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## BOSTnet Information

**February 27, 2007**

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**Special Announcements**

Welcome to the February 2007 edition of the BUZZ. This year marks BOST*net's* 20th Anniversary! This edition of the BUZZ looks back on the field of out-of-school time as BOST*net* celebrates 20 years of connecting children and families to valuable and rewarding before and afterschool opportunities. Please send your feedback and ideas on the BUZZ to [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org).

Please watch the BOST*net* website ([www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org)) and the next BUZZ for updates on our 20th Anniversary special events. View BOST*net's* accomplishments through the "[BOST\*net\* Milestones](#)" timeline, which highlights year-by-year activities since 1987.

**BOST*net* 20th Anniversary Celebrations: Save the Date!** June 7th, 2007, 10am-12noon at BOST*net*, 11 Beacon Street, Suite 1000 (10th Floor). Our monthly BOST*net* Leadership Roundtable series concludes with a celebration and breakfast to honor dedicated 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](mailto:info@bostnet.org). We will also host an event in September 2007 to honor the founders of BOST*net*. Location and other information to be announced soon!

### **BOST*net* formally welcomes its newest addition to the team - Geraldine Peters as Senior Program Director!**

Geraldine has worked for over 15 years on behalf of children, youth and families who needed additional supports for success in life. She brings this experience and the knowledge of the challenges of supporting children and youth to her work at BOST*net*. In her role as Senior Program Director, she provides oversight for all of the BOST*net* initiatives with a focus on bringing the accomplishments in the field of Out-of-School-Time to the attention of those who can continue to make a difference. Prior to her arrival at BOST*net*, Geraldine's career was centered in residential treatment. She began her career in California working in a shelter with infants and toddlers and then in a treatment center for latency age boys. After moving to Massachusetts in 1996, Geraldine worked at the Walker School as the Assistant Director and has spent the last 5 years as the Program Director for the Germaine Lawrence Diagnostic Center working with troubled teenage girls and their families in a short term treatment center in Arlington. Throughout her career she has provided consultation and training to public school systems on working with

difficult students and she has also provided family consultation and training in the area of school refusal. Geraldine has also provided educational opportunities to those in the field by presenting at conferences for the Massachusetts Association of Child Care Workers. Geraldine has a Master's Degree in Administrative Science from Boston College.

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**Upcoming BOSTnet news and events:**

**Leadership Round Table: *All of Us are Learning! Working with Youth with Learning & Behavior Disabilities on Homework and Education***

March 1, 2007

10 am - 12 noon

Tobin Community Center, 1483 Tremont Street, Mission Hill, 02120

This Roundtable will focus on including youth with learning disabilities in after school programming, with presentations by both SPARK after school program and the Arts Incentives Program at United South End Settlements and their approaches to working with youth with learning disabilities. Contact BOSTnet for more information or to RSVP: (617) 720 1290 or [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org).

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**Middle School Half-Day Forum**

March 8, 2007

8am - 12noon

Curry Student Center at Northeastern University

This FREE forum will provide tools for program providers to create supportive, positive environments for middle school youth to learn and grow. Register today at [info@bostnet.org](mailto:info@bostnet.org) or 617.720.1290 ext 232.

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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 reading the [Q & A](#) and [FY08 Budget Fact Sheet](#). Or call BOST *net* for more information or to RSVP at (617) 720 1290 x250.



Strengthening Programs...

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### **Sharing promising practices to promote program quality...**

In 1994, BOST *net* was selected as the Boston-lead organization for the national Wallace Reader's Digest Funds' MOST (Making the Most of Out-of-School Time) initiative. Throughout its seven-year duration, this partnership leveraged more than \$2 million in resources for Boston's out-of-school time programs. Along with lead organizations in Chicago and Seattle, BOST *net* contributed to identifying key elements that influence out-of-school time services and piloting a full spectrum of initiatives and activities in Boston, to determine the most effective practices to increase the supply of quality, affordable out-of-school time care. In 1995, BOST *net* launched the Boston Directors Roundtable. Roundtables are provided free of charge, convene leaders in afterschool monthly on the first Thursday of each month, and have evolved to include unique training topics, networking opportunities and EEC hours for participants.

