

Youth Programs and Economic Development: Analyzing Benefits that are Intangible, Complex, and Uncertain

K Maeve Powlick, PhD

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Introduction

Long-term economic development is intergenerational, intimately related to raising children. Development, from a capabilities perspective, is when people improve their ability to do and be what they choose (Sen 1985), and it involves a long-term co-evolutionary process of individual and institutional change (Bowles 2004). However, the economic literature is lacking in its understanding of youth as actors in the development process.

Children tumble out of every category economists try to put them in. They have been described as consumer durables providing a flow of utility to their parents, investment goods providing income, and public goods with both positive and negative externalities. Children are also people, with certain rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (Folbre 1994, 86).

Raising the next generation produces the important public good of the perpetuation of the species, and children who grow into productive adults produce many other important public goods as well. When children begin to work at an early age, such as on family farms, and when parents have claims over their adult children's assets and earnings, they provide important economic benefits to their parents (*ibid.*). In this way they act both as capital – the produced means of production – and as assets. Additionally, children are an investment—we need to invest in children in order for them to be the

valuable public goods, the useful capital, or the stable asset they may become. However, children are different from other goods, capital, assets, and investments—as Folbre asserts, they are people. Starting from very different initial conditions, youth themselves must engage in action, making and enacting choices, to create the benefits we expect from them as adults. They are active participants in the public good generation process, of which they themselves are a public good. They are the only type of ‘capital’ that can produce through their own will. They can choose to invest or not invest in their own assets. Like adults, children both affect and are affected by economic changes around them.

The ability of children to participate actively in the development process, however, is not given. While they can do powerful things for others, they have many needs that must be attended to by adults. They are in the process of articulating their identities, meaning they have the potential to enact agency through everyday practice (Cleaver 2007). However, they are also vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and maladaptive examples from peers and adults (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008). They have an entire lifetime to develop their capabilities, but they may also believe that their lives are circumscribed by the limits of the communities in which they live, and may feel hopeless in their ability to develop productive assets such as human capital. Hope for the future is an important asset for youth development¹.

The work of raising children was once largely the job of mothers, chained to the species through continuous attention to their own children (de Beauvoir 2010). Even in

¹ See the Search Institute, creator of the Developmental Assets framework - www.search-institute.org/assets

the 21st century, mothers spend on average many more hours per week than do fathers in activities with their children (Folbre and Bittman 2004). It has been argued by both Nancy Folbre (Folbre and Bittman 2004; Folbre and Yoon 2006) and Susan Himmelweit (2000) that the transition from a system where women cared for children to one where the task is equally shared between women and men has begun but has not been completed, and that completing it entails a wider acceptance of the responsibility to care for children. In the United States, poor women and women of color have historically always had high levels of participation in the labor market (Jones 1985; Kessler-Harris 2001), but this has in the past two generations extended beyond these subgroups. However, aside from the abandonment of a family wage, the institutions of the labor market have changed little from the days when an employer's expectation is that their employees would be going home to a wife who managed all domestic needs, including care of her husband and children. With this incomplete institutional change, the burden of care continues to fall disproportionately on women, many of whom come home to work the infamous second shift. Both fathers and mothers are scrambling to fulfill their own needs and those of their children, balancing demands for money and time. "...Once we start moving away from a gender-divided society, in which each gender is expected to make its own specific contribution to the care of children, towards a more equal one, we have to go the whole way if children are to be sufficiently well cared for" (Himmelweit 2000, 18). This has not yet occurred.

In this transitional period of gender norms, other institutions have been developed to help meet the needs of parents and children. Youth experience their world through a series of settings—especially school and family. After-school programs, also called Out-

of-School Time (OST) programs, from three to six pm², are an increasingly important setting in the lives of youth, especially in the United States, which is the focus of this paper. After school care is a universal need for children of working parents, and many would argue that OST programming is also a universal need for adolescents. Affluent parents frequently buy these services through the market, including academic support and enrichment opportunities, during the school year and during the summer. OST programs also provide an opportunity to interact with and form relationships with adults and peers outside of the structure of the school. Many low-income parents are priced out of the OST opportunities available in affluent communities, and due to low effective demand they may not be available in low-income communities anyway. Even in affluent communities, the market does not provide enough school-aged care to serve all children, nor is such care always of high quality. Given the lack of funding for OST programs, existing resources must be targeted to the children most in need of services, although universal after school care may be more desirable. Children in affluent communities have access to better schools, with better academic support and more enrichment opportunities available directly through the schools. Providing equality of opportunity for youth requires targeting public funds to those children not currently having their need for OST programming met through other channels. While OST programs for youth include a wide variety of programs, this paper focuses on programs that operate primarily during the school year and serve children living in concentrated poverty.

² OST programs also frequently provide services on weekends, during school holidays, and during the summer.

OST programs and other settings make up the village that raises the child. But how does a village raise successful children? How can the things that youth do and learn in these settings contribute to economic development, especially at the individual and community level? Even if programs fail in their stated objectives, could they become successful failures³ that facilitate development in other ways? Involving youth in the development process requires bringing development to their everyday lives, through these settings. It has been well documented that OST programs reduce juvenile crime and improves social skills⁴. What is lacking from the debate, however, is discussion of the fact that the accomplishments of OST programs, including but not limited to reducing crime, are contributions to economic development with the explicit participation of youth.

In this paper, I first make a case for the use of mixed-method research in studying youth programs, subsequently introducing the mixed-method data set used in the paper. I then critically discuss methodologies used to make decisions about the best use of funding resources, specifically cost-benefit analysis (the most common method used by economists). I then discuss the costs of the 21st CCLC OST programs in New York State. Next, I discuss some of the benefits of these programs. Typically, evaluations of OST programs focus on the direct benefits to youth participating in the programs, specifically changes in grades and test scores (Mathematica Policy Research 2005; Naftzger, Margolin, and Kaufman 2005; Russell *et al.* 2007; Russell, Mielke, and Reisner 2008).

³ Eve Weinbaum (2004) develops this concept in reference to plant closings in Appalachia, discussed in greater detail below.

⁴ See, for example, the research briefs posted by Fight Crime, Invest in Kids (www.fightcrime.org). **ADD CITATION**

Other studies have adopted broader measures of outcomes, but maintain an individual focus—such as increased feelings of safety after school, increased attendance rates at school, and improved social and personal skills (Durlak and Weissberg 2007). I focus on benefits related to community development that are often left out of evaluations. These benefits are 1) provision of safe child care, 2) job creation, and 3) public good benefits produced through the role of OST programs as a bridge between the family and the school. The third benefit also relates to increasing capabilities. The first two are presented using primarily quantitative data, while the last is supported through qualitative data. I end with a summary of my results.

Mixed Methods: Methodology and Data Set

When research is used in policy making, the goal is to provide an adequate picture of reality in order to make an informed decision. As long as the information is analyzed and packaged in such a way that it can be used, more information, of a higher quality, at a greater depth, and representing a broader section of the population is better. But, fulfilling all of these criteria at once is difficult. Increasing the quality or depth of information means that it takes longer to procure, and so given real world constraints it must be obtained for a smaller sample. Likewise, gathering and analyzing information for a larger sample makes depth more difficult and time consuming. A researcher using mixed-methods can gather different types of information to address all of the concerns above, using each type of data and research model⁵ for its strengths.

⁵ Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) distinguish between research methods and research model, where research model refers to the underlying philosophy and design of a research project, and may be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed in nature.

Mixed-methodology refers to a combination of quantitative and qualitative data and/or research models. A mixed-method study may use primarily quantitative methods with mixed data – for example, an experimental design with qualitative questions included in an exit interview – or the reverse, such as a qualitative study that also collects demographic data. Alternately, a study may use a methodology that is itself mixed, generating quantitative and qualitative data, each according to different methodological designs. This is identified as the most desirable application of mixed methods by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998). All mixed-method studies are founded on the belief that both quantitative and qualitative data are useful, though for different purposes and for different types of data.

Qualitative and mixed-method research is not commonly used in economics, but it is widely used in many social science, policy, and project evaluation settings (*ibid.*). Because qualitative data are especially useful for information not easily obtainable from official documents and other published materials (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004), the addition of qualitative research to economic analysis is especially appropriate in the presence of incomplete contracts. Moreover, qualitative research emphasizes the interpretation of social events and processes (Charmaz 2006; Mason 1996), meaning that it is useful for building empirically grounded theory about microeconomic activities, such as community-based economic development. The mixed-method and qualitative research process is an iterative process alternating between research and theory building (Charmaz 2006), and such an approach to evaluation has been advocated by Amartya Sen (2000) as well as practitioners of Multi-Criteria Evaluation (Munda 2004, Mathieson 2004).

The use of qualitative as well as quantitative data in economic research has a number of advantages. First, it provides new tools for confronting bias in research design and resultant data. Quantitative data are often assumed to be free of bias, but, like qualitative data, they are obtained through an imperfect process where mistakes are made and misunderstandings can occur (Charmaz 2006). Second, mixed-methodology allows for a triangulation of methods, where multiple types of information are gathered about the same question, issue, or case. These data points are used where different perspectives may yield different answers to research questions. Third, mixed methodology facilitates interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary discussion by bridging the gaps between quantitative and qualitative researchers. Having familiar data available to aid in the interpretation of unfamiliar data facilitates learning across differences in methodology, epistemology, and ontology.

The General Theory of the Second Best (Lipsey and Lancaster 1956) provides a strong argument for mixed-method research. A first-best world, in this sense, is one that adheres to all of the assumptions of a ‘perfect’ model, such as perfect competition (the example in the seminal article cited above), the ideal quantitative methodology, or the ideal qualitative methodology. A ‘first-best’ quantitative study would have an experimental design, a random, representative sample, homoskedastic errors, and no omitted variables. A first-best qualitative study, in the tradition of feminist research, would exhibit no researcher effects in the generation of data and would live up to ideals of empowerment, participation, and freedom from bias in interpretation. Real-world researchers, however, are seldom, if ever, able to achieve these ‘first best’ research designs. Samples in quantitative research are not purely random—for example,

excluding individuals without phones, or individuals who are not found in sampling sites like malls or universities. Quantitative models do not include all relevant independent variables, missing variables that are hidden and/or cannot be quantified, leading to heteroskedastic errors that have no predictable functional form (Hayes and Cai 2007).

Qualitative research is subject to no fewer 'second-best' conditions. Observing an event has an effect on that event, and as qualitative researchers recognize, all that researchers can truly do is interpret what they see and hear, which are in turn interpretations by participants in the studies (Charmaz 2006, Mason 1996). Even when researchers adhere to values of empowerment, these values are difficult to implement and can produce unintended consequences (Ellsworth 1994). Although researchers can attempt to perfect their research designs, they are limited to striving for good research in a second-best world.

