



Kawartha Lakes Police Service Community Survey

Final Report
June 18, 2021



Prepared by:



**FORUM
RESEARCH**

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Introduction



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Purpose

The Kawartha Lakes Police Community Survey and 3 community focus groups were conducted by Forum Research in February and March 2021. The goal of this research is to facilitate a series of stakeholder consultations to determine the nature and level of services required of the Kawartha Lakes Police Service.

The findings of this research will help the Kawartha Lakes Police Service understand how it can improve and sustain services provided, and identify pathways of growth within the community.

The current report presents preliminary, high-level findings from the KLP Community Survey.

Methodology: Quantitative and Qualitative

Quantitative Survey

Fieldwork Dates	March 15-April 23, 2021
Method	Telephone (random digit dial), online
Criteria for Participation	At least 18 years of age, living or working in Lindsay or Ops Township
Sample Size	N = 532
Average Length	15 minutes
Margin of Error	+/-4.3%

Qualitative Focus Groups

Focus group dates	February 10 th , 2021 (1 session) February 11 th , 2021 (2 sessions)
Session Length	Approximately 90 minutes

Interpreting the Report

The results of this survey are occasionally compared to results from the 2013 Report of the Public Consultation Committee of the City of Kawartha Lakes Police Services, where applicable.

Throughout the report, there may be references to Top 2 (TOP2) and Bottom 2 (BTM2). This references the collected top 2 positive responses, where applicable. For example, a TOP2 grouping referred to as “satisfied” may be the combined result of “somewhat satisfied” and “very satisfied”. In contrast, the Bottom 2 score is the net percentage of respondents of the lowest categories on the rating scale. Using the same example scale as above, the combined number of respondents who answer “somewhat dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied” would be grouped together to represent the BTM2 score, or “dissatisfied”.

Due to rounding, numbers presented in this document may not add up to the totals provided. For example, at times, the sum of all question values may add up to 101% instead of 100%. Similar logic applies to TOP2 and BTM2 groupings.

Lastly, the notes located under each chart indicates the related question from the survey questionnaire, the sample framework used in the analysis, and the sample sizes of the related data.



Key Findings and Recommendations



Insight #1

Most respondents in the Kawartha Lakes area say they feel safe in their respective area of Lindsay or Ops Township, as well the majority of respondents are satisfied with the quality of service provided by the Kawartha Lakes Police Service. For those who said they were dissatisfied, the most common reasons are related to police not stopping crime/drug dealing, not dealing with problems properly and police having a bad attitude. Participants from the focus group discussions pointed out the importance of the police taking on more proactive roles to address crimes and issues rather than being reactive when a situation arises.

Being more proactive can help KLPS prevent crime and address respondents' reasons for dissatisfaction.

Insight #2

While respondents are mostly satisfied across all police activities, they are particularly satisfied with the police being approachable and easy to talk to, and having major emergencies being dealt with. The majority of respondents also find all police activities to be important, particularly dealing with major emergencies and responding quickly to calls. When comparing ratings of satisfaction with ratings of importance on these police activities, it was found that *supporting victims and witnesses* and *following up on complaints* were rated high in importance, but respondents were not as satisfied.

By focusing on supporting victims and witnesses and following up on complaints, which are activities very important to respondents, KLPS could bolster satisfaction.

Insight #3

Over half of the respondents say there are improvements that they would like to see KLPS deliver in their region. The most mentioned improvement was to have more police presence. Similarly, when asked how the police can improve how they work with the community to address issues of concern, having more police presence and visibility was most mentioned.

Many participants from the focus group discussions also brought up the importance of having police presence. Having presence and visibility especially during positive events can help the community and youths to develop more positive impressions of the police rather than associating the police with negative events. Participants also reasoned that police presence can help officers build rapport and trust with residents.

It is recommended that the KLPS work on having an increased positive police presence in the communities.

Insight #4

Respondents are concerned about most law enforcement issues and are particularly concerned about impaired driving and drug-related crimes.

The KLPS should ensure that law enforcement issues related to impaired driving and drugs continue to be diligently addressed in order to ease respondents' concern.

Insight #5

When asked about the allocation of money to various resources, the majority of respondents say more money should be spent on operational support such as drug enforcement, domestic violence, and investigations. Furthermore, respondents most want to see less spending in administrative areas such as human resources and finance.

KLPS should consider ways to allocate more resources to operational support and less in administration.

Insight #6

When it comes to the cost of policing, respondents most commonly believe that the police service should find alternate methods for delivering services in order to reduce costs, while still maintaining those services.

The KLPS should find alternative ways to deliver services to reduce costs, but still ensure that services are maintained.

Insight #7

Many participants from the focus group discussions think the KLPS can benefit from more training. Some also suggested yearly or bi-yearly professional training days for officers. Most survey respondents feel that in addition to the prerequisites to becoming a police officer, officers should receive mental health training.

It would be beneficial for KLPS officers to receive additional training, especially in the area of mental health.

Insight #8

In terms of education for the community, respondents say they would like to see KLPS provide drug and fraud education to the community. Similarly, participants from the focus group voiced concerns regarding fraud particularly for the older population.

It is recommended that the KLPS provide educational training and raise awareness on issues related to drug and fraud.

Insight #9

Respondents are mostly getting their local news and information from social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, and the internet at-large. Similarly, respondents mostly receive information from the police through social media, particularly Facebook, and are generally satisfied with KLPS' media presence. Furthermore, some participants from the focus group believe that it is more effective for KLPS to use social media rather than conventional/traditional media because this allows KLPS to share the facts without the media spinning the story, allows KLPS to share various messages to the community (e.g., public safety messages, raise awareness of issues, etc.), and provides an avenue for KLPS to reach youths.

KLPS is doing well in terms of their media presence and should continue using social media to keep residents informed and to stay connected with residents.



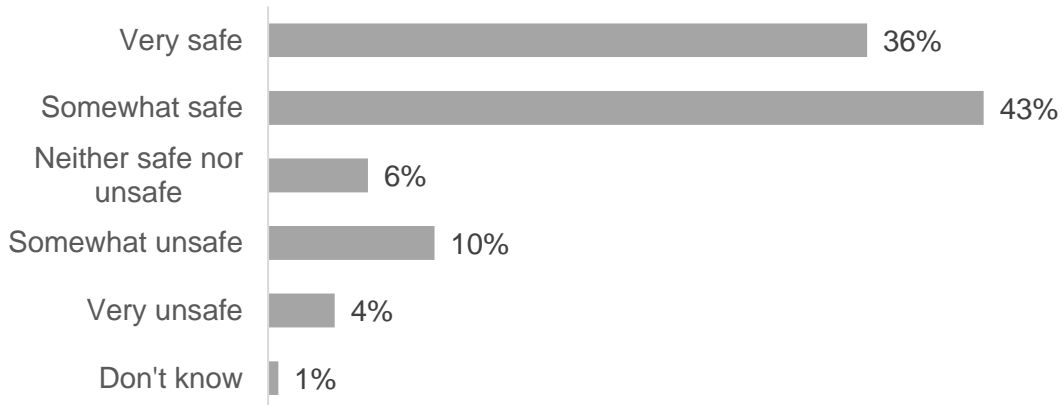
Detailed Findings

Safety and Satisfaction



Safety

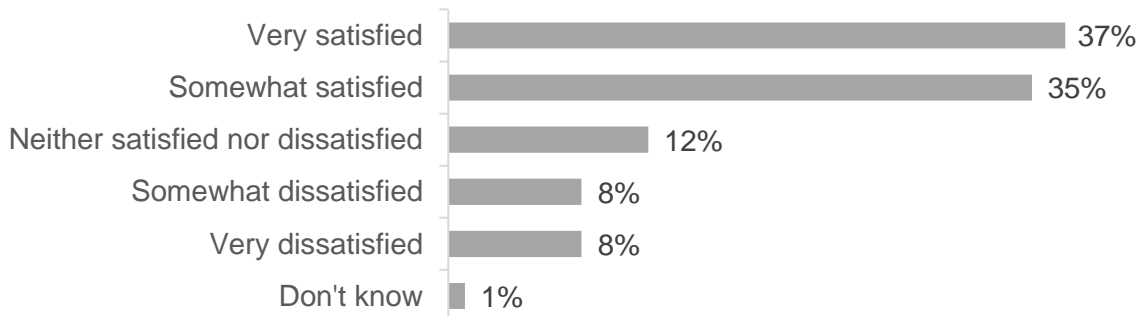
Most respondents in the Kawartha Lakes area say that they feel safe in their respective area of Lindsay or Ops Township (TOP2: 79%).



SA1: How safe do you feel in [REGION]? Would you say that you feel...
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Satisfaction with Overall Quality of Service

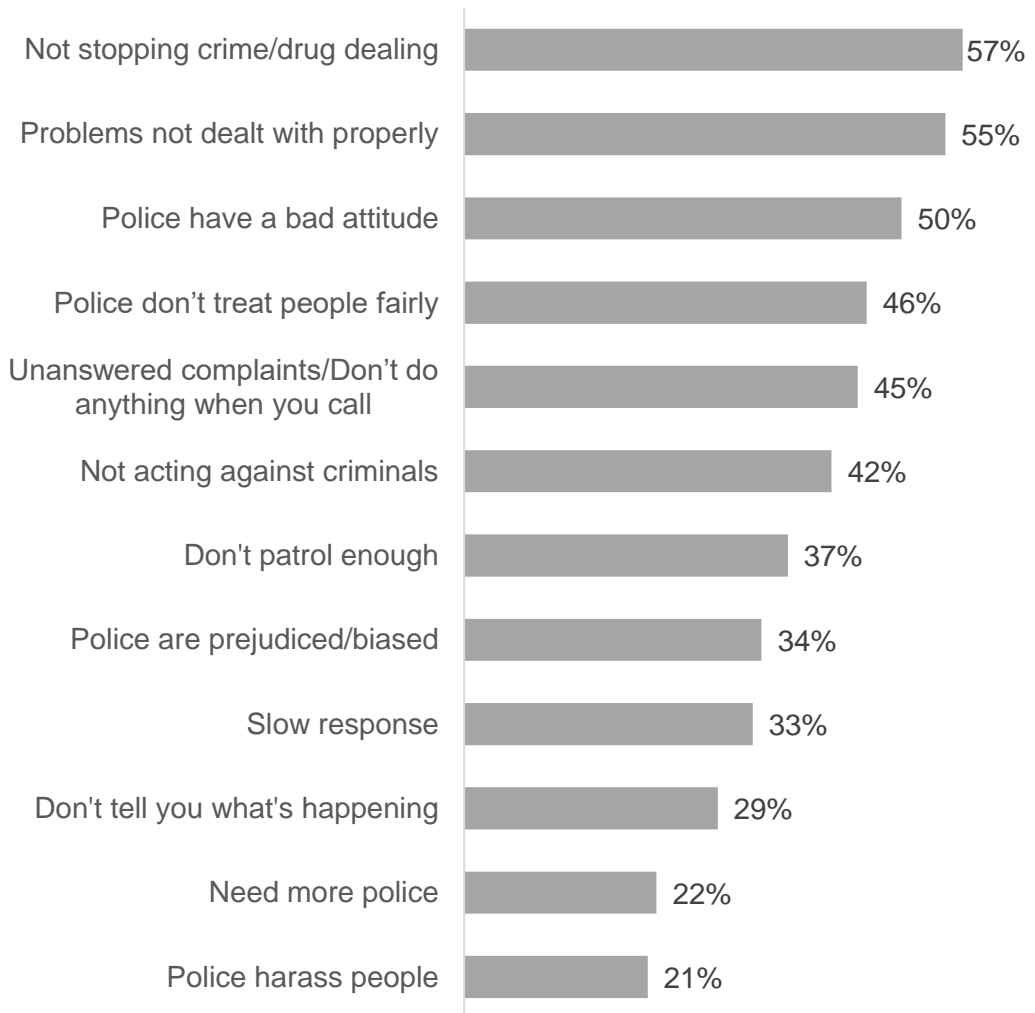
The majority also say they are satisfied with the overall quality of service provided by the Kawartha Lakes Police Service (TOP2: 72%). Most of those satisfied report being very satisfied (37%) with the quality of service. In 2013, a 6-point satisfaction scale was used instead of a 5-point scale, and 83% said they were satisfied (TOP3: very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied) with the overall quality of service.



