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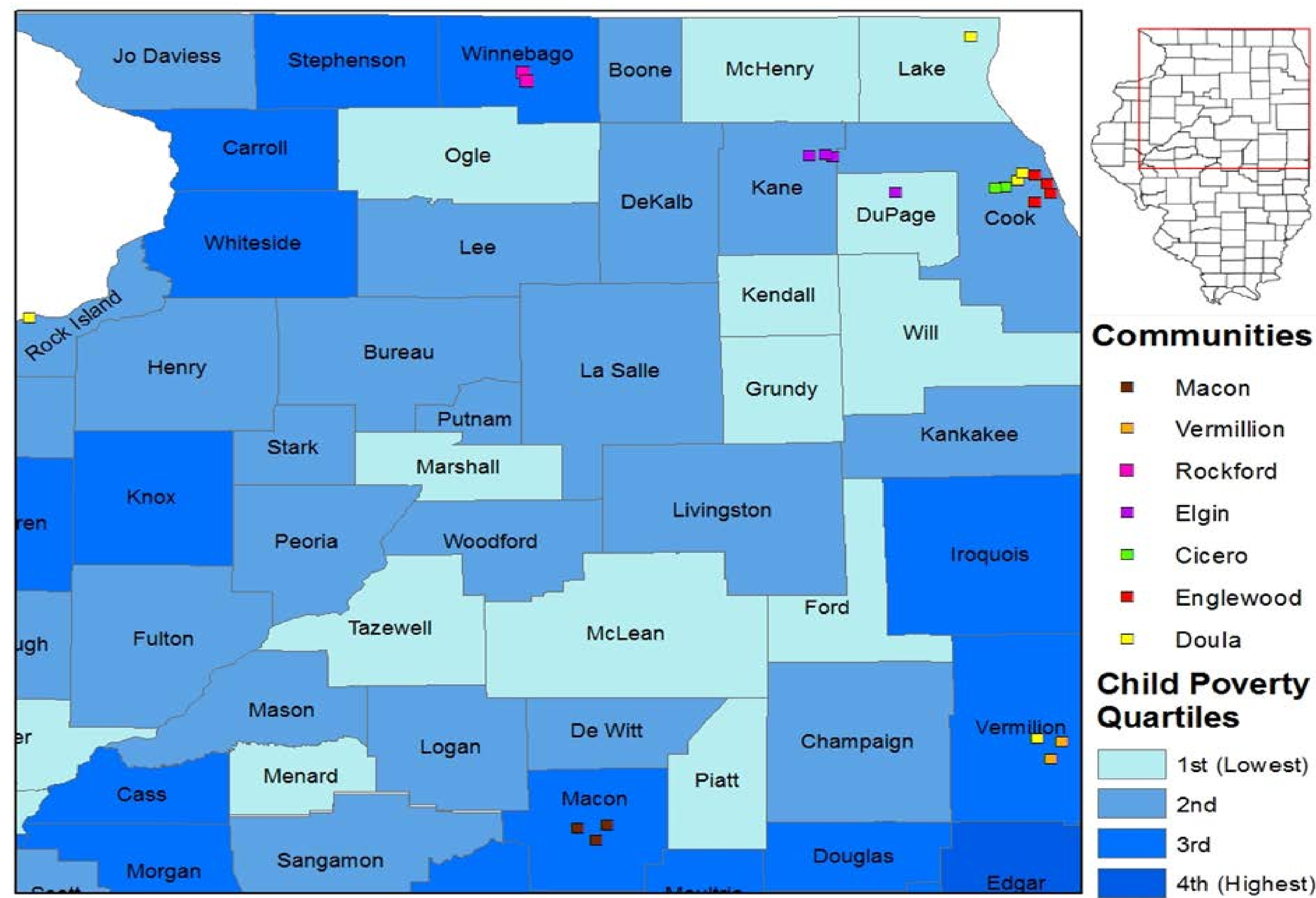
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²Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development

