

COMMUNITY REFERRAL SURVEY REPORT

OCTOBER 2020

As part of the expansion of Atlanta Fulton County Pre-Arrest Diversion (PAD), a public survey was conducted to gather input on PAD's Harm Reduction Team services. These enhanced services include the ability for community members to make referrals to PAD. Data were collected over a month in September-October 2020. 597 respondents took the survey with varying degrees of completion. The online survey was shared via social media, email, and the PAD website.

The survey included closed and open-ended questions on the following topics: how respondents are likely to respond to activities in their communities that are related to unmet mental health needs, problematic drug use, or extreme poverty; activities they would be likely to refer to the Harm Reduction Team and qualities about the services that are important should they make a referral; attitudes toward harm reduction practices; experience contacting the police; experience with behavioral health services and the justice system; and demographic information.

There are several limitations that are important to consider. The survey gathered information from a convenience sample which limits the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, respondents who identify as white, women, and those who live on the Eastside of Atlanta are overrepresented.

The findings illuminate which activities respondents are likely to refer to 311 and what they value when they make referrals. More than two-thirds of respondents are likely to make a referral to 311 if they encounter someone yelling or causing a public disturbance or sleeping in an abandoned building. Respondents find it important that the people referred to the Harm Reduction Team are linked to resources and avoid encounters with the police. Respondents also indicate it is critical to have a quick response to referrals.

Responses to the open-ended questions indicate respondents find it essential I to extend the hours that the Harm Reduction Team will be available. Additionally, the data highlight the importance of thoroughly educating the community about the Harm Reduction services, referral process, and eligibility.

The PAD team is grateful to the stakeholders that helped to develop and share the survey and the nearly 600 respondents who took the time to offer their input.

Key Takeaways and Considerations

- Respondents value the option to connect individuals to resources and to prevent police contact.
- Provide education about the services to assuage concerns about police contact, set expectations, and offer methods to link people outside of business hours.
- Several respondents are familiar with people in their neighborhoods who engage in quality of life activities, may
 be eligible for services, and/or for whom they have previously requested police or help
- Consider alternate ways to make referral requests, particularly via text message.
- Inform community that this is one component of a) a network of social services and b) ongoing expansion of PAD services.
- Provide clear messaging about eligibility, particularly around people experiencing mental health crises, urgent health concerns, and minimum age requirement. Provide alternate response options for those who may be ineligible (e.g. GCAL).
- Some respondents may lack clarity on the difference between request for Harm Reduction Team and those for other 311 services (e.g., waste cleanup, neighbors' code violations, fender benders).

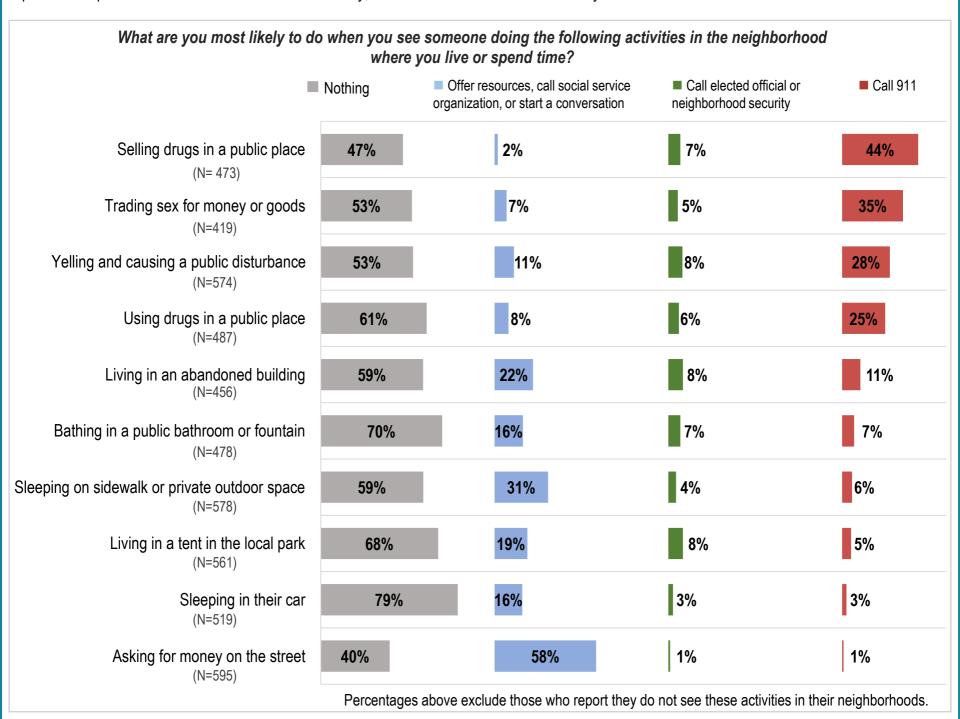
Limitations

The survey sample is not representative of Atlanta or the areas that PAD serves. The sample is largely people
who identify as white (68%), women (70%), and live or spend time on the Eastside of Atlanta (51%).

