



Webinar

# Exploring Law Enforcement Attitudes and Beliefs about Traffic Safety Enforcement

July 8, 2019

Jay Otto, Center for Health and Safety Culture



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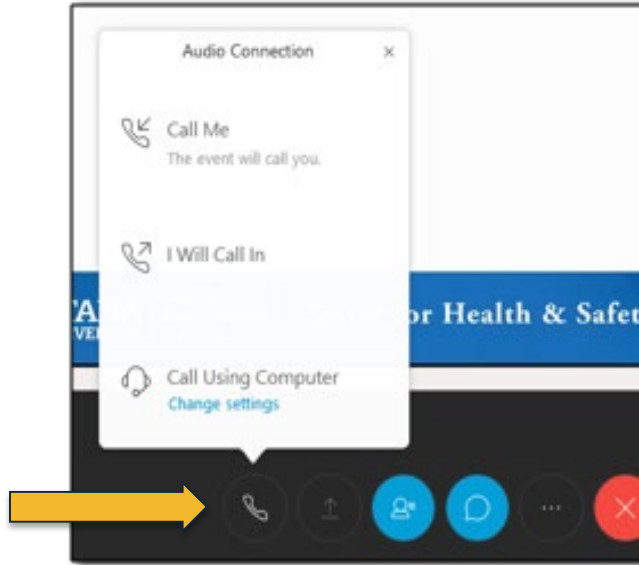
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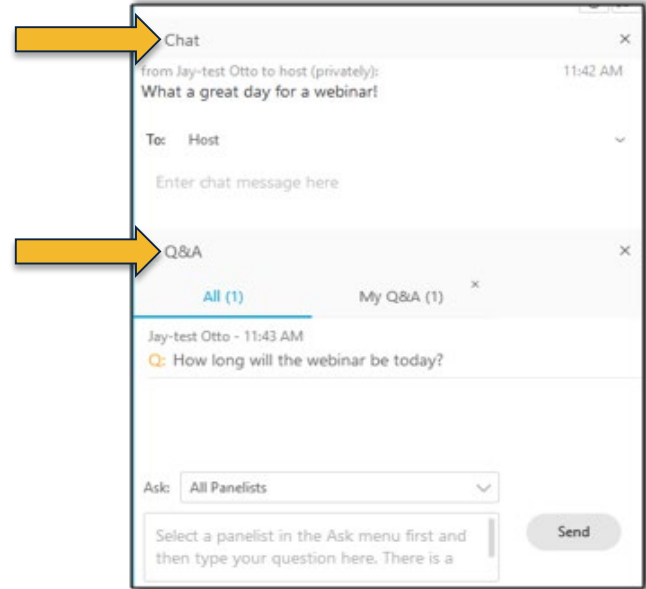
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Use the Chat box and Q&A box to send questions.



# About the Center for Health and Safety Culture

We are an interdisciplinary center serving communities and organizations through research, training, and guidance to cultivate healthy and safe cultures.



# Core Issues



Traffic Safety



Substance Misuse



Domestic Violence



Child Wellbeing

# Sponsor

## Traffic Safety Culture Transportation Pooled Fund Program

Participating States

CA, CT, IA, ID, IL, IN, LA, MT, NH, NV, TX, UT, VT, WA

Managed by



**VISION ZERO**  
zero deaths - zero serious injuries

Montana Department of Transportation

Sue Sillick (ssillick@mt.gov )

<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety.shtml>



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# Agenda

- Objectives
- Approach
- What We Learned
- Recommendations / Potential Next Steps
- Other Research Projects



# Objectives

1. How law enforcement leaders and officers prioritize traffic safety relative to other public safety issues
2. Self-reported attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors about traffic safety enforcement activities
3. Law enforcement's perceptions of how traffic safety enforcement behaviors have changed in recent years
4. How prioritization of traffic safety attitudes, beliefs, enforcement behaviors, and perceptions of change vary between leaders and officers, agency types, and urban and rural settings



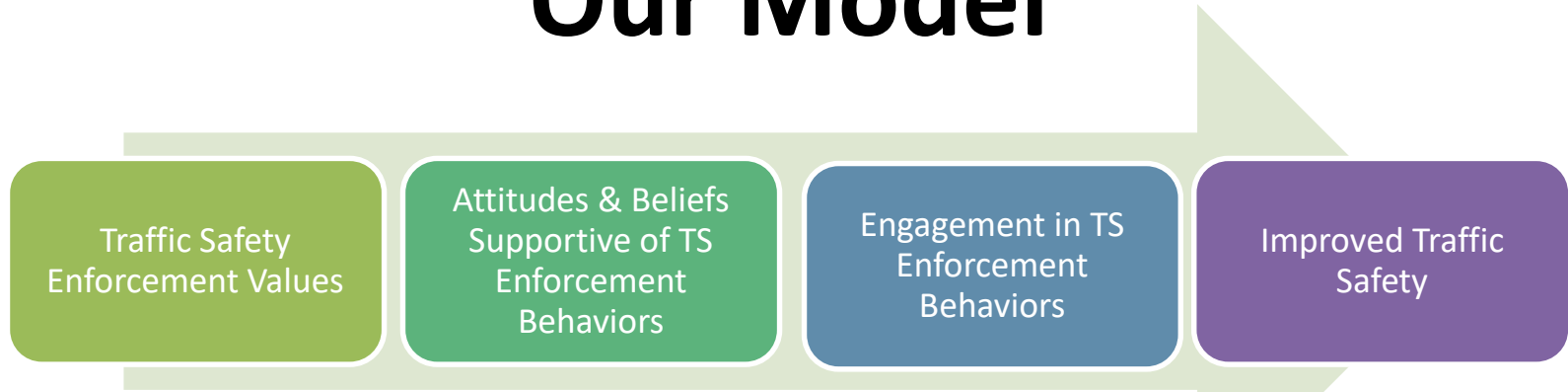
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# Our Model

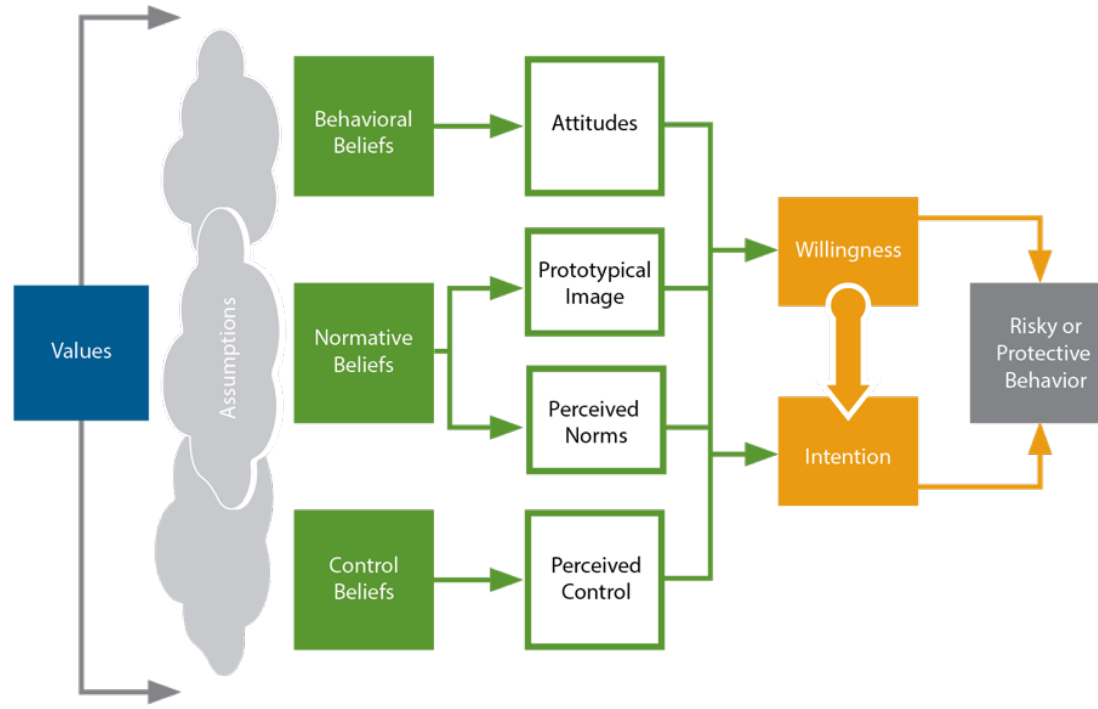


## Enforcement Behaviors

- Seat belt
- Speeding / aggressive driving
- Impaired driving
- Distracted driving



# Behavioral Model



# Participants

- Engaged agencies in 4 states
  - CT, ID, IL, and MT
  - statewide, municipal, county agency/sheriff's office
- Final Participation
  - 19 agencies (4 statewide, 9 municipal, 6 sheriff's offices)
  - 568 officers (280 statewide, 141 municipal, 147 sheriff's offices)



