the framework for quality - providers, families, and funders will have a common understanding of what they can expect from a quality program.

The assessment tool to be created in year two of the process helps programs identify where their strengths and weaknesses are, allowing them to create a strategic plan for improvement. This is where the picture of what a quality program looks like comes more sharply into focus, with more concrete indicators lending definition to the broader strokes of the standards.

The enhanced professional development framework, to come in year three, will represent a more targeted approach to seeking and receiving training for staff members, better allowing programs to increase quality.

The shift is not a quick one, but the process is vital to making sure that all Arizona kids have access to quality programming during their out of school time. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's [Kids Count data](#) ranks Arizona 46th in both education and overall well being of children and youth. The system will help ensure that afterschool providers are a key part of the solution in improving those numbers, and the lives of our kids.

For more information on the work of the standards committee or the development of the quality improvement process, contact Melanie McClintock at 602.496.3307 or mmcclintock@azafterschool.org.

Changes to Empower Center Standards Emphasize Oral Health, Sun Safety, and Professional Development



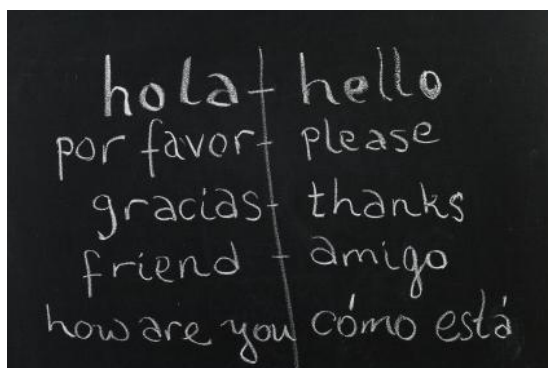
The bar for health standards in child care just got a little higher with the new changes to the Empower Center standards slated to go into effect in January. The Empower program allows licensed child care centers to benefit from a 50 percent reduction in licensing fees if they become Empower Centers and implement the program's standards focused on encouraging better nutrition and healthy living. The program, which started as a pilot three years ago at the height of the budget crisis, has proven effective in raising children's health outcomes and is now here to stay, which helped spur the changes to the standards.

With the new additions to the list of standards, which has now grown to 10, Empower Centers will foster not only best practices in nutrition and physical activity but also sun safety and oral health. Both areas are significant public health concerns in the state. There is also an added staff training requirement of three hours annually related to physical activity, nutrition, oral health, and tobacco education. The Department of Health Services will provide training opportunities at their own conference, at other organization's conferences such as their workshop at the 2012 Arizona Afterschool Conference, and online as well, hoping to make the trainings as cost-neutral and accessible as possible.

"I think we'll see our children have the opportunity to create a foundation for healthy futures," said Cynthia Melde of the Arizona Department of Health Services. She added that when children pick up healthy habits early, they are much less likely to struggle with obesity and chronic disease later in life.

[See the new Empower Standards here>>](#)

Redesigned Bilingual Afterschool Directory Allows Programs to Reach Spanish-Speaking Families



Arizona's Hispanic population is a significant force in the state. According to the [Pew Hispanic Center](#), Hispanic youth represent 43 percent of Arizona's K-12 students, and 68 percent speak a language other than English at home. This trend is one that has defined Arizona, and likely will continue to. However, as research by the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence has identified, Latino children and youth represent a distinctly lower percentage in programs than they do in the general school-age population. **Thanks to the newly redesigned, bilingual Arizona Afterschool Directory, language is no longer a barrier to reaching this important segment of our population.**

The [Arizona Afterschool Program Directory](#) is the state's only bilingual, centralized database of organized afterschool and out of school time programs. Its powerful search features allow parents and families to look for programs not only geographically and age-wise, but also to search via programming criteria.

