



NEWS RELEASE  
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## Many Afterschool Events This Week Will Focus on Community Service

### *Lights On Afterschool Is Thursday, October 20*

Every afternoon, afterschool programs across the country show students how to support their communities, promoting civic engagement and providing opportunities to collect food and clothing for those in need, clean up parks and playgrounds, read to seniors and more. This week, many of the 8,000 [Lights On Afterschool](#) events around the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide will engage students and families in community service. A million people are expected to participate in the 17th annual nationwide rally for afterschool, sponsored by the [Afterschool Alliance](#). The New York skyline will again shine for afterschool on Thursday when, for the tenth consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building is lit up in yellow for afterschool.

Among the community service events being planned for this year's *Lights On Afterschool*:

**Alabama, Gadsden:** The Donahue Elementary Edge afterschool program will hold a coat drive for *Lights On Afterschool*. Students, families, local clothing stores and businesses have been bringing used coats to the school. Students in each classroom are competing to see who can collect the most coats. Each student who brings in a jacket gets a free homework pass, and the classroom that collects the most coats will win a prize. Volunteers are sorting the coats by size and, on October 20th, afterschool students will direct community members to the cafeteria where they can take the coats they need. Leftover clothing will be donated to a local homeless shelter.

**Illinois, Marion:** The HUB Recreation Center will hold a Halloween Trunk 'N Treat and carnival on October 20th. There will be games for students, lightbulb coloring and decorated car trunks filled with treats. Parents and community members will have a chance to sign a petition in support of afterschool funding and learn more about the HUB's afterschool program. The event will also serve as a food drive for the local Ministerial Alliance food pantry.

**Massachusetts, Malden:** On October 21st, Kids' Place will finish its Child Safety Week with a *Lights On Afterschool* celebration. Police officers will fingerprint the students and talk to them about safety. Throughout the week beforehand, students will discuss cyber safety, stranger safety and home-alone safety. In addition, students will role play difficult situations, make cards for police officers and take safety quizzes.

**Michigan, White Cloud:** For *Lights On Afterschool*, the TrueNorth Project FOCUS afterschool program at White Cloud Public Schools will hold a community service event for students and

parents on October 20th. Teams of students will compete to see who can clean up the most trash from around Mill Pond Park.

**Minnesota, Eden Valley:** The Eden Valley-Watkins L.E.A.D. afterschool program are holding an anti-bullying carnival today as part of *Lights On Afterschool*. The event spotlights the range of programming available at ED-W L.E.A.D., including community outreach, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), academic support and physical fitness. At the rally, parents and supporters are signing a petition that urges lawmakers not to deny or divert funding for afterschool programs.

**Nevada, Yerington:** The Boys & Girls Clubs of Mason Valley will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with a family night on October 20th, leading into a week-long food drive. The evening will kick off the Club's Season of Giving—community service events throughout the fall. A representative from Catholic Charities will discuss the importance of giving back to the community. Families will decorate large paper bags that each house in town will fill with food to donate. The filled bags will be collected from doorsteps by volunteers and donated to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada.

**New York, Queens:** As part of its seventh annual *Lights On Afterschool* celebration, the Child Center of NY's Basie Beacon afterschool program at IS 72 will hold "Improvement Starts with I," designed to improve police-community relations. Police officers from the 113th precinct and community representatives will be guest speakers at a special community forum, followed by a basketball game between the officers and students from the afterschool program. The event will be on October 20.

**Oregon, Newport:** For *Lights On Afterschool*, the Youth Development Coalition of Lincoln County will hold a youth resource fair at Yaquina View Elementary School on October 27th. The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry will give STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) presentations to students. There will be dental screenings, nutrition education programs, Oregon Health Plan registration and more for adults.

**Vermont, Milton:** Milton After School Kids will hold an open house on October 20th for *Lights On Afterschool*. Students and guests will work together to create a mural and adults will have the chance to view student artwork and films made at the program's summer video camp. There will be a bean bag toss challenge and a rims-and-pins tournament. The program will collect canned goods for a local food pantry.

**Virginia, Hampton:** Alternatives Inc. will hold an "Afterschool is Cool!" reception on October 20th for *Lights On Afterschool*. The reception will have stations featuring activities the afterschool program offers, including: a place to write [letters to the next president](#); a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) scholastics station; "Readers Theater;" a spot for science experiments; "24" Math Mania; and a facilitated discussion on what a great afterschool program looks like. The event will take place at Hunter B. Andrews Pre K-8 School.

**West Virginia, Mt. Zion:** For *Lights on Afterschool*, Calhoun County Middle and High School will host an Evening with the Candidates on October 20th. The school has invited all major candidates for office in Calhoun County, as well as state and national campaigns, to set up

booths at the school and talk about their priorities and positions. In advance of the event, afterschool students are writing letters to the West Virginia gubernatorial candidates and the presidential and vice presidential candidates.

“Every day, quality afterschool programs keep our kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “These programs also engage students with their communities, providing opportunities for service, teaching them about our democracy, and in other ways helping them become engaged, responsible citizens. Afterschool programs show children and youth how they can help others, while working in teams to strengthen and support their neighborhoods, cities and towns. This kind of engagement pays dividends for years to come by strengthening citizenship among the next generation.”

The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of more than 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that, 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.

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

Among the more than 100 *Lights On Afterschool* partners this year are United Way of America, Camp Fire, MENTOR and National League of Cities. 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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*