



ALASKA PUBLIC SAFETY STATEWIDE SURVEY

Component Two of Alaska Public Safety Project

Report prepared for the
Alaska Department of Public Safety

by

Justice Center
University of Alaska Anchorage



JC 9506

1995

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Acknowledgments

Many people and organizations have influenced, shaped and contributed to the successful completion of this Alaska Public Safety Statewide Survey, which is Component 2 of a broader study of issues related to crime and police services in Alaska. Although I would like to acknowledge by name everyone who made a contribution, unfortunately that is impossible. In addition to the list exceeding the length of this report, I simply am not personally familiar with the contributions of all who were involved.

Two organizations that provided the essential financial support for the project were the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice and the Alaska Department of Public Safety. I am very grateful for the encouragement and support we received from members of the Department of Public Safety. Among those most significantly involved were Colonel Glenn Godfrey, Major Tom Stearns, Captain Glenn Flothe and Captain John Glass (now Colonel of the Alaska Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection). I especially appreciate the support provided by Department of Public Safety Grant Manager Catherine Katsel, who ensured the development of the project plan and its implementation were coordinated with and approved by the department officials. Ms. Katsel also provided excellent advice on methodological issues and critical appraisal of the draft products.

The data collection and processing methodology represents a unique departure from most previous statewide surveys in that the sample construction and the data weighting techniques used in this survey were designed to facilitate greater accuracy in distinguishing the opinions from rural, predominately Native communities throughout Alaska. This approach was stimulated in part by considerations of the commitments made to Cook Inlet Region, Inc. and its leadership to ensure that UAA Justice Center research is organized to include attention to concerns and issues of Alaska Natives. We are especially grateful to Mr. Roy Huhndorf for his support of this approach.

First among those on the Justice Center faculty and staff without whose support this survey would not have been completed was Emily Read, who coordinated the development of the instrument, oversaw the collection of data by Hellenthal and Associates, and performed the preliminary analyses of data and report drafting. This report is the direct result of Ms. Read's conscientious, industrious, professional work. She was assisted in the instrument development by Dr. Allan Barnes, Dr. Nancy Schafer, Cassie Atwell, Cathy Katsel, Captain John Glass, and Captain Glenn Flothe.

We were fortunate to receive the assistance of Hellenthal and Associates, who conducted the telephone interviews and performed data entry and compilation. This group performed excellent work in an efficient, cost-effective fashion.

Finally I would like to express my appreciation to the editorial, administrative and clerical staff members of the Justice Center: Antonia Moras, Jan Brewer, Melissa Green, and Jean Angus. This study could not have been completed without their valuable and effective work.

John Angell
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October 1995

I. INTRODUCTION

In October 1994, the Alaska Department of Public Safety contracted with the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center for the completion of a multi-faceted research project. The goals of this project were to:

- Catalog previously collected data and reports related to drug, alcohol, violent crime and other public safety issues in Alaska.
- Establish baseline data which can be used for program development and evaluation related to substance abuse, violent crime and public safety in those areas of Alaska under the authority of the Alaska Department of Public Safety.
- Collect and analyze data concerning public safety, criminal victimization, community characteristics and resident preferences related to the quality of life in a stratified sample of rural Alaska Native communities.

The preceding goals were addressed by a three-component data collection approach. One component is a review of previously established research data bases and the development of an inventory of existing programs related to substance abuse and violent crime in Alaska. The second component involves the completion of a statewide representational opinion and drug use survey designed to provide benchmark data for evaluating changes in future years. The third component is an exploratory study of a stratified sample of approximately 25 to 30 Alaska villages to obtain factual information and opinions related to public safety and quality of life issues as a basis for evaluating community public safety needs and directions for community-based public safety programs in rural Alaska communities.

This report is the result of the second component of the project. It presents data on quality of life and public safety issues, concerns and priorities obtained from a sample of 603 adult Alaska residents in early December 1994.¹ The interviewees were selected by use of statistical techniques which provided both statistically representative statewide and regional samples of adult Alaskans. The statewide-regional design was developed as an alternative to a more traditional statewide sample to facilitate region-to-region as well as region-to-statewide comparisons.

The statistical techniques used in this study provide a 95 per cent confidence level in a margin of error of ± 3.99 per cent for statewide and ± 8.87 to ± 8.95 per cent for the regions. In examining responses received from each question or series of questions, it should be recognized that the margins of error across columns are not uniform, although they are very close. The data distribution with the smallest margin of

¹ The statistical N of 605 used throughout this report is the result of regional weighting techniques used to improve data analysis. Further information on this area is contained in Appendix A.

error is the statewide distribution. Margins of error reflect the degree of accuracy we can assume with any given statistic. For example, in this study, with the ± 3.99 margin of error associated with the “statewide” column, the statewide results obtained in the survey are, to a near certainty, accurate within ± 3.99 per cent for the entire adult population of Alaska. Therefore, if 10 per cent of the respondents statewide answer “no” to a question, we know with near certainty that between 6.01 per cent and 13.99 per cent of the entire Alaska adult population would have answered “no” if all adults had been queried. (See Appendix A for additional information on the sampling methodology and statistical techniques used.)

The remainder of this report is divided into thirteen parts, beginning with discussion of the demographic characteristics reported by survey respondents. Questions about respondent age, length of Alaska residency, family composition, gender, education, and income were fielded at the end of each interview, after all other data had been obtained. For presentation purposes, however, demographic profiles are discussed first. This permits subsequent discussion of any notable group-based differences among respondents in their answers to the rest of the survey questions.

Each section of this report describes the primary results of the survey, both for Alaska residents within each of the five regions in Alaska and for the state of Alaska in its entirety. In each section, discussion of the primary results of the survey questions is followed by a discussion about some statistically significant variations among answers that are attributable to differences in respondent demographic characteristics. For example, males, as a group, might differ from females, as a group, or the relatively wealthy might answer differently from the middle class or the poor. Except for apparently spurious incidents, when such demographic-based differences in perceptions or opinions reach the level of statistical significance at the .95 level of confidence, they are discussed in this report.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Respondents in this survey were asked about length of Alaska residency, number of children, years of education completed, age, marital status, gender, and 1993 household income. Although survey respondents were not queried on demographic information until the end of the survey interview, this information is discussed first in this report to facilitate subsequent evaluation of relationships between respondent demographic characteristics and specific opinion data. Tables 2.1 through 2.8 summarize the demographic information both by region of residence, in the five regional columns, and for Alaska in its entirety, in the far right column.

Table 2.1 displays the frequency distributions of respondents' average (mean) length of Alaska residency by region. The shortest mean length of residency is 18.57 years for Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su respondents. The average length of state residency for Anchorage respondents was nearly identical, at 18.78 years. The average length of Alaska residency among rural Alaska respondents was 24.53 years, the longest among the five regions of Alaska. The average length of residency statewide was 20.53 years. Of the respondents, 26.1 per cent have been in Alaska ten years or less and 26.1 per cent began living in Alaska 30 years or more ago.

Table 2.1. Alaska Residency

Question 27: How many total years and months have you lived in Alaska?

<i>Year respondent began living in Alaska:</i>	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide N=605
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	
1985 - present	25.4%	32.0%	26.0%	22.9%	22.7%	26.1%
1975 - 1984	19.9	28.2	35.3	28.8	25.7	29.7
1965 - 1974	19.7	13.6	19.1	23.7	14.7	18.1
Pre-1965	35.0	26.2	19.6	24.5	37.0	26.1
<i>Average years of Alaska residency</i>	<i>23.75 years</i>	<i>18.57 years</i>	<i>18.78 years</i>	<i>20.70 years</i>	<i>24.53 years</i>	<i>20.53 years</i>

Table 2.2 displays the average ages of study respondents and the age categories into which they fall, again for each of five regions and the state as a whole. There were slight variations in respondent ages by

Table 2.2. Age

Question 30: In what year were you born?

<i>Age of respondents:</i>	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide N=605
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	
18 to 29	11.3%	14.7%	13.8%	19.9%	17.0%	14.9%
30 to 34	17.1	14.8	14.7	10.7	13.3	14.3
35 to 39	13.0	22.7	18.9	19.8	16.0	18.4
40 to 49	33.0	21.1	29.9	22.2	39.3	29.3
50 +	25.6	26.7	22.7	27.4	14.3	23.1
<i>Average age</i>	<i>43.18 years</i>	<i>42.73 years</i>	<i>42.09 years</i>	<i>41.45 years</i>	<i>40.85 years</i>	<i>42.07 years</i>

region. The overall average age of respondents was 42.07 years. (Individuals contacted by interviewers on the telephone had to be at least 18 years of age in order to participate in the survey.) Twenty-three per cent of the respondents statewide were 50 years or more of age. Except for Rural Alaska, where only 14.3 per cent were above 50 and 39 per cent were in the 40-49 age range, the age distribution was relatively consistent throughout the regions.

Almost half (46.3%) of the households contacted reportedly contained no children or adolescents (Table 2.3). Surveyed households had, on average, 1.32 children. However, strong differences in the presence of children emerged among regions. Rural Alaska households contained, on average, 2.04 children, which is significantly higher than households in each of the other regions. Over one-third (36.7%) of the rural households reportedly contained three or more children. This proportion compares to the statewide figure, where only one-fifth of the households contained three or more children.

Table 2.3. Number of Children in Household

Question 28: Of the people living in your household, how many are children or adolescents under 18 years old?

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide N=605
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	
None	53.5%	45.7%	48.3%	52.5%	30.9%	46.3%
One	12.1	13.5	10.0	15.9	15.0	12.4
Two	21.4	24.2	21.0	18.7	17.4	20.7
Three or more	13.0	16.7	20.8	12.9	36.7	20.6
Average number of minor children	1.06 <i>children</i>	1.18 <i>children</i>	1.29 <i>children</i>	0.97 <i>children</i>	2.04 <i>children</i>	1.52 <i>children</i>

Like respondent age, the reported educational levels of study participants do not vary significantly among regions of residence (Table 2.4). The average number of years of education of Alaskans polled is 14.40, or slightly more than one year of college. Of those polled, 54.8 per cent reported having completed some college-level education, while 27.7 per cent have the equivalent of a high school education or less. The remaining 17.5 per cent report completing more than 16 years of formal education.

Table 2.4. Education

Question 29: How many total years of education have you completed?

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide N=605
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	
High school or less	27.5%	31.3%	22.8%	25.3%	38.6%	27.7%
1-2 years of college	30.1	30.0	27.7	32.4	24.6	28.5
3-4 years of college	25.4	20.3	32.0	23.5	20.7	26.3
Post-college	17.0	18.4	17.5	18.8	16.2	17.5
Average years of education	14.40 years	14.22 years	14.69 years	14.53 years	13.71 years	14.40 years

In all discussions of survey results respondent gender is weighted to compensate for the relative over-representation of female to male participants. When this weight is applied, as it is throughout this report, female and male participation is balanced and equal. Table 2.5 shows the effect of this weight. In each region, males and females are equally represented. As discussed in the introduction, the process of weighting female and male responses has the effect of creating the equivalent of two additional survey respondents. The addition of two cases is an unavoidable “side-effect” of the gender weight, but the use of this weight does not negatively impact the accuracy of the survey results.

Table 2.5. Sex

Question 33: What is your sex?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Male	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Female	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0

Table 2.6 shows study participants’ marital status and domestic living arrangements. The majority of respondents, 64.1 per cent, identified themselves as married. Depending upon region, the proportion of married varies between 61.5 per cent and 67.8 per cent, roughly two-thirds of each region. The next largest group of respondents displayed in Table 2.6 are the divorced, at 13.3 per cent statewide, followed in frequency by never married respondents living with another adult. Rural Alaska had the lowest per cent (2.5%) of respondents who reported never married and living alone.

Table 2.6. Marital Status

Question 31: Are you married, separated, divorced, widowed, never married and living with another adult, or never married and living alone?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Married	67.8%	61.7%	65.8%	61.5%	61.5%	64.1%
Separated	2.2	3.1	5.0	2.6	0.9	3.3
Divorced	11.8	19.7	11.7	11.5	12.8	13.3
Widowed	1.5	2.4	4.9	1.4	5.4	3.7
Never married, living with another adult	12.0	9.2	7.5	17.0	16.9	11.0
Never married, living alone	4.8	4.0	5.0	6.0	2.5	4.6

Table 2.7 displays a “computed” combination of the marital status and gender of survey respondents. This combination variable, rather than gender or marital status alone, is used in subsequent discussions of differences in responses attributable to any combination of gender and marital status. For example, in some situations single men, as a group, are found to answer a question differently than married men, married women, and single women. In other cases, differences emerge which are based solely on gender or solely on marital status rather than on a combination of the two. As weighted for both regional and statewide analysis, there are equal proportions of married men and women in each column. There are also equal proportions of single men and women in each column, although there is some slight variation among regions.

Table 2.7. Marital Status by Gender

(Computed)

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Married males	33.9%	30.8%	32.9%	30.7%	30.7%	32.1%
Married females	33.9	30.8	32.9	30.7	30.7	32.1
Single males	16.1	19.2	17.1	19.3	19.3	17.9
Single females	16.1	19.2	17.1	19.3	19.3	17.9

The distributions of another computed demographic variable are displayed in Table 2.8. Here respondents are classified as either young or mature, a part of a couple or single. Three groups each constituted about one-fifth of those surveyed: the mature couple, the young family, and the mature family. Single

respondents, including the young single, the mature single, and the single parent, made up approximately one-third of the sample.

Table 2.8. Family Status*(Computed)*

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Young single (18-37)	6.1%	7.5%	6.7%	9.8%	3.2%	6.6%
Adult single (38+)	19.2	16.2	18.3	12.2	13.0	16.5
Single parent	6.9	14.7	9.2	16.5	22.4	12.8
Young couple (18-37)	4.8	3.3	3.8	3.3	1.7	3.5
Mature couple (38+)	23.4	18.7	19.5	27.1	13.1	19.8
Young family (18-37)	18.7	19.9	21.3	14.0	20.2	19.6
Mature family (38+)	20.9	19.8	21.3	17.0	26.6	21.3

Finally, the last piece of demographic information obtained from the sample is an estimate of the respondent's gross 1993 household income. Since it is usually difficult in survey research to obtain information on income, this issue was covered by the final question on the survey to ensure that the inquiry would not result in respondents terminating their cooperation early in the questionnaire. Many individuals consider a request for income information—even with assurances of confidentiality—to be an invasion of privacy. Because of this reluctance, income is the demographic fact most commonly missing from survey results. The results of this survey are no exception, although an additional effort was made to minimize the effect of missing income data. At the end of the survey interview, participants were first asked directly to estimate the 1993 gross household income. Income estimates were received from 472 of the 605 subjects. This equates to a missing data rate of 21.98 per cent. If respondents replied “don't know” or refused to provide an estimate of household income, they were asked: “We don't need the exact dollar figure. Could you tell me which of the following broad categories it falls in?” A list of categorized income categories was then read. Ultimately, respondents were more willing to identify the category of income of their households and the combined methods produced a much lower missing data proportion of 8.9 per cent. Table 2.9 combines responses to both queries, but mean figures or averages displayed at the bottom of Table 2.9 are derived from actual income estimates obtained in the first query. Because the 1994 income figures would not have been available in December 1994, when the interviews were conducted, 1993 was used as the base year.

