

Mental Health Resources For Police Officers

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What We Set Out to Find..

We wanted to find out if Utah police officers had enough resources to deal with on the job stresses. We also wanted to find out if they knew enough to help fellow officers and themselves. This is a big topic in law enforcement because officers often times deal with everybody else's baggage, but they will put up a wall covering their own baggage instead of dealing with it.



Prior Research

There have been a lot of studies dealing with police suicide rates, but non have been specifically done to address officers in Utah and suicide/ mental health awareness was only a side topic such as the following:

In a study done by The Badge of Life, they found the police suicide rates to be:

- 2008- 17/100,000
- 2009- 17/100,000
- 2012- 14/100,000
- 2016- 12/100,000



Our Survey

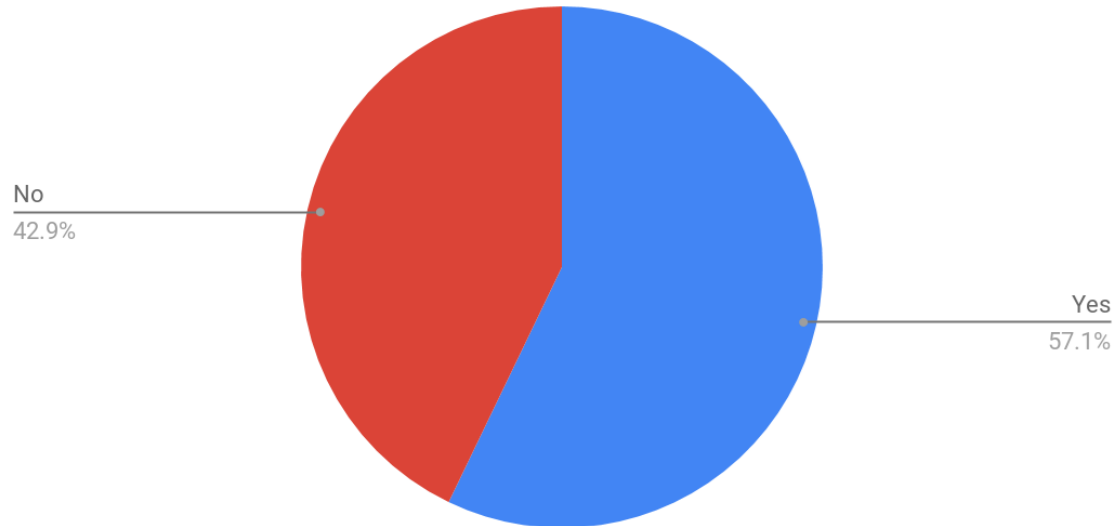
We originally planned on sending our survey to 2-3 departments, but many of the agencies were not receptive to the idea. With that being said, we contacted Orem Police Department and they were very interested in having their officers take our survey.

- Overall population size 4,782 sworn LEO's in Utah
- Sample Size 82 sworn LEO's at Orem P.D.
- 95% confidence interval
- Margin of error + or - 11