The intentional addition of bilingual capabilities to the directory will help Arizona afterschool programs reach the growing, underrepresented Latino school-age demographic. The Spanish version has all the same tools available as in the English version of the site - the powerful advanced search capabilities, the functional Google mapping, and the easy to understand interface are all there. They are just in a form that is now accessible to Spanish-speaking families. All Arizona children deserve access to high quality afterschool programming; the new directory is helping make that a reality.

The addition of bilingual capabilities is paired with AzCASE's outreach efforts to the Arizona Latino community, which includes participation in events such as Univision's Back to School Fair "Es El Momento: Preparandose para el Exito/The Time is Now: Preparing for Success." **Join the Directory and make your program accessible to families in this underrepresented school-age demographic!**

Updating or entering data into the directory is easy!

- **If your program already has a login**, enter the directory to review your data and update your information so families can better find you.
- **If you do not yet have a login**, create one and enter the requested data to make your site readily accessible to Arizona families looking for quality afterschool programming!

[Click here to go to the Arizona Afterschool Directory!](#)

Questions? Watch the [video tutorial](#) or contact AzCASE at info@azafterschool.org or 602.496.3308.

Coming Soon: Expect More Excellence Tour!

In the new year, Expect More Arizona will launch a new campaign called The Expect More Excellence Tour to advance a shared vision of world-class excellence for Arizona. A world-class education already exists for some Arizona students, but not for most. This campaign will build public demand for raising the bar for all Arizona students by shining a spotlight on examples of excellence that already exists across the state. A panel of community stakeholders will select winners from each region of the state, and Arizonans will have the opportunity to vote for the People's Choice of Excellence. The tour, to be launched in the spring, will highlight the excellence that does exist in the state, particularly emphasizing projects that are replicable or scalable, and that represent a broader culture of excellence.

Afterschool programs are increasingly being recognized as critical components for a child's personal growth and success. It is important for afterschool programs to participate and be highlighted in the upcoming tour, both to be recognized for the great work being done but also to help raise awareness of the afterschool field and its benefits for our state's children and youth. Stay tuned for more details on the tour and how you can be involved to help shine the light on afterschool excellence in 2013!

[Learn more about Expect More Arizona>>](#)

Focus on Health

Afterschool programs play a key role in the health and well-being of youth through activities that encourage healthy behaviors, an environment that includes a healthy snack or meal, and opportunities for physical activity. This section features new topics, resources, curriculum ideas and activities to help you ensure youth are fit, healthy, and ready to learn. [See a complete list of our afterschool health resources here>>](#)

Want to improve kids' academic outcomes? Make exercise a priority



A new study shows that middle school students who were fit performed better in school. The researchers followed the physical and academic performance of eighth graders and found that those who were in better shape outperformed less fit peers in both standardized tests and grades. The areas that had the strongest correlation to academic success: cardiorespiratory fitness and muscular strength and endurance. Researchers say that it's too soon to draw a causal relationship, but it's safe to say that this may be just another reason to get kids up and moving afterschool. Their health and grades may depend on it!

[Read more about the study here>>](#)

Health Funding Opportunities

Mantis Gardening Equipment Grants

Deadline: March 7

The National Gardening Association and Mantis will give 25 charitable and educational garden programs a Mantis Tiller/Cultivator with border/edger and kickstand and the choice of a gas-powered 2-cycle engine or electric motor. All nonprofits that enhance their local communities are eligible. Past winners include community gardens, schools, ministries, colleges, master gardening groups, and hospices.

[More information>>](#)

ING Run for Something Better School Awards

Deadline: May 15

Working in partnership with the National Association for Sports and Physical Education, ING will provide grants to establish a school-based running program or expand an existing one (before, during or after school hours). Awards are available to programs that target grades Kindergarten through 8th grade in elementary or middle schools. The awards program will provide a minimum of fifty (50) grants up to \$2,500 for each school that desires to establish a school based running program or expand an existing one. Through activity plans created by NASPE and based on the National Standards for Physical Education, the awards program will offer children a healthy start to life and foster their desire to exercise before obesity ever begins.

