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# Community Policing and “The New Immigrants”:

Latinos in Chicago



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# Community Policing and “The New Immigrants”: Latinos in Chicago

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# Contents

Summary . . . . . 1

Population Trends . . . . . 2

    A look at the Nation. . . . . 3

    A look at Chicago. . . . . 3

Characteristics of Latinos in Chicago . . . . . 4

The CAPS Program. . . . . 5

Problems in Chicago’s Latino Neighborhoods. . . . . 7

    Results from evaluation surveys . . . . . 7

    Results from city service records . . . . . 10

    Results from official crime reports . . . . . 11

Latinos’ Responses to the CAPS Initiative . . . . . 12

    Integrating Latinos into CAPS . . . . . 12

    Awareness of CAPS among Latinos. . . . . 14

    Participation of Latinos in CAPS . . . . . 16

    Perceptions of the quality of policing among Latinos. . . . . 17

Conclusion . . . . . 20

Suggested Reading . . . . . 22

Notes . . . . . 23

## Summary

The influx of immigrants and the corresponding changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the Nation's population have placed significant demands on the infrastructure of the Nation's public service sector, particularly the criminal justice system. This is evident in Chicago, where shifting population patterns are dictating how police initiatives are being implemented.

The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy, known as CAPS, was instituted on an experimental basis in a few police districts in April 1993. The initiative was designed to improve police effectiveness by identifying and prioritizing problems and working with the community to solve the problems. When CAPS became a citywide effort in spring 1995, law enforcement looked for ways to incorporate the city's diverse population in the initiative. An evaluation of the CAPS program—performed by Northwestern University and supported by the National Institute of Justice, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, and private organizations—began before CAPS was initiated citywide and continues to monitor its progress. From the evaluation, it has become clear that not all residents are reporting the same benefits from the CAPS program.

This NIJ Research Report, the third in a series of four reports on community policing in Chicago, summarizes key findings from the evaluation to determine the extent to which CAPS has involved and/or benefited different population groups and highlights the experiences of Chicago's "new immigrants," particularly its burgeoning Latino population.<sup>1</sup> As summarized below, the evaluation found that despite aggressive efforts, CAPS experienced difficulties integrating Latinos into the program. More specifically, the evaluation found that—

- Latinos are one of Chicago's most troubled populations, and they have reaped comparatively fewer benefits than those enjoyed in many other city neighborhoods, such as declining crime rates and generally improving conditions.
- Awareness of CAPS was generally high, due in part to the city's aggressive marketing campaign. However, English-speaking Latinos

were far more aware of the program than Spanish-speaking Latinos and depended less on television and radio to learn about the program. In fact, television did not prove to be an effective vehicle for encouraging involvement in CAPS.

- Community involvement in CAPS was closely related to the violent crime rate in a particular neighborhood. Despite Latinos' general perception that their neighborhoods were particularly problem prone, their attendance at neighborhood beat meetings was relatively low. Such modest involvement by the Latino community has been one of the program's shortcomings.
- Chicago residents generally perceived that the quality of policing improved during the 1990s. Perceived levels of police corruption and misconduct remained stable. In contrast to the view of Chicago's white residents, however, Latinos and blacks were still skeptical about the quality of policing in their neighborhoods at the end of the decade.

Before examining these results in more detail, this report describes national and local population trends and characteristics of Chicago's Latino residents in an attempt to put the implications of this evaluation into clearer perspective. Because the changing composition of Chicago's population is representative of nationwide trends, these findings may be relevant to a wider audience. The report then briefly describes the CAPS program and discusses the crime problems of Chicago's Latino neighborhoods before noting how Chicago's Latinos view and have participated in CAPS.

## Population Trends

An examination of the Nation's and Chicago's population trends shows the implications of this evaluation. Because Chicago's large and diverse population is consistent with nationwide population patterns, other jurisdictions may use the results of this evaluation when planning and implementing similar community policing initiatives.

## A look at the Nation

Between 1990 and 1998, the Hispanic population in the United States grew by an estimated 35 percent and the Asian population grew by 41 percent. Currently, the U.S. population is approximately 12 percent Hispanic and 4 percent Asian. These groups—younger and with larger families—are projected to account for more than half of the Nation’s population growth over the next 50 years. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2050, the U.S. population will be 25 percent Hispanic and 8 percent Asian; non-Hispanic whites will constitute a bare majority, at 52 percent.

More difficult to project is the impact that immigration could have on these figures. About 9 percent of the U.S. population is foreign born, and the bulk of immigrants now arriving come from Spanish-speaking and Asian nations. As the growth of the white and black populations slows, the traditional concepts of “majority” and “minority” will change continually.

## A look at Chicago

Chicago mirrors these national trends. Long an entrepôt, Chicago is the third most popular destination city for new immigrants. Since the 1990 census, the city has become home to tens of thousands of newly documented immigrants from Mexico alone, and large numbers of undocumented immigrants. Smaller numbers of immigrants also have arrived from the Middle East, the Philippines, and Poland. The city’s Chinatown neighborhood is expanding in several directions, and refugees from Southeast Asia are forming new communities of their own. Members of each group arrive with established views of how to relate to the police—and government in general—and find themselves accommodating these views to a new environment and America’s big-city problems.



