

PROMISING PRACTICES PROVEN-STRATEGIES

Delivering Quality Extra Learning Opportunities for Our Children

Promising Practices – Proven Strategies, Delivering Quality Extra Learning Opportunities for Our Children, a conference on Extra Learning Opportunities sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in partnership with The Center for Schools and Communities, was held on March 1 – 2, 2006 at the Hilton Harrisburg. This conference brought together practitioners who support children, families and communities by providing supervised environments during non-school hours. Over 490 participants took the opportunity to learn about and discuss the research, policies and practices that can improve or enhance extra learning opportunities in the Commonwealth.

“The idea of knowing that you are not alone in the field of afterschool programming and that there are others who are willing to help and improve the quality of service for your individual program made this conference so valuable,” remarked an attendee. 46% of the conference attendees were afterschool providers; educators/teachers made up about 14%.

Keynote Speaker, Dr. Deborah Lowe Vandell, Chair of the Department of Education at the University of California—Irvine, shared the findings of her intensive study of 1,300 children from birth through age 15. Dr. Vandell described a convergence of factors that are contributing to a growing interest in after-school programs. She also noted that afterschool programs do make a difference when the quality of the programs is high and students attend them regularly. Dr. Vandell shared findings from a number of studies that describe why afterschool programs are beneficial.

More than 100 different presenters led workshops on topics ranging from child obesity to identifying funding opportunities.

Motivational Speaker and Educational Consultant Darrell Andrews provided the Keynote Address. He challenged conference attendees saying “It takes teamwork to make the dream work!”

“I feel very inspired! I can’t wait until the next conference,” exclaimed an attendee. Pennsylvania’s youth.”

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Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Avenue, Suite 200 Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-1661 Fax (717) 763-2083 www.center-school.org