



Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Education Programs in Suffolk County 2015-2016

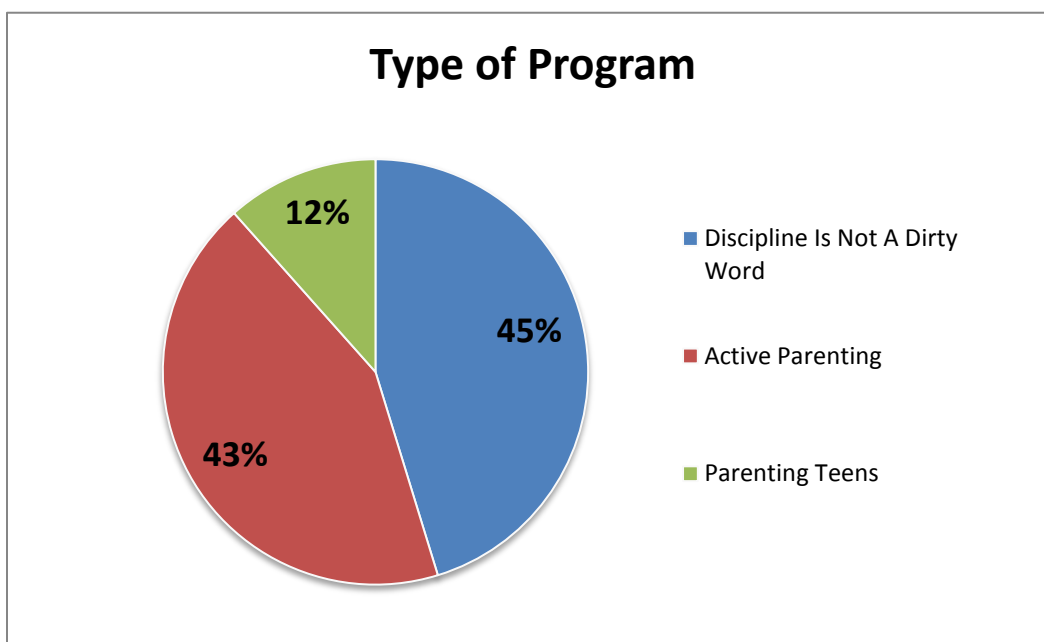
By Eliza Lathrop Cook

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Suffolk County offers a variety of programs for parents and caregivers. These programs reach a wide range of families and seek to promote positive parenting and, ultimately, healthy family and child development. This research brief presents data collected from participants in Suffolk County CCE parent education programs from July 2015 to July 2016. Participants included parents and caregivers who participated in programs that comprised of at least six hours of

content delivery. Data were collected from participants at the first session (a pre-test) and at the last session (a post-test). Results of the analysis of these data are shown below.

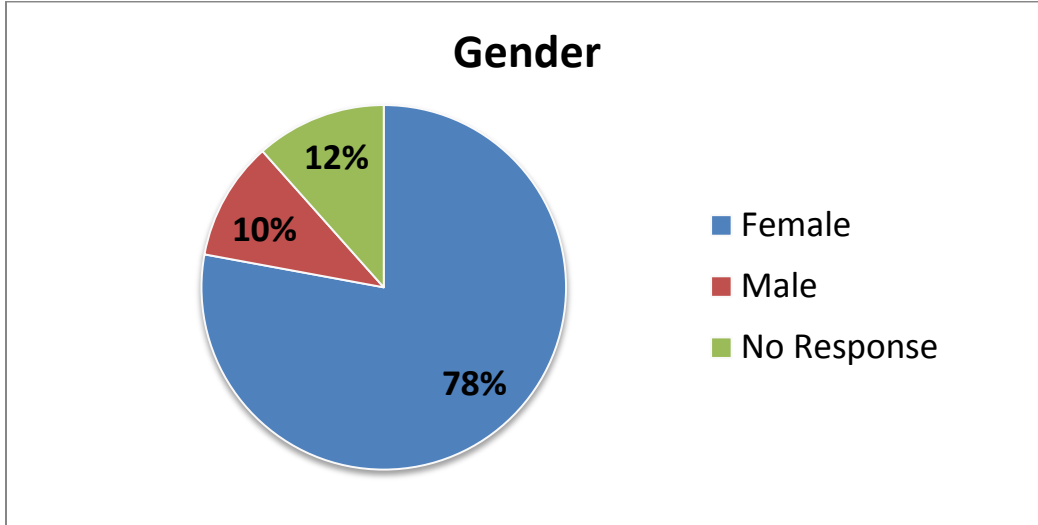
Demographics of Participants in Programs in Suffolk County, New York

A total of three programs were evaluated in Suffolk County, with the largest number of participants involved Discipline Is Not A Dirty Word (45%).



