

Section 5:

Neighborhood Services & Conditions

Indicators suggest that school performance, health, and public safety all continue to improve in New York City. However, these aggregate gains have not closed the significant gaps in environments between lower-income and higher-income New Yorkers. Overall, lower-income households continue to live in neighborhoods with higher crime rates and lower-performing schools than their higher-income counterparts.

1. Crime

a. New York City's total crime rate has reached historically low levels.

New York City's serious crime rate decreased significantly—by nearly 12 serious crimes per 1,000 residents—between 2000 and 2012, according to data reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting Program. Figure 5.1 depicts serious crime rates (excluding rape) that the five largest cities reported to the FBI.¹ During this period, each of the five largest cities also saw a decline in their total crime rate. Chicago experienced the largest decline of 21.3 crimes per 1,000 residents and Houston the smallest of 5.7 crimes per 1,000 residents. Despite the larger decline in crime in Chicago, New York City still had the lowest serious crime rate of the five largest cities in 2012, with a rate of 23.8 crimes per 1,000 people.²

b. New York City's murder rate reached a historic low in 2012.

From 2000 to 2012, New York City saw a decline of 0.03 murders per 1,000 residents citywide. New York City tied with Chicago for the second largest decline of the five largest cities. In 2012, there were 419 murders reported in New York City—fewer than in any year since 1963, the year

that the New York City Police Department first started collecting data. The decline was particularly steep from 2011 to 2012, when the number of murders in New York City declined 18.6 percent—from 515 in 2011 to 419 in 2012. As seen in Figure 5.2, four out of five of the largest cities saw a decline in their murder rate between 2000 and 2012. The decline in Los Angeles was particularly notable. Still, New York City's homicide rate was lower in 2012 than in any of the four other largest cities.

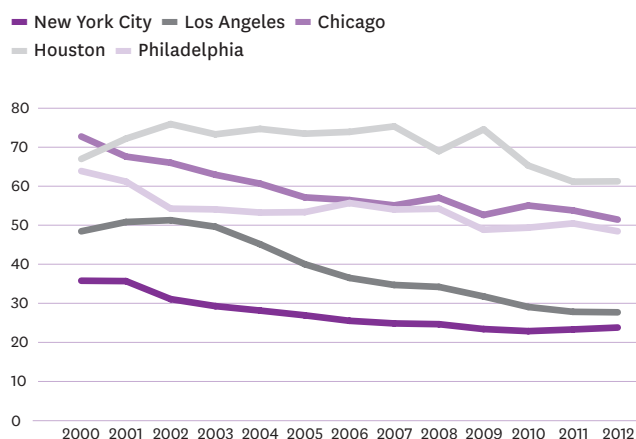
c. New York City's overall incarceration rate declined between 2000 and 2012.

New York City's incarceration rate (the proportion of residents currently in prison) fell from 1,341 per 100,000 residents to 1,081 per 100,000 residents between 2000 and 2012—a decline of 260 incarcerated individuals per 100,000 residents. But not every borough experienced a decline. As seen in Figure 5.3, while the Bronx and Manhattan saw their incarceration rates drop significantly, Brooklyn and Staten Island both experienced increases. Of the five boroughs, the Bronx enjoyed the largest decline in its incarceration rate, falling by about 1,290 incarcerations per 100,000 residents from 2,232 incarcerations per 100,000 residents in 2000 to 942 incarcerations per 100,000 residents in 2012. Manhattan also experienced a notable decline of 791 incarcerations per 100,000 residents. Brooklyn saw the largest increase in its incarceration rate of 392 incarcerations per 100,000 residents.

¹ Because Chicago does not conform to the FBI's standard for reporting rape, rape is omitted from serious crime rates shown in Figure 5.1.

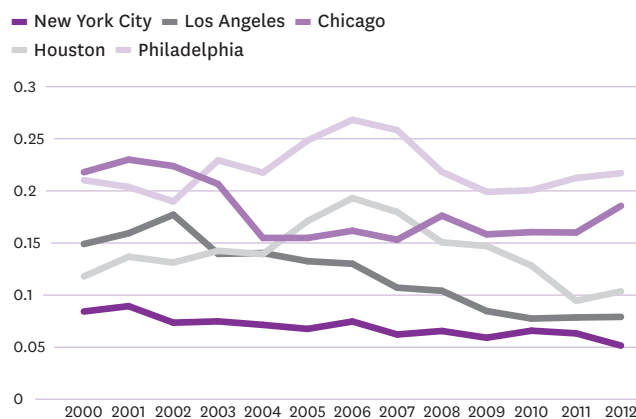
² The source of New York City's crime data in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Program, differs from the source used in Figures 5.4, 5.5, 5.6; Table 5.1; and Part 3 of the report: the New York State Penal Code standard as reported by the New York City Police Department. Due to the differences in reporting standards between the sources, we advise against comparing crime data between sections.

