



America After 3PM **Findings by Grade Level**

Each day in America, millions of kids go home to an empty house after school. In recent years, the growth of quality, affordable afterschool programs—programs that keep kids safe, inspire learning and help working families—has begun to offer parents of these children positive alternatives. Over the past five years, afterschool programs have played an increasingly important role in providing valuable after school opportunities across all grade levels.

In 2009, nearly 30,000 families were surveyed to learn how many children are in afterschool programs, how many are unsupervised after school and how these numbers compare to five years ago. Building upon and updating a similar study conducted in 2004, *America After 3PM*, sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, gives the most comprehensive and accurate picture to date of what this nation's youth are doing each day after school. RTi, a market research firm, conducted the research for the Afterschool Alliance.

America After 3PM finds there are significant differences in how students at different grade levels spend their after school hours, as well as differences in satisfaction, attitudes toward afterschool programs and barriers to enrollment.

	Elementary School (K-5)	Middle School (6-8)	High School (9-12)
Percentage of Kids in Afterschool Programs	17	12	7
Percentage of Kids in Self Care	4	30	55
Percentage of Kids in Sibling Care	11	13	N/A
Percentage of Kids Who Would Participate if a Program were Available	41	36	32
Percentage of Parents Satisfied with Afterschool Programs	89	88	91

- The parent or guardian is the primary caregiver after the school day ends for elementary (73 percent) and middle school (65 percent) students.
- Among high school age youth, self care is the primary after school care arrangement. (55 percent). Self care is also reported at substantial levels among middle school students (30 percent).
- Four percent of elementary age children are in self care.



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By Grade Level Look at Self Care¹		
Grade level	% of children in grade level in self care	Number of children in self care
Grades K to 5	4%	1,133,989
Grades 6 to 8	30%	3,722,219
Grades 9 to 12	55%	8,640,751
All Grades	26%	15.1 million

Afterschool Program Participation and Satisfaction by Grade Level

Afterschool program participation is highest at the elementary school level, with 17 percent of elementary students participating in afterschool programs, followed by 12 percent of middle school students. Only seven percent of high school students participate in afterschool programs.

By Grade Level Look at Afterschool Participation		
Grade level	% children in grade level in afterschool	Number of children in afterschool
Grades K to 5	17%	4,505,912
Grades 6 to 8	12%	1,391,495
Grades 9 to 12	7%	1,095,297
All Grades	15%	8.4 million

Satisfaction with afterschool programs is strong and comparable across grade levels – nine in 10 parents (89 percent) overall are satisfied with the afterschool programs their children attend. However, satisfaction with specific features of afterschool programs suggests that different factors drive satisfaction for parents of students of different ages.

- Parents of elementary school aged children report greater satisfaction with location.
- Parents with children in middle school report greater satisfaction with transportation and tutoring.

¹ A note of caution about the self care data: Experts believe parents are hesitant to admit that children are unsupervised, so the numbers reported regarding self care may underestimate the number of children actually in self care.



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- Those with children in high school are more satisfied with those areas pertaining to 'life skills,' such as access to mentors, workforce skills, technology and community service.

Barriers to Enrollment by Grade Level

After lack of need because a parent is home after school, the top barriers to enrollment vary by grade level.

- Cost and hours of operation are larger hurdles to parents of elementary aged children.
- Quality of care and academics are bigger barriers among parents of non-high school children.
- Availability is a barrier across grade levels, but especially among middle and high school aged children.

By Grade Level Look at Kids Who Would Participate if an Afterschool Program Were Available		
Grade level	% of children in grade level likely to participate	Number of children likely to participate
Grades K to 5	41%	6,546,590
Grades 6 to 8	36%	3,143,596
Grades 9 to 12	32%	3,745,100
All Grades	38%	18.5 million

State-by-State Grade Level Findings

State level findings will be added to this report on October 15, 2009. Separate tables for each state will be posted that include by grade level percentages of kids in afterschool programs, percentages of kids in self care and percentages of kids likely to participate if an afterschool program were available. Statewide projections by grade level will also be provided.