



Youth Mentoring: 2024

Year 1 Evaluation Results

Children's Trust of Alachua County

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Purpose Statement

This report evaluates the first-year implementation of a youth mentoring program funded by the Children's Trust of Alachua County. The report provides insight on performance and highlights successes and opportunities for improvement. The primary audience for this report is the Children's Trust staff, providers, the Trust Board, and partners who help support the implementation of services. After gaining insights from results presented, we aim to strengthen services and outcomes for children and youth.

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Executive Summary

The Children's Trust of Alachua County (CTAC) introduced youth mentoring to offer opportunities for at risk youth to develop relationships with caring adults that would promote social emotional skills and school performance. Mentoring also deters youth from delinquent activity and negative influences, potentially reducing involvement with the juvenile justice system. CTAC provided funding for two different mentoring grants: mini grants, which focused primarily on group mentoring programs, and larger, full contract grants which included both group mentoring and one on one mentoring. Overall, youth built strong relationships with mentors and maintained or made gains in social emotional skills and academic performance, while avoiding involvement with the juvenile justice system. Mentoring aligns primarily with CTAC Goal 3: Children live in a safe community. Programming also aligns with CTAC Goal 2: Children learn what they need to be successful.

The purpose of this report is to share results from the mentoring initiative and provide insight into performance, successes, and areas for growth. Key findings are highlighted below:

Performance Results

- 409 total youth served
 - 279 youth served through full contract programs
 - 130 youth served through mini grant programs
- 162 mentors engaged
- 2,781 one-on-one mentoring sessions
- 350 group mentoring sessions
- 93% of youth in full contract programs reported relational satisfaction and closeness with their mentor

- 100% of youth in full contract programs were doing well or made gains in social emotional skills and school performance
- 97% of youth in full contract programs had no juvenile justice involvement
- 92% of youth in mini grant programs reported satisfaction with group mentoring

Key Successes

- Extensive mentor and parent/caregiver support from providers
- Youth satisfaction with mentoring relationships
- Camaraderie built in group sessions

Areas for Improvement

- Increase frequency of one-on-one mentor-mentee contacts
- Support needed for mentor recruitment
- Continue ongoing SAMIS support

Introduction

In July of 2023, the Children’s Trust of Alachua County facilitated a competitive procurement process to identify qualified organizations to provide mentoring to Alachua County youth. The National Institute of Justice (2023) defines youth mentoring as a consistent, prosocial relationship between an older peer or adult and one or more youths. CTAC sought evidence-based programs which supported character-building activities and the development of supportive relationships between youth caring adults. Mentoring practices included those aimed to address juvenile delinquency, truancy, substance abuse, victimization, and other high-risk behaviors and enhance social emotional skill development and school performance. Six organizations received full 12 month mentoring contracts, requiring one on one and group mentoring, and eight

organizations received six-month mini grants which required only group mentoring. This report outlines the outcomes of both mini grant and full contract mentoring programs.

Why is youth mentoring important?

Mentoring provides youth with a consistent, positive adult relationship that promotes healthy development and social functioning and reduces risk factors for school and family level behavioral problems, among others (National Institute of Justice, 2023). A study of 1,310 youth of varying risk profiles found that after a year of mentoring, participants reported fewer depressive symptoms, greater acceptance by peers, more positive beliefs about their ability to succeed in school, and better school grades (Herrera et al., 2013). Over 2.5 million U.S. children and youth participate in mentoring programs every year due to their overwhelmingly positive impact on young lives and communities (Raposa et al., 2019).

In 2022, 19 per 1,000 youth in Alachua County were arrested, up from 15.4 in 2021, compared to 11.2 per 1,000 in the state of Florida in 2022, up from 9.7 in 2021 (Florida Department of Health, 2024). Implementing mentoring programming in Alachua County reduces risk factors, such as low school involvement, which can lead to youth arrests (Florida Department of Health, 2024). Mentoring programs can also provide youth with a caring adult to talk to when they have a problem, enhancing protective factors such as social and emotional competence. During CTAC's listening project (2023), 20% of youth reported they do not have such an adult. CTAC implementing programming that reduces risk factors and promotes protective factors can reduce youth arrests and encourage student engagement in school, ensuring all children live in a safe community (CTAC Goal 3).

What are best practices in youth mentoring?

In a review of over 400 peer reviewed articles and research studies on effective mentoring practices, Garringer et al. (2015) report six standards of mentoring best practice. First, programs should recruit appropriate mentors and mentees by realistically describing program goals. Second, mentoring program providers should screen prospective mentors and mentees to ensure they have the time and commitment to participate in the program. The most positive benefits are associated with mentoring relationships that last at least a year, where mentors and mentees meet for at least four hours each month. Third, mentoring program providers should train prospective mentors, mentees, and parents and guardians in knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to build effective and safe mentoring relationships using culturally appropriate tools and language. Programs should provide a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in person, mentor trainings. Mentors should also be trained in the importance of collaborating with parents or guardians, as parent-mentor partnerships are important in facilitating positive youth outcomes.

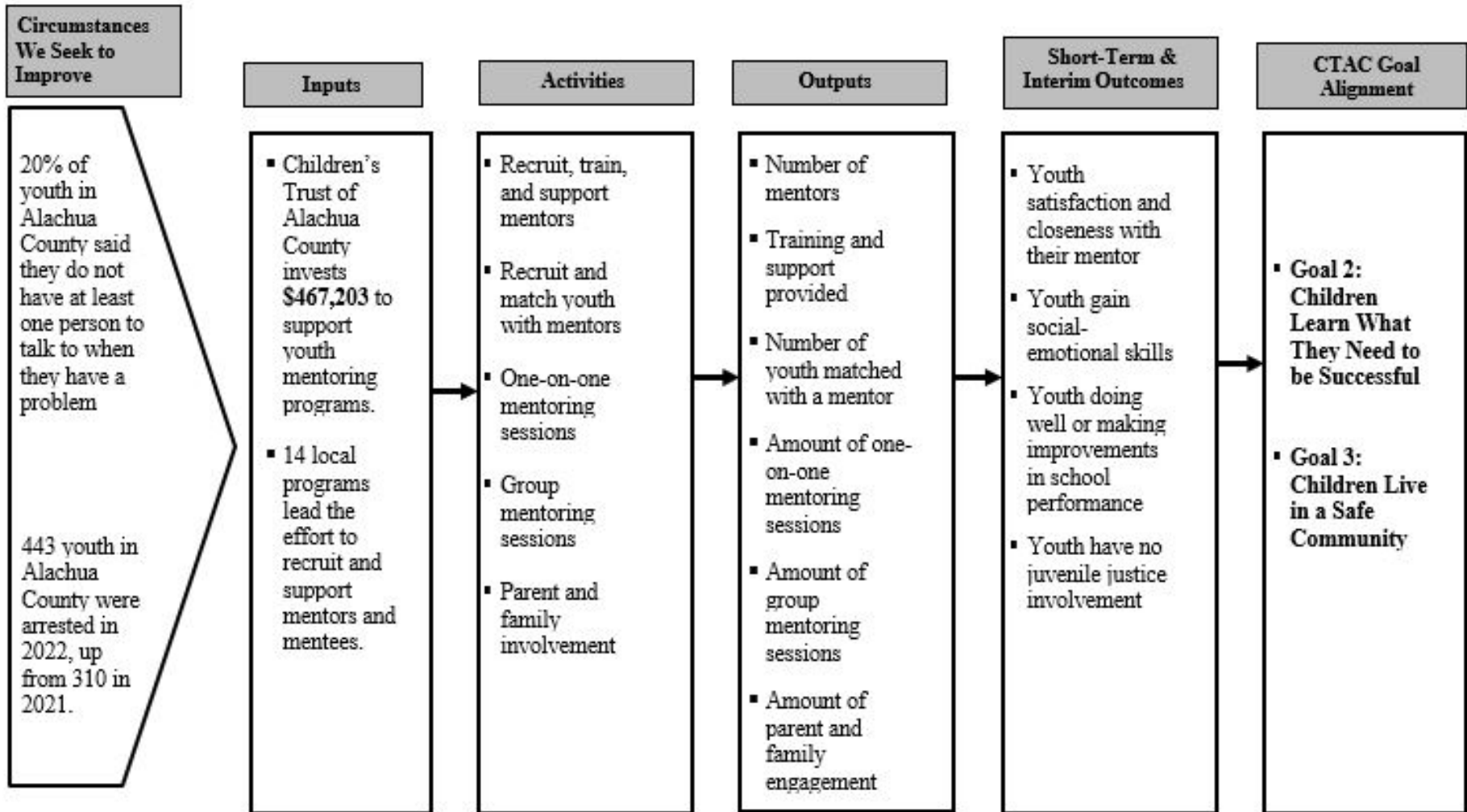
Fourth, mentors and mentees should be matched using strategies to increase the likelihood of long term, effective relationships. Common interests, for example, should be used as a primary criteria for matches. Mentoring relationships should also be monitored for milestones and safety and providers should provide ongoing training, advice, and resources to mentors for the duration of the relationship. Lastly, mentoring program providers should facilitate the closure of mentoring relationships in a way that affirms participant experience and allows for reflection.

Garringer et al.'s (2015) best practices informed CTAC's procurement process and evaluation of program implementation.

Logic Model for Youth Mentoring

CTAC's logic model for youth mentoring outlines the inputs and activities that drive our desired outcomes: Youth build a caring relationship with a mentor, build social emotional skills, enhance school performance, and ultimately avoid involvement with the juvenile justice system. CTAC's investment in local mentoring providers ultimately facilitates a community in which all children are safe (CTAC Goal 3).

Logic Model: Youth Mentoring



Sources:
 Children's Trust of Alachua County Listening Project
 Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

Key Questions

Key questions address the program design used, demographics of program participants, amount of mentoring received by youth and training received by mentors and parents/caregivers. Program outcomes and tools used to measure outcomes are then discussed. Successes include parents/caregivers and mentors receiving extensive support from providers, youth reporting high satisfaction with mentoring relationships, and gains in social emotional skills and educational performance. Mentor and provider perspectives are also presented.

Program Design

Full contract recipients and mini grant recipients implemented two different program designs. Six providers received twelve month full contracts, with programs to be implemented from October 2023 through September 2024. Eight providers received six month mini grants, with programs to be implemented from April through September 2024.

Full contract providers recruited mentees and mentors and facilitated match pairs of one mentor to each mentee. Each matched pair was to meet one on one for an average of two or more times each month for a minimum of nine months. Providers were also to facilitate group mentoring sessions once per month. Group mentoring provided opportunities for skill building around self esteem, responding to bullying, college and career planning, and more.

Full contract providers were also to provide monthly support to mentors and parents/caregivers. Programs were to ensure prospective mentors, mentees, and their parents or caregivers had the basic knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to build safe and effective relationships. Pre-match training builds self-efficacy of mentors and provides knowledge of safety, ethics, risk-management, and relationship building. Mentor and parent/caregiver training has implications for the length of match relationship as well as all parties' perceptions of the quality of the relationship (Garringer et al., 2015).

