

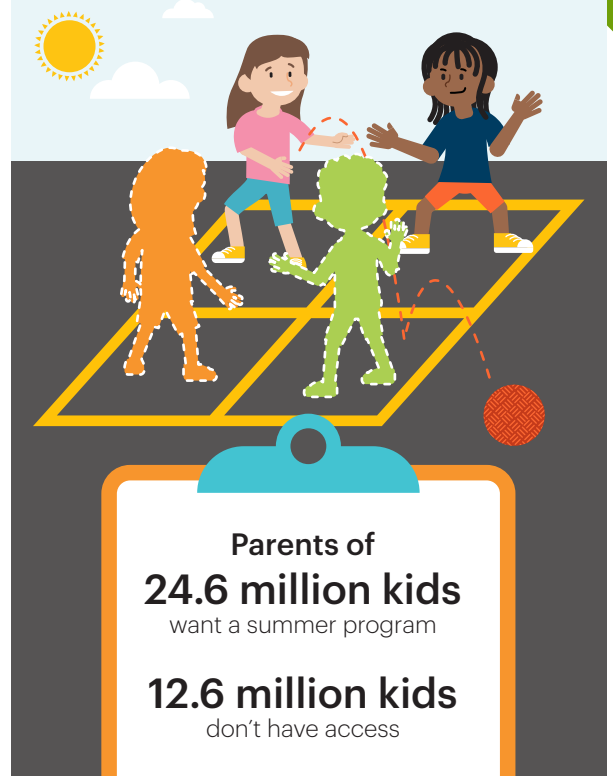
# The Summer Struggle for Everyday Families:

## Affording the Opportunities Parents Want for Youth

### FAMILIES WANT A SUMMER FULL OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THEIR KIDS

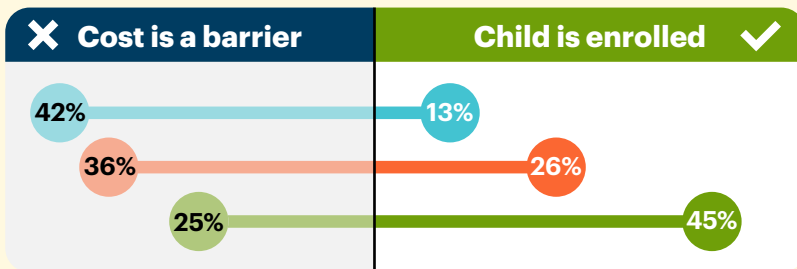


### BUT HALF OF THEM ARE MISSING OUT



### AFFORDABILITY IS THE TOP CHALLENGE FOR EVERYDAY FAMILIES

● Low-income families ● Middle-income families ● High-income families



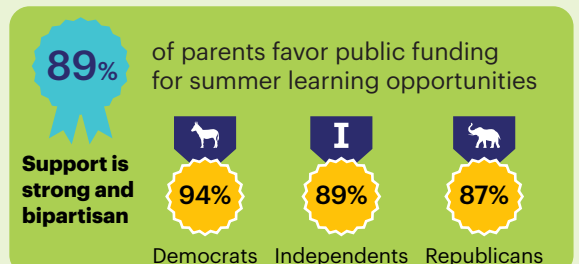
Children in high-income families are **3X more likely** to be enrolled in a summer program

#### For every \$100 earned:



Over the summer months, low- and middle-income families spend a greater slice of their income on summer programs

### PARENTS GIVE SUMMER PROGRAMS HIGH MARKS AND WANT THEM FUNDED



Learn more and see recommendations for action at [aa3pm.co](http://aa3pm.co)

# The Summer Struggle for Everyday Families: Affording the Opportunities Parents Want for Youth

Parents of 24.6 million young people want a summer full of opportunity for their children to explore, connect, and grow. But cost puts summer programs out of reach for far too many families. *America After 3PM* finds that 1 in 2 children are missing out on the summer programs their parents want for them.

## Families want a summer full of opportunity for their children

Safety; caring and knowledgeable staff; youth developmental supports; and time to be social, active, outdoors, and off screens are **extremely important** to parents when choosing what their child does over the summer.



### ENVIRONMENT AND OFFERINGS:

- ◆ Safe environment (**80%**)
- ◆ Knowledgeable & caring staff (**73%**)
- ◆ Fun & educational activities; less screentime (**67%**)
- ◆ Physical activity (**61%**)
- ◆ Developing a sense of belonging (**59%**)
- ◆ Convenient hours (**59%**)
- ◆ Experiencing the outdoors (**56%**)
- ◆ Variety of activities (**56%**)

### YOUTH DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORTS:

- ◆ Opportunities to build confidence (**66%**)
- ◆ Support for child's mental health & well-being (**65%**)
- ◆ Interacting with peers, building social skills (**65%**) & developing positive relationships with other kids (**63%**)
- ◆ Building communication, teamwork, critical thinking, leadership, & entrepreneurship skills (**60%**)

## Summer programming is a community-wide effort

During the summer, young people participate in voluntary summer learning and enrichment programs, mandatory and optional summer school, internships and work experiences, arts and drama programs, sports and STEM camps, and more. These summer experiences occur across a variety of settings, including community-based organizations, schools, city and town facilities, museums and science centers, libraries, colleges and universities, and religious organizations.



## Affordability is the top challenge for families

Unfortunately, affordability is placing summer programs further out of reach for everyday families, with low- and middle-income families much more likely than high-income families to say that cost is an issue (42% and 36% vs. 25%).

3x

At the same time, children in high-income families are more than 3 times as likely as children in low-income families to be in a summer program (45% vs. 13%) and nearly 2 times as likely as children in middle-income families (45% vs. 26%).

## More than 9 in 10 families rate their child's summer program highly

96% of parents are satisfied overall with their child's structured summer experience, including 63% who are extremely satisfied.

## Parents of every background support public funding for summer learning opportunities

89% are in favor of public funding for summer learning opportunities. Since 2009, parent support has steadily increased, with support remaining strong across demographics:

- ◆ **Political affiliation:** 94% of Democrat, 89% of Independent, and 87% of Republican parents
- ◆ **Community type:** 87% of parents living in rural, 89% of parents living in suburban, and 93% of parents living in urban communities
- ◆ **Race/ethnicity:** 90% of Asian American, 93% of Black, 90% of Hispanic, 91% of Native American, and 89% of White parents

### About the Survey

The fifth edition of *America After 3PM* surveyed 30,515 U.S. parents or guardians with a school-age child living in their household, completing at least 200 interviews in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., between January 31 and April 21, 2025. Data were collected by Edge Research on behalf of the Afterschool Alliance. The overall margin of error for the child- and household-level data is +/- < 1%. The *America After 3PM* summer findings are based on research funded by The Wallace Foundation.

### About the Afterschool Alliance

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children have access to affordable, quality afterschool programs. Learn more at [afterschoolalliance.org](https://afterschoolalliance.org)

