

DIGITAL ACTION TOOLKIT

INTRODUCTION

In March, President Trump unveiled his budget priorities for 2018. Among his priorities? Singling out 21st Century Community Learning Centers—the only dedicated source of federal funding for afterschool and summer learning programs—for elimination.

Nearly two million children and families are at risk of losing the programs they rely on. Congress will decide what happens next—and it's more important than ever before for afterschool supporters like you to speak out and share why afterschool matters to you, your family, and your community.

FIRST AND FOREMOST...

- Be sure to use the hashtag **#AfterschoolWorks** in your tweets and Instagram posts.
- Add the **I Heart Afterschool profile picture frame** on Facebook—show your support for afterschool while keeping your favorite profile pic! Go to this link and search for “afterschool:” <https://www.facebook.com/profilepicframes>
- Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest **@afterschool4all** and on Facebook **@afterschoolalliancedc** to keep up with the latest news on the battle to save afterschool.

TELL YOUR AFTERSCHOOL STORY

Later in this toolkit, you'll find sample social media posts that you can easily copy and paste to show your support for afterschool. But telling your personal story about the impact an afterschool program has made on your life is by far the most effective way to capture people's attention and convince them that #AfterschoolWorks.

Not sure where to start? We've put together some prompts to help you think about how afterschool has made a difference in your life.

There are plenty of ways to tell your story. Here are a few ideas.

- **Tweet** your written story using the hashtag #AfterschoolWorks. Can't fit it all into 140 characters? Turn it into a thread by replying to your own tweets (you can remove your handle from the beginning and they'll still be threaded together!).
- **Post on Facebook.** Create a status with your written story
- **Create a video.** You don't need fancy equipment to create awesome video content. Just grab your smartphone and speak from the heart straight into the camera. Keep it under 60 seconds (the shorter the better) and post it to Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.
 - **Edit short clips together** if you can and create a compilation of stories to upload to YouTube.



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- **Write a blog post** if you've got a lot to share. No blog? No problem. It's easy to publish a post on Medium.com, or email info@afterschoolalliance.org to submit your narrative to be considered as a guest post for the Afterschool Snack. Once it's been published, share it widely on social media.
- **Use our "I Love Afterschool" printable.** Fill out the reasons you love your afterschool program, then take a photo of the finished product and share it:
<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/WeLoveAfterschoolToolkit.pdf>
- **Share with us directly.** We're on the lookout for stories to share on our website, blog, and social media. If you'd like to be featured, let us know:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/afterschoolstories>

IF YOU'RE AN AFTERSCHOOL PROFESSIONAL...

- How have you seen your afterschool program impact students over the course of your career?
- Have you seen your afterschool program impact parents and families as well as students?
- Do you have any data illustrating the impact of your program on your students? Talk about those results.
- Are there any particular students you can think of that experienced significant growth in the time they attended your program? Share their stories.

In addition to answering these prompts yourself, encourage your students, parents, and alumni to share their stories!

IF YOU'RE AN AFTERSCHOOL STUDENT...

- What would you do after school if you couldn't come to this program?
- What's your favorite thing about your afterschool program?
- What's the coolest thing you've learned in your afterschool program?
- How has your afterschool experience helped you in school?
- How has your afterschool experience helped you get ready for your future career, or your path to college?

IF YOU'RE THE PARENT OF AN AFTERSCHOOL STUDENT...

- Where would you send your kids after school if this program wasn't available?
- Have you noticed any positive changes in your child[ren] since they started attending their afterschool program?
 - Are they doing better in school?
 - Are they healthier or more active?
 - Are they better behaved, or do they get along better with their classmates?
- Has your child's enrollment in an afterschool program helped you at work? Would your job be affected if the program was no longer available?
- Is your child learning things or having experiences in their afterschool program that aren't available to them during the school day? Do those experiences help them do better in school?

IF YOU'RE AN ALUMNUS OF AN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM...

- What's your favorite memory from your time in your afterschool program?
- Have skills you learned in your afterschool program helped you in your career?
- Did your afterschool program help you on the path to college?
- Did you form important relationships (with friends, mentors, teachers, etc.) through your afterschool program? Are you still in touch with those people?

RESOURCES

GRAPHICS

You can download a selection of graphics for use on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and more from this Google Drive folder: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BzIQEWLRMV8jYIjNtVJESXJlVTQ?usp=sharing>

29 infographics illustrating compelling data from our most recent *America After 3PM* study are available for download as well: <http://afterschoolalliance.org/aa3pm/infographics.cfm>

SAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS

Did you know? A Facebook post that includes a photo usually reaches more people than just a link. Try using these sample posts as captions alongside a photo from your afterschool program, or one of our downloadable graphics.

