Zeidler Center

Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion

Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.

Police & Youth Listening Circles #4

October 10, 2018

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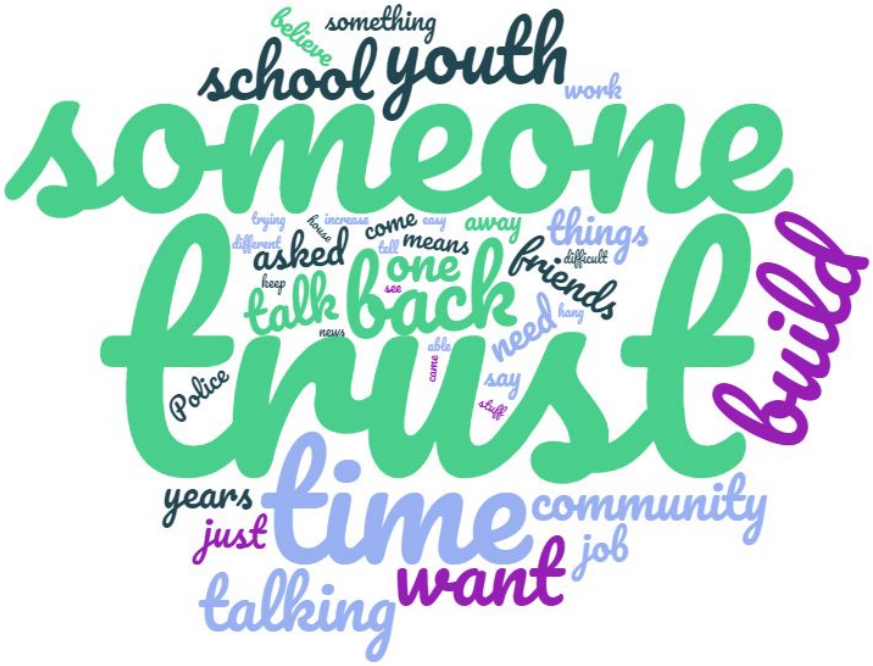

"It deals with consistency whatever I'm doing however I'm doing it. It deals with integrity to do what I'm supposed to do. I think we have to create settings where youth can have honest conversations to build rapport with us [officers]. We have to increase the knowledge of youth to know where trust is broken. Our youth need to have respect of themselves. We have to have conversations and teach them. We have to let the youth know we're like them. And we have to be empathetic."

"What's the most favorite thing about your job as a police officer?"

Response: "Situations where you've dealt with someone in the past and years later you see them and they thank you. It makes you feel like you're doing your job."

"I am motivated because I have a lot of older brothers and boy cousins that I do not want to go to jail out here stealing cars and driving recklessly. It makes you afraid for your life and to leave home sometimes."

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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS....3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY....4

ANALYSIS....6

Question Round One: *"Tell a story about a time it was either easy or difficult for you to build trust with another person. What made it so?"* 6

1.1 Amount of time spent with a person....6

1.2 Sharing information and communication....7

1.3 Conflict and breaking trust....7

Question Round Two: *"What does the word trust mean to you? And how can we increase trust between youth and police officers?"* 8

2.1 Loyalty and consistency....8

2.2 Increased interactions and communication....8

2.3 Past experiences with police officers....8

Connected Conversation: *"What motivates you to take positive action in your community and what holds you back? What questions of curiosity to do you have for each other that came up during the go-arounds? What, if any, police policies are confusing to you? Which do you want to know more about?"* 10

3.1 Motivated by family members and community organizations....10

3.2 Police work and action....10

3.3 Promotion of events....11

3.4 Parting words....12

FEEDBACK FORMS....13

ANNEXES....20

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Executive Summary

The fourth Police & Youth Listening Circles session was hosted at the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center on October 10, 2018. Milwaukee police officers, police-in-training, and youth participated in six listening circles, each led by a trained facilitator from the Zeidler Center. During the Facilitated Dialogue, each participant was given the opportunity to respond to two rounds of questions:

"Tell a story about a time it was either easy or difficult for you to build trust with another person. What made it so?"

"What does the word trust mean to you? And how can we increase trust between youth and police officers?"

After the Facilitated Dialogue, participants were invited to speak in the Connected Conversation. This is an open conversation that encourages participants to follow up with each other by discussing what was heard during the structured part of the facilitated dialogue. To initiate the discussion, participants were invited to answer three questions:

"What motivates you to take positive action in your community and what holds you back?"

"What questions of curiosity to do you have for each other that came up during the go-arounds?"

"What, if any, police policies are confusing to you? Which do you want to know more about?"

During the first round, participants described specific people with whom they have trust. Trust was often attributed to the amount of time spent with a person. More time spent with a person often correlated with increased trust and vice versa. Many participants attributed trust with the ability of that person to hold secrets and with whom to share thoughts and feelings. Participants also shared instances in which trust was broken, often due to personal conflict.

During the second round, participants described trust as being closely related to behaviors of loyalty and consistency. To increase trust between youth and police officers, most pointed to the creation of settings, like the listening circles, as a way to increase interactions and communication between the two groups.

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During the Connected Conversation, some participants cited specific family members or organizations who motivated them to create positive change in the community. Participants also expressed curiosity in police work and action. Some participants shared personal stories of negative experiences with police officers to derive a better understanding of police work. At the end of the event, during the parting words, participants cited overall positive feelings about the experience.

Questions about this dialogue may be directed to:

Zeidler Center for Public Discussion

(414) 239-8555

office@zeidlercenter.org

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Analysis

***Question Round One**: "Tell a story about a time it was either easy or difficult for you to build trust with another person. What made it so?"*

1.1 Amount of time spent with a person

Many participants shared stories about specific people in their lives as examples for building or losing trust. A key theme that emerged was the amount of time spent with a person. Many participants acknowledged that the more time they spent with another person, the more trust they built, as can be seen in the following testimonies:

> *"It was an easy time for me with my partner. I've had a lot of different partners over the years. She's been my partner for the past 7 or 8 years. We've been knowing each other for a long time and have built a deep bond. She helped me break walls down and I trust her with my life."*

> *"It's easy to trust my best friend that I've known since 2nd grade. There's things about me she knows that not even my family does. We've been friends so long that's why I know I can trust her for life."*

> *"As an officer it's difficult both ways because people do not trust easily, it takes time. There was an incident at one of the schools and I had to get a statement from one the students regarding the incident. It was really difficult, but I kept talking and trying to build trust and eventually the student shared the needed information."*

In contrast, participants noted that trust decreased when they spent less time with a person.

