

FROM THE GROUND UP: ACTIVE DESIGN AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNITIES IN NYC

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Active Living
Research

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OUTLINE

- **ACTIVE DESIGN**
 - BACKGROUND
 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- **CASE STUDIES**
 - INNOVATION HIGH SCHOOL,
HARLEM
 - KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS PLAY STREET,
BRONX
- **CONCLUSIONS + NEXT STEPS**



ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDELINES

APPROACH

- Multi-Agency & Multi-Sector Collaborations
- Evidence-based strategies
- Audience: urban planners, designers, architects, developers government agencies, policy makers

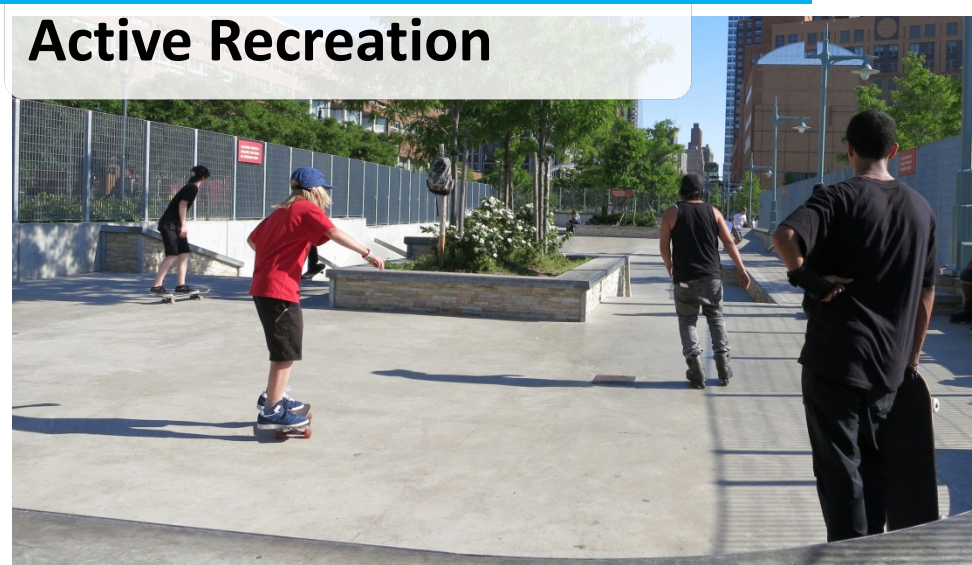


ACTIVE DESIGN: BASIC CONCEPTS

Active Transportation



Active Recreation



Active Buildings



Healthy Eating

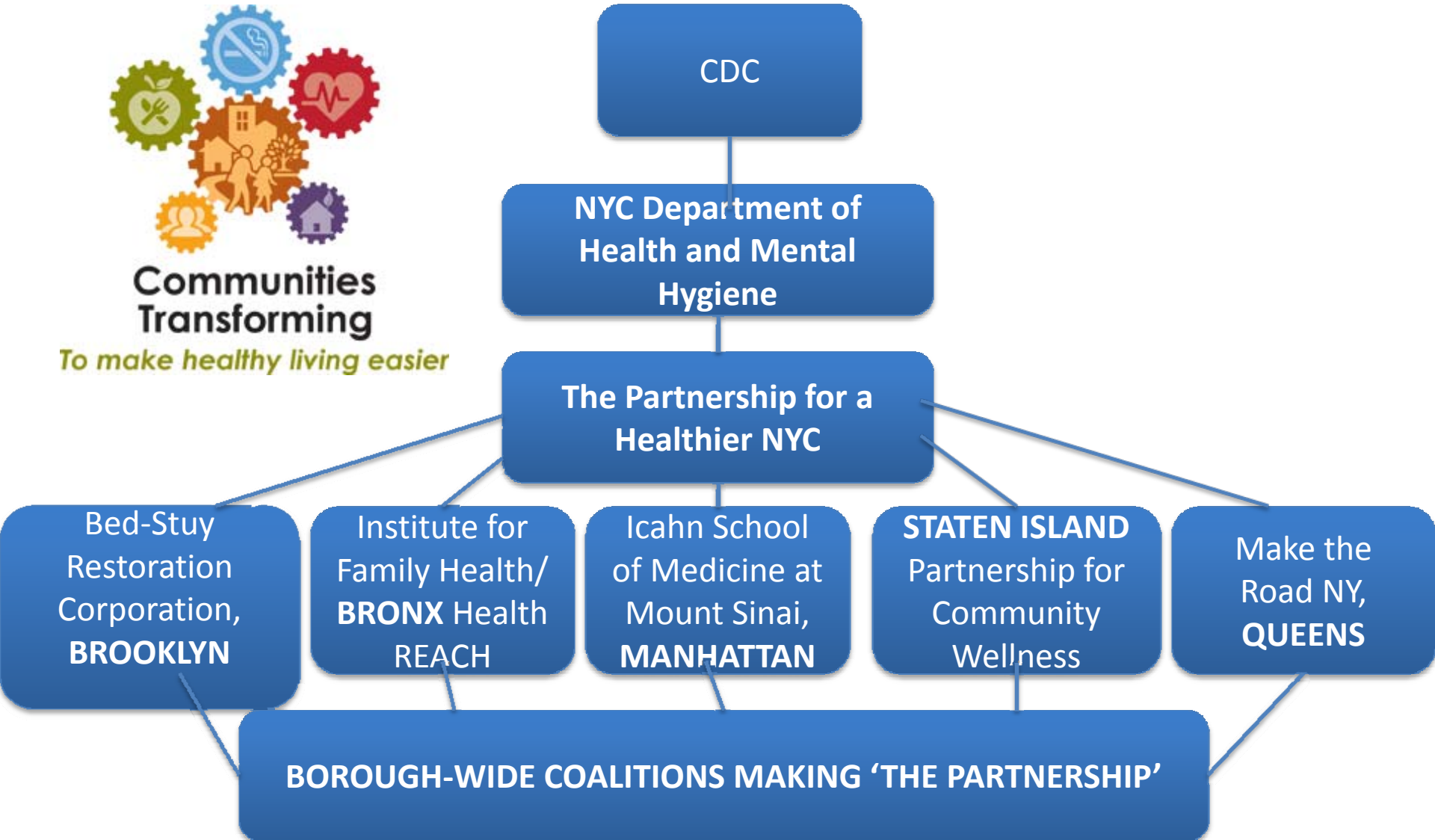


ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDELINES

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 4,000 professionals trained
- Over 25,000 copies of the Active Design Guidelines distributed
- Signing of Mayoral Executive Order
- Creation of Center for Active Design
- LEED Pilot Credit for Active Occupancy

