

Afterschool Information for Parents

Choosing the right afterschool program for your child is an important decision. You want to know that your child will be in a safe, healthy environment that fosters his/her learning and development through activities, projects, field trips, and relationships with peers and positive older role models. Over the last several years, the afterschool program options in San Francisco have expanded, and there are many differences among them, including location (schools, community centers, nonprofit organizations, playgrounds, and recreation centers); focus, (tutoring and homework help, outdoor activities, arts, etc.); and other factors, including ages served, hours of operation, enrollment policies, cost to participants, and other characteristics.

Types of Afterschool Programs in San Francisco

In San Francisco, there are hundreds of afterschool programs. Below is an overview of a few of the largest types of afterschool programs.

Looking for an Afterschool Program?

Check out the program locator at www.SFKids.org

Afterschool programs based at schools

There are three general types of afterschool programs at SFUSD schools:

Two programs are sponsored by SFUSD: a) *Early Education Department School Age Programs (formerly known as Child Development Centers)*, and b) *SFUSD ExCEL (Expanded Collaboratives for Excellence in Learning) Programs*. SFUSD's vision for its afterschool programs is to bolster school-day success and support families by creating high-quality, safe, youth-centered, and culturally responsive learning experiences that expand social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development of all students. Both the EED and ExCEL programs offer programming that is equally composed of academic support, recreation, and enrichment. The table below outlines how the district's two afterschool options differ. Students in K to 5th grade can pick up a central application form for both programs at school sites, the district's Enrollment Placement Center, or EED sites. Applications for middle and high school ExCEL programs can be obtained at the school site. More information at www.sfusd.edu or call the Early Ed. Dept at 750-8500 or ExCEL office at 750-4500.

	Early Education Dept's Afterschool Programs	ExCEL Afterschool Programs
Ratios	1:14 Adult to Student	1:20 Adult to Student
Sites & Location	31 sites; on or off school site	93 sites; on school site
Ages Served	K-5	K-12
Seasons	Summer and school break programming. Open during teacher professional development days. Closed on furlough days.	Limited summer and break programming. Closed during teacher professional development and furlough days.
Governance	Run by certified SFUSD staff	Run in partnership with the school site, teachers, and local community organizations
Staffing	EED teachers, EED paraprofessionals	Community staff, school day teachers
Attendance Requirements	Preferred 5 days a week. Program hours vary.	5 days a week from end of school until 6pm

Other Programs at SFUSD Schools: At several SFUSD schools, nonprofit or for-profit organizations secure space to provide independently operated afterschool programs. Most charge participants fees, but many offer financial assistance. Application and more information must be obtained from the individual programs.

Some private schools offer afterschool programs or activities. These programs vary in focus, hours, participant costs, and enrollment procedures. Application and more information are available at individual private schools.

Afterschool programs based at other locations

Several types of afterschool programs are not located at schools. Below is a description of a few such types:

Licensed School-Age Care Programs serve school-age youth in community centers throughout the city. Licensed school-age programs aim to foster the healthy development of youth and vary in their programmatic philosophy and practices. Most programs charge participants fees, but many offer financial assistance. Application and more information must be obtained from the individual programs.

San Francisco's Afterschool for All

San Francisco's Recreation and Parks Department offers afterschool programs, in addition to classes, sports instruction, and other activities, at public recreation facilities. Also, through a partnership with the SF Department of Children, Youth & Their Families, there are several nonprofits participating in *Rec Connect* and they operate afterschool programs at city recreation centers. These programs and the department's other offerings vary in cost and hours of operation. Application and more information are available at www.sfreconline.org.

Nonprofit or for-profit organizations offer a variety of programs, classes, activities, and extended care at locations across the city. These programs vary in focus, hours, participant costs, and enrollment procedures. Application and more information must be obtained from the individual programs.

How to Find an Afterschool Program

www.SFKids.org

The San Francisco Afterschool for All effort, with support from the SF Department of Children, Youth & Their Families, partnered with this parent-run website to create an online searchable database of afterschool programs at public school, private school and non-school settings. This site includes a program description, days and hours of operation, ages served, languages spoken, and more. Click on "Out-of-school time" or you can use the "advanced search" feature to search by neighborhood, ages served, or a keyword.

San Francisco's Children's Council

The San Francisco Children's Council publishes an annual Afterschool Guide that is typically released before the school year starts. This resource guide can be found on their website at www.childrenscouncil.org.

We also encourage you to ask your school principal, staff from nonprofit organizations, and other parents in your neighborhood for information and referrals.

What Are the Characteristics of a High-Quality Afterschool Program?

Below are some characteristics of high-quality afterschool programs for parents to look for:

Characteristics of Programs for Youth Ages 5-10

- Wide variety of activities and choices, but offered under a set routine
- Frequent individual interaction with adults
- Quiet areas as well as noisy areas
- Outside experiences; nature walks and talks
- Imaginative play opportunities
- Some clear responsibilities like clean-up
- Opportunities to read aloud, silently, and to talk about books and ideas
- Matching, ordering and sorting activities
- Opportunities to apply arithmetic problems in real-world ways
- Opportunities to work with a variety of materials for projects
- Physical activity that is not competitive

Characteristics of Programs for Youth Ages 10-14

- Wide variety of options
- Connections to real-world experience
- Opportunities to interact in large and small groups as well as individual recognition
- Experiences that explore ethics and values with respected adults
- Physical activity
- Opportunities for decision-making and leadership
- Opportunities to apply school day lessons
- Experiences emphasizing reasoning and problem-solving in art, science, mathematics
- Quiet times for homework with adult help and peer help when needed
- Wide range of reading activities with discussion of the ideas found in the books

Excerpted from the Afterschool Alliance at www.afterschoolalliance.org. For more information, please also refer to the National AfterSchool Association at www.naaweb.org and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time at www.niost.org.

San Francisco Afterschool for All Initiative

Since 2006, the city, school district, private funders, parent representatives, and community partners have been working together through a citywide task force called the *Afterschool for All Advisory Council* to ensure all elementary and middle school youth have access to afterschool options. The Council meets regularly to discuss out of school time policy, and has produced several publications, including tools to help afterschool providers enhance program quality.

For more information: <http://sfafterschoolforall.blogspot.com> or afterschoolforall@dcyf.org