Response to Behaviors Associated with Unmet Mental Health Needs, Problematic Drug Use, and Extreme Poverty

Respondents are **most likely to do nothing** when they see "quality of life" activities in the neighborhoods where they live or spend time. The incidents respondents are **most likely to report to 911** are related to **drug sales and use, a public disturbance, or sex work activity**. When respondents see someone asking for money, they are most likely to **offer food, money or resources, call a social service organization, or start a conversation**. Less than 10% of respondents are likely to **contact their city council member or other elected official or call neighborhood security** in response to any activity.

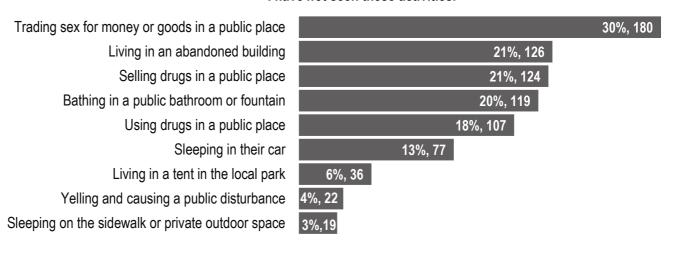
597 respondents answered the question; those who report not seeing the activities are excluded from the figures in this chart. Percentages represent the portion of those who have seen the activity; the numbers listed under the activity statements.



Activities Respondents Do Not See in their Communities

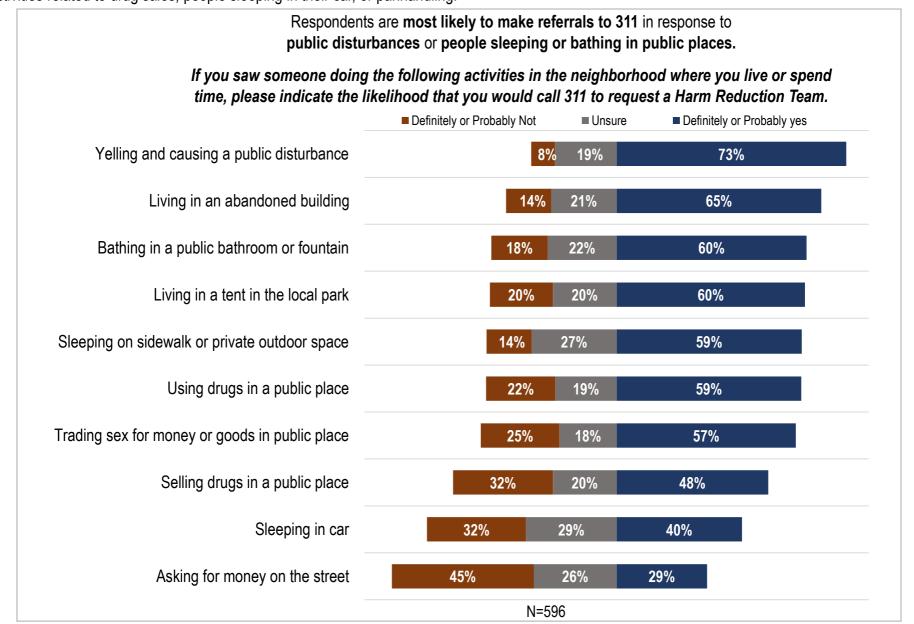
Not all participants see the activities in question in their neighborhoods. Respondents are most likely to report they have not seen sex work activity, someone living in abandoned building, or public drug sales. The counts of those who report *not* seeing the activities are listed here with percentages of the total responses.

I have not seen these activities.



Likelihood to Refer to 311

Respondents are more likely to call for activities that are disruptive or most clearly related to homelessness. They are less likely to make a referral for activities related to drug sales, people sleeping in their car, or panhandling.

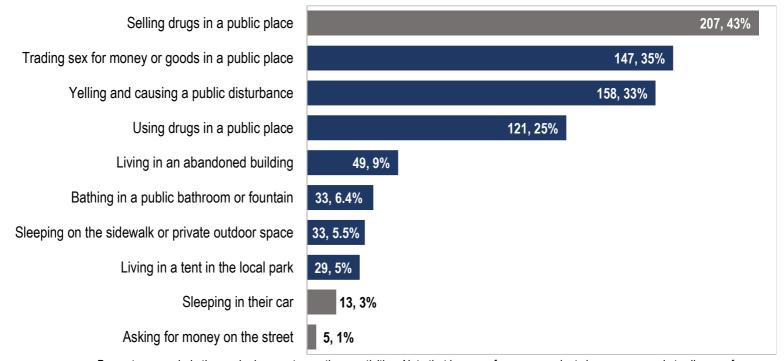


Activities Respondents Report to 911

Below are the activities and percentages of respondents who reported they would call 911. By comparing the activities for which respondents would be likely to call 311 (above) to those for which respondents would be likely to call 911 (below), we can see that providing an alternate service may decrease requests for police for activities related to drug use, solicitation, or explicit homelessness.

Count and percentage of respondents who have seen the activities who are likely to call 911.

Over 50% of respondents would be likely to call 311 for the highlighted activities.



Percentages exclude those who have not seen these activities. Note that because fewer respondents have seen people trading sex for money the percentage is higher, but the count is lower compared to yelling and causing a disturbance which more people report having seen.

Activities Which Respondents Would Like to Refer to 311

Respondents noted a variety of activities they would like to refer to 311, most of which align with activities or behaviors respondents have previously reported to police. The most frequent mentions were related to mental health, loud or domestic disturbances, unattended youth, and/or solicitation. The percentages represent the portion of all the responses (N=233).

Theme	# of Related Comments (% of 233 Total Comments	Excerpts
Mental Health	37 (16%)	People living on the street with mental health issues Actively psychotic individuals or those suffering from mental illness
		Someone who looks like they're going through a mental or health crisis
Noise/Domestic Disturbance or	34 (15%)	Domestic disturbances; relationship arguments
Domestic Violence		Domestic violence in front of my home
Fundat Houselsons street of	00 (4.40/)	Loiterers fighting amongst themselves
Explicit Homelessness: Lack of Shelter	32 (14%)	People living in abandoned buildings or sleeping on the street
		Permanent urban encampments in public property such as parks
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Aggressive homeless people, or unauthorized people inside our gated complex
Minors or Animals	27 (12%)	Kids selling water in the street
		Young homelessness and young prostitution
		Unattended and unsupervised children who don't have any adults around
		Truant kids in groups in the neighborhood
		Animals not being cared for, abused, or unrestrained if dangerous
Panhandling/ Solicitation	26 (11%)	Homeless sex workers
		Persons asking for money and/or food in Publix and CVS parking lots
		Teens going door to door to attempt to sell something like magazines
Waste	20 (9%)	Trash, code violations impacting public, obstacles blocking sidewalks or road, condoms or needles in parks
		Illegal dumping
Hygiene/Nudity	16 (7%)	People defecating and urinating on sidewalks, doorways, etc.
		I have witnessed people naked on my street. Looking for a place to pee or clean up
		Men have exposed themselves to women a few times in the parks and on neighborhood streets
Threat to others	15 (6%)	People who seem mentally ill especially if they are acting in a threatening way
Tueffie	45 (00/)	Suspicious individuals walking in neighborhood
Traffic	15 (6%)	Incessant drag racing
		Fender benders; nonviolent crime
		Suspicious vehicles
Threat to Self	14 (6%)	Mentally disturbed people yelling and behaving erratically, jumping out in the street at cars, and otherwise potentially endangering themselves or others
		Someone in possible medical trouble
Substance Use	13 (6%)	Person under the influence of drugs/passed out
		Drug sales at a local business
Explicit Homelessness: Lack of Food	12 (5%	Someone dumpster diving or eating out of a trash can
Code Futenessest	11 (5%)	Crimes involving property
Code Enforcement		Any city services that do not require immediate emergency
	5 (2%)	Lots of late night roamers trying to break into unlocked cars
Break in/ Theft		Package thefts: person may need support rather than iail
		Package thefts; person may need support rather than jail

When and How to Contact 311

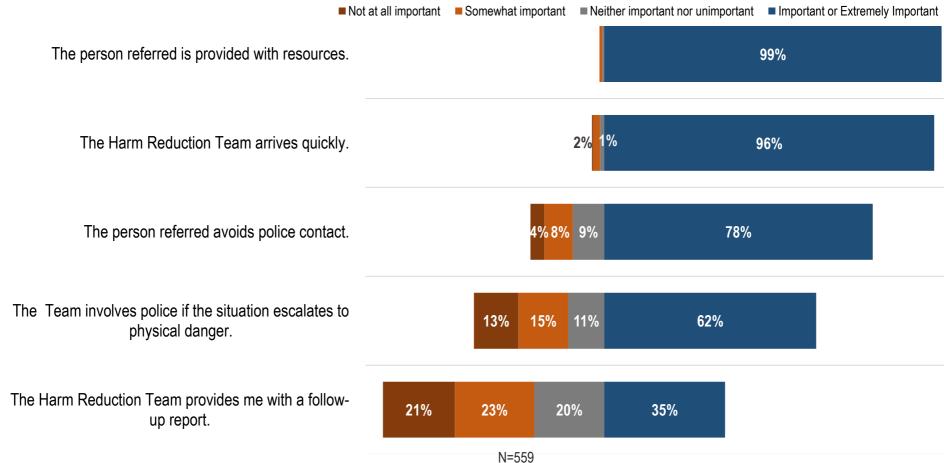
- All participants who selected an option would choose to use **a mobile app** to make a referral to the Harm Reduction Team.
- All participants who selected an option would be most likely to make a referral request in the evening from 4 pm-7 pm.

Important Components

For instances in which respondents call 311, they find it important that the person referred will be provided with resources and avoids police contact and that the team responds efficiently to a referral.

If they were to call 311, it is important or extremely important to respondents that a person they refer to the Harm Reduction Team is provided with resources. It is less important to respondents to receive a follow up report.

For situations in which you may call 311, please rate how important the following are to you.



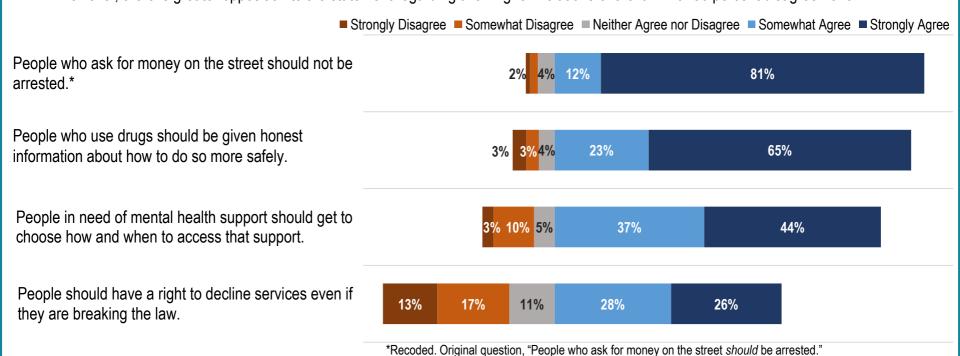
Harm Reduction Beliefs

Acceptance of Principles and Practices of Harm Reduction

Over 90% of participants somewhat agree or strongly agree that people who panhandle should not be arrested; 88% agree or strongly that people who use drugs should be given information to reduce risk; and 81% agree or strongly agree people should be able to choose how to access mental health support. Less than half (49%) believe that people should be able to decline services if they are breaking the law.

Over 80% of the 556 respondents who answered the question agree with *most* statements about harm reduction practices.

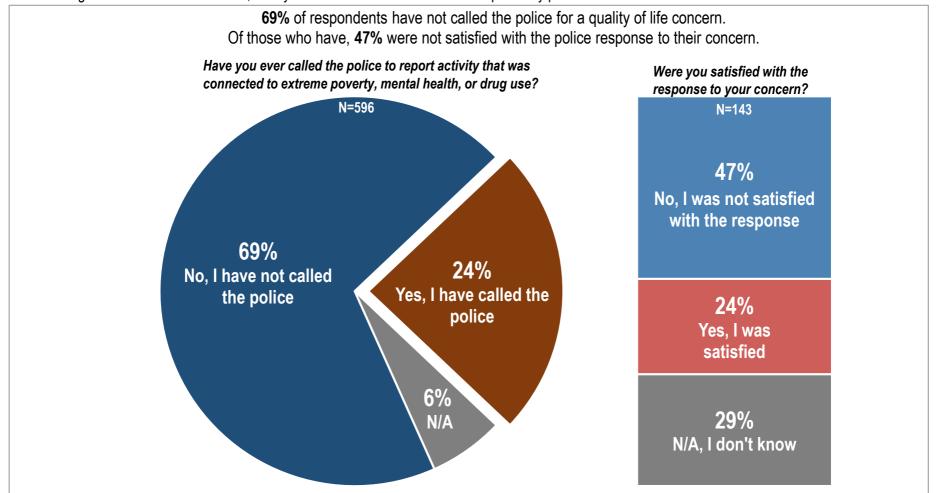
However, there is greater opposition to the statement regarding allowing for violations of the law with 30 percent disagreement.



Contacting the Police Page 6

Experience Contacting Police

Over two-thirds of respondents have *not* called the police to report a concern related to extreme poverty, unmet mental health needs, or problematic use of alcohol or drugs. Of those who have called, nearly half were not satisfied with the response by police.



Reasons for Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction with Response

Most respondents who answered "No, I was not satisfied" noted the police did not take action, were unhelpful, or appeared not to care. Those who responded "N/A, I don't know" were unaware of the outcome, did not remain at the scene, or did not receive additional information. Others who selected N/A indicated that services were not provided or those that were offered were not appropriate for the situation. Respondents who stated "Yes, I was satisfied" reported the police responded helpfully and the situation reached a resolution or the people who were the focus of the concern were dispersed. Some respondents who responded that they were satisfied offered a more mixed reaction, explaining that while the police attempted to help, they were not able to provide the response necessary to reach an appropriate resolution.

Comments within each response were grouped into themes and the count of related comments is represented below. The size of the boxes is correlated with the number of comments; the larger boxes had the most comments related to the given theme.

Were you satisfied with the response to your concern?							
NO. I WAS NOT SATISFIED.			N/A. I DON'T KNOW.		YES. I WAS SATISFIE	ED.	
						Situation resolved successfully, 11	
	Police were unequipped	, 20	Response time, 10	Don't know the outcome,	27	People were disper 6	rsed,
Inaction, 21	Didn't know who to call, 6	0.000	olice acted propriately, 5	Services needed other than police, 7	No real services rendered, 4	Police were helpful but situation unresolved, 4	Arrested 1

6 respondents explicitly stated they wished there was another service aside from 911/police to contact or did not know who else to call to attain help. The following quote exemplifies this sentiment: "I did not want the person to be arrested or detained, merely offered help, and I was deeply concerned that by calling 911 I could have made their situation worse. I wasn't sure who else to call."

Reasons for Contacting Police

Respondents documented numerous reasons for calling the police for activities related to extreme poverty, unmet mental health, needs and problematic substance use. Respondents indicated they called police because they did not know how else to link someone to help, individuals appeared to be in danger, or to report someone causing a disturbance, threat, or refusing to leave a business or private property. The themes below intersect in multiple ways and responses fall under multiple categories. For example, several comments that pertain to explicit homelessness also fall within the theme of being on private property. The percentages represent the portion of all the responses (n=133).

Theme	# of Related Comments (% of 133 Total Comments	Excerpts s)
Substance Use	26 (20%)	Woman doing heroine in my backyard
		Someone unconscious in a park of an apparent drug overdose
Noise/Domestic Disturbance or Violence	25 (19%)	Someone acting very erratically, yelling and being threatening
		Violent domestic dispute, called 911 but they never came
Mental Health	24 (18%)	Mentally ill homeless person was using furniture on our front porch and yelling at herself
		Someone experiencing a mental health crisis on the street
Threat to Self and/or in Danger of Traffic	17 (13%)	Man walking on I-85
		Woman passed out on sidewalk on Edgewood around 5 pm on a weekday
Explicit Homelessness	16 (12%)	Women living/taking over a bus stop for her living space
		Homeless man sleeping outside apartment building when the weather was very cold out of concern for him with the weather
		Woman slept overnight on our front porch. I called 911, but made it clear that she was not a threat. I wanted to get her help and didn't know who else to call.
On Private Property	13 (10%)	Homeless lady ringing my doorbell and lingering on my property. I didn't want to call them but I was afraid and live alone
		Man in my yard using my outdoor water faucet
Threat to others	11 (8%)	Man known for violent behavior refused to leave an area where I was working despite me making repeated requests for him to do so
Panhandling/ Solicitation	10 (8%)	Homeless person asking people for money inside my business who refused to leave
		Called the police about prostitutes in a residential neighborhood.
		Aggressive panhandling
Hygiene/Lack of Clothing	8 (6%)	Naked woman laying on the sidewalk. People defecating in public space.
Break In/Theft	6 (5%)	Stealing packages, stealing from my garden
		Someone who was trying to open doors of cars to steal from them; they were clearly homeless
Minors or Animals	3 (2%)	Runaway youth
		Dog in a car with the windows up
Traffic	1 (.8%)	Car accident

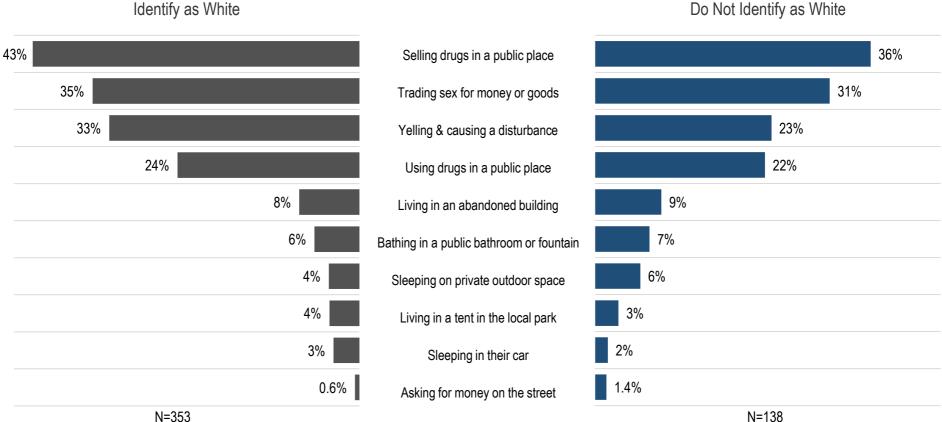
Because the survey sample skewed white, it is important to make comparisons between white respondents and those who do not identify as white. Respondents selected all races that applied. For the purpose of this report, people who *only* selected white will be referred to as respondents who **identify as white**. People who selected Black, Asian, Latinx, Middle Eastern or two or more races will be referred to as respondents who **do not identify as white**. The racial and ethnic breakdown of those who did not select white only are represented in the table to the right. Over half of respondents who do not identify as white selected Black or African American.

Race and Ethnicity	Count (% of 139 who do not identify as white)
Black or African American	84 (60%)
Hispanic or Latinx	18 (13%)
Asian	12 (9%)
Hispanic or Latinx, White	7 (5%)
Asian, White	5 (4%)
Middle Eastern or North African	4 (3%)
Two or More Races (not yet listed)	9 (6%)

Comparing Likelihood to Call 911 by Race

Comparison by Race of the Activities which Respondents are likely to Report to 911 In general, white respondents are more likely to call 911 than those who did not select only white.

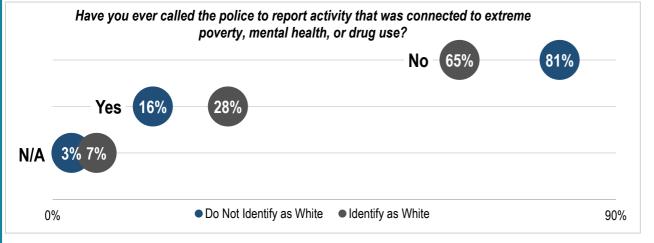
This figure excludes respondents who do not see these activities.



Experience Contacting the Police Among Respondents who Selected White and those who Did Not Select White

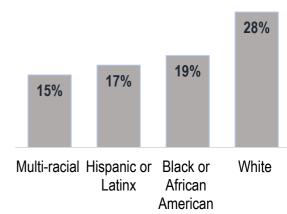
Over one-quarter of respondents who selected **white** for race have contacted the police for a quality of life concern, compared to 16% of those who **did not select white**.

This figure excludes respondents who do not see these activities.



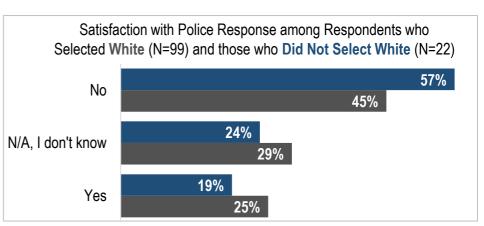
Percentage of those who have called police by race.

Yes, I have called the police.



Comparing Satisfaction with Police Response by Race

Over half of respondents who **do not identify as white** were not satisfied with the police response to their concern, compared to 45% of those who identify as **white**. One-quarter of those who identify as white were satisfied with the response, whereas less than 20% of those who do not identify as white reported being satisfied.



Comparison of Response to Seeing Activities Among Respondents who Identify as White and Those Who Do Not Identify As White

People who do not identify as white are more likely to offer resources, food or money, call a social service organization, or start a conversation when they see "quality of life" activities. Those who selected white as their race are more likely to do nothing when they see all activities aside from selling drugs, for which they are more likely to call 911. Overall, respondents are not very likely to contact their city council member or other elected official or contact neighborhood security, but respondents who do not identify as white are slightly more likely to do so.

These figures exclude respondents who do not see these activities in the neighborhoods where they live or spend time.

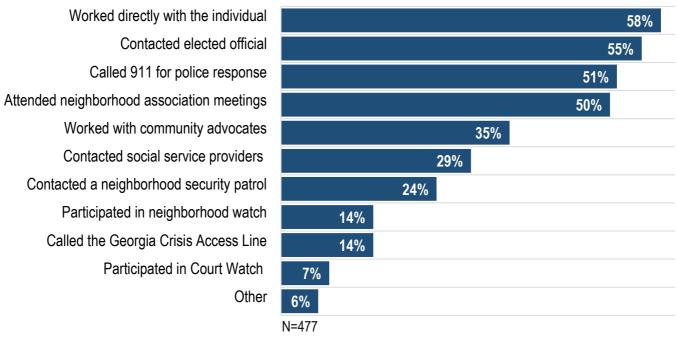


Respondent Participation in Activities to Address Community Concerns

Over 50% of respondents who answered the question (N=477) reported working with an individual to support their needs, contacting an elected official, and/or calling 911. Several respondents wrote in other activities they engage in including volunteer work or providing referrals and resources.

Over half of respondents report engaging in activities to address concerns in their communities.

Have you ever done any of the following in order to address a concern in your community?



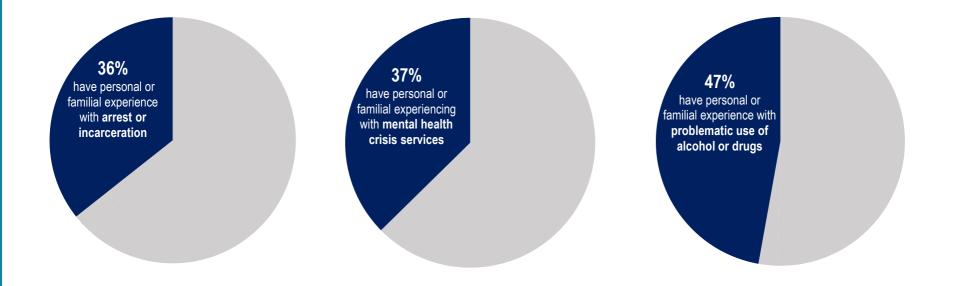
Other Activities		
Volunteer/Work with a Social Service Organization	7	
Called 311 or Referred to a Social Service Organization	4	
Given Money or Resources to Individuals	4	
Work with Community Boards, Grassroots Organization, or Mutual Aid	4	
Intervened to Resolve a Situation	2	
Donate to Organizations	1	
Serve on NPU	1	
Asked Individual to Leave Property	1	

Lived Experience

Respondents' Personal Exposure to the Justice System and Behavioral Health Needs and Services

Respondents were asked if they or a close family member had ever been arrested or incarcerated, utilized mental health crisis services or gone to the hospital for mental health concerns, or experienced problematic use of alcohol or other drugs. Over 30% of respondents have lived experience with the justice system and mental health services and nearly half have experience with substance use.

Among those who answered the questions (N=530-533), **over one-third reported having experience** with incarceration, mental health crisis services, or problematic drug or alcohol use.



Respondents offered suggestions, concerns, and questions on a variety of topics. Over 50% of the N=131 comments related to expanding the hours of operation of the Harm Reduction Team.

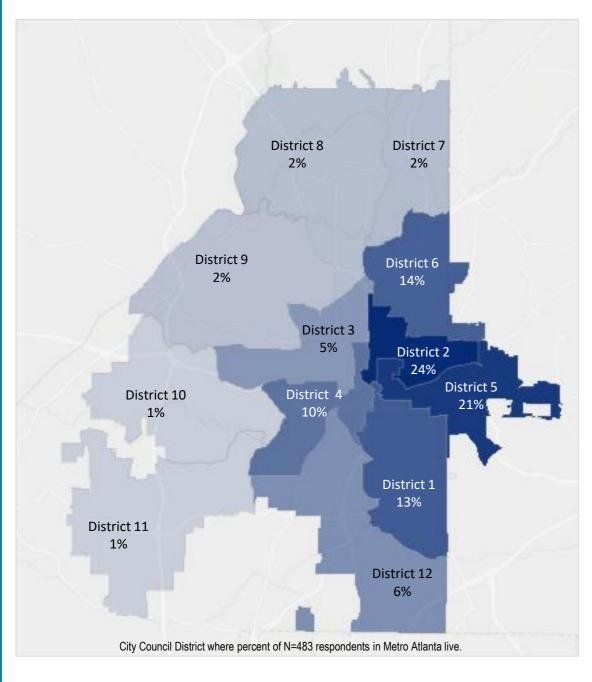
· 		"
Theme Need Night and Weekend Hours	Excerpts The actual time I am most likely to use the service is at night, post-7pm.	# of Comments
Need Night and Weekend Hours	The actual time rain most likely to use the service is at hight, post-rpm.	
Respondents indicate that the service would be most useful during		
hours outside of Monday-Friday 7am-7pm.		42
Need 24/7 Services	Most incidents described in questions occur during hours 311 is not staffed. If	
O constants and beginning the grant for this consists to be a consistent to 0.4/7.	we want 311 to handle situations as described, it should be available 24/7.	
Comments emphasized the need for this service to be available 24/7.		25
Reporting Methods & Process	Having a real person/operator to speak with is important. Otherwise, it feels	
reporting methods a riocess	like our requests just go into the void. You should also offer feedback/proof of	
Suggestions for texting 311; having a live operator; assessing for	something being done. If you use an app, that means providing tracking of	
emergency response and requiring a callback number like the	every step of the progress (like for shipping, food delivery, etc.).	13
"seeclickfix" app; using tracking like other apps; and the ability to	Tayting 211 yayld be better then using mabile ann	
tweet @atl311, submit request online, and send pictures.	Texting 311 would be better than using mobile app.	
Positive Feedback	This is a great idea- it provides trained professionals to deal with mental	
POSITIVE PEEUDACK	health/substance abuse issues and frees up police to focus on police matters	
Respondents expressed excitement and encouragement.	Treath reasonance abase reades and need up period to reads on period makers	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		10
Concerns Regarding Potential Participants' Consent,	I would want to knowwhether by calling 311 I was putting individuals at risk for	
Confidentiality, & Police Contact	police interaction (howoften the teams resort to calling police stats should be made available).	
Comments pertained to racial profiling; potential police contact	inade available).	9
resulting from referrals; and participants' confidentially, consent, and	There needs to be trust that this team is really about harm reduction and not a	
ability to decline services.	backdoor to police intervention. Confidentiality for victim and reporter.	
•		
Education on Referral Process & Sharing Follow Up	I think it's important to publicize what resources/actions are taken. Faith in	
Information	government is unfortunately lowand even supposedly "liberal" areas quickly	
	turn on disadvantaged people and resources if they can't see the results.	
Publicize requests and actions taken, share profiles of the harm reduction team members, provide education on how people can	Please include directions for howto respond to/report incidents between 7pm	8
respond outside of active hours and to minor issues, set realistic	and 7am without endangering those that need care	
expectations for response times and communicate with the NPUs.	and the same of th	
<u> </u>	With the inefficiency with 211 recording Public Warks and Code Enforcement	
Experience with 311	With the inefficiency with 311 regarding Public Works and Code Enforcement, I don't have any confidence in the ATL 311 system. They're efficient in taking	
One respondent noted 311 has been responsive, however, others	the information but somebody is short on execution of actions to resolve the	
indicated the service has been inefficient and the app and online	issues.	6
request mechanisms are not user friendly. One comment		
recommended including full phone number for 311.		
Referrer's Concerns Related to Confidentiality & Timeliness	Referrals will only be effective for the individual if they are responded to	
receiver 3 concerns related to confidentiality & rimeliness	quickly, and people will less likely to refer if they do not see timely responses.	
Commenters stressed the importance of a quick response time and		
suggested caller's should be anonymous/confidential.		6
Comments Pertaining to Necessary Resources & Staff	It is critical that ATL 311 be staffed and funded properly to respond. This will	
Capacity	only work if there are people available and equipped to help.	
Respondents expressed concerns that there are sufficient resources	A system would need to be in place to identify those individuals who	5
in the city and that the team itself will have capacity to field referrals.	consistently absorb the resources at the detriment of others in needmany	
One comment pertained to a population of consumers who utilize	causing such problems have chosen to assume this lifestyle as it is rewarded and reinforced by their behaviors.	
Recommendation to Route Referrals through 911	Seems like 311 is not the place for Harm Reduction referrals, rather, 911 is.	
necommendation to notice neterrals through 911	911 should have specially trained operators available 24/7 to take HR calls	
Participants suggested that the 911 system should complement or	who can then determine if an HR person, the police or a combination should	
replace 311 to dispatch the Harm Reduction Team.	be sent.	3
Ougations & Conserve Bautaining to Boutlands Boundaries	Con a team come out to a energific ever with level residents to be level to	
Questions & Concerns Pertaining to Particular Populations	Can a team come out to a specific area with local residents to help point out numerous people who have been known for years to have issues that	
One questioned if the Team could dispatch to a particular area to	desperately need help?	
serve known individuals and another suggested responders for		2
children and youth should be well informed about their particular		
challenges.		
Other	By creating a weird web of first responders, you will destroy the overall	
	effectiveness of the system and hurt the citizens.	
	Howcan support and engage the disenfranchised to become active in	
	community improvement?	2
		_

