

# ***POLICE & YOUTH***

## ***PROJECT FINDINGS AND WHERE WE GO FROM HERE***



A New Lens Report

Evaluation data from Two Gems Consulting Services

[www.twogemsconsulting.com](http://www.twogemsconsulting.com)

A group of **young people and police** met for 6 weeks in the summer of 2009 to explore the tensions between the two groups, to design a video and training to help other young people and police gain sensitivity to one other.



# ***Focus Question***

What needs to happen to improve the relationship between police officers and young people?

# Map of Cluster Names

What needs to happen to improve the relationship between police officers and young people?

**THE CITY SHOULD ENACT  
SUPPORTIVE POLICIES  
AND PRACTICES**

**YOUTH  
SHOULD BE  
MORE  
RESPONSIBLE**

**COMMUNITY AND POLICE  
SHOULD BUILD STRONGER  
RELATIONSHIPS**

**OFFICERS SHOULD  
COMMUNICATE MORE  
EFFECTIVELY**

**THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD  
PROVIDE EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING FOR OFFICERS**

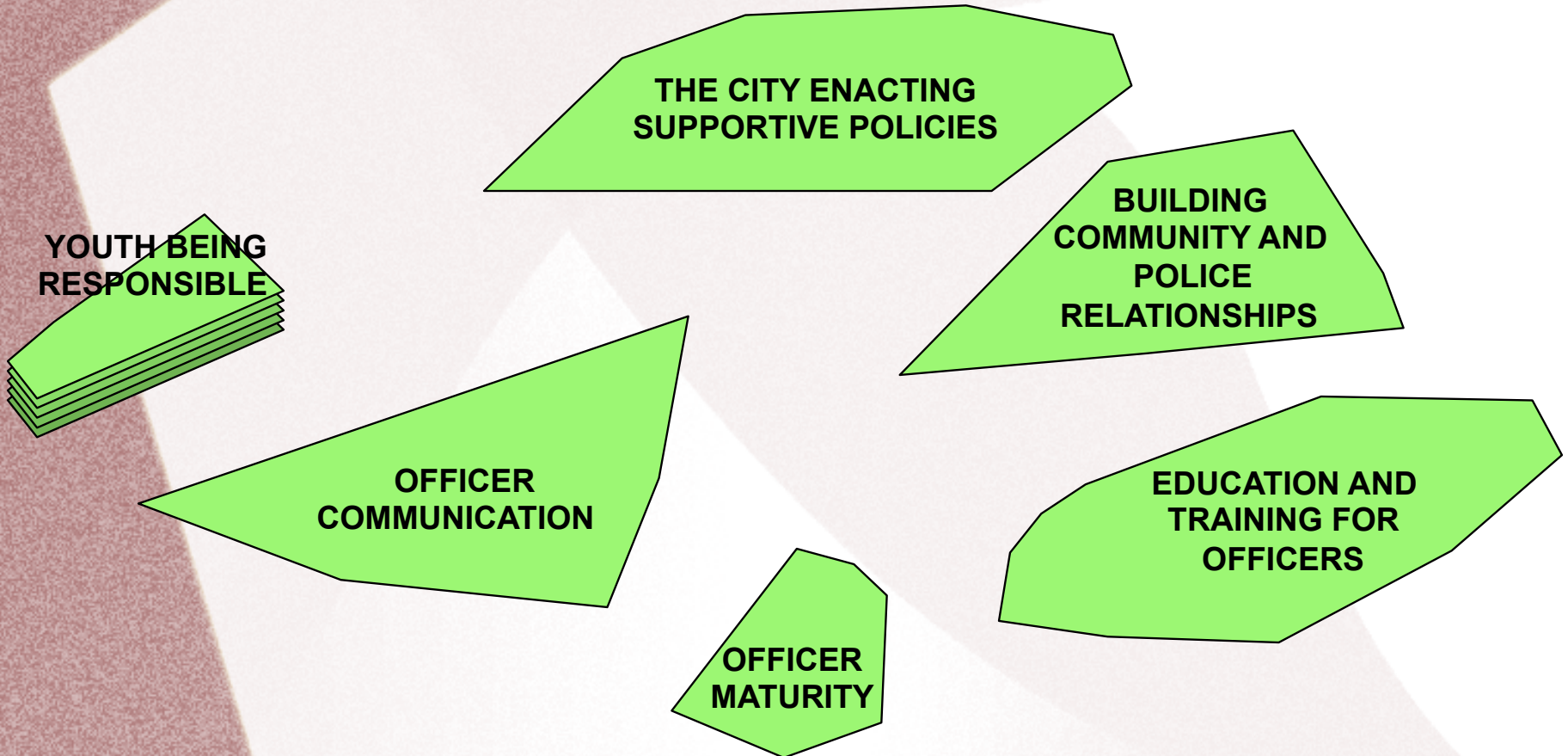
**OFFICERS  
SHOULD  
SHOW  
MATURITY**

Note: Size and shape of clusters are not indicative of popularity



What Do **Police** Think is  
**Acceptable to other Police Officers**  
in Resolving Youth/Police Tension?

Note: The more stacks in the cluster, the higher the rating by participants. The fewer amount of stacks the less significance to participants.



What Do **Youth** Think is  
**Acceptable to Police Officers**  
In Resolving Youth-Police Tension?

