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National Demonstration Site Impact Report

Prepared on January 5, 2022 for:

Keeley Park

McLeansville, NC

Developed by:

Center for Outreach, Research & Education

CORE

Turning research into practice.®

About this report:

PlayCore's Center for Outreach, Research, and Education (CORE) leads the National Demonstration Site Network to raise national awareness and help local leaders and residents share the positive impact they are making on community health and wellness through innovative evidence-based designs of play and recreation spaces.

To meet that goal, CORE worked with **GameTime** to collect data included in this report through a QR code survey process. Our goal is to gather data and share insights that help you describe and evaluate the performance of the park using information about park users, usage, and user experiences.



Research-based soundbites included to bring meaning to your results



On-site signage encourages visitors to complete a user survey.

How did we capture the data?

This report shares back data and insights from:

- **Users:** A survey of site users completed between November 2020 and December 2021
- **Key Informant:** A survey capturing information about your site from Shawna Tillery– the person your team identified as knowledgeable of the planning, design, and maintenance of this park.

The data included in this report was gathered from 64 unique user survey responses.

Survey respondents provided information about the group with whom they visited the site.

Report describes 210 site users:

- **80%** visited in groups of 1-4 people
- **20%** visited in groups of 5 or more people (max=15)

To respond to the survey, visitors used their smartphones to scan a QR code located on signage placed near the entrance to the site. Surveys consisted of approximately 13 questions, focused on one of three factors: users, usage, and user experiences.

Onsite data collection topics

USERS	Visitor characteristics, group size
USAGE	Visitor activity level, visit length, visit frequency
USER EXPERIENCES	Visit reasons, visitor satisfaction

Survey participants were encouraged scan the QR code and respond to survey questions via CORE's online survey form. Surveys were available in **both English and Spanish language versions**. Average time to complete survey was 4 minutes.

Site Overview

Keeley Park

Keeley Park in McLeansville is one of 32 PlayCore National Demonstration Sites (NDS) in the state of North Carolina from over 800 sites nationwide. NDSites exemplify evidence-based best practices in design and implementation, support health-related initiatives, and provide meaningful ways for community stakeholders to gather and share data about the sites' community impact on the community. There are five NDS programs that help communities turn research into practice in local public destinations.

Keeley Park was designed to align to three National Demonstration Site Designations:



Me2: 7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design applies a comprehensive design philosophy to innovate an outdoor play environment where both physical and social inclusion can occur to the greatest extent possible.



Play On! Intentionally promote physical activity through active play and encourages the developmental progression of skills through healthy movement by incorporating the six key elements of play.



Outdoor Adult Fitness Parks provide a variety of meaningful outcomes to communities and can serve as critical health solutions by offering new ways to make physical activity more available, accessible, affordable, and enjoyable.

Research indicates that positive outcomes occur when stakeholders are engaged in the planning process, evidence-based design principles are implemented with the built environment, and supplemental programming is offered to further enhance user experiences.

Survey Data Insights about Users, Usage, and User Experiences.



Your Key Informant Reported 7 Goals for Keeley Park:

Social Emotional Health & Wellness

Physical Health & Lifestyle Behaviors

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Community Engagement

Public Service

Environment

Education

Research indicates that these goals and themes are essential to building healthy, vital communities, and are related to important health challenges in your state.



In North Carolina, the percent of youth feeling sad or hopeless increased by 23% between 2017 and 2019.^[1]

Every site designed, built, and programmed with your site designations in mind can help to counteract negative trends and support more positive outcomes.

Visitor Satisfaction

Site visitors reported an overwhelming level of satisfaction with the new play and recreation space. 100% of surveyed visitors were satisfied with their experience, with a majority (94%) reporting being very or completely satisfied with the site during their visit.



100% Satisfied

“We love this park. Everyone in the city drives to be here. Best playground we’ve ever been to.”

