

Community Learning Opportunities: Evidence on Impact, Quality, and Access

Presented by Dale A. Blyth, Ph.D.
Associate Dean and Director
University of Minnesota Extension
Center for Youth Development

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Using Evidence in Policymaking

- **Defining a public problem**
- **Proposing a solution that will address the problem and examine the costs and benefits**
- Implementing the solution
- Evaluating and improving the solution for highest impact
- Expanding the solution for broader impact

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Framing the Issue

Language	Policy Questions
Out of School TIME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is time used? • What difference does it make? • Should we use more time for learning? Formal learning or other forms of learning?
Afterschool / Summer PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do these types of programs matter? For what? • Are they necessary or nice for learning and development? • How are they funded? • Can people access them?
COMMUNITY Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of community and family in all this? • How can we make them more available? • How do we ensure quality?

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Understanding the Issue

What do you think ?

Is adult supervision afterschool more common in rural areas, cities, suburbs, or the urban core?

What Does Evidence Says:

RURAL/ SMALL TOWN	MEDIUM SIZE CITIES	SUBURBAN	URBAN
71%	67%	63%	77%

When is it most difficult for parents to find things for their children to do?

What Does Evidence Says :

SUMMER	AFTER SCHOOL	WEEKENDS
57%	13%	15%

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Defining the Issue

Minnesota Study

- **Random Sample Phone Survey of 1607 parents and 808 youth**
- **Purpose: Understand parent and youth perspectives on whether the problem is one of supply or demand for community learning opportunities**
- **Sampled from 8 regions around the state and weighted to get state estimates**

Is There a Demand for Community Learning Opportunities?

Let's look at the Evidence about

- **What Types of Opportunities Parents & Youth Want**
- **What Parents and Youth Value about Opportunities**

How Much Would Parent Like a Program that ...	% Very Much
Teaches the Value of Hard Work and Commitment?	85%
Focuses on Helping Youth Explore Things that Really Interest Them?	85%
Encourages Your Child to Try New Things?	75%
Focuses on Volunteer Work & Helping Others in the Community?	73%
Helps Your Child Get Along with Others?	70%
Focuses mainly on Getting into College or Careers?	64%
Helps Child Learn How to Make Changes on Issues that Matter?	63%
Promotes Athletic Activity or Team Sports?	62%
Gives Time to Homework with Adult Support?	56%
Teaches Art, Music, or Dance?	54%
Reinforces Your Religious Faith?	51%
Is Recommended by Other Parents?	48%
Emphasizes Cultural, language, or Ethnic Heritage and Beliefs?	42%

What do Minnesota Parents and Youth Value about Youth Programs?

- **The majority of Minnesota parents believe youth programs are important to the positive development of youth.**
- **Over six times as many youth believe youth are better off when they participate in activities (88%) than when they have lots of free time (13%).**
- **The value placed on opportunities does not differ much by community type, income, and ethnicity**

Are Community Learning Opportunities Available?

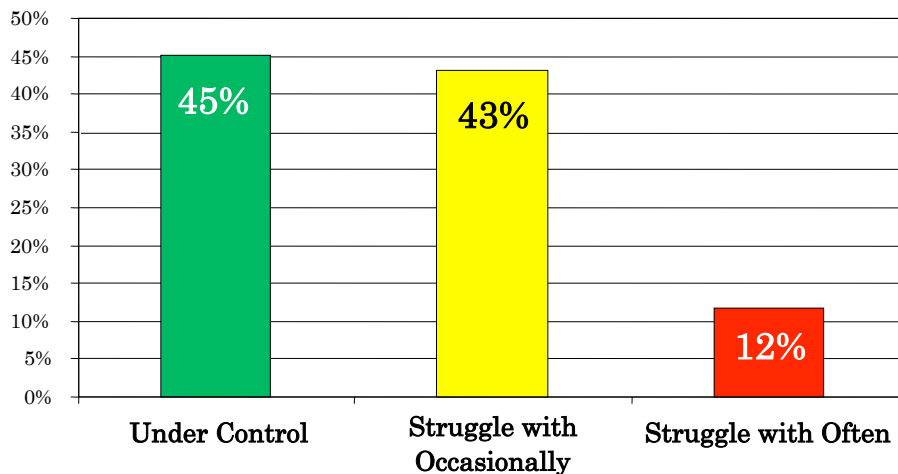
Let's look at the Evidence about

- How Much Parents Struggle To Find Them?
- How Hard It Is To Find Quality Opportunities?

