

TIMMINS
DIVERSITY
AWARENESS
PROJECT

SURVEY REPORT



Table of Contents

Introduction	_____	02
Research Objectives	_____	03
Methodology	_____	03
Profile of Respondents	_____	04
Survey Scope	_____	05
Key Findings	_____	06
Detailed Findings	_____	07
Next Steps	_____	12
Appendix	_____	13

Introduction

The Timmins Diversity Awareness Project is an initiative led by a diverse group of community partners and local residents, and facilitated by the Timmins Economic Development Corporation. The key objective of the project is to address racism and discrimination in Timmins and build awareness of the many cultures that exist in the city, with the overall goal of fostering a welcoming and inclusive community.

Made possible in part by the Government of Canada, the project received funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage as part of the *Anti-Racism Action Program (ARAP)*.

Project Advisory Group members include local residents, the City of Timmins, Timmins and District Multicultural Centre, Timmins Local Immigration Partnership, Newcomers Encouraging Self-Empowerment in Timmins, Timmins Native Friendship Centre, Réseau du Nord, Université de Hearst, Collège Boréal, Northern College, Timmins Chamber of Commerce, and members of the Indigenous Advisory Committee.

Research Objectives

As part of this project, an online survey of Timmins residents was undertaken to gather feedback from community members on their experiences of racism or discrimination in Timmins.

The intent behind the survey was to better understand what racism and racial discrimination look like in Timmins presently. The survey centred around the following questions:

1. What forms of racism/discrimination do people experience in Timmins?
2. Where does it happen?
3. What are the perceived impacts?

Methodology

A non-random survey was conducted between February and March 2021. The survey was conducted through an online questionnaire available in both English and French.

The questionnaire was circulated to newcomer settlement agencies, Indigenous organizations, post-secondary institutions, and Project Advisory Group members. It was also uploaded to the Timmins Economic Development Corporation website and made available to Timmins residents.

A total of 154 respondents completed the survey, though not every respondent answered every question. Individual question response totals are listed where appropriate.

Respondents were self-selected, meaning respondents were able to decide themselves whether or not they wanted to participate in the survey.

Some of the limitations to this research are a limited sample size and a non-random sample based on participant self-selection, leaving results unable to be generalized for the population. It is important to note that while the self-selected nature of the survey may impact the representativeness of the study sample and generalizability of the results, it does not negate the experiences of respondents.

Profile of Respondents

- The vast majority (86%) of respondents were born in Canada.
- Of immigrant respondents, 72% have been in Canada for 10 years or less.
- 35% of respondents are Indigenous (i.e. First Nations, Métis, Inuk).
- Of those respondents identifying as racialized, 50% identified as Black and 21% as South Asian.
- 54% of respondents are between 18-40 years old.

Indigenous and immigrant respondents make up a higher proportion of survey respondents compared to their demographic proportions of the population of Timmins (11.3% and 3.8%, respectively, according to the 2016 Census). This may be explained partly by the self-selected nature of the survey. Those who choose to participate in a survey on the subject of racism/discrimination may be those who are more aware of the subject or those who may have experience with the subject. Changing demographics within the city since 2016 may also be a factor.

The demographic profile of respondents also skews younger with 54% of respondents between 18-40 years old. The same age range only makes up 34.4% of the population of Timmins. This variation could be due in part to the survey only being accessible online and generational differences in technology use.

Racialized person or racialized group is preferred over “racial minority” or “visible minority” (OHRC, 2005). In this document, the term racialized community / group / respondent encompasses all people that are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour, excluding Indigenous peoples (i.e. community groups that were previously referred to as visible minorities by Statistics Canada).

Survey Scope

This survey focused on the topics of racism and racial discrimination. The Government of Ontario's *Anti-Racism Directorate* defines racism as consisting of "ideas, beliefs or practices that establish, maintain or perpetuate the superiority or dominance of one racial group over another."

The Ontario Human Rights Commission describes racial discrimination in the following terms:

"Racial discrimination is the illegal expression of racism. It includes any action, intentional or not, that has the effect of singling out persons based on their race, and imposing burdens on them and not on others, or withholding or limiting access to benefits available to other members of society."

