

# Chilli's Struggles: Identity and the Pursuit of Safety



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# Community Observations

Location 1: Smith and 9th Street F and G Station.

- It's stores everywhere and always right next to each other
- I never see people go in too that taco spot why is it still there
- Stores look ran down and torn up why does this community look like this



# Community Observations

Location 2: Coffey Park

- I feel as though this is like a safe space for others
- I always see people coming to find peace
- It's around fall time leaves on the floor people with jackets
- Not too many people were in the park cause it was chilly and cold
- This is a place where I can come and clear my mind
- This is the only park I know doesn't have construction around it
- I find it weird that a lot of white folks be in the back of the park
- Only part I know that isn't gated up looking like a maze like the projects
- I see a man with a jacket and a book bag walking
- more and more leaves are falling and trees looking more thin
- It looks like a calm cold day around the afternoon

- No police officials around patrolling the park



# Interview with Mark, Red Hook Resident

Date: 12/4/2021

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Hi, my name is Zhane Ramsey. I'm a public safety organizer at RHI and I'm here with...

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Mark.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

I'm going to be asking you questions about Red Hook and what public safety means to you. So we're going to get started. I'm just going to start with that question. What does public safety mean to you?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Public safety means for our people in the neighborhood to feel safe.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, that's what public safety is, to feel safe in your own neighborhood.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Okay. How do you feel about NYCHA?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Uh, it has its pluses and it has its negatives, really. You know, I think NYCHA changes along with each generation, it changes.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Would you like to elaborate on that?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I think that at one time, NYCHA used to be, you know, full of residents. I think that now, it's like... they're just here.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, and that's how they consider the residents also, you know.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you feel like NYCHA doesn't care about the community as they should?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Uh, in a way I think they don't. I think that they don't put the time in to find out what people in the community will like, what they don't like, or help, you know?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Uh, even, even brooms in the building for people to clean up a little, you know.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah. What type of effort would you like to see from NYCHA that you don't see now?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Um... More concern, (laughs) more concern.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

More concern, I mean, about people and, and what issues they have in their apartments.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah. And would you like to elaborate more on that? Like, what's going on in NYCHA apartments?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Like, you might have somebody that has, uh, a hole in their wall and NYCHA will be like, "Okay, we're going to get with you."

And it might be months before NYCHA gets with you. And now you're dealing with that hole in the wall.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

So, at one time, it'd be like, as soon as you put the paperwork in, NYCHA was right there to fix it.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

So it's now, it's like, you know, they don't, they don't, they don't have any urgency about this. You know, there's no urgency.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

So you feel like NYCHA doesn't care about the community as much?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Not as much as they used to.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Why do you think that changed?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Well, to me, I think it's, you know, you have less people, you have more people that's more concentrating about a job, then... more than a job, you know?

Sometimes when you want a job, you put your 100% into it. If you just come to work, then it's you just coming to work your eight hours and that's it.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you feel like NYCHA has been slacking on the effort that they've been putting in?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Some have and some haven't. We have some good NYCHA people and then we have some that just don't care.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Hmm.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

It's a job.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Hmm. I know recently, there was a gas leakage. Can you tell me more about that?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

It was a gas leakage from these guys, they busted the gas line.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

So then NYCHA said, "Well, okay. You know what? You don't have any heat and the hot water. We will give you hot plates." And then that was it. Now we have to wait for the people to fix the gas lines. So now that was a minute. And there's people out here still-

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

... you know, there's people out there that still don't have gas.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah. Um, how long did that take? to be prepared?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Uh, I mean, you had to be prepared right on the spot, because what changes were going to be made? There was no gas-

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

... still no hot water. You know, you had to deal with it.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

And it wasn't like they were notifying you on what was going on or how long the process was going to take, or anything like that. So, I felt like

NYCHA failed on that. They didn't keep

everybody updated on what was going on.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Um, so how long have you been, um, living in Red Hook?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I come in and out, because I come and check my mom.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Okay.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

