

An Education and Support Program For Families of Students with Disabilities



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Introduction

- The Center on Secondary Education of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (CSESA) is a school-and community-based education model for high school students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD)
- High schools get training and coaching for transition programs for students with ASD
- Transitioning Together* is an eight-week education and support program for families of teens with ASD. The groups aim to:
 - reduce stress for families
 - improve how families cope with transition
 - help youth transitioning out of high school.
 The present study led a version of the program designed for use in a high school setting for students with a wide range disabilities, including ASD

Method

Participants. Families of high school students with disabilities, as well as teachers, participated. Data collected from:

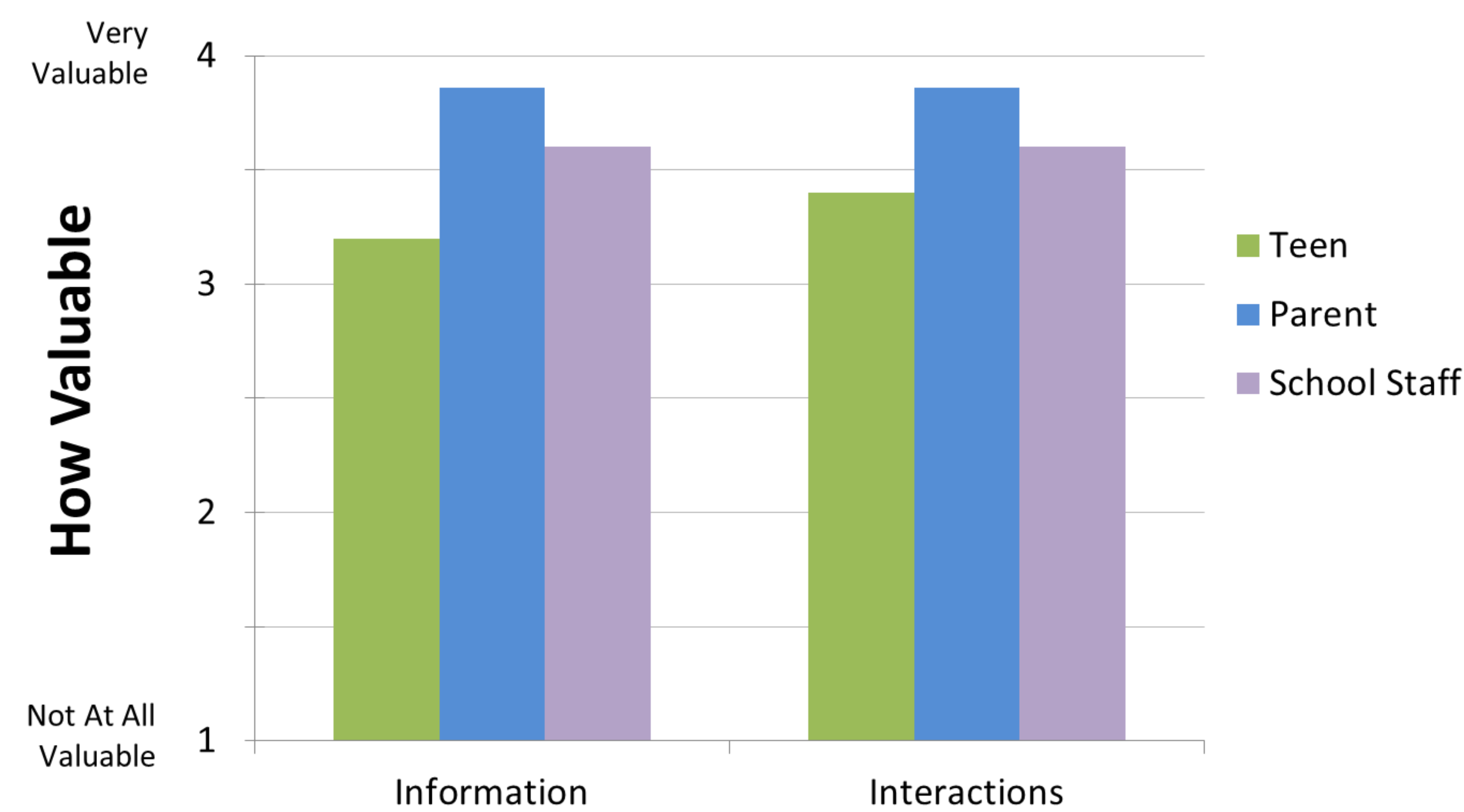
- 5 teens (12-18 years of age)
- 8 parents
- 6 teachers

