

WHAT IS SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS?



Summer Night Lights is an innovative gang reduction/youth development program that provides arts and recreational programming at city parks throughout Los Angeles during extended summer evening hours when young people are most likely to be involved in or victims of gang violence. In 2009, Summer Night Lights will provide nine weeks of expanded programming for youth and families in sixteen recreation centers in the City's most crime-ridden neighborhoods.

Research has consistently shown that youth are most likely to commit violent crimes between the hours of 4 p.m. and midnight. Additionally, crime spikes during the summer months when longer daylight hours also result in youth searching for activities to cure restlessness and boredom. Summer Night Lights seeks to provide a simple, inexpensive solution to this problem by giving our young people activities that will interest and enrich them in a safe, supervised environment.

Summer Night Lights is a partnership between the Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD), the Los Angeles City Council, the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). It is funded by both public grants and private donations.

Summer Night Lights 2009 will take place in the following locations:

1. Hollywood – Lemon Grove Recreation Center
2. Rampart – LAUSD School Site
3. Northeast – Glassell Park
4. Northeast – Cypress Park
5. Baldwin Village/ Southwest – Jim Gilliam Park
6. Southwest II – EXPO Center
7. Boyle Heights/ Hollenbeck – Ramon Garcia Park
8. Florence-Graham/ 77th Division – Mount Carmel Park
9. 77th Division II – Van Ness Park
10. Newton – Ross Snyder Park
11. Pacoima/ Foothill – Hubert Humphrey Park
12. Panorama City – Sepulveda Park
13. Ramona Gardens/ Hollenbeck – Ramona Gardens Recreation Center
14. Watts/Southeast – Nickerson Gardens Housing Development
15. Watts/Southeast – Jordan Downs Housing Development
16. Watts/Southeast – Imperial Courts Housing Development

A Program Coordination Team will oversee the program in their designated Zone and convene an advisory group made up of key local stakeholders including LAPD, LAUSD,

Recreation and Parks, Cultural Affairs, community and faith-based organizations, intervention workers, community residents, youth, business leaders, and others.

The “Summer Night Lights” program has three major components:

1. Extended Hours & Programming: From July 8 – September 5, sixteen recreation facilities will extend their hours until midnight, four nights a week (Wednesday - Saturday) and expand programming to include youth-centered recreational, educational and artistic activities to engage youth in positive activities during peak times for violence. Youth will conduct outreach from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and programming at the park will begin at 7 p.m. and go until 12 midnight.
2. Youth Squad: 10 community youth coordinators will be hired to create and staff the extended hours and programs. Community coordinators will be at-risk youth, ages 17-20, who will receive stipends for the duration of the program.
3. Cease-Fire: Interventionists will help maintain cease-fires on site and in the surrounding community. They will assist in referring youth and in collaboration with recreation and parks staff, will assist in overseeing community coordinators and participate in the expanded programming.

A BETTER LA

Contributions to the Summer Night Lights program can be made through A BETTER LA. A BETTER LA, founded by USC football head coach Pete Carroll, is a 501(c)(3) comprised of local leaders from the private, non-profit, social service, faith-based, education and law enforcement sectors. A BETTER LA is committed to supporting Los Angeles communities in their goal to reduce violence by empowering change.

If you are interested in purchasing tickets to the June 10, 2009 event, “Arts at the Park After Dark,” please send an email to summernightlightsevent@gmail.com for more information and a link to an on-line donations page.

For questions about the Summer Night Lights program or “Arts at the Park After Dark,” please call (323) 957-4500 or email Heather.Repenning@lacity.org.