Some examples of racial discrimination according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission include:

- More obvious instances of **racial harassment**, such as comments, jokes or name-calling;
- More subtle instances of **racial discrimination**, such as being assigned to less desirable jobs, or being denied an apartment because you appear to have Aboriginal ancestry, or facing unfair scrutiny from security staff at a shopping mall; and
- Even subtler instances of **racial microaggressions**, such as an employee who asks a colleague of color how she got her job, suggesting she may have been hire through an affirmative action or quota system and not because of ability, or attributing a certain level of intelligence to a racialized person, based on their race.

Key Findings

77% of respondents have witnessed racism/discrimination "often" or "sometimes"

A significant percentage of respondents report witnessing (91%) or experiencing (69%) racism/discrimination in Timmins. Of those that have witnessed racism/discrimination, 51% have witnessed it "often" and 26% "sometimes". Fewer respondents have personally experienced racism/discrimination, with 18% having experienced it "often" and 31% "sometimes". Indigenous and racialized respondents tend to experience racism/discrimination more frequently, with 88% having some level of personal experience (33% "often" and 42% "sometimes").

MOST COMMON BASIS

The most common basis by which racism/discrimination is experienced or witnessed is based on [skin colour/race](#) (75%), followed by ethnic or cultural background (70%), and accent (32%).

MOST COMMON PLACES

Respondents are more likely to witness or experience racism/discrimination [on the street](#) (57%), at a store (52%), and at work (51%).

MOST COMMON FORMS

The forms of racism/discrimination that respondents witnessed or experienced most "often" or "sometimes" are [stereotyping](#) (77%), unwelcome staring (66%), and patronizing or demeaning conduct (65%). The most common forms of systemic racism/discrimination witnessed or experienced are [poor customer service](#) (63%), unfair treatment in the workplace (50%), and being unfairly treated by law enforcement (41%).

MOST COMMON IMPACTS

Racism/discrimination experienced by Indigenous and racialized respondents is most likely to negatively impact [feeling a sense of belonging in the community](#) (53%), renting a house/apartment (49%), getting hired (43%), and participating in community life (41%).

Note: Excluding questions regarding frequency, respondents were able to select more than one answer, therefore the percentages do not add up to 100%.

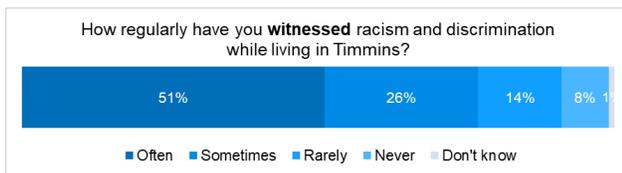
Detailed Findings

Experience with Racism/Discrimination

A significant percentage of respondents report having witnessed and/or experienced racism and discrimination in Timmins.

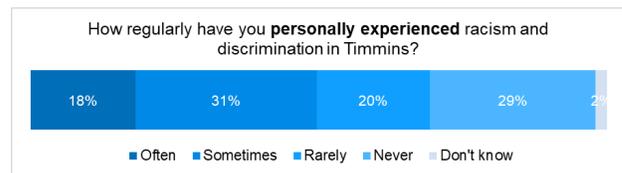
People are more likely to witness racism/discrimination than to personally experience it themselves.

- 91% of all respondents have witnessed racism/discrimination, with 51% witnessing it "often" and 26% witnessing it "sometimes".
- 69% of all respondents have personally experienced racism/ discrimination, with 18% experiencing it "often" and 31% experiencing it "sometimes".



Total: n=152

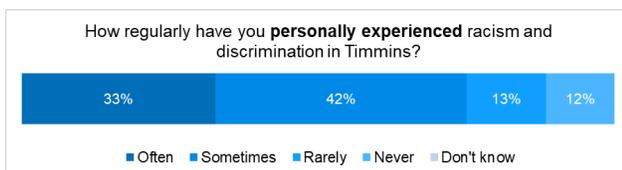
All respondents



Total: n=153

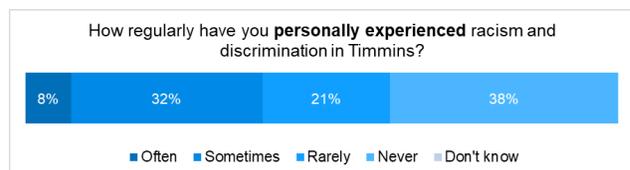
Indigenous and racialized respondents are much more likely to personally experience racism/discrimination than non-racialized respondents.

