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Bronx Children's Museum launches summer health program empower kids

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Carla Precht, the founding executive director of the Bronx Children's Museum, said a new program to get kids to take charge of their health will help them make better choices later on.

As the borough struggles with the city's highest obesity rates, the [Bronx Children's Museum](#) is working to empower kids to take charge of their own health.

About 120 children from the [South Bronx](#) are participating in the museum's Dream Big Initiative. The goal is to inspire children to lead healthy lifestyles so they can accomplish their dreams.

"Health is one of the more serious problems we have in the [Bronx](#). And young children are the ones we need to educate," said the museum's executive director [Carla Precht](#).

"Children form their habits and behaviors early," she continued. "So if we can influence what they know about what is healthy at an early age, then there's a greater likelihood that they will make the right choices."

Throughout the summer, the young participants have been attending various workshops at four community-based organizations: Abraham House, BronxWorks, Freedom Community Center and Supportive Children's Advocacy Network.

Instructors from the performance groups, ¡Retumba! and Pregones Theater, have been using dance, drama, singing and mural painting to teach the youth about healthy lifestyles.

The program culminates on Aug. 6 with a daylong celebration at [Hostos Community College](#) during which the children will get to showcase all that they've learned.

The event also is to feature drumming workshops, performances by the Highbridge Voices Choir and the unveiling of the students' mural.

At the Freedom Community Center in [Port Morris](#), students have been studying drama. They're working on a play about healthy living for the finale event on Aug. 6.

"The program's been great for them," said [Joe Perez](#), who heads the community center. "These are the kinds of experiences they don't normally get around here. It's exciting for them."

Sixteen children, ages 7 to 9, are taking part in the program. Last week, they took a workshop on nutrition and exercise.

"Afterwards, they were actually talking about it," Perez said. "Kids don't usually do that, so I think it's hitting home."

This summer's program is the second such effort by the Bronx Children's Museum. Last year's Dream Big Initiative celebrated Supreme Court Justice - and Bronx native - [Sonia Sotomayor](#), and participants even got to meet the trailblazing jurist.

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