

BRONX WELLNESS AND QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE

BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT

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Executive Summary

The response to the Bronx Wellness and Quality of Life Survey was strong and enthusiastic. Bronx County has a population of approximately 1.4 million people. Ninety percent of the respondents self identified as Bronx residents. However, the survey was open to anyone who either lived or worked in the Bronx. Generally, a population of one million people requires a survey pool of 1,100 respondents for a +3 margin of error. Moreover, a population of 10 million requires a sample size of 1,110 for the same margin of error. Our office received over 1,900 completed surveys. We tracked participation by zip code, age, and Community Board to collect a representative sample of the entire borough. Our office also looked at socioeconomic trends such income, marital status and home ownership. Our office also inquired as to the length of residency in the Bronx. In this case, 64.9 percent of respondents have lived in the borough 20 years or longer. The sample showed a high degree of civic knowledge and engagement, 91 percent identified as registered voters. Many respondents stated they were able to name their elected officials. More than half were involved in community or local civic activities.

1) Bronxites' Views of the Borough

More than half the respondents referred to the Bronx as a good or excellent place to live. More people thought the Bronx was moving in the right direction rather than the wrong direction, 40 percent compared to 25 percent, while more than a third of respondents were undecided. Almost two thirds or 64.8 percent of respondents declared that their outlook on life was either positive or confident. The job market in the borough was rated poor by about half of respondents. Moreover, 60 percent stated they were unhappy with their current level of income. However, about the same percentage indicated their incomes covered their basic expenses and costs of living. It should be noted that about half the respondents, 47 percent, reported incomes above \$50,000. The cleanliness of the borough needs improvement, with only 41 percent of respondents rating their neighborhoods' "appearance/cleanliness" as either excellent or good. Although the Bronx is home to some of the city's largest parks and has the highest park to person ratio, only 48 percent rated the parks as excellent or good. Alternatively, 78 percent rated the borough's recreation centers as good or fair. Libraries were well regarded, with 60.4 percent rating them as good or excellent. Education was by far the top priority as the issue which needs the "biggest improvement for the wellness and quality of life in the Bronx;" over 700 people listed it as their top priority. Economic development was second with 388 people listing it as their top priority and crime/safety was a close third with 375 respondents listing it as their top priority.

2) Education in the Bronx

Approximately 1,200 respondents stated they were parents, or 63 percent of the sample. When our office isolated their results from the general pool, we noticed little movement which may be a reflection of their high level of participation in the survey. Schools in the Bronx were generally ranked "fair." However, the second most popular rating for high schools and middle schools was poor; specifically, 47 percent of the sample rated middle schools as "fair" and another 31 percent rated them as "poor". Similarly, high schools were rated "fair" by 41 percent of the sample and another 40 percent rated them as "poor". More than 75 percent of the sample

stated they felt the New York City Department of Education is not responsive to the concerns of Bronx parents. In regards to English Language Learner (“ELL”) programs, more than half the population stated they were unsure whether there are sufficient ELL programs. This is peculiar given the significant foreign born population of the borough. More than half the sample, 55 percent, stated there are not sufficient Gifted and Talented programs in the Bronx. Similarly, more than half stated there is insufficient information available on financial aid option for students entering college (54 percent) and inadequate supply of after school programs (61 percent).

3) Safety

The sample generally felt that the Bronx is a safe place to live, with approximately two thirds (64 percent) rating their neighborhood as safe or very safe. However, 35 percent rated the Bronx as unsafe, suggesting there is need for improvement in certain areas. When asked what should be done to increase safety, more than 850 listed greater police presence as their top recommendation; in second place was “greater enforcement of quality of life crimes” with 47 percent.

4) Transportation

The sample reported that travel by car was their main means of transportation at 38 percent, by subway was second at 36 percent. More than half own or lease a car, 54 percent, with 77 percent rating the roads in the Bronx as “fair” or “poor” (44 percent and 33 percent respectively). Congestion pricing was viewed negatively. When asked whether people would pay to drive into Manhattan if they were assured the funds were being utilized to improve mass transit, almost 70 percent stated no. The public transportation options received mixed reviews. Almost 40 percent rated train service as good; in contrast, about 40 percent rated buses as fair.

5) Health and Lifestyle

The survey touched upon several health and lifestyle preferences. The Bronx has well documented health issues, in particular obesity. Hence, our office asked several questions pertaining to diets and access to healthy foods. About half the respondents (52.1) rated their eating habits as “good.” Recreational options such as arts, entertainment, restaurants, museums and nightlife were rated mostly as fair by 37 percent of the sample. In regards to improving eating habits in the Bronx, 46 percent of the sample rated improved access to quality produce as their top priority. Increased access to supermarkets instead of bodegas was rated as the second top priority at 15 percent. Although, 80 percent of all respondents stated they did most of their food shopping in supermarkets. More than half (60 percent) stated they shop at green markets/farmers markets; moreover, of those that said no, two thirds (66 percent) stated they would make purchases if there were such a market near their home or work.

Although, more than half of the sample (60 percent) stated they did most of their general shopping in the Bronx, a high proportion (40 percent) stated they did most of their general shopping outside of the Bronx. Half of these individuals listed Westchester County as their shopping destination of choice. The customer service provided by Bronx businesses was generally rated as “fair” (43 percent of respondents). The number of respondents who stated they dined out occasionally versus frequently was about equal at 38 percent each. Similar to the general shopping trends, more than half of the sample (55 percent) stated the restaurants they visited frequently were in the Bronx; yet, a high proportion (45 percent) stated they dined out mostly outside of the Bronx.

Review of Methodology and Sample

1) Outreach

The survey was initially released on August 24, 2011, and closed on October 31, 2011. It was available online as a form as well as downloadable as a PDF; both were also made available in Spanish. The links to the PDFs and online forms were disseminated to a wide list of borough and city wide media outlets. The Borough President’s office partnered with many of its local institutions, including the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, hospitals and educational institutions, such as Hostos Community College, to forward the links to a wide spectrum of Bronxites. For purposes of the survey, a Bronxite was defined as someone who either lives or works in the Bronx. The links were also distributed via social media including but not limited to the Borough President’s Facebook and Twitter accounts. The twelve Bronx Community Boards were vital in promoting and distributing the survey both electronically and via direct person to person outreach.