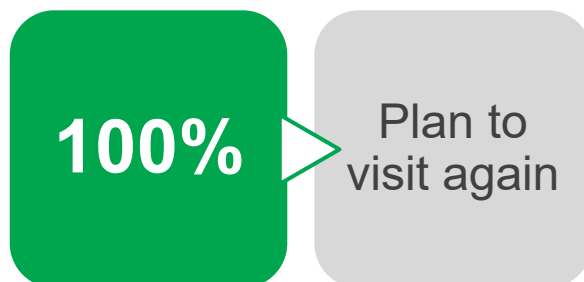
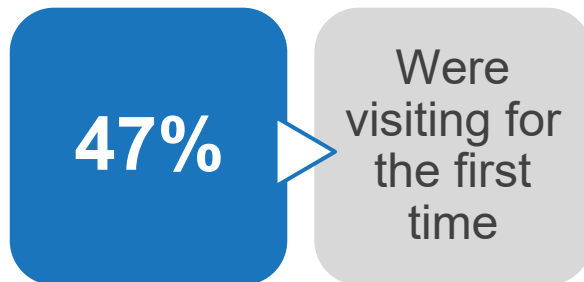
- Visitor

Recent research has begun to more show the relationship between satisfaction with public amenities, trust in government, and health.

In these ways, we know that overall impressions are important! And at this park, first impressions were strong!

Keeley Park is reaching new park visitors and visitors’ level of satisfaction is likely contributing to repeat visits.

Almost half of those responding to the survey said it was their first visit, and all visitors said they planned to visit again.




In the United States, living within a 10-minute walk of a park is positively and significantly associated with higher levels of civic trust, appreciation, and stewardship.^[2]

Living near a popular park is also associated with greater satisfaction with local park and recreation departments and police.^[2]

Demographics

With the diversity of elements at all NDS parks, we would expect to see higher rates of use. Our research confirms this.



Every play element added to a playground increases the park's use by 50%.^[3]

Nationwide, CORE has found that park managers familiar with NDS-designated sites report 60% of the time that these evidence-based designed sites outperform other local play spaces in terms of visitor volume. To help compare, the RAND National Study of Neighborhood Parks also found that the average rate of park use is 20 people per hour.^[4]

Key Informant Insights about Keeley Park's Inclusivity:



"We want to attract the community to a playground where children of all abilities can play together with a range of physical, sensory, and social experiences. We want this play environment to encourage children to be active, learn from and teach each other that differences are ok, make friends, socialize, and be happy children."

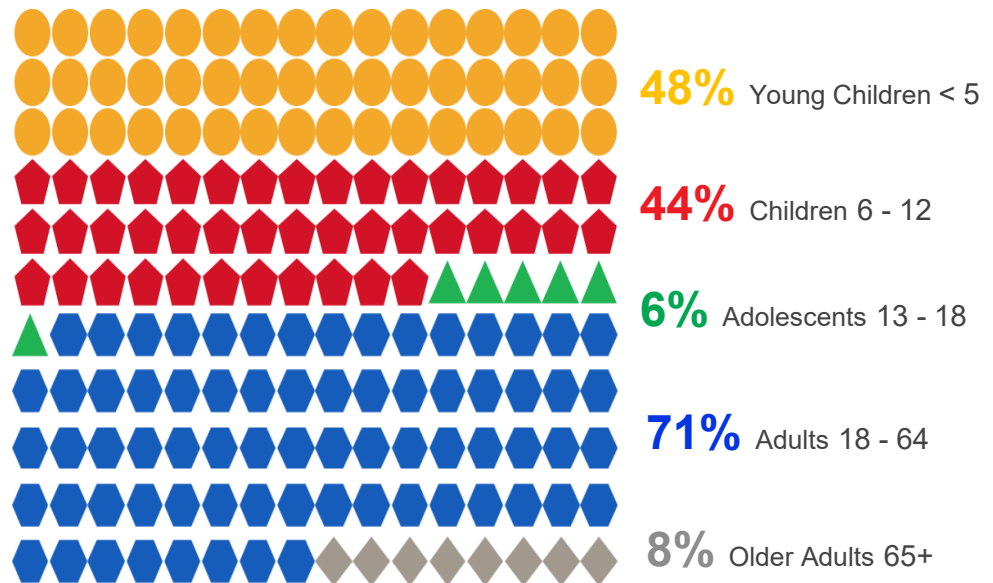


User Survey Insights:

PlayCore captured information about the characteristics of group visitors to the site.

