



Ipsos Reid



Police Sector Council Attitudes Towards Policing

June 2009



Overview

- Youth say first hand contact with police officers/civilian employees (excluding friends and family) television news programs, and first hand contact with police officers who are friends or family members have shaped their views of policing the most.
- A majority of youths *disagree* that being a police officer means you're not allowed to think on your own.
- A majority of youth agree that being a police officer means you have to be a role model for others. They also say that the police play a positive role in society and that the police play a positive role in their community.
- While youth agree that the police play a positive role in society, they also feel that the police should be more active in their community.
- A majority of Canadian youth agree that the ethnic make up of any given police force should be a reflection of the community it serves. While youth agree that the make up of a police service should reflect the community, the same proportion agree that in some cultural communities policing is not seen as a positive career choice.

- Ipsos Reid conducted an online study among n=1,521 youth, ages 16 to 27 years, across Canada. Fieldwork was conducted online, using the Ipsos Reid Online Panel, between January 22, and February 9, 2009. This included an over sample of n=250 in Alberta. The breakdown of respondents by region is as follows:

- British Columbia, n=158
- Alberta, n= 383
- Saskatchewan/Manitoba, n= 90
- Ontario, n= 482
- Quebec, n= 308
- Atlantic Provinces, n=100



- In terms of the survey data preparation, the data are examined against the population in question's characteristics and adjusted by region, age and gender to ensure representativeness by these key variables. Data for this study was weighted and is representative of Canada's regional, age and gender composition for 16 to 27 year olds in accordance with Census data.
- Note to the reader: In several instances you will notice that there are a number of respondents who are not accounted for on a slide (where agree and disagree total less than 100%). Respondents were provided with both 'don't know' and 'refused' options. In some cases there were a higher number of youth who selected these options. These numbers are available in the detailed tables.



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Detailed Findings



Youth Say First Hand Contact with Police Officers, and Television News Programs Have Shaped Their Views of Policing Most



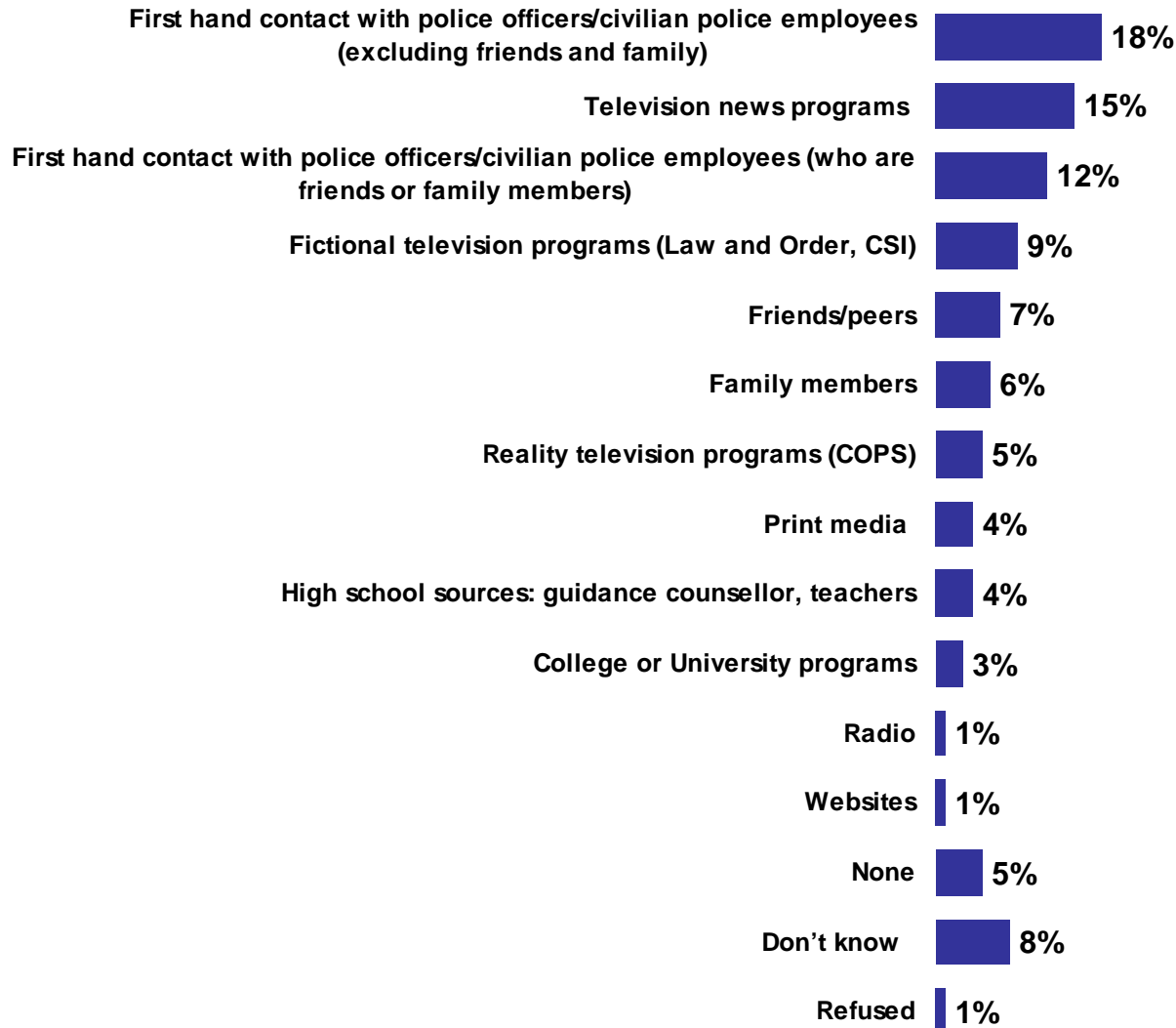
- Youth were provided with a list from which to select the source which has shaped their views of policing the most. First hand contact with police officers/civilian employees is the source selected most often (be that excluding family, or family members who work in this field).

First hand contact with police officers/civilian employees (excluding friends and family) was selected most often (18%), followed by television news programs (15%), and first hand contact with police officers who are friends or family members (12%).

Fewer than one in ten say friends/peers (7%), family members (6%), reality television programs (5%), print media (4%), high school courses (4%), college or university programs (3%), radio (1%), or websites (1%).



Youth Say First Hand Contact with Police Officers, and Television News Programs Have Shaped Their Views of Policing Most





Youth Say First Hand Contact with Police Officers, and Television News Programs Have Shaped Their Views of Policing Most

- Residents of Quebec (9%) are less likely than those in other parts of Canada to say first hand contact with police (excluding friends and family). Those who say they do not have a family member who is, or has within the past 20 years, been employed as a police officer (20%) are *more* likely than those who do, to say first hand contact with police (excluding friends or family) (11%).

- Those most likely to say television news programs include:
 - Those who say they do not have a family member who is, or has within the past 20 years, been employed as a police officer (16%) compared to those who do (9%);
 - Those who would not consider a career in policing (17%) compared to those who would (11%);
 - Those interested in other career areas (16%) compared to those most interested in policing (4%); and,
 - Those who say other career areas offer them the most career opportunities (16%) compared to those who say policing does (4%).





Majority *Disagree* that Being a Police Officer Means you are not Allowed to Think on Your Own

- A majority of youths *disagree* (71%) that being a police officer means you're not allowed to think on your own, with more than one in three (35%) who strongly disagree. One in five (21%) agree with the statement, including just fewer than one in ten (7%) who strongly agree.
 - Those most interested in a career in policing (87%) are more likely to disagree, compared to those interested in other career areas (72%);
 - Women are more likely to disagree (76%) compared to men (67%).



■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree





Youth Feel Police are Role Models, Play Positive Role, but Should be More Active in Community