Table 2.9. Household Income, 1993

Question 32: Including only those living at home, what was your total household income for 1993 before taxes and other deductions were made?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast	Mat-Su	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Rural Alaska	Statewide
\$0 to \$25,999	15.2%	31.9%	16.8%	17.2%	57.1%	29.4%
\$26,000 to \$35,999	8.9	9.8	6.9	25.0	4.5	8.8
\$36,000 to \$45,999	4.9	8.7	23.3	0.0	3.7	10.7
\$46,000 to \$65,999	35.2	24.8	17.6	34.8	17.3	23.2
\$66,000 +	35.8	24.8	35.3	23.0	17.4	27.8
<i>Estimated average annual income in 1993*</i>	\$60,190	\$50,650	\$55,560	\$50,740	\$51,820	\$54,200

* Based on respondents who provided actual estimates.

The 1993 statewide average household income shown in the right hand column of Table 2.9 was calculated at \$54,200. Income varied substantially by region of residence, with the lowest average (mean) incomes calculated for respondents in the Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su region and the Fairbanks region, at \$50,650 and \$50,740. The highest average income was reported by respondents residing in southeast Alaska, at \$60,190. Also noteworthy in Table 2.9 are the income data from rural Alaska residents, where well over half (57.1%) of rural respondents reported annual household incomes of less than \$26,000, compared to a corresponding figure of 29.4 per cent statewide. Another interesting aspect of the reported household income distribution is the low proportion of incomes in the \$26,000 to \$46,000 range in comparison to those in the less than \$26,000 and the above \$46,000 ranges. Rural Alaska respondents, in particular, seem to be separated into low and high income groups, with only 8.2 per cent reporting household incomes in the \$26,000 to \$46,000 range.

III. QUALITY OF LIFE

Three measurements of Alaskans’ quality of life were used in the survey instrument: questions concerning satisfaction with community life, and one regarding respondent efficacy within the community.

The first question concerned satisfaction with community life:

How do you feel about your community as a place to live? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with life in your community?

Table 3.1, “Satisfaction with Community,” displays results to this question. The “statewide” figures in the far right column show levels of satisfaction and data in the other columns show satisfaction levels in each of the five regions of the state surveyed. Alaskans from all areas of the state expressed satisfaction with their lives in their respective communities. Statewide, 45.8 per cent said they were “very satisfied” with their communities, and 39.9 per cent, “somewhat satisfied.” When responses are examined by area of Alaska in which respondent resides, satisfaction levels are not conspicuously different. Although compared to residents of other communities the residents of Fairbanks and Southeast Alaska voiced the highest levels of satisfaction, these levels of community satisfaction are not statistically greater than in other areas of the state.

Table 3.1. Satisfaction with Community

Question 1: How do you feel about your community as a place to live?

	Valdez/Kenai/ Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Very dissatisfied	0.0%	2.1%	3.2%	1.0%	2.6%	2.2%
Somewhat dissatisfied	7.9	11.8	9.7	4.5	9.1	9.1
Neutral/don't know	0.7	3.9	3.8	0.7	3.3	3.0
Somewhat satisfied	38.4	36.5	39.2	42.0	45.0	39.9
Very satisfied	52.9	45.7	44.1	51.8	40.0	45.8

Examining associations between respondents’ levels of community satisfaction and their demographic profiles reveals a number of interesting relationships. There is a negative relationship between levels of community satisfaction and length of Alaska residency. This means that people who expressed dissatisfaction with their community life reported living in Alaska for longer periods of time than did those people who reported being somewhat or strongly satisfied.

Education also relates to Alaskans’ expressions of community satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Those interviewees with the lowest education were the least satisfied, while those reporting the most education also reported being the most satisfied.

A second gauge of quality of life relates to respondent sense of ability to affect community conditions—a variable termed *efficacy*. Interviewees were asked:

In your opinion, how much of a difference can you and your family make in what happens in your community? Can you make a lot of difference, some difference, very little difference, or no difference in improving your community?

There is generally a positive relationship between efficacy and quality of life. This question obtained data on Alaskans' perceptions concerning the ability of local residents to control the conditions in their communities and neighborhoods: Are the social and political environments in Alaskan communities such that people feel they can make a difference in improving their community? The results displayed in Table 3.2 show, to a large extent, the interviewees' answer is "yes."

Table 3.2. Ability to Make a Difference in the Community

Question 2: *In your opinion, how much of a difference can you and your family make in what happens in your community?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide N=605
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	
No difference	2.5%	4.8%	5.7%	3.3%	5.8%	4.8%
Very little difference	14.6	16.4	17.0	19.1	13.9	16.4
Some difference	59.6	50.2	57.2	52.8	52.0	54.9
A lot of difference	21.8	27.2	18.4	22.1	27.4	22.3
Don't know	1.4	1.3	1.7	2.6	0.9	1.6

Of Alaskans interviewed, 77.2 per cent reported believing that they themselves or their families could make "some" or "a lot of" difference in improving their communities (54.9 per cent believe they and their families can make "some" difference; another 22.3 per cent believe they can make "a lot of" difference). On the negative side, however, roughly 20 per cent of Alaskans believe they can make "very little" or "no" difference in improving their communities. Looking at responses by area of residence again shows some minor differences between residents of the five areas; however, the differences are not statistically significant. The data from Rural "bush" Alaskans and residents of the Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su region show that Rural Alaskans are a little more likely to believe they can make "a lot" of difference.

Several notable significant relationships emerge when interviewee demographic characteristics are compared with the efficacy variable. Educational levels have a positive association with efficacy. Those interviewees who believe that they can make a difference in their communities have significantly higher levels of education than people who believe they cannot make a difference.

Marital status of the respondents was also associated with their sense of efficacy. Compared to their married counterparts, single men are considerably less likely to believe they can make "a lot of" difference. The same proportions of married women and single women think they could make "a lot of" difference, and married women are more likely than single women to think they can make "some" difference.

The last significant demographic association with a sense of ability to make a positive change is gross 1993 household income—a positive relationship, and an expected one. The average income of people who believe they and their families can make "no difference" is \$36,809; the average for those who believe they can make "very little" difference is \$43,158. Those who feel most efficacious earn more money: Those believing they can make "some" difference on average earn \$56,228 and those who think they can make "a

lot” of difference earn an even higher average income of \$62,689.

These data support a conclusion that those who have the highest educational levels and control the most resources perceive themselves as having the ability to influence community developments, while those with low levels of education and resource control are less confident about their capacity to have an influence on the developments in their communities.

Finally, the third quality-of-life measure in the survey attempts to assess peoples’ beliefs about the goodness or wholesomeness of their communities:

How much do you agree or disagree with this statement: “My community is a good place to raise children.” Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?

By asking respondents if they think their communities are good places to raise children, it was expected they would think about any number of things they might associate with a child-raising environment, including schools, safety, day care and other services, familial support, or even crime and delinquency. However the interviewees chose to define “a good place for raising children,” large majorities of respondents in all areas of the state reported a belief that their communities are good places to raise children. Rural Alaska respondents and those from Anchorage are slightly less likely than respondents in other areas to believe their communities are good child-rearing environments; the strongest agreement with the statement came from the Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su region. Close to 16 per cent of the Rural Alaska respondents reported disagreement with the notion that their local community was a good place to raise children.

Table 3.3. Child-Raising in the Community

Question 3: How much do you agree or disagree with this statement: “My community is a good place to raise children.”

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Strongly disagree	2.8%	3.0%	2.4%	0.9%	7.3%	3.1%
Somewhat disagree	5.1	3.3	10.7	5.0	8.5	7.6
Neutral/don't know	2.3	2.7	3.2	2.4	4.3	3.1
Somewhat agree	33.0	30.4	44.5	37.1	32.6	37.7
Strongly agree	56.8	60.6	39.3	54.6	47.4	48.4

Opinion on the child-rearing atmosphere of respondents’ communities varies significantly with a number of demographic characteristics. The longer people have lived in Alaska, the more likely they are to agree that their communities are good places to raise children. (This finding is in conflict with that indicating a negative relationship between overall satisfaction with the community and length of residency.) Further, whether or not people have children in their households also relates to their reported opinions about whether their community was conducive to child-rearing. Strongest agreement that it was a good place to raise children came from those with one child in their household; agreement was weakest from respondents with no children in their homes.

Married males and females are significantly more likely than single men and women to see their communities as good places to raise children. Women, regardless of marital status, were more likely than men to report viewing their communities in this light.

The data obtained concerning adult Alaskans’ perceptions of the quality of life in their communities support the conclusions that over 85 per cent are satisfied with their communities, over 75 per cent believe

they have the capacity to influence the development of their communities, and over 85 per cent believe their communities to be good places to raise children. The highest negative attitudes, although the regional differences are modest, are in Anchorage and the Rural “bush” areas of the state. Higher levels of educational achievement and married status seem to be most positively associated with favorable attitudes about the quality of community life across the state.

IV. COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

The second series of questions in the survey were designed to obtain interviewee opinions concerning both the most serious problem in their community and the most serious public safety concern. This approach was used as an effort to place public safety issues in a relationship with other possible problems by giving interviewees as much opportunity as time permitted to identify broader concerns. The open questions asked were:

- *Considering the wide range of issues affecting the quality of peoples' lives, what do you think is the MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM facing your community today?*
- *What do you think is the most serious PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERN facing your community?*

Following these problem identification questions, interviewees were asked:

What do you feel is the best way to solve this PUBLIC SAFETY PROBLEM?

Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 summarize the statewide distribution of responses received to these questions. Due to the very large variety of responses, although the regional differences are not displayed in tabular form, those which were most substantive will be discussed in the narrative. The most frequently cited "serious problem," presented in Table 4.1, is related to drugs, alcohol, substance abuse and associated crime. One out of four respondents (24.8%) identified problems within this category as the most serious overall problem in their community. Rural Alaska respondents were over twice as likely as those in more urban areas to cite drugs, alcohol and substance abuse as the most serious problem, with 55.0 per cent of them doing so. Although drugs, alcohol, substance abuse and related crime formed the problem most frequently cited both statewide and in four of the five regions, it was the second most frequently cited problem for Anchorage residents. Of the Anchorage residents interviewed, 27.9 per cent identified crime and violence issues as the most serious problem in their community.

Statewide, the second most frequently cited serious problem, noted by 15.2 per cent of respondents, were concerns related to crime and violence. More specifically, interviewees identified increasing crime and decreasing safety, violent crimes and killings.

Economic issues affecting Alaska communities, chiefly lack of jobs, unemployment and the general economy, was the third most frequently cited serious problem area. About 7.8 per cent of Alaskans interviewed identified concerns about employment, but overall, residents of Southeast Alaska considered such matters more pressing than did residents of other areas.

Answers obtained in response to the first open-ended question are displayed with as much detail as is possible. In processing this information, all answers were examined and consolidated into broad categories to facilitate understanding. Many Alaskans commented on problems associated with the behaviors of

Table 4.1. Most Serious Community Problem

Question 4: Considering the wide range of issues affecting the quality of peoples' lives, what do you think is the most serious problem facing your community today?

N = 605

Substance abuse	Drugs, alcohol, substance abuse, related crime	24.8%
Crime and violence	Increase in crime, safety from crime, violence, violent crime, killings	15.2
Economy	Economic situation, economy, jobs, employment, unemployment, shortage of oil revenue	7.8
Juvenile delinquency	Juvenile behavior, violence, crime, or drug use, juveniles have no respect, gangs, kids	7.6
Family breakdown	Family breakdown, poor parenting, home life, divorce, working parents, indifference, apathy, parent/public apathy, lack of involvement	5.3
Education	Education, poor schools, quality of teachers, lack of funds	4.7
Other government/services	Wages and benefits for public employees, city expenditures not spent where needed, better trails, budget, have city pay for city services, support of social services, our leaders/government/politicians, highway improvement, roads, water supply, sewage	4.2
Poverty and homelessness	Homelessness, housing, poverty, income, money, beggars	3.5
Lack of moral standards	Lack of moral teaching in school, people living without God, lack of belief, lack of moral standards	2.9
Too much government	Government intrusion, too much public assistance/welfare, government interfering with hunting and fishing industries, overtaxation	2.4
Recreational/educational opportunities	Cuts in or lack of kids' recreational/educational activities, need a recreation center with running water	2.0
Deteriorating social attitudes	Racial discord, chauvinism, hatred, bitterness, lack of unity/getting along in community, deteriorating social attitudes, greed, people not taking responsibility for themselves	1.7
Other concerns about juveniles	Kids wandering around, bored, need jobs, children do not want an education, teen pregnancy, education for teen pregnancy	1.5
Environment and resource issues	Environmental issues, environmentalist vs. resource user, mining, logging	1.5
Lack of government services	Lack of law enforcement, police department intervention, lack of money to remove snow, lack of transportation, not enough public services, lack of government money coming into community	1.3
Theft, burglary	.....	0.7
Drunk drivers, DWIs	.....	0.6
Population and industry growth	Fast-growing tourism, growth management, population growth	0.5
Other social concerns	Child care, child abuse, elderly	0.4
Fishing and hunting	Fishing industry has gone down, fishing quota lowered, young people lack of going hunting	0.3
Rising utility/freight rates	Utility rates increasing, high freight rates	0.2
Other concerns	Store shortages, too much TV, gay and lesbian rights, threat of moving capital, kids have too much supervision, moose, lack of sophistication in business enterprise, weather too cold, too much snow	1.7
Don't know	.....	8.6

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding and weighting.

juveniles, their attitudes and their criminality. Still others voiced concerns with what they perceive as a breakdown in family and home life, parental authority, indifference and apathy. Concerns about the quality of education are also prominent across the state, with people commenting on poor schools, a lack of funding and quality teachers. Aside from the concerns voiced by a fairly large group of people about violence and violent crime, the only other crimes or types of crimes identified as “serious problems” were theft and burglary, and drinking and driving.

After the questions regarding the most serious problem, each interviewee was asked to “narrow” his or her focus and identify the most serious public safety concern facing the community. The fact that most respondents find open-ended questions more challenging to answer shows in the results of this second open-ended question. Fewer respondents answered this question than answered the previous question, perhaps because in some instances they had already identified a public safety issue as the most serious problem. In assessing the relative importance of some of these concerns, it may be useful to keep in mind that answers to open-format questions reflect “top-of-mind” issues perceived as immediately important to the interviewee.

Table 4.2. Most Serious Public Safety Concern

Question 5: What do you think is the most serious public safety concern facing your community?

N = 605

Substance abuse	Drugs, alcohol, substance abuse	15.9%
Road conditions	Street and road maintenance, road conditions, log trucks, keep highways clear in winter, don't allow studded tires, put middle lane through town, need new highway, dangerous streets, speed limit too high, roads unsafe for bicycles, not plowing the sidewalks or streets, inadequate snow removal, not enough street lights, driving concerns in winter, icy roads, no roads, people get lost, unpaved roads contributing to TB	10.3
Crime	.....	9.1
Drinking and driving, DWIs	.....	6.5
Concerns about police/law enforcement	Need more police, lack of police, troopers, inefficiency, lack of professionalism, bad police, lack of crime prevention, make police better	6.2
Violence, violent crime	.....	5.0
Other crimes	Rise in gang activity, gangs, robberies, burglary, theft, holdups, domestic violence, vandalism, assault, sexual abuse, break-ins and property destruction	5.2
Traffic	Traffic laws being broken, speeding, bad drivers, accidents, need traffic control, more lights, too much traffic, no headlights	4.2
Juvenile crime	Teenage and juvenile crime and violence	3.6
Concerns about guns	Handguns, guns, weapons, availability of guns, kids and guns, guns in schools	3.0
Inadequate criminal justice system	Not sentencing criminals long enough, penalties not severe, not enough jails, judicial system, criminal justice system	1.8
Environmental problems and concerns	Lack of clean water, sewer, dirty air in winter, oxyfuel, Potential hazards from mining, tsunami warnings, tank farm hazard and safety	1.6
Animal control and wild life protection	Moose, polar bears, wildlife, animal control, loose dogs, need more Fish and Wildlife Protection	1.5
Other transportation safety issues	Boating, snowmachine safety, better ferry service needed, closure of airport runway	1.4
Child abuse and child safety	Child abuse, non-response to abuse in community, children's safety	1.1
Fire protection services	Fire department closed, fire protection, lack of funding for fire protection	1.1
Hunting concerns	Hunter safety, moose hunters too close to homes	1.1
Lack of various services	Lack of parking, lack of sidewalks, not enough public services, lack of medical attention or care, not enough emergency service workers at hospital, no recreation facility for kids	1.1
Other concerns about juveniles	Young kids drinking, idle time of young people, need curfew for teens, lack of authority in schools, better education for teenage pregnancy	1.0
Other concerns	Violence on TV, removal of legal arms from respectful citizens, homeless, tax expenditures, being free to go where you want to, kids not caring about each other, need better values, too much talk and not enough action, lack of moral sense, need better education, people who think they know best and want more power, possible mental health facility opening, winter weather, hypothermia, suicide, AIDS	2.8
Don't know	.....	16.5

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding and weighting.