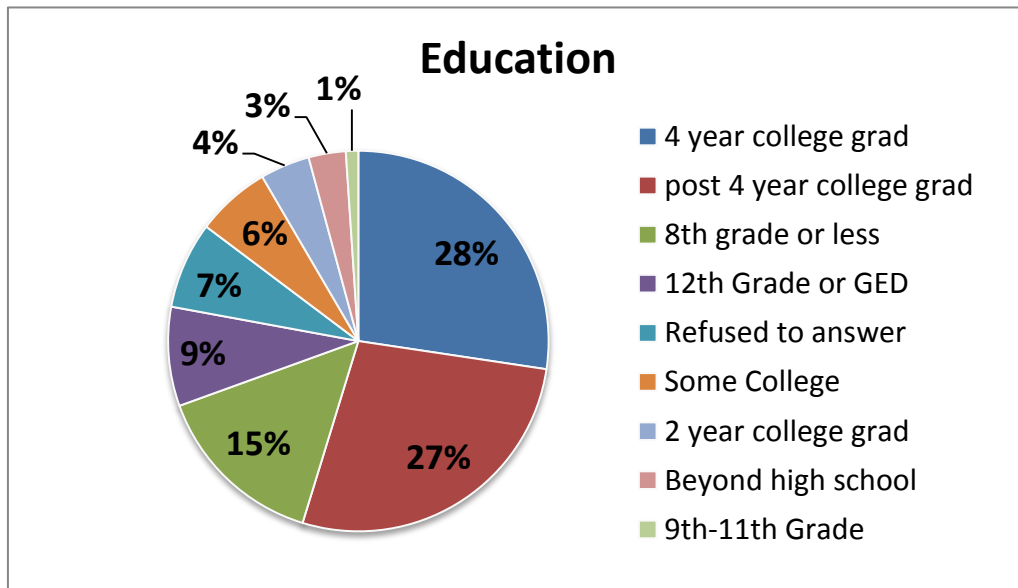
The following summaries use data from 95 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their parent education class.

The majority of participants in the Suffolk County CCE parenting classes were females (78%).



