



# ClaimStat Alert

Office of the New York City Comptroller

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BUREAU OF POLICY & RESEARCH AND BUREAU OF LAW AND ADJUSTMENT

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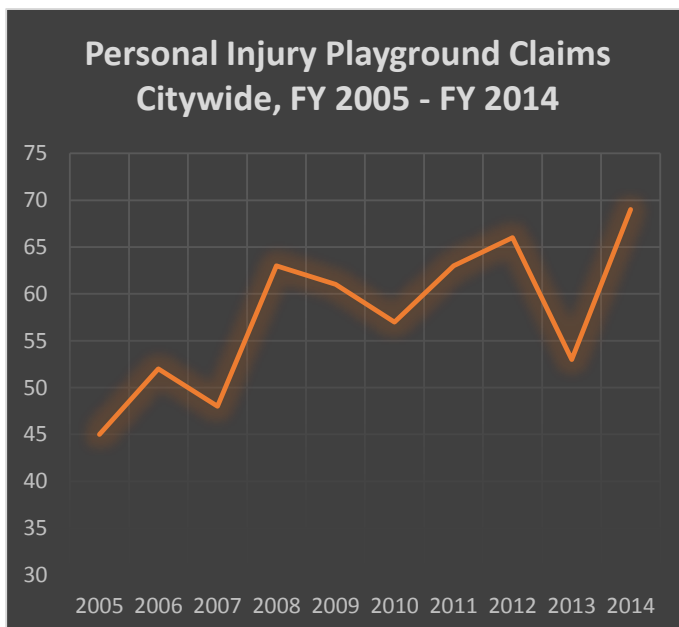
## ClaimStat Alert: Protecting Kids on NYC Playgrounds

In 1903, the City of New York opened Seward Park, the first permanent municipally-built playground in the country.<sup>1</sup> On opening day, over 20,000 children jammed into the park, overwhelming the 5,000 seats that had been set aside for the formal program.<sup>2</sup> The excitement that began in Seward Park soon spread across the City. From 1934 to 1960, as the New Deal and the Baby Boom of the post-WW II era brought additional federal funding for playgrounds, the number of municipal playgrounds in New York City soared from 119 to 777.<sup>3</sup>

Now as then, playgrounds continue to draw children from every corner of the five boroughs. Today, nearly 1,000 playgrounds maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation (“Parks”) host hundreds of thousands of children annually.<sup>4</sup>

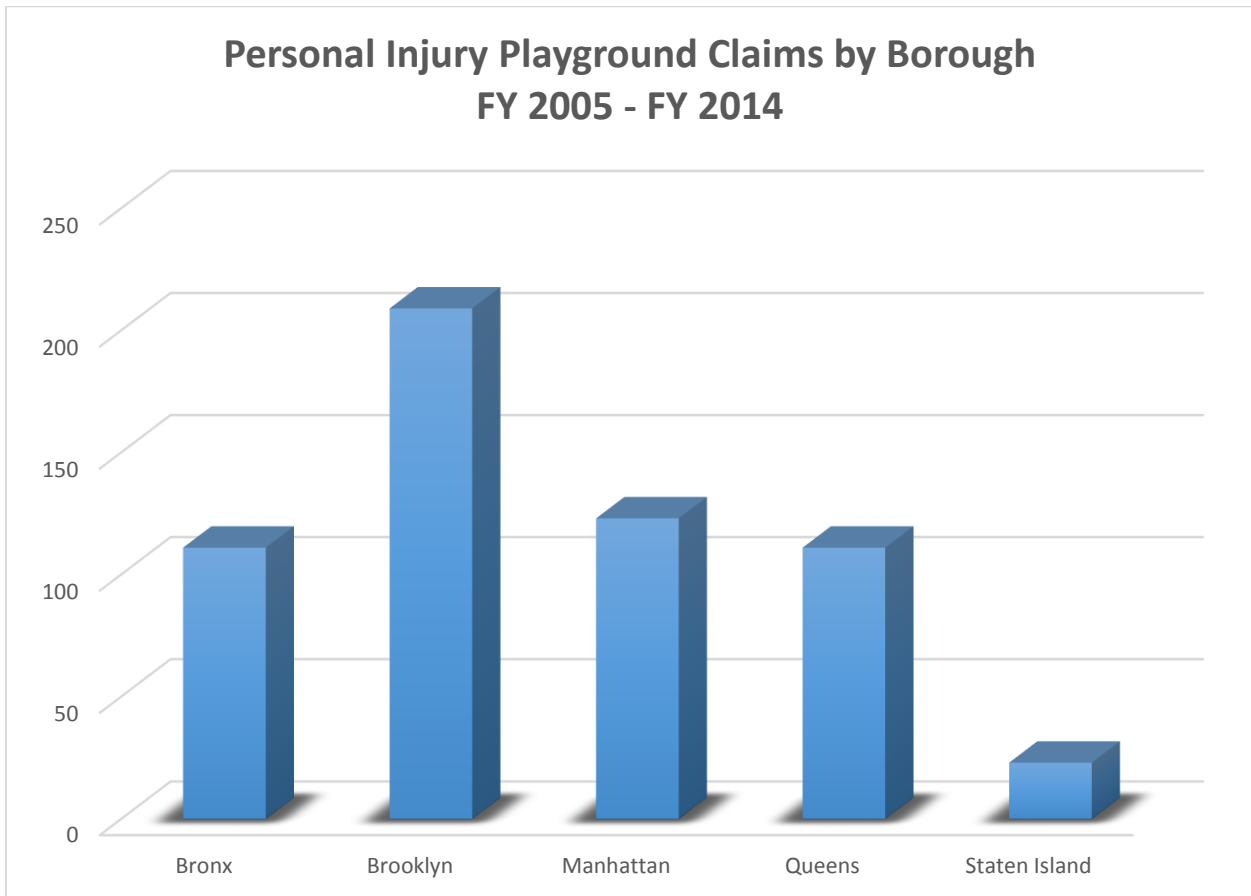
While the vast majority of children safely use our City’s playgrounds, some are injured—sometimes seriously. In this **ClaimStat Alert**, we analyze playground-related personal injury claims against the City of New York from Fiscal Year 2005 to Fiscal Year 2014. We found the following:

- 577 claims were filed against the City over the ten-year period—an average of over one a week.
- Annual claims have risen 53 percent over the last ten fiscal years, from a low of 45 in FY 2005 to a high of 69 in FY 2014, despite the fact that the number of children under the age of 18 in New York City declined by nearly 7 percent from 2005 to 2013.<sup>5</sup>
- 530 playground-related personal injury claims were settled between FY 2005 and FY 2014 at a cost of \$20.6 million.<sup>6</sup>





- Causes for injuries cited in the claims included:
  - Defective/broken surfaces/matting, including several claims where children burned their feet on matting in summer months
  - Improper playground design
  - Insufficient maintenance of equipment, such as swings and slides
  - Protruding nails and/or debris
- Brooklyn had by far the most claims filed during this time period—209—dwarfing Manhattan (123), the Bronx (111), Queens (111), and Staten Island (23).



