



The Third Annual Kristin Anderson Moore Lecture

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***Evidence-Based Programs in Action
Policy and Practice Insights from a Success Story***

Washington, DC

Introduction by Kristin Anderson Moore, Ph.D.
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Good morning!

Out-of-school time programs face high expectations but generally have modest resources. In addition, the research base is quite thin.

This combination of minimal research and resources, coupled with high expectations that out-of-school time programs will, in a few hours a week, turn around dropouts, prevent teen pregnancy, and promote civic virtue poses an almost impossible challenge for out-of-school time programs. Moreover, it represents a wasted opportunity because millions of children and youth attend out-of-school time programs and would benefit from stronger evidence-based programs.

However, there are programs that improve outcomes for children and youth (some of which have been evaluated and found to have impacts). The value of implementing evidence-based programs, increasing the use of effective practices, and using data to improve out-of-school time programs seems clear. If we implement stronger programs and practices, this ought to improve outcomes for children and youth. What if we implemented better programs?

Typically, though, these are still one-shot programs. At the end of the program, it's generally over, and the positive effects associated with participation, if any, tend to dissipate over time. What if we had a sequence of programs? Moreover, kids who attend an out-of-school time program leave the program and head out into communities that pose many challenges to developing children and youth. The need to invest in communities, not just individuals, has led to approaches like Harlem Children's Zone and Promise Neighborhoods. What if our out-of-school time programs were nested in stronger communities? Would the synergies of multiple, sequenced programs produce stronger communities and better outcomes for children?

My review of research, evaluation, and practice led me four years ago to develop the STRIDES model, shown on the red card in your folder. The word STRIDES highlights the importance of several program characteristics:

“S” if for **Sequencing** age-appropriate programs for children.

The “T” is for **Targeting** programs according to children’s levels of need and risk; some may not need any special programs, while other children need broad, deep, and ongoing assistance.

“R” is for **Revising and improving** programs to increase their effects.

“I” if for **Implementing** with care and quality.

“D” if for **Disseminating** knowledge continuously from formal research, from practitioners and foundations, and from listening to children and parents.

“E” is for **Evaluation**, whether this means monitoring outcomes or conducting rigorous evaluations of program impacts.

Finally, “S.” We need to **Sustain** strong programs. Practitioners need stability and children need stability. Therefore it is important to not just develop strong programs but to sustain them.

I felt that the STRIDES model captures some important realities that policy-makers, funders, and practitioners needed to recognize.

And then I met Philip Uninsky and realized that he had not only recognized and articulated these same ideas, but he had actually put them into practice in Cayuga County, New York. The success of this effort, as well as the challenges faced in pulling it off, deserves our attention.

Philip is a sociologist and an attorney who worked in the New York State legislature. His bio is in your folder, so I will just note that he now heads the Youth Policy Institute and is a senior scholar at the Partnership for Results.

Following his presentation, we are fortunate to have three policy respondents to provide brief comments prior to Q&A.

Larkin Tackett is from the Department of Education. He works on the Promise Neighborhood Initiative.

Sonja Nesbit is the Deputy Staff Director on the House Means and Ways Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support. She works closely with the Subcommittee on child welfare, home visiting, and family support issues.

Cliff Johnson is the Executive Director of the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families at the National League of Cities.

Thank you, Philip.