

How We Measure Our Impact On Community Safety



**NEIGHBOURHOOD
WATCH
AUSTRALASIA**

Impact Report 2024

Introduction

Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHWA) is committed to enhancing community safety by delivering national initiatives and programs centred around evidenced-based crime prevention practices. This report outlines how NHWA measures the impact of these initiatives using quantitative and qualitative data collection, academic collaborations and community feedback mechanisms.

1. QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHWA) collects and analyses numerical data, such as crime statistics and survey results, to evaluate the success and impact of its programs in a clear and measurable way.

Crime Statistics Analysis

- Before implementing a program, NHWA identifies the location by analysing crime hot spots nationally, doing so ensures that resources are allocated efficiently to areas where they can have the greatest impact.
- To assess the programs' impact and to ensure continual improvement, NHWA collects and analyses crime statistics from police and other data sources before and after the programs' implementation.

Independent Academic Surveys

- Conducted frequently to understand community perceptions and experiences about NHWA programs and identify areas for improvement.
- Collaborations with academic institutions including The University of Queensland, Griffith University and Queensland University of Technology aim to generate evidence-based insights and provide data-driven recommendations for program improvement and scalability.
- Use of experimental designs including pre and post-program surveys to evaluate impact.

“Neighbourhood Watch is a program that works and is associated with a reduction in crime of between 16 and 26%”

Research findings presented by
Professor Lorraine Mazerolle AC FASSA
School of Social Science
The University of Queensland



2019 Neighbourhood Watch Queensland (NHWQ) Community Capacity Survey (conducted by The University of Queensland):

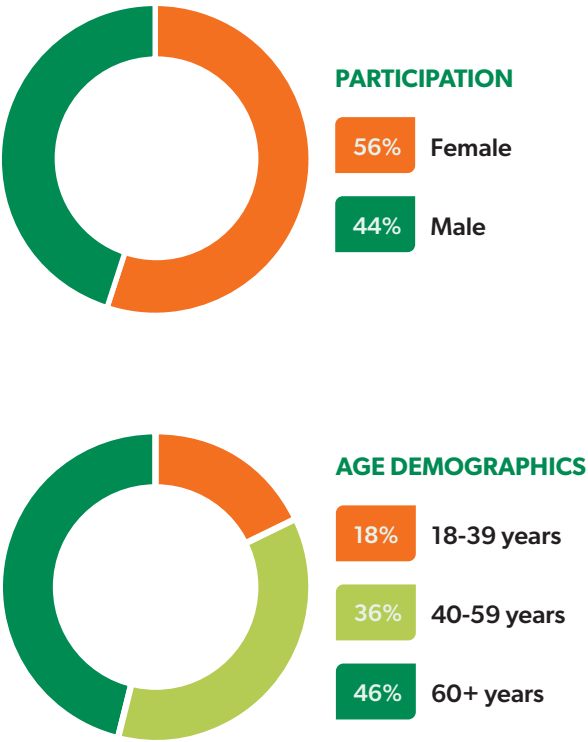
- The NHWQ Survey overlaid the 2012 Australian Community Capacity Study, a multimillion-dollar project funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) led by Wickes and Mazerolle, studying the life course of urban neighbourhoods.
- Examined long-term effects of community crime prevention efforts among NHWQ volunteers compared to a sample of Brisbane residents.

Engagement and Motivation:

- › Active NHWQ members are more aware and proactive about crime issues, demonstrating the benefits of Neighbourhood Watch (NHW).
- › NHWQ members reported moderate to high collective efficacy, slightly higher on average than Brisbane residents in the 2012 Australian Community Capacity Study.

Recommendations:

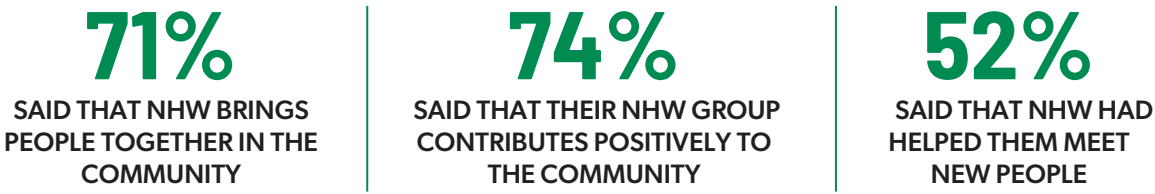
- › Create a centralised contact list and clear instructions on how to become a member.
- › Develop an online library of resources for NHW groups to utilise nationally.
- › Incorporate the community's role in reporting crime and disorder in campaigns and educational material.



Crime Concerns and Safety Perceptions



Enhancing Community Cohesion



1. QUANTITATIVE MEASURES - continued

2023 National Secure Your Home Day (NSYHD) Survey (conducted by The University of Queensland):

- National Secure Your Home Day (NSYHD) participants shared their knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and engagement towards crime prevention.

Crime Concerns and Safety Perceptions:

- › **Cybercrime** is the **most frequently experienced** crime among participants but is **underreported** to police.

Recommendations:

- › **Increase promotion** nationally through platforms like YouTube and partnerships with renowned brands.
- › **Develop a mobile app** for the home security checklist and create a promotional jingle.
- › **Translate NSYHD materials** into common multi cultural languages spoken in Australia (e.g. Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese and Vietnamese).
- › **Continue and extend the Target Hardening Support Program**, especially in areas with high rates of home burglary.