ClaimStat is designed to save taxpayer money and improve services across all City agencies by taking a data-driven approach to the thousands of claims filed annually against the City of New York.

The Parks Department can use this ClaimStat Alert, which includes maps detailing where playground claims have arisen in the last ten years, as a tool to determine how to invest capital dollars in our City’s playgrounds and explore how design improvements and enhanced training for Parks maintenance staff can make our playgrounds safer for the next century of New York City kids.



The Parks Department could start by reviewing playgrounds with the highest number of claims over the past decade, including the Mullaly Park Playground in the South Bronx and the Dr. Ronald E. McNair Playground in East Harlem.<sup>7</sup>

Playground / Park Name	Number of Claims	Borough
<b>Mullaly Park Playground</b>	7	BX
<b>Dr. Ronald E. McNair Playground</b>	7	MN
<b>Stroud Playground</b>	6	BK
<b>Union Square Park</b>	6	MN
<b>Slope Park Playground</b>	6	BK
<b>Juniper Valley Park</b>	6	QN
<b>Wright Brothers Playground</b>	5	MN
<b>Thomas Jefferson Park Playground</b>	5	MN
<b>Belmont Playground</b>	5	BX
<b>Sunset Park</b>	5	BK
<b>Kolbert Park Playground</b>	4	BK
<b>Bensonhurst Park</b>	4	BK
<b>Gravesend Park</b>	4	BK
<b>Watson Gleason Playground</b>	4	BX
<b>Bushwick Playground</b>	4	BK

Our analysis also shows how elements of playground design can lead to more injuries than others. As shown in the table on page 4, improper surfacing—including missing or defective matting (86 claims), cracked or broken surfaces (73), holes in the ground (14), and rubber mats that become too hot in summer months (3)—accounted for 176 claims during this time period, over 30 percent of the total.

Certain types of equipment are more likely to contribute to injuries than others, including climbing apparatus like monkey bars (10 percent of all claims), as well as slides (5 percent) and swings (4 percent). Improper maintenance also accounts for a considerable share of claims (ten percent).



Type of Claim	Number of Claims	BX	BK	MN	QN	SI
N/A (BLANK) <sup>8</sup>	163	30	56	39	33	5
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - MISSING/DEFECTIVE MATTING	86	22	32	14	16	2
SURFACE/GROUND - CRACKED/BROKEN	73	15	35	5	14	4
IMPROPER MAINTENANCE	60	5	28	15	10	2
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - CLIMBING APPARATUS	56	14	18	15	6	3
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - UNSPEC	35	6	7	10	10	2
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - SLIDE	28	5	4	5	12	2
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - SWING/TIRE SWING	21	4	10	3	3	1
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - OTHER PLAYGROUND EQUIP	19	3	5	9	1	1
SURFACE/GROUND - HOLE/DEPRESSION	14	3	5	4	2	0
DEBRIS/GLASS	6	1	4	0	1	0
EQUIP FAILURE/DEFECT	5	1	1	2	1	0
IMPROPER PLAYGROUND DESIGN	5	1	2	1	0	1
BURNT FEET - RUBBER MAT RELATED	3	0	1	1	1	0
PROTRUDING - BOLTS/NAILS	2	1	1	0	0	0
PROTRUDING - PIPES/POSTS	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>23</b>

The data also shows that certain communities suffered from greater numbers of playground-related claims than others over the past decade.

As shown in Map I, Manhattan Community District 11 in East Harlem, Community District 3 in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Queens Community District 5, encompassing Glendale, Ridgewood, Maspeth, and Middle Village, had the highest numbers of claims during this time period.