2) About the Office of the Borough President

The Borough President is an independently elected official, the chief executive of Bronx County and works with the Mayor to prepare the annual executive budget submitted to the City Council. The Borough President reviews and comments on major land use projects, and proposes sites for City facilities within his jurisdiction. The Borough President also monitors the administration of City services and engages in strategic planning for the economic development of the borough. He appoints a representative to the New York City Board of Education and the New York City Planning Commission. The Borough President also appoints the members of the Community Boards and is the Chairperson of both the Borough Board and the Borough Services Cabinet. Among other distinctions, the borough president is a trustee of the New York City Employees' Retirement System. The Borough President's Office also houses the Borough's Topographical Bureau, which is responsible for maintaining the borough's official maps, and assigning street addresses. The Borough President may also request the introduction of legislation to the City Council.

3) About Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

Elected Bronx Borough President in the Special Election on April 21st, 2009, Ruben Diaz Jr., previously served in the New York State Assembly since 1997, representing the 85th Assembly District.

As borough president, Diaz is leading the fight for a new “living wage” law in New York City, which would require developers that receive heavy taxpayer funding for their project to pay the employees of that development a “living wage.”

In addition, Diaz hosted the borough’s first ever economic summit, in coordination with the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, which brought together business, community and not-for-profit leaders from across the Bronx and the region to discuss the economic goals of the borough. Diaz has also created a Public Housing Advisory Council, which meets to discuss and find answers to the issues faced by the residents of the borough’s public housing buildings; and an African Advisory Council, which works with the Bronx African community to resolve its emerging issues and make recommendations on strategies to improve the quality of life of this growing population.

4) The Sample

The survey received a total of 1,903 respondents, of which more than 500 were paper surveys collected through direct community outreach efforts. The survey contains a variety of question types, including closed rating and open ended questions associated with quality of life issues that are relevant to Bronxites.

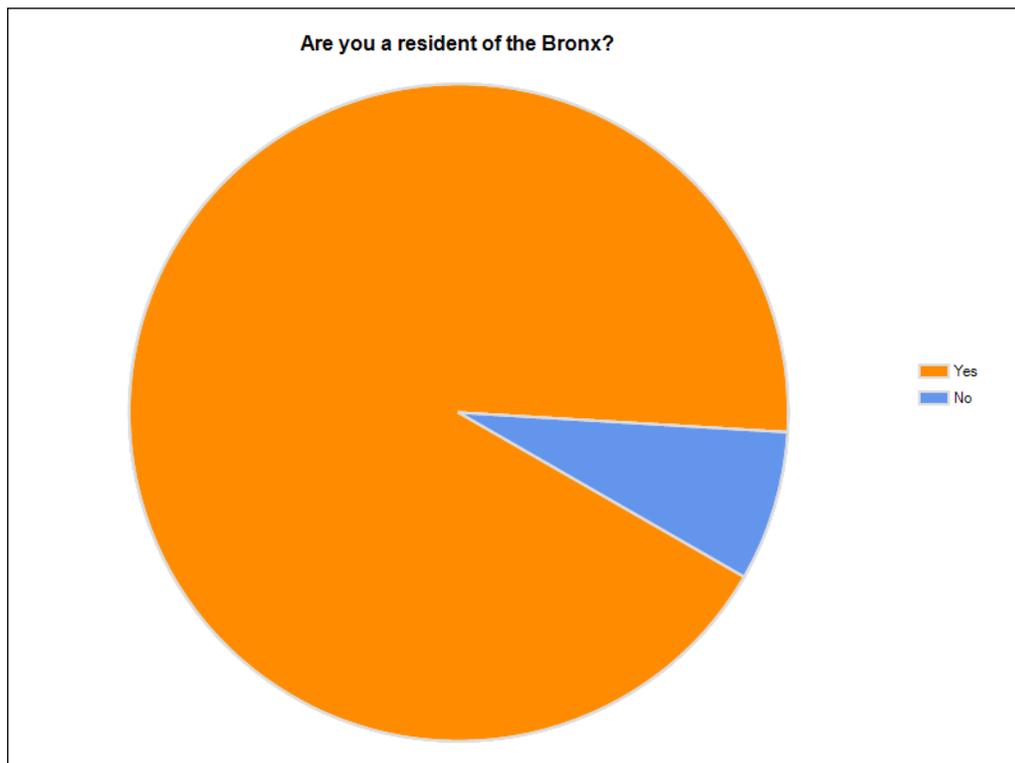
Acknowledgements

The success of this survey would not have been possible without the many partners who generously devoted their time and energy. The Bronx Community Boards and our borough’s elected officials performed a tremendous and indispensable amount of outreach on this project. The Borough President greatly appreciates all those who helped promote the survey, but also every individual who took time to complete the survey as well. In particular, Lehman College went above and beyond. Moreover, we were very fortunate to have two talented and enthusiastic Lehman students, Tiffany Dias and Leidy Ferreras, intern on this project. We also would like to recognize Christine Westphal from the College of Mount Saint Vincent for her efforts on this project during her own internship with our office.

Survey Results

How old are you?	
Answer Options	Response %
Under 18	0.9 %
18 to 25	7.0 %
26 to 30	8.7 %
31 to 40	18.5 %
41 to 50	19.6 %
51 to 62	24.8 %
Over 62	20.6 %

Are you a resident of the Bronx?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	92.6 %
No	7.4 %



If you are a Bronx resident, what is your zip Code?	
Answer Options	Response %
10451	4.8 %
10452	3.3 %
10453	3.6 %
10454	1.6 %
10455	1.9 %
10456	4.1 %
10457	2.6 %
10458	4.7 %
10459	3.6 %
10460	3.6 %
10461	5.2 %
10462	6.2 %
10463	6.7 %
10464	0.8 %
10465	3.8 %
10466	3.4 %
10467	7.3 %
10468	4.7 %
10469	6.0 %
10470	1.5 %
10471	2.1 %
10472	3.4 %
10473	4.1 %
10474	1.1 %
10475	3.4 %
Not Applicable	6.5 %

Are you currently employed?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	62.9 %
No	19.0 %
Other (Retiree, Full Time Student, "Unable to work")	18.1 %

If yes, do you work in the Bronx?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	44.1 %
No	26.0 %
Not Applicable	29.9 %

