

Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York

Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

80 Centre Street, Sixth Floor
New York, NY 10013
212-815-0400, Gen
212-815-0440, Fax

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Contacts:

Kati Cornell
Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office
(212) 815-0525

Paul J. Browne
New York Police Department
(646) 610-6700

Alana Sweeny
Police Athletic League
(212) 477-9450

Erin Duggan
New York County DA's Office
(212) 335-9400

New PAL Play Street to serve youth at 3333 Broadway in Harlem

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, ALANA SWEENEY, Executive Director of New York City's Police Athletic League, New York County District Attorney CYRUS R. VANCE, JR., New York City Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY and New York City Schools Chancellor DENNIS M. WALCOTT announced today the opening of a new Police Athletic League (PAL) Summer Play Street to serve youth residing in 3333 Broadway, a large, residential complex in the Manhattanville section of West Harlem. The recreational and educational program will be held in the schoolyard of I.S 195, Roberto Clemente School, 625 West 133rd Street, and run for a seven-week summer session.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony this morning at the I.S. 195 schoolyard, located near 135th Street and Broadway, marked the opening of the PAL Play Street. Financial support for the program is derived from narcotics trafficking proceeds obtained during criminal prosecutions by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (SNP). The Play Street officially began on July 9 and will run through August 24. The privately-owned, residential complex at 3333 Broadway is comprised of five high-rise apartment buildings and houses thousands of residents.

PAL's Summer Play Street program, founded in 1914, is designed to enrich the summer experience for youth in New York City by providing fun-filled places to play and learn. Young people ages 6 to 16 are invited to participate in a range of sports, games and other activities, such as basketball tournaments, table games and cultural arts. The program includes a prevention education component designed to reduce risk-taking behaviors and foster life skills. During the weeks it is in session, the site will operate from 2:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. This is the first Play Street location to offer Saturday hours.

In March, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office and the NYPD's Manhattan North Narcotics arrested four members of a major Chicago to New York narcotics trafficking organization at 3333

Broadway. Two of those arrested were also charged with selling six firearms and large quantities of cocaine to undercover officers during a three-month investigation. The arrests took place as police executed a search warrant in a 13th floor apartment at 3333 Broadway. A Chicago narcotics supplier was observed tossing a kilogram of heroin (2.2 lbs.) from a window. The defendants were charged in connection with over \$19,000 in sales of drugs and guns, as well as heroin and cocaine possession.

By supporting PAL, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor and the New York County District Attorney's Office join in a cooperative effort to rebuild communities after drug organizations are removed, and to improve relationships between young people and law enforcement. The Play Street serves as a safe haven for youth who might otherwise be subjected to gang recruitment and other criminal activity, including violence and drug dealing.

The Play Street program at the I.S. 195 schoolyard dovetails with the work of a newly formed group, the West Harlem Empowerment Coalition, which was spearheaded by NYPD Deputy Inspector Ruel R. Stephenson, Commanding Officer of the 30th Precinct. Government agencies, including the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office and the New York County District Attorney's Office, have joined forces with local business people, clergy and elected officials to offer West Harlem youth activities and summer employment opportunities.

New York City's Police Athletic League is the first, finest and largest civilian-run PAL in the country, and provides recreational, educational, cultural and social activities to over 50,000 boys and girls each year. It is also the city's largest, independent, nonprofit youth organization.

"We are happy to offer recreational opportunities to young people in West Harlem, and particularly 3333 Broadway. It is satisfying to support this Police Athletic League program with money taken from criminal organizations that endangered residents by using the residential complex as a base for trafficking guns and drugs," Special Narcotics Prosecutor BRIDGET G. BRENNAN said. "I want to thank Mayor's Office supporting our Safe Neighborhood Initiative and our efforts to provide safe, fun summertime activities for New York City's youth through our partnership with PAL."

PAL Executive Director ALANA SWEENEY said, "We are gratified by the continued support of the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor to support the Police Athletic League's much-needed delivery of activities to youth in communities scarred by drug dealers. Through these efforts, 150 young people will have a great summer under the supervision of trained PAL professionals."

Manhattan District Attorney CYRUS R. VANCE, JR., said, "There is a real need for safe places for kids to play in New York City when school is out for the summer. Through a creative allocation of funds seized from drug dealers in this community, this Play Street will provide young people in West Harlem with just that. I would like to thank the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, NYPD, the Police Athletic League, and the Department of Education for their ongoing support for vital crime prevention programs geared toward youth in Manhattan."

Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY said, "Although crime is down in New York City more than 32% compared with a decade ago – and down 35% in the 30th Precinct – the police are not letting up on drug dealers and other criminals who play games with people's lives for their own profit. Together the NYPD, Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Manhattan District Attorney and local, law-abiding citizens and other leaders are transforming proceeds from these arrests into alternatives for young people, six days a week with this Play Street. It's a model for others to follow."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office, the PAL and the NYPD for their continuing commitment to the children of New York City," said Schools Chancellor DENNIS M. WALCOTT. "The PAL Play Street program is an integral partner in our efforts to keep our kids engaged in positive and safe activities while school is out for the summer. I also thank IS 195 Principal Rashaunda Shaw, KIPP Superintendent Dave Levin and KIPP Special Projects Associate Lauren Katz for their hard work in bringing this newest Play Street location to fruition."