



Choices for Youth

2003 VOTERS SURVEY FACT SHEET

Voters Support for Prevention Dollars Stays Strong

Despite the worst budget deficit in history, California voters' support for youth violence prevention has grown. Significantly, eight in 10 California voters say state spending on violence prevention and youth safety programs is as important to them as spending for law enforcement. So serious is the problem of violence involving youth that when faced with severe cuts in government services California voters unite in their demand for continued funding for violence prevention programs. Republicans and Democrats, whites, Hispanics, Asian-Americans and African Americans, in every region of the state, are convinced that a wide variety of violence prevention programs are effective. Furthermore, they say they would be less likely to vote for their legislator if they knew he or she had voted to reduce funding for youth safety programs.

THE GOAL

The goal of Choices for Youth: A Public Education Campaign to Prevent Violence Against Youth is to increase support for effective programs to prevent violence against youth. A substantial and growing body of research shows that a variety of approaches work to prevent violence, strengthen families and help youth to develop into safe and healthy adults. This survey was conducted to assess levels of public support for these programs.

VIOLENCE AGAINST YOUTH IS A SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM IN CALIFORNIA.

- Homicide is the leading cause of death in California for youth ages 15 to 19.
- Youth ages 12 to 17 are nearly three times more likely than adults to be victims of serious violent crimes.
- In a single year in California, nearly 6,000 young people are hospitalized for some form of violent injury including assault, child abuse, domestic violence and rape.

Data Source: 1998 Hospitalized Injury Surveillance System, California Department of Health Services; America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (1999).

KEY FINDINGS OF THE LATEST SURVEY

California voters say:

- Spending on violence prevention is as important to them as spending on law enforcement and prisons.
- Violence in their own communities poses a greater threat to the safety of youth than terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.
- It is more important to invest in prevention programs than to build more correctional facilities.
- Funding for violence prevention and youth safety is a crucial part of public safety spending that California cannot afford to cut back, even in tough budget times.
- They would be willing to volunteer in youth safety programs.

METHODOLOGY

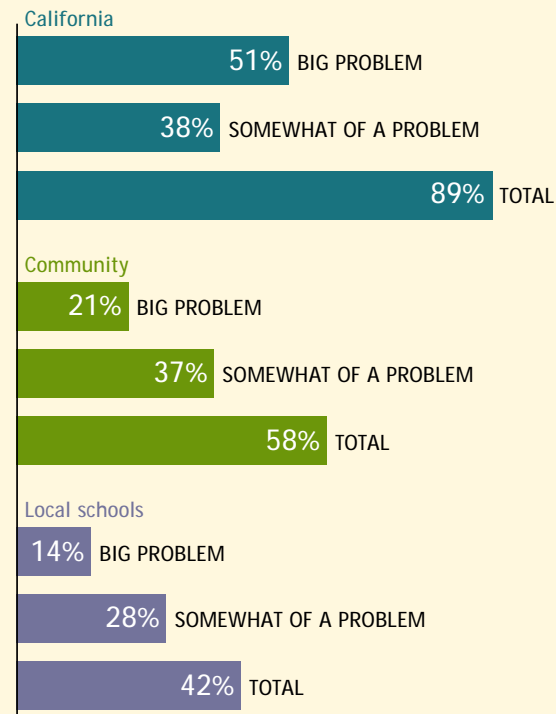
This fact sheet describes the results of a statewide telephone survey of 807 registered California voters conducted by the Survey & Policy Research Institute at San José State University, under a grant to *i.e.* communications, LLC from The California Wellness Foundation. The survey was conducted April 6-11 in English, Spanish and Vietnamese and has a margin of error of plus-or-minus 3.5%.

To receive a copy of the complete polling report or for more information, please visit the Choices for Youth website at www.preventviolence.org or contact us at 415-616-3930.

HIGHLIGHTS

Nearly nine in 10 California voters (89%) say violence involving youth is a problem statewide and slightly more than half (51%) say it is a big problem. Voters say violence involving youth is less of a problem in their own communities, but even there 58% say it is a problem and 21% say it is a big problem. And in schools, where most parents expect their children to be safe, 42% say violence is a problem and 14% say it is a big problem. Clearly, California voters are concerned about the level of violence involving youth throughout society.

