



NEWS RELEASE
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Lights On Afterschool Events Around Nation Showcase Students' Music, Dance, and Art

Many of the thousands of [Lights On Afterschool](#) events across the country this month are highlighting the ways afterschool programs inspire children and youth through the arts. Organized by the [Afterschool Alliance](#), *Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs. It will be held on October 28 this year.

Hundreds of thousands of students, parents, educators, policymakers, and community leaders will participate in this year's 22nd annual celebration of *Lights On Afterschool*, joining in local events, both in-person and virtual, hosted by afterschool providers across the country. Events will involve schools, community centers, parks and recreation centers, and other community partners to demonstrate the many ways afterschool programs help students succeed in school and in life. Many will highlight students' artistic creations, a reflection of their daily activities in afterschool.

Among the scheduled events at programs around the nation:

Fairbanks, Alaska: The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District 21st Century Community Learning Centers afterschool programs will host an event at the Lathrop High School auditorium on October 27 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. The event will include stations focused on literacy and culture as well as performances from different programs including fencing, Native Dance, theater and step team. The event is open to students across six afterschool programs, and up to 300 people are expected to attend.

McGehee, Arkansas: The Boys & Girls Club of McGehee will host "Lights, Camera, Action" for *Lights On Afterschool*. The event will feature a gallery with photography pieces children have been working on during the year. There will be a Light Bulb Challenge in which participants will pose for a social-media-friendly photograph while mimicking a light bulb, and a presentation from Mrs. Arkansas Earth. The event is set for October 28 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM, and as many as 100 people are expected.

Chicago, Illinois: The Carole Robertson Center for Learning's afterschool program is hosting a virtual talent show for its *Lights On Afterschool* celebration. The ongoing event launched online on October 20, featuring videos created by students at the program's four sites. Students in the videos dance, sing, and perform in class skits. In addition, one student leads a two-minute Rubik's Cube demonstration.

New Orleans, Louisiana: Community Works of Louisiana will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* at each of its eight sites with a photo-booth style event. Students will create a lightbulb collage, allowing them to draw, color, or write about their favorite parts of afterschool. The event will be on October 28 from 5:00 to 5:30 PM.

St. Louis, Missouri: At each of six elementary school afterschool sites, the Arts In Mind (AIM) afterschool program will host arts-related activities designed to reinforce teamwork, sportsmanship, and imagination. The events, set for October 28 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM, will bring together parents, teachers, and other community stakeholders. Events will be held at the AIM program's sites at the Buder, Mason, Meramec, Mullanphy, Woerner, and Woodward Elementary Schools.

Cleveland, Ohio: The Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association's 21st Century Community Learning sites will host a variety of activities for *Lights On Afterschool*. At the Newton D. Baker School of Arts program, 60 students in grades K-8 will make paper mâché light bulbs with their parents. Students at the Glenville High School program will form groups to come up with a design for a t-shirt for the Partners for Student Success program, with the resulting designs to be submitted to a panel of teacher judges. The events are scheduled for the afternoon of October 28.

Pasadena, Texas: In this pandemic year, the Pasadena Communities In School afterschool program will host a drive-through "Trunk Or Treat" event for *Lights On Afterschool*, after which students will receive a take-home arts and crafts activity to demonstrate their creative initiative through the arts. The activity kit will include a canvas, paint, paint brushes, and a template from which to work, as well as flyers about afterschool programs and Halloween safety tips. Students and their families will submit a picture of their completed project. The Trunk or Treat event will run from 4:30 to 6:30 PM on October 28.

"Giving children and youth an opportunity to express themselves through the arts is particularly important during these difficult days," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "It's terrific that so many *Lights On Afterschool* events will showcase student creativity and the thoughtful ways afterschool programs foster and inspire their talents."

During the pandemic, afterschool and summer learning programs have stepped up to expand their hours and services, provide in-person and virtual educational activities, deliver meals and enrichment kits, support students during remote learning, check in with children to ensure their social and emotional needs are being met, connect families to social services, and much more.

The most recent [America After 3PM](#) household survey of more than 31,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, finds that for every child in an afterschool program in the United States, three more are waiting to get in. The families of 24.6 million children — more than ever before — are unable to access a program. Many report cost as a barrier. There are significant inequities, with Black and Latinx children unable to access the afterschool programs their parents want for them.

A large and powerful body of evidence demonstrates improvements in grades, school attendance, behavior and more among children who participate in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that students in afterschool programs are more engaged in school and excited about learning and develop critical work and life skills such as problem solving, teamwork, and communications.

The New York skyline will shine for afterschool on October 28 for the 15th consecutive year, as the iconic Empire State Building is lit up in yellow and blue for afterschool.

BellXcel, Capital One, and Clear Channel Outdoor are generous sponsors of *Lights On Afterschool* this year.

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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.