

Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Program

Mentor and Mentee Survey Findings

MAY 2019

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Executive Summary

The Children & Youth in Care and Mentoring Project received grant funding from the province of Alberta to increase the number of children and youth in care having access to a mentor. The agencies participating in the project are Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, Red Deer Youth HQ, and Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters Edmonton and Area Society. As a component of the developmental evaluation, as led by AndersonDraper Consulting Inc., mentors and mentees completed online surveys about their experiences with the program. The surveys were administered annually over the last three years.

In 2019, 66 mentees completed the mentee survey and 73 mentors completed the mentor survey. Overall, the number of mentors and mentees completing the surveys increased over the three administrations (i.e., 17 mentees in 2016, 45 in 2018 and 66 in 2019; 33 mentors 2016, 2018 and 73 in 2019). In addition, increased positive impacts were noted over the three years of the evaluation. Mentees noted improvements in outcomes related to relationships, confidence and skill building. Mentors noted improvements in outcomes related to confidence in their role as a mentor and support provided to them through the agency through training and connections.

Mentees who completed the survey predominantly resided in larger urban centres and had been matched for longer than a year in their first mentoring experience. The majority of mentees who completed the survey were aged 15 and under and did not know their mentor prior to being matched. Mentees noted that because of the program, they felt better about themselves, supported, knew where to go for advice and resources in the community. Mentees also noted improved outcomes in their confidence, ability to solve problems, make friends and set boundaries. Mentees felt more prepared for the future and felt more connected to their community.

Mentors who completed the survey also primarily resided in larger urban centres, had been mentoring for over a year and were in their first match. Generally, they had heard of the program through the Big Brothers Big Sisters agency or through a friend; joining because they wanted to make a difference in someone's life. Mentors noted they received training in over 12 content areas and received ongoing support for their match through the coordinator and the agency. When asked, they noted they had observed positive change in their mentee in outcomes related to self-confidence, relationships, supports, engagement at school and hope for the future. Mentors noted they generally see their mentee once every two weeks and connected in person or through texting or calling. The mentors noted observations of positive change and impact in their mentee as a result of the program.

Overall, both mentors and mentees noted positive impacts of the program and reported successes in their matches. The survey results demonstrate that the program is making a difference in both the lives of the mentees and mentors. Mentors time is well spent making improvements in outcomes related to building trusting relationships, improving confidence and skill and in improving educational and behavioural outcomes.

1. Introduction and Background

The Children & Youth in Care and Mentoring Project received grant funding from the province of Alberta to increase the number of children and youth in care having access to a mentor. The agencies participating in the project are Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area (BBBS), Red Deer Youth HQ, and Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters Edmonton and Area Society (BGCBigS).

AndersonDraper Consulting Inc. (the Evaluator) is leading the developmental evaluation. An important part of the evaluation is engagement of mentors and mentees who were asked to complete an online survey about their experiences to date.

Structure of the Document

The report is segmented by surveys administered to mentees and to mentors. The mentee survey is presented first, followed by the results of the mentor survey. Sixty-six mentees completed the mentee survey, and 73 mentors completed their survey. Comments referencing the 2016 and 2018 survey findings, noting similarities and differences, are made throughout the document.

Data Collection

The survey tool was created by the Evaluator with input from the Children & Youth in Care Advisory Committee. The tool was programmed online, and the survey link was distributed to mentors and mentees by site representatives. The survey was open from early February to mid-March 2018. As an incentive, mentors and mentees could each enter in a draw for a \$50 Cineplex gift card. A mentor's and a mentee's name were randomly selected, they were notified and mailed their gift card at the end of March 2019.

Limitations

The results presented are a snapshot in time. The respondents self-selected, and findings may not be representative of the entire mentor population. A response rate is difficult to ascertain as the agencies sent out the survey link, however the Evaluator is confident all mentors have had an opportunity to respond if they chose to do so.

