

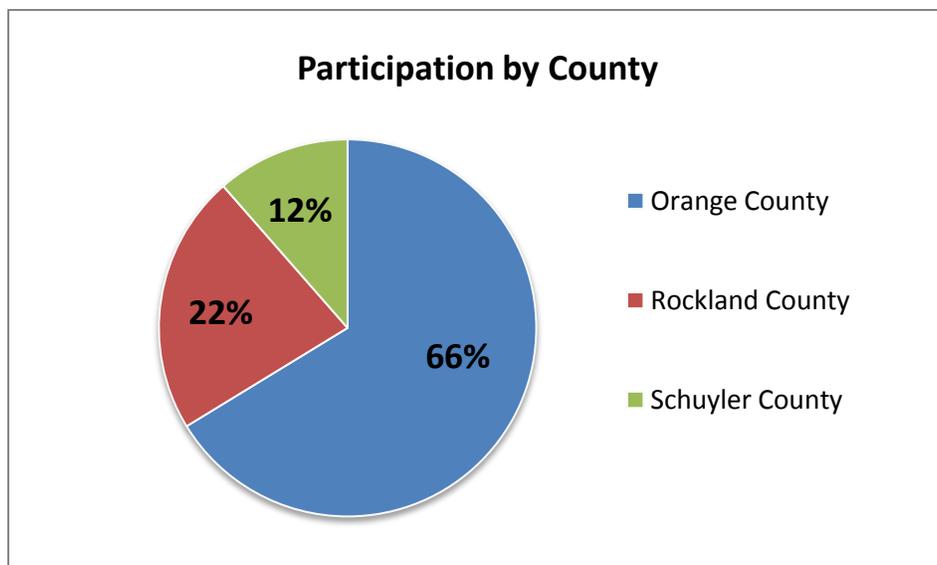


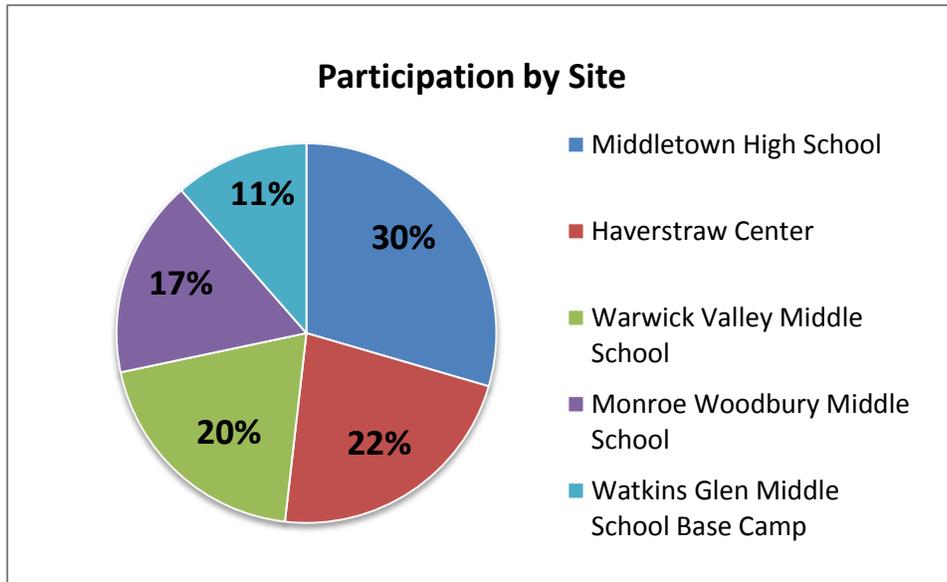
Eliza Lathrop Cook  
Rachel Dunifon  
Kimberly Kopko

## Strengthening Families Program Statewide Report

Strengthening Families is a parent, youth and family skills-building curriculum designed to prevent teen substance abuse and other behavior problems, strengthen parenting skills, and build family strengths. This program was developed by professionals at Iowa State University Extension. The program is delivered in 7 two-hour sessions where parents and youth meet separately for the first hour and then families practice skills together during the second hour. Sessions are highly interactive and include role-playing, discussions, learning games, and family projects.

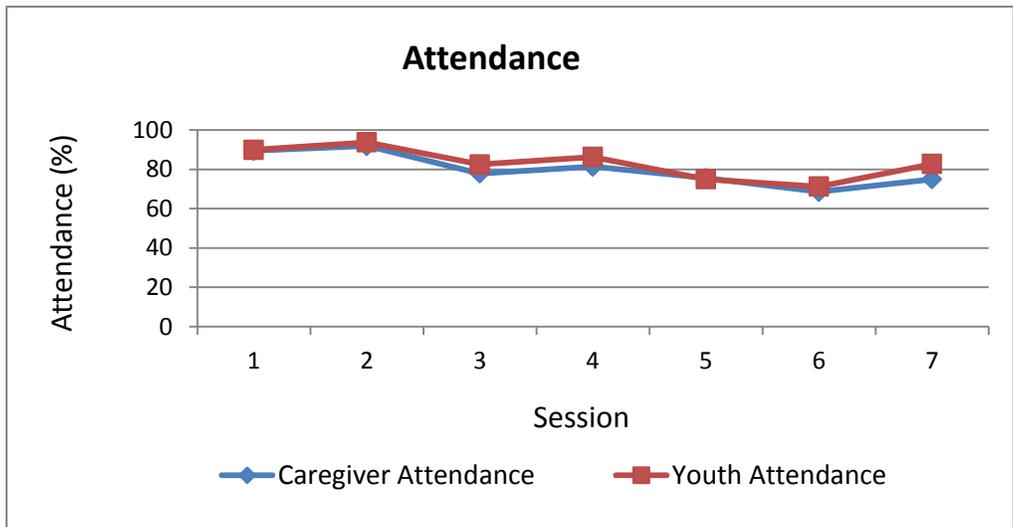
Each session contains a variety of activities. This research brief presents data collected from participants in the Strengthening Families Program across New York State between September 2010 and July 2011. Participants include youth and caregivers who attended one of the six available series in the following counties: Orange, Rockland, and Schuyler; at one of the following locations: Haverstraw Center, Middletown High School, Monroe Woodbury Middle School, Warwick Valley Middle School, and Watkins Glen Middle School Base Camp.





Eighty-six caregivers and 80 youth participated in the Strengthening Families Program. The average

attendance for caregivers was 77.8% while the average attendance for youth was 80%<sup>1</sup>.

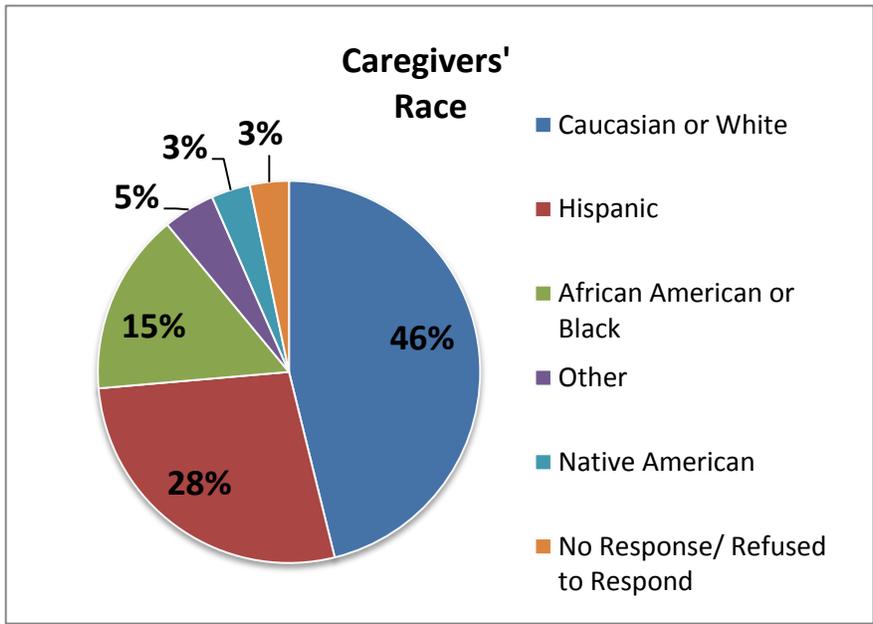
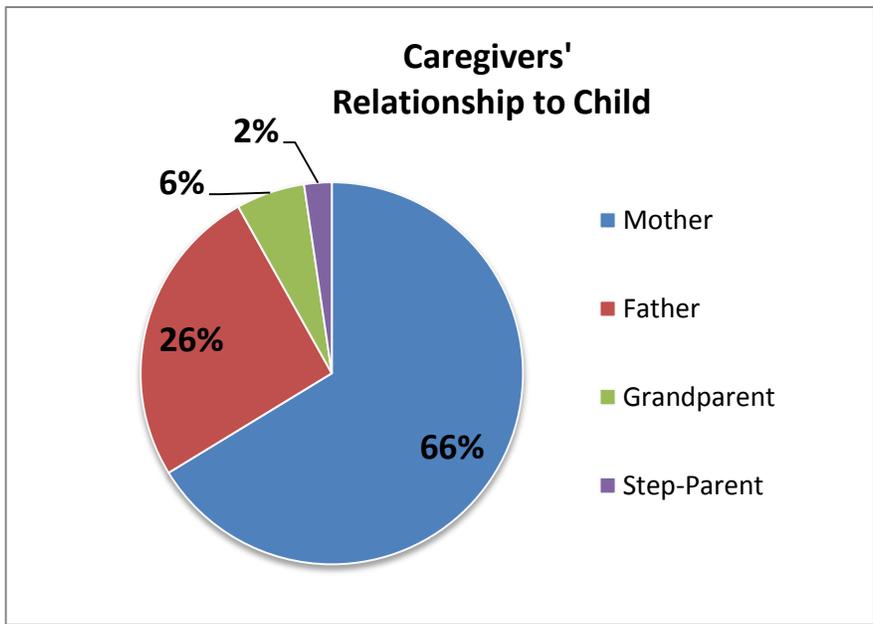


**Caregiver Demographics:**

The following summaries use data of the 86 caregivers who participated in the program. The overwhelming majority of participants were mothers

(66%) and the average age of caregivers was 45.3 years. In addition, most of caregivers who participated in the Strengthening Families program were Caucasian (46%).

