

# Parenting In Context

## Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Education Programs, 2012-2013

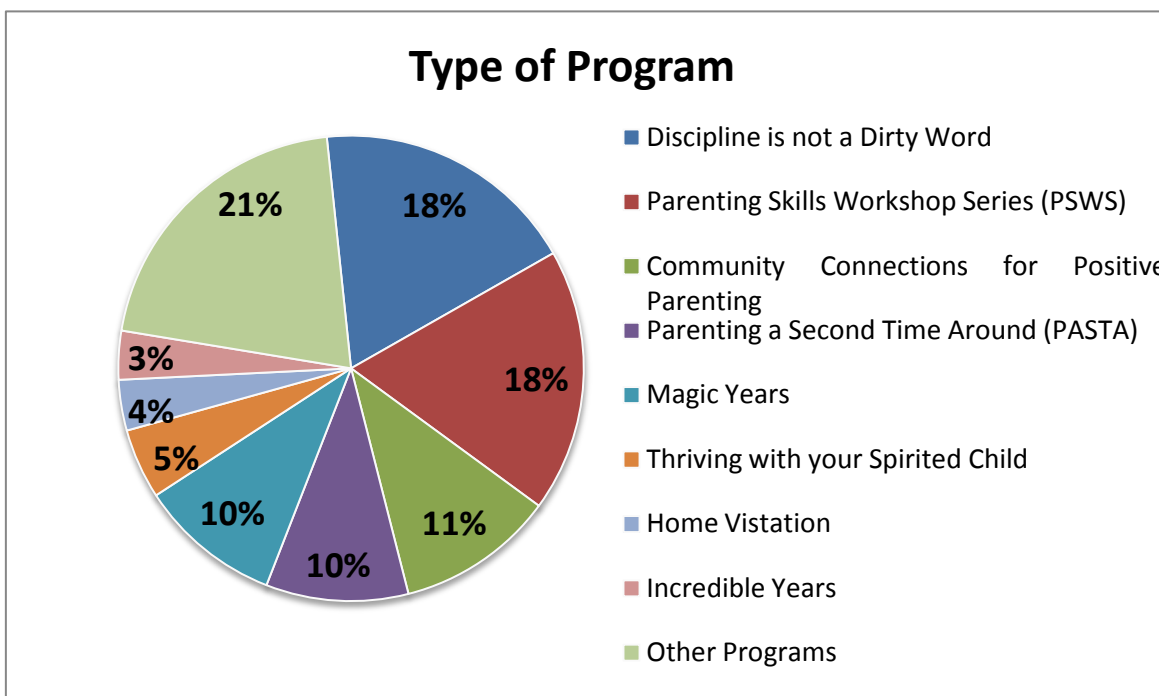
By Eliza Cook, Rachel Dunifon, and Kimberly Kopko

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 between July 2012 to July 2013. 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.

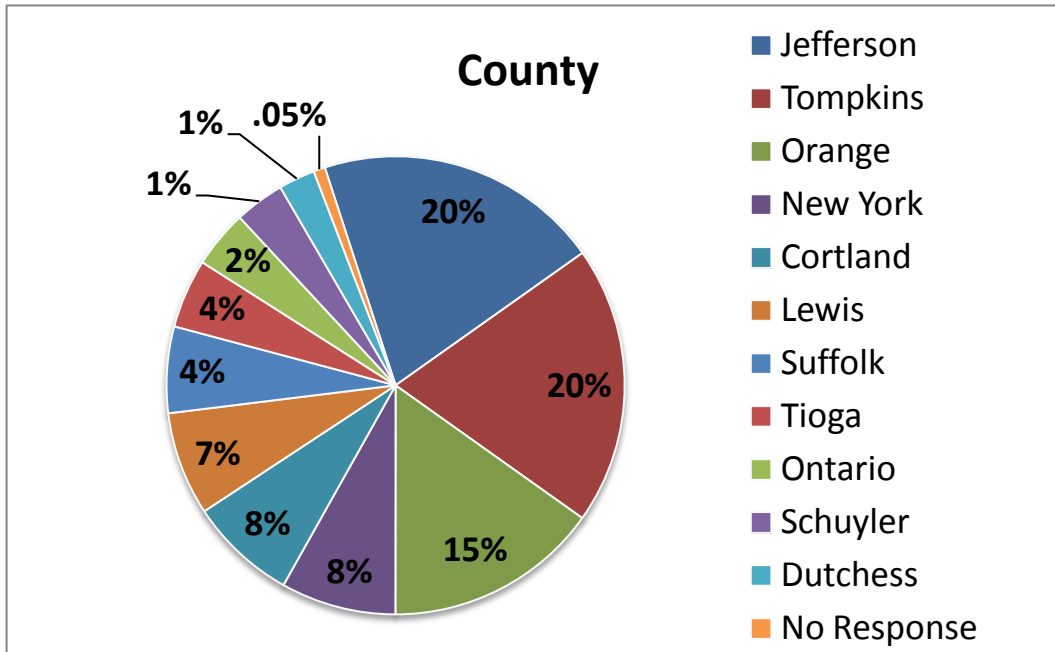
### Demographics of Participants in CCE Parent Education Programs

