

Boys and Girls Club—Roxbury, Massachusetts.

OVERVIEW

There are not many programs in the city of Boston that concentrate on the issue of athletics in the life of the urban teenager. Most programs look to offer more than organized sports. Still there are few of these programs around. Two excellent ones are the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston and the YMCA of Greater Boston.

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

To provide an after school program that will educate the teens physically, socially, and culturally.

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

The main goal is to provide a positive environment for the kids in a negative neighborhood. In order to do this they hope to enrich their lives by physical development, unleashing their creativity, teaching them fundamental skills, and helping them to become responsible adults.

FUNCTIONS OR ACTIVITIES OF PROGRAM

There are lots of activities offered: remedial reading, community service projects, computer training, arts and crafts, cheerleaders, athletics, aerobics, swimming, organized team sports, drug/alcohol classes, nonviolence classes, and a variety of summer programs in a camp setting. Yearly membership is five dollars.

TESTIMONIES OF PROGRAM

The atmosphere of the program is vibrant—hundreds of kids doing everything you imagine. One youngster said, "I come here everyday. It's here or the street and lately the street isn't fun." Another said, "I like it here because they treat you like an adult. If you mess up you're out of here."

It feels very safe inside the walls although the area where it is located is just the opposite.

IMPLICATIONS

1. This program and others like it across the country and worldwide are excellent choices for urban teenagers. Inexpensive and safe, such facilities provide a place for kids to go and stay out of trouble.
2. There are too few programs like this one. The troubles in Boston and in other metropolitan areas are too large to not invest in more programs like the Roxbury Boys and Girls Club.

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