

# **Bronx Community Conversations for Change** **Supporting Healthy Living in the Bronx**



## *Discussion Guide:*

### **A Community Conversation About Active Living**



## INTRODUCTION

There are a lot of people living in the Bronx who are overweight or obese. This is a major health concern, because of their connection to chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. Meanwhile, there are many factors preventing Bronx residents from being physically active in their communities. Financial concerns, safety concerns, sanitation concerns, and poor upkeep are the ones Bronxites point to all the time. By having community conversations, we can identify solutions to address these concerns and improve our health.

Communities need to find answers and take action on many different levels. The dialogue-to-change process brings all kinds of people together to share different views and experiences. In the process, they begin to build stronger relationships and work together to find solutions to address these concerns and improve our health. Community conversations are a chance for us to hear from each other and make a plan to create better, stronger, neighborhoods for our families and neighbors. Our hope is that by talking and listening to each other, we'll start to build a better Bronx for and by the people that live in the Bronx.

Our conversations will focus on making our communities:

- Safer
- Healthier
- Beautiful
- Neighborhood friendly

We'll think about ways to create opportunities for feeling good and staying healthy using our public parks, streets and other open spaces. And it all starts with a conversation.

### Using this discussion guide

This guide is not meant just for reading; it's meant for you to use. We want to have these conversations so we can tell the story of neighbors and organizations working together to solve problems and strengthen our community.

Here's the basic outline of the discussion sessions in this guide:

- **Session One** gives participants in the group a chance to talk about their connections to the Bronx and hear about other people's experiences. Also, it will offer some different viewpoints about the state of health in the Bronx and the root challenges for being physically active/active living in the borough.
- **Session Two** is an opportunity to talk about possible approaches for supporting physical activity/healthy lifestyles in the Bronx, come up with action ideas and think about which ones would work best for our community.

## SESSION 1: GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER & ACTIVE LIVING IN THE BRONX

### **PART 1: Getting to Know One Another – Who are we and what is our vision for a healthier Bronx? (50 minutes)**

#### ***Activity 1: Getting to Know One Another (10 minutes)***

Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us today. In this session, we will get to know one another, talk about what is important to us, and see how we want to work together. Then, we will discuss about what other people are saying about healthy living in our community.

Let's go around the room and answer the following questions:

1. Who are you?
2. Why did you come today?
3. How long have you lived or worked in the Bronx?
4. What are your hopes for this effort?

#### ***Activity 2: Setting ground rules and designating roles/responsibilities (5 minutes)***

Creating some ground rules will help our discussion work well. Here are some ideas. Are there other rules that you would like to add?

1. Start on time. End on time.
2. Listen to one another. Treat each other with respect.
3. Each person gets a chance to talk.
4. Speak for yourself. Use "I" statements instead of trying to speak for your group.
5. One person talks at a time. Don't cut people off.
6. It's OK to disagree.
7. Stick to the issue.
8. If you talk about people who are not here, don't say their names.
9. Some of the things we talk about will be very personal. We will not tell these stories to other people, unless we all say it is OK. "What is said here, stays here."
10. Help the facilitator keep things on track.

Assigning specific roles for group members will make sure we get everything done that we want and everyone's voice is heard. Here are some ideas. Are we missing any?

1. Timekeeper
2. Note taker

**Activity 3: What is your connection to the issue? (15 minutes)**

1. Why is it important to talk about living a healthy lifestyle and being physically active?
2. What worries you the most about this issue?
3. How has living or working in the Bronx affected your ability to be healthy? Tell us about your experience finding affordable, easy ways to exercise.
4. Based on the discussion so far, what have you learned from others in this group?
5. What do we agree about? Where do we differ? Why?

**Activity 4: Visioning Exercise - What Are Our Hopes for a Healthier Bronx? (20 minutes)**

A "Vision" is an image of what we hope for the future, a goal to pursue.