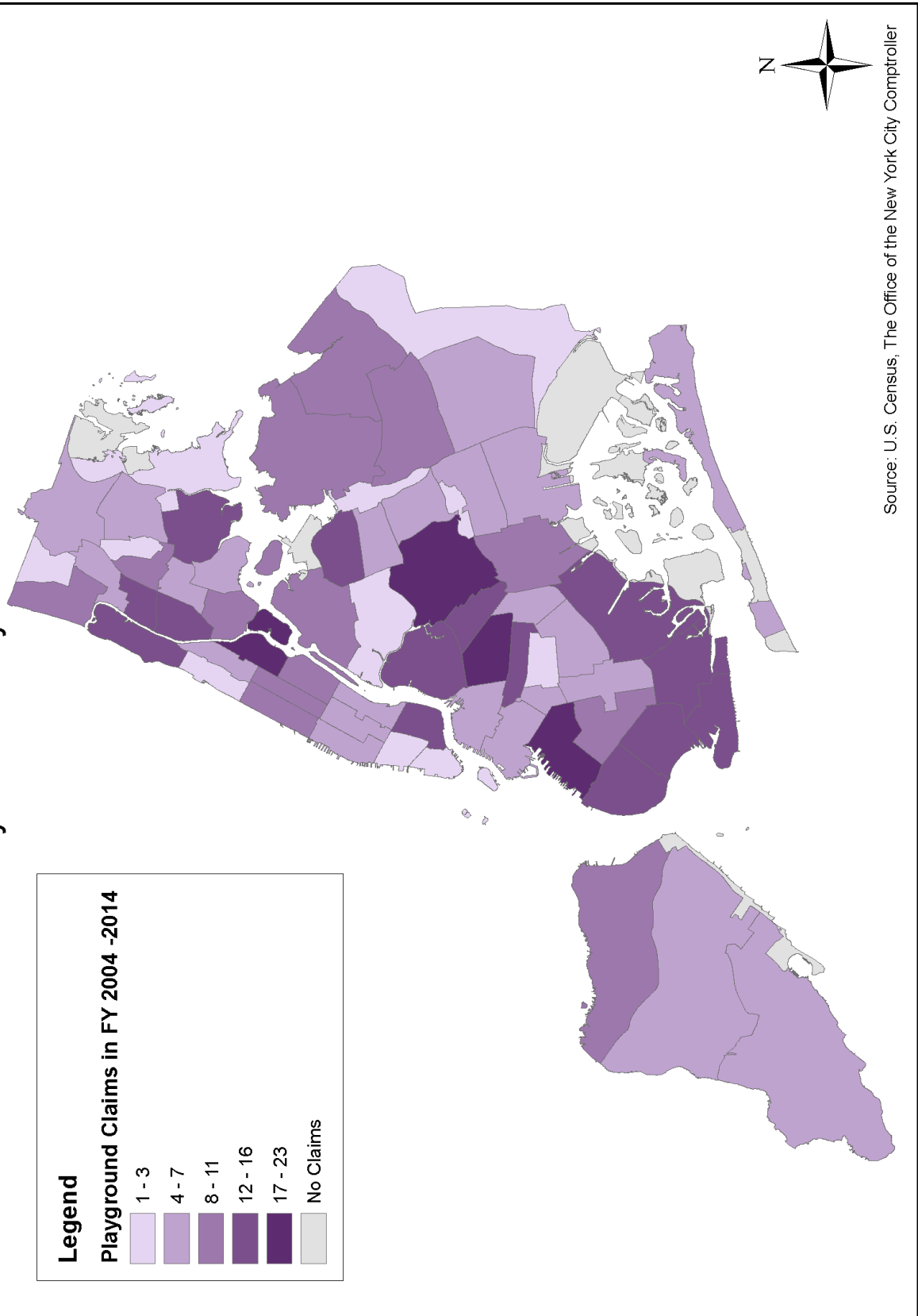
Map II shows claims broken down by City Council District, with the greatest number of claims in Council District 8 in Manhattan/Bronx, with 30 claims, Council District 43 in Brooklyn with 20 claims, Council District 30 in Queens with 19 claims, and Council District 16 in the Bronx with 18 claims.

A complete list of claims by Community District and City Council District can be found in the Appendix.



## MAP I

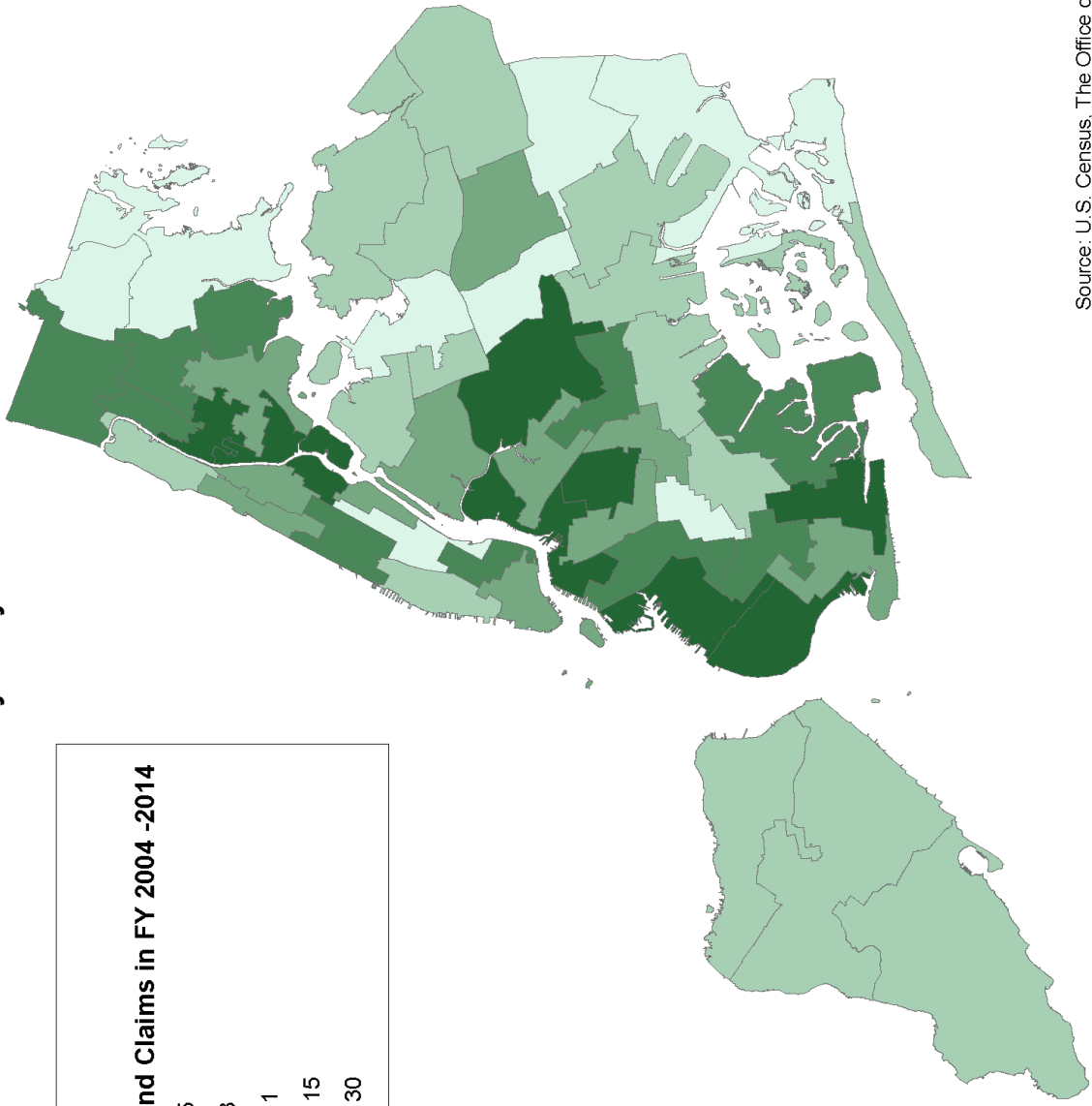
### Personal Injury Playground Claims in FY 2005 - 2014 By Community District