A total of sixteen parent education programs were evaluated, as shown below. The largest number of participants took part in the Discipline is not a Dirty Word program (18% of all participants) and the Parenting Skills Workshop Series (18%). The



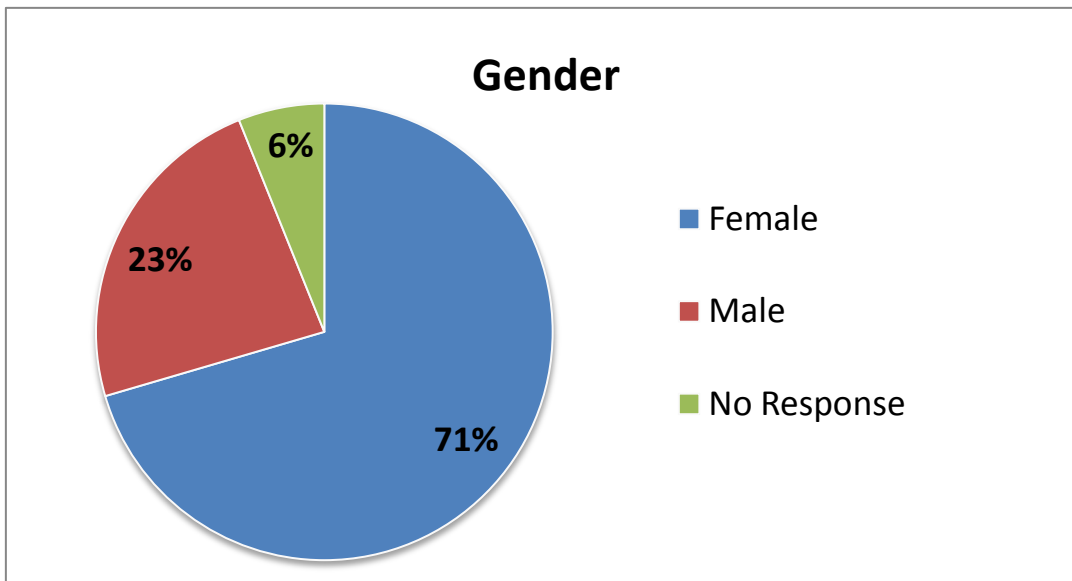
following summaries use data from 738 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their parent education class. In total, data was collected from

ten counties throughout the state. Jefferson and Tompkins Counties had the largest share of participants (20%).