"Visioning" is a process you can use to identify and name the values and beliefs that represent your hopes for your community. For example, if you say, "I hope we can create a community where everyone has an opportunity to succeed," the word that sums up this idea is opportunity.

Why it's important to hold up a vision for our community:

- Creating a vision motivates people. It gives them the energy and spirit to get the job done.
- A clear vision implies and promotes change.
- A vision that embodies cultural values and beliefs can inspire and guide the way community members treat one another.
- "You tend to move in the direction you're looking!"

**Instructions**

The goal of this exercise is to come up with 4 or 5 words that describe the group's hopes for the community. What kinds of positive things do we want to see in our community? What would show that we are living healthy lifestyles?

- Label a piece of newsprint: Our Community Vision. Set it aside to use at the end of the exercise.
- Label a piece of newsprint: Ideas to Start Our Visioning Process, and list words like: Opportunity, Respect, Safety, Health, Diversity, Spirituality, and Culture. Use this list to start the exercise.
- Ask the group to imagine that they are going to build a monument in the local park that stands for things they like about their community. Their job is to come up with 4 or 5 words that describe their vision of hope for the community. These words will be carved on the monument.

- Do a brainstorm. Write the ideas on the newsprint labeled Ideas to Start Our Visioning Process. (It's OK to include words that describe the community as it is today.)

Use these questions to help the group come up with ideas:

- What are the things that make a community a good place to live and be healthy?
- What words describe the things you like about this community and that make it easier to make good choices about food and exercise?
- How does having clean, safe and accessible parks and other outdoor spaces support these ideas?

Once the brainstorm is complete, ask the group to talk about:

- What the words mean to them.
- Which ideas matter most.
- How others in the community might feel about these ideas.
- Words they would like to add.

Now, narrow the list to 4 or 5 top ideas:

- Ask group members to vote for their 3 top choices. They can do this with a show of hands, or put stickers next to the 3 words they prefer.
- List the top 4 or 5 words on the paper labeled Our Community Vision.

**BREAK (5 minutes)**

## **PART 2: What Are People Saying About Healthy Living in Our Community?**

**(60 minutes)**

During the first part of our meeting, we talked about our personal connection to the Bronx. Next, we will talk about the issues and challenges related to maintaining a healthy lifestyle in our neighborhoods, like whether we have access to parks and do we feel safe walking and biking on our streets. We will also discuss a range of views to help us explore the roots of the problem. This will help us develop action ideas in later sessions.

### ***Activity 1: Discuss the Information Sheet (15 minutes)***

Please review the attached information sheet and use the following questions to talk about the data:

1. When you look at the information, what stands out? Why?
2. Does anything surprise you? Why?
3. What overall themes and trends do you see?

***Activity 2: Exploring Different Viewpoints the State of Health in the Bronx (45 minutes)***

How can we support healthy lifestyles and active living in our neighborhood? Here are a range of views that some people might hold. People have different ideas about the situation so one view cannot tell the whole story. We may agree with each other on some points and disagree on others. That is OK.

And please remember that not all views are represented. These are just examples of what some people could be thinking.

**Views**

**1. Residents and police need to find better ways to work together to keep our parks and streets safe and free of crime.**

We can do much more when residents and police try to work together, instead of blaming each other for problems in the neighborhood. There are many ways for citizens to help the police take care of the parks and other public spaces, including neighborhood watch groups, citizen patrols, even by videotaping drug or prostitution activity. Police officers can help citizens, especially young people, by getting to know them and by taking their concerns seriously. Reducing crime and violence in the parks and on our streets requires both citizens and the police. Also, concerns about safety should be brought to the Community Affairs Officer of the local precinct. People can request that a Parks Enforcement Patrol officer be assigned to patrol a park more often.

