

Arkansas School-Age "LINKS"

October 2007

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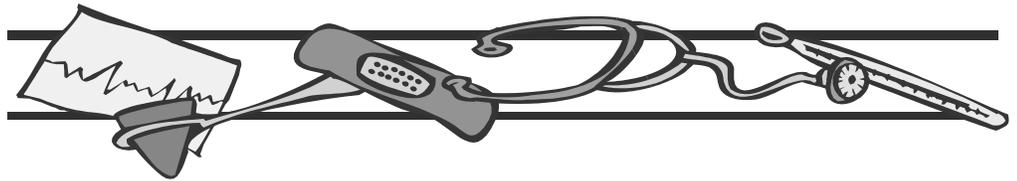
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Children, Health, & the Writing on the Wall

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Often in public health, we make predictions we do not want to come true. When, for example, we project the potential consequences of an avian flu pandemic, we don't want to be right. Rather, we want to motivate preventive responses so that our grim predictions never do materialize. We are hoping that forewarned is forearmed, in other words.

This pertains to an alarm I have been sounding for years about one of the potential, ultimate tolls of the obesity epidemic. Namely, heart disease in teenagers.

The logic behind my rants on this topic is quite straightforward, and plays out in three basic contentions. First, we have epidemic obesity in both adults and children in the US. Second, we have epidemic type 2 diabetes- formerly known as "adult onset" diabetes- in both adults and children as a result of obesity. And third, diabetes predicts heart disease.

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The third point requires a bit of explanation. A group of experts in cardiovascular medicine called the Adult Treatment Panel of The National Cholesterol Education Program issues guidelines for health care providers in the identification, and management, of cardiac risk factors in our patients. Those guidelines tell us that we should treat our patients with diabetes as if they already were known to have coronary heart disease, because the link between the two is so strong.

Now it is noteworthy that this is an “adult” treatment panel. After all, heart disease is, by and large, a disease of adults. But I am not convinced it will remain so.

When I went to medical school, I learned about two kinds of diabetes mellitus: juvenile onset, and adult onset. What we now call type 2 diabetes is diagnosed more and more commonly in children under the age of 10. But less than a generation ago, this very condition was appropriately called “adult onset” because it occurred almost exclusively in overweight, middle-age adults.

If one chronic disease of midlife can migrate down the age curve to become a condition of childhood, what basis do we have to think that others can't follow? What the Adult Treatment Panel says about diabetes in adults—that it can be assumed to signal the presence of heart disease—is true in children, too, until proved otherwise. We have little cause to think diabetes does different damage to small bodies than to larger ones.

So, when 16, 17, and 18 year-olds have had adult onset diabetes already for a decade or more, shouldn't we expect to start seeing them show up in emergency rooms with angina pectoris and myocardial infarction (heart attack)? I think we should.

Not long ago, I gave a talk in Missouri, after which a dietitian in the audience came up to speak with me. She told me about a 17-year-old boy whose care she is involved in, who has already undergone a triple coronary bypass. To

the best of her knowledge, this boy had no unusual genetic predisposition to heart disease. Just obesity, type 2 diabetes at an early age, and the obvious, predictable consequences.

When I first started making a fuss about this threat some years back, my audiences were a bit stunned, and uncertain of my reasoning. More recently, they have seemed less stunned, more convinced, and deeply concerned. Now, they are starting to provide evidence to prove me right. This is a very unhappy trend.

We can change it. A crisis is a dangerous opportunity, because recognition of danger inspires will for change. And will leads to way.

In what ways can we protect our children, grandchildren, and the students in our schools from this unkind fate? By committing to healthful eating and activity patterns ourselves, and acting as role models for our families. By insisting that our schools find a way to build in physical activity, toss out junk food, and make their cafeterias models of good nutrition. By demanding that clinicians be trained to provide thoughtful, compassionate guidance toward a health-promoting lifestyle.

We should regulate or ban the aggressive marketing of junk foods to children. We should find ways to reestablish time-honored behaviors related to better health, such as walking to school. We need more sidewalks and parks, fewer drive-through fast food restaurants.