## Characteristics of Latinos in Chicago

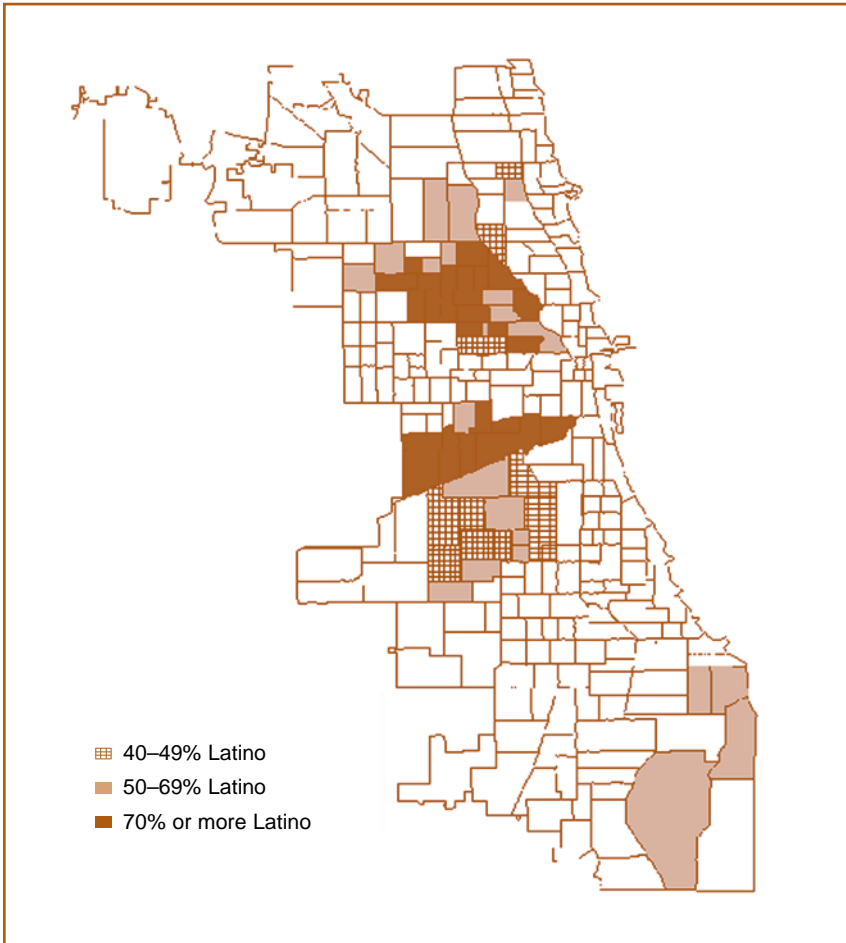
In 2000, the city’s Latino population (754,000) exceeded the total population of all but 13 U.S. cities. Exhibit 1 illustrates the police beats in Chicago with the largest concentrations of Latinos; many others can be found scattered throughout the city’s racially diverse areas or in predominantly white beats.

Most of Chicago’s Latinos are of Mexican heritage. In 2000, about 15 percent were of Puerto Rican origin, a percentage that had declined since 1990. The study found that more of the expanding Latino population preferred to speak Spanish rather than English, as a significant number of survey respondents wanted to be interviewed in Spanish. Based on this measure, the percentage of Latinos who preferred to speak Spanish grew from 35 to almost 60 percent (or 14 percent of all adult Chicagoans) during the 1990s. In this report, this group is referred to as “Spanish speakers.”

Surveys indicated that Latino households differed in significant ways from those of whites or blacks in the city. During the 1990s, Latino households in Chicago averaged more children per household than either white or black households. As a result of this and continued immigration, the Latino fraction of the population grew from 20 to 26 percent during this period. Latinos were less likely to have much formal education than either whites or blacks. In 1999, more than 45 percent of Latinos surveyed reported that they did not graduate from high school, and less than 10 percent had a college degree. They were also the lowest income group of the three; 44 percent said they earned less than \$20,000 per year, compared with 38 percent of blacks and 16 percent of whites.

In general, Latinos were younger and spent less time in their current residences than other population groups. At the same time, they were most likely to live as married couples with children. In 1999, almost 70 percent of the Latino households surveyed included children, compared to just 22 percent among whites and 44 percent among blacks. Of those surveyed, Latino women were by far the most likely to report that their job was “keeping house.” Despite this finding, Latinos were still as likely as whites to be employed; relatively few of those

Exhibit 1: Concentration of Latinos in Chicago's Police Beats



interviewed were retired or out of work. These distinctions turn out to be important, because the experiences of Chicago's Latinos in general—and Spanish speakers in particular—differ from those of other groups.

## The CAPS Program

Chicago's community policing initiative includes features designed to increase police effectiveness by identifying and prioritizing problems

and working with the community to solve them. Teams of patrol officers assigned to each of the city’s 279 police beats provide coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These turf-based beat teams were created so that officers could become more attuned to local conditions. A sergeant coordinates work across shifts, and all officers on the team meet quarterly to review priorities and discuss tactical plans.

To accommodate these teams, an easy-to-use crime analysis and mapping system was developed by the department and installed in every district station to help beat officers identify local crime patterns and suspects. Dispatching procedures usually keep these units in their beats when they are on assignment, freeing up time from answering calls and giving them more time to engage in proactive community-oriented work. Excess calls and some low-priority matters are handled by roving rapid-response units.

Team members and their sergeants attend community meetings held regularly (usually monthly) in each beat. Beat meetings provide an important opportunity for neighborhood residents to meet and hear from the police who work in their neighborhood. Here, residents can voice their concerns and get involved in problem-solving efforts with the police. Because many problems that residents consider important are beyond the scope of traditional police mandates, the city created a special service-request process that enables officers to mobilize other city agencies that may be better able to handle such problems. Furthermore, special problem-solving training sessions are held for all officers, and yearly retraining programs are held for beat sergeants.

In 1995 and 1996, thousands of community residents were trained for their role in the community policing process. Teams of civilian and uniformed training officers conducted evening and weekend training in virtually every beat in the city. After an orientation meeting, trainees completed three problem-solving sessions organized around the department’s four-step problem-solving model and the “crime triangle” (victim-offender-location).

