

Vermont Afterschool Professionals Report for the National Career Pathways Project
Data Collection, Analysis, and Synthesis
February 2008

Prepared by: Lynne Feal-Staub, Independent Consultant
Holly Morehouse, Vermont Department of Education

Introduction

Vermont is one of six states and two municipalities participating in a one-year National Career Pathways Project. The purpose of the project is to develop ways to support systemic career pathways for youth workers, including afterschool providers. In particular, the project looks at incentives, credentials, higher education, and policy. The other participating states/municipalities are California, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Baltimore, and New York City.

One component of Vermont's Career Pathways Project involves surveying individuals working in "afterschool" to collect general information about the field, as well as, to determine professional development needs and incentives and barriers to realizing those needs. For the survey component of the Vermont project we elected to follow the seven principles of a flexible and fair career pathways system as developed by the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition.¹ Those seven principles are:

1. **Recognizes competence-** Acknowledges that there are multiple pathways to competence: certificate-based training, academic coursework, life experience and work experience.
2. **Rewards competence-** Provides guidelines and financial incentives to employers that reward competence with increased responsibility, compensation and work incentives.
3. **Requires competence-** Has standards of workforce quality, and includes efforts to support, sustain and prepare youth workers as a part of the core definitions of program quality that are subject to monitoring and improvement.
4. **Redefines competence-** Provide guidelines that describe position levels by responsibility and connection to direct service; qualifications required, including experience, education and certification; knowledge expected; and advancement options, or how to move through and/or up the lattice.
5. **Reflects the perspective of all stakeholders-** Regularly seeks the input of workers, employers and funders.
6. **Relies on the use of public and private dollars-** Ensures the sustainability and scale of the system by leveraging private dollars and linking the system to public funding sources to ensure the creation of a diversified funding base.
7. **Reaches all youth workers-** Has the authority to address the needs of all youth workers – full-time and part-time, across age groups and settings.

Six of the above seven principles were utilized to guide both survey development and the organization of the mid-year and final report. Approaching the project and survey tool development in this manner helped to ensure that data collection included a wide spectrum of aspects critical to the establishment of a flexible and fair career pathways project. Only one principle, Principle #6- "Relies on the use of public and private dollars," was not incorporated in the survey tools. This principle refers to the structure of the funding sources behind a career pathways project. The survey tools developed for this project were all designed for *individuals* working in afterschool programs and were primarily aimed at collecting information about their professional development needs, incentives, and barriers. While we use the principles above as an overall organizing structure, the information gathered through the survey tools about needs, incentives, and barriers gives this project a specific Vermont focus.

¹ The Next Generation Youth Work Coalition (2007)
Available at: www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/workforce/documents/ClearPoliciesforCareerPathway.doc

Survey Tools

For the purposes of this study, two survey tools were developed. The first was created in the spring for distribution at Vermont's Working with Youth Conference on May 16, 2007. This survey was developed by the Afterschool Professional Development Committee under the Agency of Human Services, Child Development Division. This survey was called the "Defining Our Workforce" survey and it was a solid first-cut at "mapping the field" and was used to guide the subsequent stages of data collection.

The second survey tool was developed later in the year by the authors of this report, with feedback from Ruth Matthews at the Child Development Division, and its purpose was to build on the spring survey, address any identified information gaps, and provide additional information needed for the project. The title of this second survey is the "Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey" and it was used to collect input from a wide variety of people working in afterschool programs across Vermont.

A third manner for collecting data was considered under the project, but not realized. The Community College of Vermont offered a course entitled *Introduction to Afterschool Education and Care* in spring 2007. Upon completion of the course, participants were asked to fill out a survey about their experience in the course as well as identify any other professional development needs they may have. Although several attempts were made to obtain copies of that survey and of the compiled survey results, we were not able to get them in time to include them in this report.

The Defining Our Workforce Survey

The Defining Our Workforce survey was developed by the Vermont Agency of Human Services and distributed at the May 2007 Vermont Working with Youth Conference. This survey was then made available on-line throughout the spring of 2007. A total of 106 surveys were collected, 91 at the May conference, 11 through the on-line format, and 4 through other sources. Analysis of this survey was completed in August 2007 and a report was submitted to the Agency of Human Services.

Results from the Defining Our Workforce survey showed that this survey primarily reached a group of individuals with a high level of education (78% of respondents indicated holding a bachelor's degree or higher) that were invested in the planning of their careers (only 10% indicated not having completed any career planning activities). 82% of respondents indicated receiving professional development and support through workshops and conferences and the two areas most strongly identified as interest areas for continued learning were child and youth development (80% indicated interest) and families and communities, which elicited 82% of respondents indicating interest. 69% of respondents indicated obtaining information about professional development opportunities through their supervisor or workplace, and the top three barriers or challenges towards participation in professional development opportunities identified were: scheduling conflicts (46%), cost (44%), and time commitment required (37%).

All in all, the respondents of the Defining Our Workforce survey seemed to be a fairly homogenous group. The fact that this survey was primarily distributed through one conference, with only 14% of surveys collected outside of the Working with Youth Conference, supports the presumption that this survey may not have reached a wide enough audience to yield data that allows for generalizations about the afterschool field to be made.

The Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey

The Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey was distributed in fall 2007, and a copy of the survey questions can be found as an attachment to this report. A total of 291 surveys were collected from throughout the state². The Vermont Afterschool Professionals Surveys was distributed through three avenues:

² Please note that throughout this report, totals do not always equal one-hundred percent due to non-responses, respondents providing more than one response to any particular question, and rounding errors.

- **Vermont Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Centers (VDOE-CCLC)**
The State Coordinator for Vermont's 21st CCLC programs converted the Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey into Survey Monkey for online distribution and collection (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>). All 35 of the Vermont 21st CCLC programs (covering over 100 different program sites) were sent notification via email asking them to respond to the survey and providing the survey link. The email request specified that the survey should be filled out by project staff working at all levels: directors, site coordinators, instructors, teachers, volunteers, and high school staff. Of the 143 total surveys collected, 104 were filled out online and an additional 39 were submitted in hardcopy. The Survey Monkey distribution of the survey took place in September 2007.
- **Vermont School Age Care Network (VSACN) Afterschool Conference** - On October 18, 2007 afterschool professionals and practitioners from throughout Vermont attended the VSACN Afterschool Conference. A hardcopy version of the Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey was available at the conference. Conference participants were asked to fill out the survey and return it to conference organizers. Because a large number of program staff from 21st CCLC sites were also in attendance at this conference, participants were asked not to fill out the survey again if they had already participated in the Survey Monkey version of the tool online. Although over 200 people were in attendance at the conference, only 16 surveys were collected from this venue.
- **Agency of Human Services, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Specialists**– The CCR&R Specialists have 12 regional offices throughout Vermont. Their responsibilities include working with childcare and afterschool care providers in their region by providing technical assistance and professional development opportunities. Throughout the late fall and early winter, the CCR&R offices were asked to distribute the surveys to the field. Through these regional offices 132 surveys were collected.

Data Collected through the Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey

This section of the report looks at the data collected through the Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey. Not all questions are examined in equal depth; rather we have focused the report on those questions that seem to yield the most convincing, relevant, or striking results.

Analysis #1: Organization Type

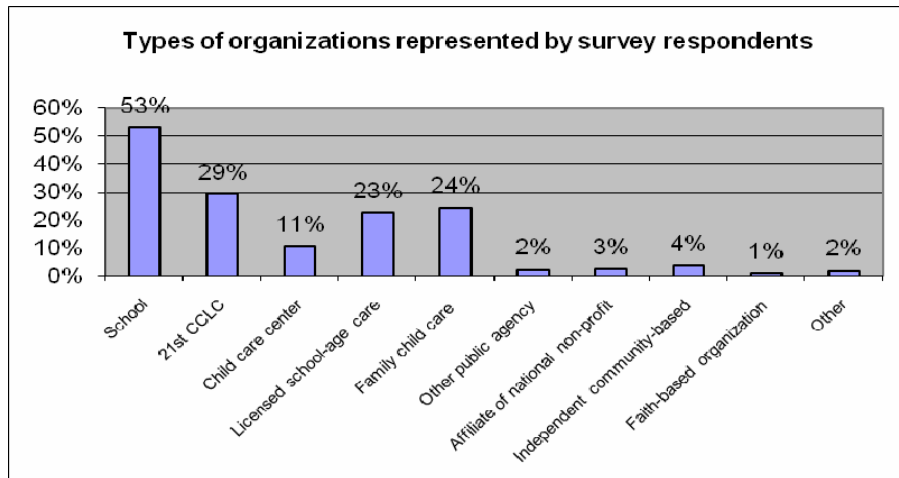
Related Principle: Reaches all youth workers and reflects the perspective of all stakeholders

The first question in the survey asks respondents to specify the type of afterschool organization or program where they work. The choices given were: (1) school; (2) 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC); (3) child care center; (4) licensed school age care; (5) family child care home provider; (6) other public agency (i.e. parks and recreation, public health, library); (7) affiliate of a national non-profit (i.e. YMCA, 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs); (8) independent community-based organization; (9) faith-based organization; or (10) other. Respondents were allowed to check more than one type of organization and thus could respond, for example, that their organization is a school, a 21st CCLC site, and a licensed school age care program.

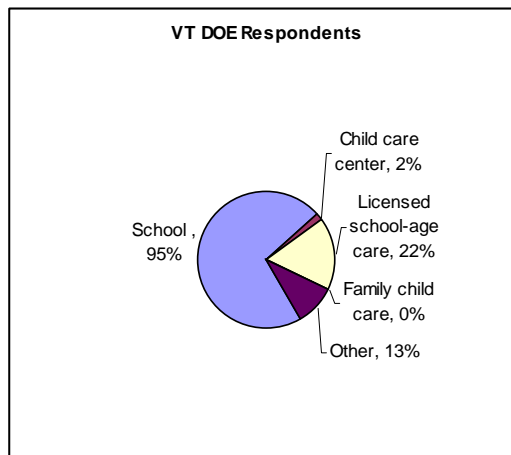
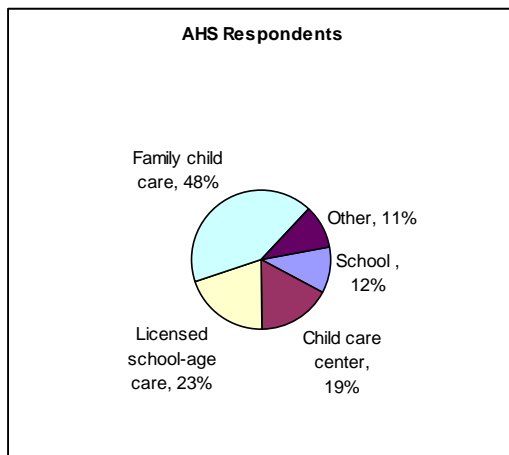
Of the 291 total respondents, 53% state that the afterschool program in which they work is also a school. 29% state that the afterschool program is a 21st CCLC site. 24% reported the organization as a family child care program. And 23% reported that their organization is a licensed school-age care program. It is interesting to note that only 11% reported their organization to be a childcare center and the responses for other public agencies, national affiliates, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations was even smaller. This first question gives us important information about our survey pool. It does not mean that 53% of the afterschool programs in Vermont are run by schools. Rather it tells us that we were successful in surveying afterschool professionals working in a school setting. With its strong emphasis on school-linked afterschool programs, it is not surprising that our distribution of the survey through the Survey Monkey tool and the 21st CCLC network in Vermont caught a large number of school-based or school-run programs.

