

Councillor Reeves asked what precipitated the move to standardized hours. Mr. Spooner said it is easier to explain standard hours to the public. Mr. Goodwin stated that it is also easier to promote and market programs with standard hours. Mr. Spooner stated that the new standardized hours will mean expanded hours. Eileen Keegan stated that in surveying youth, many expressed interest in Saturday hours.

Mr. Spooner then summarized the program areas. Attachment C. He noted that the list is not a complete description of everything that goes on; rather it is a definitive base line list.

Homework help is available at all sites. Staff received some basic training in this area. In all sites except Area 4, the first 45 minutes of time each day is set aside for homework, they must be engaged in quiet activities. Area 4 has sufficient space so that other activities can go on at the same time.

Councillor Reeves asked about computers. Eileen Keegan stated that the new spaces are comprehensively wired and have dedicated rooms. All centers have at least some computers on site. Assistant City Manager Jill Herold stated that the FY99 budget contains a commitment for significant technology expansion.

Ms. Herold distributed a document about staff training. Attachment D.

Councillor Sullivan suggested making connections with corporations who are updating their own systems. Ms. Semonoff noted that if the proposed donations are too old, the kids cannot do their homework.

Councillor Sullivan said that there is also an issue in that the schools are MAC based, whereas the business world is PC based. Ms. Keegan agreed and noted that the Frisoli Center is one half MAC and one half PC, which works very well.

Councillor Sullivan asked about internet connections. Ms. Herold said that the Area 4 and East Cambridge centers are wired but not connected. East Cambridge has an ISDN line.

Mr. Spooner described an ongoing networking project at Area 4.

Councillor Reeves asked about staff expertise on computers. Mr. Spooner stated that it varies from center to center. They have contracted for basic training for staff at all centers, with more expertise at the two youth centers with the computer labs.

Councillor Reeves stated that he would think it would be useful to have a fairly high degree of staff computer literacy at each center. Buying the hardware is not enough. At a center he visited in California, students were studying for their SAT's on computer.

Mr. Spooner described a program at the Gately in which CRLS kids developed a computer program to teach youth and that curriculum was used the next year at the Gately very successfully.

Councillor Sullivan asked whether it would be possible for staff helping youth with homework at the youth centers to get access to what kids' particular needs are from the schools.

Ms. Semonoff said that this is a very important issue and there is a long way to go. Even at the homework centers at the schools which are school-staffed, the staff do not have enough information about the kids' academic needs.

Ms. Herold agreed that making these connections is of major importance.

Councillor Reeves noted that at one program he observed, staff came at 10:30 and had the opportunity to interact with school staff to gather this information.

Mr. Spooner then described the GO: Get Outdoors program which pairs up centers for outside activities that are meant to be appealing and to introduce kids to kids from other neighborhoods.

Councillor Reeves requested a description of the "piloting" process. Mr. Spooner stated that there were eight trips in all, including a bicycle trip, a canoe trip and a camping trip to Camp Quinapoxet, the Cambridge Boy Scout Council Camp in New Hampshire. A typical trip is approximately 13 kids plus 2 staff. The idea came from the kids themselves. Ms. Keegan described the possibility of collaboration of the School Department and the Frisoli Center to have a rock climbing, ropes, Project Adventure program.

Councillor Reeves described a Phillips Brooks House program in which he participated while at college. The program was somewhat similar to what has been described here. The staff-to-youth ratio was very low, and thus a great deal of individual mentoring took place on these trips. He saw great success.

Councillor Sullivan noted the goal of kids meeting kids from other neighborhoods and asked whether kids travel more now. Mr. Goodwin stated that more youth do get around the city because the schools are not neighborhood based.

Councillor Reeves stated that it might be good for the youth centers to own camping materials. Mr. Goodwin agreed and added that the Appalachian Mountain Club allows the centers to use their equipment.

Michelle Farnum then described the employment assistance activities and programming. Approximately 15 youth center staff have been trained and now offer job readiness workshops on a regular basis. There is a link with computer literacy, with the kids using computers for resumes and letters.

Councillor Reeves asked about numbers.

Ms. Farnum stated that 17 staff were trained in three or four sessions. Due to attrition, there are now ten trained staff. The job readiness workshops are now held quarterly at the youth centers, depending on demand. To date, there have been 21 separate workshops with varying attendance. In addition, the trained staff now work one-on-one with kids.

An exciting development this year is the Neighborhood Services Project. It began in February with 50 kids enrolled. They tried to have 12 from each center. It is designed for 14 and 15 year olds to give them some work experience during the school year because up until now, there has been only one program for this age group.

