



CYP

Cambridge Youth Programs

Year in Review 2024–2025

Purpose

Programs

Values

CYP in Numbers

Key Partnerships

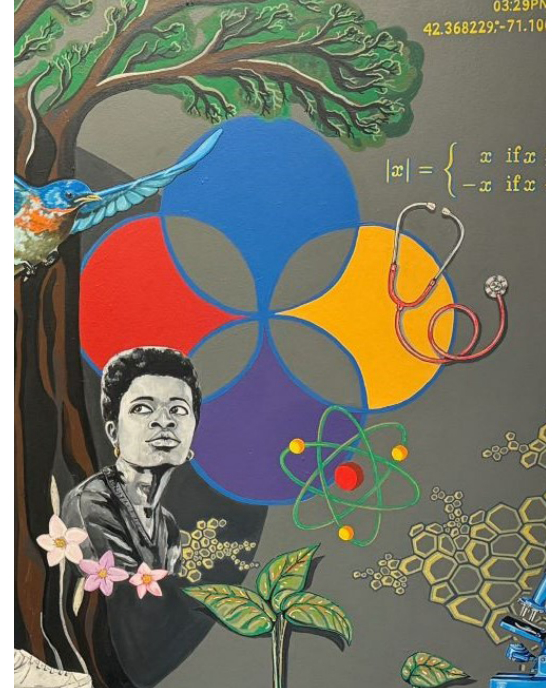
Youth Outcomes

Looking Toward the Future



**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Human
Service
Programs



Cambridge Youth Programs (CYP) Purpose

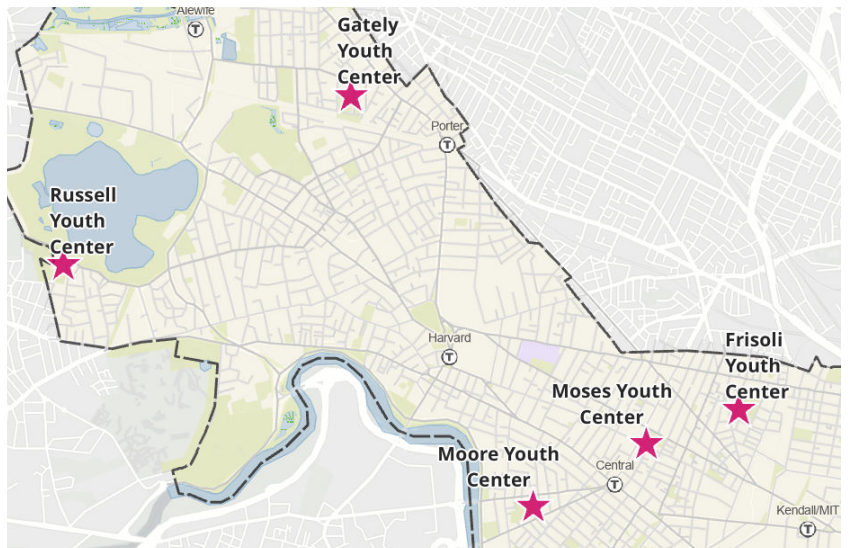
To provide Cambridge young people with a just, joyful, and caring community where they forge healthy relationships, discover who they are, and develop new skills for now and for the future.

Programs

CYP operates two distinct programs: an **after-school program** for middle schoolers and **pre-teens in grades 4–8**, and an **evening Teen Program** for youth in grades 9–12. Programs are designed to align with national research to promote youth development and leadership.

Locations

- Frisoli Youth Center
61 Willow St.
- Gately Youth Center
70R Rindge Ave.
- Moore Youth Center
12 Gilmore St.
- Moses Youth Center (*teens only*)
243 Harvard St.
- Russell Youth Center
680 Huron Ave.



Values

Fostering Growth and Transformation

We have a responsibility to create challenging learning environments that empower young people in discovery about the world and themselves.

