

Office of Health Equity
Climate and Health Team

Focus Group Report:

**“Exploring Community Health Leaders’
Knowledge & Attitudes on Climate Change
as a Public Health Issue”**



Climate & Health Communications

Goal: Increase awareness, engagement and support for climate and health protection

- communication strategy
- sample message concepts and approaches
- for CDPH and Local Health Departments

Major Research Questions

1. Values & Beliefs
2. Awareness
3. Level of Concern
4. Climate Change Mitigation Strategies
5. Health Co-Benefits
6. Communication

Methods



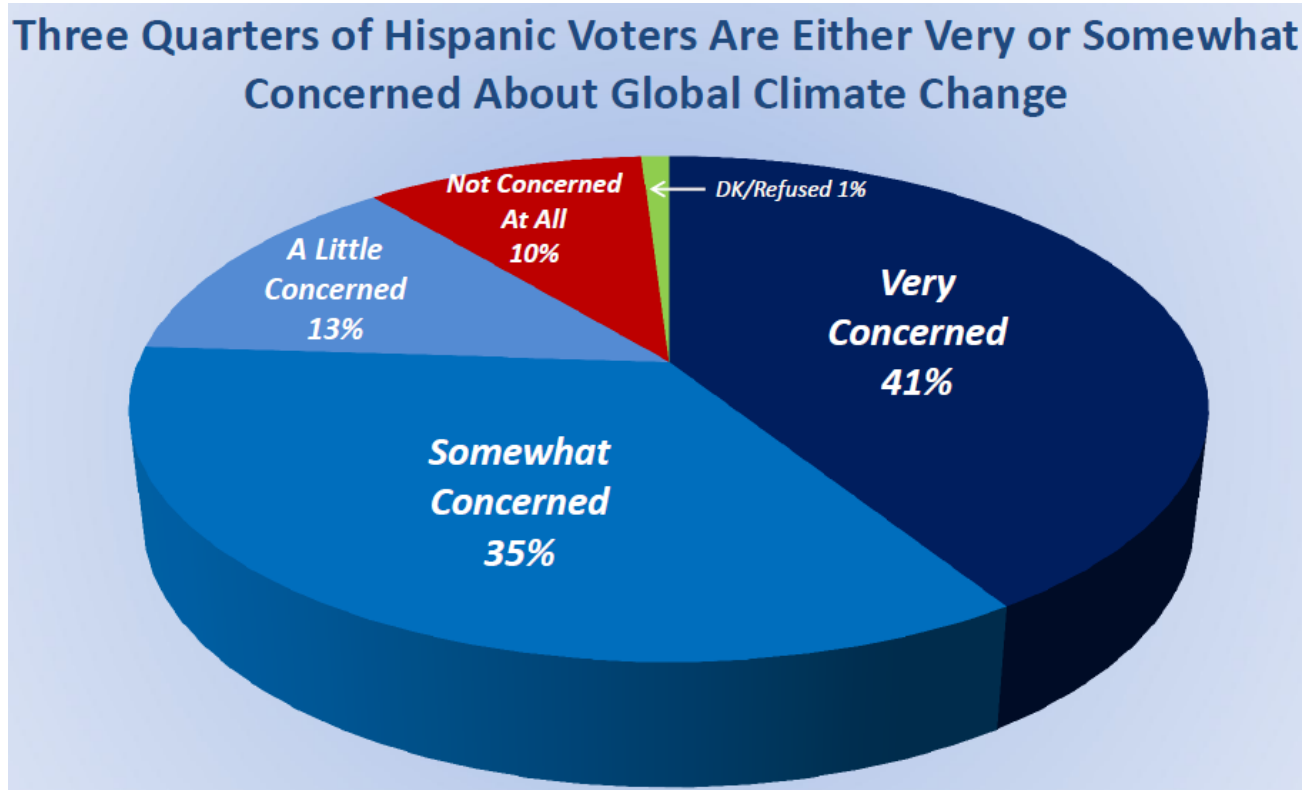
- 6 Focus Groups in 3 Regions
 - Bay Area
 - Southern CA
 - Central CA
- 3 English and 3 Spanish
- CPHS & UC Davis IRB approval
- UC Davis and Harder & Company
- Lay “Community Health Leaders”

Target Population

“Community Health Leaders”

- Involved in efforts to promote health in their community
- Do not work professionally in a public health or medical job
- Spanish speakers and English speakers
- Not involved in climate change work

Targeting Spanish Speaking Latinos



Sierra Club & National Council of La Raza, National Poll 2012

Recruitment

- Outreach to local public health networks
- Telephone screening
- Limitations

UC DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY'S HEALTH?