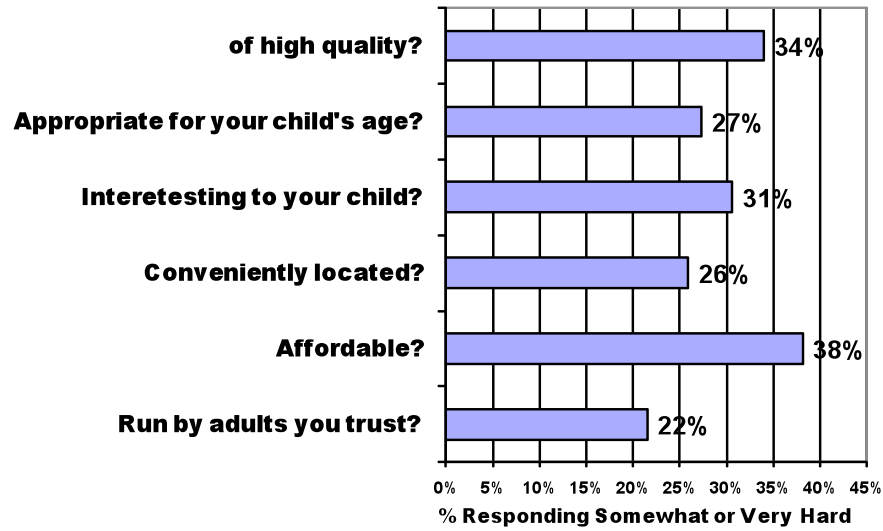
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The Struggle to Find Opportunities

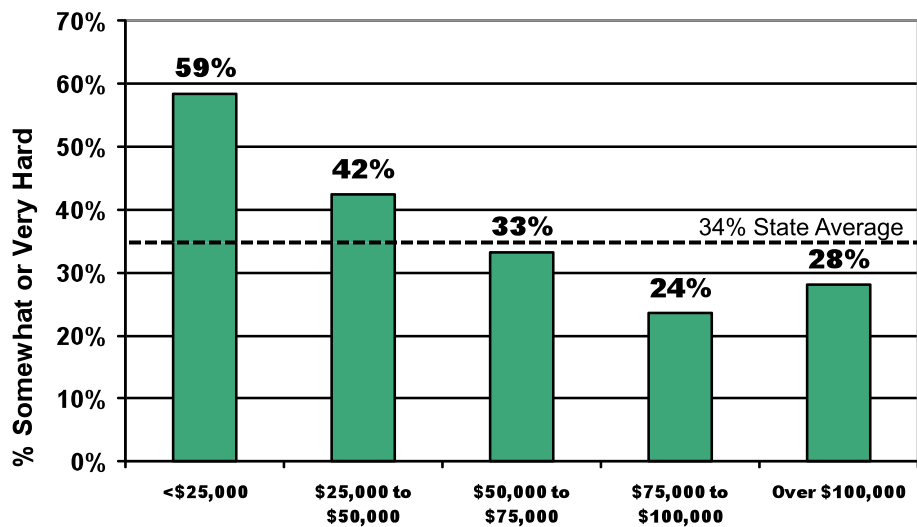
Parent Reports Of Struggling To Find Things For Their Children To Do When Not In School



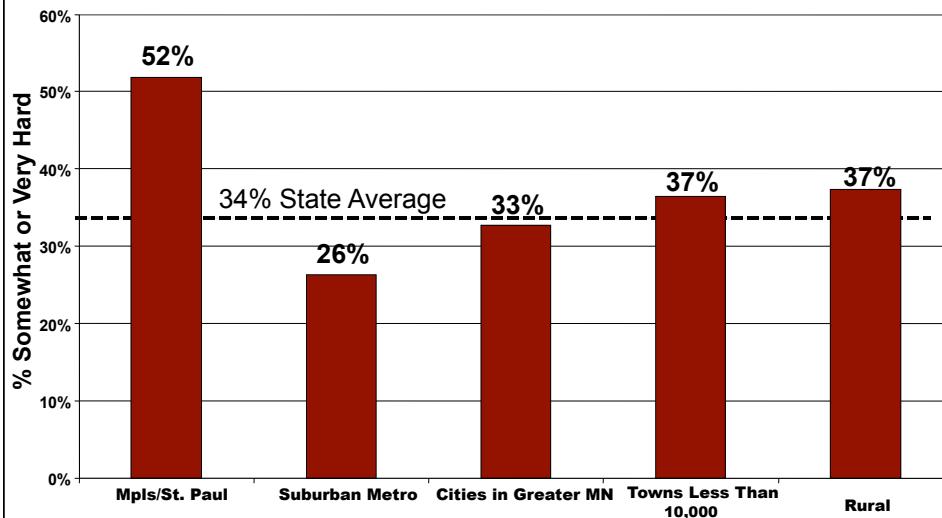
**How Hard is It to Find Programs
in Your Community that are ...**



