

Detroit's After-School Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime Or Youth Enrichment and Achievement

A Research Brief by FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN is a statewide anti-crime organization of more than 350 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders, and violence survivors. It is part of the national organization FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, headquartered in Washington, D.C., with more than 2,500 members.

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The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime

When the school bell rings, thousands of Detroit children and teens head to the street with neither constructive activities nor adult supervision and violent juvenile crime suddenly soars. Research from across the country consistently shows that on school days, the hours from 3 to 6 PM are the peak hours for teens to:

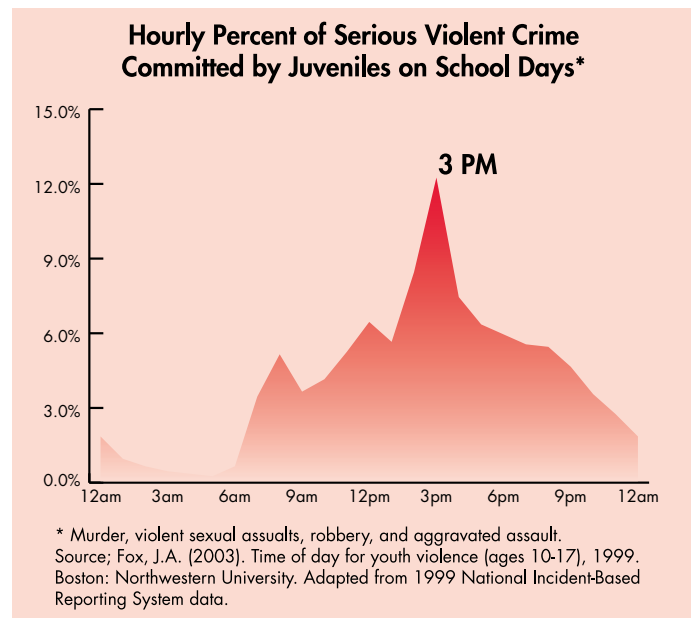
- commit crimes,
- be victims of crime,
- be in or cause a car crash, and
- smoke, drink or use drugs.

Detroit has experienced its share of juvenile crime. For example, in 2004, 755 Detroit juveniles convicted of crimes were in out-of-home placements. A statewide survey of parents on after-school issues also showed that parents in Southeast Michigan who did not have after-school programs for their children were more concerned than similar parents elsewhere in the state about their child's safety.

After-School Programs Can Cut Crime, Teach Skills and Values

Quality youth development programs can cut crime and transform the "prime time for juvenile crime" into hours of academic enrichment, constructive recreation and community service. After-school programs can protect both kids and adults from becoming victims of crime. For example:

- In a study conducted in several U.S. cities, five housing projects without Boys & Girls Clubs were compared to five receiving new clubs. At the beginning, drug activity and vandalism were the same. But by the time the study ended, the projects without the programs had 50 percent more vandalism



and scored 37 percent worse on drug activity.

- Studies going back over fifty years show Boys & Girls Clubs can successfully reduce crime. A more recent study showed that specialized club programs can effectively recruit and retain children at high risk of becoming involved in gangs and even those youth who are already in gangs. The evaluation of the anti-gang Boys & Girls Club programs found that the high-risk youth in these clubs "showed decreases in some gang and delinquent behaviors and were less likely to be sent away by the courts. They also exhibited positive changes in their engagement or achievements in school."
- Support from caring adults matters. Young people who were randomly assigned to a Big Brothers/Big Sisters waiting list were almost twice as likely to begin illegal drug use and nearly three times more likely to hit someone

compared to those who were given a mentor.

- The Bay View Safe Haven after-school program in San Francisco matched participants with similar non-participants. For the youths with prior histories of arrest, participants were half as likely as non-participants to be rearrested within six months after joining the program.

Not all after-school programs will produce these results. Quality matters. Turning children away from involvement in crime will take programs with quality designs and adequate numbers of caring, well-trained staff.

