

**EDC**

Education  
Development  
Center

# EVALUATING THE VERMONT EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Preliminary Findings

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# Data



## Interviews

- 15 individuals in policy-making, program leadership, and system-management positions



## Focus groups

- 5 Focus groups: Family child care providers, Center staff, Center directors, Children's Integrated Services (CIS), Afterschool directors and staff



## Surveys

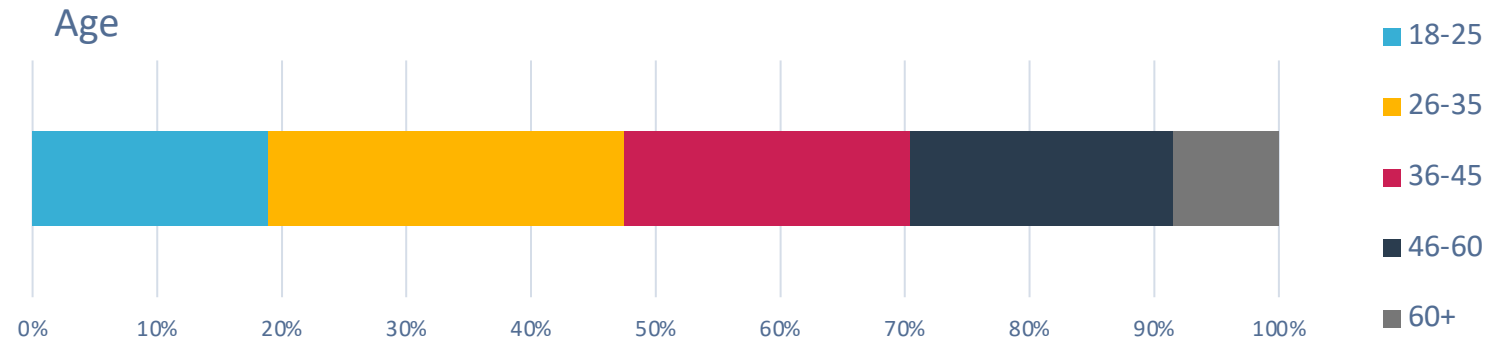
- 800 respondents representing:
- Regulated early childhood education programs
- Afterschool programs
- CIS programs



# Survey respondents were predominantly white females, though age and educational attainment varied.

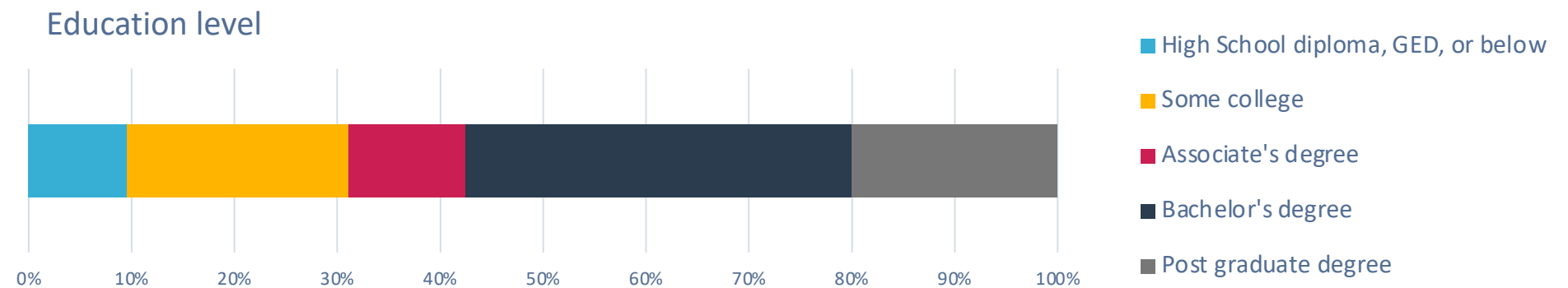
92%

White



92%

Female



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# EVOLVING POLICY LANDSCAPE



New systems and structures are well-intended, but present challenges to overcome.