WHO WE ARE



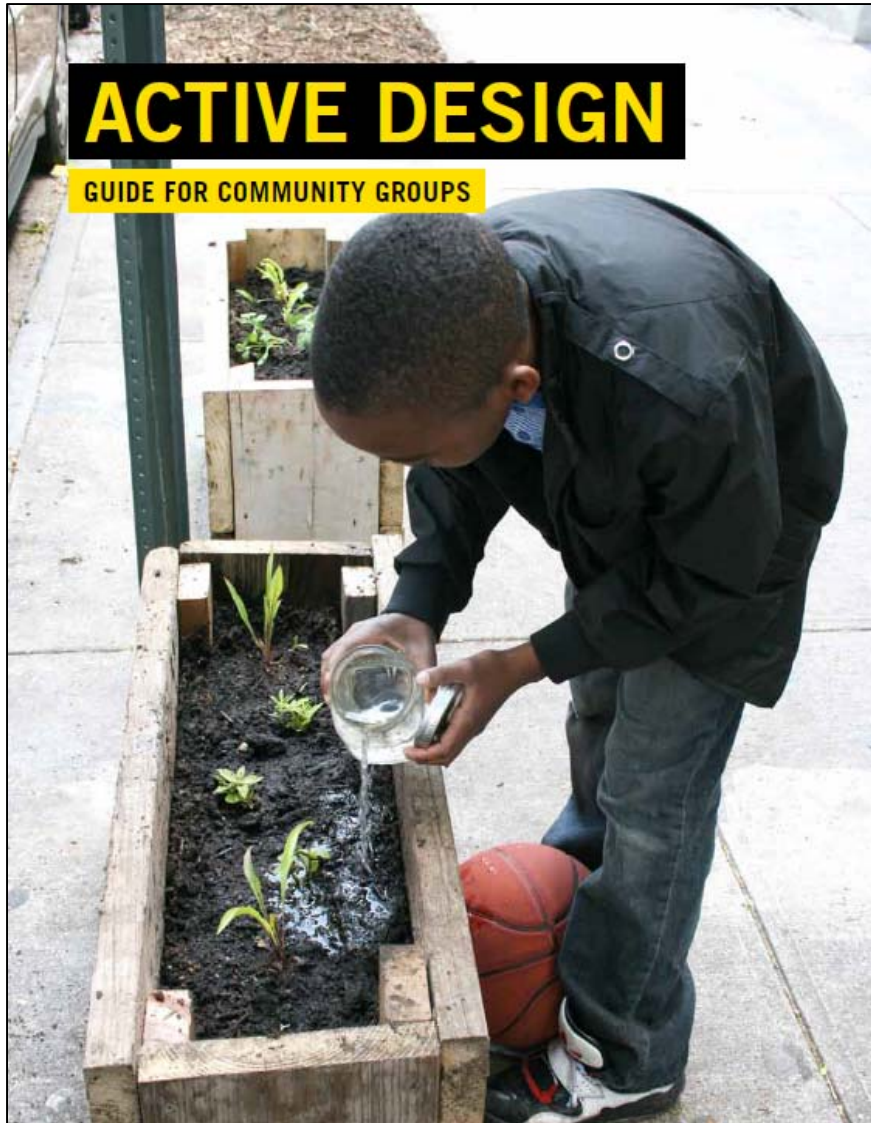
ACTIVE DESIGN COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

AIMS

- Education on links between built environment + active living + health
- Info on available resources
- Provide venue for residents to collectively envision healthier communities
- DOHMH + partners to learn about barriers to healthy living from community perspective to prioritize our efforts
- **Generate excitement!**



ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS



Active Transportation



Active Recreation



Active Buildings



Green Space and Nature



Healthy Foods and Beverages



GREEN SPACE AND NATURE

Benefits

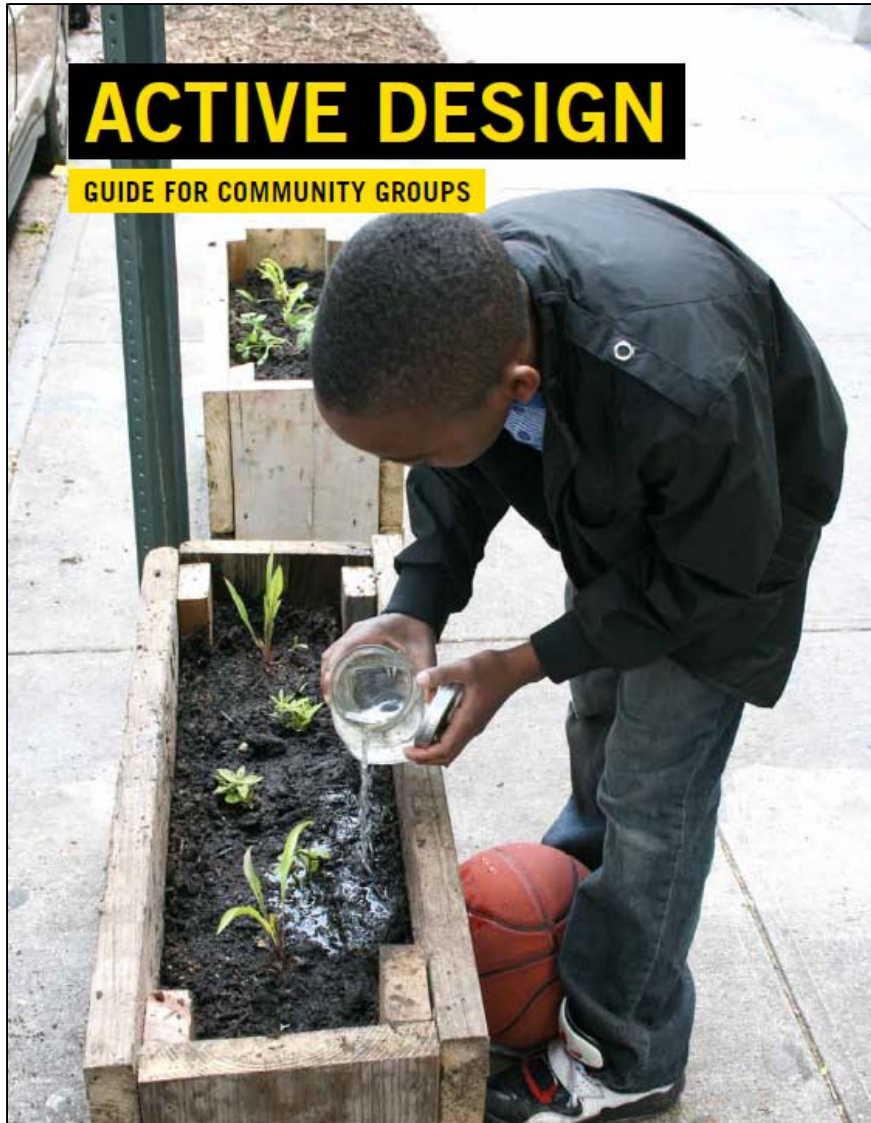
Exposure to Green Space and Nature promotes physical and mental health. Trees provide shade, encouraging people to remain active in warmer weather, and improve air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide. Natural waterways and fountains may also foster a sense of well-being.