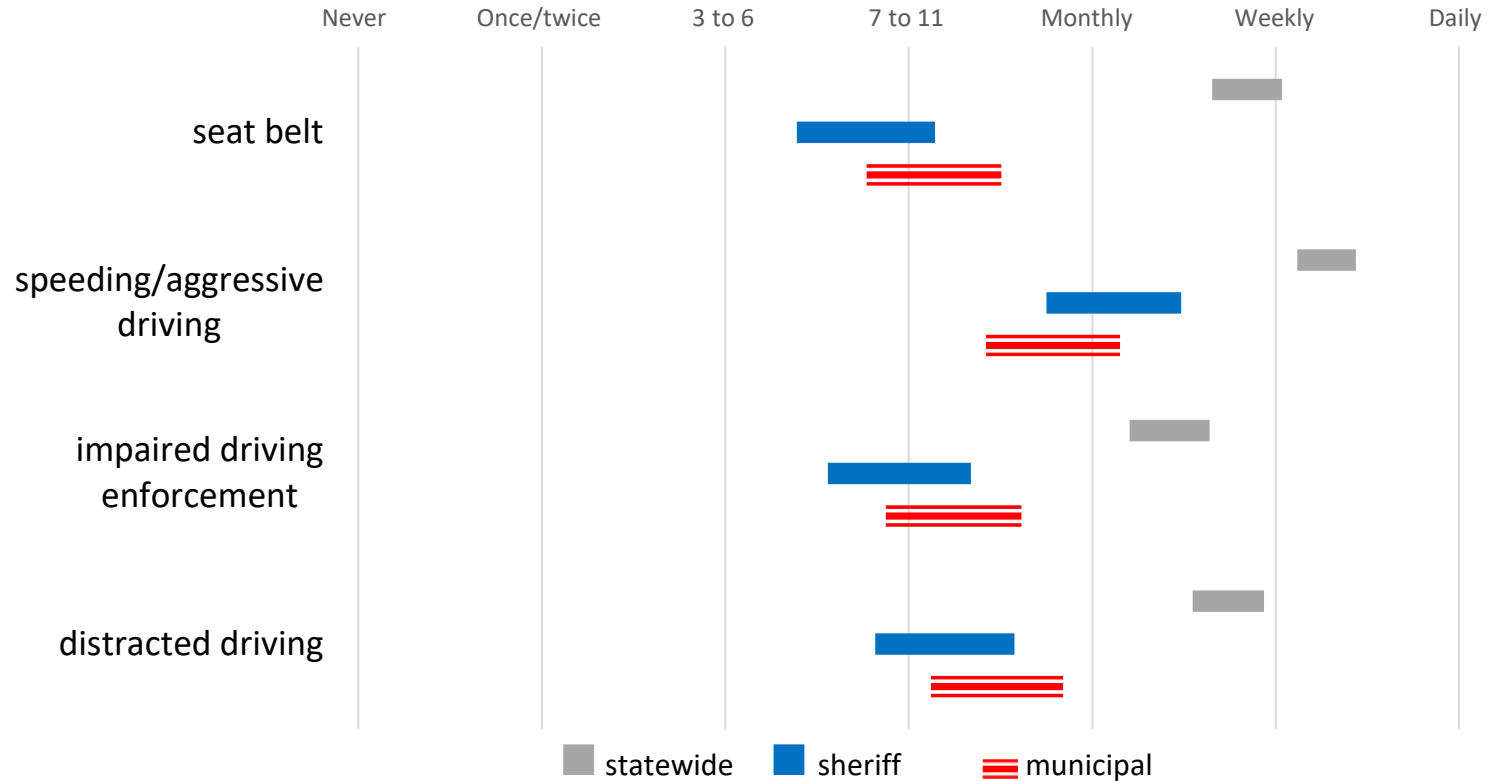
# Summary of Scales

| Scale                              | Number of Items | Internal Reliability (Cronbach's alpha) | Number of Respondents | Mean* | Standard Deviation |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Enforcement behavior               | 5               | 0.938                                   | 529                   | 5.2   | 1.77               |
| Change in enforcement behavior     | 5               | 0.975                                   | 526                   | 4.6   | 1.93               |
| Change in traffic safety behaviors | 4               | 0.773                                   | 529                   | 5.2   | 1.17               |
| Willingness                        | 4               | 0.799                                   | 502                   | 5.5   | 1.26               |
| Intention                          | 5               | 0.951                                   | 500                   | 5.6   | 1.62               |
| Attitude                           | 10              | 0.847                                   | 491                   | 5.2   | 0.85               |
| Prototypical image                 | 16              | 0.916                                   | 468                   | 5.8   | 0.80               |
| Perceived injunctive norms         | 3               | 0.759                                   | 466                   | 5.4   | 1.15               |
| Perceived descriptive norms        | 5               | 0.947                                   | 528                   | 5.8   | 1.36               |
| Perceived control                  | 3               | 0.824                                   | 459                   | 5.7   | 1.29               |
| Prioritization                     | 2               | 0.861                                   | 565                   | 5.7   | 1.17               |
| Concern for traffic safety         | 3               | 0.674                                   | 563                   | 6.0   | 1.21               |
| Knowledge                          | 3               | 0.772                                   | 459                   | 4.5   | 1.45               |
| Training                           | 8               | 0.697                                   | 456                   | 2.9   | 1.99               |

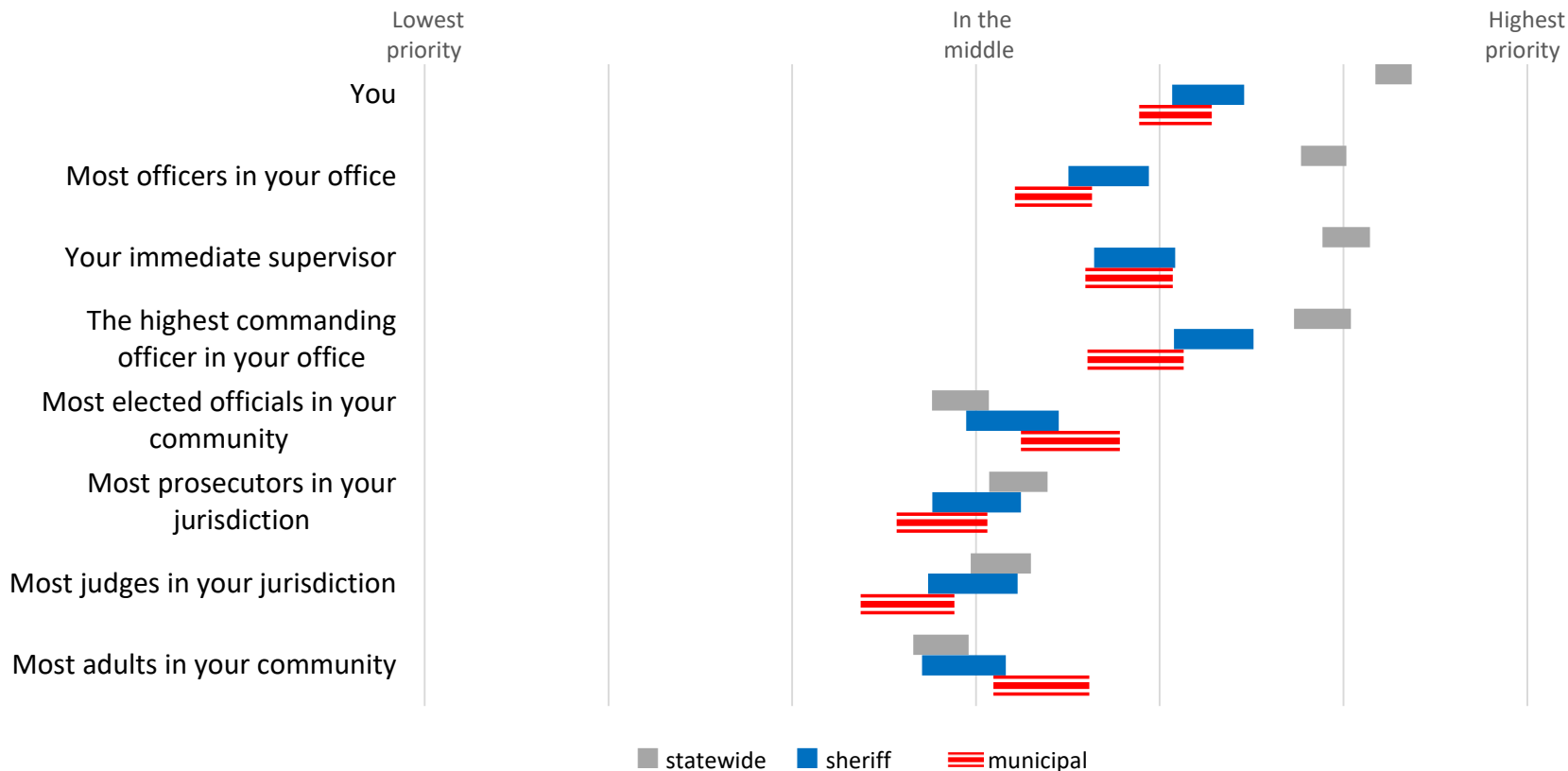
\*All scales range from 1 to 7 except for Training which ranges from 0 to 8.



