



Healthy Missoula Youth
Coalition

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Purpose of the Section

- Explain the benefits of after school programs
- Review several after school programs available in Missoula
- Review several youth serving organizations available in Missoula

What Educators Can Do

- Encourage youth to become involved in after school programs
- Raise awareness of the benefits these programs have when speaking with parents
- Become involved in after school programs with youth

Why is this important?

After school programs provide a wide variety of benefits for youth, such as leadership skills and teamwork.

**“YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT JUST THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW
— THEY HAVE A GREAT UNTAPPED POTENTIAL FOR
RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP TODAY.”**

- BRENDTRO, BROKENLEG AND VAN BROCKERN, 1990

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Benefits of After School Programs

Why after school programs are beneficial for youth and how it can impact lifelong outcomes.

After School Programs Offered in Missoula

A brief overview of programs offered in Missoula.

Youth Serving Organizations in Missoula

A variety of youth serving organizations in Missoula that are easily accessed and have known benefits and protective factors.

INTRODUCTION

Prevention interventions can be implemented in a variety of situations, not just during school hours. It is crucial to address the time between 3pm and 6pm, as these are some of the unsupervised hours when youth are most likely to participate in risky behaviors¹. The safe and semi-structured environment that afterschool programs provide for students allows for positive prosocial involvement, and helps to reduce the chances of students becoming involved in unhealthy risk taking. Not only does this give parents and guardians peace of mind as they are at work, but it plays a crucial role in the development and well-being of students.

BENEFITS OF AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Many of these programs address positive youth development models, which incorporate the six life domains of work, education, relationships, community, health, and creativity². These programs offer a range of benefits that can have a positive impact on students' academic and personal growth. They serve a wide variety of purposes, ranging from homework support to teaching students skills outside of their academic repertoire. This can help students further develop their social-emotional skills, build relationships, and learn to collaborate with others³.

As social skills develop and youth become more involved with their after school community, these students are given the unique opportunity to develop leadership skills, decision-making abilities, and participate in group projects. Research has shown that these experiences push students to develop their self-esteem and confidence, preparing them for future success in both their academic and personal lives⁴.

After school programs provide students with additional educational opportunities, allowing them to find their spark and further their learning in a subject that has meaning to them. Not only do these programs give youth a safe and supportive space to learn, but many after school programs include physical activities, sports, and games, which can help students stay active and healthy. Many after school programs are designed to incorporate cultural aspects and emotional wellness, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion, which helps students become well-rounded.

After school programs are an essential part of students' development. They provide students with the opportunity to continue learning, stay safe and active, socialize, and grow as individuals.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN MISSOULA

Disclaimer: Missoula County has a plethora of youth serving organizations and after school programs. The 2020 Missoula County Prevention Needs Assessment showed that the two highest protective factor scores in the overall sample of students were reported as **Community Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement** and **School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement**. As such, the following is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of programs offered in Missoula. It is only intended to provide several examples of the existing options for after school programs, and does not necessarily reflect an endorsement of the program by the Healthy Missoula Youth Coalition.

Elementary

| PROGRAM | FREE | FEE | TRANSPORTATION |
|----------------------|------|-----|----------------|
| CAMPFIRE WESTERN MT | | YES | NO |
| DISCOVERY CORP CAMP | | YES | YES |
| YMCA | | YES | YES |
| MT TAEKWONDO ACADEMY | | YES | YES |

Middle School

| PROGRAM | FREE | FEE | TRANSPORTATION |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|----------------|
| ALL NATIONS - PROJECT VENTURE | YES | | YES |
| MT TAEKWONDO ACADEMY | | YES | YES |
| EMPOWERMT - EPIC | YES | | NO |
| EMPOWERMT - BE YOU | YES | | NO |

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High School

| PROGRAM | FREE | FEE | TRANSPORTATION |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|----------------|
| ALL NATIONS NATIVE YOUTH COUNCIL | YES | | YES |
| EMPOWERMT - YOUTH FORWARD | YES | | NO |

ALL AGES

| PROGRAM | FREE | FEE | TRANSPORTATION |
|----------------------------|------|-----|----------------|
| BIG SKY BLACK BELT ACADEMY | | YES | YES |
| BOYS & GIRLS CLUB | | YES | YES |
| EMPOWERMT - ABY (BIPOC) | YES | | NO |
| MSLA PARKS & REC | | YES | NO |

YOUTH SERVING ORGANIZATIONS IN MISSOULA

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF MISSOULA COUNTY

BGCM provides after school programs, full day programs on days school is out, and summer programming. At BGCM students are provided snacks, mentorship, high quality programming, and a safe place. At the Boys & Girls Club members learn about DEI, STEM, art, emotional wellness, healthy habits, and culture. Part of the programming also includes Power Hour which is a time carved out for students to receive academic support. The club is passionate about serving the Missoula Community.