- In fact, 33% of Indigenous and racialized respondents report experiencing racism/discrimination "often" and 42% "sometimes", compared to just 8% and 32% for non-racialized respondents, respectively.



Total: n=52

Indigenous and racialized respondents

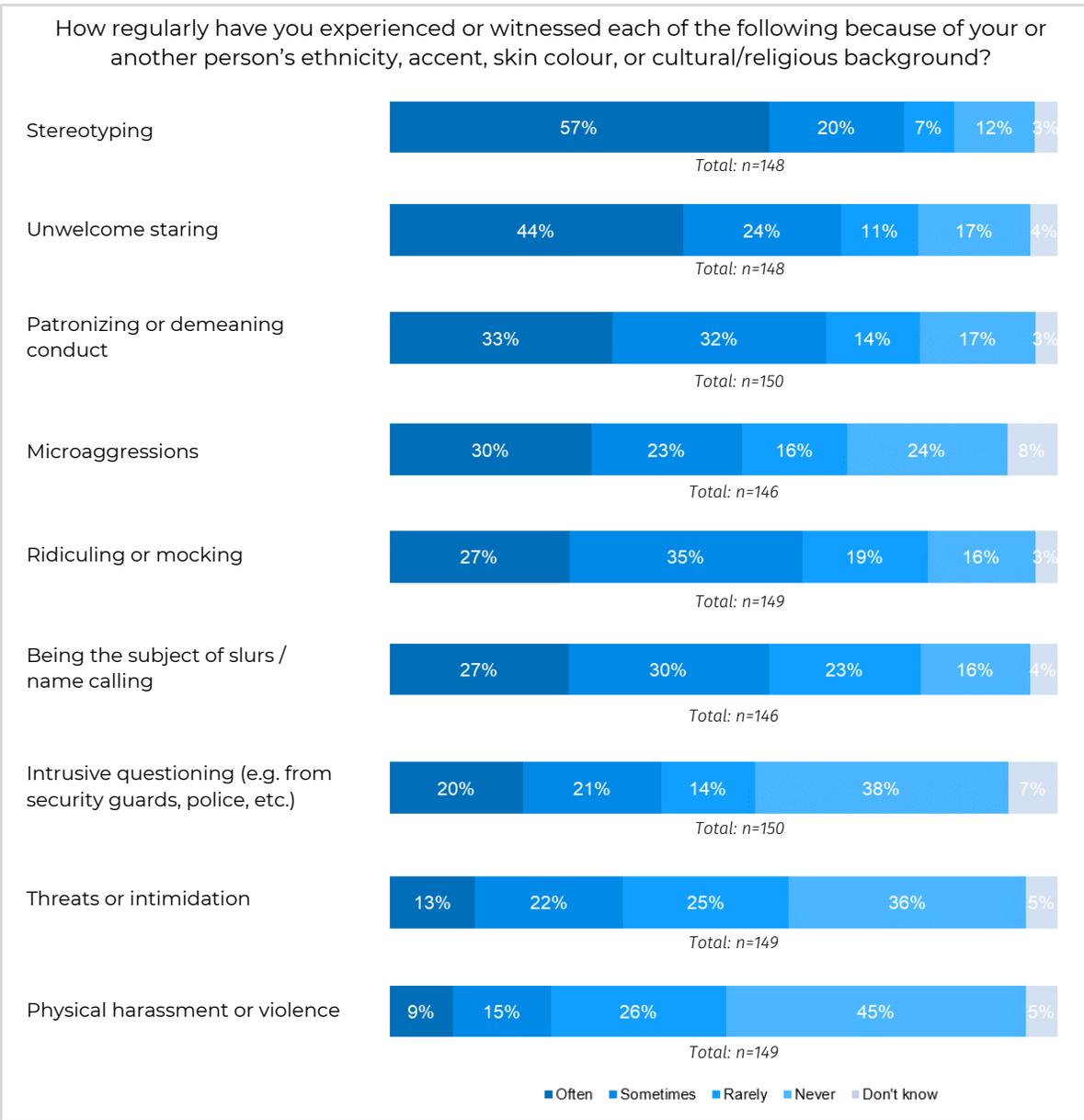


Total: n=66

Non-racialized respondents

Respondents identified stereotyping as the form of racism/discrimination that they witness or experience most frequently in Timmins, with 77% of respondents reporting having witnessed or