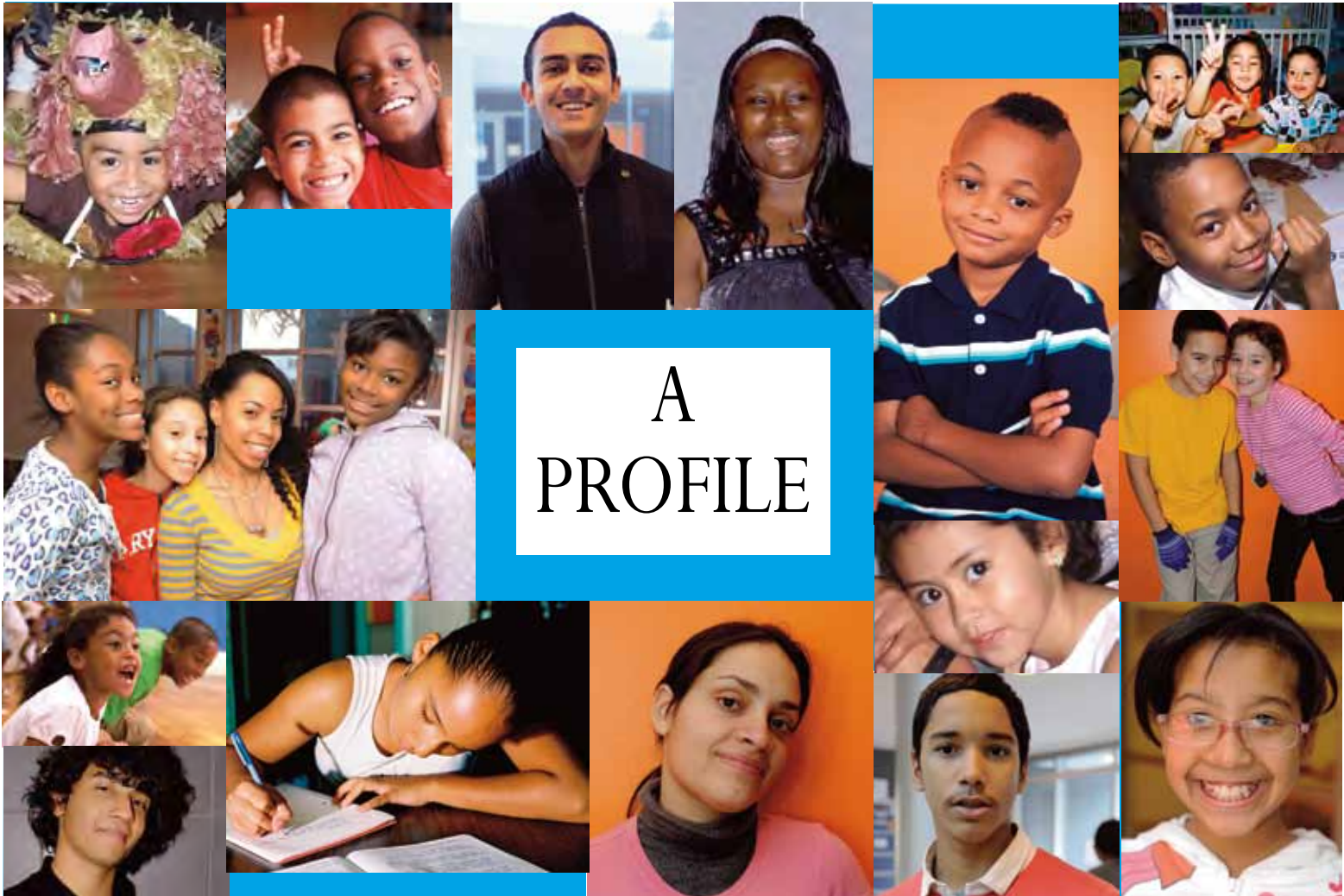




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# BRONXWORKS CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS

“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

These words from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt embody the hopes and aspirations of children, and they gain special meaning in places like the South Bronx, a 26-square-mile area, where more than one-third of its 500,000 population are 18 years of age or younger.

The South Bronx has been a place that produces great people in a host of fields, including the arts, business, entertainment, and government service. The success realized as adults by the likes of Sonia Sotomayor, Ivan Seidenberg, Jennifer Lopez and Colin Powell began in their formative years in the South Bronx as children. Their experiences—and those of thousands of other lesser known successful adults—affirm the belief that the creation of a solid foundation for a child will insure her or his success as adults.

