

# America After 3PM for Black Families and Communities



## Introduction

The Afterschool Alliance's fourth edition of America After 3PM—which provides a detailed accounting of the circumstances and conditions of U.S. children during the hours of 3 to 6 p.m. and compares afterschool program participation and unmet demand statistics for 2020 with results from 2004, 2009, and 2014—finds that the need for afterschool programs is especially high in the African American community. For every Black child in an afterschool program, 3 are waiting to get in, as more than 9 in 10 Black parents (93 percent) report satisfaction with their child's afterschool program, the highest reported satisfaction across the editions of the survey.\*

While data for the 2020 edition of America After 3PM were collected pre-pandemic, to accompany the data and determine how the pandemic has affected families' needs during the hours after school, the Afterschool Alliance commissioned a nationally representative follow-up survey of parents in October 2020. The follow-up survey found that nearly half of Black parents reported stress due to providing learning support while their child's school is operating virtually (47 percent) and concerns about their ability to juggle working and monitoring their child's distance learning (46 percent), and 3 in 4 Black parents (74 percent) say that the experience of coronavirus has made them appreciate teachers and afterschool program providers more than ever.

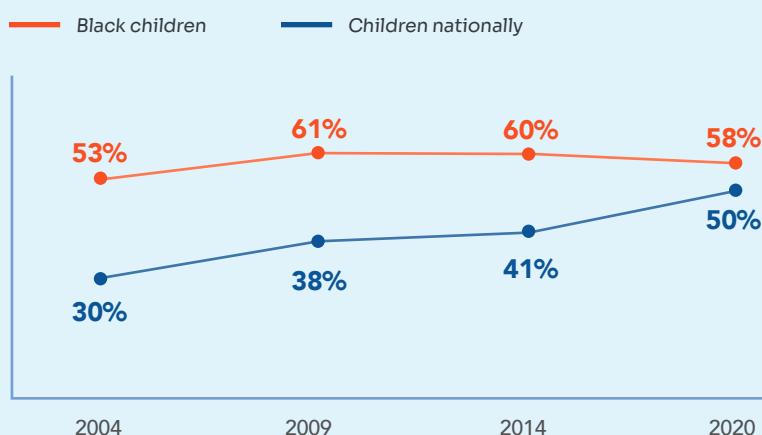
### Unmet demand remains high in the African American community

The unmet demand for afterschool programs among Black children remains high. For every Black child in an afterschool program, 3 more are waiting to get in. Once again, America After 3PM finds that more than half of Black children who are not enrolled in an afterschool program would be in a program if one were available (Figure 1). There are now more than 4 million Black children who would likely participate in a program (58 percent).

The unmet demand for afterschool programs is higher among Black children than children overall (58 percent vs. 50 percent), as well as higher than White children (46 percent).

**Figure 1: The percentage of Black children left without afterschool remains high**

Percent of children who are not in an afterschool program, but would be enrolled if a program were available to them



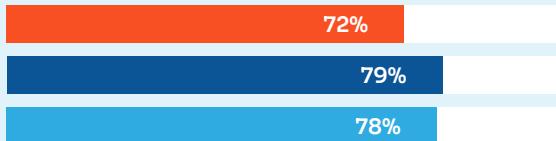
\* "Black" and "African American" and "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably throughout this report. Both "Black" and "White" are capitalized for the purposes of this report as referring to a racial and ethnic group of people.

