



## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF NYC SKATEBOARDERS**

### **SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

#### **BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS**

***NYC skaters are a predominantly Black and Latino, low-income population that lives at home with their families, and almost half live in single-parent households.***

- Most skaters (88%) who completed the survey were between the ages of 16 and 27; more than half were age 16 to 21
- 80% of the sample were raised in NYC
- Skaters raised in NYC are predominantly Black and Latino, and come from low-income/low resource families. 83% had a household income under \$60,000 for an average family of 4, and 65% had a household income under \$40,000
- HHF Skaters were most likely to live in single-parent households and were more likely to receive some form of public assistance
- There are skaters within the community, many of whom were raised outside of NYC, who have higher levels of education, are more likely to be employed full-time, have higher incomes, and seem to have a greater awareness of what skills are more/less marketable on the job market

#### **EDUCATIONAL ISSUES**

***Regardless of background, skaters seemed to struggle with school. They have higher rates of suspension and ADD/ADHD than the general population, are largely uncertain about whether they want to attend college, and have extremely low participation in job training programs. Half of all skaters in NYC age 18 or over are not currently in college or participating in a job training program.***

- Outside of age, employment, and income, the “Haves” and “Have Nots” of the skate community have much more in common than not
- They all seem to share some conflict around or aversion to school with 10 times the rate of suspension found in NYC schools and 3 to 8 times the rate of ADHD found in the general population.
- 43% reported needing extra help with math while in school, about 1/5<sup>th</sup> received extra time on tests and just over 1/5<sup>th</sup> received counseling.
- 65% of those college age and below had not participated in organized after school or out of school activities/programs
- Still, skaters had a slightly lower HS dropout rate than among the general population in NYC and 60% of those who dropped out of school earned a GED



- HHF skaters were less likely to need extra help in school, less likely to drop out of HS than NYC skaters in general, and were more than twice as likely to attend 4-year colleges, but they were almost twice as likely to drop out of college
- Very few participated in job training programs
- Close to half of all skaters were either uncertain about going to college, did not plan to attend, or wanted to do something other than college

### **EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS**

***Although 60% of all skaters had at least a part-time job, finding a job was the single most important issue for skaters in NYC. The overwhelming majority of skaters were working in unskilled positions in the service industry, but were most interested in pursuing careers in creative fields or entrepreneurship.***

- Although 60% of all skaters had at least a part-time job, the single most pressing issue across all skaters was “Finding a Job”
- Skaters raised outside NYC were significantly more likely to have full time jobs and less likely to be unemployed
- 60% of all skaters in NYC were employed in unskilled positions in service, food service, and retail. Skaters Raised in NYC were 4 times more likely to work in unskilled positions
- They described a variety of careers they thought they would enjoy, but the top industries they were interested in were Photography, Video/Film, Design, Entrepreneurship, and Action Sports.
- The top skills they were interested in acquiring were: Filmmaking, Photography, Apparel Design, and Graphic Design
- Skaters raised outside of NYC were significantly more likely to express interest in Web Design and Coding than those raised in NYC

### **ISSUES & CONCERNS**

***Outside of finding a job, the issues skaters perceived to be the biggest in the skate community were dealing w/negativity in the skate community, issues with police, and issues with drugs and alcohol. Skaters also expressed concerns with securing housing, getting into college, the need for more skate parks, particularly indoor skate parks, and help getting sponsors.***

- The top issues skaters felt skaters in NYC need help with were: “Finding a Job”, “Dealing w/Negativity and Haters”, “Issues w/Criminal Justice”, and “Issues w/Drugs/Alcohol”
- HHF Skaters listed “Getting into College” as their second most pressing issue/concern, followed by Negativity, and Housing, and were the only group to list “Apprenticing in a Trade” in the top 5
- Skaters Raised Outside of NYC ranked Drugs/Alcohol, Housing, and Criminal Justice issues 2<sup>nd</sup>, followed by Getting into College and Negativity



- Other issues of great concern were more skate parks, indoor skate parks, getting sponsors, and negativity/a need for stronger community were the most common additional issues described in open-ended responses
- HHF skaters described sponsorship issues much more often than the general skater population

## **SUMMARY OF MAJOR ISSUES**

### **EDUCATION:**

*Skaters seem to struggle with school and are apprehensive about attending college.*

### **CAREER/INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS:**

*At least half of all NYC skaters are not in college or participating in job training programs, most are employed in primarily unskilled, part-time jobs in the service sector that make it difficult for them to afford housing, and they seem to have virtually no meaningful educational or career guidance.*

### **INTERESTS:**

*Skaters' interests are driven by and revolve around skateboarding and skateboarding-related activities (e.g., video/film, photography, apparel design), but may not reflect skills that are most marketable/in-demand in the job market and/or which have the best long-term career/earning potential.*

### **COMMUNITY-WIDE ISSUES:**

*Skaters have frequent contact with the police. There is a great deal of drug and alcohol use in the community. There seems to be a lack of functional cohesion in the skate community, which may be related to the perception of "Negativity".*



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **CONTINUE TO ENGAGE SKATE COMMUNITY IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:**

