

# Unincorporated Los Angeles County Traffic Safety Survey Responses (2018-2019)



## INTRODUCTION

Traffic fatalities and severe injuries are a serious public health threat. On average, someone loses their life in a traffic collision every five days on an unincorporated Los Angeles County roadway.<sup>i</sup> Countywide, motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death for children (aged 5-14) and the fourth leading cause of premature death overall.<sup>ii</sup>

## VISION ZERO

Vision Zero is a traffic safety initiative to eliminate traffic-related fatalities. It is an international movement that emphasizes a data-driven approach to traffic safety, acknowledging that people make mistakes and focusing on system-wide practices, policies, and designs to lessen the severity of traffic collisions.<sup>iii</sup> Agencies that adopt Vision Zero commit to the systematic elimination of traffic deaths for all roadway users.

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY SURVEY

Los Angeles County's Vision Zero Action Plan identifies a multi-disciplinary approach to enhancing traffic safety, including engineering enhancements, policy changes, promoting a culture of traffic safety, and focusing enforcement to address unsafe behaviors such as speeding and impaired driving. The ambitious five-year Action Plan is intended to guide Los Angeles County's efforts to eliminate traffic deaths on unincorporated County roadways by 2035.<sup>iv</sup> From August 2018 through January 2019, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health administered a Los Angeles County Traffic Safety Survey to better understand traffic safety concerns and experiences of unincorporated community stakeholders and inform the Vision Zero Action Plan. These insights, paired with traffic collision data and sound engineering principles and judgment, will inform roadway enhancement projects, educational programs, community engagement, and enforcement efforts.

Over 750 people over the age of 13 completed the Los Angeles County Traffic Safety Survey at 49 events at County parks, schools, town council meetings, and meetings convened by community partners across the unincorporated communities. The 10-minute survey was administered in person by County staff and was completed in English (65%), Spanish (33%), and Mandarin (2%). Table 1 shows the respondents' demographic profiles, including variables such as age, gender, and race/ethnicity.

## RESULTS AND LIMITATIONS

The survey had several limitations. While survey administration was geographically diverse, it was primarily focused in areas with the highest concentrations of traffic fatalities and severe injuries. For example, most of the surveys were administered in zip codes 91748, 90255, 93543, and 93591 (East Los Angeles, Lake Los Angeles, Rowland Heights, and Walnut Park). Surveys were also administered in the following communities: Altadena, Bassett, Florence-Firestone, Hacienda Heights, Lennox, Littlerock, Pearblossom, South Whittier, Sun Village, West Whittier-Los Nietos, Westmont/West Athens and Willowbrook. The sample sizes for each community were relatively small and lacked the power to separately develop meaningful profiles for each. Lastly, the survey was administered in person at community events and meetings, limiting the study population to only those who were able to attend these events. Results percentages are rounded to whole numbers; therefore, values may not add up to 100 percent.

## Respondent Profile

Almost three-fourths of respondents drive alone as their primary mode of transportation on a weekday and have an average one-way commute time of 45 minutes or less (Figures 1 and 2).

Table 1: Respondent Demographics (n<sup>v</sup>=757)

Age	Total	Percent
< 18	21	3
18-24	23	3
25-29	56	7
30-34	90	12
35-39	82	11
40-44	80	11
45-49	54	7
50-54	43	6
55-59	54	7
60-64	54	7
65-69	52	7
70-74	45	6
≥ 75	55	7
Did not respond	48	6
Sex	Total	Percent
Female	517	68
Male	203	27
Other	3	0
Did not respond	34	4
Race/Ethnicity	Total	Percent
White, non-Hispanic	150	20
Hispanic or Latino	444	59
Asian/South Asian	49	6
Native Hawaiian, Filipino, and/or other Pacific Islander	7	1
Black, non-Hispanic	55	7
Native American/Alaskan Native	6	1
Other	14	2
Did not respond	52	7
Living Situation	Total	Percent
Own	397	52
Rent	310	41
Other/Do not have permanent address	16	2
Did not respond	34	4

Figure 1: Respondents' typical weekday transportation mode (n<sup>v</sup>=757). (Respondents marked all options that applied. Figure excludes 1% "other" and 5% "did not respond").

