

2013 Stowell Data®

# Textiles and Mattresses Consumer Recycling Behavior and Awareness Profile



COLEHOUR + COHEN  
*Public Relations & Social Marketing*

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LEIGH STOWELL & COMPANY



# Survey Background

## Objective

To understand current behavior among King County residents related to the recycling of various types of textiles, perceptions as to what items are considered acceptable for donation, and awareness of and attitudes toward various collection options. In addition, to understand mattress disposal behavior and motivation.

## Strategy

- Online survey of adults aged 22 and over in King County.
- Measure most common disposal options utilized for clothing, shoes and linens, as well as what types of items are most commonly thrown in the trash, and what would motivate residents to donate more.
- Measure reasons behind mattress disposal, awareness of what happens to mattresses, and motivation to recycle.

# Survey Methodology

- Total sample = 501 completed\* surveys throughout King County
  - Proportion for completed surveys within the City of Seattle = 25.7%
  - 50/50 Gender split
- Data Collection Method = Self-administered web-survey
  - Respondents are recruited via partner websites and confirmed through email response
- Data Collection: October 30 – November 5, 2013
- Margin of Error = +/- 4.38% at 95% confidence level
- 5-minute interview average

*\*respondents must answer all questions to be included in sample.*

# Textiles - Summary of Survey Findings

## Discard Methods for Textiles in Good Condition

- Most respondents reported taking unwanted textiles in good condition to a thrift store. Specifically, residents said thrift stores are among their top three methods for getting rid of clothes (85% of all respondents), shoes (78%) and household linens (76.8%).
- Public donation bin/drop box was the second most commonly reported disposal method.
- Nearly a quarter (23.1%) of all residents reported putting materials in good condition in the trash.

# Textiles - Summary of Survey Findings

## Condition of Textiles Discarded in the Trash

- When asked about the condition of clothing, shoes, or household linens residents place in the trash, residents reported that:
  - The item is torn or has holes (65.9% of all respondents)
  - The item is broken or damaged (56.1%)
  - The item is stained or discolored (50.7%)
  - An unmatched item (48.5%)

# Textiles - Summary of Survey Findings

## Donation/Recycling Motivation

- An overwhelming majority of respondents (82%) said they would increase the amount of textiles donated, even when in poor condition, if they knew that condition was not an issue.
- Residents reported that the following would motivate them to donate more clothing, shoes, or household linens, instead of putting them in the trash:
  - Items acceptable whether in good or poor condition (50.5%)
  - Donation bin/drop box closer to home (27.5%)
  - Receive information about how to schedule donation pickup (24.8%)
  - Ability to place clothing/shoes/linens in standard recycling container (24.6%)

# Textiles - Summary of Survey Findings

## Residents who Discard Textiles in the Trash

- Respondents who selected “Put in the trash” as one of their top 3 methods for disposing of clothing, shoes, or linens that are in good condition were statistically more likely to:
  - Have children in the home
  - Be between the ages of 24-34
  - Have an annual household income of more than \$40,000
  - Live in an apartment or condo
  - Live in on the Eastside or in South King County
  - Be male

# Mattresses - Summary of Survey Findings

## Disposal Reasons and Methods

- Most respondents who have disposed of a mattress have done so while replacing an old mattress with a new one.
  - The majority (55%) had that mattress taken away by the retailer.
  - 20% sold the used mattress or gave it away for free.
  - 10% took it to a transfer station.
- Among those who had a mattress removed, 72% either paid no fee or do not remember paying a fee for the service.



# Mattresses - Summary of Survey Findings

## Recycling Awareness

- Among those who had a mattress removed, 41 percent said they don't know what happened to a mattress at "end of life".
- Most respondents are unaware of mattress recycling options in the area.
- Nearly 70 percent of respondents stated that they would be more likely to purchase a mattress from a retailer that recycles.
- More than half of respondents (52%) stated that they would be willing to pay to have their mattress recycled.

# Textiles

# Questions – Textiles

## Discard Methods for Textiles in Good Condition

1. “When you or someone in your household has **clothing** in good condition that you no longer want, what do you most often do with it?”  
    “What do you do second most?”  
    “What do you do third most?”
2. “When you or someone in your household has **shoes** in good condition that you no longer want, what do you most often do with them?”  
    “What do you do second most?”  
    “What do you do third most?”
3. “When you or someone in your household has **household linens**, such as towels, bedding and curtains in good condition that you no longer want, what do you most often do with them?”  
    “What do you do second most?”  
    “What do you do third most?”

# Questions – Textiles

## Condition of Textiles Discarded in the Trash

4. “Which of the following best describe the condition of clothing, shoes, or household linens you place in the trash?”

Options:

- Unmatched item
- Broken or damaged
- Stained or discolored
- Torn or has holes

# Discard Methods for Textiles in Good Condition

Asked of all adults:

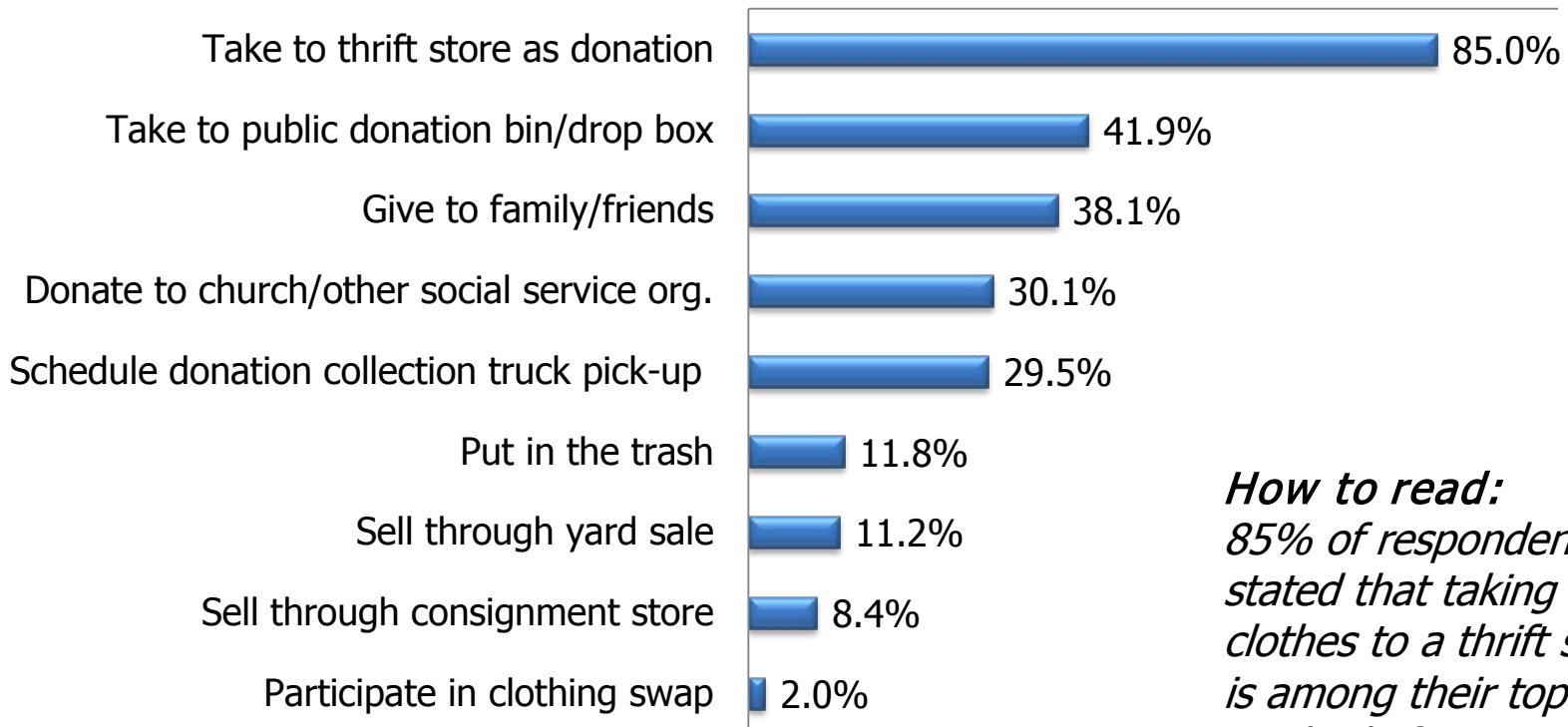
“When you have *clothing* in good condition that you no longer want, what do you do with it...”