[More information>>](#)

APS Foundation Grants

Deadline: Rolling

Through Corporate Giving, APS supports nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) Internal Revenue Service tax exempt status through cash and/or in kind services. APS supports local communities in five strategic areas: health and human services, community development, education, arts and culture, and environment. Grants have been awarded to schools, recreation centers, sports programs, and many other community groups. Award amounts vary.

[More information>>](#)

SPARK Health Grants

[Grant Finder Tool](#) allows you to search for Grants by location and program of interest. Grants updated daily.

Arizona's Coordinated School Health Program

Provides current funding opportunities from their partnering organizations.

[View here>>](#)

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in the afterschool community,
join our network on Facebook!



Afterschool in the News

Challenges of Rural Programs Come to Light

The out of school time field has received increasing amounts of attention in recent years as educators and policy makers search for new ways to close the achievement gap, stem the dropout crisis, and more actively engage kids in their education. Rural programs, however, have still not gotten a large slice of that spotlight.

[As Education Week reports](#) - and many Arizona programs know all too well - rural programs face a unique set of challenges. Recruiting and retaining qualified staff can prove difficult for urban programs, and becomes even more of an issue among the smaller populations in rural areas (see the research and reports section for more on that). Inadequate funding and transportation issues are the other serious barriers identified. A key to increasing success for rural programs cited in the article is the work of statewide networks, such as AzCASE and others funded by the Charles Steward Mott Foundation, which help link rural programs to one another.

[Read Education Week's reporting on rural afterschool programs here>>](#)

New USDA Memo Streamlines Process for Afterschool Meals for At-Risk Kids

Feeding hungry kids meals afterschool is a crucial service afterschool programs provide to some of our country's neediest children and youth. It certainly isn't easy, though - the rules around federal funding for afterschool meals are byzantine, resulting in confusion across the many levels of players involved. A new memo released by the USDA, seeks to address some of the concerns that have come up surrounding administration of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act enabling the afterschool meal program, and also seeks to support expansion of the program by easing the burden on local sites. The Afterschool Alliance urges participating programs to share and discuss the changes with their state agencies.

[Read the memo here>>](#)

Job Opportunities

**HAVE AN AFTERSCHOOL JOB OPENING
TO POST IN OUR NEWSLETTER?**

[Post it here>>](#)

Flagstaff STEM Consortium

Flagstaff Community STEM Coordinator - Part Time

[Read more>>](#)

Association for Supportive Childcare

T.E.A.C.H. Coordinator

[Read more>>](#)

BAG IT

Event & Volunteer Coordinator (Tucson)

[Read more>>](#)

Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley

Health and PE Director (Gilbert)

[Read more>>](#)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix

Activity Leader: Youth and Teens
(Phoenix)

[Read more>>](#)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix

Art Activity Leader (Phoenix)

[Read more>>](#)

First Things First

Parent Awareness & Community Outreach Coordinator (Coconino County)

[Read more>>](#)

[View the full list of available positions and descriptions on our website>>](#)

Funding Opportunities

***New opportunities in red**

Botanical Education Grants

Deadline: December 31, 2012

The Herb Society of America's Grant for Educators challenges individuals, groups, or small businesses to develop and deliver learning experiences to the public. Each year, the Grant Committee anticipates funding 1-2 grants for a total of \$5,000. The Grant rewards innovative projects that enhance herbal education in school systems, communities, or any public forum (electronic or person-to-person). Applications are requested from educators, persons engaged in botanical or horticultural activities, museum directors, botanical/garden writers, and small herbal business owners.

[More information>>](#)

Full Circle Trade and Thrift Grant Opportunity **Deadline: January 11, 2013**

The Board of Full Circle Trade and Thrift is now accepting applications from local (Flagstaff) non-profits to participate in a new program. If chosen the applicant will be selected for a month in 2013 to receive a percentage of the profits made for that month. The non-profit will assist in volunteering at the store, providing goods for sale and/or getting the word out about the store. The more outreach they are able to do, the more the bottom line will be increased. Applications need to be returned by January 11, 2013 at 5:00p.m.

