



NEWS RELEASE

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New Study: Vast Increase in Afterschool STEM Learning in Allegheny County

Parents of Nine in Ten Allegheny County Children in Afterschool Programs Report STEM Learning Opportunities There – But Thousands of County Children Shut Out

PITTSBURGH, PA — Afterschool programs are leading the way in educating the next generation in the STEM subjects the jobs of the future will require. Ninety-two percent of parents of Allegheny County afterschool students now say their child's afterschool program offers STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) learning, up significantly from 76% in 2014. Half (51%) of those whose child's program offers STEM report their child engages in STEM learning after school at least twice per week. But nearly four in five Allegheny County children whose parents want afterschool programs for them (92,451 children) are not enrolled.

Those are among the findings in [Afterschool STEM Takes Off In Allegheny County](#), a household survey commissioned by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) and released today by [Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time \(APOST\)](#). Conducted by Edge Research, it is based on survey responses from 30,515 U.S. households, with 456 households with 682 children in Allegheny County screened.

Afterschool programs in the County are educating students on a range of STEM topics, according to parents, with 89% saying their child's afterschool program offers engagement in math, 83% science, 81% engineering, 79% computer science, and 78% tech. Five in six Allegheny County parents say afterschool programs help children gain skills and interest in STEM, such as [Tree Pittsburgh's youth programs](#) that offer environmental education programming focused on educating youth and families about the benefits of trees in their communities.

"As we celebrate our 20th year, we're thrilled to see the increase in supported STEM afterschool opportunities in Allegheny County," says Joe Stavish, Director of Education at Tree Pittsburgh. "It shows us that children's learning styles have changed and that our program's hands-on, interactive approach to STEM learning for youth is valuable to our communities, allowing them to gain real life job skills for potential career paths that they may not have known existed."

"In Allegheny County and across the country, parents value and prioritize STEM learning in afterschool, and afterschool programs have stepped up to provide it," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Afterschool is an ideal place for STEM education. It offers students the chance to explore their interests, engage with peers in hands-on, team-based learning, and see up close how STEM can help solve problems facing our communities and our country. We're thrilled with the tremendous uptick in afterschool STEM learning in Allegheny County, throughout Pennsylvania, and nationwide. We need

to continue the trajectory and, most of all, make afterschool programs available to many more students. As long as millions of children whose parents want afterschool programs for them are missing out, we have more work to do.”

Support for afterschool programs in Pennsylvania has increased through the Building Opportunity through Out-of-School Time ([BOOST](#)) program. In 2024, Pennsylvania invested \$11.5 million in out-of-school time (OST) programs to 46 providers across the state, with 10 of those located in Allegheny County. This investment proved to be a positive step in meeting demand for both afterschool and summer programs and was renewed at \$11.5 million in the 2025-26 budget.

“This study has really good news for Allegheny County,” said APOST Executive Director, Karen Dreyer. “In an age when science and technology continue to shape and reshape our lives, we must invest in programs to support young people to learn, explore, and create in the STEM fields so that they gain the skills and experiences needed to lead our communities into the future.”

Nationally, the Afterschool Alliance study also found that 92% of parents of afterschool students now say their child’s program offers STEM learning – up from 69% in 2014. But there are disparities in afterschool access to STEM, with children in rural communities and low-income families lagging behind.

In most respects, the Allegheny County findings mirror the national survey findings, which also include:

- **Increases in STEM in afterschool from 2014 to 2025 were seen in every state.** The biggest increases were in Arizona, Hawaii, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Washington State, Wisconsin and Wyoming.
- **Children in families with low incomes are less likely to have multiple exposures to STEM in afterschool each week than those whose families have higher incomes.** Less than half of parents with low incomes (48%) say their child engages in STEM in afterschool multiple times per week, compared to 56% of parents with middle incomes and 60% of parents with high incomes.
- **Rural parents report fewer computer science and technology opportunities in afterschool.** Just 70% of rural parents with a child in an afterschool program report that the program offers computer science, compared to 88% of urban parents. Similarly, just 66% of rural parents with a child in an afterschool program report that the program offers technology education, compared to 86% of urban parents.
- **Two in three parents with children in afterschool programs (65%) value STEM extremely or somewhat when selecting a program – but there are differences by race.** Native American parents (73%), Black and Hispanic parents (70%), and Asian American parents (68%) place greater importance on STEM in afterschool than White families (62%).
- **Parents of boys and girls report similar levels of access to STEM in their child’s afterschool program, but parents of girls prioritize computer science, technology, and engineering less than parents of boys.** Parents today report that 93% of male children and 91% of females have STEM opportunities in afterschool. But there are differences in how much parents of boys and girls prioritize different STEM subjects, with 63% of boy parents placing greater importance on computer science, technology, and engineering, compared to just 53%, 56%, and 58% respectively, of girl parents.

- **Parents prioritize STEM, and specifically computer science, more as their children age.** Just over half of parents of elementary schoolers (53%) say computer science offerings are important when they choose an afterschool program for their child, compared to 68% of parents of high schoolers.

Afterschool STEM Takes Off in Allegheny County is made possible with support from Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time. Findings from Allegheny County are [here](#) and Pennsylvania statewide findings [are here](#). Allegheny County data were collected between January 31 and June 18, 2025.

The *America After 3PM 2025* study is based on a survey of 30,515 U.S. parents or guardians with a school-aged child living in their household. It was conducted in English and Spanish using a mixed-mode methodology to reach as many households as possible. The margin of error for the national study is +/- <1%. Previous *America After 3PM* surveys were conducted in 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2020. It is based on research funded by Overdeck Family Foundation.

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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.

Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST) is a convener, connector, and collaborator with Out-of-School Time (OST) providers focusing on school-aged youth in Allegheny County. APOST's vision is that every youth in Allegheny County has access to high-quality OST learning opportunities that strengthen their development, empower communities, and are recognized as essential to educational and workforce development systems. More information can be found at www.afterschoolpgh.org.