

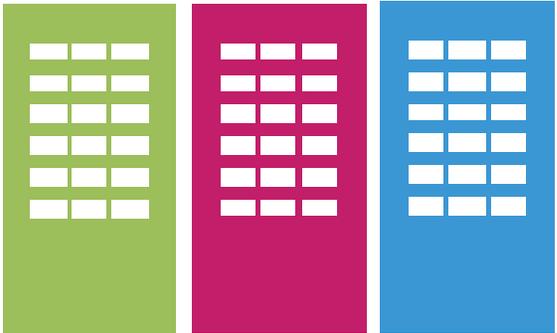
CONCRETE SAFARIS

WORK OUT YOUR ADVENTURE



Annual Report 2016

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Values

Concrete Safaris fosters positive youth development and rewarding adventures with a code of conduct.



V

Value, Respect, Responsibility

We respect ourselves, each other, the land, all living things within the land, and our personal and group belongings. We take responsibility for our personal and group actions.



A

Amicability, Fun, Friendship

We love to have fun outside every day!
We are friends through good and bad, helping each other succeed.



L

Listening, Learning, Leadership

We listen to each other.
We learn to build our skills, knowledge, and character.
We are healthy leaders, during and outside of workshop hours, in our community and beyond.



U

Uniqueness

We show the world our best selves.



E

Exercise + Eating Healthfully

We exercise regularly and eat healthfully every day to create positive energy within ourselves and to meet life's challenges with a clear mind and strong body.



S

Sharing, Safety

We share our ideas for the benefit of the group and all supplies available during workshops without greed or entitlement. We practice safety and are aware that what we do impacts those around us.

Letter from the ED & Chair

February 23, 2017

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2016 was a tremendous year of growth at Concrete Safaris.

The organization expanded programming for youth in East Harlem, and staff, volunteer, and board capacity grew exponentially. Concrete Safaris was led by 4 full-time and 3 part-time staff with assistance from 774 volunteers. City Surfers after-school program focused on health promotion, gardening, and outdoor play. Children (ages 7-12) went on weekly field trips and explorations as well as camping at Gateway National Recreation, Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island in May. In each of these outdoor activities, they explored nature, learned teamwork, and built skills, independence, and confidence. Concrete Safaris hosted 32 Green Exercise Days in 2016, which drew 2,496 neighborhood children. In June, JungleGym – our annual obstacle race and active living fair in East Harlem - was attended by 500 children and families. Outdoor Leadership Academy trained 68 interns (ages 14-24) in environmental health. Participants continued to learn and engage with their communities and families to be healthier through action and activity. Children were empowered by the decision-making and planning in our gardens, with JungleGym obstacle race design, and with exploration of the neighborhood and beyond, including bicycling, hiking and camping.

In June, Concrete Safaris established its first long-term office and education space, called Base Camp, at the East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action, a NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene building on 115th Street at Lexington Avenue. Programming and back-end operations were housed there beginning in July 2016.

Concrete Safaris strives to fulfill its mission to provide youth with the experiential education to become healthy leaders and environmental advocates for themselves and their communities. We envision a world where all youth have the opportunity to play and learn outdoors every day. The 2016 Annual Report demonstrates positive impact in a limited resource environment. While gun violence has increased in Jefferson Houses, where much of our outdoor programming operates, incidents have been moving away from our gardens – north, south, and west. A Safety Report will be issued later in 2017 to share those results.

We are looking forward to even more active growth in 2017 at Concrete Safaris and invite you to be a part of these adventures!

With Much Appreciation,



Mac Levine
Founding Executive Director

Sincerely,



Mandy DeRoche
Board Chair

Overview

Vision

We envision a world where all youth — even in the lowest resourced neighborhoods — have the opportunity to play and learn outdoors every day.

Mission

To provide youth with the experiential education to become healthy leaders and environmental advocates.

What We Do

Concrete Safaris creates healthy leaders through outdoor play interventions designed by and for children and youth.

Why

Our efforts focus in low-income neighborhoods where a lack of supervision and gear, and high-crime are the key factors preventing children and youth from leaving their homes for school, work, and play.



Supervision



Problem: Children in East Harlem may not have someone in their lives who has time or expertise in outdoor activities. For example, a parent who does not know how to ride a bike would not have the skills to teach a child to ride a bike, and may be less likely to purchase a bike as a result. A parent may not know that s/he can grow his or her own food in a NYC Housing Authority development, or may not have the knowledge, funds or supplies to start a garden. A parent working multiple jobs may leave a child at home with a sibling who is afraid of gun violence in his or her housing development, and therefore the child may not leave the apartment after school or on weekends.

Solution:

01 CS hires lead staff with 4-yr degrees in their fields of instruction.

Staff hold bachelors or masters degrees in wellness, physical fitness, agriculture, and public health, and participate in working groups and committees, conferences, panels, and other types of community-centered leadership opportunities.



02

Staff and interns represent children served.

97% of CS staff are people of color who grew up in low-income households, often in public housing.



03

Juvenile Justice

Over half of CS staff have a non-violent, non-sexual criminal history. CS is committed to increasing local employment opportunities and decreasing recidivism amongst youth offenders who act as role models in the community.



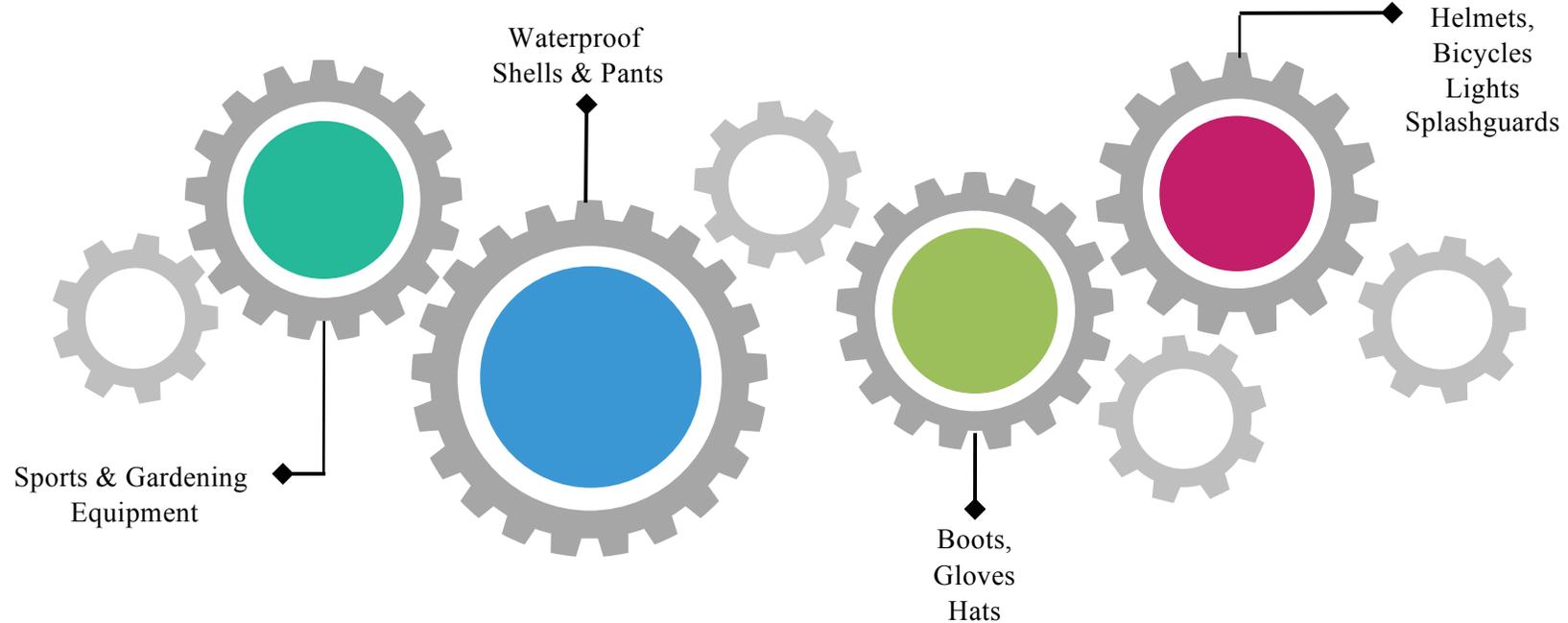
“Seeing the kids grow is a thrill within itself. Seeing them designing and giving input into JungleGym lets me know how excited they are to play outdoors. The speeches that they are putting together for Community Board 11 to secure the street closures for JungleGym get them to think more about community and what it takes to put on a community event. It’s like seeing a flower bloom.”

-- Christopher Hartsfield, Outdoor Play Coordinator

*Staff includes Concrete Safaris’ full-time and part-time employees and interns.

Supplies

Problem: Many children in East Harlem, a low-income neighborhood, do not consistently have access to clothing or supplies necessary to participate in many outdoor activities.



Solution: Concrete Safaris provides after school participants with equipment and supplies to level the playing field and ensure participation by all children whose families support outdoor play participation.

Social Justice

Problem: Many children and youth do not have access to positive leadership opportunities in East Harlem, do not understand the forces shaping where they live or how the built environment impacts their health, and do not have the knowledge or skills to talk about environmental health concepts or consider working in the field.

Solution:

01 Safety

Since 2014, gun-related incidents, including homicides, shootings, and shots fired, have increased in and around Jefferson Houses, where Concrete Safaris operates most of its outdoor programming. Concrete Safaris' gardens discouraged gun-related incidents as the incidents moved south, north, and west away from garden-based, community-centered activities. A follow-up safety report will be issued later this year.

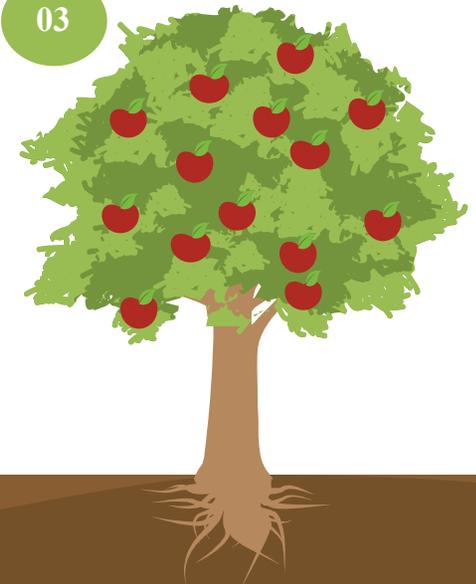
02 Urbanism

Children learn about the connections between city infrastructure and healthy eating and green space, conduct research around what changes they and the community may want to see in the gardens, and then commit to making those changes a reality.



03 Roots of Success

Through an environmental health certificate program, interns gain knowledge and skills to discuss key issues facing urban environments and increase their ability.



Four Key Programs

City Surfers



City Surfers After School

Concrete Safaris' after-school program's primary goal is to improve the health and fitness of East Harlem children. It currently engages 50 children for 17.5 hours each week at PS 83 and PS 182 in East Harlem.

JungleGym



JungleGym Obstacle Race

Through this annual obstacle race, held in East Harlem's Jefferson Park and across 3 city blocks, elementary school children transform outdoor spaces not traditionally used for play. Children participate in race design, construction, promotion, fundraising, volunteerism, and healthy competition.

Green Exercise Days



Green Exercise Day Field Trips

More than 10,200 2nd-5th grade children have participated in garden-based educational obstacle course field trips, held four times per year (seasonally), that involve gardening, urbanism, outdoor play, and environmental health.

Outdoor Leadership



Outdoor Leadership Academy Internships

This year, Concrete Safaris expanded its 6- to 20-week internship program for 14- to 24-year-olds from 49 to 68 interns throughout the year. The goals are to expose youth to environmental health employment opportunities, develop their leadership skills, and involve them in leading local children in activities.

City Surfers After School Program

Concrete Safaris' after-school program's primary goal is to improve the health and fitness of East Harlem children. City Surfers gardened, cycled, created health promotion videos, went on field trips, camped, designed and promoted JungleGym 2016, and led a Youth Empowerment Gardening workshop at the Just Food Conference.



Featured: Field trip to the African Burial Ground National Monument, Ice skating at Lasker Rink, "Look at me, I got a scooter" at the Annual Holiday Potluck Party, Distribution of vegetables and herbs from the gardens, Halloween, A family meal, Wheelbarrowing wood chips in the garden.



How would you describe City Surfers?

“awesome” “Fun” “active”
“Happy” ”great teachers”
“tiring”
“helpful”



What would you be doing if you were not in City Surfers?

“Be so bored”
”Homework”
“Play video games”
“Watch t.v.”
“Sleep”
“Eat”
“Whatever I want”



Parents say:

“great program, love that they go outside”

“motivates children more in the discipline of healthy eating and exercise and in their tasks”

“excellent”



City Surfers Program Evaluation

156 Days

70 City Surfers (ages 7-12) attended after school from PS 182 / 83 for 15-hours per week, 156 days per year from October – June. City Surfers was the only 5-day/week after school offered at both schools.



59%

of participants were ESL students, and 18% had an IEP to accommodate learning challenges. Homework assistance was provided for 30-45 minutes Monday-Thursday in a supervised environment.

The following pages demonstrate results from an external program evaluation conducted by environmental health pediatricians and masters of public health candidates at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

City Surfers Program Evaluation

City Surfers went on adventures and learned how to cycle through learn-to-ride instruction and tackling urban geography like hills, potholes, and sidewalk cracks 3 to 4 afternoons per week. City Surfers ended the school year by leading a community bike ride.



345 hours

Each City Surfer played outdoors for 345 hours during programming from October – June.

75%

Cycled to 96th Street on the East River Esplanade and back – 1.5 miles.



88%

Circled Thomas Jefferson Park 100 times.



63%

Cycled to, from, and around Randall's Island – 6 miles, while 50% circled Central Park and back at 7 miles.



City Surfers Program Evaluation

City Surfers after school builds skills, self-esteem, and accountability. In addition to getting outside and being active, City Surfers had better outcomes in the classroom compared to students who did not participate.



13%

City Surfers had 13% fewer absences than non-participants. East Harlem children had some of the highest school absenteeism in New York City.

44%

City Surfers demonstrated a 44% improvement in social-emotional skills compared to non-participants.



21%

City Surfers performed 21% better in math & science class than non-participants.



4

City Surfers created four health promotion videos on topics from food hygiene to sugar intake:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCua5F4rydD0jX32IeKZWbZw>

In an evaluation of the 2015/16 school year, City Surfers' performance was compared to non-participants in 2nd- 5th grades at PS 182 and 83.

City Surfers Program Evaluation

City Surfers learned to become global citizens as they explored their neighborhood, went on weekly field trips and camped at Gateway National Recreational Area.



82% Of City Surfers camped for the first time.

Weekly Field Trips Included:

Hiking Central Park

Sony Wonder Lab

Long Bike Rides

Walking Over the Brooklyn Bridge

Museum for the City of New York

Playgrounds & Gardens

Museo Del Barrio

Ice skating at Lasker Rink

Most children in East Harlem remain within a 6-block radius of their homes. Parents, family, and friends are the primary people who may influence where a child walks within those 6-blocks and beyond, but often they do not have the resources to expose their children to the world outside of East Harlem. Without an after school field trip or adventure, City Surfers would not have the opportunity to experience New York City's many neighborhoods, cultural institutions, or landmarks.

