

**PRESS RELEASE
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\$178.5 Million Needed to Increase Afterschool Programming Across New York
State Budget Must Prioritize 1.1 Million New York Children Still in Need of Afterschool Care

January 20, 2015—The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) is calling on Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature to ensure at least \$178.5 million in new funds annually for a multi-year plan to increase the availability of afterschool care across the state. This investment is urgently needed to meet the growing need for afterschool care and prevent New York from falling farther behind nationally.

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.

That is why New York City is investing \$338 million in afterschool programs this school year. But children across the state need afterschool opportunities and the state budget should ensure that families have access to quality, affordable care. 85% of New York parents support public funding for afterschool programs.

“An investment in afterschool programming is a cost-effective way to increase students’ academic achievement and personal growth,” said Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Executive Director of NYSAN. “New York City made this critical investment last year. It is time for students across the state to have access to the benefits of quality, affordable afterschool care.”

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.

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.

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 coincides 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.

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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