



Young participants in school boycott find little to do at the D Street housing project in South Boston. (Globe photo by John Blanding)

## Some kids in Southie tire of playing hooky

By Anne Kirchheimer  
Globe Staff

Nine-year-old Bobby Stanton doesn't care if he ever goes to school again.

The chubby, freckle-faced youngster, one of hundreds of South Boston youngsters still staying away from school to protest forced busing, has all the playmates he needs to keep him busy.

His 26 cousins live near him, all on South Boston's I street. And, like most other kids in the neighborhood, they're not going to school either.

Bobby gets up a little later these days than he would if he were going to his third grade class at the Tynan School around the corner. He usually does a few chores for his mother and then heads out on his bike, never straying more than three blocks from home.

The streets of South Boston, the stronghold of the Boston school boycott, are no longer lined with kids as they were three weeks ago when school opened. There are no longer crowds in front of schools or gangs milling around on corners.

On Gates street, 12-year-old Richie O'Brien, clad in his red, white and blue hockey jersey helps John Differ, 16, sweep the sidewalk. Both have been home since the boycott began almost three weeks ago.

John, who is supposed to attend Roxbury High School, plans to go to classes Monday. "I'll go next week because there's no trouble over there. I was waiting to see what would happen."

Richie O'Brien, assigned to a 6th grade class at McCormack School at Columbia Point, is not sure if he'll go. He thinks he might continue his out-of-school activities. "We play hockey, play cards, play everything," said O'Brien.

Around the corner a pretty, 15-year-old redhead carries a brown

bag full of groceries home to her mother at the Old Colony housing project. She stops to talk to 14-year-old Peggy Noonan, who is aimlessly riding a bike around the project.

"I want to go to school, I miss it," said Peggy, who is supposed to go to 10th grade at South Boston High School.

She said yesterday she is thinking of signing up for night school because her mother won't let her break the boycott and go to Southie. "I'd like to graduate from Southie high because I want to be a stewardess," she said.

But meanwhile, Peggy said, she is bored to death. "I don't usually help my mother around the house, but I've been doing it lately because I'm so bored."

Frankie Cucca and Mary Hornbaker, who have been going together eight months, don't mind the boycott because they have more time to spend together.

Frankie, 15, said his parents are trying to convince him to either go to work or go back to school. He said he can't decide what to do.

Mary, 13, comes from a family of eight. She is spending her free time babysitting. She said she doesn't mind because Frankie goes with her.

At the other end of South Boston at the D Street housing project Steve Duquett, 16, takes time out from pitching nickels with his 13-year-old friend, Tony, to tease some girls. He has already won 7 and he can afford to play.

Duquett, who studies merchandising but wants to be a policeman, said he is not at Roxbury high school, where he's been assigned, because his mother is afraid he'll get into fights. His younger brother and sisters are going to the Mackey and Bigelow schools. Steven's father thinks his son should be in school. "I say take a chance, Columbus did," said Duquett.