

Western Opinion Research



CANADIANS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

July 18th, 2007

Report (v2)

Privy Council Office

POR 066-07

Blackburn Bldg Rm. 600

85 Sparks Street

Ottawa, Ontario

Call Up #: 35035-075044/001/CY

*Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français sur
demande*

WESTERN OPINION RESEARCH

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Contract #: 35035-075044/001
Award date: May 25/07

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Privy Council Office commissioned Western Opinion Research to conduct a qualitative research study (POR 066-07). The purpose of the research project was to understand Canadians perceptions of crime in their community. Focus groups were used to meet this objective.

The contract (#35035-075044/001) was awarded May 25, 2007. Twelve focus groups were conducted in six cities across Canada. Two sessions were conducted in each of the following locations:

- Richmond, BC on June 4, 2007
- Fredericton, NB on June 4, 2007
- Laval, PQ on June 6, 2007
- London, ON on June 5, 2007
- Mississauga, ON on June 6, 2007
- Winnipeg, MB on June 5, 2007

The groups were attended by randomly recruited Canadians residing in the local area. There were three distinct population sub-groups included in the study: individuals 55 years of age or older; homeowners and home renters (tenants).

Focus groups are a qualitative research method, where participants are led through a discussion by a moderator. Participants are encouraged to provide open-ended and detailed responses to questions that allow for probing of inner thoughts and feelings.

The focus groups were conducted to assist the government with increasing its understanding of Canadians' views as they relate to crime in their community.

A final report entitled "Canadians and Their Perceptions of Crime" was delivered to the Privy Council Office in July 2007¹. For further project information contact:

Privy Council Office
Blackburn Bldg.
85 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario

¹ Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français sur demande

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

Top-of-Mind Descriptions of Their Community

Crime, or the feeling of being unsafe, was not top-of-mind among participants when initially asked to describe their community or neighbourhood they live in. Descriptions most often given were positive feelings:

- Friendly place with friendly people
- Family friendly
- Close to amenities such as schools, grocery stores, banks
- Lots of trees, parks

Most participants did not make comments which suggested they felt crime to be exceptionally present in their neighbourhoods. Usually crime was somewhere else in the vicinity—downtown or a particular neighbourhood (North-End of Winnipeg or Vancouver’s East Side or downtown London). There was a feeling that crime was “closing in” on some areas. Participants were beginning to notice crime getting closer to them—this would include describing violent crime that happens in proximity to the community. Also some participants would discuss property crime that actually happens in the community, indicating that it was a sign of drug use or other factors that are starting to enter the community that could become serious.

Crime Today Compared to “When I was a Child”

Almost everyone felt crime today is worse than when they were children growing up. This applied equally to individuals aged 55 years or older, as well as to individuals who were in their early 20’s. It was interesting to hear young adults in their twenties maintain that when they were in high school (likely less than 10 years ago) things like gangs, drugs and violence were not anything like they are today.

Crime being ‘worse’ meant different things to participants. Outlined below are several streams of thought which surfaced during the sessions on this question:

- Some people said there are simply more acts of crime today than before.
- Other people said they were not sure if there was actually an increase in the volume of crime today than when they were children, but the acts of crime were more extreme and violent—for example “*Kids are getting bolder and more violent today than they used to be.*” This includes the weapons being used and cyber-bullying.
- Still, other people were not sure there were actually more acts of criminal activity, but that heightened media attention—sometimes ad nauseum—glorifying various criminal acts made it seem this way.

Regardless of the points view outlined above there was an almost nostalgic view among participants that crime was not as severe as when they were children.

This point in the discussion led to the raising of two underlying themes that would surface at various times throughout the focus group discussion. These were:

- The changing nature of the family and the impact that this is having on neighbourhoods and young people;

- The lack of respect among young people (pre-teens and teenagers)

BEHAVIOURS

Precautions & Reasons

Participants, in some form or fashion, all exercise precaution as a result of crime. Most precautions are driven by a concern for property as opposed to personal safety. As the discussion progressed in the sessions, a large number of participants had been directly touched by some form of crime—usually property-related. This appears to have a bearing on what precautionary measures are taken.

The Most Vulnerable in Society

Children and seniors were an immediate top-of-mind response to the question which segments in society, if any, are more vulnerable to crime. New immigrants were also noted as being at risk because they do not know their new surroundings and areas to stay away from. Also, these individuals are sometimes not trusting of law enforcement and therefore reluctant to seek help. New immigrants are also seen as susceptible to being drawn into criminal activity by lack of a support system when they first arrive in the country.

Women were also noted as being vulnerable to crime, but interestingly, this was not generally one of the more immediate mentions.

What emerged from this discussion was a sense that those who perpetrate crimes against vulnerable segments are abusing a trust. Each of these groups were noted as being in a 'trusting' situation. New immigrants to the country need to trust people. Seniors have been raised to be more trusting or, perhaps, because of their situation, are in a position of needing to trust others. Children and individuals with disabilities must trust and rely on people around them for supports. As a general theme, participants displayed a general disgust towards anyone who would abuse one's trust.

HEADLINES

The Headlines discussion brought to the surface the primary angst when it comes to crime—frustration with the justice system over a perceived lack of justice or consequences for the perpetrators of various criminal acts. Participants felt that sentences or punishments handed out to a convicted criminal do not fit the crime.

Very Angry

Two newspaper headlines consistently generated the most “*makes me angry*” reactions among participants. These were:

- *Minimum sentence for man who killed pregnant girlfriend*
- *House arrest for drunk driver; Man drank an entire case of beer, then killed a bicyclist in crash*

The perceived leniency of the sentence was the basis for most reactions to these headlines. In addition, the headline “Minimum sentence for killing pregnant girlfriend” generated much reaction to the fact it involved “*taking two lives.*”

Four other headlines surfaced as having noteworthy levels of “*makes me angry*” reactions from participants across the groups. These were:

- *Teacher avoids jail for student sex: House arrest for man who 'abused trust' of girls*
- *Teen charged in stabbing. Friends say dispute over MP3 player led to west-end killing*
- *Husband sentenced for choking wife; Probation, conditional discharge ordered after late-night assault*
- *Local man charged with possession of child porn*

These headlines generated an ‘angry’ response for different reasons. The headline involving the teacher generated strong reaction to the abuse of trust by a person in authority taking advantage of their situation.

The dispute over the MP3 player generated reactions of dismay to disgust over the senselessness of the act—“it’s just an MP3 player!” It speaks to the lack of respect and discipline of youth. It also speaks to the fact that children now have the weapons and wherewithal to kill.

The child porn reference generated strong reactions relating to the vulnerability of children. Parents and grandparents reacted very strongly to this headline.

The ‘Husband assaulting his wife’ headline angered people over the leniency of the sentence. There appeared to be no punishment, which in participants’ view gave the message that domestic abuse was acceptable.

The following French language headlines elicited a strong reaction from participants:

- *De faux policiers terrorisent un couple de personnes âgées Saint-Agapit*
- *Un homme de Colombie-Britannique est accusé du meurtre de sa femme enceinte*
- *Agression sauvage au poignard à Laval*

- *Pornographie juvénile : un coupable et un accusé*

Somewhat Angry/Annoyed/Sad

The headlines below are the top three items which generated the most *somewhat angry, annoyed or sad* reactions. A common reason for reacting to these headlines somewhat milder than others was that no loss of life or physical assault was referenced. In addition, a vulnerable element of society (child, elderly or woman) was not involved.

In both the *somewhat angry* and *little concern* categories the headlines pertaining to fraud or identity theft were included. Many individuals noted that the reason for this was that there was no physical harm or loss of life so did not warrant a strong a reaction. In addition, it was mentioned that in many instances the harmed individual eventually was reimbursed any lost money.

- *Bank card fraud on rise: Consumers urged to cover up PINs or risk getting ripped off*
- *Teen charged for smashing windows*
- *Beaconsfield man charged with drug trafficking; Marijuana and cocaine found after search of vehicle pulled over for driving infraction*

The headlines below generated a moderate response in the French language groups in Laval:

- *Saint-Léonard: vandalisme dans un cimetière; Une vingtaine de pierres tombales, certaines datant de deux siècles, ont été renversées*
- *Vol et vandalisme dans deux écoles primaires; Encore des malfaiteurs à l'école Saint Pie X*
- *La police démantèle une opération de fraude par carte de crédit.*

Little Concern/Low Impact

These headlines generated the most *unconcerned* reactions from participants. The 'Teen smashing windows' headline was often reacted to with the comment, "That's what kids do. They did it when I was a kid and they will do it when my kids have kids." The drug-related headlines did not garner stronger reactions because there was not enough information in the headline. Participants were unsure what quantities of the drugs were involved. This appeared to be important to individuals in terms of determining the seriousness of the crime.

- *Teen charged for smashing windows*
- *Beaconsfield man charged with drug trafficking; Marijuana and cocaine found after search of vehicle pulled over for driving infraction**
- *Bank card fraud on rise: Consumers urged to cover up PINs or risk getting ripped off*

These headlines generated an *unconcerned* response in the French language groups:

- *Arrêtés avec des speeds et de la cocaïne*
- *Libération provisoire pour Jacques Dubé accusé de violence conjugale*

* This headline is listed in both lists because it elicited a significant number of moderate (annoyed/sad) impressions, as well as, a large number of impressions of 'no concern'.

FAITS SAILLANTS

Le Bureau du Conseil Privé a confié à Western Opinion Research le mandat de réaliser une étude qualitative (POR 066-07). Ce projet de recherche avait pour but de comprendre la perception des canadiens au sujet de la criminalité dans leur communauté. Afin de rencontrer les objectifs fixés, l'étude a été réalisée à l'aide de groupes de discussion.

Le contrat (#35035-075044/001) a été octroyé le 25 mai 2007. Douze groupes de discussion ont été réalisés dans six villes à travers le Canada. Deux sessions ont été animées dans chacune des villes suivantes :

- Richmond, CB le 4 juin 2007
- Fredericton, NB le 4 juin 2007
- Laval, PQ le 6 juin 2007
- London, ON le 5 juin 2007
- Mississauga, ON le 6 juin 2007
- Winnipeg, MB le 5 juin 2007

Les participants de chaque groupe ont été recrutés aléatoirement parmi la population de chaque région. L'étude visait trois sous-groupes de population distincts : les gens de 55 ans et plus, les propriétaires et les locataires.

Les groupes de discussion sont une méthode qualitative où les participants discutent entre eux en suivant un schéma de discussion. L'animateur encourage les participants à fournir des réponses ouvertes et détaillées aux questions posées pour sonder en profondeur leurs pensées et leurs impressions.

Les groupes de discussion ont été réalisés afin d'aider le gouvernement à parfaire sa compréhension de l'opinion des canadiens au sujet de la criminalité dans leur communauté.

Un rapport final intitulé "Les Canadiens et leurs perceptions de la criminalité" a été remis au Bureau du Conseil Privé en juillet 2007. Pour de plus amples renseignements sur cette étude, veuillez contacter :

Bureau du Conseil Privé
Édifice Blackburn
85 rue Sparks
Ottawa, Ontario

PERCEPTIONS GLOBALES SUR LA CRIMINALITÉ

Description spontanée de leur communauté

La criminalité, ou un certain sentiment d'insécurité, ne faisaient pas partie des aspects cités lorsqu'on demandait aux participants de décrire leur communauté ou le quartier dans lequel ils vivaient. La description qu'ils en faisaient le plus souvent relatait des sentiments positifs:

- Un endroit sympathique avec des gens amicaux
- Propice à la famille
- Proche des services tels écoles, épiceries ou banques
- Beaucoup d'arbres, de verdure, de parcs

La plupart des participants n'ont pas fait de commentaires qui puissent suggérer qu'ils estimaient que la criminalité était exceptionnellement présente dans leur voisinage. Habituellement, la criminalité se trouvait ailleurs, dans les environs – au centre-ville où dans un quartier spécifique (dans la partie nord de Winnipeg ou dans East Side Vancouver ou au centre ville de London). Les participants avaient l'impression que la criminalité envahissait certains secteurs et commençaient à remarquer que la criminalité se rapprochait de chez eux – ceci comportait la description de crimes violents qui s'étaient produits à proximité de leur quartier. Les participants ont également discuté de crimes perpétrés contre les biens des personnes qui s'étaient produits dans leur communauté en soulignant que c'était un signe que la drogue ou d'autres facteurs commençaient à s'infiltrer dans leur communauté et que cela pourrait devenir sérieux.

