At Dallas Afterschool, we believe that quality education can change lives, and the world we live in, for the better. But how do we really define education, and what do we expect from it, when students spend only 20% of their waking hours per week in a traditional school environment, leaving the other 80% of their time unaccounted for? Consider the following:

Dallas has the highest childhood poverty rate of any city over 1 million people.

By the time students reach the 6th grade, middle class kids have likely spent 6,000 more hours learning than kids born into poverty. See graphic to the left.

From 3-6pm, there are over 100,000 students in Dallas County between the ages of 5-14 left home alone without adult supervision or support. This is more than enough children to fill the AT&T stadium beyond capacity.

As a result, substantial opportunity gaps exist that can’t be closed through traditional schooling alone. These gaps reinforce the cycle of poverty; the further behind our students become today, the more restricted they, and our community, will be in the future. Research indicates that quality afterschool programs increase academic scores, social-emotional skills, attendance in school, and reduce negative student behaviors. We need quality out of school time programs to improve outcomes for students in Dallas County.

Dallas Afterschool works with 130 partner sites to serve over 500 staff and over 9,000 students annually. Through providing coaching, training, and resources to program staff, we amplify impact to serve more Dallas County children.
Dallas Afterschool's Core Programs

The Program Quality Initiative
Dallas Afterschool works with 30 different nonprofits and over 130 afterschool and summer program sites annually to provide coaching, training and resources through our Program Quality Initiative. Our mission is to ensure that programs deliver safe, high quality programming for students in low-income neighborhoods. Throughout the Program Quality Initiative process, afterschool and summer program sites work to address 10 elements of national best practices for high quality out of school time programming alongside a Dallas Afterschool Quality Advisor. Sites that master all ten elements are recognized as “Certified” by Dallas Afterschool. We conduct research through our partnership with SMU’s Center on Research and Evaluation, with a data sharing agreement with Dallas ISD, on the impact of quality out of school time programs on student academic success. Additionally, we are simultaneously conducting an analysis on the impact of afterschool programming on students’ social and emotional health.

After the Bell Alliance
In Dallas, two of every five, or 40%, of children grow up in poverty. Currently, the vast majority of kids with the greatest need for academic and social/emotional support do not have access to quality afterschool care. Further, parents who desire to work and create a better life for their children are left to make a choice between full-time employment and the guarantee of safety for their children between the hours of 3-6pm. The After the Bell Alliance is a collaborative created to unite local community members, leaders, and funders around issues related to Out of School Time Programs. This coalition will raise awareness about the importance of quality OST Programs and advocate for the expansion of these opportunities.

Wonder Kits
Dallas Afterschool designed Wonder Kits to fit the needs of flexible learning environments like after school programs. Powered by curiosity, Wonder Kits ignite a love of learning with only 10 minutes of preparation time. Wonder Kits contain all materials needed to run a hands-on, engaging STEM-based activity for up to 25 students and feature easy to follow instructions, a how-to video and tips to make every project a learning opportunity for both activity leaders and students. Activities are also meant to encourage teamwork and social-emotional growth.

To date, Wonder Kits have supported over 52,000 students with quality lesson plans and activities.