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### **NATION'S LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS HIGHLIGHT NEED FOR AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES TO REDUCE CRIME**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) A new report from more than 5,000 police chiefs, sheriffs and prosecutors spotlights research showing the impact of afterschool programs on improving public safety, increasing student academic performance, and saving taxpayer dollars, among other outcomes.

While charting a 70 percent reduction in juvenile arrests since 2000 and the fact that 10.2 million children participate in afterschool programs today compared to 6.5 million in 2004, the report reveals more than 11 million children still leave school for an unsupervised environment in the afterschool hours.

"I believe quality afterschool programs are the best form of long-term crime prevention a community can provide," said Ventura County California Police Chief Ken Corney. "Afterschool programs can increase school-day attendance and test scores and reduce dropouts – all of which can lead to lifelong success, which is integral to keeping our communities safe."

"We have strong programs in my community, but with limited funding they aren't able to reach all of the youth who would benefit from positive social development, increased supports, and greater opportunities to channel their energy productively," said Wyandotte County, Kansas Sheriff Donald Ash.

"From Risk to Opportunity: Afterschool Programs Keep Kids Safe When Juvenile Crime Peaks" from Fight Crime: Invest in Kids details an analysis of FBI and local law enforcement data on school-day crime rates for youth in 46 states. It found that a majority of states for which data were available saw crime spike during the afterschool hours from 2 to 6 p.m. State-by-state data on the hours when juvenile crime is highest is included in the report.

Research on outcomes related to afterschool program participation includes a study of a Texas program offered through the 21st Century Learning Centers (CCLC) – the only federal funding source for programs that serve high-poverty schools – where participating youth improved their scores on standardized tests and reduced absences. Also referenced is a meta-analysis of 68 programs that found participants did better on state reading and math tests, had higher GPAs and better school attendance.

Research on other programs found participants had better attendance records and were less likely to use drugs and alcohol. The report also describes a program in Chicago that reduced arrests by 35 percent and recidivism by 21 percent, and how youth involved in a Los Angeles program were 30 to 50 percent less likely to commit a crime.

Research in the report also shows quality afterschool programs can save at least \$3 for every dollar spent based on increased earning potential, improved school performance and reductions in crime and future welfare costs among kids who participate.

Fight Crime members speaking out in the report include Red Wing, Minnesota Police Chief Roger Pohlman, former South Salt Lake, Utah Police Chief Chris Snyder, Detroit, Michigan Police Chief James Craig, Burlington, Iowa Police Major Darren Grimshaw, and Knoxville, Tennessee Police Chief Eve M. Thomas. The report also profiles afterschool programs and outcomes in Ventura, CA; the state of Wyoming; New Britain, CT; South Salt Lake, UT, Burlington, IA; Detroit, MI; the Tennessee Valley; and Summerville, SC.

The report is being released shortly before a national October 24 *Lights On Afterschool* celebration. More than a million people are expected to participate in more than 8,000 *Lights On Afterschool* events around the country, which are organized by the Afterschool Alliance.

“This vitally important new report is a powerful endorsement of afterschool programs from the law enforcement community. Law enforcement leaders from coast to coast recognize that investing in afterschool programs today is essential to our safety and security tomorrow,” said Jodi Grant, executive director of the Afterschool Alliance.

“This new report shows conclusively that the hours between 2 and 6 PM, when schools are closed but many parents are still on the job, are prime time for juvenile crime,” Grant added. “So, if we are serious about reducing juvenile crime, victimization and delinquency, keeping our streets and communities safe, and putting youth on the path to becoming responsible, successful adults, we will increase funding for afterschool programs. Every student needs the chance to learn and grow, in a safe, supervised environment, after the school day ends.”

Since the late 1990s, support for and investments in afterschool programs have grown significantly with wide bipartisan support beginning with the legislation that federally funded created 21st Century Learning Centers, which enable communities to create and shape afterschool programs uniquely suited to their kids. Funding increased during the administrations of President George W. Bush and President Obama. President Trump has recommended elimination of the program.

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