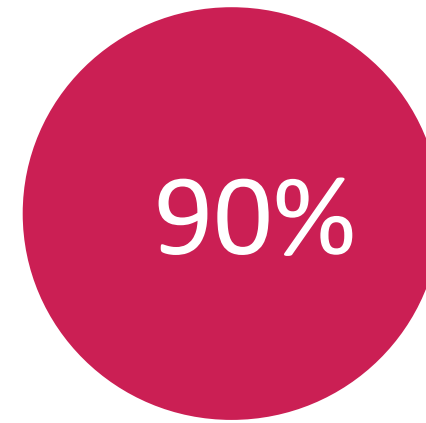
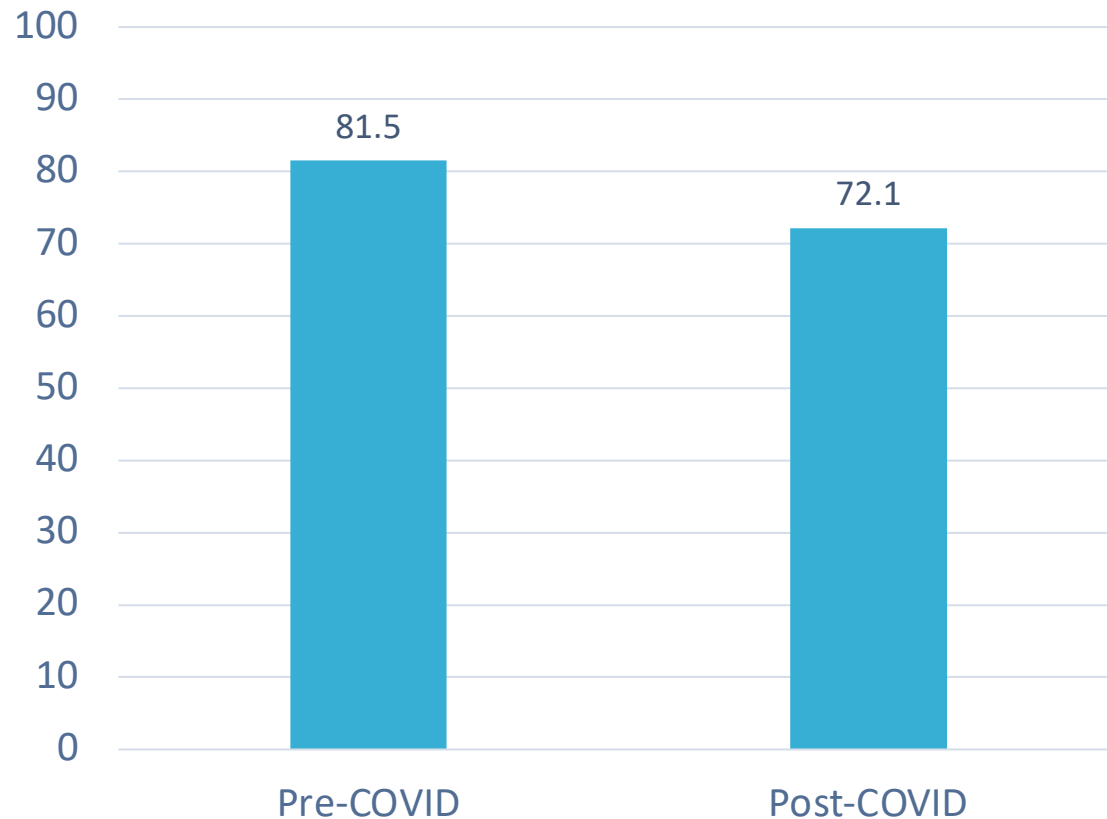
Early childhood educators understand that the 2016 change from the regional Resource Development Specialist agencies to the Northern Lights at CCV system improves equity of access for training and professional development support, but the slow onramp had left a vacuum for a year or more, particularly in some regions. Perceptions of this transition vary geographically. Things are heading in the right direction and are improved.

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# **OVERALL ENGAGEMENT WITH AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

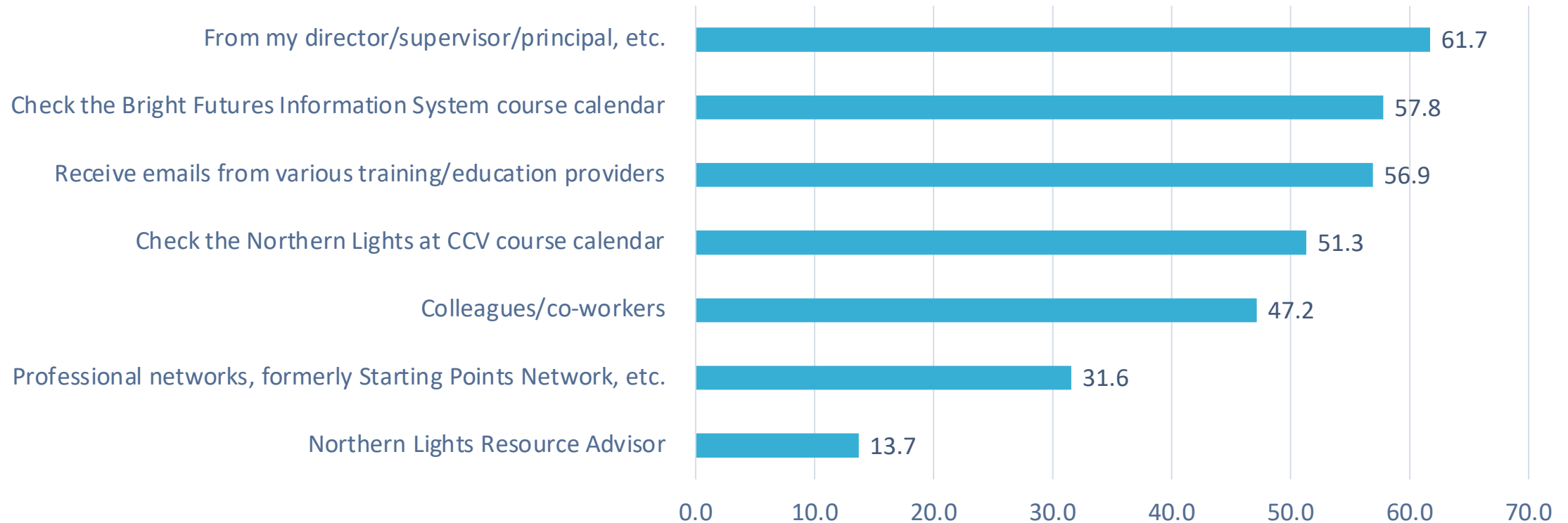


# The vast majority of respondents were satisfied with professional development opportunities, though satisfaction decreased somewhat with COVID.

