



NEWS RELEASE
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Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Will be Focus of Hundreds of *Lights On Afterschool* Events This Year

Today is 4-H National Youth Science Day

With their focus on hands-on learning and the time they give students to experiment, afterschool programs offer valuable opportunities for children and youth to learn science, technology, engineering and math skills that help prepare them to succeed in the workforce of the future. Hundreds of afterschool programs across the country will showcase the ways they engage students in STEM learning – as well as keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families – during the 16th annual *Lights On Afterschool* this month.

To celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* this year, 4-H is providing kits to afterschool programs that will conduct the “Motion Commotion” science experiment and take part in [National Youth Science Day](#). More than 200 afterschool programs are making National Youth Science Day a part of their *Lights On Afterschool* festivities. Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, *Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs.

The Afterschool Alliance just released [new STEM-related findings](#) from its “America After 3PM” survey of more than 30,000 U.S. households. It found that seven in ten parents of children in afterschool programs (69 percent) report that their child’s afterschool program offers STEM learning opportunities. The data also reveal strong support among parents (70 percent) for providing hands-on STEM learning in afterschool and high satisfaction (80 percent) with afterschool STEM offerings among parents of children in programs that provide this education.

Lights On Afterschool events this month with a focus on science include:

Declo, Idaho: Andrew Fletcher, Cassia School District 151

Declo Elementary and Mountain View Elementary will hold open houses on October 22nd in honor of *Lights On Afterschool*. Community members will participate in science activities planned and led by students, to include combining Diet Coke and Mentos, experimenting with color changing milk, demonstrating their Lego robotics creations and playing with bubble solutions. School principals, superintendents, business leaders, parents and community members will attend each event. Declo Mayor Jay Darrington will attend the Declo Elementary open house and Burley Mayor Merlin Smedley will attend the Mountain View event.

Camdenton, Missouri: Sherry Comer, Camdenton R-III Afterschool Services

Camdenton R-III Afterschool Programs will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with a STEM show at the Camdenton Middle School Little Theater. Mad Science, an interactive science education

group, will put on its “Fire and Ice” show, which teaches children about chemical reactions, air pressure and the states of matter by demonstrating foggy dry ice storms, a bubble shower with trapped gas, giant beach balls floating in the air and a special Mad Science “burp” potion. Students from local schools, including the Lake Career & Tech Center, will come together for the event, with an expected audience of 700 people, on October 21st.

Omaha, Nebraska: Gwynette Williams and Nicole Everingham, Collective for Youth Collective for Youth hosted a *Lights On Afterschool* carnival on October 3rd at the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Sapp Fieldhouse. Governor Pete Ricketts gave a short speech, Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert read a proclamation, and Collective for Youth presented community awards. Students played in a basketball tournament and performed in a talent showcase. The celebration featured 40 STEM activity booths where children and families participated in robotics competitions, played coding games, built rockets and learned about life-saving medical procedures. A resource fair offered information about afterschool opportunities. There were nearly 2,000 participants, including students from 29 afterschool programs.

Queens, New York: Monique Maitland, Child Center of New York
The Child Center of New York’s Beacon 226 afterschool program will hold a family welcome day/open house for *Lights On Afterschool*. Throughout the week leading up to *Lights On*, students will work on science projects – elementary school students will make silly putty and middle school students will create glow-in-the-dark rainbow water – which they will demonstrate to their parents at the event. Students will also rally throughout the neighborhood, holding signs and chanting about what afterschool means to them. After the science presentations, everyone will enjoy a dance. The celebration will be held at MS 226 on October 22nd.

Cleveland, Ohio: Lucy Conant, Salvation Army Ohio City
The Salvation Army Ohio City will hold an open house for parents to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*. Students will read poems and perform a skit to kick off the event, and then everyone will transfer to the afterschool classrooms to play math-related games. One game will be NBA-sponsored Math Hoops, a fast-paced basketball board game that allows students to learn fundamental math skills by utilizing the real statistics of their favorite NBA and WNBA players. Another classroom will feature story reading. The open house will take place on October 22nd.

The 2014 “America After 3PM” household survey, 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.