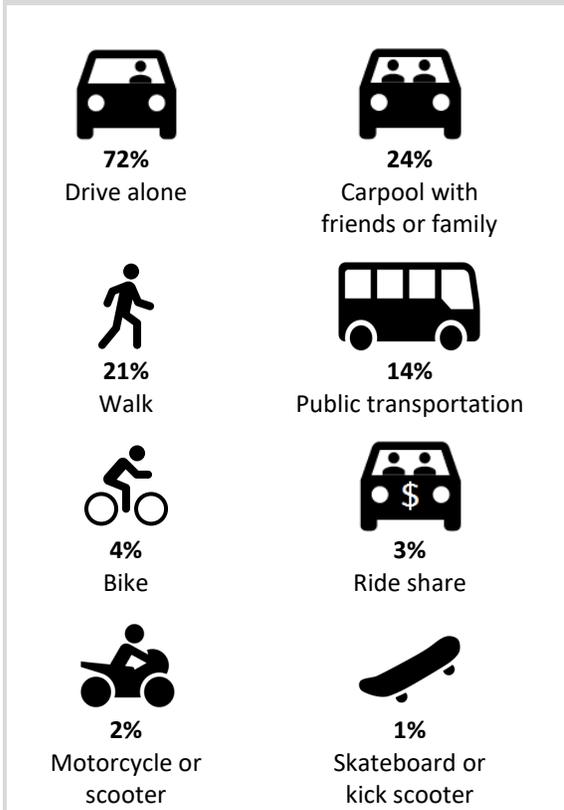
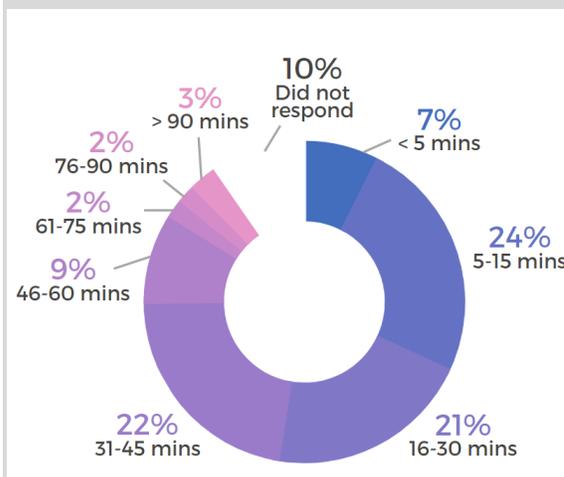
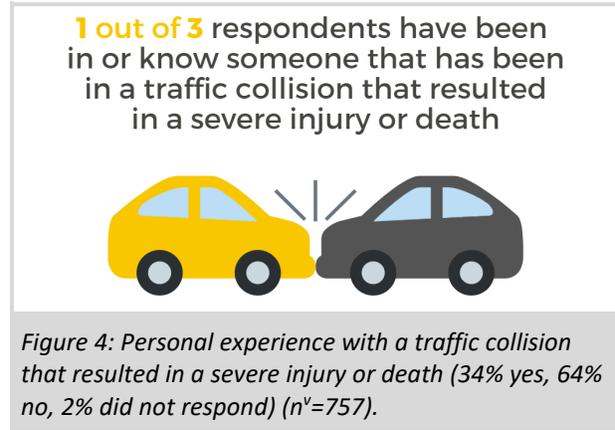
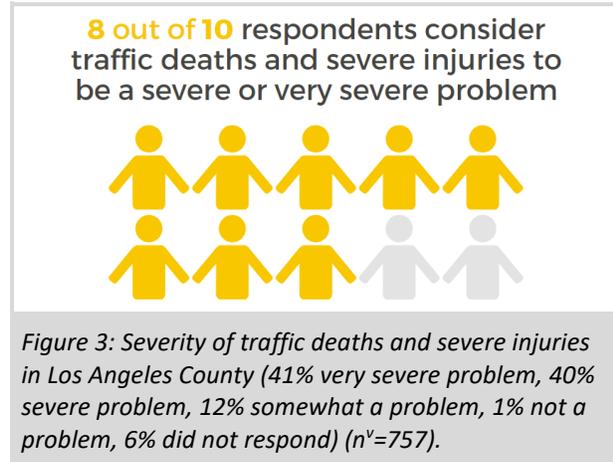


