

SOUTH BOSTON

Play Across Boston

Active Facts



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 **South Boston** youth.

Youth Sports and Physical Activities in South Boston

In 1999-2000, 15 different sports and physical activity programs² located in South Boston responded to the **Play Across Boston** survey. Of those 15 programs, many were non-profit and over one-third did not charge a participation fee. Of the non-profit programs, most were league sports, comprised of multiple teams playing a single

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

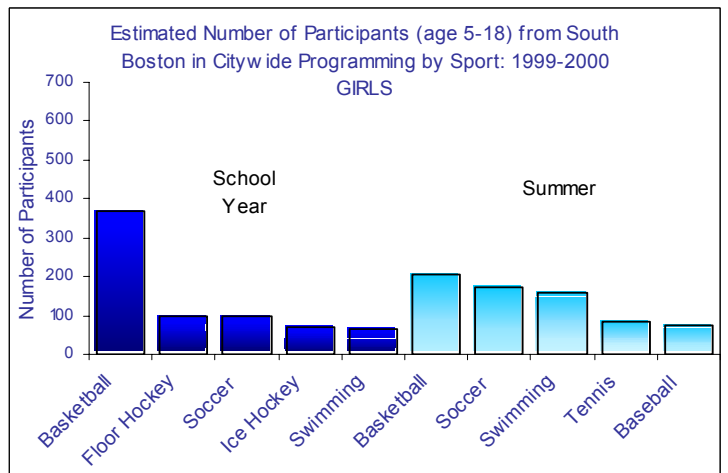
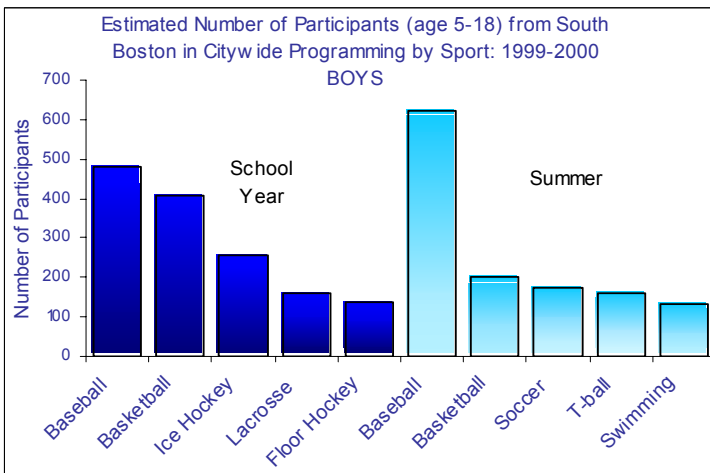
Type of Program	Number in South Boston	Number in Boston	% in South Boston
Non-Profit	11	155	7%
For Profit	1	18	6%
Boston Public School	2	35	6%
Non-public School	1	15	7%
Total	15²	223	7%

sport or were provided by the Community Centers in South Boston. Figure 1 describes the types of programs available in South Boston and Boston overall.

As for participation in citywide programs, South Boston youth represent about 8% of all youth sports and physical activity participants in Boston and comprise 4% of Boston's 95,251 5-18 year olds. This means that South Boston youth participate at a higher level than youth from other Boston neighborhoods. Of the many sports and activities offered throughout the city, baseball appears to be the favorite for boys during both the school year and the summer. Girls preferred basketball during both the school year summer. In South Boston, boys have a higher 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 South Boston

As one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in Boston, South Boston is filled with many parks, playgrounds and other facilities for youth sports and recreation. In 2000-2001, PAB surveyed 14 different public complexes in South Boston to document the types of facilities and amenities available. These sites included 3 parks and 3 playgrounds operated by the Parks & Recreation Department, 3 parks and 1 rink operated by the former MDC, currently the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), 2 Community Centers and 2 Boston Community Schools (community centers housed within Boston Public Schools). In total, these complexes housed 12 playgrounds, 13 basketball courts (9 full courts), 4 baseball fields, 3 softball fields, 6 Little League fields, 4 tennis courts, 2 ice rinks, and more! In addition, several private facilities in South Boston host youth sports activities, including the South Boston Boys & Girls Club. Assessments of playground quality indicate that South Boston playgrounds ranked average.