Figure 5.1: Total Serious Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents, Excluding Rape), Five Largest U.S. Cities²



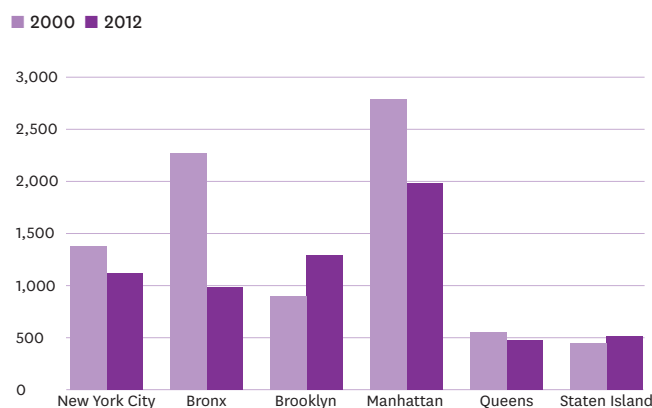
Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Program, NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.2: Murder Rate (per 1,000 Residents), Five Largest U.S. Cities



Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Program, NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.3: Adult Incarceration Rate (per 100,000 Residents) by Borough



Sources: New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, NYU Furman Center

Comparing New York City's High- and Low-Crime Neighborhoods

Stark socioeconomic differences exist between New York City's neighborhoods with the highest and lowest crime rates. Table 5.1 shows that the top 25 percent of precincts with the highest rates of crime had nearly double the poverty rate of the quartile of precincts with the lowest crime rates (29% and 14%, respectively), and over three times the child poverty rate (79% and 26%, respectively) from 2008 to 2012. During the same period the city's highest crime neighborhoods had larger average shares of black (47%) and Hispanic (34%) residents, while an average of 54 percent of the residents in the city's lowest crime neighborhoods were white.

Table 5.1: Weighted Average Neighborhood Socioeconomic Characteristics (2008-2012) by Neighborhood Serious Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents) Quartile in 2012, New York City^{2,3}

	First Quartile (Lower Crime)	Second Quartile	Third Quartile	Fourth Quartile (Higher Crime)
Percent Asian	20.5%	13.7%	4.8%	4.4%
Percent Black	4.5%	22.3%	37.2%	47.0%
Percent Hispanic	19.0%	33.4%	36.8%	33.7%
Percent White	54.1%	27.3%	19.1%	12.3%
Unemployment Rate	8.3%	10.4%	12.5%	13.6%
Poverty Rate	13.9%	18.1%	25.9%	28.7%
Poverty Rate: Population Under 18	26.2%	40.7%	63.9%	79.0%
Homeownership Rate	44.0%	37.2%	20.2%	23.0%
Median Household Income (2013\$)	\$73,185	\$54,926	\$43,818	\$43,267
Median Monthly Rent (2013\$)	\$1,425	\$1,239	\$1,093	\$1,088
Educational Attainment:				
No High School Diploma	16.9%	22.7%	25.8%	27.2%
Educational Attainment:				
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	39.4%	26.8%	25.1%	21.9%

Sources: American Community Survey (2008-2012), New York City Police Department (2012), NYU Furman Center

³ Table 5.1 presents weighted averages of socioeconomic characteristics of Census tracts from the American Community Survey's 2008-2012 estimates by quartile of total felony crime rates as of 2012. Indicators describing personal characteristics (race, unemployment, poverty, educational attainment) are weighted by that Census tract's total population, and indicators describing the conditions of households (homeownership rate, income, rent) are weighted by that tract's number of households. Precincts in Manhattan below 59th Street and Central Park are excluded. These precincts tend to have relatively higher crime rates because the daytime population of workers cannot be counted in the rate's denominator (for more information, see definition of serious crime rate in the Indicator Definitions and Rankings chapter).

Average Neighborhood Crime Rates by Household Income

There exists an apparent association between household income and the safety of one's neighborhood in New York City. The New York City Police Department divides major felonies (described together previously as serious crimes) into two sub-categories: *violent crime* includes murder, rape, assault, and robbery, while *property crime* includes burglary, larceny, and grand larceny of a motor vehicle.