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The list is long, but not complicated. Everything we can do to make eating well and being physically active the path of least resistance everywhere we go deserves our support. Every policy at odds with these goals is a public enemy. Vote accordingly.

When I propound to audiences my worries about the future, I have an adage in mind: "the best way to predict the future is to create it."

My grim predictions about the potential progression of this health crisis are not made to be fulfilled. This is not a case where being right is a proud achievement. Being right about a worst case scenario is testimony to nothing but failure. Being right about a gloomy future is being wrong about how the present is being handled.

I am not yet right about heart disease becoming routine in adolescence. My most fervent hope is that as a society of concerned adults- parents, grandparents, teachers- we rally to this crisis, and do whatever it takes- to prove me wrong.

Dr. Katz has developed a nutrition education program (Nutrition Detectives) and a physical activity program (ABC for Fitness) for elementary schools. Both programs are very streamlined and designed to fit into the school day without interfering with other school obligations; in fact, ABC for Fitness is actually designed to INCREASE teaching time! Both programs are available for free. See:

<http://www.davidkatzmd.com/nutritiondetectives.aspx>

<http://www.davidkatzmd.com/abcforfitness.aspx>



Sample Activity from ABC for Fitness

Sentence Break Procedure:

Students are asked to perform various exercises when the teacher points to a created sentence or reads a sentence. They keep performing the exercise until the teacher moves on to the next part of the sentence.

Verb = Jumping jacks

Noun = Squat jump

Adjective = Lunges

Pronoun = Push ups

Adverb = Arm circles

Preposition = Jogging in place

Conjunction = Knee jumps

Interjection = Hop scotch

Example:

The boy (squat jump) ran (jumping jacks) to the small (lunges) house (squat jump).

Variations:

- You can substitute different exercises.
- Students perform exercise in conjunction with the punctuation needed in the sentence or paragraph (example: jump high in air for an exclamation point).

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Afterschool from an International Perspective

By Maricella Garcia

I had been an Afterschool Program Coordinator for 5 years when the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service invited me to be a part of their second class. The most intriguing part of the Clinton School experience for me was the opportunity to participate in hands-on service that really defines what I believe social change should be about. The Clinton School philosophy emphasizes focusing change through community identified issues, utilizing community identified resources. In addition, each student's program is individually tailored to their interests. For me, this meant that I could focus on education issues and seek out new and interesting ways to address them both here in the U.S. and I internationally.

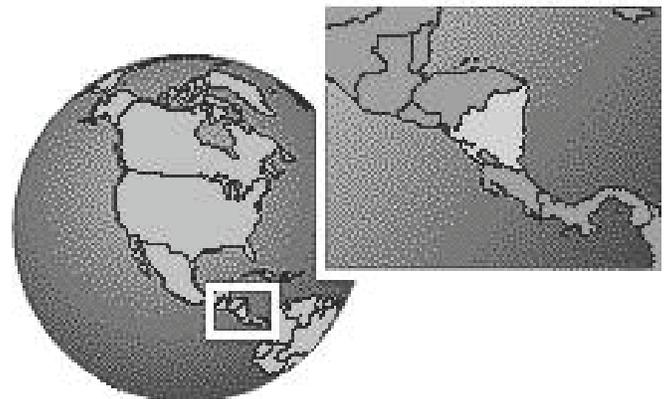
During the two-year program, the Clinton School curriculum provides three hands-on service projects. The second of these projects, the International Public Service Project is designed to provide a practical experience through a placement in a public service agency or organization that is located overseas or carries out international work. The goal is really to immerse yourself in an organization and the work that they do. Since I care a great deal about education, that is where I focused my primary attention. During the research for this project I came across an organization called La Familia Padre Fabretto, which serves more than 5,000 underprivileged students throughout Nicaragua in more than 22 metropolitan and rural centers.

