



Expanded Learning Talking Points

In the U.S. today, more than 11 million children—1 in 5 youth—are on their own unsupervised after school. Here in Vermont, 24% percent of children and youth in grades K-12 are currently enrolled in ELOs during the school year. Of those children not currently in programs, 33% would participate if more programs were available and accessible.¹ These kids are missing out on key opportunities to learn and grow. Research shows that afterschool, summer learning, out-of-school time, and expanded learning opportunities (ELOs) offer a range of valuable benefits for kids, families, and communities:

1. Inspiring Learners

- High-quality ELOs can lead to improved attendance, behavior, grades and coursework.²
- Afterschool and summer programs are real solutions linked to closing the academic achievement gap and accelerating learning gains.³
- High-quality ELOs connect youth to their communities and offer them the opportunity to engage with their local neighbors, businesses, and organizations.

2. Helping Working Families

- Afterschool programs help relieve the stress on working families. For most families, there is a gap of 15-25 hours per week when parents are still at work and children are out of school and need supervision. In fact, parents miss an average of five days of work per year due to a lack of afterschool care.⁴
- With a 95% parent satisfaction rate, afterschool programs in Vermont are valued by parents for their quality, the services offered, and the academic supports provided. 81% of Vermont parents agree that afterschool programs help give them peace of mind about their children when they are at work, and 79% agree that afterschool and summer learning programs help working parents keep their jobs.⁵

3. Keeping Kids Safe & Healthy

- On school days, the hours between 3 and 6 p.m. are the peak hours for youth to commit crimes, be in or cause an automobile accident, be victims of crimes, smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs.⁶
- For every \$1 spent on quality ELOs, Vermont gets back \$2.18 in long-term savings from reduced criminal activity and substance abuse treatment, as well as accruing benefits from increased high school graduation rates and work productivity.⁷
- Afterschool and summer programs are important venues for improving nutrition, providing access to healthy meals and snacks, and promoting physical activity.

4. Supporting Vermont's Vision for Education

- ELOs are well-positioned to support Vermont's major education initiatives, including the new Education Quality Standards, flexible pathways for graduation, personalized learning plans, proficiency based graduation requirements, and 21st century skills.⁸

¹ Afterschool Alliance. (2014). *America After 3PM: Afterschool Programs in Demand*.

² Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., & Pachan, M. (2010). *A Meta-Analysis of After-School Programs that Seek to Promote Personal and Social Skills in Children and Adolescents*.

³ Vandell, D., Reisner, E., and Pierce, K. (2007). *Outcomes Linked to High-Quality Afterschool Programs: Longitudinal Findings From the Study of Promising After School Programs*.

⁴ Catalyst & Brandeis University. (2006). *After-school Worries: Tough on Parents, Bad for Business*.

⁵ Afterschool Alliance. (2014). *America After 3PM: Afterschool Programs in Demand*.

⁶ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2006). *OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book*.

⁷ Vermont Afterschool. (2014). *Return on Investment Study*. Available at <http://bit.ly/1zaTHp0>

⁸ Vermont PreK-16 Council. (2014). *Every Hour Counts: Vermont Students Succeed with Expanded Learning Opportunities*.