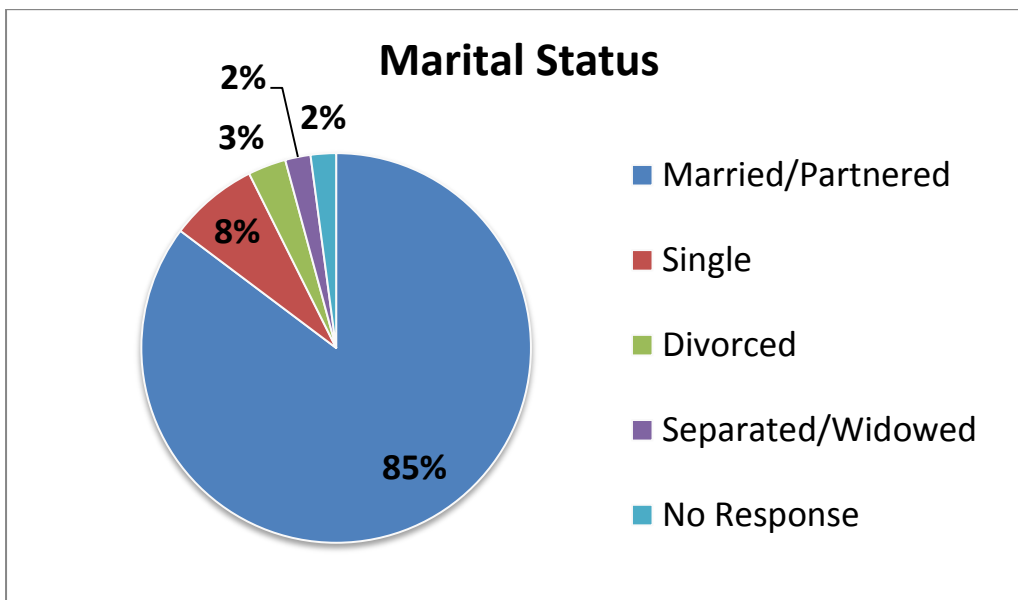
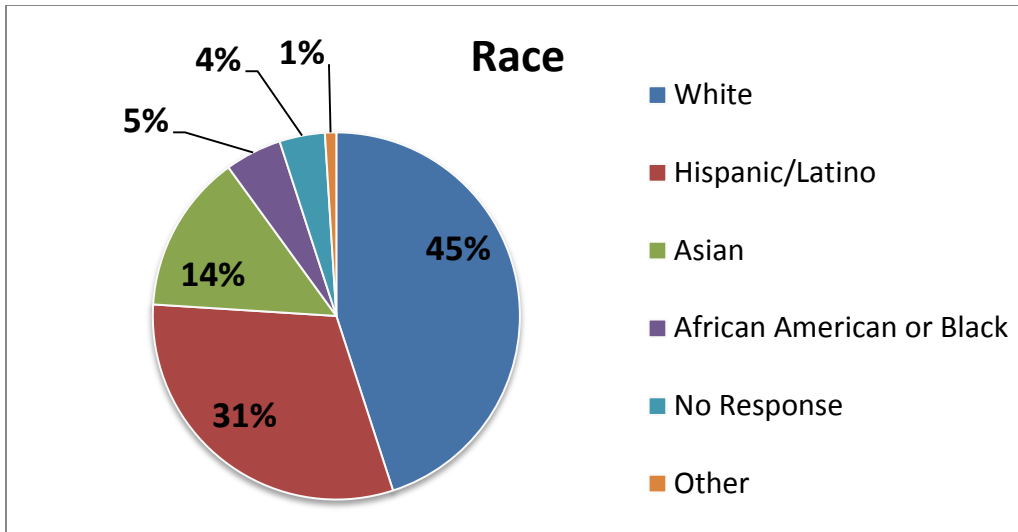
Educational attainment among the participants varied widely, with the greatest number of participants having graduated with a four-year college

degree (28%), followed by those who completed a degree beyond a four-year college program (27%).



The majority of the participants in Suffolk County CCE parent

education classes were white (45%) and 85% were married or partnered.



Pre-Post Survey Results

This evaluation used a pre- and post-test in which the participants were asked to answer two identical surveys—one given at the first