The South Bronx faces great challenges. *Keeping Track of New York City Children*, a publication that looks at a host of indices pertaining to young people and their families, paints an extremely bleak picture for many of the area’s neighborhoods. They are characterized by low-performing schools, high rates of adult joblessness, sub-standard post-secondary education in many

families, and an economic malaise that is further undermining the communities’ social fabric. However, amidst crisis and despair are institutions that create opportunities to overcome these and other challenges.

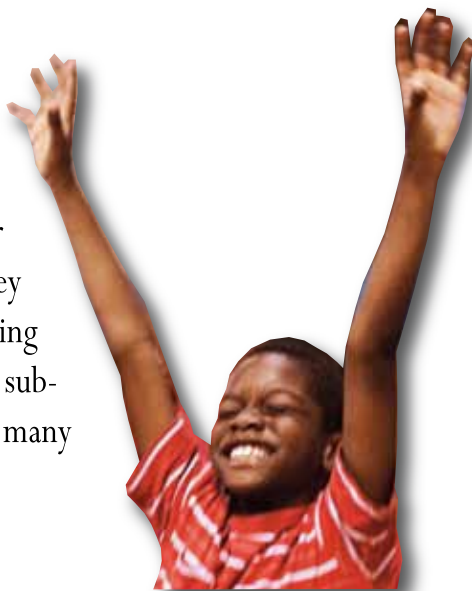
BronxWorks (formerly the Citizens Advice Bureau) is such an institution. Founded in 1972 in the Morris Heights section of the South Bronx, we have been working with children and young people since 1989, when we established our first after-school and summer camp program. Through the years, we have expanded our scope of services to offer a continuum of support for young people from the pre-school through the pre-college years.

Our programs for young people now touch the lives of thousands throughout the South Bronx. Whether it is pre-school children preparing for kindergarten or high school youth preparing for college, BronxWorks is there to offer a guiding hand.

Our efforts have achieved significant results that have been documented by independent evaluations and participant surveys. Those who have benefited from our work have provided inspiring testimonials. Indeed, we have created vehicles that “can build our youth for the future” and instill the confidence that enables them to believe in themselves.

What follows are highlights of our children and youth initiatives over the last year. The data offers hard facts and the quotes from the young people we have engaged will touch your hearts. In the process, we hope you will join us as we create pathways for successful futures.

Carolyn McLaughlin  
Executive Director



## Services for Pre-Schoolers and Families

Our early childhood services — the Early Childhood Learning Centers (ECLC), Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), and Concourse Even Start — are designed to lay the foundation for children’s academic success. These programs have produced results in communities where many families lack strong literacy skills.



### The Early Childhood Learning Centers (ECLC)

provide pre-schoolers with a quality learning experience that is both comprehensive and up-to-date. Using the HighScope curriculum, they encourage the social, cognitive and educational development of each child through the vehicle of play and creative expression.

### Accomplishments & Highlights:

- Since its inception, the ECLC has helped nearly 300 children make smooth transitions into kindergarten and first grade.
- In January 2009, the centers received accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the equivalent of a gold star of approval, that confirms our position as a leading provider of youth development programming.
- Data from the 2009 client survey shows that as a result of attending the ECLC, parents were more likely to facilitate educational activities with their child at home to further support their child’s classroom experience.

### Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

, our long-standing early-childhood development and parent education program in operation since 1992, has impacted 1,514 parents and 1,631 pre-school children between 3 and 5 years old. HIPPY prepares pre-school children for successful elementary school entry and provides parents with tools to be successful first teachers. In 2010, HIPPY served 78 families with 81 children, 95% of whom were recent immigrants from Botswana, the Dominican Republic, Mali and Mexico.

### Accomplishments & Highlights:

- Of the parents surveyed in 2010, 100% felt that their child was better prepared for kindergarten as a result of HIPPY.
- A 2010 evaluation conducted by HIPPY USA, the national body that certifies all locally-based HIPPY programs and provides staff development opportunities, cites that HIPPY children are better behaved, more used to school routines, more engaged, and better prepared for kindergarten overall than their non-HIPPY classmates.
- At the end of the 2010 cycle, 85% of HIPPY parents reported that they regularly read to their children and facilitated educational activities for them in the home as opposed to 53% at the beginning of the cycle.



