



## Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Education Programs, 2014-2015

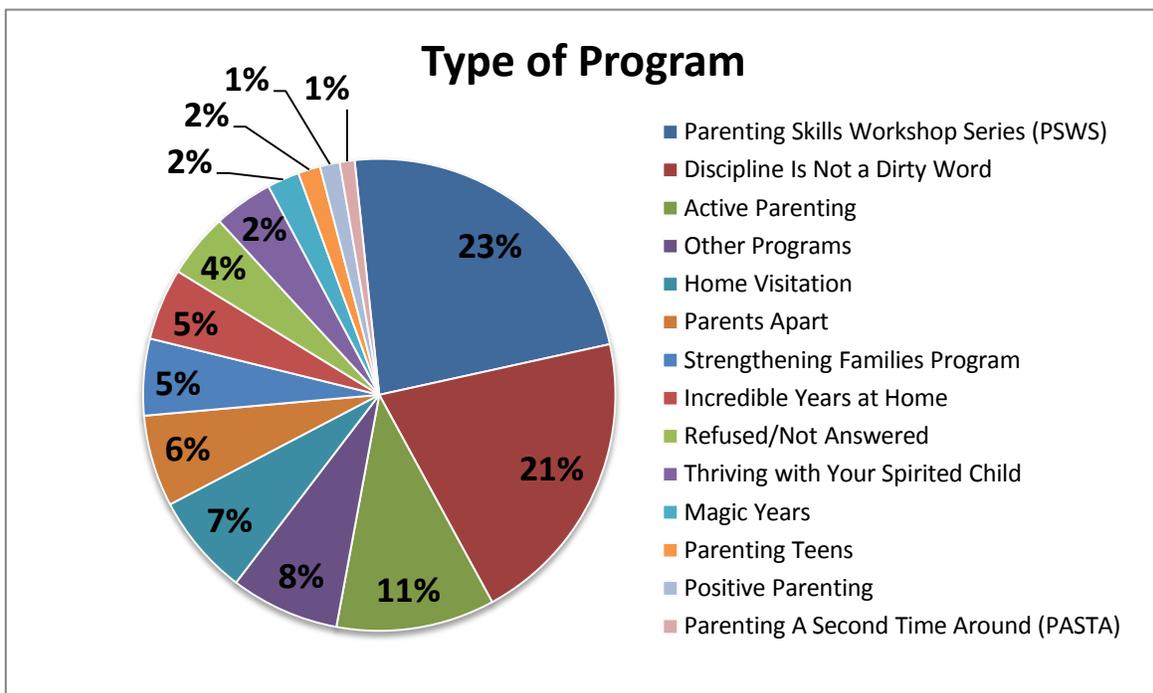
By Eliza Lathrop Cook & Kimberly Kopko

The Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) system offers a variety of programs for parents and caregivers. Offered at CCE associations throughout New York, 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 CCE parent education programs from July 2014 to July 2015. Participants included parents and caregivers who participated in programs 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.

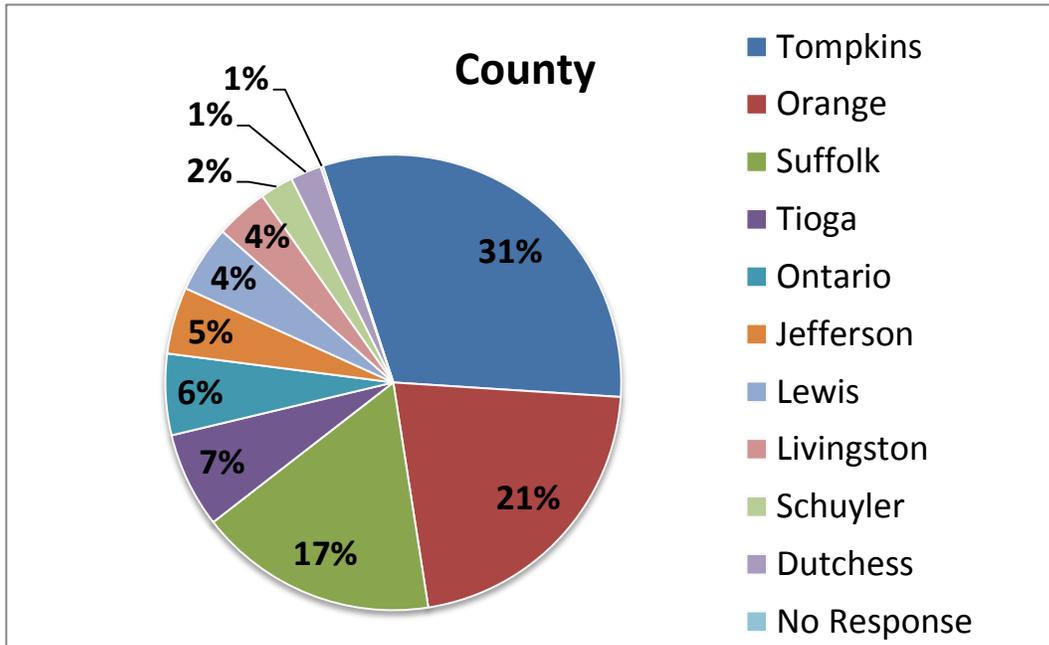
### Demographics of Participants in CCE Parent Education Programs