³The Ounce of Prevention Fund

The Problem

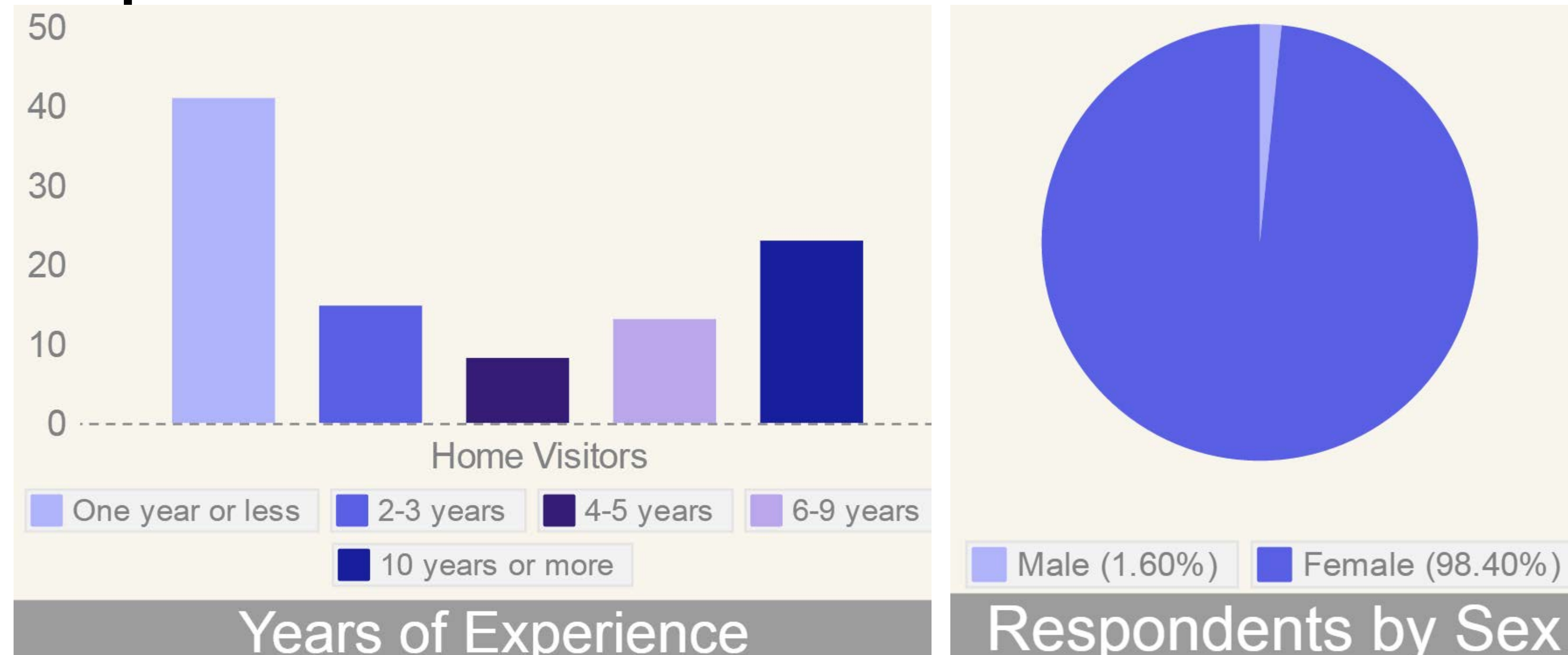
Illinois MIECHV operates in 13 high-risk communities, which include many highly publicized violent neighborhoods.



The Survey

To gain a better understanding of home visitor perceptions of risk and unsafe experiences, as well as how to better address safety concerns, we surveyed home visitors about safety in 2015.

