

California's Next After-School Challenge: Keeping High School Teens Off the Street and On the Right Track

Report highlights from FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS CALIFORNIA

This brief is based on a report by FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS CALIFORNIA, a bipartisan, anti-crime organization of over 260 sheriffs, police chiefs, district attorneys and victims of violence. FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS CALIFORNIA is part of the national FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS organization with over 2,000 members nationwide.

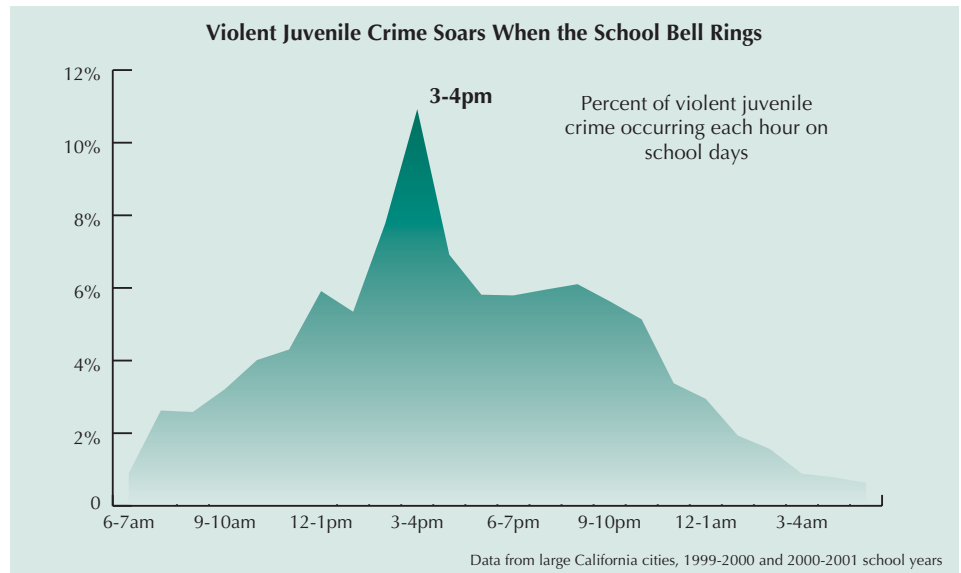
After the enactment of Proposition 49 to expand after-school programs for elementary and middle school students, California faces a new after-school challenge in the years ahead—providing after-school opportunities for high school students. Teenagers are far more likely than younger students to be involved in crime or engaged in other risky behavior during the after-school hours. Four of every five juvenile crimes in California are committed by high school-age kids.

The Prime Time for Violent Juvenile Crime

Evidence from police departments in California's largest cities shows that, on school days, the prime time for violent juvenile crime is from 2 PM to 6 PM. The single most likely hour of the school day for a juvenile to commit a violent crime—homicide, rape, robbery, or assault—is between 3 PM and 4 PM. In addition, the after-school hours are the peak hours for young people to be victims of violent crime, use drugs and alcohol, and be involved in car crashes.

High School After-School Programs Prevent Teen Crime, Improve Behavior and Increase School Success

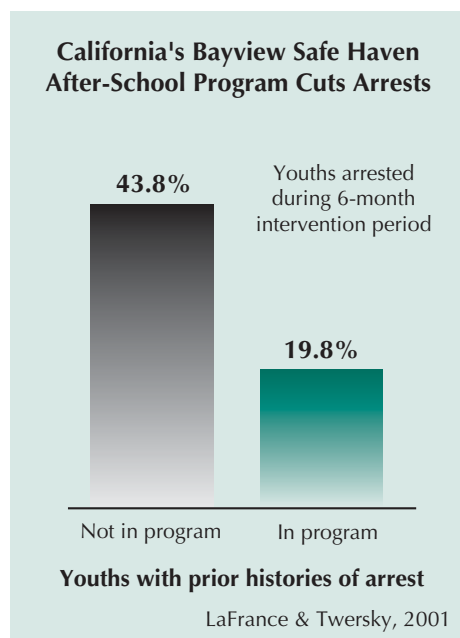
New research from California and across the nation shows



that quality after-school programs can transform this prime time for juvenile crime into productive hours of academic enrichment, skill building, recreation and community service. After-school programs are proven to cut teen crime and violence, reduce teen sex and teen pregnancy, cut drug and alcohol use, and prevent truancy and school discipline problems. New evidence also

shows that quality after-school programs for teens increase academic achievement and promote civic participation.

For example, one study compared over 120 participants at the Bayview Safe Haven after-school program in San Francisco with a matched comparison group of similar students who did not attend the program. It found that youths who did not participate in the after-school program were two to three times more likely to be arrested during the six-month initial intervention period than program participants.



National research also yields positive results: six years after randomly-selected high school freshmen from welfare families were assigned to participate in the Quantum Opportunities four-year after-school and graduation incentive program, boys left out averaged six times more criminal convictions than boys assigned to the program.

A Dangerous Shortage of After-School Programs for Teens

Despite clear evidence that after-school programs for teens can prevent crime and improve behavior, there remains a dramatic shortage of after-school programs for California teens.

