

OVERVIEW

Northspan’s Welcoming Community has partnered with international humanitarian nonprofit Nonviolent Peaceforce for the Rural MN Community Safety Project. This collaborative effort, with additional support from the Department of Transformation and Voices for Rural Resilience, is aimed at enhancing safety, well-being, and security in two rural communities in northeast Minnesota.

The two northeast Minnesota communities selected for the Rural MN Community Safety Project include:

- The Cloquet area, inclusive of the tribal lands of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- **The Grand Marais area, inclusive of the tribal lands of the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa**

As part of the project’s initial sensing phase, a community-wide survey was launched to gather input from each community. The survey asked community members to share insights on their community connections and perceptions, feelings of personal safety, knowledge of community initiatives around safety, and select pieces of information pertaining to identity and demographics. Responses will be used to identify challenges to safety, opportunities to promote physical and psychological safety, and key action areas for de-escalating potential threats of violence in each community.

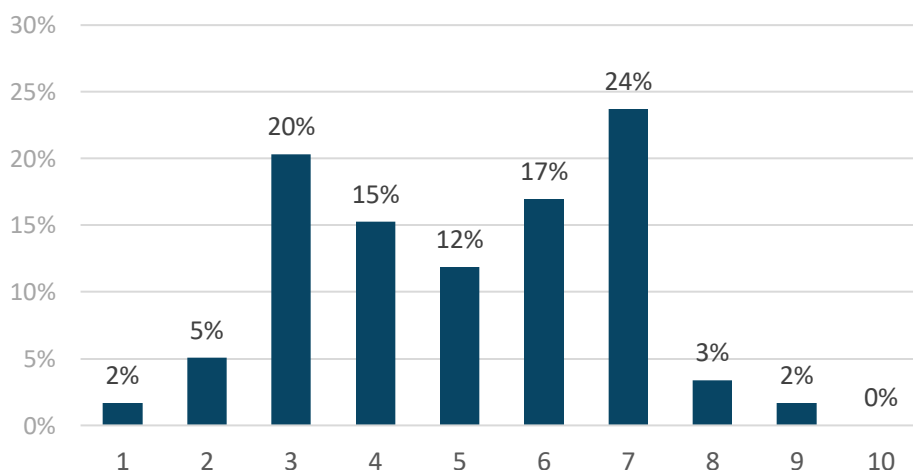
The Grand Marais area community-wide survey was distributed via SurveyMonkey and was open from March 11, 2024, through June 10, 2024. All responses are reported anonymously and in aggregate.

A total of 87 participants engaged with the survey. Respondents were first asked a screening question on whether they live or work in the Grand Marais / Grand Portage Reservation area community. Of the 87 responses, 2 participants (2%) responded ‘no’ and were thus disqualified from continuing the survey due to their lack of direct affiliation with the community, while 85 participants (98%) indicated ‘yes’ and were directed to the full survey.

SECTION 1 OF 4: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS & PERCEPTIONS

The first section of the survey aimed to determine community members’ perceptions of existing tensions in the Grand Marais area. Additionally, it sought to establish participants’ sense of connection to their community through questions related to “third places”, a concept that refers to places outside of home and work where people gather to exchange ideas, have a good time, and build relationships in the community.

How would you rate the level of tensions in your community on a scale of 1 (no tensions) to 10 (very high tensions)?



Average Tension
Level Rating:
5.03

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COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY SUMMARY

What kinds of tensions have you noticed?

