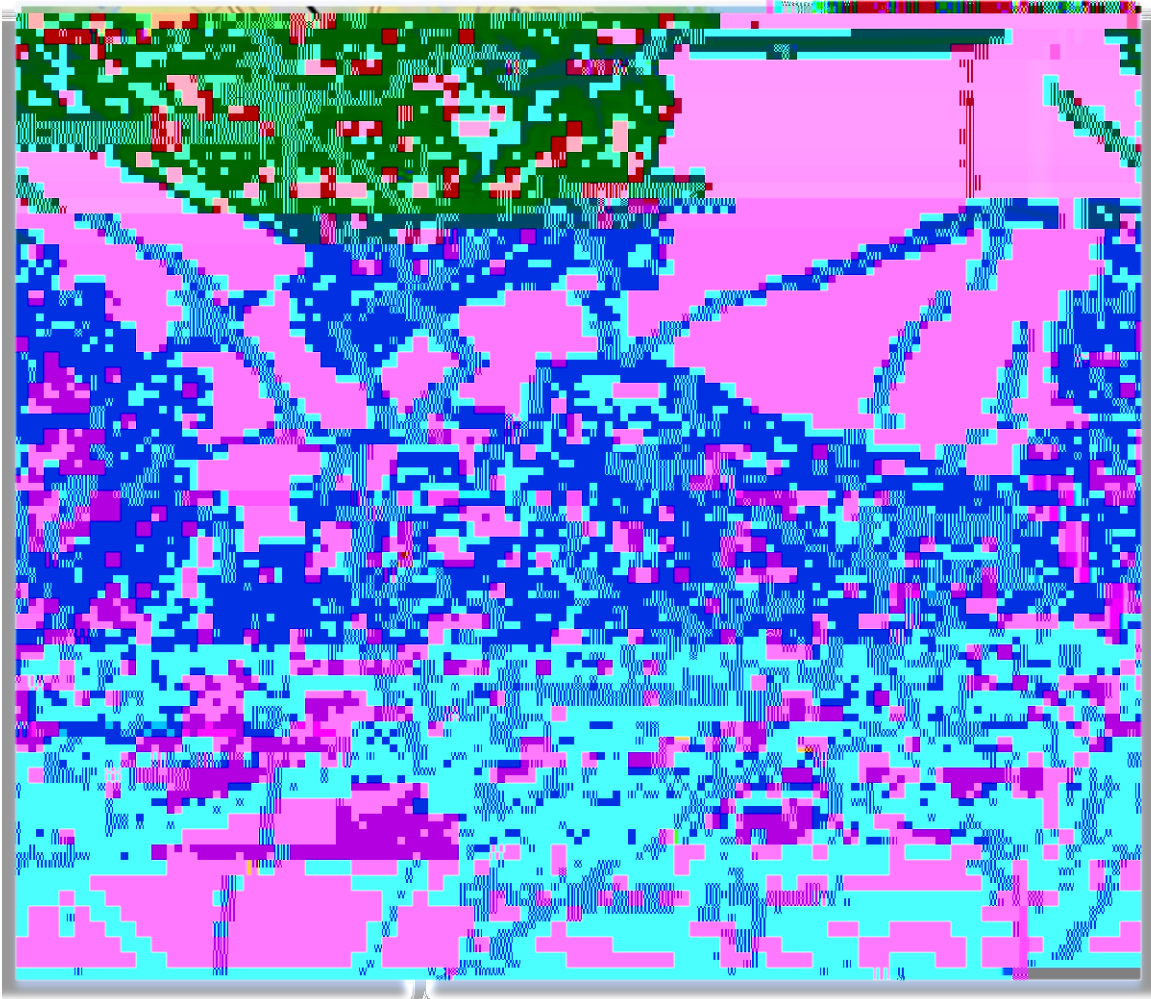

The 13th Annual Life in Hampton Roads Survey Report



THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

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Executive Summary

The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Old Dominion University is pleased to present the results from the 13th annual Life in Hampton Roads (LIHR) survey. The purpose of the survey was to gain insight into residents' perceptions of the quality of life in Hampton Roads. This year, all survey data was collected via telephone interviews as was the case prior to the pandemic. More than two-thirds of respondents rated the quality of life in the region as excellent or good (69.3%). About 25% rated Hampton Roads' quality of life as fair (24.7%) and 4.5% rated it as poor. Consistent with previous years, respondents rated the quality of life in their city and their neighborhood higher than they did for the region as a whole. Just over 70% rated the quality of life in their city as good or excellent (70.1%) and 24.2% rated their city as fair. Only 5.6% rated their city's quality of life as poor. Neighborhood ratings of quality of life remain the highest, with 82.3% rating their neighborhood as excellent or good. Only 15.9% rated their neighborhood quality of life as fair and 1.8% rated it as poor.

Hampton Roads residents had mixed perceptions of the economy but showed some optimism about their own financial situation. Less than half (42.4%) of those surveyed rated the economic conditions in Hampton Roads as excellent (3.1%) or good (39.3%). A similar percentage (42.0%) rated economic conditions as fair and 14.6% rated them as poor. Interestingly, despite the impacts of COVID-19, these ratings are not much different than in past years of the survey, during or prior to the pandemic.

The outlook for home purchasing and inflation, however, may be less optimistic, with 65.2% of respondents saying that now is a bad time to buy a house and only 14.7% responding that it is a good time to buy. Only 12.4% think that it is neither a good nor bad time. This is a major decline from 2021.

More than 81% of respondents rated the quality of their own health as excellent (26.2%) or good (55.5%). This is higher than last year with most of the increase being in the excellent category - increasing from 17.9% to 26.2%. Thus, we are seeing an increase in self-reported good/excellent health close to levels reported pre-pandemic (e.g., from 82% in 2017). However, over a third of the population (35.2%) reporting that the pandemic has somewhat negatively affected their mental health and nearly twenty percent (19.5%), saying that the pandemic has negatively affected their mental health a great deal.

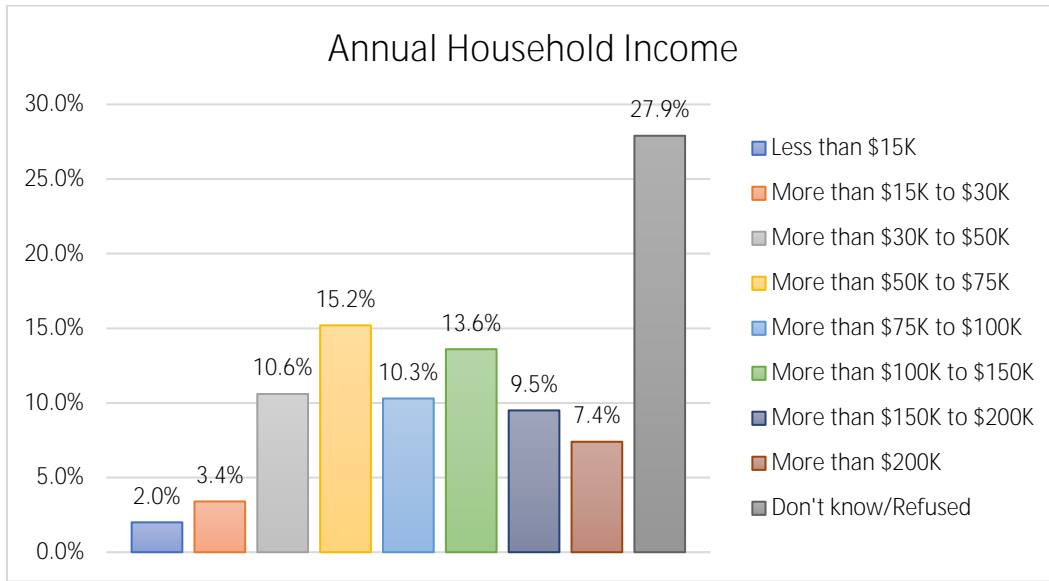
More than three-quarters of Hampton Roads residents report that they are fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. This year, the number of fully vaccinated residents rose to 78.6% and only

14.1% had received no vaccinations. This past year, half of the sample (50.6%) reported getting at least one booster, that is, three or more shots.

