

Micah Raskin Discusses the Importance of After School Programs

Micah Raskin on the Importance of After School Programs

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Afterschool

programs have been proven to improve grades, lower dropout rates, and provide a range of benefits to students, families, and their communities alike. "I know how important afterschool programs are, especially in the Queens area where I'm from," says [Micah Raskin](#). "I was part of afterschool programs myself as a kid. Now that I'm older and more successful, I want to give back and make sure that other kids have all the opportunities available for them to succeed."



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Micah Raskin is a resident of Queens, a professional championship poker player, and a well known local philanthropist. He has donated generously to schools in the Nassau County, NY area and personally helped to start several afterschool programs in local schools.

Afterschool Programs Help With Academic Achievement Says Micah Raskin

Afterschool programs have been proven to improve academic performance, Micah Raskin informs us. He points us towards a case study of 21st Century Community Learning Center programs conducted nationally. 40 percent of students who attended the afterschool programs saw improvement in their math and reading grades. Those who attended regularly saw even more gains than those who attended sporadically, further supporting the claim that the afterschool program was the cause of their improvement.

"These academic improvements happen for multiple reasons," says Micah Raskin. "It's not just one thing, it's the whole experience. Kids need a safe, structured, supervised place to concentrate, socialize, play, learn, and grow. Afterschool programs - when executed correctly - can provide this for kids who would otherwise be home alone or in a negative environment."

Afterschool programs offer a relaxed place for children to do their homework and take extra time on their work. Even in a positive and healthy home environment, it can be difficult to concentrate and get work done - especially if you have a large household with multiple children, pets, and other distractions running wild. Having a space that is still associated with "school," but is also less structured than class time can help your child decompress and think at their own rate. And often there are tutors or teachers available to answer questions and help.

And when children start to increase their proficiency in subjects they were previously struggling in, they gain confidence. "And confidence is key to any kind of success!" says Micah Raskin. "When you're proud of yourself and excited about doing well, you're more likely to be excited about school in general and dread showing up less. And if you're excited, you tend to put in more effort. It's a really exciting positive feedback loop that gains momentum over time."

This newfound confidence can open up doors that kids - especially teens - may have thought were closed to them. "If you're suddenly understanding math and science, you can see how you might continue your education in college and become a computer programmer or a technician," enthuses Micah Raskin. "Having a purpose, being engaged - it drastically lowers the likelihood that a kid will drop out. That's one of the reasons these programs are so important."

Micah Raskin Discusses How Afterschool Programs Can Improve Social Outcomes

Aside from the academic benefits, afterschool programs can also offer major social benefits to the children who attend them. "Some of these kids have a hard time communicating and socializing with their peers because of their home lives," [explains Micah Raskin](#). "But offering a safe and supervised environment means a few extra hours in a safe place. And since the programs aren't as structured and binding as class time, they have time to actually socialize and learn how to talk to one another or bond over a group activity."

Proper socialization can lead to fewer emotional problems and better behavior. In a good afterschool program, there should be an emphasis on respect, open-mindedness, compassion, self-discipline, and other healthy character traits.

Another way that mood and emotional behavior are improved is actually through the physical activities that many afterschool programs offer. If you're playing a sport or running around playing "Red Rover", you're reducing your aggression by channeling it into a healthy pursuit. And exercise releases endorphins which boost your mood, calm your nervous system and improve your cognitive abilities. At the same time, engaging in physical activity and putting an emphasis on healthy eating can help reduce obesity, which improves confidence and reduces the opportunity for bullying.

Afterschool Programs Reduce Risky Behavior in Troubled Youth Says Micah Raskin

A study performed by the University of Chicago called "Investing in our Young People," found that across the nation, there was a direct correlation between afterschool program attendance and reduced drug use. The UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing conducted a similar study that concluded children and teens who attended afterschool programs were less likely to engage in criminal behavior in their teens and later on in life

"When you set kids up for success, they will almost unilaterally try to rise to the occasion," says Micah Raskin. "When all they have is the model of their negative home lives or the pressure of their peers, what alternative is open to them? None that they can see. But after school programs offer a window into a different way of living and give them a purpose and safe place to explore and relate to others."

In other words, kids who have violence and drug use modeled for them from a young age often tend to fall into those same patterns because it is "normal" to them. But when you offer music classes, and afterschool sports, and science and reading clubs, and theater, you're giving them a new dream. You're giving them a safe space to realize that there are other options and that they are worth more and are capable of so much more than they were made to believe.

"Confidence and self-worth lead to better decisions in all areas of life," says Micah Raskin. "And when the kids in our community win and succeed, we all win and succeed. You have to invest in the youth of the community so they'll want to stay and help you make it a better place. Generations of investment lead to wealth, well-being, and prosperity for the whole community. My dream is to help the next generation of Queens residents live happier, more fulfilling lives."

[Micah Raskin is a professional poker](#) player with over \$2 million in winnings from tournaments all over the country. He is a well known local philanthropist who donates to and volunteers with afterschool programs, activities for special needs children, and local soup kitchens. He's also an avid gardener, skier, tennis player, and amateur chef.

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