

# Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

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## Community-Based Summer Learning Programs for School-Age Children: Research-to-Policy Resources

[Research](#) has demonstrated the substantial decline in proficiency in reading and mathematics during the summer months for children from low-income families and that these losses are cumulative from year to year. As [recently noted](#) by Rachel Schumacher, director of the Office of Child Care, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), access to high quality summer opportunities for learning during the summer is critical to avoiding loss of key academic skills acquired during the school year. While the exact number of children who are in community-based summer learning programs cannot be determined based on available [national data](#), analyses of the [2006 Survey of Income and Program Participation \(SIPP\)](#) indicate that school-age children from families living in poverty are substantially less likely to have these and enrichment learning opportunities. By funding the new [National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment](#), the Administration for Children and Families in DHHS has invested in training and technical assistance to a wide range of stakeholders – including Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies, statewide afterschool networks, state and local education agencies, child care resource and referral agencies, and out-of-school-time provider associations – with the goal of increasing low-income families’ access to high-quality summer learning experiences.

Summer learning experiences for school-age children can be provided in a variety of ways and settings, including summer school programs (often remedial), community-based programs (often a continuation of afterschool programs), and home-based programs (in which families are provided with information and resources to encourage reading, often run by libraries). [Research](#) has indicated that all three types of summer learning programs can have a positive impact on children’s retention of key skills when these programs are of high quality, recruit vulnerable children, and engage families in ensuring consistent attendance. Having an impact on a broad scale requires that policies and infrastructure, including funding, are in place to expand effective programs.



This **Research-to-Policy Resource List** compiles publications and documents published in 2010 and later on the following topics related to community-based summer learning programs for school-age children:

- Effective curricula, best practices and exemplary models
- State policy options

### **Research on Effective Curricula, Best Practices, and Exemplary Models**

Evaluations of the following summer learning programs have been conducted and the results published:

- [Building Educated Leaders for Life](#)
- [Electric Company Summer Learning Program](#)
- [Higher Achievement](#)
- [One City Summer Initiative](#)
- [Smarter Summers](#)
- [Summer & School Break Programs](#)

Summaries of effective program models are available in:

- [Getting to work on summer learning: Recommended practices for success](#)
- [Making summer count: How summer programs can boost children's learning](#)
- [Year-round learning: Linking school, afterschool, and summer learning to support student success](#)

### **Research on State Policy Options**

The [National Summer Learning Association](#) tracks state policy developments. Its most recent summary of key state bills affecting summer learning is the State of [Summer Learning 2015 State Policy Snapshot](#). The Association in consultation with the White House, the Department of Education, and Civic Nation developed a [guide](#) to potential funding sources for summer programs with examples of blended public-private financing strategies.

Research in three states – Massachusetts, Michigan, and Rhode Island – illustrate state initiatives to expand access and increase impact of summer programs:

- Massachusetts:
  - [Summer Literacy Collaborative](#)
  - [21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Summer Enhancement](#)
- Michigan:
  - [21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Summer Expansion](#)
- Rhode Island:
  - [Moving from Summer School to Summer Learning](#)

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