

► COMPREHENSIVE SUMMER PROGRAMS: Providing Critical Services for Youth & Families



DENVER AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

Summer 2024

5,475

unduplicated youth
attended summer
programs

13

youth service providers
held programs at

43

locations across the City

Summer programming is essential to ensure that young people have a safe, supportive and enriching place to be while parents work. Summer programming also helps to mitigate the effects of summer slide and the loss of academic skills. Furthermore, summer programming builds a variety of youth skills, including social emotional learning, and provides access to unique experiences, healthy meals and mental health services.

During the summer of 2024, the Denver Afterschool Alliance (DAA) worked with 13 youth service organizations to measure the impact of their programs. Comprehensive Out-of-School Time (OST) organizations provided programming options to meet the needs of young people, families and communities across Denver. Providers served a range of youth from ECE to 12th grade.

Types of Activities

Providers offered several areas of focus including Social Emotional Learning, Health and Fitness, Equity and Inclusivity, Leadership Development, Artistic Exploration, Academics and more. Summer programs provided healthy meals and snacks to young people, offered wraparound services to families, took kids to fun off-site locations and worked collaboratively with other OST partners to deliver unique and engaging experiences for youth and families.

“I can’t thank everyone enough for creating such a safe and welcoming space for my children. They had such a great time, and I hope we’re able to return next summer.”

Denver Parent

“In our Bold Business program for high school girls, we fostered connection between local business partners and our young entrepreneurs. With a series of site visits, we watched youth and local business leaders develop connections, build mentoring relationships and provide opportunities for our young entrepreneurs to grow!”

Summer Program Staff





Summary of Key Findings

- OST summer programming continues to provide a critical service for working families
- Summer programs foster a sense of connection and belonging for youth
- Summer programs that provided high quality, fun and engaging activities are valued by youth and families
- Supportive adults are key to positive youth and family experiences
- Summer Improvement Plans, based on measures of quality practices and outcomes, likely impacted the quality of services provided to youth

Program Quality Measures

During the summer, each organization engaged in a process that aligned specific goals with action steps to ensure successful program outcomes. Each organization also had at least one external assessment using the Summer Quality Improvement Tool (a measure of high-quality staff practices from The Weikart Center). All organizations scored high on the assessment, validating the quality practices that lead to youth outcomes. Organizations also surveyed youth and families to gauge the effectiveness and quality of their programs. Surveys were provided in 11 languages. Below is a sampling of the findings:

YOUTH PERCEPTION collected using the DAA Youth Summer Survey (N=738):

- 92%** reported they **made new friends**
- 88%** reported they worked on **making good choices** in summer programs
- 88%** reported they **enjoyed the projects and activities**
- 87%** reported that they had **adults** in the program **that got to know them** and **helped them** when they had a problem
- 84%** reported they **learned new skills** that would help them in school

FAMILY PERCEPTION collected using the DAA Family Summer Survey (N=447):

- 91%** of parents reported that summer programming **made it possible for them to go to work or school**
- 91%** of parents reported that their child(ren) **made friends** and felt like they **belonged** in the program
- 91%** of parents reported that their child(ren) **had fun and were engaged** in the program activities

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver
- Colorado Dream Foundation
- DPS Extended Learning and Community Schools
- Girls Inc. of Metro Denver
- Heart & Hand
- Mile High 360
- MSU Center for Urban Education
- Scholars Unlimited
- Sims-Fayola Foundation
- Struggle of Love Foundation
- Sun Valley Youth Center
- Vive Wellness
- YMCA of Metro Denver

“This past summer, we helped students connect with each other and access the resources they needed to grow both academically and socially, all while giving working parents peace of mind.”

Summer Program Staff

