

School News & Notes

Strengthening America's After School Programs

(NAPSA)—Up to 15 million American youth do not participate in structured educational or recreational activities during after school hours (U.S. Census Bureau, Urban Institute estimates, 2000). That's a serious problem. Youth with nothing to do after school are more susceptible to violent juvenile crime, substance abuse and poor academic performance.

The 4-H movement is responding to this problem with 4-H Afterschool, an initiative to increase the quality and quantity of after school programs in the community and nationwide. The aim is to provide more young people with outstanding learning opportunities through which they can have fun, stay safe, and develop social, emotional, physical and academic skills.

4-H introduced 4-H Afterschool during National 4-H Week in October in support of Lights On Afterschool! Thousands of communities across the country marked the occasions by raising awareness of the need for after school programs.

Easily accessible to anyone in youth development, 4-H Afterschool provides a vast reservoir of expertise. The user-friendly resource guides, for example, explain how to



establish 4-H clubs at after school sites and provide training on how to work effectively with youth. With proven curricula covering hundreds of topics—from leadership and character building to aerospace and computer science—4-H Afterschool can also equip youth programs in the community with the ready-to-use tools they need to brighten young minds and spirits.

To learn more about 4-H Afterschool, visit www.4hafterschool.org.