



AFTERSCHOOL *news*



The Case for the Arts in Afterschool

"We don't have time to offer arts activities." We've all heard this statement, and some of us may have even said it ourselves. Just as a work of art may bring a new perspective, the same is true for finding time for art. Instead of seeing art as something that takes time away from academic enrichment, try using the arts to reinforce it. You will likely find students to be enthusiastic participants in music, theater, and visual arts projects related to core content areas like math and science, and you will also be using research-based strategies that can help them learn.

Integrating the Arts With Other Subjects is one of the promising practices in the arts section of the Afterschool Training Toolkit (www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/arts/pr_integrating.html), a free online staff development resource developed by the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning. This practice supports learning through creative, hands-on arts activities that build on content from other subject areas. For example, students studying the solar system might extend learning by creating a planetary travel brochure. "If a student is struggling with science, he or she might be more receptive if an instructor presents science in the context of an art activity," says Suzanne Stiegelbauer, who led the development of the arts toolkit. "Once you have sparked students' interest with art, you will increase their desire to learn any subject."

Project-based learning (where students learn by tackling real-world problems and projects) and thematic learning (where activities are organized around themes) are two types of instruction that lend themselves to the incorporation of arts activities. To get started, talk to students' day-school teachers to learn what themes students are studying during the regular school day. If a social studies class is studying the Middle Ages, students can spend their afterschool hours building replicas of medieval castles or listening to the music of troubadours. If you are interested in integrating the arts into afterschool activities, visit Integrating the Arts With Other Subjects in the arts toolkit and click on the "Sample Lessons" tab.



"Once you have sparked students' interest with art, you will increase their desire to learn any subject."

SUZANNE STIEGELBAUER
arts educator

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 *resources*

FREE WEBINARS ON TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS IN AFTERSCHOOL

The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning staff want to help you use technology and the arts in afterschool. The technology webinar will be offered on July 30, and the arts webinar will be offered on August 22. Visit the National Partnership's events calendar to learn more and register.
www.sedl.org/afterschool/training/calendar.html



"Arts are easy to include in afterschool programs. The arts strategies are vehicles to engage students in the learning process."

CATHY MANDEL
21st CCLC coordinator

KidsQuest

ENGLEWOOD, COLORADO

At the KidsQuest afterschool program in Englewood, Colorado, the arts are woven into ongoing afterschool activities. None of the current staff have college degrees in the arts, which shows just how much you can achieve with enthusiasm and the right resources. Staff attend district training on incorporating the arts into reading comprehension.

Each month the KidsQuest staff choose a theme and essential questions as a unit of study for project-based learning. Staff brainstorm with students to determine the direction of the study, and each unit contains multiple arts activities that support learning. Past art activities have included drawing the life cycle of butterflies for a unit on insects and designing costumes made from recycled materials for a unit on the environment.

The arts have also served as the foundation for parent programs that highlighted student work in the arts. This year's programs include "The Night the Museum Came Alive," where students displayed art and held performances related to different museum themes. To afterschool professionals considering using the arts in their programs, 21st CCLC Coordinator Cathy Mandel offers this encouragement: "Arts are easy to include in afterschool programs. The arts strategies are vehicles to engage students in the learning process."

IN YOUR words

How does your afterschool program use arts instruction? (Select one.)

- We include arts activities as part of academic enrichment.
- We offer arts instruction separate from academic enrichment.
- We currently do not offer arts activities.

To participate in this survey and view results, submit your vote at www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200807.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



Editor: Laura Shankland
Designer: Shaila Abdullah

Copyright © 2008 by the SEDL. This newsletter was produced in whole or in part with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-03-CO-0048. You are welcome to reproduce AfterWords and distribute copies at no cost to recipients; please credit SEDL as publisher.

TRAINING tip

Community Involvement

Arts activities can provide excellent ways to showcase your afterschool program and get the community involved. If students have created a mural as the culmination of a science project, why not take the activity one step further by inviting families to admire the mural at an afterschool family night? Such events can also provide opportunities for family members to share their own artistic talents.

EVENTS calendar

July 30 Webinar: "Technology in Afterschool"
1 P.M. CDT

August 22 Webinar: "Teaching the Arts in Afterschool"
1 P.M. CDT

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

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