



America After 3PM **KEY FINDINGS**

Each day in America, millions of kids go home to an empty house after school. In recent years, the growth of quality, affordable afterschool programs—programs that keep kids safe, inspire learning and help working families—has begun to offer parents of these children positive alternatives. Over the past five years, afterschool programs have played an increasingly important role in providing valuable after school opportunities for children and families.

In 2009, the Afterschool Alliance conducted a national household survey of nearly 30,000 families to learn how many children are in afterschool programs, how many are unsupervised after school and how these numbers compare to five years ago. Building upon and updating a similar study conducted in 2004, *America After 3PM*, sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, gives the most comprehensive and accurate picture to date of what our nation's youth are doing each day after school.

America After 3PM finds that afterschool programs today are serving significantly more children than they served five years ago, but there also are more children unsupervised each afternoon in the United States, and the demand for programs is higher than ever.

- More than a quarter of America's schoolchildren are on their own after the school day ends, and before parents get home from work. Despite growing awareness that children are at particular risk during these afternoon hours, the number and percentage of children left on their own in the afternoons has actually increased in the last five years.
 - The number of children who are unsupervised in the afternoons has risen from 14.3 million (25 percent) in 2004, to 15.1 million (26 percent) in 2009.
 - Today, 30 percent of middle school students (3,722,219) and four percent of elementary school children (1,133,989) are unsupervised after the school bell rings.
- The availability of afterschool programming for kids has improved in the last five years and families are taking good advantage. But there are not enough programs to keep pace with rising need.
 - The number and percentage of children participating in afterschool programs has increased significantly in the last five years, with 8.4 million children (15 percent) now participating. That compares with 6.5 million children in 2004 (11 percent).
 - Parents of the 18.5 million children (38 percent) not currently participating in afterschool programs say they would enroll their children if a program were available to them. That is a significant increase from 15.3 million (30 percent) in 2004.
- While ethnic minority children are more likely than others to be in afterschool programs, millions are unsupervised each afternoon and the unmet need is huge.
 - Twenty-five percent of Asian, 24 percent of African-American, 21 percent of Hispanic and 16 percent of Native American children attend afterschool programs, compared to the national average of 15 percent.
 - Yet 28 percent of African-American, 21 percent of Hispanic and 24 percent of both Asian and Native American children have no adult supervision after the school day ends.
 - While two in five parents overall (38 percent) would enroll their children if afterschool programs were available, more than half of African American (61 percent) and Native





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American (51 percent) parents, and nearly half of Hispanic and Asian parents (47 percent), say they would.

- The economy is taking a toll on participation in afterschool programs.
 - Parents cite a number of barriers to enrolling their children in afterschool programs with more than half of parents (52 percent) citing cost and more than one in four reporting hours of operation (26 percent) and availability (27 percent) as reasons for non-participation.
 - On average, parents who pay for afterschool programs pay \$67 per week, up from an average of \$44 per child per week five years ago.
 - Nearly one in three households (31 percent) report that their children are spending more time in the care of a parent after school now than a year ago. Reasons include changes in work status and availability/affordability of programs.
 - While overall satisfaction with afterschool programs remains consistent since 2004, mean satisfaction is down on several factors, including cost, location and number of days/hours per day a child can attend a program.
- Americans see afterschool programs as an answer. The vast majority of parents of children in afterschool programs are satisfied with the programs their children attend, and public support for afterschool programs is unusually strong.
 - Nine in ten parents (89 percent) are satisfied with the afterschool programs their children attend.
 - Nine in ten parents surveyed (91 percent) agree that there should be “some type of organized activity or place for children and teens to go after school every day that provides opportunities to learn.”
 - Eight in ten parents (83 percent) support public funding for afterschool programs.
 - Parents recognize that afterschool is more than just a safe place for kids. According to parents of children in afterschool, the top benefits of participation include helping with social skills, keeping kids safe, providing opportunities to be physically active and helping their child succeed in school.

America After 3PM provides powerful evidence that we must do more to support afterschool programs in the United States. That includes increased support from all levels of government and the philanthropic and business communities.

According to U. S. Census data from 2007, the total school-age population is 57.3 million, which is the foundation for the national projections in *America After 3PM*.

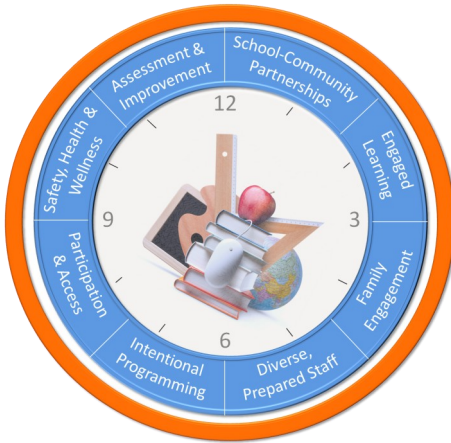
America After 3PM was sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. Between March and May 2009, 29,754 parents/guardians responded to survey questions about their after school child care arrangements during the 2008-2009 school year. RTi, a market research firm, conducted the survey and analyzed the data for the Afterschool Alliance. Additional information from *America After 3PM* is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.



