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Contact:

Dr. Don Levy, 518-783-2901 or dlevy@siena.edu

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49% NYC Residents Living Comfortably or Doing Alright; But One in Five Have Struggled to Buy Food or Housing Over Last Year; Findings Vary by Race, Ethnicity, Borough

Majority Expect Typical Young NY'er to Graduate High School, 50% Say will Graduate College, Less than Half Predict Good Job; 41% See Drugs, Alcohol in their Future, One in Four Think Neighborhood Youth will Be in a Gang

Police, Parks, Availability of Goods & Services Get High Grades in All Boroughs Except the Bronx; Local Gov Responsiveness Found Lacking; As a Place to Raise Children NYC Gets Mixed Reviews by Borough, Race & Income

Loudonville, NY. Nearly half of City residents say that they are either doing alright or living comfortably when asked how they are managing financially these days, according to The New York Times/Siena College poll of New York City residents released today. However, 18 percent are finding it difficult or very difficult, and 21 percent have had times over the past year when they did not have enough money to buy food. Also, 17 percent say that at some point over the last year, they did not have enough money to provide adequate shelter or housing for themselves or their family.

Asked to assess the future life chances of a typical young person in their neighborhood, a large majority, 73 percent, predict that it is very likely or almost certain that young people will graduate high school, but only 50 percent think it at least very likely that they will graduate college. Forty-three percent of respondents across the City think it very likely or almost certain that a neighborhood youth will get a job with opportunities for advancement. However, nearly as many, 41 percent, think it very likely or almost certain that a local youth will abuse drugs or alcohol. Gang membership is likely for neighborhood kids, according to 27 percent of New Yorkers, and 32 percent think they will have an incarcerated family member.

“On so many issues – the quality of life in the boroughs, the future chances of young people, economic security – attitudes and perceptions vary dramatically by borough, income, race and ethnicity,” according to Don Levy, Director of the Siena Research Institute. “Residents of Manhattan and Queens as well as white New Yorkers and those earning at least \$50,000 are most inclined to say that they are doing alright or living comfortably. However, a majority of residents of the Bronx and Brooklyn and nearly three-quarters of those earning under \$50K are either just getting by or finding it difficult to manage financially.”

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Only 33 percent across the City say that their borough is getting better as a place to live while 39 percent say things remain the same and 27 percent believe things are deteriorating. With the exception of the Bronx, where a majority give the police a grade of no better than fair or poor, and Brooklyn, where residents are closely divided, a majority of residents of the other three boroughs say the police are doing a good or excellent job of keeping residents safe. Majorities of residents of all boroughs except the Bronx praise the availability of goods and services and the condition of parks, but no more than 37 percent of any borough give a grade of excellent or good to local governments on their responsiveness.

“Nearly four in ten New Yorkers earning less than \$50K and thirty-six percent of Bronx residents have had times over the last year when they did not have enough money to buy food. And a third of both Black and Latino New Yorkers have also faced the anxiety about money for food, while the same is true for only nine percent of white City residents,” Levy said.

“Similarly, when it comes to the cost of housing, it is a much greater problem among Black and Latino New Yorkers and in the Bronx than it is for white New Yorkers or residents of the other boroughs,” Levy said. “Still, between 14 and 18 percent of the residents of Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island say they have had times over the last year when they lacked the money to provide adequate shelter for their family.

“Large majorities of residents of Staten Island and Queens rate their borough as an excellent or good place to raise children, as do a large majority of white New Yorkers. In Manhattan, 50 percent concur as does a plurality in Brooklyn. However, two-thirds of Bronx residents say their borough is no better than a fair if not a poor area to bring up kids. Among Blacks and Latinos, a large majority give their borough failing grades for raising children.

“Interestingly, the life chances white New Yorkers see for local kids are greater than those of Black and Latino residents when it comes to graduating from high school or college, or living in a two-parent household. But, Black and Latino residents have a much greater expectation that young people will live a life better than their parents, compared to white respondents,” Levy said.

“We also see stark differences between white respondents versus Black and Latino residents when it comes to negative life events. Where one-third of white respondents predict drug or alcohol abuse being in the future for local kids, 46 percent of Blacks and 53 percent of Latinos do. And three times as many Blacks and Latinos think a typical local young person will be in a gang than do whites,” Levy said.

This New York Times/Siena College Poll was conducted October 29-November 11, 2015 by telephone calls in both English and Spanish to 1,961 New York City residents of whom 1,588 are registered voters. It has a margin of error of ± 2.5 percentage points for residents. Data was statistically adjusted to correct for unequal probability of selection by household size, and the overlap of land and cell phones and by age, education, borough, race/ethnicity and gender to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing to landline and cell phones weighted to reflect known population patterns. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in New York State. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Don Levy at [\(518\) 783-2901](tel:5187832901). For survey cross-tabs and frequencies: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.