**2. Young people should have a voice in the affairs of the neighborhood.**

Most of the decisions made in the neighborhood about the parks and other public spaces affect young people directly, but they are rarely asked to share their concerns, ideas, or solutions. Their knowledge, energy and intelligence shouldn't be ignored. Young people can help with park cleanup and beautification projects, and community gardens. We should also make sure that they are voting members of our neighborhood associations or attend public meetings where our local officials will be. We need to let them know that we value the contribution they can make to the entire community.

**3. We need to keep young people from getting into trouble.**

Many young people get into trouble because they have too much free time so they end up doing unhealthy things. If we plan activities for them and show them that we care, our young people will be more likely to lead healthy lives. We need to give them chances to work with caring adults, to interact positively with one another, and to do their part in the community. They can help make the neighborhood and parks safer by taking part in neighborhood cleanups, and joining in midnight basketball programs and community arts projects. We can also set up curfews and keep an eye on young people who've been in trouble.

**4. People are making bad personal choices.**

We are responsible for making our own choices. If we decided to be unhealthy then we are causing our own health problems. Too many people choose to eat bad food or don't take advantage of going outside to the parks to get some exercise. If they made better choices, they would have fewer health problems.

**5. Historical racism and structural racism both play a key role in why the neighborhood is unhealthy and has low resources.**

We have the most park space in the city but the lowest number of police to keep the parks safe. We also don't have the same kinds of facilities and programs or activities in our communities that other more affluent neighborhoods have or other neighborhoods that don't have a lot of people of color. More people would use the parks if there were more activities like youth sports programs and reading programs with benches in the parks; more people would bike for fun and to work, if there were more free bikes, bike riding classes, and bike lanes and racks in the borough. The Bronx is one of the last places to gentrify and is therefore one of the last places to get these exciting programs. We don't have these things because racism plays a big role in how our parks and roads are funded and what activities are held there.

**6. There are real obstacles to using the parks and other public spaces.**

There is not good access to parks and other spaces like community gardens. The parks aren't open at times when people would like to use them, or the process of getting approved to use the space is too difficult to navigate. Parks and other public spaces are not well maintained, there is not enough lighting, and there are very few activities do to at the parks. There should also be access to healthy food, such as fruit and vegetable stands, near parks to promote healthy eating in parks. People would use the parks and walk/bike if other people picked up after their pets. Not having enough restrooms or water fountains with cold water also make the parks and roads less attractive for physical activity, especially for families with young children. Equipment in parks, when available, is not maintained well. Parks are not equipped to accommodate children with special needs or disabilities. And, sometimes, people don't feel safe in the parks because of crime, harassment, or rowdy people.

**7. We should have a say in decisions that affect our health and our neighborhood.**

Our homes and quality of life are affected by what happens in the neighborhood around us. We should create land-use plans and ordinances to make sure that we have a say about changes and ideas for the parks and public spaces. We should have a say in decisions being made about the location of highways, manufacturing sites, and other projects that can have a negative impact on air quality, and make sure that regulations about vehicle idling are created and enforced. By working together and working with local government, we can also deal with other things, such as animal waste, graffiti and broken playground equipment. If we let things slip, our parks and neighborhoods will go downhill, meaning there is less opportunity for people to have clean and safe spaces for physical activity.

**8. There needs to be more education and awareness about the connection between physical activity, fitness and overall health and reduction of chronic diseases.**

If we told real stories about how others have changed their exercise habits and improved their health, more people would be motivated to change their own lifestyles. The media should be more focused on promoting opportunities for fitness that are available. People would be more interested in exercise if they knew where to go to get information about opportunities that promote health, such as the location of nearby parks and where to borrow bikes.

Turn to your neighbor. Discuss the following questions for the next five minutes and then report back to the group

- Which views come closest to your own way of thinking? Why?
- Is there anything that you don't agree with or surprise you?
- What views do we agree about? What are things we disagree about?
- What other viewpoints do you think may be missing?

For next time: Think about these views. See if you hear them from others in the community. Also, look and listen for ideas about what we could do to improve the situation.