class session and another given after the completion of the last parenting class. The survey included ten questions about parenting attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge designed to capture

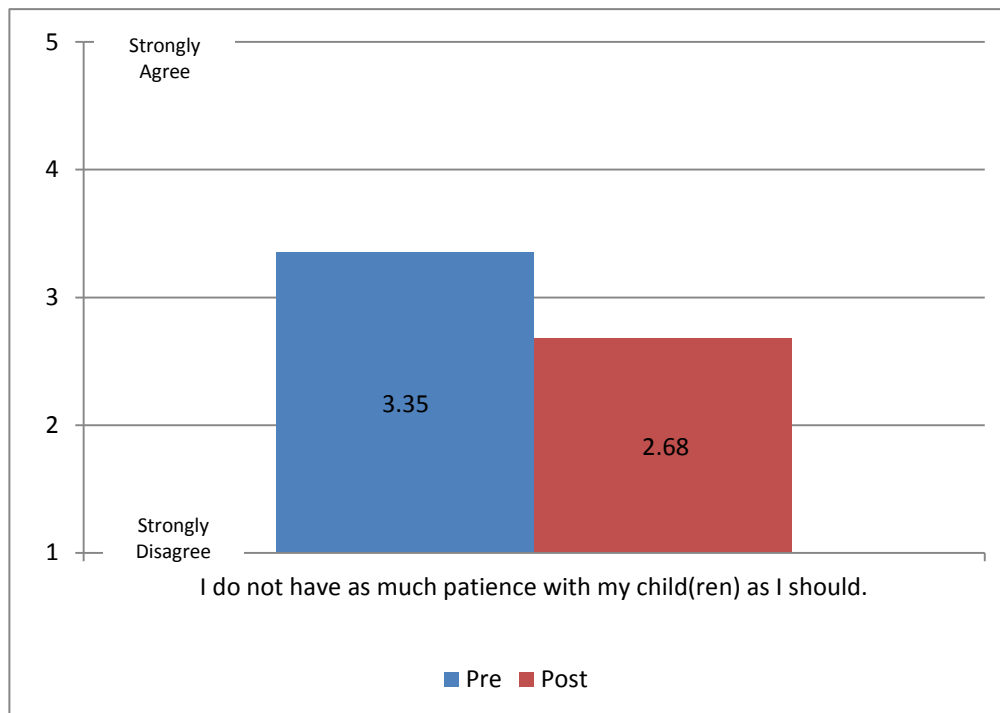
some of what was taught in the class. The pre- post-study design allows researchers to see if attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge change during the course of the workshop. Using this type of research design does not allow one to determine whether taking part in the parent education class *caused* a change in attitudes, behaviors and knowledge;

