

Gary Comer Youth Center Rooftop Garden Chicago

The Gary Comer Youth Center, located in the Grand Crossing neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, offers positive extracurricular alternatives in a welcoming and safe environment to youth 8 - 18. Our mission is to provide the support for all of our youth to graduate from high school, prepared to pursue college and careers. The Center draws its primary membership from the youth of the South Shore Drill Team, Paul Revere School and Alumni Association, the new Noble Street Charter high school, and the local school community. In addition, the Youth Center offers numerous special events and activities open to the broader public throughout the year.

The Gary Comer Youth Center has created an environment where young people are offered the opportunity to participate in five primary program tracks:

- Academics
- Arts and Culture
- Civic Engagement
- College and Career Preparation
- Health and Fitness

A highlight at the Center is the 8,600 square foot rooftop garden. Youth and community members grow a wide variety of vegetables, herbs, fruits and flowers in the garden. The produce is used in the Center's cooking classes and meal preparation. Additionally community members volunteer in the garden and take home fresh produce. We are also exploring year-round gardening by using row covers and other season-extending techniques. This year we grew spinach, lettuce, collard greens, mustard greens, kale and herbs, including oregano, thyme, chives and even rosemary, throughout the winter. Furthermore, we are growing a wide variety of perennials, grasses, fruits and bulbs to determine which varieties are best suited for a rooftop garden.

Contact: Marji Hess, Garden Manager, 773-358-4070

Photos:



Overview: Spring



Spring Bulbs



Strawberries



Overview: Winter



Winter



Winter: Row Covers