



Handout - Youth Voices on Asbury Park

In the Summer of 2012, researcher Dr. Alicia Raia-Hawrylak interviewed young people ages 11-16 on life in Asbury Park and the changes they were seeing in the city. Below is a sample of response Dr. Raia-Hawrylak received.

“Across the tracks is the better place where the beach is at. . .that’s what they really rebuilding, all the stores and stuff. There’s not a lot of gang violence over there neither. It’s more strict. They have kind of different rules and more cops, cops walking on the beach, cops walking on the ground, cops on bikes, cops on cars.”

-Kenny, age 14

“[On the East Side] They’ve been cleaning up, better roads, more plants, the sidewalk and stuff.”

-Gerald, age 16

“There’s different types of neighborhoods, like bad neighborhoods and good neighborhoods. On this side of town [the East Side] we live on is the good side of a neighborhood. . .A neighborhood is good if it’s peaceful and everybody knows each other and gets along. A bad neighborhood, always violence, you see mad stuff on the ground, litter and all that. On this side of the neighborhood is good. It’s peaceful, there’s no violence actually. The neighbors know each other and get along pretty good. The whole side is good. I really didn’t notice any gangs, violence, or anything.”

-Jamal, 13

“[Asbury Park] is a dangerous city. Shooting. Stay out of dangerous areas. Washington Avenue. By the beach it’s fine, that’s where it’s quiet.”

-Diamond, age 11

[East-siders] are the ones with the houses, they keep the neighborhoods nice, there’s not a lot of break-ins and stuff where they live at. It’s quiet, every time I go there whether it’s night or day, it’s quiet, it’s sometimes there’s a lot of traffic to go to the beach, but other than that it’s quiet. . .they don’t blast music all the time like they do over here. It’s calm and quiet. More by the beach, and towards Deal (north), is usually where the Caucasian, well, that’s where they live, and it’s more pleasant over there. I would like to live over there. The farther you go from the beach, the farther up into Asbury you go, people just go crazy.

-Terri, age 14