While New Yorkers of all income levels lived in safer neighborhoods in 2013 than they did in 2000, the city's lowest-income households (earning \$20,000 or less) experienced the largest reductions in crimes per 1,000 residents from 2000 to 2013. Figure 5.4 illustrates these trends. But despite these overall reductions, in both 2000 and 2013, the city's lowest-income households experienced the highest incidence of violent crime. In 2013, the average violent crime rate for the city's lowest-income households was two crimes per 1,000 residents higher than that of the city's highest-income households.

Household income is also closely associated with a neighborhood's murder rate. As shown in Figure 5.5, in 2013, the average household earning up to \$20,000 annually saw an average murder rate nearly twice as high as the average household earning over \$250,000 annually. Similar to trends in the incidence of violent crime faced by households of different income levels, the average murder rate fell the most for the city's poorest households, by 0.05 murders per 1,000 residents, from 2000 to 2013.

In 2013, higher-income households lived on average in neighborhoods with much higher rates of property crime than lower-income households, as depicted in Figure 5.6. For example, the highest-income households (those earning more than \$250,000 annually) faced an average of 12 property crimes per 1,000 residents, while the lowest-income households (those earning \$20,000 or less annually) saw an average of eight property crimes per 1,000 residents. An important limitation to note is that the city's highest-income households are more likely to reside in mixed-use neighborhoods with daytime populations that exceed the number of residents, or nighttime residents.

Because crime rates do not take into account the number of people in the neighborhood during the day, these rates may overstate the risk of crime in mixed-use neighborhoods. As for changes from 2000 to 2013, the average property crime rate fell the most for the city's highest-income households.

Figure 5.4: Average Violent Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents) by Household Income, New York City²



Sources: New York City Police Department, U.S. Census (2000), American Community Survey (2012), NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.5: Average Homicide Rate (per 1,000 Residents) by Household Income, New York City²



Sources: New York City Police Department, U.S. Census (2000), American Community Survey (2012), NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.6: Average Property Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents) by Household Income, New York City²



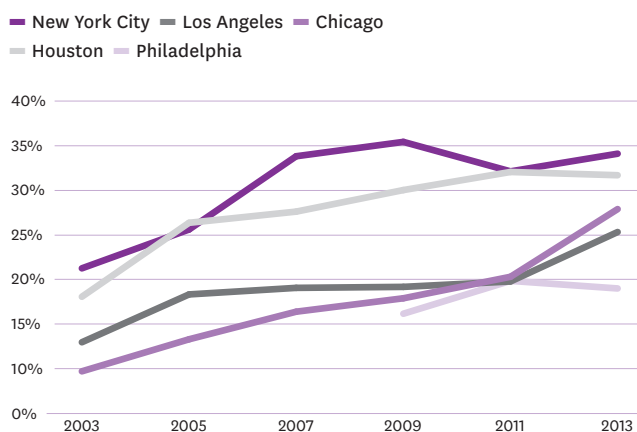
Sources: New York City Police Department, U.S. Census (2000), American Community Survey (2012), NYU Furman Center

2. Schools

a. Citywide, student performance in math and reading continued to improve.

During the 2012-2013 school year, New York City fourth graders out-performed their peers in the other four largest U.S. cities in both math and reading, as seen in Figures 5.7 and 5.8. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (the Nation's Report Card), 34 percent of New York City fourth graders performed at or above a proficient level in math, a 13 percentage point increase since 2003. In reading, 28 percent of fourth graders performed at or above proficient, a six percentage point increase over 2003.

Figure 5.7: Fourth Grade Students Performing at or Above “Proficient” in Math on National Assessment of Educational Progress, School Districts of Five Largest U.S. Cities



Sources: National Assessment of Educational Progress, NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.9: Average Percentage of Students Performing at Grade Level in Math by Household Income, New York City

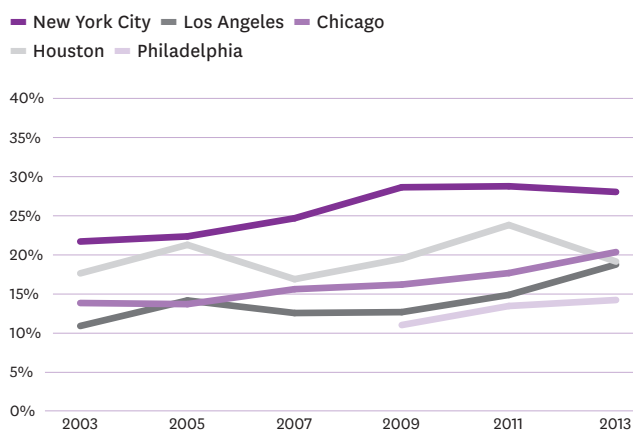


Sources: New York City Department of Education, U.S. Census (2000), American Community Survey (2012), NYU Furman Center

b. Significant income disparities exist in New York City school performance.

