



NEWS RELEASE

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New Data: Allegheny County Parents Value the Afterschool Programs Their Children Attend, But Four in Five County Kids Are Missing Out

PITTSBURGH, PA — Most Allegheny County parents who want to enroll their children in afterschool programs are unable to do so. The parents of 118,940 Allegheny County children want afterschool programs for them, but just 26,489 County students are currently participating – and 92,451 are being left behind. The barriers that most often prevent enrollment are inconvenient locations (cited by 58% of County parents who are unable to enroll their children), cost (cited by 55%), lack of a safe way to get to and from programs (54%), and programs not being available in their communities (44%). The average cost per week that Allegheny County parents report paying for afterschool programming is \$101.50.

Those are among the findings of [a household survey](#) commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance and released today. It finds that an overwhelming majority of Allegheny County parents (92%) favor public funding for afterschool. Nine in ten parents say afterschool programs encourage fun and learning and decrease screen time; and build social skills and responsible decision making. Eighty-six percent say they boost teamwork, critical thinking and social skills, and 82% say they keep kids safe.

[America After 3PM 2025](#) is based on survey responses from 30,515 American households, with 456 households with 682 children in Allegheny County screened. It was conducted by Edge Research.

“The afterschool community in Allegheny County is doing powerful work, but there aren’t nearly enough programs to meet the demand, and too many students and families are missing out,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The vast majority of parents in the area who want their child in an afterschool program can’t access one, and that needs to change. Quality afterschool programs are essential to student success in school and life. We need more support from government at all levels, businesses, and philanthropy to meet the demand for afterschool programs in Allegheny County, across Pennsylvania, and nationwide.”

Support in the state of Pennsylvania has increased over the last year with the launch of the Building Opportunity through Out-of-School Time ([BOOST](#)) program. In 2024, Pennsylvania invested \$11.5 million in out-of-school time (OST) programs to 46 providers across the state, with 10 of those located in Allegheny County. This investment proved to be a positive step in meeting demand for afterschool programs and was just renewed at \$11.5 million in the 2025-26 budget.

“I am so grateful that our elected officials and private foundations continue to invest in young people’s learning during the out-of-school time hours,” said APOST Executive Director Karen Dreyer. “Young

people are constantly learning and growing, and it is important that they have healthy, safe, high-quality places where they can build relationships and try new things. In a world that is constantly changing, young people need to develop strong, creative, problem-solving skills along with the ability to collaborate. Out-of-school time programs provide kids with these opportunities. In addition to Pennsylvania's renewed investment in programs, Allegheny County spends about \$16 million a year on out-of-school time programs. While these investments are significant, as the *America After 3PM 2025* data shows, there is a need for greater investments so that all young people can access programs."

In most respects, the Allegheny County findings mirror the national survey findings, which include:

Access is uneven by age.

- More than half the elementary schoolers not in an afterschool program (58%) would be if a program were available, as would 49% of middle school students, their parents say.

Cost is the greatest challenge for families whose child is not in an afterschool program.

- 56% cite cost as an important factor preventing them from enrolling their child.
- These parents cite accessibility as another primary barrier, with 49% saying their child does not have a safe way to get to and come home from afterschool programs and 48% saying program locations are inconvenient.
- Four in ten of these parents (42%) report a lack of programs in their communities.

Satisfaction among parents with students in afterschool programs is high.

- Nearly all parents are satisfied with their child's afterschool program (95%) and rate the quality of the program as excellent, very good, or good (97%).
- Most parents are happy with the opportunities for reading or writing and time to experience the outdoors (both 77%), healthy snacks and meals (75%), and homework help (72%) their child's program provides; and are satisfied the program helps their child develop social skills (90%); work on communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and leadership (82%); learn responsible decision-making (82%); and build confidence (86%).

Parents recognize the benefits for children: safety, skills, school engagement, and well-being.

- The percentage of parents who agree that afterschool programs keep kids safe and out of trouble grew from 66% in 2014 to 78% now.
- More than 8 in 10 parents agree that afterschool programs provide opportunities to learn life skills, like interacting with peers and responsible decision making (85%).
- Three-quarters of parents (75%) agree afterschool programs help children become more excited about learning and improve their attendance.

Parents say afterschool programs support working families.

- 85% say programs provide working parents with peace of mind knowing that their children are safe and supervised, and 84% agree these programs allow them to keep their jobs or work more hours.
- 88% of parents with a child in an afterschool program say that it boosts their productivity and 92% say they are less stressed knowing their child is safe.

Parents want more public funding for afterschool programs.

- 89% of parents favor public funding for programs that provide afterschool opportunities to students in communities that have few opportunities for children and youth. This is a steady increase from 83% in 2009, 84% in 2014, and 87% in 2020.
- Support is the highest among Black families (92%), families in urban communities (92%), households where both parents work (91%), and working moms (90%).

The Allegheny County *America After 3PM 2025* is made possible with support from Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time. Findings from Allegheny County [are here](#) and Pennsylvania statewide findings are [here](#). Allegheny County data were collected between January 31 and June 18, 2025. The Allegheny County Department of Children Initiatives will soon be releasing an OST Dashboard for Allegheny County that delves even more deeply into understanding program availability and capacity in the region.

The *America After 3PM 2025* study is based on a survey of 30,515 U.S. parents or guardians with a school-aged child living in their household. It was conducted in English and Spanish using a mixed-mode methodology to reach as many households as possible. The margin of error for the national study is +/- <1%. Previous *America After 3PM* surveys were conducted in 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2020. It is made possible through the Afterschool Alliance's partnership with the New York Life Foundation.

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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.

Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST) is a convener, connector, and collaborator with Out-of-School Time (OST) providers focusing on school-aged youth in Allegheny County. APOST's vision is that every youth in Allegheny County has access to high-quality OST learning opportunities that strengthen their development, empower communities, and are recognized as essential to educational and workforce development systems. More information can be found at www.afterschoolpgh.org.