The General Theory of the Second Best cautions that, in such a world, it may be better to deviate further from the ideal design than to attempt but fail to reach it. If we cannot achieve perfect quantification of all important variables, it would be better to include qualitative information to contextualize and interpret quantitative results than to ignore non-quantified variables. In a qualitative study with a small and possibly biased sample, likewise, quantitative data can contextualize the sample by providing information on the rest of the neighborhood, city, or country in which research participants live. Research design in a second-best world means using diverse methodologies where they perform best to generate data of different forms.

The research for this paper adheres to this standard, using quantitative data to compare information about a large sample of communities and OST programs and qualitative data to provide information with more depth for a smaller sample of communities and programs. The data are derived from samples of 21st CCLC programs at multiple geographic levels. The qualitative sample includes five programs located in the region between Albany and New York City, involving a relationship of a year or more with two programs. Quantitative analysis is conducted for all 735 programs and all block groups in New York State where possible, and for the Albany City School District computing resources demanded a smaller sample. The data comes from three sources—original qualitative research, the 2006 APR, and the 2000 US Census at the block-group level.

It would be impossible to have a complete dataset explaining all the vagaries of growing up. There exists a large amount of uncertainty in the process of developing from child to adult, as well as many opportunities for choices to lead to drastic change—both choices by young people themselves and choices by others in their lives. Moreover, there are so many influences on young people, and so little ‘control,’ that parsing out the specific impact of an individual program or curriculum is very difficult. Relying on imperfect data to make decisions concerning youth can lead to mistakes, bad decisions, and throwing the baby out with the bathwater. However, it would be equally dangerous to allow decision-makers to make judgments without the participation of the many stakeholders involved and concrete information to justify decisions.

The Decision-Making Process and Evaluation Methodology

Should we fund free OST programs? Which programs should we fund? How do we meet the needs of parents and communities to care for children in the after-school time period, and why should we? Decisions about after school funding are made by policy makers relying on evaluation data to guide their decisions, typically through some application of cost-benefit analysis to determine whether a program produces net benefits. A full understanding of the benefits of youth programs and other programs related to community development requires moving beyond the restrictive assumptions used in CBA in practice, but this does not require abandoning the spirit of cost-benefit analysis. Even if we consider only the most basic of benefits, child care and job creation, the benefits of 21st CCLC programs will be shown to out-weigh the costs. However, there are many other benefits to OST programs that are difficult or impossible to quantify. These benefits are still important for decision makers to consider, and should be included in evaluation research. While they do not provide the false sense of precision of a single positive or negative number, studying qualitative benefits to OST programs aids in the development of high quality programs and gives decision makers better tools for justifying their decisions.

Because OST programs and other non-profits do not often earn money through market-based economic activities, someone has to decide to grant them money to fund their operations. Whether the decision-maker or decision-making group is connected to the government or a foundation, there are several steps in the decision process, typically involving some combination of methods such as summary judgment, the analysis of data, and social bargaining among stakeholders. Someone with the power to allocate money

must decide that a need, such as OST programming, should be funded. They then determine guidelines for proposed programs (whether loose or strict), how to communicate these guidelines to potential grantees, and the criteria to be used for determining whether proposals fulfill the guidelines and are worthy of funding. The grant making body then issues a Request for Proposals (RFP). Potential grantees must make their own decisions, choosing to design programs that are fundable based on the RFP guidelines, and submitting their applications. In turn, individuals from the grant-making body must evaluate proposals and score them according to the appropriate rubric, which may only be one step in deciding exactly which programs to fund, especially if many programs score highly on their applications. Decision-makers must also decide the criteria to identify high quality and/or successful programs, for future decisions about continuing or ending funding. On a daily basis, grantees make decisions about the operation and strategic planning of their programs. The long-term funding decisions related to OST programs are examples of complex decisions, because there are many stakeholders and many criteria involved. “As perceived complexity increases, decision makers seem more apt to use shortcuts to cope with unmanaged uncertainty and ambiguity” (Nutt 1998, 1150, citing Nutt 1989). Examples of such short cuts are assigning prices for costs and benefits for which there is no actual price-making market and assigning probabilities (such as zero) to uncertain events. Rigid, specific rubrics in scoring grant applications are also a way to cope with the ambiguity of proposed programs serving drastically different target populations and adopting different objectives. Additionally, decision-makers may simply use ‘judgment,’ applying “their

intuition to select among courses of action without explaining (or being able to explain) their reasoning or rationale” (*ibid.*, 1148).

Decisions about the use of public money typically rely on some type of data, qualitative, quantitative, or mixed, and it has been argued that these decisions should be made through a ‘reasoned’ approach (Sen 2000), including the participation of stakeholders (Munda 2004). Data are translated into a decision through a process involving judgments about whether an alternative meets certain criteria or conforms to certain norms, as well as social interaction and some form of bargaining among stakeholders. While decision-makers often use data to influence their decisions, in the end, people must actually make the decisions. When a methodology, such as CBA, is relied on to make the decision (to offer a “yes or no” as lamented by conference participants quoted in Little and Mirrlees (1994, 63)), the power to make decisions is given to the technocrats who determine the quantification schemes and weights for costs and benefits in the equation. Even then, people are still making the decision through indirect means. In order to adequately guide decision makers, evaluation data should be as complete as possible and packaged in such a way as to give good guidance. Cost-benefit analysis is founded on a simple guideline for packaging advice: do the benefits outweigh the costs? However, the methodology also includes multiple layers of questionable or false assumptions about the nature of data, costs, and benefits (Sen 2000). Moreover, CBA as it is practiced fails to live up to the methodology as laid out in two classic works, one by Amartya Sen, Partha Dasgupta, and Stephen Marglin for United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) (second edition in 1992), and the other by Little and Mirrless for the World Bank (1969). Participants at a 1994

discussion of Littles and Mirrles, hosted by the World Bank, complained of inadequate data quality, inability to calculate shadow prices for key items, and the inappropriate use of CBA to make decisions for policy makers. A central problem in CBA is that it ignores all values except price, on the assumption that price can adequately capture all-important values (Sen 2000, Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004).

Below I discuss four critiques of CBA important to the analysis of OST and other youth programs – the importance of rights and values, multiple measures of value, participation, and uncertainty and complexity. These four critiques all suggest the importance of qualitative data and iterative processes in evaluation practice. Qualitative research is advocated by many practitioners of Multi-Criteria Evaluation (MCE), including iterative interviewing, collaborative benefits mapping, and participation of a wide range of stakeholders (Burgha 2004, Mathieson 2004, Munda 2004). A better CBA would include explicit consideration of rights and values, because these are important to stakeholders (Sen 2000, Munda 2004). Cultural change, the protection of rights, the expansion of freedom and opportunity—these and other important potential policy impacts have no market price, but people will articulate in interviews how they fit into their values, price or no. Additionally, CBA should incorporate uncertainty and multiple pathways of causation, which are best identified through the use of qualitative data as well as quantitative data. Likewise, while theories of causation cannot be tested statistically with qualitative data, processes of cause and effect that are valuable in predicting uncertain future events can be observed and explored through qualitative research over time (Mathieson 2004). Qualitative research is especially helpful for analysis of costs and benefits that are difficult to price, may occur in the future, and are

the result of complex relationships—such as the impacts of OST programs on youth and their communities.

Inclusion of Rights and Values

While the spirit of CBA does not demand indifference to rights and values, these are often ignored in practice. The first foundational concept of CBA is explicit valuation, which “demands full explication of the reasons for taking a decision, rather than relying on an unreasoned conviction or on an implicitly derived conclusion” (Sen 2000, 935). This can be translated as the mandate that decisions should be based on an explicit statement of values. Values determine which reasons are acceptable for making a decision (Munda 2004). However, values differ depending on the context, the stakeholders, and the methodology used as a decision aid. For example, acceptable reasons for a decision in a military context would be that the activity will reduce casualties and/or collateral damage (Mathieson 2004). Military decision makers treat lives saved or lost as a measure of what they value, and are allowed to make what decision makers view as essential decisions without referencing costs (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004). Most cost-benefit analyses treat market value (dollars saved or lost) as a measure of what they value, and attempt with at best limited success to translate all values into these terms (*ibid.*).

The second foundational concept of CBA, consequential evaluation, is that costs and benefits should be “evaluated by looking at the consequences of the respective decisions” not on the basis of the ‘rightness’ of those decisions. Mahatma Ghandi’s “deontological insistence on nonviolence irrespective of consequences” is an example of non-consequential evaluation (Sen 2000, 936). Many every-day decisions are made

through non-consequential evaluation. Himmelweit (2000) argues that women make decisions about caring for children on the basis of what is right in the context of their relationships, rather than because of the consequences of their caring labor. However, even decisions made through consequential valuation are founded on implicit deontological agreements—for example, that an action be legal or (more nebulously) moral. Sen (2000, 936) argues that consequential valuation should go beyond the fulfillment of desire (the standard utilitarian concept) to also include “whether certain actions have been performed or particular rights have been violated.” This allows decision-makers to use the fulfillment of norms or values that have been agreed upon as a decision criteria, but based on the rightness of the consequences, not the rightness of the action itself. In a social decision process, it is important to be explicit about these foundational agreements, because they influence the decision whether or not they are explicitly discussed (Munda 2004).

The inclusion of rights and values in CBA requires abandoning what Sen termed “evaluative indifferences”—nonvaluation of actions, motives, and rights; indifference to intrinsic value of freedom; and an instrumental view of behavioral values (943-944). Non-valuation of actions, motives, and rights is unnecessary and limits the power of CBA to explain what people see as important. Discussed in section 4.5 below, valuing actions, motives, and rights can be accomplished by moving beyond price (Sen 2000; Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004). In the case of OST programs, priceless values might include promoting equal opportunity or maintaining a fair distribution of funds, which in turn implies (among other things) protecting against discrimination based on race, sex, etc. Fulfilling the right of equality of opportunity could be used to justify providing youth

from low-income families with a support network of educational and community institutions like that routinely available to youth from more affluent communities, such as caring youth-adult relationships beyond the family, safe public space, and access to enrichment activities.

Additionally, CBA ignores endogenous changes in values, norms, and behaviors particularly those involving “cultural challenges and also movements of people from one cultural setting to another (for example, from rural to urban areas)” (Sen 2000, 945). Youth are continually in the process of forming their values, for better or worse, and expanding the set of opportunities to youth is essential to empowering them to make free, adaptive choices. Objectives of culture change are hard to measure but cannot be ignored in order to adequately evaluate programs, as these difficult-to-measure objectives are common among programs. However, what changes should be valued positively depends on the perspectives and values of stakeholders involved. Balancing these different perspectives requires participation.