## Problems in Chicago's Latino Neighborhoods

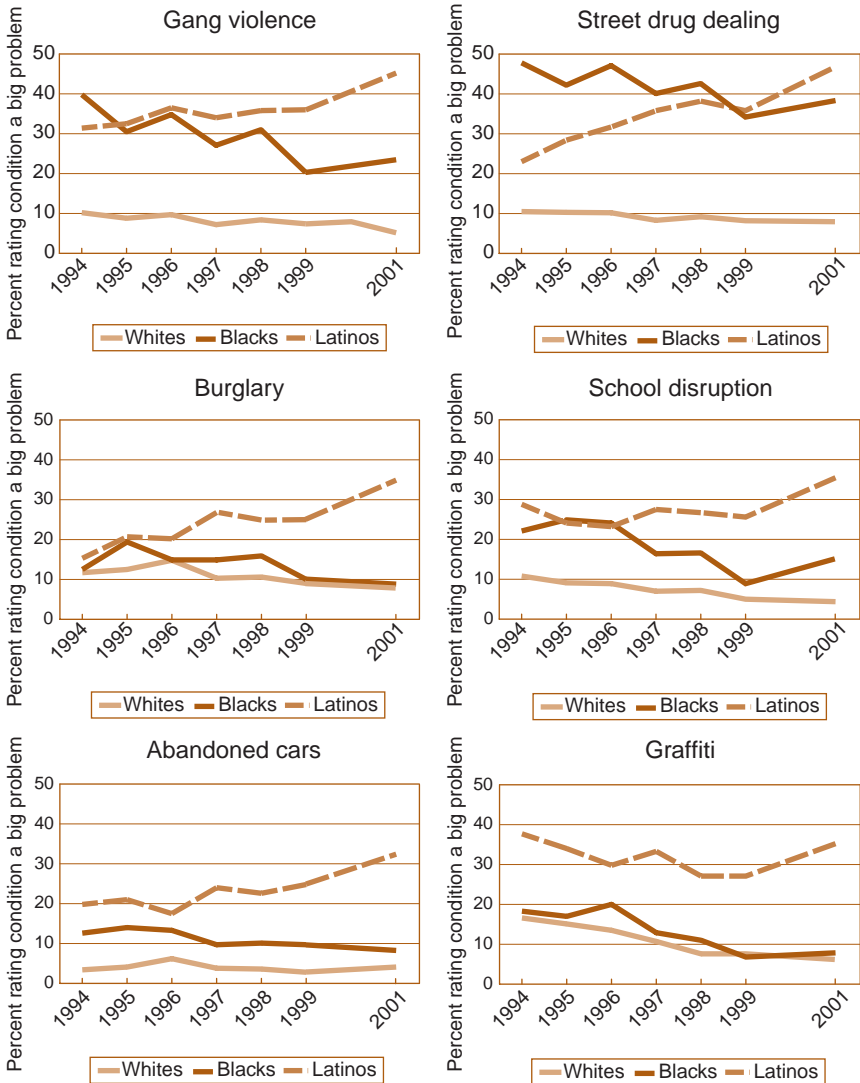
The CAPS evaluation has several sources of data on the extent of problems facing Chicago residents, including the results of evaluation surveys, city service records, and crime reports. These sources all point to the same general conclusion: Chicago's Latino communities are among the city's most troubled groups, and by and large they have not experienced the same general improvement in neighborhood conditions as other groups.

### Results from evaluation surveys

Exhibit 2 presents trends in perceptions of neighborhood conditions reported by residents since 1994. The yearly surveys targeted 13 potential problems, including violent and property crimes, social disorder (e.g., public drinking and loitering groups), and physical decay (e.g., abandoned buildings and trash-strewn vacant lots). Respondents were asked whether each was a big problem, some problem, or no problem in their neighborhood. Based on the surveys, Latinos topped 11 of 13 problem categories, often by a wide margin. They scored slightly below blacks on two problems: street drug sales and loitering groups.

Both Latinos and blacks fared visibly worse than the city's white residents, who were best off in every category. White residents had fewer problems to begin with, but they still saw statistically significant improvements on 10 of the 13 measures. From 1994 to 2001, Chicago's black neighborhoods saw more substantial improvements, albeit from a more troubled base near the beginning of the 1990s. Reported decreases in gang violence in black neighborhoods meant that by 1997, Latinos considered gang violence a greater problem than blacks did. Aside from gang violence, surveys revealed that Latinos had the greatest concern about burglary and car theft (not shown in exhibit 2), a finding that contrasted with the declines in concern registered by others in the city. Street drug dealing became a more serious problem for Latinos during the study period, as the number of Latinos concerned about drug dealing doubled. Latinos' concerns about abandoned cars in

Exhibit 2: Trends in Perceptions of Neighborhood Problems



Note: No survey data were collected in 2000.

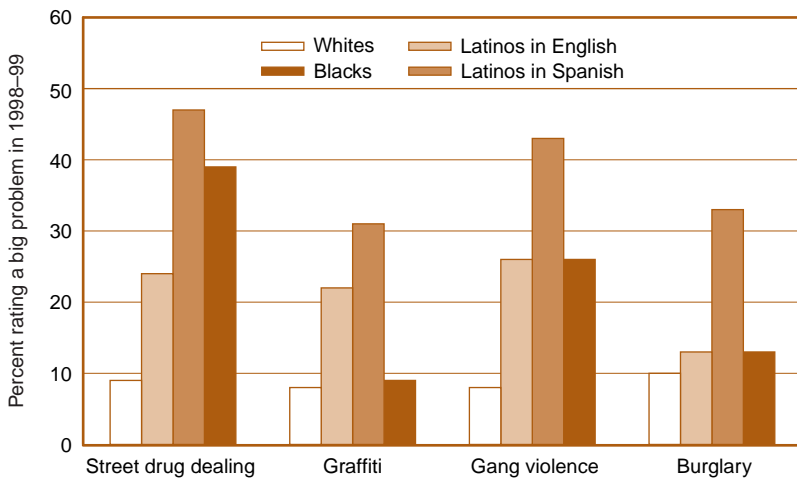
their neighborhood also grew throughout the evaluation, and they did not share in perceived improvements in the maintenance of order in and around the city’s schools. For the most part, Latinos surveyed saw the severity of problems as stable or increasing as the decade continued.

