

Nessie Foundation

Creating a Model for Low-Wealth Manufactured Housing Communities

STEPS TO SUCCESS

ENGAGE COMMUNITY

Community involvement increases ownership, pride and enthusiasm for the health initiative.

REMAIN FLEXIBLE

Stay open to modifying projects and programs to meet the needs of the community, and restructuring again as needs or interests change.

DON'T BE AFRAID

TO ASK

Partners may have access to volunteer groups or resources you were unaware of. Human resources and support may also be available within the community itself. Don't shy away from recruiting active participants to volunteer or serve in leadership roles.



Imagine a mobile home community

with sidewalks, outdoor spaces for basketball, soccer and playgrounds, garden beds, and areas for grilling and picnicking with neighbors. Doesn't sound like any mobile home community you've seen before? Well, you haven't visited Parrish Manor, a manufactured housing community in Southeast Raleigh.

The Nessie Foundation knew they had a unique opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of approximately 1,000 Parrish Manor children. The community is not serviced by public transportation or close to park facilities. Food available

within walking distance includes three fast food chains and one convenience store, making junk food easily accessible. This, coupled with families' limited incomes, make it difficult for the children to be healthy.

The Nessie Foundation engaged a variety of community partners such as Boys and Girls Club of Wake to start a soccer league, Inter-Faith Food Shuttle to help install garden beds and provide cooking classes, and Be Active North Carolina for resources related to offering fun, physical activity opportunities through the Parrish Manor after-school club. Focus groups and surveys were conducted to learn more about residents interests and needs for being able eat healthy and increasing their physical activity.

Fast forward three years: community transformation is underway. To date, a recreation field, outdoor play space, walking trails, and picnic shelters have been installed, and are coupled with programs like a walking club, sports leagues, cooking classes, and a youth-led garden program. Plans are also in place to construct a tornado shelter, funded by a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant, that will double as an indoor community recreation facility. Nessie Foundation leaders hope that living a healthy, active lifestyle will become a family affair and that similar communities will follow suit. of vandalism and crime. Residents stay longer, decreasing unit turnover. These types of changes ultimately help make the community safer and more connected.



A grant-funded initiative to increase active living and healthy eating for underserved youth in Wake County. Administered by the Community and Clinical Connections for Prevention and Health Branch in the NC Division of Public Health and the N.C. Public Health Foundation. Funds provided by the John Rex Endowment.

“Many mothers have commented that they are so relieved to live in a community where they can let their children have freedom and play. It is community members like Travis that permit this to happen. [Travis lives in the community and is a leader in the Afterschool Activity Club.] I like to view him as a watch-dog over all his community brothers and sisters. The Activity Club is a safe haven for many of the youth in the Parrish Manor community where they not only exercise, but also can learn from... role models like Travis. It is my hope that this club produces more leaders like him.”

- Amanda H, Activity Club Coordinator

The Word on the Street...



A Focus Group participant explains, “We moved to Parrish Manor because it is a good place to raise our kids. The children have freedom. They can safely walk to a friends house or get the mail. There is space to play and activities for the children to do.”

Results from a Parrish Manor Visioning Session, revealed that residents were the most interested in having a community center, walking trails, basketball and things to climb.

The Nessie Foundation listened and responded! To date, all of these features are in the outdoor play space master plan and many have already been installed.

Lasting Impact

The recreation field, outdoor play spaces and walking trail will be enjoyed by the residents of Parrish Manor for years to come. The FEMA grant, awarded to Nessie for the construction of an emergency shelter in Parrish Manor, will also serve as a community center. This space will allow for enhanced program offerings and partnerships.

The Nessie Foundation believes these changes create a win-win scenario for communities like Parrish Manor because it helps improve the health of the community and makes good business sense. Residents have more pride in their community, minimizing incidents vandalism and crime. Residents stay longer, decreasing unit turnover. These types of changes ultimately help make the community safer and more connected.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Nessie Foundation’s Executive Director, Chris Parrish, recognized as Tarheel of the Week for his work with the Parrish Manor health initiative.

Nessie Foundation gave presentations about the health initiative for two large national meetings: The National Manufactured Housing Industry meetings in Chicago and Las Vegas; and annual meeting for a large manufactured housing company that operates over 18,000 home sites in 50 communities across the country.



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