

NEWS RELEASE
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**Study: Dallas Afterschool Participation is Below National Average,
More Than 50,000 Dallas Kids Are Unsupervised in the Afternoons**

*Afterschool Alliance Releases ‘Dallas After 3PM,’
Offering New Insights from Groundbreaking ‘America After 3PM’ Research*

Dallas schoolchildren are less likely to be in afterschool programs and more likely to be without supervision during the afternoon hours, compared to the national average, according to the newly released report, *Dallas After 3PM*. The report is based on research from *America After 3PM*, the most comprehensive study to explore how America’s children spend their afternoons, released by the Afterschool Alliance and sponsored by JCPenney. [Dallas After 3PM](#) reveals city-level data on afterschool and summer learning program participation and public support and compares those figures with the national averages.

According to the Dallas study, 14 percent of the city’s schoolchildren are in afterschool programs (30,427 children) compared with 15 percent of schoolchildren who are in afterschool programs nationally. Dallas is slightly above the national average for the percentage of children left without supervision in the afternoons, with 27 percent of Dallas children (58,680) unsupervised after the school day ends, compared with a national average of 26 percent. Participation in summer learning programs in Dallas is high, with 30 percent of the city’s children (65,200) enrolled, compared with 25 percent nationally.

“There’s more work to do in Dallas in terms of afterschool participation before we can ensure that all the city’s students are safe and supervised after the school day ends,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant in releasing the study. “Too many Dallas children are left alone in the afternoons, when they could be under the supervision of caring and well trained adults, getting help with homework, learning about everything from robotics to literature, expanding their horizons, getting exercise, and more. Dallas has the building blocks in place to make further, much needed, progress, but it needs to take the next steps.”

“Dallas children who are in afterschool programs reap tremendous benefits, as do their families,” agreed Janet Mockovciak, Board Chair of the Dallas AfterSchool Network. “But there aren’t nearly enough high quality afterschool programs to meet the need, and as a result too many schoolchildren here are missing out on opportunities to help close the experience gap and shape their futures through tutoring, homework help, the arts and sports, mentoring and job preparation, and much more. This report is a call to action. If we care about our kids and our city, we will do better.”

Positive findings from the report demonstrate the important work done by the Dallas AfterSchool Network, which is leading the charge to advance the quality and availability of afterschool programs. It also notes that the Dallas Independent School District has a long history of supporting enrichment efforts during after-school hours, including the Thriving Minds program. In addition, the city-funded Outreach After School Program and the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department are highlighted.

Released last year, *America After 3PM* found that the number of children left alone after the school day ends has risen to more than 15 million children nationwide – an increase of 800,000 children since the 2004 edition of the study. Last week, the Afterschool Alliance released a special report, *From Big Cities to Small Towns*, examining the differences and similarities between participation in afterschool programs between urban, suburban, and rural communities. The report concludes that just about one in ten rural schoolchildren attends an afterschool program, and while more than half of rural parents struggle with availability of afterschool options, urban and suburban parents cite affordability as their major concern.

The *Dallas After 3PM* report is being released on the eve of *Lights On Afterschool*, a national rally for afterschool on October 21. It is expected to include 1 million people at some 7,500 events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide this year.

To rally public support for life-enriching afterschool programs for children in need, JCPenney is hosting “Round-Up” in its stores from Oct. 13-26. During this time, JCPenney customers will be invited to round-up their purchases to the nearest whole dollar and donate the difference to local afterschool programs in their communities.

“Since 1999, JCPenney has distributed more than \$100 million to help increase afterschool opportunities across the country by supporting innovative programming in more communities and making access grants available each year to families experiencing financial hardship,” said Michael Theilmann, group executive vice president for JCPenney and chairman of the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. “Data from the *America After 3 PM* study is powerful evidence that we’ve made progress on the afterschool issue but more resources are needed to help meet the rising demand for afterschool programs across the country.”

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About the Afterschool Alliance:

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

About *Dallas After 3PM* and *From Big Cities to Small Towns*

Dallas After 3PM and *From Big Cities to Small Towns* are available online at www.afterschoolalliance.org. Findings from *America After 3PM* are based on survey responses from approximately 30,000 parents and guardians on afterschool services during the 2008-2009 school year. RTi, a market research firm, conducted the survey and analyzed the data on behalf of the Afterschool Alliance. The entire survey was sponsored by JCPenney through its signature charity, JCPenney Afterschool.

About JCPenney's Commitment to Afterschool:

As a leading corporate advocate for the afterschool issue, JCPenney works with afterschool organizations to increase the accessibility and affordability of afterschool programs across the country. Through its legacy of supporting youth and charitable organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, The Y, National 4-H, United Way and FIRST, JCPenney formalized its commitment to the afterschool issue by establishing the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Over the last decade, more than \$100 million has been distributed to afterschool programs across every JCPenney community thereby making it possible for more children to participate in life-enriching programs that inspire them to be smart, strong and socially responsible. For more information, visit www.jcpennyafterschool.org.