## MAP II

### Personal Injury Playground Claims in FY 2005 - 2014 By City Council District



**Legend**

Playground Claims in FY 2004 -2014

2 - 5
6 - 8
9 - 11
12 - 15
16 - 30

Source: U.S. Census, The Office of the New York City Comptroller



## Settlements

There were 530 playground-related personal injury claims settled between FY 2005 and FY 2014, with some claims dating from as far back as 1992. As with claims filed, Brooklyn had the highest number of settlements, though the Bronx had the highest total value of settlements and the highest average amount per settlement. The disparity in the Bronx numbers is largely attributable to a single claim, filed in 1999 and settled in 2007 for \$3.5 million.<sup>9</sup>

Borough	Number of Claims Settled	Total Value of Claims Settled	Average Amount per Settlement
<b>Bronx</b>	130	\$7,468,589	\$57,451
<b>Brooklyn</b>	175	\$6,604,664	\$37,741
<b>Manhattan</b>	109	\$3,856,150	\$35,378
<b>Queens</b>	99	\$2,391,250	\$24,154
<b>Staten Island</b>	17	\$323,795	\$19,047
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>\$20,644,448</b>	<b>\$38,952</b>

Type of Claim	# of Claims	BX	BK	MN	QN	SI	Total Amount of Claims	Average Amount per Claim
N/A (BLANK)	153	41	56	29	24	3	\$4,198,265	\$27,440
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - MISSING/DEFECT MATTIN	76	22	29	12	11	2	\$2,187,889	\$28,788
PLAYGROUND	56	10	16	11	17	2	\$6,553,750	\$117,031
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - CLIMBING APPARATUS	55	14	17	12	10	2	\$1,351,000	\$24,564
SURFACE/GROUND - CRACKED/BROKEN	50	11	18	8	10	3	\$1,456,150	\$29,123
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - UNSPEC	29	3	9	11	5	1	\$1,068,350	\$36,840
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - SLIDE	28	8	4	5	9	2	\$1,550,250	\$55,366
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - SWING/TIRE SWING	24	7	8	6	2	1	\$754,944	\$31,456
SURFACE/GROUND - HOLE/DEPRESSION	18	5	5	3	5	0	\$479,000	\$26,611



Type of Claim	# of Claims	BX	BK	MN	QN	SI	Total Amount of Claims	Average Amount per Claim
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - OTHER PLYGRND EQUIP	13	3	3	6	1	0	\$467,850	\$35,988
IMPROPER PLAYGROUND DESIGN	8	2	3	1	1	1	\$199,000	\$24,875
DEBRIS/GLASS	7	1	4	1	1	0	\$94,250	\$13,464
EQUIP FAILURE/DEFECT	4	1	0	1	2	0	\$92,000	\$23,000
PROTRUDING - PIPES/POSTS	3	0	1	1	1	0	\$37,250	\$12,417
PLAYGROUND EQUIP - TIMBERFORM	2	0	1	1	0	0	\$60,000	\$30,000
BURNT FEET - RUBBER MAT RELATED	2	0	1	1	0	0	\$37,500	\$18,750
PROTRUDING - BOLTS/NAILS	2	2	0	0	0	0	\$57,000	\$28,500
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>\$20,644,448</b>	<b>\$38,952</b>

## Making Playgrounds Safer

Playground safety is a critical issue across the country and around the world.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, from 2006-2008, an average of 218,851 pre-school and elementary school children each year received emergency department care for injuries that occurred on playground equipment.<sup>10</sup> Over half of those injuries took place on public playground equipment.<sup>11</sup> Four percent of those children required hospitalization.

The vast majority of injuries on the playground are connected with climbing equipment and swings. Approximately 79 percent of these equipment-related injuries are caused by falls.

In some cases, a single piece of equipment is responsible for multiple injuries. For instance, in 2013, at least five children suffered broken legs while playing on the same swing at Slope Park in Brooklyn.<sup>12</sup> That swing, which allegedly had been installed too low to the ground, has since been removed by Parks<sup>13</sup>, but it is a reminder that by analyzing claims in real time, we can identify potential weaknesses in our City's playgrounds and fix problems before children are injured and taxpayers held liable.

While we cannot eliminate all injuries that stem from children at play, we can take a number of steps to ensure that our City playgrounds are as safe as possible. This means ensuring that the maintenance and design of playground equipment is in line with best practices.





The Preliminary Mayor’s Management Report (MMR) for FY 2015 found that in the first four months of FY 2015, the percentage of play equipment rated “acceptable” *fell* from 93 percent to 91 percent compared to the same period in FY 2014.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, the percentage of safety surfaces rated “acceptable” also fell, from 95 percent to 94 percent.

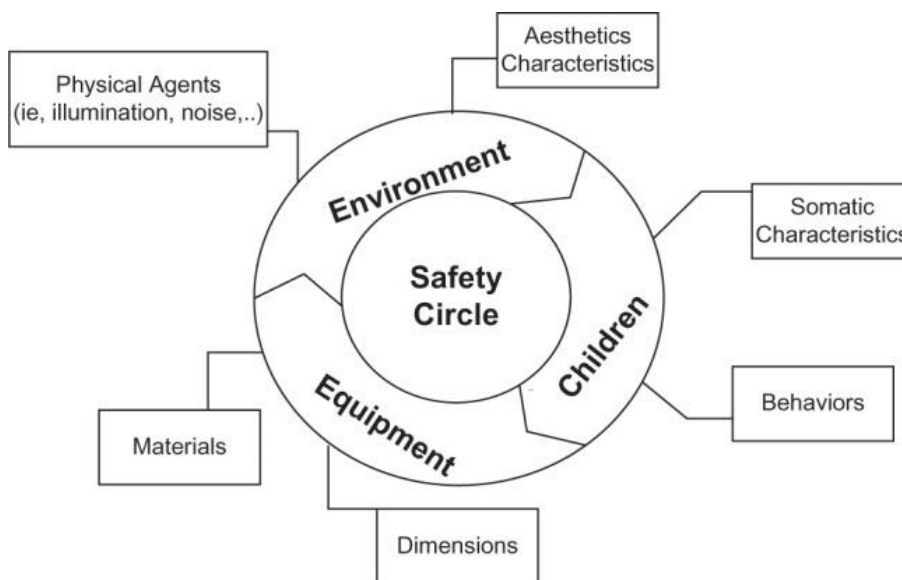
These trends are particularly troubling given Parks’ poor record of completing capital projects on time. A recent report from Comptroller Stringer on the City’s Capital Budget revealed that the Parks Department showed the greatest deviation of all agencies between its planned capital commitment and its actual capital commitment in FY 2014, with over 75 percent of total commitments, or \$1.15 billion, below the authorized level.<sup>15</sup> While planned FY 2015 commitments indicate that most of the shortfall was the result of a delay of the FY 2014 commitments into FY 2015, it is imperative that the Parks Department redouble its efforts to finish capital projects—including modernizing the City’s playgrounds—on time.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently noted that “major changes in the design and maintenance of playgrounds have substantially reduced the number of playground injuries.”<sup>16</sup> In particular, the WHO found that the most effective interventions to prevent such injuries have focused on “the use of impact-absorbing materials, height restrictions on equipment and the overall design of playgrounds.”<sup>17</sup>

