



Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Education Programs in Suffolk County 2013-2014

By Eliza Cook & Kimberly Kopko

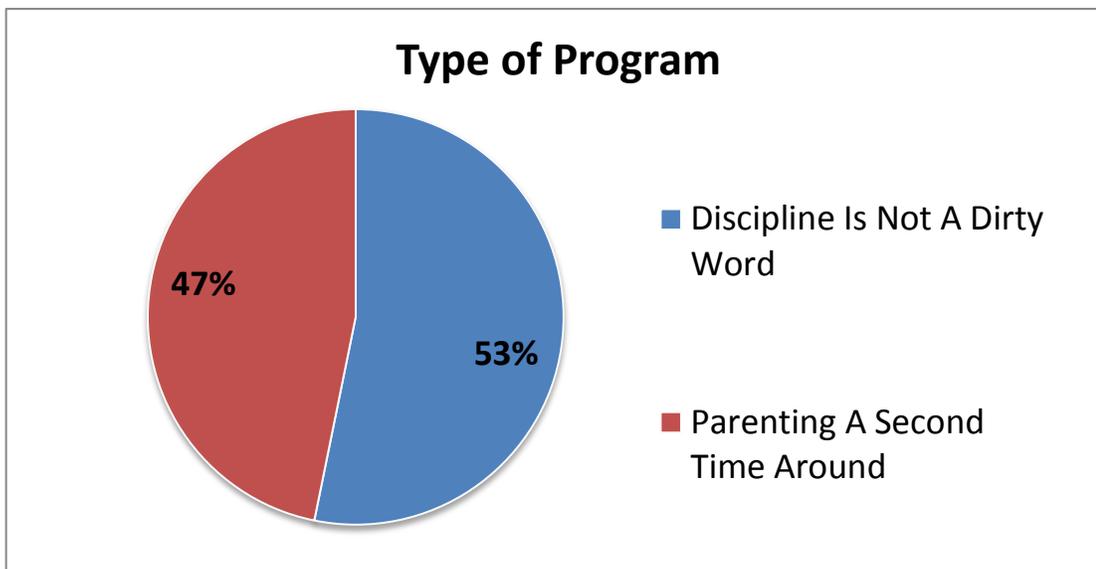
Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Suffolk County offers a variety of programs for parents and caregivers. These programs reach a wide range of families and seek to promote positive parenting and, ultimately, healthy family and child development. This research brief presents data collected from participants in Suffolk County CCE parent education programs from July 2013 to July 2014. Participants included parents and caregivers taking part in programs that comprised 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