This program takes a different approach. They did a survey of young people and from that they developed "community-based service learnings," with specific criteria that all programs must meet. All programs must: serve the youth center in some way, have a career awareness strand, require the development of transferable skills and end up with a tangible product. All have a reflective place, such as keeping a journal. There are now programs in five centers. At the Moore and Gately Centers, the projects involve developing a college and career resource library. The West Cambridge project is to inform the committee that is planning a new West Cambridge Youth Center. The Frisoli Center is doing an historical snapshot of the neighborhood. Area 4 is doing a community census. They are 12 week programs, and the kids work 6-8 hours a week.

Councillor Reeves noted that the program sounds like RSTA's City Works Project.

Mr. Spooner then described the drop-in and leisure activities. He said that this is a catch-all title that includes many loosely-structured activities like chess tournaments that do not fit into other categories. Mr. Goodwin noted that the kids see this as their own time, a valuable part of the centers.

Councillor Reeves said that although he values "down-time," he hopes that there are lots of interesting programs. For example, at the Area 4 center, he would probably offer African dance and drumming.

Councillor Reeves asked about the total per/youth program cost. Ms. Herold stated that it is about \$600.00 per kid, including all programming and staff expenses, everything except building/facility maintenance.

Mr. Spooner then described the substance abuse programming. The entire youth staff is trained in identification/referral. Groups are run by CASPAR.

Mr. Goodwin then described the sports and fitness components.

Councillor Reeves asked about collaboration with health efforts at CRLS. Mr. Goodwin said there is some. Health and Hospitals, Aids Awareness and smoking cessation programs all involve the Public Health Department and school personnel.

Mr. Spooner then described the mental health support offered through a collaboration with the Neighborhood Health Centers. There are 8-10 week groups; there is also training and support for staff in identification and referral.

Councillor Reeves asked about staff opportunities to learn more about youth development. He noted that in the course of his fellowship research this year, he had the opportunity to contemplate recent literature on this subject. He emphasized that it is important for staff to have the opportunity to reflect.

Councillor Reeves thanked all those present for their participation in the meeting and stated that Cambridge has a good template.

Councillor Reeves said that he would like to have the committee visit the Cambridge Youth Centers. He wants to set up a series of visits. Ms. Herold stated that her staff will prepare a two-page suggestion on how best to conduct these visits, perhaps spending about an hour with some participants. She added that she would be pleased to have a "mini town meeting" with youth and the committee.

Mr. Spooner stated that a group of 8-13 youth is the best size for getting constructive, useful feedback from the kids.

Councillor Reeves lamented the in articulateness of Cambridge youth. He stated that there are far too few opportunities for them to get up and speak. He would like to have some impact on this issue.

Ms. Herold suggested the possibility of coordinating the visits with the Neighborhood Service Project final presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

For the Committee,

Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves
Chair

Youth Center member demographics

Membership, totals and by gender

As of January 1	Area 4	Frisoli	Gately	Moore	West	Total
Preteens	99	285	108	44	22	558
preteen female	34	116	40	19	7	216
% of all preteens	35%	41%	37%	43%	32%	39%
preteen male	65	169	68	25	15	342
% of all preteens	65%	59%	63%	57%	68%	61%
Teens	148	198	94	27	41	508
teen female	51	54	20	3	11	139
% of all teens	34%	27%	21%	11%	33%	23%
teen male	97	144	74	24	30	369
% of all teens	66%	73%	79%	89%	67%	72%
Totals	247	483	202	71	63	1066
% of total	23%	45%	19%	7%	6%	33%female 67%male

Members by ethnicity/race

	Area 4	Frisoli	Gately	Moore	West	Total
African Am/Black	54%	14%	34%	72%	24%	31.2%
White	8%	25%	22%	4%	41%	20.0%
Haitian	25%	10%	24%	16%	32%	17.7%
Port. lang: Port/CV/Brz	not recorded	34%	3%	2%	1%	16.1%
Hispanic	9%	16%	10%	6%	1%	11.5%
Asian	1%	1%	5%	0	0	1.7%
Other	3%	1%	2%	0	1%	1.8%

Utilization report

Member's participation in Youth Center programming is effected by many variables, including season, weather, school vacation, holiday and release day schedules, special program activities and more. Thus, utilization calculations must reflect these factors.

Offered here are the highest and lowest observed attendance figures - the highest and lowest number of youth to attend on a given day. Typically, June is the school year month with lowest utilization and March the highest, with utilization being a combination of attendance (signing in on a given day) and participation (signing up for particular activities).

	Area 4		Gately		Moore		West		Frisoli*	
lowest and highest daily attendance	l	h	l	h	l	h	l	h	l	h
individuals attending monthly	225	330	142	231	58	60	79	85	approx 420	
preteens in a 'typical day'	25	95	42	70	12	28	15	38	52	118
YL staff on in preteen hrs	3	4	2	4	2	2	2	2	3	4
teens in a 'typical day'	23	83	18	50	12	24	15	42	43	105
YL staff on in teen hrs	3	4	3	4	2	2	2	3	3	4

*Frisoli data taken from the November - April period, as the facility opened in late October.