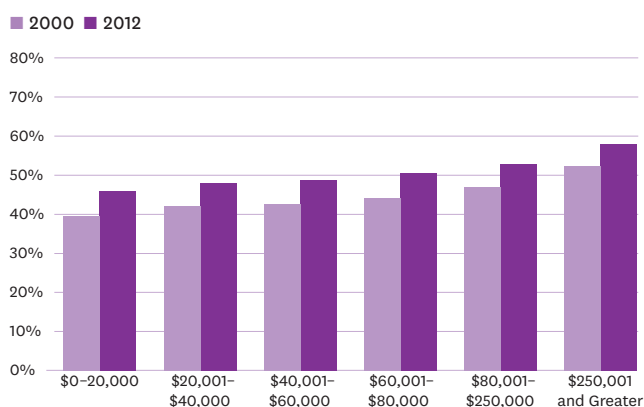
While overall student achievement has improved in both reading and math, clear disparities persist in the academic performance of students attending different schools. Figures 5.9 and 5.10 show that in 2012, the average public school student from a household earning more than \$250,000 attended a local school with peers whose proficiency rates were 11 percentage points higher in math and 12 percentage points higher in reading than the rates in the average school attended by a student from a household earning less than \$20,000. In reading, the proficiency gap between the schools narrowed by less than a percentage point from 2000 to 2012, while the proficiency gap in math narrowed by two percentage points.

Figure 5.8: Fourth Grade Students Performing at or Above “Proficient” in Reading on National Assessment of Educational Progress, School Districts of Five Largest U.S. Cities



Sources: National Assessment of Educational Progress, NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.10: Average Percentage of Students Performing at Grade Level in Reading by Household Income, New York City



Sources: New York City Department of Education, U.S. Census (2000), American Community Survey (2012), NYU Furman Center

c. New York City's high school graduation rate increased by 18.2 percentage points from 2005 to 2012.

New York City's four-year high school graduation rate—defined as the share of students who entered high school four years earlier and graduated on time—was 64.7 percent in 2012; 18.2 percentage points higher than it was in 2005. As illustrated in Figure 5.11, New York City has outpaced the other four largest school districts in New York State (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers) in improving its overall graduation rate, and has narrowed the gap with New York State as a whole from 19.3 percentage points in 2005 to 12 percentage points in 2012.

3. Health

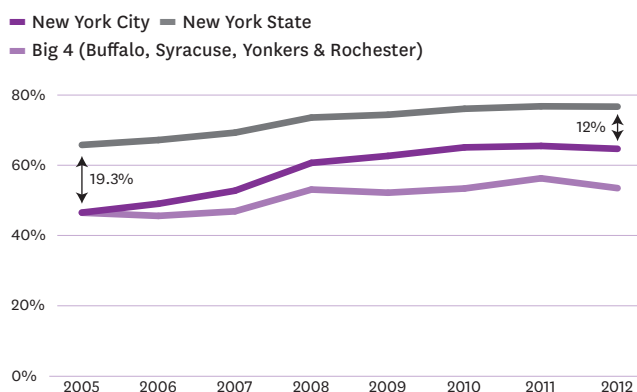
a. Infant mortality remains lower in New York City than the U.S. as a whole.

New York City's infant mortality rate has been consistently lower than the U.S. average from 2000 to 2011, and the gap between the two has increased over time. Figure 5.12 shows that New York City's infant mortality rate declined fairly steadily and significantly from 2000 to 2011—falling from 6.7 deaths in the first year of life per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 4.7 in 2011—while the national infant mortality rate declined at a slower pace. New York City experienced 0.2 fewer infant deaths per 1,000 live births than the U.S. in 2000, but by 2011, the city had 1.4 fewer infant deaths per 1,000 live births than the U.S. In 2010 and 2011, New York City's infant mortality rate was also lower than that of Philadelphia, Chicago, and Houston.

b. Incidence of elevated blood lead levels has fallen steadily.

