

Children's Corner



Helping Children Reach Their Potential

(NAPSA)—While most families acknowledge the importance of education, one out of every six students in America doesn't graduate high school on time.

This can be the result of many unfortunate circumstances but research shows that what happens during out-of-school time can have a significant impact on reversing the negative trends facing youth, including dropout rates. Fortunately, there are steps that parents and others can take.

What Parents Can Do

- **Stay in touch with your children.** Let them know they can talk to you about anything, including trouble at school.
- **Explain why they need to stay in school.** Show how it will affect their future, socially and economically.
- **Be involved with the school.** Get to know their teachers and school administration. Teachers see students in the academic environment more than parents do. If you can, join the PTA or volunteer at various events so you can be among the first to know what happens at school.
- **Intervene if necessary.** Some kids may need tutors, mentors, psychologists, counselors or career shadowing to do their best.
- **Look into changing schools.** A charter or vocational high school, home-schooling or an online program may be best for your child.

What Others Are Doing

There's a nonprofit organization that finds ways to address each young person in need and guide them all down the right path in life.

With 11.3 million kids having no place to go at the end of each school day, and 43 million with no access to summer learning programs, Boys & Girls Clubs of America provide stability and a great environment for kids and teens to learn and grow. They have programs in Sports and Recreation, Education, Arts, Health and Wellness, Career Development, and Character and Leadership.



Kids and teens are more likely to stay in school when they have a place to go after school where they can have fun and learn to be good citizens.

There are also programs specifically for teens, designed, said Jim Clark, president and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of America, to "provide meaningful experiences today so teens are ready to chase their dreams tomorrow." Around 97 percent of these teens expect to graduate high school and 88 percent expect to complete some form of postsecondary education.

At the Clubs, youths can have fun with peers and be guided by trained youth development professionals so those most in need can achieve great futures as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Today, more than 4,600 Clubs serve over 4.7 million young people in cities, towns, public housing and on Native lands throughout the country, and on U.S. military installations worldwide.

The Clubs have enjoyed strong support among such celebrities as LeBron James, Howie Mandel and Denzel Washington, who have all endorsed the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. So have most of the organization's alumni. In a recent Harris Survey, 54 percent said the Club saved their lives.

Learn More

For further facts, visit the Boys & Girls Clubs of America website, www.bgca.org. To find a nearby club, click "Get Involved," then click "Find a Club." To view donation options, click on "Ways To Give."