

**PRESS RELEASE
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State Must Act to Expand Afterschool Programs

*More than 1 Million New York Children Still Need Afterschool Care
"America After 3PM" Report Finds New York Falling Behind*

January 5, 2015—A substantial investment in afterschool programming is urgently needed to meet the growing need for afterschool care and prevent New York from falling farther behind nationally. The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) is calling on the Governor and the Legislature to work together to fund a multi-year plan to increase the availability of afterschool care across the state.

A 2014 report, *America After 3PM*, found that New York State has stalled in meeting the demand for afterschool programs over the last five years. 1.1 million of New York's children and families are still without afterschool opportunities—the same number as in 2009.

When the survey was last conducted by the Afterschool Alliance in 2009, New York ranked third in the nation as an afterschool leader, based on a combined quality, participation, and parental satisfaction score. But in 2014, New York was not even in the Top Ten.

New York State's drop in the *America After 3PM* rankings coincided with a 35% reduction in funding since 2009. While Governor Cuomo proposed a major investment of at least \$160 million annually for afterschool in last year's Executive Budget, no new statewide funds were added in the final state budget for 2014-15.

Participation in high-quality afterschool programs can help close the achievement gap between students coming from low and high-income communities. Afterschool programs have also been found to increase school engagement and school attendance, reduce risks of substance abuse and involvement in juvenile crime, and increase access to adult mentors. 85% of New York parents support public funding for afterschool programs.

"As the new legislative session focuses New York's attention on education, we hope New York will look to afterschool programs as an effective opportunity to increase students' academic and personal growth," said Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Executive Director of NYSAN. "Only 21% of New York's children currently have access to the

additional learning time, mentorship, and enrichment provided by afterschool programs—and another 1.1 million New York students want those opportunities.”

Affordable afterschool programs are essential for New York’s working families, who are faced with the nation’s highest average costs for afterschool care—leading to an estimated 584,000 children being unsupervised every day across the state. Research has found that 3 to 6 pm is the time for highest risk of juvenile crime and other risky behaviors, including substance abuse, because so many youth are unsupervised during these hours. Afterschool programs can reduce these behaviors by providing safe, engaging places for youth to learn and play during these high-risk hours.

America After 3 PM can be accessed at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>.

About NYSAN

The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) is a public-private partnership dedicated to promoting young people’s safety, learning, and healthy development by increasing the quality and availability of programs available outside the traditional classroom.

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