Respondents

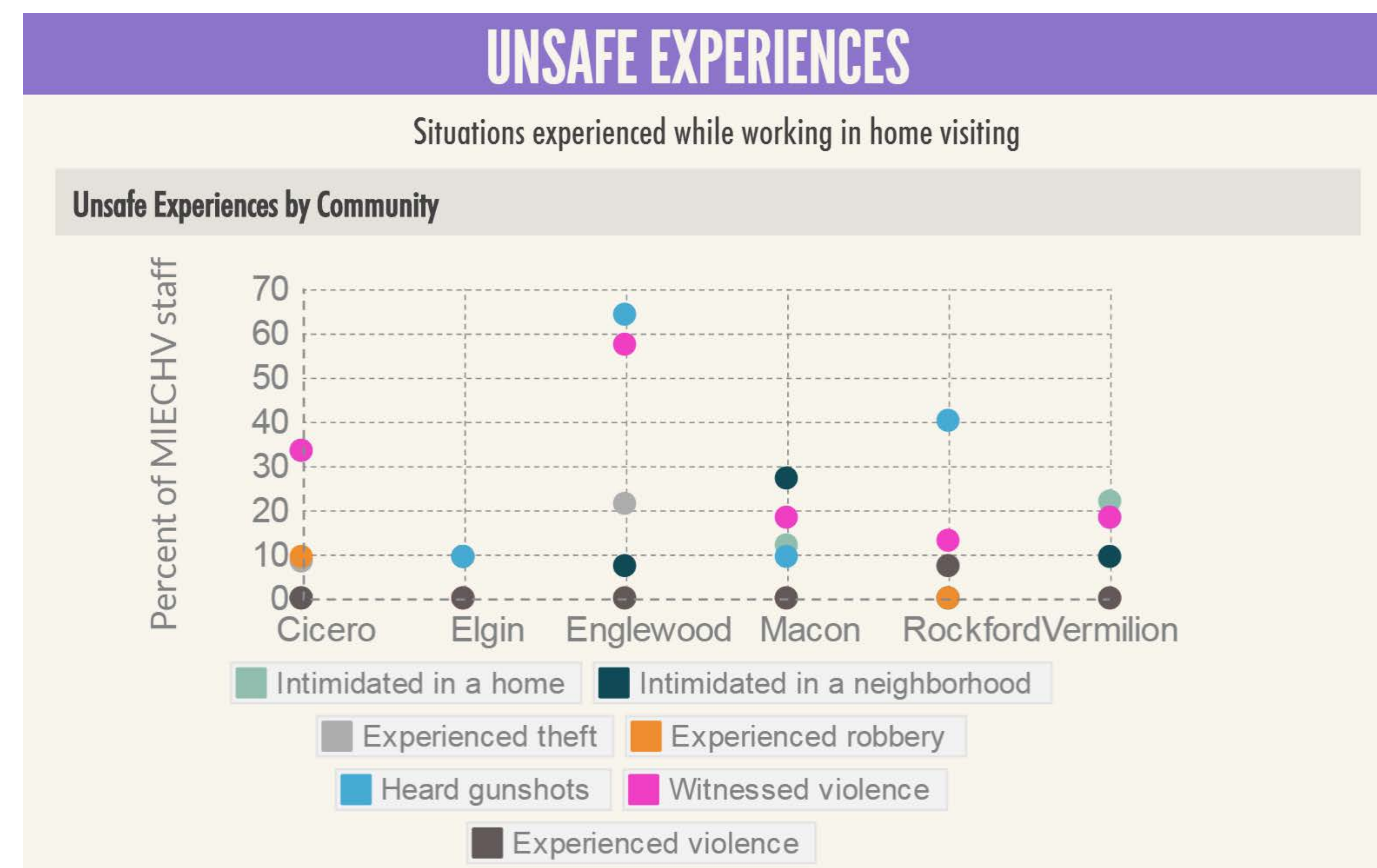


Results

Statewide, home visitors report high levels of concern about potential threats in both the homes and neighborhoods in which they work.