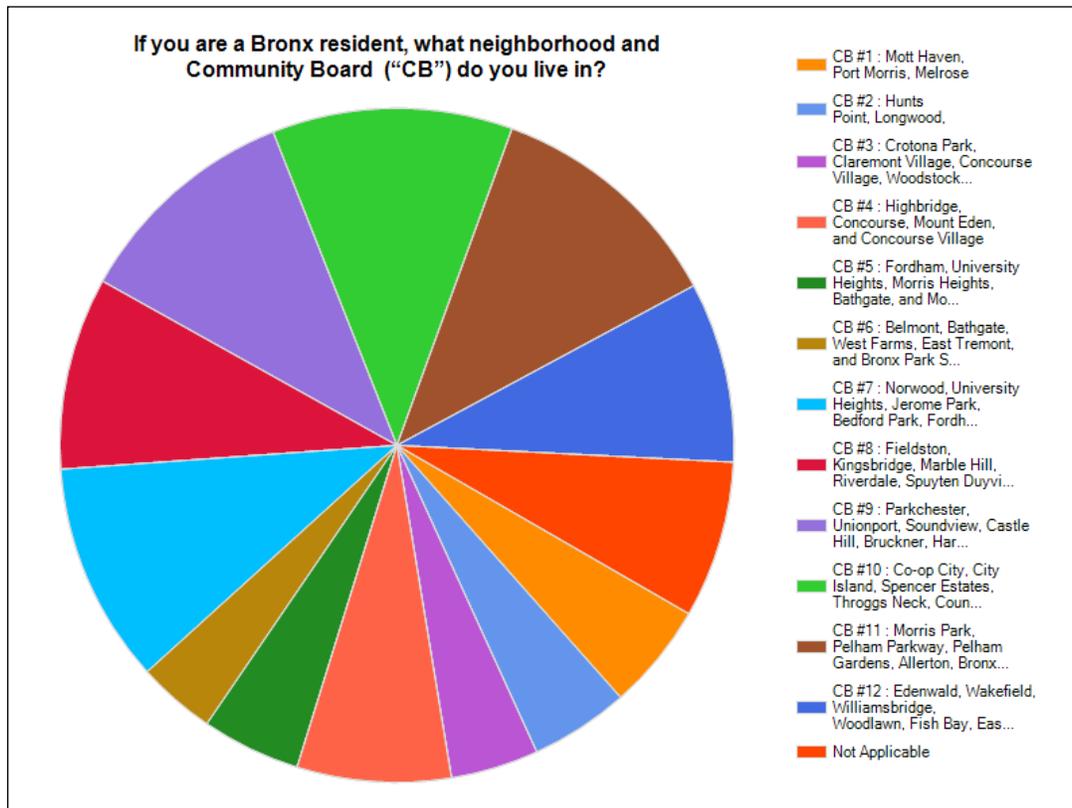
If yes, what is the zip code of your employer?	
Answer Options	Response %
10451	7.0 %
10452	2.5 %
10453	2.1 %
10454	1.1 %
10455	2.1 %
10456	1.7 %
10457	3.4 %
10458	3.0 %
10459	2.3 %
10460	1.6 %
10461	3.7 %
10462	2.0 %
10463	1.4 %
10464	0.2 %
10465	0.9 %
10466	0.8 %
10467	2.7 %
10468	3.6 %
10469	0.8 %
10470	0.4 %
10471	0.8 %
10472	0.8 %
10473	0.8 %
10474	1.2 %
10475	0.5 %
Not Applicable	52.4 %

If you are a Bronx resident, what neighborhood and Community Board (“CB”) do you live in?

Answer Options

Response %

CB #1 : Mott Haven, Port Morris, Melrose	5.1 %
CB #2 : Hunts Point, Longwood,	4.7 %
CB #3 : Crotona Park, Claremont Village, Concourse Village, Woodstock, and Morrisania	4.2 %
CB #4 : Highbridge, Concourse, Mount Eden, and Concourse Village	7.4 %
CB #5 : Fordham, University Heights, Morris Heights, and Mount Hope	4.7 %
CB #6 : Belmont, Bathgate, West Farms, East Tremont, and Bronx Park South	3.7 %
CB #7 : Norwood, University Heights, Jerome Park, Bedford Park, Fordham, and Kingsbridge Heights	10.6 %
CB #8 : Fieldston, Kingsbridge, Marble Hill, Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil, Van Cortlandt Village	9.2 %
CB #9 : Parkchester, Unionport, Soundview, Castle Hill, Bruckner, Harding Park, Bronx River and Clason Point	10.9 %
CB #10 : Co-op City, City Island, Spencer Estates, Throggs Neck, Country Club, Zerega, Westchester Square, Pelham Bay, Eastchester Bay, Schuylerville, Edgewater, Locust Point, and Silver Beach	11.5 %
CB #11 : Morris Park, Pelham Parkway, Pelham Gardens, Allerton, Bronxdale, Laconia, and Van Nest	11.6 %
CB #12 : Edenwald, Wakefield, Williamsbridge, Woodlawn, Fish Bay, Eastchester, Olinville, and Baychester	8.6 %
Not Applicable	7.5 %



If you live in the Bronx, how many years have you resided here?	
Answer Options	Response %
Less than 1 year	0.7 %
1 - 5 years	8.5 %
6-10 years	7.0 %
11-20 years	12.5 %
More than 20	64.9 %
Not Applicable	6.4 %

Do you rent or own your home/apartment?	
Answer Options	Response %
Rent	64.8 %
Own	35.2 %

Are you married?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	39.2 %
No	60.8 %

Do you have children?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	62.5 %
No	37.5 %

If yes, are they enrolled in a New York City public school?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	20.3 %
No	24.7 %
Not Applicable	55.0 %

What is your annual household income?	
Answer Options	Response %
Less than \$10,000	8.2 %
\$10,000 - \$29,999	14.8 %
\$30,000 - \$49,999	19.8 %
\$50,000 - \$74,999	19.4 %
\$75,000 - \$100,000	13.8 %
\$100,000 plus	14.7 %
N/A	9.4 %

Civic Participation

Are you registered to vote?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	91.0 %
No	9.0 %

When was the last time you voted?	
Answer Options	Response %
2010	67.5 %
2009	6.0 %
2008	13.0 %
2007	0.5 %
2006	0.4 %
2005	0.4 %
Prior to 2005	2.7 %
Have never voted	9.5 %

Can you name your elected officials? Click all that you can recall:

Answer Options	Response %
U.S. Congressman	80.8 %
State Senator	88.6 %
State Assembly Member	67.7 %
City Council Member	70.3 %

Bronxites Views of the Borough

How would you rate the Bronx as a place to live?

Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	11.1 %
Good	42.1 %
Fair	35.6 %
Poor	11.2 %

How would you rate the public parks in the Bronx?

Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	6.2%
Good	41.4%
Fair	39.5%
Poor	12.9%

How would you rate the recreation centers in the Bronx?

Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	2.2%
Good	28.8%
Fair	50.6%
Poor	18.4%

How would you rate the libraries in the Bronx?	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	12.6%
Good	47.8%
Fair	32.7%
Poor	6.9%

If you live or work in the Bronx, how would you rate your neighborhood's appearance/cleanliness?	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	7.6%
Good	34.3%
Fair	36.5%
Poor	21.6%

How would you rate the Bronx as a place to work?	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	9.8%
Good	37.7%
Fair	37.2%
Poor	15.3%

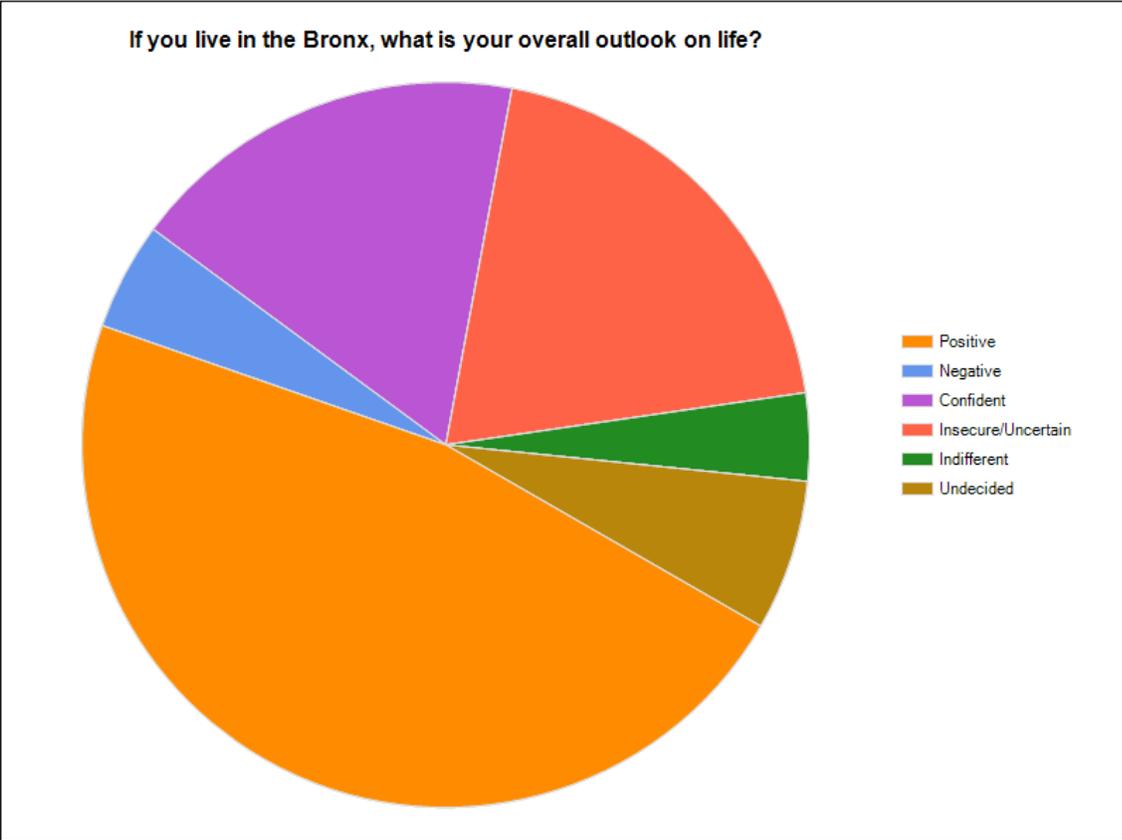
Is the Bronx quality of life moving in the right direction?	
Answer Options	Response %
Right direction	39.6%
Wrong Direction	26.8%
Undecided	33.6%

Things have gotten better or worse in the Bronx over the last five years?

Answer Options	Response %
Much better	8.8 %
Better	35.7 %
Same	26.5 %
Worse	29.0 %

How do you feel things will be in the Bronx over the next five years?

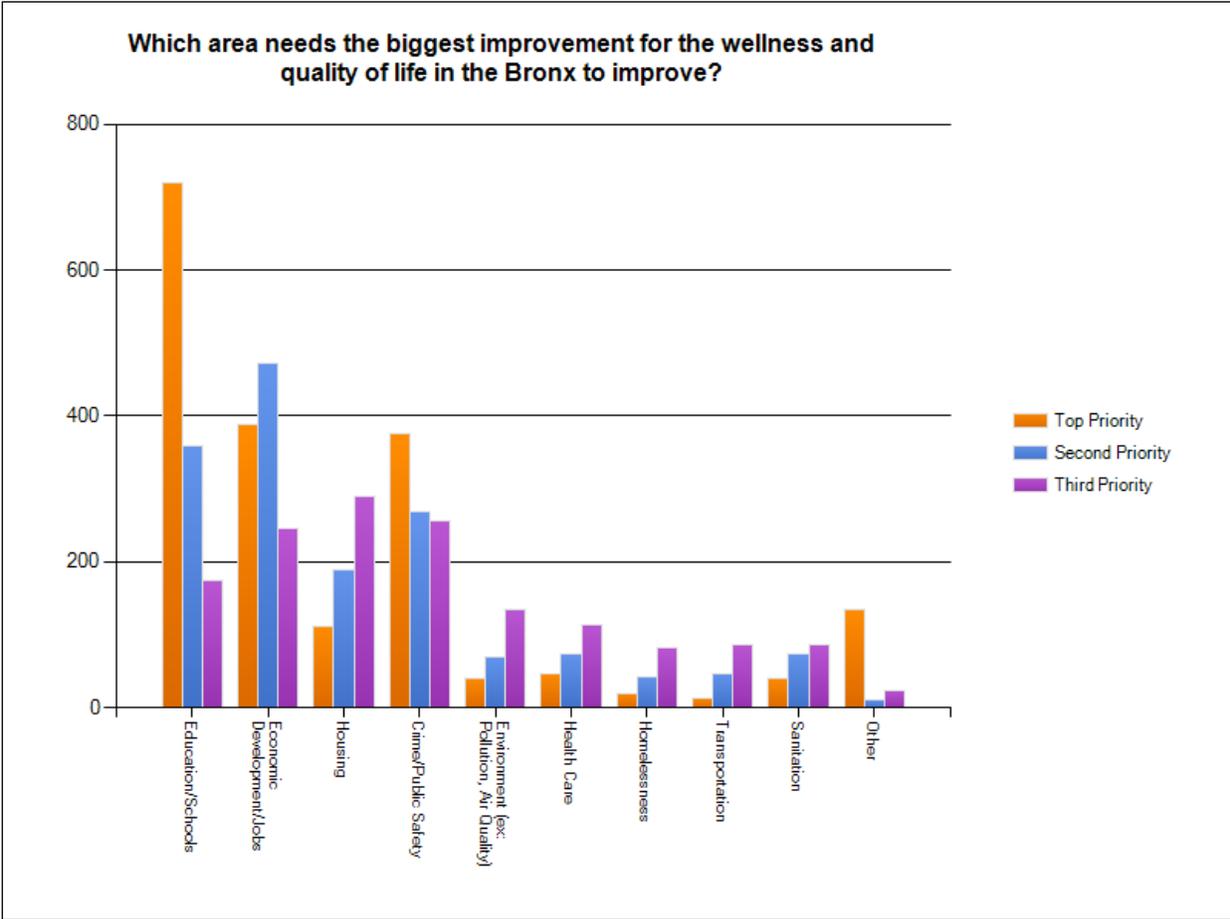
Answer Options	Response %
Much better	14.7 %
Better	33.5 %
Same	29.4 %
Worse	22.3 %



