



Why Invest In Afterschool?

Afterschool programs are a critical 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 dollars back for every \$1 that is invested in them. A US 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 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 & 6pm:

US Department of Justice Statistics document that juvenile crime triples between 3pm and 6pm, which is also the period when children are most likely to be victims of crime and participate in risky behavior (i.e. drug & alcohol abuse and sexual activity). Afterschool programs provide safe, structured, supportive and supervised activities for children during this critical time when parents are at work. Additionally, many afterschool programs provide mentors and caring adult role models who guide children in their goal setting and expose children to 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 curriculum 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 prevent risky behavior and reinforces positive decision making.

Afterschool Programs Extend Learning Time & Enhance Student Success:

Study after study documents that high-quality afterschool programs improve student achievement and support success in the classroom. In fact, a recent national study by The University of California-Irvine and Policy Study Associates demonstrated that high quality programs can improved 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 model expand learning time by up to 50%.

Afterschool Programs Help Prevent School Dropout:

High quality afterschool programs increase students' attachment to school, support their learning 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 necessary 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.

Afterschool Programs Support Working Families:

With dramatic changes in the workforce over the last 30 years, the need for afterschool programs has grown. A recent poll of New Jersey voters documented that over two-thirds of New Jersey voters believe that afterschool is 'Very Important' and nine-out-of-ten New Jersey residents believe that afterschool programs are either 'Very Important' or 'Somewhat Important.' Driving this exceptionally high level of public support is the fact that there are more dual-income households and single-parent families than ever before, and afterschool programs are 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. As Ralph Izzo, Chairman & CEO of PSEG has publicly stated, 'Corporate support of afterschool is enlightened self-interest.'

Additionally, afterschool programs provide thousands of jobs for New Jersey residents. A 2006 study by 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**. New Jersey After 3 programs alone employ more than 1,300 people.

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, both programs have been under-funded for years and there is potential for New Jersey to attract millions in additional Federal funds. In fact the Stimulus Package provided an additional \$2 billion in funds to the CCDBG which may yield as much as \$30 million in new Federal funds for New Jersey. Two priorities of the Obama administration could also translate into new funds: the Serve America Act and reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Serve America could bring millions in new funding for AmeriCorps and other community service programs (New Jersey After 3 currently attracts over \$300,000 annually in National Service funding). 21st CCLC has the potential to grow by about \$1 billion which would translate into \$30 million new dollars for New Jersey.