Washington Community Leaders Asked to Help Schools

Local News

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TACOMA, Wash. - School will start again before you know it and, for parents, that also means figuring out what to do w

Connie Ladenburg, a member of the Tacoma City Council, says it's a way to pass along skills to the next generation - t

"It's a paradigm shift of thinking, because now we are really reaching out to our whole community, all of the people inv

Ladenburg says the city council, school board and parks department in Tacoma are working together to put more after-school activities in place for kids in Pierce County. She says they'd like to see more businesses willing to volunteer, especially with teens, to reinforce the skills they learn at school.

Diana Comfort, assistant director of child care for the *Tacoma-Pierce County YMCA*, says parents' top priority is keeping their kids safe after school, but the programs also focus on health, physical fitness and learning. That has turned out to be a winning formula, she says.

"What new research is revealing is that kids in quality out-of-school programs are more engaged in learning, and achieve higher academic performance, standardized test performance, and homework completion - and grades!"

The Tacoma "Y" runs 47 programs in 10 school districts, and received a grant from *Schools Out Washington* to build more community involvement with kids. Grants were also given to the city of Shoreline, the YMCA in Snohomish County, the Northwest Learning and Achievement Group in

Wapato, and the Martha and Mary Child Care Center in Poulsbo.