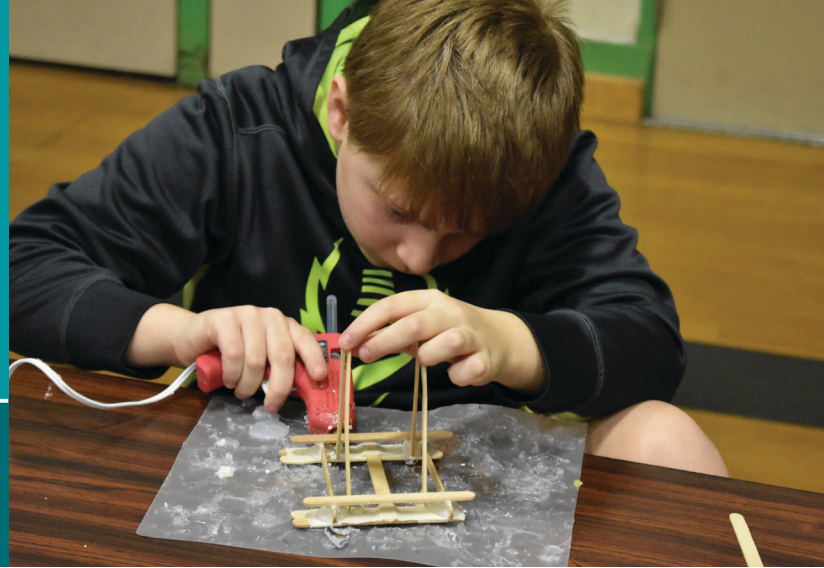


Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs Are Essential for COVID-19 Recovery

This is Afterschool



The afterschool field is an essential part of the nationwide community response to the coronavirus pandemic, and programs continue to play a critical role throughout recovery as our states reopen for business.

Rising to the Moment

Many afterschool programs remained open during the COVID-19 closures, innovating to keep kids safe and engaged in learning regardless of physical setting. Depending on community needs, these programs expanded their hours and services to help essential personnel continue to do their jobs, provided food for families in need, and stayed connected with caregivers and parents.

When COVID-19 forced afterschool programs to close:*



78% pivoted to offer virtual programming



37% distributed meals to families



16% stayed open to serve children of essential workers

*Results are based on 358 responses collected through a national online survey conducted by the Afterschool Alliance between March 31 – April 7, 2020.

Moving Forward

Today, following their Governors' Executive Orders, afterschool and summer programs are slowly and safely reopening to help children catch up, keep up, and emerge from this crisis strong, resilient, and hopeful. Programs are:

- contingency planning to operate flexibly in the future as additional issues that stem from the pandemic arise
- working to deploy staff with expertise in social-emotional learning and trauma-informed care to help kids recover emotionally
- expecting to modify operating hours as school schedules may no longer look traditional



Did you know?

Nationwide, more than 10 million school-age (K-12) youth rely on afterschool and summer learning programs. These expanded learning programs exist in all 50 states and include: 4-H clubs; Boys & Girls Clubs; YMCAs; teen leadership and service programs; summer camps; and robotics, college readiness, science and technology, sports, arts and music, drama, and academic enrichment programs. Kids attend these programs before school, after school, and during the summer.



Yet afterschool programs are in jeopardy: It is expected that as many as 3 in 4 will close due to lack of funding.

Help us change that.

