

April 23rd, 2024

Maine's Youth Tele-Behavioral Health Program (2022-2023)

Funding Sources

Cooperative Agreement for Emergency Response: Public Health Crisis Response - 2018, COVID-19 Public Health Workforce Supplemental.

National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities Among Populations at High-Risk and Underserved, Including Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations and Rural Communities Grant.

Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Grant, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, U.S. CDC.

This presentation and its' contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of funding agencies.

Key Participants

- **Therapist:** Provides virtual therapy sessions to students.
- **CHW:** On-site support for the therapy program, bridging the gap between students, families, and services.
- **School Counselor:** Collaborates with the CHW and therapist to ensure comprehensive support for students. Acts as a conduit for program referrals.
- **School Administrators:** Oversees the implementation of mental health initiatives within the schools. Provides support and resources to the counseling team. Collaborates with external partners, such as therapists and CHWs, to ensure comprehensive support for students.

Program Goals

- 1 Increase student access to quality mental health treatment
- 2 Reduce barriers to accessing educational programming
 - Absenteeism
 - Office referrals
 - Behavioral resets
 - Time in residential/inpatient mental health treatment
- 3 Promote academic success and achievement

CHW-Supported Tele-behavioral Health Program



1

Referral

Identify students who could benefit from the Program and refer. Referral may come from Guidance Team, school administration, teachers, parents/guardians, students.



2

Enrollment

CHW works with school staff and parents/guardians to complete the enrollment forms.



3

Communication

CHW communicates with parents/guardians, school staff, students, and clinicians.



4

Weekly Sessions

Weekly sessions are held with clinicians over web-conferencing platform in private space. CHW schedules sessions and checks in with student before and after each session.



5

Linkages with Services

CHW assists student and/or parents/guardians to access social and medical services outside the Program.



Year 1 Findings

September 2022 - June 2023

Quantitative Method

- CommCare
- School Staff Satisfaction Survey (n=22)
- Clinical Providers Satisfaction Survey (n=4)
- Parent Satisfaction Survey (n=16)



Qualitative Method

- CHW Interviews (n=3)
- Implementers Focus Group (n=19)



Methodology

Prospective mixed-methods evaluation with quantitative priority.

