Vision Zero with a Youth Lens
A Positive Deviance Study of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Outcomes

Seth LaJeunesse & Stephen Heiny

University Transportation Center Spotlight Conference Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety
Washington, D.C., December 2, 2016
Acknowledgement

This research is made possible with support from:

FIA FOUNDATION

fiafoundation.org
Research Questions

• What do cities focus on with respect to Vision Zero? What are common barriers to implementation?

• How do cities address speeding?

• How do cities frame child pedestrian and bicyclist safety?

• How does political will to advance Vision Zero come about?

• How does public support for Vision Zero come about?
Data & Methods: Selection of Cities

Involved:
• Crash statistics
• Geographic diversity
• Level of engagement with Vision Zero

For Lauderdale, FL
New Orleans, LA
New York City, NY
San Francisco, CA
Seattle, WA
Washington, D.C.
Data & Methods: Data Collection

- Semi-structured interviews with at least 3 stakeholders in each city, representing city staff and advocacy groups

- Focused on general safety and speeding issues, safety goals and strategies, political will, and public support

- Are employing a “grounded theory analysis” of interview responses.
  - Doing so helps to identify emergent theories that explain cities’ commonalities and where they diverge
Key Preliminary Findings

• All cities reported some level of using youth-related safety efforts to facilitate wider safety programs

• Example:
  – School-centered education and engineering projects that extend into surrounding neighborhoods

• Framing projects as school- or child safety-focused helps gain better community support
Key Preliminary Findings

**Catalyst**
- High profile crash
- PR issue (e.g., being a “focus city”)
- Empathy engagement

**General Approach**
- Action-oriented
- Barrier-oriented

**Political Will**

**Child safety focus**

**Public Support**
Practical Implications

• **Collaborating** across agencies and with communities is key

• **Beginning with child-oriented areas** can serve as starting point for tackling difficult safety issues like speeding

• **Framing interventions as part of broader “Vision Zero” campaign** increases acceptability of safety improvements
Future Research Needs

• Understand how **political will** emerges and sustains

• Identify other politically feasible ways to **address speeding**

• Valid and reliable **pedestrian and bicyclist “exposure” data**

• Quality crash reduction estimates for **countermeasure combinations** (e.g., high visibility crosswalk + pedestrian refuge island)