So she's been here about 50 years, 55 years.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

How is her experience with Red Hook?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

At one time it was good. Now, she doesn't really come outside like that. You know, um, maybe that's because she lost a lot of friends and then also there's nowhere for her to come out.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, due to the construction, there's nowhere for her to sit.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you think the construction is affecting Red Hook, peers?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Yes. I think it is. I think it's affecting the whole attitude of people, man, because it's a mess. And when it's a mess, you know, people's attitude is like that too, you know. But like, you know, they rather don't care, because this is what they get, you know. Even though it's not Red Hook, but this is what they you know?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you feel like, by the construction workers putting all of these fences up, do you feel like they messed up a beautiful community in a way?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

No. I think that they did it to make it better, but there could have been a whole lot of other ways they could have done it other than, you know, the way they're doing it.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I think that they could have gone like, a block at a time, or a section at a time, instead of just one whole mess. You know?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Mm-hmm (affirmative). I heard that there was a lead problem in the building.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Yeah.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Can you tell me more about that?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I heard a few people say they had lead problems there. Some people came around and said they did an inspection and the inspection that they did was really they painted your wall and said, "That part had lead in it."

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

But, nobody ever came back to take the lead out, do anything. They just painted a part and said, "That part has lead in it."

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

What about the mold?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

The mold. There's mold here, you know. I don't, we don't have mold-you know, when I go up to my mom's house, she doesn't have mold.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

But I heard people had mold issues.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

And they got sick. Their children got sick from it.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you think that all of these problems in the building, NYCHA is just brushing off, even though it's like, affecting these people?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

No, I think that NYCHA is overwhelmed with so much stuff. I don't think that they're ignoring it, I just think they're overwhelmed and they don't know how to deal with it.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know what I'm saying?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

How do you think NYCHA could fix it, if they could?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I don't know if it could be fixed, unless you hire more people. You know, that seems to be the problem, less people. I think they need more people, maybe to train more people. You know, not everybody should be a cleaner. You need more technicians, more people in the building to teach younger people.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, hire younger people.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, hire people and get them jobs.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

So back to the police.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Right.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

What are your thoughts on police brutality?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You've got some good police and you've got some bad police. I think that you put the wrong police in the wrong neighborhoods. I think that when they put people in neighborhoods like this, they already tell them that this is a bad neighborhood, so their mentality is that, it's a bad neighborhood. So they come here thinking, you know, I got to be a bully. You know?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Hell, at one time, it was like a community thing.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, the cops were more friendly, everything like that. You know?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

They did not judge you, because you black-

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

... or Spanish.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you think police brutality happens in Red Hook? Or have you seen any police brutality in Red Hook lately?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Lately I haven't, but then a lot of times we hear people saying it, but then sometimes you can't judge it, because you don't know what happened. You don't know, Sometimes you have guys say, "I ran. I ran from the police- they had to chase me."

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

So, you know, but, if you go across the board, overall police brutality, you know, I think it's, it's unfair how they treat, you know, the black and the brown communities. You know what I'm saying?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, like me and you. Like, we're nobody, like we're not people.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
How do you feel about black cops?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Towards us as black people.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You've got some good black cops and you've got some black cops that feel like they're better than us.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Like they didn't grow up in the hood.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know? And I think sometimes that, they should be more represented in neighborhoods just like this, you know, because they can relate. You know rather than having a white cop here. He can't relate to this, but a black cop, I feel like can.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

The level of violence in Red Hook, has it increased, or decreased?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

To me, I think it's less. I mean, back in the 70s and 80s it was worse out here. You know, there was a lot of shooting out here. You know, I think they're making it bigger than what it is. It's not bad.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

What can you say changed the decrease in violence in Red Hook?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I just think.. To me, it's less drug dealing. I mean, you got drug dealing going on, but back then it was like a major thing.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**  
Selling drugs was like a big thing. So, you have more conflict. You know?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Yeah

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**  
Now, you just have fights here and a fight there. You might have, you know, different neighborhoods come here, that's where the violence comes from. Different neighborhoods come here. Your neighborhood is fighting them, you know?