The range of specific problems identified was as broad as Alaska is diverse, including concerns from substance abuse and road conditions to teen pregnancy and winter weather. It is clear, based on the responses, that adult Alaskans are not of one mind on public safety problems. Many of the concerns expressed were unique and so closely tied to the community or the respondent they received only one mention. None of the problems identified was mentioned by more than 16 per cent of the interviewees. The range of these responses seems to illustrate the importance of a community-by-community approach to public safety problems.

Alcohol and drug use and substance abuse concerns were, as in the previous question, the most frequently cited problem, with 15.9 per cent of the interviewees identifying this area as the most serious public safety concern. Again, a higher proportion of Rural residents (29.1%) and Southeast residents (20.7%) identified alcohol and drug use and abuse as the most serious public safety problem in their communities. The second most commonly cited group of public safety concerns were those relating to streets and roadways, with a full 10.3 per cent identifying a broad range of street and highway-related deficiencies and issues as the most

voiced by respondents were coded into broad categories of like or similar responses. The statewide categorizations are displayed in Table 4.2.

After respondents identified the most pressing public safety concern for their communities, they were asked for their suggestions for solutions to the problems identified. The solutions offered are displayed below within categories of the cited public safety concern. For example, of the respondents who identified alcohol, drugs and substance abuse as the most pressing problem facing their communities, Table 4.3 shows one-fifth (20.2%) suggested educational efforts to be the most effective solution. As a solution to alcohol and drug problems, “family ties, parental responsibility and involvement” were the second most frequently offered suggestions. A number of people (7.2%) recommended strengthening laws and making penalties associated with drug and alcohol abuse tougher. Still others (6.5%) suggested legally restricting access to alcohol and drugs, while others (3.0%) suggested legalizing drugs. About five per cent suggested funding more law enforcement officers in an effort to solve the problems of drug and alcohol abuse in their communities.

Concerns about roadway hazards, poor maintenance, sidewalk problems and snow removal were cited as most pressing by 10.3 per cent of respondents. Subsequent suggestions for handling these types of problems were requests for better road maintenance and repair, increased funding and taxing for roadway maintenance, and more snow removal on roadways and sidewalks.

Education was the answer most commonly suggested by respondents citing crime as the most serious public safety concern. Solutions to crime also included suggestions that laws be changed to be harsher on criminals and that government fund more police. Only three respondents specifically suggested that a solution to crime was public involvement and awareness. Other suggestions obtained are displayed under “crime” in Table 4.3.

The most commonly suggested solutions to a community’s drinking and driving problems are tougher laws and longer sentences. Other suggestions were more law enforcement related to drinking and driving and also education and educational campaigns. Again, Table 4.3 displays other suggestions about how to deal with drinking and driving offenses.

A lack of adequate law enforcement and other problems with local police were cited as the most serious public safety problems by 6.2 per cent of respondents. Their suggested remedies were primarily calls for more law enforcement officers, more money and funding for law enforcement, and more and better training for law enforcement officers.

Finally, “violence and violent crime” are considered the most serious public safety problems by 5.0 per cent of the respondents. Suggestions for how to deal with violence and violent crime mirrored suggestions for other public safety concerns, with proposals for more law enforcement resources, and newer and tougher laws against violence. But respondents also believe that families and citizens need to become more involved in solving violence and that education is also a solution.

V. PERCEIVED MAGNITUDE OF COMMON PUBLIC SAFETY PROBLEMS

A series of forced-choice items was used to obtain interviewee perceptions about the seriousness of commonly mentioned problems of crime and public safety. This approach forced respondents to focus on specific issues and rate each on a three-item scale of 1) very large problem; 2) somewhat of a problem; or 3) not a problem. The precise question for each interviewee was:

Now, I am going to read you a list of some serious social problems that may or may not occur in your community. Please tell me how much of a concern you feel these problems are in your community. What about _____ (FILL IN PROBLEM)? Is this a VERY BIG PROBLEM, SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM, OR NOT A PROBLEM at all where you live?

*Burglary
Property Destruction
Stolen Vehicles
Juvenile Crime
Illegal Drug Use
Selling Drugs
Alcohol Abuse
Domestic Violence
Other Physical Assaults (other than Domestic Violence)
Suicide Attempts
Sexual Assaults
Child Abuse/Neglect*

Proportional results from the series of questions are in Table 5.1. They are calculated for each social concern listed by areas of respondent residence and for all of Alaska. Perceptions about the severity of these problems vary significantly by region of Alaska in which respondents live. Only on the item “other physical assaults” did area-based differences **not** reach levels of statistical significance.

Alcohol abuse was the problem most frequently identified by interviewees as a “very big” problem in Alaska. Table 5.1 shows that 57.8 per cent of Alaskans statewide consider alcohol abuse to be a “very big problem” in their communities. Over 60 per cent of the interviewees in all regions of the state except for Anchorage ranked alcohol abuse as a “very big problem.” Even in Anchorage, where 49.7 per cent of the respondents ranked it as a “very big problem,” alcohol abuse was ranked at this level by a significantly higher proportion of the interviewees than any of the other problems.

The range of responses of interviewees who considered alcohol abuse to be a “very big problem” was from the relatively 49.7 per cent of Anchorage residents to 71.2 per cent of Southeast residents.

Among other large regional differences in the responses are the following: Rural Alaskans do not consider burglary as much of a problem as do other Alaskans. Half of rural residents called burglary “not a

Table 5.1. Perceived Seriousness of Common Public Safety Problems

Question 7: How much of a concern do you feel these problems are in your community?

	Southwest N=121	Valdez/Kenai/ Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Burglary						
Not a problem at all	24.3%	19.2%	23.3%	15.0%	47.4%	25.5%
Somewhat of a problem	61.6	65.6	56.7	59.6	44.5	57.3
Very big problem	11.8	13.9	18.5	24.7	6.3	15.7
Don't know	2.4	1.3	1.5	0.7	1.8	1.5
Property destruction						
Not a problem at all	28.3%	32.7%	31.7%	26.0%	43.6%	32.6%
Somewhat of a problem	57.6	54.9	53.2	45.7	45.9	52.0
Very big problem	14.1	11.5	15.1	26.1	9.7	14.8
Don't know	0.0	0.9	0.0	2.2	0.9	0.6
Stolen vehicles						
Not a problem at all	52.7%	47.3%	40.3%	31.0%	62.1%	45.4%
Somewhat of a problem	39.0	39.3	39.7	41.1	28.7	38.0
Very big problem	6.2	7.4	14.5	20.9	7.4	11.8
Don't know	2.1	6.0	5.5	7.0	1.8	4.7
Juvenile crime						
Not a problem at all	12.7%	12.8%	20.9%	13.2%	24.7%	18.1%
Somewhat of a problem	56.4	49.4	39.0	46.3	58.7	47.1
Very big problem	30.9	37.0	38.6	37.8	14.8	33.5
Don't know	0.0	0.8	1.5	2.8	1.8	1.4
Illegal drug use						
Not a problem at all	7.6%	8.8%	19.5%	8.5%	13.1%	13.7%
Somewhat of a problem	39.2	35.9	32.2	46.3	39.9	36.7
Very big problem	47.8	50.0	36.2	39.8	41.4	41.4
Don't know	5.4	5.3	12.1	5.4	5.7	8.2
Selling drugs						
Not a problem at all	10.0%	9.7%	24.1%	10.5%	13.9%	16.5%
Somewhat of a problem	38.2	36.2	29.1	42.6	35.9	34.3
Very big problem	41.2	46.1	34.7	37.2	41.4	38.9
Don't know	10.6	8.0	12.1	9.7	8.9	10.4
Alcohol abuse						
Not a problem at all	3.4%	6.2%	21.1%	7.6%	9.5%	12.7%
Somewhat of a problem	25.4	30.2	26.3	28.8	29.5	27.7
Very big problem	71.2	60.3	49.7	62.9	61.0	57.8
Don't know	0.0	3.3	2.9	0.7	0.0	1.9
Domestic violence						
Not a problem at all	10.1%	10.5%	27.8%	11.4%	22.5%	19.6%
Somewhat of a problem	37.6	51.4	35.1	46.1	40.1	40.4
Very big problem	51.6	29.7	30.6	33.0	31.0	33.5
Don't know	0.7	8.4	6.5	9.6	6.4	6.5
Other physical assaults (other than domestic violence)						
Not a problem at all	34.5%	36.1%	36.8%	24.7%	42.3%	35.7%
Somewhat of a problem	49.2	44.7	38.8	47.9	42.9	43.0
Very big problem	14.3	8.7	19.2	19.4	12.5	15.7
Don't know	2.1	10.5	5.2	8.0	2.4	5.6
Suicide attempts						
Not a problem at all	38.4%	45.6%	42.1%	30.9%	35.8%	39.9%
Somewhat of a problem	36.5	33.3	27.8	36.7	37.2	32.5
Very big problem	15.9	6.4	12.8	19.6	22.8	14.5
Don't know	9.2	14.8	17.3	12.7	4.2	13.2
Sexual assaults						
Not a problem at all	24.4%	32.8%	36.1%	16.0%	30.2%	30.6%
Somewhat of a problem	44.7	43.7	35.1	51.8	40.5	40.8
Very big problem	27.4	14.5	17.6	24.6	17.6	19.2
Don't know	3.5	8.9	11.2	7.6	11.6	9.4
Child abuse/neglect						
Not a problem at all	18.0%	17.4%	29.2%	12.4%	30.2%	23.8%
Somewhat of a problem	46.3	52.5	36.9	37.7	36.4	40.9
Very big problem	32.9	24.0	28.1	40.8	25.7	29.2
Don't know	2.7	6.2	5.8	9.1	7.7	6.2

problem at all.” This difference in perception also exists for estimates of the problem of property destruction in Rural communities. Overall, in comparison with interviewees in other areas of the state, Rural Alaska residents consider property destruction less of a problem. Fairbanks residents, on the other hand, are more apt to consider property destruction to be a “very big” problem. In the same fashion, stolen vehicles are considered to be a problem by few Rural residents and by many more Fairbanks residents. Responses which identify property crimes as less serious concerns in Rural Alaska are consistent with the findings of previous studies.

However, the results in Table 5.1 display consistent levels of agreement across the regional areas of the state on other public safety concerns, especially in light of an approximately nine per cent margin of error within each region. For example, for three problems—illegal drug use, selling drugs, and domestic violence—fairly equal proportions of respondents in each region called the problems “somewhat” or “very big” problems in their communities. Further, significant proportions of the respondents in each region identified burglary (58.2%), property destruction (52.3%), juvenile crime (47.7%), sexual assault (45.0%) and child abuse (43.6%) as “somewhat of a problem” in their communities. Vehicle theft is the only item that the largest proportion of the respondents statewide (45.5%) and in all areas except Fairbanks considered “not a problem at all” in their communities.

Table 5.2 is a different method of presenting the responses to the “size of problem” questions. This table shows the results of ranking responses instead of examining them as “small,” “medium,” or “large.” The rankings are created by assigning numerical values to the size-of-problem responses for each crime given (i.e., “not a problem” = 0, “small” = 1, “medium” = 2, and “large” = 3). In each area of Alaska, residents ranked alcohol abuse as the most serious public safety problem facing their communities. Also, illegal drug use was ranked high and was the second most serious problem in each of the communities. Unique to Southeast Alaskans’ perceptions is the relative seriousness of the problem of domestic violence in their communities. In those communities, domestic violence was identified to be a problem equivalent to illegal drug use, and it was ranked second only to alcohol abuse in severity.

Although Tables 5.1 and 5.2 reflect a variety of regional differences, for the state as a whole, adult Alaskans perceived the most serious of these problems to be alcohol abuse, illegal drug use, sale of illegal drugs and juvenile crime.

There are a number of notable associations between respondents’ assessments of these problems and their various demographic characteristics. Not all of these relationships are intuitive. For example, those

Table 5.2. Crime Problems in the Community Ranked

Ranked according to magnitude (calculated).

Southeast N=121	Valdez/Kenai/ Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse
{ Illegal drug use }	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	{ Illegal drug use }	Illegal drug use
{ Domestic violence }	Selling drugs	Juvenile crime	Child abuse/neglect	{ Selling drugs }	Selling drugs
Selling drugs	Juvenile crime	Selling drugs	Selling drugs	Domestic violence	Juvenile crime
Juvenile crime	Domestic violence	Domestic violence	Juvenile crime	Child abuse/neglect	Domestic violence
Child abuse/neglect	Child abuse/neglect	Child abuse/neglect	Domestic violence	Juvenile crime	Child abuse/neglect
Sexual assaults	Burglary	Burglary	Burglary	{ Sexual assaults }	Burglary
Burglary	Sexual assaults	Property destruction	Sexual assaults	{ Suicide attempts }	Sexual assaults
Property destruction	Property destruction	Other physical assaults	Property destruction	Other physical assaults	Property destruction
Other physical assaults	Other physical assaults	Sexual assaults	Other physical assaults	Property destruction	Other physical assaults
Suicide attempts	Stolen vehicles	Stolen vehicles	Stolen vehicles	Burglary	Suicide attempts
Stolen vehicles	Suicide attempts	Suicide attempts	Suicide attempts	Stolen vehicles	Stolen vehicles

Brackets {} indicate that two items have equivalent rank.

who consider property destruction, stolen vehicles, illegal drug use, domestic violence and child abuse and neglect to be “very big” problems have, on average, fewer years of Alaska residency than do people who consider these crimes to be less of a problem.

Respondents’ educational levels also relate to their assessments of several problems. People perceiving juvenile crime, domestic violence, illegal drug use, suicide attempts and child abuse and neglect to be “not a problem” report completing fewer years of education, on average, than do those considering these to be problems in their communities.

Likewise, respondent age is associated with perceptions about the magnitude of some of the problems, including juvenile crime, illegal drug use, selling drugs, domestic violence, and other physical assaults. Older Alaskans are less likely than younger residents to consider juvenile crime a problem in their communities. The youngest respondents, on average, were those who see juvenile crime as a “very big” problem in their communities. Similarly, respondent age is associated with interviewees’ perceptions of domestic violence and other physical assaults as community problems.

Men and women, married and unmarried, view the problem of alcohol abuse differently. Alcohol abuse is perceived as most serious by married women, followed by single women and single men. Married men, on the other hand, attribute the least amount of severity to the problem of alcohol abuse. The problem of suicide attempts is also viewed differently by women and men, married and single. Suicide attempts are seen as least serious by single men, followed by married men and then married women. Single women, on the other hand, attribute the greatest severity to the problem of suicide attempts.

VI. PRIORITIES FOR POLICE RESPONSE TO PROBLEMS

The fact that something is viewed as a problem in a community does not necessarily mean residents view it as being a high priority for the police. Interviewers were asked to rank each of a list of problems as a low, medium, or high priority:

Now, I would like you to think about how much priority you think police should give to investigating these problems. Please tell me for each problem whether you consider it a low priority, a medium priority, or high priority. Is _____ (FILL IN PROBLEM) a low priority, a medium priority, or high priority?

*Burglary
Property Destruction
Stolen Vehicles
Juvenile Crime
Illegal Drug Use
Selling Drugs
Alcohol Abuse
Domestic Violence
Other Physical Assaults (other than Domestic Violence)
Suicide Attempts
Sexual Assaults
Child Abuse/Neglect*

Results to the series of questions on police priorities are shown in Table 6.1, again with row-calculated percentages pertaining to each problem. The statewide results in the right hand column show that most adult Alaskans expect police to give high priority to nine of the twelve types of problems listed. Interviewees statewide gave the highest priority to police responses to sales of illegal drugs and child abuse/neglect cases (80.2% and 80.0% “high priority”), followed by responses to sexual assaults (74.1% “high priority”), juvenile crime and illegal drug use (71.8% “high priority” each).

The Rural Alaska responses differ from those of other areas on the priority assigned to a number of problems. Rural Alaskans attached lower police priority than do residents of other areas of the state to the categories of burglary, property destruction, stolen vehicles, juvenile crime, domestic violence, other physical assaults, sexual assaults and child abuse/neglect. On the other hand, rural Alaskans (and south eastern Alaskans) attach higher priority to responding to alcohol abuse and suicide attempts. Compared to other communities and to statewide figures, residents of Anchorage and Fairbanks attach relatively lower priority to police responses to alcohol abuse.

Table 6.2 contains the results of ranking the identified police priorities for each of the problems by region of the state and for Alaska as a whole. As before, the rankings are based on mean values constructed by changing the “low,” “medium” and “high” priority responses into 0, 1, and 2 values, respectively, and

Table 6.1. Police Priorities

Question 8: How much of a priority do you think police should give to investigating these problems?

		Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast	Mat-Su	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Rural Alaska	Statewide	
	N=121	N=120	N=120	N=122	N=122	N=605	
Burglary							
Low priority	11.4%	6.2%	12.0%	7.9%	29.0%	13.1%	
Medium priority	39.6	39.0	47.5	54.6	35.3	43.9	
High priority	49.0	54.8	40.5	37.5	34.8	42.8	
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.1	
Property destruction							
Low priority	13.8%	10.6%	13.6%	11.9%	26.7%	14.9%	
Medium priority	46.1	48.9	60.2	52.7	35.9	51.6	
High priority	38.5	40.5	26.2	34.4	35.8	32.8	
Don't know	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.7	0.6	
Stolen vehicles							
Low priority	37.7%	11.6%	13.2%	21.2%	38.7%	21.1%	
Medium priority	30.0	47.1	50.0	49.8	29.8	43.7	
High priority	31.7	41.3	36.8	29.1	28.1	34.6	
Don't know	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.6	
Juvenile crime							
Low priority	4.6%	4.6%	5.5%	5.3%	16.0%	6.8%	
Medium priority	19.5	24.3	14.6	19.1	33.7	20.5	
High priority	75.2	71.1	79.1	74.9	47.6	71.8	
Don't know	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.7	2.6	0.9	
Illegal drug use							
Low priority	7.2%	10.6%	10.7%	4.3%	6.4%	8.8%	
Medium priority	16.5	13.6	21.5	20.7	18.8	18.9	
High priority	75.7	75.8	67.8	75.0	72.1	71.8	
Don't know	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.5	
Selling drugs							
Low priority	6.2%	4.6%	10.0%	2.4%	8.2%	7.3%	
Medium priority	10.6	14.2	10.2	14.8	10.4	11.6	
High priority	81.9	81.3	78.9	82.8	78.7	80.2	
Don't know	1.3	0.0	0.8	0.0	2.6	0.9	
Alcohol abuse							
Low priority	5.0%	7.1%	10.5%	8.8%	8.0%	8.6%	
Medium priority	21.5	26.4	34.9	38.5	15.6	29.1	
High priority	71.9	65.0	54.5	52.6	74.7	61.6	
Don't know	1.6	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.7	
Domestic violence							
Low priority	1.8%	3.3%	5.0%	4.3%	13.3%	5.5%	
Medium priority	17.4	31.0	30.3	28.3	25.6	27.8	
High priority	80.1	65.6	64.7	65.7	58.4	66.0	
Don't know	0.7	0.0	0.0	1.7	2.6	0.7	
Other physical assaults (other than domestic violence)							
Low priority	12.7%	9.1%	9.1%	7.7%	19.1%	11.0%	
Medium priority	25.1	40.4	32.1	35.8	29.4	32.7	
High priority	61.5	50.5	58.8	55.6	48.9	55.8	
Don't know	0.7	0.0	0.0	1.0	2.6	0.6	
Suicide attempts							
Low priority	23.0%	24.8%	26.7%	23.7%	20.6%	24.6%	
Medium priority	21.9	31.9	38.4	36.2	25.3	32.8	
High priority	52.5	42.1	34.0	39.4	49.6	41.0	
Don't know	2.6	1.2	0.9	0.7	4.4	1.7	
Sexual assaults							
Low priority	3.2%	3.3%	4.4%	1.9%	13.8%	5.2%	
Medium priority	13.2	18.1	23.3	19.3	20.7	20.2	
High priority	83.6	77.7	72.2	78.8	63.1	74.1	
Don't know	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.5	
Child abuse/neglect							
Low priority	2.6%	2.0%	3.6%	5.3%	12.9%	4.9%	
Medium priority	8.5	10.2	18.9	5.6	19.3	14.5	
High priority	88.9	87.8	76.7	89.1	65.3	80.0	
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	2.5	0.7	

Table 6.2. Police Priorities Ranked

Ranked according to magnitude (calculated).

Southeast N=121	Valdez/Kenai/ Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Child abuse/neglect	Child abuse/neglect	Child abuse/neglect	{ Juvenile crime }	Selling drugs	Child abuse/neglect
Sexual assaults	Selling drugs	Selling drugs	{ Child abuse/neglect }	Alcohol abuse	Selling drugs
Domestic violence	Sexual assaults	Sexual assaults	Selling drugs	Illegal drug use	Sexual assaults
Selling drugs	Juvenile crime	Illegal drug use	Sexual assaults	Child abuse/neglect	Juvenile crime
Juvenile crime	Illegal drug use	Juvenile crime	Domestic violence	Sexual assaults	Illegal drug use
Illegal drug use	Domestic violence	Domestic violence	Illegal drug use	Domestic violence	Domestic violence
Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse	Other physical assaults	Other physical assaults	Juvenile crime	Alcohol abuse
Other physical assaults	Burglary	Alcohol abuse	Alcohol abuse	Other physical assaults	Other physical assaults
Burglary	Other physical assaults	Burglary	Burglary	Burglary	Burglary
Suicide attempts	{ Property destruction }	Property destruction	Stolen vehicles	Property destruction	Property destruction
Property destruction	{ Stolen vehicles }	Suicide attempts	Property destruction	Suicide attempts	Suicide attempts
Stolen vehicles	Suicide attempts	Stolen vehicles	Suicide attempts	Stolen vehicles	Stolen vehicles

Brackets {} indicate that two items have equivalent rank.

then multiplying these values by the numbers of respondents who selected them. This procedure created a mean or “average” priority score which was used as a focus for the priority list for each area of Alaska, as well as the state as a whole. These lists show differences in the priorities by region.

Statistical evaluation of responses concerning police priorities and demographic characteristics produces a number of significant relationships. There is a negative relationship between length of Alaska residency and opinions about the appropriate police priorities for responding to juvenile crime, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, other physical assaults, sexual assaults and child abuse and neglect. As the length of Alaska residency increases, the priorities attached to these crimes decrease. “Old-timers” are not as quick as new residents to assert that police should place a high priority on investigating these crimes.

Respondents’ gross household income is negatively related to the priorities they assign to property destruction and suicide attempts. This means that people who reported low household incomes assigned higher priority to property destruction and suicide attempts than did people who reported high household incomes.

The data in the preceding sections show that resident opinions about the magnitude of problems in their community are not necessarily consistent with their opinions about how police should prioritize the problems. To illustrate, whether or not juvenile crime is perceived as a problem in their communities, a majority of Alaskans identify it as a high priority for police agencies. Thus, even those people who report juvenile crime not to be a problem in their areas likely assign a high police priority to it. Likewise, for the problem of illegal drug use, even if it is not considered a problem in their own community, respondents identify the task of fighting drug use to be a top priority for police.

VII. ALASKANS' WILLINGNESS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN POLICE EFFORTS

Successful community policing programs require residents who believe they can make a difference and who are willing to get involved in public safety improvement efforts in their communities. Besides volunteerism, there are several ways that people can participate in improving public safety. Interviewees were asked one general and six specific questions (displayed in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, respectively) about what they might be willing to do in support of police efforts:

Given the problems in your community, to what degree are you willing to actively help with public safety efforts? Are you very willing, somewhat willing, somewhat unwilling or very unwilling to help with public safety efforts?

In general, how willing are you to do any of the following? Would you say that you're very willing, somewhat willing, somewhat unwilling, or very unwilling to _____ (FILL IN ACTIVITY)?

*Report a crime you see to the police
Report suspicious activities you see
Tell police who you are when you see a crime
Assist police officers needing help
Assist a victim needing help
Testify in court*

With rare exception, the adult Alaskans interviewed expressed a willingness to report crimes and suspicious activities, to identify themselves to police, to assist police and victims, and to testify in court. Because of this near unanimity, a more meaningful focus might be on peoples' unwillingness to participate in the apprehension and prosecution of criminals and other law enforcement activities.

Table 7.1 displays responses to the general question about people's willingness to "actively help with public safety efforts." These responses are displayed both by region and for the state. Table 7.2 shows responses to the six "specific" questions of respondent willingness. The tables show no significant differences in willingness by respondents' area of residence. Of each task we queried, Alaskans are least willing to

Table 7.1. Willingness to Help with Public Safety Efforts

Question 9: *Given the problems in your community, to what degree are you willing to actively help with public safety efforts?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Unwilling	0.0%	2.1%	3.3%	3.4%	4.3%	2.8%
Neutral/don't know	6.7	6.2	3.3	7.6	7.3	5.4
Willing	93.3	91.7	93.4	89.0	88.4	91.8

Table 7.2. Willingness to Help with Specific Public Safety Activities*Question 10: In general, how willing are you to do any of the following?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Report a crime you see to the police						
Unwilling	1.1%	1.4%	0.9%	1.0%	2.6%	1.3%
Neutral/don't know	0.0	3.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.2
Willing	98.9	95.0	98.3	98.3	96.6	97.5
Report suspicious activities you see						
Unwilling	3.9%	6.5%	6.0%	4.6%	8.7%	6.1%
Neutral/don't know	1.8	2.4	1.1	1.9	2.5	1.7
Willing	94.3	91.0	92.9	93.6	88.8	92.2
Tell police who you are when you see a crime						
Unwilling	2.5%	4.9%	8.9%	5.5%	10.0%	7.1%
Neutral/don't know	1.1	1.3	0.0	0.9	0.8	0.6
Willing	96.4	93.8	91.1	93.6	89.2	92.3
Assist police officers needing help						
Unwilling	2.8%	4.0%	5.3%	7.6%	9.5%	5.7%
Neutral/don't know	2.9	2.1	1.7	3.8	6.3	2.9
Willing	94.3	93.9	93.0	88.5	84.3	91.4
Assist a victim needing help						
Unwilling	0.7%	2.1%	0.8%	3.1%	2.6%	1.6%
Neutral/don't know	1.8	1.4	1.4	0.7	1.8	1.4
Willing	97.5	96.5	97.8	96.2	95.5	97.0
Testify in court						
Unwilling	3.4%	1.8%	3.2%	7.2%	5.1%	3.8%
Neutral/don't know	0.0	1.4	3.3	1.7	5.0	2.6
Willing	96.6	96.8	93.5	91.1	89.9	93.6

identify themselves to police when they have witnessed a crime: Overall, 7.1 per cent are unwilling—to some extent—to identify themselves. This unwillingness is strongest in Anchorage and in rural Alaska, where 8.9 per cent and 10.0 per cent are at least somewhat unwilling. When the sample margins of error are considered, even these variations from other areas cannot be considered substantive differences.

There are only two demographic characteristics of respondents that relate significantly to Alaskans' willingness to "actively help with public safety efforts"—age and the presence or absence of children in the household. The relationship between willingness and age shows that younger respondents were generally more likely than older respondents to express a willingness to help with public safety efforts.

Respondents' expression of a willingness to help is associated with the presence and number of children in the home. The small portion of interviewees who expressed unwillingness to help included almost exclusively people who had either one child or no children.

Respondent educational level is associated with both willingness to tell police their identity and to assist victims needing help. But the relationship is different for each task. Respondents who reported lower levels of educational achievement were less willing than those with more advanced education to give police their identities. Conversely, the small number of people who expressed an unwillingness to assist victims reported more education than the majority who are willing.

Willingness to assist police "needing help," displayed in Table 7.2, is related to length of Alaska residency: Those who reported a willingness, on average, reported fewer years of Alaska residency than were reported by those who expressed an unwillingness to assist police officers needing help. Those with the longest average amount of Alaska residency tend to be the most neutral on this issue.

Willingness to assist police also varies among men by their marital status: A higher proportion of married men than single men reported a willingness to assist police. Finally, an identical association with the marital status of men exists for willingness to “report suspicious activities to police”: Single men are significantly more apt to be unwilling to report suspicions to police than their married counterparts. Household income is associated with people’s willingness to “testify in court,” presumably in a criminal case for the prosecution. Those unwilling to testify come from households with lower average incomes than those who indicated a willingness.

VIII. CRIME TRENDS, SENSE OF SAFETY, AND WORRY ABOUT VIOLENT CRIME

This section deals with adult Alaskans’ perceptions of the crime trends in their communities, their perceptions of community safety after dark, and the extent to which they worry about being a victim of violent crime in their individual communities. The first question related to crime trends:

Would you say that crime in your community is greatly decreasing, somewhat decreasing, staying the same, somewhat increasing, or greatly increasing?

Alaskans are split in their perceptions about crime trends; however, over half believe crime in their communities is staying the same or decreasing (Table 8.1). Four out of every ten Alaskans believe that crime in their communities has “stayed the same” (41.6%); 10.6 per cent think crime in their communities is decreasing. Another 43.5 per cent perceive crime as either somewhat increasing or greatly increasing. Residents of Fairbanks are considerably more likely than those in other areas to believe that crime has either somewhat or greatly increased. A higher proportion of Rural Alaskans than residents of other areas believe crime has stayed the same, and fewer Rural Alaskans than others believe that crime has increased to any extent in the past year.

Table 8.1. Crime Rates in the Neighborhood

Question 11: Would you say that crime in your neighborhood is decreasing, staying the same, or increasing?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Greatly decreased	1.1%	0.0%	5.5%	0.0%	2.6%	2.8%
Somewhat decreased	7.8	9.4	6.3	2.9	14.0	7.8
Stayed the same	45.4	39.1	41.4	32.7	48.8	41.6
Somewhat increased	32.4	42.2	32.4	44.8	24.2	34.3
Greatly increased	10.1	5.5	10.3	15.6	5.0	9.2
Don't know	3.3	3.8	4.2	4.1	5.5	4.2

Only a few demographic characteristics can be significantly associated with perceptions of crime trends. The most significant were marital status and gender. Women were more likely than men to perceive crime as increasing. Single men and single women were more likely than married counterparts to perceive decreases in crime.

Table 8.2 contains a summary of the responses to the question:

How much do you agree or disagree with this statement: “It’s safe to be out on the streets of my community after dark.” Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Based on the data obtained, 80.8 per cent of adult Alaskans reported agreeing that the streets of their communities are safe at night. Slight below half (44.3%) of the respondents strongly agree and another 36.5 per cent somewhat agree. The strongest disagreement to this question came from Fairbanks and Anchorage area residents, where 25.6 per cent and 30.0 per cent, respectively, disagreed. Table 8.2 seems to reflect a direct relationship between the extent of an area’s urbanization and the expressed opinions of residents about safety on community streets.

Table 8.2. Safety in the Community

*Question 12: How much do you agree or disagree with this statement:
“It’s safe to be out on the streets of my community after dark”?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	N = 605
Strongly disagree	3.7%	2.7%	9.4%	15.9%	0.9%	6.9%
Somewhat disagree	8.3	3.2	14.1	14.1	7.5	10.4
Neutral/don’t know	2.3	0.6	1.6	1.5	3.5	1.8
Somewhat agree	26.4	32.4	43.9	35.0	31.1	36.5
Strongly agree	59.2	61.0	31.0	33.5	57.0	44.3

A similar rural-urban difference exists in tabulated responses (Table 8.3) to the question:

How often do you worry about becoming a victim of violent crime in your community? Are you always, occasionally, infrequently, or never worried about becoming a victim of violent crime?

Rural residents are least likely to worry about becoming a victim of violent crime; 52.7 per cent never worry. Anchorage residents are more likely than those of other areas to worry. Although Alaskans who frequently or always worry about becoming a victim of violent crime are a small minority, representing only 10.1 per cent statewide, slightly more people in Anchorage (12.8%) and in Fairbanks (15.6%) express this degree of worry. Statewide, fairly equal numbers of respondents declare they “never” or “infrequently” worry, at 34.1 per cent and 32.1 per cent respectively. Close to one-quarter of adult Alaskans (23.7%) occasionally worry about becoming a victim of violent crime, while 6.9 per cent frequently worry and 3.2 per cent always worry.

Table 8.3. Level of Worry About Violent Crime

Question 13: How often do you worry about becoming a victim of violent crime in your community?

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	N = 605
Never worried	43.9%	46.5%	19.8%	30.9%	52.7%	34.1%
Infrequently worried	34.1	27.7	38.2	27.0	22.9	32.1
Occasionally worried	15.9	18.8	29.2	26.5	19.0	23.7
Frequently worried	5.2	5.9	8.7	9.6	2.6	6.9
Always worried	0.9	1.2	4.1	6.0	2.7	3.2

The higher proportions of rural residents than city residents who view their communities as being safe and having decreasing crime are difficult to explain. Historically, the rural areas of Alaska have had violent crime rates proportionally equal to or greater than those of the larger Alaska cities. Are resident attitudes based on the perceived number as opposed to the proportion of violent crimes which occur in a community?

Is fear level associated with ratio of violent crimes to actual size of the geographical area rather than ratio of crimes to population in an area? Perhaps the extent and focus of media coverage shapes attitudes and fear levels of citizens.

Those areas where the largest proportion of citizens expressed the opinion that their area of residence is unsafe and reported being fearful of becoming a violent crime victim were also the urban areas with the most established and accessible police operations. Questions concerning these situations need additional attention.

IX. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL: RELATIONSHIP TO CRIME, MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEMS, AND RISKS

For at least two decades, public policy involving crime and the administration of justice has been founded on the proposition that drugs and, to a lesser extent, alcohol abuse are the fundamental generators of criminality in the United States. To test the support for that proposition among adult Alaskans interviewees were asked:

How much of the crime in your community do you feel is caused by illegal drug use? Do you feel that very little, about a fourth, about half, about three-fourths, or almost all of the crime in your community is caused by illegal drug use?

The results from this question are in Table 9.1. Over three-fourths of all Alaskans interviewed expressed the opinion that from one-fourth to almost all of the crime in their communities is caused by illegal drugs. Of adult Alaskans, 27.2 per cent expressed belief that about half the crime in their communities is caused by illegal drug use. Relatively equal proportions believe that either very little (20.6%) or about one-fourth (21.8%) is caused by illegal drug use. Analysis of these results by area of residence shows that, while there is no significant difference among residents of the various regions, a higher proportion of Rural respondents (28.6%) than urban (Anchorage, 18.9%; Fairbanks, 15.3%) reported feeling that “very little” of the crime in their community was caused by illegal drugs.

Table 9.1. Illegal Drug Use as a Cause of Crime

Question 14: How much of the crime in your community do you feel is caused by illegal drug use?

	Southeast N=121	Valdez/Kenai/ Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Very little	18.9%	22.6%	18.9%	15.3%	28.6%	20.6%
About a fourth	22.6	22.3	21.3	20.0	22.8	21.8
About half	29.7	30.3	26.9	33.2	17.7	27.2
About three-fourths	10.9	12.7	20.6	14.5	11.5	15.8
Almost all	11.6	3.6	8.1	9.3	14.2	8.9
Don't know	6.3	8.4	4.1	7.6	5.2	5.8

There is a positive association between Alaskans’ age and their beliefs about the amount of crime attributable to illegal drugs. The younger the respondent, the less likely he or she was to attribute crime causation to illegal drugs.

Immediately following the preceding question, interviewees were asked:

How much of the crime in your community do you feel is caused by alcohol use? Do you feel that very little, about a fourth, about half, about three-fourths, or almost all of the crime in your community is caused by alcohol use?

The compiled responses to this question (Table 9.2) overlap the responses to the previous question concerning the relation of illegal drugs and crime. It may be these two issues are so closely associated in peoples’ minds that there is often no clear separation between drugs and alcohol in association with criminality. Overall, however, Alaskans consider the effect of alcohol on crime to be slightly higher than that of drugs. Adult Alaskans attribute more crime in their communities to alcohol use than to use of illegal drugs. Statewide, about one-third (36.0%) believe that “very little” or “about a fourth” of the crime in their communities is caused by alcohol use. Almost the same proportion of Alaskans (32.5%) think that “almost all” or “about three-fourths” of the crime is caused by alcohol. Rural Alaskans and those from the Southeast area of the state rated the contributions of alcohol use to crime as much more significant than did interviewees in other areas. Compared to the 60.5 per cent of respondents statewide who think that one-half or more of their crime is caused by alcohol use, 78.2 per cent of Rural Alaskans attribute at least half of their crime to alcohol, as do 76.4 per cent of Southeastern Alaskans. Similarly, a higher proportion of Rural and Southeast interviewees ranked alcohol use as having a larger influence than illegal drugs on causing crime in their

Table 9.2. Alcohol Use as a Cause of Crime

Question 15: How much of the crime in your community do you feel is caused by alcohol use?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast	Mat-Su	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Rural Alaska	Statewide
	N=121	N=120	N=120	N=122	N=122	N=605
Very little	5.9%	15.6%	12.3%	11.2%	9.0%	11.4%
About a fourth	16.3	18.2	36.7	18.8	11.1	24.6
About half	42.7	32.6	23.9	30.3	19.5	28.0
About three-fourths	19.7	17.0	18.9	25.9	21.1	19.9
Almost all	14.0	10.3	4.8	8.9	37.6	12.6
Don't know	1.3	6.3	3.5	5.0	1.7	3.6

communities.

In an attempt to obtain public opinions concerning the extent to which the most commonly recognized drugs are problems in the various local communities, the interviewees were asked:

Now, I would like to ask you about drugs used in your community. For each substance I read, please tell me how much of a problem you think the drug is in your community. What about _____ (FILL IN SUBSTANCE) is this a VERY BIG PROBLEM, SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM, or NOT A PROBLEM at all where you live?

- Cocaine or Crack*
- Marijuana, Hashish*
- Alcohol*
- Stimulants, Uppers, Speed (Amphetamines)*
- Barbiturates, Downers*
- Inhalants: Glue, Gas, Aerosol Sprays, etc.*
- Tobacco: Cigarettes, Chew, Snuff, Cigars*
- Heroin or other opiates*
- Hallucinogens: LSD, Mushrooms*
- Tranquilizers: Valium*

Table 9.3 displays tabulations of interviewee responses. Respondents often did not know enough about some of the mentioned drugs to venture an opinion on whether or not it constituted a problem, or on

the extent of its use in the community. The “don’t know” responses provide a measure of the lack of public familiarity with the substances, their use or their impact in the community. Nearly one-third of adult Alaskans did not know the extent to which amphetamines, barbiturates and opiates are problems in their communities, and about one-fourth did not know if inhalants, hallucinogens, or tranquilizers were problems.

Most adult Alaskans are willing to express opinions about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and cocaine use and impact. Again, opinions about the significance of alcohol as the greatest community drug problem are striking. Only 6.6 per cent of state residents believe alcohol is “not a problem at all” in their community, while 32.3 per cent think it is “somewhat” of a problem and 58.3 per cent think it is a “very big” problem. Hence, 80.6 per cent of the interviewees rated alcohol as a very big community problem. Even larger numbers of residents of Southeast Alaska, Rural Alaska and the Fairbanks area consider alcohol to be a “very big” problem. Alcohol is considered to be less of a problem in Anchorage than in any other region of the state.

It is interesting that tobacco was second to alcohol as the substance most likely to be considered a “very big” problem (38.6%) by the entire statewide sample, followed by cocaine or crack (29.8%), marijuana or hashish (27.9%), and inhalants. Comparatively, cocaine and crack are thought to pose less of a problem by Rural Alaskans than residents of other areas, but inhalants are considered by Rural Alaskans to be a greater problem. The fact that the specific drugs which the highest proportion of Alaskans view as community problems are alcohol and tobacco, followed by marijuana and cocaine, is unexpected and interesting.

Several demographic relationships are statistically significant in assessments of cocaine, marijuana, alcohol and tobacco. First, for the drugs cocaine or crack, people who ventured no opinion on the magnitude of the cocaine problem in their communities were, on average older and less educated than people who offered ratings of the cocaine problem. The youngest respondents were more likely than the older to express the opinion that either cocaine is not a problem at all in their communities, or that it is “somewhat” of a problem. Low household income was also significantly associated with the opinion that cocaine is not a problem in the community. As a group, respondents who reported low income households perceive the drugs of cocaine or crack as less of a problem than did respondents of higher incomes. Finally, opinions about cocaine also vary significantly by gender. Women, on average, perceived the size of the cocaine problem in their communities as significantly bigger than did men.

In assessing the size of a marijuana problem in their communities, men gave lower estimates of the problem than did women, and married women saw marijuana as a larger problem than did single women. As with cocaine, interviewees’ opinions about the problem of marijuana in their communities also relate to their levels of household income; however, this relationship is not simple or linear. People with incomes of \$46,000 to \$65,999 see the problem as larger, on average, than do people of other incomes. Compared to other groups, the poorest respondents, those reporting household incomes of less than \$26,000 annually, assign the least severity to the problem of marijuana in their communities.

There is a positive association between opinions about the size of the alcohol problem in communities and interviewee educational levels. Specifically, interviewees who said alcohol did not constitute a problem to their communities had, on average, fewer years of schooling than did interviewees who said alcohol presents “somewhat of a problem” in their communities. Those who believe alcohol is a “very big” problem have the highest levels of education.

Alaska residency was also associated with opinions about the magnitude of alcohol problems. Those who believed alcohol to be a “very big” problem in their communities, have, on average, fewer years of

Table 9.3. Drugs in the Community

Question 16: How much of a problem do you feel the following drugs are in your community?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Cocaine or crack						
Not a problem at all	13.1%	16.9%	19.8%	9.0%	38.5%	20.2%
Somewhat of a problem	44.0	42.0	28.9	34.7	25.1	33.3
Very big problem	26.7	22.9	38.3	32.2	15.6	29.8
Don't know	16.2	18.1	13.0	24.0	20.7	16.9
Marijuana, hashish						
Not a problem at all	16.0%	15.9%	22.8%	20.9%	19.0%	19.9%
Somewhat of a problem	43.2	28.4	47.2	33.8	40.6	40.7
Very big problem	30.8	41.7	18.9	30.6	31.9	27.9
Don't know	9.9	14.0	11.1	14.8	8.4	11.5
Alcohol						
Not a problem at all	1.8%	4.1%	9.5%	6.4%	5.8%	6.6%
Somewhat of a problem	24.5	31.5	42.0	22.8	21.8	32.3
Very big problem	73.1	61.7	44.6	67.8	70.7	58.3
Don't know	0.7	2.7	3.9	3.1	1.7	2.8
Stimulants, uppers, speed (amphetamines)						
Not a problem at all	23.0%	24.0%	24.9%	16.1%	47.1%	26.9%
Somewhat of a problem	36.4	31.6	45.5	34.6	20.7	36.7
Very big problem	8.6	4.5	5.9	8.3	0.9	5.5
Don't know	32.0	39.8	23.6	41.0	31.3	30.9
Barbiturates, downers						
Not a problem at all	25.9%	27.7%	30.4%	20.6%	52.5%	31.6%
Somewhat of a problem	32.8	28.1	39.1	28.5	15.9	31.4
Very big problem	5.0	4.0	7.0	7.6	0.0	5.2
Don't know	36.3	40.3	23.5	43.4	31.6	31.8
Inhalants: glue, gas, aerosol sprays, etc.						
Not a problem at all	36.9%	28.0%	31.3%	23.3%	38.5%	31.6%
Somewhat of a problem	29.3	30.8	38.3	26.1	34.8	33.7
Very big problem	5.2	8.2	11.9	6.3	14.8	10.1
Don't know	28.6	33.1	18.6	44.3	11.8	24.6
Tobacco: cigarettes, chew, snuff, cigars						
Not a problem at all	21.5%	30.9%	30.0%	28.8%	14.5%	26.5%
Somewhat of a problem	24.2	24.7	36.9	22.6	27.1	29.8
Very big problem	52.6	36.0	27.5	42.9	55.3	38.6
Don't know	1.8	8.3	5.6	5.7	3.2	5.2
Heroin or other opiates						
Not a problem at all	33.5%	36.7%	31.1%	24.8%	57.5%	35.8%
Somewhat of a problem	27.2	24.3	38.6	24.8	14.3	29.1
Very big problem	3.2	2.4	9.6	4.7	0.9	5.5
Don't know	36.1	36.5	20.7	45.7	27.3	29.6
Hallucinogens: LSD, mushrooms						
Not a problem at all	30.6%	34.0%	32.5%	28.0%	61.2%	36.4%
Somewhat of a problem	33.3	25.9	38.2	24.8	9.9	29.3
Very big problem	3.9	4.6	9.4	4.8	1.7	6.1
Don't know	32.2	35.5	19.9	42.4	27.1	28.2
Tranquilizers: Valium						
Not a problem at all	22.6%	26.3%	31.2%	28.1%	55.9%	32.7%
Somewhat of a problem	42.9	30.4	43.2	31.6	9.5	34.2
Very big problem	4.9	9.1	7.3	5.0	3.5	6.4
Don't know	29.5	34.1	18.3	35.3	31.1	26.6

Alaska residency than do people who consider alcohol to constitute less of a problem.

Finally, gender and marital status also relate to perceptions about alcohol. Women assign significantly more severity to the problem of alcohol in their communities than do men.