- Trees and greenery are associated with less obesity and more physical activity.²⁷
- The presence of trees encourages walking by making sidewalks and streets more attractive, providing shade and lowering temperatures in summer. Trees also help separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic.^{23,24,25,27} More children walk to school in areas where there are trees.²⁶
- Trees help reduce air pollutants that can trigger asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Areas with more street trees have less early childhood asthma.²⁷
- Residents living in "greened" surroundings or in areas with trees report less fear and violence.^{28,29}
- Every \$1 spent on tree care in New York City (NYC) returns nearly \$6 in improved air quality, energy savings, less carbon dioxide and better absorption of storm water, besides making urban spaces more attractive.³⁰



Community residents and business owners plant flowers on Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, Chicago in a project supported by the local community board, a local school and UrbanGreenNYC (page 16).
Credit: Kenneth Hong

ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS



Active Transportation



Active Recreation



Active Buildings

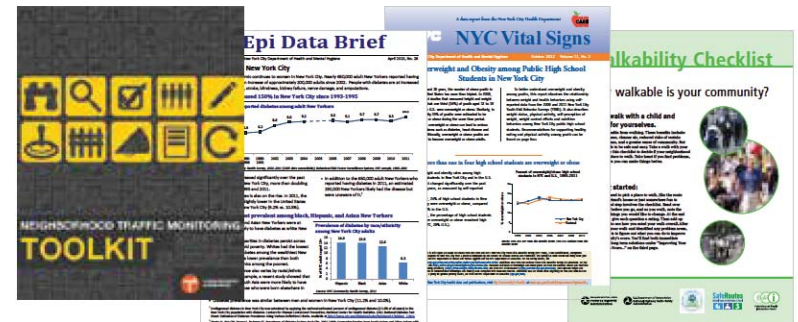


Green Space and Nature



Healthy Foods and Beverages

**MAKE THE CASE:
BUILDING COMMUNITY
SUPPORT FOR ACTIVE DESIGN**



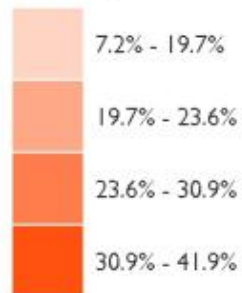
COMMUNITY PARTNERS + PROCESS FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Active Design workshops
- One-on-one meetings to discover intersections of interests
- Follow-up meetings, partnerships, and commitments
- **Develop and implement action plans**



