

# **PRESS RELEASE**

April 29, 2008

## **National Institute on Out-of-School Time Partners with nFocus Software on Integrated Youth Assessment Solution**

**WELLESLEY, MA— April 29, 2008** — The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) announces that they are partnering with nFocus Software™ to develop an automated assessment system that helps afterschool programs improve program quality and reach desired youth outcomes. The system, referred to as “The Afterschool Program Assessment System (APAS),” is one of the few assessment systems available that helps afterschool programs link quality and youth outcomes in a comprehensive, flexible, and integrated fashion.

“APAS takes program assessment to a whole new level,” states Ellen Gannett, director of NIOST. “The combination of our research-based assessment tools with nFocus Software’s Kidtrax® database management tool offers afterschool programs a unique web-based solution to guide continuous quality improvements easily and effectively. Funder reports are built right into the system and can be run at the touch of a button. This reduces reporting time and allows afterschool staff more time to focus on their programs.”

APAS includes two measurement tools — the Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAYO) and the Assessing Afterschool Program Practices Tool (APT). Unlike other assessment systems, these scientifically field-tested tools allow users to focus on evaluating specific, observable practices rather than more general quality characteristics. Kidtrax provides a web-based interface that pulls the information together in a user-friendly, data management program. Users can quickly and easily generate reports to guide program improvements.

“This is an exciting time for afterschool programs – and for APAS. At a time when many afterschool programs are struggling to meet funders’ and policy makers’ expectations for youth outcomes, APAS offers a solution that provides programs with the tools and data they need to show how they are benefiting young people.” states Wendy B. Surr, a research associate at NIOST.

APAS is now available to afterschool programs nationwide. Development and testing of the system began in 2000 in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Education (MADOE). A pilot program funded by a grant from AT&T Family Care Development Fund has been running in Georgia and New Jersey since September of 2007 with additional sites in North Carolina (funded by Partners of Out-of-School time) and Massachusetts (funded by the United Way of Massachusetts Bay).

Dawn Mendelsohn, director of Community Resource Development in Framingham, MA, has been using the APAS tools since they were created. "The tools have been very valuable in helping us assess our afterschool programs," says Mendelsohn. "Our programs are complex with many components and the APAS tools allow us to break down activities and outcomes into manageable parts that can be evaluated and improved as needed."

For more than 30 years, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time at the Wellesley Centers for Women has been dedicated to moving the afterschool field forward through its research, education and training, consultation, and field-building. Much of NIOST's work has encompassed projects of national scope and influence, several representing "firsts" for the field and many focusing on building out-of-school time systems. NIOST is a program of the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) at Wellesley College. Since 1974, scholars at WCW have helped shape a better world through their social science research projects and training programs.

nFocus Software is the leading provider of data collection and outcome measurement software to the public sector. nFocus Software customers include non-profit organizations, Fortune 500 companies and the federal government. The company serves organizations ranging from local sites with fewer than 100 individuals, to state-wide deployments serving thousands of individuals, to the United States Army, where our solutions are used to track the training and mission readiness of all 1.2 million soldiers. For more information on nFocus Software, visit their website at [www.nfocus.com](http://www.nfocus.com).

nFocus Software, TraxSolutions, KidTrax are either registered trademarks or trademarks of nFocus Software in the United States. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

###

**For more information contact:**  
National Institute on Out-of-School Time  
106 Central St.  
Wellesley, MA 02481  
781-283-2547  
781-283-3657 (fax)  
[www.niost.org](http://www.niost.org).