### **Responding to out-of-school time providers with training and technical assistance...**

In 1998, BOST *net* launched satellite initiatives with a focus on improving out-of-school time programs and systems on the North Shore (Lynn) and in Brockton. BOST *net* became a Managing Partner of the Achieve Boston initiative, which launched a catalogue

and website of professional development and training opportunities for out-of-school time professionals. In 2003, BOST *net* hosted the "Families Matter" Conference on Family Engagement and Involvement in Out-of-School Time for over 150 parents and providers of after-school programs. More than 12 workshops addressed strategies for building parent and provider skills to increase family involvement. In 2004, BOST *net* provided the first Youth Program Resource Fair, supported in part by Nellie Mae, including free resources from over 70 vendors for the more than 300 after-school providers who attended.

BOST *net* currently continues to strengthen youth programs through its Middle School Training Series and Network, the statewide Afterschool Access project, the Boston Afterschool Quality initiative (BASQ), through family engagement and positive behavior best practice tools, and through all of our program quality improvement training opportunities.

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### Out-of-School Time Landscape...

#### **Guiding parents through Out-of-School Time opportunities...**

In 1989, BOST *net* surveyed 5500 families on out-of-school time programming issues in the Boston area, held a press conference and released the survey report and recommendations. BOST *net* has sought out and responded to information from parents on transportation, access and affordability, family engagement, involvement and leadership. In 1991, BOST *net* began publishing the Guide to Boston's Before and Afterschool Programs including 50 program descriptions and a checklist for parents on finding the right program for their child. In 2002, BOST *net's* *Guide to Before and After School Programs* included 293 programs and was made available on line in English and Spanish. Last year the printed Guide included more than 400 programs! BOST *net* delivers 5,000 free copies of the Guide to parents through Boston Public Schools, libraries, Parent Resource Centers and other community organizations.

## Providing a picture of the "state" of out-of-school time...

In 2004, BOST*net* became the first organization to "map" afterschool programs throughout Boston and provided printed maps, which include child/youth demographics and the ability to locate afterschool programs within Boston's neighborhoods. Within the last year, BOST*net* has included a print map within the [Guide to Boston's Before and Afterschool Programs](#), has mapped programs accessible to individuals with physical disabilities and has mapped Boston Public School locations and programs serving two different age groups. BOST*net*'s database contains layers of information on more than 450 afterschool programs and in 2006, BOST*net* launched its "State of the Field" information series for key policymakers.

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Access for All...

## Increasing access to opportunities for children and youth...

In 1987, a small group of low-and moderate-income parents recognized from firsthand experience that the need for quality child-care far outweighed the supply of accessible options in their communities. They came together as Parents United for Child Care, now BOST*net*, and began the work of mobilizing a constituency for change that included thousands of parents, child care providers and other community allies.

One of the first and most pressing needs articulated by BOST*net*'s parent constituency was the need for accessible, quality before- and afterschool care. This widely identified critical gap in services led BOST*net* to become a leader in the groundbreaking work of creating a more effective out-of-school time system in Boston and throughout the state. BOST*net* was a central participant in the Mayor's Task Force on After School, which led to the formation of the unprecedented After School For All Partnership. **Promoting Access for All children and youth to rewarding afterschool opportunities has remained the mission and vision of BOSTnet twenty years later.**

## **Increasing the supply of opportunities for children and youth...**

In 1992, BOST*net* launched the Boston School Age Child Care Project (BSACCP), an initiative to increase the quality, supply, and affordability of programs for school-age children in Boston. BOST*net* helped to make Boston programs affordable for an additional 3,000 children from low- and moderate-income families through its "Affordability Grants." Our ten-year Facilities Initiative, funded by the Barr Foundation and managed in partnership with The Children's Investment Fund (FUND), has enhanced thousands of slots, and created several hundred new slots, within school-age programs located in underserved neighborhoods. In 2002, we awarded Community After School Scholarships (CASS) Grants to 20 community based after-school programs, to improve access and affordability for families. We also launched the United Way of Massachusetts Bay's Community After School Initiative (CASI) to assist more than 20 programs with expansion and organizational development. BOST*net's* "Program Start-Up" initiatives brought together parents, schools, and community organizations to start 14 new out-of-school time programs, increasing the availability of programming by an average of 250 new slots each year. BOST*net* continues to produce and disseminate the Program Start Up Manual, a comprehensive resource with step by step information on starting an afterschool program.

