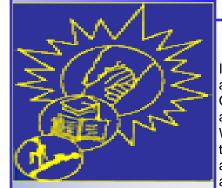
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Berkeley Youth Alternatives Newsletter

A Message from our Executive Director

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. I invite you to learn more about Berkeley Youth Alternatives and what we are providing for the community. Our staff and our partners are doing their best to meet the emotional, mental, academic, physical, and social needs of families during this challenging economy. We need your help to combat the achievement gap between our population and the majority of the youth in Berkeley and Alameda County; the health disparities in asthma, diabetes and heart disease that continue to impact our families the most; and the violence that plagues our children, youth and young adults.

At BYA, we believe that we are not only providing quality services to under-served and under-resourced populations of children and families in Berkeley and other parts of Alameda County but also inspiring hope among people so that they can reach their innate potential. By remaining committed to the organization's values dating back to its founding in 1971 and by making services accessible, we are *making a difference in the lives of children and families*.

We have many ways for you to support our mission and efforts -- Volunteer in one of our multiple programs; **Be a mentor** to one of our youth; **Donate** property, cars and money; and **Join us** at our special events, such as our **Crab Feed** on *Thursday, February 26, 2009*.

We look forward to communicating with you through this newsletter and our monthly dinners. Also, look for web updates on our programs at www.byaonline.org.

Thank you in advance for your support of children, youth and young adults in our community!

Niculia Williams

Executive Director Berkeley Youth Alternatives



Berkeley Youth Alternatives

Staff Directors, Managers and Coordinators

Niculia Williams, Executive Director Kevin Williams, JD, MPH, Development & Policy Director Renda Davis, Director of Extended Care; Assistant Sports & Fitness Director Rebecca Prager, MSW, Director of Health & Environment Alex Williams, Sports & Fitness Director Jovan Yglecias, MA Medi-Cal Coordinator Toya Groves, MA Case Manager; Teen Center Coordinator Kim Allen, Garden Program Manager Vivian Mc Bride, Executive Assistant Nicholas Wright, Volunteer, Mentoring & Academics Coordinator

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What's going on at BYA!

5th Annual Crab Feed!

It's time once again to make your reservation for our **5th Annual Crab Feed!** The Crab Feed is scheduled for **Thursday, February 26, 2009** from **7:00-9:00pm**. Tickets are \$40.00 and will **NOT** be sold at the door. If you would like to reserve a table please add \$10.00 to the ticket price, and note that each table will seat 6-8 people. **To order your tickets, please contact BYA at 510.845.9010**

The Sports & Fitness Calendar ~ Let's Get Moving

Did you know that Berkeley Youth Alternatives offers a Line Dancing Class for adults on Thursdays at 6:30pm? Currently, there are 25 adults in the class learning various dance steps that are so fun and easy that they forget its exercise! If you are interested in moving to the beat and joining this 'fun, fitness craze', drop by on a Thursday night. Classes are 90 minutes in length and only cost \$2.00 per person. BYA is ready to get you into tip top shape! We currently have programs in Basketball, NFL Flag Football and Tennis. *For more information about these fun and exciting programs, please call our Sports and Fitness Director, Alex Williams at 510.845.9066*

The BYA Afterschool Center

The BYA Afterschool Center targets children and youth, ages 6-14, who need additional support to improve their overall literacy and math skills. Our center also instructs participants in computers, arts & crafts, music instrumentation, sports and dance. Our volunteer tutors from UC Berkeley serve as important role models for the children. All of our participants have BYA counselors and case managers that work in collaboration with teachers to ensure that children meet their innate potential. Our center is open during the academic year Monday through Friday from 2:00-6:00pm. We are also looking for caring and supportive volunteers that want to give back to the community.

These services are supported by the Alameda County Probation Department, the City of Berkeley and the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services.



Agency. For more information, or to refer a child or youth, please contact Renda Davis, Director of Extended Care Programs at 510.845.0155

The BYA Teen Center

The BYA Teen Center is designed to meet teens where they are, providing them with positive alternatives to street life. It works to divert teens from negative activities while providing them with positive and creative activities that they can enjoy and learn from. The Teen Center focuses on engaging teens by using popular contemporary art forms and by exposing them to technology and training in music production. We currently offer Music Production on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 6:00-8:00pm, Computer Instruction on Monday - Thursday from 6:00-7:30pm, Fashion Design on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 5:00-6:00pm, and Basketball on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 6:00-8:00pm. *The Teen Center is partially supported by the Alameda County Office of Education and the Alameda County Workforce Investment Board. For more information, please contact Toya Groves, Teen Center Coordinator at 510.647.0719 or teens@byaonline.org*

Rooted in the Community

Through the Rooted in the Community Network, youth from organizations focused on food justice issues and urban agriculture converged on July 23 - 27, 2008 for a collaboration of expressive, creative, culinary, social and political activity. Four HEAT youth interns, Spencetta Davilla, DeAndre Foster, Nikki Reed, and Seaguins Young, joined 140 other youth and chaperones from as far away as Boston, Maine and Texas! While staying at UC Berkeley, attendees made visits to farms and urban agriculture programs in Santa Cruz, Alameda, Hayward and Oakland. BYA garden youth hosted an afternoon of solar oven building and cooking. BYA's Rebecca Prager and Kim Allen participated with other youth leaders from Farm Fresh Choice, Growing Youth Project at the Alameda Point Collaborative and Hayward Nutritional Learning Community Project, Pie Ranch and Food What?! as part of the conference planning committee. For more information, please visit www.rootedincommunity.org

Family "Connection" Dinners Come and Celebrate with us!