This year, 72% of respondents reported that they are somewhat or very satisfied with the police and this is relatively consistent over the past few years. However, respondents reported negative experiences with police varied significantly between races. Well over half of African American

Race	Percentage
White	58.2%
Black/African-American	28.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.9%
Asian	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.6%
Multiracial	4.1%
Other	2.2%
Don't Know/Refused	5.7%
Hispanic/Latino Origin?	Percentage
Yes	7.0%
No	91.5%
Don't know/Refused	1.4%
	Percentage
	4278.02 98.54

question in the survey, with almost 19.4% declining to answer and another 8.5% responding with “don’t know.”



Quality of Life

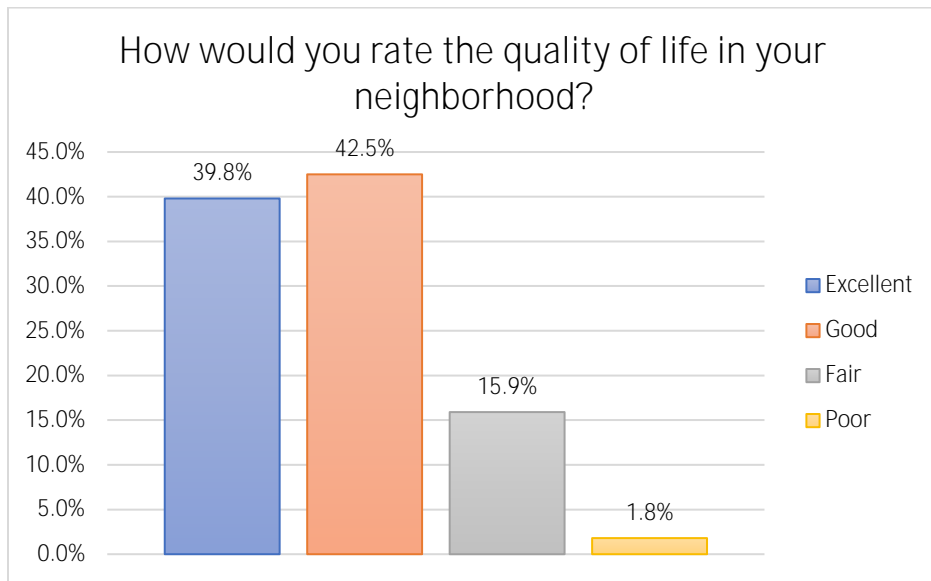
Perceptions of the Region, City, Neighborhood

More than two-thirds of respondents rated the quality of life in the region as excellent or good (69.3%).

This is slightly higher than last year (65.4ghe

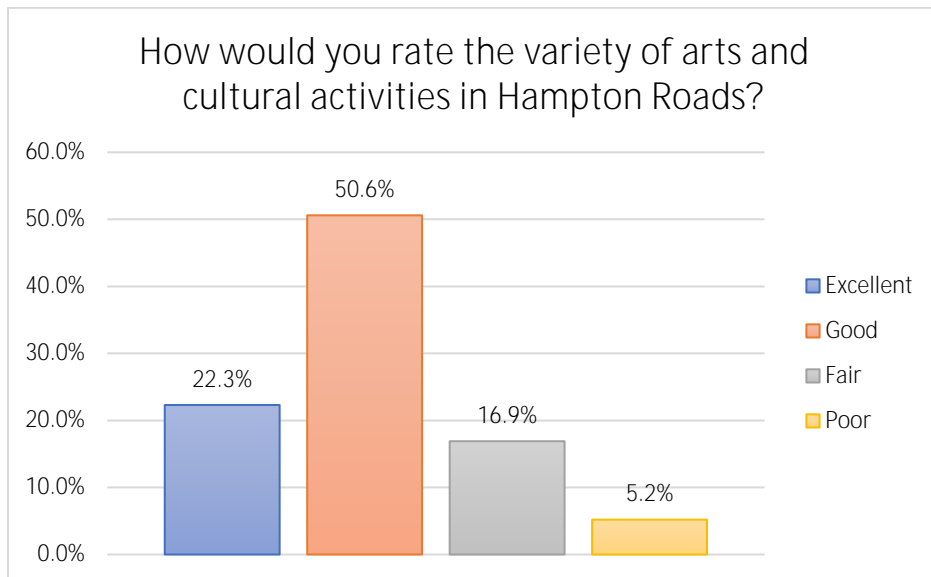
However, there was significant variation in the perceived quality of life across the respective cities. Less

Neighborhood ratings of quality of life were the highest, with 82.3% rating their neighborhood as excellent or good. Only 15.9% rated their neighborhood quality of life as fair and 1.8% rated it as poor.



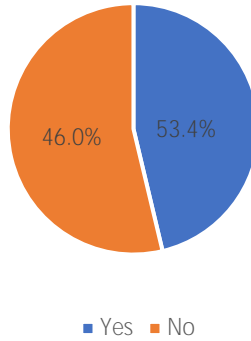
Cultural Activities

Almost three-quarters of respondents rated the variety of arts and cultural activities in Hampton roads as excellent (22.3%) or good (50.6%). Another 16.9% rated the variety of arts and cultural activities in Hampton Roads as fair and 5.2% rated the variety as poor.



Additionally, more than half of respondents said they had visited a historical site, museum, or monument in Hampton Roads in the last 12 months (53.4%).

Have you visited a historical site, museum, or monument in Hampton Roads in the last 12 months?



Transportation/Traffic

Less than 40% of respondents (37.8%) reported avoiding visiting a business in a neighboring city due to tolls on the bridges or tunnels. However, almost half of respondents (49.6%) reported avoiding visiting a business in a neighboring city due to traffic congestion

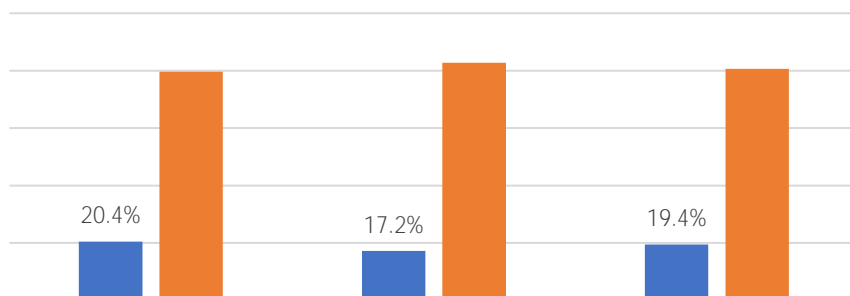
Experiences and Attitudes Towards the Police and Reactions to Crime

Negative Experiences with the Police

For the past few years, the Life in Hampton Roads survey has included two items measuring negative experiences with the police:

1. In the past year, have you or someone close to you had a negative experience with police (e.g., the officer shouted at you, cursed at you, pushed or grabbed you)?
2. In the past year, have you heard of someone in your local community who had a negative experience with police (e.g., the officer shouted at them, cursed at them, pushed or grabbed them)?