Opinions about tobacco associate significantly to length of residency, number of children, age, and

gender and marital status. The average length of Alaska residency declines as the magnitude assigned the problem of tobacco increases. Thus, people who think tobacco is not a problem at all have, on average, lived in Alaska for more years than others who believe tobacco is either “somewhat” or a “very big” problem. People who consider tobacco to be a problem were younger, on average, than people who consider tobacco to be a small problem or not a problem at all.

The number of children reported in the home is also associated with opinions about tobacco as a problem. People who believed tobacco was not a problem in their communities had fewer children in their homes. And finally, women perceive tobacco to be a larger problem in their communities than do men, and married women perceive tobacco to constitute a larger problem than do single women.

Table 9.4 is a summary of the proportional arrangement of responses to the question:

How much do you think people risk harming themselves, either physically or in other ways, if they use _____ (FILL IN SUBSTANCE) once a week? Do you feel that there is NO RISK, A MODERATE RISK, A HIGH RISK, or A VERY HIGH RISK if they use _____ (FILL IN SUBSTANCE) once a week? What if they use _____ (FILL IN SUBSTANCE) daily?

*Cocaine/Crack
Marijuana
Inhalants (Glue, Gas, Aerosol Sprays)
Alcohol*

This question was designed to obtain opinions about the risks associated with use and frequency of use of drugs and alcohol. Statewide, adult Alaskans associated the lowest amounts of risk with weekly use of marijuana and alcohol. The highest amounts of risk are associated with daily cocaine use (79.5% statewide, “very high risk”) and daily inhalant use (78.2%, “very high risk”), followed by weekly inhalant use (51.0%, “very high risk”) and weekly cocaine use (37.3%, “very high risk”).

Beliefs about the risks associated with marijuana and cocaine or crack use do not vary significantly by region of the state in which respondents reside. However, there are significant regional differences in beliefs about inhalant and alcohol risks. Compared to all state residents, people from the Fairbanks area and from the Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su region attribute relatively higher risks to weekly inhalant use while rural Alaskans and those from the Southeast attribute relatively lesser risk. Again compared to all residents, Fairbanks residents assign more risk and rural Alaskans assign less risk to daily inhalant use. One regional difference in Alaskans’ beliefs about alcohol use is very distinct: Rural Alaskans assign considerably greater risks to both weekly and daily alcohol use than do people from other areas of the state. Of all areas of the state, residents of Anchorage assigned the lowest amounts of risks to weekly and daily alcohol use.

Analysis reveals a number of statistically significant associations between the perceived risks of drugs and the demographic characteristics of respondents. Age has a positive association with opinions about the risk of marijuana and inhalant use for both weekly and daily use. This means that the higher the age group, the higher the ranking of the risks associated with the use of marijuana and inhalants.

Educational levels also relate to reported risk Alaskans assign to weekly marijuana use and daily and weekly alcohol use. People who assess the risks of weekly marijuana use as “high” or “very high” have, on average, slightly fewer years of schooling than interviewees who believe there is no risk, low risk or moderate risk with using marijuana weekly. The association between education and beliefs about alcohol risk is more

Table 9.4. Risk Associated with Alcohol and Drug Use

Question 17: How much do you think people risk harming themselves, either physically or in other ways, if they use the following substances once a week? What if they use the substances daily?

	Southeast N = 121	Valdez/Kenai/ Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Marijuana						
<i>Once a week use</i>						
No risk	14.1%	14.3%	15.2%	17.6%	10.4%	14.4%
Low risk	35.3	28.5	32.4	28.2	26.1	30.6
Moderate risk	24.7	27.7	28.6	23.9	24.7	26.7
High risk	10.4	12.6	12.6	17.4	15.4	13.4
Very high risk	10.4	6.9	8.6	8.8	7.6	8.4
Don't know	5.1	10.0	2.6	4.0	15.8	6.4
<i>Daily use</i>						
No risk	5.6%	5.6%	3.2%	4.1%	0.0%	3.6%
Low risk	6.1	5.6	17.1	10.2	10.5	11.8
Moderate risk	22.5	24.0	18.9	17.4	17.1	19.8
High risk	30.7	32.0	30.6	34.6	30.8	31.4
Very high risk	27.2	25.2	28.3	28.7	26.8	27.4
Don't know	7.8	7.5	1.9	5.0	14.8	6.0
Cocaine/crack						
<i>Once a week use</i>						
No risk	0.7%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.7%	0.6%
Low risk	3.2	5.2	2.9	4.3	5.0	3.8
Moderate risk	22.0	16.6	13.7	10.9	17.5	15.5
High risk	32.7	36.9	39.8	37.1	32.6	36.9
Very high risk	36.3	35.7	40.0	44.3	27.3	37.3
Don't know	5.0	5.7	2.8	3.4	16.9	5.9
<i>Daily use</i>						
No risk	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.7%	0.5%
Low risk	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.1
Moderate risk	3.8	2.3	0.0	0.0	3.4	1.4
High risk	10.8	15.6	12.7	9.3	16.4	13.1
Very high risk	80.4	77.4	83.7	88.1	63.4	79.5
Don't know	5.0	4.8	2.8	2.6	15.2	5.3
Inhalants (glue, gas, aerosol sprays)						
<i>Once a week use</i>						
No risk	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Low risk	5.8	0.6	5.1	3.1	3.4	3.9
Moderate risk	10.1	17.3	13.2	7.4	14.2	13.0
High risk	29.6	19.3	23.2	21.6	30.7	24.3
Very high risk	44.3	55.3	54.2	56.0	39.2	51.0
Don't know	9.1	7.5	4.3	11.9	12.5	7.7
<i>Daily use</i>						
No risk	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Low risk	3.1	0.0	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.0
Moderate risk	2.0	4.9	3.5	1.6	3.4	3.3
High risk	6.1	12.0	10.3	4.1	16.5	10.3
Very high risk	81.1	76.3	81.1	83.3	65.9	78.2
Don't know	7.7	6.8	4.3	10.0	13.4	7.3
Alcohol						
<i>Once a week use</i>						
No risk	14.2%	20.8%	16.6%	12.6%	13.8%	16.1%
Low risk	41.4	37.1	43.3	43.1	19.8	38.3
Moderate risk	19.2	19.4	22.5	27.3	29.0	23.1
High risk	9.7	10.6	7.9	7.9	13.3	9.5
Very high risk	12.1	9.4	5.6	7.4	17.5	9.2
Don't know	3.4	2.7	4.1	1.7	6.6	3.8
<i>Daily use</i>						
No risk	0.0%	4.1%	1.5%	1.0%	2.2%	1.8%
Low risk	8.9	7.6	7.0	7.0	0.9	6.4
Moderate risk	17.7	20.1	29.2	18.7	8.9	21.6
High risk	33.8	32.6	31.2	40.7	33.1	33.3
Very high risk	35.2	32.1	27.6	30.9	47.5	32.9
Don't know	4.5	3.4	3.5	1.7	7.4	4.0

provocative. Analysis discloses a negative relationship between level of educational achievement and the risks interviewees associated with alcohol use. This means that, generally, the average amount of risk respondents assign to alcohol use increases as the years of schooling decrease. Thus, people who believe that risk is present but low have an average 14.98 years of schooling.

Gender relates significantly to risks respondents assign to daily marijuana and cocaine use and with risks associated with weekly alcohol use. Men perceive less risk attached to daily marijuana use than do women, and the same holds for risk attributed to daily cocaine use, although daily cocaine use is considered far more risky by respondents than daily marijuana use. Weekly alcohol use was considered by all gender groups of interviewees as a relatively low risk activity; however, men attribute less risk to this than do women and married people see it as less risky than single people.

X. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL: PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF USERS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS AND SELLERS OF DRUGS

Opinions are at times based on inaccurate information, misperceptions, and guesses rather than fact. The preceding sections of this report contains evidence of some of the inconsistencies such foundations produce. To obtain more objective, factual knowledge based on personal experience, the following three questions were asked:

Do you personally know someone who regularly abuses alcohol?

Do you personally know someone who regularly uses illegal drugs?

Do you personally know someone who sells illegal drugs?

The answers to these questions provided evidence of how close interviewees were to the problems of alcohol and drug abuse (of course, knowing people who abuse alcohol or drugs or sell illegal drugs does not mean that the users or dealers reside in the respondent's community. In addition, it is possible many interviewees may know and be reporting on the same abuser or seller). Table 10.1 shows that 3 out of 5 adult Alaskans report knowing someone who regularly abuses alcohol and over one-half (53.9%) report knowing more than one person. Regional differences are prominent. Residents from Southeast Alaska and Rural Alaska are considerably more likely than Alaskans from other regions to report knowing more than one person who regularly abuses alcohol. This situation may be attributed to the relatively small sizes of communities in these regions, the widespread nature of alcohol abuse, or both. Residents of Anchorage, on the other hand, are fairly split between those who know an alcohol abuser and those who do not.

Table 10.1. Personal Knowledge Alcohol Abusers

*Question 18: Do you personally know someone who regularly abuses alcohol?
Do you know one person or more than one person who regularly abuses alcohol?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
No	22.7%	35.9%	46.7%	38.2%	28.2%	37.7%
Yes — one	6.1	9.6	9.8	9.8	4.3	8.4
Yes — more than one	71.2	54.5	43.5	52.0	67.6	53.9

What about personal knowledge of the regular use of illegal drugs? Table 10.2 shows that 36.1 per cent of Alaskans personally know someone who regularly uses illegal drugs, and 27.1 per cent know more than one person. Alaskans across the state are equally likely to know at least one person who regularly uses illegal drugs, but when it comes to knowing more than one person who regularly uses illegal drugs, Rural Alaskans again stand out. A relatively large 38.5 per cent of Rural Alaskans reported knowing more than one person who uses illegal drugs.

Table 10.2. Personal Knowledge of Users of Illegal Drugs

*Question 19: Do you personally know someone who regularly uses illegal drugs?
Do you know one person or more than one person who regularly uses illegal drugs?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
No	65.4%	62.0%	67.8%	62.4%	55.5%	63.9%
Yes — one	4.3	16.0	9.1	7.7	6.0	9.0
Yes — more than one	30.3	21.9	23.1	29.9	38.5	27.1

Fewer Alaskans report knowing people who sell illegal drugs. Results to this item are displayed in Table 10.3. Of those interviewed, 84.3 per cent reported that they do *not* personally know someone who sells illegal drugs. Conversely, however, this can mean that around one adult Alaskan in six knows someone who sells drugs. Knowledge of drug sellers shows no statistically significant regional differences.

Table 10.3. Personal Knowledge of Sellers of Illegal Drugs

*Question 20: Do you personally know someone who sells illegal drugs?
Do you know one person or more than one person who sells illegal drugs?*

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
No	88.5%	83.4%	85.8%	84.8%	77.5%	84.3%
Yes — one	6.0	7.7	5.6	6.4	7.0	6.3
Yes — more than one	5.5	9.0	8.6	8.8	15.5	9.4

Significant relationships between demographic characteristics and personal knowledge of alcohol and drug users and sellers emerge with length of Alaska residency, education, age, and gender/marital status. For example, there is a relationship between knowing someone who abuses alcohol and length of residency of the interviewees. Those who report not knowing such an abuser had, on average, lived in Alaska for shorter periods of time than have the people who reported they knew an alcohol abuser.

People who reported knowing others who regularly abuse alcohol have higher levels of education than those who report otherwise. The association between educational level and personal knowledge of people who *use* illegal drugs does not reach the level of statistical significance; however, educational level and reported acquaintance with **drug sellers** does reach significance. People who know someone who sells illegal drugs have, on average, less education than those who do not know such a person.

Age is unrelated to knowledge of people who regularly abuse alcohol, perhaps because alcohol abuse is common in all adult age groups; however, age relates strongly to knowledge of others who regularly use illegal drugs. Younger respondents were more likely than older interviewees to report that they personally know a drug user. A similar relationship exists between age of respondents and knowledge of people who sell illegal drugs. Younger respondents were more likely to report knowing drug sellers.

Gender and marital status relate to knowledge of drug users and drug sellers. Single men, for example, were the only group in which the same proportion of interviewees report not knowing and knowing drug users. Single males were significantly more likely than married men, married women, and single women to report knowledge of more than one drug user. Marital status is associated with knowledge of drug sellers. Single people were more inclined to report knowing someone who sells drugs than were their married counterparts, and singles were also much more likely to know more than one person who sells drugs.

People’s proximity to alcohol abuse, drug use and drug sales is statistically unrelated to their household incomes and the presence or absence of children in their homes.

XI. COMBATTING ILLEGAL DRUG USE AND ABUSE

Public policies concerning the handling of people who use harmful illegal drugs have shifted among several strategies over the years. At times abusers have been basically ignored; at other times the emphasis has been on providing treatment; and at times the prevalent policy has involved arresting and prosecuting them. This section deals with public preferences concerning the handling of users of illegal drugs. The interviewees were asked:

Which one of the following statements best reflects your view on how to handle people who use harmful illegal drugs?

1. *“They should be arrested and prosecuted.”*
2. *“They should not be arrested but treated medically, like any person with a physical or emotional problem.”*
3. *“They should be arrested and then treated medically, like any person with a physical or emotional problem.”*
4. *“They should be left alone unless they are bothering somebody.”*

Table 11.1 shows the responses to the first of these opinion questions. Only 13.6 per cent chose the option of arrest and prosecution, although almost half the respondents (46.7%) indicated illegal drug users should be handled by arrest and medical treatment. Another 22.7 per cent chose the option of treating drug abusers solely on a medical basis, without arrest; 15.5 per cent indicated drug abusers should be left alone unless they are bothering someone. While the table shows some variation across regions of the state, none of the regional differences reached statistical significance.

Table 11.1. How to Handle Users of Illegal Drugs

Question 21: Which one of the following statements best reflects your view on how to handle people who use harmful illegal drugs?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
They should be arrested and prosecuted.	19.4%	15.7%	10.3%	16.7%	12.8%	13.6%
They should not be arrested, but treated medically like any person with a physical or emotional problem.	16.2	17.8	28.1	19.8	21.6	22.7
They should be arrested and then treated medically, like any person with a physical or emotional problem.	50.6	47.1	43.4	49.7	46.7	46.3
They should be left alone unless they are bothering somebody.	10.4	16.6	17.4	12.2	16.3	15.5
Don't know	3.4	2.9	0.7	1.6	2.6	1.8

Only two associations with demographic characteristics proved significant, and both have somewhat obscure implications. Interviewees who chose the opinion of leaving illegal drug users alone also report considerably longer Alaska residency, than did people who chose other options. People with children were less likely than those without to believe “arrest and prosecution” to be the best way to deal with drug users.

Since the preceding options were not inclusive of all alternatives for handling people who use drugs, interviewees were given the opportunity to suggest other alternatives. They were asked:

Do you think that there is a better way to handle people who use drugs other than what was just mentioned? (IF “YES”) what is the better way to handle people who use drugs?

Table 11.2. Other Ways of Handling Users of Illegal Drugs

Question 22a: Do you think that there is a better way to handle people who use drugs other than what was just mentioned?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Yes	27.6%	35.6%	27.8%	25.2%	17.0%	27.1%
No	72.4	64.4	72.2	74.8	83.0	72.9

Table 11.3. Better Ways to Handle Drug Users

Question 22: Do you think that there is a better way to handle people who use drugs other than what was just mentioned? What is the better way to handle people who use drugs?

