



## Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parent Education Programs, 2015-2016

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 between July 2015 to July 2016. 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 fifteen 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 the Discipline Is Not A Dirty Word Program (14%).

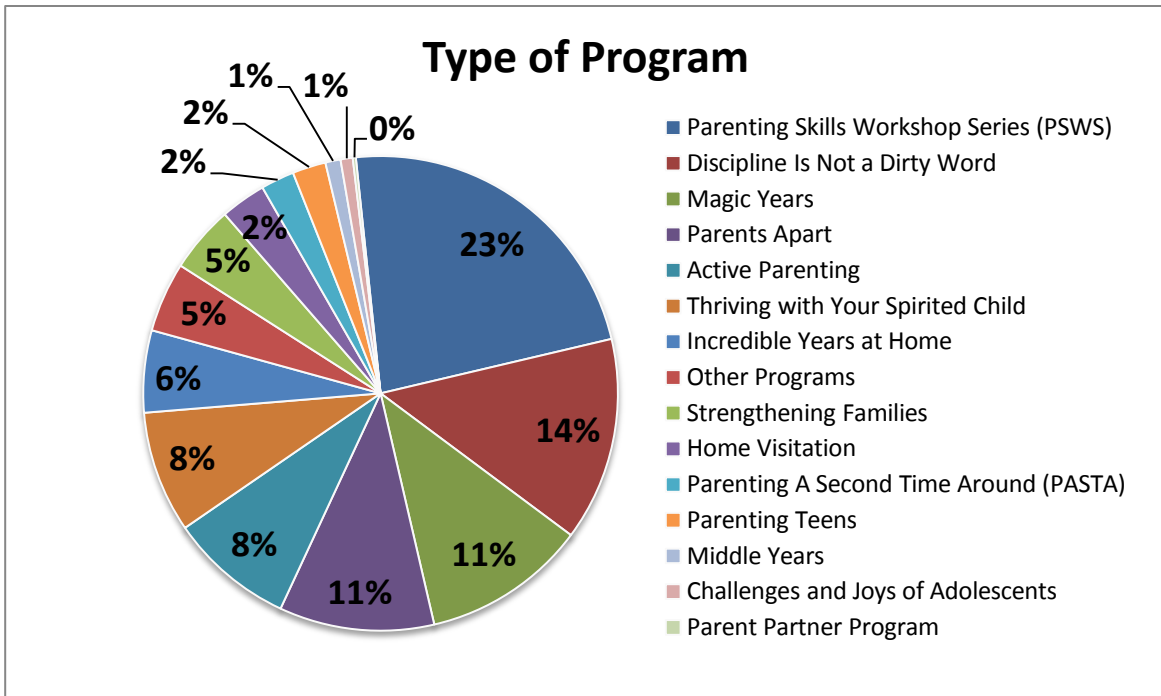
### Outcomes at a Glance

In 2015-2016, **483 participants** attended CCE parenting programs across New York State. Participants took part in one of **fifteen parenting programs** in **seven counties** across the state.

The majority of participants in the parenting education classes were:

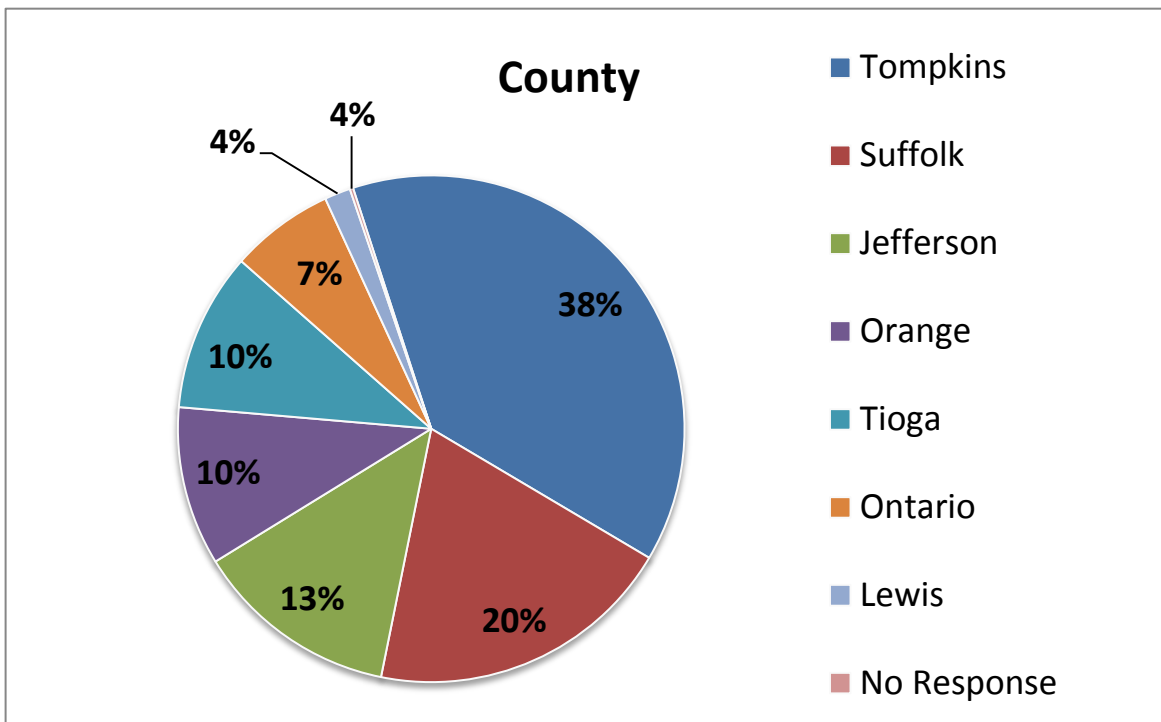
- **Female (67%)**
- **White (72%)**
- **Married or Partnered (45%)**