- Partner with Sarah Zeller-Berkman, PhD (Coordinator of Youth Studies Initiatives at the John F. Kennedy, Jr. Institute for Worker Education, CUNY School of Professional Studies and expert in Community-Based Participatory Action Research) to continue the needs assessment/program development process
- This would be a more focus-group and action-based approach that will allow for in depth exploration of issues identified in the first phase of the needs assessment and brainstorming with members of the community about solutions, programs, and appropriate outreach and delivery modalities

### **STRENGTHEN/CREATE GREATER COHESION IN THE SKATE COMMUNITY:**

- Most NYC skaters were interested in volunteering w/HHF and there are plenty of members of the community who have skills and resources that can be shared
- Build better bridges between the more skilled/resourced members of the community and those who have less skills and resources through organized skills workshops, career panels, and potentially opportunities for mentorship
- Create a Craigslist-like platform for NYC skaters where we can provide resources and opportunities, and where skaters can share job opportunities, connect with filmmakers, and share skills, etc. This could be developed with NYSkateboarding.com
- Provide more organized opportunities for skaters to work together towards goals related to issues like building more skate parks in NYC

### **INCREASE BASIC INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS:**

- Post Independent Living Skills resources on the platform
- Offer Independent Living Skills workshops

### **LEVERAGE SKATERS' INTERESTS TO ENGAGE THEM**

- Provide workshops, skill shares, and panels run by skaters related to: video/filmmaking, photography, and how to get sponsors
- These will continue to strengthen skaters connection to HHF, allow us to develop a larger database of skaters for future outreach/programs, and will give us leverage to engage them in some of the other less fun programs

### **PROVIDE SUPPORT, RESOURCES AND TRAINING RELATED TO JOBS:**

- Post information about job training programs on the platform
- Provide career panels and workshops with skaters working in industries of interest to discuss the realities of working in these industries and provide opportunities for mentorship
- Develop a version of Kickflip that includes more career/educational planning resources



## **SURVEY RESULTS**

### **SURVEY DEVELOPMENT**

Survey questions were developed based on discussions between Joanna, Jessica, and our social work volunteer to represent social, demographic, and developmental issues that we felt were important to have basic information on. We had three different small focus group sessions with 12 NYC skaters where we asked skaters to talk about issues of importance to them and then to review and give feedback on the survey questions (content, wording, order, etc.) and data collection/recruitment procedures. The final survey was edited based on feedback from the skaters from the focus group as well as 2 older skaters from the industry who have conducted surveys with skaters in the past.

### **TOTAL SKATER SAMPLE AND RECRUITMENT**

A total of 307 skaters completed at least part of the survey (172 online; 63 in-person; 72 HHF). About 77% of the initial 307 completed the entire survey.

HHF skaters were recruited via email with follow-up by email, text, and direct messages via social media accounts. The 172 skaters who completed the survey on-line were either recruited via posts on HHF and NY Skateboarding social media accounts or via a button/link on the NY Skateboarding website. Anticipating that skaters recruited via social media may not accurately represent the skater population (we expected them to be older, more educated, and less racially diverse), we also had 6 HHF skater interns recruit an additional 63 skaters at skate parks and shops around the city in-person.

### **SAMPLE REPRESENTATIVENESS**

Estimates of the NYC skate population based on market research range from 3,000 active skaters who skate at least once/week to 10,000 people who have bought some sort of skate equipment. Since HHF's target population for programs is active skaters, our N of 307 is equal to about 10% of the entire population of active NYC skaters, which is a decent sample for the purpose of making estimates about the needs of the general skater population of NYC. We are still awaiting demographic breakdowns of existing market data on NYC skateboarders (which is not yet available), so it is difficult to know whether our sample is representative of the NYC skater population as a whole. When we receive additional market data, we will continue data collection to make sure that our sample is as representative as possible.

The sample appears to be fairly representative of the general NYC population by race and borough. As compared to the population of NYC, Blacks and Latinos are slightly over-represented, while Asians and Whites are slightly under-represented in the skater sample, but this is consistent with what we've observed in the skater population of NYC.

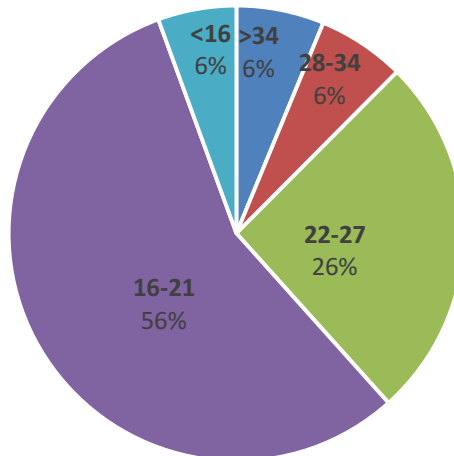


<u>RACE</u>	<u>SKATER SAMPLE</u>	<u>NYC STATS</u>
BLACK	30.7%	25%
LATINO	40.1%	28%
ASIAN	9.7%	13%
WHITE	29.4%	44%

<u>BOROUGH</u>	<u>SKATER SAMPLE</u>	<u>NYC STATS</u>
BROOKLYN	33%	31%
BRONX	12.9%	17%
MANHATTAN	18%	19%
QUEENS	25.5%	27%
STATEN ISLAND	0.3%	5%

Overall, the majority of the skaters who completed the survey fell into the age groups we currently serve (16 to 21 years old), followed by age 22-27, which together represent fairly typical ages served by youth development programs.