A total of thirteen parent education programs were evaluated, as shown below. The largest number of participants took part in Parenting Skills Workshop Series (PSWS) (23% of all participants) and Discipline Is Not A Dirty Word (21%). The following summaries use data from



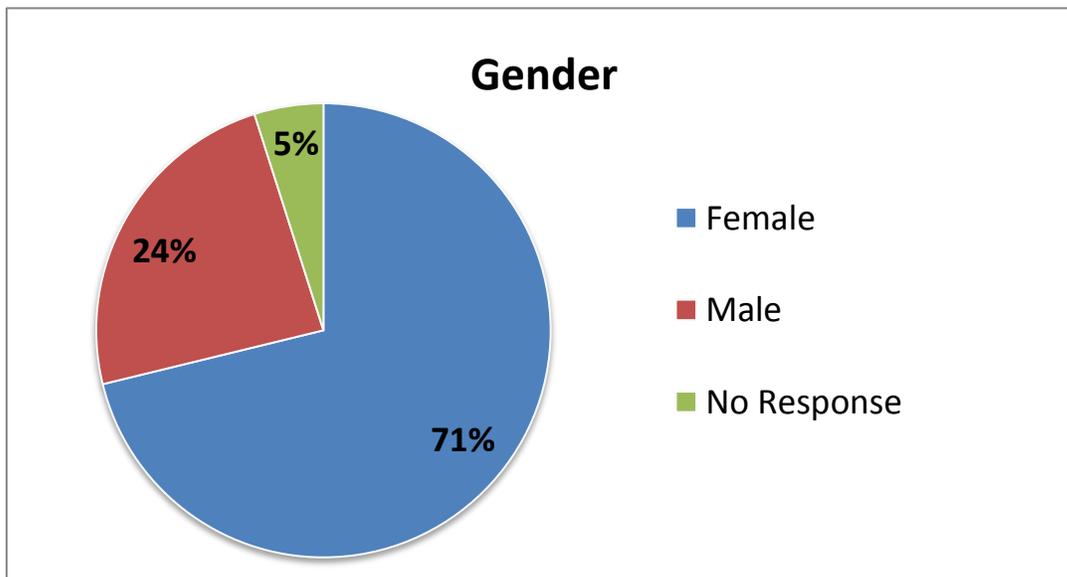
590 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their parent education class. In total, data was collected from

ten counties throughout the state. Tompkins County had the largest share of participants (31%) followed by Orange County (21%).



