

# Afterschool Advocate

*A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance*

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## **LAWMAKERS FORM CONGRESSIONAL AFTERSCHOOL CAUCUSES**

In a move designed to raise public awareness about the need for more afterschool programs and increase resources for quality afterschool care, Members of Congress have established the first-ever Afterschool Caucuses – one in the Senate, and one in the House of Representatives. U.S. Senators Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT) and John Ensign (R-NV) and Representatives Nita M. Lowey (D-NY) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) will serve as co-chairs of the newly-formed, bipartisan Caucuses.

“Afterschool programs are cost-efficient because they keep children out of trouble, and give them the opportunities they need to learn,” Senator Ensign said. “These programs are a good investment in the future of our children, families and communities. I am proud to co-chair the new Senate Afterschool Caucus.”

“Kids, parents and law enforcement professionals all agree: quality afterschool programs work to keep kids safe, help working families, and improve academic achievements,” said Senator Dodd. “We should do more to support these initiatives that make a difference in the lives of our children, so I am pleased to be a part of this new, bipartisan Afterschool Caucus in support of quality afterschool initiatives.”

Dodd and Ensign have circulated a letter to their Senate colleagues encouraging them to join.

The founding members of the Senate’s Afterschool Caucus are Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

Lowey, Ros-Lehtinen and House Afterschool Caucus founding members Dale Kildee (D-MI) and Randy Cunningham (R-CA) circulated a similar letter in the House of Representatives. “When the school day ends, as many as 15 million children have no place to go,” Representative Lowey emphasized. “Afterschool programs keep our children safe and involved in positive, enriching activities, and are a vital component in the learning process. Yet, by not fully funding the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Afterschool program, we are failing to provide millions of working parents and their children with an appropriate safe haven. The new Afterschool Caucus will be a powerful force to make ‘afterschool for all’ a reality.”

“At times like this, with natural disasters and wars, we need to pay special attention to our children,” Representative Ros-Lehtinen added. “Right now, the demand for affordable, quality afterschool experiences far exceeds the availability of these programs. The new Afterschool Caucus will work to increase funding for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program so more working families will get the help they need and their children will have the option of high-quality, safe, afterschool learning activities.”

“We welcome the new Caucuses, which will be a tremendous asset as we work toward the day when afterschool programs are available to every child and family that needs them,” said Afterschool Alliance Interim Executive Director Jen Rinehart. “We commend the Caucuses’ co-chairs and members for their leadership on this critical issue.”

## LAWMAKER OUTREACH

The Afterschool Alliance is asking supporters around the country to call their Representative and Senators to ask them to join the new Afterschool Caucus in their chamber. Tell them:

- Afterschool programs play a critical role in offering students who need extra help the support they need to be successful in school.
- The hours between 3 and 6 PM are when kids tend to experiment with risky behavior. These are also the hours when working parents worry most about not being at home.
- Afterschool programs provide the safe, productive environments that children need, and give parents peace of mind. In a recent household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance and funded by JCPenney Afterschool, the parents of more than 15 million youth said children would participate in an afterschool program if one were available.
- Please join the Afterschool Caucus!

To send information or get contact information for your Members of Congress, please visit <http://capwiz.com/afterschool/home/> where you will find letters asking your Senators and Representative to join their Afterschool Caucus and to support afterschool programs.



### PROJECT 2010 CONTINUES TO GAIN SUPPORT

The Afterschool Alliance's *Afterschool for All: Project 2010*, a sign-on campaign designed to demonstrate the diverse support for afterschool, is growing by leaps and bounds. Nearly 1,000 individuals and organizations have signed on to the goal of afterschool for all by the year 2010. Project partners include 120 mayors, 115 police chiefs and 190 national organizations.

The growth of *Project 2010* is due in no small part to its many motivated partners, who are using the campaign to build enthusiasm and broaden support for afterschool. In New York, more than 1,000 children, parents, police officers and educators visited Albany on February 1 to call for more investment in state afterschool programs and to ask state legislators to sign on to *Project 2010*. As of February 1, 13 state legislators had responded to that call and signed on.