**YOUTH BEING  
RESPONSIBLE**



**THE CITY ENACTING  
SUPPORTIVE POLICIES**



**BUILDING  
COMMUNITY AND  
POLICE  
RELATIONSHIPS**



**OFFICER  
COMMUNICATION**



**OFFICER  
MATURITY**



**EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING FOR  
OFFICERS**

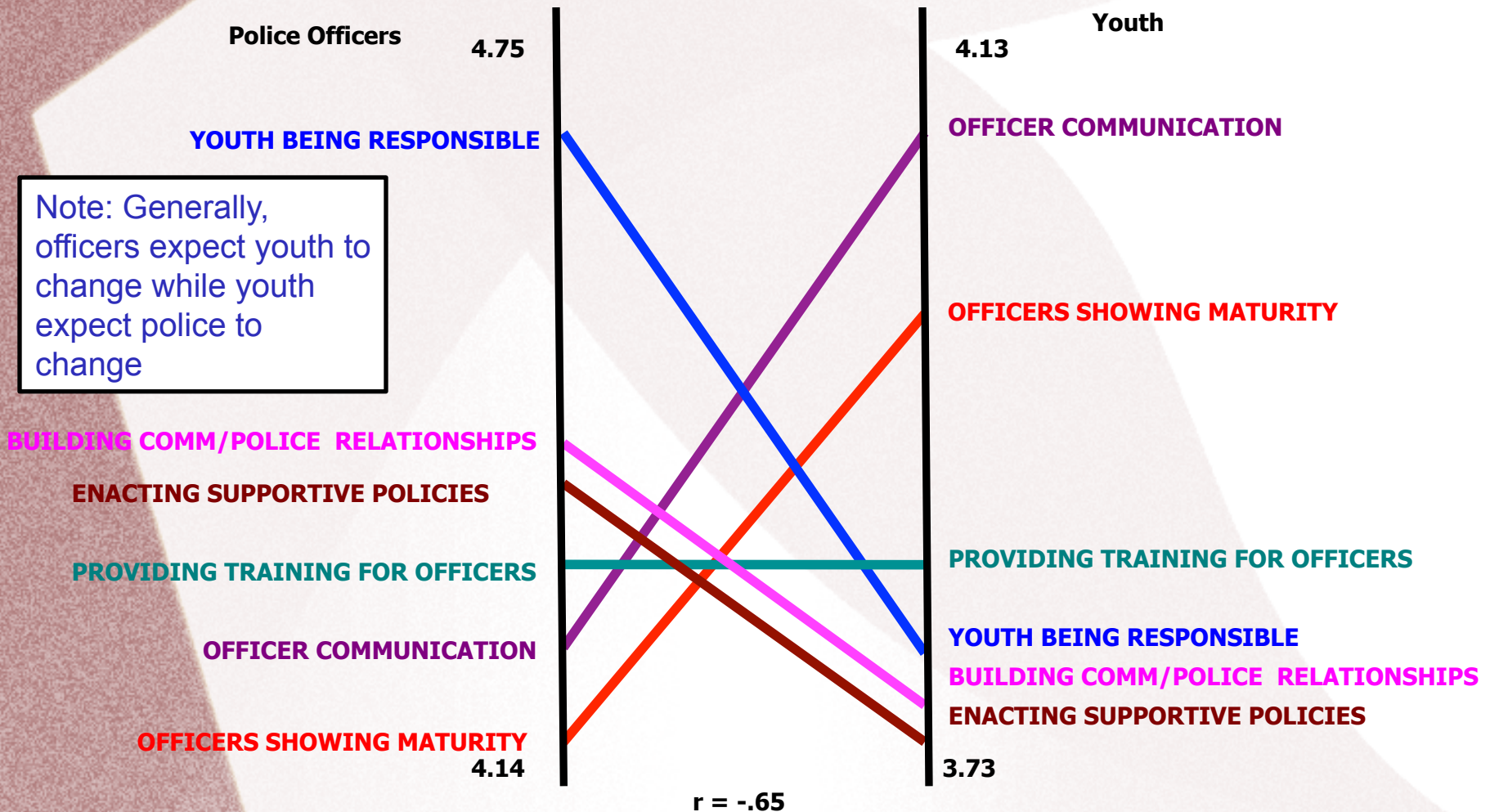




**Both groups generally see their peers as inflexible and place responsibility for resolution on the other.**

# Solutions Found to be **Effective** to Police Officers

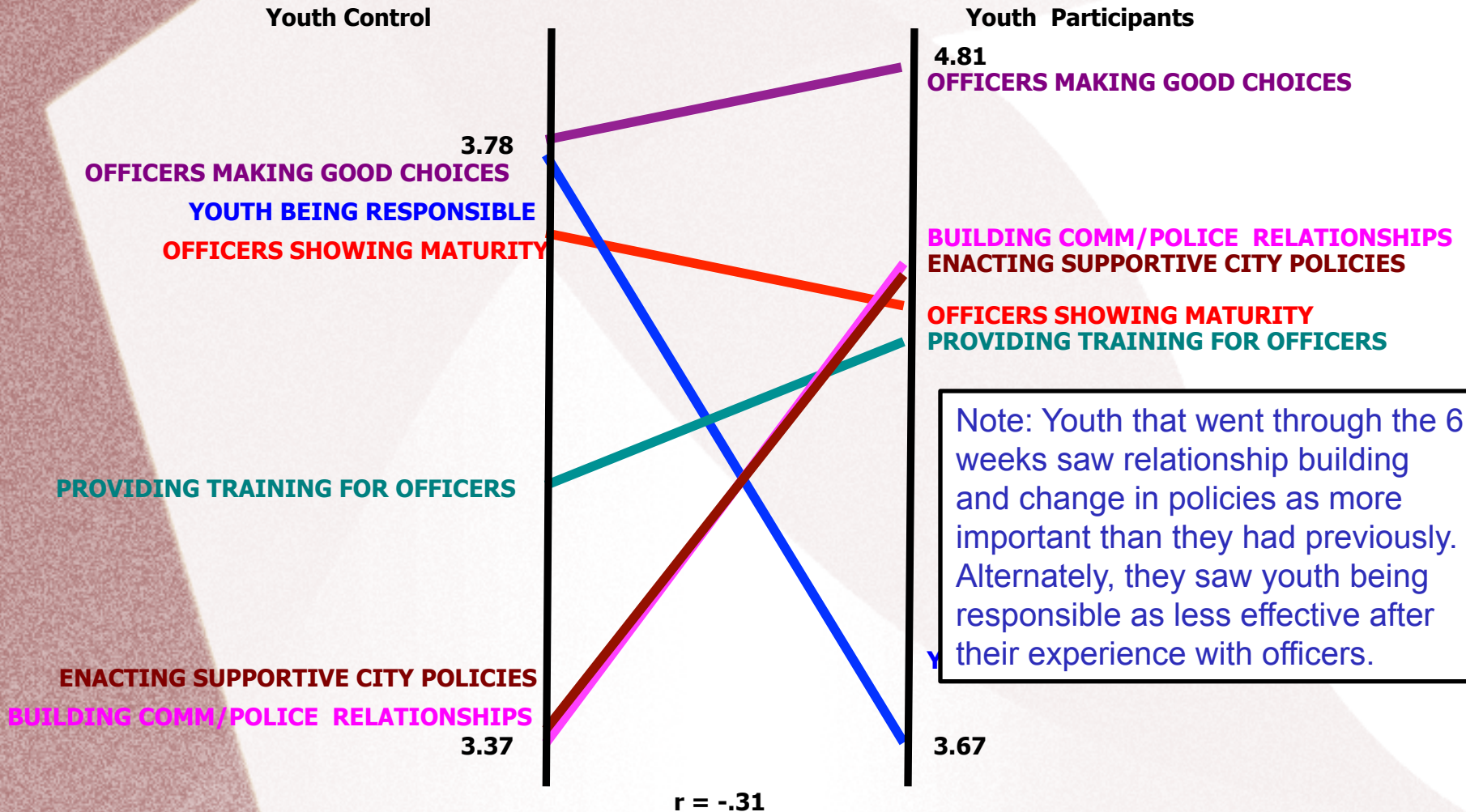
## A Comparison of Officers to Youth





# Solutions Found to be Effective to Police Officers

## A Comparison of Participating Youth to Control Youth



# *Summer reflections about police*

- Police don't see the need for explaining an order to a citizen
- Police are prone to holding youth personally responsible for issues that others might consider systemic in nature (i.e. high school drop out rate)
- Police expect that youth should make good choices even in the absence of parental or community support
- Police don't have an understanding of the normal development issues that occur in youth in adolescence (i.e. rebelling against authority or thinking you know everything)
- Police expect youth to make the kinds of decisions they made as kids but without the same support or resources