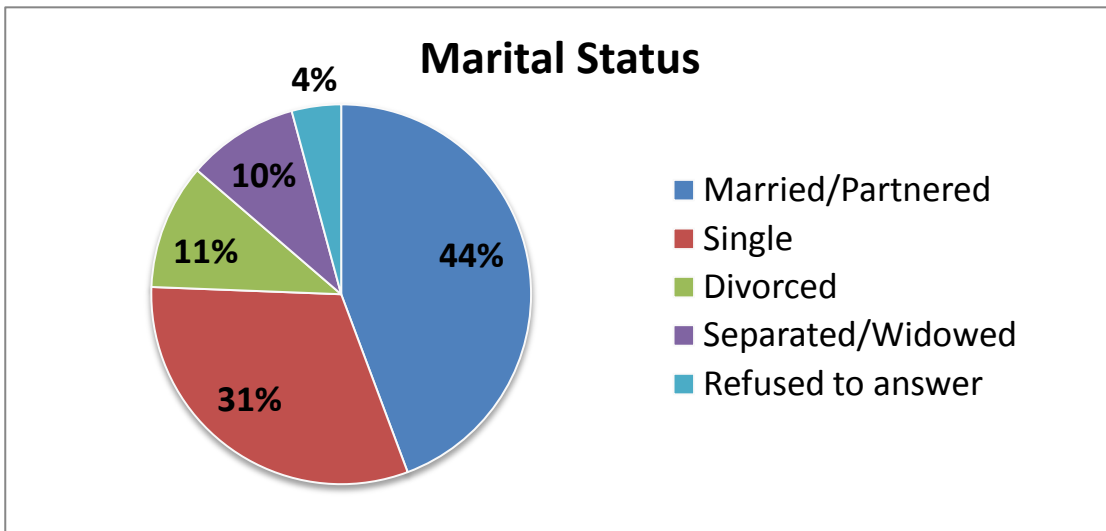
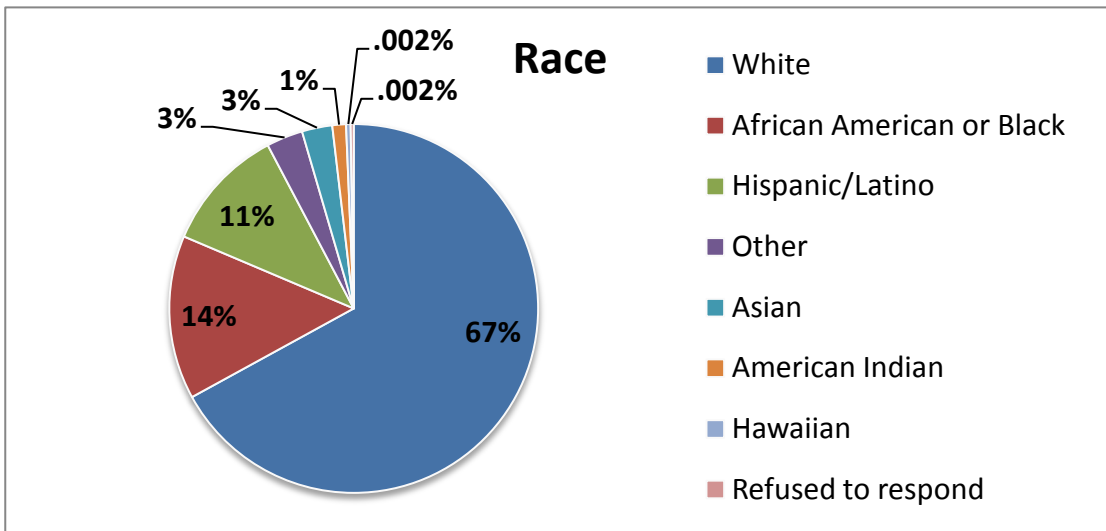
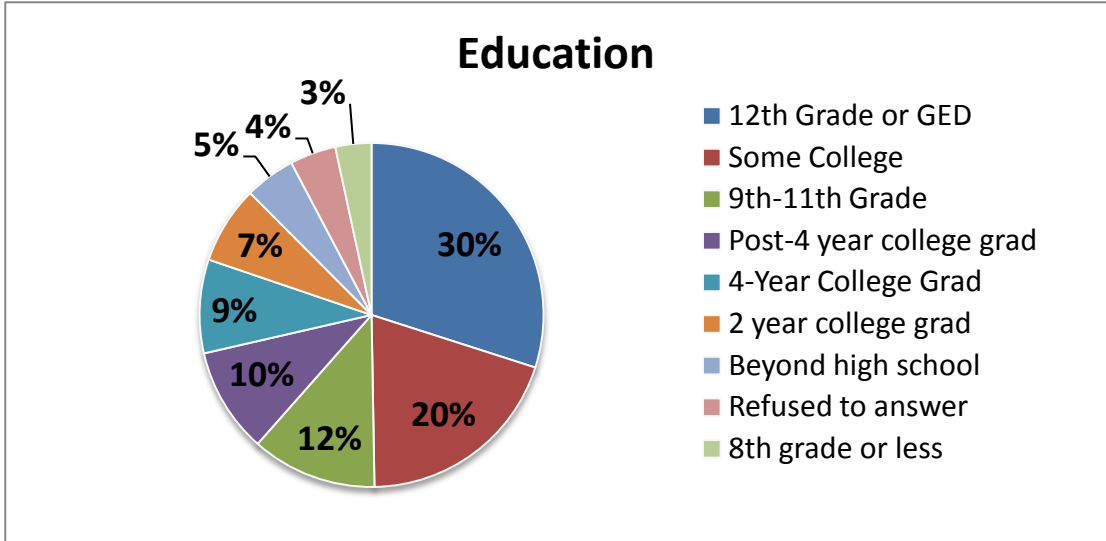
The majority (71%) of participants in the parent education classes were female. The highest level of educational attainment reached among

the participants varied widely, with the greatest number of participants reaching 12<sup>th</sup> grade or a GED (30%) followed by those having attended,



but not graduated from, college (20%). The vast majority of the participants in parent education

classes were white (67%), and 44% of the participants were married or partnered.