La criminalité aujourd'hui par rapport a "quand j'étais enfant"

Presque tous les participants estimaient que la criminalité était pire aujourd'hui que lorsqu'ils étaient jeunes. Cette constatation s'appliquait autant aux gens de 55 ans et plus qu'aux personnes dans la jeune vingtaine. Il était intéressant d'entendre de jeunes adultes dans la vingtaine soutenir que, lorsqu'ils étaient à l'école secondaire (vraisemblablement il y a moins de 10 ans), des choses comme les « gang », les drogues et la violence n'étaient rien comparativement à ce que l'on connaît aujourd'hui.

Le fait que la criminalité "empirait" signifiait des choses différentes selon les participants. On retrouvera ci-dessous différentes thématiques abordées durant la discussion à ce sujet :

- Certaines personnes disaient qu'il y a tout simplement plus d'actes criminels qu'auparavant.
- D'autres ont dit qu'ils n'étaient pas certains qu'il y ait un plus grand nombre de crimes que lorsqu'ils étaient enfants mais que les actes commis étaient plus extrêmes et plus violents – par exemple, « maintenant les jeunes sont plus arrogants et plus violents qu'ils ne l'étaient autrefois ». Ceci inclut les armes utilisées et la brutalité sur Internet.
- D'autres encore n'étaient pas certains qu'il y ait réellement plus d'actes criminels, mais ils croyaient que l'augmentation de l'attention médiatique qui leur était consacrée – parfois jusqu'à nauséabond – et qui glorifiait divers actes criminels, contribuait à donner cette impression.

Sans tenir compte de ce qui précède, on sentait néanmoins un sentiment presque nostalgique de la part des participants qui estimaient que la criminalité n'était pas aussi grave lorsqu'ils étaient enfants.

Ce point soulevait deux thèmes sous-jacents qui étaient repris à divers moments, tout au long de la discussion :

- Les changements dans la nature même de la famille et l'impact que cela provoque dans la vie de quartier et sur des jeunes en général;
- L'absence de respect entre les jeunes (pré-adolescents et adolescents)

COMPORTEMENTS

Précautions et motifs

D'une manière ou d'une autre, les participants prennent tous des précautions pour se prémunir contre les crimes. La plupart des précautions prises touchent la propriété ou les biens personnels plutôt que la sécurité des individus. Au fur et à mesure que la discussion progressait, une bonne proportion de participants disaient qu'ils avaient été directement touchés par une forme quelconque de criminalité – le plus souvent par des crimes qui touchaient leur propriété ou leurs biens. Ceci semble avoir eu un impact direct sur les précautions prises par les participants.

Les gens les plus vulnérables dans la société

Les enfants et les aînés sont spontanément cités lorsqu'on demande aux participants d'identifier les segments de population, s'il y en a, qui sont plus vulnérables ou plus sujets à être victimes de crimes. Les nouveaux immigrants sont aussi mentionnés comme étant à risque parce qu'ils ne connaissent pas leur nouveau milieu ni les quartiers à éviter. De plus, ces personnes se méfient parfois de la façon dont la loi sera appliquée et hésitent donc à demander de l'aide. On pense aussi que les nouveaux immigrants sont susceptibles d'être attirés dans des activités criminelles par manque de système de support lorsqu'ils arrivent au pays pour la première fois.

Les femmes sont aussi mentionnées comme étant plus vulnérables mais il est intéressant de souligner qu'elles ne sont pas généralement citées en tête de liste.

Ce qui ressort principalement de cette discussion c'est que ceux qui perpètrent des crimes contre des gens issus des segments de population les plus vulnérables abusent de la confiance qu'on leur accorde. En fait, chacun de ces segments était décrit comme étant dans une situation où ils doivent faire confiance aux autres. Les nouveaux immigrants au pays ont besoin de faire confiance aux gens. Les aînés ont été élevés dans un contexte où l'on faisait naturellement confiance aux gens ou, dans le contexte de leur situation actuelle, certains d'entre eux doivent aussi faire confiance aux autres. Les enfants et les handicapés doivent faire confiance et doivent compter sur leur entourage pour avoir de l'aide ou du support. De façon générale, les participants ont démontré une sorte de dégoût envers quiconque abuserait de la confiance des gens.

TITRES D'ARTICLES DE JOURNAUX

La discussion des titres d'articles de journaux a fait rejaillir le principal sentiment ressenti lorsqu'il s'agit de criminalité : de la frustration face au système judiciaire qui manque de justice et où ceux qui commettent divers actes criminels s'en tirent sans conséquences. Les participants étaient d'avis que les sentences ou les peines imposées aux personnes reconnues coupables de crimes ne correspondaient pas à la gravité de l'offense.

Vraiment en colère

En anglais, deux titres d'articles ont inmanquablement mis les participants en colère :

- *Minimum sentence for man who killed pregnant girlfriend*
- *House arrest for drunk driver; Man drank an entire case of beer, then killed a bicyclist in crash*

Cette réaction provenait généralement du fait que les sentences étaient perçues comme étant beaucoup trop clémentes. De plus, le titre « Minimum sentence for killing pregnant girlfriend » a suscité beaucoup de réactions au sujet du fait que « deux vies » étaient en cause.

Quatre autres titres se démarquent en suscitant de la colère de façon notoire dans l'ensemble des groupes:

- *Teacher avoids jail for student sex; House arrest for man who 'abused trust' of girls*
- *Teen charged in stabbing. Friends say dispute over MP3 player led to west-end killing*
- *Husband sentenced for choking wife; Probation, conditional discharge ordered after late-night assault*
- *Local man charged with possession of child porn*

Ces titres ont suscité de la colère pour diverses raisons. Le titre impliquant un professeur a suscité une forte réaction parce qu'il s'agissait d'un abus de confiance de la part d'une personne en autorité qui prenait avantage de cette situation.

La querelle au sujet du lecteur MP3 a suscité des réactions de consternation et de dégoût à cause de l'absurdité du geste – « c'est seulement un lecteur MP3! ». La situation met en évidence le manque de respect et de discipline des jeunes et rappelle le fait que des jeunes ont maintenant des armes et des moyens pour tuer.

La référence à la pornographie juvénile a suscité de fortes réactions au sujet de la vulnérabilité des enfants. Les parents et les grands parents ont réagi très fortement à ce titre d'article.

Le titre de l'article au sujet du mari qui assaille sa femme a mis les gens en colère à cause de la clémence de la sentence. Il semblait qu'il n'y avait pas eu de peine imposées, ce que les participants interprétaient comme envoyant le message que les abus domestiques sont acceptables.

Les titres français suivants ont suscité une forte réaction de la part des participants

- *De faux policiers terrorisent un couple de personnes âgées à Saint-Agapit*
- *Un homme de Colombie-Britannique est accusé du meurtre de sa femme enceinte*

- *Agression sauvage au poignard à Laval*
- *Pornographie juvénile : un coupable et un accusé*

Un peu en colère/attristé

Les libellés ci-dessous correspondent aux trois éléments qui sont en tête de la liste des titres d'articles qui ont suscité un peu de colère ou qui ont attristé les participants. La principale raison qui explique cette réaction plus modérée est qu'il n'y avait pas de perte de vie ou d'assault physique en cause. De plus, aucun groupe jugé vulnérable n'était impliqué (enfants, aînés ou femmes).

Les titres portant sur des fraudes ou des vols d'identité se sont retrouvés à la fois dans la catégorie « un peu en colère » et dans la catégorie « pas vraiment concerné ». Plusieurs personnes ont indiqué que ceci s'expliquait par le fait qu'il n'y avait pas eu de blessures ou de pertes de vie et qu'en conséquence, cela ne méritait pas de forte réaction. De plus, les participants ont indiqué que, dans plusieurs cas, la personne lésée se voyait rembourser les montants perdus.

- *Bank card fraud on rise: Consumers urged to cover up PINs or risk getting ripped off*
- *Teen charged for smashing windows*
- *Beaconsfield man charged with drug trafficking; Marijuana and cocaine found after search of vehicle pulled over for driving infraction*

Les titres d'articles qui suivent ont suscité une réaction modérée dans les groupes francophones réalisés auprès de citoyens de Laval :

- *Saint-Léonard: vandalisme dans un cimetière; Une vingtaine de pierres tombales, certaines datant de deux siècles, ont été renversées*
- *Vol et vandalisme dans deux écoles primaires; Encore des malfaiteurs à l'école Saint Pie X*
- *La police démantèle une opération de fraude par carte de crédit.*

Pas vraiment concerné/peu d'impact

Les titres qui suivent sont ceux qui concernaient le moins les participants et qui avaient le moins d'impact pour les participants. L'adolescent qui cassait les carreaux a fréquemment suscité le commentaire suivant « C'est ce que les jeunes font. Ils le faisaient lorsque j'étais enfant et ils le feront encore lorsque mes enfants auront des enfants à leur tour ». Le titre portant sur la drogue n'a pas non plus suscité de plus fortes réactions parce que le titre ne comportait pas suffisamment d'information. Les participants n'étaient pas sûrs de la quantité de drogue impliquée. Cet aspect semblait important pour les participants afin qu'ils puissent déterminer le niveau de gravité de ce crime.

- *Teen charged for smashing windows*
- *Beaconsfield man charged with drug trafficking; Marijuana and cocaine found after search of vehicle pulled over for driving infraction**

* This headline is listed in both lists because it elicited a significant number of moderate (annoyed/sad) impressions, as well as, a large number of impressions of 'no concern'.

- *Bank card fraud on rise: Consumers urged to cover up PINs or risk getting ripped off*

Les titres d'articles suivants ont suscité peu d'impact et les participants des groupes francophones ont indiqué qu'ils ne les concernaient pas vraiment:

- *Arrêtés avec des speeds et de la cocaïne*
- *Libération provisoire pour Jacques Dubé accusé de violence conjugale*

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project was to collect opinions and views from a selection of Canadians on crime and justice issues. The focus of discussion was crime, safety and justice issues of concern or interest to Canadians in their communities, and how they feel these should be addressed.

The focus groups were intended to assist the government with increasing its understanding of emerging issues and gauge Canadians' views on important issues facing the nation. It is the desire of the government that, by getting regular feedback from the public on these issues, it will be able to properly assess progress and relate communication strategies to federal crime prevention and justice activities.

Areas of exploration included:

- General perception about crime in Canada
- Perceptions of crime rates in Canada's communities
- Types of crime Canadians are concerned about
- General communications testing and awareness of government justice initiatives

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research methodology was employed consisting of twelve focus groups conducted across six locations (two groups in each location). The locations are:

- Richmond, BC (English)
- Winnipeg, MB (English)
- London, ON (English)
- Mississauga, ON (English)
- Laval, PQ (French)
- Fredericton, NB (English)

The groups lasted approximately 1^{1/2} to two hours.

Brian Baomal, Andrew Enns and Nadia Papineau-Couture were the moderators and lead researchers for this assignment. The research team divided the moderating as follows:

- Andrew Enns: Richmond and Winnipeg
- Brian Baomal: London, Mississauga and Fredericton
- Nadia Papineau-Couture: Laval

The moderator's guide used in the groups was prepared in consultation with officials from the Privy Council Office.