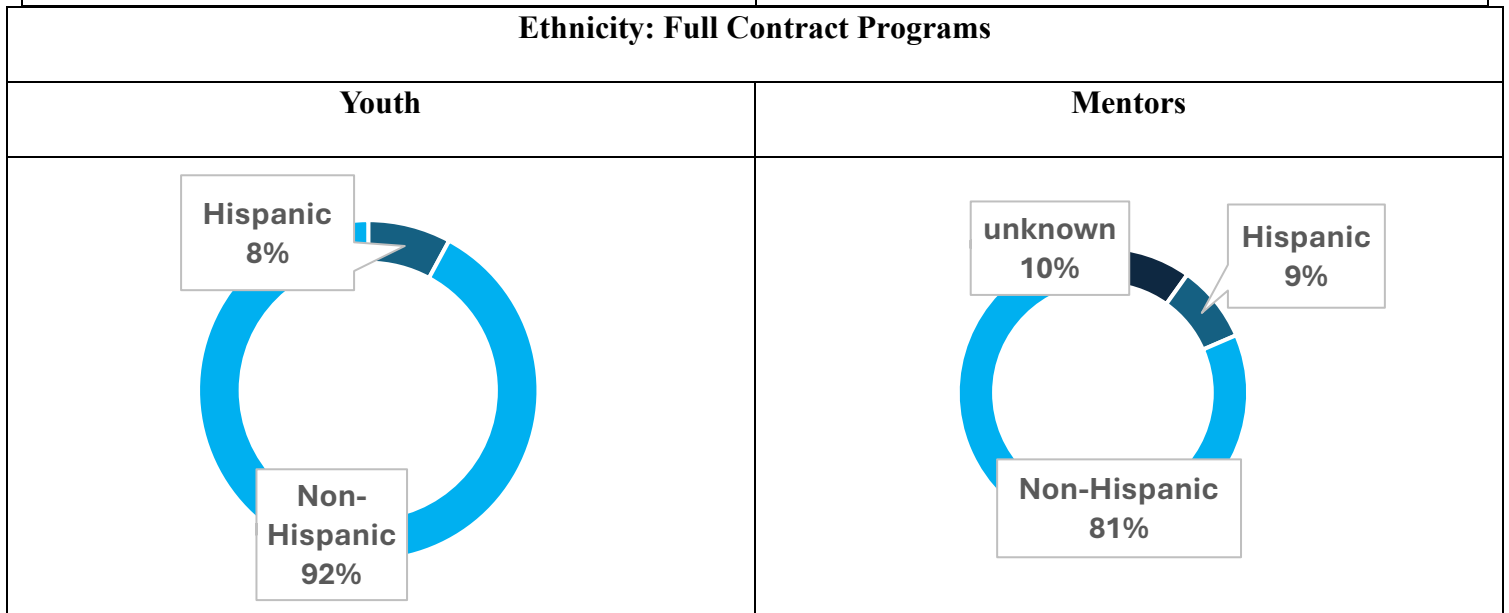
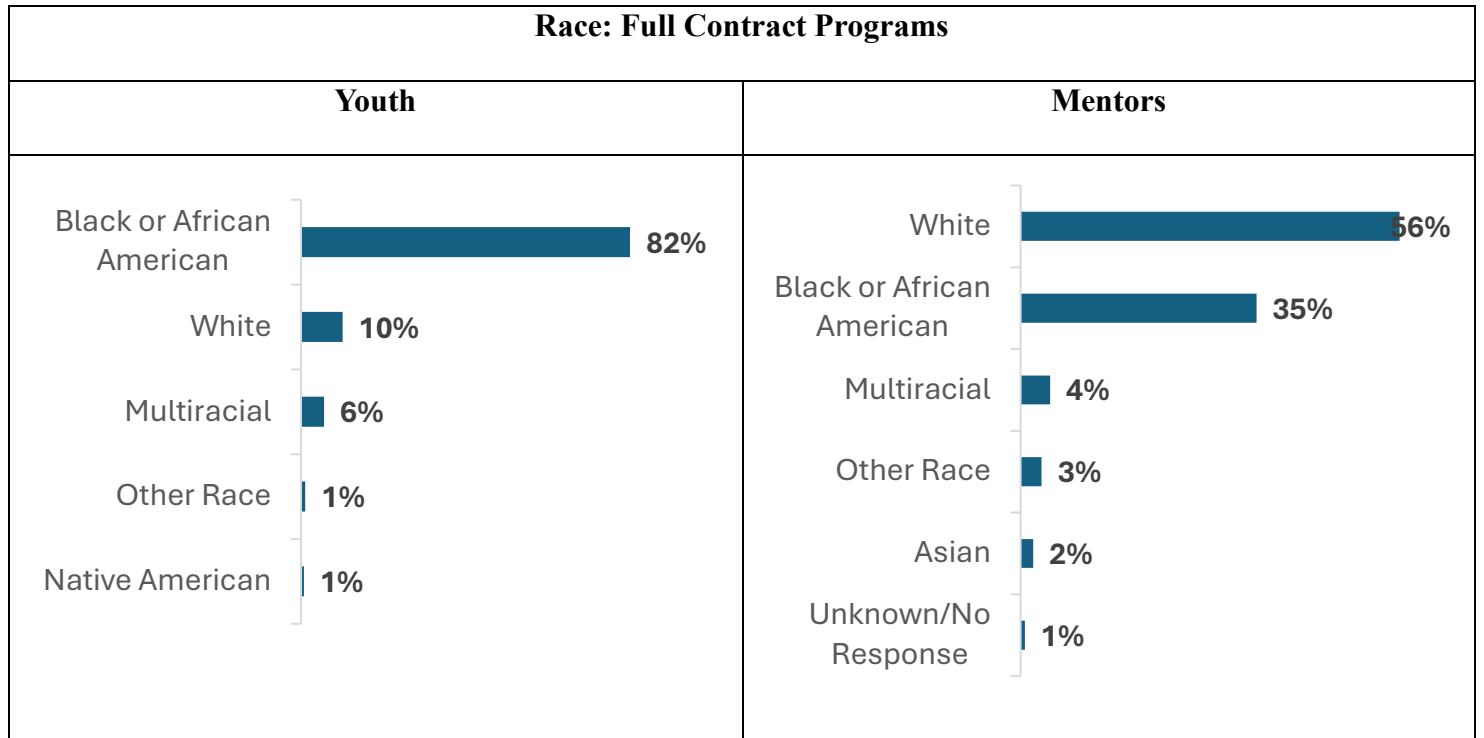
Mini grant recipients were expected to offer group sessions twice a month to enrolled mentees. Sessions could include lessons in character building, self-esteem, healthy relationships, reducing risky behaviors, substance abuse prevention, community engagement, and more. Sessions were to be held during a timeframe most conducive to high participation. Mini grant recipients' aimed for youth to participate in two or more group sessions per month on average for at least three months.

Mentoring Program Design			
Full Contract		Mini Grant	
	9+ Months Youth Engagement		3+ Months Youth Engagement
	Group Mentoring		Group Mentoring
	One on One Mentoring		
	Mentor Support Parent/Caregiver Support		

Who were the participating youth and mentors?

CTAC's mentoring initiative served a total of 409 youth: 279 in full contract programs and 130 in mini grant programs. The average age of youth in full grant programs was 12.8 and the average age of youth in mini grant programs was 10.3. In the full contract programs, 12% of youth were in elementary school, 51% were in middle school, and 35% were in high school. In the mini grant programs, 65% of participants were in elementary school, 24% were in middle school, and 13% were in high school. Most youth in the full contract programs identified as African American (82%), while most mentors identified as White (56%). Most youth in the mini

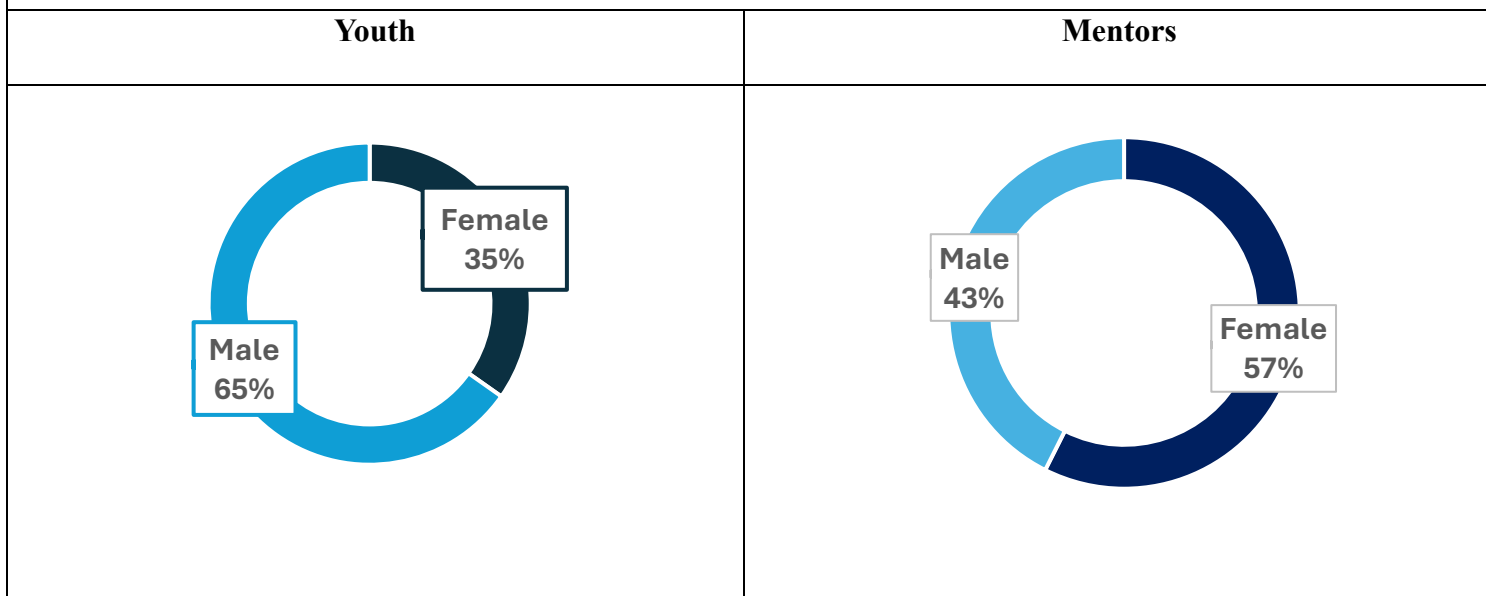
grant programs also identified as African American (83%). More than half of youth in full contact programs were male (65%) while more mentors were female (57%), and most youth in mini grant programs were also male (57%). Most youth in both programs and mentors resided in Gainesville. Full demographic information is show below:



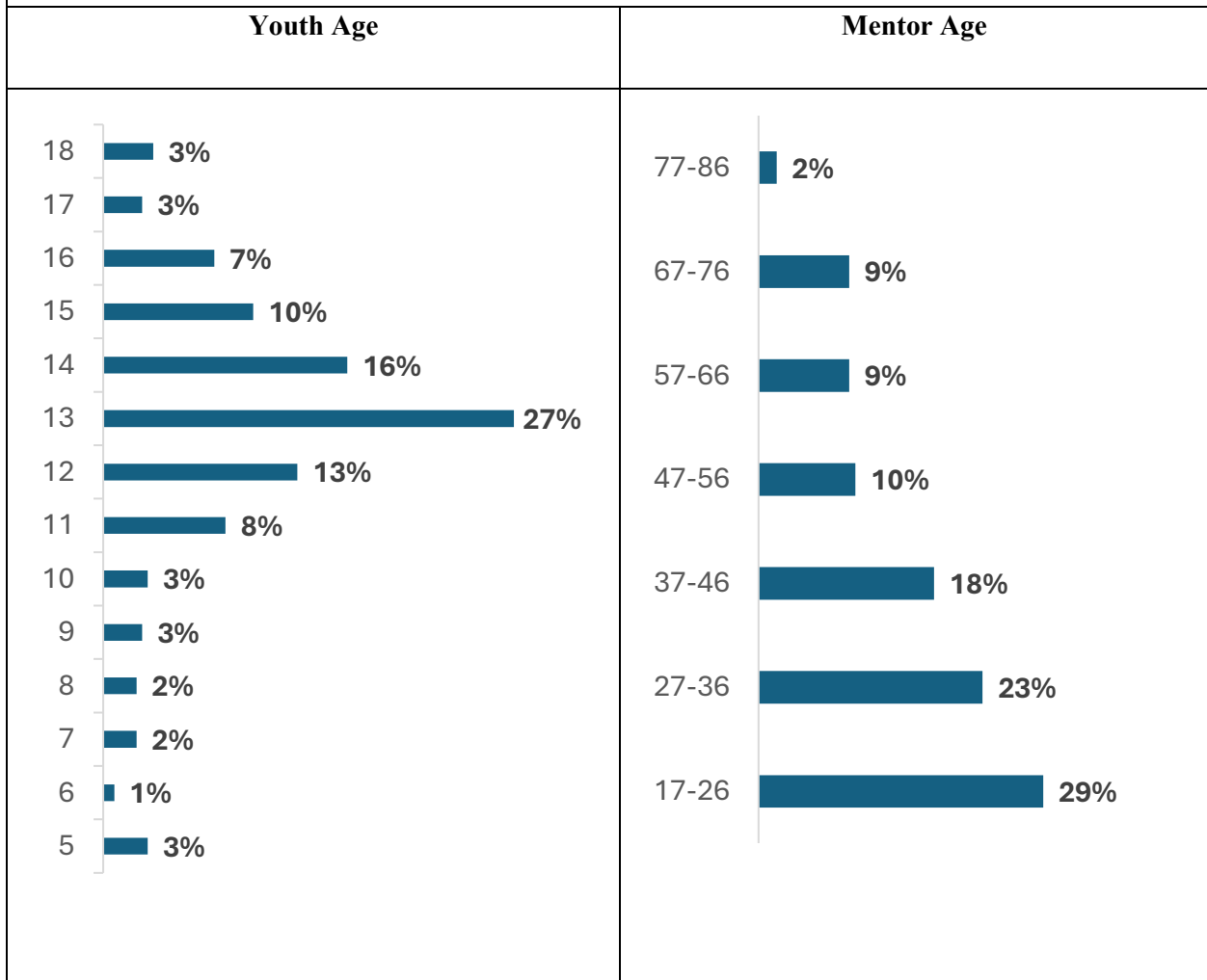
City of Residence: Full Contact Programs

Youth		Mentors	
City	Percentage residing in	City	Percentage residing in
Alachua	4%	Alachua	4%
Archer	1%	Archer	1%
Gainesville	90%	Earleton	2%
Hawthorne	0%	Gainesville	79%
Newberry	5%	High Springs	4%
Waldo	0%	Micanopy	1%
		Newberry	4%
		Outside of Alachua County	5%
		Waldo	1%

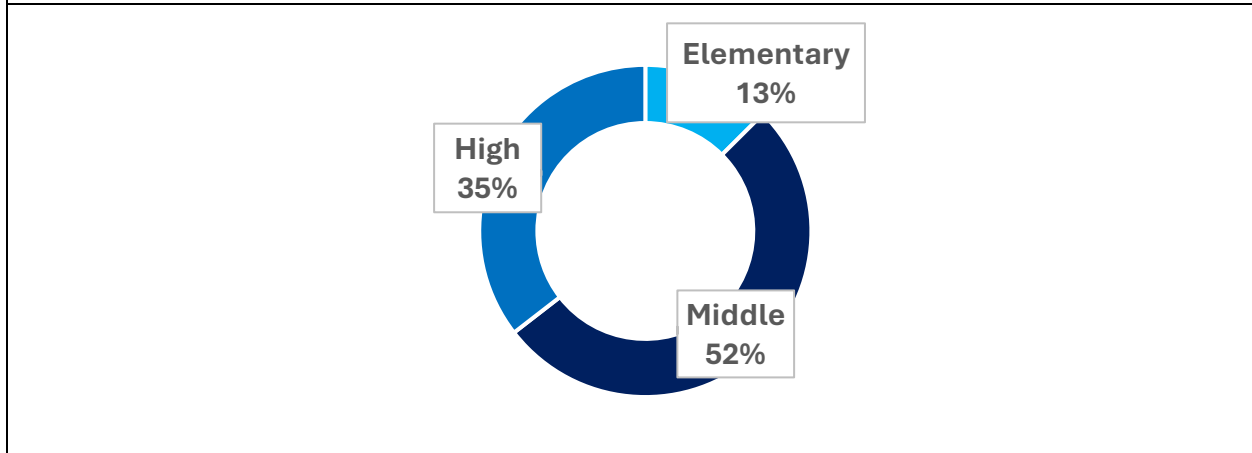
Gender: Full Contract Programs



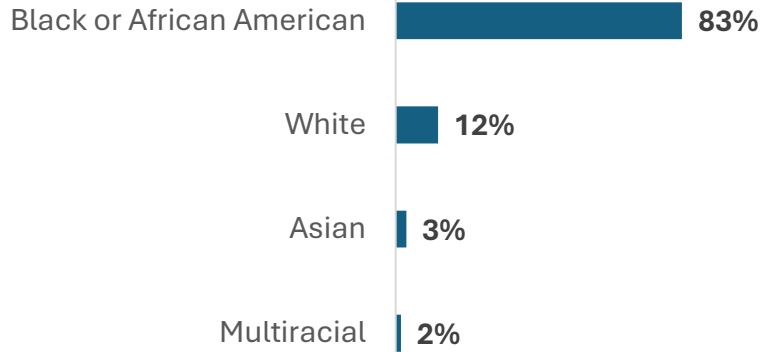
Age and Grade: Full Contract Programs



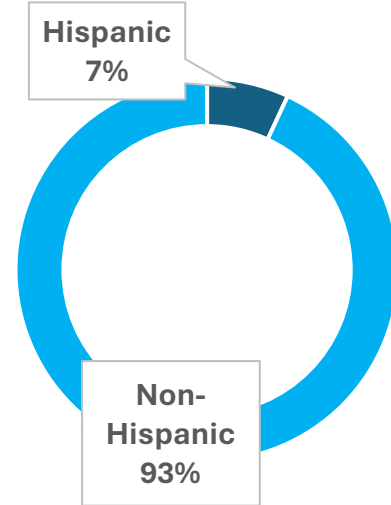
Youth Grade



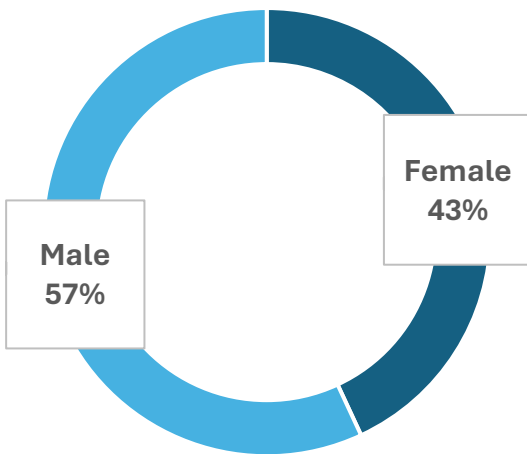
Youth Race: Mini Grant Programs



Youth Ethnicity: Mini Grant Programs

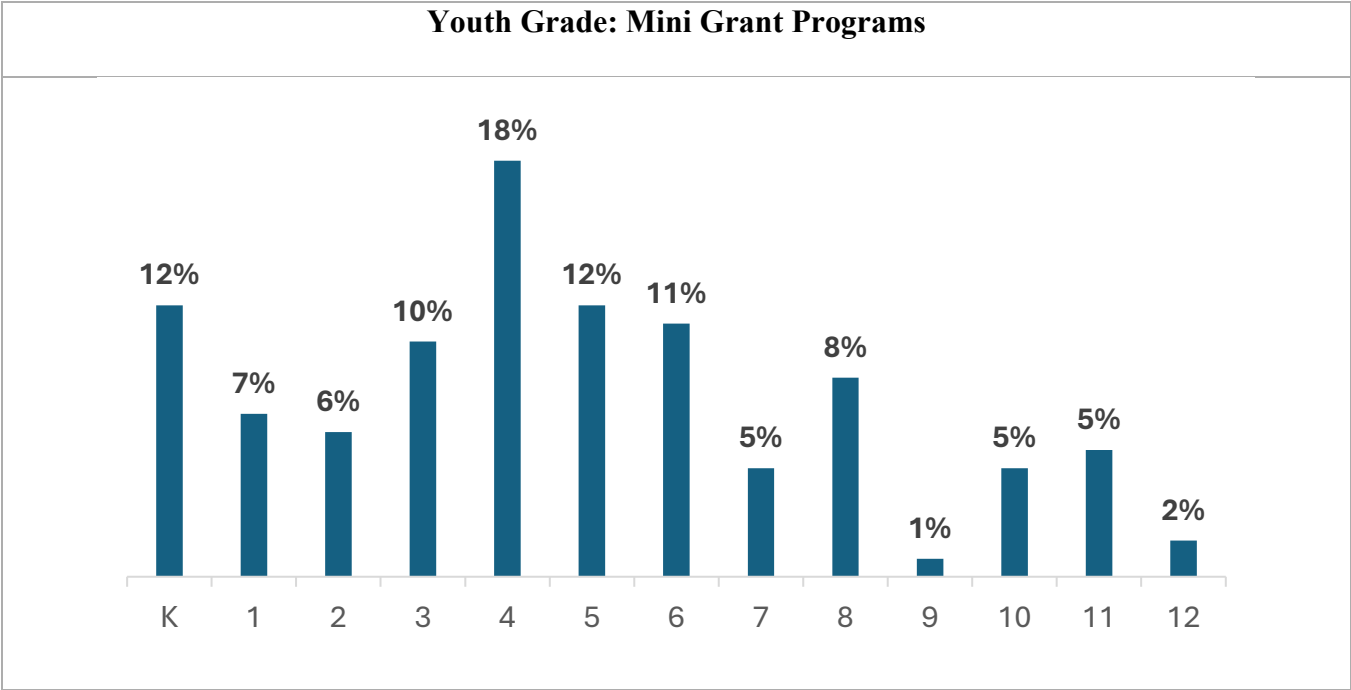


Youth Gender: Mini Grant Programs



Youth City of Residence: Mini Grant Programs

City	Percentage residing in
Alachua	11%
Archer	3%
Brooker	1%
Gainesville	66%
Hawthorne	2%
High Springs	3%
Micanopy	5%
Newberry	10%

