

NEWS RELEASE
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CONTACT: Gretchen Wright
202/371-1999

*After the School Bell Rings...
Are the Lights On Afterschool for Florida's kids?*

**Cable to Air Show on National *Lights On Afterschool Day!*
Thursday, October 16th at 8 AM on Suns Sports Network (Statewide in FL)**

Orlando, Fla. – The Afterschool Alliance and the Florida Afterschool Network have joined forces with Bright House Networks and the Florida Cable Telecommunications Association to produce a 30-minute cable television program that educates viewers about the benefits of afterschool programs and what is happening in programs around the country and in Florida.

Providing an overview of afterschool in America, it features more than 20 interviews with high-profile leaders and afterschool champions from different segments of society including kids in programs now. It also includes the latest facts and figures on afterschool needs, benefits and challenges. The program focuses on Florida, with statewide leaders discussing the supports they believe Florida children need after school, and what needs to be done to provide those supports.

The cable program will air on Thursday, October 16 in Florida, to coincide with the 9th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, a nationwide celebration of afterschool programs that is held each October in 7,500+ communities that attracts one million Americans. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has served a Chair of the event since 2001, and *Cheers* star Rhea Perlman is a national spokesperson. The program will also air several more times through the end of the year.

“The Afterschool Alliance is thrilled that Bright House Networks led efforts to develop this landmark show, which provides Floridians with important information about the impact of quality afterschool programs on our children, families and communities. Afterschool programs are critical to keeping our kids safe, inspiring them to learn and helping working families,” said Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance. “But a lack of resources means that most children are missing out on afterschool opportunities. We applaud Bright House Networks, and the cable industry, for taking on this important issue.”

Background:

In the US today, 14.3 million youth are alone and unsupervised after school. These youth are at grave risk of getting into trouble. In fact kids without an afterschool program are twice as likely to drink, smoke or use drugs, and one-third more likely to become teen parents.

Research shows that kids in afterschool programs are not only safe, they are achieving more in and out of school. Children who participate in afterschool programs attend school more often

and are 20 percent less likely to drop out of school. Through hands-on learning and a variety of creative projects and activities, they are putting school days lessons into practice and developing leadership, teamwork and social skills critical to succeed in the 21st century workplace.

Why it matters...

Several developments in Florida make this project particularly salient. Last year, Florida passed a ballot measure that means severe cuts in city and county budgets, which are pinching police and fire departments, city services and afterschool programs across the state. A lot of these programs are fighting for their lives, so there is an even stronger need to keep the doors open.

The show was created through a partnership between the Afterschool Alliance, which has relationships with national leaders and in the state; the Florida Afterschool Network; Bright House Networks, which is doing a tremendous amount of work in afterschool and has strong ties to afterschool programs in several communities; and the Florida Cable Telecommunications Association.

About the Afterschool Alliance:

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality, affordable afterschool programs. Lights On Afterschool is a nationwide grassroots celebration of afterschool programs designed to call attention to the need for more afterschool programs. The Afterschool Alliance launched the event with 1,200 celebrations in 2000; today, more than a million Americans participate in 7,500 Lights On Afterschool events nationwide each October. For more information, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org.

About Bright House Networks (BHN)

Bright House Networks is the nation's 6th largest MSO with 2.4 million customers in several large markets including Bakersfield, California; Birmingham, Alabama; Detroit, Michigan; Indianapolis, Indiana; Orlando, Florida (Central Florida Division) and Tampa Bay, Florida along with several other smaller systems in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. The high-growth Tampa/Central Florida markets are contiguous and form one of the country's largest cable clusters. Bright House Network's corporate locations are in Orlando, Florida and Syracuse, New York.