

## **Three Community Partners**

### **Importance of Community Partners**

We've found one of the most important aspects of a successful afterschool and AMP program is to have supportive partnerships. We recommend at least 3 community partners. Community isolation can be a serious challenge.

It means you're doing everything on your own, hidden from those who might be able and willing to support you in a variety of ways. This limits your ability to build capacity, and ultimately makes you less sustainable.

Take time to engage others in your mission. You will strengthen your program in the long run. We've seen several programs – started by a few dedicated people – disappear within a few years from burnout, lack of planning, and lack of resources. Community partners can help avoid these pitfalls.

### **Partnerships Don't Have to Be Complex**

If a church down the street has access to volunteers, approach them and see if they'd be willing to help. Maybe they can help serve meals or tutor. Maybe a retired accountant in the congregation can help you with your budgeting.

The local library might be able to provide reading materials. There might be other organizations with similar programming that might want to partner and share resources. The more people familiar with and supporting your mission, the more sustainable your program will be.