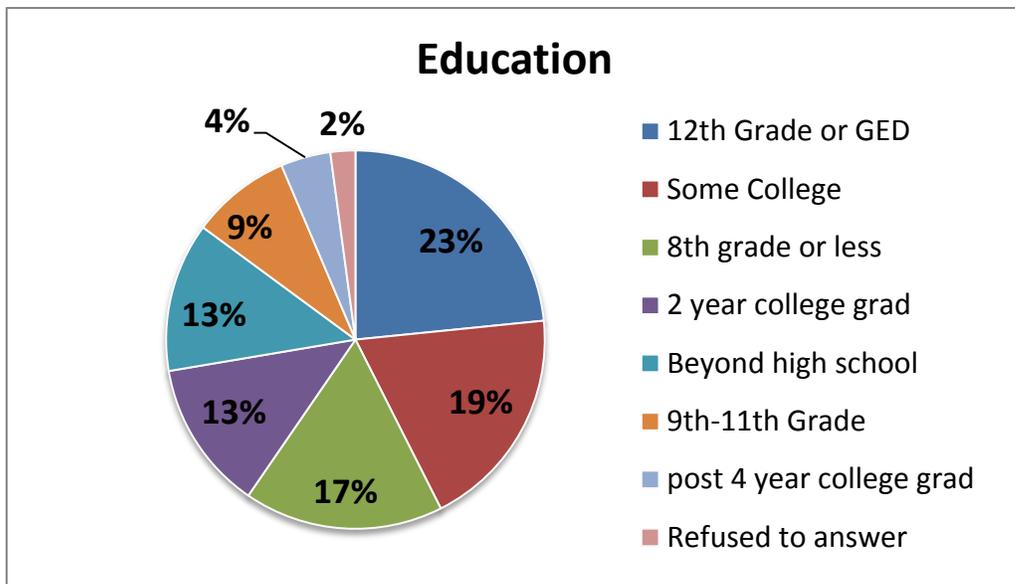
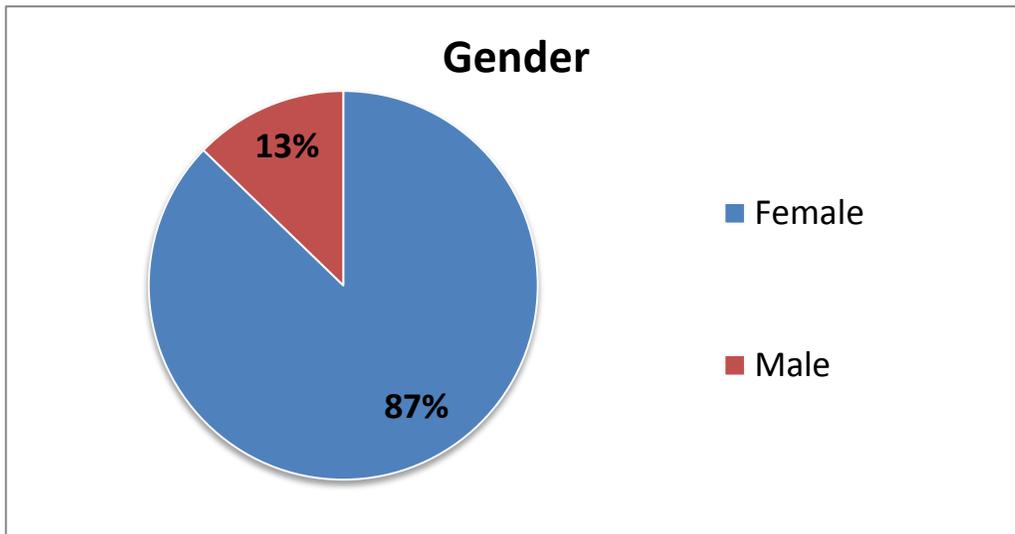
A total of two programs were evaluated in Suffolk County, as shown below. The largest number of participants took part in the Discipline is Not a Dirty Word program (53% of all participants).

The following summaries use data from 47 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their parent education class.



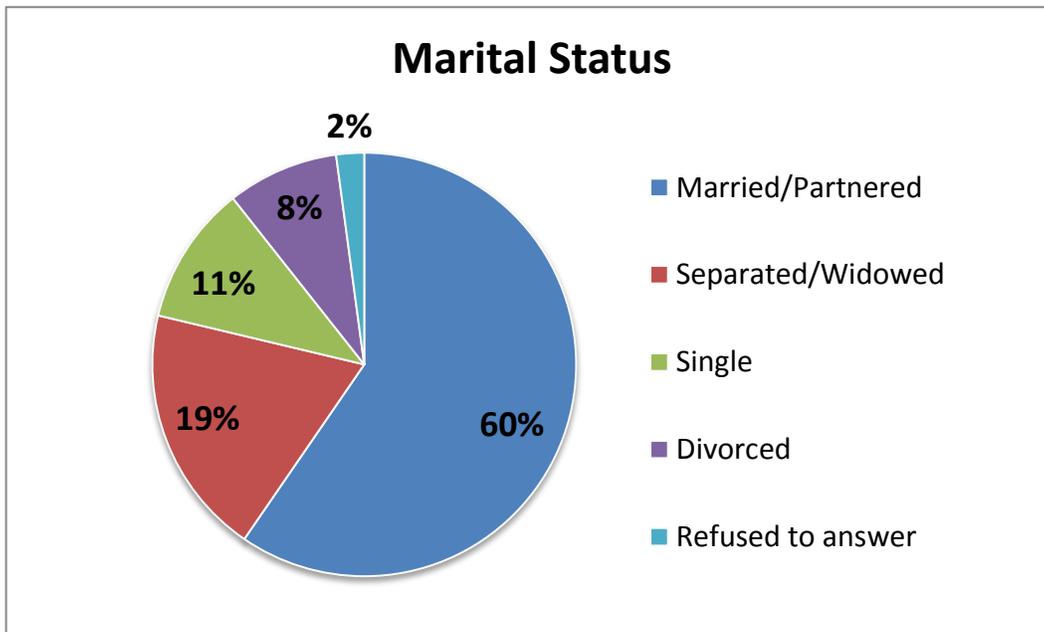
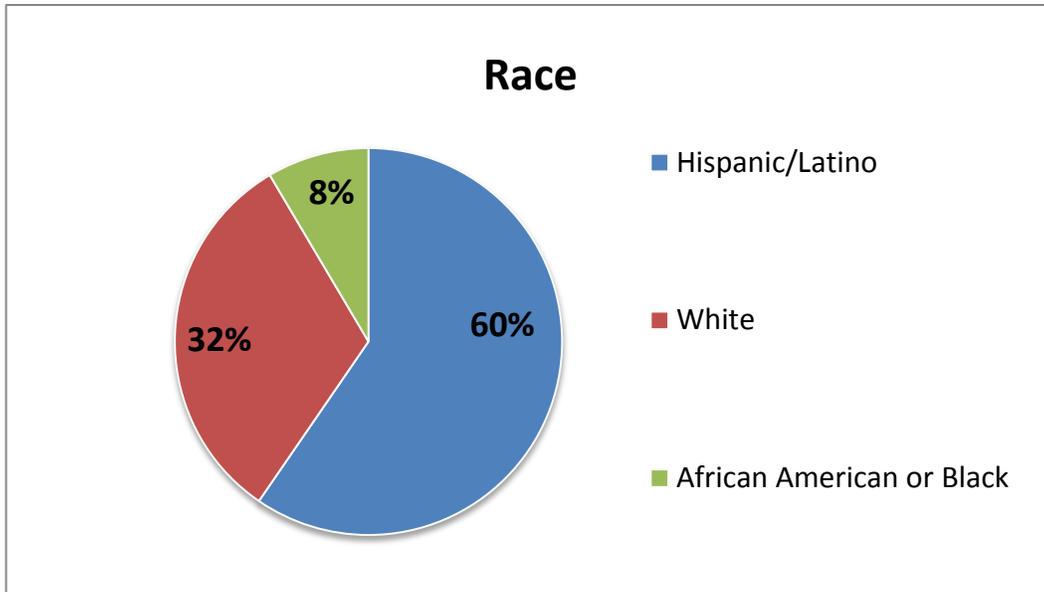
The majority of participants in the Suffolk County CCE parenting classes were females (87%). Educational attainment among the participants varied widely, with the

greatest number of participants having finished their education at 12th grade or a GED (23%), followed by those who attended, but did not complete college (19%).



The majority of the participants in Suffolk County CCE parent education classes were white (60%)

and the most common marital status was married or partnered (87%).



Pre-Post Survey Results

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

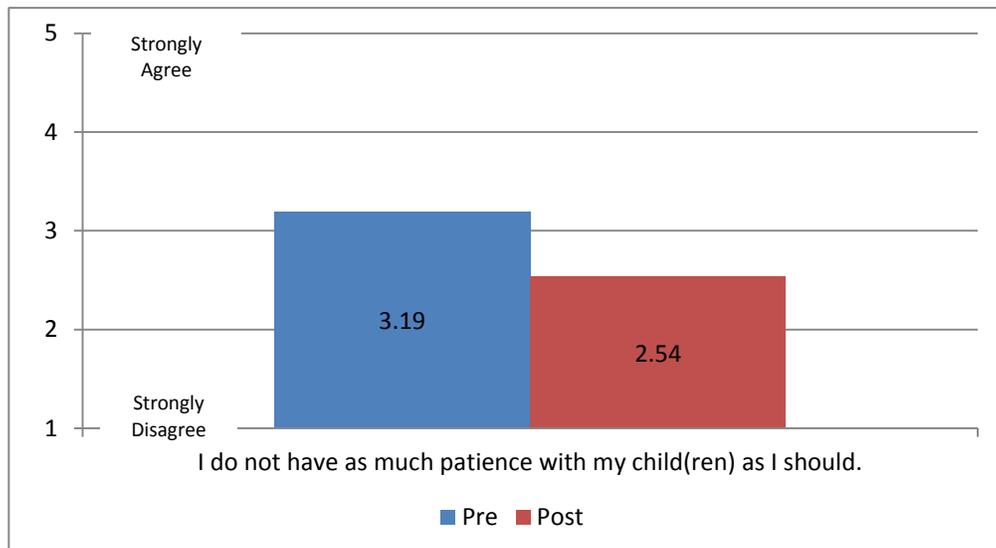
questions about parenting attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge designed to capture some of what was taught in the class. The pre- post-study design allows researchers to see if attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge change during the course of the workshop. Using this type of research design does not allow one to determine