Nicaragua is a country in education crisis. More than 35% of the population is under the age of 15, but the government doesn't have sufficient funds to educate its young people. Although education is now free and compulsory, it was not that long ago that each parent had to pay a "school tax" or their child could not attend school. This led to high numbers of dropouts and more than 850,000 students, out of a total

country population of fewer than 6 million (14% of the population), who didn't attend school.

In addition, although the situation has improved, there is still not all-day schooling in Nicaragua public schools. Children attend school in shifts, for either 3 ½ hours in the morning or in the afternoon. Public schools do not provide transportation, serve any meals, and teachers make approximately 2,000 cordobas or roughly \$110 a month. Unfortunately, the most needed teachers are leaving education. Many long-time educators have left the field for more menial jobs such as domestics because they find the pay is higher and the positions are more secure.

In spite of all this, there are many programs which have stepped in to fill the "need gap." Fabretto is one of those programs. Fabretto serves children ages 5-22 in shifts to accommodate their school schedule. They provide hope and opportunity for low-income Nicaraguan children enabling them to gain a quality education that they need to become responsible, productive adults. In addition to basic classes in Spanish and Math (called reinforcement because they reinforce school day work), participants are able to participate in a variety of programs including English classes, computer training, dance, choir, sports, etc. Fabretto also provides students with free lunch and school uniforms, shoes and supplies.



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During this past summer I spent three months integrating myself into the Fabretto programs in the poorest, most rural centers. During that time I visited three centers and engaged parents and students in an assessment of the Fabretto program. I interviewed 150 parents and 150 students on general program satisfaction, the importance of the program to them, and suggestions for improving the program.

Out of the more than 300 interviews that I conducted, I came away with three general concepts which I think are universal to quality Afterschool care:

Afterschool should be focused on what families want and need

Many times as a provider we can become focused on what we need to keep a program running, but quality programs deal not only with internal assessments of need, but also address the needs of the families they serve. Parents have various reasons for sending their children to Afterschool programs. Some parents want their child to be in a safe place, some want academic enrichment, and others want them to participate in activities like dance or soccer. Whatever the need, programs need to identify the reasons that families enroll their children into their programs. Working toward meeting identified needs should be a primary component of the program. Parents who need tutoring won't be interested in programs focused only on recreation and vice-versa. In order to be an effective Afterschool program, you must know your parents and students and understand the factors bringing them to your program. Fabretto has done this in two ways. First they implemented the survey of parents and youth to gain their feedback on the program. Second, they assigned teachers to families for monthly visits so that families know that the center cares about their issues. Staff are responsible to meet monthly with families to address any issues. The ongoing communication keeps the center informed about any new issues which arise.



Afterschool should address the needs of the family holistically

Many times in education it seems like we focus on one thing at a time, test scores, drop-outs, delinquency, etc. However, addressing the needs of underprivileged children requires programs to think outside the "one issue box." Children who are hungry are not going to be able to focus on school work, just as children who don't have the necessary school supplies or uniforms are more likely not to go to school. There are a multitude of factors that affects children's progress in school. Thinking critically about issues children face requires us to address the larger issues that can contribute (or detract) from a child's success in school.

This is why partnerships are key. For example, Fabretto partnered with a program called ProNiño to provide school uniforms, shoes, and supplies to all their children. No one agency has all the resources it needs to address the multitude of challenges that children are facing. Making partnerships can be the most difficult but rewarding part of Afterschool programming. By partnering, Afterschool programs can provide services they otherwise wouldn't be able to offer to their participants, enriching their experience and developing stronger networks where each agency focuses on their specific mission. The result is less competition and improved services.

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Afterschool should strive to always make Improvements

This is probably the most critical step for Afterschool programs. Meeting participants' needs doesn't mean that you are finished; it means that you are just beginning. Effective programs are constantly reviewing, reevaluating, and enriching their program structure and services. Stagnation can destroy an Afterschool program. Participants' needs change overtime and programming should reflect that change. Obviously, we can't expect that a 14 year-old will enjoy the same activities that he did when he was 5.