SA2: How satisfied are you with the overall quality of service provided by the Kawartha Lakes Police Service? Would you say that you are...
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Overall Quality of Service

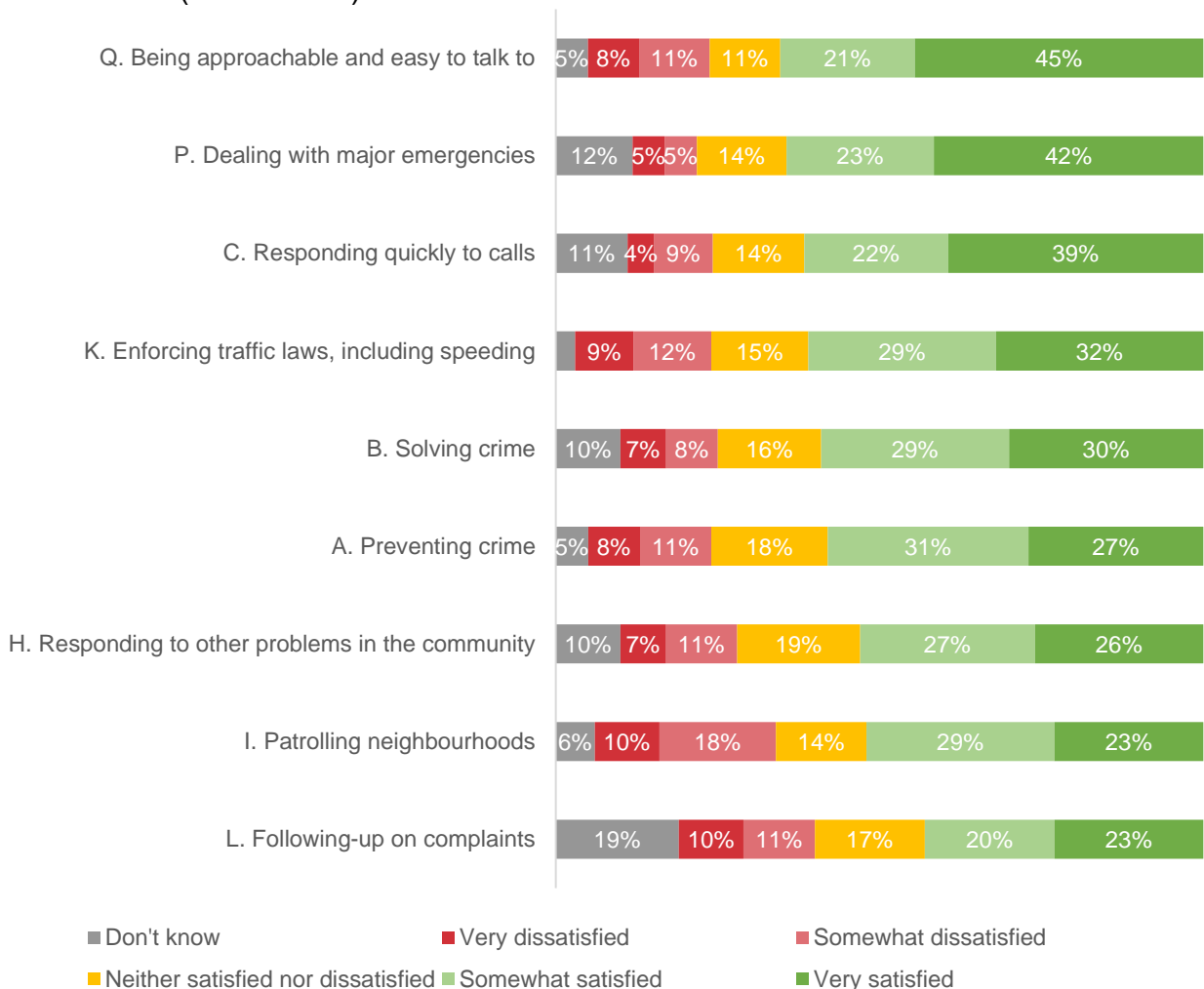
For respondents who say they are dissatisfied with the overall quality of service provided by the Kawartha Lakes Police Service, the most common reasons are related to not stopping crime/drug dealing (57%) and problems not dealt with properly (55%).



SA3: Please tell me / select the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the overall quality provided by the Kawartha Lakes Police Service. (Includes mentions >20%)
 Base: Respondents who answered "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" in SA2 (n=82)

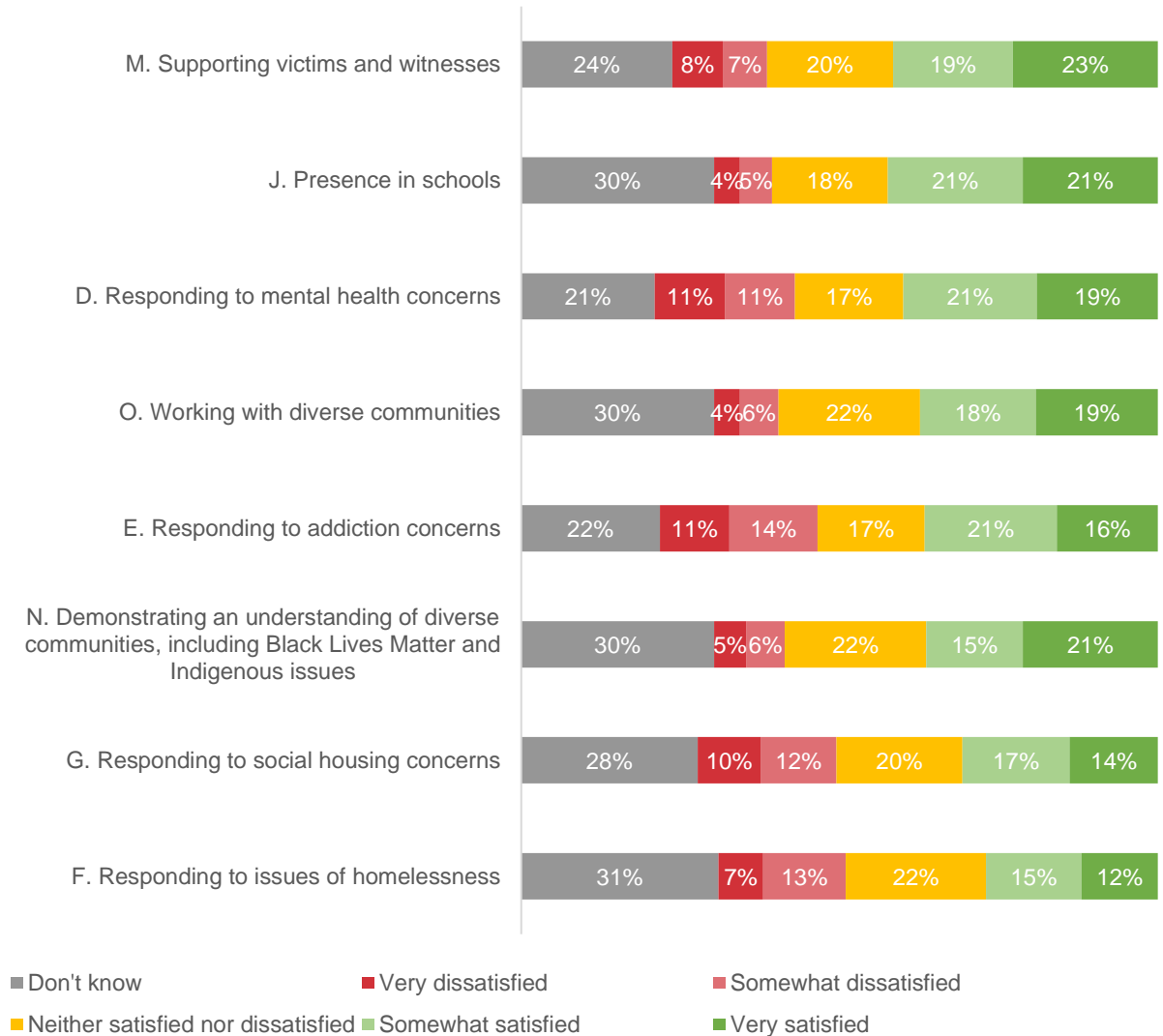
Satisfaction with Police Activities

Respondents are satisfied with KLPS' performance in nearly all activities. Satisfaction is highest for "being approachable and easy to talk to" (TOP2: 66%) and "dealing with major emergencies" (TOP2: 65%). In 2013, a 6-point satisfaction scale was used to ask satisfaction with the quality of service provided in 7 areas. Being approachable and easy to talk to and dealing with major emergencies were not included. Respondents in 2013 were most satisfied with "responding quickly to calls" (TOP3: 88%), followed by "solving crime" (TOP3: 84%).



SA4A/SA4B: Now I'd we'd like to know your level of satisfaction with a variety of police activities. Using a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means "very dissatisfied" and 5 means "very satisfied", how satisfied are you with the Kawartha Lakes Police Service's performance in the following:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

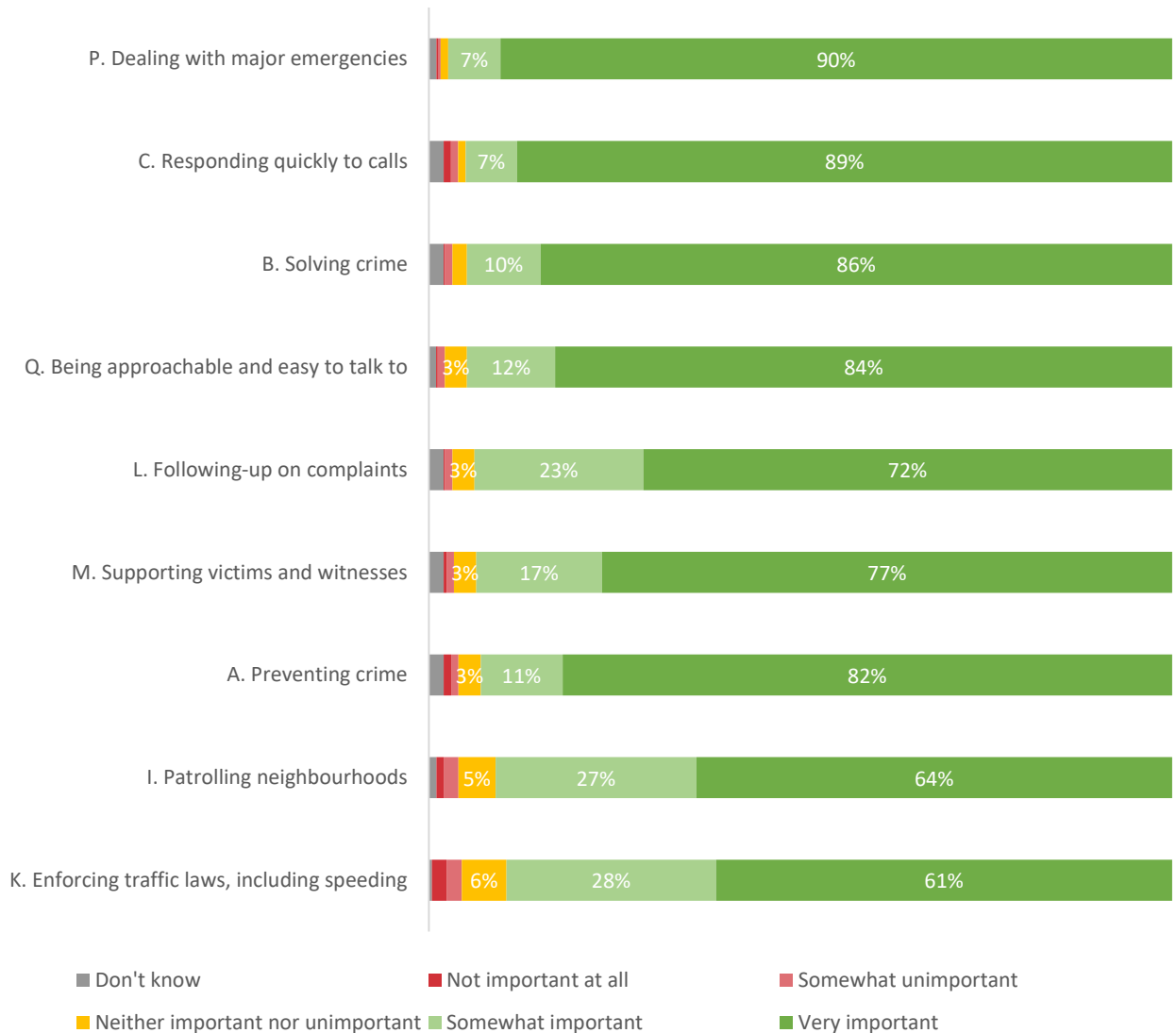
Respondents are least satisfied with the police “responding to issues of homelessness” (BTM2: 20%).



