

Vermont Chapter

INCORPORATED IN VERMONT

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Vermont
Medical
Society

January 17, 2020

Dear Senator Baruth:

On behalf of the Vermont Medical Society (VMS) and the American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter (AAPVT) we submit the following written testimony in support of the proposal for Universal Afterschool Programming. VMS represents over 2400 physicians across Vermont and AAPVT represents over 200 pediatricians.

VMS & AAPVT strongly support equitable and universal access for all youth to evidence-based, quality afterschool programming. We would ask that evidence-based, quality afterschool programming specifically be named as a requirement of any afterschool program, and that programming must include:

- Increased Community Engagement
 - Current Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data from 2019ⁱ show that only a little over ½ of Vermont high school students feel that they matter in their community.
- Giving youth a greater sense of purpose
- Providing access to extra-curricular activities such as arts, technical skills, team activities

This programming has been proven increase protective factors against risky behaviors for youth and the more protective factors you have, the less risk factors. Community connectedness is a protective factor.

We know that the most “at-risk” time of day for youth is from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.ⁱⁱ

- more unplanned pregnancies occur
- bullying takes place
- substance use starts

In 1998, Iceland had high rates of substance use among 15 to 16-year olds.ⁱⁱⁱ At that time, 42% had been drunk in the last 30 days, 23% had used cigarettes and 17% had used marijuana. Upon implementation of quality, evidence-based afterschool programming those rates dropped dramatically. In 2017, the rates were 5%, 3% and 7% respectively.

We also ask that you strongly consider adding a seat for the American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter on the afterschool task force, bringing pediatricians’ expertise in child health, development and prevention to the work of the group.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Winters
Deputy Director, Vermont Medical Society
Executive Director, American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter

ⁱ https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HSVR_YRBS_2019_HSReport.pdf

ⁱⁱ <http://www.vermontafterschool.org/impact/why-afterschool-matters/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2017/01/teens-drugs-iceland/513668/>