Lehigh Valley Health Network

# LVHN Scholarly Works

## Investigating Neighborhood Engagement & Perceptions

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### Published In/Presented At

Fantozzi, Q., Arndt, C., & Shaak, S.A. (2023, July 28). *Investigating Neighborhood Engagement & Perceptions* . Poster presented at Research Scholars, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Center Valley, PA.
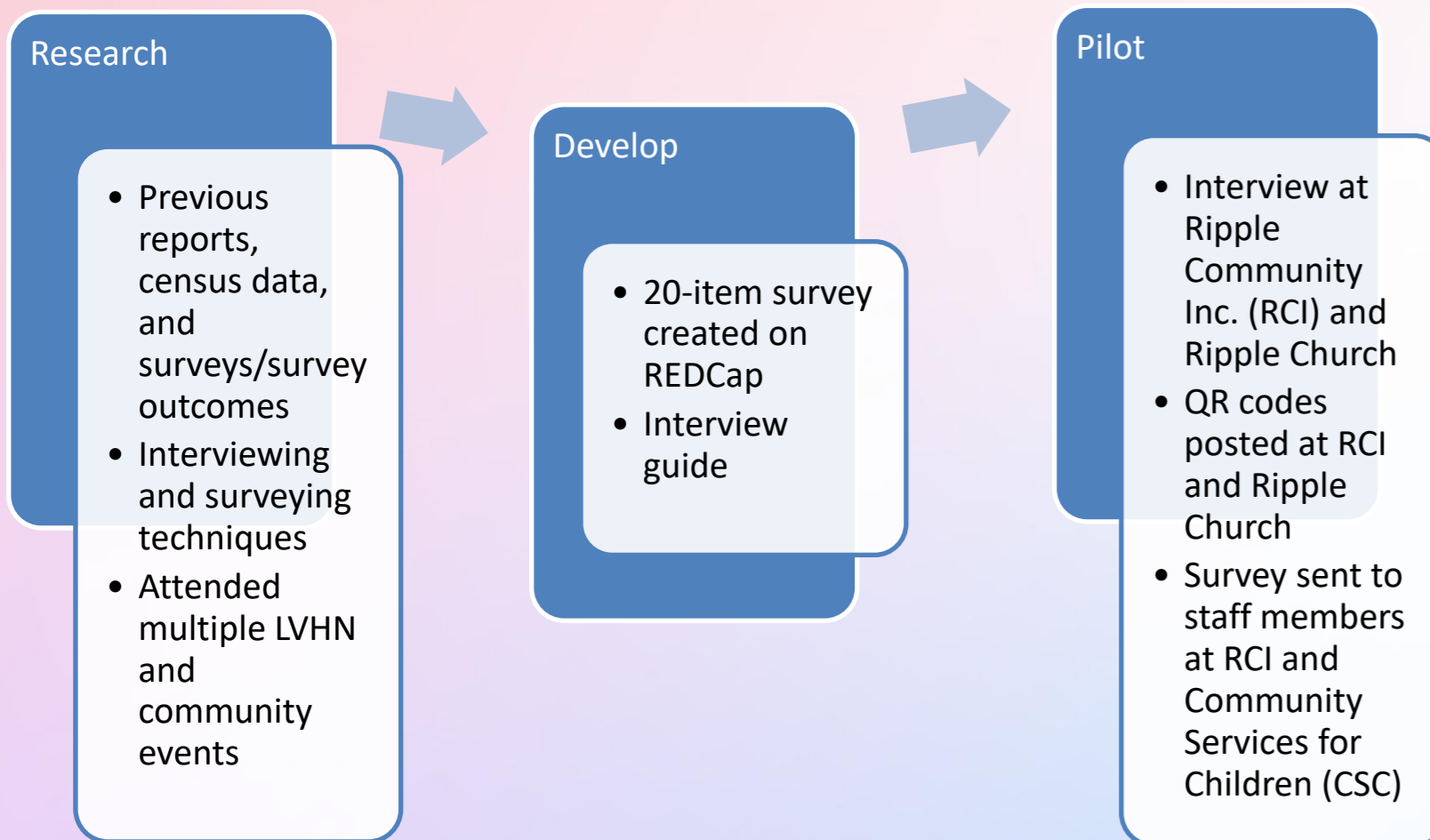
# Investigating Neighborhood Engagement & Perceptions

## Quinn Fantozzi, Cheryl Arndt, Ph.D, & Samantha A. Shaak, Ph.D.

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## Background

- Franklin Park is a neighborhood in Allentown located in Census Tracts 18 and 20.
  - High Hispanic population (65%)
  - Low income; low academic outcomes
  - Strong LVHN & community-based organization presence
- The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health (LPPIH) uses a place-based approach, acknowledging that not all communities are the same, and therefore, the same initiatives cannot be implemented everywhere.
- **Objectives:** This project aims to gain a better understanding of the experience of living in Franklin Park, how residents engage with their community, and what can be done to improve their experiences through piloting a survey and conducting interviews. It also aims to learn more about the historical context of the neighborhood.

