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## BOSTnet Information

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### January 30, 2007

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### Special Announcements

Welcome to the January 2007 edition of the BUZZ! The theme of this issue is **Healthy Programming**, where we look at afterschool activities in light of their impact on the physical well-being of children and youth. This edition of the BUZZ looks at facilities, program policies, National Afterschool Association standards, nutrition, and sports-related activities among others. Please send your feedback and ideas to [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org).

### **2007 marks BOSTnet's 20th Anniversary!**

Save the Date: June 7th, 2007, 10a-12noon at BOSTnet. We will conclude our monthly BOSTnet Leadership Roundtable with a celebration and breakfast to honor out-of-school time professionals who have been in the field for 20 years. To RSVP and/or more information contact us at [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org).

Please watch the BOSTnet website ([www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org)) and the next BUZZ for updates on our 20th Anniversary special events.



### **Upcoming BOSTnet news and events:**

#### **Guide to Boston's Before and Afterschool Programs, 2007-08**

A free and powerful marketing tool! Are you trying to increase program enrollment? Trying to reach youth from different communities? Do you want to reach the 58,000 students in Boston Public Schools? Update your entry in *BOSTnet's Guide to Boston's Before and After School Programs* by logging on here [www.webguide.bostnet.org/logon.asp](http://www.webguide.bostnet.org/logon.asp). Your updated entry will be included in the 2007-2008 "Guide" that will be distributed this Spring to schools, community centers, social service agencies, libraries and other places to reach families, children, and youth. New program or forgot your login information? Please email [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org). Update by January 31st (tomorrow!) to be included in **BOSTnet's 20th Anniversary Edition!**

Go to the BOST*net* website ([www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org)) for an easy link to enter your program information online. You may also go directly to our logon page at [www.webguide.bostnet.org/logon.asp](http://www.webguide.bostnet.org/logon.asp).

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### **Leadership Round Table: Making Sports More Inclusive!**

February 1, 2007

10 am - 12 noon

Northeastern University, Curry Center, Boston MA

Learn about different approaches to creating inclusive sports and recreational opportunities for youth with different abilities. Hear afterschool sports and recreation programs share their experiences and tools for creating inclusive programming. Contact BOST*net* for more information or to RSVP: (617) 720 1290 or [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org).

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### **Greater Boston/Cambridge regional MAP Policy meeting**

February 8, 2007

9am - 12noon

United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Boston MA

Learn how to advocate for youth and afterschool programming while getting updates on this year's legislative hopes and progress. All are welcome. Please call BOST*net* for more info or to RSVP: (617) 720 1290 or [lavallee@bostnet.org](mailto:lavallee@bostnet.org).

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### **Promoting Positive Behavior Workshop**

February 13, 2007

9am - 12noon

Windsor Street Boys and Girls Club, Cambridge MA

This training forum is part of the Afterschool Access project, coordinated by BOST*net* and sponsored by the EEC (Early Education and Care). Afterschool Access is based on the need of afterschool programs to more effectively deal with behavior issues in a positive manner for greater retention of students. For more information or to RSVP, please call BOST*net* or email [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org).

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### **Afterschool and Youth Advocacy Day!**

March 14, 2007

9am - 12noon

The Great Room, Massachusetts State House

Everyone who is concerned about afterschool in Massachusetts is encouraged to attend! Bring parents, youth, staff members! We will meet at the State House to demonstrate our support of afterschool. Individual groups will meet with their legislative representatives. Find out more by attending the February 8th regional meeting or by calling BOST*net* at (617) 720 1290.

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### **BASQ update and accreditation**

BOST*net* is pleased to announce the **BOST*net* Afterschool Quality Initiative**, beginning January 2007. It is the new phase of a three-year project that recruited fourteen Boston programs to participate in rigorous technical assistance and

assessment in the pursuit of National Afterschool Association (NAA) accreditation. BOST *net* is currently conducting a baseline assessment of the participating programs to develop an action plan tailored for each site. Several programs are ready to apply for accreditation this year while others are pursuing more general quality improvements.