We note that both items refer to relatively serious negative experiences and are not issues related to standard daily encounters with the police (e.g., a brief conversation about directions or a traffic stop). Response categories were simply “yes” and “no”. This year 19.4% of respondents reported that they (or someone close to them) had had a negative experience with the police, up slightly (2.2%) from 17.2% reported last year and down 1% from the year before. All in all, these minor differences are not statistically different and are likely due to sampling variation.



The percentage of residents having heard of someone in their local community who had had a negative encounter with the police was much larger than close personal experiences. Indeed, this past year nearly half of respondents (47%) reported knowing someone in the community who had had a significant negative experience with the police in the past year. This is significantly more than the prior two years where 33% and 31% reported such knowledge. Knowledge of serious negative encounters with the police is higher than close personal encounters, at least in part, because there are so many ways of hearing about unpleasant incidences—e.g., from family, friends, or various media sources.

Consistent with past surveys and a considerable body of empirical literature, we again found statistically significant and relatively strong differences in negative encounters with the police by race and ethnicity. In 2021, African American respondents were more than twice as likely (29%)

In general, there appears to be an increase in negative experiences with the police and this is particularly clear when we focus on hearing of negative encounters by others in the community. From last year, white respondents' hearing of someone else in the community having a negative experience rose 10% from 29% to 39%, African American's reporting of hearing of someone in the community also rose by a similar degree (11%) from 48% to 59%, and those responding as other (i.e., nonwhite, non-African American) increased by almost 28% from 20% to 48%. Given that the composition of the "other" category is so diverse but small in number, it is difficult to tease out the specific groups that are experiencing increased knowledge about serious encounters with the police.

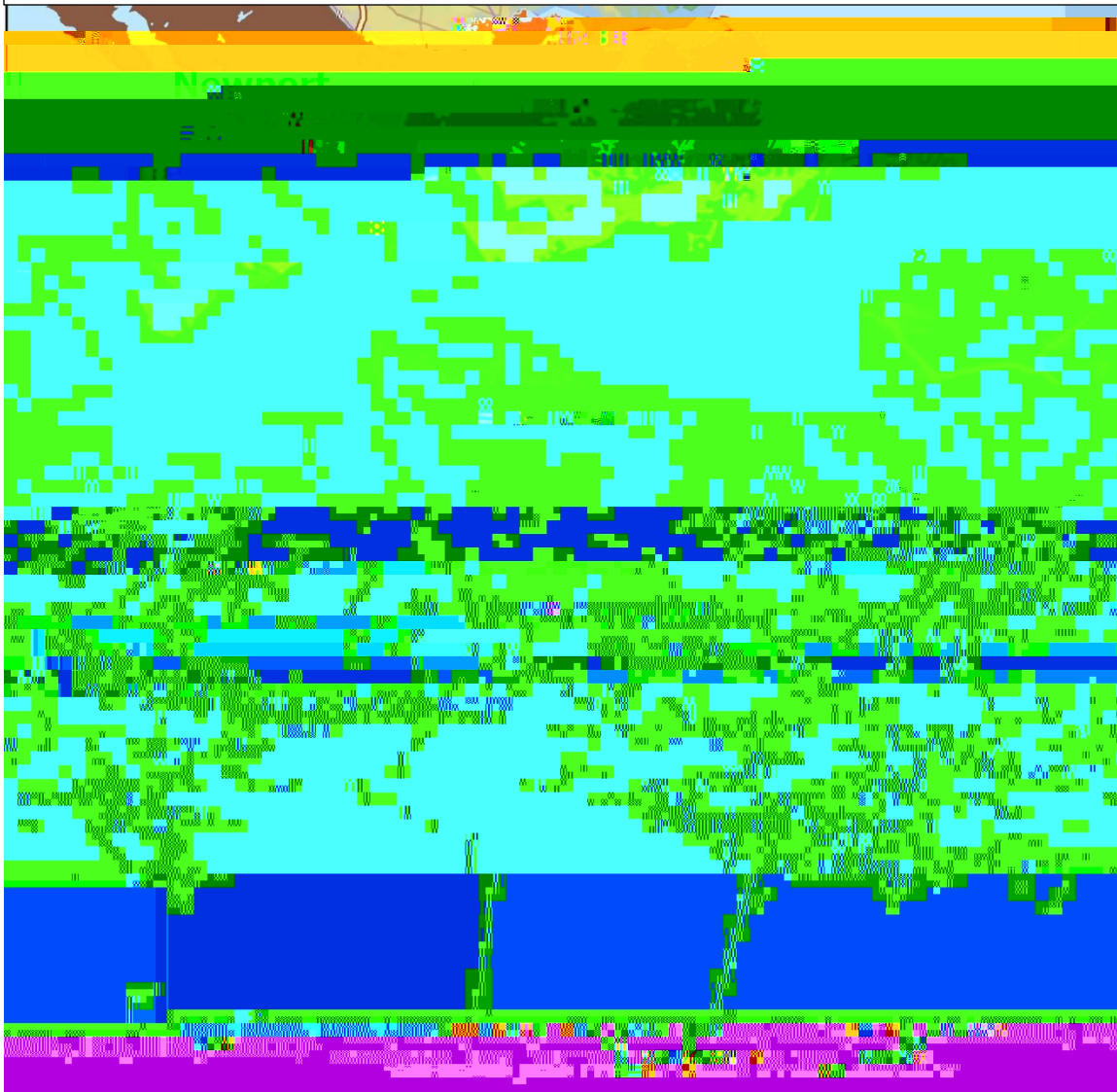
While the variation in personal negative experiences with the police (and/or experiences of someone close) appears to vary across cities ranging from 12% (Newport News) to 33% (Portsmouth) from 20% to 48%.

(39% in 2021 compared to 34% in 2022) with a slight increase in those reporting being somewhat trusting of the police (from 41% to 44%).

Perceptions of the Police by City

To explore these data further, we dichotomized the three variables to distinguish those who were very likely to report an offense to the police versus those less willing (e.g., very unlikely, unlikely, neither likely nor unlikely, and likely). The first two variables (breaking in and assault) did not significantly vary by cities across Hampton Roads. However, willingness to report witnessing someone selling drugs did vary significantly across cities. More than half of the respondents in Newport News (57%) and Suffolk (56%) would be very likely to call police if they saw someone selling drugs. Chesapeake, Hampton, and Virginia Beach all had between 43% and 47% of respondents indicating that they would call the police if they saw someone selling drugs. Finally, 36% of respondents from Portsmouth and 28% of respondents from

