

**Detroit Summer Youth Employment Program:
Northend Central Woodward Case Study**

University of Michigan – School of Social Work
Good Neighborhoods Technical Assistance Center

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Northend Central Woodward Case Study

Background

The Detroit Youth Employment Consortium (DYEC) working in collaboration with City Connect Detroit launched Grow Detroit's Young Talent. The goal of the initiative was to raise money from the private sector to support work experiences for young people in Detroit. In 2011, the initiative raised about \$1.7 million dollars. Although the majority of the money collected is used to directly subsidize youth wages, a decision was made this year to use funding flexibly when circumstances warranted. As a demonstration of this principle, Ed Egnatios, Program Director for the Good Neighborhoods Program, suggested an alternative method for providing jobs to Detroit's youth. Mr. Egnatios challenged the six Good Neighborhoods (GN) supported by the Skillman Foundation to participate in a pilot program to self-recruit employers to provide as many jobs as possible for neighborhood youth aged 14 to 24. Working with City Connect Detroit, who would serve as the project's primary partner, grants would be provided as seed money to support staff to run a jobs program and supervise youth, but the recruited employers would be responsible for hiring, training and paying the youth themselves. Northend Central Woodward (NECW) was the only GN community that took on the challenge this year and agreed to participate in this pilot program.

Introduction

NECW Summer Youth Employment Project (SYEP) was a local pilot program that provided the neighborhood's youth ages 14 to 24 with enriching and constructive summer work experiences through placements funded by local employers. Fifteen employers hired 105 youth from the NECW neighborhood for a minimum of six weeks in a variety of positions. Employers in the SYEP included faith-based organizations, eateries, restaurants and clothing stores, which brought together public, private and non-profit sectors to provide meaningful employment opportunities for youth.

Program Description

The SYEP created employment opportunities for NECW's youth using an alternative method of recruitment, training and funding. The employment program, which began in June of 2011, primarily provided employment that lasted for a minimum of 6 weeks during the summer, but is projected to continue placing youth through December of 2011 with the hope that many youth would continue to work in their job placement year-round. Eligibility criteria to participate in the SYEP were as follows:

- Youth must be between 14 and 24 years of age
- Youth must live within the NECW community area codes
- Youth must be willing to work

While the SYEP provided summer employment opportunities for youth who were both work-ready and non-work-ready, youth that were hard to place participated in the Learn and Earn Program. These youth, who were either too young to hire (14 or 15 years of age) or who needed extensive training, participated in this program in an effort to develop the work readiness skills needed to enter the labor force (see Learn and Earn Program document).

Program Goals

Through the SYEP, the NECW Governance Board strived to provide youth with the opportunity to earn money and gain meaningful work experience. Youth would learn skills and develop attitudes and habits necessary to succeed in the workforce. While in the workplace, youth would gain exposure to various career industries and interact with working professionals in a positive work environment. Finally, the ultimate goal of the SYEP was to introduce youth to employers and peers who would positively impact their lives.

Program Planning & Recruitment

The NECW Governance Board created a planning committee to establish program goals, policies and procedures for the SYEP. Meetings began in May of 2011 and continued through early July, which resulted in 6 planning sessions. To maximize outreach efforts, committee members simultaneously recruited employers and youth. Staff had 2 to 3 weeks to recruit employers and hire youth before the start of the SYEP in mid-June of 2011.

Employer recruitment efforts began shortly after the formation of the planning committee in May 2011. During this time the Governance Board committee provided personal contacts in addition to community contacts to generate a list of potential employers. Staff members used direct contact, face-to-face interviews, and one-on-one techniques to recruit employers. This included going door to door with local businesses, contacting non-profit organizations directly via phone, and distributing letters/flyers requesting youth employers in the 48202, 48211, 48206 and 48238 area codes. Potential employers were given an information packet which detailed the program goals and employer responsibilities, which included hiring youth at their own expense for up to 8 weeks of employment (see Recruitment Packet). Of the 43 employers approached in the Woodward Corridor and surrounding areas, 15 employers agreed to hire youth. These employers, who agreed to employ NECW residents without any subsidies, hired youth not simply to provide them with work experience or seasonal employment. Rather, employers were motivated to hire youth because they saw an active Governance Board working to combat youth unemployment and advocating for youth from the community who needed opportunities to thrive.

As employers were being recruited, so were youth. Youth were recruited through various partnerships, youth employment orientations and seven different community outreach days ranging from late June to early July. Youth who participated in the recruitment process completed registration forms and attended a youth employment orientation and training course. Youth orientations were held continually to have an adequate pool of candidates for employment. All youth who participated were entered into the NECW youth database. A total of 184 youth were recruited for employment positions based on their geographic location, interviewing skills and work-readiness. Of the 184 recruited youth, 105 were hired by the 15 employers. As a benefit to participating in the SYEP, youth received two shirts and identification cards. These cards provided youth free access to Detroit's transit system as youth were not restricted to where they could work, thus minimizing transportation concerns.

Program Orientation & Training

Prior to being placed or hired, recruited youth participated in a general orientation and training. This training consisted of one-on-one counseling with NECW staff and group orientation and training. During the recruitment process, the NECW committee discovered several barriers that could possibly prevent youth from being hired. This prompted the development of the Learn and Earn Program. Recruited youth had a variety of skill sets, diverse educational experiences, and various socio-economic backgrounds, all which affected their work-readiness. Those youth who were work-ready or who were close to being work-ready were often hired instantly. These types of youth possessed good listening skills, were self-starters, had a positive attitude, were well-spoken and quick learners. Youth who did not possess these skills often required more training and guidance from NECW staff. This latter group comprised the 20 youth who would eventually participate in the Learn and Earn Program. The remaining 85 youth who were hired received orientation and training from NECW as well as on-site training from their employer.

Program Partners

In an effort to create jobs and employment training opportunities for youth, the SYEP partnered with several well-established organizations throughout the city of Detroit. Two-thirds of the SYEP partners were from the non-profit sector, with the remaining 1/3 coming from the for-profit sector. This included City Connect's Grow Detroit's Young Talent, Youth Development Commission (YDC), Vanguard Community Development,

Lakeshore Engineering Department, Youthville Detroit, Detroit Parent Network and Youth Employment Solutions, which provided the curriculum and training for the Learn and Earn Program.

Program Challenges

The bulk of the challenges that occurred within the SYEP stemmed from lack of time. Because the pilot program only allowed 2 to 3 weeks of recruitment and training, the NECW Governance Board did not get the opportunity to branch out city wide or recruit the number of targeted placements. If the program was able to start in January for example, the program would be able to double or triple the job opportunities for youth and could have students more fully prepared in time for a June start date.

Non-programmatic issues resulted from social concerns amongst families. Many youth did not have proper ID (SSN, photo ID, birth certificates, etc.) to even be considered for employment. Thus upon hiring, an unforeseen challenge to NECW staff was filling out social service related forms and documents. Though, this was not an enormous barrier, it can be a challenge when there are hundreds of youth enrolling at the same time. Tracking youth and keeping up with their whereabouts also served as a program challenge. Again, many youth and their families move frequently, changing telephone numbers, losing contact with the community, or are simply unaware of the school that the child will be attending, which makes it difficult for youth serving organizations to monitor and serve youth over time. Finally, youth and family's lack of vision for the future served as a precarious challenge. Amongst the SYEP population, youth expressed goals and desires, but did not know how to reach them. They did not know the steps to take, the places to go or the things to do to reach those goals. Most would require individualized attention to help them apply to post-secondary educational institutions or proactively take the steps necessary to pursue their career goals.

Program Successes

Despite the time constraints and the various challenges faced by SYEP, the program had many successes. Firstly, many of the youth are still placed at their jobs from the summer, with the most recent hire occurring in late October. Thus more and more youth are becoming long-term employees. Secondly, valuable relationships were built not only with employers, but among their peers and NECW staff as well. NECW staff assisted youth in preparing for interviews, tests, and other orientation-related tasks which established a strong support system for and with youth. As a result, NECW staff continues to interact and work with many of the youth as they frequent Vanguard, Youthville and other organizations within the area. Thirdly, this job program gave youth a sense of hope within and amongst themselves and connected them to positivity within the community. Furthermore, it provided youth with a sense of voice and presence in the community as evident by the NECW Youth Advisory Council that will be formed in January of 2012. Building off the relationships and friendships developed over the summer, youth will create a board, independent from the NECW Governance Board, wherein youth will work as a cohesive unit managing themselves, engaging in peer mentoring and training, and serving as positive role models in the community. Finally, there were no serious behavioral problems or concerns with youth at the workplace, which is not only evidence of youth's maturity, but also good preparation that leads to professional development as employees.

Considerations for Future Programs

Communities who want to emulate an employment program similar to SYEP should consider several ideas. Firstly, it is important to recruit from anywhere feasible (not just the immediate neighborhood) to expand your employer base to provide more work sites for youth. Secondly, prepare youth as much as possible before they are sent on jobs. Use one-on-one counseling to learn youth's strengths and challenges and group trainings to foster engagement and camaraderie among youth. Taking time to work with and prepare youth ahead of time gives the program committee a better idea of who is 'work-ready' and also allows the team to create a strong support system between staff and youth.

Closing Remarks

Even in a time of limited federal funding, youth-serving organizations like NECW's SYEP were able to provide meaningful employment opportunities for 105 youth. Despite the numerous challenges, the program was able to overcome systematic and individual social barriers to create and sustain a program that was beneficial to both youth and the community at large. As the number of work-ready youth continues to grow, Detroit can look forward to increasing the number of both employers and youth employees every year.

The remainder of this report summarizes data from a survey of young people participating in the NECW summer youth employment program. The questions are similar to those asked of Detroit SYEP participants in the past. Forty-five of the 105 youth from NECW completed the survey for a response rate of 43%.

Part 1. Reflection on your summer work experiences

Figure 1: What was your summer job with the Detroit Summer Youth Employment Program? Mark the one answer that best applies.*

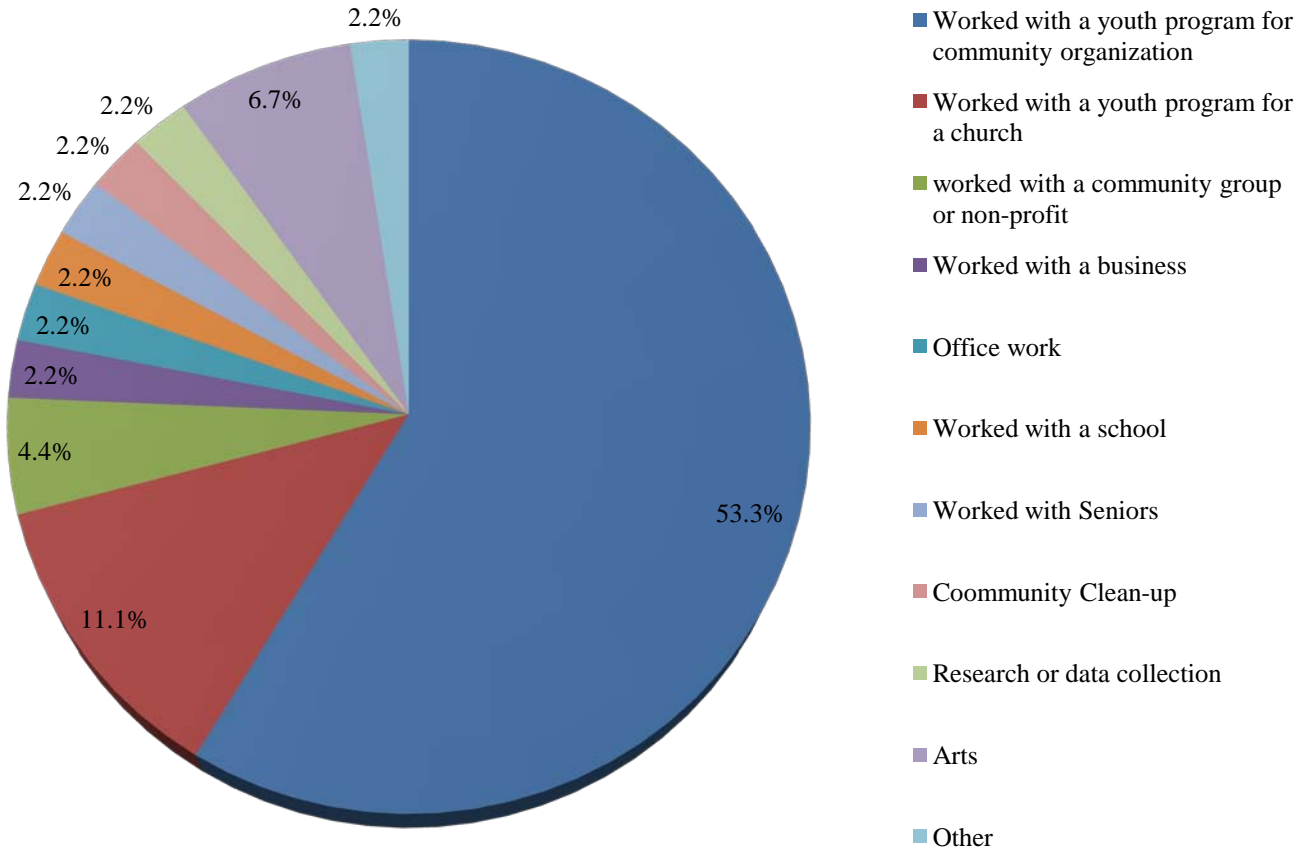


Figure 2: Please read the following statements and check one answer based on your experience with the Detroit Summer Youth Employment Program

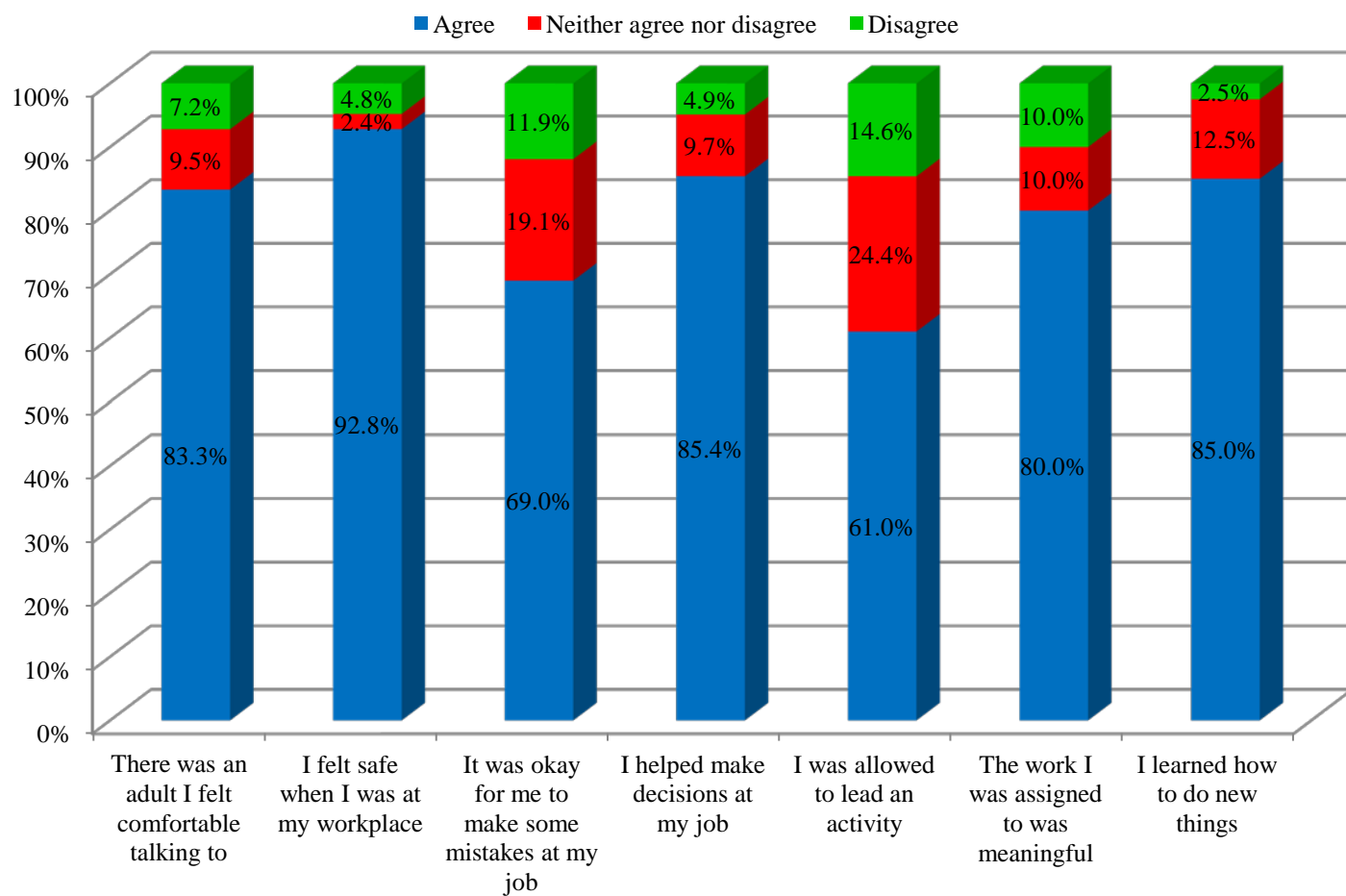


Figure 3: What do you think you would have been doing if you were not working with the Detroit Summer Youth Employment Program? Mark the one answer that best applies.

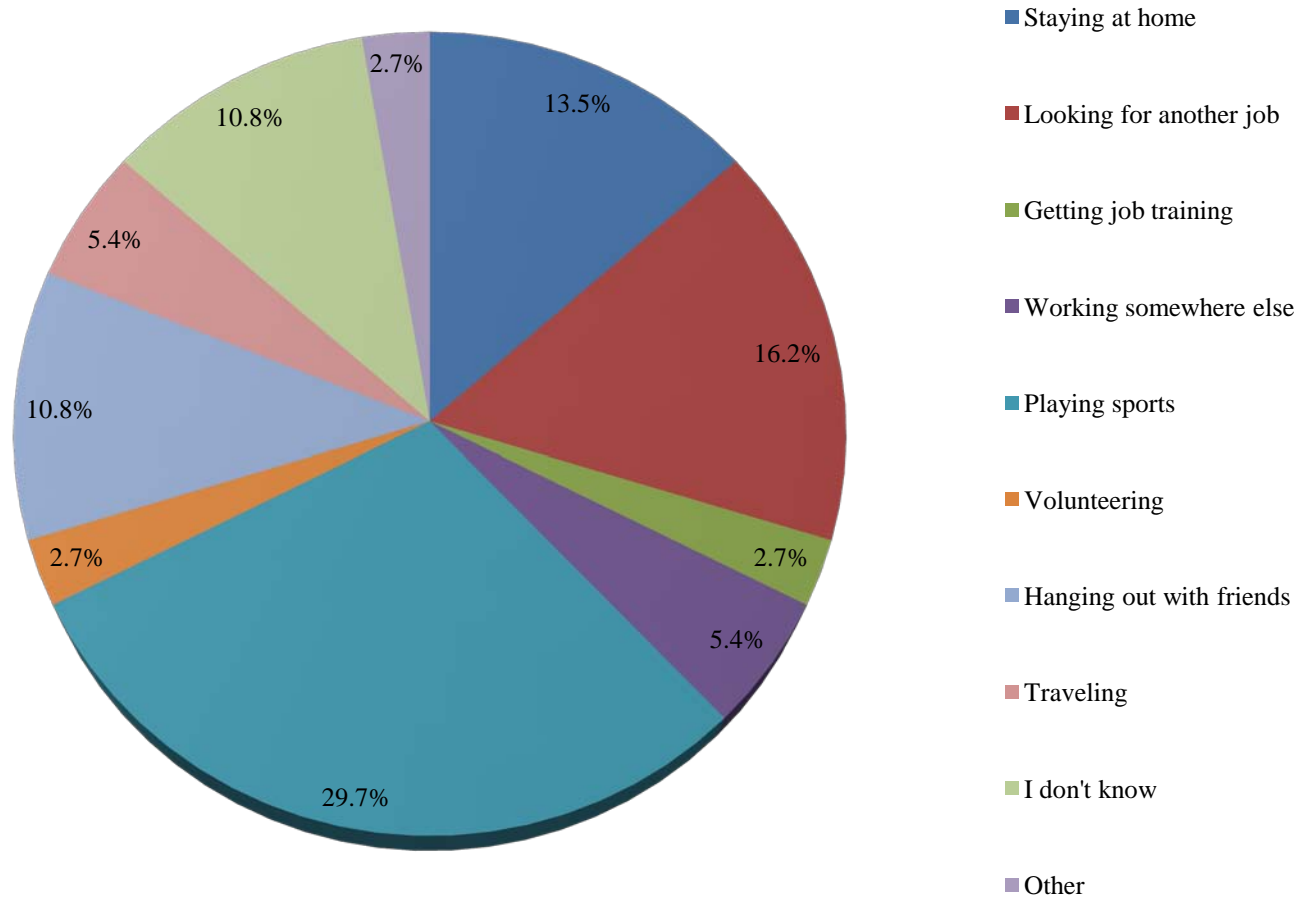


Figure 4: What are the most important job skills you learned from the program? Mark up to 3 answers.

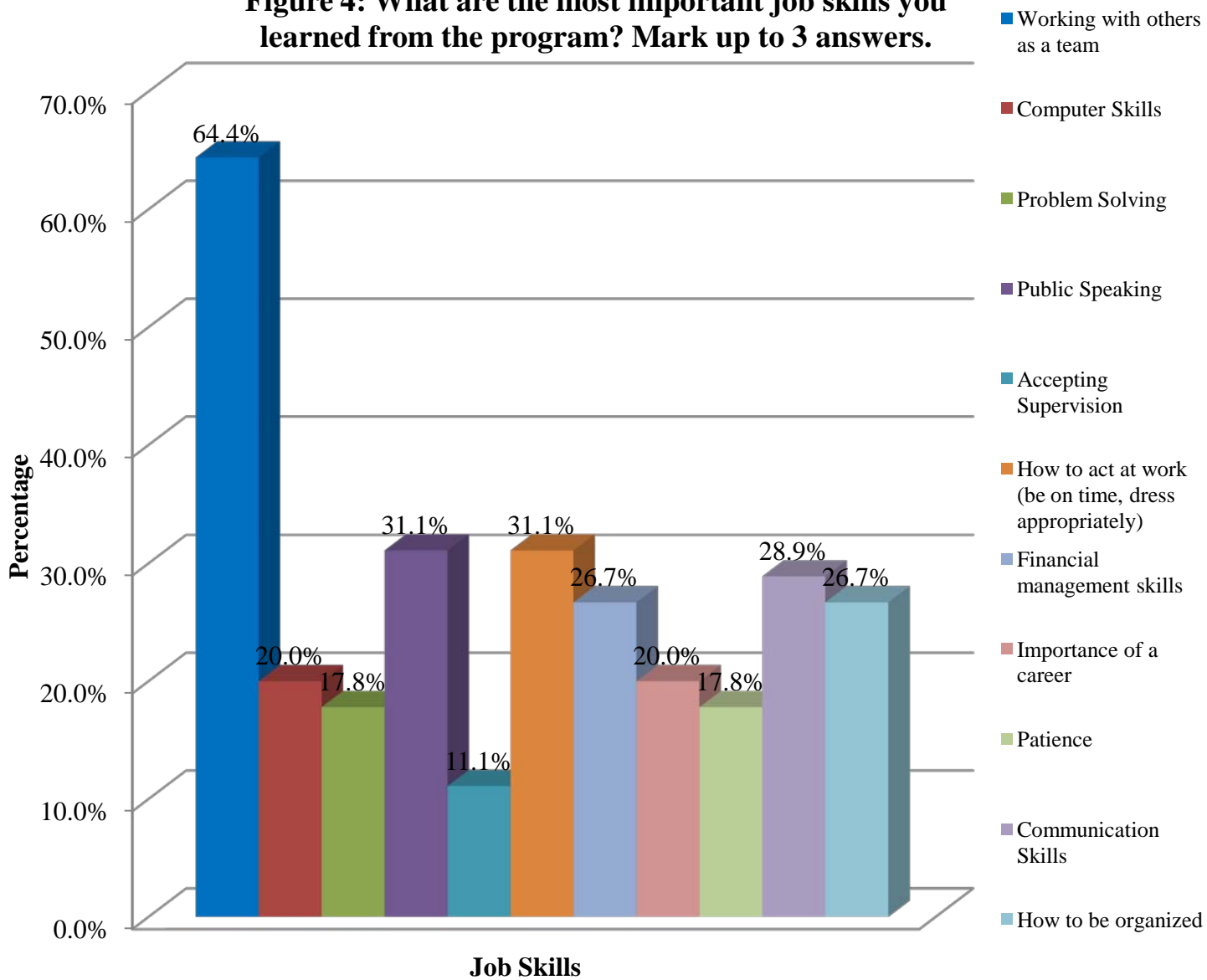


Figure 5: How did the program help you prepare for future employment? Mark ALL answers that apply.

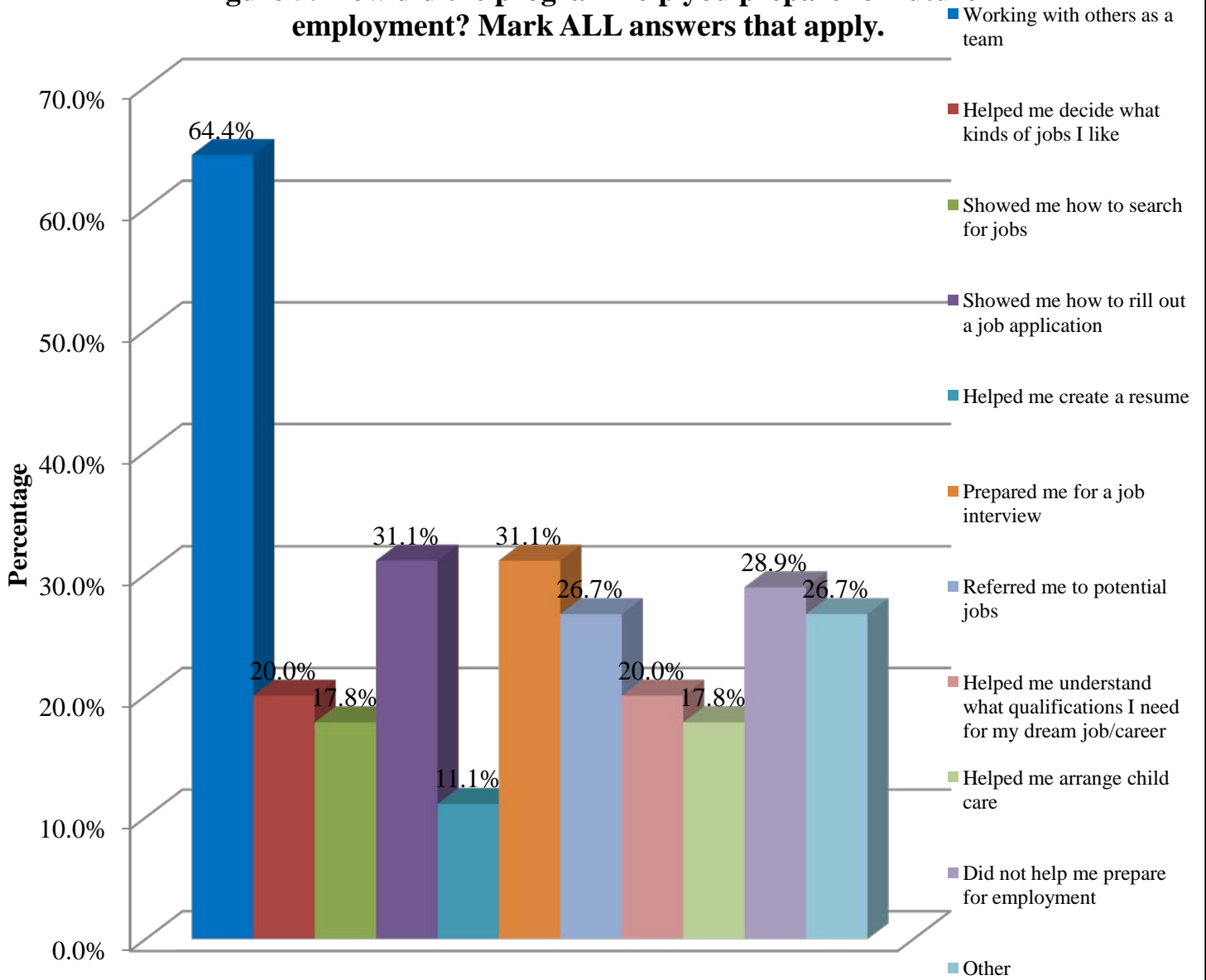


Figure 6: How did the program help you academically?
Mark ALL answers that apply.

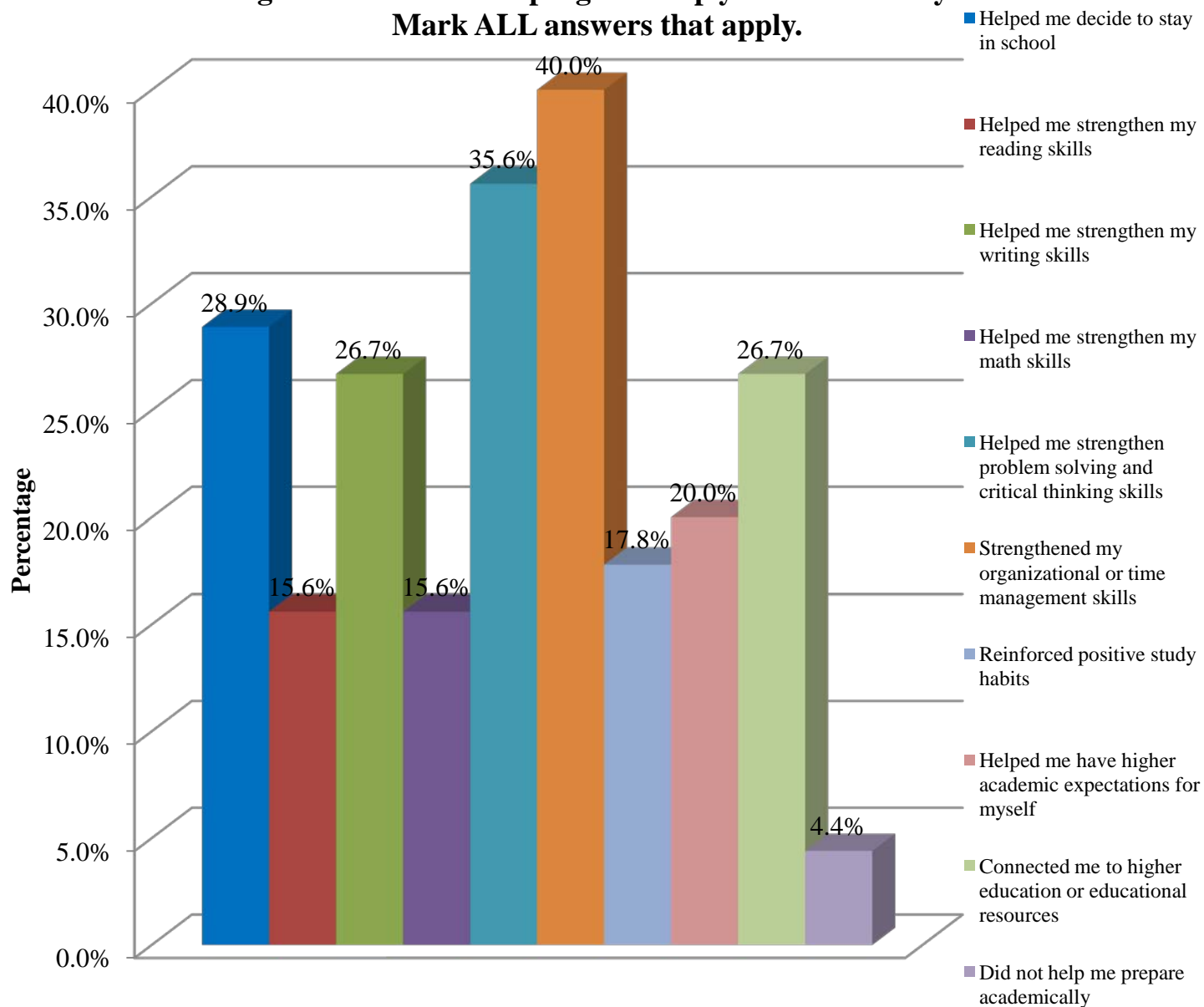


Figure 7: To what extent has the Detroit Summer Youth Employment Program change your ideas about your future?