> *"My dad came into my life when I was twelve years old and I did not trust him, so it took time for me to build trust with him and relax."*

In addition to time, participants shared stories of placing effort on spending time to get to know someone better.

> *"Somebody asked me if they could use my basketball at the park. I didn't want to give it to him because I didn't know him. So, I played a basketball game with him to build trust."*

> *"I can recall a time when I dealt with someone. He had mental health issues and was acting belligerent. I had taken calls before to this guy's residence, and I was familiar with him. He was becoming more and more aggressive. I started talking to this person, letting him know that I was familiar with him, and that I had helped him before. I gave him specific information about the times I had helped him in the past and asked him if I was a help to him or if I hurt him. I did all of that to get him to remember me so that he*

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could realize that he could trust me again. As a result, I was able to redirect him because he trusted me. It also helped him not be suicidal and begin to care about himself."

1.2 Sharing information and communication

Participants often attributed trust with people based on one's ability to hold secrets and share thoughts and feelings.

"I've built trust with my girlfriend. Early when we were still friends I was able to lean on each other. Having an open line of communication and not judging each other helped build trust with each other."

"Me and my friends talk about intimate stuff. Most of my friends that I trust, we have been through grade school, and now we ended up in junior high together, so we have a great bond, and our friendship has gotten very tight."

They also noted that reliability and dependability were key factors when trusting a person.

"If I don't know you I'm going to get to know you. I have a friend I didn't like when we met. He had my back on something and we have been brothers ever since."

"Easy time with my friend. I have left stuff at his house and he would call me and tell me. I know I can trust him."

1.3 Conflict and breaking trust

A few participants shared instances in which trust was broken. Many instances centered on conflict, especially regarding actions by the person which resulted in a violation of their trust.

"I had told my friend something in confidence and she told everybody so since then it has been difficult to trust her and those persons she told my business to."

"The first day of school, it was cool. I ran into some old friends – some girlfriends. We all trusted each other in the beginning of school, and then for some reason or another the girls stopped talking to me and started talking about me, so we had a fight. Now, I am a little standoffish. It's sometimes easy, and sometimes hard for me to make new friends and trust them."

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Question Round Two: "What does the word trust mean to you? And how can we increase trust between youth and police officers?"

2.1 Loyalty and consistency

Many participants noted that continual support and loyalty by a person established and defined the trust the held in that person.

> *"Trust is like loyalty. It's unity. It's knowing that someone has your back and you can be there for them."*

> *"I think 'trust' is pretty simple. It's being able to know someone is going to do what they say they'll do when they say they'll do it."*

> *"Anything you can do to a person to connect, to get one to trust you is the practice of leaning back towards someone and allowing them to catch you."*

They also shared ways in which they built trust, especially through consistent behaviors.

> *"It deals with consistency whatever I'm doing however I'm doing it. It deals with integrity to do what I'm supposed to do."*

2.2 Increased interactions and communication

To increase trust between youth and police, many participants pointed to the creation of settings, often referring to the listening circles themselves, which allow for increased interactions and communication between the two groups.

> *"To increase trust between youth and police, we're doing that now by having a dialogue to see that we are all regular people. When I was younger I thought we were all different, but now I see that more and more every day we are more alike than different."*

A few participants also pointed to interacting with police officers through a school setting to improve trust between the two groups.

> *"More officers need to come into our schools to share more information to talk to students, and I think we can become tighter."*

> *"More people in our community need to talk and police need to talk to kids more about what they do. Police officers should visit schools more."*

2.3 Past experiences with police officers

A few participants shared past personal instances where a lack of trust resulted from negative experiences with police officers, including the lack of follow-through in the actions of police officers.

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"I think we can increase relationships by mutually respecting each other and the space we occupy. We may have had bad encounters in the past both ways. But just because I've had a bad experience doesn't mean that's the way things can't change."

"Lack of trust is the biggest problem in the community. If one officer does something bad people may not trust other officers whether they are black or white. I am very straight forward. I'm not going to tell you I won't take you to jail and then take you to jail."

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Connected Conversation: "What motivates you to take positive action in your community and what holds you back? What questions of curiosity to do you have for each other that came up during the go-arounds? What, if any, police policies are confusing to you? Which do you want to know more about?"

In this unstructured part of the session, facilitators used the questions above as a starting point for participants to converse with each other. Many discussions focused on police work and actions, while several discussions focused on who or what motivated them to take action in their community or households.

3.1 Motivated by family members and community organizations

Regarding taking positive action in their community, some participants referred to specific family members as being influential in their thinking, as can be seen in the following testimonies:

> *"My grandpa, before passing, would say 'Clean up the earth and stay off the streets.'"*

> *"My dad, he does a lot for the community."*

Some participants were motivated by the challenges faced by family members to create change.

> *"My dad and uncle [were] in jail and I am motivated not to let any more of my family members go to jail from ignorance, being in the wrong place and with the wrong crowds."*

Lastly, a few participants cited the community at-large, including specific organizations and schools, as key motivators for creating change.

> *"I am motivated because the number of African American officers has grown. I am motivated because the community needs to be cleaned up and I want to go out and help do that."*

> *"I was raised to give back to the community whether through food, money, hugs and working on projects together."*

> *"I am motivated by the Boys and Girls Club to give back."*

3.2 Police work and action

In almost all circle dialogues, participants expressed curiosity in police work.

