

WORKING HEADLINES FOR INTERNAL USE

Research repository based on research based on the 26-year longitudinal Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (SECCYD).

The Enduring and Meaningful Impact of Afterschool Programs

High-quality afterschool activities provide more than just a safe space for children—they offer lifelong benefits that extend into adulthood. New research from a 26-year longitudinal study published in Educational Researcher demonstrates that consistent participation in afterschool programs from early childhood through adolescence significantly impacts academic success, social skills, and behavioral outcomes. The findings underscore that afterschool programs are a crucial investment in the holistic development of young people, fostering skills and behaviors that lead to healthier, more productive lives.

This study is the first to directly document opportunities and opportunity gaps as they accrue across early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence in multiple key areas of child development.

Sustained participation in early learning and afterschool activities offer cumulative developmental impacts across childhood and adolescence lasting into adulthood.

Foundation for Learning: Early care engagement lays the groundwork for cognitive and social development, leading to academic benefits in elementary school.

Building the Foundation for Success: Children who consistently participate in afterschool activities in elementary school show academic success and positive social behaviors.

Keeping Youth Engaged and Connected: Youth engaged in middle-level afterschool programs are more confident and engaged.

Supporting Success and Safety: Youth involved in high school activities are more productive and safer than their peers.

Promoting Positive Outcomes: Young adults who participated in afterschool activities show improved life skills and are less likely to engage in risky behaviors.

By age 26, young people who participate in early learning and afterschool activities are stronger learners, earners, and leaders.