Camping At Gateway National Recreation Area

Each spring, City Surfers leave home – many for the first time without their parents – for the brave world of camping. In 2016, 27 children took a train, ferry, and bus to Staten Island, New York City for a 3-day, 2-night adventure they will remember forever.



Building Confidence

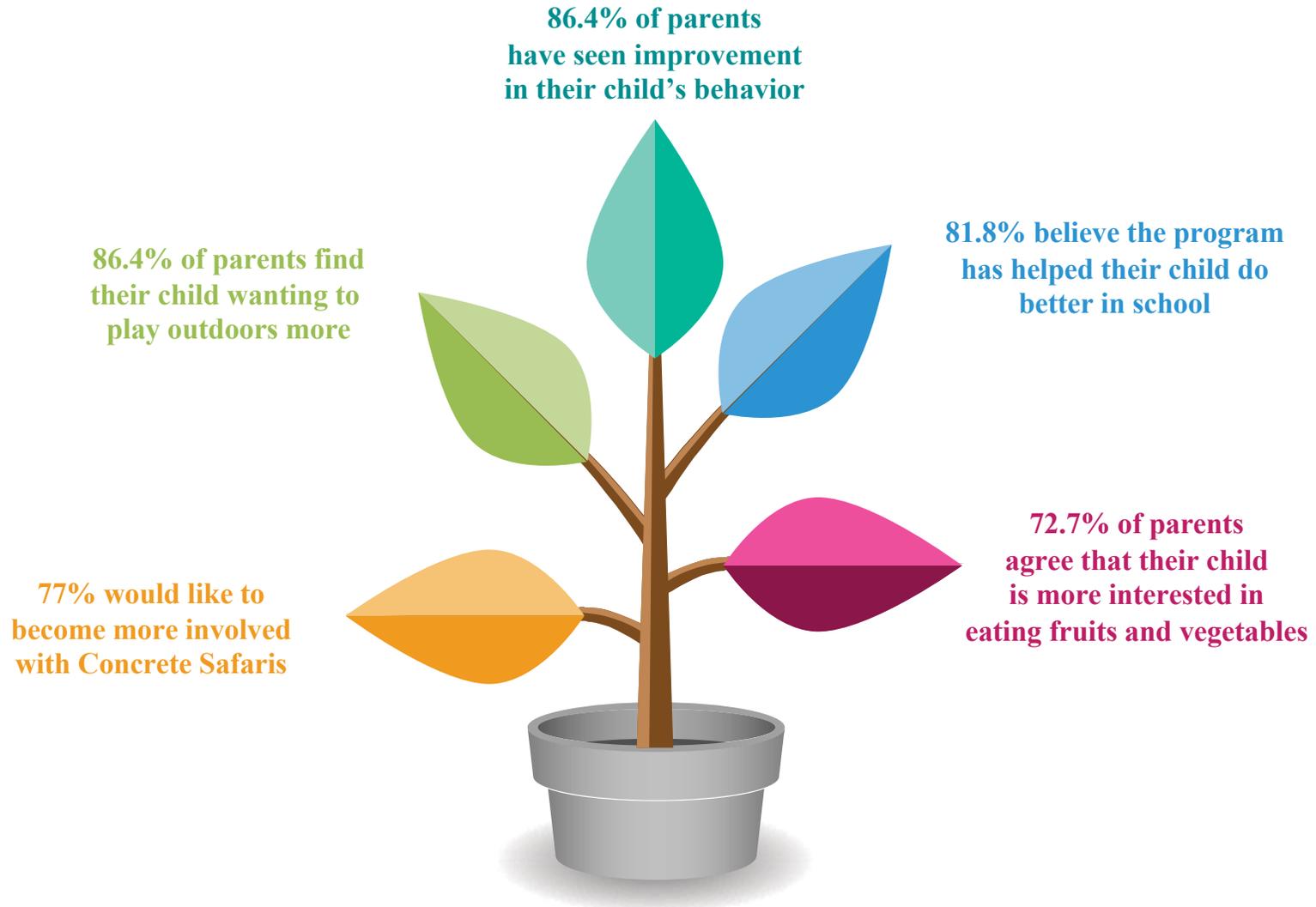
City Surfers toured Fort Wadsworth, learned how to build a fire in the rain and made their own s'mores .

Building Skills

Park rangers led City Surfers on a sea creature scavenger hunt, and Bike New York led a bicycle tour. Everyone learned to camp.

“It is important to go outside because I like to see the world change.” – Anonymous City Surfer

Parents Speak Out



100% of parents would recommend this program to others

Green Exercise Days

Concrete Safaris hosts 2nd-5th graders from NYC School District 4 at its gardens, Mad Fun Farm at Washington Houses and Jefferson Gardens at Jefferson Houses, where children learn about the connections between city infrastructure and healthy eating and green space, conduct research around what changes they and the community may want to see in the gardens, and then commit to making those changes a reality. Most participating teachers have returned with their classes for 10 or more field trips.



Partners:

NYC Housing Authority, Public Schools 7, 50, 72, 83, 102, 155, 182, & Amber Charter School, Bank Street Summer Camp, Central Park East II, Bartlett Tree Experts, CIT Group, Deloitte & Touche, Hardware NY, Harlem RBI, New York Junior League, Petsky Prunier, SCOR Reinsurance Company, Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center, TAG Young Scholars, YMCA.

Concrete Safaris increased community outreach through single-day events from 2,100 children in 2015 to 2,496 children in 2016.



Green Exercise Day Birthday Parties

This year children were invited to host their birthday parties at Mad Fun Farm and Jefferson Gardens. Outdoor Leadership Academy interns designed the menu, worked with New York Common Pantry to deliver healthy food and delicious cupcakes, and co-led activities for children and their families.

Featured: Birthday partygoers garden, open presents, and play games.

JungleGym 2016

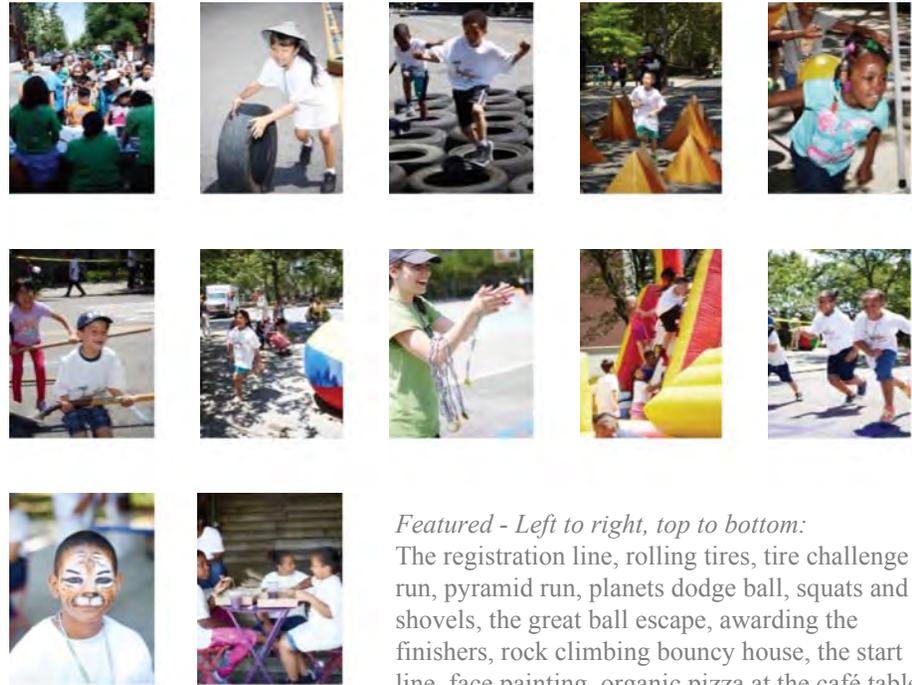
Through this annual activity held in East Harlem, elementary school children transform outdoor spaces not traditionally used for play. **500 children** and families participated in obstacle race design, construction, promotion, volunteerism, and healthy competition. The race took place across 3 city blocks and 4 courts in Thomas Jefferson Park. The Active Living Fair included bouncy houses, face painting, health promotion booths, and more!



“Setting up the JungleGym obstacle course was awesome and cool because we got to design the whole course and we worked with the after school teachers to set up tires and paint them. The park became a believable obstacle course!”

- Steven G.

“I thought it was a good opportunity for people to get together, have fun and be fit. When I was creating, so many things were going through my mind... and we had to work together to make it happen, I loved it! Different school districts even came to play and enjoy the race.” - Mickelson L.



Featured - Left to right, top to bottom:
The registration line, rolling tires, tire challenge run, pyramid run, planets dodge ball, squats and shovels, the great ball escape, awarding the finishers, rock climbing bouncy house, the start line, face painting, organic pizza at the café tables.

Partners: NYC Department of Transportation’s Weekend Walks Program, NYC Parks, the NYPD’s 23rd and 25th Precincts Community Affairs, NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, Tahl Propp Equities, Neapolitan Express, Boriken Neighborhood Health Center, Citi Bike, NYC Community Board 11, Applebee’s, Partnerships for Parks, Edible Schoolyard, Harlem Art Collective, New York RoadRunners.

Outdoor Leadership Academy



This year, 68 youth (ages 14 – 24) participated in a 6- to 20-week summer internship program. The goals were to expose teenagers to environmental health employment opportunities, develop their leadership skills, and involve them in leading local children in healthy activities. Interns complete a 4-module certificate in environmental health and science called Roots of Success.

Most important life skills learned according to the interns:

- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Public speaking
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Surveying
- ✓ Promoting health
- ✓ Contributing in my community
- ✓ Youth development
- ✓ Business skills
- ✓ Vocabulary
- ✓ Friendship
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Green jobs
- ✓ Bike repair
- ✓ Nutrition

Partners: El Barrio’s Operation Fightback, Getting Out & Staying Out, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, NYS Office of the District Attorney, NYC Housing Authority, NYC Department of Health

Outdoor Leadership Academy Outcomes

Outdoor Leadership Academy interns helped grow and distribute 2,000 lbs. of produce, led obstacle races in Playstreets, and participated in the DA's Night Out, NYPD's East Harlem Night Out, Harlem RBI Day, back-to-school fairs, & festivals, and spread the word about and hosted Concrete Safaris' birthday parties for children.



