

Top 10 States for Afterschool



Introduction

Starting in 2009, there has been a ranking of the top 10 states for afterschool to complement findings from the America After 3PM survey, which examines how children spend the hours from when schools let out to when parents typically return home from work. The intention of the top 10 states for afterschool is to capture and highlight the states that are doing well at providing opportunities for children to participate in quality, affordable afterschool programs. Although afterschool programs are helping kids learn and grow, inspiring new interests, connecting young people to mentors, and providing working parents peace of mind knowing that their children are in a safe and supportive environment, the 2020 edition of America After 3PM found that nationally, for every one child in an afterschool program, three more are waiting to get in.

The *2020 Top 10 States for Afterschool* brief delves into the data used to determine the top 10, as well as factors that may have contributed to each state's ranking. What it finds overall is that every state in the top 10

has its own unique story of afterschool, from significant state and local investment in afterschool to an intentional focus on quality standards and assessment tools. Although each state offers a different picture of the afterschool field, the through line is that the states benefit from the investment by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, which established the [50 State Afterschool Network](#) to develop, support, and grow quality afterschool programs in each state. With nearly 25 million children and youth not in an afterschool program, but who would be enrolled in a program if one were available to them, the amount of work ahead to increase access to quality afterschool programs looms large. However, by taking a lead from the top 10 states and through the concerted and coordinated efforts of policymakers, program providers, advocates, and young people, much progress can be made.

Methodology

To determine the 2020 top 10 states for afterschool, a composite score—comprised of nine variables selected to indicate the availability, affordability, and quality of afterschool programs in a state—was calculated for all 50 states and Washington, D.C. Rankings were determined by indexing each state's composite score against the national average.

To maintain consistency with the methodology of the 2009 and 2014 top 10 states for afterschool, similar variables were selected from the 2020 household survey as were used in 2009 and 2014. In the instances where the exact variable match was unavailable, a determination was made for an appropriate

substitute. For example, the 2009 and 2014 calculations included parents reporting that they were satisfied with the variety of activities available in their child's afterschool program. As this question was not included in the 2020 America After 3PM survey questionnaire, in the 2020 top 10 calculation, an average was taken of parents' satisfaction in a broad range of areas that would help to indicate satisfaction in a variety of areas. Items were selected that a majority of parents at the national level indicated were important in their selection of an afterschool program, including homework and academic help, physical activity, reading and writing, and the opportunity to build life skills.

In determining the state ranking's calculation, afterschool program participation is assigned the highest degree of importance, with the percent of children in an afterschool program in a state weighted by the average number of hours per week children spend in afterschool programs. The full list of variables is as follows:

- Percent of children in an afterschool program, weighted by the average number of hours per week each child spends in an afterschool program
- Percent of children not in self-care
- Percent of afterschool participants who live in low-income households*
- Percent of parents "extremely" satisfied with their child's afterschool program overall
- Percent of parents satisfied with the cost of their child's afterschool program
- Percent of parents satisfied with the variety of activities in their child's afterschool program†
 - Average score of parents satisfied with opportunities for physical activity, homework or academic help, reading or writing, and opportunities to build life skills in their child's afterschool program
- Percent of parents satisfied with the quality of care in their child's afterschool program‡
 - Average score of parents satisfied with the safety of environment and knowledgeable and caring staff in their child's afterschool program
- Percent of parents who disagreed with the statement that it was difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program in their area§

Findings

As in previous top 10 states for afterschool lists, the states that rank in the top 10 have a broad geographical spread, diverse community makeup, and span the gamut of number of children in the state, from California (rank number 2) to Vermont (rank number 9), and from Florida (rank number 3) to Alaska (rank number 4). States identified among the top 10 this year, when compared to the national average, typically have higher rates of afterschool program participation and parent satisfaction with their child's afterschool program, as well as lower rates of children who are alone and unsupervised after school.

In addition to reporting on the indicators from each state that led to its placement in the top 10 ranking, this brief discusses each state's policies, funding streams, and quality improvements and systems as they relate to afterschool programs to both catalog measures taken to help increase the availability of high-quality afterschool programs in a state, as well as to create a roadmap for others who are working to expand afterschool

programs in their neighborhood, city, or state. While the top 10 states are leading the nation in creating enriching opportunities for youth in the hours after school, since the last edition of America After 3PM in 2014, public investments in afterschool programs have largely stalled. For instance, funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the only federal funding stream dedicated exclusively to afterschool, before-school, and summer learning programs, has not kept up with the cost of inflation, increasing less than 9 percent between 2014 and 2020. In spite of the increases in the 21st CCLC investment since 2014, the current funding level is \$10 million below the 2014 level in inflation-adjusted terms. A multi-faceted approach, with investments at the local, state, and federal levels of government, is needed to ensure that high-quality afterschool programs are both available and accessible to all children and their families, regardless of where they live.

* The percentage of children in an afterschool program who qualify for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program is used as the proxy for percentage of children in an afterschool program who live in low-income households.

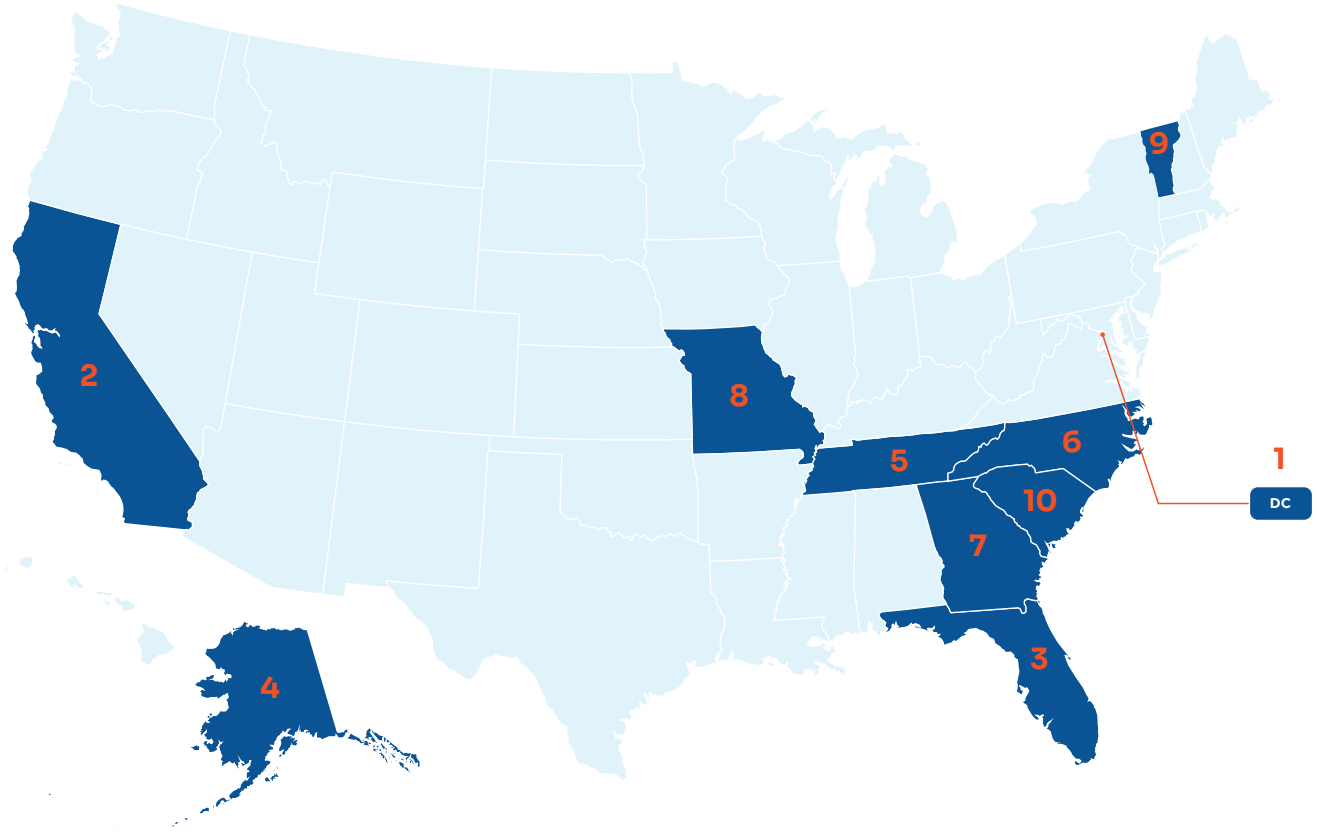
† In the 2009 and 2014 America After 3PM surveys, parents were asked their level of satisfaction with the variety of activities in their child's afterschool program.

‡ In the 2009 and 2014 America After 3PM surveys, parents were asked their level of satisfaction with the quality of care in their child's afterschool program.

§ In the 2009 America After 3PM survey, parents overall were asked if they agreed with the statement, "afterschool programs are available in my community." In the 2014 America After 3PM survey, parents overall were asked if they agreed with the statement that afterschool programs in their area provide a high quality of care.



The Top 10 States for Afterschool



Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
State	Washington, D.C.	California	Florida	Alaska	Tennessee	North Carolina	Georgia	Missouri	Vermont	South Carolina



The numbers behind Washington, D.C.'s 1st place ranking

In 2020, Washington, D.C. has the highest afterschool program participation rate (24 percent), with more than 21,000 children taking part in a program. D.C.'s ranking as number one for afterschool is largely due to the percentage of D.C. children who participate in afterschool programs and the average hours per week they spend in afterschool programs, as these two factors hold the most weight in the rankings calculation, although both are lower than they were in 2014. D.C. also saw a 50 percent reduction in the rate of children alone and unsupervised in the hours afterschool, dropping from 26 percent in 2014 to 13 percent in 2020.

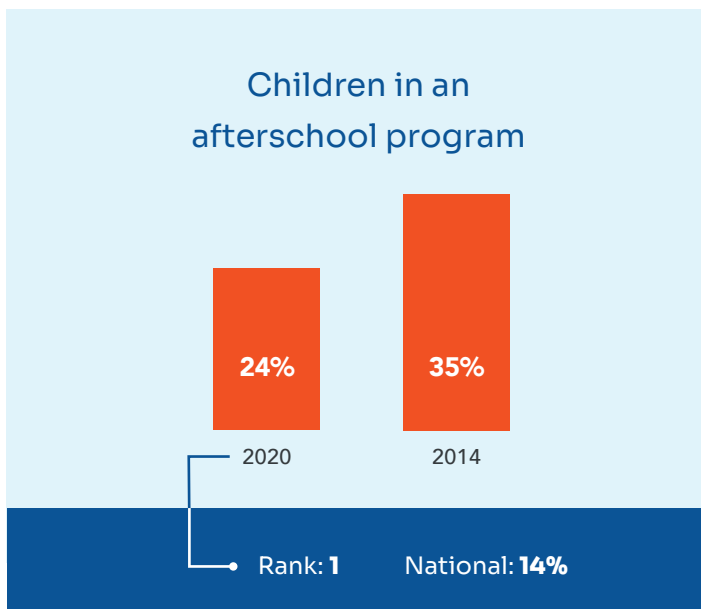
A review of Washington, D.C. parent responses regarding their children's experience in their afterschool programs found that parents' satisfaction with aspects of their child's afterschool program that were included in the top 10 calculation soared between 2014 and 2020. For example, the percent of parents extremely satisfied with their child's afterschool program increased from 34 percent to 65 percent and parent satisfaction with programs' cost increased from 45 percent to 77 percent.

Through coordinated advocacy efforts, groups such as DC Alliance of Youth Advocates (DCAYA) and DC Action for Kids have helped build support at the local level, resulting in victories for afterschool programs in D.C. In 2017, the Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes (OST Office) was launched to ensure that all young people have access to

high-quality learning opportunities outside of the regular school day. In the 2019-20 school year, \$8.7 million was awarded in local funds to 88 nonprofit organizations that provided services to more than 16,000 children across D.C.¹ Part of the local funds are generated by the Tax-Payer Support for Afterschool Programs for At-Risk Students, a D.C. initiative where residents are able to contribute a portion of their taxes to support education and enrichment opportunities for youth experiencing housing instability or residing in public housing communities. D.C. also continues to fund their Community Schools Initiative, which in 2018, received an additional \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education.²

Mayor Muriel Bowser also recently launched the Learn24 Initiative as a cohesive and coordinated approach between public agencies, service providers, businesses, funders, and schools to collectively raise the quality of out-of-school time programming. Through this, the OST Office funds organizations that provide intentional positive youth development programming for at-risk children and youth that are most in need of high quality, low- or no-cost afterschool opportunities. Because of the positive impact of regular participation, organizations that receive grants from the OST Office are required to offer consistent and long-term programming. Additionally, beginning in 2017, 22 program sites piloted the Weikart Youth Program Quality Intervention Process as part of the Learn24 effort towards improving quality.

Washington D.C.'s afterschool participation



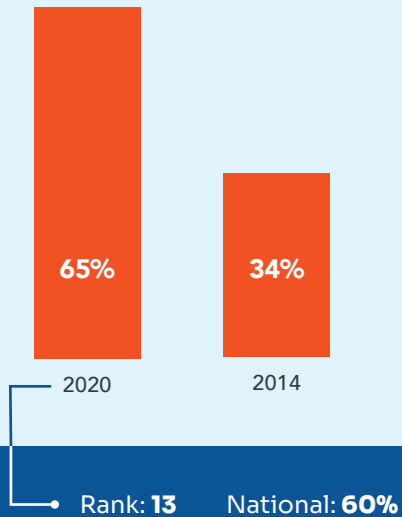
6.5 hours

Average time children spend in an afterschool program per week

24%

Percentage of children in afterschool who are from low-income households

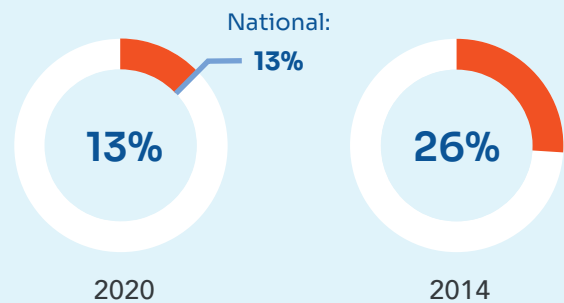
Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	91%
	Variety of activities offered	79%
	Cost	77%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



30%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program





The numbers behind California's 2nd place ranking

California is one of the few states that has consistently made it in the top 10 states for afterschool since evaluating and ranking states' America After 3PM data began in 2009. Once again, afterschool program participation is the primary reason behind a state's placement in the top 10. Similar to Washington, D.C., as well as its results from 2014, California has a strong afterschool program participation number compared to the national average, with more than 1.1 million children taking part in a program. Moreover, the percent of children alone and unsupervised in the hours after school in the state was cut in half, dropping from 19 percent in 2014 to 9 percent in 2020, currently having the lowest rate of children in self-care in the nation.

California saw increases in parent satisfaction numbers, with the most notable increase being a nearly 20 percentage point jump for overall parent satisfaction. California parents reporting that they were extremely satisfied with their child's afterschool program rose from 47 percent in 2014 to 66 percent in 2020. However, despite the strong participation numbers and low percentage of children in self-care, more than half of California parents (56 percent) report that it is difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program for their child.

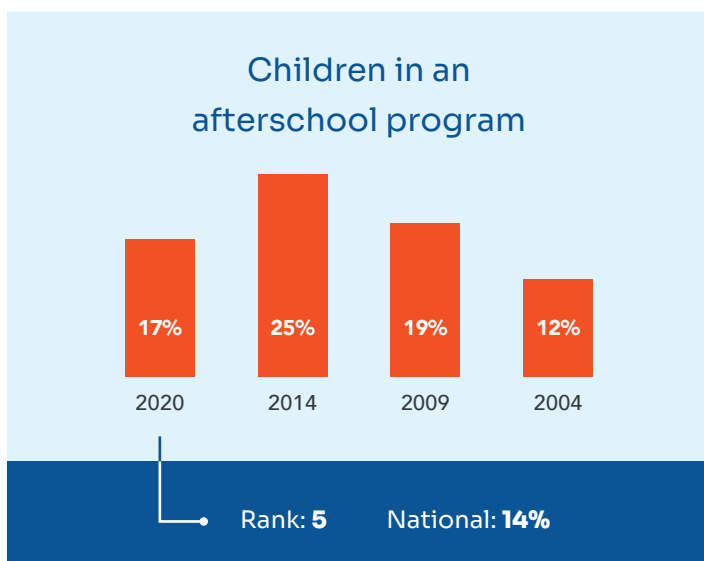
A key factor in the availability of afterschool programs in California is its robust state system funded by \$650 million in After School Education and Safety (ASES) dollars, which supplements approximately \$130 million in federal 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) dollars. In total, the state and federal dollars fund 4,500 sites that serve 980,000 students annually.³ Over the last four years, state funding for afterschool

programs has increased by \$100 million to reach \$650 million today. As costs to operate programs continue to rise, in particular as the state's minimum wage increases, this growth in funding was necessary to continue to ensure quality programming at existing afterschool programs.

California's publicly funded afterschool programs serve some of the state's most vulnerable children, including 84 percent of children who are socio-economically disadvantaged, 90 percent children of color, 33 percent English language learners, and 25 percent of children who are experiencing homelessness.⁴ Through collaboration between schools and local communities, the ASES program provides literacy, academic enrichment, and safe, constructive alternatives for students in grades K-9. California also places a priority on serving high school students, reserving half of the state's 21st CCLC federal funds for the High School After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens (ASSETs) program.

The California Department of Education's Expanded Learning Division places a high value on program quality. Through a partnership with the [California AfterSchool Network](#) Quality Committee, the state developed its 12 Quality Standards for Expanded Learning. These standards focus on areas such as having a safe and supportive environment, promoting healthy choices and behaviors, and ensuring diversity, access, and equity. The Quality Standards are the foundation of a new program requirement established in 2014 that each state and federally funded Expanded Learning Program participate in a data-driven Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process grounded in the Quality Standards.

California's afterschool participation



5.5 hours

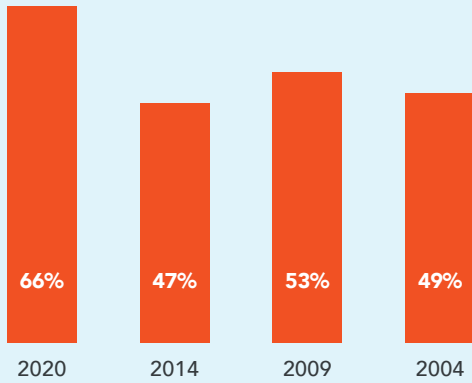
Average time children spend in an afterschool program per week

33%

Percentage of children in afterschool who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



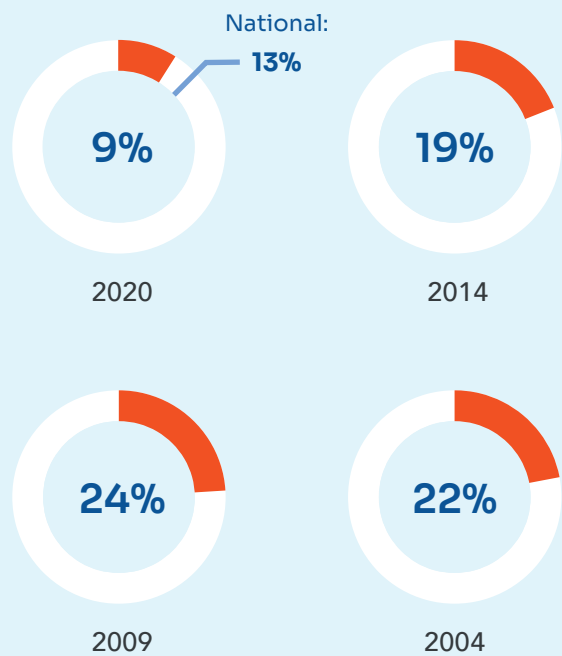
Rank: **9** National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	94%
	Variety of activities offered	88%
	Cost	82%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



22%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program





The numbers behind Florida's 3rd place ranking

Florida holds the number three spot for the second time in a row. Similar to 2014, Florida's strong participation numbers and low rate of children alone and unsupervised after school helped maintain its placement as the third-ranked state. While afterschool program participation decreased in the state from 2014 to 2020, close to 1 in 5 of Florida's school-aged children (16 percent) participate in a program, equating to more than half a million young people. With the percent of children in self-care dropping from 19 percent in 2014 to 11 percent in 2020, Florida has the second-lowest rate of children in self-care compared to other states.

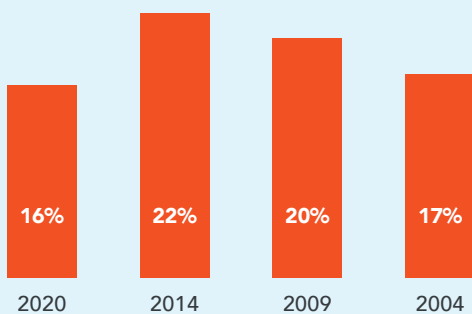
Florida also sees high afterschool program satisfaction numbers, with 95 percent of parents satisfied with the quality of care and 87 percent satisfied with the variety of activities offered. Additionally, Florida parents extremely satisfied overall with their child's afterschool program increased from 58 percent in 2014 to 66 percent in 2020. The [Florida Afterschool Network](#), the statewide intermediary that supports quality improvement efforts throughout the state and works to ensure that every child in Florida has access to a high-quality afterschool program, attributes these numbers to its work to improve quality standards and increase access to professional

development for afterschool professionals on these standards. For instance, to help promote quality standards, the network led the development of the Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs that serve as a guide and foundation for quality programming.

To supplement Florida's \$66.1 million in federal funds for 21st CCLC programs in FY2020, local Children's Services Councils (CSCs) also provide significant funding for high-quality, evidence-based programs that are free or low-cost to families. Located in nine counties throughout the state, Florida's CSC communities represent 51 percent of the state's population of those 18 and under. The largest community, Miami-Dade, provided approximately \$46 million in 2019 toward afterschool and youth enrichment programs and summer camps, of which \$21.2 million went directly toward afterschool programs. In Palm Beach County, nearly \$20 million was invested in afterschool, summer programs, and other expanded learning opportunities.⁵ These opportunities for youth are unique, with Florida being one of the only states in the country with a statute that empowers the creation of local, dedicated public funds for children's services.

Florida's afterschool participation

Children in an
afterschool program



Rank: 7

National: 14%

6 hours

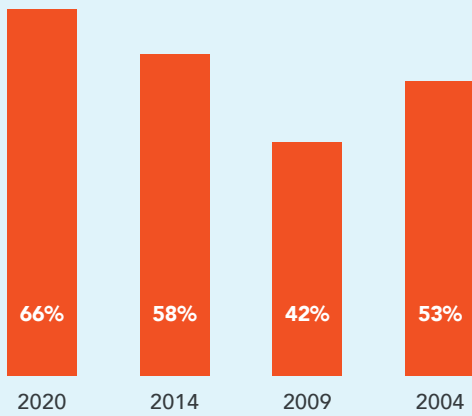
Average time children spend in
an afterschool program per week

37%

Percentage of children in afterschool
who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



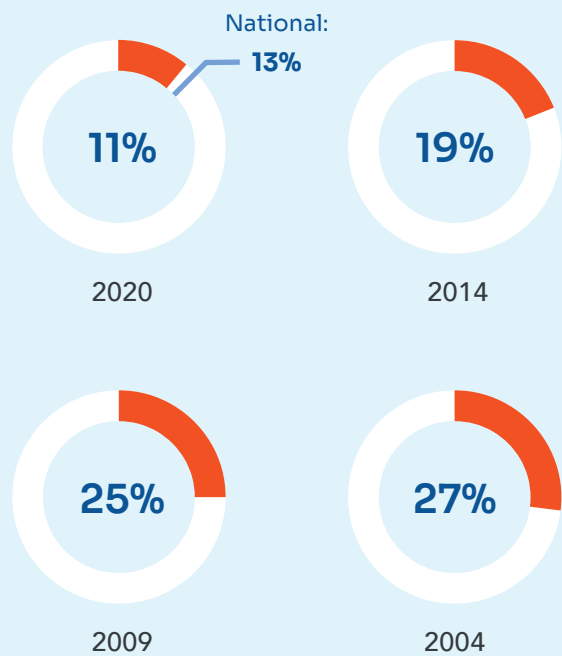
Rank: **12** National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	94%
	Variety of activities offered	84%
	Cost	76%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



24%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program





The numbers behind Alaska's 4th place ranking

Alaska is new to the 2020 top 10 states for afterschool after making steady gains since 2009. The state moved from 46 in 2009 to 31 in 2014, and jumped to four in the rankings in 2020. Similar to other states on the list, Alaska's strong participation numbers and above average hours children spend in afterschool programs helped to secure their first appearance in the top 10, with 17 percent of Alaska's school-aged children taking part in afterschool programs and spending an average of 6.6 hours a week in programs. However, while Alaska did see improvements in the rate of children alone and unsupervised after school, they ranked in the bottom 25th percentile.