Procedure. Participants attended:

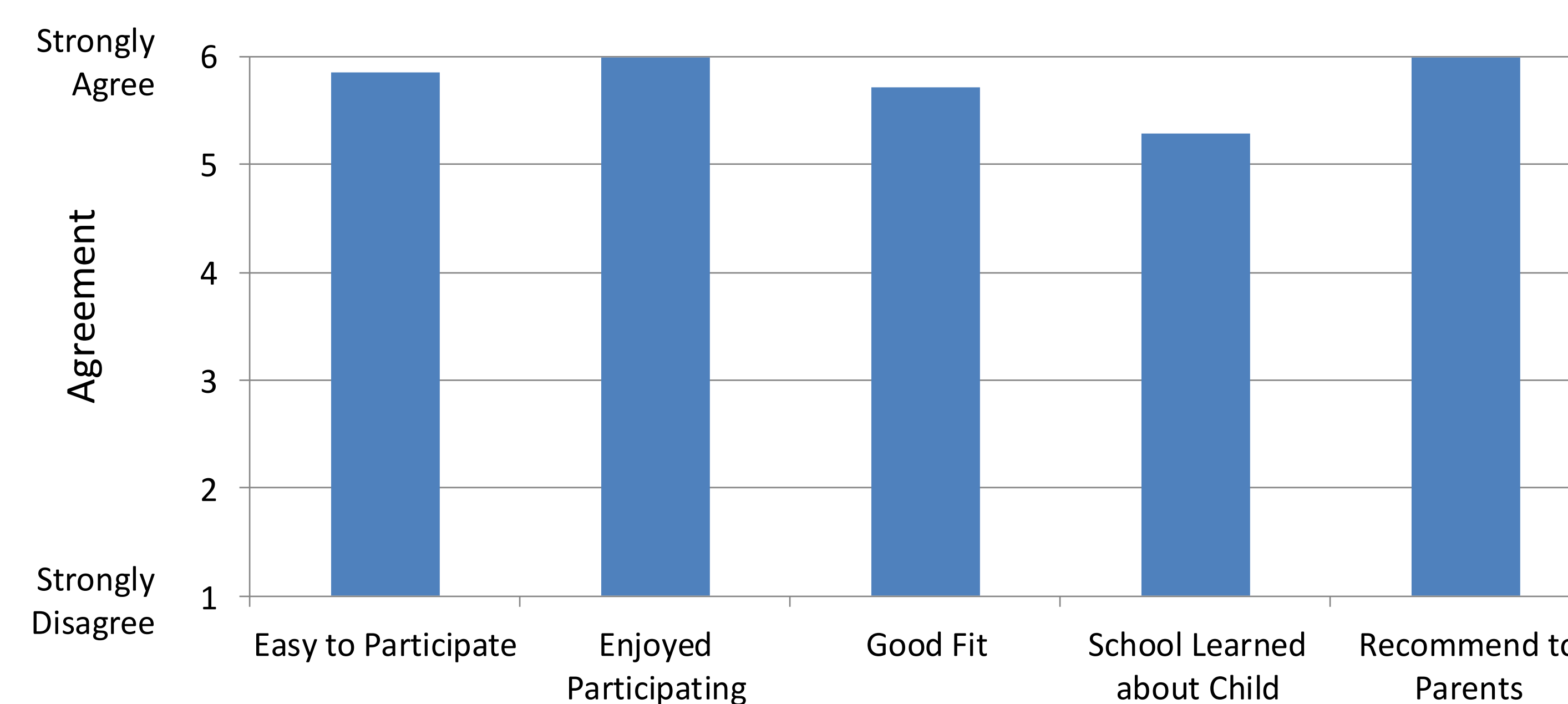
- Joining sessions, to talk about family goals related to transition (parents and teens only).
- 8 weekly parent group sessions
 - Information on employment and college planning
 - Problem solving
 - Community involvement
 - Legal Issues
 - Health and well-being
- 8 weekly teen group sessions, social skills and goal setting
- Exit Interviews (all)