“Weeds are bad for plants”

“People actually like healthy parties”

“You have to water plants for them to take root”

81%



This internship enhanced my self-understanding and professional development in important ways

93%



I felt comfortable handling all assigned responsibilities

96%



Roles and assignments made me feel like an integral & valued part of the work environment

96%



I observed and/or participated in a full range of organizational operations and learning opportunities

Outdoor Leadership Academy Interns Speak Out



Brandon

Garden Program Intern

“The internship enhanced my development by making me better prepared for helping my community and using my skills to start a creative business.”



Corey

Garden Program Intern

“I’m learning and reconnecting with useful skills that I will utilize in my career path, most of which involves being patient with myself and a lot of planning. The impact that Concrete Safaris has made on me is visible. I never thought that an internship could have such a significant impact on the lives of others and myself. Working directly with children and the community has helped me become a better person in my daily personal life.”



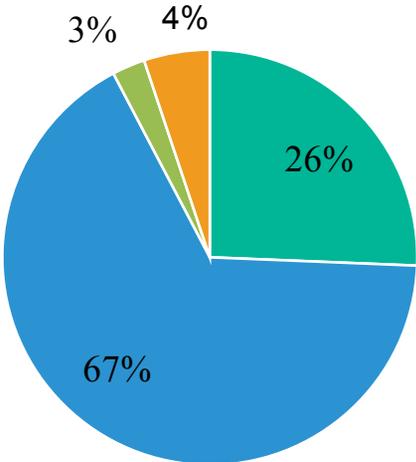
Kevin

Outdoor Play Intern

“My experience working as an intern has been amazing. Throughout the time working here I’ve learned the importance of staying physically active and eating healthy. It is an amazing feeling that I am part of something so special that’s positively influencing a youth’s life. Knowledge passed down from staff has changed my personal life in a positive way. I changed a couple of bad eating habits. I am now eating healthier and more active and I feel great!”

Demographics

70 City Surfers

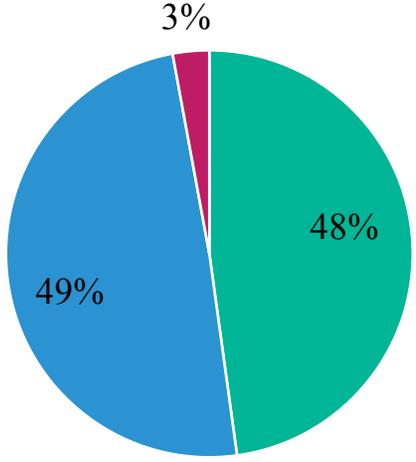


- African-American
- Latino
- Asian
- Mixed

 **44%**
Female Students

 **56%**
Male Students

72 Lead Staff & Interns



- African-American
- Latino
- Other

 **43%**
Female Staff

 **57%**
Male Staff



Partners



✓ **Education**

PS 83, 182, Amber Charter School, The Association to Benefit Children, Children's Aid Society, City-As-School High School, Columbia University, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Public Schools 7, 38, 50, 57, 72, 96, 101, and 102, Northeastern University, Pratt Institute, and The Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center.

✓ **Foundations**

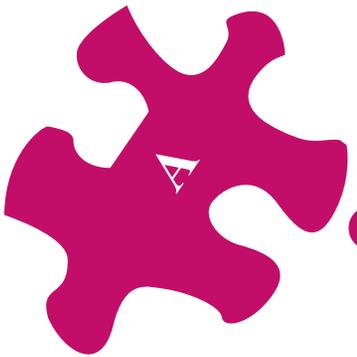
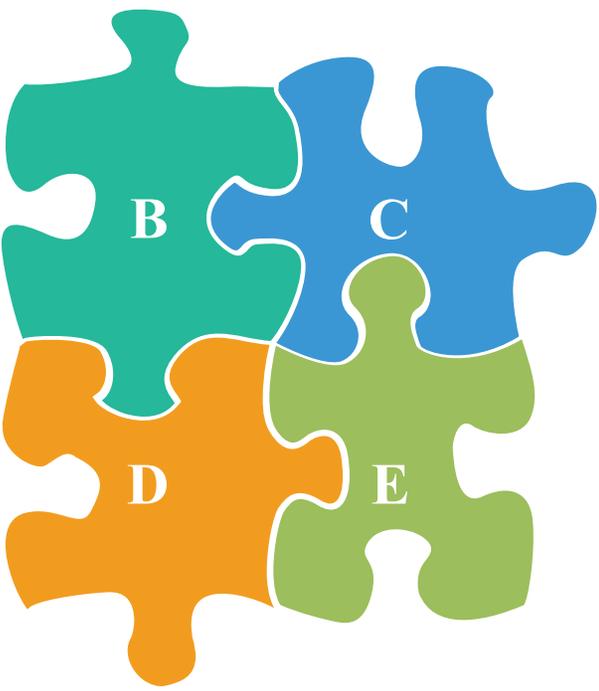
The Hyde & Watson Foundation, Levitt Foundation, The Morrison & Foerster Foundation, and The Pinkerton Foundation.

