

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Yard – East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center to Hold Grand Opening Celebration on Saturday, March 22 at 11 am at 3521 Church Avenue



TheYard – East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center's Thanksgiving event.

(New York, New York—March 13, 2025) – For residents of East Flatbush curious about what is going into the street level space at 3521 Church Avenue, all will be revealed on Saturday, March 22 when **The Yard – East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center** opens its doors.

The Yard – East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center (FEC) is one of 30 FECs launched by the Administration for Children's Services in New York City. Although operated by **Rising Ground**, a trusted and longstanding human services nonprofit at the forefront of meeting the critical needs of New Yorkers, everything about the FEC — including the name, the physical layout, and the offerings it provides — is co-designed with families

and community members. Participation is voluntary, free, and open to all community members. At the centers, families and children can connect with neighbors, volunteer their time, participate in various events and activities, and access resources and supports they need to thrive.

The Yard began providing community offerings last year including Financial Literacy, Computer Science & Coding, and Vision Board Workshops, a Summer Youth Program, and a monthly Women's Virtual Circle. Events have included a Community Baby Shower, Back-to-School Resource Fair, Thanksgiving Turkey & Food Giveaway, a Holiday Toy Giveaway, and more. Community members are invited to take part in bi-monthly virtual Town Hall meetings to express their ideas about what they want to see at the FEC.

Director, Natasha Esteva, MSW says that, to date, The Yard has supported around 1,100 families and the opening of the new space will solidify and grow The Yard's presence: "The grand opening of The Yard - East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center marks a new chapter for our community, a space where families can find support, connection, and resources to thrive. We are committed to fostering a welcoming environment that uplifts and empowers individuals of all backgrounds. This center is more than just a place — it's a home for growth, resilience, and collective strength."

"Congratulations to the East Flatbush community and Rising Ground on the grand opening of The Yard – East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center (FEC)," says **Jess Dannhauser, Commissioner of the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS)**. "A central part of the FEC model is that community members play a key role in each center's design, so we look forward to seeing how The Yard reflects East Flatbush's unique dreams. Expanding FECs across New York City has been a top priority for ACS, and we're thrilled to see the continued positive impact they have had on children and families."

The new space expands The Yard's offerings to include community meeting spaces, a children's play area, access to computers, a food pantry provided by The Goldberg Family Foundation, and a hub to connect the community to resources. The space is decorated with artwork by children from the community and specific areas within the center have been named in honor of individuals who have made significant contributions to the East Flatbush community, including:

- **The Rodrick F. Daley Conference Room** named in honor of Rodrick Daley, Chairperson for New York City Community Board 17, recognizing his leadership and service.
- **Dawn Swaby's Kitchen** named after Dawn Swaby, the previous owner of Brooklyn Jazz & Sports Bar (now the FEC facility), celebrating her community contributions.
- **Curtis Nelson Comfy Corner** named for Curtis Nelson, Executive Director of Sesame Flyers International, acknowledging his dedication to community enrichment.

All three are expected to attend the opening day event.

In addition to remarks from keynote speaker, **New York City Council Member Rita Joseph**, and a ceremonial ribbon cutting, the opening day celebrations will include tours of the space, entertainment, and refreshments. The event is open to the public.

Attendees can register online [here](#).

Information about The Yard – East Flatbush Family Enrichment Center, including a link to a community resource directory and event information, can be found [here](#). Members of the community are invited to visit the center at 3521 Church Avenue. Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm.

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About Rising Ground

Rising Ground is a leading nonprofit human services organization, currently operating more than 101 programs at 143 sites across all five New York City boroughs and Westchester County, employing a workforce of 2,100+ people. Driven by the belief that each of us can thrive when life has hope and opportunity, Rising Ground provides caring support and proven paths to positive change, helping more than 30,000 individuals and 72,000 family members to rise above adversity. Founded in 1831 as Leake & Watts, an orphanage, Rising Ground has been at the forefront of supporting evolving community needs and is a leader in utilizing results-focused, evidence-based practices. For more information, visit RisingGround.org.

