



House Bill 33: FY24-25 Operating Budget

Senate Finance Committee
Chair Dolan
Vice Chair Cirino
Ranking Member Sykes
Senators Blessing, Brenner, Craig, Gavarone, Hicks-Hudson, Lang, Manning, Reineke,
Romanchuk, Schuring

Testimony submitted by:
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Chairman Dolan, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Adam Shank, and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs. I want to take a moment to thank the Administration and the General Assembly for their steadfast support of the Clubs over the years. Through your work and support, the Clubs are making significant impacts on the lives of the youth we serve.

If a student in Ohio has access to a Boys & Girls Club, they have access to more hours of structured programming out-of-school than they do in their local classroom. Using out-of-school time to build communities of learning and increase access to academic resources is critical. It is also effective.

The past few years have had a profound impact on education, leading to widespread learning loss and a need for academic recovery. A recent study found that students have lost an average of six months of learning, with low-income and minority students being hit the hardest

(COVID-19 and Learning Loss: An Unprecedented Crisis in America's Schools, 2020). To address this challenge, it is essential to provide students with access to high-quality, evidence-based programs and resources that support academic recovery.

Boys & Girls Clubs have a long history of providing high-quality, evidence-based programs and activities designed to support academic success. Studies have consistently shown that participation in Boys & Girls Clubs is associated with improved academic outcomes. A systematic review of research studies found that Boys & Girls Clubs have a positive impact on youth outcomes, including academic achievement, higher grades, and better performance on standardized tests (The Impact of Boys & Girls Clubs on Youth Outcomes, 2017). A meta-analysis of research studies found that participation in after-school programs, including Boys & Girls Clubs, was associated with improved academic outcomes, such as higher test scores and better grades (The Effectiveness of After-School Programs for Improving Academic Outcomes: A Meta-Analytic Review, 2007). Furthermore, in delivering these academic outcomes, Clubs have documented a positive return on investment for the state of Ohio. ***In fact, for every \$1 that state invests in Boys & Girls Clubs, Ohio communities recognize a return of \$11.35*** (Institute for Social Research and the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan, 2015).*

Attached, I have included a comprehensive summary of Club impact on school performance documenting that Club programs: *improve young people's school-day attendance, which is essential for academic progress; boost academic success for youth – leading to better grades, higher test scores, positive study habits, improved school behaviors; engage youth over the summer months, preventing the learning loss that can occur when they are not in school;*

* Preliminary results from an ongoing Social Return on Investment Study by the Ohio University Voinovich School indicate that the return on investment for Ohio is likely significantly higher today than it was when the University of Michigan study was conducted. The final report of this study is expected in August of next year.

enhance young people's engagement with learning, as well as their attitudes and behaviors related to school; foster good study habits and positive behaviors, which youth then use in school and at home; build young people's confidence, belief in their abilities and their expectations for the future; and increase youth's chances of staying in school, being promoted to the next grade and graduating high school on time. This data demonstrates, in short, that Clubs are a critical partner in enriching and achieving desired state educational outcomes.

For these reasons, the Administration, General Assembly, and Department of Education have partnered with Clubs to expand services and promote academic recovery in high-need rural, Appalachian, and urban areas. We now have more than 100 Club sites across the state, a 33% increase in service area, and a service capacity of more than 60,000 Ohio kids, a 300% increase from early pandemic levels. Many of these sites and service areas were established in direct partnership with local school districts. Additional partnerships are underway to provide mobile Club programming in hard to reach rural and Appalachian areas where access to services is limited.

The ongoing partnership with ODE has produced an increase of 1,714 sq miles in service area, 3,482 more program hours, support for 678 educators in eliminating barriers to learning, the engagement of 12 new school districts, and the establishment of 46 new partnerships to assist academic programming efforts in some of the highest need areas of the state.

To ensure the sustainability and enhancement of these successful programs, the Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs is requesting that the House's allocation of \$3.5 million in each fiscal year be maintained in the Senate. Administered by the Ohio Department of Education, the funding will support the ongoing establishment and expansion of Club programming in underserved areas of the state and to support academic programs to address learning loss. This allocation would be the continuation of the ongoing partnership with ODE, but a new investment

of state funds as opposed to federal dollars. Coupled with a more restrictive increased earmark of federal pass-through TANF dollars included in the Governor's and House's versions of the bill, this amount will ensure the continued support and expansion of evidence based academic programs.

As the needs of Ohio's youth continue, it is imperative that the state support ongoing and impactful programs in a fiscally responsible way. One that is focused on outcomes and return for Ohio's communities and tax dollars. At the requested amount, annual academic programming could be provided at the cost of \$58.33 per student and generate a documented return of \$39,725,000 in economic benefit for the state.

State funding for Boys & Girls Clubs is an investment in the future of communities and the well-being of our youth. Boys & Girls Clubs have a proven track record. Clubs in Ohio have evolved beyond mere community-based organizations to become state partners in addressing youth issues. If you want to have positive impacts on state outcomes in academic recovery, youth mental health, and college/career readiness, an investment in Boys & Girls Clubs is sound state policy with a documented ROI. Therefore, we humbly request the maintenance of the aforementioned allocations in the Senate version of HB 33.



SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

ATTENDANCE

Afterschool programs improve young people's school-day attendance, which is essential for academic progress.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When young people attend school regularly, they achieve at a higher rate than those absent more often. For elementary-school youth, regular attendance leads to greater proficiency in reading and math: fourth-grade students who attend regularly score an average of 12 points higher on reading assessments – more than a full grade level – and, among eighth graders, those attending regularly score an average 18 points higher on math assessments.¹ Middle-school youth who don't miss school have a greater chance of staying engaged in their schoolwork and passing important courses that prepare them for high school. For high-school students, attending school regularly increases their chances of graduating and finding good jobs; it is, in fact, nearly as important as good grades for predicting whether teens will stay on track to graduate.² Regular school attendance equips young people for success now and in the future by fostering helpful life skills and habits, connecting youth to their community, building strong social-emotional skills and encouraging positive relationships.³