Participants were asked to select up to 5 responses from the following options that best represent the types of tension they have seen in the Grand Marais area community. Results are displayed below by the percentage that each response was selected:

<i>Type of Tension</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Economic inequality	57%
Political polarization	55%
New vs. long-term resident conflicts	55%
Substance abuse or addiction	52%
Mental health issues	50%
Tourist or part-time resident conflicts	50%
Environmental concerns or disputes	41%
Values and ideological differences	36%
LGBTQIA2S+ discrimination	33%
Spreading misinformation	33%
Bullying	29%
Cultural differences	28%
Racial or ethnic tensions	28%
Gender-based disparities	22%
Intergenerational or age-related differences	19%
Other (please specify)	14%
Law enforcement and community relations	9%
Perceptions of individual worth	3%
Religious differences	3%
Violent crime	2%

Respondents who selected “Other” specified they have noticed tensions relating to hospital concerns, a shortage of affordable housing, school choice, government over-regulation, and othering.

When have you seen these tensions happen and/or escalate?

Responses to this open-ended question were clustered by overall theme, with some responses containing multiple themes, and are displayed below based on the percentage of frequency each theme appeared:

<i>Occurrence or Escalation of Tensions</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Social media and online community forums	44%
Day-to-day conversations	19%
Local media and news outlets	19%
School settings	17%
Local politics and public meetings (e.g., County Board, City Council)	15%
Unaddressed substance use and/or mental health issues	13%
Workplace settings	10%
Cultural awareness events (e.g., Pride)	10%
Hospital politics and mask mandates	10%

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Rallies, protests, and demonstrations	10%
Stress from housing shortage and economic inequalities	8%
When changes are proposed or introduced in the community	8%
Exclusion and conflicts between new and long-term residents	6%
Gradual escalation over time	6%
Disrespect for Indigenous culture and Treaty Rights	4%
Election cycles and political polarization	4%
Local businesses in the community	4%

How have tensions in your community impacted you personally?

Participants’ responses to this open-ended question were categorized based on general theme, with some responses spanning more than one theme, and are shown below by the percentage that each theme occurred:

<i>Personal Impacts of Community Tensions</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Increased general concern for others	27%
No significant personal impact	20%
Feelings of fear, intimidation, or uneasiness	14%
Increased concern for children	14%
Discrimination or limited opportunities	11%
Caution in voicing opinions or opening up	11%
No longer feeling at home as a long-time resident	11%
Acting as a moderator or feeling caught in the middle	9%
Harassment or threats	9%
Social exclusion	9%
Not feeling heard or respected	7%
Not feeling welcome as a new resident or “outsider”	7%
Emotional or physical manifestations of stress	7%
Self-isolation or avoiding places in the community	7%
Disengagement (e.g., news, social media)	5%
Substance abuse	5%

Which of the following best represents your third place(s), where you feel a sense of community and choose to spend your time away from home and work?

Next, participants were asked to select up to 3 responses from the following options that best represented their third place(s), with results displayed below by the percentage that each response was selected:

<i>Third Place(s)</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Park or outdoor recreation area	55%
I don’t have a third place	25%
Coffee shop or café	23%
Bar or pub	20%
Gym or sports facility	20%
Other (please specify)	20%

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School or community education facility	16%
Church or other place of worship	13%
Art gallery, studio, or maker space	11%
Library or bookstore	11%
Retail shop or store	7%
Clubhouse (VFW, Moose Lodge, American Legion, etc.)	0%

Participants who selected “Other” specified third places including homes of family and friends, the co-op grocery store, Death Café [a meeting space to openly discuss death-related topics], the post office, attending events for their child, and places outside of Cook County.

Why did you choose your above third place(s)?

Responses to this open-ended question were grouped by overall theme, with some responses containing multiple themes, and are shown below based on the percentage of frequency each theme appeared:

<i>Reason for Choosing Third Place(s)</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Connection to nature	24%
Force of habit or “it’s just where I go”	19%
Alignment with interests/lifestyle	16%
Feeling welcome and accepted	14%
Comfort	11%
Connecting with people who have shared values	11%
Family-friendliness	11%
Proximity/convenience	11%
Physical or mental wellbeing	8%
Interaction with family and friends	8%
Peaceful place to relax and unwind	8%
Safety	5%
Supporting local businesses	5%
Entertainment	3%

SECTION 2 OF 4: PERSONAL SAFETY

This next section assessed respondents’ feelings of personal safety in the Grand Marais area community. It sought to evaluate their perceptions of both physical safety (accessibility and the safety of one’s body) and psychological safety (emotional well-being and the belief that one can speak up without risk of punishment or humiliation).

