

Public Safety in Thunder Bay

2025 Survey Results

February 2026



Goals for Surveying

The Public Safety Pulse is designed to track how residents feel about safety in Thunder Bay and what shapes those perceptions. It measures perceived safety, the issues residents most want addressed, and the areas where community members most want to see police activity or improvement.

The survey also captures lived experience and public engagement with policing. This includes recent victimization and safety-related behavior changes, residents' willingness to contact the Thunder Bay Police Service, and the factors that influence reporting decisions or hesitation to engage.

Finally, the questionnaire assesses the quality and fairness of police service in day-to-day interactions. It measures perceptions of respectful treatment and voice, whether residents believe service is delivered consistently across the community, and how residents view responsiveness, approachability, and relationship-building—alongside an open-ended question that surfaces residents' top improvement priorities in their own words.

This is an annual recurring survey, which means efforts to address perceptions of public safety and resident concerns can be measured year-over-year.

Report structure

- 01 Methodology & Sample
- 02 Executive Summary
- 03 Perception of Safety and Community Priorities
- 04 Personal Experiences with Thunder Bay PS
- 05 Fairness, Respect, and Voice
- 06 Quality of Service

| 01

Methodology and Sample

Methodology

Sample

412 respondents were recruited online across **Thunder Bay** between **Nov 25th, 2025 and January 7th, 2026** using targeted ads on various platforms (e.g., social media, apps for Android and IOS) as well as online survey panels. Using data from **Statistics Canada**, this survey employed quotas to match the distribution of **race, ethnicity, age, and gender** in Thunder Bay, ensuring that the sample represents the entire population of the city.

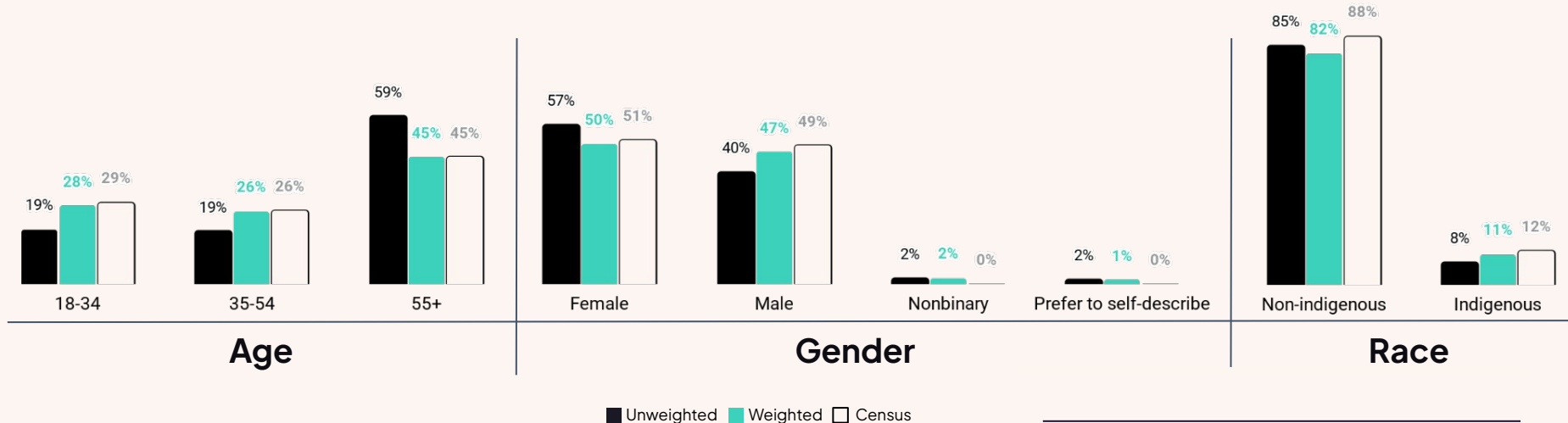
Weighting

To make sure our sample is representative, a technique called **rake-weighting** was used to balance out any remaining differences between the makeup of the survey respondents and the community. This process serves as a **statistical safeguard** against any demographic group being overrepresented or underrepresented in the final score calculations by giving **overrepresented groups a lower weight** and **underrepresented groups a higher weight** in the analysis.

Zencity Sampling

Our data

Zencity's sampling methods are designed to ensure data reliability and representativeness by using advanced weighting techniques that account for the demographic composition of Thunder Bay. Our representative approach ensures a balanced and comprehensive view of resident sentiment, enabling more nuanced insights to support data-driven decisions.



| 02

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

- **Safety perceptions remain split**—just over half of residents feel safe in Thunder Bay (51%), while about one-third feel unsafe (32%); neutrality increased year-over-year (18% vs. 13% in 2024).
- **Concerns about safety are primarily tied to disorder and substance use** (87% cite disorderly behaviour and drug use/needles; 77% cite homelessness/encampments among those who feel unsafe).
- **Residents' top priorities for police focus on drugs and property crime** (62% drug use; 43% theft/break-ins), while calls for **more visible policing** and **faster response times** stand out as leading improvement areas.
- **Willingness to contact police is high and stable** (84% willing), but among those hesitant, the leading needs are **greater trust/confidence** (54%) and **clear acknowledgement of concerns** (44%).
- **Service perceptions are mixed and often uncertain**—enforcement satisfaction is net-positive (45% satisfied vs. 23% dissatisfied), but residents are less confident about promptness and relationship-building, with sizable “don't know” shares (e.g., 27% on response promptness; 31% on community relationships).

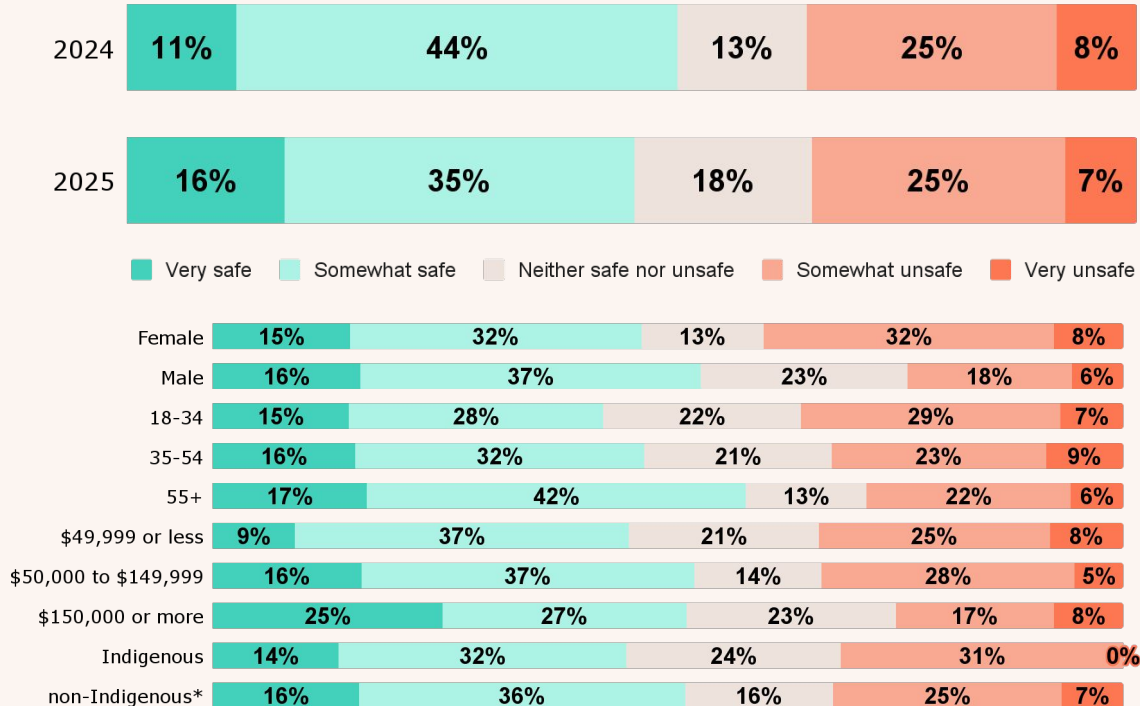
| 03

Perception of Safety and Community Priorities



Q2: Overall, how safe do you feel in Thunder Bay?

[single-select, n=412]



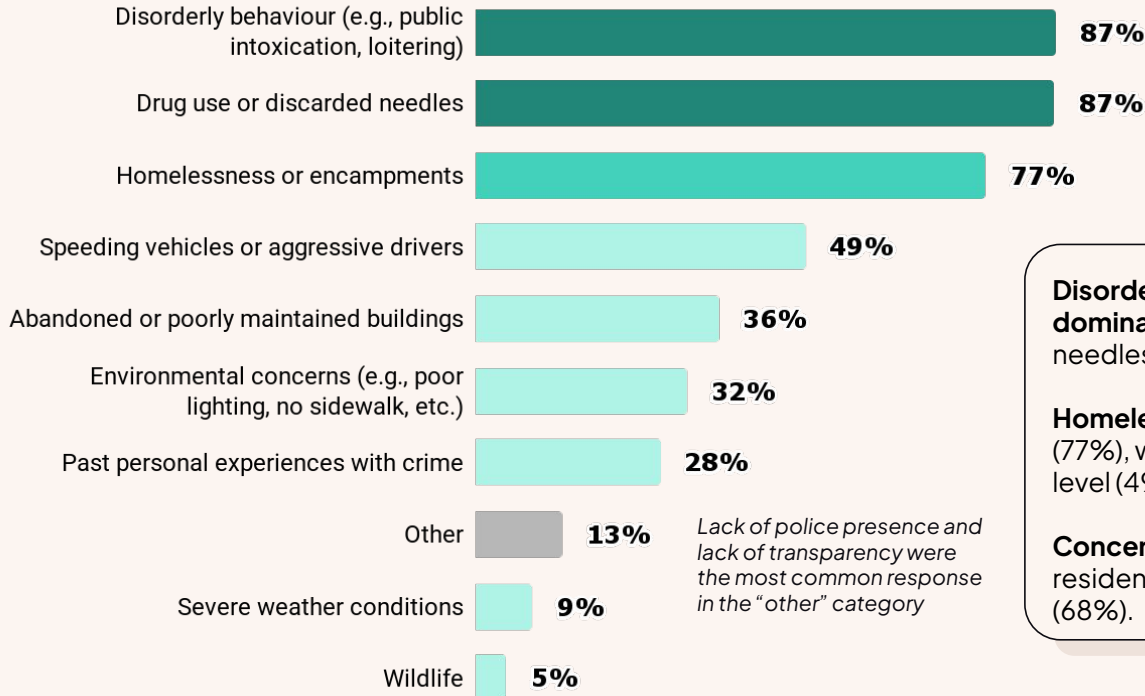
Safety perceptions remain divided—about half of residents feel safe (51%), while one-third feel unsafe (32%) and nearly one in five are neutral (18%).

Neutrality increased year-over-year (18% vs. 13% in 2024), while “safe” responses dipped slightly (51% vs. 55%).

Notable differences year-over-year: **women’s sense of safety dropped 9 points** (47% vs. 56%), residents earning **\$49,999 or less feel more safe** (46% vs. 42%), and those earning between **\$50,000 to \$149,999 feel significantly less safe** (53% vs. 66%).

Q3: Which of the following make you feel unsafe in Thunder bay?

