

## *Uncertain Times 2012* Afterschool Programs Still Struggling in Today's Economy

Afterschool programs provide a lifeline for families and communities across the nation, providing a safe and supervised space for kids to engage in creative, educational activities with caring adults and mentors. But a rocky economic climate and tightened budgets at the local, state and federal levels have put these programs at risk.

*Uncertain Times 2012*, conducted by the Afterschool Alliance between April 25 and June 8, 2012, assesses the impact of economic conditions on afterschool programs. While many studies have evaluated the impact of programs, *Uncertain Times* is the only research to examine the fiscal health of afterschool programs and their ability to meet the needs of their communities. The 2012 report, the third in the *Uncertain Times* series, finds that afterschool programs continue to grapple with diminishing budgets and are concerned about financial security. These constraints, coupled with increased demand, leave them unable to fully support the children who need their services most. The report is based on 1,012 survey responses, representing 4,947 afterschool sites serving more than 567,470 children located in urban (45 percent), suburban (30 percent) and rural (31 percent) communities across the United States.

**How would you characterize the community that your afterschool program serves?**

31% Rural

30% Suburban

45% Urban

Number of respondents: 907 (90%)

**On average, how many days a week does your program operate during the school year?**

2% 1 day

10% 2-3 days

84% 4-5 days

4% 6-7 days

Number of respondents: 1,010 (99%)

**What percentage of participating students are in elementary, middle and high school?**

74% Elementary

30% Middle School

*For more information, visit [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)*

14% High School  
Number of respondents: 926 (92%)

**What ethnic groups (by percentage) are served by your program?**

7% Asian/Pacific Islander  
35% African American  
44% Caucasian  
23% Hispanic/Latino  
5% Native American  
6% Other

Number of respondents: 901 (89%)

**What percentage of program participants are female and male?**

51% Female  
49% Male

Number of respondents: 902 (89%)

**What percentage of program participants qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program?**

Average is 68%

Number of respondents: 873 (86%)

**What percentage of program participants are Limited English Proficient?**

Average is 14%

Number of respondents: 828 (82%)

**What percentage of program participants have special needs/learning differences?**

Average is 16%

Number of respondents: 839 (83%)

**Including the 2011-2012 school year, how many years has your program been in operation?**

5% 1 (or less)  
11% 2-3  
15% 4-5  
25% 6-10  
15% 11-15  
28% 15+

Number of respondents: 910 (90%)

**What is the primary affiliation of your program?**

32% Community-Based Organization/Local Nonprofit  
29% School-Based (Public and/or Private)  
10% Other  
9% YMCA  
8% BGCA  
4% Private For-Profit  
3% Faith-based Organization  
3% Other Nationally Affiliated Nonprofit  
2% 4-H

1% College/University-Based  
.1% Library/Museum  
Number of respondents: 911 (90%)

**What types of activities is your program offering youth over the 2011-2012 school year? (Check all that apply)**

92% Homework Help  
85% Sports/Physical Activity  
84% Arts/Music/Cultural Activities  
80% Reading  
74% Nutrition/Wellness  
64% Community Service  
60% Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)  
58% Bullying Prevention  
58% Mentoring  
46% Services for Parents and Families  
37% Digital Learning  
36% Drug, Alcohol or Tobacco Prevention Programs  
31% Civic Engagement  
30% College Preparation  
26% Services for Children with Special Needs/Learning Disabilities  
25% Violence/Gang Prevention  
23% Career/Internship or Workforce Development  
20% Language and/or ELL Services  
13% Pregnancy Prevention Programs  
11% Mental Health Services  
9% Other  
6% Medical and/or Dental Services  
Number of respondents: 907 (90%)

**Does your afterschool program offer high school students credits toward graduation?**

15% of those who serve high school students offer credits towards graduation.  
Number of respondents: 891 (88%)

**In addition to after school, does your program offer services during the following times? (Check all that apply)**

44% Holidays and/or Inter-Session  
35% Before School  
19% Weekends  
35% None of the Above  
Number of respondents: 895 (88%)

