

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: September 2, 1998

Governor Opens After-School Program For Youths in Jersey City, Announces Family Friendly Center Grants

Gov. Christie Whitman today highlighted her commitment to the prevention of drug abuse among teenagers when she cut the ribbon to officially open the Jersey City Youth Program, which will provide a safe and drug-free environment for young persons to participate in after-school activities. Gov. Whitman today also announced \$2 million in funding for Family Friendly Centers, a newly created program to fund after-school centers for children between the ages of 5 and 13.

Joining the Governor in the ceremony was General (Ret.) Barry McCaffrey, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and Jersey City Mayor Brett Schundler.

"This program will offer something that tough drug laws and federal and state dollars can't provide: the chance to steer kids away from drugs by giving them the most important gift we can give - time. Time with other kids, time off the streets, time with adults who care," the Governor said.

"If we can reach troubled young people before they get to the brink, we'll be helping them, their families and our entire society," Gov. Whitman said. "This program will provide that help. It will give the youth of Jersey City a place they can turn to, with a host of educational and recreational activities."

Gov. Whitman said that New Jersey is battling against drug criminals in a variety of ways. These include targeting open air drug markets, outlawing the drug called "Special K," stiffening penalties for crimes related to drug use and sales, outlawing booby traps and other devices used to injure law enforcement officers during drug busts, expanding drug-free zones, weeding out marijuana growers and mandating drug education as part of school curriculum.

"And we're seeing results: drug arrests in 1997 were up seven percent compared to 1996," the Governor said. "But we also want to prevent our young people from ever using drugs in the first place."

Gov. Whitman said the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse has Municipal Alliance drug prevention programs in each county and provides \$8.5 million each year to more than 516 participating communities for drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs.

The Jersey City program is located in the New Jersey National Guard's Interactive Community Resource Center at 678 Montgomery Street.

The Youth Program, which will include educational as well as recreational activities, will be run by the local community and supported by the New Jersey National Guard. It will be funded with federal asset forfeiture dollars received through the New Jersey National Guard's Drug Interdiction Program.

The program will primarily serve youths 18 years of age and under. However, it also will encourage community and family activities that include adults, children and parents.

Gov. Whitman also announced the first grants to be awarded for her \$2 million Family Friendly Centers initiative, which provides funds to start-up and enrich 41 new after-school programs. The programs will serve children from 5 through 13 years of age, whose parents work outside the home, and will provide a safe place for children in need of before and/or after-school care. The programs will be housed in public elementary or middle school buildings and will be licensed by the state. Grants have been awarded to the following organizations:

ATLANTIC

AtlantiCare Behavioral Health, Atlantic City

\$50,000

AtlantiCare Behavioral Health, Egg Harbor	\$50,000
BERGEN	
Bergenfield Outreach Program, Bergenfield	\$50,000
Hackensack Public Schools, Hackensack	\$50,000
CAMDEN	
ASPIRA, Camden	\$50,000
Cherry Hill Public Schools, Cherry Hill	\$50,000
CUMBERLAND	
Little Lamb Pre-Schools, Vineland	\$34,444
Millville Public Schools, Millville	\$50,000
Vineland Public Schools, Vineland	\$48,147
ESSEX	
Ironbound Community Corp., Newark	\$50,000
New Community Corp., Newark	\$50,000
Babyland School Family Services, Newark	\$50,000
Unified Vailsburg Services, Newark	\$50,000
TriCity Peoples Corporation, Newark	\$50,000
East Orange YMCA, East Orange	\$41,365
GLOUCESTER	
Clayton Board of Education, Clayton	\$50,000
HUDSON	
ASPIRA, Jersey City	\$50,000
Harrison Board of Education, Harrison	\$49,720
MERCER	
Princeton Family YMCA, Princeton	\$50,000
MIDDLESEX	
B.A.S.C. Network, Carteret	\$50,000
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, Perth Amboy	\$50,000
Puerto Rican Association, Perth Amboy	\$50,000
New Brunswick Tomorrow, New Brunswick	\$50,000
Edison Recreation Department, Edison	\$50,000
South Brunswick Board of Education, Monmouth Junction	\$50,000
MONMOUTH	
Brookdale Community College, Long Branch	\$50,000
Community YMCA, Asbury Park	\$50,000
YMCA of Western Monmouth Co., Freehold	\$49,750
MORRIS	
Mt. Olive Child Care Learning Center, Budd Lake	\$50,000
OCEAN	
Lakewood Twp. Public Schools, Lakewood	\$50,000
PASSAIC	
Center for Family Resources, Ringwood	\$49,883
NJ Community Development Corp., Paterson	\$50,000
Paterson YMCA, Paterson	\$50,000
Catholic Family Community Service, Paterson	\$50,000
SALEM	
Salem City Public Schools, Salem	\$50,000
SOMERSET	
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, Manville	\$50,000
UNION	
Elizabeth Board of Education, Elizabeth	\$50,000
YWCA of Summit, Summit	\$30,890
WARREN	
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, Hackettstown	\$50,000