Figure 2: Respondents' average length of one-way commute time for their main trip of the day (n<sup>v</sup>=757). (Respondents marked one option).



## Traffic Safety Concerns and Self-Reported Behavior

Many respondents were concerned with the severity of traffic deaths and injuries (Figure 3).



Of the respondents that have been in or know someone that has been in a traffic collision that resulted in a severe injury or death (Figure 4), 44% stated that the fatal or severe injury collision involved two or more vehicles and 13% stated the collision involved a vehicle and person walking (Figure 4(a)); 39% stated that distracted driving contributed to the collision (Figure 4(b)).

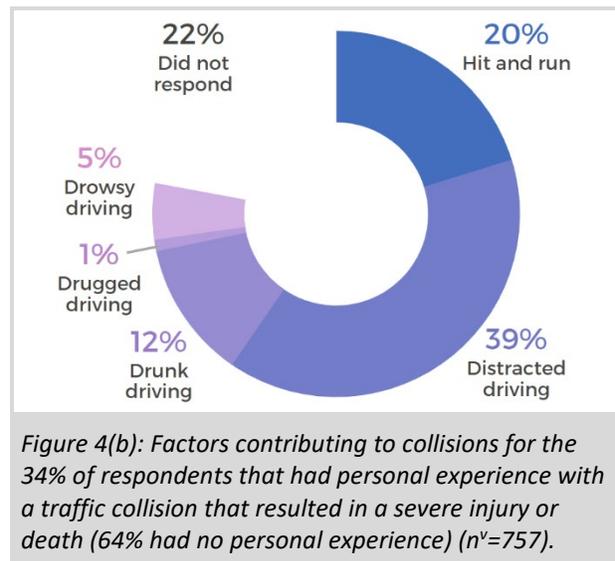
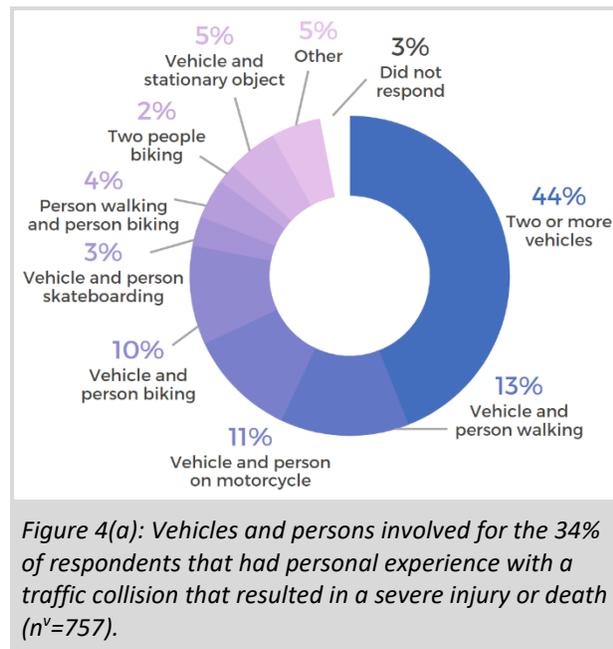


Figure 5: Respondent report of how often they wear a seatbelt, speed, and/or stop for people walking or bicycling while driving (n=757).

