



NEWS RELEASE
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Music, Dance, Visual Arts by Students Will Be on Display at *Lights On Afterschool* Events from Coast to Coast in October

Many of the more than 8,000 [Lights On Afterschool](#) events across the country next month will highlight the many ways afterschool programs inspire children and youth through exposure to and engagement with the arts. Organized by the [Afterschool Alliance](#), more than a million people are expected to participate in the 17th annual nationwide rally for afterschool. This year, the New York skyline will again shine for afterschool on October 20th when, for the tenth consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building is lit up in yellow.

Lights On Afterschool is the only national rally for afterschool. Events will be held at schools, community centers, science museums, parks and recreation centers, state capitols, malls and other venues to demonstrate the many ways afterschool programs help students succeed in school and in life.

Among the arts-focused events that will be part of this year's *Lights On Afterschool*:

Ventura, California:

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Ventura will host an open house and art appreciation evening on October 20th. Representatives from local community agencies will judge students' artwork and their decisions will determine which pieces to send to the National Boys & Girls Club Fine Arts event in December. The artwork has been collected during the year from students of all ages and incorporates different types of media.

Fort Lauderdale, Florida:

In honor of *Lights On Afterschool*, United Cerebral Palsy will host an art show at Wyndham Sea Gardens Resort on October 20th featuring artwork by afterschool students. Families, community members, school principals and superintendents, donors and others will view the artwork and participate in a raffle and silent auction to benefit the afterschool program. Guests will also view a slideshow about activities the program offers.

Indianapolis, Indiana:

In honor of *Lights On Afterschool*, students at the Speedway-Newby Elementary At Your School afterschool program have written and directed a play about bullying that they will perform on October 20th. After the show, students will have their faces painted and make masks shaped like stars, which are meant to "let their little light shine through."

Lawrence, Kansas:

The Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence will hold its annual *Lights On Afterschool* talent showcase on October 7th at Free State High School. The showcase will feature performances from each of the club's 15 afterschool sites, in line with the event's "Blast from the Past" theme.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Many of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation's 151 afterschool sites will participate in a city-wide *Lights On* poster contest. Children will design posters celebrating an aspect of afterschool: youth voices, health and wellness, or afterschool STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). Artwork will be displayed in classrooms and bulletin boards throughout October. One selection from each site will be sent to Philadelphia Parks & Recreation's *Lights On Afterschool* committee. Three district winners will be announced on October 20th, and each will be awarded \$100 toward the purchase of afterschool art supplies.

Salt Lake City, Utah:

The Indian Hills Elementary School Discovery Club will put on a half-hour puppet show for students, parents and school staff on October 19th to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*. After the show, there will be an open house for families to learn about the afterschool program's activities. Student artwork will be showcased throughout the school.

"Across the country, quality afterschool programs are providing a range of arts learning experiences," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "In addition to showcasing the many ways afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families, many *Lights On Afterschool* events this year will focus on the ways afterschool programs teach students about the arts, deepen their connections to the art world and use art instruction to build on topics learned during the school day."

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.

Among the more than 100 *Lights On Afterschool* partners this year are Boys & Girls Clubs of America, After-School All-Stars, Voices for Healthy Kids and Association of Science-Technology Centers. For a complete list of national *Lights On Afterschool* partners, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaNatPartners.cfm>.

To find an event in your area, please visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaFindEvent.cfm>.

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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.