Sanford/Lee County Homelessness Survey Data

Survey Background

Purpose- To gather opinions on homelessness from Sanford and Lee County's citizens. Specifically those not involved with this initiative or homelessness in general.

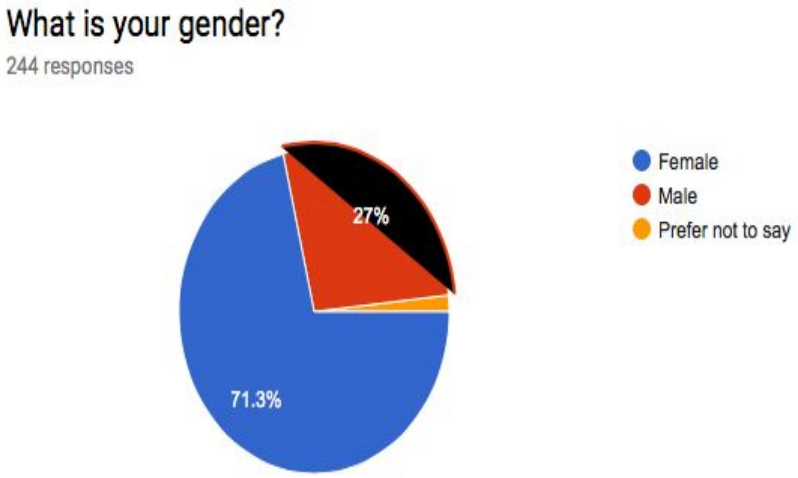
Method- 13 question Google Form survey. The survey went live on June 4th, and participants had two weeks to complete it with the deadline being June 18th. Paper copies were distributed to several local organizations and businesses. An online link was sent through social media and email.

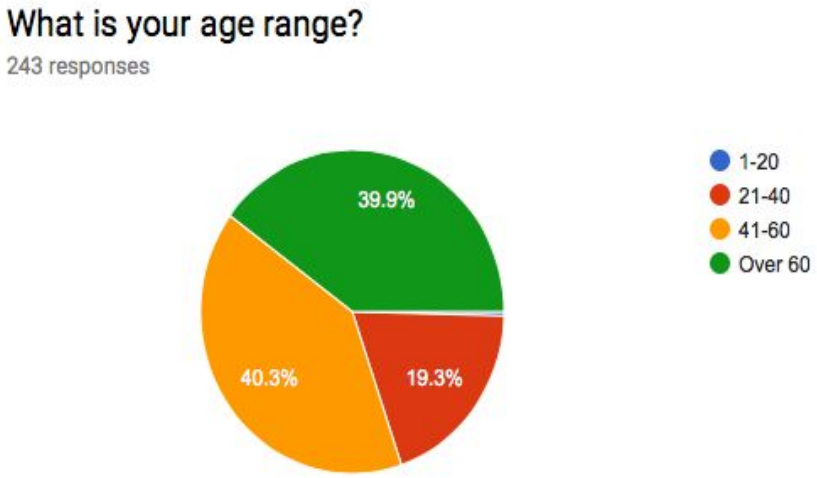
245 total responses to survey- good sign from a small town- shows interest in topic

