

Drop-In Lounge is a cool place for kids

Youth council's site in Rocky Point offers a relaxed atmosphere

By Elizabeth Bonner

Think that there's nothing to do? Think again. The North Shore Youth Council in Rocky Point has once again brought the Drop-In Lounge back for kids in the area.

Year round, the North Shore Youth Council (NSYC) has an after school program from 2:30-5 in the afternoon. When school ends, it turns into a summer recreation program for the morning hours. And, as it has been in the past, from the hours of 1-4 p.m. starting July 5 until August 19, the Drop-In Lounge is open for grades 4-12. On Monday nights, from 7-9 p.m., the Drop-In Lounge will be open to grades 9-12.

"It's a place for kids to come hang out," said Charlene LaCasia of the North Shore Youth Council.

So why is it so fun? Just some of the things to do are foosball, air hockey, a pool table, karaoke, and outdoor activities.

"This is a place to have fun with other kids," said Drop-In Supervisor Kim Green.

The atmosphere is relaxed, and you can tell that there is fun in store for the day. As Ms. Green was being interviewed, she was busy getting cookies and ice pops ready, and later helping set up the ping-pong table.

"This is the best gig ever," said Bobby Woods, an associate counselor. Mr. Woods started out at the NSYC as a kid, and worked himself up through junior counselor to helping Ms. Green with Drop-In.

"Anyone is welcome to come," Ms. Green continued, "There is no sign up or registration, and it's free."

The only time that kids might need money is when the counselors let them know the next day they'll be walking

to maybe McDonald's or Broadway in Rocky Point for some pizza.

"We always doing something," said Ms. Green, "There's a lot of things the kids could be doing that isn't good for them, and we help give them somewhere else to go."

When the kids were asked to use one word to describe the Drop-In Lounge, they all eagerly replied "cool," "awesome games," and "exciting."

Junior counselor Alison Concklin agrees. "It's all a lot of fun," she said, "I've been coming here for a few years, and I got to sign up for the junior counselor position when I was old enough."

The Drop-In Lounge takes place every day from 1-4 p.m. for grades 4 through 12 and on Monday nights from 7-9 p.m. for grades 9-12. The North Shore Youth Council is located in Rocky Point on the property of the