## Figure 2: Parents, in particular parents of color, agree that afterschool programs complement school day learning

Percentage of parents who agree that afterschool programs provide the following benefits:

White parents    Latinx parents    Black parents

Help children become more excited about learning and interested in school



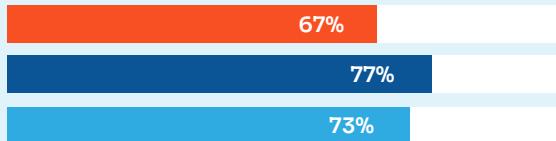
Help parents build connections to their child's school day education

## Figure 3: Afterschool programs are serving as a resource to parents

Percentage of parents who agree that their child's afterschool program provides the following supports

White parents    Latinx parents    Black parents

Helps me build skills through classes and/or workshops



Helps me connect with community resources

### Black families recognize the positive role of afterschool programs, both for young people and parents

Black parents largely have a positive view of afterschool programs' social and emotional and academic benefits that mirror parents' responses overall, agreeing that programs keep kids safe (74 percent); provide opportunities for children to engage with their peers and reduce unproductive screen time (83 percent); and help children gain interest and skills related to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)<sup>†</sup> (78 percent). Black parents also view afterschool programs as having a positive influence on children, agreeing that programs help young people build life skills (82 percent), allow children to build positive relationships

with caring adults and mentors (79 percent), and reduce the likelihood that young people will engage in risky behaviors, such as drug use (73 percent).

Black and Latinx parents are more likely than White parents to connect the supports afterschool programs provide to children's school-day learning, including agreeing that programs help children become more excited about learning and interested in school and help parents build connections to their child's school-day education (Figure 2).

Black parents also overwhelmingly agree that afterschool programs support families, with approximately 4 in 5 Black parents agreeing that afterschool programs provide working parents peace of mind knowing that their child

is safe and supervised (83 percent) and that afterschool programs help working parents keep their jobs (79 percent). Moreover, the intensity of agreement with the supports afterschool programs provide families is greater among Black parents compared to parents overall. For example, 56 percent of Black parents completely agree that afterschool programs provide working parents peace of mind versus 49 percent of parents overall. Both African American and Hispanic parents with a child in an afterschool program are more likely than White parents to report that their afterschool program helped them to build skills through classes and/or workshops and connected them with community resources, such as dental clinics or financial planning services (Figure 3).

<sup>†</sup> In the 2020 America After 3PM survey, respondents were asked about "science, technology, engineering, math, and computer science learning opportunities."



## Access is a greater barrier to afterschool participation in the African American community

While affordability and accessibility are the primary challenges reported by parents overall to enrolling their child in an afterschool program, access to programs appears to be a greater barrier to participation among communities of color, in particular, communities of color with low income. Similar to parents overall and White parents, cost of afterschool programs was a reason why a majority of Black parents (58 percent) did not enroll their child in a program; however, Black parents are more likely than White parents to report that there was a lack of a safe way for their child to get to and come home from an afterschool program, program locations and hours of operation are not convenient,

and that there were no spaces available in the afterschool program they preferred (Figure 4).