What does safety mean to you?

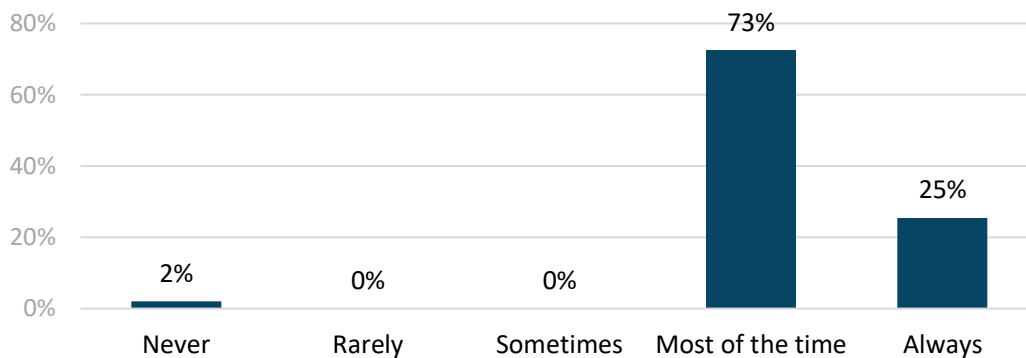
For this open-ended question, participants' responses were sorted based on their theme, with certain responses covering more than one theme, and are displayed below by the percentage of frequency each theme occurred:

<i>Personal Definition of Safety</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Freedom from fear and anxiety	67%
Protection from violence and physical harm	54%
Ability to be yourself and move around freely	48%

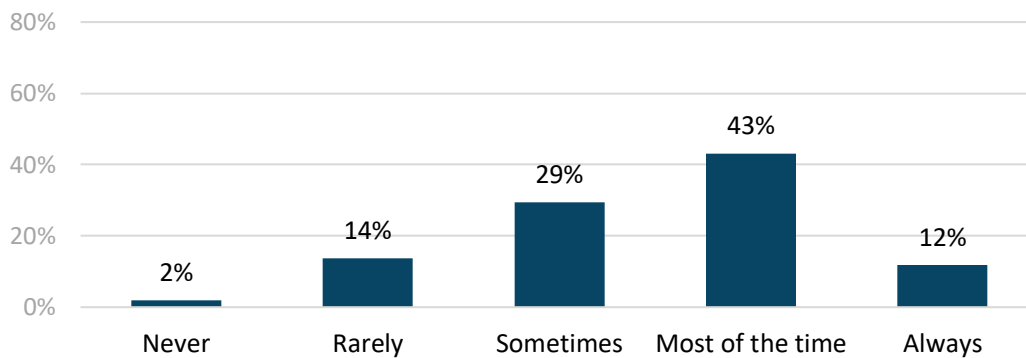
**GRAND MARAIS AREA | RURAL MN COMMUNITY SAFETY PROJECT
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Protection from mental and emotional harm	42%
Sense of community and belonging	29%
Security and stability	19%
Trust and respect	17%
Protection from environmental hazards	15%
Fulfillment of basic needs	10%
Protection of property and belongings	10%
Crime and/or substance use prevention	6%

