



**The DREAM Program, Inc.**

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August 15, 2006

## **Forest Park DREAM Update July 2006**

The month of July was filled with DREAM activities. From Camp DREAM, to D-Unit the community's children and families have been busy taking advantage of the long, hot days and soaking up the sun.

The D-Unit interns have had the opportunity to spend a ton of time at Forest Park this summer – learning more and more about DREAM families, and meeting newcomers to the community. Day trips to Crystal Beach and other local swimming holes have given ample space for a variety of summertime activities. Afternoons spent at Forest Park playing games, hanging and meeting with parents have built new relationships and strengthened existing ones. Full day activities, arts and crafts and water games brought DREAM kids outside in the sun all month long.

Later in the month, DREAMers visited the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium. Meeting up with 5-7 year olds from the Southern DREAM communities, children from Franklin Square and the other Chittenden County programs spent an afternoon learning about wind, physics, and outer space. After exploring the museum (from taxidermy to computers!) DREAMers were given a tour of the stars and learned the histories of constellations during the Planetarium's light show.

DREAM also had a chance to get outdoors in the Rutland region this summer. A group of DREAMers took a trip to the Killington ski area to experience outside sliding and enjoy the ski facility during the summertime months – for hiking, games, and crazy adventures on some of the biggest ski slopes in Vermont. One Saturday afternoon was spent doing community service with the Vermont Nature Conservancy – pulling an invasive species of water chestnut from a local river. The afternoon was spent in canoes with Rutland community members of all different ages - learning about the river habitat, meeting new people, and culminating with a giant riverside barbeque!

Justine Modica, the DREAM Outdoor Intern, has also been planning regular hiking trips around the state of Vermont. Trips brought Forest Park DREAMers up the White Rocks hike in Wallingford and around the Pico Peak area. Forest Park DREAMers had the opportunity to participate in a number of these trips according to their age and interest in the subject matter, and even met up with DREAMers from other communities for some adventures!

And then there was Camp DREAM! In the month of July five camp sessions took place bringing DREAMers ages 8-10 and 12-14 years of age up to Camp for three and five day sessions. It has been an amazing summer up at Camp – regular tubing trips down the Lamoille River, cultivating vegetables from the fresh organic garden, and meeting new friends from around the state. This year, the 12-14 year old girls, as repeat camp attendees, had the opportunity to take part in some new camp programming focusing on adolescent issues through discussion and outdoor challenge activities. In its pilot year, this programming was a complete success.



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Camp's rustic setting has been undergoing a facelift as the NCCC crew has thrown all its energies into firming up some of the paths, clearing drainage ditches, and lining the newly constructed road with rocks from all over camp. In conjunction with Veggie Town from Winooski, the NCCC crew planted and maintained Camp DREAM's first organic garden in Camp's homestead area. Furthermore, NCCC created the foundation and floor support for the lean-to and built the majority of the Tree House campsite's frame! Camp is growing more and more permanent by the day.

Look forward to news of summer's end festivities, the final days of Camp, and the beginning of the regular mentoring school year in August's monthly report. And, as always, please feel free to contact the Central Office with any questions or thoughts.

Keep DREAMing!

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