



NEWS RELEASE
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***Lights On Afterschool* Events Across Country Set for Next Week**

Youth-led virtual conversations. A webinar on re-imagining engineering, with girls leading the way. A fall festival with bicycle decorating and pumpkin bowling. Events focused on bridging the gap to the virtual world that include lessons about bridges and how they are constructed, and bridge-building by students. Those are some of the educational, fun, enriching activities taking place for [Lights On Afterschool](#) across the nation next week, as the only national rally for afterschool programs features a mix of virtual and in-person events this year. Now in its 21st year, *Lights On Afterschool* is organized by the [Afterschool Alliance](#) to showcase the many ways afterschool programs help students succeed in school and in life. Many events will be held on Thursday, October 22nd.

“In normal times, afterschool programs do an extraordinary job of supporting students and families with homework help, mentors, art and music, healthy snacks and meals, STEM activities, college and job readiness, sports and fitness, robotics, and much more. Programs have stepped up during the pandemic with badly needed additional supports to keep students engaged and learning, and help families access food, the Internet, translation help, and health and social supports,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “We’re delighted that programs are planning thousands of events for *Lights On Afterschool* this year to showcase the creative ways afterschool programs engage and educate children and youth. Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working parents – and now they are doing so during expanded hours and in expanded ways. That is an untold story of the pandemic.”

The Afterschool Alliance will host [virtual events](#) for *Lights On Afterschool* each night next week. Among the many state and local *Lights On Afterschool* events set for the next week:

Rogers, Arkansas: The Rogers Activity Center will host an outdoor fall festival open to the public on October 22nd from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Guests must wear a mask and will have their temperature taken upon arrival. Families are encouraged to bring their bicycles, which they can ride to booths that provide fun fall activities and games including bike decorating, pumpkin painting, pumpkin bowling, and more. Attendees will collect tickets at the booths, which they can exchange for a prize. A food truck will feed families.

Oakland, California: Bay Area Community Resources (BACR) is holding a virtual event to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* on October 15th from 4:30 to 5:30 PM. There will be art projects, social and emotional learning (SEL) practice, and a community discussion. Students, families, the school community, and other BACR afterschool programs are invited.

Boynton Beach, Florida: On October 22nd, Prime Time Palm Beach County, a 20-year local nonprofit that supported more than 200 afterschool programs and 30,000 children and youth in 2018-2019, will call attention to *Lights On Afterschool* through a dedicated webpage and social media awareness. Prime Time honors local afterschool professionals who are on the frontline every afternoon inspiring our children to be their best and supporting them to thrive socially and academically.

Georgia: The Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with a Town Hall on October 19th at 3:00 PM. Participants will virtually tour programs in action and hear from students, families, and staff live and through pre-recorded videos about how afterschool programs support learning and why it's more important than ever to keep the lights on, both during and after school.

Hawaii: The Hawaii Afterschool Alliance will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with activities, a dance challenge, and a Town Hall. On Wednesday, October 21st from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM, there will be a statewide afterschool rally to showcase the power of afterschool in Hawaii and celebrate policymakers, business, philanthropy, and community leaders. Students will also participate in a Dance Challenge to the song "Light it Up - Remix" by Major Lazer. On October 22nd, students and parents will post photos on social media using the hashtags: #LightsOnAfterschool, #LightbulbChallenge and #LightsOnHI.

Iowa: The Iowa Afterschool Alliance will hold a week of activities to celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*. On Monday, October 19th at 10:00 AM there will be a webinar for program providers on supporting youth voices in afterschool. On Tuesday, October 20th, students will submit stories and photos that illustrate how their programs light up the community. These stories and photos will be posted on the Iowa Afterschool Alliance's Facebook and Twitter pages. On Wednesday, October 21st, the Iowa Afterschool Alliance will host two virtual events: at 9:00 AM a webinar hosted with the ALCP titled "Reimagine Engineering with Girls Leading the Way" and at 4:00 PM a livestream STEM activity provided by LaunchPAD. On Thursday, October 22nd, there will be a Legislative Roundtable conversation with policymakers, program providers, schools, businesses, families, youth and other stakeholders to discuss how afterschool programs have stepped up to serve youth and communities.

Cold Spring, Kentucky: Crossroads Elementary School will hold a three-day family scavenger hunt across the school's boundary zone for *Lights On Afterschool*. It will start on October 17th at 11:00 AM and last until October 19th at 7:00 PM. Families are asked to take pictures during the scavenger hunt and submit them to be used in a movie, which will be sent to legislators and others. Throughout the month, students will participate in "Light up your yard," a sign and flyer decorating event.

White Plains, New York: The After School Connection Program will host a *Lights On Afterschool* event the week of October 19th, starting with discussions on why afterschool programs are so important to students, their families and community. Youth will create art projects and posters supporting *Lights On Afterschool*, followed by a lighting of the fountain on October 22nd. White Plains Mayor Thomas Roach, a long-time supporter of *Lights On Afterschool*, will light the main water fountain in downtown White Plains, as well as downtown parking lots, in yellow to support *Lights On Afterschool!* After the lighting ceremony, students will gather at their program!

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: To celebrate *Lights On Afterschool*, After-School All-Stars Philadelphia & Camden is holding a virtual event from October 19th to October 22nd. The theme is “Let’s Bridge the Gap Together” in honor of students bridging the gap into this new virtual world. As part of the lessons during the week, students will learn about bridges, their history, how they are constructed, and their importance. Students will participate in their own bridge-building activity and at the end of the event they will have the opportunity to present their bridge to engineers. Additionally, landmarks throughout the Philadelphia and Camden area will light up in blue to show support for afterschool programs.

Tooele, Utah: The Tooele Boys & Girls Club will celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* with a Haunted Walk Thru at a local train museum that will run from October 23rd to October 30th from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Fifteen local agencies will create the haunted scenes. Families will pre-register and be assigned a specific time to attend. Late nights for teens are scheduled on October 23rd and October 30th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. More than 1,000 people are expected over the week, including guests from Tooele City Parks and Recreation, Tooele County Health Department, Tooele City Police, Tooele County Boys Scouts, Communities that Care, Children’s Justice Center, Create Better Health with 4-H, and other agencies.

For the 14th consecutive year, the New York skyline will shine for afterschool one night during *Lights On Afterschool* week, and landmarks will be lit for afterschool across the country.

The [America After 3PM](#) household survey of more than 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide – but the unmet demand is great. For every child in an afterschool program today, two more are waiting to get in. Unmet demand is especially high in rural communities and communities of concentrated poverty. One in five students in the United States is unsupervised after the school day ends. A new household survey on afterschool will be released in early December.

Governments, parents, philanthropies, businesses and others support afterschool and summer learning programs, but investments are under threat. Again this year, the Trump administration recommended eliminating dedicated federal funding for afterschool and summer learning programs in its budget proposal, although bipartisan majorities in Congress have made clear they will not do so. The Afterschool Alliance is asking Congress to provide a onetime \$6.2 billion boost in funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers – the chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs – to ensure out-of-school-time programs can do more to help students and families during this difficult time.

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 communication.

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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.