



Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Education Programs in Tompkins County

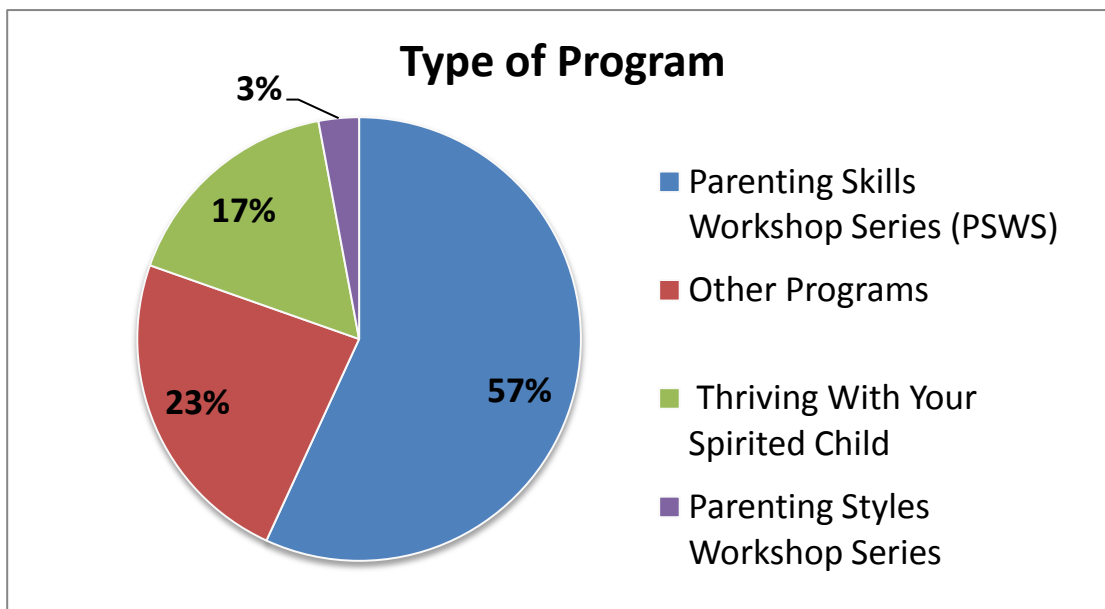
By Eliza Cook, Rachel Dunifon, and Kimberly Kopko

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Tompkins 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 Tompkins County CCE parent education programs from July 2011 to July 2012. 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.

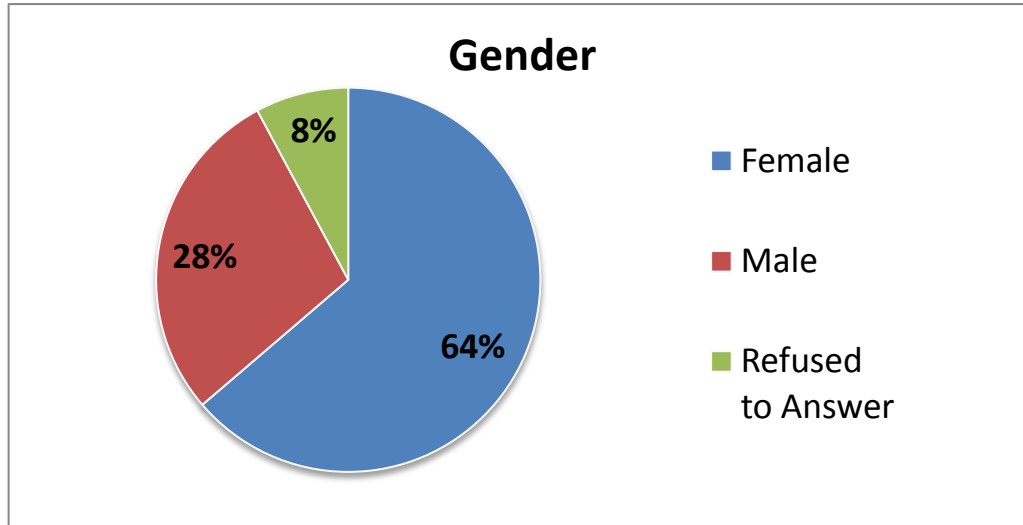
Demographics of Participants in Programs in Tompkins County, New York

A total of three programs were evaluated in Tompkins County, as shown below. The largest number of participants took part in the Parenting Skills Workshop Series (57% of all participants).