<sup>1</sup> Rockland County combined sessions six and seven into one final session. Thus, the attendance graph does not include caregiver and youth attendance results for Rockland County in session seven.

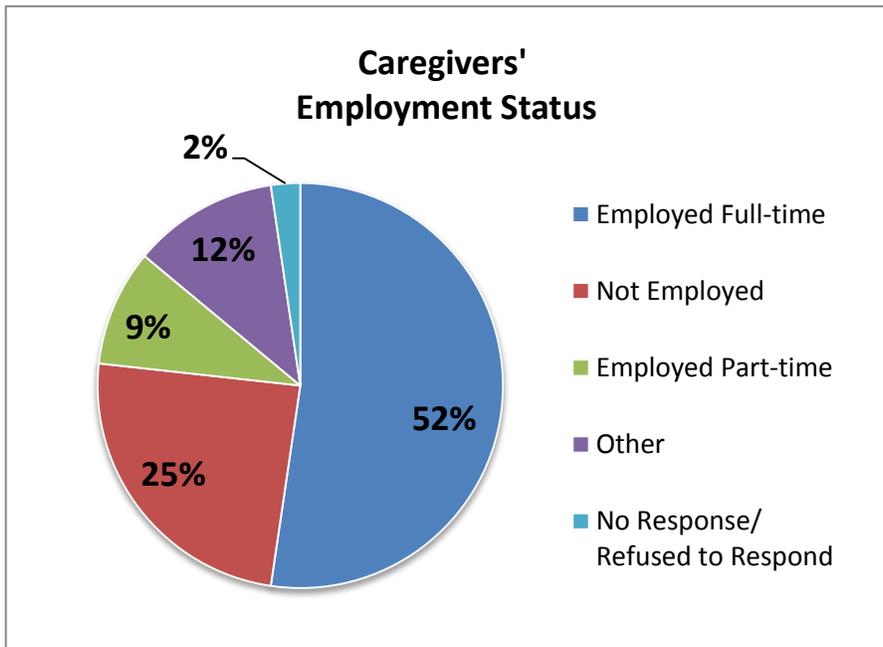
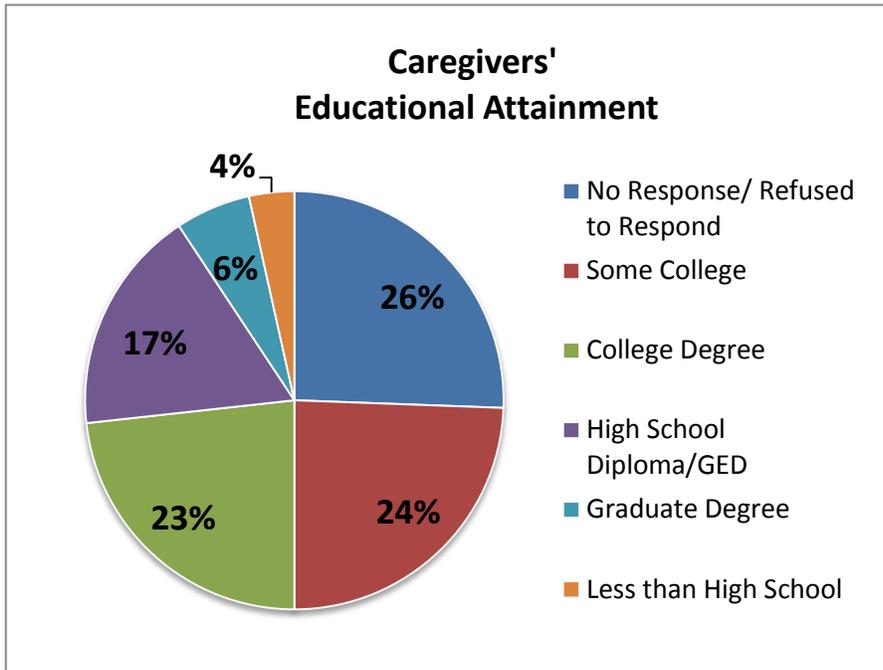


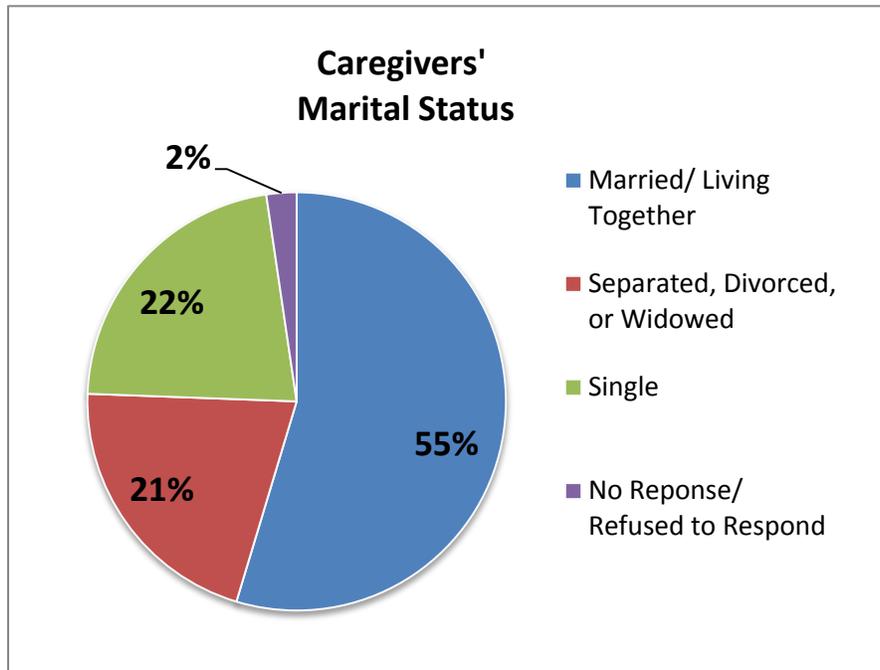
Educational attainment ranged from High School Diploma/GED to obtaining a Graduate Degree with the largest percentage of caregivers who responded having some college experience (24%). Employment status varied, with a majority of caregivers

reporting full time employment (52%), and not employed as the second largest category (25%). The overwhelming majority of caregivers reported being married or partnered (55%).

Caregivers reported an average number of 2.2 children living at home. The average age of the youngest child was 9.4 years while

the average age of the oldest was 13.8 years. Children's ages ranged from six months to 33 years.

