Charmaraman, L., Delcourt, C. G., Durrani, S., Kapoor, J., Richer, A. M., & Xiao, L. F. (2022). The role of parents, other adults, peers and informal learning communities in shaping positive social media use in adolescent girls. *Information and Learning Sciences*, *123*(7/8), 399–420. https://doi.org/10.1108/ils-03-2022-0034

This study aims to present the idea of "communities of social media practice," wherein seasoned users mentor newcomers, with a special emphasis on young female users. The study investigates how early adolescents use social media platforms to seek and provide guidance using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The researchers surveyed 968 young adolescents, averaging around 13 years of age, to understand the sources and types of guidance they receive on social media, the popularity of conversation topics related to this guidance, and how these interactions correlate with positive social media engagement. Additionally, the study includes a qualitative case study of a summer workshop involving 17 students, which illustrates how intentional communities of practice can foster positive social media usage among young users.

There were several findings from this study. One finding was that teenage girls regularly look to their parents, friends, and younger family members for advice on social media. Another finding was that peer interactions are strongly linked to positive use of social media, making peer groups the most influential source of guidance. The last finding is that peers play a crucial role in influencing each other's social media practices, and the case study illustrates how communities of practice can support adolescents in developing positive social media behaviors.

The focus on a crucial developmental stage, the investigation of guidance sources other than parents, the identification of guidance-related conversation topics, and the documentation of unofficial communities of practice that encourage positive social media engagement among adolescent girls are what make this study unique and valuable.

Creating successful after-school programs requires an understanding of how early adolescents use social media to seek and receive guidance. Peer influence is important, which means that to encourage positive social media use, interventions that take advantage of peer interactions are necessary. Involving parents in workshops can also teach them how to encourage their kids' online activities. Putting together instructional workshops based on effective case studies can give students the chance to pick up knowledge from one another in a secure setting. Programs for

peer mentoring can increase the positive effects on students even more. Including lessons on digital literacy in the curriculum can support the growth of students' capacity for ethical social media decision-making and critical thinking. In the end, these initiatives seek to support middle school students' holistic growth and responsible digital citizenship in the current digital environment.

Hanlon, T. E., Simon, B. D., O'Grady, K. E., Carswell, S. B., & Callaman, J. M. (2009). The effectiveness of an after-school program targeting urban African American youth. *Education and Urban Society*, *42*(1), 96–118. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124509343144

The study evaluates the efficacy of an after-school preventive program for African American youth in high-risk urban areas who are in the sixth grade. Throughout the academic year, the program was implemented on-site and used group mentoring with a focus on African American cultural heritage and remedial education to improve academic achievement, school chemistry, and social skills. Analyses were conducted on data from 237 and 241 students at two middle school sites (comparison and intervention) that served comparable urban communities. Grade point average and teacher ratings showed significant positive effects on academic achievement, with students at the intervention site benefiting most from them. Furthermore, there was a positive correlation observed between an increase in parental participation in the intervention program and advancements in students' grade point averages. Negative behavior changes, however, did not differ significantly between the comparison and intervention sites.

This study demonstrates the positive effects on behavior and academic achievement of an after-school prevention program aimed at African American youth in urban areas. Similar initiatives could be implemented in middle school after-school programs to help improve student outcomes, especially for populations of students who are at risk. The focus on cultural appreciation, remedial education, and group mentoring offers tactics that could be incorporated into current programs to improve school cohesiveness and the development of social skills. In addition, the relationship between improved academic performance and parental involvement emphasizes how crucial it is to involve parents in after-school programs. Having a better understanding of these results can help develop and implement after-school programs that are successful and meet the needs of a variety of student populations, which will ultimately help middle school students behave well and succeed academically.

Heidari, E., Mehrvarz, M., Marzooghi, R., & Stoyanov, S. (2021). The role of digital informal learning in the relationship between students' digital competence and academic engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, *37*(4), 1154–1166. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12553

Digital informal learning (DIL) was essential to sustaining students' academic engagement during COVID-19. This study examines the connection between academic engagement and students' digital competency, emphasizing the mediating function of DIL in higher education. The study, which involved 308 students from Shiraz University in Iran, used structural equation modeling (SEM) for analysis in addition to a descriptive correlational design. The results show a strong and positive relationship between DIL and academic engagement and digital competence. Furthermore, a mediator between students' digital competency and academic engagement was found to be DIL. Administrators should place a high priority on improving students' digital competencies and offering user-friendly DIL platforms to effectively facilitate academic engagement, especially considering the critical role that higher education institutions play in fostering academic engagement, especially during a pandemic.

