



# City of Cambridge

## Executive Department

**YI-AN HUANG**  
City Manager

June 26, 2023

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Please see below an update from the Department of Human Service Programs, Community Safety Department, Cambridge Police Department, and the Cambridge Public Health Department regarding opportunities for youth engagement throughout the summer.

Summer is fast approaching and the City of Cambridge remains committed to ensuring a wide variety of programming for young people to enhance well-being, create more community connections and reduce incidents of violence. This memo serves as an overall update on the planning by the city to provide supportive, engaging and innovative programming and opportunities for community building for the Summer of 2023

Building on many years of commitment to providing comprehensive programming for young people, this update will outline how the Department of Human Service Programs, Community Safety Department, Cambridge Police Department, and the Cambridge Public Health Department are working collaboratively to offer opportunities for youth engagement throughout the summer.

This document is not intended to provide a comprehensive list of all the summer programming across the city. Many community-based organizations provide a wealth of support and opportunities for engagement with young people. The following is meant to provide an overview of what the City of Cambridge is doing directly and providing funding to support.

### ***Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP)***

DHSP Summer 2023 Programs for Middle Schoolers and Teens and Families to promote positive environments includes the following programming.

#### **Cambridge Recreation Summer Basketball Leagues**

One of the very significant opportunities for Cambridge young people ages 8 to 19 to engage in productive and fun activities is the Recreation Summer Basketball league. During Summer 2022, more than 380 young people participated in the 5 leagues. For players, coaches, and staff, the leagues offer more than skill-building and competition; they foster lasting relationships and build community. The leagues bring together families, younger and older siblings and friends.



Recreation is currently recruiting for 2023 Summer Basketball Leagues, which will run July 5 and run through mid-August. Leagues include:

- Medina Dixon Instructional Basketball (Girls 11 & under), Donnelly Field
- Davonte Neal Instructional League (Co-ed ages 8-11), Sennott Park
- Sharif Moustafa Instructional League (Co-ed ages 9-13), Glacken Field
- Fast Break League (Boys 12-14 / grades 6-8), Hoyt Field
- Eurie Stamps Sr League (Boys 15 – 19 / grades 9-12+), Hoyt Field
- 

The Cambridge Summer Food Program serves nutritious dinner meals at Summer Basketball League sites. [For 2023 registration and scheduling details, click here.](#)

### **Cambridge Youth Programs (CYP) Pre-Teen / Middle School Summer Programs**

*Offered Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. during the following sessions: Mini-session: July 5 – 7; Session 1: Week 1 and 2 (July 10-21); Session 2: Weeks 3 and 4 (July 24 – August 4); Session 3: Weeks 5 and 6 (August 7 – August 18)*

During Summer 2023, 260 youth will be participating in CYP's Pre-Teen / Middle School Summer Programs.

- **Empowerment Program at Frisoli Youth Center:**  
This summer at Frisoli, young people will be exploring joy. Our goal is to provide an experience for youth to truly feel joy. Young people will leave the program every day being able to identify at least one time they felt joy throughout the day. Young people will be able to discover new activities that give them that “feel good” feeling. We will be using Joy as an act of resistance against oppression and systematic racism. Empowering them to show up as their authentic self. Our goal is to build confidence this summer.
- **Sports Leadership Academy at Moore Youth Center:**  
Summer 2023 will be the summer of the “Dream Team” at the Sports Leadership Academy. This theme will live in the program in several ways. A strong team needs to understand the strengths and areas of growth of all its members. Over the course of the summer, young people will self-evaluate their skill level in a specific sport each week. Youth will be partnered according to skill level to promote peer leadership and connection. This system is meant to teach networking. Young people will explore sports that are unfamiliar in hopes that they find a new interest or passion.
- **Discovery Program at Russell Youth Center:**  
Discovery Program will promote positive youth interaction and provide young people with an opportunity to “Move” themselves towards discovery throughout the summer. Young people will be on a path of discovery that allows for them to motivate one another to overcome challenges, be in a space where they can become optimistic with others, becoming a valued member of the Russell Community while being an enthusiast. During their journey they will learn from experiences that allow for them to discover inner talents that focus on movement.
- **Swag Academy at Gately Youth Center:**  
This summer at Swag Academy our Gately community will begin to reform this specific idea of “swag”. Youth will begin to develop their own personal swag by exploring personal interests. Youth will explore their community through T-ride Tuesdays! T-ride Tuesdays will allow youth to commute to a new destination every week on public transportation. Youth will learn about the MBTA, how to use it, and move around their city.

