



Email any comments or additional information for the BUZZ to buzz@bostnet.org

BOSTnet Information

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Special Announcements

Welcome to the April 2007 edition of the BUZZ! This edition of the BUZZ highlights Youth/Teen Program Spaces and Safe Summer Programming. Please send your feedback and ideas on the BUZZ to info@bostnet.org.

- **BOSTnet is celebrating its 20th Anniversary in 2007!** Please watch the BOSTnet website (www.bostnet.org) and the next BUZZ for updates on our 20th Anniversary special events. See **BOSTnet's work through the "BOSTnet Milestones" timeline, which highlights year-by-year activities since 1987.**
- **BOSTnet welcomes Michael Bennett as Research Director:** Michael Bennett has over fifteen years of experience researching and writing for a variety of governmental, private and non-profit organizations. His research has ranged from American social and cultural history to management theory and organizational dynamics. Michael has contributed to academic journals, professional conferences and Web-based curricula. He began his career at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania where he helped develop community-based exhibits and educational outreach programs. Prior to moving to Boston in 2004, Michael spent five years in Washington, DC, working with the National Park Service and most recently established a consulting firm in Vermont. Michael has two school-aged children currently enrolled in the Boston Public School system who participate in after-school programs in the city. Michael is a volunteer coach for the Jamaica Plain Youth Soccer League. He graduated with a M.A. in American Studies from the University of Notre Dame.
- **BOSTnet provides a variety of trainings for Out-of-School Time Programs.** Please click here to visit our training webpage to view signature BOSTnet trainings such as Promoting Positive Behavior, Engaging Families, and Inclusion of Children with Disabilities, as well as exciting new trainings such as Designing Out-of-School Time Space.
 - **Save the Date! Friday May 4th, 9 am - 1 pm, 11 Beacon Street, 10th floor, Engaging Families in After School Training.** This training will provide staff with time-tested tools and strategies to improve family engagement in programs working with families from a diversity of backgrounds, keeping families informed and connected to resources, and developing relationships with families to enhance programs and youth outcomes. Receive a copy of our Engaging Families Tool-kit containing evidence-based strategies. **Competencies:** National AfterSchool Association and Achieve Boston. **Staff serving children ages: 5-14 Cost:** \$100 per participant. RSVP at info@bostnet.org.
 - **Save the Date! Friday May 11th, 9 am - 1 pm, 11 Beacon Street, 10th floor, Promoting Positive Behavior Training.** This training provides staff with tools and strategies needed to improve behavior outcomes in program. Participants learn the developmental needs of children and youth, responses to challenging behavior,

appropriate expectations of children and youth with different needs, and identification of unmet needs that result in challenging behaviors. **Competencies:** National AfterSchool Association and Achieve Boston. **Staff serving children ages:** 5-18. **Cost:** \$100 per participant. RSVP at info@bostnet.org.

Upcoming BOST*net* news and events:

- **3rd Annual Summer Program Resource Fair!**
May 3, 2007
10 am - 12 noon
Boston Children's Museum, 300 Congress Street, Boston.

BOST*net* is excited to host this event at the newly-renovated Children's Museum! Find out about Summer Programming Resources & link with Community & Cultural institution staff on passes, trips, kits and more! To sign up as a Program Resource or to RSVP as an attendee, please contact info@bostnet.org or 617-720-1290 x232. [View the flyer.](#)

- **End of the School Year Celebration: Please Bring Your Staff!**
June 7, 2007
10 am - 12 noon
BOST*net* Offices, 11 Beacon St., Suite 1000, Boston, 02108

We will conclude this year's monthly BOST*net* Leadership Roundtable series with a celebration and breakfast to honor out-of-school time professionals who have made a lasting impact in the field. Join us to be recognized for the valuable work you do, enjoy a hot breakfast, check out BOST*net* resources and network with other OST professionals! To RSVP or to receive more information, contact us at info@bostnet.org or 617-720-1290 x232.