[multi-select, n=134]



Lack of police presence and lack of transparency were the most common response in the "other" category

Group	Gangs
Overall	77%
18-34	68% (-9)
35-54	88% (+11)
55+	78% (+1)

Disorder and substance-related concerns dominate—disorderly behaviour and drug use or discarded needles are each cited by 87% of residents who feel unsafe.

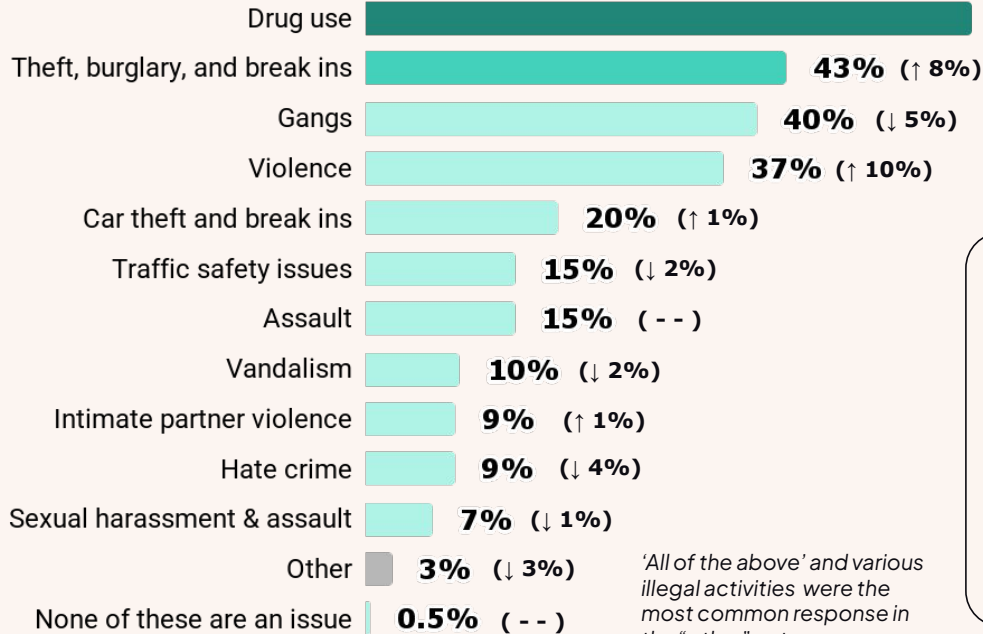
Homelessness or encampments are also a leading factor (77%), while traffic/speeding concerns appear at a mid-tier level (49%).

Concern about gangs varies by age—it is highest among residents ages 35-54 (88%) and lowest among ages 18-34 (68%).

Perception of Safety and Community Priorities

Q6: What are the top issues or problems that you would like the Thunder Bay Police Service to deal with?

[multi-select, n=412]



'All of the above' and various illegal activities were the most common response in the "other" category

Group	Gangs
Overall	40%
\$49,999 or less	25% (-15)
\$50,000 to \$149,999	45% (+5)
\$150,000 or more	50% (+10)

Drug use is the clear top priority residents want TBPS to deal with (62%), followed by theft, burglary, and break-ins (43%), gangs (40%), and violence (37%).

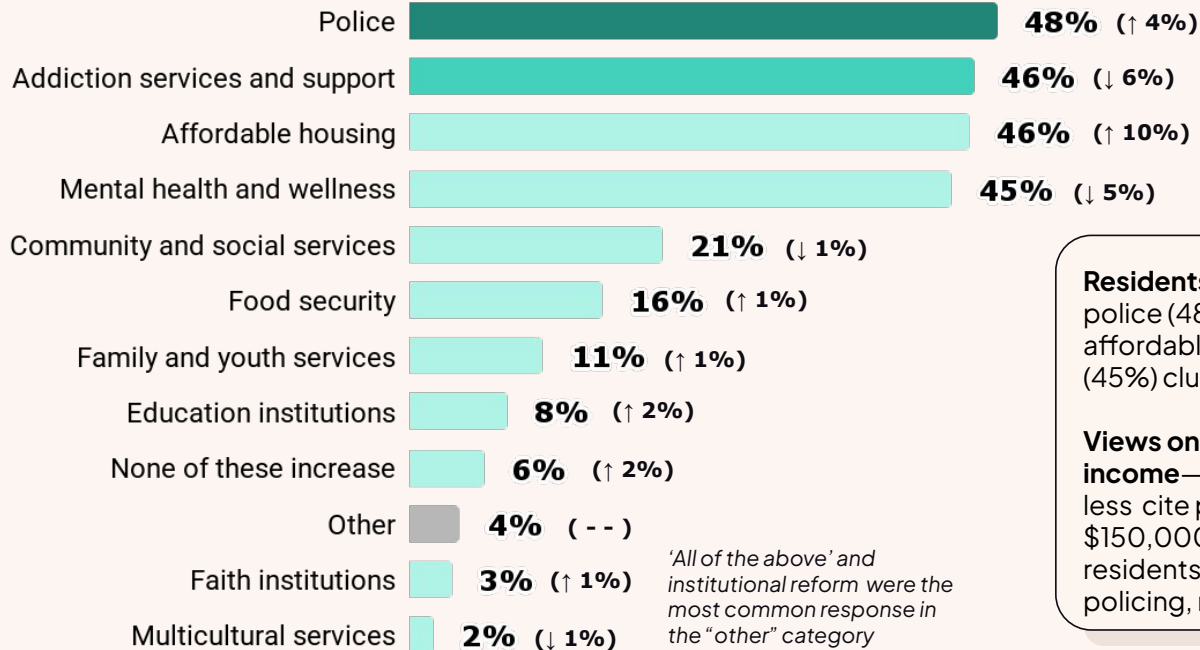
Lower-tier concerns (e.g., traffic safety, assault) are selected by roughly one in six residents or fewer.

Mentions of gangs increase with income—25% among those earning less than \$50K vs. 50% among residents to earn \$150,000 or more.

Perception of Safety and Community Priorities

Q7: In your opinion, which of the following play the most critical role in improving community safety in Thunder Bay?

[multi-select, n=412]



'All of the above' and institutional reform were the most common response in the "other" category

Group	Police
Overall	48%
\$49,999 or less	34% (-14)
\$50,000 to \$149,999	49% (+1)
\$150,000 or more	69% (+31)

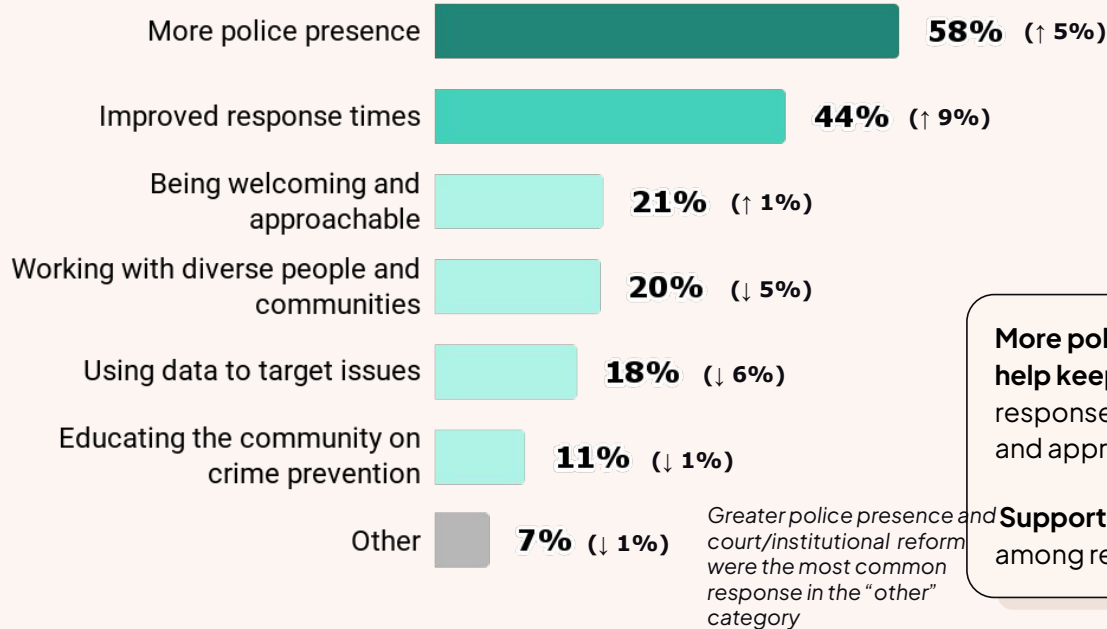
Residents see shared responsibility across systems, with police (48%), addiction services and support (46%), affordable housing (46%), and mental health and wellness (45%) clustered closely together.

Views on police responsibility vary sharply by income—only 34% among respondents earning \$49,999 or less cite police, compared with 69% among those earning \$150,000 or more. This pattern suggests higher-income residents are more likely to place primary responsibility on policing, relative to lower-income residents.

Perception of Safety and Community Priorities

Q8: Which of the following police actions do you feel are most important for keeping your community safe?

[multi-select, n=412]



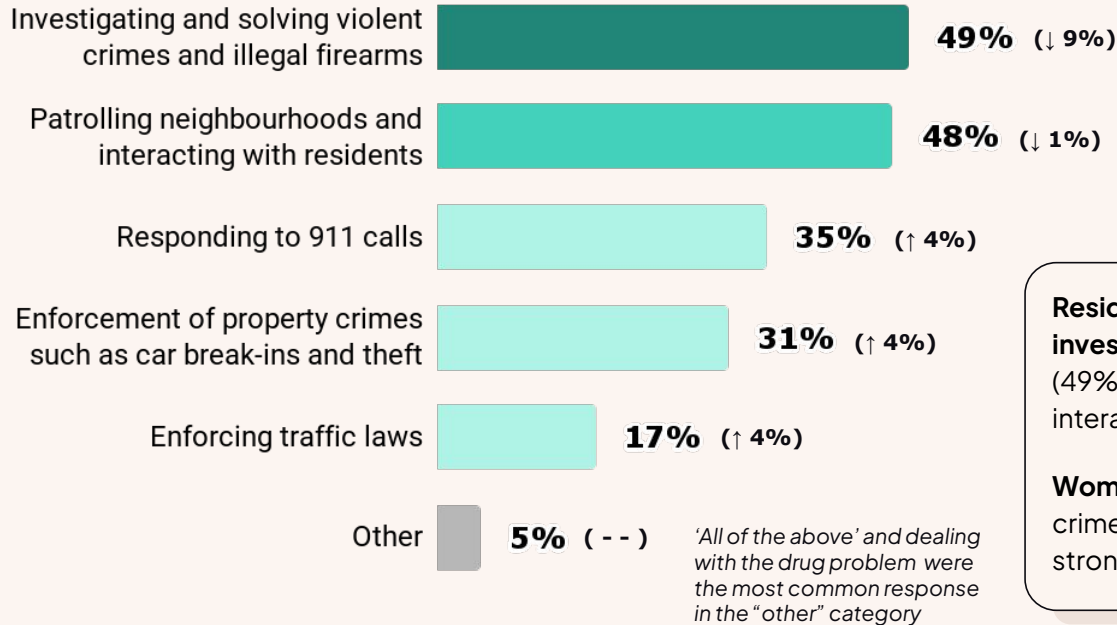
Group	More police presence
Overall	58%
18-34	46% (-12)
35-54	52% (-6)
55+	68% (+10)

More police presence is the leading action residents feel would help keep their community safe (58%), followed by improved response times (44%), and having TBPS being more welcoming and approachable.