On the other hand, by definition, the family child care programs are not run within schools but rather based out of the provider’s home. The numbers below show that we did a fairly good job collecting responses from this segment of the field as well, and many of these respondents came in through the CCR&R offices.

One area that does not seem well represented in our survey sample are people who work for those larger organizations (e.g., YMCA’s, Boys & Girls Clubs, community organizations) that offer afterschool programming, sometimes physically based within a school building, but not run by the school or identified with the school. We should have been able to access this segment of the field through the VSACN Afterschool Conference. However, the response rate was so low from that venue (only 16 completed surveys) that the information and needs of people working in those types of programs may not be adequately represented in our survey sample.



Another way to consider the survey sample is to break out respondents based upon whether they obtained the survey through the Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS) or through the Vermont Department of Education (VTDOE). Looking at the data through this filter shows a clear distinction between the types of programs that two agencies work with through their respective networks. VTDOE’s work with afterschool programs focuses primarily on 21st CCLC sites and these programs are all required to be run in close collaboration with their local schools. However, even given that requirement, it is striking that 95% of the respondents who received the survey through VTDOE channels report that they are employed within the school system. On the other hand, the respondents who received the survey through one of the AHS channels show more variety in employment structures but still with that strong percentage coming from family care child programs (48%). Of note is the overlap in that 12% of AHS respondents identify their work environment as a school, and 22% of VTDOE respondents state that they are employed by a licensed school-age care facility.



Analysis #2: Full or Part-time Work

Related Principle: Reaches all youth workers and reflects the perspective of all stakeholders

The data show that the afterschool field in Vermont is largely a part-time workforce with 71% of the total respondents working 20 hours or less at their afterschool jobs. There is no significant difference between the groups when looking at just VTDOE respondents or AHS respondents. By definition the afterschool field offers primarily part-time employment in that afterschool programming typically operates for two hours per day, five days per week. Individuals providing direct service within the afterschool field are highly unlikely to be employed full-time. Of the 42 AHS respondents who indicated working full-time within the field (31 hours or more), 60% responded being in a management position. The same holds true for 93% of the 39 VTDOE respondents indicating full-time work.

In future studies, it would be interesting to ask respondents when they report working only part-time in an afterschool setting what they are doing during the rest of the week. Do they have another part-time job in a school or in another type of program working with children or youth? Do they only want part-time work or would they prefer a full-time job in the afterschool field? Are they staying home with young children or with other responsibilities? Or are they working the other 20 hours or so per week in a completely unrelated field? The answers to these and other related questions would be important in better understanding the need and appropriate extent of a career pathways project.

Number of hours per week respondents currently work within the afterschool organization

AHS Respondents

- 29% 1 – 10 hours/week
- 42% 11 – 20 hours/week
- 7% 21 – 30 hours/week
- 11% 31 – 40 hours/week
- 9% 40+ hours/week

VT DOE Respondents

- 38% 1 – 10 hours/week
- 34% 11 – 20 hours/week
- 8% 21 – 30 hours/week
- 10% 31 – 40 hours/week
- 9% 40+ hours/week

Analysis #3: Management or Direct Service Positions

Related Principle: Reaches all youth workers and reflects the perspective of all stakeholders

Most program respondents work either directly with children and youth (41% of total respondents) or share responsibilities both in direct service and a program management capacity (40% of total respondents). Only 13% of total respondents report being solely in a management position. However, when broken out by state agency connection, 20% of the VTDOE respondents report being solely in program management or administration positions while only 7% of the AHS respondents report being in similarly focused positions.