While these findings can be helpful in understanding the implementation of the Children & Youth in Care and Mentoring project and identifying successes and lessons learned, results should be interpreted with the above caveats in mind. The following sections summarize survey findings.

2. Survey Findings: Mentee Survey

Overall, 66 responses were collected from the survey administration. This is an increase from 45 surveys captured in 2018 and the 17 responses received in 2016. The following represents findings from the survey, organized by question. The number of participants who answered each particular question is provided. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic and Match Information

Respondents were asked demographic questions to contextualize their responses. Overall, mentees were primarily from Edmonton (53%), then Calgary (36%), followed by Red Deer (11%), had been matched for longer than a year, most were participating in their first mentoring experience, the majority were aged 15 and under, most did not know their mentor prior to being matched and most indicated they shared similar interests with their mentor. These results were almost identical to the 2016 and 2018 demographic results, with slight variants.

Sites were provided a summary of their individual findings in a separate report. There were no notable differences in results across the three locations as such the remainder of the report, after Figure 1, represents combined findings from the three sites.

Figure 1. Mentee's location in the province (n=66)

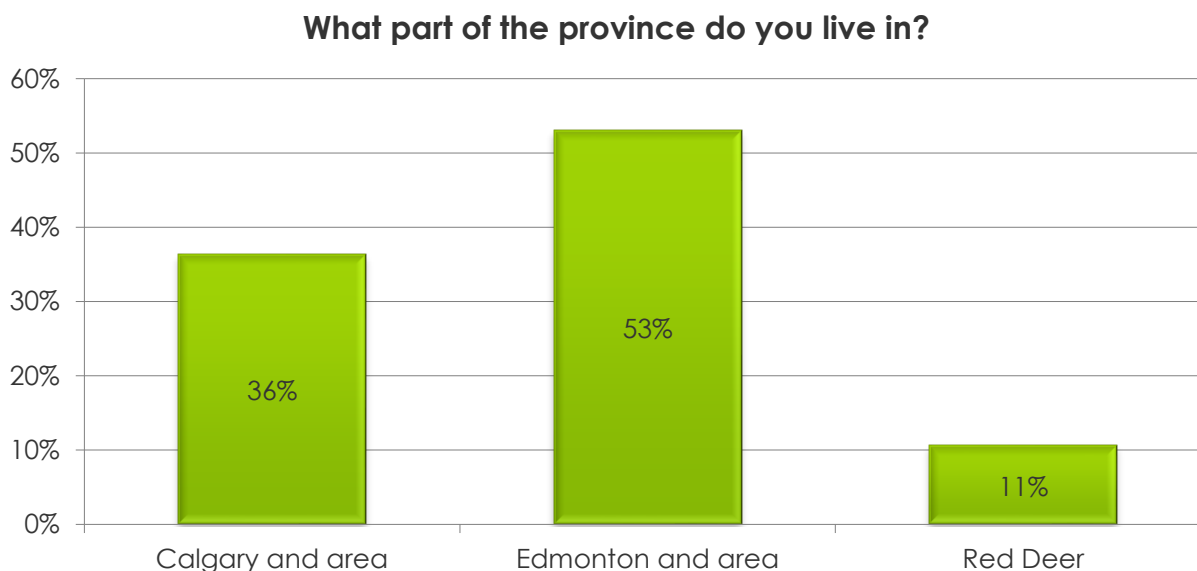
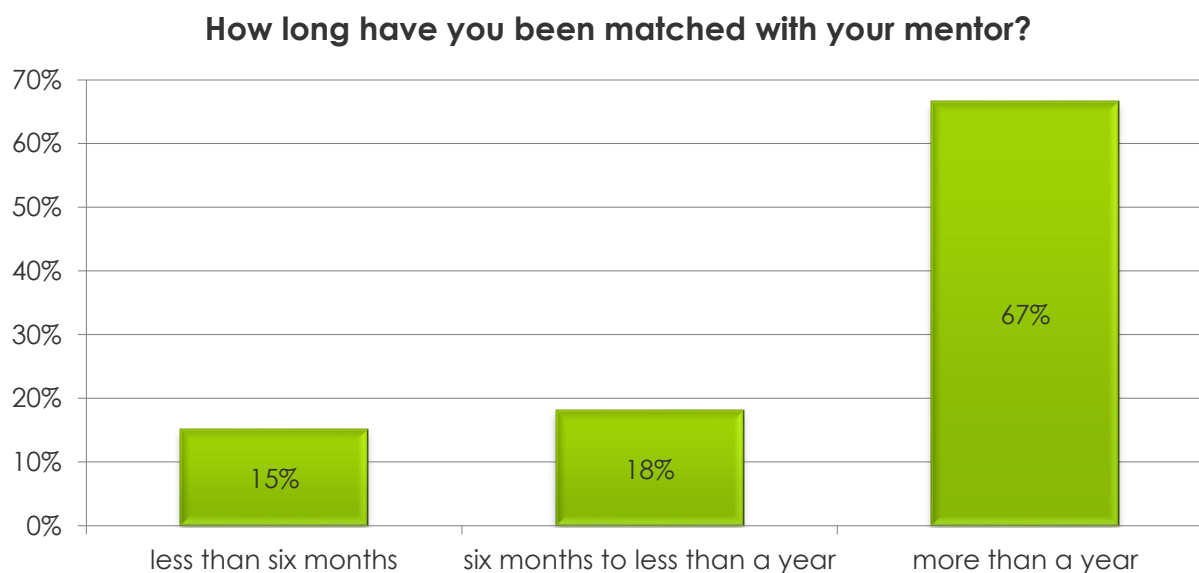
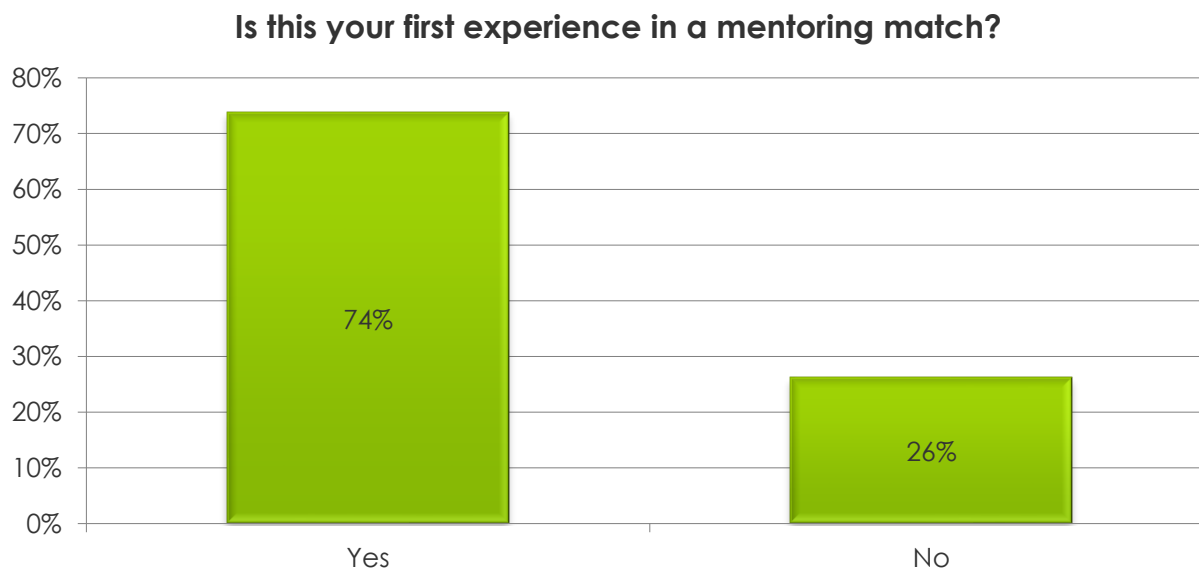


Figure 2. Mentees length of match with mentor (n=66)