# *Summer reflections about youth*

- Youth feel that being ordered to do something without an explanation is disrespectful
- Youth lack knowledge of the law
- Youth feel unable to succeed without adequate support and guidance from adults
- Many youth who feel that they are raising themselves or have been disappointed by adults, do not respect authority figures
- Many youth are angry about circumstances in their lives and they haven't been taught to channel their anger or understand how to make change
- Youth don't feel understood by adults who try to mentor them when they don't listen to their unique experience

# *Summary*

Data from this part of the project suggests that in order to shift youth and police tensions, **relationship building** and **a shift in policy** is important.



# ***Phase 2: Diamond Trainings***

- Each month 40 officers from one district were pulled off the street for 28 days of training.
- New Lens was given a 3 hour block each month to train officers on communication with youth.
- Initial trainings were not as successful as subsequent trainings where we learned to orchestrate introspection and transition in a short amount of time.

# ***Training Goals for Police***

Police will:

- Examine their beliefs and attitudes about youth
- Understand more about young peoples' perspectives and why youth behave the way they do
- Examine ones own personal history and the differences between previous generations and youth today
- Explore the utility in explaining reasons for giving an order
- Explore the utility of building relationships proactively



# ***What we learned from our first trainings***

- Police find introspective work “touchy feely.” Direct conversation about feelings is not effective in achieving introspection.
- Don’t talk, do something. Create opportunities to explore ideas and feel empathy through activities.
- Though change often involves vulnerability, police won’t admit vulnerability publicly but will talk in small groups.
- Police have a strong sense of group cohesion and don’t often publicly disagree with each other. Challenging police perspectives is best done through presenting media, through a youth panel, or some other outside perspective where they can experience empathy.

# ***The structure of the trainings***

Warm up and assessment

Simulation (in depth, hour-long role play) & reflection

Discussion of personal experiences as young people

Youth panel

Watch youth-produced video about police and youth relationships



# *Key Findings from Diamond Trainings 2009-2010*

- Positive training results increased between Fall 2009 and Winter/Spring 2010.
- Depth of understanding of youth in written comments on surveys increased over the same period.