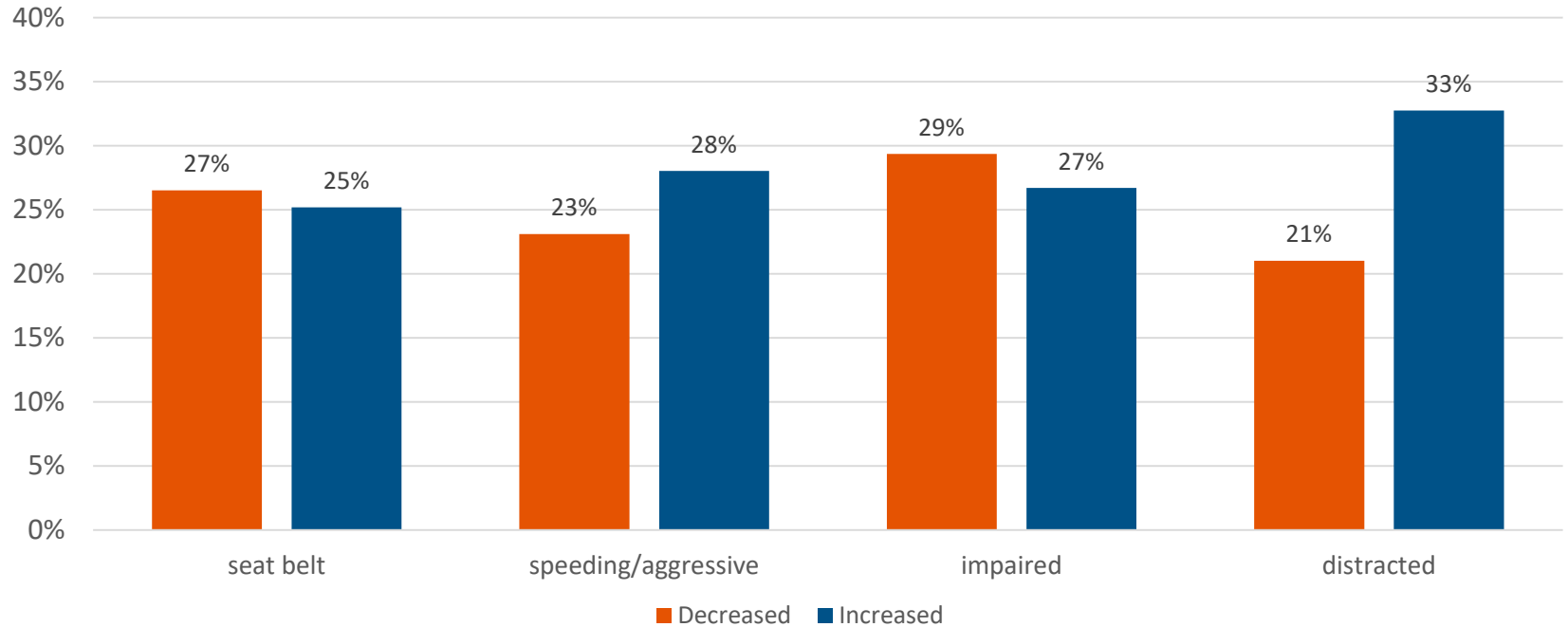
# "Thinking back over the past 12 months, how often have you engaged in the following traffic safety enforcement activities?"



# Relative to all the issues law enforcement addresses, how would the following people prioritize traffic safety and enforcement?

