

## Reclaiming the Streets

### **BRONX STAT:** What T.A. and CCB's Research Says

**3-7 pm** Time during which child pedestrians in New York City are most likely to be hit **29** Total pedestrian fatalities in the Bronx in 2004 **1,845** Total pedestrian injuries in the Bronx in 2004 **8.3** Average length in days of hospital stay for an injured pedestrian in the Bronx **\$27,618** Mean charge per hospitalization of injured pedestrians in the Bronx **Buffalo, Schenectady, Rotterdam, Bayshore, White Plains, Danville** cities and towns in New York State that use slow speed zones near schools **Alaska, Arizona, Illinois, Indiana, Florida, Louisiana, Ohio, Oregon, Maine, Minnesota, Nevada, Pennsylvania, South Carolina** States outside of New York State that use slow speed zones near schools **137** Number of 20 mph zones (enforced with traffic calming) in London by 2002 which have lead to **61%** reduction in the number of child pedestrians killed or seriously injured **50%** reduction in the number of all pedestrians killed or seriously injured **77%** reduction in the number of car occupants killed or seriously injured.

# Only the Strong Shall Survive



Parents in the Bronx demand slower speeds around their children's schools

## DOT Forces Parents and Children to Extraordinary Lengths to Win Simple Improvements

**Y**OU MAY NOT BELIEVE HOW HARD it can be to win common sense improvements to our streets. Sometimes we at T.A. are shocked to be reminded of just how difficult it usually is to get the City Department of Transportation to make painfully obvious improvements to our streets. But the story of the Community Collaborative to Improve Bronx School's safe streets campaign is a maddening reminder that the DOT is ready to resist even negotiating with the most well organized and determined of concerned community members.

### Common Sense Solutions to Common Problems

As we detailed in the previous issue of *Transportation Alternatives Magazine*, the Community Collaborative to Improve Bronx Schools, which is a coalition of parents, schools and community groups who work together to

win educational justice in Bronx schools, has presented a proposal to the City Department of Transportation to create safe zones around all public schools in the Bronx. It is a common sense proposal that calls for long overdue improvements like speed humps on small streets and more time to cross the street on big streets to prevent more needless

### **DOT STAT:** What the DOT's Research Says

According to the DOT, "Past research suggests that to be effective, school speed limits should be reasonable and consistent with drivers' perceptions of the need for caution in these zones."

# Reclaiming the Streets

deaths. The group, which includes as members ACORN, the Citizens Advice Bureau, Highbridge Community Life Center, Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council, New Settlement Apartments, Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition and the NYU Institute for Education and Social Policy, expected the DOT to at least read and consider its proposal seriously, and to be willing to negotiate. But the DOT has not opted to negotiate in good faith.

In an effort to win the DOT's support, CCB has taken their case to the DOT and to New Yorkers at large. To date they have had seven formal meetings with DOT staff, hand delivered a personal invitation to DOT First Deputy Commissioner, Judith Bergtraum and sent her Mother's Day flowers and a card.

They have also staged a press conference on the steps of City Hall with 100 parents

and children, Councilmember Helen Foster, a representative from the Bronx Borough President's office, Vice President of the UFT, Michelle Bodden, and a representative from State Senator Serrano's office. When the DOT did not offer anything substantial, they then held a rally and march of 500 parents and children in the Bronx, leading

to blocking traffic on the Grand Concourse. When the DOT still did not offer an adequate counter offer, the CCB held a funeral procession of 100 parents and children, a priest and a coffin in front of the mayor's campaign office.

CCB's large, forceful actions have draw the attention of major media including: front cover coverage in *Hoy, El Diario* and the *Daily News* Metro Section. They have also merited an article in the *New York Times*, and made appearances on NY1, Fox 5, UPN 9, Channel 7, Channel 4, Bronx 12, and BronxTalk.

CCB is not content just to put on a good show. They have also conducted in-depth research on the specific problems and needs of schools. They have collected lists of problems and recommended solu-

## CCB Supporters

- 25,000 Bronx residents including local parents and principals
- United Federation of Teachers
- Irma Zadoya, Superintendent of Region 1 schools
- Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión
- City Councilmember Helen Foster
- City Councilmember Anabel Palma
- City Councilmember Maria Baez
- State Assemblymember Michael Benjamin
- State Assemblymember Aurelia Greene
- State Senator José Serrano
- State Senator Ruben Diaz, Sr.
- Congressman Joseph Crowley
- Congressman José Serrano
- American Heart Association
- Bronx Health Initiative

tions from most principals in the Bronx. They have collected lists of problems and recommended solutions from United Federation of Teacher representatives at Bronx schools. With T.A.'s assistance they have compiled best practices on traffic safety zones from around the city and world. Finally, CCB has conducted independent surveys of schools to determine what is in place and what is needed. Below is their proposal and DOT's response. □

## What CCB has proposed:

Implement Traffic Safety Zones within 1,320 feet of all Bronx public schools using the New York State Traffic Calming Law and the New York State School Speed Limit Law. This includes:

1. 15 mph zones enforced with traffic calming measures around schools on small streets and medium sized streets where it is appropriate
2. Pedestrian safety zones enforced with traffic calming measures around schools on big streets that reduce pedestrian crashes by 50% by 2010 (compared to 2004 levels) while maintaining or increasing pedestrian volumes
3. Installation of Traffic Safety Zones around any schools built or renovated in the Bronx after June 30, 2005
4. City Department of Transportation annual audit of school pedestrian safety in the Bronx; this includes publishing statistics on students being injured or killed by drivers in the Mayor's Management Report and maintenance of all devices at the schools
5. Automatic evaluation of the need for additional safety measures in the event of a death or injury to a pedestrian within 1,320 feet of a school, the findings of which will be subject to review by the principal and installed within a year of the beginning of the investigation

## The DOT's Response:

1. Installation of two new speed humps near schools by June 2005
2. Review of three school locations for speed humps by June 2005
3. Review of 25 priority schools in the Safe Routes to School Program by fall 2005 (it has been over a year since the DOT launched this program which many schools and elected officials had expected to address their problems after many years of begging for relief)
4. A test of 15 and 20 mph zones on a total of five streets near schools in the Bronx
5. Request that CCB help lobby Albany lawmakers to support red light enforcement cameras and speed enforcement camera legislative initiatives

### TakeAction!

Watch a short documentary of the CCB campaign at [homepage.mac.com/trob/OpenPlanningProj/iMovieTheaters56.html](http://homepage.mac.com/trob/OpenPlanningProj/iMovieTheaters56.html)