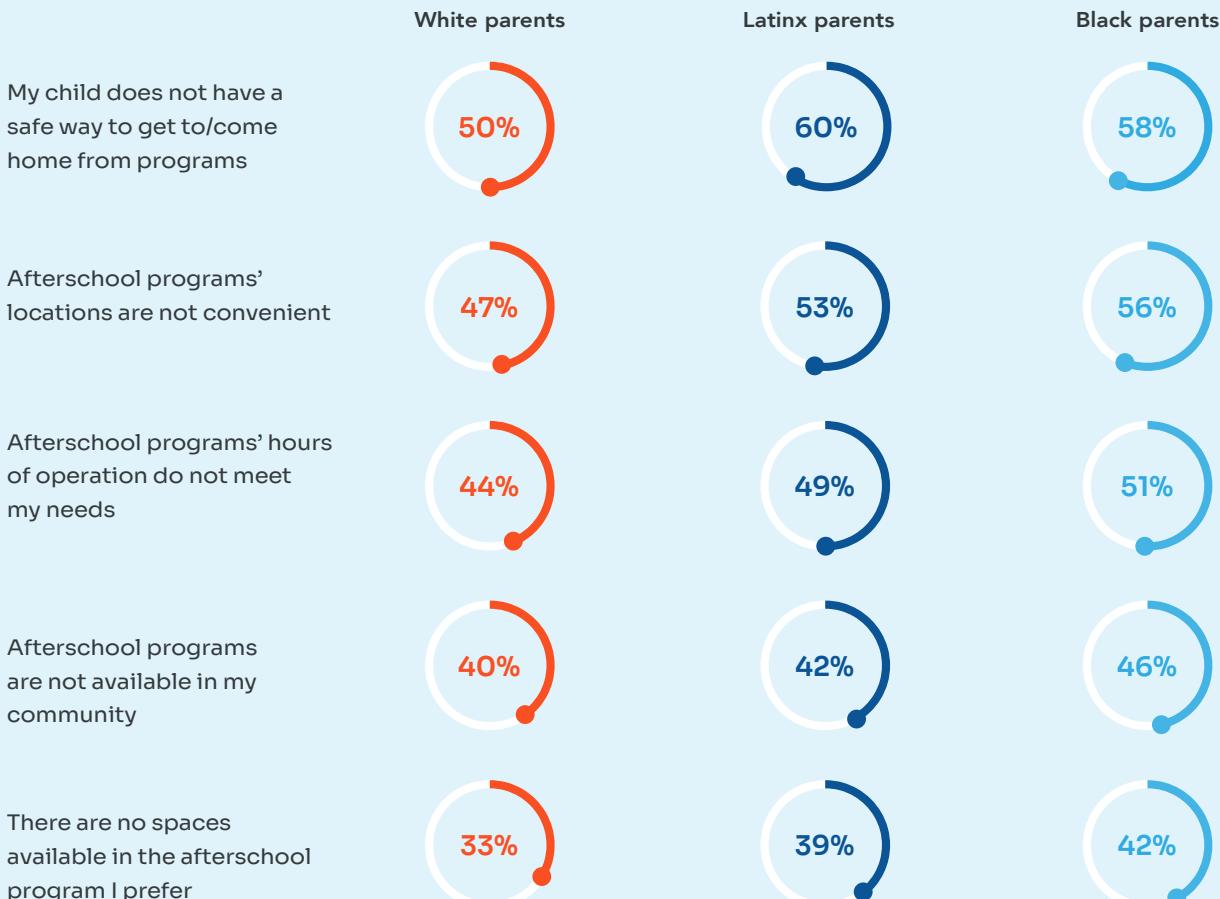
Examining challenges reported by Black, Latinx, and White families with low income, Black and Latinx parents with low income are more likely than White parents with low income to report issues of access (Figure 5). Black parents with low income are more likely than both Latinx and White parents with low income to report that afterschool programs are not available in their community and are the only group where the lack of a safe way to get to and come home from programs is the top reported answer. Cost is the top reported answer among White parents with low income (63 percent) and preferring that their child stay with them or another adult after school is the top reported answer among Latinx parents with low income (65 percent).

Following the national trend, barriers to participation reported by African American parents have grown since 2014 (Figure 6). For instance, the percentage of African American parents reporting that programs are too expensive increased 18 percentage points from 2014 (40 percent vs. 58 percent) and parents reporting that their child does not have a safe way to and from programs increased 10 percentage points (48 percent vs. 58 percent).

While not among the top-tier reasons for not enrolling their child in an afterschool program, it is worth noting that concerns that afterschool programs would expose their child to negative influences is higher among communities of color, with a majority of Black (54 percent) and Latinx parents (56 percent) reporting that this concern factored into their decision-making process,

