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*In the United Kingdom, out-of-school-hours learning (OSHL) is incorporated into education policy. This is the story of how demonstration projects, political lobbying, and funding combined with training, youth work, and schools to make such innovation mainstream “across the pond.”*

## 4

### Out-of-school-hours learning in the United Kingdom

*Ian Fordham*

IT IS 3:00 P.M. on the 14th of October, 2003, and I am in the House of Lords in Westminster, celebrating the merger of two successful not-for-profit organizations: Education Extra and the Community Education Development Centre (CEDC). This is a defining moment in the afterschool field in the United Kingdom. The momentous occasion offers an opportunity to take stock of the achievements of Education Extra, which for the past ten years has led national developments in what we call *out-of-school-hours learning* or what, in the United States, is called *out of-school time*.<sup>1</sup> In addition, this is a chance to reflect on where we are in England and in the rest of the United Kingdom in the development of the out-of-school-hours field. It is also a chance to look forward to a new

I am grateful to Kay Andrews for her permission to use extracts from her book, *Extra Learning: New Opportunities for the Out of School Hours*.

This chapter is dedicated to my father, Mike Fordham, and grandmother, Kathleen Fordham, who passed away in 2003.

organization called ContinYou, which has a broad and dynamic vision about what constitutes learning beyond the classroom. This chapter brings together these three key strands and sets them in the context of recent developments in the U.K. afterschool field. The chapter concludes with a view of the challenges and opportunities facing the United Kingdom in the future and lessons for the American afterschool field.

In 1992, Education Extra was founded by Michael Young, whose many achievements as a policymaker and social entrepreneur included single-handedly writing the post-1945 Labour Party manifesto and jump-starting more than fifty not-for-profit organizations such as the Open University<sup>2</sup> and the Consumers Association. What was then called Education Extra: The Foundation for Afterschool Activities had the mission of bringing after-school activities within the reach of every child, predominantly in response to the chronic lack of use of school buildings after 3:30 P.M. but also to the needs of young people who spend 85 percent of their time outside school hours. With just two staff in a small office in East London, the organization was led by Kay Andrews, who not only provided the creative, intellectual, and political leadership until 2001 but was the engineer of significant strides made in the out-of-school-hours movement in the United Kingdom.

In the early nineties, the birth of Education Extra was set against a widely held perception that after-school activities had declined.<sup>3</sup> This perception, underscored by the loss of playing fields and playgrounds and the proportion of mothers returning to work, saw increasing concern about what school-age children were doing outside school hours. At the same time, social and economic changes, such as long working hours and poor access to affordable child care for working families, began to intensify the conflict between the needs of parents and children at the end of the school day. For many families, finding care for the many "latchkey" children and keeping them safe and off the streets was a huge stimulus for developing after-school activities.

### *Out-of-school child care*

One early response to these mounting pressures came in the form of the Out-of-School Childcare Initiative, introduced in 1993 by the Conservative government to give grant support toward new after-school child care for school-age children. By mid-1996, 71,500 child-care places had been created, and 40 percent of parents had seen measurable improvements in their labor market provision.<sup>4</sup> To support this effort, the first child-care benefits were made available in 1994 to help with the costs of child care. Since then, the development of a National Childcare Strategy, aimed at establishing out-of-school clubs, with places for one million children, £300m (\$450 million) was made available by the incoming Labour government through funds from the national lottery<sup>5</sup> for out-of-school clubs. Between 1997 and 1999, child care was mapped in every local area, and plans were prepared detailing the proposed expansion of child care through local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCPs) at the local authority (municipal) level.

The National Childcare Strategy has undoubtedly made a huge difference to the profile of out-of-school child care. In 1997, there were 3,500 out-of-school clubs providing 115,000 places for children in England. In 2003, the number of clubs has increased to 7,000, offering over 240,000 out-of-school child-care places. Further advocacy led to national standards for out-of-school child-care clubs, including<sup>6</sup> "Aiming High," the nationally recognized quality assurance scheme for out-of-school child-care clubs and a range of support for the work of the Kids Clubs Network, the leading not-for-profit organization in the United Kingdom in the child-care field.<sup>7</sup> This advocacy also jump-started a government attempt to provide an integrated early-education child-care and health service for children in the most disadvantaged areas, called SureStart.<sup>8</sup> Another service was called Making Space, which included out-of-school clubs for older children, aged eleven to sixteen. Both programs demonstrate the blurring of the boundaries between care and learning.<sup>9</sup>

But despite the achievements and growth of the out-of-hours care field in the United Kingdom, the second response by government in the early nineties may prove even more significant. This response was characterized by a growing awareness on the government's part of new approaches to out-of-hours clubs and activities that emphasized the direct links to learning, the agendas of teachers and schools, and the holy grail of raised achievement.

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### *Out-of-school-hours learning: The early years*

Early work in 1993 for Education Extra was simply recognizing the valuable work teachers and other adults delivered outside school hours and helping schools do far more. In response, the first National Award for After School Activities was created, which enabled small grants to be made to schools ready to develop their activities and clubs and to take the next step. The first public act of recognition proved extremely popular, with hundreds of schools applying for an award, articulating the value and benefits of after-school activities, and joining the new National After School Network, set up to define and spread good ideas and good practice. By 1994, with about seven hundred schools in its national network, Education Extra started to engage in a range of research and development activities in what was increasingly being termed *out-of-school-hours learning* (OSHL for short). Our organization also wrote the first in a series of advice sheets called Extra Specials and set up a series of demonstration projects across the United Kingdom to show what could be done outside school.

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### *A manifesto for OSHL*

In 1997, three partners—Education Extra, CEDC, and the Kids Clubs Network—came together to present a joint manifesto calling for a national development strategy for OSHL. Ahead of this manifesto, a mixture of advocacy, diagnosis, prescription, and proof

of benefit, along with a growing body of innovative practice and a significant amount of lobbying by Kay Andrews, had already begun to make an impact on the three major political parties—Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal Party. The Liberals, supporting the joint manifesto from the three nonprofits, made its commitment clear when their leader, Paddy Ashdown, went on record saying,

The under-use of Britain's schools is a national scandal. Schools are still seen by too many as 8:30–3:30 P.M. . . . In the education revolution this country needs, our schools must become, instead, a resource for the whole community—centers for community learning—which, in partnership with others, offer a whole range of educational opportunities for all ages all through the year.

