

NEWS RELEASE
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**Study: Los Angeles Afterschool Participation Far Exceeds National Average,
But One in Five L.A. Kids Is Unsupervised in the Afternoons**

*Afterschool Alliance Releases ‘Los Angeles After 3PM,’
Offering New Insights from Groundbreaking ‘America After 3PM’ Research*

While more than one in four Los Angeles schoolchildren participates in an afterschool program, nearly 130,000 of the city’s children are without supervision after the school day ends, according to a newly released report, *Los Angeles After 3PM*. The report is based on research from *America After 3PM*, the most comprehensive study to explore how America’s children spend their afternoons, released by the Afterschool Alliance and sponsored by JCPenney. *Los Angeles After 3PM* reveals city-level data on afterschool and summer learning program participation and public support and compares those figures with the national averages.

According to the Los Angeles study, 27 percent of Los Angeles schoolchildren are in afterschool programs (an estimated 175,485 children) compared with 15 percent of schoolchildren who are in afterschool programs nationally. Participation in summer learning programs is also higher than the national average, with 34 percent of Los Angeles children (220,981) enrolled compared with 25 percent of children nationally. But despite those relatively strong rates of program participation, nearly 130,000 Los Angeles children are unsupervised in the afternoons. According to the new data, 20 percent of Los Angeles children are unsupervised in the afternoons (129,989), compared with a national average of 26 percent.

“Los Angeles has accomplished a lot in terms of afterschool programs,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant in releasing the study. “But there’s a long way to go. Too many kids are left alone in the afternoons, when they could instead be under the supervision of caring and trained adults, learning about everything from robotics to literature, expanding their horizons, getting exercise, and more. Fortunately, Los Angeles has made a strong commitment to afterschool and, as a result, the city has the building blocks in place to make further, and much needed, progress.”

“The children in afterschool programs reap tremendous benefits, as do their families,” agreed Tim Bower, Administrator of L.A. Unified School District’s Beyond the Bell program. “But there aren’t nearly enough afterschool programs to meet the need, and as a result too many Los Angeles schoolchildren are missing out on opportunities for homework help, music and sports, mentoring and job preparation, and much more. If we care about our kids and our city, we will do better.”

Los Angeles After 3PM cites the important role played by California's After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program, the result of 2002's Proposition 49, which it says gets much credit for the high percentage of afterschool participation in Los Angeles. The report also notes the critical work done by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the Beyond the Bell program, and LA's BEST.

Released last year, *America After 3PM* found that the number of children left alone after the school day ends has risen to more than 15 million children nationwide – an increase of 800,000 children since the 2004 edition of the study. Last week, the Afterschool Alliance released a special report, *From Big Cities to Small Towns*, examining the differences and similarities between participation in afterschool programs between urban, suburban and rural communities. The report concludes that just about one in ten rural schoolchildren attends an afterschool program, and while more than half of rural parents struggle with availability of afterschool options, urban and suburban parents cite affordability as their major concern.

The *Los Angeles After 3PM* report is being released on the eve of *Lights On Afterschool*, a national rally for afterschool on October 21. It is expected to include 1 million people at some 7,500 events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide this year.

To rally public support for life-enriching afterschool programs for children in need, JCPenney is hosting "Round-Up" in its stores from Oct. 13-26. During this time, JCPenney customers will be invited to round-up their purchases to the nearest whole dollar and donate the difference to local afterschool programs in their communities.

"Since 1999, JCPenney has distributed more than \$100 million to help increase afterschool opportunities across the country by supporting innovative programming in more communities and making access grants available each year to families experiencing financial hardship," said Michael Theilmann, group executive vice president for JCPenney and chairman of the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. "Data from the *America After 3 PM* study is powerful evidence that we've made progress on the afterschool issue but more resources are needed to help meet the rising demand for afterschool programs across the country."

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About the Afterschool Alliance:

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

About *Los Angeles After 3PM* and *From Big Cities to Small Towns*

Los Angeles After 3PM and *From Big Cities to Small Towns* are available online at www.afterschoolalliance.org. Findings from *America After 3PM* are based on survey responses from approximately 30,000 parents and guardians on afterschool services during the 2008-2009 school year. RTi, a market research firm, conducted the survey and analyzed the data on behalf of the Afterschool

Alliance. The entire survey was sponsored by JCPenney through its signature charity, JCPenney Afterschool.

About JCPenney's Commitment to Afterschool:

As a leading corporate advocate for the afterschool issue, JCPenney works with afterschool organizations to increase the accessibility and affordability of afterschool programs across the country. Through its legacy of supporting youth and charitable organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, The Y, National 4-H, United Way and FIRST, JCPenney formalized its commitment to the afterschool issue by establishing the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Over the last decade, more than \$100 million has been distributed to afterschool programs across every JCPenney community thereby making it possible for more children to participate in life-enriching programs that inspire them to be smart, strong and socially responsible. For more information, visit www.jcpennyafterschool.org.