



NEWS RELEASE  
October 13, 2016

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

## Many of Next Week's *Lights On Afterschool* Events Will Highlight Healthy Behaviors

Next week, [Lights On Afterschool](#) events will be held at schools, community centers, parks, recreation centers, malls and other venues to demonstrate the many ways afterschool programs keep kids safe and healthy, inspire them to learn and help working families. Organized by the [Afterschool Alliance](#), *Lights On Afterschool* will include more than 8,000 events in communities across the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide this year. A million people are expected to participate in the 17th annual nationwide rally for afterschool.

Many of this year's *Lights On Afterschool* events will feature the many ways afterschool programs teach healthy eating and offer opportunities for students to get and stay active. Among the health-focused events being planned for this year's *Lights On Afterschool*:

### **Santa Barbara, California:**

The Santa Barbara Unified School District will hold *Lights On Family Fitness Nights* at each of its seven afterschool sites on October 20th from 5:00 to 6:30 PM. Family members at each site will participate in fitness activities, including zumba, frisbee golf and dodgeball, and then enjoy a healthy dinner.

### **Leesburg, Florida:**

The Rimes Extended Learning Center will hold a healthy foods-themed open house on October 20th. Students in the afterschool program have been studying healthy habits, portion control and label reading this year, so the open house will feature activities focused on these topics. Students will lead their family members and friends through the center, where there will be rainbow egg races, a food group parachute game, apple puppets and a nutrition toss. Students will create placemats with die cuts of rainbow food choices and take home grocery store scavenger hunt games.

### **South Glens Falls, New York:**

The Fisherman's Net Youth Program will hold a week of health and wellness-related activities and learning ahead of *Lights On Afterschool* this year. In the weeks leading up *Lights On Afterschool*, families and community members have been encouraged to submit their favorite healthy, child-friendly snack and meal recipes. One winner will be chosen in each category and announced during the program's "Get Active" party on October 20th, at which students and families will enjoy the best healthy snacks, play active games and celebrate the afterschool program.

**Fargo, North Dakota:**

The YMCA of Class and Clay Counties will hold its fifth annual *Lights On Afterschool* 1K fun run on October 20th. As many as 1,500 children and staff will warm up and stretch together at Island Park with local radio personality Alek from BIG 98.7. Students from each program site will decide beforehand how they'd like to dress up for the run, and members of the planning committee will be dressed as characters from Toy Story. After the race, students from each participating afterschool program will take a photo together in their costumes at the finish line.

**Portland, Oregon:**

The Wattles Boys & Girls Club will host a vision screening and health fair for *Lights On Afterschool* this year. Attendees will play health jeopardy and cycle through fitness and healthy snack stations, and America's Best Contacts & Eyeglasses will give the 125 guests vision screenings on October 20th.

**Arlington, Virginia:**

Drew and Abingdon Extended Day will hold a *Lights On Afterschool* Health and Fitness Expo on October 20th. Students will cycle through "Get Fit" stations offering activities such as zumba, kickboxing, mixed martial arts and line dancing, as well as a healthy snacks station.

"Every day, quality afterschool programs help young people become and stay healthy by modeling and teaching healthy behaviors," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "They instill healthy habits that can last a lifetime. *Lights On Afterschool* events across the country are showcasing how afterschool programs are potential game changers when it comes to promoting wellness. From serving nutritious snacks and meals to inspiring students to start moving, afterschool programs are exercising the minds and bodies of young people so they can build healthy habits for a strong future." Many programs have implemented the afterschool Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards, which provide up-to-date, evidence-based, practical quality standards for providing children with healthy food, drinks and physical activity during out-of-school time.

The New York skyline will again shine for afterschool on October 20 when, for the tenth consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building is lit up in yellow for afterschool.

In a unanimous vote, the United States Senate passed a resolution that recognizes October 20 as a day to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

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.

Among the more than 100 *Lights On Afterschool* partners this year are the National Association of Police Athletics/Activities Leagues, Inc., Food Research & Action Center, Voices for Healthy

Kids, National Recreation and Park Association and Nickelodeon. 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>.

# # # #

*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).*