## Pre-Post Survey Results

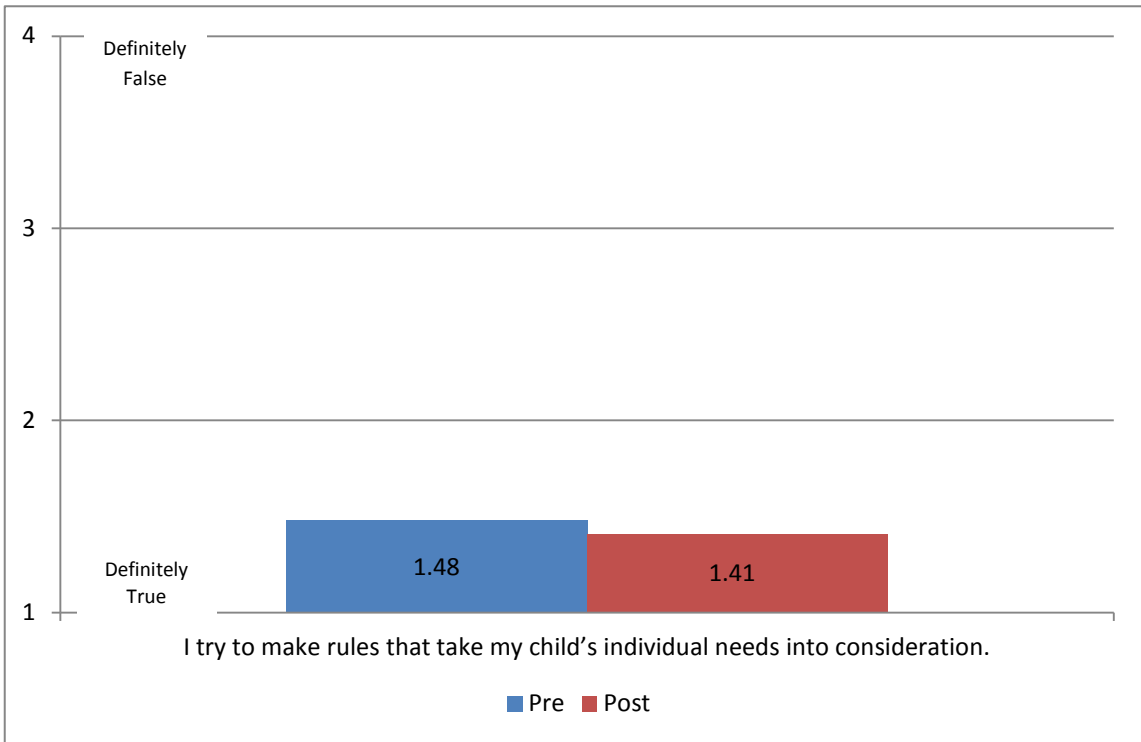
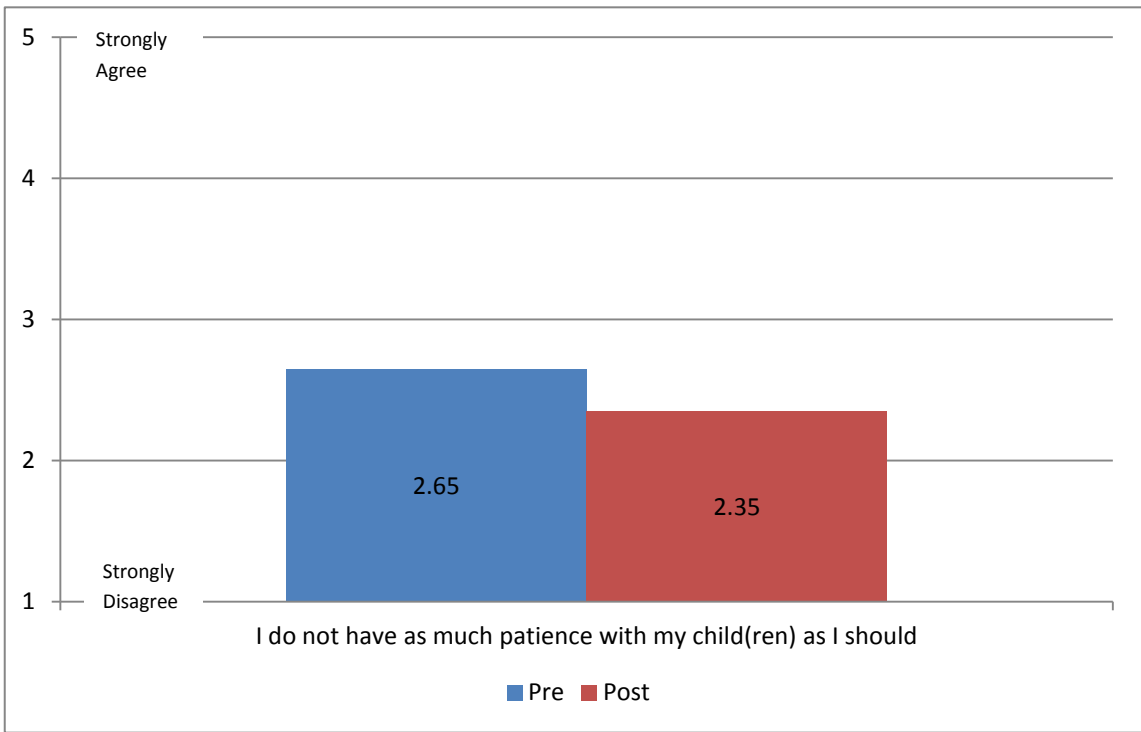
This study used a pre- and post-test evaluation, in which the participants were asked to answer two identical surveys—one given at the first session of the class and another given after the completion of the last parenting class. The survey included ten questions about parenting attitudes, behaviors,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