Program Reach

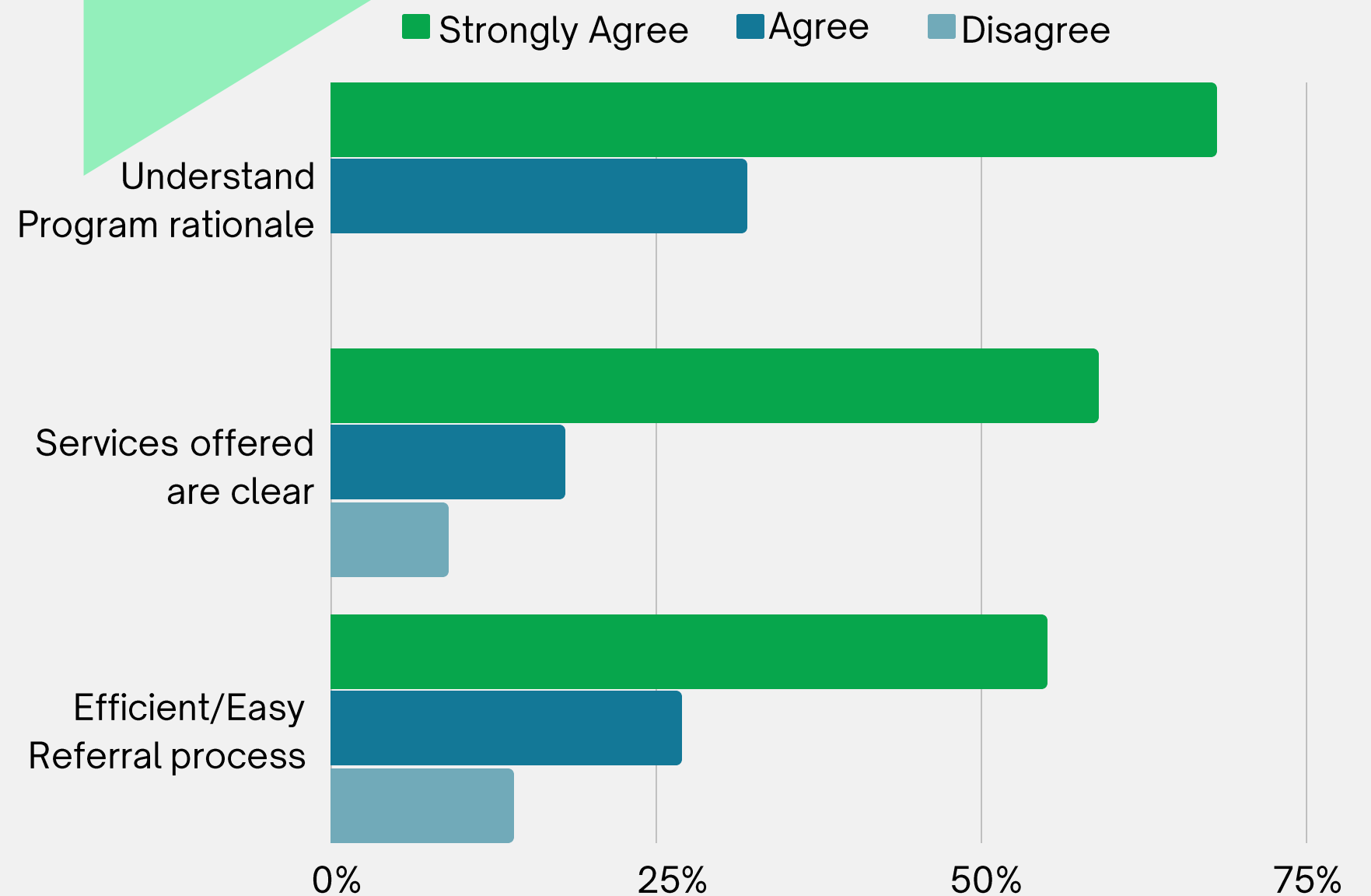
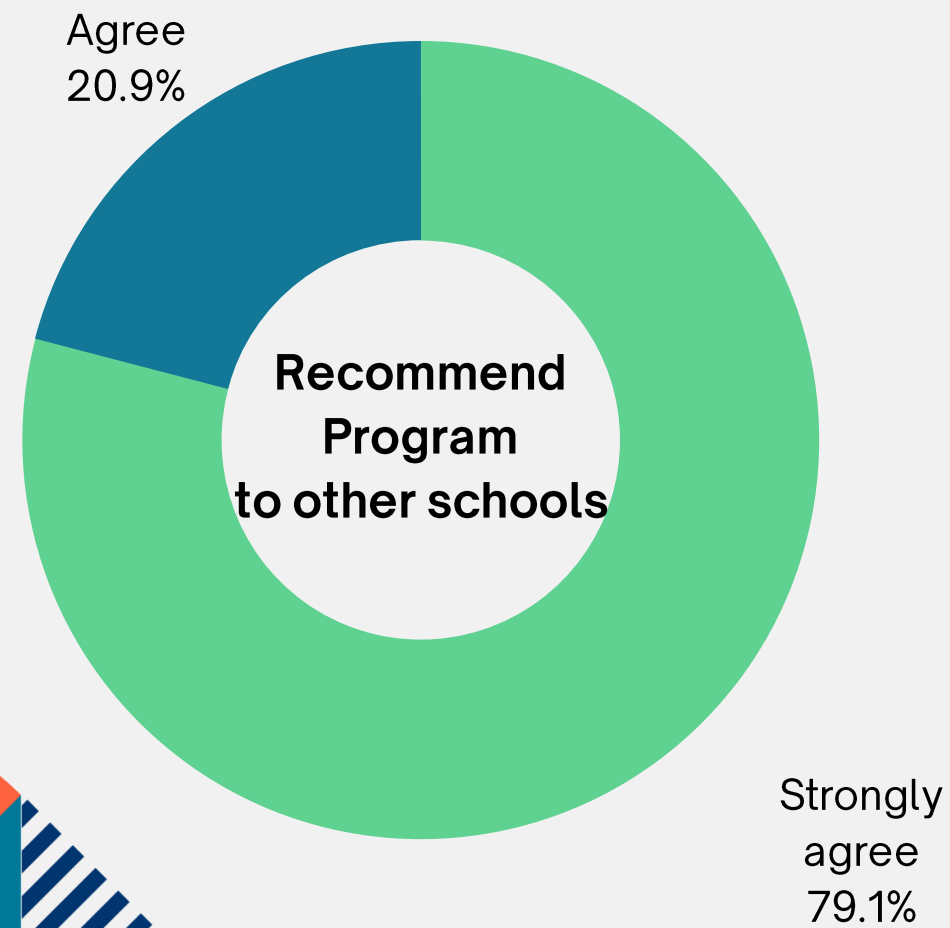
September 2022 - June 2023

- **6 schools** participated
- **94 students** enrolled
- **397 CHW encounters** (students, parents, school staff)
- **441 behavioral health sessions** (5 per student)



School Staffs' Satisfaction

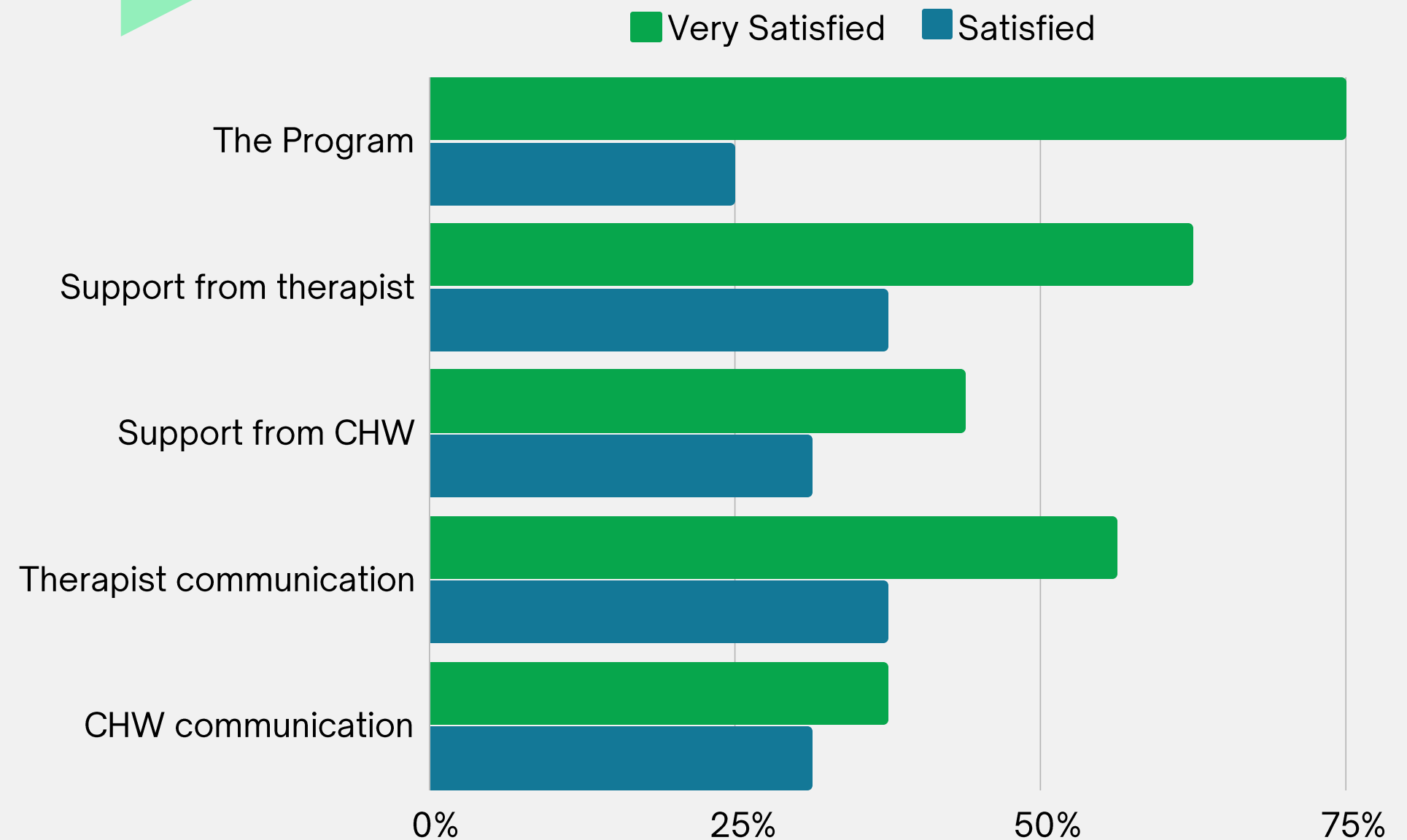
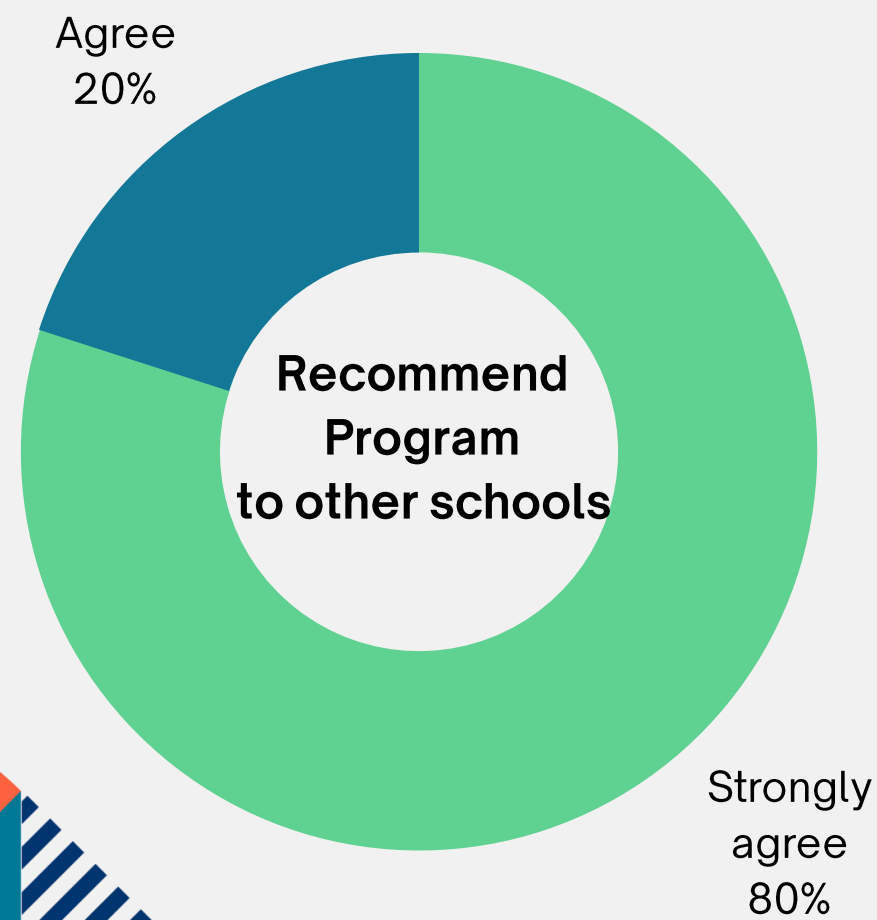
“I was really lucky ... because I could point to the door next to my office and say” ‘In that room right there, we have this tele-health program and it's stress free for you. You don't have to transport your kid. They'll get some help that they need. They'll have someone to talk to you that's not me...’ And the work that our team did to identify those students and ... have those critical conversations with parents was what made it really successful.”



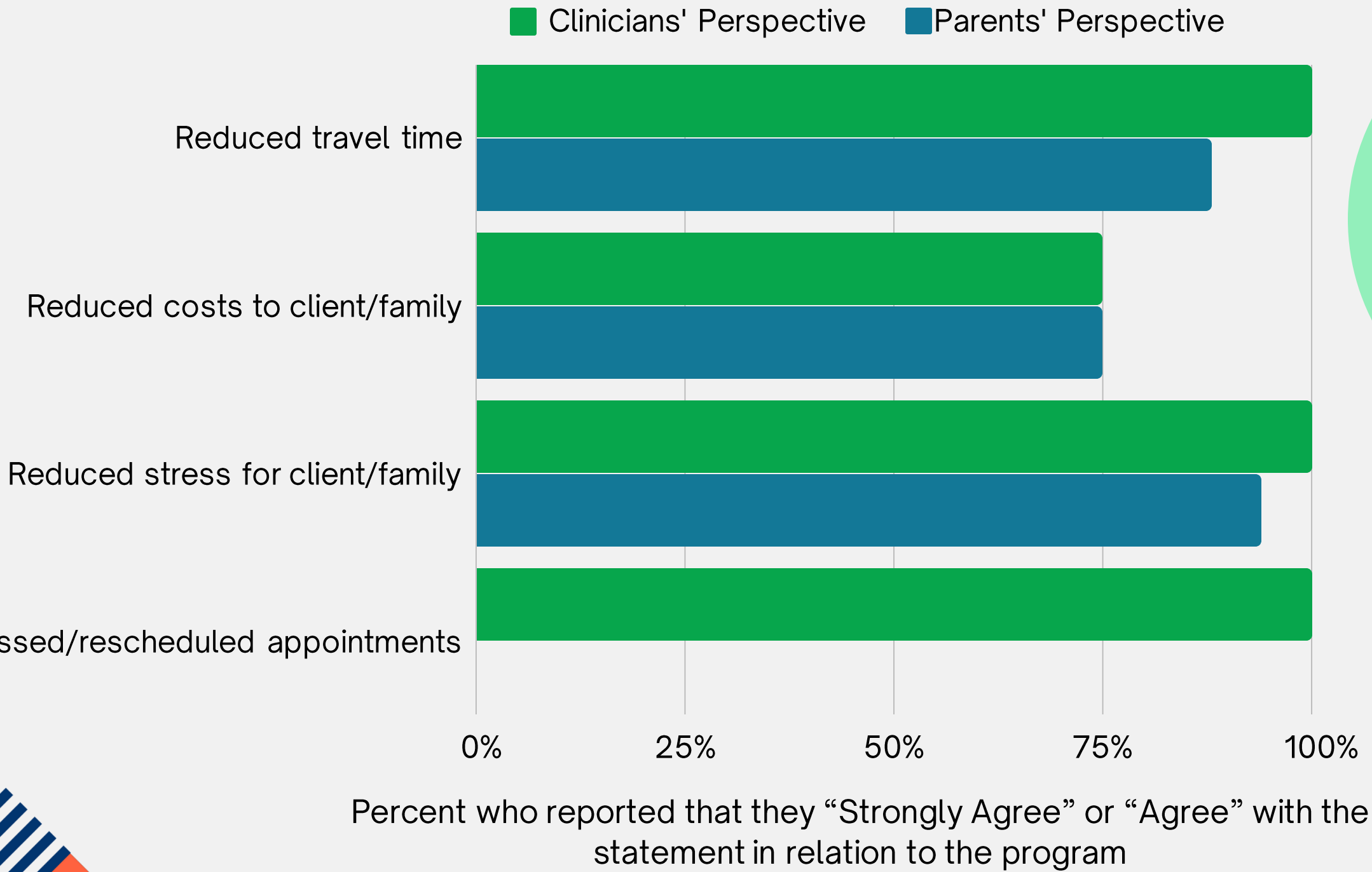
Parents' Satisfaction

“Communication between me and the CHW has been good. The CHW will email updates if needed ... as well as use email to confirm scheduling.”

“[the clinician] was very helpful with helping get more help for [child]. Any questions she or I had, we contacted one another. My child enjoys the time she has with [clinician] and has been very helpful for her mental health.”



