

Creating Summer Jobs

Give kids a real choice

All Join Hands

An
Editorial Board
series on
violence against
children.



An improved police department and more aggressive efforts to get illegal guns off the street are two important tactics to reduce the surge of violent crime in Philadelphia.

But they aren't the only ones — and they may not even be the most effective ones in the long term.

Give kids an attractive alternative to crime and they might just choose it. Make sure the alternative includes a legal paycheck, career training, and possibilities for the future and it will be hard for a young person to resist.

So it's good to see a community drive to arrange summer internships for Philadelphia youth.

The Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce is expanding summer jobs programs with its ambitious "Working Solutions" campaign.

The chamber is working in partnership with Commerce Bank, the United Way of Southeast Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia Youth Network.

The goal of "Working Solutions" is to persuade area companies to offer 1,000 employer-paid internships for kids this summer. So far, businesses have committed to providing 650 jobs.

This program isn't a social service. It's practice for the real world. Kids who seek one of the internships — and there's a long waiting list for them — have to fill out a job application, produce a resumé, show some

knowledge of how to act in a workplace, be interviewed by the prospective employer, and receive training.

Hey, what do you know, all of that is excellent preparation for getting and keeping a job.

What's as heartening as the jobs themselves is the business community's acting on the reality that its success depends on the city's having an educated, prepared workforce. This is only one of many civic challenges that businesses in the region should aggressively take on.

Summer jobs for kids addresses three of the greatest challenges.

It's a crime-fighting tool. It's an economic development strategy. It's a way to give the city's young people the opportunities they deserve.

Companies interested in offering paid summer internships can contact the chamber at 215-790-3732 or visit <http://www.greaterphilachamber.com>.