The Labour Party went into even greater detail:

After-school activities have been shown to have a crucial bearing not only on individual pupil achievement but on the overall ethos and success of a school. . . . We will . . . recommend that after-school activities be included in every school's development plan so that their contribution is clearly linked to the school's core objectives. . . . Rather than being seen as a peripheral add-on, such activities should be seen as core to a school's whole ethos and attainment. . . . I invite you all to join with us, to work towards making the vision of after-school activities in every school, and an after-school club in every community a reality.<sup>10</sup>

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### *Homework and high hopes*

The manifesto was well received. However, the immediate context and challenge for OSHL was meeting the growing call to improve the consistency and standard of homework as a way of raising pupils' overall achievement. There was widespread anxiety about the quality and consistency of homework and an increasing concern for the many children at the primary (elementary) and secondary (high school) levels who have no place to study, no family support to do so, and no resources. The influential Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), the government-run agency that

carries out formal inspections of schools, child-care settings, youth work provision, and initial teacher education at universities, then published a report, noting that only one-quarter of primary schools had a written policy on homework, that many of the policies were very recent, and that the average amount of homework set varied widely. OFSTED recommended that schools should have an agreed-upon, written homework policy in order to be fully effective and that senior management should ensure this policy was properly planned, clear, and closely monitored.

But what does this have to do with OSHL? The answer is that the OFSTED report led to a government study funded by the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE) that showed clear evidence of the link between successful schools and the amount of homework *and* extracurricular provision offered to children. Under the heading of "extracurricular," the report covered curriculum enrichment (traditional extracurricular activities such as sports, drama, chess, photography, and other clubs and societies), curriculum extension (study support opportunities provided before or after school or during the breaks in the school day, such as homework clubs, extra revision classes, and extra after-school tuition, whether undertaken voluntarily or as a result of teacher direction), and homework. This was the first systematic attempt to map the place of extracurricular activities as a whole against the characteristics of a successful school, as defined by OFSTED. The report concludes that "academic performance and high levels of participation in extracurricular provision go together" and evidence reveals

- An enormous range and depth of extracurricular provision
- A very high value placed on extracurricular provision by headteachers (principals) and schools
- A high value placed on extracurricular activities by pupils, with two-thirds of all pupils believing that curriculum extension and enrichment were important
- A positive correlation between the quality of a school, as reflected in an OFSTED inspection, and the provision of curriculum enrichment

- An element of good practice, for example, committed leadership, whole school policy, pupil involvement, and opportunities for self-study
- A clear link between the amount of homework done and the overall performance of the school<sup>11</sup>

Researchers went on to comment that despite the very wide range of benefits identified by the schools, it was surprising to find that only three of the fourteen headteachers had a formal policy for extracurricular provision, whereas two others said that there was reference to it in their school's development plan.

These findings were the stimulus for the government to then set up the first publicly funded after-school "homework" schemes, which placed OSHL higher up the education policy agenda. The twelve pilot projects, run by Education Extra, showed how many different ways could be found for providing homework learning support through activities outside school hours—from a primary school library and ICT (information communication technology) clubs, to secondary school "homework hotlines" and structured subject clubs for revision.<sup>12</sup> Each of these projects recorded significant gains in terms of students' participation, learning gains, positive attitudes toward school, and academic improvement.

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### *Raising achievement and "study support"*

In 1997, with the mantra, "Education, Education, Education," the new Labour Government came to power in England, led by Tony Blair. One of the first government white papers "off the stocks" was titled "Excellence in Schools" and contained an explicit promise that OSHL would be a prime agent for change, as a key way of addressing both disadvantage and underachievement. The paper signaled the intention of making provision for homework through after-school homework clubs but made it clear that OSHL activity was to have a key role in the national strategy to raise achievement: "We want all young people to have access to a range of activity in

addition to normal classroom teaching and learning designed to improve their achievement.<sup>13</sup>

This changing focus of linking out-of-hours activities directly to in-school achievement was a critical moment in the development of the afterschool movement and in Education Extra's work. However, the challenge still existed for the incoming government to give OSHL status, visibility, and a clear educational purpose. The government met this challenge first by asking Education Extra to pilot a series of Summer Literacy Schools, focused on literacy skills and reading development, through a range of out-of-hours enrichment activities in the summer holidays. The second way the government met this challenge was by reshaping and repositioning the term *OSHL* and calling it *study support*. Crucially, the term *study support* linked out-of-hours activities to in-school achievement and led immediately to the development of a National Framework for Study Support. This framework emphasized the voluntary and enriching nature of out-of-hours activities, while linking it explicitly to higher standards and formal education. In 1998, *Extending Opportunity*, a national framework for study support, was produced. Here, *study support* was defined as

activity outside normal lessons which young people take part in voluntarily. It is accordingly an inclusive term, embracing many activities, with many names and guises. Its purpose is to improve young people's motivation, build their self-esteem and help them to become more effective learners. Above all it aims to raise achievement.<sup>14</sup>

This document was the first national attempt to create a framework that would raise awareness of study support as a concept: define its language, purpose, and scope; extend its boundaries; set out agreed-upon principles of good practice, and emphasize the partnership prospects for study support as a whole. Its publication proved to be a crucial moment in establishing the difference between traditional extracurricular activities and what was now officially labeled *study support*.

The challenge was still there to convince headteachers that such a term would not stifle the creativity of what took place outside school hours. This barrier was overcome partly by the fact that

*study support* is an incredibly inclusive term, embracing many activities, with an emphasis not just on extension activities but on enrichment opportunities beyond the curriculum. The government also stated categorically that the purpose of these activities was to improve young people's motivation and build their self-esteem, in addition to raising their achievement levels. Finally, this groundbreaking document committed much-needed extra resources and funding into schools specifically targeted at developing and sustaining OSHL activities.

#### *Lottery and central government funding for OSHL*

The first dedicated source of funding for OSHL was generated uniquely from funds raised by a U.K.-wide national lottery. The distributor of funds for good causes such as education, health, and the environment is called the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), and the Out of School Hours Learning strand of its work has, to date, given over £225m (\$350 million) to OSHL clubs and activities linked to or run by schools.<sup>15</sup> NOF has had an enormous influence on policy and practice, too, as it emphasized in its guidance to potential grantees that partnerships between schools and outside partners must take place in order for grants to be made. This emphasis led, in turn, to the development of strategic officers at municipal levels to manage the NOF budget, to create partnerships between schools, arts, youth, and community organizations, and to disseminate good practice to schools. These officers were first networked by Education Extra in 1999 in a series of tri-annual regional officer meetings (ROMs for short), and today these meetings continue, with national policy and local issues being discussed and professional development opportunities provided. When I visited the United States in 2003, these notions of a lottery fund for OSHL and strategic OSHL officers stood out as useful concepts, particularly when applied or conceived of at a state level.

