

After-School Programs Can Prevent Crime

Research shows that after-school programs can reduce crime by offering constructive alternatives to gangs and drugs during the peak hours for juvenile crime.



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A priority goal of *FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS* California, an anti-crime organization of 400 sheriffs, police chiefs, district attorneys and crime survivors, is to ensure access to after-school programs for children and youth of all ages—including high school students—and to ensure successful implementation of Proposition 49.

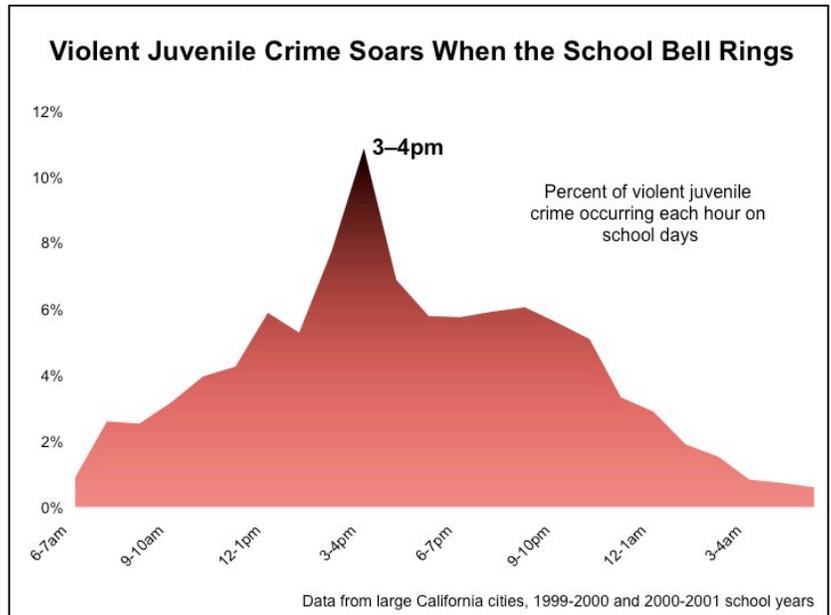
Violent Juvenile Crime Peaks After School

After-school programs help shut down the “*Prime Time for Juvenile Crime.*”

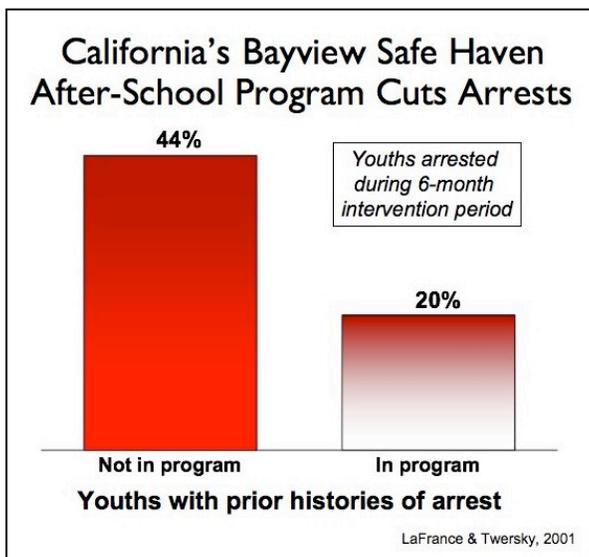
When the school bell rings, turning millions of children and teens out on the street, violent juvenile crime suddenly soars. In California, the peak hours on school days for such crime—and the peak hours for kids to become victims of violence—are from 2 pm to 6 pm.¹ The after-school hours are also the prime time for kids to smoke, drink or use drugs, or be involved in a car crash.²

Evidence Shows That After-School Programs Reduce Crime

At-risk youth left out of the Bayview Safe Haven after-school program in San Francisco were *two to three times more likely to be arrested* during the six-month initial intervention period than program participants.³



dropped by two-thirds, violent acts and carrying a concealed weapon *fell by more than half*, and arrests were *cut in half*. School discipline, detention, suspensions and expulsions *dropped by a third*.⁴



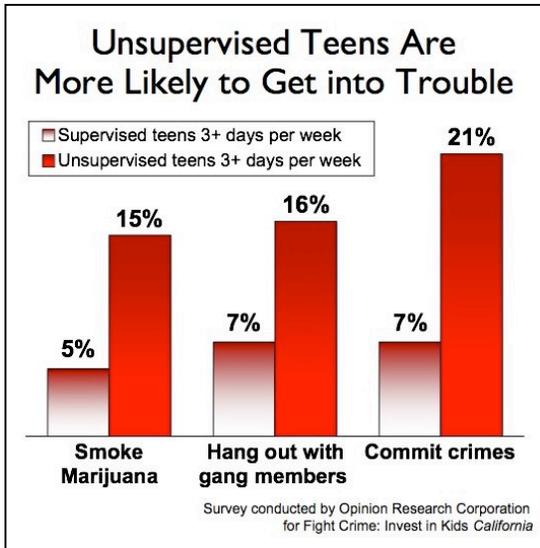
“As the County’s head prosecutor, I know the hours after the school day ends are critical to public safety. After-school programs encourage kids to thrive in school and life, while helping them avoid the traps of delinquent behavior, including drug use, vandalism and gang affiliation.”