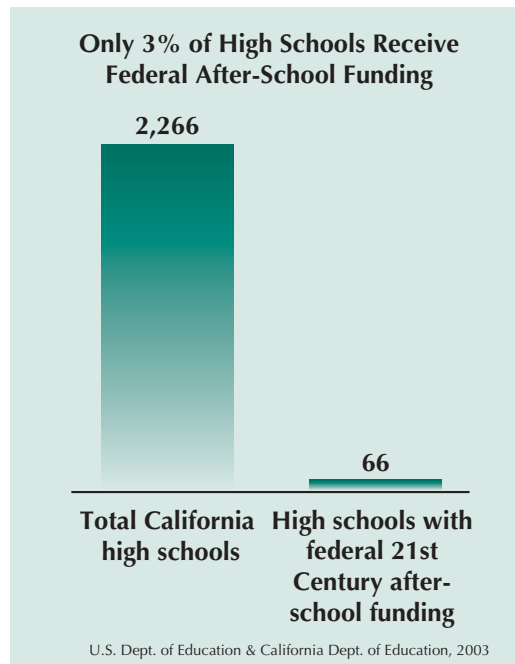
For example, California's only dedicated public funding source for high school after-school programs provides only enough funding to serve students at just 3 percent of California high schools—just a few thousand out of over 1.7 million public high school students.

In addition, according to a new survey, over 70 percent of high school principals from schools in California's lowest-income neighborhoods believe there are not enough after-school programs at their schools and in their communities

And California high schools are unable to take advantage of their own valuable resources after school. Within an hour after school lets out, 65 percent of high schools in California's poorest neighborhoods close their computer labs, 73 percent close their libraries, and 84 percent close their gyms for recreational use.

Investing in After School Saves Money and Lives

Investments in after-school programs for teens, especially for the young people most at risk of sliding into delinquency or becoming victims of



programs for

crime, pay for themselves, in both lives saved and tax dollars saved.

A study concluded that the Quantum Opportunities high school after-school program returned over \$16,000 per participant to taxpayers and crime victims over and above the costs of the four-year program—nearly \$2 in crime savings alone for every dollar invested.

The RAND Corporation compared the cost-effectiveness of the Quantum Opportunities after-school program with that of

California's "Three Strikes" law. It concluded that, per dollar spent, Quantum Opportunities was over five times more cost-effective at preventing serious crimes than "Three Strikes."

A Call for Action

While California made modest, yet historic, progress in 2002 to create, using federal funding, what has been touted as the "nation's first state-supported high school after-school program," it is time to take the next step.

Now California's sheriffs, police chiefs, district attorneys and victims of violence are calling on public officials to ensure that federal funding continues to support high school after-school programs and, as the economy recovers, to make new federal and State funding available to continue expanding access to high school after-school programs.

The report profiles over 35 high school after-school programs in California with promising results or approaches and provides a county-by-county analysis showing the percentage of local high schools receiving funding.

Endnotes:

The After-School Hours Are a Time of Risk for California Teens

Prime Time for Violent Juvenile Crime

Based on total incidents of violent juvenile crime (where suspect was a juvenile) on school days reported to police for school years September 1999—May 2000 and September 2000—May 2001. All 14 cities with populations over 200,000 were contacted and this data was obtained from Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Diego, and San Jose.

Prime Time for Youths to Be Crime Victim

Based on total incidents of violent crime against juveniles on school days reported to police for school years September 1999—May 2000 and September 2000—May 2001. All 14 cities with populations over 200,000 were contacted and this data was obtained from Long Beach, San Diego, San Jose, and Stockton.

Prime Time for Youths to Use Drugs or Alcohol

Mason-Dixon Polling & Research. (2001, August). National survey of teens. Retrieved from the Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Website: http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/Teen_Poll_PDF.pdf

Prime Time of Teens to Be Involved in Car Crashes

Rice, T. (2000). Los Angeles: Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center, School of Public Health, University of California—Los Angeles.

High School After-School Programs Prevent Teen Crime, Improve Behavior and Increase School Success

Bayview Safe Haven research results

LaFrance, S., Twersky, F., Latham, N., Foley, E., Bott, C., & Lee, L. (2001). A safe place for healthy youth development: A comprehensive evaluation of the Bayview Safe Haven. San Francisco: LaFrance Associates.

Quantum Opportunities research results

Lattimore, C. B., Mihalic, S. F., Grottpeter, J. K., & Taggart, R. (1998). The Quantum Opportunities Program. In D.S. Elliot (Series Ed.), Blueprints for violence prevention: Book four. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

A Dangerous Shortage of After-School Programs for Teens

Only 3 Percent of High Schools with After-School funding; Number of Students Served

Sixty-six high school after-school programs received 21st Century grants expiring in either 2003 or later, out of a total of 2,266 high schools. For federally-administered grants, see: U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Retrieved from <http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stccclc/awards.html>. For state-administered grants, see: California Department of Education. (n.d.). California 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Grant awards. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/after-school/21/grants.htm>. For the total number of high schools, see: California Department of Education. (n.d.). California school directory. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/schooldir/>. All 21st Century high school grantees were contacted. 21st Century high school programs serve from 20 to 300 students per site. For the number of students enrolled in California public high schools, see: U.S. Department of Education. (2003). State reports: California, 2002-2003. Retrieved from [http://www.ed-](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/profile.asp?level=04&reportNumber=16#enrollment-)

bygrade

High School Principals Survey on after-school programs and use of computer labs, school libraries and gyms after school
All 132 "Title I Schoolwide" high schools (schools with at least 40% of students eligible for free and reduced school lunches) were contacted and 37 responses were received.

Investing in After School Saves Money and Lives

Quantum Opportunities cost-benefit analyses

Aos, S. (2001). The comparative costs and benefits of programs to reduce crime, version 4.0. Retrieved from the Washington Institute for Public Policy Website: <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/crime/pdf/cost-benefit.pdf>; Greenwood, P.W., Model, K. E., Rydell, C. P., & Chiesa, J. R. (1998). Diverting children from a life of crime: Measuring costs and benefits. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

A Call for Action

The "nation's first state-supported high school after-school program"

Office of the Governor, State of California. (2002, September 29). Governor Davis signs legislation to improve high school achievement. Retrieved from the Office of the Secretary for Education website: <http://www.ose.ca.gov/news/>.