Through our partnership with the Alameda County Food Bank, Berkeley Youth Alternatives hosts Family Connection Dinners on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:00pm at BYA. This is an opportunity for us to share information, highlight upcoming events and activities and celebrate the accomplishments of our children, youth, young adults and parents, with meals prepared by our Cook and the youth in our Culinary Arts program.

We hope that these dinners serve as a way to stay "connected" with BYA Alumni, both youth and staff. So, spread the word to those you know and come share a meal with us. We look forward to seeing you and your family.



Preparing food for a Family "Connection" Dinner

"Pathways to Success" ~ Reaching Teens and Parents

If you are having trouble 'reaching' your teenager, then we have a powerful group for you! Pathways to Success is led by the Counselors and Case Managers with the Berkeley Youth Alternatives Counseling Center. Our staff of MFT Interns are under the clinical guidance of our Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. This group meets on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 5:30pm and features guest speakers such as attorneys, law enforcement, college preparation advisors, physicians and others who are giving our youth real messages about life and the dangers of the streets. *The Center also offers individual, family and group counseling services under our contracts with the Alameda County Probation Department, Alameda County Office of Education and the City of Berkeley.*

For more information about Individual, Family, and Group counseling services, please contact us at 510.849.1408



Mentors ~ Making a Positive Connection

Be a Mentor ~ Change a life!! BYA Mentors are asked to make a commitment of at least 9 months, ideally one year, to working with a child one-on-one. Mentoring can involve many activities such as tutoring, coaching a child in a sport or recreational activity, taking a child to a movie, having a child job shadow for a day, or even taking a child to a college campus. The Volunteer and Mentoring Center provides training and support for mentors throughout the program. We need help matching at least 25 children with mentors by February 2009!! The Mentoring Program is made possible with partial funding from the Alameda County Probation Department and the Alameda County Office of Education.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Nick Wright at 510.647.0712 or volunteer@byaonline.org

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

Berkeley Youth Alternatives would like to thank our core partners who help us "do the work" with children, youth, young adults & their families:

Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Agency Alameda County Office of Education Alameda County Probation Department Alameda County Workforce Investment Board Barbara and Donald Jonas Family Fund City of Berkeley East Bay Community Foundation Stern Memorial Trust Theodore Rosencranz Fund West Berkeley Foundation

We would also like to thank the many individual donors who have provided needed assistance throughout the year.

Thank you to the following supporters for "making it happen" with our participants:

Alameda County Food Bank Berkeley Adult School Berkeley Boosters Association Berkeley City College Berkeley Montessori School Berkeley Technology Academy Bread Workshop Cal Corps Cal - State University East Bay City of Emeryville Parks & Recreation Dept. Farm Fresh Choice Lifelong Medical Care Rising Sun Energy Rubicon Inc. The Bread Project Team Up for Youth UC Berkeley School of Public Health Waterside

Lets Hear From our Parents!

The next meeting of the BYA Parents Organization will be Thursday, January 8, 2009 at 5:45pm. Meetings will now be held on the first Thursday of each month. We need all parents from the BYA programs, including the Afterschool Center, Pathways to Success, Steps-to-Success and The HEAT Center to participate and have ALL voices heard. At our upcoming meetings, we will be conducting a Financial Seminar as well as an Education Advocacy Training and we want your input into our Movie Night, Casino Trip, Bowling Adventure and much more.

For more information, please contact Renda Davis at 510.845.0155 or afterschool@byaonline.org

Berkeley Youth Alternatives Mission Statement

Berkeley Youth Alternatives helps children, youth and their families address issues and problems by way of **prevention** which can

include reaching youth before their problems become crises; and **intervention** by providing support services to youth who are entangled in the juvenile justice system. Berkeley Youth Alternatives helps build the capacity within individuals to meet their innate potential.

Please visit us on the web at

www.byaonline.org

Car Donation Program

Donate your vehicle to Berkeley Youth Alternatives and get a tax deduction for fair market value!!

For more information, please call BYA at 510.845.9066



BYA Landscaping Services

BYA Landscapers to the Rescue! Need help with your yard? Have weeds that you can not tame? Want regular landscape services?



Let the BYA Landscapers Team come to help you.

Contact the HEAT Center at 510.647.0709 for a yard visit and a quote and leave your yard to us!