

This is Afterschool in New Jersey



New Jersey parents value afterschool programs for keeping kids safe and providing them opportunities to learn, connect, and build foundational life skills. Programs also help parents keep their jobs, boost productivity, and reduce stress. But too many families are missing out. In New Jersey, approximately 589,000 children whose parents want afterschool programs do not have access to them.

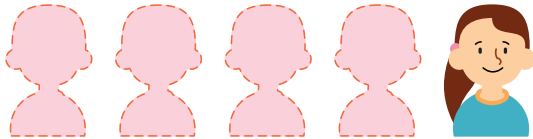
Demand for Afterschool Programs in New Jersey is Enormous

Parents of **742,333** children want afterschool programs

✓ **152,895** children are in afterschool programs

✗ **589,437** children are **not** in programs, but would be if a program were available

Approximately 4 in 5 New Jersey children are missing out.



Afterschool Programs Support New Jersey Children’s Learning and Development

New Jersey parents give programs high marks for quality and for supporting their child with:



Afterschool Works in New Jersey

In a 2024 U.S. Department of Education report on 21st CCLC programs nationally, New Jersey students attending programs saw both academic and behavioral improvements. Programs helped:

- Boost academic performance:** More than half of 4th through 8th grade participants demonstrated improvement on the state’s reading/language arts (58%) and math assessments (54%). Additionally, 59% of 7th through 8th and 10th through 12th grade students with a GPA below 3.0 the previous year achieved a higher GPA.
- Reduce chronic absenteeism:** Two-thirds of chronically absent students improved their school-day attendance.
- Improve engagement and behavior:** 71% of 1st through 5th grade participants improved their teacher-reported engagement in learning, and 67% of all students decreased their in-school suspensions compared to the previous year.

New Jersey Parents Stand Behind Afterschool Programs

91%

Agree that all young people deserve access to quality afterschool and summer programs.



90%

Are in favor of public funding for afterschool programs. Support for public funding is also high across political affiliations.



Afterschool Programs Help Working Families and Strengthen the Economy

New Jersey parents report that their child's afterschool program:

87%

Helps them keep their job



98%

Leads to less stress



87%

Boosts productivity



Additionally, research spanning several states shows that **every \$1 invested** in afterschool programs **saves at least \$3** by:



Increasing kids' earning potential as adults



Improving kids' performance at school



Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency



If there were not an afterschool program available, what, if any impact would it have on your family?

"Either my wife or I would have to leave work 2 hours early to pick [our children] up from school. Or one of us would have to quit work and find a part-time job. And financially, that is something we could not afford..."

— NEW JERSEY DAD

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative (21st CCLC) is the only federal funding dedicated to afterschool and summer programs, enabling states to award funds to local programs that meet community needs. 21st CCLC programs engage students in hands-on learning activities aimed at supporting their academic growth, provide a variety of enrichment activities to complement school-day learning, and offer educational and support services to the families of participating children.

IN NEW JERSEY:

13,699

children are served by a 21st CCLC program

161

communities served

Demand for programming in New Jersey is so great that more than **4 out of every 5** applications were not funded during the most recent competition.

Citations

1. Afterschool Alliance. (2025). *New Jersey After 3PM*, fifth edition [Data set]. <https://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/data/new-jersey/demand>.
2. U.S. Department of Education. (2024). *21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) analytic support for evaluation and program monitoring: An overview of the 21st CCLC performance data: 2022-2023 (19th report)*. Washington, DC.
3. Afterschool Alliance estimate based on findings from state-level return on investment studies, including California, Georgia, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Vermont.
4. New Jersey Department of Education. (2025). [Number of children and communities served by NJ 21st CCLCs, 2024-2025] [Unpublished raw data].

About the Afterschool Alliance

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

