



Charlotte-Mecklenburg 2012 Criminal Justice System Survey Presentation of Results

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Methodology

- The survey was conducted by MarketWise, Inc., by telephone , Jan. 23 – Feb. 10, 2012.
- Adults residing in Mecklenburg County were eligible to participate.
- The final sample contained 501 respondents.
- The sampling frame was based on a random digit dial (RDD) landline sample, plus a RDD cell phone sample.
 - Both samples were purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc. This type of dual sampling frame produces a sample that is more representative of the adult population, than RDD samples with just landline or just cell phones.
- The survey was conducted in English and Spanish.
- The average interview length was 19 minutes.
- For results based on the total sample (n=501), the margin of error is ± 4.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.



Comparison of Actual Demographics to Sample Demographics

	Mecklenburg Census Data	CJS Sample 2012 (n=501)
Gender (Q1)		
Male	48%	50%
Female	52%	50%
Race/Ethnicity (Q3)		
White, non Hispanic	51%	50%
African American	31%	30%
Hispanic of all races	12%	12%
Other	6%	8%
Age (Q4)		
18-34	31%	30%
35-44	23%	20%
45-54	19%	19%
55-64	14%	16%
65+	13%	16%

9% of interviews were conducted in Spanish.

The CJS sample is representative of Mecklenburg County based on key demographics of gender, race/ethnicity, and age.

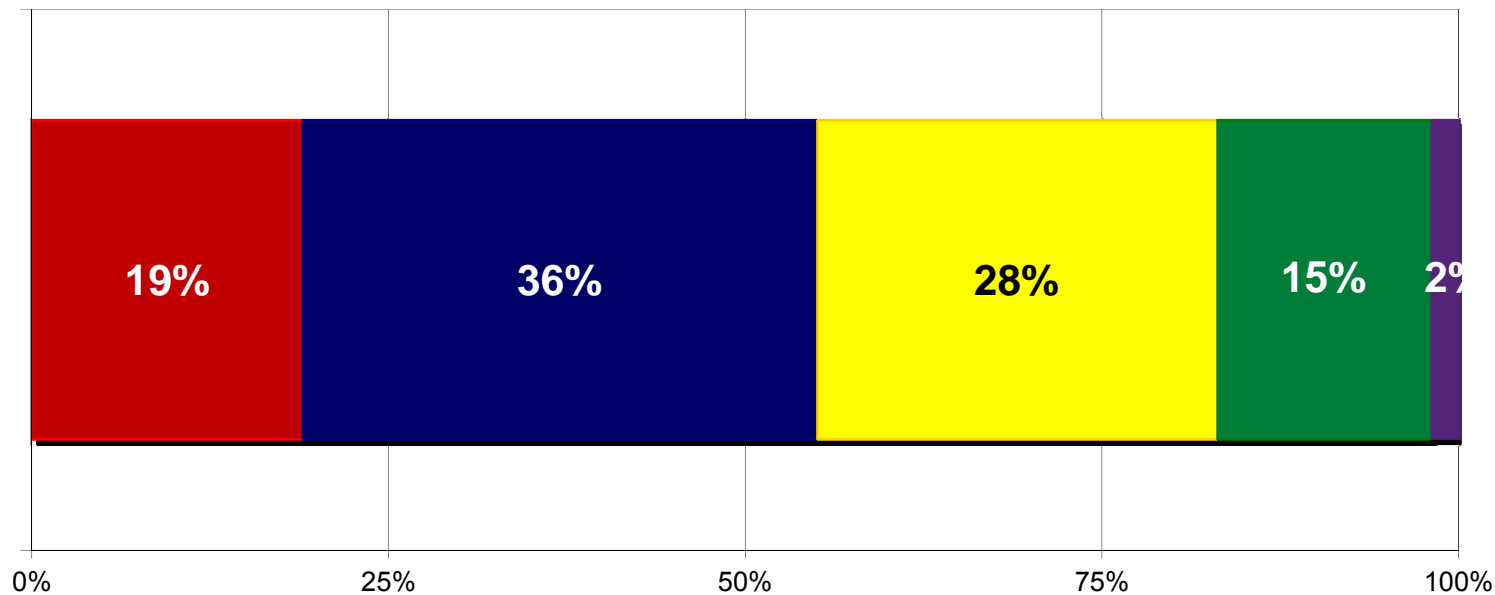


Perceptions of Crime in Mecklenburg County



Thinking about the problems facing Mecklenburg County today, how serious a problem is crime? Please use a 1 to 10 rating scale where 1 means not at all serious and 10 means extremely serious. (Q5)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Total serious problem=55%



Average
6.7

■ 10,9=Extremely serious ■ 8,7=Serious ■ 6,5=Midpoints ■ 4-1=Not serious ■ Don't know



In day to day life in Mecklenburg County, what types of crime, if any, do you personally worry about? (Q6)

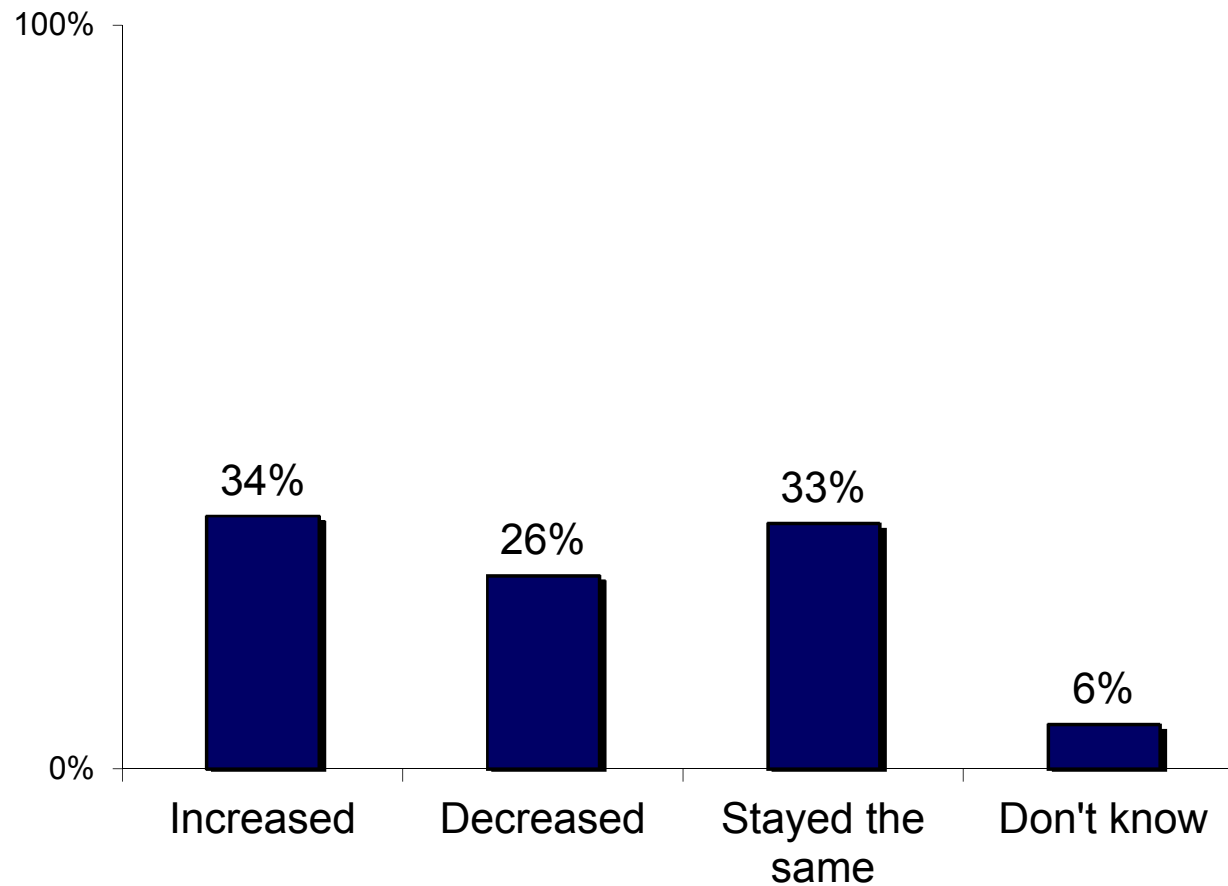
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

	Percent of Total Sample
Violent crime: rape, muggings, robbery, shootings, attacks	43%
Burglary, theft, break-ins	37%
Home invasions	17%
No concerns	11%
Auto theft, auto break-in	10%
Murder, homicide	9%
Drug related crimes, drug dealers	4%
Crimes against children	4%
Gangs, gang activity	3%

Ratings made by fewer than 3% of the total sample are not shown.

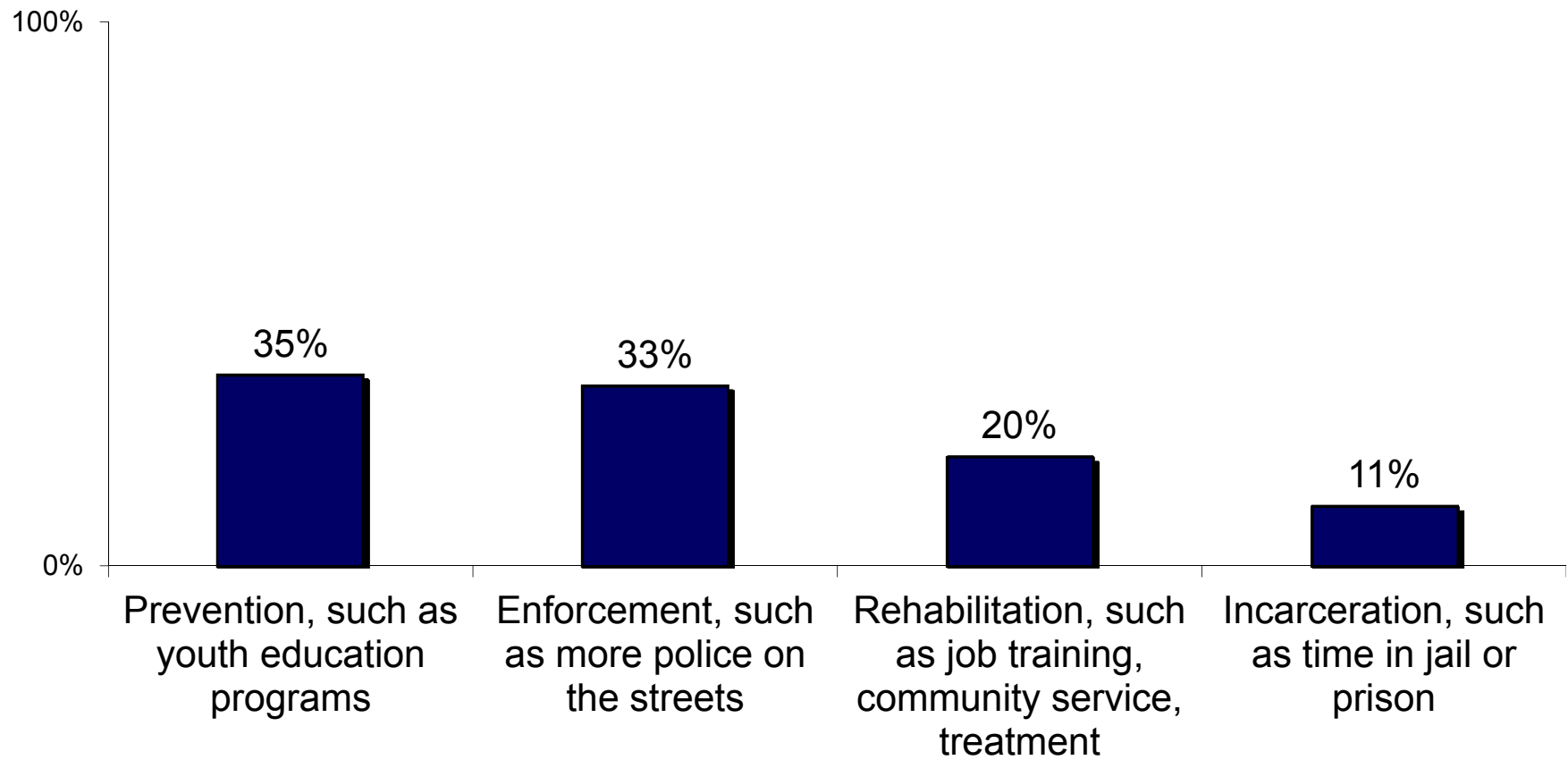


Would you say the amount of crime in Mecklenburg County over the past three years has . . . (Q7)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





Please tell me which one of the following four options you think should be the top priority for dealing with crime overall in Mecklenburg County? (Q8_1)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