For more information, contact Bill Packard at 928-214-1094.

National Science Foundation STEM Grants **Deadline: January 14, 2013**

The Advancing Informal STEM Learning program invests in research and development of innovative and field advancing out of school STEM learning and emerging STEM learning environments.

[More information>>](#)

Community Action Grants

Deadline: January 15, 2013

The American Association of University Women is offering Community Action Grants to individuals, AAUW branches, AAUW state organizations, and community-based non-profit organizations that propose programs promoting education and equity for women and girls. One-year grants of \$2,000-\$7,000 will provide seed money for new projects whose topics include a clearly-defined activity that promotes education and equity for women and girls. Two-year grants of \$5,000-\$10,000 will provide start-up funds for longer-term programs that address the particular needs of the community and develop girls' sense of efficacy through leadership or advocacy opportunities. Special consideration will be given to projects focused on K-12 and community college girls' and women's achievements in science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM).

[More information>>](#)

AZ Commission on the Arts Fast-Track Grants

Deadline: January 25, 2013

Arizona Commission on the Arts Fast-Track Professional Development Grants for Individuals provide aid to artists, arts administrators, and arts educators for funding professional development and skills-building endeavors with an award of up to \$750. The deadline upcoming deadline is for activities taking place between January 1, 2013 and June 30, 2013.

[More information>>](#)

Department of Veterans Affairs Grants

Deadline: February 1, 2013

The Department of Veterans Affairs is funding Supportive Services for Veterans' Families grants, available to nonprofits that provide assistance to the children and families of service members.

[More information>>](#)

The Big Read Grants

Deadline: February 5, 2013

Encourage literacy in your community! Approximately 75 organizations in communities of varying sizes across the country will be selected to participate in The Big Read from September 2013 through June 2014. Community organizations participating in The Big Read develop and produce community-wide reading programs which encourage reading and participation by diverse audiences. Applicant organizations for The Big Read must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit; a division of state, local, or tribal government; or a tax-exempt public library.

[More information>>](#)

Captain Planet Foundation Grants

Deadline: February 28, 2013

The CPF annually funds projects that serve as catalysts to getting environment-based education in schools and inspire youth and communities to participate in community service through environmental stewardship activities. Recipients of these awards are often schools and nonprofits that propose projects involving children and young adults (aged 6-18). Generally, the sum of awarded grants is between \$250-2,500.

[More information>>](#)

Freeport McMoRan K-12 STEM Grants

Deadline: March 15, 2013

The Freeport-McMoRan Foundation supports K-12 public and private schools with their STEM Innovation Grants. These grants are designed to support K-12 teachers and schools in their efforts to develop, improve or expand innovative instructional programs in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Applicants may be teachers, school administrators or parent volunteers/PTA officials at public and private schools located in or near communities where Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold has a presence. K-12 schools are the only organizations eligible for this support. Grants up to \$5,000 will be awarded to support projects in the eligible project categories.

[More information>>](#)

Share Our Strength Grants

Deadline: Rolling

Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry grants utilize funds raised through our Great American Bake Sale, Dine Out For No Kid Hungry, and other sources to support innovative programs that help improve children's access to programs that help address hunger. Share Our Strength awards grants of \$5,000 - 10,000 to non-profit organizations, schools, and other eligible organizations involved in the following activities:

- * Increasing access to after-school snack and meal programs or childcare programs supported through CACFP

- * Increasing access to summer meals programs supported through the Summer Food Service Program or the National School Lunch "Seamless Summer" Program

- * Educating and enrolling more eligible families in SNAP/WIC

- * Increasing the availability of Universal School Breakfast through alternative models such as in-

classroom breakfast and grab-n-go

* Advocacy around any of the above anti-hunger issues

[More information>>](#)

LEGO Children's Fund Grants

Deadline: Rolling

The LEGO Children's Fund provides quarterly grants to programs with a special interest in collaborative efforts and raising matching funds. The Foundation gives priority consideration to programs that meet their goals and are supported in volunteer time and effort by LEGO employees. Grants will be awarded to qualified tax-exempt organizations, including educational organizations with specific, identifiable needs primarily in early childhood education and development, technology and communication projects, and sport or athletic programs that concentrate on under-served youth. Typical awards are \$500-5,000.