A total of **320 participants** attended their final class and **9 out of 10 items on the survey showed significant improvements** between the pre- and post-test.



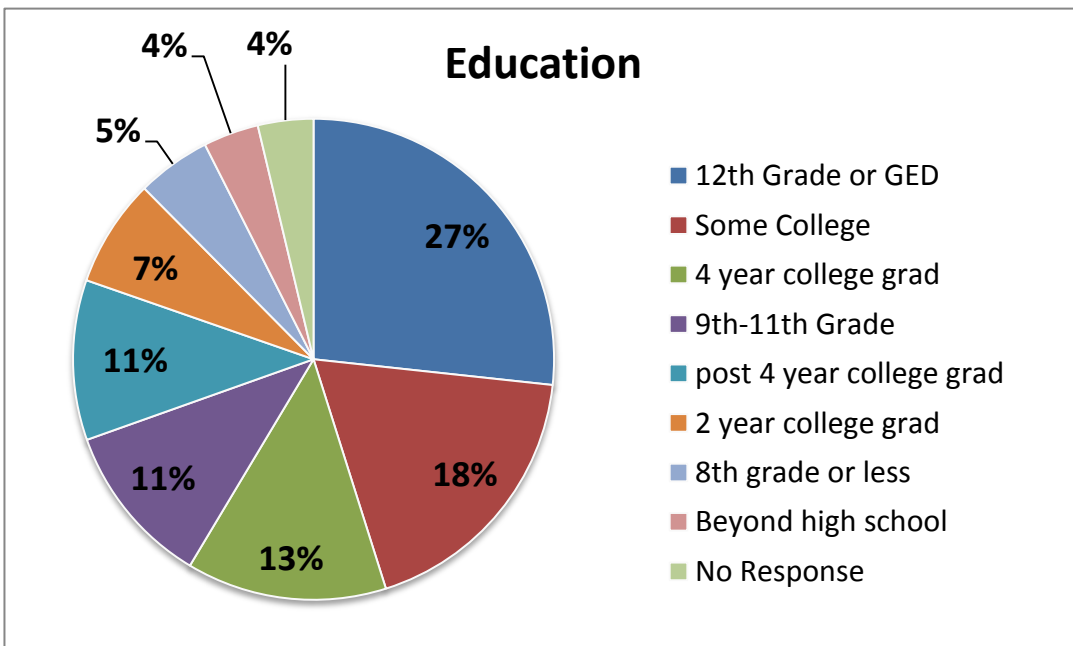
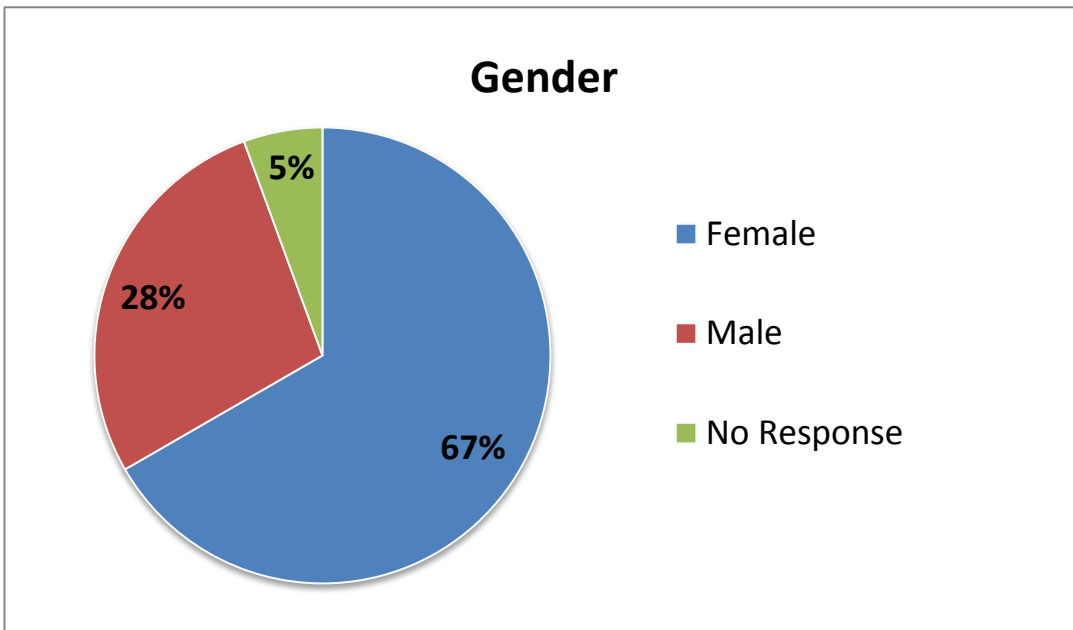
The following summaries use data from 483 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their parent education class. In total, data was collected from

