



NEWS RELEASE  
September 7, 2005

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## **Afterschool a Hit with Pro Sports Leagues**

### ***MLB, NBA, NFL and NHL Join Afterschool for All: Project 2010***

The four national leagues representing America's most popular professional sports have come together to support the afterschool programs that keep kids safe and healthy, help working parents and inspire students to learn. This week, the Afterschool Alliance announced that Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, National Football League and National Hockey League have joined thousands of other influential organizations and individuals in *Afterschool for All: 2010 Project*, a national effort to press for afterschool programs for all children. Dozens of youth leagues and professional and amateur sports associations are also participating.

*Project 2010* was created to help the diverse institutions and individuals who support afterschool deliver a united, powerful message about the importance of afterschool programs in the lives of children, families and communities. The mission of *Project 2010* is to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality, safe and enriching afterschool programs by the year 2010.

"We are delighted that these four leagues are joining *Project 2010* and showing support for afterschool programs," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "We've heard over and over from athletes around the country that afterschool programs were key to their success. Today's afterschool programs are offering kids the chance to participate in activities that keep them fit, teach them about teamwork, and motivate them to live healthier, more active lives. At a time when an epidemic of obesity is threatening the health of so many children, we simply must make afterschool programs available to all our kids."

In addition to the four national sports leagues, *Project 2010* includes numerous youth sports groups, including American Youth Football, Inc.; American Youth Soccer Organization; USA Cycling; USA Gymnastics; USA Swimming; USA Team Handball; USA Weightlifting; Action for Healthy Kids; and the Urban Health Initiative. Thousands of educators, youth advocates, business leaders, law enforcement experts, entertainers, and others also have joined.

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The Afterschool Alliance recently took *Project 2010* public, inviting organizations and individuals to go to [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org) and sign onto the following statement:

*In America today, millions of youth are alone and unsupervised in the hours after schools close and before parents return home from work. This puts children and teens at grave risk for juvenile crime, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and other problems. It means students are wasting precious time when they could be learning. And it leaves millions of working parents worried about their children when they should be focused on their jobs. This unproductive, untenable, and truly unacceptable situation would be remedied if our nation invested more fully in the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, help working families and inspire success. That is why we raise our voices, individually and collectively, in support of efforts to give America's youth and families access to the quality, affordable afterschool programs that they deserve.*

Through the Afterschool Alliance, members of *Project 2010* have opportunities to bring messages about the importance of afterschool to new and varied communities. They will tell the nation that afterschool programs and opportunities:

- Provide safe, challenging, engaging and fun learning experiences to help children and youth develop their social, emotional, physical, cultural and academic skills.
- Work in collaboration with schools and community resources to offer children and youth an array of accessible and diverse services and opportunities.
- Promote positive relationships among children, youth, families and adults.
- Engage children, youth, families, schools and community partners in ongoing design, implementation and evaluation of activities.

*The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

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