In 2018 Alaska became the first state in the nation to have a portion of their cannabis tax revenue designated specifically to afterschool programs. Through the Positive Youth Development Afterschool Grant Program, 12.5 percent of Alaska's new marijuana sales tax revenue will directly support afterschool programs. In the fall of 2019, \$1.25 million supported new or expanded programs in 33 communities across the state as part of the state's effort to reduce the risk of substance abuse.⁶ In addition to these funds, Alaska received \$6.1 million in fiscal year 2020 to support 21st CCLC programs.

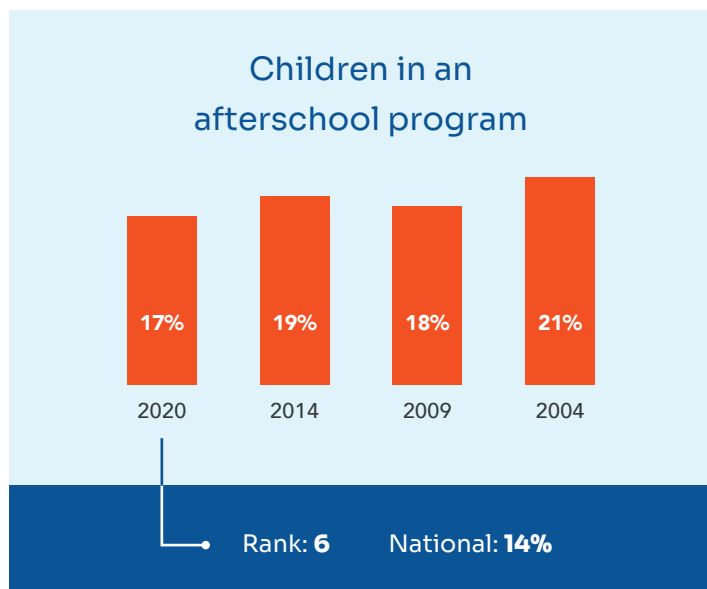
A 2018 report by the McDowell Group examining the role that Alaska's afterschool programs can play to promote protective factors and reduce substance youth among Alaska's youth concluded that afterschool

programs are both helping young people develop protective factors—such as self-confidence and the ability to connect with their peers, and are providing protective factors for young people—such as supportive adults and providing engagement in meaningful activities. This, in turn, has led to improvements in behavior and lowering the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors, such as binge drinking and using marijuana.⁷ America After 3PM found that 93 percent of Alaska parents agreed that their child is learning how to make responsible decisions in their afterschool program, and 96 percent are satisfied that the program is staffed by knowledgeable and caring adults.

Related to quality, Alaska had impressive satisfaction numbers based on findings from America After 3PM, with 95 percent of parents satisfied with the quality of care and 90 percent satisfied with the activities offered in their child's afterschool program. Parent satisfaction with the variety of activities offered ranked first among all states. Alaska also had one of the highest rates of overall parent satisfaction, with 67 percent of parents extremely satisfied with their child's afterschool program.

Alaska's rise in ranking from 2014 is closely linked to the 2013 launch of the [Alaska Afterschool Network](#), which has increased collaboration, coordination, and advocacy for the out-of-school time field across the state over the last six years.

Alaska's afterschool participation



6.6 hours

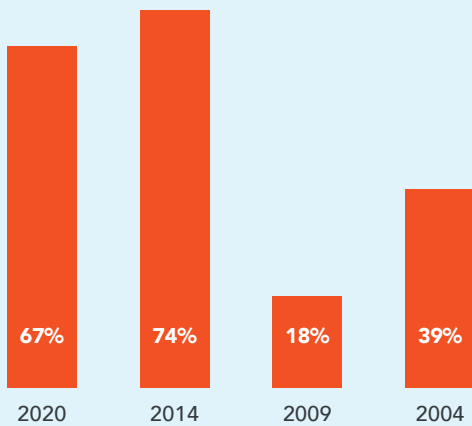
Average time children spend in an afterschool program per week

27%

Percentage of children in afterschool who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



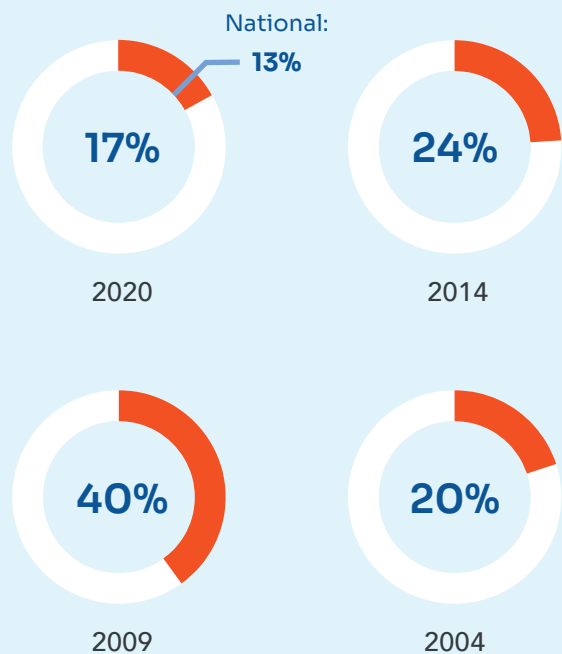
Rank: **7** National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	95%
	Variety of activities offered	90%
	Cost	72%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



22%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program



The numbers behind Tennessee's 5th place ranking

Ranked ninth in 2014, this year Tennessee moved up four spots to the number five ranking. Although both Tennessee's participation numbers and hours children spend in afterschool programs are in line with the national average, the state's results that indicate afterschool program quality are in the top percentile among all states. Regarding parents' overall satisfaction with their child's afterschool program, 7 in 10 Tennessee parents say that they are extremely satisfied, the second highest reporting of all 50 states and Washington, D.C. The number of Tennessee parents extremely satisfied overall with their child's afterschool program has consistently risen since 2009, growing from 44 percent in 2009 to 66 percent in 2014, and now reaching 71 percent in 2020. Most Tennessee parents also are satisfied with the quality of care (96 percent) and variety of activities (85 percent) in their child's afterschool program.

Over the last few years Tennessee has continued to build upon their citywide afterschool systems, in particular the Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA), which, through coordinated efforts, helps improve the quality of afterschool programs. NAZA is a partnership between the Nashville Public Library, Metro Nashville Public Schools, the Mayor's Office, and more than 20 youth-serving organizations whose collective goal is to improve learning experiences for youth. Since its inception in 2010, NAZA has continuously worked toward supporting high quality programming through investment in afterschool programs and providing free-of-charge professional development trainings and evaluation services. Today, NAZA serves close to 2,000 students in 43 program sites across the city, with investments of

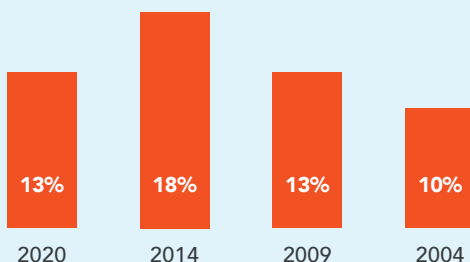
\$2.6 million.⁸ In addition to the citywide systems, quality is a centerpiece in Tennessee's afterschool efforts, as evidenced by their School-Age Developmental Standards and the Afterschool Standards for Tennessee. Both sets of standards guide programs in providing best practices, with the Developmental Standards being child-focused and addressing school-age children's social and emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

The Tennessee Department of Education operates two primary funding sources for afterschool programs — 21st CCLC and the Lottery for Education Afterschool Programs (LEAPS). LEAPS uses a portion of unclaimed state lottery winnings to fund high-quality programs for at-risk youth in which at least 50 percent—with priority given to 80 percent—of students qualify for the National School Lunch Program, are at risk of academically failing, or are experiencing adverse family situations. In fiscal year 2021, awards totaled \$14 million.

Across the state, the [Tennessee Afterschool Network](#) helps to build the capacity of afterschool providers to offer quality programming that helps keep kids safe and healthy; provides learning opportunities, including literacy supports and STEM rich experiences; and engages young people in service experiences to help them give back to their communities. The Tennessee Afterschool Network supports the full range of afterschool programs in the state, including the citywide systems and the 21st CCLC and LEAP funded providers to help ensure that young people and families across Tennessee have access to quality afterschool programs.

Tennessee's afterschool participation

Children in an afterschool program



Rank: **27** National: **14%**

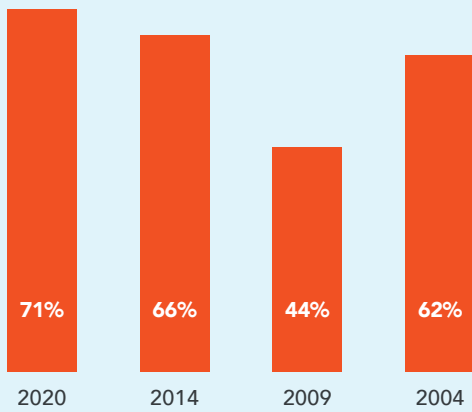
6 hours

Average time children spend in
an afterschool program per week

33%

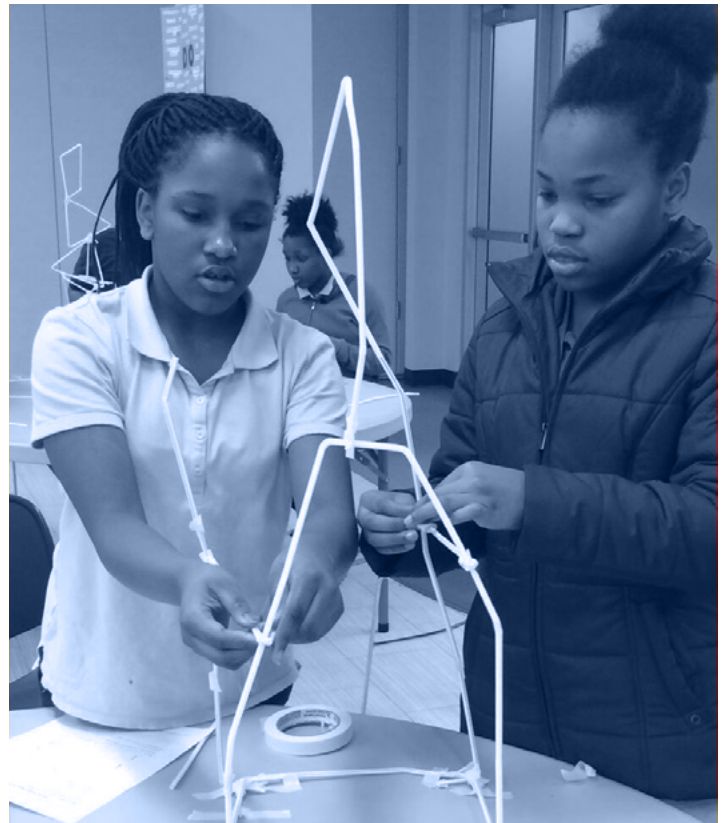
Percentage of children in afterschool
who are from low-income households

Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



Rank: **2**

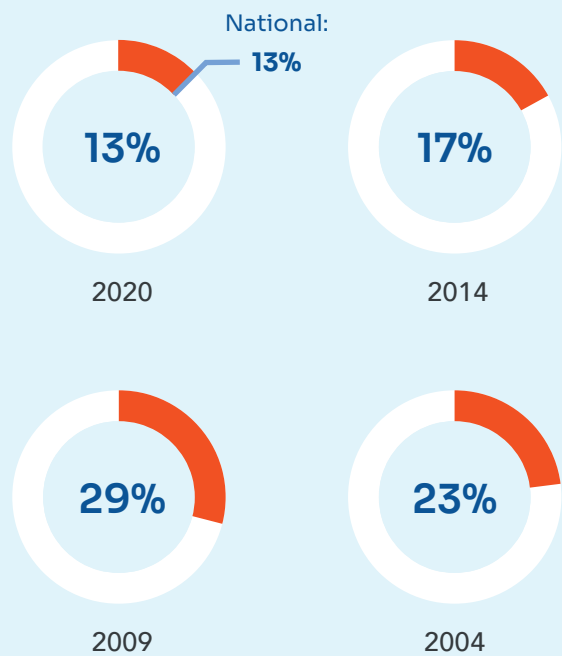
National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	96%
	Variety of activities offered	85%
	Cost	92%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



24%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program



The numbers behind North Carolina's 6th place ranking

North Carolina's return to the top 10 this year, after falling out in 2014, is driven by their high satisfaction numbers and low rate of children alone and unsupervised afterschool. This year, North Carolina had the highest overall parent satisfaction, with 73 percent of parents extremely satisfied with their child's afterschool program, making an almost 25 percentage point increase from 2014. The percentage of parents satisfied with the cost of their child's afterschool programs also increased, growing from 78 percent in 2014 to 83 percent in 2020. North Carolina parents reporting satisfaction with other measures of quality were also high, most notably 98 percent of parents reporting satisfaction with the quality of care in their child's afterschool program, the second highest overall. Although North Carolina's participation rate is slightly below the national average at 12 percent, these strong parent satisfaction numbers indicate high-quality programs in the state.

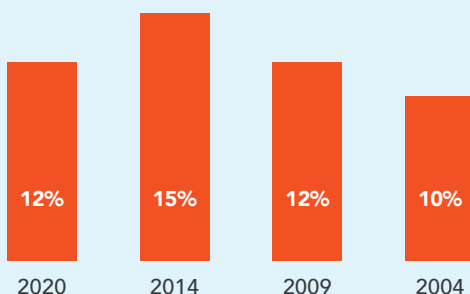
North Carolina has placed a large emphasis on high-quality afterschool programs over the last few years. In both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) authorized up to \$6 million for the Extended Learning and Integrated Student Supports Competitive Grant Program to fund high-quality, independently validated extended learning and integrated student support service programs for at-risk students that raise standards for student academic outcomes.⁹ Nonprofits and nonprofits working in collaboration with local school administrative units provide these programs

that emphasize regular attendance and active participation, and focus on using evidence-based practices, performance measures, and other quality standards to ensure effective programming.

The state's afterschool network, the [North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs](#) (NC CAP), also works toward supporting high-quality programs through grant funding. In an effort to help combat barriers to serving youth, NC CAP launched their POWER UP Program and accompanying mini-grants to provide resources and technical support over two years to help build program capacity in afterschool programs located in rural communities that were identified as those with the greatest need related to child well-being, according the *2018 Roadmap of Need*. Published by the Public School Forum of North Carolina, the *Roadmap of Need* uses data on health, youth behavior and safety, education, and economic development to take a whole child needs assessment of what young people living in each of North Carolina's 100 counties must have in order to thrive. Additionally, NC CAP developed a set of quality standards to guide programs based on what high-quality programs across the country have in common. The standards focused on eight areas, including employing qualified staff, emphasizing positive relationship building, establishing partnerships, and providing students with intentional activities that support their academic and personal growth. In 2017, the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro adapted the standards to serve as the framework for the NC 21st CCLC Out-of-School-Time Program Quality Self-Assessment.

North Carolina's afterschool participation

Children in an afterschool program



Rank: **33** National: **14%**

6.1 hours

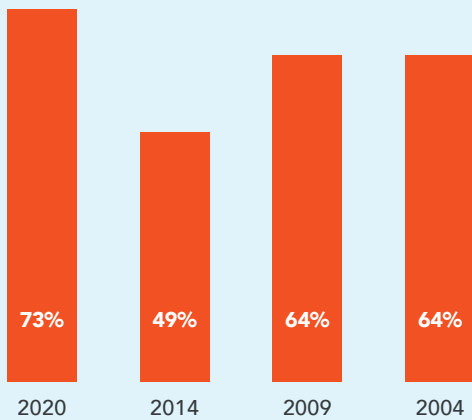
Average time children spend in an afterschool program per week

35%

Percentage of children in afterschool who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



Rank: **1**

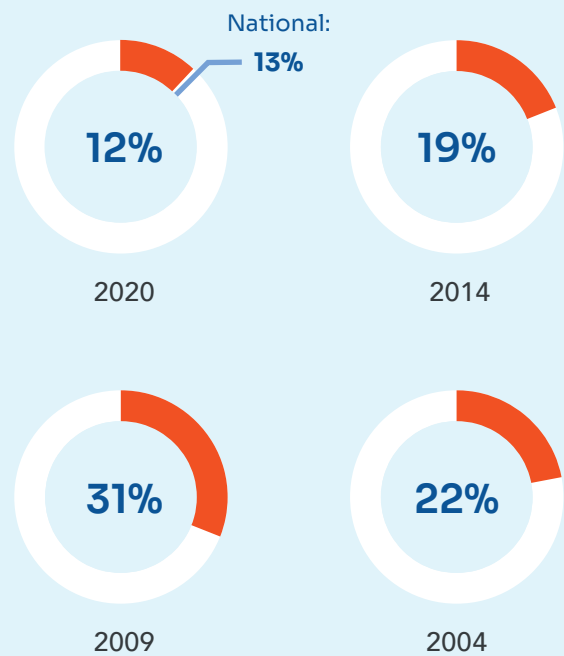
National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	98%
	Variety of activities offered	87%
	Cost	83%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



25%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program





The numbers behind Georgia's 7th place ranking

Georgia's first entry into the top 10 states for afterschool in 2020 is in large part due to the state's afterschool participation rate. Georgia was one of the few states in this wave of America After 3PM to see an increase in afterschool program participation from 2014, rising from 16 percent in 2014 to 18 percent in 2020. Its afterschool participation rate was the third highest overall among all states. Additionally, Georgia saw a drop in the percentage of children who were alone and unsupervised in the state, decreasing from 18 percent in 2014 to 13 percent in 2020.

Meanwhile, based on Georgia parent responses, the state has also undergone gains related to afterschool program quality. For instance, Georgia's parents extremely satisfied with their child's afterschool program increased from 54 percent in 2014 to 60 percent in 2020.

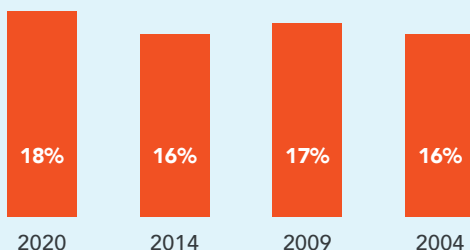
In addition to the \$40.7 million in federal funds to support 21st CCLC programs, the Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) operates the Afterschool Care Program to provide funding to afterschool programs that support low- to moderate-income families and those in the foster care system. The program is funded through Georgia's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and received \$15.4 million in 2015-16, serving more than 72,000 kids in 278 programs across the state.¹⁰ In particular, the program provides funding to increase capacity and sustain quality programs, providing opportunities for youth to establish positive relationships with adults and peers, and assisting organizations in supporting youth's overall wellbeing.

The state has also placed an emphasis on quality improvement. The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning established the Quality Rated School Age Program, a quality improvement system for child care and afterschool programs to reach higher levels of quality within their programs, providing technical assistance, free training, mini-grants, bonuses for receiving a quality rating, and advertising and advocacy materials. In 2015, the Governor's Office for Children and Families funded the Georgia Afterschool and Youth Development (ASYD) Quality Standards, as part of the Georgia ASYD initiative. The [Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network](#), which works to advance, connect, and support high quality afterschool and summer learning programs for children and youth throughout Georgia, provided leadership on the development of the ASYD Quality Standards. The result was a set of practice guidelines that include areas such as health and wellbeing, professional development, and linkages with the school day.

2015 also saw the start of the Georgia Apex Program by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). The Georgia Apex Program is a partnership with community health providers to promote early detection of behavioral health challenges in school-age youth, increase access by bringing behavioral health services to youth in schools, and create and sustain coordination between providers and the school districts. Approximately 75 percent of schools participating in the program have extended these services over the summer – often in partnership with DBHDD Mental Health Resiliency Clubhouses, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and others. Some schools have also partnered with afterschool programs to reach more young people.

Georgia's afterschool participation

Children in an afterschool program



Rank: **3** National: **14%**

6 hours

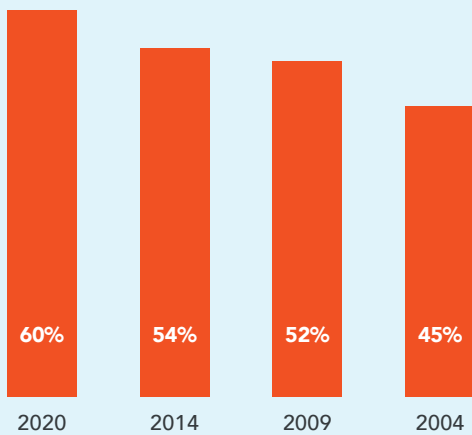
Average time children spend in
an afterschool program per week

33%

Percentage of children in afterschool
who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



Rank: **26** National: **60%**



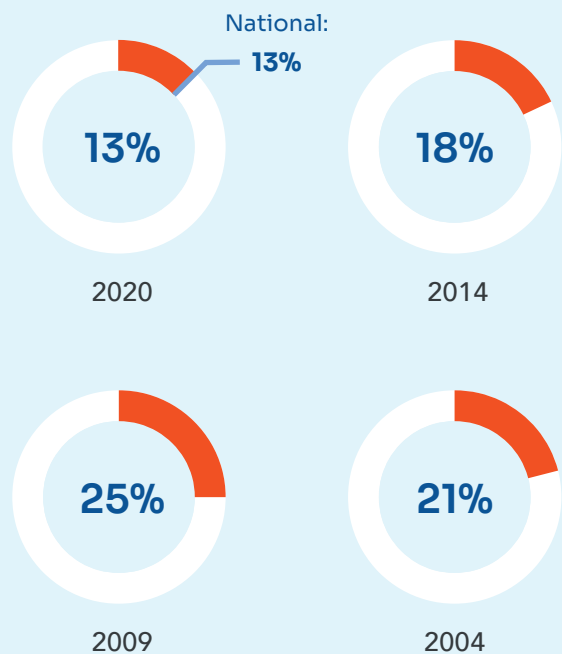
Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	85%
	Variety of activities offered	78%
	Cost	81%

30%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program

Children alone and unsupervised after school





The numbers behind Missouri's 8th place ranking

Missouri makes its first appearance in the top 10 list this year by obtaining the number eight spot. Its placement in the top 10 is owing to the high afterschool program satisfaction numbers and above-average hours children spend in afterschool programs. Assessing parents' satisfaction with their afterschool program, Missouri ranks third, making a 10 point gain from 2014 and increasing from 61 percent of parents who are extremely satisfied with their child's afterschool program to 71 percent in 2020.

Although Missouri is in the top percentile of states in regards to average hours per week children spend in an afterschool program and the percentage of children alone and unsupervised after school decreased from 25 percent in 2014 to 18 percent in 2020, areas for improvement still exist. Missouri remains among the states with the highest self-care rates, and Missouri's afterschool program participation rate is on par with the national average.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education administers two federal funding sources for afterschool programs—21st CCLC and the School Age Community (SAC) grant program. In 2017, \$1.2 million was awarded for a three-year grant to support SAC programs, supplementing the current \$18.4 million in 21st CCLC funding.¹¹ Additionally, in 2019, Missouri's legislature passed a bill authorizing \$3 million from the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to fund afterschool and out-of-school support programs.

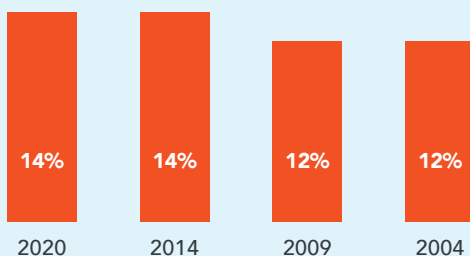
In 1993, the Missouri legislature passed the Community Children's Services Fund, which allows counties or local units of government to pass local taxes

to support mental and behavioral health programs for children and youth in the communities. However, to date, less than one-tenth of Missouri counties have enacted the local children's funding. The St. Louis Mental Health Board is the only entity in the state that provides support from their Children's Services Fund to afterschool programs as a way of preventing future behavioral health issues.

In the last decade, Missouri has also worked toward quality improvement. For 21st CCLC and SAC grantees, the state utilizes the Youth and School-Age Program Quality Assessment (PQA) tool, developed by the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, and all programs across the state can follow the Missouri Afterschool Program Standards for best practices and the Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals. The annual Missouri School Age Community Coalition (MOSAC2) Professional Development Institute provides national level plenary and breakout sessions to ensure Missouri afterschool program staff have the most up-to-date and relevant information to ensure quality services. The [Missouri AfterSchool Network](#) (MASN) brings together afterschool program directors, staff, and partners on a quarterly basis to build systems of support in five committee areas: professional development, funding and sustainability, public policy and awareness, quality, and STEM. The volunteer-led committees identify the needs of the afterschool field and drive the professional development, resources, and supports available to support the quality of afterschool programs statewide.

Missouri's afterschool participation

Children in an afterschool program



Rank: **23** National: **14%**

6.6 hours

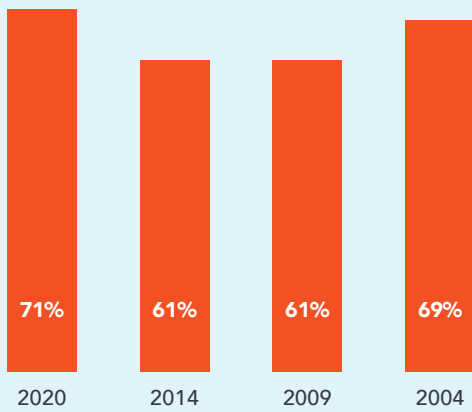
Average time children spend in an afterschool program per week

32%

Percentage of children in afterschool who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



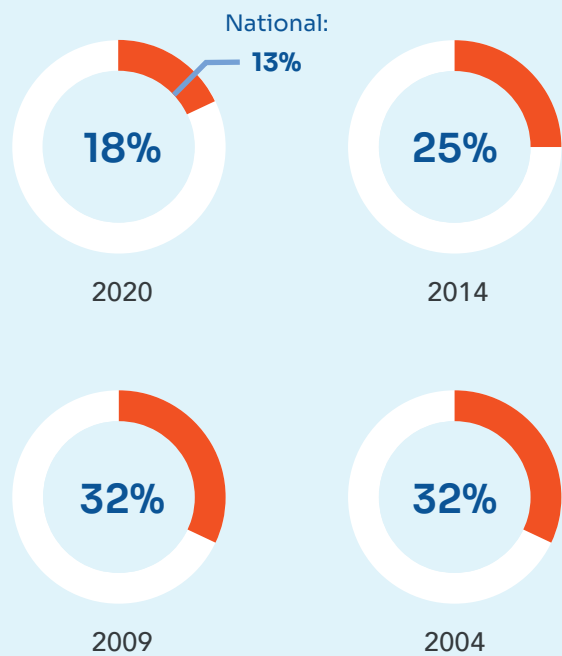
Rank: **3** National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	91%
	Variety of activities offered	78%
	Cost	83%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



34%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program





The numbers behind Vermont's 9th place ranking

Although this is the second time Vermont has made it into the top 10 states for afterschool ranking, it has dropped from its previous ranking of four to nine. While Vermont continues to have high afterschool program participation in relation to the national average, their move in rankings is the result of the percentage of children who remain alone and unsupervised in the hours after school and the percent of children in low-income families who participate in afterschool programs.

Once again, Vermont is among the top states for afterschool program participation. Despite the small decrease in afterschool program participation from 2014 to 2020, Vermont has the second highest afterschool program participation rate among states and Washington, D.C., as well as one of the lowest rates of parents reporting that it is difficult to find an afterschool program. Additionally, the majority of Vermont parents are satisfied with the quality of care (92 percent), variety of activities (73 percent), and cost (72 percent) of programs.

The state places an emphasis on increasing access to afterschool programs for all youth, recognizing programs' positive return on investment. In January 2020, Governor Phil Scott announced that he supports a universal afterschool network to ensure that every child in the state has access to afterschool programs, and in fall 2020, the Vermont legislature established a task force focused on universal afterschool access. Additionally, as part of the state's efforts to provide afterschool programs for all youth, the Vermont Opioid Coordination Council and Vermont's Marijuana Commission

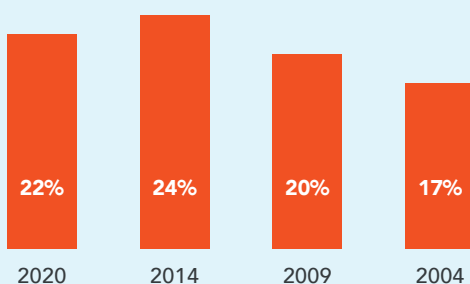
included in their reports to the Governor strong recommendations for increased investments in afterschool programming.

Recently, the Vermont Agency of Human Services established the Afterschool for All Grant Program to provide \$600,000 in state funding to improve accessibility of afterschool programs, either by increasing the number of children served by starting a new program or expanding current programs to serve more youth, in particular for low-income youth.¹² Vermont also receives \$6.1 million in federal funds for 21st CCLC programs that support some of the state's most vulnerable youth. Over the last four years, availability of 21st CCLC school-year programs has increased. In 2019, 82 percent of sites offered at least 32 weeks of programming, and 74 percent offered at least five days of programming a week.¹³

Vermont also focuses on improving program quality with support from [Vermont Afterschool](#), the statewide afterschool network. The network is highly involved in various initiatives, including the statewide adoption of the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) tool to help programs identify best practices and assess and improve their programs and professional development for staff in areas such as trauma-informed care and social and emotional learning. For instance, with leadership from Vermont Afterschool, the Vermont Youth Project (VYP) is underway. VYP is a five-year pilot in six communities where state and local partners come together to develop localized plans to create an environment after school that builds protective factors and embraces positive youth development.