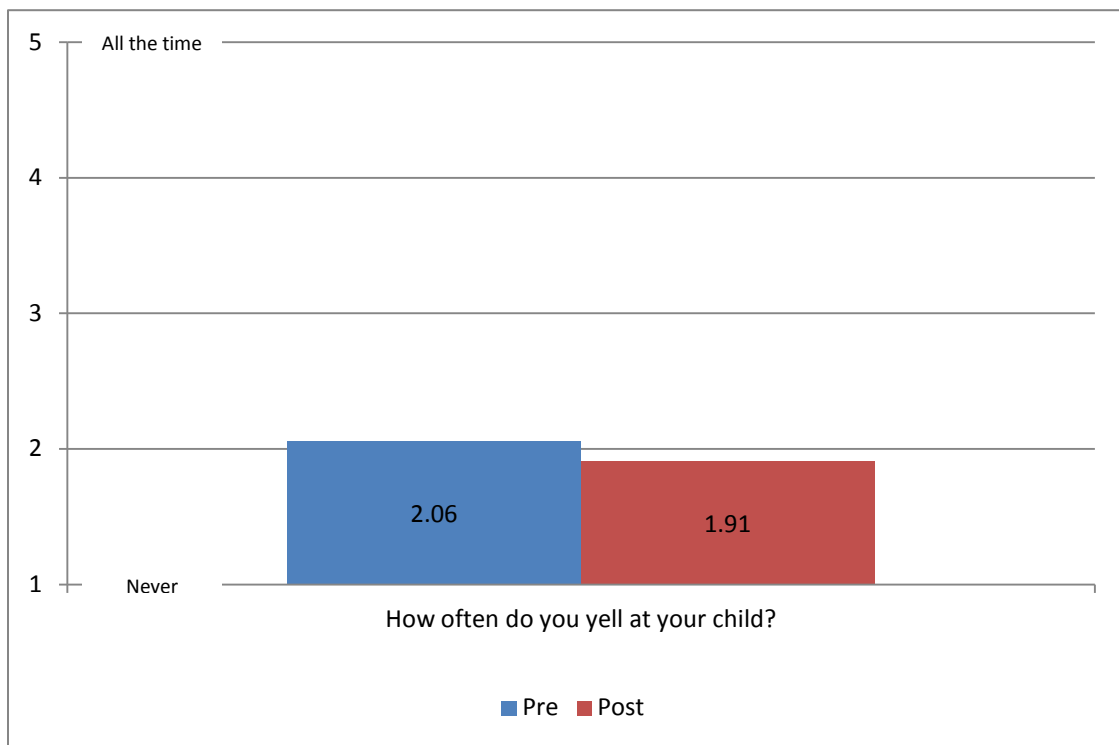
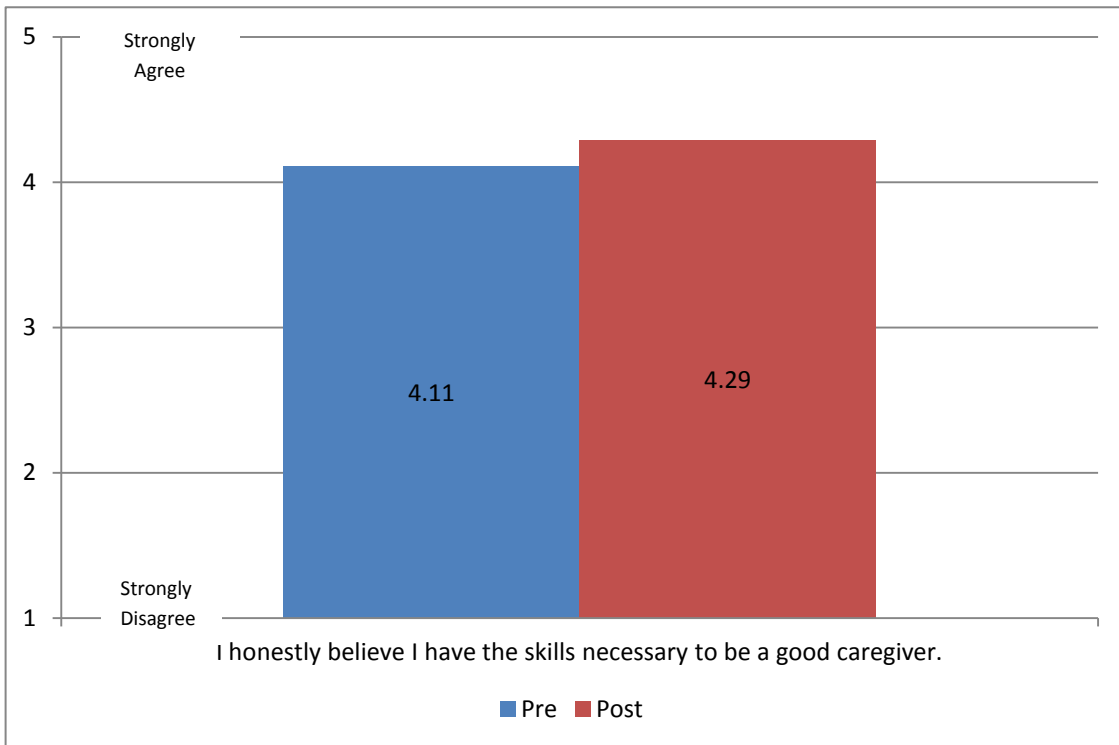
The following evaluation is based on information provided by 491 participants, who completed a parent education program and completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. Nine of the ten items on the survey