**Concourse Even Start** program is a family literacy initiative that works closely with Latin American and West African mothers of children aged 3 to 8 who possess little or no formal education and wish to learn English and to become acclimated to American culture. Even Start offers workshops on improving and strengthening parenting skills, as well as educational activities designed to help the parents to more closely interact with their child. Family educators visit the families at home for two hours per month to reinforce what is learned in the workshop setting.

**Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- 92% of adults enrolled during the 2010 program year demonstrated improvement in English language literacy proficiency, compared to 76% in the 2009 program year.
- 95% of the elementary school aged children enrolled in the 2010 program year were promoted to the next grade.
- 63% of the pre-school children improved their listening or expressive communications skills, compared to the 50% statewide standard for participating Even Start pre-school youngsters.



**Services for Elementary School-Aged Children**

Services offered to elementary school-age children include the Project Achieve and Express to Success programs. These programs provide children aged 6 to 12 with comprehensive after-school and summer camp services that support and expand on what is learned in school in a safe, nurturing environment.

**Project Achieve and Avenue St. John** are two programs where, for over two decades, after-school and summer camp services have been a staple at BronxWorks. Our extended day and summer camp services provide reading, writing, math and technology skills enrichment assistance to 110 children each year, aged 5 to 12, through stimulating, hands-on activities that augment the daily classroom experience. Activities focused on fitness and nutrition, sponsored by the Food Bank for NYC, are also a key part of the programming.

**Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- 100% of the parents said their children always like coming to the program.
- 100% of the parents said Project Achieve staff members discuss their child's growth and behavior in a helpful way.
- 96% of the children said they always or usually like coming to the program.



**Express to Success After School Program at PS130** provides tutoring and homework assistance services to students who attend PS 130 which is located in the Longwood section of the Bronx. In addition to tutoring and homework assistance, students are provided with arts and culture-related activities as well as theme-based projects that support what they learn during the regular school day. During the 2009-2010 school year, the program served 272 children.



#### **Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- 100% of enrollees were promoted to the next grade.
- Responding to the growing obesity ratio among the youth, a running club was created with the New York Road Runners Association. Since its implementation, staff and students have reached 4,945 miles of their 5,500-mile goal, resulting in increased energy and self-discipline in the classroom.
- 81% of participants maintained a grade average of B or higher during the 2009-2010 school year.

### **Services for Middle School-Aged Youth**

With the idea that youth can only flourish when provided with a nurturing learning environment and viable resources, BronxWorks offers middle school teens academic and career exploration supports designed to help them further their success down the educational pipeline and hone valuable life skills. The Safe Passage program at the BronxWorks Main Community Center provide these supports to South Bronx teens.

**Safe Passage** has helped over 600 teens make a successful transition from middle school to high school and from early to middle adolescence since 1993. The program is designed to help a minimum of 70 youngsters per year, aged 13 to 15, improve their academic performance and sharpen important life skills. It encourages youth development through academic assistance, education counseling, high school application assistance, technology training, community service, and other activities.



#### **Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- In 2010, out of the 149 students enrolled in the program, 105 (or 70%) participants showed an improvement in their report card grades.
- 96% of the youngsters surveyed said staff members care about them.
- In the past year, 140 participants (94%) engaged in community service. Activities included cleaning up local parks and collecting canned goods for our food pantry. These activities helped youth learn the importance of teamwork and leadership, while providing them an opportunity for career exploration.

## Services for High School-Aged Youth

Picking up where our middle school youth services leave off, BronxWorks' services for high school-aged youth provide participants with academic and vocational resources designed to nurture and support teens as they transition into adulthood. While enrolled in these programs, which include a city-sponsored alternative high school, they receive lessons in building marketable skills that will enable them to obtain employment or a degree from an institution of higher learning. These programs serve over 1,500 youth per year.

### The Community School for Social Justice (CSSJ)

is a small public high school that was founded in 2002 through a partnership with BronxWorks, the Department of Education, and New Visions for Public Schools. BronxWorks offers after-school programs and internships, as well as college preparation and advisory services. A partnership with Hostos Community College allows CSSJ students to take college-level courses while in high school. During the 2009-2010 school year, 343 students were enrolled.

#### Accomplishments & Highlights:

- 85% of CSSJ graduates enroll in college, compared to 15% for the Bronx overall and 5% for low-income Bronx youth.
- In 2010, CSSJ received an "A" on the NYC School Progress Report administered by the New York City Department of Education.
- Of the 65 ninth and tenth graders enrolled at CSSJ, 100% were placed into community service projects, enabling them to learn the importance of leadership and community involvement. Projects included placement with organizations such as the Riverdale Neighborhood House and the food pantry at the PS 11 Beacon program.



**The Jill Chaifetz Transfer School (JCTS)**, first opened in 2007, is an alternative school supported by the NYC Department of Education, providing intensive academic support to students ages 17 to 21 who have fallen behind academically and helping them further their academic careers. While enrolled at the school, young adults receive specialized assistance to pass Regents exams and graduate with a traditional high school diploma. They also receive job readiness training, college placement assistance, and paid internships. In the 2009-2010 school year, 150 students were enrolled.

#### Accomplishments & Highlights:

- Of the 35 seniors that attended JCTS, 33 graduated (91%), and 28 (85%) went on to enroll into college.
- In 2009, 75 students worked as interns in the child-care, retail, office administration and other fields, enabling them to explore the world of work and develop hard skills.
- Since opening its doors, the school has served over 200 students and has boasted an average graduation rate of 88%.



**Excel**, launched in 2006, is a comprehensive program whose purpose is to help participants build confidence, develop marketable skills, plan careers, and obtain a GED, employment, or an internship. It takes a hands-on approach to working with 17-to 21-year olds who are out of school or unemployed. Participation in the program begins with a psycho-social assessment and the creation of a service plan. These enable participants to develop education, employment, and life skills goals, as well as help identify actions to overcome barriers, such as unstable living arrangements.

**Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- Of the 159 young adults enrolled in Excel in the 2010 program year, 114, or 72%, entered the program reading below the eighth grade level. Despite this, 100% (159 of 159) realized at least one positive outcome after enrollment, including transitioning from a pre-GED to a GED class, obtaining a GED, securing a job or internship, or being accepted to a college.
- Students who participate in the Excel program are connected to CAFÉ, BronxWorks’ college prep program (see below). As a result of this connection, over 150 students have entered college.
- On a 2010 client survey, 90% of program participants (160 youth) reported that they felt that Excel enabled them to make better choices about their future.

**Center for Achieving Future Education (CAFÉ)**

was created in 2004 for parents, middle school students who are making the transition to high school, and high school students seeking information about and applying to college. It ensures that disadvantaged youth are able to enter and succeed in high school and college, thereby helping them to fully realize their potential and become resourceful, contributing adults. Since its inception, CAFÉ has served over 600 South Bronx teens ages 13 to 21. In 2010, CAFÉ assisted 208 middle school students and 325 high school students with the high school and college application process.



**Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- Of the 135 eighth grade students enrolled in CAFÉ, 100% received acceptances from their first choice of high school.
- In the past year, CAFÉ has helped 90 high school seniors obtain college acceptances and \$407,000 in grants and scholarships.
- Among the scholarships that CAFÉ has helped students to obtain over the past few years were such prestigious awards as the Gates Millennium and the Posse Foundation Scholarships.



**The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)** is designed to provide low-income South Bronx youngsters ages 14 to 24 with an exposure to the world of work through job opportunities at selected BronxWorks locations and with other nonprofit as well as for-profit institutions. Funded by the New York City Department of Youth & Community Development, the BronxWorks SYEP initiative also provides participants with career exploration workshops, world of work orientation sessions, and links to other youth development resources. In 2010, SYEP enrolled 400 young people.

### **Accomplishments & Highlights:**

- Placed youth with 40 institutions based in the Bronx and other parts of New York City, including the Mary J. Blige Foundation, the Harvest Home Farmers' Markets, Best Buy, the Morris Heights Health Center, and Midtown Comics.
- In neighborhoods that have historically lacked access to banks, all of our SYEP participants established relationships with banks and received information on money management, thus enabling them to explore asset building and enhance their financial literacy.
- Each SYEP participant attended a college exploration workshop conducted by the BronxWorks Center for Achieving Future Education, which helps young people and their families with the transitions from middle school to high school and high school to college.