<div> <div></div> = Top ranking response  <b>BLUE</b> = Rise in rank  <b>RED</b> = Drop in rank         </div>	...most		...second most		...third most	
	Rank	(%)	Rank	(%)	Rank	(%)
Take it to a thrift store as a donation	1	61.9	2	17.4	6	6.2
Take it to a public donation bin/drop box that accepts clothing	2	12.6	1	19.6	3	10.0
Schedule a donation collection truck to pick it up from my house	3	9.6	4	11.4	4	8.6
Donate it to my church or another social service organization	4	6.6	5	10.4	2	13.2
Give it to family or friends	5	4.2	3	16.6	1	17.6
Sell it through a consignment store	6	1.4	8	3.0	8	4.2
Put it in the trash	6	1.4	6	4.8	7	5.6
Sell it through a yard sale	8	.2	7	4.0	5	7.0
Participate in a clothing swap with others	8	.2	9	1.2	9	.6

# Top 3 Disposal Methods Combined

## Unwanted Clothing

Among Adults 22+



***How to read:***  
*85% of respondents stated that taking clothes to a thrift store is among their top 3 methods for getting rid of them.*

# Top 3 Disposal Methods Combined

## Unwanted Clothing – Gender Comparison

	Adults 22 +	Male	(Index)	Female	(Index)
Take to a thrift store as a donation	85.0%	83.5%	98	86.5%	102
Take to a public donation bin/ drop box that accepts clothing	41.9%	43.0%	103	40.9%	98
Give to family or friends	38.1%	34.5%	91	41.7%	109
Donate to my church or another social service organization	30.1%	28.5%	95	31.7%	105
Schedule a donation collection truck to pick up from my house	29.5%	32.5%	110	26.6%	90
Put in the trash	11.8%	15.3%	130	8.3%	71
Sell through a yard sale	11.2%	10.4%	93	11.9%	107
Sell through a consignment store	8.4%	4.8%	57	11.9%	142
Participate in a clothing swap with others	2.0%	.4%	20	3.6%	179



Asked of all adults:

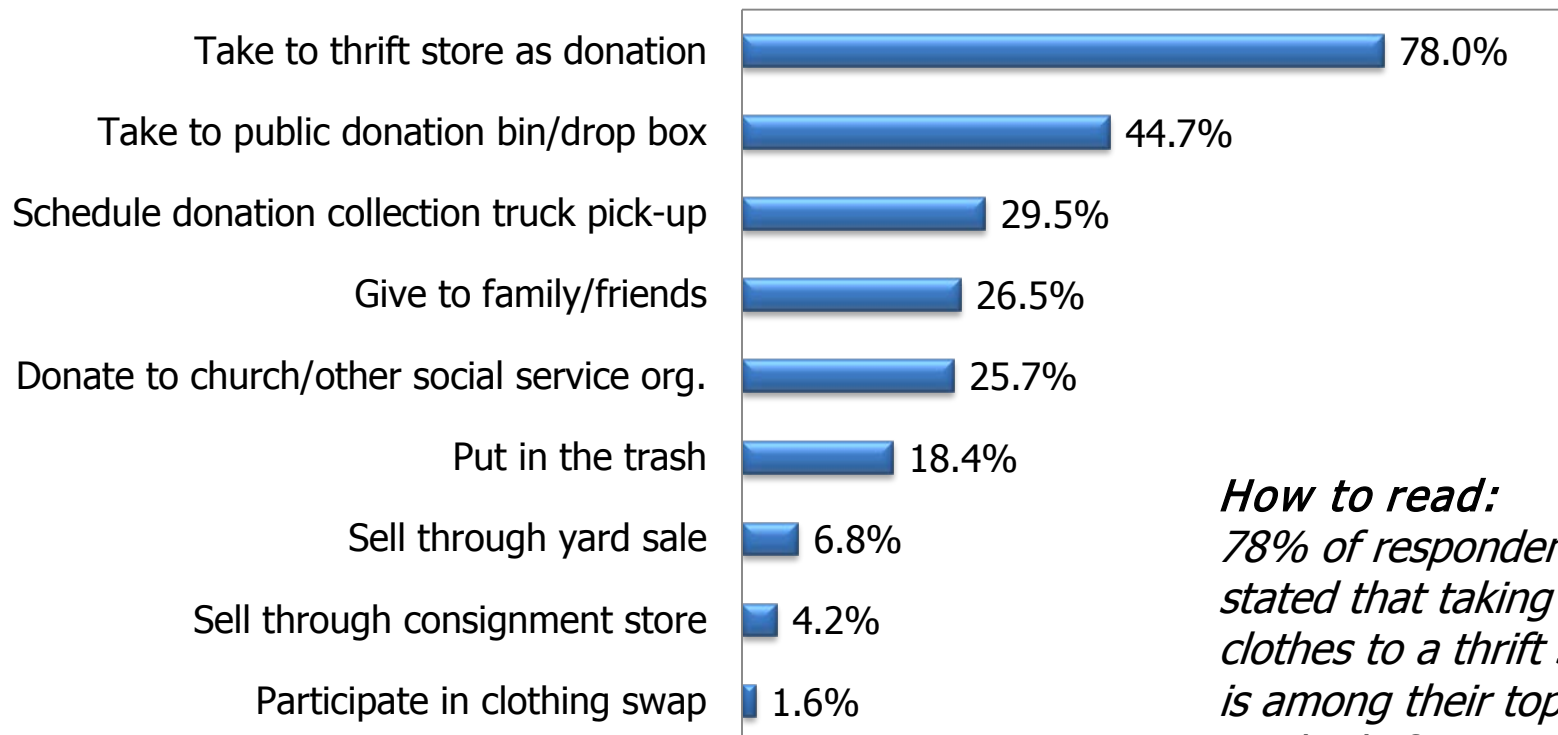
“When you have *shoes* in good condition that you no longer want, what do you do with them...”

<div> <div></div> = Top ranking response  <b>BLUE</b> = Rise in rank  <b>RED</b> = Drop in rank         </div>	...most		...second most		...third most	
	Rank	(%)	Rank	(%)	Rank	(%)
Take them to a thrift store as a donation	1	54.3	2	18.2	6	6.2
Take them to a public donation bin/ drop box that accepts clothing	2	13.2	1	20.2	1	11.4
Schedule a donation collection truck to pick them up from my house	3	7.4	3	12.4	3	9.8
Give them to family or friends	4	7.2	5	8.2	1	11.4
Put it them the trash	5	5.6	6	4.4	5	8.6
Donate them to my church or another social service organization	6	4.8	4	11.2	3	9.8
Sell them through a consignment store	7	1.0	8	1.0	8	2.2
Sell them through a yard sale	8	.6	7	2.4	7	3.8
Participate in a clothing swap with others	9	.2	9	.6	9	.8

# Top 3 Disposal Methods Combined

## Unwanted Shoes

Among Adults 22+



***How to read:***  
*78% of respondents stated that taking clothes to a thrift store is among their top 3 methods for getting rid of them.*

# Top 3 Disposal Methods Combined

## Unwanted Shoes – Gender Comparison

	Adults 22+	Male	(Index)	Female	(Index)
Take to a thrift store as a donation	78.0%	76.7%	98	79.4%	102
Take to a public donation bin/ Drop box that accepts clothing	44.7%	44.6%	100	44.8%	100
Schedule a donation collection truck to pick up from my house	29.5%	29.7%	101	29.4%	99
Give to family or friends	26.5%	22.5%	85	30.6%	115
Donate to my church or another social service organization	25.7%	24.5%	95	27.0%	105
Put in the trash	18.4%	21.3%	116	15.5%	84
Sell through a yard sale	6.8%	5.2%	77	8.3%	123
Sell through a consignment store	4.2%	3.2%	77	5.2%	123
Nothing	3.8%	5.2%	138	2.4%	63
Participate in a clothing swap with others	1.6%	.8%	50	2.4%	149

Asked of all adults:

“When you have *household linens* in good condition that you no longer want, what do you do with them...”