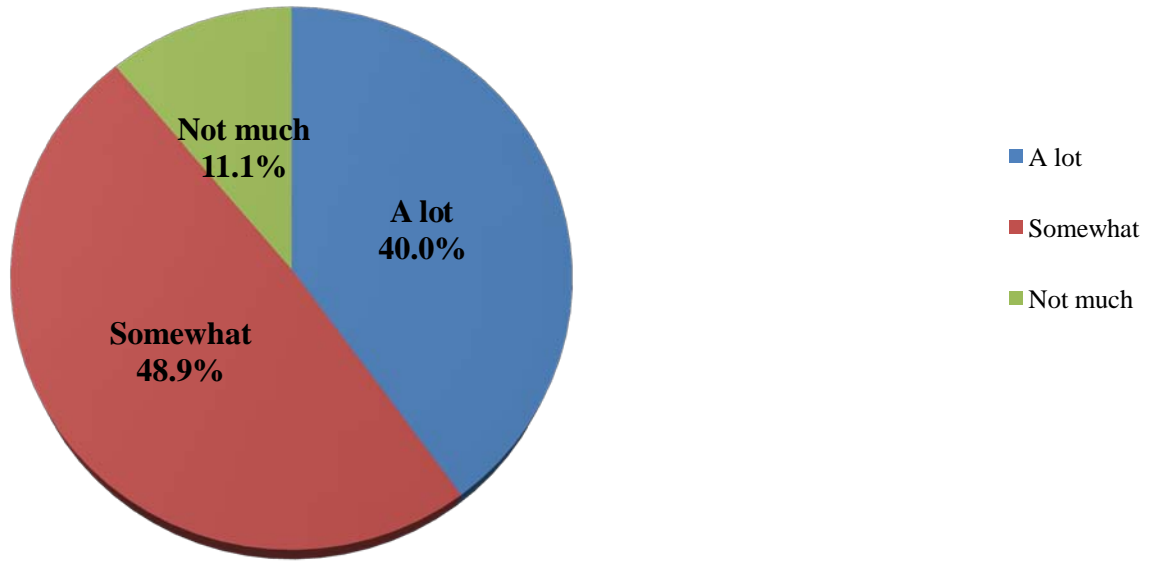


Figure 8: If your ideas about your future have changed because of the program, how have they changed? Mark ALL that apply.

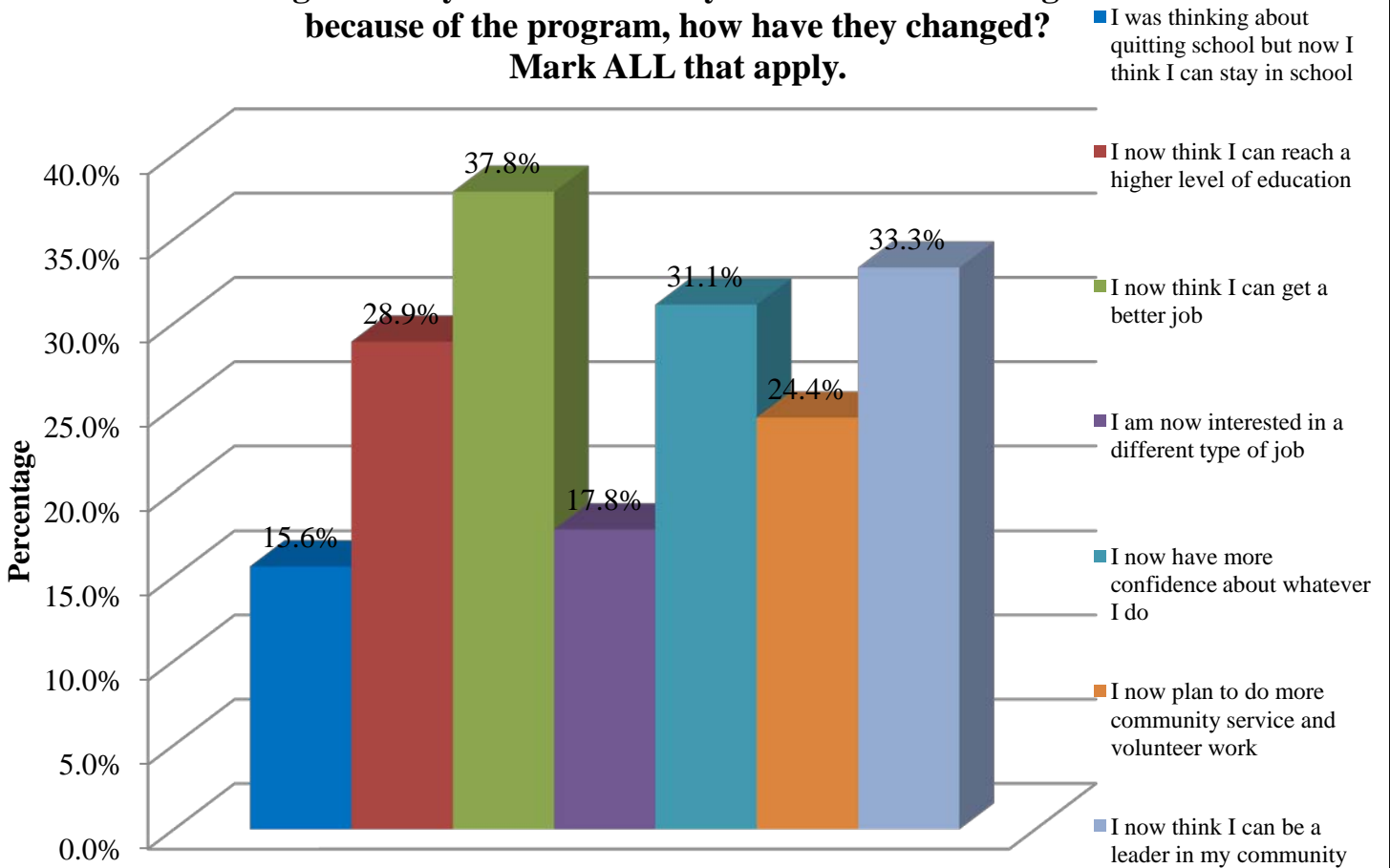


Figure 9: Looking back at your experience with the Detroit Summer youth Employment Program, would you recommend the program to other youth who haven't participated in it before

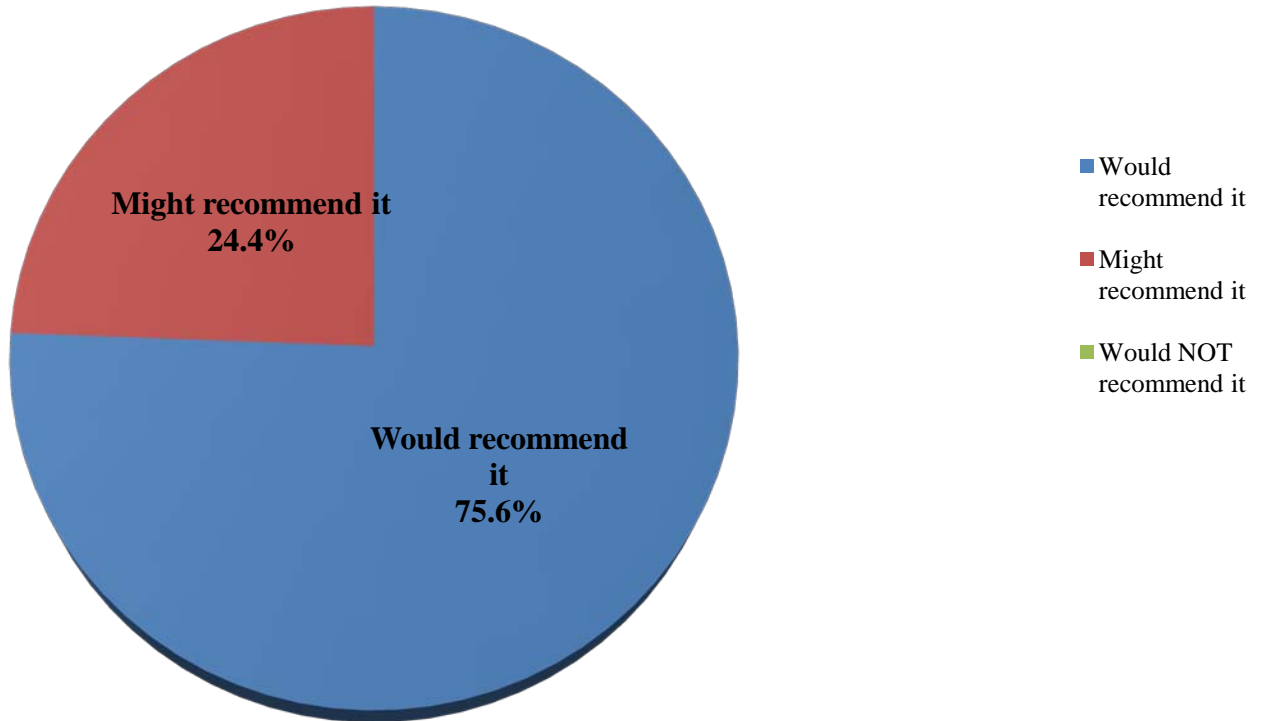


Figure 10: Do you have a bank account in your name?

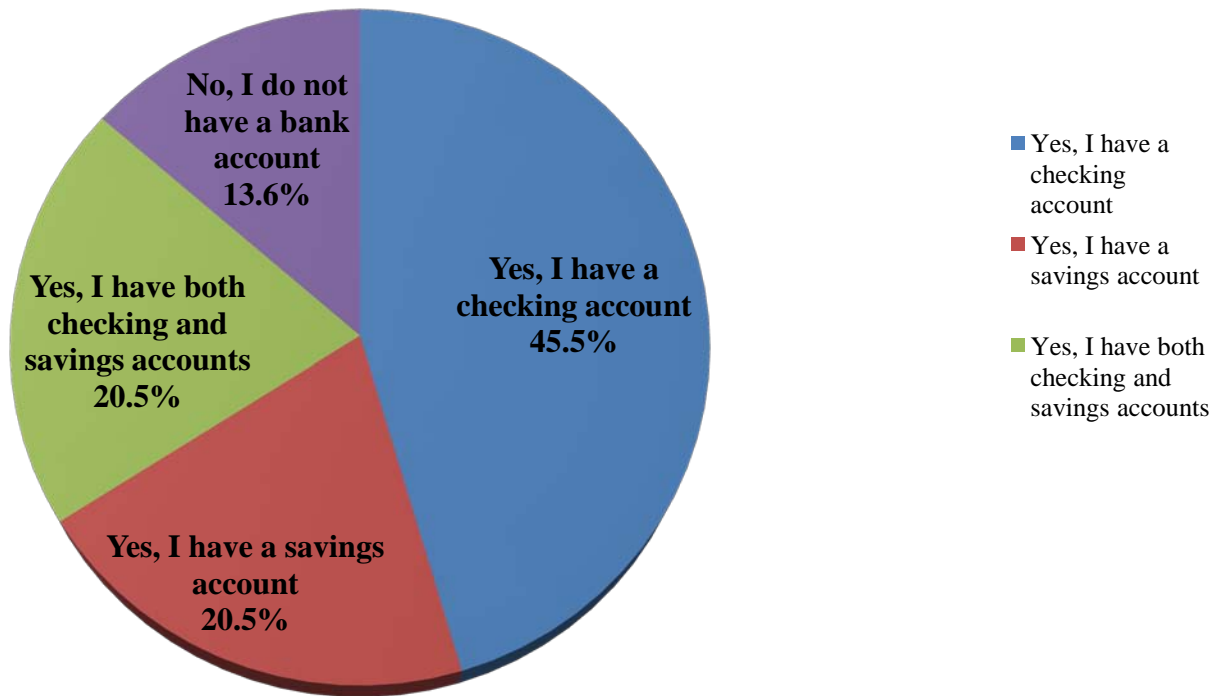


Figure 11: Do you feel comfortable writing out a check?

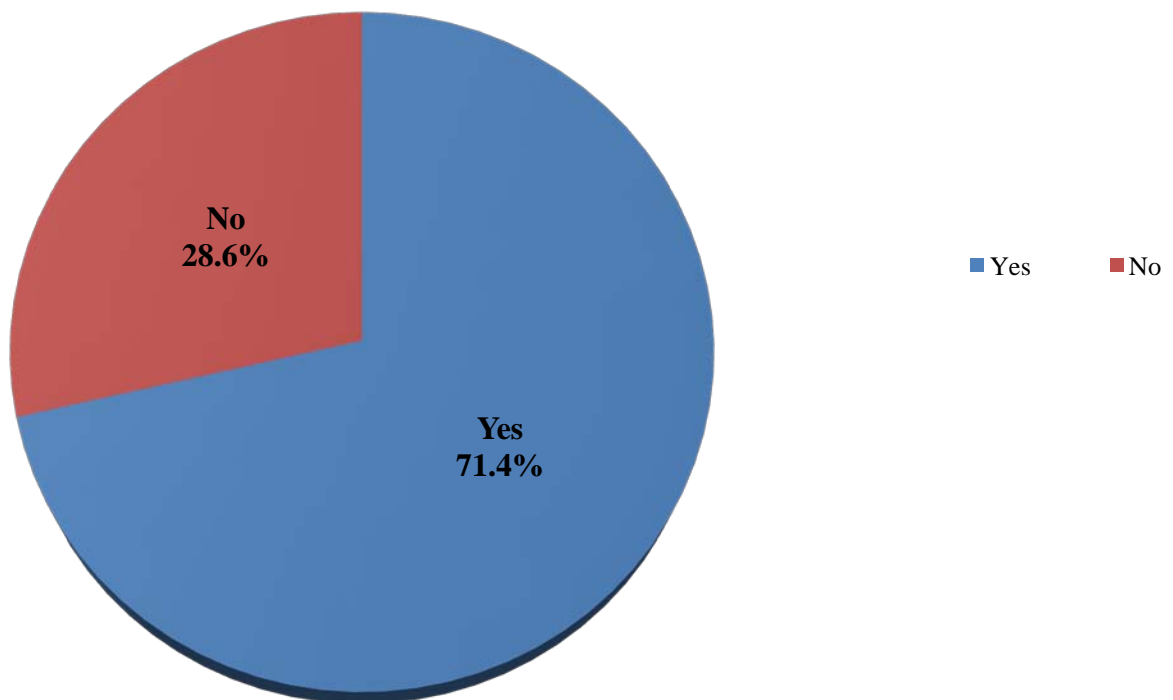


Figure 12: In the past year, how often have you planned what you are going to spend your money on? Planning could mean making a shopping list, writing out a budget, or saving for a particular purpose.

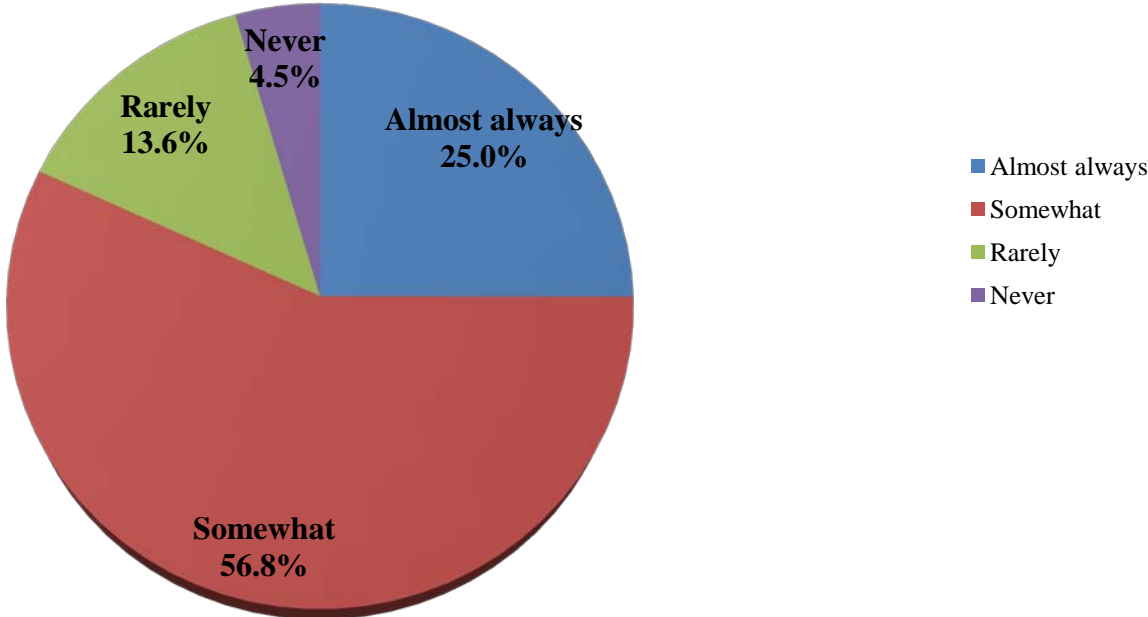


Figure 13: In the past year, how often have you saved on a regular basis?

