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SUPPORTING HEALTH LITERACY

NCLB Funds Community Learning Centers

By Harvey Lee

One important component of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) is Title IV, Part B, more commonly known as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The program offers competitive grants to establish or expand learning centers that help students meet standards in core subjects by offering activities that strengthen and complement classroom curricula. Programs and services, which are offered outside regular school hours, can be as varied as tutoring, drug and violence prevention, art and music, technology, and recreation. The centers are also expected to offer literacy and related educational development for members' families.

The goal is to foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports academic achievement. Through the community learning centers, students receive supervision before and after school and during summer vacation while their parents are at work. The centers improve students' reading and prevention skills, reducing the possibility of future health problems or risky behavior by increasing comprehension of fitness and prevention messages and promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

A good source of information about the community centers and NCLB is *No Child Left Behind: A Desktop Reference*, available at www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/reference. Copies of the report can also be requested via fax (301-470-1244), phone (1-877-4-ED-PUBS), and email (edpubs@inet.ed.gov). Alternate formats such as Braille, large print, or audiotape can be obtained by calling (202) 260-9895 or (202) 205-8113.

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