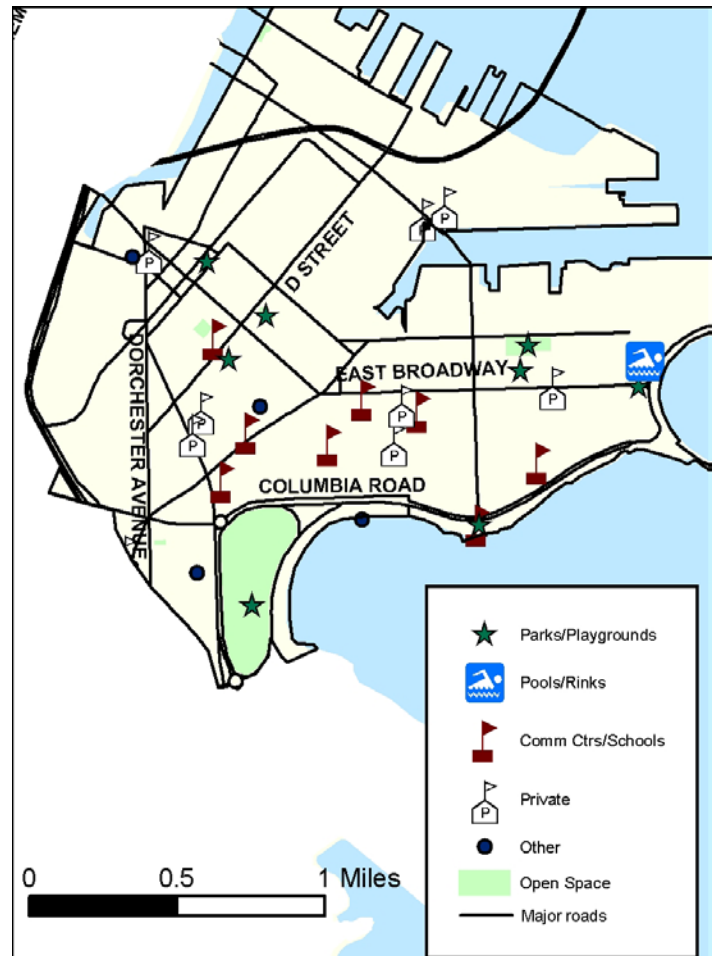
South Boston has...

- 13 Basketball Courts
- 4 Baseball Fields, 3 Softball Fields, and 6 Little League Fields
- 12 Playgrounds ... and more!

Public Recreational Facilities in South Boston

	South Boston	Boston	% in South Boston
Overall Recreational Complexes	14	230	6%
Ball Fields			
Baseball	4	36	11%
Softball	3	69	4%
Little League	6	46	13%
Football	1	11	9%
Soccer	4	33	12%
Track	1	8	13%
Other Field	2	9	22%
Ball Courts			
Tennis	4	92	4%
Basketball (Full)	9	155	6%
Basketball (1/2 -court)	4	29	14%
Volleyball	5	10	50%
Street Hockey	2	17	12%
Handball	3	18	17%
Other Recreational Facility Types			
Pool	1	28	4%
Ice Rink	2	13	15%
Other Recreational Facility	4	35	11%
Playgrounds			
Playgrounds	12	155	8%
Total	67	809	8%

Recreational Facilities in South Boston



Future Directions in South Boston

South Boston ranks high out of the 12 Boston neighborhoods¹ in its facilities per youth ratio, indicating that relative to other neighborhoods in Boston, South Boston, has more facilities per 100 youth. Furthermore, South Boston ranks high in participation rates in sports and physical activity programs. Thus, the facilities and playgrounds are plentiful for the youth in South Boston and Play Across Boston recommends that resources be allotted to maintain these facilities and to encourage youth, especially girls, to participate in existing programs.

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:
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