Other groups have recommended training improvements and design enhancements to reduce risk. According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, the playground surface is the most important factor in the number and severity of injuries due to falls. By using softer surfaces—such as mulch, shredded tires, or sand—we can reduce the likelihood of injuries and reduce liability to the taxpayer.<sup>18</sup>



A 2011 report in the Open Access Journal of Sports Medicine recommended that municipalities adopt a “systematic safety approach” based on the “safety circle” of equipment, environment, and children.<sup>19</sup>



On the equipment side, research shows that after adjusting for factors such as the child’s age and weight and the presence of impact absorbing surfaces, children falling from over 16.4 feet (5 meters) faced four times the risk of injury compared to those falling from below that height.<sup>20</sup> As a result, playgrounds should be designed to minimize the potential for falls from above that height. Particular attention should also be paid to monkey bars. A 2008 study of National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) data published in the *Journal of Pediatric Surgery* concluded that capital improvements should target monkey bars because the number of injuries per year per capita stemming from this piece of equipment remains stubbornly high, while the frequency of injuries from swings and slides is decreasing.<sup>21</sup>

With this research in mind, the Parks Department should consider a number of steps to improve playground safety.

- The Department of Parks and Recreation should periodically review playground compliance with the latest guidelines from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) handbook for public playground safety, which includes best practices for the siting, construction, and maintenance of public playground equipment.<sup>22</sup>

The National Program for Playground Safety has urged states to adopt the CPSC regulations, finding that the “safety grade” for states that have adopted the CPSC guidelines is a B, while states that have not adopted the guidelines were issued a “C” grade.<sup>23</sup>

Seventeen states have passed legislation adopting all or part of the CPSC regulations and/or the regulations set forth by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), which cover everything from surfacing and fencing to broad issues related to public-use playgrounds.<sup>24</sup>



- The Parks Department should also explore ways to enhance training for employees responsible for playground maintenance and inspection. The National Playground Safety Inspector Course (NPISC) is recognized as a comprehensive program of playground hazard identification and risk management training.<sup>25</sup> The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation trains staff members with personnel who have gone through the NPSIC and the Parks Department should consider using a similar program here in New York City.<sup>26</sup>
- In addition to exploring how the NPISC can be used to enhance training, Parks should also partner with the City's Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and other hospitals to further identify potential problems at City playgrounds and to ensure that Parks staff are aware of the type of injuries being suffered by children and how to prevent them from recurring. As a 2012 report in the *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health* found that healthcare professionals can provide municipal planners with details about the nature and risk of playground injuries.<sup>27</sup>
- Lastly, Parks should examine the effect of the Playground Associates program on personal injury claims. Playground Associates provide supervised recreation in local parks and playgrounds—a critical component to limit risk of injuries to children.<sup>28</sup> Studies have indicated that inadequate supervision is a contributing factor in up to 40 percent of playground injuries.

If the data indicates that fewer children are being hurt at playgrounds with Associates than playgrounds without Associates, the Parks Department should consider expanding the program in order to protect kids and reduce potential liability to the City.



## APPENDIX

### Methodology

Of the 577 claims that occurred in FY 2005 to FY 2014, only 529 were “mappable.” These claims were mapped using geographic information provided in the “occurrence” field found in each claim. Only 50 of these claims had the names of playgrounds or parks included in their occurrence information. The majority of claims had geographic information in the form of addresses or cross-streets. In those cases, the Office of the New York City Comptroller mapped the data by manually researching the closest playground to each address or cross-street with the use of online maps.

The location of playgrounds was verified either with Google Maps, Open Street Maps, or the Department of Parks and Recreations listing of playgrounds. When the closest playground to a claim was indecipherable – either because the occurrence information provided was incomplete, too vague, or equally distant from multiple playgrounds, that claim was omitted from the spatial analysis. Once the location of a playground was verified, the geographic information was geo-coded and used in our spatial analysis. Only claims that occurred between FY 2005 and FY 2014 were mapped.

### Data

Data below is from playground-related personal injury claims filed between FY 2005 and FY 2014.

Borough	# of Claims
<b>Bronx</b>	111
<b>Brooklyn</b>	209
<b>Manhattan</b>	123
<b>Queens</b>	111
<b>Staten Island</b>	23
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>577</b>

Of the 577 claims, 529 were able to be mapped to specific playgrounds. The table below shows the breakdown of claims by playground.

