



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

The Lights Will Be On for Afterschool All Across the Country on October 26th

More than a million people in communities across the nation and at U.S. military bases worldwide will turn the lights on for afterschool on Thursday, October 26th as part of the 18th annual [Lights On Afterschool](#). The only national rally for afterschool is expected to include some 8,000 events this year – showcases, science fairs, fun runs, academic contests, community service activities, performances, sports competitions, open houses and more at schools, YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, parks, museums, community centers, state capitols and other places. These events will showcase the skills students gain and the talents they develop at their afterschool programs.

For the 11th consecutive year, the New York skyline will shine for afterschool that evening when the iconic Empire State Building is lit in yellow to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

The [Afterschool Alliance](#) organizes the event to underscore the need to invest in afterschool programs, which provide homework help; mentors; healthy snacks and meals; opportunities to play sports and get fit; robotics; computer programming; art, dance and music; job and college readiness; and countless opportunities for team-based learning.

“Quality afterschool programs do a tremendous amount to help children and youth succeed in school and in life,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “These programs give kids a chance to discover their talents and passions. They keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and give parents peace of mind while they are at work. During *Lights On Afterschool*, programs open their doors so community members can see the hands-on, fun, educational activities they offer students. But there aren’t nearly enough afterschool programs to meet the need. Our country will be stronger and the next generation more successful when we change that.”

The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide – but the unmet demand is great. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, two more are waiting to get in. Unmet demand is especially high in rural communities and communities of concentrated poverty. One in five students in the United States is unsupervised after the school day ends.

Afterschool programs are supported by governments, parents, philanthropies, businesses and other public and private funding streams. Investments are frequently under threat; this year, the President’s budget proposed an elimination of federal funding for afterschool and summer

learning programs. While the Senate and House of Representatives have rejected the call to eliminate afterschool funding, there is still a threat of cuts that could affect 100,000 students. Congress is likely to complete the Fiscal Year 2018 budget later this year.

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.

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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.