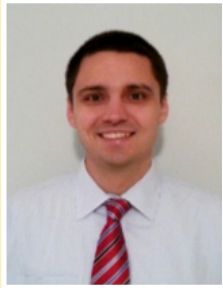


# 21<sup>ST</sup> CCLC NEWSLETTER



Volume 2, Issue 4- Spring 2014

## Program Manager's Message



*It is hard to believe that another school year is nearing its end! Thank you for working so hard to help make this year a success for Georgia's 21st CCLC program.*

*As you begin to wind down the school year, we hope you take time to share your successes and highlights with your stakeholders. Our staff certainly looks*

*forward to reading about them in your summative evaluations and discussing them with you over the summer.*

*As we have done in the past, we will distribute our annual customer service survey in May. In addition to the feedback we receive throughout the year, this survey is a critical tool to help our team analyze our services and identify areas of improvement for next year. We hope you are able to take a few minutes to let us know how we are doing.*

*Finally, as many of you know the FY15*

*applicants have been notified of their status. With over 100 subgrants ending this year and funding available for about 80 FY15 RFPs, turnover was inevitable. We want to wish those of you leaving us next year the best of luck as you move forward. We hope you stay active in Georgia's afterschool community and reapply during our next competition. Thank you for all that you have done for our state.*

*Michael Thaler, Program Manager*

## Rev up your EVALUATION with these TIPS!

› First things first. **Find a good evaluator**, preferably with experience in education data and language.

› **What will your evaluation be able to tell you about your program?**

Challenges (known and unknown) in your program can be isolated by using a **formative evaluation** process. Using daily, weekly, or monthly data can help you determine if program milestones are being met; or if existing professional development is supporting staff goals. Formative evaluations can tell you if students are progressing, if schedules are working, or if a mid-course correction needs to be made.

All programs already do a **summative evaluation**. This is the report that captures the year-end assessment of your program. It can assist with decision-making such as which activities should be continued for the next year— or not. It is also used when ending a grant to show stakeholders the impact of your program on your targeted population and to determine if your program did what you said it would do.

› **What will your evaluation NOT be able to tell you about your program?**

For example, without measuring participants' achievement or attitudes at the beginning of the program, you won't be able to determine how much student engagement has changed. If you do not compare your students in your program to similar students who have not been in your program, you may not be able to attribute participants' success to your efforts.

- **Know your plan!** Include your evaluation plan in your steering committee meetings and stakeholder groups. Refer to it frequently. Viewing the evaluation process as belonging only to the evaluator can create missed opportunities to make sure your program is on the right track.

- **Who? What? When? Where? How?** Having a good evaluation plan will ensure that appropriate evaluation activities occur at the proper times. Once the program begins, you can't go back in time and collect pre-test data.

- **Be a scout and be prepared!** Think about potential barriers and challenges to your evaluation plan. Need to get student data? Then set up a written agreement with the target school. An

evaluator may think the first week of school is an ideal time to collect survey data on staff, but a meeting with the principal and faculty leadership may inform you both otherwise.

- Feel free to dust off the calculator and **check the evaluator's work**. If unsure about content, then ask for clarifications, corrections, or revisions where necessary. Do the math!

- Develop your knowledge base. **Teach yourself** about the basics of program evaluation. Some good resources:

- [The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University \(www.wmich.edu/evalctr/\)](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/)

- [GrantCraft—Evaluation Techniques Series Evaluation for CBOs \(www.opportunitystudies.org/evaluation/\)](http://www.opportunitystudies.org/evaluation/)

- [Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation \(www.wmich.edu/evalctr/jc/\)](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/jc/)

- [Planning an Effective Program Evaluation: A Short Course for Project Directors \(www.the-aps.org/education/promote/promote.html\)](http://www.the-aps.org/education/promote/promote.html)

- [W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Toolkit Basic Guide to Program Evaluation \(www.managementhelp.org/evaluation/fnl\\_eval.htm\)](http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluation/fnl_eval.htm)

# program highlight

## Spotlight on Newtown County After School Academic Program

Newton County's After School Academic Program (ASAP) is improving academic achievement at West Newton elementary school, Clements, Cousins, Indian Creek, Liberty, and Veterans Memorial middle schools, and Newton and Alcovy high schools by extending and reinforcing classroom instruction in all academic disciplines. Instruction is carried out through fun, engaging Internet technology and other innovative instructional strategies based on individual student's diagnosed needs and areas of deficiency.