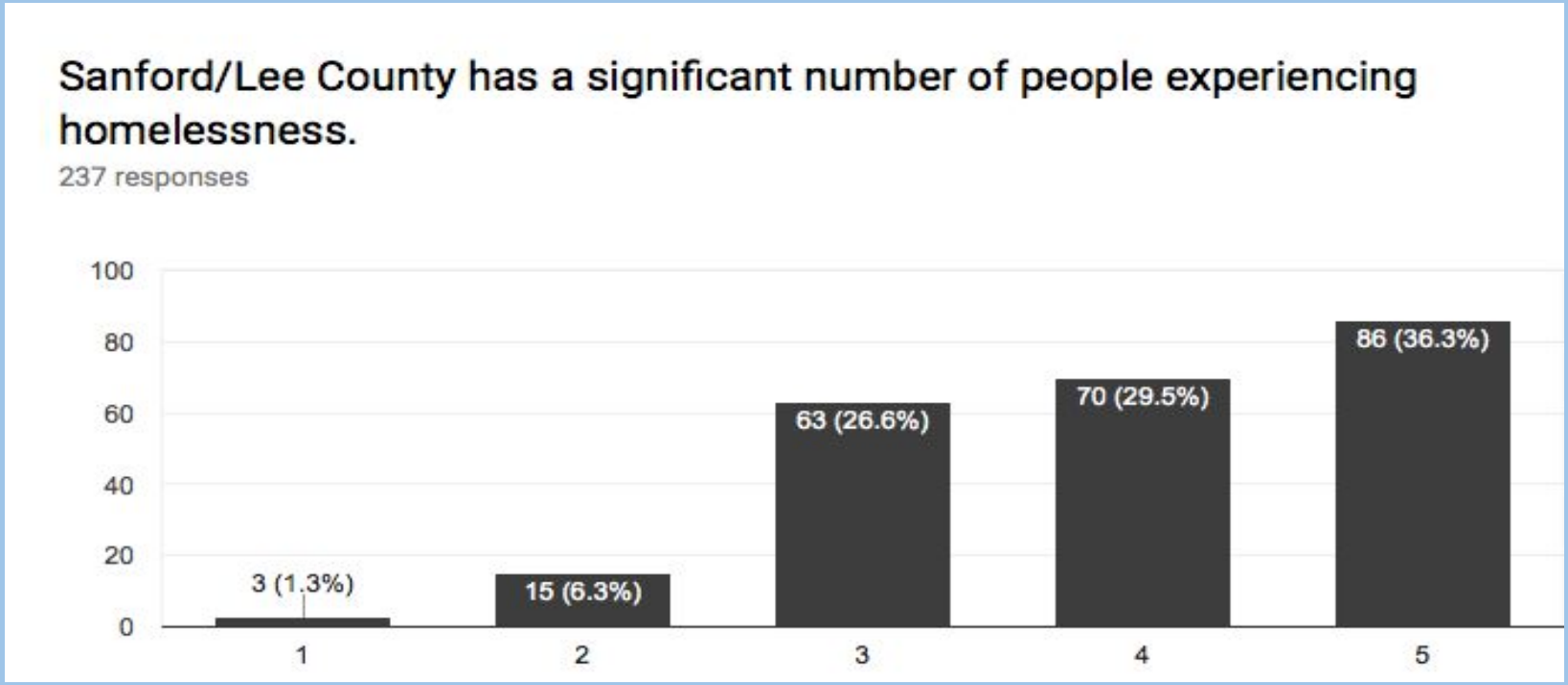
Demographics

Respondents were mostly women (174, 71.3%)

