Program Spotlight:
The Greater Ridgewood Youth Council

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council (GRYC) deployed a rapid response team to build a virtual learning platform and to curate virtual resources for families to use. Over 250 staff members were involved in the creation of the GRYC’s virtual learning platform, which now includes over 150 different online classrooms. Over 3,500 families were contacted over the phone along with outreach through social media and email.

The GRYC was asked by the Dept. of Youth and Community Development to present their remote platform to over 350 attendees from various agencies citywide in order to help service providers rise to the challenge of providing cutting edge services to the children throughout the city during the pandemic.

The GRYC has provided robust staff training and holds weekly online meetings with its entire staff of front-line workers, education specialists, program directors, and agency executives. Some of the programs being offered in the online afterschool program are: yoga, robotics, photography, cosmetology, floral arrangement, dance, Zumba, cheerleading, beat-making, book and movie clubs, visual arts, cooking, fashion, drama, fitness and sports, music and band practice, and more.

In addition, the GRYC is spotlighting its financial literacy club with one of its sites coming in 1st place out of 721 middle schools in NYC. The agency is also building an inter-agency multifaceted cooperative, and strategic gaming club online which includes offerings such as
Minecraft, eSports, computer programming, and cryptography.

Through partnerships with the Youth Volunteer Corps and the Ridgewood Kiwanis Club, participants at the GRYC are able to continue to emulate the mission of the agency by doing virtual service-learning and leadership projects as well. For more information, click on the link above.

If you would like to share how your program has been able to stay in contact with your community, feel free to fill out our questionnaire.

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**Summer Activity Guide Now Available!**

To support the hard work of afterschool programs and camps across the state, we have been working alongside the 50 State Afterschool Network and Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network to develop a suite of fun and engaging activities and challenges designed specifically to accommodate a COVID-19 summer. Unit one of the Summer Activity Guide is now available. Check out our website for more information.

On the page you will be able to find activity guides for ages 5-9, 10-12, 13-15, and 16-18. In addition, you will have to access two other documents and a video that will assist you in the implementation of the activity guide(s) and/or help you navigate virtual platforming.

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**Update on Empire State After-School Program Grantees**

OCFS recently released an update regarding Empire State After-School Funding. In the update they stated: "We are asking contractors to reach out directly to their OCFS Program Manager to provide details on how they have been operating and providing services during this time of school closures. Those contractors that are able to creatively deliver services as approved in their contracts and work plans will continue to be paid." To view the entirety of the document, click here.

For other information regarding COVID-19, additional resources, and updates check out our COVID-19 resource page.

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**Help Tell the Story of how Afterschool Programs are Stepping Up and What Programs Need Moving Forward**
Across the country, COVID-19 has impacted afterschool and summer programs and the young people and families who rely on them to keep kids safe and engaged in learning. It is important for funders, policy makers, education leaders, and the overall public to understand the current situation, as well as the projections and concerns for the future.

To help make that possible, the Afterschool Alliance will be conducting surveys throughout the summer, and possibly into the fall, to monitor the situation and help provide solutions.

The survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes of your time and your responses will be anonymous. To thank you for your time, 50 respondents to the survey will be randomly selected to win one of two prizes: a $25 cash prize OR a STEMfinity gift card that can be used to purchase a STEMfinity STEM kit. Click below to start the survey!

[Click Here]

Here you can go into detail about absolutely anything you want your readers to know about. Make sure to connect the story to your readers and how it relates to the mission of your organization.

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**Ask USDA to Approve Statewide Waivers for Eligibility, Additional Reimbursement, and Other Flexibilities**

NYS Education Department (NYSED) has requested an extended statewide waiver of area eligibility requirements, which limit most summer meal sites to areas where 50% or more of the children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Extending this waiver – currently set to end June 30, 2020 – would allow continued meal service in all areas of the state. NYSED also requested a waiver to allow additional reimbursement for costs necessary to provide meals in alignment with current health and safety guidelines, an extension of meal pattern flexibility in areas with food shortages, and waivers of on-site monitoring requirements. USDA has not yet approved these requests.

SFSP sponsors, sites, and advocates can share their support for these and other statewide and nationwide waivers. Let USDA know the vital importance of these flexibilities, how they will help alleviate summertime child hunger in your community, and the urgency of approving them quickly to allow adequate time for planning and preparation ahead of summer.

- **Click here to send comments to USDA.**
- **Post on social media;** be sure to tag USDA on Facebook (@USDA) and Twitter (@USDANutrition).
Contact Hunger Solutions NY for assistance or sample language.

Network for Youth Success Events

6/4: Trauma-Informed Practice in Afterschool, Virtual Training
Don't miss out on your chance to discover the role that afterschool programs play in helping children survive and thrive after traumatic experiences. Using trauma-informed care research, this workshop will explore how afterschool programs can be safe places for all children. Emphasis will be on practices in afterschool, including interactions with children and program development. This workshop is for all afterschool, summer, and expanded learning time staff who want to integrate trauma-informed practices into their programs. To register, click here.

6/5: Virtual QSA: How to Conduct a Self-Assessment When You Can’t Meet In-Person
Learn how to use online tools to conduct a self-assessment with your team when you can’t be in the same room together! This session will explore how programs can still do a Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) program assessment during the pandemic. Emphasis will be on techniques and tools to allow assessing, scoring, and discussion when program staff cannot meet in person. This session is being offered especially for those grantees in New York State who need to meet grant requirements when they may or may not be able to gather in person. To register, click here.

9/23: Fall SAC Credential Course, Capital District
The New York State Network for Youth Success administers the New York State School Age Care (SAC) Credential, which promotes quality services to children and families by providing specific standards, training, and evaluation for afterschool professionals. For those interested, click here.

9/2020 - 12/2020: Distance Learning
The Distance Learning School-Age Care (SAC) Preparatory Course includes viewing recorded videos, reading, and preparing a portfolio and resource file. This class meets the education requirement to be a Site Director in New York State. We are now enrolling for Fall 2020.

SAVE THE DATE: 4/23 & 4/24, 2021: School’s Out, Make it Count Annual Conference
Our Annual Conference will be held on April 23rd & 24th 2021 for 2020. Be ready for two full days of trainings on a wide variety of topics, various vendors, awards, networking, and more! Stay tuned for more information.

Other Events

6/1 -6/26: Rise Up for Equity: Virtual Summit on Community Schools and Family Engagement!
Starting on June 1st, there will be 20 days of plenary, workshop, and deep-dive sessions! The virtual summit offers the best of both worlds, combining the content, networks and expertise from IEL’s flagship events, the Community Schools National Forum and the National Family and Community Engagement Conference. Become immersed in multiple events, learn more about innovative and proven practices, approaches and research from grassroots to systems efforts to co-create equitable communities. You no longer need to choose between experiences - participate as your schedule permits and/or watch a recording at your own convenience. To register, click here.

6/4: Connections and Solutions: Local Intermediaries Leading the Charge for Afterschool
Now more than ever, we need connections and solutions. Planted in a new remote reality, afterschool champions across the country are facing a host of unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19 for which there is no playbook or script. With urgency, local afterschool organizations have mobilized like never before to support young people as school and afterschool programs closed. Intermediaries are demonstrating their distinct powers to understand the needs of children and youth and work with policymakers and funders on redefining a new normal. As communities emerge from this crisis, local intermediaries are poised to bring their communities together to redefine what education and youth development looks like to ensure equity and access to open opportunities for young people.

To register, click here.

6/5: The Trauma Responsive Educational Practices Project Virtual Conference
The TREP Project is hosting a one-day virtual conference to bring together leading researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to provide evidence-based guidance for the role that schools can play as the primary social institution responsible for influencing the well-being of children and youth during this national crisis. For more information or to register, click here.

6/8: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work
A sense of belonging is essential to having a strong foundation for growth, team spirit, and a motivated team. Join in and learn activities that support a culture of teamwork and cohesiveness. To register, click here.

6/16: The Future of Transportation in New York Post COVID-19
While New Yorkers adapt to getting around during the pandemic, a larger question looms: what will our transportation systems look like when we get this disease under control? Is there still a place for open streets in a post COVID-19 NYC? How can mass transit bounce back after ridership has plummeted this low? What’s in store for buses, bike lanes, and congestion pricing, now that the transit system’s equilibrium has been so disturbed? To register, click here.

Ways You Can Help the Network!

Choose us as your non-profit through Amazon Smile, donate, become a member, follow us on Facebook and Twitter, or check out our website!