CASE STUDY 1: INNOVATION HIGH SCHOOL, EAST HARLEM

Obesity*

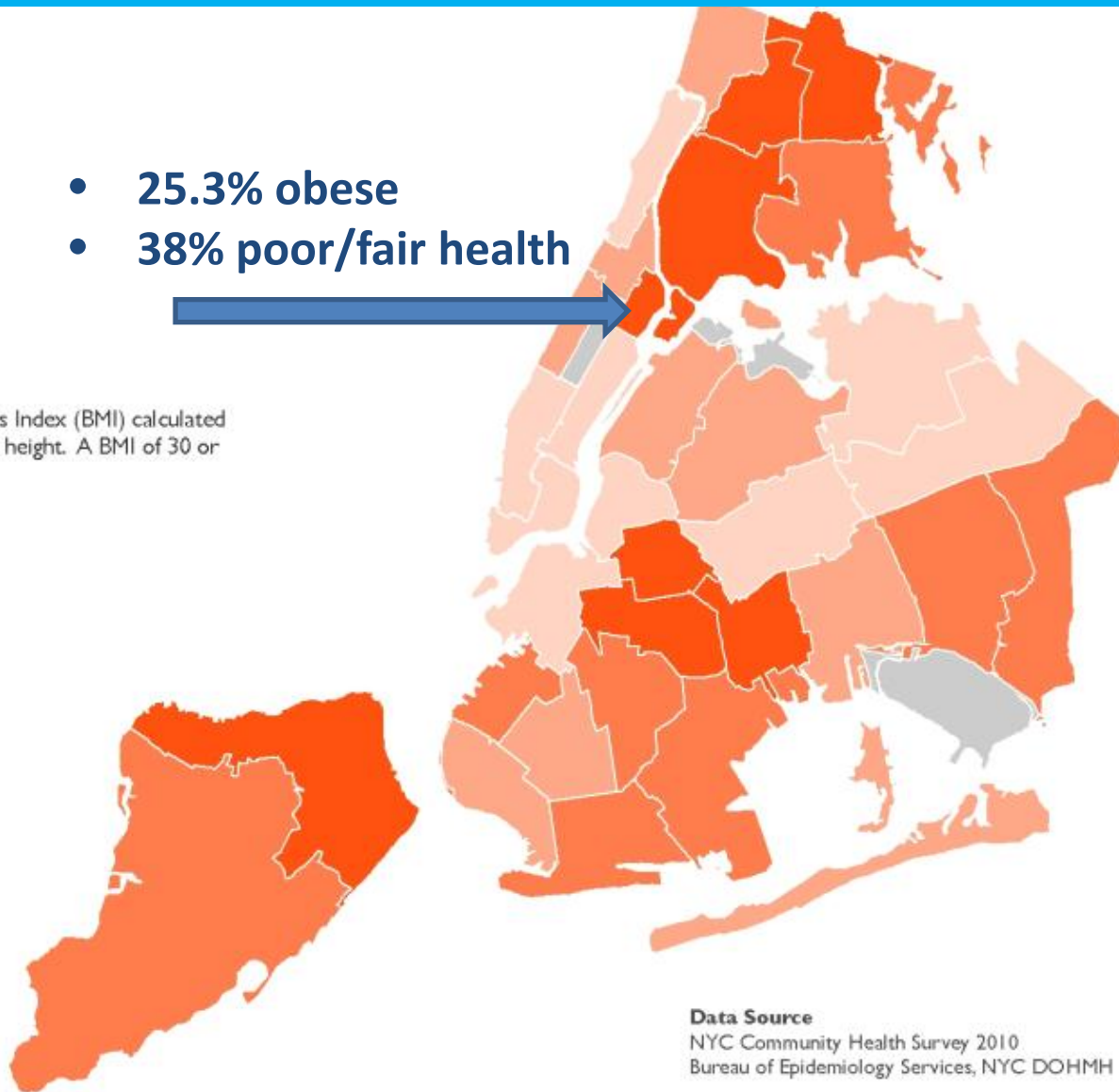


- **25.3% obese**
- **38% poor/fair health**



*Percentages are age adjusted.

Obesity is based on Body Mass Index (BMI) calculated from self-reported weight and height. A BMI of 30 or greater is classified as obese.



