

WEST LOOP, NEAR WEST SIDE, PILSEN (//WWW.DNAINFO.COM/CHICAGO/WEST-LOOP-NEAR-WEST-SIDE-PILSEN)

Education (//www.dnainfo.com/chicago/topics/education)

Police Bond With Students Over A Chess Board

By Kayla Martinez (//www.dnainfo.com/chicago/about-us/our-team/editorial-team/kayla-martinez) | July 27, 2017 6:27am



Officers sit down with students to play a game of chess.

DNAinfo/Kayla Martinez

NEAR WEST SIDE — Chicago Police officers and high school students are learning to play chess together in an attempt to build positive relationships between police and the city's young people.

The "Cops and Kids" Initiative is a program developed by Chicago Public Schools and the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation in partnership with the Chicago Police

Department.

The program runs daily for three weeks in the summer at Whitney Young High School, and serves 18 students from four different high schools: Kelly, Community Christian Alternative Academy, Whitney Young and Walter Payton.

Both the police officers and some of students were new to the game of chess. Some students on chess teams actually showed police how to play.

Aside from bring cops and kids together, the program also offers college readiness workshops and college tours.

Sylvia Jordan, the manager of academic competitions for CPS, partnered with Renaissance Knights president David Heiser to create the program.

"Often times, kids idolize the wrong person. So you know, as opposed to fearing officers or viewing them in a negative light we wanted them to build a positive relationship and looks at a police officer as a role model in the community," Jordan said.



The program hopes to promote positive relations between the youths and Chicago Police officers. [DNAINfo/Kayla Martinez]

For officers, the program offers an opportunity to become more in tune with the young people.

"It's great because some of these kids get a chance to interact with police [in a way] that they normally don't, in a positive way," Officer Dillard Fisher said. "To experience police officers in another light is also always a positive thing to show the young men that we're just like them, we're just people and we just learned how to play chess ourselves."

Beyond the program, Jordan said they hope to encourage students of the program to encourage others to participate and be "positive citizens in the community."

"What we're trying to teach the kids to do is be advocates in their home communities as well as their school communities," Jordan said. "And promote peace and promote non-violence through their experience via chess and via the programs."

Cops and Kids will continue throughout the school year in a new after-school program at several schools, participating in tournaments throughout the year.



Get our daily West Loop, Near West Side, Pilsen news and alerts!

Subscribe

By clicking subscribe, I agree to be bound by the [Terms of Use](https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/about-us/terms) and [Privacy Policy](https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/about-us/privacy-policy)