



**The DREAM Program, Inc.**

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June 17th, 2006

## **Franklin Square DREAM Update May 2006**

At present, there are 29 children from 15 different families involved in the DREAM Program at Franklin Square. These children range in age from 6 to 13 years of age.

It was a quiet month for Franklin Square DREAM – as the school year winds down and summer plans are gearing up. The primary event of the month was an end of the year celebration barbeque at Oakledge Park.

The barbeque took place on the last Friday of the school year – mentors and children reserved a space at Oakledge Park along the waterfront. A blend of games, treehouse climbing, rock collecting, and rollerblading filled the afternoon. Towards the end of the event mentors and children separated into pairs so that they could talk about the upcoming summer, and graduating seniors could spend some final time with their DREAM partners.

After a group picture, thank yous, and goodbyes to the seniors the group did a huge rendition of their closing tradition “Purple Stew” (an interactive song). Other park-goers came over to join in the game and by the end all of Oakledge Park was singing this DREAM classic.

DREAM mentors at St. Michael’s College ended on a high-note. During their last week of classes the group met for an evening retreat where they discussed each DREAM child and goals for next year. A lot of time was spent discussing/analyzing the past tension between age groups of children and recording which programming options over the past two months at worked to dispel this tension. It was clear to the mentors that making sure there were age-appropriate activities available at all times, plus a strong balance of one-on-one and group time made it possible for the different age groups (especially siblings) to better enjoy the time spent around each other in DREAM. Notes were made for this summer’s D-Unit Intern to help the older DREAM children assume greater roles of responsibility in programming to provide them a chance to plan and direct their own activities.

At their evening retreat mentors also worked out a recruiting plan for next fall. Taking into account graduating mentors and children who have transitioned out of the Franklin Square community, the group will need to recruit 11 new mentors to provide one-on-one relationships to all of the children currently in the program. This will be the first priority when mentors return to campus in the fall.

In the DREAM Central Office plans are underway for Camp DREAM Summer 2006 and D-Unit. The month of May involved preparation for summer staff training, development of programming calendars, and road construction!

As of the end of May Camp DREAM has a new main road and turn-around, allowing the DREAM bus to easily access Camp property. DREAM’s homesteading site is also currently under development. This site at Camp will consist of a pole-barn tool shed (constructed by DREAM staff, alumni, and mentors last fall), a large organic garden, an orchard, and a chicken coop. During the summer months the homestead will be kept by Camp staff and campers who will reap their rewards in fresh vegetables, fruits, and eggs!



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D-Unit Interns will begin their orientation during the first week of June and programming onsite in the Franklin Square community beginning the week of June 12<sup>th</sup> starting with an afternoon of introductions, food, and planning with Franklin Square families.

To see pictures of the past year of events and activities at Franklin Square DREAM please check out our website at: <http://dreamprogram.smugmug.com/Franklin%20Square>

Please feel free to contact the Central Office with any questions or thoughts.

Happy Summer!

Keep DREAMing!  
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