This study emphasizes the value of digital literacy and digital informal learning (DIL) in promoting student engagement in the classroom, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This emphasizes the value of including DIL activities and digital literacy initiatives in the curriculum for an after-school program at a middle school. The program can successfully encourage student academic engagement by emphasizing the development of students' digital skills and giving them access to interesting DIL platforms. The necessity for customized interventions that make use of digital resources to enhance student learning outside of traditional classroom settings is also highlighted by an awareness of the mediating role of DIL. The effectiveness of after-school programs in encouraging academic engagement in a digital learning environment can be improved by incorporating these insights.

Low-income children's after-school care: are there beneficial effects of after-school programs? (1994, April 1). PubMed. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/8013233/

This study looked at 216 low-income children (average age = 9.1 years) receiving four different types of after-school care: formal after-school programs, mother care, informal adult supervision,

and self-care. The findings indicated that after-school care was associated with mother education, family income, and race; however, it was not associated with child gender, family marital status, neighborhood safety, or parenting style. Compared to other after-school care options, participation in a formal program was associated with improved academic achievement and social adjustment after adjusting for maternal education, race, and family income. The activities that kids did in different after-school programs varied; kids in formal programs spent more time on academics and enrichment activities, while kids in non-formal programs spent less time playing outside or watching TV. They also spent less time with their siblings and more time interacting with peers and adults. Peer relationships, emotional adjustment, and conduct and academic grades were all correlated with the amount of time spent on these activities. This study emphasizes how crucial it is to consider the kind of after-school care offered, especially for kids from low-income families. It emphasizes how official after-school programs are superior to alternative forms of care in fostering social adjustment and academic success. This highlights the importance of providing structured academic activities and enrichment lessons for a middle school after-school program to improve student outcomes. Program designers can ensure that activities that have a positive impact on students' development are prioritized by using knowledge of the relationship between after-school activities and academic and social outcomes as guidance. Furthermore, acknowledging the impact of socioeconomic factors on decisions made regarding after-school care highlights the need for inclusive and accessible programming to effectively support all students.

Park, H., Guo, S., Choi, S., & Noh, K. (2020). Interrelations between After-School Settings and the Delinquency and Emotional-Behavioral Problems of Elementary School Children: Findings from Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study. *Social Sciences*, *9*(9), 161. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci9090161

This extensive study explores the complex connections between children's behavioral outcomes and after-school environments, concentrating on delinquency and emotional-behavioral issues. By considering a variety of informal care arrangements, it fills the current research gap, which is focused on formal after-school programs (ASPs). The results contradict the commonly held belief that children in foster care have lower rates of delinquency, and that children in ASPs have

fewer emotional-behavioral issues. This implies that the involvement of parents and structured activities are important in reducing behavioral problems in kids. The study also emphasizes how important it is to consider sociodemographic variables like household income, race, and maternal education when designing intervention strategies for children because they have a substantial impact on the behavioral outcomes of the latter group. Maternal awareness and involvement in their child's development may have advantages, as evidenced by the positive correlation found between maternal education and emotional-behavioral development in children.

The study's conclusions about racial/ethnic variations in parenting styles and how those variations affect kids' behavioral outcomes also highlight crucial questions for culturally sensitive interventions. Furthermore, the association found between children's emotional-behavioral issues and household income highlights how economic factors impact parental influences and family dynamics. The study highlights the significance of fostering supportive school environments by shedding light on the effects of peer bullying and school connectedness on children's behavioral outcomes. All things considered, these observations offer insightful advice to educators, decision-makers, and professionals in creating focused interventions that cater to the different needs of kids in different after-school environments, eventually encouraging positive behavioral outcomes and holistic development.