✓ **Non-Profit Organizations**

Appalachian Mountain Club, Architecture for Humanity – New York, BoardLead, El Barrio's Operation Fightback, Exalt, Friends of Thomas Jefferson Park, Getting Out & Staying Out, Harlem RBI, Harvest Home Farmer's Market, Junior League, Lawyers Alliance for NY, Lower East Side Ecology Center, New York Cares, New York Common Pantry, Partnership for After School Education, Partnerships for Parks, Transportation Alternatives, Union Settlement Association, and Youth I.N.C.

✓ **Corporations**

BlackRock, CIT, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, Deloitte, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, JRM Construction Management, Life Time, Lowenstein Sandler LLP, Petsky Prunier, PricewaterhouseCoopers, SCOR Reinsurance Company, Blumenfeld Development Group, Ltd.



✓ **Individuals**

774 volunteers donated their time in 2016.

✓ **Government**

FDNY, Fund for Public Health NYC, Manhattan Borough President's Office, Materials For the Arts, NYC Department of Health, NYC Department of Transportation, NYC Department of Youth, NYC Housing Authority, NYC Parks, NYPD, NYS Office of the District Attorney, and Office of Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito.



Concrete Safaris would like to recognize Levitt Foundation for its 4-year commitment to Youth Empowerment Gardens from 2013-2016, which helped transform City Surfers and our organizational strategy with Levitt's support through Concrete Safaris' longest-running grant to date.

Welcome to Base Camp

In early 2016, Concrete Safaris was one of 6 non-profit organizations selected to move into the East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Center (formerly District Public Health Office). In June, after 8 years operating grassroots out of our backpacks and donated spaces, the organization moved into its first indoor home, affectionately called Base Camp.



OFFICE & EDUCATION SPACE

Staff and participants now have an indoor place to work, learn, and play in a space that was designed to feel like a treehouse.



WORKSHOPS & TRAININGS

Children & youth participate in workshops & trainings in shared spaces throughout the building.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Families are invited to regular events like our annual holiday party.

Partners: New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene and Center for Health Equity, Open Architecture / New York, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, and The Hyde & Watson Foundation.

Team Concrete Safaris



Dave, Denis, Matt, and Mandy are all smiles after this year's grueling hot race. Not pictured: Fred.

For the past 5 years, racers have competed in the NYC Triathlon on behalf of Concrete Safaris. This year, the racers all finished the race and collectively raised over \$10,000. The NYC Triathlon was the first triathlon that all team members had ever done. It was so hot the day of the race that the producers shortened the run to 5-miles, but Team Captain Dave Adler still ran the full 6.2 miles anyway. Way to go Dave!

Partner Spotlight

Concrete Safaris is made possible because of a terrific group of partners that have contributed their many talents and resources to children's outdoor play. Here's what they have to say about working with our team...



Heaven B.

City Surfers Fifth Grade Graduate (4 years of participation)

“I liked Concrete Safaris because I was able to express my inner true beauty. My experience was that I learned how to plant and how to ride a bike for a long time, and how to work with others.”

Follow up: Heaven is now a bi-monthly volunteer on Field Trip Fridays as a 6th grader.

Featured: Heaven (right) graduated from the 5th grade in June 2016.

Caitlin Falvey

Partnership for a Healthier Manhattan Coordinator, Department of Population Health Science and Policy, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

“The Partnership for a Healthier Manhattan has enjoyed supporting and working alongside Concrete Safaris since our inception in 2014. Over the years we have seen our funding put to use making beautiful, lasting environmental improvements to East Harlem's landscape. We value Concrete Safaris' commitment to youth leadership and civic engagement, and are proud to call them a partner in our ongoing community health work.”

Featured: Sinai & NYC Dept. of Health staff pitch in at registration for JungleGym 2016.



Partner Spotlight



Ms. Frances Castillo

Principal, NYC Public School 83

“Concrete Safaris has been a critical partner to our school community at Public School 83. They have empowered our students to understand the importance of healthy eating and the impact of physical activity. Mac Levine and her staff have played an important role in establishing a well-rounded program that also includes the social and emotional development of our students. Our students truly enjoy the program and look forward to participating at the end to the day.”

Featured: City Surfers pose after a prep session for the Just Food Conference.

Carol Santiago-DeJesus

Director of Workforce Development, El Barrio’s Operation Fightback

“El Barrio’s Operation Fightback is grateful for the relationship we share with Concrete Safaris. For the last several years, Concrete Safaris has been an innovative and dedicated worksite sponsor for dozens of kids in our Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), our Work, Learn, and Grow (WLG) Employment Program, and our Opportunity Youth Program. Participants rave about Concrete Safaris, particularly about the way that the organization has exposed them to new experiences. Such is the case with 16 year old, Daijon Burroughs, who is currently working with Concrete Safaris several hours after school. He says that he enjoys working with them because “it has taught me new skills like gardening and about the environment.” Further, he shares that the organization has also taught him “how to be a better big brother to my siblings” since he has the opportunity to work with kids ages 8 through 12. El Barrio’s Operation Fightback looks forward to many more years of successful collaboration with Concrete Safaris in service to our community and our youth.”

Featured: An OLAIntern and SYEP participant teaches a garden visitor how to plant.



