



NEWS RELEASE
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Americans from Coast-to-Coast to Rally for Afterschool Programs At *Lights On Afterschool* Events October 12

Message to Lawmakers: Keep Lights On & Doors Open After School for our Kids

Afterschool program directors, educators, parents, kids, and community and business leaders around the country are gearing up for the seventh annual *Lights On Afterschool*, to be held on October 12 this year. Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, this year's *Lights On Afterschool* will include some 7,500 events throughout the nation and at military bases around the world. At these events, a million Americans will urge their leaders to support the afterschool programs that keep children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.

Lights On Afterschool rallies will give youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, and to send the message that millions of kids have no place to go each weekday afternoon when the school day ends.

“Instead of receiving help with homework and a chance to explore their talents and interests, too many of our children are unsupervised and at risk in the afternoons,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Americans are keenly aware that opportunities are lost when children have no safe, supervised activities after the school day ends. That is why *Lights On Afterschool* has grown so quickly. We expect events this year in every state and every corner of the country. The tremendous participation underscores the strong support for afterschool programs and widespread awareness that our nation needs many more.”

Lights On Afterschool was launched in October 2000 with 1,200 events across the country. Last year, a million people rallied at 7,500 events to show their support for afterschool programs. Organizers expect this year's event to be even larger. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National Chair of *Lights On Afterschool*, a position he has held since 2001.

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 by 2010. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

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