BOSTnet unveils its newest publication

Throughout the work that BOSTnet does with programs, environment plays a key role in program quality. Not only does the environment of a program affect the types of activities that can occur, but also who can access these activities, what information it gives about the program, and how the children and youth interact with their environment. The physical space of an Out-of-School Time program and program quality go hand in hand. From school age programs to youth development programs, the space and environment of the program plays an essential role in the overall quality of the program.

"Developing Spaces by and for Teens in Out-of-School Time Programs", a new BOSTnet publication available this week, highlights the importance of physical space in OST programs serving teens. Based on lessons and practices from the on-going ten year Facilities Initiative of Children's Investment Fund and Build the Out-of-School Time Network (BOSTnet), *"Developing Spaces by and for Teens in Out-of-School Time Programs"* highlights the importance of teen voice in developing spaces for teens. Teens are more likely to use space that they have helped create.

The need to interact and customize the environment is also important for younger youth. The National Afterschool Association Keys to Quality (NAA- formerly NSACA) also reinforces the importance of the indoor physical environment. Keys number 9 and 10 highlight the importance of indoor space, with focus on allowing for children and youth to take initiative and explore their interests through being able to arrange materials and equipment to suit their activities and to have areas where they can display their work.

As programs think about summer activities and into the fall planning, keep in mind the importance of space and your program environment. There are many things that OST providers can do to increase the quality of their program through the physical space and environment. For more information on physical space and its impact on program quality, or to order a copy of *"Developing Spaces by and for Teens in Out-of-School Time Programs,"* please contact BOSTnet at info@bostnet.org or (617) 720-1290, ext. 232. There is a \$10 fee for this publication.

Safe Summer Programming

Summer Success: Challenges and Strategies in Creating Quality Academically Focused Summer Programs

This brief, first released in the November 2006 issue of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP), examines the common challenges and successful strategies for creating high quality, academically focused summer programs. One of the seven main challenges identified in the brief involves building strong connections with youth's families, and several promising strategies for overcoming this challenge are discussed.

www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/issuebrief9.html.

BOSTnets 2007-2008 Special 20th Anniversary Edition of the Guide to Boston's Before and After-School Programs is coming to schools, libraries and community centers in May!

This special edition illustrates the power of the out-of-school time network, containing the largest number of programs ever listed and supported by out-of-school time leaders who express their enthusiasm for BOST*net's* critical work. This edition includes program descriptions, activity types, summer program information, and disability and access information for families with children who have special needs.

The Guide is also available on-line, in a searchable format, in Spanish and English. This year, 425 listings representing 500 programs are available. We also provide a checklist to guide parents and guardians in finding the right after school programs.

Right in time for the summer, you will be able to choose from 262 summer opportunities for children and youth!

Mark your calendars! The 3rd Annual BOST*net* Summer Program Resource Fair is on May 3rd. Please refer to our **Upcoming BOST*net* news & events** section of this edition of the BUZZ for more information and how to RSVP.

Afterschool Access Initiative

Helping afterschool providers develop the skills necessary to successfully work with children to promote positive behavior has been the focus of the Afterschool Access project at BOST *net* since August 2006. In this project, supported by the Department of Early Education and Care, BOST *net* connected afterschool providers in New Bedford, Brockton, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, Peabody, Cambridge and Boston with behavioral health organizations to receive coaching, modeling, observation and tools to create environments of success for both the children and staff.

As the BOST *net* Afterschool Access for All project nears its end for this year, BOST *net* held a meeting of all the OST program participants and the Behavior Specialists in April to review and share some of the best practices that have worked to encourage more positive behavior at the different programs. Although positive and clear rules and positive reinforcement are the main catalysts for promoting positive behavior in programs, environment plays an important role in supporting positive behavior. When the program space is welcoming, colorful, and allows for easy interaction between staff, children and families, it creates a more positive environment, which in turn, creates more opportunities to support positive behavior in children and youth.

