

Expanding learning and supports for an equitable recovery

This is Afterschool in Connecticut



In Connecticut, afterschool programs provide expanded learning opportunities to 79,197 students and are a lifeline for working families. In Connecticut, 81% of parents report that all young people deserve access to quality afterschool and summer programs. Yet, too many kids in Connecticut are being left out. In fact, **for every child in an afterschool program, 3 more would participate** if a program were available.

Helping young people learn, grow, and thrive

Students in afterschool programs in Connecticut are:

-  Interacting with peers and building social skills **89%**
-  Getting homework help **73%**
-  Taking part in physical activities **88%**

The Center for Applied Research in Human Development at the University of Connecticut and the Capitol Region Education Council jointly conducted a study of Connecticut's 21st CCLC afterschool programs that looked at students enrolled in the program for one to four years. The 2019 study found that students participating in afterschool programs for multiple years had significantly higher school-day attendance rates and higher scores on Connecticut's standardized math and Language Arts test scores compared to one year participants. Additionally, a 2020 study of the state's 21st CCLC programs found that regularly participating students during the 2018-19 school year had a higher school-day attendance rate compared to the previous year, as well as a lower rate of disciplinary infractions.

Parents in Connecticut agree that afterschool programs:

-  Provide opportunities to build life skills **81%**
-  Get kids excited about learning **77%**
-  Reduce the likelihood that youth will use drugs or engage in other risky behaviors **73%**

Call and response: Afterschool programs stepping up during the pandemic

From the outset of the pandemic, afterschool programs have adapted and expanded their services to best meet the needs of the children and families they serve. In partnership with Stratford Community Services, Stratford Public Schools offered virtual afterschool programming. For example, students took virtual field trips to California and Virginia. Bristol Central High School's drama club also went virtual, which meant master classes and counseling sessions with professional theater artists and putting on a virtual production via Zoom.

A 2021 national survey of afterschool providers finds programs continue to provide:

Academic enrichment	94%
Time to interact with peers	86%
Physical activity	81%
Snacks or meals	77%
Check-ins with student and families	32%
In-person services during virtual school days*	24%

Looking toward the summer, **79%** of providers will be offering summer programming.

**Among program providers that report that they are offering in-person services.*

21st Century Community Learning Centers

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) are local before-school, afterschool, and summer learning programs that serve students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools, engaging students in hands-on learning activities aimed at supporting their academic growth. They provide a variety of enrichment activities to complement school-day learning and offer educational and support services to the families of participating children.

In Connecticut, 9,720 children in 113 communities take part in a Community Learning Center.

21st CCLC grants are the only dedicated federal funding source that support local communities' afterschool and summer programs. Demand for programs is so great in Connecticut that 5 out of every 9 applications cannot be funded.

The 2020 Department of Education annual performance report of 21st CCLC found that among regular participants:



Nearly half improved their math (**48%**) and English grades (**48%**)



69% improved homework completion and class participation



62% improved their behavior

A lifeline for working families

A national survey of parents in the fall of 2020 found that as the pandemic continued to disrupt school schedules, most parents were concerned about their child's social and emotional well-being and connection to peers, as well as their own ability to continue to provide learning support and/or care for their child as virtual school and distance learning extends into 2021.

Based on the 2020 America After 3PM household survey, parents in Connecticut agree that afterschool programs:

- Build positive relationships between children and adults **79%**
- Keep kids safe and out of trouble **71%**
- Help working parents keep their jobs **83%**
- Provide working parents peace of mind **85%**

A smart investment

Research spanning several states shows that every \$1 invested in afterschool programs saves at least \$3 by:



- 1 Increasing kids' earning potential
- 2 Improving kids' performance at school
- 3 Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency

Additionally, Community Learning Centers leverage diverse partners to meet community needs. A typical program receives \$67,000 from partners to supplement its federal funding. Nationwide, partner contributions totaled more than \$1 billion between 2006 and 2010.

Parents in Connecticut are behind public investment in afterschool programs

84% of parents favor public funding of afterschool programs to expand opportunities for kids in underserved communities.



Support is strong and bipartisan



88% Democrats



88% Independents



78% Republicans