



On a beautiful snowy evening, townspeople gathered to light the town tree for the holidays. Photo: Carmen Bates

Andover After School Program Provides Vital Services

By **Bonny Morris**
Andover After School Program

The Andover After School Program (AASP) and the Andover Five Alive Program (AFAP) provide an essential service to the community, and the Hamp House is ideally suited to host its operations. In most of our neighboring communities, after school programs are housed on school grounds, and the programs work together with the schools for success.

The Andover After School Program was founded in 1995 and primarily serves children from kindergarten to fifth grade. The Andover Five Alive Program was founded in 2001 to provide care for kindergarteners. As more families work outside the home, enrollment has steadily increased.

AASP is licensed for 22 children, and AFAP is licensed for 16. In 2007-2008, 34 children were enrolled in AASP and 15 in AFAP, compared to 28 in AASP and 8 in AFAP in 2004-2005.

In recent years the population of AE/MS has decreased. This year the program serves close to 30% of the kindergarten through fifth grade students at AE/MS.

As we near the end of our 10-year lease with the Andover School District, we are seeking a new lease. Please vote in support of our warrant article at the School District meeting in March.

Did you know?

- On school days, the hours between 3 PM and 6 PM are the most dangerous hours for our youth.
- After school programs not only provide a safe, supervised setting to protect youth, but also the supports that lead to greater academic success, strong friendships, and greater expectations for the future.
- Nearly 25% of New Hampshire children (54,000) go home alone after school.

• Afterschool Alliance states that the facts and research are clear: after school programs benefit kids, working families, and communities.

After School In New Hampshire

The following statistics demonstrate the need or demand for after school programs among the 233,877 school-age children in New Hampshire:

- 23%, or 53,792 children, are unsupervised after school
- Only 18%, or 42,098, of New Hampshire's kindergarten through twelfth-grade youth are able to participate in after school programs
- 35% of all children not in an after school program would be likely to participate if an after school program were available, according to Afterschool Alliance's *America After 3 PM*, published in 2004.
- More than 22% of kindergarten through twelfth-grade youth in self-care would be likely to participate in an after school program if one were available in the community.
- 77% of parents in New Hampshire are extremely or somewhat satisfied with the after school program their child attends.
- Nearly 5,298 of New Hampshire's kids are counting on the programs supported by the US Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative, the only federal program dedicated to after school programs.

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After School In America

- More than 14 million school age children (25%) are on their own after school. Among them are more than 40,000 kindergarteners.
- The parents of more than 28 million school-age children work outside the home.
- Only 6.5 million kindergarten through twelfth-grade children (11%) participate in after school programs. An additional 15 million would participate if a quality program were available in their community.

• The hours between 3 PM and 6 PM are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and sex.

• Nine in 10 Americans want all children and teens to have some type of organized activity or safe place to go after school.

• Parents miss an average of eight days of work per year due to a lack of after school care. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about after school care costs businesses up to \$300 billion per year.

These statistics come from the Afterschool Alliance; Lake, Snell, Perry and Associates Inc.; US Department of Labor; Fight Crime: Invest in Kids; the Community, Families, and Work Program at Brandeis University; Catalyst and Brandeis University.

Andover Lions Club Trims The Town Tree For The Holidays

By **Jim Goody**
Andover Lions Club

The Andover Lions Club, in conjunction with the Andover Service Club, has decorated the blue spruce in front of the Town Hall and Library. In order to hold costs down it was decided to replace the 7.5 watt lamps of old with much smaller, more efficient miniature lights.

Many thanks to the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative chaps who responded with their big white bucket truck once again. John McLaughlin and his willing crew installed some 1,200 lights on the tree. Lion Howard George was in charge of the operation.

On Sunday, November 30, the Christmas tree was lighted by the Andover Girl Scouts, followed by Christmas cars and refreshments.



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