> *"What's the worst part of job ever been?" Response: "For 10 years having to work with cases of domestic violence—especially at the same house. On one incident I*

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sat down with the female and talked to her about available resources to get out of the situation. It made me feel good when she actually did it."

"What's your favorite thing about the academy?" <u>Response</u>*: "Studying and learning about constitutional law."*

"Why do police say even if you didn't do anything you are in trouble because the people you are with did?" <u>Response</u>*: "That is called party to a crime. If you are together, everyone might have a different story about who did what. We have to question everyone to get to the bottom of it."*

Many participants cited experiences, either personally or from other people, to ask about specific responsibilities held by police officers.

"When I was six [years old] the police took my father AND my mother away for a crime. They did do the crime, but I still have a problem with the police because they took my parents away. They were gone away for some years, and when they came back they came back and got me, and everything was good, and I know it was my parents fault that they committed crime, but I still get angry at the police because in my mind they took my parents away." <u>Response</u>*: "Your parents broke the law. The police just did their job in taking your parents away. You have to understand that your parents broke the law. Your parents did what caused them to be taken away. You trust your parents. Please learn to trust us, too. We were just doing our job."*

"Some people don't understand the system. We are not the judge. It is not for us to decide if someone is guilty. We just arrest on probable cause or the information we have. It's possible he didn't do it. The judge will review everything and make a decision."

3.3 Promotion of events

Participants cited the communication and promotion of events, including the role of the media, as a significant factor in changing the community and affecting levels of trust between police officers and youth.

"It seemed that it would be great to get the good stuff on the news. It seems that we're aware of good, but we don't see it on the news." <u>Response</u>*: "I agree with that. I was recently at a Black and Latino Male Achievement [BLMA – an initiative of MPS to help such students be successful academically and gain soft skills for life] event. We asked the news to come, but they didn't."*

Posed question: "What do you want to see police do more of?"
<u>Response 1</u>*: "Parties."*
<u>Response 2</u>*: "Block parties."*

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Response 3: "We do block parties all summer long. We have to do a better job of promoting events."

3.4 Parting words

The most cited word was "trust", which reflected the key theme of the questions for the listening circles. In addition, a few participants reflected upon the role of community in building trust. Overall, many participants expressed positive feelings about their experience with each other and in the listening circles, including the mentioning of words such as "optimistic", "rewarding", and "hopeful."

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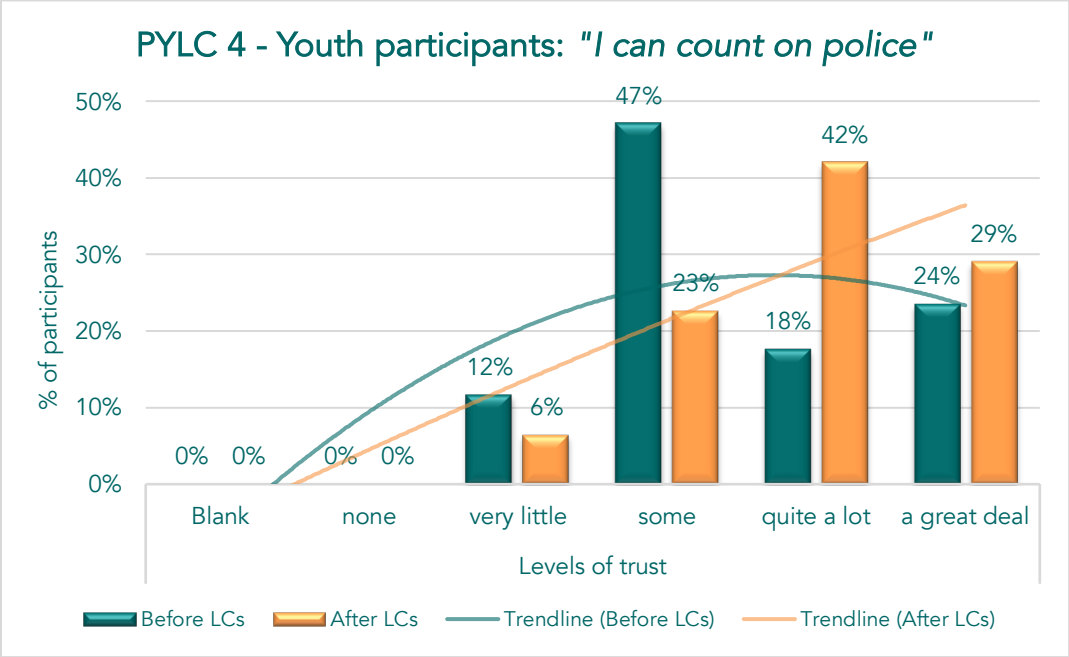
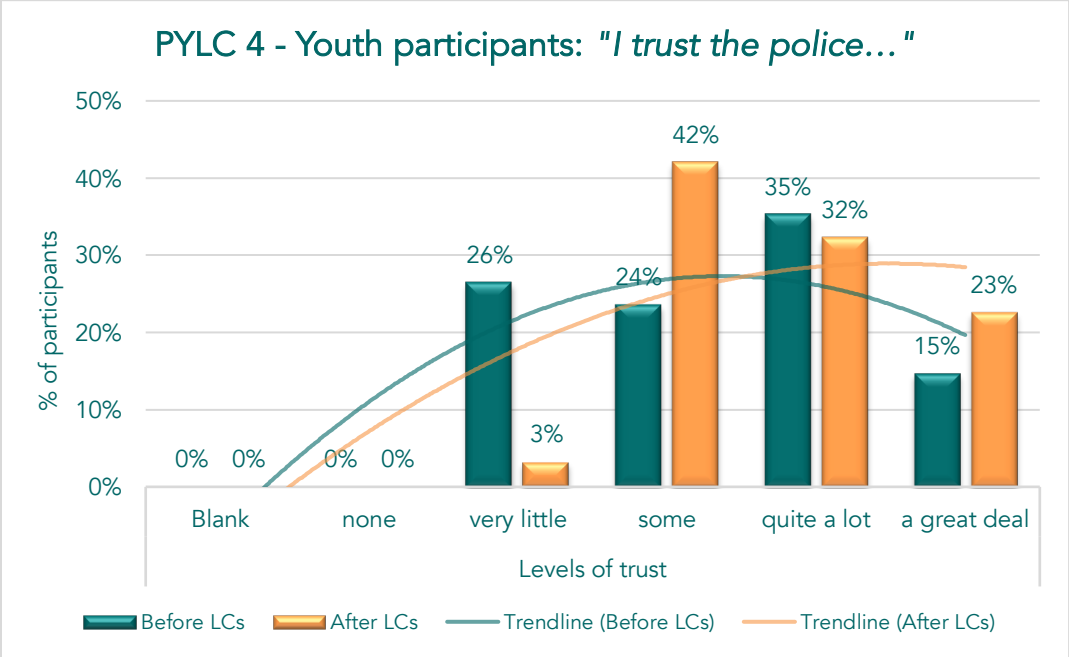
Feedback forms