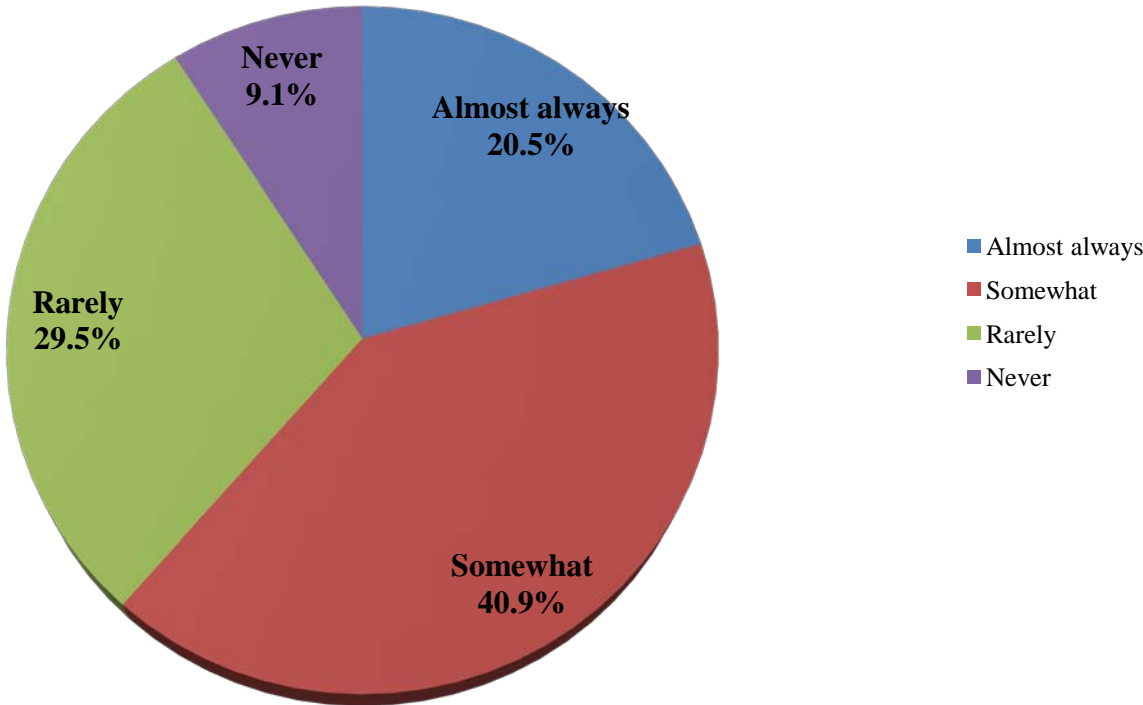


Figure 14: What did you do with the money you earned this summer? Mark ALL answers that apply.

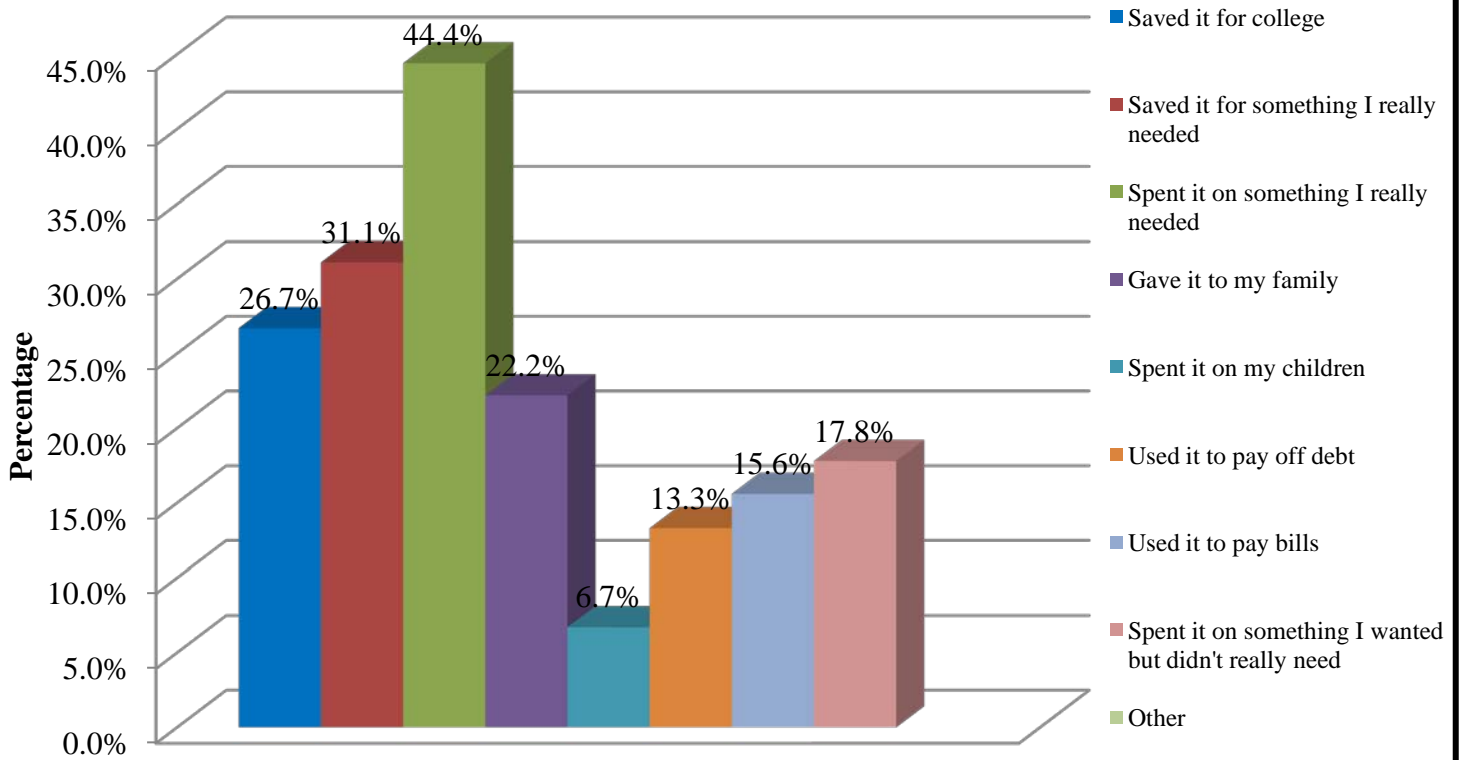
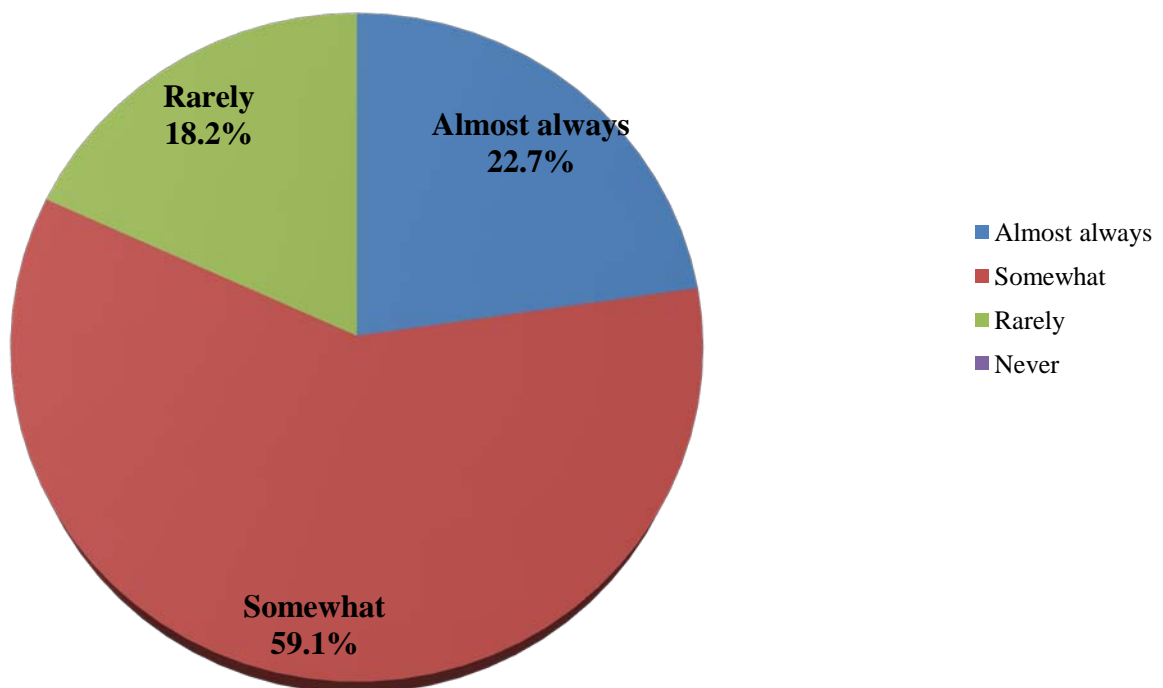


Figure 15: This summer, how often did you feel that you did a good job managing your finances?



Part 3. Educational Goals

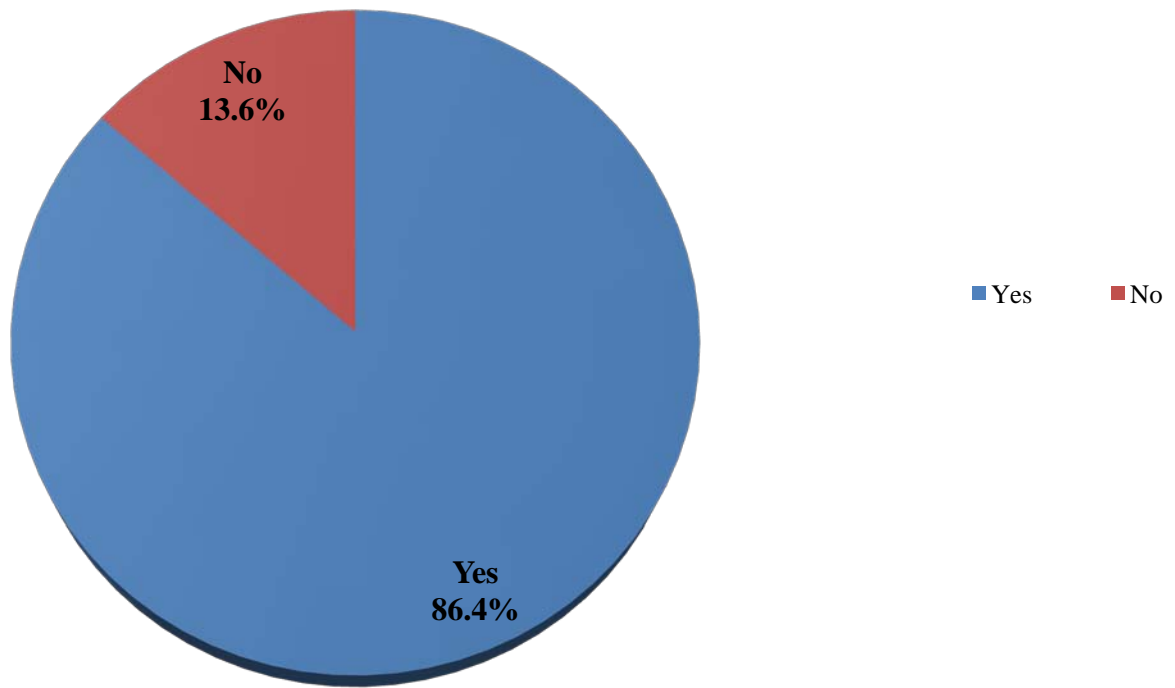
Table 1: What job would you like to be doing in 10 years?

45 out of 45 respondents completed this item, for a response rate of 100%.

Themes developed from the responses are presented below with illustrative comments.

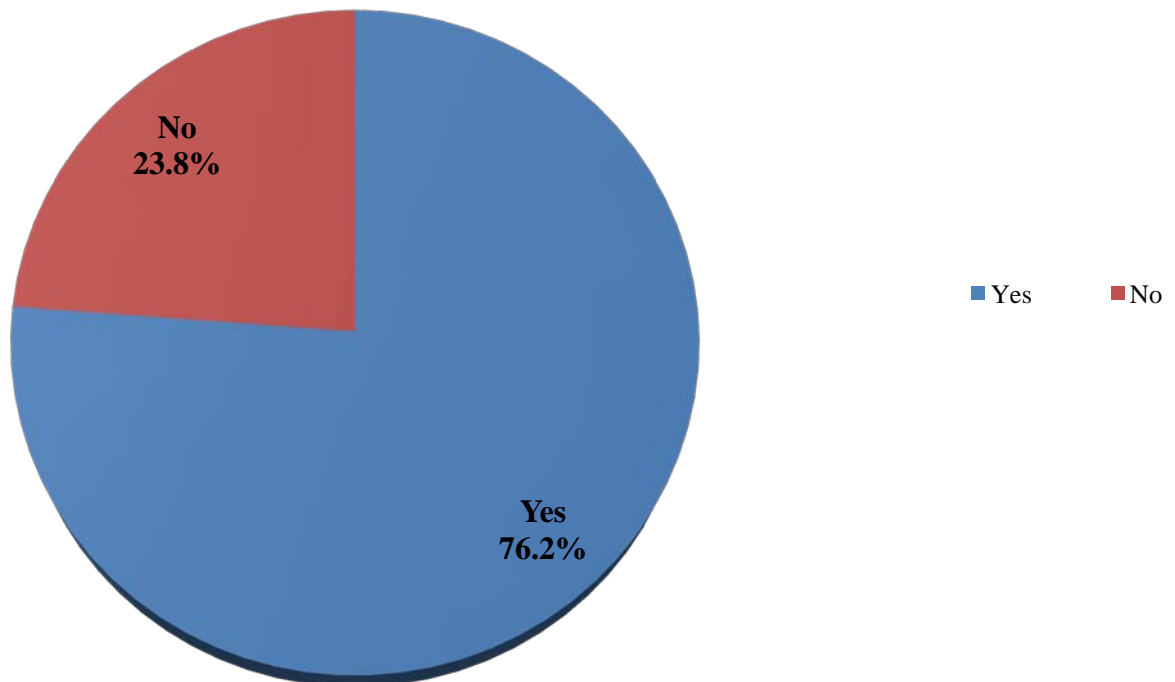
Aeronautics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot
Armed Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy
Computers, IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic designer
Culinary Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chef
Doctor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgeon • OBGYN • EMT • Pediatrician • Veterinarian
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Elementary Teacher
Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical
Home Improvement, Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction worker
Law Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officer
Lawyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawyer
Mechanic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanic
Music & the Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapper • Artist • Dancer • Model • Fashion designer
Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RN
Scientists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemist • Archeologist
Service Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales associate • Working on campus
Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBA player • NFL player

Figure 16: Do you need to finish high school to get this kind of job?