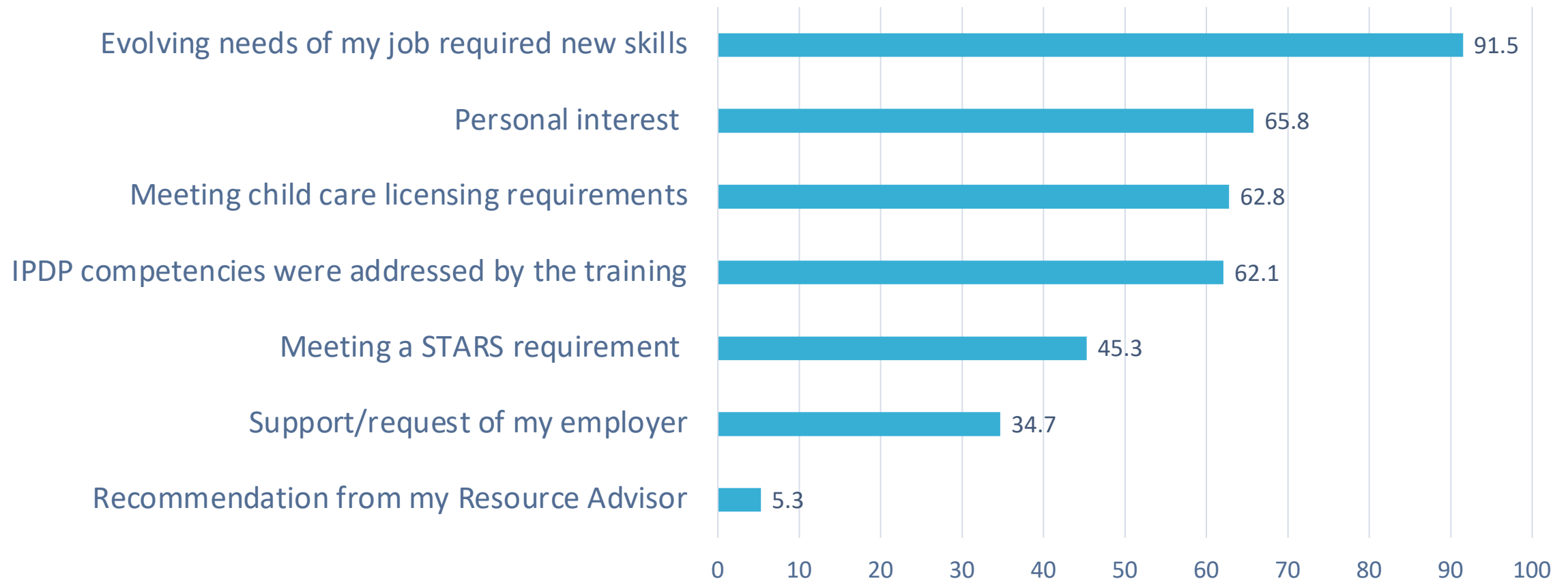


Agree or strongly agree that  
“professional development  
has changed my practice”

# More than half of respondents found out about professional development from BFIS and/or Northern Lights calendars; Northern Lights Resource Advisors have been underutilized.

