

2003 INNOVATIONS AWARD PROGRAM
Application Form

1. Program Name:
Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force

2. Administering Agency:
Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education

3. Contact Person (Name & Title):
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8. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program:

The Illinois General Assembly passed House Resolution 63 and Senate Resolution 70 in 2001, creating the Illinois After-school Initiative and Task Force and designating the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as the co-chairs. The resolutions required the Task Force, comprised of leaders in youth development and education, to assess the state of out-of-school-time services in Illinois. The assessment for out-of-school-time programs would include estimates on the number of children and youth participating in programs and those who need but are not attending programs; the various public funding streams; and to develop a plan for coordinating these services so that programs would be made available to all interested school-age children. The Task Force was able to agree on recommendations and strategies outlining how Illinois can reach its goal of providing quality out-of-school-time services to the 1.6 million school-age children in Illinois.

9. How long has the program been operational?

The General Assembly passed the resolutions creating the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force in May 2001, and the Task Force met for the first time in December 2001.

10. Why was the program created? (What problem(s) or issue(s) was it designed to address?)

In Illinois, 1.4 million school-age children and youth live in families where the sole parent or both parents work. That translates to 64 percent of all Illinois children between the ages of 6 and 17. The resulting unsupervised time puts children and youth at greater risk of truancy, poor school performance, depression and substance abuse. The out-of-school hours are also the most common time for teens to engage in sexual behavior, try drugs or alcohol or become a victim of violent crime. The growing need, increasing dangers facing youth and an awareness of the value of out of school time programs have led to public demand for programs and have sparked an expectation that government will play a role in ensuring that these programs are available. The combination of public interest and unmet need created a ripe atmosphere for a joint public and private sector strategy to make affordable, quality out-of-school-time programs available for all interested youth and their families. Illinois took the first important step toward this goal when the General Assembly passed resolutions creating the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force.

11. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

In August of 2000, the National After-school Alliance convened leaders from ten states across the country at the Disney Institute for a weekend-long symposium on after-school issues. Illinois' delegation reconvened upon their return and decided to develop a legislative resolution to create the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force. Over the next year, the group found a sponsor for the legislation and lobbied for its passage. In May 2001, the General Assembly passed the resolutions creating the Illinois After-school Initiative. The Task Force established from the Initiative met for the first time in December 2001, and continued meeting through September 2002 to uncover information about the status of out-of-school-time programs in the state and develop recommendations to enhance these programs and expand their reach. The final report was issued to the General Assembly in November 2002.

12. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

Although other states have addressed the issue of after-school services, Illinois is one of the only states to begin its efforts with the direction and support of the Legislature through the passage of a Resolution. In addition, Illinois is rare in that representatives from both education and human services, two groups that frequently compete for out-of-school funding, are working cooperatively together. In leading the Illinois After-school Task Force, DHS and ISBE have formed a strong partnership that has become the focus of national attention. Other states across the country are viewing Illinois as a leader in out-of-school time programming: for the language of the Resolution, and for the partnership between the two state agencies with the largest responsibility for children and youth. Illinois and the Task Force have garnered attention from national organizations and other state governments, many of whom are using the language of the Resolutions as a model in crafting their own legislation.

13. What were the program=s start-up costs? (Provide detail about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place).

The start-up costs for the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force were minimal. The initial meeting was funded by the Disney Institute. The Illinois Center for Violence Prevention (ICVP) coordinated the Illinois After-school Initiative and supplied staff support, and worked with the leadership of the group to provide strategic direction. In addition, the Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD) at the University of Illinois provided data collection and analyses. These two organizations received a small grant totaling approximately \$200,000. Task Force members assumed any expenses associated with meetings or related activities.

14. What are the program=s annual operational costs?

Expenses include:	Data Collection and Evaluation:	\$30,000
	Printing:	\$11,625
	Travel:	\$5,500
	Meetings:	\$9,000
	Telephone:	\$6,300
	Postage:	\$1,680
	Office Supplies:	\$1,400

15. How is the program funded?

ICVP has recently received a three-year contract from the C. S. Mott Foundation to continue to coordinate the Task Force and its activities. ICVP will receive \$225,000 over the next three years in declining amounts: \$90,000 the first year, \$75,000 the second year and \$60,000 the third year. This will assist them in their initial project start up and building of public/private partnerships.

16. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

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17. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

This program relies heavily on the collective knowledge and experience of the Task Force members to meet its goal, rather than on equipment and technology. In order to communicate with one another, members have used Email, the telephone and the

traditional mail service. The Work Groups used the Internet to research and collect data relative to after-school programming. In addition, Power Point presentations have been given at the Task Force meetings to summarize the goals and activities of the group. Teleconferencing equipment owned by the Illinois= Central Management Services is accessed for Task Force meetings to help alleviate travel costs for members. However, no equipment or software purchases have been made specifically for the Initiative.

18. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator=s name, present address and telephone number.

A few other states across the country have convened groups to address the issue of after-school programming, and Illinois has been named as one of nine Gold Star States by the C.S. Mott Foundation because of its innovative efforts in this area.

19. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

Illinois is one of the only states to begin its efforts with the direction and support of the Legislature through the passage of a Resolution. In addition, Illinois is rare in that representatives from both education and human services, competitive agencies are working cooperatively together. In leading the Illinois After-school Task Force, DHS and ISBE have formed a strong partnership that has become the focus of national attention. Other states view Illinois as a leader in out-of-school time programming: for the language of the Resolution, and for the partnership between education and human services agencies. National organizations and other state governments are using the language of the Resolutions as a model in crafting their own legislation.

20. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

While the requirements of the Resolutions have been fulfilled, the Task Force will continue to meet. The second year of the Illinois After-school Initiative is being launched with a meeting in March of Task Force members. The invitation also is extended to all individuals and organizations who are interested in expanding access to and improving the quality of out-of-school-time programs in the state. The goal in the second year of the Initiative is to create a statewide Network that will implement the ideas and recommendations described in the Final Report.

21. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program=s effectiveness in addressing the defined problem(s) or issue(s). Provide tangible examples.

With the intense amount of interest shown by individuals and groups throughout Illinois, finding members to serve on the Task Force has not been a problem. In fact, the Task Force has struggled to keep its size manageable and functional, while still accommodating all the organizations seeking to be a part of the Initiative. However, by ensuring that a wide variety of perspectives are included in developing the strategic plan, Illinois has been successful in building a broad base of support for this Initiative.

22. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The idea of providing quality after-school services to all Illinois children has grown from a lofty dream in the minds of a few individuals to a realistic goal shared by a wide variety of youth advocacy groups throughout the state. The passage of the Illinois After-School Initiative Resolution created the Task Force, chaired by the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education, and involving those with an interest in youth. The Resolution also specified the work to be completed, and the deadlines for the reports to be presented to the Governor and the General Assembly. However, the details of the activities to be conducted were left to the Task Force and its Co-Chairs. Since the Resolution was passed, the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education established a close working relationship in order to meet the Resolution's strict and short timelines. Putting aside territorial and personal issues, staffs from both agencies worked to guide the Task Force to assess after-school programming and develop a strategic plan that has the support of the local agencies and individuals and the two state agencies with the most vested interest in children.

23. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

States must seek support from all interested groups and individuals before attempting to assess out-of-school services and develop a comprehensive plan. Studies show that it is imperative that representatives from both education and human services be involved when shaping policies that involve services during non-school hours. It is sometimes difficult to bring individuals from such diverse groups together; however, the results are worth the effort.