- Almost two million kids could lose their afterschool programs under the president's budget proposal. Please join me to speak up for them and ask Congress to save afterschool:
<http://afterschoolalliance.rallycongress.net/ctas/support-afterschool-summer-learning-programs>
- A recent poll found that 8 in 10 Americans think cutting afterschool funding is a bad idea. I'm one of them! Are you with us? Tell your reps in Congress:
<http://afterschoolalliance.rallycongress.net/ctas/support-afterschool-summer-learning-programs>
- The research shows that afterschool works to get kids excited about STEM and close America's skills gap. Why cut what works? Please join me to ask Congress to save afterschool:
<http://afterschoolalliance.rallycongress.net/ctas/support-afterschool-summer-learning-programs>
- The White House is trying to eliminate afterschool funding and is justifying it by claiming there's "no evidence" that afterschool works. That's not true.
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolSnack/The-president-says-afterschool-doesn-t-work-That-s-just-not_03-16-2017.cfm

SAMPLE TWEETS

- .@QuinnipiacPoll says 83% of Americans think cutting afterschool is a bad idea—click if you agree:
[#AfterschoolWorks](http://tiny.cc/protectafterschool)
- Our kids, families & communities can't afford to lose afterschool funding. Help save afterschool:
[#AfterschoolWorks](http://tiny.cc/protectafterschool)



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- #AfterschoolWorks to get kids excited about STEM & close America's skills gap. Don't cut what works! <http://tiny.cc/protectafterschool>
- .@POTUS wants to take afterschool programs away from almost 2 million kids. Don't let that happen: <http://tiny.cc/protectafterschool> #AfterschoolWorks
- I want every kid and family to have access to afterschool choices. Click here if you're with me: <http://tiny.cc/protectafterschool> #AfterschoolWorks
- The @WhiteHouse claims there's no evidence that #AfterschoolWorks. That's not what the research says. <http://bit.ly/2mUdu3e>

SAMPLE EMAIL BLAST

SUBJECT LINE: Act now to defend America's afterschool programs

The president's budget has singled out afterschool funding for elimination.

[Please take two minutes to tell your representatives in Congress to stand up for America's children, families, and afterschool options.](#)

Congress will decide what happens next. If the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative is eliminated, many programs will not survive. **Nearly two million children will be affected, leaving parents without reliable afterschool choices.**

The battle is just beginning. With your help, it's still possible to persuade Congress to protect our afterschool choices. **Take action now.**

USEFUL LINKS TO SHARE

WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

Afterschool Alliance action hub that will be updated as new ways to take action become available: <http://afterschoolalliance.org/policytakeaction.cfm>

Email Congress: <http://afterschoolalliance.rallycongress.net/ctas/support-afterschool-summer-learning-programs>

Sign the letter of support for Community Learning Centers (for organizations only—not individuals): <https://goo.gl/forms/OdHPVBFW6ImD4MJ02>

FACTS & RESEARCH

Data table – State-by-state breakdown of how many children would lose afterschool programs under the president's budget: http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Impact_FY18_Budget_Proposal_on_21stCCLC.pdf

Fact sheet – 21st Century Community Learning Centers Facts & Figures:
<http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/21stCCLC-Overview-2017.pdf>

Fact sheet – 21st Century Community Learning Centers Statewide Evaluation Academic Highlights:
http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/21stCCLC_Statewide_Evaluation_Highlights.pdf

Fact sheet – Afterschool supports student success: <http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Afterschool-Supports-Students-Success-May2016.pdf>

Webpage – Essential afterschool research:
<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/researchAfterschoolEssentials.cfm>

Webpage – Afterschool evaluations database: <http://impacts.afterschoolalliance.org/>

Webpage – Afterschool STEM Hub: <http://afterschoolstemhub.org/>

BLOG POSTS

“The president says afterschool doesn’t work. That’s just not true.” Evidence refuting White House claims that afterschool doesn’t work. http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolSnack/The-president-says-afterschool-doesn-t-work-That-s-just-not_03-16-2017.cfm

“What does the president’s ‘skinny budget’ mean for afterschool and summer learning?” An outline of the impact of the president’s budget on the afterschool field.
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolSnack/What-does-the-president-s-skinny-budget-mean-for-afterschool_03-20-2017.cfm

“An anti-education, anti-science budget proposal.” An outline of the impact of the president’s budget on afterschool STEM education. http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolSnack/An-anti-education-anti-science-budget-proposal_03-20-2017.cfm

MEDIA COVERAGE

“Trump proposes eliminating after-school program.” Anderson Cooper 360, March 17, 2017.
<http://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2017/03/19/after-school-program-trump-budget-tuchman-ac-pkg.cnn>

“WH budget chief wrongly claims afterschool programs don’t work.” Politifact, March 21, 2017.
<http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/mar/21/mick-mulvaney/wh-budget-chief-wrongly-claims-afterschool-program/>

“Do After-School Programs Positively Impact Children?” The Atlantic, March 23, 2017.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/03/do-after-school-programs-positively-impact-children/520566/>