

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 Mississippi

Analyzing data obtained from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting database, 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 Mississippi during school days, with 21% of juvenile crimes occurring during this time period.

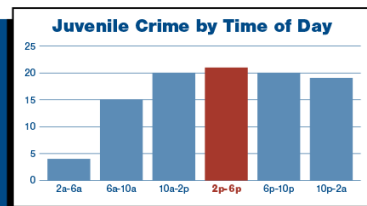
In Mississippi, 70% of parents agree that afterschool programs help to give parents peace of mind about their children when they are at work and 58% agree that afterschool programs help to keep kids safe and out of trouble. Yet, for every student in an afterschool program, 3 more would participate if a program were available.

With 217,663 students in Mississippi 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 Mississippi

Quality Afterschool Programs:

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



#AfterschoolFightsCrime

FightCrime

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

Program Spotlight

Ambassadors of the Evers Academy for African American Males (A-TEAAM) | Jackson and Canton, MS

In 2012, 20 community-based organizations in the Jackson and Canton Mississippi regions—including 100 Black Men of Jackson, members of the PanHellenic Council, Jack and Jill of America, and the National Council of Negro Women—came together with the goal of creating a singular program focused on an issue that would leverage their combined resources. The group reached a consensus that they wanted to work with young men of color on character and leadership development, launching the program in one middle school in Jackson and one in Canton. Today, the program—Ambassadors of the Evers Academy for African American Males (A-TEAAM) mentorship, character and leadership development program—is in seven states across 18 sites, serving approximately 180 6-8 grade “ambassadors”.

In the program, which is divided into two-hour sessions held once a week after school for eight weeks in the fall and seven weeks in the spring, ambassadors cover a range of themes including respect, responsibility, caring, and working together. A-TEAAM takes a “village approach”, pairing three to four mentors from a partner organization with two to three ambassadors to help them develop the skills and knowledge that will provide a solid foundation for their future. For instance, during the week focused on respect, mentors work with ambassadors to discuss what respect means to them, walk through scenarios to practice what respect looks like, and allow time for students to reflect on and share lessons learned. Law enforcement is brought in at the end of the respect session to open a dialogue between themselves and the ambassadors. The program creates a safe space for their ambassadors that promotes open and honest conversations. At the end of each ambassador’s year in the program, they integrate the lessons learned in the program and create a story on what



Photo Source: A-TEAAM and Jay Johnson and Anita Young

their narrative is and how it has changed over the course of the year. Every other year, the program publishes a book with the ambassadors’ short stories, which is shared with the ambassadors, their families, and program partners. Program evaluations found that 51 percent of ambassadors improved their school attendance, 61 percent increased their positive behavioral changes, and 95 percent increased their knowledge of cultural awareness. A student in the program, when describing what he learned from the program wrote, “I learned not to be a bystander when it comes to bullying. I learned to not cause violence with every problem. I learned to communicate.”

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