

Mandatory Minimums & Guns: Opinions from Illinois

Compiled by Julian Ignacio & Mariame Kaba (Project NIA)

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Overall Survey Results

Compiled by Julian Ignacio & Mariame Kaba (Project NIA)

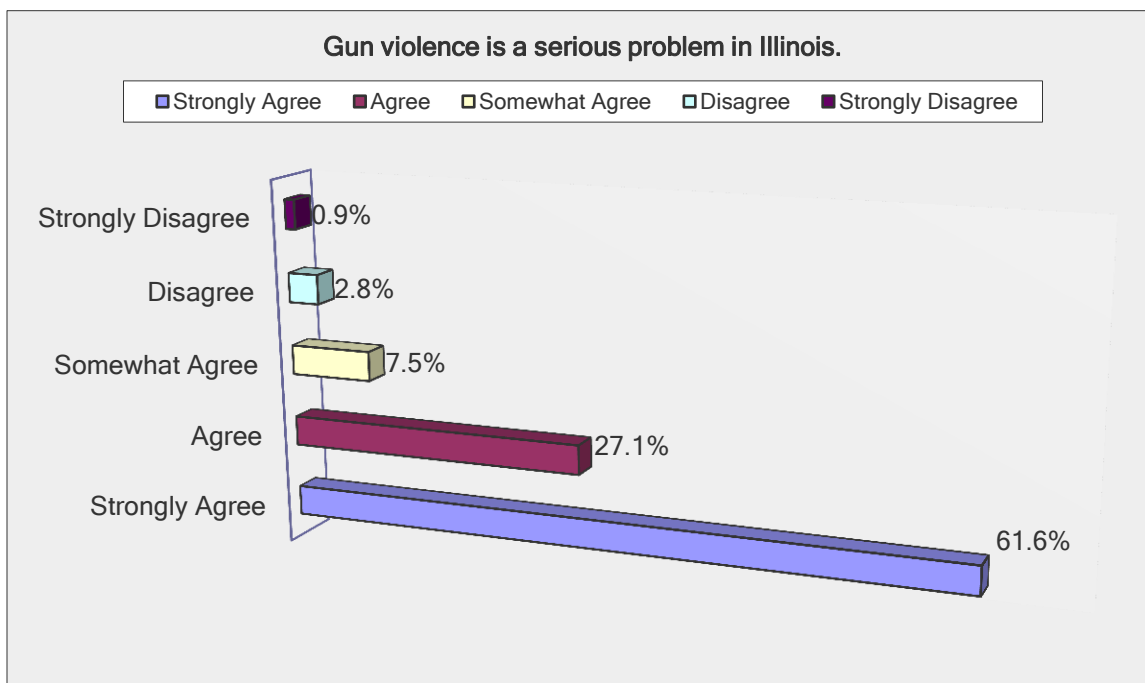
From November 20 through 29, Illinoisans were invited to offer their opinions about gun violence and mandatory minimum prison sentences through an online survey. Over 570 responses were collected and the results are offered in this report.

The online survey by Project NIA shows strong public opposition to SB 1342, a mandatory minimum gun bill proposed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel & awaiting a vote by the Illinois General Assembly. The findings indicate support for an approach to gun violence that runs contrary to the punitive policy currently under consideration by the General Assembly.

FINDINGS

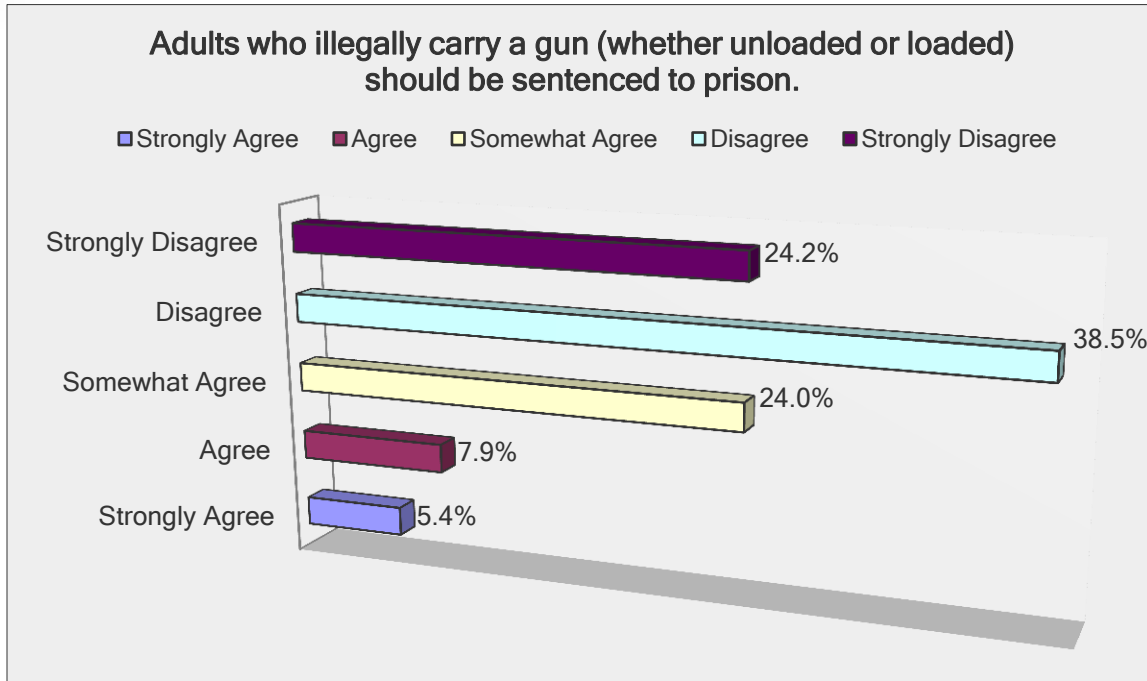
Below are some charts illustrating how survey respondents answered the questions posed.

Gun violence is a serious problem in Illinois.