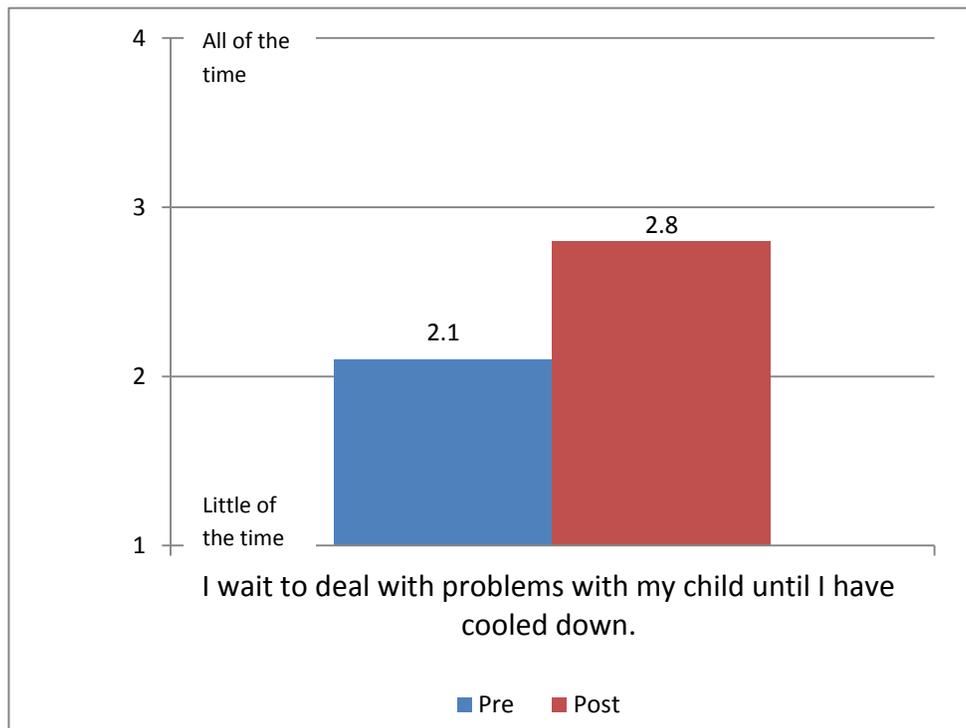


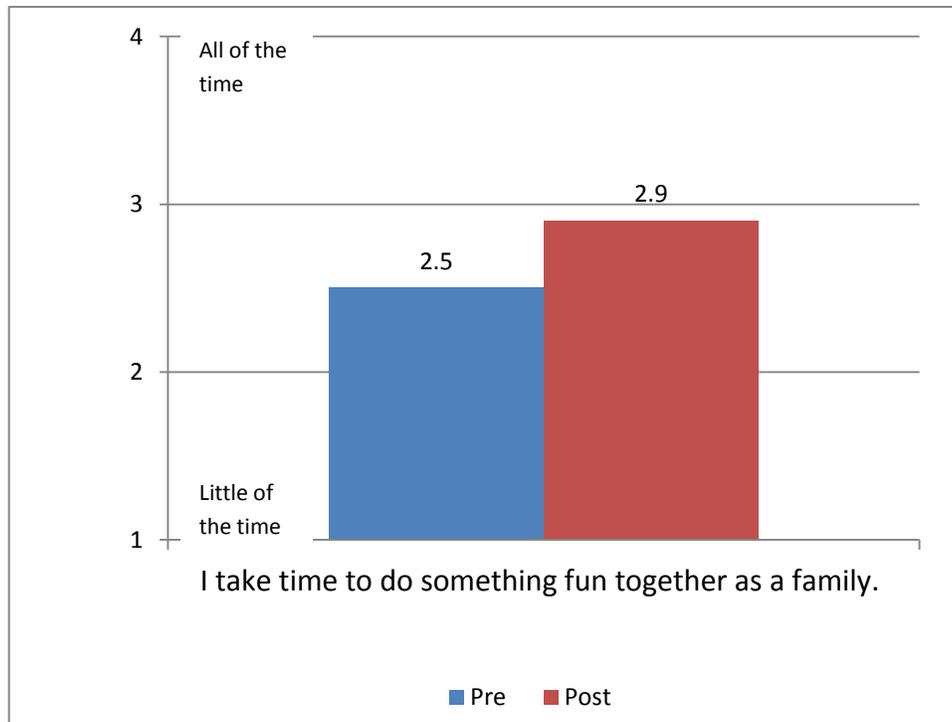
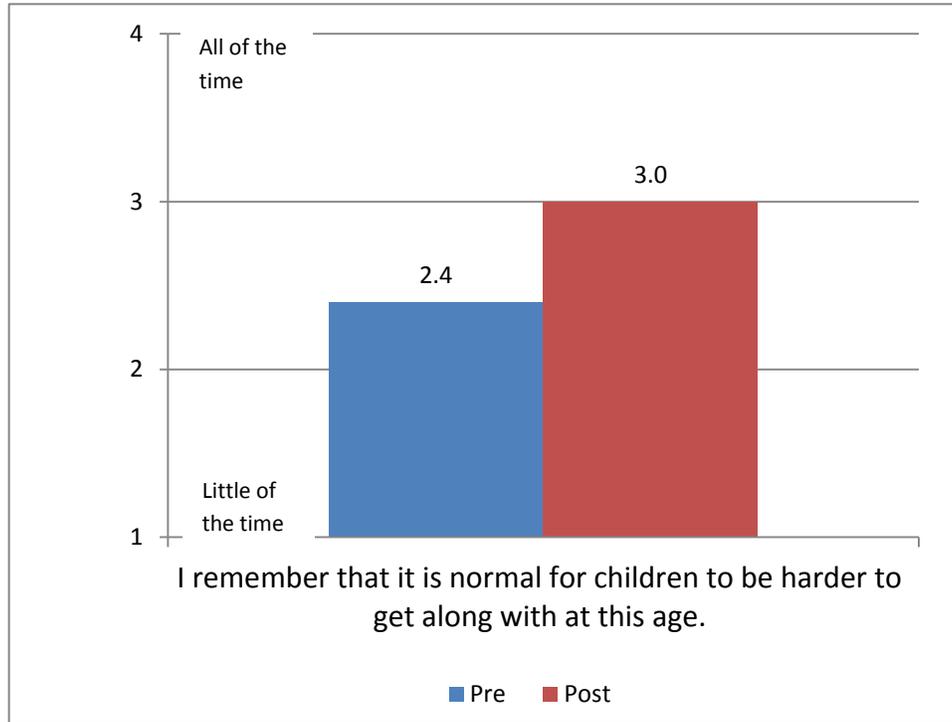


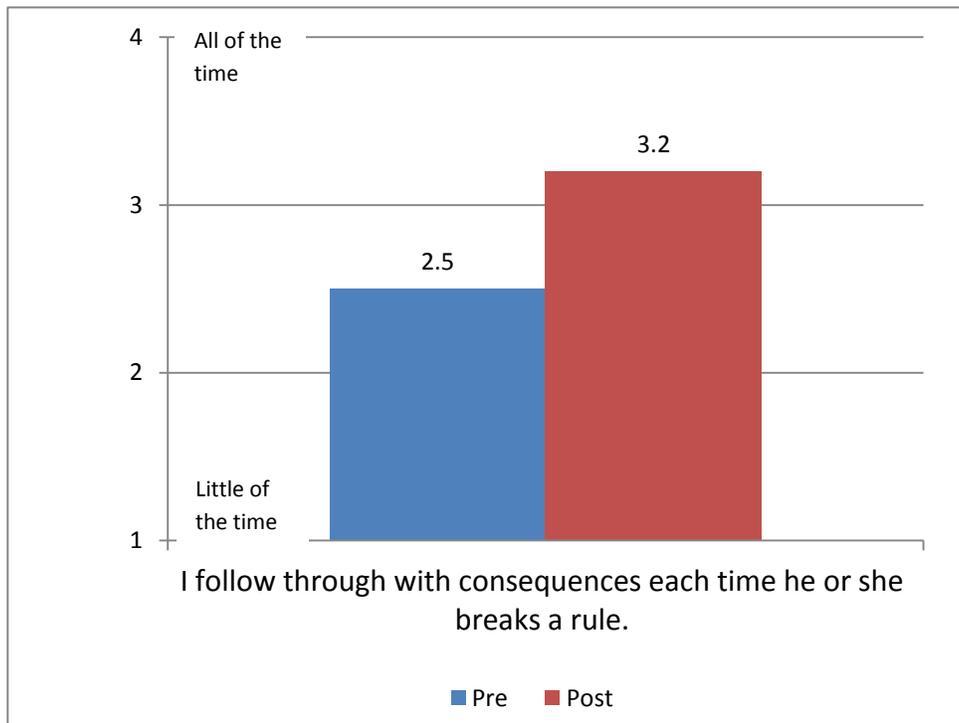
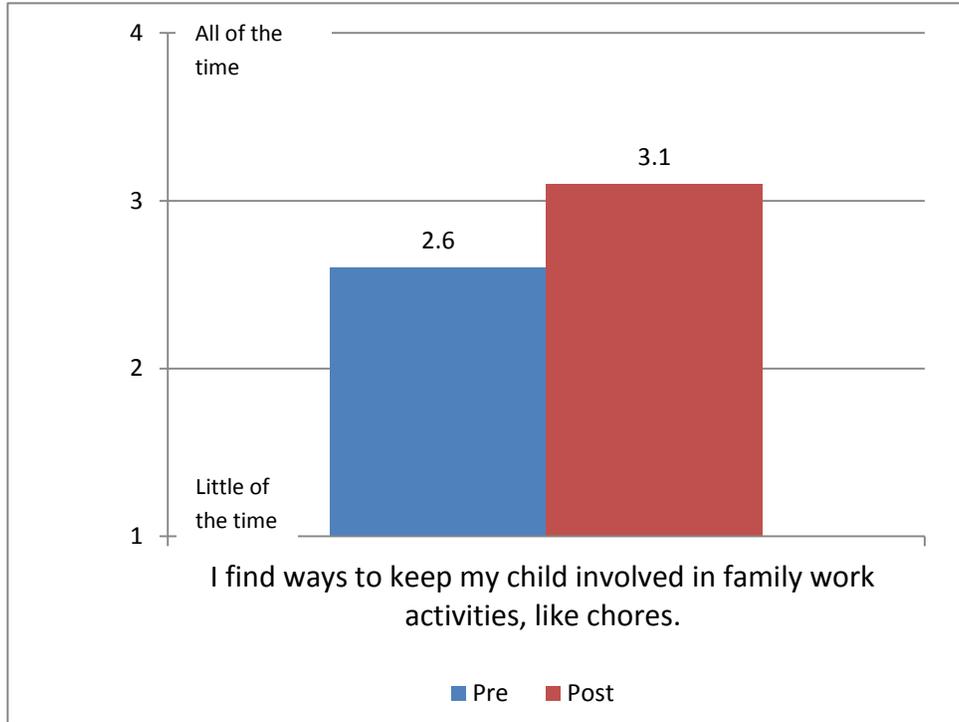
**Caregiver Results:**