SA4A/SA4B: Now I'd we'd like to know your level of satisfaction with a variety of police activities. Using a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means “very dissatisfied” and 5 means “very satisfied”, how satisfied are you with the Kawartha Lakes Police Service’s performance in the following:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Importance of Police Activities

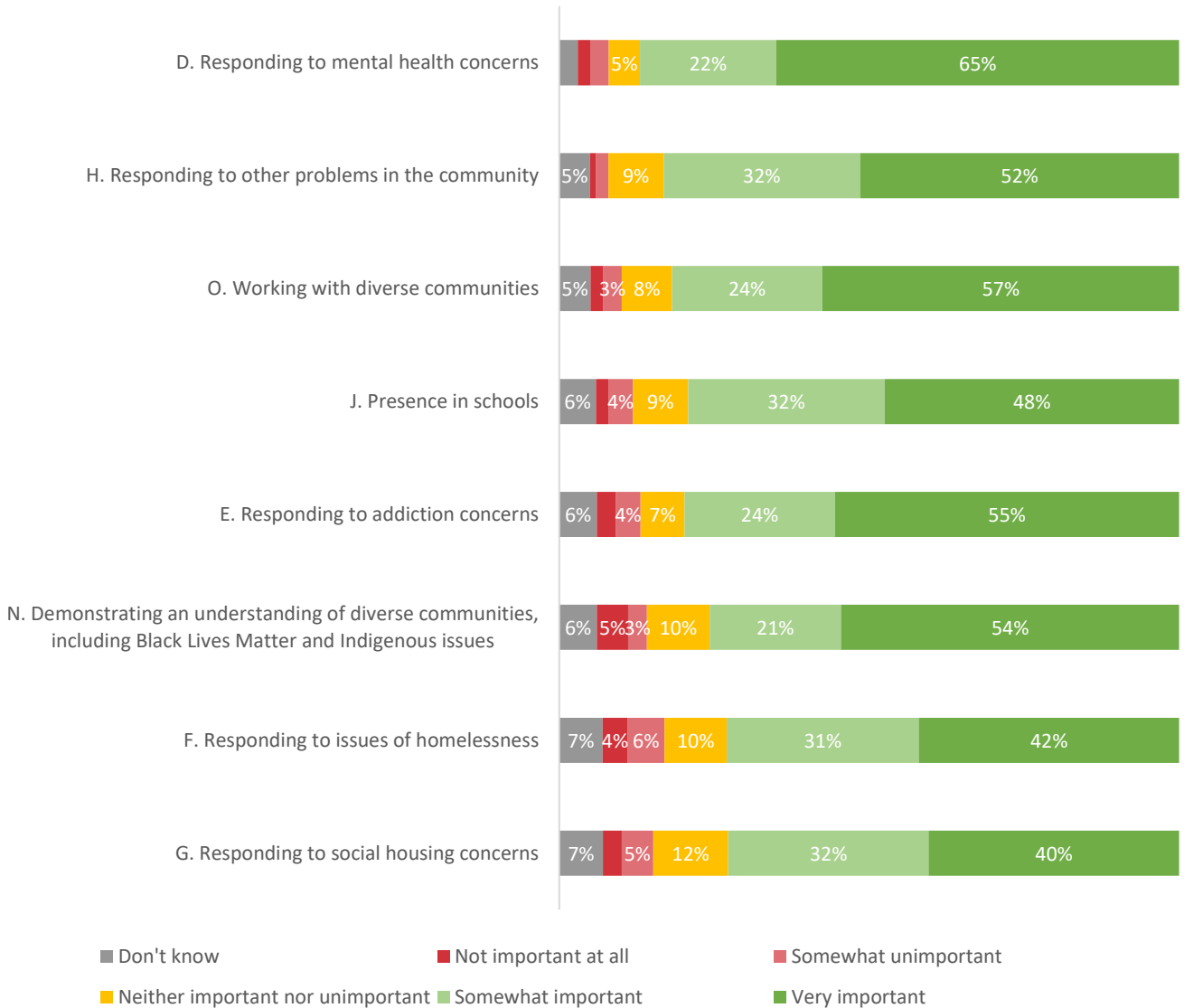
Respondents find all policing activities important, but dealing with major emergencies (TOP2: 97%) and responding quickly to calls (TOP2: 96%) are particularly important.



SA5A/SA5B: Now we'd like to know how important these police activities are to your community. Using a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means "not important at all" and 5 means "very important", how important are the following police activities in your community:

Base: All respondents (n=532)

While the majority of respondents say all police activities are important, importance is rated lowest for responding to social housing concerns (TOP2: 72%) and responding to issues of homelessness (TOP2: 73%).



SA5A/SA5B: Now we'd like to know how important these police activities are to your community. Using a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means "not important at all" and 5 means "very important", how important are the following police activities in your community:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Satisfaction vs. Importance Analysis

The following section explores the importance of police activities to respondents compared to their level of satisfaction with the same activities. Based on the importance and satisfaction ratings, each activity can be considered a success, target, or a secondary area.

Successes are activities that are considered important to respondents and have a high level of satisfaction.

Targets are activities that are considered important by respondents but have a lower level of satisfaction.

Secondary areas are activities that have a high level of satisfaction amongst respondents but are seen as less important.

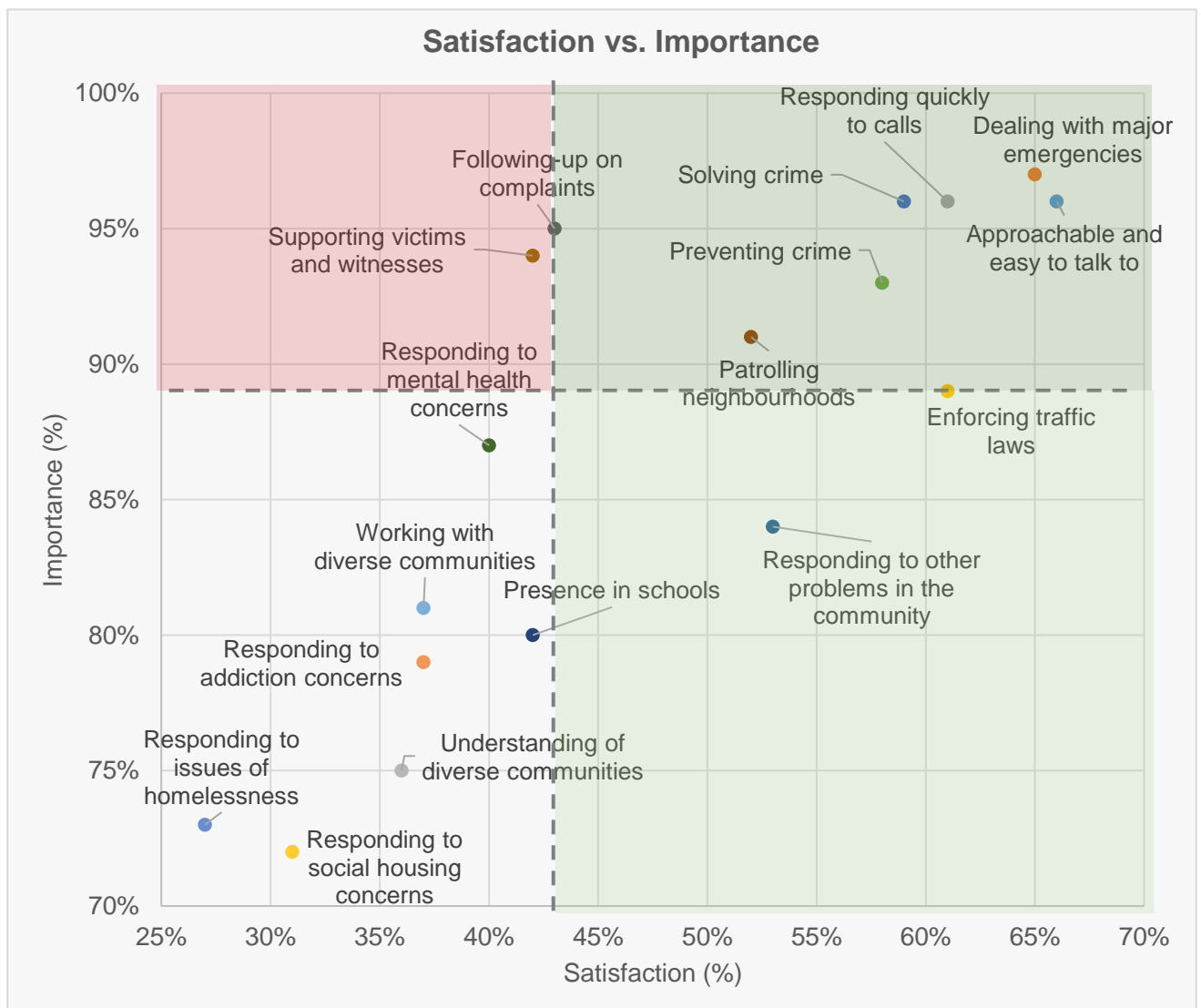
Thresholds are established by finding the median values for each of the importance and satisfaction scores. The median values determine the grid quadrants:

- The median satisfaction for activities is 43%
- The median importance for services is 89%



The satisfaction vs. importance analysis displayed in the grid below identified six areas of **successes** where respondents rated these activities as very important to them and are also highly satisfied: dealing with major emergencies, approachable and easy to talk to, responding quickly to calls, solving crime, preventing crime, and patrolling neighbourhoods. Responding to other problems in the community is identified as a **secondary area**, meaning it is considered less important, but satisfaction is high.

The analysis also identified two **target** areas, where respondents rated these activities as important but are not as satisfied: supporting victims and witnesses and following up on complaints. Raising satisfaction in these target areas may improve overall satisfaction.