[More information>>](#)

Michael and Susan Dell Foundation Grants

Deadline: Rolling

The Michael and Susan Dell Foundation is committed to alleviating urban children experiencing poverty and gives grants of varying amounts to charitable or tax-exempt organizations. The Foundation seeks to fund projects that directly serve or impact children in 5 essential focus areas: education, health, safety, youth development, and early childhood care. The MSDF will review submitted online grant proposals and respond via e-mail within six weeks. If they find the proposed project to be aligned with their mission, the applicant will be asked to complete a formal grant application for funding.

[More information>>](#)

[Find more resources and funding opportunities on our website>>](#)

Awards, Contests & Fellowships

NFL Network PE Teacher of the Year

Deadline: December 31

The NFL Network PE Teacher of the Year awards \$10,000 to an outstanding PE teacher leading the fight against childhood obesity. The winner will also be given a \$5,000 School Companion PE Grant, a trip to the NFL Draft, and will act as a spokesperson for the program in 2013.

[More information>>](#)

Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

Deadline: January 15

Know a youth, an adult, or an organization that has gone above and beyond in service to others? The Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism is accepting nominations for the 12th Annual Governor's Volunteer Service Awards. Nomination forms will be accepted through January 15, 2013, with the award recipient announcement made in March 2013. Those selected as this year's recipients of the Governor's Volunteer Service Award will be honored at a special reception in April 2013.

[More information>>](#)

Civic Engagement Video Contest

Deadline: January 31

Project Civil Discourse and the Arizona Humanities Council have launched a student voices video contest, inviting Arizona students in high school or college to create a video answering the question, "What does civic engagement mean to you?" First and second place will receive a cash prize.

[More information>>](#)

Center for Native American Youth Champions for Change Program

Deadline: January 31

The Champions for Change (CFC) program recognizes and encourages inspirational Native youth (ages 14 to 24) working in their tribal or urban Indian communities to promote hope and make a positive impact. Champions can include individuals who initiate programs, events, or other efforts to improve the lives of fellow Native youth and Indian Country. In addition to an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, DC, where finalists will be honored, they will also have an opportunity to participate in a mentorship pairing; serve a two-year term on a newly created Youth Advisory Board at the Center; and be eligible for consideration for a future visit from a member of the Center's board of advisors to their home community to share more about their initiative for change.

[More information>>](#)

National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award

Deadline: February 4

The National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award is given to twelve excellent out-of-school arts and humanities programs, particularly those from underserved communities. Winners receive \$10,000 and an invitation to accept their award from the President's Committee's Honorary Chairman, First Lady Michelle Obama, at a ceremony at the White House. In addition, winners will receive an award plaque, the opportunity to attend the Annual Awardee Conference in Washington, DC in the summer of 2013, and will be featured on the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award website.

[More information>>](#)

Christopher Columbus Awards

Deadline: February 4

The Christopher Columbus Awards is a national, community-based science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program for middle school students. The program challenges the students to work in teams of three to four, with an adult coach, to identify a problem in their community and apply the scientific method to create an innovative solution to that problem. Eight finalist teams and their coaches will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Walt Disney World® to attend National Championship Week and compete for cash prizes and the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant, plus a \$200 development grant to further refine their idea.

