



NEWS RELEASE  
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## Help for Families Seeking Afterschool Programs

### *Online Consumer Guide Provides Tips on Finding Afterschool Programs, Ways to Create Programs, Ideas for Supporting Afterschool Locally and Nationwide*

Washington, DC – Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. Yet, every day in the United States, more than 15 million children don't have a safe, supervised place to go after the school day ends. Now, new online consumer guides, developed by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) and sponsored by [jcpenny](#), provide state-specific information on: finding high-quality local afterschool programs, starting programs, locating programs and supporting afterschool programs.

A variety of institutions offer afterschool programs – local school districts, faith-based organizations, community organizations, nationwide groups, parks and recreation departments, even law enforcement. The online guides include links to local and statewide resources and databases of programs, as well as several nationwide groups, such as YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs of America and 4-H Council that provide afterschool programming. They also suggest:

- talking to other parents, guardians and grandparents to see if they know of good afterschool programs in the community;
- calling the local child care resource and referral office;
- looking into whether there are programs at local community centers, schools, museums and libraries; and
- checking the federal online directory of youth afterschool programs at <http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/>.

The guides also provide information on ways to support afterschool both statewide and nationwide, including:

- donating to the national jcpenny “pennies from heaven” campaign either online (<http://jcpennyafterschool.org/>) or when shopping at a jcpenny store;

- signing on to the Afterschool Alliance's petition to preserve afterschool programs (<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/petition/>); and
- writing to Members of Congress to tell them about why afterschool programs are so important to the community.

The guides are part of the **2011 State-by-State Afterschool Progress Reports and Consumer Guides**, which measured all states' progress toward offering afterschool programs to all children who need them on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best rating. The **Progress Reports** were developed by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) and sponsored by [jcpenny](#).

For more information on finding, starting and supporting afterschool in your state, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Progress-Reports-main.cfm> and click on your state on the U.S. map.

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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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*