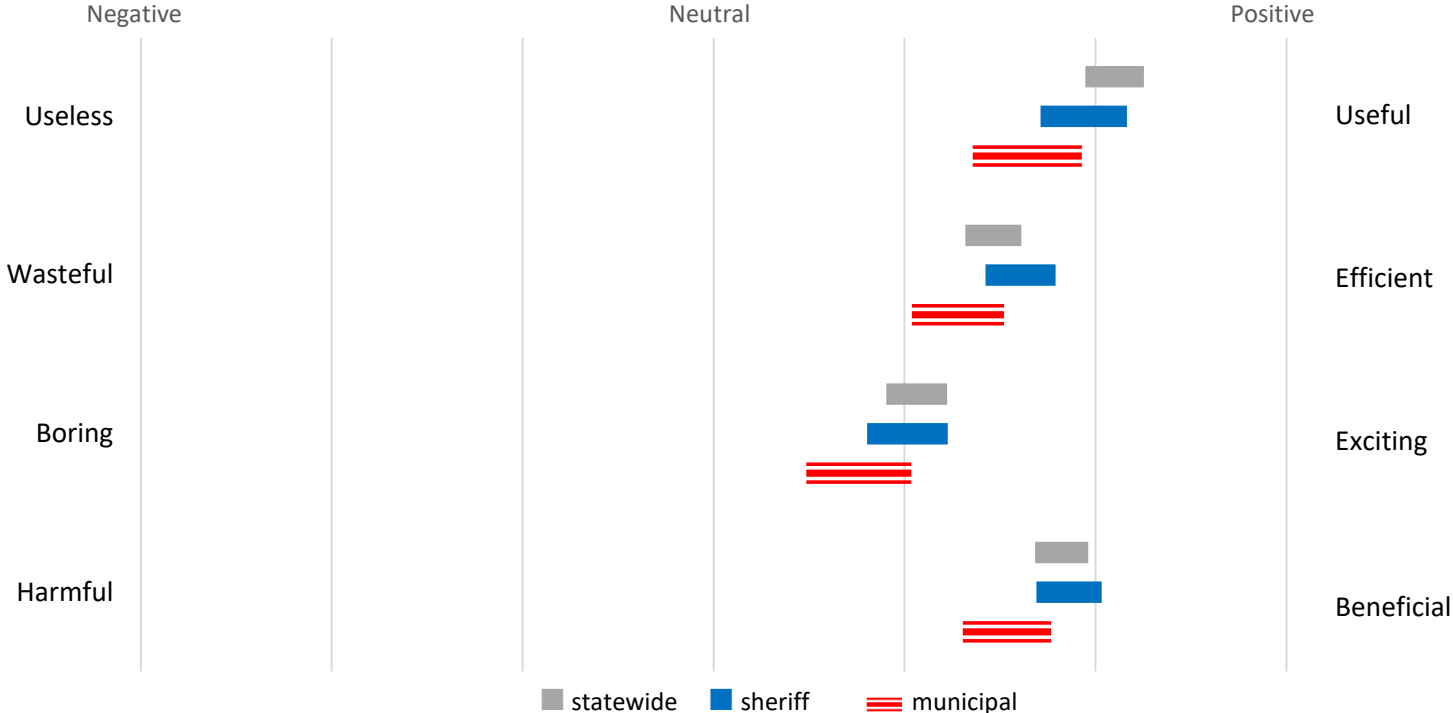


# Has your current engagement in each of the following traffic safety enforcement activities decreased, stayed the same, or increased relative to 5 years ago?



# Attitude about Traffic Safety Enforcement

"For me, engaging in traffic safety enforcement activities feels..."



