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YOUTH FIRST COMMUNITY OF PROMISE



ANDOVER • ANOKA • RAMSEY

April 14, 2011

City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

Dear Mayor Ramsey and City Council Members,

On behalf of Youth First Community of Promise I am writing to request \$5,000.00 in program support for our after school and summer programs at the Ramsey Neighborhood Center.

Youth First operates under a joint powers agreement with the City of Ramsey along with the Cities of Andover and Anoka, Anoka County and the Anoka Hennepin School District. The City of Ramsey has been a strong supporter of Youth First for many years. Your past and continued support is greatly appreciated.

Youth First offers free after school and summer programs to youth and families who live in the City of Ramsey. Our programs focus on providing youth in our community with 5 promises. Caring Adults, Safe Places, Effective Education, A Healthy Start and Opportunities to Serve. For the past 5 years we have been fulfilling these promises to area youth by offering a wide range of programs and services at the Ramsey Neighborhood Center. Attached is an overview of our 2010 programs and participants in the City of Ramsey.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you would like to come tour the Ramsey Neighborhood Center.

Sincerely,

Heidi Geiss, LSW
Program Director

**CARING ADULTS
SAFE PLACES
a healthy start
MARKETABLE SKILLS
service
opportunities**

Active Partners with:

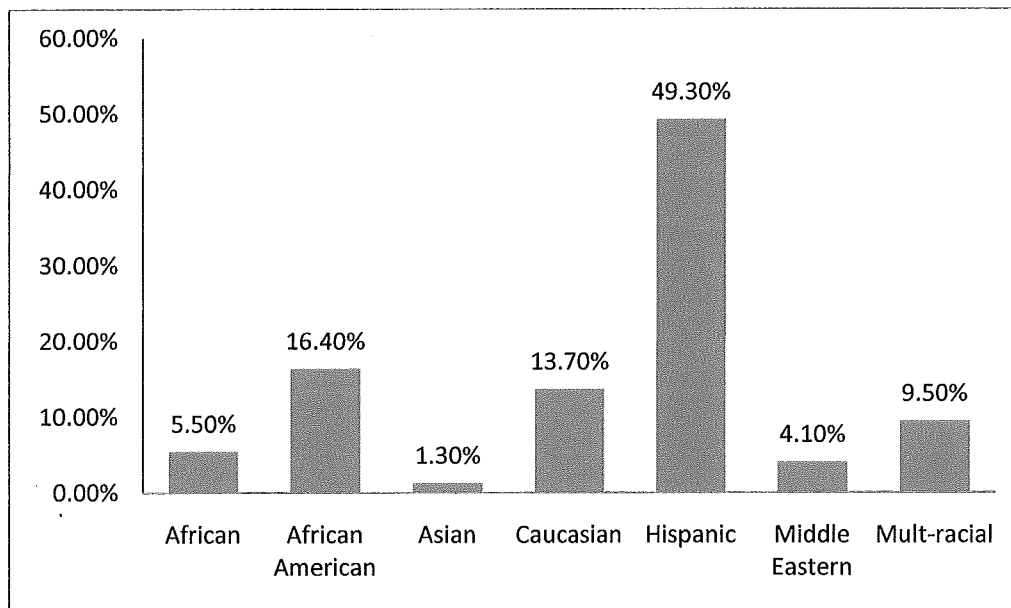
- Anoka County • City Governments of Andover, Anoka & Ramsey • School District #11 • Business •
- Faith Based Communities • Civic & community groups •

Youth First 2010 Summary

Ramsey Neighborhood Center

Student Demographics

- 73 unduplicated Ramsey middle/high school youth served
- 5.5% of Ramsey participants (youth) were homeless in 2010
- 64% participated in both summer and after school programs
- 100% of students qualified for free/reduced lunch
- Participants live in the following residential developments: Oak Terrace, Rivenwick Village, Sunwood Estates, and the townhomes at Sunfish Lake Blvd/Bunker Lake Blvd NW



Afterschool Program

- Offered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2:45 – 5:30 p.m.
- Provide students with homework help and access to computers and text books as well as materials needed to complete assignments.
- Communicate regularly with teachers and staff to hold students accountable for missing/late work and to prepare for tests.
- Provide students with a healthy snack (provided by Anoka-Hennepin School District 11 and partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank)

Summer Programs

- On site activities twice a week with an additional field trip on Thursday's to a variety of educational and recreational locations. Transportation provided by Anoka-Hennepin Community Education. The Anoka-Hennepin School District provided free bag lunches for each child.
- Community Garden – Facilitated by City of Ramsey
- Collaboration with Alexandra House and the Choose Respect Curriculum
- Weekly Family Clubs – evening opportunities for Ramsey residents to share a meal; hear an educational speaker and spend time getting to know their neighbors. This year's topics included: Saving for college, Human Rights Coalition, Anoka County Public Health, and Railroad Safety.
- Community Service Opportunities – During the summer months, students participated in three community service projects at Second Harvest, Feed My Starving Children and area nursing homes. These projects were a great opportunity for our students to give back to the community.

Other Activities & Services

- Provided homework assistance in the ESL Student Center at Anoka High School for Ramsey students twice a week. Liaison between the teachers, students and parents to ensure that assignments are being completed. Attend school conferences and help to organize and implement special family events at school designed to get families more involved.
- Through Ronald McDonald Mobile Dental Unit, we had three clinics in 2010 serving 29 kids and completing approximately \$10,000 in dental services. The majority of the kids have never had dental care before.
- Distributed over 300 new filled backpacks to K-12th grade kids
- Provided movie/dinner nights throughout the year at the Neighborhood Center for kids 14 and older to spend time in the company of their peers in a healthy way.
- Coordinated Saturday morning basketball games/lunch at the Andover YMCA for middle and high school boys.
- Coordinated free eye exams and eye glasses for uninsured students through a collaborative with Caring & Sharing Hands and Pearl Vision. Four Ramsey students were provided with eye glasses. None of the students have had vision checks in the past and all had significant visual deficiencies.
- Provided students and their families with assistance in completing required forms for school, sports and other activities.
- Access to computers, copiers, fax and phone for our students and families for a variety of purposes. Provided direct services and referrals for mental health, housing, employment, and educational needs.