

# northside center for child development

May 23, 2012

## Testimony

Dear Council Members,

I want to thank the City Council for holding this public hearing. I'm Daniel Marangiello, an Educator and Coordinator of afterschool and summer programs at Northside Center for Child Development. Northside Center for Child Development is a 65 year old community based agency providing educational, mental health, child care and social services to over 2,800 children and youth.

We currently have an OST program that's designed to provide services to children with special needs. The Out of School Time Program includes afterschool and summer activities designed to keep participants productive in a safe and supportive environment. Participants in the program grow socially and academically by participating in the various program offerings.

We were saddened and deeply troubled to learn that our successful and empowering afterschool program which has been in existence in some form for over 26 years, has become a casualty of difficult economic times. Our highly specialized program has been a relied upon resource, which has contributed to the successful development of educational and socialization skills for hundreds of children in East Harlem.

This program is a necessary resource for the stakeholders in the community. Our program is unique in that we service special needs children who might not be able to participate in an OST program otherwise. Because we are in a center with therapeutic and educational services, we take a holistic approach to our children. Our OST program is supplemented with therapeutic services provided by social workers as well as intensive remedial services provided by master's level Reading and LD specialists to those students who meet program criteria. As a result, participation with our program increases the likelihood that participants will be successful in others areas of their personal development, as well. Coping with the needs of a child or children with disabilities, while struggling to meet their family's basic subsistence needs, would be

beyond reach for many of our parents if faced with the loss of our reliable and appropriate afterschool and summer child care.

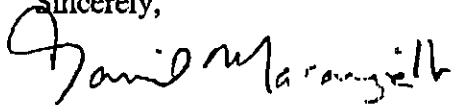
Our participation with this hearing is an affirmation of Northside Center for Child Development's desire to continue to provide afterschool services in the community. It is imperative, that the leadership of the city reconsiders the termination of our program. We hope that leadership will be working diligently to make concessions which will allow for our program to remain open.

I would like to end with some direct quotes from our parents, who say it so eloquently –

- “I am worried. I need this program for my son.”
- “Many single parents cannot afford the services Northside Center’s After School Program provides.”
- “Please Council Members and others, please band together for the center so they can help the children.”
- “I pray to God that the (program) does not close ... in case something happens he has someplace to go.”

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to offer these remarks on behalf of the children and parents of The Northside Center for Child Development.

Sincerely,



Daniel Marangiello, M.S.Ed.  
Coordinator of Afterschool Services

Faheem Abdur-Razzaaq  
1295 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apt. 19D  
New York, NY 10029  
(212) 369-5447

May 23, 2012

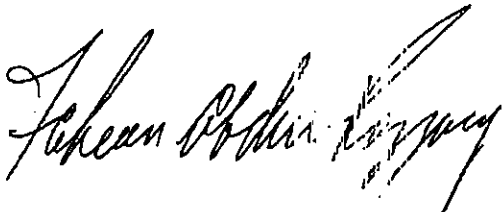
Testimony

Dear Council Members,

My name is Faheem and I am the proud parent of three wonderful children. I am writing this letter because I am disturbed about the funding cuts to Northside Center's afterschool program. My children's participation with the afterschool program has allowed me to further my education and receive extra academic assistance for my children. Northside Center provides excellent afterschool activities for the residents of Schomburg Plaza and many others in the East Harlem community. Defunding this organization would cause a tremendous strain on parents who work late and attend school and would deprive children of the much-needed services Northside provides. This cut would negatively affect the entire community and its effects will impact more families than you know. Please reconsider your position on funding Northside Center for the fall of 2012.

