



News Release
October 21, 2014

Contact: [Luci Manning](#)
202/371-1999

Unmet Demand for Afterschool Programs in Allegheny County Is High

New Household Survey: Parents Are Overwhelmingly Satisfied with Afterschool Programs, But 90,000 More Students Would Participate, If Programs Were Available

Washington, DC — Demand for afterschool programs in Allegheny County far exceeds supply. Twenty-eight percent of students in the county (52,646 children and youth) participate in afterschool programs, but the parents of 70 percent of the county's children not currently participating say they would enroll their child in an afterschool program, if one were available. That puts the unmet demand for afterschool programs in Allegheny County at 94,764 children, according to a new household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance.

The 2014 edition of [America After 3PM](#) also found that 18 percent of students in Allegheny County are unsupervised after school for an average of 2.94 hours per week.

The *America After 3PM* survey included 30,000 American households and 13,709 in-depth interviews. In Allegheny County, 127 households provided in-depth responses and 549 children were screened for the study. "In many respects, the results in Allegheny County are consistent with those around the country," said Afterschool Alliance Vice President of Research Jen Rinehart. "An overwhelming majority of parents are satisfied with, and see tremendous value in, the afterschool programs their children attend. But many more parents would enroll their children, if programs were available. We have more work to do here. Every Allegheny County family that needs an afterschool program should have access to one."

"As County Executive, I spend a lot of time in our communities, talking with residents and families, and I know that many are taking advantage and benefitting from the Out of School Time programs that are available in our community," said The Honorable Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Executive. "The demand for quality programs continues to grow, which is why I am working with APOST, the United Way and other partners to find ways to grow the number of high quality slots and programs for the children and youth of Allegheny County."

"Over the years, I have visited numerous Out of School Time programs and know they provide wonderful opportunities for our children and youth," Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto added. "Based on my conversations with parents, I know, too, that these programs are critical for working families. We obviously want to do more to meet the demand for these programs. One thing the City can do is continue its work of enhancing route safety for our children and youth. That has been and will continue to be a priority for my administration."

Nationally, the new survey found that participation in afterschool programs is up, with 18 percent of the nation's schoolchildren in programs (10.2 million children)—up from 15 percent in 2009 (8.4 million children) and 11 percent in 2004 (6.5 million children). But at the same time, unmet demand has increased. The parents of nearly 20 million children (19.4 million) say they would enroll their child in an afterschool program if a program were available to them. That means that the existing supply of afterschool programs is meeting barely one-third of demand.

Statewide, *America After 3PM* found that Pennsylvania is making gains. Seventeen percent of state students—321,296 students in all—are enrolled in afterschool programs, up from 9 percent in 2009, when the survey was last conducted. But 346,457 Pennsylvania students are still without adult supervision in the afternoons. The parents of 811,954 Pennsylvania children not already in an afterschool program say they would enroll their child *if a program were available*.

According to the new Allegheny County survey:

- More than nine in ten parents of children in afterschool programs (92 percent) are satisfied with their child's afterschool program overall. Eighty-eight percent of parents say they are satisfied with their child's safe environment, and 73 percent are satisfied with the quality of their care.
- Two-thirds of parents agree that afterschool programs can help excite children about learning and help children gain workforce skills, such as teamwork, leadership and critical thinking. Seventy-two percent of county parents agree that afterschool programs reduce the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors, such as commit a crime or use drugs, or become a teen parent.
- An overwhelming majority of Allegheny parents (86 percent) support public funding for afterschool programs.
- Four in five parents in the survey agree that afterschool programs help give working parents peace of mind about their children while they are at work.

“We are greatly encouraged by the advancements made by Allegheny County in the development of afterschool programs for our children,” said Grant Oliphant, President of The Heinz Endowments. “This is a critical resource that not only helps students academically and socially, but also strengthens families and community. Most importantly, it represents a commitment to our region's future.”

The national, Pennsylvania and Allegheny County *America After 3PM* reports, and accompanying data, are available at www.afterschoolalliance.org. A snapshot of national participation and demand for summer learning programs is also available online.

Thursday, October 23 will be the 15th annual *Lights On Afterschool* – a national rally for afterschool sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance. Find a local *Lights On Afterschool* event at www.afterschoolalliance.org/LOA.cfm.

Findings from *America After 3PM* are based on in-depth interviews with 13,709 U.S. households with children, completed by way of an online survey using a blend of national consumer panels. Shugoll Research collected and analyzed the data for *America After 3PM*. The goal of at least 200 completed interviews was reached in every state and the District of Columbia. In states where this goal could not be reached using online panels, random-digit dialing was used to complete supplementary telephone interviews. In order to participate, respondents had to live in the United States and be the guardians of a school-age child living in their household. All interviews were completed between February 28 and April 17, 2014.

The Allegheny County [*America After 3PM*](#) study is funded by the Heinz Endowments. Nationally, the study is funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Noyce Foundation, with additional support from the Heinz Endowments, The Robert Bowne Foundation and the Samueli Foundation.

###

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.