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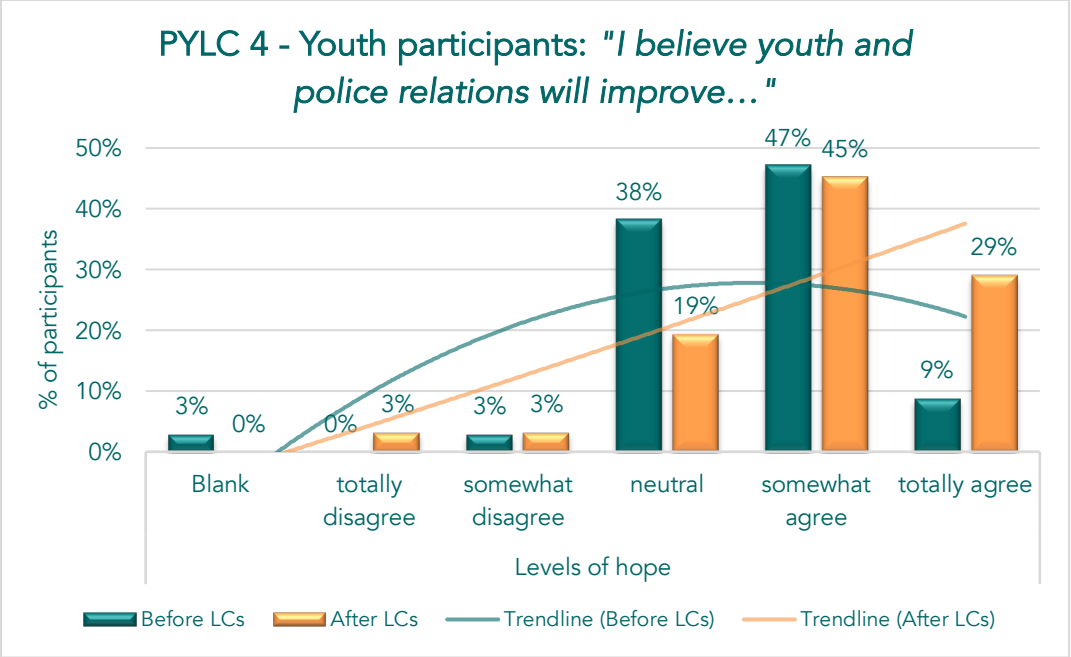

