

KEY FINDINGS

Although data about arrests and judicial consequences show African, Caribbean, Black and mixed youth in Windsor are no different than Canadian youth in general in terms of their experiences with police,⁴ they are stopped and questioned by police more than twice as often as African-American youth in the USA.³

Contact with police is experienced as racist, classist, sexist, and overly aggressive. It made youth feel anxious and threatened rather than safe. Youth living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods were those most likely to have numerous forms of contact with police.

WHAT DO THESE RESULTS SUGGEST ABOUT PROGRAMMING AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WINDSOR POLICE SERVICES AND AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, BLACK, AND MIXED YOUTH?

Results of our study paint a picture of poor relationships between Windsor Police Services and African, Caribbean, Black, and mixed youth. Given the research evidence that good relationships contribute to good policing and police services for communities,^{1, 2, 6} Results of this research point to the following strategies for improving police-community relations

- ✓ Establish a permanent coalition of African, Caribbean, Black, and mixed adult and youth leaders and other cultural groups in Windsor/Essex to develop and deliver workshops addressing diversity and cultural competency for police.
- ✓ Develop resources for youth explaining their rights and appropriate responses to police contact. These resources should be developed through a collaboration between ethno-racial community leaders, youth, and police services personnel.
- ✓ Insure African, Caribbean, Black, and other ethno-racial communities are represented on the Windsor Police Services Board.
- ✓ Alliances between police and faith communities can help form positive relationships with the African, Caribbean, and Black community.

REFERENCES AND ELECTRONIC COPIES OF THIS FACT SHEET ARE AVAILABLE AT:

<http://www.aidswindsor.org/Programs-and-Services/african-caribbean-services.html>

<http://www.accho.ca/>

Research team: Eleanor Maticka-Tyndale, Kenny Gbadebo, Michael Brennan, Jelani Kerr, Francisca Omorodion, Valérie Pierre-Pierre, and Robb Travers.

This project would not have been possible without the work and commitment of Michael Antwi, Danait Asgedom, Lydia Chan, Rebecca Friesen, Tamara Hurst, Tola Mbulaheni, Karen Metcalfe, Robert Mihan, Rhulangane (David) Mungwete, Pauline Nash, Sanford Tyndale, the Youth Advisory Committee, all the Windsor/Essex youth, community members, and community leaders who participated in the study. Many thanks to Chris Carriere for his graphic design and OHTN for their generous support.

For information about filing a complaint against the police:

<http://www.oiprd.on.ca/En/Pages/Home.aspx>



PROMOTING & OWNING EMPOWERMENT & RESILIENCE AMONG AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, & BLACK YOUTH IN WINDSOR

POLICE CONTACT

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), this community-based research project identified factors that (a) contribute to infection with the human immune-deficiency virus (HIV) and other sexual health outcomes among African, Caribbean, Black, and mixed youth, and (b) reduce vulnerability.

WHAT WE DID



Where? Windsor & Essex County, Ontario.

When? March 2013 to July 2014.

Who? Single African, Caribbean, and Black youth, 16-25 years old.

WHO PARTICIPATED?

11% Black

Their families had lived in North America for at least 2 generations, and their ancestors came from Africa

32% Caribbean

They or their parents were born in the Caribbean

7% Mixed

Only one parent can trace his or her heritage to Africa

50% African

They or their parents were born in Sub-Saharan Africa

20%

In Canada less than 4 years

25%

In Canada 4 years or more

55%

Born in Canada

- ↻ 50% female, 50% male; 3% identified as transgender.
- ↻ 95% heterosexual, 5% lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning or asexual.
- ↻ 74% Christian, 13% Muslim.
- ↻ 86% full-time students, 7% part-time students.
- ↻ Of those who were not full-time students, 18% employed full-time, 30% part-time, 52% unemployed.

POLICE-COMMUNITY CONTACT

Research has consistently shown that when contact between the police and the public is positive, people have greater confidence in and willingness to cooperate with police and courts in reporting crimes, cooperating as victims and witnesses, compliance with decisions of police and courts, and disapproval of vigilantism^{1,2}

WHAT KINDS OF CONTACT DO AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, BLACK, AND MIXED YOUTH HAVE WITH POLICE?

Of every 10 youth:

👤👤👤👤👤👤 **6 had been questioned by police.**

👤 **1 had been arrested.**



Few reported a judicial outcome such as probation or parole (5%), prison (3%), or house arrest (2%).

In focus groups youth spoke of what it was like to be questioned by police. Many felt police demonstrated racist, prejudiced, sexist and disrespectful approaches to people from ethno-racial communities. Several youth acknowledged that "not all police [were] bad" and they felt their presence "kept crime rates down." Youth had very few positive things to say about the police.



"I don't really see any positive in the police is what I'm trying to say. There's more negatives than positives."



"I don't see every police officer as an evil cop; however, I think the police thing as a whole ... like there's obviously systemic racism built into our society and built into our system."

African, Caribbean, Black and Mixed youth felt:



TARGETTED



SINGLED OUT



TREATED DISRESPECTFULLY



TREATED W/O CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Instead of making them feel safe, police made them feel "anxious and threatened". Overall, police were described as a "negative presence," with positive aspects outweighed by the many negative ones.

WHAT INFLUENCES WHETHER YOUTH HAVE CONTACT WITH POLICE OR NOT?

We looked at:

Personal Characteristics

- Sex
- Age
- Ethnic/racial group (African, Caribbean, Black or Mixed)
- Religion
- Where born/time in Canada
- Live with family or not
- Financial support
- A student or not
- Employment

Experiences:

- Neighbourhood quality
- How youth spend free time
- Time spent in church or mosque



WHAT WE FOUND

Those who were questioned by police were more likely to be:

- ♂ **MALE**
- 👤 **NOT LIVING WITH FAMILY**
- 🇨🇦 **LIVING IN CANADA LONGER**
- 🏠 **LIVING IN A DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Those who lived in a disadvantaged neighbourhood were also more likely to have:

- 🔗 **BEEN ARRESTED**
- 🏠 **SPENT TIME IN PRISON**
- 👤 **BEEN ON PAROLE OR PROBATION**
- 🏠 **BEEN PLACED ON HOUSE ARREST**

WHAT IS A DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOOD?

A disadvantaged neighbourhood is one where youth report evidence of drugs (both dealing and using), violence (e.g., stabbing, shooting), public drunkenness, gang fights, people being attacked or beaten, derelict buildings, and/or evident prostitution.