If you live in the Bronx, what is your overall outlook on life?	
Answer Options	Response %
Positive	47.0 %
Negative	4.8 %
Confident	17.8 %
Insecure/Uncertain	19.8 %
Indifferent	3.9 %
Undecided	6.7 %

If you live in the Bronx, would you move to another neighborhood in the Bronx?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	32.8 %
No	33.5 %
Maybe	26.7 %
N/A	7.1 %

Which area needs the biggest improvement for the wellness and quality of life in the Bronx to improve?			
Answer Options	Top Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority
Education/Schools	57.4%	28.7%	13.9%
Economic Development/Jobs	35.1%	42.8%	22.2%
Housing	19.0%	32.0%	49.1%
Crime/Public Safety	41.7%	29.9%	28.4%
Environment (ex: Pollution, Air Quality)	16.3%	28.6%	55.1%
Health Care	19.7%	31.6%	48.7%
Homelessness	13.2%	29.9%	56.9%
Transportation	9.0%	31.7%	59.3%
Sanitation	19.9%	36.8%	43.3%
Other	79.9%	6.5%	13.6%



The job market in the Bronx is:

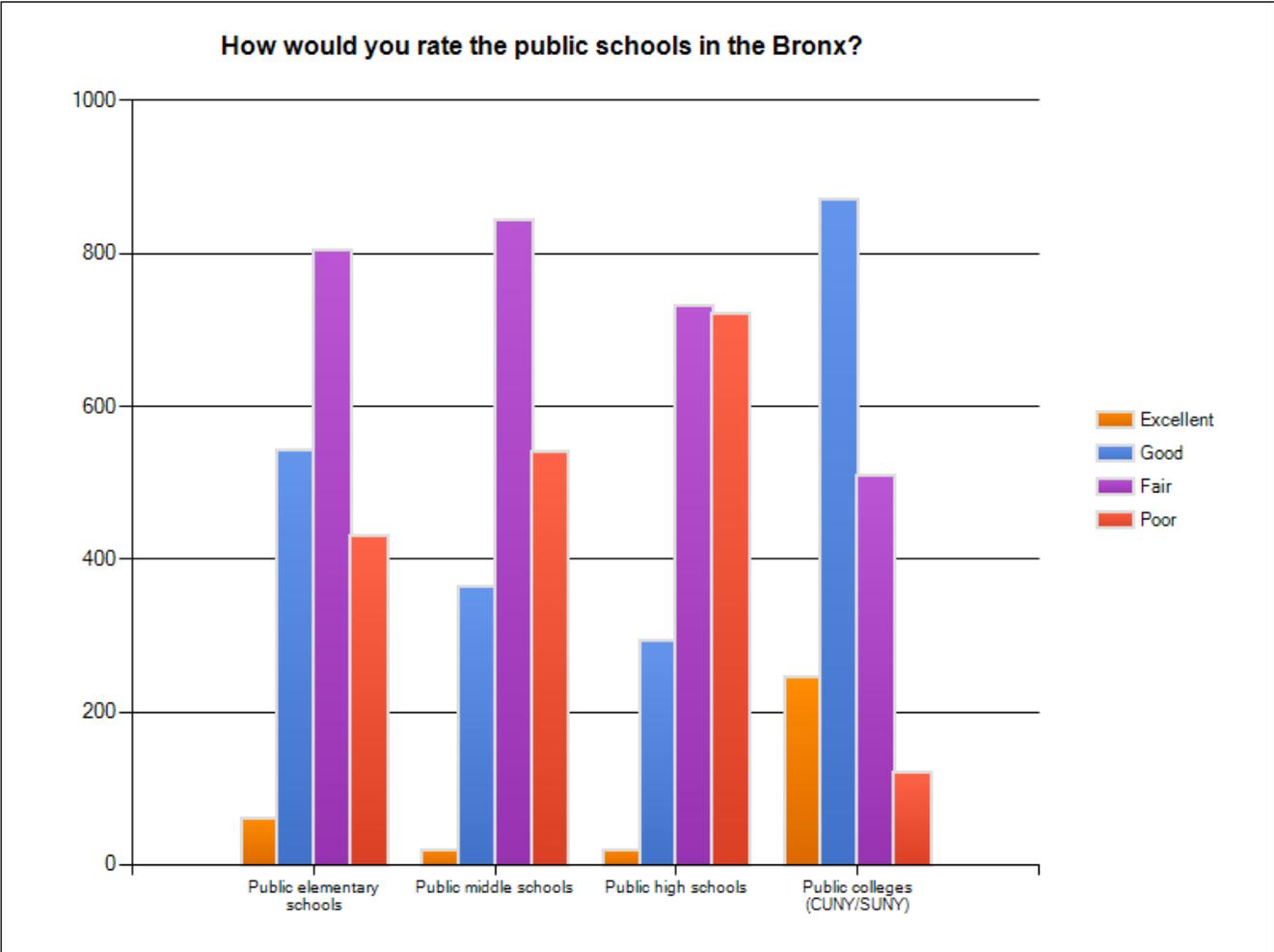
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	0.6 %
Good	11.6 %
Fair	49.9 %
Poor	37.8 %

Are you happy with your current level of income?

