



NEWS RELEASE
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Largest *Lights On Afterschool* Rally Ever Held Is Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Across the country, the lights will be on for afterschool programs today and this evening as students, parents, educators, policy makers, business and faith leaders, community members and others come together to show their support for afterschool programs as part of the 19th annual [Lights On Afterschool](#). The only nationwide rally for afterschool programs, *Lights On Afterschool* includes [more than 8,300 events](#) in every corner of the country this year.

The [Afterschool Alliance](#) organizes *Lights On Afterschool* to focus attention on the urgent need to invest in afterschool programs, which provide which provide homework help, mentoring, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities, sports and fitness, healthy snacks and meals, art and dance, job- and college-readiness, and opportunities for hands-on, team-based learning.

A [national poll](#) released this week finds that vast majorities of the public – across gender, race, age, regional and party lines – consider afterschool programs important to their communities. There is strong support for public funding of afterschool and summer learning programs, with two in three adults saying they want their federal, state and local leaders to provide funding for these programs. Seven in ten oppose eliminating federal funds for afterschool programs, as President Trump has twice proposed to do, and 52 percent are strongly opposed. The poll of 1,001 adults was designed by Lake Research Partners and the Tarrance Group and administered by Ipsos through an online omnibus survey in September.

“This new poll and the massive turnout for *Lights On Afterschool* this year shows Americans understand the pivotal role that quality afterschool programs play in helping young people develop the skills they need to thrive in school and in life,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “All over the country today, people are seeing firsthand the skills students hone and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, which keep kids safe and inspire them to learn through fun, educational, hands-on activities. Unfortunately, there aren’t nearly enough afterschool programs to meet the need. That needs to change because afterschool and summer learning programs help children reach their full potential and ready them for the jobs of tomorrow.”

The New York skyline will again shine for afterschool tonight when, for the 12th consecutive year, the iconic Empire State Building is lit up in yellow and blue for afterschool. Lights will also shine for afterschool this evening across the country, as the Pennsylvania Capitol, Florida’s

Orlando Eye, the Indianapolis Power & Light building, buildings along the Dallas skyline, and the M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore light up in honor of *Lights On Afterschool*. Earlier this month, the waterfalls of Sioux Falls lit up to kick off South Dakota's celebrations.

The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that 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 others support afterschool programs, but investments are frequently under threat. Two years in a row, President Trump has proposed a budget that would have eliminated federal funding for afterschool and summer learning programs. While Congress has rejected the call to eliminate afterschool funding and included modest increases in FY2018 and FY2019, threats of cuts continue to loom.

[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.

Among the more than 200 diverse national, state and local *Lights On Afterschool 2018* partners supporting *Lights On Afterschool* this year are 4-H Afterschool, After-School All-Stars, Association for Science-Technology Centers, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, Camp Fire, Food Research & Action Center (FRAC), Girls Inc., National Association of Police Athletics/Activities Leagues (PAL), National League of Cities, National Recreation & Park Association, Think Together, the YMCA of the USA and others. A complete list of national *Lights On Afterschool* partners [is here](#).

A list of *Lights On Afterschool* events is [here](#). To find other events in your area, see [this map](#).

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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.