



*Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.*

## Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circles Report

Fall Series 2018-2019

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Thank you to Bader Philanthropies for hosting these listening circles. We would also like to thank our partners: Safe and Sound, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Regional Department of Corrections.

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# Table of Contents

Glossary ..... 5

Executive Summary..... 6

Quantitative Data – Pre/Post-Surveys.....11

Listening Circle 1 – “Shots Fired!” Escalation/De-escalation - Analysis.....16

**Question Round One:** “Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?” .....16

1.1 Group Escalation.....16

1.2 One-On-One Escalation.....17

1.3 Other Incidents of Escalation .....18

1.4 Not Escalation But Violent .....18

1.5 Participant Attempt at De-Escalation .....18

**Question Round Two:** “What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighborhood?” .....19

2.1 Increase Police Involvement.....19

2.2 Take Initiative to De-Escalate.....20

2.3 Trust and respect .....20

2.4 Communication and Collaboration .....21

2.5 Other Suggestions .....21

**Connected Conversation:** “Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin.” .....22

3.1 More Communication .....22

3.2 Addressing Issues of Bias.....22

**Parting Words**.....23

Feedback Forms .....24

Listening Circle 2 – Healthy Relationships – Analysis.....30

**Question Round One:** “Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What's something that you enjoy doing together?” .....30

1.1 Family Members as Friends.....30

1.2 Trusted confidants .....31

1.3 Long-Time Friends .....32

1.4 Shared Common Interests.....32

<b>Question Round Two: “What does a real friendship look like to you?”</b> .....	33
2.1 Trust.....	34
2.2 Helpful and Reliable.....	34
2.3 Good Communication.....	34
2.4 Non-Judgmental and Understanding.....	35
<b>Connected Conversation: “What's one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?”</b> .....	35
3.1 More Communication and Interaction.....	35
3.2 “We’re all human.” .....	36
<b>Parting Words</b> .....	37
Feedback Forms .....	38
Listening Circle 3 – Gratitude – Analysis .....	45
<b>Question Round One: “What’s a memorable situation you’ve had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?”</b> .....	45
1.1 Parents and Teachers.....	45
1.2 Law Enforcement/Fire and Other Government Officials.....	45
<b>Question Round Two: “How have you been grateful for someone in authority?”</b> .....	46
2.1 Parents, Family and God.....	46
2.2 Supervisors and Teachers.....	47
2.3 Law Enforcement and other Government Personnel.....	47
<b>Connected Conversation: What’s one thing you are grateful for about this community? (One group discussed: As a community, what is a specific step that can be taken to help get Milwaukee to the place of positive police/community relations? What things personally can you do to make the community better?)</b> .....	48
3.1 Trust and Gratefulness .....	48
3.2 Change through Generations.....	49
3.3 Relationships with Law Enforcement .....	49
3.4 Information and Responsibility.....	50
3.5 Suggestions and Next Steps .....	50
<b>Parting Words</b> .....	51
Feedback Forms .....	52
Listening Circle 1 – Annexes .....	60
Listening Circle 2 – Annexes .....	70
Listening Circle 3 – Annexes .....	85

## Glossary

**Listening Circles** – Listening Circles are composed of a structure part of experience sharing between participants, followed by an unstructured portion during which participants can exchange about what has been said and ask questions of curiosity. The goals of the listening circles are to foster communication and build bridges between communities, invite trust and facilitate relationship building between officers and residents.

**Go-Around or Round** – The structured part of a Listening Circle composed of one question that each participant answers with the same amount of time, with no interruptions, going clockwise. Listening Circles are usually composed of two or three go-arounds.

**Connected Conversation** – The unstructured part of a Listening Circle that takes place after all go-arounds are completed. Participants are asked to share airtime yet are not timed. It is the moment for participants to interacted with each other and react to what they have heard during the structured parts of the dialogue. Connected conversation questions are available as well if participants want to explore other topics with the help of a prompt.

## Executive Summary

The Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion (Zeidler Center) has facilitated dialogues between police and residents in the Harambee community since 2016. This report details participant responses and feedback during and after our Fall 2018-2019 sessions (on Monday, September 17, 2018; Monday, October 15, 2018; and Monday November 12, 2018). The executive summary (pages 6-15) identifies major themes of the listening circles, followed by a section offering an in-depth analysis of each dialogue.

### Program Description

The Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion believes that an important step in repairing relationships between law enforcement and communities of color in Milwaukee is to come together in unique spaces that provide the opportunity for facilitated, face-to-face communication to co-create resident-based solutions. The Zeidler Center's program, funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Racial Equity and Inclusion Grant, and the Northwestern Mutual Foundation, involves circles that are professionally facilitated by Zeidler Center facilitators, and co-designed by residents and police to fit the needs of each community it serves.

Participants experience both structured and unstructured portions of dialogue. Through timed facilitation, participants can respectfully share their personal perspectives and learn about the perspectives of others. The Zeidler Center listening circles create a platform for greater mutual trust and understanding, essential for establishing a constructive, collaborative environment for change. The Zeidler Center's community partners play an essential role in encouraging continued resident, youth, and officer engagement. Our partners in Harambee include Safe & Sound, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Milwaukee Regional Department of Corrections.

### Listening Circle 1 – "Shots Fired!" Escalation/De-escalation

The first Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle event of the Fall series was hosted at Ba-der Philanthropies on September 17, 2018. Milwaukee police officers and neighborhood residents of Harambee took part in four listening circles that were led by trained facilitators from Zeidler Center. The event started with the Facilitated Dialogue, during which every participant responded to two discussion questions centered around the issue of escalation and de-escalation:

1. *“Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?”*
2. *“What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighborhood?”*

After each participant was given an opportunity to speak, they were invited to engage in the Connected Conversation, an open discussion during which participants follow up with each other’s responses from the Facilitated Dialogue. To start the conversation, Zeidler Center facilitator could use the following prompt:

*“Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin.”*

During the first round, most participants described a situation they witnessed that escalated. Participants described either a situation that escalated among a group of individuals or crowd of witnesses or a situation involving two individuals that escalated. Some involved physical violence while others involved only verbal arguments. There were also participants who did not describe a situation that escalated per se, but the incident they witnessed led to violence. A few participants also described situations where there was de-escalation, or at least an attempt to de-escalate the conflict.

During the second round, participants offered a variety of suggestions, some of which they intended to enact individually. Several participants suggested increasing police involvement, whether it is increasing police presence or individuals calling the police when they witness an incident. Others who shifted the responsibility to individuals suggested that witnesses should try to intervene and prevent escalation themselves. Still, more participants emphasized the importance of trust and respect among all residents and between residents and police officers. In general, participants expressed their support for more communication across all areas.

During the Connected Conversation, participants followed up with one another’s comments from the second question. Some discussed the initial steps that residents can take, while others focused on how the police should change their approach. Not all of the discussion groups had time to have this open conversation, so the responses were limited mostly to two groups. At the end of the two-hour session, participants expressed hope and optimism in their parting words, indicating an overall positive experience from this event.

## Listening Circle 2 – Healthy Relationships

The second Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle event of the Fall series was hosted at Bader Philanthropies on October 15, 2018. Milwaukee police officers and neighborhood residents of Harambee participated in five listening circles led by facilitators trained from Zeidler Center. The event began with the Facilitated Dialogue. During this structured conversation, every participant was given the opportunity to respond to two discussion questions:

1. *“Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What’s something that you enjoy doing together?”*
2. *“What does a real friendship look like to you?”*

After answering both questions, participants moved on to the Connected Conversation. The Connected Conversation is an open discussion where participants are encouraged to follow up with one another. To launch the conversation, the facilitators prompted the participants with the following question:

*“What’s one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?”*

During the first round, most participants identified a family member as their closest friend. Participants also identified friends whom they described as trusted confidants. A large number of participants highlighted the length of their long-time friendships, while other participants emphasized their shared common interests in sports and exercise or arts and culture.

During the second round, most participants described the importance of trust and loyalty in friendships. Participants also highlighted important characteristics such as being non-judgmental and understanding. Some emphasized the importance of good communication, specifically being good listeners. Others highlighted the importance of being helpful and reliable as friends.

During the Connected Conversation, most participants followed up with one another from their earlier discussions. The majority of comments emphasized the importance of more communication and interaction within their community. Some specifically mentioned more positive dialogue and interaction with their neighborhood police officers. Others suggested holding more organized community dialogues like Zeidler Center’s Listening Circles. At the

conclusion of the event, participants indicated a successful session overall by giving positive comments in their parting words.

### **Listening Circle 3 - Gratitude**

On Monday, November 12th from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m., the Zeidler Center held a Haram-bee Police and Resident Listening Circle, the third of the fall series. The event was held at Ba-der Philanthropies in Milwaukee. Groups of participants were asked two discussion questions, followed by a Connected Conversation question. The questions were as follows:

**Question Round One:** *“What’s a memorable situation you’ve had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?”*

**Question Round Two:** *“How have you been grateful for someone in authority?”*

**Connected Conversation:** *“What’s one thing you are grateful for about this community?”*

In response to Question Round One regarding memorable experiences with authority figures, respondents’ answers fell into two broad categories of authority: Parents and Teachers; and Law Enforcement and other Government Officials. Respondents relayed a balance of negative, mixed and positive experiences within each category. Respondents shared feelings of trust, mistrust, sadness and gratefulness as a result of their experiences.

Responses to Question Round Two about gratefulness for authority fell into three broad categories: Parents, Family and God; Supervisors and Teachers; and Law Enforcement and other Government Personnel. Responses were fairly distributed equally across categories, with Parents, Family and God and Law Enforcement/Government Personnel having slightly more responses than Supervisors and Teachers overall. Respondents stated feelings of appreciation across categories for authority figures that provided them guidance, support, and discipline when warranted.

When discussing gratefulness in the community during the Connected Conversations portion of the discussion (as well as suggestions and personal actions for building community, as one group did), respondents’ responses fell into five categories: trust and gratefulness, generally; change, including change through generations; continuing responses related to relationships with law enforcement (positive and negative); information and responsibility,

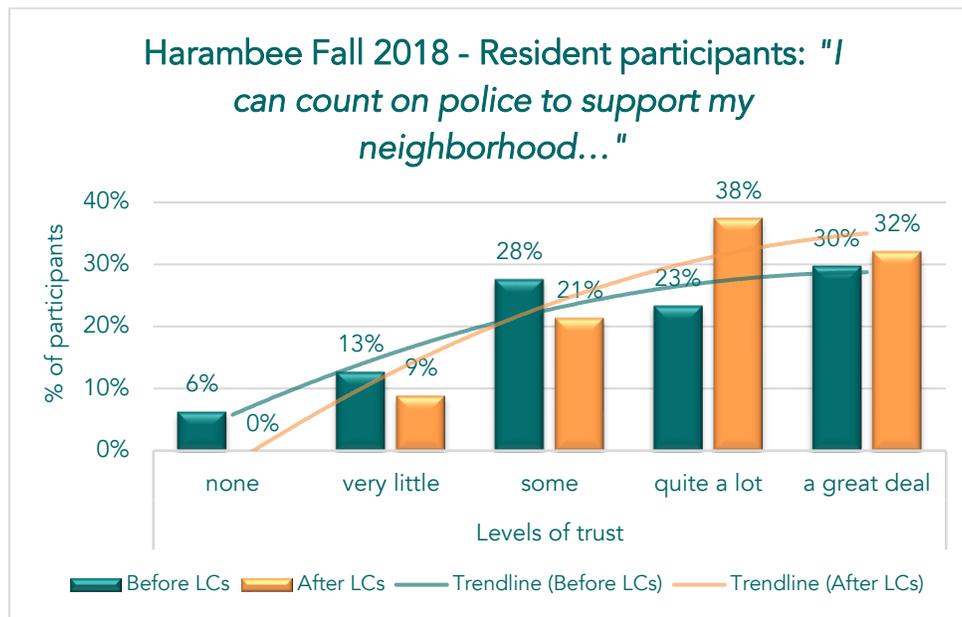
including the media; as well as suggestions and next steps to take. Overall, discussion focused on building community relationships and the value of respect, communication and shared understanding.

## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post-Surveys

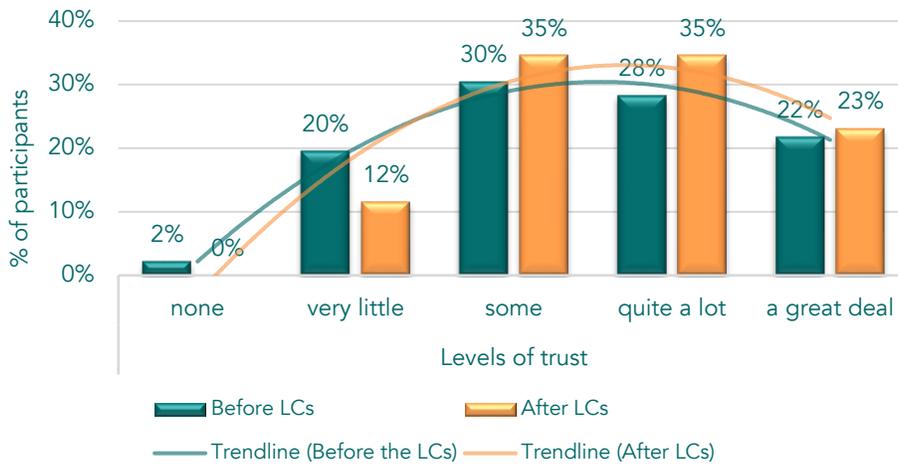
Through the use of pre- and post-surveys, the Zeidler Center has collected quantitative data regarding the effects of the Listening Circles on levels of trust amongst both resident and officer participants. The following graphs are a combination of the three Fall events that took place in Harambee. Trends amongst officer participants and resident participants are very similar for all three Fall events and thus will be presented conjointly in this report for a matter of reading efficiency. All graphs indicate **improvements in levels of trust, support, and hope** when it comes to police perceptions (resident-only data), and police-resident relations (police and resident data combined). Results for individual events are available in the analysis of each Listening Circles event (beginning on page 24).

Overall, participant attendance throughout the Fall series included an average of 17 Harambee residents and 7 police officers per Listening Circle. Based on the results of the pre-surveys, the Zeidler Center has been able to track the self-identified returning rates at different levels as well as newcomer rate for both police officers and residents for each event. The newcomer rate for both police officers and residents was high during the Fall series, which underlines the outreach efforts undertaken during the Fall in Harambee which led to new participants being exposed to Listening Circles.

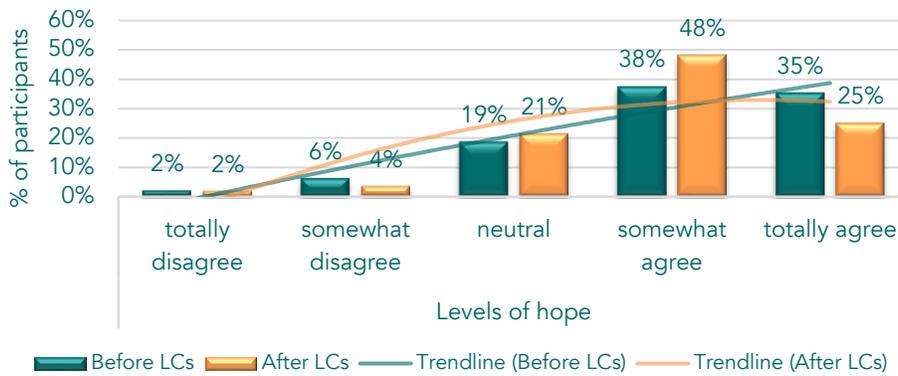
### Resident Participants

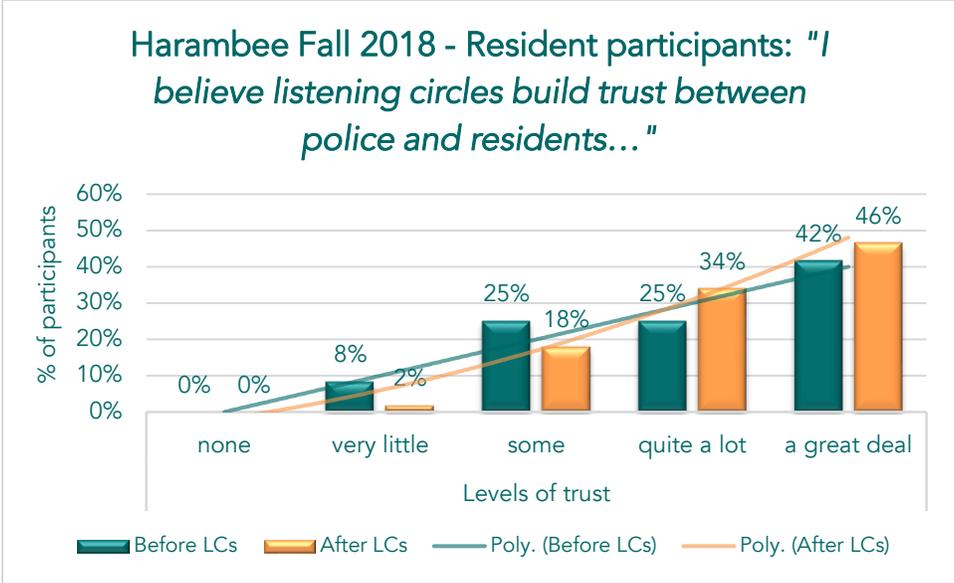


### Harambee Fall 2018 - Resident participants: *"I trust the police..."*

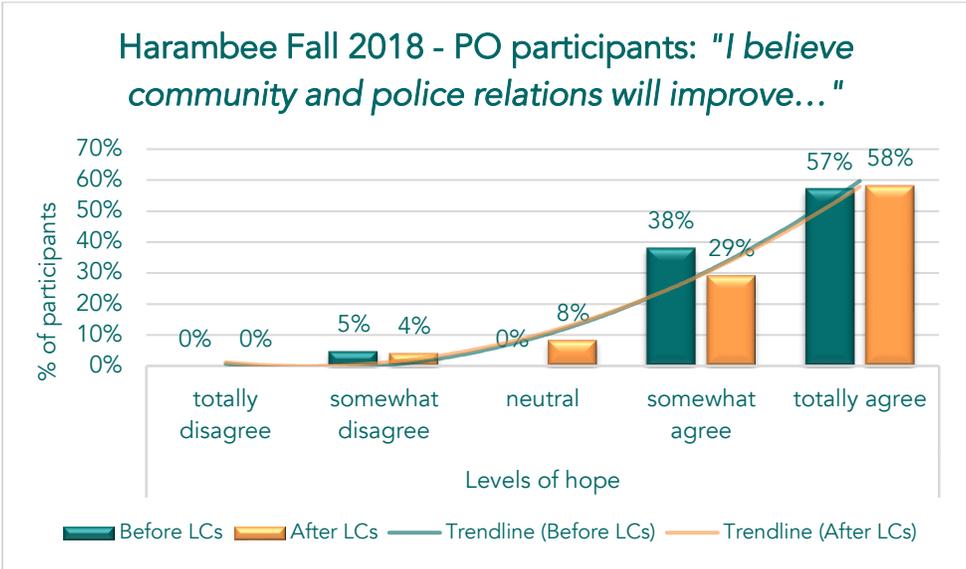


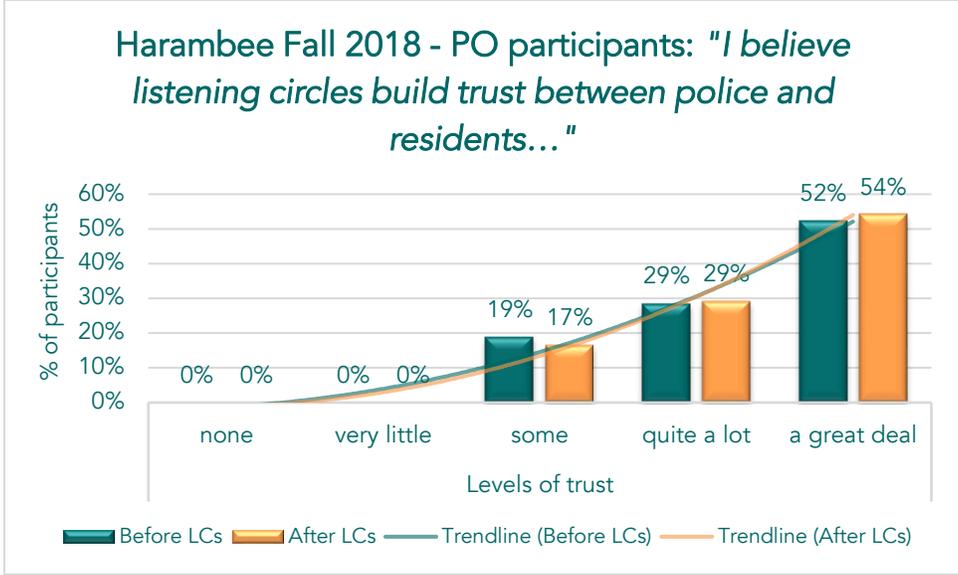
### Harambee Fall 2018 - Resident participants: *"I believe community and police relations will improve..."*



