



NEWS RELEASE
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CONTACT: [Luci Manning](#)
202/371-1999

America Will Turn the Lights on for Afterschool on October 22nd

Empire State Building to be Lit in Yellow for 16th Annual Rally for Afterschool

More than a million people in thousands of communities across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide will turn the lights on for afterschool this October by joining the only national rally for afterschool programs. More than 8,000 afterschool programs are expected to participate in the 16th annual [Lights On Afterschool](#), on or around October 22nd, holding rallies, science fairs, fun runs, student performances, community service events, sports competitions, open houses and more at schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, Ys, community centers, museums, parks and recreation facilities, state capitols, malls, and other settings. All these events will celebrate the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.

The New York skyline will shine for afterschool that evening when, for the ninth consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building is lit up in yellow to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

Lights On Afterschool is organized by the Afterschool Alliance to underscore the need to invest in afterschool programs, which provide homework help, healthy snacks, mentoring, physical fitness, robotics, computer programming, community service opportunities, art and music, job- and college-readiness, and countless opportunities for hands-on learning.

“Quality afterschool programs help students hone their skills and discover their passions, preparing them to succeed in school and in life,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “*Lights On Afterschool* events give children and youth the chance to showcase the talents they develop at their afterschool programs, which offer hands-on, engaging activities that are both educational and fun. But too many afterschool programs are without the resources they need to serve all the children in their communities who need them – and families, schools, communities and the country suffer as a result.”

The 2014 “[America After 3PM](#)” household survey of more than 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide, up from 6.5 million in 2004. But the unmet demand for afterschool programs has increased as well. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, there are two more whose parents say they would participate, if a program were available. One in five students in the United States today is unsupervised after the school day ends.

Right now, Congress is debating reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and working on the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2016. The outcome of both of those debates will help determine federal funding for afterschool programs in coming years.

A large and growing body of evidence demonstrates improvements in attendance, behavior, academic achievement and more among children who participate in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that afterschool programs encourage increased parental involvement – an important building block for student success.

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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.