



Santa Clara County's Neighborhood Safety/Services Unit (NSU) 2018 Annual Report

The NSU is a program of the County of Santa Clara Probation Department that utilizes a public health approach to foster community cohesion and provide services to high-need neighborhoods. This work is accomplished through the use of community engagement, leadership development, activities for youth and families, and a focus on health and wellness.

Overview of NSU

The Neighborhood Safety/Services Unit (NSU) is a unique unit within the Santa Clara County Probation Department Juvenile Division. The NSU is currently being piloted in two neighborhoods, 95122 and 95020 ZIP codes, both of which were identified through a data driven process reviewing public health and other system data, including crime trends and school suspensions/expulsions. The NSU developed a tiered oversight structure, which ensures the goals of the NSU are met.

Exhibit 1: NSU Oversight Structure

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<p><i>Policy Oversight</i></p> <div data-bbox="228 716 532 842"> <p>Juvenile Justice System Collaborative (JJSC)</p> </div> <div data-bbox="228 856 532 982"> <p>Childrens, Seniors, and Families Committee (CSFC)</p> </div>	<p><i>Strategic Alignment</i></p> <div data-bbox="568 716 872 856"> <p>Service Delivery Coordination Race Equity Through Prevention</p> </div> <div data-bbox="568 871 872 991"> <p>Impact/Outcome Evaluation NSU Evaluation Team</p> </div>	<p><i>Collective Impact</i></p> <div data-bbox="927 695 1230 842"> <p>Collaborative Programming and Collective Impact – NSU Coordinating Council Team</p> </div> <div data-bbox="927 856 1230 947"> <p>Community Mobilization – NSU Implementation Team</p> </div> <div data-bbox="927 961 1230 1066"> <p>Internal Strategy Team NSU Internal Team</p> </div>

The core components of the NSU include community engagement, violence prevention through pro-social programming, and collaboration with School Linked Services (SLS). By strategically partnering with county, city, and community based organizations, the NSU is able to provide leadership training to residents and assist them in identifying meaningful community action goals that improve safety in their communities. The NSU also provides funding for pro-social activities for both youth and adults residing in its partner communities, which may include, but is not limited to, health and wellness workshops, physical fitness classes, and access to sports and extra-curricular activities during the school year and spring/summer breaks. Finally, the NSU partners with SLS to ensure youth who are presenting truant and/or at-risk behaviors are linked to pro-social and other violence prevention programs or activities.

Exhibit 2: NSU Components



Research Background

NSU's strategy is grounded in the intersection of public health and criminal justice, and employs research based approaches in youth and community violence prevention. Relevant frameworks include: (1) the socioecological model, which emphasizes multiple levels of influence (individual, relationships, community and societal); and (2) strategies to address specific risk and protective factors for youth development. Both of these concepts inform NSU's strategy and align with a document created jointly by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Violence Prevention, entitled *Shared Framework for Reducing Youth Violence and Promoting Well Being*.¹ NSU's activities help to develop several individual, relationship, and community-level factors shown to be protective for adolescents, including: prosocial opportunities; the presence and involvement of caring/supportive adults; and a safe, cohesive, and supportive neighborhood. There are specific neighborhood characteristics that research has shown to be linked to physical and psychological health, and youth development and violence prevention specifically, which are addressed by NSU. These include: collective efficacy, social cohesion, and social capital.² Consistent with the models and approaches described above, NSU's strategy addresses multiple levels of influence (e.g. individual, school, community) and further develops multiple protective factors in order to reduce youth violence and promote positive youth development.

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to help NSU track process and outcome indicators of success, as well as challenges and lessons learned. Evaluation questions related to process focus on whether or not the program was implemented as intended by tracking services provided and the number of people served. Examples of process questions include:

- How many neighborhood association meetings were held?
- How many NSU-funded neighborhood events were held?
- How many people attended these events?
- How many youth participated in pro-social activities through NSU funding?

Evaluation questions related to outcomes address whether or not there were changes in knowledge, attitudes, behavior or community indicators as a result of NSU's activities. Examples of outcome questions include:

- *Individual-level:* Do residents' leadership skills and self-efficacy to effect change increase after participating in the leadership development workshops?

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Violence Prevention. "Shared Framework for Reducing Youth Violence and Promoting Well Being." Retrieved January 2017 from <https://www.ojjdp.gov/funding/SharedFramework-for-Youth-Violence-Prevention.pdf>

² Collective efficacy: describes a community with a shared objective consisting of individuals likely to intervene on behalf of the common good. Social cohesion: high level of connectedness among members of a community and a willingness to help out one another. Social capital: relations of trust, mutual expectations, and shared values.

- *Community-level*: What impact do NSU activities have on perceived community safety and social cohesion?

Methodology and Data Sources

This report summarizes data from the following two outcome measures:

- **Community survey**: Survey conducted with residents at each site to assess community-level constructs such as perceived community safety, community cohesion, and collective efficacy.
- **Focus groups**: Focus groups with adults and youth at each site to gather qualitative information about similar concepts measured in the community survey (community safety, community connectedness and cohesion).

Results

Community Survey

Purpose and Methodology

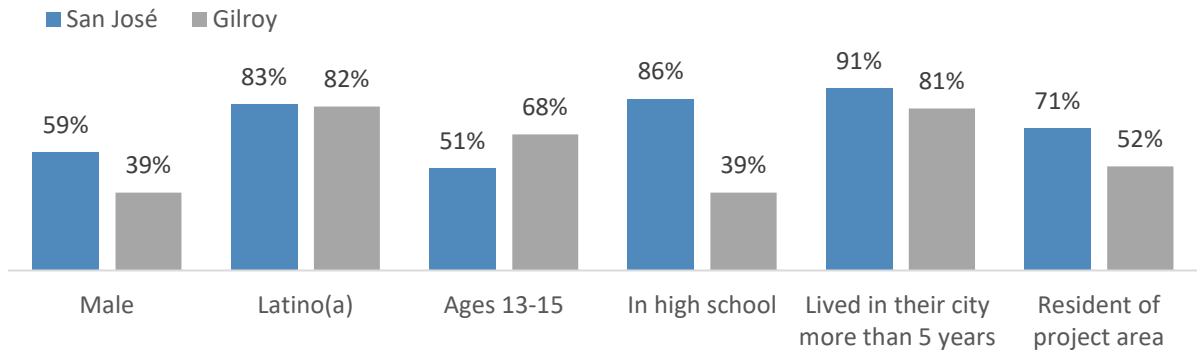
The purpose of the 2017 Community Survey was to assess the impact of community engagement and cohesion work in the two NSU project areas. The survey included questions in the following domains: demographics, social cohesion, caring adults (youth), willingness to intervene, fear of crime, neighborhood safety, school safety (youth), self-efficacy, and informal collective action³. The survey was collected between August and December 2017 at four community events, was provided in English and Spanish, and was either self-administered or proctored depending on the respondent's preference. Backpacks and other giveaways were provided as incentives. The following section provides data highlights; full survey results are provided in Appendices A and B.

Description of Sample

- **Youth demographics**: Most youth respondents identified as Latino(a) and had lived in their respective city more than five years. However, more male youth participated in the survey in San Jose and younger youth in Gilroy.

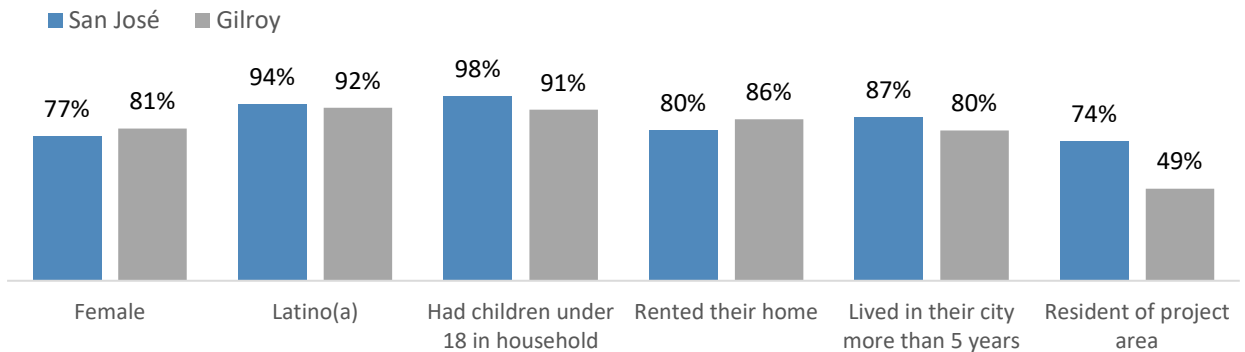
³ Informal collective action, also collective efficacy, is a neighborhood-level concept whereby community members create a sense of agency and assume ownership for the state of their local community. It is one of various predictors of the overall functioning of a community.

Exhibit 3: Community Survey Youth Demographics

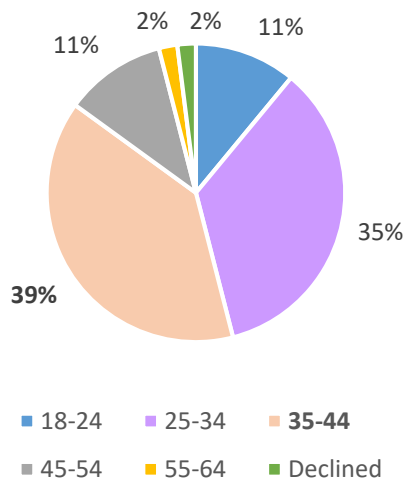


- Adult demographics:** Most adult respondents identified as female and Latina(o). Most also had children and youth under the age of 18 living in their household, rented their homes, and had lived in their respective city more than five years. There was a wide representation of age among both San Jose and Gilroy adult respondents.

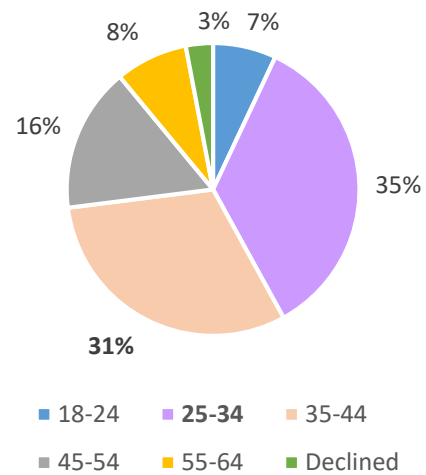
Exhibit 4: Community Survey Adult Demographics



Adults' Age: San Jose



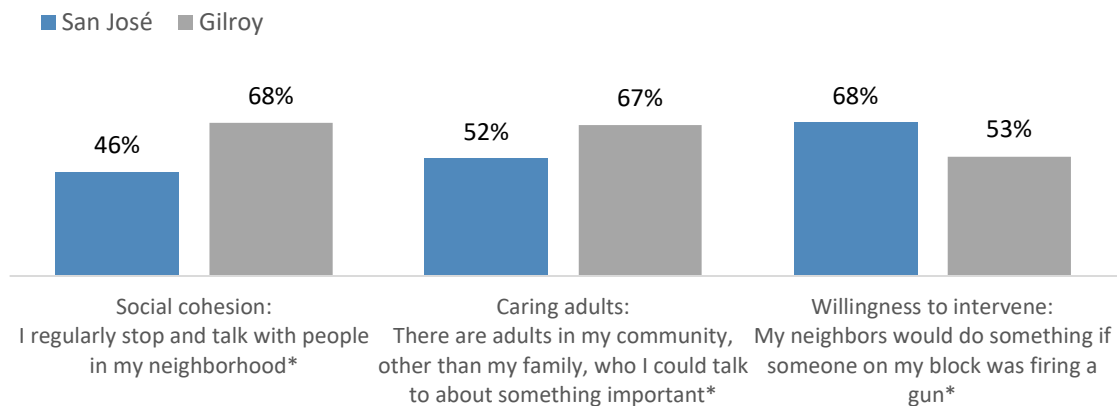
Adults' Age: Gilroy



RESULTS – YOUTH

- **Social cohesion:** Youth mostly think their neighbors are friendly and feel happy in their neighborhoods, but some youth don't know the names of their neighbors or talk to them (46% in San Jose and 68% in Gilroy report that they regularly stop and talk to their neighbors).
- **Caring adults:** Though many youth can ask an adult in their family for help, some youth don't have other caring adults in the community to encourage them or to talk (52% in San Jose and 67% in Gilroy said there are adults in their community, other than their family, who they could talk to about something important).
- **Willingness to intervene:** Some youth feel that their neighbors are unlikely to intervene when issues come up in their neighborhood (68% in San Jose and 53% in Gilroy think their neighbors would do something if someone on their block had a gun).

