

## Kids will have lots to do this summer

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By Mayor Thomas M. Menino  
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West Roxbury -

We in the city know how important it is for our young people to have safe and positive programming to keep them busy this summer.

This past weekend, I kicked off the Boston ROCKS! "Recreational Opportunities for City Kids," a coordinated summer programming campaign aimed at connecting Boston's youth between the ages of 8 to -14-year-olds.

As part of Boston ROCKS!, we have unveiled a database and dedicated a phone line that parents can use to access more than 500 programs for Boston's youths, including arts, sports and educational activities.

Boston is committed to the safety and development of our youths, and the wealth of activities and programming being offered this summer underscores this commitment. From jobs to sports to camps, the young people of Boston have an incredible range of opportunities to continue to grow and learn and have fun all summer long.

This summer, Boston has reached out to the nonprofit and community partners to ask them to join the effort in bringing a wealth of programs and activities to youths. There are exciting and simple new ways to find a program perfect for you through a new online database and helpline. At [www.bostonyouthzone.com/summer](http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/summer), kids and parents can search a database of programs, camps and events by neighborhood, gender and age.

In addition, city youthline workers are staffing a helpline, 617-635-KIDS, so our youths can find the best way to spend their summer.

Just for an example, a 12-year old girl in Dorchester can find information on GRLZ Radio, the Cape Verdean Community UNIDO Soccer Program, St. Peter's Catholic Charities Sunset Point Camp and the Boston Police's Girls LEAP (Lifetime Empowerment and Awareness Program). There are hundreds of other programs, including sports camps and clinics, arts and music programs, Zumix Radio, Police Activities League programs, YMCA programs, sailing lessons and more.

Community partners, including Catholic Charities and the Black Ministerial Alliance, have stepped up to help us by extending the hours at St. Peter's and the Haitian Community Center, giving our young people a place to go in the evenings and on the weekends. Black Ministerial Alliance partnered with Citizens Bank to announce "Summer Enrichment Series," a three-part program focused on employment, engagement and education funded by a \$200,000 grant from the Citizens Bank Foundation.

These programs compliment the many existing programs for Boston youths. In addition, the city of Boston's community centers and pool facilities will extend their hours of operation to provide young people a safe environment this summer. And there will be enhanced programming at several sites throughout the city and the addition of a "rolling recreation" mobile recreation unit that will travel to local parks to engage youth in a variety of activities, including arts and crafts, sports, dance and group games.

New programs have been added for teens this summer including:

- Arts Scene: this summer, the city will expand arts programming, bringing new and innovative arts opportunities to every Boston neighborhood through Arts Scene;
- Boston ROCKS! Youth Zone: many community centers and parks will host a variety of daily drop in activities and supervised play offering dance instruction, discussion groups, sports, arts, crafts and games;
- Boston at Night: Boston is committed to giving youth safe, positive activities on Friday nights. Various community centers will host events every Friday from 6-10 p.m.
- Sports Scene: a six-week youth sports skill development program.

Also new this summer are Boston Community Grants that provide additional funding to outside agencies wishing to partner with the city in providing safe and positive summer activities for preteens and teenagers. This new funding will provide additional programming to complement the hundreds of summer options youth already have access to through Boston ROCKS!

For more information and to look up programs this summer, remember the Web site or phone the 617-635-KIDS hotline.