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT HOW CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTS OUR HEALTH?



If you are a **COMMUNITY LEADER** or help to improve the health of your community, join a **Focus Group** discussion in **LOS ANGELES** on climate change and health in your community. We are interested in hearing your thoughts about climate change and health!

Focus group will last about 90 minutes.
\$40 gift card will be provided in appreciation of your time.

CALL toll free 1-855-729-5050 or email climatechange@cdph.ca.gov to see if you can participate.

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL.

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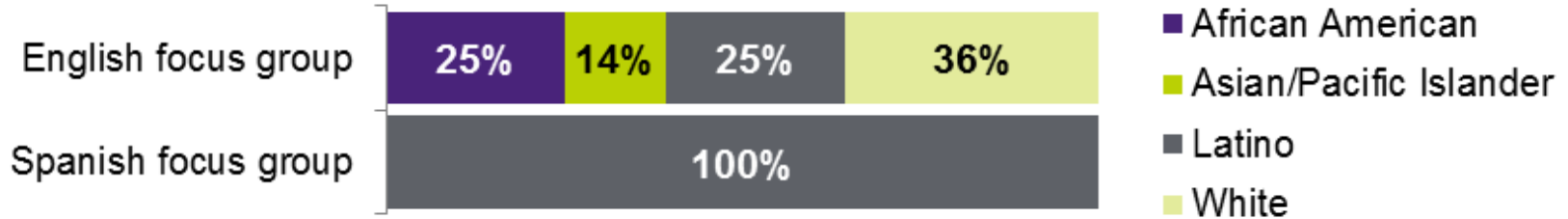
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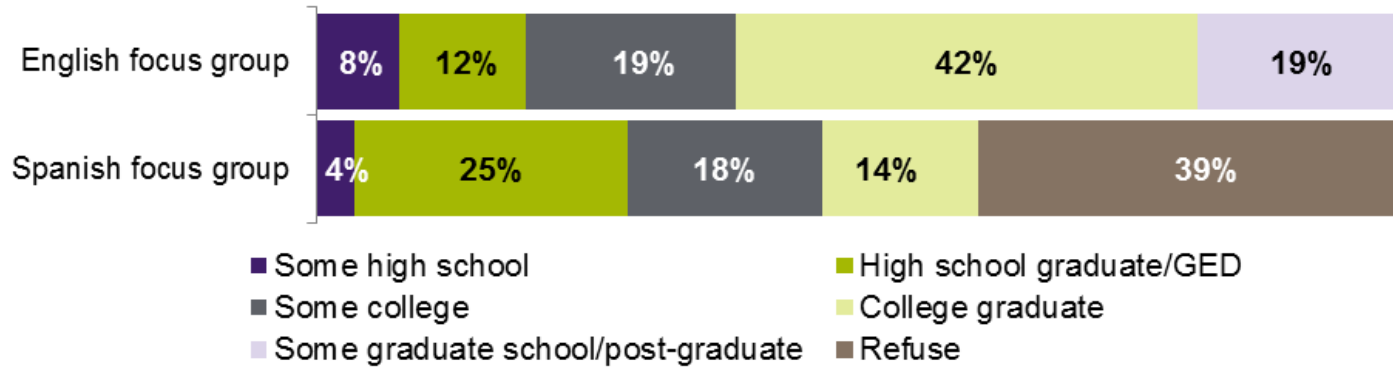
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Participant Demographics