***Activity 3: Wrap-Up (5 minutes)***

To end this session, let's go around the circle and briefly answer the following (5 minutes)

- Name one thing that you enjoyed during this session.
- Name one thing that surprised you.
- Name one way we can improve the next session.



## SESSION 2: WHAT CAN WE DO

### **Part 1: Approaches to Building a Healthier Bronx (45 minutes)**

In Session 2, we talked about challenges to staying healthy in our community. Today, we will talk about how we can start to solve some of these challenges through specific action ideas.

#### ***Activity 1: Getting Started (5 minutes)***

1. Before we get started, let's review the ground rules. Does everyone still agree with the list? Do we need to add anything?
2. Since our last meeting, has anything happened that relates to this issue that you would like to share?
3. Here is a brief summary of what we discussed during Session 2 to help us to be ready for our work today.

#### ***Activity 2: Approaches to Change (40 minutes)***

We've talked about how our neighborhood is doing. Now, we will explore some ways to improve things. What approaches will work well? What will help us deal with health and physical activity gaps? What can we accomplish within one year?

Below is a list of possible approaches. Please take 5 minutes to review them and then turn to your neighbor to talk about them (15 minutes). Use these questions to think about the different approaches:

1. Have we already tried any of these approaches? If so, what happened?
2. Which approaches do you like best? Why?
3. What other approaches can you think of?
4. Which approaches address the physical activity gap in different types of institutions (government, businesses, schools, nonprofits, etc)?
5. What approaches might we be able to help move forward because they already have traction in NYC?
6. What approaches won't work? Why?

#### ***Approaches***

##### **1. Focus on personal responsibility.**

People need to be responsible for learning about the benefits of being physically active. They should take charge of their health by making better choices about exercise, even if they have to sacrifice in other areas to make it happen. Ultimately, access, education, and affordability can only go so far toward changing our system. Lifestyle changes can only come from personal commitment. We can all take action

to choose go to the gym or park to work out and model physical activity for our children. We need to become active stakeholders in making healthy choices for our communities.

Someone who supports this approach might like these action ideas:

- Exercise at least 20 minutes per day
- Start a walking club in a park
- Join a gym or recreation center

## **2. Focus on the community.**

Even if people want to have healthy and active lifestyles, they need to live in a community that supports them. More resources and time need to be put into the entire community in order for individuals to be able to have healthy options. Creating healthy lifestyles requires that we have a healthy community that values making sure everyone has the space and time for physical activity. Our community needs to be the kind of place that supports good health, not a place that makes people sicker or obese. Communities should make sure that the parks, streets and other open spaces are safe for everyone and well maintained so that community residents can lead active lives.

Someone who supports this approach might like these action ideas:

- Create more spaces dedicated to physical activity, including parks, plazas, Play Streets
- Work with local government and local nonprofits to create affordable, recreational programs in the parks and other outdoor spaces
- Build bike paths on the roads and in the parks to encourage biking
- Increase lighting on the sidewalks and put in speed bumps on the streets

## **3. Focus on children, schools and after school programs.**

By preventing children from experiencing obesity or other related health problems, we invest in their future and our own. Offering children opportunities to be physically active helps them to do better in school, establishes lifetime health habits and shows our responsibility for protecting the next generation. Because so many children spend time in school, schools are a good place to start offering children opportunities for exercise and outdoor play.

Someone who supports this approach might like these action ideas:

- Increase time spent in physical education (gym class)
- After school programs offering activities in the public parks and school gyms
- Schools holding sporting events or field days in the parks for students to take part in
- Empower parents with ideas for helping their children stay active in the home
- Creating murals in the stairwells to encourage children to take the stairs in school

## **4. Educate people about the benefits of being physically active in their daily lives.**

Outreach and education can provide individuals with creative and engaging ways to make the healthy choice, the easy choice throughout their day. A food education and

physical education system built by community groups and faith based organizations can provide the support and creative ideas many individuals need to maintain a commitment to lifestyle change. In addition, by making healthier food and activity choices, communities can use their buying power to shift market demand toward healthier options in their neighborhoods.