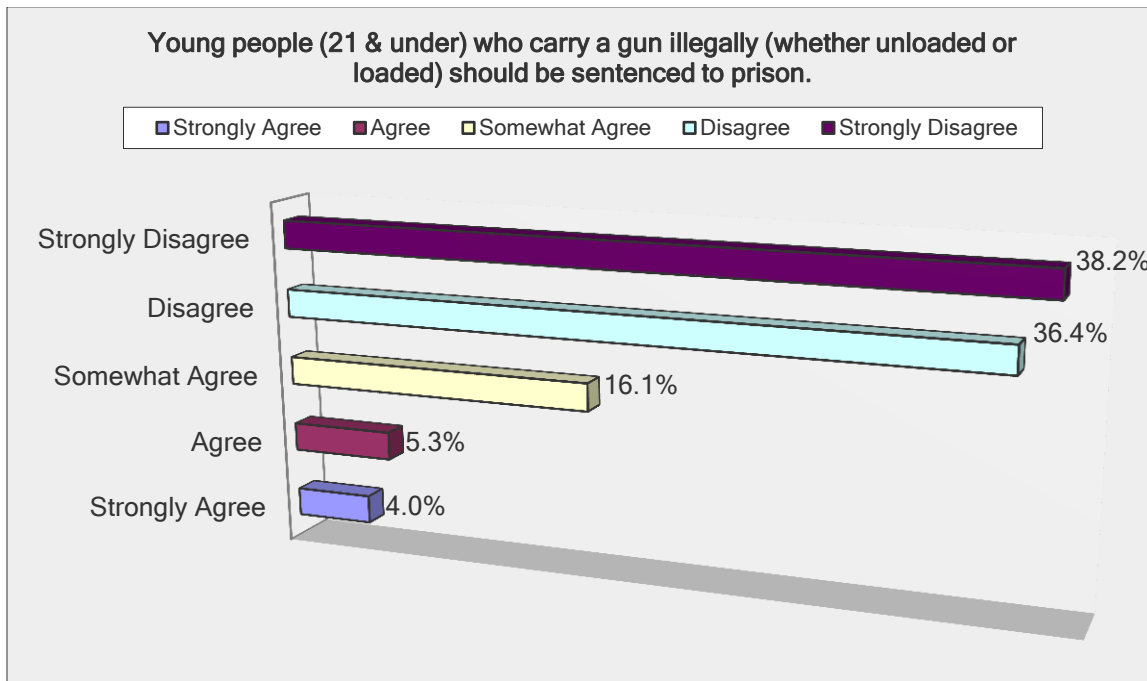


Nearly nine out of 10 (89%) people surveyed agree/strongly agree that “*Gun violence is a serious problem in Illinois.*”

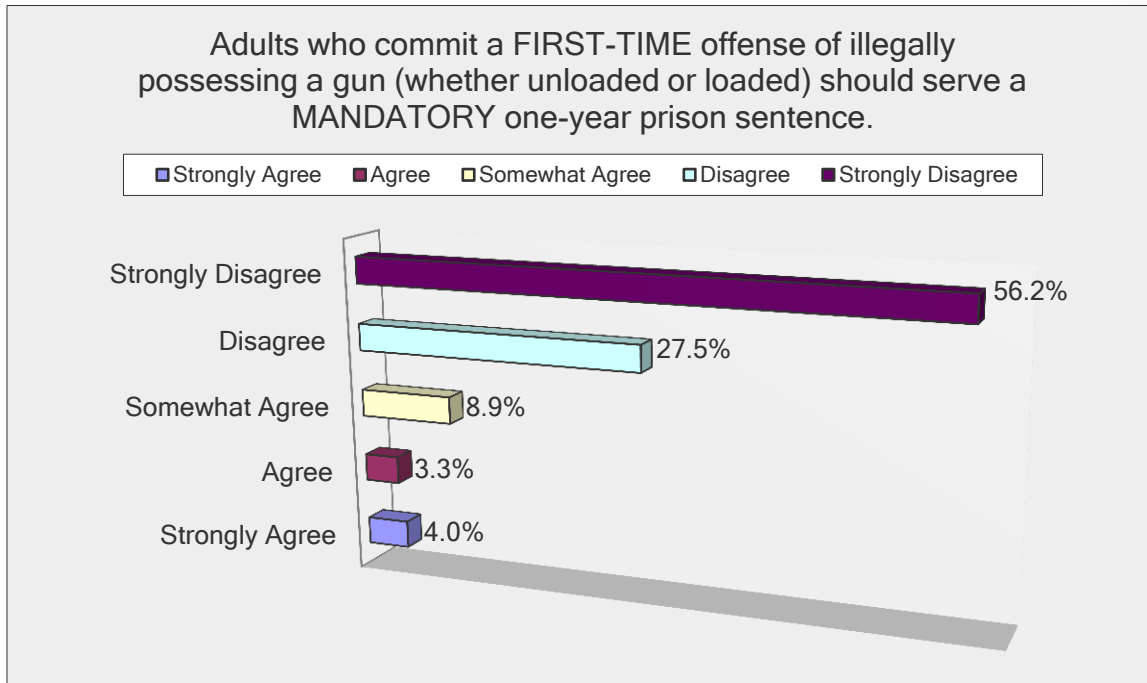
Adults who illegally carry a gun (whether unloaded or loaded) should be sentenced to prison.