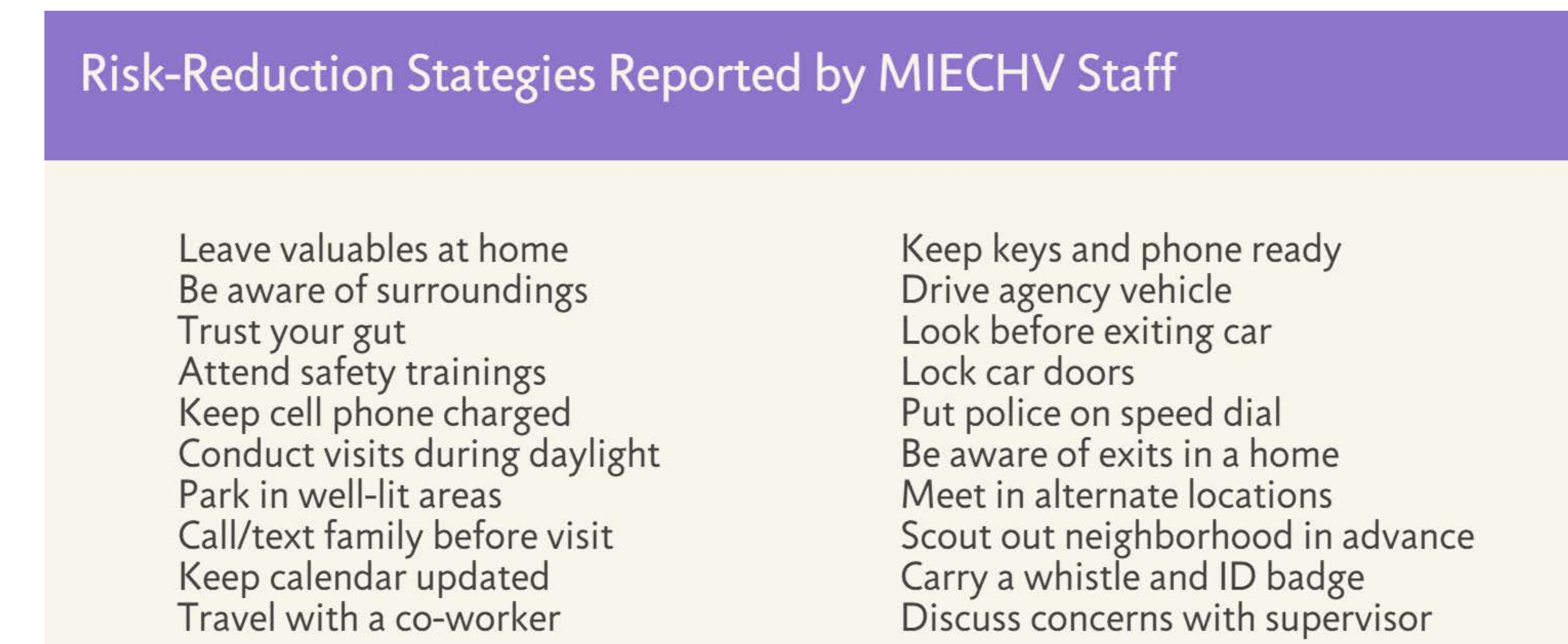


While home visitors reported high levels of concern about safety, it is encouraging that they did not report high levels of unsafe experiences compared to their perceptions of risk.



Risk-Reduction Strategies

Home visitors reported practicing a wide range of safety best practices and attending trainings held by their agencies.



However, many home visitors reported that their agencies lacked safety policies, held trainings infrequently, and had substandard cultures of safety.

- Fewer than half of agencies provided cell phones to home visitors or had a standing safety committee
- 30% of agencies did not provide annual safety trainings
- 15% of agencies did not have written safety policies

Much of the responsibility to develop and implement safety policies appears to fall onto the individual home visiting staff.

Follow Up

Illinois MIECHV created a website with safety best practices, trainings, and safety-related resources:
<http://igrowillinois.org/safety-home-visiting/>

Next Steps

- **Further research** is needed to identify safety-related opportunities and challenges on a national level and to address home visitor safety without providing disincentives for engaging with families.
- Home visiting funders, models and agencies ultimately must be responsible for **ensuring that this research is diffused into practice** in order for individual home visitors and the families they serve to benefit.