**Age of Total Skater Sample**





## **SUBGROUPS**

We broke the sample into 3 different subgroups which might be important targets for the strategic development of HHF programming:

- **HHF Skaters** (i.e., those who have participated in HHF programming)
- **Skaters Raised in NYC**
- **Skaters Raised Outside of NYC**

These groups are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, there are HHF skaters in both the Raised in NYC and Raised Outside NYC (our Newark skaters) groups.

**Skaters Raised Outside of NYC.** We assumed correctly that Skaters Raised Outside of NYC would be socio-demographically different from those raised in NYC and, if not separated from the general sample, might skew certain results. 20% of the sample were Skaters Raised Outside NYC. Basic statistical analyses on Survey Monkey confirmed that this sample had significantly more skaters who identified as White, had a significantly higher college attendance/graduation rate, higher rates of full-time employment and trade union participation, lower rates of unemployment, and had higher incomes than the sample that was raised in NYC. They were also older (26 years old) on average than the Skaters Raised in NYC (mean age = 20). This is all consistent with a population that selectively migrated to NYC, most likely to go to college or to work. Beyond the noted variables, the Skaters raised Outside of NYC were not significantly different from the Skaters Raised in NYC across any of the other variables, other than being significantly less interested in digital filmmaking and game design than the NYC skaters, and being significantly more interested in acquiring skills in coding and web design (neither of which were of particular interest across the entire sample). This suggests that there are a lot of characteristics that skaters have in common despite demographic, socio-economic, geographic or racial differences.

**HHF Skaters.** We also looked at the HHF skaters as compared to all other skaters to determine if there were systematic differences between them and the general NYC skater population that might suggest ways we ought to adapt our outreach. So far only 50% of HH Skaters have completed the survey. Unfortunately, the HHF skaters who have responded to the survey are not necessarily representative of all HHF skaters. Those who completed the survey participated more recently in HHF programming, whether as participants or as interns/volunteers, and are younger (mean age = 19) on average than both the general skater population in NYC (mean age = 23) and the general HHF population, 75% of which is between 18 and 25 years old. It's reasonable to conclude that many of the HHF skaters who may have the greatest need for intervention/support have yet to complete the survey. We plan to escalate our efforts to increase our response rate in 2017.

Strategically speaking, given limited resources, it makes sense to prioritize focusing available opportunities and services on HHF Skaters first, followed by Skaters Raised in NYC, followed by all skaters in NYC in general. Since the HHF Skaters are very similar to other Skaters Raised in

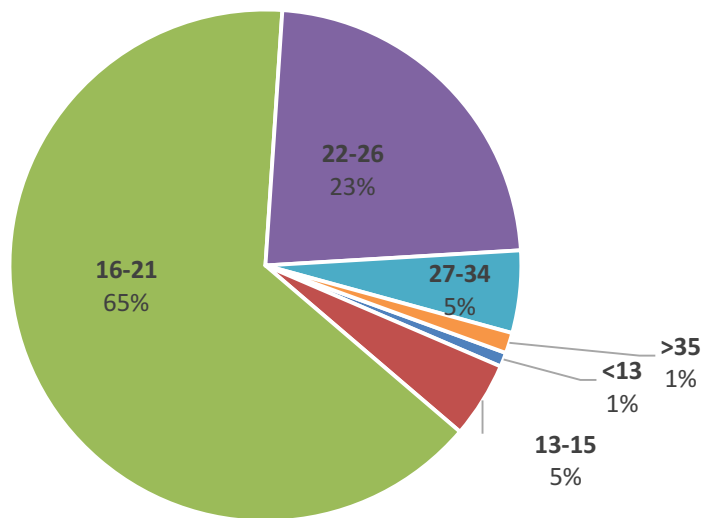


NYC, in reporting the data we have opted to focus primarily on the 80% of skaters who were raised in NYC (which includes most of the HHF skaters). This group of 235 skaters appear to be the group at greatest need for services/support. Where relevant (i.e., on measures where there was no significant difference between the two groups), we incorporate data for the Skaters Raised Outside of NYC.

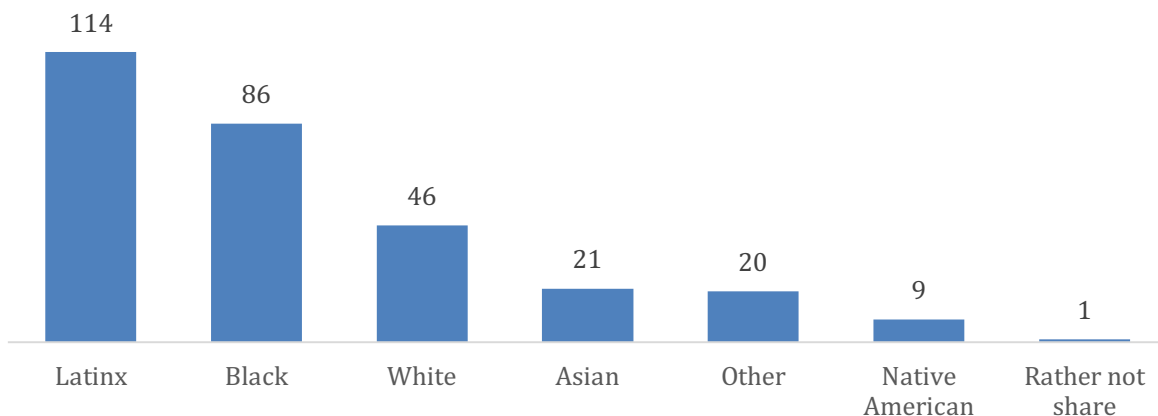
**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS**

89.4% of the skaters who were raised in NYC are male and over 90% identified as heterosexual. Ages ranged from 10 to 40. 88% of the sample was 16 to 26 years old; 65% were age 16-21.