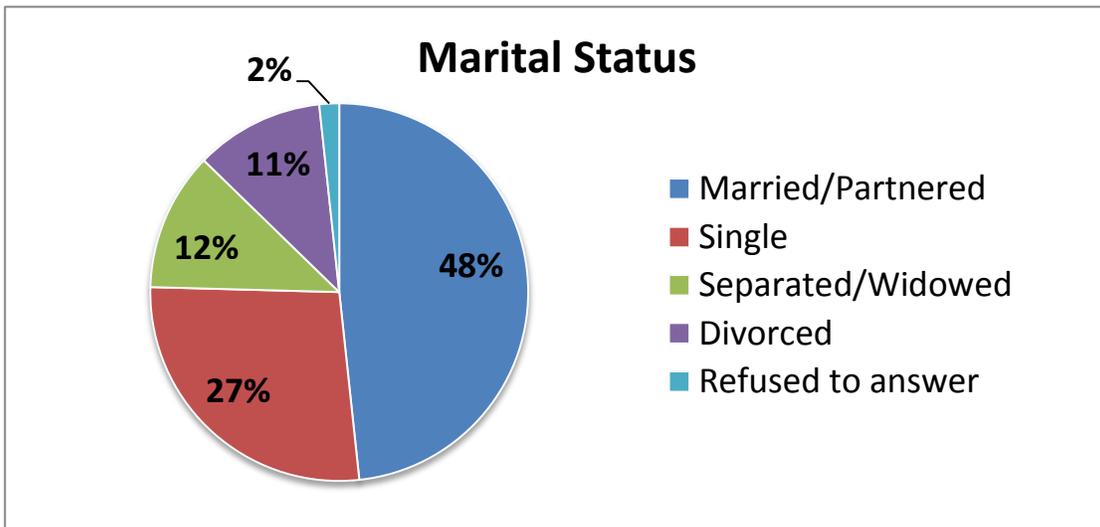
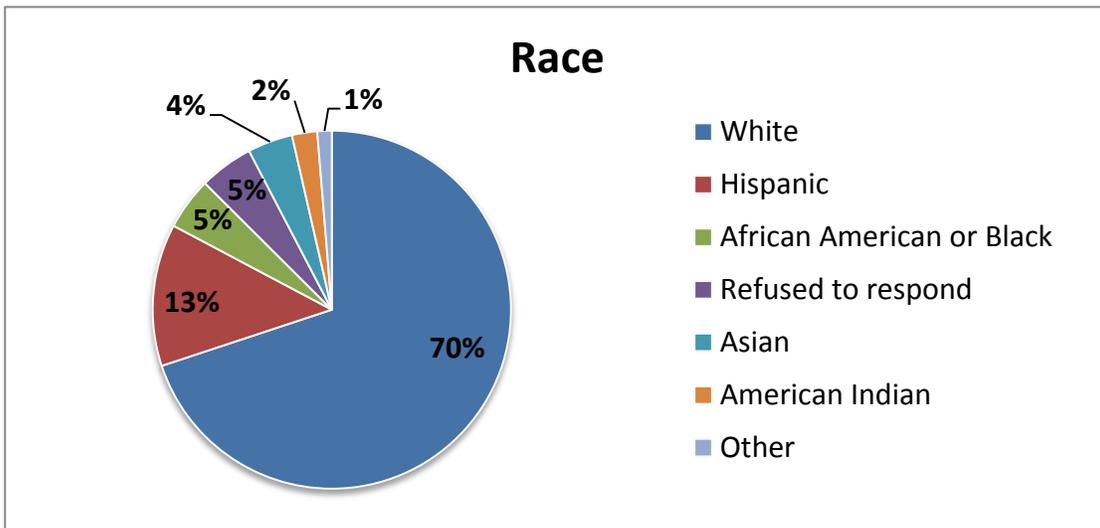
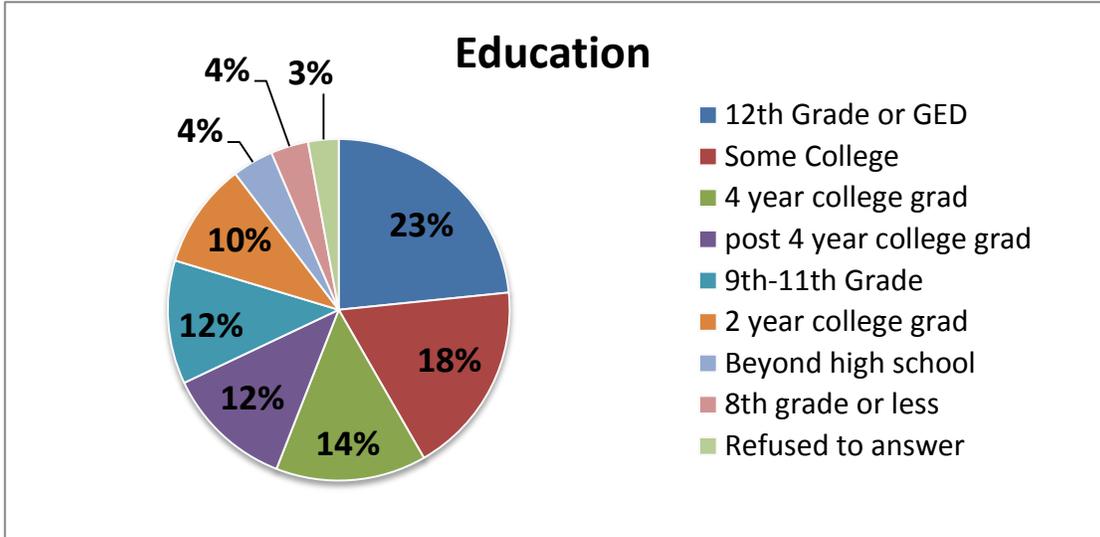
The majority (71%) of participants in parent education classes were female. The highest level of educational attainment reached among

participants varied widely, with the greatest number of participants reaching 12<sup>th</sup> grade or a GED (23%) followed by those having attended,



but not graduated from, college (18%). The vast majority of the participants in parent education

classes were white (70%), and 48% of the participants were married or partnered.



