

2015

Community Responses

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM
IN TOLEDO & LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO
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Part I: Survey of Those that have Been Incarcerated

Description:

Ninety (90) individuals were given surveys regarding their experience with the legal system. They willingly provided feedback about their experiences being incarcerated, and the experiences associated with being in the legal system. The purpose of the survey was to understand their experiences in further develop the community plan.

Demographics:

Subjects ranged in age from 19 years of age to 61 years old. Those 24 to 34 were the most represented group. Fifty of the individuals who took the surveys were females, 39 were males, and one did not state a gender. Total time individuals spent incarcerated ranged from 3 months to 35 years. Of respondents that answered, 57 were white, 14 were African American, 2 were Hispanic, 4 were Native American, and 4 were of mixed race.

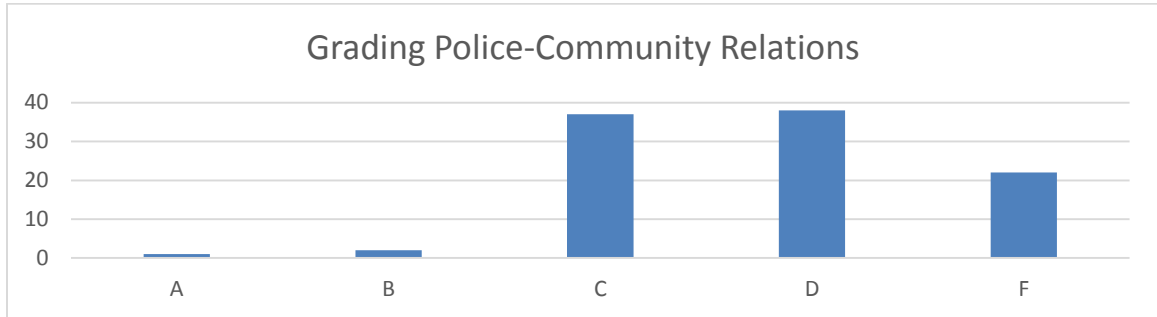
Do you think the violence police experience/witness on job effects how they do their job?

The community plan calls for mandatory debriefing session for all TPD officers who experience violence; 77% of the respondents stated that the violence police experience or witness on the job effects how they do their job, and 23% did not believe it had an effect.



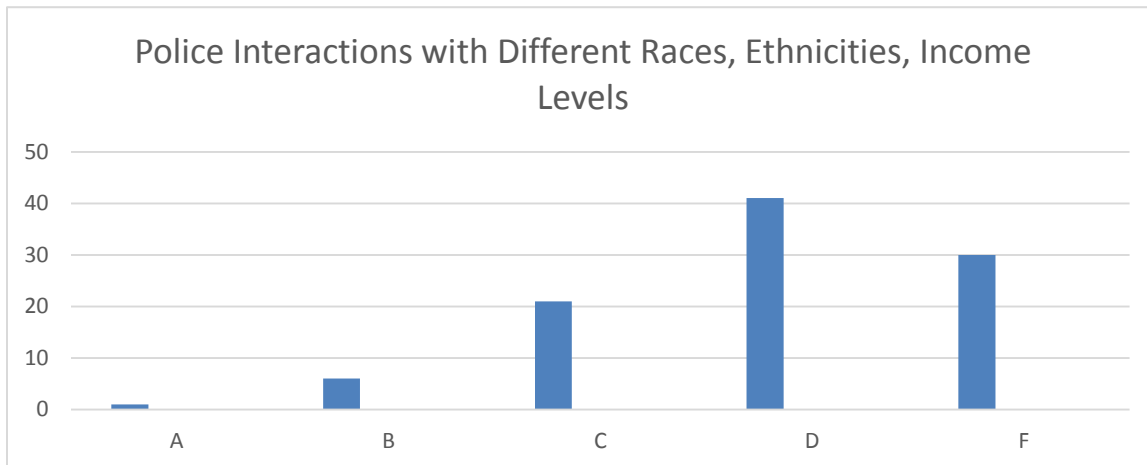
If you had to grade the police on the relationship between police and your community, what grade would you give them?

One percent (1%) rated the relationship at A, 2% rated it a B, 37% gave it a C, 38% reported D, and 22% of individuals rated it an F.

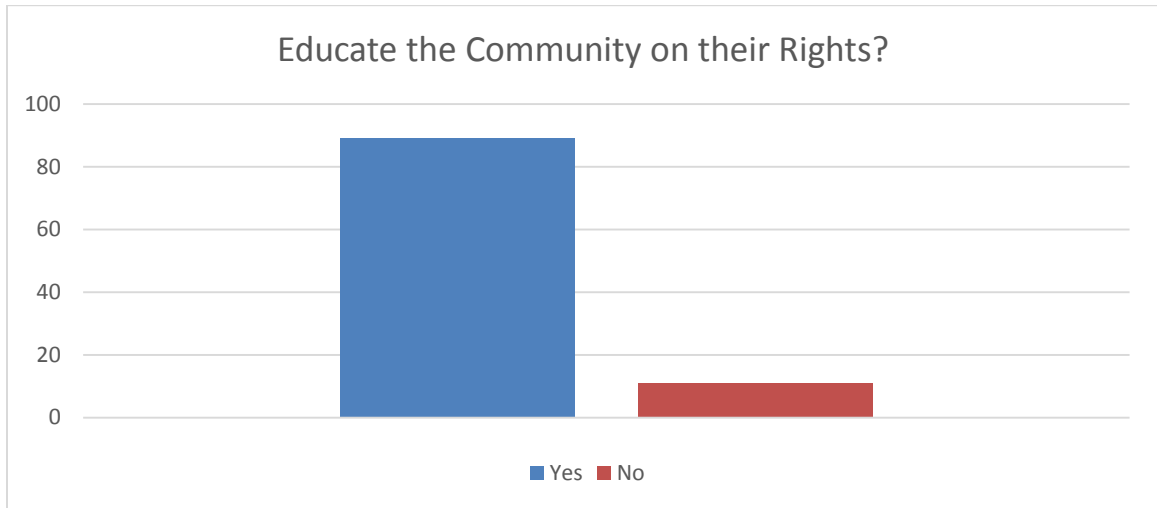


If you had to grade the police on how well they interact with people from different races, ethnicities, and income levels, what grade would you give them?

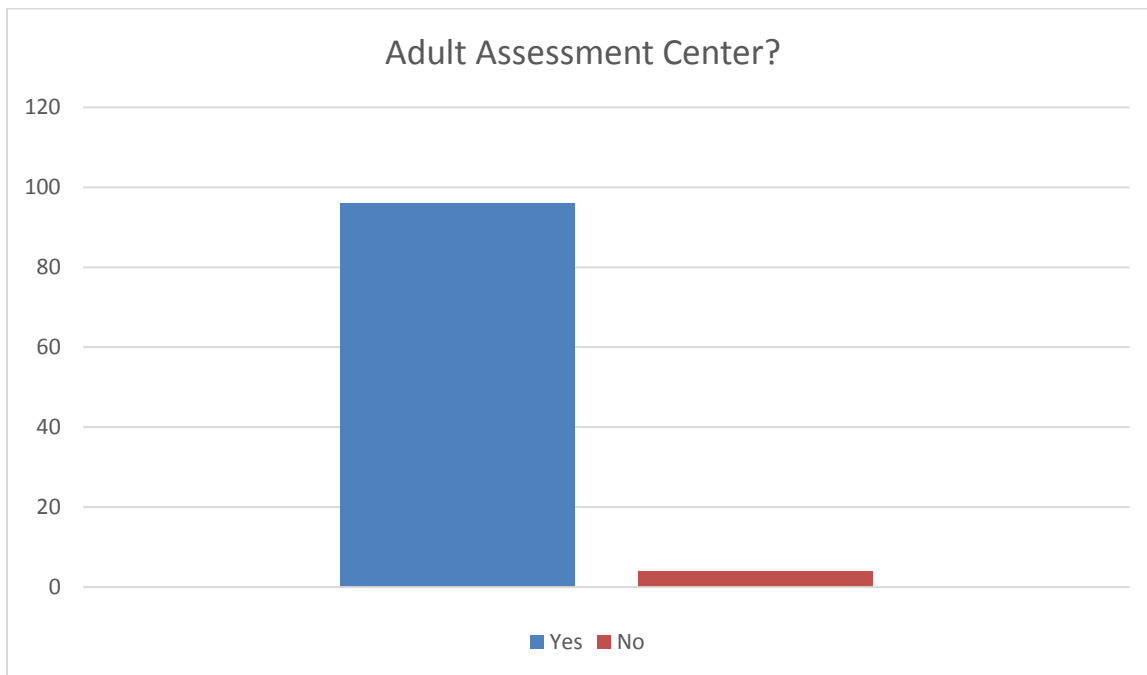
One percent (1%) reported an A, 6% reported B, 21% reported C, 41% reported D, and 30% reported F.



Spending money to educate the community on their rights when stopped by police is a good idea? Eighty- nine percent (89%) agreed that it would make a difference; 11% did not.

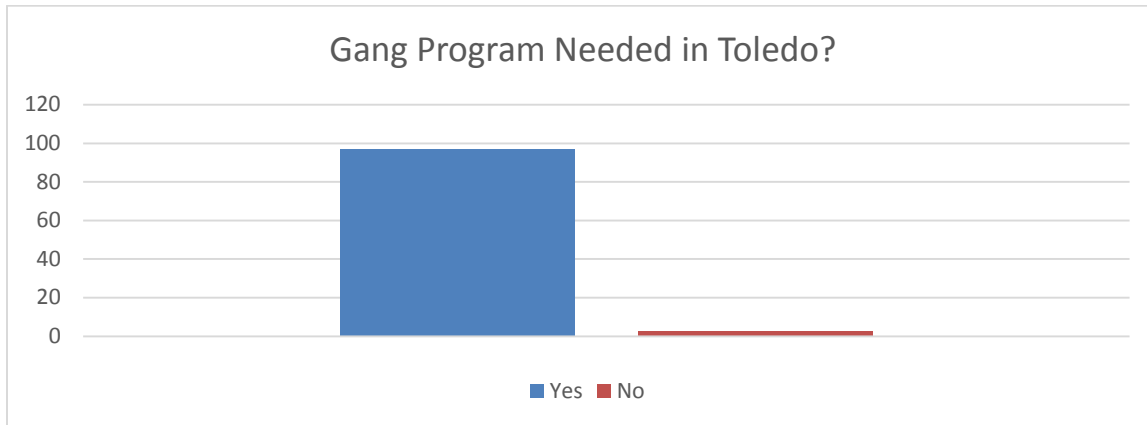


Developing a center where those with mental health & substance abuse problems, and where some people who have committed non-violent offenses could go to receive help instead of jail would be a good idea? Ninety-six percent (96%) yes, and (4%) no.



Providing gang members opportunities to change their lives, and in exchange they agree not to engage in gun violence would be a good idea.

Ninety-seven percent (97%) reported that a gang program is needed and 3% reported that there is no need.



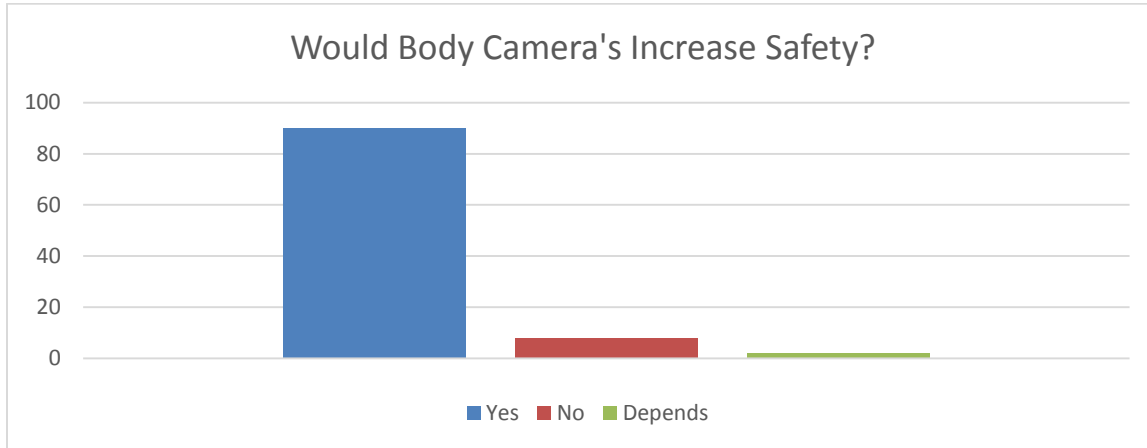
Hiring people, sober for two years and no longer incarcerated or on probation/parole to work to support and fight for those that are incarcerated is a good idea?

Ninety-seven percent (97%) reported this as a good idea and 3% did not.



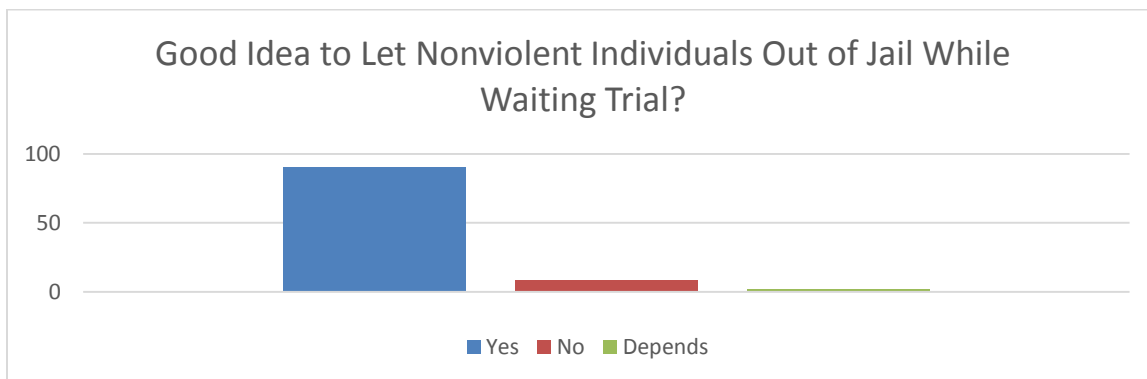
If you are ever stopped by a police officer, having the officer wear a body camera would increase your feeling of safety?

Ninety percent (90%) who have had police encounters believe this would be good for public safety, 8 % believe this is not a good idea, and 2% stated it depends.



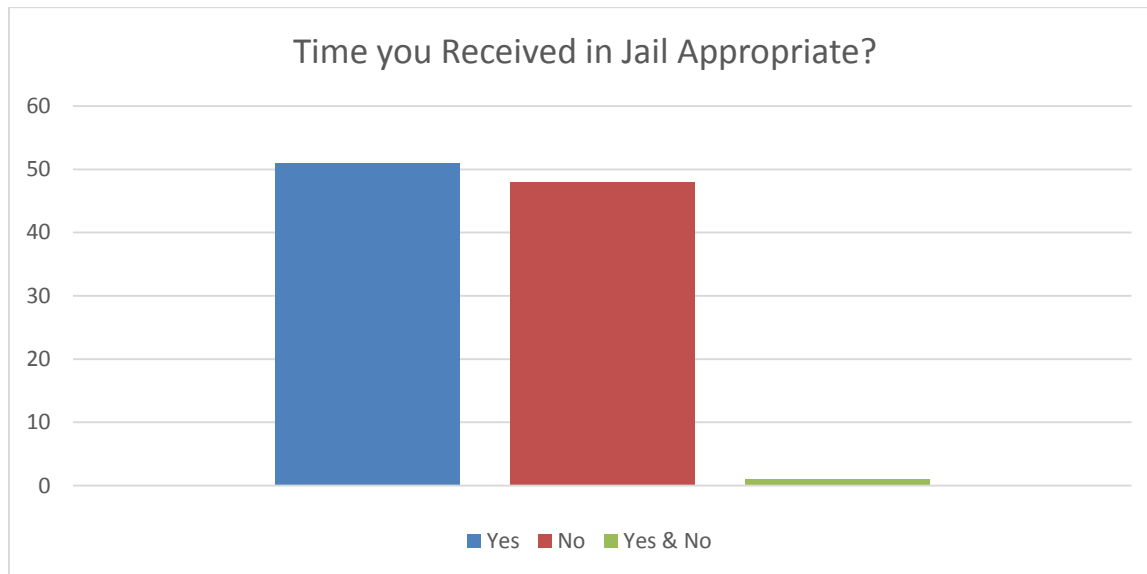
Is it a good idea to allow more people who have committed a nonviolent offense out of jail while they are awaiting trial?

In conjunction with the current PSA tool we asked the individuals if this plan makes sense. Seventy-nine (79) people (90%) stated this is a good idea. 7 people (8%) reported that it was not a good idea, and 2 (2%) stated it depends.



Do you think the time you received in jail for the crime you committed was appropriate?

Fifty-one percent (51%) reported yes, 48% reported no, and 1% reported both yes and no.

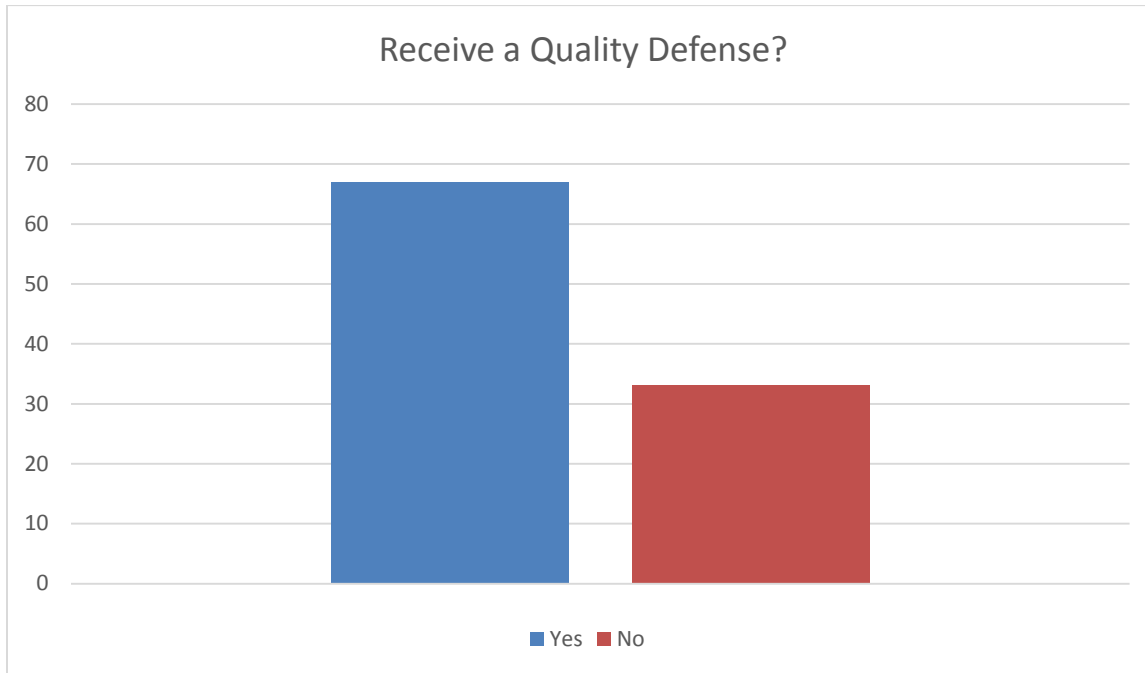


Some of the reasoning behind these answers is listed below:

- Less time would have been appropriate.
- I feel my sentence was harsh for a first time felon. 1 ½ plus rehab and a halfway house for weed resin.
- Six months for my first felony. Answer is in the question! Non Violent first felony.
- No Because I was not using drugs and didn't need rehab.
- First offense and no arrest so no.
- No because I successfully completed community control before a minor slip up shouldn't require extra time in jail, but extra time with help.
- Because it was an accident and I was not under the influence.
- No because I never hurt or tried to hurt anyone.
- No because I got scammed and I didn't hurt no one-bullshit.
- No it was my first felony.
- No I should never been put in jail. I should have received treatment in lieu of jail time
- Yes for the crime and no for the reason.
- 200 dollars cost the city?
- No Because I got charge for something that wasn't mine. Its coo I accepted it.
- No because it was my first offense.
- No it wasn't me.
- Because the amount of money and drugs I had was not worth the time.

When you went to court, did your attorney provide you with a quality defense?

Sixty-seven percent (67%) reported they did receive a quality defense, while 33% reported that they did not receive quality defense.

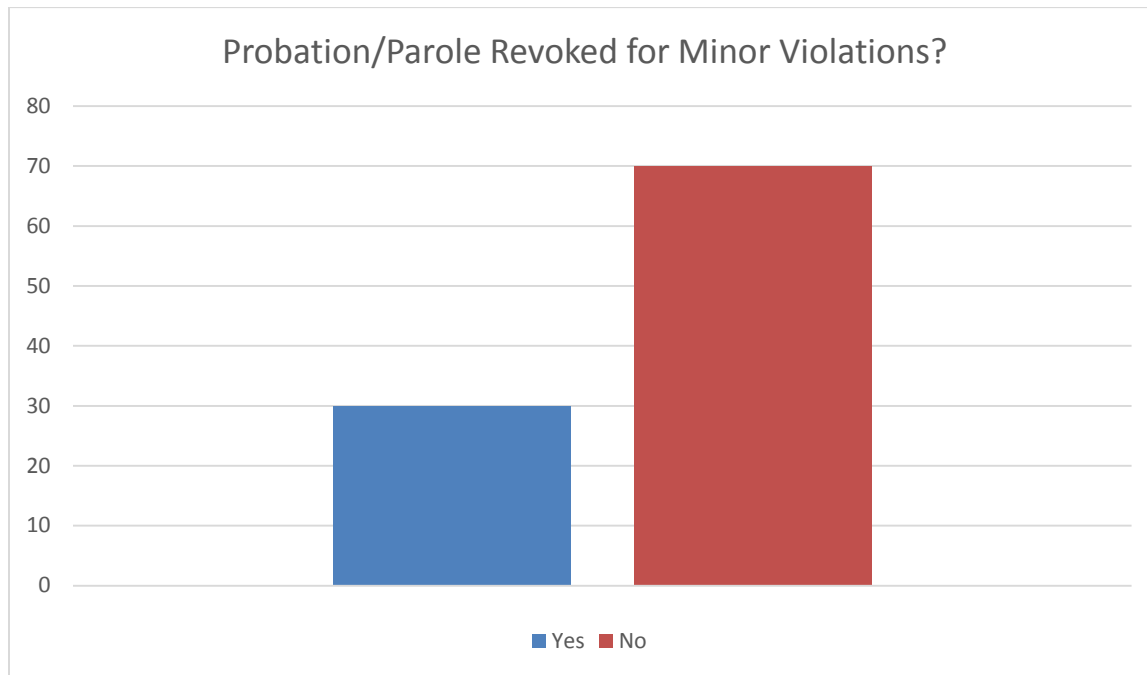


Those that were dissatisfied with their defense reported why:

- She had evidence that I wasn't allowed to see.
- She only went by the paperwork she got on me. She barely ever spoke to me about my case.
- Public defender wasn't really knowledgeable or didn't care.
- I was never shown my motion of discovery.
- She didn't care, just wanted to rush.
- He didn't do one thing I asked and had no answers to my questions.
- He did not defend me.
- He just wanted me to plead out asap.
- No he said what court wanted, not me.
- She was free and didn't care to take her time.
- No because I feel she didn't respect my health issues.
- No I didn't pay him.

Have you had your probation/parole revoked for things you think were very minor?

Seventy percent (70%) reported their violations were not minor, while 30% reported minor violations.

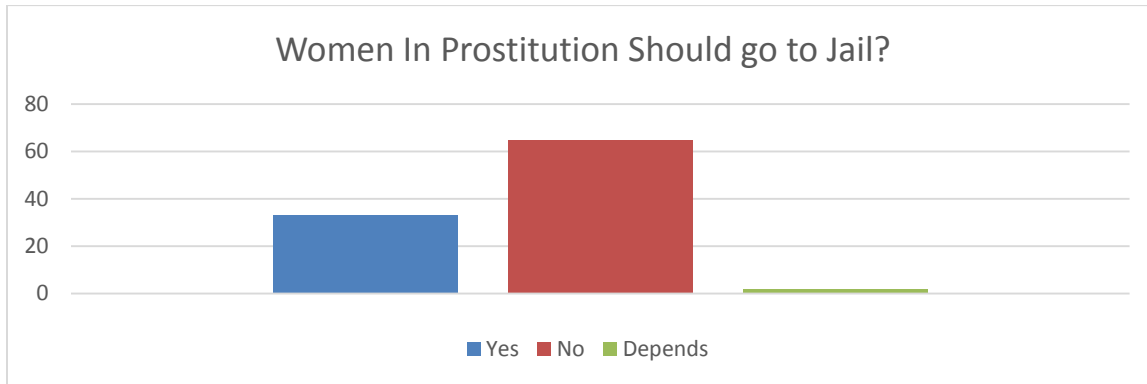


Those that believed their probation/parole was revoked for very minor violations commented below:

- Contaminated urinalysis caused false positive.
- Smoked some weed once.
- I didn't drop.
- I got a lot of morphine at the hospital for a migraine and the judge threw me out of probation into jail.
- I admitted to using asking for out-patient help and inpatient services at another place.
- Yes missing my appointment with my counselor.
- Yes missed a meeting.
- Yes one dirty drop.
- Yes fake meeting

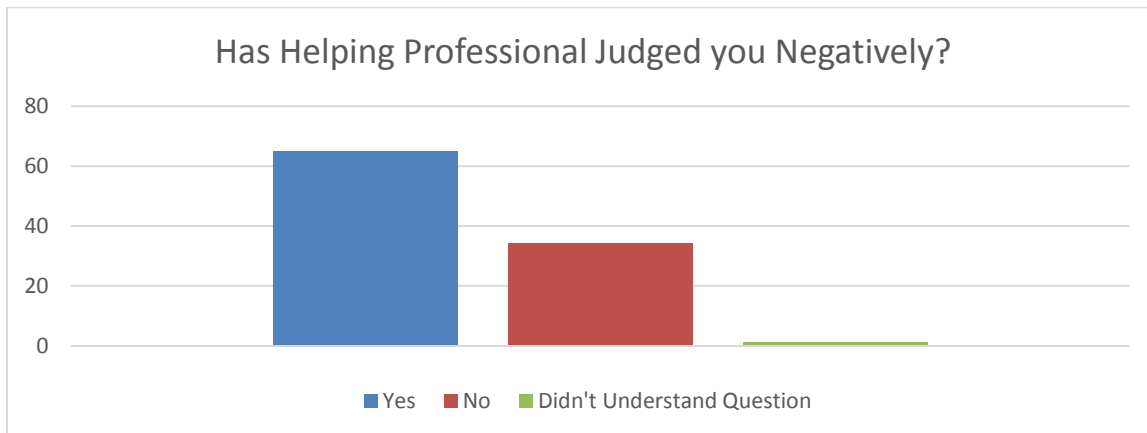
Do you think women involved in prostitution should go to jail?

Sixty-five percent (65%) reported that they shouldn't; 2% stated it depends on the situations and 33% reported they didn't know whether or not they should be placed in jail.



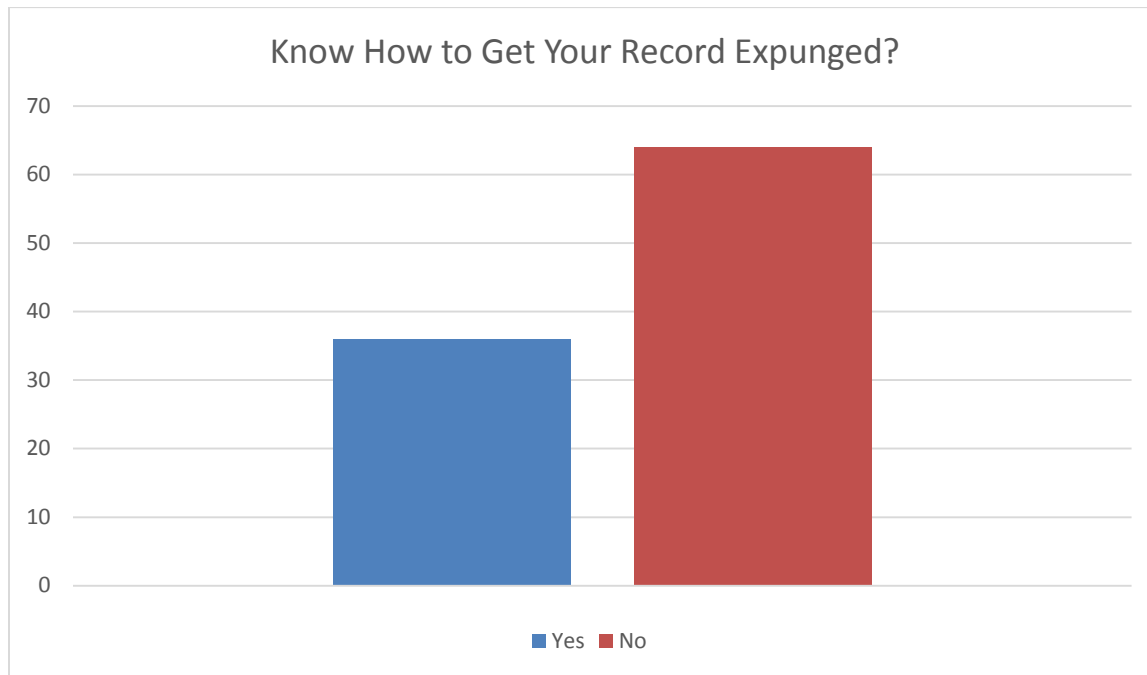
Have you felt like a helping professional (e.g. social worker, counselor, probation officer, nurse, case manager etc...) has judged you negatively?

Sixty-five percent (65%) reported that they have been judged, 34% reported that they didn't think they were judged, and 1% reported they didn't understand the question.



Do you know how to get your record expunged?

Expungement of one's record can be a tiring and lengthy process. When asked if they even knew how to go about this, only 36% reported yes and 64% reported no.



References

Part II: Findings from Open Ended Questions with Those that have been Incarcerated

Returning citizens' questionnaire

The returning citizen questionnaire consisted of interviewing a total of 12 adult participants, half female and half male, and including 4 African Americans, 4 Hispanics, and 4 Caucasians. Some participants answered the full questionnaire and some provided little information pertaining to their situations. These interviews consisted of participants who have been incarcerated within the past 2 to 3 years.

Each were asked the following questions:

1. What has been your experience with Toledo Police Officers?
 - a. What has been your experience with Toledo Police Officers in the community?

Positive

- They are fair most of the time.
- I have had decent interactions with TPD until 1 time I ran and they chased me down.

Negative

- Police have stopped me while I was walking in the neighborhood asking me where I was going, what I am doing, where do I live. I think that is a form of harassment.
- Negative
- Being Hispanic has always put a negative spin on things.
- They are mostly tricks for prostitutes.
- The police are ok, they were cool to me.
- They don't bother you unless you cause a problem or fit that image of a criminal so now I don't dress like one or talk like a criminal. You don't see them too much unless something goes wrong. You can call all you want and they won't come unless you get shot.
- I haven't had any dealing with the police in the community except at DARE when I was a kid.
- All of my experiences have been bad because it has always been me causing trouble, making the cops chase me and stuff.

b. What has been your experience with Toledo Police Officers at a police stop?

Positive

- I have not been mistreated by the police like a beat down, but I have been pulled over a lot when I was not doing anything like a crime, but a traffic stop was legit.
- Positive.
- They stop you because you look suspicious and they don't have problems, that's not cool.
- They just pulled me over like when I was speeding and gave me a ticket. When I was arrested they just put me in the back seat of their car and took me in it.
- I have had ok stops and the one time I had a bad one because I was pulled over in a black neighborhood and was arrested for possession and paraphernalia.
- I can't say they bad because I was always caught up in some stuff. One time they let me go and they knew I had a strap and some dope. It was weird.

Negative

- They are rude and judgmental.
- They are fair most of the time.

c. What has been your experience with Toledo Police Officers at arrest?

Positive

- When they picked up they just took me to the jail, wasn't any big deal.
- They were nice as long as I was.
- They are fair most of the time.
- They just held me to court.
- They just took my mug shot and fingerprint me, nothing special.
- I have been arrested a lot but I cannot say that I have been mistreated or anything I was always doing the wrong thing.

Negative

- Very Negative
- Very offensive, no care of means for a women.
- They took a domestic violence charge and made it aggravated assault and physical harm, this was all over a fight with my girlfriend, it wasn't right.

- It was really messed up man because they took all my stuff and made me feel like a really bad person. All I had was some weed and I told them where it was but they tore my car up and didn't fix shit.

2. What has been your experience with Sheriff's deputies in Lucas County?

a. What has been your experience with Sheriff's deputies in Lucas County in the community?

Positive

- Never run ins with the sheriff
- They are understanding and are nice.
- They do a good job.
- No Trouble with Sheriff.
- Haven't been in any trouble with the Sheriff.
- I think just the DARE program.
- Never dealt with them before.

Negative

- Being Hispanic I have noticed there are more questions asked and even rougher and aggressive.

b. What has been your experience with Sheriff's deputies in Lucas County at a police stop?

- They are rude and angry.
- They do a good job.

c. What has been your experience with Sheriff's deputies in Lucas County at arrest?

- I was very scared, they scared me.
- They are nice as long as I am nice to them.
- They do a good job.

3. What has been your experience with public defenders or other attorneys?

Positive

- Good
- My public defender really wanted the best for me and he was not judgmental Todd Geldy.

- They work hard and try to help as much as they can.
- Not much a defender could do, I was involved in stealing a car and it was grand theft auto.

Negative

- Public defenders didn't do shit for me, I don't even remember talking to a public defender.
- Paid attorneys definitely defend and perform better.
- They don't have time to spend with the citizens.
- He didn't spend any time talking to me; guess because I was just guilty.
- In municipal court they don't do nothing because they work with the court, you know? In common pleas they the truth...but you have to pay them in the end.
- They were ok I just had to pay a fine and that was it. They cost like \$25.

4. What has been your experience with judges?

Positive

- He just did what the prosecutor dude told him to do; he barley talked to me, just listened to the prosecutor and gave me six months.
- I had a fair judge.
- Fair
- The judges have been all fair.

Negative

- It had been ok until this last time and my past followed me.
- They were understanding and fair but related to heavily on prosecutors opinion.
- It was real quick, sentenced and sent to CTF.
- He just gave me my sentence and I was done.
- They don't really do nothing but look at your record give you a sentence from my experience.
- Some seem racist, but I don't know because everyone else got different sentences.

5. What has been your experience with prosecutor's when/if you were the victim of a crime?

- They were kind of indifferent.
- Fair
- Because I have a criminal record I am judged! That victim of crime place isn't helpful either.

6. What has been your experience in jail?
- a. What has been your experience with personnel in jail?

Positive

- Everybody was cool with me.
- They were non-judgmental and helpful.
- No problems with staff.
- Staff was cool.
- They just doing their job.

Negative

- Rude
- Jail is generally going to be worst for a Hispanic.
- It was scary and nasty.
- It's really violent in there. It was non-stop bull shit and people don't care for your safety. I was cool 'cause I got hands, but a lot of people shouldn't be treated like that. It's the most boring place in the world but people go back.
- It was dirty and I never want to go back.

- b. What has been your experience with programs in jail?

Didn't want to be involved in programming:

- I didn't do any programs; just did my time.
- They had some but I didn't want to do any.

Involvement

- I went to AA meetings in there.
- None until I went to CTF.
- I was involved in women's traumas group called WITT, they had AA and church services.

Insufficient

- Insufficient.
- They need more programs and more help.
- AA and church only thing they got. Jail is only a holding place.
- That's a joke.

c. What has been your experience with medication in jail?

- 4 respondents reported they were not on medication
- I have gotten what I needed most of the time.
- At CCNO it was okay and they gave me what I needed. At CTF they need a better way.
- Illegal stuff was there.

7. How could they improve [programs]?

- Limit the load of work and not put so much on us.
- Offer something for drug addiction.
- Make programs more available to people who can't get Medicaid.
- Give rides.
- I don't know, but they need more people who care about you.

What did you need that wasn't available or accessible to you?

- I didn't have money, a job or a way to get to probation. It was a bitch trying to get a job, no phone, getting downtown all the time and reporting. I stayed with my moms and she didn't have any money to give to me.
- Mental Health.
- In general we are not all the same and require more individual care.
- Knowledge. Information.
- Mental health needs to be more taken [seriously], more care.
- The police need some criminal justice classes.
- I had a good program and now I am in recovery.
- Transportation, help going to college or getting some job training.

