



NEWS RELEASE  
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## **Afterschool Programs Coast-to-Coast to Rally for Afterschool**

### ***Lights On Afterschool 2004 Will Take Place in Museums and JCPenney Stores, In Schools & on Baseball Fields on October 14***

From a children's museum in Pittsburgh to the field where "A League of Our Own" was filmed to JCPenney stores across Maryland, parents, children, teachers, policy makers and others will rally for afterschool programs on October 14 as part of the fifth annual *Lights On Afterschool*. Among the events to be held on that day:

- An afterschool celebration at a pre-season National Basketball Association game between the Atlanta Hawks and the Minnesota Timberwolves at the Birmingham Jefferson Convention Complex in Birmingham, Alabama.
- A tour of afterschool programs in San Jose, California, that will begin with a news conference at City Hall and end with a pasta dinner for members of the San Francisco 49ers, city council members, police, the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce, and the national CEO of the Afterschool All-Stars Foundation.
- A rally at Bosse Field in Evansville, Indiana, featuring performances, food, games and entertainment. More than 30 community agencies will set up booths on the perimeter of the field with games and give-aways. The rally will begin with a proclamation from the Mayor and culminate with a fireworks display.
- In-store afterschool events at select JCPenney stores around Maryland with parents, children, teachers, community members and afterschool program directors from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers and Junior Achievement, YMCA and 4-H programs. An Afterschool Summit at the Statehouse on October 12 will kick off the rally. The state Special Secretary for Children, Families and Youth is co-sponsor.
- A rally and visit to COSI, a science and industry museum in Columbus, Ohio. The Mayor will host the event, which will include children from some 60 afterschool programs throughout the community. The rally will feature the Ohio State University marching band, a step team and local sports team mascots.

"Each year we see even more diverse and exciting *Lights On Afterschool* events," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson. "This year will be no exception. But whether they are on a basketball court in Alabama, in a JCPenney store in Maryland or at a children's museum in Pittsburgh, everyone participating in *Lights On Afterschool* is sending one message: We need more afterschool programs, because afterschool is key to kids' success."

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Add One

In May, the Afterschool Alliance released *America After 3 PM*, the most in-depth study ever to explore how America's children spend their afternoons. It found that 14.3 million kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> graders care for themselves after the school day ends. The parents of more than 15 million children say their children would participate if an afterschool program were available. The JCPenney Afterschool Fund supported *America After 3 PM*.

*Lights On Afterschool* was launched in October 2000. That year more than 1,200 events were held across the country. By last year, more than half a million people rallied at more than 5,000 events in all 50 states as well as Guam, Japan and South Korea to show their support for afterschool programs. Organizers expect this year's event to be even larger. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is the National Chair of *Lights On Afterschool* again this year. A listing of 2004 *Lights On Afterschool* events is online at [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa\\_2004/find.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa_2004/find.cfm).

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. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://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](http://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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