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Education after De Blasio

Professor Bloomfield

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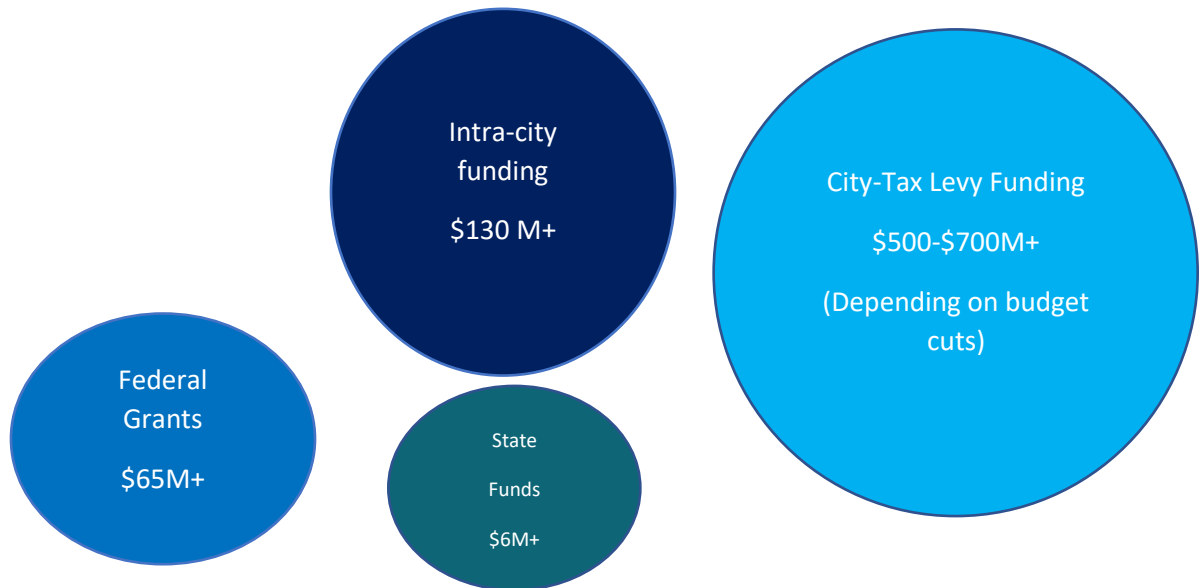
What's next: How DYCD can maintain adequate funding without the American Recovery Plan

This started as a piece advocating for the reinstatement of after-school funding to the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) after the \$357 million dollar cut in fiscal year 2021, however through the American Recovery Plan the city's preliminary plans to make more cuts to the 2022 budget was halted and the budget saw an influx of over \$40 million totaling the budget out at \$835 million. While this is fantastic news, I am hesitant to celebrate because this is a one-shot deal, this money is not guaranteed in fiscal year 2023 or beyond and in fact the proposed budgets for those years show a cut of almost \$60 million. So, considering this dilemma there is one pressing question that needs to be answered, what happens after fiscal year 2022? I believe that part of the solution is that the city and state should do everything it can to refrain from inflicting anymore budget cuts on DYCD. This organization is an integral part of not just children's after-school programs but other much needed resources. Unfortunately, as with many other city agencies DYCD is chronically underfunded and consistently must find ways to operate high-quality programming while facing the ever-looming reality of budget cuts.

Currently there are more than 900 programs in the Out of School Time (OST) system. These programs serve youth in grades k-12 throughout the five boroughs and are all funded and overseen by the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). Programs included in this system are the Comprehensive After-School System of NYC (COMPASS NYC) programs which house the elementary school-aged children, School's Out New York City (SONYC) which are geared toward 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and 91 Beacon programs which act as school-based community centers and serves not just youth but adults as well. There are also cornerstone programs located in 94 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Community centers which offer programming for the whole community, including senior citizens. DYCD is an asset to the community-based organizations that run these much-needed programs. They keep them all running through program funding, professional development opportunities and resources.

DYCD doesn't only fund afterschool, they fund crucial services for all age groups and demographics. Some examples are the Healthy Families program which provides services for families dealing with issues regarding domestic violence, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and health and nutrition. They also fund the NDA Adult Literacy Program which provides Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs with classes in math, reading and writing, this program also offers help to Adults' looking to take the High School Equivalency Test (HSE). So how come such a vital organization like DYCD is always facing budget cuts? Some of the answer lies in where they get their funding.