Support for more visible presence increases with age—68% among residents aged 55+ vs. 46% among those ages 18-34.

Q9: In your opinion, which of the following would you like the police to prioritize?

[multi-select, n=412]



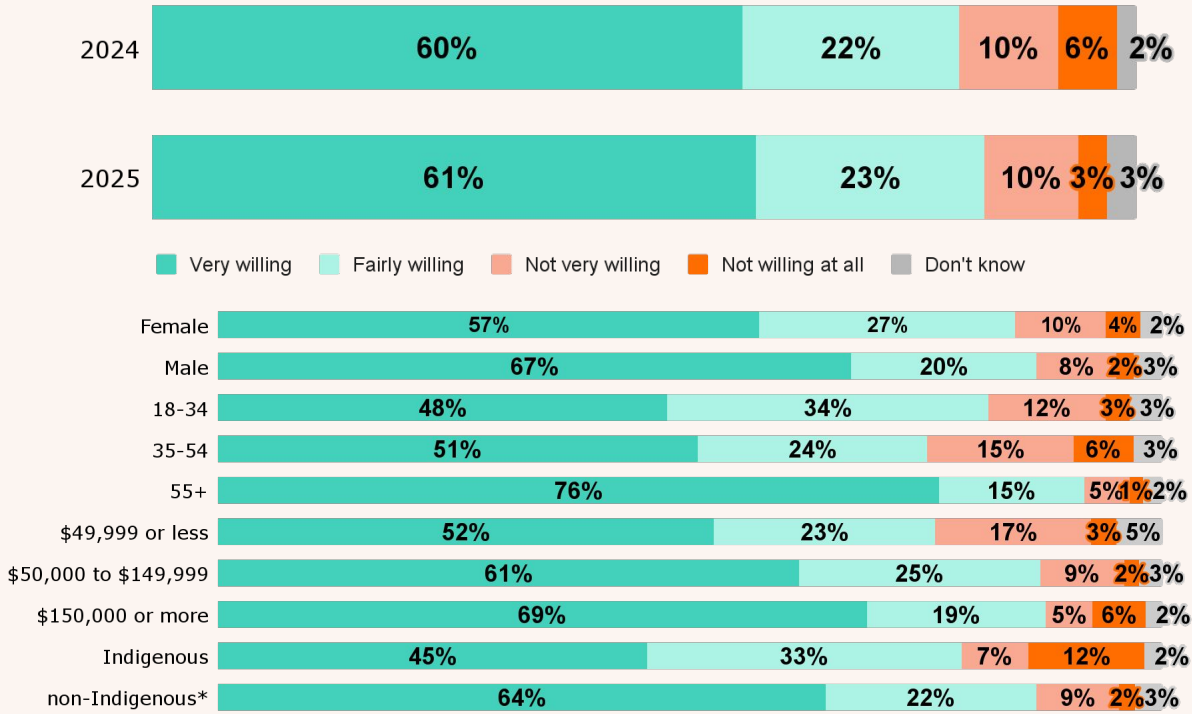
Group	Investigating and solving violent crimes and illegal firearms
Overall	49%
Female	55% (+5)
Male	45% (-4)

Residents' top priority for the police centers on investigating and solving violent crimes and illegal firearms (49%), closely followed by patrolling neighbourhoods and interacting with residents (48%).

Women are more likely than men to select violent crime/firearms as the top priority (55% vs. 45%), indicating stronger prioritization of this issue among female residents.

Q10: How willing would you be to contact the Thunder Bay Police Service if you were a victim of crime or were worried about something?

[single-select, n=412]

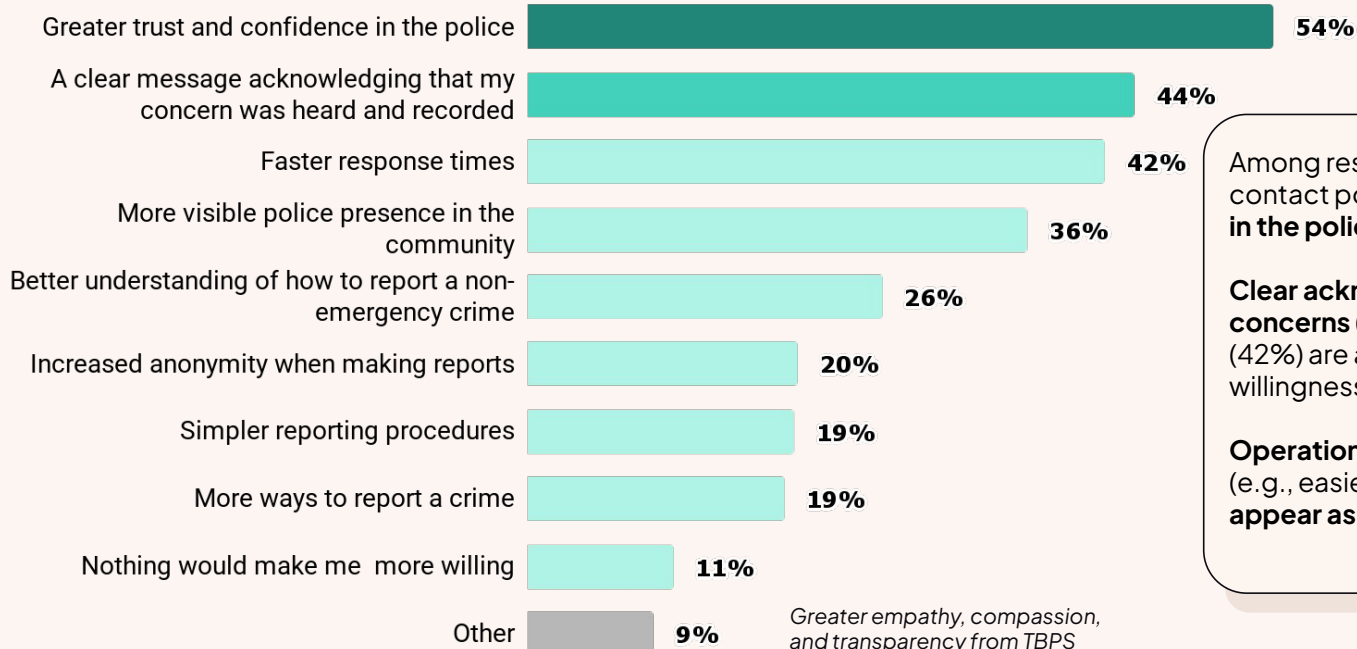


Willingness to contact police remains high (84%) and is slightly higher than in 2024 (82%).

Lower-income residents express more hesitation—75% willing among those earning less than \$50K vs. 86–88% among higher-income groups, with more “not very willing” responses (17%).

Compared to 2024, **every demographic group is more willing to contact TBPS** than they were last year **except those ages 34–54** (75% vs. 85%) and those earning **less than \$49,999** (75% vs. 77%).

Q11: Which, if any, of the following would make you more willing to contact the Thunder Bay Police Service if you were a victim of crime or were worried about something? *[multi-select, n=143]*



Greater empathy, compassion, and transparency from TBPS were the most common response in the "other" category

Among residents who are not fully willing to contact police, **greater trust and confidence in the police is the leading need** (54%).

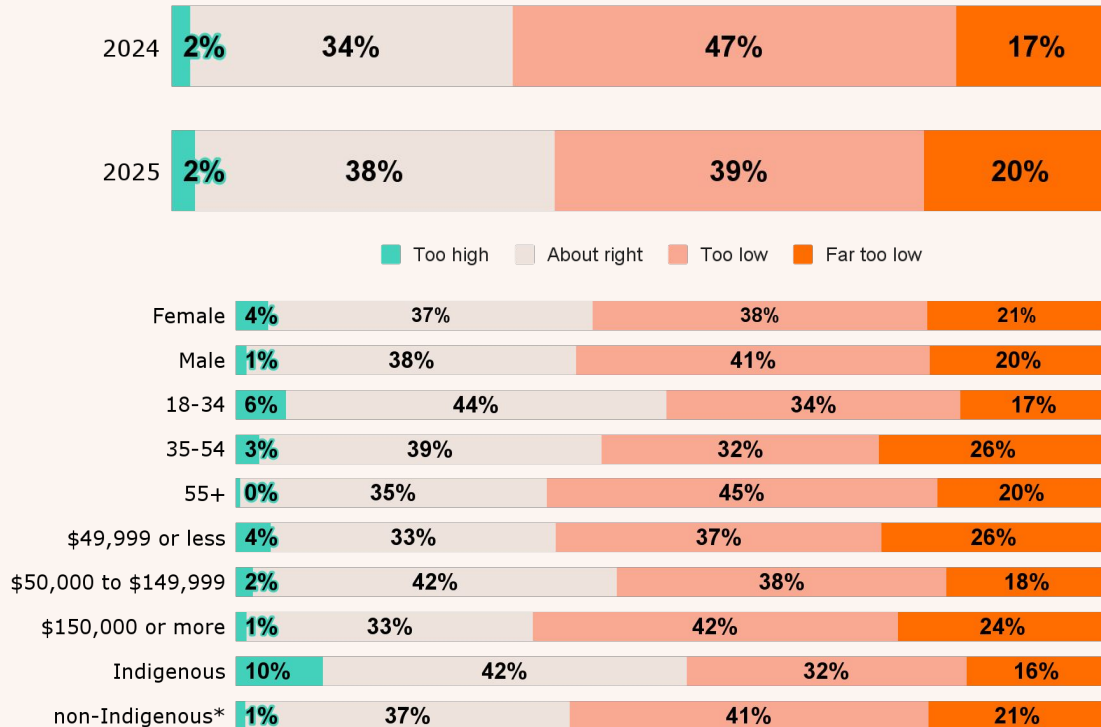
Clear acknowledgement of residents' concerns (44%) and **faster response times** (42%) are also top drivers of increased willingness.

Operational improvements to reporting (e.g., easier procedures, more ways to report) appear as **secondary factors** (19–26%).

Perception of Safety and Community Priorities

Q12: Thinking about the police presence in your neighbourhood, do you feel that it is too high, too low, or about right?

[single-select, n=412]



Most residents still feel police presence is too low in their neighbourhoods (59% “too low/far too low”), though this is slightly improved from 2024 (64%) across all demographic groups.

Just under four in ten say presence is about right (38%), while “too high” remains rare (2%).

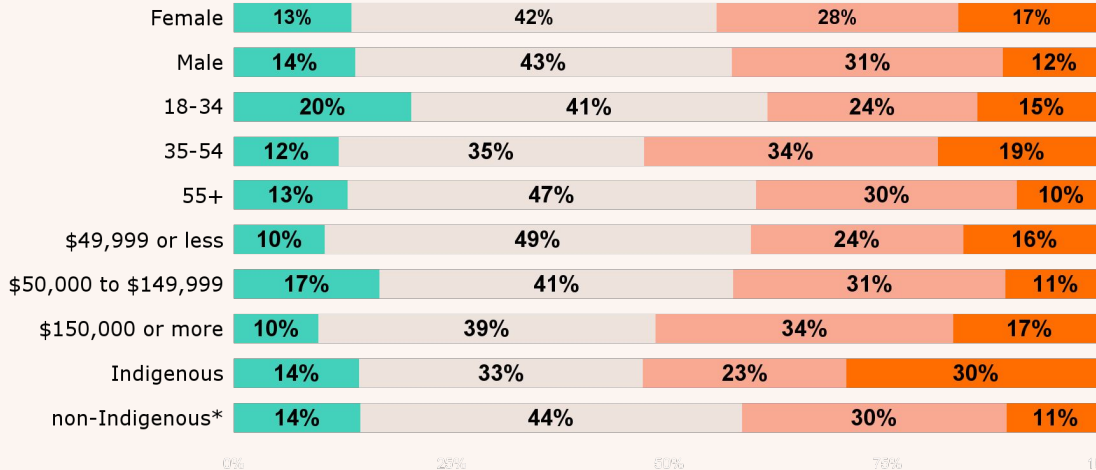
Older residents are more likely to say staffing is too low (65% among those aged 55+), while those aged 18–34 are more likely to view staffing as “about right” (44%).