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

In afterschool, youth feel connected to peers and classmates, engaged in learning and supported by people who care about them. They experience a sense of belonging, connection, and academic support, all of which have a positive impact on their school-day attendance.⁴

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Clubs foster regular school attendance. A longitudinal study of middle-schoolers attending Clubs found improvements in attendance and attitudes about school. Youth who attended Clubs skipped school less and applied more effort in their schoolwork, and these results improved as the number of days in afterschool increased.⁵
- In 2022, nearly two-thirds (62%) of Boys & Girls Club members aged 9 to 12 and almost three-fourths (72%) of teens 13 and older reported not having skipped school in the past four weeks.⁶
- School-day attendance is even higher among Boys & Girls Club teens who have an optimal Club Experience, when the Club environment consistently provides them with positive experiences in a specific area. This group, when compared to teens whose experience needs improvement, are 26% less likely to skip school than their counterparts.⁷



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- A study of more than 10,200 Boys & Girls Club members in Washington state using student data from the 2013-2014 school year found that Club members were 36% less likely to be chronically absent when compared to students across the state. Members who attended the Club frequently (on average, two or more times per week) were 55% less likely to be chronically absent.⁸
 - A study conducted by the Connecticut Department of Education and the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs found that only 7% of Boys & Girls Club youth in grades K to 12 were chronically absent during the school year, compared to 11% of students across the state. Members who attend the Club frequently (on average, two or more times per week) were two times less likely to be chronically absent than youth across the state.⁹
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EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- In a summary of 128 studies of afterschool programs spanning grades K to 12, researchers found that 41% of the programs showed that their participants had improved outcomes in attendance and enrollment.¹⁰
 - Youth participating in Chicago's After School Matters program had significantly fewer school-day absences than their peers (7.5 days of school missed vs. 9.6).¹¹
 - The more often youth attend afterschool, the more they benefit. Youth in Rhode Island who participated in 21st Century Community Learning Centers 60 days or more in a year had 70% fewer school absences than non-participants,¹² and those attending afterschool 70 days or more in New Jersey's Community Learning Centers showed an even greater reduction in absences.¹³
 - A study of the Horizons summer learning program – serving 6,000 youth in 19 states – found that those who participated at least four summers had higher attendance rates and less chronic absenteeism than non-participants. Elementary- and middle-school youth had attendance rates 1.1 percentage points higher, equal to two extra days of school, and high-school students had rates 3.6 percentage points higher, equal to 6.5 more days of school.¹⁴
 - Middle-school youth participating in the AfterZone afterschool program for at least two years missed 25% fewer school days than non-participants.¹⁵
 - Afterschool programs that give youth chances to plan future activities, learn something, explore and discover new things on their own, make a contribution or engage in discussions saw improved school-day attendance among youth participating 60 days or more.¹⁶
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GRADES AND TEST SCORES

Afterschool programs boost academic success for youth – leading to better grades, higher test scores, positive study habits, improved school behaviors.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Academic achievement is essential for youth. Doing well in school gives students a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment, motivating them to work harder and do their best, which in turn increases their self-confidence. When youth succeed academically, they benefit by tapping into a love of learning, developing a strong work ethic and gaining important life skills that will serve them well in the future. Academic achievement also pays off in the long term; it increases the likelihood that a young person will graduate from high school, get accepted into a good college, have access to more job opportunities and have higher earnings when they enter the workforce. It also can lead to better health later in life.¹⁷

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

When youth have the opportunity to learn and practice new skills through academic enrichment experiences in afterschool, their grades and test scores improve. While afterschool programs complement learning that takes place during the school day, they also offer advantages that schools cannot provide: time and space for in-depth learning projects, flexibility for learning outside the classroom, opportunities for active participation and activities to motivate youth.¹⁸

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Clubs' academic enrichment experiences, such as high-yield learning activities and games, and support in the form of targeted tutoring and homework assistance help youth perform well academically. Participants in BGCA's Project Learn, which builds on skills and knowledge youth learn at school, saw increases in grade point averages: overall GPA (11%); math GPA (13%), spelling GPA (22%) and reading GPA (5%).¹⁹
- In 2022 outcomes measurement data, the majority of BGCA Club members (83%) reported receiving mostly As and Bs.²⁰

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- In a summary of 128 studies of afterschool programs spanning grades K to 12, researchers found that one-third (33%) of the programs showed improved participant outcomes in math achievement; one-fourth showed gains in reading achievement (26% of programs) and science achievement (25% of programs).²¹



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- A review of 68 afterschool programs found that programs that seek to promote young people’s personal and social skills – and use SAFE (sequenced, active, focused and explicit skill-training practices) – result in improved performance for participants in school grades and standardized test scores when compared to non-participating youth.²²
 - A two-year longitudinal study focused on the effects of afterschool participation on ethnically diverse elementary- and middle-school youth from high-poverty communities. Students who attended high-quality programs two to three days a week over a two-year period, when compared to non-participating youth, showed gains of 20 percentiles (elementary-school youth) and 12 percentiles (middle-school youth) in math achievement test scores.²³
 - In a national evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Center programs, 25 out of 54 states reported improvements in the grades of regular program attendees. Half (50%) of students in K to 12 had improved math grades and 49% had improved English grades.²⁴
 - Regular attendees in 21st Century Community Learning Center programs also improved their performance on assessment tests. One-fourth of elementary students improved on the elementary reading state assessment, and 19% of middle- and high-school youth improved on the middle/high school mathematics state assessment.²⁵
 - In New Mexico, 29% of participants in 21st Century Community Learning Centers raised their grade by a full letter, and nearly half (49%) of those earning below a passing grade raised their grade by the end of the year.²⁶
 - When youth living in low-income households participate in afterschool programs, their achievement in math (at grade 5), is closer to that of their peers from higher-income households. When youth participate on a consistent basis, there is no gap in math achievement between groups of children in grade 5.²⁷
 - Youth show the greatest improvements in school performance when participating in afterschool programs with an academic component – tutoring or homework assistance.²⁸
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SUMMER LEARNING LOSS