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
110th St Playground	3	MN
115 Street Playground	1	QN
79th St Playground (Shore Park)	1	BK
Admiral Park	1	QN
Adventure Playground	3	MN

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Agnes Haywood Playground	1	BX
Alfred E. Smith Houses Playground	1	MN
Alice Kornegay Triangle	1	MN
Alley Pond Park Playground	2	QN
Almeda Playground	1	QN



Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
American Playground	1	BK
Ampere Playground	1	QN
Ancient Playground	1	MN
Andries Playground	2	BK
Annadale Playground	3	QN
Asser Levy Playground	2	BK
Athens Square	1	QN
Augustus St. Gaudens Playground	1	MN
Babi Yar Triangle	1	BK
Bailey Playground	1	BX
Baisley Pond Park	1	QN
Barretto Point Park	1	BX
Bartlett Playground	2	BK
Basil Behagen Playground	1	BX
Bath Beach Park	2	BK
Battery Park	1	MN
Bayview Playground	1	BK
Beach 41st St. Park	1	QN
Bedford Playground	1	BK
Bellerose Playground	1	QN
Belmont Playground	5	BX
Benniger Playground	1	QN
Benson Playground	2	BK
Bensonhurst Park	4	BK
Bill Bojangles Robinson Playground	1	MN
Bill Brown Playground	1	BK
Bleecker Playground	1	MN
Bloomingdale Playground	1	MN
Brevoort Playground	1	BK
Brighton Playground	1	BK
Brizzi Playground	1	BK
Brook Park	1	BX
Brooklyn Botanical Garden	1	BK
Brooklyn Bridge Park	1	BK
Brower Park	1	BK
Brownsville Playground	1	BK
Brownsville Recreation Center	1	BK
Bulova Park	1	QN

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Bushwick Playground	4	BK
Cadwallader Colden Playground	1	QN
Canarsie Park	2	BK
Carl Schurz Park	1	MN
Carmansville Playground	1	MN
Carrol Park Playground	1	BK
Caserta Playground	1	BX
Castle Hill Playground	1	BX
Catbird Playground	2	MN
Cecil F. Sledge Playground	1	BK
Century Playground	2	BK
Chelsea Park Playground	1	MN
Chelsea Waterside Playground	2	MN
Cherry Tree Playground	1	MN
Chester Playground	2	BK
Clark Playground	1	BX
Clintonville Playground	1	QN
Clove Lakes Park	1	SI
Colgate Close Park Playground	1	BX
Commander Eugene S. Sarsfield Playground	1	BK
Coney Island Houses Playground	1	BK
Corona Golf Playground	2	QN
Cunningham Park	1	QN
Daniel M. O'Connell Playground	1	QN
De Hostos Playground	1	BK
Decatur Playground	1	BK
DeSalvio Playground	1	MN
Detective Keith L. Williams Park	1	QN
Devanney Triangle	2	BX
Devoe Park	1	BX
Dinosaur Playground	1	MN
Dome Playground	1	BK
Dongan Playground	1	SI
Dr. John's Playground	2	BK
Dr. Ronald E. McNair Playground	7	MN



Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Drew Playground	1	BX
Dry Dock Playground	1	MN
Dutch Kills Playground	2	QN
Dyker Beach Park	2	BK
East 110th Street Playground	1	MN
East Elmhurst Playground	1	QN
East River Park Playground	1	MN
Eastchester Playground	1	BX
Ehrenreich-Austin Playground	1	QN
Eleanor Roosevelt Playground	1	BK
Elmhurst Park	2	QN
Evergreen Playground	2	BK
Fairmont Playground	2	BX
Fermi Playground	1	BK
Flynn Playground	1	BX
Forest Park	1	QN
Fort Independence Playground	1	BX
Fort Tryon Park	1	MN
Fountain of Youth Playground	1	BX
Francis Lewis Playground	1	QN
Frank D O'Connor Playground	1	QN
Fred Samiel Playground	1	MN
Frederick Douglas Playground	2	MN
Frederick K. Judge Playground	1	QN
Fresh Creek Park	1	BK
Fresh Meadows Playground	1	QN
Friends Field Playground	2	BK
Frontera Park	1	QN
Frost Playground	1	BK
Galapo Playground	2	BK
Garibaldi Playground	2	BK
Gen. Douglas Macarthur Park	1	SI
Gonzalo Plasencia Playground	1	BK

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Gorman Playground	3	QN
Gouverneur Playground	1	BX
Grace Playground	1	BK
Grand Playground	1	BX
Gravesend Park	4	BK
Great Kills Park	1	SI
Greenpoint Playground	1	BK
Greenwood Playground	2	BK
Grover Cleveland Playground	2	BK
Haffen Park	1	BX
Half-Nelson Playground	1	BX
Halletts Cove Playground	3	QN
Hamilton Fish Park	1	MN
Hammel Playground	1	QN
Happy Warrior Playground	1	MN
Heckscher Playground (BK)	1	BK
Heckscher Playground (MN)	2	MN
Heisser Triangle	2	BK
Henry Hudson Park	1	BX
Herbert Von King Park	2	BK
Hermon A. Macneil Park	1	QN
Highland Park	2	BK
Hill & Dale Playground	1	BX
Hippo Playground	1	MN
Hoffman Park	1	QN
Homecrest Playground	1	BK
Hoover-Manton Playground	2	QN
Horseshoe Playground	2	BX
Howard Playground	2	BK
J Hood Wright Park	1	MN
J.J. Byrne Playground	2	BK
Jackie Robinson Park	1	BK
Jackson Pond Playground	1	QN
Jacob's Ladder Playground	1	BK
James Weldon Johnson Playground	1	MN
Jennifer's Playground	1	SI
Jerome Playground	1	BK
Jesse Owens Playground	2	BK
John F Murray Playground	1	QN



Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
John Hancock Playground	1	BK
John J. Carty Park	3	BK
John Jay Park	3	MN
Joseph F. Mafera Park	1	QN
Joyce Kilmer Park	1	BX
Judge Moses Weinstein Playground	1	QN
Junction Playground	2	QN
Juniper Valley Park	6	QN
Kelly Park	2	BK
Kissena Corridor Park	3	QN
Kolbert Park Playground	4	BK
Kossuth Playground	1	BX
Lafayette Gardens Playground	1	BK
Lance Corporal Thomas P. Noonan Playground	1	QN
Leif Ericson Park Playground	2	BK
Lemon Creek Park	1	SI
Lenape Playground	2	BK
Lieutenant Federico Narvaez Tot Lot	1	BK
Lincoln Terrace Park	3	BK
Linden Park	1	BK
Lindover Park	3	BK
London Planetree Playground	1	QN
Luther Gulick Playground	1	MN
Lyons Square Playground	1	BX
Mae Grant Playground	2	MN
Magenta Playground	1	BX
Mahoney Playground	1	SI
Main Street Park (Brooklyn Bridge Park)	1	BK
Manhattan Beach Park	1	BK
Marcus Gravey Park	2	MN
Maria Hernandez Park	3	BK
Mariner's Gate Playground	1	MN
Markham Playground	1	SI
Marlboro Playground	1	BK
Martin Luther King Playground	1	MN

