Throughout the pandemic, afterschool and summer programs adapted and expanded services to meet the needs of children and families. They are vital partners today in supporting students’ well-being and academic growth. Yet, too many kids in Ohio are being left out. Prior to the pandemic, a survey of Ohio parents found that for every child in an afterschool program, 5 more would participate if a program were available. These programs provide safe and supportive spaces to keep young people engaged in learning during a difficult and trying time. So it comes as no surprise that in a national fall 2020 survey, 75% of parents agreed that the experience of the pandemic made them appreciate teachers and afterschool providers more than ever before.

A 2020 evaluation of Ohio’s 21st CCLC programs by the American Institutes for Research found a statistically significant positive impact of participation on academic outcomes, with regular program participants scoring higher on math and English language arts assessments compared with similar non-participating youth. Additionally, it was found that participation in the programs was associated with statistically significant reductions in both unexcused absences and disciplinary incidents. Based on youth surveys, a large majority of students agree that their program has helped them learn things that will be important for their future (80%) and in school (79%), find out what is important to them (77%), make new friends (76%), and improve their confidence (75%).
Increasing kids’ earning potential as adults
Improving kids’ performance at school
Supporting working families
Parents in Ohio agree that afterschool:

- Helps working parents keep their jobs – 76%
- Helps parents build connections to their child’s school day education – 61%
- Provides working parents peace of mind – 80%
- Increasing kids’ earning potential as adults
- Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency
- Improving kids’ performance at school

A smart investment
Research spanning several states shows that every $1 invested in afterschool programs saves at least $3 by:

- Improving kids’ earning potential as adults
- Increasing kids’ earning potential as adults
- Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency
- Improving kids’ performance at school

Ohio parents want investment in afterschool and summer programs
The overwhelming majority of parents in Ohio favor public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs:

- 87% favor public funding for afterschool opportunities
- 87% favor public funding for summer learning opportunities

Transforming Lives
“During the pandemic, it was challenging because I was social distancing and not doing certain activities. But, my 21st Century [Community Learning Center] program has been a place where I’ve been able to meet new friends, communicate, and be social with others. I wasn’t a talker, but now I am! The mentors in my program also helped me stay on top of my work and encouraged me. Without my program, I wouldn’t have the grades I do now, and I wouldn’t be as social as I am. I wouldn’t be able to do a lot of things without my program.”

Kyla Anderson
High school student attending a 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool program

21st Century Community Learning Centers
21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) are local before-school, afterschool, and summer learning programs that serve students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools. These 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 2021 Department of Education annual performance report of 21st CCLC found that among regular participants:

- 1 in 2 improved their language arts or math grades
- 7 in 10 improved their homework completion and class participation
- More than 3 in 5 improved their behavior in class

In Ohio, 2,776 children in 309 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.

Demand for programming in Ohio is so great that more than 4 out of every 5 applications were not funded during the most recent competition.

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. Learn more at: www.afterschoolalliance.org