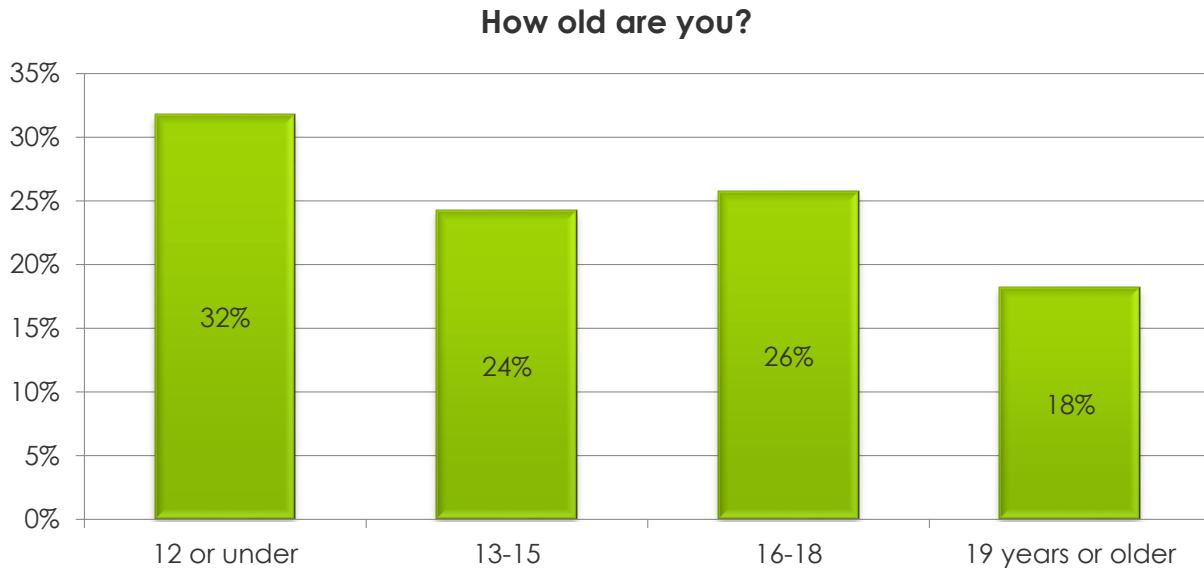


When asked how long they have been matched with their mentor the majority of mentees indicated for longer than a year (67%) followed by six months to less than a year (18%) and less than six months (15%). When compared to the 2016 survey results, the program and support has advanced to include longer term support. In 2016, 47% of respondents had been matched for more than six months and were not asked for longer than that term as the program was new. The 2018 results showed a similar pattern of responding to the current results, indicating a stabilization of length of mentee matching.

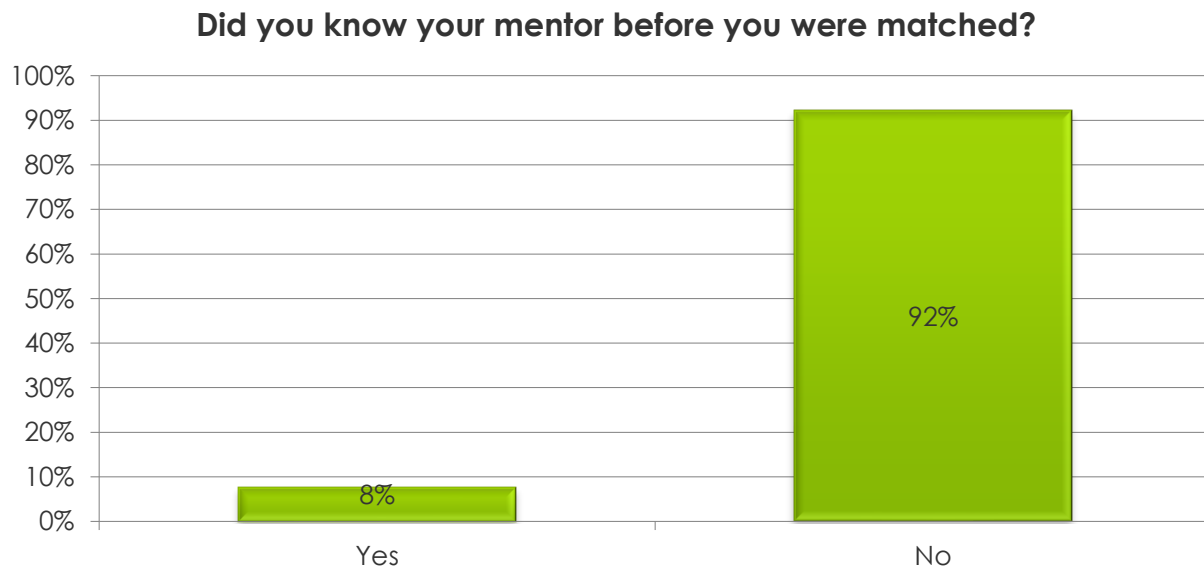
Figure 3. Mentees' experience with mentoring (n=65)