Percent reporting that they would

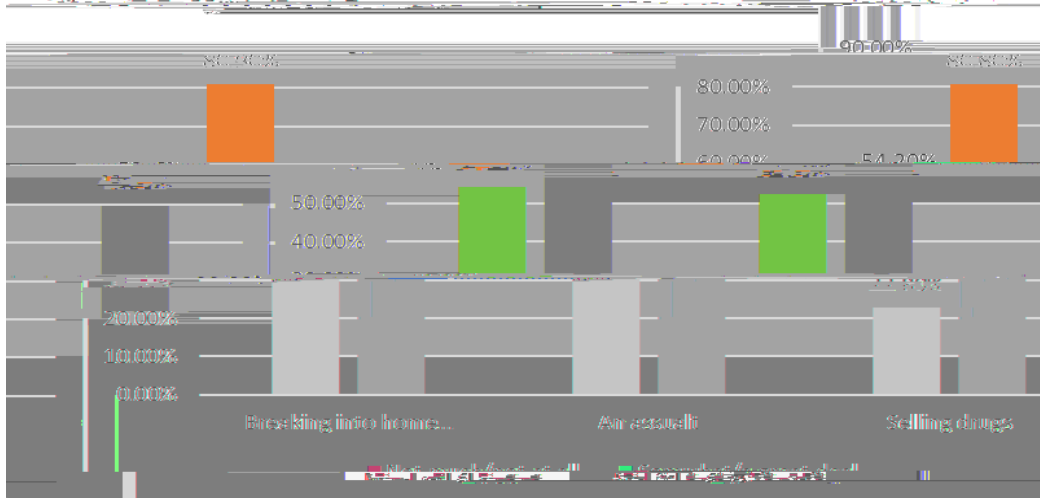


Using the same dichotomization (very likely versus all other categories) we examined respondents' willingness to call the police in the three situations described earlier by race. Here we find relatively strong and statistically significant differences by race. Most white respondents (81-82%) responded that they would call the police in cases of someone breaking into a home or building or seeing a person being assaulted while a much lower percentage of African American respondents indicated the same (63% and 61%, respectively). Respondents of other race/ethnicities are also less likely than white respondents to call the police in cases of breaking/entering and assault (75% and 76%, respectively). In the third

situation, witnessing the selling of drugs, white respondents are much less likely to be willing to call the police (49%) than in the other situations, but so are African Americans (33%) and those of other races (40%). These results suggest relatively strong differences between racial groups.

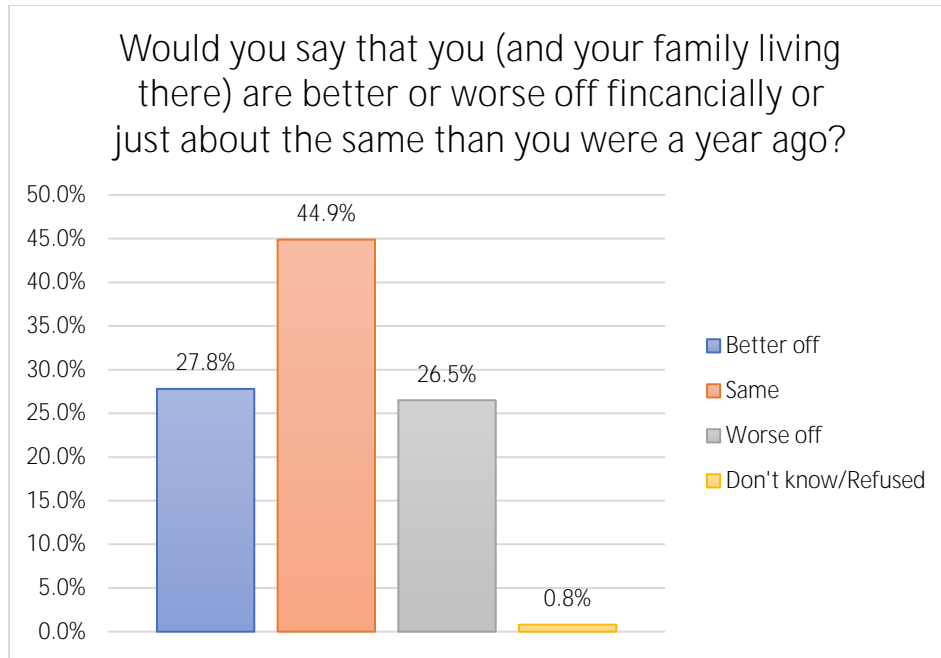
While a full multivariate analysis of these findings is beyond the scope of this general summary report, the data show shown that African American respondents have more negative experiences with the police and are less satisfied and trusting of the police. Bivariate statistical analyses suggest willingness to call the police in each of these situations is correlated with both negative experiences with the police as well as trust and satisfaction with the police. Importantly, we find that while negative experiences and satisfaction with the police are significantly correlated with willingness to call the police, trust in the police is the strongest factor affecting willingness to call. Those who trust the police (somewhat or a great deal) are about 25% more likely to report being willing to call the police if witnessing a break-in or an assault than those having less trust in the police. Further, while respondents were less likely to report being willing to call the police when witnessing someone selling drugs, those who report great trust in the

