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**MAYOR ADAMS ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF SATURDAY NIGHT
LIGHT YOUTH PROGRAM TO KEEP YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE AND ENGAGED
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

*25 New Sites Brings Program to 131 Community Gyms Across City Providing
Free Saturday Night Activities for Youth Aged 11-18*

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today announced the expansion of the Saturday Night Lights program to include 25 additional sites with an additional \$1.25 million investment. The Saturday Night Lights program provides safe and engaging activities for young people in underserved neighborhoods to have a fun and additionally provides a productive place to gather during traditionally high-crime times on Saturday evenings. Young people can enjoy an array of indoor activities at 131 sites in all five boroughs, including basketball, soccer, volleyball, dance, martial arts, and more. Saturday Night Lights is an interagency partnership through the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the New York City Department of Education (DOE), and the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, working with the city’s five District Attorney’s Offices and community-based organizations that administer the programs.

“Saturday Night Lights is about changing lives and ensuring no young person is left behind,” said **Mayor Adams**. “We are building trust between the police, the community, and our youth, while lifting young people up in every borough throughout this city. And we’re proud to be expanding this program to reach even more young people in underserved neighborhoods where they can have a safe, fun, and productive place to gather and play sports. We’re all in this together, and this is about giving young people another choice and keeping our city safe when crimes are most likely to be committed.”

“Saturday Night Lights is another hallmark of this administration’s investment and commitment to free, high-quality summer activities for young New Yorkers,” said **Deputy Mayor of Strategic Initiatives Sheena Wright**. “By bringing together local community based organizations and multiple agencies, this is a true collaborative process to make sure our young people have a fun, engaging summer.”

“Today marks another great step forward in putting New York City children first,” said **NYPD**

Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell. “The Saturday Night Lights program is centered on enhancing youth development, building trust, and creating opportunities for young people in the communities that need us most. Furthermore, it works to prevent violence by connecting with our youth before they might ever have a first encounter with the criminal-justice system. To that end — in close collaboration with the Mayor’s Office, the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Education, the Parks Department, and all of our law-enforcement and community partners — we will continue to employ innovative efforts to keep every New York City neighborhood safe.”

“Ensuring our children have fun, free, and, most importantly, safe activities throughout the summer months is vital in keeping our youngest engaged and in building supportive and caring environments. Saturday Night Lights is an immensely valuable program, and I’m thrilled to see it being expanded over the next few months,” said **DOE Chancellor David C. Banks.** “I’m grateful to all the community members and city workers for their dedication to facilitating this fantastic program, and look forward to the continued partnership between DYCD, NYPD, and the Department of Education in supporting New York City’s kids.”

“The expansion of Saturday Night Lights joins the unprecedented growth of the Summer Youth Employment Program and Summer Rising — a trifecta of investments prioritized by Mayor Adams supporting young people to keep them safe and engaged,” said **DYCD Commissioner Keith Howard.** “To raise awareness about the dangers of gun violence, Saturday Night Lights participants are ‘playing with purpose’ for DYCD’s ‘Not One More Shot’ campaign, as they enjoy basketball, soccer, volleyball, and other enrichment activities at gyms in all five boroughs. This truly will be a summer to remember for hundreds of thousands of young people in New York City.”

“This PAL Webster location is one of the first two we opened in the Bronx in 2019, and it has been a tremendous success. More than 60 youth actively participate here every weekend, in a positive environment,” said **Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark.** “It began with basketball, but grew to offer mentoring opportunities, including driver’s education, tournament participation, restorative justice conversations, and life skills development. In July 2021, the Saturday Night Lights program expanded to 100 gyms across the city, with the Bronx getting 23 sites. The program gives children a safe, free indoor space to play, instilling teamwork, leadership, and a sense of community. Now we will be getting more sites in the Bronx and across the city, and I couldn’t be happier. I thank Mayor Adams for recognizing the value of Saturday Night Lights. Providing activities for our children starting at 11 years old will influence them in the formative years, leading them away from negative actions. I thank Commissioner Sewell for all the support from the NYPD. It is great to watch the kids interact with cops. It will go a long way in community partnership.”

Saturday Night Lights aims to activate underutilized spaces, build trust between law enforcement and communities, and help enable youth to develop the skills, knowledge, and meaningful relationships necessary to reach their fullest potential. A key component of the program is bringing law enforcement and young people together with teams of youth coordination officers from NYPD precincts. The officers coach and interact with participants to make a lasting and positive impact on their lives.

Gyms will be open Saturdays from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM for seven weeks in the summer (through August 20), and during the school year from September 10, 2022 through June 24, 2023.

Saturday Night Lights was launched at a single Harlem gym in 2011. For details on the initiative and to find a program, visit the [Saturday Night Lights website](#).

“Saturday Night Lights has supported the Police Athletic League to keep our youth safe during vital times on the weekend and build relationships between young people and the NYPD. We applaud Mayor Adams, DYCD, the DA’s offices, and all other partners for their continued support and commitment to such a vital program,” said **Carlos Velazquez, executive director, Police Athletic League**.

“Henry Street Settlement is honored and grateful to serve our community as a Saturday Night Lights location, offering safe, fun, and enriching athletics and recreation programming in spaces that are known and trusted to generations of youth on the Lower East Side,” said **David Garza, president and CEO, Henry Street Settlement**. “Having served as a Saturday Night Lights partner since the original pilot, we embrace the opportunity to open our doors even wider to young people who are seeking community as never before after several years of isolation and grief. The privations of the pandemic, coupled with recent gun violence that threatens the safety of our youth in a visceral and immediate way, have created an urgent need to revitalize our approaches and reinvest in our youth. Henry Street greatly appreciates the transformational leadership and partnership of the Mayor’s Office, the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office, the NYPD, DYCD, DOE, and Parks and Recreation in creating this important expansion.”

“At Partnership With Children, our programs focus on the mental health and well-being of the whole child. We commend Mayor Adams for providing added support to our youth and communities by opening up additional safe spaces for youth during the critical times of the summer when we have historically seen upticks in community violence,” said **Wesner Pierre, CEO, Partnership With Children, Inc.**

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