Role that respondents state most closely describes their position within the afterschool organization

AHS Respondents

- 43% Direct service with children and youth
- 7% Program management or administration
- 43% Both direct service and program management
- 5% Other

VT DOE Respondents

- 38% Direct service with children and youth
- 20% Program management or administration
- 38% Both direct service and program management
- 3% Other

Analysis #4: Experience and Future Plans

Related Principle: Recognizes competence

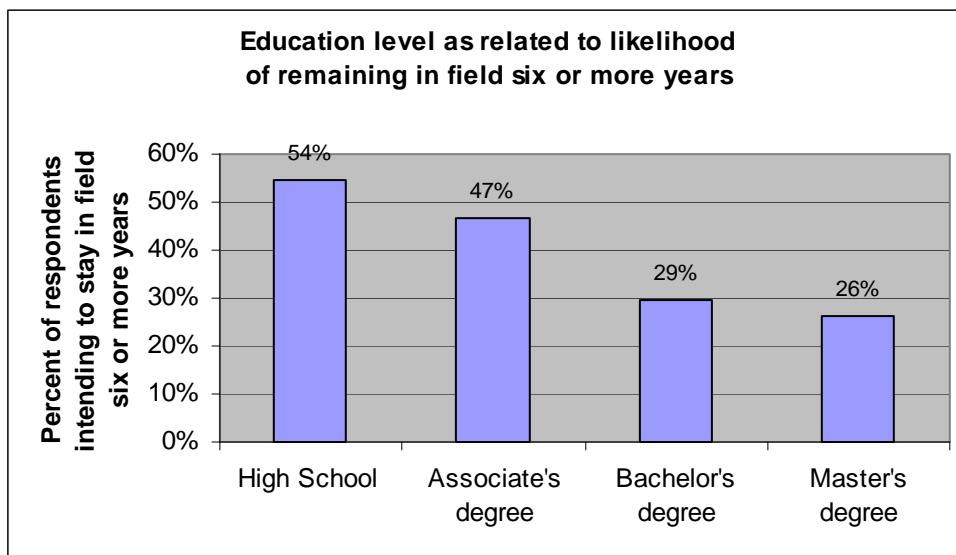
The survey included three questions designed to collect information on the work experience individuals bring to the afterschool field and on the plans individuals have for remaining in the field. Of the total

respondents, 62% have worked in their current position five years or less, yet 57% of respondents have worked with children or youth for five years or more. From these numbers we note that while afterschool is still a fairly new field, programs seem to be drawing staff from other child and youth related organizations.

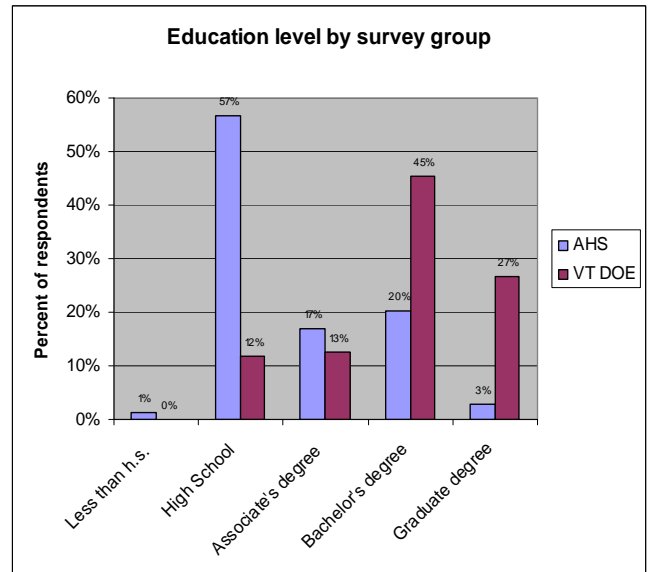
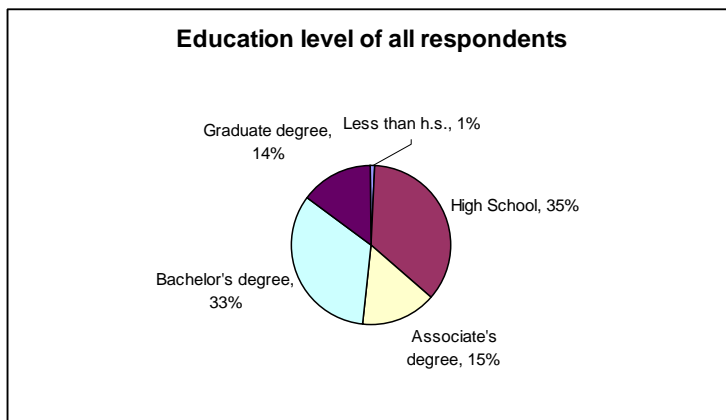
Number of years working in your current position		Number of years working with children or youth	
• 33%	less than 2 years	• 6%	less than 2 years
• 29%	2 to 5 years	• 10%	2 to 5 years
• 19%	5 to 10 years	• 18%	5 to 10 years
• 18%	10 years or more	• 39%	10 years or more

It is also interesting to note that of the 291 total respondents, 40% intend to stay in the afterschool field six or more years. This number rises to 54% when looking at only AHS respondents, and decreases to 26% when breaking-out DOE respondents showing a marked distinction in the long-term plans of individuals working for the different types of organizations. A second important distinction arises when looking at individuals with a longer term commitment to the field versus their attained education level. The data show that among these respondents long-term commitment to the field decreases as education levels increase.

Number of years planning to continue working in an afterschool setting?					
Total Respondents		AHS Respondents		VT DOE Respondents	
• 3%	less than 1 year	• 2%	less than 1 year	• 5%	less than 1 year
• 25%	1 to 2 years	• 16%	1 to 2 years	• 35%	1 to 2 years
• 26%	3 to 5 years	• 21%	3 to 5 years	• 32%	3 to 5 years
• 40%	6+ years	• 54%	6+ years	• 26%	6+ years



The trend noted in terms of individuals with higher levels of education being less committed to the afterschool field, combined with the data showing AHS respondents indicating greater levels of long-term commitment to afterschool when compared to VT DOE respondents, is borne out when comparing the education level between the two groups of respondents. As a whole, 47% of respondents indicated holding a bachelor's degree or higher. 35% of all respondents indicating holding a high school diploma. When breaking-out the data by agency affiliation, however, one sees a clear difference in education levels, with VT DOE respondents holding advanced degrees at a significantly higher rate than AHS respondents.