Answer Options	Response %
Yes	30.8 %
No	61.1 %
N/A	8.1 %

Does your income cover your basic expenses and costs of living?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	60.1 %
No	39.9 %

Education in the Bronx



Do you feel the New York City Department of Education is responsive to the concerns of Bronx parents?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	24.1 %
No	75.9 %

Do you feel there are a sufficient number of English Language Learner (“ELL”) programs in Bronx Schools?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	20.6 %
No	26.2 %
Unsure	53.2 %

Do you feel there are a sufficient number of special education programs and services in public Bronx schools?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	17.3 %
No	38.3 %
Unsure	44.3 %

Do you feel parents have sufficient access to Special Education Service Providers in the Bronx? (EX: Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Speech and Language Pathologists, Teachers of Blind, Visually Impaired, Deaf , Hard of Hearing, Speech and Language Disabilities)	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	16.9 %
No	39.9 %
Unsure	43.2 %

Do you feel there are sufficient opportunities for Bronx students to enroll in Gifted & Talented programs? (Including, but not limited to, Gifted & Talented programs, Specialized High Schools, and Honors Programs).	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	11.8 %
No	55.0 %
Unsure	33.2 %

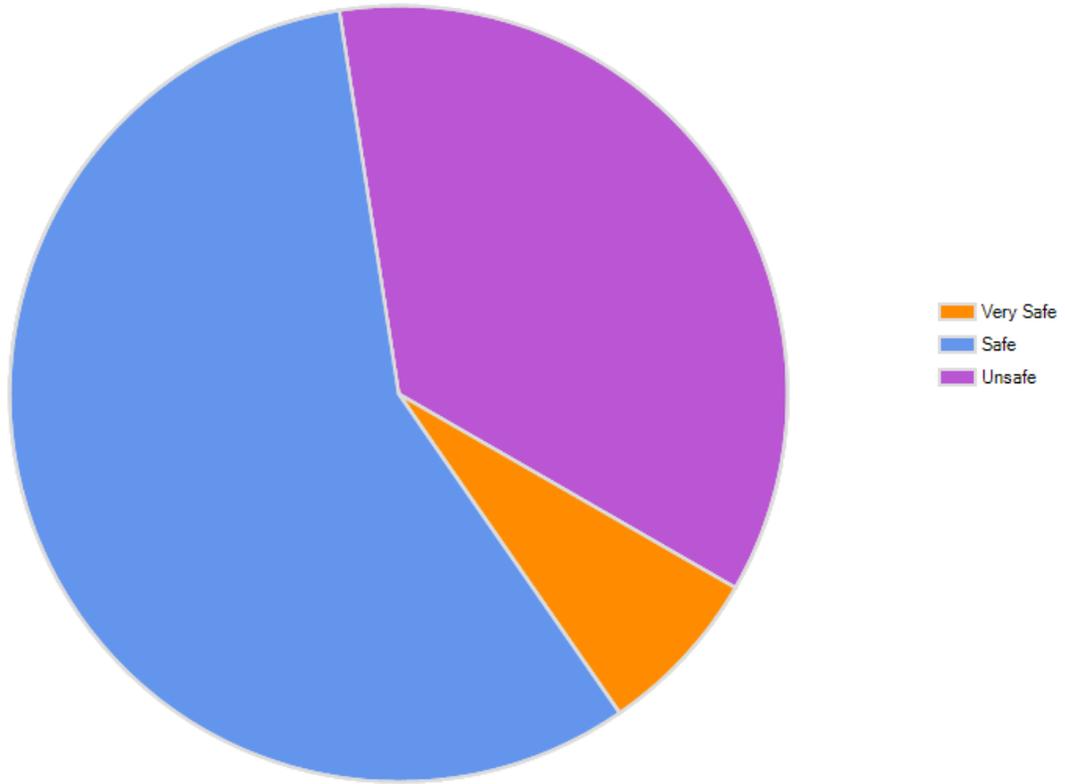
Is there enough information available to families on financial-aid options for students entering college?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	17.7 %
No	53.6 %
Unsure	28.8 %

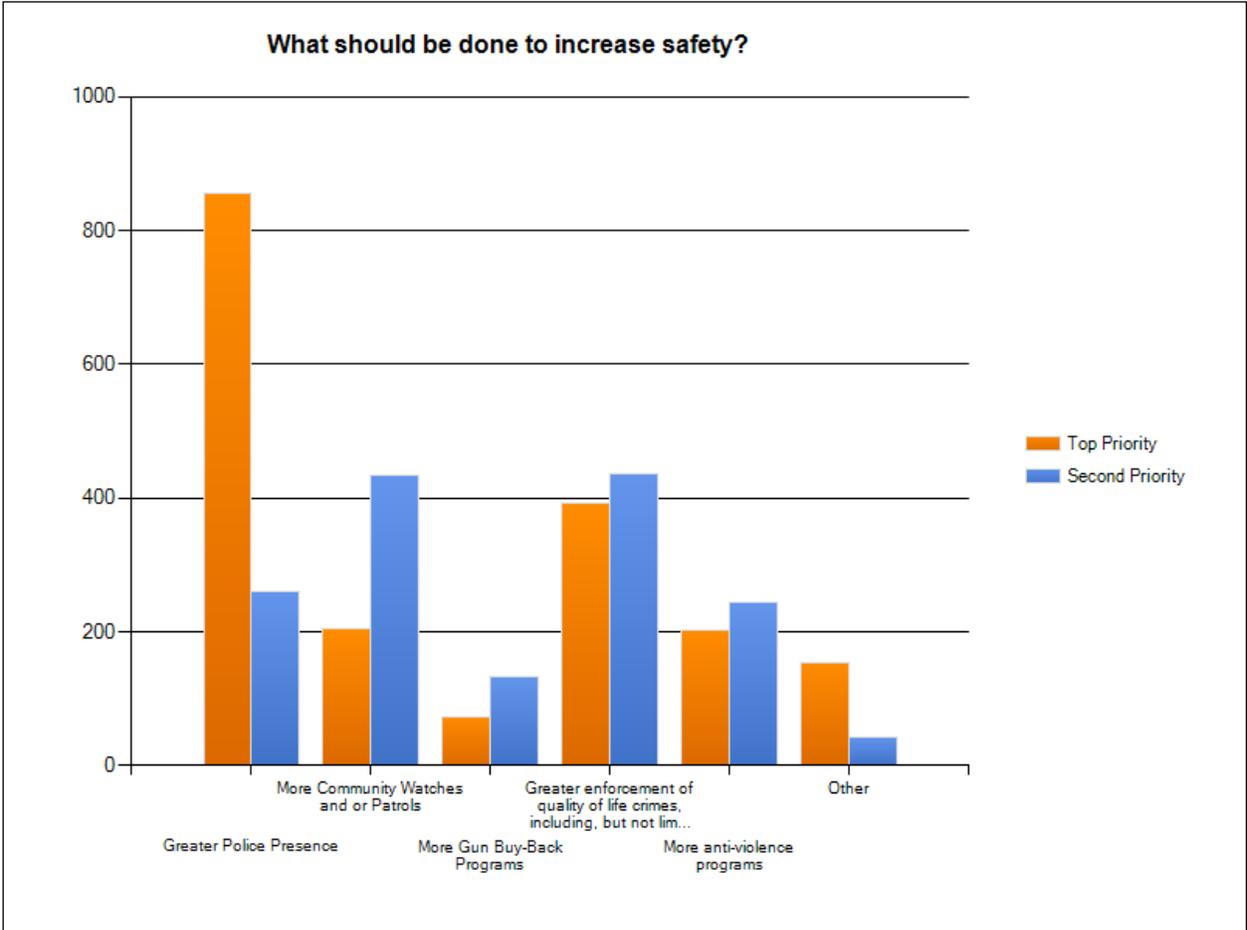
If you live in the Bronx, are there enough after-school programs available to youth in your neighborhood?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	14.1 %
No	61.3 %
Not Applicable	24.5 %