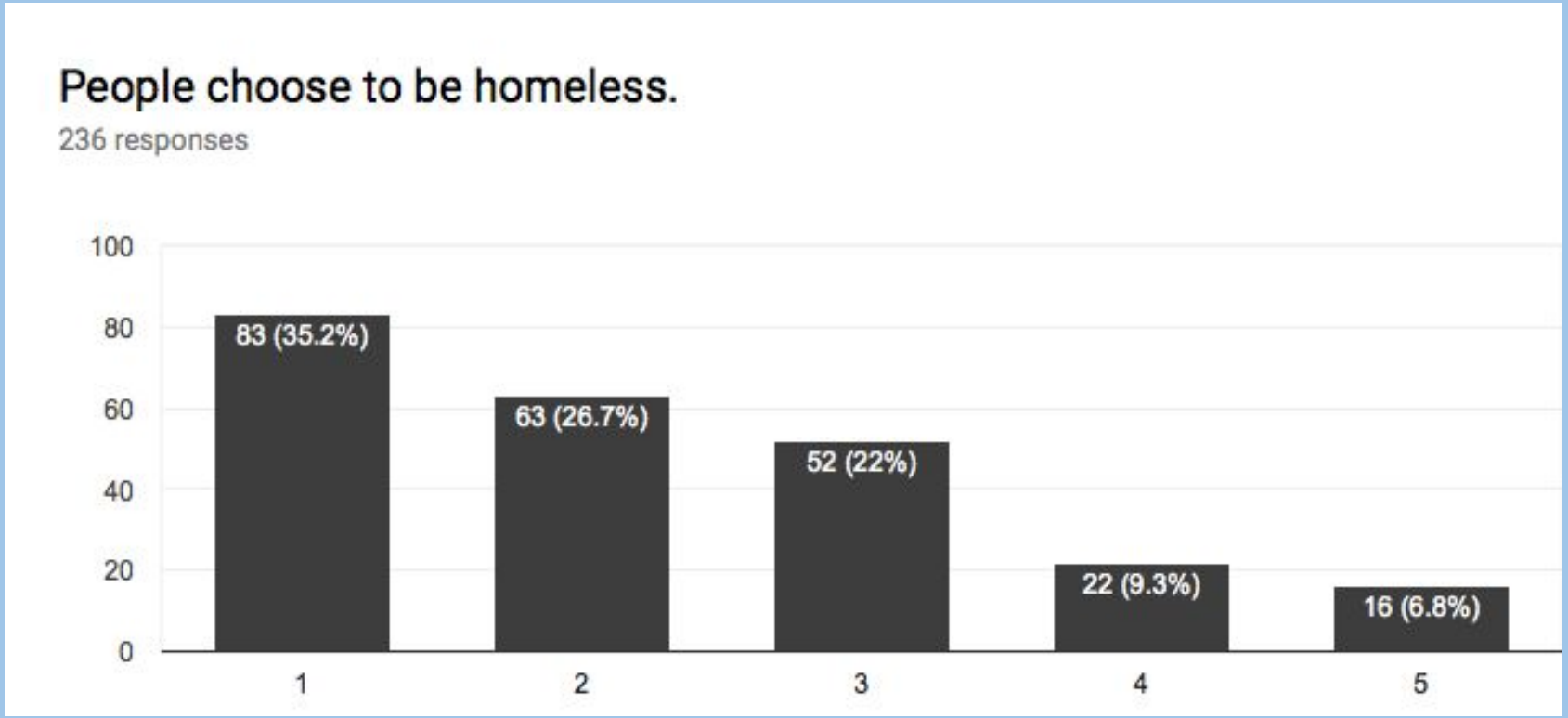
80% of respondents (195) were 40 and older. Was age a factor in how people responded? Would a younger crowd have given different results?



