

The State of Afterschool in Missouri

State House District 1 Report

Every afternoon in Missouri when the final school bell rings, 978,466 school age children need a place to go.¹ For some children this may mean private childcare or the care of a family member, but for many working families, finding an age appropriate, affordable program that provides safety and enrichment is a challenge. Afterschool programs play a critical role in keeping children and youth safe, helping working families, and inspiring learning and development outside of the classroom.

Quality afterschool programs provide children with a safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging environment, wherein their academic and social-emotional growth continues and expands outside of the bounds of the classroom. Rather than simply replicating the school day, afterschool programs offer flexible, project-based learning environments where children and youth can apply concepts learned in school through further experimentation.

Beyond the positive benefits afterschool programs provide for youth participants, they also provide critical supports for working parents, who cannot always be away from their jobs as soon as school is out of

session. Involving community-based organizations (CBO) is another key aspect of afterschool programs, and allows youth to develop enriching relationships with adult mentors other than their parents or classroom teachers.

Where are the programs & where are the gaps?

According to a 2012 survey conducted by the Missouri AfterSchool Network (MASN), 359 out of 566 school districts and charter schools in Missouri had at least one afterschool program operating within their service area.² The Afterschool Alliance estimates that approximately 137,900 children participate in afterschool programs in Missouri each year. Unfortunately, this is only 14% of our state's school-age population.¹

In 2014, MASN received a grant from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) to conduct a statewide mapping project. The goal was to locate as

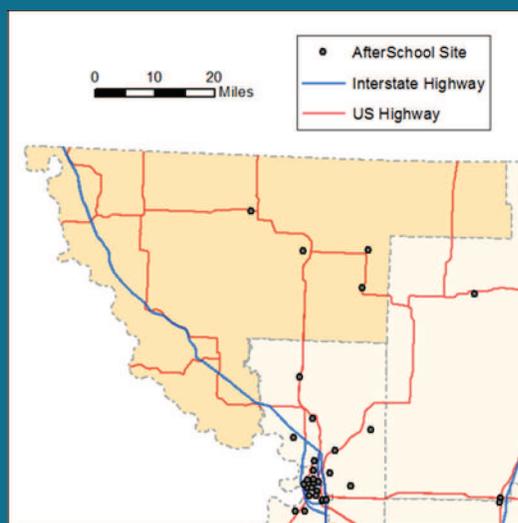
many afterschool programs in the state as possible and gather data about each program, including site locations, capacity, licensing and accreditation status, staffing, age groups served, and demographics.

The district specific afterschool findings are based on data that were gathered by surveys during the NCSL project, along with the best available data from the

“Afterschool programs are an integral part of the system that supports children’s learning and development. Children enrich their learning and discover new opportunities and interests in a safe and caring environment.”

Stacey Preis

Deputy Commissioner
Division of Learning Services, DESE



Vital Stats for State House District 1

5 – Number of identified* afterschool sites in district

4,422 – Number of school age children in district**

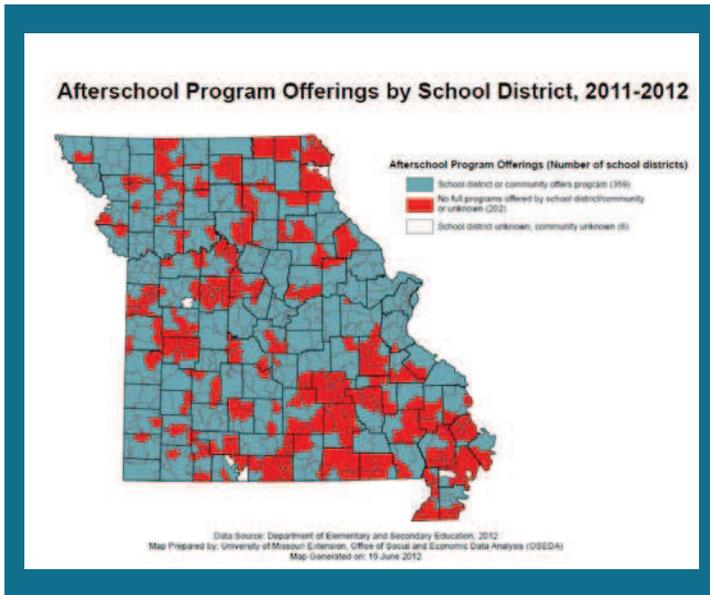
3,173 – Children with all parents working**

* There may be additional sites in the district that have not yet been identified through the multiple sources of data collection used in this project

** Census data aggregated to district³



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Departments of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Social Services (DSS), and Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

More than 300 of the 750 identified afterschool sites provided additional information about their programs. Of the sites answering the detailed survey, 67% were licensed and 19% were accredited. Sixty percent of the programs offered before school care, 100% after school care, and 31% summer learning programs.

Although some programs offer services for all age groups, 88% of those surveyed serve elementary school children, with only 30% serving junior high youth and 13% serving high school youth. The most popular three program activities offered included tutoring, STEM, and life skills.

What can we do to support children & families?

Afterschool programs in Missouri are largely supported by parents' fees, private foundation grants, and a combination of federal funds that are received by DSS and DESE then distributed back out to school districts or CBOs through grant processes or to parents in the form of child care subsidies. There is currently no state funding for afterschool, though the general assembly did approve a \$2 million appropriation for afterschool in the FY15 budget that was eventually withheld by the Governor. These funds were not included in the FY16 budget.

In terms of the demand for afterschool in Missouri, the best available data comes from the recently released *America After 3PM* report. According to the report, 14% of Missouri school age children are currently participating in afterschool programs. An additional 31% of parents said that their children would participate in afterschool programs if they were available in their community. A number that causes much concern is the 25%, or almost a **quarter million**, school-age children and youth in Missouri who find themselves alone and unsupervised in the hours between when school lets out and their parents or guardians return home from work.¹

Though access to afterschool and the quality of care in Missouri has improved drastically over the last decade, there is still a large demand for programs and a limited supply. Missouri's investment in afterschool programs is not only an investment in youth, but in families and communities by providing critical support for working parents and preparing the next generation of workers and engaged citizens.

Recommendations for Supporting Afterschool in your District

- ✓ Visit your local afterschool programs or attend a Lights On Afterschool event in your community!
- ✓ *No programs in your district?* Talk to local school and community leaders to discuss what options are available for youth after school and in the summer.
- ✓ Support the development of a task force to explore afterschool and summer learning statewide.
- ✓ Visit www.moasn.org to take the pledge to be an Afterschool Champion and to find more ways to get involved!

¹ Afterschool Alliance, *America After 3PM* (2014)

² Missouri AfterSchool Network, *Supporting Children, Youth, and Families: A Critical Look at Afterschool in Missouri* (2012)

³ Missouri Census Data Center, retrieved 2-28-15