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BOSTnet Information

March 27, 2007

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Special Announcements

Welcome to the March 2007 edition of the BUZZ. This year marks BOSTnet's 20th Anniversary! This edition of the BUZZ highlights the activities at BOSTnet focusing on developing quality through the Accreditation process, promoting Access for All, and Engaging Families. Please send your feedback and ideas on the BUZZ to info@bostnet.org.

- **Save the Date!** June 7th, 2007, 10am-12noon at BOSTnet, 11 Beacon Street, Suite 1000 (10th Floor). We will celebrate our monthly BOSTnet Leadership Roundtable with a breakfast to honor out-of-school time professionals who have been in the field for 10 and 20 years. To RSVP or to receive more information, contact us at info@bostnet.org.
- 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 formally welcomes Judi Mullen to the Board of Directors**
Judi Mullen joined Boston Private Bank & Trust Company in April 2006, bringing over twenty years of experience in the greater Boston nonprofit sector to the newly created position of Relationship Manager, Nonprofit Client Services. Judi spent 14 years with The Boston Company, gaining experience in the charitable giving arena, working both on private family foundations and the company's corporate giving program. She then worked for Massachusetts General Hospital as

Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, securing philanthropic support from donors from across the country for clinical, research and teaching programs. Most recently, she was Vice President and program manager of the State Street Foundation's grantmaking program in the Greater Boston area. Responsible for the distribution of \$5 million in grant support annually, she has an extensive knowledge of area nonprofits and the changing trends impacting them. Judi is a graduate of Middlebury College and the Williams College School of Trust Banking. She is currently a member of the Board of Directors of Associated Grant Makers and The Friday Forum. She resides in Wellesley with her husband, Phil, and their three children.

- **BOSTnet provides a variety of trainings for Out-of-School Time Programs.** Please visit our training webpage for more information at www.bostnet.org/matriarch/MultiPiecePage.asp_Q_PageID_E_7_A_PageName_E_WhatTraining 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.

Upcoming BOSTnet news and events:

- **Leadership Roundtable: *Strategies to Engage and Involve Families in Out-of-School Time Programming***

April 5, 2007

10 am - 12 noon

United Way of Massachusetts Bay, 51 Sleeper Street, Boston, MA.

Gain understanding from other after school programs on successful ways and tools for engaging families in the OST programs. East Boston YMCA Guild After School Program, Hyde Square Task Force, and Greenwood Shalom After School Program will present their successful practices on engaging families in their programs. Additionally, participants will have opportunities to share their Family Engagement practices with each other, plus time for discussion and networking. Contact BOSTnet for more information or to RSVP: 617-720-1290 x232 or info@bostnet.org.

- **Summer Program Resource Fair**

May 3, 2007

10 am - 12 noon

Location TBD

To sign up as a Program Resource or to RSVP as an attendee, please contact info@bostnet.org or 617-720-1290 x232.

- **End of the School Year Celebration: Please Bring Your Staff!**

June 7, 2007

10 am - 12 noon

BOSTnet Offices, 11 Beacon St., Suite 1000, Boston, 02108

Please RSVP at info@bostnet.org or 617-720-1290 x232.

Developing Quality

In the **BOSTnet Afterschool Quality Initiative (BASQ)**, BOSTnet is working with 13 programs to assist them in becoming accredited through the National Afterschool Association (NAA). BOSTnet provides support and technical assistance to programs in understanding the accreditation process and identifying and overcoming barriers to accreditation. The process of accreditation helps programs to focus on meeting national standards for care and gives them a yardstick against which to measure their performance and quality. The most common challenges named by participating programs is a lack of financial resources and personnel resources as well as the challenge of meeting some of the quality standards when they are sharing space. Through roundtable discussions and on-site assistance, staff at BOSTnet are working with program directors to brainstorm the solutions to these problems. In a roundtable discussion on February 27th, two NAA accredited programs - East End House and East Boston Social Center (the only two accredited program in the Boston/Cambridge Area) spoke with about 20 staff from different participating programs about the accreditation process. Acknowledging that it was a challenging process to get accredited both programs spoke about the benefits of accreditation in orienting and training staff as well as the benefit of having standards of performance based on NAA standards that are clear.

Engaging Families

BOSTnet continues to focus on engaging families in afterschool programs. Through the Engaging Families Initiative, BOSTnet aimed to identify barriers to family engagement and increase the amount and quality of family participation in afterschool programming.