The 21st Century and Mayor's Time Efforts in Detroit

In Detroit, the federally-funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers served 5,649 children during the 2004-2005 school year. Other programs grouped under the Mayor's Time initiative served 6,059 children during the same period. A survey of Michigan households showed that, for parents in Southeast Michigan who work, 20 percent had their children in an after-school program, but almost 15 percent had children who were left to care for themselves for one to five days per week. As a measure of unmet need, 54 percent of Southeast Michigan families who do not have after-school care wish their children could attend after-school programs.

Michigan awarded almost \$5 million in after-school grants through its Before- or After-School Program in FY 2005, including \$926,000 in grants to Wayne County. Detroit can also draw on state aid at-risk funds for after-school programs. More is needed, however, to increase both the coverage and the quality of programs. Nevertheless, Detroit, facing budget challenges, recently closed nine recreation centers and may soon close more or

even shut down the recreation department. The news at the federal level is grim as well. As part of the No Child Left Behind Act, the Afterschool Alliance reported that "Congress passed and President Bush signed the bill authorizing modest annual increases in [after-school] federal funding -- from \$1.25 billion in Fiscal Year 2002 to \$2.5 billion in Fiscal Year 2007." Yet actual funding is now stalled at \$981 million in Fiscal Year 2006, and in real dollar value terms, funding is being allowed to slip year after year due to inflation.

Investing in Detroit's Children and Teens

No one should think of Detroit's at-risk youth as a lost cause. Due to a range of factors – certainly not just after-school programs – real progress is being made. From 1997 to 2004 the violent juvenile crime rate fell 74 percent and the narcotics arrest rate is down 63 percent. The rates take into account the decline in Detroit's population from 1997 to 2004.

From 1997 to 2003 in Detroit, the rate of cigarette smoking among teens also dropped 58 percent and teenage (age 13-17) birth rates are down 30 percent. The improvements should translate into better days ahead for Detroit, however homicide rates have still averaged more than one a day in the last two years. It is

crucial to invest wisely in our children and teens because each high-risk juvenile prevented from adopting a life of crime can save the country between \$1.7 million and \$2.3 million.

Law Enforcement is United

More progress is possible. The members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN, the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, the Michigan Sheriff's Association, and the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police are united: to turn the statistics on after-school crime around, save more children, and better protect everyone in Detroit, more funding is needed for high-quality after-school programs.

"It's in all of our best interest to invest in our children early on rather than pay for their incarceration as they move into their teen years or older."

Detroit Police Chief
Ella Bully-Cummings

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Endnotes

The the prime time for juvenile crime and other risky behaviors

- For national data on the peak hours of juvenile crime and juvenile crime victimization, see: Fox, J.A. (2003). Time of day for youth violence (ages 10-17). Boston, MA: Northeastern University, adapted from 1999 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data. The same peak in violent juvenile crime or crime by juveniles is consistently demonstrated in city-level data collected by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids for New York city and four other cities New York State; in Chicago and nine other cities in IL; and in Los Angeles and six other cities in California. See the Fight Crime: Invest in Kids website: www.fightcrime.org
- For data on car crashes see: Rice, T. (2000). Los Angeles: Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center, School of Public Health, University of California-Los Angeles. At the request of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Professor Rice found that during the months when school is in session, the peak hours for teens 16-17 to cause automobile accidents-as well as the peak hours for them to be in such an accident-are from 3-6 pm.
- For data on substance abuse see: Richardson, J.L., Dwyer, K., McGuigan, K., Hansen, W.B., Dent, C., Johnson, C.A., Sussman, S.Y., Brannon, B., & Flay, B. (1989). Substance use among eighth-grade students who take care of themselves after school. *Pediatrics*, 84(3), 556-566.
- For the number of youth in out-of-home care because of delinquency, see: Kids Count in Michigan, (2006) Detroit: Kids Count in Michigan Data Book 2005, downloaded on March 16, 2006 from the Kids Count in Michigan website http://www.milhs.org/information/default.asp?NavPageID=50079#i_179180
- For Southeastern Michigan parents' concerns about their children's safety in the after-school hours see: Michigan Department of Education, Family Independence Agency and Michigan State University, (2003) Michigan After-School Initiative 2003 Report, retrieved on March 16 from <http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&ie=ISO-8859-1&q=Michigan+After-School+Initiative+2003+Report&btnG=Google+Search>