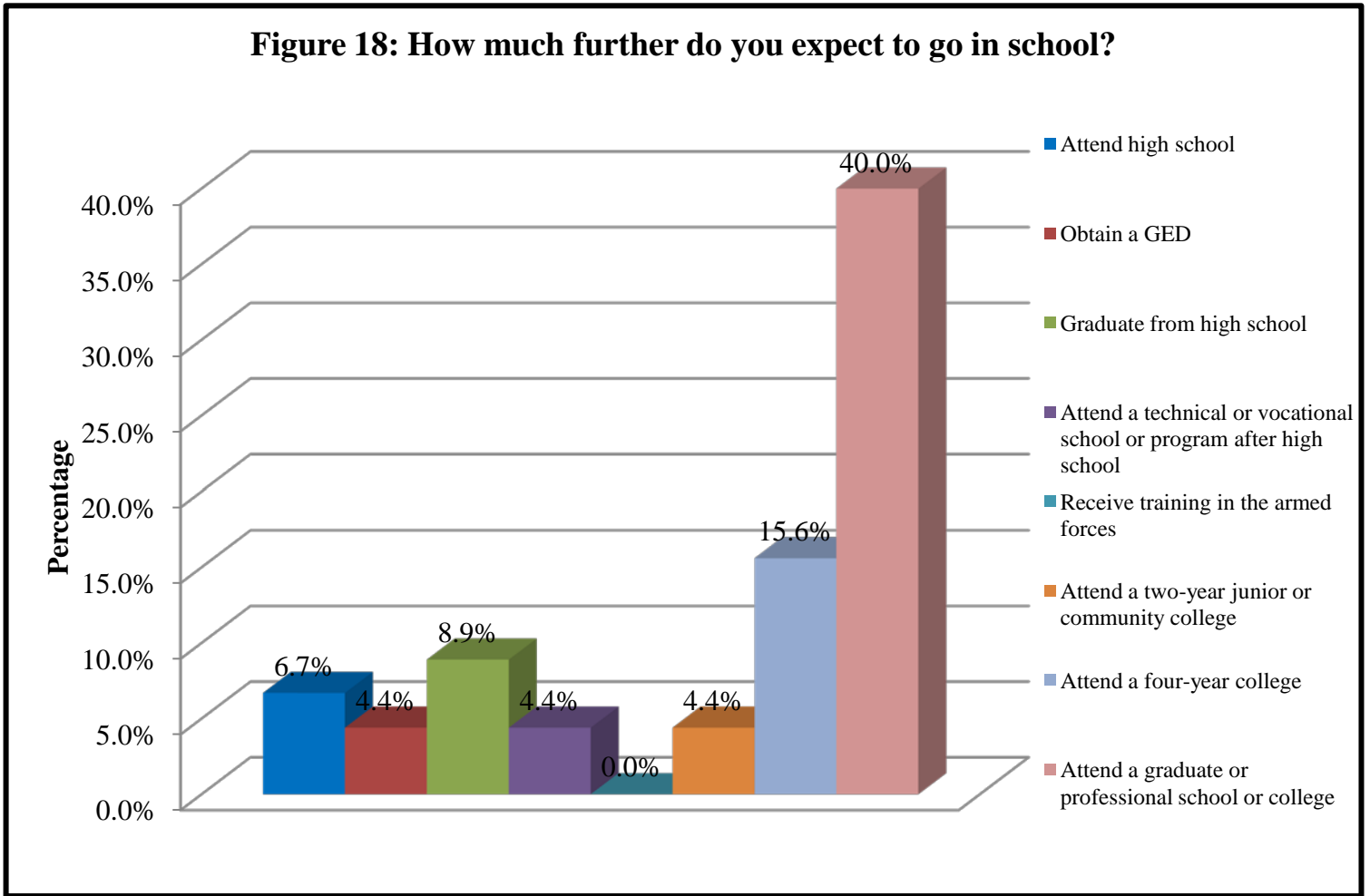


Please note that 2.2% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 17: Do you need to finish college to get this kind of job?



Please note that 6.7% of respondents did not complete this item.



Please note that 15.6% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 19: How do you describe your weight?

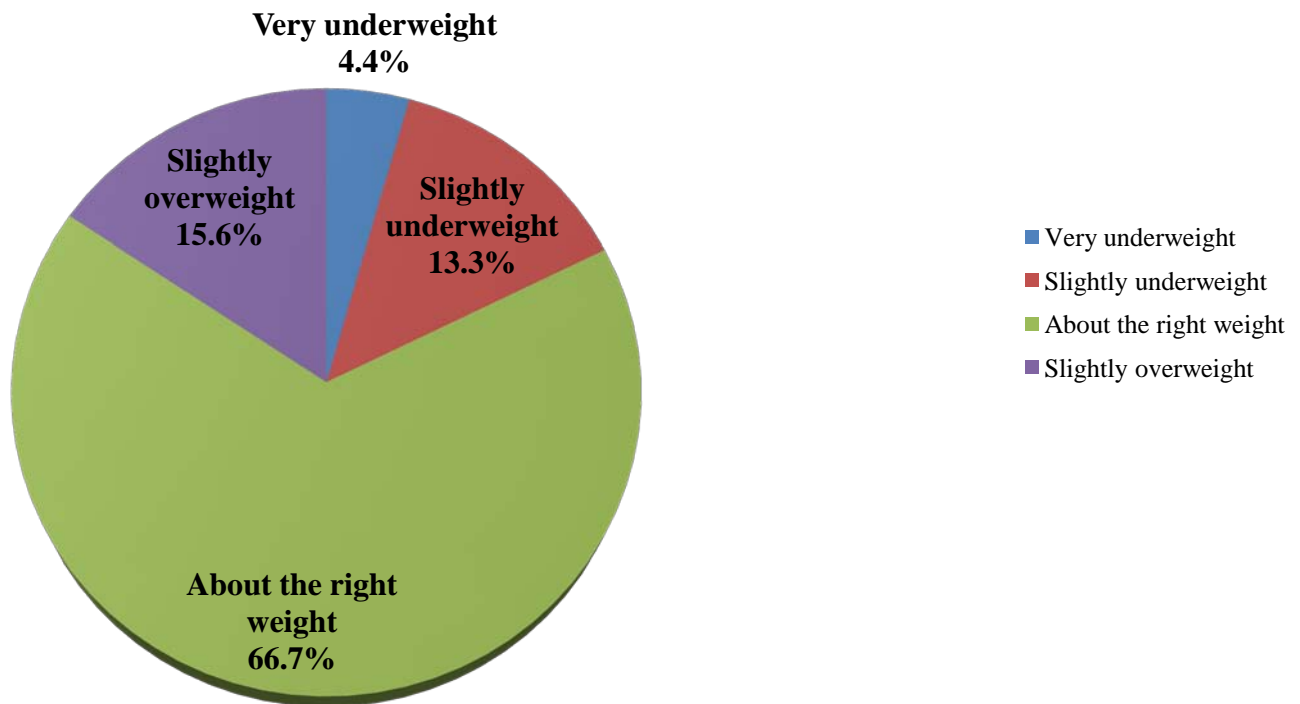


Figure 20: During the past 7 days, how many times did you..

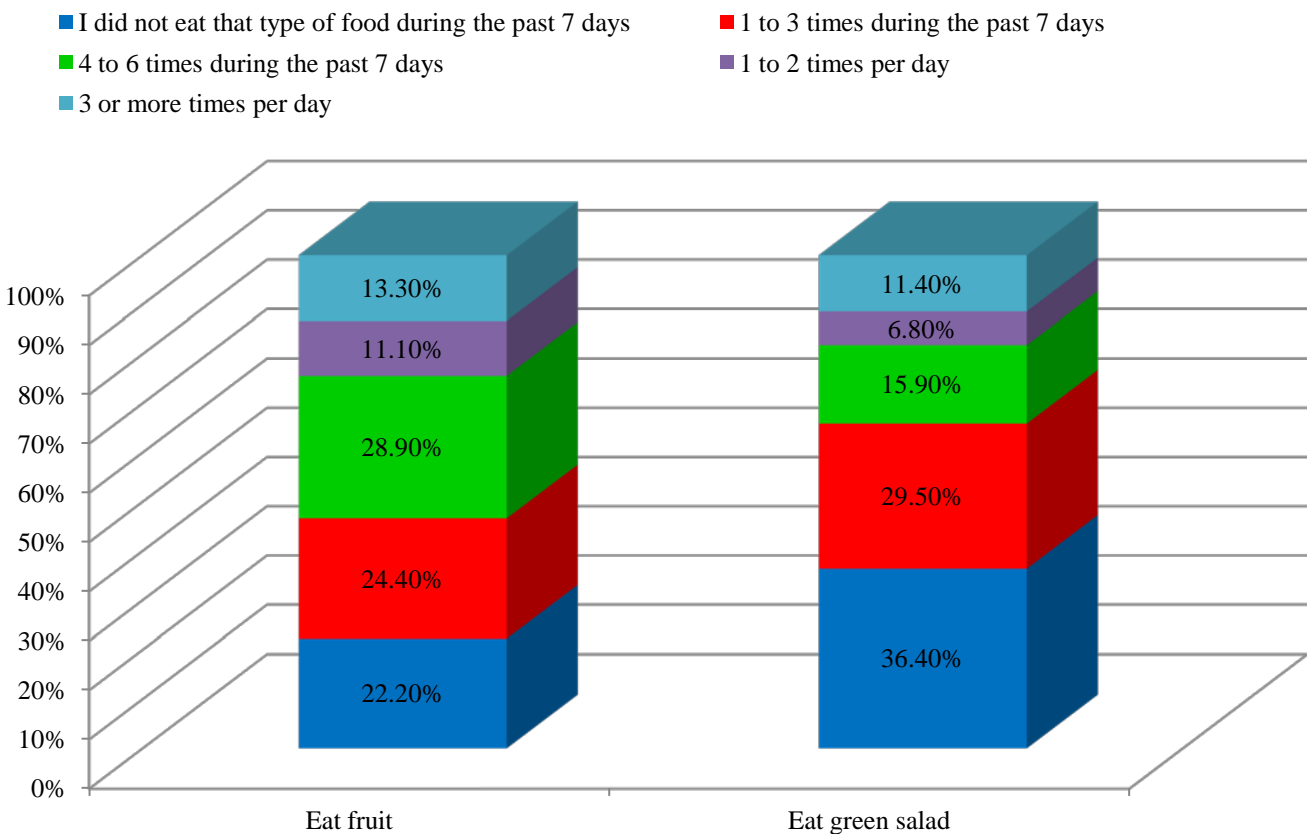


Figure 21: During the past 7 days, approximately how many hours did you spend exercising (such as basketball, football, baseball, running/jogging, dance, swimming, riding a bike, weight lifting, etc.)?

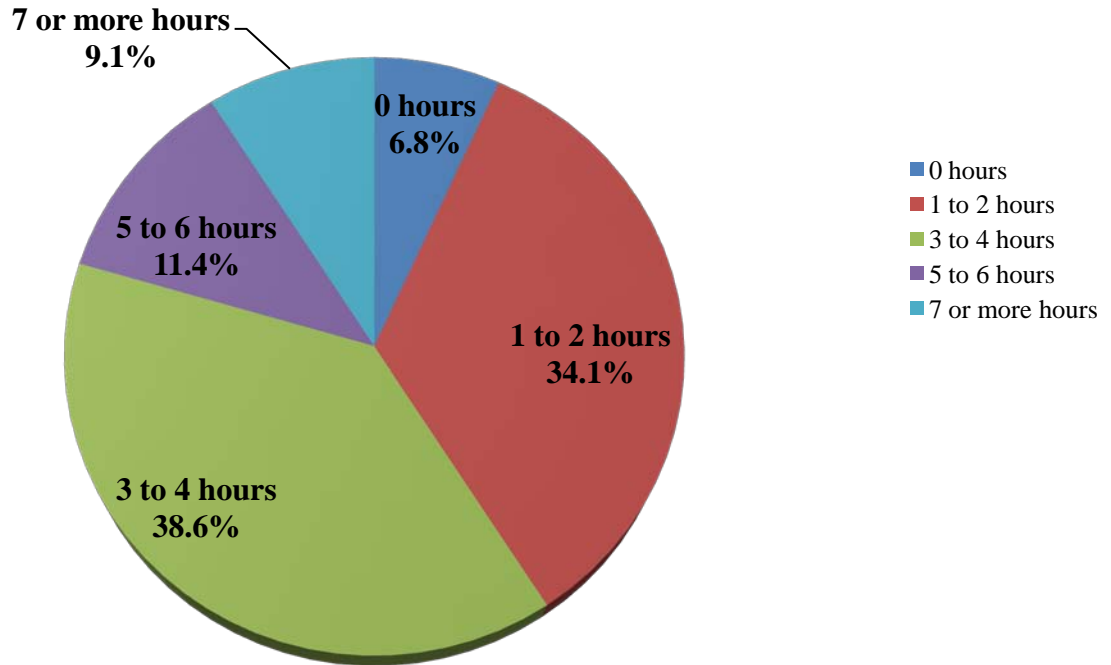


Figure 22: On an average week day, how many hours do you watch TV?

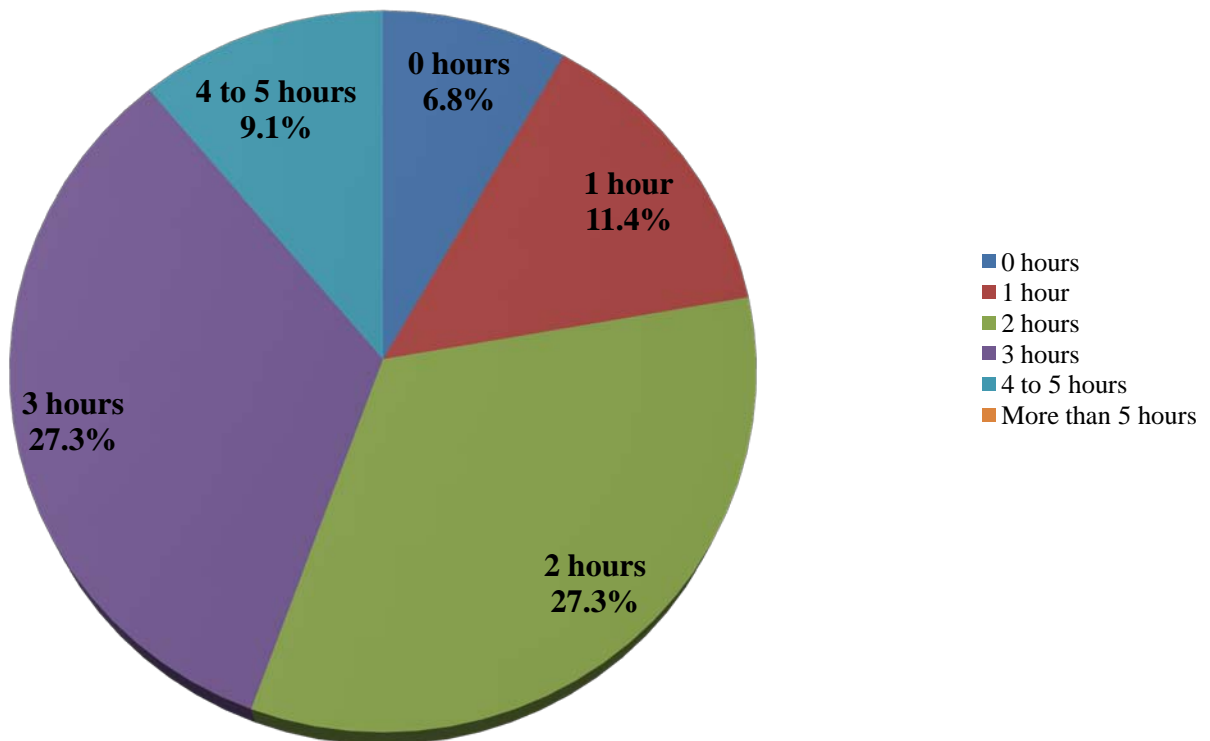


Figure 23: On an average week day, how many hours do you play video games, computer games, or use the computer recreationally (such as My Space, Facebook, etc.)?