experienced it “often” (57%) or “sometimes” (20%). Other common forms of racism/discrimination respondents report witnessing or experiencing “often” or “sometimes” are unwelcome staring (66%) and patronizing or demeaning conduct (65%).

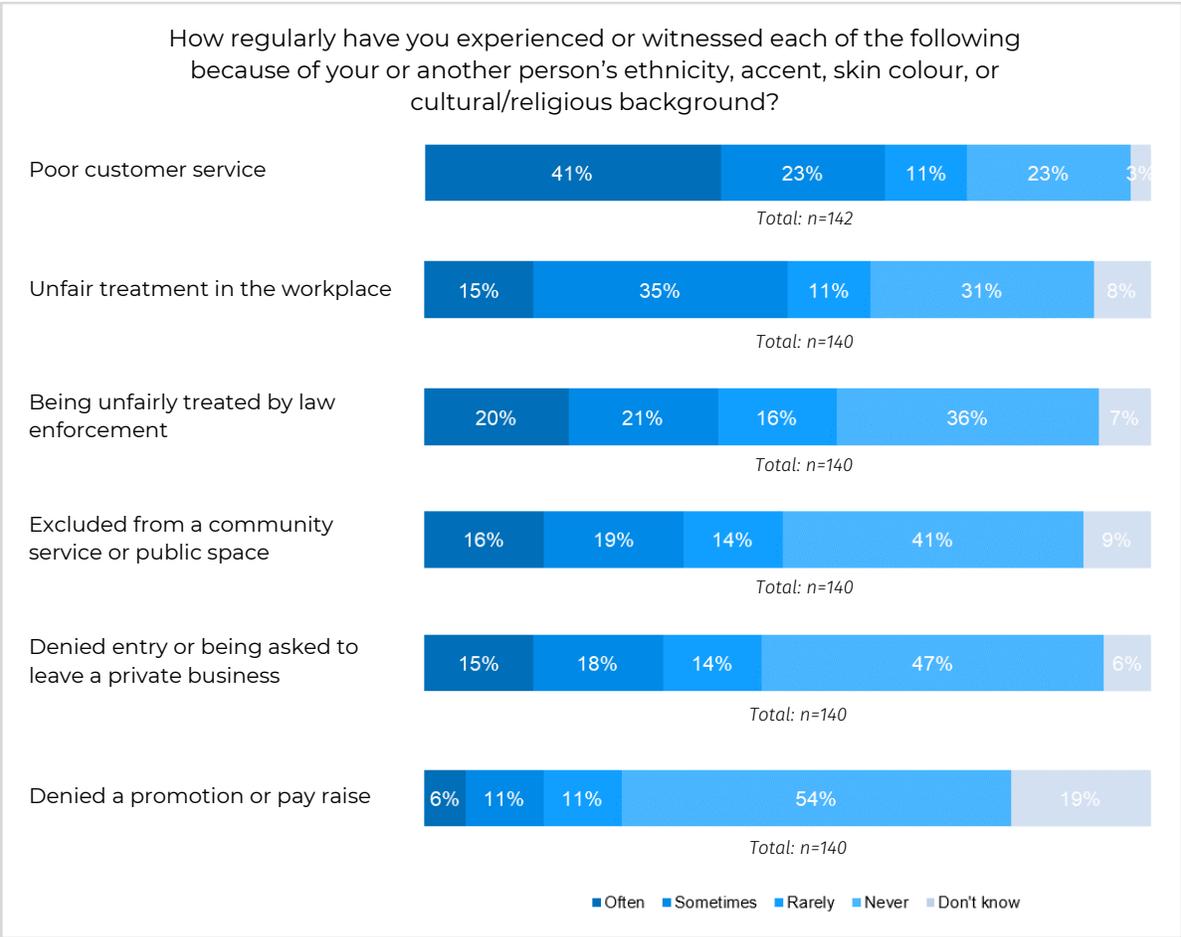
The least common forms of racism/discrimination witnessed or experienced are threats or intimidation and physical harassment or violence, with 51% and 71% of respondents, respectively, “never” or “rarely” experiencing or witnessing these situations.