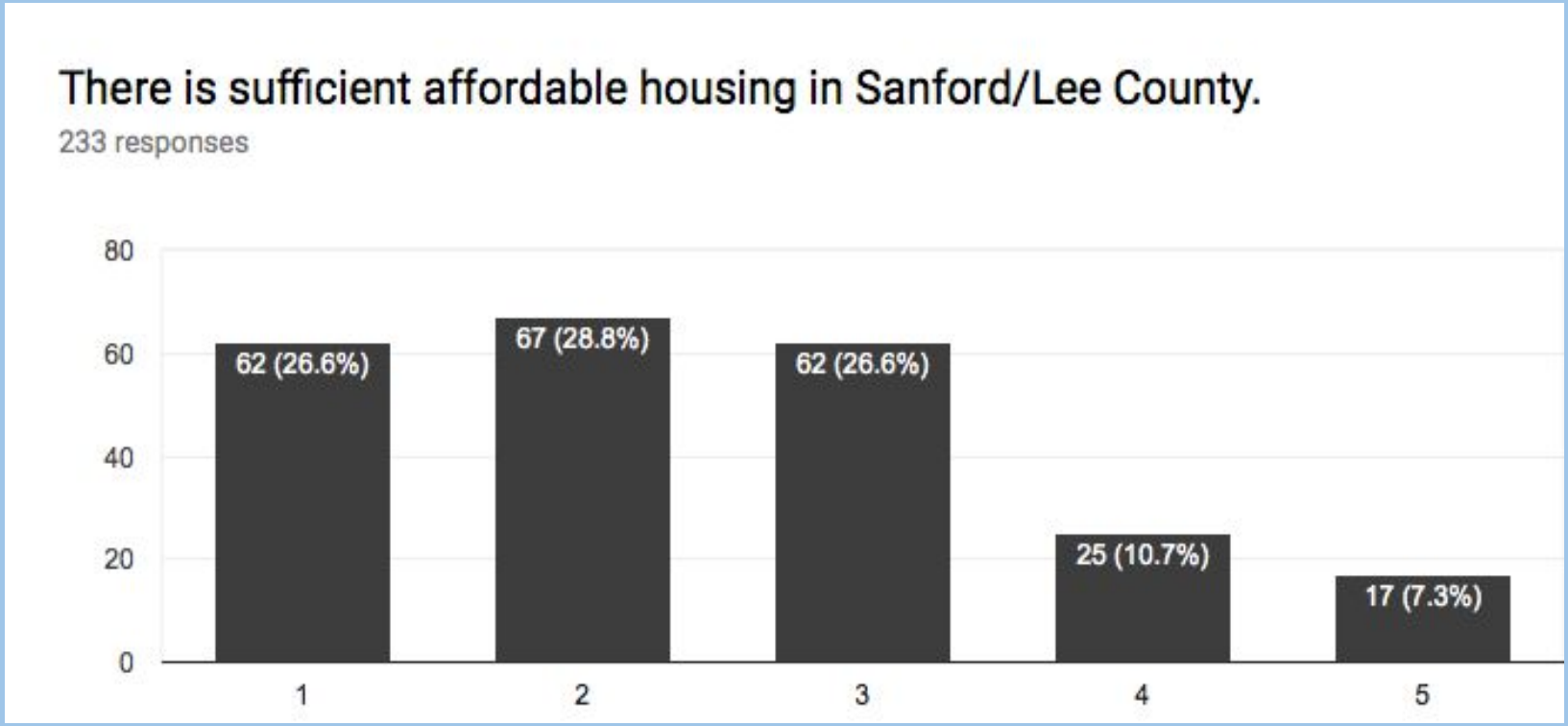




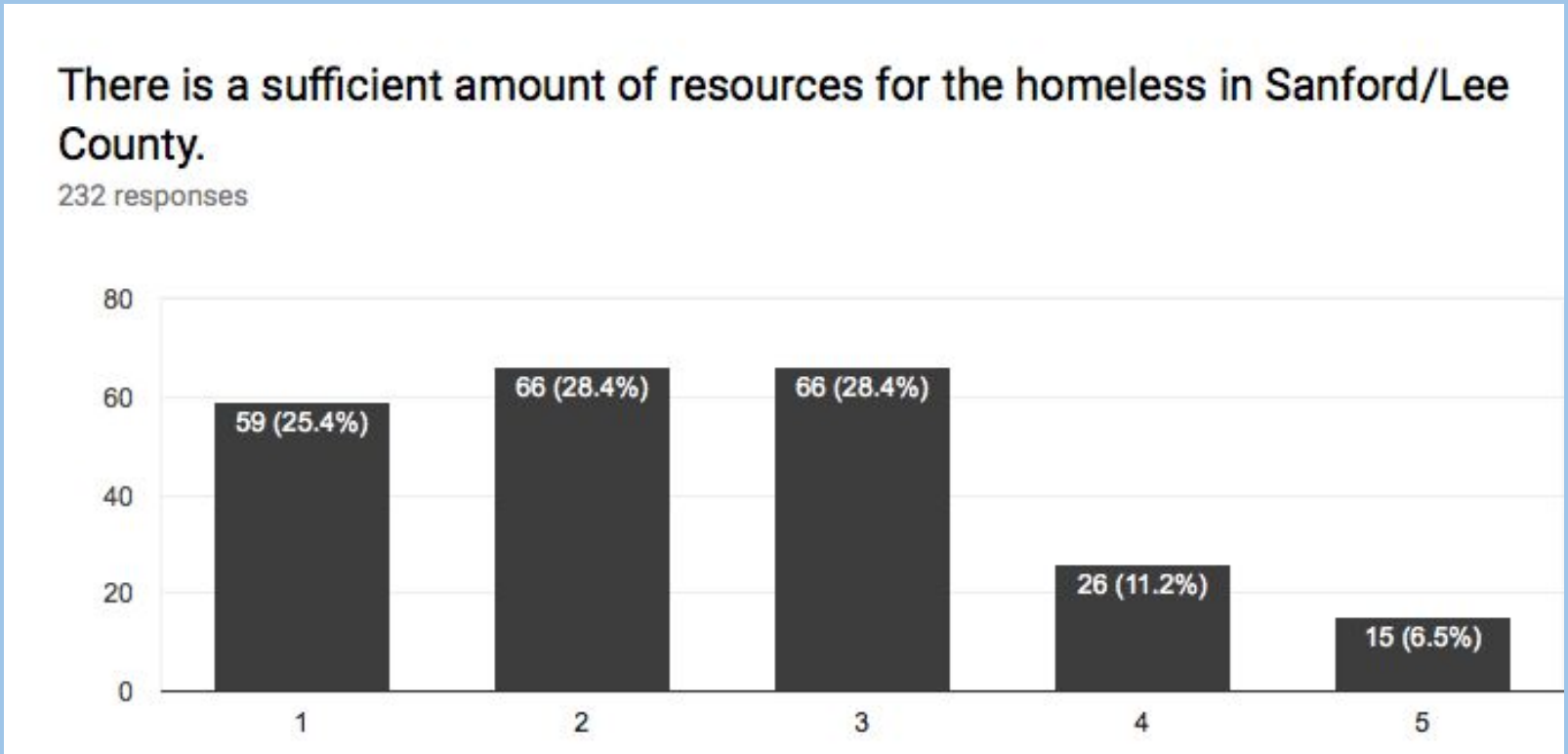
People are aware that Sanford has a significant homeless population. This could be from seeing them in public spaces such as the library or Walmart.



