



NEWS RELEASE

October 12, 2023

CONTACT: [Magen Eissenstat](mailto:Magen.Eissenstat@afterschoolalliance.org), 202/609-9889

Student Art, Music, and Dance Will Be Showcased at *Lights On Afterschool* Events Across Nation This Month

Many of the thousands of [Lights On Afterschool](#) events across the country this month will shine a light on the ways afterschool programs engage and inspire children and youth through visual arts, music, dance, photography and more. Organized by the [Afterschool Alliance](#), *Lights On Afterschool* is the only national rally for afterschool programs, which keep kids safe and healthy, inspire them to learn, and give working parents peace of mind that their children are safe and supervised after the school day ends.

Now in its 24th year, *Lights On Afterschool* will take place on October 26th. More than a million people are expected to participate in *Lights On Afterschool* events held on and around that day at schools, 4-Hs, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, cities, parks, museums, community centers, and other places. The events send the message that demand for afterschool programs is high, too many students are without programs, and the pandemic exacerbated both staff and funding shortages.

“Every day, afterschool programs across the country help students discover their talents, build their confidence, and foster their innate creativity by engaging with the arts,” said Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance. “As students continue to recover and heal from the many harms the pandemic caused, it is essential to provide them with opportunities to express themselves. We are thrilled that so many *Lights On Afterschool* events this year will showcase afterschool programs’ power to help students find their voices through music, painting, theater, dance and more.”

Among the arts-focused events that will be part of this year’s national rally:

Bismarck, Arkansas: On October 26, LiL Lions Daycare will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with performances by the student band, Rainboomer’s, at their Outdoor Musical Flower and Thunder Wall Garden starting at 7:00 PM. The event will also feature student artwork and the building will be illuminated to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*.

Colton, California: For *Lights On Afterschool*, Think Together will hold a talent show on October 26, starting at 3:15 PM. “A Night At Disney: Disney Concert” will feature students from each grade

performing a Disney song or skit, ending with a grand finale dance number. The performances are designed to teach the students the importance of being creative and thinking outside the box.

Sacramento, California: On October 26, the Sacramento Chinese Community Center will host a spooky costume dance party for *Lights On Afterschool*. Students and families will dress up in their Halloween best and show off their dance moves in the Tahoe Elementary School cafeteria, which will be decorated with artwork created by students in every grade. More than 150 people are expected.

San Diego, California: To mark *Lights On Afterschool*, McKinley PrimeTime will host a Spooky Talent Show on October 26 from 4:00 to 5:00 PM. The talent show will showcase the many talents students have, from singing and dancing to magic tricks and storytelling. Up to 100 students and families are expected to attend.

North Chicago, Illinois: For *Lights On Afterschool*, the Boys & Girls Club of Lake County will hold a glow-in-the-dark art showcase to display student art projects on October 26 from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. The classroom will be decorated with student art featuring the *Lights On Afterschool* lightbulb, lava lamps, words of affirmations, and nature and wildlife scenes to show Club families how the afterschool program is engaging, fun, and impactful for students.

El Reno, Oklahoma: On October 6, the Roblyer Learning Center partnered with the Keeping It “Real” Afterschool Program by hosting a fall carnival that featured booth games, displays of afterschool works, and art projects for *Lights On Afterschool*. Students also promoted the importance of afterschool programs to the community as the carnival served as a fundraiser for the afterschool program. More than 300 people attended.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin: On October 26, Frances Starms Camp will host its 3rd annual *Lights On Afterschool* event with a family fun night. From 5:00 to 7:00 PM, students and families will come together at the Starms Early Childhood Center for a night full of arts and crafts activities. The event will feature booths with jewelry making, face painting, cookie decorating, and mad scientist slime. After working through all the stations, families will receive a meal. More than 150 people are expected.

For the 17th consecutive year, the New York skyline will shine for afterschool on October 26th when the iconic Empire State Building is lit in yellow and blue to celebrate.

Some 24.7 million U.S. children not in an afterschool program would be enrolled, if a program were available to them, according to a [survey of 1,500 parents](#) commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance and conducted by Edge Research in 2022. That is the highest number ever recorded. Unmet demand for afterschool programs is significantly higher among Latino and Black children (at 60% and 54% respectively) than among children overall (49%). Cost is the top barrier to enrollment, cited by 57% of parents as a reason for not enrolling their child. Ninety percent of parents rate the quality of the afterschool program their child attends as excellent (51%) or very good (39%).

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

#

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.