Someone who supports this approach might like these action ideas:

- Health education classes offered in faith communities and community centers
- Promote physical activity through mass media and social marketing campaigns
- Increase the number of community groups dedicated to teaching people about the benefits of playing or exercising in the parks, biking to work, and re-designing our streets and sidewalks to promote physical activity
- Work with community and faith-based organizations to adopt your local bodega and get healthier food in your neighborhood

#### **5. Focus on working with city officials and city departments**

In order to get the resources and programs our neighborhood needs, we need to build relationships with elected officials and government agencies, especially the police, the NYC Departments of Parks and Transportation and the Community Boards. We need to work together to create the kind of healthy community we want.

Someone who supports this approach might like these action ideas:

- Working with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to create dog friendly areas in the parks and reduce the fees for the recreation centers.
- Working with elected officials and other community leaders to allocate funding to buy new playground equipment and Parks Enforcement Patrol officers
- Asking the NYC Department of Transportation to add more bike racks and lightening in our neighborhood
- Joining your local Community Board to make recommendations about how we can improve our streets and parks to promote physical activity
- Joining or creating a “Friends of \_\_\_\_\_ Park” group at your local park through the Partnership for Parks, which gives community members more leverage when speaking with Community Boards, Parks Department staff, or other city officials.

#### **6. Create more opportunities for people to participate in organized activities, sports and other recreation in the community.**

There are a lot of activities happening in parks and outdoor spaces throughout New York City that we could bring to our neighborhoods as well. Some of these activities include:

- Starting zumba and/or other exercise/dance classes
- More sports leagues for youth
- Creating more Play Streets
- Promoting beautification / gardening and tree-planting programs
- Improving access to South Bronx waterfronts for canoeing and recreation
- Having more park or river clean-up events

- Organizing more opportunities to teach youth and adults to ride bikes
- Starting a Neighborhood Watch program with other concerned citizens

Now let's report back to the whole group. What did you think of these approaches? (20 minutes)

**BREAK (5 minutes)**

**PART 2: Moving From Conversation to Action. What Can We Do? (70 minutes)**

In this session, we will move to action. First, we will look at the strengths or assets we have. Next, we will brainstorm action ideas. Then we will connect our action ideas with our assets. And, finally, we will set priorities for action.

***Activity 1: Community Assets Brainstorm (15 min)***

Every town or city has assets. Assets can be people, places, or organizations – whatever makes our community a better place is an asset.

"Brainstorming" is a creative way for a group to come up with lots of ideas in a short amount of time. Build on one another's ideas. All ideas are OK. Don't stop to discuss or judge them. The facilitator will write down every idea. Use these headings as a guide:

COMMUNITY ASSETS				
People	Places	Institutions/ Organizations	Funding Sources	Other

Use these questions to help people start the brainstorm:

1. Who has talents and skills that they might offer?
2. What groups in the community can help us out?
3. What sources of funding do we have in our community?
4. What groups do you belong to? How can they help?
5. Can you think of anything else?

***Activity 2: Brainstorm Action Ideas (20 minutes)***

Think about the approaches. Try to come up with specific actions that fit with these approaches. How many different ideas can we come up with?

Make a list of action ideas in the following categories:

- Things that you can do on your own
- Things you can do with other small groups of people
- New partnerships, collaborations, or projects
- New policies
- Institutional change

***Activity 3: Connect Action Ideas with Assets (15 minutes)***

Post list of action ideas beside the assets, and talk about which ones can be linked. Keep these connections in mind as we prioritize our action ideas.

***Activity Four: Set Priorities for Action (10 minutes)***

Look at our list of ideas for action. Now we are going to narrow it down to a few ideas to take to the action forum where people from all the discussion groups will meet to share their ideas.