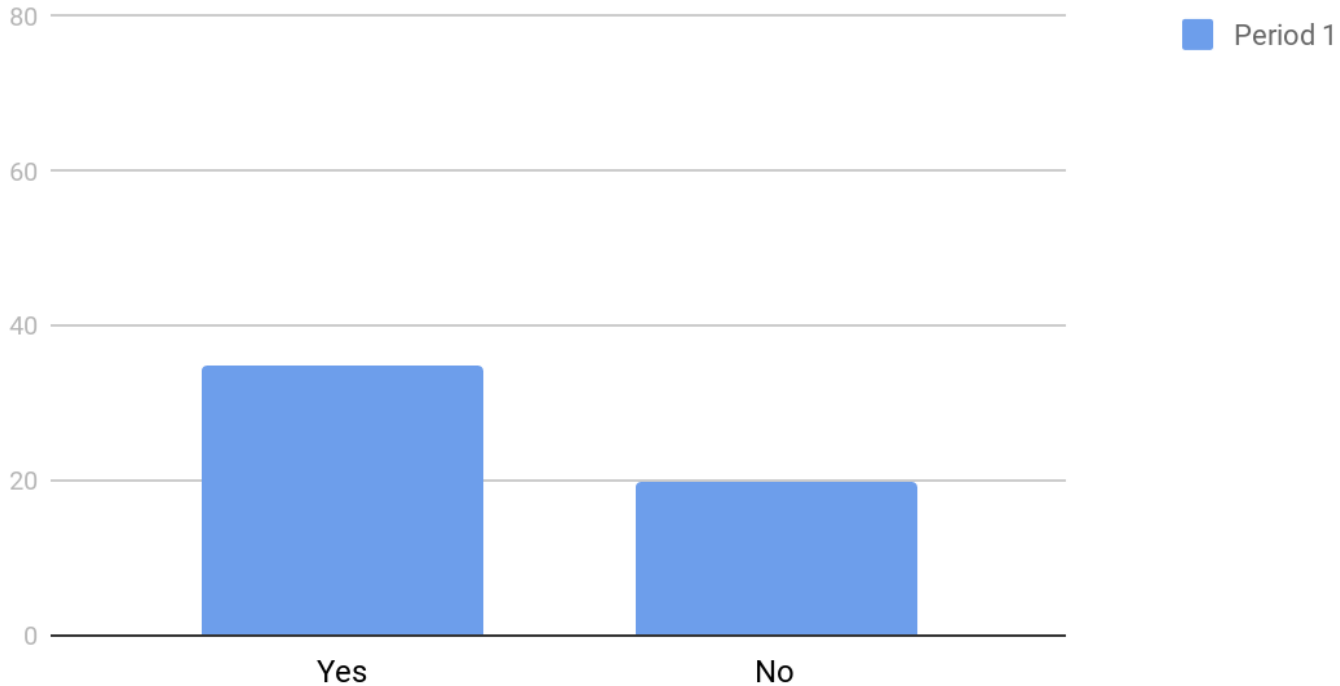


What We Found..

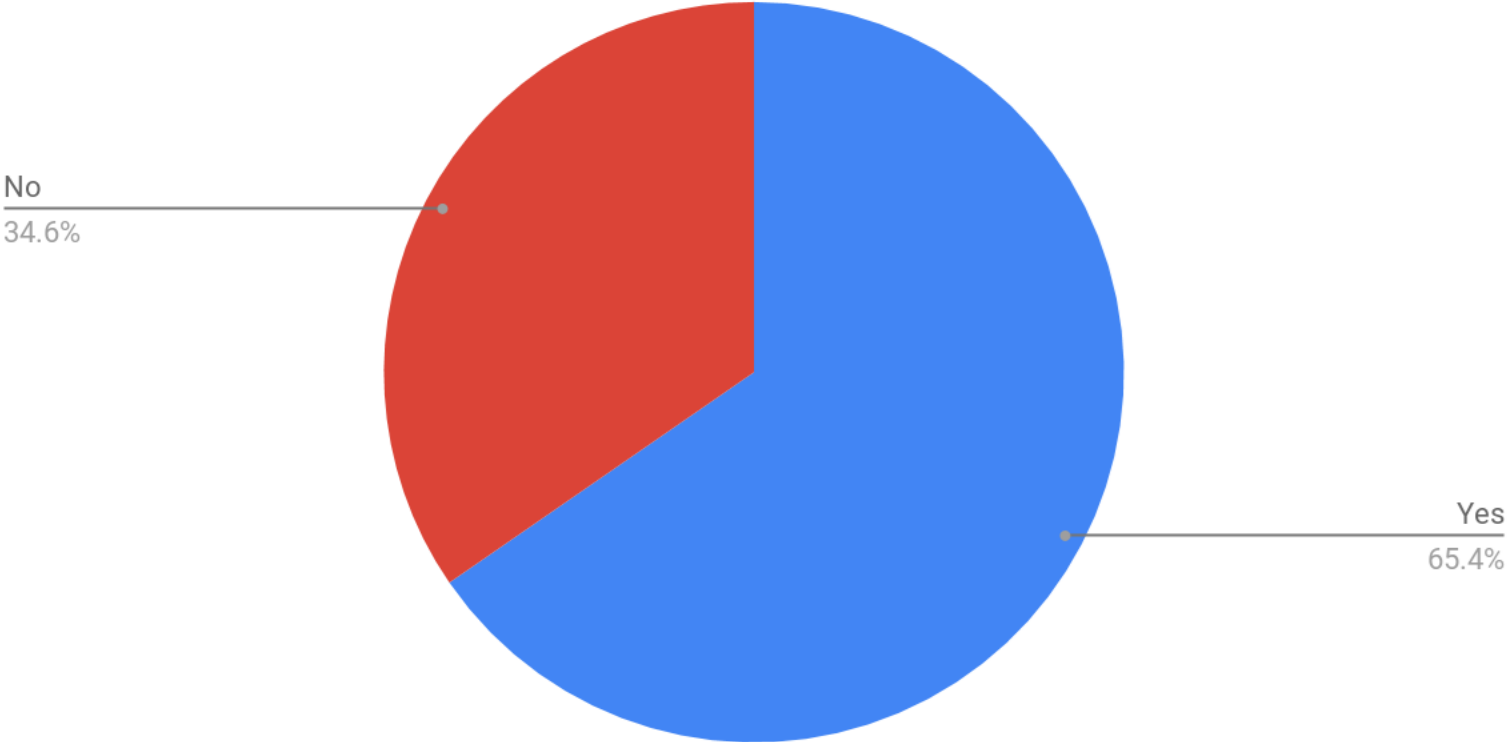
During your Law Enforcement career, have you ever known someone in the Law enforcement field that has taken his or her own life?