In January, the U. S. Conference of Mayors, another Partner, wrote to President Bush urging him to make afterschool programs a priority in the forthcoming federal budget. In the letter, Executive Director Tom Cochran wrote that funding for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers must be increased if the growing need for afterschool programs is to be met.

The Alliance welcomes new partners to *Project 2010* including The United Negro College Fund, The United Way of America, New York University Steinhardt School of Education, IBM and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

*To become a Project 2010 Partner, contact Jonathan Rhoads at [jrhoads@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:jrhoads@afterschoolalliance.org). To view a complete partner list and other partner news, click on Afterschool for All: Project 2010 at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

## TSUNAMI RELIEF UPDATE

The last issue of the *Afterschool Advocate* profiled several fundraising activities adopted by afterschool programs around the country in response to the tsunami disaster. A number of readers wrote to share ways that their students have contributed to the relief effort. Some of these activities include:

- **Omaha Afterschool Program – Omaha, Arkansas:** Children at this 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers-funded program have placed hand-decorated boxes and jars around the community to collect change for tsunami victims.
- **Muscatel Middle School – Rosemead, California:** Kreg Asplund, director of the Muscatel Middle School afterschool program, was visiting extended family in Thailand when the tsunami struck. After Mr. Asplund communicated with his school via email, his principal quickly established a tsunami fund. Proceeds will be donated to an orphanage as well as a middle school that was destroyed in Mr. Asplund's home area.
- **Holliday Montessori – Kansas City, Missouri:** Third-graders held various fundraisers for the children of the tsunami disaster, including a bake sale, film screening, and "board game day."
- **P.S. 346/Spring Creek After-School Program – Brooklyn, New York:** Students at Public School 346 held an "After-School Relief Fair" featuring a craft booth selling puppets made by students, a bake-sale booth, and a "Guess the Student's Height & Weight" booth, among other attractions.
- **Police Activities League (PAL) Youth Center – Portland, Oregon:** Students conducted a change drive during the month of January to support tsunami relief

efforts. Proceeds will be donated to Northwest Medical Teams, a local humanitarian aid organization.

- **YMCA/Horizons Neighborhood Learning Center – Appleton, Wisconsin:** Students sold paper hearts, with proceeds matched by a local insurance company.
- **Hempfield Area Recreation Commission – Landisville, Pennsylvania:** As part of the "Hearts from HARC" project, afterschool students are selling handmade, decorative heart pins with materials donated by a local business. Proceeds will be donated to the local Mennonite Central Committee tsunami relief fund.

Afterschool programs can also participate in Quarters From Kids, an effort through which youth collect quarters for relief efforts. The nationwide campaign was launched by a coalition of organizations including America's Promise, Share Our Strength, Citizen Schools, City Year, YouthBuild USA, Youth Volunteer Corps of America and the Afterschool Alliance. Quarters From Kids will offer curricula for use in programs, and an opportunity to write letters to survivors. *For more information, visit [www.quartersfromkids.org](http://www.quartersfromkids.org).*



## IN THE NEWS...

**National** – The American Music Conference, a nonprofit organization that promotes the benefits of music education, and *Teen People* magazine, are calling on parents and kids across the country to sign a petition urging lawmakers to support music education in schools. Signatures will be delivered to Members of Congress in Washington during "Music in Our Schools Month" in March.

The petition is available until February 25 at [www.themusicedge.com](http://www.themusicedge.com).

**Florida** – Citing the absence of a safe place for junior and high school students to gather in its community after school, the Grace United Methodist Church in Cape Coral will open a \$2 million, 17,000 square-foot youth center this month, reports the *Fort Meyers News-Press*. The center will offer music, drama and arts, as well as a café and new computers with wireless Internet access.

**Florida** – The Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach has received a \$1.7 million grant for its educational programs from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, reports the *Palm Beach Post*. Programs to benefit from the new funding include P.A.C.E., the museum’s afterschool initiative, which was recognized as a model by the U.S. Department of Justice for bringing arts activities to at-risk students.

**Maine** – A new afterschool carpentry program is teaching woodworking skills to Biddeford teenagers, according to the *Portland Press Herald*. The “Just Build It” program was launched by Harvest Place, a foster residence for teenage girls, with help from local building supply companies who donated tools and materials. The Biddeford Police Department has commended the initiative, noting the need for such programs in the community. Participants will receive a small stipend and may be able to find summer jobs through the program.

**New York** – The Wallace Foundation, a national supporter of expanded learning and enrichment opportunities, has pledged \$12 million to strengthen out-of-school time programs for children in New York City. The five-year grant was awarded to the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City to coordinate out-of-school time services, set quality standards, support pilot programs, and publicize available services. The grant

 **WE WANT TO HEAR**   
**FROM YOU**

Is there an interesting program in your area? Has a corporation or business in your community become involved in funding or establishing an afterschool program? Please share with us, and other readers, your success stories, comments and suggestions. Contact *Afterschool Advocate* editor Christie Constantine with story ideas via email: [advocate@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:advocate@afterschoolalliance.org); phone: 202/371-1999; or fax: 202/371-9142.

follows up on an earlier data-gathering project supported by the Foundation to identify gaps in out-of-school time opportunities, and what children and parents want from programs.

**New York** – An innovative program started by a local science teacher is bringing afterschool opportunities directly to children at Brooklyn laundromats, reports *Education Week*. The “Wash and Learn” program is a partnership between the School of Education at Brooklyn College and Laundry Capital, a laundromat company that has donated \$10,000 to the program for books and other supplies. Instead of playing video games or watching television while waiting for their parents to finish the laundry, children can now receive reading tutoring from Brooklyn College volunteers.

**Oklahoma** – Novo Nordisk Inc., a healthcare company that specializes in diabetes care, has donated \$15,000 to Native Youth Preventing Diabetes, an Oklahoma-based organization that promotes diabetes prevention among youth in eight tribes including the Absentee Shawnee, Citizen Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Iowa, Sac and Fox, Cheyenne-Arapaho, Chickasaw, and Pawnee. The funds will be used for afterschool programs to encourage healthy lifestyles and disease prevention, and

to expand the program's summer diabetes prevention camp.

**Pennsylvania** – The Philadelphia Youth Chess Challenge, supported by the nonprofit After School Activities Partnerships, is working to expand chess clubs in the Philadelphia School District, according to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. The launch of 50 new clubs was announced last month and, over the next three years, the initiative hopes to open a club in every school. The Challenge was started with a grant from the Eagles Youth Partnership, the Philadelphia Eagles charity. There are currently 100 chess clubs in 81 schools and in 19 afterschool program sites.



## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“A severe reduction in community-development block grants will hobble successful programs that provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families, feed seniors on fixed incomes or boost students’ academic achievement in afterschool programs. ... Afterschool programs keep kids off the street. They engage in sports and learning, not risky behavior or criminal activity.”

- Editorial, *Miami Herald*, January 21, 2005 (discussing cuts proposed by the Bush Administration in funding for economic development and anti-poverty programs)



## RESOURCES

### The Evaluation Exchange

The Winter 2004/2005 issue of *The Evaluation Exchange*, published by the Harvard Family Research Project, is now available online. It evaluates programs that

promote families’ involvement in children’s learning and development. *View the report at [www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue28/](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue28/).*

### New on the Shelf: Teens in the Library - Findings from the Evaluation of Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development

The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago has released a report, funded by the Wallace Foundation, that explores the role that public libraries can play in providing high-quality educational enrichment programs and a “safe” place during out-of-school hours for low-income children and youth. *The study is available at [http://209.172.156.10/home\\_new.asp](http://209.172.156.10/home_new.asp) (registration is required).*

### New USA Freedom Corps Web Site

The U.S. Department of Education, along with the USA Freedom Corps and the Corporation for National and Community Service, recently launched a web site to help direct children to volunteer opportunities in their communities. The site features information for kids, parents and teachers, including ideas for volunteer service, profiles of notable persons to encourage youths to volunteer, and additional web resources. *The site is available at [www.usafreedomcorpskids.gov](http://www.usafreedomcorpskids.gov).*




## MARK YOUR CALENDAR


### February 16, 2005

The California School-Age Consortium will hold the *California Afterschool Challenge*, a rally at the state Capitol in Sacramento to strengthen afterschool programs. Participants will meet with legislators from their districts to discuss why afterschool programs are critical for kids, families, and communities. *Please contact Christine Shirley at 415-957-*

9775 or [cshirley@calsac.org](mailto:cshirley@calsac.org) for more information.

 **February 16 – 19, 2005**


FOUNDATIONS, Inc. will host its 2005 *Beyond School Hours VIII*<sup>®</sup> national conference in Atlanta, Georgia. *The Power of Partnership* conference will include successful, content-rich, afterschool program models, as well as network opportunities with community, school, university and government leaders. There will be discussions on current policies and practices that impact programming and school systems and on methods to maximize resources and funding strategies for schools and afterschool programs. The conference is hosted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program and is sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Annenberg Foundation. *For more information or to register online, visit: [wwwFOUNDATIONSINC.org](http://wwwFOUNDATIONSINC.org).*

 **February 24 – 26, 2005**

The National AfterSchool Association (formerly NSACA) will host its 2005 conference in San Antonio, Texas. The conference will bring together 2,500 afterschool professionals – the largest conference of the profession – for practical, thought-provoking programs, sessions, and events. *For more information, visit [www.naaconference.org](http://www.naaconference.org) or call 800-606-0061.*

 **March 2, 2005**


The National Education Association will hold its eighth annual Read Across America event, which focuses the country's attention on the importance of motivating children to read, and helping them master basic skills. The program is held every year on March 2 to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Seuss. *For more information on planning an event, as well as downloadable materials, visit [www.nea.org/readacross/](http://www.nea.org/readacross/).*

 **March 9 – 11, 2005**

The Coalition for Community Schools will hold its fourth annual conference in Chicago, Illinois. The national forum will bring together leaders from across the U.S. who are implementing local community-school initiatives to share their practical experiences. *For more information or to register, please visit [www.communityschools.org](http://www.communityschools.org).*

 **March 10, 2005**


The Kansas Community Education Association (KSCEA) will hold its fourth annual conference at the Wichita Airport Hilton. The theme for the conference is, Creating a Future With No Boundaries. The price is \$75 for members and \$110 for non-members, which includes annual membership dues. *For more information, contact Lavonta Williams at [lwilliams@usd259.net](mailto:lwilliams@usd259.net) or 316-973-5107.*

 **April 15 – 17, 2005**


Youth Service America will sponsor its 17<sup>th</sup> annual National Youth Service Day, a public awareness and education campaign that highlights the contributions young people make to their communities throughout the year, and mobilizes millions of young people to address the needs of their communities. *To learn more, visit [www.ysa.org/nysd/lead\\_agencies/la\\_faq\\_parent.cfm](http://www.ysa.org/nysd/lead_agencies/la_faq_parent.cfm).*

 **April 20 – 22, 2005**

The Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University will hold its 2005 National Conference at the Radisson Plaza Lord in Baltimore, Maryland. The conference will feature four plenary sessions, concurrent workshops, and opportunities for networking among leaders in the field of summer programming and out-of-school learning. *Online registration is available at [www.summerlearning.org/about/conference.html](http://www.summerlearning.org/about/conference.html).*

 **May 10 – 11, 2005**

The After-School Institute will sponsor the Eastern Regional Conference on After-School (intended for advocates and providers in Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, DC, and West Virginia). Co-sponsors include Associated Black Charities, DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, Maryland State Department of Education, and the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning, among others. The conference will be held at the Sheraton North in Towson, Maryland. *Online registration is available at [www.afterschoolinstitute.org](http://www.afterschoolinstitute.org).*

 **May 17 – 18, 2005**

The Afterschool Alliance will convene its fourth annual Afterschool for All Challenge in Washington, DC. Advocates, parents, youth, educators and program leaders and staff are encouraged to participate in this event, which will include a “Breakfast of Champions” awards ceremony on the morning of May 18. Following the breakfast, providers and advocates will fan out across Capitol Hill for a series of meetings with their elected representatives. *For more information and the latest details, visit [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. 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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