Understanding the nuanced impact of different after-school settings on children's behavioral outcomes is crucial for designing effective middle school after-school programs. The study's findings highlight the importance of considering both formal after-school programs (ASPs) and informal care arrangements in program development. By recognizing the potential benefits of parental involvement and structured activities in reducing delinquency, program coordinators can incorporate strategies to encourage parental engagement and provide structured enrichment activities. Moreover, the study underscores the significance of socio-demographic factors such as maternal education, race, and household income in shaping children's behavioral outcomes, guiding efforts to tailor interventions to the specific needs of diverse student populations. Furthermore, research on the consequences of peer bullying and school connectedness highlights how crucial it is to establish inclusive and supportive environments in after-school programs. Overall, the development of holistic and culturally sensitive middle school after-school programs that support positive behavioral outcomes and enhance students' success and general well-being is informed by the information provided here.

Sjogren, A. L., Zumbrunn, S., Broda, M., Bae, C. L., & Deutsch, N. L. (2021). Understanding afterschool engagement: Investigating developmental outcomes for adolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *69*(1–2), 169–182. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12554

The impact of student participation in after-school programs on academic and developmental outcomes, and its uneven measurement, are discussed in this study. The study examined the factor structure of Wang and colleagues' school engagement scale using a sample of middle school students (N = 197) in an urban setting. The findings point to the multifaceted nature of engagement and indicate that it is composed of four distinct factors (affective, behavioral, cognitive, and social) and a global factor. Next, structural equation modeling was used to investigate the connection between positive youth development (PYD), academic outcomes, and engagement. The results show that student engagement is positively correlated with both PYD and mathematics achievement, but there are no significant correlations with English achievement. The design and execution of successful afterschool programs are informed by the evidence supporting engagement as a critical predictor of youth outcomes in non-school contexts, as well as the theoretically grounded approach to measuring engagement provided by this study.

The results of this study on after-school program participation by students have important ramifications for managing an after-school program at a middle school. First off, program design can be informed by an awareness of the complex interplay between affective, behavioral, cognitive, and social dimensions of student engagement, which can lead to more comprehensive engagement experiences. Program coordinators can give students a more fulfilling and enriching experience by implementing tactics and activities that address each of these dimensions. Second, the significance of encouraging student participation in after-school activities is underscored by the positive correlations found between student engagement and both positive youth development and academic achievement in mathematics. After-school programs for middle school students should give priority to activities that improve students' academic performance as well as their general wellbeing and personal development. The study's results also highlight the need to measure student involvement in after-school programs in a consistent and theoretically sound manner. Program evaluators can accurately assess the efficacy of interventions and modify program components to better meet the needs of students by using validated measures, like the

one used in this study. All things considered, this data highlights the crucial part that student involvement plays in after-school activities and offers insightful advice for creating and putting into practice middle school after-school programs that support academic achievement and constructive youth development.

Taheri, S. A., & Welsh, B. C. (2015). After-School programs for delinquency prevention. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, *14*(3), 272–290. https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204014567542

The results of a systematic review and meta-analysis looking at how after-school programs (ASPs) affect delinquency are presented in this article. Driven by conflicting findings from earlier assessments and continued curiosity in this social intervention, the review utilized stringent inclusion standards and all-encompassing search techniques to locate relevant research, culminating in the inclusion of 17 studies that drew from 17 distinct samples. These studies encompassed various modalities, including academic, recreation, and skills training/mentoring interventions. The meta-analysis revealed a small, nonsignificant effect of ASPs on delinquency, with no significant differences observed across different intervention types. While the review does not advocate for discontinuing ASPs, it suggests the need for a reevaluation of current practices, particularly regarding delinquency prevention. The article highlights research priorities, including further high-quality evaluations targeting different types of ASPs and a focus on program fidelity, to better understand and enhance the effectiveness of ASPs in addressing delinquency.

Because it clarifies the efficacy of after-school programs (ASPs) in addressing delinquency, this information is essential for managing an after-school program at a middle school. The meta-analysis highlights the significance of critically assessing the program's methodology and results, even though it shows a slight, nonsignificant effect of ASPs on delinquency. Program coordinators can evaluate their current offerings and decide on possible improvements or changes with the help of this information. Furthermore, by comprehending the different kinds of interventions assessed in the research (recreation, academic, and skills training/mentoring), after-school programs can be better designed to focus on delinquency prevention. The meta-analysis's identification of evidence-based practices may prompt coordinators to modify their programs or

add components from other intervention types. In addition, the focus on maintaining program integrity emphasizes how crucial it is to make sure after-school programs are carried out exactly as intended in order to optimize their efficacy. With this knowledge, program coordinators can concentrate on upholding the integrity of program elements and keeping an eye on the caliber of implementation.