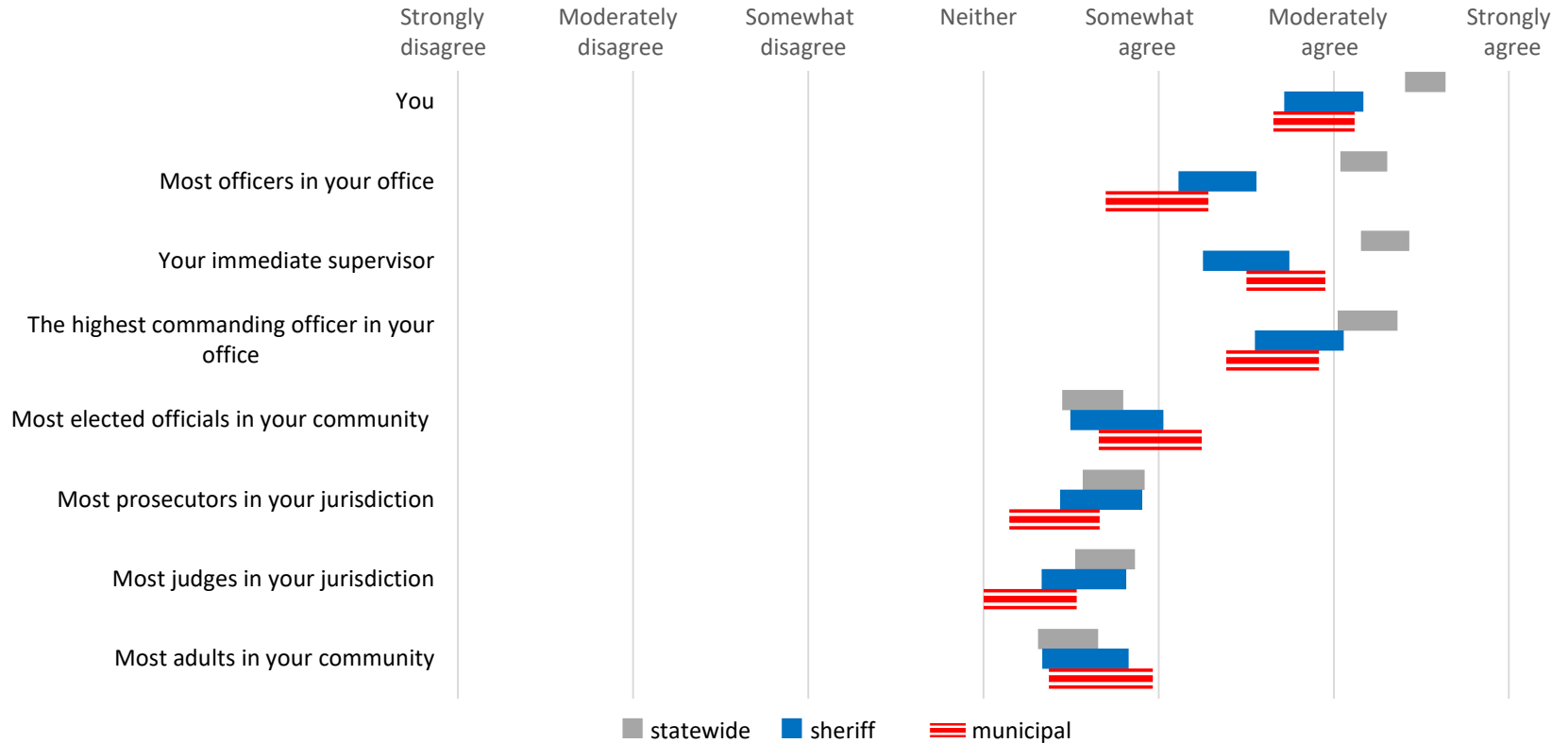


# Key Beliefs

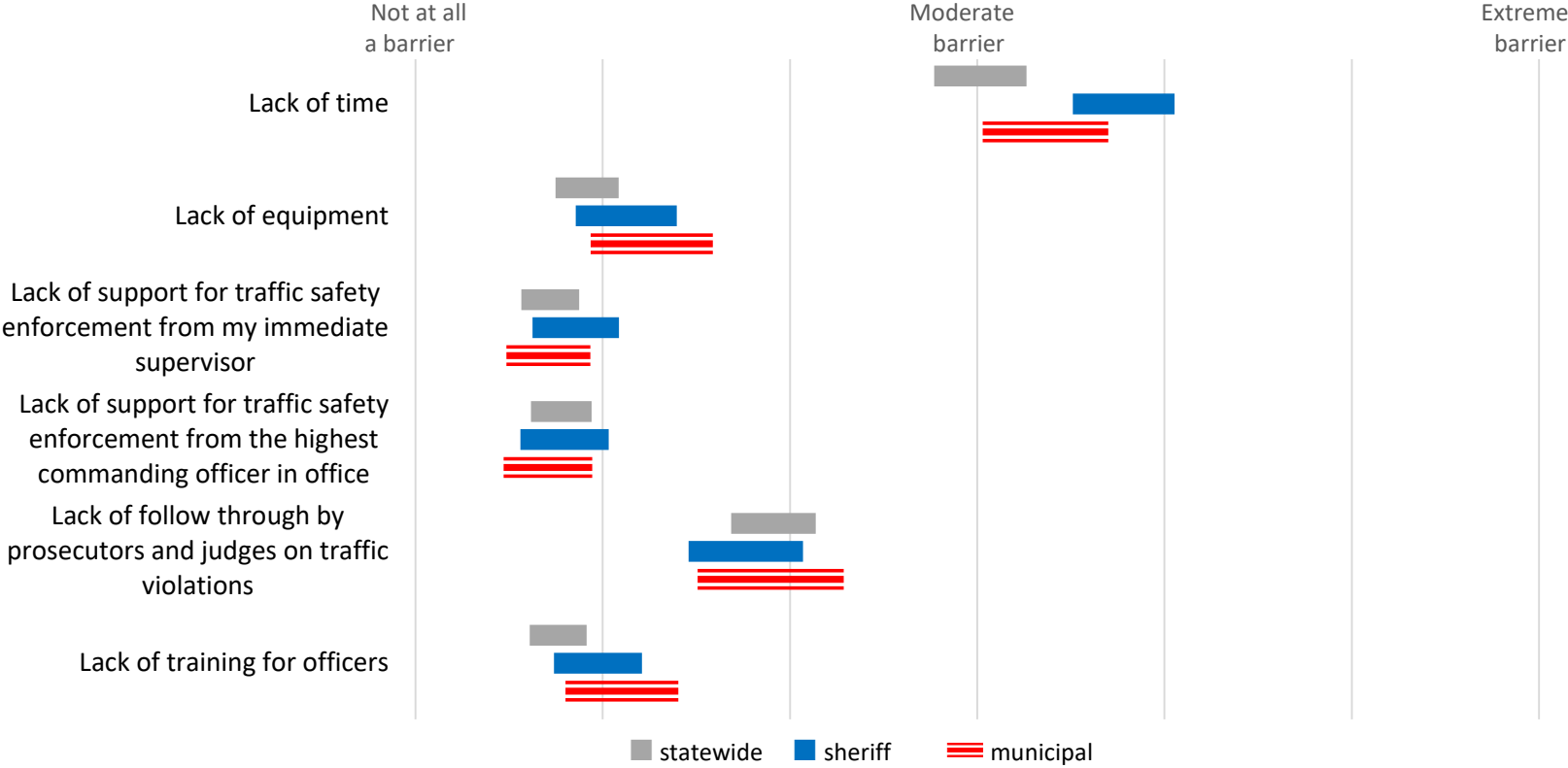
|  | Disagree | Neither agree<br>nor disagree | Agree |
|--|----------|-------------------------------|-------|
| Traffic safety enforcement efforts are a waste of time because prosecutors and judges will not follow through.   | 48%      | 17%                           | 35%   |
| Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death and injury in our jurisdiction.                                     | 17%      | 19%                           | 64%   |
| I will be positively recognized by my agency for regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement activities.    | 28%      | 22%                           | 50%   |
| I know my supervisor will think positively of me if I regularly engage in traffic safety enforcement activities. | 11%      | 18%                           | 71%   |
| Local prosecutors and judges do not seem to support our traffic safety enforcement efforts.                      | 34%      | 29%                           | 37%   |
| This community gets upset with our agency if we engage in traffic safety enforcement activities.                 | 50%      | 26%                           | 24%   |



