

### YEAR 1 (2014-2015)

Mayor de Blasio and his administration have greatly expanded afterschool options for NYC middle schoolers through the School's Out New York City (SONYC) initiative. Through the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), NYC is supporting organizations across the city in providing new programs and expanding existing ones. American Institutes for Research (AIR), an independent evaluator, has been studying the SONYC expansion. In Year 1, AIR conducted a case study of 37 high-performing sites. Here we present key findings from this in-depth research. The **youth, families, and program staff who participated in the case study reported that the SONYC expansion was a success.**

#### WHAT DO FAMILIES SAY ABOUT SONYC?

*“My child feels excited about the afterschool program because each day **she learns something new.**”*



#### WHAT DO YOUTH SAY ABOUT SONYC?

*“**I learned how to become a leader and not a follower. I learned a lot about leadership and how to communicate with my peers.**”*



# IN THEIR WORDS: PROGRAM & SCHOOL STAFF

*We are teaching them a lot of leadership and life skills that they take with them outside... and we see their progress throughout the year. We see them... taking these skills and putting them to use in the school day.*  
—Program Director

*It really brings the school community together.... Most of the [afterschool] teachers are teachers that teach here during the regular school day, [which keeps] kids connected to their teachers.*  
—School Principal

*That's a little something that we like about the program: it's not in isolation. It is school and afterschool together as one.*  
—Program Activity Leader

Youth described how the SONYC program makes them feel. The bigger the word, the more often it was used.



## DRAMATIC RISE IN SONYC ENROLLMENT



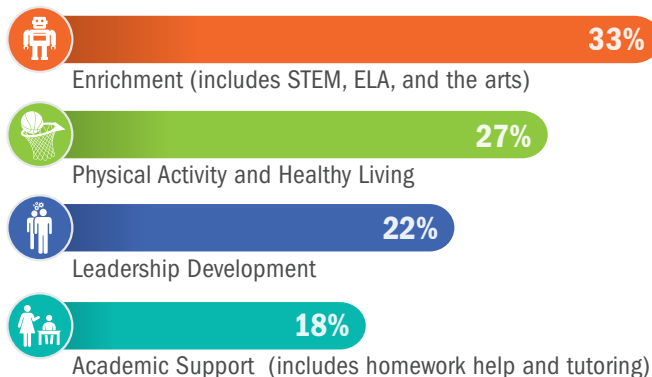
**SCHOOL YEAR 2013–14**  
18,702 youth  
enrolled in **143 programs**



**SCHOOL YEAR 2014–15**  
58,745 youth  
enrolled in **459 programs**

## WHAT WERE THEY DOING?

How participants **spent their time**:



## SONYC EVALUATION BY THE NUMBERS

- **37** site visits across New York City
- **900** family surveys
- **2,300** hours of program observations
- **7,600** hours of interviews with program directors, staff, principals, and teachers
- **2,100** youth surveys
- Analysis of **SONYC data**

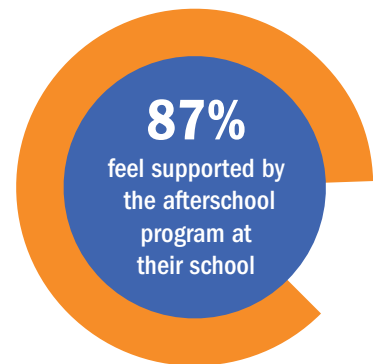
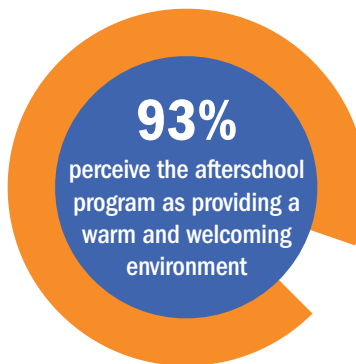
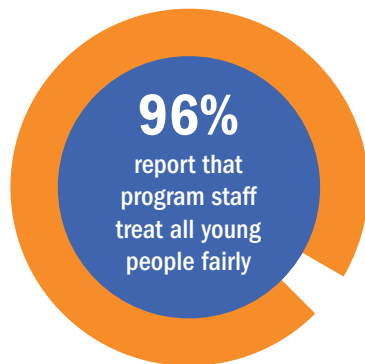
SONYC programs enrolled over 58,000 participants. City-wide, over 111,000 middle school students attended after-school programs, with the balance served by other programs at DYCD and the Department of Education. DYCD hired independent research firm American Institutes for Research to conduct the ongoing implementation evaluation.