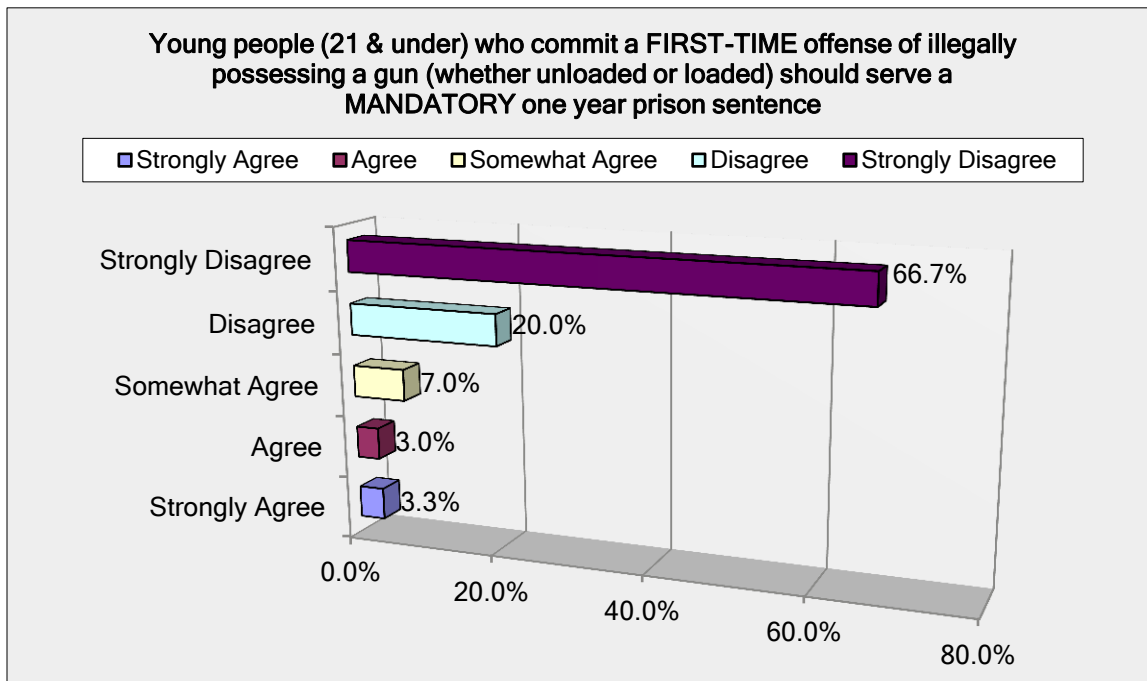
Young people (21 & under) who carry a gun illegally (whether unloaded or loaded) should be sentenced to prison.



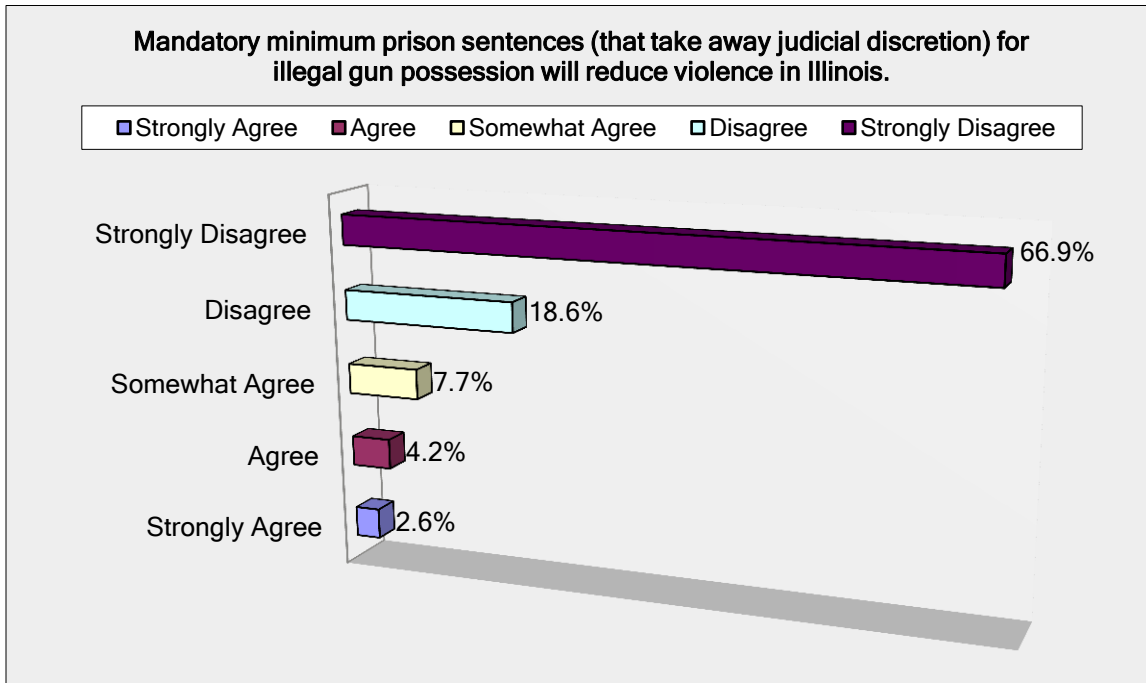
Adults who commit a FIRST-TIME offense of illegally possessing a gun (whether unloaded or loaded) should serve a MANDATORY one-year prison sentence.



Young people (21 & under) who commit a FIRST-TIME offense of illegally possessing a gun (whether unloaded or loaded) should serve a MANDATORY one year prison sentence.