N = 605

No better way	72.9%
Education	7.8
Harsher penalties, stricter laws	4.4
	Harder, stronger laws or penalties, with a Colt 45, death penalty, caning of the sellers, heavy drugs — heavy punishment, firm arrest and conviction, aggressive prosecution, don't let serious drug offenders out on bail, ship them off to an island for a year, more strict, take freedoms away, go after sellers aggressively, harsher juvenile laws, selling drugs should be treated as murder, serious laws, punishment for second offense, more supervision from authorities, take their money, track people spoken to by authorities, give one chance only
Legalize drugs, leave drug users alone	3.2
	Legalize drugs, legalize marijuana and lesser drugs, regulate marijuana, leave home use alone, ask if they want help — if not leave them alone, leave alone until they commit crime or become a burden
Treatment (voluntary or mandatory)	1.8
	Treatment with graduated scale of punishment, more demanding rehabilitation, extend rehabilitation, volunteer their own rehab, treatment as a choice, force into treatment center, treatment at affordable rate, get a treatment center, warning and then treatment
Counseling /Therapy	1.6
Family/community support and intervention	1.3
	Family support, friends and family get involved, intervention, family and community should take care of their own, community needs to deal with it on a one-to-one basis, treat the whole community and family, trained intervention
Community service alternative	1.0
Religion	1.0
	Become involved in religion, church
Find out cause	0.9
	Find out what real problem is, work on cause more than effects, find out what motivates them to do drugs, get to their personal root of the problem
Different law enforcement focus	0.6
	More emphasis on follow-through, hotline for suspects and users, slow down on illegal drugs coming in, concentrate on selling and distribution of drugs
Childhood focus	0.5
	Raise children right, parental control, early prevention, taught at an early age at home not to abuse drugs
Other	2.7
	Responsible for medical bills, clarify between types of drug offenders and punishment, jobs most important, job training, confrontation, inform them that they have a problem first, better social understandings, institutionalized, stay away from populated areas, more help with drug and treatment information, aid of police, arrest/prosecution then send them to rehab, social awareness programs

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding and weighting.

Only 27.1 per cent statewide indicated they felt better ways for handling drug users exist (Table 11.2). Regionally, the highest proportions of the interviewees to express a belief in better methods was in the Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su area, and the lowest proportion was in Rural Alaska. Their ideas vary widely and are summarized in Table 11.3. The most commonly suggested “better way” for handling drug users was “education,” which was suggested by 7.8 per cent of the interviewees. A number of respondents, 4.4 per cent, suggested that people who use drugs might be handled better by imposing harsher penalties for drug use, or alternative penalties, such as “taking their money,” “caning drug sellers,” “shipping (drug users) off to an island for a year” and “the death penalty.” Slightly fewer respondents, 3.2 per cent suggested that drugs be legalized or regulated, or that drugs users be left alone.

There has also been a good deal of discussion concerning the appropriate allocation of resources in dealing with drug abuse problems. Data related to public preferences were obtained by asking interviewees:

There are a number of possible methods of fighting drug abuse. Which one of the following do you think should receive the most money and effort?

1. Drug treatment and rehabilitation,
2. Arrest and prosecution of drug law violators,
3. Drug abuse education and prevention, or
4. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs?

Results are summarized in Table 11.4. Statewide, 57.5 per cent of the respondents chose to prioritize the options of “Drug abuse education and prevention” and “Drug treatment and rehabilitation” over the interdiction, arrest, and prosecution options. Of adult Alaskans, 39.3 per cent chose “education” as the method deserving of the most funding and effort in fighting drug abuse. Over one-fourth (26.6%) suggested stopping the flow of illegal drugs. In order of preference, these methods were followed by “drug treatment,” which 18.2 per cent selected and finally, “arrest and prosecution,” chosen by 12.8 per cent. Perhaps the most surprising feature of the response summary was this low proportion of respondents, both within each region and statewide, who prioritized funding for arrest and prosecution of drug violators low. Once again, regional differences emerged in responses to this question, but were not strong. Nor were there any distinctions between responses to this item and demographic characteristics.

Table 11.4. Methods of Fighting Drug Abuse

Question 23: There are a number of possible methods of fighting drug abuse. Which one of the following do you think should receive the most money and effort?

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide N=605
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	
Drug treatment and rehabilitation	15.3%	19.2%	22.0%	14.9%	12.1%	18.2%
Arrest and prosecution of drug law violators	15.5	11.5	13.9	9.0	12.1	12.8
Drug abuse education and prevention	37.7	41.9	38.0	46.2	35.7	39.3
Stopping the flow of illegal drugs	28.5	25.5	23.6	28.2	33.1	26.6
Don't know	2.9	2.0	2.6	1.6	7.0	3.1

Data concerning public opinions about the most significant group in community efforts dealing with drugs were obtained by the question:

Which one of the following groups do you think can do the most to help fight against drugs? Schools, police and courts, family, churches, treatment centers, or business and industry?

As shown in Table 11.5, the most frequently chosen response was “family.” Almost half (48.0%) of our respondents chose the “family” as the most effective group in fighting drugs and drug abuse. One-quarter (24.6%) of the respondents named “schools” as the group most effective in this battle. Many fewer respondents identify “police and courts” (9.9%) and “treatment centers” (6.3%), and fewer still identify “business and industry” (4.8%) and “churches” (2.6%). There are no significant variations in these responses based on region of state residence.

Table 11.5. Most Effective Groups in Fighting Drugs

Question 24: Which one of the following groups do you think can do the most to help fight against drugs?

	Valdez/Kenai/					
	Southeast N = 121	Mat-Su N = 120	Anchorage N = 120	Fairbanks N = 122	Rural Alaska N = 122	Statewide N = 605
Schools	26.4%	21.9%	26.1%	33.1%	15.1%	24.6%
Police and courts	10.6	12.2	7.1	12.1	12.3	9.9
Family	47.3	53.3	49.3	37.9	47.1	48.0
Churches	2.0	2.7	1.7	4.4	4.0	2.6
Treatment centers	5.4	4.9	6.1	6.5	8.7	6.3
Business and industry	2.4	3.5	6.8	2.4	4.8	4.8
Don't know	5.9	1.5	2.8	3.6	7.9	3.9

XII. CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION, REPORTING, AND SATISFACTION WITH POLICE

Toward the end of the survey interview, respondents were asked a series of questions about their own criminal victimization and experiences. This series of questions involved a “skip pattern”—that is, specific answers to some questions lead to the asking of others.

In the past year have you been a victim of crime?

(If yes,) What type of crime?

Did you report this crime to police?

(If yes,) How satisfied were you with the police response to your report? Were you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neutral, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the police response?

(Victims of personal crimes were asked:) To the best of your knowledge was the person who committed the crime under the influence of drugs or alcohol?

Did you know the person(s) who committed the crime?

Was a weapon involved in the crime?

Statewide, 21.6 per cent of respondents identified themselves as victims of crime during the preceding year. Table 12.1 displays the proportions of study participants identifying themselves as victims, by region of residence. Regional differences in victimization are significant. Anchorage had the highest reported victimization rate, with 30.2 per cent of Anchorage interviewees reporting victimization, as compared to 12.2 per cent of Southeast who reported having been victimized in the past year. Although the victimization rate in all regions was lower than in Anchorage, the difference especially in the Rural area seems to lie in higher personal crime and lower property crime victimization than in Anchorage. However, this finding is based on too few responses for significance. Regional columns and comparisons of victimization cannot be included on the following tables because variation by region was insignificant, and because the number of cases in which respondents identified themselves as victimized was too small.

Table 12.1. Crime Victimization

Question 25a: In the past year have you been a victim of crime?

	Southeast N=121	Valdez/Kenai/ Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	Statewide N=605
Yes	12.2%	15.8%	30.2%	17.7%	16.3%	21.6%
No	87.8	84.2	69.8	82.3	83.7	78.4

Respondents identifying themselves as victims were asked to name the crime involved. These data are displayed in Table 12.2 and 12.3. Most of the victimized respondents (79.9%) described property crimes - most frequently burglary, breaking and entering, vandalism, property destruction, theft and stolen property. The remaining victims 20.1 per cent of the sample, described crimes against the person—most commonly domestic violence, but also including muggings, assaults, robbery, drunk driver accidents, hit and run incidents and rape.

Table 12.2. Crime Victimization: Category of Crime

Question 25ba: (If you were a victim of crime . . .)
Personal crime or property crime?

	Statewide N = 131
Personal crime	20.4%
Property crime	78.7
Personal (can't talk about it)	0.9

Table 12.3. Crime Victimization: Type of Crime

Question 25b: (If you were a victim of crime . . .)
What type of crime?

	Statewide N = 131
Burglary/breaking and entering	22.3%
Vandalism/destruction of property	20.6
Theft/stolen property	17.1
Domestic violence	8.8
Car theft	7.7
Mugging/assault	7.0
Burglarized car	4.7
Window shot out/rock thrown at window	4.5
Robbery/armed robbery	1.6
Shoplifting	1.3
Rape	1.3
Harassment	1.1
Wife killed by drunk driver	0.6
Hit and run automobile	0.4
Personal (can't talk about it)	0.9

Seventy-five per cent (75.1%) of victims reported their victimization to police (Table 12.4). Two-thirds of the victims who notified the police of the crimes were either “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with law enforcement officials’ responses to their reports (Table 12.5). Additionally, victims of personal crimes were no more or less likely than victims of property crime to make reports to police, and they did not differ in their subsequent levels of satisfaction with the police response to their reports.

Table 12.4. Crime Victimization: Reporting the Crime to Police

Question 25c: (If you were a victim of crime . . .)
Did you report this crime to police?

	Statewide N = 131
Yes	74.0%
No	25.1
Personal (can't talk about it)	0.9

Table 12.5. Crime Victimization: Police Response

Question 25d: (If you reported the crime to police . . .)
How satisfied were you with the police response to your report?

	Statewide N = 97
Very dissatisfied	28.7%
Somewhat dissatisfied	36.2
Somewhat satisfied	15.9
Very satisfied	19.1

From the total statewide sample of interviewees, 4.5 per cent reported being victims of personal crimes in the past year. Once identified, victims of personal crime were questioned about the circumstances of surrounding their victimization. Table 12.6 displays the answers on the final three victimization questions. A fairly large portion (63.5%) of the victims of personal crime reported that the person who committed the crime was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time the crime was committed. An additional 14.5 per cent reported not knowing whether the perpetrators were under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Only 22.1 per cent of the self-identified personal crime victims indicated that the perpetrator of the crime was not under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the crime commission.

Table 12.6. Crime Victimization: Drug or Alcohol-Influenced Crimes

Question 25e: (If the crime against you was a personal crime . . .)
To the best of your knowledge, was the person who committed the crime under the influence of drugs or alcohol?

	Statewide N = 27
Yes	63.5%
No	22.1
Don't know	14.5

About three-quarters (74.2%) of the victims of personal offenses reported knowing their perpetrators (Table 12.7). This is a somewhat higher proportion than normally reported in crime reports. And finally, weapons were involved in approximately one-third (31.1%) of the instances of personal crime reported (Table 12.8). The type of weapon was not determined.

Table 12.7. Crime Victimization: Personal Knowledge of Perpetrator

Question 25f: (If the crime against you was a personal crime . . .)
Did you know the person(s) who committed the crime?

	Statewide N = 27
Yes	74.2%
No	25.8

Table 12.8. Crime Victimization: Weapon Involvement in the Crime

Question 25g: (If the crime against you was a personal crime . . .)
Was a weapon involved in the crime?

	Statewide N = 27
Yes	31.1%
No	68.9

Three demographic characteristics are associated with respondents' reports of being victimized in the preceding year: length of Alaska residency, income, and the presence of children in the home. Interviewees reporting victimization also reported a shorter average length of Alaska residency than was reported by people who were not victimized. On average, victims reported more children in their homes. Criminal victimization is also significantly associated with household income of the victim. A disproportionate number of victims reported household incomes at the highest end of the income scale.

There are also demographic associations with the type of crime a victim reports. Men and women, married and unmarried, are equally likely to report victimization. However, single people are more likely than married people to report personal crimes. Conversely, married men and women are more likely to report crimes involving their property.

Type of victimization also relates to household income. The average reported household income was lowest for interviewees who reported no victimization and personal crime victimization and highest for those reporting the highest rate of property crime victimization.

The willingness of victims to report crimes to police is statistically significantly related to victim age, lengths of Alaska residency, and household income. On average, victims who report their crimes to police are older and have higher household incomes than victims who do not report to police. Likewise, the length of Alaska residency reported by victims is also associated with their reports to police: Those who reported crime to police also reported having longer Alaska residency than those who did not report crime. The average household income of victims who report their crimes to police distinguishes those satisfied with the police response from those who were not satisfied. Victims who reported satisfaction with police responses had higher average reported household incomes than interviewees who reported being dissatisfied. There is no significant demographic variation in satisfaction levels among victims reporting their crimes.

XIII. VARIOUS OPINION STATEMENTS

Finally, opinions were sought to facilitate an evaluation of some common propositions about crime and crime reduction strategies. Comparable data from other studies are available to assess the Alaska opinions. The questions are as follows:

Now, I am going to read to you a list of various opinions that people might have. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

“Reducing the number of hand guns will reduce the problems in my community.”

“People must become involved in crime prevention.”

“Police are having a tough time dealing with crime all by themselves.”

The full results of responses to these opinion statements in Table 13.1 fall either into the strong disagreement or strong agreement categories, leaving very few respondents in the undecided or neutral category. Of the interviewees statewide, 65.6 per cent did not agree with the proposition that reducing the number of handguns would reduce problems in their community. Nearly one-half (49.9%) strongly disagreed, and another 15.7 per cent disagreed “somewhat.” However, this also means that 31.5 per cent of the interviewees did agree that reducing the number of handguns would reduce problems in their communities, and in Anchorage 40.7 per cent of the respondents held that view. Although 57.8 per cent of the Anchorage interviewees disagree, this is a lower proportion than that of other regions. Of the Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su interviewees, 78.8 per cent are somewhat or strongly in disagreement.

Virtually all Alaskans agree that people must become more involved with crime prevention activities: Three of four respondents (75.1%) strongly embraced this sentiment and another 21 per cent agreed “somewhat.” While none of the regional differences are significant, Rural Alaskans appear more neutral than others on the issue.

Opinion in response to the last statement, “Police have a tough time dealing with crime by themselves,” was nearly unanimous: 63.0 per cent statewide strongly agreed that police are having a tough time dealing with crime and another 24.7 per cent agreed somewhat. Regional difference on this proposition was not significant.

Respondent opinion on handguns varied considerably with three demographic characteristics: Alaska residency, age, and gender. Alaskans “neutral” on the handgun statement had the longest average length of Alaska residency. Those respondents who indicated agreement with the proposition that reducing handguns will reduce problems in their community had, on average, longer lengths of Alaska residency than do those who disagree. Age also distinguished handgun opinion, with those people whose opinions were either in the

Table 13.1. Miscellaneous Opinion Questions

Question 26: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Valdez/Kenai/					Statewide
	Southeast N=121	Mat-Su N=120	Anchorage N=120	Fairbanks N=122	Rural Alaska N=122	N=605
Reducing the number of handguns will reduce the problems in my community.						
Strongly disagree	54.6%	65.2%	41.9%	51.9%	48.8%	49.9%
Somewhat disagree	16.4	13.6	15.9	14.4	17.9	15.7
Neutral/don't know	1.6	2.1	1.5	3.8	7.1	2.8
Somewhat agree	12.0	8.6	20.8	14.2	11.4	15.2
Strongly agree	15.4	10.4	19.9	15.7	14.9	16.3
People must become involved in crime prevention.						
Strongly disagree	0.7%	0.8%	1.7%	0.9%	0.8%	1.2%
Somewhat disagree	0.7	0.0	1.4	1.7	0.8	1.0
Neutral/don't know	0.7	0.6	0.7	2.4	6.2	1.7
Somewhat agree	20.7	16.9	23.7	18.4	20.8	21.0
Strongly agree	77.3	81.7	72.6	76.6	71.4	75.1
Police are having a tough time dealing with crime all by themselves.						
Strongly disagree	0.7%	3.3%	2.7%	4.8%	3.9%	3.0%
Somewhat disagree	10.6	5.9	4.6	2.6	9.9	6.2
Neutral/don't know	2.7	5.1	0.7	2.4	7.9	3.1
Somewhat agree	27.9	24.7	23.8	21.7	26.7	24.7
Strongly agree	58.1	61.0	68.2	68.5	51.6	63.0

“strong disagreement” or “strong agreement” being among the oldest of respondents. However, the interviewees who agreed with the proposition that reducing handguns will reduce community problems were as a group younger than those who disagreed with the proposition. It seems the younger respondents are not as strongly committed as are older people to their position on this proposition, and the higher proportion of those in agreement with the proposition that reducing guns will reduce the problem are young. Finally, handgun opinions also vary significantly with gender. Male respondents are much stronger in their disagreement than are female respondents. Between married men and single men, it is the latter whose disagreement is strongest; between married women and single women, it is the former whose disagreement is the strongest.

