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Michigan Losing Ground on Afterschool; Many Detroit Students Unsupervised After School

New Household Survey: Support Among Parents is Strong But Unmet Demand for Afterschool Programs in the State is High

Washington, DC — Michigan is failing to keep pace with the rest of the nation on participation in afterschool, according to a new household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance. The 2014 edition of [America After 3PM](#) found that demand for afterschool programs in Michigan far exceeds supply; the number of children in Michigan who would be enrolled in an afterschool program if one were available is greater than the number of children enrolled in afterschool programs. The household survey also finds that the vast majority of parents of children in afterschool programs in Michigan see significant benefits from their children's participation.

The *America After 3PM* survey included 30,000 American households and 360 in-depth interviews in Michigan. It found that 13 percent of Michigan students, 210,386 children in all, are enrolled in afterschool programs, up from 12 percent in 2009, when the survey was last conducted. But 373,476 Michigan students are still without adult supervision in the afternoons. The parents of 625,026 Michigan children not already in an afterschool program say they would enroll their child *if a program were available*.

The findings echo two recent studies commissioned by the Skillman Foundation in Detroit. A 2012 study, conducted by Brandeis and Data Driven Detroit, surveyed neighborhood youth development programs in six neighborhoods; it found that fewer than half of youth (48 percent) participate in development activities. A 2013 survey, conducted in collaboration with UChicagoImpact, included 8,000 students in grades 4 to 12 in the same six neighborhoods and found that one in five youth reported being alone after school each day, and one-third said they never participate in after school activities. Fewer than half (42 percent) said they have three or more adults to turn to if they were upset or needed advice.

“Afterschool and youth development providers and advocates in Michigan are working tirelessly to provide quality afterschool programs to as many children and families as resources will allow,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “But Michigan has a lot of work ahead if it's to keep up with other states, and even more if it is to provide all children with the afterschool opportunities they need. Most parents in the state who want their child in a program can't find one, and that needs to change. Every child who is unsupervised after school is a child potentially at risk. Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. Every Michigan family that needs an afterschool program should have access to one.”

“The unfortunate reality is that afterschool programs in the state reach only a fraction of the children and families who need them,” said Mary Sutton, Executive Director of the Michigan After-School Partnership. “That’s why we’re falling behind the rest of the nation. We need to fix this, and that will require committing the resources necessary to grow afterschool programs and create the opportunities our children urgently need. We must make it a priority to turn these results around.”

“We know how to create youth development programs that work, but we simply don’t have enough of them. In fact, of recently surveyed youth in Detroit, nearly 20 percent said they’re routinely alone, unsupervised after school, said Charles Small, President and CEO of Don Bosco Hall, a lead agency of the Detroit Youth Development Alliance along with the Detroit Police Athletic League and Southwest Solutions. “Detroit is one of the biggest urban centers in the country without any form of public financing for afterschool programs. That’s a huge missed opportunity.”

In important respects, the *Michigan America After 3PM* results mirror the national survey findings, which include:

- **Participation in afterschool programs is up nationally**, with 18 percent of the nation’s schoolchildren in programs (10.2 million children), up from 15 percent in 2009 (8.4 million children) and 11 percent in 2004 (6.5 million children).
- **At the same time, unmet demand has increased.** The parents of nearly 20 million children (19.4 million) say they would enroll their child in an afterschool program if a program were available to them. That means that the existing supply of afterschool programs is meeting barely one-third of demand.
- **Demand is greatest among African American, Hispanic and low-income families.** Both participation in afterschool and unmet demand for afterschool are much higher among children from low-income households than higher-income households, and higher among African American and Hispanic children than white children. The parents of 60 percent of the nation’s African American children would enroll their child in a program if one were available, as would the parents of 57 percent of Latino children. The same is true of 35 percent of white children.
- **Despite increased participation in afterschool, the number of children unsupervised in the hours after school remains high.** Across the nation, more than 800,000 elementary students, and 2.2 million middle school students spend time alone and unsupervised during the after school hours. In all, 11.3 million children — one in five — are unsupervised in the afternoons.
- **Parental satisfaction with afterschool remains high.** Nine in ten parents (89 percent) say they are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program.
- **Support for public funding of afterschool programs remains strong.** More than four in five parents (84 percent) report that they favor public funding for afterschool opportunities in communities that have few opportunities for children and youth. Support is bipartisan, as well, with 91 percent of parents who identify as Democrats, 86 percent Independents and 80 percent of Republicans favoring public funding for programs. Parents across all geographic regions support public funding for afterschool programs.

The national and Michigan *America After 3PM* reports, and accompanying data, are available at www.afterschoolalliance.org. A snapshot of national participation and demand for summer learning programs is also available online.

Throughout October, more than 1 million people in communities across the nation and at U.S. military installations worldwide will join the only national rally for afterschool programs. Sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance and now in its 15th year, *Lights On Afterschool* brings communities together for science fairs, fun runs, community service events, music and dance performances, open houses and other events at schools, community centers, malls, parks and recreation centers, science museums, state capitols, and other settings. In Detroit, afterschool youth, families and staff will share their perspectives on afterschool programs with the City Council on October 21, and will distribute petitions calling for greater support of these youth development programs. Find a local *Lights On Afterschool* event at www.afterschoolalliance.org/LOA.cfm.

Findings from *America After 3PM* are based on in-depth interviews with 13,709 U.S. households with children, completed by way of an online survey using a blend of national consumer panels. Shugoll Research collected and analyzed the data for *America After 3PM*. The goal of at least 200 completed interviews was reached in every state and the District of Columbia. In states where this goal could not be reached using online panels, random-digit dialing was used to complete supplementary telephone interviews. In order to participate, respondents had to live in the United States and be the guardians of a school-age child living in their household. All interviews were completed between February 28 and April 17, 2014.

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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.

The Detroit Youth Development Alliance is a network of more than 200 youth-serving organizations that works to build a city where quality programming that helps kids learn the skills they need to succeed in life is available to all.