



NEWS RELEASE
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One in Five New England Children Unsupervised in Hours After School, Says New Report

Region's Progress on Afterschool Promising, Shows Signs of National Leadership, But Much Work Remains

Boston, Mass. -- Across New England, one in five children has no safe, supervised activity after the school day ends. The lack of adult supervision means these children are left to take care of themselves at a time of day when juvenile crime peaks, and when a range of inappropriate behaviors beckon, including drugs and alcohol, gangs and teen sex. Those are among the findings of a new report, *New England After 3 PM*, issued today by the Afterschool Alliance in conjunction with the Governor's Afterschool Summit in Boston.

While much work remains to be done before families' need for afterschool programs is met, New England nevertheless is showing signs of seizing national leadership in providing afterschool for all, the report says. Through regional commitment and cooperation, the area's schoolchildren could one day have the best afterschool opportunities in the nation.

Made possible by support from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the report is the first ever to focus on afterschool across New England. It examines a variety of research on New England children's weekday afternoon experience, and draws on the groundbreaking household survey research from the Afterschool Alliance's *America After 3 PM* study.

"New Englanders believe in the value of afterschool, and want to make it broadly available for children and families," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. We're hoping New England policy makers will recognize the merit of working together as a region to make afterschool available to all children, and set a brisk pace for the rest of the nation. Working separately, the states have made good progress and, indeed, only California is outpacing the region as a whole. But there's much more to do."

The report was released this morning after the Governor Romney's Afterschool Summit in Boston. The event featured experts from all six New England states, as well as Lt. Governor Kerry Healey.

“Progress has been made in extending the learning time of the region’s students, but there are still too many New England children without access to academically enriched afterschool programs,” said Nellie Mae Education Foundation President and CEO Blenda Wilson. “As this research reveals, we can increase that access, and in turn improve student performance, by working together on a regional approach to afterschool.”

According to the report:

- Only 14 percent of New England schoolchildren (just over 347,600) participate in afterschool programs, while 22 percent or (just over 546,200) are alone and unsupervised during the hours after school.
- Unmet demand for afterschool across the region is high; the parents of more than 640,000 New England children would sign their children up for afterschool if a program were available.
- The overwhelming majority of parents of children in afterschool programs approve of the care their children receive: 88 percent of New England parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with the afterschool program their child attends.

The report identifies a number of successful afterschool initiatives in the region, including Citizen Schools, BELL and SquashBusters in Massachusetts; Providence Afterschool Alliance, Afterzones and Community Schools in Rhode Island; Out of School Matters! in New Hampshire; and the EdGE in Maine.

It concludes that, by taking a regional approach, lawmakers and advocates in New England can build enough private and public support for quality afterschool programs to eventually make them available to every child and family. It calls on local and state policy makers to support increased public and private funding for afterschool, and to help create systems to support local afterschool programs.

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New England After 3 PM is available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/NE_after_3pm.pdf

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by the year 2010. More than 3,200 organizations and individuals have signed onto the organization’s Project 2010: Afterschool for All campaign, lending their voices to the call to make afterschool available to all by 2010. To learn more, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org.

Based in Quincy, Massachusetts, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation is the largest philanthropy in New England that focuses exclusively on promoting access, quality and effectiveness of education. Established in 1998, the Foundation provides grants and other support to education programs in New England that are designed to improve low-income and underserved students’ academic achievement and access to higher education. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$63 million in grants and support to education programs in the region. For more information, visit www.nmefdn.org.