In 2000, funding for OSHL was increased with the introduction of a central government-delegated budget for study support activity through the Standards Fund (SF), which, until that time, had

been used solely for in-school purposes linked to the mainstream curriculum. In 1999 and 2000 in England, £30m (\$45 million) was provided, and £60m (\$80 million) per year since then, to fund schools' OSHL programs, with the government's articulated aim of "promoting and encouraging imaginative and effective programmes of study support in schools, in order to help raise achievement, improve young people's motivation, build their self-esteem and help them to become effective learners." The guidance for 2003–04 goes further, stating that the budget allocation may be used to develop provision by funding

- A coordinator for out-of-school-hours learning (for example, providing noncontact time or responsibility allowance)
- The building of links with partners, including other schools
- Training for staff and volunteers
- Materials and equipment
- Refreshments for pupils and helpers
- Transport for students
- Payment for providers<sup>16</sup>

Funding from other central government sources has undoubtedly been an essential lever to the success and growth of OSHL. But such funding also has been reinforced by a conceptual framework for OSHL activities, which Education Extra developed, to support teachers' and schools' collective understanding of how OSHL can support the curriculum and raise achievement.

### *The OSHL framework*

The national framework for a study support document, *Extending Opportunity*, sets out a very broad definition of OSHL, to include the following activities:

- Homework clubs
- Help with key skills, including literacy, numeracy, and ICT

- Study clubs linked to or extending curriculum subjects
- Sports, games, and adventurous outdoor activities
- Creative ventures (music, drama, dance, film, and the full range of arts)
- Residential events
- Space and support for coursework and exam revision
- Opportunities for volunteering in the school or community
- Opportunities to pursue particular interests
- Mentoring by adults or other pupils
- Learning about learning (thinking skills and accelerated learning)
- Community service (crime prevention, environmental clubs)

A key feature of the document being used at ground level, though, was the visual representation of these activities in a conceptual learning framework, which has defined school-linked out-of-school-hours learning at a national level in the United Kingdom for the past five years. Known affectionately as the "three circles," this framework includes three overlapping areas of OSHL activities:

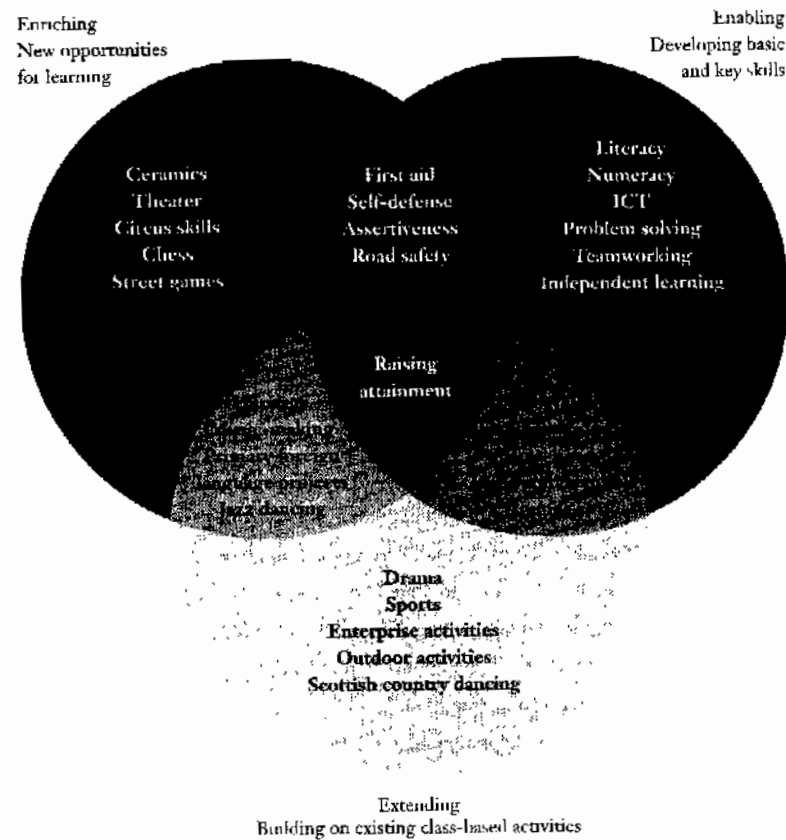
- Curriculum *extending* activities
- Curriculum *enriching* activities
- Curriculum *enabling* activities

Each of these areas suggests a different type of link with the curriculum and with raising achievement, as indicated in Figure 4.1.

Other influential models of classifying school and after-school learning links have been introduced by Noam and others,<sup>17</sup> as well as by Pittman and colleagues in Chapter Three, this issue. These efforts are part of the development of a lexicon and a classification system essential to any new field.

Curriculum *extending* activities extend what is possible during the school day in the delivery of the mainstream curriculum itself. They may include, for example,

- Homework clubs
- Study or revision activities
- Subject-based activities like the "horrible history" club

**Figure 4.1. The out-of-school-hours learning framework**

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Curriculum *enriching* activities are those that may never form part of the formal curriculum but are easily “attached” to it. They may include clubs or activities that encourage the development of a pupil’s own interests, for example,

- Rocket making or hovercraft building
- Arts activities like street theater, film making, juggling
- Street sports like skateboarding, in-line skating

Curriculum *enabling* activities enable young people to access the curriculum or develop life skills and can include

- Reading or literacy clubs
- Volunteering or community activities
- Team-work or problem-solving games and activities

The framework is widely accepted by schools across the United Kingdom as *the* model for learning outside the classroom. It reflects all U.K. governments’ aim to present both a broad and balanced curriculum and to meet the diverse learning needs of young people. Supporting learning in many spheres across the education sector, the framework also has been used by practitioners as a training tool to bridge the boundaries between what schools provide and what youth workers and child-care staff provide outside school hours.