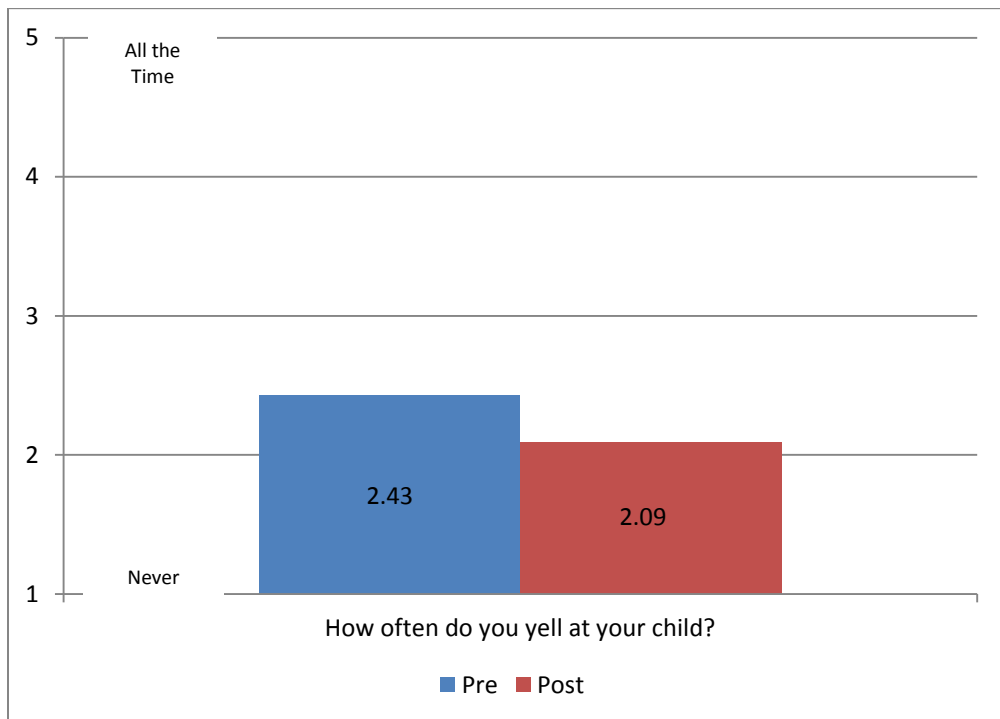
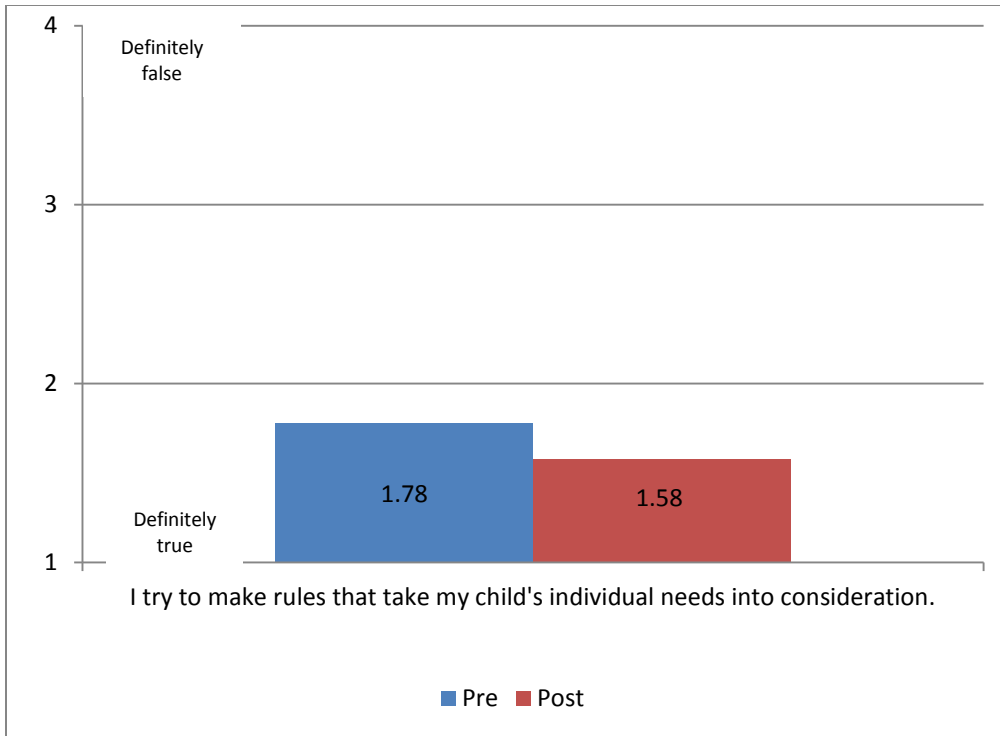
such changes could occur for other reasons outside of the workshop. However, it is possible that any significant pre-to-post changes in parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge that are observed may have resulted from taking part in the program.