Recruitment Parameters

Three distinct populations were the focus of this research. These were:

- Canadians 55 and older
- Canadians (18 and older) who own a home
- Canadians (18 and older) who rent their home

The instrument for recruiting participants was developed in consultation with the Privy Council Office.

The table identifies the dates and locations of the focus groups along with attendance by population sub-group in each city.

Location	Date	Population Sub-Group		
		55 Plus	Homeowners	Renters
Fredericton NB	Monday, June 4 th , 2007	10	X	12
Richmond BC	Monday, June 4 th , 2007	10	12	X
London ON	Tuesday, June 5 th , 2007	10	X	8
Winnipeg MB	Tuesday, June 5 th , 2007	X	10	11
Laval PQ	Wednesday, June 6 th , 2007	X	9	9
Mississauga ON	Wednesday, June 6 th , 2007	10	10	X

A total of 121 individuals participated in the research study. All participants received a \$65 honourarium at the conclusion of the discussion.

Note on Qualitative Research

The primary benefit of focus group discussions is that they allow for in-depth probing with qualifying participants on behaviour, habits, usage patterns, perceptions and attitudes related to the subject matter. The group discussion allows for flexibility in exploring other areas that may be pertinent to the subject matter.

The focus group technique is used in marketing research as a means of gaining insight and direction, rather than collecting quantitatively precise data or absolute measures. Although numbers are sometimes presented as illustrative of the opinions of the participants in a study, these are offered for insight and should not be considered statistically reliable.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME IN CANADA

“My Community”

The focus groups all began with a broad discussion about what participants liked and disliked about their communities or neighbourhoods. By and large, individuals had very positive things to say about where they lived. The comments can be broadly grouped into two categories:

1. References to physical attributes of their neighbourhood, the proximity of amenities or the natural setting
2. References to the societal make-up or characteristics of their neighbourhoods

Comments exemplifying the positive physical aspects of participants' communities included:

- *The closeness to schools, grocery stores, banks – “I can walk everywhere”.*
- *The access to parks, play areas and walking paths – “Good areas to go for walks”.*
- *Good school – “good reputation”.*
- *Community Centre for the kids.*
- *The greenness of neighbourhoods and abundance of trees, ponds – “I can see trees when I look out my window”.*
- *It's a healthy place to be.*
- *Cleanliness – “no litter or junk”.*
- *Quite.*
- *Quaint.*
- *Not too much traffic.*
- *Good for bike riding – “Shut down the street on Sundays and only allow bikes”.*

Comments illustrating the societal or ‘people’ aspects positively identified by participants were:

- *Friendly – “Everyone gets along”.*
- *Know the neighbours – “watch out for each other. We know each other”.*
- *Know everyone's kids.*
- *Older population who have been there for a while.*
- *Young families – “Lot's of families like ours”.*
- *Family friendly.*
- *Good values, honest.*
- *Close to family.*

As noted above, the immediate descriptions of participants' neighbourhoods were positive. This was the case in all regions of the country. With probing, however, some concerns or mild anxieties surfaced. These tended to relate more to the future as opposed to the immediate situation. The concerns related to issues such as:

- *Changing nature of the neighbourhood – “older people moving out and young people moving in.” “No families.” “Renters”.*
- *Families are older – “Teenagers going out all night”.*
- *Houses getting rundown.*
- *Crime closing in, especially property crimes – “You hear of stuff being stolen out of the neighbour's yard. Never used to worry about that.”*

- *Some parts of the neighbourhood not as safe.*
- *Some trouble in schools (drugs, gangs).*
- *Communities are getting more ethnically diverse, which creates worries about gangs.*

The Level of Crime: Compared to Past & Expectations in Future

It was almost universally felt in the sessions, regardless of region of the country, that crime has become worse since participants were children. Interestingly, the age of the participant had no bearing on this assessment. For older participants, particularly those in the 55 years of age and older groups, there was nostalgia about how crime was prevented and dealt with when they were children. A common memory voiced by older participants was:

- *A time when there were consequences for committing a crime.*

Participants commented that the “consequence” often came from a parent, relative or community member who would discipline (including physical discipline) a child or offender for committing a minor crime or causing a commotion.

Other memories of crime included:

- *Crime seemed further away – “In the bigger cities, downtown or in the US. Now it’s seems closer to home.”*
- *The criminal acts are getting more extreme – “The bad guys are getting bolder.”*
- *The crimes are more violent – “it’s the random gun violence that is most scary today.”*

Older participants—55 years of age or older—believed that if crime rates were not increasing, then certainly the types of crime or criminal acts were getting more “*extreme*”. Frequent gun use, serious physical assaults, the randomness involved and the senselessness of many crimes were cited as evidence supporting this view.

Youth crime and drug related crime were two specific types of criminal activity that surfaced in all groups as examples of how crime has changed for the worse since participants were children.

Youth crime was a particularly ‘hot topic’ for participants, regardless of age or region. To most adults, youth crime was perceived to be increasing at a concerning rate and the nature of youth crime was changing. It was becoming more violent and extreme. Perhaps most disconcerting for participants was the perceived lack of respect youth/teenagers had for authority. The issue of a “*lack of respect*” among youth today was raised in all sessions. The causes for this tended to tie back to upbringing and a lack of parental discipline. An example of this lack of respect, which was raised often, was the recollection by older individuals that they used to feel comfortable approaching young people if they were doing something improper or illegal. Participants were emphatic that they would not do that today given concerns for their own personal safety given the perceived unpredictability of youth.

Many participants also felt a contributing factor for growing youth crime was media related and the ‘glamorization’ of violence. Individuals identified the traditional media sources—TV and movies—but also noted video games.

Comments illustrating some of the above concerns relating to youth crime include:

- *Kids are running around these days, thirteen and fourteen years old, shooting people. When I was that age, the furthest thing from my mind was pulling the trigger.*
- *The media is playing a bigger part now. They are playing things up more.*
- *When we were kids we didn't have these violent shows on TV at 6, 7 or 8 o'clock.*
- *Most of the stuff that I experienced as a kid, it was fuelled more by boredom... now there is a lot more of the drug issue in the younger grades. Wherever drugs go, problems are going to follow for sure.*
- *Years ago you wouldn't hear of anything in schools, now you've got to be worried about guns and knives.*
- *Teenagers today smoke weed like they used to smoke cigarettes. Right out in the open.*
- *I see kids have changed, frustrations they have they let it out. Kids are drinking and fighting, hanging out in elementary schoolyards.*
- *Weapons are involved in fights now. A knife comes out and somebody ends up dead.*
- *When I was much younger if I saw a group of teenagers hanging-out, up to no good I wouldn't think twice of approaching them and asking what they are up to. Wouldn't do that today. You don't know what they might do. No limits.*

Another type of criminal activity that was perceived to have increased significantly from when participants were children was drug-related crimes. Participants voiced the opinion that drugs were more prevalent today than before. Drugs were now in schools and in quiet neighbourhoods. In Richmond, situations were described of grow-ops and crystal meth labs being uncovered on their neighbourhood streets.

The discussion on drug-related crime led to comments about increased gang violence. Participants acknowledged that much of this violence concerned “*criminals killing other criminals*”, but often the innocent were caught up in the “*crossfire*”. The other concerning aspect of this type of crime was the unpredictability and randomness of these acts. The situation in Winnipeg of an innocent young person being killed by a stray bullet, was recounted in one session as an example of this.

Another type of crime raised in a number of sessions was the perceived ‘new’ and more sophisticated incidences of identity theft and fraud. These were not of paramount concern, but certainly there was awareness of this type of crime being on the rise.

Participants were not overly hopeful about things improving a great deal in the year ahead. At best, some participants felt that crime levels would not get much worse.

Participants felt that some types of criminal activity may decrease, such as car theft or the prevalence of some illegal drugs, due to increased enforcement activities, but other criminal activities would likely increase.

Most individuals were fairly pessimistic about future crime levels. A primary reason for this, which will be noted later in this report, was a perceived lack of faith in the justice system getting tough on criminals.

BEHAVIOUR & LANGUAGE

This section of the group discussion began with participants recounting precautionary activities they perform to keep themselves and their belongings safe from crime.

Personal Precautions

The list of personal precautions of individuals were numerous and varied. Everyone in the sessions identified some precautionary action resulting from a concern over crime. As the list on the following page indicates, some of the activities mentioned were not even legal in Canada.

The responses were very similar across regions and among the different research populations. The most noticeable difference in the types of precautions surfaced between participants with children at home and those without. Participants with children raised precautions regarding transporting the children to and from school; knowing friends; and monitoring Internet usage.

Another difference was found among individuals who rent their home. They were less likely to cite certain precautions, such as home alarms and sentinel lights compared to homeowners. These individuals tended to refer to entrance security—monitoring and ensuring that strangers were gaining entry to the apartment building.

The underlying reason (concern/anxiety) for the majority of precautions mentioned in the groups was based on a desire to protect one's personal property. The level of anxiety over personal safety is low and therefore did not surface often as the reason certain actions were being taken. Personal concern, as noted above, did surface more frequently when specifically focussed on children in the household.

Another determinant or factor motivating participants' precautionary tendencies was the presence of a personal experience with crime. As noted earlier, a great many participants admitted over the course of the discussion to have been personally affected by a criminal act of some sort. In most cases this was a property crime—vandalism; theft from car; or stealing from a yard or garage. In many sessions, a few people indicated they had been personally threatened in a crime related incident. The precautions noted by these individual tended to be in response to this experience, i.e. a property or personal crime.

Outlined on the following page are the precautions provided in the groups. These are loosely sorted by the frequency of mention. The different precautions are organized into two categories:

1. Precautions focussed on protection of property
2. Precautions focussed on protection of person(s)

There is some cross-over between categories. Depending on the individual situation, some activities had different motivations behind them:

Property Protection

- Locking the doors and windows
- Car alarm, immobilizer, Club
- Home alarm
- Close curtains when away
- Leaving lights & radios on when away from home. Light timers
- Not out late
- Neighbourhood Watch programs
- Know your neighbours
- Cancel paper delivery. Have neighbour pick-up mail
- Have neighbours park in driveway when away
- Install deadbolts
- Apartment building entrance security
- Not walking alone late at night or in certain areas
- Sentinel or motion sensitive lighting
- Lock front doors when in backyard
- Shred personal documents – don't put in trash
- Have a dog
- Won't ride public transit at certain times of day (Skytrain)
- Chain up BBQ
- Have a safety deposit box. Hide valuables in the house
- Installed cameras at entrance/backyard
- Collapse and disguise boxes from new electronic purchases when disposing
- Insurance
- Have a weapon/club in the house
- Trim shrubs and trees around windows
- Self defence courses
- Don't use credit card on Internet
- Don't save log-in and passwords on Internet sites
- Bars on windows

Personal Protection

- Being aware of who is around you - should check
- Home alarm, 'arm-able' when at home
- Get a dog
- Close windows at night
- Don't park in parkades at night
- Not walking at night or walk in groups
- Have my keys in fist when going to parked
- Carry mace, bear spray
- Drive and pick-up kids from school or friends
- Won't let kids play in front of house
- Got a cell phone
- Have a dog
- Avoid groups of young people. Won't intervene if up to no good
- Street proof children by games and role playing
- Lock car doors while driving
- Won't open doors to strangers (home invasions)
- Have a whistle/personal alarm
- Notice strangers in the neighbourhood or strange cars
- Used to give people rides, hitchhikers, but not anymore
- Self defence courses
- Check Internet usage History
- Curtail Chat Rooms

Vulnerable Elements of Society

Children are one of the first segments of society identified by participants as being most at risk to crime. There is a sense they are naïve and easy targets. Children are at times trusting to a fault. It was mentioned in many groups that children are vulnerable in many different circumstances:

- Bullying at school
- Poor home/family situations

- Chat rooms online
- Peer pressure among friends
- They trust authority figures
- Possess disposable income

Seniors are also identified as individuals particularly vulnerable to crime. They are especially at risk because they are perceived to be easy targets than younger adults. In addition, they are sometimes in lonely circumstances which can increase this population's vulnerability. Seniors, (unlike children), are more likely to have items of value, including cash, which makes them an attractive target.