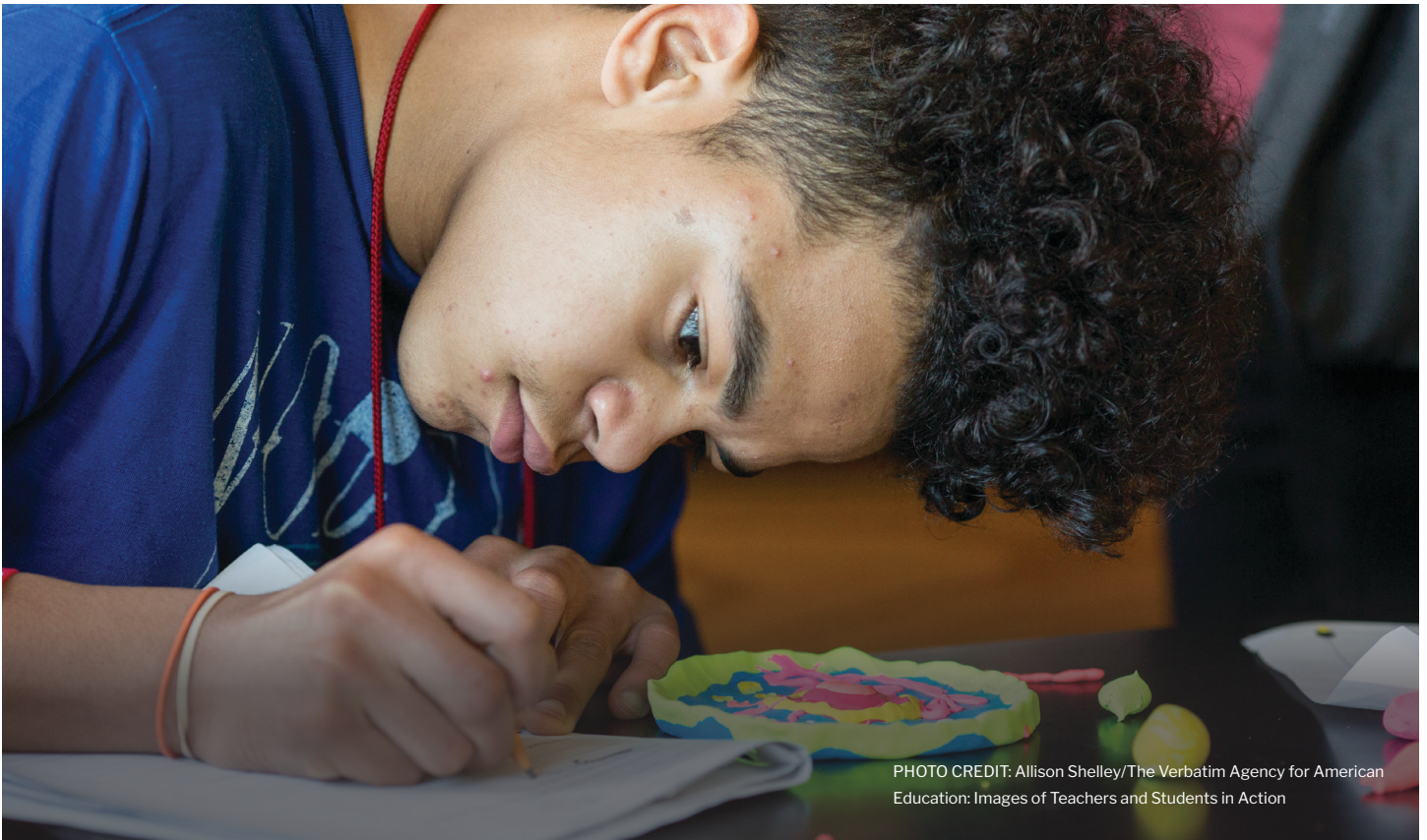





PHOTO CREDIT: Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for American Education: Images of Teachers and Students in Action

Proven Effective

Decades of research show that afterschool programs inspire students to learn, help them do better in school, and prepare them for college and career. Among students who attend 21st Century Community Learning Center-funded afterschool and summer programs:

 **69%** showed improvement in their homework completion and class participation.

 **62%** improved their behavior in class.

 **1 in 2** improved their math and reading grades.



Did you Know...

Did you know that 4.5 million kids in families with low income attend afterschool, but 10.1 million others who are also low income are waiting for an available program? The afterschool field is committed to ensure that children in underserved communities—where the unmet demand for programs is often the greatest—have access to quality, affordable afterschool and summer learning opportunities.

Many families who have low income rely on afterschool for daily snacks and supper; new learning opportunities for their children; and resources that have become critical during this crisis. In our post-COVID-19 world, we can expect afterschool to be even more critical as more families struggle financially and unemployment rates continue to rise.



We Need Support for Afterschool to:



Open safely and slowly. As states begin to reopen, we do not expect initial attendance numbers in our programs to be as high as they were before the coronavirus pandemic, and costs per student will be substantially higher as programs implement new safety and staffing procedures. Many afterschool programs will struggle to keep their doors open while relying on funding sources that are based on attendance, such as fee-based or per-child-reimbursement models.

Not only are many parents concerned with their financial future, but they also are nervous about sending their kids back to school, and afterschool and summer programs, not yet fully trusting safety measures. We need funding to ensure proper safety measures, including masks, sanitation, and other necessary precautions, as our kids' and staff's health is our #1 priority.