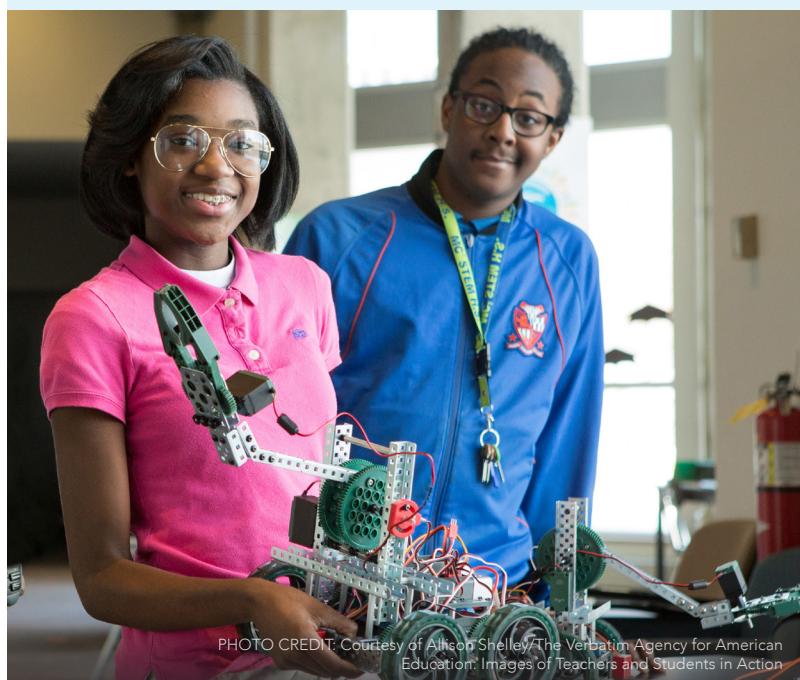
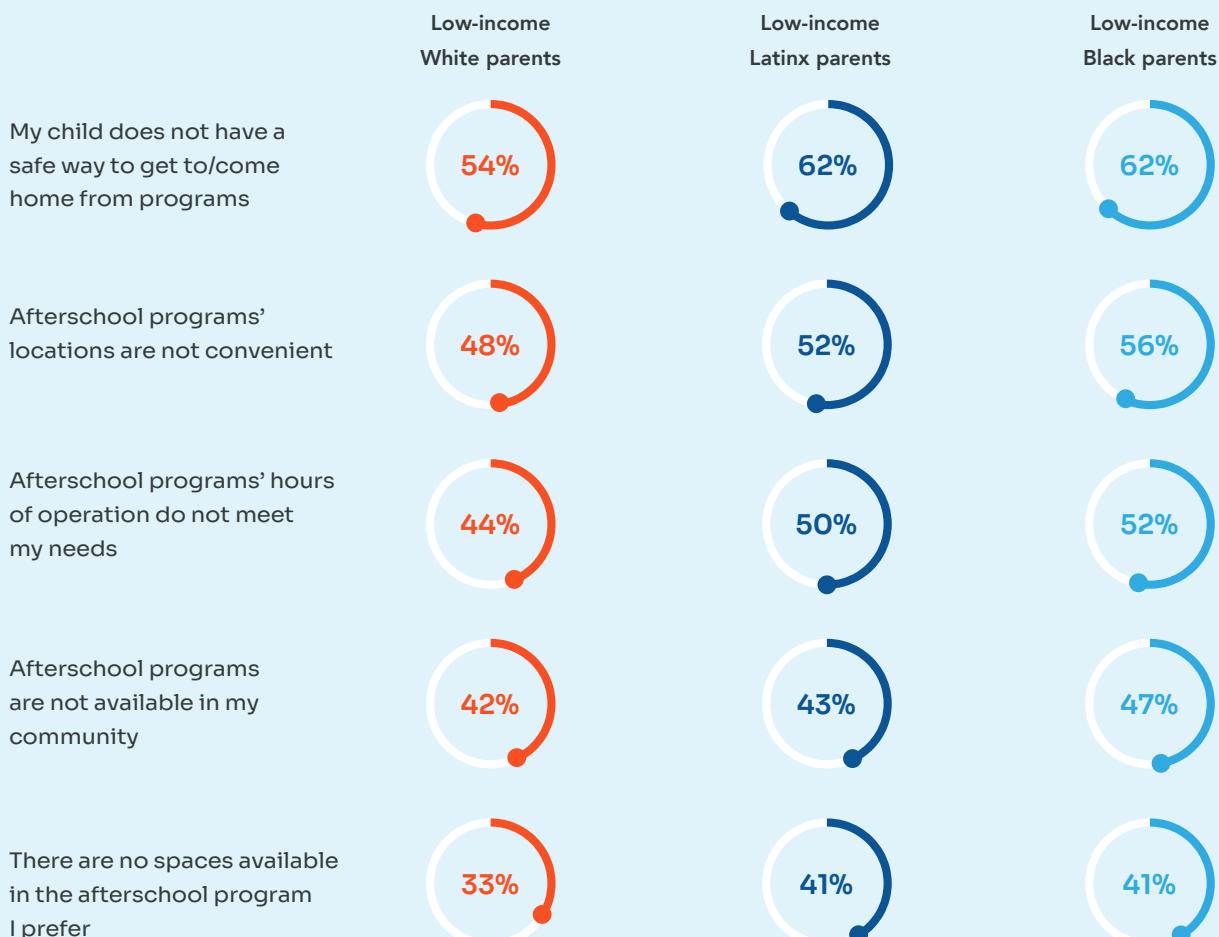
**Figure 4: Families of color face greater challenges accessing afterschool programs**

