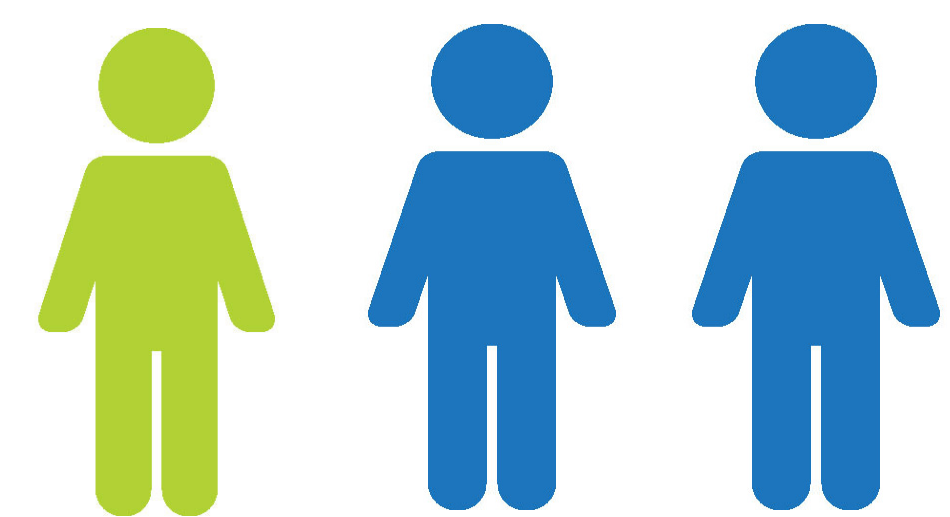


Addressing the Barriers to Play for Children in Rochester, New York

The Context

Studies demonstrate daily active play is crucial to the physical, social, and emotional health of children.^{1,2,3} In Rochester, New York, not all children have the opportunity to play every day. The purpose of this poster is to describe the barriers to play in Rochester, New York, and to share Healthi Kids' work to promote playability: our successes, lessons learned, and the perceived barriers to implementation.



1 in 3 children are overweight or obese⁴



60% of parents are concerned about the lack of safe places to play⁵

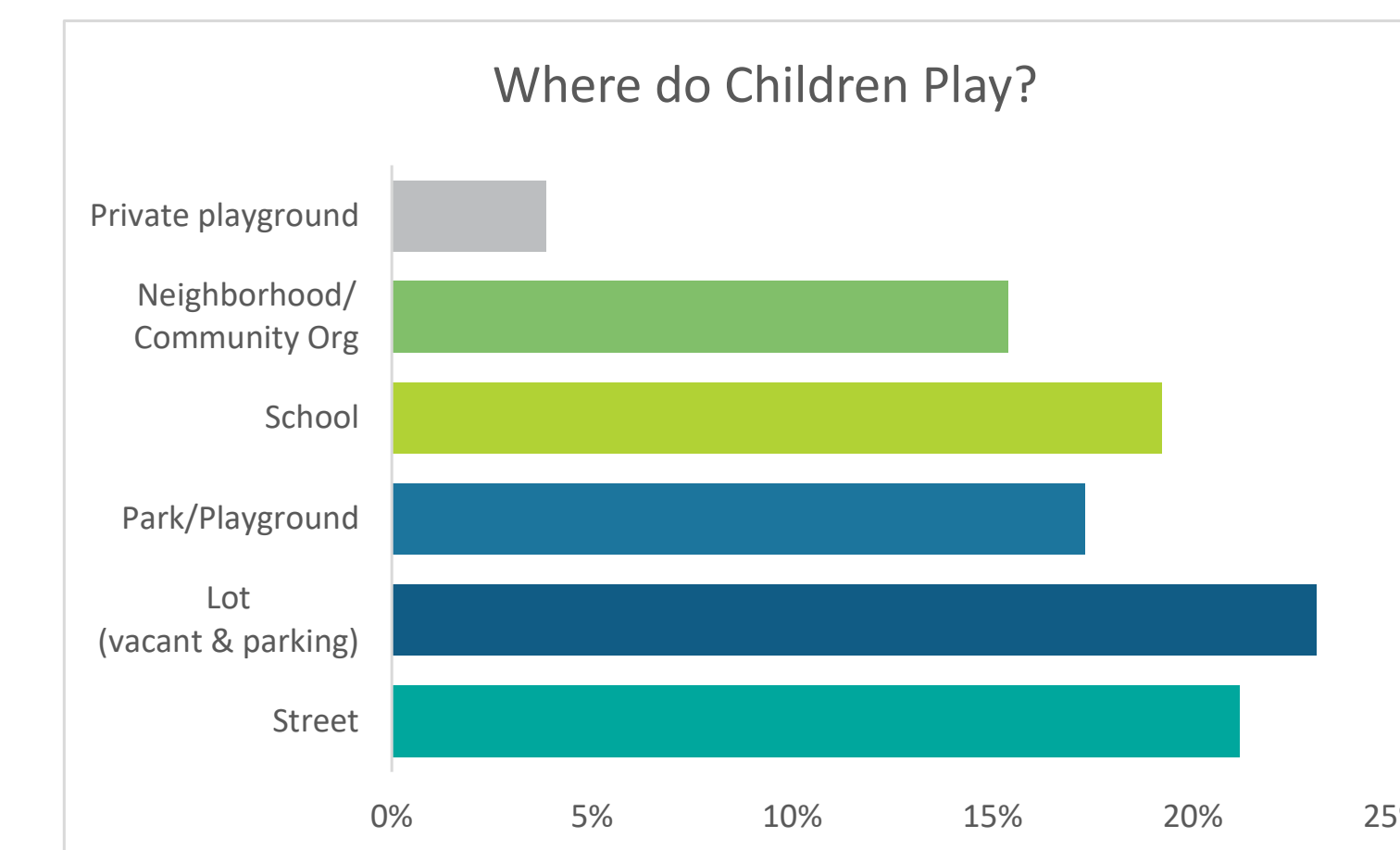


78% youth report they do not engage in an