

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY EDUCATION PROGRAM (PREP) EVALUATION REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The State Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) is managed by the Family & Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) in an effort to educate youth on contraception and abstinence for pregnancy prevention and preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In addition, PREP program curricula may also cover healthy relationships, adolescent development, financial literacy, parental communication, education and/or career success and healthy life skills. PREP programming targets at risk youth ages 10-19 who might be in foster care, experiencing homelessness, pregnant or parenting, come from racial or ethnic minority groups or live in rural areas or areas with high teen birth rates. FYSB awards grants to state agencies and organizations to execute evidence-based program models or incorporate elements of programs that have been proven on the basis of rigorous scientific research to change behavior, which means delaying sexual activity, increasing the use of contraceptives for sexually active youth, or reducing pregnancy among youth. Participating states may choose from a list of 37 evidence-based programs selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or other models that meet the requirement of being rigorously evaluated. In Iowa, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is the administrator of the PREP funding. Community-based organizations or agencies across Iowa are able to apply for funding through a competitive grant process. IDPH then awards contracts to selected organizations based on need and capacity to deliver programming. The IDPH currently offers grantees to choose between the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) curricula and Wise Guys curricula.

COVID-19

Many organizations facilitate lessons to youth during or after school hours, or within the facility they are staying in. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many facilitators stopped seeing youth in March due to school being cancelled, or not being allowed into a facility. The 28 cohorts in session were impacted by this change. Out of nine facilitators, six of them attempted to contact students with materials from the programming but were unable to track engagement. One major effect of this was that many facilitators were not able to complete exit surveys with the youth. Facilitators were given the option to send online exit surveys to students and five facilitators did so. Overall, only 14 online exit surveys and 12 paper surveys were completed for spring, meaning that exit surveys did not capture a majority of youth that attended programming.

TOP

The Teen Outreach Program® (TOP) uses a combination of group discussion and community service learning to promote positive development of youth aged 12-18 years. Topics covered in this curriculum include healthy relationships, communication and assertiveness, goal setting, critical thinking and external influences, decision making and personal reflection, values clarification to explore their own values, health, wellness, and self-understanding, and community service learning. A unique aspect of TOP is the community service learning (CSL) component, in which youth actively participate in meaningful service and practice skills they are learning. A meaningful CSL experience is one in which a teen feels an emotional connection with his/her efforts and feels like his/her actions truly make a difference. Through meaningful CSL, youth have an opportunity to see and feel a difference they made in their communities, increase their self-efficacy (self-confidence), and reflect on their experiences and apply their learned-knowledge with future projects and as they transition through adolescence. For the community service-learning component, participating youth are required to complete 20 hours of service over the 9 month implementation period. Community projects are subject to the community in which they are implemented in. Youth have a choice in selecting the service projects. In the past, projects have included making toys for animal shelters, organizing community events, or planting trees in the community.

Wise Guys

Wise Guys® is a pregnancy prevention program that promotes responsibility and educates males 11-17 years old on the necessity of making informed decisions. The program curriculum topics include but are not limited to education of sexually transmitted infections, parenthood, goal setting, and dating violence. Additionally, the Wise Guys program aims to improve communication with parents, educators, peers, and others.

METHODS

Entrance and Exit Surveys with PREP Participants

As part of a larger evaluation of PREP programming in the state of Iowa, the University of Iowa analyzed entrance and exit surveys completed by PREP participants. Entrance surveys collected demographic information. Exit surveys collected demographic information and asked youth to assess the program through various questions. All PREP participants who completed the entrance and exit survey were included in the data below. Summary statistics were produced for all the data.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Program Attendance

All programs were completed within the report period of August 1, 2019 and July 31, 2020. There was a total of 10 different facilitating organizations and 29 different cohorts. Between 3 and 23 program hours were delivered per cohort for an average of 11.5 hours. A total of 919 participants attended at least one program sessions. There were 859 participants that attended sessions in school during school hours, 34 attended sessions in school after school hours, and 26 attended sessions in another setting. Of all the youth who attended a session, 319 youth completed 75% of the scheduled program hours. Due to COVID-19, 28 of the 29 cohorts had to end earlier than expected.