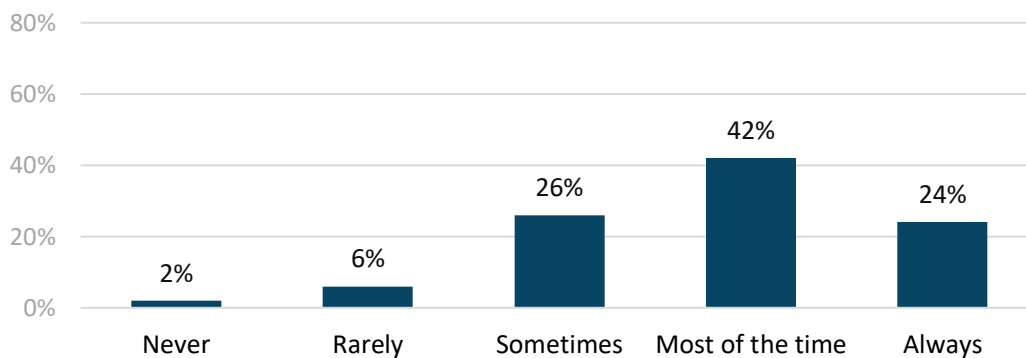
How often do you feel physically safe in your daily activities?



How often do you feel psychologically safe in your daily activities?



Do you feel comfortable going to new places you hear about in the community?

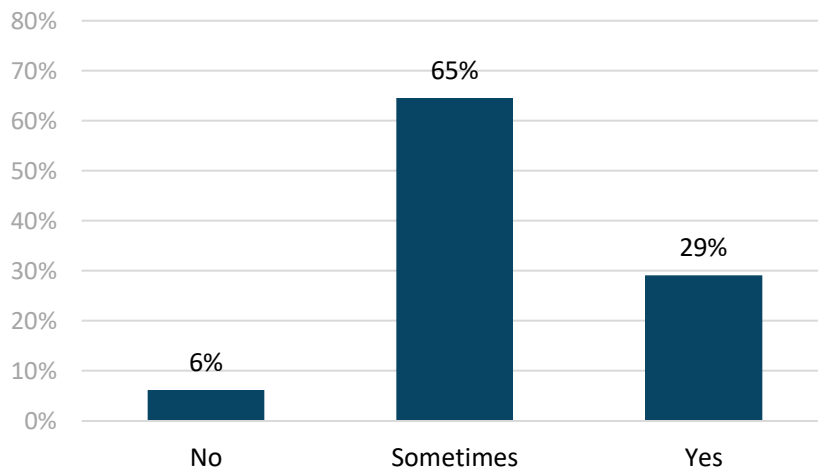


When you feel unsafe, how do you deal with that feeling?

Responses to this open-ended question were sorted into the following high-level categories based on their overall theme, with some responses covering more than one theme, and are displayed below based on the percentage of frequency that each theme appeared:

<i>Response When Feeling Unsafe</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Avoidance or staying home	22%
Leave or remove themselves from the situation	22%
Analyze and reflect on the issue	20%
Seek backup or support	17%
Situational awareness and adaptation	17%
I don't feel unsafe	13%
Planning and prevention	13%
De-escalation or communication skills	11%
Coping or self-soothing mechanisms	11%
Unsure or difficulties handling feeling unsafe	11%
Defensive or precautionary measures	7%
Power through	7%

Do you believe you have the tools to de-escalate an unsafe situation?



SECTION 3 OF 4: COMMUNITY PULSE

Next, the survey sought to map out participants' existing knowledge of current initiatives and efforts around safety in the Grand Marais area community, as well as areas of interest for further learning.

What do you know about what is already being done (initiatives, organizations, individual efforts, etc.) to promote safety in your community?