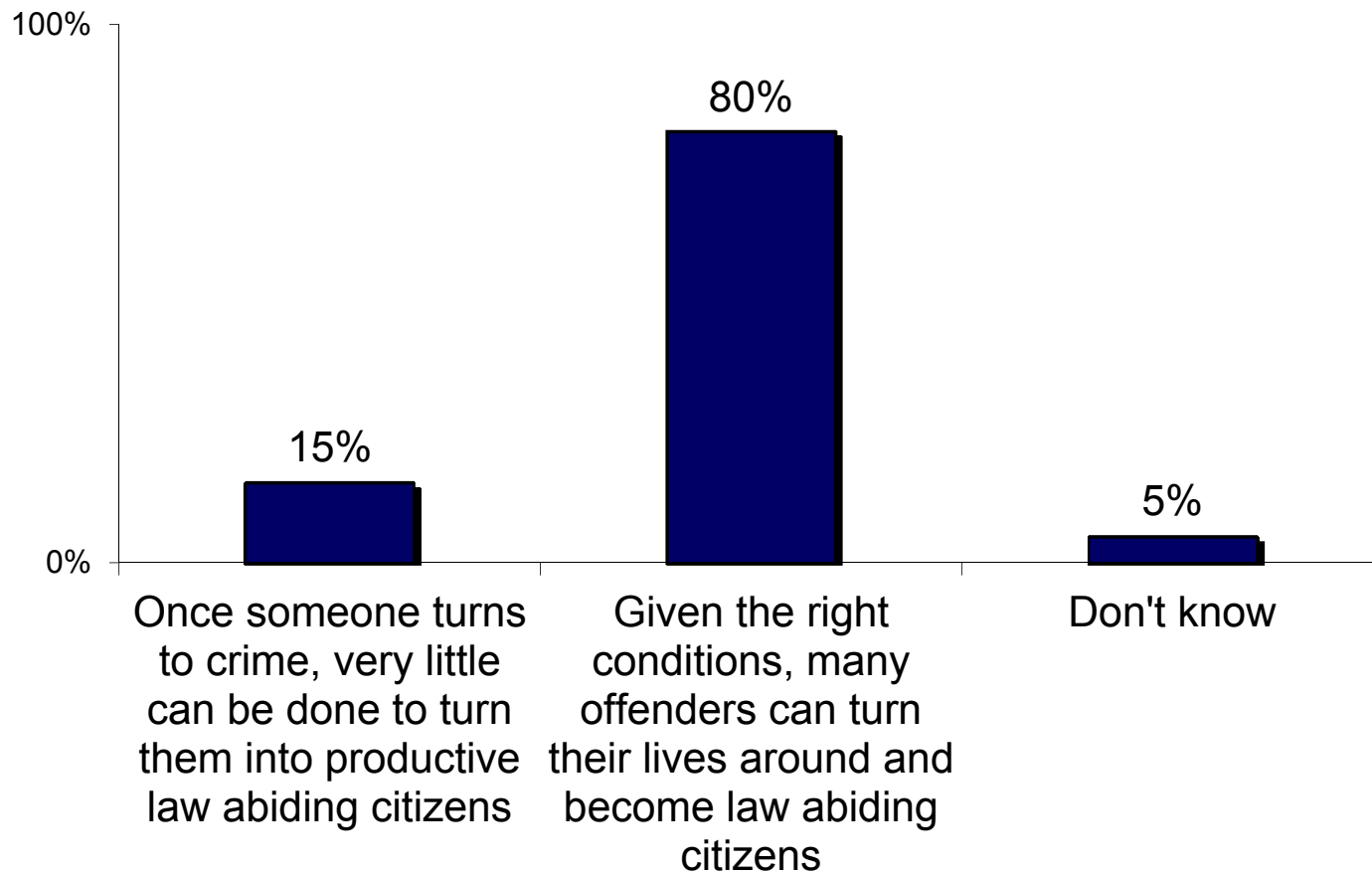




Viewpoint on Criminal Justice

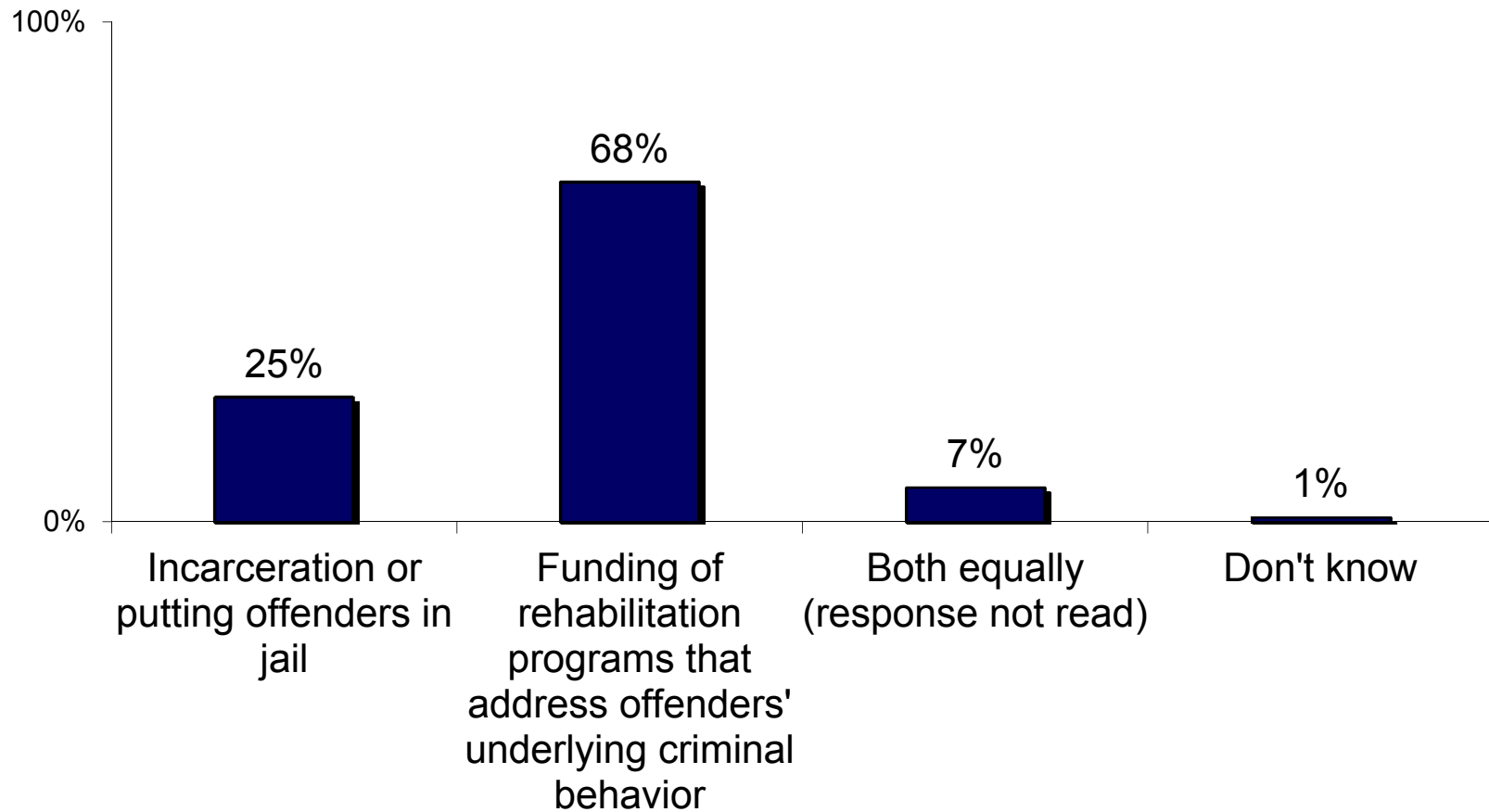


Which of the following two statements best describes your own views about efforts to rehabilitate offenders? (Q9)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





**On which of the following two options would you most want
your county tax dollars spent? (Q10)**
Base= Total Sample (n=501)

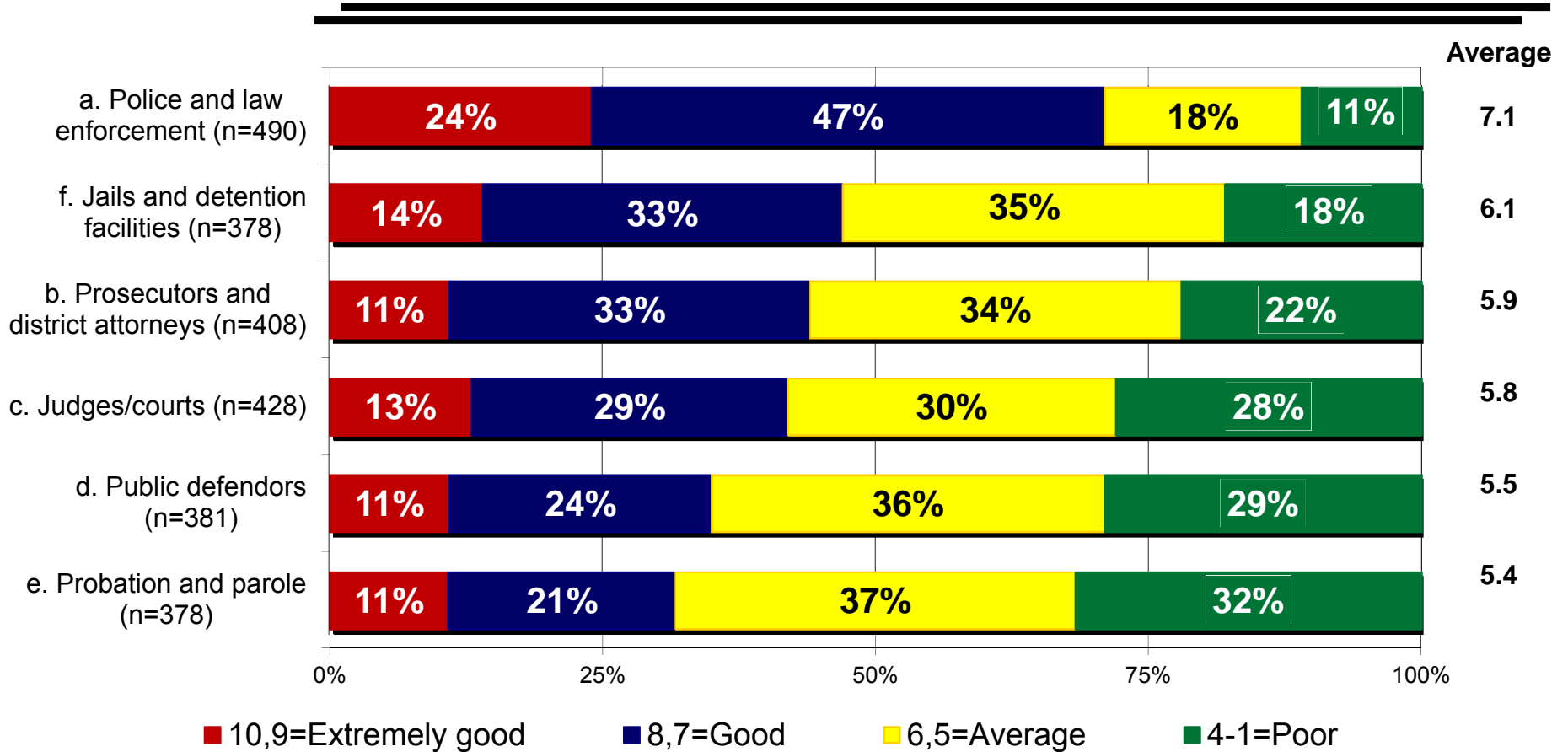




Perceptions of Performance of Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice System



Next I'd like your opinion of how well different groups in the Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice System are doing in serving the public. Please use a 1 to 10 rating scale where 1 means extremely poor and 10 means extremely good. What about . . . (Q11a-Q11f)
Base=Total Sample with "Don't know" Responses Dropped

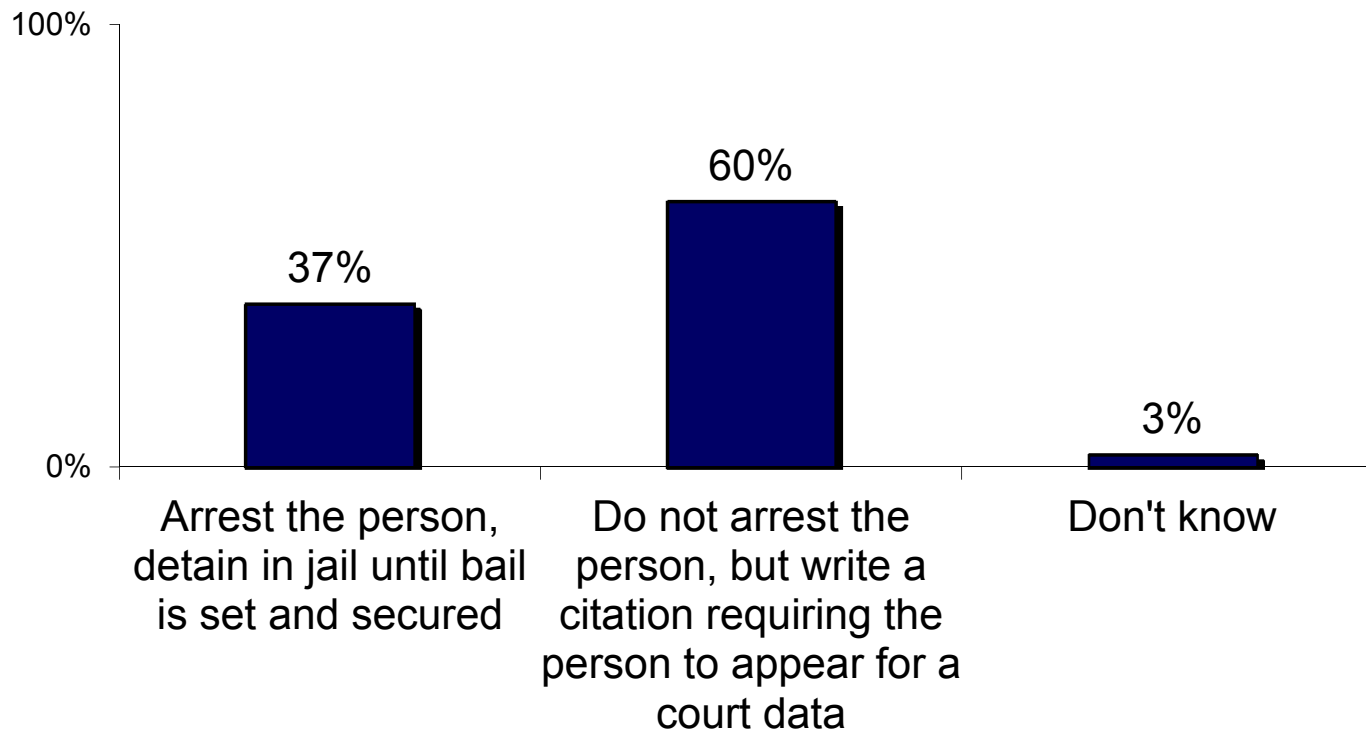




Viewpoint on Arrests and Citations



In general, which of the following do you believe is the best strategy for handling low-level, non-violent crimes? Would you say . . . (Q12a)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)

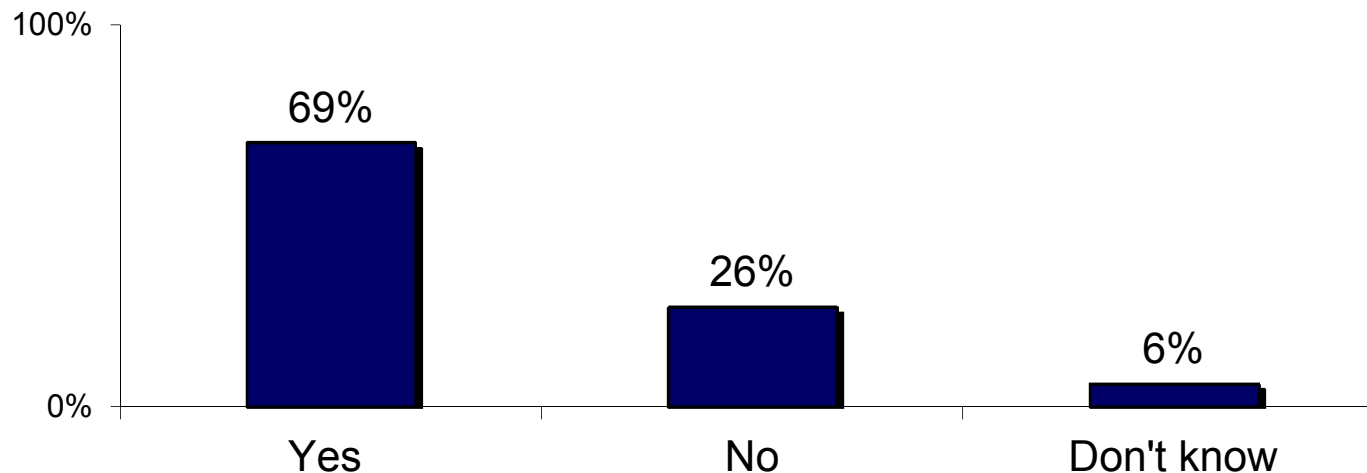




Perception of Issuing Citations Rather than Making an Arrest for Low-Level, Non-Violent Crimes, After Being Read Information Below (Q12b) Base= Total Sample (n=501)

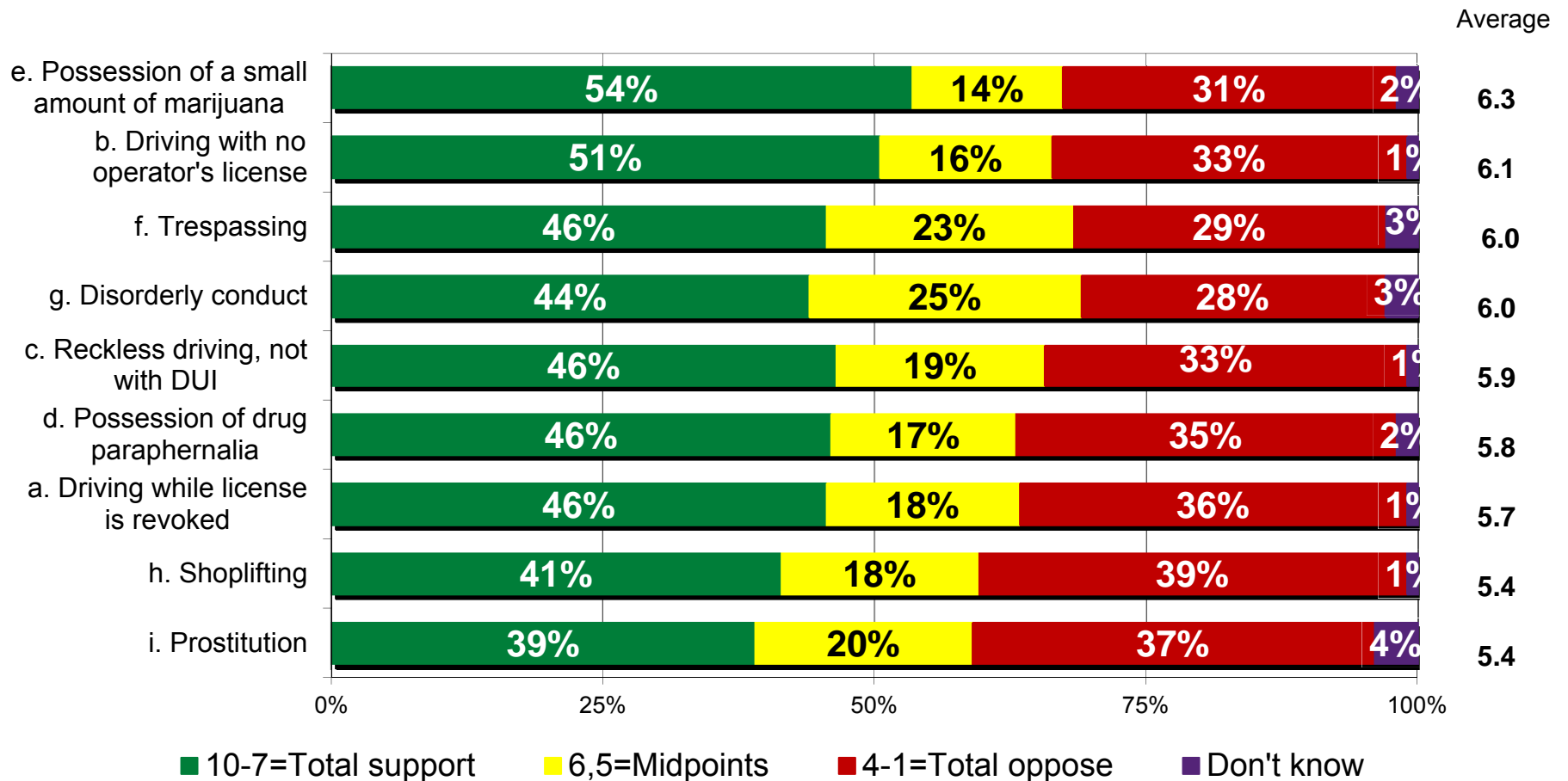
Arrest requires the officer to bring the person to jail where they must be processed. Arrest and processing is more costly than issuing a citation to appear in court. Arrest and processing also removes the officer from service in the community.

Does knowing this make you more favorable toward issuing a citation, rather than making an arrest, as a strategy for handling low-level, non-violent crimes?





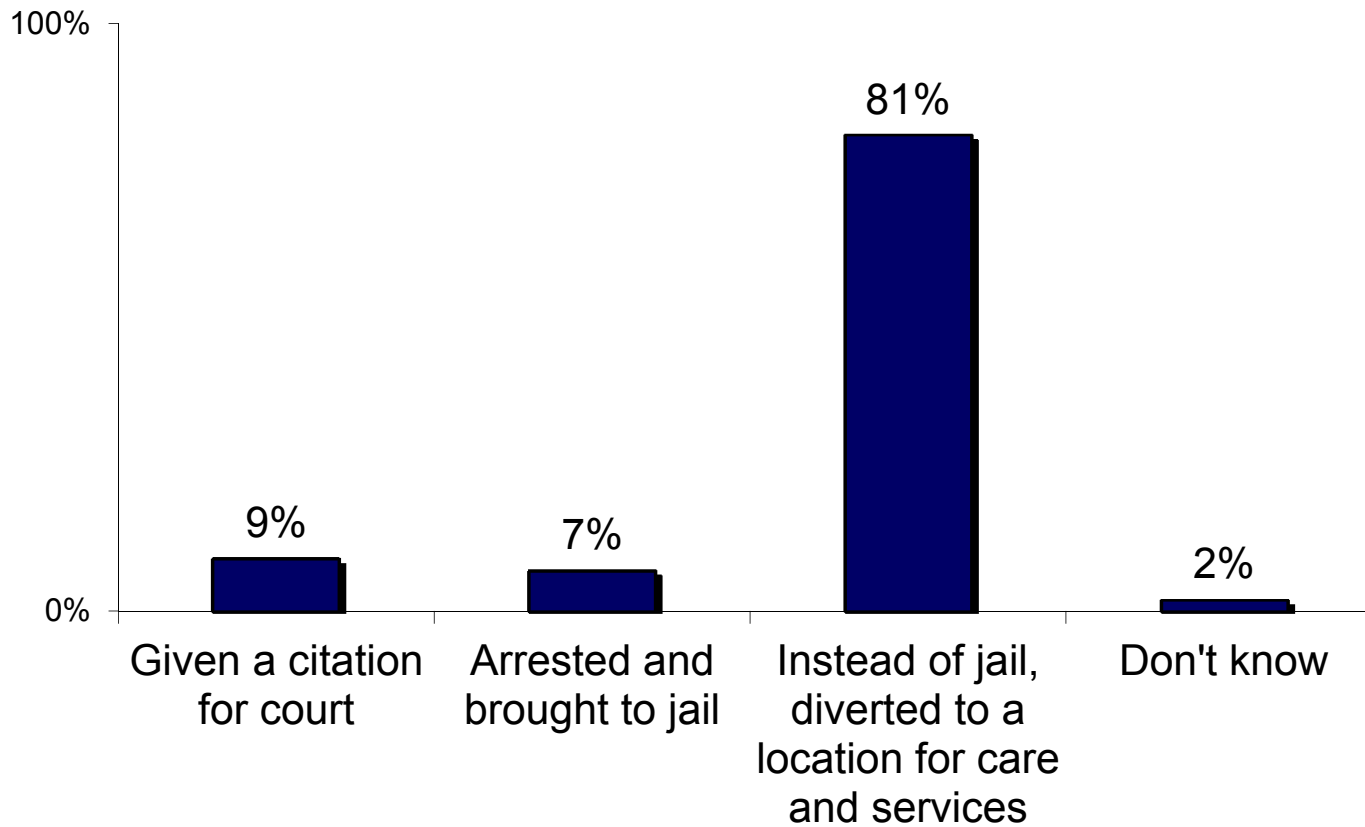
Please use a 1 to 10 rating scale to indicate your level of support for issuing a citation, with no arrest, for the following types of crime. A rating of 1 means strongly oppose citations and a 10 means strongly support citations. What about . . . (Q13a-Q13i)
 Base=Total Sample (n=501)



* For average ratings, "don't know" responses have been dropped from the base.

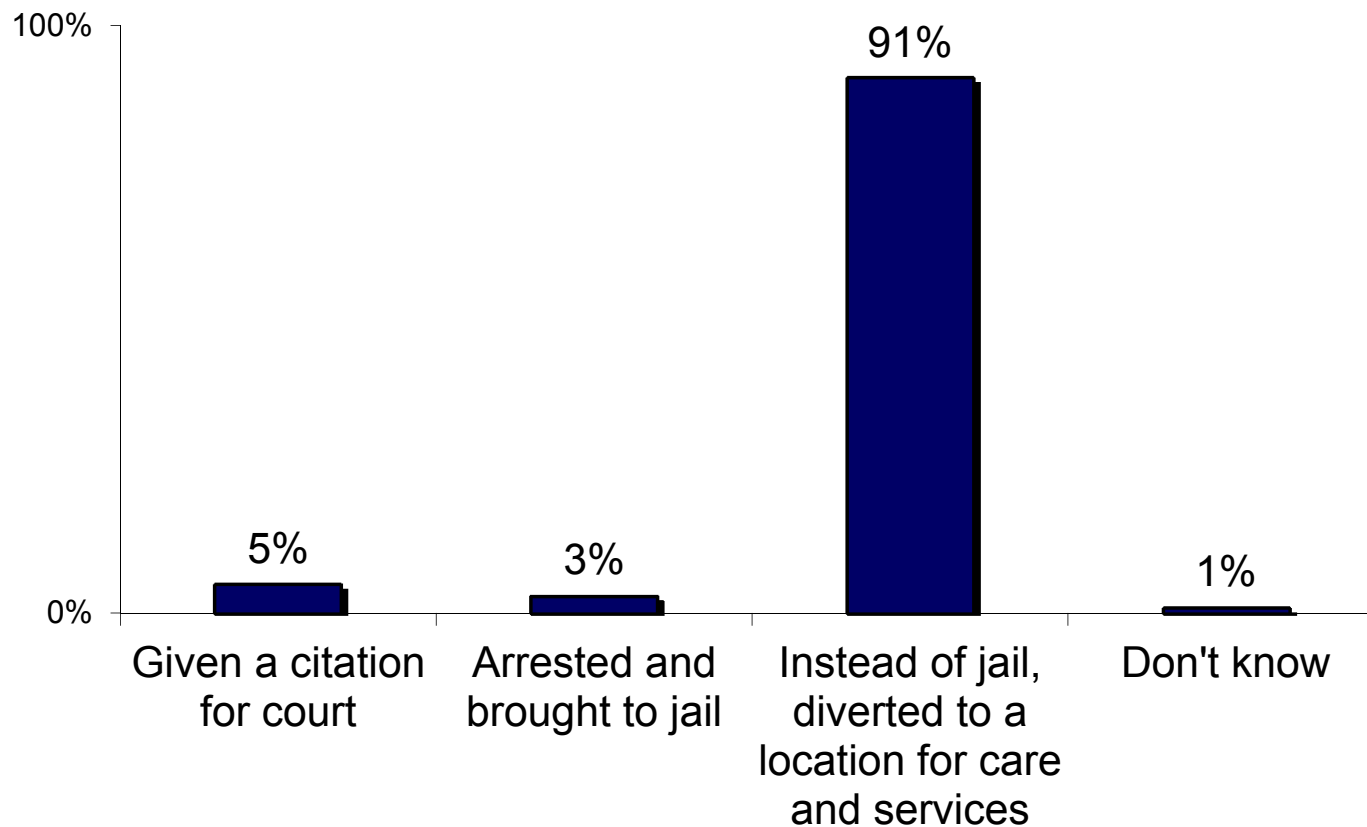


People who are homeless do not necessarily commit crimes. However, if they do commit a non-violent crime because they are homeless, should they be . . .? (Q14a)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





People who are mentally ill do not necessarily commit crimes, however, if they do commit a non-violent crime because they are mentally ill, should they be . . .? (Q14a)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)

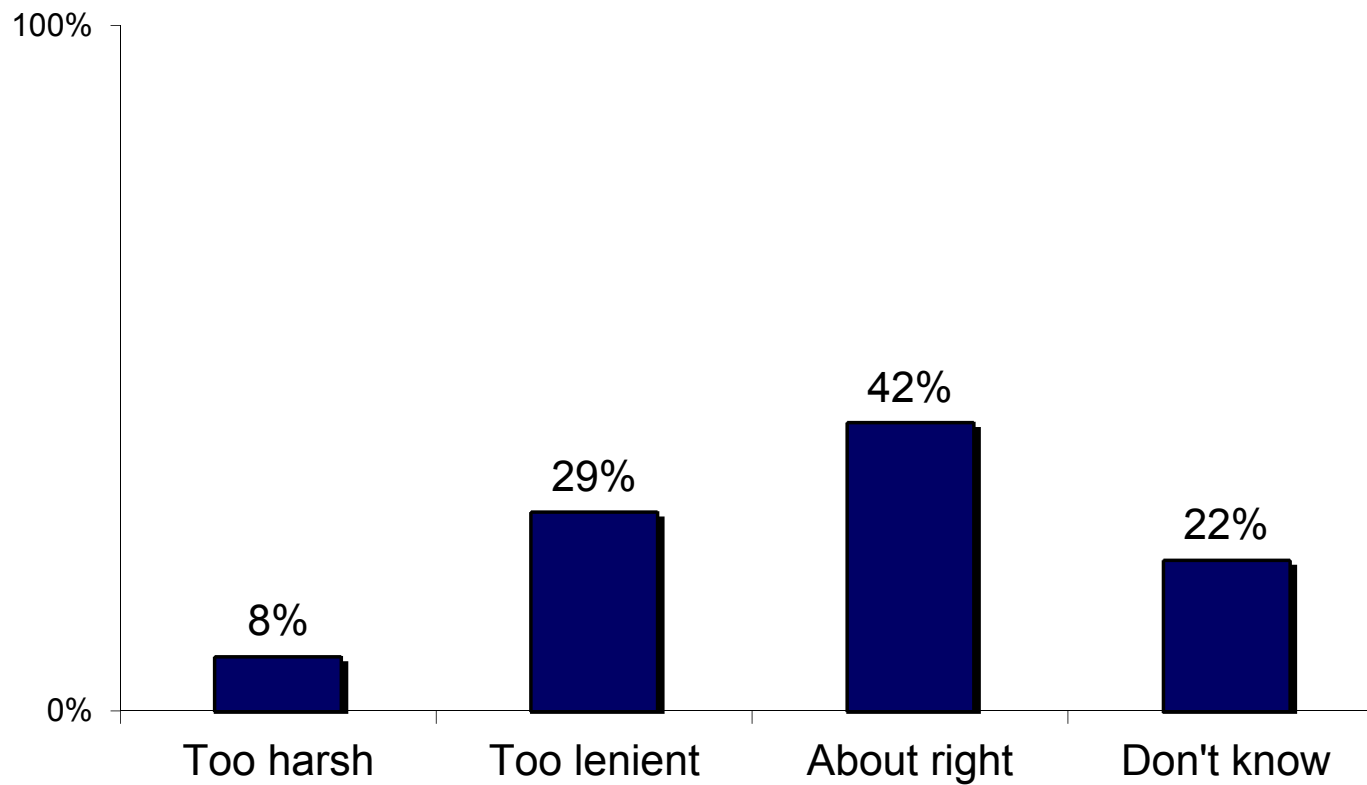




Viewpoint on Bail and Release Conditions

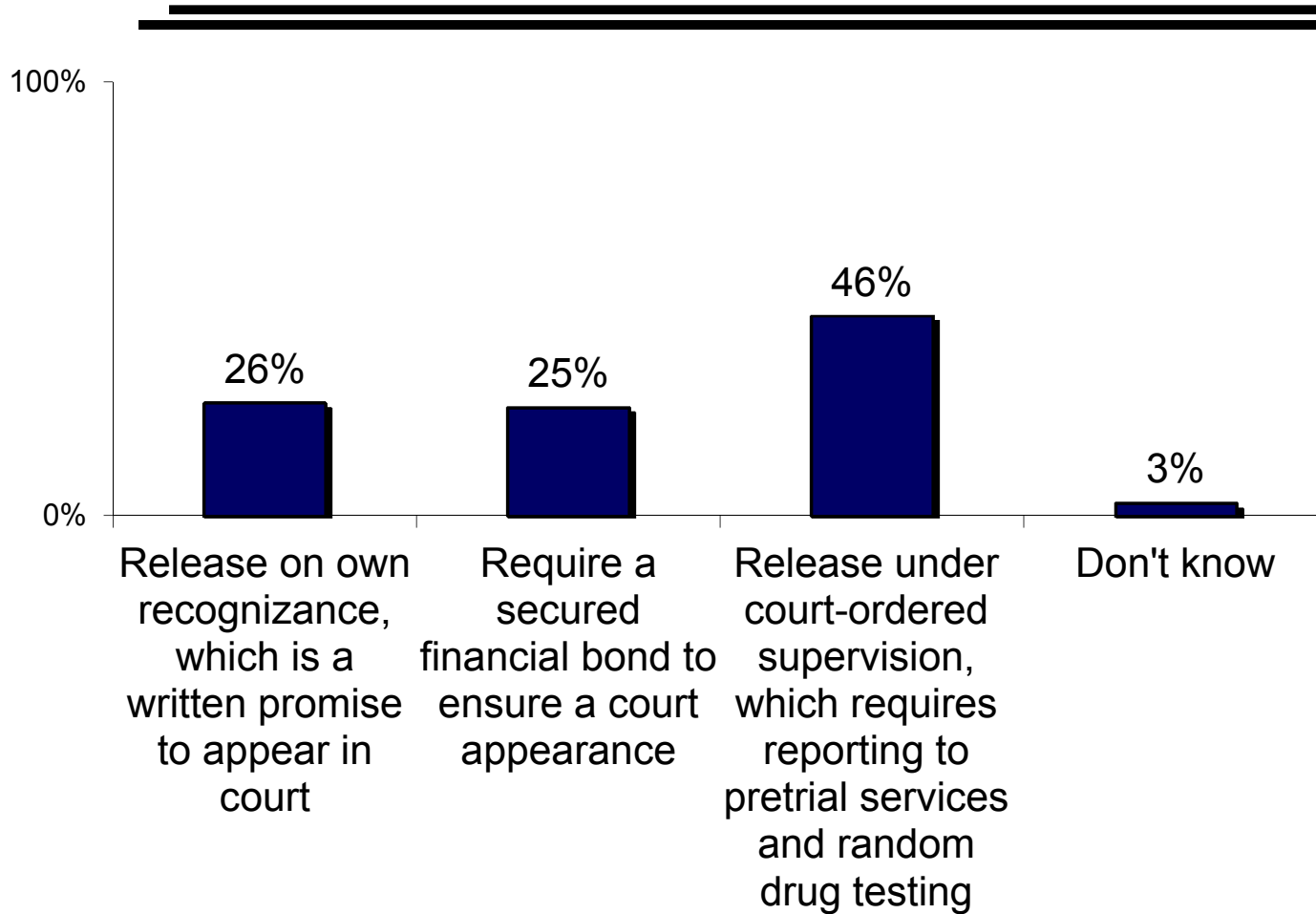


In general, do you believe Mecklenburg County courts are too harsh, too lenient, or about right at setting release conditions, such as bail, for accused defendants awaiting trial? (Q15)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





Which of the following release conditions do you favor for accused defendants who are a lower risk to commit another crime and are likely to appear in court for trial? (Q16)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

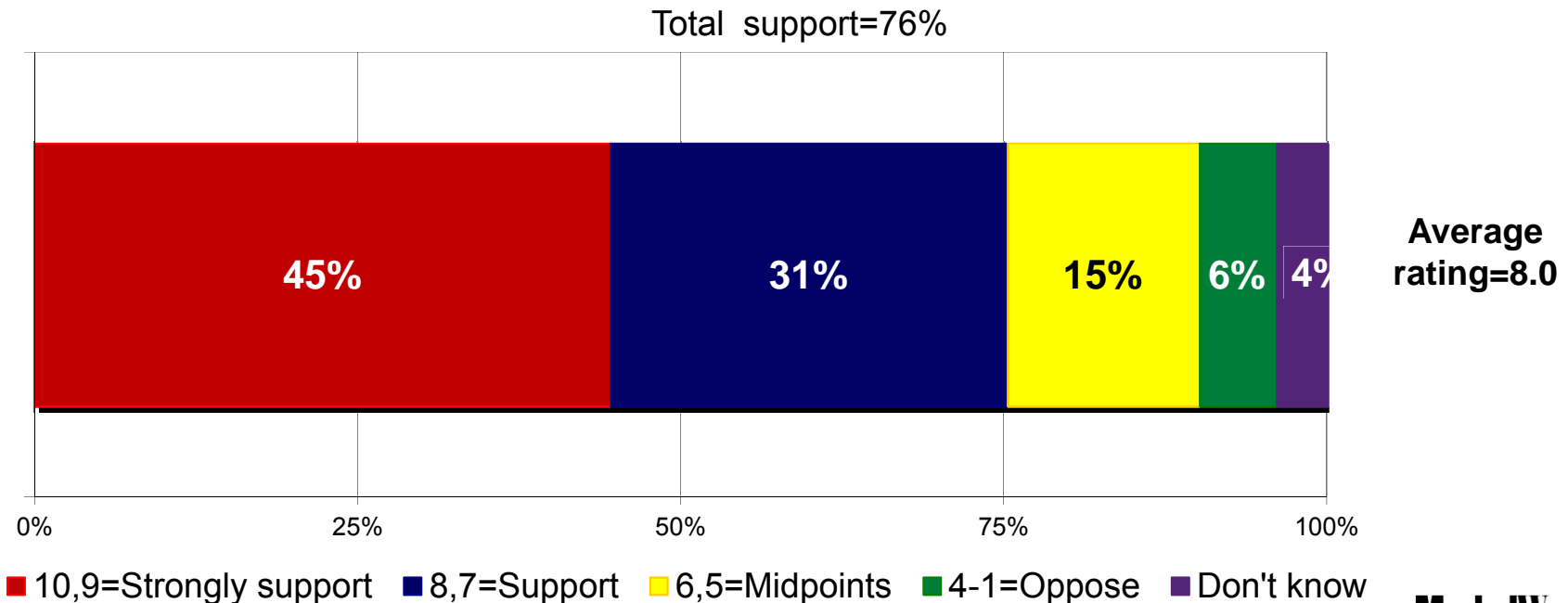




Level of Support for Mecklenburg County Bail Policy (Q17a)

Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Mecklenburg County has adopted a bail policy that recommends judges release lower risk defendants on a written promise to appear in court and/or court-ordered supervision. The policy recommends having higher risk defendants post a secured financial bond. If the defendant can not post bond, this will result in the defendant being jailed pending trial. This policy seeks to protect public safety and to use costly jail beds wisely. Please use a 1 to 10 scale to rate your level of support for this policy.





Reasons for Opposing Bail Policy (Q17b)

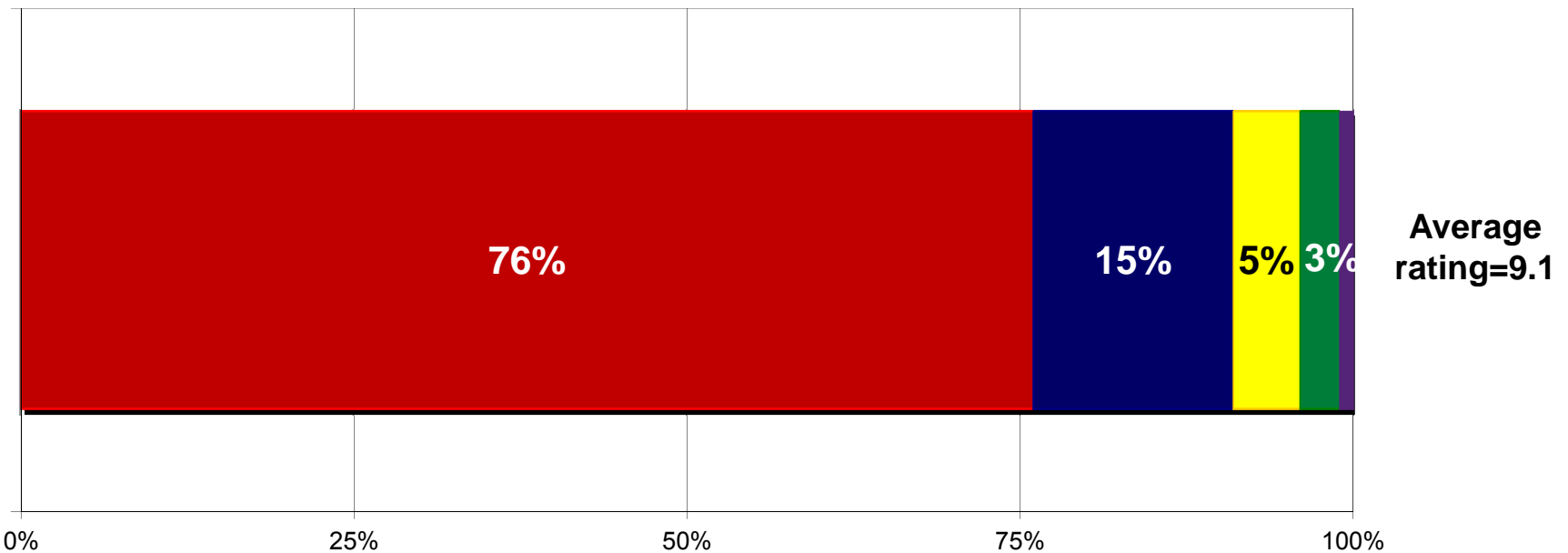
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Only 6% of the sample oppose the bail policy (i.e., gave a rating of 1 to 4, on the 1 to 10 scale). Their reasons are shown below.	Percent of Total Sample
Would favor people who have money	2%
Don't have a reason	1%
People need to stay in jail while waiting for trial	1%
Judge would decide	<.5%
Waste of money to jail people awaiting trial	<.5%
Can't make it too easy	<.5%
Not favorable/safe for the public	<.5%
Giving their money would insure they show up for trial	<.5%
Support bail policy (rating of 7 to 10 on Q17a)	76%
Midpoint ratings (rating of 5 or 6 on Q17a)	15%
Don't know if support or oppose bail policy (could not rate on Q17a)	4%



How important is it to you that judges and prosecutors are provided with detailed social and criminal background information about accused offenders when setting their release conditions? (Q18)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Total rating important=91%



■ 10,9=Extremely important ■ 8,7=Important ■ 6,5=Midpoints ■ 4-1=Not important ■ Don't know

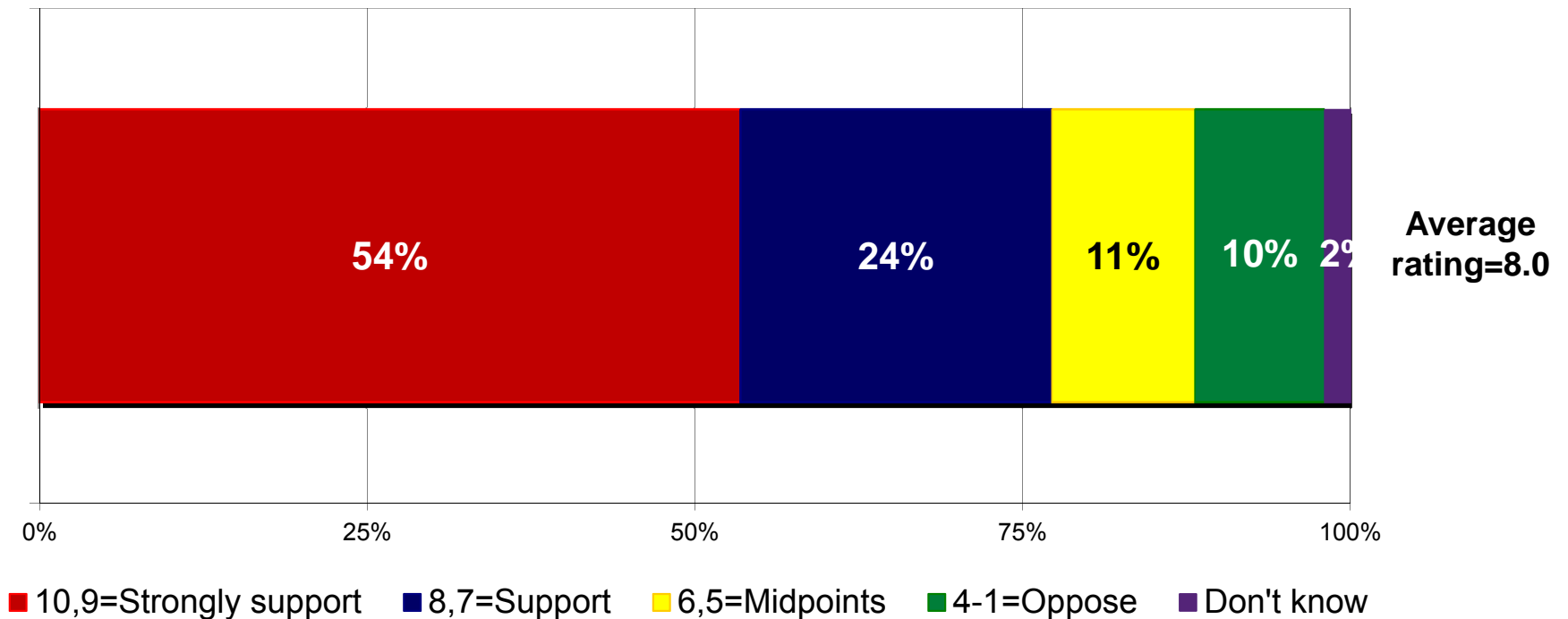


Viewpoint on Sanctions



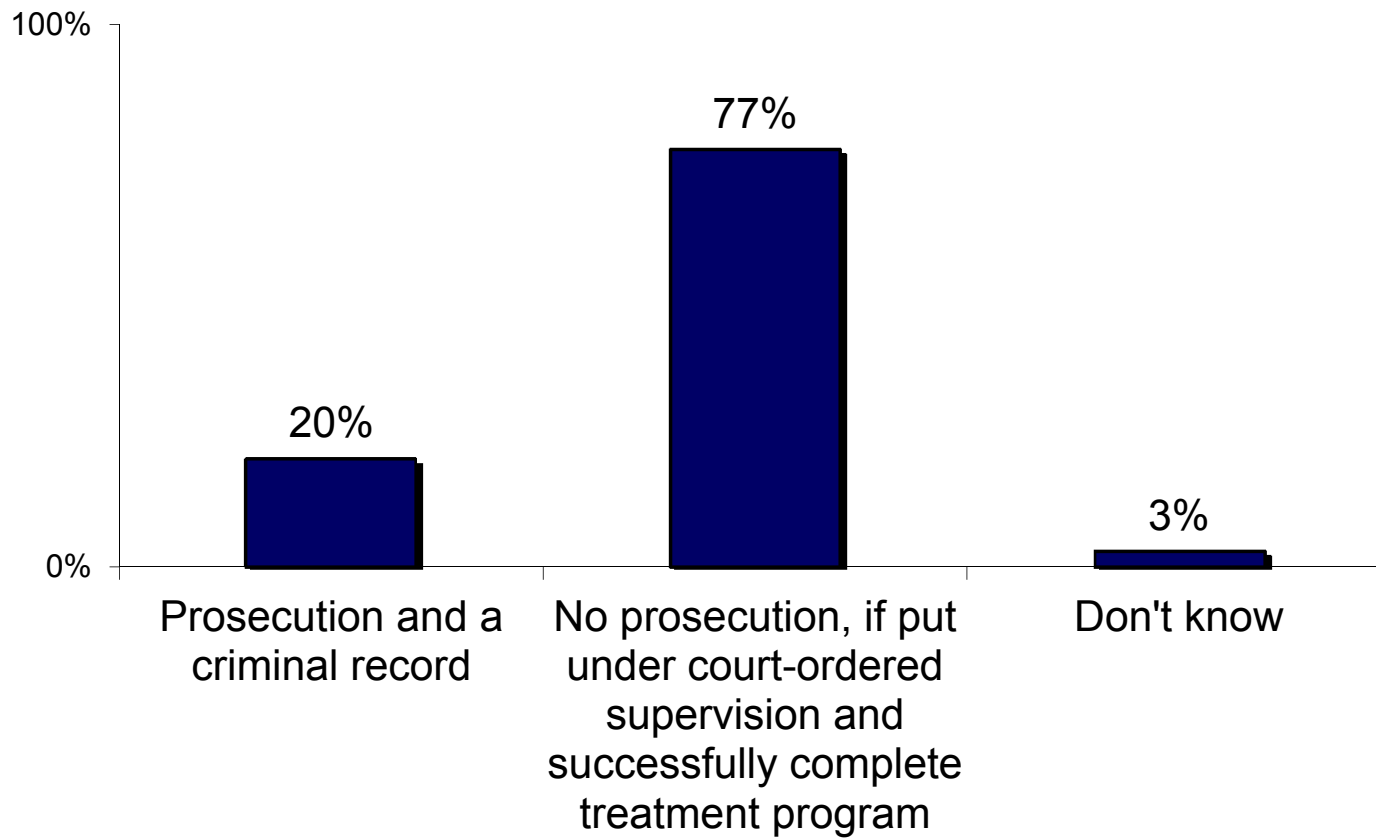
What is your level of support for having no prosecution and no criminal record for first-time, non-violent offenders, if they are put under court-ordered supervision and successfully complete treatment programs? (Q19)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Total support = 78%



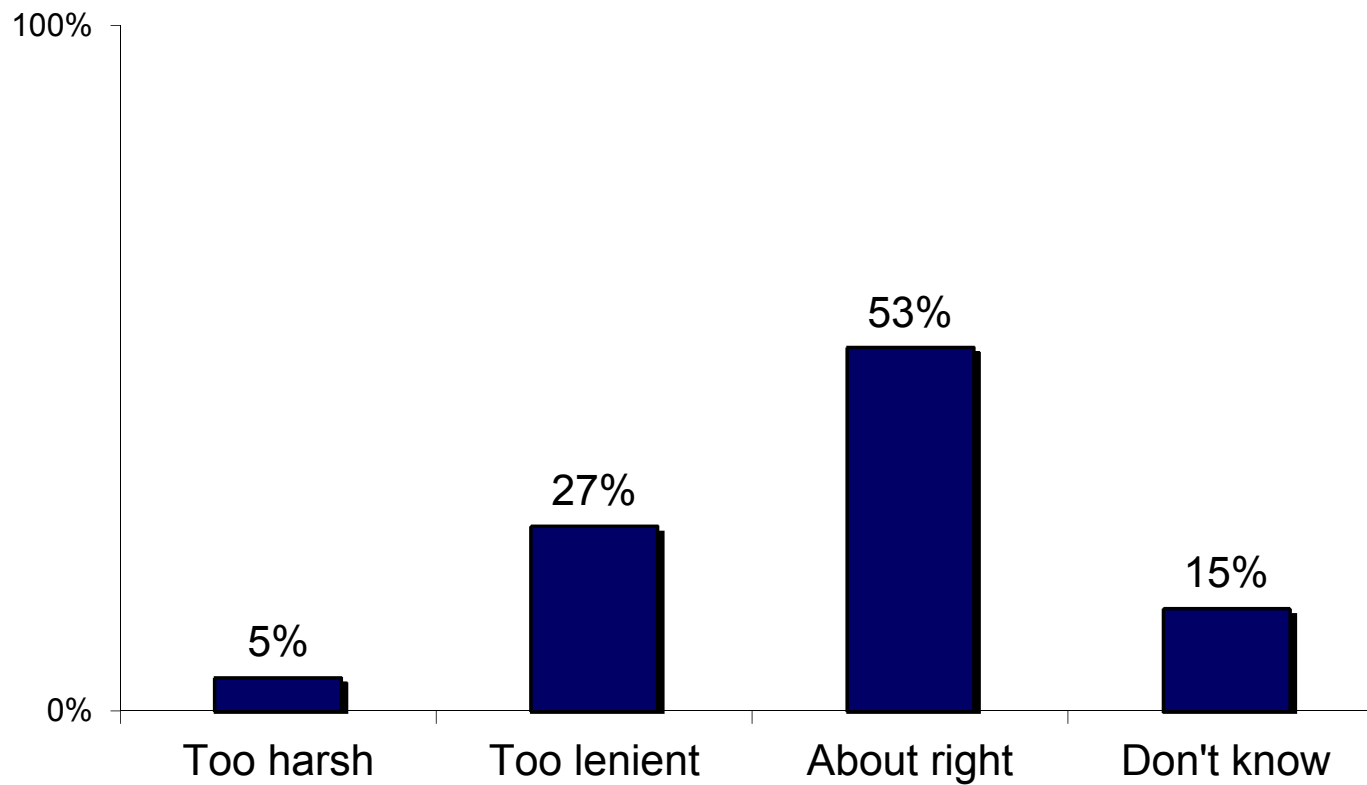


For someone under the age of 18, charged with breaking and entering, which do you favor? (Q20)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)





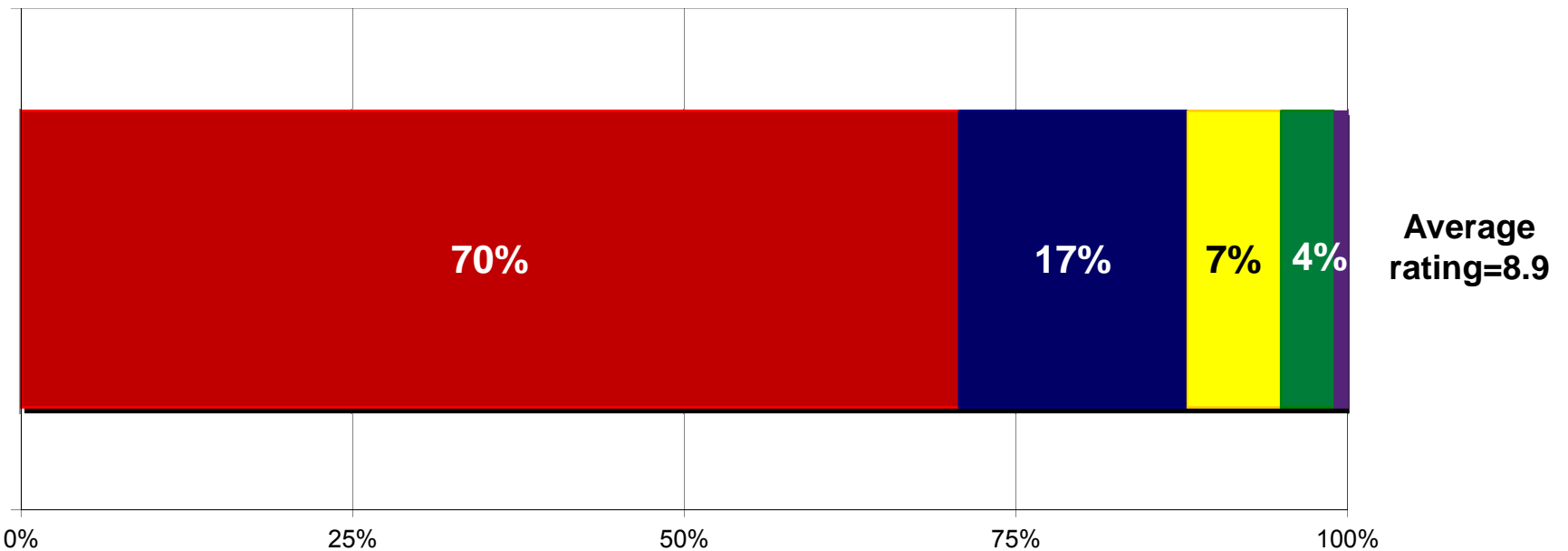
In general, do you believe the sentencing of offenders in Mecklenburg County is too harsh, too lenient, or about right? (Q21)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





How important is it to you that judges and prosecutors are provided with detailed social and criminal background information about accused offenders when sentencing?
Please use a 1 to 10 rating scale where 1 means not at all important and 10 means extremely important. (Q22)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

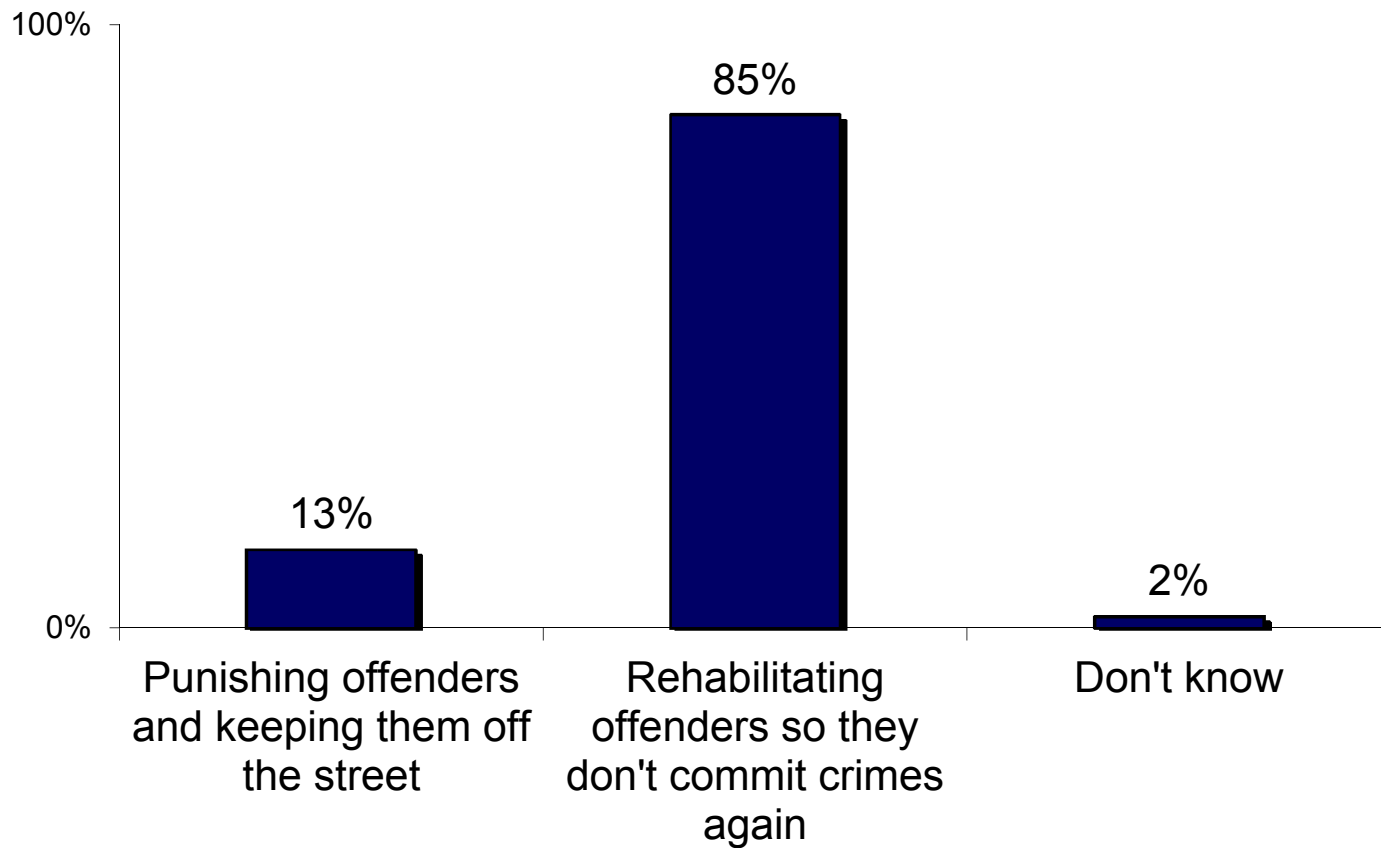
Total rating important=87%



■ 10,9=Extremely important ■ 8,7=Important ■ 6,5=Midpoints ■ 4-1=Not important ■ Don't know

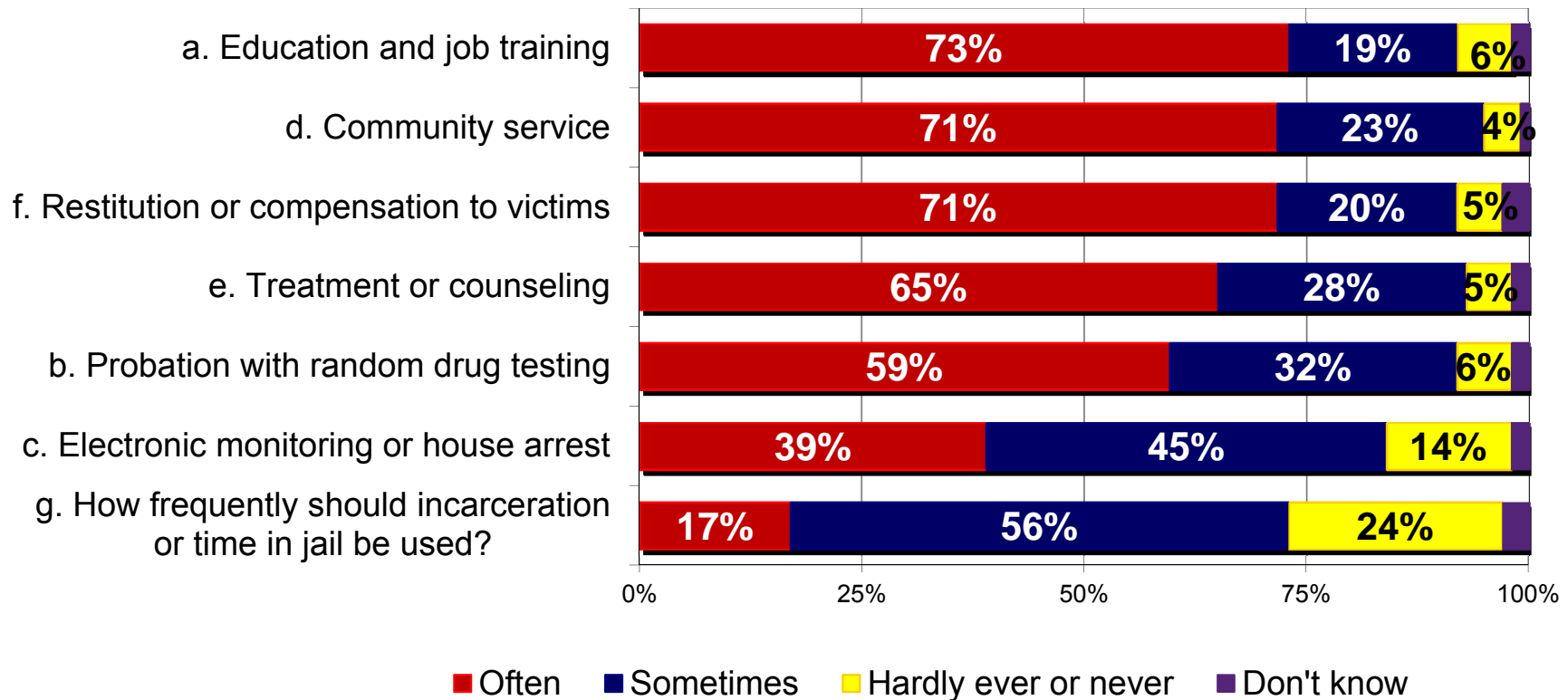


For non-violent crimes, what do you believe the most important goal of sentencing should be . . . (Q23)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)





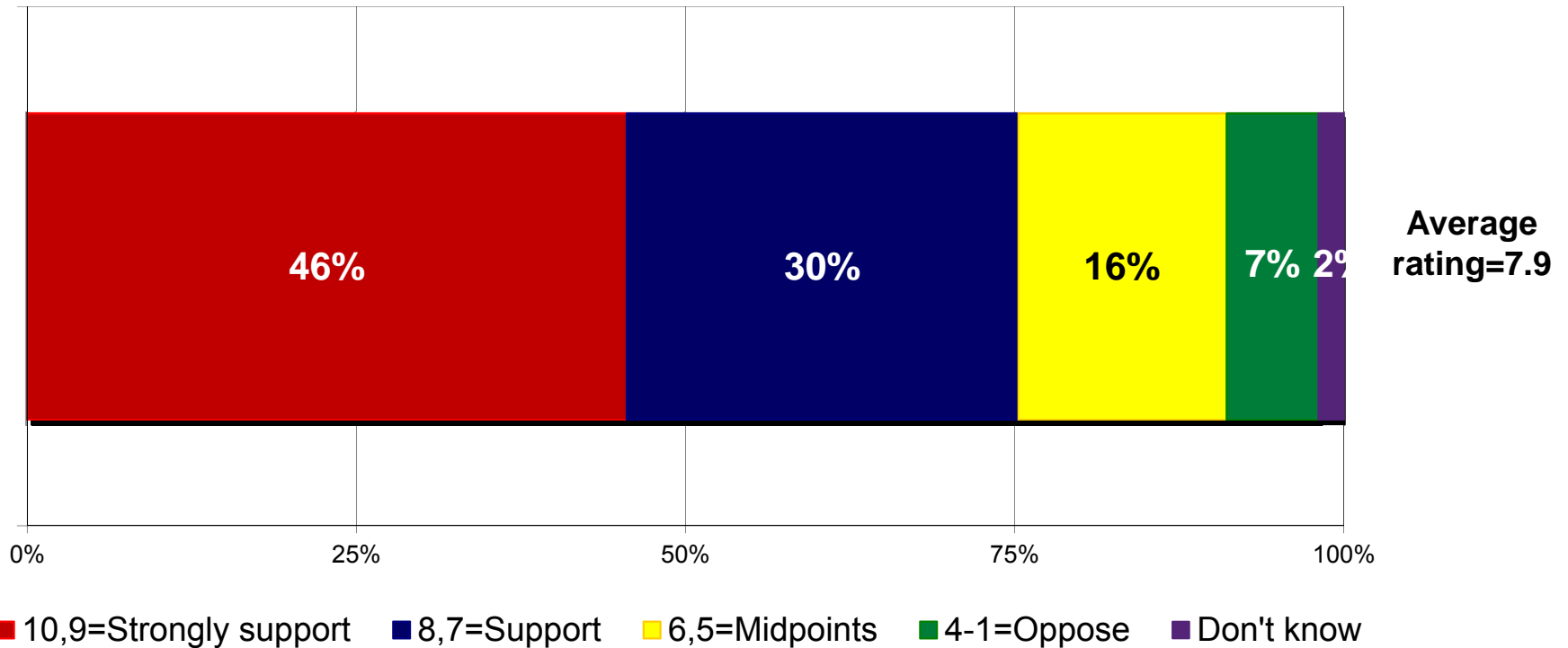
I'm going to describe some different types of community-based programs, non-jail sanctions, and/or requirements that might be used for those convicted of non-violent crimes. Please tell me how frequently you think each type should be used. What about . . . (Q24a-g) Base= Total Sample (n=501)





In general, what is your level of support for community-based programs or non-jail sanctions, instead of incarceration, for lower risk offenders? Please use a 1 to 10 scale where 1 means strongly oppose and 10 means strongly support community-based programs and non-jail sanctions for lower risk offenders. (Q25a)
Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Total support = 76%

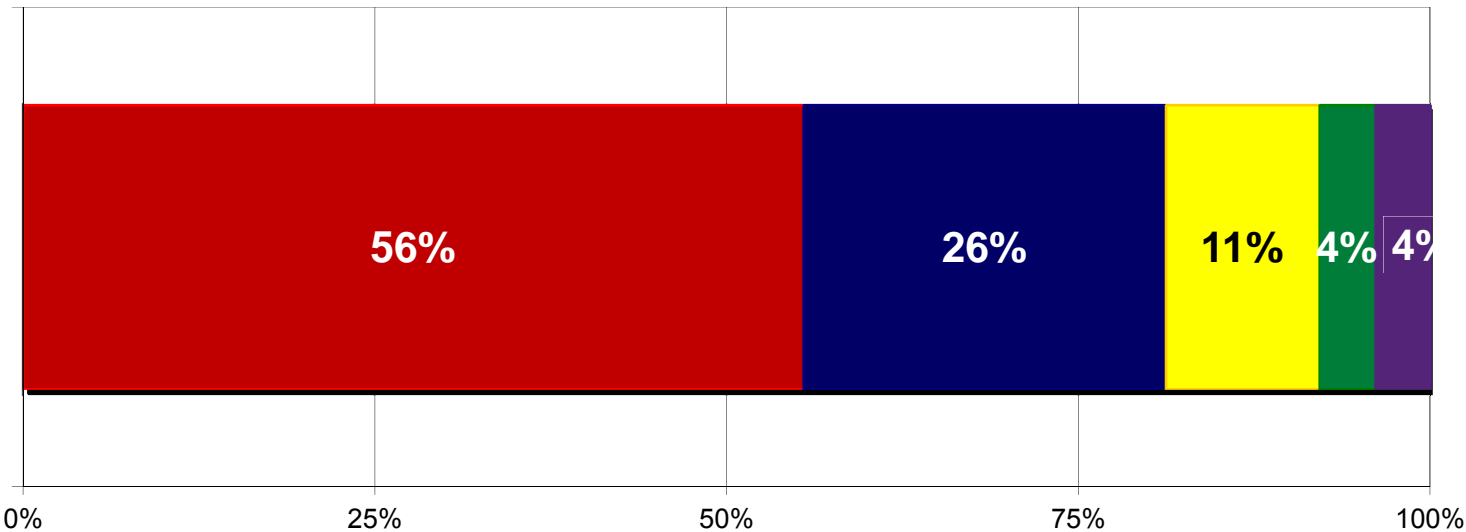




Level of Support for Community-Based Programs or Non-Jail Sanctions for Lower Risk Offenders After Being Read the Information Below (Q25b) Base=Total Sample (n=501)

The cost of holding a person in jail or prison is generally more expensive than community-based programs and/or sanctions. In addition, research conducted for the Crime and Justice Institute and the National Institute for Corrections has shown that community-based programs or non-jail sanctions are often more effective than incarceration in preventing offenders from committing future crimes. Research has also shown that lower risk offenders are more likely to become repeat offenders after being incarcerated or in jail with high risk offenders.

Total support=82%



Average rating=8.5

■ 10,9=Strongly support ■ 8,7=Support ■ 6,5=Midpoints ■ 4-1=Oppose ■ Don't know



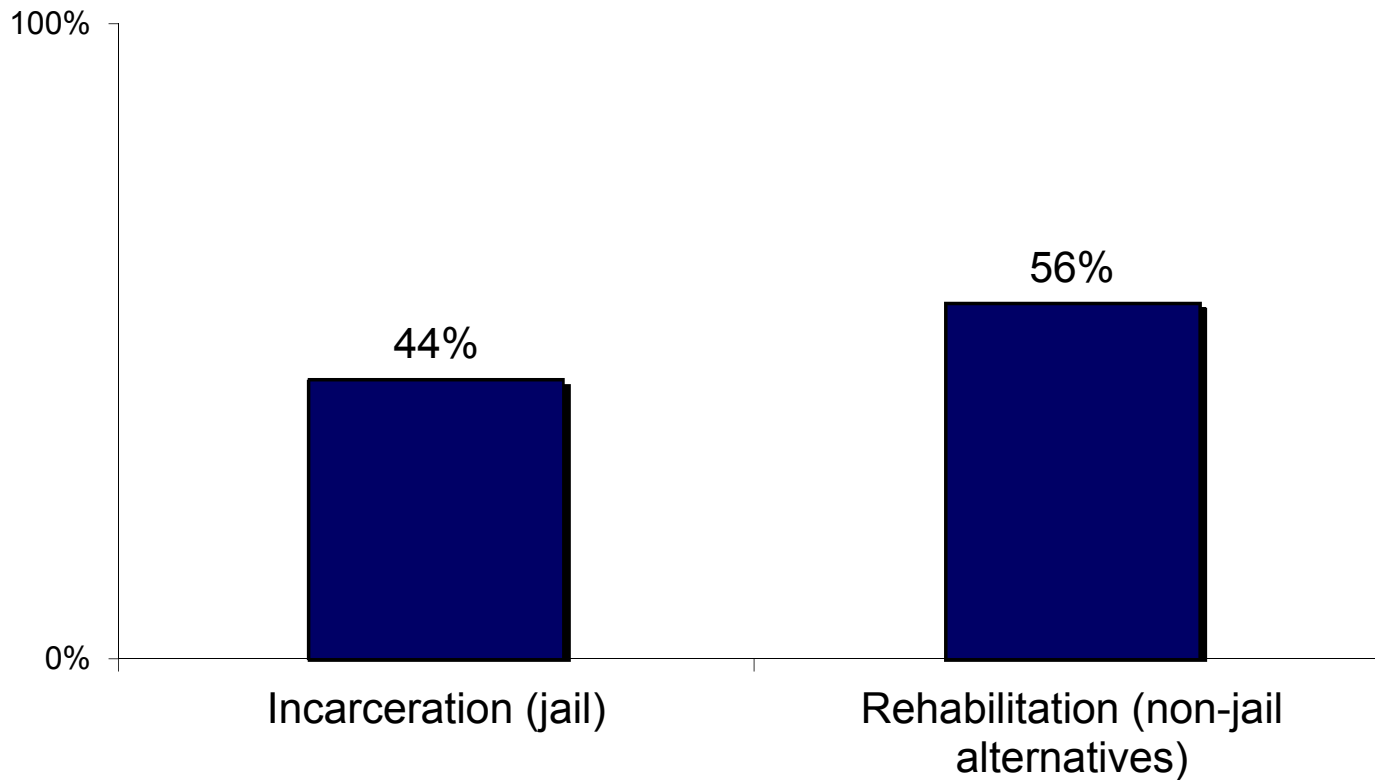
Reasons for Opposing Community-Based Programs or Non-Jail Sanctions for Lower Risk Offenders (Q25c)

Base=Total Sample (n=501)

Only 4% of the sample oppose non-jail sanctions (i.e., gave a rating of 1 to 4, on the 1 to 10 scale on Q25b). Their reasons are shown below.	Percent of Total Sample
Non-jail sanctions are over used	1%
If they go free they know they can get away with committing more crime	1%
Criminals need to pay for their crimes	<.5%
Someone that goes on that path (crime) stays on that path	<.5%
Non-jail sanctions don't change people's minds/behavior like jail does	<.5%
We need to get criminals off the streets	<.5%
Can get education and treatment in jail	<.5%
That research was not done with Charlotte criminals	<.5%
Oppose, but no particular reason	<.5%
Support non-jail sanctions for lower risk offenders (rating of 7 to 10 on Q25b)	82%
Midpoint ratings (rating of 5 or 6 on Q25b)	11%
Don't know if support or oppose (could not rate on Q25b)	4%



**Think about how County tax dollars should be divided between incarceration (jail) versus rehabilitation (non-jail alternatives).
What percentage of 100% would you give to . . . (Q26)
Base=Respondents Able to Answer (n=476)**



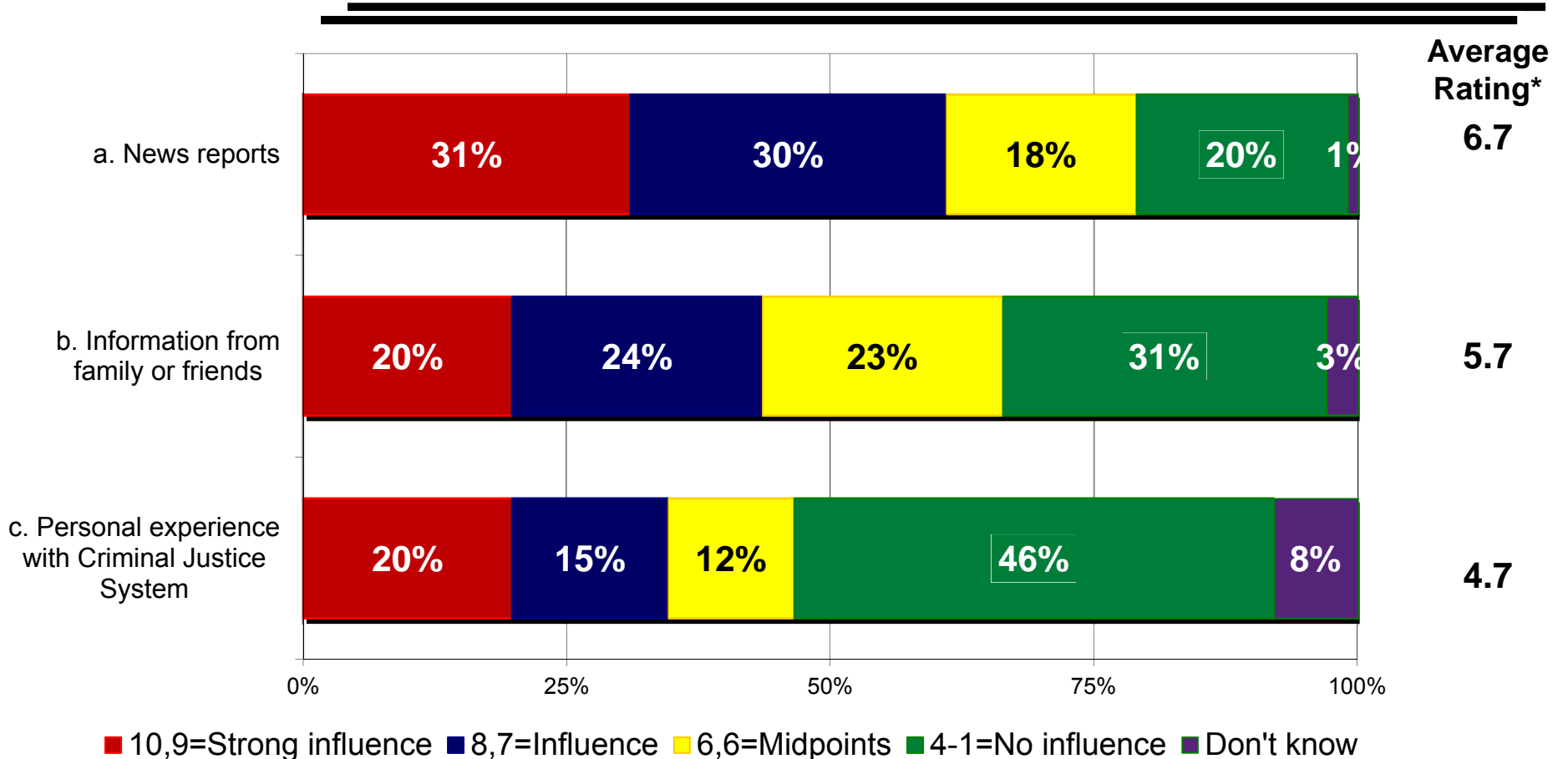
5% of respondents could not answer this question and have been dropped from the base.



Sources of Information and Experience with Criminal Justice System



In general, how strongly have the following sources of information shaped your knowledge and opinions of the Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice system? (Q27a-c)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)



For average ratings, “don’t know” responses have been dropped from the base.

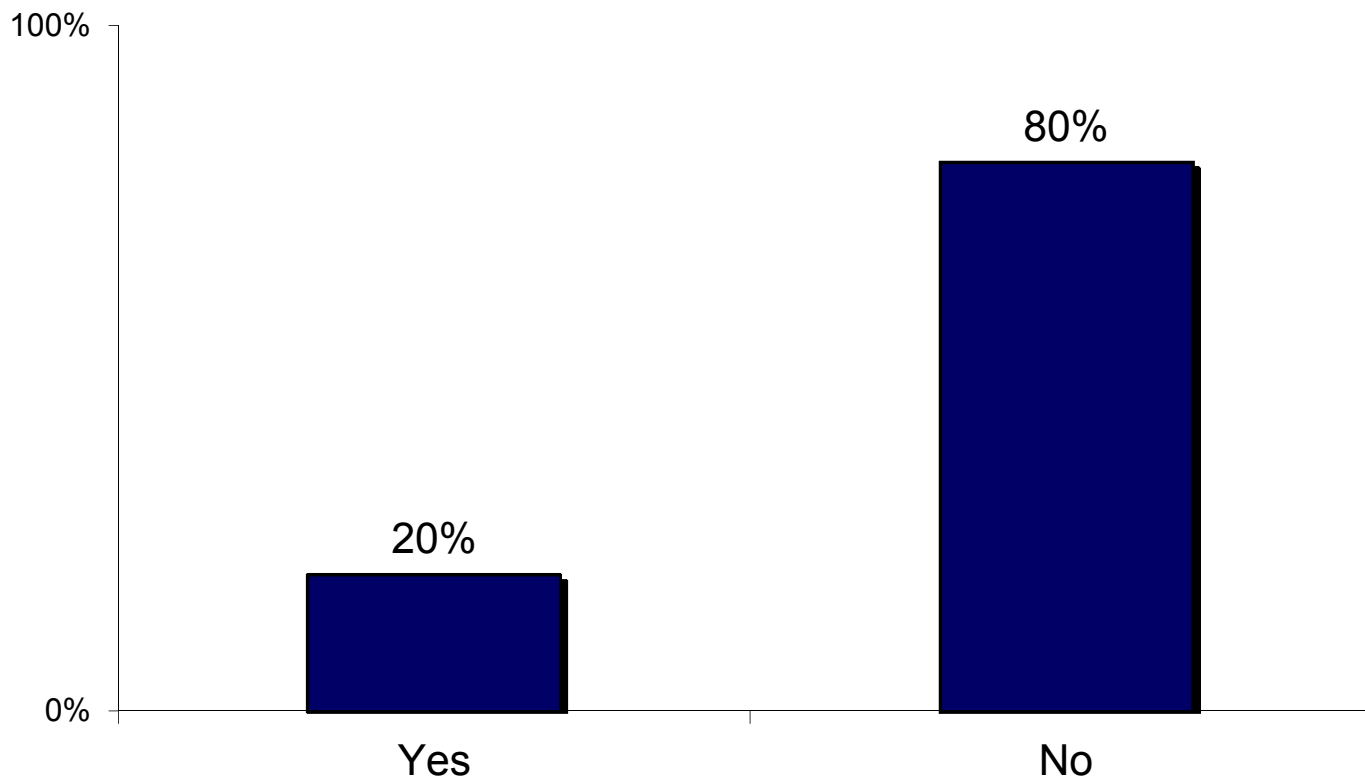
Only 9% of respondents indicated there were other sources. The other sources are: Internet (4%), interactions with CMPD (3%), education at local schools (2%), the Government (<.5%), and this survey (<.5%).



Victim Status

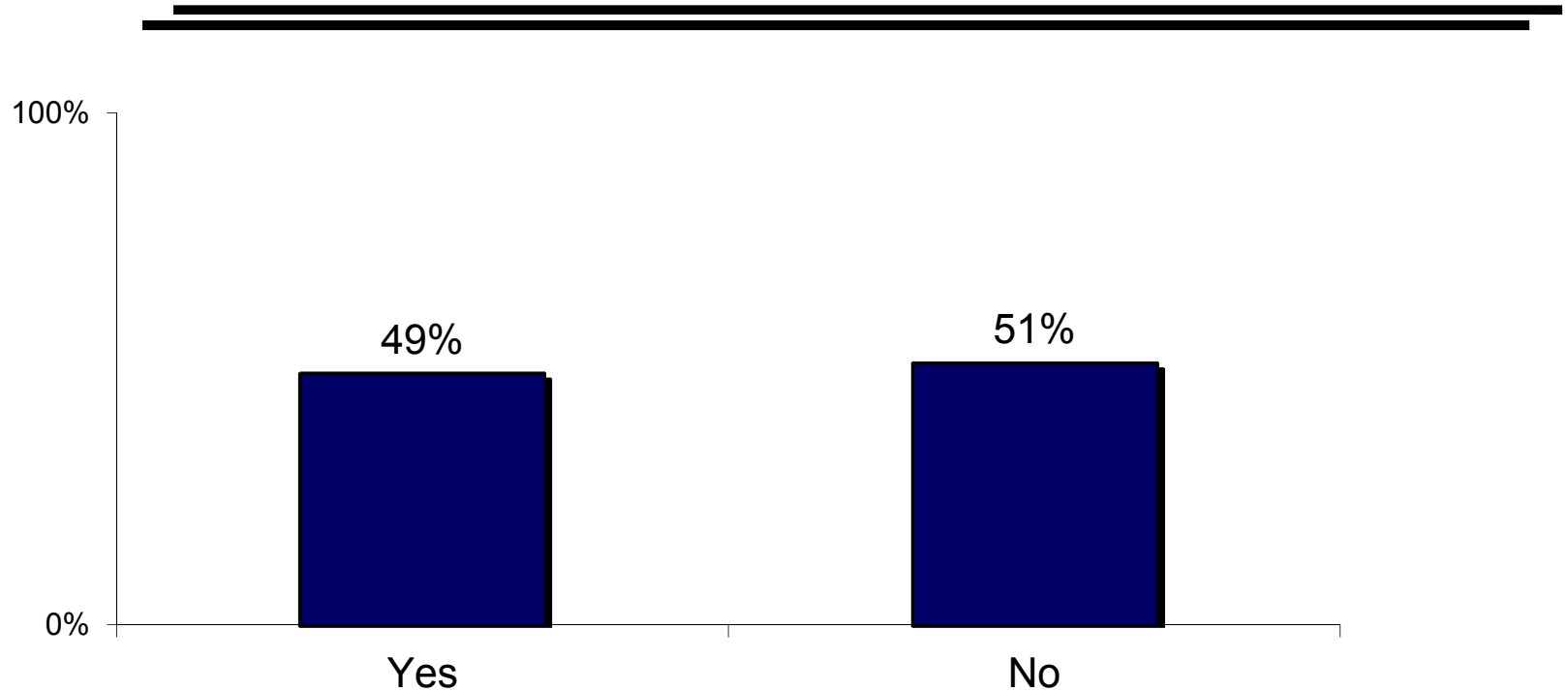


Have you or an immediate family member ever been a victim of a violent crime involving force or a weapon? (Q28)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





Have you or an immediate family member ever
been a victim of a non-violent crime? (Q29)
Base= Total Sample (n=501)





Respondent Demographics



Respondent Demographics

Q1. Gender (n=501) Male Female	50% 50%
Q3. Race/Ethnicity (n=501) White, non-Hispanic African American Hispanic/Latino of any race Other	50% 30% 12% 8%
Q4. Age (n=501) 18-24 24-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65 and older	12% 18% 20% 19% 16% 16%
Q30. Education (n=501) Less than HS HS graduate Some college/voc. training College graduate (4 yr. college) Post graduate work Advanced graduate degree	7% 24% 31% 27% 5% 7%

Q31. Employment Status (n=500, refusal dropped from base) Full time Part time Full time homemaker Full time retired Full time student Unemployed Disabled	49% 12% 5% 18% 5% 6% 5%
Q32. Area of Residence Defined by Zip Code (n=488, refusals dropped from base) North East South West	27% 33% 21% 18%
Q33. Household Income (n=434, refusals dropped from base) Less than \$25k \$25k to < \$50k \$50k to < \$75k \$75k+	26% 24% 19% 31%