

# children's PRESSLINE

## Asians face discrimination in racially diverse L.E.S.

By **RACHEL OLFSO**  
with **YESLEANY**  
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Although the Lower East Side of Manhattan is home to a wide range of minorities, Asian residents are still often confronted with racism.

"Asian people are very quiet a lot of the time...that makes some people think that they have the right to pick on them because they're easy targets," comments Maria Mendez, a local Hispanic resident.

Asians make up 9.8 per-

cent of residents in New York City, according to the U.S. Census Bureau 2000 survey. At nearly a tenth of the population, the number of Asians cannot compare to that of Hispanics and Blacks, which combined made up 53.6 percent of residents in the same survey. The Lower East Side is no exception to these statistics; the community is predominantly Black and Hispanic, making Asians part of a largely silent minority that faces discrimination.

According to Sunny Moy,

president of the Asian American Youth Center, the Asian kids he works with often won't speak up when they are bullied, even if it upsets them. "Usually Asian kids that we deal with don't say much," says Moy. "But they know they're being teased...and being discriminated. They understand that."

Jesse Rubin, 12, a Lower East Side local, recalls incidents of Asian kids being teased in his neighborhood, "[They] just get up and walk away, and I saw this one kid

started crying."

C.N. Le, a professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, specializes in the Asian American experience and believes that ignoring these problems is unlikely to lead to acceptance and progress. "They need to take steps to address that kind of discrimination directly and to make sure that the perpetrators understand that kind of behavior is not acceptable," says Le.

Moy adds, "I think discrimination still exists because we

don't openly talk about it enough with our kids. You've got to remember, discrimination is taught."

Moy is hopeful that future generations will discuss discrimination more and be more tolerant. He says, "This subject is very touchy, but it's getting better. Hey, we voted for a Black president, right?"

**Additional reporting by:**  
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## Police Athletic League youngsters unveil new PAL website at Games Day Tournament

On April 15, over 500 Police Athletic League (PAL) youngsters joined PAL President John B. Osborn, president and CEO of BBDO New York, and staff for the launch of the new PAL website ([www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org)) at PAL's Games Day Tournament of Champions, held at the PAL Edward Byrne Center in South Jamaica, Queens.

Children from all five bor-

oughs of New York City gathered for a pep rally celebration to introduce the new website that was created pro bono by BBDO New York and showcases PAL programs and opportunities to support the organization. PAL cheerleaders kicked off the pep rally and Osborn, assisted by Derrick Simmons, 6, of Cambria Heights, Queens, and My'shelle Williams, 8, of

South Jamaica, Queens, led the crowd in a countdown and pushed the button to launch the new website.

"The launching of this new website for PAL brings emotion and technology together in an unprecedented way. The site delivers information on PAL and ways to volunteer or donate, which is an important initiative in this current economic climate. Finally, the site provides a platform that strengthens and deepens our sense of community," said Osborn. "We couldn't have chosen a more meaningful moment to launch this website, a time when kids need us most."

The pep rally began the annual Games Day event, where champions, ages 6 to 18, competed in a citywide tournament for a fun-filled day of games and laughter. The Manhattan youngsters challenged their peers to double Dutch jump rope, Connect Four, noc hockey, a math challenge, Sorry, Brain Quest, Candy Land, basketball, word Scramble, pool and a fitness challenge with jump rope,



**Derrick Simmons, 6, and My'shelle Williams, 8, from PAL's Edward Byrne Center in Queens assist PAL President John B. Osborn in unveiling the new Police Athletic League website ([www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org)).**



**Michelle from PAL's Harlem Center competes in the double Dutch jump rope competition at PAL's Tournament of Champions Games Day.**

(Jerry Speier photos)

long jump, jumping jacks, sit-ups and marathon stations.

The Tournament of Champions is an annual PAL event, fostering better understanding and relationships by bringing together boys and girls of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. PAL encourages youngsters to develop athletic and educational skills and the sportsmanship qualities of discipline, fair play and healthy

competition.

The Police Athletic League, founded in 1914, has been serving New York City's young people for more than 90 years. PAL provides recreational, educational, cultural and social activities to tens of thousands of boys and girls annually. It is the city's largest, independent, non-profit youth organization. For more information, please visit [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org).

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