**AGE**



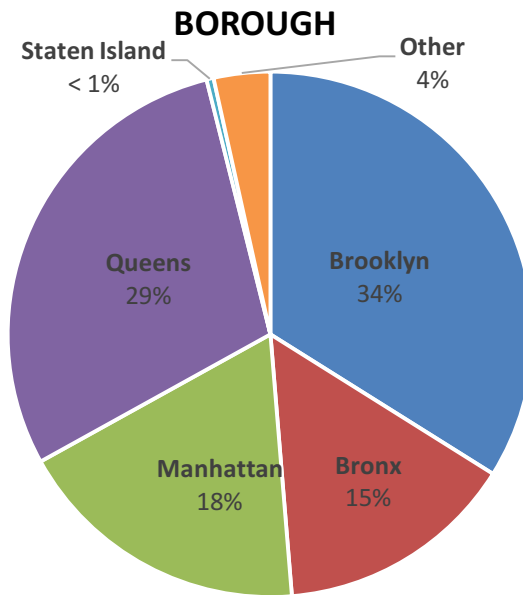
Respondents could select more than one racial group; most selected one. Skaters raised in NYC predominantly identify as Latino and/or Black



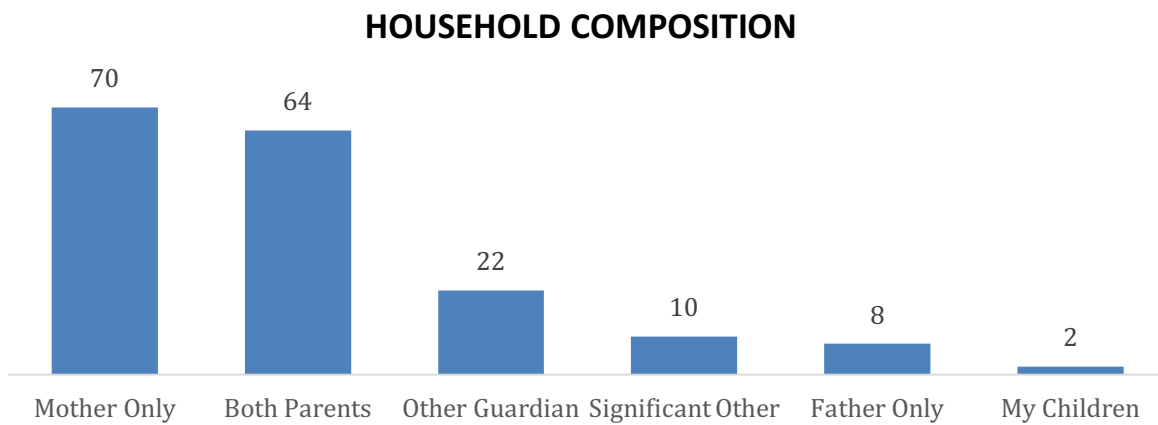




They live mostly in Brooklyn and Queens.



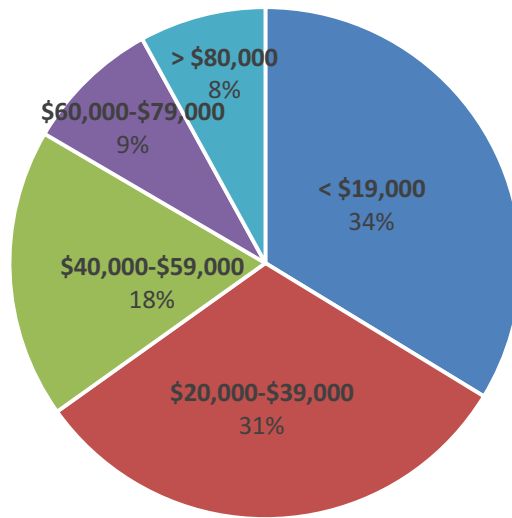
Close to 80% live at home with family and almost half of those living at home live in single parent households.