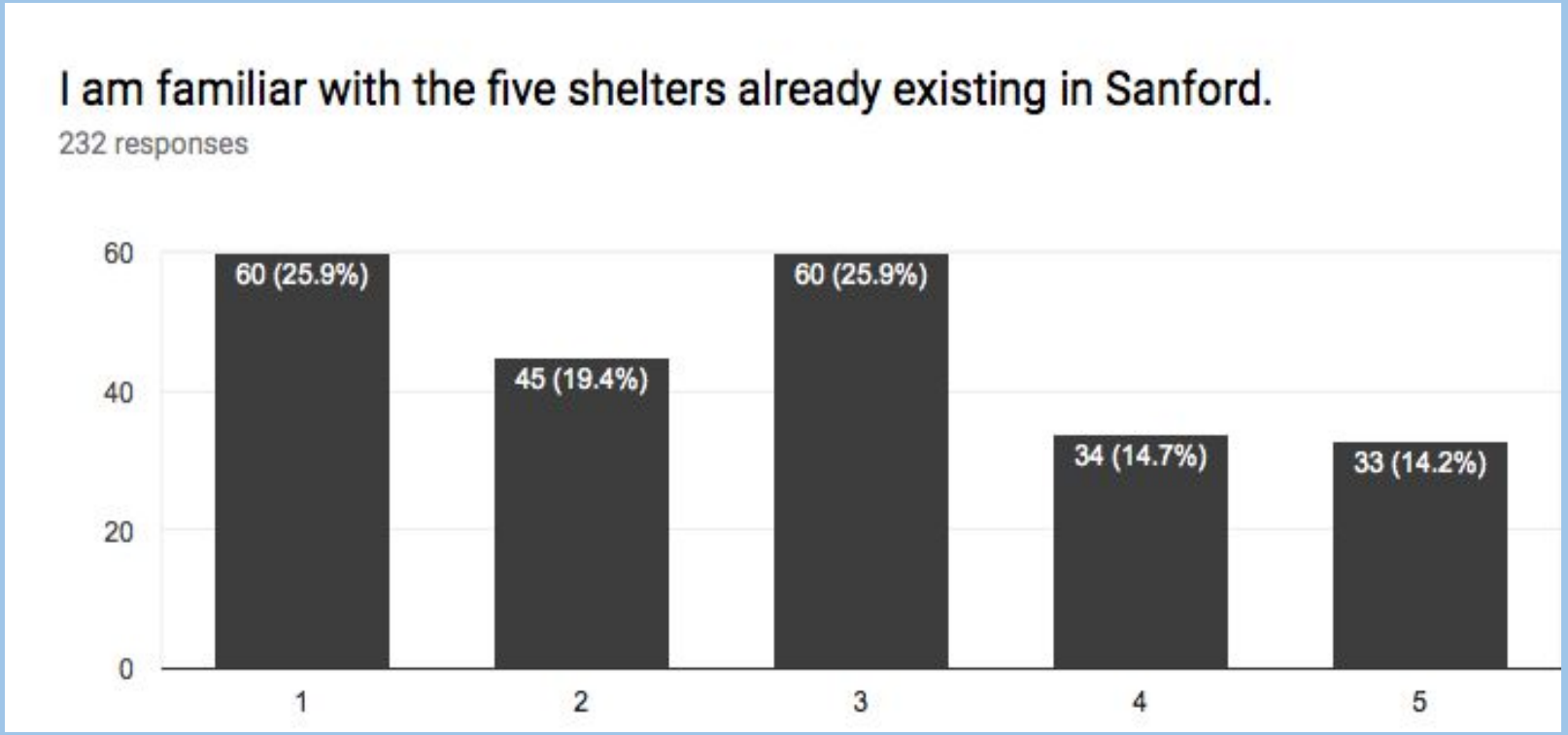
“62% of 1’s and 2’s speaks of a community that has a sense of responsibility toward those experiencing homelessness.” -Terry