## Helping Young People Make Smart Choices

The neighborhoods served by BronxWorks are characterized by high rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including syphilis, gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and HIV/AIDS. Coinciding with the high prevalence of STDs are high rates of youth vulnerability, as evidenced by young people placed in foster care, families remanded for preventive services, and youngsters placed in detention or expelled from school. BronxWorks believes that meaningful change in the lives of vulnerable youth comes through a coordinated, integrated service approach that engages

the youngsters and helps their families to uncover as well as build on their collective strengths.

To insure that young people make smart choices, BronxWorks has a full-time social worker and a full-time family life specialist who offer individual counseling, head group sessions, link families to appropriate resources, and design or coordinate other activities to empower those at risk. A key aspect of this work is in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention.

In collaboration with the New York State Department of Health, BronxWorks maintains an HIV/AIDS peer education program. Over the last 12 months, it has trained 28 teens to be peer educators. They have presented at schools, hospitals, and other community-based institutions. The youngsters have underscored the need for teens to be aware of their options and to make informed, non-coerced choices regarding sexual activity.

## Accomplishments & Highlights

- Peer educators engaged 250 youth, offering HIV/AIDS counseling and providing information on safe sex practices.
- Peer educators have developed partnerships with three Bronx-based high schools and two borough-based colleges.
- A social media design plan has been completed that will enable peer educators to raise awareness and share information through Facebook, Twitter and the World Wide Web.



## Services for Youth of All Ages

At BronxWorks, we believe that in order to foster positive youth development, it is necessary to provide youth with a continuum of services that work in tandem to produce happy, well-rounded young people. Through the Betances Community Center, BronxWorks realizes this charge.

In 2009, BronxWorks teamed up with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) under the Cornerstone Initiative created by the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to provide services at the Ramon E. Betances Houses Community Center, located in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx.



**The Betances Community Center** serves youth from 5 to 21 years of age and provides year-round programming, five days a week, including school holidays. After-school activities range from homework help and tutoring, performing arts and visual arts-based activities, to leadership development opportunities, sports and fitness training and summer camp.

### Accomplishments & Highlights:

- In its first year of operation, the Betances Community Center provided youth services for over 500 South Bronx youth.
- During the 2010 program year, youth programming met or exceeded its average daily attendance targets for 5 to 12 year olds, 13 to 15 year olds, and 16 to 21 year olds.
- In the spring 2010, members of the center's Youth Council served as panelists at a town hall meeting on the state of the Bronx at the invitation of Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz, Jr.



## What BronxWorks Means to Our Youth



### High School Youth

*"Before I came here, I had no skills and no idea about my future. Through Excel I was able to get focused and get to work."*

James, Excel



### High School Youth

*"Last year (at previous school), I only went to school three days. This year, I was out of school only three days."*

Anna, Jill Chaifetz Transfer School



### Preschool Youth

*"Thanks to BronxWorks my child is now prepared for school."*

Rosa, HIPPY parent



### Middle School Youth

*"I like that there is someone here to help me with my homework and to help me figure out things I'm not sure about."*

Michael, Safe Passage



### High School Youth

*"If it wasn't for BronxWorks, I don't think I would have made it to college."*

Edwin, CAFÉ



### Elementary School Youth

*"I like that I can come here and feel safe."*

Malika, Project Achieve



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## The BronxWorks Children & Youth Department Programs

- **After School, Summer Camp, & Teen Programs; Early Childhood Learning Center; Foster Care Prevention; Even Start Family Literacy Program**  
1130 Grand Concourse — (718) 508-3193  
Contact: Elisa Istueta, Director
- **After-School Program, PS 130**  
750 Prospect Avenue — (718) 292-3452  
Contact: Adam Castillo, Program Coordinator
- **Avenue St. John Out-of-School Time Services**  
680 Southern Boulevard — (718) 508-3178  
Contact: Jeanne Tibbets, Program Coordinator
- **Betances Community Center**  
465 St. Anns Ave. — (718) 585-5040  
Contact: Lisette Nieves, Program Director
- **Community School for Social Justice**  
350 Gerard Avenue — (718) 402-8481  
Contact: Yvette Mosley, Program Coordinator
- **Early Childhood Learning Centers**  
1130 Grand Concourse  
1605 University Avenue — (718) 508-3056  
Contact: Marcia Lawrence
- **Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters Program**  
1477 Townsend Avenue — (718) 588-3836  
Contact: Judith Santos, Program Coordinator
- **Jill Chaifetz Transfer School**  
778 Forest Avenue — (718) 292-8547, ext. 1401  
Contact: Jillian Ireland, Program Director