Overwhelmingly, poor customer service was identified as the most common form of systemic racism/discrimination witnessed or experienced in Timmins, with over 60% of respondents reporting witnessing or experiencing it “often” (41%) or “sometimes” (23%).

Unfair treatment in the workplace (50%) and being unfairly treated by law enforcement (41%) were also reported among respondents, though much less frequently. Only 15% of respondents have experienced or witnessed unfair treatment in the workplace “often”, and only 20% report experiencing or witnessing being unfairly treated by law enforcement “often”.

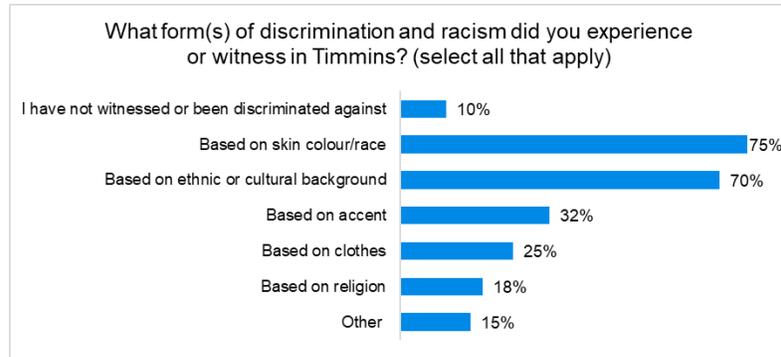
The forms of systemic racism/discrimination respondents were least likely to witness or experience were being denied a promotion or pay raise and being denied entry or being asked to leave a private business, with 65% and 61%, respectively, of respondents “rarely” or “never” experiencing or witnessing these situations.



Basis of Racism/Discrimination

The most common basis of racism/discrimination is skin colour/race (75%), followed closely by ethnic or cultural background (70%). Accent (32%) was also identified.

Other grounds reported by respondents include gender and gender identification, sexuality, body image, (dis)ability, and socioeconomic class.

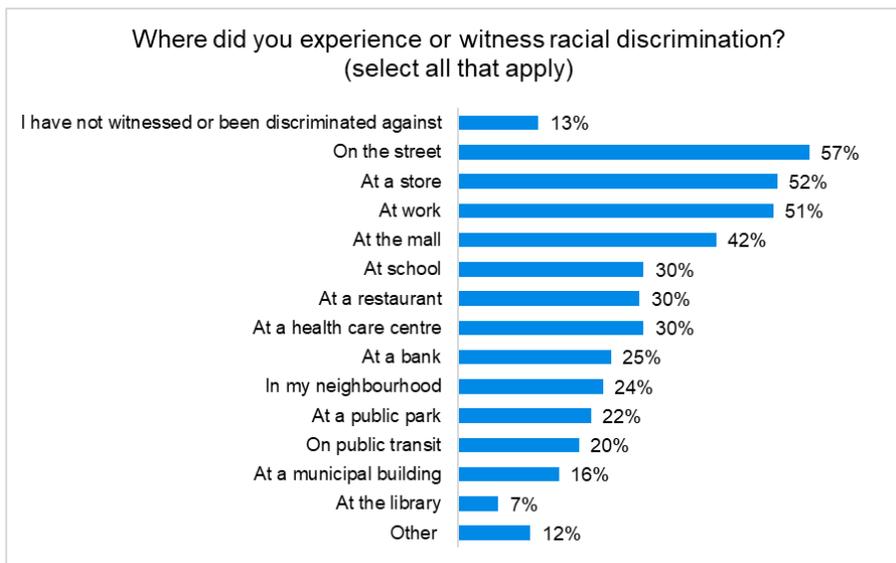


Total: n=151

Place of Racism/Discrimination

The top three places respondents experienced or witnessed racism/discrimination were on the street (57%), at a store (52%), and at work (51%). At a municipal building (16%) and at the library (7%) were identified as the least common places. Social media was repeatedly identified among 'Other' responses.