**Language.** Language played an important role in resident perceptions of the extent of neighborhood problems. The Latino community was deeply divided on this variable. Spanish speakers were much more likely than others to report that conditions were bad. On every measure, Spanish speakers rated neighborhood problems as more serious than English-speaking Latinos and blacks.

Exhibit 3 illustrates the magnitude of some of these differences across race and language. The differences depicted between English and Spanish speakers are typical: On 8 of 13 survey questions (only four are presented in exhibit 3), the latter were at least twice as likely to perceive that problems in their neighborhood were serious. Whites always reported the most favorable conditions. The responses of blacks were varied, but in each case their level of concern was far lower than that of Spanish-speaking Latinos.

**Graffiti.** Graffiti is a fact of life in many neighborhoods. Chicagoans read graffiti as a sign that gangs are moving into their area or growing more confident of their control over the neighborhood. Graffiti is

**Exhibit 3: Perceptions of Neighborhood Problems by Race and Language**



Note: Data are from 1998 and 1999 surveys that were combined to increase the number of Latino respondents with different language preferences.

believed to be infectious; where it appears and is not quickly erased, its presence will rapidly stimulate still more graffiti. Yet it did not go unnoticed in Chicago as graffiti was the subject of a surprising number of beat meetings. In 1994, graffiti was perceived to be the greatest problem among Latino respondents. The city’s white residents also considered it one of the biggest problems in their neighborhoods, albeit at a significantly lower level. As exhibit 2 showed, the only improvement perceived by Latinos over time was in the level of graffiti, although concern increased slightly in 2001.

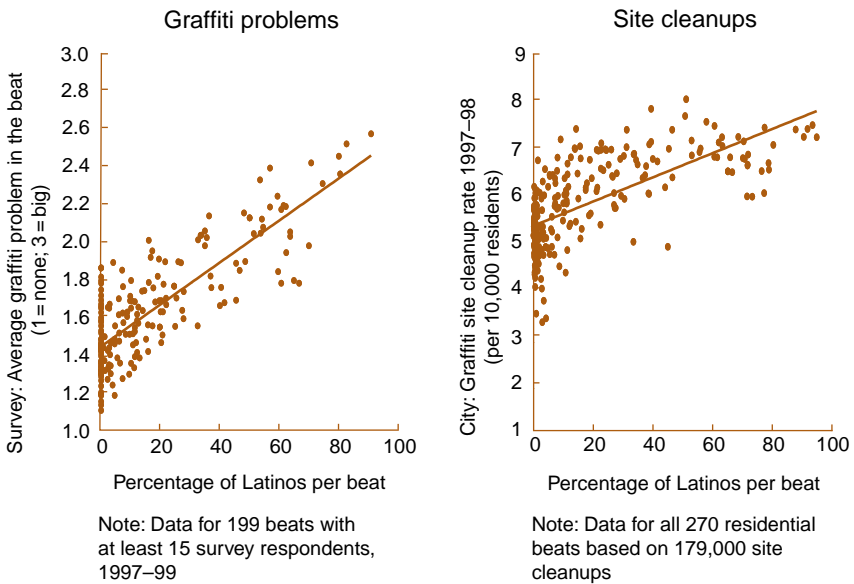
Graffiti presented an important test of the effectiveness of the city service component of CAPS. The city’s antigraffiti program involves rapid cleanup strategies and a city ordinance that bans the sale of spray paint. Rapid cleanups are a direct response to the contagion theory. Perhaps the most visible element of the city’s graffiti elimination program is teams of “graffiti blasters” armed with high-pressure soda sprayers. Paint and supplies also are available for community groups that organize cleanup efforts.

### Results from city service records

Based on records from Chicago’s Department of Streets and Sanitation, researchers in this study were able to monitor the distribution of graffiti cleanup efforts by city workers and see how closely efforts were aligned with need. Exhibit 4 examines perceived graffiti problems and site cleanup rates and how they are related to the concentration of Latinos in each beat. In the left graph of exhibit 4, the vertical axis displays the average graffiti problem rating for each beat, on a scale ranging from 1 (no problem) to 3 (big problem). The horizontal axis displays the percentage of Latinos in each beat. According to this graph, nearly all heavily populated Latino beats rated graffiti as a problem. Furthermore, it documents the strong relationship between the size of the Latino population and resident’s overall rating of graffiti problems in each area.

The right graph of exhibit 4 examines graffiti-site cleanups by city workers. Again, the graffiti cleanup rate is depicted on the vertical axis and the percentage of Latinos in each beat is scaled on the

Exhibit 4: Graffiti and Chicago's Latino Community



horizontal axis. This relationship is less dramatic than that shown in the left panel because many beats with relatively low concentrations of Latinos had relatively frequent cleanups. Although this is consistent with the general decline in graffiti problems perceived by all major groups, it is clear that most heavily populated Latino beats are near the top of the service scale.

**Results from official crime reports**

Regardless of how they are measured, crime trends in Chicago present a mixed and not always favorable picture of conditions in the city's Latino neighborhoods. To some degree, the official crime reports contradict the perceptions of Latinos, as reported in the evaluation survey. Based on 10 years of official crime reports, the city's heavily populated Latino beats fell in the middle on many measures (see exhibit 5).<sup>2</sup> Official figures for rape and auto theft were down in these areas, along with robbery and burglary (not shown in exhibit 5). Homicide rates were stable in Latino communities but did not decline as elsewhere.



Assault rates, on the other hand, rose sharply in Latino areas (not shown), contrasting with declines reported in other areas.

