NEWS RELEASE

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New Study: Strong Support for Omaha Afterschool Programs, But Demand Outpaces Availability

OMAHA, Neb.— Collective for Youth, alongside Omaha Mayor John Ewing Jr., announced new data today from a first-of-its-kind survey highlighting the success of afterschool programs across the Omaha metro, as well as vast unmet demand.

The findings come from a household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance and released by Collective for Youth, an Omaha afterschool systems-building impact organization. *Afterschool in Omaha* is part of the *America After 3PM* survey of 30,515 American households, with 444 households with 670 children in Omaha screened. It was conducted by Edge Research.

The data show two clear conclusions:

- Omaha-area parents overwhelmingly trust and value afterschool programs for keeping children safe, engaged, and learning beyond the school day. Omaha parents give their children's afterschool programs high marks, with 84% of parents rating their child's program as excellent or very good.
- But there is a strong need for more programs. The parents of 51,170 Omaha children want afterschool programs for them, and just 12,761 Omaha metro students are currently participating – meaning three in four of the city's children are being left behind.

"Omaha has a strong afterschool program ecosystem, serving more than 12,000 students with academic programming and a safe, supportive place to go every day, but demand is far outpacing supply," said Megan Addison, Executive Director of Collective for Youth. "The data we're releasing today shows that 38,409 more children would receive the benefits of afterschool programs if spots were available. As resources become more limited nationwide, local investment and collaboration matter more than ever. Afterschool programs are not a luxury. They are essential for all kids and their families."

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The barriers that most often prevent enrollment in Omaha are cost, lack of a safe way to get to and from programs, and inconvenient locations. The average cost Omaha parents report paying for afterschool programs is $100.20 per week. Ninety-two percent of parents across the Omaha metro favor public funding for afterschool programs.

“Afterschool programs are doing exactly what families need them to do, and their partnership with 41 Omaha Public Schools programs is a valued community asset,” said Mayor John Ewing Jr. “The challenge is that demand continues to grow, and these programs are critical not only for children’s development, but for keeping parents in the workforce and supporting the broader economic health of our community. I thank Collective for Youth, and their partners, for leading this important work.”

Afterschool and out-of-school time programs serve students of all ages and abilities, providing safe environments, enrichment opportunities, and trusted relationships during the hours immediately following the school day. Research consistently shows that access to quality afterschool care supports positive outcomes for youth while helping parents maintain employment. In the new study, 88% of parents with children in afterschool programs report enrollment allows them to work more hours and 79% say it boosts their productivity at work.

Additional findings from the *Afterschool in Omaha* include:

- 88% of Omaha parents agree that afterschool programs keep kids safe.
- 93% say afterschool programs help kids build social skills and responsible decision making.
- 92% say afterschool programs encourage fun and learning, decreasing screen time.

“The afterschool community in Omaha is doing powerful work but there aren’t nearly enough programs to meet the demand and too many students and families are missing out,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The vast majority of parents in Omaha who want their child in an afterschool program can’t access one, and that needs to change. Quality afterschool programs are essential to student success in school and life. We need more support from government at all levels, businesses, and philanthropy to meet the demand for afterschool programs in Omaha, across Nebraska, and nationwide.”

The *America After 3PM 2025* study is based on a survey of parents or guardians with a school-aged child living in their household. It was conducted in English and Spanish in 2025 using a mixed-mode methodology to reach as many households as possible. The margin of error for the national study is +/- <1%. Previous *America After 3PM* surveys were conducted in 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2020. It is made possible through the Afterschool Alliance’s partnership with the New York Life Foundation.

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Collective for Youth
Collective for Youth, an Omaha-area nonprofit, brings together funders, schools, and community partners to ensure children have access to safe, high-quality afterschool experiences when it matters most. Serving a network of 41 programs across the Omaha metro, Collective for Youth manages shared resources, uses robust data to drive continuous improvement, and advocates for a strong afterschool ecosystem that supports youth development and keeps families in the workforce. CollectiveforYouth.org

The Afterschool Alliance
The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.