



This is Afterschool

Helping Kids Reach Their Full Potential






Across America, 1 in 5 kids are alone and unsupervised from 3 to 6 p.m.¹ These are the hours when juvenile crime, victimization, and drug use peak—and many parents are still at work.²

When youth are not involved in structured activities after school, they are:

- More likely to engage in risky behaviors.³
- Nearly three times more likely to skip classes at school and experiment with drugs.⁴

Afterschool is changing that.

Afterschool helps youth develop the skills and relationships they need by:

-  Providing caring and supportive mentors
-  Creating a safe space where students can explore new interest areas and build confidence in their abilities
-  Showing students how to reach consensus and work collaboratively
-  Providing meaningful ways for students to engage in programs
-  Promoting problem-solving and critical thinking skills through interactive learning experiences



By transforming a time of risk into a time of opportunity, afterschool helps kids:⁵

-  Gain self-control and confidence
-  Develop strong social skills
-  Build healthy relationships with their peers and adults
-  Improve work habits and grades
-  Improve school day attendance and behavior
-  Reduce risky behaviors, such as tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol use

Afterschool is Essential to Healthy Youth Development

In addition to helping youth build a range of skills and relationships, afterschool acts as a key setting for healthy development and learning. Science shows that, **from birth through young adulthood, our brains are continuously developing**: brain pathways grow stronger, information is processed more rapidly, and we build more complex connections that enable more complex thinking.⁶



Children and youth need **continued support throughout this development and across the different learning environments they inhabit, whether home, school, afterschool, or the broader community**. Reaching 10.2 million children and youth,⁷ afterschool and summer learning programs are a part of the continuum of supports that promote learning and foster healthy development.⁸



“When children are born, their brains are not fully developed. The development of the brain actually continues into young adulthood. It is relationships and experiences that drive the development of the brain...But what’s most interesting is that a child can become a productive and engaged learner from any developmental starting point as long as we intentionally build those skills.”

Dr. Pamela Cantor, M.D., founder and senior science advisor of Turnaround for Children.⁹



By their very nature, afterschool and summer learning programs offer spaces for youth to build protective factors, by providing opportunities for young people to connect with their communities, learn new things, express themselves, and build relationships with caring adults. The afterschool community has a tremendous opportunity, and responsibility, to be good stewards and supporters that help young people develop healthy relationships and build skills to be ready for life. One of the ways we can ensure young people are ready is by helping them develop the ability to make healthy decisions about substance use.

Thomas Azzarella

Director of the Alaska Afterschool Network

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Helping students thrive.

Sources

¹ www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM

² www.fightcrime.org

³ <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/0c56/45d1dc96b36f9d059909cc848dda034c91e5.pdf?ga=2.102290244.491001682.1557497137-372060015.1557497137>

⁴ www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/oijdp/fs200114.pdf

⁵ <https://1jhp52ed2172zja983tp5xl-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/preventing-youth-marijuana-use-programs-strategies-2017.pdf>; <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED499113>; <https://teammates.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/DuBoisetalMeta.pdf?swpmx=a18824ec5b4488dd41e9fe5b0a816487&swpmxnonce=3afde01d25>; http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/What_Does_the_Research_Say_About_Afterschool.pdf

⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10888691.2017.1398649>

⁷ www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM

⁸ http://nationathope.org/wp-content/uploads/aspen_yd_final_2_web-11.18.pdf

⁹ <https://www.edutopia.org/video/science-learning-and-development>