



NEWS RELEASE

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Fun, Educational STEM Activities to be Featured at *Lights On Afterschool* Events Across Country Next Week

Making glow-in-the-dark slime. Engineering robotic arms. Experimenting with ways to cook popcorn balls. Building pumpkin towers using toothpicks and cotton swabs. These are just a few of the many examples of the fun, engaging, hands-on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) activities taking place at [Lights On Afterschool](#) events across the country this month.

Organized by the [Afterschool Alliance](#), *Lights On Afterschool* is the only national rally for afterschool programs. More than a million people will celebrate this year at 8,000 events across the country. Events are being held at science museums, schools, community centers, businesses, parks and recreation centers, state capitols, malls and other venues.

“Afterschool programs provide opportunities for students of all ages to engage in team-based, hands-on learning through science, technology, engineering and math,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “They have fun while gaining skills that can position them to succeed in school and in life. We’re delighted that so many *Lights On Afterschool* events this year are showcasing the inventive ways afterschool programs develop STEM skills in children and youth. Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help give working parents peace of mind that their children are safe and learning during the sometimes perilous hours after the school day ends and before parents get home from work.”

The STEM-focused activities to be featured at *Lights On Afterschool* events around the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide on and around October 26th will include:

Tempe, Arizona: On October 25th, the Kid Zone Enrichment Program will hold its fifth annual “Glow Party” kickoff event for *Lights On Afterschool* at Aguilar Elementary school. Each student will receive a glow stick to light up. The event will also feature music and hands-on learning activities focused on STEM, literacy, nutrition and physical activity. Activities will include: oxygen-powered space shuttles, firework space rockets, Ozobot coding robots, robotic arm engineering, snap circuits and more. Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell, Senior Advisor to the Governor for Education and Strategic Initiative Dawn Wallace, Blake Farnsworth from U.S. Sen. Jeff Flake’s office, and representatives from the City of Tempe Police will attend. Other Kid Zone program sites will host their own *Lights On Afterschool* Glow Parties on October 26th with the same games and activities. A total of 2,500 people will attend the events.

Newark, Delaware: The Boys & Girls Clubs of Shortlidge will host a celebration for *Lights On Afterschool* on October 26th. The event will include stations for students to participate in a

lightbulb-inspired art project and a “trunk-or-treating” activity. There will be STEM activities sponsored by Microsoft, as well as a video showcasing the program, demonstrations with ipads and a slime experiment.

Chicago, Illinois: On October 26th, the Chicago Youth Centers Fellowship House will host a STEM-themed *Lights On Afterschool* event that features STEM activities, including a popcorn ball cooking experiment, a “wordles” database writing activity that allow students to create designs out of adjectives to print and take home, a group scarecrow design project using non-conventional items, and a measuring activity that involves using Halloween-themed objects, such as an eyeball and skull, to measure body parts.

St. Louis, Missouri: For *Lights On Afterschool*, the Neighborhood Houses program will host a glow party on October 26th at Oak Hill Elementary. The party will include glow-in-the-dark face painting, balloons, glow sticks, t-shirt giveaways and more. There will be activity stations where students can make glow slime, participate in a glow stick baton race or a jump rope challenge and have their faces painted with glow-in-the-dark paint. The afterschool choir will perform an original version of “Afterschool You Light Up My Life.”

Kingsport, Tennessee: On October 26th, the Spooner Afterschool Program will host an open house for *Lights On Afterschool*. Celebrations will take place at ten YMCA sites. The elementary school sites will offer healthy snacks and physical activities to celebrate Nickelodeon’s Worldwide Day of Play, including relay races, tron-tag, pac-man tag and more group games. There will be STEM activities and demonstrations, such as making slime, block building, and playing jenga with apples. The middle school events will include STEM demonstrations and students will design an “incredible wearable” fitness tracker that will be used like a fit-bit.

Morgantown, West Virginia: On October 25th, the Mountaineer Boys & Girls Club Woodburn will host an open house for *Lights On Afterschool*. The event will include robotics lessons, Halloween-themed science projects, balloon dart games, a pumpkin can knock-down game, face painting, slime making and apple bobbing. Two hundred people are expected. Seven other Mountaineer Boys & Girls Club Woodburn sites are participating and hosting events at their Clubs for *Lights On Afterschool*.

Green Bay, Wisconsin: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Green Bay will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* by hosting a family night on October 26th at its Nagel and Lutsey Club locations. The family night will feature S.T.E.A.M. (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) programs around the theme of Halloween. Activities will include: building pumpkin towers using only basic building materials like toothpicks, cotton swabs, tape, etc.; invisible ink messages, where members learn to write and view them; aeroponic gardens, young people have been working during the summer to grow plants and they’ve created a presentation; bike building, members and their families will work together to assemble bicycles; pumpkin carving, digital scavenger hunts and more. The Club’s new College and Career Center will be open for tours.

Afterschool programs are in great demand. The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that 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.

Governments, parents, philanthropies, businesses and others support afterschool programs, but investments are frequently under threat; this year, the President proposed a budget that would have eliminated federal funding for afterschool and summer learning programs. While Congress has rejected the call to eliminate afterschool funding, there is still a threat of cuts that could affect 100,000 students.

The Empire State Building is a *Lights On Afterschool* partner, and it will be lit up in yellow and blue on October 26th for the event for the 11th consecutive year. Among the more than 100 other *Lights On Afterschool* 2017 partners are 4-H Afterschool, After-School All-Stars, the Association of Science Technology Centers, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Camp Fire, the Food Research & Action Center, the National Recreation & Park Association, Voices for Healthy Kids, and the Y.

For a complete list of national *Lights On Afterschool* partners, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaNatPartners.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.