Project:	Afterschool Explorations in Science (AXIS) Rate this activity. Unrated
Project Website:	http://www.incre.org
Project Categories:	Programs, Staff/Professional Development, Curriculum Development
Primary Target:	Youth (Elementary)
How to Reach Primary Target:	We provide colorful thematic activity books & materials kits to engage youth in doing science explorations, and we provide leader guides and staff workshops to support afterschool program staff in leading and facilitating the activities.
Secondary Target:	Youth (Middle)
How to Reach Secondary Target:	We provide colorful thematic activity books & materials kits to engage youth in doing science explorations, and we provide leader guides and staff workshops to support afterschool program staff in leading and facilitating the activities.
General Demographics:	AXIS has been successfully field tested with racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse girls and boys, in urban, suburban and rural settings. Youth activity books are available in Spanish.

Funders

Funders:	The After-School Corporation (TASC) 1440 Broadway, 16th Floor New York, NY 10018 http://www.tascorp.org National Science Foundation 4201 Wilson Blvd Arlington, VA 22230 http://www.nsf.gov Anonymous Foundation San Diego County Office of Education

Evaluation and Field Testing

Evaluators:	INCRE http://www.incre.org Goodman Research Group 955 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 201 Cambridge, MA 02139

	http://www.grginc.com/
Evaluation Strategy:	formative field testing in more than 70 afterschool programs; controlled evaluation with matched comparison group

Project Descriptions

Summary:	Afterschool Explorations in Science (AXIS) is a thematic curriculum designed specifically for use by afterschool programs. • Target age group: Youth in grades 4-8 • Six Thematic Units Are Currently Available: Exploring the Science of Magic Crime Scene Explorations Exploring Paper Exploring Sound and Music Exploring the Secrets of Sugar and Salt Exploring Energy • Each unit is designed to take about 10 weeks when used during academic enrichment time 1-2 days per week. Additional extension activities are provided in each unit. • AXIS activities promote a fun, non-formal approach to learning that is consistent with the goals of many afterschool programs. • Youth can choose to participate in individual activities or the whole unit. • All activities are fun and hands-on. Youth engage in science investigations using low-cost materials. • Colorful activity books for each thematic unit guide all activities. Each activity is introduced by a group of multicultural characters. • A leader facilitation guide is provided for each unit. The guide includes background information and suggested teaching strategies for program staff. No prior science knowledge is necessary to successfully use the AXIS curriculum. • Kits that provide all materials needed to carry out the AXIS activities are available for each unit. • All activities have been thoroughly field tested and evaluated in afterschool programs. • Half-day staff training workshops are available for each unit. Additional information about AXIS and the 6 thematic units can be accessed at www.incre.org
Impact:	Youth enthusiastically engage in the hands-on activities. They are encouraged to pose questions for investigation and reflect on their findings. They get a chance to explore science phenomena in a fun, non-formal way. As they explore, youth develop measurement, math, science process skills and content in physical science, human physiology and environmental science. All activities are carried out in small groups, which promotes group process and collaboration.
Lessons:	The AXIS model effectively engages youth in doing science. The activities are designed to be youth-centered, and do not rely on leadership by an experienced science teacher. In fact program staff are encouraged to engage in a process of co-inquiry with the youth. Staff workshops are hands-on and designed to allay the fears of staff who do not have a lot of experience in leading science activities. The materials kits make it easy to carry out the activities with minimal preparation time.