North Carolina After 3PM SUMMER

MAY 2026

The Summer Struggle for North Carolina Families

Affording the Opportunities Parents Want for Youth

North Carolina parents want a summer full of opportunity for their children to explore, connect, and grow. But cost puts summer programs out of reach for many.

FAMILIES WANT A SUMMER FULL OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THEIR KIDS

TOP FIVE FACTORS NORTH CAROLINA PARENTS LOOK FOR IN SUMMER PROGRAMS:

1. Safe environment
2. Knowledgeable and caring staff
3. Opportunities to interact with peers and build social skills
4. Time for fun and educational activities; less screen time
5. Opportunities to build confidence

TOO MANY NORTH CAROLINA CHILDREN ARE MISSING OUT ON SUMMER PROGRAMS

Parents of

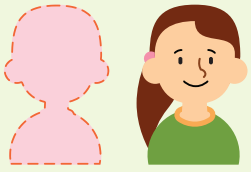
806,356 children

want summer programs

× **431,551**

children don't have access

More than 1 in 2 North Carolina children are missing out.



Affordability is the top challenge for North Carolina families.

SUMMER PROGRAMS ARE OUT OF REACH FOR TOO MANY NORTH CAROLINA FAMILIES DUE TO COST

48%
of parents report cost is a barrier to enrolling their child in a summer program

LOCATION, TRANSPORTATION, AVAILABILITY, AND FINDING INFORMATION ON SUMMER PROGRAMS ARE ALSO BARRIERS

15%
Issues with location or transportation

7%
Programs unavailable

9%
Information on summer programs is not easy to find

North Carolina parents give summer programs high marks and want them funded!

PARENTS WHO HAVE FOUND A SUMMER PROGRAM RATE IT HIGHLY

98%
Satisfaction

89% of parents favor public funding for summer learning opportunities

SUPPORT IS STRONG AND BIPARTISAN

94%
Democrats

95%
Independents

85%
Republicans

What You Can Do

Learn more and see recommendations for action at **aa3pm.co**

About the Survey

America After 3PM is a national online survey of parents or guardians of school-aged children, with supplemental interviews conducted by telephone. Data were collected by Edge Research on behalf of the Afterschool Alliance. In North Carolina, 802 households and 1,304 children were screened for this study. Child-level statewide projections are based on total school enrollment numbers for the 2021-2022 school year from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

The *America After 3PM* summer findings are based on research funded by The Wallace Foundation.

America After 3PM Afterschool Alliance