

Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3)\*  
Centralia Community Canvassing Survey Results  
Centralia, IL.  
Conducted May 18-June 5, 2021  
(N=175)

- 1) What do you like about living in your neighborhood?
  - A. (49%) I like it fine here , quiet, peaceful, family oriented community.
  - B. (18%) It's where my home is, good surroundings, like the size of the town, neighborhood, everyone is family, watch out for each other's kids.
  - C. (15%) My home, where I live, was raised here, family here or nearby, roots in the community.
  - D. (15%) "Nothing" Don't like anything about living here.
  - E. (2%) "It could be better"
  - F. (2%) Diversity
  
- 2) What makes you feel that way?
  - A. (34%) Nice neighbors, familiar with people in the community, lots of senior citizens, more of a community than you know. Lots of family around. I'm a family person, not a lot of noise. Lots of single parents.
  - B. (25%) Don't know, its where I live
  - C. (9%) Small town community "everything accessible"
  - D. (9%) Just don't like living in housing
  - E. (6%) Not as many shootings, now young thugs- not as good as it was, It use to be older people
  - F. (6%) Grocery store, security cameras, having things for kids to do
  
- 3) How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?
  - A. (69%) Real safe, very, pretty safe, moderately safe, I get respect here, safer in the day than at night, "pretty safe except for this dope house down the street where someone was murdered, a little better now"
  - B. (18%) It's okay but getting worse, "bullets flying, if the young people don't cause trouble."

- C. (12%) Shootings, violence, gun, gunshots are frequent, lot of drug activity in the area.
- D. (1%) "I don't do police harassment"

4) What could make your neighborhood better?

- A. (21%) Community infrastructure - streets are old, poorly maintained, lots of potholes, buckled sidewalks, street lights are out or too dim, overgrown vacant lots, trees need to be trimmed, or cutdown, street curbs and gutter conditions
- B. (21%) Residents and neighborhood conditions - "Owners and landlords need to take care of property, living areas and conditions", no laws that enforce maintenance, update housing
- C. (14%) More activities in parks for children, give kids something to do
- D. (13%) Community engagement - more community pride, more resident-police input, being more united
- E. (9%) Concerns over crime, criminals and drugs- remove the meth and drugs, need to address the crime problems, less violence,
- F. (10%) Improve attractiveness, develop more attractions, more attractions - "Clean it up", need a grocery store
- G. (4%) Improve community-police relationships, community policing, neighborhood watch- tried before, but not interested...
- H. (3%) Better parenting for youth and children - take care of their children
- I. (1%) Not sure, don't know
- J. (5%) Other- more diversity, more black businesses, handicap accommodations, "we are the last folks to get our power on when there is a storm" "water company sucks"

5) What can you tell me about the youth that live in your neighborhood?

- A. (26%) Kids need more to do, positive activities and resources to succeed, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, mentoring, need to focus on academics and school, need more guidance, need structure
- B. (15%) Good kids, nothing to do, need fun places to go - candy store, pool, dances, grocery store, need to expend energy, need outlets
- C. (13%) Problem behaviors - Unemployed, majority are involved in drugs and smoking, disrespectful, litter, no pride, straggling and

- struggling, throw eggs at my house, smart alecky, younger kids are not so bad, its older kids
- D. (7%) Need parent training and skills development, parents need to know better
- E. (6%) No problem, not that many, not much contact, quiet, generally good kids, youth are okay
- F. (4%) Improve community-police relationships, community policing, neighborhood watch- tried before, but not interested...

6) How is the relationship with law enforcement?

- A. (25%) No problems, pretty good, stay out of their way, no opinions, good relationship, relaxed.
- B. (26%) Negative relationship - don't like them, "don't f\*\*\* with the police, racist, discriminating, "most people fear law enforcement and CPD - some are friendly - my sons are black males and have it hard out there as we already know".
- C. (20%) Police treatment of citizens - horrible, they didn't arrest an informant yet they harass innocent people when its not beneficial, overpoliced/wrongly policed/taunting, targeting every night
- D. (13%) No relationship, lack of trust, unseen until they come to get people, need better communication, personnel do not interact with youth in a positive manner - two sets of rules and not fair treatment, they have no trust.
- E. (10%) Room for improvement (police) "could do a better job", patrol more, State police are good, make themselves personable, improve image in the community, improve communications, kids make mistakes, doesn't mean they go to jail.
- F. (6%) Other - Need more black officers, diversity training,

6A How is the relationship with the court system?