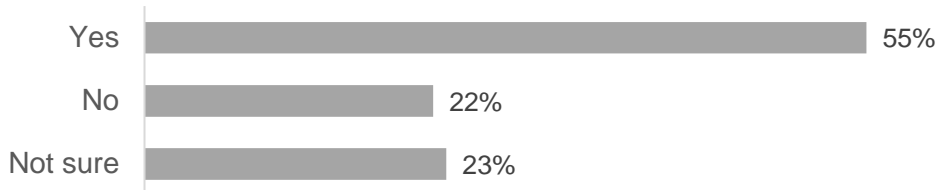
Detailed Findings

Services



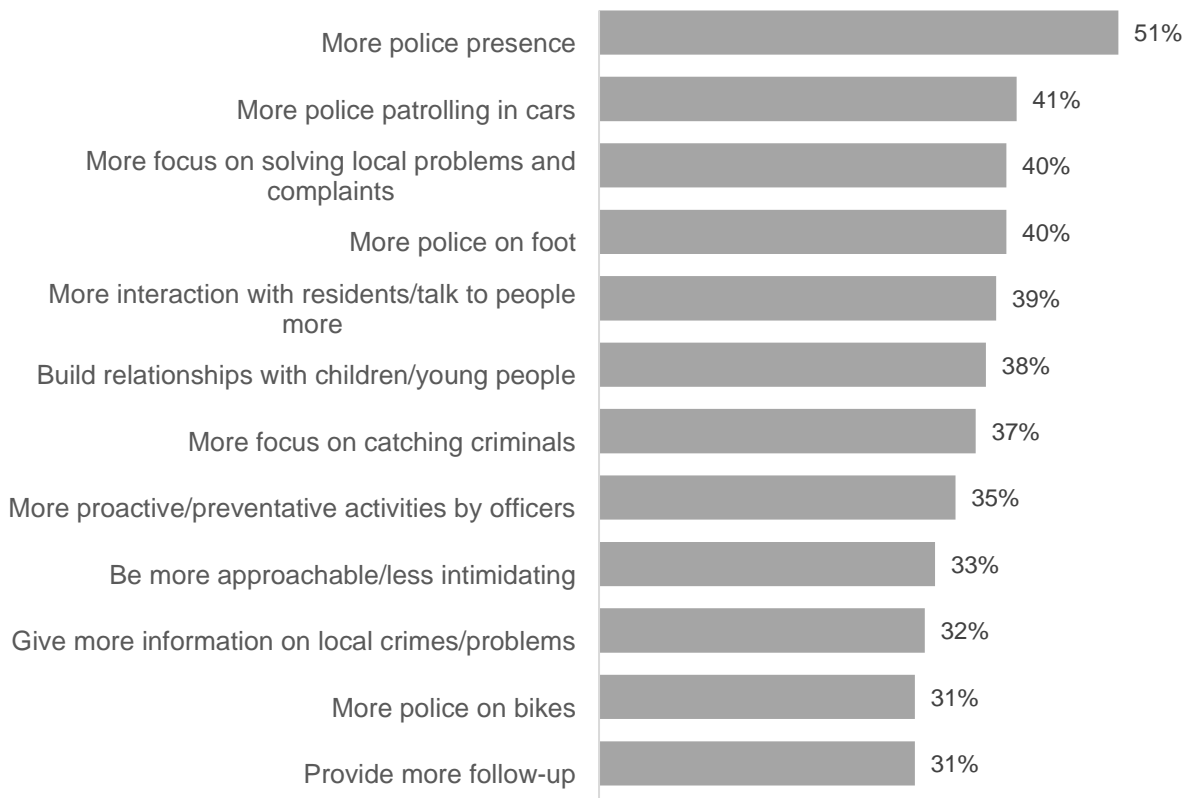
Improvements to Police Services

More than half of the respondents say there are improvements that they would like to see to the police services delivered in their region. Some improvements that respondents are most looking to see include having more police presence (51%) and more police patrolling in cars (41%).



SE3: Are there any improvements you would like to see to the police services delivered in [REGION]?

Base: All respondents (n=532)



SE4: What improvements would you like to see? (Includes mentions >30%)

Base: Respondents who answered "yes" in SE3. (n=294)



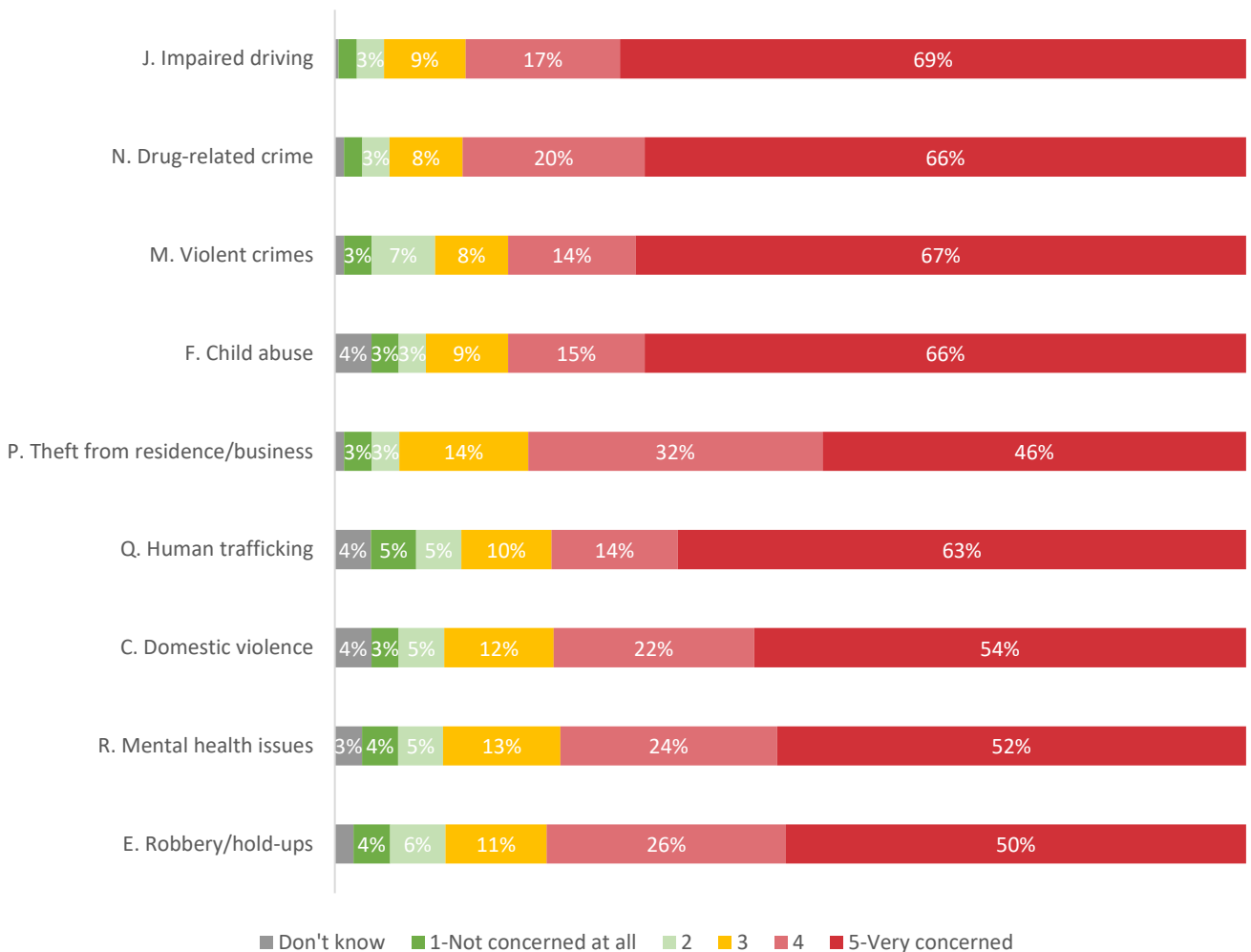
Detailed Findings

Issues and Allocations of Police Resources



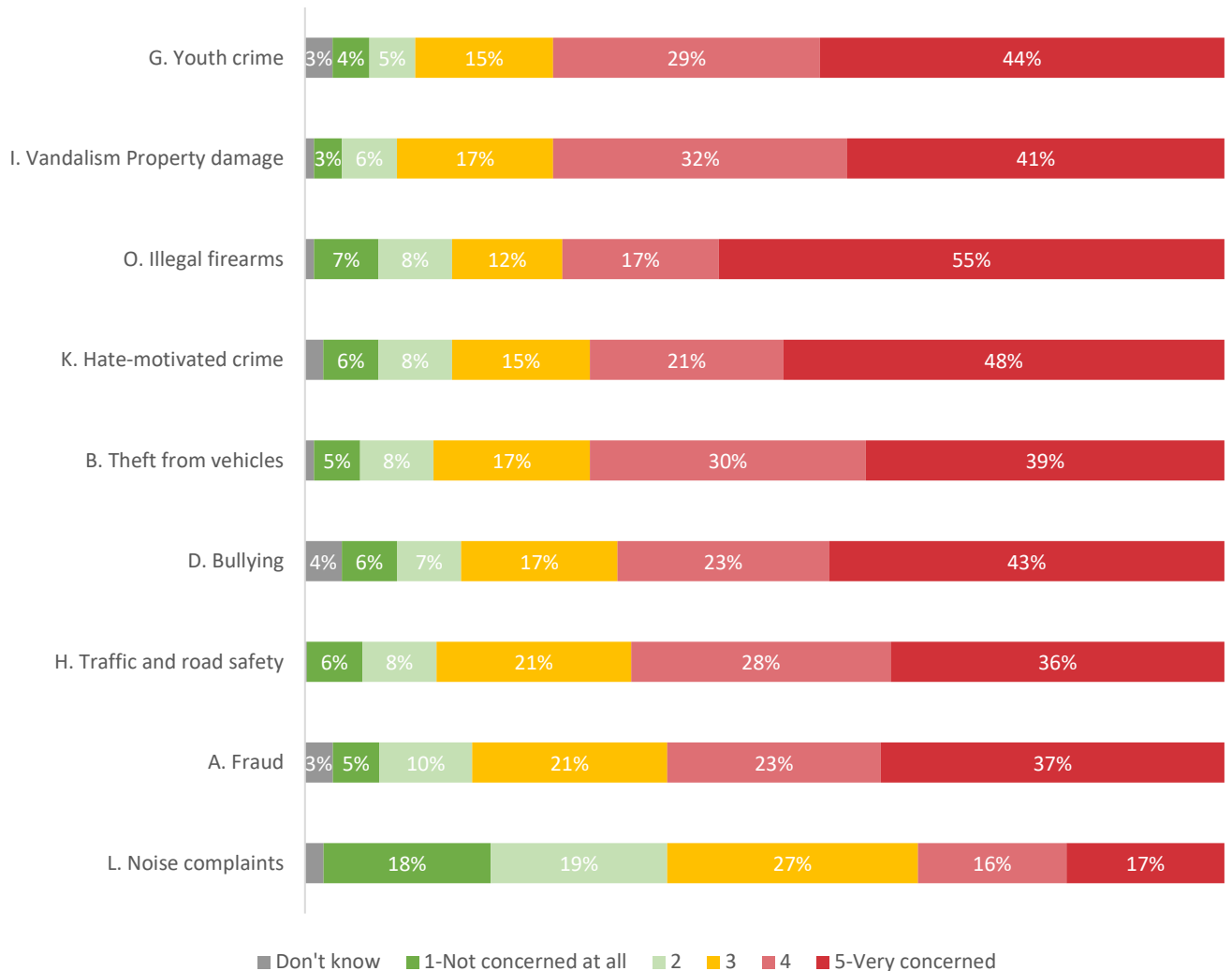
Concern with Law Enforcement Issues

The majority of respondents are concerned with most law enforcement issues. However, respondents are most concerned with impaired driving (TOP2: 86%) and drug-related crime (TOP2: 86%). In the 2013 survey, respondents were presented with a similar list of law enforcement issues and were asked, using a 4-point scale, which ones posed a serious problem, somewhat of a problem, not much of a problem, or not a problem in the City of Kawartha Lakes. Drug-related crime posed the greatest problem, with 91% saying it posed a serious problem or somewhat of a problem.