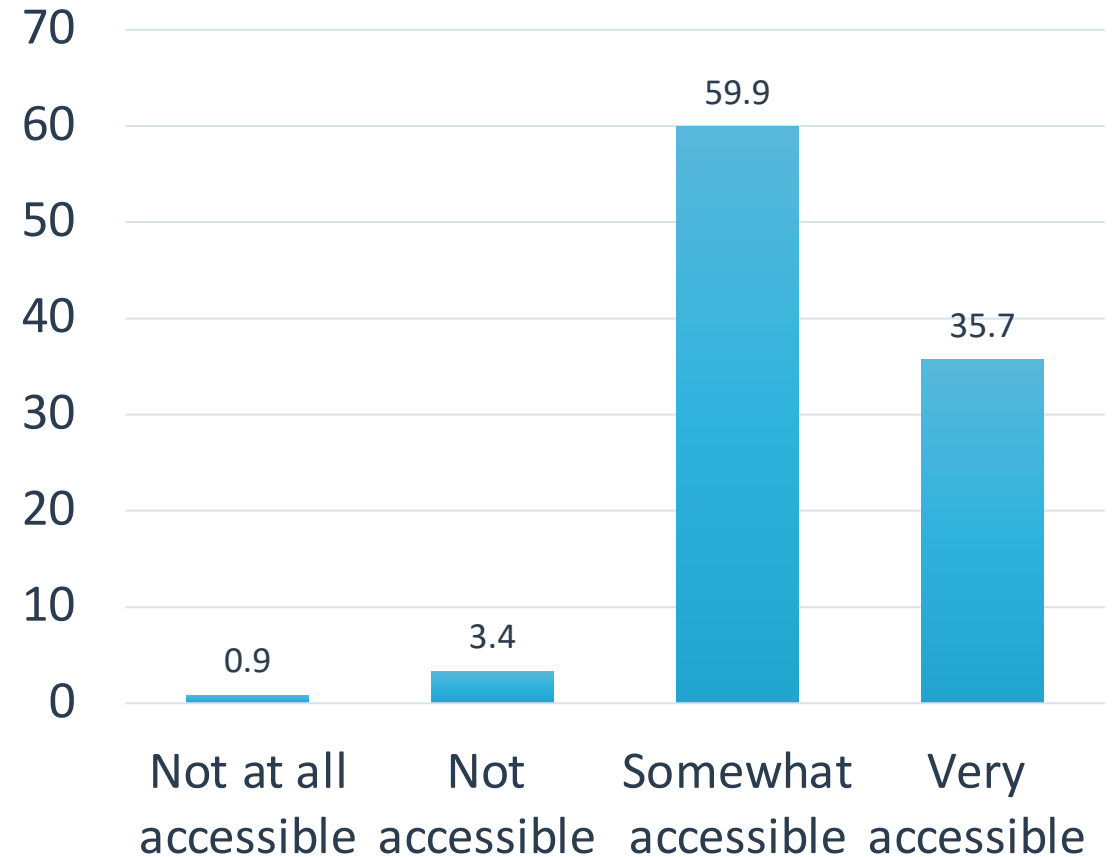


# Nearly all respondents enrolled in trainings based on the evolving needs of their jobs.



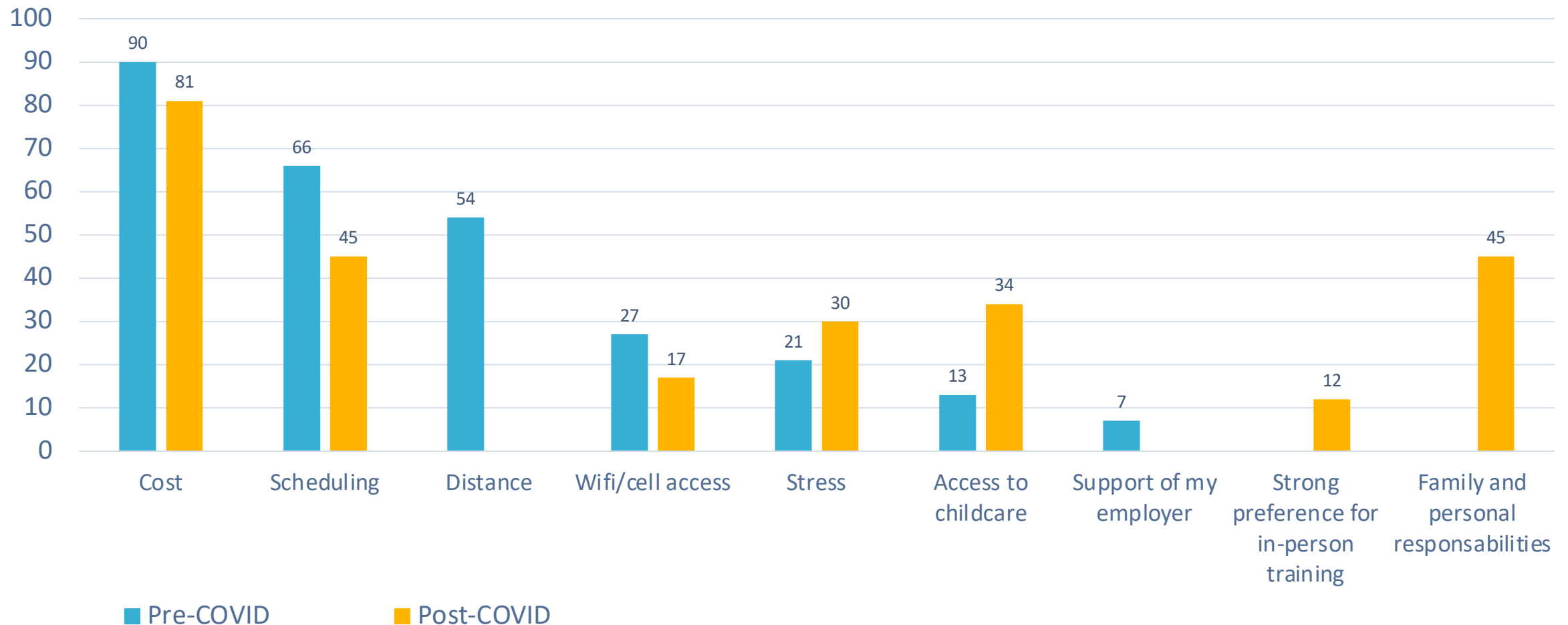
# Most respondents reported that professional development was accessible

- *...in terms of location, cost, time of day, time of year, and delivery method (in-person, Online Anytime, Online Real-Time), professional development offerings are:*
- **No differences across role groups** in perceived level of accessibility.
- **Some regional variation:** Middlebury and St. Johnsbury perceive less accessibility.





