

SCAN PROVIDES THE INTEREST...SAY THE PRINCIPALS

KEN THOMPSON, Associate Executive Director

After-school programs (ASPs) have rightfully earned their respect in the continuum of formal teaching and learning. No longer viewed as glorified babysitting, ASPs are recognized for their indelible contributions to both the academic and social development of students. Ask any school principal to depict the program in a single word, and the invariable response is "invaluable".

Why the change of heart?

The myopic focus on "academic" achievement, coupled with the overwhelming strain on financial resources, has resulted in a dearth of enrichment programming, such as bands, dance troupes and team sports, once considered an education staple. While scholarship is important, educators readily acknowledge the importance of enrichment and recreational programming. "The optimal development of the student begs a holistic approach," states Collin Wolfe, principal of P.S. 53 in the Bronx. "The empirical data clearly demonstrate a positive skew toward increased achievement for the cohort of students participating in enrichment activities, as opposed to those who are not. Enrichment activities serve to pique and reinvigorate student interest in learning, exploring and taking chances."

Delise Jones, principal of I.S. 117, also in the Bronx, appreciates the ASP for its role as a "carrot" to encourage student attendance, behavior, focus, and, yes, achievement. "I am acutely aware that the more my students are in the school building, for whatever reasons, the greater the opportunity for us to educate




Ken Thompson

"If they're here every day because they want to read, write and count, terrific! If they're here every day because they want to play in their basketball game or perform with their acting club, also terrific."

Delise Jones
principal of I.S. 117


them," says Ms. Jones. "If they're here every day because they want to read, write and count, terrific! If they're here every day because they want to play in their basketball game or perform with their acting club, also terrific! We simply need them to have an interest in being here, and the ASP is an indispensable partner to that end."

The September 2008 education issue of Good magazine observed, "Since knowledge is a consequence of experience, it's critical that children be engaged in learning activities that nurture their soul, expand their interest, build upon personal talents, and challenge their thinking." Principals unequivocally concur with this sentiment. There simply isn't enough time or funding to facilitate the level of enrichment that every student should be afforded. "That's where you guys come in," exalts Jason Levy, principal of I.S. 339, again in the Bronx. "With all of the tasks that I have, I need an after-school partner that I know will attract the students, keep them safe, and help them to maintain and increase their interest in their own lives. I need a collaborator that I can trust to be responsive to the school's and the students' needs. SCAN delivers."

It's not just the students who exhibit increased interest in being in the school building. Parents also become more involved. With their performances and recitals, athletic competitions and awards ceremonies, ASPs offer parents opportunities to observe their children developing and honing their talents and interests, while the students benefit from an enduring dose of pride. It's a win-win situation for everyone. 

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selves or their future. "Life knocks it out of you. But if you can move forward, it empowers you to be stronger. People at SCAN believed in me, and that is what propelled me. And that is what I teach my staff." Cynthia she sees it as her job to see that all of the PS230 SCAN kids have hope and opportunity.

"I'm their Mom from 3 to 6" she says referring to the afterschool hours when she has responsibility for nurturing the SCAN kids. The bonds that Cynthia forges don't have a shelf life. Years later when she runs into SCAN kids who have graduated and moved on, they still call out to her on the street, "Hey, Auntie." 

SCANLifeLine

LEWIS ZUCHMAN, Executive Director



Lewis Zuchman

Three decades ago, SCAN was founded with a singular and focused mission: to provide support and counseling to families "at risk" of child abuse and neglect. Over the years, however, our mission has evolved significantly, partly due to our growth and increased capacity, but equally due to SCAN's recognition that rescuing at-risk families – indeed enabling them to prosper – requires a more holistic approach.

Our Families, Our Children


We view each SCAN family, literally, as "our families" and "our children." Thus, our significant emphasis on activities for all age groups, where parents and children work separately and together to achieve the self-esteem needed for success; where parents play an integral role in many of the most critical 'rescue' activities; and where SCAN

serves as the backbone, providing support not only when the burdens of inner-city life threaten to erode hard fought gains, but every day, throughout the day.

Failing Schools

With so many of our young people drowning in a failed school system, SCAN emphasizes education and empowerment as the keys to personal growth and success. We want "our SCAN children" to be interested, to learn, to excel and so to prosper. This goal underlies our sponsorship of "Reach For The Stars," SCAN's award-winning upward bound program, as well as our extensive After-School Literacy efforts and, if you can believe it, a well-attended Saturday Learning Academy, as well as countless recreation and arts activities.

"Yes, I Can!"

SCAN is building communities of capable, connected and driven individuals, and "Yes, I Can!" remains our refrain. 

SCAN Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **Dec 16** 'Reach for the Stars' Christmas Celebration
- **Dec 23** Mullaly Christmas Dinner for Program Families
- **Jan 6** Three Kings East Harlem Parade, with following celebration at SCAN LaGuardia
- **Jan TBD** Team Building Training – Mullaly Staff
- **Jan 15** Black History Month – SCAN LaGuardia After-School Program celebrations
- **Feb TBD** Black History Month – Bronx and Beacon After-School Program celebrations
- **Feb 14** Valentines Luncheon – Bronx Preventive Services Programs
- **Mar 14** 'Reach for the Stars' Poetry Jam – Bronx Museum of the Arts

Key: ■ These events are open to the public.
For event details, please call Brenda at SCAN 212-289-8030.



