



NEWS RELEASE
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Nationwide Rally for Afterschool Shines a Light On Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Learning

Afterschool programs not only keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families, they can also encourage students' interest in STEM subjects, and even STEM careers. Programs around the country will show off some of the ways they engage students in STEM learning during the 15th annual *Lights On Afterschool* this month. Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, *Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs.

Lights On Afterschool events that will focus on science include:

- On October 23, third and fourth grade students at **the HSCSD #1 Program in Hot Springs, Arkansas** will select experiments to conduct that involve science, technology, engineering, arts and math. The event will end with students launching paper lanterns to “light up the sky for afterschool.” It will be held at the Ralph Witters Elementary School.
- On October 8 and 15, middle school students in the **Orlando After-School All Stars program in Florida** will visit the Orlando Science Center to participate in a science, technology, engineering and math enrichment lab where they will learn about solar energy, water conservation and renewable resources. The workshops will be the introduction to the After-School All Stars curriculum for the year.
- On October 23, **Seabrook Adventure Zone in Seabrook, New Hampshire** will host a Halloween-themed *Lights On Afterschool* event at Seabrook Middle School in collaboration with Seabrook Community Center, Seacoast Youth Services, and the Seabrook Middle School. The event will showcase students' science projects and include stations where guests can engage in hands-on projects organized by the Museum of Science Curriculum.
- On October 10, students in kindergarten through fifth grade at the **Children's Aid Society's Goodhue Center afterschool program in New York City** will explore “upcycling” – creating three-dimensional structures using cardboard boxes and other recyclable materials. Their creations will be exhibited at the Staten Island Children's

Museum. Some of the structures will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Verrazano Bridge, which connects Staten Island to Brooklyn.

“We’re delighted that afterschool programs are using *Lights On Afterschool* to demonstrate the critical and unique role of afterschool programs in engaging youth in STEM learning,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Several programs have grants from Bright House Networks, the Association of Science Technology Centers, and others to support their science-based events. Afterschool programs play a very special role in offering students hands-on opportunities to learn more about science and math. We’re proud to have national events that allow programs to showcase the amazing ways they are teaching children and youth about robotics, the environment, space exploration and much more.”

A large and growing body of evidence demonstrates improvements in attendance, behavior, academic achievement and more among children who participate in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that afterschool programs encourage increased parental involvement – an important building block for student success.

In advance of *Lights On Afterschool* 2014, the Afterschool Alliance will release new data from the nation’s most comprehensive longitudinal survey of how America’s children are spending their afternoons. “America After 3PM,” a survey of more than 30,000 families, will provide new information on how participation and demand for afterschool have changed over the last decade and how they vary by state, income level, ethnicity, and more. For the first time, “America After 3PM” will include detailed data on STEM (science, technology, education and mathematics) and physical activity in afterschool. The forthcoming “America After 3 PM” report is funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Noyce Foundation, with additional support from the Heinz Endowments, The Robert Bowne Foundation and the Samueli Foundation.

To find a *Lights On Afterschool* event in your area, please visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaFindEvent.cfm>.

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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.