Percentage of parents reporting that the following were an important reason for their decision not to enroll their child in an afterschool program



### Figure 5: Challenges accessing afterschool programs is even greater among families of color with low income

Percentage of parents reporting that the following were an important reason for their decision not to enroll their child in an afterschool program



When examining the differences in the level of participation in out-of-school activities by income, nearly 9 in 10 Black families

**(88 percent)** in the highest income bracket report that their child participated in either an afterschool program, a summer program, or an activity after school, compared to 3 in 5 Black families in the lowest income bracket

**(63 percent).** Black families in the highest income bracket also report spending 3.5 times more on out-of-school time activities than families in the lowest income bracket (\$3,519 vs. \$999).



## Figure 6: Barriers to afterschool program participation are increasing in the African American community

Percentage of Black parents reporting that:

● 2020   ● 2014

Afterschool programs are too expensive

58% +18  
40%

Afterschool programs' hours of operation do not meet my needs

51% +8  
43%

Afterschool programs' locations are not convenient

56% +16  
40%

Afterschool programs are not available in my community

46% +7  
39%

My child does not have a safe way to get to and come home from programs

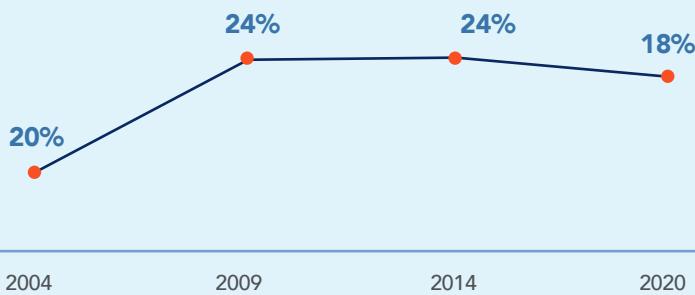
58% +10  
48%

compared to 47 percent of White parents.