This framework has established a clear link between the purpose and outcomes of OSHL activities and pupils’ learning within the classroom and has made possible, through school-level funding, the development of a new workforce of school-based OSHL coordinators (teaching and nonteaching staff) who coordinate and manage the development of the schools’ OSHL program. The framework also encourages teachers to make links between their area of the curriculum subjects and exciting learning opportunities outside school hours.

An indicator of the framework’s impact is that the language of extending, enriching, and enabling activities now forms an integral part of the written guidance given to government (OFSTED) inspectors who, as previously stated, inspect the quality and standards of teaching and learning in schools across England and Wales. In 2001, this guidance required inspectors to assess the extent to which the school provides enrichment, enabling, and extending activities outside school hours and, in more recent years, to comment on the breadth and range of the school’s OSHL program. This guidance has had far-reaching implications, as every school must now audit their after-school program and identify ways that it supports curriculum subjects and a range of different pupil needs. Further, in 2003 OFSTED introduced guidance about the inspection of the extended or “full-service” school, requiring reporting on the effectiveness of extended school services and



educational and support programs for parents, families, and members of the community.

The integration of the OSHL framework within the culture of raising achievement, inspection, and school improvement has been a significant success in the United Kingdom. This integration has even led to the positive development of teachers and other practitioners now viewing OSHL as a "built-in" rather than a "bolt-on"—part of the whole school curriculum and the drive to raise standards.

### *Longitudinal research report*

Finally, there has been the need from policymakers in the United Kingdom for research to supply a strong quantitative evidence base for the impact of OSHL on in-school achievement. This need prompted a DFEE-funded review of research into "study support," based on sixty-two projects and research studies dating from 1989 to 1999. Looking at evidence about OSHL in schools, this review also assessed the impact of young people's general participation in activities outside school hours on their range of achievements. The literature review included large-scale studies conducted in the United States, which had already examined the relationship between students' extracurricular participation and their progress in school.<sup>18,19,20,21</sup> The report concludes that "it was possible to state the research evidence has established a link between young people's participation in a range of activities outside school hours and a number of desirable outcomes, including improved attitudes to school, attendance and academic achievement."<sup>22</sup>

The research that had the greatest impact at a policy level, though, was commissioned again by the DFEE and resulted in the highly influential report by John MacBeath and colleagues called the *Impact of Study Support*.<sup>23</sup> In summary, the report describes the findings from a three-year longitudinal evaluation of the impact on pupils of participation in OSHL activities. The research team looked at the impact of study support activities in fifty-one secondary schools and information collected on some eight thousand pupils. Their research investigated pupil and teacher perceptions, attitudes, relationships between teachers and pupils, participation

rates, pupil attendance, and learning outcomes. Further data about qualitative aspects of OSHL was collected from another eighty-five schools from a wide range of geographical areas of the United Kingdom, in urban and rural areas.

The research showed firm evidence that

- Pupils who participate in study support do better than would have been predicted from baseline measures in academic attainment, attitudes to school, and attendance at school than students who do not participate.
- Effects are large—an average of three and one-half grades at the General Certificate for Secondary Education (GCSE) level (five or more subjects passed at GCSE grades A–C is broadly equivalent to the high school diploma).
- Study support appears especially effective for students from minority ethnic communities and, to a lesser extent, for students eligible for free school meals (the percentage of pupils in a school who have free school meals is the main indicator of deprivation in U.K. schools).
- The effects are cumulative—the more a student takes part, the greater the effect.
- The effects are incremental—participation for one year affects attainment, attitude, and attendance in subsequent years.
- The effects are widespread—not only subject-exam-based programs but also sport and aesthetic activities influence attainment, attitude, and attendance.

Other useful findings relate to what young people like about OSHL, which in turn contributes to the effectiveness of OSHL activities. These findings show that the young people questioned liked OSHL because

- It was voluntary.
- It was learner-centered.
- Students (and teachers) experienced a greater sense of control.
- There was a more relaxed and informal relationship between teachers and students.



- It provided a sociable learning environment.
- It fostered independent learning.
- There was a range of resources for learning.
- There was an ethos of achievement.

Perhaps the most significant value of the research was that it had made the case to government, ministers, and policymakers that OSHL had a measurable effect on pupil attainment. It also made an effective enough political case to government officials for them to commit substantially more financial resources to OSHL, both through mainstream sources directly into school budgets and through strands of other mainstream policies to raise achievement.

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### *OSHL in the Excellence in Cities program*

One such policy has been the Excellence in Cities (EIC) program, which aims, through a combination of initiatives, "to raise the aspirations and achievements of pupils and to tackle disaffection, social exclusion, truancy and indiscipline and improve parents' confidence in English cities."<sup>24</sup> The seven key strands of the program are

1. Learning mentors
2. Learning support units
3. City learning centers
4. Beacon schools
5. Specialist schools
6. EIC action zones
7. Extended opportunities for gifted and talented pupils

These strands are now having a significant effect on education in the fifty-eight most disadvantaged areas in the country. Critically, all of these strands have OSHL programs built into them, and a major evaluative report completed by OFSTED concluded recently that

Excellence in Cities programs are making an important difference to schools in disadvantaged areas. They are providing pupils with a broader range of opportunities and helping to raise their aspirations, confidence and self-esteem. The programs are helping schools and teachers to meet the needs of disaffected and vulnerable pupils more effectively. The number of exclusions is being reduced and attendance is improving at a faster rate in the schools benefiting from this funding than in the nation as a whole. The effect of the programs on achievement is more variable. Overall, it is strongest in primary schools, where the standards of English and mathematics among 7 and 11 year olds are rising at a faster rate than in all schools nationally.<sup>25</sup>

The cumulative effect of the good practice evidence, lobbying, funding, and finally, research had won us the war (or at least the battle) to make OSHL central to the government's education agenda, to the extent that the former Secretary of State for Education, Estelle Morris said,

We are beginning to learn that it isn't just about knowing that out-of-school-hours learning matters; it actually has a hugely positive and conscious link back into what goes on in mainstream classrooms. In my mind, I had moved from a compensatory education model to realizing that a vision of education and a vision of educational achievement meant that out-of-school-hours activities could be at the core of learning. It's an inseparable part of what actually goes on during the school day. And because we know that out-of-school learning works, we could have a different vision of what schools might be and we could define learning in a way that we had not been able to do before.<sup>26</sup>

But on the ground, we had still to win the hearts and minds of schools. Three significant areas of work have attempted to address this specific issue. A discussion of each area follows.

