

News Release
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More African American Students Attending Summer Learning Programs, But Unmet Demand Remains High

Washington, DC — Participation in summer learning programs has increased markedly among African American youth in the last five years, but tremendous unmet demand for these programs persists, according to data from the [America After 3PM](#) study. It found that 42 percent of African American families report that at least one of their children participated in a summer program in 2013, up from 35 percent in 2008. But despite the progress, the demand for summer programs far exceeds the rate of participation, with approximately two in three African American families reporting they would like their child to participate.

America After 3PM is a household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance. It includes responses from 30,000 U.S. families, including in-depth interviews with more than 13,000 parents and guardians, including 1,499 African American families. It was conducted in 2014, with parents reporting on their children's 2013 participation in summer learning programs.

“The numbers are clear. Demand far outstrips the supply of summer programs, particularly for African American children,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “That’s also the case with the afterschool programs from which many summer learning programs spring. But we’re not reaching nearly as many children as we could, and some of them will be at a disadvantage in the classroom next fall as a result.”

Research shows that summer learning loss is a [significant contributor to the achievement gap](#); [students from low-income families](#) typically lose two to three months in reading achievement and two months of math skills during the summer months.

America After 3PM, available online, includes national findings as well as state-by-state breakouts of data regarding how children and youth spend their time after school and during the summer. Key findings related to summer learning programs include:

- **Unmet demand.** The demand for these programs far exceeds supply. While fully 67 percent of African American respondents report that they would like their child to participate in a summer learning program, just 42 percent of parents report having at least one child in a program.
- **Participation and demand higher among African American families.** Overall demand for summer programs is higher among African American families (67 percent) than all respondents (51 percent). Similarly, participation in summer programs is higher among African American families (42 percent) than among all respondents to the survey (33 percent).

- **Strong public support for funding for summer learning programs.** Ninety-one percent of African American parents support public funding for summer learning programs, higher than the percentage of all parents (85 percent) who support funding.
- **Average weekly cost.** The average cost of a summer program for African American children averages \$222 per week, compared with a national average cost for all children of \$288 per week.
- **Five hours per day for five weeks.** Nationally, African American children participate in summer learning programs an average of five hours per day for five weeks, consistent with national averages.

“By failing to create, fund and sustain summer programs, we’re not only forfeiting the chance to prevent summer learning loss, we’re deepening the achievement gap that makes it difficult for many children to learn what they need to succeed in school and in life,” Grant added. “These programs also give students valuable opportunities to be physically active, learn a variety of science and engineering skills, learn the importance of healthy eating, explore new interests, and support their communities through service projects.”

In October 2014, the Afterschool Alliance released findings from [America After 3PM](#) related to children’s participation in afterschool programs. That data revealed a dramatic increase in participation over the past decade, from 6.5 million to 10.2 million children in the United States. Twenty percent of African American children were enrolled in afterschool programs in 2004, compared to 24 percent (2.4 million African American children) in 2014. The survey also documented a vast and growing unmet demand for afterschool programs, with the parents of 19.4 million children – including 4.5 million African American children and youth – saying they would enroll their child, if an afterschool program were available. National and state-by-state results from that report and from this special release are available at www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/.

Nonprofits, school districts, mayors and libraries hosted some 700 events for Summer Learning Day on June 19. For more information, visit the website of the National Summer Learning Association, <http://www.summerlearning.org/>.

Findings from *America After 3PM* are based on in-depth interviews with 13,709 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*. 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.

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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.