Data Source
NYC Community Health Survey 2010
Bureau of Epidemiology Services, NYC DOHMH

INNOVATION HIGH SCHOOL: STUDENT-DRIVEN CHANGE

THE SCHOOL:

- 90% East Harlem residents
- Educational model: Project-Based learning
- Director of Community Engagement = Champion!
- Group of students interested in “Doing Something!” in their community



ACTIVE DESIGN WORKSHOP:

- Student-led needs assessment of school spaces and community using assessment tool and photos
- Reporting out and selecting intervention



STUDENT-DRIVEN CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

IDENTIFIED KEY PROJECTS:

- Stairway mural to enhance stair experience and create awareness about stair use
- Art by water fountains to encourage water consumption
- Install art on unattractive fence around school
- Lights by basketball court so students can play into darker hours

STUDENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Conceptualizing design
- Implementing design
- Engaging student and school leadership
- Regular meetings to brainstorm future Active Design activities



STUDENT-DRIVEN CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT



STUDENT-DRIVEN CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT



STUDENT SURVEYS:

Pre-test: n=220

105 respondents (48%) reported not using the water fountain during the school day

Qualitative responses:

- Other Drinks Available / Preferred: "I always have soda in my bag, so there's no need to."
- "Very unclean" "Dirty"
- Water temp "It's hot."

STUDENT-DRIVEN CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT



CHOOSE

WATER

Tip: Use a
Reusable
Water Bottle



INNOVATION HS: RESULTS

STUDENTS REFLECTIONS ON

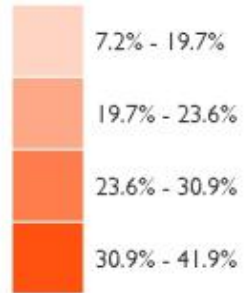
PROCESS:

- Enjoyed collaboration: “We were all really working together”
- Felt they had a voice: “It was for us, by us”
“We had a choice about what we wanted to work on in our community”
- Felt they were giving back
- Building community and safety: “Bringing people together” “Productivity” “Start trends” Keeping people from “turning to gangs.” “Peaceful” “Safety”



CASE STUDY 2: KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CENTER, BRONX