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### *Case study 1: Training and professional development*

The growth of OSHL in the United Kingdom has led to the development of new structures and roles and to resulting training and professional development needs. As Education Extra and now

ContinYou, we have been involved with other national partner organizations in the development of a set of national training and professional development materials, which include

- Codes of Practice for out-of-school-hours learning for primary schools, secondary schools, and public libraries in England and Scotland, plus separate Codes of Practice for schools in Scotland, Wales,<sup>27</sup> and Northern Ireland
- The Study Support Toolkit<sup>28</sup>
- A Briefing Pack for local authority officers, including an outline of national policy developments, good practice resources, and structures of how to manage OSHL at a strategic level
- A Trainer's Pack for local government officers and freelance trainers, including resource sheets, sample agendas, and ideas for training activities that are run locally or with the support of national organizations
- *Introductory Guide for Primary Headteachers* and *Introductory Guide for Secondary Headteachers*—two guides for headteachers, including a pithy guide to the principles of OSIL, funding sources, key resources, and audio case studies on disk
- *Making It Work in Schools*—for teachers and school-based OSHL coordinators, including practical resources developed by other schools to help set up, run, and develop OSHL programs

In a high-turnover field, these materials have provided a useful starting point for staff to engage in the key issues of setting up, developing, and managing an after-school program. But they have also been supported by a government-funded national training program (2000–2002) called Building Effective Study Support, which has provided over forty regional events, focusing on issues such as health and safety in OSHL, innovative approaches to learning in OSHL, and quality assurance, designed to enhance the skills of teachers and staff within schools and in after-school organizations. In December 2003, this program has been relaunched to become the Study Support Quality Development Program. By 2005, this new program will provide 150 local authorities (equivalent in size

to school districts) with two days' consultancy support to strategically plan out and embed OSHL within their existing strategies for school improvement. Finally, ContinYou has been involved recently in producing a *mapping report* of all accredited and nonaccredited training opportunities available for staff involved in the delivery of after-school programs and in developing the ECHO network, which is a program to train students within initial teacher-training courses at universities and colleges across the United Kingdom.<sup>29</sup>

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### *Case study 2: Youth work practice, training, and accreditation*

Across the United Kingdom, there are a significant number of youth workers supporting young people in after-school settings with their personal and skills development and enhancing their self-worth, confidence, creativity, and enterprise. Either employed by the local government (statutory youth work) or through not-for-profit organizations (voluntary youth work), these individuals are particularly well placed to work in partnership with schools to deliver a broad range of OSHL activities. Three examples of this work in practice are (1) a homework club, (2) a peer education training project, and (3) a summer school project.

#### *A homework club*

A homework club is running at Warwick Youth Centre in Waltham Forest, London, where the young people who attend are from the school on the same site. The purpose of the club—to improve young people's achievement—was established in discussions between the school and the youth service. Weekly sessions are held in which young people are supported in completing homework and other school tasks and have opportunities to discuss and work through other personal and emotional issues. Initial evaluation suggests that there has been an improvement both in examination scores and in attitudes to schooling.

### *A peer-education project*

A peer-education training project was undertaken by five sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds in the Wirral, near Liverpool, where Emotional Literacy, Motivation, and Aspiration programs are made available to young people in local community centers. After initial training, the peer educators here identified a need for Saturday provision for young people aged thirteen to nineteen, and funding was secured to run a Saturday social club, by young people for young people. Of the five young people who took part, two are now at university studying to be youth and community workers, one is a peer-education trainer for a local community center, and two are currently involved in delivering peer-education projects in local schools.

### *A summer program*

Haringey (statutory) Youth Services, Youth Action Team in London have been running a successful summer school project specifically designed to initiate a smooth transition of students from primary to secondary school. A team of experienced qualified youth and community workers, teachers, counselors, and sports leaders work with students in small groups to assist in personal development. Activities include drama, arts and crafts, music, core subjects, and sports, and provide an opportunity for subject teachers and headteachers to work as part of a multidisciplinary team, using different teaching methods and classroom management techniques. With the consent of parents, individual reports are written about pupils who appear to have special educational needs. These reports are then forwarded to the host school—or in special circumstances to a referral agency (behavioral support) that has referred the pupil to the Youth Action Summer School project. Results have included less truancy in year 7, special needs identified at an earlier stage, and closer pupil relationships with subject teachers. In addition to this, the pupils themselves are able to build support systems, share skills, and work in a multiagency setting.

This partnership approach to the delivery of OSHL programs by teachers and youth workers has been strengthened even further with the advent of Connexions—a government program in En-

gland that attempts to provide a one-stop advice and support service for young people, with access to personal development opportunities and guidance to help them make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. In schools, this has meant teams of youth workers, personal advisers, and teachers working alongside one another to offer

- Practical help with pupils choosing the right courses and careers
- Access to a broad range of personal development opportunities, for example, sports, performing arts, and volunteering activities
- Help and advice on issues like drug abuse, sexual health, and homelessness

Because many of these activities can only be delivered outside the curriculum, this approach offers significant potential for the growth of a school's OSHL program, as well as for interstaff bridging and cooperation to occur. Tensions do exist between teaching and youth work staff, particularly in relation to the assessment of these activities, the balance between formal and informal learning, and the style in which such activities are delivered. But this has been helped, in part, because youth work is a profession in the United Kingdom, with trained staff at diploma, undergraduate, postgraduate, and master's levels in youth and community work.<sup>10</sup> This approach also has allowed for professional dialogue about the shared outcomes of after-school programs, about how these programs can support teachers in and outside the classroom, and how their knowledge and experience of young people out of school can inform whole-school planning. Further, a national working group (set up by the government and the National Youth Agency in 2000 with a brief to improve and extend the contribution of youth work and OSHL) also has bridged the barriers between the teaching and youth work professions. The documents produced were an innovative example of cross-sector collaboration and resulted in

- A *mapping report*, determining the extent and range of study support activities run by or in partnership with youth services. The

report found over two hundred programs, broken down into seven main types of activity—homework clubs, personal development, ICT initiatives, exclusion, transition, and basic skills (particularly literacy and numeracy), and low-achievement initiatives<sup>31</sup>

- A detailed *evaluative study* of ten youth work and OSHL initiatives
- A Code of Practice for youth work and study support,<sup>32</sup> with extensive examples of good practice, methods, and structures that schools, youth clubs, and youth services could use to develop OSHL programs and improve their practice

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### *Case study 3: Extended full-service schools—bridges to the community*

During the past four years, the U.K. government has launched policies to promote the concept of *full-service* schools, drawing heavily on principles and practices developed in the United States. OSHL is clearly identified and embedded within each policy, and OSHL is commonly described by policymakers and practitioners as the first step for many schools on the road to full-service schooling.