Camp Fire is a Missoula based program that provides after school care in Missoula Elementary schools, Summer Day Camps and manages Camp Watanopa Rentals. Campfire after school care takes place on the school-site and provides snacks, games, crafts, and homework help.

CAMP FIRE

PARKS & REC

Kids in grades K-5 at participating Missoula Elementary schools will be outdoors and active year-round in an after school program. With a heavy emphasis on adventure recreation, Parks and Rec has programs afternoons and no-school days with students. They provide after school transportation, a healthy snack and active, outdoor fun. Programs are free at Lowell elementary and scholarships are available at other sites.

"The Y After School program provides healthy snacks, aerobic activity, and a variety of enriching activities including STEM, arts and crafts, and vocabulary. All Y After School programs are led by trained Y counselors and offer fun, safe, and supportive environments" and take place on-site at participating schools.

MISSOULA YMCA

MISSOULA PROGRAM

HIGHLIGHT

ALL NATIONS HEALTH CENTER

ANHC is committed to providing sustainable healthy lives for our Native people and the surrounding community through culturally based, holistic care. Included under the umbrella of All Nation's Behavioral Health department is Youth Prevention Services, which aim to develop and serve Missoula Native youth with culturally relevant, trauma-informed prevention services and opportunities. Youth Prevention Services and the Youth Center are located at 1515 S Russell Street.



PROJECT VENTURE

Middle school youth are offered Project Venture which is an evidence-based outdoor recreation program that takes a strengths-based approach to guiding AI/AN youth on their journey to adulthood. The year-long model includes afterschool, weekend, and activities for school breaks. The program focuses on building youth strengths and connection to nature, culture, peers, and community via weekly 90-minute after school meetings along with a monthly outing. The monthly outing and summer trips allow the youth to apply the skill sets they learn in programming with outdoor activities like snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking, and disk golfing. The school break events include day and multi-day outings that engage youth physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

MISSOULA PROGRAM

HIGHLIGHT

ALL NATIONS HEALTH CENTER

For all programs youth are picked up after school in front of each school site via All Nations transportation and parents are asked to pick up youth after programming is finished.

High School youth are offered two separate after school programs/curriculum that complement one another:

NATIVE YOUTH COUNCIL

The Native Youth Council (NYC) engages and empowers Missoula's Indigenous youth in their community-based goals. NYC's mission is to encourage AI/AN youth's self-determination through values related to Indigenous worldview, resilience, and community wellbeing. NYC members meet at the Youth Center once a month during the first week of the month for 90 minutes.

YOUTH ENGAGED IN LEADERSHIP & LEARNING

Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning (YELL) is a youth-led action research program that fosters youth leadership. Youth follow a curriculum that promotes leadership on a multifaceted approach: voice, participation, civic engagement, decision-making, and empowerment. Youth are encouraged to look at leadership in context and identify the steps they can take to create meaningful change. This curriculum includes research opportunities that will teach youth to assess the perceived barriers and facilitators to a healthy school environment and community. YELL meet at the Youth Center on the second, third, and fourth week of the month for 90 minutes.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Conclusion

After school hours are a good opportunity to engage youth in positive activities. The safe and semi-structured environment that afterschool programs provide for students allows for positive prosocial involvement and helps to reduce the chances of students becoming involved in unhealthy risk taking. Missoula already offers a wide variety of programs, so ensuring that youth become connected and invested in them is crucial.

Action Items

- **CONNECT** students to existing programs for your school.
- **QUESTION** your students: Are the programs meeting their needs and interests?
- **READ** the "Concept to Classroom" section of the Toolkit to learn about developing a new youth-led program for your school.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Monthly Free & Low-Cost Activity Calendar](#) from 5210 Let's Move! Missoula
- Missoula [YMCA](#) and [YMCA After-School Care](#)
- [Boys & Girls Club](#) of Missoula County
- [Empower MT After School Clubs](#)

1: [Sickmund & Puzanchera, 2014](#)

2: [Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs](#)

3: [Butts et al., 2010](#)

4: [David-Ferdon et al., 2016](#)