Activities include direct instruction, cooperative learning, individual and small group tutoring, homework assistance, and test practice. The academic areas being stressed are reading, math, and science with special attention to STEM real world applications and projects that integrate science, technology, engineering, and math. Newton County ASAP's focus on STEM has led to many exciting instructional activities for students. Students at Newton High School (NHS) have been studying waterborne illnesses and researching ways to eliminate them. One solution they have



found involves using water filtration devices for clean drinking water. Students created their devices through trial and error after researching different filtration systems. The students' systems have several layers of filters made with rocks, pebbles, and charcoal, all natural filters. The NHS students' devices will be sent to The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), a program developed in 2005 by former President Bill Clinton to seek innovative solutions to pressing world problems. It is anticipated that CGI will then send the devices to Third World countries to show people how to filter their own water using natural resources around them.

Other program activities have addressed the need to provide a safe and supportive environment away from the risks that come with children and youth being left unsupervised during out of school hours and the need to improve discipline and responsibility. Students have been engaged in activities such as character development, career awareness, cooking, etiquette, visual and performing arts, foreign language, and fitness and recreation. The program at Alcovy High School allows the use of visual art to express emotions, relieve stress, and deal with risk factors. Students are shown displaying their artwork completed in the program.

Service learning is also an important part of teaching responsibility and good citizenship in Newton's 21st CCLC program. Students at Clements Middle School learned first-hand the



meaning of good will toward others. Students proudly rolled up their sleeves and fed the homeless at Gethsemane Homeless Shelter in Covington, Georgia. Parents also took part in this day of giving by donating individually wrapped socks, gloves, and underwear to the residents.

Enriching field trips have been a way to extend learning in core academic areas. Students have



been on trips to the Martin Luther King, Jr Museum and Fernbank to study history and the High Museum of Art and Alliance Theatre to study visual and performing arts. Enrichment provides the element of education and fun which is also extended to families to build parental involvement. Parent activities have also included guest speakers, visual and performing arts, fitness activities such as aerobics, and special topics such as etiquette, local history, and environmental awareness. Parents and community members have supported the 21st Century Program by attending program activities and making personal and financial contributions.

## state staff spotlight



Mike Hatfill has been in education for 25 years starting with his first job at Lanphier High School in Springfield, IL where he taught freshman literature

and English. Mike has a Bachelor's Degree

in Elementary Education from Southern Illinois University and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Illinois. Mike spent most of his teaching career in that whacky world known as middle school. He taught 6-8 grade reading/ELA, science and social studies. During this time Mike also worked in the 21stCCLC program. He started as a volunteer, became a teacher and finally a site coordinator. In 2007 he moved to the Illinois State Board of Education where he worked with standards and state/federal grants including, the 21stCCLC grant.

Mike is excited to be the ERES for Region 5. He lives in Savannah with his Boston Terrier,

Abby Inez and Brittany Spaniel, Brittany Rose, as well as best friends Lynn and John. Mike is the youngest of eight kids (4 sisters and 3 brothers). He was the proud father of son Cooper Patrick who now lives in his heart.

When not working, Mike has always been involved in music and theater. He has participated in many plays and musicals on many stages. He has been a featured soloist with various choirs and is currently a member of his church's choir. Mike loves almost all types of music and at one time was a DJ. Mike is also a baseball fan, an animal lover, an avid reader, a movie lover (especially horror) and a CSI, Forensic Files, Snapped, etc.... geek.

## Reconnecting Youth with Nature

By Jennifer Bateman

### *An Alarming Trend*

Throughout history, outdoor-based play and youths' engagement with nature have been recognized as important contributors to healthy development. At different points in time, however, a cultural emphasis on connecting youth with nature has waned and outdoor experiences have been viewed as extra-curricular, superfluous, and peripheral to positive youth development. In the early twentieth century, in response to the industrial revolution, the first play-centered movement took place in order to get children out of the factories and back outdoors. Nearly 100 years later, issues including an increased focus on core academics, youths' use of media, real and perceived stranger danger, and overscheduling of children's time have resulted in a neglect of play that is contributing to a range of social, emotional, and physical problems.

In his book entitled *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, Richard Louv coined the term "nature-deficit disorder" to describe the trend of children spending less time outdoors and the correlational increase in a wide range of behavioral problems. The lack of connection between American youth and their natural environments is a result of a range of societal and lifestyle shifts including the fact that as many as 40 percent of America's schools have eliminated or significantly reduced recess. Moreover, research shows that children and adolescents are spending an average of fifty-three hours each week in front of screen media. The deficits in outdoor-based play that arise from these changes have resulted in significant increases in emotional and psychological disorders, decreased capacity to deal with stressors, and decreased physical fitness among children, adolescents and adults.

### *The Benefits of Connecting with Nature*

A growing body of research links youth exposure to and engagement with natural settings with a variety of positive benefits. Natural spaces stimulate youths' imaginations and creativity, and playing outdoors enhances cognitive flexibility, problem-solving ability, and self-discipline. Natural spaces can also contribute to the development of a sense of health, sense of well-being, sense of place, and sense of community. In recent years, research has also facilitated an awareness

of the therapeutic aspects of connection with nature. For example, researchers at the University of Illinois have shown that the greener a child's everyday environment, the more manageable their symptoms of attention-deficit disorder. Studies also show that engaging youth in natural settings through activities such as planting trees can help reduce stress, improve coping skills, and develop self-discipline.

