

NEWS RELEASE
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The Lights are On for Afterschool At Military Bases Worldwide This Week

Afterschool programs are important for all families. Military families depend on these programs to keep their kids safe and inspire them to learn while parents are on duty. That's why at U.S. military installations across the country and around the world, children, parents, educators and others will participate in *Lights On Afterschool*, the only nationwide – and worldwide – rally for afterschool programs, organized by the Afterschool Alliance.

“Afterschool programs help kids succeed and give parents peace of mind, which is critically important to all families,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “We’re delighted to have so many military bases join the tenth annual *Lights On Afterschool*. Their participation underscores the need to ensure that all children have access to afterschool programs.”

Lights On Afterschool events being held on military bases this year include:

- An open house at which parents and other people on the base will have the opportunity to learn more about the School Age Program at the Aviano Air Force Base in Italy. Parents and children will engage in pumpkin carving, face painting, relay races and more. For information, contact Tasia Ellison, Eielson School Age Program, tasia.ellison@aviano.af.mil.
- A multi-cultural festival celebrating the different places children in the School Age Program on Goodfellow Air Force Base in Texas have lived. This cultural celebration will include dance, food and games from a numerous countries. The children are researching, planning and presenting the festival. For more information, contact Terry Killgore, School Age Program, Goodfellow, terry.killgore@goodfellow.af.mil.
- An open house featuring science, physical fitness, art and drama activities at the Before and After School-Age Program on Edwards Air Force Base in California. The students will decorate the School-Age center with light bulbs and facts about how after school programs benefit children, parents, and the community. For more information, contact Sharon Baker, sharon.baker@edwards.af.mil.
- A family Bingo night and cake at the Elmendorf Youth Center on the Elmendorf Air Force Base in Arkansas. Children at the Center will also take their parents on tours of the Center. For more information, contact Madison Duran, Elmendorf Air Force Base, madison.duran@elmendorf.af.mil.

- A special game show for parents, “Are You Smarter Than A School Ager,” at the Tinker Youth Center on the Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma. Parents will also have the opportunity to join their children in science experiments and light bulb cookie decoration. For more information, contact Joy Shelly, Tinker Youth Center, joy.shelly@tinker.af.mil.
- An art exhibit and social for parents of the children who participate in the Tyndall Youth Programs at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida. For more information, contact JoeAnn McLeer, Tyndall Youth Programs, joe.mcleer@tyndall.af.mil.

At *Lights On Afterschool* rallies throughout the country and around the world this week, Americans will urge leaders to increase support for the afterschool programs that children and families need. In support of the event, the Empire State Building will be lit up for the third year in a row on October 22. In addition, this year for the first time, thanks to Woodcraft Rangers, city officials in Los Angeles will light the historic Lindbergh Beacon atop City Hall that evening, so that national landmarks on both coasts will be lit up in celebration of afterschool.

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.

In advance of *Lights On Afterschool* this year, the Afterschool Alliance released the second *America After 3PM: A Household Survey on Afterschool in America*, the most in-depth study ever to explore how America’s children spend their afternoons. Sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, a charitable organization committed to inspiring children to be smart, strong and socially responsible, it finds that despite an increase in the number of children attending afterschool programs over the last five years, more than a quarter of the nation’s schoolchildren are on their own in the afternoons. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs, if programs were available. Data from all 50 states was released on October 15.

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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.