Navigating Afterschool Challenges in 2022

In its eighth year of gathering data on afterschool programs, the Afterschool Alliance’s online survey series has captured responses from 3,236 program providers across the United States. This year’s survey collected data on afterschool programs’ experiences in the 2021-22 academic year, with a focus on the impact of COVID-19 on programs, student engagement, and program delivery. The data reflects the ongoing challenges faced by afterschool programs, particularly in the wake of the pandemic, and highlights the dedication of program providers to providing quality afterschool care and learning opportunities for students.

### Open for the School Year

Many survey respondents report that their program was open in various ways during the 2021-22 school year, with nearly half (47%) of programs operating as usual, compared to 92% last spring. Additionally, 19% of programs operated only some sites, serving a smaller number of students, or operating both in-person and virtually. Staffing, student well-being, increased demand for programming, and guidance around funding remain large concerns for providers.

### Student Academic Success and Well-Being Remain a Large Concern

Program providers were asked how students accessed learning programs. Access to technology, including computers, was extremely concerning for providers, with 74% of respondents indicating it was very concerning. Additionally, 75% reported the following would be most helpful to their programs:

- Advice on staff burnout and keeping teams engaged
- Family or parent engagement activities
- Communication tools to help families learn more about the supports offered
- Time to interact with peers and build social skills
- Opportunities to reconnect socially
- Support for connections to peers
- Meeting the academic needs of children/learning loss
- Developing life skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Emotional supports, including specialized mental health or counseling support
- Facilities costs
- Professional development or training
- Access to technology, including computers
- Programs operating as usual
- Operating only some sites
- Operating both in-person and virtually
- Operating at reduced capacity
- Unable to access programming
- Operating completely closed

### How to Best Support Providers Moving Forward

While most programs were able to implement new protocols and procedures, the pandemic took a toll on program providers, with 70% reporting the worst is yet to come. The percentage of programs completely closed has increased, and the percentage of programs unable to access programming has risen. The percentage of programs operating as usual has decreased. Providers express increasing concern about the future of their programs.

### Access to Technology

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Family or Parent Engagement Activities

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 66%
- **Spring 2021:** 62%
- **Summer 2021:** 59%

### Communication Tools

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Time to Interact with Peers

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### reconnect socially

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Support for Connections to Peers

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Meeting the Academic Needs of Children/Learning Loss

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Developing Life Skills

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Critical Thinking Skills

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
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### Emotional Supports, Including Specialized Mental Health or Counseling Support

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Facilities Costs

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Professional Development or Training

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Programs Operating As Usual

- **Summer 2020:** 70%
- **Fall 2020:** 68%
- **Spring 2021:** 65%
- **Summer 2021:** 58%

### Operating Only Some Sites

- **Summer 2020:** 28%
- **Fall 2020:** 30%
- **Spring 2021:** 28%
- **Summer 2021:** 28%

### Operating Both In-Person and Virtually

- **Summer 2020:** 45%
- **Fall 2020:** 47%
- **Spring 2021:** 49%
- **Summer 2021:** 51%

### Operating At Reduced Capacity

- **Summer 2020:** 36%
- **Fall 2020:** 39%
- **Spring 2021:** 41%
- **Summer 2021:** 43%

### Unable to Access Programming

- **Summer 2020:** 28%
- **Fall 2020:** 28%
- **Spring 2021:** 28%
- **Summer 2021:** 26%

### Operating Completely Closed

- **Summer 2020:** 20%
- **Fall 2020:** 24%
- **Spring 2021:** 26%
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