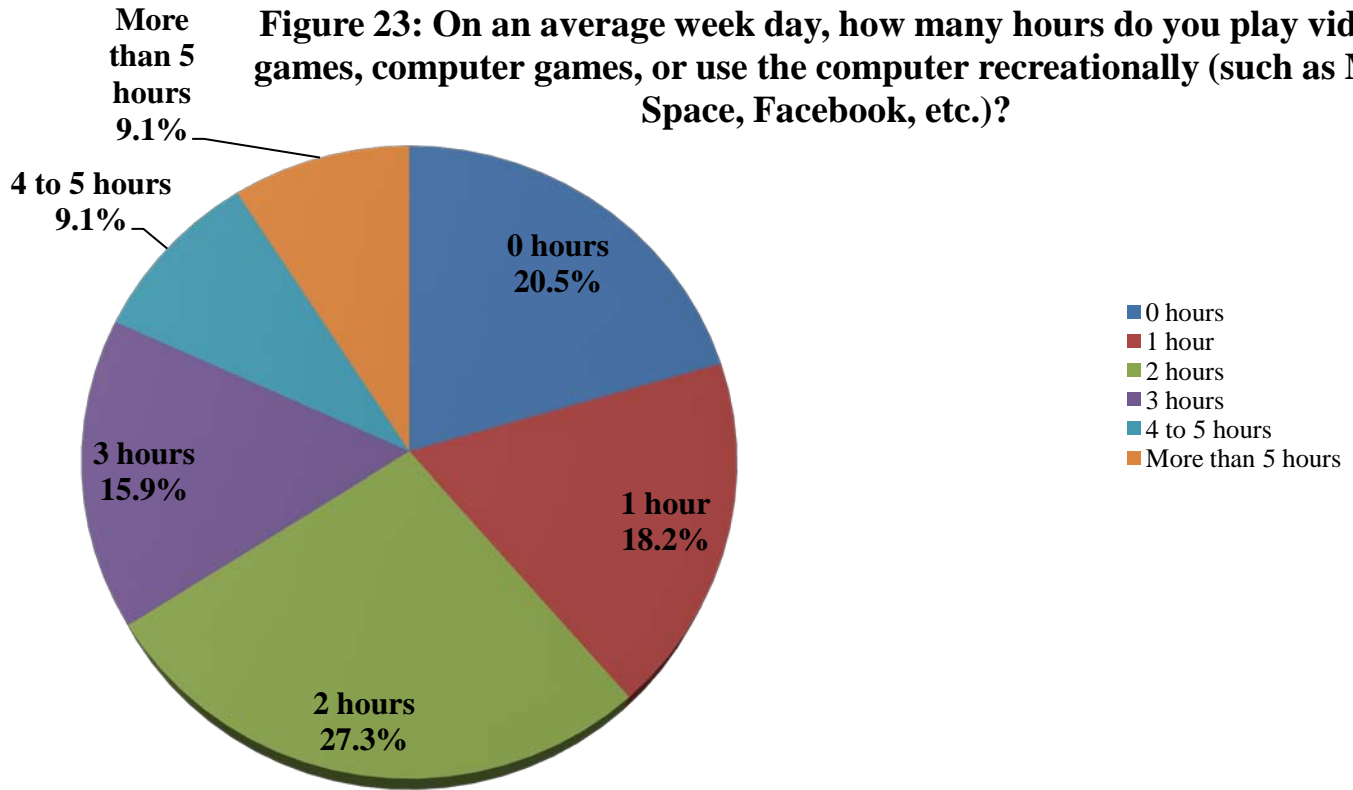


Figure 24: During the past 30 days, on how many days did you not go somewhere in your neighborhood because you felt you would be unsafe at that place or travelling to/from that place? Places include your school, a park, a store, or a neighborhood recreation

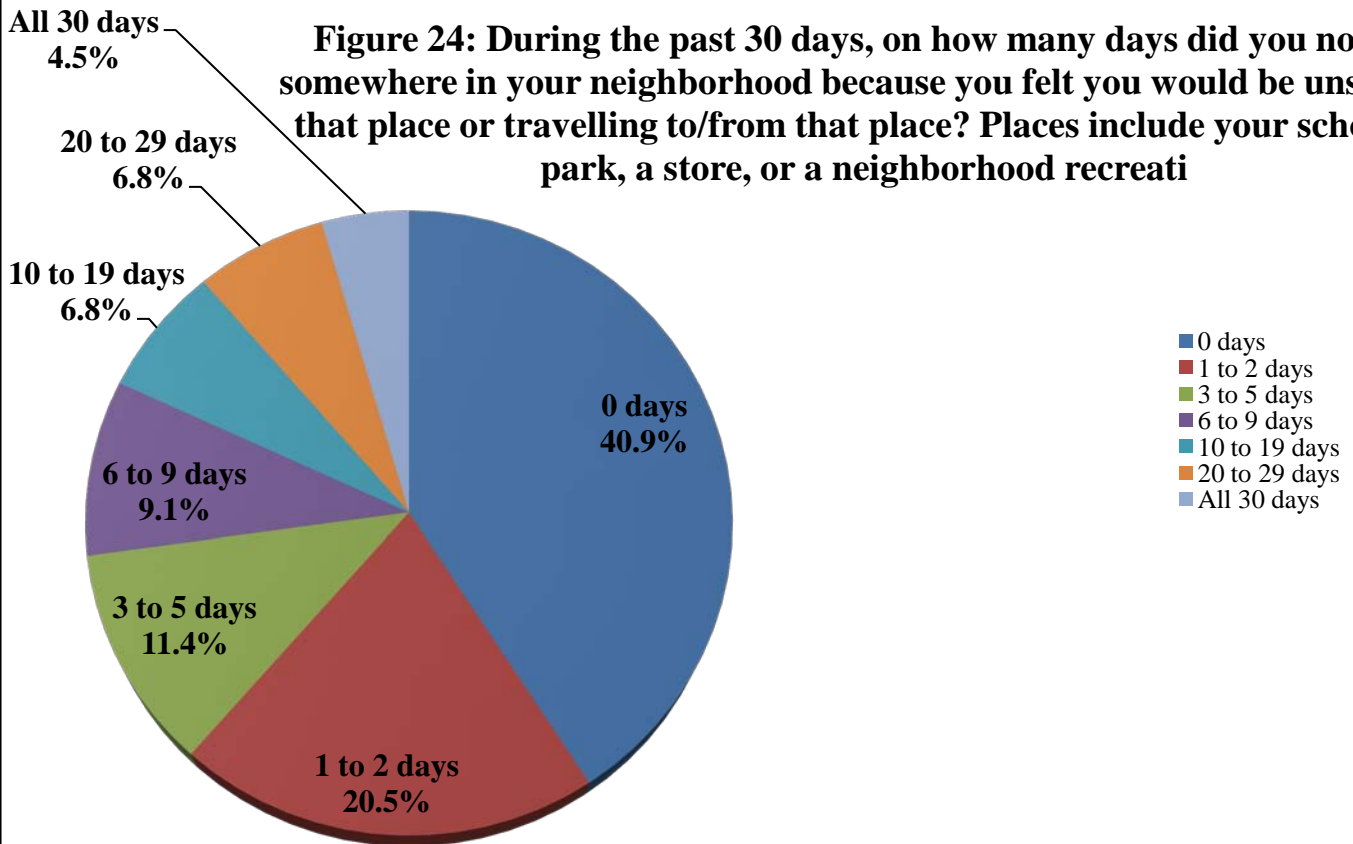
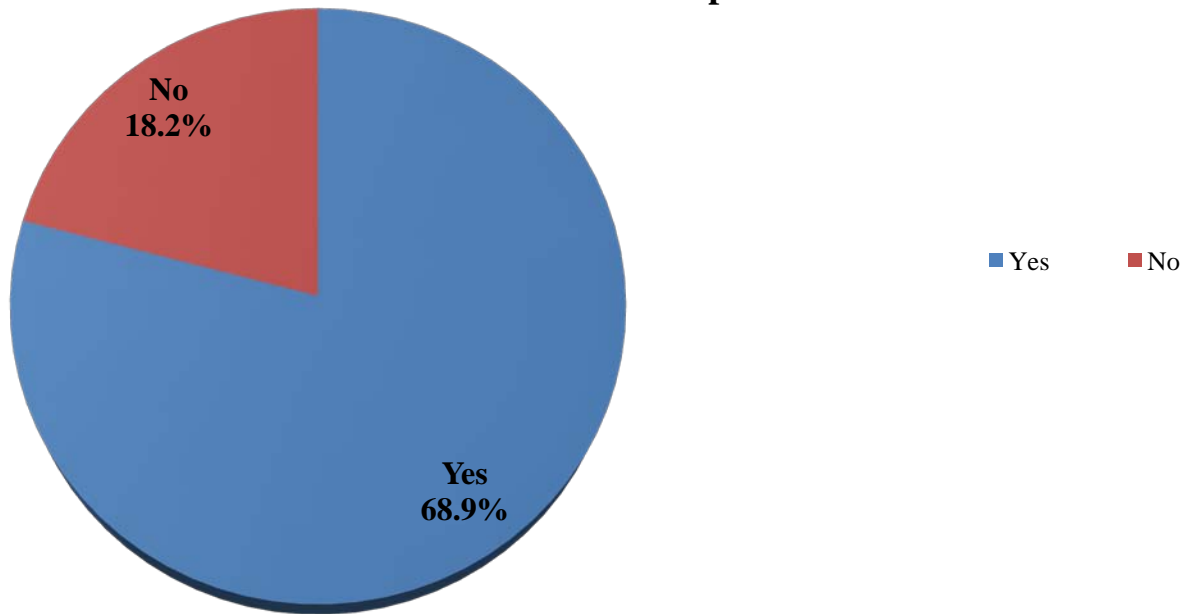
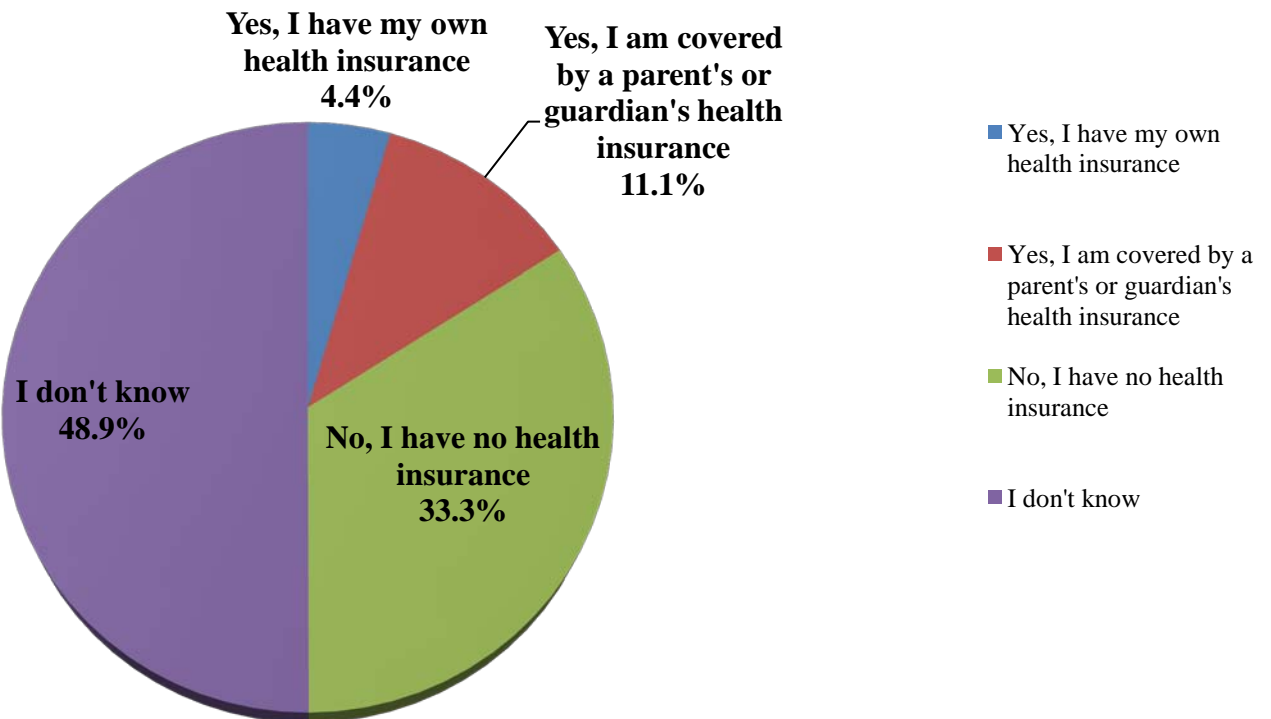


Figure 25: Do you see a doctor or nurse practitioner regularly for health check-ups?



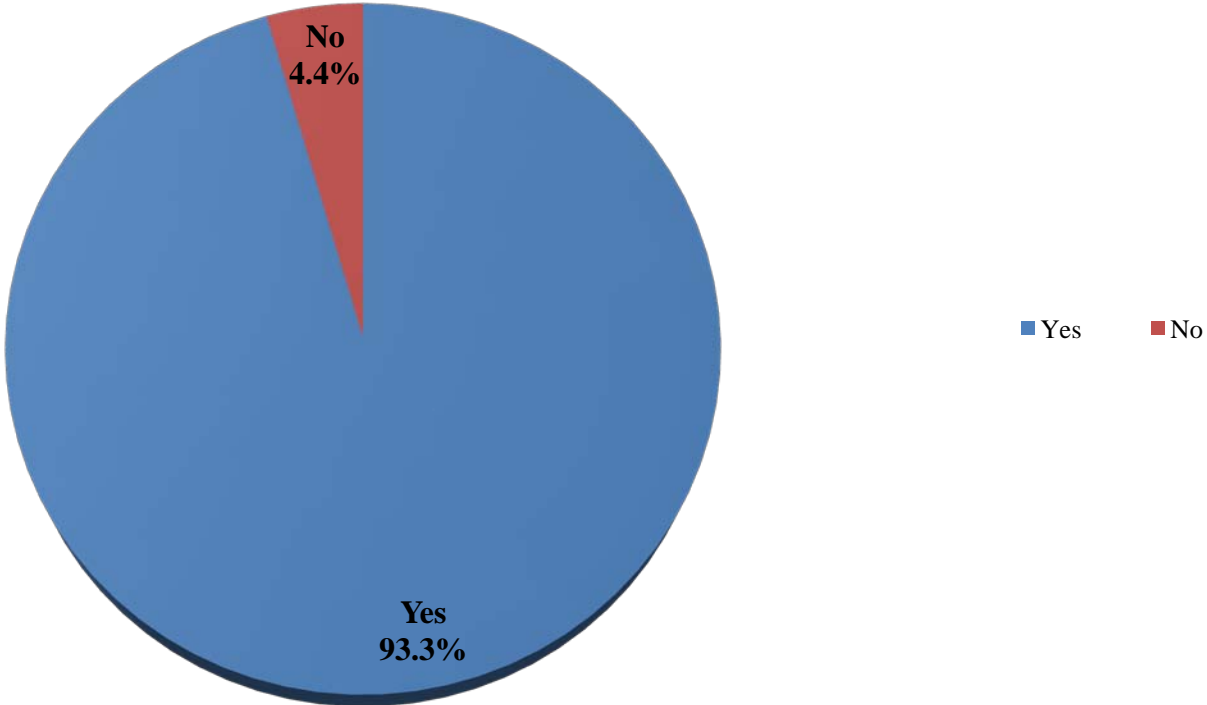
Please note that 4.4% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 26: Do you have health insurance?



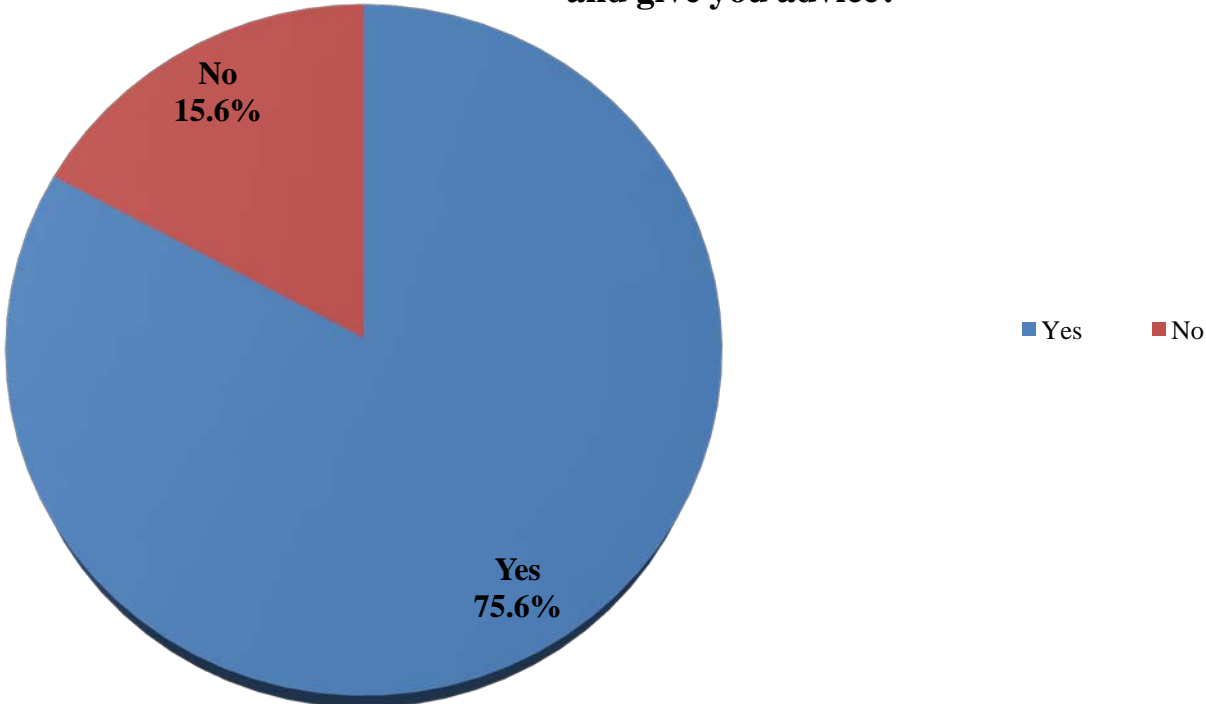
Please note that 2.2% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 27: Did you make any new friends this summer?