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Mm-hmm (affirmative). How long do you think they will be keeping this construction up?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**  
Well, from what I heard, it's supposed to be five years.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**  
Really?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Yeah, from what I heard.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

And, And how does that make you feel?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I mean, five years. Five years goes by fast. I just want to wait to see what the outcome is gonna be. You know, all this is doing, I just want to see what it's going to look like after.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you feel like after doing all of this and waiting five years, do you feel like it's going to be a better outcome, or it's going to be the same outcome?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I think it's going to be a better outcome, but I think it's going to be a different neighborhood.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I don't think it's going to be a lot of us here.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Hmm.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I think they are fixing this up for a different community.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you feel like they're trying to push more white people in and push black people out?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Yes. Yes.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Elaborate on that.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Because, if you go to, you know, in the back that neighborhood's fixed up and they are slowly working their way here. So they are building Red Hook up, so I heard they're going to change the name to Liberty Heights. So, it's not going to be Red Hook no more, you know. They're going to make it so where, it's a community where they're going to have a mixture of people, but it's going to be a whole lot less of us. And then the rent is going to go up.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

So, a lot of us can't afford that rent.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I think. The economy, I think that they're taking this area and they're going to highlight this area close to the waterfront and everything and it's a money maker.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Do you feel like the government has a big part of this?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I think the government has a big part in this. Yeah, I think that for us, they don't... They view us, you know, they view us in a certain way and you know, for neighborhoods like this, you know, they want to make this a community, but a community without us in it. Some of us are here, but some of us won't be here.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Why do you think so?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I can't, I can't hardly. I can't even explain that. I tried to, it's hard.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

So, the young generation growing up, what would you, what would you want to say to them as advice towards them trying to push us out of the community-

and put more white people in?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

I would say to them, get more involved in the community, you know, come up with ideas that you would feel like you would want to see in your community, you know. Don't just sit back and be like, "Oh, well." You know, join boards, do things, you know, to make this community better.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Go get more in, more involved.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, let them hear your voice. You know, because if they don't hear your voice, then they don't hear your voice, then you know, then you're not counted.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Yeah. What ideas do you think that the young peers in this generation should come up with to like, you know?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Um, they should say they want more community centers, more outreach centers, more stuff for them to do out here, more, uh, you know, they be more involved for people to reach out to them, to make them involved.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you think that would make it a better community and better for them as peers?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Yeah, I think so, because they're the next generation.

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

You know, like, this generation is going to be gone and then, then the ones that's going to be here. They have to fight for their own place if they want to stay here.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

Do you feel safe in Red Hook?

**Mark, Red Hook Resident:**

Yes. Yes.

**Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:**

After the past years, like, you know...

Mark, Red Hook Resident:  
Safe.

Mark, Red Hook Resident:  
Always.

Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:  
Okay. No issues?

Mark, Red Hook Resident:  
No issues.

Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:  
... violence?

Mark, Red Hook Resident:  
None.

Zhane Ramsey, Public Safety Organizer:  
Okay. well that's it. Thank you very much.

Mark, Red Hook Resident:  
No problem.

# CHILLI'S STRUGGLES: IDENTITY AND THE PURSUIT OF SAFETY

*An Auto-Ethnography of a young person of color from/working in Red Hook.*

Research Question: What does public safety mean to me?

What does public safety mean to me? Well, that's a good question because we as people don't really get into too much of what public safety is. For example, how can we improve it – but no one really focuses on that topic too much. That is a perfect example of why we should be concerned because we are not concerned enough about it. Especially all the riots and protests that had happened, why do you think that is? The justice system is behind this if we focus on putting more money and value into these communities that are messed up instead of putting money into a police force or government that doesn't care about us people.

As a young black woman growing up in New York, I grew up watching so many innocent people die or get convicted and incarcerated for things they didn't do. Cops killing innocent people, women, fathers, and teenagers because this is how the justice system works. Black people don't get justice. Me being a black female, I always feel like I'm a target because of my race and skin color – because of who I identify as. There was one time I came into a racist situation. I was minding my business heading home after a long day at school. I'm walking to the train, when all of a sudden, I feel someone push me out of the way. I turned around and said, "Excuse you". I said to him " You could have told me to move out the way politely, can you say sorry?" he replied by saying, "What? How dare you? You could have walked on the other side! This how you represent your race niggers?" I replied, "what did you just say – my race? I'm what?" After that, a lot of other things were said. Like, for example, he said I'm a "black bitch," I'm "ghetto," our people are "animals," and/or "out of control." He tried to swing on me, so I defended myself. I used my umbrella and hit him with it. Thirty minutes later, my school principal came, and then the man that tried to hit me called the cops on me to press charges . So I went back to my school with my principal and dean, and we sat down and started talking to the officers. I started telling the officers I was only defending myself. He started with me and continued to provoke me even after I tried to walk away. I just felt like why am I being arrested? just because I'm black you would take a white man's word instead of a black person.

Why is it that once you see our skin color we are automatically judged and called out of our names? My safety as a black women is always worried about these things – like getting kidnapped and raped and sold and killed

In this cruel world, minorities will always be looked at differently because we are different, in culture and fashion in many different ways, those in power fear what they don't understand, and that is us as minorities. Living in America as a minority is like living in a battlefield; the war is never over. It just gets better or worse – either a great ending or a tragic death. Us minorities have been killed over the years because of our beautiful black skin tone and our nappy hair.

Because we are misunderstood and hated by whites. Because they feel superior. Because of our skin, we won't ever feel safe enough to walk down a project block because someone's son might be misidentified if a random black man robbed the bank and he fits the description. A young black man could have his whole life together – grade A student, good job, no records – but just because we are looked at differently, we somehow always fit the description of the type of violence that just happened.

Now, let's talk about the safety that we are not getting from law enforcement that we need. How about police forces that actually protect and serve, instead of killing innocent bystanders? How are people supposed to be and feel safe, when the only people getting paid to protect us are killing us? It is not ok that people are going through this. For the past couple of years, there's been a lot of police brutality happening. It's gotten so much worse over the course of the years. Breonna Taylor was killed in her own home by police officers they didn't tell why she was murdered and who did it cause the government hides anything to do with black deaths if it involves any police officers. But this is a crazy thing. The government puts so much money into the police but doesn't worry about if the apartments in NYCHA are properly fixed or if plumbing and gas works. We need

more community programs to keep our younger generation from getting killed, as well as a neighborhood watch. I feel like that would be way better for the community because everyone knows everyone so they feel safe enough to come to them with their problems. The justice system doesn't show the people they care about our safety. All they care about is money, and that's why there aren't enough programs or good schools in the community – because of the low budget for these beneficial programs. We have bad, unhealthy, processed food in public schools when children should be eating healthy, nutritious food.

Teachers get low on resources because they don't have much of a school budget. Then, the district has to fire teachers and have substitutes for the time being. This is where the system goes wrong. It is not supporting the communities that need help, but the system is putting in the money to make sure the police force is paid.

The police department doesn't care about us people or protect us – we need an actual system that is for the people. So many people are dying because of the police's mistakes, but we are supposed to feel safe? How can we, knowing that our justice system is failing their people and putting their safety at stake? We as minorities don't feel safe at all with police. That makes me ask: what are they helping with? I haven't seen police really help or protect us as citizens

So how would you feel if you couldn't go to the police to help you get out of a situation where you're going to be stuck? The main people who are supposed to help you in a crisis are the police, and you can't even go to them for help. I depend on my community and family when I need help or if I'm in a bad situation. I mean –who can you depend on for safety in your own community better than your own people? Police can't serve and help the way they need to – that's being proven everyday. That's why the state should cut their budgets and put money into things that are more positive places, like projects and rebuilding damaged buildings (not halfway construction).

People in communities that have gangs, drug activity, and violence should have the most help from the police. Instead we don't – we're getting bullied, killed, and tortured by the police because we are African Americans. Why do the police or white people want to mess with our safety and jeopardize that?

From my own experience, I don't like the police. I recently was in a police brutality situation. When I was 14 yrs old I got into a fight with a girl I went to school with. We started fighting at a local pharmacy, close to where I live. During the fight, her best friend's mom tried to break it up and my ex boyfriend tried to get me off her. After they finally successfully got me off the girl, she told the worker in the pharmacy to call the cops on me. Things got worse after that.

The police ended up arriving without asking me any information – for my name, what's going on, how old I am. They began to arrest me. I asked why, and I was getting upset because they just – out of nowhere – started handcuffing me when I kept asking why. The police officer kept telling me to stop resisting arrest, but I was just turning around asking why I was getting arrested. So after I kept asking them if they could tell me why they were arresting, he kept saying stop resisting. Then, all I see is a female cop in front of me. She punched me in my mouth and my face. Once she did that, I got upset and kicked her in her chest because I was handcuffed from behind.

Once I kicked her, the other officer, a male, threw me to the ground and pinned me up against the car. After that incident, I was put in the car and brought to the precinct for them to put me in holding until I got picked up. This is why I don't feel safe with the police. How could I ever feel safe after that? I didn't deserve to get mistreated by the police like that at all, and this treatment has messed up how the system works nowadays. It's like the police brutality gets worse every year. When I am going to feel safe in my community? When we have police that don't care how they abuse their power and authority that they have over citizens?

Give back to the community and better it. Protect and help the community keep us safe. How are we safe if we don't know when we are going to be the next target by something like the police force? Public safety in Red Hook is important. I'm not from Red Hook, but I am from Brooklyn and I know Brooklyn does have the most violence going on throughout most of the other boroughs.

I recently spoke to a resident in Red Hook about the safety in their community. Surprisingly, the violence and danger has increased so much, and it's from the displacement caused by NYCHA construction. NYCHA doesn't have enough workers, so now project buildings have lead and mold problems. How is that safe for families? Gas leakages, no heat, children are getting sick from all the mold and lead problems which is a problem. There is no gas, so how could they cook for their families? There is no heat, so now that's going to be a problem in the winter, because it gets cold. How are families going to be warm at night?

That's why NYCHA needs more staff – to help with problems piling up in apartment buildings. Construction is a problem too – what if someone gets hurt with the construction happening everywhere? How are the construction companies making sure I'm safe as a resident? The construction in Red Hook has been going on for a long time. Fences are up leaning all over the community. It looks like a maze throughout Red Hook and they say the construction will continue up to 5 years. Hopefully it doesn't take that long to fix the community up. Back to the safety of the building – we need more construction..especially repairs. These buildings are old and worn down and NYCHA workers should focus on the buildings looking better than they look now. This is probably why there are complications in the apartment building like lead and mold – because of the foundation. The bricks that they used to build the building originally are old and grey and need repairing. What if the building collapses? How is that safe? More investing into our community will be beneficial, and it will lead to a better outcome in the people of the community.

Public safety is when you're able to go outside and walk around your project community without hearing about it on the news. Things like some people in the community were shot, hearing gunshots when you walk down the street, or that an innocent bystander was getting arrested based on him being a minority. I want to be able to know women can go home at night without them being mugged or robbed or raped or killed because they're not safe in this world or even men being able to go home without being caught in the middle of a shoot out or gang activity. We need to start investing our time in making changes in project communities. I feel like once we fix the community by investing in it, that will decrease any violence in that community.

Public safety is very important because it ensures you stay safe and it helps your loved ones stay safe, too. This world is crazy, and it isn't safe for everyone. So you have to make sure every step of the way that you're safe, and your community is safe. The police aren't here for our community so we have to be there for each other since our justice system is failing us.

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