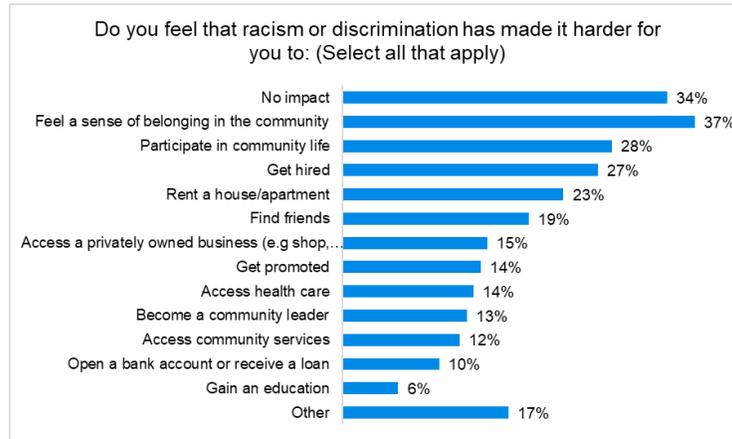
For Indigenous and racialized respondents in particular, at a bank (35%) was also identified as a place where racism/discrimination is experienced or witnessed.



Total: n=152

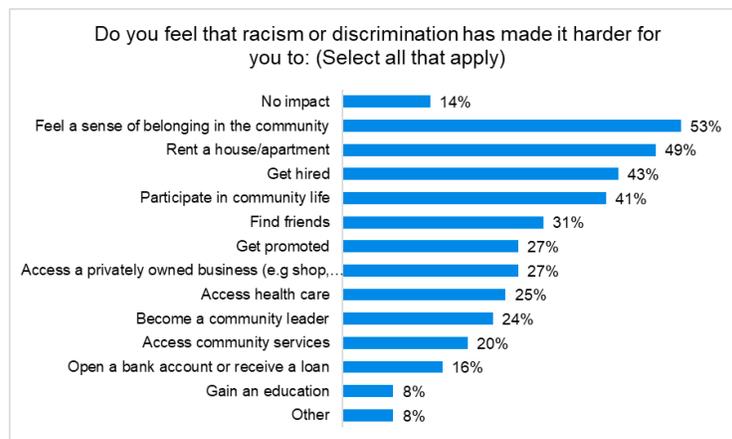
Impacts of Racism/Discrimination

Respondents tend to feel the impacts of racism/discrimination in intangible ways, most commonly negatively affecting a person's ability to feel a sense of belonging in the community (37%) and participate in community life (28%).



Total: n=139
All respondents

This impact is even more pronounced for Indigenous and racialized respondents, with 53% indicating racism/discrimination makes it harder to feel a sense of belonging in the community and 41% finding it harder to participate in community life.



Total: n=51
Indigenous and racialized respondents

Other impacts of racism/discrimination commonly felt by respondents include difficulty getting hired (27%) and renting a house/apartment (23%). Again, these impacts were heightened for Indigenous and racialized respondents (43% and 49%, respectively).

Next Steps

"Acknowledging that it is an issue among everyone and that everyone in the community has a responsibility in combatting this issue."

Survey respondents were asked for their thoughts on what would help address the racism and discrimination experienced or witnessed in Timmins. A total of 111 respondents provided feedback. The most common suggestions are below.

01

Education and training

- Education in schools on Indigenous history and the impacts of colonialism
- Cross-cultural awareness and anti-racism training in workplaces and service organizations
- Learning opportunities for the public on inclusion and active bystander techniques

02

Public awareness

- Campaigns promoting the value of diversity and highlighting the various cultures in Timmins
- Sharing personal testimonials and stories
- Events showcasing different cultures
- Speaking about the issue more

03

Systemic reform

- City as a leader
- Representation of Indigenous and racialized community members on committees, boards, and in positions of authority and leadership
- Strengthen the ability of individuals to report racism/discrimination and ensure accountability
- Improve organizational policies

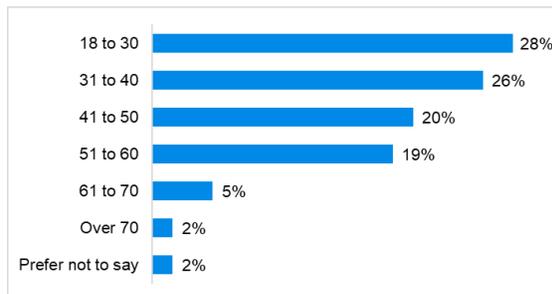
"Conversation is key... Giving people a chance to debunk or change their assumptions about one another, we can start the process of building on shared human experiences."

