

Lesson 7: Programs and Operation

Take a behind-the-scenes look at the ins and outs of running an AfterZone.

by Jenny Parma; tutorial provided by Hillary Salmons and Elizabeth Devaney

After-school programs take an enormous amount of logistical planning. How do students transition from the school to an off-site location? How do staff members keep track of students' attendance? And what about the actual programs? All these questions and more are answered below. Get an in-depth view of the different programs offered, registration process, orientation, and day-to-day scheduling that go into running an AfterZone.

An In-Depth Look at the Programs

PASA and its site-management agencies operate many different after-school programs in four sessions over the course of the school year and summer. Programs are held Monday through Thursday, both on school grounds (such as in the gymnasium, library, or cafeteria) and off-site at community provider locations. Programs are categorized broadly under arts (such as photography or dance), skills (like nature exploration and computer programming), and sports (such as volleyball or soccer), and fall into two formats, dubbed "Provider Programs" and "Club AfterZone."

PROVIDER PROGRAMS

In each AfterZone, community providers offer one- or two-day-a-week "enrichment" programs in three formats.

- » Community-based programs: All programs off school grounds are considered "community-based" and take place for two hours. Program examples include martial arts at a sports center, photography classes at a graphic design facility, or astronomy activities at a natural history museum.
- » Full-service programs: These programs take place on school grounds and run for two and a half hours, providing youth with not only focused enrichment programming but also academic supports, physical wellness activities, and personal development opportunities. Program examples include film making, spoken word, and aikido.
- » One-hour enrichment programs: These focused enrichment programs, such as robotics, break dancing, or tennis, run for one hour. Students enrolled in these programs also spend an hour before or after their enrichment program in "Club AfterZone."

VOCABULARY

- » **AfterZone session:** The term during which after-school programs operate: eleven weeks in the fall, ten weeks in the winter, six weeks in the spring, and four weeks in the summer.
- » **Club AfterZone:** Daily "learning time" for youth involved in one-hour enrichment programs on school grounds; administered by young staff members or volunteers.
- » **Instructional workshops:** Thirty- to forty-five-minute discussions in which individuals or professionals can share about their profession or passion during Club AfterZone.
- » **Provider programs:** Enrichment programs in the arts, sports, or skills mastery that take place on or off school grounds during one-, two-, or two and a half-hour time blocks.

Programs and Operation (continued)

CLUB AFTERZONE

Club AfterZone is a daily “learning time” for youth involved in one-hour enrichment programs. Either before or after their enrichment program, youth check in with YES workers, AmeriCorps members, and intensive college volunteers who all serve as AfterZone guides that collectively facilitate the sessions. (For more information about these employees, visit Lesson 5 of the tutorial).

Following check-in, students spend the next forty-five to fifty minutes involved in a number of intensive or casual learning opportunities that are chosen on a rotating basis. They engage in tutoring and other direct academic supports; focused reading time; educational and recreational games; hands-on activities (in science, math, or social studies); guided discussions on issues affecting youth; and instructional workshops.

Instructional workshops are thirty- to forty-five-minute discussions in which individuals or professionals can talk about their profession or passion. Workshops can either be offered as a one-time experience or as part of a series.

STUDENT REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

About two weeks before the AfterZone session begins, students register for after-school programs. They can attend sessions four days a week or fewer days (most programs are held two days a week). Flexibility is important to middle-school youth who are beginning to navigate their independence. PASA hosts recruitment events and showcases during the school day to introduce youth to the available programs. (Recruitment events are discussed in greater detail in Lesson 8 of the tutorial.) PASA produces a detailed registration brochure for each school outlining the possible school-based and community programs available to students.

PASA uses youthservices.net, a Web-based data management system, to process registration forms (this is the same service used for data tracking discussed in Lesson 4 of the tutorial). When the forms are completed and signed by a parent or guardian, members of the AfterZone staff enter the youth’s contact information and program selections into a data management system, and gather any missing information. When all information has been entered, a confirmation letter is sent to the student to verify their program enrollment.

Waiting lists are created after the program reaches enrollment capacity (based on a one-to-thirteen adult-to-youth ratio). Throughout the first two weeks of every session, youth are allowed to add or drop programs to be sure they have found one they like.

