

# Partnering with Schools to Reopen and Meet Students' Needs

Afterschool programs are an essential part of schools' response to the coronavirus pandemic and will continue to play a critical role through recovery. As we look ahead to the next school year, it will be more important than ever for afterschool programs to have strong partnerships with their local schools.

*This resource will help afterschool leaders identify and communicate specific ways programs can help schools as they make plans to reopen.*

## Communicating About the Value of Afterschool

We encourage afterschool providers and leaders to review the table on the following pages that describes how afterschool programs can help meet kids' needs for different strategies schools are using to reopen. The table includes messages you can use to make the case for involving afterschool leaders in discussions about protocols and schedules that are being developed for instruction, transportation and safety procedures in the coming school year.

**TIP!** Send an email or letter to your school board and superintendent describing how afterschool can help address challenges with the upcoming school year. Ask them to invite your staff to future planning meetings so you can work together and share resources. Before the meeting, consider the different ways specific programs can continue to serve kids and families during this crisis, including any additional supports or resources you will need to provide those services.



If students are ...	Returning to school for in-classroom learning	Participating in remote learning only	Participating in a mix of in-person and remote learning or have a staggered schedule
<p><b>Afterschool will be critical for helping kids catch up and keep up.</b></p>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide support with reading, math, tutoring and homework after the school day ends.</li> <li>✓ coordinate with teachers to address specific areas of learning loss and to help students who are struggling.</li> <li>✓ help schools offer expanded support and connection to student groups that need additional outreach (e.g., students with special needs).</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide in-person support for students.</li> <li>✓ connect with students at home to help with online assignments, homework and tutoring for trouble areas.</li> <li>✓ coordinate with teachers to address specific areas of learning loss and to help students who are struggling.</li> <li>✓ help schools offer expanded support and connection to student groups that need additional outreach (e.g., students with special needs).</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ ensure that kids have a safe place to learn every day, including in-person or virtual support to help with remote school requirements.</li> <li>✓ coordinate with teachers to address specific areas of learning loss and to help students who are struggling.</li> <li>✓ help schools offer expanded support and connection to student groups that need additional outreach (e.g., students with special needs).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did you know?</b></p> <p>In Texas, ACE afterschool staff deliver programming at the regularly scheduled afterschool time using Zoom or Google Hangouts. They provide academic support to kids via text messaging during their academic "power hour."</p> <p>In Oregon, afterschool programs partnered with a local children's museum and provided "grab &amp; go" activities for families to take home for engaged and exploratory learning.</p>			

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<p><b>Afterschool can keep kids safe, engaged and learning when schools are closed or parents are working.</b></p>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide care after the school day, engaging kids in enriching activities that give them a chance to lead, explore and create without stress.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide a safe place for kids to go while parents are working, help with remote school requirements, and opportunities to engage in enriching activities that give them a chance to lead, explore and create without stress.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ ensure that families have consistent care for their kids on all days, including a safe place for kids to go while parents are working, help with remote school requirements, and opportunities to engage in enriching activities that give them a chance to lead, explore and create without stress.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did you know?</b></p> <p>In Missouri, a 21st CCLC site re-opened in conjunction with their school district summer school to offer full day programming on a split schedule—half of the students are doing enrichment with afterschool staff in the morning while the other half work with classroom teachers on summer school classes. Students switch during the afternoon.</p> <p>In Nebraska, afterschool programs are providing in-person care at churches and community centers in the area of the schools.</p>			
<p><b>Afterschool programs can help schools and community partners provide food to kids and families who need it most.</b></p>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide snacks and suppers after the school day ends.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ partner with schools to distribute grab &amp; go meals to families.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ partner with schools to provide or deliver breakfast and lunch on days students do not attend school.</li> <li>✓ provide snacks and suppers on days students do attend school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did you know?</b></p> <p>In Georgia, YMCAs have partnered with neighborhood grocers to make sure families have food to eat, whether through pick-up or meal delivery.</p> <p>In Florida, some Boys and Girls Clubs have partnered with farms to get direct farm-to-table food. And other programs are providing online cooking videos to help kids and their families keep entertained and well.</p>			
<p><b>Afterschool can provide social and emotional supports that kids need to emerge from this crisis strong, resilient and hopeful.</b></p>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide caring mentors who are trained to support healthy youth development and offer positive social engagement with peers.</li> <li>✓ engage youth in activities proven to build life skills, such as problem solving, teamwork, and critical thinking.</li> <li>✓ connect families to mental health supports.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ identify community resources and partners who specialize in trauma-informed care.</li> <li>✓ provide workshops for teachers and educators about learning at home and trauma-informed care. Provide remote individual/group counseling or mentoring sessions.</li> <li>✓ engage parent advisory councils to promote SEL practices at home.</li> <li>✓ develop case loads of students so staff can conduct informal check-ins.</li> <li>✓ develop online learning modules and activities.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ use socially distant activities (outdoor preferably, on the in-person school days to reinforce SEL concepts).</li> <li>✓ engage students in project-based or service learning activities that can be started and tracked in-person or virtual.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did you know?</b></p> <p>In Washington, an afterschool club hired a full-time mental health counselor to work with youth and provide intensive support to the staff, who are providing youth development and serving as social workers.</p> <p>In West Virginia, staff of the Boys and Girls Club of Parkersburg lead regular video “teen chats” and provide other virtual club activities and challenges to stay in touch with students and community members.</p>			