Principles of Effective Expanded Learning Programs: A Vision Built on the Afterschool Approach

Effective expanded learning programs help students succeed in school and in life.

Expanded learning opportunities are inclusive of before-school, afterschool, summer learning, and extended day or expanded learning time (ELT) programs. Decades of research documenting the outcomes of afterschool and summer programs reveal a core set of key principles that are essential to yielding the best results. Aligning the spectrum of expanded learning opportunities with these principles will ensure quality and consistency across all programs. This document can be used to guide expanded learning policy at the local, state and federal levels.



1. School-Community Partnerships: Strong partnerships between community organizations and schools are at the core of successful expanded learning programs. These partnerships should be characterized by alignment of goals and services, effective lines of communication, and data and resource sharing.

2. Engaged Learning: Expanded learning programs engage young people because they make learning meaningful and relevant. Activities tap in to a young person's interest, sparking their imagination and igniting a fire within. They engage young people initially by providing choice and voice over what is offered, and maintain engagement through positive relationships with adults and peers.

3. Family Engagement: A wide body of research points to active parent involvement in their child's education as a key factor in student success; community-based organizations, partnering with schools on expanded learning, can often help facilitate that involvement. Expanded learning programs that provide safe environments for children to learn, offer parental choice and facilitate communication are crucial to parents, schools and most of all students.

4. Intentional Programming: Explicit goals and intentionally designed activities that align with those goals are critical to the success of expanded learning programs. In addition, successful programs must also engage participants in meaningful ways and meet their developmental and academic needs.

5. Diverse, Prepared Staff: Successful expanded learning programs ensure that staffing ratios, qualifications, ongoing professional development and overall staff diversity are closely linked to program goals and activities. In most instances, staffing involves a combination of both in-school staff and community partners.

6. Participation & Access: Studies show that frequency and duration of participation matter; the more kids participate, the more likely they are to show academic gains. However, participation should not be mandatory; when children choose and direct their enrichment experiences, they become more ardent learners and stronger leaders.

7. Safety, Health & Wellness: Adequate space, supervision, and security are necessary for young people to have the comfort and freedom to focus solely on the task at hand. In addition, the best programs provide opportunities for exercise and access to nutritious meals that otherwise might be unavailable.

8. Ongoing Assessment & Improvement: Programs that employ sound data collection and management practices focused on continuous improvement have the most success in establishing and maintaining quality services. Frequent assessment (both informal and formal) and regular evaluation (both internal and external) are ingredients needed to refine and sustain expanded learning programs.



For more on Expanded Learning Principles and to download the full publication, visit us online:
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Afterschool Alliance

AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL

Afterschool Programs: Making a Difference in America's Communities by Improving Academic Achievement, Keeping Kids Safe and Helping Working Families

Improved School Attendance and Engagement in Learning

- Students enrolled in the variety of afterschool and summer learning programs offered by Project Exploration were found to graduate at a rate of 95 percent, nearly double the overall rate of those attending Chicago Public Schools. Additionally, 60 percent of former participants enrolled in a four-year college are pursuing degrees in STEM-related fields. (Project Exploration, 2011)
- High school students attending California's EduCare afterschool program attend school for an average of three days more per year than those not enrolled in the program. Additionally, 91 percent of EduCare participants graduate from high school, compared to just 61 percent of matched non-participants. (Educational Research Consultants, 2011)
- Wisconsin teacher-reported improvements in behavior reflect that more than half of all regular 21st CCLC attendees improved in behaving well in class (53 percent), class participation (66 percent), being attentive in class (57 percent) and homework completion (66 percent). (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
- Fifty-nine percent of former Citizen Schools 8th Grade Academy participants enrolled in high-quality high schools compared to 28 percent of matched nonparticipants. Former Citizen Schools participants were also significantly more likely to graduate from high school in four years than were Boston Public School students overall. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2009)
- High school students participating in Chicago's After School Matters program—which offers paid internships in the arts, technology, sports, and communications to teenagers in some of the city's most underserved schools—have higher class attendance, lower course failures and higher graduation rates than similar students who do not participate in the program. (Chapin Hall Center for Children, 2007)
- Ninth grade students who, during middle school, participated in afterschool programs funded by The After-School Corporation (TASC) had higher daily attendance and credit accumulation than matched nonparticipants. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2007)