Areas where Respondents Live or Spend Their Time

Respondents live and spend their time throughout Metro Atlanta and beyond. The areas of Atlanta where most respondents spend their time is on the Eastside of the city.

The City Council Districts with the most respondents are District 2 and 5.

6% of respondents do not live in Metro Atlanta.



Respondents listed neighborhoods across Metro Atlanta where they live and/or spend time.

Area, Neighborhood	N	%
Eastside	286	51%
Inman Park	54	10%
Old Fourth Ward & Sweet Auburn	38	7%
Virginia + Poncey Highland	31	6%
East Atlanta	31	6%
Edgewood	26	5%
Candler Park	22	4%
Ormewood Park	16	3%
Little Five Points	14	3%
Decatur	13	2%
Reynoldstown	12	2%
Kirkwood	11	2%
Cabbagetown	9	2%
East Lake	5	19
Lake Claire	4	19
Midtown	96	17%
Midtown	80	149
Piedmont Park	9	2%
Ansley Park	4	19
Georgia Tech	3	19
Southwestern & Northwestern	60	119
Sylvan Hills	13	2%
West End, Westview	9	2%
Capitol View	7	19
Adair Park	6	19
Oakland City	5	19
Westside	5	19
Mozley Park	4	19
Southwest	3	19
Pittsburgh	3	19
Cascade	3	19
Adamsville	1	0%
Bankhead	1	0%
Southeastern	52	9%
Grant Park	44	8%
Peoplestown	6	19
Summer Hill	2	0%
Downtown	38	7 %
Downtown	36	6%
Centennial Park	2	0%
Northeast & Buckhead	27	5%
Buckhead	14	3%
Druid Hills, Emory	13	2%
Total	559	100%

<u>Age</u>

Respondents ranged from 20 to 80 years old. Over half are in their thirties and forties.

Age	N	%
20-29	91	18%
30-39	185	36%
40-49	104	20%
50-59	62	12%
60-69	51	10%
70-80	27	5%
Total	520	100.00%

Gender

Over 70% of respondents identify as women.

Gender	N	%
Woman	376	70.5%
Man	133	25.0%
Non-Binary or		
Transgender	13	2.4%
Prefer not to answer	9	1.7%
Prefer to self-describe	2	0.4%
Total	533	100.0%

Race/Ethnicity

Over 2/3 of respondents identify as white only. Nearly 4% selected two or more races.

Race/Ethnicity	N	%
White	357	67.7%
Black or African American	84	15.9%
Prefer not to answer;		
Prefer to self-describe	32	6.1%
Two or More Races	20	3.8%
Hispanic or Latinx	18	3.4%
Asian	12	2.3%
Middle Eastern or North		
African	4	0.8%
Grand Total	527	100%