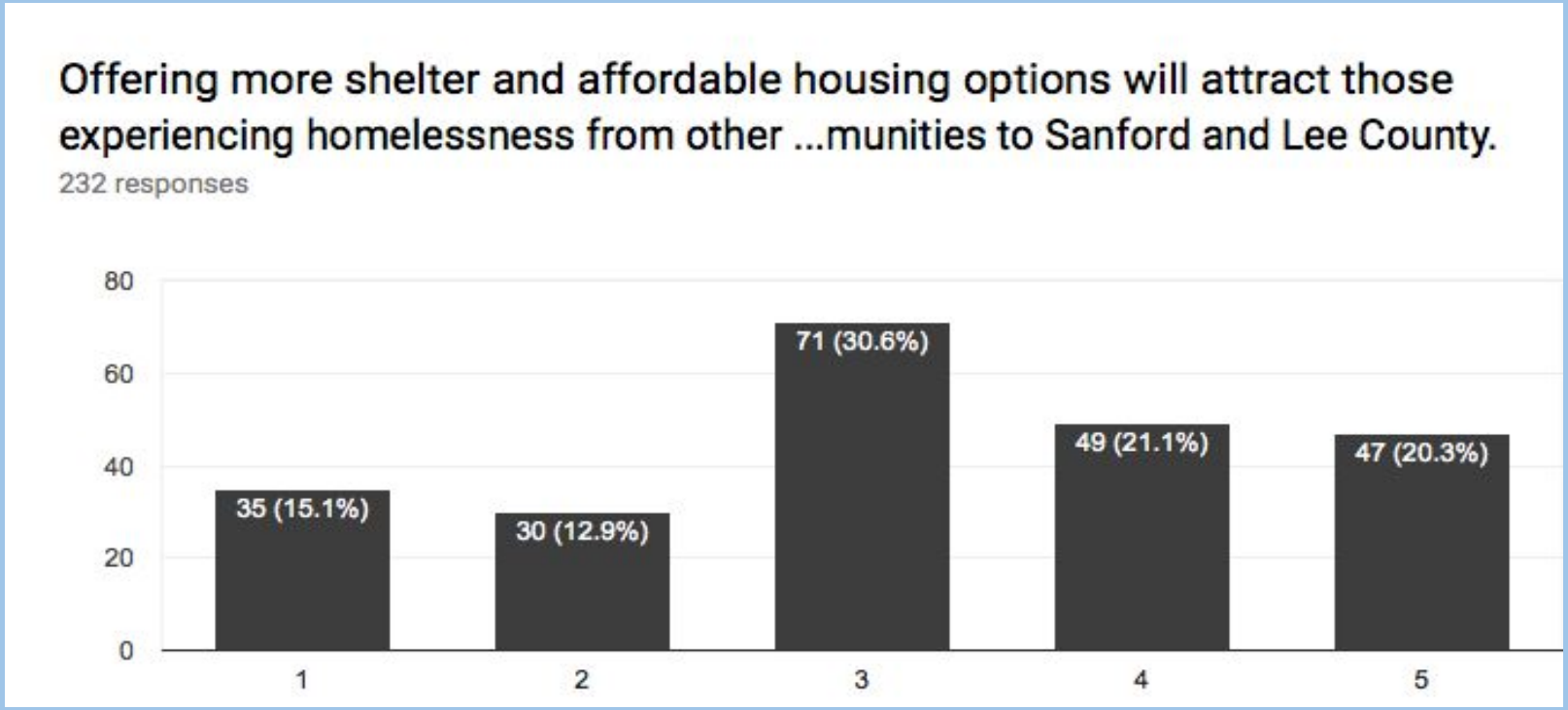
Generally people understand there is a lack of affordable housing, and probably also understand that this contributes to the high numbers of homeless in Sanford. This shows that if money was put towards affordable housing people would understand the need for it.