Q13: To what extent do you feel informed about police activity such as arrests, missing persons, drug seizures, and traffic enforcement?

[single-select, n=412]



Very informed Somewhat informed Not very informed Not at all informed

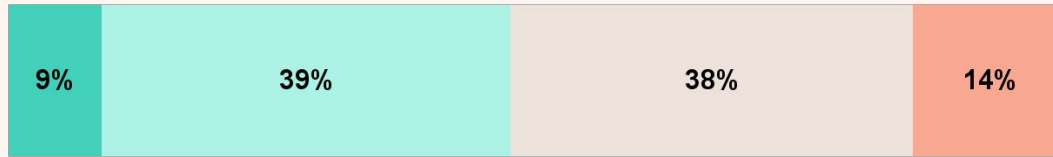


Residents are more likely to feel informed than uninformed about police activities (57% vs. 43%), though “very informed” remains relatively low (15%).

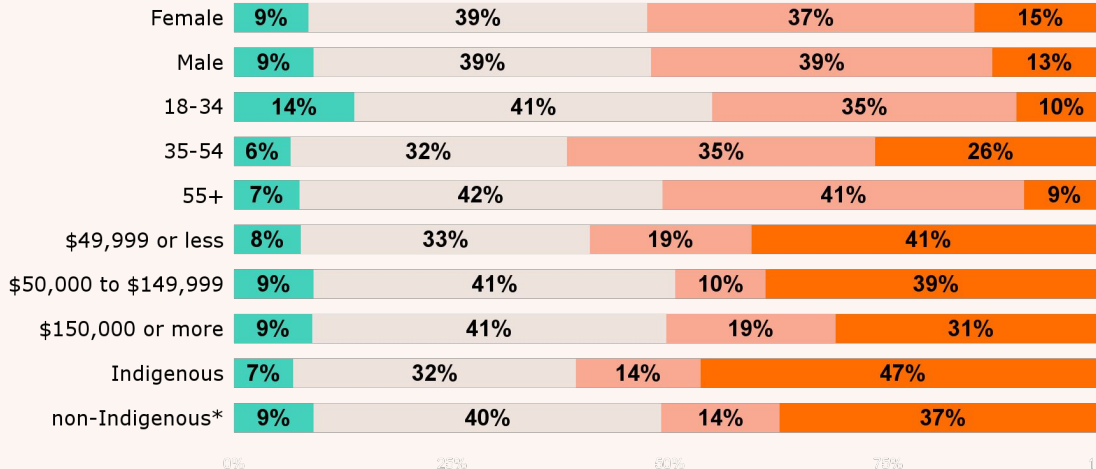
Respondents aged 35–54 report the lowest informed share (47%) and the highest “not at all informed” (19%).

By income, differences are modest, but “not at all informed” is highest among those earning \$49,999 or less (16%) and \$150,000 or more (17%).

Q14: To what extent do you feel informed about crime prevention initiatives such as ways to avoid fraud, youth outreach and gang-prevention presentations, etc.?
[single-select, n=412]



Very informed Somewhat informed Not very informed Not at all informed



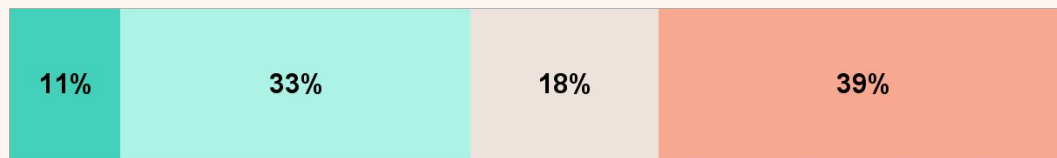
Most residents feel uninformed about crime prevention initiatives (52% not very/not at all informed), including 14% “not at all.”

Those aged 35–54 stand out as least informed (61% not very/not at all), driven by higher “not at all informed” responses (26%).

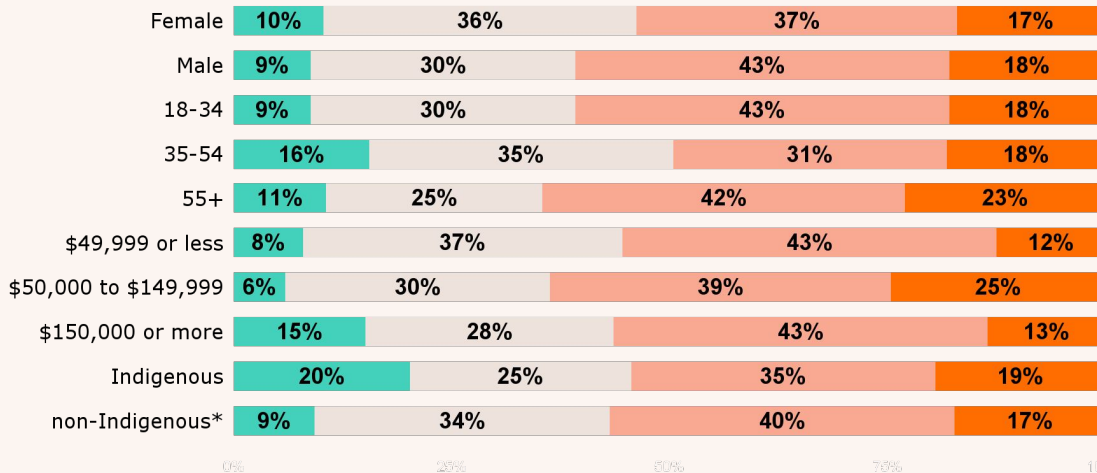
Residents aged 18–34 also report the highest “very informed” share (14%), though overall awareness remains limited.

Q15: To what extent are you aware of policing initiatives such as Special Constables, School Resource Officers, Community partnerships, etc.?

[single-select, n=412]



Very aware Somewhat aware Not at all aware Not very aware



Awareness is low overall—44% feel very/somewhat aware, while 57% feel not very/not at all aware.

Those aged 35–54 are comparatively more aware (51%), while residents 55+ are least aware (36%) and most likely to say “not at all aware” (23%).

By income, awareness differences are small, though “not at all aware” is highest among residents earning between \$50,000 and \$149,999 (25%).

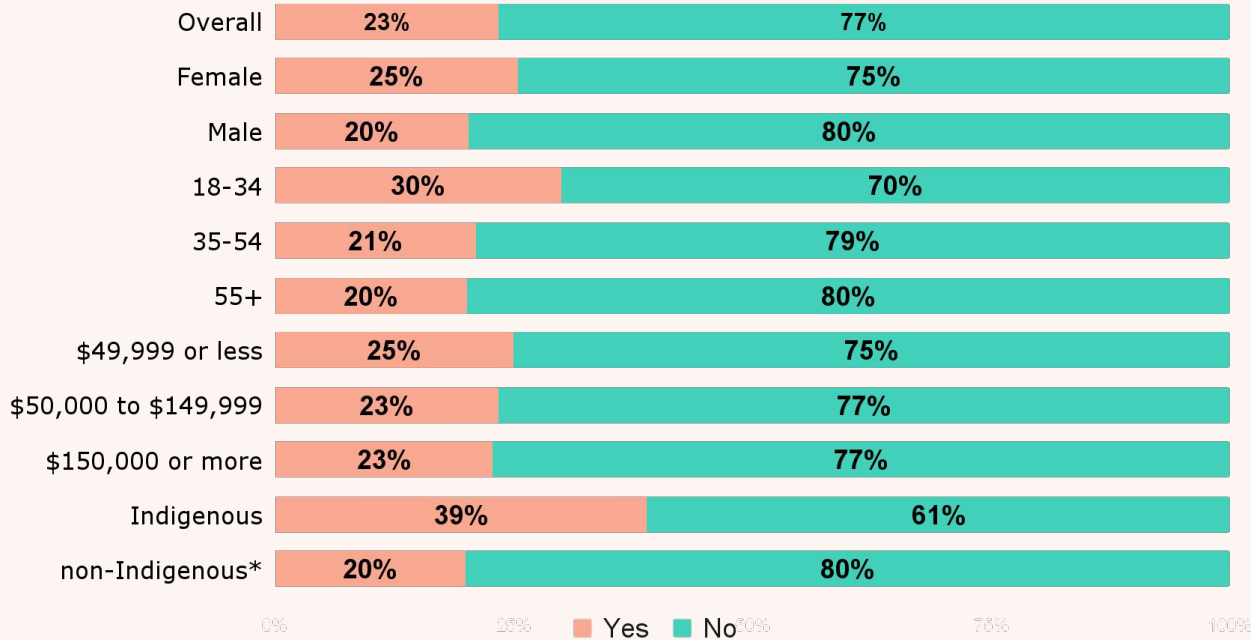
| 04

Personal Experiences with Thunder Bay PS



Q4: Have you been a victim of something you thought was crime in the past 12 months?

[single-select, n=412]



Nearly one in four residents report being a victim of crime in the past year (23%).

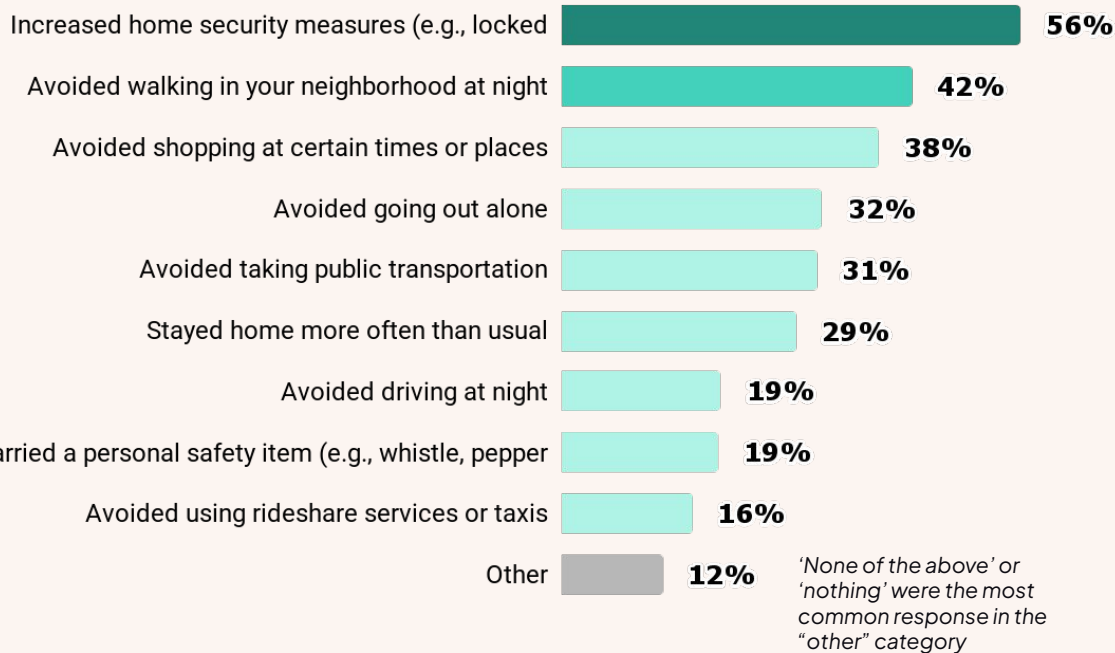
Residents aged 18–34 report the highest victimization (30%), compared with 20–21% among older age groups.

