



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF BOSTON**

**YouthConnect  
(Formerly YSPN)**

*Clinical social workers connecting at-risk youth to positive choices,  
in partnership with the Boston Police Department.*

**Since 1996**

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Roxbury, MA 02119

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[www.bgcb.org](http://www.bgcb.org)

**Program:**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston's YouthConnect program is an advocacy and intervention program of BGCB whose mission is to help the most at-risk young people make positive life choices through trusting relationships with skilled and compassionate social workers.

**We do this by:**

- ⇒ Intervening (being present) at critical moments when young people are either engaged or at risk of engaging in delinquent activity
- ⇒ Placing masters-level, licensed, clinical social workers at police stations through an innovative partnership with the Boston Police Department
- ⇒ Connecting young people and their families with the most effective social services for their individual situations

Since its inception in 1996, the program has served more than **9,800** of the city's most at-risk youth (80% between the ages of 13 and 21) and families from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Previously known as Youth Service Providers Network (YSPN), the program implemented a name change in 2010 to better communicate its mission with key constituents.

**How YouthConnect Works:**

**Licensed, trained social workers**, working out of Boston police stations, are deployed to put young people and their families in contact with a **comprehensive safety net of services**. Youth referred to YouthConnect are either engaged in delinquent activity, or at high risk of engaging in such activity. After referral, the youth receive assistance under a four-tiered system:

- ⇒ intake and assessment
- ⇒ resource coordination
- ⇒ clinical case management
- ⇒ therapy services

**Meeting a critical need:**

The program developed as a solution to the growing frustration of the Boston Police Department officers, whose only available option in dealing with at-risk youth was arrest. Boston police noted that many of the youth they came in contact with would benefit more from guidance and assistance than from an encounter with the Juvenile Justice system. Driven by BGCB's mission of helping youth become responsible citizens and leaders, YouthConnect provides police officers with options and resources for many youth offenders or potential offenders.

– more –

### **Communities Served by YouthConnect:**

YouthConnect works alongside the Boston Police Department with a focus on the following neighborhoods:

- ⇒ Charlestown
- ⇒ Dorchester
- ⇒ Jamaica Plain
- ⇒ Mattapan
- ⇒ Roxbury
- ⇒ South End/Lower Roxbury

Additionally, YouthConnect extends its reach through the city-wide units of Youth Violence Strike Force and School Police Unit.

### **Fundraising:**

YouthConnect has relied on substantial partnership funding from the Boston Police Department (BPD). Because it is a high priority for both organizations, significant effort is made to ensure program continuity.

Additionally, while YouthConnect has a core group of individual supporters, there are efforts in motion to expand this network. YouthConnect has established an Advisory Board, listed in full below. YouthConnect seeks significant financial support through the development of state budget and legislative initiatives.

- ⇒ Fiscal Year 2010 funding from government and public sources: approximately \$160,000
- ⇒ Fiscal Year 2010 funding from private sources (including events and grants): approximately \$560,000

### **Staff:**

- ⇒ Andrea Perry, LICSW **Executive Director**
- ⇒ Denise Kasrawi, LICSW **Clinical Director**

### **YouthConnect Advisory Board:**

Elizabeth Silverman, *Chair*  
Ronald M. Ansin, *Honorary Chair*  
Robert R. Beck  
Berthlyn M. Bernier  
Michael Carson  
Laurence S. Chud, M.D.  
Ruthanne Fuller  
Robert P. Gittens  
Weston Howland III  
Boston Police Superintendent Paul Joyce

Michael Kineavy  
Joshua Klevens  
Ken Lang  
Elizabeth Moore  
Janice Morris  
Frances Schendle  
Donald Stern  
Chris Wayland  
Jane Wolchonok