## Methods

**Research**
- Previous reports, census data, and surveys/survey outcomes
- Interviewing and surveying techniques
- Attended multiple LVHN and community events

**Develop**
- 20-item survey created on REDCap
- Interview guide

**Pilot**
- Interview at Ripple Community Inc. (RCI) and Ripple Church
- QR codes posted at RCI and Ripple Church
- Survey sent to staff members at RCI and Community Services for Children (CSC)

## Results

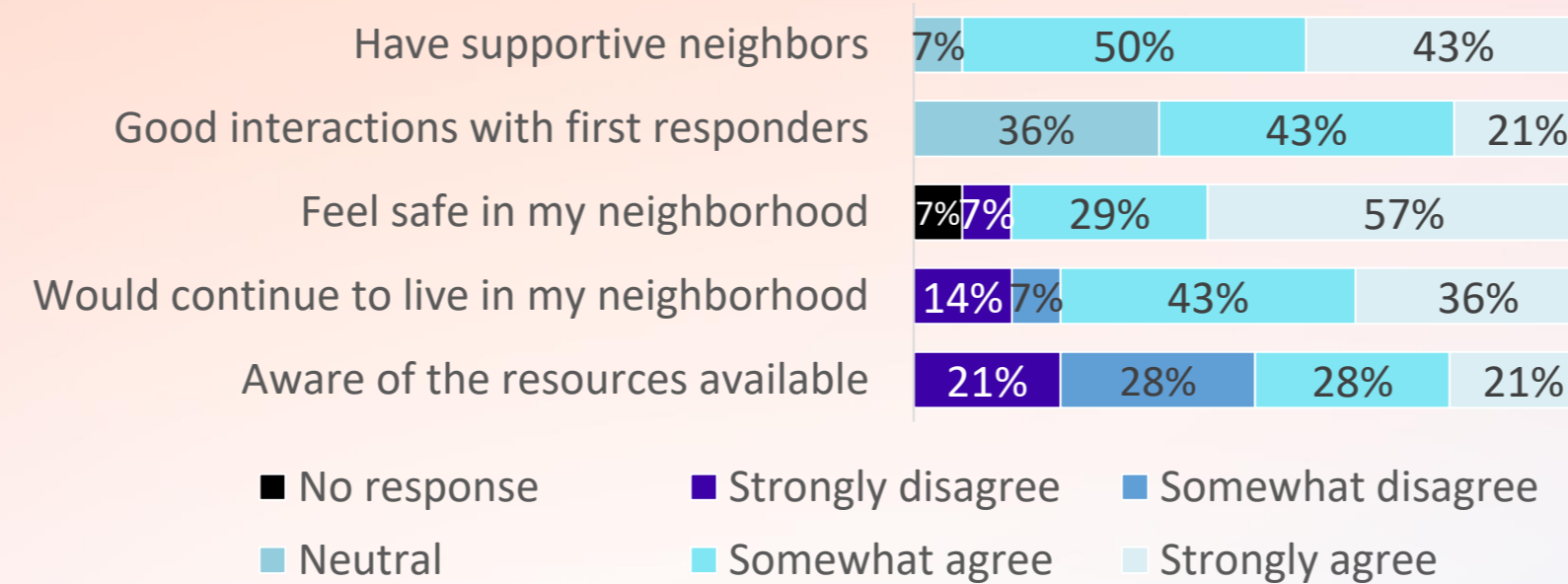### Neighborhood Engagement



*Figure 1.* Results of the first set of Likert Scale questions regarding community engagement, awareness, and perceptions; n = 14.
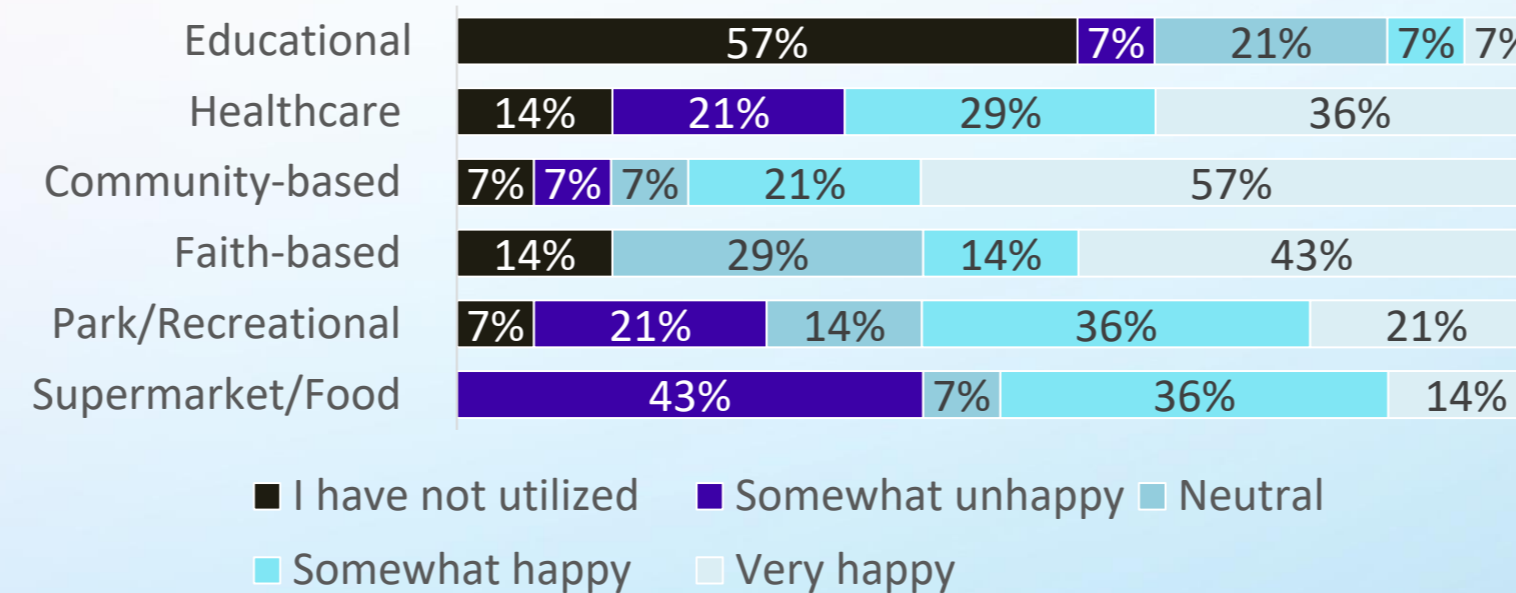
### Neighborhood Service Satisfaction



*Figure 2.* Results of the second set of Likert Scale questions, asking residents how happy they are with resources available within their neighborhood. Total n = 14; however, not all residents have utilized every service.
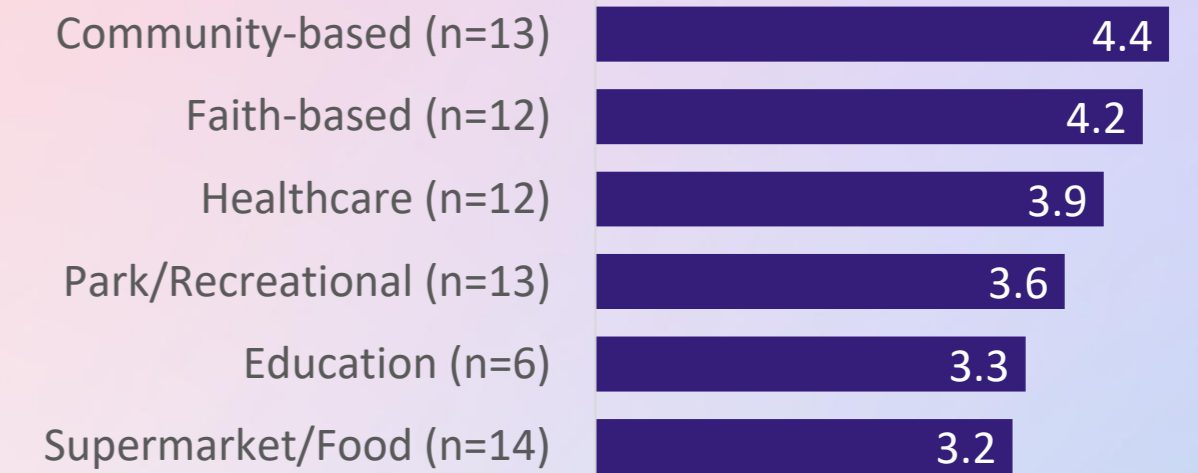
### Average Satisfaction of Services, out of 5



*Figure 3.* Average rating of services out of five, as taken from the second set of Likert Scale questions regarding how happy residents are with the given services.

## Conclusion

- The main themes that were reoccurring in interviews and survey responses were the need for:
  - More supermarkets with more healthy and affordable options
  - Improvements to the looks, conditions, and amenities of the parks
  - More safe spaces and activities for children
  - More services for the unhoused and for those struggling with mental illness and addiction
- Some reported feeling that their neighborhood is not receiving recognition from the city and some also feel that that they may not be aware of the resources available to them within their neighborhood.
- Limitations: convenience sample; not statistically significant; not properly designed for those who are unhoused

## Recommendations

- LPPIH will be further developing and carrying out this project as a part of their ongoing initiative.
- For future versions: investigate how different age groups respond within the context of the evolution of the city; hear exclusively from residents of Franklin Park; develop a survey for those experiencing homelessness to see what services need most attention.
- The Institute should address the lack of awareness regarding resources and the poor satisfaction with the supermarket and food options.

**References & Acknowledgments:**

LVHN.org