hour or more physical activity⁶

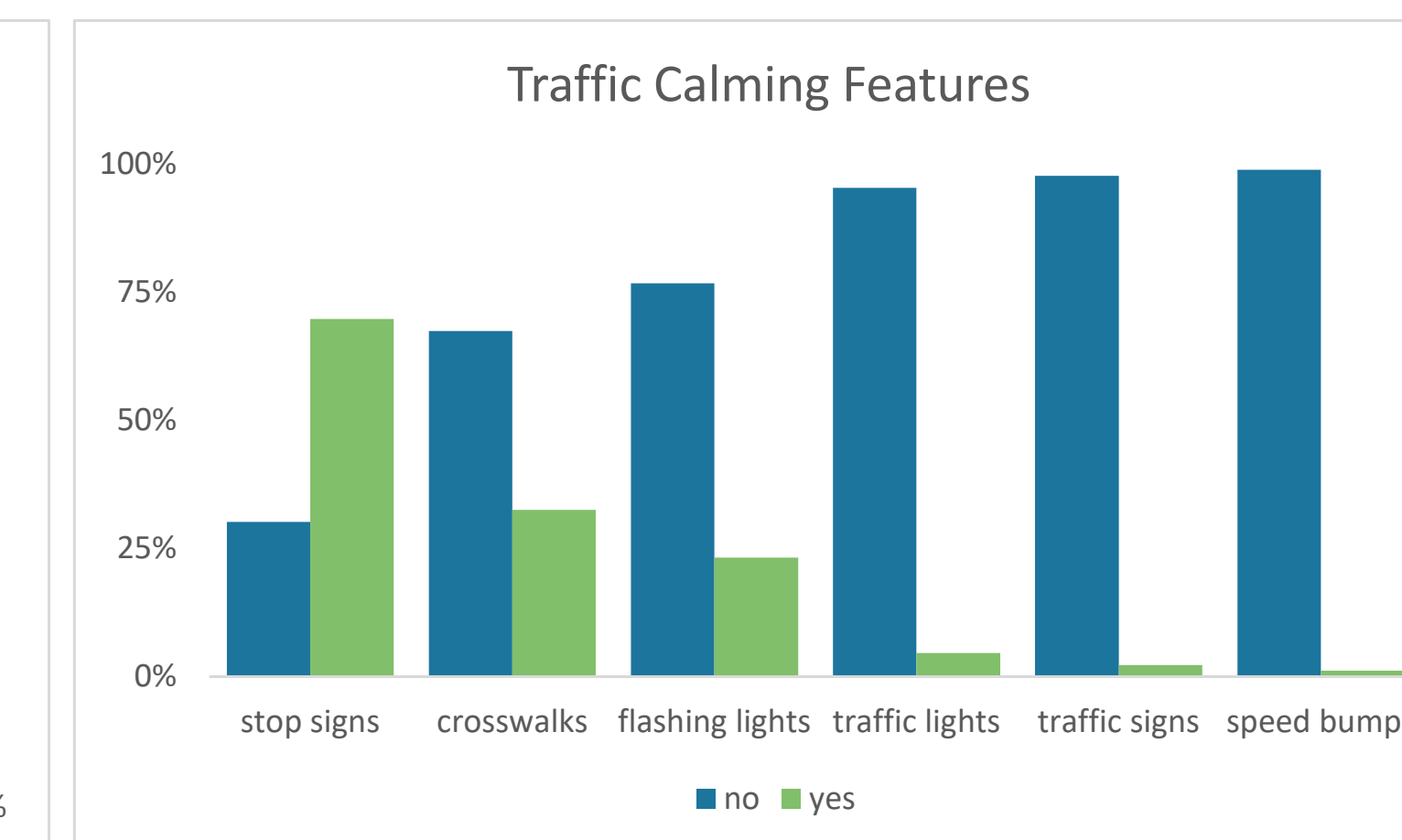


7 to 12 the average minutes of daily active recess kids receive⁷

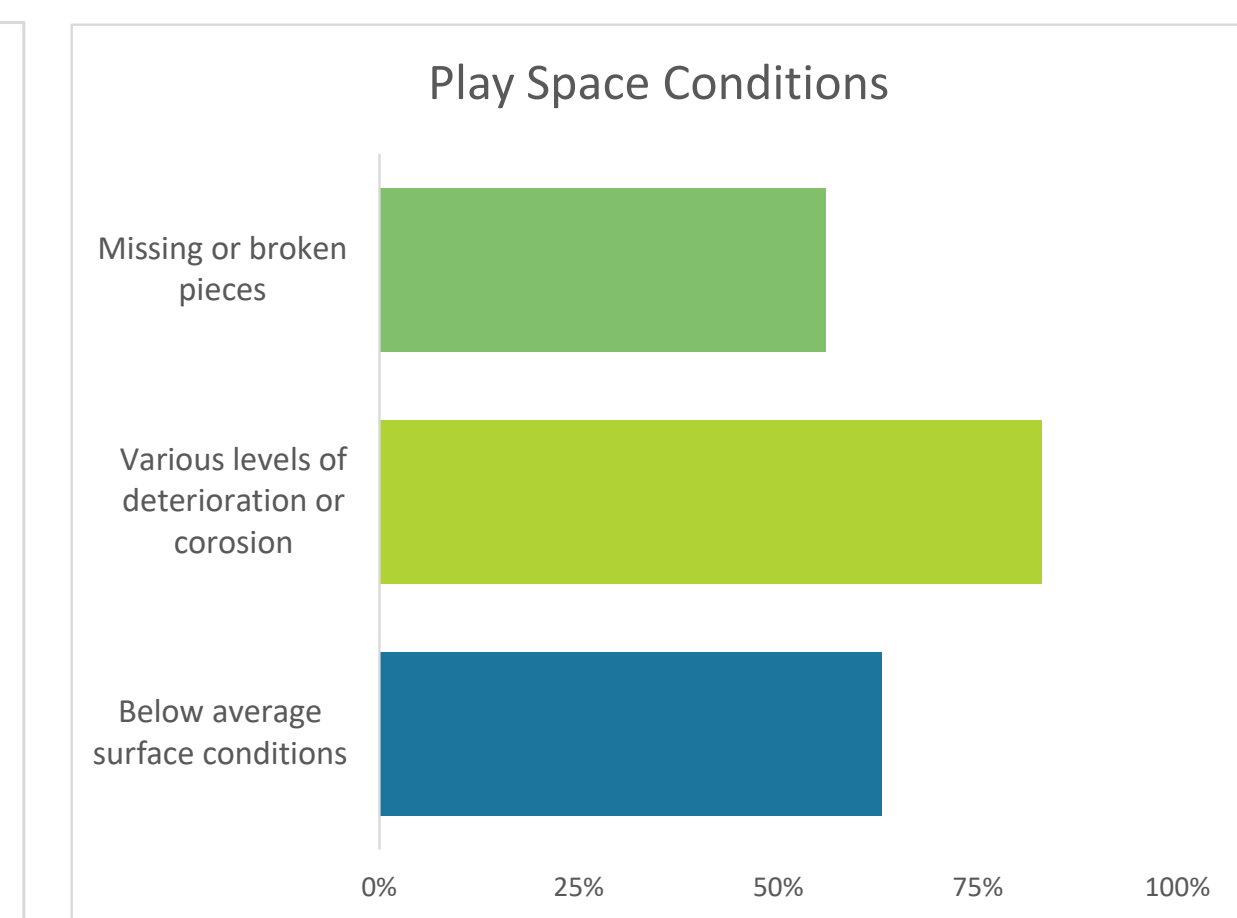
Playability Planning Results



