



NEWS RELEASE
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Actors Rhea Perlman, Kevin Sorbo Headline *Lights On Afterschool!*

As afterschool programs nationwide gear up for the nation's largest rally for afterschool, award-winning actress Rhea Perlman is preparing to reprise her role as national spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool*, and actor Kevin Sorbo is joining *Lights On* events in Los Angeles and Washington, DC. Perlman is best known for her role as Carla on the long-running television show "Cheers;" she also volunteers with LA's BEST, an afterschool program in Los Angeles. Sorbo is a spokesperson for the Afterschool Alliance and played the title role in the hit television series, "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys." The Afterschool Alliance organizes *Lights On Afterschool*, and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund is National Presenting Sponsor.

Sorbo participated in the national kick-off event, featuring the *Lights On Afterschool* Traveling Light Bulb, on Sunday, October 2 in Los Angeles. Some 4,000 children, parents and community members joined him at the event, which was sponsored by the Beyond the Bell Branch of the Los Angeles Unified School District. He will also moderate a congressional event on Thursday, October 20 – *Lights On Afterschool Day*. Perlman will participate in a national media tour, spreading the word about *Lights On Afterschool* and the importance of afterschool programs.

"We are delighted that Rhea and Kevin are joining us this year to help get out the word that afterschool programs are vitally important to children, families and communities," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire children to learn. We all have a role to play in keeping the lights on afterschool."

Research shows that 14.3 million kindergarten through 12th graders care for themselves after the school day ends. The parents of more than 15 million children nationwide say their children would participate in an afterschool program if one were available.

Lights On Afterschool began in October 2000 with 1,200 events across the country. Last year, more than half a million people rallied at 7,000 events to show their support for afterschool programs. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National Chair of *Lights On Afterschool*, a position he has held since 2001.

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 have access to afterschool programs by 2010. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

The JCPenney Afterschool Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports programs designed to keep kids safely and constructively engaged during out-of-school time. The Fund's contributions allow for the creation and continuance of afterschool programs aimed at the academic, physical, and social development of children throughout the U.S. The JCPenney Afterschool Fund also works to raise awareness of the benefits of afterschool programming, and is committed to ensuring that every child has access to the world of opportunities that awaits them after school.

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