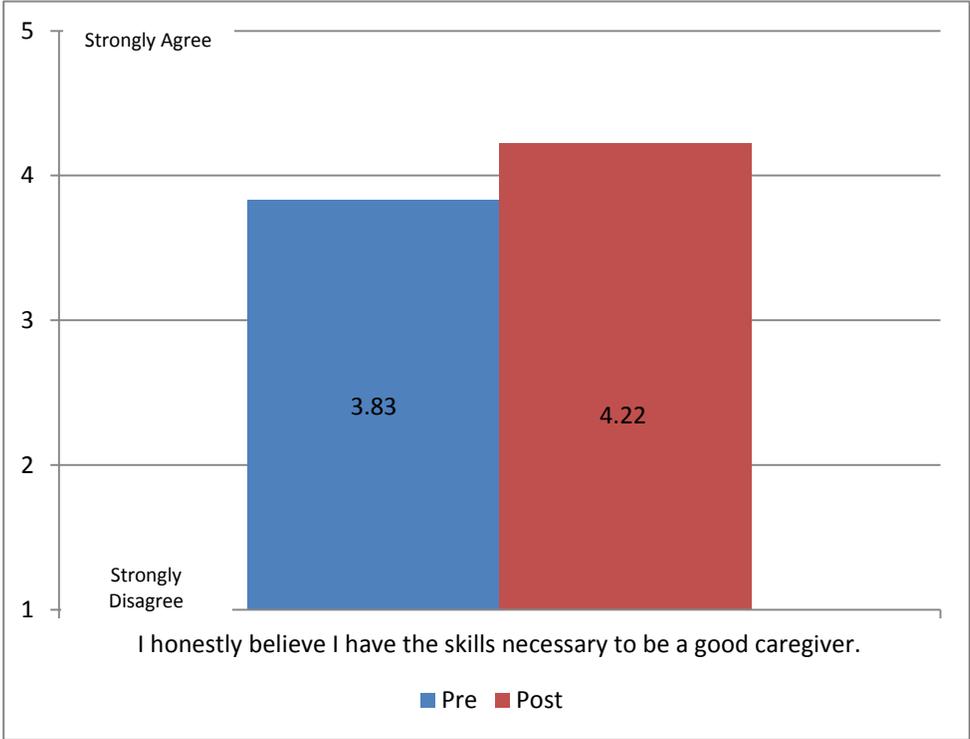
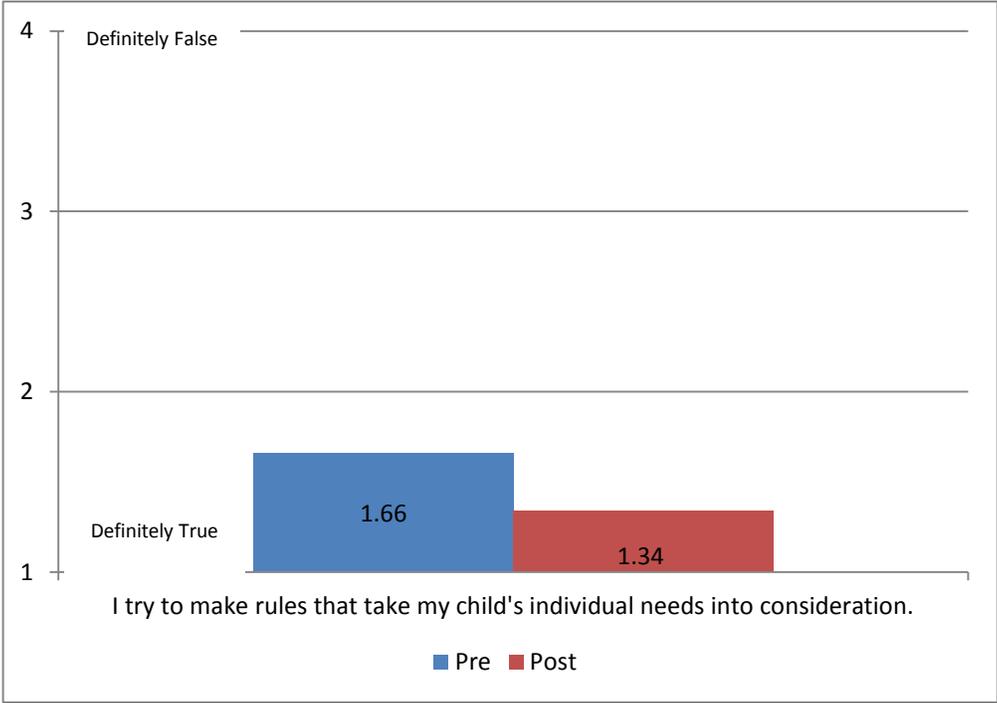
whether taking part in the parent education class *caused* a change in attitudes, behaviors and knowledge; such changes could occur for other reasons outside of the workshop. However, it is possible that any significant pre-to-post changes in parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge that are observed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

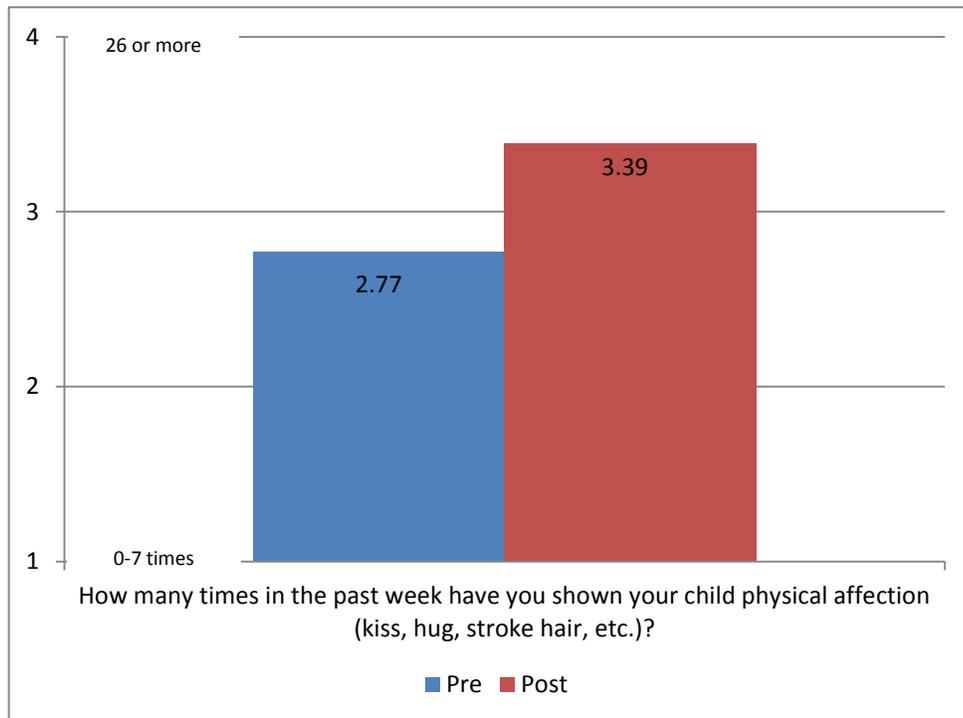
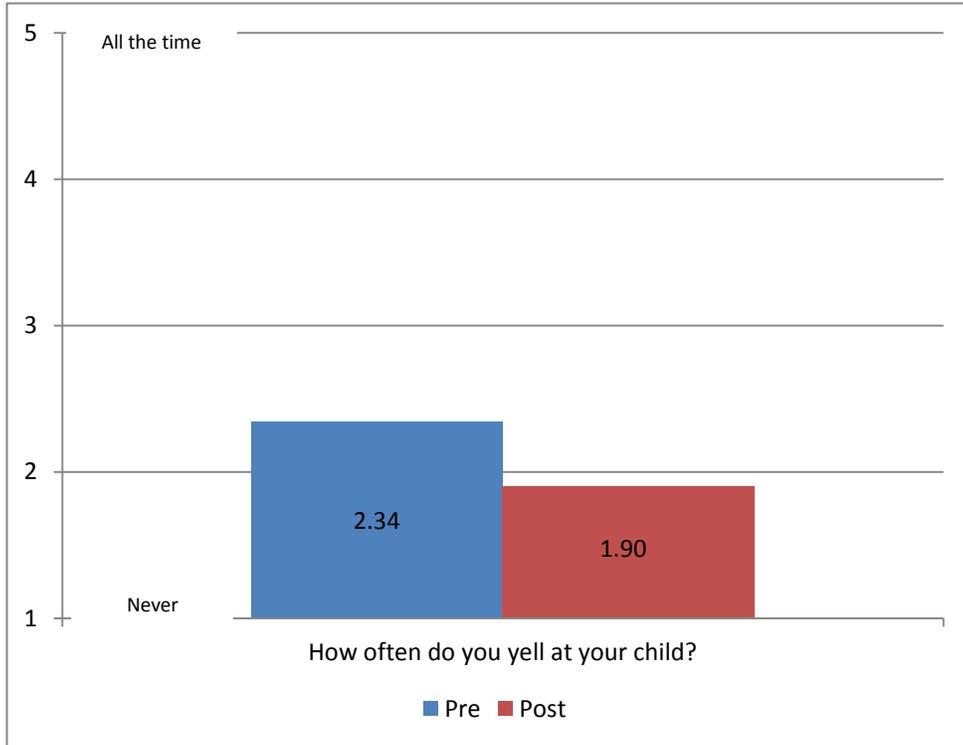
The following evaluation is based on information provided by 41 participants, who completed their program and completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. Seven of the ten measures tested showed significant improvements from the pre- to the post-test. Specifically, participants of parent education classes in CCE of Suffolk County reported increased patience with their child, an increased confidence in making rules which take their child's