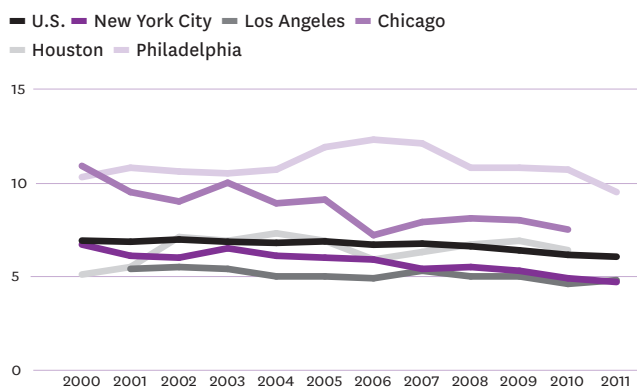
The incidence of elevated blood lead levels in New York City's children has consistently declined since 2000, falling from 21.1 cases per 1,000 children tested in 2000 to just 3.1 cases per 1,000 children tested in 2012. Lead-based paint—the primary cause of elevated blood lead levels—was banned in 1978, but it is still found in many older buildings. As awareness of the dangers of lead poisoning has increased, and city health departments have devoted more attention to the issue, the rate of lead poisoning has declined dramatically across the country and in all of the largest cities for which data are available. Despite New York City's older housing stock, its 2012 rate of elevated blood lead levels in children was lower than the rate for the United States as a whole, which was 6.2 cases per 1,000 children tested in that year. Figure 5.13 highlights these trends. ■

Figure 5.11: Four-Year High School Graduation Rates, Five Largest New York State Districts and New York State



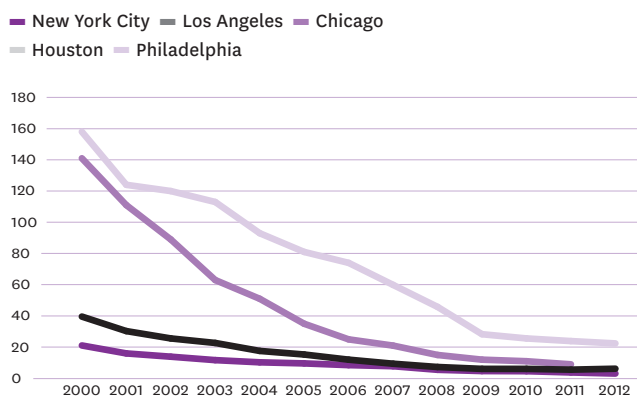
Sources: New York City Department of Education, New York State Education Department, NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.12: Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 Live Births), U.S. and Five Largest U.S. Cities



Sources: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Summary of Vital Statistics, NYU Furman Center

Figure 5.13: Elevated Blood Lead Levels (Rate per 1,000 Children Tested), Five Largest U.S. Cities

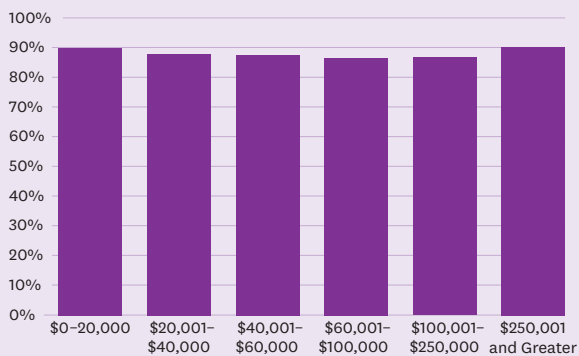


Sources: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health, Chicago Department of Public Health, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Public Citizens for Children and Youth, NYU Furman Center

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Neighborhoods with Access to Green Space

Although lower-income New Yorkers tend to live in neighborhoods with higher crime rates and lower performing schools than the average New Yorker, such economic disparities do not apply when it comes to access to green space (specifically, parks of at least a quarter acre or Greenstreets). In fact, as shown in Figure 5.14, the proportion of housing units occupied by the city's highest-income households (those earning more than \$250,000 annually) that were within a quarter-mile of a park or Greenstreet was identical to the proportion of housing units occupied by the city's lowest-income households (those earning less than \$20,000 annually) that were within a quarter-mile of a park or Greenstreet. Housing units occupied by the city's middle-income groups were only slightly less likely to be located within a quarter-mile of a park or Greenstreet.

Figure 5.14: Percent of New York City Households Living Within 1/4 Mile of a Park, 2012



Sources: New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center