Results

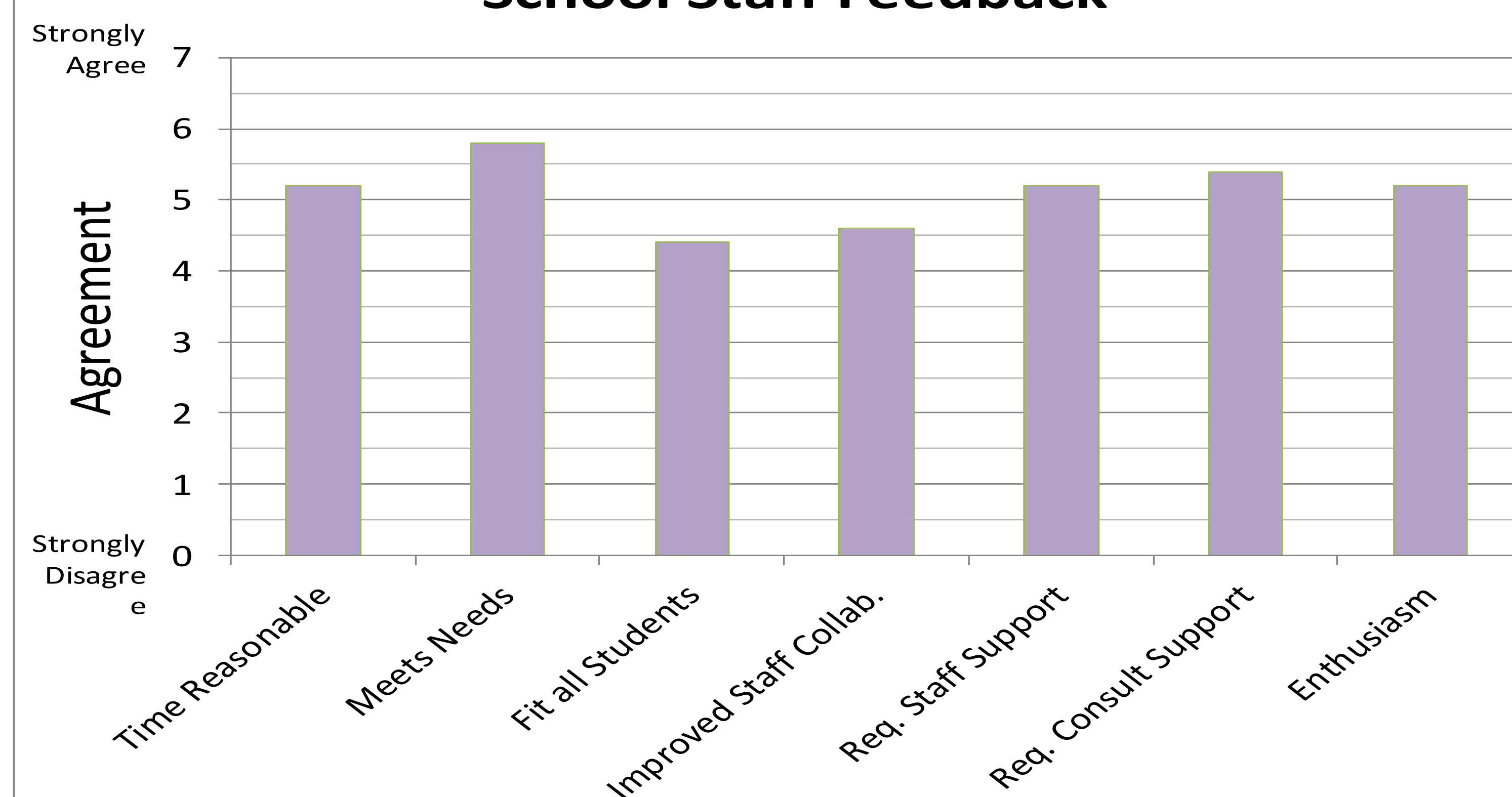
Program Evaluation Questions



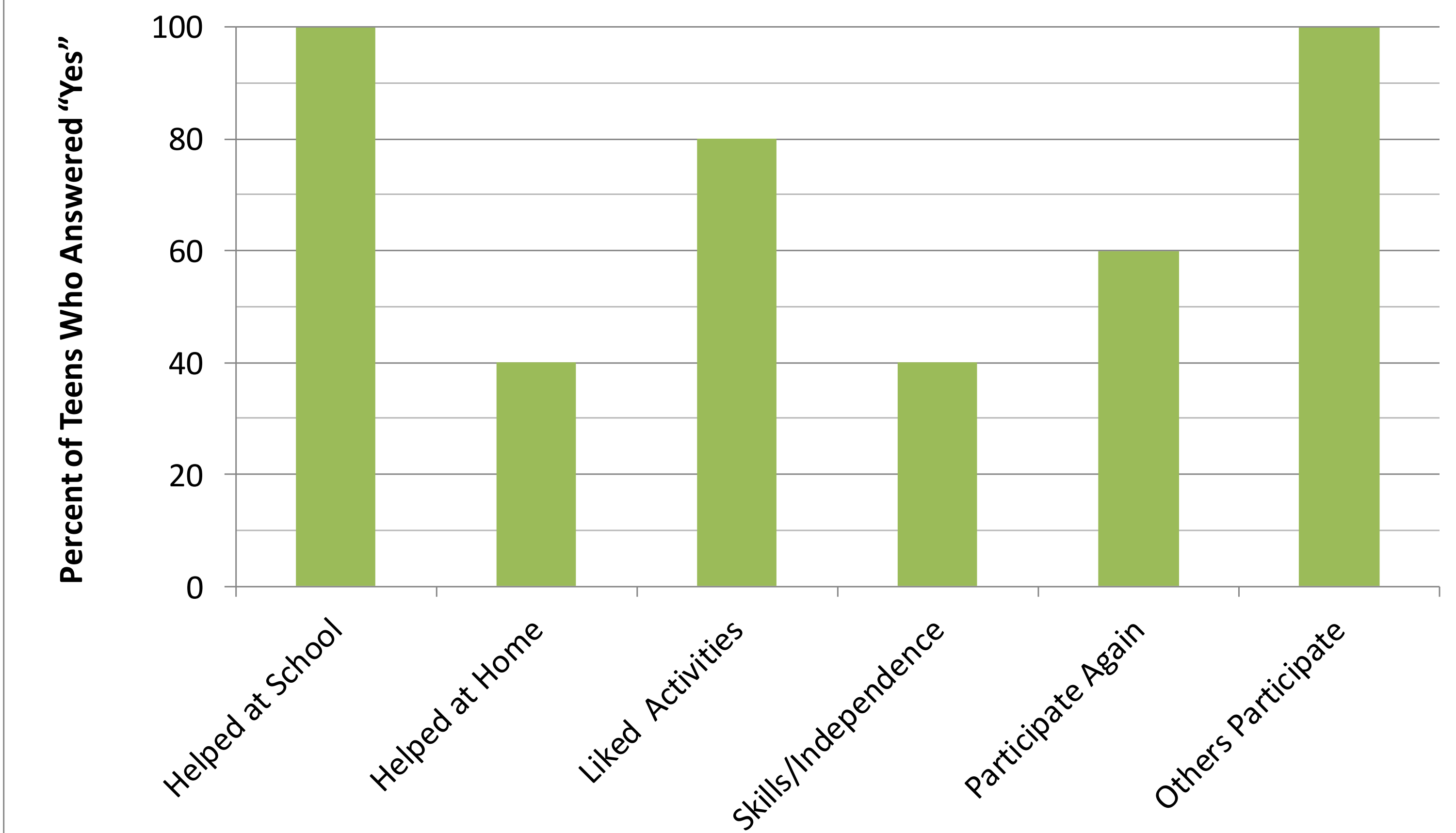
Parent Feedback



School Staff Feedback



Teen Feedback

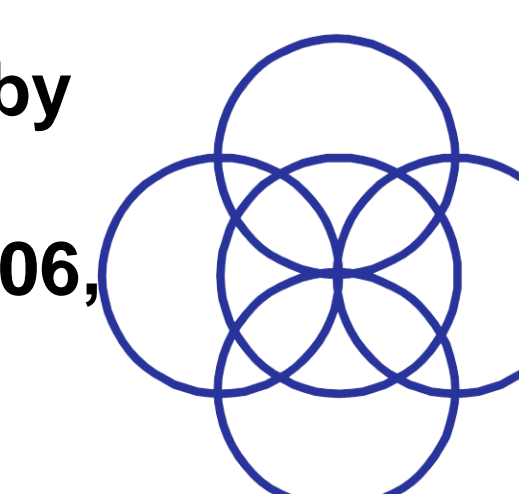


Conclusions

Overall, teens, parents, and school staff found the *Transitioning Together* program valuable, both in terms of the information provided during meetings and the chance to interact with other families. These data show that the program provides important social and informational supports that increase existing community resources.

- Parents expressed support for the program:
 - Easy to take part in, enjoyable
 - Fitting for their families
 - 100% would recommend TT to other parents.
- School staff reported that:
 - Group met needs of families and students
 - Time required to run group = reasonable in school setting
 - Would need support to implement *Transitioning Together* at their school
- Teens feedback:
 - Helpful in school
 - 100% would recommend to other teens.
 - Future group topics could target more activities to foster independence

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