Programs and Operation (continued)

PROVIDER EXPECTATIONS AND ORIENTATION

In a provider orientation at the start of each AfterZone session, staff explain program logistics and provider expectations. In addition, AfterZone managers meet with all providers once or twice a session to confirm room assignments, review program schedules, and to discuss how things are going.

Before the beginning of orientation, PASA hands out a session information packet to providers. Each packet consists of an enrollment list; emergency contact, medical, and allergy information for each youth enrolled in the program; and a session-long calendar with important dates and meetings for providers. This information is generated from the youthservices.net data management system.

STUDENTS' DAY-TO-DAY SCHEDULE

When the school bell sounds, signifying the end of the school day and the start of the after-school day, students move in many different directions. Some are involved in one-hour enrichment programs onsite, two-hour programs on and offsite, or in Club AfterZone. Following are the step-by-step procedures PASA follows to assemble, manage, and move youth around.

1. Youth sign-in.

At 2:40 P.M., school ends and all students report to their program table in the school cafeteria or other designated location; each table has a program table tent and youth sign-in sheet.

2. Snack time.

After students sign in and report their attendance, they're given a snack, which includes a juice, fruit, and grain. One student at each table is responsible for bringing the attendance sheet to the staff in charge of the snack. The student then delivers the snacks to the group.

3. Program involvement time.

After check-in and snacks have been delivered to staff, one of the following occurs:

- » Students enrolled in school-based enrichment programs during the 3 P.M. to 4 P.M. session or who are enrolled in full-service programs are led by their instructor to their assigned room.
- » Students enrolled in community-based programs board the school bus to go to their designated two-hour program location. The bus driver is given an attendance sheet with the list of students present, which the driver delivers to the program staff at the program location.
- » Students enrolled in Club AfterZone during the 3 P.M. to 4 P.M. session remain in the cafeteria and decide what they want to do during that block of time.

Programs and Operation (continued)

4. Program transition time for one-hour programs.

At 4 P.M., students participating in one-hour enrichment programs on school grounds transition to Club AfterZone; students in Club AfterZone transition to their scheduled enrichment program.

5. Youth sign-out and transportation.

At 5 P.M., all youth in all programs report to the cafeteria, and to their appropriate tables, which depends upon the transportation option parents have approved for students returning to their homes — this includes walking, pick up by a parent or designated adult, or taking one of many buses provided by the school district to targeted drop-off locations.

The data tracking tool, youthservices.net, automatically assigns students to specific buses based upon attendance data entered every program day. Bus riders are escorted to their buses by an AfterZone staff member who gives highlighted routing sheets and the electronic youth attendance sheets to the bus driver.

KEY POINTS

- » After-school programs in each AfterZone take place Monday through Thursday and operate during four sessions per year.
- » Programs involve activities in the arts, sports, or skills mastery at on-site and off-site facilities; program times run from one to two and a half hours.
- » Club AfterZone is a special “learning time” coupled with one-hour programs and run by young staff members.
- » Students have flexibility to choose their programs; tools and forms facilitate student registration, which usually takes place two weeks prior to session onset.
- » Providers attend orientation and receive information to help in preparation for the session.
- » AfterZone staff, providers, and the school district must work in a concerted effort to shuttle and keep track of youth between different facilities.