Data from your park shows a prominent representation from **young children and adult groups**, which is appropriate for the designated community.

Age Breakdown of Visitor Groups




"A safe, clean, inclusive space to take our family to play."

-Visitor

"It really is inclusive!"

-Visitor



16% of Keeley Park respondents visited in multi-generational groups. Research shows that adults who engage in play with children experience reduced stress, improved mood, greater cognitive skills, and enhanced relationships.^[5]

A full study of park use typically involves more intensive or objective data collection at the site to capture visitor counts and information about visitors' activities and characteristics. Contact CORE for more information and support.

Site Usage

Physical Activity:




PlayCore surveyed visitors about the estimated level of physical activity of the *most active* member in their group as a proxy for the whole group. Physical activity rates can capture how well a site supports healthy behaviors.

- **100%** of groups had members who were physically active during their visit (lightly, moderately, or very active)
- **69%** of groups had members who reached the recommended level of moderate to vigorous physical activity

Outdoor Play:



Another important consideration is providing frequent opportunities for community members to be outside accessing nature. At Keeley Park, **22%** of respondents visit the outdoor play space more than once a week.

 Up to **93%** of children believe in the benefits of outdoor play in nature – noting it helps them learn new things and improve communication skills.^[6]

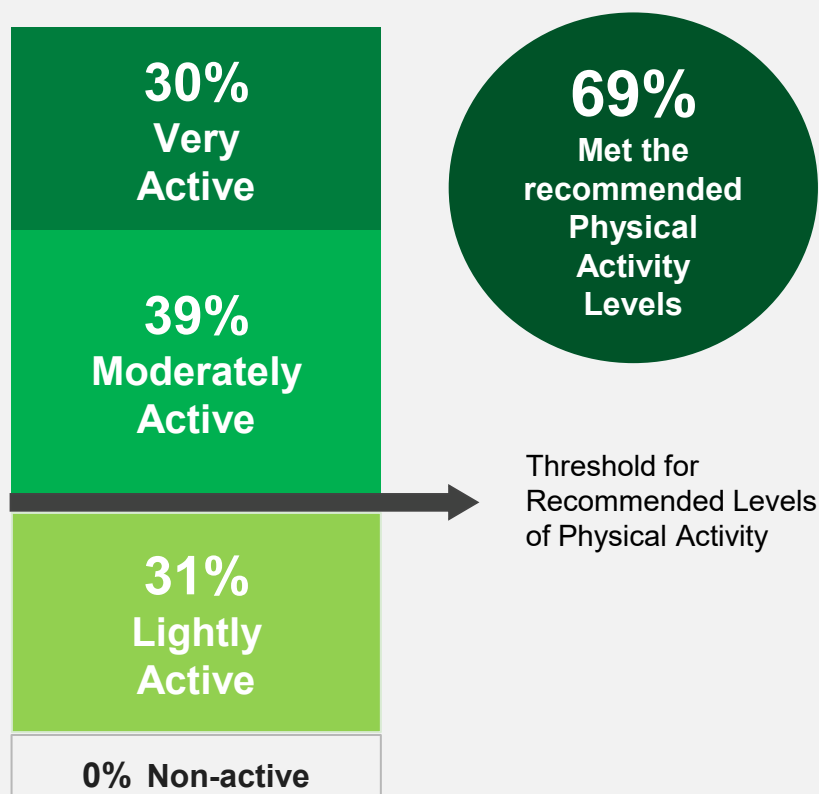
Length of Visit:



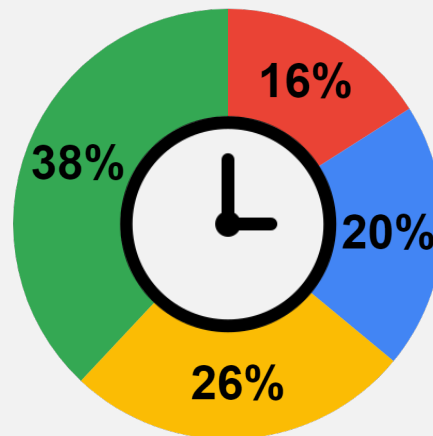
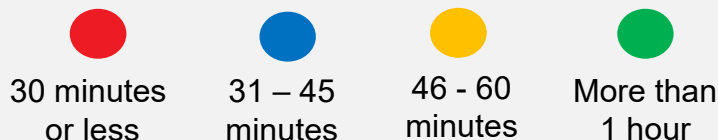
84% of visitors spent at least 30 minutes in this space, indicating that visitors view this park as a place to consistently engage in an outdoor environmental setting.

Generally, the length of time an individual or group spends in a public space will be connected in some way to their level of comfort, belonging, and enjoyment within that place

Activity Level of the Most Physically Active Individual in the Group



Typical Length of Visit



Individuals who spend more than **120 minutes** outside in nature within a 7-day period can experience health benefits.^[7]

Research shows that just **20 minutes** of time spent in a park can improve people's sense of well-being.^[8]

Reason for Visiting

This park was designed and built with social inclusion in mind. Visitors experienced these benefits and others. CORE asked survey respondents to rank their top three reasons for visiting Keeley Park site and share comments regarding the greatest benefit from this site. Below, are the top three reasons for visits, along with details about why each reason was beneficial to users, in park visitors' own words.

“You can fish, walk, run, garden, get wet at the splash park, and practice bmx biking. Please make more parks like this one!”

-Visitor

Top 3 Reasons for Visiting Site

Physical Health & Lifestyle Behaviors



The top reason for visiting was related to Physical Health that includes providing opportunities for all visitors to be active.

Physical Activity



*“Strength training exercises.”
“Salud física (Physical health)” and
“Physical activity”*

Recreational Opportunities

*“Energy outlet for child (playground use).”
“Great place to walk and play!”*

Environment



Environmental reasons highlighted among visitors included safety and unique aspects of built environment.

Built Environment



“We love the different kinds of things to play with that you don't see at other playgrounds and the accessibility features...”

Safety

“Safe friendly environment for kids to run around and just be kids.”

Social & Emotional Health



Social & Emotional Health reasons include enjoyment of social interactions.

Positive Affect



“Nice spacious space, family friendly.”

Social Engagement

“Kid interaction for my child.”

Using the Data

Many of you reading this impact report wear multiple hats when it comes to advancing community vitality through play and recreation. Whether your role is a park planner, organizer leading public engagement, an architect confirming site design decisions with stakeholders, or an agency leader sharing outcomes with your community members...

You can use both the quantitative and qualitative findings from this report to help tell the story of this site.

Sources in this report:

1. CDC: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2019), [Link](#)
2. Center for Active Design, [Link](#)
3. City Parks Alliance, [Link](#)
4. The first national study of neighborhood parks: Implication for physical activity, [Link](#)
5. Play From Birth to Twelve, [Link](#)
6. An investigation of the status of outdoor play, [Link](#)
7. Scientific Reports (2019), [Link](#)
- 8., Factors associated with changes in subjective well-being immediately after urban park visit, [Link](#)

For a complete list of sources referenced in this report please contact data@playcore.com

I want to...

...share insights and successes from this project.

- **Describe Users:** What does the group characteristic data tell us about the visitors? This site attracted sizable groups across all age groups (most common young children and adults).
- **Report Use:** How did users experience the site? Visitors had a strong first impression, the majority spending more than 30 minutes at the site (84%) and all indicated they would return (100%).
- **Identify Motivators:** What motivated people to visit? Rankings and comments revealed the most important reasons for visits, all neatly categorized for you around health and wellness outcomes.