Appendix

Study Sample: Demographic Profile

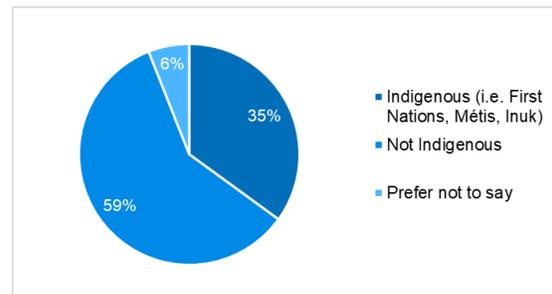
A total of 154 respondents completed the survey, though not every respondent answered every question. Total response numbers are listed below each graph.

Age



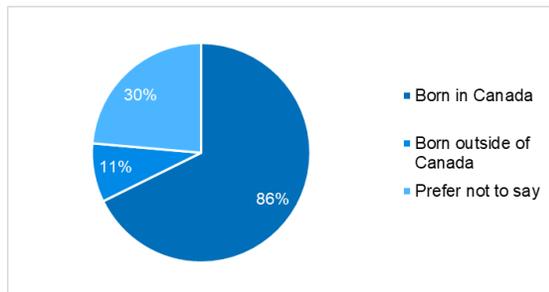
Total: n=129

Indigenous identity



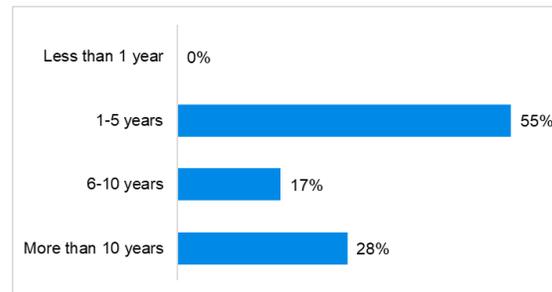
Total: n=129

Immigrant status



Total: n=133

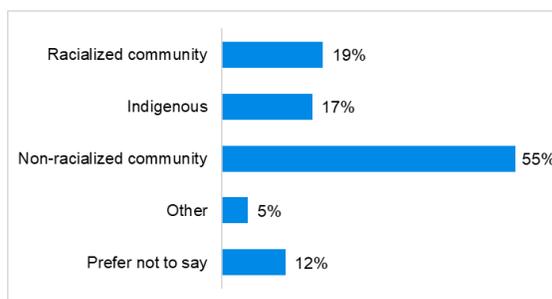
Period of immigration



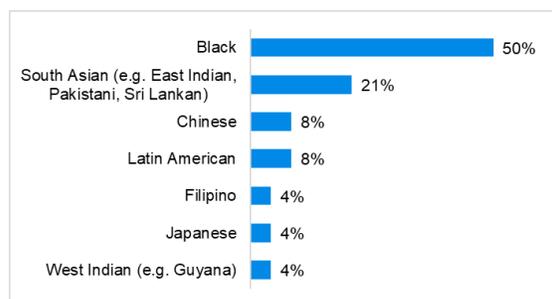
Total: n=18

**of respondents born outside of Canada*

Ethno-cultural group



Total: n=128



Total: n=24

**of respondents identifying as racialized*

Acknowledgements

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Thank you to our Project Advisory Group members:
Local residents
Collège Boréal
Newcomers Encouraging Self-Empowerment in Timmins
Northern College
Réseau du Nord
The City of Timmins
Timmins and District Multicultural Centre
Timmins Chamber of Commerce
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Université de Hearst
and Members of the Indigenous Advisory Committee

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