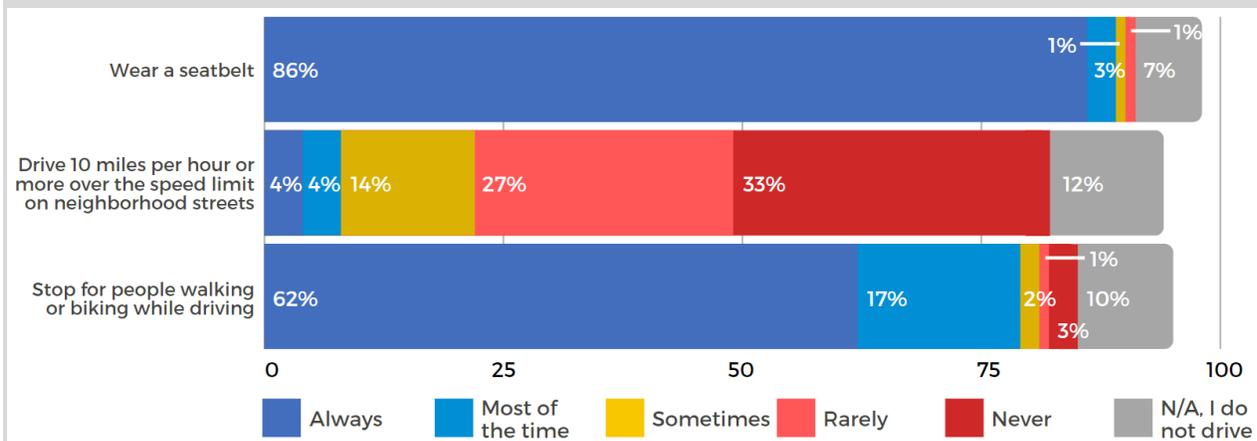
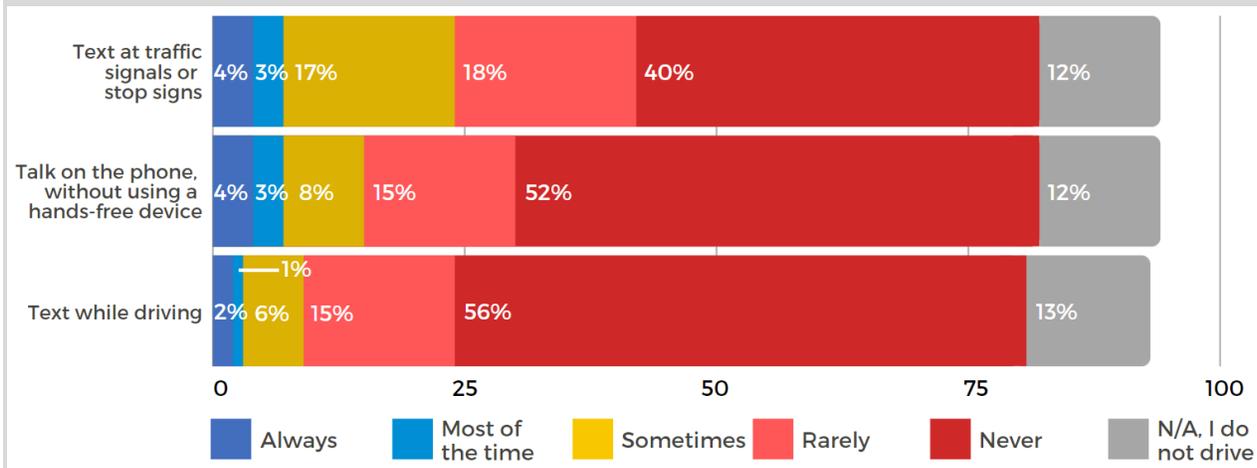