I1A/I1B. Please tell me how concerned you are with each of the following law enforcement issues in [REGION], using a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not concerned at all” and 5 means “very concerned”:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

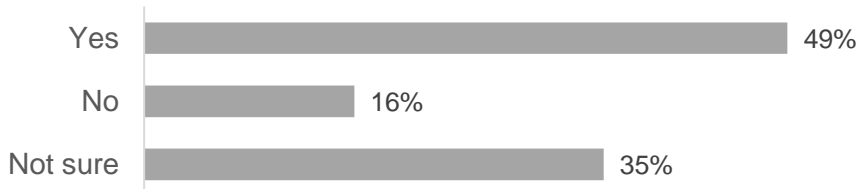
In contrast, respondents are least concerned about noise complaints, with only 33% (TOP2) saying they are concerned and 37% (BTM2) saying they are not concerned. Similarly in the 2013 survey, only 31% of respondents said noise complaints posed a serious problem or somewhat of a problem.



I1A/I1B. Please tell me how concerned you are with each of the following law enforcement issues in [REGION], using a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not concerned at all” and 5 means “very concerned”:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Addressing Issues of Concern

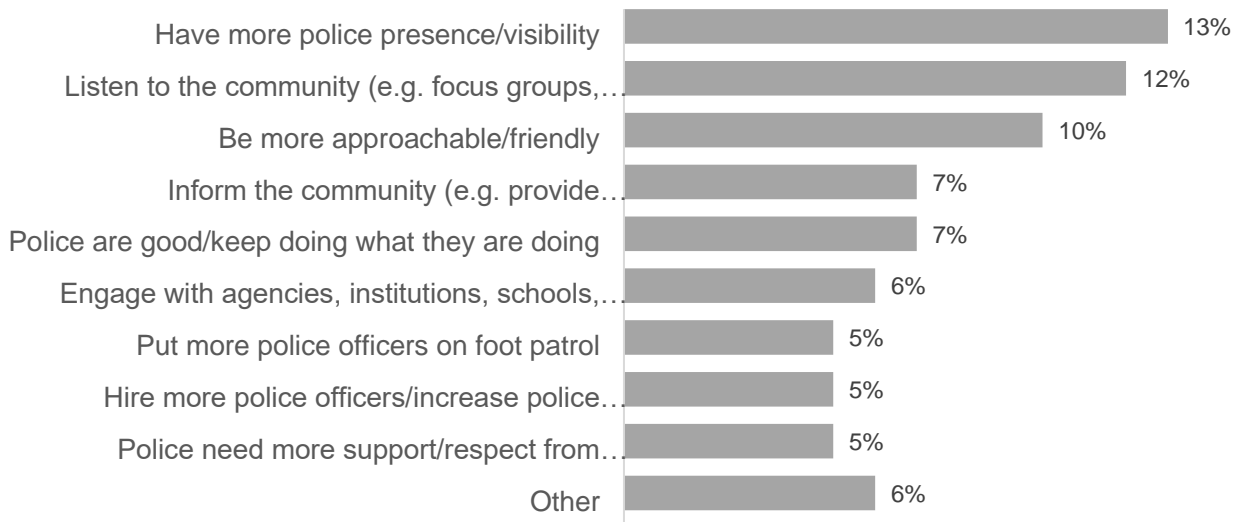
Almost half (49%) of respondents say the police works with their community to address issues of concern.



12. Does the police work with your community to address issues of concern?
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Improvements to Address Issues of Concern

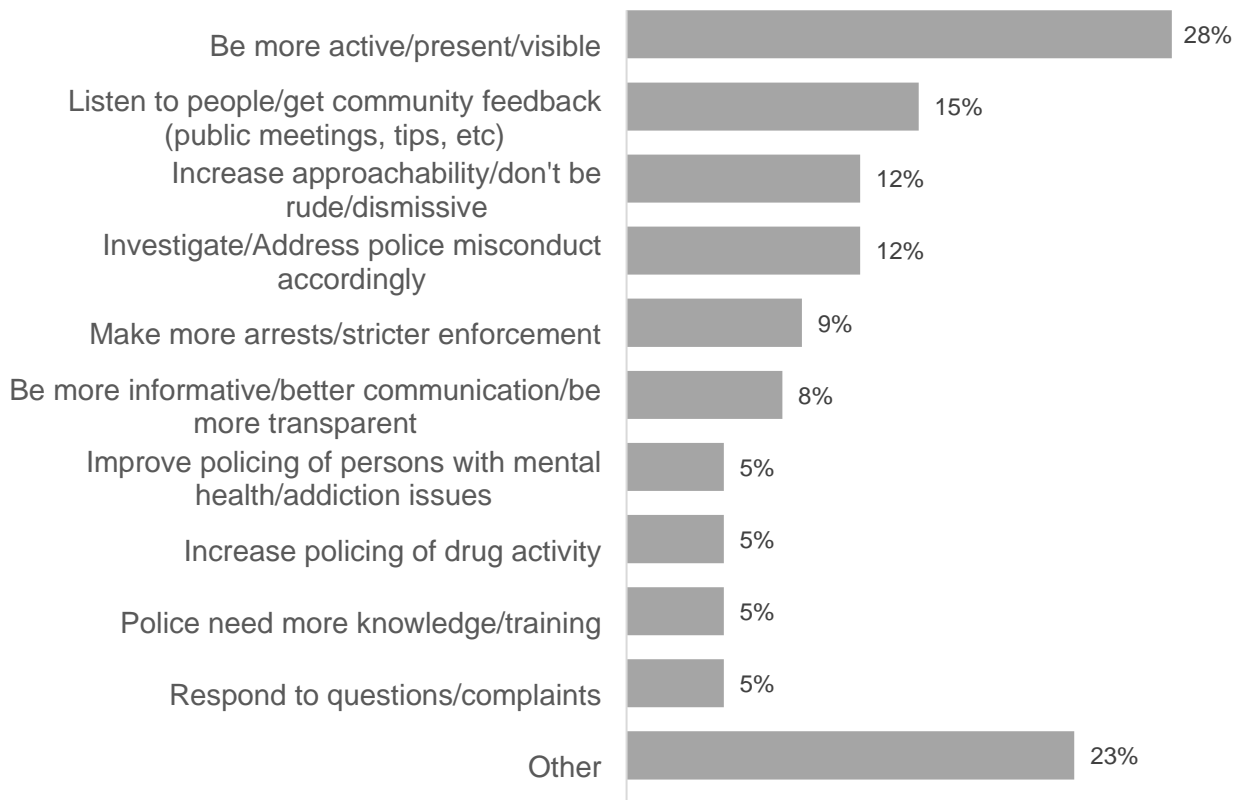
Respondents who said the police work with their community to address issues of concern, were further asked if the police can improve how they work with the community. Some improvements include having more police presence (13%), and listening to the community (e.g., focus groups, committees, town halls, etc.) (12%).



13A. How do you think the police can improve how they work with your community to address issues of concern?
 (Mentions >5%)

Base: Respondents who answered "yes" in I2 (n=262)

For respondents who said the police does not work with the community to address issues of concern, 3 in 10 (28%) said the police can be more active, present, or visible. Other ways respondents say police can work with their community to address issues of concern is to listen to people/get community feedback (15%) and increasing approachability/not being rude or dismissive (12%).



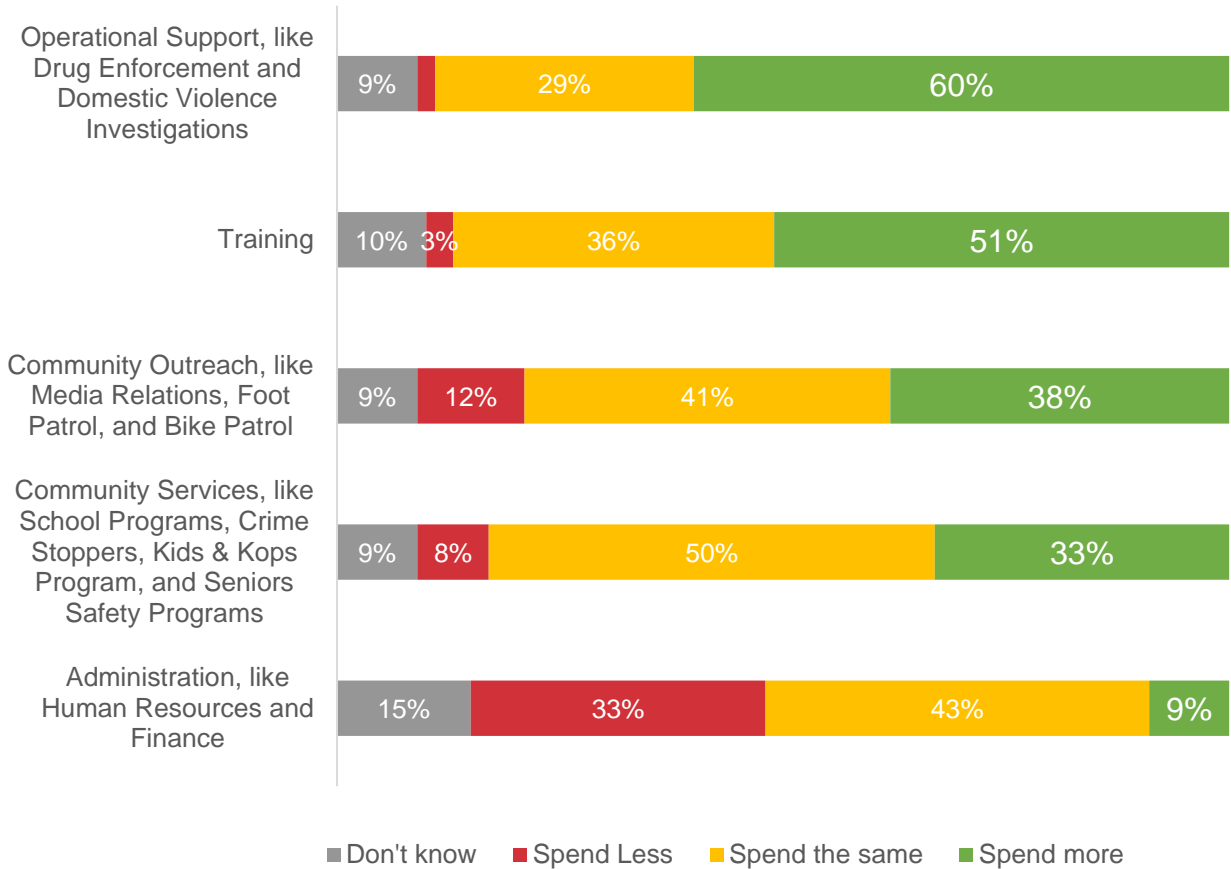
I3B. How do you think the police can work with your community to address issues of concern?