## Pre-Post Survey Results

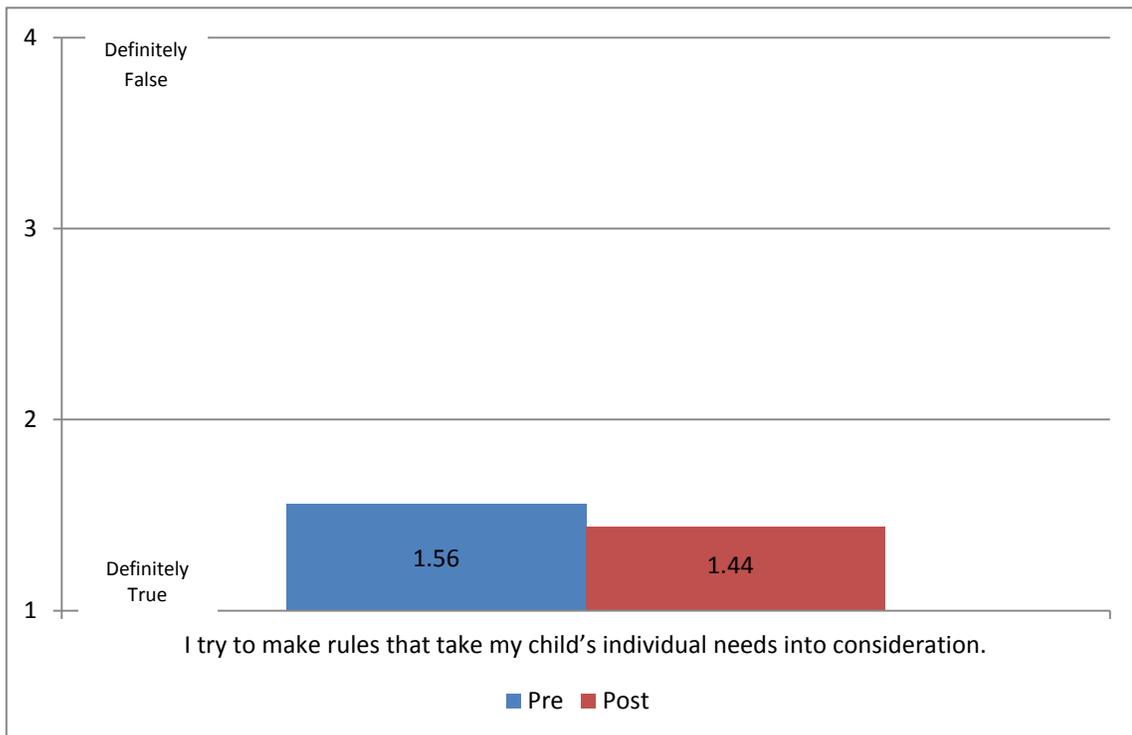
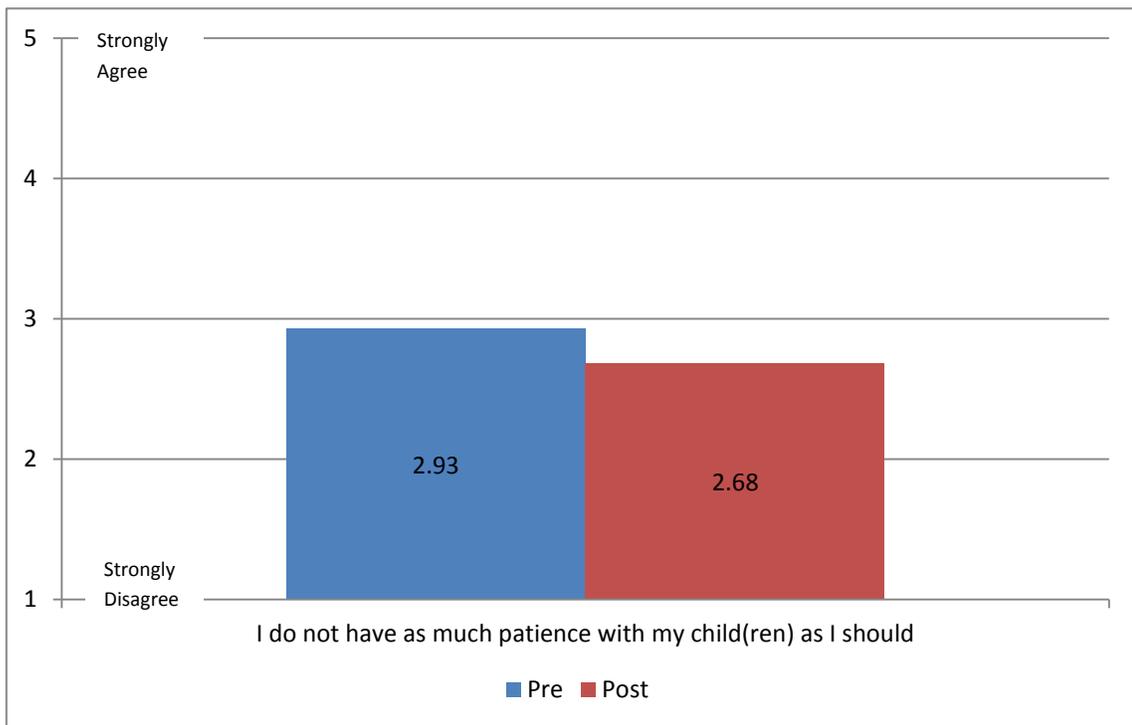
This evaluation used a pre- and post-test, in which participants were asked to answer two identical surveys—one given at the first class session and another given after the completion of the last parenting class. The survey included ten questions about parenting attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge. The pre/post study design allows researchers to see if participants' attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge change during the course of the parenting programs. 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 program. 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.