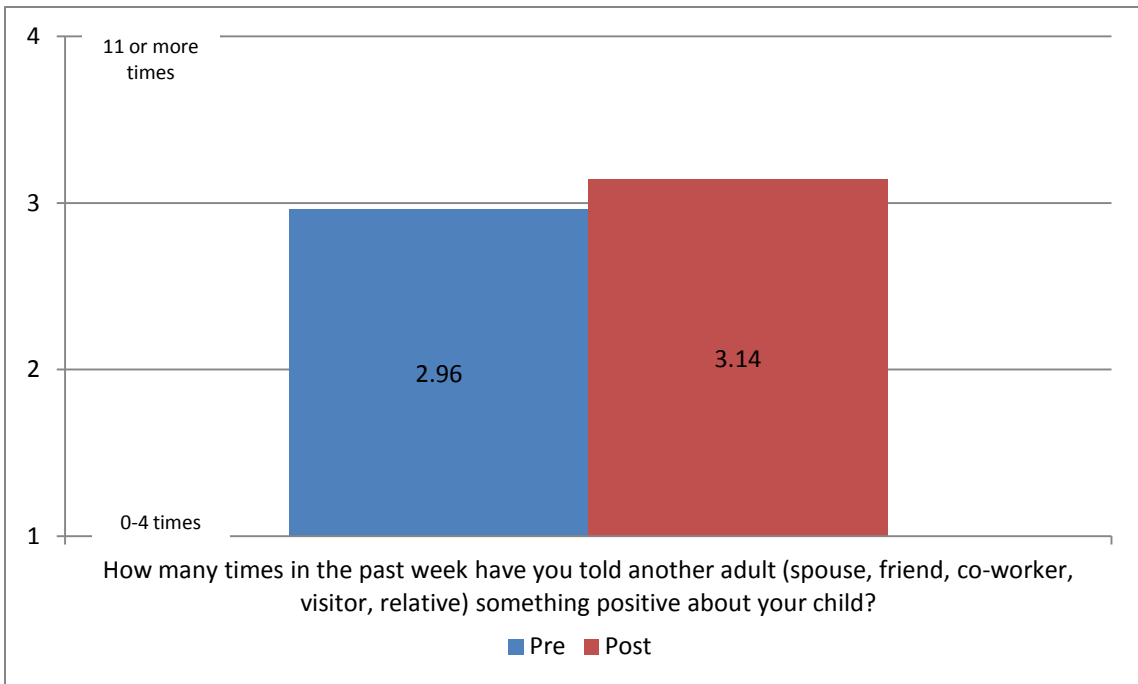
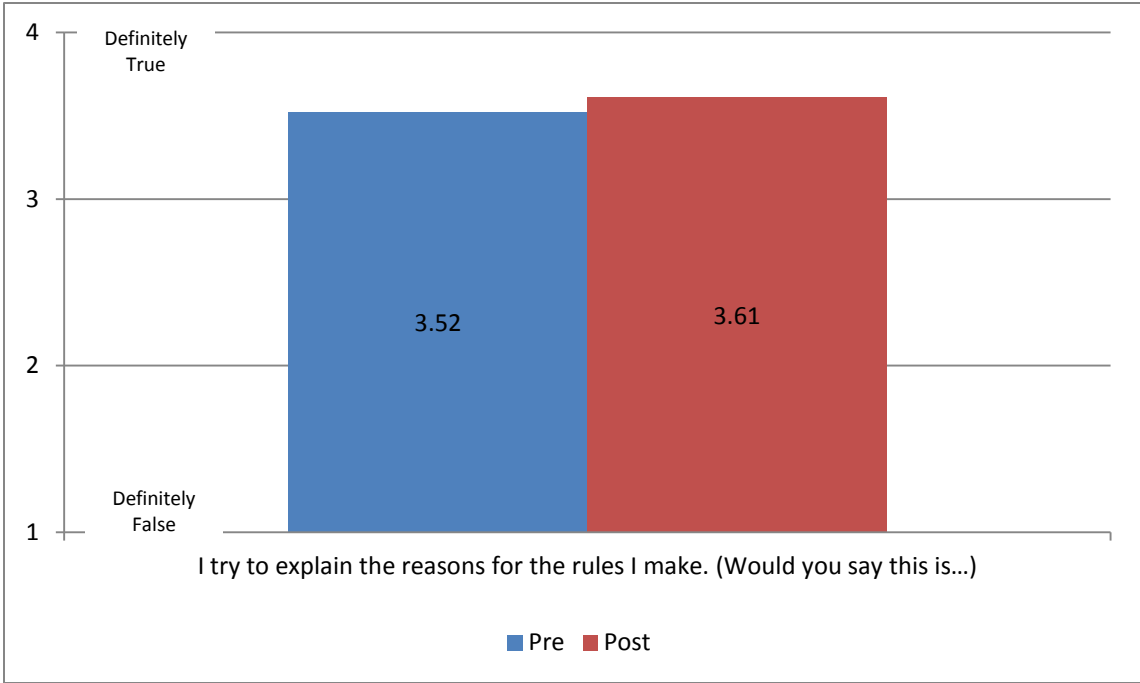
showed significant improvements from the pre- to the post-test. Specifically, participants of CCE parent education classes reported increased patience with their child, increased confidence in making rules that take their child's needs into consideration, increased belief that they have the skills necessary to be a good caregiver, decreases in how often they yell at their child, increased use of explanations for rules they make, an increase in communicating something positive about their child with other adults, increased time spent reading with their child, decreases in the number of hours their children spend watching television, and increased belief that they have enough people to count on when needed.