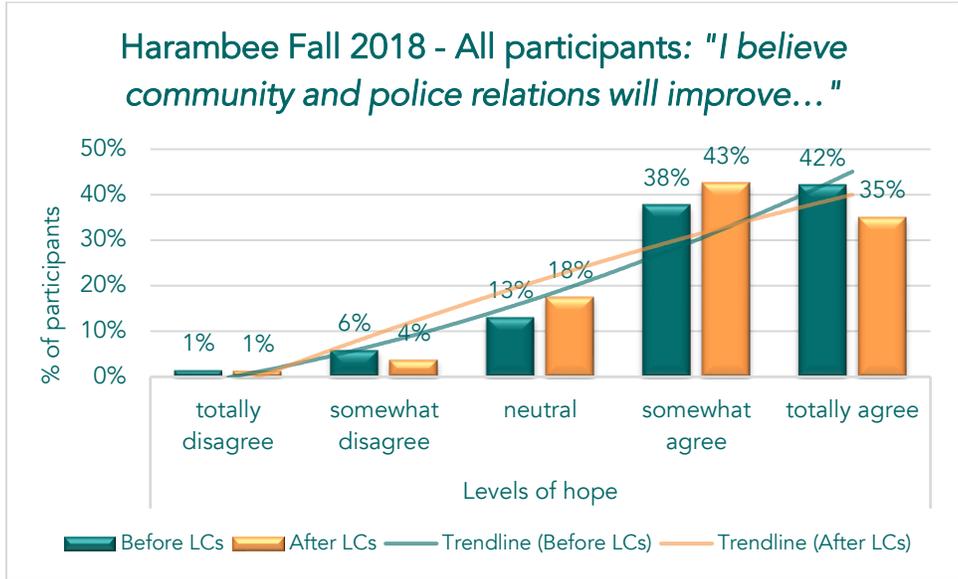


Police Officer Participants

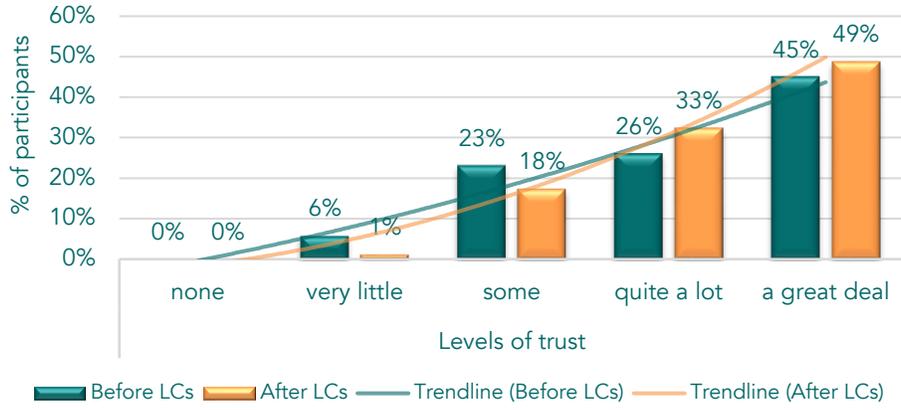




**All Participants**



Harambee Fall 2018 - All participants: *"I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."*



## Listening Circle 1 – “Shots Fired!” Escalation/De-escalation - Analysis

**Question Round One:** *“Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?”*

The majority of participants shared a story of witnessing a situation escalate in public. Some of these participants described an incident of escalation incited by a crowd of witnesses. Others de-scribed a conflict that escalated between two individuals. A few of these participants described their own attempts to de-escalate the situation. Although several participants did not describe situations that escalated, they did describe stories of violence that could have been instigated by escalation. These stories are described in the following sections.

### 1.1 Group Escalation

Most participants described situations where an incident escalated because of witness involvement. Some of the incidents began as a conflict between two individuals before being intensified by the crowd of witnesses.

*“While working with my four-member team at one of the big summer events, there were people walking and passing by regularly. Then I noticed one young lady walked over and reached and grabbed another girl and began fighting with her. While the two girls were fighting, more and more people came over and the situation kept escalating out of control.”*

Other incidents involved domestic violence between two people that escalated when other neighbors or family members joined in the conflict. These were not necessarily public situations but reflected the participants’ experiences in witnessing conflict escalation.

*“Two years ago, my brother’s girlfriend and him [sic] had been fighting all day. Any-way, it escalated so bad that she broke all the dishes in my house and called her mom over and they came over and fought my whole family. They pulled my mom's hair out and beat up her boyfriend.”*

*“I was sent out to a domestic violence argument, the neighbors were there and every-thing, and instead of breaking it up they instigated it!”*

One participant shared a similar story of witnessing a situation that escalated where the crowd did not help to de-escalate the conflict.

*“Three years ago, there was a fight down at Juneteenth. It was some youngsters, like they was [sic] about eighteen or nineteen. There were like forty people standing around with their phones out. No one was trying to break it up though and it was crazy because most of them were adults. This was like in front of a bar.”*

However, not all stories involved physical violence. Some participants described situations that escalated verbally, which they perceived as a potential for escalation into further conflict.

*“I was walking around the neighborhood meeting people, and I heard this woman from church with a friend of hers in the far distance talking very loudly to some teenage girls, and the conversation became heated.”*

*“There was a school basketball game one time where people arguing over a bad call they were all friends, but it got out of hand they were ready to fight each other.”*

These situations where participants perceived the potential for more violence were also echoed by other participants describing conflicts they witnessed between two individuals. Interestingly, some of these participants described similar situations of conflict on basketball courts like the last quote.

## **1.2 One-On-One Escalation**

Several participants described confrontations that escalated between two individuals on the basketball court. These ranged from verbal arguments to actual physical violence.

*“I was at an open gym playing basketball and one guy fouled another guy and they starting [sic] arguing. Security came over and broke it up and put one of the guys out of the gym.”*

*“I witnessed somebody on a basketball court get fouled and there was pushing and shoving. Then the guy went to his car and got a gun and started shooting.”*

As with the group escalation stories, not all of the one-on-one escalation stories were physically violent. Some participants described heated arguments between two individuals in other public spaces.

*“About a month ago inside of a store on the east side I witnessed an argument be-tween two young ladies that continued to escalate for ten minutes.”*

*“My mom and I were at the laundromat and as we were coming out we saw a lady arguing with another lady who was sitting in a car. The lady inside the car threw a cup of water at the lady standing outside as they continued to argue.”*

### **1.3 Other Incidents of Escalation**

A couple of participants described other types of situations where things escalated quickly after a poor decision that was made. These stories exhibited how situations could escalate even when those involved are not engaged in a confrontation.

*“Five summers ago, my cousins stole a vehicle which the police tried to stop but a chase began, he kept driving and I jumped out at a turn, the car crashed on Capitol and my cousin split his head in two and died and my nephew died in the hospital later.”*

*“Some youth stole a mini-van for joyriding and a thirteen-year-old girl ended up dead in a crash!”*

### **1.4 Not Escalation But Violent**

A number of participants did not describe an escalation incident per se, but a couple of them described situations that involved violence:

*“Me and my grandmother say some guys rob an old lady of her purse at the gas station and she fell down and had to go to the hospital.”*

*“My eleven-year-old brother and I were walking to the [sic] and I saw someone get shot and it was sad!”*

### **1.5 Participant Attempt at De-Escalation**

A few participants recounted stories of when they themselves tried to intervene and de-escalate the situation. Most of the time, they were successful.

*“So, I had to intervene. I reminded the guy with the gun about his daughter. I asked him to think about what would happen to her if he went to jail. Think about some other man raising your daughter. I was able to calm him down and got him a drink. It’s about helping people see the context and keep things in perspective with the bigger picture.”*

However, sometimes the participant was not as successful as they had hoped.

*“Me and my friend broke it up and after everything was good. The police rolled up, and they didn’t want to hear me out at all. In fact, they just ignored me. They looked right past me, and they picked people at random to arrest.”*

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**Question Round Two:** *“What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighborhood?”*

Participants produced a variety of suggestions. Some suggested more police involvement, while others gave suggestions for how to intervene in situations directly. Most of the participants tended to focus on the importance of trust and respect among residents and between residents and police officers. Participants generally agreed on communication being a key component to de-escalation.

### **2.1 Increase Police Involvement**

A number of participants gave suggestions for increase police involvement. Some placed this responsibility on the police officers themselves.

*“When stuff happens, the police need to come and come right away instead of taking their sweet time!”*

*“The police need to have more undercover cops to catch people speeding in the neighborhoods putting everybody lives at risk!”*

Others placed the responsibility on individuals who are witnessing a conflict.

*“Call the police and warn them of the situation happening.”*

*“We have to learn to call the police when something dangerous happens instead of just standing around.”*

These suggestions for witnesses to call the police emphasized individual responsibility, something that is echoed by other participants who suggested that witnesses should intervene directly to de-escalate a situation.

## 2.2 Take Initiative to De-Escalate

Several participants emphasized the importance of stepping in and intervening directly before a conflict escalates. These participants were critical of witnesses who focus on recording the incident on their cell phones rather than intervening to help de-escalate the situation.

*"In our neighborhoods when things happen, we can't be afraid to say something. We have to be brave enough that when we see things escalating, that we get to our kids right away we have to learn how to call for help instead of pressing record all the time on our phones."*

*"Cell phone recording is a major problem I feel like instead of calling police people are taking out their phones and recording stuff."*

These quotes, along with the earlier stories from participants who have tried to de-escalate a situation, highlight the overall agreement among participants that individuals need to take action when they are witnessing a confrontation at risk of escalating.

## 2.3 Trust and respect

Participants also emphasized the importance of respect and trust. Some stated in general terms that people should respect each other.

*"I think being respectful and not rude would and will be helpful."*

*"We need to remember the importance of respect we need to remember treating people as human beings is important. That's the problem with this rift between people sometime fear gets in the way of respect and I think that's why things are the way they are."*

Others reminded the group the importance of respecting police officers as well.

*"We'd ask that you try to treat every officer as an individual and give each one a fair chance to show their light."*

However, participants expressed their frustration with feeling disrespected by police, an issue that other participants suggested could only be mitigated by trust on both sides. This is succinctly captured by one of the participants who described his/her own personal experience in the previous round of discussion.

*“The hood can't trust you right away (looking at officers) the police is going to have to learn how to be more strategic and less aggressive. We feel oppressed by the officers we have mental and drug abuse in our in our community. Take me for an example I'm an ex-con I am a victim of the predators of my day...the drug pushers and the gangs! A lot of time, folks pre-judge me, but I am a walking testimony! I feel their respect is key but it's going to be a long road to get to it.”*

## **2.4 Communication and Collaboration**

Quite a few of the participants gave suggestions for improving communication and increasing collaboration within their communities. Some focused on the importance of better communication between residents and police officers.

*“I think there must be better communication by educating each other (police and residents) I come to events like this because the education of things changes the whole attitude and prevents clashes and wrong understanding.”*

*“We have to learn to communicate with each other and talk to each other when you sit down and talk to people you can see where the we have a uniform on or not that we have more in common then we don't have in common.”*

Others emphasized the importance of working and collaborating together to prevent escalation.

*“We need to work together like brothers and sisters, police and neighbors have to develop real relationships before things escalate and not after.”*

*“We going to have to work together and stop the violence we have to learn how to call for help when folks are fighting instead of just watching.”*

In general, these types of suggestions were optimistic.

## **2.5 Other Suggestions**

Participants also gave a variety of other suggestions—some directly related to the question, and others not so much. A complete list of these suggestions can be found in the Annexes.

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**Connected Conversation:** *“Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin.”*

Not all of the discussion groups participated in this portion of the event, but the two groups that did have a lot to say were separately focused on different topics. One group focused on the importance of increasing and improving communication in their communities. The other group engaged in a deep conversation about issues of bias that need to be addressed.

### **3.1 More Communication**

One discussion group focused on the importance of communication in their communities, with some participants offering some concrete actions to take. A couple of these participants suggested ways to intervene through dialogue.

*“I would suggest saying ‘Hello, how are you?’”*

*“I would suggest letting them know you are there for them.”*

Others gave more vague suggestions centered around increasing community discussion.

*“I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other.”*

*“I think becoming more informed through community conversations.”*

A couple of participants mentioned the challenges of intervening, with one pointing out the issues of fear among the community.

*“There’s a lot of fear out here because of the code and that’s why people don’t try to help.”*

In general, this discussion group offered a variety of suggestions for individuals to consider.

### **3.2 Addressing Issues of Bias**

Another group engaged in a discussion about issues of bias both for police officers and residents. Both police officers and residents in the group agreed that police officers do have biases they need to address. As one police officer stated,

*"We show up on the scene, we don't know anything about anything, and yeah I would be less than honest if I didn't say there are personal biases that come into play."*

However, another participant, who was also a police officer, pointed out that biases are also an issue that residents need to consider about themselves.

*"Yes, we do come in to bad situations with mistrust, and it works the other way too. I can't tell you how many houses I have been to where folks just wouldn't cooperate, and I felt like it was because I was white, and they didn't feel like I understood them. Sometimes when we get there the wall is already up!"*

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### **Parting Words**

Participants generally expressed hope and optimism in their parting words. Some expressed a changed attitude toward the police, while others reminded the group to not antagonize the police. Overall, participants indicated they had a positive experience from this event.

# Feedback Forms

## Demographics

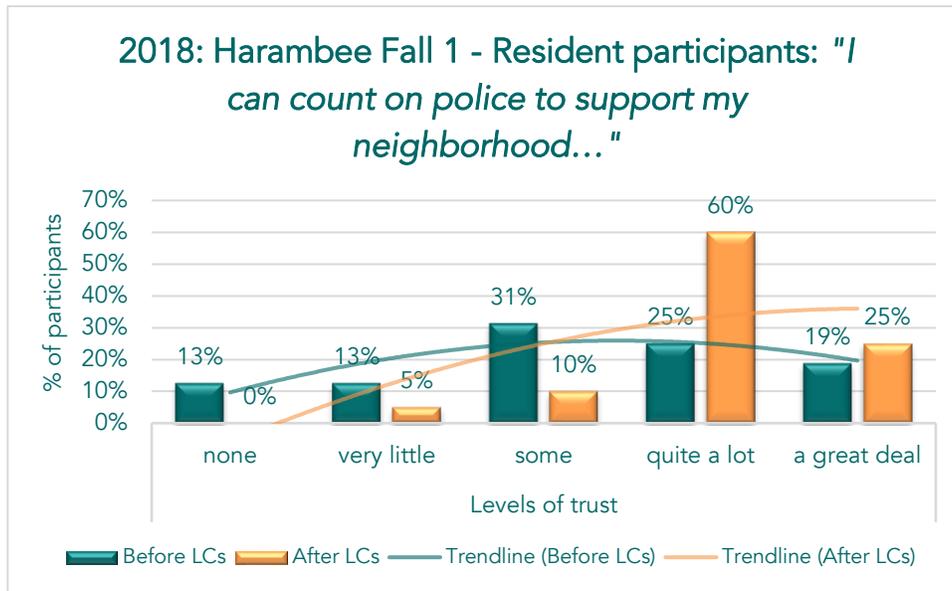
### Residents:

- Gender:
  - 68% male
  - 32% female
- Ethnicity:
  - 90% African American
  - 5% Native American
  - 5% Caucasian
- ZIP codes:
  - 53202: 6%
  - 53048: 6%
  - 53206: 6%
  - 53208: 11%
  - 53210: 11%
  - 53212: 56%
  - 53233: 6%

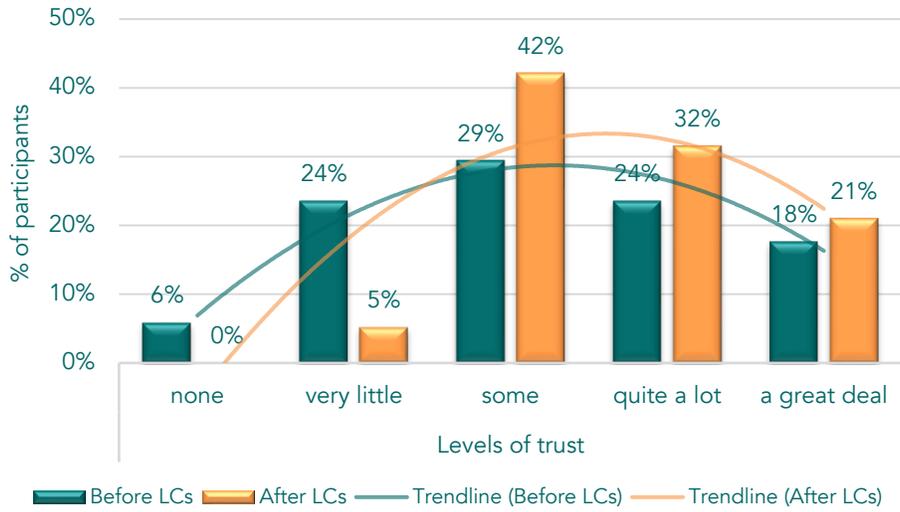
### Officers:

- Gender:
  - 71% male
  - 29% female
- Ethnicity:
  - 63% African American
  - 37% Caucasian
- ZIP codes:
  - 53201: 16%
  - 53209: 16%
  - 53210: 17%
  - 53214: 17%
  - 53222: 17%
  - 53227: 17%

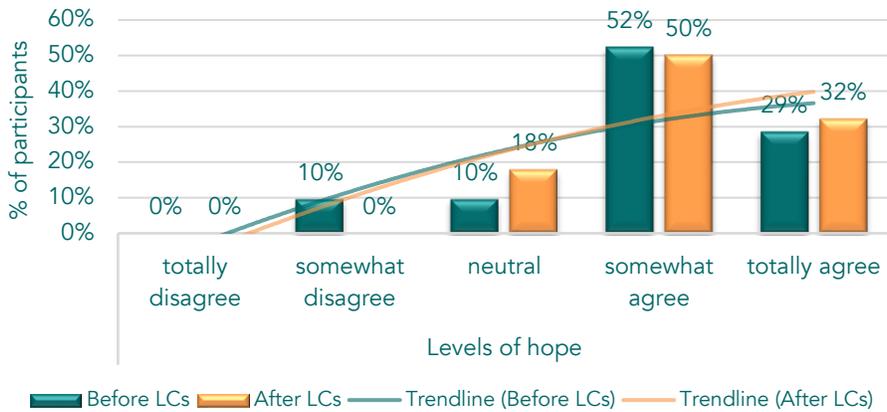
## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys



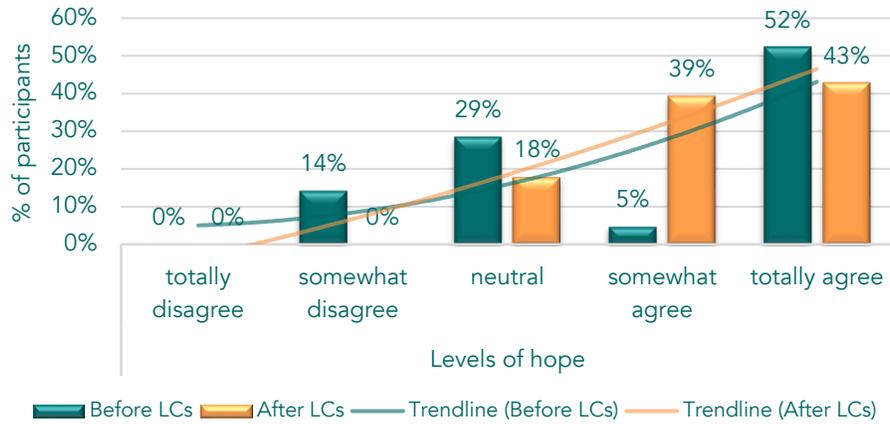
2018: Harambee Fall 1 - Resident participants: "I trust the police..."