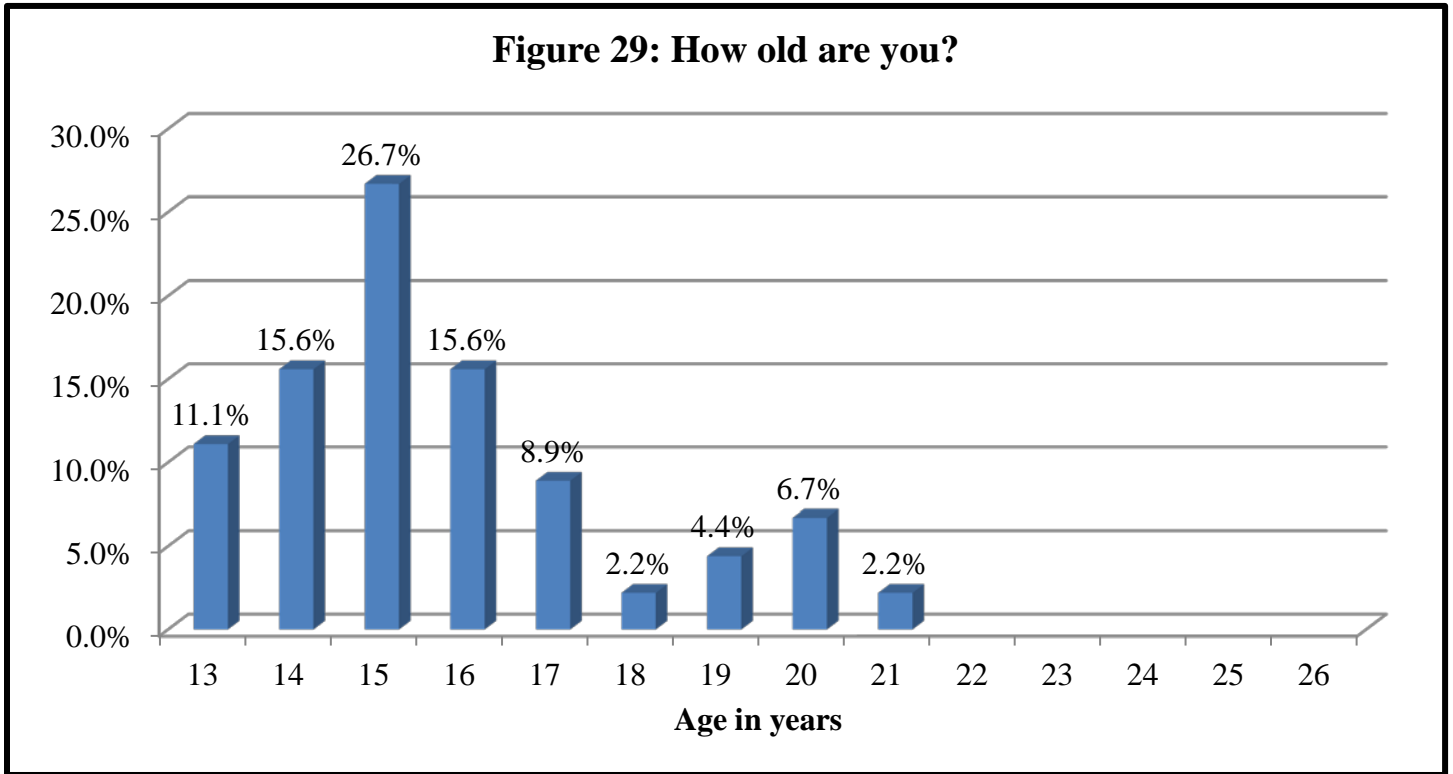
Please note that 2.2% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 28: Do you have an adult mentor- someone you trust to guide you and give you advice?

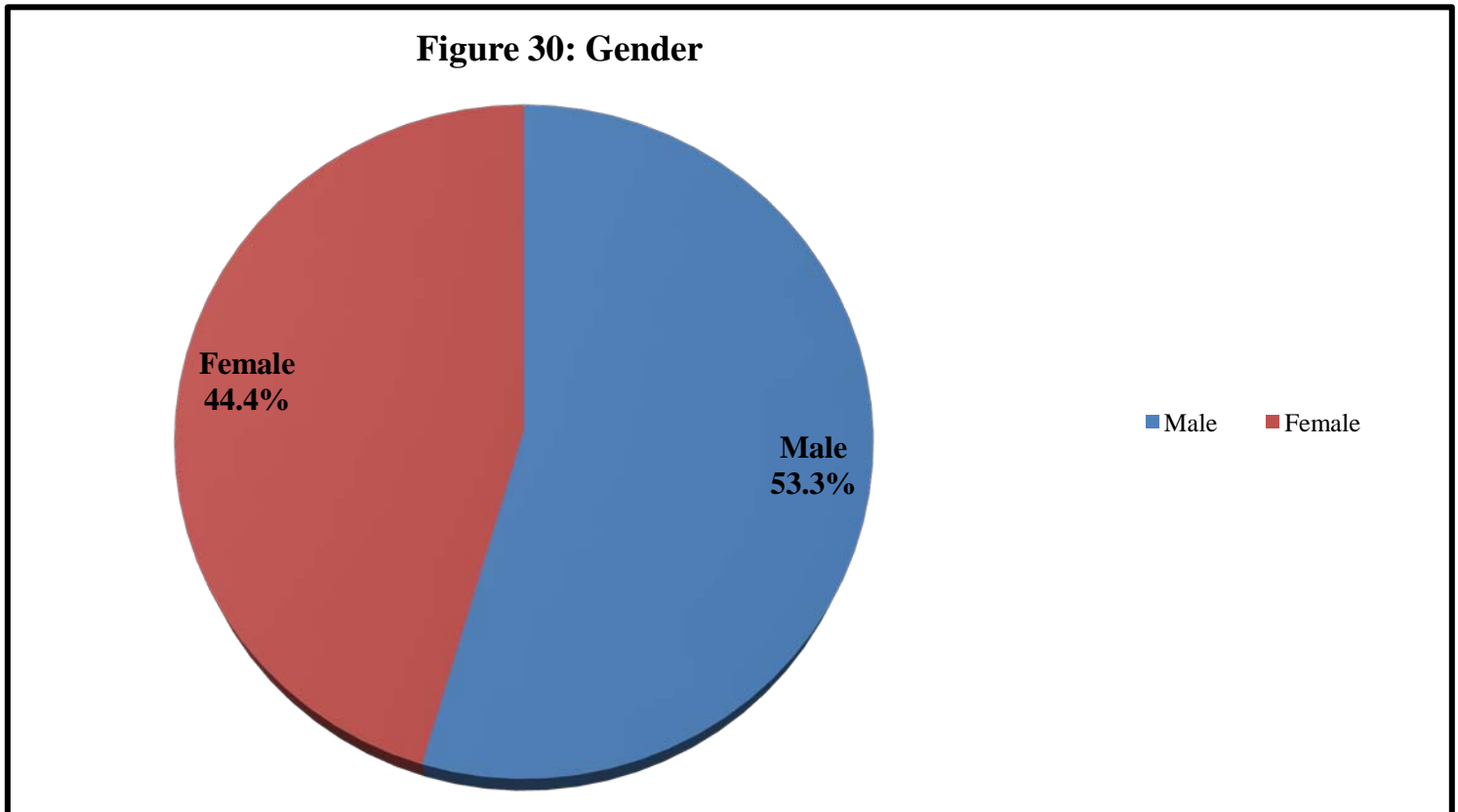


Please note that 8.9% of respondents did not complete this item.

Part 5. Tell us about yourself



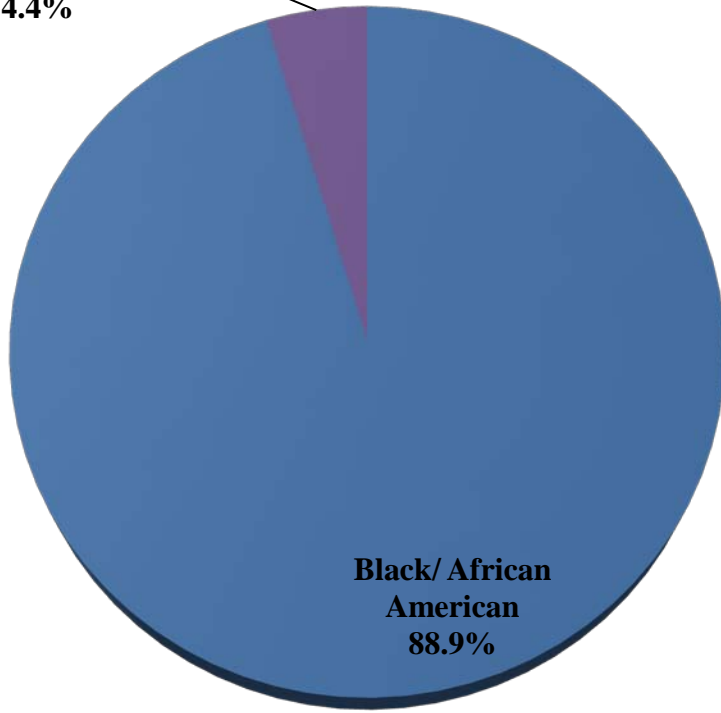
Please note that 6.6% of respondents did not complete this item.



Please note that 2.2% of respondents did not complete this item.

**Middle Eastern
or Arab
4.4%**

Figure 31: Which best describes your ethnicity?



- Black/ African American
- Latino/ Latina or Hispanic
- White/ Caucasian
- Middle Eastern or Arab
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Native American or Native Alaskan
- Other

Please note that 6.6% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 32: Which zip code do you live in?

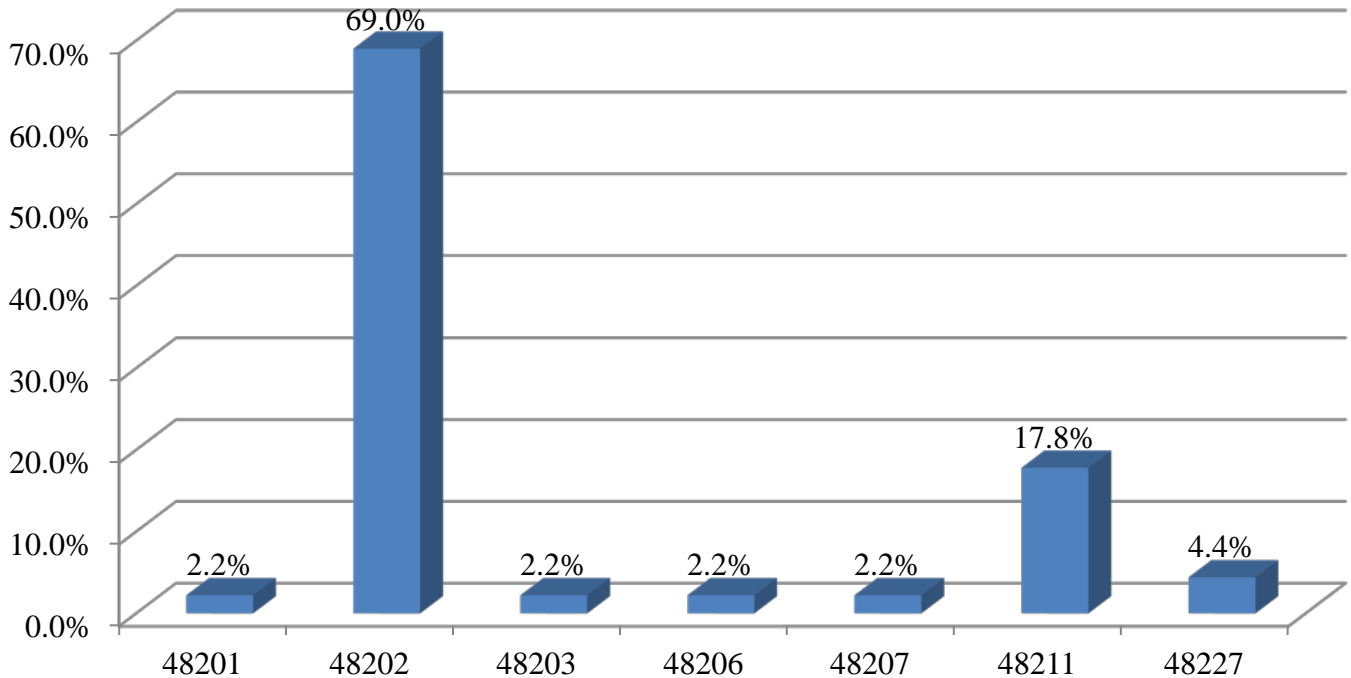
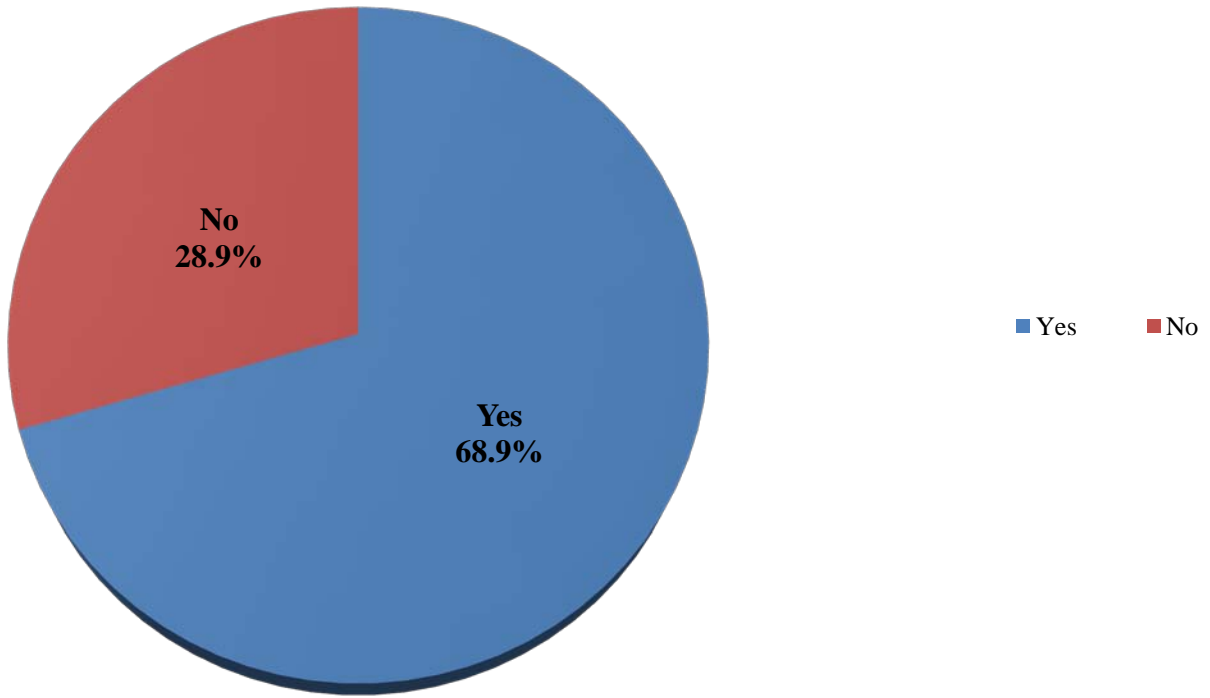


Figure 33: Have you worked for pay in the past?



Please note that 2.2% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 34: If YES, what type of work did you do before participating in the Summer Youth Employment Program? Check ALL that apply.

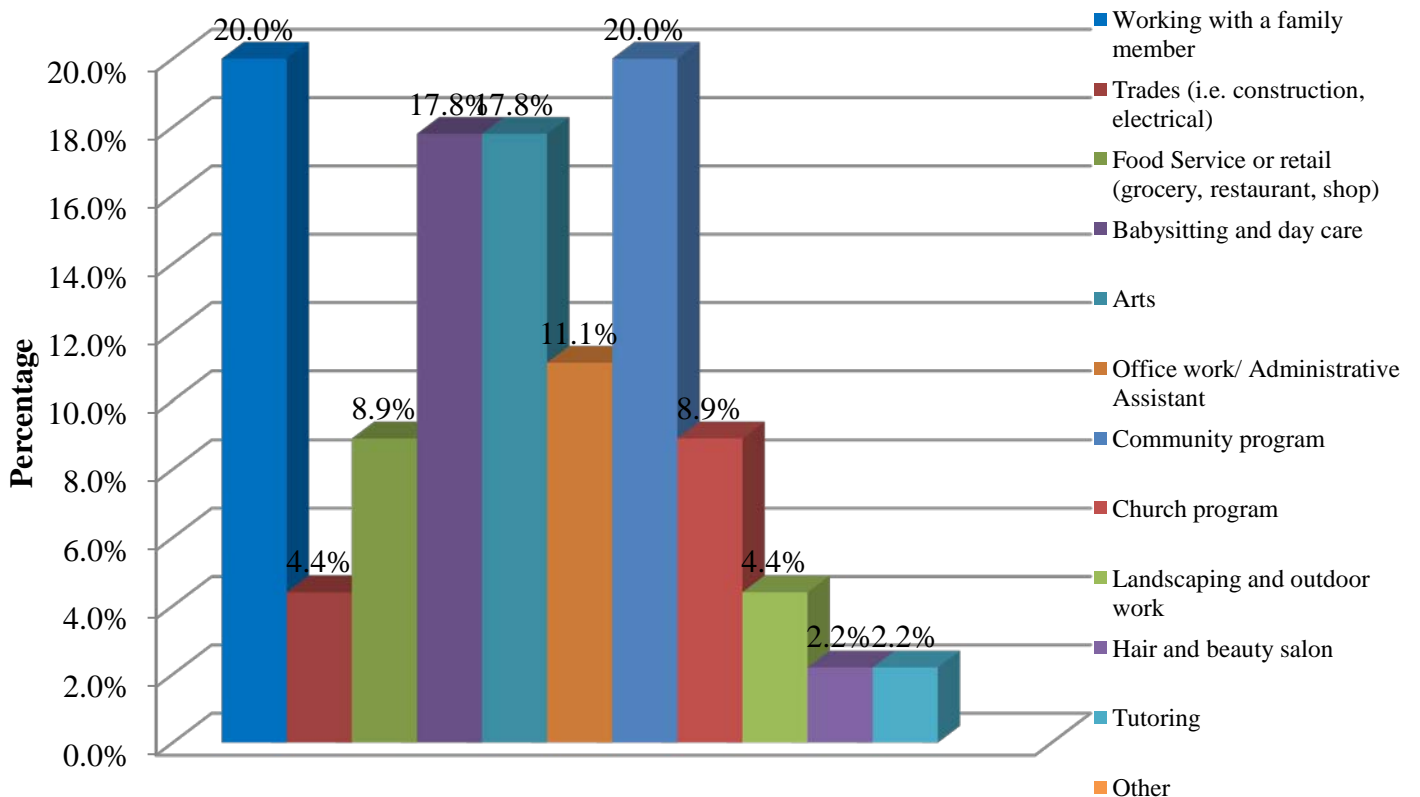
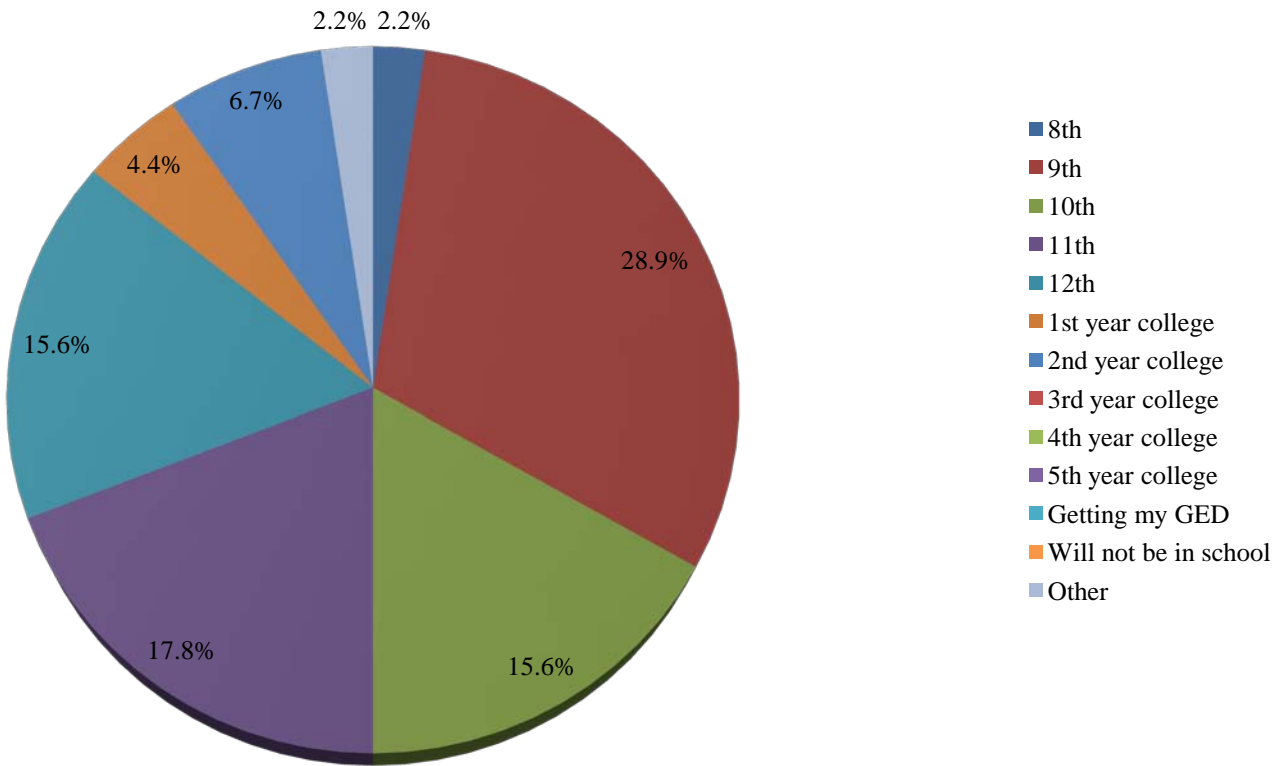
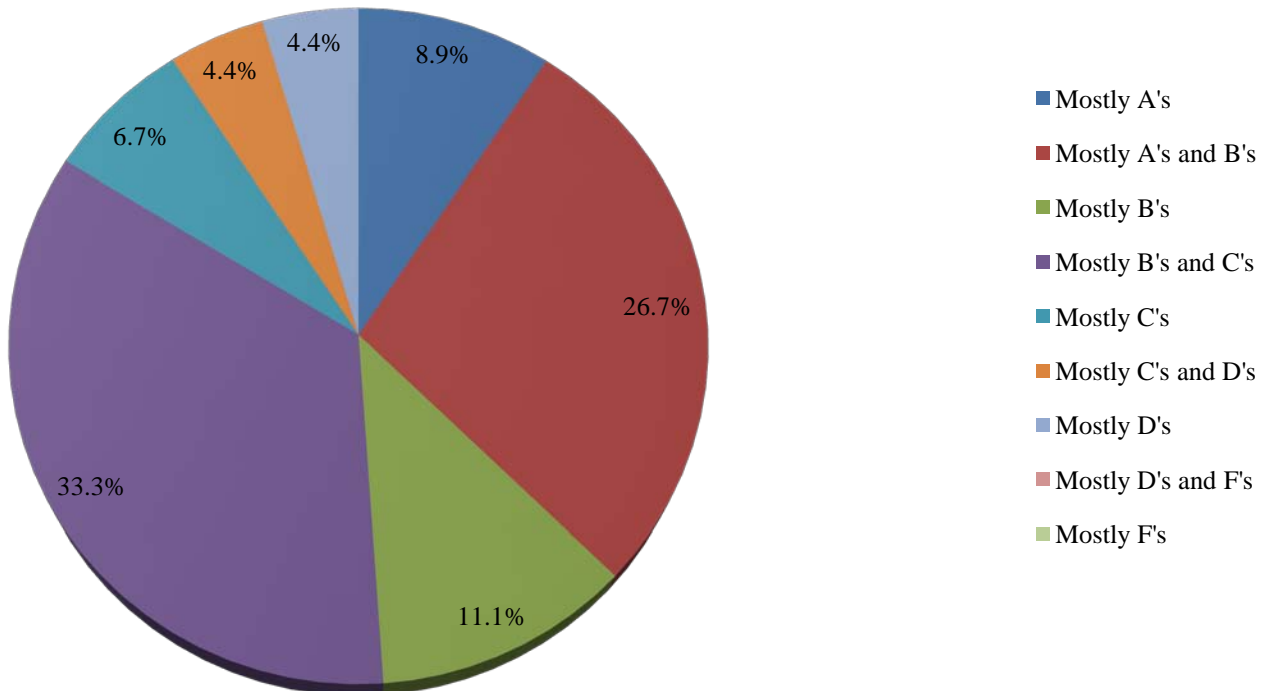


Figure 35: What grade will you be in at school in September 2011?



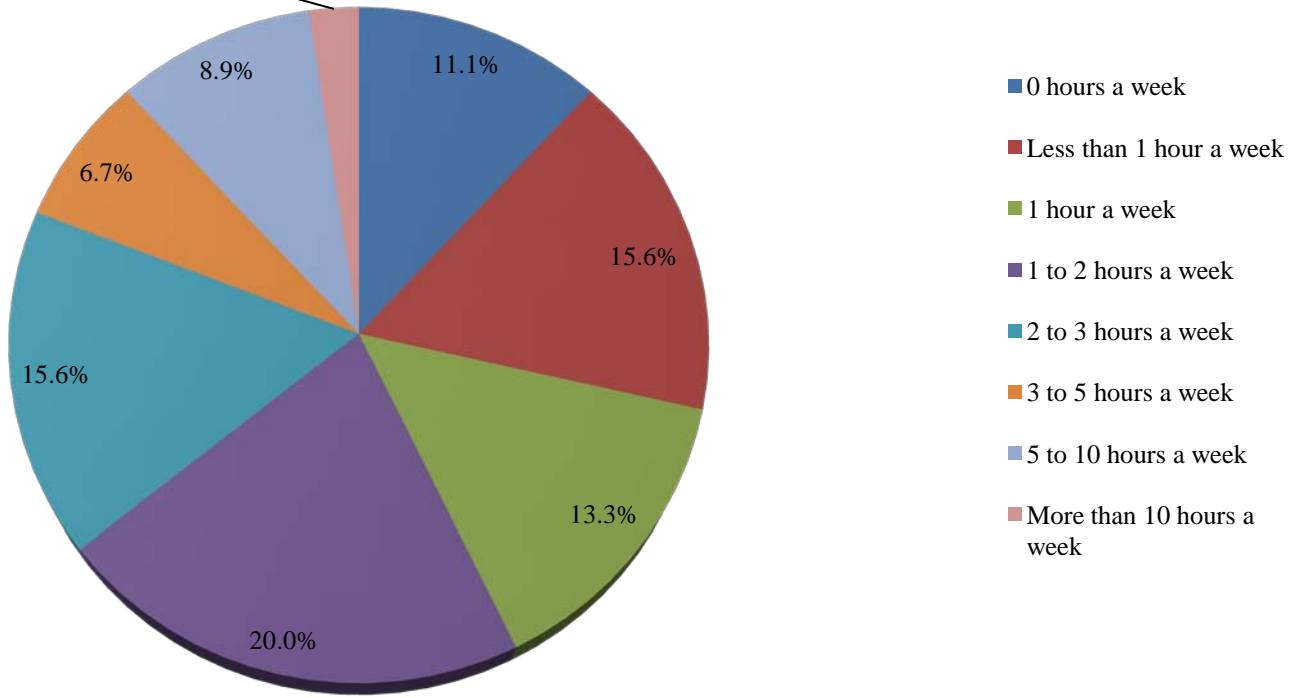
Please note that 6.7% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 36: What grades do/did you usually get in school?



Please note that 2.2% of respondents did not complete this item.

Figure 37: In one week, how much time do/did you USUALLY spend doing homework?



Please note that 6.7% of respondents did not complete this item.

Part 6. Your comments and suggestions

<p align="center">Table 2: What new skills have you learned this summer? How might these skills influence your future academic and employment goals? <i>40 out of 45 respondents completed this item, for a response rate of 89%. Themes developed from the responses are presented below with illustrative comments.</i></p>	
<p>Business/ Management Skills- 17.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization skills- it will help me be a better leader • Leadership skills • Skills to create a balanced program to display people's talent • Planning and organizing skills
<p>Child care-related skills- 2.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with children • I plan on working with children in the future
<p>Communication Skills- 20% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing skills • Public speaking • Communication skills- it will help me be a good spokesperson • The correct way to approach a guest and greet them-these skills will influence me to go after any job I want
<p>Computer skills- 17.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer skills • Working with computers • Working with social media • Learning how to do power points • Learning how to use photo shop • Working with Microsoft applications • Graphic design
<p>Money-related Skills- 5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing checks • Managing money- this skill will help me budget and save money in the future • Financial skills- it will help me in the work force
<p>Other Skills- 7.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience- it will help me get better jobs • I learned how to relax and have fun and enjoy what I was doing
<p>Social Skills- 22.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with others • Getting along with others
<p>Creative Arts/ Music- 12.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting • Art skills • Dj skills • Skills related to music

Table 3: Has participating in this summer employment program changed the ways you are involved in your neighborhood/community? If so, how?

35 out of 45 respondents completed this item, for a response rate of 77.8%. Themes developed from the responses are presented below with illustrative comments.

<p>No- 54.3% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was already active in my community • I am not ready to be a leader just yet • It didn't change the way I was involved
<p>Yes- 45.7% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to help people • I am more aware of the environment I live in • I want to be more responsible • Initially I did not like being around a lot people • I will communicate better • I want to better/beautify my neighborhood • I am more important to my neighborhood • It has taught me who to interact with in my community • It has gotten me more involved in the community

Table 4: In your opinion, what are the most important kinds of successes a person can have? What are some ways that students help one another to be successful?

37 out of 45 respondents completed this item, for a response rate of 82.2%. Themes developed from the responses are presented below with illustrative comments.

<p>Collective/Group Success- 48.6% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting each other • We can all be successful if we teach each other and help each other out • Interacting with others • Teamwork • Studying together and helping each other with homework • Listening to each other
<p>Financial Success- 13.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making money • Helping each other save money
<p>Mental Success- 2.7% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being mentally strong
<p>Other types of Success- 2.7% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success health wise
<p>Personal/Individual Success- 32.4% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having ambition • Being determined • Showing respect • Having great leadership • Having patience • Achieving your personal goals • Staying in school

Table 5: What are some ways that students hold one another back from being as successful as they could be?

37 out of 45 respondents completed this item, for a response rate of 82.2%. Themes developed from the responses are presented below with illustrative comments.

<p>Drugs/ Substance Abuse- 27% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs • Smoking • Drinking
<p>Horse Play- 13.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about each other • Joking in class • Playing around in school
<p>Other- 5.4% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letting people do what they want to do • Violence • Partying • Staying out late at night
<p>Peer pressure- 13.5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer pressure • Listening to others negative suggestions
<p>Teasing/ Bullying/ Fighting- 10.8% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being unfriendly • Teasing • Fighting • Bullying
<p>Unsupportive Behaviors/ Actions- 29.7% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jealousy • Discouraging one another • Being unsupportive of others • Putting others down • Disrupting others

Table 6: Share any additional comments you have about your job site or the summer employment program. *20 out of 45 respondents completed this item, for a response rate of 44.4%. Themes developed from the responses are presented below with illustrative comments.*

<p>I enjoyed the experiences- 50% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a good experience • It's cool • It was awesome • It was nice • It was the best job ever • It was fun
<p>I liked the people I worked with- 5% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a great experience and I liked the people I worked with in the program
<p>I would like to continue working with my job site or with my job site next year- 35% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a great program and I would love to do it again
<p>I liked meeting new people- 10% of respondents shared this type of comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was nice to be around/meet new people