Hon. Nancy O’Malley
Alameda County, District Attorney

A study of after-school programs in 12 high-risk California communities found that, among kids participating in the programs, vandalism and stealing

Five housing projects without Boys & Girls Clubs were compared to five receiving new clubs. At the beginning, drug activity and vandalism were the same. But by the time the study ended, the housing projects without the programs had *50 percent more* vandalism and scored *37 percent worse* on drug activity.⁵

A 2006 survey of over 600 California 12- to 17-year-olds found that kids left unsupervised three or more days per week are **twice as likely** as other kids to hang out with gang members, **three times as likely** to be engaged in criminal behavior, and **three times as likely** to smoke marijuana.⁶



Evidence also shows that quality after-school programs can increase school-day attendance and test scores, improve English language fluency, and reduce grade repetition and dropouts.⁷

There Is an Overwhelming Need for After-School Programs

According to the 2006 survey of California teens, nearly one million—three in 10 California 12- to 17-year-olds—are left unsupervised three or more days per week.⁸

Even with Proposition 49 in place for elementary and middle school students, hundreds of thousands of

“Investing in after-school programs is smarter and cheaper than building more prisons and jails. It just makes sense to keep kids on track for productive, crime-free lives.”

Sheriff Stanley Sniff
Riverside County

students from low-income working families are still left unserved by the major state and federal after-school programs, and over 3,000 schools in low-income communities lack state- or federally-funded after-school programs.⁹

Demand for new federal after-school funding for the 2014-15 school year far exceeded the supply of available funding by a margin of over 6 to 1, resulting in over \$200 million in grants being turned away.¹⁰

California Is Headed in the Right Direction

In recent years:

- California voters enacted Proposition 49, which increased funding for the state’s After School Education and Safety (ASES) program for elementary and middle school students by over \$400 million, to a total of \$550 million. The new funding supports over 4,000 programs and close to 400,000 students.
- Legislation enacted in 2006 (SB 638) improved ASES by increasing grant sizes and the amount of funding per student. Unlike most education programs historically, however, ASES does not receive annual cost-of-living adjustments, which in future years is likely to jeopardize program equality.
- California created the nation’s first state-run *high school* after-school program, the 21st Century High School After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens (ASSETs) program, through legislation sponsored by FIGHT CRIME:

INVEST IN KIDS *California* in 2002. The program utilizes federal after-school funding. ASSETs funding has increased from its initial \$2.5 million level to \$79 million, which funds more than 340 individual programs.

¹ Based on total incidents of violent juvenile crime (where suspect was a juvenile) on school days reported to police for school years September 1999—May 2000 and September 2000—May 2001. FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS contacted all 14 cities with populations over 200,000 and obtained this data from Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Diego, and San Jose.

² Rice, T., Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center, School of Public Health, University of California, Los Angeles. Personal communication on July 2000; Richardson, J.L., Dwyer, K., McGuigan, K., Hansen, W.B., Dent, C., Johnson, C.A. (1989). Substance use among eighth-grade students who take care of themselves after school. *Pediatrics*, 84(3), 556-566.

³ LaFrance, S. & Twersky, F. (2001). *A safe place for healthy youth development: A comprehensive evaluation of the Bayview Safe Haven*. San Francisco, CA: BTW Consultants and LaFrance Associates.

⁴ Philliber Research Associates. (2000). *The California juvenile crime prevention demonstration project: Statewide final report, January 1996 through May 2000*.

⁵ Schinke, S.P., et al. (1992). “Boys & Girls Clubs in public housing developments: Prevention services for youth at risk.” *Journal of Community Psychology*, *OSAP Special Report*, 118-128.

⁶ Opinion Research Corporation. (2006). FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *California*, California Survey of Teens. Oakland, CA: FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *California*.

⁷ Lee, B. (2010). *California’s after-school commitment: Keeping kids on track and out of trouble*. San Francisco, CA: FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *California*.

⁸ Id.

⁹ California Afterschool Network. (2014). *State of the state of expanded learning in California—2013-2014*. Davis, CA: UC Davis School of Education and California Afterschool Network.

¹⁰ Id.