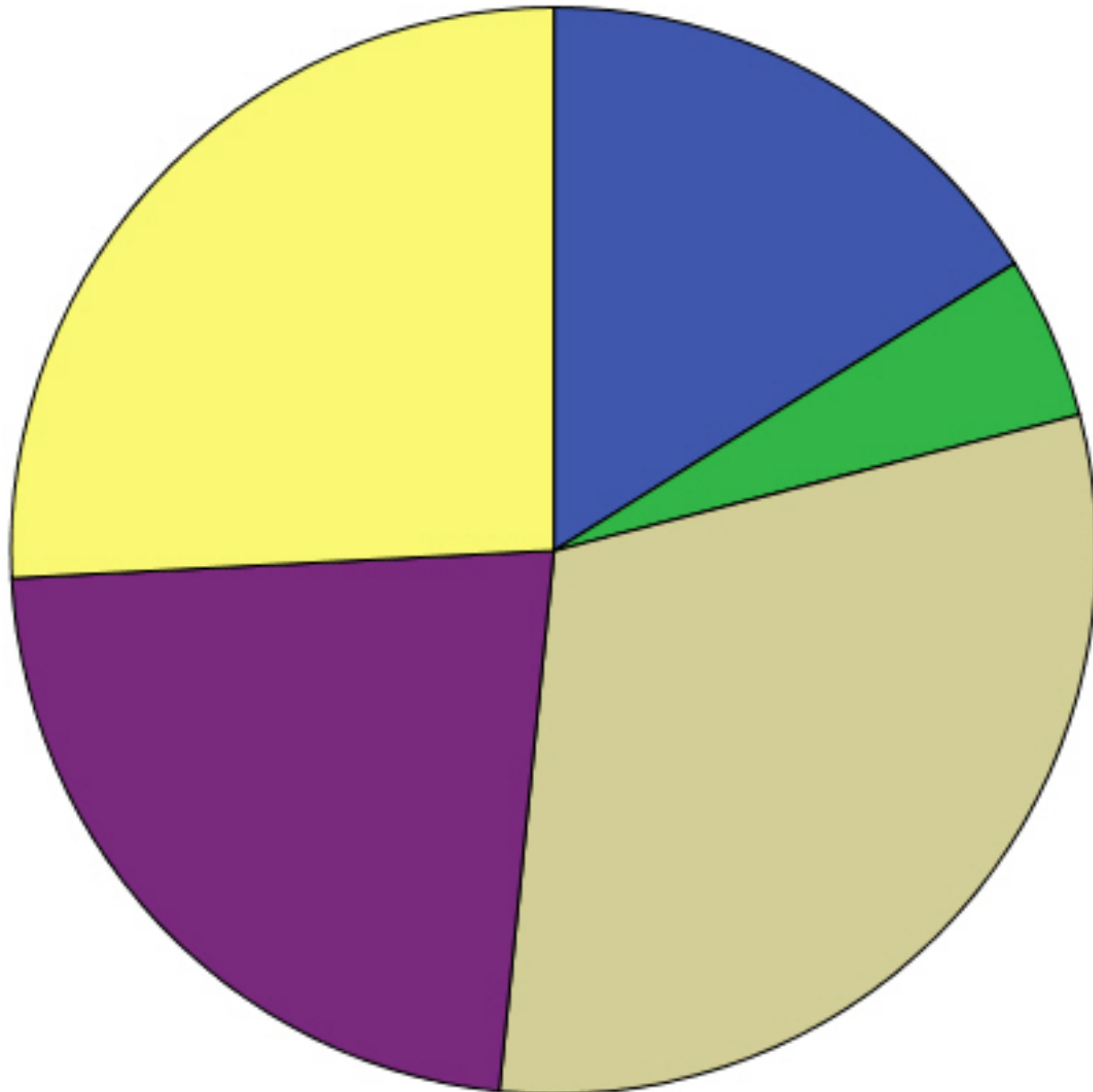
	October 2009	March-May 2010
The training was helpful	70%	92%
I learned something new about youth	67%	80%
I learned something new about myself	73%	61.7%
I will change my behavior	48%	58%

# ***Data & Findings from Revised Diamond Trainings***

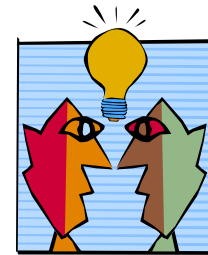
Trainings conducted March  
through May 2010



