

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 West Virginia

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 West Virginia during school days, with 26% of juvenile crimes occurring during this time period.

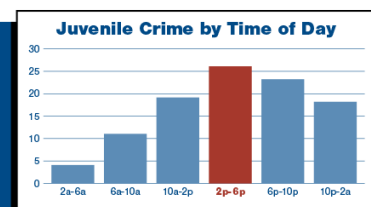
In West Virginia, 69% of parents agree that afterschool programs help to give parents peace of mind about their children when they are at work and 50% agree that afterschool programs help to keep kids safe and out of trouble. Yet, for every student in an afterschool program, 2 more would participate if a program were available.

With 108,253 students in West Virginia 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 West Virginia

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

Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle | Jefferson, Martinsburg-Berkeley, and Morgan Counties, WV

When Chief Maury Richards took over the Martinsburg Police Department, he got a call from Stacie Rohn, the Chief Executive Officer at the Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle, who told Chief Richards that she had some kids that would like to meet him and tell him about their community. Chief Richards came to the Club and met a group of young people in a roundtable discussion, who told him what they loved about their community, what scared them about their community, and how they felt about the police. From this meeting, the Chief made a promise to the kids that there would be officers in the club at least once a week to start developing relationships between officers and the youth.

The Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle is open after school between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., focused on offering youth development programming and meaningful engagement opportunities for young people in a way that helps shape their future. In addition to offering a snack and a meal every day, the program provides academic support, recreational facilities, and programming that spans from a photography class with a working dark room to a leadership program that engages locally-based businesses who offer career training. The officers from the Martinsburg Police Department are able to fit seamlessly into the programming by simply showing up and investing time with the youth, whether that is by playing a quick round of cards or sitting down to talk and connect one-on-one with the kids. When Chief Richards came to the club a year after his first roundtable discussion to host a follow up conversation, the responses from the youth were very different—not only did they feel more comfortable sharing stories about their community, but they also had a much more positive perception of the officers, whose names they now knew and with whom they had spent time connecting. “Real communication and



trust begins with police officers and young people getting to know each other personally and individually as people,” reflects Chief Richards. “One of the goals of the Martinsburg Police Department [MPD] is to have positive face-to-face interactions with kids at our Club every day. These personal contacts have been a game changer. MPD and the Boys & Girls Club have built a great relationship that is getting better all the time.”

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