Researchers created special analytic categories of crime from the data that show the same mixed pattern. Exhibit 5 shows declining rates for gun-related crimes in Latino areas, but crimes that took place in schools and threats falling short of the assault category rose (not shown), the latter by 36 percent. The city’s predominantly white beats saw small percentage declines in nearly every category, but they began at a much lower level at the beginning of the 1990s. Exhibit 5 shows that blacks were the major beneficiaries of declines in recorded crime from 1991 to 2000, a finding that was duplicated in the survey measures. Nevertheless, crime rates in all categories remained significantly higher among black residents than in white, Latino, or mixed areas.

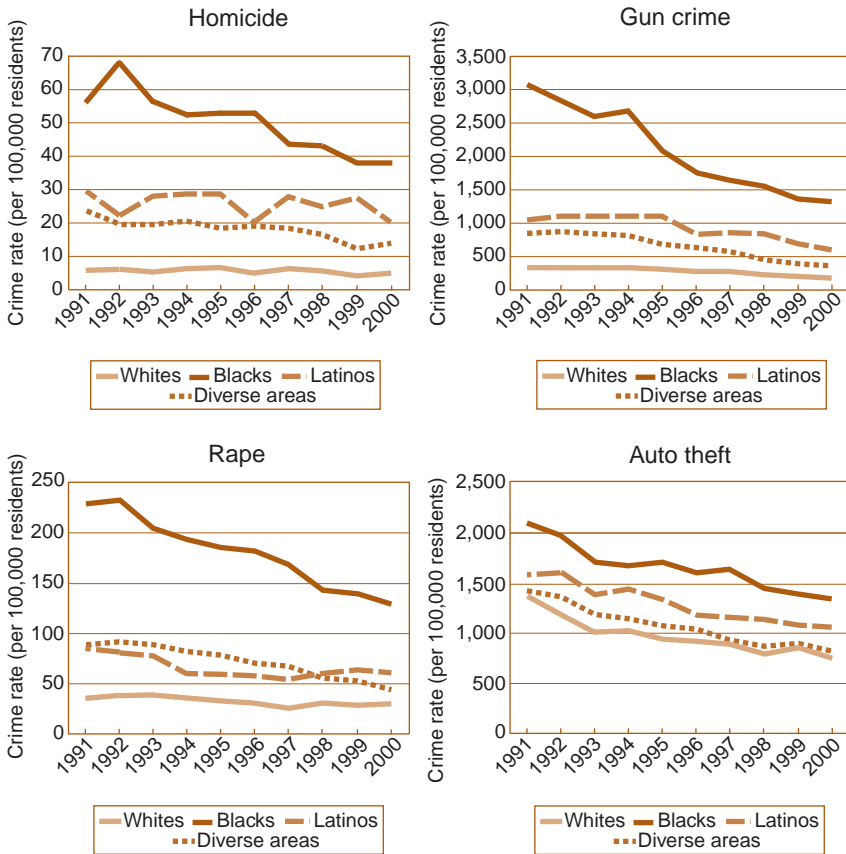
## Latinos’ Responses to the CAPS Initiative

Citizens must know about CAPS to get involved in its activities, but how is such knowledge delivered to the public? The evaluation examined marketing efforts to integrate Latinos into the CAPS program and monitored both public awareness of the program and participation in monthly beat meetings as a result of such efforts. In keeping with a key tenet of community policing (i.e., improving relations between the public and police), researchers also tracked the public’s perceptions of the quality of police service.

### Integrating Latinos into CAPS

Chicago uses an aggressive marketing campaign and diverse service-delivery personnel to integrate Latinos into the CAPS program. The marketing program to bring the diverse community closer to CAPS began in 1996. It features radio and television announcements, print and billboard advertising, and the distribution of CAPS paraphernalia such as T-shirts and refrigerator magnets. The 1997 CAPS media budget was more than \$1.5 million, and it exceeded \$2 million in both 1998 and 1999. All promotional materials are produced in Spanish and English, and poster ads and newsletters have been distributed in

Exhibit 5: Trends in Recorded Crime Rates



Note: Data collection began in 1991 and is based on individual crime incidents geocoded to a consistent set of beat boundaries.

Korean, Chinese, and Polish. Spanish ads are aired on appropriate radio and cable television stations. Civilian CAPS outreach workers regularly attend festivals, parades, marches, rallies, and assemblies during the summer to distribute fliers and promotional items. Spanish and English materials also are distributed through schools, churches, and supermarkets in heavily populated Latino areas. Promotional materials come stapled to pizza delivery boxes and have been mailed along with bills from cable television systems, cellular telephone companies, and the city’s water department.

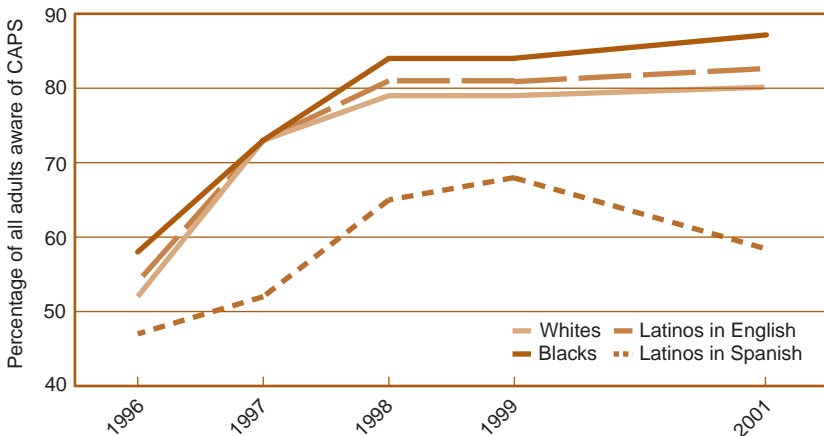
In addition to marketing, the city’s emergency communications system is staffed to handle foreign-language calls, and the police department employs approximately 800 Spanish-speaking officers. Beat meetings held in predominantly Latino areas routinely are conducted in both languages. The department’s cadet diversity training also includes role-playing exercises that address language issues. Despite these efforts, the integration of Chicago’s Latino residents into CAPS has been difficult.

