



NEWS RELEASE
October 8, 2004

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4-H & Junior Achievement Programs, YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs Nationwide Help Organize *Lights On Afterschool*

The nation's leading afterschool program providers will play a major role in the fifth annual *Lights On Afterschool*, which will be held October 14. YMCA of the USA, Junior Achievement, Boys & Girls Clubs of America and 4-H Afterschool are among the more than 150 national organizations supporting the nationwide rally for afterschool this year. Other national supporting organizations include After-School All-Stars, American Zoo and Aquarium Association, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, La Petite Academy, Medallion School Partnerships, National Association for Sport and Physical Education, National Association of Police Athletic Leagues, National League of Cities, National Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Themusedge.com and U.S. Conference of Mayors.

YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H and Junior Achievement programs from coast-to-coast will organize and host *Lights On* events. The organizations' national offices have helped spread the word about *Lights On Afterschool* and encouraged their programs to participate in the nationwide rally by distributing registration brochures and planning kits, posting information about the rally on web sites, and working with the Alliance to support local program providers. In addition, Junior Achievement will release a national poll that explores student views on afterschool programs at a *Lights On* event at the City Museum of Washington, DC on October 14.

"These four organizations represent some of the best and most innovative afterschool programs in the nation," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson. "Each year they organize thousands of educational, popular and fun *Lights On* events all across the country. We are delighted with the support we have received from these and other national supporting organizations. They are the reason we will have more than 6,000 *Lights On Afterschool* events this year at which we send the message that America needs more afterschool programs to keep kids safe, help working families and inspire children to learn." A study released in May by the Afterschool Alliance and supported by The JCPenney Afterschool Fund found that 14.3 million latchkey children have no adult supervision in the afternoons.

The Afterschool Alliance launched *Lights On Afterschool* in October 2000 with more than 1,200 events across the country. By 2003, more than half a million people rallied at more than 5,000 events in all 50 states. Organizers expect this year's event to be even larger. A list of 2004 *Lights On Afterschool* events is at www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa_2004/find.cfm.

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The 2004 National Presenting Sponsor of *Lights On Afterschool* is the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and The JCPenney Afterschool Fund is a National Sponsor of the event. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Open Society Institute are providing additional support.

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by the year 2010. Information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, established in 1926 in Flint, Michigan, by an automotive pioneer, is a private philanthropy committed to supporting projects that promote a just, equitable and sustainable society. More information is available at www.mott.org

JCPenney Afterschool is committed to helping provide children with high-quality, affordable after-school programs to help them reach the “power of their potential.” The JCPenney Afterschool Fund is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. JCPenney Afterschool has contributed more than \$34 million during the past five years to five of America’s leading after-school advocates. JCPenney Afterschool’s support helps provide safe, fun and educational after-school programs and raise awareness of the need for more such programs across the country.

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