



NEWS RELEASE  
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## **New Progress Reports Find Every State Has Room for Improvement in Making Afterschool Programs Available to All Kids Who Need Them**

*Only Nine States Get High Marks as Afterschool Alliance Considers Each State's Performance in Meeting the Need for Afterschool Programs; Reports Produced with Support from jcpenny*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A new assessment of states' progress toward offering afterschool programs to all children who need them finds that many states are making progress, but all have unfinished business to keep kids safe and learning after the school day ends. The new **2011 State-by-State Afterschool Progress Reports and Consumer Guides**, which are being released in conjunction with *Lights On Afterschool*, the only national rally for afterschool, measured all 50 states on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best rating. No states received a 5 and only nine states (California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey and New York) received a 4. Twenty states received a 3; 19 states a 2; and Delaware and Idaho received the lowest rating, a 1.

The **Progress Reports** were developed by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) and sponsored by [jcpenny](#). They are being released today at the Jacksonville, Florida *Lights On Afterschool* event – one of 17 winners of the “Light Up a Landmark” contest sponsored by jcpenny and the Afterschool Alliance. For the fifth year, the Empire State Building also will be lit up for *Lights On Afterschool* today.

The new **Progress Reports** examine how each state is helping keep the lights on for kids and families after school by considering: the availability of and participation in afterschool programs, based on data from the landmark 2009 *America After 3PM* household survey; recent state policy activity and funding for afterschool programs; and state-level leadership on afterschool from policy makers. They find:

- Twenty-one states are currently funding afterschool programs.
- Thirty-one states have an initiative in place that promotes quality in afterschool programming.
- Only 13 states have passed legislation that directly supports afterschool programs.
- Just 15 states have state-level councils, studies, pilots or ongoing legislative activity designed to advance afterschool.
- Only six states reduced the number of children in self-care in the afternoons from 2004 to 2009, the two years during which national household surveys were conducted.

The *Progress Reports* also include information for parents on how to find and support afterschool programs in each state. Links to state and national resources for finding programs are available, and parents and non-parents alike are directed to specific action steps that they can take to support afterschool.

“Millions of children in this country are unsupervised and at risk after the school day ends,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “This report should serve as a wake-up call that we need to do much more to make quality afterschool programs available. Even in tough economic times like these, we must ensure that our children get the education and supports they need to succeed in school and in life. Afterschool programs are a great investment, providing opportunities for engaging, hands-on learning that often aren’t available during the school day. Today all across the country, at 7,500 *Lights On Afterschool* events, a million people are urging state and federal lawmakers to remember that afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families – and to make afterschool funding a priority.”

In conjunction with *Lights On Afterschool* events across the nation, jcpenny will invite its customers to support the afterschool cause through the “pennies from heaven” campaign Oct. 12-25. During that period, customers can round up purchases to the nearest whole dollar and donate the difference to a local afterschool program that provides life-enriching opportunities for children in need.

“As a leading corporate advocate for the afterschool cause, jcpenny is committed to building the resources needed to offer quality afterschool services in every community,” said Jodi Gibson, divisional vice president for jcpenny and president of jcpenny afterschool. “By partnering with the Afterschool Alliance to determine the unique needs of every state, families, educators and policy makers can make informed decisions that will make afterschool programs available and accessible to those who need it most.”

A significant body of research demonstrates that students who attend afterschool programs regularly are more likely to improve their grades, tests scores and overall academic behavior. Nationwide, more than 15 million school-age children – more than one in four kids in the United States – are unsupervised after the school day ends. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs – if programs were available.

### **Methodology**

Scores for the *Progress Reports* were devised using a range of factors falling under three major categories: growth in afterschool participation; developments in state afterschool policy and funding; and advancements in state afterschool leadership. Data from the *America After 3PM* survey were used to assess afterschool participation. A total of 29,754 parents/guardians were surveyed between March and May 2009 for *America After 3PM*. The progress reports also used up-to-date policy and leadership developments obtained from afterschool leaders in the states, most notably the 40 statewide afterschool networks. The 2011 *State-by-State Progress Reports and Consumer Guides* reflect the data and resources available at the time of their release in October 2011.

The *2011 State-by-State Afterschool Progress Reports and Consumer Guides*, as well as the *America After 3PM* study, accompanying data, and information on *Lights On Afterschool* events, are available online at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).

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*The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*