	...most		...second most		...third most	
	Rank	(%)	Rank	(%)	Rank	(%)
Take them to a thrift store as a donation	1	51.9	2	18.8	5	6.6
Take them to a public donation bin/drop box that accepts clothing	2	11.8	1	20.2	2	10.2
Schedule a donation collection truck to pick them up from my house	3	8.2	4	9.2	3	10.0
Give them to family or friends	4	7.8	5	6.6	4	8.8
Put them in the trash	5	6.0	6	4.0	5	6.6
Donate them to my church or another social service organization	6	4.6	3	10.8	1	11.6
Use as rags	7	1.6	8	1.2	8	.4
Sell them through a yard sale	8	1.6	7	3.4	7	5.6

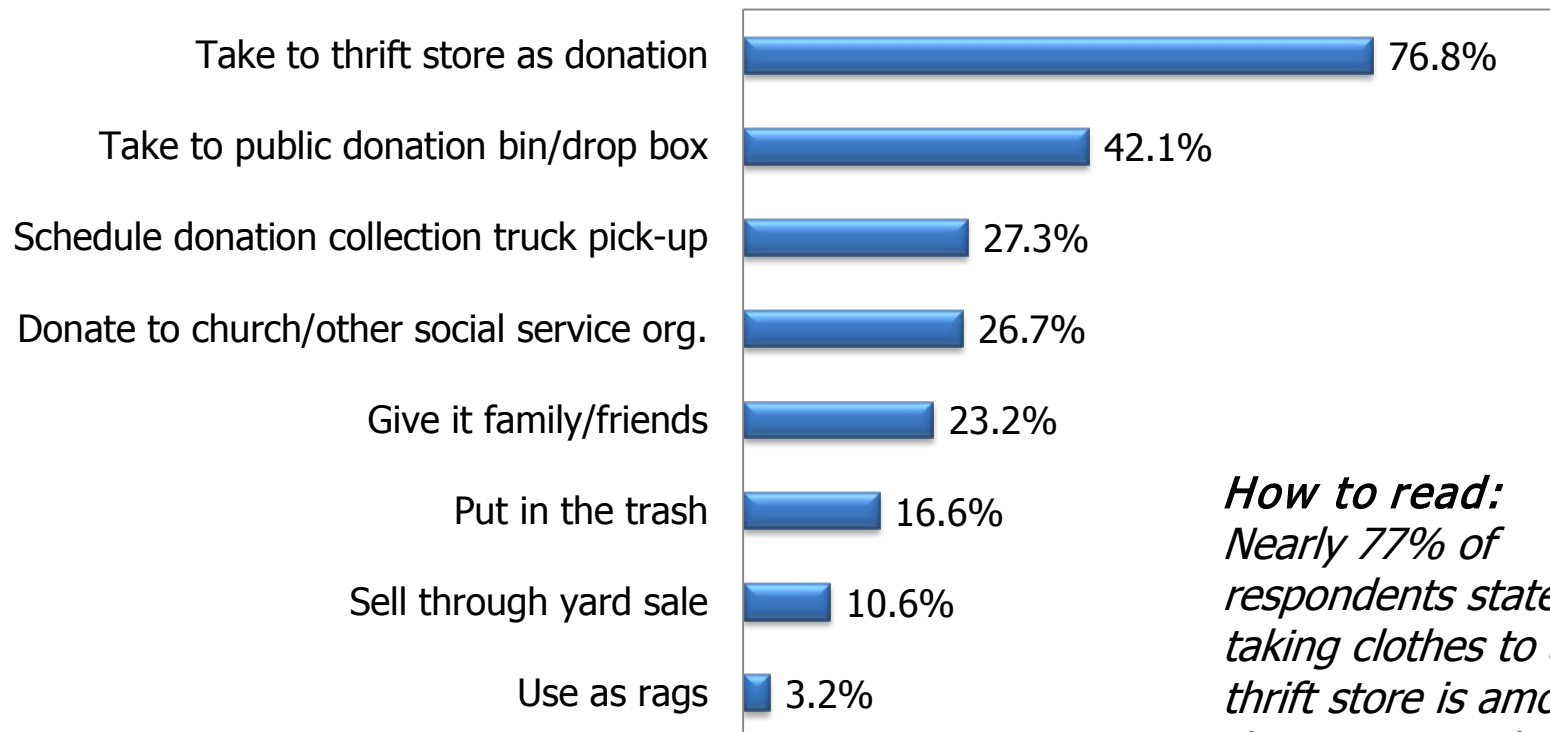
= Top ranking response

BLUE = Rise in rank

RED = Drop in rank

# Top 3 Disposal Methods Combined Unwanted Household Linens

Among Adults 22+



***How to read:***  
*Nearly 77% of respondents stated that taking clothes to a thrift store is among their top 3 methods for getting rid of them.*

# Top 3 Disposal Methods Combined

## Unwanted Linens – Gender Comparison

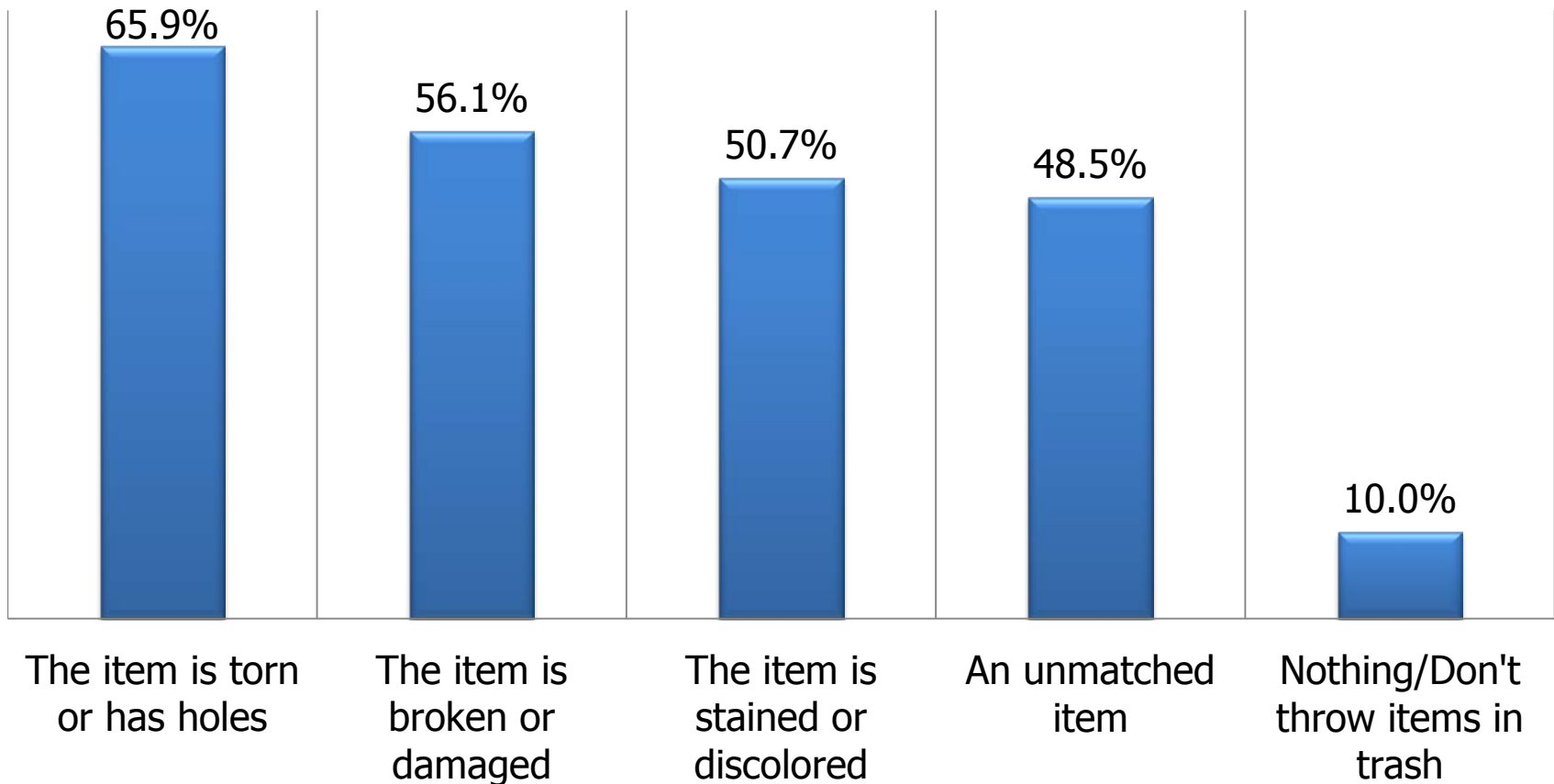
	Adults 22+ (%)	Male (%)	(Index)	Female (%)	(Index)
Take to a thrift store as a donation	76.8	70.7	92	82.9	108
Take to a public donation bin/ drop box that accepts clothing	42.1	43.8	104	40.5	96
Schedule a donation collection truck to pick up from my house	27.3	26.9	98	27.8	102
Donate to my church or another social service organization	26.7	23.3	87	30.2	113
Give to family or friends	23.2	18.9	82	27.4	118
Put in the trash	16.6	21.3	128	11.9	72
Sell through a yard sale	10.6	8.4	80	12.7	120
Use as rags	3.2	4.0	126	2.4	75
Nothing	3.2	5.2	163	1.2	37

# Condition of Textiles Discarded in the Trash

“Which of the following best describe the condition of clothing, shoes, or household linens you place in the trash?”

(Multiple responses allowed)

Among Adults 22+





# Condition of Textiles Discarded in Trash

## Gender Comparison

	Adults 22+ (%)	Male (%)	(Index)	Female (%)	(Index)
An unmatched item	48.5	41.4	85	55.6	115
The item is broken or damaged	56.1	56.2	100	56.0	100
The item is stained or discolored	50.7	44.6	88	56.7	112
The item is torn or has holes	65.9	64.3	98	67.5	102
Nothing/ Don't throw items in trash	10.0	8.0	80	11.9	119

# Questions – Textiles

## Donation/Recycling Motivation

5. “If you were told that all clothing, shoes, and household linens, even when in poor condition, are acceptable for donation at thrift stores and public donation bins/drop boxes, would you increase the amount of items you donate?” (Yes/No)
6. “Which of the following would motivate you to donate [more] clothing, shoes, or household linens [instead of putting them in the trash]?”

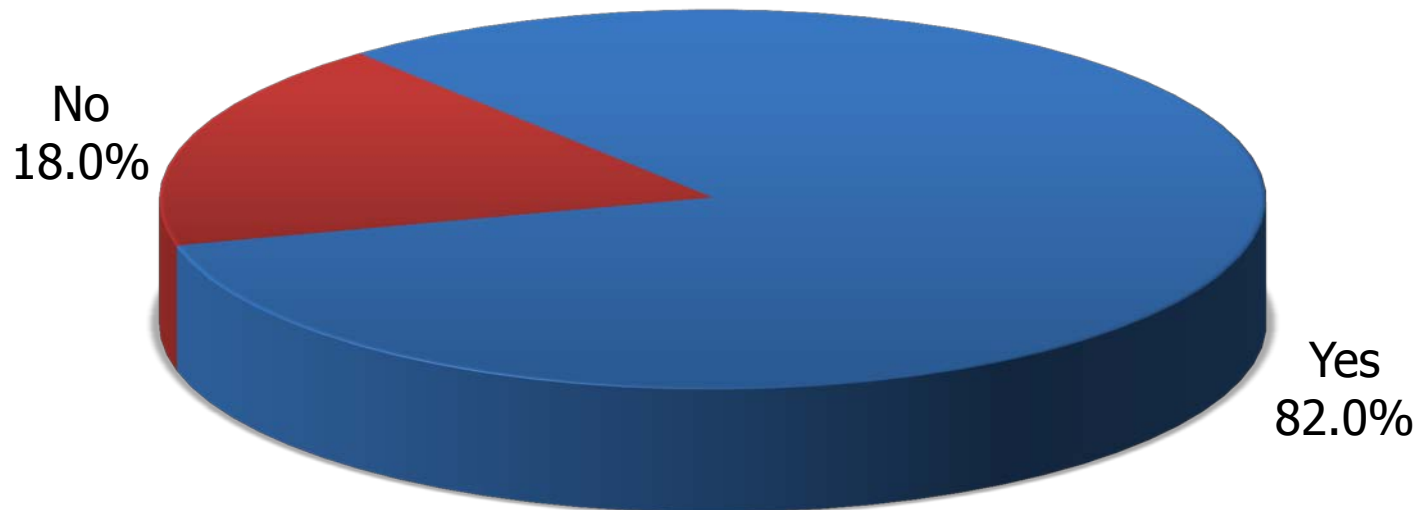
### Options:

- If I received information about how to schedule a donation pick-up at my house/apartment
- If my apartment complex provided a donation bin/drop box
- If there was a donation bin/drop box closer to my house/apartment
- If I could place clothing, shoes, and household linens in the recycling container at my house/apartment
- If I received information about what happens to the items I donate
- If I was sure that thrift stores and public donation bins accepted items whether in good or poor condition
- If these items were prohibited by law from disposal in the trash

# Likely To Donate More

“If you were told that all clothing, shoes, and household linens are acceptable for donation, would it increase the amount you donate?”

Among Adults 22+



*An overwhelming majority of respondents would donate more textiles if they knew that condition was not an issue.*

# Demographic Profile of Residents who Discard Textiles in the Trash

# Residents who Discard Textiles in Trash

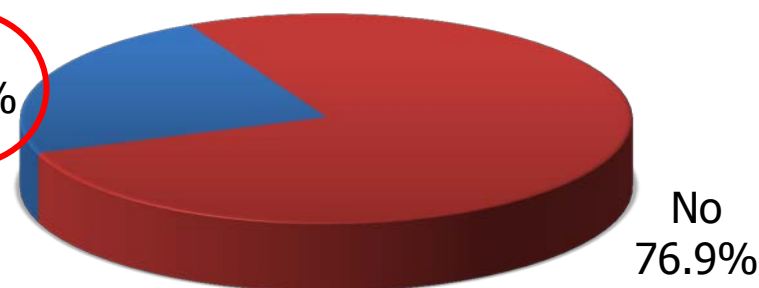


23.1%  
of respondents  
stated "Put in the trash"  
as one of their top 3  
methods for disposing of  
clothing, shoes, or linens  
that are in good condition

*Discard Textiles in Good Condition  
in the Trash*

Among Adults 22+

Yes  
23.1%



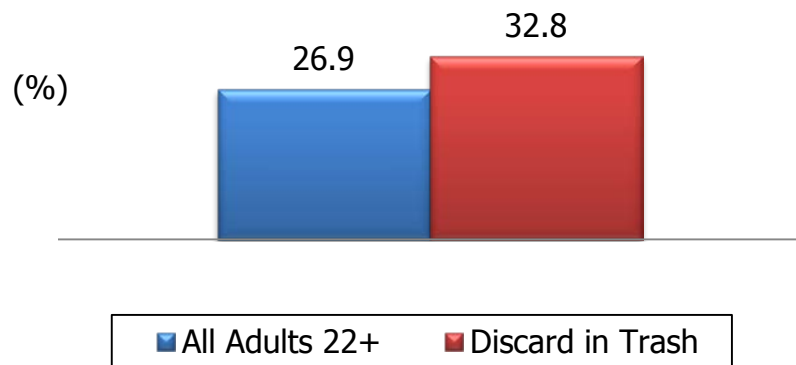
***How to read:***

*Nearly a quarter of respondents dispose of textiles that are in good condition by throwing them in the trash.*

# Demographic Comparison

= Less likely to discard  
 = More likely to discard

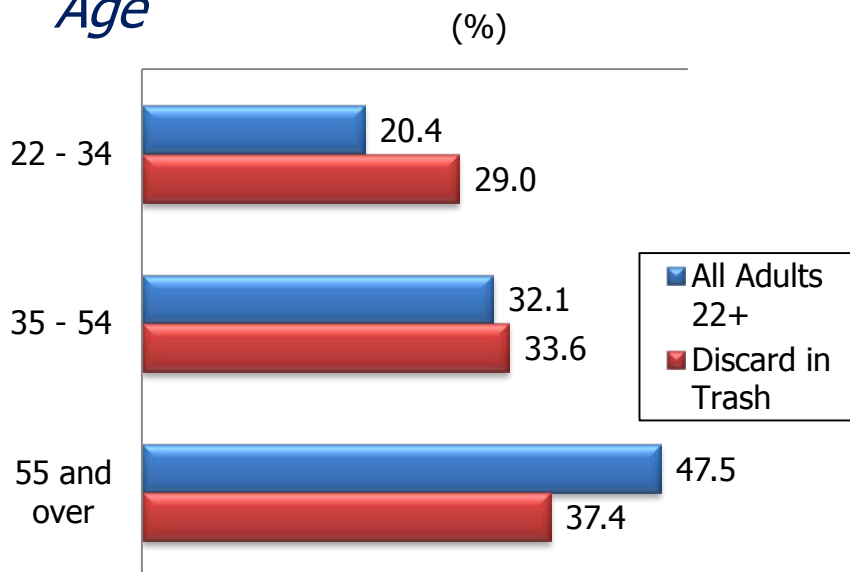
## Children In Household



## Household Income

	All Adults 22+ (%)	Discard in Trash (%)
Under \$40,000	20.6	16.0
\$40K - \$75,000	25.7	28.2
\$75K - \$100,000	15.6	15.3
\$100,000 +	25.0	26.7

## Age



## Dwelling Type

	All Adults 22+ (%)	Discard in Trash (%)
Single unit house	64.3	59.5
Apartment/condo	23.4	29.0
Townhouse or attached home	7.8	6.1

“Which of the following would motivate you to donate [more] clothing, shoes, or household linens [instead of putting them in the trash]?”

	All Adults 22+	No Discard in Trash	(Index)	Discard in Trash	(Index)
Items accepted whether in good or poor condition	50.5%	49.2%	97	54.2%	107
Donation bin/drop box closer to house/ apartment	27.5%	23.5%	85	38.9%	141
Info about how to schedule donation pick-up	24.8%	22.4%	91	31.3%	126
Place clothing/ shoes/ linens in recycling container	24.6%	23.2%	95	28.2%	115
Info about what happens to donated items	19.8%	19.2%	97	21.4%	108
Apartment complex provided donation bin/ drop box	16.4%	13.8%	84	23.7%	145
Items prohibited by law from disposal in trash	9.2%	9.2%	100	9.2%	100
Nothing	13.2%	16.5%	125	3.8%	29

# Mattresses



# Questions – Mattresses

## Disposal Methods

“Thinking about the last time you or anyone in your household got rid of a mattress, what was the reason?”

“What did you do with that mattress?”

“How much did you pay to get rid of that mattress?”

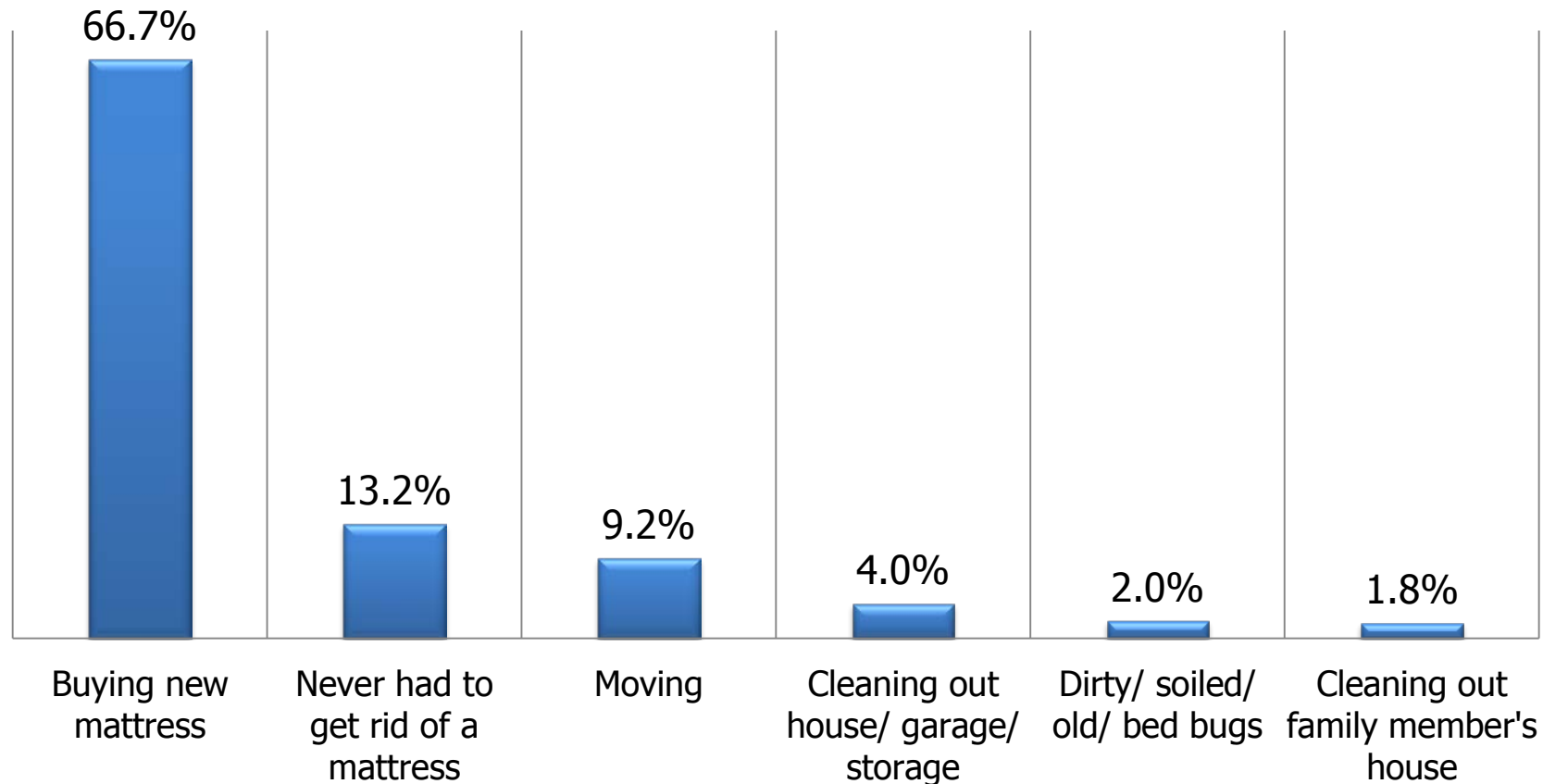
“If you needed to get rid of a mattress today, which of the following would you most likely do?”

- Have it removed by the retailer I bought my new mattress from
- Have it removed by a junk removal company
- Schedule a special pick-up with my garbage collector
- Sell it or give it away for free
- Take it to a transfer station or dump

# Reason For Disposal

“Thinking about the last time you or anyone in your household got rid of a mattress, what was the reason?”