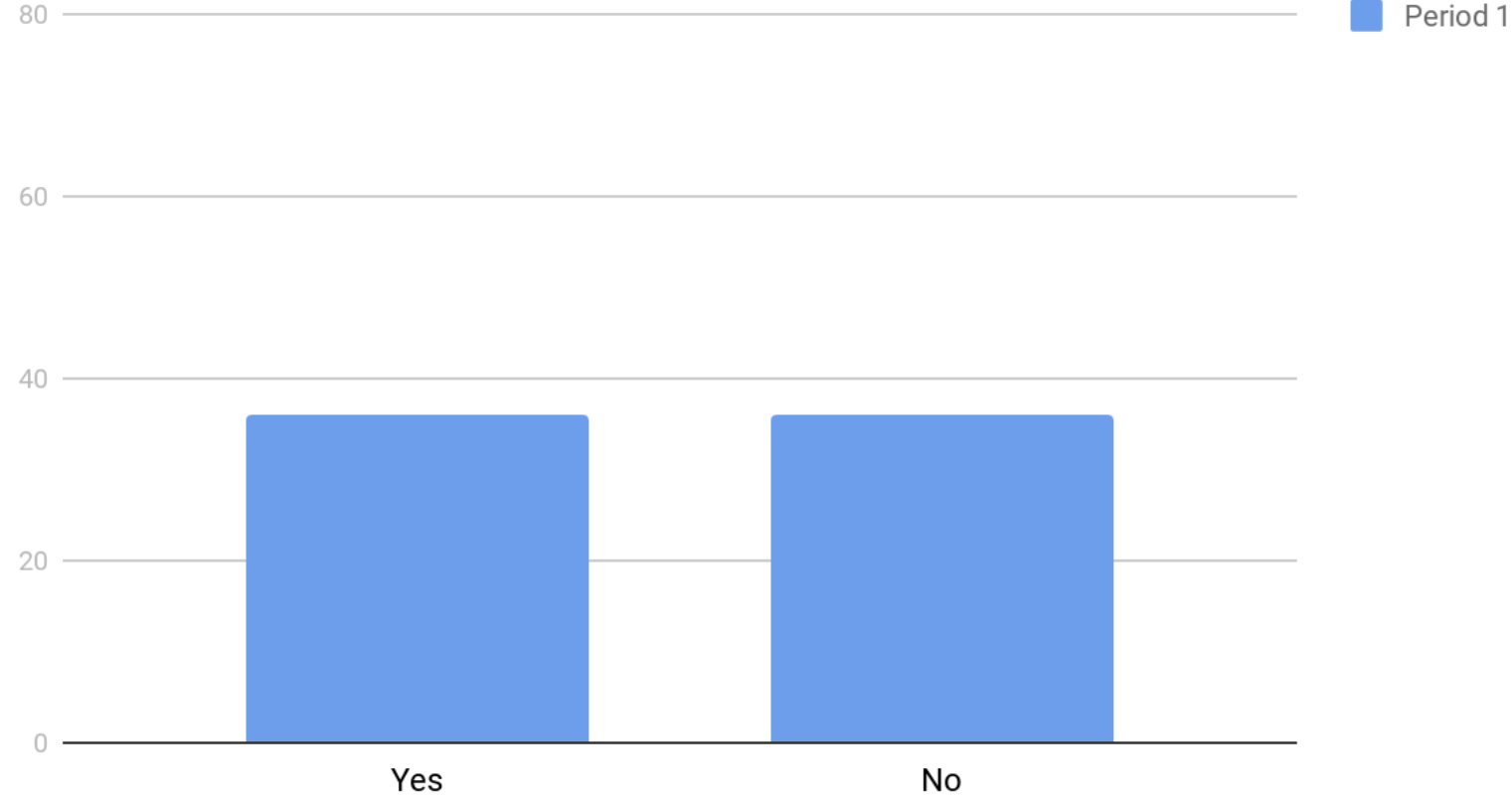
Have you ever been in a high stress situation that has caused you to rethink your career in Law Enforcement?



