

BEDFORD-STUYVESANT Education NYC Kids

First Brooklyn CARES Mentoring Space Comes to Bed-Stuy to Help Youth



By Camille Bautista | June 18, 2015 8:37am
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BEDFORD-STUYVESANT — Brooklyn’s first “Mentoring Movement” space opened for business in Bedford-Stuyvesant on Wednesday, offering a safe haven for youth at the headquarters of City Councilman Robert Cornegy.

Brooklyn CARES Mentoring Movement, a local branch of the National CARES Mentoring Movement, will help provide trained and skilled advisers for kids and teens in the borough.

While the nonprofit already has eight community partners in the area, including DIVAS for Social Justice and the Boys & Girls Club, Cornegy’s district office is the group’s first permanent space.

“We’ve faced a crisis with our young people in Bedford-Stuyvesant and northern Crown Heights that’s literally at epic proportion,” the councilman said. “Mentoring, we believe, will be the root at getting our young people back on track.”



Camille Bautista · DNAinfo Reporter

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Brooklyn CARES matches existing local mentoring organizations with volunteers, who will work with young people every Friday at the fifth floor suite at 1360 Fulton St. The nonprofit also emphasizes group mentoring, in which individuals are sent to schools to speak with kids about their industry experiences and careers.

In addition to Brooklyn, services are provided in central and southeast Queens, Harlem, and Nassau County.

Mentors are crucial in guiding the city’s children, said Susan L. Taylor, founder and CEO of the National CARES Mentoring Movement.

Taylor, who also served as editor-in-chief for Essence, called for more African-American and Caribbean volunteers to serve as role models for children.

“We do the training so that people will begin to understand that we are each other’s keepers,” she said.

An estimated 3 million children are receiving mentoring services throughout the United States, and there are 15 million more in need, according to National CARES.

Studies from community-based mentoring programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC show that risk-taking activities including violence and skipping school decrease 21 percent in mentored youth, while increasing 13 percent among those that do not participate.

Issues like substance abuse and early sexual activity also spike for teens without mentors, the study said.

“The children are screaming loudly: ‘Wake up, adults, the village is on fire,’” Taylor said. “We need to take responsibility.”

The Brooklyn CARES team will host its first informational meeting Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the councilman’s office, 1360 Fulton St. Suite 500. For more information contact Cheryl Todmann at 917-623-7299 or email brooklyn@caresmentoring.org.