

Chicago Youth Centers Opens New Location In Former CPS School to Support Children and Families in Calumet Heights

The new location will offer early learning, summer, and after-school programming five-days a week for local children, in addition to providing multigenerational activities

CHICAGO – June 14, 2023 - Today, [Chicago Youth Centers](#) (CYC) opens its newest, community support center in Calumet Heights to provide youth, families, and community members a safe place to grow, learn and foster connection.

This new location in the former Kate S. Buckingham Special Education Center underwent extensive renovations to now include a technology hub, outdoor playgrounds, and walking track to help local children grow both mentally and physically. Notably, programming will not be exclusive to youth and the center will also offer opportunities for local community members of all ages to utilize the space.

“The last few years have put immense pressure on organizations like CYC, but as a result, it pushed us to be creative, partner closely with community leaders and accomplish some extraordinary things, culminating with the opening of CYC Calumet Heights” said Chicago Youth Centers’ President & CEO, Kevin Cherep. “CYC Calumet Heights is a wonderful example of how public and private entities can put politics aside and work together to enact greater change for Chicago communities.”

To secure the building, CPS gave it to the city who then sold it to CYC for \$1. Funding for the renovations was made possible via a \$5 million capital grant from the state and through the Imagine the Possibilities Growth Campaign, a \$14M effort to bolster CYC’s places, people and programs. Donations to the campaign that specifically funded the CYC Calumet Heights renovation were from organizations like BMO, Alvin H. Baum Family Fund, Kemper Educational and Charitable Fund, The Paul M. Angell Family Foundation and others.

Notable programs available at CYC Calumet Heights starting this June include:

- **Summer Programming:** For school-aged children, ages 5-15, CYC Calumet Heights will host programming five days a week from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. CST including weekly field trips to off-site locations like the DuPage County Fair, Brookfield Zoo and 31st Street Beach.
- **Health and Wellness Activities:** CYC has partnered with Nike for an eight-week, two-hour recreational program this summer, available to all ages, that will include pickleball, bocce ball, soccer and volleyball. For children, CYC Calumet Heights has also partnered with UIC Women’s Basketball to host camps and tours of their facilities.
- **Community Events:** On Friday, June 16 CYC Calumet Heights will host an Afro-Caribbean dance night which is the first of a series of special community events that will continue to roll out throughout the summer.

To learn more about Chicago Youth Centers and its new Calumet Heights location, please visit chicagoyouthcenters.org.

ABOUT CHICAGO YOUTH CENTERS: For 67 years, Chicago Youth Centers (CYC) has been the place Where Possibility Lives: a trusted partner in Chicago’s most divested neighborhoods, ensuring that kids have a safe place they can go to explore, to discover, to process, and ultimately to envision a bright future that they can create for themselves. In early learning classrooms, afterschool programs, and

summer day camps, youth ages 15 months to 18 years find joy in learning, grow socially and emotionally, and build skills for the jobs of tomorrow. CYC students are deeply engaged, with many attending our hands-on clubs five days a week, 48 weeks a year. Together, with families, schools, supporters, and a network of extracurricular program partners, CYC envisions a Chicago where every child has equitable access to the resources, experiences, safe spaces, and mentors that they need to live each day as their best selves.