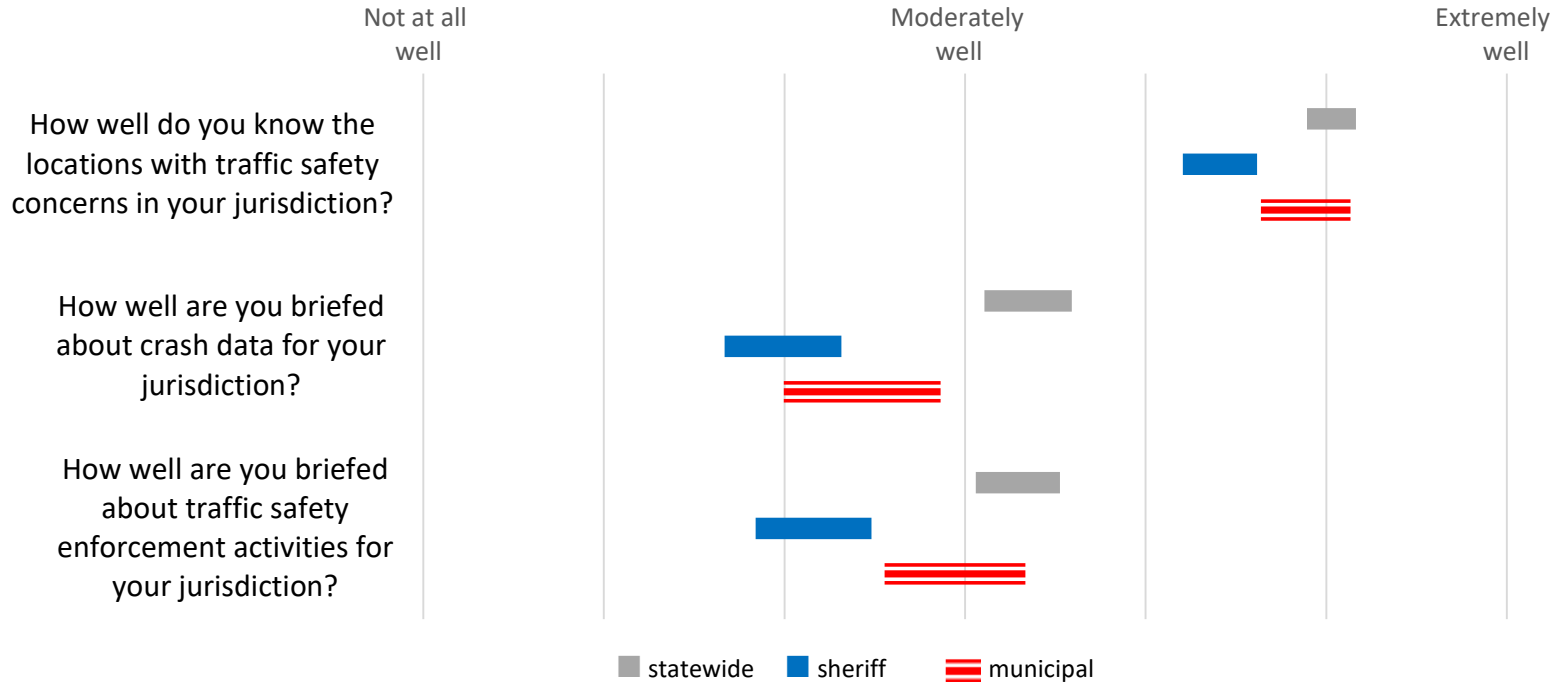
How much do the following people agree or disagree with the following statement:  
 “Law enforcement officers in this agency should regularly engage in traffic safety enforcement activities.”



# "To what degree is each of the following a barrier for you to regularly engage in traffic safety enforcement activities?"



# Knowledge



# Participation in Training (past 3 years)

| Training  | Statewide | Sheriff | Municipal | Overall |
|---|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Standard Field Sobriety Test Training                               | 87%       | 73%     | 48%       | 74%     |
| Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) Impaired Driving Training | 16%       | 13%     | 10%       | 14%     |
| Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE)              | 47%       | 18%     | 29%       | 36%     |
| Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Training                              | 15%       | 4%      | 8%        | 11%     |
| Distracted Driving  | 34%       | 30%     | 25%       | 31%     |
| Speed Management (radar, laser, etc.)                               | 82%       | 41%     | 32%       | 60%     |
| Seat belt and child occupancy protection use and laws               | 39%       | 15%     | 33%       | 32%     |
| “Below 100”   | 35%       | 46%     | 33%       | 37%     |



# Agenda

- Objectives
- Approach
- What We Learned
- **Recommendations / Potential Next Steps**
- Other Research Projects



# Recommendations

1. Frame conversations and efforts to increase enforcement around concern for safety and agreement with zero deaths and serious injuries goals.
2. Increase the prioritization of traffic safety and traffic safety enforcement among officers.
3. Leaders and supervisors should establish clear expectations for regular and consistent traffic safety enforcement.
4. Work to reduce barriers to regular and consistent enforcement.
5. Bolster training and knowledge about traffic safety enforcement.
6. Use the Dialogue Guide to facilitate a dialogue between agency leaders, supervisors, and officers