WOULD YOU SAY THAT VIOLENCE INVOLVING YOUTH IS A BIG PROBLEM, SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM, NOT MUCH OF A PROBLEM OR NO PROBLEM AT ALL IN (CALIFORNIA / YOUR COMMUNITY / LOCAL SCHOOLS) TODAY?

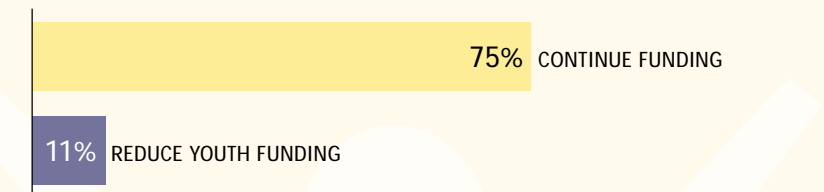


Even when reminded of the state's massive budget deficit and the difficult choices to be made, three out of four California voters are in favor of continuing funding for youth violence prevention and safety programs.

As you probably know, California is facing the worst budget deficit in its history—a deficit of more than \$30 billion. The Governor and Legislature are considering raising taxes and making deep cuts in schools, health services, public safety, transportation and other programs.

As they decide where to make cutbacks, should they:

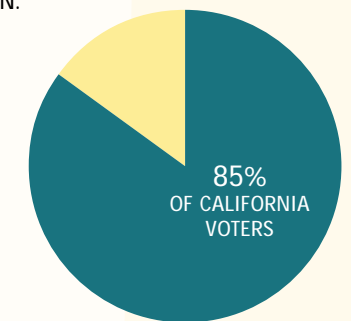
REDUCE FUNDING FOR YOUTH SAFETY PROGRAMS TO MAKE MORE FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR OTHER STATE PROGRAMS... OR...CONTINUE TO FUND YOUTH SAFETY PROGRAMS AT THE CURRENT LEVEL, EVEN IF IT MEANS LESS IS AVAILABLE FOR OTHER STATE PROGRAMS?



85% of California voters statewide responded that investing in kids' lives to keep them from taking wrong turns was closer to their own opinion.

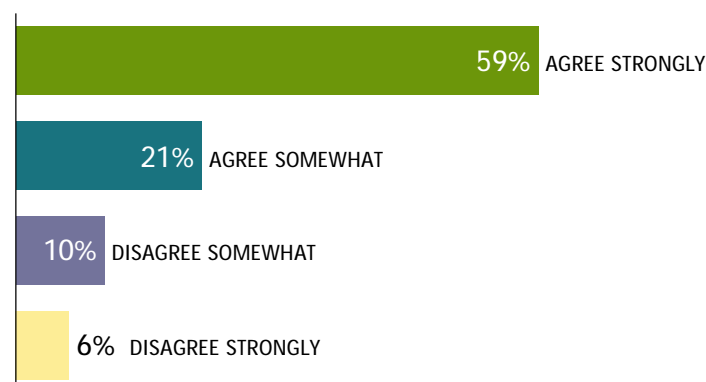
Which of the following statements about California's approach to youth violence comes closer to your opinion?

"WE SHOULD BUILD MORE PRISONS AND YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND ENFORCE STRICT SENTENCES TO GUARANTEE THAT THE MOST VIOLENT JUVENILE OFFENDERS ARE KEPT OFF THE STREETS... OR...WE SHOULD INVEST IN WAYS TO PREVENT KIDS FROM TAKING WRONG TURNS AND ENDING UP INVOLVED IN GANGS, OR VIOLENCE, OR IN PRISON."



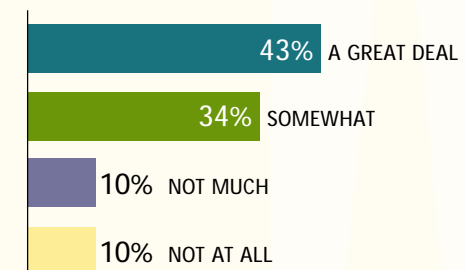
Eight in 10 California voters say state spending on violence prevention and youth safety programs is as important to them as spending for law enforcement and prisons. Agreement that violence prevention programs and law enforcement are equal partners varies little across ethnicity, political party, and region, with the least agreement registered among Republican voters at 76% and the most among African American voters at 85%.

WOULD YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "STATE SPENDING ON VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND YOUTH SAFETY PROGRAMS IS AS IMPORTANT TO ME AS STATE SPENDING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PRISONS."

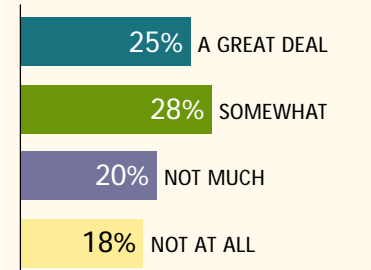


Nearly eight in 10 California voters say young peoples' fear for their safety affects their ability to succeed in school and slightly more than 40% feel that it affects their scholastic performance a great deal. A majority of voters statewide (53%) thinks youth violence harms the ability of young people in California to enter and remain in the labor force.

DO YOU THINK YOUTH VIOLENCE AND YOUNG PEOPLES' FEAR FOR THEIR SAFETY AFFECTS THEIR ABILITY TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL?



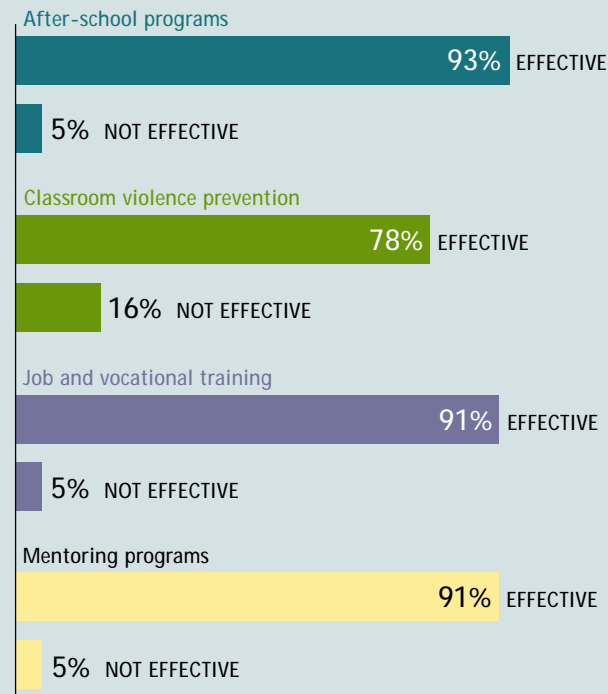
DO YOU THINK THAT YOUTH VIOLENCE IS HURTING THE ABILITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CALIFORNIA TO GET AND KEEP A JOB?



HIGHLIGHTS

Statewide an astonishing 90% or more of California voters think that after-school and adult mentoring programs, along with job and vocational training are effective in preventing crime and ensuring the safety of young people. Even classroom violence prevention programs, felt to be much less effective than other types of violence prevention programs, are seen as effective by nearly eight in 10 California voters.

TELL ME WHETHER YOU THINK THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF PROGRAMS ARE EFFECTIVE OR NOT EFFECTIVE IN HELPING TO PREVENT CRIME AND ENSURE THE SAFETY OF YOUNG PEOPLE:



Given an opportunity to use their life skills, experience, and knowledge, six in 10 California voters are willing to volunteer to ensure youth safety in their community. The willingness of California voters to share their own experiences and skills with youth in before- or after-school programs cuts across the major political parties and regions in the state.

IF THERE WERE A PROGRAM TO ENSURE YOUTH SAFETY IN YOUR COMMUNITY THAT COULD USE YOUR EXPERIENCE, SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO VOLUNTEER YOUR OWN TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN A BEFORE- OR AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM, EITHER AT A LOCAL SCHOOL OR IN THE COMMUNITY?