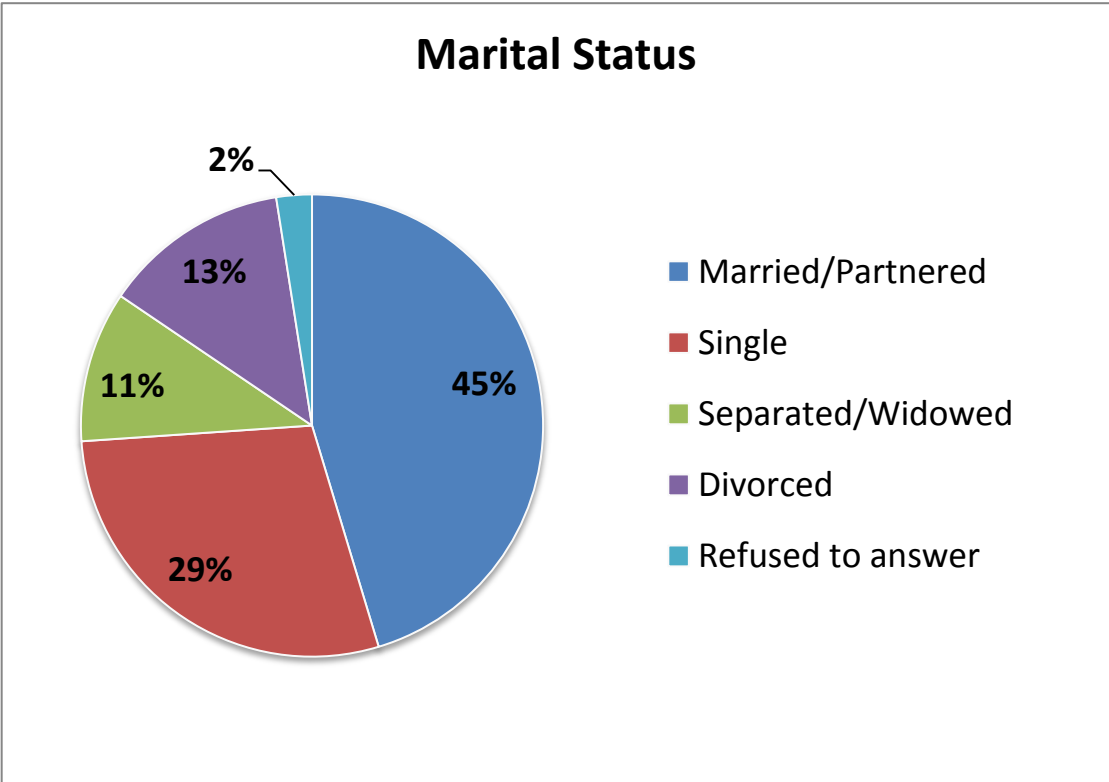
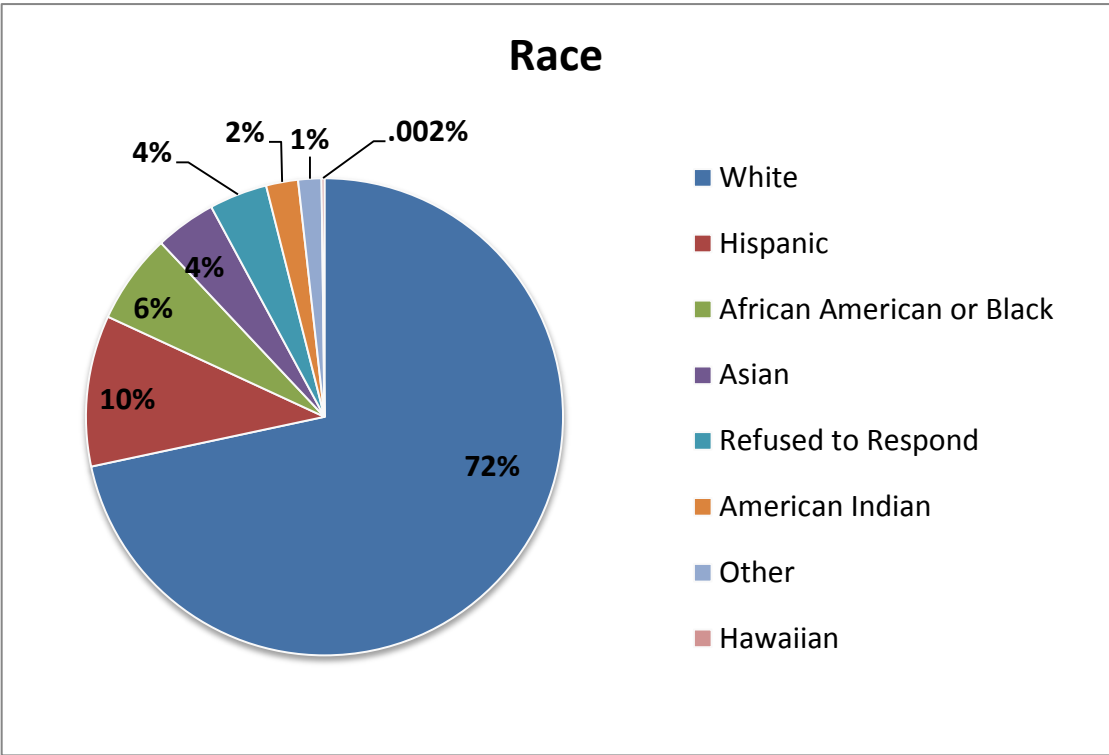
seven counties throughout the state. Tompkins County had the largest share of participants (38%) followed by Suffolk County (20%).