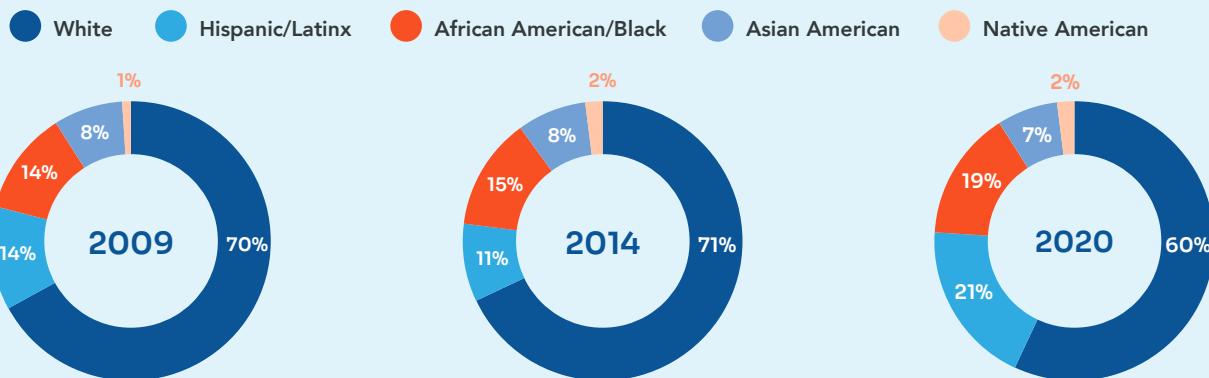
As more Black parents report that the cost and availability of programs are barriers to enrolling their child in an afterschool program, America After 3PM finds that the number of Black children in afterschool programs has declined since 2014 (Figure 7). The number of Black children in afterschool programs decreased from nearly 2.4 million (24 percent) in 2014 to approximately 1.5 million in 2020 (18 percent). However, although afterschool program participation in the African American community has declined, Black children represent a larger share of children in afterschool programs, growing from 15 percent in 2014 to 19 percent in 2020 (Figure 8).

## Figure 7: Afterschool participation has declined for the first time

Percentage of Black children participating in an afterschool program



**Figure 8: Composition of afterschool program participants by race/ethnicity through the editions of America After 3PM:**



\*Totals may not add up to 100 percent as respondents were able to select all answers that apply

### Benefits are significant for Black children and parents fortunate enough to participate

The 2020 America After 3PM survey finds that more than 9 in 10 Black parents are satisfied with their child's afterschool program, the highest percentage of Black parents reporting satisfaction across the 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2020 editions of the survey (92 percent, 90 percent, 92 percent, and 93 percent, respectively). In afterschool programs, African

American parents report that their child is receiving help with homework (82 percent), taking part in STEM learning activities (77 percent), and building life skills (71 percent), as well as getting physical activity (86 percent), and receiving healthy meals or snacks (76 percent). An overwhelming majority of Black parents also report that their child is building social skills (90 percent) and confidence (80 percent), and learning responsible decision-making (74 percent) in their afterschool program.



### Afterschool in the African American community

<b>1,506,000</b> Number of children in afterschool programs	<b>5.7</b> Average hours per week
<b>3.8</b> Average days per week	<b>\$96</b> Average weekly cost*

\*Among parents who report that they pay a fee for their child's afterschool program



## Figure 9: Parents are looking for afterschool programs to provide a range of supports

Percentage of parents reporting the following items were important in choosing their child's afterschool program

White parents    Latinx parents    Black parents

### Opportunities to build life skills



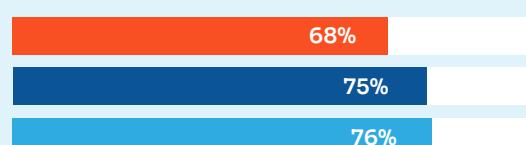
### Opportunities for reading or writing



### Exciting my child about learning



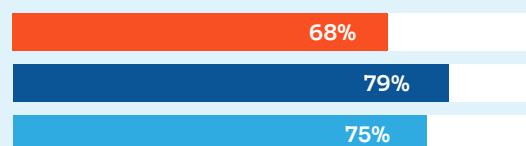
### Learning activities not provided during the school day



### Variety of activities



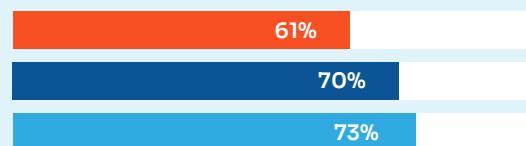
### STEM learning opportunities



### Homework or academic help



### College or career exploration



Knowledgeable and caring staff (94 percent) and a safe environment (93 percent) topped the list of reasons Black parents selected their child's afterschool program, similar to parents overall; however, parents of color are much more likely to say that exciting their child about learning, providing academic enrichment, and offering learning activities not provided during the school day were important in their choice of an afterschool program than White parents (Figure 9).

