A summer shaped by young people.

YOUTH VOICE

"Learning how to introduce myself to people"

Anonymous youth survey respondent

Safe Summer Sites expanded **Milwaukee Public Schools Twilight** and existing neighborhood programs for young people ages **12 to 20**. More activities, evening access, trusted adults, and youth leadership created opportunities for connection, learning, and prevention before harm occurs.

June 22 to August 30, 2026

Primarily 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 or 9:30 p.m.

Six Milwaukee Public Schools locations and six community locations

12
anchor locations

64
youth ambassadors

184
individuals employed

24
Safe Passage team members

BELONGING, IN A YOUNG PERSON'S WORDS

"Meeting new people and growing bonds with them, the staff are very nice and welcoming"

Anonymous youth survey respondent

From youth voice to shared action

Listen to youth

Youth convenings, a survey, and focus groups informed planning and activities.

Share leadership

Youth ambassadors helped develop and implement activities with trusted community partners.

Create belonging

"kids/teens having a safe space to be kids without life's interruptions"

Anonymous staff survey respondent

Meet youth where they are.

Partners supported and promoted community events and provided **Safe Passage services** where young people already gathered. The approach adapted to community program closures, including **heat wave days**, helping sustain connection as conditions changed.

Event summary: July 11 to September 6, 2026

Attendance includes the broader community and may include repeat attendees.

30
community events

7,645
reported attendance

Sources: Safe Summer Sites evaluation draft and supplemental adaptive events summary, October 14, 2026.

Belonging is an outcome.

Young people brought curiosity, creativity and leadership to welcoming spaces. Their experiences of safety, learning and connection show the strengths this shared community response put into action.

96%
would probably or definitely attend again

92%
felt safe at the site

94%
would recommend the program to a friend

64% learned something new

52% had something positive to do

The reach of trusted spaces

4,870
recorded visits at Milwaukee Public Schools

1,300+
unique youth reported at Milwaukee Public Schools

1,766
reported unique attendees at community locations

Schools: June 22 to August 6. Community: June 22 to August 30. Visits and attendees differ; counts may overlap across locations.

Safer spaces. A shared contribution.

0
reported violence at sites during programming

20%
fewer victims citywide
117 victims, all ages

22%
fewer victims ages 12 to 20
29 young people

Partners believe expanded trusted spaces, youth leadership and adaptive community events played a major role in a safer summer, alongside Milwaukee's broader prevention work.

A shared community response

City of Milwaukee Department of Community Wellness and Safety
Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services
Milwaukee Public Schools
Children's Wisconsin
Medical College of Wisconsin Comprehensive Injury Center
Greater Milwaukee Urban League
Safe & Sound
INPOWER Solutions
Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin health network

Community hosts, enrichment and event partners, and the Violence Response Public Health and Safety Team also contributed.

What's next

Keep youth at the center. Carry this collaboration beyond summer with consistent, safe and engaging opportunities.

- **Keep youth leading.**
  Involve more young people in planning and evaluation.
- **Strengthen grassroots partners.**
  Plan early and sustain shared coordination.
- **Stay flexible.**
  Adapt activities and access to changing youth needs.

"That I learned how to do my future job just in 3 days"
Anonymous youth survey respondent

Sources: evaluation draft and adaptive events summary. Youth survey: 283 voluntary responses, about 109 per question; findings may not represent all attendees. Citywide figures: homicide and nonfatal shooting victims, June 22 to August 29, 2026, versus 2025. Declines were already underway; the initiative's separate impact was not measured. No youth incident occurred within 400 meters of a site during hours. Nearby all age counts across all hours were seven in each year. Anonymous quotes; capitalization lightly edited.