Honoring Youth

We believe in young peoples' inherent brilliance. We place youth voice, needs and experience at the center of our work.

Building Community

We believe that authentic relationships and an environment of trust, safety and acceptance are at the heart of a community that supports the success of young people.

Embracing Energy

We believe that we are all responsible for the energy we bring to our relationships and our community and the impact that our actions have on others. We are all connected and through our collective power we can all achieve more.

Living Social Justice

We serve with equity across all identities and honor the responsibility that we must actively combat racism and all forms of oppression.

Facilitating Fun

We bring joy and passion into our work.



CYP in Numbers

Summer 2024

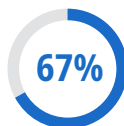
393 Cambridge pre-teens and middle schoolers, ages 9–13, participated in CYP's Pre-Teen / Middle School Summer Programs

58 Cambridge teens joined CYP's teen internships. *An additional 20 teens worked in CYP's Pre-teen / Middle School Summer Programs.*

School Year 2024–2025

466 total number of youth served at CYP


187 teens served in CYP internships

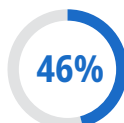
 **67%** of CYP's Pre-Teen Middle School Program are in grades 6–8


40+ field trips yearly *(including out-of-state trips)*

CYP Staff

69 current number of part-time and full-time staff

 **50%** of full-time staff currently live or have lived in Cambridge

 **46%** of full-time staff are CYP alumni *(former CYP program participants)*

 **60%** of full-time staff have a Bachelor's degree or higher

198 years the combined professional experience of full-time CYP staff

Key Partnerships

CYP partners with local universities, businesses, and non-profit organizations to enhance the experience of pre-teens, middle schoolers, and teens.

University Collaborations

Young people learn new skills, impact their communities, and gain exposure to higher education.

Lesley STEAM Learning Lab

Teens participated in a Pre-College Creative AI and Design Course, where they learned about the fundamentals of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) while earning college credits. Teens explored face-sensing AI, GenAI design thinking, and other GenAI tools. Participants earned a stipend and gained valuable STEAM skills that they can apply to future educational or career endeavors.



Photo Credit: Dr. Nettrice Gaskins, Lesley University

Harvard Museums of Science and Culture

Each fall, CYP collaborates with Harvard faculty to provide a 12-week, early work experience for young people. CYP participants develop presentation, communication, critical thinking, and data analysis skills. They also learn to leverage data to enhance the quality of their presented work. Young people experience science in a workplace and how science can play a role in social justice movements.



Career Exploration

Experiential learning opportunities that inspire the career pathways of Cambridge teens.



Harvard Food Labs

Harvard students visit Youth Centers to teach young people how to cook dishes from many different countries, offering a hands-on opportunity to explore diverse cultures through food. Through interactive workshops, the students gain confidence in the kitchen while nurturing creativity, teamwork, and cultural appreciation.

PAGU/Food Restore

Moses Youth Center partners with this local restaurant for the Culinary Kings and Queens program, which teaches teens culinary skills, budgeting, and health and wellness.

National Society of Black Engineers

Frisoli Youth Center hosts a seminar and workshop that provides young people with valuable insights, mentorship opportunities, and hands-on learning experiences in engineering and STEAM fields.

Life Enrichment and STEAM Skill-Building

Introducing new athletic and recreational skills while promoting the joy of learning.

Green City Growers

Staff from the local agricultural service teach teens about urban farming and the importance of growing their food while learning about environmental science.

Mass Audubon partners with CYP to offer environmental education classes, which continue into the fall, giving youth the opportunity to explore nature and build outdoor skills.

Fresh Pond Golf Course and Recreation

staff will offer golf lessons at Russell Youth Center to youth from ages 9–19.



Youth Outcomes

All of our programs are developed to uphold CYP's core values and these three youth outcomes.

1. Leadership Development

Having the bravery and confidence in yourself to guide others towards a common purpose with wisdom, kindness and support. Leadership is knowing when to share learning and perspective, and when to ask for help.