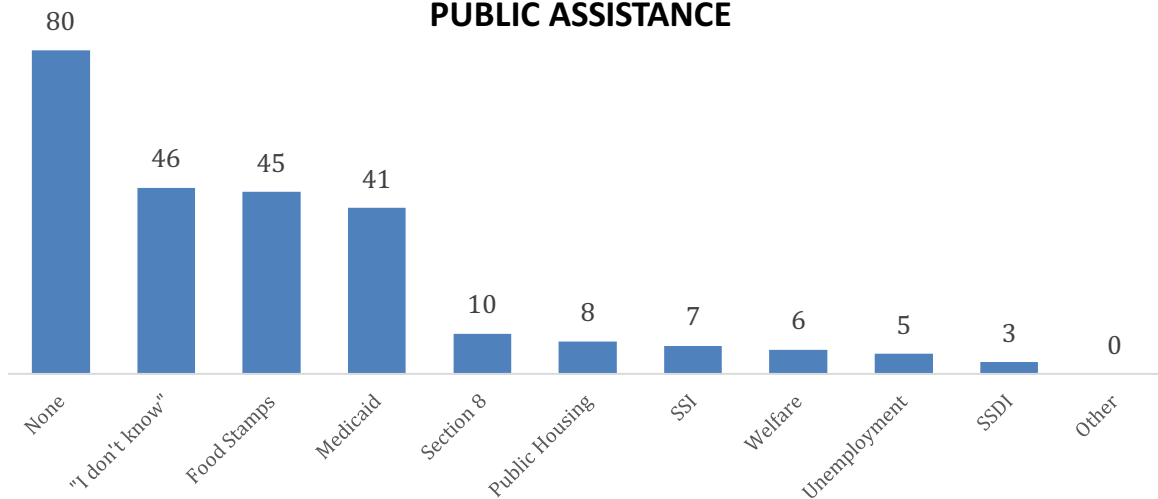
65% have an annual household income of less than \$40,000 with an average household size of 4 people.

### ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



At least 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the skaters report that their family receives either Medicaid or Food Stamps (or both). 90% are citizens and only 3% have ever been in the foster care system.

### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE





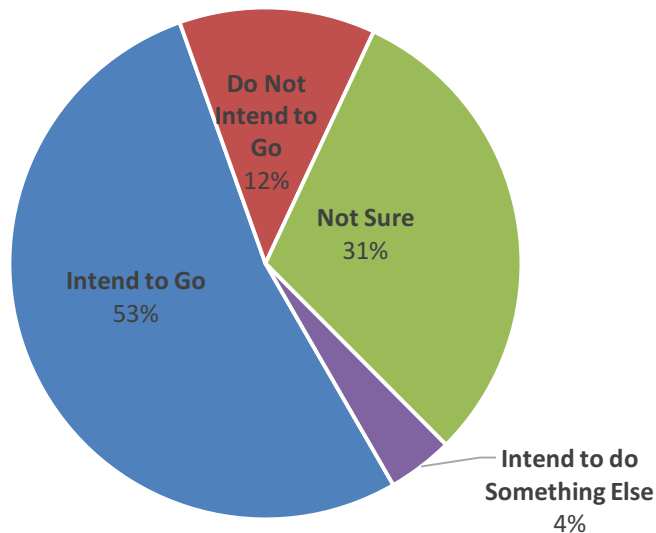
**HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED**

30% were still in middle or high school. The high school dropout rate (17%) was slightly lower than the drop out rate in NYC (22%), and about 60% of those who had dropped out earned a GED. Of the 150 skaters who were college age or older, more than half (53%) were not in college or participating in a job training program. Still, the college attendance rate of 47% was about 3 times that reported for skaters across the United States.

	NYC Skater Tally	%	
Left HS/No GED	10	6.7%	16.8%
Left HS/GED	15	10.1%	
HS Diploma	39	26.2%	36.3%
Left College/Job Training	15	10.1%	
Currently in Job Training	2	1.3%	1.3%
In Community College	27	18.1%	37.60%
In 4-Year College	29	19.5%	
Graduated Job Training	1	0.7%	0.7%
Associates Degree	3	2.0%	7.3%
Bachelors Degree	7	4.6%	
Masters+	1	0.7%	

Of those who had not yet attended college, 65% had never participated in after school or other out of school activities, and only 53% intended to go to college.

**COLLEGE INTENTIONS**

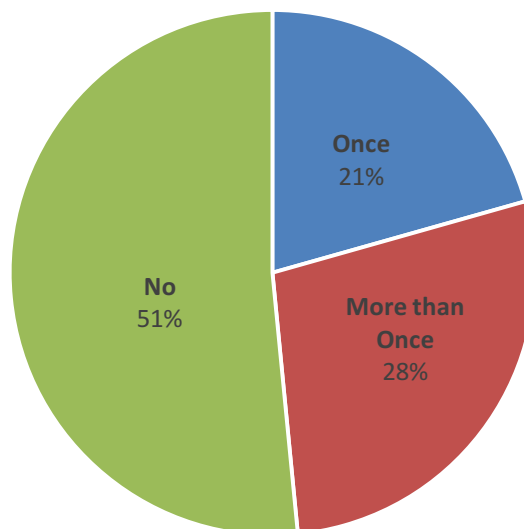




## EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

Across all subgroups, skaters had extremely high rates of suspension/expulsion from school in their lifetimes as compared to most recent NYC statistics on suspension. Although rates were comparable across all subgroups, Skaters Raised in NYC had the highest rates of suspension. Approximately 4.3% of students in the NYC public school system were suspended in the 2014-2015 school year. The rate among Skaters Raised in NYC (49%) was more than 10 times the rate in NYC.

## SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

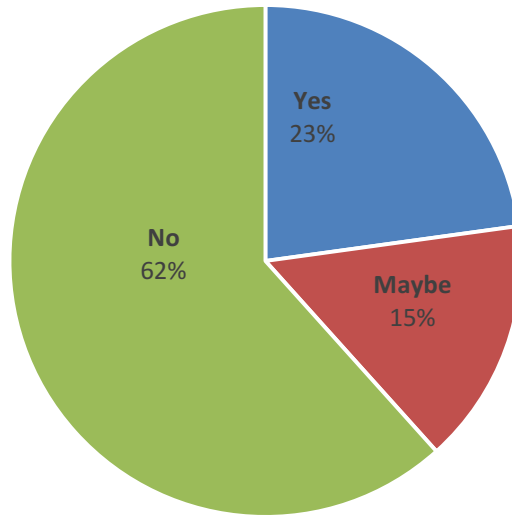


The extraordinarily high rates of suspension among skaters certainly suggest that skaters may struggle with school, have behavioral or impulse control issues, and/or may have a generally negative view of school.

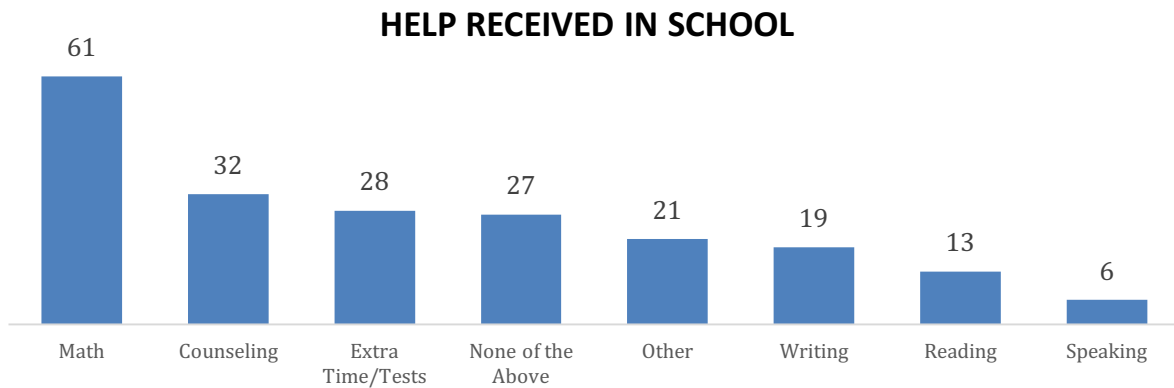
Consistent with this theory, when asked if they had ever been told they had Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD) or if they thought they might have it, skaters reported rates of ADD/ADHD that were between 3 and 8 times higher than the rate among the general population (5%). Although a slightly higher percentage of Skaters Raised Outside of NYC reported that they had been told that they had ADD or ADHD, the rates across all subgroups was very similar. Below are the rates for those who were raised in NYC:



### TOLD HAVE ADD/ADHD OR THINK THEY MIGHT HAVE IT



Skaters in both the Raised in NYC and Raised Outside NYC groups reported receiving help at school, with help with math being the most common area of support:

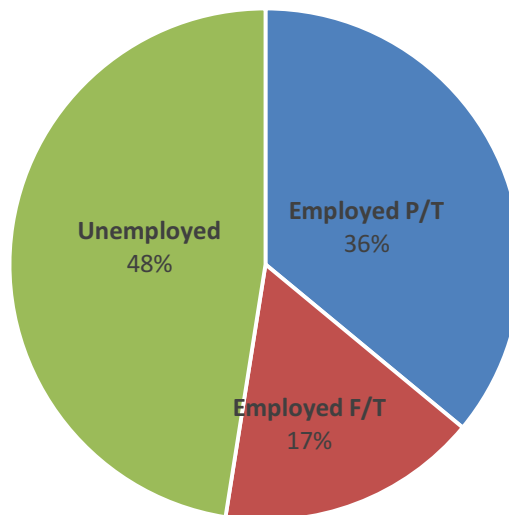




## JOBS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Although 60% of all skaters in the total survey sample reported that they had a part or full-time job, “Finding a Job” was selected as the #1 issue among all skaters in NYC by a large margin. Across all subgroups of skaters (raised in NYC, raised outside of NYC, HHF skaters), it was selected more than 1.5 times as much as any other issue on the checklist of most pressing issues.

## EMPLOYMENT



The skaters who were raised in NYC were significantly less likely to have a full-time job than those who grew up outside of NYC and had moved here. 48% of Skaters Raised in NYC were unemployed, which was almost twice the unemployment rate of Skaters Raised Outside of NYC (24.5%). At least some of this difference could be accounted for by the fact that Skaters Raised in NYC are younger and are also more likely to live with family, which means they may not have to contribute as much to household expenses and therefore may be less motivated to look for employment. They are also more likely to be Black or Latino and so may be more likely to experience discrimination in hiring.

**Jobs/Careers.** Across all subgroups, skaters reported 134 jobs on the open-ended question about what their current job was. 60% of skaters worked in Food Services, Retail, or other unskilled or manual labor positions. Skaters Raised in NYC (87%) were 4 times more likely than Skaters Raised Outside of NYC (22%) to work in unskilled or manual labor positions, and Skaters Raised Outside NYC were significantly more likely to be a part of a trade union.