## Awareness of CAPS among Latinos

Awareness of community policing in Chicago is high. In 1998, the Bureau of Justice Statistics surveyed residents of 12 cities about their relations with police. That study ranked Chicago at the top in terms of the percentage of respondents who knew about their city’s community policing program and who had heard about and attended a community anticrime meeting. This high level of awareness reflects the city’s marketing effort in support of the program.

Exhibit 6 illustrates recent trends in awareness of CAPS among Chicago’s major racial and ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup> In 1996, about half of adults recalled hearing about the city’s program. There was little

Exhibit 6: Awareness of CAPS



Note: No survey data were collected in 2000.

difference between whites, blacks, and Latinos in this regard. As awareness rose, however, a visible gap opened between Spanish-speaking Latinos and others. It became noticeable during the course of the evaluation when Latinos of Mexican heritage preferred a Spanish-language interview. By 2001, CAPS recognition among most population groups hovered around 80 percent. The notable exception, however, was the Spanish-speaking Latino population, who as a group fell behind by about 19 percentage points from 1996 to 2000. By 2001, blacks were most aware (by a slim margin) of the CAPS program. Thus, although the city’s marketing campaign increased levels of awareness dramatically, differences in market penetration accounted for a noticeable split among language groups in terms of program awareness.

Exhibit 7 details how respondents recalled hearing about the program, based on surveys taken from 1997 to 1999. Survey respondents described up to 5 sources of awareness, which were coded by interviewers into 1 of 14 categories. Exhibit 7 presents data on 6 sources that were mentioned by at least 10 percent of those responding. Less frequent sources of information included billboards; posters in the rapid transit system; police car logos; booths at neighborhood festivals, marches, or rallies; announcements at church; and materials brought home from school. Compared with other groups, Chicago’s Latinos

**Exhibit 7: Major Sources of CAPS Awareness by Race, by Percentage**

Sources of Awareness	Total (n = 6,594)	Whites (n = 2,783)	Blacks (n = 2,221)	Latinos Total (n = 1,103)	Latinos in English (n = 583)	Latinos in Spanish (n = 520)
<i>Television</i>	50	44	51	62	55	68
<i>Heard from someone else</i>	27	25	32	23	28	17
<i>Fliers, brochures, or newsletters</i>	18	18	19	15	17	13
<i>City or local newspapers</i>	17	28	10	8	8	7
<i>Posters</i>	13	16	12	9	12	6
<i>Radio</i>	12	14	9	16	11	21

Note: Values are percentages based on respondents in combined 1997–99 citywide surveys who had heard of CAPS; weighted estimates.

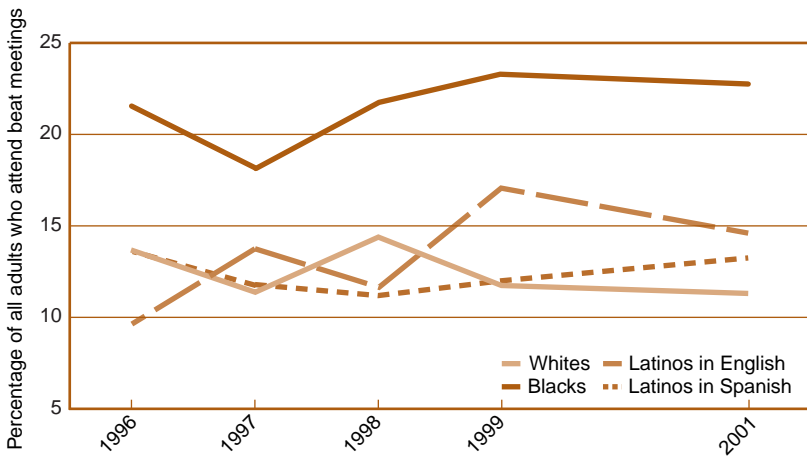
depended heavily on television and radio for their knowledge of police matters. This was especially true for Spanish speakers, more than 60 percent of whom relied on television and more than 20 percent on radio. Newspapers were ineffective at reaching Latinos compared with whites, and there appeared to be less informal conversation about CAPS within the Spanish-speaking community (only 17 percent of Spanish-speaking respondents said they heard about it from someone else). Differences in how various groups heard about CAPS are significant because awareness is linked to actual program involvement.

### Participation of Latinos in CAPS

The manner in which people heard about the program and its efficacy at getting them to attend beat meetings can be explored statistically. Because different groups of people heard about the program in different ways, the analysis involved first controlling for important individual characteristics related to program awareness and turnout. The list included age, income, sex, home ownership, education, length of residence, and language preference, among others. Taking these factors into account, Latinos who heard about the program on television were less likely to attend than most other groups. Those who heard about the program from someone else or who received a newsletter or flier were more likely to attend. These findings are provisional because only randomized experiments can yield unambiguous findings about the effects of media exposure, but they suggest that the dependence of Chicago’s Latinos on television did not mobilize them in support of CAPS.

Exhibit 8 depicts trends in beat meeting turnout as recalled by survey respondents. Turnout was highest among blacks over the entire period, followed by English-speaking Latinos, whites, and Spanish-speaking Latinos. This pattern is significant because statistical analyses of attendance rates at thousands of beat meetings over this period found that a driving force behind participation was violent crime. This explains, perhaps, the high levels of involvement by blacks. Rates of beat meeting attendance were lowest in the city’s relatively well-off white neighborhoods, where residents perceived that they were much safer.

Exhibit 8: Attendance at Beat Meetings



Note: No survey data were collected in 2000.

