

SUMMER ARTS SCHEMES FOR THE YOUNG

- 1 Youngsters in deprived areas are to get cut-price access to arts, sports and drama activities to divert them from anti-social behaviour over the summer.

Some local councils in England are to get a share of £265m to help them provide positive activities in schools over the holiday period.

- 5 Incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour tend to rise over the summer. Children's Minister Beverley Hughes said young people needed to be kept safe, engaged and out of trouble.

- 10 She said: "In many areas there is really good offer to young people, through extended schools, youth and leisure services and a wide range of voluntary and community organisations.

However, as summer approaches I urge all local authorities to redouble efforts to consult with young people and actively promote activities to them.

- 15 We need to focus on areas where there is a high incidence of anti-social behaviour by young people and also help marginalized young people overcome the barriers they face to participation."

She added: "The vast majority of children and young people are law abiding and contributing well to society, but long summer evenings with nothing to do can encourage young people to get into trouble."

- 20 The government wants all schools to provide extended services to the local community by 2010.

Officials point to a faster rate of improvement in academic attainment in areas where schools offer fully extended services. Chief executive of the Training Development Agency for schools Graham Holley said: "We know that students' progress in extended schools is about double the rate of the national average.

- 25 So it is crucial that these services reach every child in every community.

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