

POLICY LEADERSHIP SERIES

WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION FOR STATE LEGISLATORS

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR POLICY LEADERSHIP ON AFTERSCHOOL CARE

More than 60 percent of children (ages 5-14) with full-time working parents currently care for themselves after school.¹ These unsupervised children may be at risk during after school hours.

'Afterschool' has been defined as the time when a child is dismissed from school until about 6pm.² Children are often released from school earlier than when their parents leave work, which means that children can be unsupervised after school.

Quality afterschool programs provide opportunities for children's academic and social development, as well as for care by adults in a safe environment. Numerous studies document the negative outcomes that result when children are unsupervised afterschool such as juvenile crime, substance abuse and other high-risk behaviors. In addition, parents who are at work and worry about their children after dismissal from school are more distracted and less productive on the job.

These negative effects suggest to business leaders and policy makers that quality afterschool care is a priority concern. Recent policy conversations have focused on the need for increased quality afterschool care options and programs, which are being introduced more widely into legislation.

Would families participate in afterschool care?

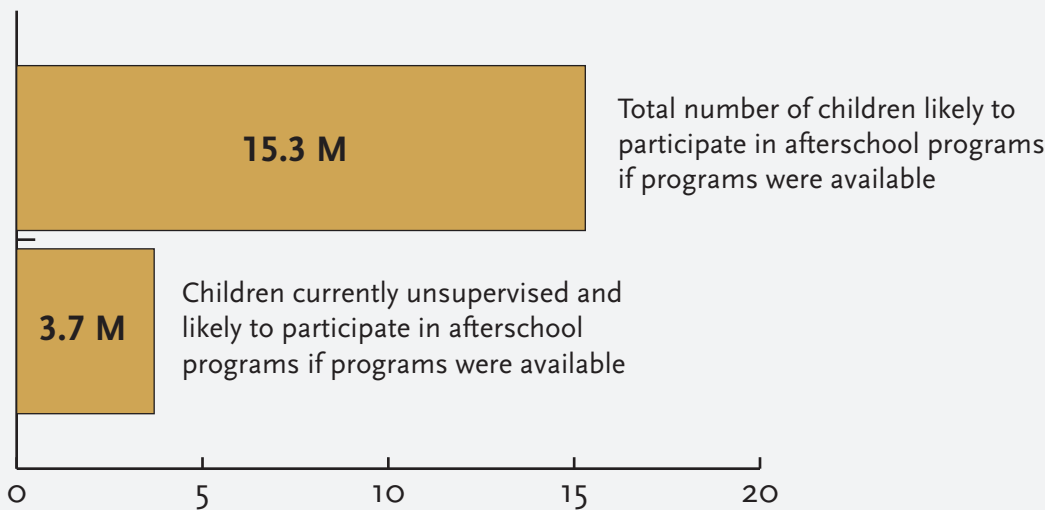


Chart source: Afterschool Alliance³

*"More than eight in ten parents believe that afterschool programming is an essential public service, critical to their children's academic and social success."*⁴

WHY IS AFTERSCHOOL CARE A POLICY MATTER?

Without policies that support afterschool care, business leaders, in addition to community and school leaders, may not fully realize the need for quality care for school-age children.

- State-level policymakers have a unique opportunity to offer incentives to employers for providing afterschool care options to employees.
- Legislation can provide relevant information and facts on issues; bills and statutes containing critical facts on afterschool care could be educational, as well as an invaluable tool for stressing the importance and relevance of this issue for today's working families.
- Legislators can model afterschool programs for other organizations, as the State is an employer of working parents.

"As a working mother of three, I know how hard it is to juggle personal and professional responsibilities. Both parents face this juggling act today. However a child's need for quality activities-- such as mentoring, tutoring, and community service-- doesn't conform to the schedule of any working parent. That is why afterschool activities and care are so important for our children. Too often, kids are left to their own devices on how to spend their time at the end of school. This is a lost opportunity to keep children supervised and away from crime, substance abuse, and other mischief. I applaud schools, businesses, and families that provide these opportunities to children in their communities. There's no better investment than our children's future."

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLYMEMBER NOREEN EVANS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF AFTERSCHOOL CARE.



HOW DOES THE AVAILABILITY OF AFTERSCHOOL CARE AFFECT YOUR CONSTITUENTS?

Having access to afterschool care can make a difference in the well-being of families and communities. Parents want afterschool programming, even if it would cost them money:

- "When respondents heard a description of a comprehensive afterschool program and were told that the program may cost \$1,500 per student annually, 62 percent voiced support for using federal and state funds to put these programs in their community...voters said they were willing to increase their own state taxes by \$100 annually to pay for every child to attend an afterschool program (52 percent favor). This support grew to 60 percent of respondents when they were told the funds would be protected so that they could only be used for afterschool programs." ⁵
- "There is significant research which shows that participation in after-school programs is positively associated with better school attendance, more positive attitude towards school work, higher aspirations for college, finer work habits, better interpersonal skills, reduced drop out rates, higher quality homework completion, less time spent in unhealthy behaviors, and improved grades." ⁶

WHO USES AFTERSCHOOL CARE?

- In a survey of 94 cities conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, city leaders indicated that afterschool program capacity is growing but only about 35% of children needing afterschool care are actually enrolled in programs.⁷
- "Among 10- to 12-year-olds, white children are twice as likely as Hispanic children, and almost three times as likely as black children, to use self-care as the primary form of care (30 percent for whites, compared with 15 percent for Hispanics and 11 percent for blacks)." ⁸

HOW DOES AFTERSCHOOL CARE AFFECT BUSINESSES?

When working parents are worried about what their children are doing after school, parents may experience "Parental After-School Stress."⁹

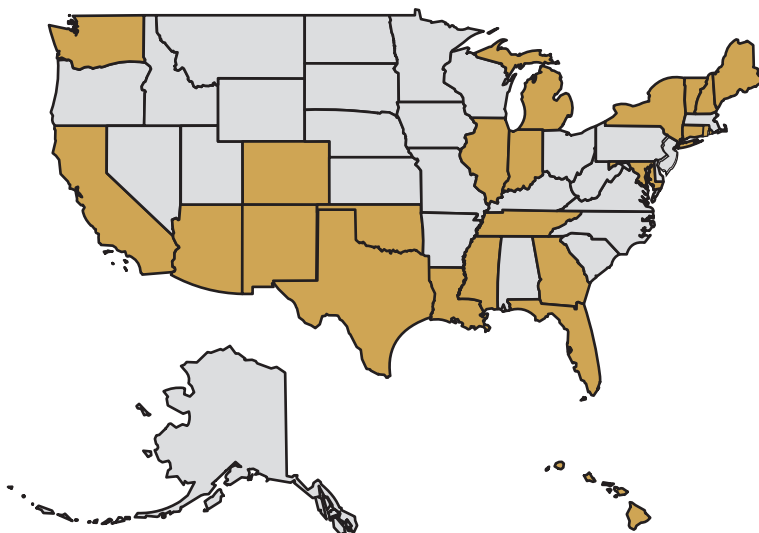
- Parental After-School Stress (PASS) symptoms include reduced concentration and lower productivity on the job. To decrease PASS, businesses can provide information about afterschool options, allow parents to monitor children's afterschool activities, or support community afterschool care programs (i.e., with technical assistance, resources, etc.).
- Parents with high afterschool stress are more than three times as likely as those without PASS symptoms to report high levels of job disruption, and more than four and a half times as likely to report low levels of psychological well-being. On average, they miss five more days of work annually than parents with low PASS, for a total of eight unplanned absences per year. ⁹
- "The risk of having high PASS is cut by about half when parents report...that they have workplace access to information about or referrals to local after-school programs."¹⁰

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Innovative state policies that encourage employers, schools, and communities to collaborate to provide afterschool care options might increase the availability of quality afterschool care programs.

28 states have passed statutes that address afterschool care.

- 10 states (CA, CO, DC, IL, LA, MD, NM, NY, RI, TN) have statutes related to the need for or the establishment of programs.
- 8 states (AZ, CA, CT, HI, ME, MI, TX, WA) have statutes related to afterschool care funding.
- 8 states (CA, CO, GA, MD, MS, OK, TX, VT) have statutes related to at-risk youth.
- 5 states (CA, CT, IN, RI, WA) have statutes related to advisory committees or boards for afterschool programming.
- 5 states (CA, CO, DC, NH, TN) have statutes related to caregiver/provider benefits, protection, and qualifications.
- 3 states (CA, FL, WA) have statutes related to student achievement.



For more statutes related to afterschool care, visit wfnetwork.bc.edu/bills.php

ARE ANY BILLS ON AFTERSCHOOL CARE BEING CONSIDERED BY YOUR LEGISLATURE?