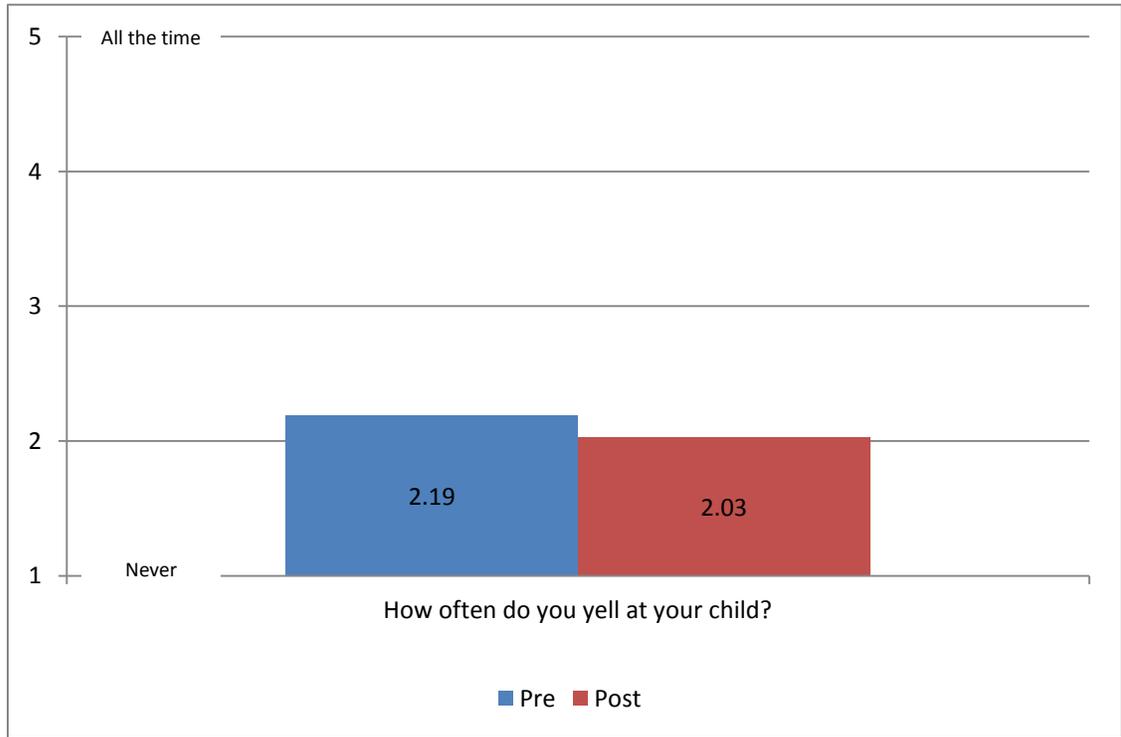
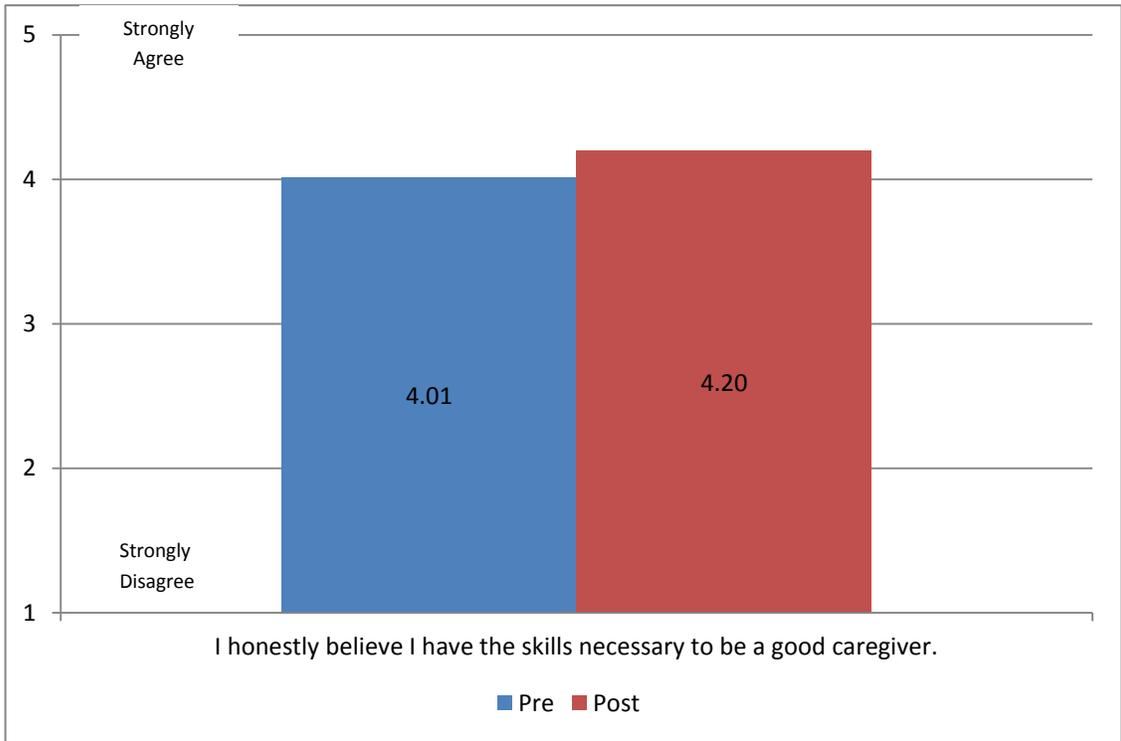
The following evaluation is based on information provided by 370 participants who completed a parent education program and completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. All ten items on the survey showed significant improvements from the