The majority (67%) of participants in 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 (27%)

followed by those having attended, but not graduated from, college (18%). The vast majority of the participants in parent education classes were white (72%), and 45% of the participants were married or partnered.





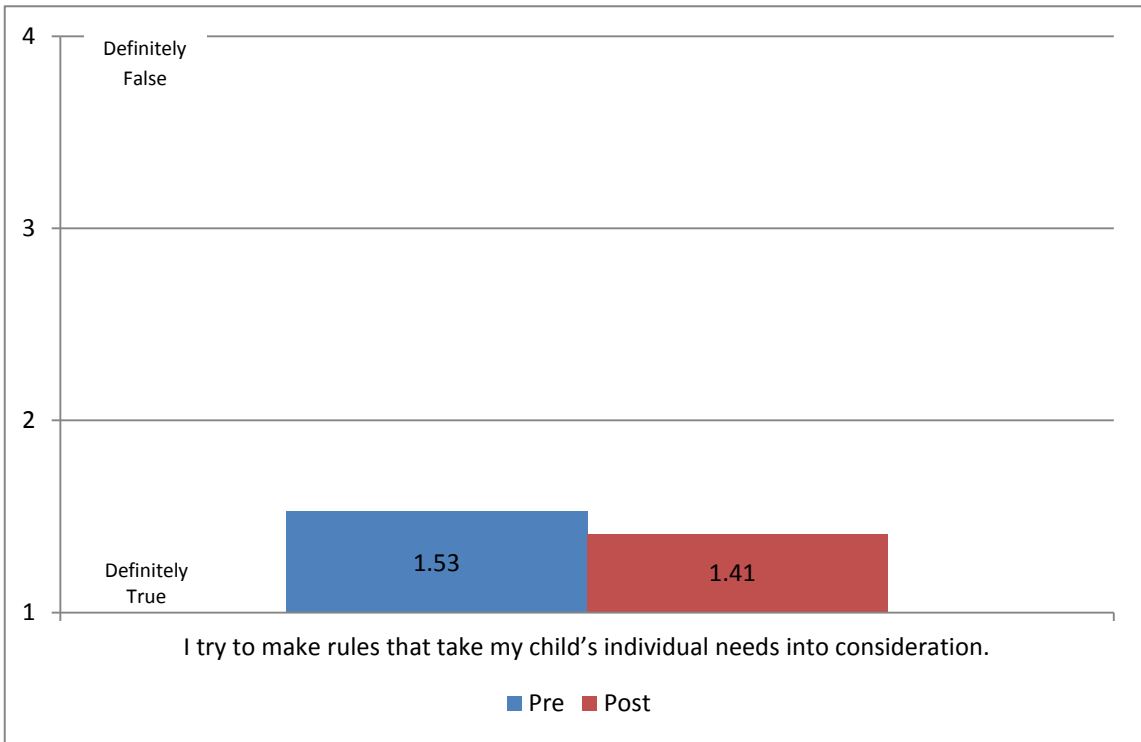
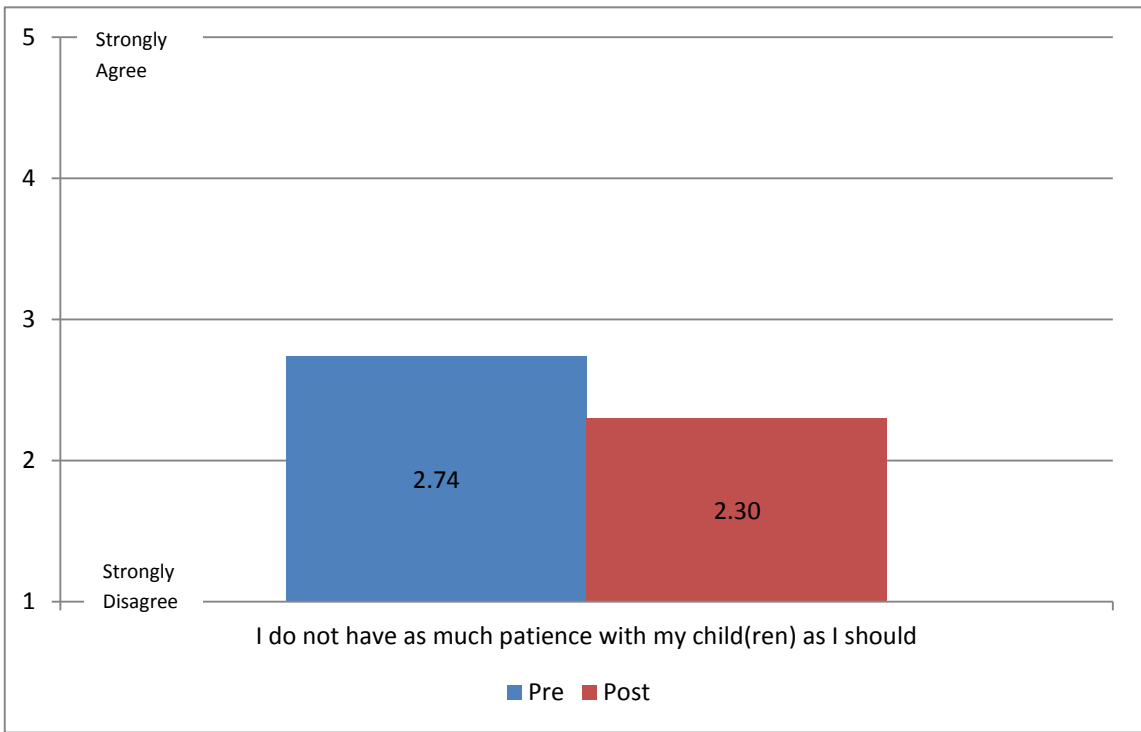
## Pre-Post Survey Results

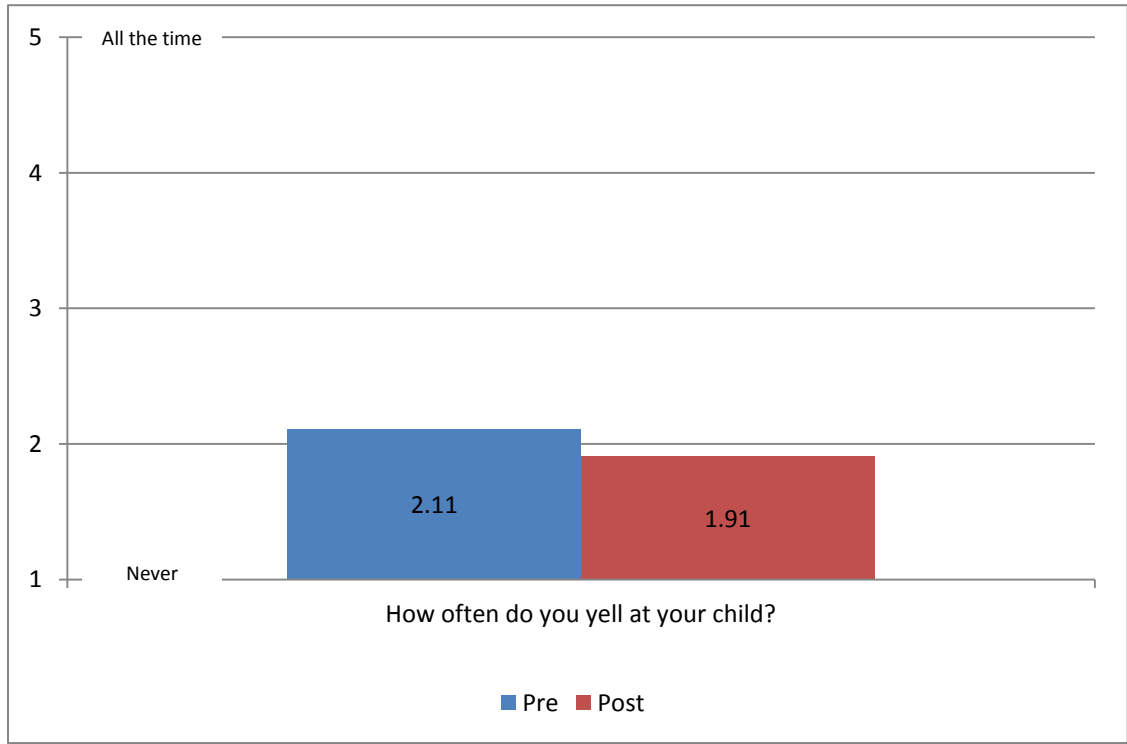
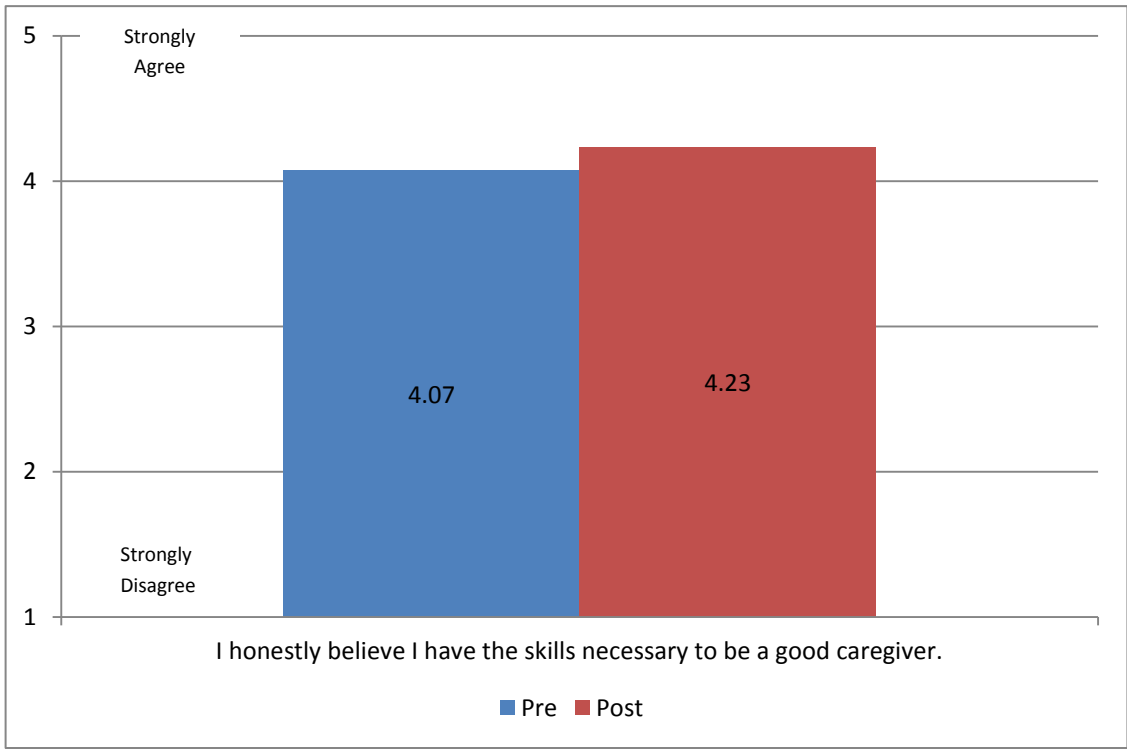
This study used a pre- and post-test evaluation, in which the participants were asked to answer two identical surveys—one given at the first session of the class and another given after the completion of the last parenting class. The survey included ten questions about parenting attitudes, behaviors,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

