



NEWS RELEASE
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Flat Federal Funding Leaves Half the States Unable to Support New Afterschool Programs in FY '05

Planned Growth of Afterschool Programs at Standstill, Despite Vast Unmet Need

Washington, DC -- New research into state grant-making under the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative reveals that half the states were not able to make any new grants to afterschool programs in 2005. The research was conducted by the Afterschool Alliance.

The grant-making standstill is the direct result of the federal government's failure to realize the vision of *No Child Left Behind*, concludes ***Impossible Choices: How States are Addressing the Federal Failure to Fully Fund Afterschool Programs***. Because Congress and the President did not provide the funding promised in *No Child Left Behind* to support growth in afterschool programs, many states could not fund any new afterschool programs this year. States committed to multi-year grants and were left with only enough money to fund their existing grantees when the increases authorized by *No Child Left Behind* did not materialize. A few states were able to make new awards only by reducing awards to existing grantees in the later years of their grants.

"States have been caught by a one-two punch from the federal government," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "The states expected that Congress and the President would live up to the funding commitments they made in the *No Child Left Behind Act*, and planned accordingly. But since funding for afterschool has been frozen, many states are finding that their multi-year grants consume their entire 21st Century Community Learning Centers budget. As a result, they are unable to fund new programs. What that means is simple but sad: No new afterschool programs for the millions of kids and families who need them. We know that lawmakers face tough choices, but shortchanging our kids is not a good solution."

Researchers identified 26 states that made no new grants in 2005. They are: Alaska, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Wyoming. In addition, four states – Alabama, Kentucky, North Dakota and Utah – provided funds to new grantees in 2005, but only through budget reductions to existing afterschool programs in their states. The result is no net new slots in afterschool programs for students in these states.

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To compile the data in *Impossible Choices*, Afterschool Alliance researchers contacted state education agencies in every state and the District of Columbia, by phone or e-mail. Researchers confirmed what they were told in those conversations by consulting agency websites and other sources, where available.

“There is vast unmet need for afterschool programs in our country today,” Grant added. “We know lawmakers face difficult choices, but investing in our children pays dividends for generations. By promising funds and then not delivering, the federal government forced states to make an impossible choice between supporting the afterschool programs that parents have come to depend on, and making grants to new programs in communities that are currently unserved. We need to do both if we are to generate and sustain the growth in afterschool programs that America’s families need. We look forward to working with the Administration and Congress to increase afterschool funding next year.”

The full report is available on the web at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Impossible_choices.cfm. To identify and contact local afterschool providers in individual states, contact the Afterschool Alliance media office at 202/371-1999.

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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 information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.