

CANNABIS TAX REVENUE

The Case for Investing in Out-of-School Time Programs

Eighteen U.S. states have legalized adult-use cannabis, and experts believe more states will follow in their footsteps.

We need to be ready. That means understanding how we can best use cannabis tax revenue to keep our young people safe and drug-free in the first place.



Using cannabis tax revenue to fund Pennsylvania's out-of-school time programs is one of the smartest investments we can make.

On school days, [the hours between 2-6 pm](#) are the peak hours for youth to commit crimes, be victims of crime, smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs. These are the hours in which youth are attending afterschool and other youth development programs include places like YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, community-based organizations, parks and recreation centers, and more.

These programs are proven to help kids and families thrive. They help kids learn, grow, make smart choices, avoid drugs, gain workforce skills, and graduate from high school. They help working parents keep their jobs, connect families to resources in the local community, and reduce crime in our neighborhoods.

[Decades of research](#) support the stories of success, showing that afterschool helps kids do better in school, stay in school and out of the juvenile justice system. This matters because [10% of Pennsylvania's young people](#) are not graduating high school, and therefore unprepared to join our robust, competitive workforce that requires a high school diploma or post-secondary degree, as well as contribute to our state's economy.

In Pennsylvania, every \$1 invested in out-of-school time programs saves \$6.69 by decreasing:

High school dropout rate

Teen pregnancy

Substance use

Crime



Source: Joint State Government Commission (2021)

Afterschool Program Spotlight

SHINE (Schools and Homes IN Education) Afterschool Program in Carbon and Schuylkill counties, a 21st Century Community Learning Center, actively partners with schools, families, and businesses to accelerate students' learning and growth. SHINE teachers align afterschool activities with school district curricula. They collaborate with classroom teachers and guidance counselors to monitor students' attendance and academic progress and ensure students who are struggling receive the extra support they need. SHINE's comprehensive 36-week program engages kids in fun, enriching hands-on activities that build literacy, leadership, and social skills. It focuses on STEM learning and helps students explore in-demand careers related to engineering, health sciences, and green energy. Seven-year data trends show that 79% of all SHINE students improved in their academic performance, according to their classroom teachers. In addition, a yearly average of 98% of SHINE students were promoted to the next grade level, and 70% of SHINE students achieved at least a "B" or 80% grade in reading and math.

The SHINE program was originally developed and implemented by Lehigh Carbon Community College in Carbon and Schuylkill counties. The model has been replicated in Luzerne, Wayne and Pike counties.

A recent evaluation found that of elementary school students who participated in SHINE:

- 96%** were promoted to the next grade
- 92%** had exceptionally good or satisfactory school attendance
- 92%** had satisfactory or above grades in science
- 79%** improved in academic performance

Pennsylvania needs more out-of-school time programs—and sustainable funding.

Too many young people in Pennsylvania are missing out on expanded learning opportunities and essential supports that out-of-school time programs provide. Families report cost, lack of transportation, and lack of access are barriers to enrollment.

We must increase access to out-of-school time programs. These investments must be prioritized, dedicated, and sustained long-term, as outlined by the Joint State Government Commission, which calls for a [dedicated funding stream for out-of-school time programs in Pennsylvania](#).

Invest cannabis tax revenue to expand out-of-school time programs statewide.

Approximately half of states that have legalized adult-use of cannabis—including Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont—are already investing, or have plans to invest cannabis tax revenue back into youth development programs.

The Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network (PSAYDN) recommends that our state do the same. If cannabis is legalized—the state should invest cannabis tax revenue to expand access to out-of-school time programs across the state, which will support our youth's futures and our state's economy.

Best practices from other states

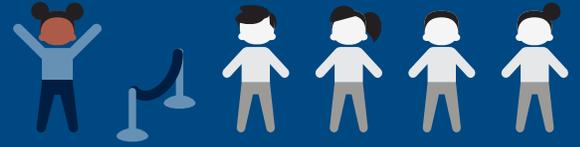
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Illinois is investing cannabis tax revenue in programs that can:

- **Help students make math gains.** (YMCA of Rock River Valley)
- **Fund a college and career counselor and create a teen center.** (East St. Louis Youth Development Alliance)
- **Teach workforce readiness skills and improve parental engagement.** (Springfield Urban League)
- **Connect families who have experienced violence, trauma, or economic disinvestment to afterschool programs, leadership development, and workforce training.** (Center for Community Academic Success Partnerships)

Read more [here](#).

For every youth enrolled in an afterschool program in Pennsylvania, **4 more are waiting to get in.**



That's more than **775,000 children** who would be enrolled in a program if one were available to them.

Afterschool programs have strong, bipartisan public support.



Pennsylvania parents strongly support afterschool and rely on these programs:



88%
support public funding for afterschool



94%
are satisfied with their child's afterschool program