Safety

If you live and or work in the Bronx, do you consider your neighborhood safe?	
Answer Options	Response %
Very Safe	7.0 %
Safe	57.2 %
Unsafe	35.8 %
If Other (please specify)	

If you live and or work in the Bronx, do you consider your neighborhood safe?





If you witnessed a crime in progress, what would you do?	
Answer Options	Response %
Call the police/911	92.6 %
Attempt to stop the crime/get involved	4.6 %
Do nothing	2.7 %

Transportation

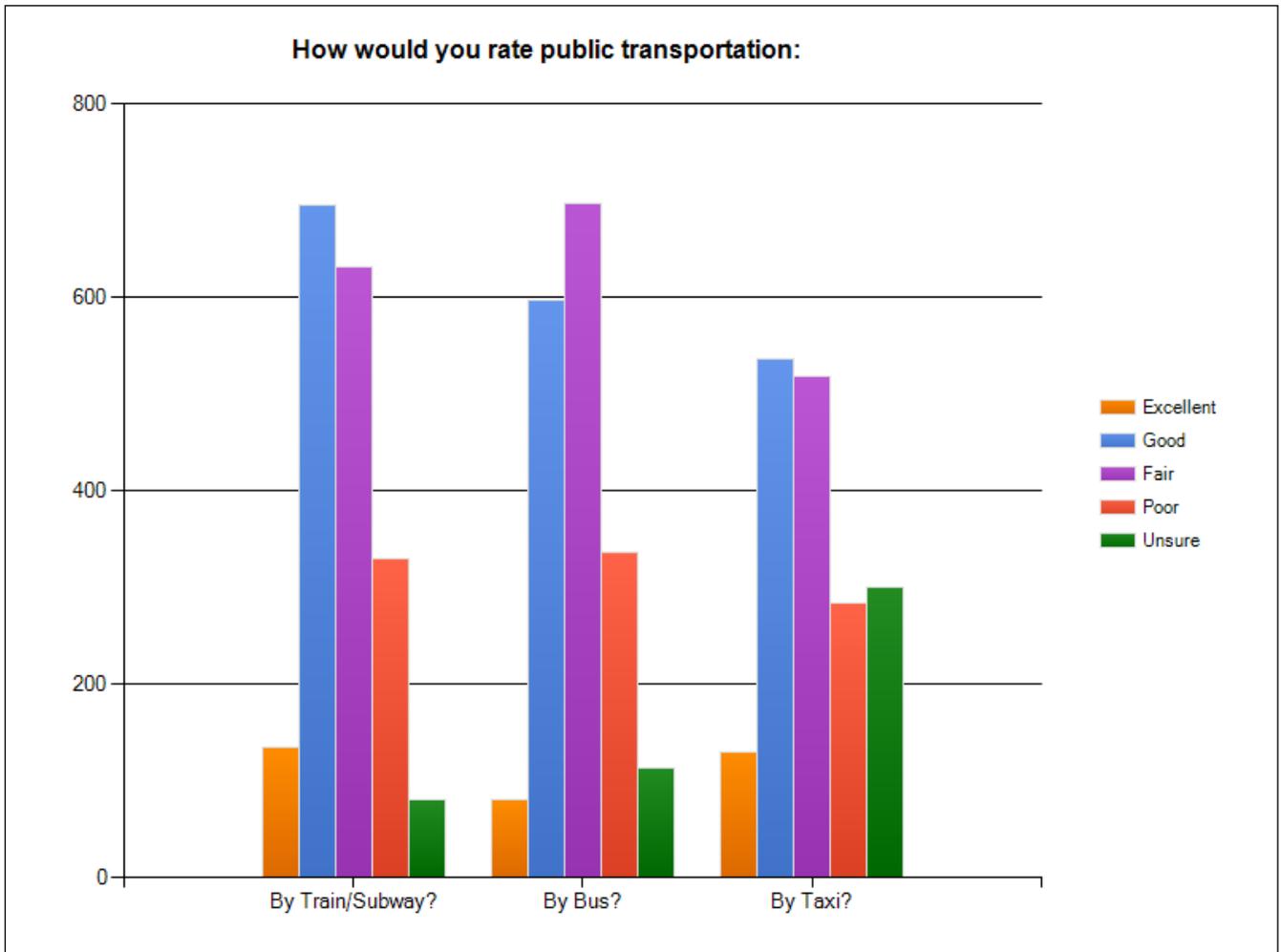
Do you travel mainly by:	
Answer Options	Response %
Subway	35.9 %
Bus	19.2 %
Car	37.6 %
Other (please specify)	7.3 %

Do you own or lease a car?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	53.9 %
No	46.1 %

How would you rate the roads and highways in the Bronx?	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	0.7 %
Good	21.7 %
Fair	44.1 %
Poor	33.5 %

Would you pay to drive into Manhattan if you were assured the funds were being utilized to improve mass transit?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	31.1 %
No	68.9 %