2. Champion Mentorship

Part of every staff member's job description is to be a champion to young people. A CYP Champion is a staff member that expresses care, challenges growth, provides support, shares power, and expands possibilities for young people. Research has shown that contact with a mentor/champion can profoundly impact a young person's life.

3. Future Planning

CYP helps young people chart a path that supports their curiosity to explore and build skills, strategies, and networks to identify and develop areas of interest into academic, post-secondary, and/or personal goals. The process includes Success Plans to focus on actionable and realistic goal-setting, planning, and decision-making that are developed in partnership with a Champion.

Data-driven Outcomes

Leadership experience in youth is linked to higher earnings in adulthood.*

Youth with leadership experience are more likely to engage in community service and civic activities.†

Mentored youth are 46% less likely to start using illegal drugs and 27% less likely to begin drinking alcohol.‡

Mentored youth are 55% more likely to enroll in college compared to their non-mentored peers.§

* *Developing leadership skills among adolescents and young adults: a review of leadership programmes.* International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 23(1), 86–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2017.1292928>

† *Leadership is a life skill.* Michigan State University. https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/leadership_is_a_life_skill

‡ *Mentoring Impact.* MENTOR Nebraska. <https://www.mentornebraska.org/mentoring-impact/>

§ *Why mentors are important: Benefits for mentees, mentors and all.* Big Brothers Big Sisters of Broward County. <https://www.bbbsbroward.org/benefits-of-mentorship/>

1. Leadership Development

Outcome: Youth are able to identify and explain a leadership opportunity they were engaged in at least one time per week of the program.

Leadership Development in Action

Sankofa: Rites of Passage Program (Russell Youth Center)

The overall goal of this internship is to be a catalyst for the beginning of a teen's transition into young adulthood. Our program Elders (Teen Program Staff) serve as stewards to help teens navigate challenges and activities designed to expose them to new thought processes while drawing from their own lived experience. In this, we foster growth and transformation by creating an environment where they have the space to share their gifts, knowledge, and interests.

Boys II Men: Youth Grant Pitch Contest

(Moses Youth Center)

Through the Boys II Men teen internship, teens participated in Social Capital Inc.'s Youth Grant Pitch Contest, competing against 15 other youth programs across the Greater Boston region. This competition allowed youth to strengthen their community while practicing public speaking, project management, and community organizing. Boys II Men won first place, earning funding to host an event raising awareness about Teen Substance Abuse. The Young Kings honed essential leadership skills, including decision-making, problem-solving, and communication, demonstrating their commitment to addressing community issues and fostering positive change.

"Boys II Men to me is a brotherhood and a community.

We learn and grow from each other and we have staff to help us. It's a family."

— CYP Teen Program participant



2. Champion Mentorship

Outcome: 70% of young people in CYP programming are able to identify at least one champion during an afterschool program or summer session / teen internship.

Champion Mentorship in Action

Youth Worker 101 (Moore Youth Center)

Through the guidance of CYP Champions, this internship develops young people into youth workers capable of facilitating developmentally appropriate programming for young people in grades 4–8. Participants undergo leadership and youth development training, engage in ongoing reflections, and gain hands-on experience in the Moore pre-teen afterschool programs. The curriculum covers youth development, critical thinking, lesson planning, team building, public speaking, time management, and community outreach. Teens grow as leaders, explore careers in youth development, and apply their skills in real-world settings while working alongside staff to identify and strengthen their interests and contribute to the success of the program.



Environmental Protectors (Gately Youth Center)

Conducted in partnership with the Harvard Museums of Science and Culture (HMSC), this program engaged 15 high school students in a 12-week internship focusing on themes of environmental justice and science. Young people were tasked with collecting data to support a hypothesis and to use facts to strengthen their arguments and their presentation. This group learned about the racist practice of redlining and about higher instances of pollution and environmental hazards in marginalized communities. Taking this learning into account, young people were challenged to identify areas of their community that they believed would have higher amounts of lead in the soil. Embodying CYP Champions, the staff involved in this internship express care, challenge growth, provide support, share power, and expand possibilities.