Differences by income are minimal (23–25%), suggesting experiences are relatively consistent across income brackets.

Personal Experiences with Thunder Bay PS

Q5: In the past 3 months, have you chosen to do any of the following because of safety concerns?

[multi-select, n=412]



Residents report substantial behaviour changes over the past 3 months due to safety concerns, led by increased home security (56%) and avoiding walking at night (42%).

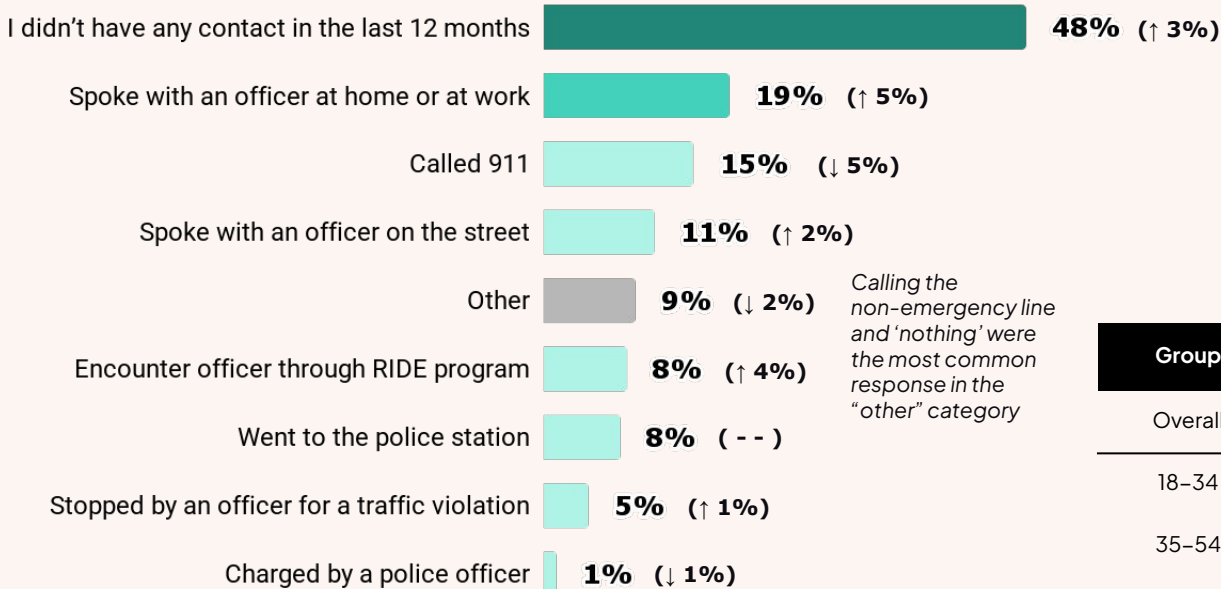
Avoiding certain shopping times/places (38%) and avoiding going out alone (32%) are also common.

Gender differences are pronounced—female residents are far more likely than men to avoid walking at night (58% vs. 25%) and to avoid going out alone (49% vs. 12%).

Group	Avoided walking in your neighborhood at night	Avoided going out alone
Overall	42%	32%
Female	58% (+16)	49% (+17)
Male	25% (-18)	12% (-20)

Q17: What was the most recent contact you had with the Thunder Bay Police Service in the last 12 months?

[multi-select, n=412]



Calling the non-emergency line and 'nothing' were the most common response in the "other" category

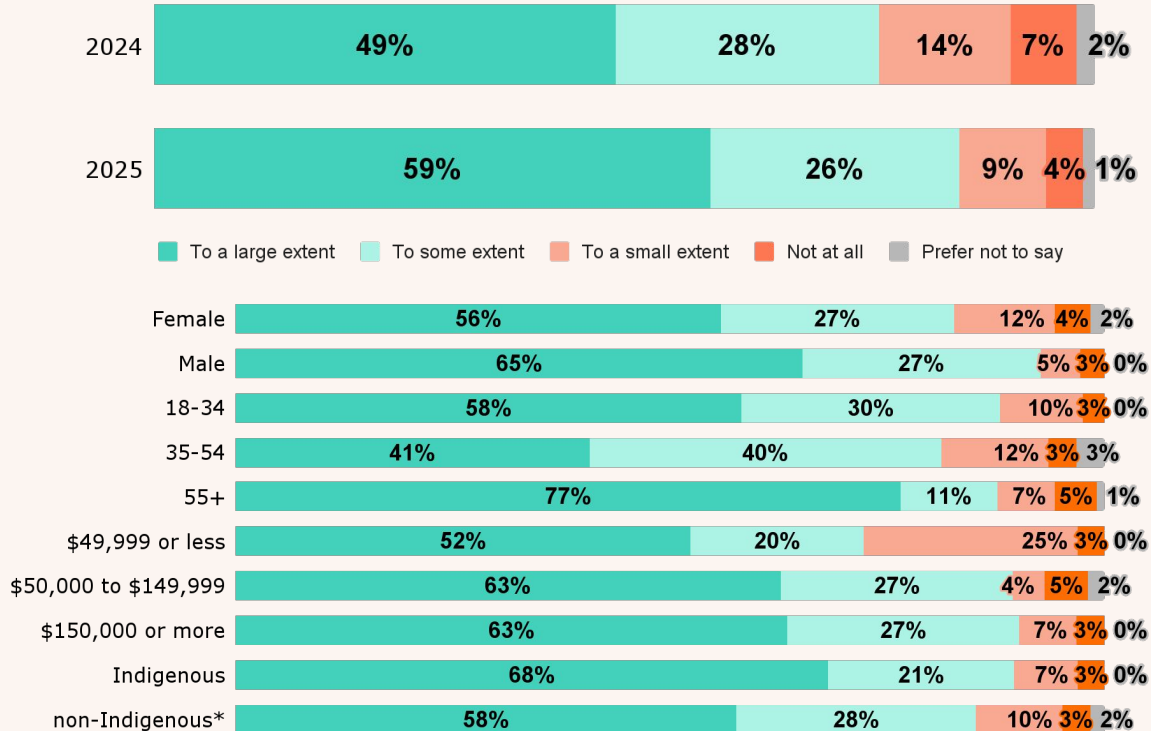
Nearly half of residents report no contact with TBPS in the past year (48%).

Among those with contact, **the most common are speaking with an officer at home/work** (19%) or **calling 911** (15%).

Those aged 18–34 report substantially higher contact—27% called 911 (vs. 15% overall), while those aged 55+ report notably lower contact (6% called 911; 9% spoke at home/work).

Group	Called 911	Spoke with an officer at home or at work
Overall	15%	19%
18–34	27% (+12)	27% (+8)
35–54	16% (+1)	26% (+7)
55+	6% (-9)	9% (-10)

Q18: Thinking back to your most recent interaction with a Thunder Bay Police Service officer or staff member, to what extent were you treated respectfully?
[single-select, n=198]



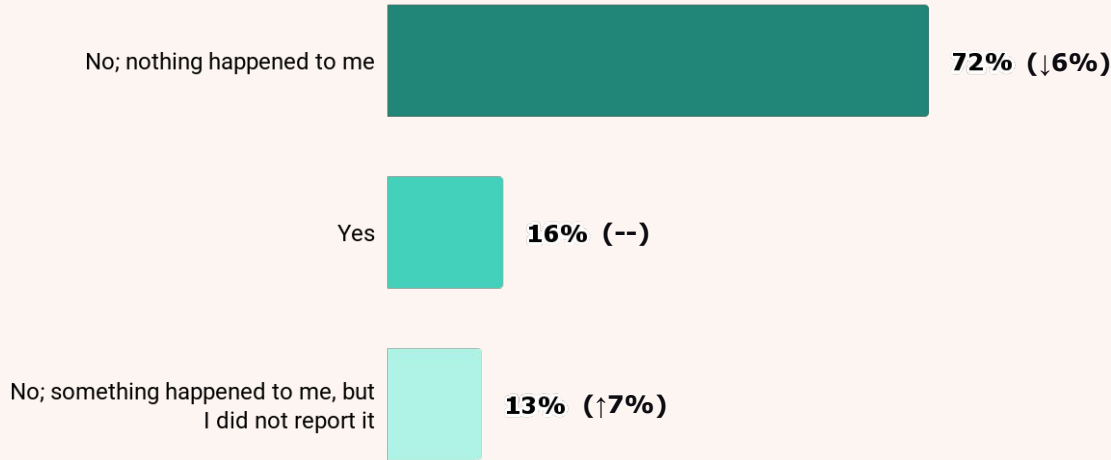
Perceived respectful treatment improved year-over-year—85% say TBPS treated them respectfully to a large/some extent in 2025, up from 77% in 2024.

This change is driven by growth in “large extent” responses (59% vs. 49%).

Older residents report the most positive experiences (77% “large extent” among 55+), while ages 35–54 are less likely to select “large extent” (41%) and more likely to select “some extent” (40%).

Personal Experiences with Thunder Bay PS

Q24: During the last six months, did you report to the Thunder Bay Police Service something that happened to you that you thought was a crime?
[single-select, n=412]



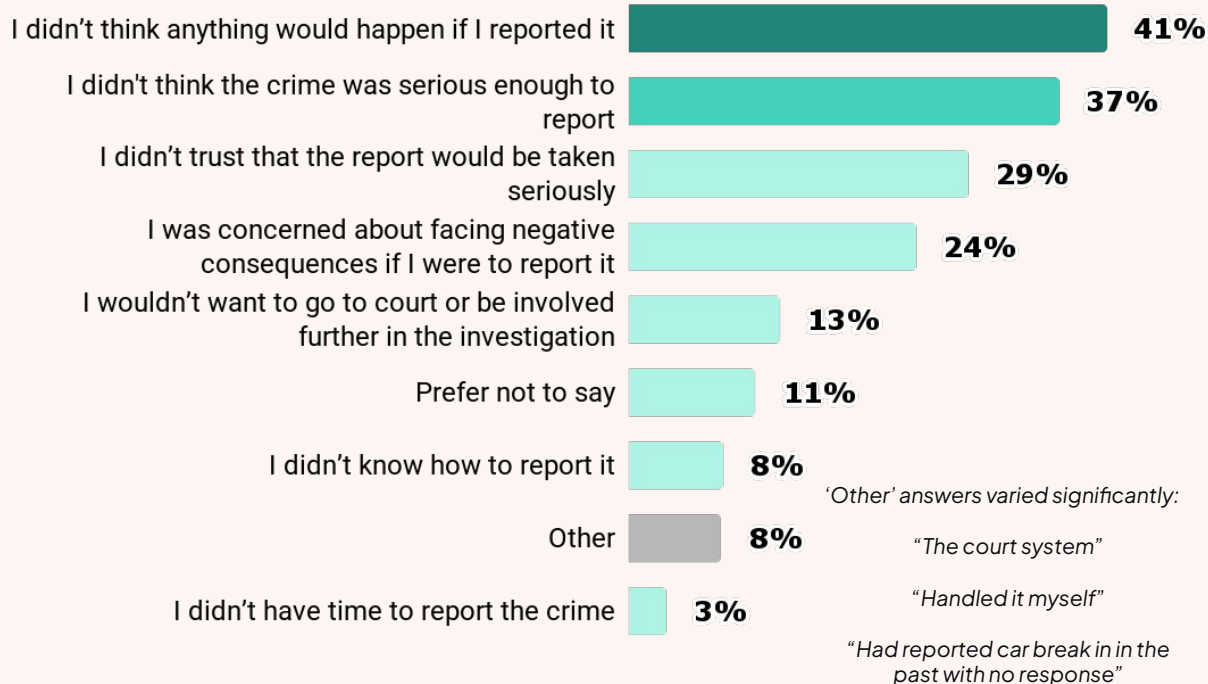
Most residents did not experience a crime in the past six months (72%), **down from 78% in 2024**. However, **nearly three in ten report an incident**—16% reported it, and 13% experienced something but did not report.