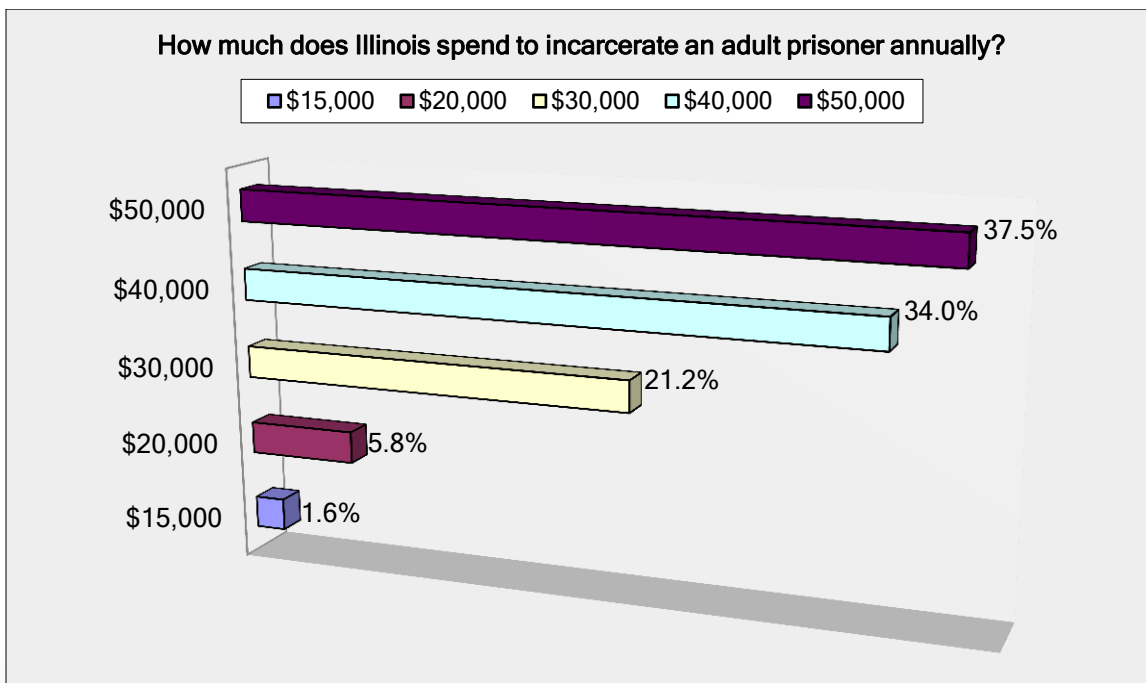


Mandatory minimum prison sentences (that take away judicial discretion) for illegal gun possession will reduce violence in Illinois.

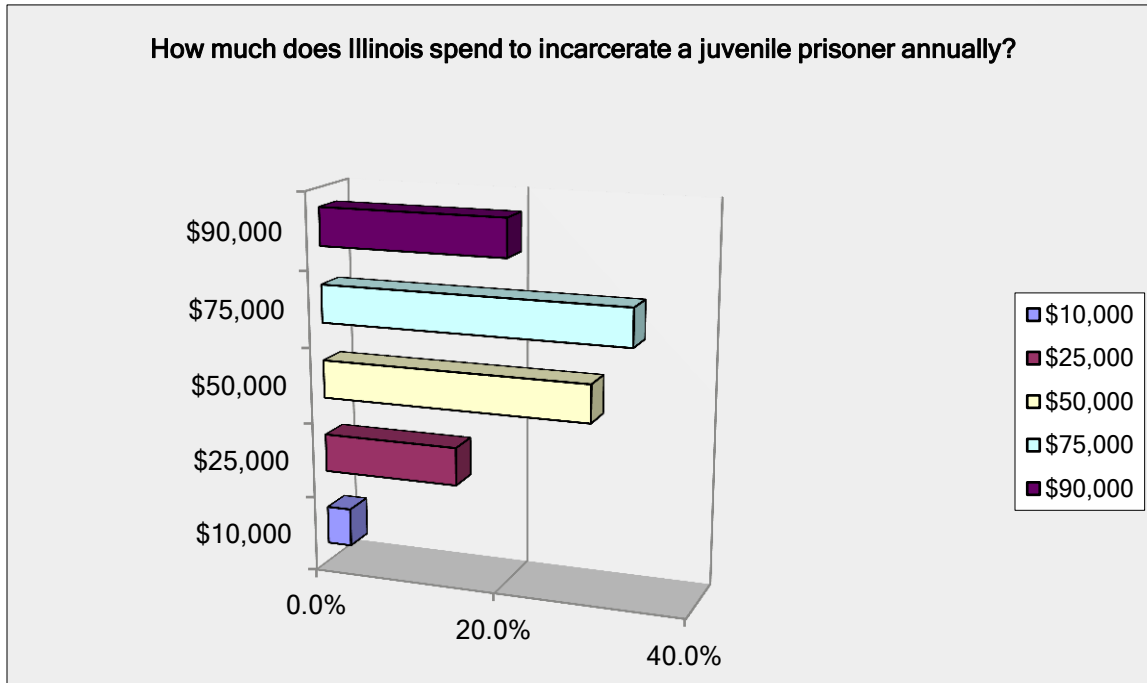


86% of Illinoisans disagree/strongly disagree with the statement: *“Mandatory minimum prison sentences (that take away judicial discretion) for illegal gun possession will reduce violence in Illinois.”*

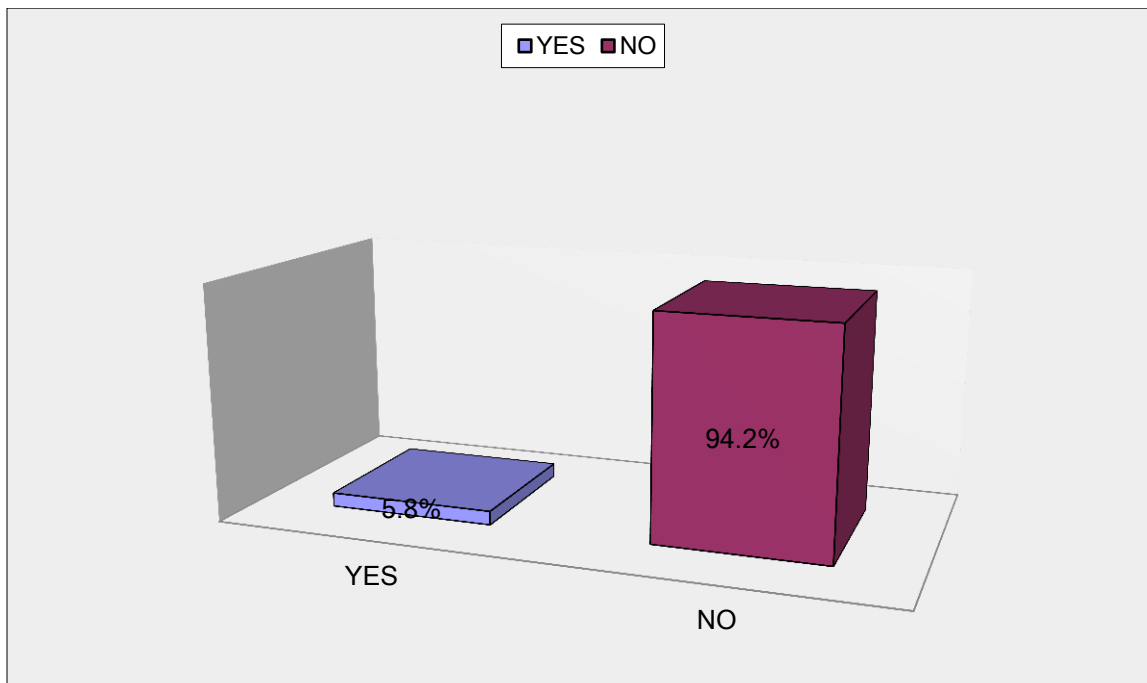
How much does Illinois spend to incarcerate an adult prisoner annually?