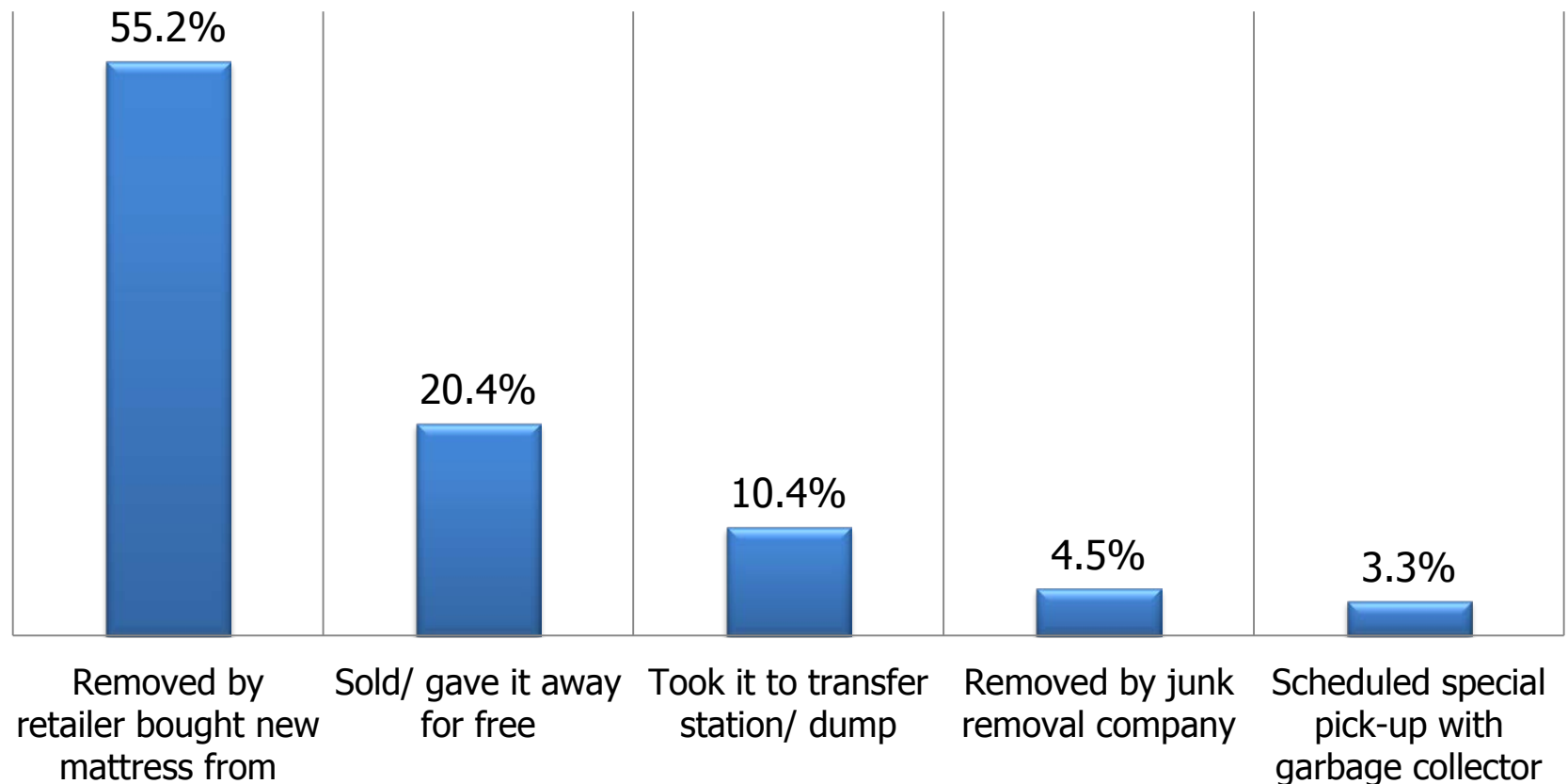
Among Adults 22+



# Disposal Method

“What did you do with that mattress?”

