



## Uncertain Times 2009: Recession Imperiling Majority African-American Afterschool Programs and the Children They Serve

What has been the effect of a faltering economy, state and local budget cuts and stagnant funding on afterschool programs and the youth and families that they serve? The Afterschool Alliance's new national survey of afterschool providers, *Uncertain Times 2009*, offers answers.

From April 9, 2009 to May 7, 2009 the Afterschool Alliance surveyed afterschool programs on how the economy is affecting their programs and communities. 1,447 programs responded to the survey, representing 8,587 afterschool sites serving more than 1.2 million children. Leaders at 370 majority African-American programs were among the respondents.

Overall, majority African-American program leaders report that they are serving a high need population, struggling to maintain their funding and are worried about how the recession will affect future funding. Nearly all respondents to this web-based survey say that more children in their communities could benefit from afterschool programs, if programs were available.

### Key Findings for Majority African-American Afterschool Programs:

- Majority African-American afterschool programs are serving a high need population. On average, 86 percent of kids at majority African-American programs qualify for free/reduced price lunch (compared to 67 percent of students at afterschool programs overall). Ten percent of students at majority African-American programs are Limited English Proficient and 10 percent have special needs/disabilities.
- 96 percent of program leaders in majority African-American areas report that the recession is affecting their communities (compared to 95 percent of program leaders overall), and 7 in 10 say it is "very much" affecting their community.
- Following the national trend, unemployment, failing/shrinking businesses, high food prices and more kids going hungry/families struggling are the top ways majority African-American communities are affected by the recession.
- About 7 in 10 majority African-American programs report a loss in funding due to the recession, more than the 6 in 10 overall. About 2 in 10 respondents (18 percent) report that their programs have experienced a significant loss that will cause cutbacks to the program, or cause one or more sites to close; overall, 1 in 10 respondents said the same.
- More than half of majority African-American program leaders (57 percent) report that their budget is inadequate to meet the needs of students and families. Overall, 47 percent of program leaders report the same.
- 68 percent of majority African-American programs report that funding is down from 2 years ago (compared to 62 percent of afterschool programs overall).



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- 9 in 10 programs in majority African-American areas (89 percent) and nationwide expect the recession to impact their programs in the 2009-2010 school year. About 4 in 10 majority African-American programs (39 percent) expect the recession to “very much” affect their program.
- Majority African-American programs are seeing lower prospects for future funding than programs across the nation. 76 percent report that funding is less than secure for the next 1 to 2 years (compared to 69 percent in afterschool programs overall). Eighty-six percent of majority African-American programs report funding is not fully secure for the next 3 to 5 years – slightly higher than the 83 percent of overall respondents who said the same.
- 90 percent of respondents in majority African-American communities say more kids need afterschool; overall, 85 percent say kids need more afterschool in their communities.
- 85 percent of majority African-American programs offer summer programs and 51 percent expect enrollment to be higher in summer 2009 than the year before. Overall, 42 percent of programs expect summer enrollment to be higher.
- 4 in 10 majority African-American programs (40 percent) say they would need to at least double capacity to serve all the kids in their community who need afterschool, more than the nearly one-third of overall respondents who said the same.
- Majority African-American programs report the same top significant barriers to participation as programs overall: transportation and fees.

In sum, *Uncertain Times 2009* finds that –in majority African-American communities and across the nation – many afterschool programs, and therefore many kids and families, are feeling the effects of the recession and expect that to worsen next year.

*Methodology: Uncertain Times 2009 used web-based survey software. The Afterschool Alliance emailed a link to the survey to more than 10,000 contacts in its database in April 2009. Recipients were encouraged to forward the survey to afterschool program staff, and programs were asked to be certain that only one person per program completed the survey and to provide responses from a site-level coordinator when possible. Nationally, 1,834 responses were reviewed. 387 of them did not provide sufficient data to be included in the final analysis or were duplicate responses. Therefore, the final national sample was 1,447 responses which represent approximately 8,587 afterschool sites serving more than 1.2 million children. (Many respondents are responsible for multiple sites.)*