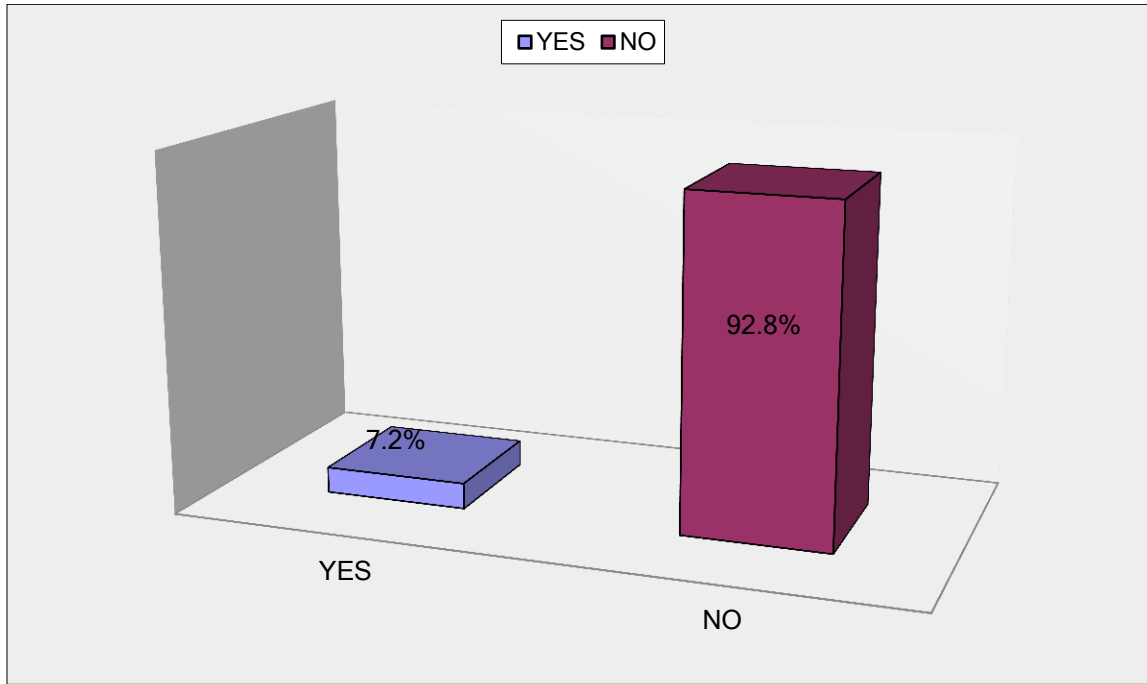
How much does Illinois spend to incarcerate a juvenile prisoner annually?



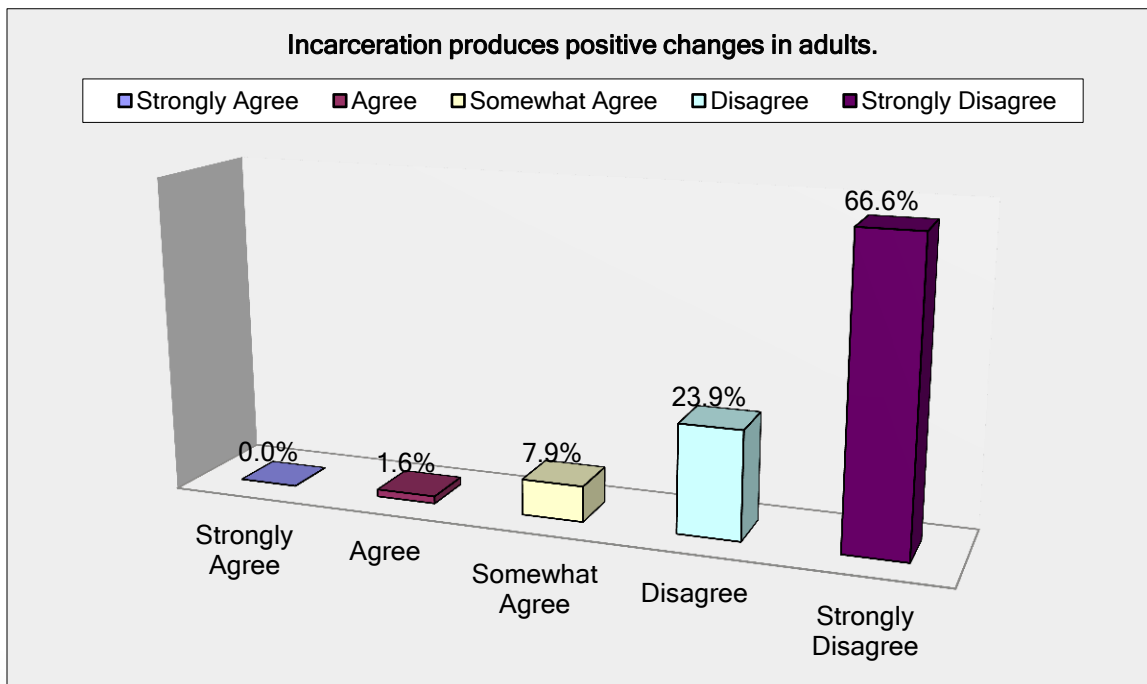
Experts calculate that SB1342, a mandatory minimum gun bill currently being debated by the Illinois legislature, might cost the state as much as an additional \$780 million over 10 years. Should Illinois spend an additional \$780 million in prison costs over the next 10 years?



