



NEWS RELEASE
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Military Families Join National *Lights On Afterschool* Rally

Military personnel and their families are among the legions of people who benefit from afterschool programs. That's one reason that thousands of military families will participate in the eighth annual *Lights On Afterschool* this week. America's only national rally for afterschool is organized by the Afterschool Alliance, and this year it will include afterschool programs on military bases in the United States and around the world opening their doors to show community members the fun, engaging, educational activities they offer to students.

"Military families are working families and they depend on afterschool programs to keep their kids safe and inspire them to learn after the school bell rings," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "This year we kick off the 10th anniversary celebration of 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool programs. It has funded afterschool programs for military and civilian families – but, still, more than 14 million kids have no supervised activity waiting for them each afternoon. We need more funding if we are to give all children access to the afterschool programs they need."

Lights On Afterschool events being held on military bases this year include:

- ❖ The Bitburg School Age program in **Spangdahlem, Germany** will hold a parent/child scavenger hunt on October 18. Each clue will lead to a different area of the program and highlight the program's activities and offerings. The final clue will lead to a small buffet dinner. For more information, contact Helen Reeves, helen.reeves@spangdahlem.af.mil.
- ❖ Youth Programs at Misawa Air Force Base in **Misawa, Japan** will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with an outdoor festival on October 19. Speakers will include Major Patrick Sollami and Edgren High School Principal Michael Johnson. The festival will include carnival games, prizes and food. For information, contact Kayline Hamilton, kayline.hamilton@misawa.af.mil.
- ❖ To celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* at the **Fort Richardson Army Base in Alaska**, Richardson School Age Services will host an open house on October 18 for parents, military commanders and the entire base community. For more information, contact Lori Jarvis, lori.jarvis@richardson.army.mil.
- ❖ The **Little Rock Air Force Base** Youth Center in **Little Rock, Arkansas** will exhibit students' work at an afterschool art gallery during its *Lights On Afterschool* event on October 18. The artwork will showcase the many different activities that children engage in at the program. Afterschool students will serve refreshments and give their parents a tour. For

more information, contact Jacqueline Russell, jacqueline.russell@littlerock.af.mil, 501-987-6355.

- ❖ The Almost Grown Zone at **Shaw Air Force Base in** South Carolina will present a program on the importance of afterschool. Afterward, students will showcase the skills and talents they've developed in the program and participate in carnival games with their families and friends. For more information, contact Sophia Johnson, sophia.johnson@shaw.af.mil, 803-895-2252.
- ❖ The Navy MWR Mid-Atlantic Youth Program in **Virginia Beach, Virginia** will host a *Lights On Afterschool* open house on October 18 that features face painting and games, as well as places for participants to get information about services like Fleet and Family Support, Navy Health, The Navy Credit Union, Bank of America, Lincoln Housing, Family Fitness and Kool Smiles. For more information, contact Cathy Mead, cathy.mead@navy.mil, 757-433-3976.

Lights On Afterschool was launched in October 2000 with 1,200 events. A million people are expected to rally at 7,500 events this year to show their support for afterschool programs and to encourage lawmakers and others to make afterschool programs available to all students who need them. Actress Rhea Perlman is the spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National Chair, a position he has held since 2001. For the first time ever, the Empire State Building in New York City will be lit with yellow floodlights on October 18 in recognition of *Lights On Afterschool*.

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.

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