



MEDIA ADVISORY
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Rallies for Afterschool Will Be Held in All 50 States Thursday

24th Annual Lights On Afterschool Will Include Diverse Events With Students, Parents, Educators, Public Officials, Community Leaders, Others

A million people will rally for the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give working families peace of mind on Thursday as part of the 24th annual [Lights On Afterschool](#), organized again this year by the [Afterschool Alliance](#). Events will include student showcases, art displays, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) demonstrations, open houses, debates and discussions, walks and runs, visits from lawmakers and business leaders, and more as thousands of local programs showcase the skills students hone and talents they develop at their afterschool programs. Events will focus on academics, health and well-being, arts and music, civic engagement, STEM, fitness, healthy eating, bullying prevention, and more.

A representative sample of [Lights On Afterschool events is here](#). To find more events, see [this map](#).

The New York City skyline will shine for afterschool Thursday night when the Empire State Building is lit in yellow and blue. Throughout the country, buildings and bridges, arenas and stadiums, and other [landmarks will also be lit up](#) for afterschool this week.

STEM-related *Lights On Afterschool* events are being sponsored by NASA, which has invited programs and youth to join a special [virtual event with Thermal Blanket Technician Paula Cain](#); the Center of Science and Industry (COSI), which is providing free James Webb Space Telescope Learning Lunchbox STEM kits to youth at 45 programs; 4-H, which is providing [Power Protectors challenge kits](#); and [Everyday Superheroes: Women in Energy Careers](#), which is donating books and sending experts to talk to students about careers in STEM energy fields.

Lights On Afterschool underscores the need to invest in afterschool programs. Some 24.7 million U.S. children not in an afterschool program would be enrolled, if a program were available to them, according to a [survey of 1,500 parents](#) commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance and conducted by Edge Research in 2022. That is the highest number ever recorded. Unmet demand for afterschool programs is significantly higher among Latino and Black children (at 60% and 54% respectively) than among children overall (49%). Cost is the top barrier to enrollment, cited by 57% of parents as a reason for not enrolling their child. Ninety percent of parents rate the quality of the afterschool program their child attends as excellent (51%) or very good (39%).

Capital One and Clear Channel Outdoor are generous sponsors of *Lights On Afterschool* this year.

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