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New Poll: Strong Majority of U.S. Voters – More Than Ever Before – Want Government to Invest More in Afterschool Programs

Across Party Lines, Voters Say Afterschool Programs Are a Necessity for Their Communities

WASHINGTON, DC – Across demographic and party lines, large majorities of U.S. registered voters say that afterschool programs offer myriad benefits to students, parents, and our economy, and want their newly elected leaders to provide more funding for these programs. In an online survey conducted in December of 2024 and released today, 85% of voters say they want their newly elected leaders to provide more funds for afterschool programs. That includes 92% of Democrats, 81% of Independents, 77% of Republicans, and 77% of people who voted for President Trump.

The [poll](#), conducted by Lake Research Partners and New Bridge Strategy for the Afterschool Alliance, found that 87% – including 95% of Democrats and 82% of both Independents and Republicans – agree that afterschool programs are “an absolute necessity.” That is up significantly from 2018 when 73% said so, and from 2022 when 81% of registered voters said so. Support is overwhelming among all demographic groups, including voters of all races and ages and those who live in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

“At this moment when lawmakers are scrutinizing federal expenditures closely, this new survey leaves no doubt that voters recognize the tremendous benefits afterschool programs offer to children, youth, communities, and our economy, and that they want lawmakers to invest more in these programs,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “It’s easy to understand why. Today in the United States, for every child in an afterschool program, four more are waiting to get in. Nearly [25 million children](#) not in an afterschool program would be enrolled, if a program were available to them. Students in afterschool programs make gains in grades, school attendance, behavior, and more – but too many of our children and youth are missing out.”

Other findings from the new survey of registered voters:

- The 85% of voters who want their newly elected leaders to provide more funding for afterschool is a sharp increase from 66% who said so in 2018 and 81% in 2022. More than three in five voters today (61%) feel strongly that leaders should provide more funding for afterschool programs.
- Among registered voters who say that they want their newly elected leaders to provide more funding for afterschool programs, more than three in five (63%) support that funding, even if it means they would pay more in taxes.

- When asked about a choice policy makers may have to make between continuing or eliminating federal funding for afterschool and summer programs, just 5% of voters would prefer that elected leaders eliminate funding for these programs. Nearly nine in ten voters (88%) prefer to continue the funding. Seven percent are unsure.
- Nearly nine in ten voters (89%) agree that having access to quality, affordable afterschool and summer programs is important to help parents work and to strengthen our economy. Nearly half of voters (48%) say it is very important.
- There is broad and growing agreement among voters that afterschool programs are an absolute necessity. The percentage of rural, older, younger, and Independent voters who agree all increased by more than 10 percentage points from a similar survey fielded in 2022. Today, 96% of Black voters, 90% of parents, and 88% of younger voters (under age 30) agree with that statement, as do 85% of older voters (age 65 and over), 86% of Latino voters, and 81% of rural voters.
- Ninety-one percent of voters say afterschool programs give parents peace of mind that their children are safe and supervised after the school day ends; 90% say they help children catch up academically and socially; 89% say they prevent risky behaviors and exposure to negative influences in-person and online; and 87% say they help children develop community and social skills, replacing screen time with in-person interaction.
- Four in five voters (80%) have a very or somewhat favorable impression of afterschool programs, compared to just 6% with a somewhat or very unfavorable impression. Fourteen percent have no opinion.

The [online survey of 1,400 U.S. registered voters](#) includes oversamples of Black, Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Indigenous voters. It was conducted from December 4 to December 11, 2024. Its margin of error is +/- 3.1%.

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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.