Afterschool programs engage youth over the summer months, preventing the learning loss that can occur when they are not in school.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Summer learning loss occurs when youth fail to retain what they learned during the previous academic year, returning to school at a lower level than when they left. This loss especially affects youth from low-income households; studies show that most youth lose about two months of grade-level equivalency in math and reading skills over the summer, but youth from low-income households experience even greater loss.²⁹ Because it can take as much as two months in the fall for young people to recover and re-learn what they lost while away from school, it is especially important to engage them in constructive, enriching activities during the summer months so they will be ready for success when the school year gets under way.³⁰

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Summer programs have the potential to help youth avoid learning loss. Through high-quality instruction, smaller group sizes, engaging programming and content aligned with school-year curricula, afterschool programs give youth access to educational resources in the summer and additional time and support for learning and retaining academic content.³¹ With this support, youth are equipped to start the next grade ready to learn and build on their previous success.³²

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

A 2015 randomized control trial of Boys & Girls Clubs' Summer Brain Gain's modules for elementary youth found that participants had more gains in math compared to non-participants. In addition, younger participants (rising in grades 1 to 3) showed significant gains in early literacy, and older participants (rising in grades 4 to 5) experienced no significant learning loss in math and reading.³³

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- In one study of summer-learning programs, youth in grades 3 through 7 had improvements in math after one summer. Frequent attenders benefitted even more; after two summers, they experienced gains in mathematics, language arts and social-emotional skills.³⁴
- Long-term participants in the Horizons summer learning program – targeting youth from low-income households – scored higher on standardized math and science tests at the end of elementary school. They had higher grade point averages in grade 9 than non-participants and were less likely to repeat a grade in middle and high school. Horizon youth



also earned more credits, the equivalent of one full-year course credit by the end of grade 9.³⁵

- Elementary school students from low-income households in urban districts who were high attenders of summer learning programs experienced benefits in math (25 percent of the average annual gain) that persisted through the following school year (13 percent of the expected annual gain).³⁶
 - In a study of Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL), a summer program targeting elementary children living in low-income households, participants gained approximately one month's worth of reading skills during the summer over their non-participating peers.³⁷
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LEARNING ENGAGEMENT

Afterschool programs enhance young people's engagement with learning, as well as their attitudes and behaviors related to school.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Being engaged in school is an important predictor of student success; when youth are curious and engaged in learning, they are more likely to do well academically, feel connected, have a sense of social-emotional well-being, stay in school and graduate.³⁸ When a young person is engaged in school, it can be behavioral, such as attending class and completing assignments. Being engaged also can be emotional, liking school, identifying with school or finding learning interesting or enjoyable. And it also can be cognitive, if a student is curious, focused and attentive, and using higher-level critical thinking, for example.³⁹ Youth with all three types of engagement are more likely to do well academically.⁴⁰

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool programs engage and motivate youth through a variety of activities that make learning fun, and these positive experiences outside of school can enhance a young person's engagement while in school.⁴¹ In one study, more than three out of four principals reported positive effects of afterschool programs: 82% said afterschool enhanced students' attitudes toward school and 76% said it enhanced youths' motivation to learn.⁴²

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Clubs activate members' motivation and curiosity. Nearly all Club youth (92%) say they enjoy learning new things, and 84% say they choose activities that push them to learn new things. This enjoyment leads to positive results; of Club members who enjoy learning, more than three-fourths (77%) are on track to graduate.⁴³
- Boys & Girls Club members who have an optimal Club Experience, when the Club environment consistently provides them with positive experiences in a specific area, are two times more likely to enjoy learning new things than members whose experience needs improvement.⁴⁴
- Boys & Girls Club youth also see learning as important. Nearly three-fourths (73%) of Club members say that what they are learning in school will be important later in life.⁴⁵

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- In a summary of 128 studies of afterschool programs spanning grades K to 12, researchers found that more than one-third (39%) of the programs showed improved participant outcomes in school engagement.⁴⁶



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- Afterschool programs foster engagement. Teachers report that youth in Community Learning Centers show more positive engagement and effort in class and in schoolwork.⁴⁷
 - Young people report higher motivation and positive states of mind when they are in afterschool programs than when they are elsewhere; they also think the activities they do there are more important than other activities they engage in.⁴⁸
 - In a three-year evaluation of the Beacon Community Center afterschool initiative, nearly all (95%) of the middle-school participants reported that they try hard in school.⁴⁹
 - Afterschool programs that intentionally foster personal and social skills have an overall positive and statistically significant impact on youth – prompting more positive attitudes about school, enhanced self-perception (including self-confidence, self-esteem and a sense of self-efficacy), a greater sense of connection to school and improved social behavior.⁵⁰
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STUDY HABITS

Afterschool programs foster good study habits and positive behaviors, which youth then use in school and at home.

WHY THIS MATTERS

An important element of a young person's education is becoming an independent, self-directed learner. Youth need to develop effective study habits and positive classroom behaviors – such as listening, paying attention and participating actively in discussions – so they get the most out of class and complete their assignments successfully on their own and on time. These skills are especially important as youth get older. With good study habits and positive school behaviors, young people's grades will get better, their knowledge will grow and their ability to learn and assimilate new information will increase.

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Young people who participate in high-quality afterschool programs spend more time engaged in academic and extracurricular activities, in contrast to youth in other settings, who spend more time watching TV or playing outside unsupervised. As a result, participants in afterschool programs develop more positive study habits and school behaviors.⁵¹ Regular participation in afterschool programs is linked to significantly improved schoolwork habits and reduced behavior problems, both important to academic progress.⁵²

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- An evaluation of New Hampshire's Community Learning Centers found that teachers reported that 64% of youth who regularly participated in the program were more successful finishing their homework and 60% increased their level of class participation.⁵³
- A two-year longitudinal study focusing on the effects of afterschool participation on ethnically diverse elementary- and middle-school youth from high-poverty communities found that those who attended high-quality programs two to three days a week over a two-year period showed significant gains in study habits and task persistence.⁵⁴
- In a national evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Center programs, 40 out of 54 respondents (all 50 states, plus District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and the Bureau of Indian Affairs) reported improvements in homework completion and class participation of regular attendees. According to teacher reports, more than two-thirds (68%) of Learning Center participants in elementary, middle and high school had improved homework completion and class participation.⁵⁵
- In a three-year evaluation of the Beacon Community Center afterschool initiative, nearly all of the middle-school participants reported that they pay attention in class (93%), come to class prepared (88%) and always finish their homework (85%).⁵⁶