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news from SCAN NEW YORK fall/winter 2009

The SCAN Challenge

by JOAN MALKIN

In 2001, the New York Supreme Court decided the obvious: NYC schools were, by almost any measure, not only underperforming but, in some cases, deplorable.

The combination of concentrated poverty, large numbers of immigrants with limited English proficiency, and inadequate resources dedicated to public schools translated to woeful academic achievement.

Poverty takes a particularly high toll. Economically disadvantaged parents tend to be less well educated, frequently change residence, can afford fewer books, computers and other educational support materials, and their families generally experience poorer health. A domestic environment like this


makes success in schooling almost unachievable.

Looking at the drop out rate, the number of students graduating on time, the quality of the degrees conferred, and standardized test results, the court declared the 'system' a failure and required a number of remedial measures. Citing NYC's high percentage of at-risk students, it mandated "an 'expanded platform' of programs that will allow students to spend 'more time on task'." The court went on to highlight specific programs



that have been demonstrated to work – such as pre-K, summer, after-school and Saturday programs, coupled with family literacy initiatives – but noting sadly that they had not been fully implemented city-wide.

SCAN is proud to say that it has long been at the forefront of innovative and effective initiatives for at-risk students designed to complement public school activities and enhance their effectiveness, as the other articles in this newsletter demonstrate.

Although statistics are difficult to interpret, the quality of education in NYC seems to be improving. Recently released DOE statistics indicate real – and in some cases significant – improvements in math and English test scores and graduation rates. So, while education improvement is, properly, a multi-prong imperative, school-based programs deserve appropriate recognition and our continued support. 

Editor's Note: This newsletter is dedicated to coverage of SCAN's school-based programs, the largest grouping of SCAN's services. We look at some of the activities sponsored, the program's partners and its superstars. Under the focused directorship of Ken Thompson, the NYC-funded school-based programs are a vital component of the Mayor's strategic initiative to improve the delivery of education in NYC. While it is impossible and, indeed, meaningless to try and identify any one of SCAN's programs as its best, the school-based programs are, without question, 'making a difference.'

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A SCAN PARENT — MENTOR AND ADVOCATE FOR OUR YOUTH

by JOAN MALKIN

Cynthia Chisolm speaks with a resonant and powerful voice, that of both the choir singer that she has been and the respected, no-nonsense leader that she is now. She is almost imposing. But not quite. Despite her large presence, she has a ready and full smile, sometimes bashful, which reflects the humility and gentleness that she brings to her SCAN job.

A Decade of Service

Cynthia started her nearly decade-long career with SCAN as a Parent Volunteer in 1999. Two of her own children were involved in the SCAN pilot after-school dance workshop at PS 53 in their Bronx neighborhood, and Cynthia was asked to secure the auditorium during the workshops. The following year, SCAN was invited to take a larger role in PS 53's after-school activities. With 3 children in the school, Cynthia was well known by the other parents and the school officials and was a logical candidate for the SCAN position of Parent Mentor, a role designed in part to forge

greater community ties with the school and increase parental involvement in their children's education. On an initial stipend of \$50 per week, she assisted SCAN Group Leaders shepherding the children through their afterschool activities. Sharing her passion for singing and putting a personal stamp on her SCAN role, she also started the Chorus Club.

In 2003, Cynthia became a Group Leader herself and a year later was promoted to Parent Liaison at PS230, also



Cynthia Chisolm, center, with some of her after-school students.

Cynthia Chisolm is the SCAN Site Coordinator at PS230. Her three children have attended SCAN activities over the years and today, her daughter, Jana, works as a SCAN "intern." Cynthia exemplifies the overarching SCAN belief that the involvement of the community, especially parents, is crucial to re-establishing the family, including SCAN, as the key support mechanism for the growth, learning and empowerment of at-risk youth.

in the Bronx, performing the key role of mediating issues between the kids, their parents and school and SCAN officials. Cynthia now holds one of the most important positions in the SCAN school-based program. Today, as SCAN Site Coordinator, she is responsible for overseeing the smooth running of all of SCAN's afterschool programs at PS230. And, by all accounts, they run very smoothly.

What has made Cynthia been so remarkably successful at SCAN? There is an element of tenacity and drive, to be sure. A single, stay-at-home mom, she recalls that she has been at the bottom and says she is now working her way to the top. "I was looking for an outlet so my kids would respect me and I could find stimulation... I want my kids to see that Mommy has moved up."

Personal Commitment is Key

"You have to have compassion. And you have to like it... I tell my staff to like it like I like it." Cynthia likes it alright. Her face melts with tenderness and affection as she describes the kids and their successes. "I give it 100%."

Plus, she's got the right "life skills," as she calls them. She knows the neighborhood, she's lived there and she recognizes and understands the problems and issues. "I was a mother and a parent, so I know."