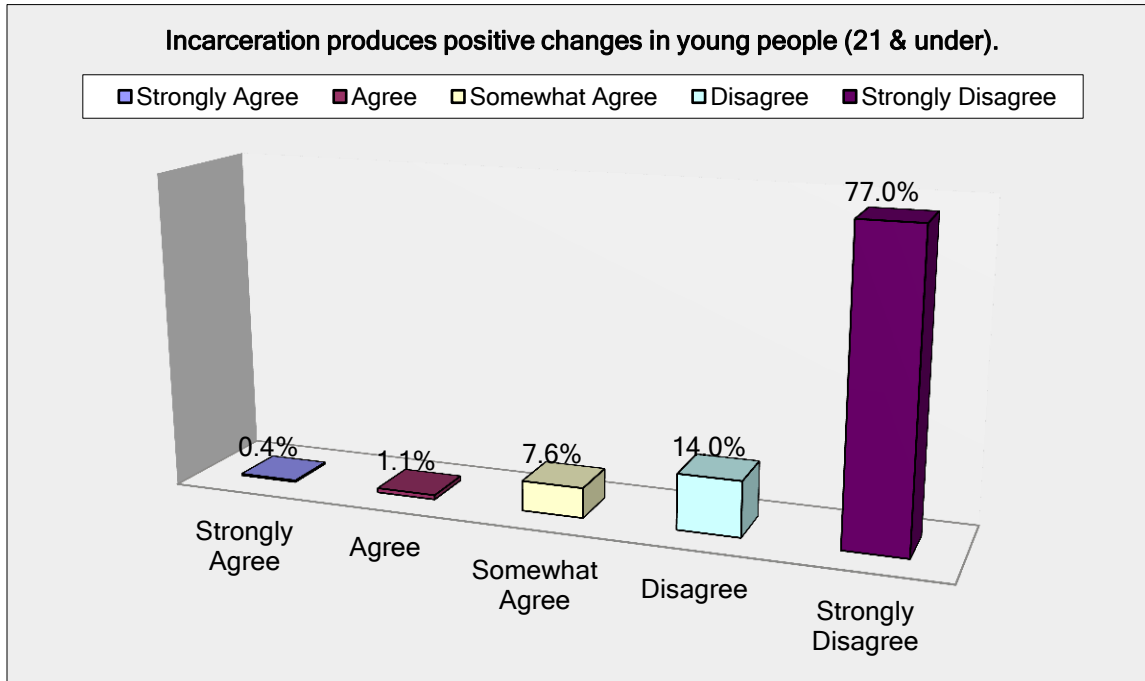
Experts say that SB1342, a mandatory minimum gun bill currently being debated by the Illinois legislature, might increase the number of prisoners in Illinois by nearly 2500 in 10 years. Illinois's prison system is already overcrowded with nearly 50,000 prisoners in a system designed for 32,000. Should Illinois pass SB1342?



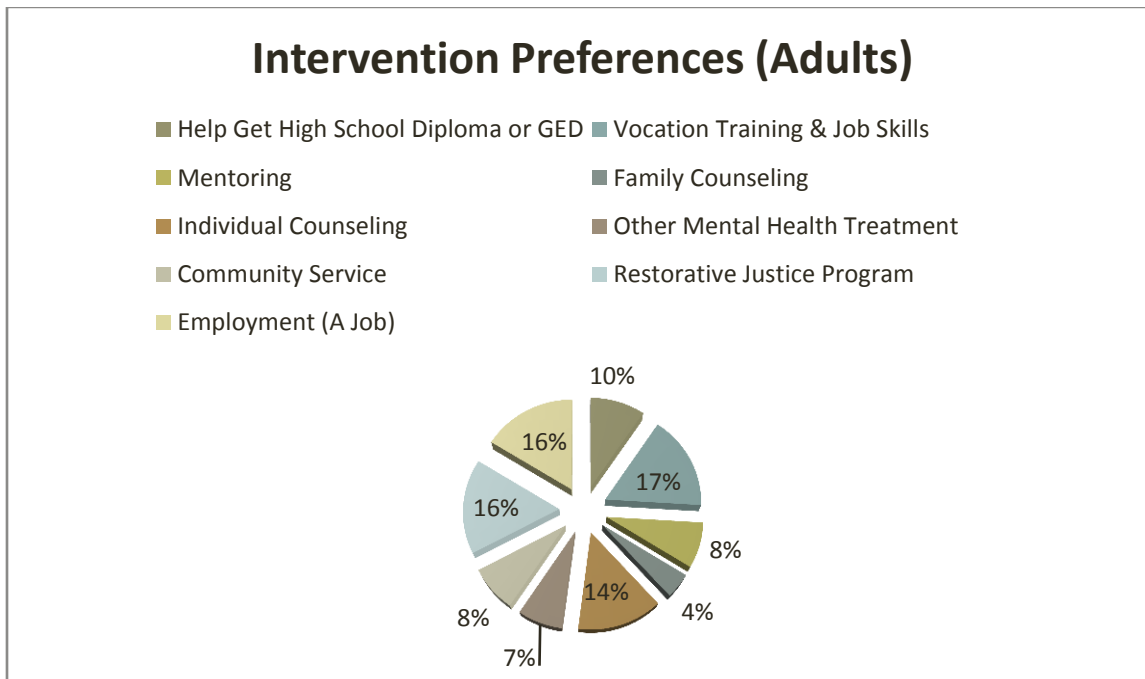
Incarceration produces positive changes in adults.