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- In an evaluation of Virginia's 21st Century Community Learning Centers, school-day teachers reported that 21st CCLC students improved in key areas. Approximately three-fourths of teachers said students improved in homework completion and class participation (77%) and in classroom behavior (70%), and more than half (54%) said 21st CCLC students improved in their motivation to learn.⁵⁷
 - According to their teachers, students who regularly attended Wisconsin 21st Century Community Learning Centers improved in several ways. Two-thirds of 21st CCLC students (66%) improved in class participation and in homework completion; and more than half (58%) improved in coming to school motivated to learn and being attentive in class.⁵⁸
 - In an evaluation of the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) afterschool initiative – serving youth from low-income, low-achieving schools – researchers found that youth who had a strong sense of belonging to their afterschool program showed significant improvements in 10 out of 13 outcomes, including being better able to pay attention in class and being more likely to study hard for a test.⁵⁹
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YOUTH AND ADULT EXPECTATIONS

Afterschool programs build young people's confidence, belief in their abilities and their expectations for the future.

WHY THIS MATTERS

A student's expectations about doing well in school can predict their future achievement⁶⁰; in fact, if youth believe they can do something, they experience more academic success.⁶¹ Youth also are more likely to perform well academically when adults hold high expectations for them.⁶²

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool programs, because they are at the intersection of school, community and home, have the potential to motivate and encourage youth beyond what school alone can do. A positive afterschool setting – one with positive social interactions, student engagement, academic enrichment and supportive adults – can increase youth perceptions of their academic abilities. As their confidence grows and their identity as a learner increases, so does their belief in themselves and their expectations for the future.⁶³

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Club youth who perceive their Club experience as positive are more likely to have high academic expectations, good grades and a sense of valuing school.⁶⁴
 - Outcome measurement data on Boys & Girls Club members shows that 94% of Club youth say that adults at the Club believe they will be a success.⁶⁵
 - Surveys of adult alumni of Boys & Girls Clubs show that the vast majority (91%) believe that adults at the Club held high expectations for them and believed they would be a success.⁶⁶
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EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

Nearly all participating teens (96%) in Chicago's After School Matters program reported having plans for their lives after high school.⁶⁷



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Afterschool programs increase youth's chances of staying in school, being promoted to the next grade and graduating high school on time.

WHY THIS MATTERS

High school graduation is a critical milestone for all young people. It is a requirement for higher education and because it provides the credentials needed for many jobs, it prepares youth for entry into the workforce and gives them a better chance of being employed. In 2022, the employment rate for workers with a high-school diploma was 20% higher than for those who had not completed high school; less than half (47%) of workers 25 and older without a high-school diploma were employed.⁶⁸ With a high-school diploma, a worker has a better chance for higher earnings; in 2020, the median annual earnings for those with high-school completion was 23% higher than for those without (\$36,600 vs. \$29,800).⁶⁹ High school graduation serves as a foundation for the rest of a young person's life by leading to more opportunities, better living conditions, a healthier life – and preparing them to participate as productive, engaged citizens.⁷⁰

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Participants in afterschool programs are more likely to graduate high school and less likely to miss school, fail courses, or drop out than non-participants and, the higher the participation in afterschool, the greater the positive impact on youth graduation rates.⁷¹ Yet it is not only frequency that matters; research shows that afterschool programs must be of high quality if they are to have a positive impact on youth. High-quality afterschool programs offer important elements of learning environments – positive relationships, skill-building activities, high levels of engagement, a focus on mastery of knowledge and skills, appropriate levels of structure, opportunities for autonomy and choice.⁷²

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Club members overwhelmingly have high expectations; nearly all Club youth (94%) expect to graduate high school.⁷³
- Three-quarters of Boys & Girls Club youth are on track to graduate from high school on time. Among elementary school youth, 53% are on track for on-time high school graduation with low risk. An additional 19% are on track with some risk (such as having poorer grades or occasionally skipping school). Among middle-school youth, 55% are on track with low risk and 20% are on track with some risk. Among high-school members, 54% are on track with low risk and 22% are on track with some risk.⁷⁴
- The majority of Boys & Girls Club members also have aspirations for education beyond high school: 91% of youth expect to finish high school or college and 96% of teens expect to complete high school, vocational or trade school, one or two years or college, a four-year college degree, or a master's degree, Ph.D., M.D. or equivalent.⁷⁵



EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- In a summary of 128 studies of afterschool programs spanning grades K to 12, researchers found that half of the programs showed improved outcomes in grade promotion and high-school graduation.⁷⁶
- Most ninth-grade students participating in Chicago's After School Matters program (91%), which serves 20,000 high-school youth in high-poverty areas in the city, are on track for their grade level, which is an important predictor of on-time high-school graduation. Participants' on-track rate is 4% higher than that of non-participants.⁷⁷
- High school seniors in Chicago's After School Matters program graduated at a rate of 92%, considerably higher than the state-wide graduation rate of 80%. Participating teens are 2.7 times more likely to graduate high school than their peers who do not participate.⁷⁸
- A longitudinal study of LA's BEST Afterschool Enrichment Program, which serves elementary-school students in more than 200 area schools, found participants 20% less likely than non-participants to leave school without graduating. The difference between the two groups was even greater for youth involved in the BEST program for two or three years.⁷⁹
- A state-wide study of 21st Century Community Learning Centers in Texas found that youth participating 60 days or more in a school year were 97% more likely than non-participants to be promoted to the next grade level.⁸⁰ For youth in grades 9-11, afterschool participation made them 55% more likely to be promoted to the next grade level on time.⁸¹

Please see Social-Emotional Development in the Impact Evidence library to see how it relates to young people's learning and academic achievement.

