



NEWS RELEASE  
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## **Organizations Representing Law Enforcement, Private Businesses, Sciences and More to Help Celebrate Afterschool Programs at 16<sup>th</sup> Annual *Lights On Afterschool* Rally**

Afterschool programs do more than help working parents, keep kids safe, and inspire them to learn. They also improve students' skills, prepare them for college and the workforce, and help them learn to contribute to their communities. Those contributions and more will be celebrated during the 16<sup>th</sup> annual *Lights On Afterschool* rally this month, set for October 22. More than 200 diverse organizations – representing a wide range of interests, from law enforcement to outdoor recreation to the sciences – are participating in this year's events. *Lights On Afterschool* is organized by the Afterschool Alliance.

Among the organizations supporting this year's rally are:

- The National League of Cities, which is encouraging mayors and other city leaders across the country to participate in events and issue proclamations in support of *Lights On Afterschool*;
- The National Recreation & Park Association, which represents many of the city and state parks and recreation departments that run afterschool programs and take part in *Lights On Afterschool*;
- STEMfinity, which has donated engaging, hands on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curricula and materials that will be raffled off to afterschool programs holding *Lights On Afterschool* events this month;
- The Association for Science-Technology Centers, which is encouraging science museums and centers to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* by providing hands-on learning activities for afterschool youth. More than a dozen such events were held last year; and
- The National Association of Police Athletic Leagues (PAL), which runs afterschool programs nationwide that will hold *Lights On Afterschool* events, including in Brooklyn, where PAL Breukelen Cornerstone students will put on a talent show for parents and community members featuring poetry, art and dance. The Police Athletic League of

Jacksonville, Florida, will celebrate *Lights On* with a Family Night that features games, a student art gallery, a craft table, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) activities and a literacy presentation.

These are just a few of the more than 8,000 *Lights On Afterschool* events being planned nationwide. Participants will gather at thousands of community centers, malls, parks and recreation centers, state capitols, science museums and other venues to learn more about the many ways afterschool programs support students' success academically and in life.

Among the other organizations supporting *Lights On Afterschool* this year are: America's Promise; Bright House Networks; Campfire; Lego Education; New York Life; Torani; and many others.

For the ninth consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building will be lit up in yellow to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* on October 22.

"The support for *Lights On Afterschool* this year is inspiring and a fitting tribute to the amazing contributions afterschool program make," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "The organizations that support our nationwide rally reflect the diversity not only of the activities offered in afterschool programs, but also the variety of ways those programs benefit students, their families, their communities and our society. We're gratified that year-after-year, we have had such wonderful partners in this event who are so committed to young people and to making quality afterschool programs available to all students."

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.

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.

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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).*