# Cost is the highest barrier to accessing professional development, even post-COVID.



# Qualitative insights

- More experienced teachers have a more difficult time accessing PD offerings that they perceive to be at their level (focus groups and interviews).
  - According to surveys, this isn't because they aren't looking.
- Though inclined to seek trainings elsewhere (online, conferences), they perceive challenges in having those trainings count towards licensing requirements.
- Family child care providers have a difficult time accessing trainings.
  - Increased access to online trainings has been a silver-lining of COVID



## Which trainings have been unavailable to you?

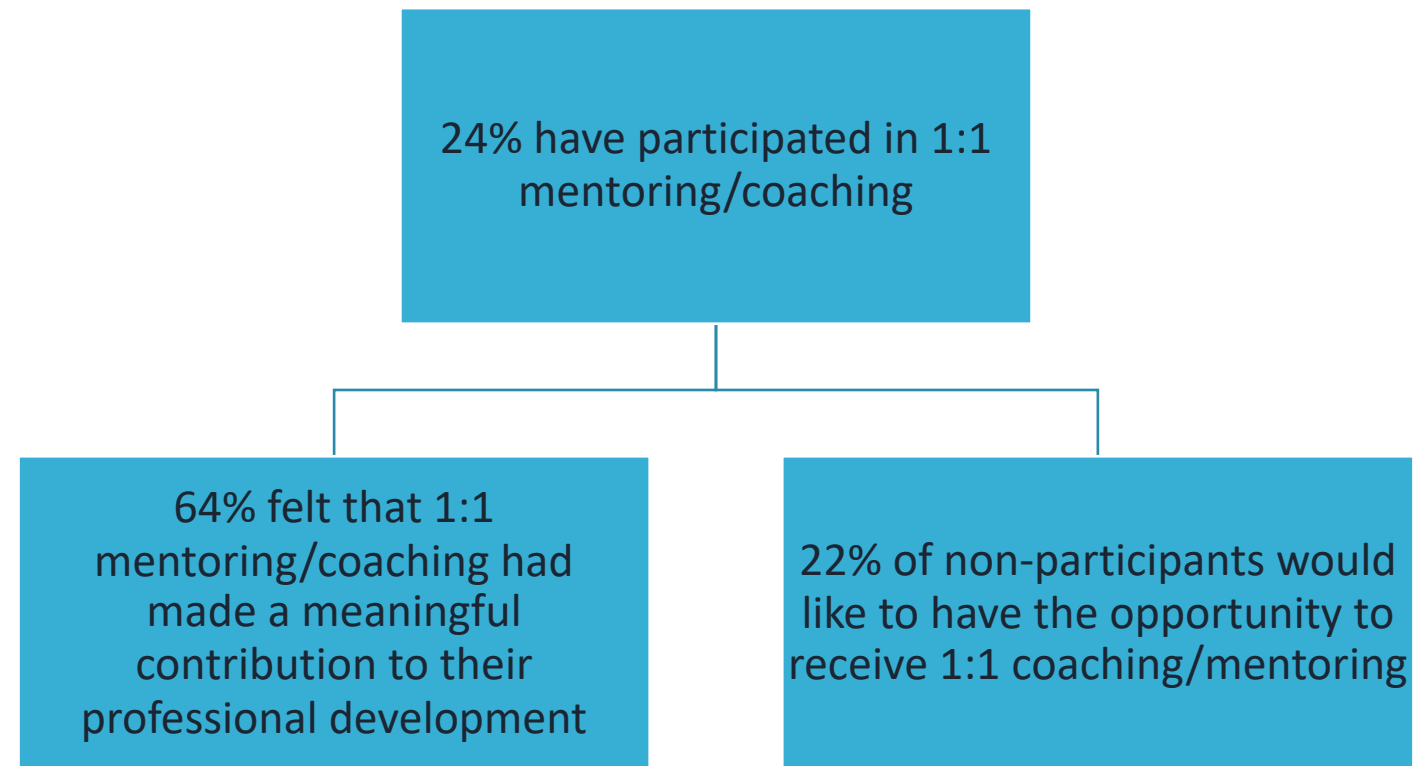
- Entry-level trainings were more frequently identified by survey respondents as being unavailable.
- Few respondents found Social-Emotional and Trauma-related trainings to be unavailable

|   | %    |
|---|------|
| Medication Administration   | 28.9 |
| Basic Specialized Care  | 27.9 |
| Emergency Preparedness  | 25.2 |
| Strengthening Families and Youth Thrive Trainings                                     | 23.1 |
| First Aid and CPR   | 19.3 |
| Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals  | 16.3 |
| Social-Emotional Development and Learning trainings                                   | 4.8  |
| Trauma Informed Practice trainings [including focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences] | 4.6  |

# Mentoring and coaching has positively impacted those who have participated, but non-participants may need help understanding its value.