Engagement and Motivation



25%

PERCEIVE CRIME LEVELS IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD AS HIGH OR VERY HIGH



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NSYHD HOME SECURITY CHECKLIST INCREASED THE LIKELIHOOD OF PARTICIPANTS MAKING CHANGES TO THEIR HOME SECURITY BY

3.5 x



INDIVIDUALS WHOSE CHILDREN PARTICIPATED IN NSYHD ACTIVITIES WERE

1.7 x

MORE LIKELY TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

1. QUANTITATIVE MEASURES - continued

2024 Target Hardening Support Program (THSP) Survey (conducted by The University of Queensland):

- The THSP provides financial rebates for home security improvements, with the aim to significantly reduce repeat victimisation and burglary rates.
- Based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) evidence-based practices.

Engagement and Motivation:

- › The funding enabled burglary victims to take immediate action to target harden their homes against future opportunistic property crime.

Recommendations:

- › Increase visibility in the community in general and for the program.
- › Encourage police to verbally explain the rebate and the benefits of target hardening to victims.
- › Keep in contact with rebate recipients after the program to encourage ongoing engagement with NHW.
- › Review and refine the eligibility criteria to expand the program's reach.

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The Police are the Public and the Public are the Police

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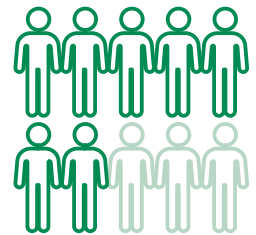
Sir Robert Peel, 1829

Crime Concerns and Safety Perceptions



100%

REPORTED THAT THEY FELT SUPPORTED AND ACKNOWLEDGED AS VICTIMS OF PROPERTY CRIME



70%

OF PARTICIPANTS FELT SAFER AFTER INSTALLING SECURITY MEASURES WITH THE REBATE



60%

OF PARTICIPANTS WERE POSITIVELY INFLUENCED TO INSTALL TARGET HARDENING MEASURES AT THEIR PROPERTY BECAUSE OF THE REBATE. THIS SUGGESTS THEY MAY NOT HAVE CONSIDERED CHANGES WITHOUT THE INCENTIVE

2. QUALITATIVE MEASURES

Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHW) gathers and reviews qualitative data from the community, such as feedback and case studies, to understand their experiences, behaviours, and perceptions. This provides insight into whether the program has made a positive and measurable change.

Community Feedback

- Direct feedback from community members through interviews, surveys and focus groups.
- **Target Hardening Program:**
 - Participants were interviewed to understand their experiences and perceptions.

Case Studies

- Detailed studies in areas with high rates of crime.
- Provides an in-depth understanding of the initiative's impact on local safety and cohesion.
- Highlights successes and challenges in implementing crime prevention strategies.

Participant Quotes: Target Hardening Support Program

"Thanks for the work you do in helping keep our communities safer."
Craig and Phoebe, QLD, June 2024

"Thank you so very much for the reimbursement of \$550, we are so very appreciative of it and thankful for this opportunity! It is just wonderful that Neighbourhood Watch Australasia have offered this program, it will help many people to feel a lot safer in these hard times."

Melissa, QLD, March 2024

"Thank you all so much for all your hard work and dedication implementing the initiative. My family and I are sincerely grateful and appreciate the assistance especially given the difficult financial climate most of us are currently experiencing at the present."

Kellie, QLD, March 2024

"Thank you for supporting us to feel secure in our home..."

Alex, ACT, April 2024

3. EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

An evidence-based approach refers to programs and practices that are proven to be effective through sound research methodology.

- Employ an evidence-based approach to policy and practice overseen by The University of Queensland.
- Involves targeting specific issues, testing interventions, and tracking outcomes.
- Example: Target Hardening Support Program:
 - Piloted in three communities with high rates of home burglary: Toowoomba, QLD; Canberra, ACT; and Perth, WA.
 - Systematically tracked impact on burglary rates and participants' feelings of safety.
 - Based on the successful Locks, Lights, and Line of Sight Program in New Zealand.

4. BUILDING COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) serves as a vital link between communities and the police, empowering residents to take action and fostering a sense of control and ownership over their streets and neighbourhoods.

- A community's ability to unite and work toward common goals is a critical factor in reducing crime.
 - **2019 NHWQ Survey:** Communities with Neighbourhood Watch reported higher levels of collective efficacy and were twice as likely to report crime compared to the general population.
- Initiatives focused on building collective efficacy include:
 - National Secure Your Home Day
 - Target Hardening Support Program
 - Target Hardening Community Information Sessions.

Collective Efficacy



Neighbourhood Watch is Police and Community working together for safer communities.

5. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Continuous improvement is an ongoing process of identifying, analysing, and making incremental improvements to systems, processes, products, or services.

- Continuously improving by **incorporating feedback** from participants and academic findings to adapt and refine initiatives.
- Key findings to be implemented in future initiatives:
 - National Secure Your Home Day
 - › Development of multi-lingual resources and cybercrime advice.
 - Target Hardening Support Program
 - › Incorporate participant suggestions for increasing awareness of the initiative and improving accessibility.

Conclusion

Neighbourhood Watch Australasia (NHW) measures the impact of its initiatives on community safety using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. By leveraging crime statistics, surveys, academic studies, community feedback, and evidence-based practices, NHW ensures its programs are effective and continuously improving. This holistic approach not only enhances community safety but also strengthens community support and cohesion, fostering safer, more resilient communities across Australasia.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH AUSTRALASIA



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