## **Teen Summer Programs at DHSP**

### **Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP)**

The goal of MSYEP is to serve as a young person's first job experience and exposure to the world of work. The program is open to Cambridge residents ages 14 through the summer after completing high school. Teens are placed in public sector and non-profit jobs throughout Cambridge and in surrounding communities for six weeks during the summer. They work 20 hours a week and are paid minimum wage by the City. Nearly half of the youth are placed in Summer Work and Learning sites, which offer participants a valuable educational and employment experience using the community's resources to expose youth to potential educational or career paths.

During Summer 2023, MSYEP will run from July 5 – August 11 and teens will make \$15 per hour. There will be between 850 and 900 teens participating in this summer's program.

### **Summer Teen Internships offered by Cambridge Youth Centers**

*Teens are matched to CYP Teen Internships through MSYEP*

**Boys to Men (Moses Youth Center)** is a leadership empowerment internship for self-identified young men focusing on Wellness (Physical Fitness/Nutrition), Self-Care, Financial Literacy, Career Exploration, and Weekly Culture Dialogues centered around Social Justice, Music, Fashion, Art and Sports.

**Youth Worker 101 (Frisoli Youth Center)** is a leadership and skill-development program that is focused on developing our young people into future youth workers. As part of the training and reflective process, teen interns will have the opportunity to build skills and experience to facilitate developmentally appropriate programming for grades 4th -8<sup>th</sup>

**ARTrepreneurship for Teens (Russell Youth Center)** is an internship for teen creatives. Young people will have the opportunity to explore the journey of entrepreneurship through the lens of art expression and creativity. Our goal is to empower and educate young artists on how to build a career utilizing their own talents and gifts.

**Teen Night Live** is hosted by Cambridge Youth Programs, during Summer 2023 and invites Cambridge teens, ages 14 – 19, to come together and build community through games, events, music, sports, field trips, cookouts, and more! The activities will happen in the evening at the different Youth Centers.

### **Cambridge Summer Food Program**

The Cambridge Summer Food Program provides free breakfast and lunch meals to Cambridge youth ages 18 and under. No identification (ID) required to get a meal and vegetarian options are available at every location.

Beginning June 26, 2023, free breakfast meals will be served from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. and free lunch meals will be served from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at parks across the city.

Youth can also enjoy sports, games, and crafts. with Cambridge Recreation staff in the parks from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Free dinner meals are provided at Recreation Summer Basketball League locations. Youth do not need to participate in the leagues in order to get a meal.

The 2023 Summer Food Program schedule will be posted at [www.cambridgema.gov/SummerFood](http://www.cambridgema.gov/SummerFood)

DHSP will also collaborate and provide support to other summer programming that will support young people to come together to build community, build skills and engage in productive activities.

Among those programs are:

- The Cambridge Basketball Lab directed by Matt Meyershon which will operate out of the War Memorial with support from the Cambridge Community Center to provide young men and women with basketball and life skills and a productive place to be in the late afternoon this summer.
- The Recess Program that will operate for middle school age students at different venues throughout the summer
- Friday Night Hype will also be working to engage middle school students this summer with several events

For more information about DHSP, go to <https://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP>

## ***Community Safety Department (CSD)***

### **My Brother's Keeper**

The Community Safety Department is partnering to work with [My Brother's Keeper](#) (MBK) to provide young adult engagement programming over the summer.

MBK's areas of focus will be: Post secondary planning/exploration, financial education and mental health coaching.

The program will run from July through August and will include:

- 20 young adult participants, ages 18-24 years old
- 5 weeks of programming
- 12 hours per week of program delivery
- 60 hours of total program delivered
- 20 total workshops designed, delivered & experienced

### **Summer Outings**

CSD and the Cambridge Police Department will collaborate on providing opportunities for families, young people and children to build community through fun events and outings. These events will include picnics, beach trips and cookouts in Cambridge and they will be promoted widely in the community.

### **Bi-Weekly Check In Meetings**

The CSD will also organize and lead bi-weekly check in zoom calls for youth serving programs and departments throughout the summer starting in July. The goal of the calls will be to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting young people and to understand increases in tension across the community in order to provide compassionate and thoughtful interventions. Participants will include department heads, educators, non-profit executives, neighborhood organizers, religious leaders, activists, community partners, etc., in order to improve synergy and strengthen the safety net under our most vulnerable populations.

For more information about CSD, go to [cambridgesafety.org](http://cambridgesafety.org)

## ***Cambridge Police Department (CPD)***

The Cambridge Police Department has a number of unique volunteer and employment programs this summer designed specifically for young residents interested in a career in public safety.