- Research shows that job-embedded supports—such as apprenticeships, mentoring, and coaching—can improve PD access by integrating PD into daily practice and on-the-job training.

On the job training with mentoring was ranked among the top 3 training formats





# The availability of online trainings has improved access to professional development.

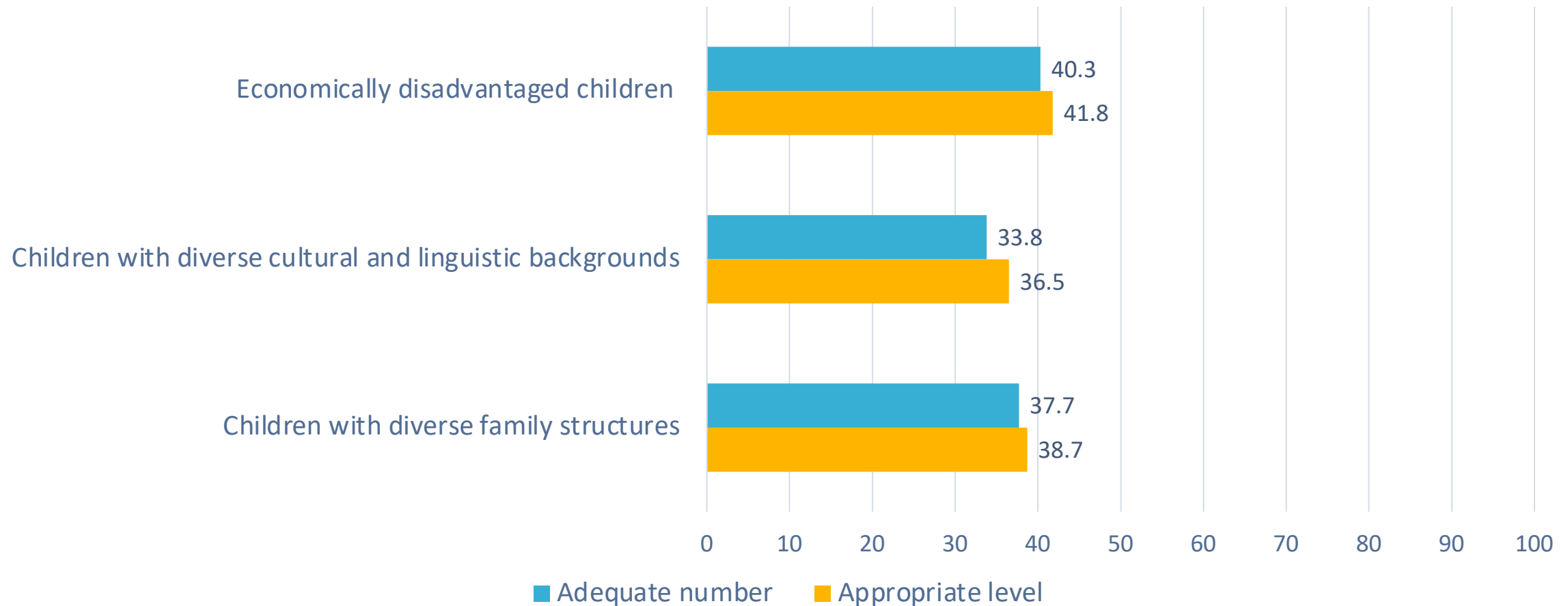
81%

Hope that the availability of Online Real-Time training opportunities will continue after the COVID-19 pandemic