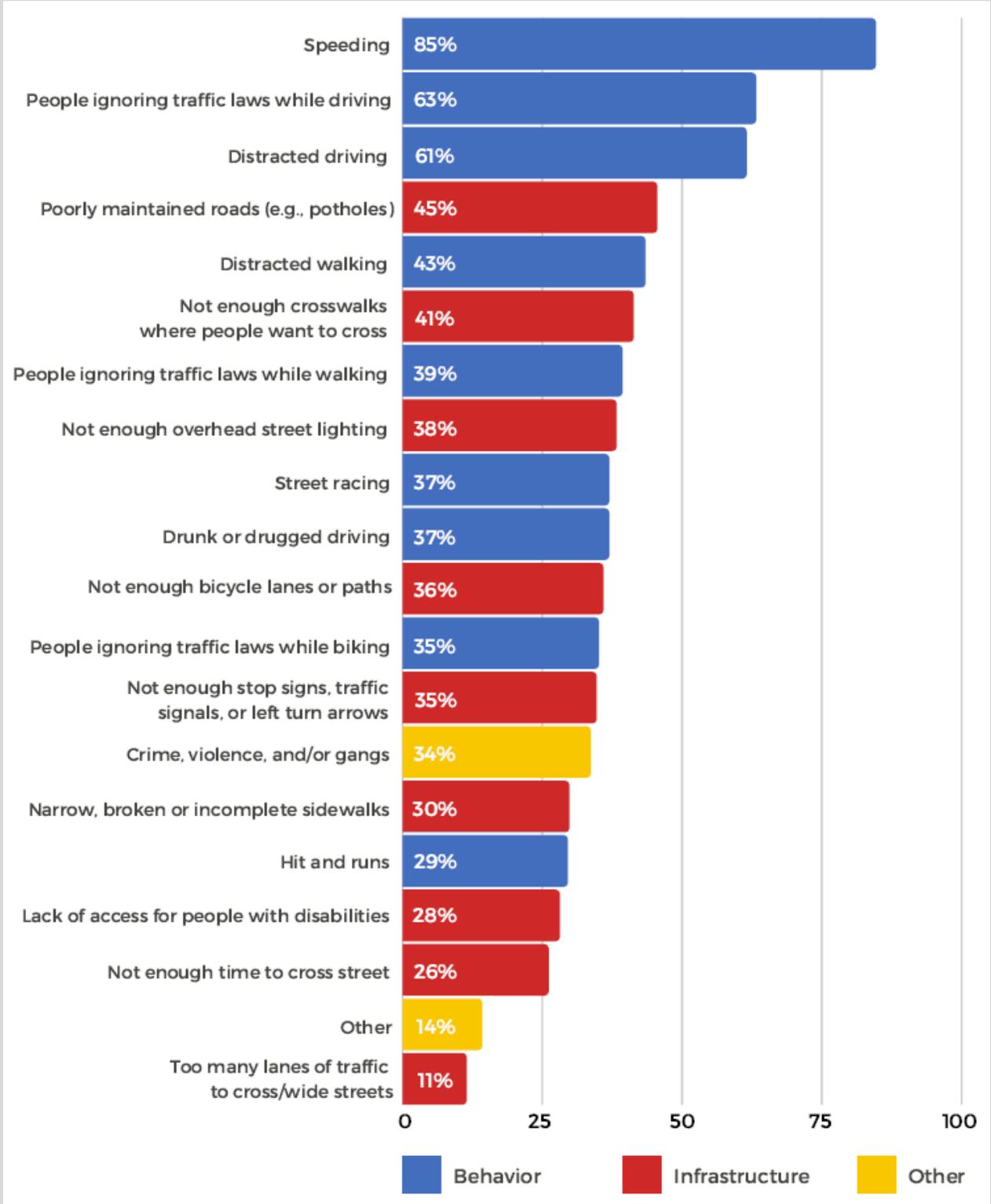