New immigrants were another group of people identified as more vulnerable to crime. One frequently mentioned reason for this was that immigrants, often because of their financial situation, tended to live in high crime areas. In addition, some immigrant populations came from countries where the police and authorities in general were not trustworthy, which may lead them to be reluctant to report crime or suspicious behaviour. In a few locations, participants added that some Immigrants do not trust banks and therefore have a large amount of money in their residence, which can make them an attractive target for criminals.

The discussion about immigrant vulnerabilities to crime raised comments, most often from participants who were immigrants themselves, over the vulnerability of this group getting involved in criminal activities—most notably gangs. The point was made in several sessions that supports for new immigrants (programs, jobs, training, etc.) were important because young immigrants need to be exposed to opportunities Canada has to offer. The most important opportunity was the ability to get a good job and support a family. Participants believed that if immigrants are not exposed to these opportunities, they may look for alternative ways to find financial success and reward—from illegal sources.

A small number of participants noted that the scenario just described above could apply equally to individuals in low income situations.

Women were mentioned as being particularly vulnerable to crime, although not always as part of the initial top-of-mind discussion. Women were seen as being vulnerable because of perceptions of being weaker. In addition, they were the target of sex related crimes, such as assault or harassment.

Other populations identified in the sessions as being vulnerable to crime were:

- Disabled persons
- Low income families or residents of low income areas
- First Nations
- Less educated individuals

Various Crime & Justice Terminology

Participants were read a series of crime and/or justice related terms. After each they were asked to indicate: what came to mind when they heard the phrase; what did the phrase mean to them and what connotations—good or bad—did they associate with the phrase or term. The order in which the phrases were read to participants was randomized in the sessions.

Effective Gun Control

This phrase, more so than the others, generated the most immediate and verbal response from participants. This reaction was almost always a sarcastic chuckle or guffaw, followed by comments such as:

- *It's a joke.*
- *An oxymoron. A misnomer. Doesn't exist.*
- *A farce.*
- *Can't be done.*
- *It takes a lot of energy for nothing.*
- *It doesn't work. If I really wanted a gun I could get a gun.*
- *Legal gun owners aren't killing people.*
- *I hate the whole damn gun control thing. I think it is ridiculous, the registration of long firearms. It's totally ineffective and a waste of money.*
- *You are not going to register a weapon if you're a criminal element.*
- *A minor inconvenience for criminals.*

For many participants in all locations, the phrase 'gun control' conjured images of the Gun Registry program which was almost universally noted as being a waste of money and ineffective. Reaction was often more negative in the groups of older adults (55 plus) and in more rural based communities, such as Fredericton, where a number of participants legally own registered guns.

The concept of 'gun control' was noted as being an important and a laudatory idea, particularly in Laval and Mississauga, but the current system was clearly not working in participants' view. The inclusion of the word 'effective' was occasionally singled out as problematic.

In terms of language – many participants missed the term “effective” in the phrase “effective gun control”. In some groups the moderator asked participants to repeat back the phrase discussed, and participants would often just say they were talking about “gun control”. Many participants volunteered that 'effective gun control' in their mind meant stopping the flow of illegal guns coming in from the US. In addition, many individuals suggested the laws should be toughened to really crack-down on gun related crime. A few individuals suggested ensuring longer sentences were given when convicted of a crime involving a firearm. They did not feel “effective” gun control could be accomplished with the tools and systems available today, and that “effective” was an unrealistic ideal.

Conditional Sentencing

The term was not universally known or understood. There was some confusion with this term and the phrase 'minimum sentences'. The majority of individuals, however, correctly associated 'conditional sentencing' with an alternative sentence to actual jail time—most often house arrest. Example of some of the phrases which came to mind associated with conditional sentencing included:

- *House arrest. You can go to work during the day, but you are monitored.*
- *House arrest. I wish someone would tell me to stay home for 18 months. It's a joke.*
- *Leniency.*
- *It's not a real sentence.*

- *Loose sentencing.*
- *Sentences for petty crimes.*
- *Cop-out by government.*
- *Strings attached.*
- *Walking papers. It costs \$70k to keep you in jail, so you get out.*
- *Has to do with criminal intent and severity.*

In many sessions, there was some appreciation that in certain circumstances special consideration was warranted. This tended to be for less serious crimes (not involving physical assault and injury) and for first offences only—“*Sometimes a second chance is warranted.*” Participants strongly believed that this form of sentencing was being used too often and with the wrong individuals. The example of repeat offenders being given conditional sentences was often cited.

Another common concern expressed in relation to conditional sentencing was the perceived lack of monitoring and, subsequently, compliance by the convicted criminal. There was a prevailing view that the legal system was not doing a good job monitoring individuals on a conditional sentence and therefore there was really no sentence at all. Many participants cited, anecdotally, that they had heard of situations where individuals were violating the restrictions of the conditional sentence. This appeared to be the biggest evidence for participants feeling there was a lack of compliance associated with these types of sentences.

Mandatory Minimums

Most individuals correctly interpreted this term to mean an automatic longer or “*stiffer*” sentence. This concept was generally supported, somewhat more so by older participants, over the age of 55, especially in comparison to Renters. In addition, the term was somewhat less supported in Mississauga compared to participants from Richmond, Winnipeg and Fredericton.

While most individuals supported the mandatory minimums approach, there were some differing views of the overall impact of this concept on crime levels. Some participants felt that if criminals knew that if caught by authorities they automatically would serve a relatively long time in prison, they may think twice about committing the crime. Other individuals, however, disagreed with this view stating that criminals do not think about the consequences of getting caught when committing a crime.

A significant number of participants reacted positively to the mandatory minimums phrase because it was a stronger measure of punishment. The discussion about this phrase, like the discussion associated with conditional sentencing, generated significant commentary about the increasing “softness” of the criminal justice system. The concept of mandatory minimums was seen as reversing this trend. Participants supported minimum sentences for very serious crimes, such as murder and sexual assault, as well as, for repeat offenders. The US ‘three strikes’ law was raised in a few groups as something that should be considered in Canada.

Another aspect of the positive reaction to this term was the emotion behind it. There was a sense that mandatory minimums are a way of restoring justice, or a way of “getting back” at someone who has committed a crime that causes concern and strife in the community.

There were a few comments made that this legal approach took some of the discretion away from judges. Most participants did not see this as a bad occurrence—some mentioned that sometimes judges provide sentences that were perceived as too lenient. There were a number of comments, however, that certain circumstances warranted discretion and therefore it may become a problem if mandatory sentencing became more common. Younger participants were more likely to hold a view that some form of judicial flexibility was important.

The phrase ‘mandatory minimums’ was not universally understood in the sessions. In almost all sessions, but most notably in Laval and Winnipeg, individuals misinterpreted the phrase to mean serving the ‘minimum sentence’, which was not viewed positively. In Laval, a few participants linked the term to serving one-sixth of their prescribed jail time.

Drug Violence

There were four distinct definitions of the term “drug violence”:

- Property crimes and robberies committed by the addicted individual to support the habit
- Dealers engaging in violence among themselves – the intended victims are other criminals and not community members
- Individuals committing crimes and assaults while they are high
- Families who are victimized by a family member with a habit (this could include physical abuse, property crime or fraud to support the habit)

While all four of the above definitions were discussed in many of the groups, most people initially associated this with property crimes and robberies committed by drug addicts to support their habit. Based on the comments in the groups, this was a very prevalent form of crime. Many individuals, particularly older participants, noted drug related crimes were often random and violent because of the state of mind of the perpetrator.

The second common response to the phrase drug violence was to link this with gang violence—“*criminals killing other criminals*”. References were made to gang related violence, which was often extreme and usually involving guns, and in particular semi-automatic weapons. Many individuals, particularly in Richmond, expressed concern as to how this gang violence occurred in broad daylight, without warning and in perceived respectable parts of the city. This was concerning for individuals, as innocent bystanders could be caught in the middle. One of the sessions in Winnipeg recalled a recent shooting where a young man was caught in the crossfire between rival gangs and killed. Drive-by shootings were another form of crime associated with drug violence. The randomness of drug violence was a common concern.

Some verbatim associations with the phrase drug violence include:

- *Break and enter*
- *Robbery and muggings*
- *Gangs*
- *Ethnic gangs*
- *Biker gangs*
- *Youth gangs in schools*
- *Organized crime*
- *Dealers*
- *Increasing levels*

A final comment associated with the phrase ‘drug violence’ was the perceived influence of TV and other media have in this regard. In a few locations (Winnipeg and Richmond) participants expressed the concern that TV programming sensationalized drug related violence and lifestyles making this attractive to young people.

Youth Crime

Youth crime was a topic already discussed in the sessions prior to this phrase being introduced. In almost all sessions, there was a concern over a perceived lack of respect from youth. Comments in this regard included:

- *Lack of respect. Youth today are different than the youth 20 years ago. Twenty years ago getting caught was a big deal. There were consequences.*
- *Youth don't have a sense of authority or respect for authority. No respect for a parent.*
- *Just disrespect*
- *They feel no responsibility for anything*

The sessions which consisted of predominantly older participants were more likely to emphasize this concern, but ‘lack of respect’ was raised often in most groups. To address this problem, some participants suggested a stronger parental role—in several sessions there were comments suggesting parenting has a significant impact on young people and the likelihood of getting involved in crime. In Winnipeg, Richmond and Fredericton, the point was raised that the family dynamic was changing with both parents working and the stresses this places on some families. The term “*latch-key kids*” was used to describe children basically raising themselves after school while their parents were still at work. The concern about this phenomenon centred around how this was contributing to a parental loss of control—which ultimately could lead to increased criminal tendencies.

In Winnipeg, the discussion of parenting and youth crime was the primary focus of conversation around the term ‘youth crime’. Auto theft was often cited as a very good example of parents losing control of their children, sometimes at a very young age.

Comments regarding the parental role in youth crime included:

- *Where are the parents?!*
- *Parents today let their kids get away with anything. Parents need to instil more fear in their kids.*
- *Depends on parents and how they raise their kids. How they discipline their kids.*
- *It comes down to a lack of parenting.*
- *There are no consequences for the parent if their kid gets in trouble. They don't care.*
- *Family dysfunction. Youth crime is usually an indication that the youngster came from a family environment where they've not got the kind of values, instruction or parental involvement that one would expect or should get.*

It should be noted that during the discussion on the connection of family and youth crime, many participants disagreed that this was the sole or primary factor. These individuals often cited examples of kids coming out of “*broken homes*” and becoming very successful.

Another suggestion raised in many groups was the need for stronger consequences in the form of punishments for young offenders. There were many comments regarding the leniency of the

youth justice system. A number of individuals noted that they felt young offenders often only receiving a “*slap on the wrist*” for the crimes they commit. Many participants felt there needed to be more detention time and other consequences, such as fines and community service. While there was a general feeling that sterner punishment was required when dealing with youth crime, there was also a strong concern expressed that detention or “*youth jail*” was not necessarily the best course either. In Winnipeg, it was noted by one individual, to the agreement of others in the group, that locking individuals up sometimes leads to associating with other young criminals and subsequently becoming involved in more trouble once released from detention.

The types of crime which came to mind when thinking specifically about youth crime included:

- Auto theft
- Drugs (dealing)
- Vandalism
- Petty stealing
- Breaking and entering
- Bullying at schools
- Youth gangs

In Winnipeg, a particular youth crime which stood out was auto theft.

Safe Streets

The phrase ‘safe streets’ elicited reactions in the sessions as more of an ‘ideal’, as opposed to a reality by many participants. This is not to suggest that currently streets are considered unsafe, but rather that crime is possible on any street. It was often suggested that “*safer*” streets may be more appropriate—“*It’s like safe sex. You’re never going to have a 100% safe street.*”

Participants also noted that safe streets very much depended on what streets one was referring to or where one happened to be in a city—“*My street in suburbia, yes [safe], but downtown, not so much.*”

Other people noted that safe streets depended on the time of day—“*Downtown is fine during the day, but I wouldn’t want to be there after dark.*”

Other comments related to the ‘safe street’ phrase included:

- Neighbourhood Watch
- Foot patrols
- Bright lights, well lit
- No speeding

Based on comments, participants in Fredericton, Laval and Mississauga (to a somewhat lesser degree), were more likely to feel the streets were fairly safe in their own neighbourhoods.

Ombudsman for Victims of Crime

The vast majority of participants responded favourably to this phrase, but for the most part wondered if such a person or office existed. Fredericton was the one location where participants appeared to feel the position actually existed compared to responses in other locations to the

phrase. In Laval, there was some confusion over what the term meant—“*an arbitrator or mediator*”—which created some question as to what would be ‘arbitrated’—a financial settlement?

The Ombudsman was interpreted as a:

- *Victims advocate*
- *Spokesperson for victims*
- *A person to help guide victims through the process*
- *Watchdog*
- *Champion for victims*
- *A go between for victims and the legal system*
- *Mediator or arbitrator*

There was support for such an office or person. Many participants felt the victim is often overlooked in the process and the ombudsman may help address this. There were some comments that the system is currently more supportive of the criminal as opposed to the victim. A few participants noted the accused receives legal aid and other social supports, while the victims are usually left on their own.

Interestingly, it was raised in several groups that if an ombudsman for victims office was created, it needed to be “*arms length from government and non-political*”. In addition, the office needed to “*have teeth*” in order to stand-up for victims if necessary. If this was not the case, a few people felt it would only be a token effort on the part of government to only make it appear they were increasing support for victims of crime.

Property Crime

Most participants were familiar with the phrase ‘property crime’ and in fact indicated they personally had experienced this in some form or another. Property crime was associated often with youth (teens) and drug addicts. It was viewed in many sessions as a type of crime that was increasing.

Common examples of property crime included;

- Vandalism
- Theft
- Break and enter
- Graffiti
- Home invasion
- Arson

A few people also mentioned identify theft and credit card fraud as examples of property crime.

For many participants, property crime was not a form of crime which elicited ‘fearful’ reaction, however, it was noted as being a crime which made them angry. Participants noted this anger stemmed from:

- *They steal your kid’s bicycle and you have to explain why its gone and she’s crying.*

- *The violation. If they steal from your house you feel they have been everywhere in your home.*
- *When they take something that you have bought, like an iPod, it may be just an item, but you worked hard to save for it. You made a sacrifice and it's gone like that. They should work for it too.*
- *It's the aggravation that goes with it. If you have to report a crime you have to take time off work. Go down to the police station. Then make an insurance claim. You have to take time off work to do all this. It's annoying.*
- *You make an insurance claim and your premium goes up.*

TOPICS (HEADLINES)

The final section of the discussion asked participants to review a set of newspaper headlines which all related to crime in some manner. A total of 12 headlines were tested in each group. The same headlines were tested in the English language sessions, although the order of which they were listed was randomly altered. In the French language sessions (Laval) the headlines shown differ somewhat from the English ones (see Appendices for complete list of headlines).

Participants were instructed to independently rate each headline according to how it made them feel. The criteria used in the rating exercise included whether the headline made them feel:

1. Really angry
2. Somewhat angry or annoyed or sad
3. Not really of a concern

After participants noted how each of the headlines made them feel personally, the responses were discussed in the group.

For the purpose of the report, the headlines which received the highest number of different ratings are discussed below. The parentheses include the number of participants out of the total study population who rated the headline in a certain manner. Underneath each headline are the participant verbatim comments illustrating why they rated the headline the way they did.

Really Angry

Minimum sentence for man who killed pregnant girlfriend (95/103)

- *He killed two people.*
- *Not just taking one life, taking another. She was pregnant.*
- *It's like two lives taken. She was vulnerable and trusted him.*
- *One was a child.*
- *Murder should not ever get a minimum sentence. He's taken two lives here. This was his girlfriend, that's someone you're supposed to love, which makes it so much meaner.*
- *He killed. He took life.*
- *The brutality of the crime.*
- *It's a pathetic sentence.*
- *He should be in jail for life.*
- *He should be in jail for whatever it is for murder, but twice as long as that.*
- *He should have been executed.*

House arrest for drunk driver; Man drank an entire case of beer, then killed a bicyclist in crash (90/103)

- *The sentence is inappropriate to the degree of the crime. Way too inappropriate.*
- *He killed someone.*
- *If you kill a man should not get to stay in your house.*
- *It's murder basically.*
- *He took a life.*

- *If you are consuming alcohol you know what the risks are and you've taken an innocent life.*
- *People should know better, it's socially unacceptable to drink and drive.*
- *He's not really being punished.*
- *The sentence is an insult to the person killed.*
- *Tells the rest of society it's not a big deal.*
- *This won't be a deterrent to others.*
- *There's no excuse for it—it's so preventable.*
- *He committed two crimes. Drinking and driving and killed someone.*
- *It's a really stupid punishment.*
- *The sentence is almost unbelievable.*
- *The whole thing has lax written all over it.*
- *He'll just drink at home.*
- *Ridiculously low sentence.*
- *House arrest looks pretty soft.*
- *Sentence should be involuntary manslaughter.*
- *He should be sent away for life.*
- *Executed. Death penalty.*
- *Minimum 10 years. 10 to 15 years.*
- *5 years in jail and never drive again.*
- *Driver should have to meet with family of victim.*

Teacher avoids jail for student sex: House arrest for man who 'abused trust' of girls (76/103)

- *Abuse of trust of children.*
- *Abuse of power.*
- *He's in a position of trust which he took advantage of.*
- *He's a professional that should have been held to a higher standard and he's abused that.*
- *It's a position of trust. A violation.*
- *Teachers are supposed to have the trust of the people who are sending their kids to them. Breaking the trust of parents. Also sexually assaulting children.*
- *Teachers have a lot of influence and they've breached that bond.*
- *It is somebody who's taking advantage of their position of trust. A teacher you figure should be the last person taking advantage of kids.*
- *He should lose his job and pension.*
- *Slap on the wrist.*
- *Should be some jail time.*

Teen charged in stabbing. Friends say dispute over MP3 player led to west-end killing (73/103)

- *That much violence over an MP3 player? An object?*
- *No value for human life.*
- *They think it is OK to solve a dispute with a weapon*
- *Why do kids have weapons.*
- *Something petty to be killed over.*

- *Just the pure stupidity of it. Why would you kill somebody, ruin your life, ruin the lives of the victims family and your family just for a toy.*
- *I think about my own kids and how something so simple that escalated out of control.*
- *I can't see this ever happening when I was a kid*
- *Charged on YOA so sentence would be very bad [probed: lenient].*

Husband sentenced for choking wife; Probation, conditional discharge ordered after late-night assault (69/103)

- *I don't think the husband has the right to abuse his wife period.*
- *I am totally against violence against women.*
- *Minimalization of women.*
- *The judicial system is not giving this [domestic violence] the kind of weight and attention it should be getting.*
- *There has to be real punishment for this.*
- *Makes me mad because most of the time the women don't press charges. They won't because it ends up angering him more.*
- *Sentences were too trivial.*
- *Saying its OK to abuse your wife.*

Local man charged with possession of child porn (68/103)

- *Child pornography is disgusting.*
- *Taking advantage of children.*
- *Crime against children.*
- *It's sick.*

De faux policiers terrorisent un couple de personnes âgées à St-Agapit (16/18)

- *Ce sont des personnes âgées (seniors)*
- *Si on n'a plus confiance en la police, on n'a plus confiance en personne (If you can't trust the police, you can't trust anyone)*
- *Comment un uniforme s'est-il ramassé là? (How did they get a uniform?)*
- *Impardonnable (Unforgivable)*
- *Lâche (Coward)*
- *Surtout auprès de vieillards (More so because they are elderly's)*

Un homme de Colombie-Britannique est accusé du meurtre de sa femme enceinte (13/18)

- *Encore une autre violence contre une femme (another violence against a woman)*
- *C'est comme s'il avait tué deux personnes (It's like if he had killed two people)*
- *Rien ne s'est passé dans le sens qu'il ne s'est pas fait arrêter avant [je suppose qu'il y avait déjà eu de la violence conjugale] avant qu'elle se fasse tuer. (Nothing was done before hands [supposing there has been previous violence] before she got killed.*
- *Parce qu'elle est enceinte (Because she is pregnant)*
- *Il vient de donner la vie et il l'enlève (He gave life and he takes it away)*
- *C'est peut-être parce qu'il n'en voulait pas (It's maybe because he did not want the baby).*

Agression sauvage au poignard à Laval (12/18)

- *Le mot sauvage (the word wild)*
- *C'est à Laval (It's in Laval)*
- *Ça me fait revivre des affaires (It makes me live again things that happened to me in the past)*

Pornographie juvénile: un coupable et un accusé (11/18)

- *Un enfant c'est inoffensif (A child is harmless)*
- *Pornographie juvénile : en bas de 18 ans, tu ne touches pas à ça (Juvénile pornography : under 18 years old, don't touch)*
- *Abus de pouvoir, il s'imagine qu'il peut faire ce qu'il veut (Abusing his power, he thinks he can do what he wants)*

Une sentence jugée trop clémente; Alcool au volant : Peter Howe provoque un accident mortel, mais évite la prison (8/18)

- *Il a tué quelqu'un et évite la prison! (He killed somebody but avoids jail)*
- *Mon neveu s'est fait frapper par un ivrogne (My nephew was hit by a drunken driver) Il n'a même pas fait une semaine de prison (He did not even stay a week in jail)*
- *Le fait qu'il évite la prison (The fact he avoids going to jail)*
- *Si le journal se donne le droit de juger que cet acte est trop clément, c'est que beaucoup de monde le pense. (If the newspaper takes the right of judging that it is too lenient, it's that a lot of people think that way).*
- *Justice à deux vitesses (two speed justice)*
- *Les alcooliques font des choses et, au lieu d'aller en prison, ils vont dans des centres pour les aider (Alcoholics do things and, instead of going to jail, they go to centers to get help).*

Vol qualifié sur une sexagénaire (Not discussed in the group) (10/18)**Slightly Angry, Annoyed or Sad / Not Really a Concern**

There was considerable overlap in the headlines participants identified as either making them *somewhat angry* or that *really did not concern them*. As such, the verbatim comments for these headlines are combined below.

