



NEWS RELEASE

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While Parents in Dallas Give Afterschool Programs High Marks, New Household Survey Finds Huge Unmet Demand for Afterschool in the City

WASHINGTON, DC — Many more Dallas parents want afterschool programs for their children than are able to access them, according to a national household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance. Dallas After 3PM, commissioned by Dallas Afterschool and released today finds that, by overwhelming margins, parents express strong, broad-based support for afterschool programs. But unmet demand – the percentage of children in the city not currently in an afterschool program whose parents say they would be enrolled if an afterschool program were available to them – is high, with families citing cost as a barrier to enrolling their children. As a result, for every child in an afterschool program in Dallas today, three more are waiting to get in.

[*America After 3PM 2020*](#) is based on survey responses from more than 30,000 American households, including 609 Dallas households with 1,962 Dallas children screened. It finds that 14% of Dallas students, more than 32,600 children and youth in all, are enrolled in afterschool programs, while more than 101,600 students in the city are without the afterschool programs their parents say they need.

“Afterschool providers and advocates in Dallas are doing remarkable work, but the city is still not coming close to meeting the demand for these programs,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Most parents in the city who want their child in a program can’t find one. We need to fix that. Every parent should have access to an affordable, quality afterschool program that will keep their child safe, supervised and learning. Quality afterschool programs are essential to student success in school and life. If we want to emerge from this pandemic strong, we need to provide all our children and youth access to the important enrichment opportunities and resources afterschool programs provide.”

In important respects, and while the study does not include data for Dallas prior to 2020, the Dallas findings mirror the national survey findings, which include:

- Support for afterschool programs is strong. Parents give high marks to afterschool programs, with 83% agreeing programs give working parents peace of mind, 81% agreeing programs help parents keep their jobs, and 76% agreeing programs help children gain interest and skills in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) – all increases from 2014. In Dallas,

support is also high, with 81% of parents agreeing that programs give working parents peace of mind, and 85% agreeing that programs help parents keep their jobs.

- Unmet demand for afterschool programs is soaring. Demand has grown 60% nationally since 2004, from 15.3 million children (30% of non-participants) waiting to get into a program in 2004 to 18.4 million children (38%) in 2009 to 19.4 million children (41%) in 2014 to 24.6 million children (50%) in 2020. In Dallas, 101,625 students are without the afterschool programs their parents say they need today.
- Cost and access are barriers to participation, and inequities persist. Fifty-seven percent of parents report that cost is a barrier to enrolling their child in an afterschool program. Access (lack of a safe way for their child to get to and come back from a program) is a barrier for 53%. Both are significant increases from 2014. In Dallas, these numbers are even higher, with 69% of parents reporting that cost is a barrier, which is likely attributable to the survey finding that the average weekly cost in Dallas is \$120, approximately 40% higher than the average cost overall in Texas.
- Eighty-seven percent of parents favor public funding for programs that provide afterschool opportunities to students in communities that have few opportunities for children and youth. Support crosses demographic and political divides, with 91% of parents who identify as Democratic, 87% of those who identify as Independent, and 85% of parents who identify as Republican in favor of public funding. Support in Dallas is similarly high with 84% of parents favoring public funding for afterschool programming.

“It is great news that 92% of Dallas parents are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program,” said Christina K. Hanger, Chief Executive Officer of Dallas Afterschool. “Also encouraging is the overwhelming support for public funding of afterschool, with 84% of Dallas parents expressing support. We intend to continue the progress to make afterschool programs available to all children and youth, in Dallas and across Texas. Students and families need afterschool programs now more than ever, since the pandemic has changed school schedules, disrupted our economy, and put many children and youth at risk. It’s essential that we address the unmet need for afterschool programs in Dallas and across Texas right away.”

The national, Texas, and Dallas *America After 3PM 2020* reports, fact sheets, and accompanying data, are available at afterschoolalliance.org.

Findings from *America After 3PM 2020* are based on a nationally representative survey of randomly selected adults who live in the United States and are the parent or guardian of a school-age child who lives in their household. A total of 31,055 households were surveyed in English or Spanish, and a subset of households (14,391 respondents) answered follow-up questions regarding afterschool experiences or barriers to participation in afterschool, as well as perceptions of afterschool programs. Data from interviews are weighted on race and income within states and by state population. The overall margin of error for child-level and household-level data is +/- < 1 %. The survey included at least 200 interviews in every state and the District of Columbia. Data were collected between January 27 and March 17, 2020, by Edge Research. In Dallas, oversample specific responses were collected between April 28 and May 5, 2020.

America After 3PM 2020 is made possible with support from the New York Life Foundation, Overdeck Family Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Altria Group, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Charles Stewart Mott 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 afterschoolalliance.org.

Dallas Afterschool is a nonprofit organization leading the charge to help working families and level the playing field for children of all races and economic backgrounds by increasing the quality and availability of out-of-school time programming in Dallas County. Dallas Afterschool provides vital support, training, and resources to afterschool providers and helps parents find afterschool programs that meet their needs. More information is available at www.dallasafterschool.org.