The 10-Point Plan: offering our members a full menu of options

Homework Help

Staffed by youth workers and volunteers, members can work on homework assignments, read or otherwise work quietly, Monday through Thursday. Centers stock books, magazines, puzzles and other constructive activities, as well as school supplies. Frisoli and Area 4 have full computer labs; Gately, Moore and West have at least one computer available. Staff training, through our collaboration with Tutoring Plus, focuses on the basics of homework help, identifying learning problems, and working with diverse populations.

GO! Get Outdoors

Our new wilderness program was piloted in the 1997 and will be fully active this spring and summer with 10 day-trips planned. GO! mission is to expose young people to new environments and new ways of relating to one-another and the world around them through experiential education. The program features day and weekend wilderness trips, and an in-City orienteering workshop. Trips will include hiking, rock climbing, canoeing and deep sea fishing. Two staff will undertake a four-day Appalachian Mountain Club training in May.

Employment Assistance

Employment Assistance is a menu of activities meant to motivate young people to explore their interests and to develop the skills required of the working world. Through our collaboration with the Office of Workforce Development, we plan programs, activities and staff training throughout the year.

In job-seeking skills workshops, CYP staff, trained by OWD, instruct teens and preteens and are available for individual support in resume writing, interview skills, workplace relations and other aspects of finding and keeping a job. Throughout the year, we offer computer basics workshops and individual instruction to the PC and Windows basics.

With OWD, the Neighborhood Service Project is a school-year extension of the Mayor's program for 50 members. Participants receive a stipend and educational opportunities. Projects include developing college resource centers, and creating neighborhood history installations.

Finally, CYP staff is trained to assist members with locating the right summer or school-year employment program, completing applications, interviewing, etc. Each year, employers such as ERI and MSYEP come in to the Centers to recruit along with our staff.

Drop-in & Leisure

Drop-in is time in which participants can do fun, structured activities, or simply hang out with friends. Drop-in time provides the context for youth worker-youth relationship building which leads to youths' participation in more structured personal development activities. Activities might include playing pool, Ping-Pong or computer games; going on a beach trip or field trip; special events and celebrations; planning a dance; attending a special sporting event at CRLS, creating a business; doing arts & crafts, or just talking. We have recently made this area richer in the diversity of activities and to better include young people in planning activities.

Drop-in and leisure time occurs at every Center during most hours of operation. It is the "back-drop" against which more structured activities occur. In this sense, DI&L is not a program, but "down-time" and less-structured activities in which most Youth center members participate.

Substance Abuse

Working with CASPAR and the Cambridge Prevention Coalition, we offer members substance abuse education groups, and 'problem identification and referral' (I&R) support. Staff receives I&R training and group facilitation training from both groups. CYP staff has periodic consultation with CASPAR staff on issues with particular members, to stay informed about education techniques and drug-use trends, and for general support. Occasional activities have included one-time workshops on smoking prevention and alcohol dangers awareness, as well as participation in planning events such as the Cambridge Marijuana Forum.

Sports/Fitness

Sports & fitness encompasses sports, fitness and health activities. Most sports occur during drop-in time, which is less structured. We also provide many coed, boys and girls leagues in a variety of sports, for teens and preteens. A variety of workshops on other topics are offered, including smoking cessation and AIDS prevention. We have begun to offer more sophisticated health education, as in our partnership with Hoops & Health, 'health for athletes' series, and a 'science/health' series for preteens.

Mental Health Support

Through a collaboration with the Neighborhood Health Centers, we are able to offer staff support and training and some direct services to the program for the first time. We have been offering 'discussion groups' on a variety of youth-generated topics, such as school stress, relations with parents, and so on. Staff are receiving periodic in-service training and consultation from LICSWs at staff meetings. Through this collaboration, we are able to identify problems and work with the family of a troubled member to navigate complicated mental health systems.

Special Focus: Girls and Young Women

The Cambridge Youth Program recognizes that it, like other youth programs, has not served the needs of its female participants as adequately as their male counterparts. Our aim is to continually innovate to find programs, activities and ways of working which encourage new girls and young women to get involved in what we do.

Each program area includes activities specifically for girls and young women, particularly sports, substance abuse and mental health; special outreach activities and new systems for generating ideas from girls have been developed. Past and forthcoming training will help us to identify barriers to serving girls well

Anti-violence Activities

The quality of interaction between our participants and staff remains high, through training, the values we maintain as a program, and our connection with the communities in which members live. These relationships allow us to help kids get engaged in exciting and challenging activities. This process is crucial in helping kids to remain violence-free. While not a program in itself, *per se*, this philosophy is the hallmark of good youth work, and is in accord with the respected 'assets approach' advocated by the federal government and the nation's leading youth work organizations.