- A. (40%) Don't know, Never involved, fine, unfamiliar with point system
- B. (11%) Court system is good, rehabilitation through court system,
- C. (50%) Courts are terrible - courts suck - double jeopardy, neighborhood thinks court system does not care, court has its own laws, "whites get lenient sentencing", "just want money and racist as ever", problem with city about tickets for yards, prejudice against blacks, a problem for the poor and blacks,

7) What are the barriers to getting good jobs in Centralia?

- A (10%) None/no idea
- B. (14%) Blacks and minorities find it difficult to find good jobs- "plenty of quality minorities here, but for some reason not offered the same position, pay, etc.", racism, discrimination, Equal Opportunity Programs will only get you so far, more blacks need to be hired, "you should never discriminate (for a job) by race".
- C. (19%) High quality jobs are hard to find - Lack of good jobs, not good paying jobs, lack of living wage, not many job opportunities, only fast food, don't want women (working) in factories, blacks don't get good administrative jobs
- D. (14%) Barriers to employment- lack of skills/education, need information and training, education degrees, need for continuing education, No. 1. some can't read, but are good at math, need to stay in school to get a job, drug testing, lack of childcare is a major issue, and a small town mentality.
- E. (13%) It's not what you know, but who you know - lack of connections, knowing someone, or networking, nepotism, many family owned business, too much favoritism (for jobs).
- F. (11%) Other - lack of work leads to idle people, lack of awareness or knowledge of jobs, no help to find employment.
- G. (7%) Some people are slackers- people are just lazy, If you want to find work, you can find a job, no motivation, no incentive to work. Since COVID monies have been abundant, no one wants a job.
- H. (9%) Your record follows you - your record, "most employers will look at your background and will make decisions on something that happened years ago", A lot of people want to improve and do better, just just do not have the resources or not given a chance,

(With a ) bad history and presence of Facebook, it is hard to get hired. Drug testing.

- 8) What resources are available/helpful in Centralia?
- A. (30%) Private, not for profit agencies - BCMW (7x), BMCW is very helpful, Community Resource Services (5x), Salvation Army, Lutheran Christian Services, City of Hope Church, Food Pantry x2, Black Men United - inactive. Need to take some children to Salem for some services??.
  - B. (22%) I do not know, not aware
  - C. (20%) Publically or government funded agencies or services - Public Aid, Library, - been closed, SNAP, LIHEAP, Housing Authority, Southern Community Transit - shuttle.
  - D. (7%) Centralia Community Youth Center
  - E. (7%) Resources are inadequate
  - F. (6%) Kaskaskia Community College - I hear a lot about it , but don't know how helpful it is.
  - G. (2%) Getting to work is difficult for some folks - transportation stops at 6 pm, no cabs, many people drive (or would need to) go to Nashville Transportation is a problem if you work at Neb.???
  - H. (6%) Other - there are a few, but there are barriers to find them, Not enough, inadequate, It's a joke, the resources are here, but I'm unqualified to receive them to help support a family (retired), They stereotype people and are not welcoming. They assume everyone is on drugs. The food pantry is picked over.

