



behavior research center's

Latino Poll

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GANG PROBLEMS DECLINE IN LATINO NEIGHBORHOODS

Phoenix, Arizona, June 20, 2002. In 1996, 54 percent of Hispanic adults in Arizona's urban areas said that gangs in their immediate neighborhoods were a problem, including 21 percent who rated them to be a "major" problem. By 1998, the proportion with gang problems in their neighborhoods had risen to 60 percent, and 27 percent, an historic high, labeled the problems as "major."

Today, four years later, concern about neighborhood gangs has declined to 45 percent, a 16 point drop from 1996, and only 16 percent now rate them to be a major problem, the lowest reading by far in recent years.

Residents in the Tucson area who have historically reported fewer problems with gangs continue in that tradition, with only 13 percent rating gangs as major problems facing their neighborhood. In Phoenix the figure rises to 19 percent, but even this is a huge decrease from the 34 percent registered in 1998.

In the 2002 results, we notice that perception of the seriousness of gang crime tends to rise among older people, people in middle income neighborhoods and in white collar and English dominant neighborhoods. This may suggest that gang problems today tend to be the most prevalent within older and more acculturated neighborhoods, rather than in the poorest neighborhoods or in those where immigrant populations are the strongest, as may sometimes be thought to be the case.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 502 Hispanic heads of household across Maricopa and Pima Counties, conducted between April 6 and April 26, 2002, by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona as part of the Center's independent and non-partisan HispanicTRACK™. The public is welcome to visit www.brcpolls.com to read this and other recent polls.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This report is based on the twenty-fourth semi-annual wave of Behavior Research Center's HispanicTRACK™/Latino Poll survey, completed between April 6th and 26th in 2002, in which interviews were conducted with 502 Hispanic heads of household throughout Pima and Maricopa Counties. Respondents were interviewed in the language of their choice. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.4 percent of what they would have been had the entire Hispanic population been surveyed. The Latino Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

For this and other polls. See www.brcpolls.com/results

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona
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	2002	1998	1996
Major problem	16%	27%	21%
Minor problem	<u>29</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>33</u>
Total	45%	60%	54%
<u>% Answering</u>			
<u>"Major Problem"</u>			
Maricopa County	19%	34%	22%
Pima County	13	20	20

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