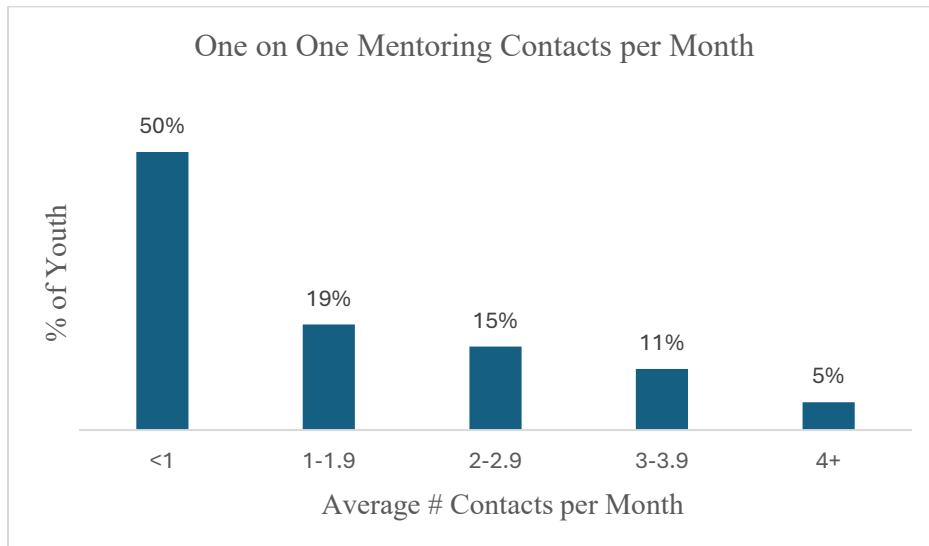


How much mentoring did youth receive?

Of the 279 youth enrolled in full contract programs, 232 were matched with mentors during the fiscal year. The primary reason youth were not matched with mentors is the providers did not have enough mentors to match every youth interested in the program. Youth not matched with mentors participated in group mentoring sessions only.

Full contract providers were asked to document the number of times each mentor-mentee pair connected each month. An official, documented connection was a meeting that lasted at least 30 minutes. Beyond that requirement, each provider determined parameters around connections in their own programs. Of the 232 matched youth, providers consistently entered connections data for 220 youth. During the fiscal year (October 2023- September 2024), providers documented 2,781 connections between mentors and mentees, or 12.6 connections on average per mentee. Of the 220 youth for whom we have data, 68 (31%) connected with their

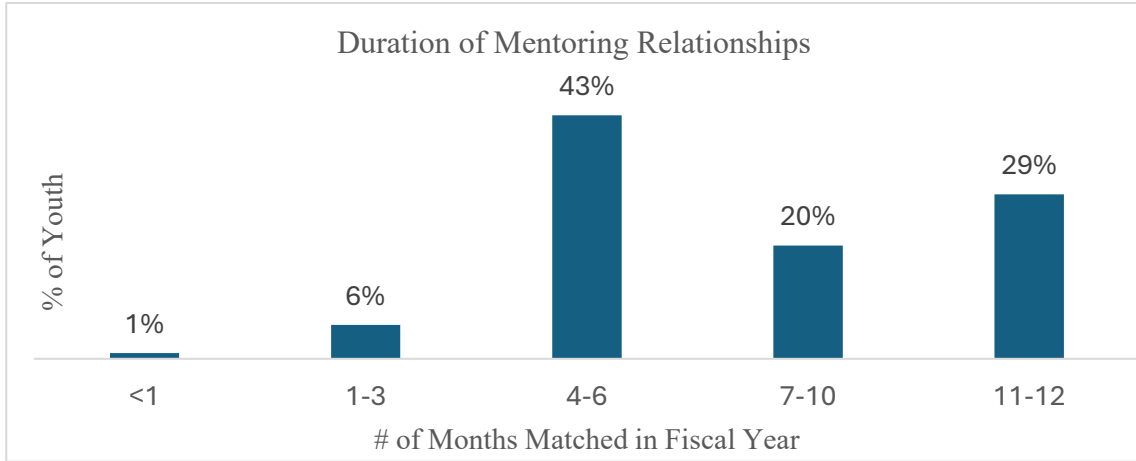
mentor two or more times each month. Half of youth (50%) connected with their mentors fewer than one time on average per month (see graph below). Full contract providers were also expected to facilitate monthly group mentoring sessions; 228 sessions were facilitated during the fiscal year.



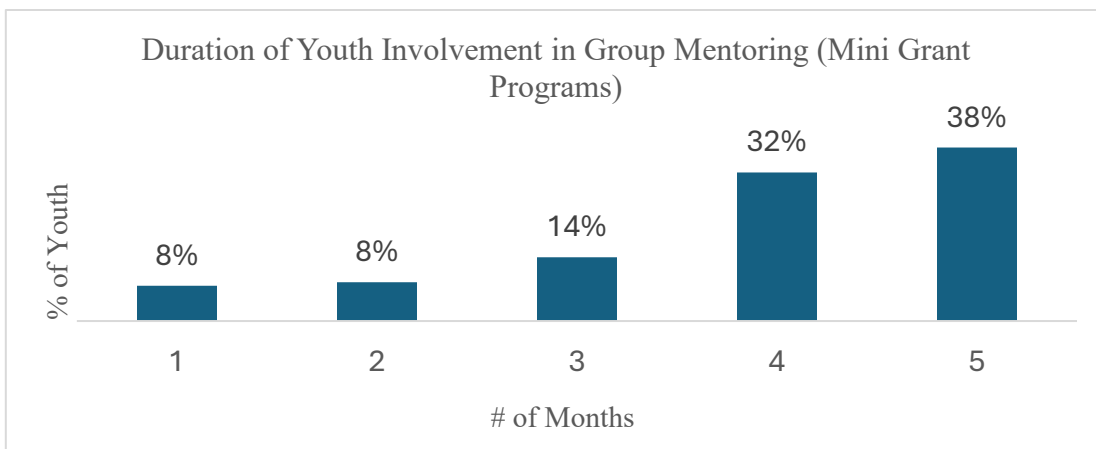
Although only 31% of mentees connected with their mentor more than twice a month, mentees overall report positive benefits from their mentoring relationships. An increase in frequency of meetings would likely only enhance overall program impact. Participant reflections and areas for improvement are outlined in more detail in later sections of this report.

Garringer et al. (2015) recommends mentor-mentee relationships extend for at least one year. Of the 232 matched youth enrolled in full contract mentoring programs, 82 were matched with mentors before January 2024, giving them the opportunity to be in their mentoring relationship at least nine months of the fiscal year (October 2023-September 2024). Of the 82 youth matched before January 2024, 74 (90%) remained in their mentoring relationship for nine or more months. Almost half of all matched youth (43%) were matched between four and six months. The fiscal year extended for one year exactly, so unless mentoring relationships had already been established at the start of the fiscal year, most relationships lasted less than one

year. Ideally, mentoring relationships facilitated during this first fiscal year will extend into the next fiscal year.



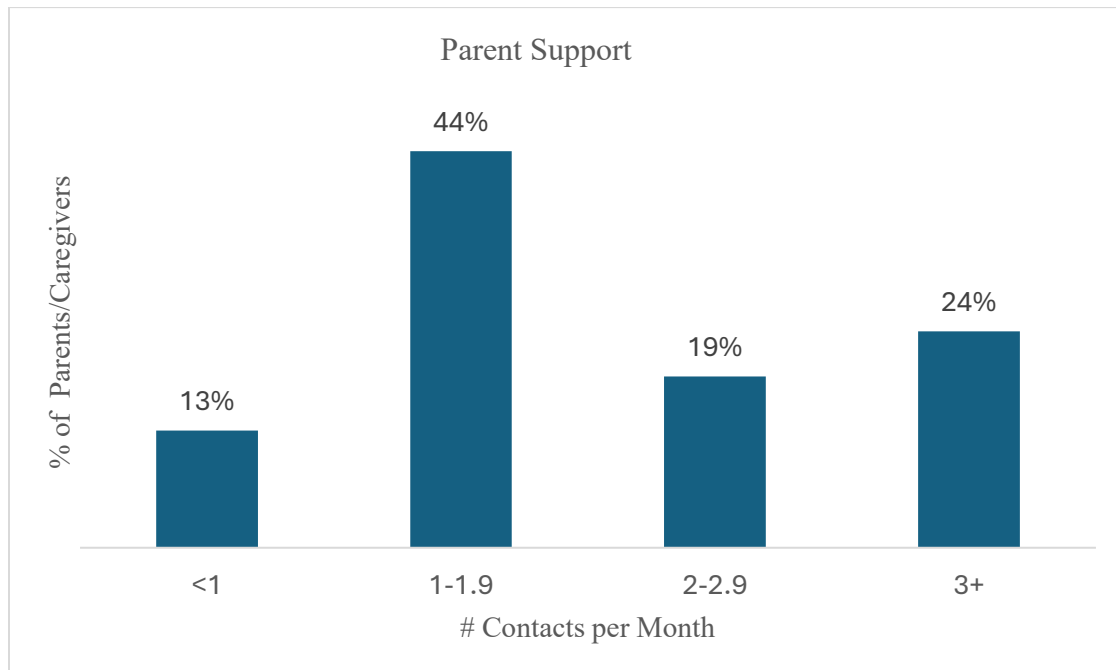
Eight mini grant recipients were each expected to facilitate ten group mentoring sessions over the six month contract period, for a total of 80 sessions. 122 total sessions were facilitated, exceeding the group target. 96 (74%) of 130 total youth in mini grant programs participated in two or more group sessions per month on average and 109 (84%) participated for at least three months. 38% of youth participated for five months.



How much were parents/families engaged?

Parent support of and involvement in the mentoring relationship is associated with positive youth outcomes (Garringer et al., 2015). Parent understanding of the potential benefits of mentoring, goals of the program, and their contribution to the relationship can strengthen youth motivation to participate in the program and ultimately mentor-mentee bond. Training that highlights the role of mentor, mentee, and parent can help parents understand boundaries and expectations (Garringer et al., 2015); regular check ins with staff give parents the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and learn about mentoring.

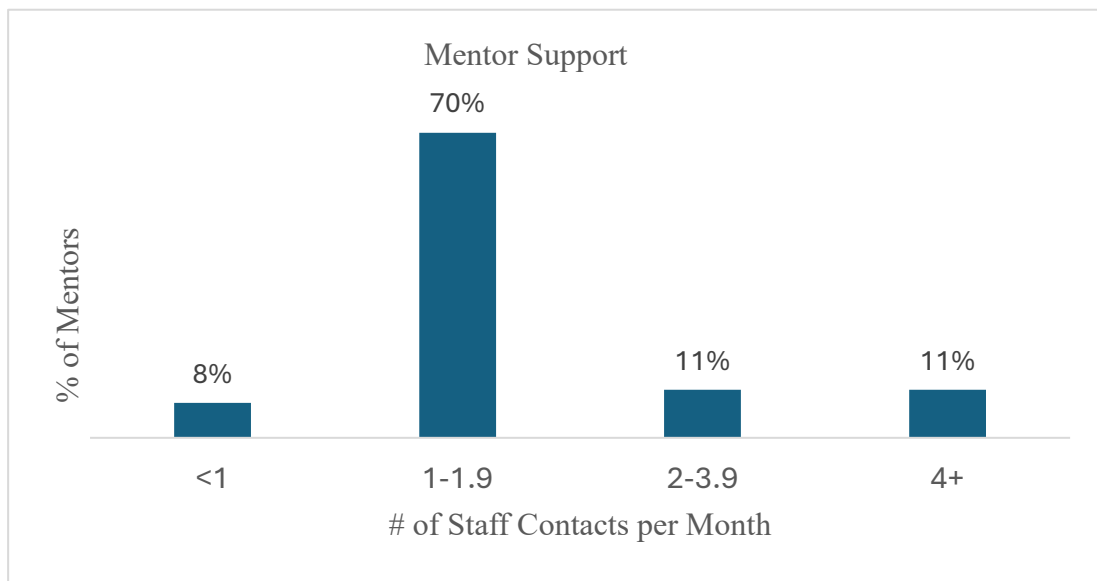
Parents of youth enrolled in full contact programs were to receive program communication at least once per month. Parents of 238 youth (86%¹) received check ins from staff at least once per month on average, and 24% of parents received program communication more than three times per month on average.



¹ 86% reflects 238 of 275 youth. Four of the total 279 youth enrolled September 2024, not enough time to be included in this measure.

How much training and support do mentors receive?

Ongoing training can provide a space for mentors to obtain guidance and support for specific targeted questions that may arise over the course of the mentoring relationship. It can help mentors understand setbacks and restore or maintain momentum in the relationship. Having realistic expectations is associated with relationship longevity, so staff checks with mentors can help manage their expectations (Garringer et al., 2015). 92% of mentors received staff check-in support at least once per month, and 11% received check-ins more than four times per month on average.



Were youth satisfied with the program?

CTAC measured youth satisfaction and program outcomes for both the full contract and mini grant programs using surveys. Two surveys were administered to full contract youth participants and one post survey was administered to mini grant program participants. Overall, results revealed positive outcomes from both programs.

Full Contract Program Surveys

Youth in full contract programs were asked to complete two surveys during the contract year: The Youth Strength of Relationship survey was administered to youth three months after their mentor match and annually thereafter on their match anniversary date to measure their relational satisfaction and closeness with their mentor. Some youth had been matched with a mentor before the contract year began, so they completed the survey later in their relationship. Youth were also asked to complete a pre and post Youth Outcome Survey. The pre survey was administered at the beginning of the program and the post survey was administered after youth had been matched with their mentor for nine months and every 12 months thereafter. The pre/post survey measured gains in social emotional skills, school performance, and self-reported juvenile justice interaction.

Survey completion rates are important because larger participation yields more representative, valid, and meaningful results. 123 youth (53%²) completed the Youth Strength of Relationship Survey, 163 youth (58%³) completed the Youth Outcome pre survey only, 25 youth (34%⁴) completed both pre and post Youth Outcome Surveys, and 35 youth (47%⁵) completed only the post Youth Outcome Survey. Surveys were completed either electronically or on paper and were not anonymous.

Why did you youth choose the program?

The Youth Outcome pre survey asks youth why they chose the program as a free response question. Overwhelmingly, the most prevalent response was “to better myself,” or “to be better.” Variations of the response included mentions of wanting to reach personal goals and move his/her life “in the right direction.” Bettering oneself also included wanting to learn to

² 123 of 232 matched youth

³ 163 of 279 enrolled youth

⁴ 25 of 74 youth who remained in mentoring relationship for nine or more months

⁵ 35 of 74 youth who remained in mentoring relationship for nine or more months

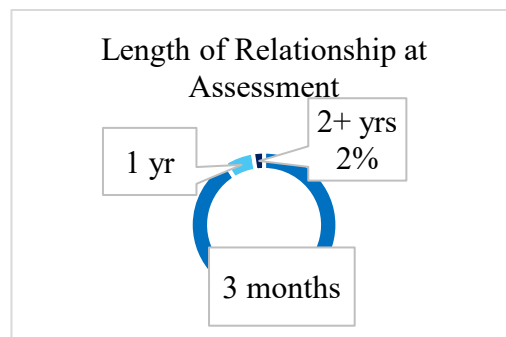
better manage emotions. Responses included, “to be a better man,” “I believe that I am better,” “I want to be a better person,” and “to become a better version of myself with the help of mentors.” Others included, “I want to learn how to communicate with people better,” “to be a better student,” and “to do better.”

The second most prevalent response related to camaraderie; wanting to develop social skills and a social network. Responses included “I wanted to meet new people who I can hang out with and talk to,” “the brotherhood,” “so I could...have a person in my corner...” Others included, “I have lots of goals to reach and I think the group can help,” and “honestly...what I deal with in school and at home have negative effects on me and I needed someone to help me through those times.” Another youth said, “to better myself and work on my anger, also to feel like I’m not alone.” Lastly, “I wanted to feel as if I was important and feel more socialized.”

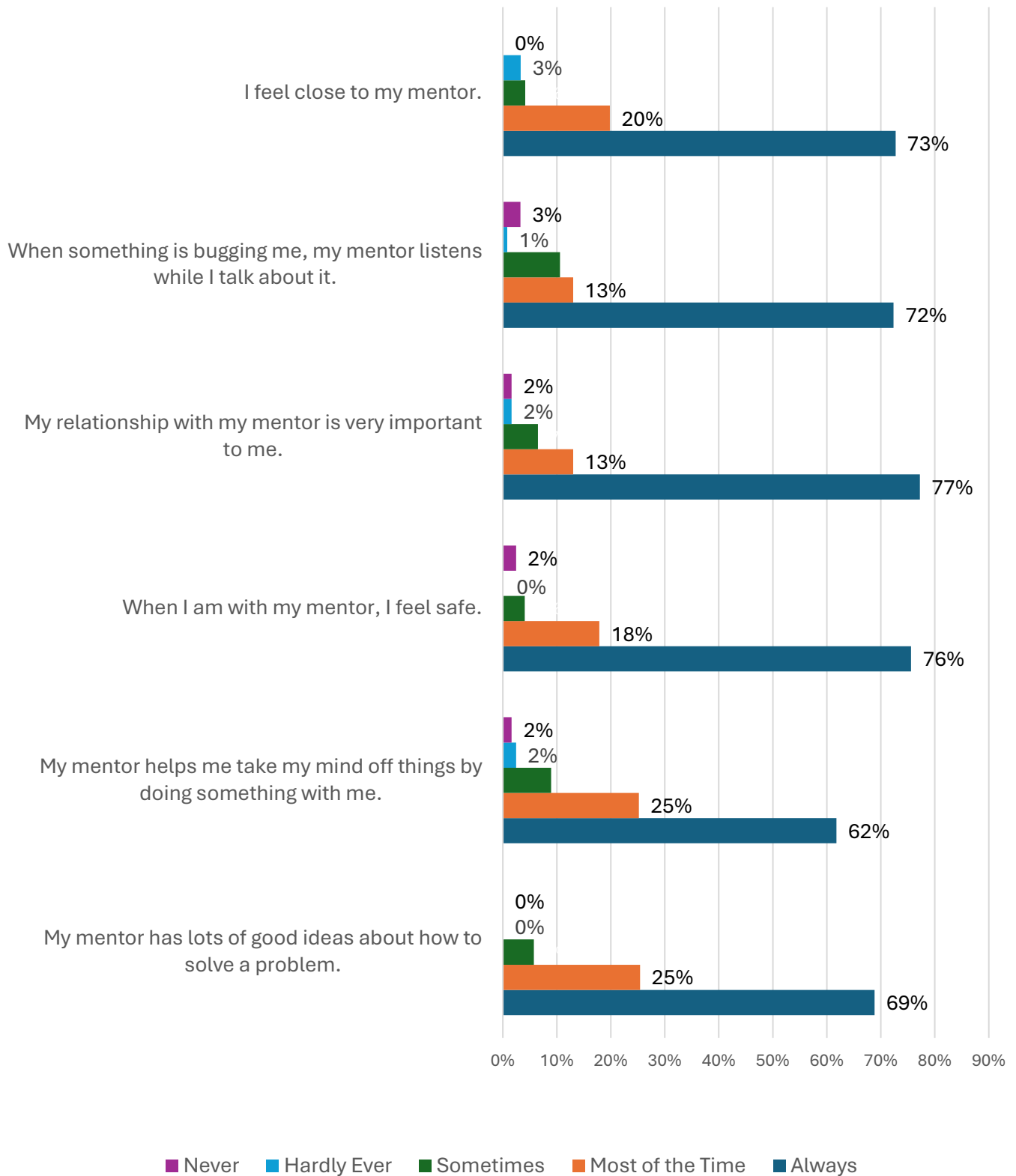
Other themes included boredom and wanting something to do, wanting to make a difference and help the community, scholarships, college, and career planning, and wanting to stay out of trouble.