Participant Entrance Survey

The PREP Participant Entrance Survey was completed by 746 participants. The participants included 515 males and 226 females while 5 participants did not respond to the gender question. Ages of participants ranged from 11 to 21+ years of age with an average age of 13.9 years. Figure 1 displays the grade distribution of the participants. Figure 2 communicates participants identified ethnicity while Figure 3 depicts participants responses to the question regarding their identified race. Of the 746 entrance survey responses, nine participants did not provide a response to the question regarding their identified ethnicity and 120 participants of which did not provide a response to the question regarding their identified race. There were 665 participants that marked “none of the above” for their residence and are not shown in Figure 4.

Figure 1. PREP Participants Entrance Survey by Grade

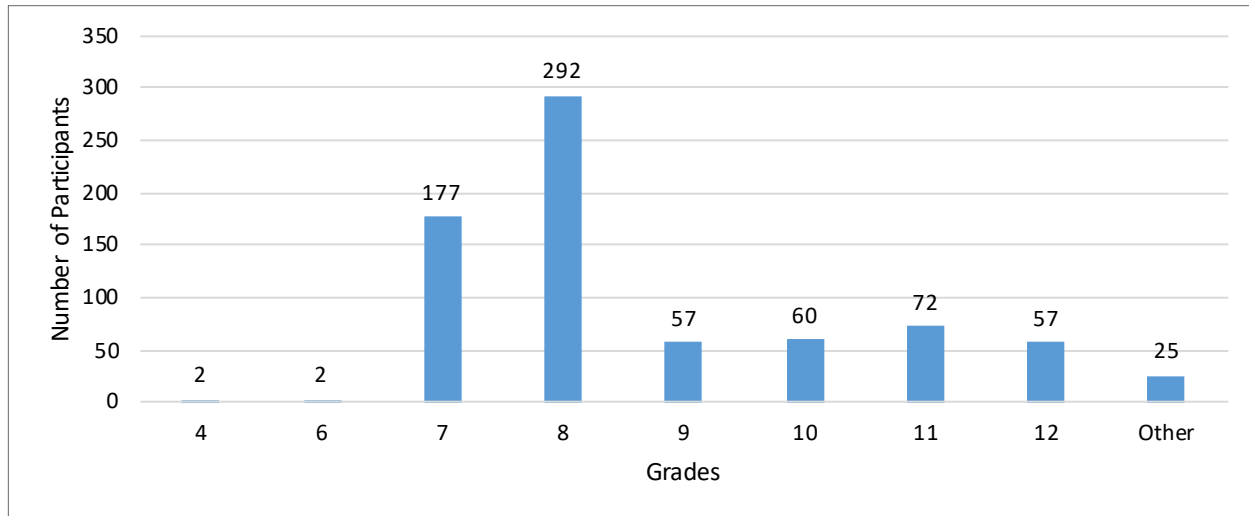


Figure 2. PREP Participants Entrance Survey by Ethnicity

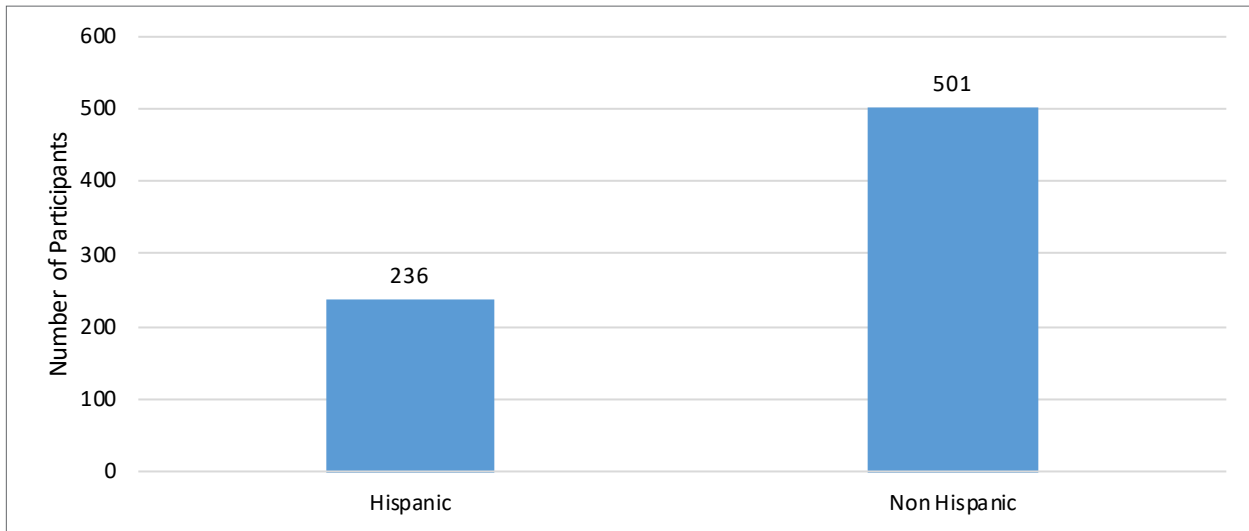


Figure 3. PREP Participants Entrance Survey by Race

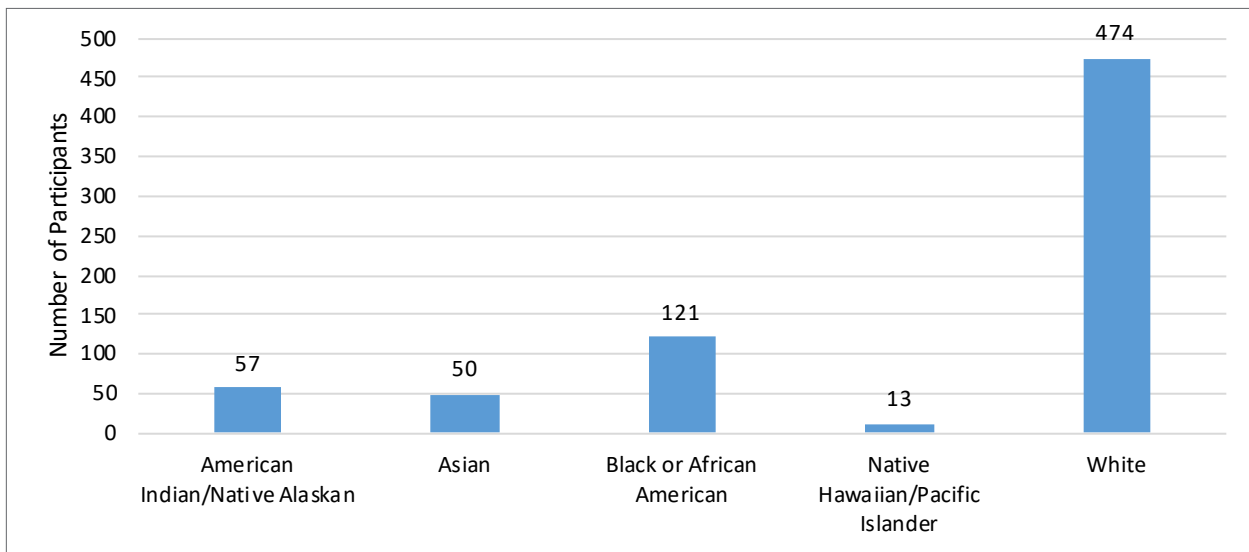
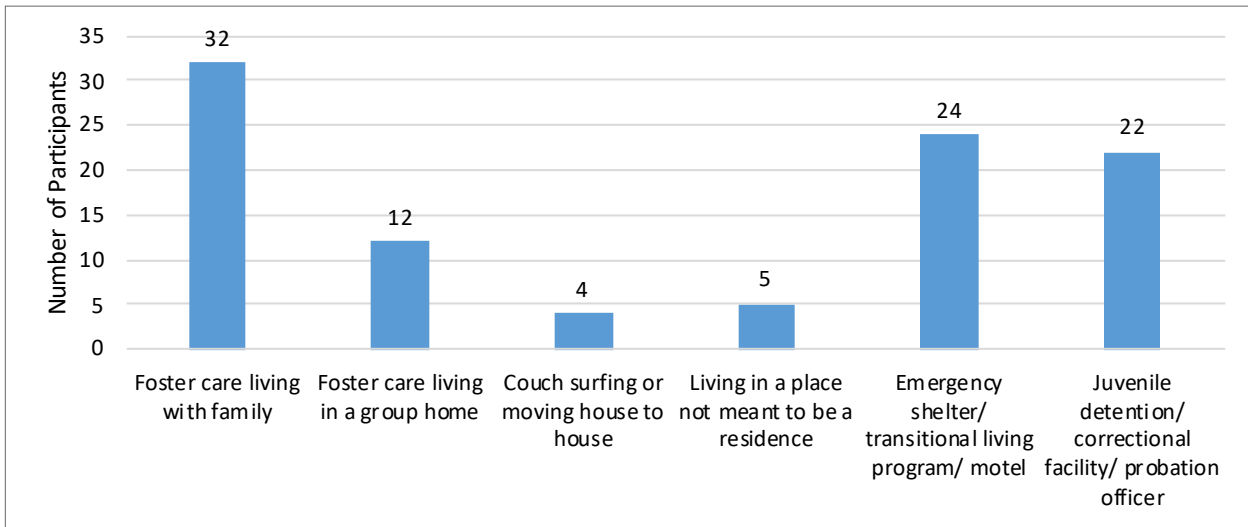