Respondents **aged 55+ are most likely to report “nothing happened”** (84%), compared with 61–64% among younger groups.

Group	No; nothing happened to me
Overall	72%
18–34	64% (-8)
35–54	61% (-11)
55+	84% (+12)

Q25: For which, if any, of the following reasons did you not report this crime to the Thunder Bay Police Service?

[multi-select, n=45*]



Perceived futility is the leading barrier to reporting a crime to TBPS—41% did not think anything would happen if they reported.

A substantial share also did not view the incident as serious enough (37%), while **trust and safety concerns appear as meaningful factors** (29% did not trust it would be taken seriously; 24% worried about negative consequences).

Practical barriers (e.g., not knowing how, time) are relatively uncommon (8% and 3%).

Q26: What is the number one thing you think the Thunder Bay Police Service could do to improve? [open-text, n=412]

Residents most often pointed to **how officers engage with the public, where police are seen day-to-day, and which public safety issues need more focus** as the clearest opportunities to improve.

Presence

Increase visibility outside of emergencies. A common request was simply to “see police” more often in neighborhoods and public spaces.

More proactive patrols. Residents referenced routine patrols (including walk-throughs/foot patrols) rather than only responding after incidents.

Presence as prevention. Many framed visibility as a deterrent—especially for nuisance behavior and repeat problem areas.

Law Enforcement

Increase staffing and resources. Many comments framed service gaps as a capacity problem (not enough officers available per shift).

Right-size the response team. Some suggested adding complementary supports (e.g., mental health/addiction expertise) alongside enforcement capacity.

Focus resources on frontline outcomes. A smaller set raised budget/prioritization—wanting investment to translate into visible, effective policing.

Response

Faster arrival when residents call. Many comments were direct: response times feel too slow, especially when calls are perceived as urgent.

Improve call handling and follow-up. Residents referenced difficulty reaching a person, needing call-backs, and wanting updates after reporting.

More consistent response to property crime and quality-of-life issues. Several comments reflected frustration when theft, break-ins, or lower-priority issues feel deprioritized.

Q26: What is the number one thing you think the Thunder Bay Police Service could do to improve? *[open-text, n=412]*

*Beyond visibility and priorities, residents also emphasized **faster response and follow-up, capacity/staffing constraints, and a set of prevention or system-level suggestions** that sit adjacent to frontline policing.*

Public Safety

Prioritize drug activity and related disorder. Repeated mentions centered on drugs, dealers, addiction-related harm, and associated street-level issues.

Increase traffic enforcement. Speeding and reckless driving came up often, including calls for more enforcement at busy roads/intersections.

Address repeat and violent offending. Some residents emphasized gangs/violent crime and the need for stronger consequences and enforcement focus.

Support

Lead with respect and professionalism. Many responses focused on day-to-day interactions feeling dismissive, judgmental, or unhelpful.

Build trust through fair treatment. Comments referenced perceived bias/discrimination and a desire for more consistent, equitable policing.

Communicate clearly in the moment. Residents asked for better listening, explanations, and a more service-oriented approach when concerns are raised.

Other

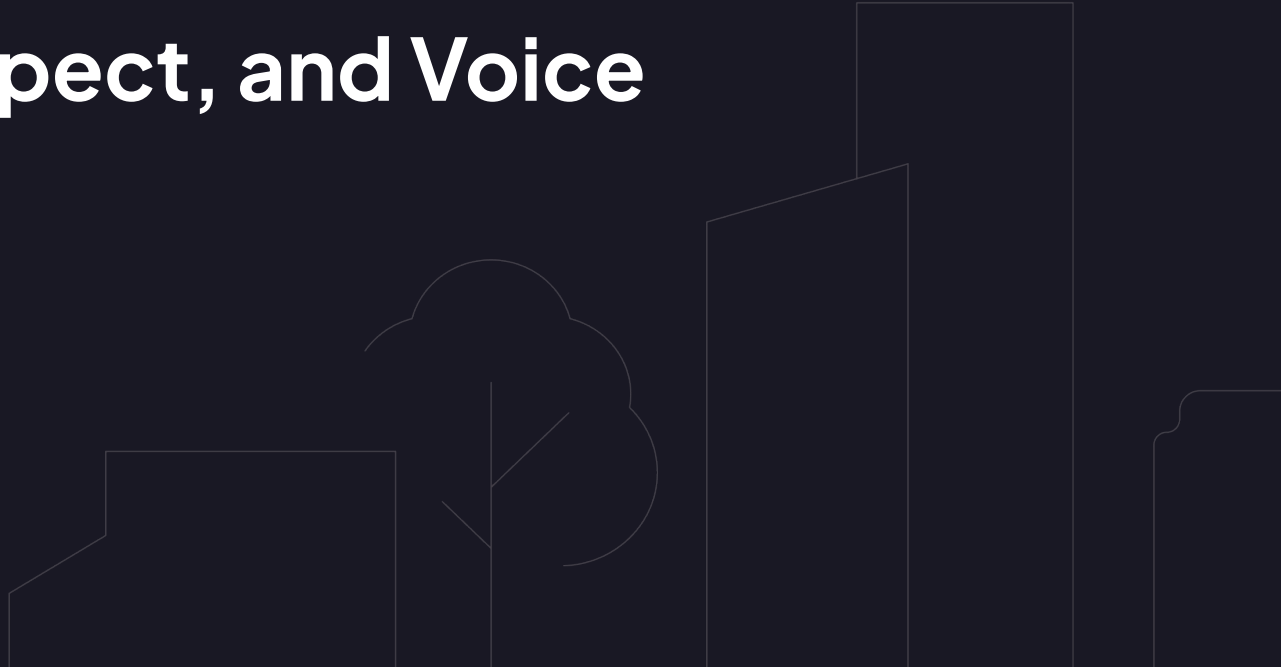
Prevention and upstream solutions. Some responses emphasized outreach, youth supports, education, and mental health/addictions services to reduce repeat harm.

Justice system constraints. A subset pointed to courts/bail/“revolving door” dynamics as limiting what police can accomplish alone.

Mixed or non-actionable feedback. A portion of responses were unclear, highly individualized, or expressed skepticism that anything will change.

| 05

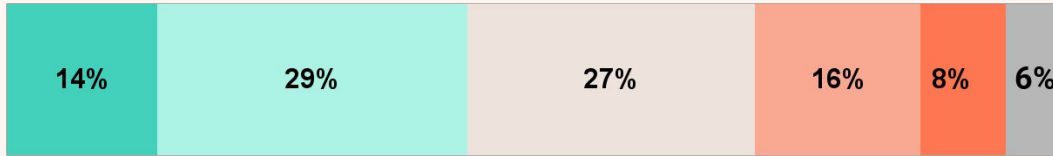
Fairness, Respect, and Voice



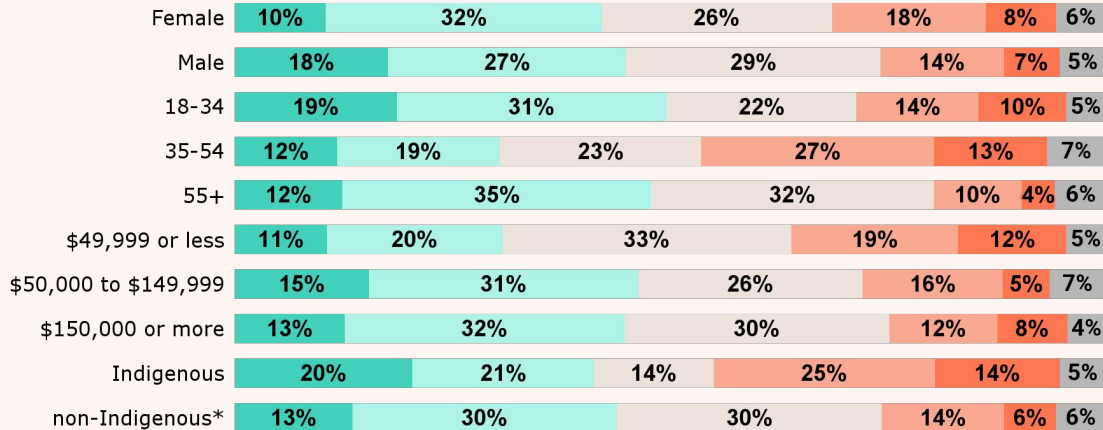
Q16: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[single-select, n=412]

Thunder Bay police treat individuals with respect regardless of who they are



Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know



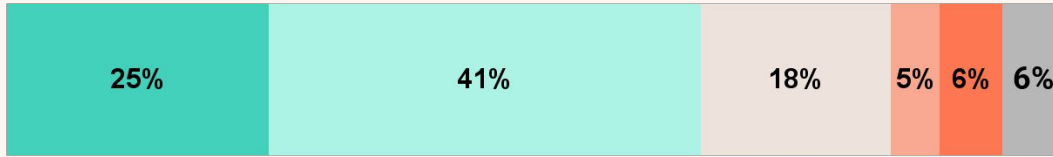
Views are mixed on whether Thunder Bay police treat individuals with respect regardless of who they are: **43% agree** vs. **24% disagree**, with **27% neutral**.

Skepticism is highest among those **aged 35-54 (40% disagree)**, while residents aged **55+** are more likely to agree (**47% agree**).