Keep kids connected and learning. During the crisis, afterschool providers have been innovating to stay connected with students and keep them engaged in learning. Some have implemented safety measures to keep their physical sites open, while others now offer remote support and virtual programming to help with school work and hands-on activities that complement school lessons and provide students outlets for social and emotional expression, leadership, and exploration. Looking ahead, students will need even more robust support from afterschool and summer learning providers to re-engage, catch up, and keep up.

Afterschool programs connect kids with caring adults trained to provide developmental supports proven to help young people develop social skills, gain self-control and confidence, build healthy relationships, improve work habits and grades, and reduce risky behaviors.



Help parents return to work. As businesses across the country are reopening, many parents will be unable to go back to work if their kids are still home. In fact, according to America After 3PM, **74% of parents say that afterschool programs help them keep their jobs and 75% say that afterschool programs give them peace of mind while they are at work.**

We need to ensure that programs have enough resources to maintain their staff during COVID-19 closures. Without these resources, we risk programs never being able to reopen again, much less ramp back up as economies reopen and more families return to work outside the home.

When kids have no place to go after school, they miss out on opportunities to learn and each year. Parents lose 8 days of work, and businesses lose up to \$300 billion a year due to parental concerns about afterschool care. Today, the need is in ever sharper focus as parents struggle to work with children at home.



Partner with schools. As school districts consider different models for the upcoming school year, perhaps earlier school-day start times, staggered schedules, and school days that incorporate a hybrid of virtual and in-classroom learning, partnerships with afterschool programs will be essential for meeting students' needs and helping to mitigate learning loss as a result of the pandemic. This means that we will need to re-imagine students' learning days, which includes how afterschool programs can support learning during expanded out-of-school hours. Examples of partnering with schools may include sharing physical spaces, giving students access to technology devices and hot spots, and coordinating professional development and training for both classroom teachers and afterschool program staff.

Before the pandemic, the national demand for afterschool programs was high—nearly 20 million were waiting for an available program. Going forward, this need may be greater as programs will need cover more hours that meet adjusted school calendars and accommodate parents' work schedules.

Help Protect Your Local Afterschool Programs

The afterschool field is thinking big and bold about our role in a comprehensive learning day to help ensure that students have every possible opportunity, virtually and in person, today and in a post- COVID-19 world.

Now is the time to invest in afterschool and summer learning programs as they will need additional staff and professional development, as well as more space and the ability to run full-day programming to most effectively support working parents and school districts' revised schedules.

We will continue to work collaboratively with communities so that our schedules and services are efficient, effective, and meet the needs of the families we serve. We are calling on your support.



Parents can:

- Follow programs' safety protocols as your families' health and safety are our #1 priority.
- Communicate with your school, school board, employers, and elected officials about your and your child's needs during COVID-19 recovery.



School districts and local officials can:

- Collaborate with afterschool providers when re-imagining summer learning programs and back-to-school time. The afterschool field can operate in ways that best support families' needs for enhanced learning and safe, supervised settings if they are part of a comprehensive plan for a redesigned learning day as schools re-open. Other groups to consider inviting to the table include parks and recreation departments, museums, libraries, faith-based institutions, higher education, public housing, and summer camps, which also serve families.
- Consider how funding from the CARES Act can support young people across learning settings.



Businesses can:

- Continue to offer work-study and entrepreneurship education opportunities for students enrolled in afterschool programs.
- Survey your workforce to identify supports that your employees need. Share findings regarding afterschool implications with your local programs.
- Advocate for support of your community's afterschool and summer learning programs.



State and federal officials can:

- Use resources in the COVID-19 response and recovery funding, such as the Governor's Emergency Education Relief and Elementary and Secondary Education Relief Funds, to strengthen afterschool and summer programs. Additional CARES Act Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds can support afterschool programs for students up to age 13.
- Increase the allocation of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars for afterschool and summer learning programs.
- Consider leveraging AmeriCorps and VISTA, WIOA and CTE funds, and Child Care Development Block Grant funds to creatively braid support for afterschool programs at the local level.
- Empower 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) to support immediate needs by ensuring they have the necessary resources to fully support students when in-person operations resume, including over the summer and in the upcoming school year.
- Increase 21st CCLC funding at the federal level and consider matching federal funds with state afterschool funding.
- Support continued funding for afterschool and summer learning programs to ensure proper safety measures, including masks, sanitation, and other necessary measures.



The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs.