



# Afterschool Alliance

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## **National Rally for Afterschool to Highlight Ways Programs Teach Science & Math, Improve Children's Health, Expose Youth to Arts, Help Them Become More Engaged Citizens**

Every day in afterschool programs, children improve their science and math skills, learn to paint and sculpt, get tips on improving their health, and learn to more fully participate in our democracy. Across the country this month, programs will hold open houses, street fairs and other special events to showcase these and other activities as part of *Lights On Afterschool*, the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs.

Among the events scheduled this month are:

- STEMopalooza, a science, technology, engineering and math expo hosted by the University of Colorado, Denver on October 23 – 25. Students in the Colorado MESA afterschool program will participate in hands-on activities that teach them more about these “hard sciences.”
- “A Night of Sitar Stars” at the Sitar Arts Center in Washington, DC on October 16. Students in the Center’s afterschool program will perform and guests will have the chance to tour the facility.
- A community health fair hosted by the Parma Learning Center in Parma, Ohio on October 16. Afterschool students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will have booths that provide information on health and nutrition. The health fair also will include information on safety, healthy eating, oral health, immunizations and other health topics.
- An “Afterschool (Not) Idle” singing contest for kindergarten through 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, hosted by Peavey Electronics in Meridian, Mississippi on October 16. Finalists will perform and judges will award prizes to the winners, including the grand prize of a demo recording session.
- “Government Family Night” hosted by the Local Investment Commission/Caring Communities on October 16 in Independence, Missouri. Speakers will discuss democracy, voting, taxes, the Constitution, laws, the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship and how afterschool programs promote engagement.

“Quality afterschool programs are so important to young people’s growth and development,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “When students might otherwise be unsupervised and at risk, these programs give them fun, engaging, educational activities that help them develop new interests and explore their talents. *Lights On Afterschool* is when we showcase all the amazing things that happen every day in afterschool programs, and the many ways they help our children succeed, today and in the future.”

This month, more than one million people are expected to participate in more than 7,500 *Lights On Afterschool* events across the nation and at United States military bases worldwide. A list of events is online at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaFindEvent.cfm>.

For the second year in a row, the Empire State Building in New York City will be lit up for *Lights On Afterschool*. Actress Rhea Perlman is a spokesperson, and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National Chair – a position he has held since 2001. *Lights On Afterschool* 2008 also will mark the end of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program, the largest federal funding stream for afterschool programs.

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*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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

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