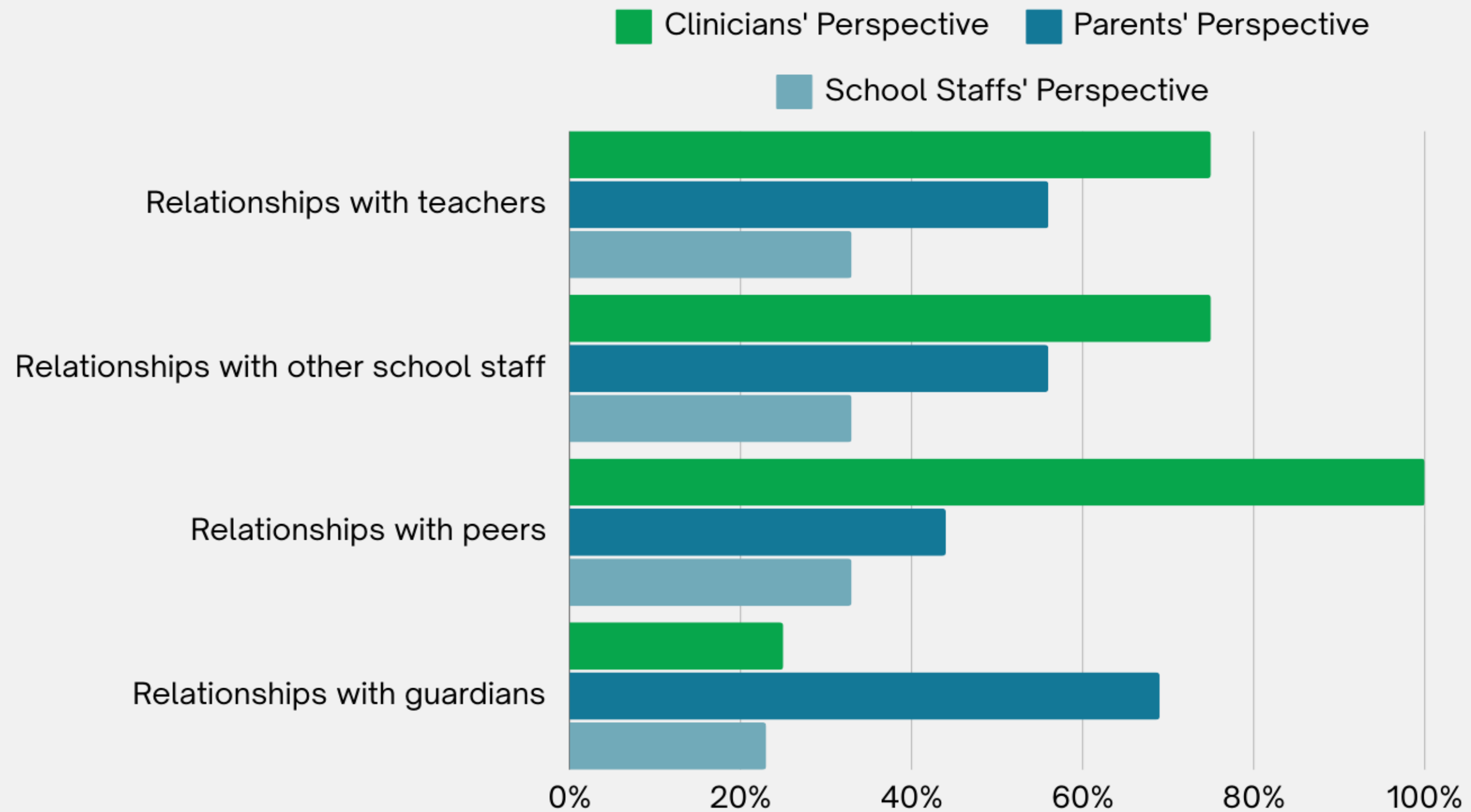
Increased Accessibility



"My daughter can get the therapy she needs at school without having to rush her over to an in-person session right after work. Or try to take time off to accommodate her getting the help she needs."



Students' Outcomes



Percent who reported that the student(s) "Improved a lot" since taking part in the Program

Implementers Experience



CHW's Impact on Families



Coordinates and supports tele-behavioral health counseling sessions.

Attends 504 and IEP meetings to advocate for student needs and supports.

Provides care coordination services to youth and their families for additional treatment or resource needs.





CHW's Impact on Students



Builds supportive and safe connection with students to foster a positive school experience and reinforce therapeutic treatment outcomes – a relationship separate from the relationship that the clinician develops with the student.

Assists student access to tele-behavioral counseling sessions as well as supporting access to off-site resources as needed.

Conducts comprehensive screening/assessment activities including mental health status, health screen and social needs factors to inform needs for additional referrals/resources.

Provides crisis intervention/support at the school site as needed.





Brittany Caruso, CHW delivering school supplies at the beginning of the school year to students and families in need.

CHW's Impact on Schools



Helps create behavioral and academic intervention plans.

Attends 504 and IEP meetings to advocate for student needs and supports.

Collaborates as a member of the school's guidance team to discuss students on the caseload and work with this team to refer students to the program.

Supports various initiatives in the school community with regard to Social Emotional Learning and positive school culture (Kindness Campaign, Winter Carnival and school spirit weeks).