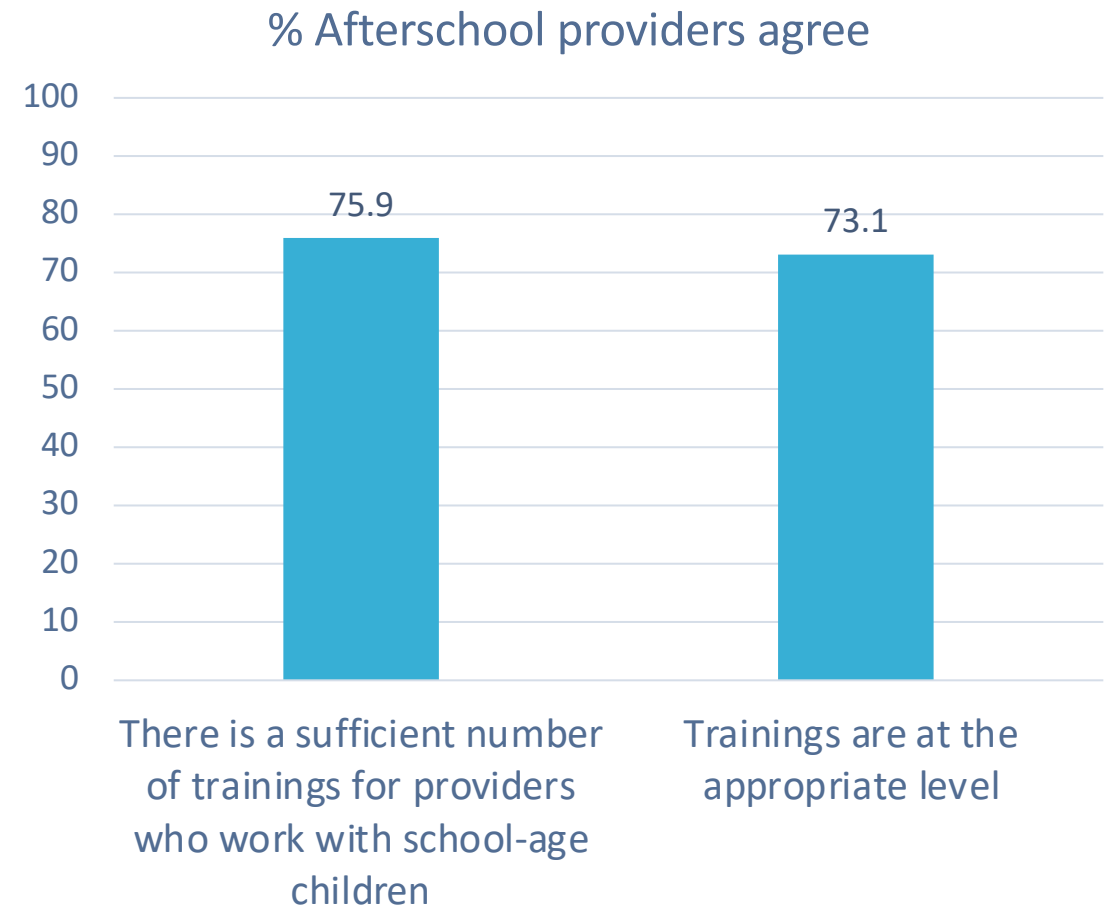


Providers were enthusiastic about the diversity of opportunities and access that online trainings provided without the challenges of travel.

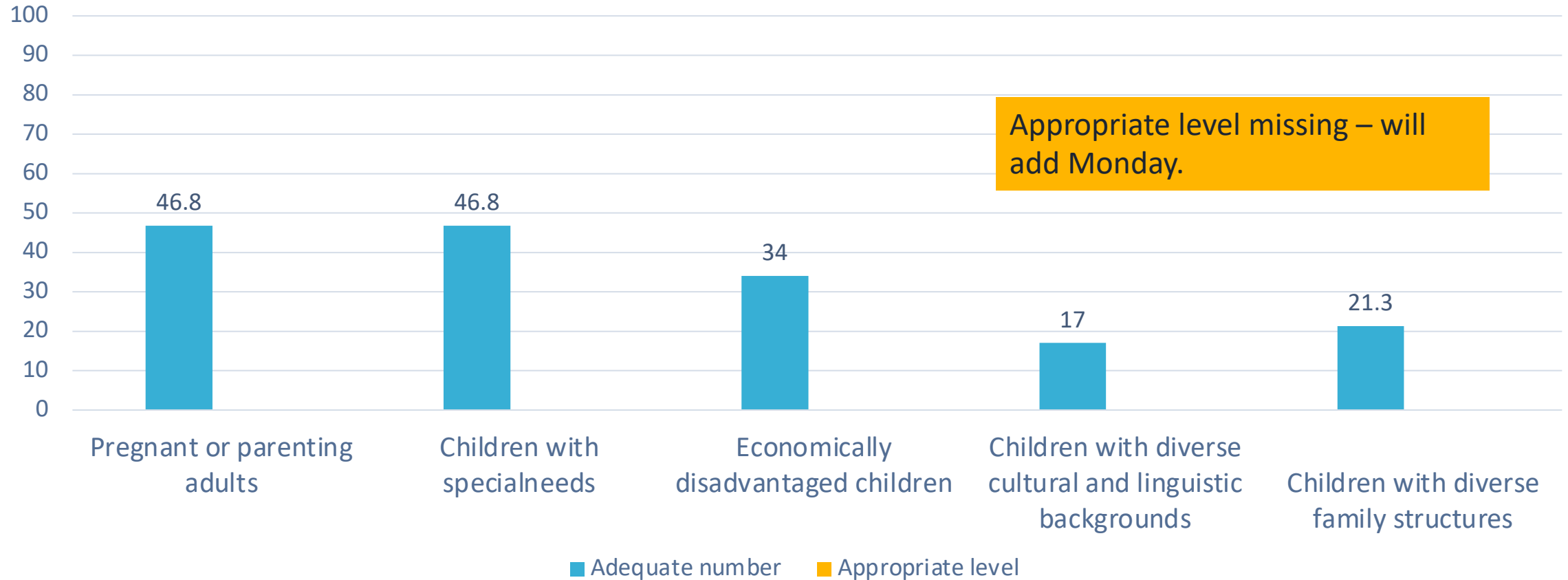
# Less than half of respondents agree that there is adequate training on topics related to equity, diversity, and inclusion