When looking at the intensity of answers, even more notable differences arise between White parents and Black and Latinx parents. For example, majorities of Black and Latinx parents report that homework or academic help was extremely important in their selection of their child's afterschool program (65 percent and 59 percent, respectively), compared to 47 percent of White parents. Opportunities for reading or writing and college or career exploration are other factors that a majority of Black and Latinx parents report were extremely important in their selection of their child's afterschool program, compared to less than half of White parents (Figure 10).

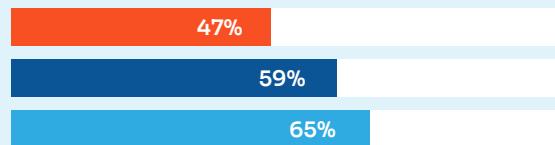


**Figure 10: Black parents are more likely than White parents to report that academic enrichment is very important in their selection of an afterschool program**

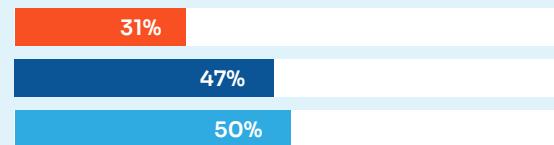
Percentage of parents reporting the following items were extremely important in choosing their child's afterschool program

White parents    Latinx parents    Black parents

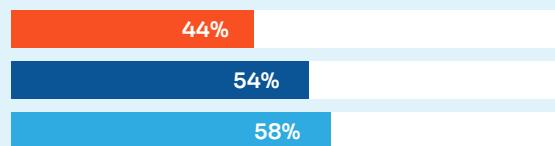
Homework or academic help



College or career exploration



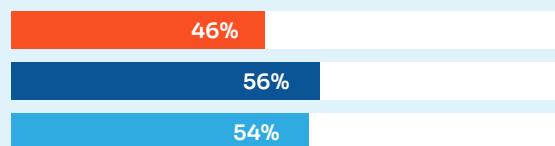
Opportunities for reading or writing



Science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science learning opportunities



Variety of activities



African American parents report high levels of satisfaction with individual aspects of their child's program that were important in their selection of a program, including the program's safe environment, staff, opportunities to build life skills, and hours of operation and location (Figure 11).