*The participating programs are:*

Cacique Afterschool Program  
Charlestown Boys and Girls Club  
East Boston YMCA at the Guild School  
Ellis Memorial sites: Tent City, Berkley, Madison Park  
G.R.A.S.P. Afterschool Program  
Greenwood Shalom Afterschool  
Hattie Cooper Community Center  
Lena Park Afterschool  
Little House of Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses  
Ohrenberger Community Center  
STARS at Mildred Ave Community Center  
South Boston Neighborhood House

NAA accreditation enables programs to demonstrate, through self-assessment and external evaluation, that they are maintaining high standards of school-aged care. It supports staff and other stakeholders in the program improvement process. The standards directly reflect quality indicators evidenced by ongoing research. These include standards related to human relationships, indoor/outdoor environments, activities, safety, health, and nutrition. For example, "Safety, Health and Nutrition" standards are aimed at verifying that the security and health of children in the program. This may refer to safety hazards, adequate supervision, equipment and facilities issues, and snacks.

The accreditation process itself includes:

- (1) Review of afterschool quality standards
- (2) Establishment of an After School Quality (ASQ) team
- (3) Self-study to assess and improve the program based on these standards
- (4) Intent to submit and application
- (5) External site visit (endorser) and review
- (6) Continuous improvements, including interim reports

BOST *net* looks forward to updating the afterschool field on the lessons from the BASQ initiative over the next six months. We anticipate that this process can help support afterschool quality improvement in programs in Boston and across the state. For more information on the NAA accreditation process, please refer to [www.naa.org](http://www.naa.org).

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Out-of-School Time Landscape...

## Healthy Programming in After School

According to the 2006-2007 BOST *net* annual survey of Boston after school programs, 70% of programs report that they provide healthy programming (either sports, health or recreational programming). These programs have the capacity to serve 19% of the total school age population in Boston. Sixty-three percent (63%) of programs offer Recreational activities and 33% offer some form of Health activities.

While 50% of programs provide some type of Sports activities, there are only a few organizations providing sports programming as a program focus. Many of

these provide multiple opportunities throughout the city. Approximately 15% of programs provide sports programming as a primary focus area.

## Healthy Programming in Neighborhoods

**What is the state of healthy programming in those Boston neighborhoods with the largest concentrations of children and youth?**

According to the 2000 US Census, Dorchester and Roxbury have the largest populations of children and youth, ages 5-18, in the city of Boston. Dorchester has 35,168 children and youth while Roxbury has 12,735.

Programs offering healthy programming in Roxbury have the capacity to serve almost 20% of the total school age population in Roxbury, very similar to the corresponding Boston rate (19%). However, Dorchester-sited programs that offer healthy programming only have the capacity to serve 10% of Dorchester's School Age population.

A significant portion (over 80%) of Boston's school age population may not have access to sports, recreation, and health related activities in after school. If alternative opportunities, such as in-school sports or neighborhood recreation areas, are not available, many of Boston's children and youth may have limited opportunities for physical development. This issue is even more acute in neighborhoods such as Dorchester where 90% of the population does not have access to healthy afterschool programming in local organizations.

In 2006, Build the Out-of-School Time Network (BOST*net*), through the Lead to Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities (LOYD) Initiative funded a partnership between East Middlesex ARC and the newly constructed Malden YMCA to create inclusive sports and recreational activities for youth ages 7 - 12 years. This partnership has created a wonderful opportunity for families of youth with disabilities to enjoy great recreational activities.

Since October, the EMARC and Malden YMCA partnership has allowed the YMCA to offer almost all their recreational activities to youth with different abilities. Youth are able to participate in music, cooking, physical fitness, swimming, basketball, and other classes. EMARC was able to offer Malden YMCA staff trainings on how to best provide services for youth with different abilities and to help with certain programs. In September 2006, EMARC and Malden YMCA staff held a parent night for members of both organizations to meet the different staff and hear about this new partnership. To help with the integration and implementation of new activities, EMARC has a dedicated staff person and several volunteers at the Malden YMCA.

The mutual benefits of this partnership are tremendous. Malden YMCA now has programs for youth with disabilities. In fact, a Malden YMCA staff member explained the considerable size of the autism community in Malden and how he was excited to be able to offer these inclusive opportunities. EMARC staff have been able to create opportunities for their members and their youth. More and more, parents of youth with disabilities are coming to see the Malden YMCA as an opportunity for their youth to access physical activities in a safe and nurturing environment. Plans are on the way to integrate EMARC sponsored activities into the regular YMCA calendar and advertising it as a regular YMCA activity to the community, creating an opportunity for all youth, regardless of ability, to participate in both EMARC and YMCA run activities.