ENDNOTES

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- ² U.S. Department of Education (January 2019). *Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools: A Hidden Educational Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education), <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>.
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- ⁴ Goerge, R. M., Cusick, G. R., Wasserman, M., & Gladden, R. M. (2007). *After-School Programs and Academic Impact: A Study of Chicago's After School Matters* (Issue Brief No. 112), <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/after-school-programs-and-academic-impact>. Vandell, D., Reischer, E., & Pierce, K. (2007). *Outcomes Linked to High-Quality Afterschool Programs: Longitudinal Findings from the Study of Promising Practices* (Irvine: University of California and Washington, D.C.: Policy Studies Associates), <http://www.gse.uci.edu/docs/PASP%20Final%20Report.pdf>. Chang, H.N. and Jordan, P.W. (2013). "Building a Culture of Attendance: Schools and Afterschool Programs Together Can and Should Make a Difference!" in *Expanding Minds and Opportunities: Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summer Learning for Student Success*, edited by Terry K. Peterson, The Expanded Learning and Afterschool Project (Washington, D.C.: Collaborative Communications Group), <https://www.expandinglearning.org/expandingminds/article/building-culture-attendance-schools-and-afterschool-programs-together-can-and>.
- ⁵ Arbreton, A., Bradshaw, M., Sheldon, J., et al. (May 2009). *Making Every Day Count: Boys & Girls Clubs' Role in Promoting Positive Outcomes for Teens* (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures), <https://www.issuelab.org/resources/3266/3266.pdf>.
- ⁶ Boys & Girls Clubs of America (2022). Data from the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI) Member Survey, <https://mydata.bgca.net/Home.aspx>.
- ⁷ Boys & Girls Clubs of America (2022). Data from the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI) Member Survey, <https://mydata.bgca.net/Home.aspx>.
- ⁸ Cole, J. (2016). *Report on Chronic Absenteeism Comparing Boys & Girls Club Youth and Washington's General Student Population*. University of Washington for Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington State.
- ⁹ Charter Oak Group, Inc. (2014). *Educational Outcomes for Youth in Connecticut: Chronic Absenteeism and Disciplinary Action among Boys & Girls Club Participants*, Charter Oak Group, Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, Boys & Girls Clubs of America.
- ¹⁰ Neild, R.C., Wilson, S.J. and McClanahan, W. (March 2019). *Afterschool Programs: A Review of Evidence Under the Every Student Succeeds Act* (Philadelphia: Research for Action), <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Afterschool-Programs-A-Review-of-Evidence-Under-the-Every-Student-Succeeds-Act.pdf>.
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POSTSECONDARY ADVANCEMENT

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Afterschool programs equip youth for postsecondary education by helping them explore options and prepare for their next steps.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Education beyond high school matters more than ever; 65% of jobs today require the kind of knowledge and skills only possible through postsecondary programs.¹ Careers that require more education will grow faster than average: by the year 2030, the growth of all occupations will average 7.7%, but those requiring an associate degree will be up 10.5%, and those requiring a bachelor's degree will increase 9.9%.² Greater educational attainment also leads to higher earnings – those with a bachelor's degree earn 84% more than those with only a high-school diploma³ – as well as to better health, a longer life and other positive life outcomes.⁴

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

The path to postsecondary education involves educating young people about options and connecting them with support so they can see what's possible after high school and plan next steps.⁵ Afterschool programs offer readiness activities not always available at school (especially under-resourced schools): exploring different types of education, visiting college campuses, meeting guest speakers, attending college fairs and identifying relevant postsecondary options.⁶

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- More than half (55%) of Boys & Girls Club teens in 11th and 12th grades report that they have participated in a college preparation program at the Club.⁷
- Boys & Girls Clubs guide teens through the concrete steps of preparing for post-secondary education. Two-thirds of Club teens in 12th grade have taken the SAT, ACT or another college entrance exam (68%) and applied for college scholarships (66%).⁸
- Three-quarters (75%) of Boys & Girls Club teens in grades 11 to 12 are post-secondary ready, based on their course completion.⁹

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- Nearly three-fourths (71%) of youth who regularly took part in Virginia's 21st Century Community Learning Center programs said it helped them learn what was necessary to be ready for postsecondary education, either a trade school or college.¹⁰



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- High-school juniors participating in the College Possible afterschool program learned about college life through campus tours and summer programs. Participants in the program were three times more likely to graduate than their peers.¹¹
 - More than four-fifths (86%) of alumni who participated in the College Possible afterschool program found the support they received as “very” or “extremely” helpful in navigating the college application and enrollment process.¹²
 - More than 70% of youth participating in Project Echo’s afterschool program, designed to empower youth to thrive in college and careers, said they were able to identify their academic strengths and were encouraged in their decision to go to college.¹³
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COACHING AND MENTORING

Afterschool programs guide young people through the complex process of applying for admission and financial aid.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Many youth pursuing education after high school need guidance in completing applications for admission, financial aid and scholarships. First-generation and students from low-income households need even more help; these students often do not know how to access support from college counselors, teachers, coaches, family members or other helpful adults.¹⁴

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

In a national survey of high-school seniors in 2022, only one in four (25%) reported receiving counseling at school about how to pay for college¹⁵; research shows that, when youth have help navigating the complex process of applying for admission and financial aid, they are more likely to enroll, attend and complete their postsecondary education. Supportive adults in afterschool help with this process.¹⁶ Many afterschool programs also have links with nearby colleges or universities so youth can connect with mentors in college, helping them meet role models already on their way to success and encouraging them to see their own futures differently.¹⁷

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- Coaches in the College Possible afterschool program guide high-school seniors in applying for college, financial aid and scholarships. Nearly all participants (98%) are admitted to college, and 80% progress from their first to second year of college.¹⁸
- Mentoring makes a difference to youth participating in the iMentor program, an organization that empowers youth from low-income communities to attend college and reach their goals. Youth have strong relationships with their mentors; they trust them (92%), are open and honest with them (92%), and say the relationship is important (89%).¹⁹ The program also helps youth plan and prepare for postsecondary education: in 2020, 87% of participants submitted the FAFSA, 97% of students submitted a college application, and all of these were accepted to a college.²⁰
- Youth mentored by Prep for Prep, an organization dedicated to creating access to educational and professional advancement opportunities for young people of color in middle and high school, receive \$35 million each year in independent school financial aid.²¹
- Prep for Prep youth benefit from the coaching and mentoring they receive, as evidenced by the postsecondary success of program alumni: 624 have master's degrees, 302 have JDs, 258 have MBAs, 130 have medical or nursing degrees and 125 have PhDs or EdDs.²²



