

EAST BOSTON

Play Across Boston

Active Facts



Figure 1: Types of Programs in East Boston Offering Sports and Physical Activities to Youth (1999-2000)

Type of Program	Number in East Boston	Number in Boston	% in East Boston
Non-Profit	10	155	6%
For Profit	2	18	11%
Boston Public School	2	35	6%
Non-public School	2	15	13%
Total	16²	223	7%

Play Across Boston (PAB) is a project of the Harvard Prevention Research Center at the Harvard School of Public Health undertaken in collaboration with Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society and a broad-based Community Advisory Board. PAB has worked since 1999 to describe youth sports and physical activity programs in Boston. Due to limited documentation of the local challenges to physical activity and sport promotion, **Play Across Boston** conducted a comprehensive community-based assessment of physical activity resources for Boston youth. In addition, we collected data concerning the presence and condition of publicly accessible parks, facilities and playgrounds in 12 Boston neighborhoods¹. For more detailed information, please refer to the full Play Across Boston Report (www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc).

As we work with our partners toward creating greater opportunities, **Play Across Boston** data provide a solid basis upon which to achieve our goals of improving community health and reducing disparities in physical activity access and participation. This **Active Facts** outlines the types of recreational programs and facilities available to **East Boston** youth.

Youth Sports and Recreational Activities in East Boston

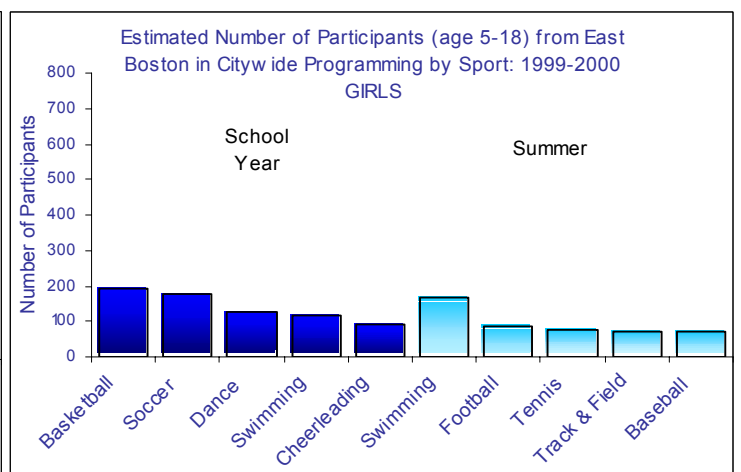
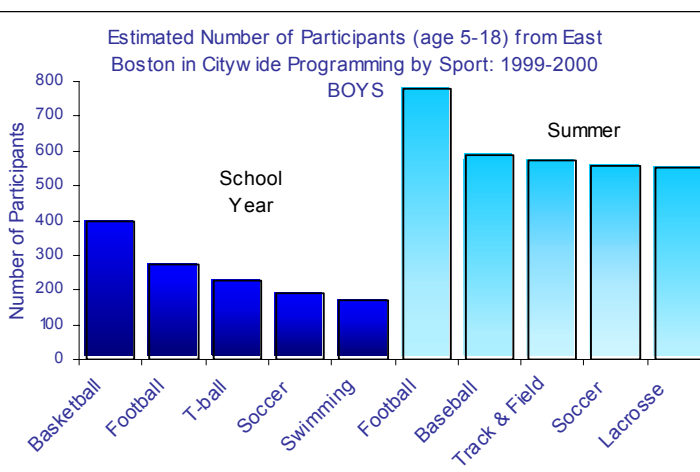
In 1999-2000, 16 different sports and physical activity programs² located in East Boston responded to the **Play Across Boston** survey. Of those 16 programs, many were non-profit and over one-third did not charge a participation fee. Of the non-profit programs, most were either league sports, comprised of multiple teams playing a single sport or were programs provided by the

Community Centers in East Boston. Figure 1 describes the types of programs available in East Boston and Boston overall.

As for participation in citywide programs, East Boston youth represent about 10% of all youth sports and physical activity participants in Boston yet comprise 7% of the of Boston's 95,251 5-18 year olds. This means that East Boston youth participate at a higher level than youth from other neighborhoods. Of the many sports and activities offered throughout the city, basketball appears to be the favorite for boys during the school year and football appears to be the favorite during the summer. Girls also favored basketball during the school year and preferred swimming during the summer. In East Boston, boys have a greater level of sports participation than girls.