After-school programs can cut crime

- For Boys and Girls Clubs in housing projects, see: Shinke, S.P., Orlandi, M.A., & Cole, K.C. (1992). Boys and Girls Clubs in public housing developments: Prevention services for youths at risk. *Journal of Community Psychology*, OSAP Special Issue, 118-128.
- For a study comparing crime in neighborhoods with a Boys Club to neighborhoods without a Boys Club see: Brown, R.C., (1956) *A Boys' Club and Delinquency: A study of the statistical incidence of juvenil delinquency in three areas in Louisville Kentucky*, New York, New York University Press.
- For the study of Boys and Girls Clubs serving youth at-risk of joining or already in gangs, see: Arbreton, A. J. and McClanahan, W. S. (March 2002). Targeted Outreach: Boys and Girls Clubs of America's Approach to Gang Prevention and Intervention. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures. Retrieved on March 14, 2006 from http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/148_publication.pdf
- For the Big Brothers/Big Sisters results, see: Tierney, J., Grossman, J., Resch, N., (November 1995). Making a difference: An impact study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Philadelphia, Public/Private Ventures.
- For data on the Bayview program see: 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. The 21st Century and Mayor's Time efforts in Detroit
- The data on the number of children served by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers and the programs under Mayor's

Time was provided in a personal communication with Laurie A. Van Egeren, Assistant Director of University-Community Partnerships--Research and Evaluation, Michigan State University on March 13, 2006.

- For the data on the survey of Michigan parents see: Michigan Department of Education, Family Independence Agency and Michigan State University, (2003) Michigan After-School Initiative 2003 Report, retrieved on March 16 from <http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&ie=ISO-8859-1&q=Michigan+After-School+Initiative+2003+Report&btnG=Google+Search>. The children caring for themselves are ages 5 to 18, and the figure for Southeastern parents who wish their children had after-school programs was provided in a personal communication with one of the researchers on the survey, Lori A. Post, Michigan State University, on March 15, 2006.
- For the figures for Michigan after-school funding see: Sorbet, J., (March 3, 2006). Department of Human Services' (DHS) Before- or After- School Program FY 2005 annual report. Lansing Michigan, Michigan Department of Human Services.
- Detroit recreation department cuts are from: Bello, M, and Hunt, A., (March 14, 2006). State of the City: Detroit in crisis, The Detroit Free Press, downloaded on March 16, 2006 from <http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060314/NEWS01/603140310/-1/BUSINESS07>
- The quote on federal funding is from an Afterschool Alliance press release on their report titled Impossible Choices: How states are addressing the federal failure to fully fund afterschool programs, downloaded from their website on March 16, 2006 at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Impossible_choices.cfm
- The figure for spending on the 21st Century program is from the FY2006 Labor Health and Human Services appropriations bill taking into account a one percent, across-the-board cut that was made to it and many other federal programs. Investing in Prevention Saves Money
- For the figure of the cost of one individual involved in crime see: Cohen, M. A. (1998). The monetary value of saving a high-risk youth. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 14(1), 5-33.
- The data on the progress being made by Detroit's youth was provided in an Excel chart by Phil Wells, Deputy Director of Mayor's Time, on March 13, 2006. The chart notes that the crime data is derived from Michigan State Police Internet Data, the cigarette smoking data is from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risky Behavior Surveys, and the teen birth rate data is from the Michigan Department of Community Health.
- The average number of homicides in 2004 and most of 2005 are based on: Martin, A.H., and Schmitt, B., (December 16, 2005). Murders in city likely to match 2004 total: Detroit has 357 so far in '05. Detroit Free Press.