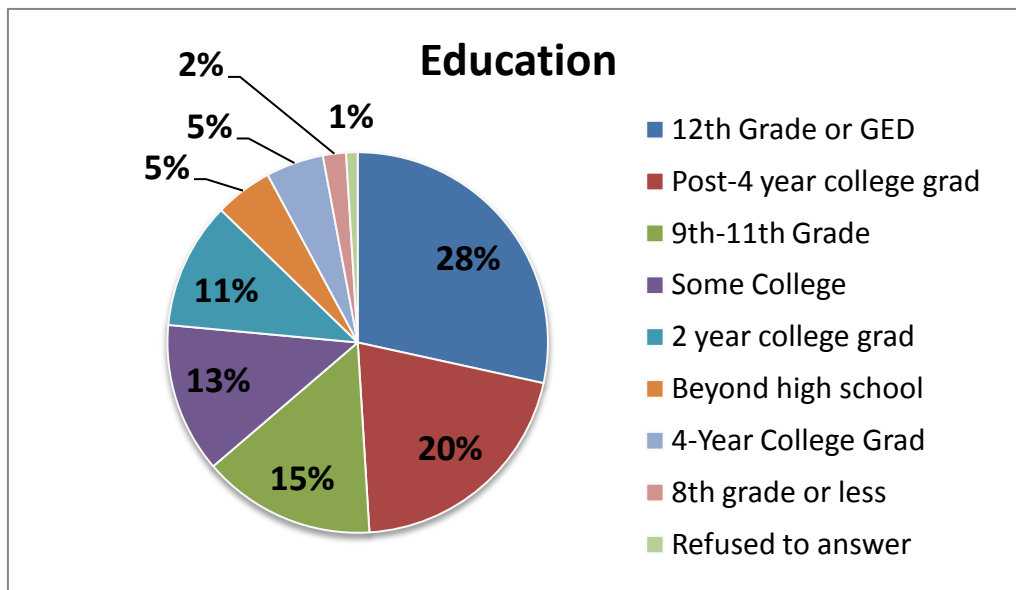
The following summaries use data from 102 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their parent education class.

The majority of participants in the Tompkins County CCE parenting classes were females (64%).



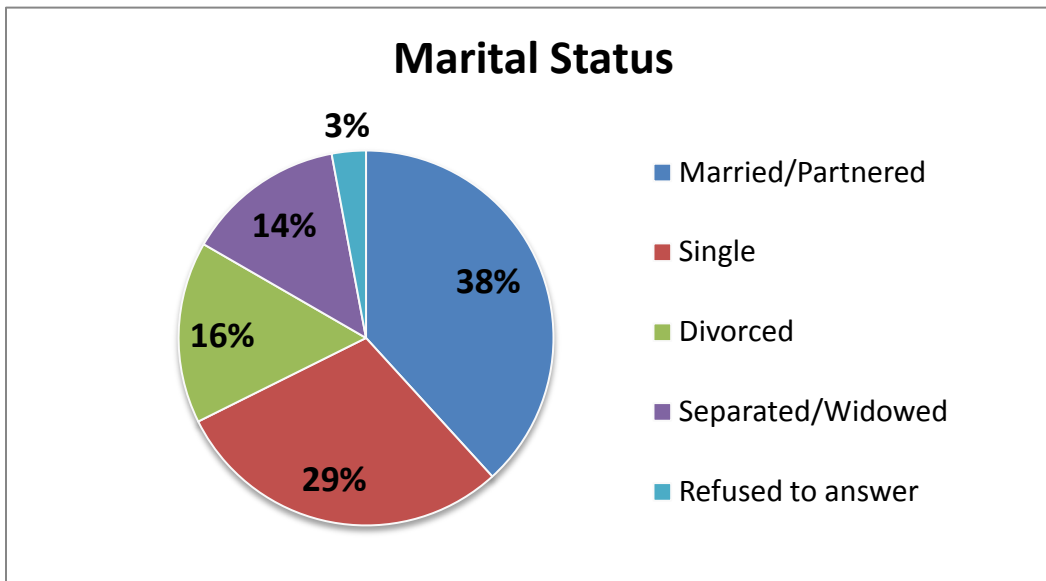
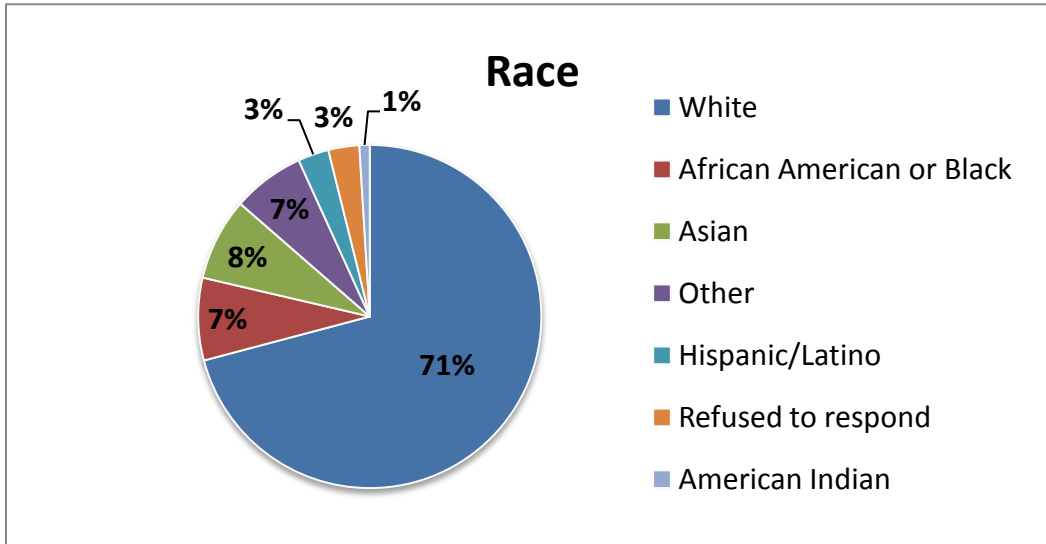
Educational attainment among the participants varied widely, with the greatest number of participants having finished their education at 12th grade