Funding



DYCD'S Pre-Covid budget framework consisted of funding from the Federal government through 9 grants including the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) through the State of New York, they also receive federal money through City with the WIOA Youth activities grant and the Temporary Assistant for Needy Families (TANF) grant. All three federal grants make up 80% of DYCD's federal funding. DYCD also receives intra-city funding, over \$130 million, through Department of Education, this money primarily funds its SONYC programs and most recently the summer rising and learning bridges initiatives, they also receive around \$100 million in discretionary funding from the City Council. Most importantly, DYCD's primary funding source is City-Tax Levy (CTL) funding, which is funding that that city gathers by borrowing against future tax revenue. Their funding being based on projected revenue is problematic, especially if the city does not make the money that it expects, when this occurs DYCD, and other City agencies are faced with cuts that effect our most needy communities. Now, to fully grasp our current situation, we must take a journey through the numbers and analyze the past starting with fiscal year 2020.

Fiscal Year 2020

Initially Fiscal Year 2020's budget totaled at \$953,852,000 with over \$700M from city funds and over \$200m from non-city funds (federal grants, intra-city funds etc.) In the budget there was also a \$34 million dollar increase to SYEP which equated to 10 new positions (6 program managers, 3 deputy directors, 1 senior program manager) as well as \$114.6 million Minimum wage increase for the program. There was also continued funding for 60 new beds added FY19 for ages 21-24 years old in LGBTQ-affirming locations, citywide. After lockdown DYCD experienced a \$357M dollar budget cut. Included in that cut: were all SONYC summer programs (\$166M), all SYEP slots (\$160M) as well as all City Council discretionary Funding.

Programs were hit extremely hard by this huge budget cut and subsequent lockdown, COMPASS providers switched to remote programming when schools closed, all 91 Beacon programs closed following the school closures but were able to transition to remote platforms and continued offering afterschool services and lastly, a total of 61 out of the 94 Cornerstone locations, transitioned to support handing out DOE Grab and Go meals. While there may be some that make the statement that programs were still operating, although remotely, it is extremely difficult to run quality programming such as dance and sports virtually.

Fiscal Year 2021

Prior to the influx of money from the American Recovery plan the FY 2021 budget was totaled at \$598.3 million causing the initial cancellation of Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and COMPASS, Beacon and Cornerstone summer camps. This breaks down to 300+ COMPASS sites, which eliminates camp for approximately 40,000 COMPASS participants, the elimination of camp for 8,500 SONYC program middle-school students, 18,200 Beacon students

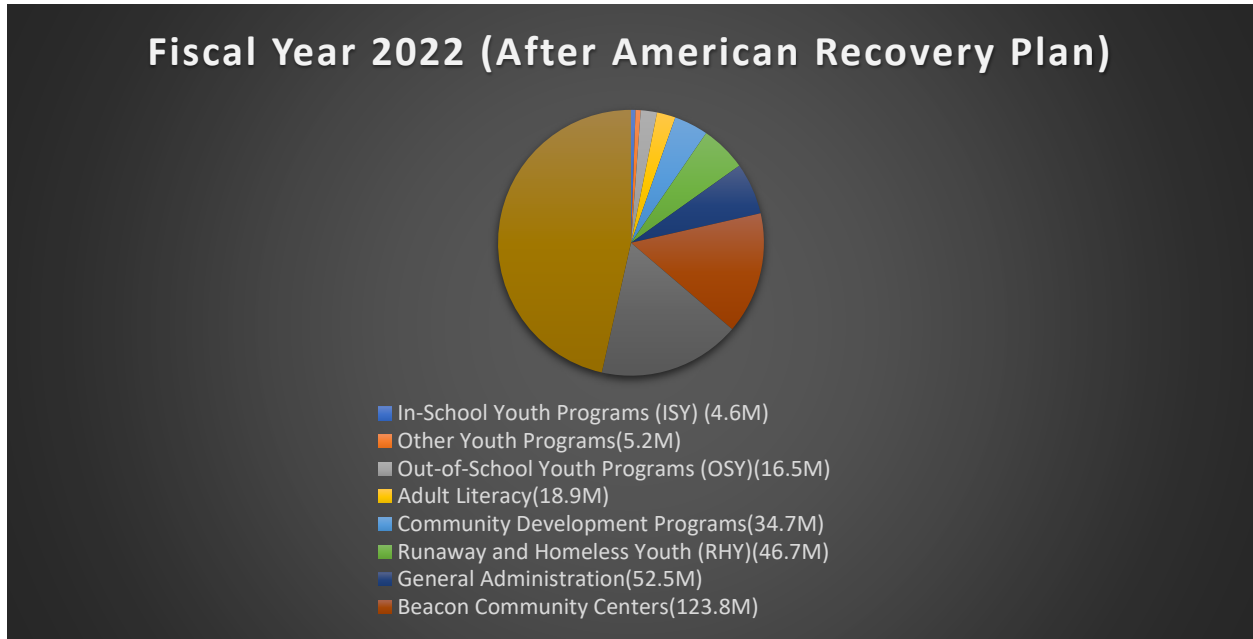
and 3,000 Cornerstone youth. It also meant that 70,000 SYEP participants would go without paid jobs (for older- youth) and project-based learning with stipends (for younger-youth). After the American Recovery Plan funding the budget rose by almost \$200 million.

