



NEWS RELEASE
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Science Museums, Cable Networks, Dance Programs Among Diverse Organizations Supporting 14th Annual Nationwide Rally for Afterschool

Lights On Afterschool Partners Reflect Diverse Afterschool Activities

The variety of activities and opportunities afforded children in afterschool programs are as wide-ranging as children's interests, from astronomy to folk dancing to video production to cooking, and much more. The organizations supporting the 14th annual nationwide rally for afterschool programs reflect that broad spectrum of activities.

Among the more than 200 organizations joining the Afterschool Alliance to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* this year are: the Association of Science-Technology Centers, Inc.; the Maker Education Initiative; NASA; 4-H; the Institute of Museum and Library Services; Bright House Networks; KidScape Productions, and many others.

Many of this year's partners are taking an active role in the events, including:

- The Association of Science-Technology Centers is encouraging its members to hold *Lights On Afterschool* events.
- Bright House Networks is sponsoring its second annual Facebook Photo Contest, giving afterschool programs the chance to post photos from their *Lights On* events on the Bright House Facebook page where people can vote for their favorites.
- Several afterschool programs will have youth participate in 4-H National Youth Science Day Experiment activities for *Lights On Afterschool*
- The Empire State Building will be lit in yellow on October 17, to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

"There is no limit to the variety of fun, educational, hands-on activities offered in afterschool programs," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "*Lights On Afterschool* offer us a chance to showcase those diverse activities and the skills children are learning in the

afterschool programs that also keep them safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. We're delighted to have such wonderful partners, both for *Lights On Afterschool* and for our ongoing work to promote and support afterschool programs."

Lights On Afterschool events allow children to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, and to send the message that millions more children deserve an equal chance to thrive in afterschool programs. This year, a million people will participate in some 8,000 events in communities nationwide and on U.S. military installations overseas, including student performances, runs and walks, open houses, art and essay contests, art displays, tree lightings, carnivals, and much more. To find a *Lights On Afterschool* event in your area, please visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaFindEvent.cfm>.

The Afterschool Alliance organizes *Lights On Afterschool* to draw attention to the many ways afterschool programs support students by offering them opportunities to learn new things – such as community gardens, boat racing, and playwriting – and discover new skills.

According to a 2012 study conducted by the Afterschool Alliance, nearly two in five afterschool programs (39 percent) report that their budgets are in worse shape today than at the height of the recession in 2008, and more than three in five (62 percent) report that their funding is down “a little or a lot” from three years ago.

Many more students across the country need access to afterschool programs. 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.