



## NEWS RELEASE

March 25, 2026

Contacts:

[Stephanie Van Koevering](#), Michigan Afterschool Partnership

[Lisa Lederer](#), Afterschool Alliance

## **Unmet Demand for Afterschool Programs in Detroit and Across Southeast Michigan Is Enormous, New Study Finds**

### *Parents of Students Who Are Enrolled Give Afterschool Programs High Marks*

DETROIT, MI —Tens of thousands of students in Detroit and hundreds of thousands across Southeast Michigan are missing out on the afterschool programs their parents want for them. Those are among the findings from [a household survey](#) commissioned by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) and released today by the Afterschool Alliance and the [Michigan Afterschool Partnership](#) at a major event at Detroit's Chandler Park Dome.

In Detroit alone, parents of 101,443 children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs, yet only 20,352 students are currently participating. Across Southeast Michigan, the gap is even wider: 494,542 parents want access to programs, but just 90,097 children are enrolled.

“That means that, in Detroit and across Southeast Michigan, four in five children are missing out,” said Erin Skene-Pratt, executive director of the Michigan Afterschool Partnership. “From literacy and career development to personal growth and leadership, what happens between 3 and 6 p.m. and during the summer months is transformational. Our economy and our future depend on boosting access across the region.”

The barriers that most often prevent enrollment in both jurisdictions are cost, program unavailability, inconvenient locations, and lack of a safe way to get to and from programs. The average cost Detroit parents report paying for an afterschool program is \$98.80 per week; Southeast Michigan parents report paying an average of \$102.50 per week.

“The afterschool community in Michigan is doing powerful work, and the state has made a significant investment but still, 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 Detroit, across Southeast Michigan, and nationwide.”

Survey results also show that parents whose children attend afterschool programs give them high marks; 81% of Detroit parents and 82% of Southeast Michigan parents with a child in an afterschool program rate its quality as excellent or very good. At least nine in ten parents in both communities (93% in Detroit, 90% in Southeast Michigan) favor public funding for afterschool.

[America After 3PM 2025](#) is based on survey responses from 30,515 American households, with 596 households with 957 children in Detroit, and 1,146 households with 2,002 children in Southeast Michigan, screened. Detroit families were included in both surveys. The surveys were conducted by Edge Research.

“Strong majorities of parents in both jurisdictions recognize many benefits afterschool programs offer to students, with four in five parents in both jurisdictions agreeing programs keep kids safe,” Skene-Pratt said. More than 85% of parents in both Detroit and Southeast Michigan say programs build their social skills and responsible decision making; and encourage fun and learning, decreasing screen time.”

These parents also recognize that afterschool programs offer enormous benefits to them, with 84% of Detroit parents and 75% of Southeast Michigan parents agreeing they help them keep their jobs or work more hours, and 85% of Detroit and 78% of Southeast Michigan parents agreeing they boost productivity at work.

In most respects, the Detroit and Southeast Michigan 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%).

[Detroit America After 3PM](#) was made possible with support from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and The Skillman Foundation. [Southeast Michigan America After 3PM](#) was made possible by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, The Skillman Foundation, The Jamie and Denise Jacob Family Foundation, and Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. Data for both studies were collected between January 31 and June 18, 2025. Statewide Michigan findings from the same study [are here](#).

The national *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.

# # # #

*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).*

*The Michigan Afterschool Partnership champions statewide access to quality and equitable Out-of-School Time programs to ensure that all children and youth succeed.*