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- Through the ACE Chicago Mentoring Afterschool Program, high-school youth prepare for postsecondary education and potential careers by working with mentors and completing hands-on projects in architecture, construction, engineering and related professions. Students have received 819 scholarships as a result of their participation in the program.²³
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EXPECTATIONS AND CONFIDENCE

Afterschool programs build youth confidence and raise expectations related to postsecondary education and their future goals.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Adults' expectations for young people's futures strongly influence how well youth perform academically. Parents' high expectations are linked to academic achievement, grades, college attendance and completion; by holding high expectations, parents help youth set goals, see the value of education, and work to reach their goals. Equally important are teachers' expectations. When teachers hold high expectations of their students, youth are more likely to succeed academically, and these effects are even stronger when parents also have high expectations.²⁴

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool programs foster youth expectations and confidence, encouraging them to realize their full potential and envision themselves being successful in the future.²⁵

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- In 2022, three-fourths (75%) of Boys & Girls Club teens said they expect to pursue post-secondary education (one or two years of college, four-year college degree, master's degree, PhD, MD or equivalent).²⁶
- Nearly half (48%) of Boys & Girls Club high-school members in 2022 said they expect to attend a four-year college or university immediately after high school.²⁷

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- Nearly all (96%) of teens participating in Chicago's After School Matters program reported having plans for their lives after high school, compared to one-third (30%) of Chicago teens, who reported feeling sad or hopeless.²⁸
- California's state-wide Think Together afterschool program supports youth to prepare them for college; 90% of middle-school participants and 88% of high-schoolers are confident that college is an option after completing the program.²⁹
- Four-fifths of participants in the Project Echo afterschool program say it helped them decide on a college major and improved their skills in communication, self-confidence, teamwork and enthusiasm for school.³⁰



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- Students in the iMentor program, which matches youth with college-educated mentors, have high expectations for postsecondary education; before starting the program, 95% of participants aspire to go to college but only 67% believe they will. iMentor closes the gap between youth aspirations and expectations: 72% of participants enroll in college.³¹
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ENROLLMENT

Afterschool programs increase the likelihood that a young person will apply and enroll in a postsecondary program.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Of the 2021 graduates who enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall following graduation, there were striking differences among different groups of youth. Students from low-poverty schools enrolled in college immediately after high school at a rate of 72%, while those from high-poverty areas enrolled at a rate of only 46%. The same disparity occurred between schools with low- vs. high-minority populations: 64% of youth from low-minority schools enrolled in college immediately, while only 51% of those from high-minority school enrolled.³² Enrollments are declining among these groups of students, and they continue to be highly under-represented on college campuses. The need for increased access is greater than ever.

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Numerous studies show that participation in afterschool programs has a positive impact on youth enrollment and completion of postsecondary education. Afterschool programs also encourage youth to explore other postsecondary options such as trade school, vocational/technical schools, apprenticeships and the military.

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- The NYOI survey of Boys & Girls Club members found that youth in grades 9 to 12 plan to pursue a variety of postsecondary options immediately after high school: attend a two-year community/technical college (14%); enter the workforce (8%); join the military (5%); attend a vocational school/career prep program (2%); take a gap year to volunteer (2%) or complete an industry apprenticeship (1%).³³
- The educational attainment of adult alumni of Boys & Girls Clubs points to the importance of postsecondary planning and preparation for youth in Clubs. More than four-fifths (82%) of Club alumni report having pursued some type of postsecondary education (college, trade/vocational school, an associate degree, a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, or a PhD or equivalent),³⁴ compared to only 50% of adult in the general population who had attained any kind of postsecondary degree.³⁵

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- A study of the After School Matters Program, which serves nearly 20,000 teens in Chicago, found that 66% of participants had enrolled in college by the fall after their high-school graduation, compared to 58% of nonparticipants.³⁶



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- College Track, an afterschool program preparing first-generation students from low-income communities for higher education, closes the college-completion gap. The participant graduation rate is two times the national graduation rate for first-generation students and those from low-income communities; 96% of their participants go to a two- or four-year college, and 90% will be the first in their families to graduate from college.³⁷
 - The Upward Bound college access program and the Upward Bound Math-Science Program focus on increasing the rate at which disadvantaged high-school students enroll in and complete postsecondary programs. A majority (84%) of program participants in 2017–18 enrolled in postsecondary education soon after high school graduation; more than half (57%) matriculated into a four-year institution, and one-fourth (26%) matriculated into an institution that does not award a bachelor's degree.³⁸
 - A survey of Project Exploration alumni who participated in an afterschool science education program targeting females and under-represented youth found that respondents benefited from the program. Alumni had higher college enrollment rates (51% graduated from or attending a four-year college or university), a greater likelihood of majoring in a science field (59%) and greater employment rates (32%) in science-related professions.³⁹
 - After completing the iMentor program, which provides mentoring to youth from low-income communities to empower them to attend college, students enroll in college at a higher rate than students nationally (72% vs. 55%); they also complete college at a higher rate than the national student population (47% vs. 27%).⁴⁰
 - A survey of alumni who completed the College Possible afterschool program found that more than one in four (29%) had earned either a master's degree or doctorate.⁴¹
 - In an evaluation of the Upward Bound college access program for disadvantaged high-school students – which provides guidance with college-entrance exams, postsecondary options, completing college applications and understanding financial aid opportunities – youth earned a license or certificate from a vocational school at a significantly higher rate than their peers (9% for participants vs. 4% for nonparticipants).⁴²
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Please see [Workforce Readiness](#) in the Impact Evidence library to see how postsecondary advancement relates to career exploration, skill development and work-based experience.

