



NEWS RELEASE
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Across America, Libraries Will Help Turn the Lights On for Afterschool Next Thursday, October 25th

Since the very first *Lights On Afterschool* events were held 19 years ago, libraries throughout the nation have been an integral part of the national rally for afterschool programs. That will be true again this year, with libraries large and small hosting and co-hosting events that showcase the skills students gain and the talents they develop at their afterschool programs. *Lights On Afterschool* is organized by the Afterschool Alliance, which expects more than a million people across the nation and at U.S. military bases worldwide to participate in some of the 8,000 events that will take place on and around October 25th.

The [Afterschool Alliance](#) organizes *Lights On Afterschool* to draw attention to the need to invest in afterschool programs, which provide homework help, literacy support, mentors, healthy snacks and meals, opportunities to play sports and get fit, robotics, computer programming, art, dance, music, job and college readiness, and opportunities for hands-on, team-based learning. For the 12th consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building will be lit in yellow and blue on October 25th to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

Among the more than 200 national, state and local *Lights On Afterschool* partners this year are the [Young Adult Library Services Association](#) and the [Science-Technology Activities & Resources for Libraries](#) (*STAR Net*), managed by the Space Science Institute's National Center for Interactive Learning. STAR Net is a hands-on STEM learning network for public libraries across the country that focuses on helping library professionals build their STEM skills by providing "science-technology activities and resources" (STAR) and training to use those resources.

Among the library-based *Lights On Afterschool* events scheduled for this year:

Satsuma, Alabama: The Satsuma Public Library will host the Story Time Special afterschool program and the Teen Friend's Tutoring Program on October 25th from 3:00 to 5:00 PM. Students are invited to dress as their favorite characters and join the fun. There will be special guest appearances by storybook characters.

Yuma, Arizona: For *Lights On Afterschool*, the Wellton Branch Library will hold an event on October 25th. The fun, educational activities will include students building Bristlebot Robots to promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education.

Eureka Springs, Arkansas: The Eureka Springs Community Center, in partnership with the Eureka Springs Carnegie Public Library, will host a carnival on October 25th from 5:30 to 7:30

PM for *Lights On Afterschool*. There will be an inflatable planetarium, with presentations by a student outreach group from the University of Arkansas. There will also be dance performances from local troupes, a karate demonstration from Groves Karate studio, a collective painting activity, and booths with carnival games. Mayor Butch Berry will emcee the event and issue a proclamation about the afterschool program.

Hinesville, Georgia: On October 25th from 4:00 to 7:00 PM, the Dream Builders Learning Center afterschool program in Midway, Georgia will partner with the Hinesville Public Library and Keep Liberty Beautiful for an open house and garden party on the library's campus. Hinesville Public Library will facilitate a science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) program at which children make terrariums and discuss how things grow. Students will also tour and plant in the Keep Liberty Beautiful garden they have adopted, while discussing recycling and water conservation. Parents will discuss the importance and impact of afterschool programs with Dream Builders afterschool staff. The event will feature games and crafts, and child advocate Demmentrice Jefferson will serve as the keynote speaker. Local school board members and United Way representatives may attend.

Hays, Kansas: On October 25th, the Science and Mathematics Education Institute at Fort Hays State University (FHSU) will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* from 3:30 to 4:30 PM in their makerspace in Forsyth Library. Students will make 'squishy circuits' out of conductive dough and LED light, as well as invent small projects with "Little Bits" snap-together electronics. FHSU students, faculty and community members will attend.

Caruthersville, Missouri: For *Lights On Afterschool*, Caruthersville Public Library will hold an open house on October 25th from 3:00 to 5:30 PM for children and parents. There will be tours of the library focused on the children's room to show parents what their children do after school. Students and parent will play board games together.

Farmington, New Mexico: Organized by Afterschool Ambassador Flo Trujillo, on Thursday, October 25, the Farmington Public Library will host "7 Habits of Happy Kids." Students will each get a piece of a puzzle and will together post a positive leadership message through a floor puzzle for *Lights on Afterschool*. Using a "Can-Do" Attitude, youth will engage in the 7 Habits and focus on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) activities at the library. Participants will each receive a *Lights On* strobe light, glasses, a wristband, and more from library staff and join a Tippie Toe Parade (tour the library) following story time.

The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of more than 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide, up from 6.5 million in 2004. But the unmet demand for afterschool programs has increased as well. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, there are two more whose parents say they would participate, if a program were available. Unmet demand is especially high in rural communities and communities of concentrated poverty. One in five students in the country is unsupervised after the school day ends.

[Peachjar](#) helps afterschool programs connect with families and is a generous sponsor of *Lights On Afterschool* this year.

KIND snacks joined forces with the Afterschool Alliance and Nickelodeon's Worldwide Day of Play to support *Lights On Afterschool* this year by feeding healthy appetites. KIND has provided

more than 400,000 KIND Kids™ bars as complimentary snacks for guests at *Lights On Afterschool* events around the country.

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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.