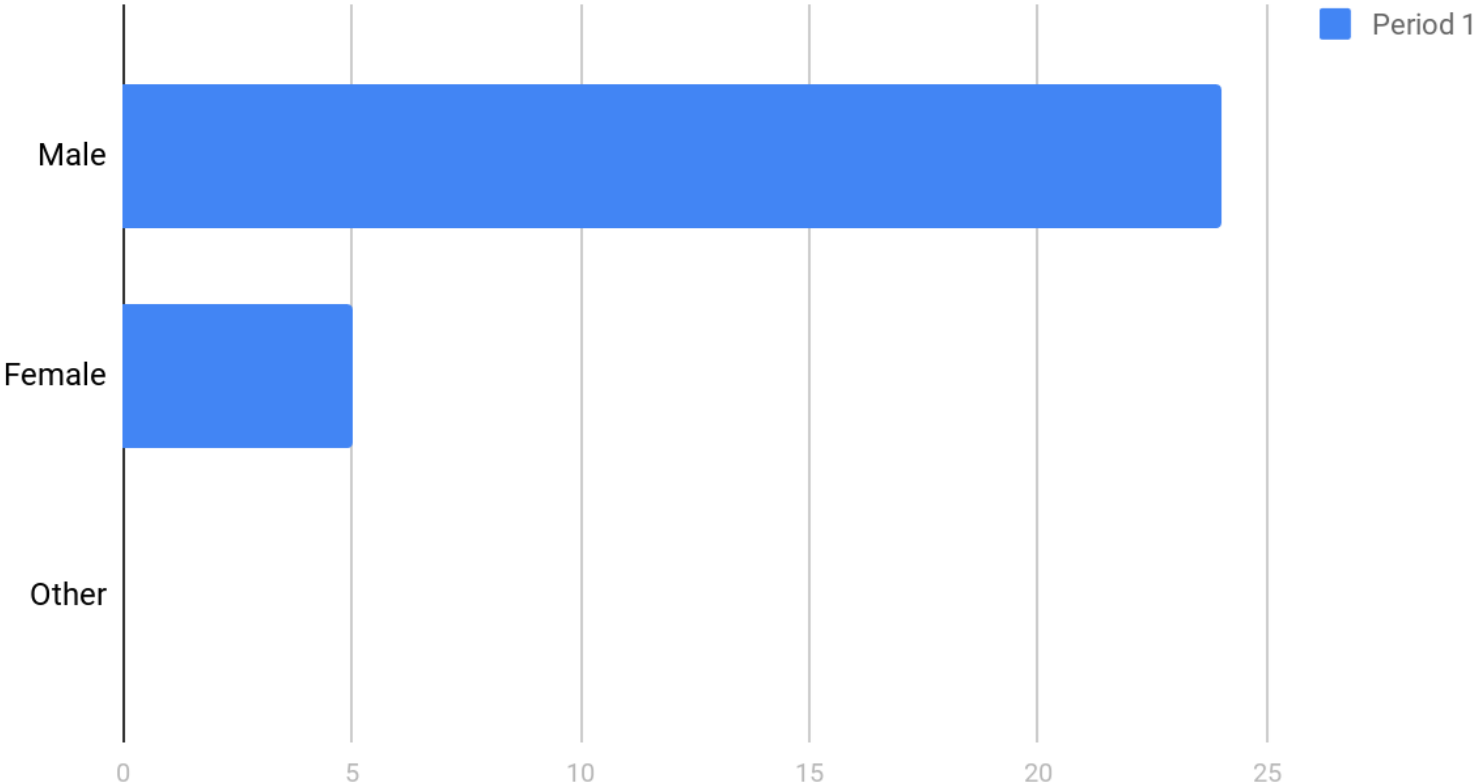
Do you feel you have enough information to give someone in these circumstances that would be helpful to them?