The grant funded classroom toolboxes to provide regulation tools for students in classrooms to assist them in improved readiness to learn.



Program Success: School Counselor Perspective



High needs students are able to have consistent and effective support.

Allows for an increase in school counselor ability to serve other student populations and spend less time in crisis support and care coordination for highest needs students.

More availability for Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions.

Provides a tangible solution for parents/guardians and teachers.

Assistance with school wide social emotional learning initiatives.

Increase in availability of resources that are pertinent to student success (clothing, hygiene products, food, and school supplies).



Program Success: School Administrator Perspective

Significant barriers to quality mental health treatment:

- Geographic isolation
- Lack of transportation
- Extended wait lists
- Lack of safe/private mental health services (in-home treatment)
- Missing extended academic time

The Acadia Tele-Health program brings quality mental health services to the school setting:

- Mental health care in a safe setting
- Ready access
- Flexible scheduling
- Support services - before, during, and after clinical sessions
- Clinical sessions - tailored to school-based needs
- Ongoing case management

Prior to the implementation of the Acadia Tele-Health program students experienced significant barriers to academic achievement

Loss of time in school

- Tardy, absent, and truancy
- In-school/out of school suspensions
- Frequent school nurse visits
- Requests to go home
- Office behavior resets
- Schoolwide holds
- Frequent guidance referrals
- Specialized placements (day treatment...)

Lack of self-regulation skills

- Threats/plans to harm self and/or others
- School elopement
- Yelling/swearing/screaming

Multi-disciplinary Approach = A Conduit of Care

At Warsaw Middle School we believe in the multi-disciplinary approach. Part of the success of the program has been the ability for multiple partners to collaborate to meet the needs of students:

- Admin - Principal and Assistant Principal
- Nurse
- Guidance
- SEL Coordinator
- School Resource Officer
- Flexibility - The ability for students in the program who are actively in need - to have access to either our CHW or Clinician

Program impact on student self-harm and suicide ideation/ attempts

Decreased frequency of self-harm and suicide ideation/attempts due to therapy being provided.

Immediate access to a crisis evaluation and recommendations through the program clinician.

CHW can provide 1 to 1 support in the school setting for students at all stages in a crisis episode.

CHW acts as a conduit to care for parents/guardians.

Transition of students from inpatient care settings back to public school setting is smoother and more successful.

Because of the Acadia Tele-Health program:

Students...

- Have access to quality mental health treatment
- Consistently attend school
- Participate actively in their educational program
- Engage in a pro-social way with peers and adults
- Have fostered a trusting relationship with school staff, CHW and Clinician
- Have met previously unmet basic needs

Administration...

- Can focus on school needs as a whole
- Dedicate time to school-wide goals

Staff...

- Able to focus on teaching
- Aware that students have a support system with wraparound services in place
- Actively see that students' needs are being met
- Peace of mind that a safety net is in place
- Have access to the CHW when students are struggling in the classroom

- “Ms. Cindy has helped me fix my sleep schedule, anger issues, and improve my grades.” - 7th Grader
- “You’re fun and help me feel better.” - 2nd Grader
- “Ms. Cindy helps me with my problems at home. She helps me with the adult relationships too. I can express myself without holding back. Stuff stays private unless me or someone else is in danger. She has helped me get through tough times with my parents and my friends.” - 8th Grader
- “I can be open with Ms. Cindy; my language is not a barrier. She understands that it is a way to express myself.” - 8th Grader
- “Ms. Cindy is really nice. Talking to her is not like talking to a regular adult. Talking to her is like talking to a friend, but she gives adult feedback.” - 8th Grader
- “Ms. Brittany is very helpful. Sometimes when I am having a hard time, she is there to check in with me. She also helps us get logged on to our meetings.” - 8th Grader
- “Ms. Cindy gives me somebody to talk to. I feel listened to. I also feel acknowledged.” - 8th Grader
- “Ms. Cindy and Ms. Brittany have taught me to never give up. And to try my best.” - 8th Grader
- “Ms. Brittany has been there for me. She is someone I trust and has helped me with my depression - just by checking in on me.” - 8th Grader
- “I used to yell at my parents and grandparents - a lot. Ms. Cindy has helped me learn how to manage my anger.” - 5th Grader

Keep the Conversation Going!

LEADERSHIP:
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