As noted earlier, Chicago’s Latinos view their neighborhoods as decidedly problem prone, yet their level of awareness of and involvement in community policing is limited, principally because of linguistic disadvantage. The city has attempted to respond to this issue. In addition to the widespread availability of CAPS promotional materials in Spanish, translators usually are available at beat meetings held in predominantly Latino areas. Furthermore, those police districts have a large proportion of the department’s Spanish-speaking officers. Police emergency and city-service dispatchers have the capacity to handle Spanish calls. Despite these factors, the limited involvement of Latinos in Chicago’s program remains noticeable, especially in light of the problems they face.

Perceptions of the quality of policing among Latinos

**Results from experimental districts.** Although surveys point to high levels of CAPS recognition among Chicagoans, they also document an enormous gulf between racial and ethnic minorities and white residents in their views of the quality of police service and the demeanor of police toward citizens. In surveys conducted in the city’s experimental districts before CAPS began, Latinos were found to be nearly

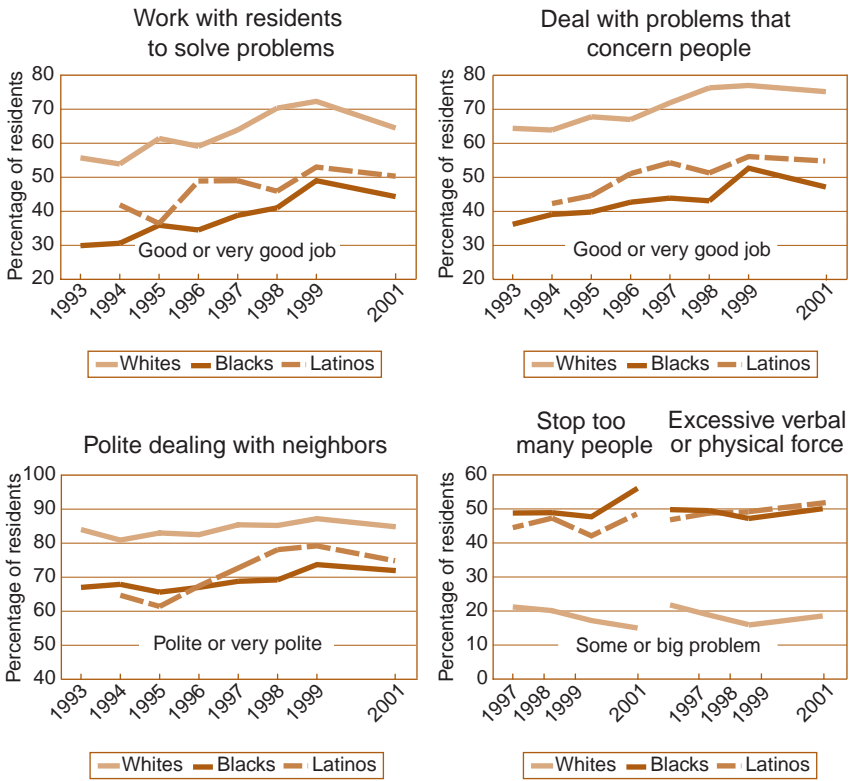
3 times more likely than whites to think that police working in their neighborhood were impolite and 2.5 times more likely to think that police were unfair, unhelpful, and not concerned about their problems. Latinos were more negative than blacks on two of these four measures.<sup>4</sup> A 1998 survey found that 40 percent of Latinos thought that police in their area were “too tough on people they stop,” compared with 10 percent of whites and 33 percent of blacks.

**Results from the citywide evaluation.** The CAPS citywide evaluation surveys asked respondents to assess the quality of service delivered by police working in their neighborhood. Questions asked how effectively police responded to crime, street disorder, and victims’ needs; how polite, fair, concerned, and helpful they were when dealing with area residents; and how effectively they worked with residents on problems that concern the community. Another set of questions probed the extent to which communities perceived police corruption and misconduct toward residents.

In the main, Chicagoans perceived improvements in the quality of police service during the 1990s and stable levels of police corruption and misconduct. Trends depicted in exhibit 9 illustrate typical patterns of change in opinion between 1993 and 2001. Exhibit 9 shows gains among all groups in their perceptions of police cooperation with the community. This is illustrated by the graphs at the top of exhibit 9 that chart responses to questions about whether police were doing a good job “working together with residents . . . to solve local problems” and “dealing with the problems that really concern people in [the] neighborhood.” Among Latinos, perceptions of the quality of police service improved by about 10 percentage points between 1993 and 2001. There is, however, plenty of room for improvement because a gap as much as 20 percentage points still exists between the percentage of Latinos and the percentage of whites who rate police favorably on these measures.

Questions about police demeanor—represented in exhibit 9 by responses to a question about how politely police deal with people in the neighborhood—typically gathered more positive reviews during the reporting period. Finally, popular assessments of the extent of police misconduct or corruption changed little during the 3 years

Exhibit 9: Trends in Perceptions of Police



Note: No survey data were collected in 2000.

questions were asked about these topics. This is illustrated in exhibit 9 by trends in queries about “police stopping too many people . . . without good reason” in the neighborhood and “police using excessive force . . . being verbally or physically abusive to people in your neighborhood.” Gaps among the races on these measures were as large as any in the survey and did not close over time.

**Language issues resurface.** Language preferences again divided Latinos in their views of police. These differences, however, were not as extreme as the differences noted earlier regarding neighborhood problems. There was no real difference between English- and Spanish-speaking Latinos on 6 of 13 evaluative questions about police. On the remaining seven questions, however, English speakers remained more



positive by an average of approximately 7 percentage points. Language was related to perceptions of police helpfulness, concern, and fairness and the extent to which they seemed responsive to neighborhood problems. Of note, the perceptions of Chicago’s Spanish-speaking population closely resembled those of blacks on dimensions of the quality of police service.