Participation in Decision Making

While many private decisions are made by a judgment process with little explanation⁶, stakeholders in public decisions like the funding of OST programs demand a reasoned approach that includes their values. This requires a participatory approach to decision making, such as through extended peer communities. Participation in decision making raises many questions – “have all the social actors the same importance (i.e.

⁶ In Nutt’s (1998) study of corporate decision-making, for example, 14% of decisions in his sample were made by a simple judgment process.

weight)? Should a socially desirable ranking be determined on the grounds of the majority principle? Should some veto power be conceded to minorities? Are income distribution effects important?” (Munda 2003, 667). Moreover, using participation in a creative rather than verification function requires transparency in the decision making process. Participatory approaches must also recognize that policy evaluation is not a one-shot activity, but rather is a learning process that happens over long periods of time (*ibid.*).

Munda argues that the important lessons of MCE relevant to participation are: 1) the relationship between decision maker and analyst is always embedded in a social framework, 2) a variety of participatory methods, such as those used in qualitative research, should be combined, 3) a cyclic or iterative evaluation process is necessary to incorporate learning by the scientific team undertaking the study, which allows for “continuous testing of assumptions and unavoidable biases of the study team”, 4) the first step in the process should be an analysis of the relevant institutions in order to identify stakeholders, 5) the decision analysts/study team should not accept participatory inputs uncritically, as such a process may leave out some important social actors and/or privilege the voices of certain actors (670-671).

Sen also advocates participation, highlighting it as one of the most important freedoms that must be maintained in the development process: “among the opportunities that we have reason to value is the freedom to participate. If participatory deliberations were to be hindered or weakened, something of value would be lost” (Sen 2000, 5). Participation, however, needs to move beyond ‘verification’ processes to ‘creation’ processes where stakeholders have power over the decision at hand. Creation implies

that stakeholders can come up with new alternatives and are involved in changing the nature of the evaluation through an iterative learning process (Munda 2004).

In the context of OST programs, stakeholders include, at a minimum, 1) staff at community-based organizations, 2) school faculty, administration, and staff, 3) parents and guardians, and 4) program participants (youth). Other community members, such as business owners, law enforcement personnel, firefighters, library staff, clergy and lay staff at places of worship, and parks and recreation staff—all of whom participate in some OST programs as partners—may also be active stakeholders. A participatory decision-making process about OST funding requires sensitivity to the needs of these various stakeholders, including constraints on time and transportation. Moreover, participation should not be a burden on stakeholders who have many other responsibilities. For example, it is not a parent's full-time job to influence decisions about their child's OST program, and there should be opportunities for them to participate in decision-making without requiring excessive commitments of time and energy on their part. Collaborative research, where the research process is designed to meet specific needs of participants in the study, and Participatory Action Research, where researchers participate and help in the project they are studying, are methodologies that have potential for needs-sensitive participation (see, for example, Webb *et al.* 1966 and Sullivan and Kelly 2001). Including children's voices presents its own challenge. As with adult stakeholders, the participation of children should not add excessive responsibilities to their lives, and their participation may be in the context of the OST program itself, by including them in collaborative and participatory research. Children have their own language, and they view the world differently than adults, with an

understanding of the broader world that grows as they mature. Including children in research, decision making, and planning requires creative, age-appropriate activities, and staff who are skilled in making adult activities accessible to young people. The differences in the way children think, however, in no way negate the fact that they do think—and they have opinions about how to best meet their needs and wants. Children’s voices may be dismissed as fickle, because they are even more sensitive to emotion than adults—they may say they hate a program one day, because they had a bad day, but go back to loving it the next—but when their stated opinions are contextualized by ongoing observation and participation of researchers, this apparent fickleness can be adequately interpreted.

Multiple Measures of Value

Including rights and values in decision-making requires multiple measures of values that can be compared to justify a decision. This is in contrast to standard practice in CBA that relies on additive accounting and market price as a single measure of value (Sen 2000). It is possible in theory to include distributional weights in an additive accounting paradigm, but in practice these are rarely used. Market value ignores distributional issues because the scarce dollars of the poor and the plentiful dollars of the affluent receive the same weight. Moreover, there is no weight attached to changes in the distribution of wealth that will result from the policy/program (946). While additive accounting is a foundational concept of CBA, Sen argues it is not necessary to the spirit of the methodology. Other methods are possible, such as the multiplicative Nash product in a Nash bargaining model, or a concave function reflecting diminishing marginal utility of income and expenditure. Because the quantities of benefits are based on non-basic

judgments, a better procedure would require “conjoint determination of quantities of benefits and their weights” (Sen 2000, 939). Moreover, a simple additive model may not adequately capture costs and benefits when benefits are projected values rather than realized values and there are multiple pathways of causality, meaning that a single cause contributes to multiple effects and vice versa (Mathieson 2004).

Many things of value have no price, and so in CBA prices are assigned to these values or they are ignored all together.

The imperatives of protecting human life, health, and the natural world around us, an ensuring equitable treatment of rich and poor, and of present and future generations, are not sold in markets and cannot be assigned meaningful prices. The point is not that *everything* of value is priceless; some of the benefits of protecting life, health, and nature can and should be priced. The fish we eat, the hospital beds we need when were sick, even the experience we enjoy when visiting natural wonders, do have monetary values. Cost-benefits analysis incorporating these partial values will lean slightly towards protecting health and the environment. It will not, however, go nearly far enough; it will never reflect the full strength of our impulse to protect life, health, and nature (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004, 207)

Ackerman and Heinzerling argue that CBA is in practice “complete cost-incomplete benefit analysis,” but that “no theoretical construct or practical necessity justifies relying on such an unbalanced comparison” (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004, 207). The use of willingness to pay to value things that have no market value—and hence, when people state how much the are willing to pay, they know they will not be asked for the money—is problematic at best but is often used to value things such as “prized components of the environment” (Sen 2000, 946). These values are taken as a real measure of the loss involved when the environment is damaged—Sen gives the

example of oil spills, where values estimated through contingent valuation have been used to determine the liability of the party that caused the damage, regardless of the actual costs of repairing the damage. The inability of one person to purchase the “good” also makes measurement of price difficult. I might say I am willing to pay \$50 more per month for adequate education in my community—and \$50 might be all I could afford—but that \$50 could not possibly cover the entire cost. “What I am willing to contribute must, given the nature of the task, depend on how much I expect others to contribute” (Sen 2000, 949), and on how much I have in the first place. For a person who has very little, \$50 would indicate a high value on the public good.

Additionally, in market valuation the potential for adequate compensation of the losers by the winners is taken as sufficient evidence that an action should take place—as Sen writes, “Don’t worry, my dear loser, we can compensate you fully, and the fact that we don’t have the slightest intention of actually paying this compensation makes no difference; it is merely a difference in distribution” (947). While economists agonize over the question of the allocation of resources, they thereby ignore questions of the distribution of the gains that result from ‘efficient’ allocation—a fundamental problem in much economic analysis (Bowles 2004). Distributional questions are of vital importance, however, to both the winning and losing sides. Moreover, the path-dependent results of initial distributions can explain the existence of inefficient allocations and lack of efficient adjustment over time. Those who have won in the past now have both an incentive and the power to hold onto to their winnings, even at the cost of efficiency (Bowles 2004, Braunstein and Folbre 2001). In the process, adverse initial conditions and inequalities can be exacerbated over time (Bowles and Gintis 2002,

Eeckhout 1999). Distribution therefore should be considered in both assigning weights and in evaluating outcomes.

Ackerman and Heinzerling (2004) argue for 1) evaluating costs and benefits in a holistic manner, 2) valuing moral imperatives above cost comparisons (as is done in military decision making), 3) using a precautionary approach to uncertainty, and 4) valuing fairness towards the poor and powerless, as well as future generations (210). By comparing costs and benefits as a whole, but not forcing them to be expressed in the same units, decision-analysis can avoid the pitfalls of willingness-to-pay methodology. The incorporation of multiple measures of value, such as those used in MCE, does not negate the need for participation of stakeholders. As Ackerman and Heinzerling attest, holistic valuation and participatory decision making requires abandoning the notion of a single ‘formula’ for making seemingly perfect decisions in a second-best world.

Costs and benefits can be compared, however, in complex methodologies like MCE, which involve qualitative data, participation, and iterative processes, and provide information useful to decision-makers but do not make decisions for them. These methodologies are often used in the military, where decision-makers feel the need to justify complex decisions, but do not want to rely on a simple method like CBA that reduces costs and benefits all to a single measure (Mathieson 2004). MCE, especially in the form labeled “social multi-criteria evaluation,” has also been used to make decisions about public resources when multiple stakeholders are involved, such as water policy in Italy (Munda 2004). Unlike CBA, MCE allows multiple measures of value, analysis of complex pathways of causation, and the inclusion of different levels of time frame and scale.

Completeness, Uncertainty, and Complexity

Lastly, the lack of completeness in evaluation research, the uncertainty of future events, and complexity in causation, scale, and time frame all limit the ability of CBA to provide adequate information to guide decision-makers.

Completeness

The completeness assumption of Cost-Benefit Analysis—that individuals are engaging in an optimization process and that future utility and disutility can be measured through expected values—substitutes for a real analysis of complexity, imperfect information, and uncertainty. Along with the reliance on market price as a measure of value, these limitations can be mitigated through the inclusion of qualitative data and the use of abductive, iterative, or learning processes for making decisions. Sen argues that it is straightforward to move beyond the assumption of completeness—one needs only assume a *maximization* process, where “we do not choose an alternative that is worse than another that can be chosen instead” (Sen 2000, 940). However, children may not know what options are really available to them, instead seeing only the small subset of possibilities visible within their community. The isolation of public housing projects, where young people have little access to role models from outside of the project, has been found to have negative impacts for youth (Pratt 2009, Furman 2010, Schwartz *et al.* 2010). The view these youth have of what is possible may be further skewed if the most successful individuals leave the community and so are not visible. Maximization given what is believed to be available will then be quite different from anything resembling true optimization. A creative iterative or learning process in evaluation can lead to the generation of more alternatives (Burgha 2004), implying that such a process is better than

a simple additive accounting of costs and benefits when there is such incompleteness in the range of choices.

Uncertainty

The expected utility principle measures future utility as the weighted average of possible outcomes, where their probability of occurrence is the weight. It typically relies on other assumptions as well, such as no risk aversion or loss aversion (Bowles 2004, Gintis 2000). As Sen points out, when the weights to different possible outcomes are determined by the analyst, relying on assumptions of full knowledge, these weights themselves need justification, in addition to the “axiomatically demanding framework of expected value reasoning” (Sen 2000, 942). The weights are non-basic judgments, based on “factual presumptions, often made in an implicit way” (942). The weights are no more than importance coefficients, not actually measuring the underlying value of each possible cost or benefit (Munda 2004, Mathieson 2004). Uncertain events (for which probabilities are unknown) may simply be assigned a probability weight of zero, thereby removing them from analysis.