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<p><b>Afterschool can help provide connections and support to families.</b></p>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ use drop-off and pick-up to share resources on food, health and unemployment resources</li> <li>✓ employ informal and regularly scheduled check-ins with parents.</li> <li>✓ ask parents and families what they need (and how they need supports to be delivered).</li> <li>✓ partner with and provide referrals to local primary and mental health providers and other essential supports.</li> <li>✓ develop family assistance plans and/or coordinate Parent Advisory Council</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ hold community calls with families using video platforms like Zoom or conduct weekly one-on-one calls with students or parents.</li> <li>✓ distribute resources on food, health and unemployment resources.</li> <li>✓ ask parents and families what they need (and how they need supports to be delivered).</li> <li>✓ partner with and provide referrals to local primary and mental health providers and other essential supports.</li> <li>✓ help schools identify and re-connect with students and families who have stopped participating fully in remote learning.</li> <li>✓ coordinate family outreach.</li> <li>✓ coordinate virtual parent advisory meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ use drop-off and pick-up as well as platforms like Zoom, or conduct check-in calls with parents.</li> <li>✓ distribute resources on food, health, and unemployment resources.</li> <li>✓ ask parents and families what they need (and how they need supports to be delivered).</li> <li>✓ partner with and provide referrals to local primary and mental health providers and other essential supports.</li> <li>✓ coordinate family outreach.</li> <li>✓ coordinate virtual parent advisory meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did you know?</b></p> <p>In Massachusetts, program staff are making weekly phone calls to families to identify resources the family needs—including meals, health, academic and financial supports to keep their household strong.</p>			
<p><b>Afterschool can help families overcome technology challenges and ensure kids have access to learning platforms.</b></p>		<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide internet connectivity and a place where kids can focus on their remote school requirements.</li> <li>✓ connect with families to help ensure they can access remote learning.</li> <li>✓ provide support to parents to help them track and support students' online school assignments and homework.</li> <li>✓ provide remote learning at-home tips and guidance.</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide internet connectivity and a place where kids can focus on their remote school requirements.</li> <li>✓ connect with families to help ensure they can access remote learning.</li> <li>✓ provide support to parents to help them track and support students' online school assignments and homework.</li> <li>✓ provide remote learning at-home tips and guidance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did you know?</b></p> <p>In New York, afterschool programs worked with older caregivers to help them navigate the virtual technology needed to keep up with the school day.</p> <p>In Illinois, afterschool programs are calling students before school starts to help them get off to a great start and make the most of their learning at home for the day.</p>			