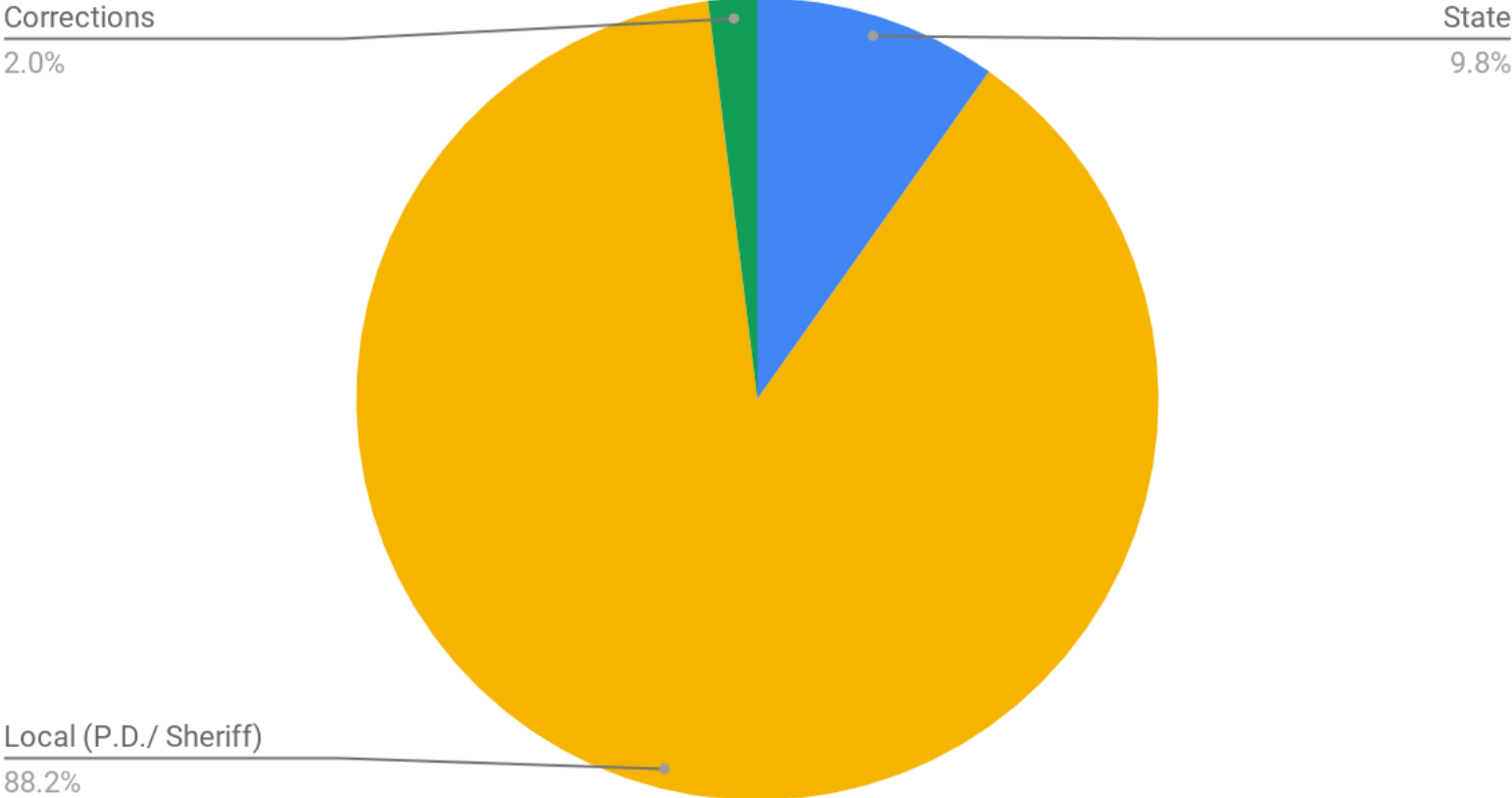
Would you be receptive to receive help for PTSD/Suicide?