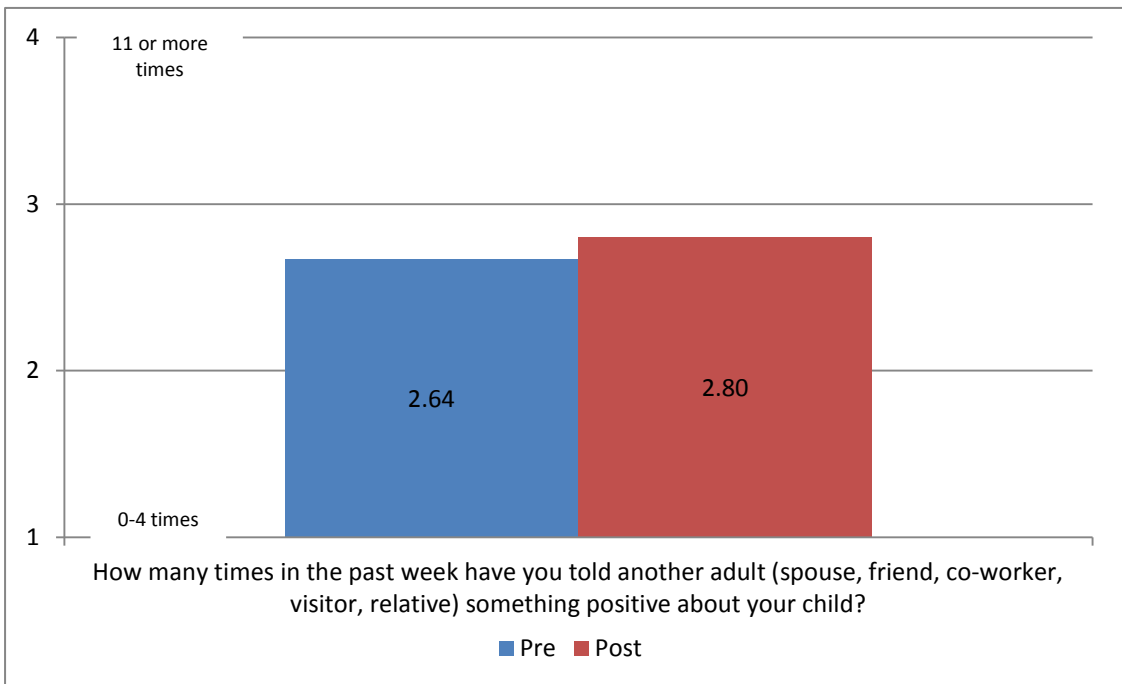
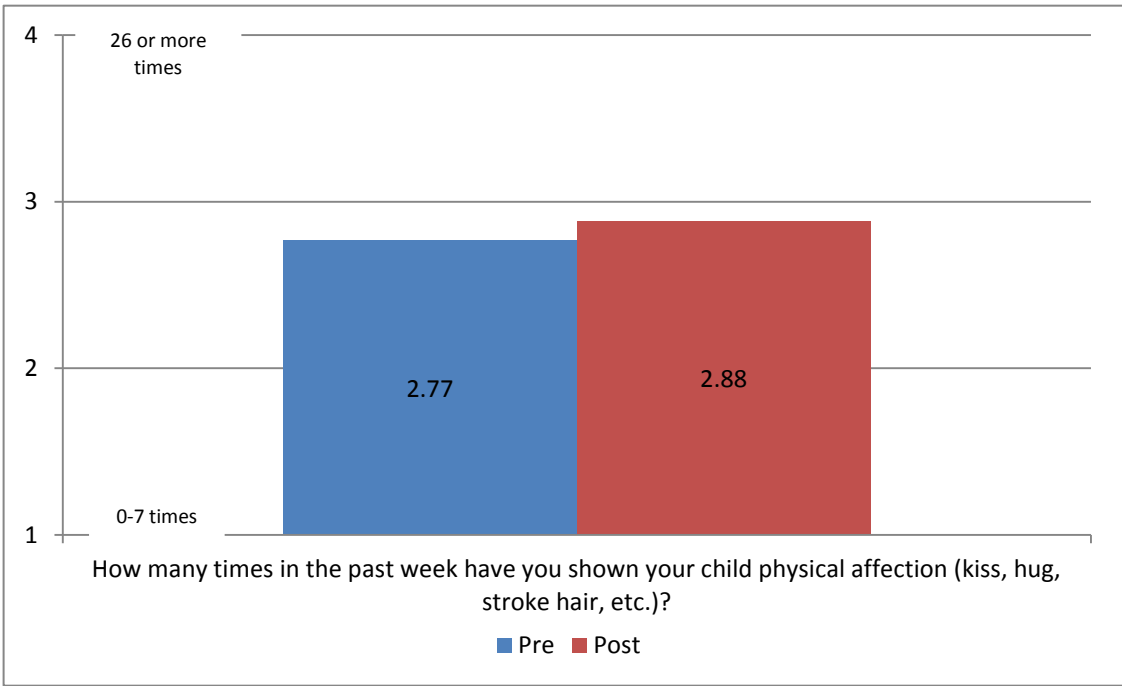
The following evaluation is based on information provided by 320 participants, who completed a parent education program and completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. Nine out of ten items on the survey showed significant improvements