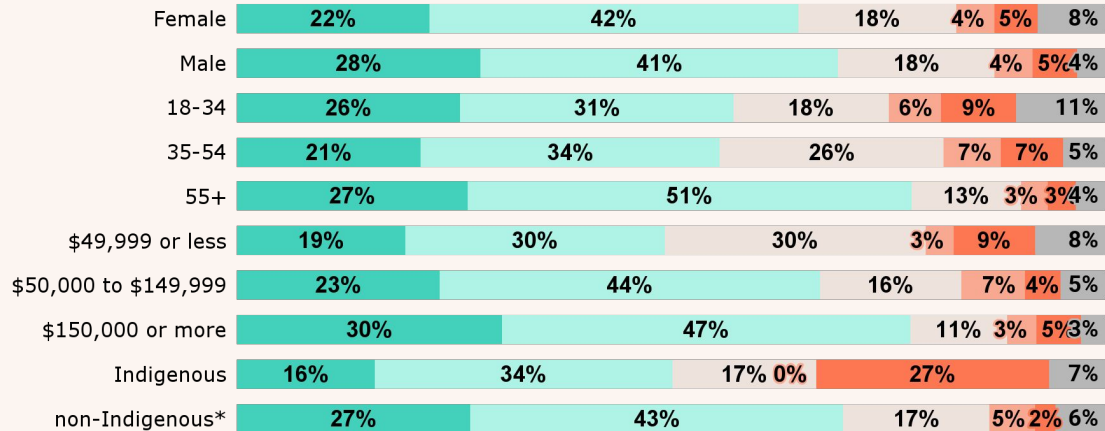
Q16: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[single-select, n=412]

Thunder Bay police would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason



Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know



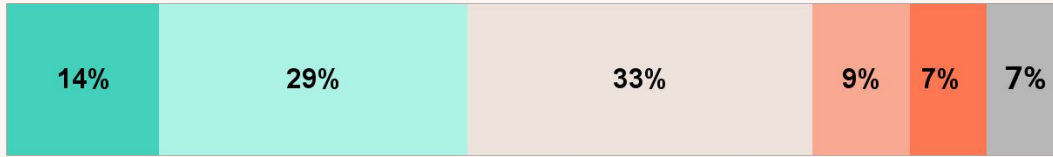
Most residents expect to be treated with respect if they have contact with police: **66% agree** (including **25% strongly agree**) compared with **11% disagree**.

Agreement is strongest among residents **aged 55+ (78% agree)**, while lower-income residents are less positive (**49% agree**) and more likely to be neutral (**30%**).

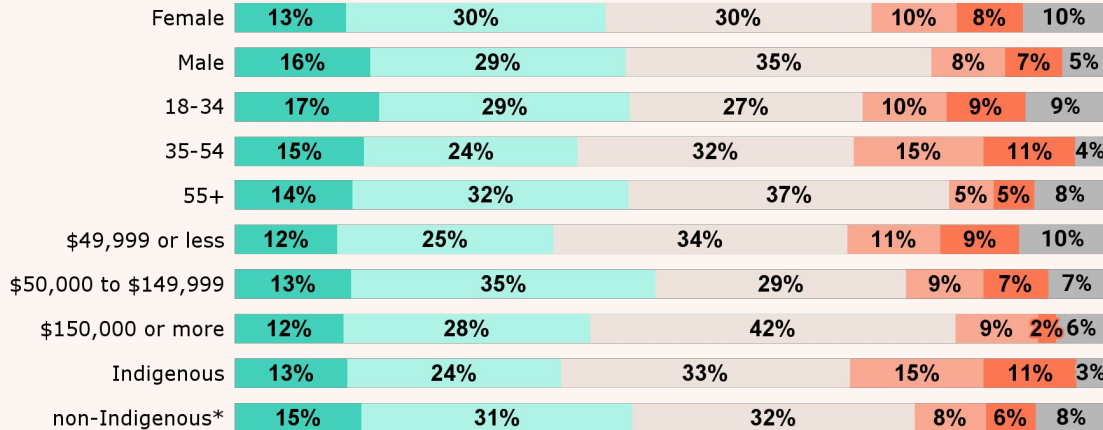
Q16: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[single-select, n=412]

I feel that I am able to provide input to the Thunder Bay Police Service



Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know



Fewer residents feel they are able to provide input to the Thunder Bay Police Service: **43% agree**, while **33% are neutral** and **16% disagree** (7% don't know).

Disagreement is highest among those **aged 35-54** (26% disagree) and residents earning **less than \$49,999** (20% disagree; 10% don't know).

| 06

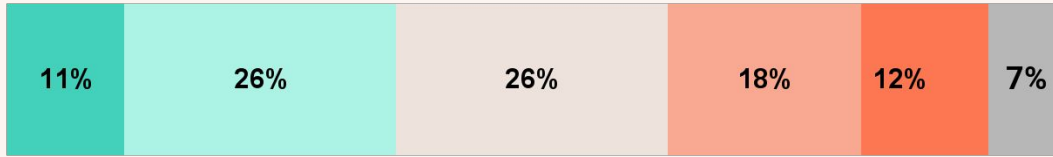
Quality of Service



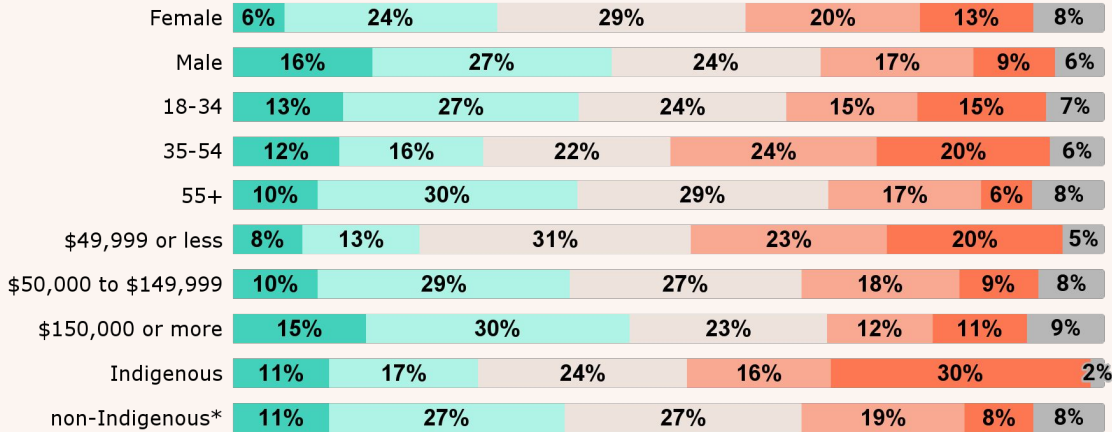
Q16: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[single-select, n=412]

Thunder Bay police provide the same quality of service to all individuals



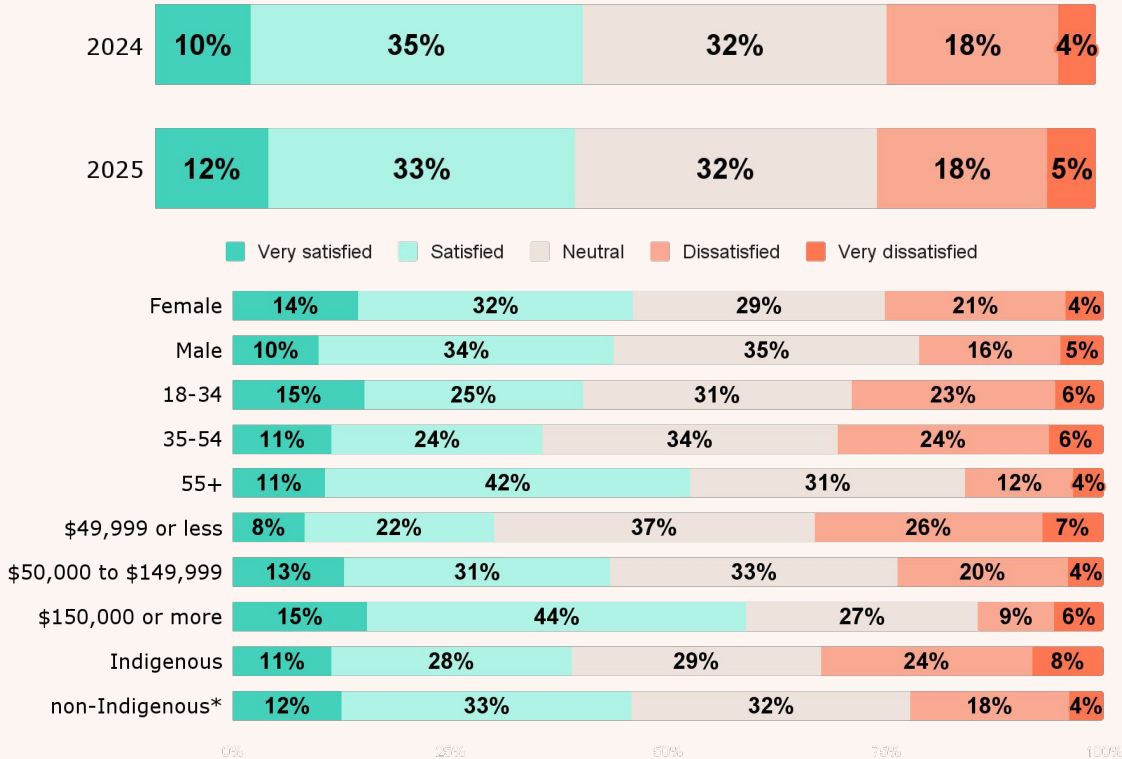
Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | I don't know



Opinions are divided on whether Thunder Bay police provide the same quality of service to all individuals: **37% agree** vs. **30% disagree**, with **26% neutral**.

Negative views are concentrated among residents earning less than \$49,999 (**43% disagree**) and those **aged 35-54 (44% disagree)**, while higher-income residents are more likely to agree (**45% agree at \$150,000 or more**).

Q19: How satisfied are you with the Thunder Bay Police Service's enforcement of the law?
[single-select, n=412]

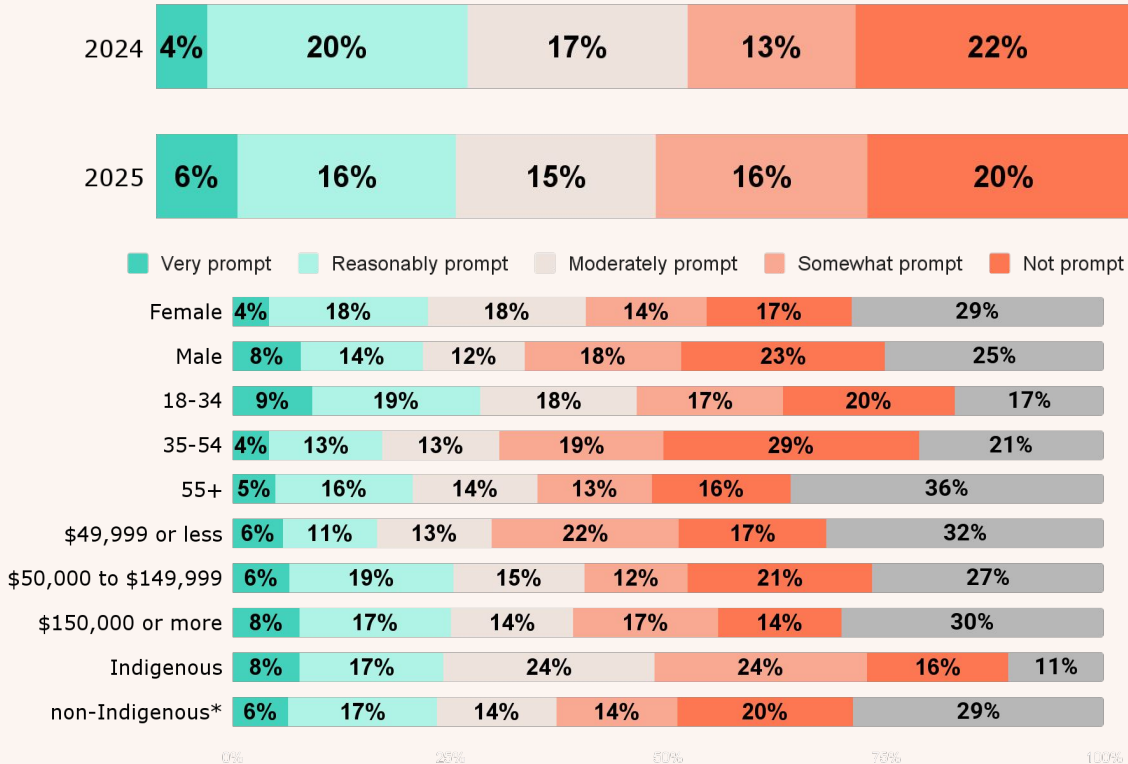


Satisfaction with Thunder Bay Police Service's enforcement of the law is mixed: **45% are satisfied** vs. **23% dissatisfied**, with **32% neutral**.