The new budget totaled \$776M with \$8M+ restored to Beacon summer programming, \$36M+ funding restored to COMPASS Elementary summer programming, \$8M+ restored to Cornerstone summer programming and \$115M Restored to SYEP. This funding allowed some children to participate in summer camp, mostly through the summer rising program. The summer rising is a new program implemented in summer 2021 in which NYC unified “the strengths of the NYC Department of Education's (DOE) academics with the Department of Youth & Community Development’s (DYCD) school-based enrichment programming¹” This new way of operating created even more collaboration between the DOE and the Community Based Organizations (CBO) housed within their buildings, this was great for children and the community, however these restorations were hardly the budget allocations seen in 2020 and with looming budget cuts this could mean that this program and others can’t expand to reach everyone.

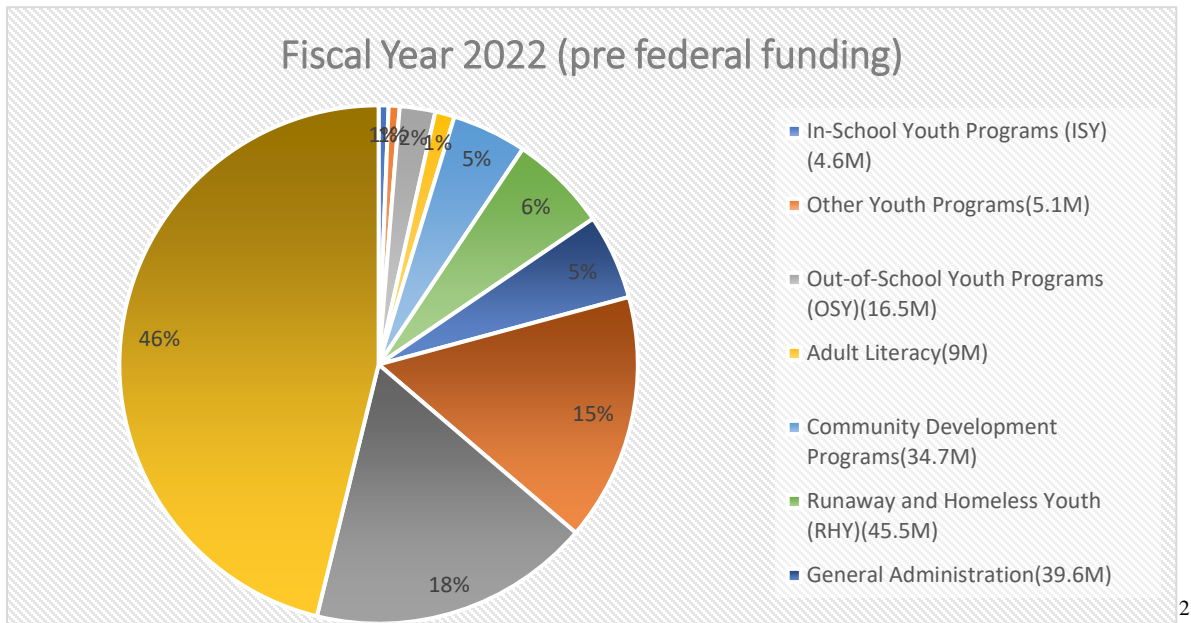
¹ [Summer Rising \(nyc.gov\)](https://www.nyc.gov/summer-rising)

Fiscal Year 2022

The upcoming budget for DYCD totals to \$835.4 million dollars with funding for the following:



The pre-American Recovery plan budget total was \$745.3 million with funding for the following:



While both charts look similar the preliminary budget had over \$40 million less in the budget for OST programs, \$10 million less for both the Beacon and cornerstone programs respectively, \$9 million less for the adult literacy and almost \$30 million less for staffing needs. There was also a proposed \$4 million cut to SONYC programs along with the elimination of SONYC camps which was an additional \$5.7 million cut, this pre-federal funding budget seems to be the way they are going for the next fiscal year. Presently, the proposed budgets for FY 23, 24, AND 25 total at \$776 million, this is almost \$100 million less than FY 22 budget. This cut would mean cuts to staffing and necessary resources for many communities throughout the five boroughs.

Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 and Beyond

² [DYCD.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

So how do we make sure that DYCD maintains adequate funding? The answer to this question has two parts, the first being changing the narrative. Having spent 10 years working in and running after-school programs in NYC I have had to continuously combat the narrative that youth programs are just glorified baby-sitting services, however, I know this to be far from the truth. I have been able to follow the lives of past participants and see the impact that quality programming has had on them. I have old participants who got introduced to organized basketball in my program and are now playing college ball on scholarship, another participant was encouraged to dance and has now opened their own dance studio at the age of 22 and has been featured on the news giving back to their community. I run into, my past participants all the time and they tell me how they are doing and always say how much they miss the program. It is in these interactions that reinforce my belief that these programs are needed especially for our marginalized communities but despite this there is still a disconnect between what some people and policy makers think after-school programs do and what they actually do. To change this, I propose that DYCD do a social media and internet campaign.

In this campaign they would spread the message of the importance of after-school programs in the development of children and adolescents through sharing former participants, parents and school staff testimonials. They should also consider creating a hashtag and encouraging individuals and CBO'S to share their stories about the essential work that DYCD is doing. They can also distribute the academic data that it is already out there, there have been many studies done on the impact of youth programs on children's cognitive and social emotional growth.

One such study by Deborah Vandell, Sandra D. Simpkins and YangYang Liu titled:
“From Early Care and Education to Adult Problem behaviors: A Prevention Pathway Through

After-School Organized Activities”, examined how access to early childcare education during children’s first five years and children’s after-school organized activities in middle childhood are related to children’s academic and social functioning in high school. They found that consistent participation in afterschool was important for building children’s social-emotional skills which included being more confident when meeting new people as well as interacting with their peers and adults, all of which are great indicators for children’s future success in school and in the workplace. In this study they used data from their larger longitudinal study “*Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development*” which followed 1300 participants from birth to age 26.

In that 26-year study researchers compared how participating in youth programming helped to narrow disparities between low income and higher income children, this is especially important since DYCD offers free programming to children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Through their research they found that the more months that children participated in high quality programming correlated with them more likely being college graduates. They also saw that disparities in family income were also mitigated.

Their data showed that if children from low-income backgrounds experience exclusively high-quality programming for just 15 months, they only had a salary difference of \$4800 when compared to adults who came from higher economic backgrounds. Astonishingly, if children participated in programming for 24 months or more the study found that their salaries as adults were almost indistinguishable from their high-income counterparts. Let’s absorb that for a moment, just 15 months of high-quality programming in childhood could have long term impacts on the rest of their lives and funding DYCD is a critical piece in guaranteeing that children have a chance to experience that.

The second recommendation is advocating for the return of City Council discretionary funding. Since Fiscal Year 2020 the funding from the City Council has yet to be returned to DYCD's budget, that is over \$100 million dollars in funding that could keep the next budgets near if not over the upcoming budget of FY22. This would mean that DYCD could maintain quality programming with no cuts to staff or present programming budgets ensuring that at least for the next few years children throughout NYC will have access to the resources and tools that they need to achieve greater academic success and socio-emotional skills.

Opposition

While I am sure there will be arguments to this money being put back into DYCD's budget with claims that there isn't enough money to go around, it is important to point out that DYCD's budget represents just 1% of the city's entire budget, making cuts to this organization doesn't make a dent in savings for NYC. Also, ensuring the budgetary needs of DYCD simultaneously ensures that children, especially children from low socio-economic backgrounds have access to spaces where they can learn, grow, play, and imagine. We continually talk about how we shrink the wage gap, well this is a small piece of the puzzle, the data is there, quality programming during childhood can do that and it is up to us to make sure that the money is there.

References

Vandell, D. L., Simpkins, S. D., & Liu, Y. Y. (2021). From early care and education to adult problem behaviors: A prevention pathway through after-school organized activities *Development and Psychopathology*, (33), 658–669.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579420001376>

Fiscal year 2020

[260-DYCD1.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation \(nyc.gov\)](#)

Fiscal year 2021

[260-DYCD.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation \(nyc.gov\)](#)

Fiscal year 2022

[DYCD.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation \(nyc.gov\)](#)