EMARC staff will talk more about this partnership at the BOST *net* Leadership Roundtable on February 1st, 2007 entitled "Let's All Play! Making Sports More Inclusive". Contact Kambiz Maali at (617) 720-1290 ext. 230 for more information.



policy update...



**Mark your calendars!**

**February 8th: Greater Boston/Cambridge MAP Regional Policy Meeting**

Preparation for Advocacy Day!

9am - 12noon

United Way, 11 Sleeper Street Boston

The agenda includes updates and preparation for **March 14th Advocacy Day!**

Find out about our FY08 legislative requests for afterschool in Massachusetts and get updates on the Afterschool Commission. Learn about the legislative process, meeting with your legislator, providing written/oral testimony, and effectively advocating for afterschool all while networking with other advocates.

**Please rsvp today** to [lavallee@bostnet.org](mailto:lavallee@bostnet.org) or call BOST *net* at (617) 720 1290 for more information. We look forward to seeing you there!

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## **Afterschool, Childhood Obesity, and Program Policies**

"The obesity crisis in America is... hitting youth so hard that health experts warn that this generation of children will be the first to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents. The nation's growing network of afterschool providers can

make a significant contribution to this battle. Afterschool programs can provide physical activity and nutrition education, healthy snacks and a safe place to play and socialize in the hours after school." (*Excerpted from Afterschool Alliance, Issue Brief No. 24*)

One implication of unstructured and unsupervised afterschool time is the evident impact on children's long-term health. This extends beyond the potential risk of victimization and violence to include healthy eating habits and physical exercise. Afterschool programs can directly address this issue by providing exercise and nutrition information (Food Research and Action Council, 2006). Recognizing this, afterschool programs nationwide are addressing health concerns and physical movement, both through activity design and the physical space where the program takes place. Likewise, National Afterschool Association (NAA) standards advocate for nutritional snacks, opportunities for physical exercise, and facilities for indoor and outdoor play.

Programs in urban environments often must be creative in how they integrate physical activity into the afterschool curriculum due to space limitations. It can involve rethinking organizational policy and partnerships to expand programming options for youth. For example, Brookview House in Dorchester has partnered with Sportsmen Tennis Club Recreational Facility to expand their available healthy programming to include more physical activity. Beginning with a summer program that provided 30 teens with tennis lessons, life skills workshops and field trips, this collaboration has extended into the school year. Currently, the tennis club offers free space in exchange for including Sportsmen middle schoolers in Brookview House's capoeira lessons and workshops. Mayumi Brooks, Youth Director, notes that not only does this partnership bring together youth from different city neighborhoods, but it has impacted their access to physical programming, and improved attitudes and even academics. "People should just open their doors to this kind of collaboration," she advises.

## Other Resources for Healthy Programming

To help after school programs provide healthy snacks for children, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsors a number of food programs. These services include the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Special Milk Program. For more information, call 703-305-2286 or find program fact sheets on their Web site at [www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/FoodNutritionAssistance/ChildNutritionPrograms.htm](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/FoodNutritionAssistance/ChildNutritionPrograms.htm).

More information on healthy eating in afterschool can be found at the Massachusetts Department of Education: Child and Adult Care Food Program and Outside School Hours Snack Program. See [www.doe.mass.edu/cnp](http://www.doe.mass.edu/cnp) for more details.

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Your help is valuable in many ways: written or oral testimony regarding after school, attending Advocacy Day on March 14th, calling/emailing state legislators, talking with other community leaders, and much more! We will be organizing additional gatherings to prepare for hearings and Advocacy Day. Check [www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org) for updates. Meanwhile, please mark your calendars...

*Advocacy Day for After School is March 14, 2007!*

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*To access Community News, Events, Resources and Job Listings, please visit our website, [www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org), to access our Resources Page.*

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## Quick Links

- [Our website](#)
- [Newsletter Archive](#)
- [Our Publications](#)
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## Contact Information

email: [buzz@bostnet.org](mailto:buzz@bostnet.org)

phone: (617) 720-1290

web: [www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org)