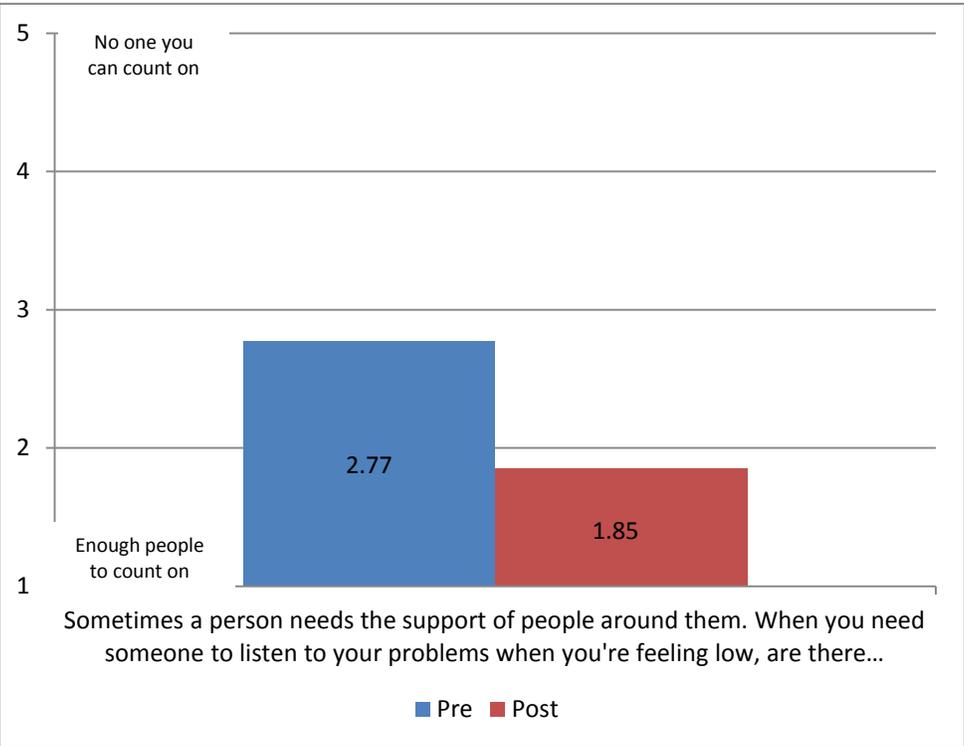
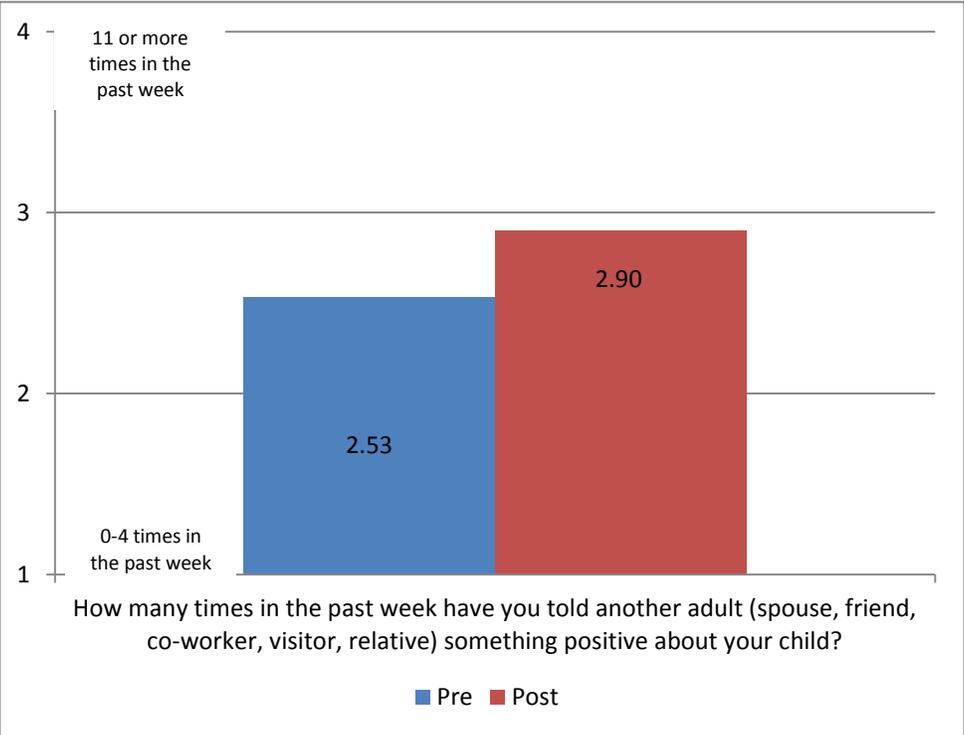
needs into consideration, the skills necessary to be a good caregiver, decreases in how often they yell at their child, increase in the amount of affection they show to their child, an increase in communicating something positive about their child with other adults, and increased belief that they have enough people to count on when needed.

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 seven 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 have a positive impact on their participants.

Visit the *Parenting in Context* project at:

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

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