



This is Afterschool in Vermont

In Vermont, Encore received \$700,000 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds from the North County Supervisory Union, the Vermont Agency of Education, and Vermont Afterschool to enhance their afterschool and summer program. Since June 2020, the program has been able to build staff capacity, including increasing wages, adding hours for site coordinators, and creating staff positions focused on student behavior to support frontline staff. The increased capacity has allowed staff to better support students who struggled with behavior and academics during and after the pandemic. For example, Encore added a two-hour academic engagement period to summer programs, which provided 50 additional hours per year for students to practice curriculum-aligned literacy and math concepts in small groups. Encore also used ARP funds for bike and woodworking trailers, with more than 250 young people accessing bikes, taking bike safety programs, or engaging in woodworking projects during the 2022-2023 school year. The ARP investments in Encore has re-engaged students and has been a strategy to reduce absenteeism in the district. Of the youth who attended Encore 30 days or more in 2023, 61% had a higher school-day attendance rate, attending school at least four more days than the school average.

However, as American Rescue Plan and other pandemic relief funding expires, many Vermont youth will lose their programs—and families and communities will lose essential supports—if action is not taken. In Vermont, for every child in an afterschool program, 1 more would participate if a program was available. And a national fall 2023 survey of afterschool program providers found that nearly 3 in 4 are concerned about their program’s long-term funding and future. Afterschool and summer programs across Vermont are accelerating students’ growth, supporting students’ well-being, and helping working families. To keep their doors open, these programs need additional investments at the local, state, and federal levels.

IMPROVING SCHOOL-DAY ENGAGEMENT AND REDUCING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM







A 2023 U.S. Department of Education report on 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)—local before-school, afterschool, and summer learning programs that serve more than 1.3 million students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools—found that:

7 IN 10 students in the program demonstrated an **IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING**

NEARLY HALF of students who were **CHRONICALLY ABSENT** the previous year **IMPROVED THEIR SCHOOL-DAY ATTENDANCE**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ACCELERATE STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC GROWTH AND SUPPORT THEIR WELL-BEING

Vermont students in afterschool programs are:

-  Getting homework help (66%)
-  Engaging in STEM learning opportunities (74%)
-  Working on their reading and writing skills (57%)
-  Interacting with their peers and building social skills (90%)
-  Taking part in physical activities (82%)
-  Building confidence (77%)



85% of Vermont parents are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

Vermont parents agree that afterschool programs are:



Helping working parents keep their jobs **(81%)**



Providing working parents peace of mind knowing that their children are safe **(82%)**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT

An overwhelming majority of Vermont parents favor public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs.



Research has found that **EVERY \$1 INVESTED** in Vermont afterschool programs leads to a **RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF JUST OVER \$2** by:

- ✓ Reducing student drop out rates
- ✓ Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency
- ✓ Reducing drug and alcohol addiction and teen pregnancy

With strong public support, a national survey found that approximately 8 in 10 registered voters said that afterschool programs are an absolute necessity for their community (79%) and that they want their federal, state, and local leaders to provide more funding for programs (80%).

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs engage students in hands-on learning activities aimed at supporting their academic growth, provide a variety of enrichment activities to complement school-day learning, and offer educational and support services to the families of participating children. The 2023 Department of Education annual performance report of 21st CCLC found that among regular participants:



MORE THAN 1 IN 2 improved their GPA



7 IN 10 improved their engagement in learning



2 IN 5 saw a decrease in school suspensions

In Vermont, 11,171 children in 86 communities take part in a 21st Century Community Learning Center. 21st CCLC grants are the only dedicated federal funding sources that support local communities' afterschool and summer programs.

AFTERSCHOOL WORKS

Studies have shown that students regularly participating in quality afterschool programs attend school more often, are more engaged in school, get better grades, and are more likely to be promoted to the next grade. For example, in a 2023 report by the U.S. Department of Education on 21st CCLC programs nationally, Vermont students in need of improvement saw both academic and behavioral improvements. Nearly half of Vermont's 21st CCLC participants who had a GPA below 3.0 the previous year improved their GPA (47%), and close to 3 in 10 demonstrated growth on the state's math (28%) and reading/language arts assessments (27%). Students in programs also improved their school-day attendance rates and behavior in school. Thirty-nine percent of students with an attendance rate below 90% the previous school year improved their school-day attendance and nearly 1 in 4 students (23%) decreased their in-school suspensions compared to the previous year. These findings reinforce earlier statewide evaluations that found that students participating in programs reported a positive experience, including that they felt like they belonged (70%) and mattered in the program (69%), as well as that programs were providing holistic supports to students, such as offering a strategy outside of homework help for students struggling academically (81%).