Overall, by guiding program design, decision-making, and implementation strategies to effectively address delinquency prevention and promote positive youth development, this information offers helpful advice for managing an after-school program at a middle school.

APA PsycNet. (n.d.). https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2016-21281-001

In school disciplinary systems, restorative justice (RJ) has become a viable substitute for zero-tolerance policies that do not work. RJ uses a restorative approach to address disciplinary infractions. Restorative Circles (RC) are one of the RJ techniques that offers a forum for mediated communication to resolve disputes. Although school-based RJ is becoming more popular in the US, there is still a dearth of empirical research on the subject. This study investigates the experiences and results of staff members and students who take part in a remote learning program at a big metropolitan high school in the Southeast of the country. Thirty-five students and twenty-five staff/administrators who were involved in the RC program participated in semi-structured interviews. A theoretical model was created using grounded theory methodology with an emphasis on results. An analysis produced both favorable and unfavorable results. Satisfaction and disappointment were among the negative outcomes; taking control of the process, breaking the school-to-prison pipeline, improving relationships, reducing destructive conflict engagement, encouraging meaningful dialogue, and reaching social and academic milestones were among the positive outcomes. This study offers a theoretical framework for comprehending RC experiences, which is helpful for researchers and practitioners who want to improve the use of RJ in educational settings.

Having a thorough understanding of the experiences and results of Restorative Circles (RC) within the context of Restorative Justice (RJ) can be very helpful when managing an after-school

program for middle schools. The study underscores the efficacy of restorative justice (RJ) as a feasible alternative to zero-tolerance disciplinary policies. It also stresses the significance of implementing a restorative approach to address disciplinary infractions. Coordinators of the after-school program can give students a positive environment for handling behavioral issues and conflict resolution by implementing RC. The study also identifies both positive and negative consequences of involvement in RC, including reduced conflict engagement, improved relationships, satisfaction, and disappointment. Program designers and implementers can use this information to anticipate possible problems and create interventions that are specifically tailored to deal with them. Furthermore, the study's theoretical framework provides insightful information for practitioners looking to improve RJ's application in educational settings. Program coordinators can optimize the implementation of RC experiences and maximize their impact within the after-school program by comprehending the underlying principles and processes of these experiences. All things considered, this study offers crucial advice for managing an after-school program in a middle school by encouraging the use of restorative practices, like RC, to build a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that encourages good behavior and wholesome relationships among students.

Schumacher, A. (2014). Talking circles for adolescent girls in an urban high school. *SAGE Open*, *4*(4), 215824401455420. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014554204

The use of Talking Circles with 60 teenage girls during a two-year study of Restorative Practices (RP) in an urban high school is presented in this article. The impact of Talking Circles on the social and emotional development of the girls was investigated through individual interviews and participant observations in this study. Based on the Relational Cultural model, the results showed that Talking Circles improved participants' listening, anger management, and empathy while also providing a safe environment for peer support. The girls felt more confident in their abilities due to these improvements in social-emotional literacy. According to the study, Talking Circles are a great way for schools to build relationships, promote growth, and help students develop their social and emotional competencies.

This study provides valuable insights for running a middle school after-school program by highlighting the potential benefits of incorporating Restorative Practices (RP), specifically

Talking Circles, into program activities. By implementing Talking Circles, program coordinators can create a safe and supportive space for adolescents to build friendships, develop emotional literacy skills, and resolve conflicts effectively. The findings suggest that participating in Talking Circles can improve students' listening, anger management, and empathic skills, ultimately leading to greater self-efficacy. Therefore, integrating Talking Circles or similar restorative practices into the after-school program can contribute to the social and emotional development of middle school students. Additionally, this approach aligns with the relational cultural model, emphasizing the importance of fostering growth-fostering relationships within the school environment. Overall, incorporating RP and Talking Circles into the after-school program can enhance students' social-emotional well-being and promote a positive school climate.