Improved Test Scores and Grades

- Ninety-four percent of middle school students attending 21st CCLC programs in Pinellas County, Florida maintained or showed growth in language arts (compared to 59 percent of non-participants), 84 percent maintained or showed growth in math (compared to 62 percent of non-participants) and 85 percent maintained or showed growth in science (compared to 40 percent of non-participants). (Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, 2011)
- Students in Washington, DC attending Higher Achievement's intensive year-round afterschool and summer learning program significantly improved their standardized test scores. After two years of access to the program, Higher Achievement youth showed significantly larger gains in their reading and problem-solving scores compared to non-attendees. (Public/Private Ventures, 2011)
- Forty-one percent of Los Angeles public school students regularly attending afterschool programs operated through Beyond the Bell scored as proficient or advanced on the English/Language Arts portion of the California Standards Test, compared to just 32 percent of non-participants. (Educational Research Consultants, 2011)
- An evaluation of THINK Together afterschool programs in Santa Ana, California conducted by UC Irvine found that the more THINK Together afterschool opportunities a student participates in, the more likely they are to experience significant standardized test gains in Math and English/Language Arts. (University of California, Irvine, 2010)
- Researchers at MDRC found that as little as 45 minutes of focused academic instruction during afterschool, using specially created materials, resulted in a statistically significant increase in students' math scores. (MDRC and the William T. Grant Foundation, 2008)
- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study found that regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs is linked to significant gains in standardized test scores and work habits. (University of California at Irvine, 2007)
- Active participants in programs offered by TASC were more likely to take and pass the Regents Math Sequential 1 exam by ninth grade than were nonparticipants. Thirty-two percent of active ninth grade participants took and passed the exam, compared to one percent of ninth grade nonparticipants. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2004)



Students at Greatest Risk Show Greatest Gains

- A five-phase evaluation of the Citizen Schools program found that former Citizen Schools participants were more likely to pass the tenth-grade Mathematics and English/Language Arts MCAS tests than were students district-wide. This is particularly noteworthy considering that participants as a group were more academically at-risk than the general Boston Public School population at baseline. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2010)
- The James Irvine Foundation's Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) initiative found that students' reading success was strongly linked to the quality of literacy programming. Children in low-performing schools in California who participated in CORAL read more, enjoyed reading more and had higher levels of engagement in school overall. (Public/Private Ventures and the James Irvine Foundation, 2008)
- Researchers at Johns Hopkins University concluded that two-thirds of the achievement gap between lower and higher-income youth results from unequal access to summer learning opportunities. (American Sociological Review, 2007)

Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe, Healthy and On Track for Success

- A meta analysis of 68 afterschool studies concluded that high quality afterschool programs can lead to improved attendance, behavior and coursework. Students participating in a high quality afterschool program went to school more, behaved better, received better grades and did better on tests compared to non-participating students. (Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010)
- A Northeastern University study found a sharp increase in homicides involving African American youth, both as victims and perpetrators, between 2000 and 2007. The study found that risk spiked during the afterschool hours, indicating that out-of-school-time is primetime for juvenile crime for those youth who do not have access to afterschool programs. (Fox and Swatt, Northeastern University, December 2008)
- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study found that students reported improved social and behavioral outcomes: elementary students reported reductions in aggressive behavior towards other students and skipping school, and middle school students reported reduced use of drugs and alcohol, compared to their routinely unsupervised peers. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2007)
- A study found that children who attended LA's BEST were 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities than their peers who did not attend the program. Researchers estimate that every dollar invested in the LA's BEST program saves the city \$2.50 in crime-related costs. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, September 2007)
- Early childhood education expert James Heckman concludes that a complement of early education and participation in afterschool programs can reduce initiating drug use among youth by nearly 50 percent. (University of Chicago, 2006)
- A study measuring the health and social benefits of afterschool programs found that controlling for baseline obesity, poverty status, and race and ethnicity, the prevalence of obesity was significantly lower for afterschool program participants (21 percent) compared to nonparticipants (33 percent). (Mahoney, J., Lord, H., & Carryl, E., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2005)
- Teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes than teens who do participate. They are also three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs and are more likely to drink, smoke and engage in sexual activity. (YMCA of the USA, 2001)

Afterschool Programs Help Working Families

- An evaluation of New York City's Out-of-School Time Programs for Youth initiative found that 74 percent of parents of participants agreed that the program made it easier for them to keep their job, and 73 percent agreed that they missed less work than they had previously because their children attended the program. In addition, 71 percent of parents reported that they were able to work more hours because their children were in the program. (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., September 2009)
- Parents miss an average of five days of work per year due to a lack of afterschool care. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about after school care costs businesses up to \$300 billion per year. (Catalyst & Brandeis University, 2006)
- In an evaluation of LA's BEST, three quarters of the parents surveyed indicated that since enrolling their children in the program, they worried significantly less about their children's safety and had more energy in the evening. A majority also indicated the program sizably saved them time. (UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, June 2000 and December 2005)