

For Immediate Release  
Media Contact: Lisa Desatnik, 513-984-5474

Public Contact: Community Services YMCA, 513-961-3200



## **Parents, Caretakers, Community Volunteers and Advocates Invited To M.E. Lyons YMCA AfterSchool Program October 22**

October 16, 2009 -- On October 22, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., parents, children, caretakers, community volunteers and advocates, are invited to the M.E. Lyons YMCA CincyAfterSchool site to celebrate the accomplishments that children enjoy because of the enriching experiences at afterschool sites. The M.E. Lyons YMCA CincyAfterSchool site is located at Riverview East Academy - 3555 Kellogg Ave (45226-2180).

It is all part of a national celebration organized by the Afterschool Alliance and sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. 'Lights On Afterschool!' shines the light on after-school programs and calls attention to the need for more after-school resources nationwide.

"We know that quality after school activities are good for children and for communities because we have seen success firsthand. Lights On AfterSchool! is an opportunity for parents and others who care about the futures of our young people to experience our programs and help ensure all children have access to them," said Jennifer Henderson, YMCA senior program director.

A national study showing 15.1 million children left alone after the school day demonstrates the strong need for engaging activities after the last classroom bell. Greater Cincinnati children are fortunate because YMCA-led afterschool programs are offering them opportunities to thrive; however, there continues to be a growing need for more sites to serve more students. For more on the study, please visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM.cfm>.

"The bottom line is that more children need - and don't have - afterschool programs today than five years ago," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "We have increased the number of children in afterschool programs, but not enough to keep up with demand."

With more than 60 after school locations, the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati is one of the largest providers of child care programs in this region. In Cincinnati, the YMCA is a lead agency in the nationally recognized CincyAfterSchool Network – a partnership between Cincinnati Public Schools, the YMCA and other leading youth development agencies, school leaders and volunteers representing the after school component of Cincinnati Public School's Community Learning Center initiative. With 28 sites, CincyAfterSchool serves students in grades K through 12. Tutoring/mentoring; telecommunication/technology; career exploration; service learning; fine arts; leadership training; recreation; multi-cultural/diversity; non-school day programs including Saturdays, holidays, summers, evenings and family sessions are offered at each one. Some of their successes include: 46.6% increase in reading test scores from 2007 to 2008; 44.8% increase in math test scores from 2007 to 2008; 93.6% plan to attend college.

YMCA AfterSchool program goals include: increasing student achievement, reducing risk-taking behavior, and providing balanced programming opportunities for all children, youth, and their families.

For all other locations, the public can contact Jennifer Henderson at the Community Services YMCA, 513-961-3200.

**ABOUT THE YMCA OF GREATER CINCINNATI:** As the area's largest youth and family-focused not-for-profit, the YMCA reinforces character values through assets-based programs and services to more than 143,000 individuals, kids and families annually. Adult mentors encourage young people to be caring, responsible, respectful, and honest through sports, summer camps, structured child and afterschool care, and leadership building programs. Branches offer quality time for families, resources for parents, and a variety of opportunities for seniors to be active. The Membership for All sliding scale fee structure means everyone, no matter their ability to pay, can always benefit from the YMCA. Last year alone more than 17,400 families and individuals enjoyed healthier and happier lives because generous partners helped the YMCA in its vision to be accessible to all.

# # #