



NEWS RELEASE
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National Rally for Afterschool Programs Set for Thursday, October 25th

The 19th annual [Lights On Afterschool](#) – the only national rally for afterschool – will be held on Thursday, October 25th. On that day, more than a million people across the nation and at U.S. military bases worldwide will turn the lights on for afterschool by opening their doors to showcase the skills students gain and the talents they develop at their afterschool programs.

Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, this year’s event is expected to include more than 8,000 events – science fairs, student performances, showcases, fun runs, academic contests, community service activities, sports competitions, open houses and more at schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, parks, museums, community centers, state capitols and other places.

For the 12th consecutive year, the New York skyline will shine for afterschool that evening when the iconic Empire State Building is lit in yellow to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

The [Afterschool Alliance](#) organizes the event to underscore the need to invest in afterschool programs, which provide homework help, mentors, healthy snacks and meals, computer programming, job and college readiness, opportunities to play sports and get fit, robotics, art, dance, music, and countless opportunities for hands-on, team-based learning.

“Quality afterschool programs help children and youth discover their talents and passions and give them the chance to learn in a different kind of environment than they experience during the regular school day,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “These programs are essential to helping kids succeed in school and in life. They keep them safe, inspire them to learn and give working parents the peace of mind that comes with knowing their children are safe and supervised with opportunities to learn. For *Lights On Afterschool*, programs open their doors so community members can see the hands-on, educational, fun activities they offer. But there aren’t nearly enough afterschool programs to meet the need. We need to change that, for kids, families, communities and for our country.”

The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide – but the unmet demand is great. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, two more are waiting to get in. Unmet demand is especially high in rural communities and communities of concentrated poverty. One in five students in the United States is unsupervised after the school day ends.

Governments, parents, philanthropies, businesses and other public and private funding streams support afterschool and summer learning programs, but investments are frequently under threat. Again this year, the President proposed to eliminate federal funding for afterschool and summer learning programs in his budget proposal. While the Senate and House of Representatives have rejected the call to eliminate afterschool funding, any cuts would mean that that these essential programs are available to fewer students, more children and youth are unsupervised after the school day ends, and more working parents are without the assurance that their children are safe and supervised until they return home from their jobs.

A large and powerful body of evidence demonstrates improvements in attendance, behavior, academic achievement and more among children who participate in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that afterschool programs encourage increased parental involvement – an important building block for student success.

[Peachjar](#) is a generous sponsor of *Lights On Afterschool* this year.

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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.