

From a Time of Risk to a Time of Opportunity

This is Afterschool



The hours after the last school bell rings and before parents typically return home from work is a time of endless opportunities and potential for young people. It can be a time of learning and growth, when kids explore new topics in fields like science, technology, engineering, and math; discover new interests; and develop their communication, teamwork, and leadership skills alongside supportive mentors. It can also be a time of risk, as an October 2019 report by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a membership organization of more than 5,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other law enforcement leaders, found.



9 in 10 adults agree that afterschool programs are important to their community

Although juvenile crime has dramatically decreased in the past decade, *From Risk to Opportunity: Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe When Juvenile Crime Peaks* determined that nationally, the hours between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. are the peak time for juvenile crime.¹

In the U.S., for every 1 young person in an afterschool program that inspires learning, provides enriching activities, and keeps them safe, there are 2 more who are waiting to get in. Public support for afterschool is high, with 9 in 10 adults agreeing that afterschool programs are important to their community, but there are not enough programs today to meet the needs of all children and families. The new Fight Crime: Invest in Kids data is further evidence of the need to do more to help ensure that all youth are able to take advantage of the benefits and supports that afterschool programs provide.

Juvenile Crime in Alaska

Analyzing data obtained from the law enforcement partners in the state, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids' report, *From Risk to Opportunity: Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe When Juvenile Crime Peaks*, determined that 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. is the peak time for juvenile crime in Alaska during school days, with 32% of crimes occurring during this time period. However, it is worthwhile to note that the 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. window has the second highest peak, with more than 1 in 5 juvenile crimes occurring during this time (22%). It is also important to note that in some instances, law enforcement agencies may code a criminal activity as noon or midnight if the exact time of the offense is unknown or unclear. Looking at the hourly crime rate breakdown in Alaska, noon has the highest recorded offenses at 11%, three percentage points higher than the next highest time.

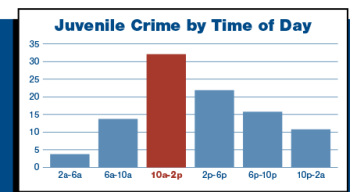
In Alaska, 78% of parents agree that afterschool programs help to give parents peace of mind about their children when they are at work and 64% agree that afterschool programs help to keep kids safe and out of trouble. Yet, for every student in an afterschool program, 2 more would participate if a program were available.

With 45,365 students in Alaska waiting to get into an afterschool program, increased investment in afterschool programs is needed.

The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime in Alaska

Quality Afterschool Programs:

- Reduce Crime
- Boost Academics
- Improve Behavior
- Lead to Healthier Habits
- Save Money



#AfterschoolFightsCrime

FightCrime

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS
COUNCIL FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Program Spotlight

North Star Youth Court | Fairbanks, AK

In 1996, Wendi Leach identified a need in Fairbanks, Alaska to set up a diversion program for young people committing first-time, low-level misdemeanors that could be handled outside of the formal court process. What has developed over the past nearly 24 years is a youth court system in which teens with minor offenses receive their sentencing from their peers—a cohort of teen volunteers aged 12-18 that serve as the judge, attorneys, and jury. North Star Youth Court takes on real cases that are referred by the Department of Juvenile Justice and the local District Court. Volunteers go through intensive training and preparation, learning about the law, common terms used in court, and restorative justice practices. The youth handle all aspects of the case, developing public speaking and writing skills, coming to understand conflict resolution, and gaining volunteer experience. One alumni of the program went on to become an attorney and returned to serve as the legal advisor for North Star Youth Court. Eight youth members have the opportunity to serve on the nonprofit's Board of Directors, alongside eight adults, which offers invaluable firsthand experience in understanding nonprofit management.

For the clients whose cases are brought to North Star Youth Court, the experience is also incredibly beneficial. Those who formally complete the program are never formally charged with a crime and, by extension, have no juvenile record that follows them. They are able to stay out of the formal justice system and have the opportunity to engage in constructive conversations around accountability and restorative practices led by a cohort of their peers, in a setting focused on building community, rather than punishment. Youth Court has built friendships between clients and teen volunteers and some clients go on to join the program as volunteers themselves, after their case has been resolved. According to an evaluation



of Alaskan youth courts, the peer-led systems had a collective recidivism rate after 6 months of approximately 3 percent. The 2010 report prepared by the McDowell Group also stated that the benefits of this system included “a more focused, individualized and age-appropriate process for defendants, more communication with defendants’ parents and with victims, a rich opportunity for education and personal growth for both defendants and youth volunteers, and a chance for a variety of adult community members to play a role in youth justice and restoration.”

Source

¹ Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. (2019). *From Risk to Opportunity: Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe When Juvenile Crime Peaks*. Retrieved from www.strongnation.org/articles/930-from-risk-to-opportunity-afterschool-programs-keep-kids-safe



Afterschool Alliance

afterschoolalliance.org

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. Learn more at: www.afterschoolalliance.org