Moving beyond the expected utility principle requires a different method of valuing future events, incorporating qualitative information and an abductive process to enable decision makers to judge and value uncertain events. The implications of the weights an analyst chooses in CBA may not become apparent until after the analysis has become completed. “Rather than taking the weights as unalterable entities, they could be offered as tentative values, which remain open to revision as and when the results of using those values become clear. Then, instead of having a one-way sequence of

valuation, we could proceed from tentative values to the applied results and then rethink as to whether the weights need revising in the light of the generated rankings of alternatives” (Sen 2000, 943).

Iterative valuation is especially useful in situations where the costs and benefits in question cannot clearly be quantified. Here, not only are the weights created through non-basic judgments, but so are the so-called measures of costs and benefits. In the case of like OST programs, where many of the benefits will never have an actual market price, iterative evaluation can allow for a determination of the weights that reflects the degree to which the stakeholders involved value the programs. Participation and iterative processes go hand-in-hand for public decisions.

Complexity in dimension, scale, timeframe, and objective

Public decisions are complex, with high stakes, uncertain outcomes, and multiple value systems. Additionally, public decisions have effects in multiple contexts, increasing the complexity along axes of dimension, scale, time frame, and objective (Munda 2004). With Out-of-School Time (OST) programs, for example, there are possible effects in economic, educational, psycho-social, and public safety dimensions. An evaluation focusing solely on the educational dimension misses other important effects. Scale also matters, because benefits at one scale may be counted as costs at another, especially where there is a negative network externality to using a resource. For example, a community may value an increase in tourism, but too much tourism in the region may lead to overall negative effects. Additionally, benefits that manifest at multiple scales—individual, community, city, etc—will be lost if the focus of an evaluation is only on a

single scale, such as the individual. Costs and benefits also occur in different time frames, which is captured in CBA through the use of the discount factor (typically exponential). By discounting the future, and heavily discounting the distant future, long-term effects are collapsed to yield a present discounted value where they may not count much at all. This is particularly relevant to choices such as a young adult choosing to pursue an additional year of schooling, that involve costs in the short term, through decreased wages, but benefits in the long term through increased earning potential.

Although, there are many concurrent objectives when complex decisions are made, evaluations tend to focus on only a small number—such as the emphasis on grades, test scores, and teacher reports of behavior in evaluations of 21st CCLC programs. While some evaluations consider other objectives, large-scale evaluations generally focus on grades and classroom behavior because at this point in time there are data on these objectives for the largest number of programs. Data on other objectives are difficult to gather, as are data on different scales and time frames—especially if the data is to live up to some first-best experimental ideal. If after-school programs are considered in their educational dimensions alone, and are not recognized for their role in economic and social dimensions, data on these dimensions are likely to be unavailable.

Applying the Concepts

A methodology for adequate evaluation of youth programs, especially those funded by public money, must include the valuation of rights and values, such as equal opportunity. It also should include the participation of stakeholders—including youth themselves—through meaningful creation processes, beyond the disempowering façade

of participation that is limited to verification. Because few of the benefits of youth programs can be reduced to a market price, evaluations need to include multiple measures of value. Decisions of youth should be contextualized in their immediate community and the larger social system, so as to critically investigate the completeness of the maximization processes inherent in youth choice, as well as to determine the complexity of causes acting on youth outcomes. As many of the benefits of youth programs will occur only in the future, the uncertainty of future events is a central question of study. Lastly, because benefits of youth programs are manifest in multiple dimensions, scales, time frames, and objectives, ignorance of this complexity will always produce incomplete evaluations. Embarking on my study of youth programs, I was told by some Program Evaluation scholars that I would not be able to say anything because there was no 'control group' to which youth were assigned randomly. I would argue that the four problems with CBA discussed above offer a much more daunting challenges to the ability to do good research.

What does this critique of CBA mean for program directors attempting to prove that their programs are worthwhile? In the short-run, they are operating within a system where they are expected to prove certain specific benefits in order to maintain or increase their funding. Achieving a large-scale change in the way programs are evaluated is a long-term project. Because there are many non-quantified benefits to youth programs, there needs to be a shorter-term change in government policy that values qualitative research and broader measures of benefits to OST programs. The research for this study therefore does build upon the cost-benefit analysis framework, rather than reject it altogether, while attempting to live up to the prescriptions I make above. The research is

participatory, incorporating the values and interpretations of participants in the study. I combine qualitative and quantitative data, following an iterative process to determine appropriate measures for benefits quantified through non-basic judgments. I also include discussion of uncertain events. The lack of long-term, longitudinal research does not mean that uncertain events should be ignored, but rather that they should be proactively discussed in order to spur the necessary research. My analysis does not produce a new formula, but instead aims to provide an evaluation of costs and benefits that can contribute to a broad discussion to better empower decision-makers to make informed decisions. This evaluation can be used as a starting point for a larger, creatively iterative, participatory evaluation of publicly funded OST programs.

Costs of 21st CCLC OST programs in New York State

The 21st CCLC grant program in New York State provides substantial grants for running after-school programs in poor communities. Table 1 presents a general overview of the size of awards given to grantees—in New York State in 2006, the average award amount was \$116,600 per site per year, with each grantee operating on average 2.89 program sites (the largest number of sites was 12). 21st CCLC programs have other sources of funding as well, ranging from zero to 9, with an average of 1.53 additional sources of funding.

Table 1: Funding for 21st CCLC Grantees

N = 237	Mean	Std Deviation
Number of Sites	2.89	2.11
Award Yr 1	\$242,787	\$164,878
Award Yr 2	\$481,014	\$318,396
Award Yr 3	\$480,537	\$318,847
Award Yr 4	\$480,537	\$318,847
Award Yr 5	\$480,537	\$318,847
Average Per Yr	\$336,975	\$221,777

Total for 5 Years	\$1,684,876	\$1,108,883
Number of Other Funding Sources	1.53	1.88

The 21st CCLC programs mostly operate during the after-school time (three to six pm) during the school year, five days a week, but many also operate during the summer, on weekends, and on school holidays (see Table 2). Statistics for school year and summer operations were calculated excluding programs that offered no services during that time⁷. Programs that operated during the school year run for an average of 16.22 hours per week (546.61 hours per school year), capturing the fact that many offer programming in addition to the fifteen typical hours of after-school time each week, including on holidays and weekends. Programs operating during the summer are open an average of 24.19 hours per week (162.80 hours per summer).

Table 2: Operations for 21st CCLC Centers

		Mean	Std Dev
School Year N = 705	Hrs per Week	16.22	9.92
	Days per Week	4.79	.83
	Weeks per year	33.70	6.58
Summer N = 278	Hours per week	24.19	15.47
	Days per week	4.76	.63
	Weeks per year	6.73	6.97
Total N = 729	Weeks per Year	35.20	11.08

Attendance data, which are available only for programs in their second or later year of operation, show that each center serves on average 198.35 participants, 99.77 of

⁷ It is important to note also potential errors in this data, as some programs report zero for hours, days, or weeks (but not for all three). Additionally, three programs reported that they operate 52 weeks in the school year and 52 weeks in the summer.

whom are considered regular attendees, meaning that they have attended 30 days or more of programming. Considering only the school year, a program with an average award (\$116,600) would cost \$213.31 per hour (\$2.13 per hour per regular attendee).

Table 3 contains demographics for regular attendees at 21st CCLC programs for which data is available. Programs tend to serve mostly Hispanic and Black youth, with on average a large minority of youth for whom ethnicity is not reported, possibly including multi-racial youth (see Figure 5.1). The programs serve roughly even numbers of male and female regular attendees. On average, more than 40% regular attendees are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Large minorities of regular attendees are either identified as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or their LEP status is unknown, and the same is true for the more generic designation of ‘special needs.’

Programs serve youth from pre-kindergarten through high school, with slightly higher attendance in elementary and middle school programs—see Table 4⁸. Additionally, there are more programs serving elementary and/or middle school youth than those serving high school youth, with the largest number of programs serving middle school youth, in reflection of the funding priority for middle school programs.

⁸ In Table 4, programs serving no youth in that category were not included in the calculation of the mean or standard deviation (i.e. 281 programs serve some youth in elementary school, though they may not serve youth in every elementary grade).

Table 3: Demographics of Regular Attendees at 21st CCLC Centers, N = 522

Ethnicity N = 514	% Native American	1%
	% Asian	3%
	% Black	33%
	% Hispanic	32%
	% Pacific Islander	0%
	% White	15%
	% Unknown	16%
Gen.	% Male	46.7%
	% Female	46.2%
	% Unknown	3.3%
Other	% LEP ⁹	11.8%
	% Unknown	26.0%
	% Free or Reduced Lunch	58.0%
	% Unknown	24.1%
	% Special Needs	8.0%
	% Unknown	10.8%