These questions will help you set priorities for action:

- Which ideas are easiest to get done?
- Who would work with us on these ideas?
- Which ideas might do the most good?
- Which ideas might have a long-term impact?

As a group, choose two or three ideas that are important and doable. Then, consider the following questions:

- What would it take to make this happen?
- What community assets could we use to move this idea forward?
- What kind of support do we need to take these steps? Who else could we link up with?
- How do we begin?

Write the top two or three ideas on a flip chart labeled Priority Action Ideas.

***Activity 5: Get Ready for the Action Forum (10 minutes)***

The facilitator will explain the agenda for the action forum and the group will choose someone to present their top 2 or 3 ideas for action at the event.

## ACTION FORUM

Community conversation programs lead to action in many ways. One way to do this is through an Action Forum. This is a large-group meeting at the end of a round of conversation. Ideas from all the conversation circles are presented at the Action Forum. There are usually several action ideas that many people support.

To move these ideas forward, people form action groups or task forces. Some people may join these action groups. Some may choose to help in other ways. In community conversation programs that continue over time, more and more people get involved, and many kinds of action occur.

### **Agenda: Action Forum (1.5 to 3 Hours)**

1. Social time: Refreshments, Entertainment, Gallery Walk (time to read summaries from each circle posted around the room)
2. Welcome and Introductions
  - Moderator welcomes everyone and introduces sponsors.
  - Review agenda.
  - Talk about the study circle effort in the community.
  - Thank facilitators and other key volunteers.
3. Reports From the Community Conversations
  - A representative from each conversation circle speaks for a few minutes.
  - Be sure to include vision and community assets.
4. Moving to Action
  - Moderator identifies the most common themes for action from all community conversations, and invites participants to sign up for an action group or task force.
  - People choose action groups, and sign up.
  - Leader for each action group collects names, and sets a date for the first meeting.
  - People sign up for facilitator training, or to help organize future community conversation.
5. Closing remarks
  - Closing remarks. (Describe how the action efforts will be tracked and tied to further organizing.)
  - Next steps. (Include plans for another round of conversations, celebration, or check-in meeting.)

## INFORMATION SHEET

The following information can help us understand what challenges and opportunities we have in our community, especially related to active living.

### **Is obesity a major issue in the Bronx?**

- Nearly 2 in 3 adults<sup>1</sup> and 3 in 10 public high school<sup>2</sup> students are overweight or obese. In the South Bronx, nearly 4 in 10 public elementary school students are overweight or obese.<sup>3</sup>
- Blacks and Latinos have higher levels of obesity than whites in the Bronx.<sup>1</sup> Among youth, Black and Hispanic youth are 3 times as likely to be obese than whites<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 4 adults living in the Bronx rated their own health as fair to poor, with Hispanic or Latino residents more likely than other groups to rate their health as fair to poor.<sup>1</sup>

### **How active are Bronx residents?**

- Seven out of 10 Bronx adults report that they have exercised in the past 30 days, but only 6 in 10 adults meet the recommended 30 minutes of daily moderate activity.<sup>1</sup>
- Eight out of 10 Bronx youth do not meet daily recommendations for exercise.<sup>2</sup>
- Almost half of all adults in the Bronx watch three hours or more of TV per day.<sup>1</sup>
- Almost 6 in 10 adults in the Bronx report that they have walked or ridden a bike in the past month for transportation, but only 1 in 10 walk or ride a bike to work as the only means of transportation.<sup>1</sup>
- Almost 9 out of 10 adults climb at least one flight of stairs per day.<sup>1</sup>

### **Why is active living so important?**

- Lack of exercise is directly linked to obesity, which can lead to diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and depression.
- About 1 in 8 adults in the Bronx have been told by a health professional at some point that they have diabetes. This is the highest rate in NYC.<sup>1</sup>
- In adults, obesity is linked to a 2-4 year decrease in life expectancy. The younger the person is when s/he becomes obese, the more years of life are lost.<sup>2</sup>