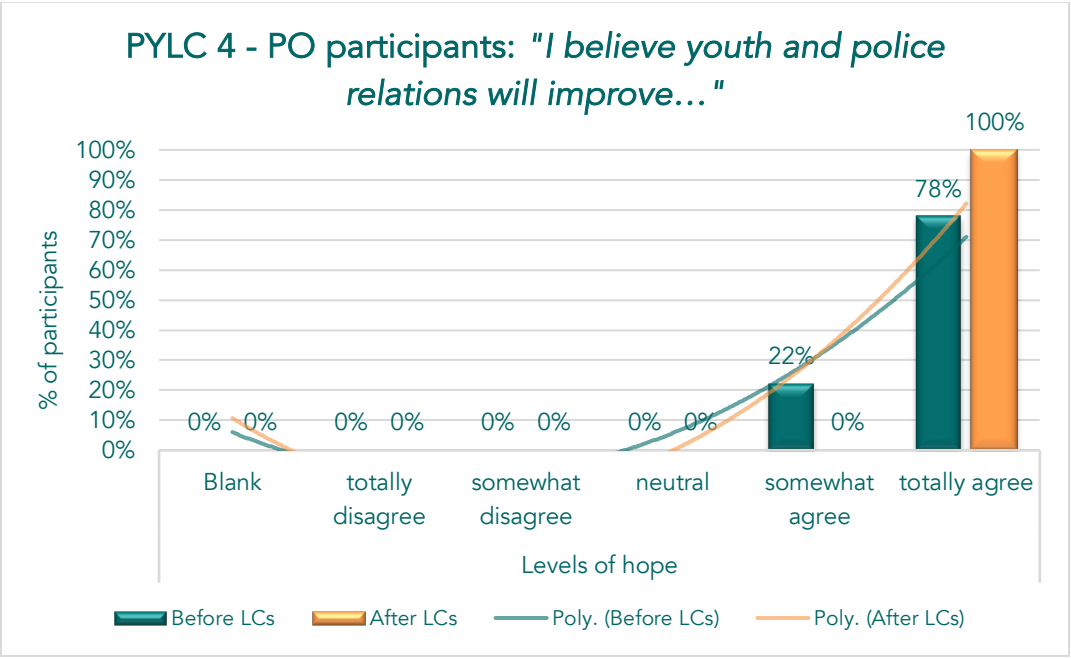

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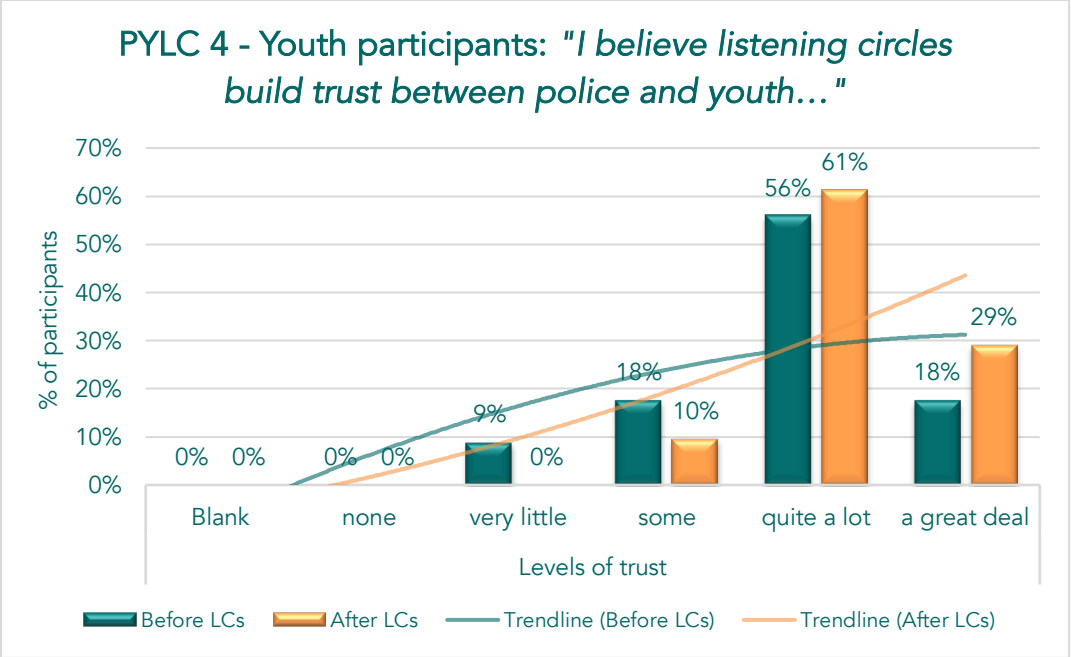

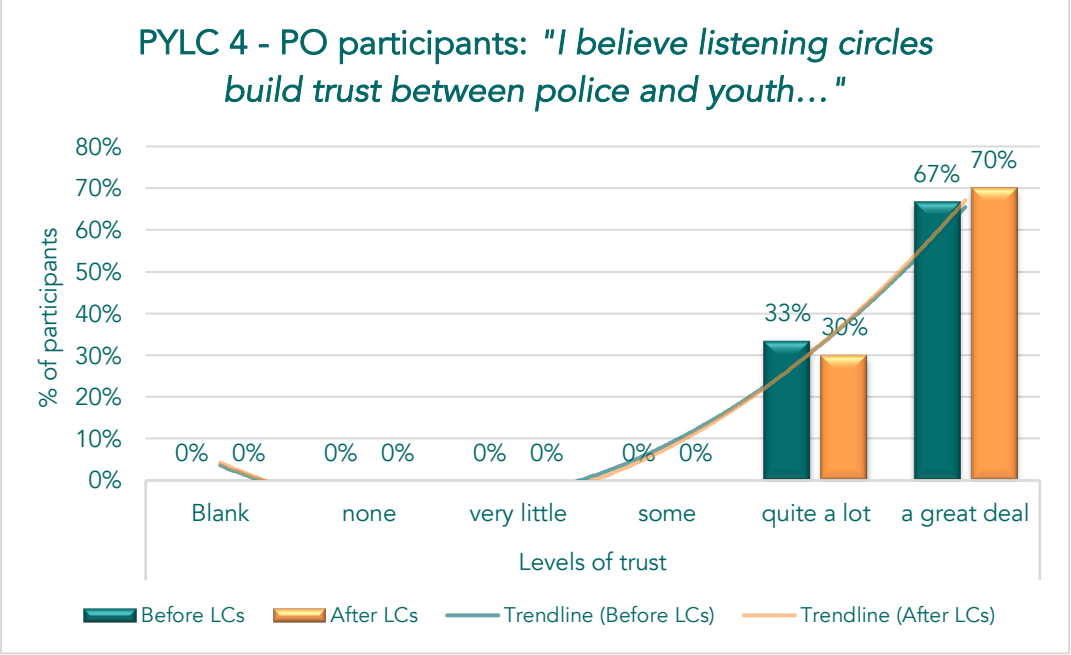

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What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? What, if anything, did you learn about an Officer/Youth today?

Officers:

- That we have more in common than others believe
- Hearing the youth ideas and thoughts
- The kids know the mainstream media narrative is not true. They want to hear the good news.
- The youth trusting me to share their life experiences with me. The youth carry pain and do not know how to deal or get through it.
- It was great having an open dialogue. I learned that youth have a lot of questions to ask the police.
- That they have had some bad experiences no matter the age, some as young as 10 years old
- Just spending time with the youth
- Getting to hear others backgrounds/stories. Concerns of youth and their relationships with police.
- Interacting positively with youth and experiencing their input
- They are willing to build the relationship with police.

Youth:

- I learn that what... That we make
- Everything really
- The police is not a person that hurt you
- That they are not wrong for what they do it's their job
- I learned that XX is a cool officer and is a good listener and gives good advice
- They're not bad people
- I have somewhat a lot in common with the police
- They are not all bad
- I learn that Officer XX is a good cop and that she get calls about something seriously
- Meeting actual police officers were satisfying
- That you can't judge a book by its cover
- I learn that I can trust police
- Cops are cool - they like black student
- What I learned about officers today is that police is nice and they are not bad people
- The most satisfying thing is that I connected with my peers and I learned more about laws and sentencing
- I learn that all officers are not the same
- She is trustworthy
- That I got to know people. That she worked for 12 years.

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- They work a lot of hours
- That they had a lot of ideas
- That officers go through a lot every day.
- They work hard
- They go through a lot
- That they see and go through a lot during the job
- I got to ask questions
- Get to know more about the police
- Getting to know them more
- Talking to police
- Helped me trust them more

What questions or concerns are you leaving with?