Bank card fraud on rise: Consumers urged to cover up PINs or risk getting ripped off (52/103)

- *I'm upset about it mainly because there's not enough education to educate elderly and people who are subject to fraud so they'd be better protected. This is something that can be prevented.*
- *There are more steps to prevent this.*
- *We're always hearing about this. More common.*
- *Banks are doing something to minimize this. It gets you thinking about ways to avoid this. It can be avoided.*
- *There is no specific victim in the headline.*
- *It's an information headline. No victim.*

- *I don't think it is going to happen to me. I take precautions.*
- *You have more control over that crime. You can take steps to avoid this happening to you.*
- *It does piss me off because this is a possibility. But no physical assault here.*
- *Usually banks will give you back your money eventually.*

Teen charged for smashing windows

- *He should be charged. Good thing.*
- *Something has happened. He charged. People are desensitized to those types of crimes because they happen a lot.*
- *It was resolved. He did get caught and got charged with it.*
- *Pretty minor. Just windows. Lot's of them, but only windows.*
- *It's not a big deal. Smashing windows has been around for years.*
- *That's the kind of regular trouble kids get into and have always gotten into.*
- *If it were my windows I would have made it red [angry response].*
- *Just vandalism.*
- *There's a real possibility it could happen to anyone. Anyone's kid.*
- *Small petty thing and he was charged.*
- *It's sad to hear that teens are vandalizing things. It is not to the extent to be very angry about it, however. It's still somebody's possession, somebody's home.*
- *Not sure we should give someone a criminal record for smashing windows.*

Beaconsfield man charged with drug trafficking; Marijuana and cocaine found after search of vehicle pulled over for driving infraction (43/103)

- *He didn't hurt anybody.*
- *Nobody died.*
- *It was good he was caught.*
- *It reminds me of small town news.*
- *If a drug trafficker is being charged, that is good because it means the police are doing their duty.*
- *Why would they just go and look in someone's vehicle. He wasn't out selling.*
- *To be charged with trafficking, doesn't he have to be caught selling?*
- *I feel disconnected from it. Drug trafficking doesn't feel like it has anything to do with me personally. There is no connection.*
- *Traffic offences happen everyday.*
- *The way it is described it sounds like recreational drugs. I would be more angered if I saw Dr. so and so is charged with giving out too many prescriptions.*

Saint-Léonard : vandalisme dans un cimetière; une vingtaine de pierres tombales, certaines datant de deux siècles ont été renversées (10/18)

- *C'est triste, mais ils sont morts (It's sad, but they are dead)*
- *C'est du matériel (It's only material)*
- *Ça m'attriste, dommage, manque de respect (It makes me sad, sorry, it's a lack of respect)*
- *Moins pire que des meurtres (Less bad than murders)*
- *C'est matériel, ça se répare (It's material, it can be repaired)*

Vol et vandalisme dans deux écoles primaires : encore des malfaiteurs à l'école St-Pie X (9/18)

- *Vandalisme (vandalism)*
- *C'est la violence (it's the violence)*
- *Du matériel ça se remplace, une personne ça ne revient pas en vie (Material things can be replaced while a person cannot come back to life)*
- *Ça veut dire que c'est un problème de quartier. On n'écoute pas les jeunes: on pourrait peut-être s'en occuper (It means it's a neighbourhood problem. We don't listen enough to youth : maybe we could take care of them).*

Arrêtés avec des speeds et de la cocaïne (11/18 no concern)

- *Arrêtés pourquoi? On ne le sait même pas (Arrested why? We don't even know)*
- *Il a été malchanceux (He was not lucky)*
- *Ça ne me concerne pas (I am not concerned)*
- *Juste un individu ce n'est pas la mafia ou les Hells (Only an individual, it's not the mafia or Hells)*
- *S'il avait tué pour ça, peut-être; mais il n'a rien fait (If he had killed for that maybe, but he did not do a thing)*
- *Il n'y avait pas de quantité (They did not mention quantities)*
- *Rien du tout : il y a toujours eu de la drogue et de la boisson. S'il avait frappé quelqu'un, ça m'aurait mis en colère. (Nothing at all : there has always been drug and booze. If he had hurt somebody, then I would have been furious).*
- *Ils n'ont fait de mal à personne (They did not harm anyone)*
- *Si tu "scrapes" ta vie, c'est ton affaire. (If you destroy your life, it's your business).*

La police démantèle une opération de fraude par carte de débit (8/18)

- *Ça arrive tous les jours (It happens everyday)*
- *C'est réglé (It's resolved)*
- *C'est arrivé à ma fille et ça s'est réglé (It happened to my daughter and it got resolved)*
- *On est habitués à ça (We are used to it)*
- *Ça pourrait être nous la victim (We could be the victim)*
- *J'ai été victime et la caisse populaire m'a remboursé (I was the victim and the credit union reimbursed me)*
- *Il y a bien des choses qui sont pires (There are a lot of things that are worse)*
- *Il n'y a pas de violence (There is no violence)*
- *Ça ne reste que du matériel (Afterall, it's only material).*

LAST THOUGHTS

Each of the groups concluded with a brief discussion concerning awareness and impression of the government's current initiatives relating to the criminal justice system. The majority of participants are unaware of any particular government measures in this area. There was low recall in the groups of any of the new legislative changes that have been introduced.

A few individuals in the sessions noted that the current government had run on a "*law and order agenda*" in the last election, but were not sure what had been done since. A few individuals felt a few new measures had been introduced, but nothing very significant.

There was a strong feeling among participants that crime and the justice system were areas that needed much improvement and modification.

Overall, the series of discussions revealed that the over-arching feeling among Canadians when it comes to crime in their communities is not one of fear, but rather one of frustration with how the system currently deals with criminals. In addition, there is some anxiety with how crime is perceived to have changed over the years and how whether this will continue to change for the worse.

APPENDICES

Moderator's Guide

INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

- Introduce moderator and thank participants for attending
- Tonight, we're conducting research on behalf of the Government of Canada to explore issues relating to crime and safety
- Explain general purpose of focus group discussions:
 - Gauge opinions about issues and ideas
 - No right or wrong answers
 - Okay to disagree; want people to speak up if hold different view
- Any questions? ACCEPT BRIEF QUESTIONS BUT DO NOT LINGER.
- Roundtable introduction: please tell us your first name and one of your favourite interests or hobbies.

SECTION ONE: GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME IN CANADA (20 MINUTES)

- First, let's talk about the community or neighbourhood you live in. What do you like the most about where you live? Why do you say that?
 - Probes:
 - Close to family/friends
 - Inexpensive/affordable
 - Location/close to work/schools
 - Safe/free of crime
 - Clean
 - Beautiful
- What are some key words both good and bad you would use to describe your community?
- Thinking about crime in Canada, do you think the level of crime has changed since you were a child? Why do you say that? [MODERATOR LISTEN FOR 'IDEALISM' POST-WAR ERA]
- What do you think the level of crime in Canada will be like in 5-10 years from now...will it be better or worse than it is now, or about the same? What do you think will be the biggest changes? Any others?

SECTION TWO: BEHAVIOUR AND LANGUAGE (45 MINUTES)

- We have talked about crime in our communities. Now, I would like to talk about the safety measures you take to protect yourself and/or your possessions. Let's develop a list of things that you do to keep yourself safe. Please tell me what are some of the things that you do on a regular basis?
MODERATOR TO GO AROUND TABLE – RECORD ON FLIP CHART

[Only ask if necessary, and don't go into much detail] If necessary to generate ideas, probe:

- What are the things you do to make yourself/family feel physically safe?
 - What are things you do to protect your possessions? Including your home or your vehicle.
 - What do you do to keep business items/work items safe?
 - What about when you go online?
- So, let's go through each of these... tell me why you are doing them **[Probe – What's the anxiety around these? What are you trying to protect]** **WRITE ON BOARD**

- As a group, you have developed this list of reasons why you protect yourself. Let's now focus on grouping these items. Let's sort all of these precautions into groups that are similar. [**Probe – What's the anxiety/fear/reason why you're doing the protective action?**]

HAVE RESPONDENTS PARTICIPATE IN A SORT EXERCISE – MODERATOR GROUP ON FLIP CHART – AIM TO GROUP ALONG FEAR/CAUSE FOR PROTECTIVE ACTION

- Now that we have categories, which of these categories or set of precautions is most important? GO AROUND TABLE
 - Why is this set of precautions most important?
- Do you think certain individuals or groups are more vulnerable to crime than others? If so, which ones and why?

Probe:

- seniors
 - women
 - people with disabilities
 - youth/children
 - people in rural or remote communities
 - low skilled or low educated people
 - immigrants
- I'd like to get your feedback on a few terms that have been used tonight and some that are often used to refer to the kinds of issues we have been speaking about. What comes to mind when you hear the term...? READ/ROTATE, That is, what does the term mean to you? Anything else?
- a) Effective Gun Control
 - b) Conditional Sentencing
 - c) Mandatory Minimums
 - d) Drug Violence
 - e) Youth Crime
 - f) Safe Streets
 - g) Ombudsman for Victims of Crime
 - h) Property Crime

Ask for each term:

- What first comes to mind?
- What does this mean to you?
- Negative and positive connotations and why
- Extent to which each term resonates

SECTION THREE: TOPIC EXERCISE (40 MINUTES – 10 MINUTES OF EXERCISE + 30 MINUTES OF DISCUSSION)

- I am distributing a sheet with a listing of different newspaper headlines. These are sourced in terms of dates and newspaper. The headlines are about various crime and justice issues. These are all headlines from across Canada from the last couple of years.
- In front of you there are different colour hi-liter markers: Red, yellow and blue. Each represents an emotion. The **red** marker means the headline makes you really angry, the **yellow** one means it makes you slightly angry or sad, while the **blue** marker means it doesn't really concern you.
- I am going to read out the various headlines and would like to record how it makes you feel on your own sheet using one of the coloured hi-lites. You don't have to indicate a feeling or emotion for every headline if you are really uncertain, but it would be great if you could place one beside most. [MODERATOR MIX-UP ORDER FOR EACH GROUP]
- Afterwards we will review and discuss selections as a group.

CONDUCT EXERCISE

MODERATOR, HAVE PREPARED FLIP CHART SHEET LISTING ALL HEADLINES. GO THROUGH EACH HEADLINE AND RECORD, USING SHOW OF HANDS, THE NUMBER OF RED, YELLOW AND BLUE HI-LITES BESIDE EACH HEADLINE.

GO THROUGH EACH OF THE TOP THREE OR FOUR HEADLINES THAT HAVE THE MOST RED MARKS.

- How did you feel about this headline?
 - What was it about this headline that made you angry?
 - Why?

GO THROUGH EACH OF THE TOP TWO HEADLINES THAT HAVE THE MOST YELLOW MARKS.

- How did you feel about this headline?
 - Why did this sadden, annoy or slightly anger you?
 - Why were you not outraged?

GO THROUGH THE TOP HEADLINE THAT HAS THE MOST BLUE MARKS.

- How did you feel about this headline?
 - Why did this not anger you, even a bit?

CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES)

- We have talked about a lot of topics here today, is there anything else about crime and justice that we haven't covered that you would like to bring up or add?
- Why is it important?

THANK PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR TIME; COLLECT ALL MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

- L'animatrice se présente et remercie les participants de leur présence
- Le projet de ce soir est réalisé pour le compte du Gouvernement du Canada et vise à explorer les enjeux qui touchent la criminalité et la sécurité
- Expliquer en quoi consistent les groupes de discussion:
 - Jauger les opinions au sujet des enjeux ou des concepts
 - Pas de bonnes ou mauvaises réponses
 - C'est correcte d'avoir des points de vue différents; nous voulons que vous le disiez lorsque vous n'êtes pas d'accord ou que vous avez une opinion différente
- Avez-vous des questions? **ACCEPTER DE BRÈVES QUESTIONS MAIS NE PAS S'ATTARDER.**
- Tour de table: présentation des participants
 - Dites-moi votre prénom
 - Et dites-moi quel est votre passe temps préféré ou la chose qui vous intéresse le plus.

