

## The Edge @ Allen Station makes the Transition from a Youth Center to a Visitor Center

The Edge Youth Center has been a primary youth/teen oriented facility since its opening in June of 2005 and has recently begun to transition into a visitor center. The 4,000 square foot building includes a media room with five televisions, a Playstation and Xbox, a game room with ping pong and pool tables, a snack bar, and computer lab equipped 12 computers, printers and software.

The conversion process began June 1, 2009. Prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>, children ages 10 -17 (18 if still attending high school) were permitted access to the facility with a paid membership. As the facility continues to grow and develop, it is the City's objective to provide an environment that encourages parent involvement in the lives of their children. The main focus of the conversion will be on the lobby/game room area. Previously the lobby provided a variety of gaming tables and a membership was required to use this equipment. As the facility shifts to more of a visitor center, additional furniture is being added and a select number of game tables will remain.

Modular furniture, including a sectional sofa and chairs, has replaced the older sofa and tables. Round café tables and chairs have also been added to create a cozy atmosphere. "The key reason for this transition is so all park visitors can utilize the facility," said Carrie Cessna, Recreation Services Manager for the Parks and Recreation Department, "We want parents to have a place where they can relax while their children play at the park."

The facility also houses a concession area and the staff at The Edge wishes to encourage all patrons to utilize this amenity. "We've expanded our food service to include healthier choices," stated Billy Diaz, Youth Program Supervisor for The Edge. "We've purchased a greaseless fryer with a heating element that eliminates fat and oil." Future plans include a variety of beverage machines that will offer specialty coffees. Lockers will also be added so park patrons will have a place to securely store their personal belongings. A minimal fee will be required to rent locker space.

The new lounge area does not require a membership to utilize and offers parents as well as park users a place to congregate. The media room and computer lab still require membership and lobby usage is consistent with all other Parks and Recreation facilities.

"We want to thank Allen residents for their support over the years and hope the changes we make enhance their enjoyment of our facility," remarked Cessna. "Our goal is to provide a positive and safe environment for the citizens of our community."

The Edge @ Allen Station Park is owned and maintained by the City of Allen Parks and Recreation Department and is located at 201 E. St. Mary in Allen, TX. In addition to the Visitor Center, The Edge is also home to a 37,915 square foot skate park with a wide variety of bowls and transitions, a 900 foot BMX track and two full size hockey rinks suitable for adult and youth play.

For more information about The Edge @ Allen Station Park please call 214.509.4860 or visit our website at [www.allenparks.org](http://www.allenparks.org).