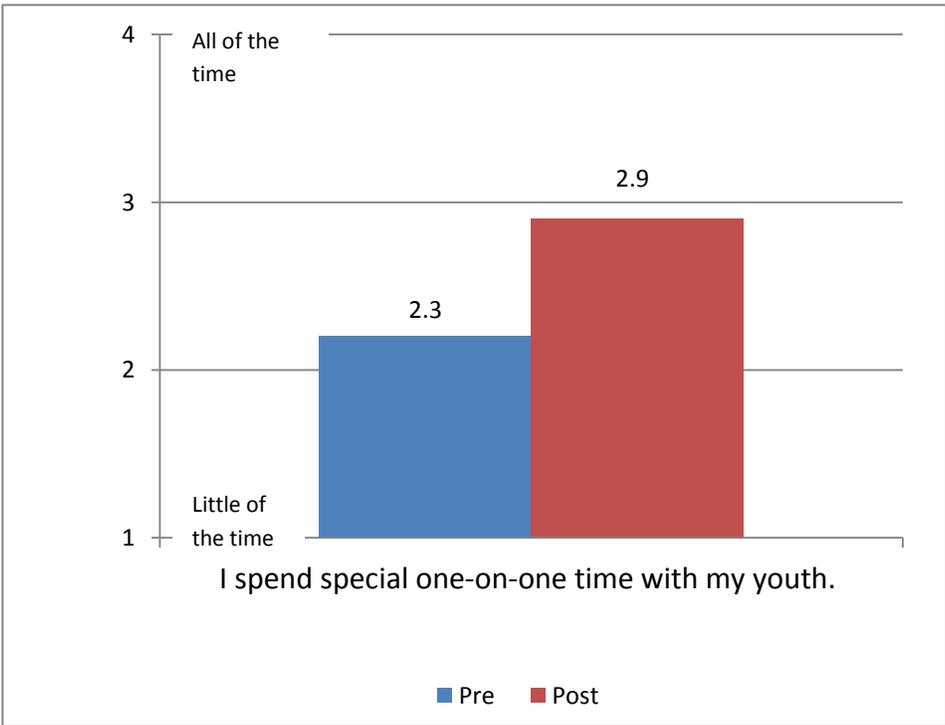
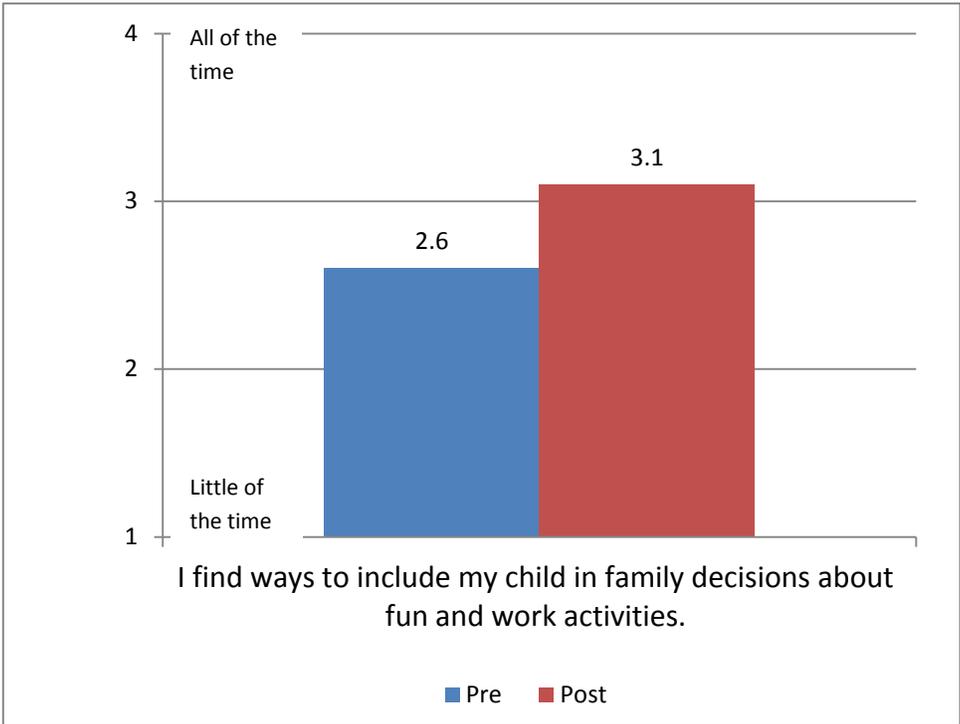
In comparing the pre- and post-test survey results, the following 14 questions showed significant *positive*

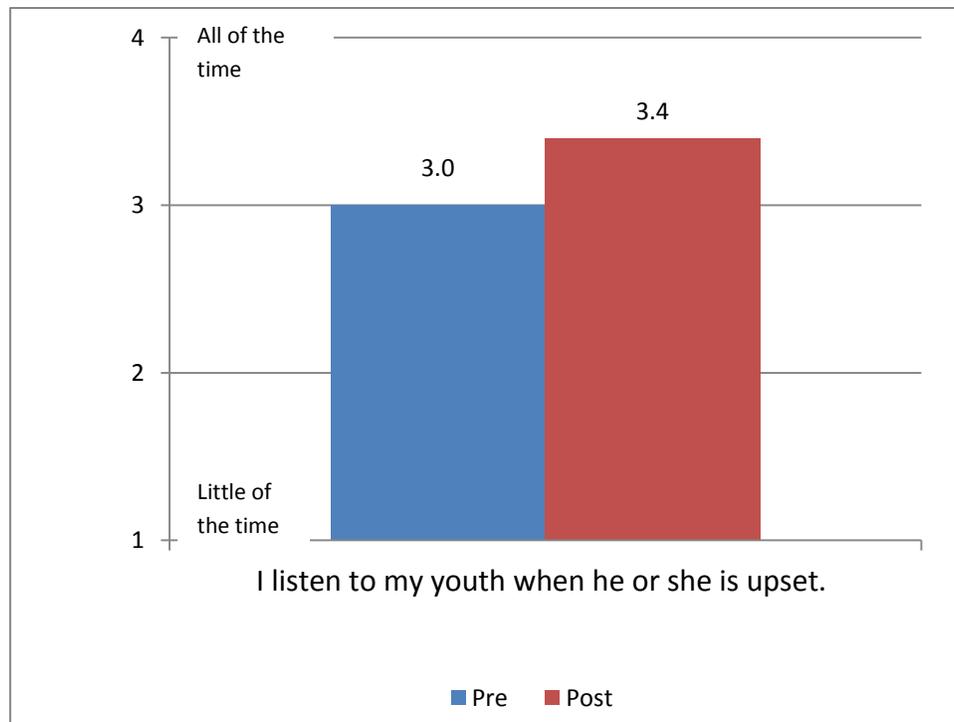
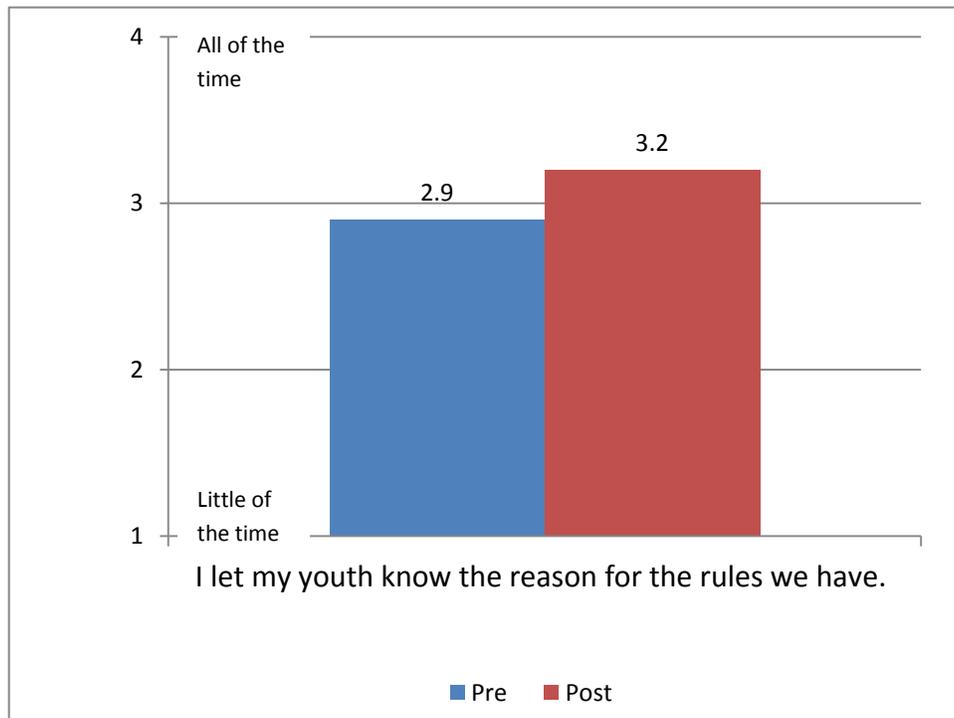
changes at the 1% level, indicating that results were highly significant with 99% certainty that the results are not due to chance.

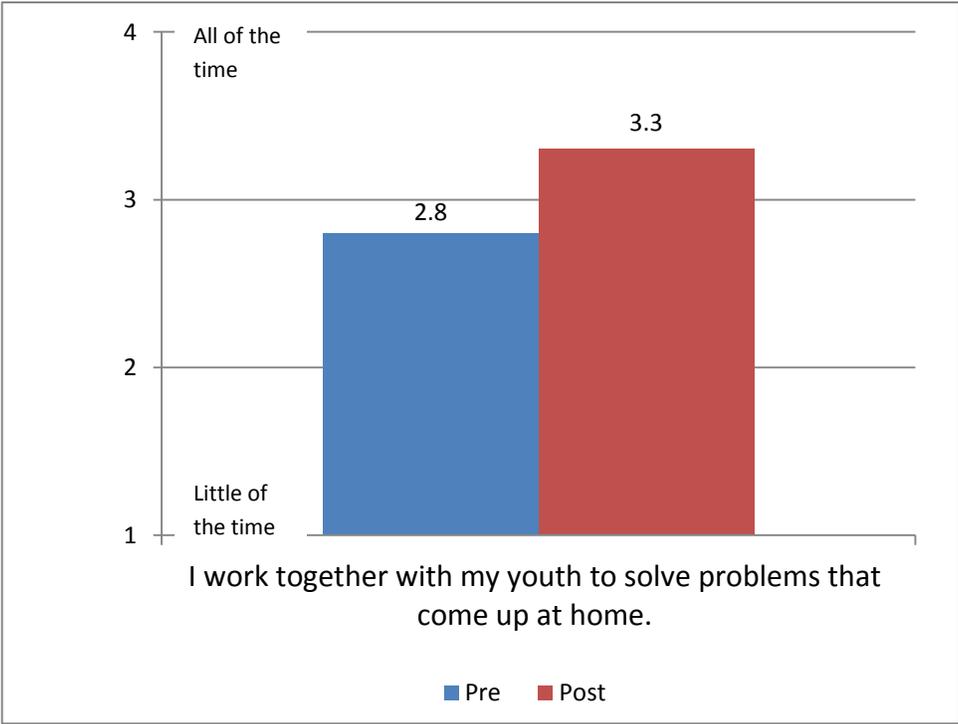
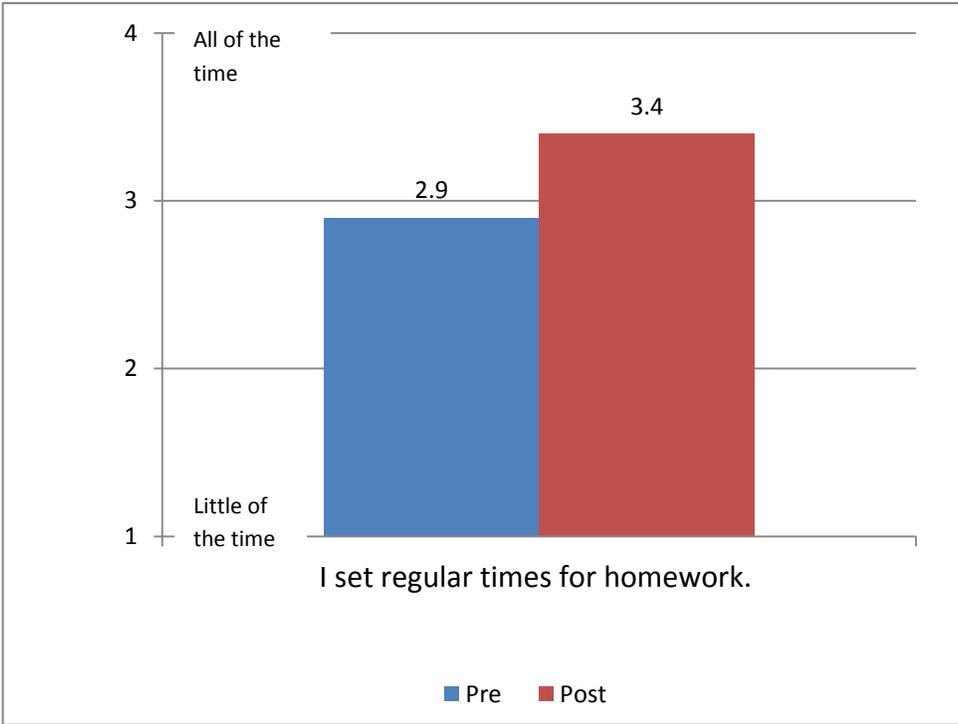