### YEAR 2 (2015-2016)

Mayor de Blasio and his administration have greatly expanded afterschool options for NYC middle schoolers through the School's Out New York City (SONYC) initiative. Through the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), NYC is supporting organizations across the city in providing new programs and expanding existing ones. American Institutes for Research (AIR), an independent evaluator, has been studying the SONYC expansion. In Year 2, AIR surveyed school principals and program directors across the SONYC initiative and conducted youth focus groups in a sample of high-performing programs. **Findings suggest that program and school leaders believe the SONYC program makes a strong contribution through the variety and quality of program activities, the quality of the program staff, and the relationships the staff have with youth.**

### WHAT DO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS SAY ABOUT SONYC?

*“Because of the program, many kids who would not otherwise participate in afterschool have opportunities to do so.”*



### WHAT DO PROGRAM DIRECTORS SAY ABOUT SONYC?

*“We empower students to take ownership in the design and development of their program.”*



# IN THEIR WORDS: YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

*I learned that sometimes I'm shy.... It's okay to be who you are.*

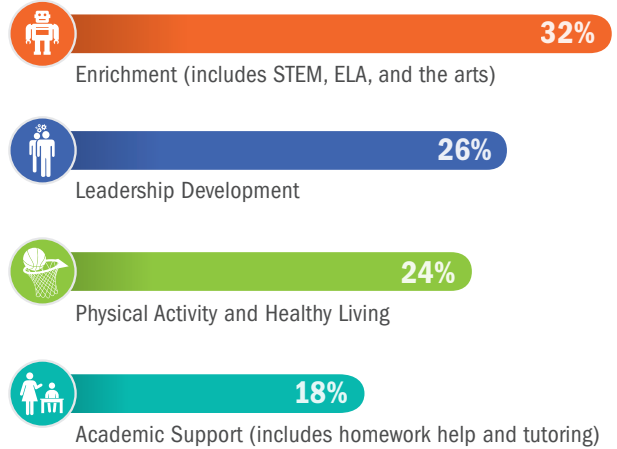
*Fun [activities] keep you motivated, keep you going, [and] inspire you.*

*[Program staff] speak to us with appropriate language and they talk to us like they would want to be spoken to. It's a two-way respect that goes on.*

*We learn how to be better people and to care about the world. We also learn how to be better leaders by talking about our opinions.*

# WHAT WERE THEY DOING?

How participants **spent their time**:



# SONYC ENROLLMENT CONTINUES TO RISE



**SCHOOL YEAR 2013-14**  
18,702 youth  
enrolled in 143 programs



**SCHOOL YEAR 2014-15**  
58,745 youth  
enrolled in 459 programs



**SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16**  
66,598 youth  
enrolled in 511 programs

# SONYC EVALUATION BY THE NUMBERS

- 286 school principal surveys
- 379 program director surveys
- 12 hours of focus groups with 83 youth at a sample of high-performing programs
- Analysis of SONYC data

SONYC programs enrolled over 71,000 participants. City-wide, over 116,000 middle school students attended after-school programs, with the balance served by other programs at DYCD and the Department of Education. DYCD hired independent research firm American Institutes for Research to conduct the ongoing implementation evaluation.

# YEAR 3 (2016-2017)

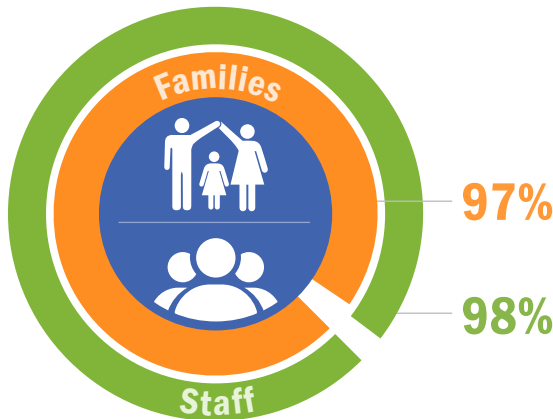
Toward the goal of universal access to afterschool programming for middle school students in New York City, **the de Blasio Administration now funds over 500 Schools Out New York City (SONYC) programs serving more than 67,000 students annually.** SONYC is administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). DYCD hired American Institutes for Research (AIR), an independent evaluator, to study the SONYC initiative to understand program implementation and outcomes. In Year 3 of the initiative and evaluation, AIR focused on youth leadership development and surveyed SONYC program staff and families across the initiative. AIR also surveyed youth about their leadership attitudes and skills in a representative sample of programs. Key findings from Year 3 suggest that programs have hired experienced staff, engaged families of youth participants, and are prioritizing youth leadership development as a program goal.

