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Kick-Off Youth N.O.I.S.E. Meeting Sparks a Fire in Mission Hill

Mayor, Youth, Community Members Fill Tobin Center to Raise Questions, Speak Out and Creatively Address Community Violence

Boston – Difficult questions about violence in Mission Hill were on the table last night at the groundbreaking first meeting of Youth N.O.I.S.E., Neighborhood Outreach for Inner Street Empowerment. In the midst of a new surge of youth violence in Boston, over 150 youth and community members gathered last night at the Tobin Community Center.

Joined by Mayor Menino, Police Commissioner Ed Davis, State Representative Jeffrey Sanchez, City Councilors Mike Ross, Sam Yoon, Michael Flaherty, Felix Arroyo and Charles Yancey and members of the B-2 Police District, Mission Hill youth met and raised concerns about violence and safety.

The overwhelming response of young people at last night's meeting showed the city that there are youth who are taking initiative to creatively foster dialogue around violence and to form relationships in their communities.

"We cannot stop the violence," said Sociedad Latina Youth Community Organizer Arlenis Diaz, 16. "But we can help to decrease it."

Spurred by increasing violence in their neighborhoods and the lack of trust between the community and the police, Youth Community Organizers at Sociedad Latina and MissionSAFE initiated plans for Youth N.O.I.S.E. nearly a year ago.

After meeting with and gaining the support of Mayor Menino in December, the Youth Community Organizers used last night's kick-off meeting to announce the beginning of these monthly meetings, to be facilitated by Youth Community Organizers at Sociedad Latina and MissionSAFE, in collaboration with Police District B-2 officers.

*Based in Roxbury's Mission Hill, **Sociedad Latina** has been working with Latino youth and families in the Boston area for 38 years, creating a new generation of Latino leaders by offering programs that nurture the inherent strengths of youth, instill a sense of cultural and personal pride, and offer a place for youth to speak and be heard. **MissionSAFE** is a Mission Hill youth development program that creates an emotionally, psychologically and physically safe space where youth are nurtured, listened to, engaged and cared for by adults who form healthy relationships with them.*

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