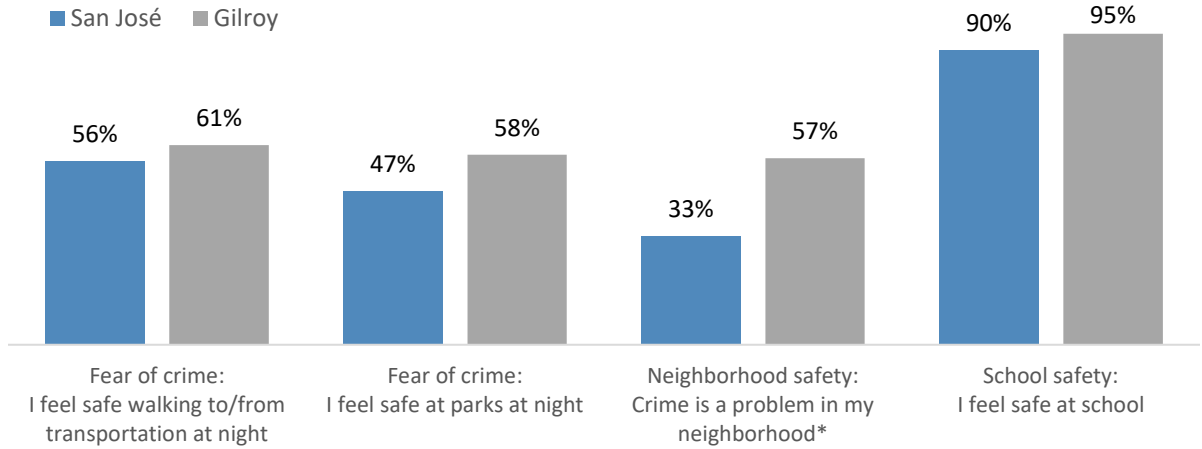
Exhibit 5: Community Survey Youth Social Cohesion, Caring Adults, and Willingness to Intervene



An asterisk () indicates that the difference between two groups (San Jose and Gilroy) is statistically significant.*

- **Fear of crime:** Youth feel safe in the daytime at their local parks, on public transit, and walking around their neighborhood, but some feel unsafe at night (47% in San Jose and 58% in Gilroy feel safe at parks at night).
- **Neighborhood safety:** Some youth agree that drug activity, violence, and crime are problems in their neighborhoods, but most also agree that that their neighborhoods are generally safe (33% in San Jose and 57% in Gilroy think crime is a problem in their neighborhood; 67% in San Jose and 90% in Gilroy think their neighborhood is safe).
- **School safety:** Youth feel safe at school and believe schools provide opportunities to get involved, and they are also are interested in more prosocial activities. Some of these activities included after school programs, organized sports, festivals and block parties, youth clubs, study groups, and community clean-ups (90% in San Jose and 95% in Gilroy feel safe at school).

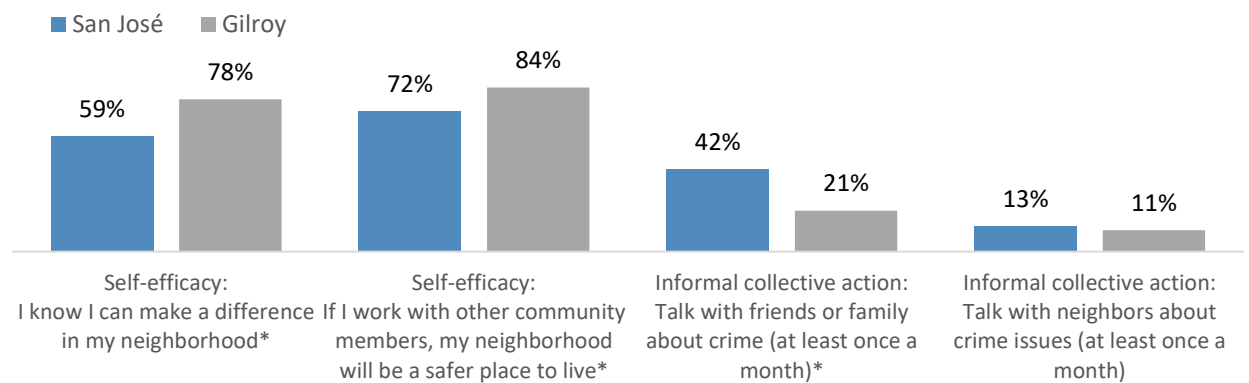
Exhibit 6: Community Survey Youth Fear of Crime, Neighborhood Safety, and School Safety



An asterisk (*) indicates that the difference between two groups (San Jose and Gilroy) is statistically significant.

- Self-efficacy:** Youth believe they can make a difference in their community (59% in San Jose and 78% in Gilroy agree that they can make a difference in their neighborhood; similarly, 72% in San Jose and 84% in Gilroy think that if they work with other community members, their neighborhood will be a safer place to live).
- Informal collective action:** Many youth have never or rarely talk to their family, friends or neighbors about crime issues (42% in San Jose and 21% in Gilroy talk to their friends or family about crime at least once a month; 13% in San Jose and 11% in Gilroy do so at least once a month with their neighbors).

Exhibit 7: Community Survey Youth Self-Efficacy and Informal Collective Action

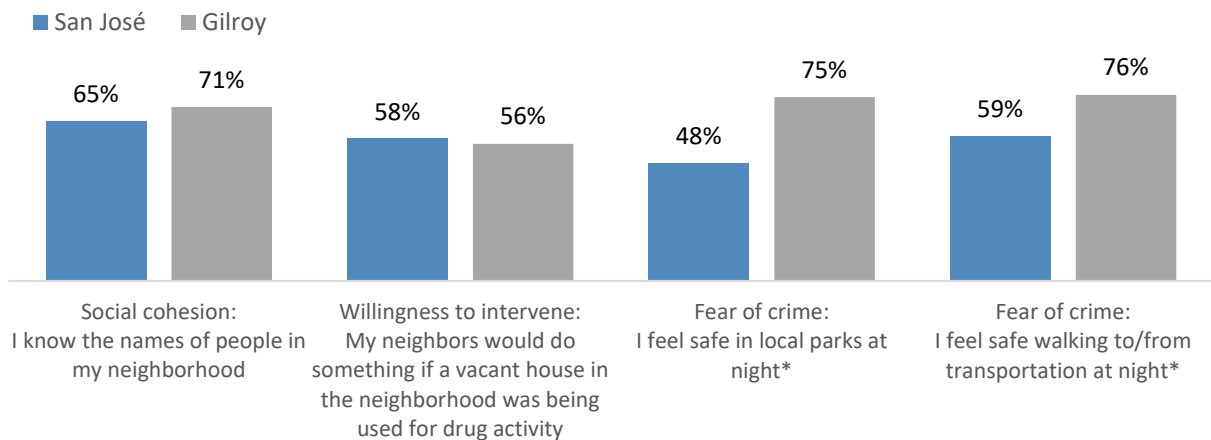


An asterisk (*) indicates that the difference between two groups (San Jose and Gilroy) is statistically significant.

RESULTS – ADULTS

- Social cohesion:** Adults think their neighbors are friendly, but some don't know their neighbors' names nor feel they share the same values (63% in San Jose and 71% in Gilroy know the names of their neighbors; 61% in San Jose and 76% in Gilroy think people in their neighborhood share the same values).
- Willingness to intervene:** Some adults feel that their neighbors are unlikely to intervene in neighborhood issues, such as with neighborhood drug activity (58% in San Jose and 56% in Gilroy think their neighbors would do something if a vacant house in their neighborhood was being used for drug activity).
- Fear of crime:** Similar to youth, many adults reported feeling safe in the daytime, but some felt unsafe at night in their local parks and near public transit (48% in San Jose and 75% in Gilroy felt safe in their local parks at night; 59% in San Jose and 76% in Gilroy felt safe walking to and from public transportation at night).

Exhibit 8: Community Survey Adults Social Cohesion, Willingness to Intervene and Fear of Crime

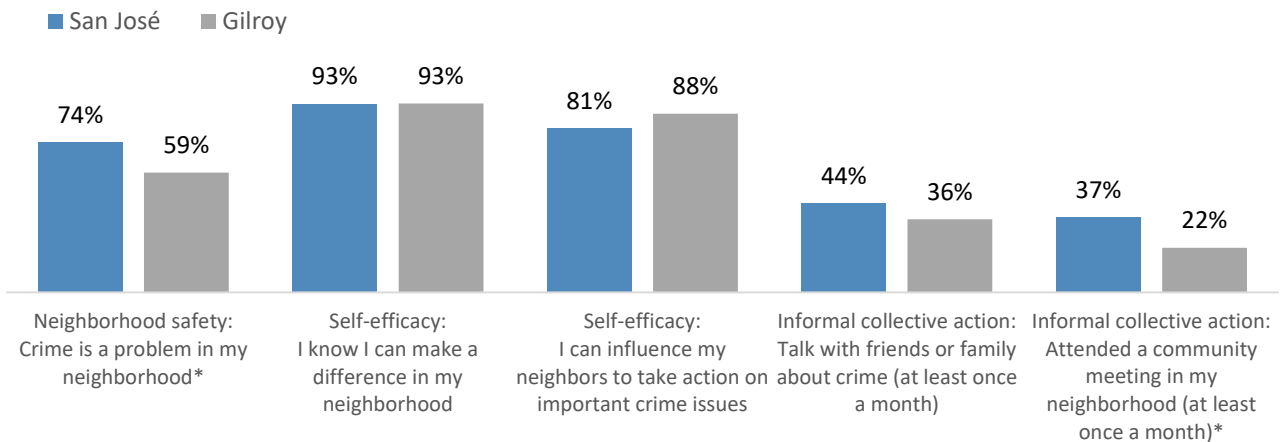


An asterisk () indicates that the difference between two groups (San Jose and Gilroy) is statistically significant.*

- Perceptions of safety:** Like youth, adults agree that drug activity, violence, and crime are neighborhood problems, and some also feel that their neighborhoods are generally safe (74% in San Jose and 59% in Gilroy think crime is a problem in their neighborhood; 64% in San Jose and 66% in Gilroy think their neighborhood is safe).
- Self-efficacy:** Levels of self-efficacy are strong among adults, with respondents reporting that they believe that they can make a difference in their community and influence other people to take action on crime issues (93% in each community said they know they can make a difference in their neighborhood; 81% in San Jose and 88% in Gilroy believed they can influence their neighbors to take action on important crime issues).

- Informal collective action:** More than half of adults have either never talked to their family, friends or neighbors about crime issues, or have done it once or twice. Many have also never attended a community meeting in their neighborhood (44% in San Jose and 36% in Gilroy talked with friends and family about crime at least once a month; 37% in San Jose and 22% in Gilroy attended a community meeting in their neighborhood at least once a month).

Exhibit 9: Community Survey Adults Neighborhood Safety, Self-Efficacy, and Informal Collective Action



An asterisk (*) indicates that the difference between two groups (San Jose and Gilroy) is statistically significant.

Focus Group Findings

Valley Palms

A focus group was held with VPNA members in May 2017. The focus group included a total of 10 participants: seven residents who were part of the VPNA, one youth participant, and two staff who provided support to the group. VPNA members had lived at Valley Palms for an average of 7 years (range 2 to 19 years). The discussion was facilitated in Spanish.

- Sense of community and skills learned:** Focus group participants described a strong sense of community in their neighborhood, and were especially appreciative of the services and supports provided through the community center at Valley Palms. Their perceptions of neighborhood safety were that the community has improved compared to the past, even if there were still incidents of crime occurring in the area. In terms of the VPNA, members described the purpose of the association as a place to discuss community problems, create solutions, and stay informed. As far as skills learned, VPNA members discussed having better communication with others, feeling a greater sense of contribution to their community, and acquiring English as a second language skills. Most expressed interest in improving their computer literacy skills.

