

## Why Teenagers? (Chicago)

Chicago first lady Maggie Daley, chair of *After School Matters*, deliberately focused the program on teenagers. "As a society, we have tended to isolate teens—we've walled them off as a problem, a big mystery that we never hear about except when there's trouble," says Daley. "If teenagers are lost, it's because we are losing them, by not giving them the opportunities to show what they can do, to be their best, and to have a little fun in the process."

By providing paid apprenticeships in the arts, technology, sports and communications, *After School Matters* creates opportunities for teens to work with caring adults in these fields and to develop marketable skills. "We realized there was a hunger on the part of teenagers to have interesting things to do after school," said Daley. "This is a positive, proactive thing we can do, and we know it works because our kids stay in the program."

Daley also noted that After School Matters keeps participating teenagers out of trouble.