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WORKFORCE READINESS

CAREER EXPLORATION

Afterschool programs give youth opportunities to explore a variety of occupations, an essential step in helping them identify potential careers.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When youth explore careers, they can consider their interests and skills and how they might connect to possible occupations. Career awareness and exploration also helps youth understand why school is important and how their learning relates to potential work they may pursue in the future.¹ This kind of exploration is especially important for youth of color, females and young people from low-income communities.² For example, although women and people of color make up the fastest-growing segments of the U.S. population, they account for only 47% and 37% of the U.S. workforce.³ It is important to equip all youth, especially those who have been under-represented, with the knowledge they need to build a successful career. And, while career programs have traditionally targeted older teens seeking jobs, early exposure to the world of work for younger students is essential to their long-term potential for career success.⁴

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Experts agree that career awareness/exploration is a process that should begin early. Even children can become aware of different careers as they imagine and role-play scenarios that help them think about how their futures might look. Middle-schoolers need a chance to explore different occupations so they can develop a sense of self/identity and an attitude about work. Older teens need chances to explore career paths through their interests, classes and actual work experience.⁵ Research shows that afterschool programs foster workforce readiness for youth, yet most of the evidence in this area comes from school-based programs and those targeting young people who are not in school or not working.

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Nearly three-fourths (70%) of Boys & Girls Club teens in 12th grade report that they have participated in career exploration at the Club,⁶ compared to one in three (33%) of high-school seniors nationally who received counselling about career possibilities.⁷
- Two-thirds (63%) of Boys & Girls Club adult alumni report that the Club helped them learn about different jobs and careers.⁸



EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- High-school urban youth in the GEAR UP college-readiness program gained awareness of their own abilities, skills, values, attitudes and beliefs; four-fifths (80%) of participants reported knowing how their personal skills and interests relate to a future career.⁹
 - In a survey of urban high-school youth in the GEAR Up college-readiness program, 79% said they learned how to find information and support related to their career interests. Nearly all (93%) also saw how their high-school experiences related to a future career.¹⁰
 - According to a recent evaluation of SHINE afterschool programs, which gives elementary- and middle-school youth the chance to explore different careers, 83% of parents reported that their children and teens demonstrated increased career awareness.¹¹
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CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Afterschool programs give young people the chance to develop and practice the essential workforce skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow.

WHY THIS MATTERS

More than ever, young people need help building the essential skills needed to succeed at work. The U.S. workforce today requires employees to be prepared with a combination of hard skills, the job-related knowledge and expertise needed to do a job effectively, and soft skills, the personal qualities that will allow them to succeed in the workplace. Almost all employers (91%) say that soft skills are as important or *more* important in employees than hard skills or technical expertise,¹² especially communication and interpersonal skills, self-management skills, the ability to collaborate or work in teams, problem-solving skills, and integrity or the ability to make ethical decisions.¹³ But youth today feel largely unprepared for the workforce; in a survey of 750 high-school students nationally, only 23% said they feel well prepared to join the workforce.¹⁴

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

To be successful in any occupation, youth need a combination of *hard skills*, the job-related knowledge and expertise needed to do the job effectively, and *soft skills*, the personal qualities that allow employees to thrive and succeed in the workplace. Afterschool programs foster these skills that young people need to succeed in the workplace. And, while workforce programs often target older youth, skill-building can begin earlier; research shows that younger students in quality afterschool programs can improve their communication, teamwork and other foundational skills employers seek.¹⁵

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Club members gain important skills needed in the workplace. Almost all of Club teens believe they have the skills needed to be successful in a job (95%); say they can express their thoughts and ideas clearly (88%); can work with people who are different from them (94%); feel comfortable asking questions when they don't understand something (84%); and finish things on time (81%).¹⁶
- A 2013 study of Boys & Girls Clubs' Money Matters: Make It Count! program showed that Club teens improved their financial literacy, with a more than 20% increase in knowledge related to credit cards, debt, savings and banking. Teens also showed improvements in use of financial terms, making better financial decisions, thinking and talking about future goals, wanting and planning to save money, and considering businesses to start.¹⁷
- Most adult alumni of Boys & Girls Clubs continue to report high employability skills in adulthood; 90% of Club adult alumni feel like they have the skills needed to be successful in a job, 93% can express their thoughts and ideas clearly, and 94% can work with people who are different from them.¹⁸



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- Boys & Girls Club adult alumni report being satisfied with their careers at a higher rate than adults in the general population (78% vs. 65%) and with their financial well-being (71% vs. 61%).¹⁹
 - Most Boys & Girls Club adult alumni believe the Club had a positive impact on their preparation for adulthood and career. Approximately two-thirds believe the Club contributed to the person they are today (69%) and helped prepare them for adulthood (65%).²⁰
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EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- Evaluations of 21st Century Community Learning Centers in Massachusetts, Arkansas and Virginia found that participants gained workforce readiness skills. In Massachusetts, teachers reported positive changes in high percentages of 21st CCLC students: relationships with adults (68%), critical thinking skills (62%), leadership skills (59%), ability to self-regulate (57%), perseverance (55%) and communication skills (54%). In Arkansas and Virginia, the overwhelming majority of 21st CCLC students themselves reported strong work habits: following rules (93% of students), time management (88% of students), finishing work on time (87% of students), working well by themselves (83% of students) and professional behavior (81% of students).²¹
 - A review of afterschool programs found that youth have improved social-emotional skills: self-perception (42% higher); positive social behaviors (35% higher); and improvement in problem behaviors (30% better) when compared to non-participating youth.²²
 - In a survey of afterschool leaders conducted by Furman University, most respondents said afterschool programs develop social-emotional skills “a lot”: teamwork (89%), self-confidence (87%), communication (81%), problem solving (61%), critical thinking (57%).²³
 - A hands-on, “earn-as-you-learn,” job-training program in Minnesota equips teens with employment skills – responsibility, appropriate workplace behavior and language, collaboration, initiative and problem solving – as they work in urban non-profit bakeries. Youth reported improved skills in several areas: increased knowledge of work quality (82%); skills and experience to mentor other youth (91%); ability to do something different when things don’t work (98%) and the ability to set goals and work toward them (98%).²⁴
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CAREER APPLICATION