CA	AB 1556	Provides child care and development services for children up to 13 years old and allows parents to choose child care that best suits their needs.
	AB 1984	Creates the 21st Century High School After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens program and requires the State Department of Education to set guidelines for a minimum of 10 programs to receive funds.
CT	SB 1068	Provide grants for children in the Hartford program to participate in an all day kindergarten program.
	HB 6361	Establishes the incorporation of family literacy opportunities into child care, afterschool care, and day care settings.
FL	HB 751	Establishes 211 call centers to help people find job training and assistance, elder care and child care.
	SB 1650	Establishes a separate budget for the Agency for Workforce Innovation.
GA	SB 384	Requires 'After-school program' definition to include programs that serve students who have dropped out of school and who have previously failed courses.
	SB 22	Authorizes the Georgia Crime Information Center to provide records of arrests or crimes for persons applying for employment at an afterschool program. Further allows for the disqualification of employment, if the person was prosecuted for child-related offenses.
HI	HR 69	Establishes a task force, Hawaii After-school Initiative, to develop a plan to ensure quality afterschool programs for every school-age child in the state.
	HB 373	Encourages adult supervision of older children and the importance of establishing safe, structured learning environments for youth during the out-of-school hours.
IA	SB 2205	Changes definition of afterschool program to include a summer-only program regarding child care regulations.
	HB 385	Promotes support to increase access to high-quality preschool programs.
KS	HB 2376	Provides exemptions concerning the licensing of child care facilities to the Salvation Army, Boys and Girls Club and local units of government for 5 to 15 year-olds.
MA	SB 26	Encourages funding for youth summer job programs in high-crime communities which focus on activities during out-of-school time.
	HB 1084	Establishes the afterschool child care transportation program.
MI	SB 279	Requires allocation of funds to support out-of-school-time programs and resources, for children in low-performing schools.
	HR 26	Establishes the Michigan After-School Initiative to evaluate and develop a plan for afterschool programs.
MN	HF 4	Requires allocation of funds for afterschool enrichment grants to support programming for at-risk children.
MO	HCR 11	Renames the Joint Interim Committee on After-School Programs as the Joint Legislative Committee on Out-of-School Programs.
MS	HB 159	Establishes the "Mississippi After-School Initiative Task Force" to develop a plan to ensure quality afterschool programs.
NJ	AB 1363	Establishes a program providing grants to schools and child care centers, including afterschool programs.
	SB 2523	Establishes a comprehensive program of afterschool activities for students.
NM	SB 434	Requires appropriation of funds to the children, youth and families department for a task force for the out-of-school time program.
NY	AB 7966	Establishes an afterschool challenge program to provide support for afterschool programs that provide affordable afterschool care for students in grades one through eight that run after school until at least six o'clock.
	SB 553	Requires funds be allocated to organizations that provide supervised afterschool activities to youth in families under the state's temporary assistance program.
OK	HB 2580	Requires coordination among governmental agencies and commissions to create an out-of-school resource center.
WV	HCR 89	Establishes a taskforce to study afterschool programs and develop plans to provide high quality afterschool programs.
WA	HB 1981	Establishes an afterschool plan that would expand and support high quality afterschool programs.

For more bills related to afterschool care, go to: wfnetwork.bc.edu/bills.php

WOULD YOU LIKE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT AFTERSCHOOL CARE?

The following resources about afterschool care might also be of interest to you.

- The Afterschool Alliance: www.afterschoolalliance.org
 - The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit organization that advocates for quality, affordable programs for all children through research and practice. The common goal of this agency and its supporters is to have all children easily access quality programs by the year 2010.
 - The Afterschool Alliance's Elections Guide 2004 has information for voters, youth, and candidates, all pertaining to afterschool care. Visit: www.afterschoolalliance.org/elections/elections_2004.cfm
 - The Afterschool Alliance has also developed a page for up to date policy news briefs on afterschool care. Visit: www.afterschoolalliance.org/policy_news.cfm
- The National Child Care Information Center's Afterschool Investments Project: www.nccic.org/afterschool
 - This program hopes to develop and offer state profiles of afterschool resources, policies and issues, create tools and materials to support the development and sustainability of afterschool efforts, and provide technical assistance at regional meetings around building state collaborations for afterschool. State-by-state comparisons and profiles are on the website.
- National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) (2003, January). *Making the Case: A fact sheet on children and youth in out-of-school time*. Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College.
 - To view fact sheet, visit: www.niost.org/publications
 - To read more about NIOST, visit: www.niost.org

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The Sloan Work and Family Research Network can provide you with additional research-based information about working families. VISIT WWW.BC.EDU/WFNETWORK, EMAIL WFNETWORK@BC.EDU, OR CALL 617.552.1708.