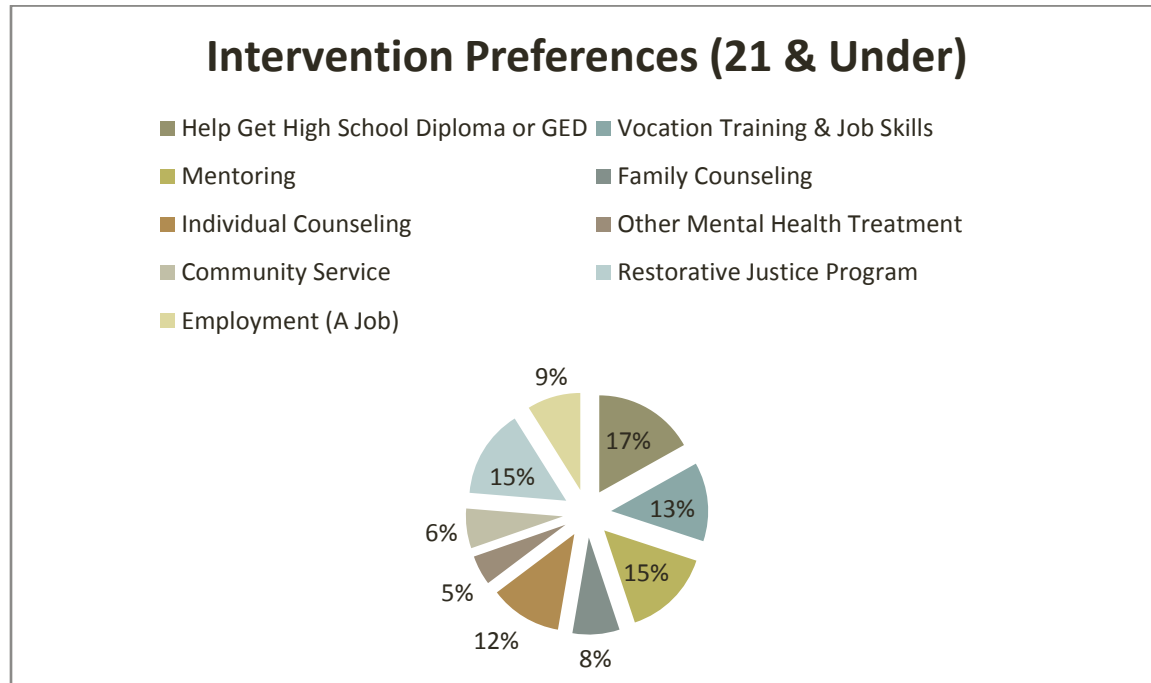
Incarceration produces positive changes in young people (21 & under).



What type of interventions outside of prison would you support for adults who illegally carry a gun (whether loaded or unloaded)? (Pick your TOP THREE CHOICES)



What type of interventions outside of prison would you support for young people (21 & under) who illegally carry a gun (whether loaded or unloaded)? (Pick your TOP THREE CHOICES)



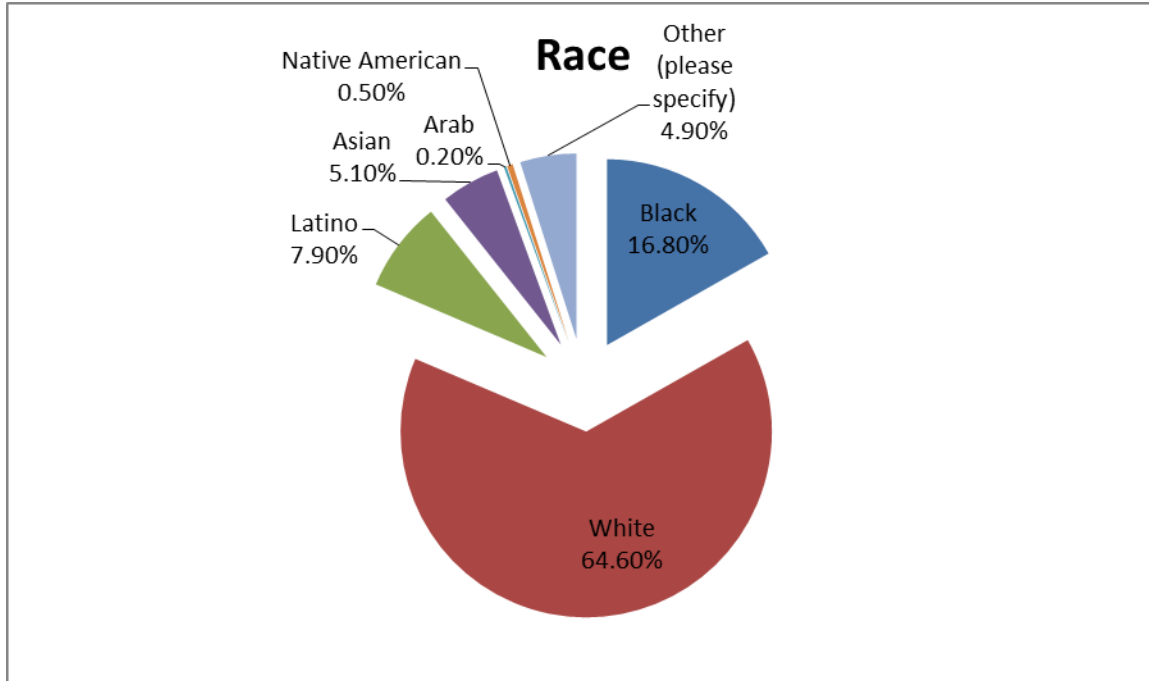
The survey found that when given choices outside of prison, Illinoisans support the following types of interventions for adults who illegally carry a gun (whether loaded or unloaded): Vocation Training & Job Skills, Restorative Justice Program, and Employment. They favor Help getting a high school diploma or GED, Mentoring, and Restorative Justice Program for youth (21 & under) who illegally carry a gun (whether loaded or unloaded).