What changed...

According to the Massachusetts After-School Research Study (INCRE and NIOST, 2006), all afterschool providers could benefit from paying attention to their relationships with the families of the youth in their programs (p. 29). BOSTnet support through the Engaging Families Initiative proved valuable to programs in improving relationships with families of their participants. One of the main goals of the Engaging Families Initiative was to increase the amount of direct positive communication between family members and program staff. Prior to this project, programs tended to communicate with parents primarily when there was a problem. Through the Engaging Families Initiative, BOSTnet helped these programs significantly increase the amount of positive communication with parents about their children's progress, program activities, and events. Family members attended family events and field trips, became tutors, provided gifts, food, and financial support, and assumed leadership roles in the program.

How can BOSTnet help you increase family engagement?


A Guide to Engaging Families

Lessons from the Engaging Families Initiative have been compiled in a joint publication by the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, the Harvard Family Research Project and BOSTnet. This publication, entitled ***Focus on Families! How to build and support family-centered practices in after school***, summarizes the research on family involvement and highlights effective practices that have been developed in the programs participating in the Engaging Families Initiative. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this guide, contact BOSTnet at info@bostnet.org or call 617-720-1290 or visit the publications section of our website (www.bostnet.org).

Training on Engaging Families

Don't miss BOSTnet's **Leadership Roundtable** discussion on April 5th, "*Strategies to Engage and Involve Families in OST Programs*" to be held from 10am-12pm at the United Way offices.

To learn more about Engaging Families, check out the BOSTnet website (www.bostnet.org) for the State of the Field report - "Strengthening Youth Programs through Family Engagement".



Out-of-School Time Landscape...

On March 14th, 2007, over 300 people attended Afterschool and Youth Advocacy Day at the State House to rally support for the out-of-school time field. This "Lobby Day" was organized by the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership with support by BOSTnet to seek a greater investment in out-of-school time programs from policymakers. All of the featured speakers including Attorney General Martha Coakley, Senator Thomas McGee, Suffolk County Juvenile Court Judge Leslie E. Harris, and Everett Chief of Police, Steven Mазzie, emphasized the value of out-of-school time programs, including creating safe places for kids to go after school and giving kids the opportunities to stay out of trouble, get support in academics, social skills, and just have fun. The highlight of the event was student speaker, David Perez, a peer leader at La Vida, Inc., who spoke eloquently of the difference that afterschool programming has made in his life and the positive impact it has had on keeping him out of trouble and achieving both academically and socially. Following the event many staff met with legislators to lobby them in support of investing the out-of-school time field.



Access for All...

Working with children with behavior issues presents a unique challenge to out-of-school time (OST) programs and their staff. Oftentimes, OST staff lack the training and knowledge required to create a successful experience for children with challenging behaviors, which impacts the quality of the experience for those children, their peers, and the staff who work with them. 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 BOSTnet since August 2006. In this project, supported by the Department of Early Education and Care, BOSTnet 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 an environment of success for both the children and the staff. Feedback from the **Afterschool Access** participants indicate that this support and education has been successful in helping them work more successfully with children with behavior issues. On March 1st at the BOSTnet Leadership Roundtable on Learning and Behavior Disabilities, Jenny O'Neill from the Mason After School program spoke to about 70 of her colleagues about the challenges of working with children with behavior issues and shared with them the helpful things that her team has learned through the **Afterschool Access** project. Jenny spoke about the importance of having individualized programming mixed with good program structure to create success. Additional opportunities to learn about **Afterschool Access** strategies and successes will be available at upcoming BOSTnet half-day forums in late May and early June. Please stay tuned for more information.



On March 21st, representatives from BOSTnet, the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (MAP) and Boston After School and Beyond testified in support of House Bill 141, proposed legislation to create a coordinated system of out-of-school time services for school age children, youth and their families, which would respond to the needs of individual communities and support both the expansion of out-of-school time programs and quality improvement in such programs.

BOSTnet has been invited to sit on the Commission on After School and Out of School Time co-chaired by Senator Thomas McGee and Representative Marie St. Fleur. The first meeting was held on March 22nd. The purpose of the commission is to define, coordinate, expand, finance and improve accessible, affordable and quality out-of-school time programming for school age children in all settings.

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

Quick Links

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Contact Information

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