She knows that parents have a hard time understanding what young kids are going through today. She knows that the kids don't believe anymore – in them-

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REACHING HIGHER GROUND THROUGH HIP-HOP

by JEANNETTE RICHARDS



Jeannette Richards

Hip-Hop is a cultural movement that developed in the Bronx in the 1970's, primarily among African and Latino Americans. Hip-hop music began to emerge as DJs created rhythmic beats by looping breaks on two turntables. This was later accompanied by "rapping", a rhythmic style of chanting. An original form of dancing and particular style of dress arose among followers of this new music.

The Hip-Hop Underground

The Hip-Hop movement has produced some of the best artists of the '80's and '90's such as Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, African Bambaata, Sugarhill Gang, and KRS1. These artists spoke of the every day adversity they came into contact with. Remarkably, however, these early lyricists offered a positive view on political issues, they did not glorify gangsters, they never used explicit language and through their music, they never projected the putdown of women. These underground artists represented their communities and strived for equality.

"Hip-Hop isn't just music, it's more about poetry."

Lewis Zuchman
SCAN Executive Director.

"Hip-Hop isn't just music, it's more about poetry," stated Lewis Zuchman, SCAN's Executive Director. Understanding the positive roots and influence of hip-hop among inner-city youth and hoping to attract neighborhood teens to SCAN's umbrella of empowerment-based programs, SCAN started an after-school Hip-Hop program at Junior High School 99 in 2003. Ray Ramirez, a successful hip-hop artist with East Harlem roots, led an undergrad Hip-Hop group, focusing mainly on the spoken word and poetry. Monday through Thursday, he prepped his students using demo discs and mixtapes.

SCAN's Hip-Hop programs were designed to empower the oppressed youth of America's inner cities and, equally important, to bring peace and enjoyment so that youth would be able to develop self esteem and self-expression through their passion for Hip-Hop.

Another brilliant Hip-Hop educator who shared his talents with SCAN youth was Mike "Legendary" Pacheco. Mike instructed a creative writing class, which included poetry and lyric composition. Once a month he held poetry jams which included both his and Ray's group.

The purpose of these poetry jams was to enable the students to share and perform their finished works.

SCAN has proved that Hip-Hop music provides a positive experience, both enriching and inspiring. And if you don't believe that, you should come and witness the SCAN youth as they share an uplifting evening of creativity at the March 14, 2009 Poetry Jam at the Bronx Museum of the Arts. 🎤

Ray Ramirez, a successful hip-hop artist with East Harlem roots, led an undergrad SCAN Hip-Hop group, focusing mainly on the spoken word and poetry.



Jeannette Richards is a senior at the Academy of Environmental Science and is enrolled in SCAN's Reach for the Stars program. Jeannette's contribution is part of SCAN's continuing effort to engage its youth in the publication of SCANLife. "Hip Hop" is currently offered as part of SCAN's school-based program curriculum at several schools.

SO, WHAT ARE SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS?

by KEN THOMPSON, Associate Executive Director

School-based programs are—here's the punch line—programs based in schools! During this school year, SCAN is facilitating programs in 16 schools, serving an average of 4,000 students daily.

School-based programs are typically operated in school buildings by outside organizations. The outside organization, or 'host' – such as SCAN, receives funding from a variety of public and private sponsors. These sources include the United Way, The After-School Corporation (TASC), the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and city, state and federal departments of education. The 'host,' in consultation with the school administrators, then staffs,

supervises and administers the program in accordance with funding source and regulatory mandates.

SCAN operates six distinct school-based programs:

- the Attendance Improvement and Drop Out Prevention program (AIDP), which aims to improve school attendance through a combination of support, counseling and incentives
- the El Faro and La Isla del Barrio 'Beacons', programs that operate year-round, including after school, weekends, holidays and summer vacations, which offer comprehensive programming to the general community, including adults
- Out-of-School Time programs (OST), which also offer

comprehensive programming and similarly operate on a year-round basis

- Family and Adolescent Literacy programs, which run after-school and aim to increase English language profi-



ciency for both native and non-native speakers

- Supplemental Educational Services (SES), a federally funded remedial tutoring program
- the 'Supporting Parents Involved in Children's

Education' program (SPICE), a proprietary SCAN program in which parents are trained as early childhood literacy coaches and placed in classrooms to work with severely deficient students on a one-on-one basis.

Extensive research indicates that school-based programs, particularly after-school programs, are an essential and integral component of every child's social and educational development. Since after-school programs are not generally subjected to the stringent parameters that in-school programs are saddled with, they have the flexibility to foster learning environments that are encouraging, engaging and challenging. Indeed, it is more often in the after-school program that a child is afforded the opportu-

nity to explore, experience, and, hopefully, realize her/his true passions. For many, if not most students, the after-school program is the most relished part of each day.

School-based programs provide ancillary advantages to society-at-large. In a time where a majority of inner-city households are led by single parents, school-based programs provide safe, free and consistent childcare. Moreover, the programs are an immediate and effective deterrent to crime, preventing students from becoming either victims or perpetrators. Finally, school-based programs guide, support, develop, and hone the skills that young people will need to become lifelong, contributing members of society. 🎤