Figure 6: Respondent report of how often they use their phone while driving (n=757).



Although concerned about traffic safety (Figure 3), results in Figures 5 and 6 (above) show that respondents partake in risky behaviors while driving that could increase the chance of a fatality or severe injury occurring in the event of a collision. Additionally, 85% of respondents indicated that speeding was a top traffic safety concern (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Report of respondent traffic safety concerns for streets in their community (respondents marked all options that applied), stratified by traffic safety behavior, infrastructure, and other (n=757). "Other" response examples include stray dogs, truck traffic/volume, double parking, and curved streets without demarcations.



## Traffic Safety Project and Program Implementation

Based on the survey results, respondents strongly supported infrastructure, education, and law enforcement strategies to address traffic safety concerns in their communities.

### Infrastructure

**9 out of 10** respondents support the implementation of street projects to improve traffic safety



Figure 8: Support for efforts to implement street projects to enhance traffic safety in a community (72% strongly support, 19% somewhat support, 2% somewhat oppose, 2% strongly oppose) (n<sup>v</sup>=724).

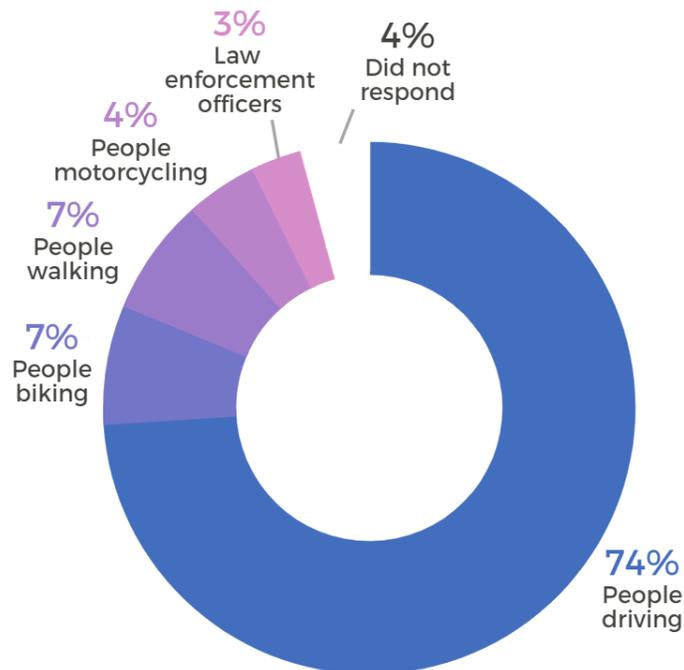
**69%** of respondents are willing to add five or more minutes to their one-way commute to reduce collisions, injuries, and deaths



Figure 9: Willingness to add time to a one-way commute for traffic safety projects that slow traffic to reduce collisions, injuries, and deaths (n<sup>v</sup>=659).