⁹ Limited English Proficiency

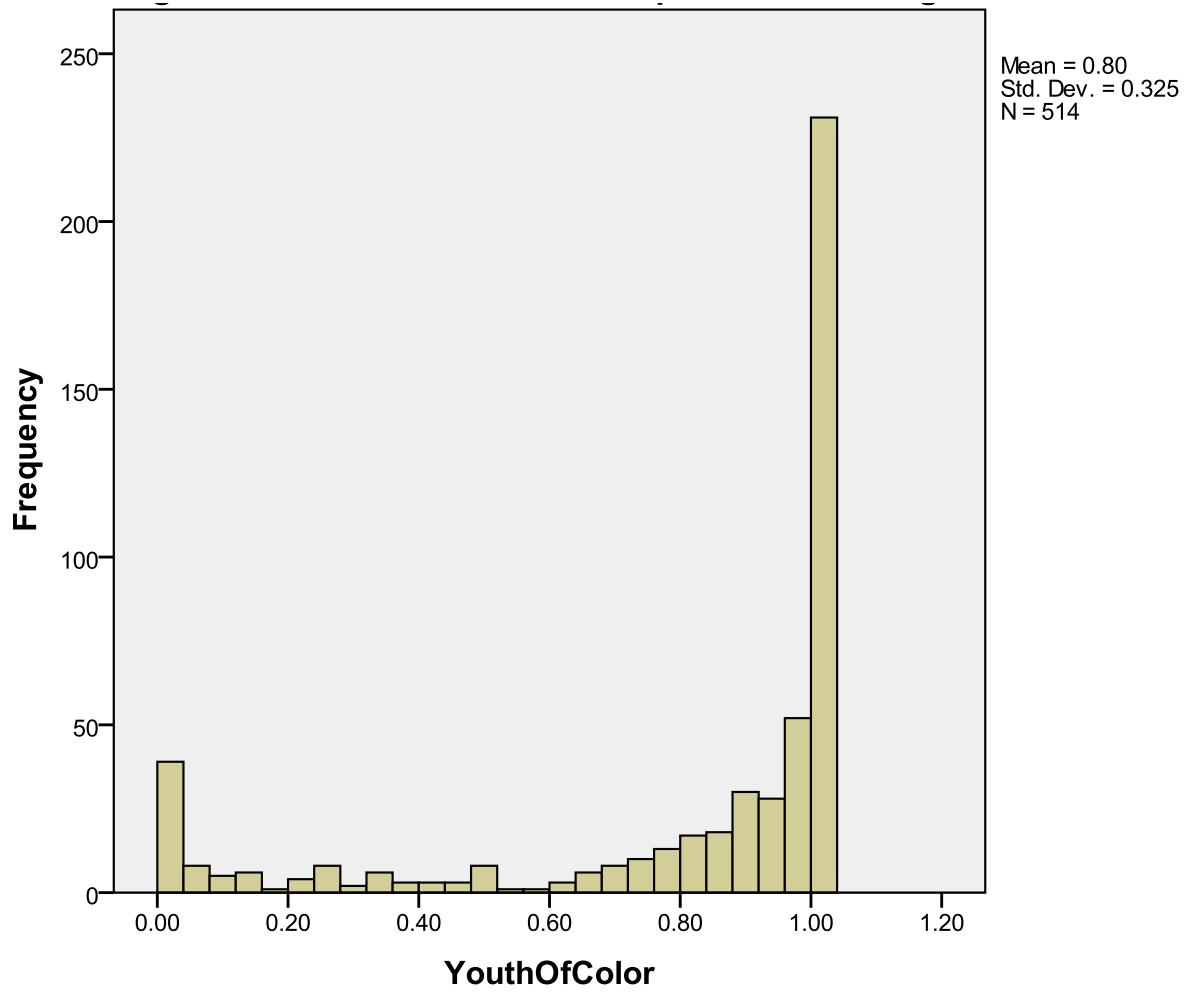


Figure 1: Youth of Color as a Proportion of All Regular Attendees

Table 4: Attendance (Regular attendees) by Grade Level

		Mean	Std. Dev
Elementary Grades N = 281	Pre K	.35	2.205
	Kindergarten	6.99	10.692
	First Grade	11.27	15.104
	Second Grade	12.47	16.091
	Third Grade	15.96	18.532
	Fourth Grade	16.64	16.809
	Fifth Grade	18.00	17.202
	Unknown Elem	3.52	13.366
Middle Grades N = 340	Sixth Grade	20.27	22.269
	Seventh Grade	32.71	33.970
	Eighth Grade	28.71	36.357
	Unknown Middle	3.69	26.309
High School Grades N = 149	Ninth Grade	12.69	18.253
	Tenth Grade	10.61	14.169
	Eleventh Grade	8.61	13.270
	Twelfth Grade	7.30	11.817
	Unknown High School	3.17	9.925

Considering only school-year operations, 21st CCLC programs on average cost \$2.14 per regular participant per hour, or \$213.27 total per hour (see Table 5). Including participants who attended less than 30 days, programs on average cost \$1.08 per participant per hour. The average award of \$116,600, and the average cost per regular attendee per hour of \$2.14, are used below as a representative cost structure of a 21st CCLC center.

Table 5: Average Cost per unit of Operations for School Year Programs

per site per year	\$116,600.42
per hour (546.7 hours)	\$213.27
per day (161.3 days)	\$722.88
per week (33.7 weeks)	\$3,459.59
Per regular attendee (99.8)	\$1,168.68
Per total participants (198.4)	\$587.85
Per RA per Hr	\$2.14
Per Participant per Hr	\$1.08

An Exploration of Benefits of 21st CCLC Programs

The benefits of after-school programs are complex and difficult to measure. I will explore here three types of potential benefits to after-school programs, beyond the commonly cited individual effects mentioned in the introduction:

- Providing safe supervision for children at a time when most families are in need of this service
- Providing jobs in low-income communities, including for youth
- Production of public goods related to the role of OST programs as a bridge between the family and the schools (i.e. the state).

The first two, both of which relate to the labor market, are the easiest to explore quantitatively. The third is explored through qualitative research, as these benefits directly related to building capabilities and promoting agency. As will be seen from the magnitude of the most easily quantifiable benefits to after-school programs, non-quantifiable benefits do not need to be highly valued to demonstrate that OST programs are a worthwhile use of money.

Child Care Provision

Even though OST programs are more than babysitting, they do provide the basic services provided by a babysitter—adult supervision and care to ensure the safety of youth. Each 21st CCLC center in New York state serves on average 122 elementary and middle school participants (78 regular attendees), for a total of 65,514 (41,871) in the state. Most of these children would require an alternative form of childcare in the absence of the OST programs. In interviews, some parents stated that they do not know

what they would do for child care without the after-school program, while others indicate that they would provide child care through family networks, a paid program (such as at a church), or by hiring a babysitter. One parent who was looking for a job stated that she would need to remain unemployed if her child was not in an OST program. The caring labor provided to these children produces important public goods, meaning that it is a collective rather than individual responsibility (Folbre 1994).

The costs for childcare vary by location, and in some locations it may be difficult to find quality paid child care at all. A babysitter in the informal market could charge anywhere between \$5 and \$15 per hour, or more. A daycare center, on the other hand, is likely to cost \$100 to \$400 per week for full-time care, between \$2.50 per hour and \$10 per hour—however, daycare centers providing school-age care may not be available. The New York State Office of Child and Family Services provides families receiving Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) a benefit for school-age child care of \$262 per week, \$54 per day, \$36 per half-day, or \$9.17 per hour (NYS OCFS 2008). If the school-aged care from a 21st CCLC program were replaced at the TANF rate, an average program during the school year is providing a net benefit of \$225.34 per week, \$28.76 per half-day, or \$7.03 per hour. Using the hourly rate, this adds up to a yearly benefit of \$3,843 per regular attendee, or \$383,561 for an average program.

One may assume that the child care services of a 21st CCLC programs would not be reproduced for all youth, especially older youth. There are, however, many other reasons why OST programs produce benefits for individuals and communities when older youth participate. Paramount among these are the reductions in juvenile crime associated with participation in OST programs. Researchers and practitioners in the field

recommend that programs targeting older youth focus on specific desires and needs of the target population, such as creative activities, internships, practical skills, help with college preparation, and, when possible, paid jobs (Wahl Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2004). As discussed below, programs that provide high school and college-aged youth with paid jobs working with younger adolescents and children are providing a benefit to both their young employees and the community.

Table 7 presents a sensitivity analysis for estimating a child care replacement cost for an average 21st CCLC program. In the table I assume that programs serving elementary and/or middle school youth each serve on average 82 regular attendees, while high school programs serve 39, all operating for the average 546.7 hours during the school year (summer operations are not included in this analysis). Regular attendees are assumed to attend all program hours, and participants (those who attended less than 30 days) are ignored in the calculation. The potential benefit is calculated for replacement costs of \$3.50, \$5.00, \$7.50, and \$10.00 per hour. I include replacement of 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, and 100% of the care they receive in the 21st CCLC program. The underlined entries are my suggestions for calculation of the replacement cost, assuming the replacement cost per hour is lowest for elementary school students and highest for high school students, and that elementary, middle, and high school students will need to replace 100%, 60%, and 40% of the care respectively.

Children of these ages need to be engaged in constructive activities during the after-school time. Elementary-aged children are not legally allowed to be left alone. While there are some children in 21st CCLC programs who have one parent at home, I do not have accurate data on how prevalent stay-at-home parents are for this population.

Considering all block groups in the state, an average of 60% of children under 18 are living in households with all available parents in the labor force. 21st CCLC programs operate in communities of concentrate poverty, and serve a majority of children from low-income families. OST programs like 21st CCLC have a long history of serving working parents, including both mothers and fathers (Halpern 2003). While I do not have specific data on how many children in 21st CCLC programs have a parent at home, I believe this number to be small.

The need for OST programming does not disappear for older youth. For example, a high school student may attend a music lesson, receive tutoring, or go to the movies with their friends—all viable alternatives to unsupervised time on the streets. It could be argued that high school students may be better served through paid employment – and some 21st CCLC programs do employ high school aged youth, as discussed in the next section. However, with high youth unemployment rates, low-income, urban youth attending an OST program may not have a real opportunity cost of paid employment, and some OST programs for high school students provide internship experience, an opportunity to learn job-related skills hands-on, and monetary stipends (Wall Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2005).

These estimated replacement costs, and the average program cost of \$116,600 per year, indicate a net benefit of \$107,547 for each elementary school program, \$85,132 for each middle school program, and -\$31,315 for each high school program, indicated for

selected entries in Table 7¹⁰. However, if the replacement of high school OST programming is valued at 100%—meaning that all of the regular attendees at that program were engaged in some other, privately funded constructive activity for the same amount of time—an average high school program would produce a net benefit of \$96,613.

Job Creation

OST programs in poor communities provide job opportunities for high school and college students as well as other adults. In communities where there is unemployment, there are precedents for valuing this job creation by calculating ‘shadow wages’ based on the employment rate (Sen, Marglin, and Dasgupta 1992). Wages are generally treated in CBA as labor costs—when a shadow wage is calculated, this cost is reduced by some percentage based on the unemployment rate. Many 21st CCLCs have few expenses other than maintaining quality staff, as they operate in school buildings for which all maintenance costs are paid by the school district. One question is whether the part-time jobs provided by OST programs should be valued this way, and there is debate in the field itself over to what extent OST jobs are and should be “professional” (Miller 2005, Mott 2009). I would argue that jobs for youth provide important benefits.