[More information>>](#)

2013 Excellence in Summer Learning Award

Deadline: February 8

The National Summer Learning Association's Excellence in Summer Learning Award recognizes outstanding summer programs that demonstrate excellence in accelerating academic achievement and promoting healthy development for young people between kindergarten and twelfth grade. In addition to recognizing the Excellence Award-winning programs, NSLA will also recognize summer learning innovations in high-interest categories such as, but not limited to: Family Engagement, Digital Learning, Health and Nutrition, Early Literacy, and New Vision for Summer School. All programs also receive detailed written feedback--highlighting both strengths and recommendations for improvement based on NSLA's quality standards.

[More information>>](#)

Coconino County Caring for Children Awards

Deadline: February 8

CCC&Y is now accepting nominations for the Annual Caring for Children Awards. Selected winners will be recognized at the Annual Child Abuse Prevention Kick-Off Luncheon scheduled for Thursday, March 28th from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Acceptable nominations can be for any Coconino County resident or provider giving direct service, care and support to children and youth. Take the time to honor and support

that person in your agency or your life who is committed to the health and success of children and youth!

[More information>>](#)

Trainings & Conferences

Conscious Discipline with Diana Brown

January 24, 9-Noon, Phoenix - West Valley

January 29, 9-Noon, Tucson

January 30, 9-Noon, Phoenix - East Valley

January 31, 9-Noon, Flagstaff

Diana Brown, a star of the 2012 Arizona Afterschool Conference, will be delivering her high-energy, engaging Conscious Discipline workshop on four dates across the state. She got rave reviews of her session at the November conference - attendees loved how fun, funny, and useful her session was. Behavior management can be a challenge, let Diana show you how to effectively handle conflict so staff and kids can spend less time addressing behavior and more time learning! \$30 a person, register now!

[More information>>](#)

Arts Integration for STEM Trainings

January 26, 2013 - Oro Valley (Pusch Ridge Christian Academy)

February 2, 2013 - Tempe (Sperling Center for Educational Innovation)

Learn the Arts Integration Solutions (AiS) approach to engaging students in STEM learning through the alignment of arts and academic standards in this free training. Experience a lesson demonstration that explores a process shared by the visual and performing arts, scientific inquiry, and design engineering to increase critical thinking and problem solving. You can immediately apply theories, strategies, lessons, and resources gained in this intensive in your classroom to transform your teaching practice and student learning.

[More information>>](#)

Mapping to the Core

January 24, 2013, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix

Hosted by Grand Canyon University and the Arizona Department of Education, this dynamic professional development opportunity helps schools take a deeper approach to using the Common Core Standards to map their curriculum. Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs will lead the training, showing how the switch to Common Core offers the opportunity to upgrade teaching and learning for 21st century learners.

[More information>>](#)

Beyond School Hours XVI

February 20-23, 2013, Jacksonville, FL

Beyond School Hours XVI will be held February 20-23 at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront in Florida. Conference participants will learn how to successfully engage older youth, see best practices in action and connect with education leaders. Ron Clark, the 2000 Disney American Teacher of the Year and two-time New York Times bestselling author, will be the keynote speaker.

[More information>>](#)

22nd Annual Celebrate the Young Child Conference

March 9, 2013, Glendale Civic Center

One of the largest Early Childhood Conferences in Arizona, the Celebrate the Young Child Conference provides a full day of training for over 600 early childhood professionals. It is sponsored by Association for

Supportive Child Care and the Arizona Child Care Association, and offers professional development and networking opportunities.

[More information>>](#)

Best of Out of School Time Conference

May 1-4, 2013, Palm Springs, CA

BOOST invites you to join the nation's largest, most recognized and comprehensive conference for after school and out-of-school time professionals. Set in a retreat-like atmosphere, this conference promises to rejuvenate your passion and boost your direction for quality programming.

[More information>>](#)

Community Events

DBG Las Noches de las Luminarias

Various dates, ending December 30

Come celebrate the Desert Botanical Garden's 35th anniversary of *Las Noches de las Luminarias*. Each night of *Luminaria*, the Garden comes to life with the soft glow from more than 8,000 hand-lit luminaria bags and thousands of white twinkle lights. Walk the paths with a warm cup of cider, the sounds of handbells ringing and Dickens Carolers singing during this unique holiday event.