Relationship between trust in the police and willingness to call them

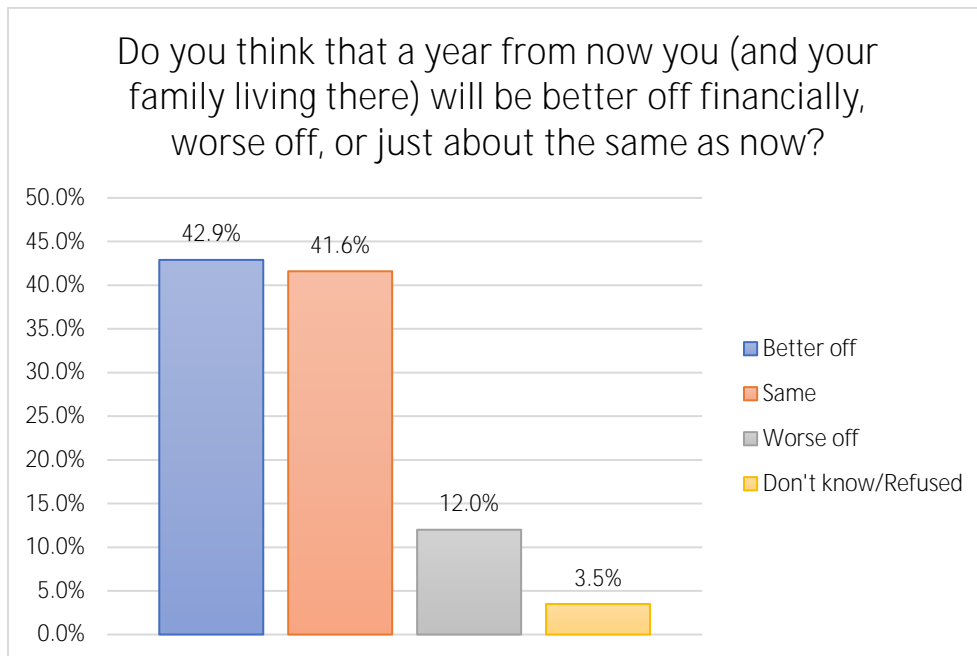


The Economy & Employment

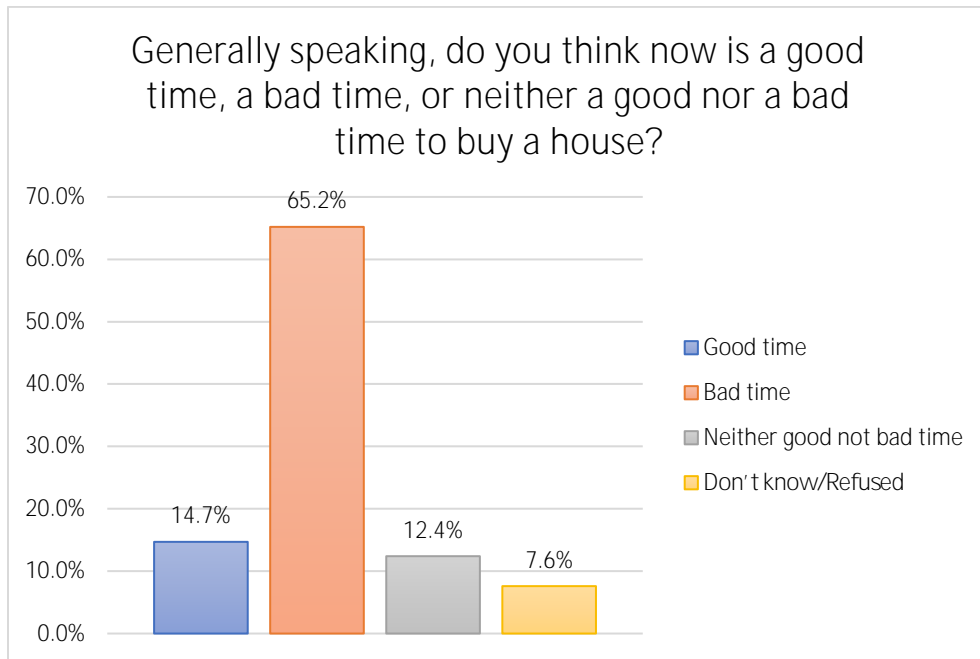
Economy



Respondents showed some optimism for the future, with 42.9% indicating that they think they and their family will be better off financially a year from now. More than 40 percent (48.3%) think they will be the same and 12.0% think they will be worse off. Residents are perhaps hopeful that the worst of the financial impacts of COVID-19 will not be long-lasting.



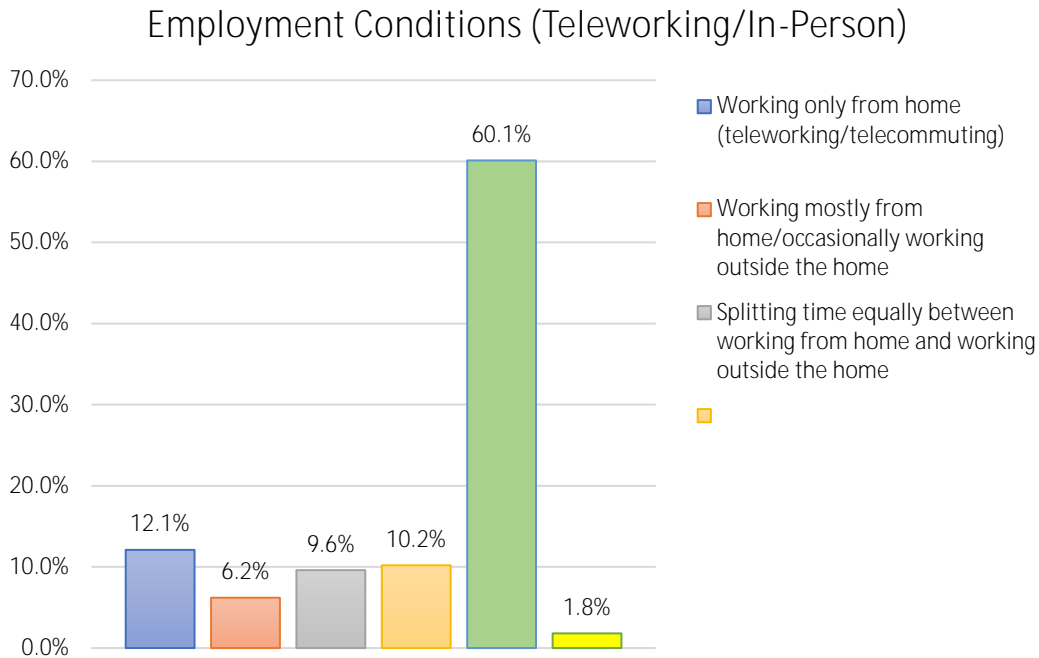
The outlook for home purchasing and inflation, however, may be less optimistic, with 65.2% of respondents saying that now is a bad time to buy a house and only 14.7% responding that it is a good time to buy. Only 12.4% think that it is neither a good nor bad time. This is a major decline from 2021 when 27.8% thought it was a good time to buy a house and only 41.3% thought it was a bad time to buy a house. These shifting sentiments perhaps reflect the impacts of rising interest rates and higher home prices.¹



This year, respondents were asked if they thought inflation would be higher, the same, or lower than it is today a year from now. More than half of respondents stated that they thought inflation would be higher than it is today a year from now (55.9%) and 14.6% thought inflation would be about the same. Less than one-quarter of respondents thought inflation would be lower than it is today in a year (23.9%).

¹For example, see: <https://virginiarealtors.org/2022/02/24/where-are-home-prices-really-headed-in-2022/>

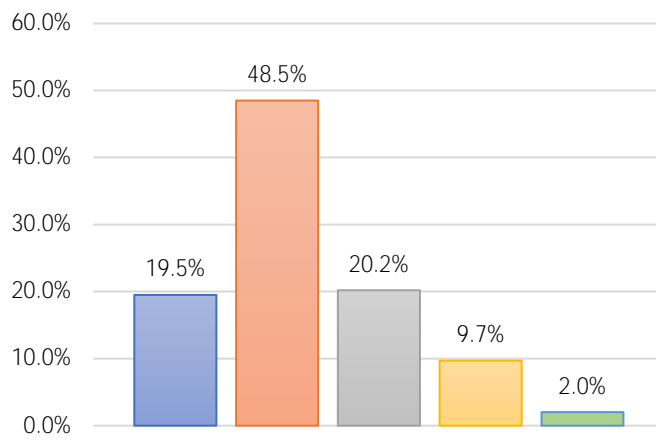
they are working only from home and either teleworking or telecommuting. The remaining respondents reported either working mostly outside of the home (10.2%), splitting time equally between working from home and outside the home (9.6%), or working mostly from home (6.2%). Only 1.8% had some other arrangement.



Respondents were asked to rate their level of work burnout on a scale of 0 to 10, with “0” meaning “not feeling burned out at all and “10” meaning “feeling completely burned out.” The average rate given for work burnout was 4.8. The most common ratings of work burnout reported were 0 (17.5%), 8 (13.0%), and 5 (12.1%).

Regarding recent or future job changes, more than three-quarters of respondents (77.6%) said they had not changed employers in the past 12 months, while 22.2% said they had changed employers in the past 12 months. A majority of respondents (67.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they intend to search for a new job with another employer in the next 12 months. Only 15.5% strongly agreed that they intended to search for a new job with another employer in the next 12 months and 14.0% agreed.

