

YMCA EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES

SERVING THE ACADEMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF THE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

YMCA OUT REACH MISSION STATEMENT:

Help students achieve academic success through specialized programming; tutoring, mentoring and other youth development activities

Serve the needs of all children including students with Special Needs and English Language Learners

Establish and maintain collaboration with school districts to better align services with district guidelines to ensure student success

Help adults in the Syracuse community to access services that will help them gain quality life experiences, develop a healthy lifestyle, and strengthen family connections.

PROJECT STARFISH—BUILDING STRONG KIDS THROUGH SUMMER ACADEMICS AND ENRICHMENT

This is the ninth year that the Downtown YMCA has sponsored Project Starfish, a summer program of literacy and recreation for low achieving students on Syracuse's south side. The academic focus of the program is to help students in grades one, two and three 'read to learn, not 'learn to read.' Students identified for this program are pre tested to determine reading deficiencies which are then addressed during the course of the five week summer program, with a daily five hour researched-based program of balanced literacy which includes rotations in phonics and vocabulary development, and guided reading sessions. The YMCA provides transportation to school each day, where students receive small group instruction to improve reading fluency and comprehension, develop better writing skills, and receive practice in preparation for state mandated tests in English Language Arts and Math. Students who complete the five week program gain an average of 3 to 6 months growth in reading fluency and comprehension, and are more confident and better prepared to begin the work of the next grade level in September. Approximately 75 students participate in Project Starfish each summer.

The YMCA offers Project Starfish participants the opportunity to attend day camp activities at Camp Iroquois following the five hours of academics. This component has been the key to the program's success. Research has shown that summer programs can succeed in raising achievement levels, if these programs include diverse learning experiences that help students make important connections between the curriculum and the world around them. Students are bused each day to the Camp where they enjoy swimming, hiking, horse back riding, high wall climbing and arts and crafts. The camp program affords these students not only recreation activities in a safe and nurturing environment, but allows them the opportunity to build life experiences, enhance their vocabulary, learn social behaviors, and gain a more positive attitude and confidence about themselves and their future.

For information about Project Starfish contact Catherine Ranieri, Director of YMCA Education Services at 474-6851 (ext. 310).

TUTORING SERVICES—SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (SES TUTORING)

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS THROUGH TUTORING AND MENTORING SERVICES

