Overcoming Barriers to Cycling in Low Income and Minority Communities

Lynn Weigand, PhD, Director
Initiative for Bicycle and Pedestrian Innovation
Portland State University
The Community Cycling Center
Research on Cycling

Examines Environmental Factors
Evaluates Facilities and Programs
What We Know (or Don’t) About Cyclists

• More likely to be male, younger
• Lack understanding of cycling behavior
• Little to no research on cycling among women, low-income and minority communities
Multnomah County Population

Population of Multnomah County, 1990 to 2008

- **White**
  - 1990: 85.2%
  - 2000: 76.5%
  - 2008: 73.7%

- **People of Color**
  - 1990: 14.8%
  - 2008: 26.3%
Project Goal

Understand cultural and socio-economic barriers to bicycling within communities of color
Program Design Model

- Public Policy
  - National, state, local laws
- Community
  - Relationships among organizations
- Organizational
  - Organizations, social institutions
- Interpersonal
  - Family, friends, social networks
- Individual
  - Knowledge, attitudes, skills
Identified Partners

• Hacienda Community Development
• Housing Authority of Portland: New Columbia
Common Themes: Good News

- Bicycling for Health
- Riding with a Group
Cost

I don’t have a bike: they cost too much

African American 28.57%
Hispanic 61.90%
African 73.68%

“Bikes get thrown away because we don’t know where to get parts. In Somalia we would fix everything. Here they get thrown away.”

Total Group

60.42% Concerned
39.58% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Bikes are expensive
- Don’t know how to repair
- Don’t know where to take bikes for repair
- Repairs are expensive
- Unaware of resources for low cost repairs and tool use
Riding

I want to ride with my kids

- African American: 14.29%
- Hispanic: 63.16%
- African: 47.62%

Total Group

- 47.91% Concerned
- 52.09% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Difficult to do with children
- Fear of falling
- Fear of the police
- Lack of knowledge about laws, rights
- Lack of knowledge about safe routes
Riding

I need to learn how to ride

- African American: 14.29%
- Hispanic: 19.05%
- African: 57.89%

Total Group

- 33.33% Concerned
- 66.67% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Difficult to do with children
- Fear of falling
- Fear of the police
- Lack of knowledge about laws, rights
- Lack of knowledge about safe routes
Riding

I would like to ride with a group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>57.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>63.16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Group

- 52.08% Concerned
- 47.82% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Difficult to do with children
- Fear of falling
- Fear of the police
- Lack of knowledge about laws, rights
- Lack of knowledge about safe routes
Safety

I don’t have safe bike storage

- African American: 28.57%
- Hispanic: 57.14%
- African: 15.79%

Total Group

- 35.42% Concerned
- 64.58% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Fear of danger from moving vehicles
- Don’t know how to put helmets on correctly
- Have questions about laws and insurance
- Don’t know how to avoid trouble spots on bike

“We could not leave our bikes out on the patio where there is room because they would get stolen.”
Safety

I don’t feel safe in my neighborhood

African American
0%

Hispanic
61.90%

African
10.53%

Total Group

31.25% Concerned
68.75% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Fear of danger from moving vehicles
- Don’t know how to put helmets on correctly
- Have questions about laws and insurance
- Don’t know how to avoid trouble spots on bike

“There is no safe place for the kids in the neighborhood”
Safety

Concerned about being pulled over by police

- African American: 0%
- Hispanic: 42.86%
- African: 0%

Total Group

18.75% Concerned
81.25% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Fear of danger from moving vehicles
- Don’t know how to put helmets on correctly
- Have questions about laws and insurance
- Don’t know how to avoid trouble spots on bike
Safety

Drivers are going to be hostile toward me

- African American: 100%
- Hispanic: 0%
- African: 0%

“I don’t feel well informed about the rules of the road and the rights of bicyclists. I am not sure where to go to learn bike laws?”

Total Group

- 14.58% Concerned
- 85.42% Not a concern

Focus Group Comments

- Fear of danger from moving vehicles
- Don’t know how to put helmets on correctly
- Have questions about laws and insurance
- Don’t know how to avoid trouble spots on bike
Solutions and Programs
Thank You!

www.ibpi.usp.pdx.edu
www.communitycyclingcenter.org