# Did you learn about resolving conflict with young people?

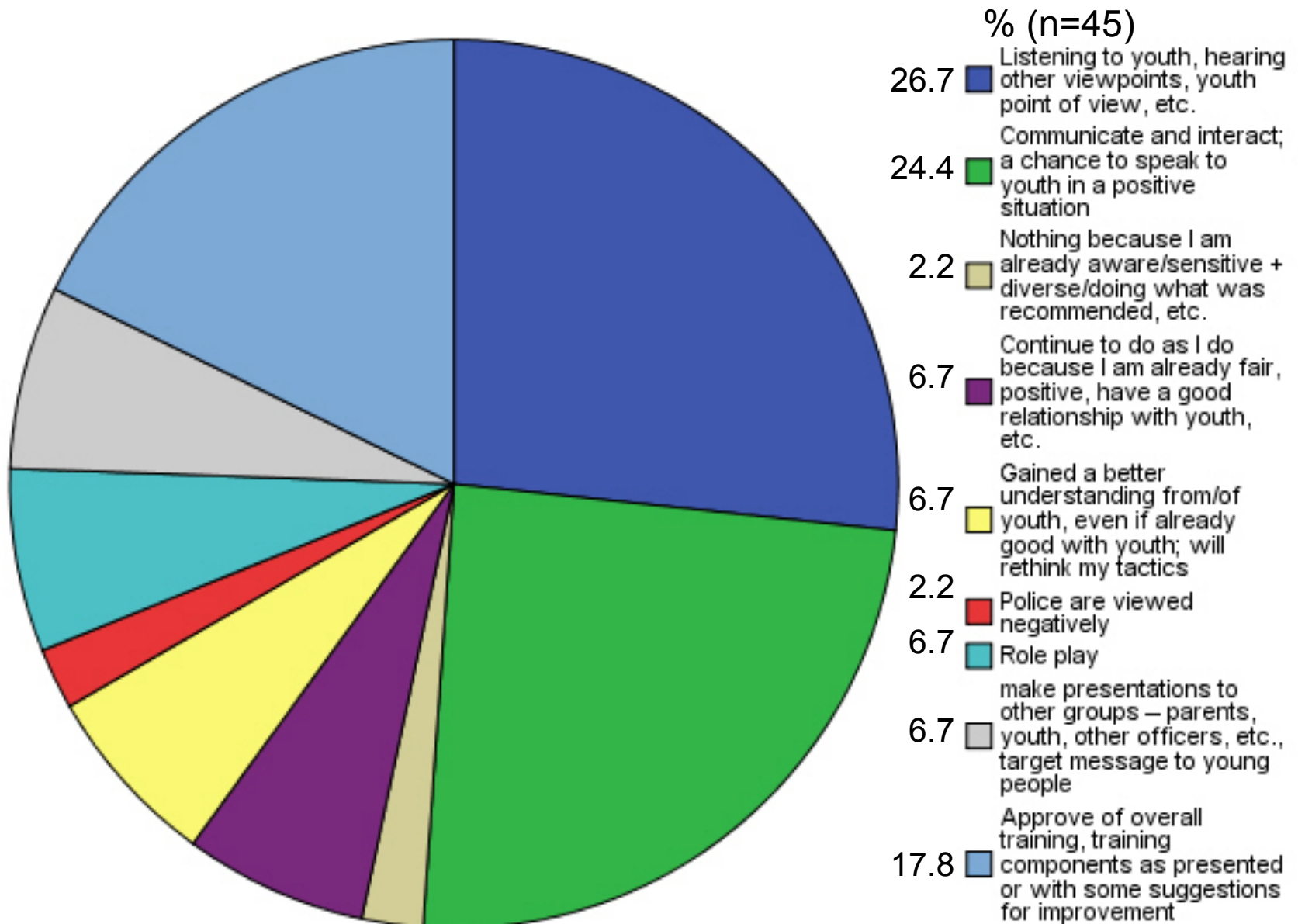


- not at all
- a little
- somewhat
- very much
- extremely so



79.0% of officers learned about resolving conflict with young people

# What was Most Helpful?





# Trends – What Promotes Positive Relationships?

	Pretest	Post-test – what <u>officers</u> should do	Post-test – what <u>youth</u> should do
Listen	1.5%	12.7%	10.9%
Communicate	15%	25.3%	14.0%
Interact	17.5%	10.5%	12.2%
Respect	9.5%	14.8%	11.8%
Mentor	4.3%	5.9%	1.4%
Understanding	13.5%	16.5%	22.6%
Positive, professional, conduct	4.0%	7.6%	8.6%
Police run youth programs (DARE, PAL, etc.)	9.8%	3.4%	0.9%
Parenting	8.9%	0.4%	n/a

# ***Explanation of trends***

- There was a shift from interaction, programs like the Police Athletic League (PAL), and from a focus on how young people are raised, to behaviors that are within the control of the officer at the time of an encounter such as listening and communicating.
- In contrast, police officers learned that young people need to listen, better understand what the job of police entails and get educated about laws and rights.



# ***Select Comments from Officers – What was Most Helpful?***

- A chance to hear the youth.
- The program is an excellent approach to help bridge the gap between ignorant officers & our youth.
- For the most part it was interesting. I was impressed by the young adults who had the courage to explain themselves, situations and thoughts. It takes guts to go in front of room & discuss and be open-minded.
- Keep all the group sessions and keep the task the way they are.
- It was good!

## ***Key insight from phase 2***

**The inclusion of a simulation where officers and youth switched roles for an hour and were given a variety of circumstances to respond to was what made our trainings jump from moderately effective outcomes to highly effective outcomes. *Essentially, officers and youth had to get out of their role to see the others perspective and experience empathy.***



# ***What does this insight mean for improving relationships?***

We concluded that despite insights, information and even good intentions on the part of police, the role officers play as enforcers is a primary influence on their behavior.