Satisfaction is highest among residents earning **\$150,000 or more (59% satisfied)** and those aged **55+ (53% satisfied)**, and **lowest among low income residents** earning less than \$49,999 (**30% satisfied vs. 33% dissatisfied**).

Q20: How prompt is the Thunder Bay Police Service at responding to calls?

[single-select, n=412]

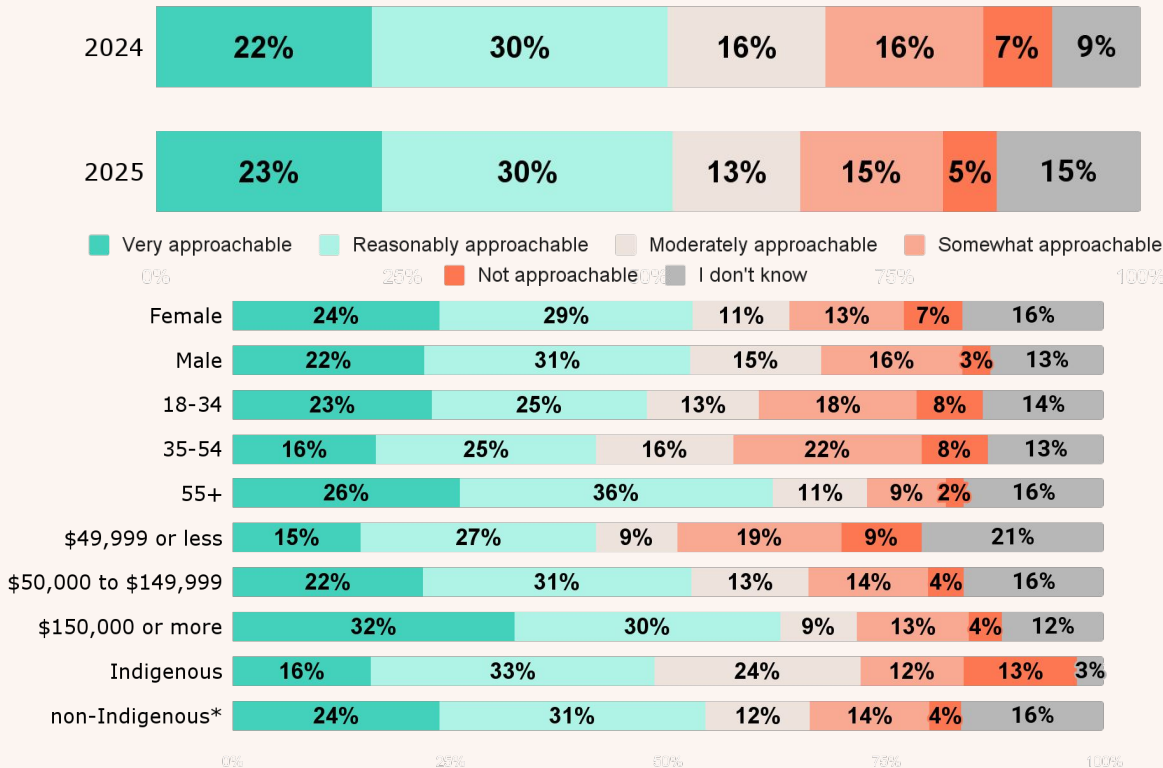


Perceptions of response promptness cluster around the middle, with substantial uncertainty: **27% don't know**, and only **6%** rate response times as **very prompt**.

More residents say responses are **not prompt (20%)** than very prompt (6%), and those **ages 35-54** are most critical (**29% not prompt**) compared with residents aged **55+** (**16% not prompt**; **36% don't know**).

Q21: How approachable are the Thunder Bay Police Service officers?

[single-select, n=412]

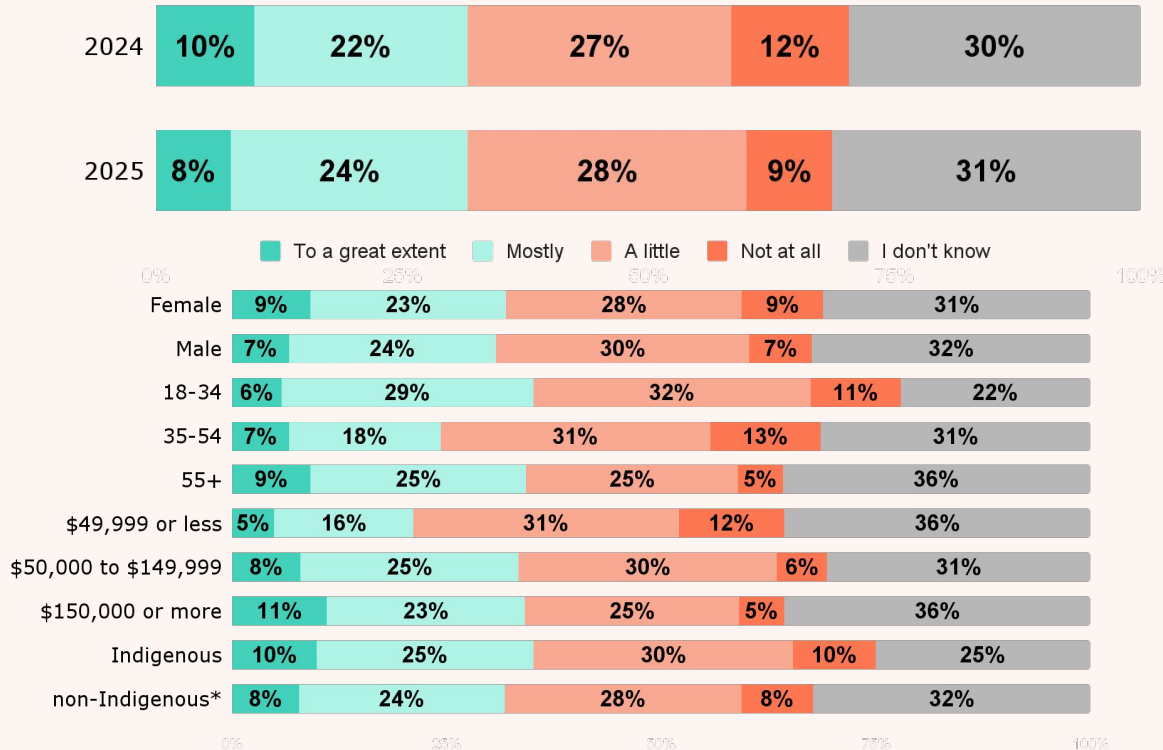


A majority rate TBPS officers as approachable: **53%** say they are **very/reasonably approachable**, while **20%** rate them **somewhat/not approachable** (**15%** don't know).

Sense of approachability is highest among respondents aged **55+** and those earning **\$150,000 or more** (**62%** **very/reasonably approachable** in both groups), while residents earning **less than \$49,999** are more likely to say TBPS officers are **not approachable** (**9%**) or **don't know** (**21%**).

Q22: To what extent does the Thunder Bay Police Service build relationships with community members and groups?

[single-select, n=412]

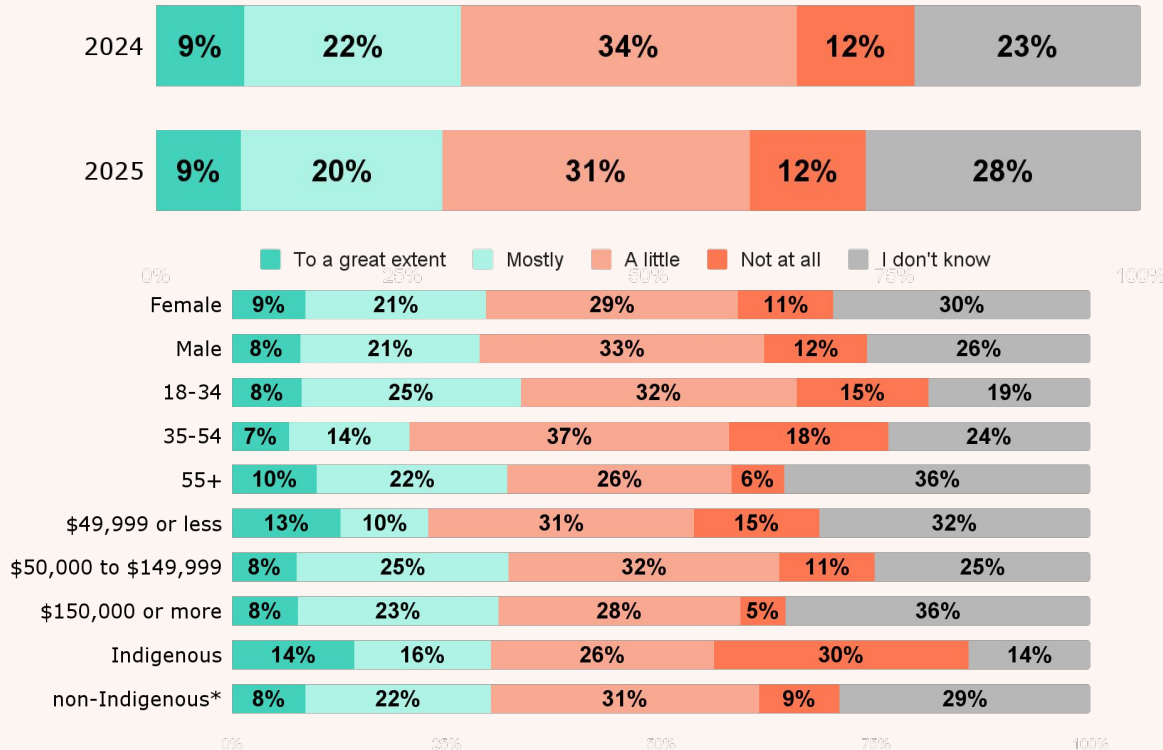


Residents are cautious about TBPS relationship-building: **32%** say they believe TBPS builds relationships with community members **to a great extent/mostly**, while **28%** say it is only “a little” and **31%** don’t know.

Positive ratings are lowest among those **ages 35–54 (25% great/mostly)** and low income residents earning **\$49,999 or less (21% great/mostly; 12% not at all)**.

Q23: To what extent does the Thunder Bay Police Service work with the public to address their concerns?

[single-select, n=412]



Perceptions are similarly mixed on to what extent TBPS works with the public to address concerns: **29%** feel they do **to a great extent/mostly**, while **31%** say “**a little**” and **12%** say “**not at all**” (**28%** don’t know).

Residents aged 35–54 are least positive (**21%** great/mostly; **18%** not at all), while those aged **18–34** are more likely to rate this positively (**33%** great/mostly).



Questionnaire

[Link to questionnaire](#)