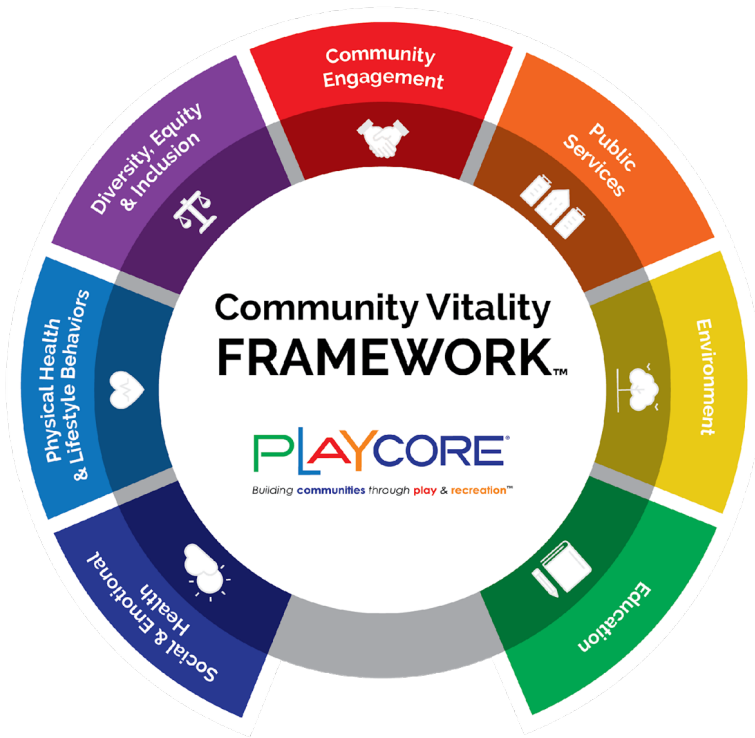
...assess the performance of this site.

- **Determine if Needs were Met:** Were visitors satisfied with their experience at the site? Yes, every single one (100%).
- **Understand Benefits:** What were the health and wellness impacts of the site? Most user groups (69%) reached the recommended level of physical activity.
- **Shared Sentiments:** Users indicated the site benefits across key indicators of community vitality, top 3 being Physical and Lifestyle Behaviors, Environment, and Social and Emotional Health.

...take my knowledge to the next level.

- **Produce new communications:** Reasons for visiting and visitor quotes provide details about community member's values when it comes to the recreational space. Further interpretation of collected site data may offer some context about findings to include in communications.
- **Generate new ideas:** Do park visitor responses give you new ideas about programming this space? Or, do responses give you ideas about what you'd like to know about other sites in your community or park system?
- **Explore new results:** Collecting new data can answer new questions. Do some groups experience important benefits more than others? Are there any changes in usage or users overtime? Are there improvements in health and wellness behaviors or outcomes?

...utilize a qualified data coach to maximize further translation, application and collection of site data: data@playcore.com



A comprehensive data-driven approach for advancing community health & wellness outcomes.

Keep Learning & Engaging

This report is just the beginning of what we can learn about how well parks and play spaces perform, meet intended goals, and how park users react to and experience them. With strong research as our starting point, there are many more opportunities to use publicly available resources or continue to partner with PlayCore—as well as parks and recreation and design organizations in your state—to gather the data that best fits your own needs, and helps you tell your community vitality story.

We hope you can use this report to continue to advocate for great parks, communicate with your communities, measure the results of your investment in public space, and improve on your level of service to your constituents and neighbors.

Information about how parks are used and valued can help public agencies and private sponsors respond to real-life conditions and experiences on the ground by adjusting design, fundraising, programming, and other strategies.

Resources:

CORE cares about each of our partner's play spaces and communities, as well as about the broad benefits associated with putting research into action. These benefits happen at every stage of the planning, advocacy, community consultation, design, construction, maintenance, and programming that goes into your National Demonstration Site.

- Resources for the National Demonstration Site Network: playcore.com/nds
- Request the Community Vitality Summary Brochure with more details on the illustrated Samplework: www.playcore.com/cv-brochure-request

To learn more about our data services or share how you plan to use this data, contact Russ Carson, PhD, PlayCore's Research and Health & Wellness Advisor for a complimentary consultation.

Contact: data@playcore.com

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