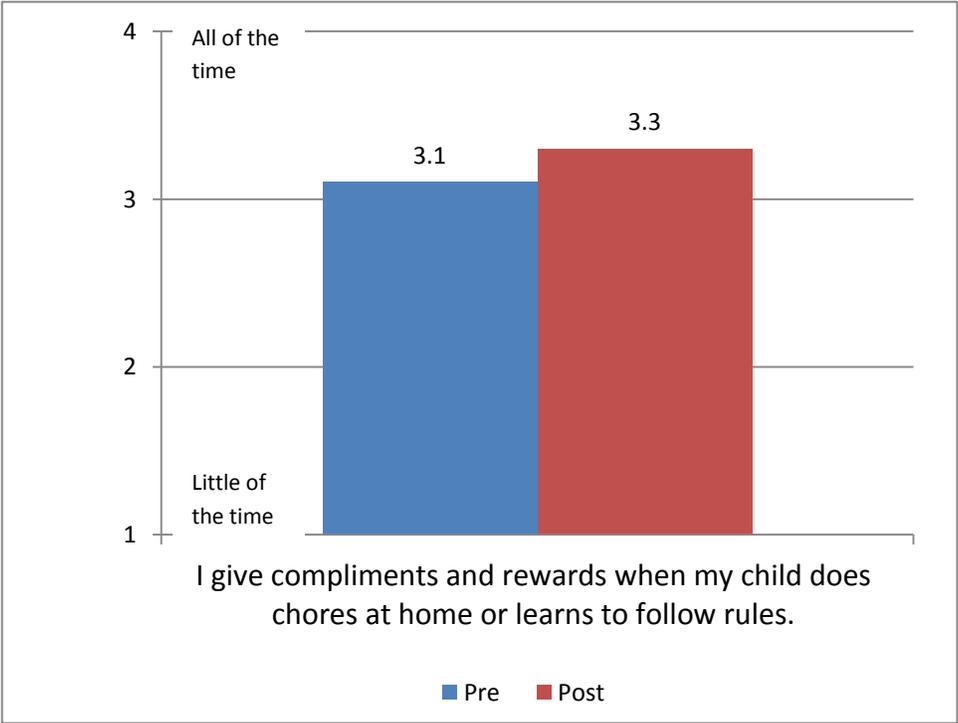
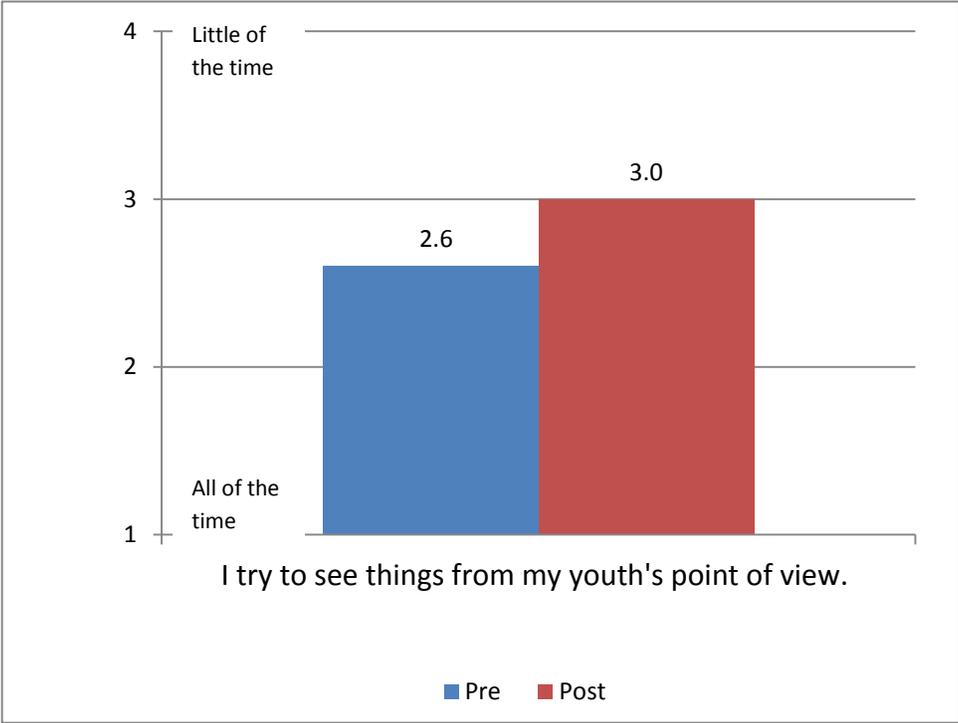


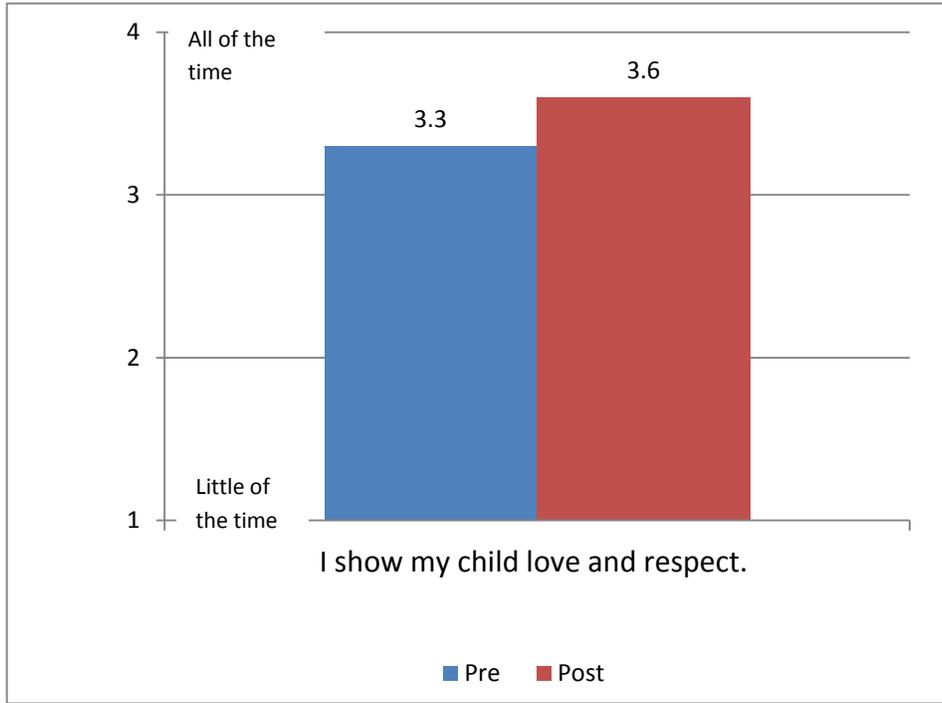






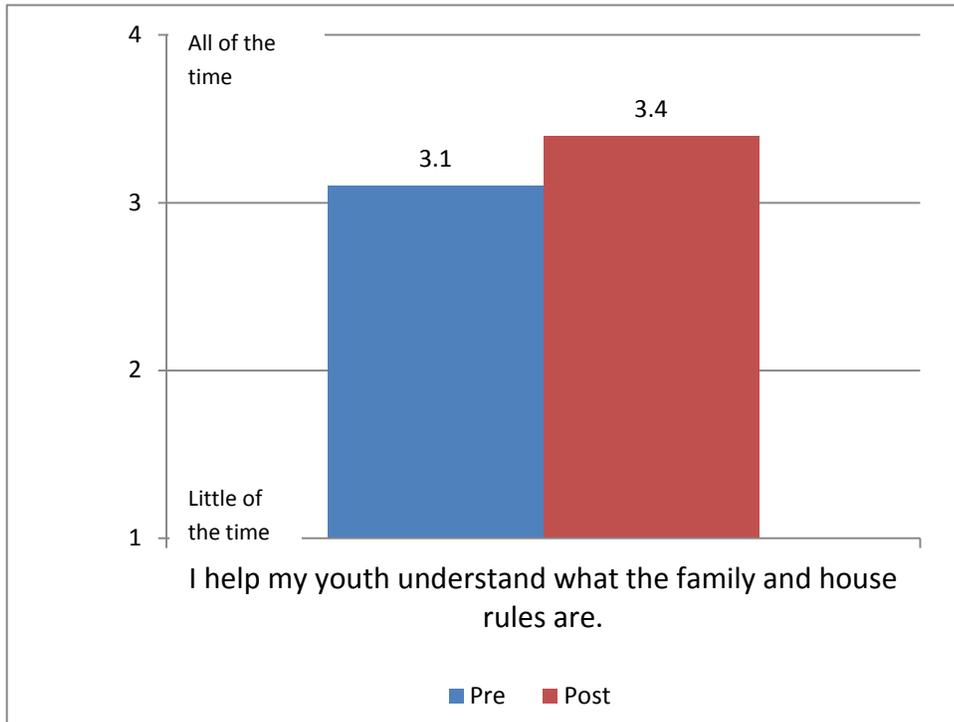






In comparing the pre- and post-test survey results, the following question showed significant *positive* changes at

the 5% level, indicating a 95% certainty that the results are not due to chance.