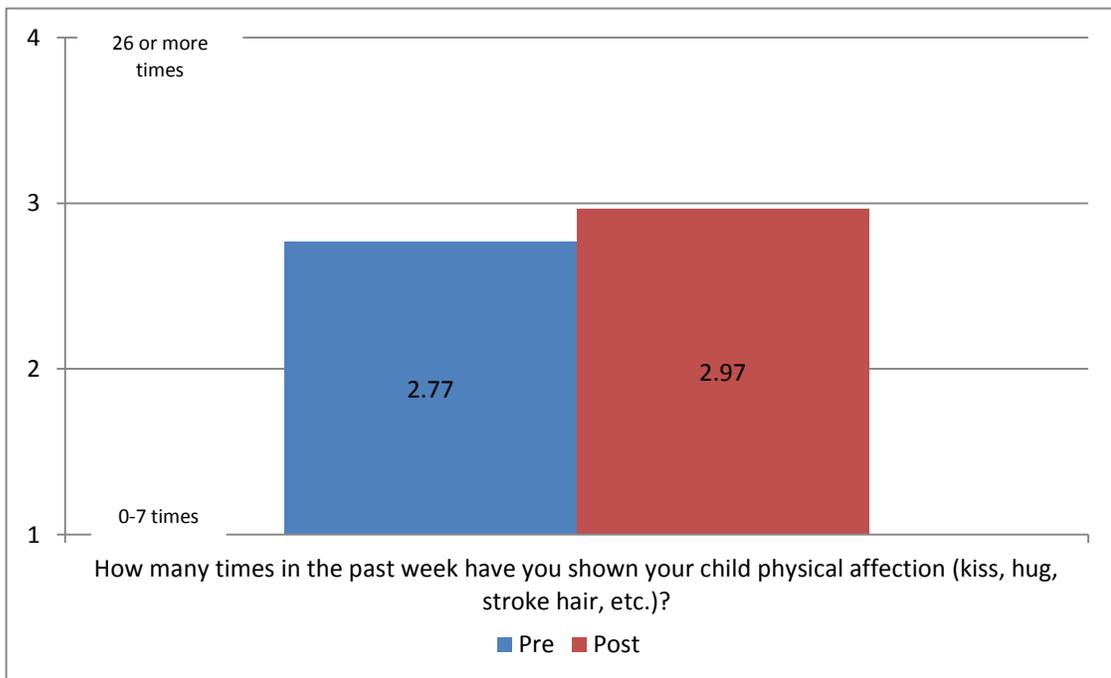
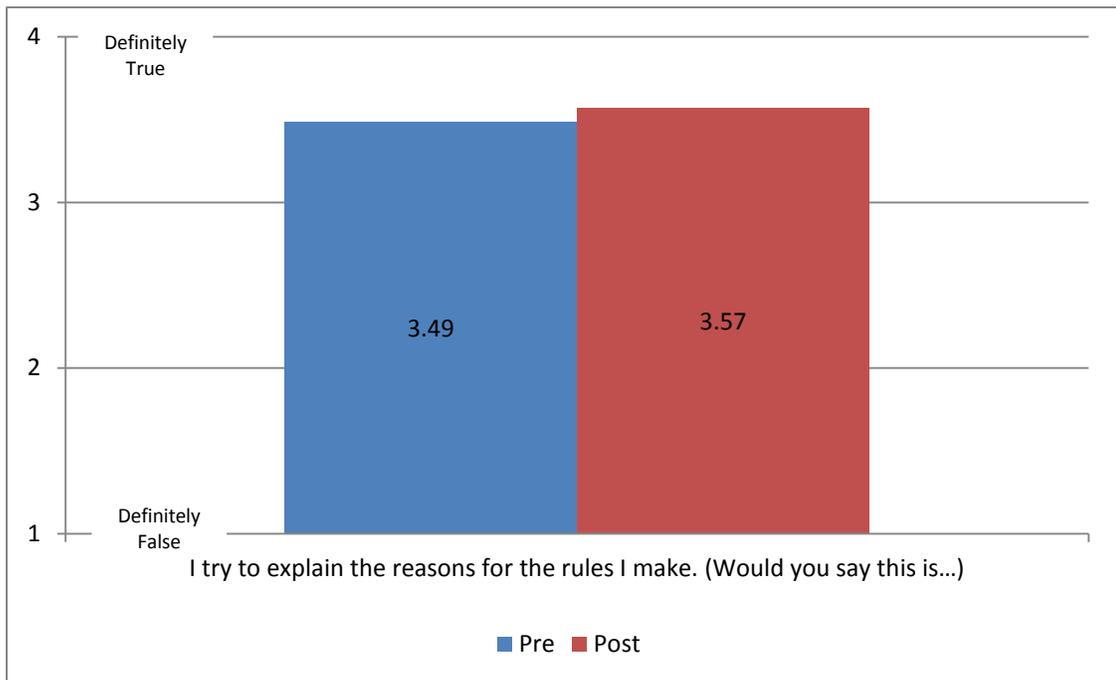
pre- to the post-test. Specifically, CCE parent education participants reported increases in: patience with their child, making rules that take their child's needs into consideration, having the skills necessary to be a good caregiver, explaining reasons for rules, physical affection towards their child, communicating something positive about their child with other adults, time spent reading with their child and having enough people to count on.