### *Reconnecting Youth With Nature in Your Program*

These benefits warrant (re)considering the role of outdoor-based play and youths' engagement with nature in your program. Here are some ideas for reconnecting your youth with nature:

#### *Keep Nature Notebooks*

Take your youth on nature explorations and encourage youth to keep a nature notebook with a record of everything they see. Their notebooks can include pressed flowers and leaves, pictures they took with a disposable camera, written descriptions, drawings, and more. Let them display three-dimensional objects in a display case or keep them in their own decorated cardboard nature box.

#### *Grow a garden*

Tomatoes, lettuces, herbs, and sunflowers are good plants to grow with youth. Keep a garden notebook to record your group's successes and challenges, as well as pictures of your farmers and crop.

#### *Create Bird Feeders*

Create birdfeeders and place a bird feeder near a window or in the outdoor space and watch who comes to visit. Purchase a bird guide such as *The Young Birder's Guide to Birds of Eastern North America* to help identify the birds. Check online for local birdwatching groups; they often host educational outings that are interesting for children and youth.

#### *Paint Rocks*

This may seem simple, but rock painting is a great way to excite children about exploring outdoors. The most important part is the rock hunt, which can be done almost anywhere. Have your youth search for "special" rocks. Then sit outside — armed with paintbrushes and non-toxic paints — to create rock art.

#### *Build a Fort*

Forts can be rustic or extravagant. There are many books today that offer wonderful and practical ideas for creating getaways. Encourage your youth to use their

imaginations to create a nature space from found objects like sticks and vines.

#### *Take a Hike*

Hiking is great exercise and an inexpensive field trip. Look online or ask around for local trails. Fill backpacks with snacks and water and set off for an easy outdoor adventure.

#### *Host a Water Day*

Make bubble buckets with water and soap. Play with water balloons. Put out a sprinkler. Everyone will enjoy this outdoor experience.

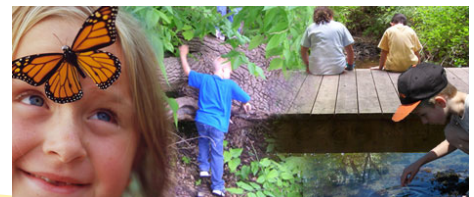


#### *Create a Nature Scavenger Hunt*

Who doesn't love a scavenger hunt? Get your youth outdoors and 'scavenging' for treasures in nature. Armed with a list of items to find, they'll eagerly look at the world around them with more observant eyes. This is a great afternoon project for a group of youth or it can be expanded to create fun displays with the results of the explorations.

#### *Things to Collect*

- Encourage identification skills by having the youth find different types of leaves or flowers native to your area. (Look for regional field guides in your local library or on [enature.com](http://enature.com), or do an internet search for the 'native plants' of your state.)
- Collect ferns, moss, pinecones, dandelions, seeds, thorns, and other botanical specimens.
- Look for fossils, colored rocks, quartz, or flat skipping stones.
- Find a temporary 'pet,' such as a frog, snail, or grasshopper. (You should let them go after you've observed them.)
- Look carefully for something 'camouflaged,' such as a walking stick insect or a moth that blends in with its surroundings.
- If you live on the coast, include things like seashells, seaweed, small crustaceans, and small pieces of driftwood.



May 2014  
Asian-Pacific American Heritage  
Month

**Save the Dates**  
May 20 – June 20, 2014  
National Smile Month

June 18, 2014  
International Picnic Day

May 5 – 11, 2014  
Screen Free Week

June 5, 2014  
National Gingerbread Day

June 30, 2014  
Summative Report Due and All  
Data Must be Certified in AS21

May 6, 2014  
National Teacher Day

June 5, 2014  
World Environment Day

July 1, 2014  
International Joke Day

May 12-16, 2014  
National Bike to Work Week

June 14, 2014  
Flag Day

July 30 - 31, 2014  
21st CCLC Annual Subgrantee  
Training

October 8-10, 2014  
Georgia Afterschool Youth  
Development Conference



*21st CCLC Annual Subgrantee Training*  
*July 30-31, 2014*  
*Macon Marriott City Center*

*We are pleased to announce that the 21st CCLC annual subgrantee training will be held at the Macon Marriott City Center in Macon on July 30 - 31, 2014. This is the same location as last year.*

*As with previous trainings, each subgrantee must have at least one person in attendance each day. It is strongly encouraged that the program director attends each day and that the individual assigned to the fiduciary duties attend the fiduciary training. Attendees are also welcome to stay at the conference hotel if it meets their organization's guidelines. More information, including a detailed agenda and hotel information, will be released soon. We look forward to seeing you there!*