Constant reevaluation of program services can help invigorate a program, especially when families realize they have a critical part to play in the program model. One of the most interesting things that I found during my trip is how exciting and important it was for the parents and students to have the opportunity to share their views. They felt connected and empowered and believed that their contribution would help to shape the program. Survey participants were willing to share their opinions, not to belittle or bemoan the shortcomings of their program, but to focus on improvement.

Taking these three simple lessons, Afterschool programs can be more effective in serving their communities. For me, I left Nicaragua excited about the possibilities for Afterschool back home in Arkansas. With the resources available here as well as the opportunities for advancing a quality Afterschool agenda, I think this is an exciting time to be involved in Afterschool education.



Tips for Using Technology in After School Programs

By Judi Wolf

Many out-of-school programs share space with programs that have access to technology and connectivity to the Internet. Close by libraries offer Internet access and, in some cases, donated computers find their way to an out-of-school program. No matter what the setup may be or how technology has found its way into your program, it is obvious that more and more out-of-school programs would like to use the power of technology to allow children to explore, experience, create, and extend their learning. The wonderful news is that technology can enhance your program with very little in the way of hardware or wiring needs. Once staff members are aware of what is available for the children in their program, they find a way to utilize what might be available to them.

Some of the best ways that technology can "power up" your program are:

Images readily available on the Internet and images gotten from digital cameras and scanners can make new ideas, concepts, places, and things visual to the child and actually encourage children to engage and focus. Children love to use images in many ways as they design and create photo displays of their friends, family, or pets, personalizing gifts, and creating books and posters alive with images. Clipart with holiday themes can add to greeting cards and stationery and put even the simplest piece of artwork into the holiday mood!

Holiday Clipart especially for children can be found at: <http://www.kidsdomain.com/clip/>

The children in your program can engage in a real life/real time project with children from all over the world. For example, a project started in Japan may invite children from every continent to join them in determining the amount of acid rain collected in a bucket outside of each class's building. Sharing this data can be fun

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and provide many opportunities for drawing conclusions and understanding geographical locations. These online collaborative projects are readily accessible on the Internet, and motivate the most reluctant learner. Data can be collected by the children in your program, analyzed and discussed and then relayed on a home computer. Data received from other localities can be retrieved on a home computer and shared in the classroom by a staff member.

- Find online collaborative projects at The Global Schoolhouse Project Registry:

<http://www.globalschoolnet.org/GSH/index.html>.

Children have opportunities to share information about what they enjoy reading in online book discussions, publish writing and art, and communicate with e-pals (the electronic version of a pen pal). They can even submit questions to experts who will answer their inquiry. Communication of this type can get what children have to say “out there” to a world-wide audience. Of course, discretion is used in not using full names or locations when using this wonderful motivational tool.

- Find e-pals at <http://www.epals.com>
- Ask questions of Dr. Universe at: <http://www.wsu.edu/DrUniverse/>

Due to the ability of the Internet to be a multimedia tool, children are able to see animation, manipulate, and hear actual audio on most computers. Listening, as they watch stories “come alive” on their computers, children are engaged by the sights and the sounds. Never meant to replace the person who reads aloud to a child, these online stories add impressively to the literacy environment of the program.

- Hear books read to children by members of the Screen Actors Guild at Book Pals: <http://www.bookpals.net/storyline/index.html>

Staff members have many opportunities to allow technology to “tame the tedious tasks” that they have in preparing activities and communicating to parents/caregivers. So many websites provide free online tools to create stationery, forms, pamphlets, newsletters, file folder games, Bingo Boards, etc. Resources for music, drama, physical activities, poetry, and holiday themes are readily available for any adult who is looking for new and stimulating resources. A wonderful Teacher Tool is [The Personal Education Press](http://www.educationalpress.org) at:

<http://www.educationalpress.org>

With Internet connectivity, there is little need for software to be purchased. Learning games are readily available online and when children are encouraged to use these as learning resources and not just as “game stations” they can engage in learning and have fun at the same time. Some websites offer brain teasers, challenges, and puzzles and can prove stimulating to several children collaborating at a computer. Making these websites more than just drill and practice can be achieved by allowing children to share their findings and strategies that they used to solve problems.