from the pre- to the post-test. Specifically, CCE parent education participants 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 physical affection towards their child, 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.

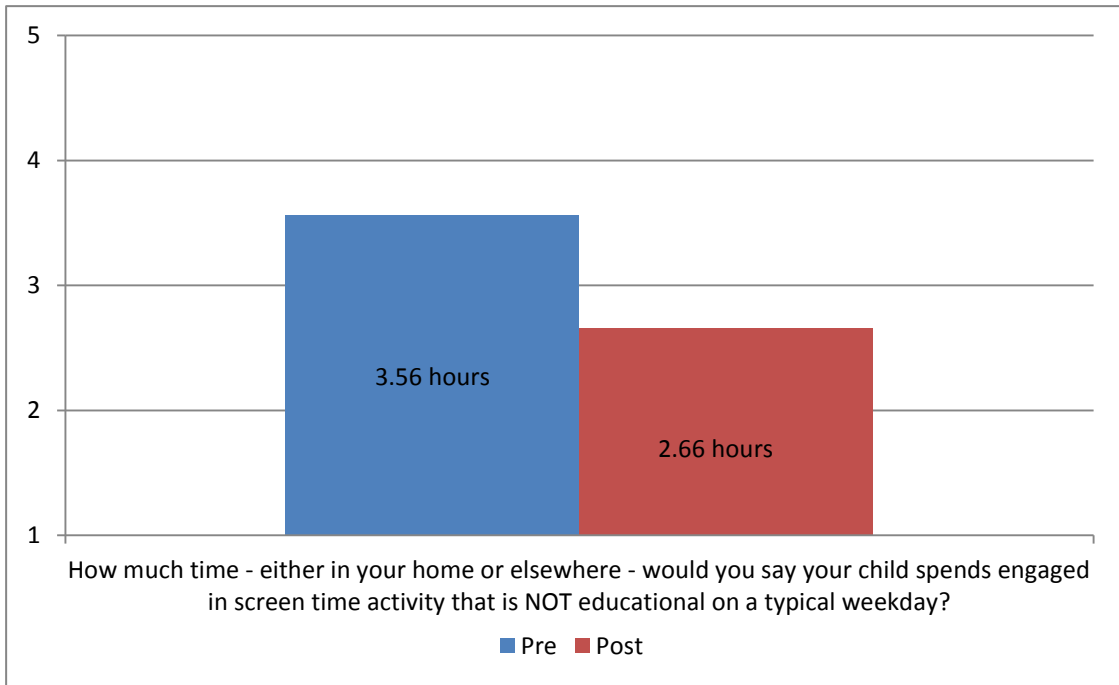
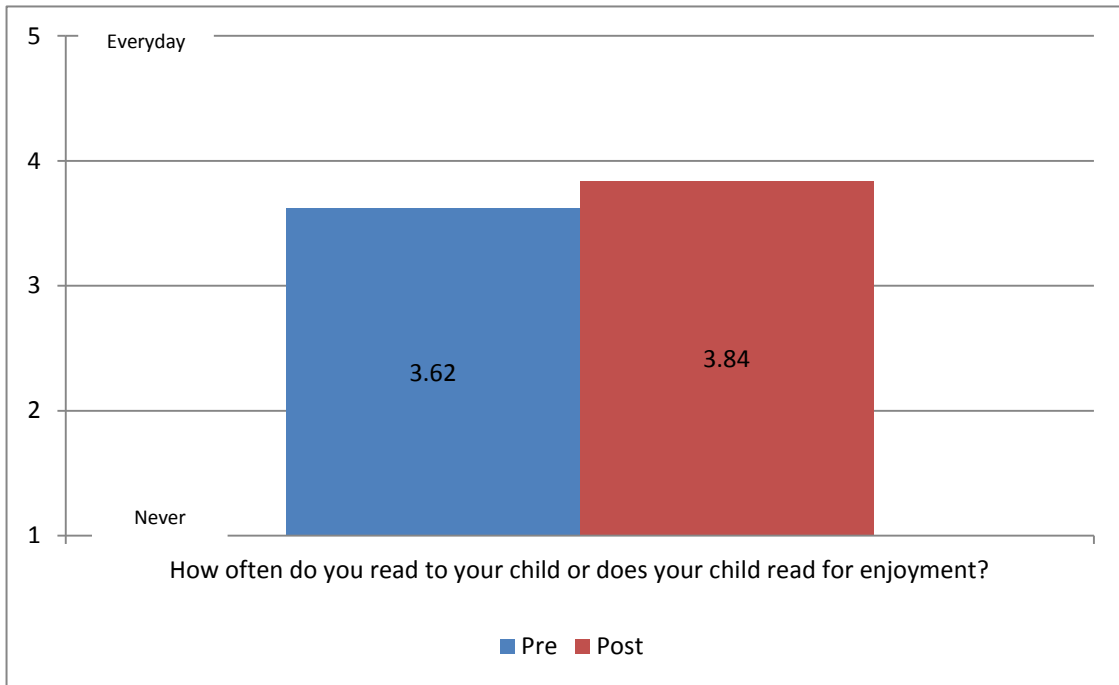
A p-value generated from a paired t-test was used as a statistical measure to determine whether a change in a given survey question between the pre- and post-test was significant. A p-value of .10 or less was considered statistically significant. This means that we can say with 90% certainty that the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

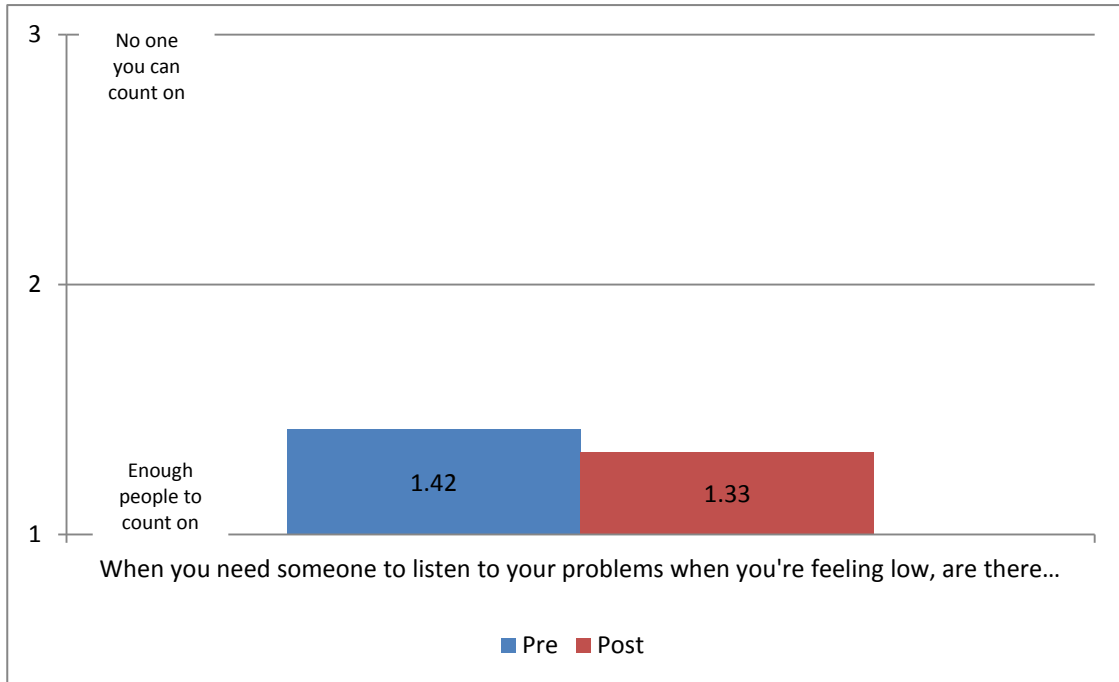












These results indicate that nine out of ten measures of parenting attitudes, behaviors and knowledge improved significantly from the pre- to the post-

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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