## SONYC PROGRAMS PRIORITIZE YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

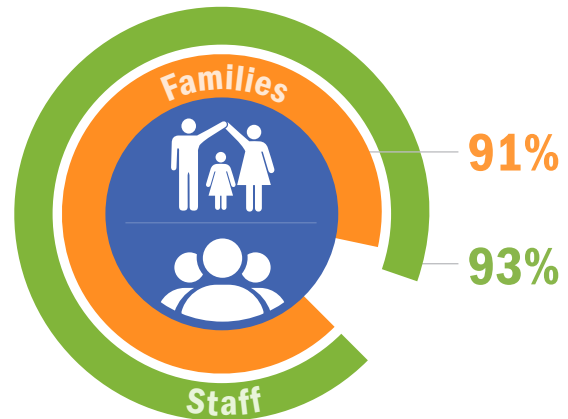
On a validated youth leadership survey, **youth attending SONYC programs** have positive perceptions of their leadership attitudes and skills:



Staff and families agree that it is important for young people to develop leadership skills.

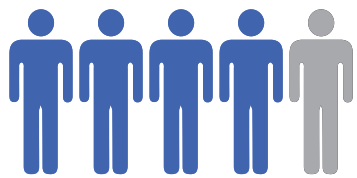


Staff and families agree that the program provides opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills.

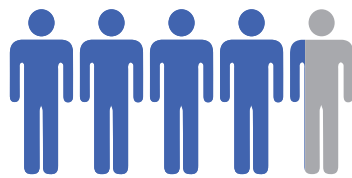


Youth leadership development is a core component of the SONYC initiative and a central construct in the SONYC evaluation. DYCD has developed a framework for youth leadership development and has aligned resource materials for SONYC program staff. In future years of the evaluation, AIR and DYCD will study how implementation of quality leadership practices influences youth perceptions of their leadership attitudes and skills. DYCD is also developing a version of the survey for use in high school programs.

# SONYC PROGRAMS HAVE EXPERIENCED STAFF



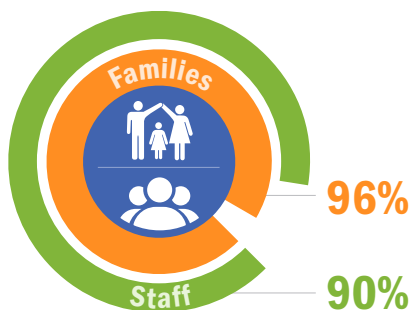
**80%** have 2+ years of experience in the field.



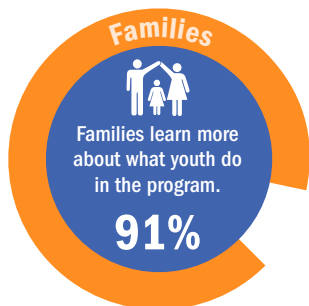
**86%** attend professional development.

Since the 2014 expansion, DYCD has increased supports for capacity building by nearly doubling the budget for training and professional development for SONYC program providers and creating the Program Quality and Innovation unit to support quality programming.

## SONYC PROGRAMS ENGAGE FAMILIES



Staff and families agree that the program is welcoming to family members.



Families learn more about what youth do in the program.



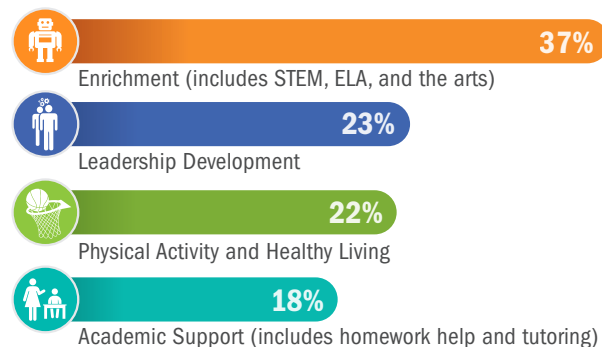
Families and their children spend more time together.

The program provides families opportunities to connect with their children.

DYCD has developed a framework for family engagement and has established it as a universal quality indicator for all agency programs.

## WHAT WERE THEY DOING?

How participants spent their time:



## 2016-17 SONYC ENROLLMENT



**67,844 youth** were enrolled in **504 programs**. SONYC has more than tripled enrollment since the initiative's expansion in 2014.

## SONYC EVALUATION BY THE NUMBERS

- **5,680** family surveys from 310 programs
- **3,290** program staff surveys from 405 programs
- **5,840** youth leadership development surveys from a representative sample of 152 programs
- Analysis of **SONYC program** administrative data

SONYC programs enrolled over 67,000 participants. Citywide, more than 116,000 middle school students attended afterschool programs, including students served by other DYCD-funded programs and the Department of Education. DYCD hired independent research firm AIR to conduct the ongoing evaluation.