



YMCA

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **YMCA Celebrates Lights On Afterschool for Kids**

**OKLAHOMA CITY** (October 16, 2009) – More than 500 school age children participate in after school programs at the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City, but hundreds more go home alone when the school day ends. YMCAs across the metro are hoping to improve those statistics through the celebration of Lights on Afterschool, a nationwide event on Oct. 22 to rally support for afterschool programs.

“We are proud to participate in this event to create awareness about the importance of afterschool programs,” said Kelly Kay, YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City Vice President and COO. “We are the area’s largest provider of school age childcare and proof that learning and activities don’t have to end with the school day.”

Parents and guardians are invited to attend the YMCA’s afterschool programs with their children at one of the 10 locations across the greater Oklahoma City area. Lights on Afterschool gives youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs, and send the message that hundreds more need quality afterschool programs.

“It has been a rough year for my daughter, but knowing that she is going to see the same friendly faces in a fun and safe afterschool program at the YMCA has made all the difference to her,” Tina Shaw, an Edmond parent, said.

The YMCA’s program is designed to provide before and afterschool care for children ages 5 to 12. The curriculum includes components in arts and humanities, character development, health and wellness, homework, literacy, science and technology, service learning, social competence and conflict resolution.

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“The entire experience for children is built around activities that challenge them to accept and demonstrate positive values,” Kay said. “It is our hope that these values will stay with them long after they leave our program, which is why Lights On Afterschool is about so much more than just keeping your child from going home alone.”

More than a million people are expected to participate in Lights On Afterschool rallies across the country to urge leaders to support the afterschool programs that keep children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.

**About the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City**

The YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City is a charitable, not-for-profit organization that serves children, families and adults of all ages, regardless of gender, race, abilities, or income. Major program areas include aquatic and water safety, youth sports, before and afterschool childcare, camping, health and wellness, teen leadership and community development. The YMCA served nearly 130,000 people in the greater Oklahoma City area last year. For more information please call (405) 297-7777 or visit [www.ymcaokc.org](http://www.ymcaokc.org).

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