• Examples of online learning games can be found at www.gocybercamp.org/login_form (especially created for the out-of-school programs) and www.cogcon.com/gamegoo/goeyhome.html (color coded for ages)

Even without Internet connectivity, application software that is available on most computers allows children to design engaging products that can be both creative and professional looking. Images inserted into the documents can help to explain a concept or to illustrate a story. Charts and graphs inserted into the documents can also be used to demonstrate a point. Similarly, Power Point®, a program contained within Microsoft® Office, can help children share in a multimedia way. These are only a few examples of how technology can enhance—but never replace—the existing out-of-school program that you have created and continue to implement. There are virtual

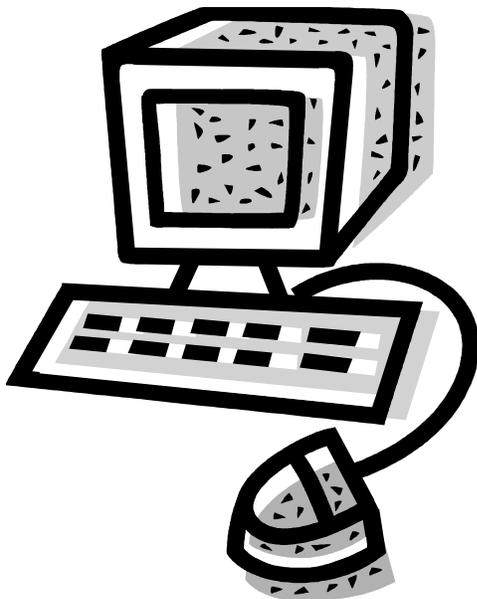
Activities to Try

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field trips and web cameras that can aid in communication from your program to the home that allow children to see things all over the world. Most people move into technology slowly, incorporating technology activities to be an integral component of your overall plans. It is never ideal or productive to have students go to the computers and find games to play. Technology applications can and should be considered in any management plan and serve as an enhancement to the goals and objectives of your program. However, once you have determined where technology might serve as an enrichment to your program, then it can be most likely a guarantee that you will find children motivated to explore, willing to design and create, and reaching new horizons. There may just be new excitement and exhilaration in the air!

Judi Wolf, from the Cleveland Ohio area, is a consultant on incorporating technology into classrooms and after-school programs. Check out her book published by School-Age NOTES, titled Computer Technology in After-School Programs: Opening the Door to Unlimited Potential. Judi can be contacted directly for workshops or trainings at techteach@adelphia.net or visit her website at www.techteachconcepts.com



Egg Drop

Try this eggs-periment and learn just how delicate an egg really is!

Materials needed per invention:

- Eggs
- 15 straws
- 10 popsicle sticks
- 1 meter of tape



Instructions:

1. Design a container that will stop an egg from breaking when it is dropped from ten feet.
2. You can only use the supplies provided for the amount outlined.
3. One quarter-sized piece of the egg must be visible.

Don't Get Caught in the Web

Try this on a rainy day and you are guaranteed to have fun!

Materials Needed:

- Balls of yarn



Find an area that has many obstacles, maybe tables, chairs, doors and other objects. Set up the area ahead of time by running string throughout the area. Make it so that there are only a couple ways to get through the web of string. You can attach it to doors, under tables, across chairs but nothing that would be knocked over that could cause harm to the players or valuable equipment. Have the players come into the area and they must get from one side to the other without touching the web. You can do many variations to this by having someone being a spider that can cause players to go another way without being caught or have a time limit. For an additional twist, have the children set up the obstacles and create the web to stump one another!