In Scotland, the policy is well established, and the Scottish Executive is currently committing £30.6m (\$45 million) to support the rollout of the “Integrated Community School” approach across all schools in Scotland. In Wales, a “Community Focused Schools” consultation paper ended in June 2003, and views are currently being canvassed on proposed new guidance for schools and their key partners on how they can develop and provide community-focused services and activities. In England, the Extended Schools policy was officially launched in March 2003, with funding of £52.2m (\$75 million) to develop 240 Extended “Full Service” schools by 2006. ContinYou has been contracted by the government to provide a technical support service for the schools, which raises the real possibility of a bridge and further connectivity between after-school

practices and a wider, more community-focused strategy. This strategy also serves as a useful marker for the U.S. afterschool field, as the policies in the United Kingdom begin to provide a coherent progression route for schools in developing their extended activities, programs, and approaches.

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### *Where are we now?*

In 2003, the status of OSHL in the United Kingdom has never been higher. But the emphasis is changing in England and in the three other U.K. countries, each of which have their own devolved governments, departments of education, and approaches toward OSHL. In Wales, for example, the national education policy document titled “The Learning Country” states boldly,

We want to see families supported during and outside the school day. Where this requires childcare, there is a strong case for schools having the legislative powers to provide it if they choose. With careful management and the responsible involvement of professional staff, this could also extend the life of the school to embrace breakfast clubs and a wide range of out-of-school-hours, cultural, and sporting activities. We believe that there should be a prospectus of such activities for every child at school in Wales by 2010, possibly incentive- or credit-based, covering the vacation period also.<sup>33</sup>

And Northern Ireland’s Programme for Government states, “To improve standards, we will continue to increase pre-school provision and maintain programmes of support for under-achieving schools, small primary schools and for increased out-of-school learning opportunities.”<sup>34</sup>

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### *OSHL as a vehicle and a mainstream tool for school improvement*

There are two other interesting trends, emanating from within the English government: first is an attempt to embed OSHL within a range of policies in “noneducational” government departments

such as the Home Office (responsible for Crime and Youth Justice) and the Department of Health. OSIL is therefore seen as a *vehicle* for delivering other policies, with policymakers noting, in particular, the freedoms and flexibilities there are within this creative time and space beyond school hours. One example of this recognition is a recent cross-government contract given to ContinYou to deliver the Food in Schools program, which aims to bring together all food-related initiatives in a whole-school approach for improving the nutrition and diet of children. The government recognizes that such a policy cannot be delivered within the confines of the in-school curriculum and hence is running two strands of the initiative: (1) Healthy Breakfast Clubs, which links to a wider national breakfast club program, run by ContinYou, in partnership with Kellogg U.K., and (2) a series of out-of-school-hours Cookery Clubs, both of which meet their outcomes and policy needs.

Second, there is a new and explicit strategy coming from government officials to embed study support within mainstream school improvement strategies. In a communication with chief education officers in December 2003, these officials suggested, for example, that the Department for Education and Skills (formerly DFFE) aims for

- All schools to offer relevant study support opportunities to every pupil at appropriate points in their school career, targeting particularly those who will benefit most
- Study support provision to be of consistently high quality, offering a sufficient range of activities to meet pupils' varying needs at different points in their school life
- Study support to be clearly linked with classroom learning, with learning that takes place beyond the classroom, where appropriate, and with identified school priorities for raising achievement
- Study support to be focused on pupils' attainment, achievement, motivation, behavior, and enrichment

The role of ContinYou therefore shifts away from demonstration and proof of benefit to giving specific grassroots and strategic exam-

ples of how OSHL activities, materials, models, and approaches can raise achievement in schools within such contexts as

- The National Primary Strategy, which sets out the government's vision for the future of primary education (ages five through eleven)
- The Key Stage 3 National Strategy, which sets out the government's vision for the future of the curriculum for pupils aged eleven to fourteen
- The Fourteen-to-Nineteen Strategy, which sets out the government's vision for the future of compulsory (fourteen to sixteen) education and postcompulsory education (sixteen to nineteen), including basic skills, academic skills, and vocational education.

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### *Challenges and opportunities*

There is an inherent danger in these moves, because they can be perceived as either the fragmentation of OSIL or linking OSIL too closely to academic achievement. In practice, however, such changes are being welcomed, for two reasons: (1) because OSIL in the United Kingdom has always linked directly to the raising-achievement agenda, and this has not led to any reduction in innovation or scale of provision or in a backlash from schools, and (2) because all U.K. governments still retain a strong commitment to OSIL, as evidenced by a recent announcement in England to continue funding for strategic officers and schools for the next three years. Local governments have welcomed the way OSIL is being embedded, as it complements their own work in (1) raising standards through the mainstream school improvement strategies identified earlier, and (2) moving away from local education authorities and chief education officers (equivalent to school districts and superintendents) to managing schools through an integrated "children, schools and families" service.<sup>35</sup> Finally, there is an equally strong argument that instead of diluting OSIL, these new approaches add to the potency of the afterschool field and raise the profile of the policy at school, local, and national levels

and across government departments. Arguably, this has not only ensured the sustainability and longevity of the policy in the United Kingdom, it has broadened the funding base for school-linked OSHL programs, which are now able to draw on more diverse funds for their OSHL activities.

There is also a benefit from the impact of high-profile OSHL initiatives, such as *Playing for Success* (PFS), which the English Department for Education and Skills (DFES) has developed. By placing underachieving pupils in inner-city areas in out-of-school study support clubs based in top football (soccer) clubs and at other sports' clubs grounds and venues, PFS has also noted significant improvement in these students' basic skills and achievement. Such initiatives also offer outstanding examples of bridging between the after-school and in-school curriculum, highlighted in the most recent evaluative research report on PFS, which states:

The 58 "Study Support" Centres took over 18,500 pupils from 1103 schools during 2001-2 and on average, the young people who participated made significant progress in basic skills. This was particularly evident in ICT and numeracy, where . . . on average, primary pupils improved their numeracy scores by about 17 months and secondary pupils by about 24 months.<sup>46</sup>

This model of a national program of OSHL centers within major sporting venues is also one that could have currency in the U.S. afterschool field.