Responses to this open-ended question were grouped based on similarities or sameness. The clustered responses are shown below by the percentage of frequency each safety promotion initiative, organization, and/or effort was mentioned, with certain participants including more than one answer in their response:

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COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY SUMMARY

<i>Initiative, Organization, or Effort Promoting Safety</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Nothing or not much	31%
Formal public safety services (e.g., law enforcement, public health, EMS, social services, etc.)	29%
Violence Prevention Center (VPC)	24%
Pride, LGBTQIA+ programs	18%
School-based initiatives (e.g., anti-bullying initiatives, safe routes to school, youth programming)	14%
Individual neighborhood and community efforts	12%
Mental health supports (e.g., support groups, coordinated crisis response pilot program)	10%
Restorative Justice program	8%
Bridge-building with Grand Portage	6%
Harm reduction initiatives (e.g., Narcan training)	6%
Diversity Coalitions and Racial Justice initiatives	6%
Local business welcoming efforts	4%
Local media (e.g., WTIP's One Small Step initiative)	4%
Active Living Pedestrian Plans, Park Master Plans, infrastructure upgrades	2%
Inclusion events at the library	2%
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) trainings	2%

Who, or what, are you most curious about in your community regarding safety?

For this open-ended question, participants' responses were categorized based on their topic or theme, with some responses spanning multiple topics, and are displayed below by the percentage of frequency that each appeared:

<i>Topic of Curiosity Regarding Community Safety</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Hearing an overall broader range of experiences and perspectives	25%
Nothing or not sure	23%
Increased communication about current safety initiatives	15%
Law enforcement and public resources (e.g., response times, capacity, etc.)	15%
How to help others in the community	10%
Children in abuse or neglect situations	8%
Clear facts/data about crime and safety issues	8%
Youth experiences	8%
Drug trafficking	5%
Tribal experiences and relations	5%
Disability awareness	3%
Third space concept	3%
Tourism and visitor/development organizations	3%
Visa workers	3%

SECTION 4 OF 4: DEMOGRAPHICS & IDENTITY

In the last section of the survey, respondents were asked to optionally share certain information about their identity and demographics to provide further insight into Grand Marais area community member characteristics.

What is your age?

<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Under 18	0%
18-24	0%
25-34	4%
35-44	39%
45-54	4%
55-64	27%
65-74	24%
75-84	2%
85+	0%

What race or ethnicity best describes you?

<i>Race or Ethnicity</i>	<i>Percent</i>
White or Caucasian	92%
Indigenous, Native American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native	4%
Black or African American	2%
Hispanic or Latinx	2%
Two or more races	2%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0%
Other (please specify)	0%

Are you a member or descendant of a Native Nation?

<i>Native Nation Member or Descendant</i>	<i>Percent</i>
No	91%
Yes	9%

If yes, which Native Nation(s)?

<i>Native Nation</i>	<i>Percent</i>
N/A	87%
Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	6%
Other (please specify)	6%
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	0%
Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	0%
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	0%
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	0%
Red Lake Nation	0%
White Earth Nation	0%

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Lower Sioux Indian Community	0%
Prairie Island Indian Community	0%
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community	0%
Upper Sioux Community, Pezihutazizi Oyate	0%

Respondents who chose “Other” identified as members or descendants of the Cherokee and Seneca Nations.

What is your approximate annual household income?

<i>Annual Household Income</i>	<i>Percent</i>
\$0 - \$24,999	4%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	21%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	23%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	17%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	9%
\$150,000 - \$174,999	11%
\$175,000 - \$199,999	4%
\$200,000 and up	2%

Do you identify as a veteran?

<i>Veteran</i>	<i>Percent</i>
No	98%
Yes	2%

Do you identify as a person living with a disability?

<i>Person Living with a Disability</i>	<i>Percent</i>
No	90%
Yes	10%

Which of the following best represents your gender identity?

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Woman	84%
Man	16%
Non-binary or genderqueer	0%
Agender	0%
Other (please specify)	0%

Do you identify as transgender?

<i>Transgender</i>	<i>Percent</i>
No	100%
I’m not sure	0%
Yes	0%

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Which of the following best represents your sexual orientation?

<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Heterosexual or straight	82%
Queer	4%
Asexual	2%
Bisexual	2%
Gay	2%
Pansexual	2%
I'm not sure	2%
Other (please specify)	2%
Lesbian	0%

The one survey participant who indicated "Other" specified "Who cares" in their response.