Analysis #5: Salary Levels and Rate of Pay

Related Principle: Rewards competence

For questions about monetary compensation, respondents were given an option of indicating an annual salary or an hourly rate of pay. For those that reported their annual salary, we discovered at first a bias in the survey tool. The original survey distributed to the 21st CCLC sites did not include wording within this question specifying that *only* pay related to work within the afterschool organization was to be recorded. Responses gathered around annual salaries seemed to indicate that respondents were disclosing total salary for *all* work, and were not limiting their responses to work within the afterschool organization. Many of the 21st CCLC sites included in the first distribution of the survey hire teachers as instructors in their afterschool programs and it appears that their teacher-salary rates were being recorded in the survey. Based on this finding, the question was modified to specifically ask about afterschool employment. However, because of this correction only results collected from later versions of the survey can be considered reliable and for this reason we have not included further analysis of salary rates in this report.

When respondents reported their rate of pay as an hourly rate instead of a salary range, we seem to avoid the data problem described above. Out of the 158 respondents who reported their hourly rate of pay, 68% receive less than \$20/hr and 32% receive \$20/hr or more. However, when comparing hourly rates of pay between AHS and VT DOE respondents, one sees a large discrepancy between the two groups. Only 2% of AHS respondents indicate earning \$20 per hour or more, whereas that number soars to 34% among VT DOE respondents. When further examining this trend, the results appear to be strongly correlated with education level.

Current pay for the work performed within the afterschool organization?

Total Respondents

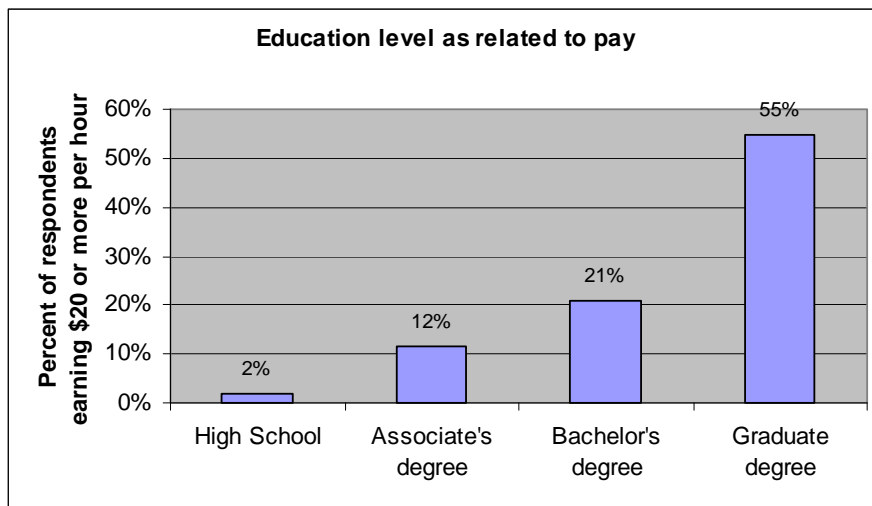
- 4% less than \$8.00/hour
- 14% \$8.00 - \$11.99/hour
- 13% \$12.00 - \$15.99/hour
- 5% \$16.00 - \$19.99/hour
- 7% \$20.00 - \$24.99/hour
- 11% \$25.00 - \$29.99/hour
- 0% \$30.00 - \$39.99/hour
- 0% \$40.00 +/hour

AHS Respondents

- 8% less than \$8.00/hour
- 20% \$8.00 - \$11.99/hour
- 7% \$12.00 - \$15.99/hour
- 3% \$16.00 - \$19.99/hour
- 1% \$20.00 - \$24.99/hour
- 1% \$25.00 - \$29.99/hour
- 0% \$30.00 - \$39.99/hour
- 0% \$40.00 +/hour

VT DOE Respondents

- 0% less than \$8.00/hour
- 9% \$8.00 - \$11.99/hour
- 19% \$12.00 - \$15.99/hour
- 8% \$16.00 - \$19.99/hour
- 12% \$20.00 - \$24.99/hour
- 21% \$25.00 - \$29.99/hour
- 0% \$30.00 - \$39.99/hour
- 1% \$40.00 +/hour



Analysis #6: Employer Support and Identified Barriers

Related Principle: Requires competence

AHS and VT DOE respondents are fairly aligned when looking at employer support around professional development opportunities and barriers or challenges to attending trainings. 54% of total respondents report that their employers make them aware of professional development opportunities and 49% pay fees while 33% provide release time. 40% of the respondents reported that professional development training is a requirement of their job. When looking at barriers, the most common barrier identified by respondents relates to scheduling conflicts (58%), with the time commitment required coming in a not too distant second (46%). Only 5% cite a lack of workplace support as a barrier and only 18% report a lack of access to trainings. These data indicate that respondents feel sufficient professional development opportunities and trainings are currently available in the state and that their employers support, and in many cases require, their attendance at these trainings.