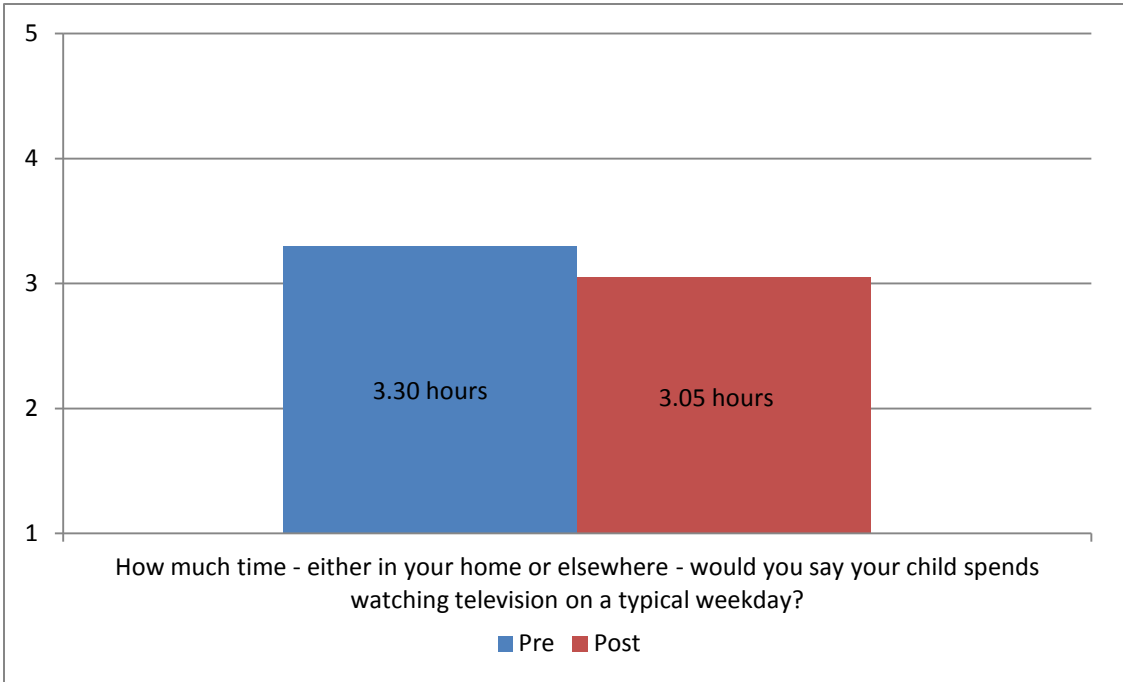
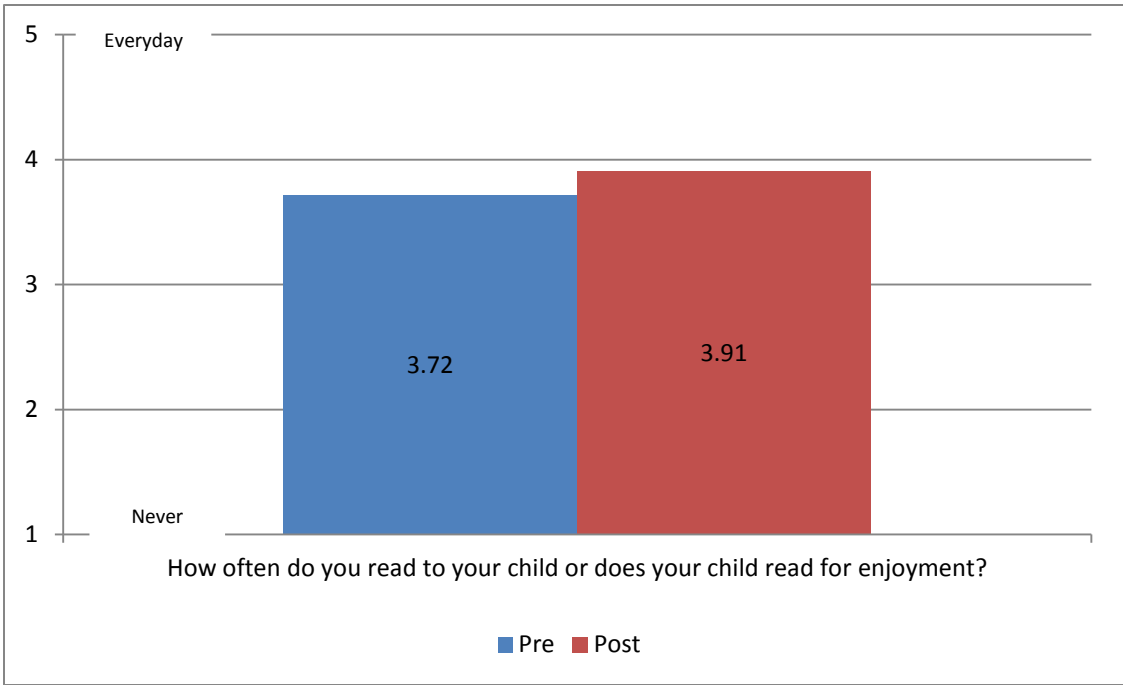
A p-value generated from a paired t-test was used as a statistical measure to determine whether a change in a given survey question between the pre- and post-test was significant. A p-value of .10 or less was considered statistically significant, and means that we can be 90% sure that the pre-to-post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