Officers:

- None
- How to better the youth/community relationship
- N/A
- Will the youth continue to build trust?
- I wonder how we can reach more neighborhoods and engage with more youth.
- How I can improve trust with youth once I get on the street
- My concerns are youth trusting the neighborhood vs police
- What can I do personally to connect with youth on a closer level?
- Them spreading the word/them bringing others to this
- None

Youth:

- N/a
- Why do police get so mad?
- None
- I have no questions nor concerns
- None
- None
- Not one thing
- N/a
- N/a
- How does it feel to be an officer?
- How fun is the job
- None
- The third one
- N/a
- None heard everything i wanted

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- Why don't the mean officers act like the nice officer?
- Why aren't all police officers like her?
- That i got to know about people.
- None
- What they was saying…
- None
- None
- None
- How will this change my everyday life?
- None
- Why does it take so long to come to carmen but bus distance close
- Can we have more of these?
- None

What's one important topic you'd like to discuss for an upcoming listening circle? (Or other suggestions for future events)

Officers:

- Yes
- None, very good time with the youth
- Get media coverage! Great event.
- Allow youth to ask more questions concerning to them.
- Follow up with participants in the future to see if they have changed opinions or have had any news good/bad experiences with the police since the circle.
- I don't have any! I thought it was very informative for myself and I believe it was for the younger people
- Somehow encouraging the youth to be more engaging with the officers. Have them not be afraid to ask questions!
- Be open minded and have fun with this while you're here
- Nothing. All is, was and will be great! Keep up the great work!

Youth:

- N/a
- Stolies
- None
- I don't really have any upcoming topics at the moment
- None
- None
- N/a
- N/a
- How can police officers be a part of the community?

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- Trust
- N/a
- How long does it take to become an officer?
- Mostly everything
- Violence
- What's the craziest experience you had as being a cop
- Nothing so far
- I don't know.
- Getting to know more people and playing games.
- I don't know.
- About what cops do
- Violence/homicides
- None
- None
- What's legal or what are my rights
- None
- To have more of them
- Knowing that all cops are not bad
- Why do we think the police like that
- Trust

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Annexes

***Question Round One**: "Tell a story about a time it was either easy or difficult for you to build trust with another person. What made it so?"*

1.1 Amount of time spent with a person

- As an officer it's difficult both ways because people do not trust easily, it takes time. There was an incident at one of the schools and I had to get a statement from one the students regarding the incident. It was really difficult but I kept talking and trying to build trust and eventually the student shared the needed information.
- My dad came into my life when I was twelve years old and I did not trust him so it took time for me to build trust with him and relax.
- One time was when my friend and me last year were close. We were in the 5th grade. I found out this year that she was coming to my school. I hoped we'd get closer. We didn't. Now we are close. We are still building trust.
- I can recall a time when I dealt with someone. He had mental health issues and was acting belligerent. I had taken calls before to this guy's residence, and I was familiar with him. He was becoming more and more aggressive. I started talking to this person, letting him know that I was familiar with him, and that I had helped him before. I gave him specific information about the times I had helped him in the past, and asked him if I was a help to him or if I hurt him. I did all of that to get him to remember me so that he could realize that he could trust me again. As a result, I was able to redirect him because he trusted me. It also helped him not be suicidal and begin to care about himself.
- It was difficult to gain trust with my mother when she left me with my grandmother. Other people go through things and need space from others. She needed her time to gather herself.
- I gained trust with somebody because last year I had a friend who asked me if I want to work with him. I was absent from school for some days, so he started hanging out with other people. When I came back to school he didn't trust me. Later, he wanted to hang out with me again. I didn't trust him then, so I didn't hang out with him.
- It was easy to trust my best friend since my freshman year. We built a brotherly bond; we had a lot of things in common.
- It was an easy time for me with my partner. I've had a lot of different partners over the years. She's been my partner for the past 7 or 8 years. We've been knowing each other for a long time and have built a deep bond. She helped me break walls down and I trust her with my life.
- I couldn't trust anyone when I transferred to a new school. I didn't know what kind of people they were.

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- Somebody asked me if they could use my basketball at the park. I didn't want to give it to him because I didn't know him. So, I played a basketball game with him to build trust.
- Building trust in the academy, I found a partner I reached out to and we began to hang out together and build trust in each other. I call him, he calls me. I check on him, he checks on me and we hang out after academy hours. He has come to my house, and I've been to his house. We've met each other's wives and they are beginning to bond, and so have our children, so that's an example of how I have begun to build trust.
- Normally I don't trust people, after talking to them I gain trust

1.2 Sharing information and communication

- I had told my friend something in confidence and she told everybody so since then it has been difficult to trust her and those persons she told my business to.
- One of my friends asked me to build a trusting relationship with her and we were both able believe that we could speak freely and honestly.
- A time it was easy was July 6, 2018. That was my first day at the Milwaukee Police Academy. There was a sense of a common purpose. I am a police recruit in training to become a police officer for the City of Milwaukee. There were 65 in total of us who had gone through a long process with common themes to be a part of the community and do things that would be meaningful. We were all from different backgrounds. We were there to learn to do something positive for ourselves and others, and through that experience we became unified.
- When I was going to Carmen [High School], in AP Chemistry I had to build trust with my teacher. I needed help, but she had to help others in my class. I stopped being shy and raised my hand. It was easier because she was helping me before I asked so that I wouldn't fall behind.
- Easy time with my friend. I have left stuff at his house and he would call me and tell me. I know I can trust him.
- Easy to build trust with my stepbrother. When I left my PS4 at his house he called my mom and brought it back.
- My friend—someone I've known for years. I'm forgetful and I leave my stuff at his house all the time. It was easy for me to trust him because he would always tell me.
- I've built trust with my girlfriend. Early when we were still friends I was able to lean on each other. Having an open line of communication and not judging each other helped build trust with each other.
- If I don't know you I'm going to get to know you. I have a friend I didn't like when we met. He had my back on something and we have been brothers ever since.
- Me and my friends talk about intimate stuff. Most of my friends that I trust, we have been through grade school, and now we ended up in junior high together, so we have a great bond, and our friendship has gotten very tight.