“I can go to Gately Staff. The person I go to most is Dan. He is easygoing and I can talk to him about my friends or when I am worried about school. He gives me great advice and cheers me up when I am feeling down.”

— CYP Pre-Teen / Middle School Program participant

3. Future Planning

Outcome: Youth are able to identify one goal they have for themselves and the steps they have identified (with the support of a CYP Champion) to work towards this goal.

Future Planning in Action

Blooming into Womanhood Internship — Financial Literacy Workshop

As part of our commitment to future planning and financial empowerment, the Blooming into Womanhood internship took a transformative field trip to Harvard University for a Financial Literacy Workshop at the Phillips Brooks House Association. Led by the Harvard Federal Credit Union, our Young Queens gained essential knowledge on credit, budgeting, and debt. This experience reinforced the importance of smart money management, preparing them to make informed financial decisions as they step into their futures as empowered young women.

"The two programs that had the most significant impact on me were Girls Taking Action and Blooming into Womanhood. Their names can speak for themselves. They taught me the importance of self-worth, confidence, and self-sufficiency. Working alongside other women is a core part of who I am today."

— CYP Teen Program participant

STEAM Program Initiative

(Moore Youth Center)

A dedicated STEAM Lab recently launched to foster creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning among youth. Fully equipped with both traditional hand tools and modern tech resources, the lab empowers young people to bring their ideas to life—from concept to design to prototype. In a recent project on model rocketry, participants explored the principles of flight while designing, building, and launching their own compressed-air-powered rockets. The STEAM Lab is a space of connection between the classroom and Youth Centers, opening up exploration to future educational and career pathways.



Looking Toward Our Future at CYP

CYP aims to strengthen our existing programs while introducing new opportunities that foster creativity, personal growth, and community engagement. The focus will remain on providing hands-on, real-world experiences through collaborative projects, mentorship, and partnerships with universities, organizations, and local leaders. We will continue to prioritize inclusivity, leadership development, and academic success, ensuring that every young person has the tools and support they need to succeed. By nurturing their talents, encouraging their curiosity, and connecting them to resources and opportunities, we are laying the foundation for a future where our youth are equipped to make a positive impact on their communities and beyond.

Upcoming CYP Initiatives

- **TEDx Harvard** (Moses Youth Center) is exploring a partnership to educate the community on how the Kings and Queens at Moses Youth Center are making an impact and how various groups can support our mission in tangible ways.
- **CYP/YPP Math Literacy Internship** (Moses Youth Center): A program where our teens receive math support and training to become mentors, guiding younger kids in collaboration with The Young People's Project (YPP) to develop skills in algebraic thinking and financial literacy.
- **Middle School Transition Program Internship** (will expand to all Youth Centers): The middle school internship offers students a hands-on opportunity to develop leadership skills, gain work experience, and contribute to their community in a supportive and engaging environment, while compensating young people for their participation.



- **Inclusive Identity Programming** (Frisoli Youth Center): Frisoli will introduce an LGBTQIA+ group for teens in Cambridge, creating a safe and supportive space for connection, self-expression, and community.

- **Audio Arts Studio** (Gately Youth Center): Rebuilding a dedicated space where youth can access state-of-the art, professional-grade audio equipment and skilled staff. This will provide generations of Cambridge youth with the opportunity to learn how to create, edit and record music and podcasts. Our first official project will be part of the 2025 Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP), when 20 Cambridge teens will work with Gately staff to conduct a public art project collecting stories from Cantabrigians and sharing them back to the community.

- **CYP Success Plans** (will expand to all Youth Centers): CYP has developed Success Plans that include a Champion staff partnering with young people to create goals, assess strengths, analyze challenges, identify supports, and create a plan to achieve goals. CYP's future is that all young people will have a CYP Success plan with the support of a Champion staff.

