

News Release
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Contact: [Luci Manning](#)
[Gretchen Wright](#)
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More Students Attending Summer Learning Programs, But Unmet Demand Remains High

Washington, DC — Participation in summer learning programs has increased markedly in the last five years, but there is still tremendous unmet demand for these programs, according to data from the [America After 3PM](#) study. It found that 33 percent of families report that at least one of their children participated in a summer program in 2013, up from 25 percent in 2008. But despite the progress, the demand for summer programs far exceeds the rate of participation, with more than half of 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. 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,” 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 more than half of respondents (51 percent) report that they would like their child to participate in a summer learning program, just 33 percent of parents report having at least one child in a program.
- **Strong public support for funding for summer learning programs.** Eighty-five percent of parents support public funding for summer learning programs. Support is at or above 75 percent in every state.
- **Costs vary widely from state to state.** Nationally, the average cost of a summer program is \$288 per week. But the state-to-state variance is enormous, with average per-week costs to families ranging from \$115 (Idaho) to \$639 per week (Nevada). Variations

may be due to program intensity and length, local staffing and facilities costs, transportation, and other factors.

- **Five hours per day for five weeks.** Nationally, children participate in summer learning programs an average of five hours per day for five weeks. The average amount of time students spend in programs varies greatly by state – from six hours per day for six weeks in Virginia to just three hours per day for five weeks in Wisconsin.

“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 some 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 to garden, cook healthy meals and 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. The survey also documented a vast and growing unmet demand for afterschool programs, with the parents of 19.4 million children reporting that they would enroll their child in a program, *if one 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 are expected to host 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.