10

Table 6: Net Benefit for Childcare Function for an Average 21st CCLC Program

	Elementary	Middle	High School (40%)	High School (100%)
Replacement Costs	\$224,147	\$201,732	\$85,285	\$213,213
Costs	\$116,600	\$116,600	\$116,600	\$116,600
Net Benefit	\$107,547	\$85,132	-\$31,315	\$96,613

Table 7: Estimated Costs for replacing childcare function of 21st CCLC programs, including only regular attendees¹¹

	Replacement Costs	Assumed Hourly Cost			
		\$3.50	\$5.00	\$7.50	\$10.00
Elementary (82)	20%	\$31,381	\$44,829	\$67,244	\$89,659
	40%	\$62,761	\$89,659	\$134,488	\$179,318
	60%	\$94,142	\$134,488	\$201,732	\$268,976
	80%	\$125,522	\$179,318	\$268,976	\$358,635
	100%	\$156,903	\$224,147	\$336,221	\$448,294
Middle (82)	20%	\$31,381	\$44,829	\$67,244	\$89,659
	40%	\$62,761	\$89,659	\$134,488	\$179,318
	60%	\$94,142	\$134,488	\$201,732	\$268,976
	80%	\$35,864	\$179,318	\$268,976	\$358,635
	100%	\$156,903	\$224,147	\$336,221	\$448,294
High School (39)	20%	\$14,925	\$21,321	\$31,982	\$42,643
	40%	\$29,850	\$42,643	\$63,964	\$85,285
	60%	\$44,775	\$63,964	\$95,946	\$127,928
	80%	\$59,700	\$85,285	\$127,928	\$170,570
	100%	\$74,625	\$106,607	\$159,910	\$213,213

There is disagreement over whether or not youth need jobs. The most common definitions of youth unemployment minimize the extent of the problem, because most youth do not report actively looking for a job and they are also enrolled in school, meaning that they are more likely to be counted as out of the labor force rather than as unemployed (Singell and Lillydahl 1989). Levin (1983, 231) identified that approximately 2% of youth are “lumpen-youth,” neither in school nor working, but this percentage may be much higher in some communities (see Figure 4.2). Moreover, most youth who work for a wage are not expected to contribute to family income, but use their money to fund extra consumption and entertainment (*ibid.*). In some circumstances,

¹¹ The average net benefit per program (replacement cost – cost of program) are as follows, assuming average program costs: Elementary (\$107,547), Middle (\$85,132), High School (-\$31,315 replacing 40% of services, \$96,613, replacing 100% of services)

however, youth are not only expected to contribute to the cost of their care, but must earn wages to cover their own subsistence needs. Many youth at Harvey Milk High School must balance high school with a full-time job because they are not welcomed at home due to their sexual orientation or gender identity—for example, one student in my class of six was working full-time at an upscale retail store to support himself after being kicked out by his parents subsequent to coming out. He dropped out of high school before the end of the year, prioritizing his job over his education. Even if low-income youth are not in such dire straights and have families that provide for their basic needs, they may use wages they earn to engage in activities with their peers, fulfilling important developmental needs. Youth themselves often state that they feel the need for jobs. Moreover, participating in an OST program as a staff member may be the only way they are willing to participate (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008; Wahl Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2004).

Experience is important for success in the labor market, and early work experience is especially important for young people who do not go on to college. Stereotypes and structural barriers like lack of transportation make it difficult for poor youth, urban and rural, to find jobs. The market fails to adequately provide employment for adults and youth in poverty trap communities. When young people would otherwise join the category of lumpen-youth—in which case it becomes difficult for them to provide for their subsistence without engaging in independent or organized crime—both the young person and the community benefit from youth employment. While any type of job will provide some degree of useful labor market experience, and indeed even the opportunity to flip burgers has been identified as important for youth (Sampson and Laub

1997), working at an OST program provides youth with experience of engaging in meaningful and important work, which is integral to living a good life (Townsend 2003).

The community may further benefit if more young people choose to become quality child

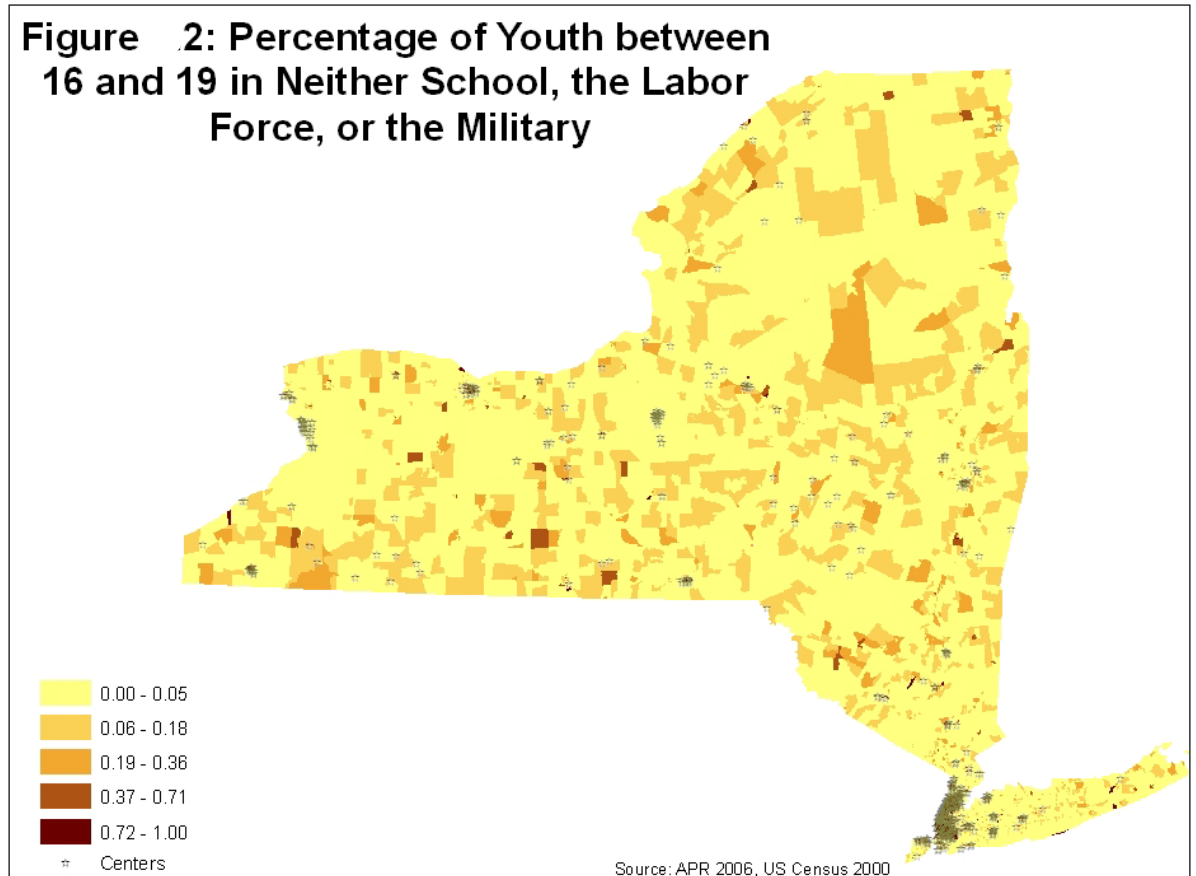


Figure 4. 2: Percentage of Youth between 16 and 19 in Neither School, the Labor Force, or the Military

care providers and educators themselves.

For these reasons, jobs for young people provided by OST programs should be valued through some type of shadow wages scheme, or alternatively by adding a job creation benefit. The fact that most jobs with after-school programs are part-time should not detract from their value to young people, because part-time jobs are more appropriate for youth enrolled in school. Staffing characteristics of 21st CCLC programs are reported in Table 7, for paid staff and volunteers. On average, teachers make up 32% of paid staff,

but this average conceals substantial variations. Many programs hire one main type of ‘line staff’ (i.e. group leaders and assistants), such as high school students or teachers, rather than a mix.

**Table 8: Staffing Characteristics for Programs Hiring some School Year Staff,
N = 533**

Type of Staff	Mean	Std Deviation	Average % of total staff
Teachers	6.4	8.1	32%
College Students	2.3	4.2	12%
High School Students	1.4	3.1	7%
Participants	.4	2.3	2%
Youth Development	3.4	4.2	17%
Community	.5	1.9	3%
School Staff	1.5	2.3	8%
Other	.4	1.8	2%
Other No College	1.8	4.5	9%
Center Administration	1.6	2.1	8%
Total	19.8	13.8	NA
Non-Funded Staff	3.1	10.0	NA
Teachers	.3	1.3	7%
College Students	.8	3.5	17%
High School Students	.9	2.6	19%
Participants	1.2	5.4	25%
Youth Development	.2	.7	3%
Community	.8	4.2	17%
School Staff	.1	.7	3%
Other	.2	2.9	5%
Other No College	.1	.8	2%
Center Administration	.1	.4	2%
Total	4.7	12.6	NA
Staff Replaced	1.6	3.1	8%

Calculating a shadow wage relies on the unemployment rate, which varied in 2000 in New York State from 6% in one block group all the way to 100% in other block groups, with a mean 7% (see Figure 4.3). As 21st CCLC programs operate in

communities of concentrated poverty, unemployment is likely to be high in communities where they operate. According to Sen, Marglin, and Dasgupta (1992), labor costs should be discounted by the same percentage as the unemployment rate, so a program in a community with 10% unemployment would include 90% of its labor costs in CBA.

Table 4.8 presents a sensitivity analysis of different parameters for a job creation benefit for 21st CCLC programs, considering all labor costs, labor costs for adult non-teacher staff, and labor costs for youth staff. Rather than discounting labor costs by the unemployment rate, I propose adding that percentage of labor costs as a benefit, as a means of highlighting the amount of the job creation benefit. Detailed data on the actual amount of each 21st CCLC award used for labor costs is not available, but the percentage is likely to be high. Some types of OST grants, for example, only provide funds for staff, under the assumption that a non-profit will be able to effortlessly cover other costs. The Table 9 is constructed using an average award of \$116,600, and the assumption that 47% of staff are adult non-teachers and 21% are youth. The underlined entries are what I propose as a reasonable approximation of the actual job creation benefit produced by such an average program – assuming 60% of the award is spent on staff, and unemployment rates of 9% and 16% among adults and youth in the community, respectively. This yields a total average benefit of \$5,310 per 21st CCLC center. Programs hiring more youth, especially those with staffs composed almost entirely of youth, are producing a much higher benefit, and are also investing significant amounts of time and resources in training their young staff. Were this benefit, along with the child care benefit calculated above, added to the funding for 21st CCLC programs, it could

support wage increases for program staff, additional materials, investment in the school building, or an expansion of capacity to serve more youth

Figure 3: Percentage of Population 16 and Over who are Unemployed, Bronx County and the Albany Area