**Which of the following best describes your program's capacity during the 2011-2012 school year?**

21% We operated above maximum capacity and served more students than we had budgeted to serve  
37% We operated at maximum capacity  
43% We operated below maximum capacity and had open slots  
Number of respondents: 1,012 (100%)

**Do you have a waiting list?**

36% Yes

64% No

Number of respondents: 1,012 (100%)

**Do you offer a summer program?**

80% Yes

20% No

Number of respondents: 916 (91%)

**Which of the following best describes your capacity in the summer of 2011?**

18% We operated above maximum capacity and served more students than we had budgeted to serve

44% We operated at maximum capacity

39% We operated below maximum capacity and had open slots

Number of respondents: 732 (72%)

**In the summer of 2011, did you have a waiting list?**

35% Yes

65% No

Number of respondents: 732 (72%)

**What do you anticipate your enrollment for the summer 2012 to be relative to the summer of 2011?**

17% Much higher

37% A little higher

30% No different

9% A little lower

3% Much lower

1% May or will not be able to offer a summer 2012 program

2% Not applicable (no summer program in 2011)

Number of respondents: 710 (70%)

**Does your program participate in the Summer Food Service Program either as a sponsor or as a site?**

2% Only as a sponsor

39% Only as a site

19% Both as a sponsor and as a site

41% Neither

Number of respondents: 708 (70%)

**What are your sources of federal funding? (Check all that apply) [NOTE: Some of these funds, such as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant, are awarded through the state but are actually federal funds. Please check the appropriate box here under federal funding and do not include the same funding source as a state source of funding awarded through the agency that administers these federal funds.]**

40% 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) Grant

27% None

21% USDA Afterschool Snack or Afterschool Meal Program

- 21% Other/Don't Know
  - 8% AmeriCorps/VISTA
  - 8% Mentoring Program (Department of Justice)
  - 8% Other Title I education funds not listed
  - 6% Supplemental Educational Services
  - 5% Juvenile Justice Programs
  - 5% Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)
  - 5% Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - 2% Arts Education Grants (NEA)
  - 2% Safe and Drug Free Schools & Communities
  - 2% School Improvement Grants
  - 1% Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP)
  - .1% EPA Environmental Education Grants
- Number of respondents: (82%)

**What are your sources of state funding? (Check all that apply. Do not include federal funds that were included in the previous question.)**

- 44% None
  - 20% Department of Education
  - 18% Other/Don't Know
  - 14% Department of Children and Families
  - 13% Department of Social/Health and Human Services
  - 5% Department of Justice/Juvenile Justice
- Number of respondents: (79%)

**What are your sources of local or private funding? (Check all that apply. Please do not include in-kind contributions in your answer.)**

- 43% Parent Fees
  - 43% Private Donations/Donation Containers/Fundraisers
  - 34% Foundation/Philanthropic Organization
  - 27% Corporation/Business
  - 22% City or County Funds
  - 21% School District
  - 12% None
  - 11% Other/Don't Know
  - 10% Faith-Based Organization
  - 5% College/University
- Number of respondents: (83%)

**How has your funding changed from three years ago (2008-2009 school year)?**

- 35% Funding is down a lot
  - 27% Funding is down a little
  - 17% Funding is unchanged
  - 8% Not applicable (i.e., program is new)
  - 11% Funding is up a little
  - 3% Funding is up a lot
- Number of respondents: 841 (83%)

**If you have had to make cuts in your program due to funding loss or stagnation over the past few years, what changes have you made as a result? (Check all that apply)**

- 45% Reduced or eliminated field trips
- 40% Reduced staffing hours
- 34% Reduced variety of activities offered in the program
- 33% Staff layoffs/not replaced staff who left program
- 32% Added or increased fees
- 29% Reduced staff pay and/or benefits
- 26% Reduced number of children served
- 24% Reduced or eliminated professional development
- 23% Increased staff/student ratio
- 20% Reduced number of sites/closed sites
- 18% Reduced or eliminated transportation services
- 17% Reduced or eliminated summer programs
- 14% Reduced daily hours or number of days of service
- 12% Reduced or eliminated holiday and/or weekend service
- 8% Other
- 7% Reduced family services
- 6% Reduced or eliminated food services offered
- 5% Reduced school-community partnerships
- 4% Lowered standards or criteria for hiring staff
- 3% Reduced or eliminated social services offered
- 2% Not applicable (i.e., program is new)