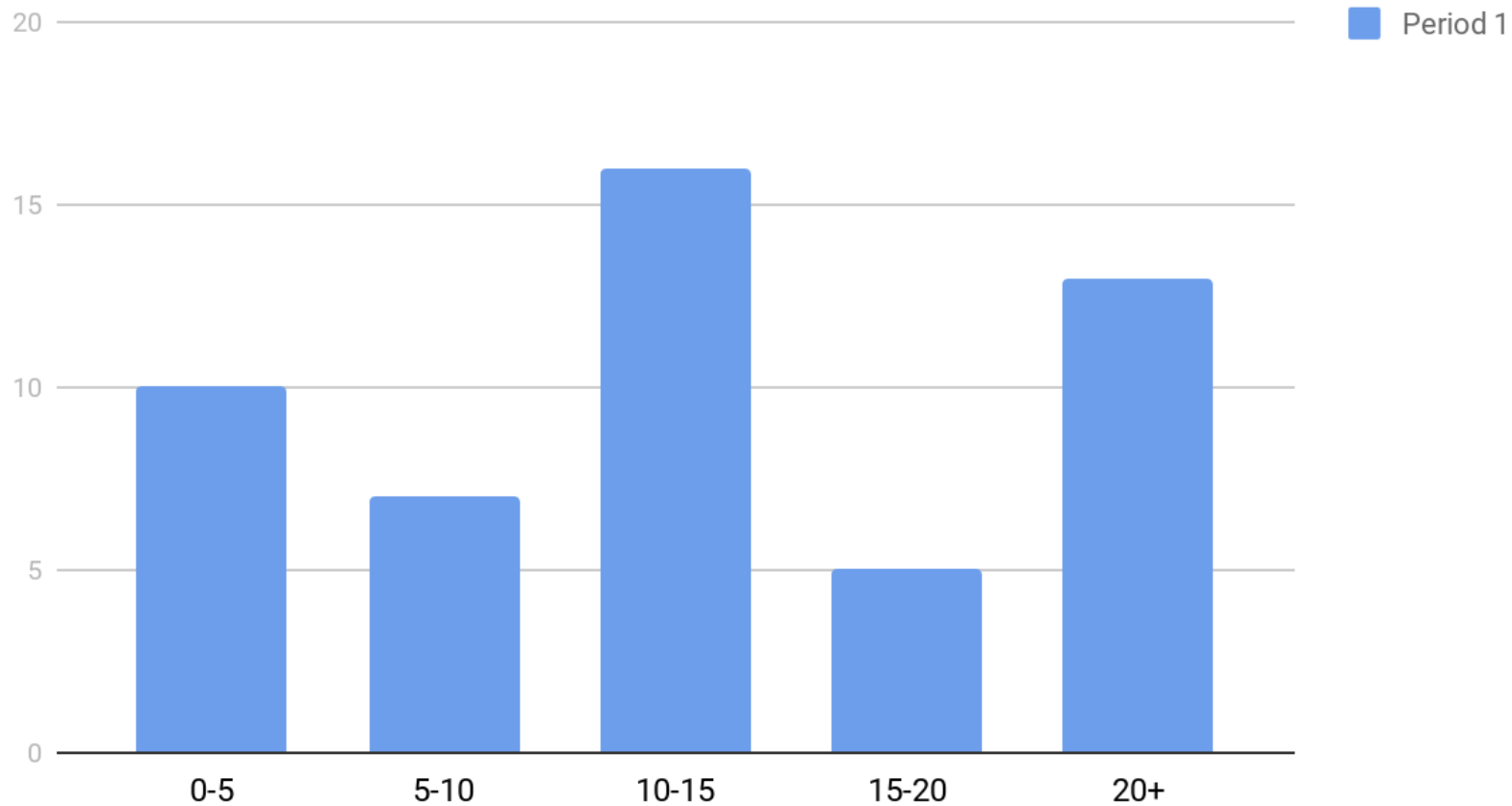
What is your gender?