82% of children do not play in traditional parks and playgrounds.



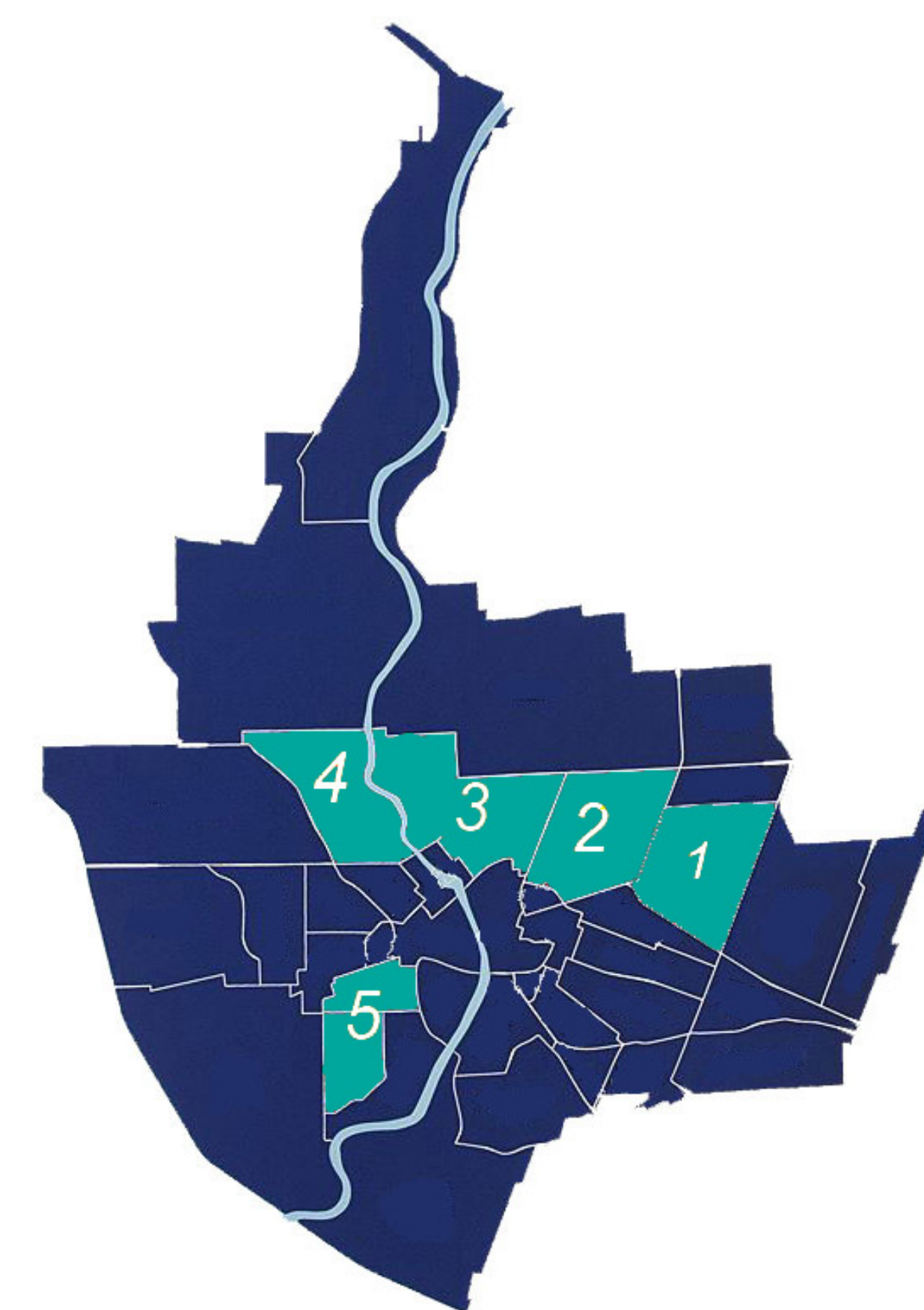
Limited traffic calming features were present surrounding each play space.