2018: Harambee Fall 1 - All participants: "I believe community and police relations will improve..."

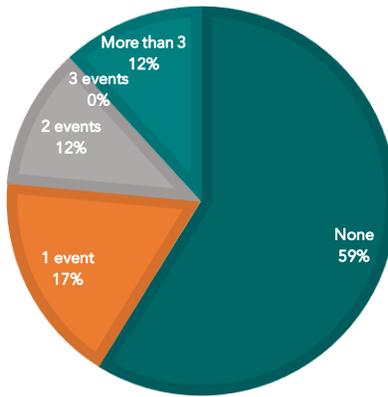


2018: Harambee Fall 1 - All participants: "I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."



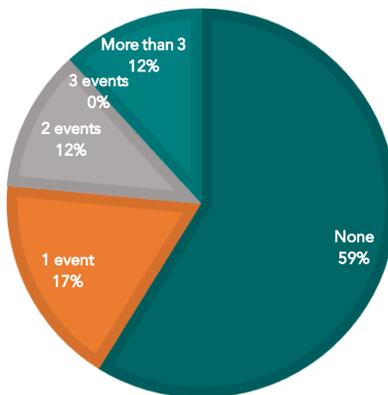
2018: Harambee Fall 1- Resident participants: Attendance of P&R Listening Circles

Legend: None (teal), 1 event (orange), 2 events (grey), 3 events (dark red), More than 3 (dark teal)



## 2018: Harambee Fall 1- Resident participants: Attendance of P&R Listening Circles

■ None ■ 1 event ■ 2 events ■ 3 events ■ More than 3



### Qualitative Data

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the police/community today?

- Communication.
- That everyone wants to build relationships to a better level to form trust and faith in each other.
- Conversation with the elders of the group. It seems as if the community does not trust police.
- Yes most people don't like the police officers they are people too. Everyone needs more ....on how to get along with others no matter the age etc...
- Most feel the same way I do. There is trust with the police.
- The youth participation.
- I liked talking to everyone.
- That they keep people safe sometimes more than 5.
- They help stop violence.
- Nothing really.
- Learning from the police perspectives.
- I enjoyed talking to the police and seeing their perspectives.
- If something happen you can't all ways count on the police.
- They listened and was positive.
- That I can believe in them.
- The young people and police were able to share their thoughts as human beings with a common purpose and concern.
- How it is gotten worse standard traffic stops escalate quickly.

- Intentional discussion.
- Yes, getting to know police.
- Not much but I learned that speaking to Police builds more trust.
- I learned police have to do the job to protect us.
- Yes that not to do bad thing.
- That all police isn't bad.
- Yes that not to do bad things.
- That they will be always here for us.
- Talking about improving school systems that police go through a lot.
- They are respectful and they come.
- The police is cool they just do there [sic] job and people scared of them.

What questions or concerns are you leaving with?

- That people won't change their personal opinion.
- None.
- I think the youth should be older to be involved in the listening circle 16 and up is a better age.
- It only seems that the residents of the neighborhood who are truly concerned about the neighborhood are here to participate there has to be a better way to get those that are disinterested, to get involved. Also, it is too structured the facilitators should be allowed to deviate and instead have open conversations.
- We all need to get to know each other in our neighborhood.
- None.
- The social media was a big part in our conversations.
- New thing.
- Nothing really.
- Don't have any.
- Can police officers with prejudices not take violence out on others?
- How police have a lot of to be done.
- None for now.
- Everyone.
- How can more people find out about the circles?
- How to have more conversations like these? How to counter the negative affects of social media?
- NA.
- Nothing.
- None.
- I want to learn about police things because I always wanted to be one .
- Unknown.
- That I really like it here.
- None ready for next session.
- None really for the next session.

- Why do people kill police they help us?

What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?

- Longer periods of discussion.
- Having older youth in group.
- Help each other when needed. We all need to live and let live!
- We should focus on improving relationships between police and youth they don't trust the police.
- Keep it where the youth have a say in the dialogue. If 8th grade - 12th. Great showing!
- I thought it went well. Maybe individual rooms for each group.
- Police safe.
- Something that happened.
- Riots.
- Violence.
- Respecting your families and community.
- Reaching the younger people so their future will be brighter.
- Everything.
- The effect of drug trafficking in the community.
- Social media + Police/Community relations.
- More police community family.
- Police.
- Nothing.
- About life.
- Crimes.
- Unknown.
- Everything.
- Police and pedestrian contact.
- Police and good.
- I don't know.

## Listening Circle 2 – Healthy Relationships – Analysis

**Question Round One:** *“Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What's something that you enjoy doing together?”*

Most participants described their friendship with a family member whom they perceived as trusted confidants. Some of these participants also described shared common interests and hobbies with their friends. These included sports and exercise, arts and culture, and travel. These anecdotes are described in the following sections.

### 1.1 Family Members as Friends

The majority of participants described a family member whose friendship means a lot to them. A few described their family in general terms.

*“I like spending time with my family because they show that they care about me. I like to hang around them. We liked going to the park. I like talking to them and being around them.”*

Several described their partners as their closest friend.

*“My husband is my friend too... I can talk to him about anything.”*

*“My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs, but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind, she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.”*

*“I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years.”*

These comments overlapped with other themes that emerged over the course of the discussion, which emphasized the length of friendships and the ability confide in their friends about anything. These themes will be discussed later in this report.

Participants also named other specific family members, such as siblings and cousins.

*"I have a close friendship with my cousin. We do everything with each other. I was homeless, and we got close. We like to play basketball and football together."*

*"The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door, and we did that on purpose. We talk every day and laugh and cry together... She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality..."*

The idea of trust as being essential to a friendship was reiterated by other participants, as described in the next section.

## **1.2 Trusted confidants**

A few participants discussed their closest friends by emphasizing the importance of trust and confidentiality.

*"Other close relationships that mean a lot to me include some people I can talk to about my day, about work, what is going on, and they're a safe person to talk to. These are people I like to go to the Bucks games with or the Brewers games. It's fun, stress free, and relaxing. Some of those same friends, I also go fishing and hunting with. It's peaceful and I enjoyed being with somebody that I can trust and depend on."*

*"I met my friend at my last job. We share core values, so I trust her opinions. I can vent to her when something is bothering me, and she will hear me out. When something good is happening, she cheers me on. I can trust that she will keep my confidence."*

Participants described their ability to "talk about anything" as an important reason for their friendship, indicating the importance of friends being able to confide in one another.

*"My sister. I consider her my friend. She lives in Minneapolis. We like to hang out and do anything... We can talk about anything. We help each other see what can't be seen."*

*"I have a few friends. Two of them, I have been friends with for 14 years—half of my life. We have been through so much together. I can tell her anything and she is non-judgmental. What do we talk about? Anything. We do everything together."*

### **1.3 Long-Time Friends**

Many participants described long-time friends by highlighting the length of time they had known each other. As mentioned earlier, participants who named their partner or spouse emphasized the length of time they have been together.

*"My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20."*

Others described friends whom they have known since childhood.

*"Me and my best friend have been together all our lives."*

*"I have a friend I grew up with. I lived with him. We do everything together..."*

### **1.4 Shared Common Interests**

Many participants described various shared interests and activities they enjoyed with their friends. These included physical activities, such as sports and exercise; arts and cultural activities such as theater; and traveling.

#### **1.4.1 Sports and Exercise**

A number of participants described a mutual interest in sports and fitness as a reason for their friendships. Several talked about playing basketball together with their closest friends.

*"My homie is like my brother. We like to play hoops."*

*"I enjoy my friendship with my nephew. I enjoy playing basketball with him, he's a lot of fun."*

*"We sit out and play games, play basketball."*

Other participants talked about enjoying being physically active in general with their friends.

*"I enjoy the seniors at the fitness gyms doing exercises and taking care of themselves."*

*"I enjoy walking with my friends at the lakefront."*

#### 1.4.2 Arts and Culture

A few participants described arts and cultural activities they enjoyed with their friends, identifying these activities as the source of their friendships.

*"My best friend. He came from Kentucky. We do theater together. We were in First Stage together."*

*"She is like a Godmother to me. A Wa'a (Ojibwe) She helps me on my path. We enjoy Native American traditional functions...Pow Wows, community-supporting activities."*

*"I have a group of women friends. We have known each other for a long time - we've been friends since the sixties. I call them my Jazz ladies. We like to go out and listen to Jazz music together."*

#### 1.4.3 Travel

A couple of the participants highlighted traveling as an important part of their friendships.

*"Me and my best friend have been together all our lives. We like to travel together out of town and out of the country. My favorite places so far were Mexico and Jamaica. She wants to go to Ghana next."*

*"I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home, we can tell if the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family."*

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#### **Question Round Two: "What does a real friendship look like to you?"**

Participants responded to this second question with a variety of definitions and descriptions. However, many participants did overlap in their responses, suggesting that to a certain extent, participants had similar views of how "real friendship" should be defined. These definitions and characteristics of friendship included trust; helpfulness and reliability; good communication; being non-judgmental; and being understanding.

## 2.1 Trust

The majority of participants mentioned trust as an important quality in a friendship. Some participants defined trust as the foundation of friendships.

*"A real friendship is somebody I can trust."*

*"Trust. Having trust between you let's it be a relationship. You have the same interests, but not necessarily all of them."*

## 2.2 Helpful and Reliable

The second most common characteristic of friendship was helpfulness and reliability in a friend. In addition to trust, several participants named reliability or dependability as an important characteristic of a good friend.

*"Trust. You have spent time with them and have memories together. Someone you can count on, that is reliable."*

*"A real friendship is someone you can count on. A real friendship is someone that you can trust."*

*"Trust. The person always has your back. We have similar interests and probably come from the same background. Or maybe different."*

Reliability was often mentioned in conjunction with helpfulness.

*"A real friend is sort of like your conscience, they will always be there. A real friend is the kind that will help you move even though they would rather be doing something else."*

## 2.3 Good Communication

Several participants described good communication as a quality of a friend's reliability and helpfulness.

*"And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you."*

*"I real friend listens to you and helps you when you are in need. They like who you are and don't try to change you."*

## 2.4 Non-Judgmental and Understanding

A few participants considered real friendships to be with friends who are non-judgmental and accepting.

*"It is not someone who's going to judge you."*

*"They are trustworthy and not judgmental. They accept you for who you are."*

*"A friend does not stand in judgement. They listen to understand. They will not necessarily agree but they will understand."*

As illustrated especially by this last quote, participants also reflected upon the importance of tolerance and mutual understanding in real friendships.

*"It involves a lot of trust and loving one another. It's also about understanding each other. And you know when to stop joking and not to cross the line. Sometimes people cross the line and that's not friendship."*

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?"*

Most participants focused on the importance of increasing communication in their communities. Some specifically highlighted the importance of getting to know one another, while others pointed to the event itself as an example of increasing communication between police and residents.

### 3.1 More Communication and Interaction

Most participants generally stated that more communication is necessary.

*"I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other."*

*"I think becoming more informed through community conversations."*

*"I think we should do more talking and breaking bread together."*

Some participants were more specific about why they think communication is important. For example, a couple of the participants explicitly stated a need for more communication and understanding between police and residents.

*“I think it all goes back to communication. I want people to have an opportunity to say what happened to their family, so I can understand why people don’t like police. That would give me a chance to try and explain what might have happened from my viewpoint. ”*

*“It helps to sit and break bread with officers in the community. I don’t know what else I can ask officers to do—come to my job or school? I think it would help me see officers as helpers rather than the problem.”*

A number of participants suggested the idea of getting to know one another.

*“If we get to know one another we will no longer be strangers.”*

*“It’s nice to get a chance to hear about each other on a personal level.”*

Several participants stated that events like the Listening Circles could be a solution for more communication amongst community members.

*“By having listening circles. These are good to have in the community and to have the officers in the community. We are human too. Sometimes people see the uniforms on and they look at us differently. We have families like parents and kids. We care. We are all human. We are good at listening and these circles help. People may not feel comfortable around police and this is a good way to bridge that gap.”*

As this quote illustrates, participants also saw a need to humanize each other, a theme that emerged from other comments as well.

### **3.2 “We’re all human.”**

A few participants who described the importance of communication also relayed the importance of humanizing each other.

*“I think there should be more communication between us and the officers because they are human beings just like us.”*

*“We keep saying “those people” when people don't get to know each other. We are all human.”*

These comments reflect the overall optimism and hope expressed by participants.

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### ***Parting Words***

Participants generally left positive feedback. Overall, all participants indicated that the event was a positive experience.

# Feedback Forms

## Demographics

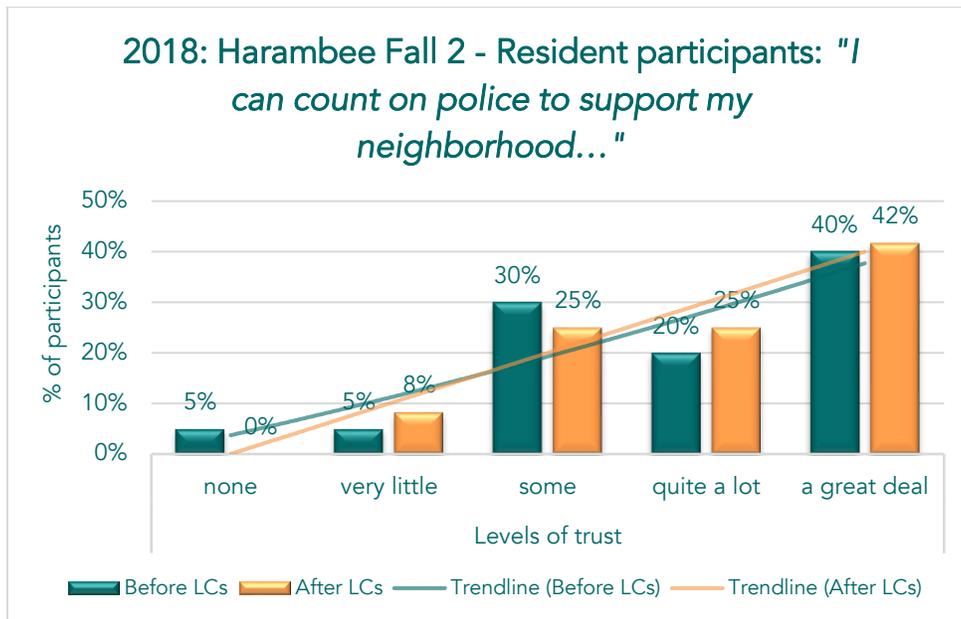
### Residents

- Gender
  - Male: 48%
  - Female: 53%
- Ethnicity
  - African-American/Black: 84%
  - Native American: 8%
  - Latinx/Hispanic: 8%
  - White/Caucasian: 4%
- Zip Codes
  - 53206: 20%
  - 53210: 5%
  - 53211: 5%
  - 53212: 65%
  - 53219: 5%

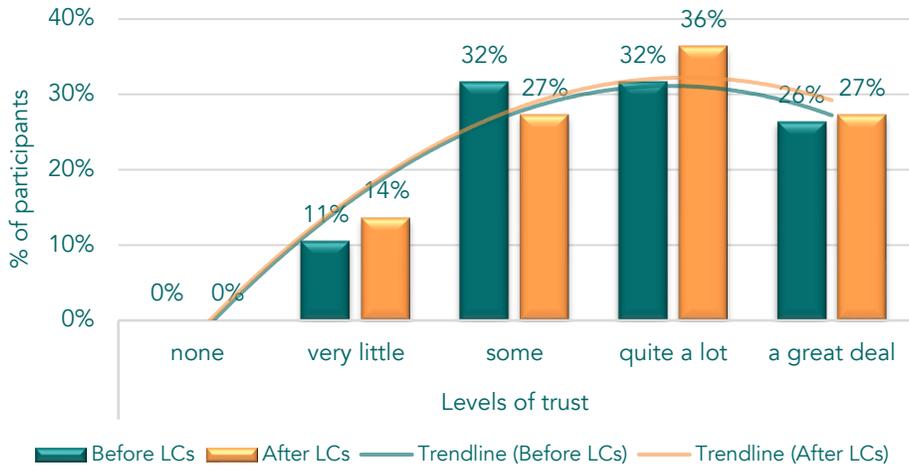
### Officers

- Gender
  - Male: 50%
  - Female: 50%
- Ethnicity
  - African-American/Black: 33%
  - Latinx/Hispanic: 22%
  - White/Caucasian: 44%
- Zip Codes
  - 53204: 16%
  - 53212: 16%
  - 53216: 16%
  - 53219: 16%
  - 53225: 33%

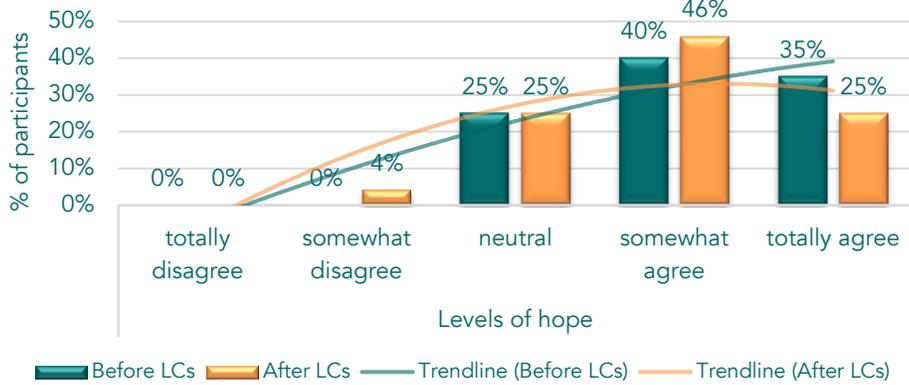
## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys



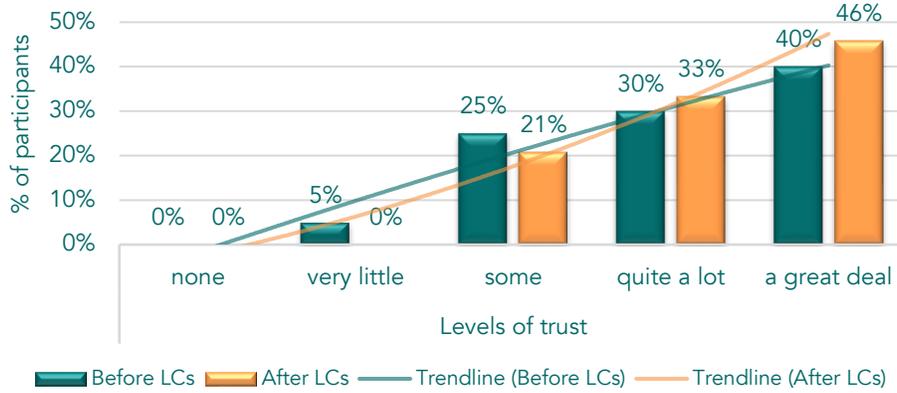
2018: Harambee Fall 2 - Resident participants: *"I trust the police..."*



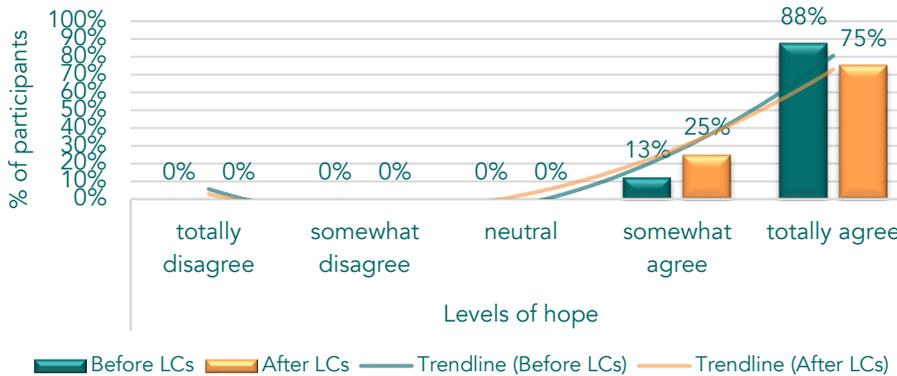
2018: Harambee Fall 2 - Resident participants: *"I believe community and police relations will improve..."*



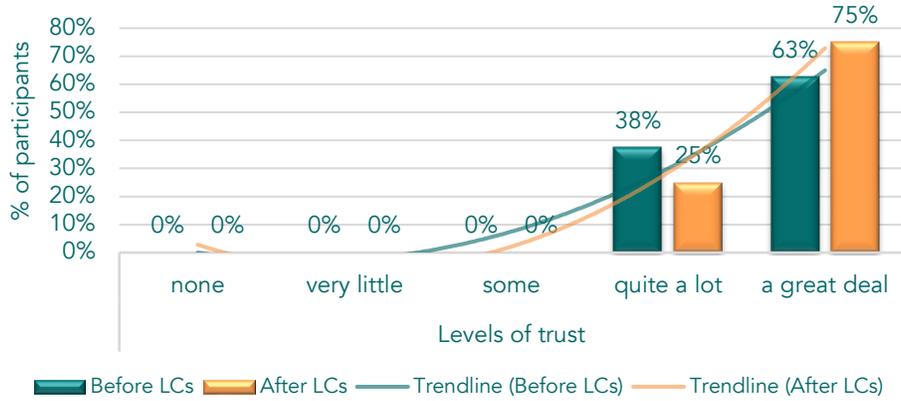
**2018: Harambee Fall 2 - Resident participants: "I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."**



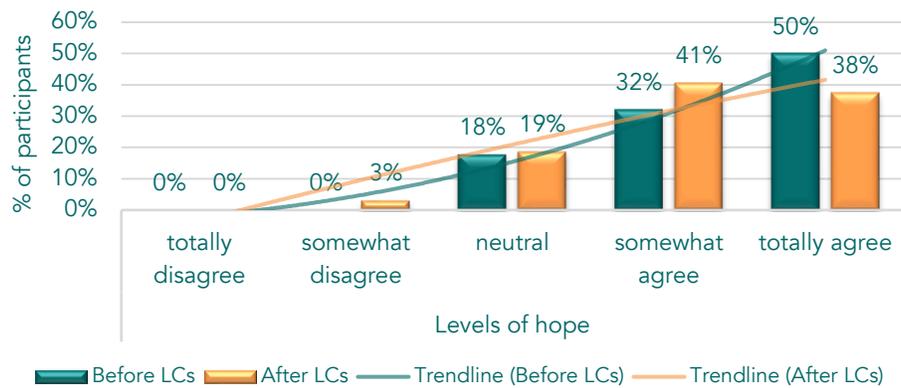
**2018: Harambee Fall 2 - PO participants: "I believe community and police relations will improve..."**

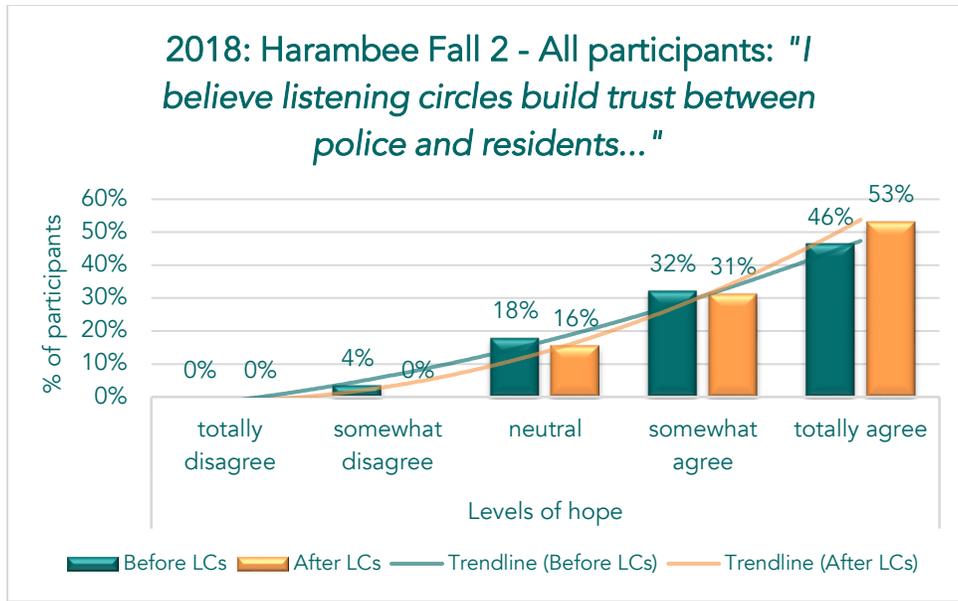


**2018: Harambee Fall 2 - PO participants: "I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."**



**2018: Harambee Fall 2 - All participants: "I believe community and police relations will improve..."**





### Qualitative Data

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community today?

- Listening to the youth open up
- People talking to each other
- Enjoying hearing the youth's opinions
- We have to keep up the good work
- Positive comments
- I enjoyed getting the opinions of the young people
- I learned that everyone wants to have good communication and not be judged on clothes or race
- We are very similar
- You don't always have to be rude to the police
- Talk to everyone
- They are willing and ready to be helpful whenever a resident calls for support
- That MPD has more family/community events than CPD
- Young folks participation, just talking in a relaxed manner
- They do care
- We were able to see that we are all human and are more alike than different
- That the police are there to help and you don't have to be afraid of them and you can count on them
- I learned the value of friendship
- Police are simply doing their jobs

- All police aren't bad
- I got to learn all police are not the same
- After the meeting I felt a sense of hope for the future and the community
- That they're not all bad
- The police want to serve as we need them to serve us
- They are not bad people
- It was satisfying hearing an adult's/police officer's point of view about what they do
- I don't know
- About friendships
- Putting a face on people in my community
- Make people new friends talk thing
- Super good people, care about people
- Getting to know them

What questions or concerns are you leaving with?

- How to teach youth to get through and deal with their pain
- N/a
- None
- I enjoy the listening circles
- None
- Will the younger participants use the info they just listened to
- None
- Some people/youth don't actually want to be here, only for the money and don't want to participate very much
- How police work with rude residents
- Is your job hard?
- More residents being part of the group
- None
- --- must be continued; how do you heal/deal with folks you are not familiar with
- The way they feel
- How to get out the word to the rest of the community
- Have more listening circles
- I don't know what this means, i might come back and visit
- I will like to come to more meetings
- How do you get more people to trust police?
- How can we become closer with law enforcement as a community
- None
- None, all of my questions were answered
- None
- None
- How often does this happen

- I don't know
- A lot
- How to make these more widespread, what did young people in our group think
- N/a

What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?

- Keep having these
- Nothing, very good conversation
- Smaller questions for the youth
- Keep an open mind
- Motivating the younger people to speak more
- Larger groups to hear more perspectives
- See answer to previous question
- You should have police walk or ride the bike in the environment
- Young people need more help
- Youth jobs
- How to handle folks who seem excluded or fearful; knowledge if folks who may turn emotional and seem dangerous
- I don't know
- How to get more people involved
- How to get more people to come out
- Public safety
- How could we change the community
- I don't know
- What will happen next - what is the action from this talk
- Bonding with police
- N/a
- I don't know
- I don't know
- None
- How to deal with conflict
- Friendships

## Listening Circle 3 – Gratitude – Analysis

**Question Round One:** *“What’s a memorable situation you’ve had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?”*

In response to Question Round One regarding memorable experiences with authority figures, respondents’ answers fell into two broad categories of authority: Parents and Teachers; and Law Enforcement/Fire and other Government Officials. Respondents relayed negative, mixed and positive experiences within each those categories.

### 1.1 Parents and Teachers

Respondents’ experiences in the Parent and Teacher’s category were mixed fairly evenly between positive and negative experiences, though experiences with parents were relayed more negatively overall than experiences with teachers. Respondents relayed stories of negative parenting (violence) and distrust of friends’ parents, as well as several positive stories about teachers coming to their aid, and especially teachers who served as a reminder or reality check to help them stay on track. There was one story involving mixed feelings for a teacher that both disciplined a respondent and built him/her back up.

*“My mother was my figure. We traveled to Chicago for dance troops. I didn’t ask. I hopped on the bus without permission. My aunt beat me and sent me back to Milwaukee. My mom then beat me. I never acted out again. My parents are the authority.”*

*“My memorable situation with an authority figure was a reality check. I won first place in something and got stuck on that for a while. My grades started to slip because I lost focus. A teacher reminded me of my other responsibilities and got me back on track.”*

### 1.2 Law Enforcement/Fire and Other Government Officials

The biggest category of responses was respondents telling stories about their experiences with police officers, fire personnel and other government employees. Again, responses were fairly balanced between positive and negative experiences, with a few stories of mixed feelings. The responses overall (negative, positive and mixed) varied between personal anecdotes of traffic stops, medical and other incidents, as well as incidents involving family or community members with authority figures. Respondents relayed feelings of gratefulness for government intervention in crisis and also feelings of sadness and misunderstanding for escalated incidents that often involved someone they cared about getting hurt or in trouble. One respondent relayed a story about appealing to a county board and having a positive experience as well.

*"My mama got in a fight with a neighbor. The police came. My mama got tazed and went to jail. Everybody felt bad and cried."*

*"Years ago I saw my brother get arrested for everything like robbing banks. The police came into the house and broke things while looking for him. I never had a father figure so my brother was like a father figure to me. It hurt my heart to see him treated that way."*

*"When I was in college, I had an experience with the law enforcement. There are two sides of a story. The two cops that were there: one was down to earth. He told me to relax about my tail-light situation. I got to see both good/bad in the authority in same situation. Bad cop maybe had a bad day."*

*"It was about 24 years ago. I failed the background check to become a police officer because of my speeding record. At first I didn't know I could, but when I found out I appealed to the Fire and Police board. They listened to me and let me become a police officer. I felt very grateful."*

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***Question Round Two: "How have you been grateful for someone in authority?"***

Question Round Two responses about gratefulness for authority fell into three broad categories: Parents, Family and God; Supervisors and Teachers; and Law Enforcement and other Government Personnel. Responses were fairly distributed equally across categories, with Parents, Family and God and Law Enforcement/Government Personnel having slightly more responses than Supervisors and Teachers overall.

## **2.1 Parents, Family and God**

Respondents stated feelings of gratefulness for parents and grandparents, feeling appreciative for their support, guidance and instillation of values, as well as discipline and "being hard on" them when they needed it. One respondent spoke of being grateful for family members who showed him how he didn't want to be, and a few respondents spoke about their growing relationship with God in the same way as others spoke about their family members.

*"I'm grateful to my mother and grandmother for instilling discipline in me. They taught me how to be the woman I should be and to develop the friendships I should have. They taught me values and morals but also let me figure out some things on my own."*

*“My grandparents are my second set of parents. My parents don’t have resources. I can go to my grandparents.”*

*“Over the last two years I’ve developed a strong relationship with God. It got me through many hard times and keeps me going.”*

## **2.2 Supervisors and Teachers**

While supervisors and Teachers made up the smallest category of responses overall, the responses were very positive and life-altering. Respondents remembered very specific things that teachers said or did that impacted their lives. Other respondents spoke about superiors in employment and the military that had or have the same impact on their lives, specifically teaching them how to navigate situations and procedures.

*“My teacher taught several classes. He was socially aware. He sparked an interest in social justice. I protested about everything... ”*

*“Common sense factors were that we read ‘knowledge is power.’ My best teacher said this. She was the backbone of my dancing career. She turned my vision for my education, career, and life.”*

*“The sergeant in the Marine Corps was a teacher for me. I learned things for the police force. He called me [to] boot camp. I treat people with respect. I learned to have fun.”*

*“My supervisors guided me in my career. They mentored me, helped me to do paperwork, taught me about procedures.... They were passing out knowledge to me.”*

## **2.3 Law Enforcement and other Government Personnel**

Participants relayed stories about experiences they had with law enforcement and other government officials, relaying gratitude and thankfulness. Respondents spoke about medical incidents where they or someone they loved were helped by first responders, as well as officers that they knew as children that they respected and helped them find their way growing up. One respondent spoke about a specific government employee that make a big influence on minority businesses, and another respondent spoke specifically about Barack Obama’s influence.

*“I was playing with my sister when we were kids on a fence with an electric gate. The fence started up and cut my sister's hand in half... They found us. I held her arm until they got there. She was OK.”*

*"I remember Officer XX from my school who has the same last name as mine. I would see him in the hallway and he would give me a high five and talk with me for a little bit. I considered him a friend."*

*"From [an] earlier story about shoplifting: I was grateful to the officer for giving me a break. It helped me decide to become a police officer. And I've seen that same officer there again."*

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**Connected Conversation:** *What's one thing you are grateful for about this community? (One group discussed: As a community, what is a specific step that can be taken to help get Milwaukee to the place of positive police/community relations? What things personally can you do to make the community better?)*

When discussing gratefulness in the community (as well as suggestions and personal actions for building community, as one group did), respondents' responses fell into five categories: trust and gratefulness, generally; change, including change through generations; continuing responses related to relationships with law enforcement (positive and negative); information and responsibility, including the media; as well as suggestions and next steps to take.

### **3.1 Trust and Gratefulness**

On the topic of trust and gratefulness, respondents spoke about both law enforcement specifically and the greater community in general. Respondents spoke about trusting the police, mostly, and knowing that someone is always there to help them, be it law enforcement or someone else in the community. Respondents noted being thankful for safety and growth and security in the community as well.

*"We as a community work together with police. I'm a Malcom X fan. I was raised not to trust officers. I think this should be refocused. I now trust officers to help others. Make places safer. The Harvest Festival was key."*

*"Yeah, I don't agree with all the decisions that some officers make, but I talk with them. Most officers have told me they're happy to be here. I'm getting to know names and faces of people in the neighborhood and I hope you trust us to protect you."*

*"I am grateful and I like the revitalization in this community..."*

*"I am grateful for being in Harambee for 30 years now and personally not having had any problems. I enjoy my community even though the crime goes up and down. I am happy that if the police are called they come."*

### **3.2 Change through Generations**

Along with relaying feelings of trust and gratefulness, some participants spoke of generational change in the same light, as well as differences in how young people view the community. Respondents spoke about generational change in views of, and experience with, police, specifically, noting a much more positive viewpoint in current times. One group had a short discussion under this topic about why or why not young people attended the discussion.

*"An officer checked out our home when my mom passed away. A change is coming. There will be a connection with community and cops. It's a different atmosphere – respect in the community when there's respect for cops."*

*"We are at that space, it's time. I had a lot of anger when I was a kid. I grew up in a hostile environment."*

*"Do all of your friends know you're here tonight? Why are they not here?...I was with my friends when I was asked to come here."*

### **3.3 Relationships with Law Enforcement**

The largest category of responses was continuing comments and experiences related to relationships with law enforcement. Respondents continued to relay both positive and negative experiences, as well as discussion about changing attitudes and specific neighborhoods and types of policing. Police respondents spoke about the value of getting out into the public and its value, and residents spoke about wanting more of a view of what police officers did.

*"I grew up around a tall officer named Mike. We had the Frank Jude and Ernie Lacy cases. Officer Mike treated me with respect. I have been treated well and poorly. I see officers beating blacks. I have seen them save lives."*

*"I get to see how people interact and get to know people in the neighborhoods and parks."*

*"I'm a bike cop in summer. I get to see them (residents) more."*

*"I want to see more of what you do in the community to make an impact as an officer... You can do a ride-along and see for yourself. No, it's not like the movie at all."*

### 3.4 Information and Responsibility

Some respondents spoke about the relationship between law enforcement, community and information, specifically about the responsibility of information and the media's role. Police respondents indicated that they do things outside their job description, including explaining where they are coming from to bridge the gap. Community respondents noted that the rate of information is faster, and media (social and otherwise) has an impact. A few respondents spoke about the responsibility of parents on young people and where that responsibility ends.

*"Being a cop, people look from the outside in. I tell young guys that I grew up in the city and raised three kids here. In my day, there was no social media. Your generation is dealing with information at the drop of a hat. We have to learn to filter...."*

*"I think a lot of the violence is because we get information so quickly. It's hard to have time to stop and think. My mom used to say you go to street life and end up in jail or hell."*

*"The media doesn't give all the details, so I understand why people might jump to conclusions."*

*"I think it's the parent's responsibility to teach their kids reality and right from wrong."*

### 3.5 Suggestions and Next Steps

Many respondents made suggestions for next steps in improving the relationship between law enforcement and the community and making other positive changes within the community aimed at strengthening relationships. Both police and community respondents spoke about how important it is for officers to get out and into the community and build personal relationships. Other respondents spoke more generally about respect and communication and noted that listening circles and similar events are incredibly helpful in building these important relationships. Some participants also noted ways that they personally intend to make a difference, including inviting others to events and communicating about law enforcement relationships.

*"Just being outside the squad car is night and day difference. So much better."*

*"It's like voting, if you get out there and talk to people up close and personal it works better."*

*"I think there should be more participation from the residents because nothing will get better if everyone is not engaged to find solutions and be better together."*

*"I think the listening circles are good and I think the event that District 5 just had in the community was a good start. I feel the more they are able to talk to us in calm moments the residents will become more comfortable..."*

*"I can tell more people about events like this. Stay positive and spread the word."*

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### **Parting Words**

When asked to note how they felt after participating in the event, many participants noted feelings of hope and positivity, indicating they were grateful to have a conversation with law enforcement and other people.

*"There's nothing that beats personal contact."*

*"I'm grateful they added another neighborhood to this program."*

*"It's nice to see police officers having more involvement."*

*"I enjoyed answering the questions and being able to ask questions of my own to the officers."*

## Feedback Forms

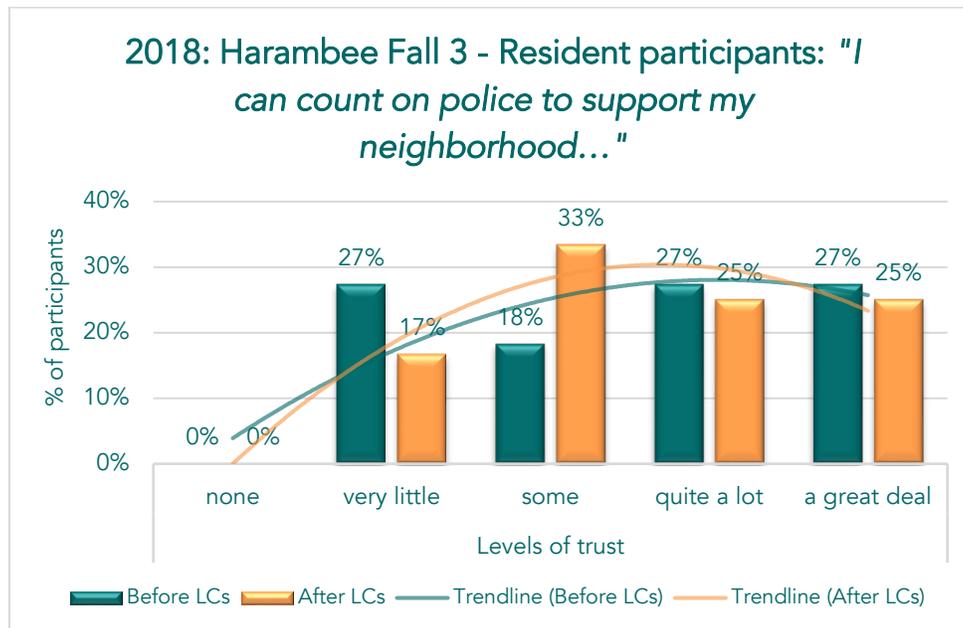
### Residents

- Gender:
  - Male - 33%
  - Female - 67%
- Race/Ethnicity:
  - African-American or Black - 92%
  - Other - 8%
- Zip Code:
  - 53202 - 9%
  - 53206 - 9%
  - 53208 - 9%
  - 53209 - 9%
  - 53212 - 60%
  - 53217 - 9%

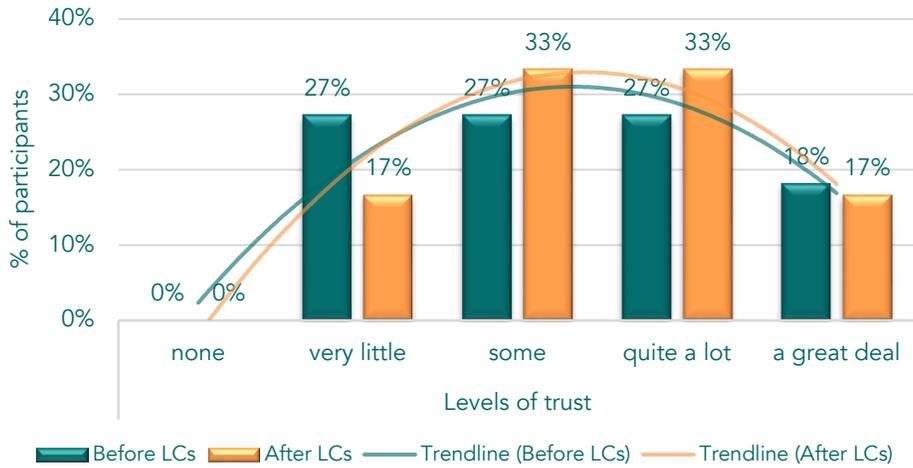
### Police Officers

- Gender:
  - Male - 75%
  - Female - 25%
- Race/Ethnicity:
  - African-American or Black - 50%
  - Latinx or Hispanic - 13%
  - White or Caucasian - 38%
- Zip Code:
  - 53204 - 13%
  - 53214 - 13%
  - 53216 - 25%
  - 53218 - 13%
  - 53220 - 13%
  - 53222 - 13%
  - 53225 - 13%

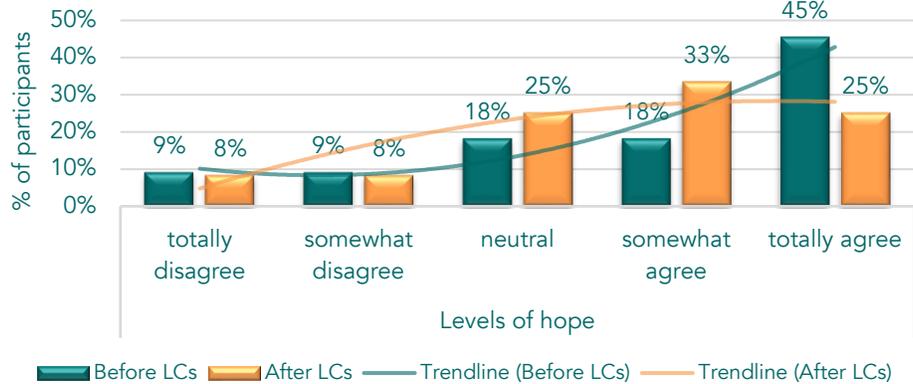
### Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys



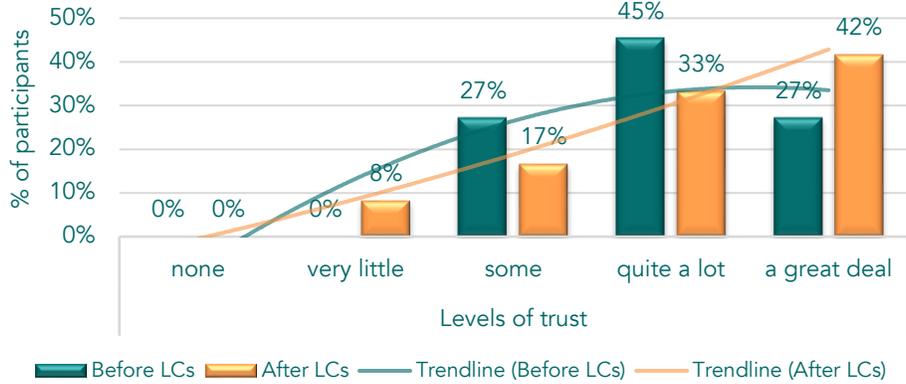
2018: Harambee Fall 3 - Resident participants: *"I trust the police..."*



2018: Harambee Fall 3 - Resident participants: *"I believe community and police relations will improve..."*

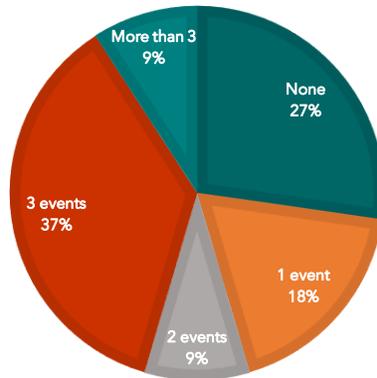


2018: Harambee Fall 3 - Resident participants: "I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."

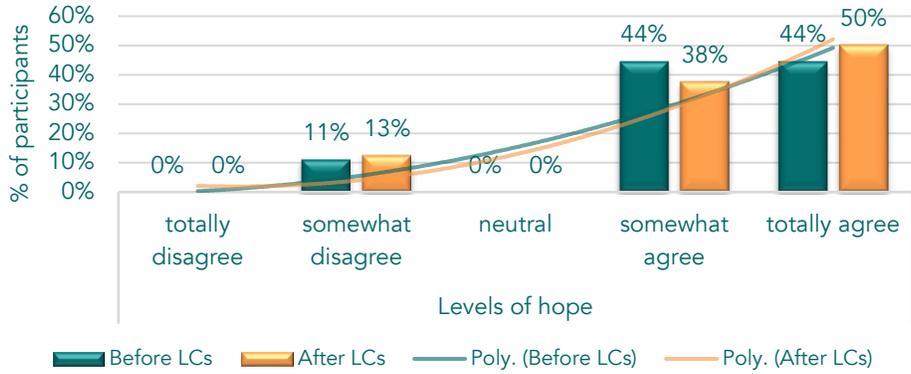


2018: Harambee Fall 3- Resident participants: Attendance of P&R Listening Circles

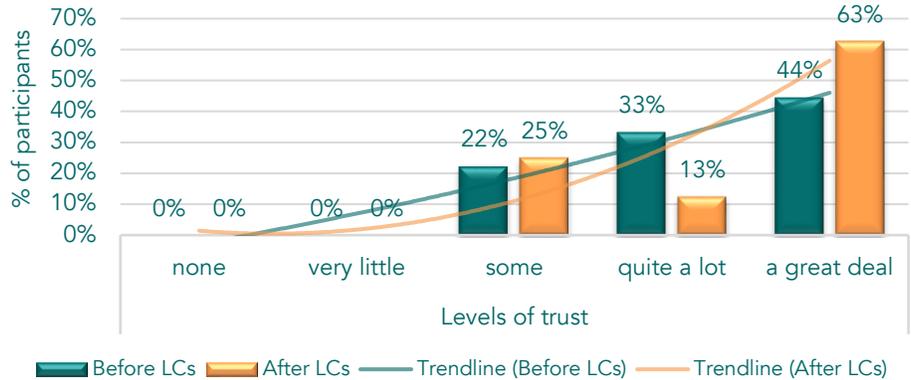
■ None ■ 1 event ■ 2 events ■ 3 events ■ More than 3



2018: Harambee Fall 3 - PO participants: *"I believe community and police relations will improve..."*

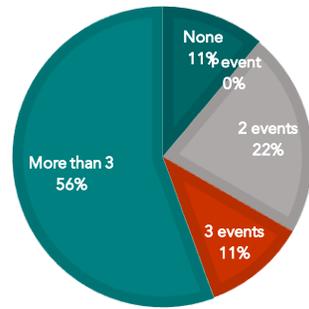


2018: Harambee Fall 3 - PO participants: *"I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."*

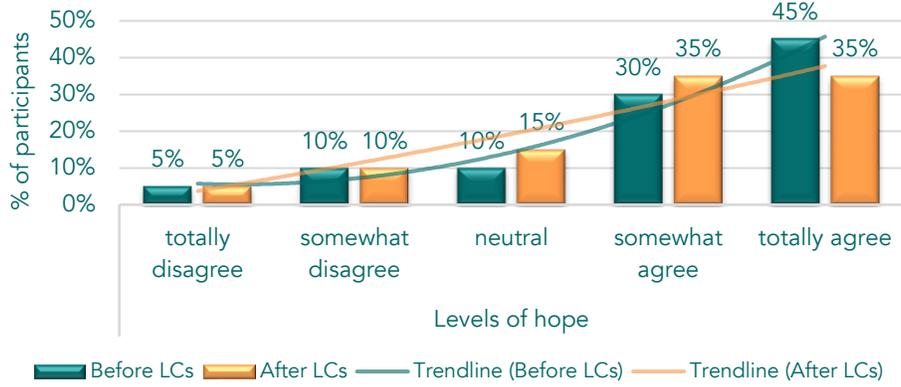


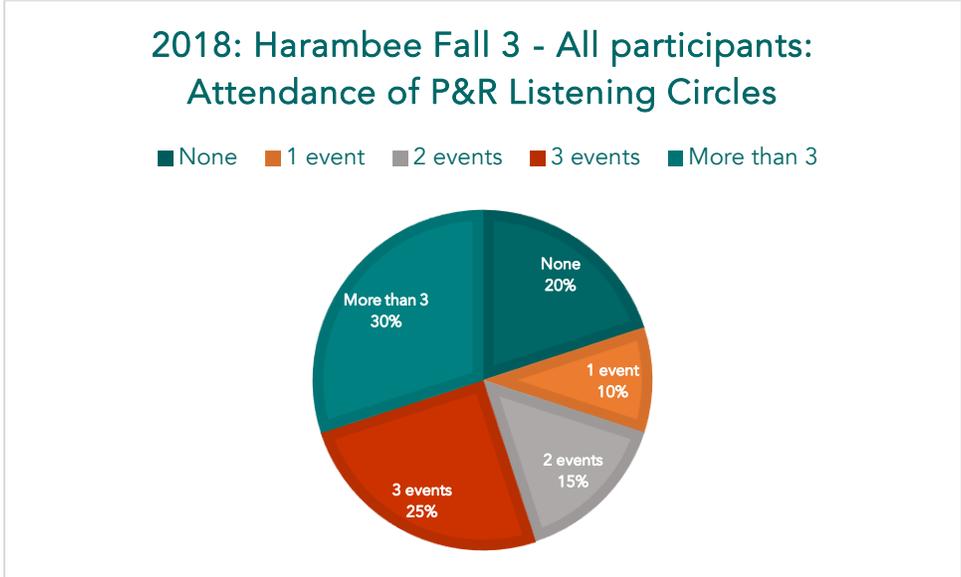
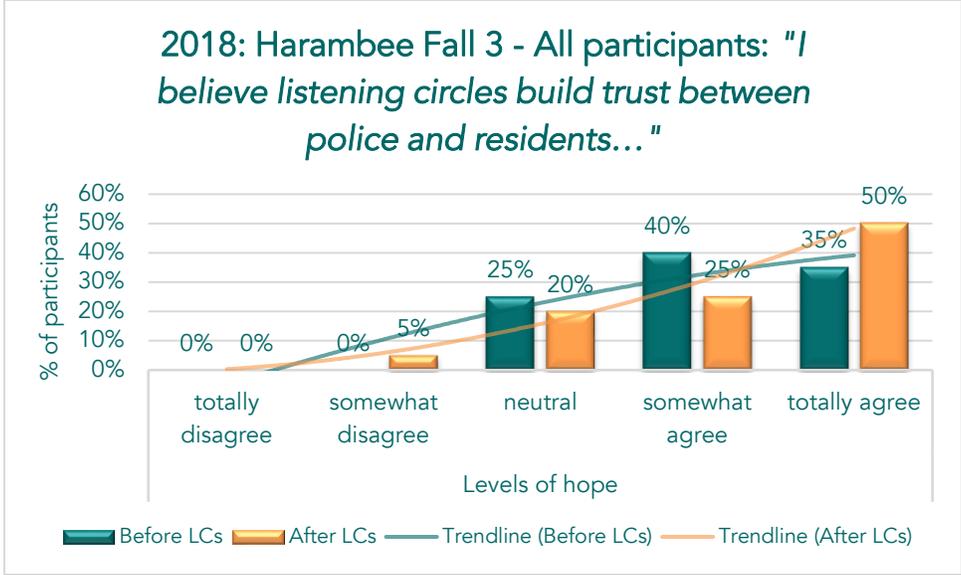
### 2018: Harambee Fall 3 - PO participants: Attendance of P&R Listening Circles

■ None   ■ 1 event   ■ 2 events   ■ 3 events   ■ More than 3



### 2018: Harambee Fall 3 - All participants: "*I believe community and police relations will improve...*"





**Qualitative Data**

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community or police today?

- Listening to the youth speak
- That everyone makes mistakes and a lot of people don't know much about us
- Meeting new people and having the opportunity to have a candid conversation with residents
- Listening to youth. I learned that our youth need to trust the police and others in the community.

- Keefe Ave school has a rap class.
- Communication with citizens
- Having time to sit and interact with people in the community. Yes that we are all human.
- Interacting with teens
- That everyone is not the same
- People must connect person to person, Break bread and relax
- Coming together, this was very helpful
- That there is hope, there is change
- That the police have hard times too
- I've learned that police are not all the same as people have so many negative comments but not many good comments
- That they take care of people
- Don't drive fast
- They treat people equally
- Speaking to people who I don't normally speak to

What questions or concerns are you leaving with?

- None
- None
- That we have to build a better relationship with the community.
- Are we showing the youth positive role models?
- If the community will ever be able to trust the police again.
- None
- None
- I have no question, I would love to see this again
- There is hope for tomorrow
- None
- None
- Being humble
- I'm afraid that police will not be nice
- Nothing
- Do y'all like y'all job
- N/A
- N/A

What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?

- Make the youth actively participate and speak

- None
- Keep up the good work.
- Continue here with small groups.
- Attempting to draw more people from the community that generally wouldn't attend a circle
- Better questions.
- Less structured conversations
- What's the changes that was made
- Creating such among offender and guard staff
- Different arrest outcomes
- Community sports
- What are some activities that can be built in the neighborhood to help trust between policemen and residents?
- Coming together
- I like to talk about how police solve problems
- How much do we trust police
- Answering questions
- Community
- N/A

## Listening Circle 1 – Annexes

***Question Round One:** Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?*

### 1.1. Group Escalation

- Once I had to go answer a call where a person had passed away. Gathering around outside the home were 25-30 people. I could not allow them inside to see the body. As more people were showing up, they began to cuss and kick at the door, and break bottles.
- At my old house, when I used to live in Sherman Park, I found that I couldn't go enjoy the park because of all the people rioting. I didn't understand what that was all about.
- While working with my four-member team at one of the big summer events there were people walking and passing by regularly then I noticed one young lady walked over and reached and grabbed another girl and began fighting with her. While the two girls were fighting more and more people came over and the situation kept escalating out of control
- I was walking around the neighborhood meeting people and I heard this woman from church with a friend of hers in the far distance talking very loudly to some teenage girls and the conversation became heated.
- The young man that was being detained began to get angrier the longer he was detained. The crowd around us grew larger and some began to shout out comments.
- This happened when I was about two or three years on the job. I was sent out to a domestic violence argument, the neighbors were there and everything, and instead of breaking it up they instigated it!
- This was a personal experience that I was in, it was a fight going on me and my guys was into it or whatever, but it ended in the shooting where somebody tried to shoot me and he ended up getting shoot himself, it was a crazy situation that I ended up doing a 12-year bit in prison for.
- There was a school basketball game one time where people arguing over a bad call they were all friends, but it got out of hand they were ready to fight each other.
- Just yesterday, I responded to an auto collision call, the victim (person not at fault) thought the police wouldn't assist them because the other person was white it was a really bad car accident and third parties from the family of the person that got hit kind of automatically thought that the police would take the side of the white person that hit them I feel like it got out of hand for no reason I was just trying to help.
- Three years ago, there was a fight down at Juneteenth. It was some youngsters, like they was [sic] about eighteen or nineteen. There were like forty people standing around with their phones out no one was trying to break it up though and it was crazy because most of them were adults this was like in front of a bar.

- Two years ago, my brother's girlfriend and him [sic] had been fighting all day. Anyway it escalated so bad that she broke all the dishes in my house and called her mom over and they came over and fought my whole family. They pulled my mom's hair out and beat up her boyfriend
- Before the Riots in Sherman Park, I had noticed a week or two before the youth were running around out of control and smoking weed on people's front porches and they seemed all hyped up? I called the police to notify them of my concerns but they did not seem interested? One week later the riots took place...I believe it could've been prevented?
- Kids on Facebook, chatting back and forth on social media...he-said-she-said turned into a senseless killing at the lakefront. I was there when the fourteen-year-old was shot because of Facebook threats.

## 1.2 One-on-One Escalation

- One time, after work, I was hanging out, and saw two guys talking. They were arguing, actually. Apparently one guy owed the other some money. The other guy was telling him he needed that money, but he wasn't going to rob him for it, even though he did have a gun. He pulled the gun to show it, and then proceeded to say that as a matter of fact maybe he should rob him anyway. So, I had to intervene. I reminded the guy with the gun about his daughter. I asked him to think about what would happen to her if he went to jail. Think about some other man raising your daughter. I was able to calm him down and got him a drink. It's about helping people see the context and keep things in perspective with the bigger picture.
- About a month ago inside of a store on the east side I witnessed an argument between two young ladies that continued to escalate for ten minutes. There was a man that tried to come in between to de-escalate the situation, but he was not successful because the child that one of the ladies was carrying had gotten hurt.
- My mom and I were at the laundromat and as we were coming out we saw a lady arguing with another lady who was sitting in a car. The lady inside the car threw a cup of water at the lady standing outside as they continued to argue.
- I was at open gym playing basketball and one guy fouled another guy and they starting [sic] arguing. Security came over and broke it up and put one of the guys out of the gym.
- At school I saw a boy and girl get into a fight because the boy spit water on the girl.
- I was at the park the other day and there was a fight about some basketball shoes. The fight happened because someone came to the park with somebody else's shoes on that were missing meaning that he stole them and tried to pass them off as his.
- I witnessed somebody on basketball court get fouled and there was pushing and shoving then the guy went to his car and got a gun and started shooting.
- We were at an outdoor event at a park and everything was going well. Then all of the sudden a guy went and got his gun and shot his girlfriend dead right in front of us! He

just stood there and no one tried to take the gun away...he thought his girlfriend was making eye contact with one of the band members!

### 1.3 Other Incidents of Escalation

- When I was an officer, I saw many situations that escalated because of someone being disrespectful, whether that was an officer or a resident.
- I was riding my bicycle and I stopped to assist with a traffic stop. The young man that was being detained began to get angrier the longer he was detained. The crowd around us grew larger and some began to shout out comments. After finally getting the handcuffs on the young man and putting he inside vehicle the crowd began to disperse.
- This was a personal experience that I was in. It was a fight going on, me and my guys was into it or whatever, but it ended in the shooting where somebody tried to shoot me and he ended up getting shoot himself. It was a crazy situation that I ended up doing a twelve-year bit in prison for.
- Just yesterday, I responded to an auto collision call, the victim (person not at fault) thought the police wouldn't assist them because the other person was white it was a really bad car accident and third parties from the family of the person that got hit kind of automatically thought that the police would take the side of the white person that hit them I feel like it got out of hand for no reason I was just trying to help.
- There was a conflict one time because a person was jealous because I was friends with someone else and tried to start a fight with them out of that jealousy
- At my age I have seen a lot... a young man was running from someone in our neighborhood. It was somebody after him that pulled out a gun and just shot and killed him in broad daylight this happened in our neighborhood a few years ago and it was one of the most horrible things I've ever saw.
- Kids on Facebook, chatting back and forth on social media...he-said-she-said turned into a senseless killing at the lakefront. I was there when the fourteen-year-old was shot because of Facebook threats.
- Five summers ago, my cousins stole a vehicle which the police tried to stop but a chase began, he kept driving and I jumped out at a turn, the car crashed on Capitol and my cousin split his head in two and died and my nephew died in the hospital later.
- Some youth stole a mini-van for joyriding and a thirteen-year-old girl ended up dead in a crash!

### 1.4 Not Escalation but Violent

- I saw a car crash last week Friday. (But it didn't escalate or de-escalate really, it just occurred as a traumatic event, and people responded to handle it. Maybe that's how more interactions could be understood, giving the benefit of the doubt that maybe these

things just happen sometimes, and it's more important to fix the immediate problem than to find fault?)

- At my age I have seen a lot... a young man was running from someone in our neighborhood. It was somebody after him that pulled out a gun and just shot and killed him in broad daylight this happened in our neighborhood a few years ago and it was one of the most horrible things I've ever saw.
- My eleven-year-old brother and I were walking to the [sic] and I saw someone get shot and it was sad!
- My cousin was out walking and tried to cross a busy street but was hit by not one not two but three cars! And they all drove away...none stopped to check on her
- Me and my grandmother say some guys rob an old lady of her purse at the gas station and she fell down and had to go to the hospital

### 1.5 Participant Attempt to De-Escalate

- Once I had to go answer a call where a person had passed away. Gathering around outside the home were 25-30 people. I could not allow them inside to see the body. As more people were showing up, they began to cuss and kick at the door, and break bottles. Well, I know the question didn't ask about deescalating, but the way I deescalated was to find someone older, respected, who knew everyone there, to help everyone understand.
- One time, after work, I was hanging out, and saw two guys talking. They were arguing, actually. Apparently one guy owed the other some money. The other guy was telling him he needed that money, but he wasn't going to rob him for it, even though he did have a gun. He pulled the gun to show it, and then proceeded to say that as a matter of fact maybe he should rob him anyway. So, I had to intervene. I reminded the guy with the gun about his daughter. I asked him to think about what would happen to her if he went to jail. Think about some other man raising your daughter. I was able to calm him down and got him a drink. It's about helping people see the context and keep things in perspective with the bigger picture.
- Three years ago, there was a fight down at Juneteenth. It was some youngsters, like they was [sic] about eighteen or nineteen. There were like forty people standing around with their phones out no one was trying to break it up though and it was crazy because most of them were adults this was like in front of a bar. Me and my friend broke it up and after everything was good the police rolled up and they didn't want to hear me out at all in fact they just ignored me they looked right past me and they picked people at random to arrest. And the adults there just watched! This was a horrible situation that was first of all escalated for no reason because grown-ups didn't get involved and the police in my opinion didn't do their job properly!
- While working with my four-member team at one of the big summer events there were people walking and passing by regularly then I noticed one young lady walked over and

reached and grabbed another girl and began fighting with her. While the two girls were fighting more and more people came over and the situation kept escalating out of control and my team of officers moved in quickly and began the de-escalation of the situation.

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**Question Round Two:** *“What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighborhood?”*

### **2.1 Increase Police Involvement**

- When stuff happens, the police need to come and come right away instead of taking their sweet time!
- We have to learn to call the police when something dangerous happens instead of just standing around.
- Take them to jail! Call the police and warn them of [the] situation happening.
- Take them to jail! The police need to have more undercover cops to catch people speeding in the neighborhoods putting everybody lives at risk!
- More people should call 911 before it escalates and the police can defuse the situation before it blows up!
- BLOCK WATCH. They are positive and each district has liaison officer to work with communities.” “In the old days we had third shift ride-alongs with the police.
- We should come together and MORE bikes on patrol in the neighborhoods!

### **2.2 Take Initiative to De-Escalate**

- Okay I'm going to just pick up from my story earlier. I think appropriate measures from the start are important first of all adults should have gotten involved during that fight (at Juneteenth) Residents have to recognize their power and it didn't help that they felt disrespected and the officers were not efficient when they just walked right by me and just grab random people that didn't help anything!
- In our neighborhoods when things happen, we can't be afraid to say something we have to be brave enough that when we see things escalating that we get to our kids right away we have to learn how to call for help instead of pressing record all the time on our phones.
- We going to have to work together and stop the violence we have to learn how to call for help when folks are fighting instead of just watching.
- Cell phone recording is a major problem I feel like instead of calling police people are taking out their phones and recording stuff I'm a talker for example and I have been able to deescalate a lot of situations with just words. Me and my partner had a situation not too long ago where everything went south because people wanted to stand around and aggravate and record the situation instead of trying to help people are instigating and saying things like “I wouldn't take that sh-- etcetera” “we're going to record this and put it on Facebook” “police brutality” where we went from talking... to a shouting match.. to

a situation where we had to use physical force! It didn't have to go that way and I don't feel like it would have went that way had things not been spotlighted at the way that it was!

- We have to learn to call the police when something dangerous happens instead of just standing around.

### 2.3 Trust and Respect

- So I passed last round, and I'm eager to contribute to the question this time. When I know something's escalating, typically what happens is that some person or person starts raising their voice. They start yelling. To get their attention, regain control of the situation, and deescalate, I just stay with a low voice, and speak softly. This lets them break out of the mode of screaming, and gets them to listen to me, carefully, and heed my words. It's really just about being respectful and trying to understand where the other person or people are coming from.
- Well, I've seen a lot of things, and it's really about respect and explaining the situation. There's three steps, or parts to this. First, I tell them how it is. Then I'll tell them what's going to happen, what I'm going to do or what I'm asking them to do. Lastly, I explain why that's the case.
- We'd ask that you try to treat every officer as an individual and give each one a fair chance to show their light.
- I agree that it's all about respect. One story I can share was from a few years ago, on Juneteenth Day. I was on my way to work, driving in my car. There was a traffic cone blocking my way to where I needed to go. A police car was right there, so I asked the police officer if he could please move this cone, so I can get to work. Now he could have just said no, I can't do that. But instead he responded with verbal abuse, calling me hateful names for even asking such a thing. I felt such disrespect from that police officer.
- I think being respectful and not rude would and will be helpful.
- Residents have to recognize their power and it didn't help that they felt disrespected and the officers were not efficient when they just walked right by me and just grab random people that didn't help anything!
- From my point of view this ain't going to change right away! The hood can't trust you right away (lookin' at officers) the police is going to have to learn how to be more strategic and less aggressive. We feel oppressed by the officers we have mental and drug abuse in our in our community. Take me for an example I'm an ex-con I am a victim of the predators of my day...the drug pushers and the gangs! A lot of time, folks prejudice me but I am a walking testimony! I feel their respect is key but it's going to be a long road to get to it.
- We need to remember the importance of respect we need to remember treating people as human beings is important. That's the problem with this rift between people.

Sometimes fear gets in the way of respect and I think that's why things are the way they are.

- When we first started biking in some neighborhoods, people were a little apprehensive but then they would meet us in an alley to talk about criminal activities going on, it's about trust.
- There must be more trust...Milwaukee is very segregated but my experience with the police here is that most of them are very cool...I was even stopped a couple of times.
- MORE consideration on both sides! I was acting like a knucklehead and snatched out of the car by officers...common sense and STOP TEACHING OUR KIDS TO HATE THE POLICE!

## 2.4 Communication

- In my view, in any interaction within the community, it should feel like talking to a family member.
- I was walking around a neighborhood in Milwaukee and talking to people in the neighborhood and this couple who were walking as well said I should get to know the police and build a good relationship.
- I think there must be better communication by educating each other (police and residents) I come to events like this because the education of things changes the whole attitude and prevents clashes and wrong understanding.
- We have to learn to communicate with each other and talk to each other when you sit down and talk to people you can see where the we have a uniform on or not that we have more in common then we don't have in common.
- When we first started biking in some neighborhoods, people were a little apprehensive but then they would meet us in an alley to talk about criminal activities going on, it's about trust.
- Meetings like this are good...listening circles to break down barriers. People can now call anonymous phone number and ask for officers not to come to their house.
- MORE consideration on both sides! I was acting like a knucklehead and snatched out of the car by officers...common sense and STOP TEACHING OUR KIDS TO HATE THE POLICE!
- I think Block Parties are a good way of coming together so everyone can see their kindness and generosity. This would help us get to know one another.
- We need to work together like brothers and sisters, police and neighbors have to develop real, real relationships before things escalate and not after.
- We going to have to work together and stop the violence we have to learn how to call for help when folks are fighting instead of just watching.

## 2.5 Other Suggestions

- MPD does a lot of de-escalation trainings. We spend a lot of time learning and practicing how to remain calm and handle various situations. We learn to listen in order to grab onto something, to learn something, to help the conversation.
- We start every day off with roll call. Often, we watch videos of officers doing things that they shouldn't be doing. We learn from these mistakes.
- Another example of cultural differences, and coming together in understanding, from my life is when I used to live nearby a thriving Jewish community. Every year they seemed to be doing some kind of renovation or remodeling, and I never understood why it was like this again every year. Then I asked one day, and a neighbor explained to me that it was just part of their religious observance.
- "Say Hello" I think an appropriate greeting is always good.
- I think either police or resident should be rude to each other.
- I was walking around a neighborhood in Milwaukee and talking to people in the neighborhood and this couple who were walking as well said I should get to know the police and build a good relationship.
- I think it would be good to remain calm and do what is asked. (Try not to push any buttons).
- I think staying calm, following directions and cooperating with the police will be helpful and not adding to the problem.
- I had an incident with bi-polar uncle and felt the police should be better prepared to respond to situations with people on, off medication!

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**Connected Conversation:** *"Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin."*

## 3.1 More Communication

- I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other.
- I think becoming more informed through community conversations.
- I think by building trust with each other.
- I thought the STOP Program that was once connected with MPS was a good tool for the students. It was a six week program of students talking it over but the program ended for several reasons.
- MPD has limited staffing at this time so we can't do a lot of social and recreational things like we use to.
- I believe you have to set a standard of conduct in the schools, neighborhoods, etc.
- I think the parents should volunteer at the schools to help with the children.
- I have a positive relationship with both because I introduce myself to the people in my community and police officers and I tell them thank you.

- I would suggest saying “Hello, how are you”?
- I would suggest letting them know you are there for them.
- “There’s a lot of fear out here because of the code and that’s why people don’t try to help.”
- I would help but I don’t know what they might do because I tried to help.

### 3.2 Addressing Issues of Bias

- I want to get more inside around that story that you told earlier about the accident because I've been in that situation where that happened myself where police come on the scene, and yeah there's obvious racial bias based on how I look and how the other person looked, and I feel like they jumped right to the other person’s side, and it's maddening because we're citizens too!
- Officer- Determining fault is not always easy. In fact, it's one of the tougher jobs that we have sometimes. We show up on the scene, we don't know anything about anything, and yeah I would be less than honest if I didn't say their personal biases come into play.
- Yes we do come in to bad situations with mistrust, and it works the other way too. I can't tell you how many houses I have been to where folks just wouldn't cooperate, and I felt like it was because I was white, and they didn't feel like I understood them. Sometimes when we get there to wall is already up!
- I see how you can say that because you look like an officer that I had to file a complaint against. You are not her obviously (laughing), but there are too many criminal officers out here, and officers with mental health issues that have killed others and themselves because everybody can't handle the job. I think that they need to be more heavy-handed on criminal officers. I think that sometimes there is excessive policing in our neighborhoods like for example, Juneteenth they come down with the armored vehicles intimidating people one time they ran some people over.
- It didn’t happen that way! I can tell you I have worked Juneteenth many times, and I was there when that situation broke out where the guy got hit by the police vehicle. People were really acting unruly and it was very hard to control.

### Other comments

- What’s it like being in the police?
- Oh, it has its ups and downs like any other line of work. Some days I just want to yell and scream. But other days feel great when I get to do my job well and help people.
- And how’s your life?
- I’m going to become a millionaire.
- Well, you’ve got to stay in school to become a millionaire!
- The teachers annoy me.
- The teachers annoy you? What do you think you do to them?

- I was the officer that the young man kept running from while I was trying to put cuffs on. More squads came and they watched out for me as the crowd grew.
- Social Media does not help the situation
- I feel like with the ability to text and being on the phones all the time are hindering us from having real conversations.
- MPD has limited staffing at this time so we can't do a lot of social and recreational things like we use to.
- I have a positive relationship with both because I introduce myself to the people in my community and police officers and I tell them thank you.

### 3.3 Parting Words

- ALL OFFICERS ARE NOT RACISTS! I was told wrong! Every officer is not bad!
- The police should carry more BUCKS cards with them to pass out.
- To ALL the young people... Hold your head up...You are the Future...Take the Helm!
- Gangsta Rap is causing a lotta gang banging that is going on!
- I appreciate my experience to heal. I feel we were all open & honest. Very Educational.
- I got to speak to young people. I feel it was a good night. I will definitely come back.
- Beneficial for the community. I'm glad that I came...something new!
- Relaxed
- Hopeful
- Open
- Good, Relaxed
- Informed
- Relaxed
- I feel like I want to know more.
- I feel a sign of hope
- This is a great opportunity, because how often do young people get the occasion to say their piece in a public space, and adults just listen to whatever they have to say? Don't pass up your chance to speak.
- It was so nice to meet and talk with you all.
- I hope we meet again someday.
- If people just know how to treat each other right... That'll be the key. I've been here since 1968. I've got knits and ties all over the place.
- After this whole experience, I learned that everything happens for a reason. I was thinking about it and it's not really your guys' fault that my family member was murdered. Maybe not all crimes can be solved, or at least not right away. I should try to treat people as individuals and give everyone their fair chance.

## Listening Circle 2 – Annexes

**Question Round One:** *“Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What's something that you enjoy doing together?”*

### 1.1 Family as friends

- My grandma. She lives in Georgia. We have long telephone conversations that I really enjoy a lot. She has a lot of wisdom to share with me.
- My homie is like my brother. We like to play hoops.
- The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door and we did that on purpose. We talk every day and laugh and cry together. We support each other, and we share meals. She's a better cook! She always has plenty of food. When my sister comes over, she says that I never cook enough. She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality. We can get angry with each other and then we come back together. Friendship means that you can say things to each other that you can't with everybody. Trust is important. I've had relationships without trust and it made me withdraw. I've had people who I thought were my best friend and they were not, because of trust. As you get older you don't need a lot. With my sister I don't like to shop so we shop together, and I hate exercise, but we do go to the gym together. Sometimes we go out to dinner.
- I enjoy playing basketball. I enjoy playing video games with my cousins. I enjoy going to play with my cousins. When I spend time with my cousins it makes me feel good.
- I like spending time with my family because they show that they care about me. I like to hang around them. We liked going to the park. I like talking to them and being around them. Yeah, we just like talking and going to the park.
- Friendships that mean a lot to me are my family and my friend Denisha. I enjoyed being around them because there's less drama. We go on outings, take the kids to the park. I like the support and the company. Even when we get mad we're still there for each other. I like hanging out the grownups and going out. We go out to eat and to the bar. We're always sitting around playing cards at the park and barbecuing which now that it's cold I will be in the house more.
- I enjoy the same as what the others have said. I really enjoy family holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of the aunties will rotate cooking food, the nieces and nephews will bring side dishes. We like to spend time together have fellowship with each other and spend time catching up. Sometimes we will be watching basketball or relaxing and talking. Some might be in the other room listening to music. It's very happy and comfortable to be around family. Sometimes I'll bring friends over and they say “Man I like this. These are good times”. It's important to be around family. Other close

relationships that mean a lot to me include some people I can talk to about my day about work what is going on and they're a safe person to talk to. These are people I like to go to the Bucks games with or the Brewers games. It's fun, stress free and relaxing. Some of those same friends I also go fishing and hunting with. It's peaceful and I enjoyed being with somebody that I can trust and depend on. A friendship is someone who likes you and that is important. We need someone in our life that we can talk to or even text. Someone who can tell when you are down and even brighten your day just by sending a text. Sometimes you can feel it if you really know that person. It's important and it means a lot to me, friendship. Having family and a few friends, we need that to get us through. Everyone has a bad day, so we need someone who we can depend on thick or thin.

- I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home we can tell if the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family. I really love hiking outdoors and she loves to fish and hike with me. It's really nice to have that person, starting as friends and then turn into family. I also have friends, guys from the military unit, that are important to me. My family is close but to go away to training and have that group there, it's a very special bond. It was important for me to have good relationships when I was the military and, in the police, the people that I work with.
- I have a close friendship with my cousin. We do everything with each other. I was homeless, and we got close. We like to play basketball and football together.
- My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs, but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.
- I enjoy my friendship with my nephew.
- I like hanging out with my mother and going around with her and seeing so many beautiful things.
- I am friends with my cousin. We like to jump off the garage.
- I have a friend that moved to California. We get together whenever we can and meet for a glass of wine. My husband is my friend too. Sometimes he will have dinner ready. I can talk to him about anything.
- I play games with my cousin. We sit out and play games, play basketball.
- My sister. I consider her my friend. She lives in Minneapolis. We like to hang out and do anything. She does all the cooking and I just watch her make the magic. We were roommates together in college, too. We can talk about anything. We help each other see what can't be seen.

## 1.2 Trusted Confidants

- The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door and we did that on purpose. We talk every day and laugh and cry together. We support each other, and we share meals. She's a better cook! She always has plenty of food. When my sister comes over, she says that I never cook enough. She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality. We can get angry with each other and then we come back together. Friendship means that you can say things to each other that you can't with everybody. Trust is important. I've had relationships without trust and it made me withdraw. I've had people who I thought were my best friend and they were not, because of trust. As you get older you don't need a lot. With my sister I don't like to shop so we shop together, and I hate exercise, but we do go to the gym together. Sometimes we go out to dinner.
- I enjoy the same as what the others have said. I really enjoy family holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of the aunties will rotate cooking food, the nieces and nephews will bring side dishes. We like to spend time together have fellowship with each other and spend time catching up. Sometimes we will be watching basketball or relaxing and talking. Some might be in the other room listening to music. It's very happy and comfortable to be around family. Sometimes I'll bring friends over and they say "Man I like this. These are good times". It's important to be around family. Other close relationships that mean a lot to me include some people I can talk to about my day about work what is going on and they're a safe person to talk to. These are people I like to go to the Bucks games with or the Brewers games. It's fun, stress free and relaxing. Some of those same friends I also go fishing and hunting with. It's peaceful and I enjoyed being with somebody that I can trust and depend on. A friendship is someone who likes you and that is important. We need someone in our life that we can talk to or even text. Someone who can tell when you are down and even brighten your day just by sending a text. Sometimes you can feel it if you really know that person. It's important and it means a lot to me, friendship. Having family and a few friends, we need that to get us through. Everyone has a bad day, so we need someone who we can depend on thick or thin.
- I met my friend at my last job. We share core values, so I trust her opinions. I can vent to her when something is bothering me, and she will hear me out. When something good is happening, she cheers me on. I can trust that she will keep my confidence.
- My husband is my friend too. Sometimes he will have dinner ready. I can talk to him about anything.
- I have a few friends. Two of them, I have been friends with for 14 years - half of my life. We have been through so much together. I can tell her anything and she is non-judgmental. What do we talk about? Anything. We do everything together.

- My sister. I consider her my friend. She lives in Minneapolis. We like to hang out and do anything. She does all the cooking and I just watch her make the magic. We were roommates together in college, too. We can talk about anything. We help each other see what can't be seen.

### 1.3 Long-Time Friends

- I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home, we can tell if the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family. I really love hiking outdoors and she loves to fish and hike with me. It's really nice to have that person, starting as friends and then turn into family. I also have friends, guys from the military unit, that are important to me. My family is close but to go away to training and have that group there, it's a very special bond. It was important for me to have good relationships when I was the military and, in the police, the people that I work with.
- I have a friend at school. We were always close. I like to learn with him, play with him and have a good time.
- I have a friend I grew-up with. I lived with him. We do everything together, but he didn't come tonight.
- My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs, but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.
- Me and my best friend have been together all our lives. We like to travel together out of town and out of the country. My favorite places so far were Mexico and Jamaica. She wants to go to Ghana next.
- My best friend of 16 years is deployed overseas right now but I enjoy doing facetime with him and my daughter because that's her God Father.
- I have a group of women friends. We have known each other for a long time - we've been friends since the 60's. I call them my Jazz ladies. We like to go out and listen to Jazz music together.
- I have a few friends. Two of them, I have been friends with for 14 years - half of my life. We have been through so much together. I can tell her anything and she is non-judgmental. What do we talk about? Anything. We do everything together.

### 1.4 Shared Common Interests

#### 1.4.1 Sports and Exercise

- My homie is like my brother. We like to play hoops.
- The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door and we did that on purpose. We talk every day

and laugh and cry together. We support each other, and we share meals. She's a better cook! She always has plenty of food. When my sister comes over she says that I never cook enough. She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality. We can get angry with each other and then we come back together. Friendship means that you can say things to each other that you can't with everybody. Trust is important. I've had relationships without trust and it made me withdraw. I've had people who I thought were my best friend and they were not, because of trust. As you get older you don't need a lot. With my sister I don't like to shop so we shop together, and I hate exercise but we do go to the gym together. Sometimes we go out to dinner.

- I enjoy playing basketball. I enjoy playing video games with my cousins. I enjoy going to play with my cousins. When I spend time with my cousins it makes me feel good.
- I have a close friendship with my cousin. We do everything with each other. I was homeless and we got close. We like to play basketball and football together.
- I enjoy my friendship with my nephew. I enjoy playing basketball with him, he's a lot of fun.
- I enjoy the seniors at the fitness gyms doing exercises and taking care of themselves.
- I enjoy walking with my friends at the lake front.
- We play kickball together with my friends.
- We sit out and play games, play basketball.

#### 1.4.2 Arts and Culture

- Carol, my friend. She is like a Godmother to me. A Wa'a (Ojibwe) She helps me on my path. We enjoy Native American traditional functions...Pow Wow's, community-supporting activities.
- J.T. My best friend. He came from Kentucky. We do theatre together. We were in First Stage together. I've always been here for him since he got here. We hang out, talk about girls.
- My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.
- I have a group of women friends. We have known each other for a long time - we've been friends since the 60's. I call them my Jazz ladies. We like to go out and listen to Jazz music together.

#### 1.4.3 Travel

- I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home we can tell if

the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family. I really love hiking outdoors and she loves to fish and hike with me. It's really nice to have that person, starting as friends and then turn into family. I also have friends, guys from the military unit, that are important to me. My family is close but to go away to training and have that group there, it's a very special bond. It was important for me to have good relationships when I was the military, and in the police, the people that I work with.

- Me and my best friend have been together all our lives. We like to travel together out of town and out of the country. My favorite places so far were Mexico and Jamaica. She wants to go to Ghana next.

### Other

- My best friend, Jada. We enjoy face time together, hanging out. We go to the library together.
- I have a friend at school. We were always close. I like to learn with him, play with him and have a good time.
- I have a friend I grew-up with. I lived with him. We do everything together but he didn't come tonight.
- Me and my friend were enemies at first. We grew-up, matured and now things are much better. We can talk through issues and she appreciates my flaws. I also have another best friend – I am friends with myself.
- My best friend and I like doing Hotel Parties where we get to use the hot tubs and the swimming pools.
- Play together

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### Question Round Two: "What does a real friendship look like to you?"

#### 2.1 Trust

- Trust. The person always has your back. We have similar interests and probably come from the same background. Or maybe different.
- Trust. You have spent time with them and have memories together. Someone you can count on, that is reliable.
- Trust. Having trust between you let's it be a relationship. You have the same interests, but not necessarily all of them.
- A real friendship is somebody I can trust. Someone I like. It is somebody that I like to spend time with. It's like when I was craving something sweet to eat and my mom baked a cake. It's about hanging out with friends and having a good time, laughing and joking. And no one is getting mad. Friendship is about bringing up memories and sharing and

joking. It's a good time. Friendship is also sharing time with their families. The kids become friends and grow up together. It involves a lot of trust and loving one another. It's also about understanding each other. And you know when to stop joking and not to cross the line. Sometimes people cross the line and that's not friendship.

- Well I'm really glad I went towards the end so I can steal some ideas from others. A real friend is somebody who has the same interests. It's also somebody who listens as well as talks. They are trustworthy and not judgmental. They accept you for who you are. A friend is positive, has a positive influence. When you talk to them you feel better versus a person who makes you feel worse. You don't need them. They're not someone who brags or gossips. I hate gossip, unless it's really juicy. A friend is there for you no matter what and is there for your interest. They are someone that you are sure they care about you and love you. You know that and you don't have to guess. They're not overly sensitive or easily bruised. They don't have a chip on their shoulder. I don't have time for that
- It is somebody that you share with and you invite them over to your house. You let them go places with you. You do stuff with them. And they don't talk about you behind your back. They are someone who looks up to you and makes sure that no one does anything to you
- A real friend is someone you can trust and they trust you. They support you and they are there for you. You can trust the person. And it is about spending time with somebody
- A friend will love you unconditionally. They will speak positivity into you. Friendship is loyalty, unity, honesty, trust and growing together
- Friendship is being honest, helpful and cheerful
- A real friend is someone you can trust with your thoughts and secrets and not have them go behind your back and tell your business.
- A real friend always tells the truth.
- I consider a friend someone who you can trust and someone who is not judge-y. Because if someone judges you, you won't be able to be open and honest.
- Someone who is loyal.
- Someone that you can trust, and you can relate to.
- Friends that are happy to see each other. They really see each other for who they are. No matter what, we all call each other. We can confide the most personal things and go to each other for advice. There will be no judgement. We are casual when we are together. Personalities are alike.

## 2.2 Helpful and Reliable

- Trust. You have spent time with them and have memories together. Someone you can count on, that is reliable.
- When they are there for you when you need them most. They don't let you down.
- A real friendship is someone who is always there. It is someone who won't turn their back on you. A real friendship is someone you can count on. A real friendship is someone that

you can trust. A real friendship of someone you enjoy spending time with. It is someone to talk to you when you're going through tough times and you don't have to worry about them telling others. A real friendship as someone who calls you up, out of the blue, just to check in on you.

- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on
- I real friend listens to you and helps you when you are in need. They like who you are and don't try to change you.
- Friends have your back through whatever. It is someone you can call when you need them.
- Pretty much the same as others have said: Someone you can call when you are going through stuff. Someone who will step-in and help re-direct you
- A real friend is sort of like your conscience, they will always be there. A real friend is the kind that will help you move even though they would rather be doing something else.
- Someone that you both have anything to give to each other. Makes you feel good to say something nice to each other.
- A person who is emotionally reliable. They can have a bad day and it's ok. You will find friends that will last you a lifetime. After not having seen each other in a while, you can go back and pick it up. People that I have known since grade school.

### 2.3 Good Communication

- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on
- I real friend listens to you and helps you when you are in need. They like who you are and don't try to change you.
- A real friend is playful and always willing to communicate.

- A real friendship never grows old. I have friends that I grew up with and we are still in communication with one another.
- A real friend accepts you for who you are and each of you are able to give constructive feedback.

## 2.4 Non-Judgmental and Understanding

- All the others made good points. Also, they are non-judgmental and take me where I am at the moment. You spend time with the person.
- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on.
- Well I'm really glad I went towards the end, so I can steal some ideas from others. A real friend is somebody who has the same interests. It's also somebody who listens as well as talks. They are trustworthy and not judgmental. They accept you for who you are. A friend is positive, has a positive influence. When you talk to them you feel better versus a person who makes you feel worse. You don't need them. They're not someone who brags or gossips. I hate gossip, unless it's really juicy. A friend is there for you no matter what and is there for your interest. They are someone that you are sure they care about you and love you. You know that, and you don't have to guess. They're not overly sensitive or easily bruised. They don't have a chip on their shoulder. I don't have time for that.
- A friend does not stand in judgement. They listen to understand. They will not necessarily agree but they will understand. A friend will be consistent, stay around and be there. You are not always in battle because you have the same core values.
- I consider a friend someone who you can trust and someone who is not judge-y. Because if someone judges you, you won't be able to be open and honest.
- Friends that are happy to see each other. They really see each other for who they are. No matter what, we all call each other. We can confide the most personal things and go to each other for advice. There will be no judgement. We are casual when we are together. Personalities are alike.
- A real friendship is somebody I can trust. Someone I like. It is somebody that I like to spend time with. It's like when I was craving something sweet to eat and my mom baked a cake. It's about hanging out with friends and having a good time, laughing and joking. And no one is getting mad. Friendship is about bringing up memories and sharing and joking. It's a good time. Friendship is also sharing time with their families. The kids

become friends and grow up together. It involves a lot of trust and loving one another. It's also about understanding each other. And you know when to stop joking and not to cross the line. Sometimes people cross the line and that's not friendship.

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- A friend does not stand in judgement. They listen to understand. They will not necessarily agree but they will understand. A friend will be consistent, stay around and be there. You are not always in battle because you have the same core values.

#### Other

- A friend will love you unconditionally. They will speak positivity into you
- Basically, what she said: Someone who goes out of their way to make sure you're okay
- Someone that you both have anything to give to each other. Makes you feel good to say something nice to each other.
- A person who is emotionally reliable. They can have a bad day and it's ok. You will find friends that will last you a lifetime. After not having seen each other in a while, you can go back and pick it up. People that I have known since grade school.

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?"*

#### 3.1 More Communication

- More of these conversations.
- More outreach to young people to get them involved.
- There needs to be more interaction, so we can get to know each other.
- More events with police and community.
- More basketball with cops.
- These circles need more advertising. I learned about this from Facebook.
- Police don't come to the schools to just say hi. They only come for incidents. They should come to just say hi.
- By having listening circles. These are good to have in the community and to have the officers in the community. We are human too. Sometimes people see the uniforms on and they look at us differently. We have families like parents and kids. We care. We are

all human. We are good at listening and these circles help. People may not feel comfortable around police and this is a good way to bridge that gap.

- It helps to sit and break bread with officers in the community. I don't know what else I can ask officers to do—come to my job or school? I think it would help me see officers as helpers rather than the problem.
- I think it all goes back to communication. I want people to have an opportunity to say what happened to their family, so I can understand why people don't like police. That would give me a chance to try and explain what might have happened from my viewpoint.
- After Dontre Hamilton police did a lot of activities to get to know people. There was a lot of outreach and one-on-one discussions in a larger setting. I think that needs to start happening again.
- I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other.
- I think becoming more informed through community conversations.
- I think we should do more talking and breaking bread together.
- I think there should be more communication between us and the officers because they are human beings just like us.
- I agreed with the comment on communication and not yelling on both ends.
- I'd like to play basketball with the police
- We need to take the time to learn about people. To get a different perspective.
- It will help us be a better community when we talk to teach other.

### 3.2 "We're all human."

- Not all police are bad. We work a 9-5, we have families and kids, I don't want to shoot anybody.
- We are not superheroes. We are human. I grew-up in the same community and I made some of the same mistakes. I got through my pain and my journey.
- I think there should be more communication between us and the officers because they are human beings just like us.
- We are all people, just like everyone else.
- We all have friends and a family and kids.
- We keep saying "those people" when people don't get to know each other. We are all human.
- We are all onions and when we peel each back each layer, you are more than what you wear. We all believe what we see.

### Other

- It has to work both ways.
- Maybe a youth representative of the police to talk to other youth. I'm more likely to listen to someone my own age.

- The Christmas “Shot with a Cop” is a good thing.
- Not for all, the police has a Facebook page it’ll show new graduates. It’ll also show information on someone who needs to be caught for a crime. That is a big thing I have noticed in the district. And I understand. Neighbors are afraid to call the police. I have not had to have that experience [being afraid of neighbors]. Like if you see drug deals in your neighborhood. You can call and say to the dispatcher ‘don’t come to my house’ and they won’t. The people won’t know a neighbor called the police. We can just say we drove by and stopped. Another big thing, not everything you see on TV we do. A lot of that they make up. I don’t get that. Sometimes when we go to crimes and people say why don’t you do this, this and this! We can’t do those things. It is hard. We are trained on very specific things. We don’t have drones that can fly in.
- I just had a problem this last week and I got mad. I went to the station on 46th and North, and they said I had to go to Sojourner Truth house. I went there and they said I had to go to the court. I went there and said I have a woman following me. Then they told me to go to the fifth district police. The police there made me so mad. I cussed him out and then left the building when they said they can’t help me! But I did file a report.
  - We are doing the best we can. Sometimes victims are screaming at us and it is hard to help. Sometimes we go to a call and people are bouncing off the walls with anger and we tell them to calm down. Then they tell us to leave. Like if we have to go to an event where someone is shot and we are swarmed by the family. We often cannot share information. I have not had to go through that situation myself [family member being shot]. The detectives are the ones that can talk to people and answer questions.
  - What were you trying to get?
  - A restraining order. I maced her.
  - This is what you need to do...
  - But I am at my kids school until 5:20 and the court is closed. I have the pink slip.
  - Oh you have the pink slip
  - Try to go in when your kids don’t have school, like Monday.
  - Would one of your family member be able to watch the kids?
  - I can take them
  - [Facilitator intervened and suggested they meet outside the circle for specific advice or police reporting procedure.]
- How does it feel to work in a dangerous field—especially like in Milwaukee?
  - I grew up here so I know what to expect. I get a call and I have to go in. I don’t think about the danger.
  - I don’t think about the danger either. Who else is going to do this job? Sometimes after-the-fact when I’m safe I think, Oh My God...I can’t believe that happened!

- Do you like your job?
  - Overall I like it but not always. Coming to events like this is the good part. We don't get calls saying come and see the "A" I got in school. We are usually there at a bad time or the worse time in someone's life. It's saddening...
- How many high speed chases have you been in?
  - I have been in about 20. About 50% get away.
  - I don't do many. Some got away. I was never the initial car. I sometimes stop for safety.
- What prompted your question?
  - It happens all the time going up Locust.
- How does that make you feel? Why are you laughing?
  - I just assume it makes you pretty mad when people get away.
  - I don't feel mad or pissed. I feel bad. Anyone could be on the street and get hurt.
- I find social media is so negative. I'd like to see more stories presented about the positives of police, so people can see that we're human.
- I need to see more positivity. I don't like watching the news because it's negative and always talking about killings, beatings...So I go to social media but I have to figure out what's true and what's not.
- It's not just that you guys have to work at it, we do too.
  - Very well put.
  - I never met any cool police officers.
  - You mean until today?
  - Yeah...I have an uncle who is a sheriff and I don't even like to hang out with him.
- I think people do a job because they want to see positives in the community. It's just like with some rappers who just want to shine a light on a problem with their words – just like Martin Luther King. They are helping in the best way they know how.
- What can I call you for? In Glendale I can call the police if I get locked out of my car, if I need help changing my tire, etc.
- They are probably not as busy as the Milwaukee police.
- Actions speak louder than words. If I see officers doing good, I will believe they are good.
- What do you want the community to do to have a better view of you?
- After Dontre Hamilton police did a lot of activities to get to know people. There was a lot of outreach and one-on-one discussions in a larger setting. I think that needs to start happening again.
- What myths about police do you want cleared up?
- Not all police are bad. We work a 9-5, we have families and kids, I don't want to shoot anybody.

- In the black community I want to see us do better. How do you feel if you see someone who is deliberately making you look bad?
- Don't judge me by what someone else is doing. If someone in school is doing something wrong does that mean I should blame you?
- When we can't say something publicly, we still address the issue internally in the way we can.
- I think by building trust with each other.
- I believe both officers and residents have to be aware of their tone when speaking to one another.
- I think we should have more officers that walk or ride bikes to make the neighborhoods safer.
- I was triggered by the suggestion of more police walking or riding bikes to make neighborhoods safer.
- There was a young lady that I was trying to arrest at the high school and she was so upset, yelling, pushing, fighting. I tried to talk with her and asked her "why are you upset?" By talking to her, I got her to calm down and get into the back of the squad car. She was mad that she was being arrested in front of her friends. She felt she was being disrespected. Just by talking to her and asking her was wrong and listening to her, she eventually calmed down.
- What the media can do to you to blow out the human in each other
- My brother has mental problems. One time he got out of control and the police were called. They were able to take of him. He was jacked up on whiskey and they were able to take him to detox.
- It was nice to talk to everybody.

### Parting Words

- I enjoyed listening to the young people giving their feedback to the group.
- Hopeful
- I feel pretty good about the conversation.
- Great
- Great
- I like that I got some answers.
- Starting to heal
- More positive
- Good
- I feel good
- This was good.
- It's good for us to do these kinds of things .
- I'm glad I did this

- Keep up the work officers and community. Even if only one or two show up, you have the best interest.
- Just be human. Just like we are. I really heard that message here. We can be rowdy out there.
- I enjoyed coming and all the information. I will be back to a listening circle. It is one good positive in police and community building.
- It is nice to see all the residents come out. They care about bridging the gap and community relations. All cops aren't bad people.
- I think these are good discussions that need to be had. But I hope for action too.
- I got to talk to adults that didn't talk down to me.
- Very good conversation. I like hearing what youth have to say.

## Listening Circle 3 – Annexes

*Question Round One: What's a memorable situation you've had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?*

### 1.1 Parents and Teachers

#### Negative Experiences

- As a 16-year-old I had a classmate that stayed in a foster home. I called her home and my friend had run out. Her mother thought that I had planned it. The mother thought that I helped. The mother got quiet. She believed that I was a part of the plan. I had to tell her the truth. I felt bad that the mom did not believe me and had a negative opinion of me.
- My mother was my figure. We traveled to Chicago for dance troops. I didn't ask. I hopped on the bus without permission. My aunt beat me and sent me back to Milwaukee. My mom then beat me. I never acted out again. My parents are the authority.
- Me and my friend got into a fight. She hit her head and busted it. A teacher came to help. I felt sad for my friend.

#### Mixed Feelings

- I had a high school math teacher who suspended me for speaking up to stop some others from fighting. I was angry. But later I was asked to be the keynote speaker at a special event and felt good about that.

#### Positive Experiences

- When I was in high school we interacted with a mix of recruiters. I got a lot of inspiration. I don't have a specific example.
- My memorable situation with an authority figure was a reality check. I won first place in something and got stuck on that for a while. My grades started to slip because I lost focus. A teacher reminded me of my other responsibilities and got me back on track.
- I recall back in my college years one day I and some friends were sitting in front of the student union. As we sat there talking I noticed this prominent person walking towards me and it seemed as though he was actually coming towards me personally while he was talking and shaking hands with others. He stopped in front of me and asked, "Did you vote?" [and] "Why didn't you vote?" and then he went into the speech saying do you understand how many people died for your right to vote? He directed us to get up and we went around the campus getting students to vote. It was a powerful experience and from that day until now I cast my vote in each election.

## 1.2 Law Enforcement/Fire and Other Government Personnel

### Negative Experiences

- I was 21 or 22 and speeding on the freeway. I was pulled over by a State Patrol deputy, a lady. She asked me why I was in such a hurry and I told her I had to get to a college exam. It was my birthday and she noticed that when she looked at my license. When she gave me the ticket it was folded like a birthday card. I thought it was a warning so I thanked her for letting me off with a warning. She said, "No, it's a ticket. Happy Birthday." I thought it was very rude.
- My mama got in a fight with a neighbor. The police came. My mama got tazed and went to jail. Everybody felt bad and cried.
- I was walking to the store with friends and there was a shooting by the gas station. The police rolled up and searched us. We let that go. When we got home, we realized we had forgotten some things at the store so we went back – we drove that time. The police pulled us over saying they thought the vehicle was stolen. I think they waited for us to come out of the house so they could follow us. Then we were really irritated.
- Years ago I saw my brother get arrested for everything like robbing banks. The police came into the house and broke things while looking for him. I never had a father figure so my brother was like a father figure to me. It hurt my heart to see him treated that way.
- My experience happened in this neighborhood across the street. My cousin was outside making threats to a lady and she proceeded to call the police. The police came and tried to calm my cousin down but she just kept threatening and being confrontational with the officer. Eventually my cousin's arm was hurt, she was put in handcuffs and taken away. I cried because of what had happened.

### Mixed Feelings

- When I was in college, I had an experience with the law enforcement. There are two sides of a story. The two cops that were there: one was down to earth. He told me to relax about my tail light situation. I got to see both good/bad in the authority in same situation. Bad cop maybe had a bad day.
- As an 18-year-old I had a creepy car. A cop car pulled up and screamed at me. He also put me on the curb. I started going to school.
- I have always had good experiences with authority figures as an adult but not as a kid. A couple of officers taught me how I wanted to be as an officer. I could follow the good examples of the good officers or the bad examples of the bad officers. I don't want to share anything specific.

### Positive Experiences

- When I was in sixth grade my sister had an accident on the bus. My sister had rolled off the seat. They helped clean up my sister. The firefighters then and now are helpful. I have a good opinion about firefighters to this day.
- My cousin threw a rock at my hand. I had to find a police officer to help. I had to get stitches.
- When I was younger I was with a friend in a store. He was gathering cards that he collected and gave me some to put in my pocket. They fell out of my pocket and we were going to be arrested for shoplifting but after I explained what happened the officer let me off. I was grateful and relieved.
- It was about 24 years ago. I failed the background check to become a police officer because of my speeding record. At first I didn't know I could, but when I found out I appealed to the Fire and Police board. They listened to me and let me become a police officer. I felt very grateful.
- Growing up I had run-ins with good and bad cops. A detective came to my job to question me. My boss assumed that I had done something wrong. The detective thought my car had been used in a crime. I had the make and model of car they were looking for but it was not the same color. I had to leave work and take the detective to see my car. Once he saw that it could not have been the car he was looking for he apologized to me. I cooperated knowing I had not done anything wrong and I just went on with my life from there.
- I recall a day when the smoke detector at my home kept going off and I kept wondering who I should call. Finally, I decided I would call the police and as I was standing outside I saw an officer and I told him what was going on with my situation. The officer came inside my home and went through the house checking for smoke or trying to find out the reason the alarm started. The officer did an excellent job and he was very professional.
- I thought about a time before coming on the job as an officer I was downtown driving west at night and the light turned red and I drove through without stopping. I was pulled over and received a ticket, and while the officer was writing me the ticket I shared with him that I was on my way to the police academy soon. The ticket was worth 3 points from my license so I went to court and it was documented as a nonmoving violation. After I finished at the academy I was assigned to the officer that had given me the ticket and I reminded him of that night.
- I used to work for the county. We had an event at the War Memorial and I tried to set it up with a caterer who was familiar with the site. The caterer said they wouldn't accept the contract because the county had never paid them for an outstanding bill. I went to the authorities who could fix this and they paid the bill, after much talk. The caterer took our event. It was very satisfying.

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***Question Round Two: "How have you been grateful for someone in authority?"***

## **2.1 Parents, Family and God**

- My parents – they're always supportive. They understood me. They wish me happy holidays.
- My grandparents are my second set of parents. My parents don't have resources. I can go to my grandparents.
- My parents because I can talk to them about anything. There is nothing I couldn't talk to them.
- When I was going to go to my friend's house after dark my brother felt it was unsafe and made me come back.
- I'm grateful to my mom for everything she does.
- I am grateful to my sister, godmother and grandma. My grandmother showed me how to follow my dreams and to think before I speak.
- My dad built skills about technology in me. That's why I want to be an engineer.
- I am grateful for my mother who raised me well, as I was her only child. I am grateful for how she corrected me when I was wrong and taught me how to talk about things that was going on around me.
- Over the last two years I've developed a strong relationship with God. It got me through many hard times and keeps me going.
- I'm grateful to my mother and grandmother for instilling discipline in me. They taught me how to be the woman I should be and to develop the friendships I should have. They taught me values and morals but also let me figure out some things on my own.
- My dad was a strict Army veteran. I am grateful for him being hard on me. He helped me become a better parent. His discipline kept me out of trouble and I never even got a ticket. I was not grateful at the time but I am now.
- I am grateful to all the men in my family, or at least some of them. Most of the men in my family are pimps or drug dealers. I don't want to follow in their footsteps but I don't judge. I don't know how they got to a place where they decided to do those things but their example has shown me that I want something different.

## **2.2 Supervisors and Teachers**

- My teacher taught several classes. He was socially aware. He sparked an interest in social justice. I protested about everything...
- Common sense factors were that we read "knowledge is power." My best teacher said this. She was the backbone of my dancing career. She turned my vision for my education, career, and life.
- The sergeant in the Marine Corps was a teacher for me. I learned things for the police force. He called me [to] boot camp. I treat people with respect. I learned to have fun.
- I'm very grateful for the Director of Programming at where I work. I work two jobs and go to school. I get very stressed. She makes me take time to breathe and de-stress.

- My supervisors guided me in my career. They mentored me, help me to do paperwork, taught me about procedures... They were passing out knowledge to me.
- I am grateful to all my bosses of the past. I didn't always agree with them but I appreciate their decisions now.

### 2.3 Law Enforcement/Government

- I was playing with my sister when we were kids on a fence with an electric gate. The fence started up and cut my sister's hand in half. I was really scared and ran to find someone. I found a car and the man had a car phone. We called 911 and I didn't know where we were but the person helped me figure out where it was. They found us. I held her arm until they got there. She was OK.
- From [an] earlier story about shoplifting: I was grateful to the officer for giving me a break. It helped me decide to become a police officer. And I've seen that same officer there again.
  - I was dealing with the Milwaukee County Board of Building Trades. They are required to use minority businesses for 25 percent of their construction contracts. But they didn't because they said they didn't exist. A man who worked with me for many years helped to open the contracts up to minority businesses he found.
  - I have been grateful for so many people in authority. My first is one of the old chiefs of police here in Milwaukee. He was my uncle's neighbor and a very down -to-earth guy with a lot of power. When I became an officer I saw him and he remembered who I was and he was personable.
  - I remember Officer XX from my school who has the same last name as mine. I would see him in the hallway and he would give me a high five and talk with me for a little bit. I considered him a friend.
  - I am grateful for the officers because they do good work whether in solving crimes or being kind when I see them.
- Obama was an influence. I thought when he won, it was a joke. He showed there were no limits.

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***Connected Conversation:*** *"What's one thing you are grateful for about this community?"*  
*(One group discussed: "As a community, what is a specific step that can be taken to help get Milwaukee to the place of positive police/community relations? What things personally can you do to make the community better?")*

### 3.1 Trust and Gratefulness

- We as a community work together with police. I'm a Malcom X fan. I was raised not to trust officers. I think this should be refocused. I now trust officers to help others. Make places safer. The Harvest Festival was key.

- Do you trust District 5 police? I cannot generalize. I don't trust all my family members so.... Everyone has a different intent.
- I don't think you would give your word to protect people by taking the job and giving an oath if you didn't mean it.
- I do and don't. Some officers want to jump out and act bad.
- Yeah, I don't agree with all the decisions that some officers make but I talk with them. Most officers have told me they're happy to be here. I'm getting to know names and faces of people in the neighborhood and I hope you trust us to protect you.
- I am grateful I know my way around my community because this is where I grew up and I have lots of family around me here. I am grateful to know that there is always someone there for me.
- I still have friends in the neighborhood that I grew up with as I've been coming to this area of Harambee since high school. I noticed that some of the children and grandchildren of my friends now live on the block. I am grateful for the Bader Foundation building in Harambee and how they have embraced the neighbors.
- I am grateful and I like the revitalization in this community. My father used to talk to me about an old store called Gimbel Schusters and the Palmer House which was owned by a wealthy family and now I see this new building, Clinton Rose [Senior] Center. I am grateful for the captain of 5th District and the compassion he brings to the job.
- I am grateful for being in Harambee for 30 years now and personally not having had any problems. I enjoy my community even though the crime goes up and down. I am happy that if the police are called they come.

### 3.2 Change and Generations

- Chief Breier worked in a racist era. More beatings of black men. We came from an oppressive era. It was more difficult than Cicero, IL. This conversation today couldn't have happened. This session is healthy.
- An officer checked out our home when my mom passed away. A change is coming. There will be a connection with community and cops. It's a different atmosphere – respect in the community when there's respect for cops.
- We are at that space, it's time. I had a lot of anger when I was a kid. I grew up in a hostile environment.
- It takes a lot for me to stand up to my friends and say I'm not going to participate in everything they do.
- I used to be Mr. Popularity in school, and the kids would follow my lead.
- Do all of your friends know you're here tonight? Why are they not here?
- I was with my friends when I was asked to come here.
- I will be at the next meeting to see if they show.

### 3.3 Relationships with Law Enforcement

- I grew up around a tall officer named Mike. We had the Frank Jude and Ernie Lacy cases. My sister was assaulted by an officer. My sister went to jail .... Again, this is a two-sides

story. Officer Mike treated me with respect. I have been treated well and poorly. I see officers beating blacks. I have seen them save lives.

- I get to see how people interact and get to know people in the neighborhoods and parks.
- I'm a bike cop in summer. I get to see them (residents) more.
- When I see killings on TV it's hard to be grateful but I have to think positively. Look at all the teachers who returned to their classrooms after school shootings.
- The community is not bad but sometimes people do dumb things. If my family member got shot and the person who did it didn't go to jail my relatives are going to act dumb and retaliate. Only afterwards [will] they think about the consequences and then either go on the run or hide out.
- If you don't like officers and the job they do, step into their shoes and do it the way you believe it should be done.
- I want to see more of what you do in the community to make an impact as an officer.
- You can do a ride-along and see for yourself. No, it's not like the movie at all.
- I have never run from the police but I know some people get scared to the point where they make themselves look guilty.
- That's true.
- You should be a cop.
- You said I should be a cop but I don't want to fight. I have a sensitive side. I used to get suspended all the time in school to the point where my mom thought I was mentally ill. Now that I'm in touch with my sensitive side I just can't fight. I don't know my own strength. I don't know if I'm just going to hit someone or beat them to death.
- I don't like District 5 because I've been there too much.
- Doing something you shouldn't?
- Yeah.
- *Resident to officer: Where do you work?*

*Officer: I work as a TABS officer out of the academy and we cover all districts north and south. We spend a lot of time motivated and encouraging the students who are having some problems through TABS, Truancy Abatement [and] Burglary Suppression.*

### 3.4 Information and Responsibility

- I do things not in my job description. Videocams help. Do cops catch cases?
- Being a cop, people look from the outside in. I tell young guys that I grew up in the city and raised three kids here. In my day there was no social media. Your generation is dealing with information at the drop of a hat. We have to learn to filter. There is good news. People want to shoot up, deal drugs.... That's what I want to protect you from. Yes, sometimes you may get caught up in an investigation, but if you're not involved just give your name and move on.
- I think a lot of the violence is because we get information so quickly. It's hard to have time to stop and think. My mom used to say you go to street life and end up in jail or hell.

- The media doesn't give all the details so I understand why people might jump to conclusions.
- It is frustrating to me when I was there and know the details but see it presented in a skewed manner.
- Yeah, media can make it look like it was all one person.
- I sometimes wonder if kids are brainwashed by TV. Do they think TV shows are reality?
- I think it's the parent's responsibility to teach their kids reality and right from wrong.
- I think parents support and raise their kids but that they can't be blamed for everything their kids do. I used to do some bad things because bad things that happened to me and because I was following my friends.

### 3.5 Suggestions and Next Steps

- More beat patrols, especially in high crime areas.
- When we do patrol cars "3 deep" it is a strategy that people don't understand. It confuses people. But it really works for us.
- I think anything community-oriented helps. Cook-outs, etc.
- Recommendations on how to prevent crime helps.
- Just being outside the squad car is night and day difference. So much better.
- It's like voting, if you get out there and talk to people up close and personal it works better.
- We used to do more work in schools. It helped to get kids to see us in a different light. Unfortunately, everybody is too busy now.
- Respect one another, communicate better and say you're sorry if you were wrong.
- I think there should be more participation from the residents because nothing will get better if everyone is not engaged to find solutions and be better together.
- I feel the hearsay has to be addressed so the truth will bring healing and us together as a community.
- I think we need more events like this in the community. I think officers and residents coming to a safe place to have intimate conversations and learning we are all human. I think we can all benefit from the positive interactions with each other.
- I think the listening circles are good and I think the event that District 5 just had in the community was a good start. I feel the more they are able to talk to us in calm moments the residents will become more comfortable. I'd like to be able to do something through social media with the youth encouraging them to become police aids and ambassadors.
- I can come to participate and listen. I can feel free to communicate and talk so the officers can have a chance to explain what was seen on the news or heard on the radio.
- I can tell more people about events like this. Stay positive and spread the word.
- I am putting my best foot forward as an officer. I have to be cognizant enough to know that some things are said out of anger and not towards me personally. As an African-American male I must put my best foot forward and be a positive role model. As a son I keep my dad's name proud. I am representative of every male in my family.

- I will start telling my friends to come and tell them how the program works and what they can get out of participating for their improvement. And getting to know the officers.

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### Parting Words

- I learned "Don't drive fast."
- There's nothing that beats personal contact.
- Same as above.
- Officers can do the same things we do.
- I'm grateful they added another neighborhood to this program.
- Not to fight.
- No final comments.
- Getting to know people.
- Going forward, getting to know one another.
- People coming together, talking it out.
- It's nice to sit and talk to people without trying to fit it in between calls.
- This discussion makes me question what I have done to make an impact.
- If you have a question or concern go and talk to a community liaison officer. Every district has one.
- It's nice to see police officers having more involvement.
- I enjoyed answering the questions and being able to ask questions of my own to the officers.
- I enjoyed talking to the officers.
- I feel pretty good about the conversation.
- I am hopeful.