



NEWS RELEASE
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An Afterschool Rally of Historic Proportions

Empire State Building, Mount Rushmore to be Lit Up For Eleventh Annual Lights On Afterschool!

One of New York's most famous landmarks and the faces of four of the nation's most revered presidents will be bathed in a warm glow this October when children, parents, grandparents, educators, community leaders, policy makers, celebrities and others across the country come together for the 11th annual nationwide rally for afterschool. New York's Empire State Building will be lit up in yellow to mark *Lights On Afterschool* for the fourth year in a row on October 21. Thousands of miles away in South Dakota, Mount Rushmore will be lit when the memorial plays host to a *Lights On Afterschool* kick-off event featuring Lakota Indian dance and song on October 16.

Since the Afterschool Alliance organized the first *Lights On Afterschool* in 2000, it has grown to include more than 7,500 events across the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide. This year, more than a million people are expected to participate.

"I am so excited to have the opportunity to see Mount Rushmore lit up to celebrate the afterschool programs that keep our children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant, who will speak at the South Dakota event. "It's a fitting tribute to the enormous contributions our afterschool programs make to children, families, schools and communities that these historic landmarks will be a part of the only nationwide rally for afterschool this year."

Across the nation, *Lights On Afterschool* events give youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, and to send the message that millions more kids need quality afterschool programs. (A growing list of rallies is available online at www.AfterschoolAlliance.org.)

In advance of *Lights On Afterschool* this year, the Afterschool Alliance will release a new special report from *America After 3 PM: A Household Survey on Afterschool in America*, the most in-depth study ever to explore how America's children spend their afternoons. This special report, *America After 3PM: From Big Cities to Small Towns*, will examine the differences in afterschool participation, satisfaction and demand across rural, suburban and urban communities. Both the *America After 3PM* full report and this new special report are sponsored by JCPenney Afterschool, a charitable organization committed to making life-enriching afterschool programs available to more students and families.

The Afterschool Alliance and JCPenney Afterschool will release the latest findings at an event in Des Moines, Iowa on October 12. The report will also reveal city-level data on Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York that will be featured at *Lights On* events in those cities.

Actress Rhea Perlman is a spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is Founding Chair, a position he has held since 2001.

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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.

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