



EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE

**Brightside**  
ACADEMY

# Brightside Insights

MARCH 2016



# Thoughts on Early Education & Child Care



With 20 years of experience, Brightside Academy is a leading provider of child care and early education. We employ over 1,200 people and serve over 7,000 children per day in our academies located in multiple cities across Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York.

Over the years at more than 65 locations we have observed a variety of issues that affect the education and quality of life that children in our communities attain. This publication was created to share these observations and trends with you, so that together, we can focus on the areas that can make a change in the lives of children who need it most.





# Importance of After-school Programs

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, after school hours between 3pm and 6pm are peak time for children to commit crimes or become victims of crimes.<sup>1</sup> This is also the time that children are most likely to experiment with drugs and alcohol. The risks are so high, yet 11.3 million children are currently unsupervised after school.<sup>2</sup>

According to America After 3PM, 18% of urban children are currently involved in an after school program, while 26% of urban children rely on self-care until parents or caregivers are home from work. The study also found that 46% of urban children would participate if an after school program were available to them.<sup>3</sup>

Studies show that 78% of parents with children attending after school programs say their children make better life choices and make substantial gains in reading and math skills. Furthermore, 80% of parents agree that their children develop stronger social skills while attending an after school program.<sup>4</sup>

Studies show that there continues to be an unmet demand for after school programs. Brightside Academy is committed to solving the problem by providing after school programs at 59 out of our 63 academies. Additionally, 33 of our locations provide transportation from local schools to the academy.

Parents of children in our after school programs have rated our programs at 3.25/5. Approximately 28.9% of parents surveyed stated that their child developed stronger social skills as a result of Brightside Academy's after school programs and 28.2% felt like our programs had a positive impact on their child's behavior.

After school programs are critical for working parents. Many Brightside Academy families have inconsistent work hours and rely on our after school program to maintain their work schedule. Parents without after school care may experience stress, distraction and lower work productivity. Nearly 87% of working mothers say the hours after school are when they are most concerned about their children's safety.<sup>5</sup> Our goal is to provide a safe and enriching environment for children while also providing parents with reliable care during working hours.



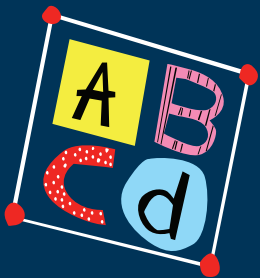
## A Closer Look

AT THE NUMBERS

**11.3** million children  
are unsupervised after  
school

**80%** of parents  
agree that their children  
develop stronger social  
skills attending an after  
school program

Nearly **87%** of  
working mothers are  
concerned about their  
children's safety when  
in the hours following  
school



**28.2%** of  
Brightside Academy  
families felt our  
afterschool programs  
had a positive impact on  
their child's behavior

Importance of  
After-school Programs

## Importance of After-school Programs (continued)

Not only do after school programs make a substantial impact on the well-being of children and parents, but they also save tax dollars. Every \$1 spent in an after school program saves \$9 because these programs have proven to reduce crime and welfare costs.<sup>6</sup> They also improve children's performance in school, thereby increasing their earning potential as an adult.

Brightside Academy's after school programs give children the opportunity to socialize with children from other schools. In some instances the school districts have multiple elementary schools that combine once the children enter middle school. Children in our after school program are already acquainted with their peers, making the transition to middle school easier.

The after school children also receive homework assistance and one-on-one time with a teacher. These children have the opportunity to complete their school work and continue learning after the school bell rings. Brightside Academy's after school program also includes projects to empower creative thinking and hands-on learning.

After school programs offer learning opportunities and activities for children to advance their educational and extracurricular experiences. These programs support working parents and give them peace of mind while at work. Brightside Academy is proud to provide enriching after school programs to prepare children for academic and personal success.

### SOURCES:

1. <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/offenders/qa03301.asp>
2. [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/imgs/AA3PM/AA3-CRIME-FP\\_crime\\_peaks.jpg](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/imgs/AA3PM/AA3-CRIME-FP_crime_peaks.jpg)
3. [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM\\_Cities\\_Towns\\_10122010.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM_Cities_Towns_10122010.pdf)
4. <http://afterschoolalliance.org/imgs/AA3PM/AA3-social-learning-full.png>
5. [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue\\_48\\_economy.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_48_economy.cfm)
6. [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/imgs/AA3PM/AA3-CRIME-FP\\_tax\\_dollars.jpg](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/imgs/AA3PM/AA3-CRIME-FP_tax_dollars.jpg)





# Bullying in Schools

**B**ullying is a problem that begins long before middle school. Many programs and educators focus anti-bullying initiatives with middle school children, but many bullying behaviors may start earlier. "Young children are especially vulnerable if they lack assertiveness, have difficulty setting limits to demands by peers, or if they tend to withdraw from peers." (Alsker & Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger, 2010)

Bullying has a negative impact on both the victim and the bully themselves. Victims were more likely to have internalizing behaviors and negative thoughts about themselves and to be rejected and isolated. Bullies were more likely to have externalizing behaviors, poor academic performance, and negative thoughts or beliefs about others, and to be negatively influenced by their peers. (Student Bullying: Overview of Research, Federal Initiatives, and Legal Issues)

Brightside Academy has a strict no bullying policy and wants to address these behaviors at the early ages to avoid increased aggression in later years. Brightside Academy surveyed its locations to find trends between negative behaviors, age groups, demographics and geographic factors.

Of the 60 academies surveyed, the staff at 36.7% at Brightside Academy locations has noticed bullying and 39% said a child has talked to them about being bullied. "Research on resiliency to bullying indicates that a relationship with a caring adult can increase at-risk students' behavior outcomes (Werner & Smith, 1982).

The survey found that while 82% of the reported bullying incidents occurred in our school age rooms, 18% occurred in our preschool rooms.

## Addressing the Issue

Each bullying resolution varies due to the situation and children involved. Brightside Academy has created the following policies to handle bullying issues.



## A Closer Look

### AT THE NUMBERS

Young children are **vulnerable** if they lack assertiveness or have difficulty setting limits to demands by peers

**82%** of reported bullying incidents occurred in school age rooms, **18%** occurred in preschool rooms

**52%** of the staff surveyed reported that they have had to notify a parent that their child was being bullied



## Bullying (continued)

- Teachers and staff model ways for young children to make friends and teach manners
- The staff uses age-appropriate consequences for aggressive or unfriendly behavior
- The staff encourages the children to use their words to tell friends "I don't like when you treat me that way" if another child is being mean to them and for the other child to say "I'm sorry"
- The staff monitors behavior and speaks to children one-on-one
- The staff contacts parents for each child to inform of the behavior at school and discuss reasons for behavior

## Parent Involvement

Recent bullying prevention programs show that parent involvement that addresses child bullying behaviors is seen as important in helping to prevent bullying behavior in school systems (Bullying Prevention and the Parent Involvement Model). Research found from Ttofi and Farrington's (2011) meta-analysis of bullying prevention literature found that parent meetings and trainings, information for parents, and parent-teacher conferences were associated with reductions in bullying at schools (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011).

"Kids whose parents monitor their behavior and have consistent rules are more likely to have healthy and close relationships with their peers, be more engaged in school, have higher self-esteem, and are less likely to bully others" (Stopbullying.gov CDC's Essentials for Parenting Toddlers and Preschoolers: Using Positive Parenting to Promote Safe, Stable, and Nurturing Relationships)

Brightside Academy discussed the anti-bullying initiative with our parents for at home support. Of the staff surveyed 52.9% reported that they have had to notify a parent if their child was being bullied or if their child was showing aggression or unfriendly behavior. Brightside Academy staff may instruct families on age-appropriate ways to model behavior and consequences. The staff may also educate families on effective communication to discuss their children's thoughts and feelings that may cause aggressive behavior, or how to speak up if the child is the victim of negative behavior.

Brightside Academy understands that bullying will have negative impacts on both the perpetrator and the victims if the behavior is not dealt with at an early age. The program's goal is to involve staff and parents to achieve improved behavior outcomes for preschool children to reduce the risk of long-term ramifications.



# Social & Emotional Development

Results from multiple studies estimate that approximately 10% of young children suffer from emotional and behavioral challenges that impair their ability to learn, with the incidence among economically disadvantaged young children being 2 or 3 times as high as their more affluent peers.<sup>1</sup> Appropriate social and emotional skills allow children to get along with others, to behave and follow directions. A lack of these skills can create serious repercussions for a child in their school years and beyond.

According to over 80% of kindergarten teachers in a national survey, the capacities to get along with other children, behave in class, and follow directions were characteristics considered essential or very important in children starting school.<sup>2</sup>

Our instructors attributed the challenges of teaching appropriate social and emotional skills to young children to factors such as: Lack of quality time spent with parents or parental absences (33.9%); Parents' lack of parenting skills (30.4%); Parental stress or depression due to relationships, money, etc. (23.2%) and community environment influences like violence, drugs, etc. (12.5%).

Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D., a leading expert on brain development and children in crisis, has identified six social and emotional core strengths that children need. They are:

1. **Attachment:** Building Relationships
2. **Self-regulation:** Thinking Before Acting
3. **Affiliation:** Joining in
4. **Awareness:** Thinking of Others
5. **Tolerance:** Accepting Differences
6. **Respect:** Respecting Yourself and Others



Taking the area of self-regulation (thinking before acting) putting a moment between an impulse and an action is an essential skill for success in school and in life. In a recent survey Brightside Academy teachers expressed that in our classrooms the greatest

## A Closer Look

AT THE NUMBERS

**10%** of young children suffer from emotional and behavioral challenges



In a survey **33.9%** of teachers attributed challenges of teaching appropriate social and emotional skills to lack of quality time spent with parents

**30.4%** of staff identified impulsive behaviors as some of the greatest obstacles to learning

Teachers report they schedule appointments with parents

**1-3 times** per month

Social and Emotional Skills Development

## Social & Emotional Development (continued)

obstacles to learning for young children struggling with self-regulation were 33.9% problems with transitions; 30.4% acting impulsively, cannot rein themselves in; 19.6% difficulty with attention and listening; and 16.1% their expressing hurt or anger physically. In urban school districts many kindergarteners exhibit these problematic behaviors.

When a child exhibits these behaviors in our classrooms, Brightside Academy teachers are trained to step in quickly and stop any hurtful action or language they hear and to introduce the class to peer mediation and conflict resolution techniques. They also praise students' thoughtful actions, remarks, reactions and problem-solving skills. Seventy-one percent of our teachers report they have to schedule appointments with parents 1-3 times per month to discuss their children's disruptive and behavioral issues in the classroom.

Brightside Academy's curriculum includes classroom and home activities that support appropriate social and emotional skills development. Our family curriculum handouts encourage parents to continue promoting self-regulation skills in the child at home through activities such as allowing the child to take part in decision-making processes, offering the child time for exploratory play, providing tasks/responsibilities they can complete independently, engaging the child in meaningful conversations and acting as positive role models of behavior and self-control in their households.

A child who can form and maintain healthy emotional relationships, self-regulate, join and contribute to a group, and can be aware, tolerant, and respectful of themselves and others will be more resourceful, more successful in social situations, and more resilient.<sup>3</sup> Brightside Academy's curriculum emphasizes the importance of developing healthy social and emotional skills in the young children that we serve. When educators and families teach children social and emotional strengths, we provide one more tool that positively impacts their success in school and throughout their life.

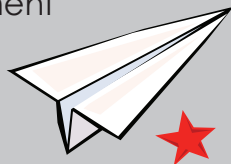
### SOURCES:

1. Jane Knitzer. Building Services and Systems to Support the Healthy Emotional Development of Young Children—An Action Guide for Policymakers. New York, New York: National Center for Children in Poverty, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.
2. National Survey of Kindergarten Teachers (2004) conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling and Research, Inc. and commissioned by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. (Findings released August 11, 2004).
3. <http://greatstartforkids.org/content/social-emotional-health-facts>
4. <http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/bruceperry/cool.htm>
5. Brightside Academy Early Learning Curriculum



# RESOURCES

Below is a list of websites families can turn to for additional guidance on the areas of Bullying, After-school Programs and Social and Emotional Skills Development



## BULLYING

- [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)
- [www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/kab/](http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/kab/)
- [www.stompoutbullying.org/](http://www.stompoutbullying.org/)
- [www.pacer.org/bullying/](http://www.pacer.org/bullying/)

### Pittsburgh, PA

- <http://ruscitto.org>
- [www.chp.edu/injury-prevention/teachers-and-parents/school-violence/parents](http://www.chp.edu/injury-prevention/teachers-and-parents/school-violence/parents)

### Philadelphia, PA

<http://cap4kids.org/philadelphia/parent-handouts/education-resources/bullying-resources/>

### New York

[www.bridgit.com/](http://www.bridgit.com/)

### Ohio

[https://saferschools.ohio.gov/content/anti\\_harassment\\_intimidation\\_and\\_bullying\\_resources](https://saferschools.ohio.gov/content/anti_harassment_intimidation_and_bullying_resources)

## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES

- [www.pacer.org/cmh/resources/featured-resources/](http://www.pacer.org/cmh/resources/featured-resources/)
- [www.cssp.org/policy/papers/Promote-Childrens-Social-Emotional-and-Behavioral-Health.pdf](http://www.cssp.org/policy/papers/Promote-Childrens-Social-Emotional-and-Behavioral-Health.pdf)
- <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/communities/families.htm>
- [www.kidsmentalhealthinfo.com/](http://www.kidsmentalhealthinfo.com/)

### Pittsburgh, PA

[www.chp.edu/our-services/behavioral-health](http://www.chp.edu/our-services/behavioral-health)

### Philadelphia, PA

[www.chop.edu/centers-programs/child-and-adolescent-psychiatry-and-behavioral-sciences/VthXxea2pQk](http://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/child-and-adolescent-psychiatry-and-behavioral-sciences/VthXxea2pQk)

### New York

[http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/7C025BB1-FFFB-494D-8FFF-F91BC2D6E817/0/ResourceReferenceSheet\\_V15.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/7C025BB1-FFFB-494D-8FFF-F91BC2D6E817/0/ResourceReferenceSheet_V15.pdf)

### Ohio

- [www.thechildrenshomecinti.org/get-familiar-with-the-childrens-home/services/early-childhood-programs/](http://www.thechildrenshomecinti.org/get-familiar-with-the-childrens-home/services/early-childhood-programs/)
- [www.cincinnatichildrens.org/patients/child/special-needs/medical/mental-health/](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/patients/child/special-needs/medical/mental-health/)

## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- [www.expandinglearning.org/expandingminds/article/importance-afterschool-programs-education-reform-worldwide-making-it](http://www.expandinglearning.org/expandingminds/article/importance-afterschool-programs-education-reform-worldwide-making-it)
- <http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/learning/afterschool-programs-benefits/>
- [www.noodle.com/articles/why-kids-benefit-from-afterschool-programs](http://www.noodle.com/articles/why-kids-benefit-from-afterschool-programs)

### Pittsburgh & Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)

- [www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state\\_abbr=PA](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=PA)
- [www.psaydn.org/](http://www.psaydn.org/)

### New York

[www.nysan.org/](http://www.nysan.org/)

### Ohio

[www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state\\_abbr=OH](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=OH)

# LOCATIONS

## PITTSBURGH, PA

**4 Smithfield Street**  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**5919 Penn Avenue**  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

**700 Lincoln Highway**  
North Versailles, PA 15137

**415 Lysle Boulevard**  
McKeesport, PA 15132

**100 S Second Street**  
Jeannette, PA 15644

**826-830 Hazelwood Street**  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

**925 Liberty Avenue**  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**415 Smithfield Street**  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**420 Chartiers Ave**  
McKees Rocks, PA 15136

## OHIO

**7710 Broadway Avenue**  
Cleveland, OH 44105

**10548 St. Clair Avenue**  
Cleveland, OH 44108

**3545 Ridge Road**  
Cleveland, OH 44102

**14001 Kinsman Road**  
Cleveland, OH 44120

**1977 Cleveland Avenue**  
Columbus, OH 43211

**3611 Livingston Avenue**  
Columbus, OH 43227

**3525 Cleveland Avenue**  
Columbus, OH 43224

**660 Harrisburg Pike**  
Columbus, OH 43223

**1585 Frederick Boulevard**  
Akron, OH 44320

**1100 S. Arlington Street**  
Akron, OH 44306

**1218 City Park Avenue**  
Toledo, OH 43604

**545 Woodville Road**  
Toledo, OH 43605

**2300 Lagrange Street**  
Toledo, OH 43608

## PHILADELPHIA, PA

**701 Market Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

**3528 I Street and Tioga**  
Philadelphia, PA 19134

**1819 E. Allegheny Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19134

**915 N. Broad Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19123

**341 Allegheny Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19134

**217-31 W. Lehigh Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19133

**1500 E. Erie Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19124

**138-140 W. Cheltenham Avenue,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
Philadelphia, PA 19144

**2700 N. 17th Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19132

**4011-4013 Market Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

**6000 Castor Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19149

**4920 N. Broad**  
Philadelphia, PA 19141

**3230 N. 3rd Street, Suite B**  
Philadelphia, PA 19140

**2501 Kensington Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19125

**5600 Woodland Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

**301 East Cheltenham Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19144

**801-43 N. 48th Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19139

**2800 N. American Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19133

**111 W. Erie Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19140

**2300 West Allegheny Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19132

**1627 Meadow Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19124

**4047-51 Lancaster**  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

## PHILADELPHIA, PA (CONTINUED)

**2501 McKean Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19145

**4829 Lancaster Avenue**  
Philadelphia, PA 19131

**5422 Media Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19131

**543 W. Courtland Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19140

**2010 Van Pelt Street**  
Philadelphia, PA 19121

## NEW YORK

**331 E. 150th Street**  
Bronx, NY 10451

**1093 Southern Boulevard**  
Bronx, NY 10459

**2901 White Plains Road**  
Bronx, NY 10467

**1465 Webster Avenue**  
Bronx, NY 10456

**1336 Louis Nine Boulevard**  
Bronx, NY 10459

**960 Intervale Avenue**  
Bronx, NY 10459

**770 St. Ann's Avenue**  
Bronx, NY 10455

**3942 White Plains Road**  
Bronx, NY 10466

**1778 Southern Boulevard**  
Bronx, NY 10460

**2 Elliot Place**  
Bronx, NY 10452

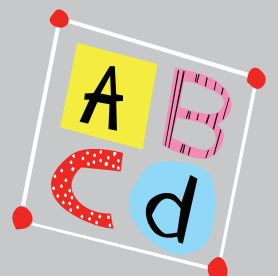
**683 Barbey Street**  
Brooklyn, NY 11207

**58 Belmont Avenue, Suite B**  
Brooklyn, NY 11212

**1491 Broadway Avenue**  
Brooklyn, NY 11221

**844 DeKalb Avenue**  
Brooklyn, NY 11221

**685 Rogers Avenue**  
Brooklyn, NY 11226







BrightsideAcademy.com | 877-868-2273





Child Care + Education =  
A Child's Bright Future