When asked what jobs/careers other than professional skateboarder they were interested in, skaters described 268 different positions in 13 different areas that they thought they would

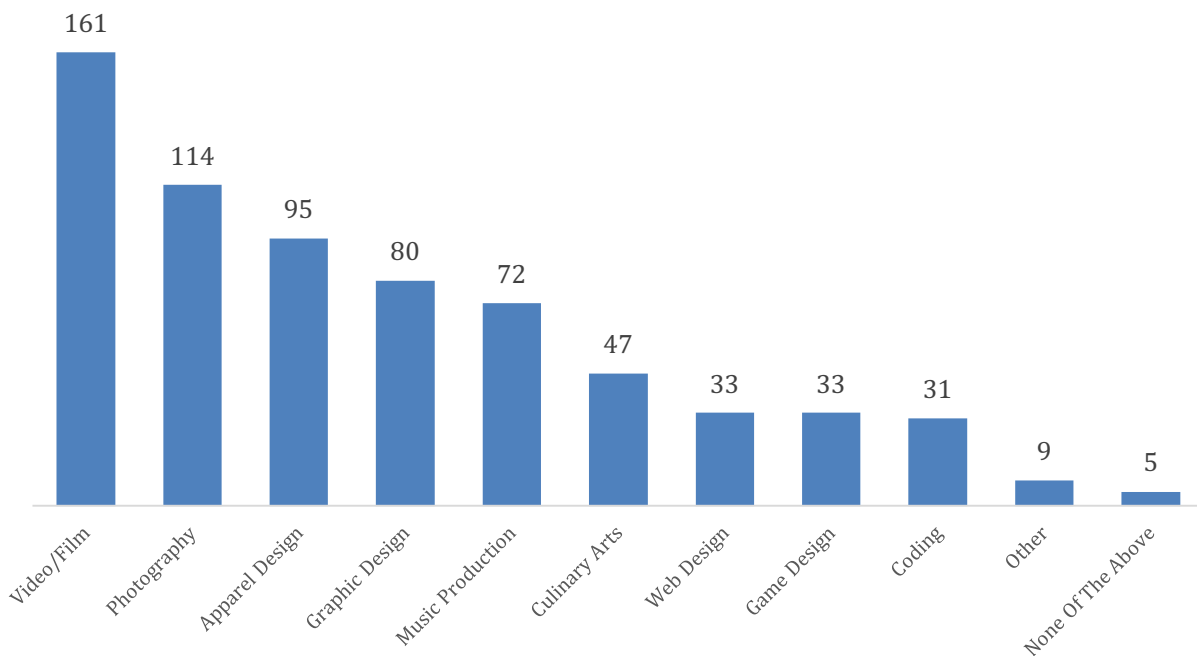


enjoy. They described careers in the Business, Entrepreneurship, Trades, Architecture and Engineering, Action Sports, Hospitality, Sciences & Medicine, Tech, Journalism/Publishing, Civil Service/Military, Art and Design, Education/Human Services, and Entertainment industries. The top 7 careers that interested skaters were (in order): careers in Photography, Video/Film (Filmmaker/Director, Filmer/Cinematographer, Editor), Design (Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Game Design, Web Design, Interior Design), Entrepreneurship (Owning a Skate Shop or having one's "Own Business" were the two most common in this category), Action Sports (Owning a Skate Shop was the most common in this category), Music (Musician and Producer were the most common), and Trades (Mechanic was the most common in this category).

These career interests were consistent with the top-rated skills selected from a checklist of options. The checklist consisted of 9 different skills identified by the focus group of skaters. Skaters were asked to select the top 3 skills they would be most interested in learning through workshops designed specifically for skaters and they were given the option to suggest others in an open-ended comment section.

Video/Filmmaking and Photography were the #1 and #2 choices across all subgroups, followed by Apparel Design, Graphic Design, and Music Production. The graph below shows results for skaters raised in NYC, which were the same as the rankings for the entire sample.

### DESIRED SKILLS



HHF Skaters differed slightly from the total overall sample in that they listed both Photography and Apparel Design as their second choice at about the same rate, and chose both Graphic Design and Music Production as their third choice at about the same rate. Skaters Raised

