

BOSTON TEEN SURVEY

Created by Boston After School & Beyond
 October 2009

Highlights

- **40%** of respondents **participated in an afterschool** program and **34%** participated in a summer program.
- The **need to work** was the most common reason teens did not participate in afterschool and summer programs. Teens also stated they did not participate because they **did not find any programs of interest**.
- Teens are motivated to participate in programs so they can **learn new skills, prepare for college and make career connections**.
- Teens were most interested in participating in **paid employment opportunities**.
- The **internet, guidance counselors, friends, and teachers** are the most common ways teens learn about opportunities. This suggests the importance of providing schools and key school staff with information about what is available for students.

In the summer of 2009, Boston After School & Beyond worked with two teen interns to design and implement a survey of teens and older youth across Boston. The purpose of the survey was to get a sense of teen participation in after school and summer programs, their motivations and reasons for participating, and their interest, in both after school and summer programs.

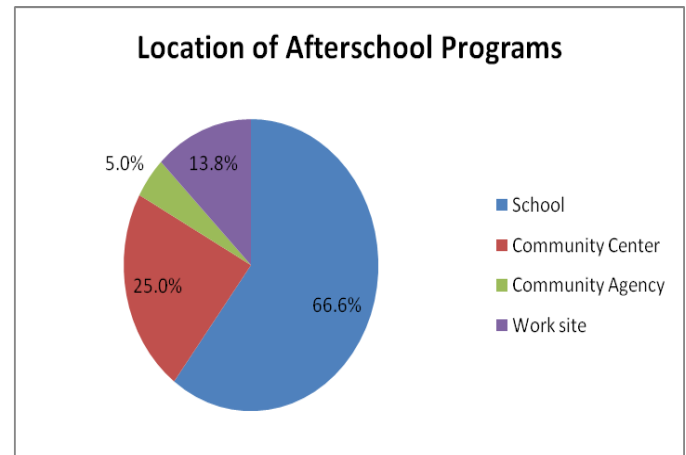
Respondent Demographics

A total of 90 teens responded to the survey. Thirty percent of respondents identified themselves as age 19 or older, while 70% were between the ages of 13 and 18. More than half of the respondents were male (57%) while 43% were female. The majority of the teens (61%) identified their race/ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino.

Forty-three percent of the respondents indicated that they will be returning to school in the fall at a variety of Boston Public Schools. The respondents hailed from neighborhoods throughout Boston, with Dorchester (14%), Roslindale (14%), and Hyde Park (13%) represented most frequently.

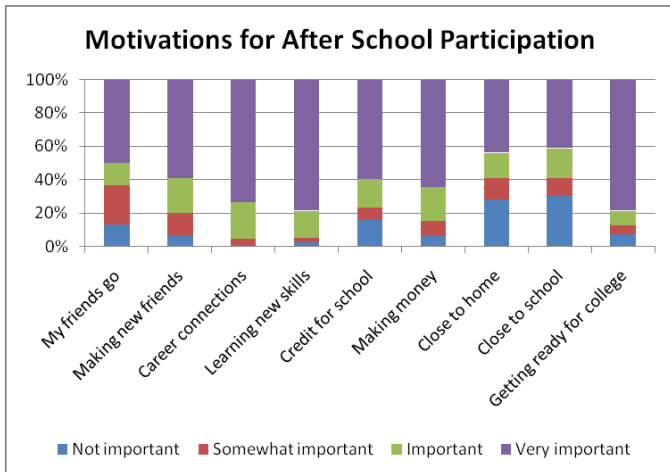
After school Participation

Forty percent of respondents said that they participated in an afterschool program during the last school year. The majority of these programs took place in a school.

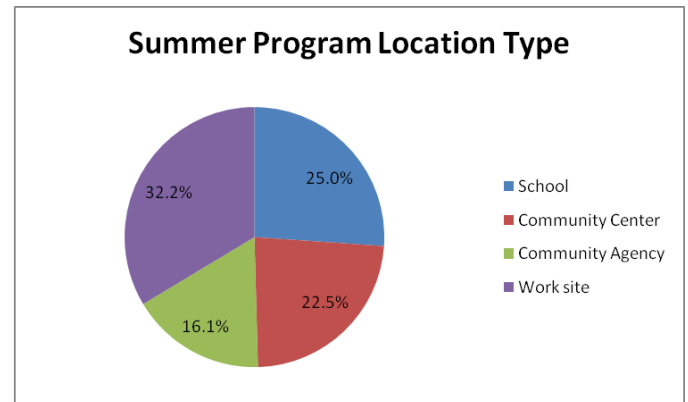


Those who stated they did not participate in an afterschool program were asked to indicate why they did not participate. The most common reason for not participating in an after school program was that teens had to work (26.7%). Eighteen percent of these teens also stated they did not participate because they did not find any programs of interest.

Teens were asked to rate the importance of a variety of factors which might motivate them to participate in a program. Learning new skills and getting ready for college were ranked with the most importance, followed closely by making career connections. A program's proximity to the teens' school or home was of least importance to influence their participation.