# Afterschool providers agree that there is sufficient training for providers who work with school-age children



# CIS providers report being less satisfied with the professional development opportunities available to them.





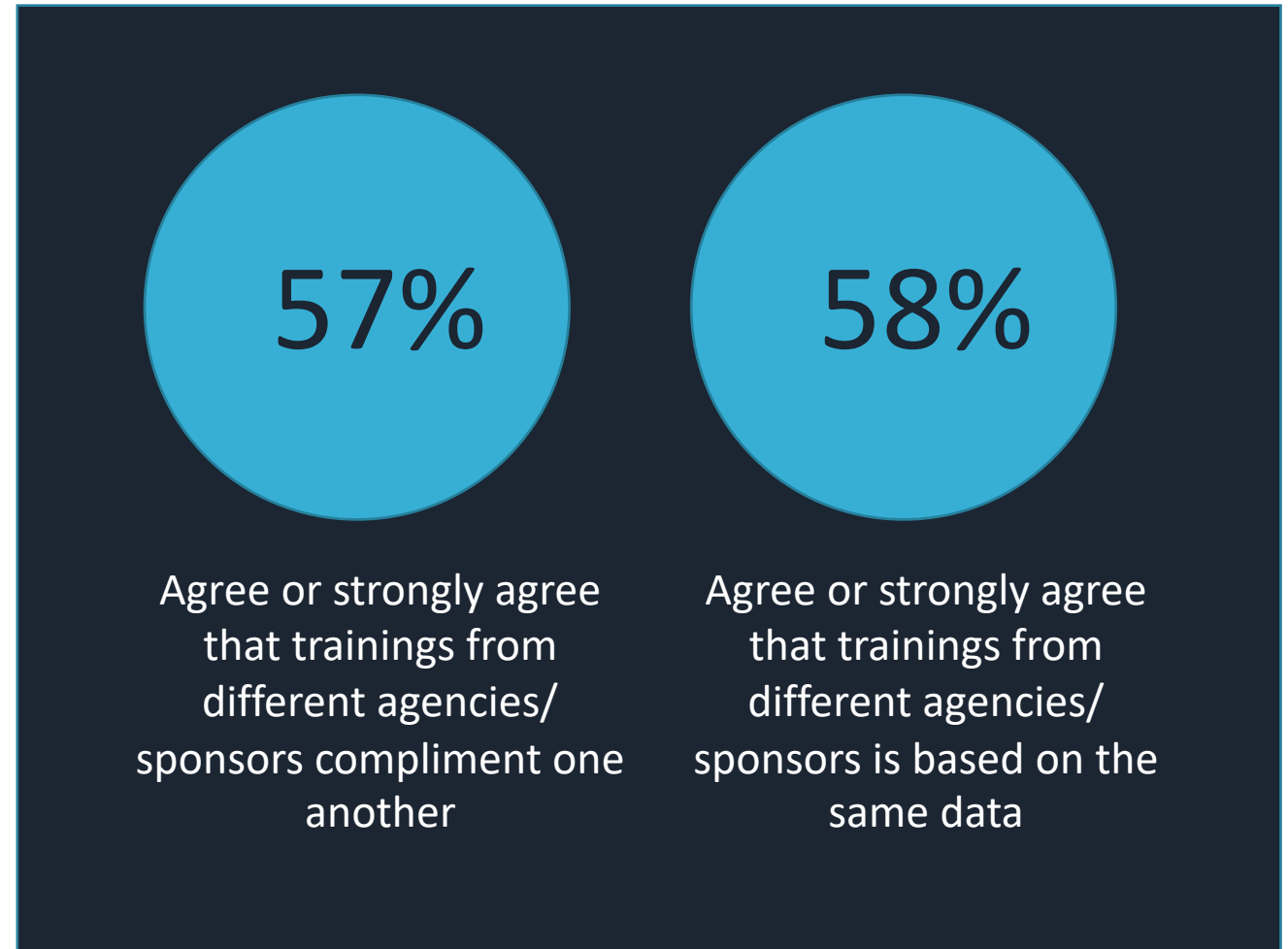
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# SYSTEM ALIGNMENT AND COORDINATION

# Most perceive alignment in the ECPDS.

The research says:

- Alignment of PD goals and resources across sectors can help to eliminate duplicate offerings and promote efficient use of PD funding.
- Ensure content and skills taught in PD courses align with the state's core knowledge and competencies for EC educators.



# More integration/cross-agency collaboration between CDD/AOE would benefit the workforce.

Align PD systems to position a career in ECE as a steppingstone to a teaching licensure.  
E.g.: enable data sharing across sectors

Identify roles with common PD needs across agencies: ECE educators with Bachelor's degrees +, CIS providers, paraprofessionals

Respond to agency needs and structures: build connections with local schools and districts; align ECPDS trainings with VELs.

Remain attentive to barriers: cost

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

# 2011 report advocated “Branding” and centralizing the ECPDS

Widespread use of Northern Lights and BFIS calendars, and improved infrastructure for tagging trainings by topic suggest that significant progress has been made.

Continue to expand virtual training options to maximize accessibility.

Broaden the range of what “counts” towards licensure.

# Continue to seek opportunities to reduce costs for participants

Widely publicize grant opportunities and T.E.A.C.H. and Child Care Apprenticeship programs.



# Next steps

- Full report by the end of December (will be posted on the CDD website),
- PPD Committee to review recommendations and integrate new work into workplan







# Questions?

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# THANK YOU

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