



NEWS RELEASE
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The Empire State Building: Five Years of Lighting Up for Afterschool

New York City Landmark Will Be Lit in Yellow in Support of Afterschool Programs on October 18

On the evening of October 18, for the fifth year in a row, the iconic Empire State Building will be bathed in yellow light as part of the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs. On that day, people all across the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide will celebrate the 13th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, organized by the Afterschool Alliance.

This year, schools, community centers, parks, malls, state capitols and other settings will play host to more than 7,500 events at which youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, and send the message that millions more kids need quality afterschool programs. More than one million people are expected to participate in *Lights On Afterschool* rallies again this year.

“For the fifth year in a row, the Empire State Building will help us shine a light on the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “We are proud to have the support of such a revered and iconic institution as we rally to protect the funding we need to keep the doors to our afterschool programs open.”

For years, the federal investment in afterschool has lagged far behind the need. In 2007, the *No Child Left Behind Act* authorized \$2.5 billion for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool. Yet federal funding stands at less than half that today. Congress is currently considering legislation that would allow other programs to compete for already-limited 21st Century Community Learning Centers funds.

A significant body of research demonstrates that students who attend 21st CCLC afterschool programs regularly are more likely to improve their grades, tests scores and overall academic behavior. More than 15 million school-age children – more than one in four kids in the United States – are unsupervised after the school day ends. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs – if programs were available.

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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.