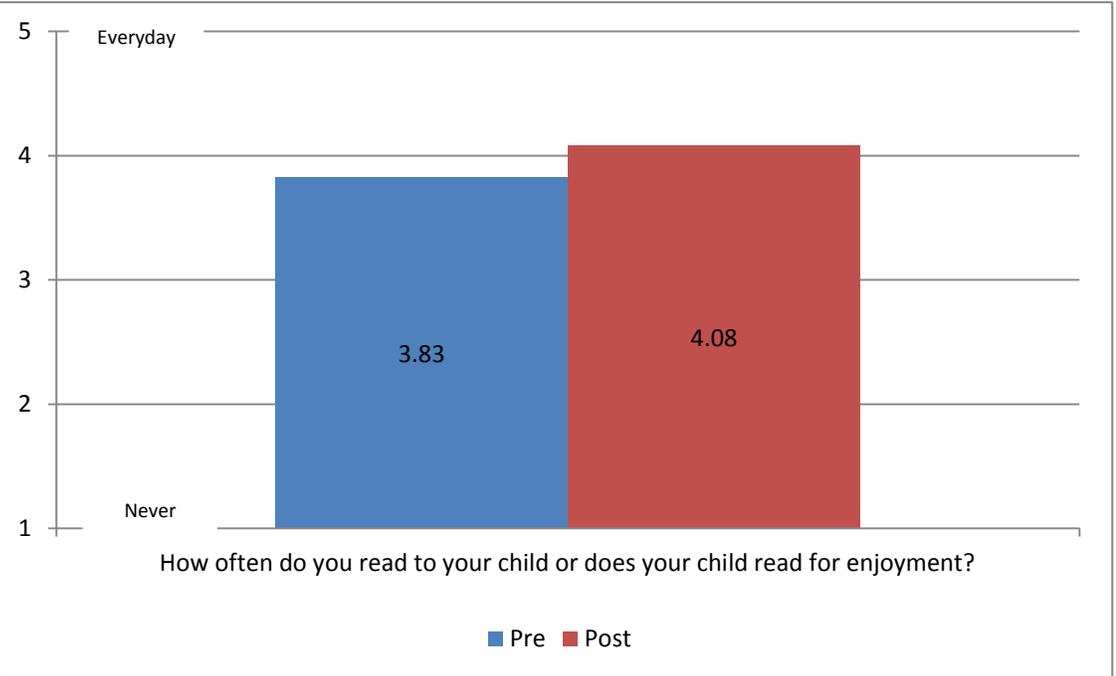
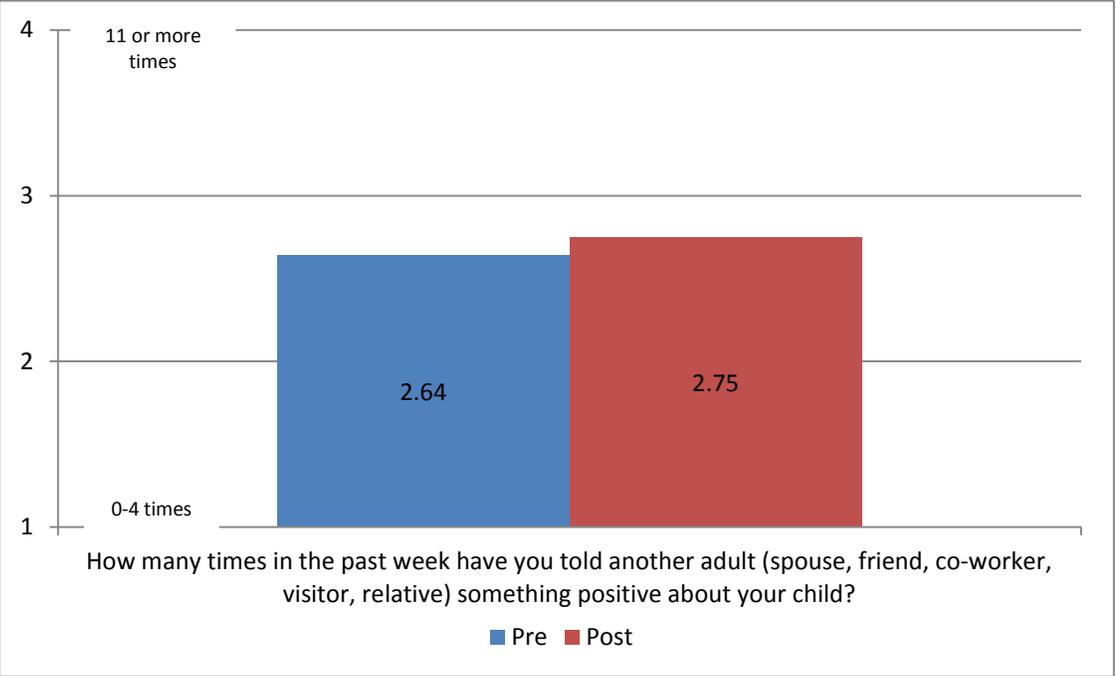
Participants reported decreases in: how often they yell at their child and the number of hours their children spent watching television.

