



Afterschool Advocate

A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance

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GEARING UP FOR *LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL 2010!*

Children, families, educators, community leaders, policy makers, celebrities and others across the country are making plans to gather in schools, community centers, parks, malls, state capitols and elsewhere on October 21 for the 11th annual *Lights On Afterschool*. The only nationwide rally for afterschool programs is organized by the Afterschool Alliance. It is expected to include some 7,500 events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide this year.

“Year after year, *Lights On Afterschool* gets bigger and brighter, as even more people recognize how important it is to keep the lights on for children after the school day ends,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Too many afterschool programs are being forced to cut back in in this recession, putting children and working parents at risk. That’s why it is more important than ever to spread the word about the need for stable, secure, adequate afterschool funding. This year, we’ll be sending a strong, clear message to lawmakers and supporters: Don’t deny or divert funds for afterschool programs.”

Greater Need for Afterschool

In advance of *Lights On Afterschool* this year, the Afterschool Alliance will release a new special report from *America After 3 PM: A Household Survey on Afterschool in America*, the most in-depth study ever to explore how America’s children spend their afternoons.

This special report, *America After 3PM: From Big Cities to Small Towns*, will examine the differences in afterschool participation,

satisfaction and demand across rural, suburban and urban communities. Both the *America After 3PM* full report and this new special report are sponsored by JCPenney Afterschool, a charitable organization committed to making life-enriching afterschool programs available to more students and families.

The Afterschool Alliance and JCPenney Afterschool will release the latest findings in mid-October at an event in Des Moines, Iowa. The report will also reveal city-level data on Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York that will be featured at *Lights On Afterschool* events in those cities.

Spotlight on South Dakota

For the first time ever, the four presidents on the Mount Rushmore National Memorial will light up in commemoration of *Lights on Afterschool*. The event will take place October 16, at the national monument.

The lighting of Mount Rushmore adds yet another national landmark to the list of esteemed national treasures that have recognized *Lights On Afterschool*. The Empire State Building in New York and the Lindbergh Beacon atop Los Angeles City Hall have both been specially lit in honor of *Lights On Afterschool*. This will be the fourth year in a row that the Empire State Building has been lit for the event.

The Afterschool Alliance organized the first *Lights On Afterschool* in 2000. Actress Rhea Perlman is a spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is Founding Chair, a position he has held since 2001.

Lights On continued on page nine...

OUTREACH

Back to School Advocacy

Back to school is a busy time, and one that provides the opportunity to help spread the afterschool message. Between sharpening pencils and dusting off desks, advocates can take two simple steps to support afterschool programs.

First, with Congress completing work on the Fiscal Year 2011 federal budget, the time is right to email lawmakers about the need for increased funding for afterschool. The Afterschool Alliance has created an email alert directed to Members of Congress about the need to [increase funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers](#). Advocates can use it to send messages to their Senators and Representative. To send the alert, click [here](#).

Another quick and easy way to build awareness about the unmet need for more afterschool programs is by placing a letter-to-the-editor in a local newspaper. Below is a sample back to school themed letter that can be tailored to fit your program and community. Be sure to check your newspaper's opinion page or its opinion section online for details on how to submit your letter.

[DATE]

To the Editor:

With the recession wreaking havoc on the economy, many afterschool programs that are essential to working families have been forced to trim back their schedules, reduce the number of children they serve and, in some cases, close altogether. This is not the kind of news working parents need as they prepare their children for the start of another school year.

According to a recent survey by the Afterschool Alliance, [#] children in [YOUR STATE – go to [America After 3PM](#) to find your state-specific information] are on their own in the afternoons, until parents get home from work. Without adult supervision and enriching, educational activities, these children miss out on opportunities to learn and grow and are at greater risk for risky and even dangerous behaviors.

Research shows that afterschool programs make a tremendous difference. [INSERT SENTENCE ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM, FOR INSTANCE – At X, our students get help with their homework, play sports and exercise and take part in fun, educational activities like robotics, dance and music.] Our students are safe and constructively engaged – something that can't be said about many of their peers who have no afterschool programs.

As our kids head back to school, we need to be sure there are safe and enriching afterschool programs available to them, and their parents, after the school bell rings.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME, TITLE, ORGANIZATION
INCLUDE PHONE NUMBER SO THE EDITOR CAN CONFIRM THAT YOU SENT THE LETTER]

Afterschool for All

Excitement is building for the 11th annual celebration of *Lights On Afterschool!* From Alaska to Wyoming, Nebraska to New York, communities nationwide are already revving up for this unique opportunity to showcase afterschool programs and the critical benefits they provide to youth and families.

What can *Afterschool for All* partners do? There are many ways that partners can get involved and help make *Lights On Afterschool* as big as possible. With as little as five minutes to make a phone call, or five weeks to help coordinate an event, here are some ideas:

- Post an [announcement](#) in your newsletter;
- [Host](#) an event;
- [Encourage contacts to attend](#) a local event.

The Afterschool Alliance has numerous suggestions for how to get involved with *Lights On Afterschool*. [Check them out](#), and thank you for helping to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool!*



FUNDING NEWS

The Afterschool Alliance's website has resources for afterschool providers, including tips for initiating relationships with funders and businesses, and for identifying funding opportunities. *To learn more, click [here](#).*

GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

Grants for Music Programs

The NAMM Foundation is accepting Letters of Inquiry for proposals for projects that create more active music makers of all ages and expand access to music making. The Foundation Program Grants support non-profit, public service music learning programs that motivate and inspire people of all ages to play music. The deadline for submitting Letters of Inquiry is September 30. *For more information, click [here](#).*

Grants Promoting Nutrition and Hunger Awareness

With support from Subaru of America, the National Gardening Foundation is accepting applications for the Subaru Healthy Sprouts Awards. Afterschool gardening programs that teach youth about nutrition and hunger are encouraged to apply. Thirty programs will be selected to receive \$500 gift certificates for gardening supplies and educational materials. The deadline is October 1. *For more information, click [here](#).*



SENATE PASSES CHILD NUTRITION BILL

The Senate unanimously passed the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act* (S. 3307) on August 5, setting the stage to significantly expand the role of afterschool programs in reducing hunger and improving child nutrition.

The bill includes a key expansion of the afterschool meals program, from the current 14 states and District of Columbia to all 50 states. If it makes it into law, this would allow afterschool programs to be reimbursed for serving meals, not just snacks, and would require schools to set standards for food served outside the cafeteria, including vending machines. The bill also helps address access to federal child nutrition programs in rural communities, particularly during the summer months when school is out.

“Often the food that children receive in afterschool programs is just as important in ensuring that they don’t go home hungry as the food they receive in school cafeterias,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “We applaud the Senate for passing this legislation, and for including afterschool programs. We are working hard to convince the House to follow the Senate’s lead on this legislation.”

Of grave concern to the anti-hunger community is the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as a funding offset to pay for a portion of the child nutrition bill. Advocates are pressing the House to find a funding offset that does not jeopardize SNAP benefits for families.

The House is expected to vote sometime this month because the current *Child Nutrition Act* expires on September 30. *To take action and to learn more about afterschool and child nutrition reauthorization, click [here](#).*



IN HER OWN WORDS...

Voices from the Afterschool Storybook...

“When my third grade teacher, Mr. Lague, first told me about the Explorers Club, I couldn’t wait for the school day to end so I could ask my mom to sign me up!... Because of the Explorers Club afterschool program, I know more about our environment and animals. Now, I am much more curious about everything – even my own backyard.”

-- Charlotte Gridley, Rutland, Massachusetts

To read Gridley’s story, and read more afterschool voices from across the country, [click here](#). Share your story [here](#).



IN THE NEWS...

California – Youth on the [Tule River Indian Reservation](#) received paid work experience this summer, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Thirty-four high school students participated in the Supplemental Summer Youth Program, the *Porterville Recorder* reports, completing 150 hours of work at one of 15 participating employers in the area. They also participated in workforce readiness training, completing applications, identifying their skills, creating resumes, dressing for success and learning interview skills. “Our goal is to lead these youth on the road to self-sufficiency,” U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Investment Act Director Teri Dobson said. “Hopefully next year we will be able to draw more employers who would like to get involved in mentoring some of our youth.”

Indiana – Martin University in Indianapolis is home to the state’s first [NASA SEMAA lab program](#) (Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Aerospace Academy). The program teaches mostly minority and underprivileged

youth, grades K-12, the fundamentals of science, technology, math and engineering (STEM) and involves them in hands-on projects to encourage the pursuit of STEM careers. This summer the program taught youth how to build rockets and test their models in the lab's wind tunnel, the *Indianapolis Star* reports. *To see pictures of the new facility and the dedication ceremony, click [here](#). To learn more about the NASA SEMAA lab program, click [here](#).*

Louisiana – “I know you went through a big earthquake, but it’s going to get better,” 11-year-old Leon Williams wrote. “I went through a huge hurricane, a huge flood, and I got better, and the same thing will happen to you.” Williams’ message is one of dozens that will adorn a canvas mural, created by the children of the [Young Audiences](#) summer program, to be sent to Haiti. The idea came from Young Audiences’ director, Vidho Lorville, a native of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, who sees a lot of similarities between Haiti and New Orleans. Lorville plans to take the mural to Haiti, where Haitian children will complete the checkerboard-pattern with their own faces and messages. The mural will then be displayed at the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans, the *Times-Picayune* reports. *For more information on Young Audiences, click [here](#).*

New Jersey – Budding marine biologists have an opportunity this summer to learn about marine life in Raritan Bay, as part of a club run through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers summer program. “The kids love it,” program director and marine biologist Dan Harning said. “We look for whatever they can find, even new species.” The students waded into the water five days a week to search for and learn about marine species, and the creatures they find are added to the 125-gallon fish tank in Harning’s classroom, the *Courier News* reports.

North Carolina – Four weeks and two days after he began running, the “Barefoot Runner” Matt Jenkins completed his 760-mile run across North Carolina. The 29-year-old afterschool instructor decided to run across the state with no shoes to raise awareness about the impact of budget cuts on programs for youth. He also asked supporters to donate money for every mile he ran, raising \$5,600 for the nonprofit Western Youth Network in Boone, which lost one-third of its funding due to state budget cuts over the last two years. Jenkins averaged 30 miles a day, and had to take a week off to recover from a snake bite, the *Citizen-Times* reports. *Learn more and get details on Jenkins’ journey [on Twitter @BarefootNCRun](#).*

Oklahoma – A new cookbook that is part of First Lady Michelle Obama’s fight against childhood obesity includes two recipes from students in the [Global Gardens](#) afterschool program at Rosa Parks Elementary School in Union. *A White House Garden Cookbook: Healthy Ideas from the First Family to Your Family* features recipes collected from children across the country, and recipes that use vegetables grown in the First Lady’s White House garden. The Global Gardens afterschool program provides plots of land to participating students, and in each garden the students grow the vegetables or herbs of an assigned theme (world geography or beans and gourds for art projects, for example). The program is so successful that middle school students often come back to continue growing and harvesting, the *Tulsa World* reports. *For more information on Global Gardens, click [here](#).*

Vermont – Some of the middle school students in the Shader Croft summer program in Williston went on a fishing trip; others interviewed a World War II veteran or visited Fletcher Allen Health Care. But all of the field trips had one thing in common: They have been designed by students in the program. The curriculum for the summer

program is organized by groups of students who researched the topics they choose and planned the trips. In the process of planning the coursework, students learned reading, writing and communication skills. “This is what I think we’re going to be doing more of,” program director Stephen Hyde told the *Burlington Free Press* – “providing high quality, engaging academic programs for kids, particularly for middle-school kids.”

Wisconsin – Students at the Madison Middle School summer woodworking class gave back to the community for their end-of-summer project by building two picnic tables for the Appleton Fire Department. The pine tables, adorned with firefighter images and emblems, are being placed at two fire departments in town. “When we were asked if we’d be interested, the chief was, of course, thrilled with the opportunity to have something done by the hands of the kids,” Appleton Fire Department Public Educator Lori Casey told the *Post-Crescent*. “We’re excited to see what the tables look like.”



SPEAKING OUT FOR AFTERSCHOOL

What Kids Can Do, a national non-profit that uses the Internet, print and broadcast media to tell the stories of adolescent learning, has created a video modeled after the testimony youth provided at the 2010 [Afterschool For All Challenge rally for Afterschool](#).

[Afterschool Matters: Youth Speak Out for Afterschool Programs](#) features testimonials of youth who have benefited from afterschool programs, and their pleas for lawmakers to continue funding these programs. It also includes video footage from the rally.

To view the video, click [here](#). For more information on the Afterschool for All Challenge, click [here](#).



ENCOURAGING HIGHER EDUCATION

[KnowHow2GO](#), a Lumina-funded public-awareness effort involving the Ad Council, the American Council on Education and other allies, is designed to encourage low-income students in grades eight to ten and their families to take the necessary steps toward college. The campaign’s public service advertisements urge young people to find someone who can help them get to college and direct students and their mentors to a Web site and other resources.

KnowHow2GO also features a network of educational institutions, youth organizations, community groups that offer support to students. This “ground campaign” complements the media campaign. Through Lumina’s support of the KnowHow2GO ground campaign, direct-service grants are helping underserved, low-income students learn how to get to college. Visit <http://www.KnowHow2Go.org> for more information.



RESOURCES

Afterschool Science Education

The [Frontiers in Urban Science Education Resource Guide](#) is a free resource of the [Collaborative for Building After-School Systems](#), to promote informal science education after school, as well as in school and during summers. Available free online, the guide outlines key elements of successful science education programs, and profiles promising programs already in place around the country. It also offers examples of science education curricula vetted by [The After-School Corporation \(TASC\)](#), and evaluation and sustainability strategies. To

download the *Frontiers in Urban Science Education Resource Guide*, click [here](#).

Assessing Informal Science

The Noyce Foundation, PEAR (Program in Education, Afterschool and Resiliency) has created a searchable website of assessment tools for informal science learning. Based on the findings of its 2008 report “[Toward a Systematic Evidence-Base for Science in Out-of-School Time: The Role of Assessment](#),” the online database includes reviews of each assessment by afterschool professionals and will be continuously updated in collaboration with the Youth Development Researchers at 4-H. For more information, click [here](#).

Informal Science Community

[InformalScience.org](#), a project of the National Science Foundation, is a growing online community for the informal science education and learning fields. Users create free profiles to join the community, and gain access to a searchable database of research, reports, projects, people, discussions, events and resources. The site also includes an [evaluation section](#) that serves as a forum on the impacts of projects and evaluation findings within the community. For more information, click [here](#).

Going Global Afterschool

The Asia Society has created [The Global Learning in Afterschool Self-Assessment Tool](#), designed to help foster or improve global learning and competence in youth. The resource assesses programs in eight categories, covering program design, environment, activities and policies. It can be used by programs in all stages of global learning implementation. For more information, click [here](#). To learn more about global learning afterschool, click [here](#).



GRANT JOINS CDC YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION COUNCIL

Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance, was recently named a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) STRYVE Action Council partner. STRYVE (Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere) is a national initiative led by the CDC to prevent youth violence before it starts.

The initiative is designed to improve the lives of youth by harnessing approaches that are based upon the best available evidence, emphasize a comprehensive youth violence prevention strategy, and support collective action from diverse disciplines and organizations. This public health approach also recognizes that preventing youth violence requires complementary and reinforcing national, state and community-level activities. Grant will work to ensure that afterschool becomes a focus of youth violence prevention efforts. For more information on the initiative, click [here](#).



KEEP UP WITH AFTERSCHOOL NEWS!

Hungry for the latest news on afterschool? Be sure to check out [Afterschool Snack](#), the Afterschool Alliance’s up-to-the-minute blog on afterschool news, trends and information from across the country. Recent posts include:

- [Back to School, Back to Snacks?](#)
- [Investing in Innovation Winners and Afterschool](#)
- [Information Abounds on Resources on Afterschool Website](#)
- [Afterschool for All is a Winning Issue for Governors](#)

And be sure to tune in every Wednesday for a national news round-up, and throughout the week for your daily dose of afterschool. Check out Afterschool Snack [here](#).



Lights On continued from page one...

Youth Poster Contest Winner

Youth artistic talent will be on display again this year through the official *Lights On Afterschool* poster. This year's version was designed by Lavionna, a student who attends the Harambee Afterschool Art Program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Her [artwork](#) was selected from hundreds of submissions from afterschool youth across the county. It will appear on more than 50,000 posters that will be visible in every community that hosts a *Lights On Afterschool* event. View Lavionna's winning artwork, and a [gallery of other submissions](#).

Join *Lights On Afterschool*

"With Congress considering proposals to allowed extended day and other programs to access 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding for the first time, it's more important than ever that we sent a strong message this fall," Grant added. "*Lights On Afterschool* will be especially important this year."

[Registration](#) is open for programs that plan to participate in *Lights On Afterschool*. Participants who register their events with the Afterschool Alliance will become part of a national registry of *Lights On Afterschool* events. Registration is free and open to all programs. To register an event, click [here](#).

For more information on how to organize a *Lights On Afterschool* event, including a [step-by-step tool kit](#), click [here](#).



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

✍ September 22 – 24, 2010

The Coalition for Science After School will hold its second National Conference on Science & Technology in Out-of-School Time in Los Angeles. Sessions will address research-based best practices, program and curriculum development, evaluation and systemic approaches to aligning science education in- and out-of-school time, with a focus on equity and access for underrepresented populations. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ October 21, 2010

The Afterschool Alliance will sponsor the 11th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, raising awareness about the benefits that afterschool programs offer to families and communities across the country. *Lights On Afterschool* is the only national rally for afterschool programs, and in recent years it has included some 7,500 events throughout the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide. Last year, a million people participated. *For more information, to plan an event or share your plans, and to sign up for free materials, click [here](#).*

✍ November 2 – 4, 2010

The California Afterschool Network will host its second annual Step Up High School Summit in San Diego. Afterschool professionals, staff members and high school administrators will gather to discuss ideas and promising practices for high school afterschool programs. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ November 4 – 6, 2010

The National Middle School Association will host its 37th annual conference in Baltimore, Maryland. This conference will give participants the information, tools and encouragement needed to provide a high-quality education for every young adolescent. *For further information, click [here](#).*

✍ November 9 – 10, 2010

The Summer Changes Everything Conference, hosted by the National Summer Learning Association, will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana. This is the only national conference focused only on summer. At it, summer program practitioners and advocates will gather to discuss how to build, strengthen and expand summer learning programs. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ November 18 – 20, 2010

The Big Tent Conference, hosted by the Search Institute, will be held in Houston, Texas. This Conference brings together youth and adult leaders from many organizations, networks and perspectives to focus on what they hold in common: Ensuring that all children and youth have the opportunity to grow up successfully. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ November 18 – 21, 2010

The National Association of Black School Educators (NASBE) will host its 38th annual conference in Fort Worth, Texas. NASBE is the nation's premier association of African American educators. Nearly 4,000 attendees from across the country are expected to join this event, which will include workshops, more than 250 exhibits, and networking opportunities with members and friends of NASBE. *For further information, click [here](#).*

✍ February 23 – 26, 2011

The 14th annual Beyond School Hours conference, hosted by Foundations, Inc., will be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Afterschool advocates will gather for professional development. Participants will also address before- and afterschool, extended day, community-based and summer opportunities, as well as workforce development, higher education, and field-building research. *For information, click [here](#).*

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, JCPenney Afterschool Fund, Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation.

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