Youth perspectives on the strength of their mentoring relationship

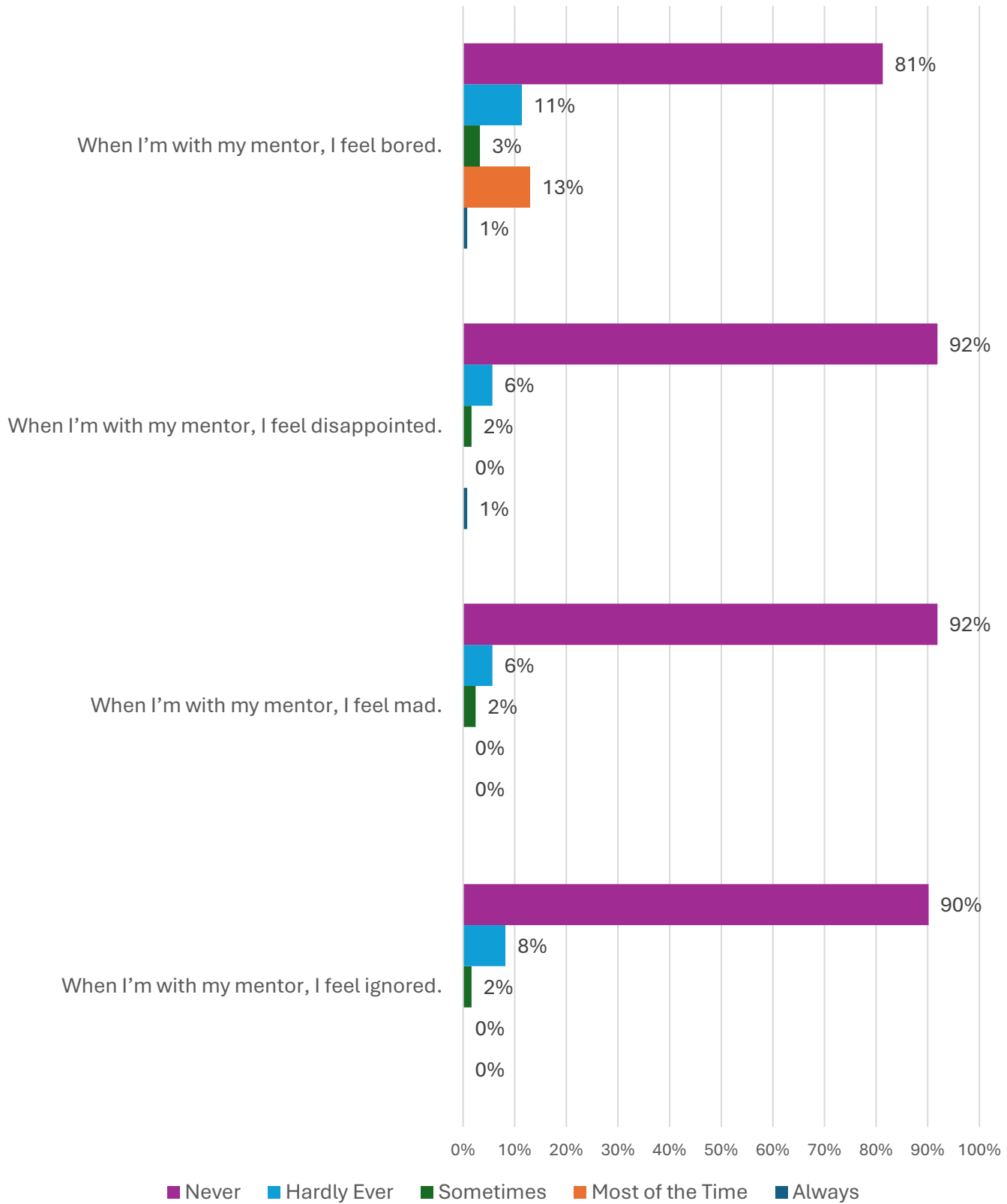
Of the 123 youth who completed the Strength of Relationship survey, 91% had been matched for 3 months, 7% had been matched for one year, and 2% had been matched for over two years.



Youth Strength of Relationship Survey Results




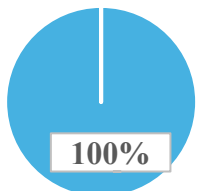
Youth Strength of Relationship Survey Results

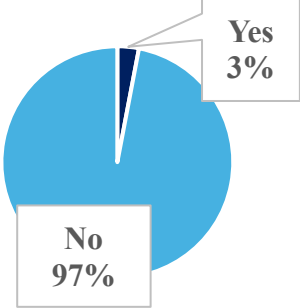


Overall, 93% of youth survey respondents expressed satisfaction across survey items specific to their relationship with their match and their experience being a mentee.

Youth Outcomes

The Youth Outcome Survey asked eight questions related to social emotional skills, eight questions related to school performance, and one question related to interactions with the juvenile justice system. Possible responses for each item included, “always true,” “mostly true,” “sometimes,” “a little,” and “rarely true.” Survey questions were asked at the beginning of the program and again after youth had been matched with the mentor for nine months. All youth (100%) who completed the survey (25 youth) maintained or made gains in social emotional skills and school performance. One youth (3%) of 35 post survey respondents indicated he/she had been arrested in the past six months.

Youth Outcome Survey		
Area Measured	% of youth who maintained or gained skills	Example question items
Social Emotional Skills		I felt good about myself
		I kept my feelings from getting out of control
		I gave up with things got difficult
School Performance		I did well in school
		I tried my best to get good grades
		I was absent from school

Youth Outcome Survey: Juvenile Justice Involvement								
Area Measured	Involvement?	Question item						
Juvenile Justice Involvement	 <p>A pie chart illustrating the results of the survey question. The chart is divided into two segments: a large blue segment representing 'No' at 97%, and a very small dark blue segment representing 'Yes' at 3%. Callout boxes are connected to each segment, showing the respective labels and percentages.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>97%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percentage	No	97%	Yes	3%	In the past 6 months, I was arrested
Response	Percentage							
No	97%							
Yes	3%							

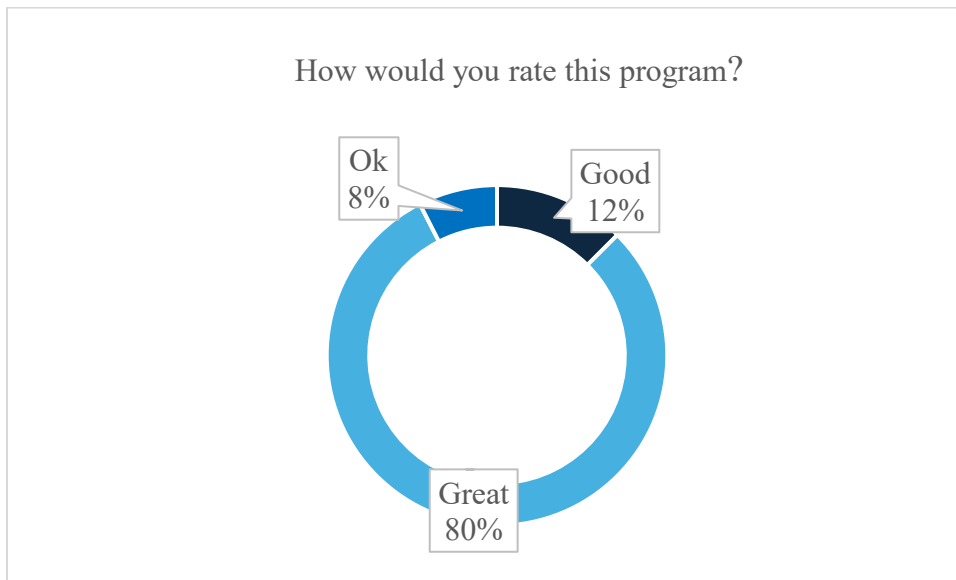
Youth were also asked on the post Youth Outcome Survey, “What impact has this program had on you?” 35 of 74 youth (47%) who had been in a mentoring relationship for at least nine months completed post surveys. The most common response related to camaraderie, which included building a social network, social skills, and developing relationships in general. Responses included, “it helped me understand others’ situations better. So I’m more empathetic,” “gave me ways to handle family issues,” and “It helped my mental health having somebody to talk to and share stuff with. I’ve made that new friend and I love our bond.”

Other themes included helping build self-esteem, helping with college and career planning, and goal setting.

Youth were also asked on the post Youth Outcome Survey if they had any suggestions for improving the program. Most responses indicated no suggestions; the only two suggestions given were, “I wish I could spend more time with my big and we [could do] more... activities,” and “college tours.”

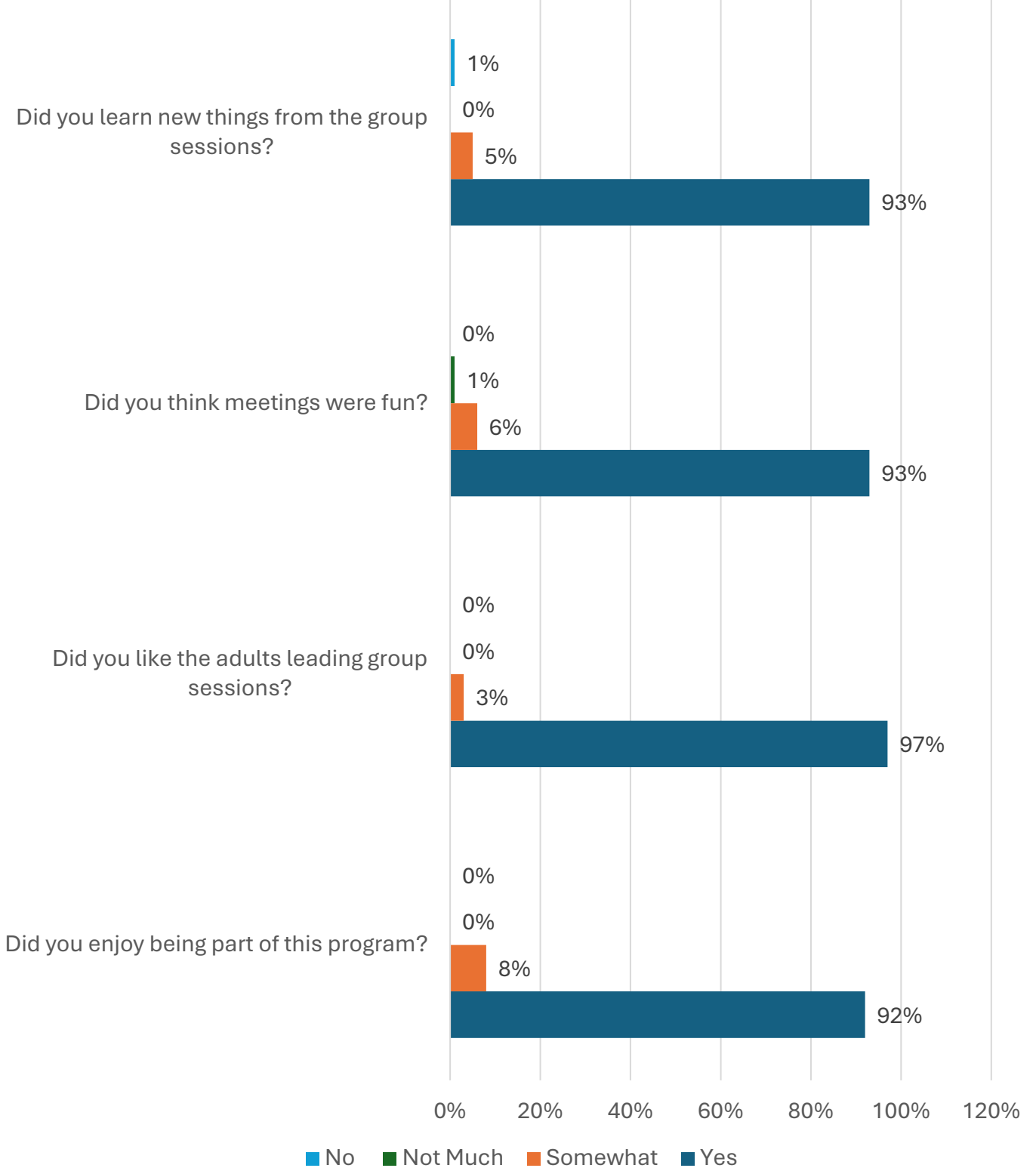
Mini grant program youth perspectives

Mini grant program participants were asked to complete one survey at the conclusion of the program. 80 of 130 youth (61%) completed the survey. Surveys were completed either electronically or on paper and overall, 92% of survey respondents rated the program as “Good” or “Great.”

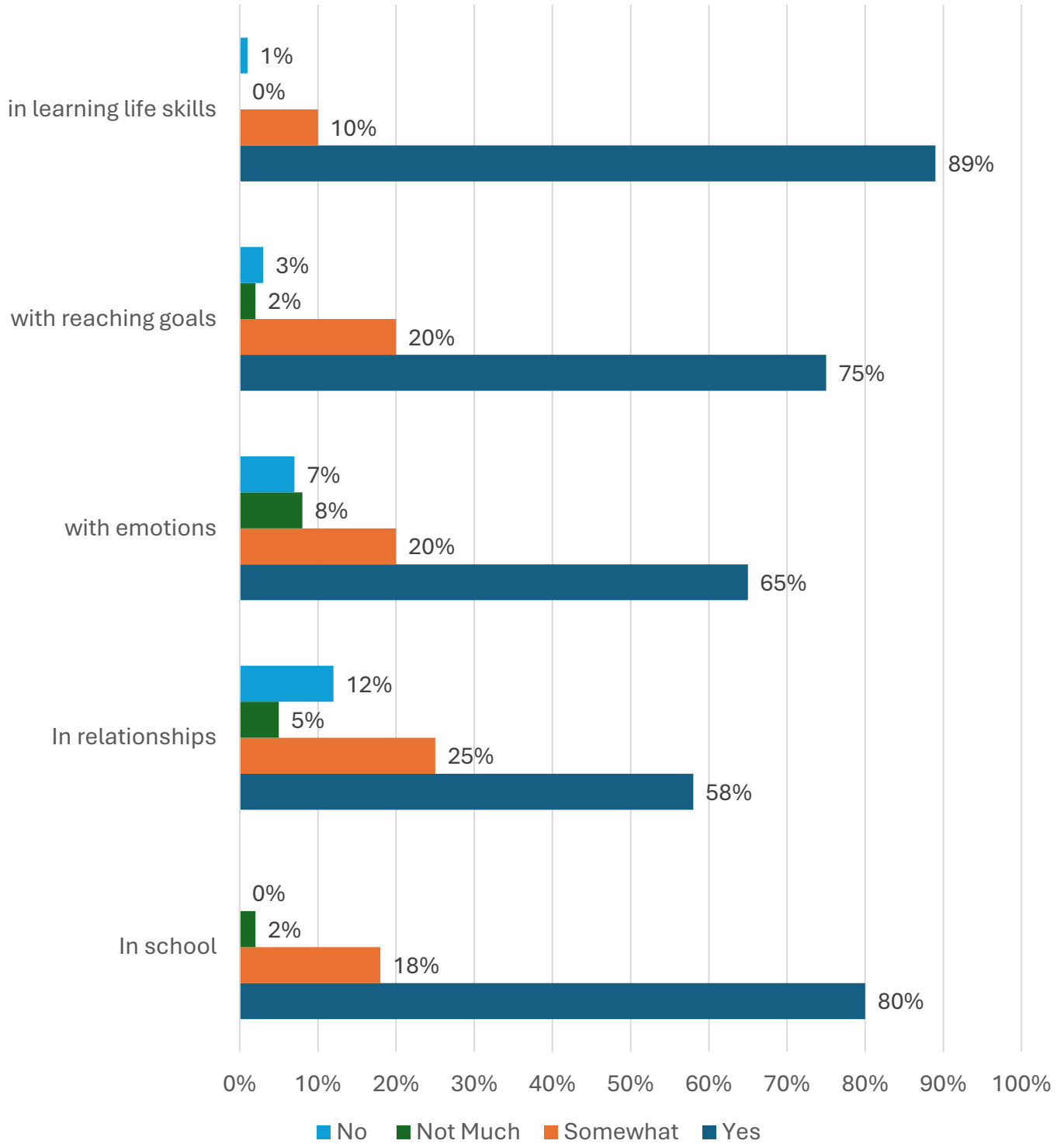


93% of survey respondents learned new things from the sessions and thought meetings were fun. 92% enjoyed being a part of the program and 97% liked the adults leading the sessions. Most participants reported that participating in the program helped them learn life skills, how to reach goals, manage emotions, maintain relationships, and do better in school.

Mini Grant Program Post Youth Survey



Did participating help you do better...



Additionally, 86% of youth felt comfortable talking in the group about things, good or bad, and 92% responded they felt comfortable talking to the program coordinator about their experiences, good or bad. 41% said they would like to meet more often, 55% said they would like to meet the same amount, and 3% said they wanted to meet less often. 33% said they would be interested in having a mentor to meet with one on one.

What did youth learn?

The post survey also included a free response question asking youth to list what they learned in the group sessions. A primary theme in responses was learning respect and social skills. One youth said, “Respect- I learned this from my Gator Golf classes. I always make sure to greet people ‘Good Morning/Good Afternoon Sir/Maam’ when I pass by [them].” Another youth said, “Courtesy- saying thank you after eating meals my parents cooked,” and one youth said, “I learned that there are better ways to handling things [than] simply walking away. And I also learned how to cooperate with police officers.”

Other themes included learning to be more confident, goal setting, and gardening skills.

What did youth like about the program?

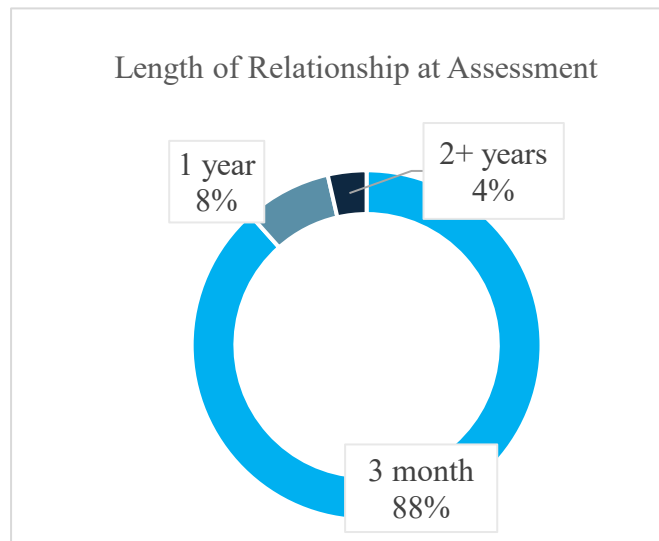
Another free response question asked youth what they liked best about the program. Camaraderie again was a central theme. Youth responses included, “I enjoyed having important talks about life with the group,” “how we all came together as a family,” and “I liked that I was able to tell how I really feel.” Other responses included, “that [the group] is always open to talk about anything and you feel comfortable,” and “the time with the guys.”

Youth suggestions for improvement

The last free response survey questions asked youth what they did not like about the program and what they would change about the program. Comments primarily focused on wishing the program was longer; otherwise most youth enjoyed the program and said they had no suggestions for improvement.

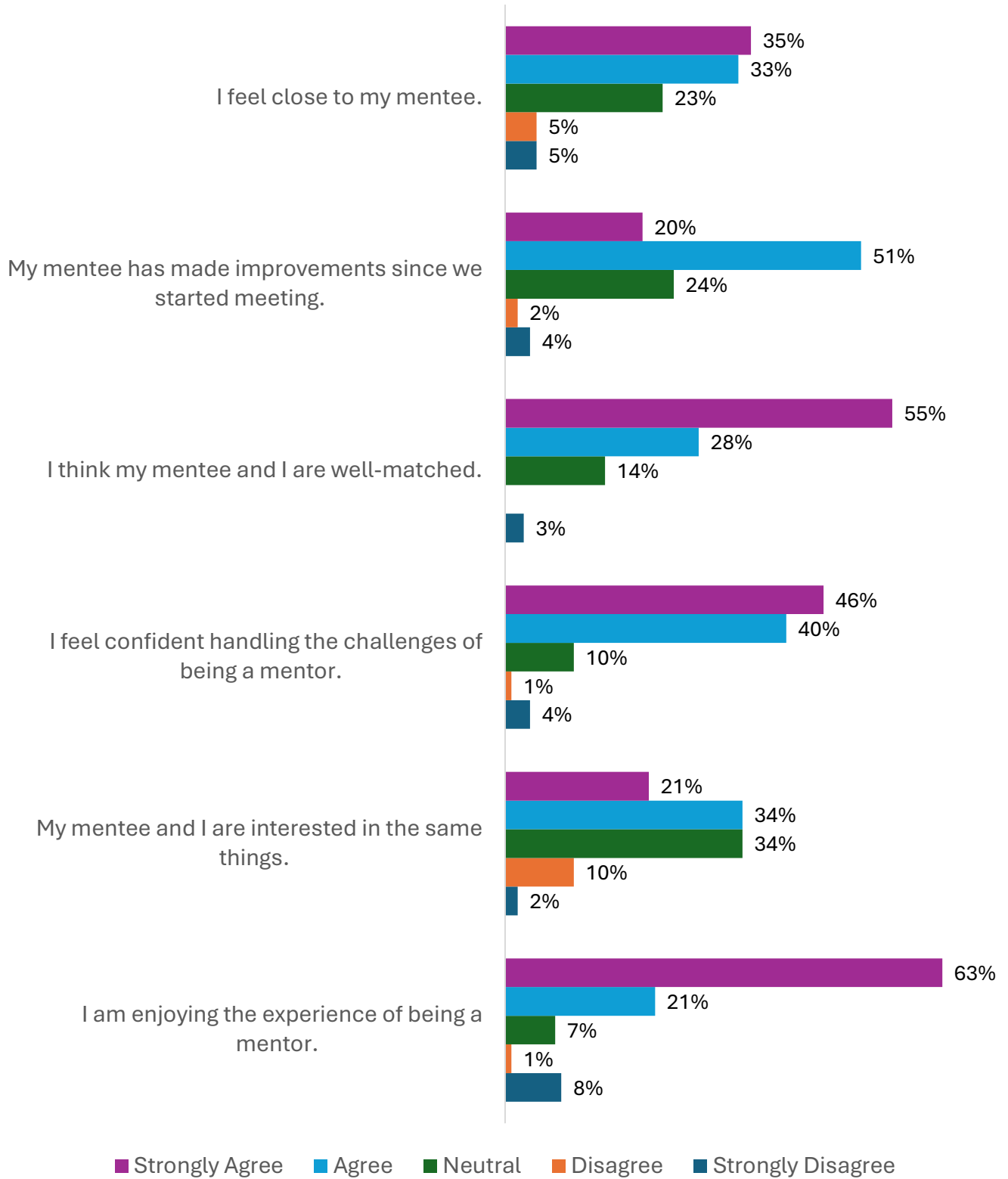
Were mentors satisfied with the program?

99 (61%) of 162 total mentors in the full contract grant programs completed the Mentor Strength of Relationship Survey, which measures satisfaction with the mentoring relationship and closeness with one’s mentee. The survey was administered after mentors and mentees had been matched for three months and annually on their match anniversary. Some mentors and mentees (12%) were matched before the contract year began, so they completed the survey later in their relationship.

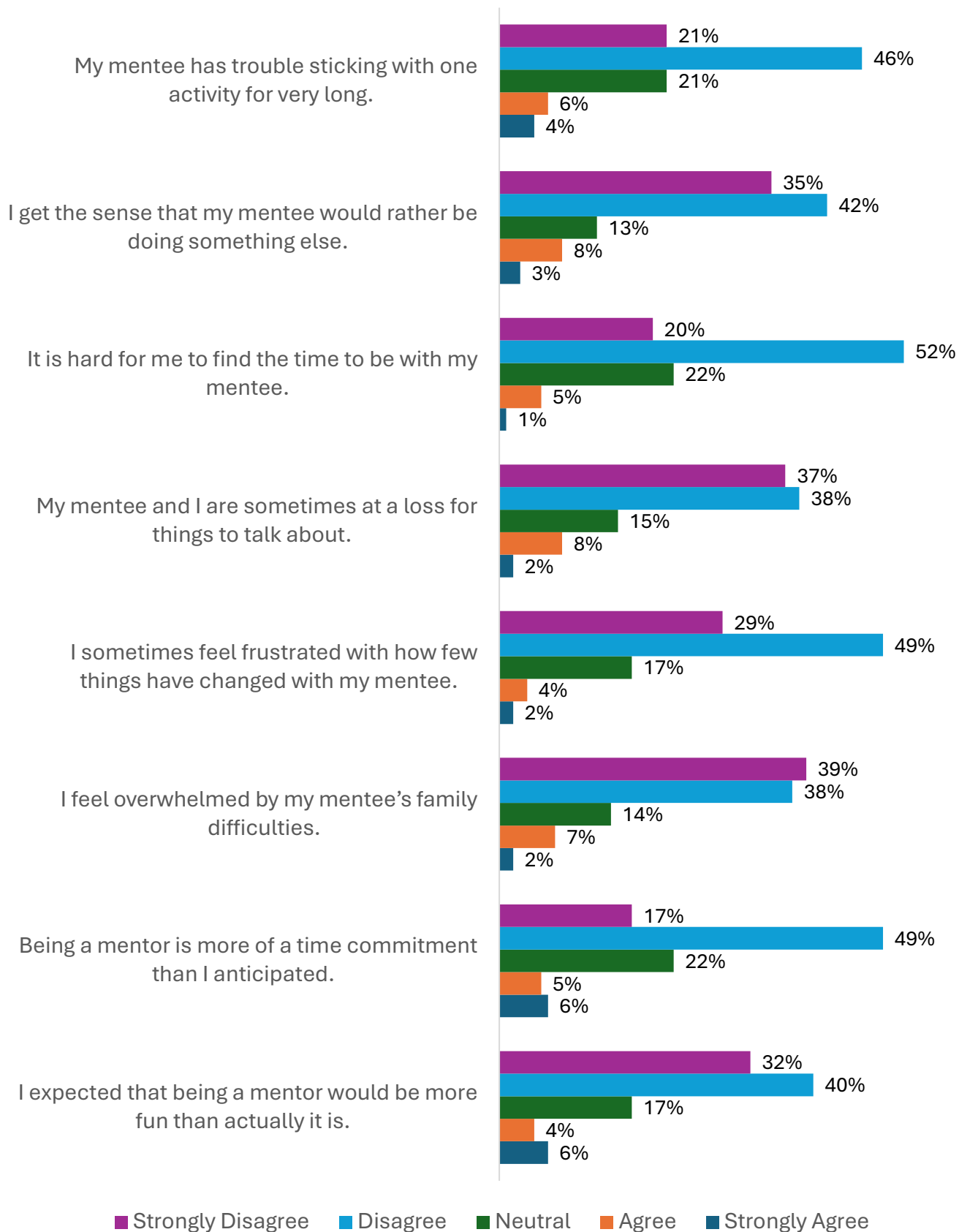


Overall, 55% of mentors expressed satisfaction across survey items specific to their relationship with their match and experience being a mentor.

Mentor Strength of Relationship Survey



Mentor Strength of Relationship Survey



Survey results indicated many mentors did not feel overwhelmingly satisfied with their mentoring relationship at three months. CTAC facilitated a convening of mentoring providers at the end of the contract year (October 2024) and these survey results were discussed. Providers with extensive mentoring programming experience discussed how at the three month mark, many mentors need support to manage their expectations about their relationship. Providers discussed how they use the three month Mentor Strength of Relationship Survey to facilitate dialogue with mentors about specific challenges mentors are having, which may include what to talk about with their mentee, or what to do if they think their mentee doesn't like them. Mentors' need for support at three months aligns with Garringer et al., (2015) guidance about staff needing to provide ongoing encouragement, tools, and expectation management to mentors. Overall, the convening discussion provided valuable insight and guidance to CTAC staff and other providers with less mentoring experience.

What did providers think about the program?

Mentoring providers each completed an End of Year reflection in which they outlined key successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Responses also highlighted youth outcomes from the provider's perspective, which included increased confidence, camaraderie, and exposure to new people, experiences, and educational opportunities. Providers also discussed the benefits of collaborating with other community organizations in reaching discussed outcomes. Additionally, providers outlined how CTAC funding facilitated the growth of their program operations.

Regarding areas for improvement, several providers in full contract programs mentioned needing support with mentor recruitment. Providers having more mentors in their program will enable them to serve more youth, and allow current mentors to mentor fewer youth, potentially

increasing the frequency of meetings with those youth. Providers also mentioned challenges adjusting to the new SAMIS data entry system. CTAC staff will continue to work closely with providers on SAMIS training and support. Lastly, survey completion from more program participants will enable a more complete understanding of program outcomes. CTAC staff are currently working to streamline the survey completion process in SAMIS so fewer steps need to be taken by providers to input survey data, hopefully improving completion rates.

Youth outcomes

The most prominent theme in reflections of both full contract and mini grant providers was the ability of the programs to develop confidence in youth. Excerpts from providers below reflect this outcome:

“A shy 5th-grade boy was referred to our program to help build his confidence and social skills. After several months of participating in our activities and receiving consistent mentor support, we saw a remarkable transformation during one of our group outings. When an activity called for volunteers, this once-reserved student boldly stepped to the front to go first in front of all his peers. This moment highlights how our supportive environment and structured activities help participants build confidence and overcome personal challenges.”

Another prominent theme throughout provider and youth reflections was camaraderie, and youth having the ability to develop a social circle of people who care about them. This theme is illustrated in two excerpts from provider reflections below:

“We counted it a great success to... have had the opportunity to engage young people, young men particularly, in honest and open dialogue regarding topics both theoretical and actual. Our discussions were thought provoking and "real" because the reality is that we are losing many of our black youth before they have even found themselves. We were able to incorporate some history lessons to tie into what we are experiencing in current times. We were able to build a "shell of comfort and comradery" amongst young men that allowed them to be vulnerable as they "thought aloud" without fear of ridicule.”

One provider provided mentee testimony:

“Being in [the mentoring program] has benefited me in many ways. One of the ways...is teaching me about brotherhood. Before... I didn't know how important it was to have someone there for you and guide you through personal trials. And along with that, [the program] has

taught me that there are people just like you who have been through similar experiences as you, have the same goals and aspirations you have, and you just aren't alone. And the mentors really help me feel that too, they will talk to us whenever we need, and even go places to talk with us and... see how we are doing in life, along with giving us advice. Through this brotherhood it has allowed me to [bond] with many people and have someone by my side, like [Sam]. [Sam⁶] and I check on each other all the time, we give each other advice, and let each other know God is with us at all times."

Lastly, many providers mentioned the programs giving youth an opportunity to be exposed to new experiences. One provider shared an experience in her reflection:

"We traveled to Atlanta for the Southern Black Girl Dream Conference, providing exposure to leadership and empowerment opportunities. Our 4th Annual HBCU Tour took us to Alabama, where the girls toured Tuskegee University, Alabama A&M, the Rosa Parks Museum, and the Freedom Rides Museum. They also visited Selma to learn about Bloody Sunday and walked across the historic Edmund Pettus Bridge... gaining a deeper understanding of civil rights history and leadership. These experiences cultivate a sense of cultural pride and inspire the girls to pursue higher education, often in environments that reflect their heritage and aspirations."

What was the investment in this program?

Of the \$500,000 CTAC allocated for mentoring in Fiscal Year 2024, \$270,064.19 was committed for full contract programs and \$122,176.50 was committed for mini grant programs, for a total committed amount of \$467,203.13. CTAC invested \$952.62 per youth on mentoring programs in 2024, based on total expenditures in fiscal year 2024.⁷

Program Investment	
FY 2024 Mentoring budget allocation	\$500,000.00
Contracted amount: Full contracts	\$345,026.63
Contracted amount: Mini grants	\$122,176.50
Total contracted amount: Full contract and mini grants	\$467,203.13
Actual Expenditures: Full Contracts ⁸	\$270,064.19

⁶ Name has been changed

⁷ Based on total expenditures as of 11.26.2024

⁸ Actual expenditures as of 11.26.2024

Actual Expenditures: Mini grants ⁸	\$119,559.00
Total actual expenditures: Full contracts and mini grants⁸	\$389,623.19
Total investment per youth (409 total youth)⁹	\$952.62
FY 2025 mentoring allocation	\$409,271

Conclusion

2024 youth mentoring programs served 409 youth in full contract and mini grant programs. Youth joined the programs mainly to better themselves, build a social circle and social skills, and have more educational opportunities. 93% of youth in full contract programs reported relational satisfaction with their mentor and 92% of mini grant participants rated their program as good or great.

Other notable success include:

- 92% of mentors received staff check-ins at least monthly
- 86% of parents received staff check-ins at least monthly
- 100% of youth maintained or made gains in social-emotional skills and educational performance
- Camaraderie built in group sessions; youth felt mentoring sessions were safe spaces to share feelings and have “real” discussions

Areas for improvement include:

- Increasing the frequency of one-on-one meetings
- Support providers in mentor recruitment

⁹ Total investment per youth based on total expenditures in FY2024, as of 11.26.24

- Ongoing SAMIS support, particularly with data entry and survey completion

Mentoring changes lives. We look forward to continuing our partnerships with local providers and working to ensure all children in Alachua County live in a safe community and can truly thrive.

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