(Mentions >5%)

Base: Respondents who answered "No" in I2 (n=86)

Prioritizing Resources

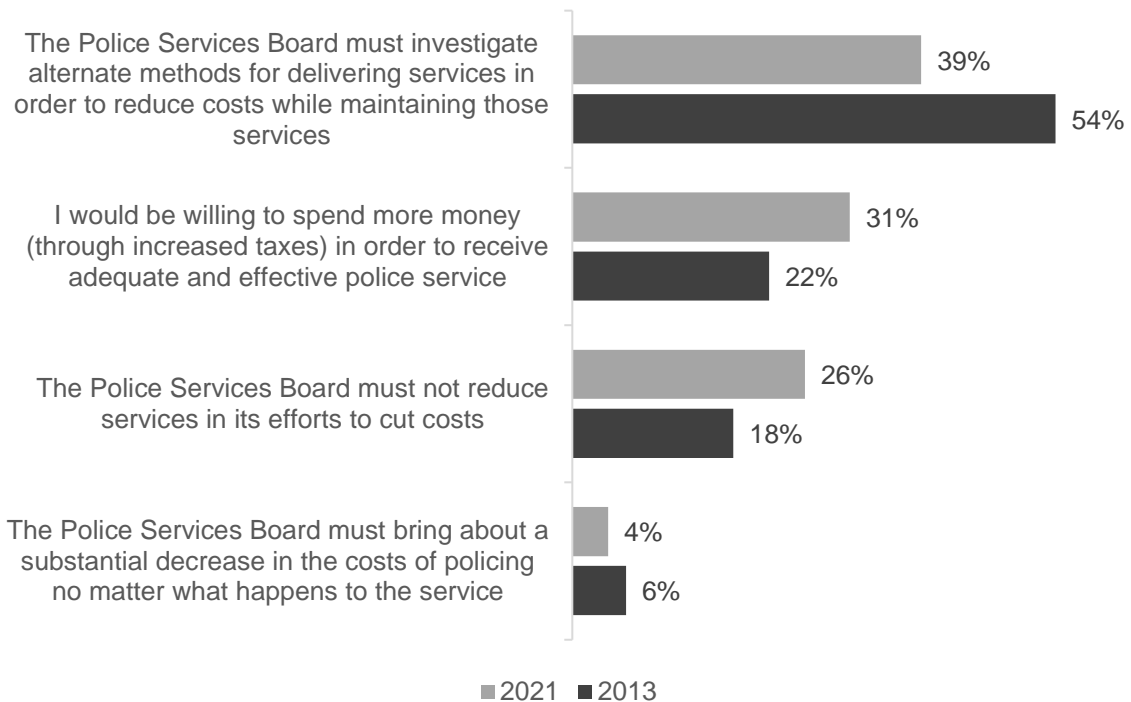
Respondents are most looking for increases in police spending on things related to Operational Support (60%) and training (51%). Respondents most want to see less spending in administrative areas like human resources and finance (33%).



A1. Police officers often have to prioritize their duties as they have limited time and resources available to them. The rising cost of policing is a national concern, and we'd like to know how much money you think should be spent on each of the following resources:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Attitudes Towards Cost of Policing

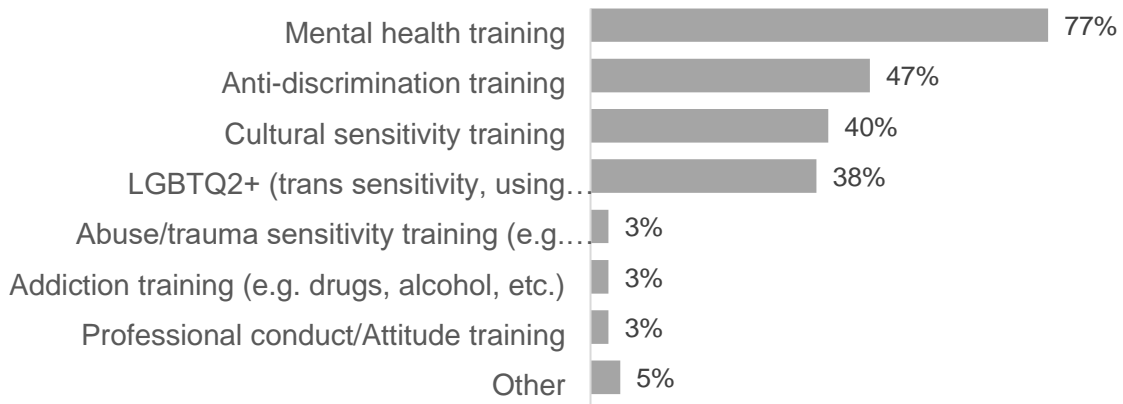
Most respondents' attitude towards the cost of policing centers on the police service needing to find alternate methods for delivering services while still maintaining those services (39%). In 2013, the same question was asked, and the most popular answer was also to investigate alternate methods for delivering services in order to reduce costs while maintaining those services (54%).



A2. Police Services across Canada are struggling with the increased cost of maintaining the current level of service they offer. Which of the following best indicates your attitude towards the cost of policing:
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Additional Training

Respondents mostly feel that, in addition to the prerequisites to become a police officer, officers should receive mental health training (77%) and almost half (47%) say police officers should receive anti-discrimination training.

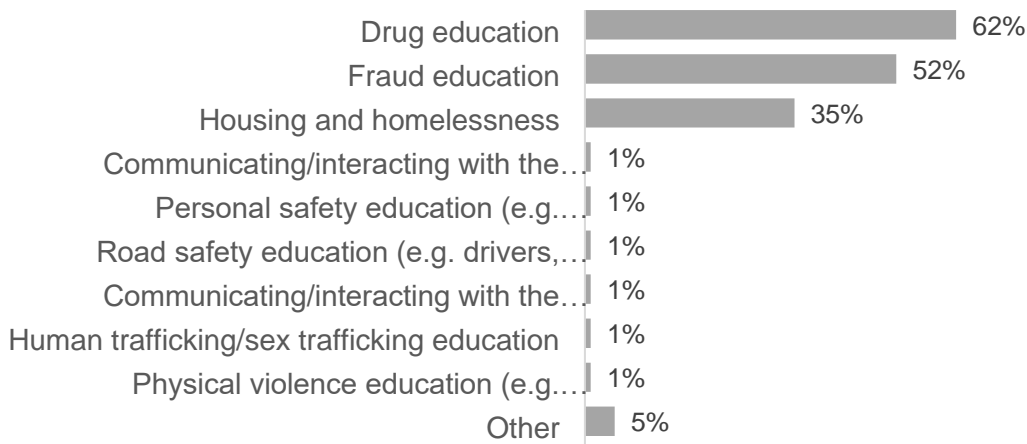


A3. Besides the prerequisites to becoming a police officer, what additional types of training, if any, do you think the Kawartha Lakes Police Service should receive?
(Mentions >3%)

Base: All respondents, visualization excludes "none" and "don't know" (n=532)

Educational Training for Community

The majority of respondents (62%) say KLPS should provide drug education to the community, and slightly more than half (52%) say fraud education should be provided to the community.



A4. What type of educational training, if any, do you think the Kawartha Lakes Police Service should provide to the community?

Base: All respondents, visualization excludes "none" and "don't know" (n=532)



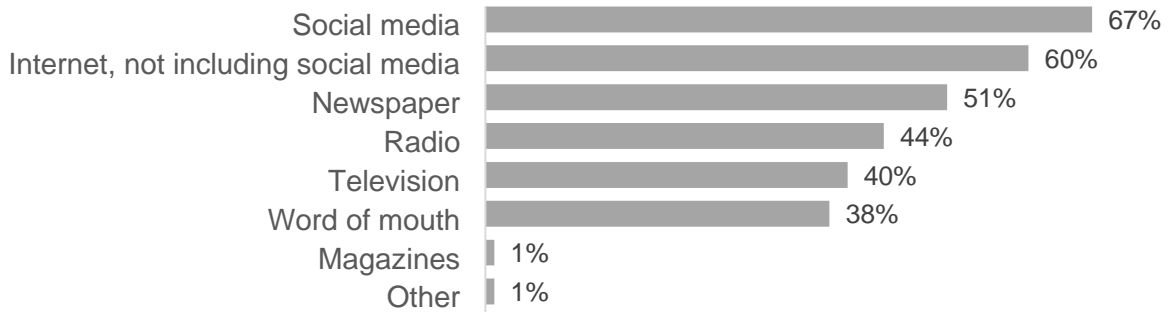
Detailed Findings

News & Information



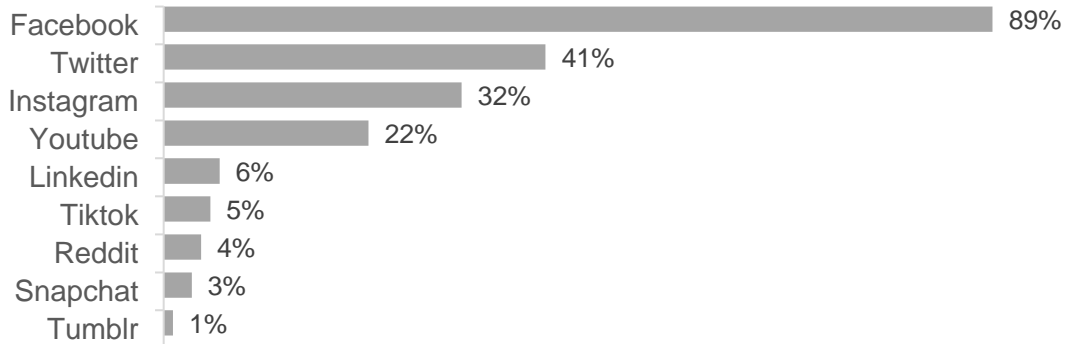
Receiving Local News and Information

Respondents mostly get their local news and information from social media (67%), particularly from Facebook (89%) and Twitter (41%). Respondents also largely get their local news and information from the internet, not including social media (60%).



N1. How do you receive local news and information?

Base: All respondents (n=532)

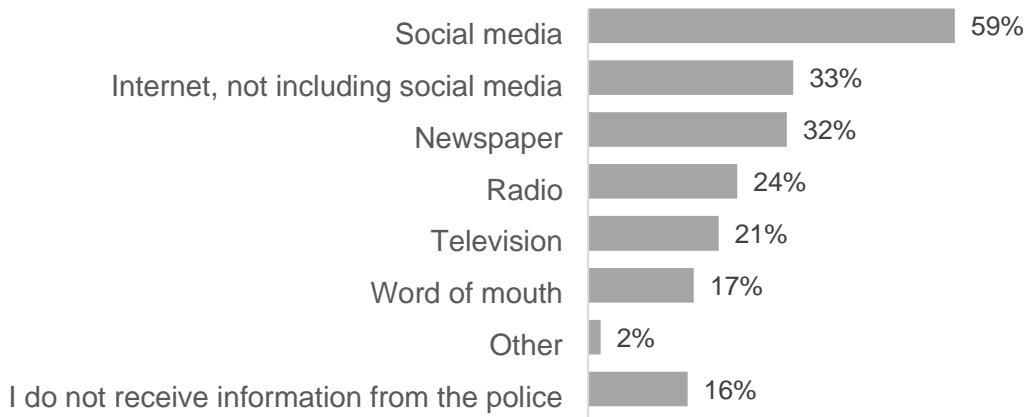


N1B. Social media

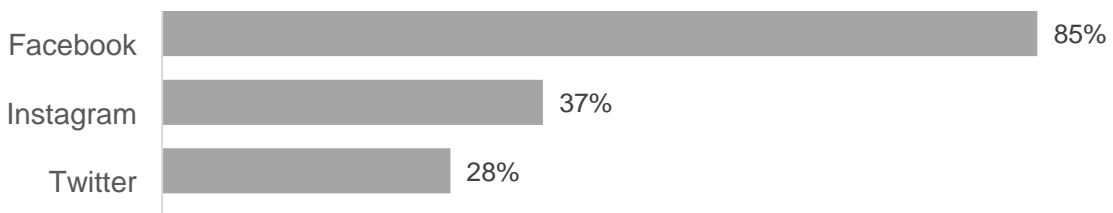
Base: Respondents who selected "social media" in N1 (n=355)

Receiving Information From the Police

Most respondents receive information from the police through social media (59%), particularly Facebook (85%) and Instagram (37%). Respondents also largely receive information from the police from the internet, not including social media (33%). Respondents also largely receive information from the police from the internet, not including social media (33%).



