

Afterschool Supports Academic Success

Success in school and life requires a solid academic foundation, as well as skills such as the ability to work collaboratively, problem solve, make responsible decisions, and communicate effectively.



Quality afterschool and summer programs support and supplement what students learn during the school day without being “more of the same.”

They provide a wide range of activities and opportunities and are consistently shown to help students attend school more often, get better grades and test scores, demonstrate gains in reading and math, and improve their work habits.

Quality afterschool programs are safe, fun, academic, enriching spaces that take a whole-child approach to development during the time before school starts, after school between 3 to 6 p.m. when risky behaviors spike, and over the summer when academic progress can slip. Students who regularly participate in quality afterschool programs:¹

- Improve their self-perception and esteem.
- Have opportunities for physical activity, healthy snacks and nutrition.
- Take fewer negative risks and make better decisions.
- Are excited about and more engaged in learning.
- Behave better in the classroom.
- Can connect with adults and mentors to broaden their base of support.
- Are more likely to advance to the next grade and graduate high school.



Title I funds aim to improve students' academic outcomes and support their well-rounded development. Research shows that afterschool programs are an effective part of the solution and links regular attendance in quality programs with consistent, positive academic results.



- Participation in The After-School Corporation (TASC, now ExpandedED) program, which emphasizes academic enrichment, homework assistance, the arts and recreation, helped students achieve gains in math and English, earn academic credits, and perform better on tests.²
 - Students in grades 3-8 who participated for two years made substantial gains in math.[†]
 - Students at high levels of educational risk and special education students showed the most gains and students participating in programs with high intensity fitness, sport and recreation components had the greatest English and math gains.
 - At the high school level, participants earned more academic credits than their peers and passed more of the New York Regents high school exams earlier than did non-participants.
- Participation in the YMCA High School Youth Initiative, which serves low-income, urban communities, helped students achieve gains in their GPAs and standardized test scores.³
 - Improved GPA: 31% of participants, 20% of non-participating peers[‡]
 - Improved English language arts test scores: 17% of participants, 6% of non-participating peers
 - Improved math test scores: 4% of participants, 2% of non-participating peers

[†]Study compared participants with non-participating peers matched by income, gender, race, eligibility for specialized education and English Language Learner classes.

[‡]Participants were compared with a randomly selected, matched comparison group.

- A meta-analysis of 68 studies found that students participating in a high quality afterschool program received higher grades, did better on tests, attended school more often and showed improved behavior than did non-participating students.⁴

- Students who regularly participated in Teach Baltimore for two or more summers had significant improvements⁵ across each of the three learning domains evaluated.⁵ The program addressed literacy learning loss over the summer among high poverty populations.

⁵A randomized control trial study.

- Participation in 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which serve at-risk students and focus on academic enrichment, art, music, recreation, and character development, helps students achieve academic gains, including improved grades and test scores.
 - Evaluations of 21st CCLC programs from many states, including California, Florida, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin, show participants improved their reading grades, standardized test scores, and/or literacy skills assessments.⁶
 - In Pinellas County, Florida, 94% of middle school students attending 21st CCLC programs showed growth in or maintained language arts skills (compared with 59% of non-participants); 84% showed growth in or maintained math skills (compared with 62% of non-participants).⁷
 - In Texas, students enrolled in 21st CCLC sessions that focused on math were significantly more likely to pass the math portion of the state's Assessment of Knowledge and Skills examination.⁸

Additional research about the benefits of afterschool is available at:
afterschoolalliance.org/research.cfm

¹ www.afterschoolalliance.org/research.cfm

² Reisner, E. R., White, R. N., Birmingham, J., & Welsh, M. (2001). Building quality and supporting expansion of After-School Projects: Evaluation results from the TASC After-School Program's second year. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates.

³ YMCA: O'Donnell, J., & Kirkner, S. L. (2014). Effects of an out-of-school program on urban high school youth's academic performance. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 42(2), 176-190.

⁴ Durlak JA, Weissberg RP, Pachan M. (2010) A meta-analysis of after-school programs that seek to promote personal and social skills in children and adolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 2010 Jun;45(3-4):294-309.

⁵ Borman, G., Dowling, N., Fairchild, R., Boulay, M., & Kaplan, J. (2006). The longitudinal achievement effects of multi-year summer school: Evidence from the Teach Baltimore Randomized Field Trial. Baltimore: Center for Summer Learning (As referenced in Harvard Family Research Project, February 2008).

⁶ Devaney, E., Naftzger, N., Liu, F, and Sniegowski, S. (2016) Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, 2014-2015 Evaluation Report; Evers, T. (2014). Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Executive Summary: 2013-2014; Naftzger, N., Sniegowski, S., Devaney, E., Liu, F., Hutson, M., Adams, N. (2015). Washington 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program Evaluation: 2012-2013 and 2013-2014; Vinson, M. and Hutson, M. (2014). Rhode Island 21st Century Community Learning Center Program Evaluation: Descriptive Report; Serve Center at UNC-Greensboro. (2014). Report on Cohort 9 North Carolina 21st Century Community Learning Center Program.

⁷ Silver, S. E., & Albert, R. J. (2011). 21st Century Community Learning Centers Administered by Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas, Inc: Summative Evaluation Report of the School-Based Program, Year 2.

⁸ Devaney, E., Naftzger, N., Liu, F, and Sniegowski, S. (2016) Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, 2014-2015 Evaluation Report; Evers, T. (2014).