The majority of play spaces were in poor condition.

Interviews revealed neighborhood & traffic safety, and unkempt playgrounds deter parents from letting their children play outdoors. The results of the assessment led to the creation of neighborhood plans to improve play. Playability plans mapped community defined play areas, addressed common themes, and defined neighborhood priorities to improve play.

Understanding the State of Play in Rochester, NY



5 Playability Neighborhoods in the City of Rochester

Healthi Kids is a community based advocacy coalition, and initiative of Common Ground Health, that advocates for healthier more active kids in the City of Rochester and Monroe County.

In 2010-2013, we partnered with community members in five neighborhoods to conduct playability assessments to answer the question where are kids playing, and what could we do to make it better?

The BRAT-DO, an assessment tool that visually identifies and evaluates the physical characteristics of parks, were conducted by residents and Healthi Kids staff. A total of 116 playability assessments were completed at 50 play spaces.

Play space was defined as places kids played: playgrounds, parks, private playgrounds, community based organizations (YMCA), schools, lots (vacant and parking), and streets.

Informal interviews were also conducted throughout the playability planning process at neighborhood meetings and through conversations during the assessment process.

The Parks and Play Spaces Environmental Audit, a requirement from our funding from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, was completed at the end of the assessment. An Evaluation Officer from Transtria LLC trained members of Rochester's community partnership on proper data collection methods using the tool. Twenty-five play spaces were evaluated with this tool.



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Advocating for Change

Armed with data and community created playability plans, the Healthi Kids Coalition and residents advocated for a number of policies, systems, and environmental changes to address neighborhood safety, policies and programs to slow down traffic, improve walkability & bikeability, and promote playability including:

- Amendments to city-wide speed bump policy
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design training to residents
- Pop up play days
- Creation of traffic calming programs & infrastructure
- Play infrastructure (traditional & nontraditional)
- Creation of PlayROCs: A communications & advocacy campaign
- Mobile Recreation on the Move Program
- Playability in city capital improvement projects
- Complete streets ordinance

Lessons Learned



Resident engagement & activation, coalition building, citywide advocacy, and Mayoral support are key to supporting playability. Community champions and resident-led groups are important drivers for change.



Barriers exist to promoting playability: liability, funding, and traffic & safety concerns emerge as key issues for practitioners.

Next Steps



Policies for Play



County-wide play fund



Non-traditional Play Spaces

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- (6) Monroe County (2015). 2014-2015 Monroe County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report. Monroe County Department of Public Health.
- (7) Healthi Kids (2015). Physical activity is not a punishment tool: The Case for Recess. Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency.