

The Faces of Jeremy's Heroes

"I love Jeremy's Heroes because now I know someone cares about me," a young boy named Tayeed, 10, a Bronx native who attends P.S. 229 shyly explains. The children of Jeremy's Heroes may have different faces, names, and ethnicities, but they all have one thing in coming; a need for a sense of belonging. These youths enjoy being part of something larger than themselves, something heroic. One can see the success of Jeremy's Heroes in the smiles on the children's faces and in the sincerity in their eyes. Every Jeremy's Heroes child knows they are cared for by the coaches and staff who serve as role-models. These children now have a reason to abstain from drugs, violence, and gangs. Tayeed is just one of many children who feels this way, thanks to Jeremy's Heroes.

Jeremy's Heroes provides a sense of belonging and security to dozens of children. "I like being a Jeremy's Hero because now I don't always have to go home alone and have a lot of great teachers. I get to hang with my friends," explains a young girl named Kiana, 10, Bronx native. The children of Jeremy's Heroes learn about the importance of teamwork, which is something most have never experienced. Many of the children are unaware that sports, such as basketball, actually require two teams. Now, they all know how to work together towards a common goal.

At Jeremy's Heroes, the children are free to be themselves because they feel included and empowered. "I like Jeremy's Heroes because we get to run and play sports and it doesn't matter what people think. It is just for fun." During the after-school sports programs, community service projects, and sports camps, the children get a chance to be carefree. The children can simply be kids and not worry about their troubles at home, or exposure to drugs, violence, or gangs. Jeremy's Heroes not only keeps kids off the streets, but allows them to be themselves, build relationships, and feel a sense of belonging and security.

Seeing the faces of these children as they engage in Jeremy's Heroes community service activities can make anyone's heart melt. Many of the faces of Jeremy's Heroes are somewhat accustomed to receiving aid, but are now exposed to character education through projects such as helping the elderly, to comforting abused animals. Participating in community service builds their character and compassion. All donations provide opportunities to develop these traits and to help turn troubled youths into compassionate, well rounded individuals that can pass this spirit of Jeremy's Heroes on to friends and family. These children bring the Jeremy's Heroes mantra of "Dream It-Live it-Teach it" to life.

Without your generous donations, these after-school programs would not be possible. As a result, these children are exposed to opportunities that would never otherwise be offered. As Jeremy's Heroes dance coach Donna Thomas, 23, Bronx native explains, "Jeremy's Heroes is great because the kids have something to look forward to and know they are cared about." The faces of Jeremy's Heroes are the faces of our future.