Only gender-marital status is associated with responses to the “crime prevention” statement: Single male respondents are the most reserved group, expressing a relatively lower degree of agreement. Single women expressed relatively greater degrees of agreement.

On the topic of “tough time,” again, respondents who hold strong opinions are older, on average, than those who believe “somewhat.” However, again the most notable age difference arose with those respondents who were neutral. These respondents were older than both respondents who agreed and disagreed.

CONCLUSION

The opinions and perceptions obtained in this study are relatively congruent across the regions of Alaska; however, there are some significant differences. Alaskans across the state report high levels of satisfaction with the quality of life in their various communities and with their ability to influence positive changes in their surroundings. Most Alaskans perceive crime around them to have either stayed the same or increased “somewhat” in recent years; respondents in Rural Alaska were most likely to report viewing crime in their communities as having stayed the same or decreased. A large proportion of Alaskans—nearly 81 per cent statewide—believe the streets in their communities are safe, even at night. In addition, most Alaskans never, or infrequently, worry about becoming victims of violent crime. Overall, these facts portray a citizenry feeling satisfied and personally safe.

One-quarter of the respondents from across Alaska clearly identify alcohol and drug use, abuse, and associated crime as being the most serious of all problems facing their communities. Anchorage residents, who expressed a relatively greater concern with crime and violence than with alcohol and drug use and abuse, prove to be an exception among the regions to the otherwise uniform ranking. This difference is shown in the open-format responses obtained and in opinions about the magnitude of problems associated with drug sales, drug use, and alcohol abuse in their communities. But substance abuse and crime are not separate phenomena, and most Alaskans view abuse as the cause, at least in part, of crime. When specifically thinking about *public safety concerns*, Alaskans again cited substance use and abuse as their foremost concern.

“Education” is the foremost solution proposed for substance abuse and crime, followed by tougher laws and sentences. Alaskans also propose increasing the capacity of law enforcement, through more funding and better trained officers. There was support for group action and community involvement to reduce substance abuse and crime, but this support was insignificant compared to the preference for education.

Alaskans are either less proficient or more reluctant in prioritizing the importance of a police response to the various problems occurring in their communities. They consider virtually all of the community problems posed to be deserving of a high priority police response. Clearly, the data accumulated on prioritization are not as constructive or valuable to future planning as are the data on community-identified problems and their magnitude. However, in thinking about priorities, Alaskans across the state displayed an intolerance of child neglect and abuse and of illegal drug sales by ranking these areas as the highest police priority.

The attempt to gauge the willingness of adult Alaskans to participate in several specific tasks involved in effective law enforcement found that the vast majority of Alaskans indicate they would agreeably report crimes and criminal suspects to police, give authorities their own names as witnesses, directly help police in other ways, help crime victims in need, or testify in court. No sizable or discrete pool of people was found to be unwilling to participate in law enforcement tasks, but on some tasks those who were unwilling had

fewer children in their homes and had fewer years of education than the willing. Single men indicated more skeptical opinions of police than were others, but again, most state a willingness to assist police.

With the exception of alcohol and tobacco, a majority of the respondents did not consider other drugs to be “very big problems.” Alaskans are less likely to know about cocaine (or crack), than marijuana, but they generally assessed the “problems” each drug represents to be fairly similar in size, with the cocaine problem considered very slightly larger. Between the two drugs, however, Alaskans attribute significantly more risk to use of cocaine than to use of marijuana. The risk of inhalant use was perceived as equal to the risk of cocaine, particularly for daily consumption. Interestingly, the risks that Alaskans associate with daily alcohol use pale in comparison to those associated with inhalant and cocaine use, and yet alcohol is clearly seen as a significant community problem across the state.

A majority of people across Alaska personally know others who regularly abuse alcohol. This proportion is less in Anchorage than elsewhere, but even in Anchorage a majority of the people know alcohol abusers. Rural Alaska villages and Southeast communities are soaked even more thoroughly in alcohol. Alaska is also a state in which up to one-third of its adult residents report knowing others who regularly use illegal drugs. Far fewer report knowing others who sell drugs.

It might be this close proximity to alcohol abuse and illegal drug use that steers many Alaskans, almost half, into choosing that users of illegal drugs be treated medically as well as punitively. On the other hand, considerable sentiment encountered in this study was for harsher penalties for criminals and drug users and for more police resources. Treatment centers were chosen far less frequently than family, schools, and police as groups helpful in fighting drugs. When asked specifically about which methods to fund, most Alaskans chose interdiction efforts and education and prevention efforts, not treatment.

Roughly one-fifth of the Alaskans interviewed reported being victims of crime in the twelve months preceding the interviews. Three out of every ten Anchorage area respondents reported criminal victimization. However, most victimization involved property crimes, such as burglary, vandalism and stolen property. Only four per cent of the interviewees were victims of personal crimes, mainly domestic violence, and muggings and other assaults.

This study has disclosed a number of unexpected facts concerning the perceptions, opinions, preferences and knowledge of Alaskans. It provides excellent data for further evaluation and development.

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Appendix A METHODOLOGY

In October 1994, officials with the State of Alaska Department of Public Safety contracted with the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center for the completion of a multi-faceted research project. This portion of the project was designed to acquire data on Alaskans' quality of life, their public safety concerns, substance use and abuse, and criminal victimization. A statewide randomized telephone survey of adult Alaska residents was used to obtain the data required for this portion of the overall project and for future "baseline" opinion studies.

The survey instrument was designed by Justice Center staff with the assistance of the Department of Public Safety personnel, and it appears in its entirety in Appendix C. Interviewers for the survey were provided by Hellenthal and Associates, an Anchorage survey research firm, and interviews were conducted between November 28, 1994, to December 9, 1994. Six hundred and three (603) adult Alaskans were interviewed over the course of two weeks. Population statistics from five geographic regions in Alaska were used as sampling frames for the study. The regions, which are inclusive of all Alaska residents, are identified as "Southeast," "Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su," "Anchorage," "Fairbanks," and "Rural/Bush." Within each of the five regions, telephone calls were made to survey participants through a population proportionate sampling method. This meant that within each region, Alaskans who resided in households with active telephone numbers had an equal chance of being selected for an interview. In each region, roughly equal numbers of interviews, between 120 and 122, were completed with Alaskans 18 years of age and older. The names of the communities included in each region and the corresponding number of completed surveys are listed in Appendix B.

The five-region design was chosen over the more traditional "population proportionate" sample in order to permit clear region to region comparisons, as well as region to statewide comparisons. While Alaska is a geographically large state, its population is largely urban, residing in the Anchorage, Fairbanks, Wasilla, etc., areas. The operations of the Alaska State Troopers, on the other hand, are focused *around* population centers, but not *on* them. In many respects the Division has a non-urban focus, and its research needs require both a statewide and rural focus. A traditional population proportionate sample of Alaska would provide—even with a large 600+ sample—relatively low numbers of "cases" from places outside the larger urban areas of the state, and the margins of error associated with these cases would be large. The five-region design chosen here minimizes the margins of error associated with the statistics obtained from each region, and with weighting, it also maintains a low margin of error for statistics obtained from all regions combined for the state as a whole. To illustrate the strength of this design, Table A.1 below shows the traditional and five-region samples and the margins of error associated with each area under each design. Note that it is only in the Anchorage area that the margin of error associated with the five-region design suffers. In all other areas the margin of error decreases.

Table A.1. Traditional and Five-Region Sample Design Comparison

	Traditional		Five-region	
	N	Margin of error	N	Margin of error
Southeast	80	± 10.99%	120	± 8.94%
Kenai/Mat-Su/Valdez	105	± 9.57	120	± 8.94
Anchorage	249	± 6.20	120	± 8.94
Fairbanks	74	± 11.38	120	± 8.94
Rural Alaska	92	± 10.19	120	± 8.94
Total	600		600	

The obtained sample distribution is shown in Table A.2, and the obtained sample, weighted to reflect statewide statistics, is shown in Table A.3. This study uses one set of data in two ways. The data are displayed by region in which residents reside, and then they are displayed to reflect the population of Alaska in its entirety. This is accomplished by a procedure known as *weighting*.

Table A.2. Obtained Five-Region Sample

	N	Margin of error
Southeast	121	± 8.91%
Kenai/Mat-Su/Valdez	120	± 8.95
Anchorage	120	± 8.95
Fairbanks	122	± 8.87
Rural Alaska	120	± 8.95
Total	603	

Table A.3. Five-Region Sample Weighted for “Statewide”

	N	Percentage of statewide sample	
		Percentage of statewide sample	Margin of error
Southeast	80	13.2%	± 8.91%
Kenai/Mat-Su/Valdez	105	17.4	± 8.95
Anchorage	251	41.4	± 8.95
Fairbanks	75	12.3	± 8.87
Rural Alaska	94	15.6	± 8.95
Total	605	100.0%	± 3.99

Two weights were applied to the results of this survey. The first weight is designed to alter the regional distribution of the data to approximate a representative statewide sample. With this weight in place, the roughly equal proportions of our five-region sample, shown in Table A.2, are re-weighted to approximate the real distribution of Alaska residents in Table A.3. Thus, whereas Anchorage residents represent only one-fifth of the cases in the study as displayed in Table A.2, when weighted, Anchorage cases approximate their real proportion of the state population, at 41 per cent, shown in Table A.3. This weight enables us to have frequency results for Alaska as a whole while still permitting regional analysis. This weight is employed whenever a “statewide” figure is cited in the text of this report and in all right-most columns of the tables contained in this report. Keep in mind that this *region* weight does not effect the results within each region. It only has an effect on evaluation of statewide results.

The second weight used in analyzing the results of this survey is designed to equalize the results among men and women. This equalization is necessary because typically, in survey research, when the selection of an adult within a household is left to chance, women will make up a slightly larger proportion of the sample than will men. Yet in the real population, which we are estimating here—men and women are distributed fairly equally. In order to compensate for this “skew” based on gender, the cases of male respondents are given a slightly heavier weight and the cases of female respondents are given a slightly lighter weight.

One result of this weight is found in the sample size. Instead of the 603 respondents interviewed, Table A.3 displays 605 respondents, or two additional respondents. This is because the weight applied is fractional. The proportions shown throughout the report are based on the higher “N.”

Appendix B DISTRIBUTION OF INTERVIEWS

Southeast

Community	Prefix	Completions
Sterling	789	23
Ketchikan	225	20
Sitka	747	14
Juneau	586	7
Point Higgins	247	6
Petersburg	772	6
Lemon Creek	780	6
Douglas	364	5
Juneau	463	5
Wrangell	874	5
Haines	766	4
Metlakatla	886	3
Craig	826	3
Take	785	2
Hoonah	945	2
Sterling	790	2
Hydaburg	285	1
Gustavus	697	1
Klawock	755	1
Yakutat	784	1
Angoon	788	1
Thorne Bay	828	1
Mt. Edgecumbe	966	1
Skagway	983	1

Anchorage

Community	Prefix	Completions
Anchorage	243	8
Anchorage	248	9
Anchorage	258	3
Anchorage	272	6
Anchorage	274	3
Anchorage	276	3
Anchorage	277	4
Anchorage	278	2
Anchorage	279	2
Anchorage	333	10
Anchorage	337	8
Anchorage	338	7
Anchorage	344	9
Anchorage	349	7
Anchorage	522	3
Anchorage	345	9
Anchorage	346	3
Anchorage	783	1
Anchorage	561	4
Anchorage	562	4
Anchorage	563	4
Anchorage	688	3
Anchorage	694	3
Anchorage	696	5

Valdez/Kenai/Mat-Su

Community	Prefix	Completions
Soldotna/Sterling	262	18
Wasilla	376	15
Homer/Anchor Point	235	11
Kenai/Salamatof	283	11
Wasilla	373	10
Palmer	745	8
Palmer	746	8
Valdez	835	6
Big Lake	892	4
Delta Junction	895	4
North Kenai	776	4
Seward	224	4
Glennallen	822	3
Cordova/Eyak	424	3
Talkeetna	733	2
Willow	495	2
Seldovia	234	1
Halibut Cove	296	1
Ninilchik	567	1
Clear/Anderson	582	1
Healy	683	1
Nenana	832	1
Tok/Tanacross	883	1

Fairbanks

Community	Prefix	Completions
North Pole	488	35
University	479	25
Fairbanks	456	14
Fairbanks	452	13
Fairbanks	457	12
Fairbanks	474	10
Fairbanks	451	8
Goldstream	455	5

Rural Alaska

Community	Prefix	Completions
Kodiak	486	16
Bethel	543	8
Unalaska	581	6
Barrow	852	6
Nome	443	6
Kotzebue	442	5
Dillingham	842	4
Kodiak	487	3
Togiak	493	2

Rural Alaska (continued)

Community	Prefix	Completions	Community	Prefix	Completions
King Salmon	246	2	Mountain Village	591	1
Alakanuk	238	1	Unalakleet	624	1
Tuntutuliak	256	1	Noorvik	636	1
Old Harbor	286	1	Kaktovik	640	1
Manokotak	289	1	Teller/Brevig	642	1
Tanana	366	1	Kivalina	645	1
Point Hope	368	1	Shishmaref	649	1
Sand Point	383	1	Tununak	652	1
Toksook Bay	427	1	Galena	656	1
Shungnak	437	1	Anaktuvuk Pass	661	1
St. Mary's	438	1	Fort Yukon	662	1
Ambler	445	1	Aniak	675	1
Port Lions	454	1	New Stuyahok	693	1
Kalskag	471	1	Tuluksak	695	1
Kiana	475	1	Akutan	698	1
Holy Cross	476	1	Napaskiak	737	1
Kasigluk	477	1	Kwethluk	757	1
Nuiqsut	480	1	Hooper Bay	758	1
Selawik	484	1	Wainwright	763	1
Noatak	485	1	Akiak	765	1
Buckland	494	1	Akiachak	825	1
King Cove	497	1	Chevak	858	1
McGrath	524	1	Elim	890	1
Nunapitchuk	527	1	Kipnuk	896	1
Eek	536	1	Nulato	898	1
St. Paul	546	1	Kotlik	899	1
Pilot Station	549	1	St. Michael	923	1
Atmautluak	553	1	Stebbins	934	1
Quinhagak	556	1	Emmonak	949	1
Kongiganak	557	1	Savoonga	984	1
Scammon Bay	558	1	Gambell	985	1
Napakiak	589	1			

Appendix C
QUESTIONNAIRE

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