



## **A Summary of Connecticut Data from the *Uncertain Times: Funding Insecurity Puts Afterschool Programs at Risk* Web-based Survey**

Today, a minority of Connecticut students benefit from afterschool programs while many youth in the state are unable to enroll because space is limited and funding is not keeping pace with demand. Afterschool programs provide a critical support that helps children do better in school and reassures parents that their children are safe and well cared for after the school day ends. Unfortunately, program leaders report that they are serving a high-need population; are serving more children than expected; and are struggling to maintain 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.

87 Connecticut afterschool providers took the survey. They represent 283 program sites and serve more than 100,000 children. 52% percent of respondents are located in urban communities, 39% are in suburban communities, and 9% are in rural communities. The survey finds that in Connecticut during the 2005/2006 school year:

- 81% of afterschool programs operated at or above maximum capacity.
- 84% of respondents say that there are children in their communities who need afterschool programs and don't have access to them.
- 47% of respondents say that funding is down a little (20%) or a lot (27%) in the last two years. Another 25% say it is unchanged. Just 17% say funding is up a little and just 11% say funding is up a lot.
- If programs are able to see an increase in funding in the future, they are most likely to serve more children.
- Afterschool programs in Connecticut are serving a high-need population. Almost half of respondents (42%) say that more than three in five students qualify for free or reduced price lunches.
- Parent fees are the most accessible funding resource in Connecticut. 52% percent of respondents rate parent fees as accessible or very accessible. Only 20% of respondents rate 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, the only federal funding stream solely devoted to afterschool programs, as accessible or very accessible.
- Fewer than half (48%) of respondents feel fully secure about their funding for the next 1-2 years. Only 27% feel fully secure about their funding for the next 3-5 years.
- Program operators in Connecticut consider the top three barriers to participation in afterschool programs to be: transportation; lack of available slots in the program; and older youth need to work or care for younger siblings.

In sum, *Uncertain Times* finds that many afterschool programs in Connecticut are fully subscribed but still unable to meet the demand, and that budget cuts and stagnation prevent them from reaching more youth and families in their communities who could benefit from afterschool.

### **Topline Connecticut Results from *Uncertain Times*:**

#### **Which of the following best describes your program's capacity during the 2005-2006 school year? (check one)**

- 20% We operated above maximum capacity and served more students than we had budgeted to serve.
- 61% We operated at maximum capacity.
- 19% We operated below maximum capacity and served fewer students than we had budgeted to serve.

Number of respondents: 87 (100%)

#### **What percentage of program participants qualified for the federal free or reduced lunch program? (check one)**

- 5% none
- 24% 1-30%
- 9% 31-60%
- 42% 61-100%
- 21% Unknown

Number of respondents: 87 (100%)

#### **During the 2005-2006 school year, what types of activities did your program offer youth? (Check all that apply)**

- 87% Arts/Music/Cultural Activities
- 86% Homework Help
- 72% Reading
- 71% Community Service
- 66% Science, Math and/or Technology
- 55% Mentoring
- 53% Obesity Prevention/Nutrition/Athletics/Recreation
- 52% Services for Parents and Families
- 45% Drug, Alcohol or Tobacco prevention programs
- 41% Violence prevention programs
- 35% Career and/or College prep
- 28% Services for Children with Disabilities
- 26% Other
- 22% Pregnancy prevention programs
- 20% Mental Health Services
- 18% Language and/or ESL services
- 8% Medical and/or Dental Services

Number of respondents: 87 (100%)

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

- 62% Holidays and/or inter-session
- 40% Before school

29% Weekends  
 21% None of the above  
 Number of respondents: 87 (100%)

**Did you offer a summer program?**

75% Yes  
 25% No  
 Number of respondents: 87 (100%)

**How has your funding changed over the last 2 years? (check one)**

27% Funding is down a lot  
 20% Funding is down a little  
 25% Funding is unchanged  
 17% Funding is up a little  
 11% Funding is up a lot  
 Number of respondents: 77 (89%)

**In the future, if you receive more funding, what change would you be most likely to make to your program? (Check one)**

25% Serve more children  
 13% Increase staff pay and/or benefits  
 10% Add variety of activities offered in the program  
 7% Increase daily hours or number of days of service  
 5% Add family services  
 5% Add transportation services  
 5% Decrease staff/student ratio  
 5% Other  
 4% Add professional development  
 4% Add summer program  
 4% Cut or decrease fees  
 3% Add field trips  
 3% Add holiday and/or weekend service  
 3% Add social services offered  
 3% Raise standards or criteria for hiring staff  
 2% Increase school-community partnerships  
 1% None. I wouldn't make any changes.  
 0% Add or increased food services offered  
 Number of respondents: 77 (89%)

**Funding Security for the next 1-5 Years**

	Connecticut		National	
Number of respondents: 77 (89%)	Not/ Somewhat Secure	Secure/ Very Secure	Not/ Somewhat Secure	Secure/ Very Secure
<b>1-2 Years</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>47%</b>

<b>3-5 Years</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>20%</b>
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*Methodology: UNCERTAIN TIMES used web-based survey software and the survey was emailed to more than 10,000 contacts in the Afterschool Alliance database in August and September of 2006. 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. 2,614 responses were reviewed. 503 of them did not provide sufficient data to be included in the final analysis or were duplicate responses; therefore the final sample was 2,111 responses which represent approximately 9,813 afterschool sites serving more than 1.5 million children. (Many respondents are responsible for multiple sites.)*

**Complete State Level Results Available Upon Request**