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- I talk to certain people about stuff and it doesn't take me long to figure out if I want that person to be my friend. I am usually a good judge of character. However, if we are not close, or I don't consider you as a friend you can't even know my name.

1.3 Conflict and breaking trust

- I gained trust with somebody because last year I had a friend who asked me if I want to work with him. I was absent from school for some days, so he started hanging out with other people. When I came back to school he didn't trust me. Later, he wanted to hang out with me again. I didn't trust him then, so I didn't hang out with him.
- If I'm with a group of friends and I have something personal on my mind I'm not gonna share my business because they might get mad and tell.
- I'm antisocial. I don't like making new friends. I had a best friend once, and we had a falling out about something so simple and so stupid. He took my potato chips so now he is no longer my best friend. I see him, though. I speak to him, and I keep it moving.
- The first day of school, it was cool. I ran into some old friends – some girlfriends. We all trusted each other in the beginning of school, and then for some reason or another the girls stopped talking to me and started talking about me, so we had a fight. Now, I am a little standoffish. It's sometimes easy, and sometimes hard for me to make new friends and trust them.
- Easy to trust but start losing trust depending on what they do
- Takes just one incident to lose trust

Question Round Two: "What does the word trust mean to you? And how can we increase trust between youth and police officers?"

2.1 Loyalty and consistency

- I think trust is believing whatever you say will stay with the person you told.
- I think when you have had a bad experience with one person it's difficult not to think that everyone is the same and put them in one group. I am trying not to be so angry anymore so I can build trust. I think this evening is a good way to get youth and police officers talking and trusting each other. To trust is to believe in the other person.
- To me trust means being honest and not telling what you should not tell when asked not to.
- Trust to me means that you have faith in someone and believe that they will be there for you.
- I think trust is being honest and a person of your word.
- I think trust is if someone tells you a secret they trust you to keep it. You have to trust people to be there when you need them.

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- Basically, loyalty. Honesty. Being able to put your phone down without worry of someone taking it.
- Trust is like loyalty. It's unity. It's knowing that someone has your back and you can be there for them.
- I think 'trust' is pretty simple. It's being able to know someone is going to do what they say they'll do when they say they'll do it.
- Trust is like depending on someone.
- It deals with consistency whatever I'm doing however I'm doing it. It deals with integrity to do what I'm supposed to do.
- Trust means speaking to someone, not judging you.
- Trust means you know someone got your back. I believe increase in trust is knowing that they (police officers) can really protect you and that's it.
- Trust means you give respect to one another; someone to count on.
- It means mutual respect between two people; its someone I can count on when I need them.
- Anything you can do to a person to connect to get one to trust you is the practice of leaning back towards someone and allowing them to catch you.
- Hanging around someone daily – you can learn to trust them.
- Looking up to someone like dads and moms you can trust. Trust makes better relationships.
- Trust means to me, I have to believe you in order to trust you
- Someone who will always be there for you
- Keep what I told you a secret
- Someone I could depend on
- Honesty

2.2 Increased interactions and communication

- Confronting, building, connecting with each other. Interaction, no holding back, not playing to the negative. We can find a little bit more empathy for each other.
- More officers need to come into our schools to share more information to talk to students, and I think we can become tighter.
- I think this evening is a good way to get youth and police officers talking and trusting each other. To trust is to believe in the other person.
- I like these circles where we can be honest and open with the officers and them with us as they explain why and how they do what they do.
- I think police and youth being more interactive would help a lot.
- We need to have more groups and more interaction with police and have this [dialogue opportunity] on the news so more people can know.
- Being able to talk out issues with a cop of why the youth doesn't like them.

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- To increase trust between youth and police, we're doing that now by having a dialogue to see that we are all regular people. When I was younger I thought we were all different, but now I see that more and more every day we are more alike than different.
- I think we have to create settings where youth can have honest conversations to build rapport with us [officers]. We have to increase the knowledge of youth to know where trust is broken. Our youth need to have respect of themselves. We have to have conversations and teach them. We have to let the youth know we're like them. And we have to be empathetic.
- We increase trust with the police by having more conversations with officers and get to know them; listening circles like this.
- I think we can increase relationships by mutually respecting each other and the space we occupy. We may have had bad encounters in the past both ways. But just because I've had a bad experience doesn't mean that's the way things can't change.
- Having more circles, more talking to each other, and without that it's hard to trust someone. Not just officers, but others as well. It's hard to trust someone you don't know. Sometimes when you talk to them you think they are cool, but they are not a person that you think you want to be with.

2.3 Past experiences with police officers

- Some like her [points to an officer in our group with whom he had begun to build a rapport during dinner] are cool and try to reason with others. Take a chill pill! Youth should stop making police wanna arrest us. Stop breaking the law and doing bad stuff!
- There's a lot of people in the neighborhood afraid of cops that makes me scared. You can't assume all stories are true. More people in our community need to talk and police need to talk to kids more about what they do. Police officers should visit schools more.
- I think things like this circle is important to keep the community engaged. Getting in a different setting and talking things out but both sides gotta be willing to talk.
- If we started having conferences involving youth and police in city conferences we won't look at the police as such bad guys. [Now] We look at police officers as someone who is always causing havoc and coming to arrest.
- Trust is a big deal. You don't have it with a lot of people. Persons that are always being there, you can almost put trust in them. Getting into the community not being afraid to talk to others. Don't let the negative be the thing to remember.

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Connected Conversation: "What motivates you to take positive action in your community and what holds you back? What questions of curiosity to do you have for each other that came up during the go-arounds? What, if any, police policies are confusing to you? Which do you want to know more about?"