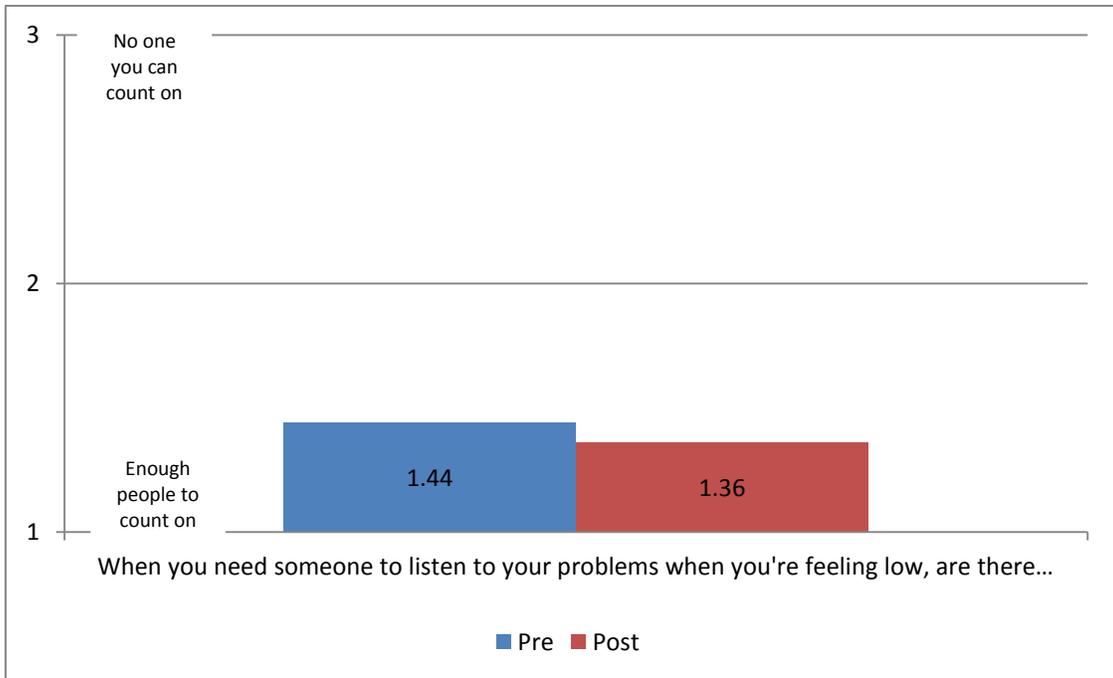
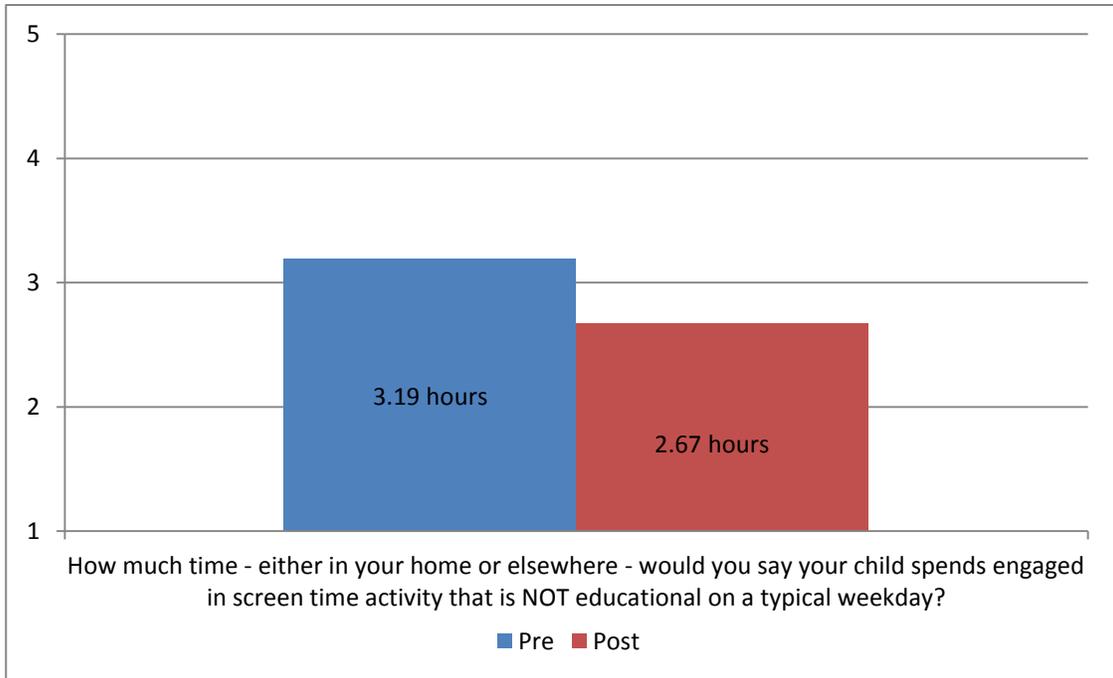
A p-value generated from a paired t-test was used as a statistical measure to determine whether a change in a given survey question between the pre- and post-test was significant. A p-value of .10 or less was considered statistically significant. This means that it can be stated with 90% certainty that 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 at the 10% level.











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

test. This suggests that, across the state, CCE 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*

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