I am satisfied with the overall compensation (or

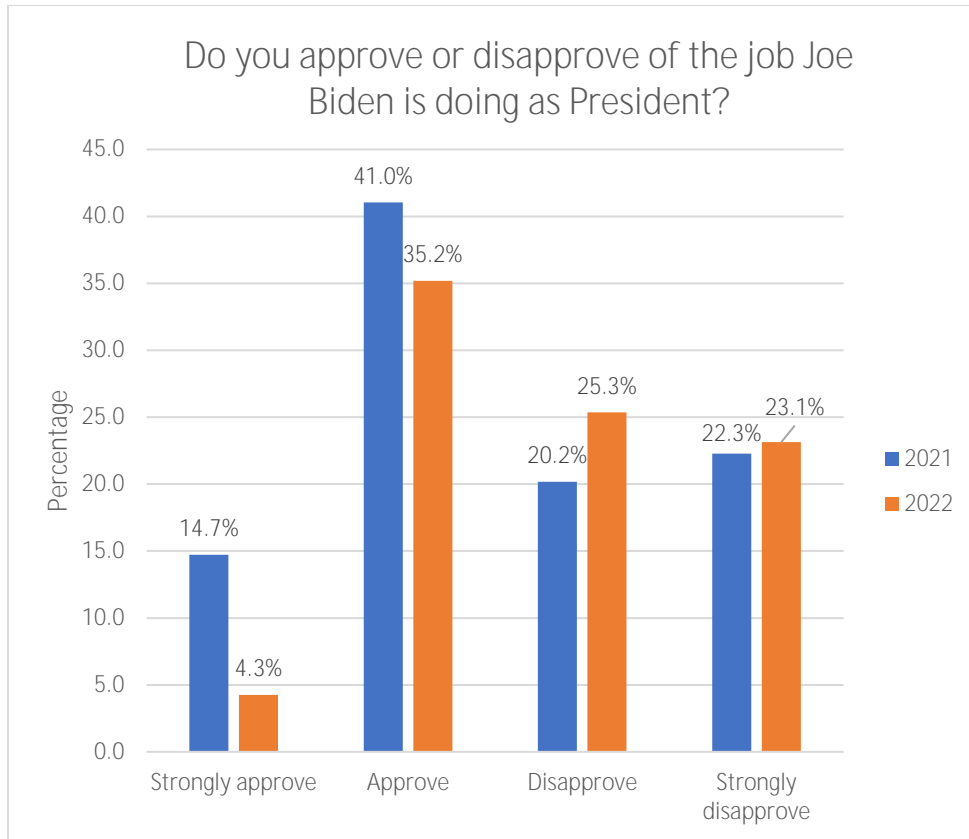


Politics and Political Opinions

The Life in Hampton Roads survey always includes a few questions about political attitudes. In 2022 the questions asked included party affiliation, political ideology, job approval of President Biden, Governor Youngkin, and local mayors.

Political party affiliation among respondents to the survey continued to lean substantially towards the Democratic Party, in line with past surveys in Hampton Roads. Nearly twenty eight percent (27.7%) of

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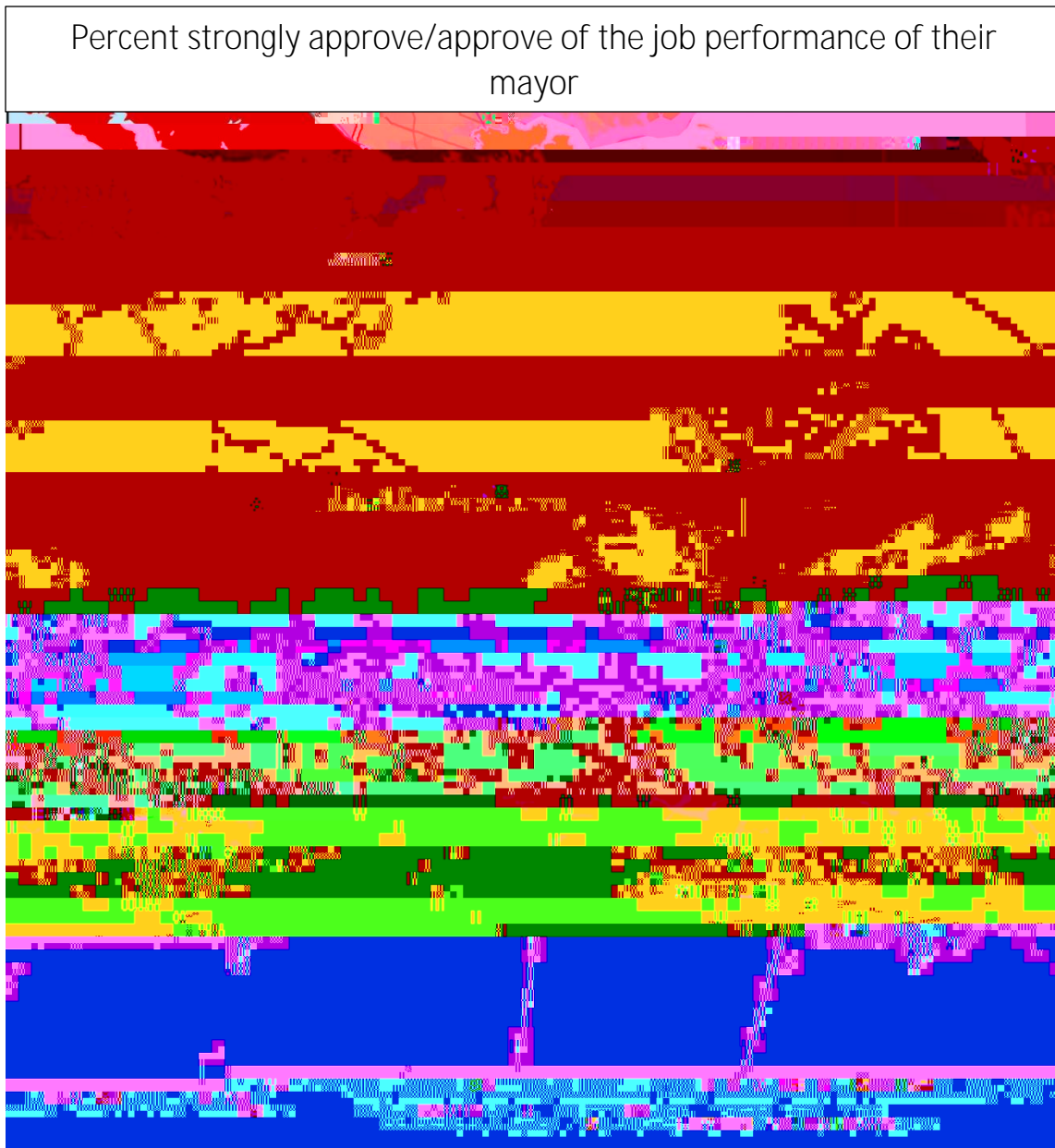


Overall, respondents' attitudes towards President Joe Biden's job performance were down from the 2021 survey, in line with changing national trends in the president's approval rate. The percentage who strongly approved of Biden's job performance dropped by about ten percent (from 14.7% to 4.3%), and the percentage who approved also dropped by more than five percent (from 41% to 35.2%).

At the time that the survey was conducted, Glenn Youngkin had been on the job as governor for several months. Opinion of Youngkin's job performance was mixed, with almost forty-four percent (43.7%) approving or strongly approving, and nearly 35 percent (34.9%) disapproving or strongly disapproving. More than twenty percent of respondents indicated that they either did not know (15.7%) or refused to answer (5.6%). Since Youngkin received roughly forty five percent of the vote in the November 2021 gubernatorial election within the 7 cities surveyed (217,129 out of 479,886 votes), this level of approval seems consistent with neither major gains nor losses in popularity for the governor at this point in his administration.