“We learned communication and community. We know each other better. We know more people. We used to not even say hello to each other.” – VPNA member

- **Greatest successes and challenges:** VPNA members identified their greatest successes as registering the neighborhood association, organizing 200 community members for *la caminata*, getting the resulting approval for the crosswalk stop sign, motivating other community members to get involved, involving their children in summer and after-school activities, and increasing awareness about the summer lunch program at the community center. The greatest challenges for VPNA members were forming the association, increasing membership due to initial resident reluctance to attend, experiencing issues with time commitments due to family schedules, getting residents to speak up about issues when the patrolling officer attends meetings, keeping up membership, providing adequate translation and interpretation supports for guest speakers at general meetings, and finding financial support for the sports field.
- **Increasing engagement:** VPNA members discussed the additional challenge of engaging other community members in the work of the association, including youth, men, and residents of other ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Possible strategies to involve men were brainstormed, and centered on engaging men through the work with the sports field. To involve residents of other ethnic/linguistic groups, VPNA members considered learning more about the diverse cultures in their neighborhood, forming relationships, and reaching out during special events like National Night Out or Community Resource Fairs.
- **Lessons learned and recommendations:** VPNA members identified their lessons learned as not giving up and being patient despite initial poor attendance or reluctance to participate in the association; showing respect for everyone, especially those residents who have a hard time expressing their opinions or communicating in large groups; and providing opportunities for residents to be leaders so they can sustain the work even if other community partners are not around to support them. On the Somos Mayfair workshops, VPNA members expressed learning about how to map their ideas and goals; how to achieve personal goals and apply that knowledge to community organizing; how to speak up in groups; how to deal with negative feedback; how to set up deadlines and timelines; and how to use different tools to organize their efforts, such as the crosswalk stop sign campaign and the sports field.
- **Training and support needs:** VPNA members identified additional training and support needs for their group, including child care opportunities at Valley Palms, both to provide child care for their families and create additional employment opportunities for residents; training on how to fundraise for the sports field, including training on grant writing, how to find funders, and how to become a 501c3; and support from legal professionals about whether having the sports field might affect residents' monthly rent.

“Don’t give up, because you can make things happen, even with one or two people as long as they’re consistent. People will start joining later. It took us a while to get going with a group of just five people. Later, we were able to later get a good sized group. Even if you see that people are reluctant, if you want to help the community and you are interested in participating, you have to stay consistent, even if there are only a few people. Be patient.” - VPNA member

Goals/Next Steps

- During the focus group, VPNA members discussed their desire for additional support to increase membership and participation in the Valley Palms Youth Council. The purpose of the Youth Council is to serve as the youth voice and vote in the Valley Palms Neighborhood Association, volunteer at various Family Resource Center events, and participate in leadership development workshops hosted by Somos Mayfair.

South County

A focus group was also held at San Ysidro Park in May 2017. The focus group included a total of 24 participants, 22 women and 2 men, living in East Gilroy for an average of 19 years (range 1.5 to 65 years). The group consisted of a group of ten women (mostly mothers of school-aged children) who participated in zumba classes at San Ysidro Park, a group of eight older women who reported organizing regular outings for seniors throughout Gilroy, and six community members who lived nearby.

- **Sense of community:** Focus group participants did not describe a particularly strong sense of community, although they indicated that they felt connected to their relatives, to some friends and neighbors, and to fellow zumba exercise class participants at San Ysidro Park. Participants identified Latino(a) and Spanish-speaking community members as more isolated in the community due to personal experiences with racism and discrimination, as well as financial instability and lack of access to resources that allow families to support children's academic and prosocial activities, including tutoring, sports, and arts.

"I am not as connected to the community. I tend to spend more time at home and not really getting to know the community, but that's getting a little better for me now that I come to Zumba. For me, being talkative and friendly made a big difference. I've always done activities and now I'm getting to know new people. I used to only know people through church and school." –Gilroy FG participant

- **Greatest community challenges:** The greatest community challenges focus group participants identified in East Gilroy included gangs, drugs, robberies, homelessness, bullying, and an overall sense of high crime and violence. Several participants expressed despair about those challenges, as well as frustration with law enforcement's response to personal incidents. One participant, however, noted that two organizations in Gilroy, CARAS and PAC at St. Mary's Church, were working to facilitate connections between law enforcement and the local community to address concerns and create more trust.
- **Perceptions of safety:** Participants were divided about how safe they felt in their community, with a third each reporting they felt safe, unsafe, or unsure. Some reported that the area around the park is getting safer, while others reported seeing homeless people and young people using drugs at the park. In addition, participants were ambivalent about police presence at or near public schools due to families' fears of racial profiling.

“It’s important to get involved with the groups mentioned to learn about what the police officers are working on. If we don’t get involved, we won’t know what’s going on. We should be invested in improving the police department to help people in different parts of this neighborhood.” –Gilroy FG participant

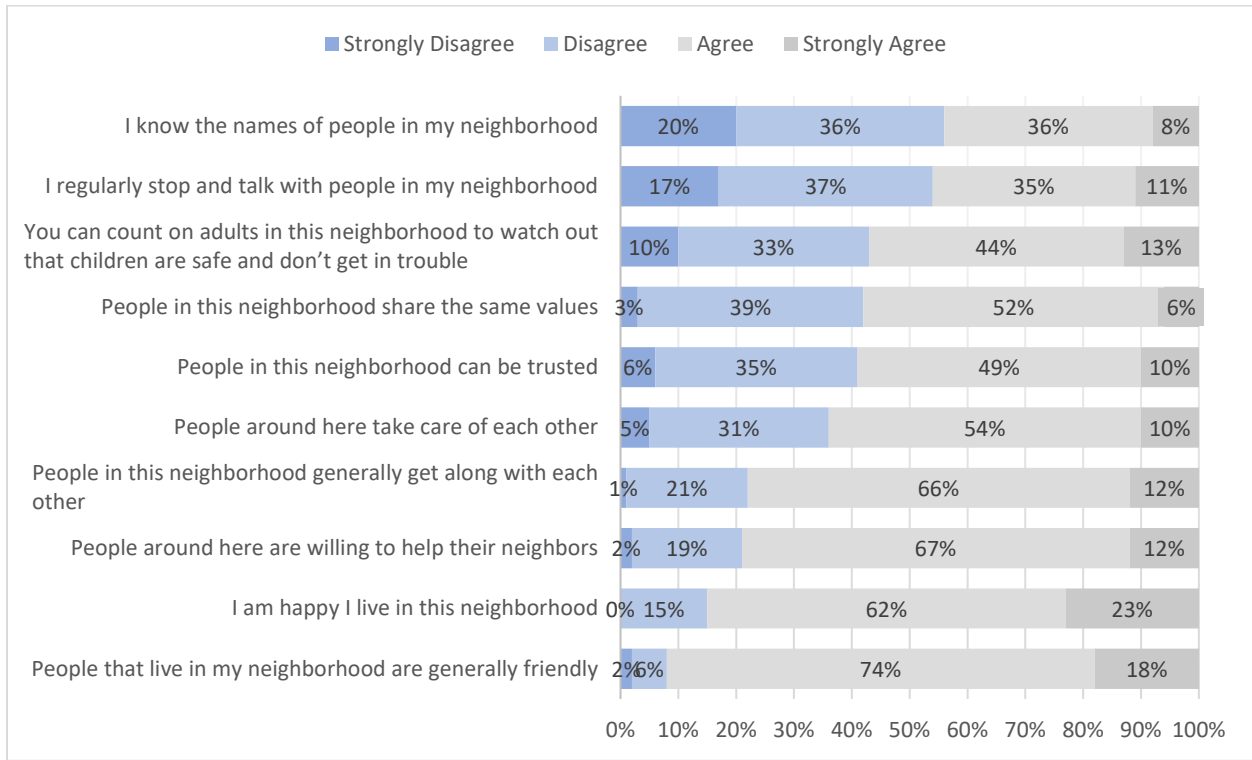
Goals/Next Steps

Focus group participants made recommendations about additional programs and pro-social activities they would like in their community. These included:

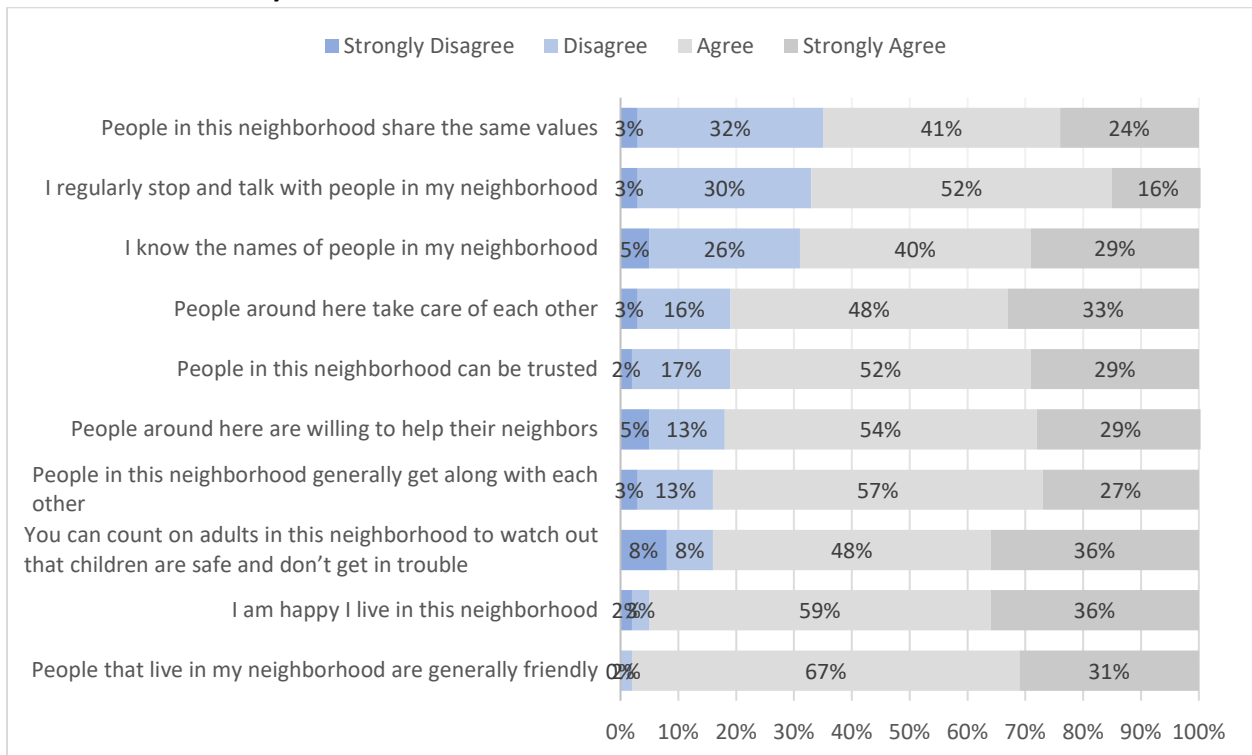
- Summer sports, like soccer and volleyball, for both kids and adults.
- Academic tutoring and after-school camps.
- Other enrichment classes: gymnastics, ballet, art, engineering.
- Cooking classes for children, youth, and families.
- Camping at the park, especially for children and families who can’t afford a campground.
- Cultural activities to bring the community to the park, including *Día de los Muertos* and *Posadas*.