Support provided by afterschool employer in pursuing professional development opportunities

- 54% Makes employees aware of opportunities
- 49% Pays fees
- 40% Requires professional development training
- 33% Provides release time
- 14% Formally recognizes/rewards participation
- 6% Does not actively support participation

Barriers or challenges negatively impacting participation in professional development opportunities

- 58% Scheduling conflicts
- 46% Time commitment required
- 35% Cost
- 26% Lack of courses related to afterschool
- 18% Access to trainings
- 8% Not interested in career in afterschool field
- 7% Lack of relevant degree opportunities in colleges
- 5% Lack of workplace support

Analysis #7: Topics of Interest

Related Principle: Requires competence

Differences between the two surveyed groups arise when examining the topics of interest within each of these groups. AHS respondents showed significantly more interest than VT DOE respondents in the following topics (defined as 10% or more of a difference between the two groups): building relationships with youth, child and youth development, curriculum/learning, family engagement, and health and safety. VT DOE respondents showed significantly more interest in the following topics: community involvement/collaborative partnerships, fiscal management/sustainability, and program evaluation. These differences may stem from a number of possible sources: (1) differences between the professional development needs of the two groups related to the higher percentage of those in management positions in the VT DOE – related programs; (2) a difference in messages

being sent by their corresponding state agencies (e.g., the main areas identified by the AHS-related respondents correspond highly with the key areas of AHS’s Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals); (3) a difference in education levels and career plans between respondents in each group; or (4) the fact that 21st CCLC programs are required to place a strong emphasis on community partnerships, sustainability, and evaluation.

Topics respondents are interested in receiving training around

AHS Respondents

- 58% Building relationships with youth
- 52% Child and youth development
- 28% Community involvement/
Collaborative partnerships
- 51% Curriculum/learning afterschool
- 31% Family engagement
- 12% Fiscal management/sustainability
- 32% Health and safety
- 20% Human relations/staff management
- 19% Leadership skills
- 17% Professionalism
- 9% Program evaluation
- 24% Program management skills
- 13% Public relations
- 30% Other

VT DOE Respondents

- 36% Building relationships with youth
- 28% Child and youth development
- 43% Community involvement/
Collaborative partnerships
- 35% Curriculum/learning afterschool
- 23% Family engagement
- 29% Fiscal management/sustainability
- 20% Health and safety
- 20% Human relations/staff management
- 22% Leadership skills
- 8% Professionalism
- 24% Program evaluation
- 18% Program management skills
- 19% Public relations
- 1% Other

Analysis #8: Interest in Further Education

Related Principle: Requires competence

Examination of respondents’ interest in furthering their education around afterschool services shows a similar trend between AHS and VT DOE respondents. That is, both groups indicate through a large percentage of affirmative responses that they are interested in receiving further training, yet the percentages drop when looking at interest levels in obtaining a certificate, credential, or degree related to afterschool.

Level of interest in receiving further training related to your current work in afterschool services

Total Respondents

- 4% Not interested at all
- 9% Low level of interest
- 23% Somewhat interested
- 36% Interested
- 24% Very highly interested

AHS Respondents

- 3% Not interested at all
- 5% Low level of interest
- 23% Somewhat interested
- 36% Interested
- 28% Very highly interested

VT DOE Respondents

- 6% Not interested at all
- 13% Low level of interest
- 23% Somewhat interested
- 37% Interested
- 19% Very highly interested

Preferred manner for receiving profession development support and training

Total Respondents

- 81% Workshops
- 63% Conferences
- 36% Workplace trainings
- 6% Non-matriculated courses
- 27% College coursework
- 26% On-line classes
- 29% Self study
- 1% Other

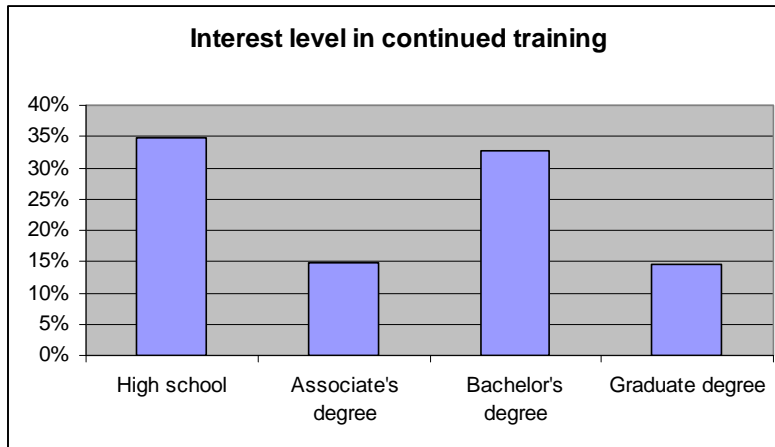
AHS Respondents

- 88% Workshops
- 66% Conferences
- 34% Workplace trainings
- 9% Non-matriculated courses
- 28% College coursework
- 26% On-line classes
- 30% Self study
- 1% Other

VT DOE Respondents

- 74% Workshops
- 60% Conferences
- 38% Workplace trainings
- 3% Non-matriculated courses
- 27% College coursework
- 27% On-line classes
- 27% Self study
- 1% Other

64% of AHS respondents are interested or very highly interested in continued training, and the same holds true for 56% of VT DOE respondents. The connection between education level and interest in continued training is not clear as those with a high school education and those with a bachelor's degree show significantly more interest than those with associates or graduate degrees. It seems logical that those who hold a graduate degree may be less inclined to pursue further training, but the decreased interest among those with an associate's degree is less clear.