Thank you,

Faheem Abdur-Razzaaq  
Schomburg Plaza Tenants Association President



Annette Jimenez-Velez  
21 East 107<sup>th</sup> Street, Apt. 4H  
New York, New York 10029  
(917) 406-1091

May 23, 2012

Testimony

Dear Council Members,

My name is Annette Jimenez-Velez Reverend Bishop. I am an Elected Official in the East Harlem Community. My family has received services for more than four years at Northside Center. My oldest son started counseling with Ms. Jennifer Hogan because he was having difficulties at school. He was angry and frustrated because he was being bullied at school. In addition to counseling he started going to the After School tutoring program with Dr. Carla Beckford. We as a family were able to see the care that she put into my son's Education to ensure that he would not be another child left behind to fall through the cracks. Today, because of this help, my son is about to graduate from the 8th grade as an Honor Student.

Now, my youngest son attends Northside's After School and Summer Program, and he is benefitting from the services. This program is so unique. Danny Marangiello and all of the Northside counselors and teachers really care about the children, who, like my son, have their own unique challenges. The children learn as well as have fun in the program. During the summer they go on trips and have great times - this has always been excellent for families who had nowhere to go or nowhere to turn.

I can honestly say that Ms. Jennifer Hogan, Dr. Carla Beckford, and the Northside Center saved our Marriage, Our Home, and Our Family. The After School program was such a major source of support for my family. I am absolutely committed to fighting for it because, though we have our challenges, at least Our kids have a Mom and Dad but what about those who do not have anyone to be that positive role model for them?

The Northside After School Program provides exceptional services to many children from East and Central Harlem, some of the most difficult areas of New York – and, even, the country.

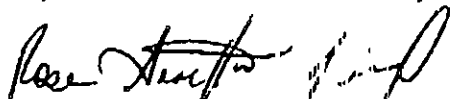
**But, the good news is that, those who reach Northside's doors, are put on the road to success. Northside kids are dropping IN, NOT OUT. They want to LEARN and stay in school.**

I urge everyone to take a pledge and call local Elected Officials who are all up for Reelection to save the After School Program at NORTHSIDE CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT NOW.

Please stand with us!

Thank you,

Bishop Annette Jimenez and Family



Keisha Bjorntzen  
10 West 135<sup>th</sup> Street, apt 5H  
New York, NY 10037  
(646) 821 0032

May 23, 2012

Testimony

Dear Council Members,

It saddens me to hear that Northside Center's After-school will not be reopening in September. Not only am I an employee, but I've also attended the after-school program as a youth. Over the years this program has provided me with most of the best memories and experiences that I have. As I see the children in the program learn, play, and participate in the activities, it creates new memories for us to share and take with us as we go through life. I've met new friends during attending and employment here and it hurts me to know that the program won't be able to have this experience that I have been able to fully enjoy. Best-friends and long term friendships are started here as well as the chance to try and learn new things. The children share a bond with the Program-Aides as well as the full staff that can't be broken. Bonds like experiencing a child that has been struggling in math and he/she receives a 95% on an exam or watching him/her catch a ball she finally learned to do. Experiences like those keep the program going and I live and I hope that I'm able to give the children in the program fun memories as I was able to have at Northside Center's Afterschool. Also, I am studying to be a teacher. Working at Northside gives me an opportunity to work and learn from education professionals so that I can continue to grow in this way too.

Thank you,

*Keisha Bjorntzen*  
Keisha Bjorntzen

Deniesha Martin  
2013 Fifth Avenue, Apt. B-21  
New York, NY 10035  
(518) 892-3602

May 23, 2012

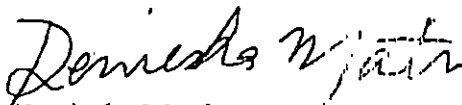
Testimony

Dear Council Members,

At the age of twelve like most pre-teens I was still learning and maturing, while exploring the different ropes of life and its opportunities. The first time I attended Northside Center for Child Development, I did not know what to expect. However, that season of my life was very influential in my success today. While attending Northside I met counselors who helped and contributed to my development over the years. When I look back on the years I was a participant here, I am nothing but grateful for the services that were offered to me, from the free tutoring, homework help, and mentoring to the amazing trips such as to the Medieval times. This program was very beneficial to my growth into woman hood. I've taken the strategies and morals I learned at Northside with me throughout life. I've mastered how to respond to many difficult situations throughout my life in a very positive way.