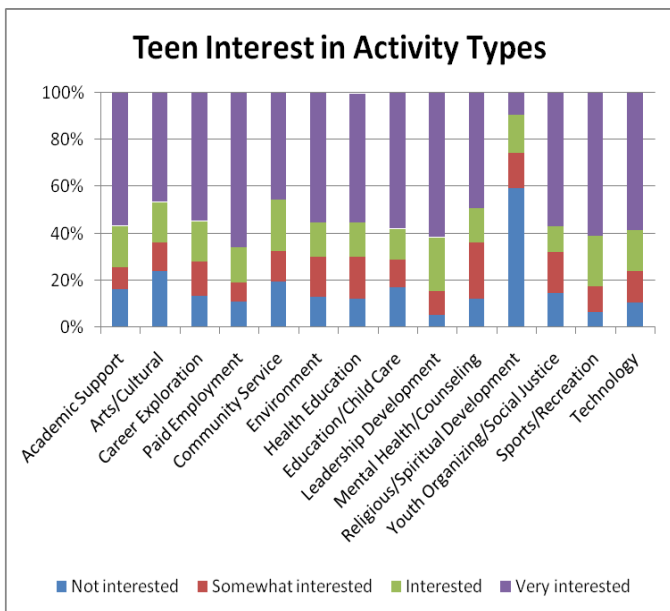


fairly evenly dispersed among the location types. Work sites represented a higher percentage with 32%.



To gain a sense of the types of after school programs in which teens would like to participate, they were asked to rate their interest in a variety of program activity types. Sixty-six percent of the teens expressed being very interested in paid employment opportunities, while 60% said they were not interested in programs dealing with religious/spiritual development. Between 40% and 60% of the respondents expressed that they were very interested in all of the other activity types presented.

As with after school programs, the need to work was the main reason teens did not participate in summer programs. The motivations for participating in summer programs were also very similar to those cited for participating in after school programs, the most important being making career connections, getting ready for college and learning new skills. Interest in summer activity types was also similar to after school, though interest in paid employment was somewhat higher for the summer.

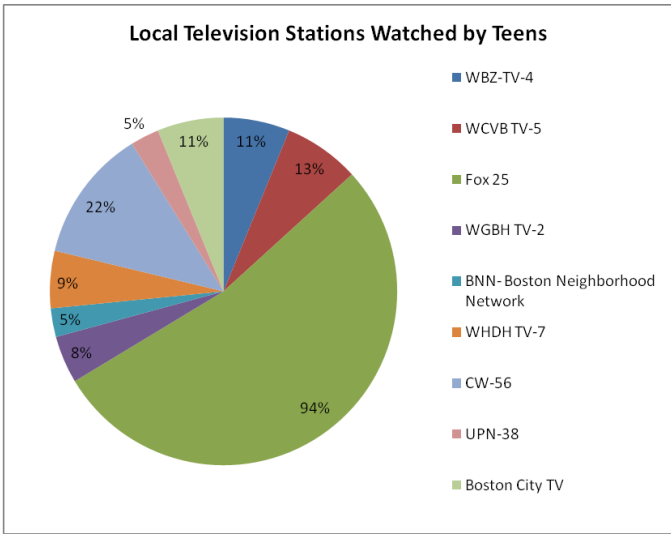


To guide marketing targets, we asked teens how they typically get info about programs and activities. They identified a variety of ways in which they get information, the most common of which were the internet, guidance counselors, friends, and teachers. This suggests the importance of providing schools and key school staff with information about what is available for students.

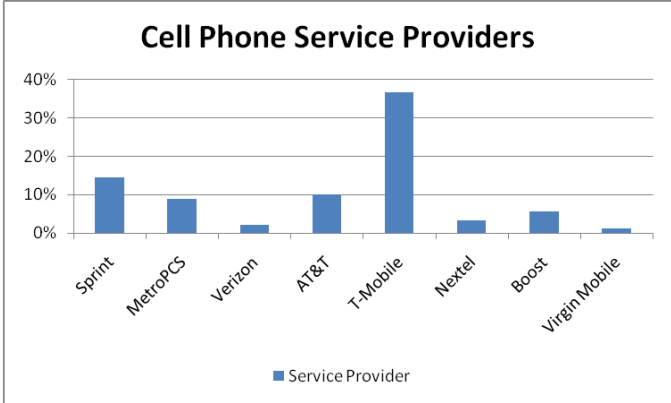
As a means of identifying the best media outlets to promote OST opportunities, teens identified the social networking sites, television and radio stations they visit most often. More than 50% of the teens identified Facebook, AOL Instant Messenger, and MySpace as the most frequented social media tools. Teens reported watching Fox-25 and CW-56 most often. Overwhelmingly, teens identified Jam'n 94.5 as their radio station of choice. In the event of a television or radio marketing campaign, these stations should be considered for promoting opportunities for teens.

Summer Participation

Only 34% of the teens participated in a summer program. Whereas afterschool programs took place overwhelmingly in schools, summer programs were



With SMS texting projects in the works, we wanted to know the capacity teens currently have for texting and through which carriers they receive their cell phone service. Sixty-seven percent of the teens reported having unlimited texting on their cell phone plan. An additional 10% said they have limited texting capacity. T-Mobile was the most common service provider.



Conclusions

This survey provides a snapshot of what teens are doing after school and during the summer. The respondents stated clearly that they are interested in programs that will help them in the future in terms of preparing for college and careers. Between 34% and 40% of this group participated in programs so there is a need to reach more teens with available programs. We now have identified some clear channels for marketing to this group including television, radio, social networking and SMS texting campaigns.