As part of the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program, CPD will once again host a Youth Police Academy, which is a six-week program that serves up to 30 teens and introduces them to a career in public safety. Youth workers learn about the role and function of Cambridge Police Officers and varying units within the Department, including the Traffic Unit, Explosive Ordnance Unit, and Special Response Team. They are also able to learn about and practice OUI stops, traffic stops, handcuffing, baton techniques and self-defense. Participants gain understanding about juvenile law, rights, and responsibilities with Strategies for Youth and the role of the Cambridge Fire Department, Emergency Communications Department, and Pro EMS in public safety.

In mid-August each summer, the week-long Middlesex Sheriff's Office Youth Public Safety Academy is held for Cambridge residents 8-12 years old. The camp is designed to expose our youngest residents to role models in public safety—including the Cambridge Police and Fire Departments — as well as to teach them valuable life and safety lessons. Junior Cadets participate in a series of activities throughout the camp, visiting with local police and fire officials, learning how to make evacuation plans for emergency situations, and participating in exercises designed to demonstrate the power and importance of teamwork.

In addition, CPD is excited to be partnering with several local organizations to host opportunities for youth engagement throughout the summer. A few highlights include:

- Weekly game nights throughout the City with the Cambridge Housing Authority and other partners.
- The Cambridge Police and community partners run basketball leagues five nights a week (Monday through Friday) throughout the summer from 6-10 p.m. In addition to offering basketball, these leagues provide game room/social recreation and informal mentoring opportunities for teens. Every June, Cambridge hosts "Safer Homes, Safer Community: Gift Cards for Guns" initiative that supports the City's initiative to reduce accidental injuries in the home and help residents safely remove unwanted firearms from their homes. The event is a collaboration of the City, Police Department, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, and faith and community-based organizations. Other special events that encourage community involvement include Danahy Park Family Day, Ethiopian Pride Day, 362-364 Rindge Avenue, Just-a-Start and Winn Properties Summer Barbeques, National Night Out, Cambridge Bike Giveback events, Community Clean-Up and Peace Walks, Monthly Coffee with a Cop and Pizza with the Police outings, Soccer Nights, Screen on the Green, Book Bike Reading, and much more.

To ensure the safety of our youth and the community, CPD has held ongoing regional multi-jurisdictional agency meetings with the Somerville, Malden, Everett and State Police.

This has resulted in:

- Enhanced information sharing and regional gun violence prevention strategies
- Overviews of critical incidents and any concerns
- Forward-looking planning

To complement these meetings, CPD has initiated a foot patrol deployment in areas in which there historically has been an increase in violent crime in the summer months. That has included:

- Modifications to Central Square and Harvard Square Patrols leading to more frequent police officer visibility and engagement.
- Enhanced community engagement in The Port neighborhood.
- Outreach by officers and staff in the Family and Social Justice Section. Part of this will include aftercare support for overdose survivors. That support includes providing survivors with valuable items such as backpacks or small duffel bags containing clothing, supplies (including Narcan) and personal hygiene products, transportation to treatment or clinical care services, assistance with vital documents to aid reinstatement of identification documents, and communication services so individuals can communicate with care providers to aid in their recovery and harm reduction modalities.

For more information about CPD, go to <https://www.cambridgema.gov/departments/cambridgepolice>

## ***Cambridge Public Health Department***

For summer 2023, the Cambridge Public Health Department's youth initiatives are focused on providing employment and learning opportunities. The Cambridge Community Corps (C3) has hired several young people to serve as part of its network of paid ambassadors.

The mission of C3 is to foster a resilient and equitable community so that everyone in Cambridge can prepare, respond, recover, and thrive under extreme situations. Corps members participate in trainings designed to make them effective communicators of public health information. Corps members address such public health topics as safety during periods of extreme heat; mosquito-borne diseases; and emergency preparedness. They visit parks throughout the city, conduct door-to-door outreach, staff tables at community events, and provide wellness education. C3 will continue to offer paid shifts over the summer to youth who are interested in participating.

We welcome all over 16 years old to come work with us. If interested, please contact us at [nrihanporter@cambridgepublichealth.org](mailto:nrihanporter@cambridgepublichealth.org).

CPHD is also welcoming youth from the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program and FLARE Education.

For more information about the Cambridge Public Health Department, go to <https://www.cambridgepublichealth.org/>

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yi-An Huang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Yi-An Huang  
City Manager