Strategies to improve the relationship must go beyond a training activity and structurally change something about the authoritative role officers play in communities and/or reduce the need for police altogether.

# ***EXISTING and PROPOSED INITIATIVES THAT ADDRESS THE NEED FOR RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND SYSTEM CHANGE***

1. Relationship building models
2. Youth engagement models
3. Arrest diversion programs
4. Economic development
5. Policy change



# ***1. Relationship-Building***

- Peace Patrol- Druid Heights
- Collaborative community projects
- Police training and avenues for communication
- Including youth in community decision making
- Community relations officers- DC's model of having these be citizens instead of officers.

## ***2. Youth Engagement***

- Midnight basketball- DC Police model
- School engagement
- Quality community centers and after school programs.



# ***3. Arrest Diversion***

- Community Conferencing
- Truancy Court- U of B
- Teen Court
- Youth response team- a citizen of Park Heights piloted a diversion initiative with shopkeepers. Shopkeepers called youth-savvy citizen instead of police when a youth issue occurred. Activist responded upon each call and mediated conversations. Proved highly effective.
- Helping officers understand what resources exist in communities so that they use alternatives

## ***4. Economic Development***

- Year-round youth jobs
- Summer jobs- Youthworks



## ***5. Policy change***

- Legalizing marijuana
- Medicalizing other drugs
- Police youth services unit- this unit in the past consisted of 2 people who handled truancy and curfew for the entire city. Could be more effective with investment.
- Divert non-violent calls for service to a crisis response team staffed by social workers. Reduce the need for officers to handle calls they are ill equipped to handle and allow social workers to address root cause issues.