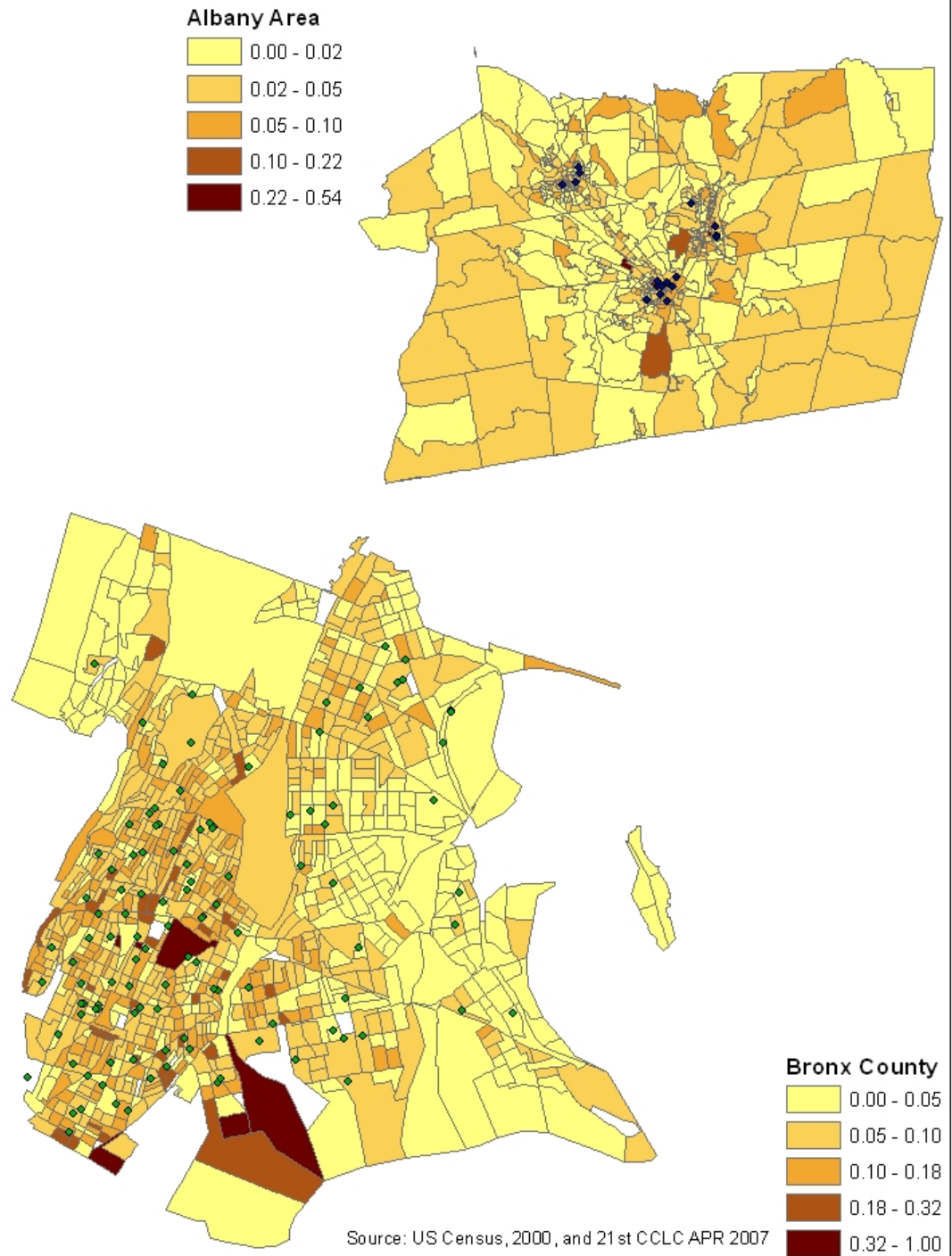


Figure 4. 3: Percentage of Population 16 and Over who are Unemployed, Bronx County and the Albany Area

Table 9: Sensitivity Analysis for Job Creation Benefit

		Percentage of award spent on staff				
		20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Total Labor Costs		\$23,320	\$46,640	\$69,960	\$93,280	\$116,600
Costs for Adult non-teacher staff		\$10,960	\$21,921	\$32,881	\$43,842	\$54,802
Costs for youth staff		\$4,897	\$9,794	\$14,692	\$19,589	\$24,486
Unemployment Rate		Job Creation Benefit				
5%	Adult	\$548	\$1,096	\$1,644	\$2,192	\$2,740
	Youth	\$245	\$490	\$735	\$979	\$1,224
6%	Adult	\$658	\$1,315	\$1,973	\$2,631	\$3,288
	Youth	\$294	\$588	\$881	\$1,175	\$1,469
7%	Adult	\$767	\$1,534	\$2,302	\$3,069	\$3,836
	Youth	\$343	\$686	\$1,028	\$1,371	\$1,714
8%	Adult	\$877	\$1,754	\$2,631	\$3,507	\$4,384
	Youth	\$392	\$784	\$1,175	\$1,567	\$1,959
9%	Adult	\$986	\$1,973	\$2,959	\$3,946	\$4,932
	Youth	\$441	\$881	\$1,322	\$1,763	\$2,204
10%	Adult	\$1,096	\$2,192	\$3,288	\$4,384	\$5,480
	Youth	\$490	\$979	\$1,469	\$1,959	\$2,449
12%	Adult	\$1,315	\$2,631	\$3,946	\$5,261	\$6,576
	Youth	\$588	\$1,175	\$1,763	\$2,351	\$2,938
14%	Adult	\$1,534	\$3,069	\$4,603	\$6,138	\$7,672
	Youth	\$686	\$1,371	\$2,057	\$2,742	\$3,428
16%	Adult	\$1,754	\$3,507	\$5,261	\$7,015	\$8,768
	Youth	\$784	\$1,567	\$2,351	\$3,134	\$3,918
18%	Adult	\$1,973	\$3,946	\$5,919	\$7,892	\$9,864
	Youth	\$881	\$1,763	\$2,644	\$3,526	\$4,407
20%	Adult	\$2,192	\$4,384	\$6,576	\$8,768	\$10,960
	Youth	\$979	\$1,959	\$2,938	\$3,918	\$4,897

Public Good Benefits

OST programs occupy a space situated between the school and the family, fulfilling a bridging role in the lives of youth between these two institutions. Benefits they produce in this role are difficult to quantify, and they affect both individuals and communities. Measurable outcomes are difficult to link empirically to the OST program itself, due to lack of experimental design and the confounding influences of school, family, and other factors on youth. None the less, three such benefits are explored below:

1) increasing parent participation and social capital, 2) improving interpersonal skills and relationships with peers, and 3) exposure to activism. These benefits occur through spillover effects such as changes in the state of the population (i.e. increasing the density of a norm), changes in informal institutions, and changes in formal institutions. Individual spillovers also occur, such as when OST programs contribute to improved grades or attendance. Because of the existence of virtuous and negative cycles, changes may need to be of a large magnitude in order to create the eventual desired result, such as a change in culture. This means that even if OST programs are contributing to the creation of spillover effects, they may not be able to achieve their desired results in the short-run. However, their failure to reach critical mass for such a change implies, in this context, that there should be more investment in them and complementary institutions in order to achieve results. The benefits described below cannot be traded on markets, because no such market exists. They must be valued in ways that resonate with the OST stakeholders, including school personnel, OST staff, parents, youth, and other community members.

Parental Involvement

Because they are not identified with the State in the same way a public school is, OST programs provide a safe public space for parents to interact with each other and to practice skills of advocating for their children (McDermott and Rothenberg 2004). In this way OST programs provide a bridge between the private relationships of the family and the institutionalized relationships of the schools, facilitating increased parental involvement in their children's education. When parents participate in OST programs and other public spaces, they meet other parents in their community, building friendships and acquaintances, identified as important in mitigating negative effects of residential

turnover and improving social cohesion and social capital (Sampson 1988). This is especially important if parents are unable or unwilling to participate in the school itself, due to barriers such as immigration status, language, negative memories of school, or fear of authority figures. When parents have a positive relationship with educational institutions, they are better able to act as advocates for their children, better enabling their children to develop their human capital—thus the OST program, in complementarity with other institutions, can create many further benefits. Parental involvement in their children’s education improves not only educational outcomes but also family relationships (Search Institute).

Participation in OST programs also benefits parents themselves, both through their children and through the direct provision of services like family literacy, ESL, and enrichment opportunities. In the Bronx, for example, Spanish-speaking parents routinely mentioned learning to speak English, learning to read, and having homework help as important ways Youth for R.E.A.L. has impacted their children’s lives. During more than one interview with Spanish-speaking parents, a child jumped in to help their parent communicate with the interviewer, a task common for the children of immigrant parents. When OST programs and community schools provide ESL programs specifically for parents this effect—improving the ability of immigrant families to function outside of Spanish-only environments—is increased even further.

OST programs impact the relationships families have with educational institutions both because they may provide a friendlier atmosphere for parents to interact (especially undocumented immigrants worried about legal repercussions) and because the hours of OST programs are closer to time parents get out of work. During a focus group, for

example, parents agreed with one another that while they attend meetings at the OST program, they do not attend meetings at the school (and never have) and that moreover they have positive relationships with staff and parents connected to the OST program but not to the school day. Additionally, the lack of grades and standardized tests in OST programs can help children, especially struggling children, to be more engaged in what they are learning—and, according to parents, they come home wanting to talk about what they have learned: “you don’t have to ask,” says one parent. Another parent says *"Cuando llega a casa ya me habla todo que ha aprendido, actividades que hacen, mucho..."* These same parents who spoke freely about their kids’ activities at the OST program were unable to provide the same information about the school day.

A tension exists between family and OST program staff regarding homework help. While this is important to many parents, some OST staff members express negative opinions about their role with homework, indicating that helping children with their homework is a parent’s responsibility, and they are being asked to take on roles more appropriately played by parents. However, English language support Out-of-School that facilitates a mono-lingual minority language within the home may help children develop bilingual language skills. Providing a consistent mono-lingual language inside the home, where the minority language is the only language spoken, is one of the most effective means of raising bilingual children (Pearson 2008). Parents who are not lacking in English language skills may also value homework help because it allows them to spend the few hours between work and bedtime engaged in other activities with their children.

Some OST staff have made statements in interviews and focus groups highlighting the fear that their students are going home to dysfunctional families with

irresponsible parents who use drugs and are involved in crime. While this is true in some cases—for example, one parent explicitly stated that she valued her child learning not to use drugs because people in the child’s family were drug addicts—there are also many OST parents who simply have to work late. Other factors, such as staff inexperience facilitating parent meetings and lack of translation services, can make parental involvement difficult for many programs. The commonality of this problem is evidenced by the frequent inclusion and popularity of workshops on increasing parental involvement at OST training conferences. Overcoming these tensions is a challenge in promoting family involvement in OST programs.