Obesity*

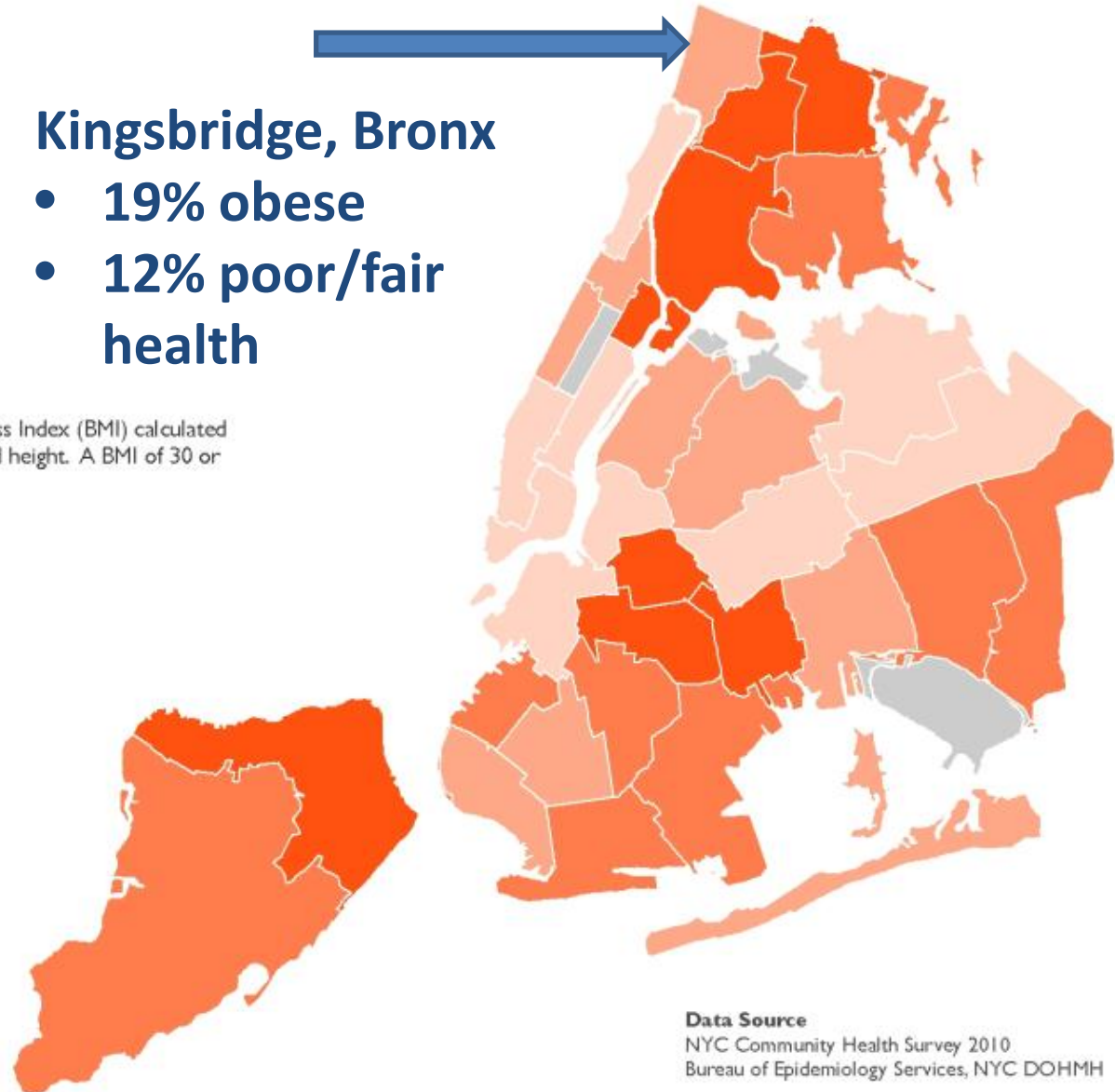


*Percentages are age adjusted.

Obesity is based on Body Mass Index (BMI) calculated from self-reported weight and height. A BMI of 30 or greater is classified as obese.

Kingsbridge, Bronx

- 19% obese
- 12% poor/fair health



Data Source

NYC Community Health Survey 2010
Bureau of Epidemiology Services, NYC DOHMH

KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS PLAY STREET

LACK OF AFFORDABLE, SAFE SPACES TO PLAY

- Lower income community within a wealthier community
- Local youth center at capacity
- Youth do not feel safe in the nearby parks, due to heavy police presence



KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS PLAY STREET

ACTIVE DESIGN WORKSHOP

- KHCC Youth Council conducted needs assessment of spaces for physical activity in community
- Discussion and selection of Play Streets as intervention and activities for the Play Street

COMMUNITY LED PROGRAM

- Activities developed and led by local youth
- Obtained funding to support the initiative



KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS PLAY STREET



**Structured activities:
Zumba, food demos and
climbing walls**

**Unstructured activities:
Arts + crafts, mobile
library**



KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS PLAY STREET



**Multi-sector collaboration:
youth-serving group, public
health, healthcare
providers, government
agencies**



PLAY STREET RESULTS

On average, 146 children attended the Play Street each week

The majority of daycare providers, parent/caregivers and passersby felt the Play Street program enhanced safety from crime (60%) and neighborhood bonding (64%)

Just one of more than 12 Play Streets operating in 2013



CONCLUSIONS

LESSONS LEARNED

- Rely on community members as the experts
- Work to ensure communities with highest health needs are aware of available resources
- Tailor approaches to audience
- Active Design and the community engagement approach is a good tool for crossing sectors with implications for addressing many community concerns

NEXT STEPS

- Develop Active Design Guide for Schools
- Connect input from community members to policy priorities

THANK YOU!

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR MAKING THIS WORK POSSIBLE.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Our partners working hard to transform their communities, neighborhoods and buildings in NYC
- The Partnership for a Healthier NYC
- NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

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QUESTIONS?

To download publications or find out more:

- nyc.gov and search “active design”
- www.centerforactivedesign.org