A few environmental best practices identified through the BOST *net* Afterschool Access Initiative are:

- o Program schedule is clearly visible
- o Youth's work is prominently displayed through out the program
- o Rules are posted clearly and are visible to all youth

These practices, along with best practices related to Rules, Activities, and Transitions create a safe and positive environment for youth in out-of-school time programs. In addition, promoting positive behavior practices are all part of

creating a Continuous Quality Improvement plan for programs, ensuring lasting program quality and higher satisfaction by children, families, and staff.

In June of this year the programs and behavior specialists involved in the BOST *net* Afterschool Access project will share their best practices through couple of forums. Dates, times, and location for the June Forums will be announced in the coming weeks. Check www.bostnet.org for more information. For more information on Afterschool Access Initiative or to learn more about Continuous Quality Improvement in out-of-school time programming, contact BOST *net* at info@bostnet.org or (617) 720-1290, ext. 232.

policy update...



Support Amendments to the House Ways & Means Budget

The House Committee on Ways and Means released their budget last Wednesday, and we need your help to ensure that afterschool and youth programs are well-supported. Representatives Dempsey, Haddad and Coakley-Rivera sponsored an amendment to increase the funding for the After School and Out of School Time Quality Grant to \$3 million. Call your Representatives this week and ask them to support Amendment #926 and other amendments that will provide a range of services to children youth and families in the Commonwealth. Here is an update on some of the amendments that you can call and ask your Representatives to support:

- * Amendment #926 - increases the ASOST Quality Grant line item from \$1.5 million to \$3 million.
- * Amendment #614 - increases funding for the child care rate reserve from \$4 million to \$12.5 million.
- * Amendment #258/845 - increases funding for the YouthWorks (summer jobs for at-risk youth) line item from \$5.7 million to \$6.7 million (two amendments were filed requesting identical funding increases to this item).

Contact Your Representatives THIS WEEK!

The House of Representatives is preparing to debate amendments to the House Ways and Means budget proposal, and debate is scheduled to begin on Monday, April 23rd. Contact your State Representative this week and ask them to support the amendments above. When you call, you can ask to speak with the Representative, or you can leave a message with the Representative's staff person who handles afterschool and youth program issues in his or her office. The [ASOST report](#) provides tips on how to identify your legislator and a suggested script.

ASOST Commission:

The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time has begun its work to recommend how Massachusetts defines and better coordinates, expands, finances and ensures accessible, affordable, and quality out-of-school time programming for school age children in all Massachusetts settings. Led by Senator Thomas McGee and Representative Marie St. Fleur, the 36 member commission, which includes Department of Early Education & Care Commissioner Reale, will hold public hearings and work group meetings to make recommendations on how the Commonwealth addresses 1) Information and Access; 2) Quality, Workforce and Professional Development; and 3) Sustainability issues. The Commission's findings will be published in Fall, 2007. The Special Commission held its first public hearing in Springfield on April 10. Additional hearings are expected to be held on Tuesday, May 1 in Pittsfield and Tuesday, May 8 in Central Massachusetts. Hearing locations are not yet confirmed. Additional hearings are likely to be scheduled for other parts of the state in May.

The Special Commission's website, found at www.massafterschoolcomm.org has additional information about hearing dates and locations, under the Public Hearing Schedule tab. This website will also include any changes that may occur in the schedule.

The Special Commission has also set up a blog at www.massafterschoolcomm.blogspot.com. Members of the public are

encouraged to submit their comments to either the website or to the blog, if they cannot attend the public hearings.

To receive the Public Policy Corner newsletter through Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (MAP), please visit www.massafterschool.org/index.html. For more Policy information, please see the [Policy Updates](#) of BOSTnet's News & Events webpage.

To access more Community News, Events, Resources and Job Listings, please visit our website, www.bostnet.org, to view our Resources Page.

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