The following three questions also *approached* positive significance at the 10% level:

- I let my youth know what the consequences are for breaking rules.
- I talk with my child about his or her future goals without criticizing.
- I often tell my child how I feel when he or she misbehaves.

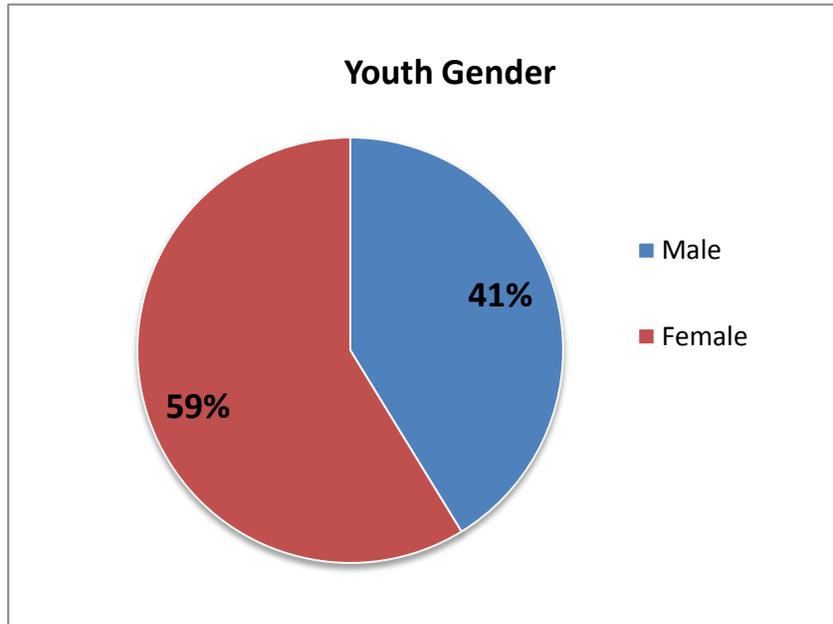
These statewide results are highly encouraging for the Strengthening Families Program with 15 out of 20 questions showing significant positive changes and three additional questions approaching positive significance.

Refer to Appendix for a complete list of Caregiver Questions.

**Youth Demographics:**

Of the 80 youth who participated in

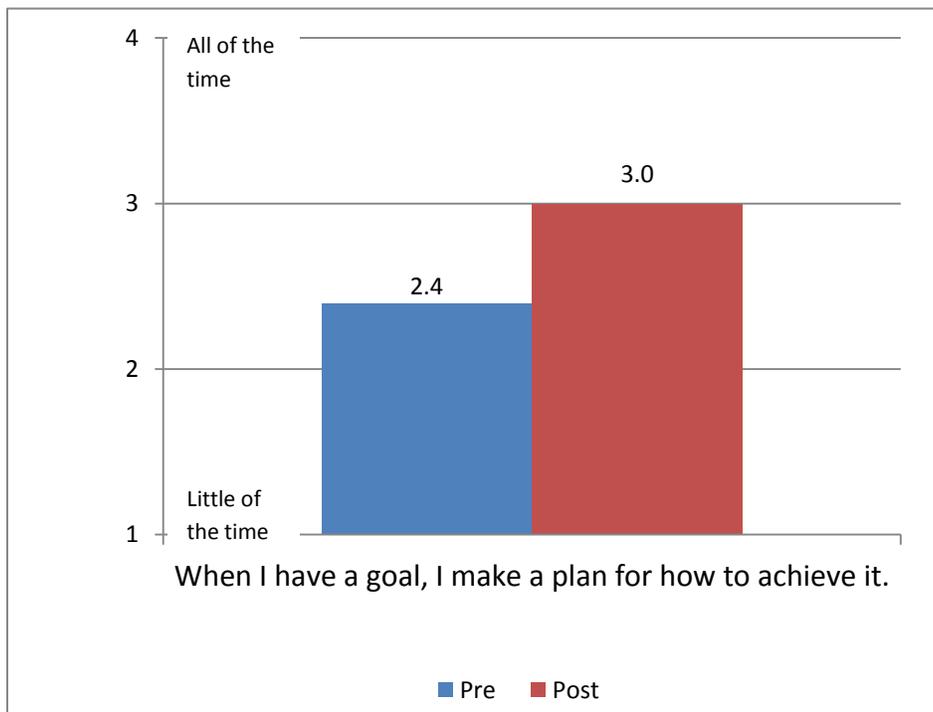
the Program, 47 were females and 33 were males.

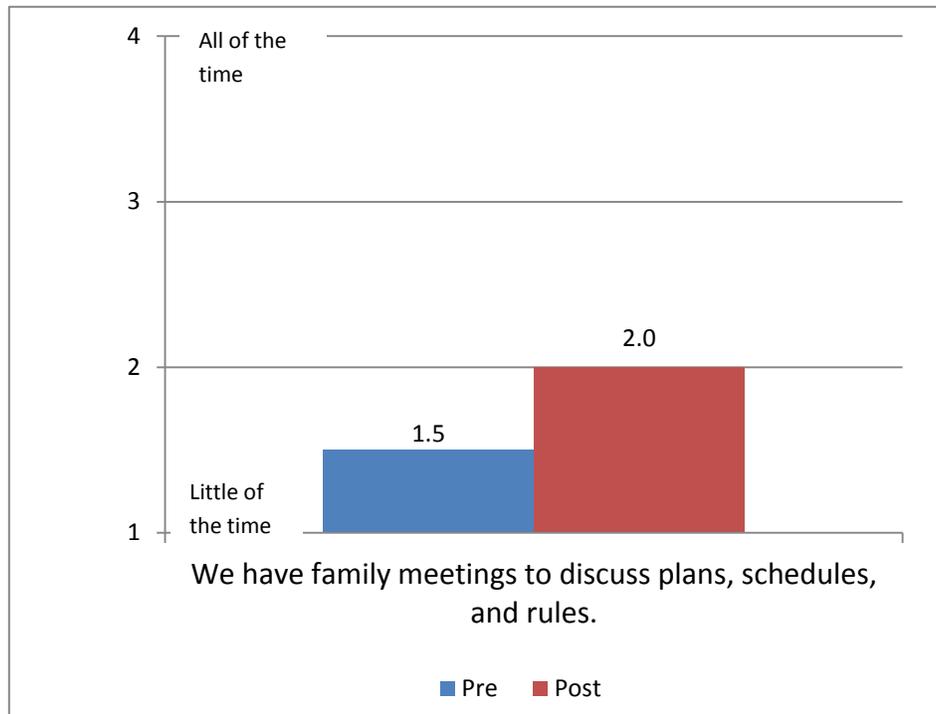
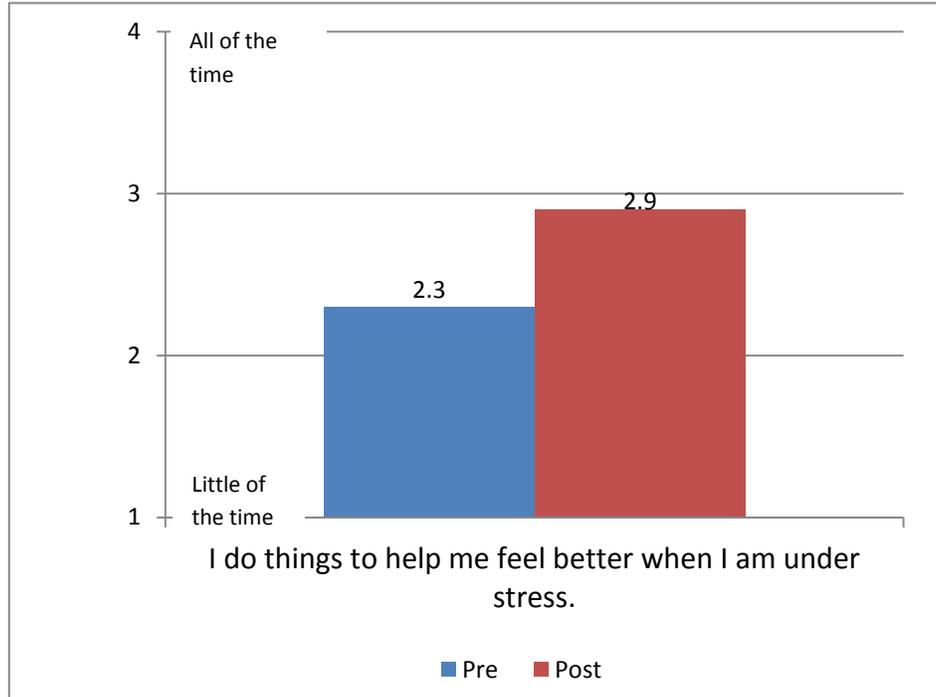