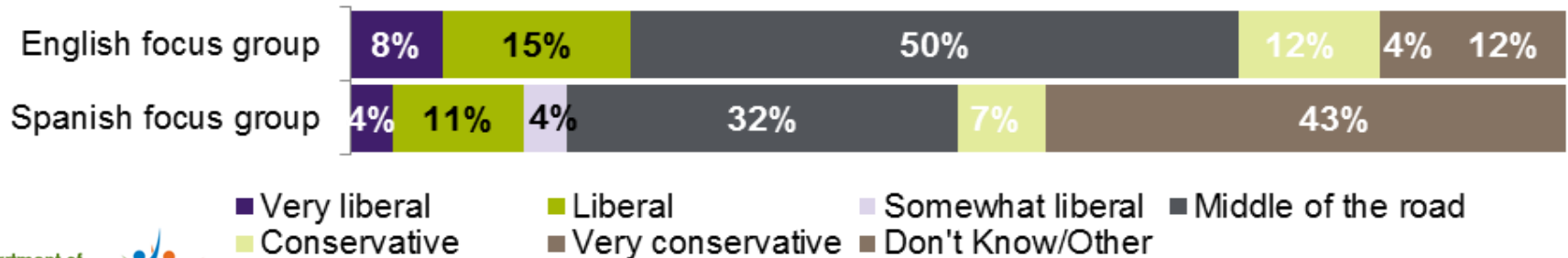
Race/Ethnicity



Education Level



Political Orientation



Participant Demographics

Areas of Community Health Work

English Focus Group	Spanish Focus Group
Community and neighborhood development councils	Physical activity
General community health	<i>Promotoras</i>
Chronic disease and nutrition	Community and neighborhood development councils
Youth	General community health
Environmental health	Chronic disease and nutrition

Key Findings

- 1) The Lens of Community Health Leaders
- 2) Motivations for Community Engagement
- 3) Awareness of Climate Change
- 4) Concerns about Climate Change
- 5) Addressing Climate Change:
 - Current Efforts
 - Future Efforts
 - Education, Training, and Communications

1) Lens of Community Health Leaders

- Equity
- Experiential Knowledge

“I live in South Central Los Angeles...where there are a lot of factories nearby. If you walk near [them], you’ll automatically start coughing...[and] the area is surrounded by a bunch of schools...This really worries me.”



2) Motivations for Community Engagement

(values and beliefs)

“If I want to be hopeful and I want to have a hopeful future for children, both my own and others, then I better be doing something to improve... my health and that of my family and my community.”



3) Awareness of Climate Change



“Right now we’re seeing extremely hot weather. We shouldn’t be at or above 100 degrees so much. The weather is affecting us a lot. How hot will it be for our children?”

“The extreme weather changes are hard when you don’t have air conditioning, and we see asthma and bronchitis and chronic illnesses. What’s going on is dangerous.”

4) Concern about Climate Change

“I am personally very concerned about these disasters that are attacking us daily and constantly like a plague. I close my eyes and I see children in the future and I see me as an old woman in my community and I don’t think we will be able to handle it...”



“I worry about drought because most people I know work in the fields. If there is a drought there won’t be jobs or food. There may be vandalism and crime.”



Map of Local Concerns



5) Addressing Climate Change: Current Efforts

“I think of environmental stewardship initiatives like San Francisco banned plastic bags. I don’t know if that is dealing with climate change, but it is helping the environment.”

“There is a city department, community members can call them and ask for up to seven trees for shade. This is good because it also saves on energy.”



AP / Ben Margot



5) Addressing Climate Change: Concerns regarding Current Efforts

“People are not informed. They haven’t seen these images.* If they did, they would think about what we’re doing.”



5) Addressing Climate Change: Concerns regarding Current Efforts

Lack of Engagement

- Desensitization
- Doubt & denial
- Lack of sense of immediacy
- Lack of call to action
- Feelings of anxiety
- Competing needs

“The idea of this traumatized culture- we are used to hearing that [climate change is a problem] and then not seeing anything come of it, so it’s not that we don’t hear it, it’s that we don’t really understand that it is indeed a real crisis.”

“I think that many people are aware of the problem, but just feel helpless in trying to effect a solution.”

5) Addressing Climate Change: Future Efforts



“We all need to contribute to a solution, not just when we see a tornado or a flood on TV. We need to make it an everyday thing. We should conserve water and try to walk instead of driving so much because those gas emissions are polluting us.”

“You must organize the community first. Get them educated so they can take action. Or else there is nothing.”

“If you just talk and talk, [we] won’t retain the information. When we see it, touch it and feel it – [that] is when we’re motivated to do something.”

5) Addressing Climate Change: Education, Communication, and Training

“In one sentence or more, would you be able to relate public health to climate change directly?... I can't make that connection; I'm not understanding.”



“Explain how walking and riding the bus will actually reduce the climate change...I would think that a bus is more polluting than a car. At a stop light, if I'm behind [a bus], I put up my windows.”

5) Addressing Climate Change: Education, Communication, and Training

	Quality/Criteria
Messages	Immediate Action-oriented Personal Positive Graphic
Training	Interactive
Educational Materials	Right dose of data Accompanied by dialogue

“With climate change, I have heard it is in the future, way down the line. How can you bring it to the now?”

“If the message is more complex, it should be given at a workshop...Our community greatly benefits from workshops or group discussions.”

Next Steps

- Share CDPH approved report (early 2014)
- Climate and Health Communications planning/strategy workshop (date?)
- Webinar to share Climate and Health Focus Group Report and Communication Plan (Spring 2014)