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Cannabis tax revenue provides opportunity to keep kids safe

Statement By
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State legislation legalizing the sale of cannabis to adults includes critical support for youth development programs in New York. The Governor and the State Legislature have wisely recognized that afterschool programs have an essential role in keeping kids safe as this new policy is rolled out. Afterschool programs will be eligible for community grants that will be funded by the tax revenue generated by the sale of cannabis.

States including Alaska, Illinois, and California are already directing revenue from cannabis sales into afterschool programs. Studies show that afterschool programs not only help kids avoid drugs, but also help them do better in school, stay in school, and stay out of the juvenile justice system.

New York needs more afterschool programs to serve our young people. For every child participating in a program in New York, four more are waiting for access. We now have a critical opportunity to help close this gap by using cannabis tax revenue to expand access to afterschool for more kids. Our kids and families need these supports now more than ever, particularly those living in communities disproportionately affected by past federal and state drug policies, COVID-19, poverty, juvenile substance use, and crime. These are the places where afterschool programs can make the greatest impact. We must do more to meet the growing need.

This crucial State funding creates a tremendous opportunity to make a proactive investment in the health, well-being, and success of our young people. The New York State Network for Youth Success supports investing this new revenue into the communities that need it most and funding evidence-based afterschool programs that keep our kids safe, drug-free, and on track for a bright future.

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About The New York State Network for Youth Success

The New York State Network for Youth Success is dedicated to building a youth-serving system that increases the quality and availability of afterschool and expanded learning programs. The Network for Youth Success supports all programs that promote young people's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development outside the traditional school day. These programs include those that serve youth in kindergarten through 12th grade, take place in schools and/or in community-based settings, and occur before and after school, during weekends, holidays, and summer breaks, or during the school day through partnerships with community organizations.

The Network for Youth Success convenes, partners and coordinates them around a common agenda focused on partnership development, policy development, and capacity building. The network connects practice with policy across a broad range of state, regional, and local partners that represent the afterschool, expanded learning, community schools, and youth development fields broadly.

More information about the NYS Network for Youth Success is available at:

<https://networkforyouthsuccess.org>