



**The Role of Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) at  
Children's Aid Society Community Schools:  
Measurable Results from a 3-year Longitudinal Study**

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**The Children's Aid Society (CAS)**

- Founded in 1853
- Largest and oldest child and family social-welfare agency in New York City
- Serves 150,000 children and families in NYC
  - Adoption, foster care and preventive services;
  - Medical, mental health, and dental services;
  - Community centers;
  - Community schools;
  - Juvenile justice community re-entry and disconnected youth programs

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**New York City Public Schools**

- 1.1 million children
- 1,400+ schools
- Significant reforms since 2002 under mayoral control

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## CAS and Community Schools

- Local Implementation
  - 18 Community Schools in NYC (Washington Heights, E. Harlem, S. Bronx)
  - 4 Elementary Schools, 10 Middle Schools, 1 K-8, 1 6-12, 2 High Schools
- National Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools
  - NYC/NYS
  - National and international adaptations

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## What is a Community School?

A community school is both a **place** and a **set of partnerships** between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities leads to **improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities.**

Coalition for Community Schools

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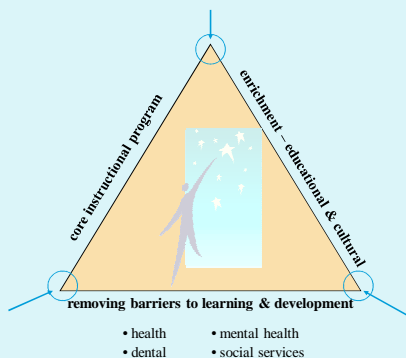
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## CAS Developmental Triangle



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### Commitment to Evaluation

- Evaluation build into our work from the very beginning <sup>LGI3</sup>
- Most recent evaluation confirmed many of our earlier findings and gave us new insights into working with middle school youth in after-school programs

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### What did we measure?

- Three-year evaluation of six Children’s Aid Society community middle schools’ after-school programming supported by 21<sup>st</sup> Community Learning Center funding
- Program’s impact on student achievement and positive youth development

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### Who did we serve?

- Primarily African-American and Latino children living in low-income communities in Upper Manhattan and the South Bronx. Many students are immigrants
- Children’s Aid currently serves 1,200 children in six 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs

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## Slide 7

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**LGI3** I'd say "Evaluation build in from very beginning" and the next bullet could read "Most recent ..." Leave out "the"

loretta, 2/11/2009

### Key Findings

- Results\*\* include (compared to non-participating children):
  - Increased academic achievement in reading and math
  - Improved interpersonal relationships with peers
  - Increased school attendance and engagement
  - Increased self-esteem
  - Increased motivation to learn
  - In most cases, the greater the level of participation, the stronger the outcomes

\*\*Data collected from standardized tests and student and teacher surveys

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### What makes The Children’s Aid approach distinctive?

- After-school programs are part of the Community Schools strategy – integrated, coordinated approach to all services provided in schools
- Commitment to program quality
- Stability amidst sweeping changes

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### Implications for Practice and Policy

- After-school programs seem to reach their maximum potential when located in schools with other support services
- Regular participation in effective after-school programs can lead to significant improvements in standardized reading and math test scores

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### Implications for Practice and Policy

- After-school programs can be targeted to a particular need, such as moving students to proficiency, or improving outcomes for the most remedial students
- Attention to factors that motivate youth to attend, and make them feel safe and trusting, are critical to learning

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### Implications for Practice and Policy

- Creative activities, sports, plays, youth councils, etc., contribute to concrete learning as well as to youth development outcomes such as getting along with peers, positive self-esteem, planning for the future
- Policies that provide effective means and resources for communication between school authorities, schools and program providers are essential for programs to work well

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### Mirabal Sisters Campus (MSC)

- Washington Heights section of Manhattan
- MSC has been a CAS Community School since 1994 (originally IS 90)
- Three middle schools on Campus
  - MS 319
  - MS 324
  - MS 383

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**Policy Implications**

- Enrichment is essential
  - Challenging, engaging, high quality
  
- Comprehensiveness is key
  - Importance of coordination and integration
  - Connection between core instructional program and after-school/other opportunities
  
- Partnerships are critical
  - Schools, parents/families, community-based organizations
  - Participation, Program Quality and Parent Engagement

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