Northside Center for Child Development gives children an opportunity to be themselves despite their situations. Every child is encouraged to explore trials that may seem impossible in their lives, and are guided through these trials. It was at the age of eighteen that I decided to come and give back to this program. I was hired as a dance instructor for the Saturday Program, and we had a blast. I watched the children transform into confident performers in the time length of five weeks. This experience was very rewarding for me as well as the children and I've been here giving back ever since. Children need a program such as this, where they are cared for individually and not judged whatsoever for what they may not know. Instead they are encouraged to set goals and instructed on how to conquer these goals in the most sufficient way. Northside Center for Child Development played a big part in my life, and taught me lessons that I could not be who I am today without them.

Thank you,

  
Deniesha Martin

Kalimba Vann  
12 East 108<sup>th</sup> Street, apt. 6J  
New York, New York 10029  
(917) 370-7528

May 23, 2012

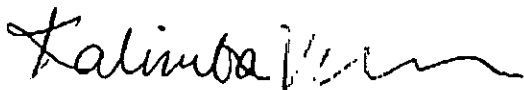
Testimony

My name is Kalimba Vann and I am a single parent raising a child with special needs. My son has ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyper Disorder). As a single parent it was hard to find an after school program with the services to meet my son's needs. I was very thankful to have found Northside Center after school program for my son. They offer the services he needed and at no cost to me, I was grateful to have found a government funded program.

My son has been attending Northside Center after school program since 2010. Within these two years he has received therapy and tutoring. He receives therapy to help express himself without getting frustrated or upset. He receives tutoring in math, reading, and writing. After his services he has an opportunity to also learn theater, how to play chess and use a computer.

During this journey I have observed that I am not the only parent in this program that needs the assistants. Many single parents cannot afford these services that Northside Center After School Program provides. We are grateful for the funding that is provided for the after school to be up and running. If you take the funding away where does that leave us because we can't afford these services.

Thank You,



Kalimba Vann

## Testimony

My 28 year old son attended the afterschool program and the summer program at Northside when he was in elementary school. Northside helped him educationally and socially. He learned how to express his feelings, get along with other children, and become independent. I feel now that my daughter is here in the afterschool program I see that they have more and greater things for her and I see the improvements that the center has made in the program. There are more options for the children to participate in the program. I feel that besides my children, along with other parents' children, they have benefitted from this program and it is much needed in the community. Please Council Members and others, please band together for the center so they can help the children, which will benefit each and every one of us.

Laverne Bradley May 16, 2012

new address:

1764 Walton Avenue  
Bronx - N.Y. 10453

old address:

1309 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue 22F  
N.Y. N.Y. 10029



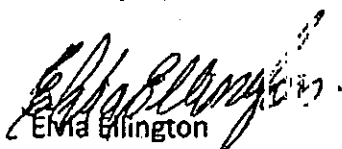
Elvia Ellington  
1660 Madison Avenue, apt 11D  
New York, NY 10029  
(347) 575-4066

May 15, 2012

TESTIMONY

I am worried. I need this program for my son. I pray to God that the center does not close. The program helps me in case something happens he has someplace to go. It will be difficult for me if it closes.

Thank you,

  
Elvia Ellington

May 8, 2012

The Honorable Lewis A. Fidler  
District 46 - Council Member  
250 Broadway  
Suite 1827  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Council Member Fidler,

I am writing to urge you to fight for the restoration of funding to support Northside's Afterschool and Summer Out of School Time (OST) program.

My child has used these services and has benefitted greatly from the academic support and other stimulating programs offered at Northside. There are many resources at Northside, so this is an ideal program for children and families with multiple needs.

Please ensure that the Northside OST program is able to continue so my family won't suffer.

Sincerely,

Northside Parent/Guardian

Name: De Anna Thomas Daniels  
Address: 1035 Jerome Ave #A6B  
BX NYC 10452  
Telephone#: 718 207 2923