3.1 Motivated by family members and community organizations

- My grandpa, before passing, would say 'Clean up the earth and stay off the streets"
- My siblings
- My parents would say "don't stop, keep doing what you do"
- My dad, he does a lot for the community
- What makes me feel good as a person is helping others out, but in this time and age as a young person the consequences of helping a friend out is retaliation.
- I am motivated because I am a communicative person. I spend time with other people who like to talk and have fun. But, it gets frustrating when we go out to do an activity and some don't listen and cooperate.
- My little brother – I want him to trust the police. My hold back is with police. I want them to catch me being good.
- My holdback is my community. In my community, when I try to do positive people hold me down. They want you to do negative, but people get brought down by negativity.
    - What do you mean by your community bringing you down because of negativity?
    - There are sections. Drug dealers. Prostitution. Violence. But there are also people doing good or trying to do good.

3.2 Police work and action

- What's confusing to me is selling drugs. Why do you get more time for selling drugs than a person who rapes a person? Response: The reason being behind that is there are times when drug dealers have large quantities of drugs with intent to distribute and sell. They get caught with weapons etc., and sometimes they are misdemeanor sexual assault cases. DNA plays a big part in contributing to [the amount of] time [given for] of an assault.
- Why were you running?
    - Because I don't like police
    - If you run it's our job to investigate why. You could be a victim and we have to keep you safe. Maybe someone hurt your family.
- Police are always trying to get in my business.
    - It's our job to be nosy.
- A lot of people get in trouble for something they didn't do. The police thought my friend was stealing. He's not bad like that.

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- Some people don't understand the system. We are not the judge. It is not for us to decide if someone is guilty. We just arrest on probable cause or the information we have. It's possible he didn't do it. The judge will review everything and make a decision.
- Why do police say even if you didn't do anything you are in trouble because the people you are with did?
    - That is called party to a crime. If you are together, everyone might have a different story about who did what. We have to question everyone to get to the bottom of it.
- When you pull a car over how do you know they have something?
    - We don't know. When we do a traffic stop it is based on a traffic violation. Maybe the plates don't match the car, there is a light out…and then we find out other things like the person does not have a license, maybe they have a warrant…
- Do you like police?
    - Police are straight to me. I did activities at school with officers. There was no disrespect. They would just tell us their opinions.
    - I don't really trust police. It depends on what mood I'm in. If I'm not in a good mood I will keep coming back with questions. It also depends on the officer.
    - I don't mess with officers. I don't get to know them. We don't have many activities with officers at school.
- What's the most favorite thing about your job as a police officer?
    - Situations where you've dealt with someone in the past and years later you see them and they thank you. It makes you feel like you're doing your job.
- What's the worst part of job ever been?
    - For 10 years having to work with cases of domestic violence—especially at the same house. On one incident I sat down with the female and talked to her about available resources to get out of the situation. It made me feel good when she actually did it.
- What's your favorite thing about the academy?
    - Studying and learning about constitutional law.
- Do any of you have trust issues with police?
    - When I was six [years old] the police took my father AND my mother away for a crime. They did do the crime, but I still have a problem with the police because they took my parents away. They were gone away for some years, and when they came back they came back and got me, and everything was good, and I know it was my parents fault that they committed crime, but I still get angry at the police because in my mind they took my parents away.
    - Your parents broke the law. The police just did their job in taking your parents away. You have to understand that your parents broke the law. Your parents did what caused them to be taken away. You trust your parents. Please learn to trust us, too. We were just doing our job.

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- Do you know how when someone or some people are committing crimes in your neighborhood you want to have the police come and arrest them so that they no longer disturb the neighborhood? [This question was addressed to the youth whose parents were arrested.] People in your neighborhood don't want them there, and feel that the police should come and take them away? Well, it's the same kind of situation with your parents. Unfortunately, they were breaking the law. They knew what they were doing was wrong. Just like you'd want the police to come and remove the people doing bad things from your neighborhood, your neighbors at the time wanted the police to come and remove your parents. We have a system in this country that is called justice, and we believe that in most cases when someone has done wrong somehow there has to be consequences for those wrongs. Your parents had to pay the consequences for their crimes. The only role that the police played was to escort them to the authorities so that they could be dealt with for their crimes. The police were only doing their jobs. If your parents had made better decisions that would not have had to happen.

3.3 Promotion of events

- What do you want to see police do more of?
  - Parties
  - Block parties
  - We do block parties all summer long. We have to do a better job of promoting events.
- It seemed that it would be great to get the good stuff on the news. It seems that we're aware of good, but we don't see it on the news.
  - I agree with that. I was recently at a Black and Latino Male Achievement [BLMA – an initiative of MPS to help such students be successful academically and gain soft skills for life] event. We asked the news to come, but they didn't.
  - You all really made me think about that. We never hear anything good on the news.
  - Newsperson covering our event tonight: I said that I was just here to observe, but if I may be allowed to say so, I totally agree. I work for an news organization trying really hard to do what you're talking about. We're online only. I'll give you my card. I do agree with you that the media portrays the central city in a negative light, and that is why we are here to do this story tonight, and tell all about the good work of this program. We have also covered the program you were talking about [BLMA] in the recent past, and the work that they do, too.

3.4 Parting words

- Trust

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- Relationships
- Communication
- Community involvement
- More listening circles
- More hands on with each other
- Good – I like to express myself and hear from others
- Rewarding – I'm here because you guys are the future
- Better – I understand more
- Good about myself – Police are trying to protect us
- I don't have one
- I don't have one
- Trusted
- Fantastic
- Trust
- Trustworthy
- Open
- Wonderful
- Optimistic
- Give everyone a change
- Learn a lot about police officers and what they go through
- Respectful and listening to others while they speak
- Respect
- Trust
- A little bit more of understanding of what they go through
- Hopeful
- Police
- Building trust
- Army
- Encouraged
- Trust
- Trust
- Community
- Honesty
- Trust
- Forgiveness
- Not all police officers are bad
- All cops ain't bad
- Loyalty
- Truthful
- Hurt. We all deal with a lot of hurt and pain that we don't know how to deal with. People don't teach us how to deal with it.

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