Vermont's afterschool participation

Children in an
afterschool program



Rank: **2** National: **14%**

6.1 hours

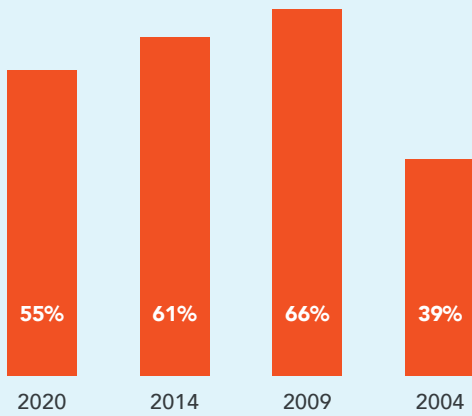
Average time children spend in
an afterschool program per week

14%

Percentage of children in afterschool
who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



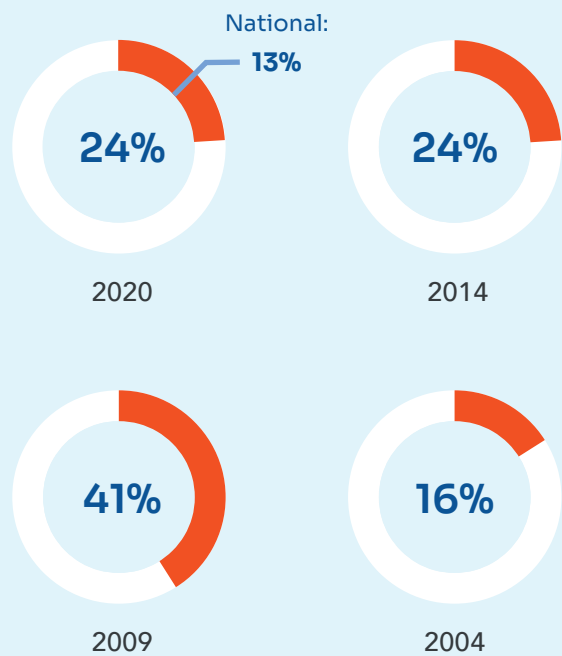
Rank: **36** National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	92%
	Variety of activities offered	73%
	Cost	72%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



40%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program



The numbers behind South Carolina's 10th place ranking

South Carolina, in its first time in the top 10 states for afterschool, closes out the list for 2020. In addition to the above-average hours per week that children take part in afterschool programs, the state performed well on factors related to afterschool program quality. Most notably, 97 percent of parents said that they were satisfied with the quality of care provided by South Carolina afterschool programs, ranking fourth overall for this particular indicator.

South Carolina also saw a decline in the percentage of children alone and unsupervised in the hours after school, decreasing from 18 percent in 2014 to 12 percent in 2020. However, the state's afterschool participation numbers remain below the national average.

Improving program quality has been a priority in the state in recent years. The [South Carolina Afterschool Alliance](#) (SCAA), the statewide afterschool network, has worked to support programs in their quality efforts and make the case that afterschool and summer learning programs contribute to young people's interest in and understanding of STEM and STEM careers, connect young people to caring adults who serve as role models, and reduce the achievement gap between young people from low-income and high-income families. In the 2018-19 state budget, afterschool legislative champions set aside \$159,000 for the SCAA to pilot a quality improvement system. As a result of the pilot's success, two afterschool resolutions passed in the South Carolina House and Senate in March 2019, with members

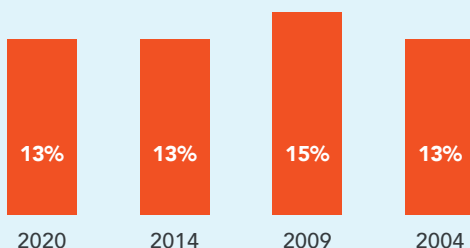
recognizing SCAA's efforts and highlighting the role that high-quality afterschool programs play in student achievement and preparing South Carolina's students for the future. The resolutions also encouraged the South Carolina Department of Education, Department of Social Services, and the Education Oversight Committee to continue to support such programs.

These resolutions set the stage for afterschool funding in the 2019-20 fiscal year, when South Carolina afterschool legislative champions secured \$1.2 million in the state budget, \$1 million of which comes from lottery funds and \$200,000 of which comes from the Education Improvement Act (EIA). Together these funds support the expansion and implementation of a statewide quality improvement system for afterschool. This includes providing STEM opportunities and nutritious snacks and meals to students attending afterschool in school districts with a poverty index 80 percent or higher, and promoting college and career digital badging. Based on the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate, a college and career readiness aspiration set by the South Carolina State Board of Education, digital badging helps validate student progress toward college and career readiness by acknowledging mastery of various skills and knowledge that students acquire in their afterschool programs.

The \$1.2 million in state funding is complemented by the \$18.7 million in federal support that the state receives for 21st CCLC programs.

South Carolina's afterschool participation

Children in an afterschool program



Rank: **29** National: **14%**

7.5 hours

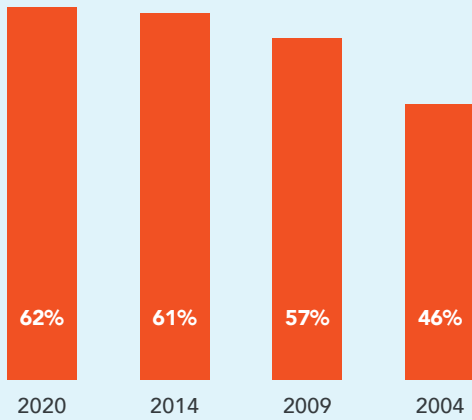
Average time children spend in
an afterschool program per week

32%

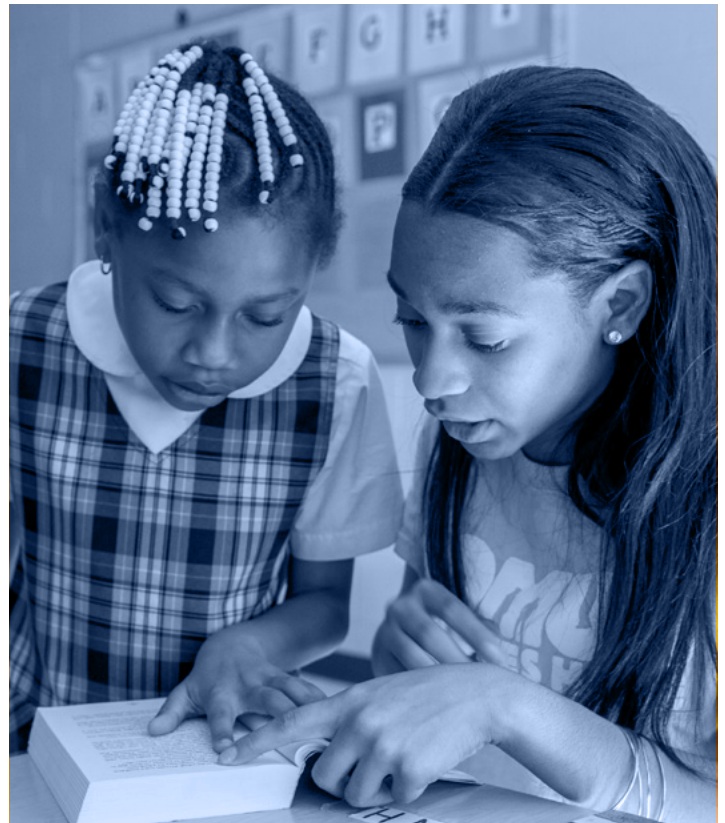
Percentage of children in afterschool
who are from low-income households



Parents **extremely satisfied** with their child's afterschool program overall



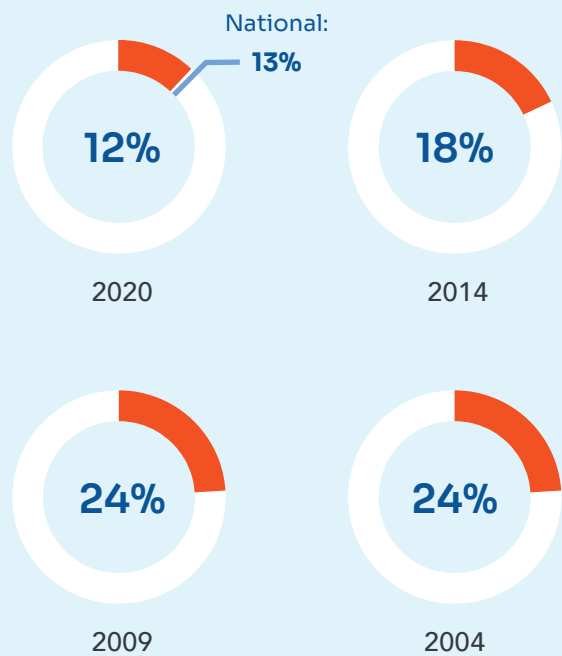
Rank: **20** National: **60%**



Parents **satisfied** with their child's afterschool program's:

	Quality of care	97%
	Variety of activities offered	83%
	Cost	75%

Children alone and unsupervised after school



22%

Percentage of parents reporting that it is not difficult to find an appropriate afterschool program



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For additional information about America After 3PM, visit: <http://www.aa3pm.co/>

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs.

Learn more at: www.afterschoolalliance.org



Afterschool Alliance

