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**NYC DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
JOINS PARENTS AND NON-PROFIT PARTNERS TO  
HELP KEEP “LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL”**

*America’s Largest Afterschool System Joins  
National “Lights On Afterschool” Campaign*

The NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) is joining afterschool programs throughout the five boroughs and the families they serve in marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lights on Afterschool, a nationwide celebration that calls attention to the importance of afterschool programs for America’s children, families and communities. Across the country, some 7,500 events are scheduled. Here in New York City, the Empire State Building will be lit up in yellow this evening, and scores of afterschool programs are hosting open houses featuring a wide variety of activities, including student performances, science demonstrations and banner raisings.

“Lights On Afterschool is the perfect opportunity for us to recognize the thousands of staff members, parents and young people who share a commitment to quality afterschool programming that has made New York City a leader in the field,” said DYCD Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav. “The current economic environment means more parents and guardians are seeking high-quality afterschool programs for their children. I look forward to partnering with leaders in New York, Albany, Washington and beyond to expand and enhance our afterschool system. Afterschool programs are not only helping parents keep their jobs, they are also providing well-qualified human service professionals with meaningful and rewarding work.”

“High-quality out-of-school time programs can help ensure that a child’s learning and enrichment doesn’t end after the last school bell rings,” said Nancy Devine, Director of Communities at The Wallace Foundation. “New York City is helping demonstrate that citywide approaches to improving out-of-school time programs – including gathering reliable information on who is being served, and on the quality of individual programs – can help create more high-quality opportunities for children, and meet the unique needs of different communities throughout the five boroughs.”

“New York is ahead of the pack on afterschool, and has special reason to celebrate Lights On Afterschool today,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “New York City’s investments in afterschool initiatives have clearly had great impact. But there is much more to do. Across the state, the majority of New York parents who want their kids in afterschool programs aren’t able to find them, usually because programs aren’t available, they can’t afford the fees, or transportation issues make it impossible. These are all barriers we can and should overcome. Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. Every New York family that needs an afterschool program should have access to one.”

This year’s event follows the introduction of compelling new data demonstrating the importance of afterschool programs. According to the [\*America After 3PM report\*](#), released by the Afterschool Alliance and sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, 8.4 million children across the nation (15 percent of all school-age children) are in afterschool programs. New Yorkers should be proud to note that the study ranked our state third in its “Top 10 States for Afterschool” list. The State’s increase is significantly driven by growth in New York City’s coordinated system of afterschool programs, which will serve more than 150,000 young people over the current school year. Below are brief summaries and highlights of afterschool initiatives administered by DYCD:

### **Out-of-School Time**

In September 2005, Mayor Bloomberg launched the Out-of-School Time (OST) initiative to provide a mix of academic, recreational and cultural activities for elementary, middle and high school-aged youth. In OST’s first year, we served 59,071 young people with a budget of \$47 million. Four years later, OST is the largest municipally-funded afterschool system in the nation, with 517 programs projected to serve more than 75,000 young people throughout the City during the 2009-2010 school year. OST’s current budget is \$110.7 million, a 135% increase since 2005. Our focus remains on providing working parents and their children with high-quality, comprehensive programs that operate during school recesses and the summer.

### **Beacon Community Centers**

Beacon programs are collaborative, school-based community centers designed to provide high-quality holistic services to youth and adults after school, in the evenings, and on weekends. Beacons were introduced in response to widespread concern about crime and drugs in New York City during the early 1990s. There are currently 80 Beacon sites operated by 44 community-based organizations. Together, these programs serve more than 96,000 youth and families annually. DYCD works with providers to offer an expanded range of structured programming designed to engage, support and retain middle school participants.

### **Beacon Satellites and the Cornerstone Initiative**

On February 2, 2009, DYCD began operating a new portfolio of youth and afterschool programs in 25 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) community centers as part of a citywide effort to ensure continuity of services. The plan is occurring in two phases. In the first phase, which began February 2009 and will run through December 31, 2009, DYCD-funded Beacon community centers located near the 25 NYCHA facilities are operating comprehensive satellite programs at each of the respective sites. The second phase of the plan begins on January 1, 2010 with the launch of new Cornerstone Initiative programs at each of the 25 NYCHA Community Centers. The new programs will serve at least 5,500 youth and 1,725 adults.

### **Teen ACTION**

Teen ACTION, DYCD's Service Learning program, is part of Mayor Bloomberg's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) anti-poverty initiative, which has committed over \$150 million annually to explore innovative approaches to poverty reduction. DYCD is administering 54 Teen ACTION programs throughout the City, with a total enrollment of 3,274 youth. Each program offers participants the chance to engage in structured learning, service projects, and reflection. Participants develop life skills while making a meaningful contribution to their community.

### **In-School Youth**

The In-School Youth (ISY) program provides year-round services to at-risk high school juniors and seniors. ISY services are designed to promote skills attainment, drop-out prevention, and high school graduation or attainment of a GED. All ISY participants are guaranteed employment in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), a subsidized summer work experience. The initiative, which will serve more than 4,500 young people this school year, is funded through the federal Workforce Investment Act.

New Yorkers can find out more about DYCD programs in their neighborhood at [www.nyc.gov/dycd](http://www.nyc.gov/dycd). They can also call DYCD Youth Connect at (800) 246-4646 or the City's 311 information line.

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