# Dialogue Guide

| Brief Survey on Beliefs about Traffic Safety Enforcement  |                          |                          |                            |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Instructions:</i> Leaders, supervisors, and officers should complete this survey when together. The results do not need to be collected. After everyone completes the survey, discuss each question and the reasons behind everyone's choices. |                          |                          |                            |                          |                          |
|   | Strongly disagree        | Somewhat disagree        | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree           | Strongly agree           |
| 1. "I believe the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our roadways should be zero."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. "Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death and injury in our jurisdiction."   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. "Our agency is responsible for the traffic safety of the public in our jurisdiction."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. "Regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement efforts will improve the safety of the community(ies) I serve."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. "When the public sees officers out enforcing traffic laws, they are more likely to follow traffic safety laws."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. "Traffic warnings and citations are an effective way to change driver behaviors."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. "Engaging in traffic safety enforcement efforts identifies criminals."   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. "I will be positively recognized by my agency for regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement activities."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. "Local prosecutors and judges do not seem to support our traffic safety enforcement efforts."  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Talking Points |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1.             | "I believe the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our roadways should be zero." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Most people agree with this statement. While we may wonder how we will get to zero, most people agree that zero is the only acceptable goal.</li> <li>b. Clearly, law enforcement plays a significant role in getting to zero, BUT we cannot expect law enforcement to do it alone.</li> </ul>   |
| 2.             | "Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death and injury in our jurisdiction." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Traffic crashes are a significant public health issue. Crashes kill and injure too many people.</li> <li>b. On average over 75 people die every day on U.S. roads. Imagine if there was a plane crash killing 75 people every day. The airline industry would stop flying.</li> <li>c. In most localities, traffic crashes are the leading cause of death of people age 5 to 25.</li> </ul>   |
| 3.             | "Our agency is responsible for the traffic safety of the public in our jurisdiction." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Because over 90% of crashes are the result of driver behavior, most crashes can be prevented. Consistent, visible enforcement can significantly reduce risky driving behavior.</li> <li>b. This does NOT mean that law enforcement is solely responsible for traffic safety. Engineers, maintenance crews, public health agencies, healthcare providers, workplaces, schools, families, and most importantly individuals have significant responsibility as well.</li> </ul> |
| 4.             | "Regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement efforts will improve the safety of the community(ies) I serve." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. As an individual officer, you make a difference every day you engage in enforcement activities. Much of your influence will be with people whom you never actually come into direct contact with, but who change their behavior because they know you are doing your job and enforcing the laws.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.             | "When the public sees officers out enforcing traffic laws, they are more likely to follow traffic safety laws." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Visible enforcement changes people's behaviors. While the warning or citation may have a greater impact on the individual who receives it, visible enforcement impacts many other people as well.</li> </ul>   |
| 6.             | "Traffic warnings and citations are an effective way to change driver behaviors." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Issuing a warning or citation is an opportunity to have a conversation with a driver that could have long term impact on the decisions they make. Helping drivers understand why the behavior is dangerous and helping them connect the impacts their risky behaviors may have on others will increase the effectiveness of the warning or citation.</li> </ul>  |
| 7.             | "Engaging in traffic safety enforcement efforts identifies criminals." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Those who violate traffic laws may be more likely to violate other laws as well.</li> </ul>   |
| 8.             | "I will be positively recognized by my agency for regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement activities." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How officers respond to this statement is important for supervisors and leaders to hear. While supervisors and leader may believe they regularly recognize officers for their traffic safety enforcement efforts, officers may feel otherwise. Supervisors and</li> </ul>  |





# Dialogue Guide

## “How much do you agree or disagree?”

1. "I believe the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our roadways should be zero."
2. "Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death and injury in our jurisdiction."
3. "Our agency is responsible for the traffic safety of the public in our jurisdiction."
4. "Regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement efforts will improve the safety of the community(ies) I serve."
5. "When the public sees officers out enforcing traffic laws, they are more likely to follow traffic safety laws."
6. "Traffic warnings and citations are an effective way to change driver behaviors."
7. "Engaging in traffic safety enforcement efforts identifies criminals."
8. "I will be positively recognized by my agency for regularly engaging in traffic safety enforcement activities."
9. "Local prosecutors and judges do not seem to support our traffic safety enforcement efforts."



# Dialogue Guide

## Speaking Points

1. "I believe the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our roadways should be zero."
  - Most people agree with this statement. While we may wonder how we will get to zero, most people agree that zero is the only acceptable goal.
  - Clearly, law enforcement plays a significant role in getting to zero, BUT we cannot expect law enforcement to do it alone.
2. "Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death and injury in our jurisdiction."
  - Traffic crashes are a significant public health issue. Crashes kill and injure too many people.
  - On average over 75 people die every day on U.S. roads. Imagine if there was a plane crash killing 75 people every day. The airline industry would stop flying.
  - In most localities, traffic crashes are the leading cause of death of people age 5 to 25.



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# Other Pooled Fund Research Projects

## Soon to Be Released

- Key Information for Driving Under the Influence of Cannabis (DUIC)
- Primer on Traffic Safety Culture
- Primer on Proactive Traffic Safety

<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety.shtml>



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# Other Pooled Fund Research Projects

## Research Underway

- Guidance for Evaluating Traffic Safety Culture Strategies
- Guidance on Messaging to Avoid Reactance and Moral Disengagement
- Tools and Resources to Increase Engaged Driving

<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety.shtml>



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