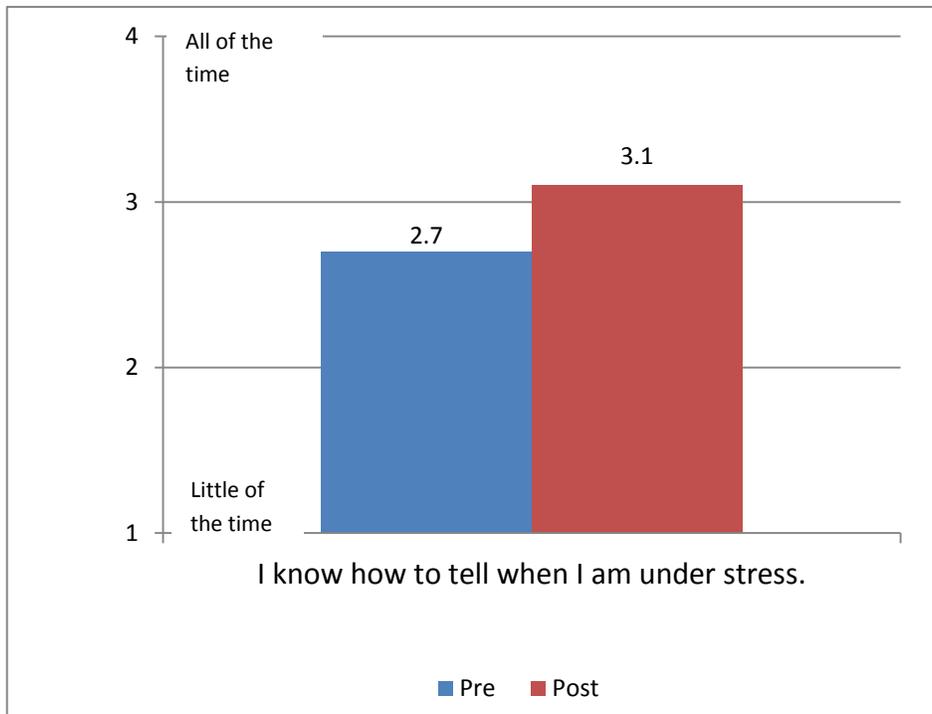
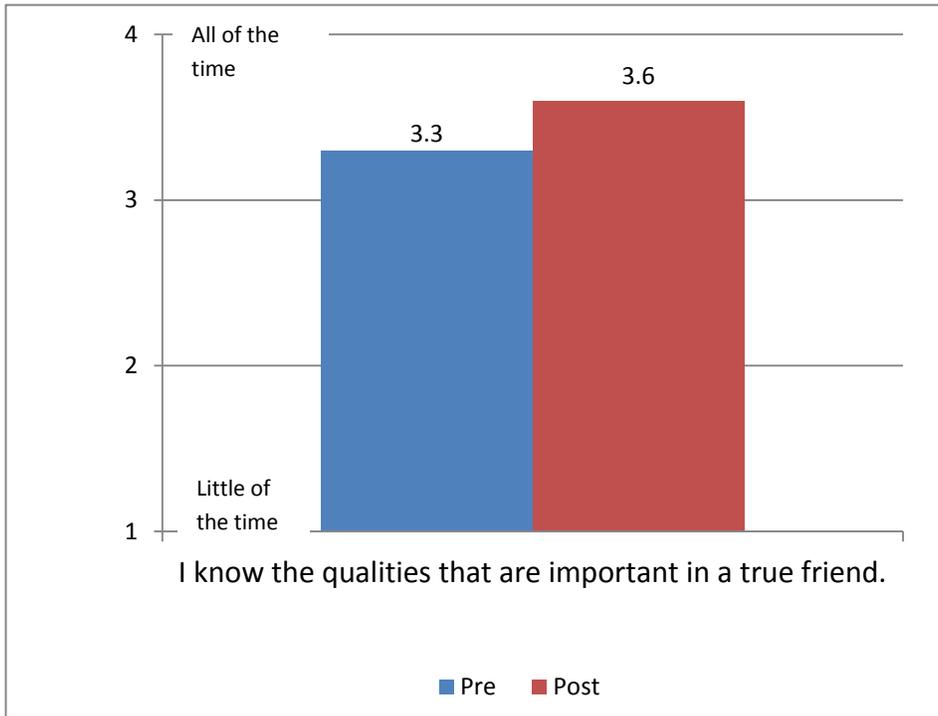
**Youth Results:**

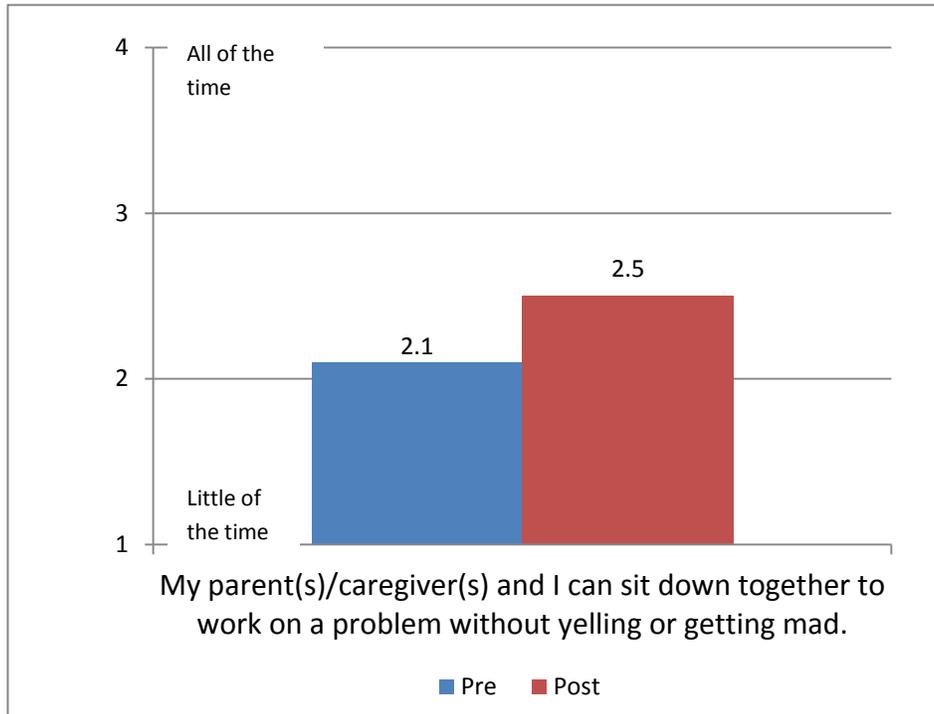
In comparing the pre- and post-test survey results, the following six questions showed a significant

*positive* change at the 1% level, indicating a 99% certainty that the results are not due to chance.



