



**OAN MISSION:** The Ohio Afterschool Network convenes stakeholders to advocate for, support, and facilitate the development of quality, sustainable Out-of-School time programs for Ohio's children and youth.

## OHIO'S AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS RESPOND TO COVID19

The afterschool field is an essential part of our communities' response to the coronavirus pandemic. We are working around-the-clock to support youth, families, and our staff. We are focused on improving childrens' safety and well-being, helping essential personnel continue to do their jobs, maintaining touch points with families, creating engaging learning opportunities for young people, and providing food and other supports for families in need. We're also working to protect and retain afterschool program staff.

Our crisis-response model is inclusive: we are rooted in community-driven solutions and are partnering with school districts, local businesses, healthcare systems, and others.

## AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT THE WHOLE CHILD

While schools are closed and when they re-open, students need not only academic support, but also social and emotional support. They need help sustaining and rebuilding relationships, talking about their experiences and emotions, developing as leaders and agents of change, and re-engaging with their interests.

Afterschool provides a safe place where professional educators connect with kids, engage them in hands-on learning, help them navigate challenges, and talk about how to make good decisions.

Staff are trained to focus on the whole child and offer enriching activities that encourage young people to try new things, build confidence, and develop social skills.

During this time of crisis, programs continue to partner with school districts by providing virtual programming, distributing learning activities with school lunches, and offering virtual check-ins and support for working families.

## SUPPORTING OHIO'S RURAL COMMUNITIES

OAN recently surveyed the field and found that afterschool programs in Ohio are innovating their models and services to provide support, particularly in rural communities where support and resources are scarce.

*"Rather than focusing on more assignments for students, we are trying to be a social support for students and families. Our book fair is now being offered online and students are being given money to buy books to have shipped to their homes."* - **Natalie Warren, MAKERS Afterschool Program, Byesville, OH**

*"Our focus has been on building and maintaining relationships with our students on the program services side of approved activities. This has included communication through multiple platforms and providing support to students and their families as the needs become known."* - **Craig Meredith, Graham Local Schools, St. Paris, OH**

*"We are providing weekly enrichment activities online and in person as well as food pick-up for our families. We are sending postcards and making phone calls to our families to meet their needs."* - **Amy Cremeans, Meigs Elementary, Middleport, OH**

We are confident we will get through this crisis together, and when we do, the afterschool field will be ready. Youth will need critical and expanded support to emerge from this crisis strong, resilient, and hopeful - and we'll be there to help them do so.



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