or a GED (28%), followed by those who had completed more than a four-year college degree (20%).



The majority of the participants in Tompkins County CCE parent education classes were white (71%)

and the most common marital status was married or partnered (38%).



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.

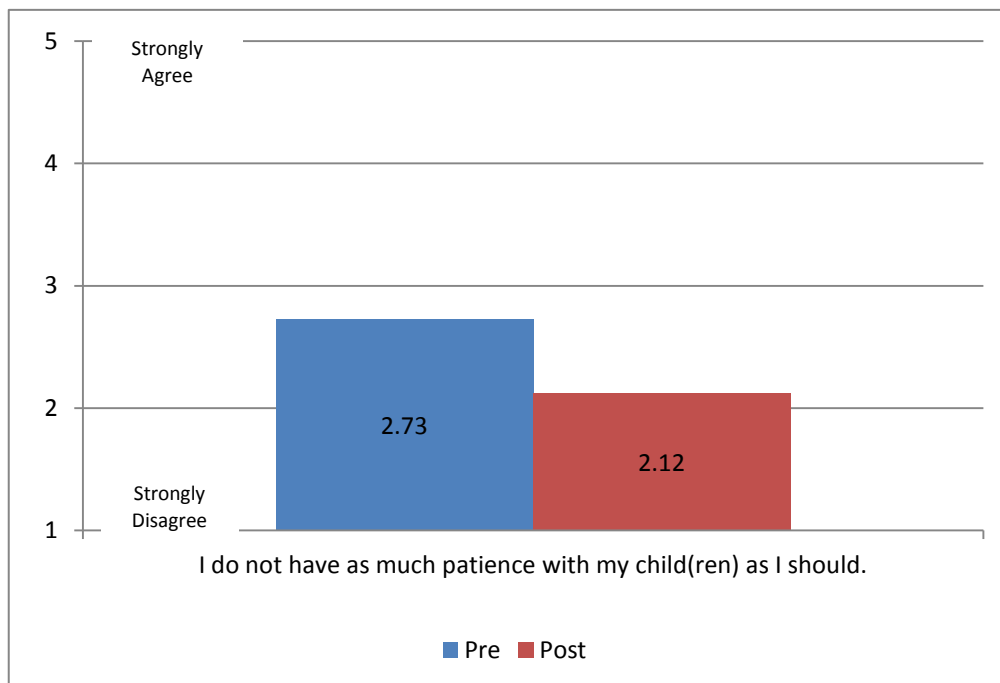
Using this type of research design does not allow one to determine whether taking part in the parent education class *caused* a change in knowledge, attitude or behaviors; such changes could occur for other reasons outside of the workshop. However, it is possible that any significant pre-to-post changes in parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge that are observed may have resulted from taking part in the program.