Figure 4. PREP Participants Entrance Survey by Residence



Participant Exit Survey

The PREP Participant Exit Survey was completed by 123 participants. Of the participants, 97 identified as male and 26 identified as female. Participants’ ages ranged from 12 to 19 years of age with an average age of 14.9 years. Figure 5 displays the grade distribution of the participants. Figure 6 communicates participants identified ethnicity while Figure 7 depicts participants’ responses to the question regarding their identified race. Figure 8 shows participants’ response to a question about their residence. There were 95 participants that marked “none of the above” for their residence and are not shown in Figure 8.

Figure 5. PREP Participants Exit Survey by Grade

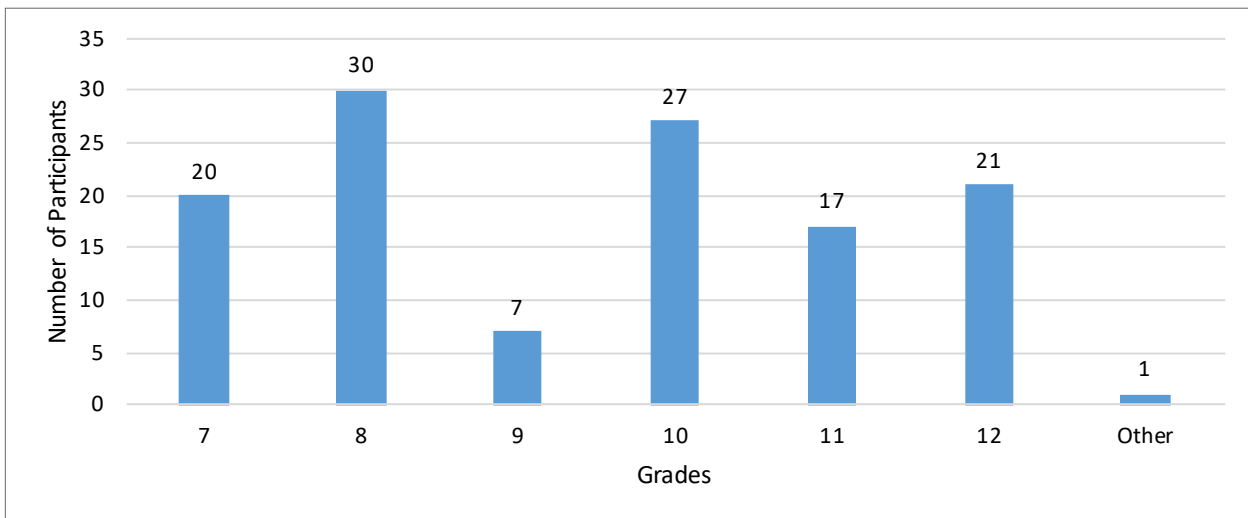


Figure 6. PREP Participants Exit Survey by Ethnicity

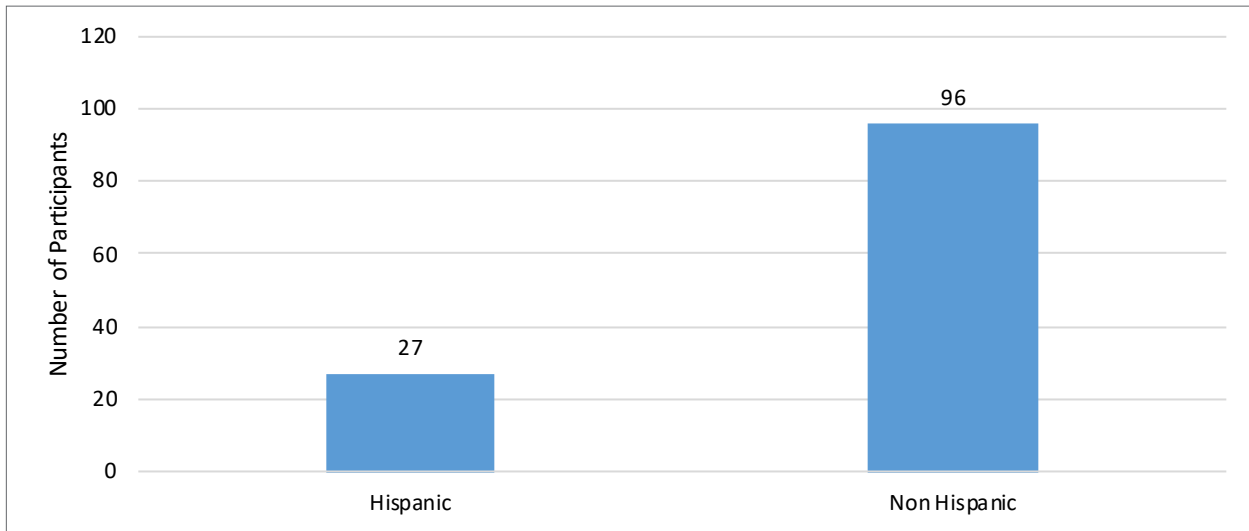


Figure 7. PREP Participants Exit Survey by Race

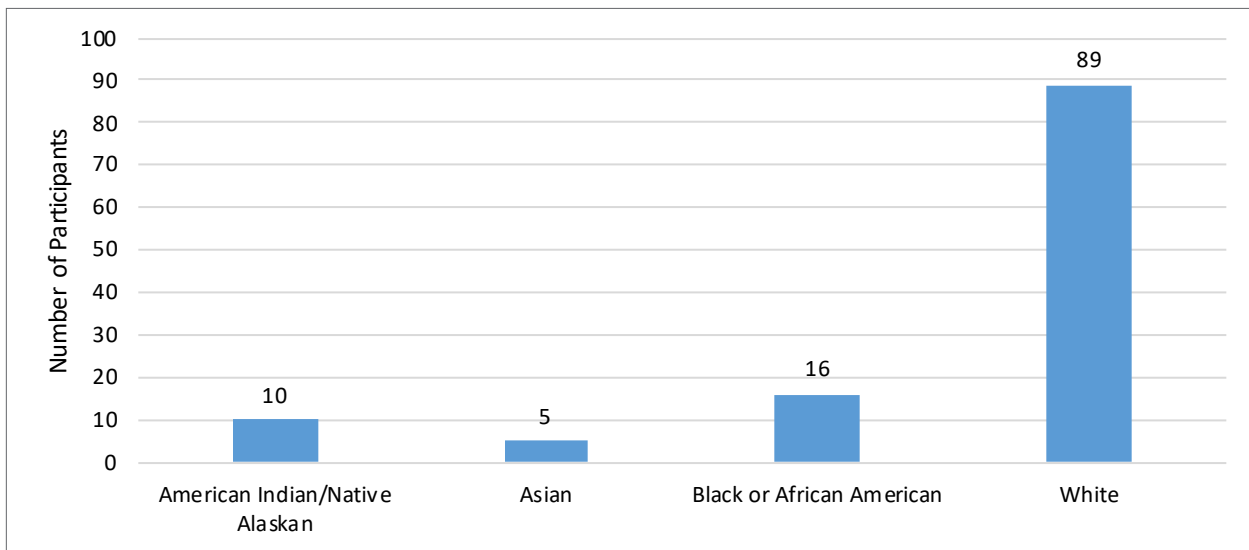
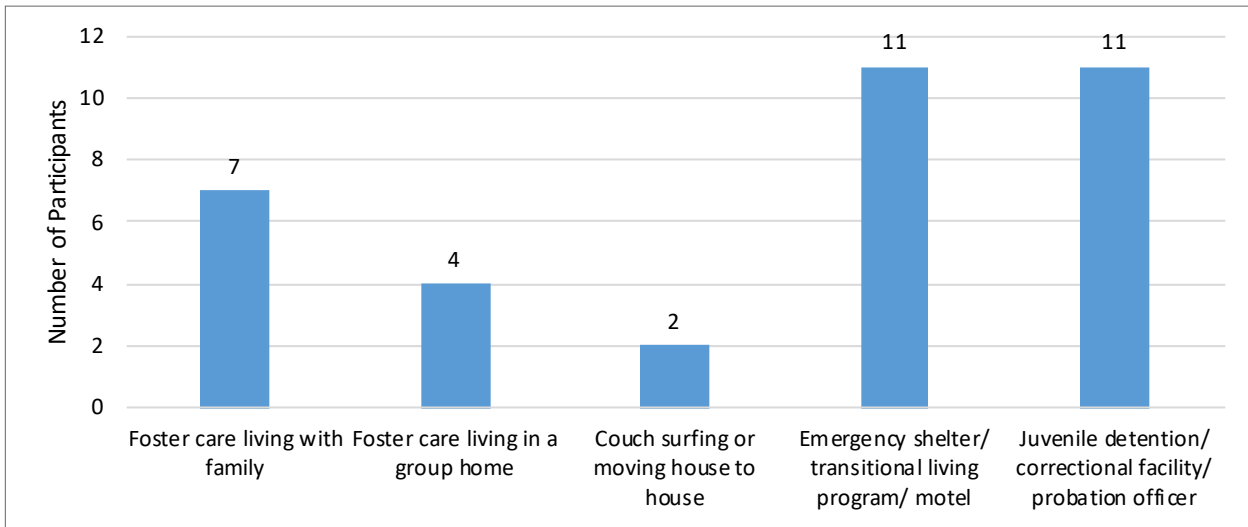
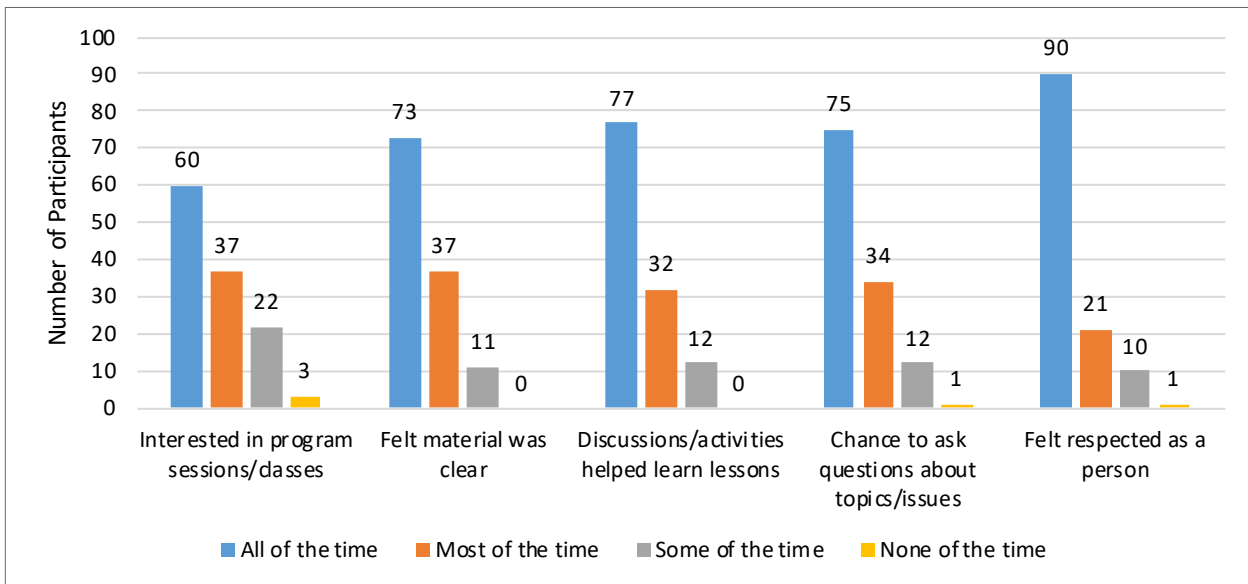


Figure 8. PREP Participants Exit Survey by Residence



Participants were also asked 5 questions to assess the response to the program and responded either “All of the time (4)”, “Most of the time (3)”, “Some of the time (2)”, or “None of the time (1)”. The participant’s responses to the four questions are shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9. PREP Participants Exit Survey Response to Program



REFERENCES

State Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Fact Sheet. (2020, October 09). Retrieved June 12, 2020, from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/prep-fact-sheet>