

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

CitySprouts Middle School Program is an out-of-school-time program for young people ages 11-14 to learn more about the world and their community, starting in the garden. It is rooted in project-based activities that draw on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) practices. It encourages youth to think critically and abstractly about the world around them, to make strong friendships, and to positively contribute to their community. It is an introduction to the workforce for young people moving from childhood to teenhood.

SUMMER YOUTH



CitySprouts **Summer Youth Program** is a 6-week program for rising 6th - 8th graders based in the school garden in July and August. Through cooking and gardening, structured STEM activities, and field trips, youth explore how STEM and food systems intersect with social justice in their communities as they develop their own group project.

AFTER-SCHOOL



Our semester-length **After-School Program** is held at six middle schools in Cambridge and Boston in fall or spring. At each site, our program is framed around a semester-long project using science and engineering practices to explore food systems in the garden, classroom and community.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP



Our new **Youth Leadership Team (YLT)** is a bi-monthly club for young people who've been a part of CitySprouts after school or summer programming and want to go deeper. It is a year-long commitment and is structured to allow youth to develop more independent projects in the neighborhood. The YLT is a vehicle for youth leadership and voice in the community around STEM, food systems and environmental justice.

"My goal was to learn about social justice issues and do science experiments and engineering, which was accomplished but I still want to learn more."

"My favorite part of the CitySprouts internship was talking about climate change and farmers, and making a new recipe, and doing science/engineering projects."

"My favorite part of the internship was learning about the carbon cycle."

"My goal was to make new friends and learn [how to make] one full meal. Both were accomplished."

"I liked cooking and eating the most."

- Boston and Cambridge youth ages 11-14 from 2018 summer program

CitySprouts is supported by the following key partnerships:





SETTING THE COURSE FOR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

CitySprouts defines health & well-being holistically to include young people’s physical and social-emotional health. Development of social-emotional skills in our youth participants is measured through evidence-based evaluation tools. Healthy food choice and eating habits are tracked through CitySprouts’ food preference survey. From our summer program:

- 84% of participants tried a new vegetable for the first time
- 86% of participants reported that they liked a vegetable that they had not liked before the program
- 81% of participants cooked a new vegetable at home with their family

OPENING THE DOOR TO STEM

CitySprouts Middle School Program is evaluated using evidence-based tools designed to capture STEM skills, interest in STEM career fields, key social-emotional capabilities and program quality. Evaluation highlights:

CitySprouts Middle School Program excels in the area of youth development. Youth have a strong voice in directing activities, highlighting the relevance of the environment and food systems to their lives, and consistently building strong relationships between adults & youth, and peer to peer.

Program activities support young people’s meaningful and connection-building reflection on STEM content and participation in activities is notably high, especially for English Language-learning students and youth with differing needs.

CitySprouts scores high in the area of organization of activities, space utilization, and incorporating appropriate and engaging materials.

Results from outside evaluations (DoS, APT, CI and SAYO) are available on request.

CITYSPROUTS & BOSTEM

CitySprouts Middle School Program is a charter member of the BoSTEM Education, Innovation & Research (EIR) project to improve young people’s STEM learning and social-emotional health. Facilitated jointly by United Way and Boston After School & Beyond, BoSTEM brings together a coalition of high performing nonprofits who are committed to closing the achievement and opportunity gaps for students who are traditionally underrepresented in STEM learning and to inspire and prepare Boston youth to succeed in 21st century careers. The five-year BoSTEM EIR grant provides CitySprouts with a combination of funding and resources to improve young people’s STEM and social emotional skills.