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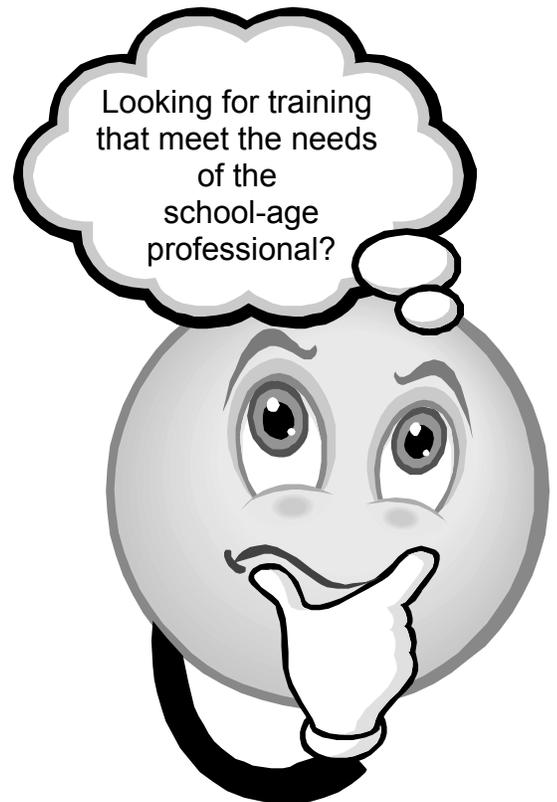
Congratulations to all programs that hosted a Lights On Afterschool event in their community this year! You were joined with over 1 million Americans who celebrated nationwide the importance of afterschool programs for America's children, families and communities. Do not forget to complete a "2007 Event Report Back" form so that your event can be recognized in a future edition of LINKS! You can access this form by visiting the AOSN website at www.aosn.org or by contacting Woodie Sue Herlein at wherlein@astate.edu

The School-Age Child Care Specialist Certificate is a great beginning toward continued professional development for the school-age professional. The specialist training provides an opportunity to meet minimum licensing requirements and to focus training in a specialist area. Consisting of twenty (20) hours of training with each module presented in five (4) four-hour modules, this program addresses the needs of children age six through thirteen.

10/11/2007
11/8/2007
12/4/2007
12/18/2007
1/10/2008

Location: The New School
2514 New School Place
Fayetteville

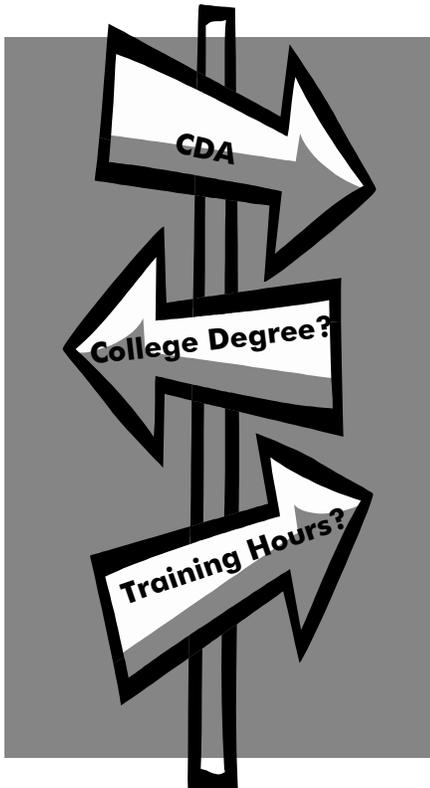
To register for any of these sessions, go on-line to <http://professionalregistry.astate.edu> or call Woodie Sue Herlein at (888) 429-1585



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Which direction are you heading on your professional journey in the school age profession?

Let the
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information
Call
(888) 429-1585
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**Visit us on the web at
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**Do you have staff
new to
school-age care?**

**Do not miss an opportunity to have
your staff participate in a
professional development
opportunity geared specifically
for the new school-age professional!**



**To learn about how to schedule this professional development opportunity in your area, contact
Woodie Sue Herlein at 888-429-1585. Training opportunities are limited so call NOW!**



Recognizing Dyslexia as a Specific Learning Disability in Arkansas

In 1991, Act 338 was enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas requiring public schools in Arkansas to identify all children with specific learning disabilities and to provide training for teachers encountering children with these problems in the regular classroom. As a provision of this Act, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) developed Specific Learning Disability (SLD): An In-service Training Manual for Regular Classroom Teachers. Due to more current evidence based research and changes in laws, rules and regulations, the ADE has developed an updated guide to address SLD, specifically dyslexia. It is called a [Resource Guide for Addressing Specific Learning Disabilities/Dyslexia](#). The ADE has compiled this guide to offer information and resources for schools regarding the identification, assessment and instruction of students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), particularly dyslexia. The characteristics of dyslexia are presented in the guide. Information on assessments and programs geared toward SLD/Dyslexia is also included in the appendices.