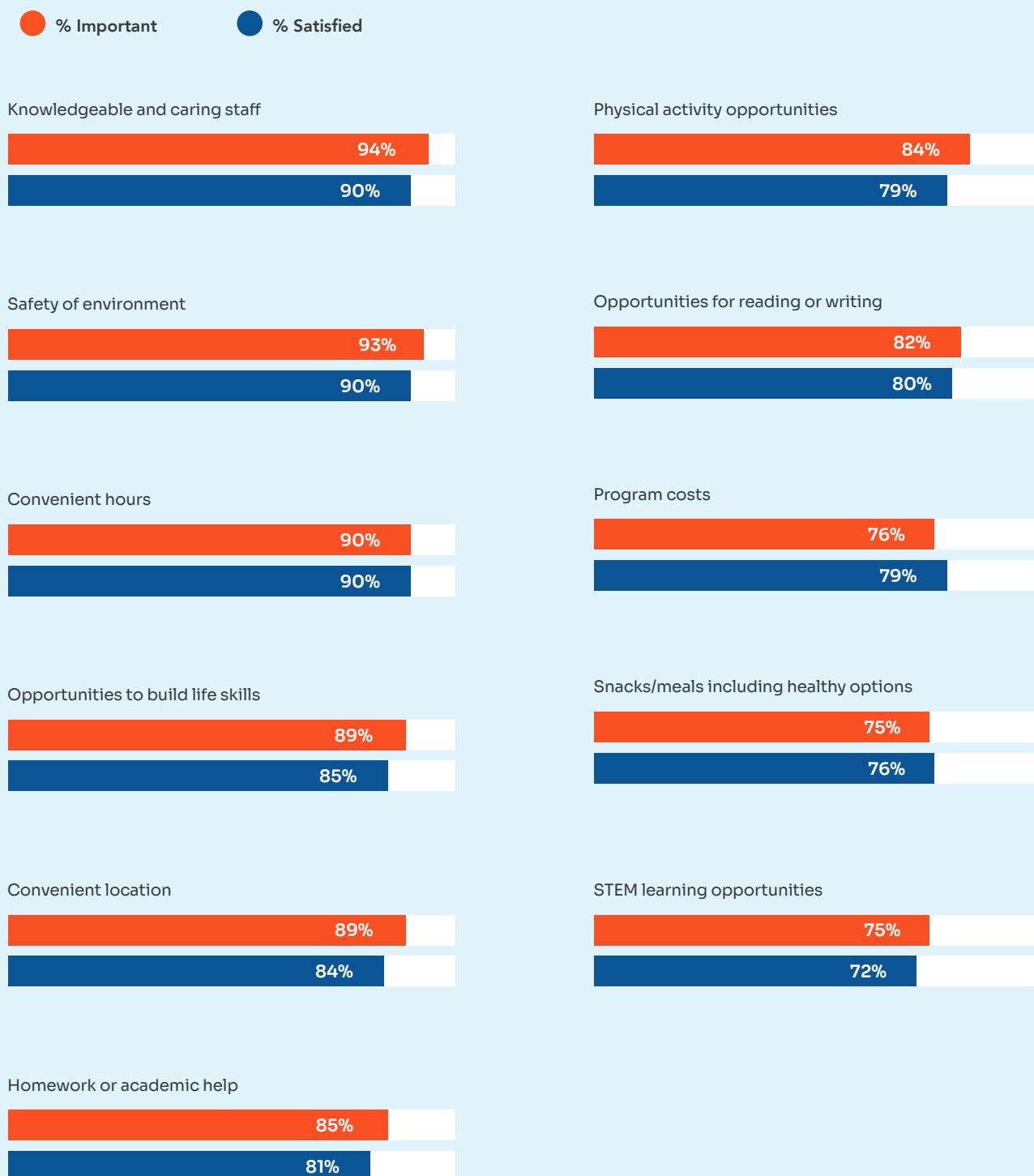
**Black parents support public investment in afterschool**

Nationally, support for investment in afterschool programs is high, with support equally strong in the African American community. Overall, 86 percent of Black parents agree that all young people deserve access to quality afterschool and summer programs, compared to 84 percent nationally. Eighty-eight percent of Black parents report that they are in favor of public funding for afterschool opportunities, slightly higher than the national average (87 percent).



**Figure 11: Black parents are satisfied with aspects of programming that are important to them**

Percentage of parents reporting importance of and satisfaction with aspects of programming





## Methodology

America After 3PM is a nationally representative survey of randomly selected adults who live in the United States and are the parent or guardian of a school-aged child who lives in their household. The survey was conducted using a blend of national consumer panels, with the goal of completing at least 200 interviews in every state and Washington, D.C. In states where this goal could not be reached using online panels, supplementary telephone interviews were conducted. For the 2020 wave of America After 3PM, interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish.

America After 3PM data included in this report were collected between January 27 and March 17, 2020. A total of 31,055 households, including 3,774 African American households, were surveyed and answered questions regarding ways in which their child or children are cared for in the hours after school. A subset of households, 14,391 respondents, including 2,084 African American households, answered a series of follow up questions regarding afterschool experiences or barriers to participation in afterschool, and perceptions of afterschool programs. The overall margin of error for child-level and household-level data is +/- < 1 percent.

Projections for African American child-level data represent the 9.9 million African American youth ages 5 to 19 in the United States, based on numbers from the 2018 U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey.

The October 2020 survey of parents was conducted by Edge Research and is a nationally representative online survey fielded October 12-29, 2020, of 1,202 parents of school-aged children.

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For more information about the national and state-specific America After 3PM survey findings, visit:  
[www.aa3pm.co/](http://www.aa3pm.co/)

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/](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/).