**How Easy or Hard is It to Find Programs
in Your Community that are of High
Quality By Family Income**



**How Easy or Hard is It to Find Programs in Your Community
that are of High Quality - By Community Type**



**The Evidence from the
Minnesota Study Suggests**

- There is demand by parents and young people for these opportunities
- They want them to support development, not just academics
- There is an *Opportunity Gap* -- Equal access to these opportunities are problematic-- especially for those who research shows would benefit most

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Proposing a Solution

Start with...

Do They Matter? – What do we know about whether community learning opportunities can make a difference?

How Much? – How large are the demonstrated effects of these types of programs? Compared to other approaches?

Do Community Learning Opportunities Make A Difference?

Evidence from multiple studies show that such opportunities can impact

- Learning & Achievement
- Social & Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development
- Career Choice
- Engagement & Persistence in School
- Youth Engagement & Contribution

Whether They Make a Difference Depends on ...

- **ACCESS** – *Have to be attractive to youth and available to family*
- **SUSTAINED PARTICIPATION**
- **QUALITY**
 - *Appropriate supervision and structure*
 - *Well-prepared staff*
 - *Intentional programming*
- **PARTNERSHIP** *with families, schools and other community organizations*
- **Special Note:** *A heavy focus on academics does NOT work as well as a broader enrichment and engagement approach*

How Much Difference Can They Make?

- Standard statistical approach called the EFFECT SIZE

- Range

0

*No
Effect*

1

*Maximum
Effect*

- Allows comparisons across different types of programs but requires research that meets certain conditions

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Effect Size of Some Well Known Policy Interventions

**Reducing Class Size on
Math Ach.**

0.23

**School-based
Substance Abuse Prev.
on Drug & Alcohol Use**

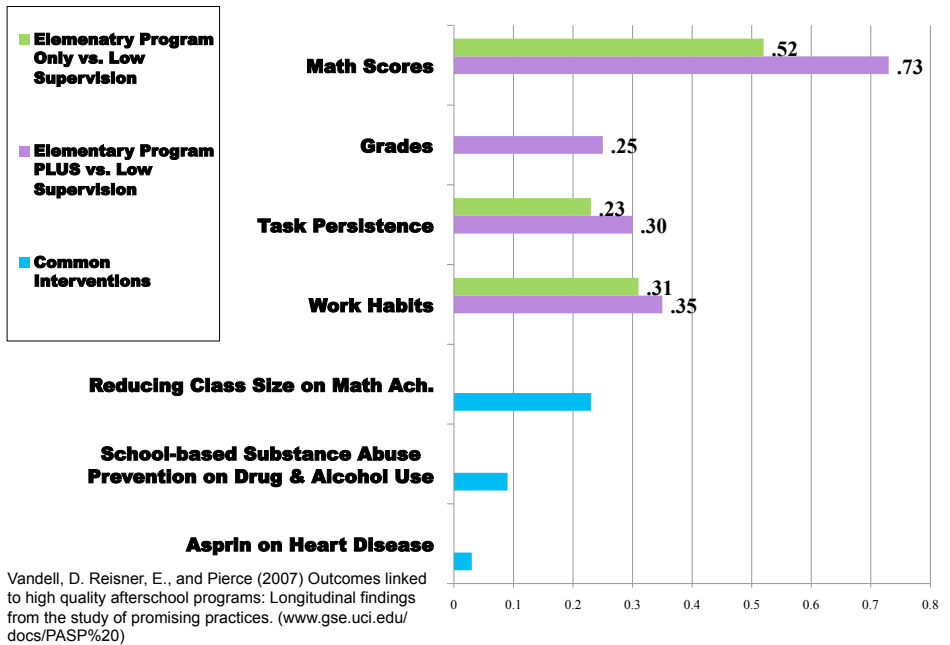
0.09

**Asprin on heart
disease**

0.03

0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6 0.7 0.8

The Size of the Effects Found



Implications from the Evidence on Community Learning Opportunities

- Community Learning Opportunities matter for many valued outcomes
- The effects are large enough to consider as a policy intervention
- Access to these opportunities is a major issue – there is an opportunity gap
- Demand for them by parents or youth is strong across communities and subgroups
- Quality matters – without it effects are weak or even negative