[More information>>](#)

SRP EarthWise Energy Contest

Vote until December 31

Six local nonprofits, including the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley and the Phoenix Zoo, are finalists to win a solar energy system from SRP. SRP uses customer contributions to build solar projects for Valley nonprofits - allowing them to focus their funding on the communities they serve. Vote by December 31st, only one vote per address.

[More information>>](#)

Run, Walk, and Roll 5k/10k

January 5th, Tempe Beach Park

Get a healthy start to the new year while supporting and raising money for Arizona Disabled Sports' adaptive sports programs. This fun event includes a 5k, 10k, 1 mile fitness walk, and a 1/2 mile kids fun run.

[More information>>](#)

ZooLights at Phoenix Zoo

Nightly, until January 6

Experience the Phoenix Zoo in a new light! Animatronic zoo creatures greet visitors as synchronized lights and music play. The all-new Music in Motion show features dancing trees, colorful lights, and giant 3-D butterflies set to music by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

[More information>>](#)

Resources, Research & Reports

iCivics Launches New Game: *We The Jury*

Can jury duty be fun? In [We the Jury](#), it is. In the latest game from iCivics, players decide a tough case and discover what jurors do once they leave the jury box and head to the deliberation room. Jury duty is

one of the fundamental responsibilities of citizenship--*We the Jury* lets kids have fun while learning all about how important and engaging serving on a jury is. Choose from two different civil case options; as the clock ticks down, you'll analyze evidence, weigh testimony, and pick the right arguments to persuade your fellow jurors to come to a fair and impartial verdict.

And of course, iCivics offers more than just the game. Players can earn Impact Points, and teachers will find supporting materials including alignment to state and Common Core standards, a classroom game guide, and related lesson plans.

[Play We The Jury Here>>](#)

New Department of Education Site Houses 21st Century Community, Free Resources

[You for Youth](#), the newly launched website from the Department of Education, is an online community designed to help afterschool professionals connect and share resources with colleagues, provide professional development and technical assistance opportunities, and offer tools for improving your program practices.

While explicitly designed for 21st Century Community Learning Center staff, the site hosts a wealth of resources that can be of use to any afterschool program. The [Resource Search](#) helps locate training tools, web-based resources, publications, and lessons and activities on virtually any topic. A search for STEM yielded a report on best practices for STEM program implementation, a 3D guide to the solar system for an astronomy lesson, and a STEM Everyday guide to increasing staff confidence in delivering STEM activities and lessons.

[Find out more about You for Youth and the resources available here>>](#)

Afterschool Matters: Staffing Out of School Time Programs in the 21st Century

Afterschool Matters, the National Institute on Out of School Time's peer-reviewed journal, takes a look at the challenges of recruiting and retaining high quality staff, something many sites and programs consistently deal with. While full-time staff and administrators in the afterschool field often have more long-term positions, there historically is a great degree of turnover among front-line staff, who are predominantly part-time.

Some of the challenges that lead to this are understandable institutional constraints - programs often can't offer enough hours or increase pay, so the positions remain entry-level and subject to high turnover. As one manager interview remarked, when programs hire people with career ambitions, it's no surprise when they take opportunities that come their way.

The challenge, then, is how to allocate scarce resources. The study posited some ideas that show potential for helping lower turnover and maintain quality. First, hire within the building as much as possible if at school sites as paraprofessionals and teachers are more likely to stay for longer periods, lowering the potential for turnover. Second, as training budgets are usually tight, focus those resources on full time staff who will be more likely to remain with the organization for longer and can contribute to institutional memory. Finally, the author reiterates calls for university teacher training programs to partner with OST programs, as both future educators and afterschool programs stand to benefit from such a pairing.

[Read the full report here>>](#)



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