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Martin Luther Playground	2	BK
Martin Tanahey Playground	1	MN
Mary O'Connor Playground	1	MN
Matthews Muliner Playground	1	BX
Maurice A Fitzgerald Playground	1	QN
Mauro Playground	1	QN
Mazzei Playground	2	BX
McCaffrey Playground	1	MN
Mellett Playground	1	BK
Melrose Playground	1	BX
Merriam Playground	2	BX
Middle Village Playground	3	QN
Midland Playground	2	SI
Morgan Playground	3	BX
Morris Garden	1	BX
Morris Mesa	1	BX
Morton Playground	1	BX
Mosholu Playground	1	BX
Mott Playground	2	BX
Msgr. McGolrick Plaza	2	BK
Mt. Hope Playground	2	BX
Mullaly Park Playground	7	BX
Murphy Park	1	MN
Murray Hill Playground	1	QN
Naples Playground	1	SI
Nelson Playground	1	BX
Newtown Playground	1	QN
Nostrand Playground	1	BK
Ocean Breeze Park	1	SI
Old Town Playground	1	SI
Othmar Ammann Playground	1	MN
Our Lady of Grace Baseball Field	1	BK
Owls Head Park	3	BK
Pat Perlato Playground	1	BK
Paul Raimonda Playground	2	QN
Pearl Street Playground	1	MN
Pearly Gates Playground	1	BX



Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Pelham Community Housing Playground	1	BX
Penn South Playground	1	MN
Penn Traingle	1	BK
People's Park	1	BX
Phil ""Scooter"" Rizzuto Park	1	QN
Pier 6 Playground (Slide Mountain)	1	BK
Pierrepont Playground	1	BK
Playground 103	1	MN
Playground 174	1	BX
Playground 278	1	BK
Playground 52 LII	1	BX
Playground Ninety	3	QN
Playground One	1	MN
Police Office Edward Byrne Park	1	QN
Police Office Hilario Serrano Playground	1	BX
Pontiac Playground	1	BX
Poor Richards Playground	1	MN
Poseiden Playground	2	BK
Potomac Playground	1	BK
Private First Class Thomas Norton Memorial Playground	1	BK
Prospect Playground	1	BX
PS 155 Playground	1	MN
PS 232 Walter Ward School Playground	1	QN
PS 40 Q Samuel Huntington School Playground	2	QN
PS 64 Playground	1	BX
PS/IS 295 School Playground	1	QN
PS/MS 282 Playground	1	BK
Queens Valley Playground	2	QN
Quisqueya Playground	1	MN
Rainbow Playground	1	BK
Rappaport Playground	3	BK
Ravenswood Playground	1	QN
Raymond Bush Playground	1	BK
Raymond O'Conner Park	1	QN

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Reinaldo Salgado Playground	1	BK
Riverbank State Park	1	MN
Rockway Beach Playground	1	QN
Roebing Playground	1	BK
Rolf Henry Playground	1	BK
Rosemary's Playground	3	QN
Rosewood Playground	1	BX
Roy Wilkins Park Playground	1	QN
Rucker Park	1	MN
Rufus King Park	1	QN
Samuel M. Bennerson 2nd Playground	1	MN
Samuel Seabury Playground	3	MN
Sara D. Roosevelt Park	1	MN
Saul Weprin Playground	1	QN
Saw Mill Playground	2	BX
Schenck Playground	2	BK
Seaside Wildlife Nature Park	3	SI
Seth Low Playground	2	BK
Seventieth Street Playground	1	MN
Sheepshead Bay Playground	2	BK
Shore Road Parks Conservancy	1	BK
Siren Slope	1	BX
Slattery Playground	3	BX
Slope Park Playground	6	BK
Sobel Court Park	2	SI
Socrates Sculpture Park	1	QN
Sol Lain Playground	1	MN
Soundview Park	2	BX
Southwest Playground (Van Courtland)	1	BX
Sperandeo Brothers Playground	1	BK
Spring Creek Park	1	QN
Spuyten Duyvil Playground	2	BX
St. Andrew's Playground	2	BK
St. Catherine's Park	1	MN
St. James Park Tennis Courts	1	BX
St. John's Park	1	BK





Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
St. Mary's Park	1	BX
St. Vartan Park	2	MN
Stapleton Playground	2	SI
Stars and Stripes Playground	1	BX
Sternberg Park	2	BK
Stockton Playground	2	BK
Strong Street Playground	1	BX
Stroud Playground	6	BK
Sunset Park	5	BK
Taaffe Playground	1	BK
Tall Oak Playground	1	QN
Taylor Playground	1	BX
Tecumseh Playground	1	MN
Ten Eyck Playground	2	BK
Terrace Playground	1	SI
The Lion's Playground	1	MN
The Painter's Playground	1	QN
Third Street Playground	1	BK
Thomas Greene Playground	1	BK
Thomas Jefferson Park Playground	5	MN
Tilden Playground	3	BK
Tilyou Playground	1	BK
Tompkins Square Park	3	MN
Torsney Playground	1	QN
Travers Park	2	QN
Tremont Park	1	BX

Playground / Park Name	# of Claims	Borough
Tudor Park	1	QN
Underhill Playground (BK)	1	BK
Underhill Playground (QN)	1	QN
Union Square Park	6	MN
University Plaza	1	BK
Van Courtland Park Parade Ground	1	BX
Van Voorhees Park	1	BK
Vanderbilt Playground	2	BK
Vincent Ciccarone Playground	2	BX
Vinmont Veteran Park	1	BX
Virginia Playground	1	BX
Vleigh Playground	1	QN
Wallenberg Playground	1	MN
Waring Playground	1	BX
Washington Market Park	1	MN
Watson Gleason Playground	4	BX
West 100 St Playground	1	MN
West Playground	3	BK
Wild West Playground	1	MN
Willets Point Playground	2	QN
William McCray Playground	2	MN
Williamsbridge Playground	3	BX
Willoughby Playground	2	BK
Wolfes Pond Park	1	SI
Wright Brothers Playground	5	MN