The interest level in continuing education drops to 38% of AHS respondents stating they would be interested or highly interested in a certificate or credential in afterschool and 36% indicating interest in an afterschool degree. In the VT DOE respondent group only 23% show interest in an afterschool certificate and a further decrease to 17% is seen in those who express interest in an afterschool degree. Similarities can be seen between AHS and VT DOE respondents in terms of the financial commitment both groups are willing to make in securing either a certificate or degree. Only 8% of AHS respondents and 9% of VT DOE respondents would consider a financial commitment above \$1000 for a certificate. The percentage increase to 14% (AHS respondents) and 13% (VT DOE respondents) when contemplating a degree.

Question: If a certificate or credential in afterschool existed in Vermont, please indicate your interest level in pursuing this option and the financial investment you would be willing to make.

AHS Respondents

- 11% Not interested
- 11% Low level of interest
- 32% Somewhat interested
- 19% Interested
- 19% Highly interested

VT DOE Respondents

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| • 34% < \$100 | • 22% Not interested | • 22% < \$100 |
| • 23% \$100-\$1000 | • 14% Low level of interest | • 26% \$100-\$1000 |
| • 7% \$1000-\$5000 | • 34% Somewhat interested | • 8% \$1000-\$5000 |
| • 1% \$5000-\$10,000 | • 15% Interested | • 0% \$5000-\$10,000 |
| • 0% > \$10,000 | • 8% Highly interested | • 1% > \$10,000 |
| • 7% Not interested | | • 22% Not interested |

Question: If credit courses designed around afterschool services leading to a college degree were available in Vermont, please indicate your interest in pursuing this option and the financial investment you would be willing to make.

AHS Respondents

- 23% Not interested
- 9% Low level of interest
- 24% Somewhat interested
- 20% Interested
- 16% Highly interested

VT DOE Respondents

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| • 17% < \$100 | • 38% Not interested | • 20% < \$100 |
| • 26% \$100-\$1000 | • 13% Low level of interest | • 15% \$100-\$1000 |
| • 11% \$1000-\$5000 | • 22% Somewhat interested | • 10% \$1000-\$5000 |
| • 3% \$5000-\$10,000 | • 11% Interested | • 2% \$5000-\$10,000 |
| • 0% > \$10,000 | • 6% Highly interested | • 1% > \$10,000 |
| • 13% Not interested | | • 26% Not interested |

Interesting discrepancies arise when examining the desire for continued professional training:

- Only 52% of the 85 respondents who identified lack of courses or lack of degree opportunities as a barrier to participating in professional development opportunities went on to affirmatively answer that they are interested receiving professional development through college coursework or on-line classes.
- Only 53% of the 80 respondents who indicate interest in receiving professional development training through college coursework towards a degree went on to affirmatively answer that they are interested or highly interested in pursuing a college degree around afterschool services.
- Of these 42 individuals who express interest in obtaining an afterschool degree, only 16 state that they are willing to invest more than \$1000 in the pursuit of a degree.

Conclusion

The afterschool field is a diverse field attracting individuals with educational backgrounds ranging from high school diplomas to graduate-level degrees. The types of organizations serving afterschool needs also vary widely from home-based childcare settings to school-run programs. Similarities between afterschool professionals can be seen in the following areas:

- Hours worked- The afterschool field is a part-time field with very few people reporting full-time employment.
- Professional development support and barriers- Afterschool professionals, by and large, feel supported in their pursuit of professional development and report similar barriers regardless of the type of organization for which they work or their educational background. Afterschool professionals have difficulty negotiating the scheduling conflicts, time commitment, and cost of professional development opportunities.
- Professional development venues- Afterschool professionals show strong agreement in their preference for obtaining professional development through workshops and conferences.

Differences between afterschool professionals tend to divide along lines related to educational background and the type of organization in which they are employed. The following differences are noted:

- Long-term commitment- Level of education is negatively correlated with an individual's intent to stay in the afterschool field.
- Salary level- Level of education is positively correlated with level of pay.
- Financial commitment towards afterschool training- Most afterschool professionals do not seem interested in making a significant financial commitment towards obtaining certification or a degree in afterschool.

The AHS respondents and VT DOE respondents can likely be defined as community-based and school-based groups. Future research should consider specifically asking respondents to characterize their work environment into one of these two categories in order to determine similarities and differences between the two that may or may not be consistent with the break-out of AHS and VT DOE respondents outlined within this report. Further break-out between school-based, community-based, and home-based should also be considered for continued research as further distinctions may arise.

Questions for further study:

- Do individuals who define their work environment as school-based, community-based, and home-based differ significantly from the results seen between VT DOE and AHS respondents?
- Do afterschool youth workers typically hold more than one job and, if so, do they see their afterschool employment as their primary or secondary job?
- Why is an increased level of education correlated with less inclination to remain in the afterschool field?
- Why do those with an associate's degree have less interest in continued training than those with other levels of education?

Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey

Professional development needs and opportunities

Welcome to the **Vermont Afterschool Professionals Survey**. This survey is designed to increase understanding about who are the Afterschool Professionals in Vermont, where you are in your professional growth, and what you need to develop and sustain your work in this field in the future.

Your answers to these questions are **anonymous**. Because we will be distributing this survey in a number of settings, you are asked to **only fill this survey out once**. We expect the survey will take you about 5 to 10 minutes to fill out.

Why the title of *Afterschool Professional*? Afterschool providers and workers of all kinds go by many different titles and work in many different settings. For survey purposes, the definition of an afterschool professional is *an individual who works with or on behalf of children and youth, primarily between the ages of 5-18 to facilitate their growth and development during non-school hours* (both before and after school hours).

The survey is especially for those of you who work directly with children or older youth, as well as those who provide program management or administrative oversight.

If this describes you, read on! And thank you for your participation.

Child Development Division
VT Department for Children and Families
Agency of Human Services

Vermont 21st Century Community Learning Centers
VT Department of Education

OVER



1. What type of afterschool organization do you currently work in (check **all** that apply)?

- School
- 21st Century Community Learning Center site (21st CCLC)
- Child care center
- Licensed school age care
- Family child care home provider
- Other public agency (i.e. parks and recreation, public health, library)
- Affiliate of a national non-profit (i.e. YMCA, 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs)
- Independent community-based organization
- Faith-based organization
- Other, please list _____

2. Which **ONE** of the following **most closely** describes your position within the afterschool organization?

- Direct service with children and youth
- Program management or administration
- Both direct service AND program management/administration
- Other, please list _____

3. What is the highest level of education you have **completed**?

- Less than high school diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Associate's degree, major: _____
- Bachelor's degree, major: _____
- Graduate degree, major: _____
- Other, please list _____

4. Indicate the number of hours per week you currently work within the afterschool organization.

- 1 – 10 hours per week
- 11 – 20 hours per week
- 21 – 30 hours per week
- 31 – 40 hours per week
- 40+ hours per week

5. How long have you been working . . .

in your current position?

- less than 2 years
- 2 to 5 years
- 5 to 10 years
- 10 years or more

with children or youth (ages 5 – 18)?

- less than 2 years
- 2 to 5 years
- 5 to 10 years
- 10 years or more

6. How long do you plan to continue working in an afterschool setting?

- less than 1 year
- 1 or 2 years more
- 3 to 5 years more
- 6 years or more

7. What is your current pay for the work you do within the afterschool organization (check only one)?

If you receive a **salary** from the afterschool organization, check **one** below:

- less than \$5,000
- \$5,000 - \$9,999
- \$10,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 and over

If you are paid **hourly** from the afterschool organization, check **one** below:

- less than \$8.00
- \$8.00 - \$11.99
- \$12.00 - \$15.99
- \$16.00 - \$19.99
- \$20.00 - \$24.99
- \$25.00 - \$29.99
- \$30.00 - \$39.99
- \$40.00 and over

8. How would you rate your level of interest in receiving further training related to your current work in afterschool services?

- Not interested at all
- Low level of interest
- Somewhat interested
- Interested
- Very highly interested

9. What is your preferred manner for receiving professional development support and training? (check **ALL** that apply)

- Workshops
 - Conferences
 - Workplace trainings
 - Non-matriculated college coursework
 - College coursework towards a degree
 - On-line classes
 - Self study
 - Other, please list _____
-

10. How do you or your afterschool employer support participation in pursuing professional development opportunities (check **ALL** that apply)?

- Employer provides release time
 - Employer pays fees
 - Employer makes employees aware of opportunities
 - Employer formally recognizes/rewards participation
 - Employer requires professional development training
 - Employer does not actively support participation
 - Other, please list _____
-

11. What barriers or challenges negatively impact your participation in professional development opportunities in the afterschool field (check **ALL** that apply)?

- Cost
- Scheduling conflicts
- Time commitment required
- Lack of workplace support
- Access to trainings
- Lack of courses related to afterschool
- Lack of relevant degree opportunities in colleges
- Not interested in career in afterschool field
- Other, please list _____

12. Please check topics you are interested in receiving training around (check top **three to five** options):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building relationships with youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Human relations/staff management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child and youth development | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community involvement/
Collaborative partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum/learning afterschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Program evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Program management skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal management/sustainability | <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please list _____ |

13. If a **certificate or credential** in afterschool existed in Vermont, please indicate your interest level in pursuing this option and the financial investment you would be willing to make.

Interest level in afterschool certificate or credential:

- Not interested at all
- Low level of interest
- Somewhat interested
- Interested
- Very highly interested

Financial investment willing to consider for afterschool certificate or credential:

- Less than \$100
- \$100 - \$1000
- \$1000 - \$5000
- \$5000 - \$10,000
- More than \$10,000
- Not interested

14. If credit courses designed around afterschool services leading to a **college degree** were available in Vermont, please indicate your interest in pursuing this option and the financial investment you would be willing to make.

Interest level in afterschool related degree:

- Not interested at all
- Low level of interest
- Somewhat interested
- Interested
- Very highly interested

Financial investment willing to consider for afterschool related degree:

- Less than \$100
- \$100 - \$1000
- \$1000 - \$5000
- \$5000 - \$10,000
- More than \$10,000
- Not interested

**Thank you so much for your time spent completing this survey
and for your commitment to young people!**