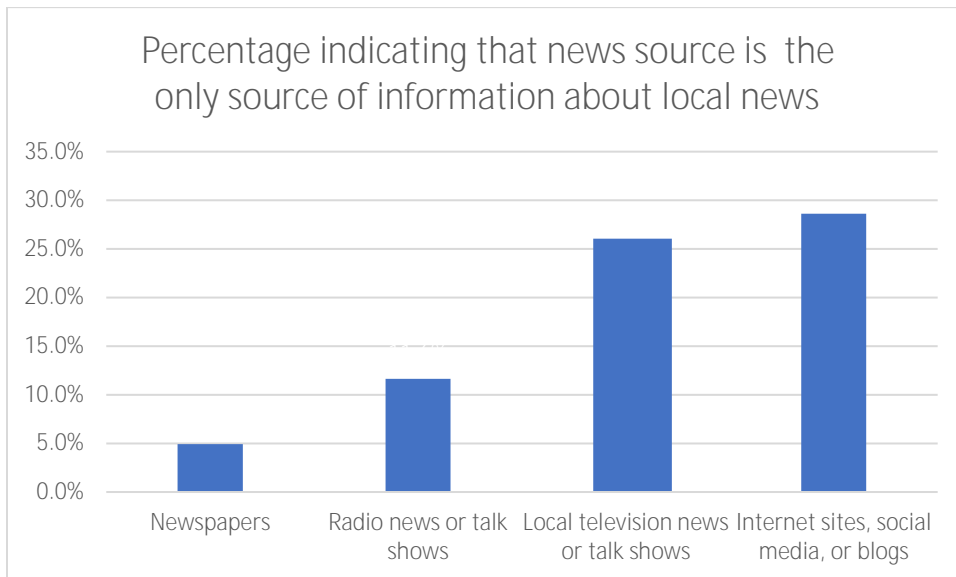
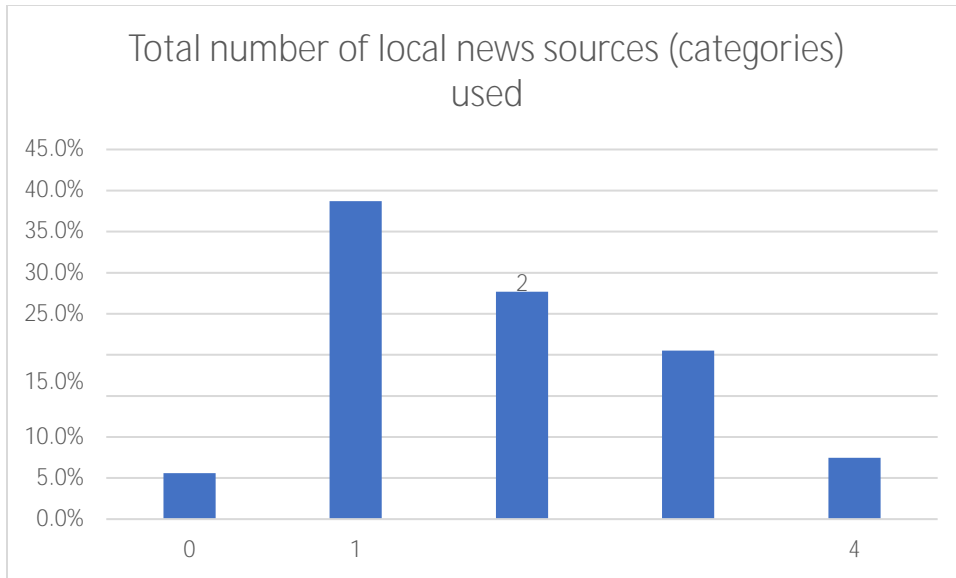
One of the issues that Governor Youngkin campaigned on was education, and an early action by the

We also asked about mayoral job approval. Responses to this question were relatively strong for most mayors. Overall, 54.2% percent indicated that they approved/strongly approved with only seventeen percent (16.9%) voicing disapproval. We observed similar patterns for most regional cities, except for Portsmouth. Only 31.0% of Portsmouth residents surveyed indicated that they approved of “the job your local mayor is doing” while fifty seven percent (57.1%) indicated that they disapproved. It is important to remember that the overall sample sizes here are quite small at the city level – only 38 individual Portsmouth residents responded to the survey. Nonetheless, the data seems to suggest that while the residents of most cities are relatively happy with the job performance of their mayor, Portsmouth residents appear to be an exception.



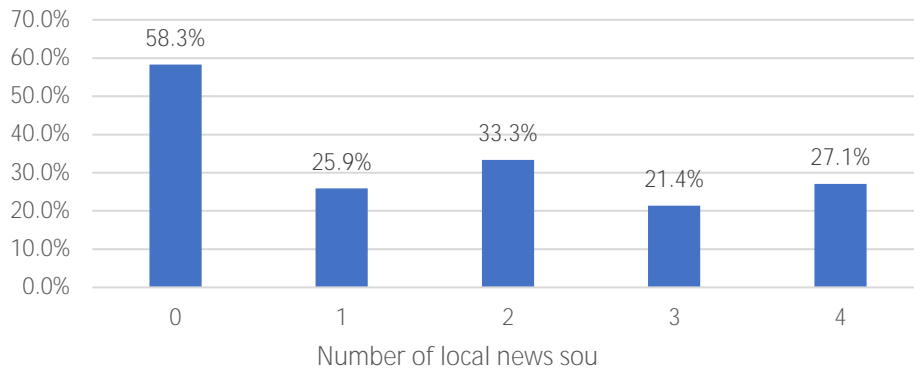
News Sources

This year for the first time,



Does it matter how many sources of information one has about local news? More than a quarter of respondents to the local mayor job approval question indicated that they either did not know (22.5%) or that they refused to answer (6.4%). Perhaps unwillingness or inability to answer the local mayor job performance question reflects a lack of information about that performance, in part due to consuming minimal amounts of local news. More than half of the respondents who consult none of the four categories of news sources did not express an opinion about the job performance of their local mayor (58.3%) while a third or less of the respondents in all other categories did not evaluate the job

performance of their local mayor. Failure to attend to local news may render citizens less able to effectively participate in local politics.²

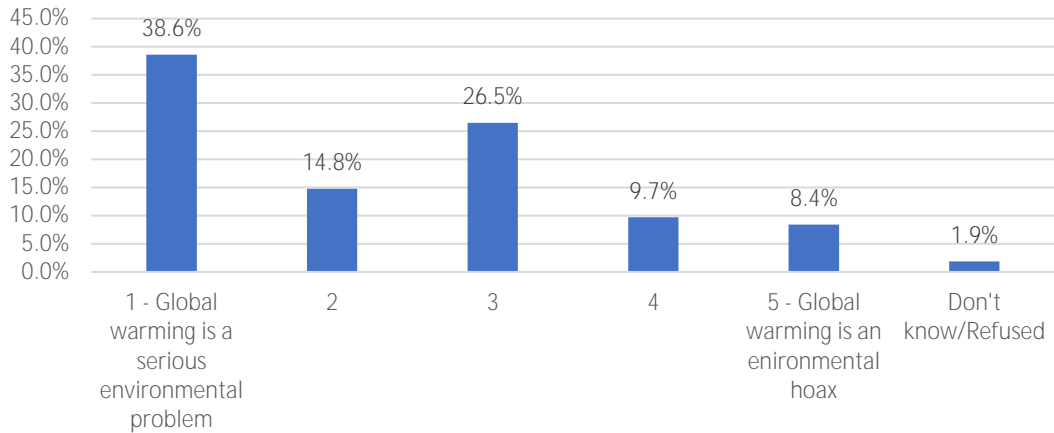


² Across the different news sources, those who consulted any news source were more likely to answer the mayor job approval question. But the difference was only statistically significant ($p < 0.1$) for newspapers and local television news, and the effect was largest (and most statistically significant) for local television news. One-third (33.9%) of respondents who did not watch local TV news failed to rate their local mayor's job performance, while only 25 percent of those who did watch failed to rate mayoral job performance.

