

NEWS RELEASE
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CONTACT: Gretchen Wright
202/371-1999

Lights On Afterschool Goes Green!

A Million Americans Expected to Join Ninth Annual Rally for Afterschool on Thursday, October 16

Americans are going green these days – recycling, driving hybrid cars, buying more energy-efficient appliances. This year, the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs is going green as well. The Afterschool Alliance has updated the symbol for *Lights On Afterschool* by replacing the standard incandescent light bulb it has used for eight years with a compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL).

The 2008 *Lights On Afterschool* poster features a CFL, and afterschool programs participating in *Lights On Afterschool* across the country will use the new CFL art for decorations and messages to lawmakers at all levels about the importance of afterschool programs. The 2008 *Lights On Afterschool* poster featuring CFLs was designed by Sarah, a 13-year-old who attends the Youth Rembrandts Greater Cleveland-West afterschool program.

This year's *Lights On Afterschool* events on October 16 will mark the end of a year-long celebration of the 10th anniversary of 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool programs.

Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, *Lights On Afterschool* 2008 will include some 7,500 events throughout the nation and at United States military bases around the world. At these events, a million Americans will urge leaders to support the afterschool programs that keep children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. More than 14 million children have no safe, supervised activities available to them after the school day ends.

The 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 afterschool programs.

“We are so pleased to showcase the wonderful talents of afterschool students by using a poster designed by one of them for *Lights On Afterschool* this year,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “On October 16, all across the country, we will send the message that Americans want to keep the lights on for children – and we’ll do it in an energy-conscious way. Supporting afterschool programs and conserving energy both help ensure a better future for our youth.”

Lights On Afterschool was launched in October 2000. Last year, a million people rallied at 7,500 events to show their support for afterschool programs. Organizers expect this year's event to be

even larger. Actress Rhea Perlman is a spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National 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.

NOTE: To request a PDF or TIF file of the 2008 *Lights On Afterschool* poster, please contact Gretchen Wright at 202/371-1999 or gretchen@prsolutionsdc.com.