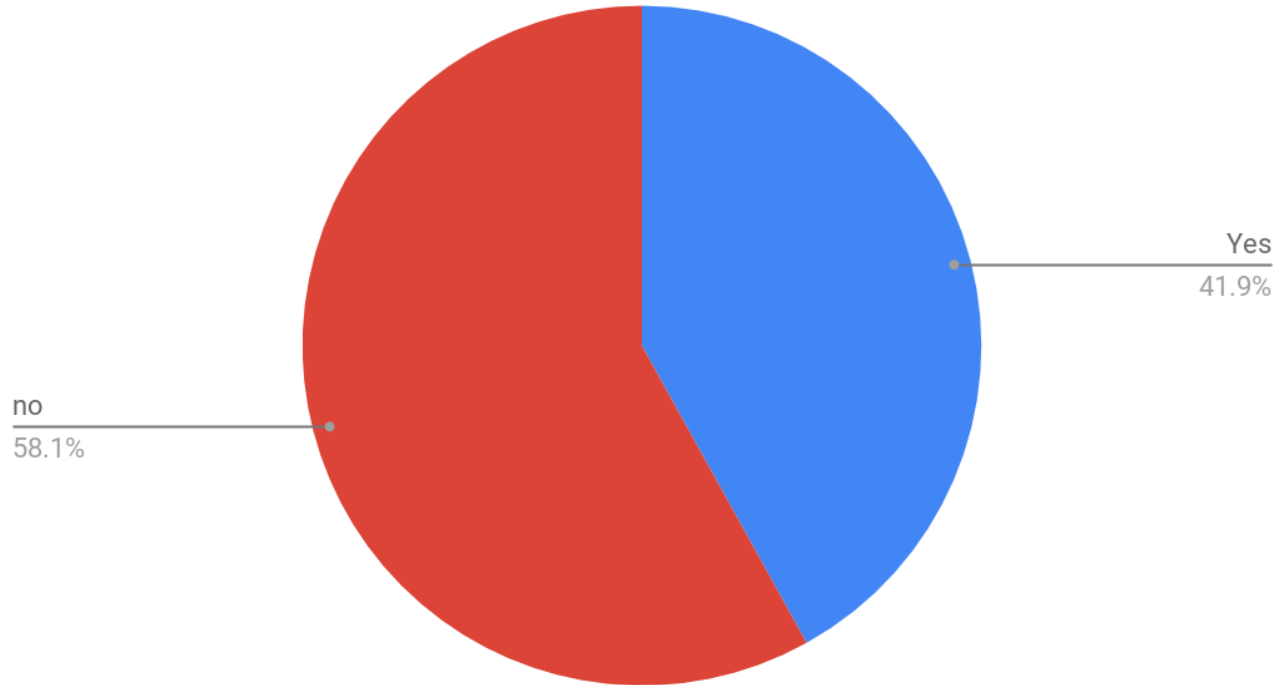
What division of Law enforcement best describes you?



How many years of service do you have in Law Enforcement?



Have you in your Law Enforcement Career ever heard anyone in the field talk about or make suicidal references?



What Does This Mean?

When looking into our survey of Orem P.D.'s 82 sworn officers we found the following:

- The majority of officers who took the survey knew somebody in the law enforcement field who committed suicide.
- Officers who have heard other officers making suicidal references were in the minority.
- The majority of Officers surveyed had at one point or another questioned if being a police officer was the right career for them because of a stressful situation.
- Most officers that were surveyed feel they have enough information to help a fellow officer in need.
- Around 50% of the officers surveyed felt they would not be receptive to help.

How Can Departments Improve?

- More training
- Getting rid of stigmas attached to receiving help
- Annual Check-ups
- Hold yourself accountable along with others around you
- Participating in surveys like this one to gain a better understanding of your situation

Conclusion

We found that officers feel more prepared to help others, but that will only accomplish so much because only some of the officers surveyed would be receptive to help. This survey has given us much needed in-site on the topic of police suicides and mental health awareness. We also would like to recognise Chief Gary Giles for allowing us to survey his officers and for his commitment to his officers overall quality of life.

Work Cited

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