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Prime Time to Release Palm Beach County Results of *America After 3 PM* Survey at Afterschool Awareness Rally

***Comprehensive new study reveals significant percentage of children left alone or
cared for by a sibling after school in Palm Beach County***

BOYNTON BEACH, Fla., – Despite an increase in the number of children attending afterschool programs in recent years, the newly-released *America After 3 PM* survey indicates that approximately 33 percent of Palm Beach County children are left alone and 12 percent are cared for by a sibling in the after school hours. These are among the key findings that will be announced at *Shake, “Rally” and Roll*, a countywide afterschool awareness rally that will be held on the Plaza at West Palm Beach City Hall on Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. Held in conjunction with the 10th *Annual Lights On Afterschool* celebration, an awareness initiative celebrated nationwide each October, this important community rally will include remarks from West Palm Beach Mayor Lois J. Frankel and representatives from the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s office, the School District of Palm Beach County and the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County.

Conducted in January 2009 by the Afterschool Alliance, a national afterschool advocacy organization, *America After 3 PM* has been cited as the most extensive research in the last five years into how America’s children spend their afternoons. Prime Time requested a Palm Beach County oversampling of the *America After 3 PM* survey to determine how parents and guardians view and value afterschool programs locally.

“Even though national level data shows that the number of children in afterschool programs has increased in the last five years,” said Suzette L. Harvey, executive director of Prime Time Palm Beach County, “we assert that every Palm Beach County family that needs an afterschool program should have access to one. The data shows that 37 percent of survey respondents in our county would be likely to enroll their children in an afterschool program if one was available to them.”

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Other key Palm Beach County findings from *America After 3 PM*:

- **Palm Beach County parents/guardians believe afterschool programs work.** The vast majority (84 percent) of parents/guardians of children in afterschool programs are satisfied with the overall program their child attends.
- **A higher percentage of Palm Beach County children attend afterschool programs.** Approximately 34 percent of Palm Beach County children attend afterschool programs, more than twice the percentage reported nationally and 14 percent more than those surveyed in the state.
- **The unmet need of Palm Beach County children unsupervised each afternoon is significant.** Approximately 33 percent of our children are in self-care and 12 percent are in the care of siblings after school.

“Too many children in Palm Beach County are left alone between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.,” stated Harvey. “These are the hours when the highest incidents of violence, drug and alcohol use, and other potentially dangerous at-risk behaviors and activities can occur. Not only do afterschool programs keep kids safe but they also inspire learning and meet the needs of working families. As a community, we must increase our efforts to make sure that quality afterschool programming is available to all Palm Beach County children.”

More than one million Americans and 7,500 communities nationwide recognize the positive contributions of afterschool programs during *Lights On Afterschool* celebrations each year. Established by the Afterschool Alliance in 1999 as a grass roots celebration of afterschool programs, *Lights On Afterschool* brings together students, parents, educators, afterschool practitioners, elected officials and business and community leaders to demonstrate their support of quality afterschool programs.

For more information about the *America After 3 PM* study, *Lights On Afterschool* and the Afterschool Alliance, please visit www.afterschoolalliance.org.

About Prime Time Palm Beach County

Prime Time Palm Beach County, Inc. (www.primetimepbc.org) is non-profit organization that serves afterschool programs and practitioners. We provide supports and resources that increase program quality to positively impact school age youth. Prime Time receives funding from the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida, the Quantum Foundation and the Sun Sentinel Children’s Fund.

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