While the rest of the country is moving away from mandatory minimum prison sentences because research and experience suggest that they don't work, Illinois has been moving towards them. It appears that the public is ahead of the policymakers again and favors a focus on rehabilitation and community-based alternatives instead of more incarceration.

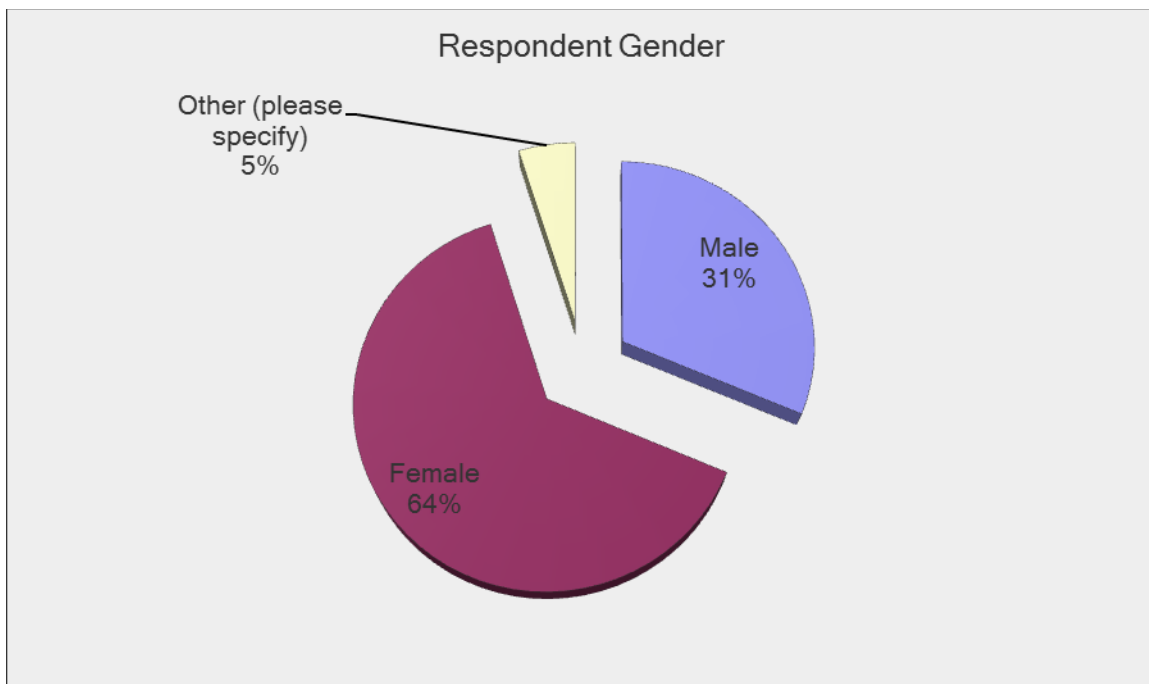
Legislators and policymakers should take heed. There is no popular demand for the 'tough on crime' bills that politicians often offer as a solution to violence and harm. The desire is for less punishment and to focus instead on the root causes of violence.

Demographic Breakdown

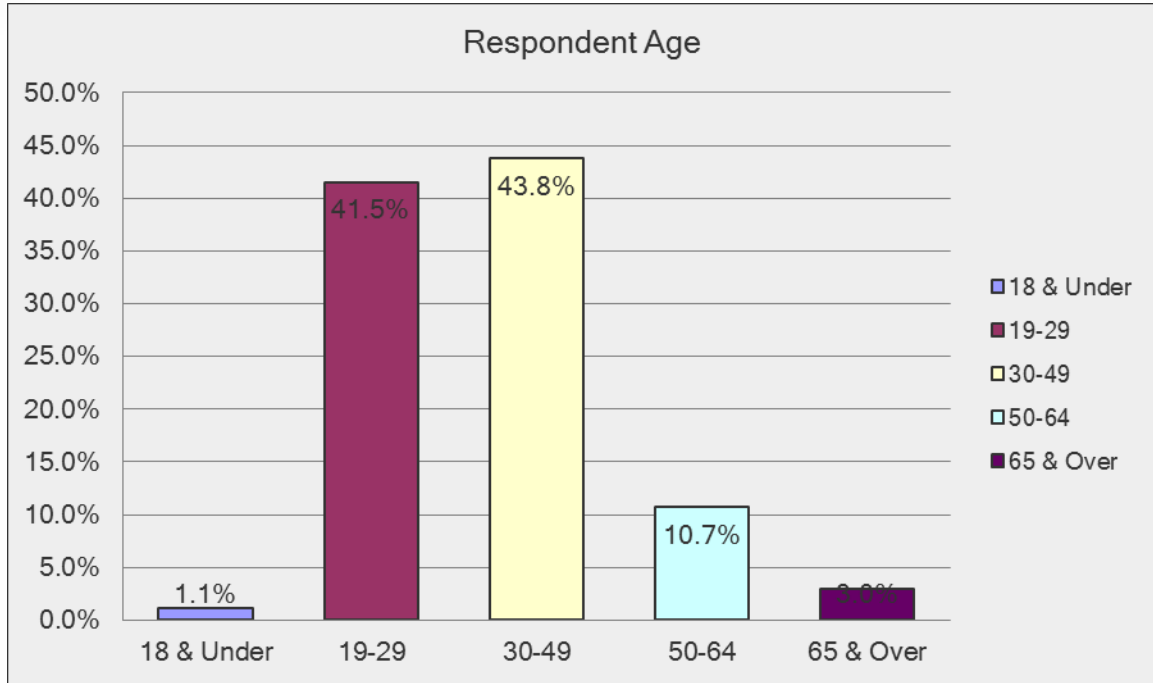
Most of the survey respondents identified as white (64.6%).



Most of the survey respondents identified as women (64%).



Most respondents were between the ages of 30 to 49 closely followed by those ages 19-29.



For more information about this survey (including a detailed breakdown of zip codes), contact Mariame Kaba at projectnia@hotmail.com.