Afterschool programs connect youth to real-life work experience through internships, apprenticeships or other on-the-job training.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Youth who gain early work experience – in part-time jobs, internships or other work-based settings – enjoy career benefits in the future, including higher hourly wages, increased annual earnings and less time spent out of work. Compared to their peers without work experience, high schoolers who work at least 20 hours per week will have as much as 20% higher earnings six to nine years after they graduate. Having early work experience makes employees more attractive to future employers, which means that entry-level work at restaurants, grocery stores or local retailers can play a significant role in a young person’s career development.²⁵ Almost all employers in one national survey (94%) said the best preparation for youth is experiencing the real world through opportunities like internships and job shadowing; in fact, employers say that previous internship and technical certifications are influential in their hiring decisions.²⁶

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool programs connect youth to real-life work experience through internships, apprenticeships or other types of on-the-job training. These experiences have several benefits for youth: they give them exposure to the world of work, first-hand experience in a specific career field, experience that reinforces academic learning and the possibility of a permanent job.²⁷ Employers are often key partners with afterschool programs in providing work-based learning or apprenticeship-type experiences, activities that are important for youth who have little exposure to careers or who are unfamiliar with the workplace.²⁸

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- More than half (58%) of Boys & Girls Club teens have had work experience in the past 12 months. The Club helped half of them get into their work placements.²⁹
- In the past 12 months before the survey, three-fourths of Boys & Girls Club high schoolers (74%) had paid part-time jobs or internships, another 20% had unpaid internships and 13% had full-time paid jobs or internships.³⁰

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- Among participants participating in YouthBuild, a career-prep program serving youth in low-income communities and those who are not in school or working, nearly two-thirds (64%) pursued jobs, internships, apprenticeships, self-employment or technical training opportunities in 2020.³¹



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- In National Academy of Finance (NAF), a school-based career prep/work-based learning program that serves predominantly young people of color, participants take career-focused courses and complete work-based learning activities to become career-ready. In 2021, more than one-third (39%) of students completed internships.³²
 - High-school students participating in Health 360: Youth Health Service Corps afterschool program in Connecticut receive preparation for volunteer service in the healthcare field and then design and implement service projects to address community health issues. The program expands youth knowledge and sparks interest in the healthcare field; after one year, 90% of participants agreed that the program taught them about careers in health care, and 71% of former participants pursued a healthcare-related field in college.³³
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EXPOSURE TO STEM

Afterschool programs encourage young people's awareness of STEM through hands-on learning, relevant skill building and career exploration.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The U.S. Department of Labor reports that, between 2021 and 2031, jobs in STEM will continue to grow at rates double those of non-STEM professions: STEM jobs will grow by nearly 11% while non-STEM jobs will grow only 5%.³⁴ Yet too few elementary-, middle- and high-school students are interested in and adequately prepared for STEM fields, and this is especially true for youth of color and girls.

DEEPER DIVE | IMPACT OF AFTERSCHOOL

High-quality afterschool STEM programs provide career exploration and access to STEM role models, as well as hands-on learning related to a variety of STEM topics. As youth engage with STEM learning, they get excited about these topics while building real-life skills and competencies. Research shows that high-quality afterschool programs can enhance young people's interests and attitudes about STEM, increasing the likelihood that they will pursue fields of study or careers in STEM.³⁵

EVIDENCE FROM BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

- Boys & Girls Club members enjoy participating in STEM. Nearly three-fourths (71%) say science is something they get excited about; 84% like to participate in science projects; and 81% are curious to learn more about science, computers or technology.³⁶
- Boys & Girls Club youth also have confidence in their STEM skills, reporting that math is easy for them (72%), science is easy for them (70%), and they are good at solving science-related problems (64%).³⁷
- Boys & Girls Club youth also express an interest in exploring STEM fields. Roughly half of Club high schoolers plan to take science-related courses after high school (56%) or want to take math courses after high school (48%), and nearly two-thirds of Club youth of all ages know the steps to take to be in a science-related career (63%).³⁸
- Nearly half (48%) of Boys & Girls Club youth surveyed about their interest in STEM say they would like a STEM-related job in the future.³⁹

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER PROGRAMS

- Nearly three-fourths (70%) of youth in STEM afterschool programs say they have more interest in and knowledge of careers in science because of their afterschool experience.⁴⁰



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- An evaluation of a 21st Century Community Learning Center program that offers STEM learning found that 91% of youth believed science and math will be used in their future careers and 52% would like to have a science or computer job in the future.⁴¹
 - A study of afterschool STEM programs showed that more than three-fourths (80%) of youth gained a deeper understanding of science careers, increased their interest in STEM (78%), developed a STEM identity— a belief that they could do well and succeed in science (73%), and developed perseverance and critical thinking skills (72%).⁴²
 - In a study of youth in grades 4 to 12 enrolled in afterschool STEM programs, 65% to 85% of students showed significant gains in STEM engagement, identity, career interest, critical thinking and perseverance. Latino youth reported the greatest gains in STEM attitudes and social-emotional learning/21st century skills; the change in STEM career interest, career knowledge, identity and perseverance was significantly higher than students from all other groups.⁴³
 - STEM initiatives at YMCA afterschool programs provide 66% more STEM opportunities than schools offer for youth who are Latino, Black, American Indian and Alaska Native.⁴⁴
 - A study of youth participating in a six-week STEM summer program targeting groups underrepresented in STEM fields – youth of color and first-generation college students – found that more than half (51%) graduated from college in four years with a degree in a STEM field, compared to non-participants, who graduated at a rate of 34%. Graduating with a STEM degree increased young people’s post-graduation earning potential by 2% to 6%.⁴⁵
 - In the Einstein Enrichment Program, which focuses on STEM enrichment for high-school students from economically disadvantaged areas in New York City, youth explore STEM through meaningful service-learning projects. A recent evaluation found that more than three-fourths (74%) of former program participants pursued science, technology, engineering or math careers.⁴⁶
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Please see [Postsecondary Advancement](#) in the Impact Evidence library to see how it relates to career exploration, skill development and work-based experience.

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