## Conclusion

The data used by the CAPS evaluation to monitor trends in neighborhood conditions and police-public relations in Chicago point to a number of favorable trends. Many patterns revealed by the Latino community may be linked to demographic changes taking place in the city. This change is fueled to a significant extent by immigration, which is signaled by an increasing preference for the Spanish language among Latinos. As the rate of immigration and the proportion of Spanish speakers have increased, the evaluation also found that levels of education and real income have decreased among the city’s Latinos over time. Poverty and education are closely tied to neighborhood problems and involvement in CAPS, so demographic trends among Chicago’s Latinos may be working against rather than for them.

Overall throughout the city, crime is down, neighborhood conditions have improved, awareness of and involvement in the city’s community policing program are stable at a high level, and perceptions of the quality of police service have become more favorable. Yet, not all of the city’s communities have enjoyed the benefits of these trends.

In particular, Chicago’s large and growing Latino community has fallen behind. By century’s end, Latinos reported worsening conditions on many measures of crime and disorder problems. Furthermore, homicide and assault rates in heavily populated Latino beats did not mirror declines noted in other city neighborhoods.

Latinos were the least likely to be familiar with Chicago’s community policing initiative, and they did not attend beat meetings at a level commensurate with their perceived problems. Interestingly, despite widespread discussion of the distrust that Latino immigrants have of

police in their home country—including expectations about indifference, corruption, and abuse of power—Latinos' views of police in Chicago do not differ much from and are, in general, slightly more favorable than those of native-born blacks. These findings suggest that negative views of police can be “home grown” as well as imported.

By 2001, CAPS achieved mixed results in improving the perception of police by residents. Generally, CAPS accomplished an overall degree of success in terms of citizen satisfaction. More pointedly, the community's perceptions of police cooperation moved into a positive range even among the most dissatisfied groups. Although responses to questions about police helpfulness, fairness, and concerns showed parallel improvements, a large gulf still existed in the perceptions of police by the city's white and minority residents. This was particularly true of responses to questions aimed at police misconduct, which registered little improvement in the views of Latinos and blacks over the latter half of the reporting period.

Latinos' views of police service improved somewhat by many measures, but about half the Latino population was still dissatisfied. These views did, however, grow more positive during the course of the study, as they did for all major groups. Chicago's Latinos shared with blacks—but not with the white population—a deep skepticism about the quality of police service in their neighborhoods, creating a gulf between Latinos and the city's white population that did not close appreciably by 2001.

Language was found to affect perceptions of crime and police involvement in the CAPS program. English-speaking Latinos reported steadily improving crime conditions. On the other hand, Spanish-speaking Latinos reported worsening crime conditions. Because the latter make up an increasingly large percentage of Chicago's Latino population, survey results for Latinos as a whole diverged from official police crime figures. This contrast results from whites and blacks; each group showed declines in crime and concern about crime in both survey results and official crime figures. Because the crime data in this report are categorized only by ethnicity, a finer breakdown of crime in Chicago than is possible with existing census data may make survey findings from Latinos match official crime figures.

Additionally, Spanish-speaking Latinos were less positive in their views of police and less involved in CAPS than their English-speaking counterparts. These findings may be symptomatic of a speculative unwillingness among Latinos to contact police and to report crimes.

Were the favorable citywide crime trends described here caused by community policing? The downward shift in crime rates since 1991 began well before CAPS was inaugurated, so any effects of CAPS need to be separated from the forces that pushed crime trends in a favorable direction. Survey measures of neighborhood conditions and perceptions of the quality of police service have moved in a generally favorable direction as well. However, like crime, they are affected by forces beyond—and perhaps more powerful than—community policing. Therefore, identifying the effects of CAPS on them also involves more detailed analysis. Before-and-after surveys point to a number of positive conclusions. The final report in this series will examine the long-term trends described here for comparable evidence of program effectiveness.

### Suggested Reading

Skogan, Wesley G. “Community Policing in Chicago,” in *Community Policing*, ed. Geoffrey Alpert and Alex Piquero, Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997:159–174.

Skogan, Wesley G., and Susan M. Hartnett. *Community Policing, Chicago Style*. New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Skogan, Wesley G., Susan M. Hartnett, Jill DuBois, Jennifer T. Comey, Karla Twedt-Ball, and J. Erik Gudell. *Public Involvement: Community Policing in Chicago*. NIJ Research Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2000, NCJ 179557.

Skogan, Wesley G., Lynn Steiner, Jill DuBois, J. Erik Gudell, Aimee Fagan, Jinha Kim, and Richard Block. *Community Policing in Chicago, Year Seven: An Interim Report*. Chicago: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, 2000. This report, one of a series, is available free of charge from 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016, Chicago, IL 60606.

Skogan, Wesley G., Susan M. Hartnett, Jill DuBois, Jennifer T. Comey, Marianne Kaiser, and Justine H. Lovig. *On the Beat: Police and Community Problem Solving*. Boulder, CO: Westview Publishing Co., 1999.

———. *Problem Solving in Practice: Implementing Community Policing in Chicago*. NIJ Research Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2000, NCJ 179556.

## Notes

1. In this report, “Latino” refers to historically Spanish-speaking people from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.
2. Data presented in exhibit 5 result from the division of the city’s 270 residential beats into 63 predominantly white areas; 121 heavily populated black areas; 56 areas where Latinos account for an average of 60 percent of the population; and 30 diverse beats that average 40 percent white, 25 percent black, and 20 percent Latino. Rates were calculated from the total number of crimes and residents in each of these aggregated areas using yearly population estimates. Nine nonresidential beats remained unclassified.
3. The most accurate measure of program awareness stems from surveys beginning in 1996. The measure combines responses to a question about hearing of “the city’s new community policing program” with a followup specifically asking whether they had heard of the CAPS program.
4. Skogan and Hartnett, 1997, 31.

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NIJ is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice and is solely dedicated to researching crime control and justice issues. NIJ provides objective, independent, non-partisan, evidence-based knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of crime and justice, particularly at the State and local levels. NIJ's principal authorities are derived from the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 3721–3722).

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