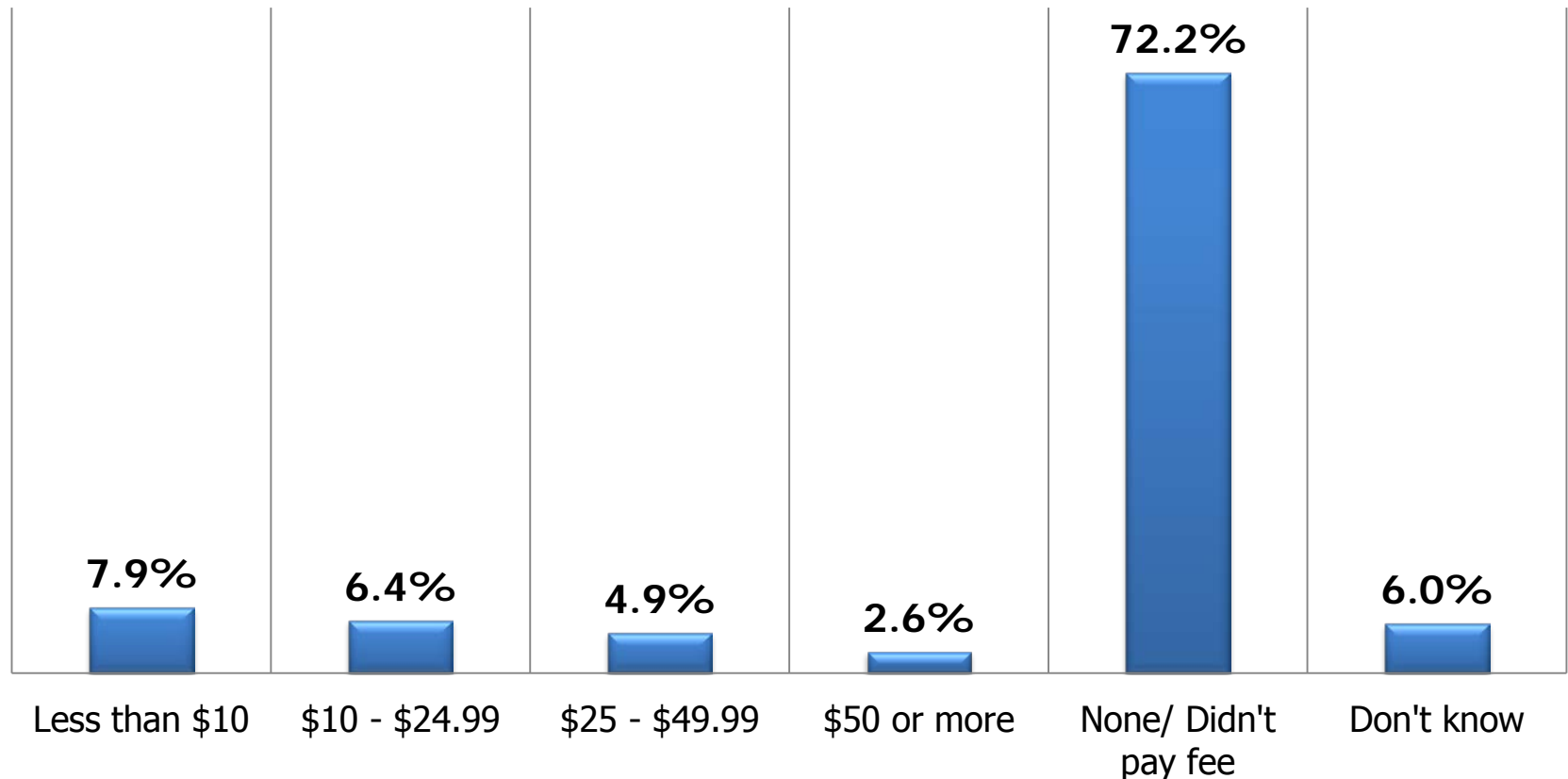
Among those who disposed of a mattress



# Removal Fee Paid

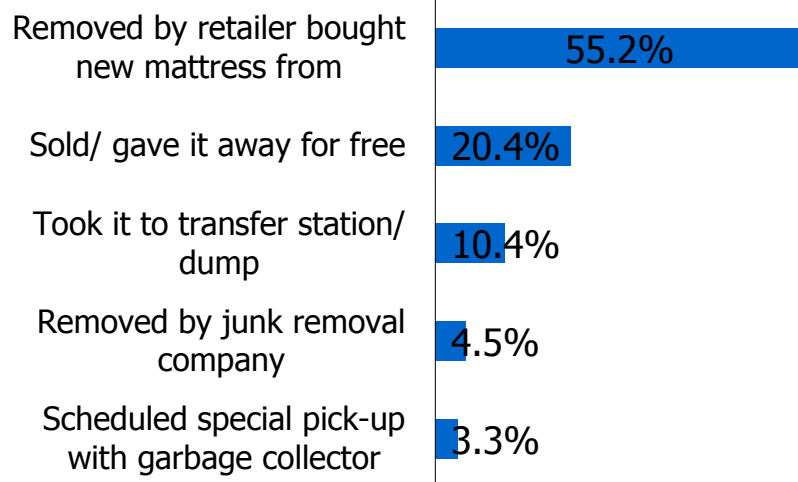
## Mattress

Among those who had mattress removed

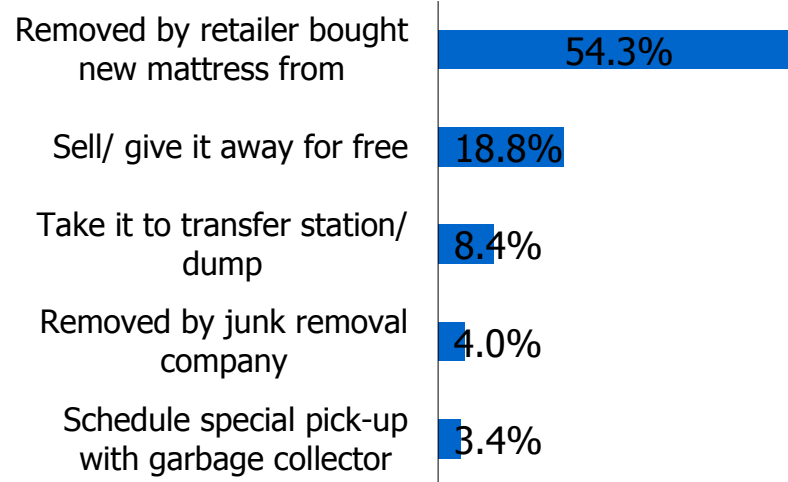


# Disposal Method – Past vs. Future Mattress

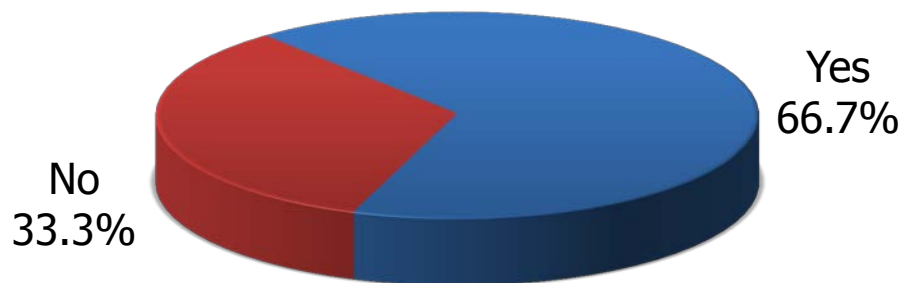
How disposed of **LAST** mattress



How plan to dispose of **NEXT** mattress



Would do the same thing as last time



# Questions – Mattresses

## Recycling Awareness and Motivation

“What do you think happened to that mattress after it was hauled away?”

- It was taken apart and recycled
- It was used again
- It was taken to a landfill

“Have you seen or heard anything about mattress recycling options in your area?”

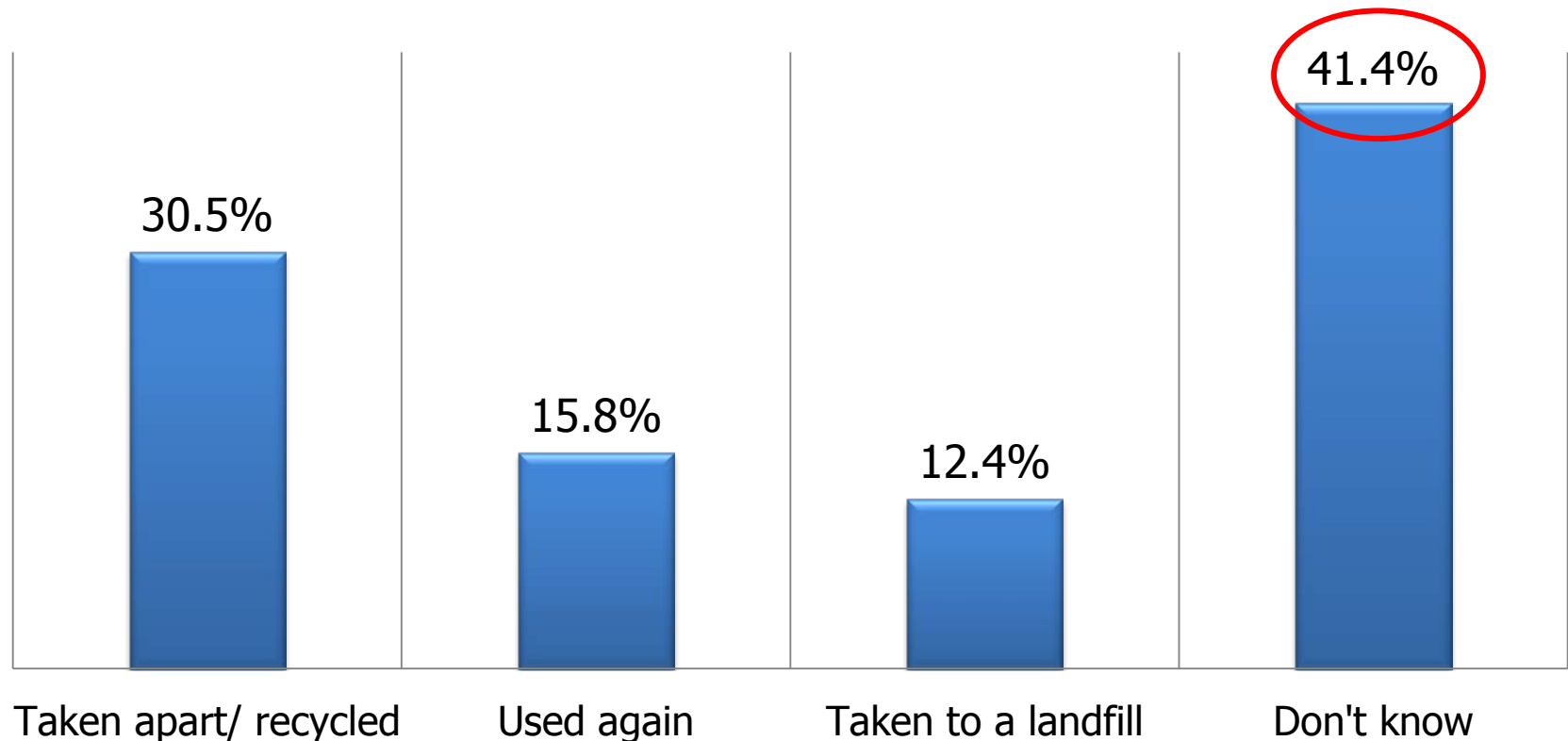
“Would you be more likely to purchase a mattress from a retailer that advertises that it recycles old mattresses?”

“Would you be willing to pay between \$10 and \$30 to have your mattress recycled, even if disposal costs less? ”

# Disposal Perception

“What do you think happened to that mattress after it was hauled away?”

