



AFTERSCHOOL *news*



Tell It Like It Is: Afterschool Communication Tools

Sharing success stories is important because stakeholders and government leaders need to know about the impact afterschool programs are having on the youth and communities we serve. The difficulty lies in how to effectively communicate when practitioners are already overwhelmed with day-to-day operational tasks. Publications are commonly used by afterschool programs to help communicate to various constituents. Common forms of communication include newsletters, e-newsletters, blogs, and magazines. Defining the publication (what kind, how long, and how often) is a first step. Once decided, two things can help you keep up with the communication task: a template and a content list.



A template is basically a map of your publication that lays out exactly where such items as logos, contact information, articles, and illustrations will be placed. Your organization may have guidelines they want you to follow. It is typically the communications department within an organization that has such information. You can also find template ideas from Microsoft Office (<http://office.microsoft.com/en-au/templates/default.aspx>) or from TemplatesBox if you are interested in creating a Web site or e-newsletter (www.templatesbox.com).

A content list is a general list of subjects, based on the interests of your target audience (parents, day-school teachers, community members, potential donors, etc.), your communication will cover each time you publish it.

Examples include recognition (student, staff, volunteer), announcements, activity highlights—the possibilities are nearly endless. When you work on your afterschool publication, the content list will provide a series of prompts rather than a blank page staring back at you. Working from a template and a content list is so much easier than starting from scratch.



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The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning helps state education agencies and local practitioners develop high-quality programs for academic enrichment as well as youth development activities.

www.sedl.org/afterschool/



FEATURED *resource*

AFTERSCHOOL CURRICULUM CHOICE: TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

This is a new resource that helps afterschool practitioners locate and make informed choices about high-quality technology resources to enrich their programs.

www.sedl.org/afterschool/guide/technology/



Photo by Cumberland Empowerment Zone

The Cumberland Empowerment Zone

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

In Cumberland County, New Jersey, 21st Century Community Learning Center site coordinators know how important it is to build relationships with day-school staff. Communication is at the center of those relationship-building efforts through activities like visiting teachers before the school day begins, speaking with office staff, and offering opportunities for staff to become involved in their programs' special events. School sites have dedicated bulletin boards for site coordinators to share important information, post photos, announce events, and demonstrate the programs' philosophy of "fun learning." Many sites use newsletters to keep parents, community members, and schools informed about events and activities.

Community visibility is a high priority for these programs, so education programs director Cynthia Angelo encourages programs to seek press coverage of their activities and use the brochure they have developed to highlight their programs. The Cumberland Empowerment Zone also maintains a Web site (www.cezcorp.org/Education%20Programs.html) to maintain lines of communication.

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IN YOUR words

How do you communicate about your afterschool program? (Select all that apply.)

- Word of mouth
- Newsletter or e-newsletter
- Web site
- Blog
- Other creative ways

To participate in this survey and view results, submit your vote at www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200804.html.

Produced for the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Technical Assistance and Professional Development for
21st Century Community Learning Centers



by the

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL LEARNING

Advancing Research, Improving Education



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ANNOUNCEMENT

Communicating About Your Afterschool Program

Would you like to learn more about newsletters and other ways to communicate about your afterschool program? The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning is offering a free Webinar, "Communicating About Your Afterschool Program." The Webinar will take place on Tuesday, May 13, at 1 p.m. central time. See www.livemeeting.com/lrs/1100001174/Registration to register.

EVENTS calendar

May 1–2	PEAK Afterschool Workshop Series: Math and Science DENVER, CO
May 13	Webinar: Communicating About Your Afterschool Program 1 P.M. CST
July 15–17	21st Century Community Learning Center Summer Institute DALLAS, TX

For more events, visit our calendar at www.sedl.org/afterschool/training/calendar.html.

Newsletter available online at www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/