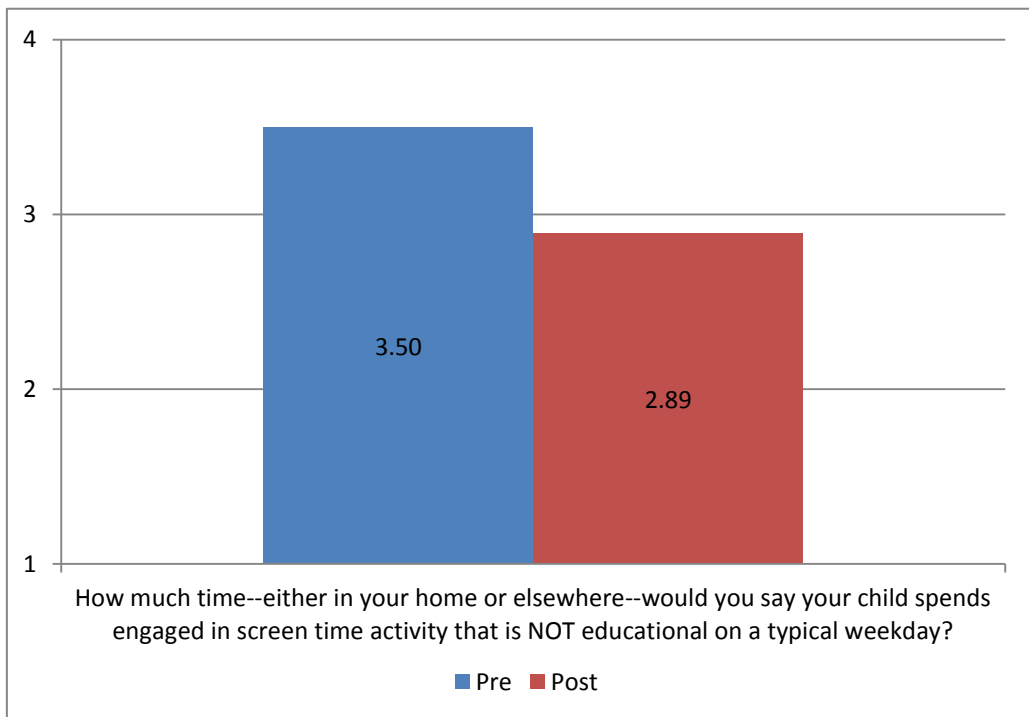
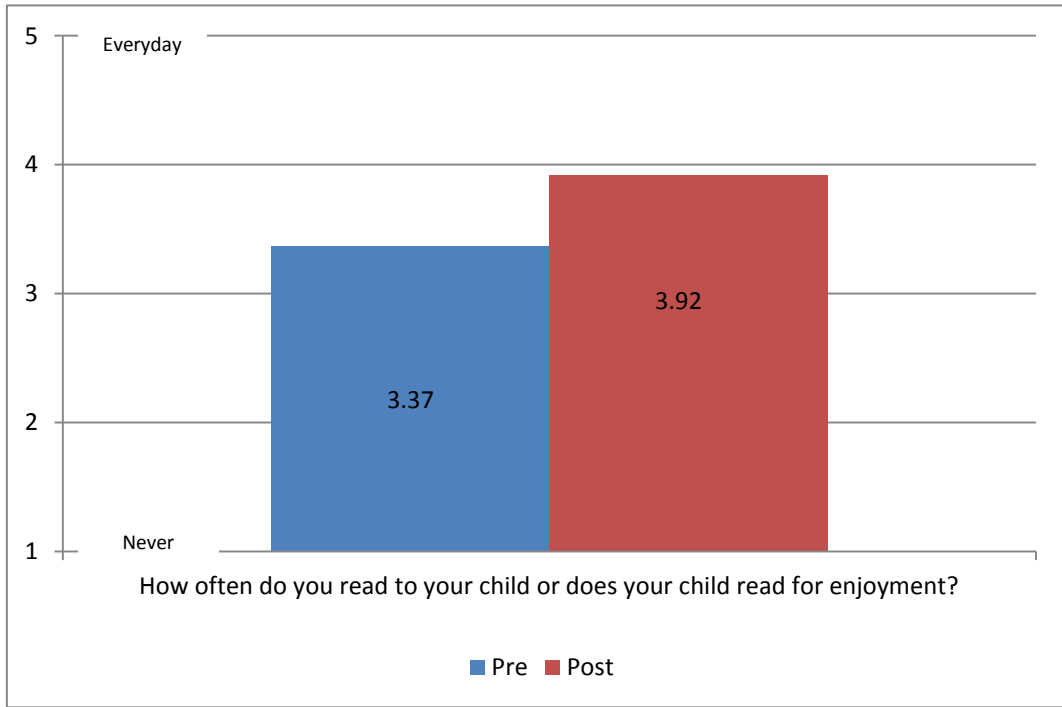
The following evaluation is based on information provided by 66 participants who completed their program and completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. Five of the ten measures tested showed significant improvements from the pre- to the post-test. Specifically, CCE parent education participants reported increased patience with their child, increased confidence in making rules that take their child's needs into

consideration, decreases in how often they yell at their child, increased time spent reading with their child, and decreases in the number of hours their children spend watching television. A p-value generated from a paired t-test was used as a statistical measure to determine whether a change in a given survey question between the pre- and post-test was significant. A p-value of .10 or less was considered statistically significant, and means that we can be 90% certain that the pre-to-post changes in participant responses are not due to chance.

In comparing participants' pre- and post-test survey results, the following questions showed statistically significant changes.







These results indicate that five out of ten measures of parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge improved significantly from the pre- to the post-

test, highlighting areas in which CCE Suffolk County parent education programs may have had a positive impact on their participants.

Visit the *Parenting in Context* project at:

<http://www.human.cornell.edu/pam/outreach/parenting/>

This work was supported by a joint research and extension program funded by Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station (Hatch funds) and Cornell Cooperative Extension (Smith Lever funds) received from Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Eliza Lathrop Cook is the Associate Director of Parenting In Context in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University.



Cornell University
College of Human Ecology

© 2016 Cornell Cooperative Extension

Cornell University offers equal program
and employment opportunities

