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ABSTRACT

This report provides, in tabular and graphic format, the results of a national poll conducted for the Fight Crime: Invest in Kids campaign. The survey sought opinions of 780 police chiefs: all chiefs from cities with populations over 100,000, a sample of 288 chiefs from cities of less than 25,000, and a sample of 292 chiefs from cities of between 25,000 and 100,000. Survey results indicated that more than 90 percent of police chiefs agreed that crime could be reduced if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start by funding Head Start, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools, and providing after school programs and mentoring. Results were similar across region and city size. The crime fighting strategy ranked as "most effective" over the long-term was to increase investment in programs to help all children and youth get a good start (selected by 60 percent). Other crime fighting strategies were ranked as follows: trying juveniles in court proceedings as adults (16 percent); hiring additional police officers (17 percent); and making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes (26 percent). In the tables and graphs comprising virtually all of this document, results are delineated by city size and by region. The appendix provides a further breakdown by city size among cities with populations over 100,000. (KDFB)

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July 26, 1996

Police Chiefs Say More Government Investments in Kids are Key to Fighting Crime

Survey Findings

Attached are results from a poll conducted for the Fight Crime: Invest in Kids campaign by Northeastern University's Center for Criminal Justice Policy Research, under the direction of the Center's Co-Director, Professor Jack McDevitt.

The survey sought opinions of 780 police chiefs, including all chiefs from cities with populations over 100,000, and a sample of 288 chiefs from cities of less than 25,000, and 292 chiefs from cities of between 25,000 and 100,000. The response rate was 70% for a total of 548 surveys returned.

More than nine out of ten police chiefs (92%) agreed with the statement "America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start" by "fully funding Head Start for infants and toddlers, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools and providing after school programs and mentoring." These results were strikingly similar regardless of region or city size.

Nine out of ten also agreed that "if America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs." Again, these results were nearly identical regardless of city size.

When chiefs were asked to rank the long-term effectiveness of a number of possible crime fighting approaches, "increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start" was picked as "most effective" nearly three times as often as either "trying more juveniles as adults" or even "hiring additional police officers."

The attached results are broken down by city size within each of the three city sizes. The appendix presents a further breakdown among those cities with populations over 100,000. Regional data is also presented.

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Table 1(A): National Results by size of Community

Table 1 (B): Regional Results

Question 2: Which of these statements comes closer to your view? A) If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare and other costs. B) Greater investment in children and youth may be worthwhile, but will not be valuable as a crime prevention tool

Table 2(A): National Results by size of Community

Table 2 (B): Regional Results

Question 3: Rating interventions on value as crime prevention tool (text of question appears on tables).

Table 3(A): National Results by size of Community

Table 3(B): Regional Results

Question 4: Most effective policy changes to reduce crime and violence (text of question appears on tables).

Table 4(A): National Results by size of Community

Table 4(B): Regional Results

Appendix A-1 through A-4: Further breakdown by city size of data for cities with populations over 100,000.

Table 1(A)

Question 1: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: *In the long run, America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start (for example, fully funding Head Start for infants and toddlers, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools, and providing after-school programs and mentoring).*

Attitude	Size of Community		
	Nationwide %	25,000 and under %	100,001 - or more %
Strongly Agree	46	38	59
Agree	46	52	37
No Opinion	3	4	1
Disagree	4	5	3
Strongly Disagree	1	1	0
		n=204	n=186
			n=154

GRAPH 1(A)

Question 1: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: In the long run, America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start (for example, fully funding Head Start for infants and toddlers, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools, and providing after-school programs and mentoring).

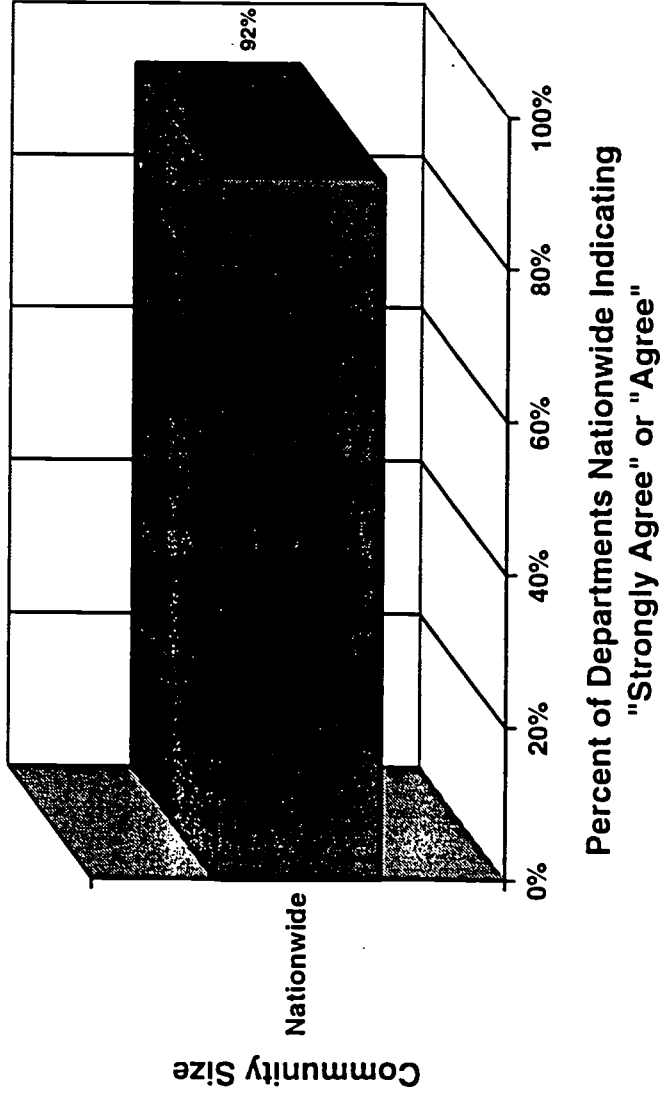


Table 1(B)

Question 1: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: *In the long run, America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start (for example, fully funding Head Start for infants and toddlers, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools, and providing after-school programs and mentoring).*

Attitude	Region			
	Northeast ¹ %	South ² %	Midwest ³ %	West ⁴ %
Strongly Agree	52	52	38	54
Agree	38	41	55	40
No Opinion	4	2	2	2
Disagree	6	4	4	4
Strongly Disagree	0	1	1	0

n=128

n=154

n=161

n=101

¹ Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

² Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

³ Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

⁴ Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.

GRAPH 1(B)

Question 1: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: *In the long run, America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start (for example, fully funding Head Start for infants and toddlers, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools, and providing after-school programs and mentoring).*

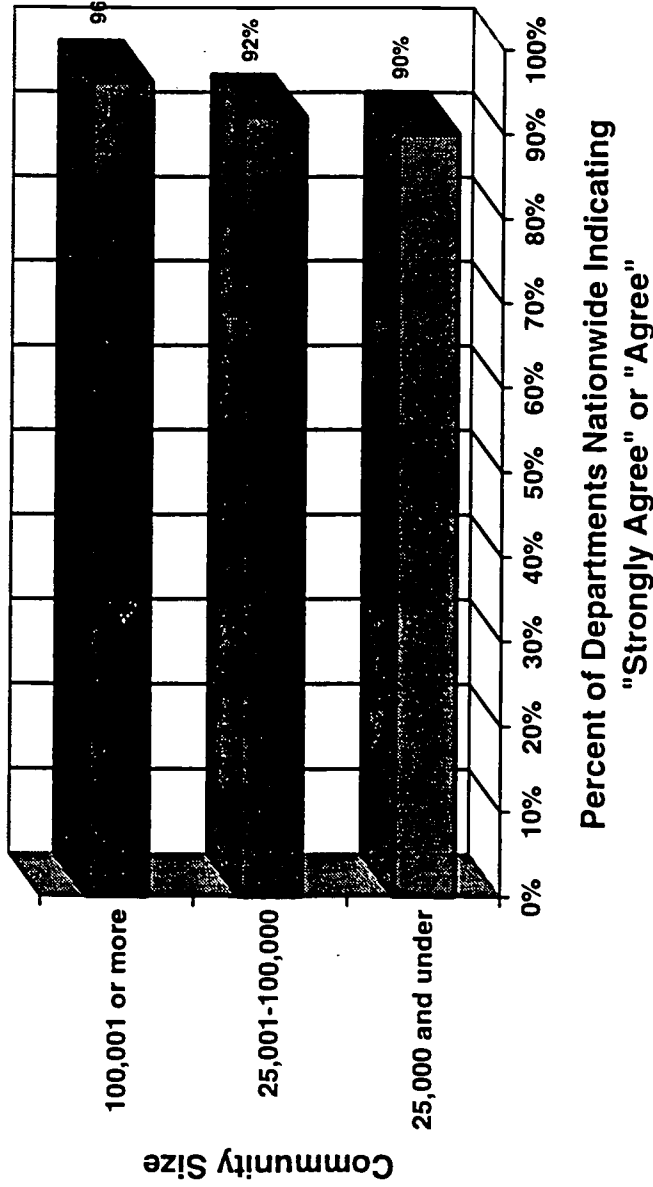


Table 2(A)

Question 2: Which of these statements comes closer to your view?

- A) If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs.**
- B) Greater investment in children and youth may be worthwhile, but will not be valuable as a crime prevention tool.**

View	Size of Community			
	Nationwide %	25,000 and under %	25,001 - 100,000 %	100,001 - or more %
A) Invest now or pay far more later	90	88	90	94
B) Perhaps worthwhile but not effective for crime prevention	10	12	10	6
		n=203	n=183	n=154

Graph 2(A)

Question 2: Which of these statements comes closer to your view?

- A) If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs.**
- B) Greater investment in children and youth may be worthwhile, but will not be valuable as a crime prevention tool.**

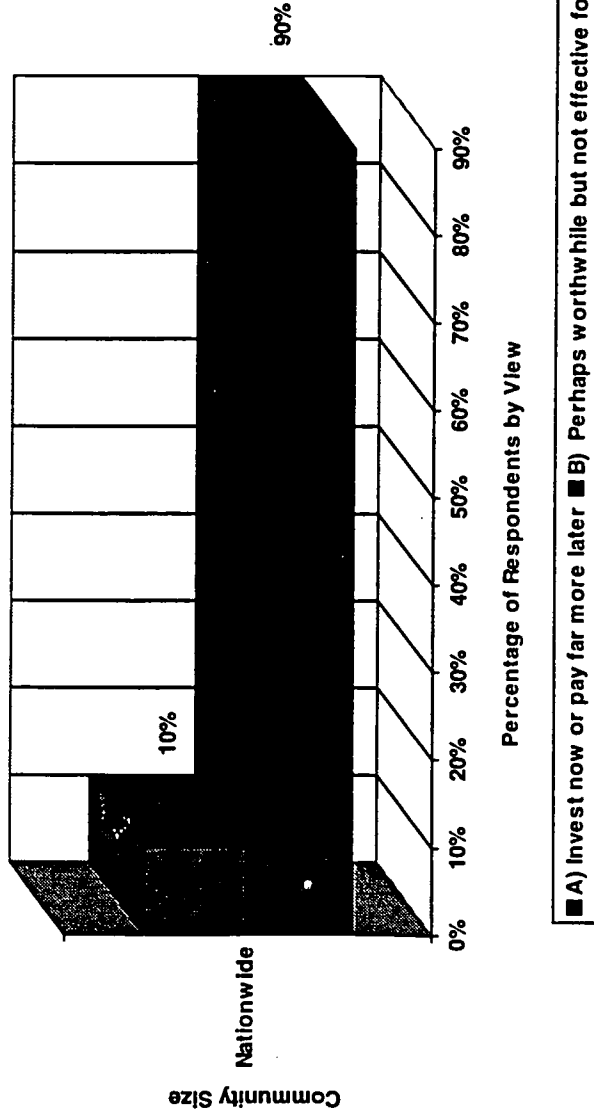


Table 2(B)

Question 2: Which of these statements comes closer to your view?

- A) If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs.**
- B) Greater investment in children and youth may be worthwhile, but will not be valuable as a crime prevention tool.**

View	Region			
	Northeast ⁵ %	South ⁶ %	Midwest ⁷ %	West ⁸ %
A) Invest now or pay far more later	93	90	86	93
B) Perhaps worthwhile but not effective for crime prevention	7	10	14	7
	n=127	n=152	n=159	n=102

⁵ Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

⁶ Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

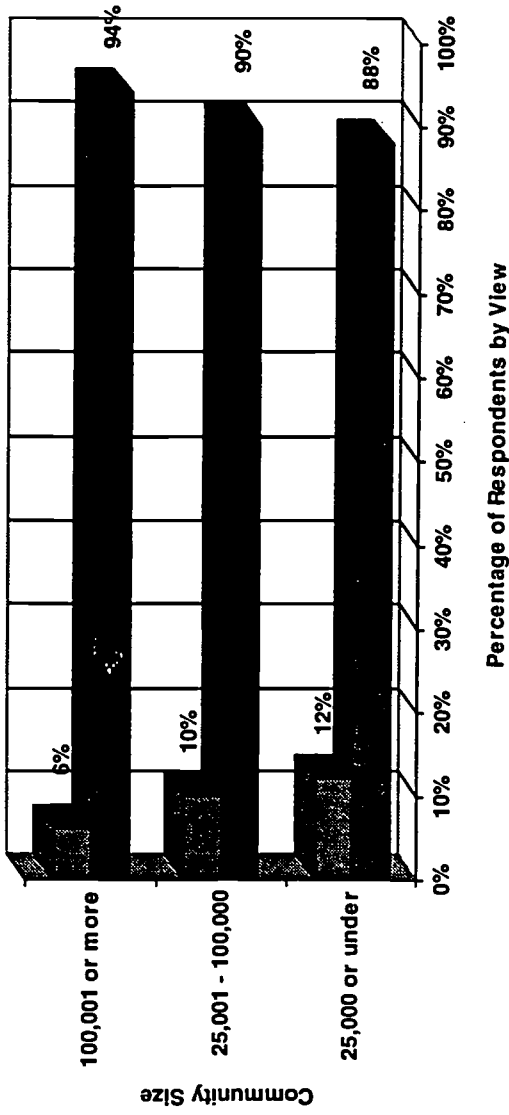
⁷ Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

⁸ Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.

Graph 2(B)

Question 2: Which of these statements comes closer to your view?

- A) If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs.**
- B) Greater investment in children and youth may be worthwhile, but will not be valuable as a crime prevention tool.**



Percentage of Respondents by View
 ■ A) Invest now or pay far more later ■ B) Perhaps worthwhile but not effective for crime prevention

Table 3(A)

Question 3: Using your best judgment, please rate the following, on a scale from 1 to 5, on their value as a crime prevention tool:

	Very Valuable	Valuable	Not at all Valuable
A. Head Start or similar early childhood education	1	2	3
B. prevention of child abuse and neglect	1	2	3
C. after-school and summer programs	1	2	3
D. mentoring programs	1	2	3
E. job training for teenagers	1	2	3
F. parenting training for high-risk families	1	2	3

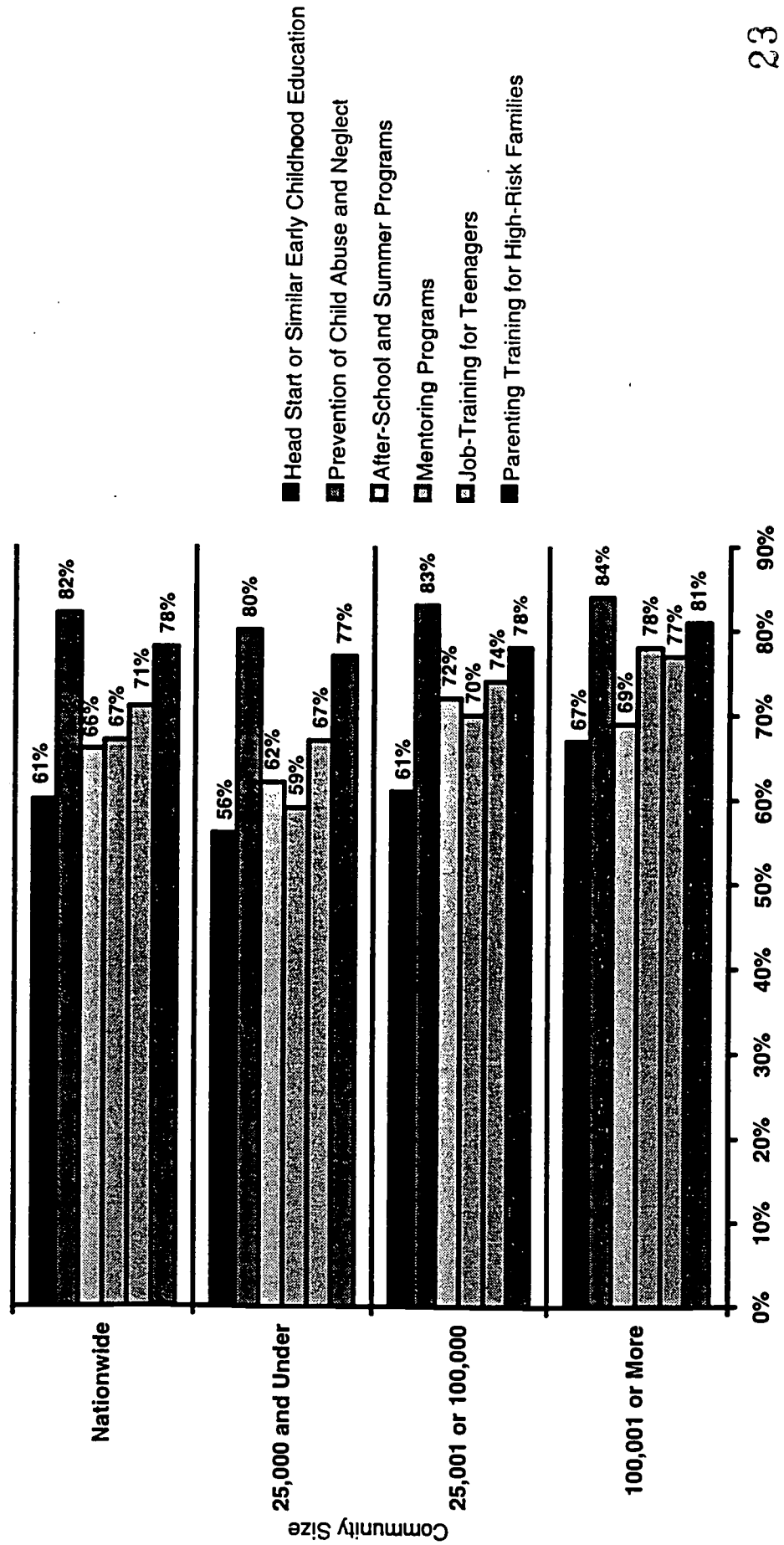
Percent of departments indicating the following programs are "very valuable" or "valuable"

Program	Size of Community			
	Nationwide %	25,000 and under %	25,001 - 100,000 %	100,001 - or more %
A) Head Start or similar early childhood education	60	56 (n=204)	61 (n=185)	67 (n=155)
B) prevention of child abuse and neglect	82	80 (n=205)	83 (n=184)	84 (n=154)
C) after-school and summer programs	66	62 (n=203)	72 (n=186)	69 (n=155)
D) mentoring programs	67	59 (n=203)	70 (n=187)	78 (n=154)
E) job-training for teenagers	71	67 (n=203)	74 (n=186)	77 (n=155)
F) parenting training for high-risk families	78	77 (n=205)	78 (n=187)	81 (n=155)

Graph 3(A)

Question 3: Using your best judgment, please rate the following, on a scale from 1 to 5, on their value as a crime prevention tool:

	Very Valuable	Valuable	Not At All Valuable
A. Head Start or Similar Early Childhood Education	1	2	5
B. Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect	1	2	5
C. After-School and Summer Programs	1	2	5
D. Mentoring Programs	1	2	5
E. Job Training for Teenagers	1	2	5
F. Parenting Training for High-Risk Families	1	2	5



Percent of Departments Indicating the Following Programs are "Very Valuable" or "Valuable"

Table 3(B)

Question 3: Using your best judgment, please rate the following, on a scale from 1 to 5, on their value as a crime prevention tool:

Very
Valuable Valuable Valuable Not at all
Valuable Valuable

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Head Start or similar early childhood education | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B. prevention of child abuse and neglect | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C. after-school and summer programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D. mentoring programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| E. job training for teenagers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F. parenting training for high-risk families | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Percent of departments indicating the following programs are "very valuable" or "valuable"

Program	Region			
	Northeast ⁹ %	South ¹⁰ %	Midwest ¹¹ %	West ¹² %
A) Head Start or similar early childhood education	60 (n=129)	67 (n=154)	57 (n=159)	58 (n=102)
B) prevention of child abuse and neglect	83 (n=128)	87 (n=154)	74 (n=159)	85 (n=102)
C) after-school and summer programs	68 (n=127)	71 (n=154)	61 (n=161)	71 (n=102)
D) mentoring programs	64 (n=129)	76 (n=153)	61 (n=161)	73 (n=101)
E) job-training for teenagers	71 (n=129)	72 (n=155)	69 (n=158)	79 (n=102)
F) parenting training for high-risk families	78 (n=129)	75 (n=155)	80 (n=161)	79 (n=102)

⁹ Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

¹⁰ Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

¹¹ Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

¹² Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.

Table 4(A)

4. Please rank each of the following policies on a scale of 1 to 4, giving a "1" to the policy you think is most effective and a "4" to the policy you think is the least effective according to their long-term effectiveness in reducing crime and violence. (please use each number only once)
- A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons.
 - B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start.
 - C) Hiring of additional police officers.
 - D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.

Percent of departments indicating the following policies are the "most effective"¹³

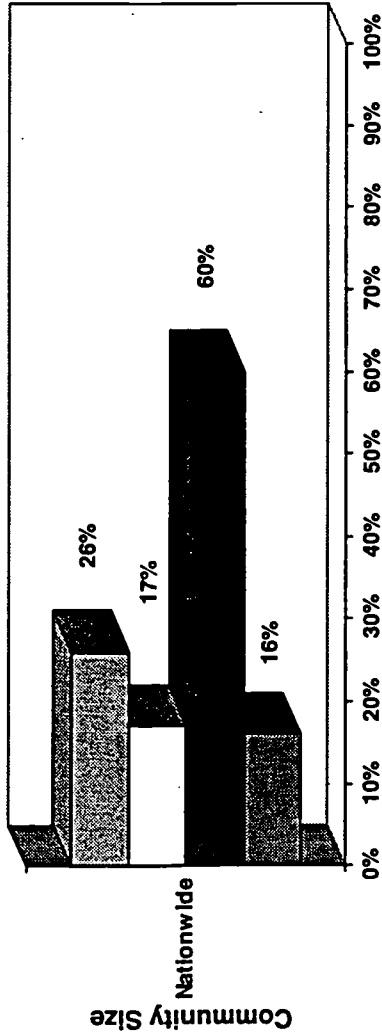
Policy	Size of Community			
	Nationwide %	25,000 and under %	25,001 - 100,000 %	100,001 - or more %
A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons.	16	20 (n=205)	10 (n=184)	12 (n=154)
B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start.	60	51 (n=206)	67 (n=185)	74 (n=155)
C) Hiring of additional police officers.	17	20 (n=205)	11 (n=185)	17 (n=155)
D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.	26	32 (n=204)	19 (n=186)	18 (n=154)

¹³ Some respondents gave more than one policy a rank of "1." Therefore, not all percentages total exactly 100.

Graph 4(A)

Question 4: Please rank each of the following policies on a scale of 1 to 4, giving a "1" to the policy you think is most effective and "4" to the policy you think is the least effective according to their long-term effectiveness in reducing crime and violence. (please use each number only once)

- A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons
- B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start
- C) Hiring of additional police officers
- D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes



Percent of Departments Nationwide Indicating these Policies as the "Most Effective"

- Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes
- Hiring of additional police officers
- Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start
- Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons

Table 4(B)

4. Please rank each of the following policies on a scale of 1 to 4, giving a "1" to the policy you think is most effective and a "4" to the policy you think is the least effective according to their long-term effectiveness in reducing crime and violence. (please use each number only once)
- A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons.
 - B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start.
 - C) Hiring of additional police officers.
 - D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.

*Percent of departments indicating the following policies are the "most effective"*¹⁴

Policy	Region			
	Northeast ¹⁵ %	South ¹⁶ %	Midwest ¹⁷ %	West ¹⁸ %
A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons.	17 (n=129)	26 (n=154)	15 (n=158)	6 (n=102)
B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start.	59 (n=129)	65 (n=155)	57 (n=160)	74 (n=102)
C) Hiring of additional police officers.	16 (n=129)	21 (n=155)	11 (n=159)	17 (n=102)
D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.	21 (n=127)	24 (n=156)	29 (n=159)	20 (n=102)

¹⁴ Some respondents gave more than one policy a rank of "1." Therefore, not all percentages total exactly 100.

¹⁵ Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

¹⁶ Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

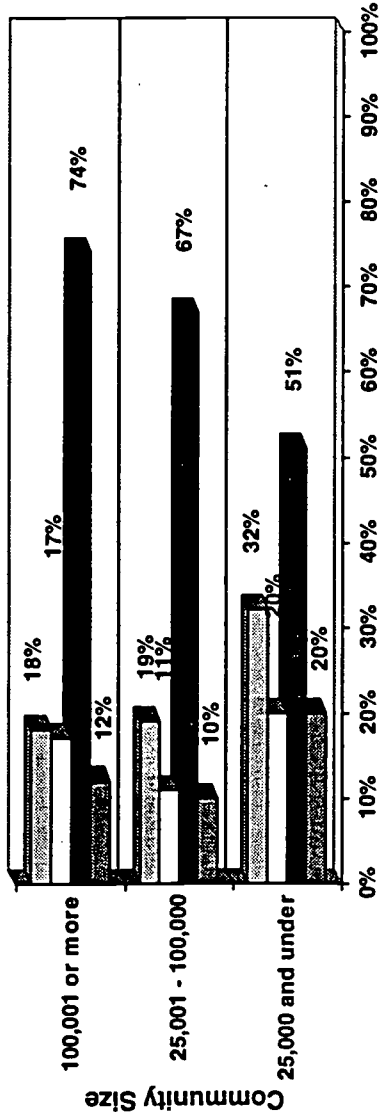
¹⁷ Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

¹⁸ Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.

Graph 4(B)

Question 4: Please rank each of the following policies on a scale of 1 to 4, giving a "1" to the policy you think is most effective and "4" to the policy you think is the least effective according to their long-term effectiveness in reducing crime and violence. (please use each number only once)

- A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons
- B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start
- C) Hiring of additional police officers
- D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes



Percent of Departments Nationwide Indicating these Policies as the "Most Effective"

- Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes
- Hiring of additional police officers
- Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start
- Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons

1.

Appendix A-1

Question 1: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: *In the long run, America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start (for example, fully funding Head Start for infants and toddlers, preventing child abuse, providing parenting training for high-risk families, improving schools, and providing after-school programs and mentoring).*

Attitude	Size of Community									
	100,001 - 250,000		250,001 - 500,000		500,001 - 1,000,000		1,000,001 - 5,000,000		5,000,001 - or more	
	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent
Strongly Agree	53	55%	24	71%	8	67%	5	50%		
Agree	40	41%	9	27%	4	33%	4	40%		
No Opinion	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%		
Disagree	2	2%	1	3%	0	0%	1	10%		
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%		
		n=97		n=34		n=12		n=10		

Appendix A-2

Question 2: Which of these statements comes closer to your view?

- A)** If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs.
- B)** Greater investment in children and youth may be worthwhile, but will not be valuable as a crime prevention tool.

View	Size of Community							
	< 100,001	100,001 - 250,000	250,001 - 500,000	500,001 - 1,000,000	> 1,000,001	Percent		
A) Invest now or pay far more later	# of responses 90	Percent 93%	# of responses 33	Percent 97%	# of responses 12	Percent 100%	# of responses 9	Percent 90%
B) Perhaps worthwhile but not effective for crime prevention	7	7%	1	3%	0	0%	1	10%
	n=97		n=34		n=12		n=10	

Appendix A-4

4. Please rank each of the following policies on a scale of 1 to 4, giving a "1" to the policy you think is most effective and a "4" to the policy you think is the least effective according to their long-term effectiveness in reducing crime and violence. (Please use each number only once)

- A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons.
- B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start.
- C) Hiring of additional police officers.
- D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.

Percent of departments indicating the following policies are the "most effective"

Policy	Size of Community				Total			
	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent	# of responses	Percent
A) Trying more juveniles as adults, and sentencing more juveniles to adult prisons.	15	16% (n=97)	3	9% (n=34)	0	0% (n=12)	0	0% (n=10)
B) Increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start.	65	66% (n=98)	29	85% (n=34)	12	100% (n=12)	8	80% (n=10)
C) Hiring of additional police officers.	19	19% (n=98)	5	15% (n=34)	1	8% (n=12)	2	20% (n=10)
D) Making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.	22	23% (n=97)	3	9% (n=34)	1	8% (n=12)	1	10% (n=9)

¹ Some respondents gave more than one policy a rank of "1." Therefore, not all percentages total exactly 100.

Appendix B-1 Size of Community

Population	Percent of Sample	Percent Nationwide
25,000 and under	38	54
25,001 - 100,000	34	20
100,001 - or more	28	26

n=548

Appendix B-2 Percentage of Sample in Large Cities *(Large cities defined as 100,001 or more people)*

Population	Percent of Sample
100,001 - 250,000	18
250,001 - 500,000	6
500,001 - 1,000,000	2
100,001 - 7,500,000	2

n=548

Appendix C Survey Response Rate

Sample Parameters	# of surveys sent out	# of surveys received	Response Rate %
25,000 and under	288	206	72
25,001 - 100,000	292	188	64
100,001 - or more	200	154	77
TOTAL SAMPLE	780	548	70

Appendix D Regional Distribution of Sample

Region	Percent
Northeast ²	24
South ³	28
Midwest ⁴	29
West ⁵	19

n=548

Appendix E Size of Department

# of Officers	Percent
1 - 20	28
21 - 75	26
76 - 200	21
201 - 35,961	25

n=548

² Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

³ Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

⁴ Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

⁵ Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.



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