Among those who had a mattress removed by a retailer, junk removal company, or garbage collector



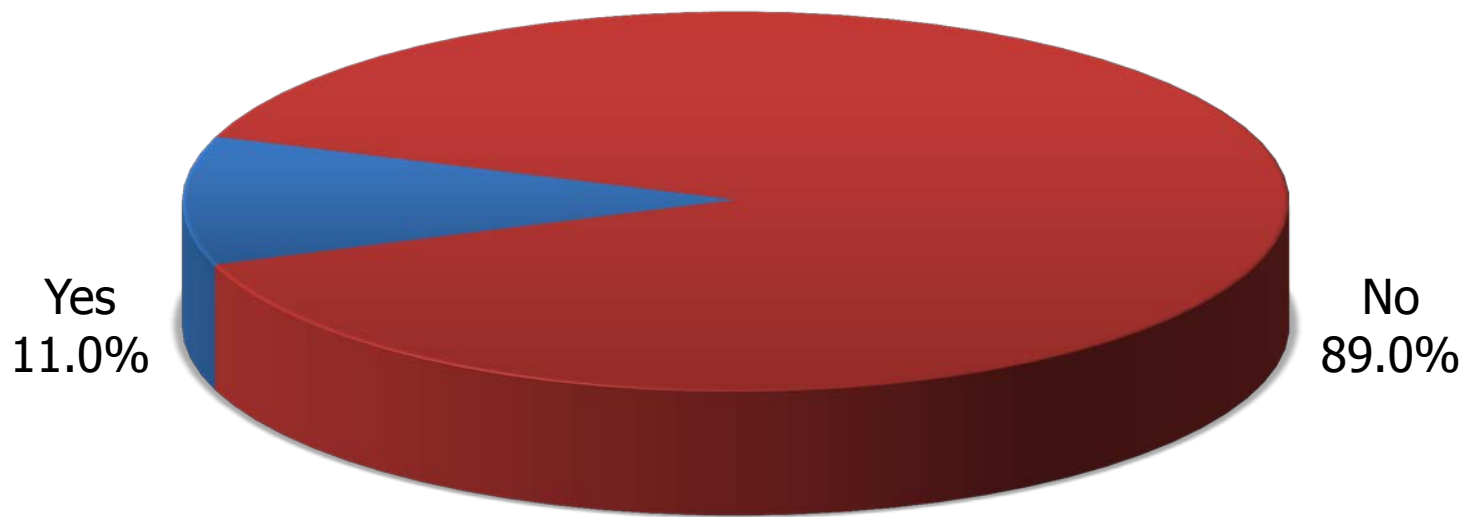
*Over 40% of respondents have no idea what became of their mattress.*

# Aware Of Recycling Options

“Have you seen or heard anything about mattress recycling options in your area?”

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Among Adults 22+



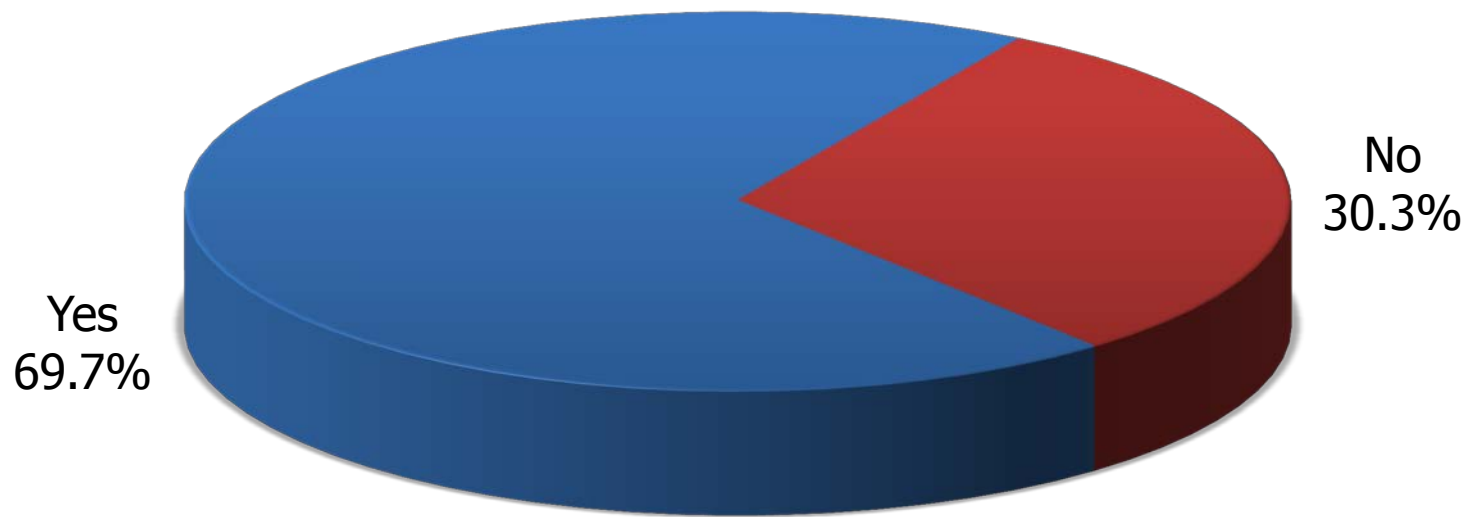
*The vast majority of respondents are unaware of mattress recycling options in the area.*



# Recycling Motivation

“Would you be more likely to purchase a mattress from a retailer that advertises that it recycles old mattresses?”

Among Adults 22+



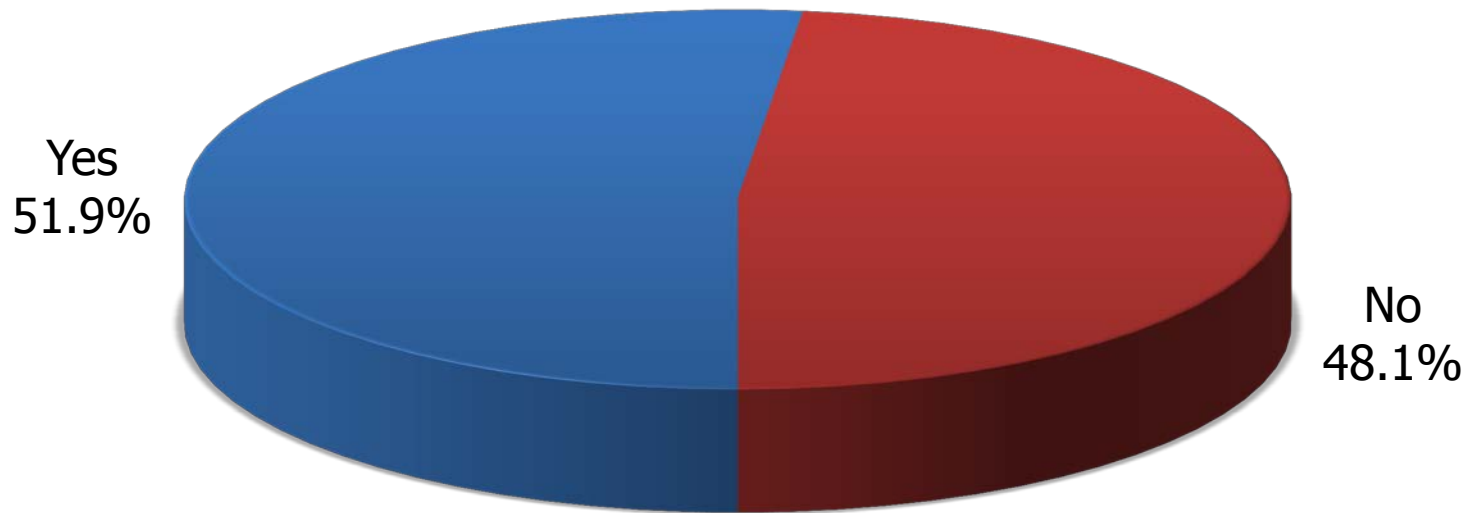
*Nearly 70% of respondents would be more likely to purchase a mattress from a retailer that recycles.*

# Recycling Motivation

“Would you be willing to pay between \$10 and \$30 to have your mattress recycled, even if disposal costs less?”

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Among Adults 22+



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## Primary Contacts

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