SECTION 1: PERCEPTIONS GÉNÉRALES SUR LA CRIMINALITÉ AU CANADA (20 MINUTES)

- Parlons d'abord de la communauté ou du quartier où vous habitez. Qu'est-ce qui vous plaît le plus au sujet de l'endroit où vous vivez? Pourquoi dites-vous cela?
 - Sonder:
 - Près de la famille/des amis
 - Pas cher/abordable
 - Localisation/près du travail/des écoles
 - Sécuritaire/où il n'y a pas de criminalité
 - Propre
 - Beau/joli
- Quels mots clefs ou expressions, bons ou mauvais, utiliseriez-vous pour décrire votre quartier ou votre communauté?
- En pensant à la criminalité au Canada, pensez-vous que le niveau de criminalité a changé depuis votre enfance? Pourquoi dites-vous cela? **[ANIMATRICE : FAIRE ATTENTION À « L'IDÉALISME » D'APRÈS GUERRE]**
- Qu'est-ce que vous pensez que le niveau de criminalité au Canada sera dans 5 à 10 ans d'ici?...Est-ce que ce sera mieux ou pire que maintenant, ou est-ce que ce sera à peu près pareil? Qu'est-ce qui sera le changement le plus important? Quels autres changements y aura-t-il?

SECTION 2: COMPORTEMENTS ET LANGUAGE (45 MINUTES)

- On a parlé de criminalité dans nos communautés. Maintenant, j'aimerais que nous parlions des mesures de sécurité que vous prenez pour vous protéger. Faisons une liste des choses que vous faites pour assurer votre sécurité. Veuillez me dire certaines des choses que vous faites de façon régulière? **ANIMATRICE : FAIRE UN TOUR DE TABLE – INSCRIRE AU TABLEAU**

Sonder, si nécessaire pour susciter des idées:

- Qu'est-ce que vous faites pour vous assurer de votre sécurité physique personnelle?
 - Qu'est-ce que vous faites pour protéger ce qui vous appartient? Incluant votre maison/logement et votre véhicule.
 - Et lorsque vous allez sur l'Internet?
- En tant que groupe vous avez établi cette liste de ce que vous faites personnellement pour vous protéger. Nous allons maintenant nous concentrer pour regrouper ces éléments. Vous allez maintenant classer ces précautions que vous prenez afin de faire des groupes qui réunissent celles qui sont similaires.

LES PARTICIPANTS EFFECTUENT UN EXERCICE DE TRI –L'ANIMATRICE INSCRIT LES GROUPES AU TABLEAU – TENTER DE FAIRE LES REGROUPEMENTS SELON LES CRAINTES/MOTIFS POUR PRENDRE DES MESURES DE PROTECTION.

- Maintenant que nous avons des catégories, laquelle de ces catégories ou ensemble de précautions est la plus importante? **FAIRE UN TOUR DE TABLE**
- Pourquoi cet ensemble de précautions est-il le plus important?
- Pensez-vous que certaines personnes ou groupes de personnes sont plus vulnérables aux crimes que d'autres? Si oui : lesquelles et pourquoi?

Sonder:

- Les aînés
 - Les femmes
 - Les handicapés
 - Les jeunes/les enfants
 - Les personnes qui vivent en milieu rural ou dans des communautés éloignées
 - Les gens qui ont peu de qualifications ou peu d'éducation
 - Les immigrants
- J'aimerais connaître vos réactions au sujet de certaines expressions qui ont été utilisées ce soir ou de certaines expressions qui sont souvent utilisées lorsqu'on parle des enjeux que nous avons abordés. Qu'est-ce qui vous vient à l'esprit lorsque vous entendez l'expression...? **LIRE/ALTERNEZ L'ORDRE**. C'est-à-dire, qu'est-ce que cette expression signifie pour vous? Quoi encore?
- i) Contrôle efficace des armes à feu
 - j) Peines d'emprisonnement avec sursis
 - k) Peines minimales obligatoires
 - l) Violence liée aux drogues
 - m) Criminalité chez les jeunes
 - n) Rues sécuritaires
 - o) Ombudsman pour les victimes de crimes
 - p) Crimes contre la propriété

Demander pour chaque expression:

- Qu'est-ce qui vous vient à l'esprit en premier lieu?
- Qu'est-ce que ça signifie pour vous?
- Qu'est-ce que ça comporte de négatif et de positif et pourquoi?
- Jusqu'à quel point cette expression vous touche-t-elle personnellement?

SECTION 3: EXERCICE DE THÉMATIQUE (40 MINUTES – 10 MINUTES POUR L'EXERCICE ET 30 MINUTES DE DISCUSSION)

- Je vais maintenant vous distribuer une liste de différents titres d'articles de journaux. Ils sont identifiés par date et par journal. Ces titres traitent de différents crimes et des enjeux reliés à la justice. Ces titres viennent tous des journaux à travers le Canada et ont été recueillis au cours des dernières années.
- Vous avez devant vous des crayons de 3 couleurs différentes: rouge, jaune et bleu. Chaque couleur représente une émotion. Le crayon **rouge** signifie que le titre vous met vraiment en colère, le **jaune** signifie que cela vous met un peu en colère ou vous attriste alors que le **bleu** signifie que cela ne vous concerne pas vraiment.
- Je vais vous lire les différents titres et j'aimerais que vous inscrivez sur votre feuille ce que vous ressentez au sujet de chaque titre en vous servant des crayons de couleur. Vous n'avez pas besoin d'inscrire une émotion ou un sentiment pour chaque titre si vous n'êtes pas vraiment certain mais ça serait vraiment bien si vous pouviez inscrire ce que vous ressentez au sujet de la plupart des titres. **[ANIMATRICE : CHANGER L'ORDRE POUR CHAQUE GROUPE]**
- Après nous réviserons et discuterons vos choix en groupe.

FAIRE EXERCICE

ANIMATRICE : UTILISER LA LISTE PRÉPARÉE D'AVANCE AU TABLEAU – REPRENDRE CHAQUE TITRE ET FAITES UN DÉCOMPTE À MAIN LEVÉE POUR INSCRIRE LE NOMBRE DE ROUGES, DE JAUNES ET DE BLEUS À CÔTÉ DE CHAQUE TITRE.

REVOIR CHACUN DES 3 OU 4 PRINCIPAUX TITRES : CEUX QUI ONT LE PLUS GRAND NOMBRE DE CODES ROUGES.

- Qu'est-ce que vous avez ressenti à propos de ce titre?
 - Qu'est-ce qui vous a mis en colère dans ce titre?
 - Pourquoi?

REVOIR CHACUN DES 2 TITRES QUI ONT LE PLUS GRAND NOMBRE DE CODES JAUNES.

- Qu'est-ce que vous avez ressenti à propos de ce titre?
 - Pourquoi est-ce que ça vous a attristé, agacé ou mis un peu en colère?
 - Pourquoi n'étiez-vous pas outré ou choqué?

REVOIR LE TITRE QUI A LE PLUS GRAND NOMBRE DE CODES BLEUS.

- Qu'est-ce que vous avez ressenti à propos de ce titre?
 - Pourquoi est-ce que cela ne vous a pas choqué ou mis en colère ne serait-ce qu'un petit peu?

CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES)

- Nous avons abordé beaucoup de sujets ici aujourd'hui, y a-t-il quelque chose à propos des crimes et de la justice dont on n'a pas parlé et que vous aimeriez relever ou ajouter?
- Pourquoi est-ce important?
- Savez-vous si le gouvernement fait quelque chose dans le domaine de la criminalité et de la justice? **SI OUI** : Qu'est-ce qu'il fait pour régler ces enjeux?

SONDER : Savez-vous s'il a déposé des projets de lois – ou pris d'autres actions à ce sujet?

REMERCIER LES PARTICIPANTS ET RECUEILLIR TOUT LE MATÉRIEL

Headlines

Headline	Feeling (Red, Yellow, Blue)
<p>1. Teen charged for smashing windows</p> <p>Date: 4/24/2007 Source: The Edmonton Sun</p>	
<p>2. Teen charged in stabbing. Friends say dispute over MP3 player led to west-end killing</p> <p>Date: 5/1/2007 Source: The Ottawa Sun</p>	
<p>3. Local man charged with possession of child porn</p> <p>Date: 4/24/2007 Source: Alberni Valley Times</p>	
<p>4. Car thief targets elderly woman</p> <p>Date: 3/14/2007 Source: Calgary Herald</p>	
<p>5. Beaconsfield man charged with drug trafficking; Marijuana and cocaine found after search of vehicle pulled over for driving infraction</p> <p>Date: 4/5/2007 Source: Montreal Gazette</p>	
<p>6. Fraud artists likened to thugs, murderers: Scams financially destroy many elderly people, RCMP superintendent says</p> <p>Date: 3/2/2007 Source: Vancouver Sun</p>	
<p>7. Bank card fraud on rise: Consumers urged to cover up PINs or risk getting ripped off</p> <p>Date: 11/6/2006 Source: The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon)</p>	

Headline	Feeling (Red, Yellow, Blue)
<p>8. Teen receives suspended sentence for doing an estimated \$225,000 Halloween damage</p> <p>Date: 3/8/2007 Source: Vancouver Sun</p>	
<p>9. Husband sentenced for choking wife; Probation, conditional discharge ordered after late-night assault</p> <p>Date: 1/19/2007 Source: Times & Transcript (Moncton)</p>	
<p>10. Minimum sentence for man who killed pregnant girlfriend</p> <p>Date: 3/21/2007 Source: The Daily News (Halifax)</p>	
<p>11. Teacher avoids jail for student sex: House arrest for man who 'abused trust' of girls</p> <p>Date: 1/27/2007 Source: Calgary Herald</p>	
<p>12. House arrest for drunk driver; Man drank an entire case of beer, then killed a bicyclist in crash</p> <p>Date: 3/30/2007 Source: Times & Transcript (Moncton)</p>	

Titre	Sentiment (Rouge, Jaune, Bleu)
<p>1. Vol et vandalisme dans deux écoles primaires; Encore des malfaiteurs à l'école Saint Pie X</p> <p>Date: 5/15/2007 Source: Le Nouvelliste (Trois-Rivières)</p>	
<p>2. Agression sauvage au poignard à Laval</p> <p>Date: 4/17/2007 Source: Le Journal de Montréal</p>	
<p>3. Pornographie juvénile : un coupable et un accusé</p> <p>Date: 3/2/2007 Source: Le Soleil</p>	
<p>4. Vol qualifié sur une sexagénaire</p> <p>Date: 3/10/2007 Source: Le Soleil</p>	
<p>5. Arrêtés avec des speeds et de la cocaïne</p> <p>Date: 4/16/2007 Source: Le Soleil</p>	
<p>6. De faux policiers terrorisent un couple de personnes âgées Saint-Agapit</p> <p>Date: 3/8/2007 Source: Le Journal de Québec</p>	
<p>7. La police démantèle une opération de fraude par carte de débit</p> <p>Date: 3/19/2007 Source: Presse Canadienne Service Français</p>	
<p>8. Saint-Léonard: vandalisme dans un cimetière; Une vingtaine de pierres tombales, certaines datant de deux siècles, ont été renversées</p> <p>Date: 5/16/2007 Source: L'Acadie Nouvelle</p>	

Titre	Sentiment (Rouge, Jaune, Bleu)
<p>9. Libération provisoire pour Jacques Dubé accusé de violence conjugale</p> <p>Date: 4/20/2007 Source: Le Journal de Québec</p>	
<p>10. Un homme de Colombie-Britannique est accusé du meurtre de sa femme enceinte</p> <p>Date: 3/13/2007 Source: Presse Canadienne Service Français</p>	
<p>11. Prof accusée d'abus sexuel sur un ado l'enseignante de 35 ans est maintenant enceinte</p> <p>Date: 3/11/2007 Source: Le Journal de Montréal</p>	
<p>12. Une sentence jugée trop clémente; Alcool au volant: Peter Howe provoque un accident mortel, mais évite la prison</p> <p>Date: 3/30/2007 Source: L'Acadie Nouvelle</p>	

Recruitment Instrument

Hello. My name is _____ from Western Opinion Research. I am calling to invite people to participate in a small research discussion group. These groups are often called focus groups. We are conducting these groups on behalf of the Government of Canada to get your views on current affairs and topics in your community. We want to speak with specific groups of individuals during these sessions. Can I ask you some questions to see if you are the type of participant we are looking for?