- 9) What resources are missing? (in Centralia)
- A. (20%) Youth programs and community activities across the year - "If not for the youth center, kids would have nothing to do". parks need more equipment and recreational places for youth to play, keep active, and out of trouble, affordable after -school and summer programs, roller rink, pool, Big Brother, Big Sister programs, need role models, more church involvement, boot camp, roller rink, summer jobs for youth.
  - B. (14%) Mental health, substance abuse and rehabilitation services - To much drug use, half the people don't work, Murray Center is only option, additional services for special needs children, foster care,

- need health and human services that employ minority staff - e.g., CRC is across the street, but unqualified
- C. (11%) More jobs, job training programs and services - job training center, Job Fairs, apprenticeships, not everyone can afford to go to school.
  - D. (9%) Other types of housing services - Different types of subsidized living arrangement - SRO, - home loans, utility assistance, a homeless shelter would be helpful x2.
  - E. (9%) Parent support and education services- child care, parent support classes and groups, more help for new moms, single moms, child safety programs, programs for providing guidance to their kids/youth - health education - safe sex, healthy relationships, mental illness, proper gun use, programs for fathers.
  - F. (8) Community engagement of blacks - Engage the community, talk to the community, help one another, sensitivity training between police and youth, need minorities in positions of power, helping minorities in the community, Chamber of Commerce, city positions, blacks not appointed just as a token "n\*\*\*\*\*".
  - G. (15%) Lack of knowledge of community resources- "what resources".
  - H. (9%) Other - need black businesses, prison is here, what happens after release, housing rehabilitation, not just tear downs, judicial defense fund, more activities for handicapp, free clinic, pulmonary care doctor.
  - I. (3%) Dental health services.
  - J. (1%) Grocery Store- currently too far away.

Additional information shared follow up survey

1. What do you know about the R3 neighborhood?

It is a community in need of jobs and positive energy to engage families to stay and raise their families. The community also needs more mental health services to meet the demanding and ever-changing needs of the people in their community.

2. Do you feel safe in this neighborhood? Why or why not?

It depends on the day. It seems as if situations and circumstances make for negative behaviors from certain areas of the community when there is a negative comment from social media/media. When the social media jury weighs in on situations where they felt were not handled correctly by the local law enforcement, that causes a negative reaction

3. What might people who live in this neighborhood like about it? Dislike?

There are people willing to help when needed and asked. They have the ability to come together as a community in a time of need to support their family and friends.

4. What could make this neighborhood better?

More mental health services, more community activities for the children, more support programs and services for low income families

5. What can you tell us about the youth that live in this neighborhood?

All of them have potential to be and do great things. The issues come with who these children are interacting with some by choice and others that are forced relationships. These individuals usually have shown to have some negative impact on children, as they have learned by example.

6. How is the relationship with law enforcement and this neighborhood? With the court system?

For the most part negative. The community does not feel law enforcement does all that they can do. They do not feel that the courts do all that they can do. Law enforcement blames the court and the court/States Attorney blames the law enforcement. It's a vicious circle that needs to end for the betterment of the community and its overall reputation.

7. What are the barriers to getting good jobs in Centralia?

The negative reputation that the community has for the crime and other negative social media/ media attention it gets state and region wide.

8. What resources are available and helpful?

Community based services, in home services that work with the individuals schedule not just 9-5

Centralia Key Stakeholder Meeting Notes from July 30, 2021

- 1) Police shortage, community policy, Is the community safe - perception is no, those not breaking law have a fine relationships with law enforcement, hear gunfire in neighborhood, need a community / police partnership, need call 911, need community police themselves
- 2) Teacher shortage
- 3) Job skills training, Identify people who want to work
- 4) Youth need direction - keep out of trouble, children with lack of role models
- 5) Need programs that provides job skills workforce development
- 6) Need recreation space in R3 areas, City (needs to) develops unused areas for recreation space
- 8) Mental health resources, program awareness, like to see social service collaboration/integration, Need driver license access good jobs, Program access, Good resources in the neighborhood
- 9) Parents, low opportunities, parenting skills development
- 10) Childhood trauma, build confidence and self esteem
- 11) City/community partnership to bring back top notch programs (sport)
- 12) Families moving to centralia to be close to incarcerated family members
- 13) Access economic activity esp. black owned business
- 14) Address needs prior to convicting, enlisting youth (who) commit crimes (juvenile court vs. adult court), Lack of opportunity once (someone has a) felony conviction, Need expungement (2nd chance) opportunities.