

# 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.<sup>1</sup>

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 California

Analyzing data obtained from 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 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. is the peak time for juvenile crime in California during school days, with 35% of juvenile crimes occurring during this time period.

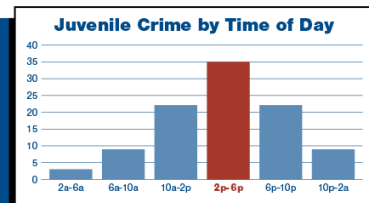
In California, 80% of parents agree that afterschool programs help to give parents peace of mind about their children when they are at work and 78% agree that afterschool programs help to keep kids safe and out of trouble. Yet, for every student in an afterschool program, 1 more would participate if a program were available.

*With 2.4 million students in California waiting to get into an afterschool program, increased investment in afterschool programs is needed.*

### 2 to 6 p.m.: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime in California

#### Quality Afterschool Programs:

- 📍 Reduce Crime
- 🎓 Boost Academics
- 👍 Improve Behavior
- ❤️ Lead to Healthier Habits
- 💰 Save Money



#AfterschoolFightsCrime

FightCrime

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS  
COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA

## Program Spotlight

LA's BEST | Los Angeles, CA



Serving approximately 25,000 children ages 5 to 12 in close to 200 Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) elementary schools, LA's BEST provides a mix of enriching activities that span the gamut, from robotics to yoga. Between the hours of 2 p.m. and 6 p.m., in addition to receiving a nutritious meal and homework help, elementary schoolers can take part in a wide variety of clubs and activities such as KidBot Club, Young Authors, Dance & Drill Team, digital photography, Mariachi Club, and a cooking and nutrition program called Small Bites, to name a few. LA's BEST encourages students to be creative, explore their interests, and discover their passions while working with supportive staff. An alumnus of the program shared, "If it weren't for LA's BEST, I can't imagine how I could have found my path. So many other kids from my neighborhood weren't so lucky. They didn't have the kind of support and resources that LA's BEST provides at no cost to families like mine."

The program—a partnership between the Los Angeles Mayor's Office, LAUSD, and the private sector—was established in 1988 by Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley and LAUSD Superintendent Leonard Britton in response to the growing incidence of children being unsupervised during the after school hours. A 2019 evaluation by the Center for Research and Evaluation of Student Standards and Testing (CRESST) at University of California, Los Angeles found that LA's BEST students with high levels of attendance in the program were 5 percent less likely to dropout of school and 6 percent more likely to graduate from high school on time compared to their peers who did not participate in the program. A 2007 evaluation of the program by CRESST found that LA's BEST students are 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities than their non-participating peers and researchers estimated that for every dollar invested in the program, the city saves \$2.50 in crime-related costs.



**Afterschool Alliance**

[afterschoolalliance.org](http://afterschoolalliance.org)

Source

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.strongnation.org/articles/930-from-risk-to-opportunity-afterschool-programs-keep-kids-safe)

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