Appendix A – Full Results for Community Survey Youth Respondents

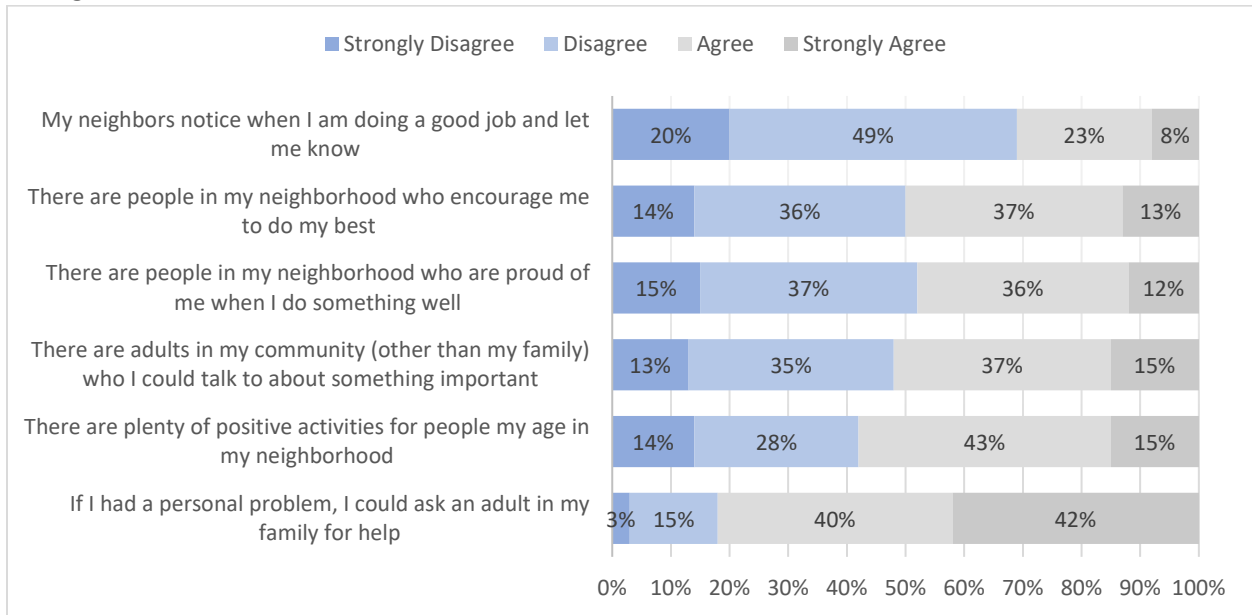
Social Cohesion: San Jose Youth



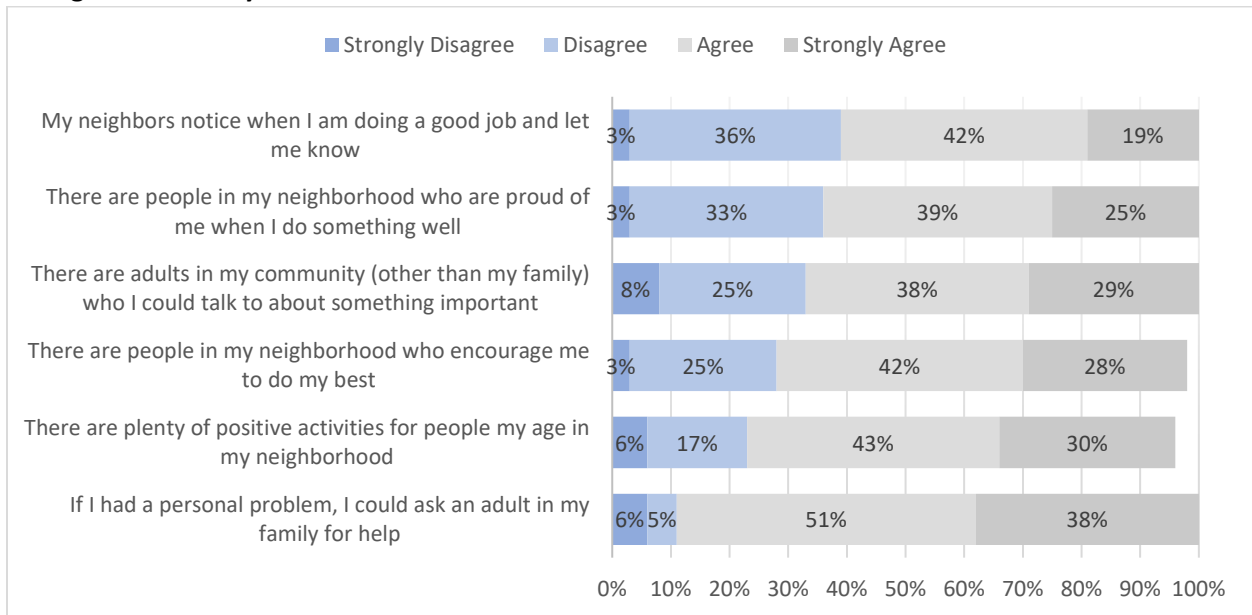
Social Cohesion: Gilroy Youth



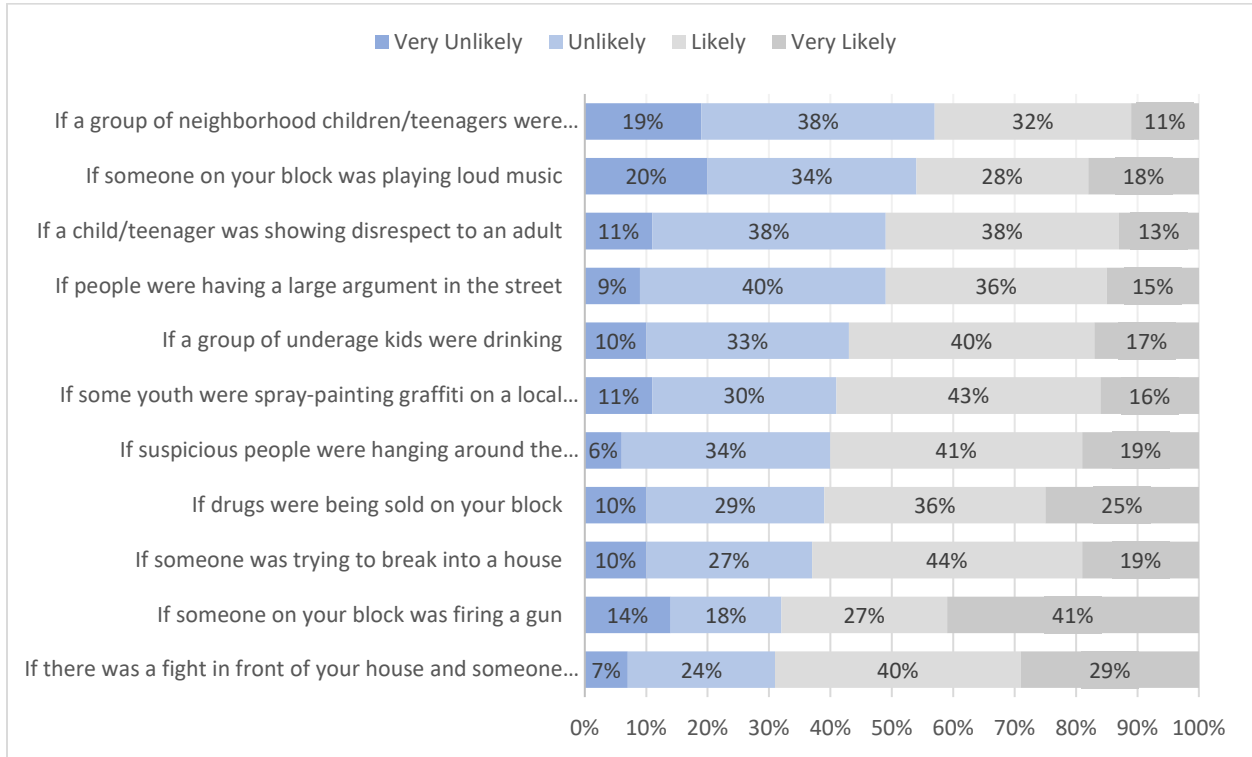
Caring Adults: San Jose Youth



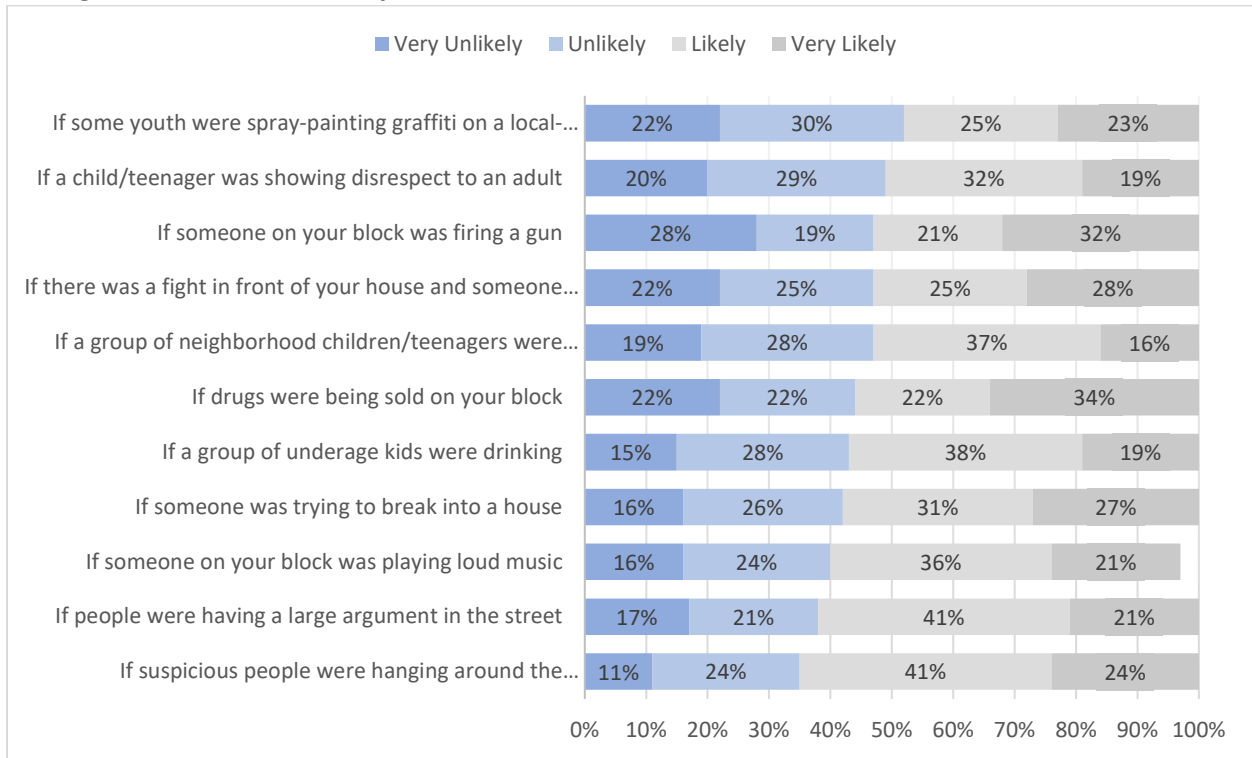
Caring Adults: Gilroy Youth



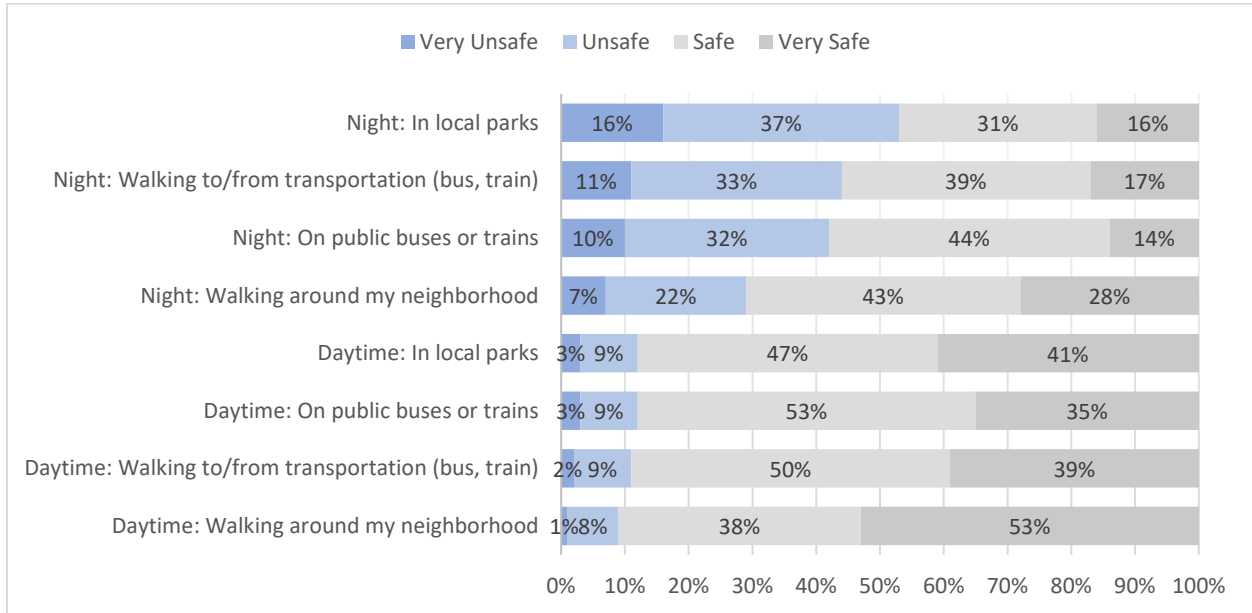
Willingness to Intervene: San Jose Youth



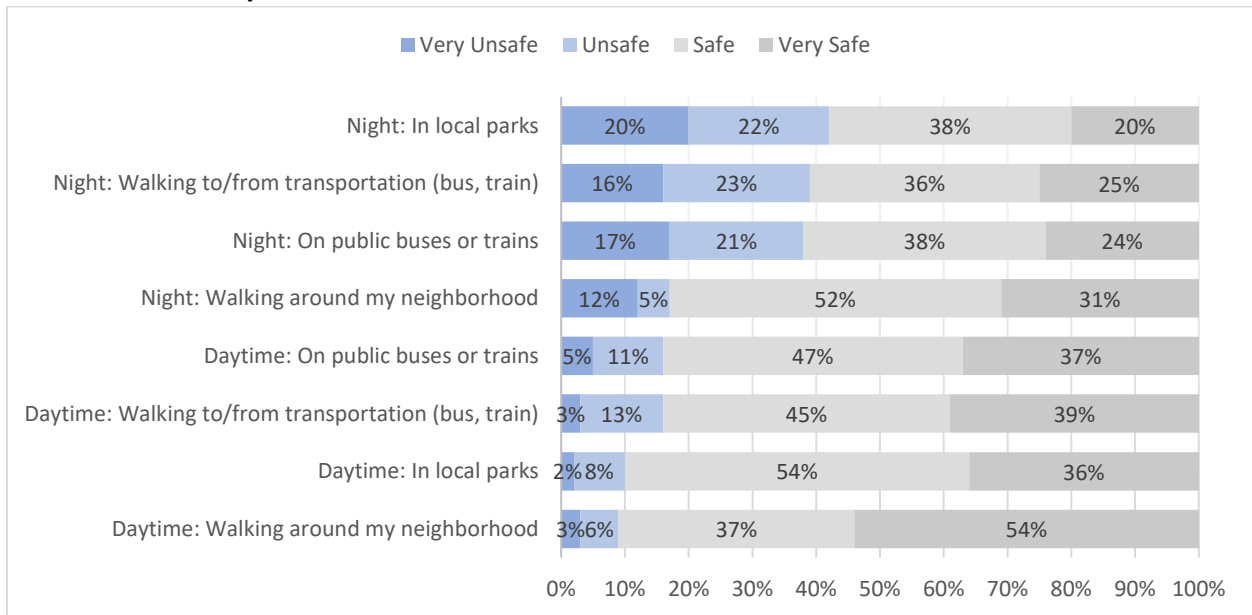
Willingness to Intervene: Gilroy Youth



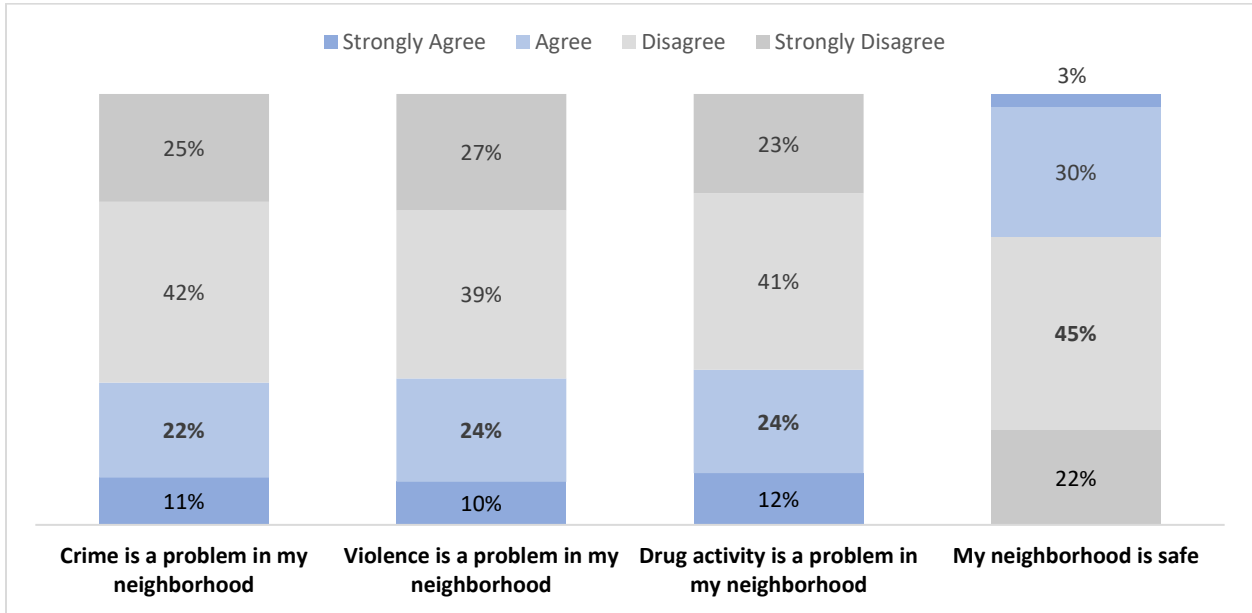
Fear of Crime: San Jose Youth



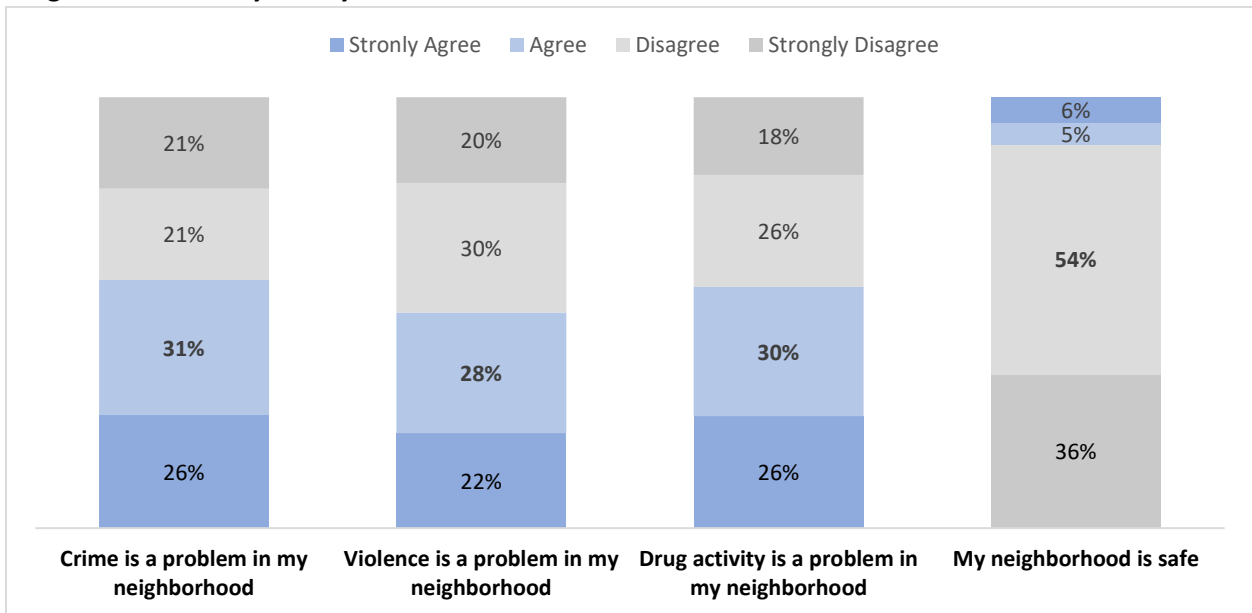
Fear of Crime: Gilroy Youth



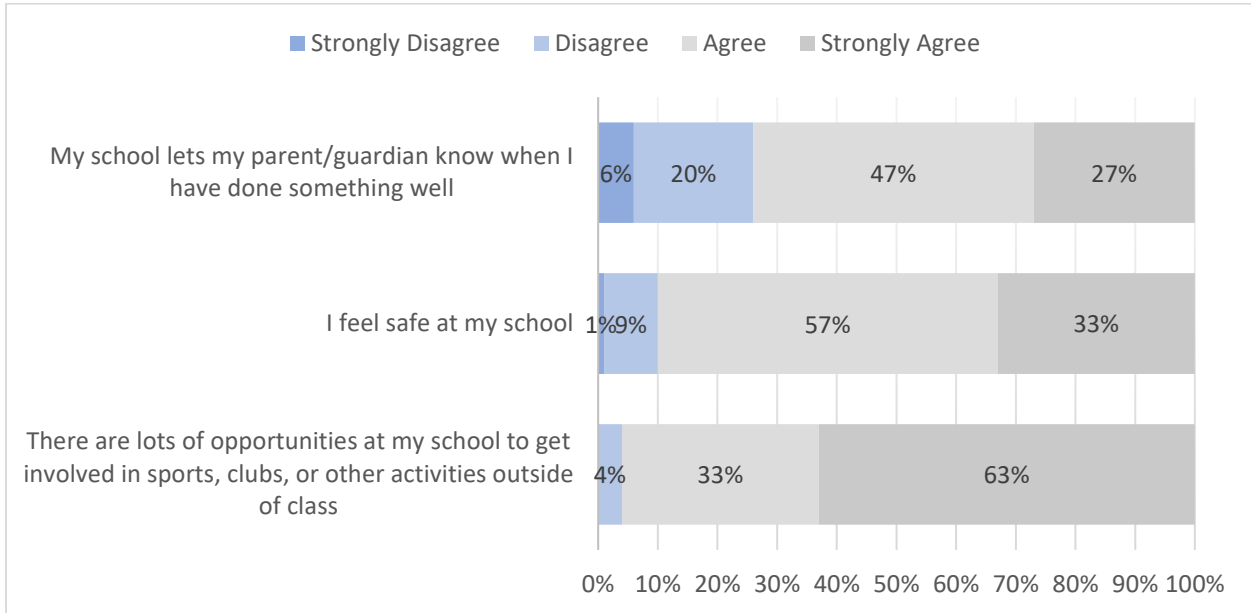
Neighborhood Safety: San Jose Youth



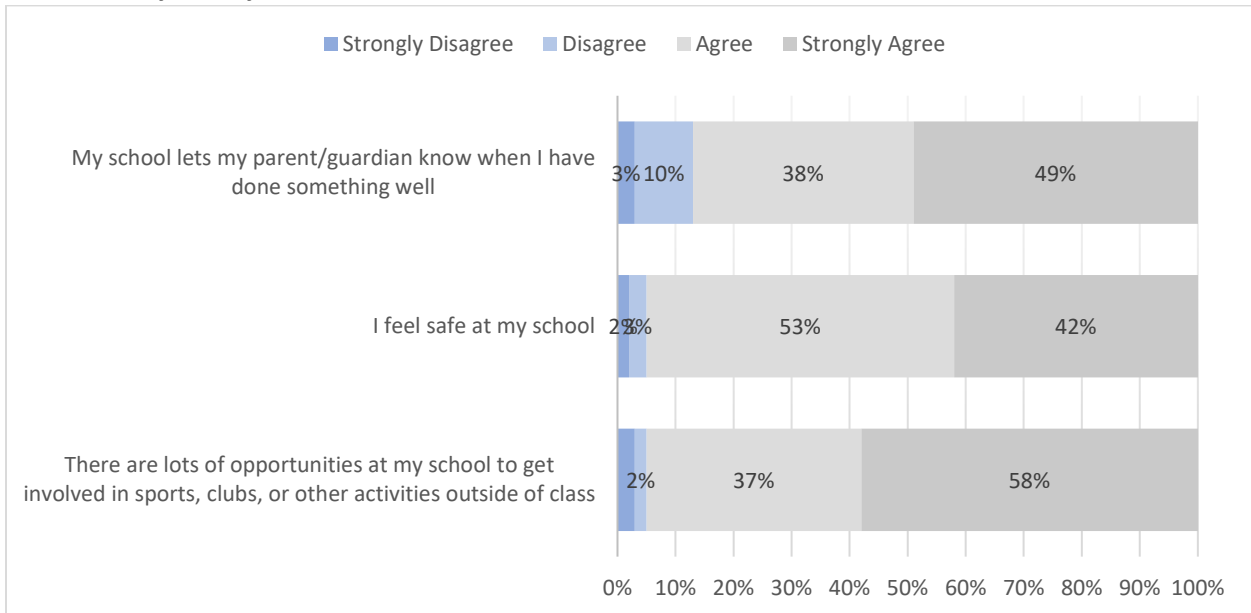
Neighborhood Safety: Gilroy Youth