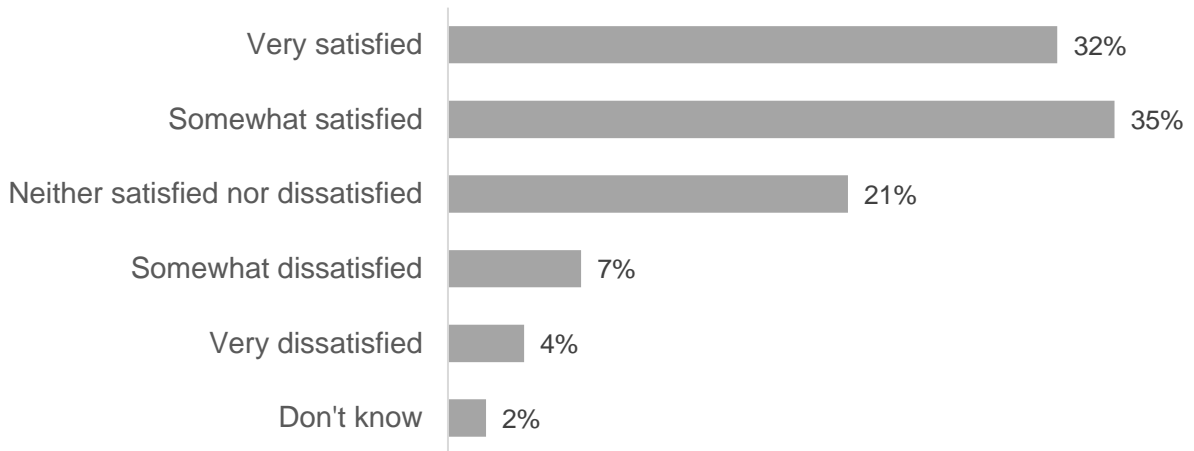
N2. And how do you receive your information from the police, if at all?
Base: All respondents (n=532)



N2B. Social media
Base: Respondents who answered "social media" in N2 (n=315)

Satisfaction with KLPS Media Presence

Respondents who indicated that they receive information from the police are generally satisfied (TOP2: 67%) with the Kawartha Lake Police Services' media presence.



N3. How Satisfied are you with the Kawartha Lake Police Services media presence?
Base: Respondents who received information from the police in N2 (n=441)



Respondent Demographic Profiles



Zone

Area 1 (the area north of Kent Street West, including the north side of Kent Street West, and the area north of King Street, including the north side of King Street, within the Town of Lindsay)

47%

Area 2 (the area south of Kent West, including the south side of Kent Street West, and the area south of King Street, including the south side of King Street, within the Town of Lindsay)

34%

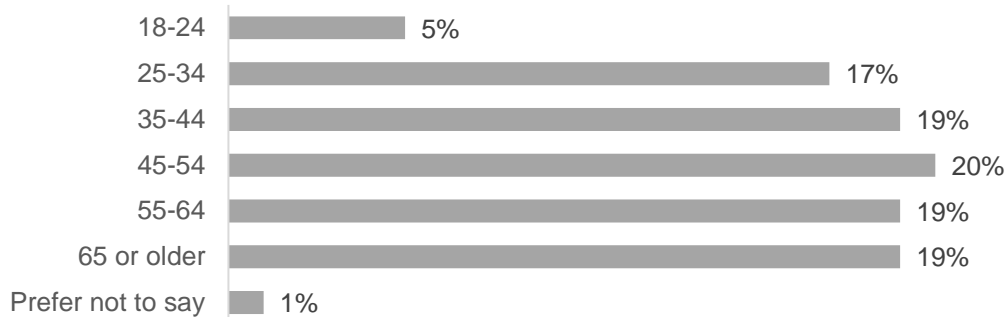
OPS (all boundary roads within Ops Township, west of the Scugog River are the responsibility of the City of Kawartha Lakes Police Service. All boundary roads within Ops Township, east of the Scugog River are the responsibility of the O.P.P.)

19%

SC3. The City of Kawartha Lakes Police Service has three patrol zones designated for uniform mobile patrol. Which zone do you live or work in?

Base: All respondents (n=532)

Age



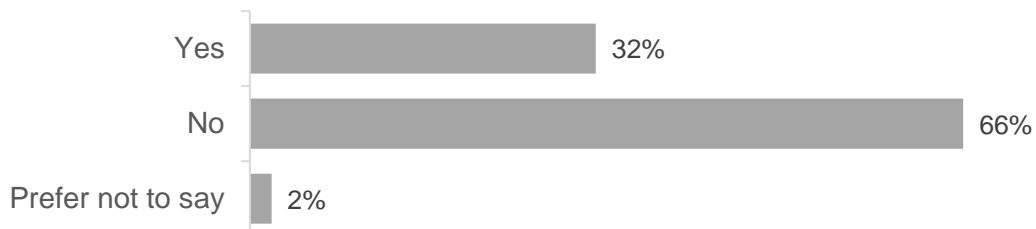
D1. First, which of the following age categories do you belong to?
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Gender



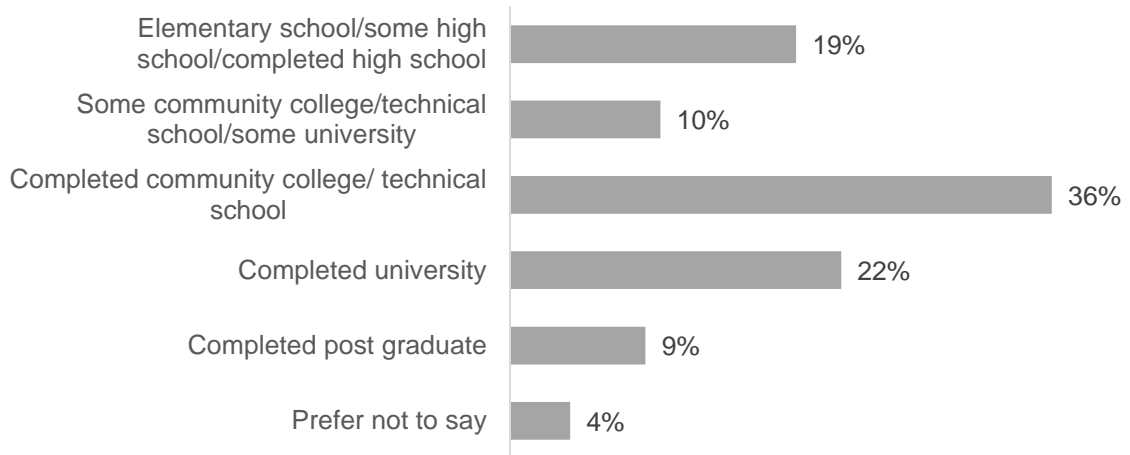
D2. Are you...?
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Children Living in Household



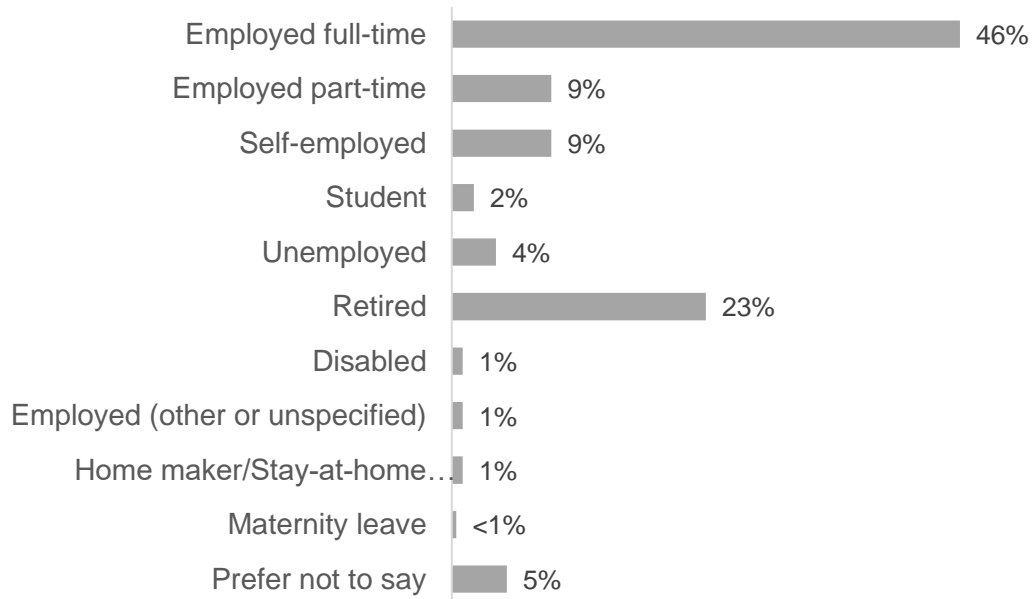
D3. Do you have any children under the age of 18 living in your household?
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Education



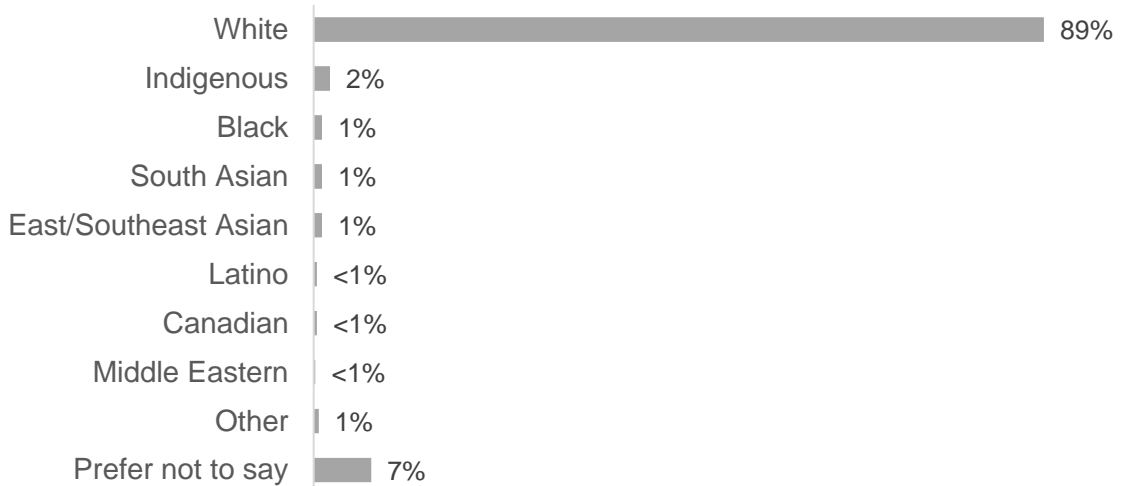
D4. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?
Base: All respondents (n=532)

Employment Status



D5. What is your current primary employment status?
Base: All respondents (n=532)

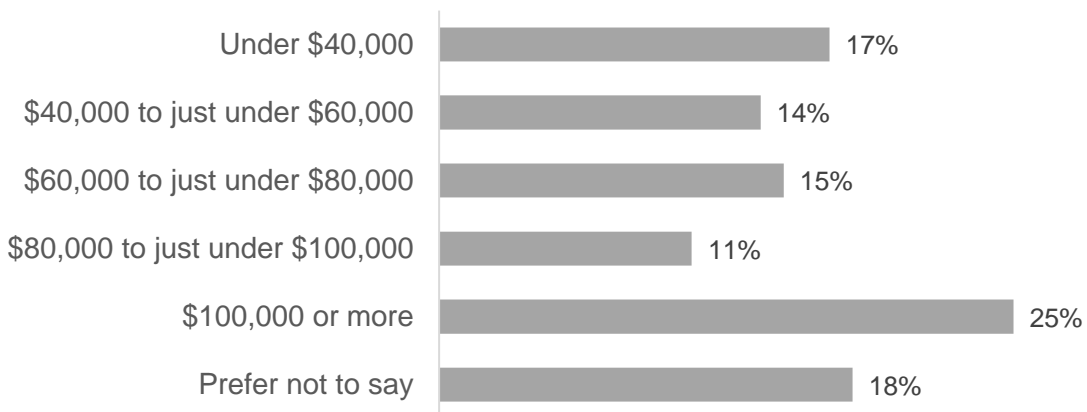
Ethnicity



D6. In our society, people are often described by their race or racial background. For example, some people are considered “White” or “Black” or “East/Southeast Asian,” etc. Which race category best describes you?

