

# afterschool WORKS



The pandemic has raised the profile of the need for quality afterschool and summer learning programs that support the academic growth and overall well-being of students. The well-rounded supports that afterschool and summer programs provide have never been more important. As young people struggle to overcome disruptions in teaching and learning, food insecurity, rising rates of gun violence, and a mental health crisis, afterschool programs stand ready to help, but do not have adequate resources to do so.

While American Rescue Plan funds targeted to afterschool and summer learning have been a lifeline of support in a small number of states thus far, programs in many states and communities continue to face challenges in accessing the funds. As efforts are underway to ensure ARP funding supports evidence-based, quality afterschool and summer programs offered through school and community partnerships nationwide, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) and Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds are absolutely essential to ensuring that young people across the nation have afterschool and summer opportunities that can help them thrive.

## 1 Support strong implementation of the American Rescue Plan by continuing to encourage and promote afterschool and summer learning programs that are rooted in partnerships and address the holistic needs of young people as an evidence-based strategy in the use of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.

A number of states are using the ARP ESSER set-aside funds to broaden access to evidence based-comprehensive afterschool and summer enrichment programs. Many have an emphasis on equity and reaching providers and populations that have not been served by other funding streams, including intentionally reaching out to smaller providers. Leading states are also collaborating with partners and building out opportunities for technical assistance and professional development to support providers and students. The demand for this funding is great, with states experiencing many more eligible applicants than they can fund. And, at the local level, many school districts are just getting started with investments in afterschool and summer, or are focusing their efforts on tutoring-only approaches. With 25 million students waiting for comprehensive afterschool programs there is a deep need to use the ARP resources effectively and to highlight, sustain, and build on any successes. Policymakers can help share best practices, identify gaps in quality and access, and work towards securing funds for operational sustainability beyond 2024.



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Ensure more young people have access to high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs by increasing funding for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative to \$1.8 billion.

For more than two decades, Congress has invested in 21st CCLC to build an afterschool and summer learning infrastructure that now supports nearly 1.6 million students in more than 10,000 communities across all 50 states. An increase of \$500 million over the current level will provide access to quality afterschool, before-school, and summer learning opportunities for an additional 500,000 students nationally. With demand for afterschool programs at an all-time high, and 11 million low-income students who would participate in an afterschool program if one were available, increasing funding for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC is an important step towards meeting the tremendous need, especially in low-income communities. Students who regularly participate in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers improve their school attendance, class participation and behavior, homework completion, and reading and math achievement scores and grades. Consistent participation has additionally been shown to narrow academic achievement gaps between high- and low-income students. Congress can help ensure that more young people have access to high-quality afterschool and summer experiences by providing an increase of \$500 million to 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC.

Visit [afterschoolalliance.org](https://afterschoolalliance.org) to learn more.

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Increase federal funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to ensure access to quality school-age care.

Roughly one-third of children served through the Child Care and Development Fund are school-aged, including those who participate in afterschool and summer learning programs. This funding stream also supports state consumer education databases to help families identify quality care in their area to fit their needs, and makes significant investments in program quality to ensure that each child has an enriching and welcoming environment when in care. As changes related to early education and birth to 5 child care are considered, we call on Congress to continue strong support for school-age care funding through CCDBG that can support quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

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Join the Afterschool Caucus.

Stand with 100+ Members of Congress who have committed to support the 30 million students who are enrolled or waiting for afterschool, before-school, and summer learning program opportunities.

For more information or to join the Senate Afterschool Caucus, Contact Brennan Barber in Senator Smith's office or Karen McCarthy in Senator Murkowski's office. For the House Afterschool Caucus, contact Carrick Heilferty in Congressman Cicilline's office.



Afterschool Alliance