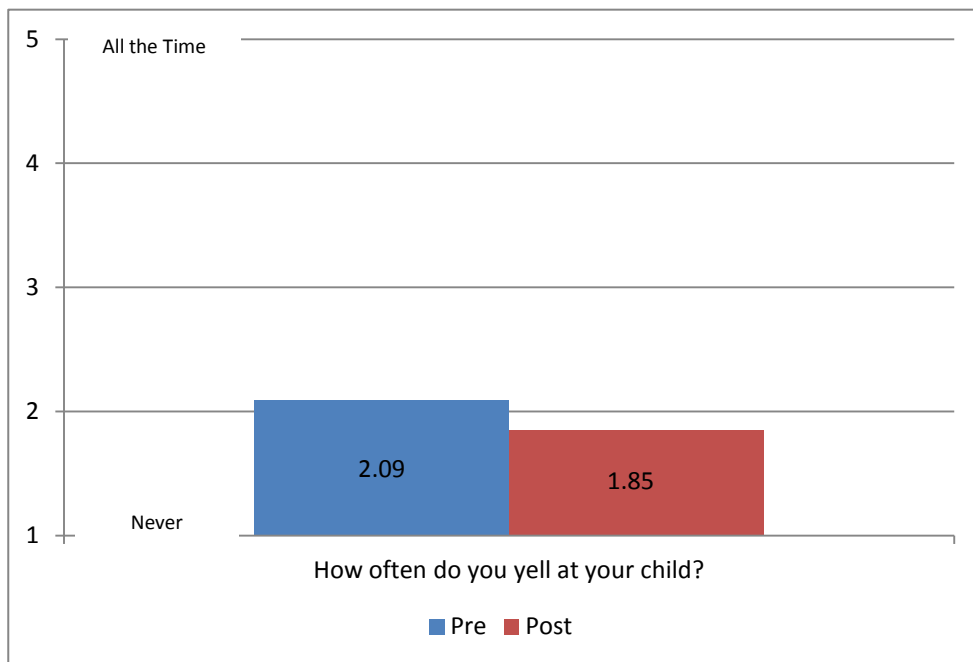
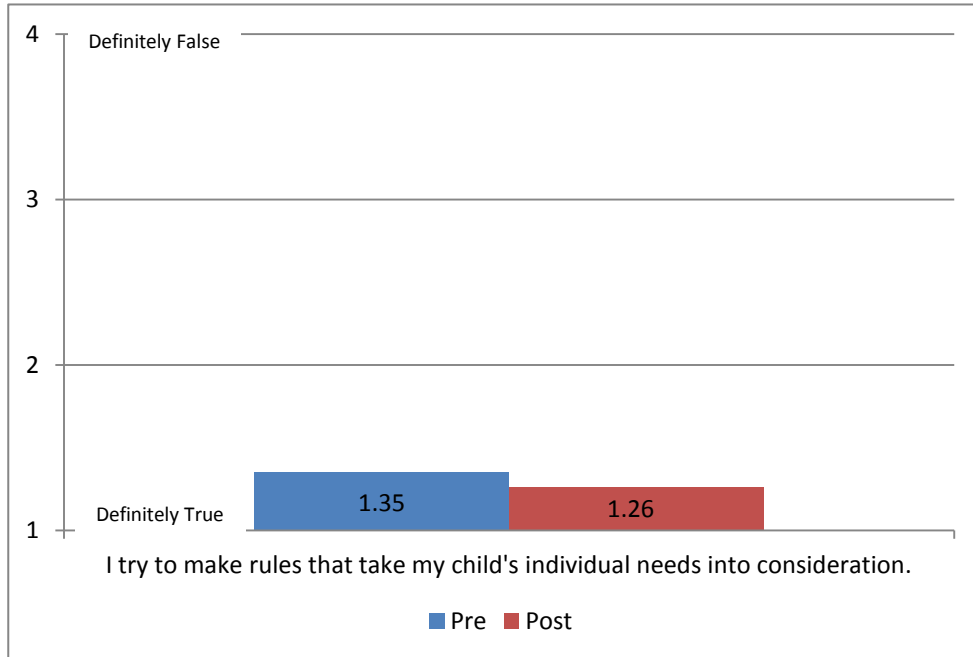
The following evaluation is based on information provided by 52 participants, who completed their program and completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. Three of the ten measures tested showed significant improvements from the pre- to the post-test. Specifically, participants of parent education

classes in CCE of Tompkins County reported increased patience with their child, an increased confidence in making rules which take their child's needs into consideration, and decreases in how often they yell at their child.

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% sure 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 three out of ten measures of parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge improved significantly from the pre- to the

post-test, highlighting areas in which CCE Tompkins 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/>

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

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