Health, Education & Welfare of Hampton Roads

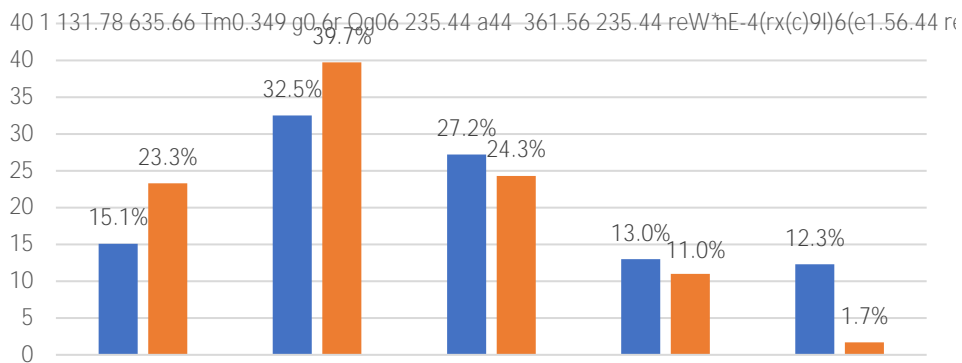
Health, COVID-

On a scale of one to five, where one means global warming is a serious environmental problem and five means global warming is an environmental hoax, where would you place yourself?



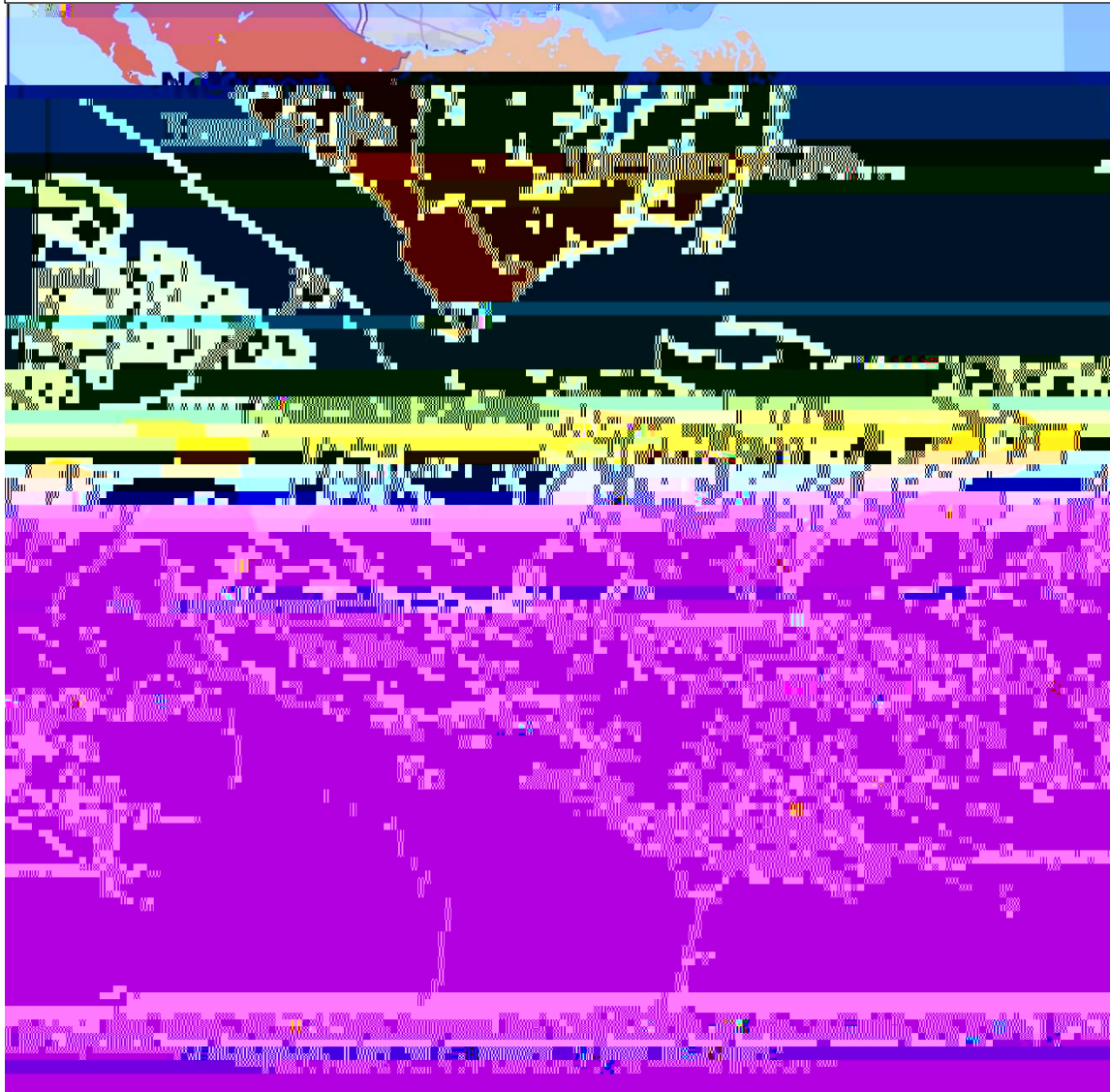
Education and the Welfare of Hampton Road Residents

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of their local public school system and there was considerable variation in the responses. About 15% reported that their public school system was excellent and another third (32.5%) reported their school system was good. Still, 27.2% rated their local public school as fair and another 13% rated it as poor. These numbers are compared below with a subsample of respondents (n=136), parents with children in local public schools. There are a couple of items of note. First, parents with children in public schools were less likely to report that they did not know about the quality of the public schools. Second, they tended to view them more favorably than those with children in the public schools. Parents with children in the public schools were 8.2% more likely to describe them as excellent and 7.2% more likely to rate them as good.



Perceptions of the quality of local public schools varied significantly across cities. Perception of the public schools were lowest in Norfolk with only 22% rating them as good or excellent. About a third of Portsmouth (32%) and Hampton (35%) rated their public schools as good or excellent and less than half of Suffolk rated their schools positively (42%). Over half of the respondents in Newport News (62%) rate their local public schools as good or excellent and nearly three quarters of those in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach rated their public schools positively.

Percent rating the quality of local public schools as good or excellent



Several questions were asked this year regarding the welfare of Hampton Road residents with a specific focus on mental health. We began with a general question regarding residents' perceptions of the quality of medical and health care in the Hampton Roads region. About a quarter of respondents rated medical and health care in the area as excellent and another 48.9% rated it a good, thus, nearly three quarters of the sample perceived the quality of care as good or excellent and 6.1% rated it as poor.

Respondents were asked how much of a problem mental illness is in Hampton Roads. Very few suggested that it was not a problem at all (2.7%) and another relatively small percentage stated that it was a minor problem (11.5%). Significantly more residents believed that mental illness was a moderate problem (44.9%) and more than a third (36%) responded that it was a serious problem.