QRS... Have you heard about it yet?

QRS stands for Quality Rating System. This new system will extend and enhance the current Arkansas Quality Approval accreditation system. The proposed system consists of five levels. Each level outlines indicators that recognize a program's accomplishments and the quality of services to children and families. Want to know more? Plan to attend one of the information meetings planned for later this year. All registered child care facilities will receive details of these meetings as soon as the schedule is finalized.

The campaign to provide more information about Arkansas QRS is called "Quality Counts". Research and experience clearly indicate that the quality of the child's early experiences has a profound and lasting effect on growth and development. Quality Counts will help programs assess the quality of their services to children and families and set goals for continued improvement.

A tool kit will be available to assist child care programs as they seek to reach higher levels of quality. Instructions and resources in the tool kit will offer guidance and suggestions for each indicator in the QRS.

In the initial implementation of Quality Counts, the first three levels will be introduced. Two additional levels will be introduced at a later date after programs have had experience working within the new system.



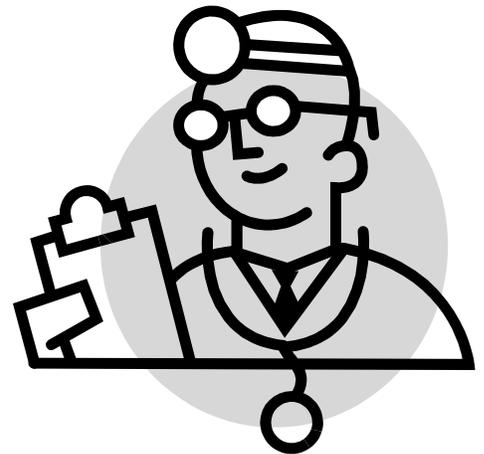


The National AfterSchool Association is the only national professional association for the afterschool field. With over 9,000 members and 36 state affiliate organizations, NAA represents the voice of the afterschool field in the areas of professional development, program quality, public policy and current issues affecting children and youth in their out of school time. NAA's membership includes practitioners, policy makers, researchers, and administrators representing all public, private, faith-based, school-based and community-based sectors. NAA's members work in school age child care programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA's, 4H, Parks and Recreation Departments, and other before school, after school and summer programs.

NEW PARTNERSHIP PROTECTS NAA MEMBERS

NAA is proud to announce its new partnership with Forrest T. Jones & Company, Inc. (FTJ), one of the most widely recognized group insurance companies in the nation. Throughout the years, FTJ has worked hand-in-hand with professional associations in adding value to member and customer programs through quality insurance products. And now, NAA members can benefit through a variety of insurance coverage benefits exclusive to its NAA membership.

Benefit privileges will include access to insurance coverage for life, disability, health, auto, and professional liability at dramatically reduced rates. FTJ will send NAA members enrollment materials and "membership only rates" in the very near future. In addition important details will be available on-line located on the newly updated NAA website, www.naaweb.org soon. Members can also visit www.ftj.com to learn more.



FREE HEALTHY SNACKS

Afterschool programs that meet criteria that qualify them as "at risk" can be reimbursed for serving healthy snacks to children and youth up to age 18. **This is NEW as of 7/31/07 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food program!** "At risk" centers are defined as being located in the attendance area of a school where at least half of the children receive free or reduced-price meals. Qualifying programs can offer snacks that meet meal pattern guidelines and then apply for reimbursement from the state agency that administers the U.S. Department of Agriculture food program. To learn more visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov> and click on "What's New" .