## Claims by Community District

CD Name	CD Number	# of Claims
Manhattan Community District 1	101	3
Manhattan Community District 2	102	2
Manhattan Community District 3	103	13
Manhattan Community District 4	104	5
Manhattan Community District 5	105	6
Manhattan Community District 6	106	5
Manhattan Community District 7	107	9
Manhattan Community District 8	108	10
Manhattan Community District 9	109	2
Manhattan Community District 10	110	6
Manhattan Community District 11	111	23
Manhattan Community District 12	112	12
Joint Interest Area - Central Park	164	10
Bronx Community District 1	201	10
Bronx Community District 2	202	4
Bronx Community District 3	203	7
Bronx Community District 4	204	14
Bronx Community District 5	205	13
Bronx Community District 6	206	11
Bronx Community District 7	207	7
Bronx Community District 8	208	8
Bronx Community District 9	209	13
Bronx Community District 10	210	1
Bronx Community District 11	211	5
Bronx Community District 12	212	5
Joint Interest Area -Van Courtland Park	226	2
Joint Interest Area - Bronx Park	227	1
Brooklyn Community District 1	301	16
Brooklyn Community District 2	302	4
Brooklyn Community District 3	303	21
Brooklyn Community District 4	304	13
Brooklyn Community District 5	305	8
Brooklyn Community District 6	306	6

CD Name	CD Number	# of Claims
Brooklyn Community District 7	307	17
Brooklyn Community District 8	308	12
Brooklyn Community District 9	309	1
Brooklyn Community District 10	310	12
Brooklyn Community District 11	311	12
Brooklyn Community District 12	312	11
Brooklyn Community District 13	313	14
Brooklyn Community District 14	314	7
Brooklyn Community District 15	315	13
Brooklyn Community District 16	316	6
Brooklyn Community District 17	317	4
Brooklyn Community District 18	318	14
Joint Interest Area - Prospect Park	355	4
Queens Community District 1	401	10
Queens Community District 2	402	3
Queens Community District 3	403	12
Queens Community District 4	404	5
Queens Community District 5	405	19
Queens Community District 6	406	5
Queens Community District 7	407	10
Queens Community District 8	408	8
Queens Community District 9	409	4
Queens Community District 10	410	5
Queens Community District 11	411	8
Queens Community District 12	412	7
Queens Community District 13	413	2
Queens Community District 14	414	4
Joint Interest Area - Flushing Meadows	481	1
Joint Interest Area - Forest Park	482	2
Staten Island Community District 1	501	9
Staten Island Community District 2	502	7
Staten Island Community District 3	503	6



### Claims by City Council District

Council District	# of Claims	Borough
1	11	MN
2	13	MN
3	6	MN
4	4	MN
5	10	MN
6	15	MN
7	11	MN
8	30	MN/BX
9	9	MN
10	7	MN
11	13	BX
12	5	BX
13	5	BX
14	13	BX
15	14	BX
16	18	BX
17	11	BX
18	12	BX
19	8	QN
20	7	QN
21	5	QN
22	7	QN
23	6	QN
24	9	QN
25	8	QN
26	10	QN

Council District	# of Claims	Borough
27	3	QN
28	7	QN
29	5	QN
30	19	QN
31	3	QN
32	6	QN
33	18	BK
34	11	BK
35	9	BK
36	18	BK
37	12	BK
38	18	BK
39	12	BK
40	2	BK
41	9	BK
42	8	BK
43	20	BK
44	12	BK
45	8	BK
46	12	BK
47	10	BK
48	18	BK
49	8	SI
50	8	SI
51	6	SI



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/seward-park>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9C07E1D91439E433A2575BC1A9669D946297D6CF>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.vcpark.org/the-park/features/18-playgrounds/84-history-of-playgrounds-in-new-york-city.html>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nycgovparks.org/about>.

<sup>5</sup> There were 1,924,510 youth under the age of 18 in New York City in 2005, compared to 1,784,583 in 2013. See: 2013 American Community Survey, “ACS DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING ESTIMATES,” DP05; 2005 American Community Survey, “General Demographic Characteristics,” DP01.

<sup>6</sup> The 530 settlements entered during this time frame cover claims dating back to 1992. Thus, the claims settled do not necessarily correspond to those filed during the period.

<sup>7</sup> Of the 577 claims in the data set, 529 could be directly mapped to specific playgrounds. The remaining 48 claims were omitted from our mapping due to incomplete data. The data is broken down by individual playground. Where notices of claim did not specify a precise playground, but rather provided an address of the incident, for instance, “Central Park: 110<sup>th</sup> Street and Lenox Avenue,” or a park, the Comptroller’s Office cataloged the claim at the nearest playground or the park as a whole.

<sup>8</sup> Many notices of claims lacked a specific type/cause of the alleged injury. These claims are marked N/A (blank).

<sup>9</sup> Claim #: 1999PI017315; This claim involved the alleged poor design of a swing area. The 19 year-old claimant fell off the back of a swing and hit her head against a fence that apparently was too close to the swing. The claimant was paralyzed leaving her with limited use of her arms and hands.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Playground-Injuries/playgroundinjuries-factsheet.htm>;

<https://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/108596/playground.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> <http://playgroundsafety.org/research/injuries>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/2013/11/01/park-slope/parents-sue-city-over-broken-legs-at-park-slope-playground>.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/2013/09/12/park-slope/swing-yanked-from-park-slope-playground-after-children-hurt>.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/downloads/pdf/pmmr2015/dpr.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> [http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/A\\_Closer\\_Look.pdf](http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/A_Closer_Look.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2008/9789241563574\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2008/9789241563574_eng.pdf?ua=1).

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> <http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00313>.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24198572>.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2073418>.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18405717>.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/122149/325.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> <http://playgroundsafety.org/research/injuries>.

<sup>24</sup> <http://playgroundsafety.org/standards/astm>; <http://www.astm.org/Standards/F1292.htm>;

<http://www.astm.org/Standards/F2049.htm>.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.mma.org/municipal-services/6533-safe-playgrounds-can-help-to-reduce-municipal-liability>;

<http://www.nrpa.org/CPSI>; Notably, member municipalities that complete the training can receive MIIA credit on their property and casualty insurance premiums, suggesting that the training has a quantifiable effect in reducing risk of injury.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/24512.html>.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3380751/>.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/122149/325.pdf>.





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