***How do we make  
change happen in a  
city that struggles  
with resources?***

Scrutinize the data about what works

Determine our values

Invest resources in our values



# ***2016 Budget Priorities***

## **Public Safety 29%**

Sanitation 20%

Education 13%

General Government 7%

Transportation 5%

Debt Services 5%

Economic Development and Culture 5%

Health 4%

Retiree Health & Benefits 3%

## **Social Services 2%**

Adjudication 2%

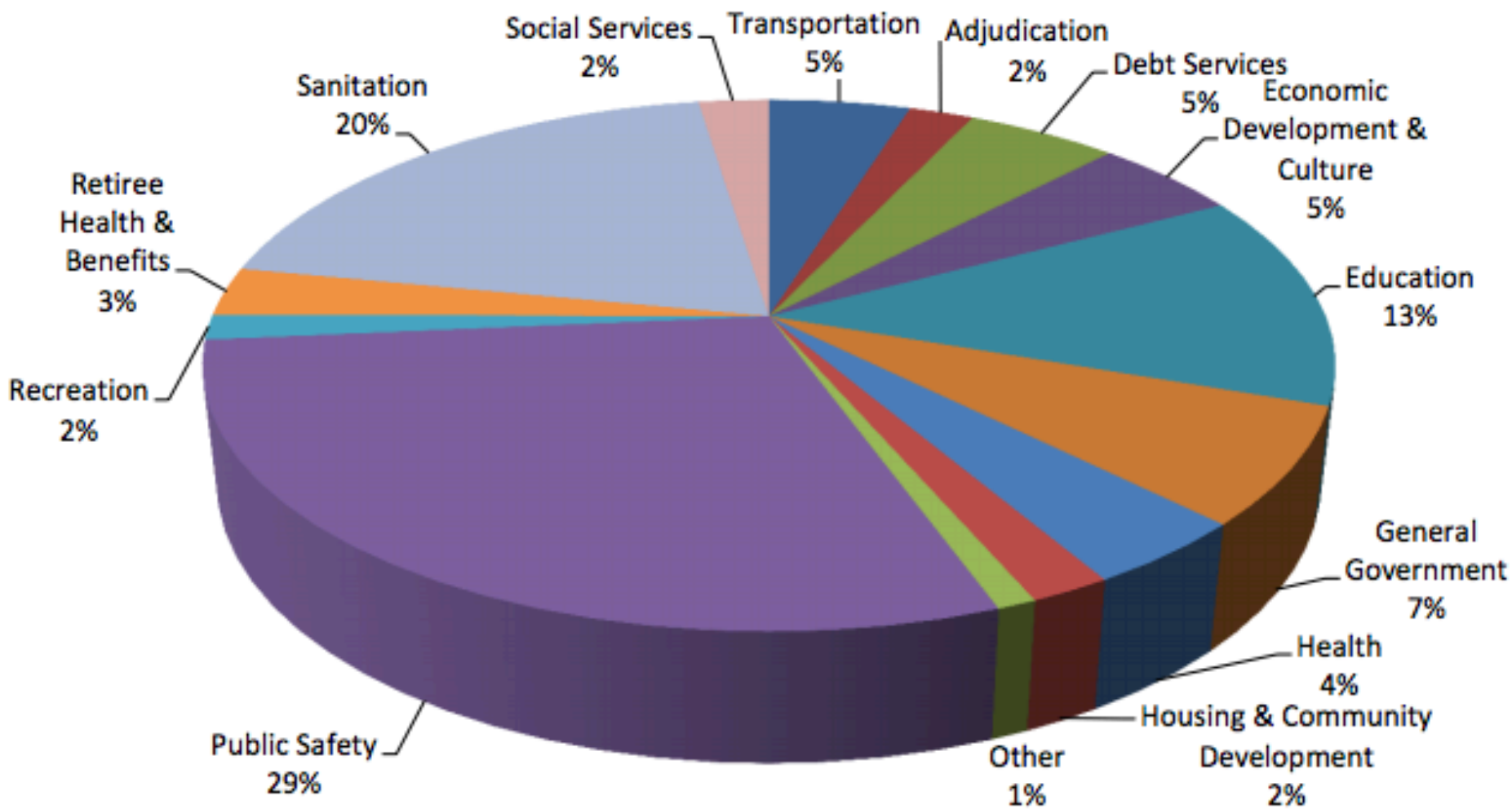
Housing & Community Development 2%

Other 1%

# Baltimore City Budget

How the Money is Used: Allocation by Function

Total Operating Budget=\$2.549 Billion





# ***What change do you want to see in policing in our city?***

Join in the conversation.

Contact New Lens at 410-383-7200  
to participate in a community  
dialogue or to register your ideas