



NEWS RELEASE

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New Study: Parents Report Vast Majority of Afterschool Students in Greater Richmond Are Engaging in STEM Learning in Their Afterschool Programs, But Thousands of Children Shut Out

RICHMOND, VA — Afterschool programs are leading the way in educating the next generation in the STEM subjects the jobs of the future will require. Eighty-eight percent of parents of Greater Richmond afterschool students now say their child's afterschool program offers STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) learning. Seventy-three percent of those whose child's program offers STEM report their child engages in STEM learning after school at least twice per week. But approximately four in five Greater Richmond children whose parents want afterschool programs for them (64,398 children) are not enrolled.

Those are among the findings in [Afterschool STEM Takes Off In Greater Richmond](#), a household survey commissioned by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) and released today by [NextUp RVA](#). Conducted by Edge Research, it is based on survey responses from 30,515 U.S. households, with 269 households with 441 children in Greater Richmond screened. Greater Richmond includes the City of Richmond as well as Henrico and Chesterfield Counties.

Afterschool programs in Greater Richmond are educating students on a range of STEM topics, according to parents, with 88% saying their child's afterschool program offers engagement in math, 84% science, 80% engineering, 75% computer science, and 72% tech. Approximately four in five Greater Richmond parents say afterschool programs help children gain skills and interest in STEM.

"In Greater Richmond 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 Greater Richmond, throughout Virginia, 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."

“Afterschool programs are educating the next generation to imagine themselves in STEM-related careers through hands-on learning in real-life settings. Every child in our community deserves access to afterschool programs that provide STEM. We need to continue increasing support until we have enough programs to ensure that no child is missing out,” said NextUp President & CEO Dr. Traymanesha Lamy.

Nationally, the Afterschool Alliance study 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 Greater Richmond 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 Greater Richmond is made possible with support from NextUp RVA. Findings from Greater Richmond are [here](#) and Virginia statewide findings [are here](#). Greater Richmond 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. The *America After 3PM* STEM findings are 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.

NextUp is an out-of-school time (OST) intermediary and nonprofit organization expanding access to quality afterschool and summer programs for Richmond youth ages 11 – 19. We convene a network of [partners](#) building Richmond's expanded learning system of youth development programs, resources, services, and opportunities. More information is available at <https://nextuprva.org/>.