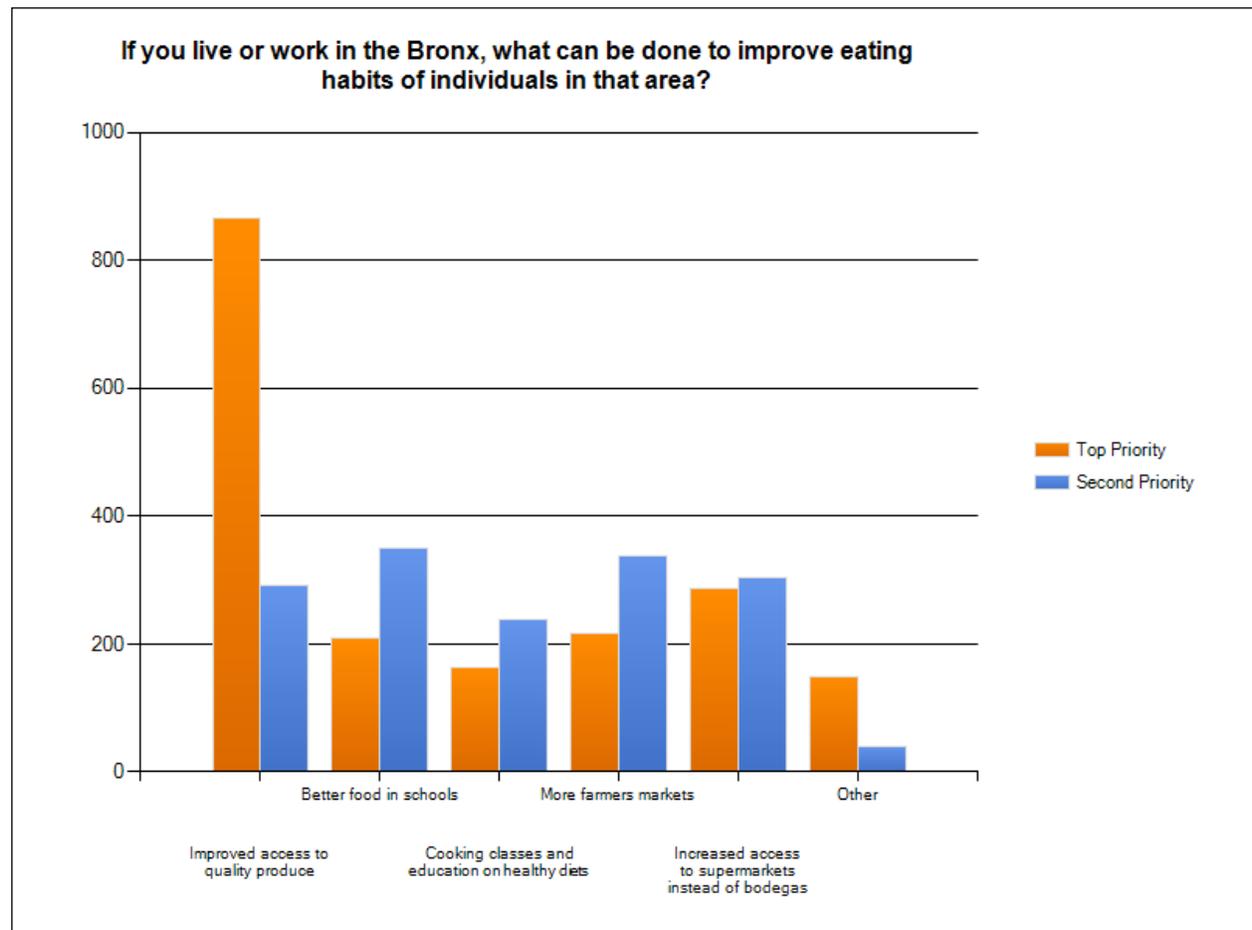
How would you rate public transportation:					
Answer Options	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
By Train/Subway?	7.2%	37.1%	33.8%	17.6%	4.3%
By Bus?	4.5%	32.8%	38.2%	18.4%	6.2%
By Taxi?	7.3%	30.4%	29.3%	16.2%	16.9%



Health and Lifestyle

How would you rate the recreational activities in the Bronx? (Arts/Entertainment/Restaurants/Museums/Nightlife)	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	3.2 %
Good	27.6 %
Fair	36.6 %
Poor	24.6 %
Unsure	8.1 %

How would you rate your own eating habits? (Eating out frequently vs. cooking at home, consuming sufficient fruits and vegetables, counting calories, consuming moderate portions vs. overeating)	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	17.0 %
Good	52.1 %
Fair	24.9 %
Poor	6.0 %



Where do you do most of your food shopping?	
Answer Options	Response %
In a bodega	1.2 %
In a supermarket	80.9 %
At a wholesale club	12.5 %
If Other (please specify)	5.4 %

Do you shop at green markets/farmers markets?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	59.0 %
No	41.0 %

If no, would you shop at a farmers market if there were one near your home or your work?	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	66.7 %
No	6.3 %
Not Applicable	27.1 %

Where do you do most of your general shopping?	
Answer Options	Response %
In the Bronx	59.1 %
Outside the Bronx	40.9 %

When you leave the Bronx to shop, where do you usually travel to make purchases?	
Answer Options	Response %
Westchester	51.6 %
New Jersey	7.1 %
Manhattan	26.8 %
Brooklyn	1.2 %
Queens	2.4 %
Other (please specify)	10.9 %

How would you rate the level of customer service provided by Bronx businesses?	
Answer Options	Response %
Excellent	3.1 %
Good	37.1 %
Fair	43.3 %
Poor	16.5 %

How often do you eat/dine out?	
Answer Options	Response %
Rarely	18.8 %
Occasionally (Once a month)	37.6 %
Frequently (At least once a week)	37.5 %
All the time (Almost daily)	6.1 %
What is the biggest reason you dine out?	

Where are the restaurants that you visit most frequently?	
Answer Options	Response %
In the Bronx	55.0 %
Outside the Bronx	45.0 %

How would you rate your relationships with your neighbors?	
Answer Options	Response %
Respectful	30.0 %
Pleasant	27.8 %
Friendly	31.2 %
Poor	3.4 %
No relationship	7.5 %

Are you involved in your community or local civic activities? (Including, but not limited to, volunteerism, church activities, local sports leagues, local political clubs)	
Answer Options	Response %
Yes	53.5 %
No	40.7 %
Other (please specify)	5.8 %