We are also dealing with youth violence issue more *head-on*. We are engaged in domestic violence training with a special emphasis on dating violence issues. Our goal is to integrate into many of the educational and recreational activities we offer to teens. We are developing, with the Dating Violence Intervention Project, a referral system for both perpetrators and victims. Conflict resolution and peer mediation are programming areas we will move into next year.

AHS - After High School

AHS is a college and career preparatory program offering activities, one-on-one help, and resources needed by teens to plan for life After High school. For college-seekers, we have test prep and practice, financial aid sessions, college visits, etc. This help is offered through weekly classes and by appointment with trained CYP staff. We will soon have AHS 'libraries' in two Centers, which will stock college catalogs and videos, union pre-apprenticeship materials, computers for writing applications, and other resource materials. We will also be providing career fairs in collaboration with OWD.

Our entrepreneurship programs through Junior Achievement are offered under AHS. They have included three business-creation projects and one personal finance project.

This program was implemented last year at Area 4 only; this coming year, we will expand the program and ensure access to all members.

28 April, 1998

TO: Ellen

FROM: Andrew

RE: Training/planning session update to date

Some of the training sessions listed below were required of staff, some were voluntary; some included the entire CYP staff, some included selected staff.

A planing session is a meeting of selected staff, usually to plan activities or to assess them once completed. Including youth workers, Directors and the managers, task groups were meant to be an important part of our program development process. They encourage participation, teamwork and the infusion of new idea from each level of the program, despite their logistical difficulties.

date	topic	attended by	led by	note
Aug.	'Navigating the mental health system for youth'	All full- and part-time staff	Dr. Rob't Zeigler, Camb. Hosp.	
Sept.	Substance abuse problem identification and referral skills	8 part-time staff	CASPAR	1/3+ of existing staff have had this
Sept.	Expectations of a youth worker	All full- and part-time staff	Bob Goodwin & Center Directors	Bob developed an interactive process
Oct.	Teaching basic employability skills	One full-time and 6 part-time	OWD	14 staff in two years have been trained
Jan.	Basic homework assistance provision	7 part-time staff	Tutoring Plus	
Feb.	Gender equity in after-school activities	All full- and part-time staff	Katie Wheeler, Wellesley College	Most popular CYP training ever
Feb.	Cofacilitating education groups & intro to the CSAP model	5 part-time staff	CSAP	
May.	Leading outdoor trips with youth	One Director, one part-time staff	Appalachian Mountain Club	4-days on the trail

City of Cambridge

The Human Services and Youth Committee held a public meeting on May 20, 1998, beginning at 5:40 p.m. in the City Council Office for the purpose of discussing youth programming in the City of Cambridge.

Present at the hearing were Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Michael Sullivan and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present were Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services; Ellen Semonoff, Deputy Director, Human Services Department (HSD); Eileen Keegan, Division Head, Community and Youth, Human Services Department; Andrew Spooner, Youth Program Coordinator, Human Services Department; Robert Goodwin, Youth Program Manager, Human Services Department; and Michelle Farnum, Youth Program Director, Office of Workforce Development, Human Services Department.

Councillor Reeves convened the hearing and explained the purpose. He noted the need among policy makers for more understanding of the depth and breadth of teen programming and its relation to the youth centers.

Councillor Reeves stated that this first meeting will be a description of present programs. He requested that there also be information about how comprehensive any particular program is. He asked whether youth become members of more than one youth center. Robert Goodwin stated that the overlap is very small, perhaps 50 out of 1,000 youths end up as members of more than one center. In response to a question from Councillor Reeves, Andrew Spooner stated that the membership is not yet computerized in a way that allows for electronic analysis.

Councillor Reeves stated that he looks forward to the development of a database that can be analyzed in ways that assist program planning and development. He then invited a description of what the youth centers are presently doing.

Mr. Goodwin described the current demographics and utilization. The information he presented is summarized Attachments A and B. He noted that one cannot ascertain from the utilization report whether kids who were at one center were at other centers as well, but the numbers for each center are accurate for that center, for example, there is no double-counting within a center.

Mr. Goodwin stated that afternoon hours are pre-teen; evening hours are teen programs. Standard hours are 2:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at a couple of centers. Three centers operate on Saturdays, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Councillor Reeves asked what determines the hours. Mr. Goodwin stated that it depends on what time the schools get out. In the Fall, all programs will have standard hours of 2:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Saturday hours will be 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Committee Report #1

4735

A report from Councillor Reeves,
Chair of the Human Services and
Youth Committee, for a meeting held
on May 20, 1998 for the purpose
of discussing youth programming
in the City of Cambridge.

In City Council June 22, 1998

Report Accepted

PLACED ON FILE