Partner Spotlight

Kathy Garofalo

Recreation Specialist/Educator, Gateway National Recreation Area

“Gateway National Recreation Area was pleased to welcome Concrete Safaris to our Staten Island Campground at Fort Wadsworth. Together with BikeNY, our adventure began with biking, seining at the beach, fort tour and hike, along with lots of games. Demonstrations included, how-to-camp, set-up a tent, and campfire safety were very exciting. Urban overnight camping was an important experience for the group, as they learned how to appreciate being in nature and away from technology. In 2016, the National Park Service celebrated its Centennial, and we are happy to have shared the celebration with your youth!”



Featured: Four City Surfers smile after setting up their tent for the night at Fort Wadsworth.



Nick Miner

Land and Water Conservation Fund National Campaign Representative, The Wilderness Society

“You don’t have to travel across the country to Yellowstone or Grand Teton National Park to experience the outdoors and enjoy our amazing park system. Concrete Safaris is one of the reasons why, as they do an amazing job helping to increase access to the outdoors, support local youth, and teach vital life skills in addition to being a strong supporter of the Land and Water Conservation Fund – our country’s most important conservation program that supports parks and open spaces. Simply put, Concrete Safaris is playing a pivotal role in helping the next generation of Americans access and enjoy our wild places.”

Featured: ED Mac Levine, Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior Sally Jewell, and The Trust for Public Land’s Senior Legislative Representative Joel Pannell

Board & Advisors

Concrete Safaris has vibrant leadership

..... Board of Directors

Chair Mandy DeRoche, Assistant Attorney General,
Environmental Protection Bureau, Office of the New
York State Attorney General
Vice Chair Jill Bentley, MPA
Secretary Michelle Ramos-Lopez, MPH, Program
Manager, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
Treasurer Richard H. Mead, Retired Officer, Federal
Reserve Bank of New York
Lance Dunbar, Global Search Solution Lead, Google
Courtney Fukuda, Product Strategist, BlackRock
Mac Levine, MPH, Executive Director

..... Youth Advisory Council*

Ysabelle
Papa
Omar
Alex
Mickelson
William
Julia
Ezekiel
Alyssa

*Last names withheld for children under age 12.

..... Advisory

Leslie Boden, MSUP, Community Health Planning Consultant
Elizabeth Bradley, Director of Partnerships and Business Development, The Foundation Center
Sandra Gittens, Retired Principal, PS 102
Vanessa Hefa, Third Grade NYC Public School Teacher
Liz Hopfan, Executive Director, Free Arts NYC
Gary Lynn, Managing Director, Morgan Stanley
Malisa McCreedy, AICP, Transportation Division Manager, City of Portland, Oregon
Perry Sheffield, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Departments of Pediatrics and Preventative Medicine, Deputy Director,
Federal Region 2 Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit, Global Health Senior Educator, Arnhold Institute of
Global Health, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Youth Advisory Council

The Youth Advisory Council is a group of dedicated children and youth who serve as the voice for their peers at community events and for political activities.



Community Board 11 Presentation

City Surfers pitched Community Board 11 to close three city streets for JungleGym 2016. Approval was given!



Just Food Conference

City Surfers led a Youth Empowerment Gardens workshop at the Just Food Conference for a room full of teens and adult educators in March.

Participants practiced public speaking, wrote presentations, and learned how to work as a team. Children met on Wednesdays to plan and promote JungleGym, Concrete Safaris' annual event. This included meetings with NYPD, community board committees, small businesses, and key partners to plan outdoor activities for families, friends, and neighbors. They also met after 6 p.m. and on Saturdays to work on special projects in the community.

Lead Staff

Our full-time staff provide thirty years of youth development experience in outdoor play and education.



Mac Levine, MPH

Founding Executive Director

Ms. Mac manages operations and leads the team with her strong vision of experiential education's power to help children grow as healthy leaders.



Christopher Hartsfield

Outdoor Play Coordinator

Mr. Chris manages all cycling and fitness programming, including our annual obstacle race and active living fair, JungleGym. He also directs staff and internship training.



CheVon Cooper

Garden Program Specialist

Mr. Che oversees all garden programming at Mad Fun Farm and Jefferson Gardens, Concrete Safaris' gardens in East Harlem. He also directs internship training.



Runelvi De La Rosa

Health Promotion Specialist

Ms. Runelvi is responsible for health promotion workshops, social media, and outreach to schools and community groups in East Harlem and the Greater New York City area.

Get Involved



Concrete Safaris, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, operates thanks to the generosity of individuals, corporations, government, and foundations. Make a 100% tax-deductible donation in support of growing healthy leaders and environmental advocates by:

Mail: Concrete Safaris, 158 East 115th Street, Suite 144, New York, NY 10029

Email: [info @ concretesafaris.org](mailto:info@concretesafaris.org) to donate stocks or to make an in-kind donation of fitness, gardening, or office supplies

Online: www.concretesafaris.org or www.junglegymrace.com

Services Needed: Signage, web design, Twitter and other social media support, outreach (participant recruitment, follow up, and new supporter connections), administrative & bookkeeping, legal, accounting, fundraising & grant writing, donation manager, computer repair and other IT support, cleaning – office, storage, garden maintenance, video production, program evaluation and alumni outreach, and TLC for the ED and staff (massage, healing working).

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