People are unsure about our amount of resources, but assume there should be more.



With the majority of respondents not knowing the 5 shelters or being unsure, the lack of awareness of the shelters in Sanford is a big takeaway of the survey. It strongly indicates need for a highly visible public relations campaign and perhaps joint fundraiser to build awareness and support.

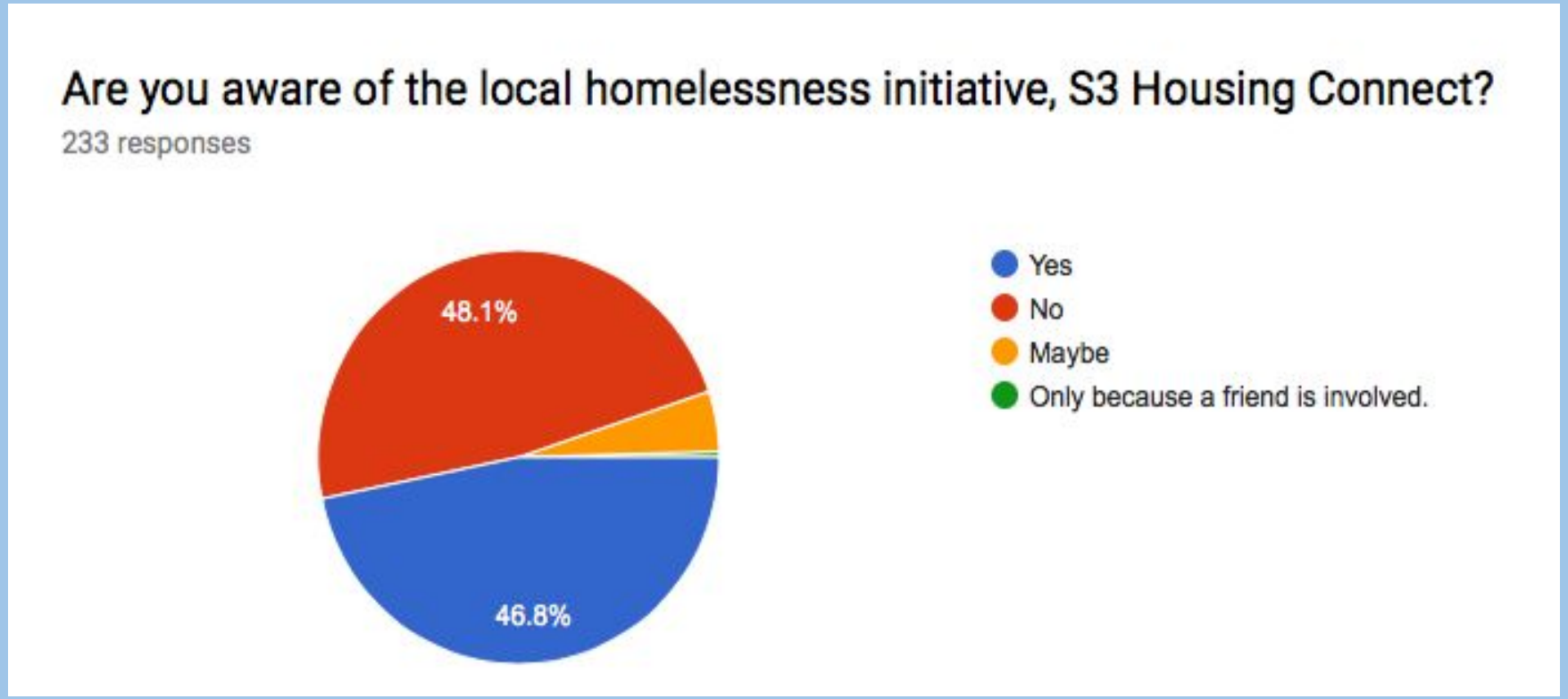


With 40% of respondents thinking shelter and affordable housing options will attract the homeless, and another 30% on the fence, this clearly is a second public relations piece. The bigger frame here is that as any area grows and attracts new population, it should also plan for increased numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness. It's part of growth, and supports the need of the S3 Housing Systems response work.

Do you feel uncomfortable interacting with people experiencing homelessness?

234 responses

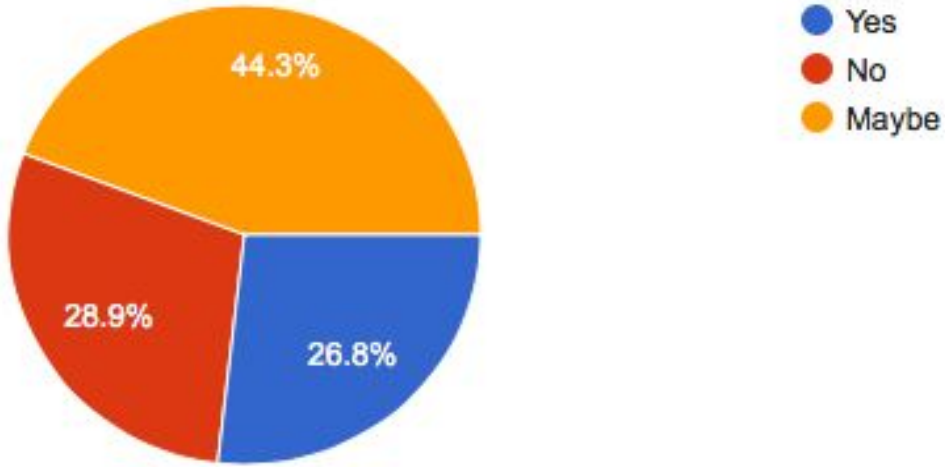
“Overall people are not uncomfortable interacting with the homeless, and that speaks well for a larger potential pool of volunteers. For those that are uncomfortable, there is at least one comment that it has to do with panhandling. Sanford could consider a public relations campaign to discourage cash handouts, and encourage donations to agencies working to end homelessness. I have worked on these campaigns in both Durham and Chapel Hill with modest success.” -Terry



Awareness of S3 is somewhat good, but will improve as we start having more public events.

Are you interested in getting involved with local homelessness projects?

235 responses



27% of respondents want to get involved (or I would assume are already involved since I am sure some S3 Housing folks were respondents) and 44% are maybes. That's a pretty good target group to convince their engagement matters, and a good pool to find volunteers.

Final Thoughts and Next Steps

What are your takeaways from this survey?