OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

Keeping Youth Safe

Afterschool, summer, and other out-of-school time (OST) programs operate at the nexus of families, schools, and communities to keep youth safe and out of harm’s way.

The Challenge

The gap in time between the last school bell and when parents arrive home from work has long been a concern of families, law enforcement, and community members. Many students are alone and unsupervised between 3:00 and 6:00 pm, which are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and sex.¹ In Nevada:

- 59,300 youth are alone and unsupervised after school.²
- 29% of high school students reported drinking alcohol and 21% reported using marijuana within the last month.³
- 2,534 youth were placed in a juvenile detention facility in 2021, with the most common arrest being related to a deadly weapon.⁴

The Opportunity

OST programs provide working parents peace of mind, knowing that their children are safe and engaged in fun learning activities after the school day ends. They help young people avoid drug and alcohol use and abuse and make smart decisions—both online and offline. These programs are a safe haven where staff support students in building life skills such as learning to work well with others, communicating effectively, and coping with stress. Young people practice dealing with challenging situations productively, and making sound and thoughtful decisions themselves—all alongside adults they trust. The competencies students gain in OST programs will serve them well throughout their lives.

Research has shown that students who participate in OST programs benefit from:

- Decreased criminal activity and risky behaviors
- More awareness of the dangers of risky behaviors
- Less aggression and other problematic behaviors
- Improved social skills and self-confidence
- Feeling safe

81% of Nevada parents agree that OST programs keep kids safe and out of trouble.²
Get Involved!

We must seize this moment to fund Nevada’s OST programs. Young people need to be surrounded by caring adults, have a place they feel safe and belong, and have the supports to build foundational skills. We can support their safety by investing in OST programs and partnerships. The Nevada Afterschool Network is helping to make connections across the state to ensure all children have access to high-quality OST programs, especially those living in communities with high need.

SOURCES

Nevada has never had enough OST programs to serve all the families who want to attend. For every student enrolled in OST, three more are waiting to get in—that’s more than 214,000 Nevada children that would enroll in a program if one were available to them.²

Nevada parents overwhelmingly support OST²
- 90% are in favor of public funding for OST programs.
- 86% are satisfied with their child’s OST program.

The Nevada Afterschool Network provides opportunities for cooperative partnerships and access for all to quality OST programs. This includes quality technical support, professional development, sustainable funding, and advocacy for OST programs at the local, regional, and state level. To achieve these goals, the network relies on strong partnerships with local programs, state agencies, community stakeholders, and families.

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