Effects on interpersonal skills and relationships with peers

Durlak and Weissbaum (2007) have found that quality after-school programs (those with sequential, active, focused, and explicit programming) produce positive impacts related to interpersonal skills—decision-making and problem-solving, self-control, leadership, conflict resolution, etc. These skills are used in building social capital, and are important for economic activities in which children will engage throughout their lives. A positive change in interpersonal skills was echoed in many of my interviews with parents. When asked what their children had learned at the OST program, their responses included getting along with others, sharing (*a compartir*), and becoming less timid. One parent said, for example, "Well, basically she was very timid, very shy. Now I can't control her. I cannot say this is this, because she sort of knows it is this way. Now she is very opinionated." This woman’s daughter had gained confidence in exercising her voice. Interpersonal skills translate across settings for youth, enabling them to better succeed in school and later in the work place.

Moreover, OST programs are a place where low-income youth can safely interact with other children in a non-competitive environment to create work, accomplish goals, produce long-term projects, and prepare for performances. Parents and youth both identify opportunities for *expression* – music, dance, and art – as important components of their OST programs, at a time when these same programs often are being reduced or eliminated in the school. The importance of OST programs as a place where youth can interact with one another differently than they do during school was expressed in a focus group of staff members (all teachers) at Yonkers Middle School:

Teacher 1: The fact that there is less stress after school allows them the freedom to express themselves more openly and maybe even take some chances that they don't take during the regular school.

Teacher 2: Part of the reason is that there are not any grades assigned for OST programs. When the pressure of grades is removed, the use of grades as the motivating factor is removed, then a completely different atmosphere is created and a method of teaching. All of a sudden it is much more about the subject matter and the relationship between the teacher and the student, and less about the communal record or awards and records of the grading system.

Teacher 3: Again, due to being so comfortable, they are ok at making mistakes but they will take more risks, discover and learn through trial and error. The regular class setting, they have too much pressure: I better not raise my hand, what if I don't know the answer? So it is a whole different way of learning.

Teacher 1: Not just the pressure from the teacher, the pressure from the whole class. After school they get to know each other and they relax with people that are there. In the regular classroom setting there might be a little bit more competition and they don't want to fail in front of their peers.

Exposure to Activism

While teachers during the school day must prepare students for ever-increasing numbers of standardized tests, OST practitioners can make time for innovative projects

like the Community Change Project at Youth for R.E.A.L. in the South Bronx, in which students identify an issue they care about, work through six phases of the project, and end the year with a rally that involves their parents and other family members and friends. As one staff member describes the project, "I think one of the strengths of this program is that it really is trying to instill in young people a set of core sort of character development principles that we hope will lead them and stay with them through out their lives - and time will tell there." In their role as community programs, OST programs encourage children to participate in advocacy with law makers as well as direct activism (Austria 2006). The goal is to inspire children, expose them to activism, and teach them about setting realistic short-term goals for changing their world. When there is an experience of empowerment, this can lead to future activism and fundamental culture change (Weinbaum 2004).

At the most basic level, this project and others like it help kids to be aware of their location within a community. One elementary school participant at Youth for R.E.A.L. defined community as "people gathering and telling each other about projects," which identifies the community as a place of action. Other children used repeating themes of the community being 'all around' them or surrounding them—these children understand that their community effects them, and put themselves in the center.

Parents are involved in the community change project as well. Many parents interviewed at Youth for R.E.A.L. stated that they participate in the yearly rally, often bringing other relatives with them. This is not revolutionizing the community over-night, but it is bringing together a large number of people together to celebrate and agitate for community change on a yearly basis, with children at the forefront as powerful actors and

leaders. In a community where many residents are recent immigrants, and parents often monolingual in Spanish, French, or Wolof, one parent told me that Youth for R.E.A.L. is “teaching the kids how to come together in unity as black, Hispanic and multiple cultures.” Another parent, herself a recent immigrant with limited English proficiency, stated:

“Sometime we don’t think to go cleaning the parks of like the...they need protect...it is something to do. Something has to be done and other than that if we don’t do it so this is our community we are supposed to keep it clean and safe and drugs free stuff like that. *Sometime they are there, they are around you but you never really get to them until somebody really talks about it...*” (sic, my emphasis)

Youth for R.E.A.L. is getting people talking about these issues, and others. Children have started to attempt to instigate youth-led change in other ways, such as in regard to cigarette smoking and child abuse—they come home telling their parents why they have learned their behaviors should change.

The long-term effects of youth programs are difficult to predict, but many practitioners are doing what they do because these are the type of effects they want to produce. One staff member described the community change project this way:

"We have a project going on community change and that is a whole project to make sure they are getting involved in the changes of the community, then what they don't want to see happening when they get older, so they learn through a structured activity on how to accumulate those resources, who to talk to, how does it affect you. These are questions that stimulate them to think about what needs to happen because being in the South Bronx, it is very poverty stricken so they have to know, know what the resources are and how to get them."

Whether these community programs will achieve continuity and be able to build lasting relationships with their youth participants is an open question. Some youth express

interest in remaining actively involved, stating for example "I never want it to end. Until I grow up and I want to be a senior educator and even if I get old I am still gonna be senior." Others express no desire to engage in activism or continue to participate with their OST program or other CBO's. One difficulty is translating activism into age-appropriate activities, which requires adequate training and support of staff.

Achieving continuity among non-profit organizations operating in poor communities can be a major challenge (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008). While people may live near one another, a functioning community is a conscious creation—it does not occur spontaneously. In order to promote spillovers and complementarities, OST programs must facilitate the opportunity for youth to share what they are learning as well as provide opportunities for families and other organizations in the community to collaborate with youth. Due to the rigid structure of public education and a lack of trust between teachers, administrators, and community-based organizations, it can sometimes be difficult to cultivate meaningful relationships between the school and OST program, and these relationships often rely on the presence of specific individuals. Staff members at 21st CCLC programs gave specific reasons for positive relationships with the school such as sympathetic principal, one key CBO staff member, or an arrangement where one staff member is able to work at the school building during the day. While OST programs can experiment with new educational methods, public schools are obligated to prepare students for ever more standardized tests, which limits their ability to creatively adapt to new styles even if new methods are proven to be effective. It can also be difficult to coordinate activities with other community-based organizations, thereby using limited

resources most efficiently. Unless there are long histories of cooperation and communication, services are routinely duplicated by community-based organizations.

Beyond the difficulties mentioned above, there are contravening forces even less under the control of OST programs that limit the ability of spillover effects to spread. Institutions like a culture of violence in a community may have strong status quo bias and be supported by a number of other institutions. For example, the relationships between community members and law enforcement personnel, the prevalence of incarceration, and a strong gang presence—especially combined with a lack of labor market opportunities—can make it difficult to convince youth that non-violence and refusing black-market work are the way to achieve the highest payoff, particularly if they observe the opposite to be true. Educational and child-raising paradigms can also provide a contravening influence against cultural change (Dryfoos, Quinn, and Barkin 2005). Norms such as memorization versus critical thinking, authoritarianism and hierarchy versus egalitarianism, low expectations about the ability of children to make choices, the appropriateness of violence as a conflict resolution technique, and the appropriate response to bullying can all make it difficult to implement objectives of culture change. Even when a program adopts such an objective, as many 21st CCLC programs do, some of their staff will hold different values, and children may be experiencing the reinforcement of different norms in other settings. In interviews, some staff members offered definitions of youth empowerment that focused on expression, responsibility, and choice for youth, but others simply identified “providing youth with a structure” and providing them with fun activities as examples of youth empowerment.

Because of these challenges, even OST programs explicitly designed with objectives of promoting activism directly related economic development may fail in their direct objective, and yet may still be considered successful. For this reason, it is necessary to generate data related to the potential of achieving such objectives and to better understand what larger institutional forces may be brought to support such programs. Similar to the way common property rights programs need to be supported at every institutional level in order to succeed (Ostrom 1991), OST programs and other community-based programs need support from other institutions. Lack of support, however, has not stopped members of poor communities from engaging in activism for what they believe is right, especially opportunities for their children. There is a long history of such activism among working class people and people of color (Jones 1985, Kessler-Harris 2001, Austria 2006, Hill 2004, Boyce and Pastor 2001, Butcher 2004, Cleaver 2007). OST practitioners and other youth workers stand on the shoulders of the activists who came before them.

Conclusion

Given the limited resources allocated for OST programming, it is important to choose the right programs to fund—but doing so is complicated and full of unknowns. The competitive application process has been adopted as the way to distinguish between high quality and low quality proposals, but due to the tight competition, many high quality proposals go unfunded. It may also be that the communities with the greatest need are also the communities that have the most difficult time fielding quality proposals. Assigning resources to technical assistance for communities interested in applying for 21st CCLC grants can facilitate a distribution of funding that is based more on the quality

of the proposed program itself. For example, in the 2005 round of 21st CCLC funding, the Buffalo City School District prepared applications but failed to win any grants, despite a high degree of need. According to the state technical assistance provider at the time, this can be attributed to the lack of partnership between the schools and CBOs in the community, which was a requirement for funding. The technical assistance center worked with the Buffalo School District to help them identify and build relationships with partners. In the following round of funding, several 21st CCLC centers were funded in the district. Unfortunately, the state decreased its funding for technical assistance so that this type of pre-application assistance is no longer supported. The assistance necessary to help communities field quality applications is also different in rural districts, which are arguably underfunded, compared to urban districts like Buffalo. The CBOs existed in Buffalo, but the school district did not have a history of successful partnership with them. In rural districts, there may not exist adequate partners to support a 21st CCLC program at all, requiring much more community investment in order to build the organization capacity necessary to win competitive grants. Winning one funding competition, like 21st CCLC could also lead to positive feedback effects through its impact on the organizational capacity of programs in the area.

One parent described the benefits of an OST program in this way:

“They have more time to do things like different music, plays, and be creative. Because all the creative programs have been snatched out of the school because of the budget. Actually, all that creative work helps with the math and helps with reading. Art has been proven to help kids with math and reading and things like that. Having this program is like giving them a second chance to get creative play, a creative outlet, and being that we live in a ‘concrete jungle,’ there are no wide open fields for them to run around screaming. Cafeterias, and classrooms, and closed spaces, cause we live on top of each other. So this program gives them a chance to scream, holler and be kids and for us parents, we don’t have to panic

about I have a kid and it's 3:30. I have to sneak out get my kid and sneak back into work before the boss catches me. Or try to basically pimp a friend or neighbor to pick up your kid and god forbid who is going to pick up your kid tomorrow. This gives us piece of mind. This program does a lot.”

OST programs, when they are of high quality, produce benefits at the individual and community level. These programs provide free child care and jobs for youth—benefits that are more than enough to make them cost effective—but they can also foster capabilities and agency among youth and their communities. The potential benefits to OST programs presented in this paper have implications for policy makers, evaluators, and practitioners to develop best practices, professional development curricula, and evaluation practices that take account of the development potential of OST programs.

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