¹ Data for some Boston neighborhoods were combined for the purposes of the Play Across Boston Report

² Includes only those programs who responded to the Play Across Boston Survey



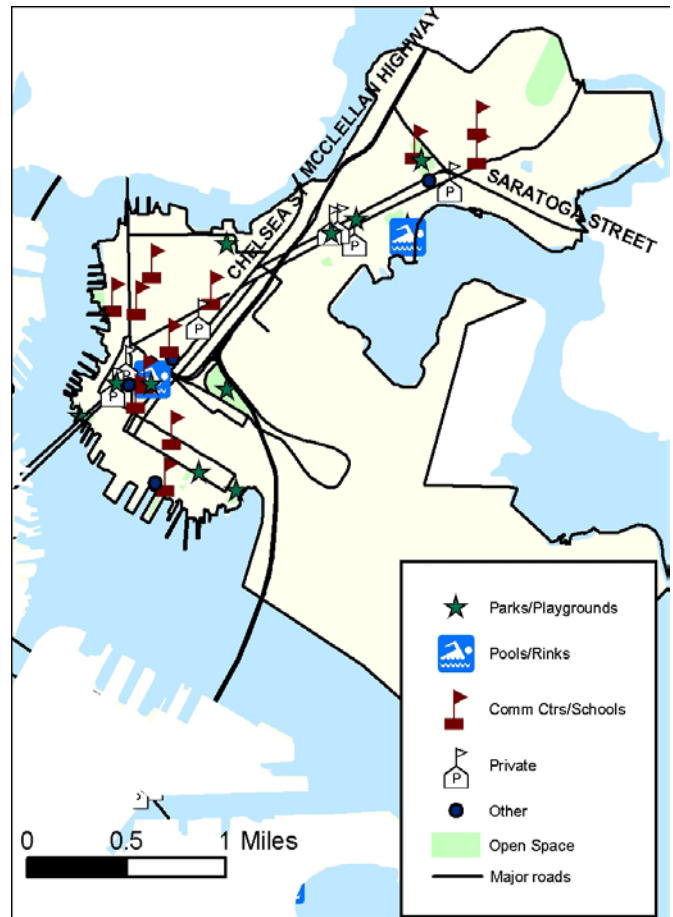
Parks, Playgrounds and Athletic Facilities in East Boston

As one of Boston's most diverse neighborhoods, East Boston is filled with many parks, playgrounds and other facilities for youth sports and recreation. In 2000-2001, PAB surveyed 16 different public complexes in East Boston to document the types of facilities and amenities available. These sites included 6 playgrounds, 4 parks, and 1 pool operated by the Parks & Recreation Department, 1 rink and 1 beach operated by the former MDC, currently the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), 2 Boston Community Centers and 1 Boston Community School (community center housed within Boston Public Schools). In total, these complexes housed 12 basketball courts, 9 playgrounds, 4 handball courts, 3 tennis courts, 2 pools, 2 ice rinks and more! In addition, several other facilities in East Boston host youth sports activities including the YMCA of Greater Boston/East Boston. Assessments of playground quality indicate that East Boston playgrounds ranked high.

East Boston has...

- 12 Basketball Courts
- 9 Playgrounds
- 7 Handball Courts ... and more!

Recreational Facilities in East Boston



Public Recreational Facilities in East Boston

	East Boston	Boston	% in East Boston
Overall Recreational Complexes	16	230	7.0%
Ball Fields			
Baseball	2	36	5.6%
Softball	4	69	5.8%
Little League	3	46	6.5%
Football	1	11	9.1%
Soccer	2	33	6.1%
Lacrosse	1	2	50.0%
Track	1	8	12.5%
Ball Courts			
Tennis	3	92	3.3%
Basketball (Full)	12	155	7.7%
Volleyball	1	10	10.0%
Street Hockey	1	17	5.9%
Handball	4	18	22.2%
Other Recreational Facility Types			
Pool	2	28	7.1%
Ice Rink	2	13	15.4%
Studio	2	7	28.6%
Other Recreational Facility	2	35	5.7%
Playgrounds			
Playgrounds	9	155	5.8%
Schoolyard Initiative Sites	2	29	6.9%
Total	54	809	6.7%

Future Directions in East Boston

Despite the resources available to its youth, East Boston ranks low out of the 12 Boston neighborhoods¹ in its facilities per youth ratio, indicating that relative to other neighborhoods in Boston, each facility in East Boston serves a greater number of youth. Never-the-less, the participation rates in sports and physical activity programs rank average. Thus, in the future to improve the opportunities available, the greatest areas of need appear to be in increasing the number of facilities and maintaining the condition of existing facilities. In addition, program providers should concentrate on closing the participation gap between boys and girls.

Information for this publication was obtained from Play Across Boston, Census 2000, and the City of Boston's website.

For more information on programs available in your neighborhood, please contact:
 Boston Centers for Youth & Families
 617-635-4920
www.cityofboston/bcyf
 or
 The Mayor's Youthline
 617-635-2240
www.bostonyouthzone.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
 HARVARD PREVENTION
 RESEARCH CENTER
 677 HUNTINGTON AVE
 7TH FLOOR
 BOSTON, MA 02115
 (617) 432-3840
play@hsph.harvard.edu
www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc