

# Out-of-School Time (OST) Initiative

## Updates & Announcements

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# Why Out-of-School Time (OST)?

## Afterschool Benefits from Childhood to Adulthood: Stronger Learners, Earners, Leaders

Young people who consistently participate in afterschool programs benefit in the short- and long-term, with positive impacts lasting into adulthood.



Vandell, D. L., and Simpkins, S. (2024) Organized afterschool activities as a developmental context for children and adolescents. *Advances in Child Development and Behavior*, 67:1-.  
[www.doig.org/10.1016/bs.acdb.2024.07.005](http://www.doig.org/10.1016/bs.acdb.2024.07.005)

# Strategic Plan Alignment

The work is aligned with the vision that Wake County's Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program serves as the prevention services arm of the County for youth. It builds on the 2023 OST Inventory to re-establish a network of collaborating youth-serving providers missing since the loss of Youth Thrive in 2020. In the County Strategic Plan, it aligns with:

- **Lifelong Learning Goal 3:** Develop baseline metrics for education-based services in Wake County Public Schools by 2025.
  - **Lifelong Learning Initiative 3.2:** Convene community partners providing youth services to improve coordination, ensure access across all partners, address service gaps and increase community awareness.

# Strategic Plan Alignment

In addition, there is potential alignment to explore with these additional areas:

- **Inclusive Prosperity Goal 1:** By 2029, 5% more residents will indicate low barriers to employment, such as access to broadband, childcare, and transportation.
  - **Inclusive Prosperity Initiative 1.5:** Assess and develop strategies to strengthen the community's capacity to increase childcare services such as second and third shift childcare, workforce development for childcare service providers, and service navigation for families seeking childcare assistance and resources.
- **Inclusive Prosperity Goal 2:** By 2029, four out of five residents asked will say they have employment opportunities that are available and right for their needs.
  - **Inclusive Prosperity Initiative 3:** Improve service navigation for entrepreneurs and small business owners by streamlining access to local resources and fostering connections to expand business opportunities

# Wake OST Steering Committee


- Provide leadership and guidance to help shape the Wake OST Network and its efforts to address the needs of the field
  - Representative Cross-Sector Engagement
    - County, Municipal & Public Institutions
    - Community-Based Organizations
    - Faith-Based Organizations
    - Community Stakeholders
  - Currently engaged or invested in OST programming
    - Direct or indirect service



# Wake OST Network

- The Wake OST Network strengthens, expands, and sustains a coordinated ecosystem of OST programs that support the whole child, whole family, and whole community. Grounded in principles of positive youth development, the Network fosters collaboration across sectors to ensure all children and youth in Wake County have access to high-quality, culturally responsive, and developmentally enriching learning opportunities beyond the school day.
- 160 OST professionals engaged in the effort and it's growing everyday!



A blurred photograph of a classroom. In the foreground, several students are seated at white tables, their backs to the camera. They are wearing various colored shirts. In the background, a teacher in a red shirt stands near a large screen displaying a blue screen. The walls are decorated with colorful posters. The text "WAKE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME NETWORK" is overlaid in the center.

WAKE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME NETWORK



# Website Development

- **Cooperative Extension, Wake County site**
- **Family/Community Member Webpage**
  - OST Mapping Database
  - Tips on How to Choose the Right Program for Your Family
  - Wake Network of Care Map
  - Additional Resources
- **OST Professionals Webpage**
  - Mapping Database + Promote Your Program on the Map!
  - Training Calendar + Submission of Training Opportunities
  - Resource Library
  - Wake Network of Care Map



# Mapping Database

- **The Mapping Database will serve as a resource for families to locate OST programs within their community that meet their needs. It will also serve as an internal tool to identify service gap areas within Wake.**
- Wake GIS will support the development of the Map
  - Launch Date: October 2025
- 178 OST Programs Listed
- Spring 2026 – Programs will be able to add their information to the map
  - Steering Committee will review and verify submissions

# Capacity Building

- **Annual OST Summer Summit - May 2026**
  - Hosted first annual OST Summer Summit in June 2025
    - 2025 Goal: 60 Attendees; Actuals: 68 OST Professionals registered; 50 in attendance
    - 2026 Goal: 100 Attendees
- **Virtual/In-Person Training Opportunities**
  - October 2025 – AfterSchool HQ – [https://go.ncsu.edu/wostn\\_octpd](https://go.ncsu.edu/wostn_octpd)
  - November 2025 – Wake County Drug Overdose Prevention Council – Date TBD
- **Training Calendar – [WOSTN Training Calendar](#)**

# On the Horizon...

- **Beyond the Bell Bulletin**
  - A monthly newsletter designed to provide providers with resources, opportunities, etc.  
[https://go.ncsu.edu/wostn\\_newsletter](https://go.ncsu.edu/wostn_newsletter)
- **Wake OST Program Tours**
  - Visit local programs to see the work in action!
- **Field Needs Assessments**
  - Youth Experience Survey – What are youth participating in OST programs perceptions of their experience?
  - Parent/Guardian Survey – What are the needs of the families in Wake County? How can OST support those needs?
  - OST Provider Survey – What are the needs of the field? How do we strengthen the OST workforce?
- **Community Event Calendar**
  - A dedicated calendar of events and happenings around Wake County

# Questions?