[IF NEED MORE INFO] These sessions are often called “Focus Groups” and are an important way of conducting PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH. The reason for the group is to hear your feelings and impressions on a particular topic. They are NOT SALES MEETINGS. At no time during or after the group will anyone try to sell you anything.

Please note that your participation is voluntary. The information you provide will be administered in accordance with the Privacy Act and other applicable privacy laws and will be reported in aggregate form only. No comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports resulting from this study.

The discussions will take place on **[INSERT DATE]**, and will last no more than 2 hours. Would you be available to attend a discussion like this? We are conducting a number of these sessions, and want to ask you some questions to see which particular session you would attend.

1. **[By observation]** Gender...
[AIM TO RECRUIT A GOOD MIX PER GROUP]

- Male
- Female

2. Please tell me if you or any other member of your immediate family currently work in, or are retired from any of the following:

- A marketing research firm
- A media or news company
- An advertising agency
- A Public Affairs company
- A law enforcement agency or security/alarm company

If “Yes” to any of the above, TERMINATE

3. What is your occupation? _____ **[Validate against Q2 to ensure not a sensitive occupation]**

4. In which of the following age categories do you belong?

- Under 18 **TERMINATE**
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44 **AIM TO RECRUIT A GOOD MIX OF AGES**
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 and over **55 PLUS GROUP**
- Refused **TERMINATE**

5. Do you own or rent your main place of residence?

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Home owner/co-owner | <input type="checkbox"/> | HOME OWNER GROUP |
| Tenant /Renter | <input type="checkbox"/> | RENTER GROUP |

6. What is the highest level of education you have obtained? Is it...

Less than high school	1	
High school graduate	2	
Some College but did not finish		3
Completed College		4
Some university but did not finish		5
Completed University	6	
Post-graduate studies	7	

7. In what range does your total household income fall before taxes?

Less than \$20,000	1
\$20,000 to \$39,999	2
\$40,000 to \$59,999	3
\$60,000 to \$74,999	4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	5
\$100,000 or more	6

GENERAL QUESTIONS

8. As I mentioned earlier you are being invited to a group discussion with approximately 10 other people.

How comfortable are you in participating and speaking out in group discussions of this size?

Very Comfortable	
Somewhat Comfortable	
Not very comfortable	[THANK AND TERMINATE]
Not at all Comfortable	[THANK AND TERMINATE]
Don't know	[THANK AND TERMINATE]

9. Participants will be asked to read information and write answers to questions in English. Will you be able to do this, and will you be able to bring with you glasses or other items that will allow you to read the material?

Yes	
No	[THANK AND TERMINATE]

10. Have you ever attended a focus group?

Yes

No [**Skip to Q 11 next page**]

If yes, how long ago? _____

[TERMINATE IF LESS THAN SIX MONTHS]

If yes, how many have you attended in the past five years?

_____ **[TERMINATE IF MORE THAN FIVE]**

If yes, What was the topic of the last group you attended?

_____ **[TERMINATE IF RELATED TO CRIME OR JUSTICE ISSUE]**

Read to Stand-by Respondents

Thank you for answering my questions. Unfortunately, at this time, the group you qualify for is full. We would like to place you on our stand-by list. This means that if there is an opening in the group, we would then call you back and see if you are available to attend the group. May I please have a daytime contact number, an evening contact number and an email address, if you have one, so that we can contact you as soon as possible if an opening becomes available. **[RECORD CONTACT INFO]**

[Interviewers: Please do not give the respondent the address of the group if you are placing them on stand-by. The address should not be given to any stand-bys regardless of if the respondent requests the address]

11. Are you familiar with focus group research?

Yes **[SKIP EXPLANATION OF FOCUS GROUP]**

No

The purpose is to hear the opinions of the participants on a particular subject, in this case current events in your community. You may decide to participate or not, and comments made during the discussion will remain confidential. During the session a moderator will lead participants through a group discussion. The Government of Canada is the sponsor of this research.

12. Based on the answers you have provided, we would like to invite you to participate in our focus group which will last approximately **2.0 hours** and for which you will receive **\$65** for your participation. **(For the 5h30 pm group: Light refreshments will also be served.)**

Bonjour. Je suis _____ d'Opinion-Impact. J'appelle pour inviter des gens à participer à des groupes de discussion. Nous effectuons ces groupes pour le compte du Gouvernement du Canada afin de discuter de vos opinions au sujet d'affaires et de sujets qui touchent votre communauté. Nous désirons parler à des groupes de personnes bien précis durant ces sessions. Est-ce que je peux vous poser quelques questions pour vérifier si vous êtes le type de participant que nous recherchons?

[SI DEMANDE PLUS D'INFO] Ces séances de consultation sont souvent appelées « groupes de discussion », et elles sont l'une des façons importantes utilisées pour effectuer des RECHERCHES SUR L'OPINION PUBLIQUE. Le but de ces groupes est de connaître vos sentiments et vos impressions sur un sujet précis. Ce ne sont pas des RENCONTRES DE VENTE. Durant ces groupes, personne n'essaiera en aucun cas de vous vendre quelque chose.

Avant de commencer, j'aimerais vous mentionner que votre participation est totalement libre et que vous pouvez décider de participer ou non. Si vous décidez de participer, toutes vos réponses demeureront confidentielles conformément à la Loi sur la protection des renseignements personnels et les documents électroniques. Dans le rapport que nous ferons, aucun commentaire ne sera relié à un participant en particulier, les opinions exprimées seront regroupées et rapportées de façon totalement anonyme.

Les discussions auront lieu le **mardi le 5 juin 2007** et dureront 2 heures. Serez-vous disponible pour participer à une discussion de ce genre? Nous organisons quelques groupes, et nous devons vous poser quelques questions pour vérifier si vous êtes le type de participant que nous recherchons pour ces groupes de discussion.

1a) Tout d'abord, est-ce que vous habitez :

Laval

Montréal

Ailleurs dans la région métropolitaine

} **TERMINER**

1b) **[Par observation] Sexe... [ASSURER UNE BONNE RÉPARTITION]**

Homme

Femme

2a) Est-ce que vous-même ou l'un des membres de votre famille immédiate travaille actuellement, ou est retraité :

D'une entreprise ou d'un service de recherche marketing

- D'une entreprise dans le domaine des média ou des nouvelles
- D'une agence de publicité
- D'une entreprise d'affaires publiques ou de relations publiques
- D'un organisme, d'une agence ou d'un corps qui fait respecter la loi
- D'une agence de sécurité ou d'une compagnie d'alarme

Si « Oui » à n'importe laquelle des options ci-dessus, TERMINER

2b) Quelle est votre occupation principale? _____ [Valider avec Q.2a pour s'assurer qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une occupation conflictuelle.]

3) Dans lequel des groupes d'âges suivants dois-je vous inscrire?

- Moins de 18 ans **TERMINER**
 - 18 – 24
 - 25 – 34
 - 35 – 44
 - 45 - 54
 - 55 – 64
 - 65 et plus
 - Refus
- RECRUTER UNE
BONNE RÉPARTITION D'ÂGE**
- TERMINER SI 55 ET +
TERMINER**

4) Êtes-vous propriétaire ou locataire de votre principal lieu d'habitation?

Propriétaire/co-propriétaire	<input type="checkbox"/>	GROUPE 2
Locataire	<input type="checkbox"/>	GROUPE 1

5) Est-ce que vous avez des enfants qui vivent à la maison avec vous?

Oui	1
Non	2

6) Quel est le niveau de scolarité le plus élevé que vous avez complété? Avez-vous complété... **[BONNE RÉPARTITION]**

Des études secondaires ou moins	1
Un diplôme d'études secondaires	2
Des études collégiales en partie	3
Un diplôme d'études collégiales	4
Des études universitaires en partie	5

Un diplôme universitaire de premier cycle	6
Des études supérieures	7

- 7) Dans quelle catégorie se situe le revenu total de votre foyer avant impôts?
[BONNE RÉPARTITION]

Moins de 20,000\$	1
20,000\$ - 39,999\$	2
40,000\$ - 59,999\$	3
60,000\$ - 74,999\$	4
75,000\$ - 99,999\$	5
100,000\$ et plus	6

QUESTIONS GÉNÉRALES

- 8) Comme je l'ai mentionné plus tôt, vous êtes invité à participer à un groupe de discussion avec une dizaine d'autres personnes. Jusqu'à quel point êtes-vous à l'aise de participer et de vous exprimer dans le cadre d'une discussion dans un groupe de cette taille?

Très à l'aise
 Assez à l'aise
 Pas très à l'aise **[REMERCIER ET TERMINER]**
 Pas du tout à l'aise **[REMERCIER ET TERMINER]**
 Ne sait pas **[REMERCIER ET TERMINER]**

- 9) Les participants devront lire des informations et rédiger des réponses à des questions en français. Pourrez-vous le faire et, si nécessaire, apportez avec vous vos lunettes ou les autres outils dont vous avez besoin pour lire des documents?

Oui
 Non **[REMERCIER ET TERMINER]**

- 10) Avez-vous déjà participé à un groupe de discussion?

Oui
 Non **[Passer à Q11]**

Si oui, il y a combien de temps? _____
[TERMINER SI MOINS DE SIX MOIS]

Si oui, à combien de groupes de discussion avez-vous participé au cours des cinq dernières années? _____

[TERMINER SI PLUS DE CINQ]

Si oui, quel était le sujet du dernier groupe de discussion auquel vous avez participé?

[TERMINER SI LE SUJET TOUCHAIT LA CRIMINALITÉ OU DES PROBLÈMES RELIÉS À LA JUSTICE]

Lire aux répondants inscrits sur la liste d'attente

Merci d'avoir répondu à mes questions. Malheureusement, le groupe pour lequel vous êtes éligibles est complet. Aimeriez-vous que nous mettions votre nom sur la liste d'attente au cas ou quelqu'un devrait se désister? Si quelqu'un devait annuler, alors nous communiquerions avec vous pour savoir si vous êtes toujours disponible. Pouvez-vous me donner un No. de téléphone ou je pourrais vous rejoindre le jour, un No. pour le soir et une adresse courriel si vous en avez une. Je pourrai ainsi communiquer avec vous dès qu'une place se libérera.

[INSCRIRE LES COORDONNÉES]

[Intervieweur: Ne pas donner l'adresse de l'endroit où les groupes auront lieu lorsque vous inscrivez quelqu'un sur la liste d'attente. L'adresse ne doit être donnée sous aucune considération – même si le répondant insiste.]

11) Connaissez-vous les recherches basées sur les groupes de discussion?

Oui **[SAUTER L'EXPLICATION SUR LES GROUPES DE DISCUSSION]**

Non

L'objectif de ces rencontres est d'entendre les opinions des participants sur un sujet donné, dans ce cas-ci sur des événements d'actualité dans votre communauté. Vous pouvez décider de participer ou non, et les commentaires faits durant la discussion demeureront confidentiels et anonymes. La séance sera dirigée par une animatrice qui couvrira avec vous les divers aspects à discuter à l'aide d'un guide d'entrevue. Nous effectuons cette recherche pour le compte du Gouvernement du Canada.

12) En me basant sur les réponses que vous avez données, j'aimerais vous inviter à participer à notre groupe de discussion, qui durera **environ 2 heures** et pour lequel vous recevrez **65,00\$** en remerciement de votre participation. (**ATTENTION LIRE POUR LE GROUPE DE 17H30 SEULEMENT** : des sandwiches et des rafraîchissements seront aussi servis.)