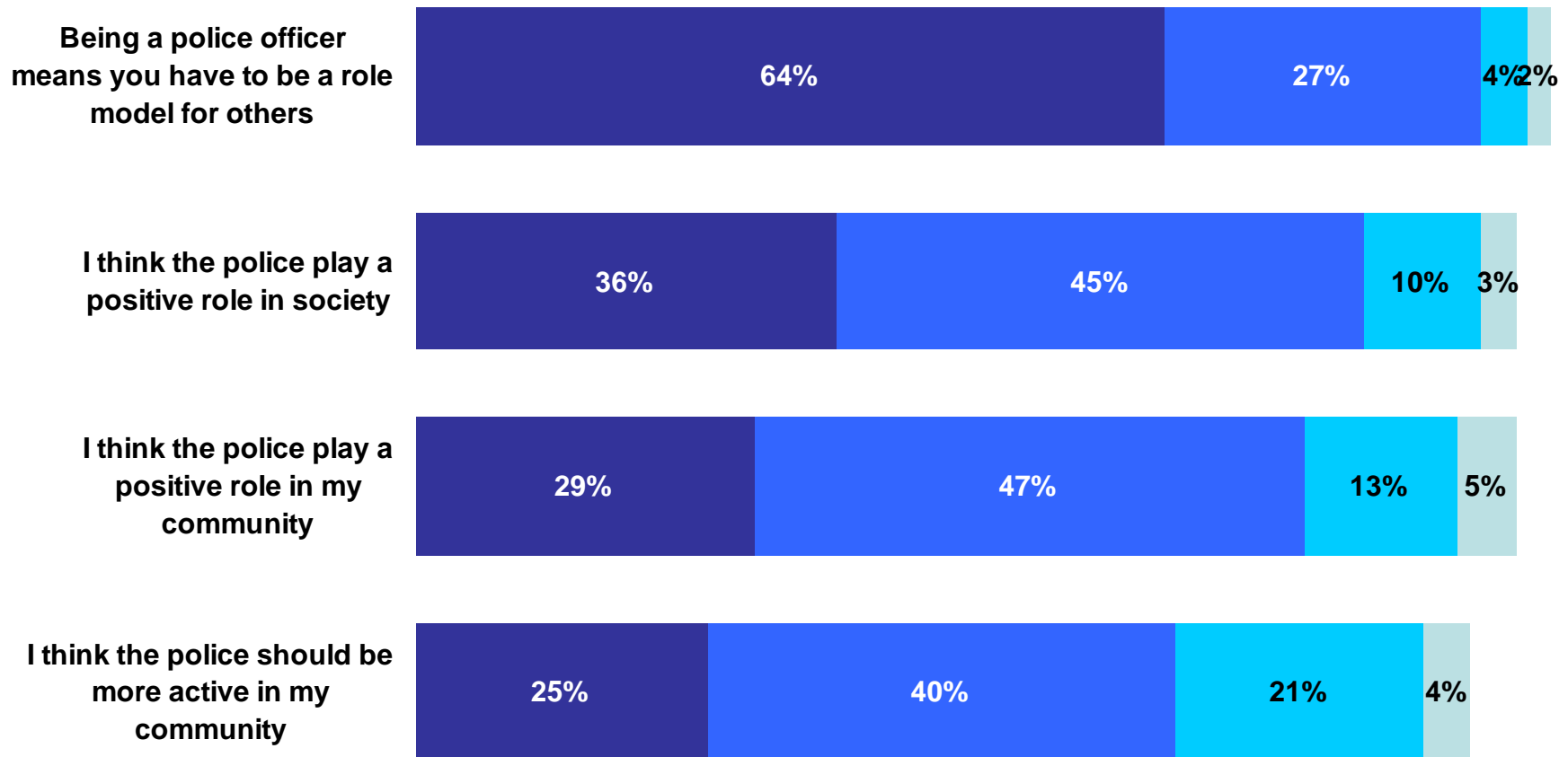
- Canadian youth have a positive view of the role that police officers play in Canada. They also feel that being a police officer means one is a role model for others, and agree that police should be more active in their communities.
- A wide majority (91%) agree that being a police officer means you have to be a role model for others. This includes about two in three (64%) who strongly agree. Six percent disagree, and just two percent strongly.
- Four in five (81%) say that the police play a positive role in society, and more than one in three (36%) strongly agree. Fourteen percent disagree, just three percent strongly. Similarly, three in four (76%) agree that the police play a positive role in their community, including three in ten (29%) who strongly agree. Fewer than one in five (17%) disagree, five percent strongly.
- While youth agree that the police play a positive role in society, they also feel that the police should be more active in their community (65% agree), with one in four (25%) who strongly agree. One in four (25%) disagree, including four percent who strongly disagree.





Youth Feel Police are Role Models, Play Positive Role, but Should be More Active in Community

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree





Those Who Would Consider a Career in Policing are More Likely to Agree

% Who strongly/somewhat agree



■ **Would Consider Career in Policing** ■ **Would not Consider a Career in Policing**





Youth Feel Police are Role Models, Play Positive Role, but Should be More Active in Community

- Those most likely to agree that the police play a positive role in their community include:
 - Those who say policing offers them the most employment opportunities (91%) compared to those who say other career areas (77%);
 - Those who would be most interested in a career in policing (88%) compared to those most interested in careers in other areas (77%); and,
 - Those with higher household incomes (peaking at 81% among those whose incomes are more than \$65K).
- Those who identify themselves as visible minorities (74%) are more likely to agree that the police should be more active in their community, compared to those who do not (63%).





Although Youth Say Police Service Should Reflect Ethnic Diversity of Society, They also Recognize that this is not Seen as a Positive Career Choice in Some Cultural Communities

- Nearly two-thirds (63%) of Canadian youth agree that the ethnic make up of any given police force should be a reflection of the community it serves, including one in four (24%) who strongly agree. One in four (26%) disagree, nine percent strongly.
 - Residents of Quebec (68%) are more likely than those in Alberta (57%) and Sask/Man (56%) to agree that the make up of a police service should be a reflection of the community it serves.
- While youth agree that the make up of a police service should reflect the community, the same proportion (63%) also agree that in some cultural communities policing is not seen as a positive career choice. One in four (24%) strongly agree. About one in five (18%) disagree, five percent strongly.
 - Residents of the Atlantic provinces (70%) and Quebec (66%) are more likely than those in BC (55%) to agree, as are those who would consider a career in policing (68% vs. 62% among those who would not).

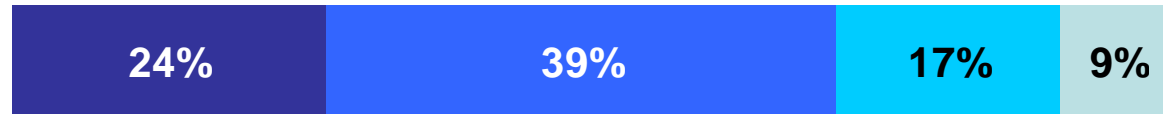




Although Youth Say Police Service Should Reflect Ethnic Diversity of Society, They also Recognize that this is not Seen as a Positive Career Choice in Some Cultural Communities

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

The ethnic make up of any given police service should be a reflection of the community it serves



In some cultural communities policing is not seen as a positive career choice

