



News Release  
October 22, 2018

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202/371-1999

## **By Large Majorities and Across Demographic Lines, Americans Support Afterschool Programs**

*New Poll Released As National Rally for Afterschool Approaches*

WASHINGTON – A national poll released today finds that vast majorities of the public – across gender, race, age, regional and party lines – consider afterschool programs to be important to their communities. There is also strong support for public funding of afterschool and summer learning programs, with two in three adults saying they want their federal, state and local leaders to provide funding for afterschool and summer programs. Seven in ten adults oppose eliminating federal funds for afterschool programs, as President Trump has twice proposed to do, and 52 percent are strongly opposed. The poll was designed by the bipartisan team of Lake Research Partners and the Tarrance Group and administered by Ipsos through an online omnibus survey from September 7 – 9, 2018. It reached 1,001 adults nationwide.

“This new poll shows clearly that Americans understand the pivotal role that quality afterschool programs play in helping young people develop the skills they need to thrive in school and in life,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “We need to increase funding so we can meet the demand for these essential programs, which keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give parents peace of mind that their children are safe, supervised and learning after the school day ends. The country recognizes that afterschool and summer learning programs help children reach their full potential and ready them for the jobs of tomorrow. Lawmakers need to understand that too.”

The poll is being released in conjunction with *Lights On Afterschool* – the national rally for afterschool programs, which is Thursday. On that day, a million people will rally for afterschool at 8,000 events across the country. *Lights On Afterschool* is organized by the Afterschool Alliance. The poll also found:

- Nearly nine in ten adults (89 percent) say they believe afterschool programs are important to their communities. That includes majorities of Democrats and Republicans.
- By strong majorities, Americans say that there should be opportunities outside of the school day for school-age children to explore topics that interest them, try out new things, and gain skills like communication and teamwork.

- Majorities of respondents across regions, gender, race, and age support public funding for afterschool programs. Regionally, support is highest in the West (70 percent), followed by the Northeast (68 percent), South (65 percent), and the Midwest (64 percent).
- Seventy percent of adults – including majorities of Republicans and Democrats – oppose eliminating federal funds for afterschool programs. More than half of adults (52 percent) are strongly opposed.
- Among adults who support funding for afterschool programs, nearly two in three agree (65 percent) that public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs should be increased, even if it means they would pay more in taxes.
- Sixty-seven percent of parents, 60 percent of women and 58 percent of men say they are more likely to vote for an elected official supporting public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs.

In both his FY2018 and FY2019 budgets, President Trump proposed eliminating federal funds for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning. Both times, Congress rejected the proposal – but federal afterschool funding remains under threat.

The *America After 3PM* household survey of more than 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide, up from 6.5 million in 2004. But the unmet demand for afterschool programs has increased as well. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, there are two more whose parents say they would participate, if a program were available. Unmet demand is especially high in rural communities and communities of concentrated poverty. One in five students in the country is unsupervised after the school day ends.

The poll was conducted online in Ipsos’s Omnibus using the web-enabled “KnowledgePanel,” a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. general population, not just the online population. The study consisted of 1,001 nationally representative interviews conducted between September 7 – 9, 2018, among adults aged 18+. The margin of error is +/-3 percentage points. The new poll’s base sample was weighted by gender, metropolitan and non-metropolitan status, age, educational attainment, race, household income and geographic region by race to reflect attributes of the actual population.

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*The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*