

Too many children are alone and unsupervised after school. While we have made progress in increasing access to afterschool programs, the need for quality afterschool programs far exceeds the supply, according to the America After 3PM report.

- 15.1 million school age children – more than a quarter of all youth – are alone and unsupervised after school. That’s an increase of nearly 1 million children in the past five years. (*America After 3 PM, 2009*)
- 8.4 million K-12 children (15%) participate in afterschool programs, up from 10% five years ago. But more than double that number – an additional 18 million – would participate if a quality program were available in their community. (*America After 3 PM, 2009*)
- The hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex. (*Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2002*)
- Currently, the federal government contributes only 11 percent of the cost of afterschool, while 29 percent of the children in afterschool meet the federal government’s definition of low-income and in need of federal assistance. (*Afterschool Alliance, 2009*)

Afterschool programs are a vital support for youth, families and communities. They keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. The engaging, hands-on experiences provided by afterschool program help youth develop the skills they need to succeed.

- 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, March 2001*)
- An analysis of 73 afterschool studies concluded that afterschool programs using evidence-based approaches were consistently successful in producing multiple benefits for youth, including improvements in children’s personal, social and academic skills, as well as self-esteem. (*The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2007*)
- 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 as well as reductions in behavior problems among disadvantaged students. (*University of California at Irvine, 2007*)
- Parents miss an average of eight 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. (*Community, Families and Work Program at Brandeis University, 2004; Catalyst & Brandeis University, December 2006*)

The public strongly supports afterschool programs. More than 1 million Americans, from coast to coast, are celebrating Lights On Afterschool to call attention to the need for more afterschool resources.

- Nine in 10 Americans want all children and teens to have some type of organized activity or safe place to go after school. (*Afterschool Alliance & Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates Inc., 2008*)
- Over three-quarters of Americans (76 percent) agree that Members of Congress, state and local elected officials should increase funding for afterschool programs. (*Afterschool Alliance & Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates Inc., 2008*)
- More than half of voters (55 percent) think there are not enough afterschool programs available for children in America today. (*Afterschool Alliance Pool, September 2003*)
- Nine in ten parents are satisfied with the afterschool programs their child attends. (*American After 3PM, 2009*)

Source: Afterschool Alliance Lights On Afterschool Facts at www.afterschoolalliance.org