

The core afterschool message is:

Afterschool programs inspire students to learn, keep kids safe, and give working parents peace of mind.

This document provides additional messaging guidance related to how afterschool supports parents.

Tips for Effective Messaging

- ✓ When it comes to benefits for parents, peace of mind and helping parents provide for their families resonate more than helping parents keep their jobs.
- ✓ Explicitly and clearly explain how afterschool benefits parents in real life. Talk about how afterschool gives parents peace of mind and allows them to focus on work because they don't have to worry about juggling rides or schedules in the afternoon.
- ✓ **Business leaders**—some of whom are parents themselves—believe that afterschool programs provide their employees with invaluable peace of mind because they know their kids are safe. Employers also say their employees focus more during the work day, are more productive (helping the bottom line of the company), and have fewer lost hours.
- ✓ Some people do not understand how afterschool programs provide job security. Talking about peace of mind, being more productive on the job, and allowing parents a more flexible work schedule can help people better realize the benefit.
- ✓ Specifying working parents provide helpful context and stronger support among conservatives.
- ✓ **Parents** need to know that their kids are safe and want them to have fun opportunities to learn and try new things, as well as time for physical activity, play, and socializing. Afterschool provides all of these things!
- ✓ Briefly reference citations when offering statistics to counter cynicism.

Core Messages (Use these consistently and repeatedly)

- Parents need flexible, affordable options after the school bell rings, and to know their kids are safe. Afterschool programs give parents peace of mind because they know their kids are safe, learning, and having fun.
- Afterschool programs allow parents to focus on providing for their families—rather than worrying about whether their children are supervised or coordinating rides for their kids.
- According to a national survey, four in five parents say afterschool helps them keep their jobs and gives them peace of mind when they are at work.
- Afterschool programs help kids avoid risky behaviors, online and offline, during the hours of 3:00 to 6:00 pm, when juvenile crime peaks.
- A Brandeis University study finds that parental concerns about afterschool results in lost productivity at work, costing U.S. businesses up to \$300 billion a year.

Language to Emphasize—and Avoid

Messages that resonate best are clear and simple. They use everyday language free of jargon and **communicate shared values and emotion**. We encourage you to use the words and phrases on the left. The right-hand column includes language that's harder to understand and may have less of an impact.*

Use This Language	Instead of This Language
✓ Working parents	✗ Parents
✓ Afterschool programs help parents work more and worry less	✗ Afterschool programs give parents greater job security
✓ According to a national survey, four in five parents say afterschool helps them keep their jobs	✗ Four in five parents say afterschool helps them keep their jobs
✓ Afterschool programs help parents balance work and life	✗ Afterschool programs help families get ahead
✓ By helping employees be more productive and less stressed, afterschool benefits businesses	✗ Afterschool supports the economy

*Overall, the terms "children," "kids," and "students" can be used interchangeably, with a slight audience preference for the use of "students" in an educational context.