

THE ISSUE:

We need more programs to keep kids off the street

“ If we had more recreation centers or youth programs [in my neighborhood], then there would be fewer kids on the streets. I go to a program at the Henry Street Settlement, but that’s in Manhattan. There should be programs [near me] where you can do sports or receive tutoring or programs that will give you a summer job. People



start picking on each other because there’s nothing else to do.”

Alexis Freeman, 17, Bedford-Stuyvesant

THE RESPONSE:

“ In Bed-Stuy, we have one Beacon program. We also have seven Out of School Time programs and two Summer Youth Employment

programs. Kids can search our Web site [to find programs in their neighborhood]. They can call our youth line at (800) 246-4646.

The Beacon program has been around for 17 years. It consists of an array of programs from homework help to



sports activities to college prep. Programs are open to anyone in the district. There’s no income eligibility; you just have to sign up.

Mayor Bloomberg helped design the Out of School Time Initiative. We just got an additional \$44 million in funding. When the program is fully operational, it will be serving 85,000 kids.

Another initiative from the Mayor’s Commission is called the Young Adult Internship Program. Those who’ve dropped out of school and are not working — the ones who are probably hanging out on the streets and causing trouble — this is an opportunity for them to learn skills, get an internship, and hopefully get them reconnected to school or to work.”

Bill Chong, Deputy Commissioner for Youth Services, Department of Youth and Community Development



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