### **Where are there opportunities for active living in the Bronx?**

- People who live in communities where they feel safe being outside and can walk or bike have better health. Also, there are studies that show that “active design” – the way we design our communities –can reduce our risk of obesity and chronic disease.
- The NYC Active Design Guidelines ([www.nyc.gov/adg](http://www.nyc.gov/adg)) includes a number of urban and building design strategies that encourage active living where people live, work and play. Below are examples of active design programs available to Bronx residents. Any organization or resident can ask for these programs in their community; however they must work with their local Community Board, property manager, and the NYC

Departments of Transportation, Parks, and Health to get most of these programs implemented.

- Active Recreation: Playstreets, Public Plazas, Car Free Sundays, Summer Streets
- Active Buildings: stair prompts and murals, bicycle parking, indoor and outdoor recreation space
- Active Transportation: Citi Bike Share, Safe Streets to Schools and for Seniors, Urban Art, Slow Zones
- There are 7,000 acres of parks in the Bronx – the greatest amount of parks land in NYC. The NYC Department of Parks & Recreation website ([nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org)) has information about locations, hours, and programming in NYC parks and recreation centers.<sup>4</sup> Also, the City Parks Foundation provides free and accessible arts, sports, education and community-building programs within NYC parks. Through its Partnership for Parks, they offer technical assistance in starting a “Friends of the Park” group, programming for “It’s My Park Day,” and Partnerships Academy Workshops.<sup>5</sup>

#### **What are the major barriers/concerns about living an active lifestyle in the Bronx?**

- Many gyms are too expensive. The annual membership fees for the NYC Parks Recreation Center is \$150 for adults (18-61); \$100 for centers without indoor pools. For seniors (62+), the membership fee is \$25 and youth (under 18) get in for free.
- From 1995-2009, the most dangerous intersection for bicyclists and pedestrians in the Bronx was Webster Avenue and East Fordham Road. The intersection of Grand Course and East 183<sup>rd</sup> Street is the third most dangerous intersection for child pedestrians and bicyclists in NYC.<sup>6</sup>
- According to the 2010 Bicycle Report Card,<sup>7</sup> more than half of bicyclists reported the number one problem with bike lanes was cars blocking or driving in them.
- The Citi Bike share program is scheduled to finally launch in May 2013. There will be 10,000 bikes at 600 stations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. There have been no discussions of this program coming to the Bronx.
- As of 2011, the Parks Department had only 9 Park Enforcement Patrol officers in the Bronx. In comparison, there are 34 officers in Manhattan, 13 on Staten Island, 12 in Queens, and 10 in Brooklyn.<sup>8</sup>
- In 3 out of the 4 years between 2004 and 2007, the Bronx received the lowest amount of capital funding for parks out of any other borough.<sup>9</sup>
- Some parks have “dog runs,” dedicated fenced in spaces for dogs to play. In the Bronx, there are 6 parks with dog runs, with an additional 18 areas where dogs are allowed to be off-leash. In comparison, there are 29 dog runs in Manhattan, with 4 additional areas designated for off-leash dogs.<sup>10</sup>



- The Parks Inspection Program rates the cleanliness and maintenance of the parks. In July 2012, the overall condition of Bronx parks was found to be 76.5% with the cleanliness rating of 79%, while in Manhattan the overall condition was 84.1% and cleanliness was 90.2%.<sup>11</sup>
- New Yorkers for Parks issues a report card on the maintenance conditions of large (20-500 acres) NYC parks. Bronx parks (Crotona, Claremont, Soundview, St. Mary's, and Seton Falls) scored the lowest out of all of the boroughs, with Claremont Park and Crotona Park faring the worst of the five.

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<http://www.nycgovparks.org/park-features/parks-inspection-program>