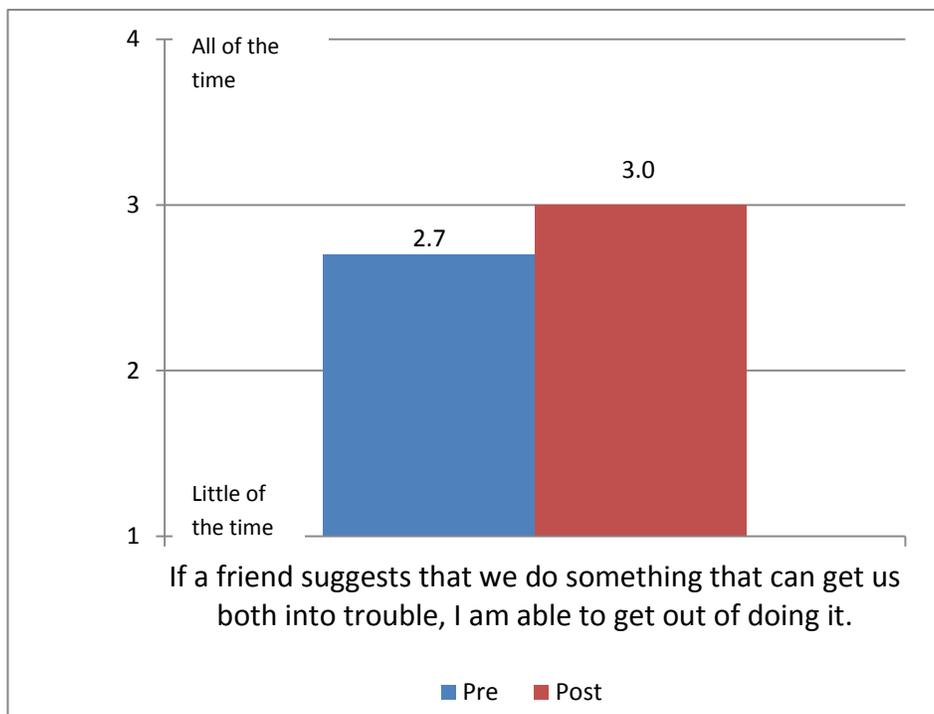


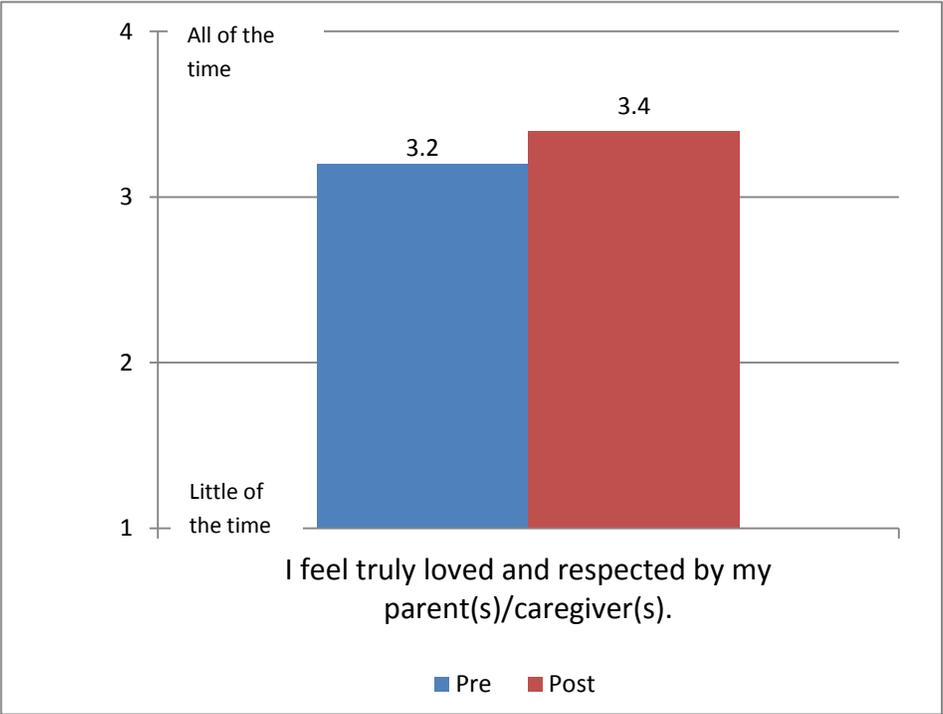
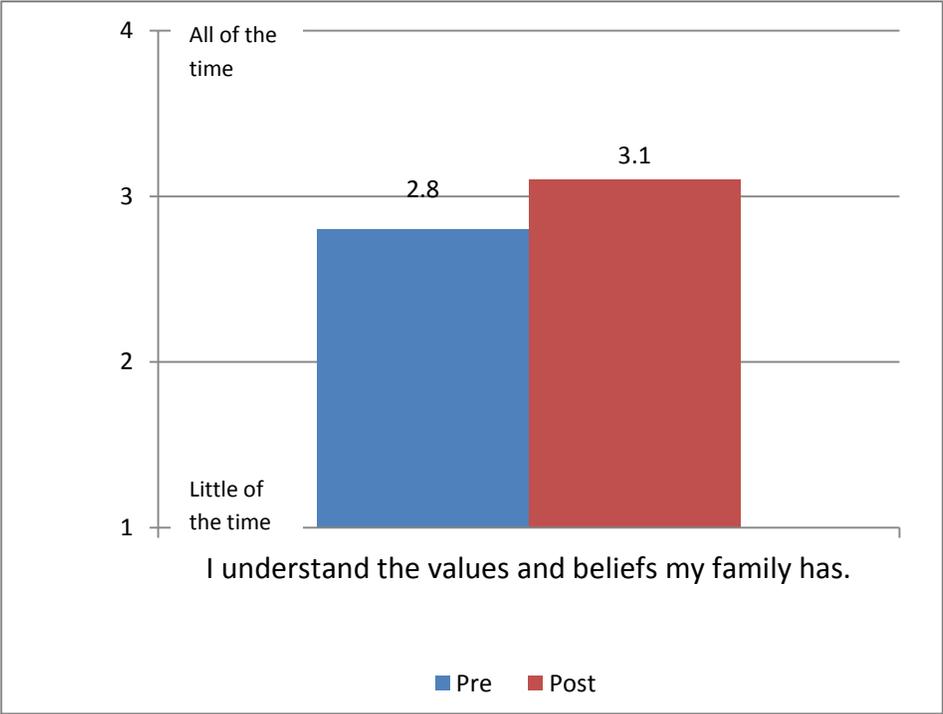




In comparing the pre- and post-test survey results, the following three questions showed a significant

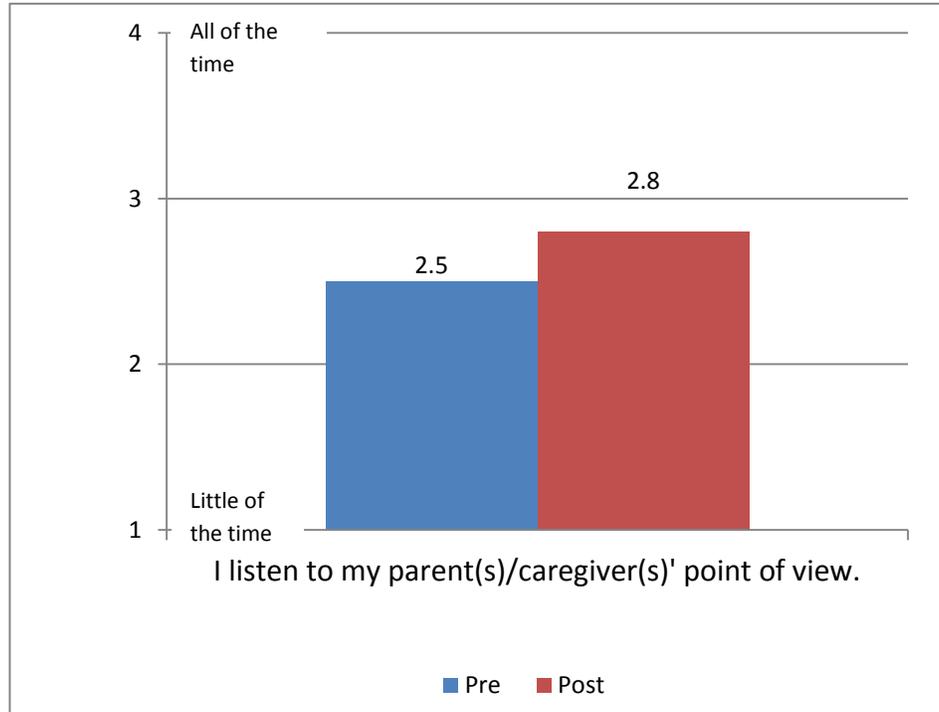
*positive* change at the 5% level, indicating a 95% certainty that the results are not due to chance.





In comparing the pre- and post-test survey results, the following question showed a significant *positive*

change at the 10% level, indicating a 90% certainty that the results are not due to chance.



These results are encouraging with 10 out of 15 questions showing significant positive changes for youth.

Refer to Appendix for a complete list of Youth Questions.

### **Conclusion:**

From September 2010 to July 2011, 86 caregivers and 80 youth participated in six separate sessions of the Strengthening Families program throughout New York State. Both caregivers and youth showed significant positive changes in their results.

Specifically, caregivers reported increased involvement of youth in discussions and execution of family work, improvements in helping youth understand house rules and reasons behind them, increased time spent together with youth one-on-one and in family activities, improvements in listening to and understanding youth's point of view and normal challenges that may accompany youth's developmental phase, increased involvement of youth to solve problems that come up at home, improved follow through with consequences, increased compliments given to youth, improved ability to

deal with problems, increased consistency in setting regular homework times, and increased love and respect shown to youth.

In addition to the questions with significant positive changes, three questions also *approached* significant positive levels.

As a result of participating in the Strengthening Families Program, youth reported an increased ability to: participate in family meetings, plan and achieve goals, identify and cope with stress, resist peer pressure and recognize important qualities in friends, work out problems with parent(s) or caregiver(s) without

yelling or getting mad and listen to their point of view. Youth also reported feeling loved and respected by parent(s) and caregiver(s), and a greater understanding of family values.

These Statewide results from the Strengthening Families Program, conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension in cooperation in Orange, Rockland, and Schuyler counties with the Haverstraw Center, Middletown High School, Monroe Woodbury Middle School, Warwick Valley Middle School, and Watkins Glen Middle School Base Camp, indicate very positive outcomes for caregivers and youth.

## Appendix

### **Caregiver Questions:**

1. I wait to deal with problems with my child until I have cooled down.
2. I remember that it is normal for children to be harder to get along with at this age.
3. I help my youth understand what the family and house rules are.
4. I take time to do something fun together as a family.
5. I let my youth know what the consequences are for breaking rules.
6. I find ways to keep my children involved in family work activities, like chores.
7. I follow through with consequences each time he or she breaks a rule.
8. I talk with my child about his or her future goals without criticizing.
9. I often tell my child how I feel when he or she misbehaves.
10. I find ways to include my child in family decisions about fun and work activities.
11. I spend special time one-on-one with my youth.
12. I let my youth know the reason for the rules we have.

13. I listen to my youth when he or she is upset.

14. I set regular times for homework.

15. I work together with my youth to solve problems that come up.

16. I try to see things from my youth's point of view.

17. I talk with my child about ways to resist peer pressure.

18. I give compliments and rewards when my child does chores at home or learns to follow rules.

19. I show my child love and respect.

20. I explain to my child the consequences of not following my rules concerning alcohol use.

### **Youth Questions:**

1. When I have a goal, I make a plan for how to achieve it.

2. I do things to help me feel better when I am under stress.

3. I appreciate the things my parent(s)/caregiver(s) do for me.

4. If a friend suggests that we do something that can get us both into trouble, I am able to get out of doing it.

5. We have family meetings to discuss plans, schedules, and rules.

6. I know how to tell when I am under stress.

7. I listen to my parent(s) or caregiver(s)' point of view.

8. I understand the values and beliefs my family has.

9. I know there are consequences when I don't follow a given rule.

10. My parent(s) or caregiver(s) and I can sit down together to work on a problem without yelling or getting mad.

11. I know the qualities that are important in a true friend.

12. I know what my parents/caregivers think I should do about drugs and alcohol.

13. My parent(s)/caregiver(s) are calm when they discipline me.

14. I feel truly loved and respected by my parent(s)/caregiver(s).

15. I am able to tell when my parent(s)/caregiver(s) are stressed or having a problem.

**Visit the *Parenting in Context* project at:**

<http://www.parenting.cit.cornell.edu>

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**Eliza Lathrop Cook is a Research Assistant in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University.**

**Rachel Dunifon is an Associate Professor in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University.**

**Kimberly Kopko is an Extension Associate in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University.**

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