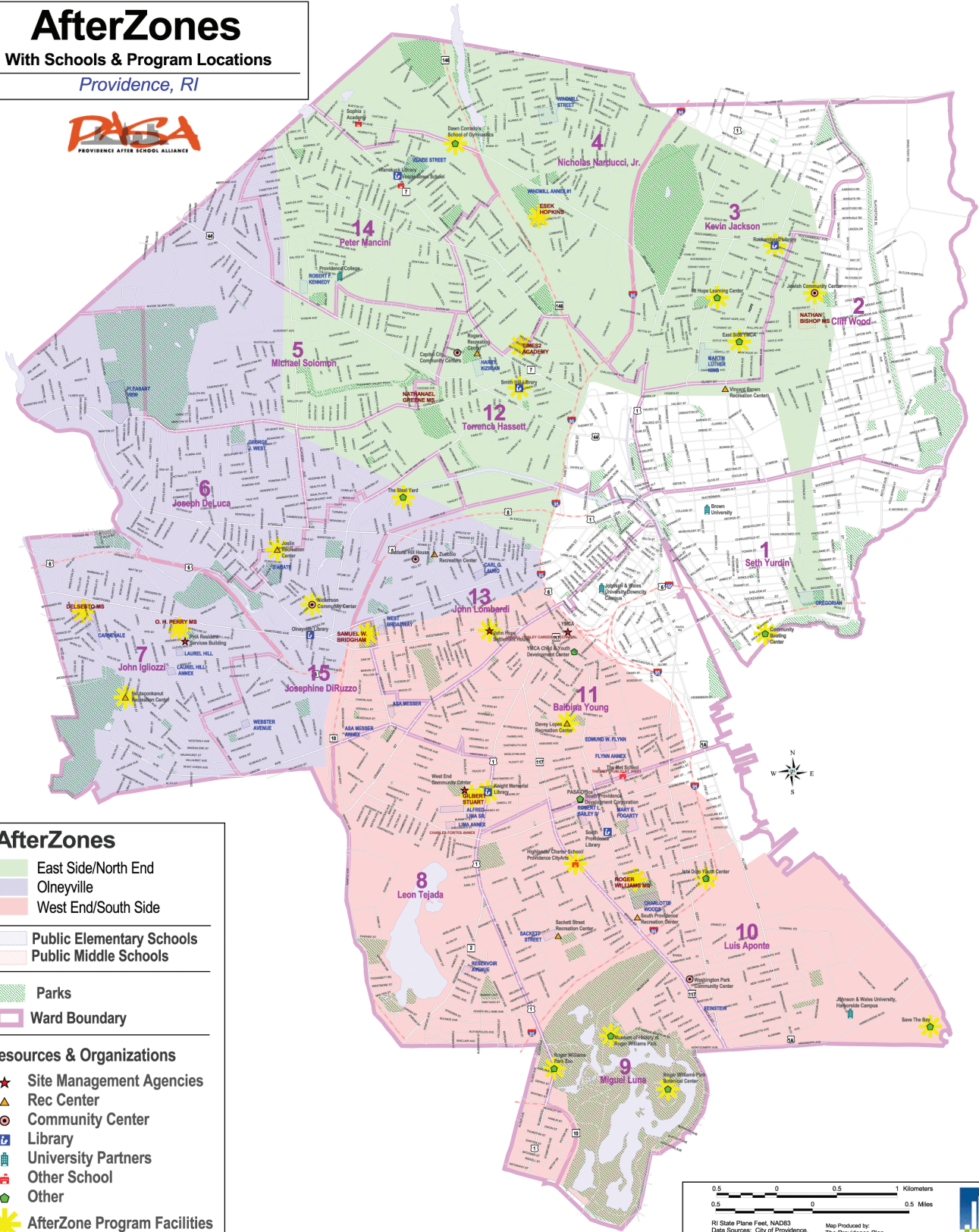
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

In the pages that follow and online, find these forms used in planning and operating the AfterZone programs; use them as a guide for your own program:

- » **AfterZone map:** A map of the city of Providence showing where programs, site-management agencies, schools, districts, and more are located.
- » **AfterZone student registration brochure:** The packet students receive prior to the start of their AfterZone program, including student contact information, course offerings, and transportation information at edutopia.org/pasa-curriculum-lesson-programs-operation.
- » **Expectations of Program Providers:** Part of the session information packet providers receive at orientation that includes the session calendar and explanation of program logistics and provider expectations at edutopia.org/pasa-curriculum-lesson-programs-operation.
- » **Provider attendance sheet:** The youth sign-in sheet created for program providers at edutopia.org/pasa-curriculum-lesson-programs-operation.

AfterZone Map

AfterZones
With Schools & Program Locations
Providence, RI



AfterZones

- East Side/North End
- Olneyville
- West End/South Side

- Public Elementary Schools
- Public Middle Schools

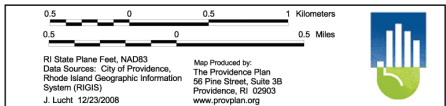
- Parks
- Ward Boundary

Resources & Organizations

- ★ Site Management Agencies
- ▲ Rec Center
- Community Center
- 📖 Library
- 🏫 University Partners
- 🏠 Other School
- ⬢ Other

★ AfterZone Program Facilities

Map Date: December, 2008



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