## **Increasing opportunities for youth with disabilities and 'underserved populations'...**

BOST*net* has traditionally prioritized access to programs for children and youth who have disabilities through its "Inclusion Grants" program. In 2001, not only did BOST*net* gain the leadership of a new Executive Director in Maryellen Coffey, but it also adopted the **Lead to Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities Initiative** (LOYD) from the Disability Law Center. In its first year, LOYD awarded grants to 8 after-school programs to promote inclusion. Since its inception, LOYD has provided more than 45 inclusion grants and has coordinated two "All Means All" statewide conferences on promising practices in the inclusion of youth with disabilities. This fall, BOST*net* will host a third statewide, "All Means All" conference focusing on strategies to accommodate youth with challenging behavior in afterschool programs. BOST*net* also launched the four-year Engaging Families Initiative (EFI) with the United Way and the Wallace Foundation, which awarded

grants and technical assistance to 10 programs serving black and Latino families. BOSTnet has provided the field with a Family Engagement Checklist for providers to assess how effectively they involve parents.



policy update...



### **Advocating for access and affordability...**

BOSTnet has a strong record of influencing child care and afterschool policy. In 1997, BOSTnet conducted a citywide "SACC [School-Age Child Care] the Vote," voter registration drive to increase low- and moderate-income parent representation in child care and family policy decision-making. BOSTnet planned and implemented the statewide ACE Campaign (Affordable Childcare for Everyone!) to make the ACE Bill a priority for the State Legislature in 1998. The ACE Campaign held several victories for working families in Massachusetts. The ACE Campaign's most impressive accomplishments were the significant increases it yielded in the state budget for child care subsidies for low income families, which totaled more than \$83 million over three years. BOSTnet has continued to partner with local and statewide organizations to elevate the needs of the out-of-school time field through "Lights On" events and statehouse "Lobby Days." BOSTnet is currently leading the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership's Regional Policy Network along with the Cambridge Agenda for Children. This year, we hope to have hundreds of advocates at the statehouse on March 14th for School Age and Youth Advocacy Day!

**Mark your calendars!**

### **March 14th, 2007: Afterschool & Youth Advocacy Day**

March 14, 2007, 9:00am - 12noon

Great Hall in the State House, Beacon Street, Boston, MA

Tell legislative representatives, the media, and the community why afterschool is important and why we must improve program quality and ability to serve more youth. Hundreds of afterschool staff, parents, and youth will rally at the State House in Boston and meet with legislators. Together, we will seek dependable state funding for afterschool programs that serve school-aged and older youth. We are also asking for more afterschool subsidies for low-income families because there are thousands of children on the Department of Early Education and Care waiting list.

**Please RSVP today** to Bob Lavalley at [lavalley@bostnet.org](mailto:lavalley@bostnet.org) or call BOSTnet at (617) 720 1290 x250 for more information. We look forward to seeing you there!

*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! Check [www.bostnet.org](http://www.bostnet.org) for updates.*

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### **The 5th Annual PEAR Conference - *The Whole Child, The Whole Day***

Friday, April 27th, 2007 from 8am-4:30pm

Harvard Medical School Conference Center

77 Avenue Louis Pasteur, Boston, MA 02115

The conference will focus on implementations and engaging young people in life and learning as well as leadership for programs, districts, cities, and states serving youth. Details are available at the PEAR website, [www.pearweb.org](http://www.pearweb.org). To RSVP, please contact Marjorie Stockford at [mstockford@rcn.com](mailto:mstockford@rcn.com).

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

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## Contact Information

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