

# focus

AFTERSCHOOL IN  
OKLAHOMA



Issue Brief:

## Preventing Dropouts in Oklahoma

Dropping out of high school means more than the loss of a diploma.

More than **one in three students fail to graduate** from high school in America. As a result, we are losing a graduating class every three years. *America's Promise Alliance*

Over the course of a lifetime, a high school dropout earns **\$260,000 less** than a high school graduate and \$1 million less than a college graduate. *Afterschool Alliance*

High school dropouts are **3.5 times** more likely than high school graduates to be arrested, and **more than 8 times** as likely to be in jail or prison. *Alliance for Excellent Education*

The Oklahoma Afterschool Network (OKAN) is a community of private and public partners who are committed to a vision in which all Oklahoma children and youth are safe, nurtured and involved in enriching activities during their out-of-school time.

### Afterschool programs:

- Keep kids safe and healthy
- Inspire learning
- Support working families

Join us at [www.okafterschool.org](http://www.okafterschool.org)



**\$3.8**  
billion

Lost lifetime earnings for the 2008 class of Oklahoma dropouts.

*Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008*



Teens not in afterschool programs are:  
3 times more likely to skip classes  
3 times more likely to use drugs  
more likely to drink alcohol, smoke and  
engage in sexual activity.

YMCA of the USA, March 2001

## Why Afterschool Makes a Difference

Each year, at least 45,000 Oklahoma students exhibit early warning signs that put them at risk of dropping out of school. *Oklahoma State Department of Education ABC 123 Challenge.*

### Public Safety

The hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, sex and gang involvement.

Afterschool programs keep kids safe and gets them off the streets.

### Gang Prevention

In Oklahoma, 29% of our kids are left alone during their afterschool hours.

Afterschool programs keep them **in school** and **out of gangs**.

### Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Oklahoma ranks 6th in the nation in teen birth rates and one in five Oklahoma children grow up in poverty.

These two indicators are a key reason girls, and often young fathers, drop out of school.

The lack of education leads to lower income - which leads to economic instability for the family. The cycle then repeats indefinitely.

### What you can do

It is up to us, as individuals, parents and community leaders to make a difference.

- **Become a mentor** in your community. Many schools, faith organizations, non-profit organizations and civic clubs offer opportunities to donate a few hours of your time to a child.

- **Donate** to afterschool programs in your community.

- **Contact your legislator** to let them know how afterschool programs can benefit your community.

- **Join the network** at OKAN. It's free! And by joining, you will receive regular updates about quality afterschool programs taking place across the state and our efforts to support those programs through our Network!



### Online Resources:

**Afterschool Alliance**  
afterschoolalliance.org

**Oklahoma Department of Education**  
sde.state.ok.us

**Oklahoma State Department of Health**  
ok.gov/health

**Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy**  
oica.org

**Forum for Youth Investment**  
forumforyouthinvestment.org

**C.S. Mott Foundation**  
mott.org

**Wallace Foundation**  
wallacefoundation.org



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OKAN is a statewide initiative coordinated by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy.