



FOCUS GROUP TESTING OF A PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAMPAIGN AIMED AT HISPANICS

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Study Overview





Background and Objectives

- ◆ McAndrew Company contracted with Shugoll Research to conduct focus groups to determine which of two Street Smart campaign approaches is most effective in motivating Latino pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross Metropolitan Washington, DC intersections.
- ◆ A set of print materials for each approach was shown to participants:
 - The “*Hard Tactics*” campaign is based on a more dramatic, graphical approach.
 - The “*Street Smart Tips*” campaign consists of tips on how to safely cross area intersections.
- ◆ McAndrew Company will use the results of the research in its spring 2011 planning for launch of the final campaign aimed at Hispanics.
- ◆ The research was conducted with Latino women and men 18 to 65 years of age who live in the Washington, DC metro area (Maryland suburbs, the District and Northern Virginia).
- ◆ Specific objectives of the focus groups were to:
 - Explore perceptions of pedestrian safety issues
 - Obtain feedback on the Street Smart campaign approaches
 - Explore media habits



Methodology

- ◆ Two focus groups were conducted on October 19, 2010 at Shugoll Research's focus group facility located in Bethesda, MD.
- ◆ The focus groups were conducted in a focus group suite that contains a conference room, built-in audio and video equipment, one-way mirror and client viewing room behind the mirror. The groups were conducted at 6PM and 8PM and each group lasted 2 hours.
- ◆ Each group was comprised of 9 respondents, mostly from South America.
 - Group 1 consisted of 6 women and 3 men.
 - Group 2 consisted of 4 women and 5 men.
 - A summary of the respondent profile may be found in the Appendix.
- ◆ The groups were conducted in Spanish by a bilingual, bi-cultural moderator.
- ◆ Focus group participants were carefully screened to meet the following criteria:
 - Women and men 18 to 65 years of age
 - Must be Spanish dominant
 - A mix of pedestrians, cyclists, bus and metro rail riders, and automobile drivers
 - Must be articulate and comfortable expressing their opinions in a group



Limitations

- ◆ The focus group methodology used for this study is qualitative in nature. Because the moderator's guide involves open-ended question areas, the exact wording of each question or the discussion of each question area will vary across groups. This means results are used to develop directions rather than quantitatively precise or absolute measures.
 - The limited number of respondents involved in this type of research means the study should be regarded as exploratory in nature, and the results used to generate hypotheses for marketing decision making and further testing.
 - The non-statistical nature of qualitative research means that results cannot be generalized to the population under study with a known level of statistical precision.

Key Findings

Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues



Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ Knowledge that pedestrians have the right of way is high among Latinos. However, Hispanic pedestrians and cyclists are concerned that drivers in the Washington, DC metro area are not aware of pedestrians' rights or do not acknowledge these rights. Pedestrians are also confused about some of the laws themselves.
 - Respondents generally mistrust drivers and feel drivers do not pay attention to pedestrians.
 - Drivers are perceived to be more knowledgeable about driving rules than about pedestrian rules.
 - Drivers seem to feel that they are entitled to own the road.
 - Drivers don't always stop at crosswalks or respect pedestrian signals.
 - Drivers are perceived to be distracted by talking on cell phones or texting on their PDAs.

"Sometimes people are not aware that the pedestrian has the priority in a crosswalk."

"The drivers, they do not pay attention and now it is worse that they are using their cell phones and they are texting, one has to be more careful, if not, you go to the next life."
 - Respondents say that if they make eye contact with a driver they have more confidence that the driver will yield.
 - Respondents do acknowledge that they, themselves, are confused about rules regarding some of the occasions when cars are allowed to turn into crosswalks.
 - Cars turning left cause confusion when pedestrians are not sure if drivers have a left turn signal or not.
 - Since a right turn at a red light is not permissible in many Latin American countries, respondents are often confused about crossing streets when cars are turning right.

"It is determined that you are allowed to make a right turn at a red light; that, in most of our countries, does not exist; even less in Uruguay and that sometimes creates doubts for the pedestrian. Therefore, because of that doubt, I think that it is a problem in teaching, in educating the pedestrian as to how they are to cross."



Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ Respondents in both groups agree that drivers in the District of Columbia are more respectful of pedestrians.
 - The suburbs are seen as less pedestrian-friendly.

“It seems like here in DC the cars are more respectful when they see a pedestrian stop. But, for example, in Rockville and more on the outskirts, they stop less often. The pedestrian does not seem as important like they are in DC.”
- ◆ Pedestrians especially value crosswalks with traffic signals and pedestrian signals that indicate the amount of time remaining to cross. They are also more confident about crossing the street when there is a traffic signal.
 - They feel safer when a crosswalk has a pedestrian signal indicating the amount of time left for crossing and feel it is an effective and helpful tool.
 - They feel less safe crossing a street that does not have a traffic signal.
- ◆ Respondents believe that, in general, they know pedestrian rules and understand how to cross streets safely. They feel that pedestrian safety is more a concern for others than for themselves.
 - The majority perceive that crossing streets correctly is an issue for lower-educated Latinos and they do not perceive themselves in this category.
 - They also expressed concern about high school students who often are oblivious to traffic and do not cross streets safely when let out from school.



Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ **Hispanic pedestrians acknowledge that they “occasionally” do not cross streets at intersections.**

- There a number of reasons for this behavior:

- They are in a hurry.
- The intersection is far from where they need to go.
- They think nothing of this behavior since in their countries’ of origin, people always cross in the middle of the road.
- There are no cars coming so they feel safe crossing.

“To take a shortcut, if you are in a hurry.”

“[I cross in the middle]. Like a good Peruvian.”

- ◆ **Pedestrian safety is generally much more lax in Latin American countries.**

- Most Latin American countries either do not have pedestrian rules or signals or no one respects them if they exist.
- Respondents laughed when comparing U.S. pedestrian rules with those of their country of origin and acknowledge that pedestrian rules are more often followed in the U.S. They feel safer as a result.

“Here people respect [pedestrian safety] more. The pedestrian also respects more when they are crossing than, for example, in Colombia. Even though in Colombia they have been educated, in Bogotá at least, in the capital, there have [still] been a lot of accidents.”



Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ For the most part, respondents first learned about crossing streets safely from their parents in their country of origin. In a number of instances, differences in what they were taught created confusion when they moved to the U.S.
 - With the exception of one respondent in each group, no one had learned about looking left, right and left again, before crossing. Instead, they just look left and right or right and left before crossing. Those that knew about looking left, right, left, learned it here in the U.S.
 - The majority of the respondents learned in their countries of origin that cyclists ride in the opposite direction of traffic as a safety measure. This allows the cyclist to see oncoming traffic.

“I heard about looking from one side to the other but not again to the other side.”

“I think that we need a reprogramming because my husband and my children and me go out on our bikes. And we go in this way [against the traffic].”

“I don't know if I am educated poorly because from the way people drive in Peru, the one about going in the same direction as traffic, my father always taught me that I have to ride [a bicycle] always against the traffic.”



Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ Respondents have a keen desire to learn to correctly follow U.S. pedestrian safety rules. They see this as a public duty and a way to integrate into U.S. society.
 - Respondents referred to the idea as “civismo”, “public spiritedness”, “citizens’ conscience”.
 - When respondents see a fellow Latino not crossing appropriately, they perceive this person as a recently arrived immigrant lacking awareness.

“I think that people are educated here. Here, I think it's a country of rules because I'm from Colombia and I also come from a city where people are becoming conscious of educating us to go to the corner and cross but here people are more aware of that.”
- ◆ While there is interest in learning about pedestrian and cyclist safety, Hispanics do not know where to find information about these rules and generally just follow what others do.
 - Respondents learn by following what other pedestrians do when crossing the streets. They prefer to walk with groups of other pedestrians because they feel more protected and to watch what others do to cross safely.
 - Respondents say they learned about driving rules before taking the U.S. driving test, but do not know of resources where they can learn about pedestrian rules in the same way.

“I made the comment at the beginning that there are [rules to follow], but I don't know where they are or where to look for them.”
- ◆ There is low awareness of pedestrian safety advertising in the Washington, DC area.
 - Three respondents recalled seeing pedestrian safety ads.
 - One respondent in each group saw an ad on a bus.
 - The other ad was near a high school about crossing in appropriate areas.

Obtain Feedback on the Street Smart Campaign Approaches





Reactions to *Hard Tactics* Campaign

Hard Tactics Campaign Images



**¡Esté Atento!
Sea StreetSmart.**

**Cada 8 minutos una vida
se detiene de manera abrupta.**

**STREET
/// SMART**
BeStreetSmart.net

La policía controla estrictamente el cumplimiento
de las leyes de tránsito

Un programa de seguridad pública del Distrito de Columbia, Maryland y Virginia



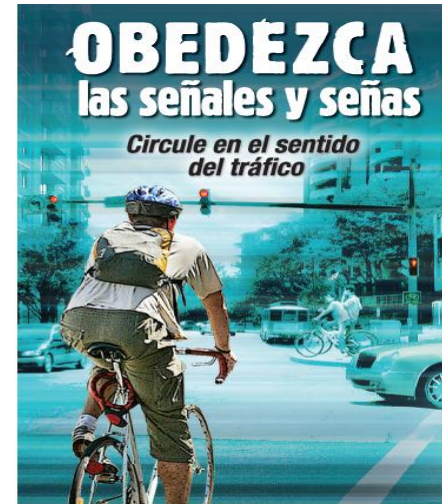
CRUCE *después de que
el autobús deje la parada.*

**Esté alerta. Cruce con cuidado.
Asegúrese de ser visto por los conductores y
esté atento a los autobuses que doblan
en la intersección.**

**STREET
/// SMART**
BeStreetSmart.net

La policía controla estrictamente el cumplimiento
de las leyes de tránsito

Un programa de seguridad pública del Distrito de Columbia, Maryland y Virginia



OBEDEZCA
las señales y señas

***Circule en el sentido
del tráfico***

**STREET
/// SMART**
BeStreetSmart.net

La policía controla estrictamente el cumplimiento
de las leyes de tránsito

Un programa de seguridad pública del Distrito de Columbia, Maryland y Virginia



Reactions to *Hard Tactics* Campaign

◆ The image of the woman being hit by a car had great emotional impact and resonated with respondents.

- Respondents found this image to be tragic and “horrible” and the negative consequences of not being safety conscious when crossing the street had tremendous impact.

“The [Hard Tactics] campaign recreates real situations with real people and it shows me a negative consequence if you don't follow safety measures in this area.”

◆ However, respondents were confused by some elements of this ad.

- It was not clear who is in the wrong in this image since it lacked a crosswalk and a traffic signal.
- Some see the mother as irresponsible, while others wonder if the driver just did not stop for the pedestrian.
- Several also would like to see a reference to the source of the “every 8 minutes” statistic mentioned in the text.
- The dark background colors used in the ad make it difficult for respondents to clearly see what is happening.
- The word “abrupta” in the text is awkward and not all Latinos may understand it.

“How did they run over the woman? [The car is] not to cross the line [crosswalk], but is there a line?”

“I don't know whose fault it is. I can't tell if the man was coming fast in the car or the man was the one who crossed because the light isn't red to know that. I don't know whose fault it was there, I don't know if it's the pedestrian or the driver.”

“I don't know why they put green in the background. It doesn't differentiate [other elements of the ad].”

“I think the word ‘abrupta’ is too much.”



Reactions to *Hard Tactics* Campaign

- ◆ **The other ads in the campaign were less well received. The ad with the image of the pedestrian behind the bus is not effective at communicating its message.**
 - Respondents do not understand why the man is next to the bus. This is important because most respondents do not already know that they should wait behind the bus before crossing the street.
 - The visuals are not sharp or clear.
 - This ad has too much text which partially obscures the image. Respondents say they are unlikely to read the text and believe that the ad's key message should be obtained from the visual.
 - Some recommend using more universal/international symbols and graphics so readers of all literacy levels can understand the messages.

"I don't know where the bus is. I don't know if there is a stop or [what the man is doing]."

"If you put something graphically that impresses [people] with less words, it's going to be [noticed] more."
- ◆ **The ad with the image of the cyclist also does not do a good job of communicating key messages.**
 - It is not clear to respondents that the ad is communicating cyclist safety. Some mention that it could be an ad selling bicycles or a type of backpack.
 - It is not clear if the cyclist is stopped or is moving forward. Since his right leg is cut off in the image, respondents can't tell if his foot is on the ground. Also, respondents can't tell if he is riding with or against the traffic.
 - Respondents feel that the word "señas" is not appropriate. It means "gestures" not "signals".
 - Again, the dark colors used in the ad do not help in clarifying the image.

"Those greens, those blues, they disorient you because you don't know if a car is coming or if he's stopped or going."



Reactions to *Hard Tactics* Campaign

- ◆ **The statement, ‘Police are enforcing traffic laws!’ has a negative connotation.**

- This statement suggests to respondents that the purpose of the campaign is to communicate that fines will be given to people who do not obey pedestrian safety rules. It makes some Hispanics suspect that the police are out to get them.

“What I think is that there is a hidden message here. Like something you don't see. This is like preparing for a new wave of tickets. It could be that the police are tricky and they put it very small, in a very small text so that nobody reads it.”

- ◆ **Respondents do not realize that “Street Smart” is the name of the pedestrian safety program and, therefore, perceive this to be an over reliance on “Spanglish” in the text.**

- Hispanics are confused about the use of the English “Street Smart” in the header of one of the ads and in the logo boxes when the rest of the text is in Spanish.

“Confusing, with a lot of words combining English with Spanish.”

- ◆ **The Street Smart text at the bottom of each ad is too small, too repetitive and too wordy.**

- Respondents do not notice the Street Smart logo or website on any of the ads.

- ◆ **Respondents would prefer to see people that are recognizable as Latinos used in the ads.**

- This is especially noticeable on the ad with the African American man behind the bus.
- Respondents say that ads in Spanish targeted to Latinos should show Latinos or at least people with Latino coloring.



Reactions to *Hard Tactics* Campaign

Respondents in both groups had similar reactions to this set of ads:

Adjectives Used to Describe the *Hard Tactics* Campaign

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dramatic• Confusing• Opaque• Contradictory• Not attention-getting• Concise• Clean• Clear• Educational | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Realistic• Informative• Shocking• Aggressive• Tragic• Logical• Impactful• Attention-getting• Direct |
|---|---|



Both groups are similar in their descriptions of the messages communicated by the campaign.

Perceived *Hard Tactics* Messages

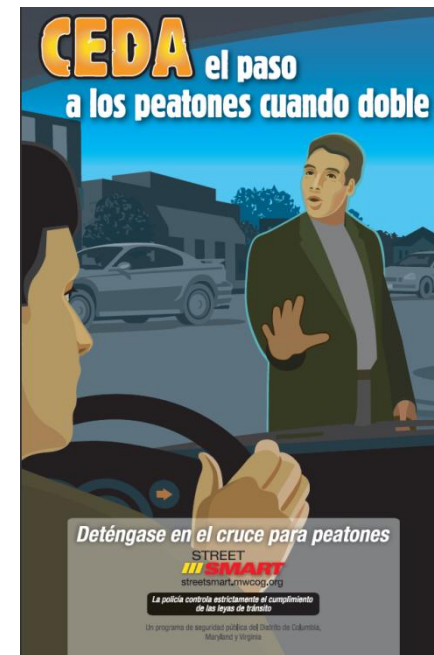
- *Accident prevention*
- *Precaution before crossing*
- *Obey traffic rules*
- *Educate pedestrians on safety rules*
- *Educate pedestrians and drivers on safety rules*
- *Shows how and where to cross streets safely*
- *Be alert to automobiles*
- *Create pedestrian safety awareness*



Respondents' Suggestions for Improvement

- Use less text
- Use universal/international symbols and graphics to better communicate the messages to all literacy levels
- Use Latinos in the images
- Use more realistic images/photographs
- Use lighter colors
- Eliminate “Spanglish”
- Reduce wordiness of *Street Smart* logo box text
- Explain what is meant by the statement that police are enforcing traffic laws (i.e., with fines, etc.)

Street Smart Tips Campaign Images





Reactions to *Street Smart Tips* Campaign

- ◆ **The Street Smart Tips campaign was clearly preferred over the Hard Tactics approach. The pedestrian safety messages in this campaign are very clear and easy to understand.**
 - Respondents liked the reduction in text, and the large headers using imperative/command words like “wait”, “cross” and “yield” allow readers to quickly grasp the messages.
 - The yellow font used for the first word of each header stands out and effectively draws the reader’s eye.
 - The images are very clear and are snapshots of real life moments. The reality of the images adds to the credibility of the messages.
 - Respondents understood this campaign to be educational and a reminder of correct safety behavior.
 - Because of its simplicity, the campaign will allow Latinos who do not read to comprehend the messages just from the images in the ads.

“The use of imperative words, stop, wait, cross lets us understand the laws better so we can follow them.”

“The images that are transmitted educate. They are real situations and they inform on how things are supposed to take place.”

- ◆ **The “cartoon” style of the images and the dark colors were not appealing to some respondents.**
 - Photographs of real people and more finished images would be preferred by these respondents.
 - Some respondents thought the colors used were too dark and lent a somber tone to the ads.
- ◆ **There was also perceived to be too much text in the logo box, and the box sometimes obscured part of the ad’s visual.**
 - In addition, the sponsoring agencies were not often noticed because of the small font.



Reactions to *Street Smart Tips* Campaign

◆ While the “Yield to Pedestrians” ad resonated, it has some confusing elements.

- It is not clear if this ad is directed to drivers or pedestrians. While many respondents perceive that the message is directed to drivers, others are confused about its intended target.
- It is not clear what the driver is doing.
- The pedestrian is perceived as hostile and aggressive.
- It is not clear if “yield to pedestrians” is asking the driver to be courteous or mandating that the driver stop.

“This one seems like it's contradictory because first, it says give the right of way to the pedestrians when you turn and below, stop at the intersection. That's why it's contradicting itself because one is for drivers and the other is for who?”

“He [the pedestrian] is too aggressive.”

“I can assume that you should give the right in regards to the question of courtesy, but it is not mandatory. I think that there needs to be something more [to show that the driver is required to stop].”

◆ The message in the ad with the man behind the bus is somewhat clearer in this campaign.

- However, some respondents still do not clearly understand what this visual is communicating.



Reactions to *Street Smart Tips* Campaign

Respondents across both groups had similar reactions to the *Street Smart Tips* campaign.

Adjectives Used to Describe the *Street Smart Tips* Campaign

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear• Easy to understand• Educational• Informative• Direct• Visual message• Precise• Attractive | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concise• Simple• Dark• Hostile• Realistic• Direct• Child-like |
|---|---|



Both groups are similar in their descriptions of the messages communicated by the campaign.

Perceived *Street Smart Tips* Messages

- *Respect and be alert to signage*
- *Respect pedestrians*
- *Teach pedestrians how and when to cross streets*
- *Teach by using simple, concrete graphics and terms*
- *Educate and inform community on pedestrian rules*
- *Accident prevention*
- *Educate pedestrians and drivers alike of pedestrian rules*



Respondents' Suggestions for Improvement

- Use real people in the images
- Use more finished images
- Use lighter colors
- Move logo box and make it smaller so it does not obscure the visual
- Reduce the amount of text in the logo box
- Increase font size of the authorities sponsoring the campaign
- Replace the pedestrian in the “yield” ad with a person who looks less hostile



Summary of Reactions to the Campaigns

◆ **As mentioned, the *Street Smart Tips* campaign was most preferred across both focus groups.**

- This campaign was preferred for its clear graphic images and its simple, educational approach including the use of imperative commands.

“I liked [Street Smart Tips] more because it's clearer. I like the drawings more even though the colors are very dark. And the message made me think that I should be careful and be attentive when crossing the street.”

“For me it's [Street Smart Tips] because it's simple and goes straight to the point and it's educational.”

◆ **However, the image of the woman with the baby in the *Hard Tactics* campaign is highly impactful, causes reflection and is memorable.**

- This image, illustrating the negative consequences of not following safe steps, would be highly motivating to pedestrians to cross streets in an appropriate and safe manner.

“The [Hard Tactics] ad seemed more explicit, more dramatic and colorful.”

“[The women with the baby] impacts more because it's more real.”

“The impact [of the women with the baby] is much more emotional and you tend to reflect more on the consequences.”



Summary of Reactions to the Campaigns

- ◆ **Therefore, a combination of simple educational messages and high impact visuals of dramatic consequences are most motivating.**
 - Other ways to motivate pedestrian safety mentioned by respondents include:
 - Promote “civismo” or public spiritedness and good citizenship
 - Emphasize keeping the body intact, unhurt
 - Remind pedestrians/cyclists/drivers that they need to obey the laws
 - Install clear signage, traffic signals and walkways so people can easily and clearly understand what to do when crossing streets
 - Create an easy and direct way for people to report infractions
 - Impose fines/penalties

Explore Media Habits





Explore Media Habits

- ◆ Spanish-language media sources are used most often, although Hispanics also obtain information from English-language media.
 - Spanish-language media include:
 - Television (Univision, Telemundo, Telefutera)
 - Internet (primarily for country of origin news, but some also mention using Google and Twitter)
 - Radio (99.1)
 - Newspapers (El Pregonero, El Tiempo Latino)
 - Latino heritage festivals where people have placed leaflets, ads, flyers
 - English-language media used are:
 - *Express* newspaper distributed for free at Metro-rail stations
 - *The Washington Post* and *The Examiner*
 - Bus stops and Metro stations
 - Some main stream TV cable and broadcast channels

Implications and Recommendations



Implications and Recommendations

The research findings indicate that Latino immigrants in the Washington, DC metro area are eager to learn and comply with pedestrian safety rules. They see this as a public duty and a way to integrate into U.S. society. They are motivated by dramatic visual depictions of the negative consequences of not following safety rules. Messages in short and simple imperative text are the most educational.

The following recommendations are based solely on this research:

1. Incorporate the most impactful images possible.

Latinos respond best to attention-getting visuals of what can happen if people do not obey safety rules.

2. Use short, imperative commands as text headers in the ads with attention-grabbing colors to educate about safety rules. Reduce the amount of text in all ads.

Imperative statements most effectively communicate the urgency of key messages and safety rules. Other text is not read.

3. Include information in the ads that communicate where Hispanics can find out more about pedestrian safety rules.

There is a great deal of interest among the immigrant community in learning about pedestrian safety rules but they do not know where to find this information.

4. Use real Latinos in the images.

Respondents prefer to see other Latinos, or people with Latino coloring, in the ads.

5. Use more defined graphics and bright colors that help distinguish key elements in the ads.

Consider the use of photographs to ensure that the visuals are sharp and clear.

6. Reduce the size of the logo box and the amount of text in the box and move to an area of the ad that does not obstruct the ad's visuals.

The logo boxes look cluttered and detract from the main messages.



Implications and Recommendations

7. **Consider making the font size of the sponsoring governments bigger and reducing the emphasis on police enforcement (or explain what police enforcement means) to lend more credibility to the campaign and reduce skepticism about the purpose of the ads.**

Some Hispanics suspect that the purpose of the campaign is to notify about enforcement fines, but reacted positively to campaign sponsorship by County governments.

8. **Make sure the Spanish terms and translations are adapted appropriately. Eliminate the use of English in the ads' headers to the extent possible.**

Words such as “abrupta” and “señas” are more often transliterations and are confusing. Respondents also do not understand that “Street Smart” is the name of the safety program and are turned off by seeing what they perceive to be “Spanglish” in the ads.

9. **Use Spanish-language publications in addition to bus stops and Metro stations for ad placement. Consider having campaign materials available at Latin American festivals.**

Latinos most often use Spanish-language media and like to attend Latin American heritage festivals.

Appendix: Respondent Profile





Respondent Profile

	Total		
Area of Residence	Total (N=18)	6pm Focus Group (N=9)	8pm Focus Group (N=9)
DC	6	3	3
Virginia	7	2	5
Maryland	5	4	1
Modes of Transportation*	Total (N=18)	6pm Focus Group (N=9)	8pm Focus Group (N=9)
Walk	10	5	5
Bike	2	1	1
Bus	8	3	5
Metro	12	6	6
Drive	12	6	6
Gender	Total (N=18)	6pm Focus Group (N=9)	8pm Focus Group (N=9)
Female	10	6	4
Male	8	3	5

*Multiple modes of transportation were accepted.



Respondent Profile

	Total		
Age	Total (N=18)	6pm Focus Group (N=9)	8pm Focus Group (N=9)
18-24 years	0	0	0
25-29 years	3	1	2
30-39 years	2	1	1
40-49 years	9	5	4
50-59 years	3	1	2
60-65 years	1	1	0
Employment	Total (N=18)	6pm Focus Group (N=9)	8pm Focus Group (N=9)
Full Time	9	4	5
Part Time	1	0	1
Homemaker	5	4	1
Student	0	0	0
Retried	1	1	0
Unemployment	2	0	2



Respondent Profile

Marital Status	Total		
	Total (N=18)	6pm Focus Group (N=9)	8pm Focus Group (N=9)
Single	5	2	3
Married	12	7	5
Living with a partner or significant other	0	0	0
Divorced, widowed, separated	1	0	1