Finally, *ContinYou*, as an organization, is reinventing or reimagining OSHL and fitting it into a twenty-first-century context where learning and the will to learn are increasingly seen as constituting important social passports. Drawing on the experience of our out-of-hours network of ten thousand schools (the largest in the United Kingdom), we are seeing active links being created between OSHL and health improvement, OSHL and economic regeneration, and OSHL and lifelong learning. We are integrating OSHL within the broader vision of the full-service extended school. In these ways, *ContinYou* is fulfilling the new vision, not of after-school opportunities for every child but of building strong healthy communities, supportive families, and confident individuals who encourage people of *all* ages and backgrounds to take an interest in learning.

### Conclusion

All these developments have provided a fertile ground for the expansion of OSHL, and some may generate ideas for structures, advocacy, or policy development in the U.S. afterschool movement. Out-of-school-hours learning is undoubtedly gaining momentum in the United Kingdom, but critically, the field also continues to reinvent itself in light of new government policies. In September 2003, for example, a landmark government report was published titled "Every Child Matters," which highlights a range of policies to protect vulnerable children and young people. It is a sign of the times that one key strand of this policy is to "promote full service extended schools which are open beyond school hours to provide breakfast clubs and after-school clubs and childcare, and have health and social care support services on site."<sup>37</sup>

In October 2003, I presented a paper at the Harvard Graduate School of Education "Learning with Excitement" conference,<sup>38</sup> which raised the following questions from Kay Andrews, the founder of Education Extra and architect of the U.K. afterschool movement:

- How far should we as policymakers and afterschool practitioners go to have to make the case concerning bridging after-school programs to in-school achievement and pupil's learning?
- How do we reconcile the tension between wanting to place OSHL within the framework of raising standards without diminishing the value of engaging young people in creative activity?
- How do we broaden the definition of achievement and ensure that this breadth has validity and respect among educators, parents, and employers alike?
- How do we measure and quantify the spectrum of outcomes and benefits of OSHL?
- How do we devise the structures, process, and methodologies of OSHL, other than by cloning a few really brilliant practitioners, both within classrooms and outside the curriculum?

At the conference, I also identified a number of challenges, encapsulated neatly by the former secretary of state for education,



Estelle Morris, who set afterschool leaders and practitioners in the United Kingdom the following challenges for the next ten years, which I feel apply equally to the U.S. afterschool field:

1. *Demonstrate what works.* There's a danger in the area of afterschool, where there's a "niceness" to what you do. You're not in an area of work, which is usually contentious. You've got a lot of goodwill on your side, but there's a responsibility that comes with that goodwill, and I think that it is to be very, very hardheaded and hard-edged about evaluation and what works. And that does sometimes mean being brave enough to close things, which aren't working and expand things, which are.

2. *Collect information all the time: Know why it works and what its consequences are.* Some of the figures for measurable and not-so-measurable outcomes for OSHL are very impressive. So measure, measure the effect of what you're doing on educational performance. That way you will use your time well, but we also need you to do this in order to secure the funding to keep you going. It's got to be as hardheaded as that.

3. *A challenge to really be leaders in creating a country that is committed to learning.* For every single citizen, no matter what they get paid to do, no matter what their day job is, we want them to say, "I'm an educator as well." That's my dream for our country. That's when you stop people and you say, "What do you do?" and they tell you two things. They tell you the job that pays them and they tell you that what they do contributes to the education service in this country, whether it's as a parent, or through involvement with the school, or through out-of-school learning activities. And I don't think that we'll achieve our ambitions until we get that. If you can play your part in making this country one that is truly committed to learning and one where every citizen accepts their obligation to be an educator, then I think that you will have changed the world.<sup>39</sup>

But to conclude, I have also reflected on the illuminating discussions with colleagues in the United States and distilled the following list of lessons, which, I believe, have been key levers to success and which may stimulate debate in the U.S. afterschool field.

#### *Ten lessons for the U.S. afterschool field*

1. Develop a common vocabulary for OSHL, clearly linking to raising achievement but flexible enough to include enrichment activities.
2. Draw up a manifesto for OSFIL and the adoption of a national framework for OSHL.
3. Commission longitudinal research, which makes the case to government about the impact of OSHL.
4. Create a strand of national lottery funding specifically for OSHL activities.
5. Develop a network of strategic officers for OSHL at regional and local levels.
6. Jump-start a government-funded national training program for OSHL.
7. Enable youth worker accreditation and professional development.
8. Create a national OSHL membership network for schools and other organizations.
9. Embed OSHL as a vehicle to deliver key parts of government and statewide initiatives and agendas and in mainstream strategies for school improvement.
10. Develop international links and collaboration with ContinYou across the pond!

#### *Notes*

1. The U.S. afterschool field shares similar divisions to those in the United Kingdom. However, there are differences in terminology, which are outlined here:

##### *United States*

Out-of-school time, extended, or enrichment activities  
Youth development  
School-age child care

##### *United Kingdom*

Out-of-school-hours learning or study support  
Youth work  
Out-of-school child care

2. The Open University is the United Kingdom's largest university, with over 200,000 students studying predominantly through distance education and on-line learning. For more information see <http://www.open.ac.uk/>.

3. For evidence of the decline in after-school activities, see Education Extra, (1996), *Capital gains*, London: Education Extra.

4. Department for Education and Employment (1996). *Work and family. Ideas and options for childcare*. A consultation document, p. 12.



