

Community Health Issue

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What is *healthy*? *Healthy* is taking in a gulp of fresh air in the morning. *Healthy* is giving your family a hug after a long day. *Healthy* is being the reason someone smiles. *Healthy* is forgiving, and allowing everyone a second chance. *Healthy* is going left when others go right, but most importantly, *healthy* is advocating for what you love, and believe in, even though something may be in your way. *Healthy* is strong, healthy can do anything, but just like us, things get in *healthy's* way.

I am a proud owner of two dogs. I enjoy taking them around my complex for walks, and to the dog park. But, owning amazing creatures comes with responsibility. Any dog owner doesn't mind this, because all the hard work you put into a dog pays off. Some of these daily responsibilities include making Fido tired, providing healthy food, and picking up feces when needed. This is where the health issue in my community comes in! People in my apartment complex find it acceptable to leave their pet's waste on the ground. It may seem silly, but a \$200 fine from the NC government isn't enough.

Uncared for stool doesn't just stink! It raises the risk for other dogs to catch diseases. When it rains, the waste gets swept up with the water, then taken to the roads and ditches. It then gets placed in our sewer systems. There're an estimated amount of 89.7 million dogs in the United States, each pooping an average of 3 times daily. The health of humans cannot afford for owners to neglect waste. I know the people who live in the same community as myself, are not the only victims. For internet searches that involve advice for untreated canine waste, one hundred and twenty-eight million results are available. This alone shows that this is a serious issue.

But, resolving this means forcing people to change a bad habit. After doing research I discovered that members of low-income housing communities are more likely to leave their dog's waste. This is understandable when a box of dog poop bags can cost up to \$75. Low-income housing communities are located all over the US, but the community I would help with \$400 is Dobbins Hill, Chapel Hill, NC. I chose this community because it is located right next to mine. I would use \$400 to buy stands that hold bags, and built-in trash cans. After talking to the community manager, we could install them, and use the leftover money to add bags to the stands, as needed. I could visit each station once a week, empty it, and bring it to the dumpster.

Healthy, is the most important thing we have. In order to preserve it, we must do anything we can, and that means we should start small. We should work together to solve health issues in our own community, and that alone will have a great impact on the world today.