



News Release
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New Afterschool Alliance Survey:

**Summer Learning Programs for Kids Face Cutbacks,
Even While Operating at Peak or Above-Peak Capacity**

Summer learning programs for kids are facing growing enrollment and tighter budgets, according to a new survey released today by the Afterschool Alliance. Nearly a fifth (17 percent) of summer programs reported reducing their services last summer due to budget pressures, while more than half (54 percent) said they expect increased enrollment this summer. The survey results were released in conjunction with Summer Learning Day (June 21).

The results are part of the Afterschool Alliance's ongoing *Uncertain Times* survey project, gauging the effect of budget pressures and the economy on out-of-school-time programs. Many afterschool programs provide summer learning programs. (A [fact sheet on these most recent findings is available online.](#))

"Summer learning programs and their related afterschool programs are facing severe hardships," said Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance, "and it's having a very real impact on their ability to serve children and families across the nation. We've seen any number of afterschool programs close their doors in recent years as a result of funding cutbacks from government at all levels and the challenging fundraising environment programs face in today's economy. These new results tell us that summer learning programs are not immune to those pressures. As a result, programs are forced to stretch beyond capacity or make severe budget cuts, just when families need them the most."

According to the survey:

- In 2011, 80 percent of the afterschool programs in the survey offered summer learning programs.
- More than six in ten summer learning programs (61 percent) reported operating at maximum capacity or over maximum capacity. The problem was even more acute in urban areas, where almost seven in ten summer learning programs represented in the survey (69 percent) reported operating at maximum capacity or over maximum capacity.

- Seventeen percent of summer learning programs reported reducing their services due to a decrease or stagnation of funds.
- More than one-third of programs (36 percent) reported having a waiting list. In urban areas, more than four in ten (42 percent) reported having a waiting list.
- Fifty-four percent of summer learning programs expected their 2012 enrollment to be higher or much higher than in 2011.
- Almost six in ten programs (59 percent) surveyed served as a summer food service program sponsor, a summer feeding site, or both.

"Summer Learning Day is an important opportunity to highlight the vital role that summer learning programs play in our children's education," Grant said. "By keeping kids learning over the summer, and by reinforcing the core concepts they learned during the previous nine months, summer programs help kids at all levels avoid summer learning loss, and arrive in school this fall ready to achieve."

This October, in conjunction with the annual celebration of *Lights On Afterschool* across the nation, the Afterschool Alliance will release the full results of its 2012 *Uncertain Times* survey. A series of reports from the 2009 *Uncertain Times* survey focused on the health of afterschool programs, and the impact of programs' challenges on African American, Latino and rural communities.

A fact sheet on these most recent findings is available at:

http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/UncertainTimes2012_SummerLearningMatters.pdf.

Uncertain Times 2012 uses web-based survey software. The Afterschool Alliance emailed a link to the survey to more than 26,000 contacts in April 2012. Many afterschool programs conduct summer learning programs, so the survey included questions on the subject. Some 924 respondents answered the survey questions about summer programs, and their responses are the basis for the results presented here.

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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.