Number of respondents: (51%)

**How secure is your funding for the next 1-5 years? (Please provide an answer for each year)**

	Not Secure	Somewhat Secure	Secure	Very Secure
1-2 years	21%	40%	28%	12%
3-5 years	45%	36%	16%	4%

Number of respondents: 823 (81%)

**Given what you know about your community, are there currently children who need afterschool care and are unable to access it?**

- 88% Yes
- 12% No

Number of respondents: 817 (81%)

**In your best estimate, how many more kids would your program have to serve to meet the needs of all kids in your community?**

- 16% More than double what you already serve
- 9% Double what are currently served
- 6% 75% more than are currently served
- 20% 50% more than are currently served
- 34% 25% more than are currently served
- 15% Less than 10% more than are currently served

Number of respondents: 785 (78%)

**In your opinion, do you consider the following items to be barriers to children being able to participate in your program or others like it in your community?**

	<b>Significant Barrier</b>	<b>Slight Barrier</b>	<b>Not a Barrier</b>
Parent Fee/Cost	29%	23%	48%
Transportation	36%	34%	30%
Older youth need to work or care for younger siblings	26%	47%	28%
Lack of available slots in program	23%	25%	51%
Lack of interest	11%	43%	46%
Negative perception of program or afterschool	5%	23%	72%
Not all children in one family are able to attend afterschool because programs are not available for all age groups	20%	43%	37%
Not enough knowledge about program or afterschool	15%	48%	38%

Number of respondents: 804 (79%)

**In your opinion, how much does the challenging economic climate seem to be affecting your community?**

64% Very Much  
 34% Somewhat  
 3% Not Much  
 .2% Not At All

Number of respondents: 814 (80%)

**Is your community showing signs of recovering from the economic recession?**

4% Very Much  
 41% Somewhat  
 44% Not Much  
 12% Not At All

Number of respondents: 814 (80%)

**In the past three years, has your community experienced any of the following? (Check all that apply)**

86% Increased unemployment  
 83% Persistently high gas prices  
 79% Increased demand for social services  
 68% Failing or shrinking businesses  
 68% Persistently high food prices  
 65% More kids going hungry or families struggling to provide food for children  
 53% Increased homelessness  
 44% Families moving out of community because of lack of jobs or affordable housing

- 38% Decreased funding for program resulting in decreased capacity to serve kids
  - 37% Loss of major employers/industries
  - 31% Decreased enrollment because parent no longer qualifies for child care subsidy and cannot afford parent fees
- Number of respondents: (80%)

**Some programs have reported a loss of funding over the last three years due to cutbacks by state or local governments or grant commitments that will not be fulfilled. To what extent has this been a problem for your program?**

- 16% Our program lost a significant amount of money over the last three years, causing major cutbacks in our program, or causing us to shut down one or more sites
  - 23% Our program lost a significant amount of money over the last three years, but we will be able to continue operations as before
  - 31% Our program lost a small but manageable amount of funding over the last three years
  - 30% Our program has not lost funding over the last three years
- Number of respondents: 813 (80%)

**How would you describe your program's budget today?**

- 57% Inadequate to meet the needs of students and families in your community
  - 43% Adequate to meet the needs of students and families in your community
- Number of respondents: 813 (80%)

**Would you say that your program's budget is in better shape than it was at the height of the recession in 2008?**

- 39% No, our budget is in worse shape
  - 40% No, our budget is the same
  - 21% Yes
- Number of respondents: 799 (79%)

**Looking to the 2012-2013 school year, how much do you anticipate the challenging economic climate will affect your program?**

- 31% Very Much
  - 54% Somewhat
  - 14% Not Much
  - 1% Not At All
- Number of respondents: 813 (80%)