5. For details about the national-lottery-funded New Opportunities Fund for out-of-school-hours child care (England only), see <http://www.nof.org.uk/default.aspx?tc=88&tct=2>.
6. For details about the national standards for out-of-school-hours child care clubs, see [http://www.surestart.gov.uk/\\_doc/index.cfm?document=154](http://www.surestart.gov.uk/_doc/index.cfm?document=154).
7. For more details about out-of-school-hours child care, see the Kids Clubs Network Web site: <http://www.kidsclubs.org.uk>.
8. SureStart is a national program run by the Department for Education and Skills and brings together early education, child care, health, and family support to give a sure start to young children living in disadvantaged areas. It covers children from conception to age fourteen, including those with special educational needs, and up to age sixteen for those with disabilities. It brings together free early education, more and better child care, child tax credit, Children's Centres, and ongoing support for Sure Start local programs. For more details, see <http://www.surestart.gov.uk>.
9. Making Space is a £2.5m (\$3.7 million) national program funded by Nestlé and run by Kids Clubs Network. Focused on eleven- to sixteen-year-olds, Making Space clubs provide social opportunities, activities, and development, including chill-out and quiet spaces in a safe environment. For more details, see <http://www.makespace.org.uk/>.
10. Extracts from a speech by David Blunkett (secretary of state for education) to the Kids Clubs Network Annual Conference, 1997.
11. Barber, M., & colleagues. (1997). *School performance and extracurricular provision*. London: Department for Education and Employment.
12. Education Extra. (1997). *Succeeding at study support*. London: Education Extra.
13. Department for Education and Employment. (1997). *Excellence in schools*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
14. Department for Education and Employment. (1998). *Extending opportunity: A national framework for study support*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
15. The New Opportunities Fund (NOF) Out of School Hours Learning Activities lottery-funding stream has now closed, and guidance information is no longer available. Two useful documents on the program can be found at NOF (2002) Achievements and Challenges in developing out-of-school-hours learning at [www.nof.org.uk/documents/live/825p\\_OOSL\\_achievements.pdf](http://www.nof.org.uk/documents/live/825p_OOSL_achievements.pdf) and in an upcoming National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) report: "Evaluation of Out of School Hours Learning Programme" (2004) at [http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research/current\\_projectemp.asp?theID=NOF&RefNo=NOF](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research/current_projectemp.asp?theID=NOF&RefNo=NOF).
16. The "study support" section of the Standards Fund guidance can be found under the heading, "206: Study Support" at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/standardsfund/SFCircular2003-2004.htm>.
17. Noam, G., Biancarosa, G., & Dechausay, N. (2002). *Afterschool Education: Approaches to an Emerging Field*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Publishing Group.
18. Camp, W. G. (1990). Participation in student activities and achievement: A covariance structural analysis. *Journal of Educational Research*, 83(5), 272-278.

19. Marsh, H. W. (1992). Extracurricular activities: Beneficial extension of the traditional curriculum or subversion of academic goals? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84(4), 553-562.
20. Brown, B. B., & Steinberg, L. (1991). *Noninstructional influences on adolescent engagement and achievement*. Final report: Project 2 (ED340641). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, National Center on Effective Secondary Schools.
21. Posner, J. K., & Vandell, D. L. (1994). Low-income children's after-school care: Are there beneficial effects of after-school programs? *Child Development*, 65, 440-456.
22. National Foundation for Educational Research. (1999). *The benefits of study support: A review of opinion and research*. Research Report RR110. London: Department for Education and Employment.
23. Macbeath, J., & colleagues. (2001). *The impact of study support: A report of a longitudinal study into the impact of participation in out-of-hours learning on the academic attainment, attitudes, and school attendance of secondary school students*. DfEE Research Report RR273. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
24. Department for Education and Employment. (1999). *Excellence in Cities*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
25. Office for Standards in Education. (2003). *Excellence in Cities and education action zones: Management and impact HMI 1399*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
26. An extract from a speech by Estelle Morris, Education Extra Annual Conference, June 2002. For the conference report and a full transcript of the speech, see <http://www.educationextra.org.uk/publications/downloads/confreport.pdf>.
27. Welsh Assembly Government. (2002). *The Code of Practice for out of school hours learning in Wales*. Cardiff: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. For more details, see [http://www.educationextra.org.uk/publications/download/WelshCode\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.educationextra.org.uk/publications/download/WelshCode(Eng).pdf).
28. For more details about the Study Support Tool Kit, see <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport/docs/>.
29. For more details about the ECHO network, which was set up to promote good practice in integrating OSHL in initial teacher education and other university courses, see the ContinYou Web site: <http://www.echo-network.org.uk>.
30. For more details about accredited courses for youth workers at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, go to the following link under the heading "Professional Programmes": <http://www.nya.org.uk/templates/internal.asp?NodeID=89816&ParentNodeID=89721>.
31. National Youth Agency. (2000). *Study support: The youth work contribution—setting the scene*. Leicester: Author.
32. National Youth Agency. (2001). *Code of Practice for youth work and study support*. London: Department for Education and Skills. For a copy of this document see <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport/docs/youthwk>.
33. Welsh Assembly Government. (2001). *The learning country: A comprehensive education and lifelong learning programme to 2010 in Wales*. Cardiff: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

34. Northern Ireland Executive. (2001). *Programme for government: Making a difference 2002–2005*, p. 35. Belfast: Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

35. For an example of integrated children's services, see Hertfordshire County Council at <http://www.hertsdirect.org/hcc/csi/about/whatiscsf>.

36. NFER. (2003). *Playing for success: An evaluation of the fourth year*. Research Report RR402. London: Department for Education and Skills.

37. Department for Education and Skills. (2003). *Every child matters*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

38. The paper "Bridging Learning Across the Pond" was presented at the Harvard "Learning with Excitement" conference on 3 October 2003. A copy of this paper can be downloaded at [www.gse.harvard.edu/~afterschool/](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~afterschool/).

39. An extract from a speech by Estelle Morris (see Note 25).

### **Resources (key books)**

1. Andrews, K. (2001). *Extra learning: New opportunities for the out of school hours*. London: Kogan Page.

2. Barber, M. (1997). *The learning game: Arguments for an educational revolution*. London: Indigo Press.

3. Bentley, T. (1998). *Learning beyond the classroom: Education for a changing world*. London: Routledge Falmer.

4. Gelsthorpe, T., & Burnham, J. W. (Eds.). (2003). *Educational leadership and the community: Strategies for school improvement through community engagement*. London: Pearson Education.

5. Noam, G. G., Biancarosa, G., & Dechausay, N. (2002). *Afterschool education: Approaches to an emerging field*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

### **Resources (key Web sites)**

1. ContinYou: <http://www.continyou.org.uk>

2. Department for Education and Skills study support Web site: <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport>

3. Department for Education and Skills, extended schools Web site: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools>

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