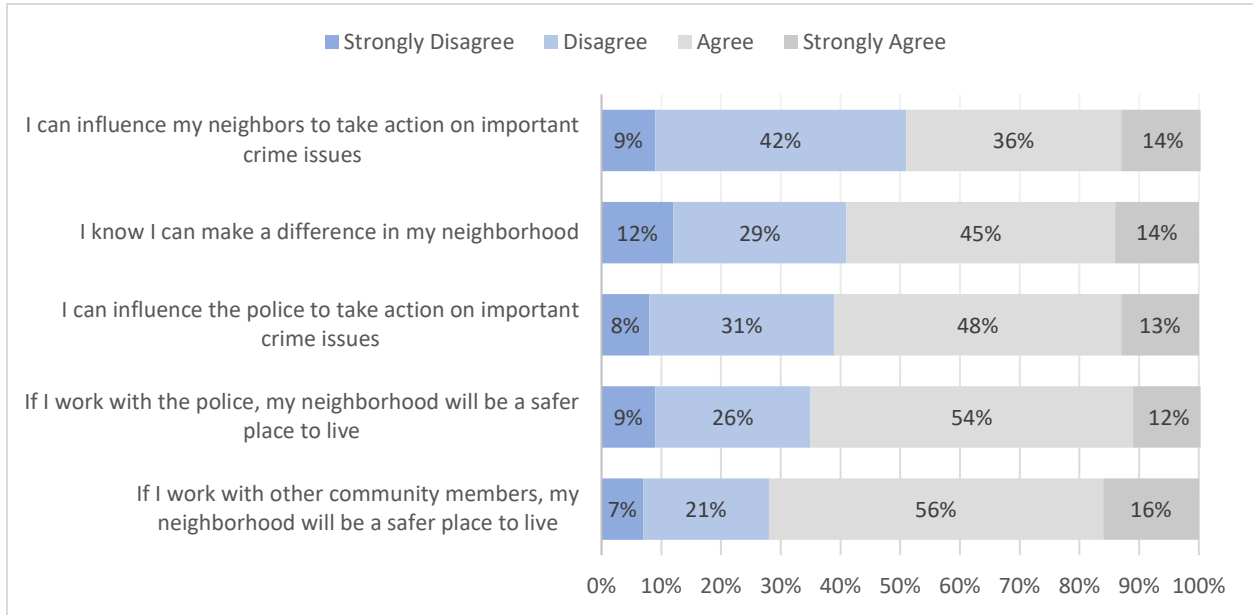
School Safety: San Jose Youth



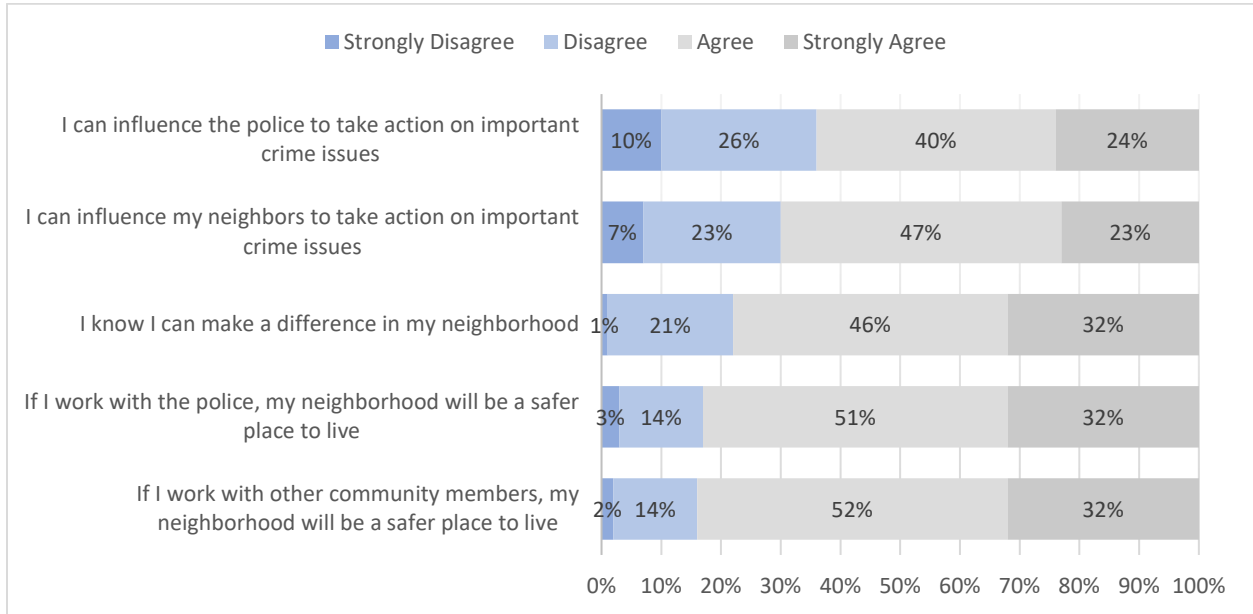
School Safety: Gilroy Youth



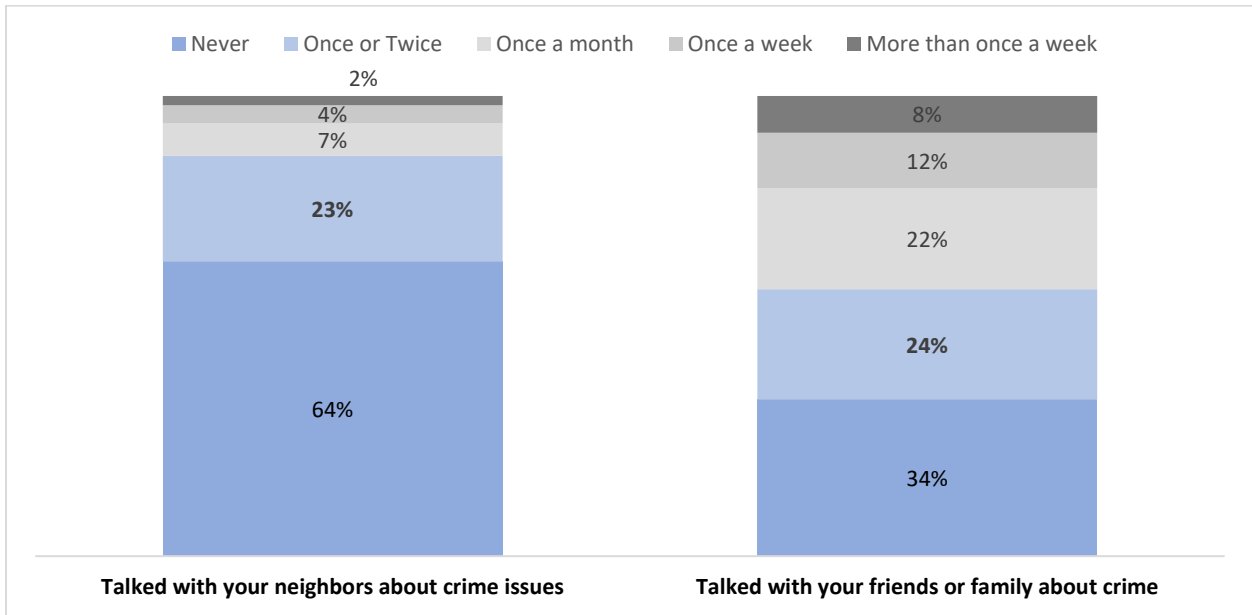
Self-Efficacy: San Jose Youth



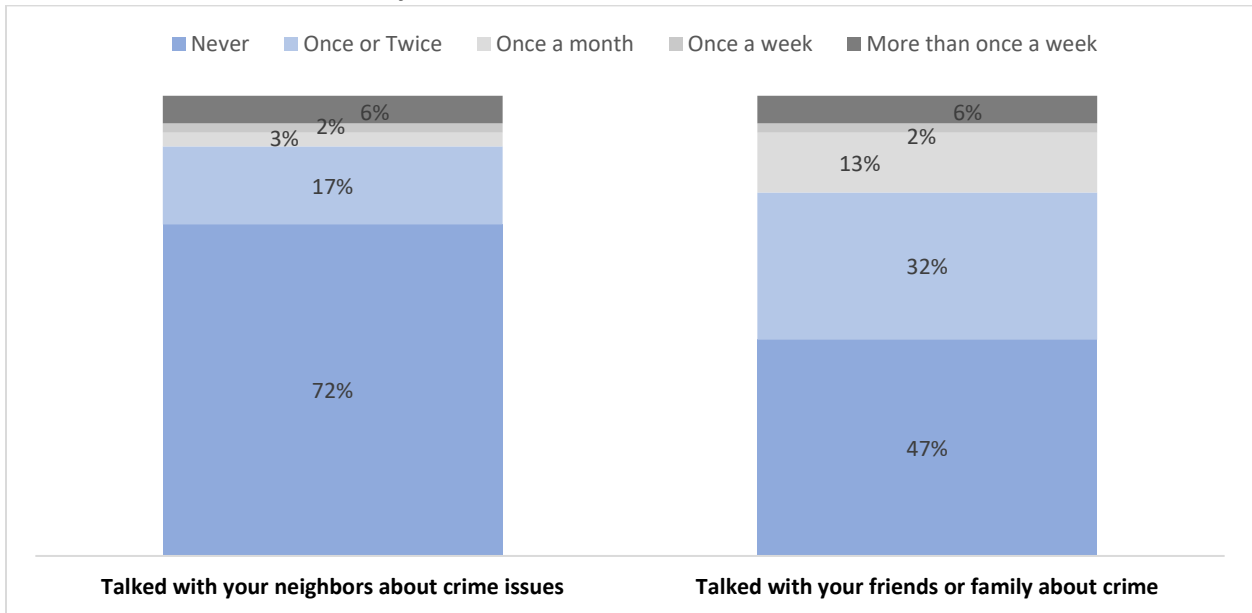
Self-Efficacy: Gilroy Youth



Informal Collective Action: San Jose Youth

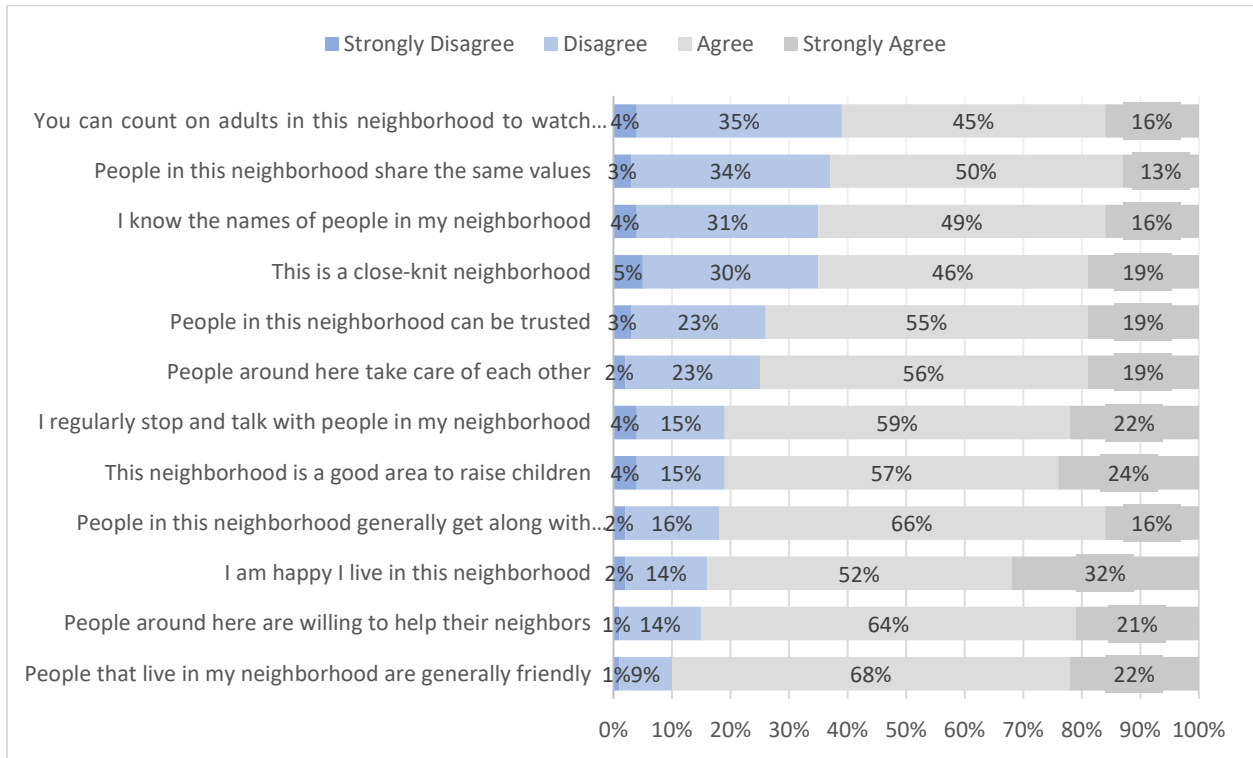


Informal Collective Action: Gilroy Youth

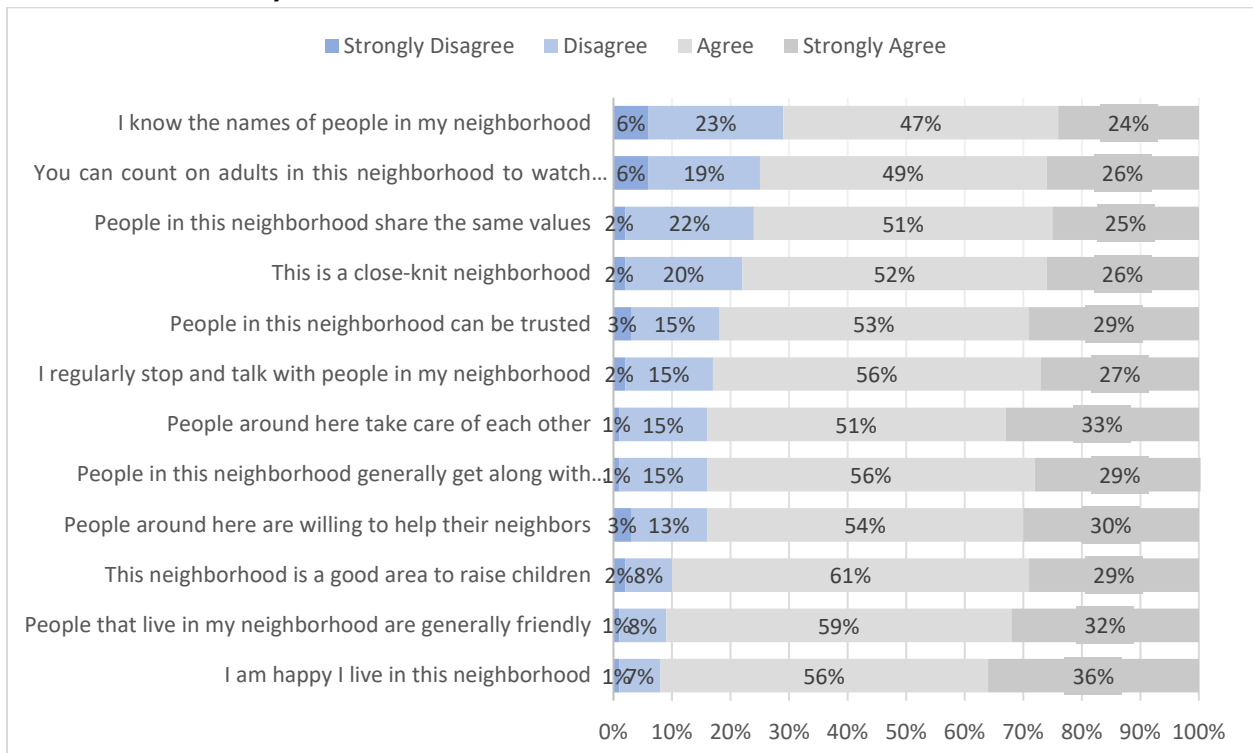


Appendix B – Full Results for Community Survey Adult Respondents

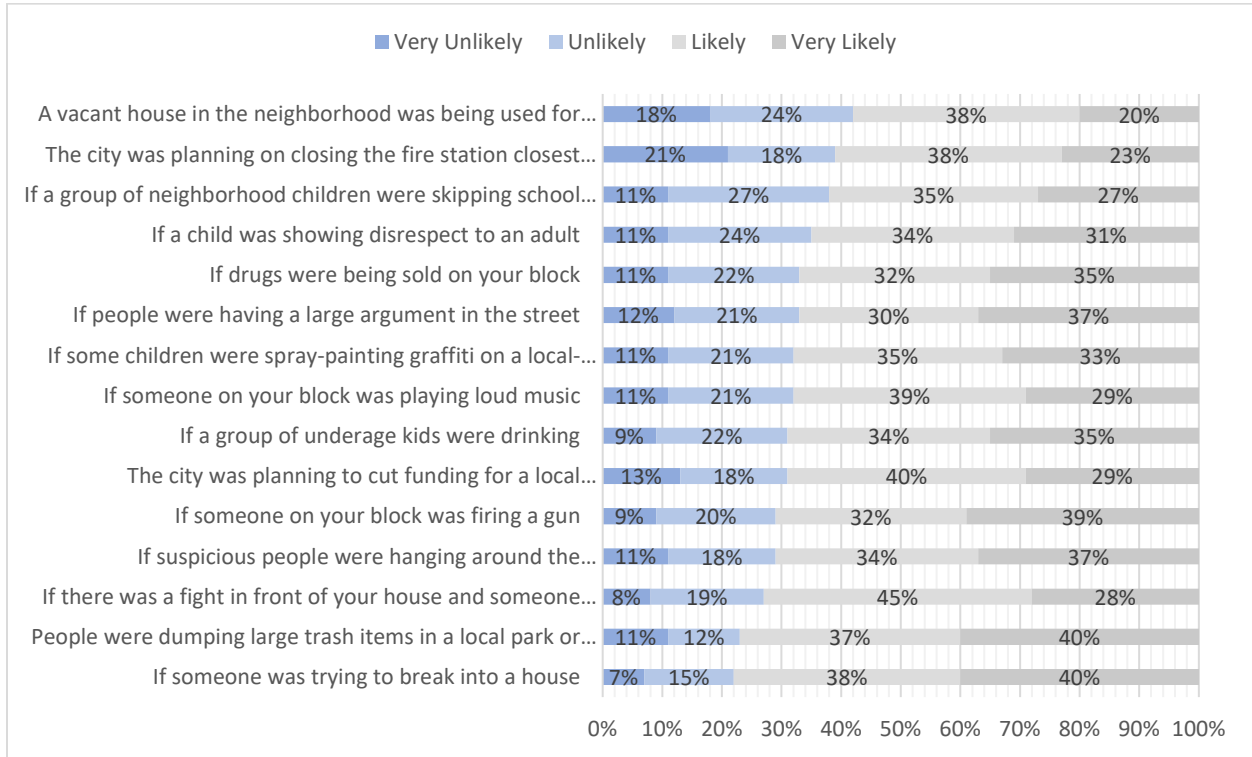
Social Cohesion: San Jose Adults



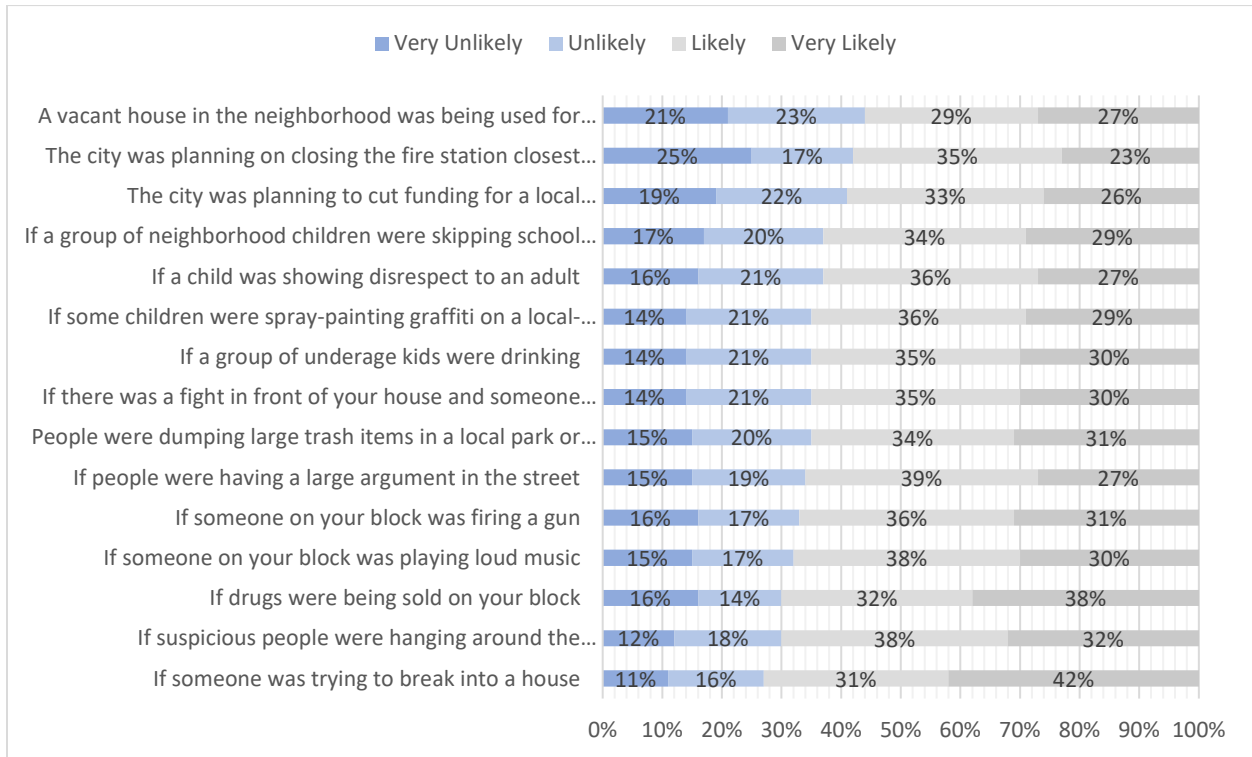
Social Cohesion: Gilroy Adults



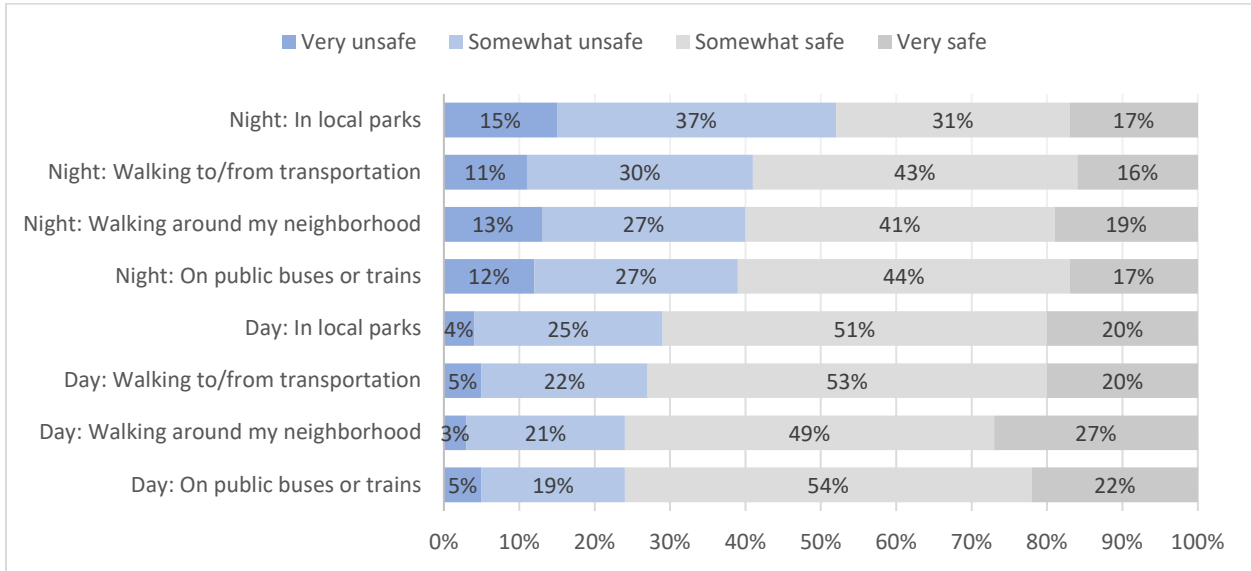
Willingness to Intervene: San Jose Adults



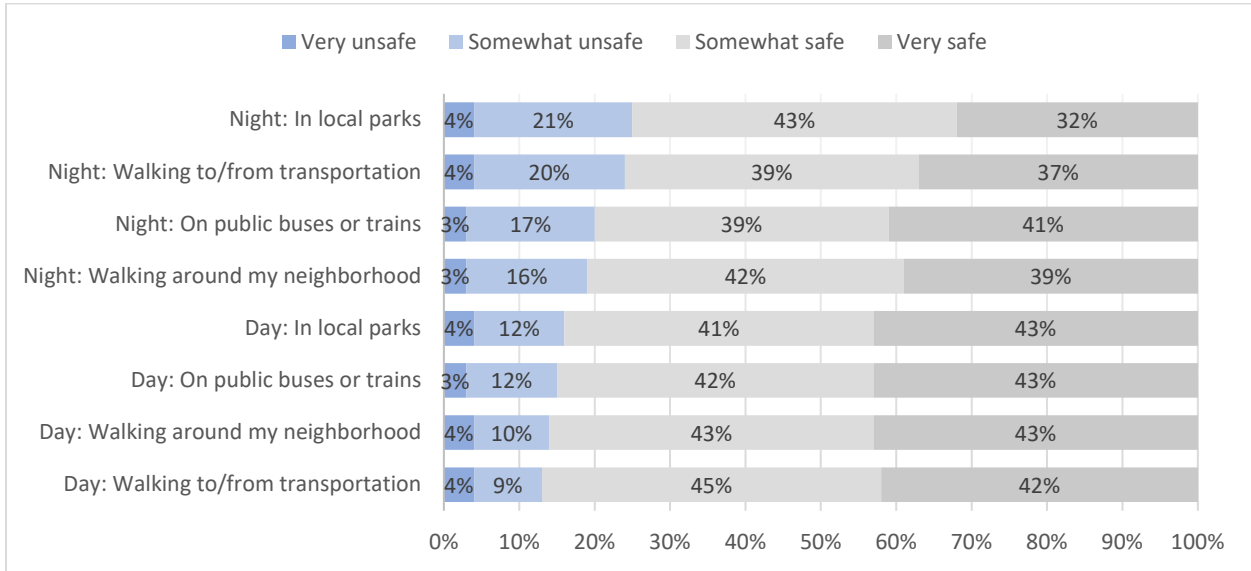
Willingness to Intervene: Gilroy Adults



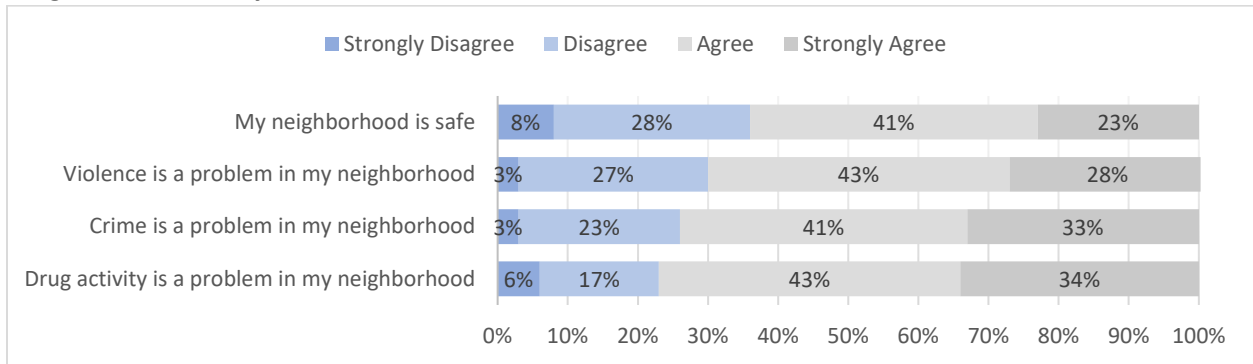
Fear of Crime: San Jose Adults



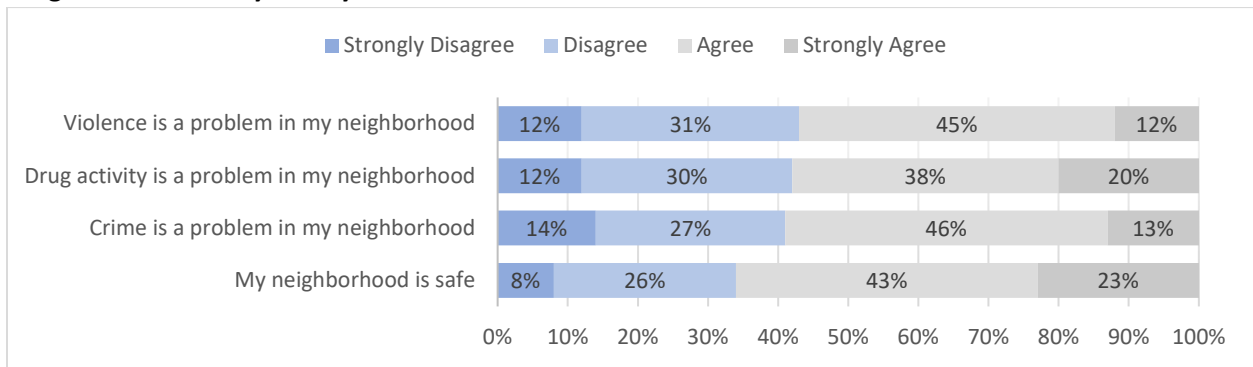
Fear of Crime: Gilroy Adults



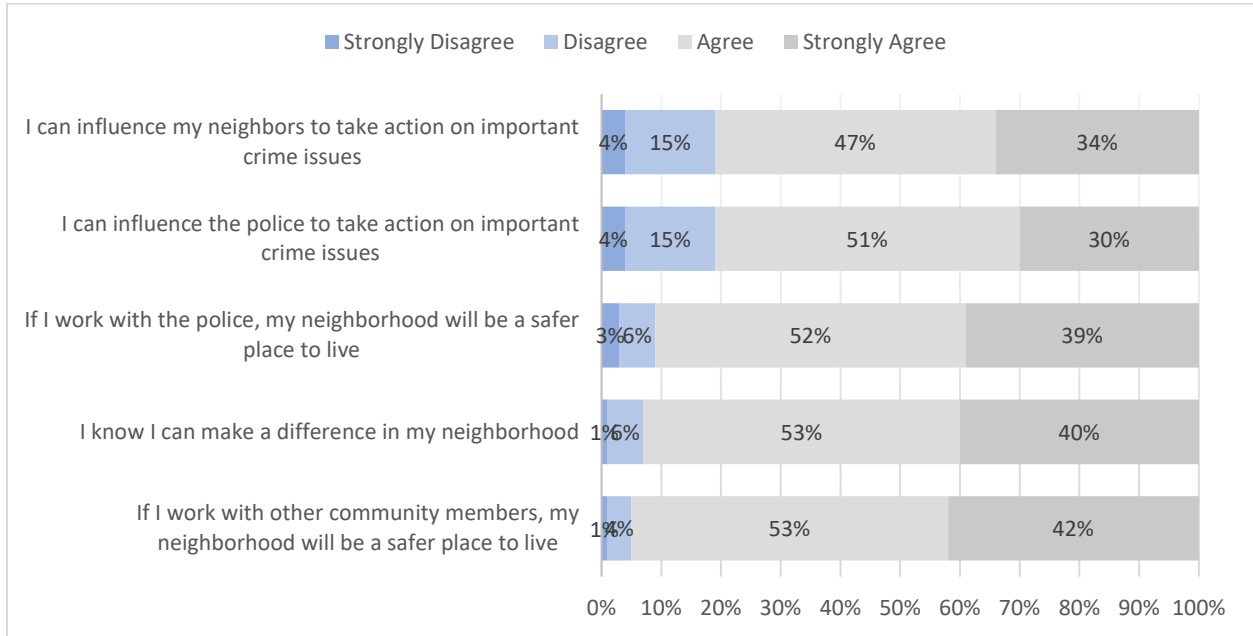
Neighborhood Safety: San Jose Adults



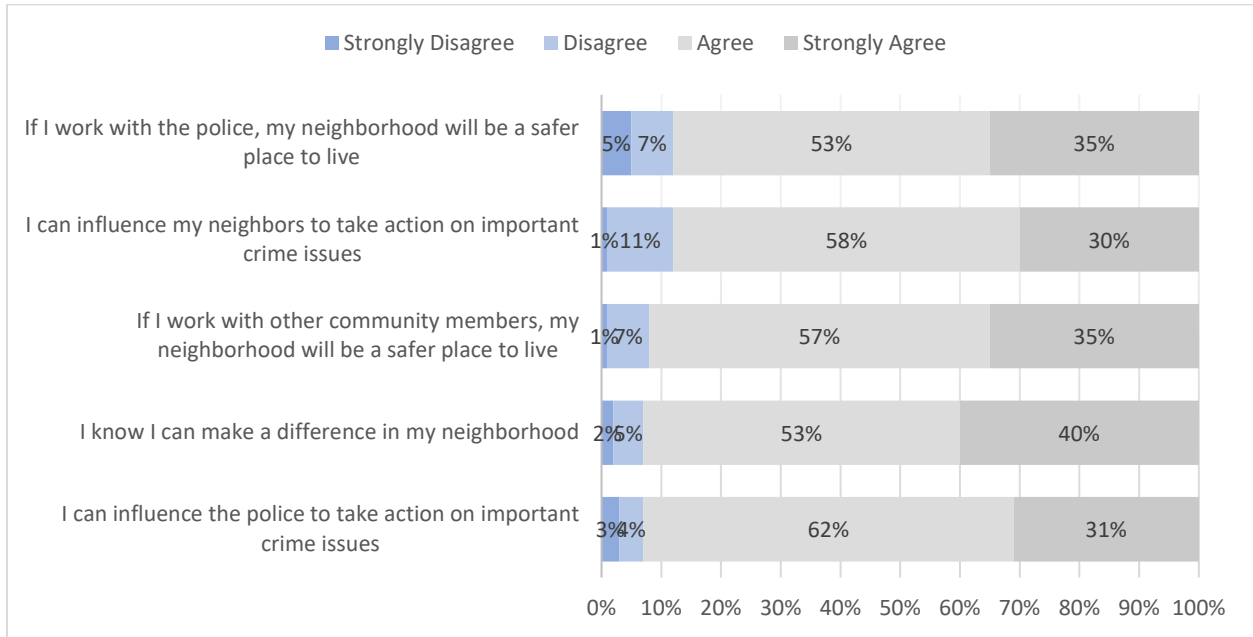
Neighborhood Safety: Gilroy Adults



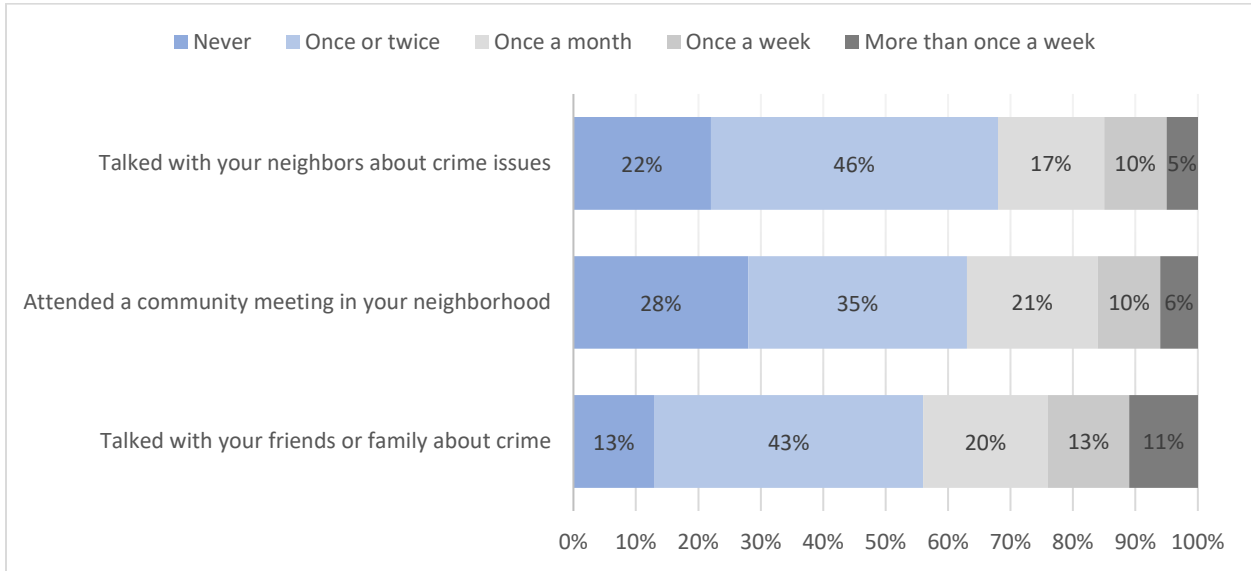
Self-Efficacy: San Jose Adults



Self-Efficacy: Gilroy Adults



Informal Collective Action: San Jose Adults



Informal Collective Action: Gilroy Adults

