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During the summer months too many children, especially disadvantaged children, lose academic ground and suffer what's known as the summer slide, which causes them to fall further behind academically. In fact, by ninth grade summer learning loss accounts for two-thirds of the achievement gap in reading.¹ Summer learning programs, often run by afterschool providers, keep kids on track. They also provide a critical support to working families by keeping kids safe and offering healthy meals and snacks. Slots in such programs are in high demand, but budget cuts at the federal, state and local levels are putting programs under financial strain. A new Afterschool Alliance nationwide survey finds that most afterschool programs offer summer learning programs, yet are stretched thin and struggle to meet increased demand.

Summer Learning Programs at a Glance²



- 61% of all summer learning programs and 7 in 10 urban programs reported operating at maximum capacity or over maximum capacity in 2011.



54% of summer learning programs expected enrollment in 2012 to be higher or much higher than enrollment in 2011.



17% of summer learning programs reported reducing their services due to a decrease or stagnation of funds.



More than one-third of programs reported having a waiting list. This number jumps to 42% for summer learning programs in urban areas.

- 6 in 10 programs surveyed served as a summer food service program sponsor, a summer feeding site or both.

¹National Summer Learning Association. (2012). The Achievement Gap. Retrieved from: http://www.summerlearning.org/resource/resmgr/SLD2012_/infographic_fordownload.pdf.

²Findings are based on the Uncertain Times survey conducted by Afterschool Alliance, April 25 - June 8, 2012. A total of 924 respondents answered survey questions regarding summer learning programs.

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children have access to affordable, quality before-school, afterschool, and summer programs. The nation's leading voice for afterschool, the Afterschool Alliance is the only organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of afterschool programs and advocating for more afterschool investments.

