

DC Park Prescription:

Combating Chronic Disease with Nature

Robert Zarr, MD, MPH, FAAP



Presenter Disclosures

Robert Zarr, MD, MPH, FAAP

- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:**

“No relationships to disclose”

Chronic Disease Burden

↳

- 100 million Americans currently suffer from a chronic disease (coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, and mental health conditions)
- Overweight and obesity contribute to chronic disease
- Chronic disease results in decreased quality of life and, ultimately, in premature death.
- Spending time in natural environments increases physical activity, hence decreases the risk obesity.

DC Park Rx is a Community Health Initiative whose mission is to prescribe parks to prevent and treat chronic disease and promote wellness

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



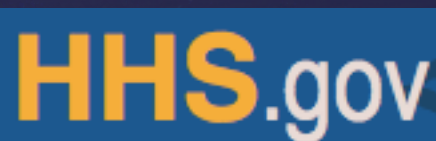
THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC



National Environmental
Education Foundation
Knowledge to live by



Children's National
Medical Center



What have we accomplished?

- Developed standardized park rating tool
- Recruited volunteers/students to rate parks
- Mapped and rated >300 parks
- Developed **Park Pages** searchable database linked to EMR
- **DC Park Rx** launched at Unity Health Care on 7-1-13 (>829 Rx prescribed) by 66 of 180 providers
- Researched changes in behavior and attitude

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INCLUDE PARKS WITHIN RADIUS (MILES):

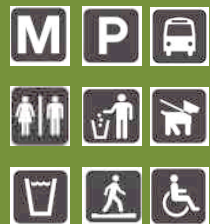
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Park Rx Search »

[Clear Results](#)

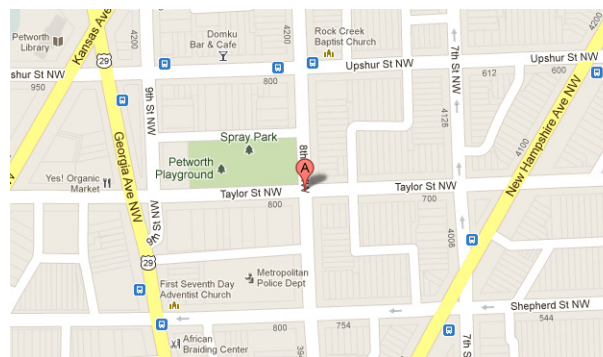
Petworth Recreation Center

DC Department of Parks and Recreation



PARK GRADES:
Cleanliness: A
Accessibility: A
Exercise Level: A

801 Taylor Street, NW



CONTACT INFORMATION:
(202) 576-6850

HOURS:
Dawn to Dusk
Some areas open only:
Mon-Fri 3:30pm – 9 pm
Sat 10- 4 pm.

Spray Park is open during the summer Mon-Sun 12-8pm

Pets: Allowed on leash, fenced dog park available

GETTING THERE:

Metro: Georgia Ave/ Petworth (Green/Yellow), walk 4 blocks north on Georgia Ave, then make right onto Taylor St

Bus: 60, 62, 63, 64, 70, 71, 79, H8- Stop at Georgia Ave/ Petworth Metro and follow metro directions. OR 62- Stop at New Hampshire and Taylor St, make left onto Taylor St

Parking: Limited street parking available

Handicap access: Yes



Things to Do!

- * play frisbee * soccer * basketball * **Spray Park** *
- *walk your dog * have a picnic *

SPORTS AMENITIES: 2 large basketball courts and an open multipurpose sports field. Facilities are well-kept.

PLAYGROUND: 2 extremely clean playgrounds in excellent condition. Clean and vibrantly-colored playground for younger children.

PATH: Difficulty Rating: Easy

- ☛ Concrete ½ mile-long path through park with a gentle slope
- ☛ Paths are extremely clean and well-kept with several benches available

Park Information

Restrooms are very clean, functioning, and unlocked.

Drinking fountains are available and clean.

SIZE – Small but with open space

SAFETY – Park is well-lit and safe during the daytime

PARK EXTRAS – Benches, picnic tables, and trash cans. Employee present and educational programs available.

AESTHETICS – The park is very sunny with mild street noise.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Water sprinkler spray park- fun for kids in the summer!



Results of Park Rx Research:

1. increase in the number of children who visit a public park in DC
2. increase in the number of parents who believe that physical activity affects the health of their child
3. increase in the number of parents who said their provider discussed the importance of physical activity
4. increase in the number of parents who said their provider recommends their child spend time at parks
5. **22 more minutes per week on physical activity**
6. **6 more days per year at a park for at least 30 minutes**

Why are these results relevant?

DC Park Rx is a low-cost intervention that utilizes a known, generally trusted, and accessible resource – parks – to influence positive health outcomes by way of the provider-patient relationship in the health care setting

Next steps...

- ◆ Programmatic expansion
- ◆ Enhancement of search functionality of database
- ◆ Creation of app for handheld devices
- ◆ Research of biometrics

Glimpse into the future:

↳ [Future DC Park Rx Website](#)

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