



**NJSACC, the Network for New Jersey's
Afterschool Communities**

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The Case for Afterschool

Afterschool programs are an essential investment for the public and private sectors, and produce positive short- and long-term benefits for children, families, and communities that save taxpayers money.

Afterschool Programs Produce a Return on Investment

Investments in afterschool programs pay dividends for taxpayers, schools, and corporations by preparing kids for high school graduation and reducing the incidence of drug-use, gang activity, obesity, and pregnancy among youth. According to an in-depth cost/benefit study produced by Claremont-McKenna College, afterschool programs bring \$3 back for every \$1 that is invested in them. A U.S. Department of Justice study shows that each high-risk youth who is prevented from adopting a life of crime through participation in afterschool programs saves taxpayers between \$1.7 million and \$2.3 million. Locally, the State's investments in the New Jersey After 3 statewide network of 100 programs have leveraged more than \$27.5 million in additional private and public sector commitments since 2004, a rate of return of over 40%.

Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe Between 3pm and 6pm:

Juvenile crime triples between 3pm and 6pm. This is also the period when children are most likely to be victims of crime and participate in risky behavior (i.e., drug and alcohol abuse and sexual activity). Afterschool programs provide safe, structured, supportive, and supervised activities for children during this critical time. Additionally, many afterschool programs provide mentors and caring adult role models who guide children to set goals and to explore new careers and skills. For example, in New Jersey alone, Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs provide afterschool mentoring to some 2,000 students statewide. Organizations like Boys & Girls Clubs provide research-based curricula and activities like "Smart Moves" which in 2007 alone taught over 4,800 kids how to avoid making bad decisions and helped prevent gang activity. Additionally, afterschool programs provide the skills, relevance, and support that prevents risky behavior and reinforces positive decision making.

Afterschool Programs Extend Student Learning Time and Enhance Student Success:

High-quality afterschool programs improve student achievement and support success in the classroom, according to research. In fact, a recent national study by The University of

California-Irvine and Policy Study Associates showed that high quality programs can improve standardized test scores by between 12 and 20 points. Afterschool programs provide tutoring, homework help, and academic enrichment activities that help students build on the lessons learned during the traditional school day. Additionally, school-based, school-linked programs like the New Jersey After 3 or the Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) expand learning time by up to 50%.

Afterschool Programs Help Prevent School Dropout:

High quality afterschool programs increase students' attachment to school and help to prevent students from dropping out. A recent study of the cost of school dropouts revealed that the number of children who dropped out of the class of 2007 alone will cost taxpayers over \$300 billion over the course of their lifetime. A recent UCLA study of LA's BEST afterschool program documented that the program significantly reduced dropout rates for its afterschool participants.

Afterschool Programs Promote Positive Youth Development:

Afterschool programs provide young people with opportunities to gain the skills and experience to grow into positive, productive, and healthy young adults.

- 1. Service, Volunteerism, Values, and Citizenship** -- Afterschool programs can expose students to service and service-learning programs that teach children the value of giving back to their communities. Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and 21st CCLC programs provide many opportunities for volunteer community service. In fact, New Jersey After 3 alone has engaged over 13,500 students in volunteer and service learning activities through its programs.
- 2. Arts** – With music and art programs disappearing from many schools, afterschool programs provide the perfect vehicle for students to develop and explore their artistic talents. Afterschool programs expose children to music, graphic arts, folk art, dance, and other artistic expressions.
- 3. Childhood Obesity** – By providing additional opportunities for organized physical activity as well as programming and activities that teach children about nutrition, afterschool programs provide an excellent tool for combating the childhood obesity epidemic.
- 4. Environmental Stewardship** – Programs like The New Jersey Afterschool Network's Celebrate Afterschool! Outdoors in the Garden State campaign build appreciation for nature through hands-on activities. The campaign is an important tool for promoting conservation and understanding of natural resources.

Afterschool Programs Strengthen the Economy and Support Working Families:

Afterschool programs provide thousands of jobs for New Jersey residents. A 2006 study by the National Economic Development and Law Center reveals that the State's **childcare field contributes over 65,300 jobs and over \$2.5 billion to the New Jersey economy.**

Today, there are more dual-income households and single-parent families than ever before, and afterschool programs have become a necessary tool for supporting families and employers. In fact, a study by Brandeis University estimates that “Parental After-School Stress” costs employers between \$50 and \$300 billion in healthcare and lost productivity costs annually. Afterschool programs also help prepare students for the 21st-century workforce by teaching critical workplace skills such as leadership, teamwork, and computer literacy. According to Ralph Izzo, Chairman and CEO of PSEG, “Corporate support of afterschool is enlightened self-interest.”

Afterschool Programs Can Leverage Federal Dollars:

Afterschool programs already bring over \$130 million in federal funds to New Jersey through the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program. However, the actual appropriations from Congress have not met the figures called for in the initial 21st CCLC legislation. Today there is potential for New Jersey to attract millions in additional Federal funds. In fact, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides an additional \$2 billion in funds to the CCDBG, which may yield as much as \$30 million in new funds for New Jersey.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on afterschool programs, visit

www.njsacc.org

www.njafterschool.org

www.afterschoolalliance.org

Afterschool Investments Project at

<http://www.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/statep.html>

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