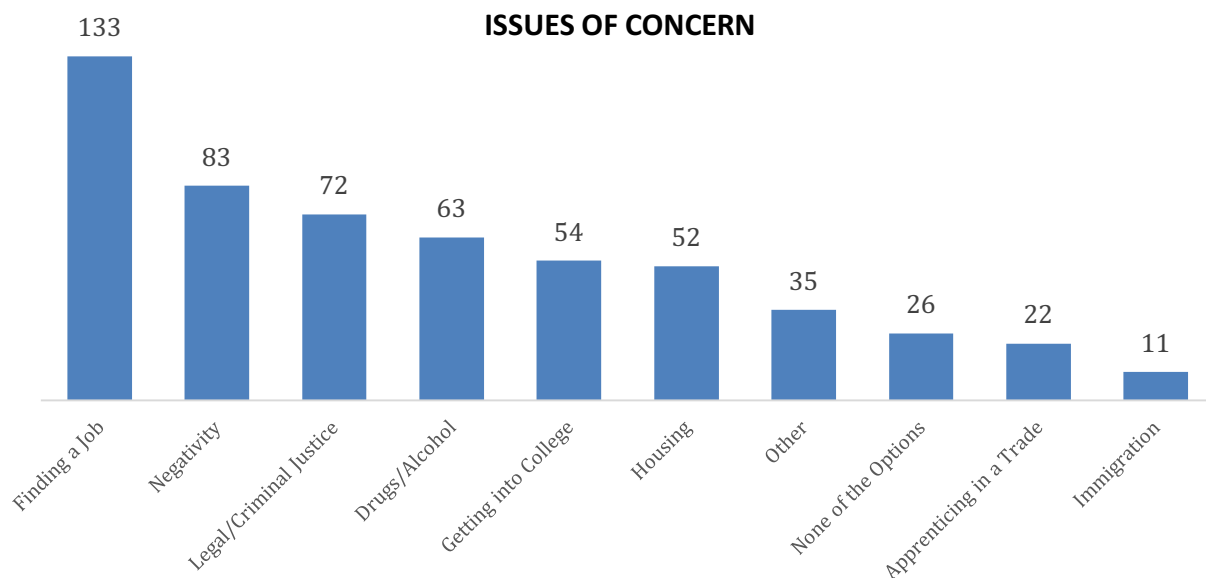


Outside of NYC selected both Photography and Graphic Design as their second choice with equal frequency and listed Web Design, Coding, Apparel Design and Culinary Arts as their third choice at about the same rate. Statistical analyses indicated that they were significantly more interested in web design and coding than the Skaters Raised in NYC. Since Skaters Raised Outside NYC were more likely to be in or graduated from college, and were more likely to have full-time jobs, this may reflect greater awareness of skills that are marketable on the job market.

Less than 10 skaters suggested other skills that were of interest to them in the open-ended comments section. These included, engineering, animation, business, computer tech, marketing, literacy, building ramps, entrepreneurship/starting a business, trade, practical opportunities, and criminal law. Although none of these were suggested more than once, entrepreneurship, practical opportunities, and criminal law are three that came up regularly in other parts of the survey. For example, Finding A Job, which certainly relates to practical opportunities was the #1 issue across all subgroups by a wide margin and Entrepreneurship was one of the top career interests. “Criminal Law” is discussed below.

### ISSUES/CONCERNS

Skaters were provided with a checklist of 8 different issues and asked to select the top 3 most pressing issues for skaters. As discussed above across the entire sample, the #1 issue was “Finding A Job”. The second most pressing issue was “Dealing with Negativity/Haters”, followed by “Legal Issues/Issues with Criminal Justice”, “Issues with Drugs/Alcohol”, and Housing. The graph below represents results for Skaters Raised in NYC, which were consistent with the top 4 results for the total sample.







There was some variation in how different subgroups in the sample ranked their 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> most pressing issues. For HHF Skaters, “Getting into College” was the 2<sup>nd</sup> most pressing issue, followed by “Dealing w/Negativity/Haters” and Housing, which were selected at about the same rate. HHF Skaters were the only group to rank “Apprenticing in a Trade” in their top 5 issues. For Skaters Raised Outside of NYC, “Issues w/Drugs/Alcohol”, “Housing Issues”, and “Legal/Criminal Justice Issues” were all tied for the 2<sup>nd</sup> most pressing concern, and “Getting into College” and “Dealing w/Negativity/Haters” were tied for the 3<sup>rd</sup> most pressing issue. It is important to note that while the general survey asked skaters to rank the top three issues skaters in NYC needed help with, the HHF skaters were asked to rank the top three issues that they personally needed help with.

**Criminal Justice Issues.** Consistent with the expressed concern around criminal justice issues, 82% of the entire sample reported that they had been stopped, questioned or harassed by the police at least once, and 2/3rds of those that had been stopped, had experienced this “A few times”. Still, only about a third had been arrested, less than 10% had outstanding warrants that they knew of, and only about 5% had been incarcerated (all for less than 6 months).

**Other Issues of Concern.** Other issues of concern among skaters were described in responses to open-ended questions. For HHF skaters, the question was presented before the issues checklist and asked them to describe the biggest issue that skaters in NYC needed help with. Non-HHF skaters had the option of describing other issues in the comments section after the checklist. The top 4 issues described were:

<u>ISSUE CATEGORY</u>	<u>TOP SPECIFIC ISSUES DESCRIBED</u>
SKATE PARKS (41)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more skate parks (16)</li> <li>• Need Indoor skate parks (13)</li> <li>• Need lights at skate parks (3)</li> </ul>
SKATE INDUSTRY-RELATED (24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting sponsorship/equipment (17)</li> <li>• Finding filmers (2)</li> <li>• Want more contests (2)</li> <li>• Want to understand how the industry works better (2)</li> </ul>
NEGATIVITY/COMMUNITY (21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negativity, bad attitudes, etc. among skaters (13)</li> <li>• Need more sense of community (5)</li> <li>• Theft w/in the skate community (1)</li> </ul>
INSTRUMENTAL SUPPORT (19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need “guidance” (9)</li> <li>• “School”, “Paying for School”, “Help with school” (6)</li> <li>• Financial (2)</li> <li>• Metrocards (1)</li> <li>• Health Insurance (1)</li> </ul>