



NEWS RELEASE  
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## For the 10<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Year, the New York City Skyline Will Shine for Afterschool



On Thursday evening, October 20th, for the tenth year in a row, the iconic Empire State Building will be lit up in yellow to celebrate [Lights On Afterschool](#), the nationwide rally for afterschool programs. *Lights On Afterschool* has been organized each year since 1999 by the [Afterschool Alliance](#). At 8,000 sites around the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide, a million students, parents, educators, business and community leaders, policy makers and others are expected to join the event next month.

*Lights On Afterschool* rallies give youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, and to send the message that millions more children and youth need quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

On and around October 20th, at schools, parks, community centers, fairgrounds, science and art museums, malls, state capitols and other venues, people will celebrate the many ways afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families in their communities. The events this year will be as diverse as the afterschool programs that host them, and will include rallies, science fairs, fun runs, student performances, community service events, robotics displays, sports competitions, open houses and more.

“Our decade-long partnership with the Empire State Building is part of what makes *Lights On Afterschool* such a powerful and special occasion in communities all across the country,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The image of that iconic landmark lit up in yellow for afterschool is an integral part of our celebrations, from West Virginia to Wyoming. Every day, afterschool programs keep the lights on for students and every October, we honor their contributions to children, youth, families and communities. Having the Empire State Building’s support has been a significant part of our success.”

Afterschool programs provide homework help, healthy snacks, mentoring, physical fitness, hands-on science activities, computer programming, community service, art and music, job- and college-readiness and more to students of all ages every afternoon. The 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. Unmet demand is especially high in rural communities and communities of concentrated poverty. One in five students in the United States today is unsupervised after the school day ends.

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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*