



Kyle Phillips | The Transcript

Aubrianan plays in the new Cox Stem Lounge after its unveiling Nov. 21, 2022, at Boys and Girls Club of Norman.

‘Lights on Afterschool’ day celebrated by Boys and Girls Club of Norman

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Today, the Boys and Girls Club of Norman celebrates “Lights on Afterschool,” an annual day of awareness for after-school programs around the country.

Lights on Afterschool is a project of the Afterschool Alliance, a nonprofit that provides resources to after-school programs and advocates for them at all levels of government. Across the country, over 8,000 rallies are hosted in recognition of Lights on Afterschool. The Boys and Girls Club of Norman plans to

use the day to talk to children about what they enjoy about the after-school programs they’re involved in, and to teach them about the importance of those programs.

“We switch up our programming for the day

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to just really highlight the kids, what they're interested in and why they like being here," said Whitney Dunn, the executive director of the Boys and Girls Club of Norman.

In addition to teaching its members about the importance of after-school programs, the Boys and Girls Club will release a video about their partnership with the Community After School

Program (CASP) to celebrate the day. CASP provides individualized tutoring plans for children, which Dunn says has helped the children to catch up on milestones they missed during the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"CASP was able to work with them one-on-one, and really get those literacy scores up so that they're more successful in the classroom, which is wonderful for our families," Dunn said.

The video about the part-

nership between the Boys and Girls Club and CASP will be released today on the Center for Children and Families' social media accounts (@CCFINorman).

Dunn said this is the first time the Boys and Girls Club of Norman has participated in Lights on Afterschool, and that in the future, she hopes to partner with other after-school programs to celebrate the event.

Dunn was named an ambassador of the After-school Alliance earlier this

year. As an ambassador, she lobbies at the State Capitol and coordinates partnerships between after-school programs across the state. When she learned she had been named an ambassador, Dunn said she was both nervous and excited.

"It's a little bit nerve wracking to go into a senator's office and tell them why they should support after school funding,"

Dunn said.

Ambassadors serve one-year terms and meet with other ambassadors across the country every month. After their term is over, ambassadors earn emeritus status, meaning that through Dunn, the Boys and Girls Club of Norman will have the After-school Alliances' resources at their disposal for years to come.