Base: All respondents (n=532)

Household Income



D7. And finally, which of the following categories best describes the total income for your household before taxes and other deductions in 2020?

Base: All respondents (n=532)



Qualitative Focus Group Findings

Follow-Up From 2013 Study



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Business and Crime Prevention

The 2013 study led to the finding that businesses feel there is a need for increased crime prevention education. In response, a KLPS representative now sits on the Business Improvement Association Board as a liaison. Some participants mentioned that this involvement demonstrates empathy from the police.

One participant said the development of the situation table is one of the things that made the most significant difference in their community, which is a multi-agency approach to address situations of acute and elevated risk. The goal is to stop repeat offenders and to help divert young people from further involvement in crime. The development of the situation table has improved their relationship with the police, and how they work with the police.

Health Services

In terms of health services, the KLPS and RMH instituted a protocol that strives to release officers within 1 hour of their arrival and the data is tracked through the Health IM reports. One participant said sending health IM reports to the hospital before the officer and client arrives has helped them with their wait times and services. However, another said that 1 hour is an unrealistic time since the situation and the patients need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Participants also brought up other progresses they would like to see from the police in the area of health services:

- Increasing awareness between police and sexual health clinics.
- Improved cooperation and communication between clinics, community paramedics, and the police.
- The police should spend more time with residents in the hospital because the hospital is not equipped to introduce people back into the community.
- The police needs to be at the table when solutions are discussed as police are often attending to gaps in the healthcare system.
- Bringing people to the hospital needs to be done in a mental health friendly way.
- The police services need to have a keen understanding of the social determinants of health, such as the link between not having housing or employment and the likelihood to (re)offend).

Social Housing

In terms of social housing, participants mentioned that they are seeing increases in the levels of gang activity, drug trafficking, and human trafficking in social housing, and that this is an area that needs to be prioritized. Progress is being made as KLPS received funding from the province to deal with Housing Unit Takeovers (HUTs), but education is important for the community by recognizing that those in the housing unit takeover situations are victims.

Participants also said the police need to build trust and rapport with the community and with the victims. Relating to the community, they need to dispel the belief that reporting an incident to an officer will not go anywhere, and relating to the victim, police officers should act in a more caring role. For example, they can help victims by giving them a meal or finding a safe space for them. Similarly, one participant mentioned that the police need to play a more active role in aiding people, and that they should handle certain issues through a social work framework by having more cooperation with social agencies.

Focus group participants also said the police should take advantage of collaborative training activities with community partners as this will help them see what the trends and issues are in the community. Another participant also mentioned that many social housing areas have initiatives such as wellness clinics. These proactive visits (which do not necessarily have to be from the police) are more effective than reactive check-ins since it helps establish relationships with communities and allows them to have a presence that is not perceived negatively or perceived as something bad happening.

Other suggestions mentioned by participants include:

- Greater sensitivity around identity. For example, approaching people using gender neutral language and asking how they would prefer to be addressed (i.e., what their preferred pronouns are, etc.).
- Investing time to understand how people perceive the police and understanding that not everyone has the same experience with the police.
- Having peer leaders within social housing units partner with the police. This can positively change the relationship the police have with residents in social housing units.

Education

In terms of education, some participants said the police should develop better communication and intervention skills, specifically when it comes to dealing with youth, racialized individuals, and marginalized individuals. For example, one participant mentioned that transgender sensitivity training has come up as a needed area of focus.

Participants also mentioned the importance of having police presence and visibility, not just when a bad event happens. By being visible during positive events, youths and others will be less likely to associate officers with negative events. This also helps provide opportunities for relationship building and establishing trust within the youth community. For example, the presence of officers in schools can be beneficial in multiple ways, such as it being helpful in regard to safety, and it being beneficial in regard to building familiarity with students.

One participant mentioned that having a youth advisory board or panel that allows youth engagement can help the police get feedback on proposed initiatives and to keep a finger on the pulse of what is happening within the youth communities.

Others also brought up that the police service being active on social media is a good way to engage with youth since many of them spend a lot of time on social media. One participant also suggested the police can try branching out to more platforms popular with youth such as Tik Tok.

Police Involvement in Schools

In terms of how involved the police should be in local schools, most participants agreed that police presence is good. Having officers around and talking to the students, whether they are uniformed or non-uniformed, can help build positive relationships. However, one participant mentioned that having a police car sitting in front of the school every day can leave a bad impression, especially when the school is visible to the street.

One participant said that police involvement in schools needs to be integrated into and reinforced by the curriculum.

Lastly, another participant voiced that one CSO to cover all schools is ineffective and demonstrates that resources are stretched.



Qualitative Focus Group Findings

Response to Mental Health Crises,
Addiction, and Opioid Crisis



Ideal Response of Police to Mental Health Crises

Ideally when responding to mental health crises, the police should be compassionate, informed and help educate, supportive, and communicative.

Participants said police visibility in the community is important and they should be perceived as providing support. For example, one participant mentioned they have a fond memory of the police coming to their school when they were a child and this presence led them to view the police positively.

One participant said that the ideal situation would be to have police officers mentoring those in the community on how to respond to and deal with mental health crises. They suggested the police can potentially partner with CMHA.

Some participants thought officers should receive mental health training on a yearly or bi-yearly rate because there can never be enough training on this topic. Types of training may include training in how to assist in crises such as how to deal with someone who is suicidal, education on dementia-related aggression, and training on communication techniques such as being sensitive in their approach, tone, and the language they use. Further to this, one participant said the police should adopt a trauma informed approach, where they assume there is a history of trauma and are sensitive to the words and actions that can trigger a trauma response. Similarly to receiving training, one participant said it would be beneficial if the police had an understanding of various diagnoses, especially when it comes to repeat clients and those with more complicated cases. By doing so, the police can be more successful when dealing with these individuals.

One participant mentioned that when responding to mental health crises, depending on the situation, they should not be the sole responder, and it would be beneficial if they respond alongside a mental health professional. However, another participant debated that having the police respond to these types of emergency situations is the better approach since these situations can turn combative.

Lastly, one participant brought up that the police are lacking in terms of accommodation for the elderly population. For example, taking an elderly patient to a hospital can do more harm than good because it is a harsh environment (e.g., harsh lighting, noise). As such, there should be alternative places to bring seniors to instead of the hospital.

Taking the Lead in the Response to Mental Health Crises

One participant said the police should be the one responding to 911 calls regarding crises due to safety concerns. After, the police needs to assess the situation to determined what is required from there on.

Another participant mentioned that the police should know how to triage and prioritize cases, so tasks do not have to get offloaded onto hospitals. Furthermore, one participant said there needs to be a clear understanding for what constitutes a crisis and what the hospitals' criteria are for admission since this varies by hospitals and facilities.

Some other suggestions for responding to mental heath crises include:

- Improvements in communication and intervention skills
- Reviewing of cases – if most calls are related to mental health, then it justifies additional mental health training
- Take into account the assessment of the situation – sometimes, police response is not fast enough and there's the perception that some calls are not being treated with the appropriate level of urgency.

KLPS' Role in Addressing Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis

In terms of addressing drug addiction and the opioid crisis, participants say messaging around the opioid crisis should focus on public health instead of individualizing the situation to the failings of people.

In order to handle these types of cases, participants said the police needs additional training, and some mentioned training should be done regularly. Such training can include understanding the symptoms, a better understanding of the Mental Health Act, and training to normalize mental health and addiction issues. Another participant also said it is important to prioritize the different types of training.

When dealing with these types of cases, one participant said responders need to be sensitive and be mindful to not use derogatory language. It is important to create channels of accountability among trusted police partners in order to create space for these types of issues to be addressed.

One participant brought up that the police can take on a more proactive role in the community by offering support and services. One example is distributing needle exchange kits. The police services can also have a CSO who goes to schools and has conversations with youth and provide education material related to drug use.

Participants also mentioned the importance of partnership and collaboration with other organizations and services. For example, the police can partner with services that help with housing, addiction, and mental health, and there can be more cooperation between the police, hospitals, and other resources.



Qualitative Focus Group Findings

Racism and Social Injustice,
Cyber Security and Fraud,
Current Community Issues,
Relationship with Media



Racism and Social Injustice in the Community

Due to the homogeneity of the community, participants thought the police do not have a lot of exposure with those from visible minority groups. As such, more work is needed to build police awareness of different populations and groups in the community. Furthermore, some participants said the police can benefit from training such as cultural sensitivity training, anti-discrimination training, and training on how to interact with Indigenous Peoples.

Participants felt that addressing racism needs to be a community effort, but also, the police need to review their policies and see how they may be complicit in perpetuating racism in the community. One participant mentioned that there needs to be a focus on community representation in the police membership that reflects the diversity. Another participant said it would be beneficial if there is public visibility on how the police are addressing racism and social injustice – for example, releasing a plan on how they plan to address racism to the public.

Cyber Security and Fraud

Participants feel that the issue of fraud and cyber security should be addressed on every level of government (federal, provincial, and municipal). There is concern regarding whether KLPS is equipped to effectively investigate cases of fraud. Some participants feel that for the majority of the time, KLPS deals with smaller levels of crime, and that they should recognize this and allow the O.P.P. and/or RCMP to handle fraud cases.

Participants also pointed out that senior citizens and those with mental health issues are most vulnerable to fraud. These individuals and the community would benefit from the police educating residents on how to recognize fraud. Furthermore, the police can distribute material warning residents of fraud and increase awareness of this issue.

One participant suggested that the banks can partner with the police by informing KLPS if they suspect an individual being a victim or target of fraud.

Current Community Issues

Focus group participants were asked to generate a list of the current issues within their community that they would like to see KLPS allocate resources to. The list includes issues on:

- Substances (e.g., opioid overdoses)
- Community policing/community presence
- Mental health
- Human trafficking
- Social housing
- Partnerships between police and community organizations
- Traffic calming (e.g., speeding, school zones)
- More training (e.g., addictions and mental health, crisis intervention, diversity training)

KLPS' Relationship with Media

Some participants believe that it would be more effective for the police to communicate with the public using social media instead of using conventional media. By using their own platform, the story is coming straight from the police and avoids situations where the media puts a spin on the stories, since conventional media tends to sensationalize and gets the story wrong.

The use of social media is also a good way to give out community messages relating to issues such as human trafficking, mental health, and other public safety messages. It is also an avenue that can reach more youth. One participant mentioned that the police can benefit from consulting on how to best optimize their social media presence.

Media – Balance Between Transparency and Maintaining Personal Privacy

Regarding transparency and maintaining personal privacy when releasing information to the public, participants feel that it is important to protect the victim's privacy, and that the police should be doing more to protect their privacy. Some participants also mentioned that the police should not pick and choose who they do and do not release names for. The police should either release all names or release no names at all. One participant mentioned that it can be damaging to have the details of an individual's name and life in the paper. This participant believed that releasing this information does no good for both the community and the individual.

Furthermore, releasing an individual's name and information can compromise the assumption that one is innocent until proven guilty.

Lastly, participants mentioned that the police should report on the facts relating to the case. Such information can include how many people were on the call, and that value judgements should be avoided.