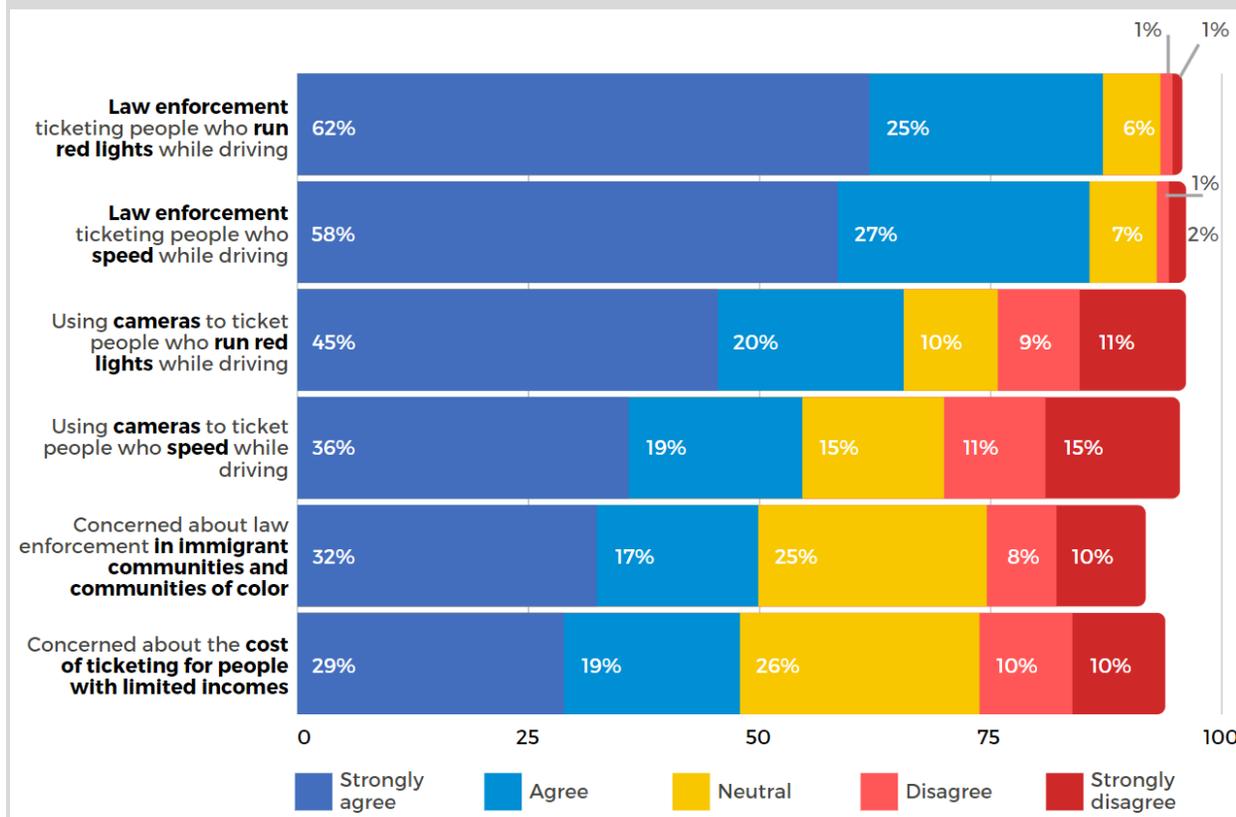
### Education

Figure 10: Respondent opinion of the groups that need to receive traffic safety education the most (n<sup>v</sup>=757). (Respondents marked one option).



## Law Enforcement

Figure 11: Respondent level of agreement for different law enforcement strategies in the community (n<sup>v</sup>=757).



For more information about Vision Zero Los Angeles County, please visit: [VisionZeroLACounty.com](https://www.visionzerolacounty.com)

<sup>i</sup> Data set compiled using: (a) Los Angeles County Public Works' Collision Database, for collisions occurring from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2017 on unincorporated County roadways; and (b) the Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS), Safe Transportation Research and Education Center at the University of California, Berkeley, 2018, data query for January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2017 for Unincorporated Los Angeles County, excluding State Highways - <https://tims.berkeley.edu/> (Accessed October 15, 2018).

<sup>ii</sup> Patterns of Mortality in Los Angeles County, 2008 -2017. Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology. December 2019. Tables 4 (p.13) and B-3 (p.47). Available at: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/epi/reports.htm> (Accessed February 19, 2020)

<sup>iii</sup> Vision Zero Network. Core Elements for Vision Zero Communities. Available at: [https://visionzeronetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/VZN\\_CoreElements\\_FINAL.pdf](https://visionzeronetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/VZN_CoreElements_FINAL.pdf) (Accessed February 7, 2020)

<sup>iv</sup> County of Los Angeles. Vision Zero Los Angeles County: A Plan for Safer Roadways 2020-2025. VisionZeroLACounty.com. Published November 2019. Accessed December 3, 2019.

<sup>v</sup> The 'n' symbol represents the total sample size or number of respondents included in the analysis of each question.