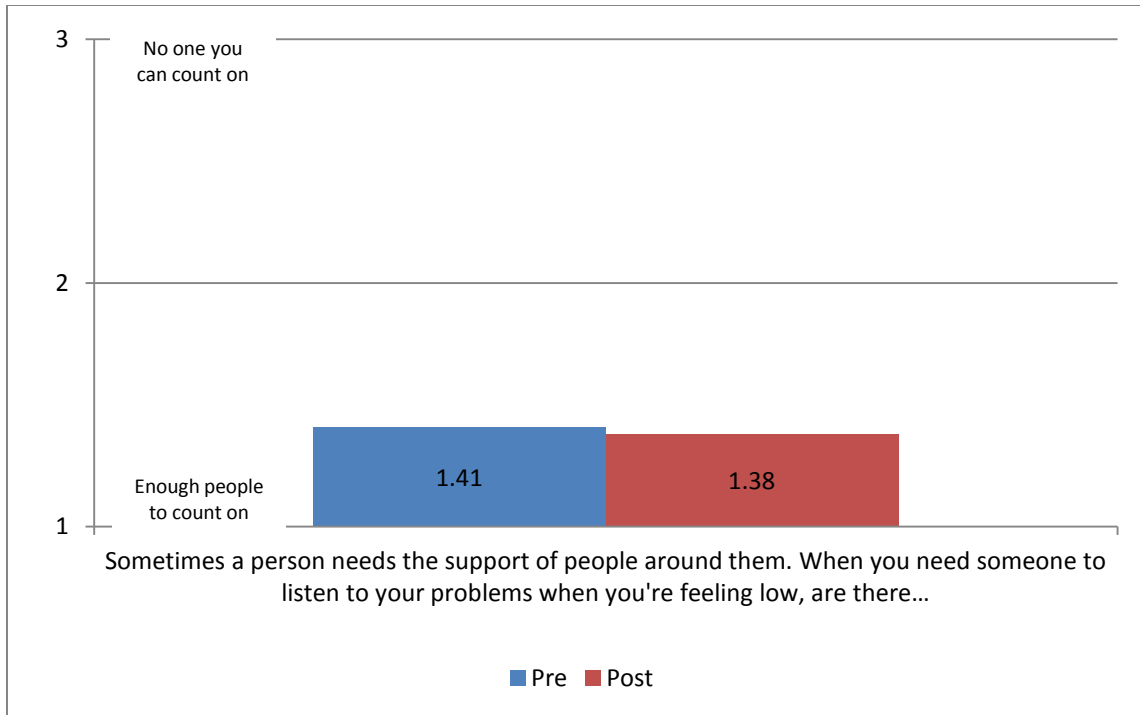












These results indicate that nine out of ten measures of parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge improved significantly from the pre- to the post-

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/>

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