

For Immediate Release

Youth Organizers Release Results of a Major Survey on Attitudes of Teens towards MBTA Transit Police

Urban Teens Expose a Serious Problem and Demand Action

For more info and/or to interview youth involved in the survey, contact:

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In recent months, many teens involved in programs at the Hyde Square Task Force, a nationally-recognized youth development agency based in Jamaica Plain, complained about the actions and attitudes of the MBTA Transit Police. Youth also related anecdotes about negative interactions they had witnessed and experienced with Transit Police as they traveled to and from Boston Public high schools.

After consulting with Dr. Marcela Gutierrez, Ph.D. of Gutierrez Consulting Partnerships, teens from the Hyde Square Task Force developed and administered a survey to 700 of their peers during the months of February, March, and April of 2010. These surveys were administered at MBTA stations and in Boston high schools.

Of the 700 respondents to the survey:

- 243 (35%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer using insults with racially charged words
- 333 (48%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer pushing or shoving
- 325 (46%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer using threats
- 475 (68%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer yelling
- 275 (39%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer using handcuffs
- 295 (42%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer cornering youth
- 243 (35%) report witnessing a Transit Police officer taking a bus pass away from youth
- 75% of the teens disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “Transit Police are skilled in communicating with teens”
- 66% of the teens disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that: “Transit Police are successful in making teens feel safe while riding the T”
- 70% of the teens disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that: “Transit Police act in a respectful way towards teens”
- 76% of the teens agree or strongly agree with the statement that “Transit Police could use training in how to communicate in a positive manner with youth”
- 74% of teens agree or strongly agree with the statement that: “The relationship between Transit Police and Boston Public School teens is a very important issue in our city.”

Teens surveyed also had an opportunity to respond to the following statement:

“If you have had any major experiences with the Transit Police – positive or negative -- please briefly describe below.”

Fifty-three teens chose to respond to this open-ended question. Their responses are available upon request.