Mentees were asked about their experience in a mentoring match, and the majority of mentees noted this was their first experience in a mentoring match (74%).

Figure 4. Mentees' age (n=66)

When asked their age, 32% noted they were aged 12 and under; 24% aged 13 to 15; 26% aged 16 to 18; and, 18% aged 19 or older. The distribution was similar to the 2016 and 2018 results, with an increase in mentees aged 19 or older.

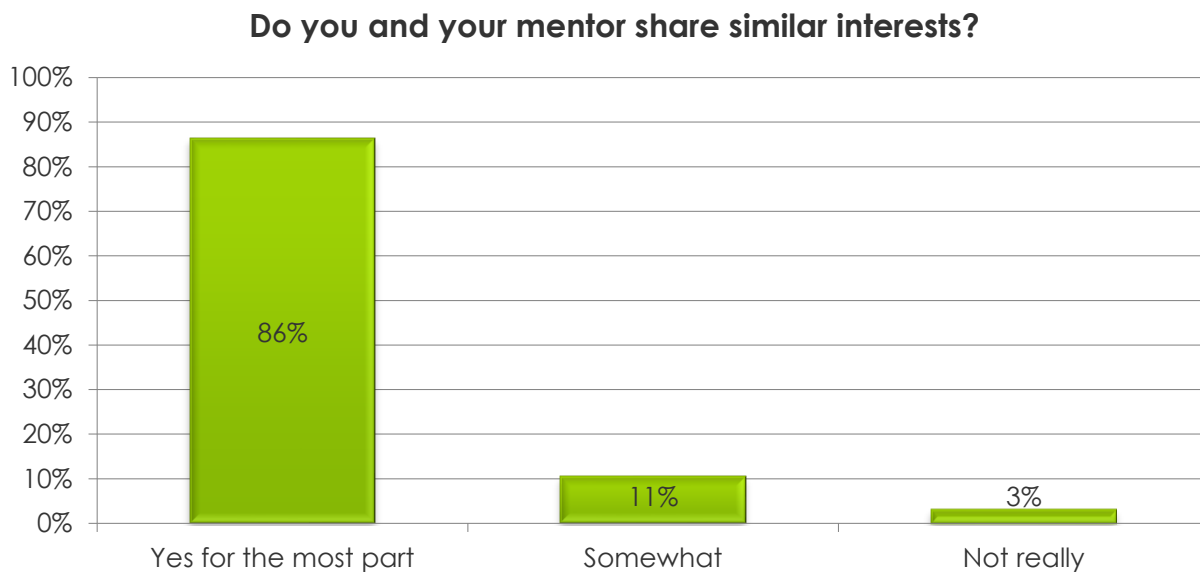
Figure 5. Mentees' knowledge of their mentor (n=65)

Mentees were asked if they knew their mentor before they were matched. The majority (92%) noted they did not know their mentor before they were matched, whereas 8% did.

Comment:

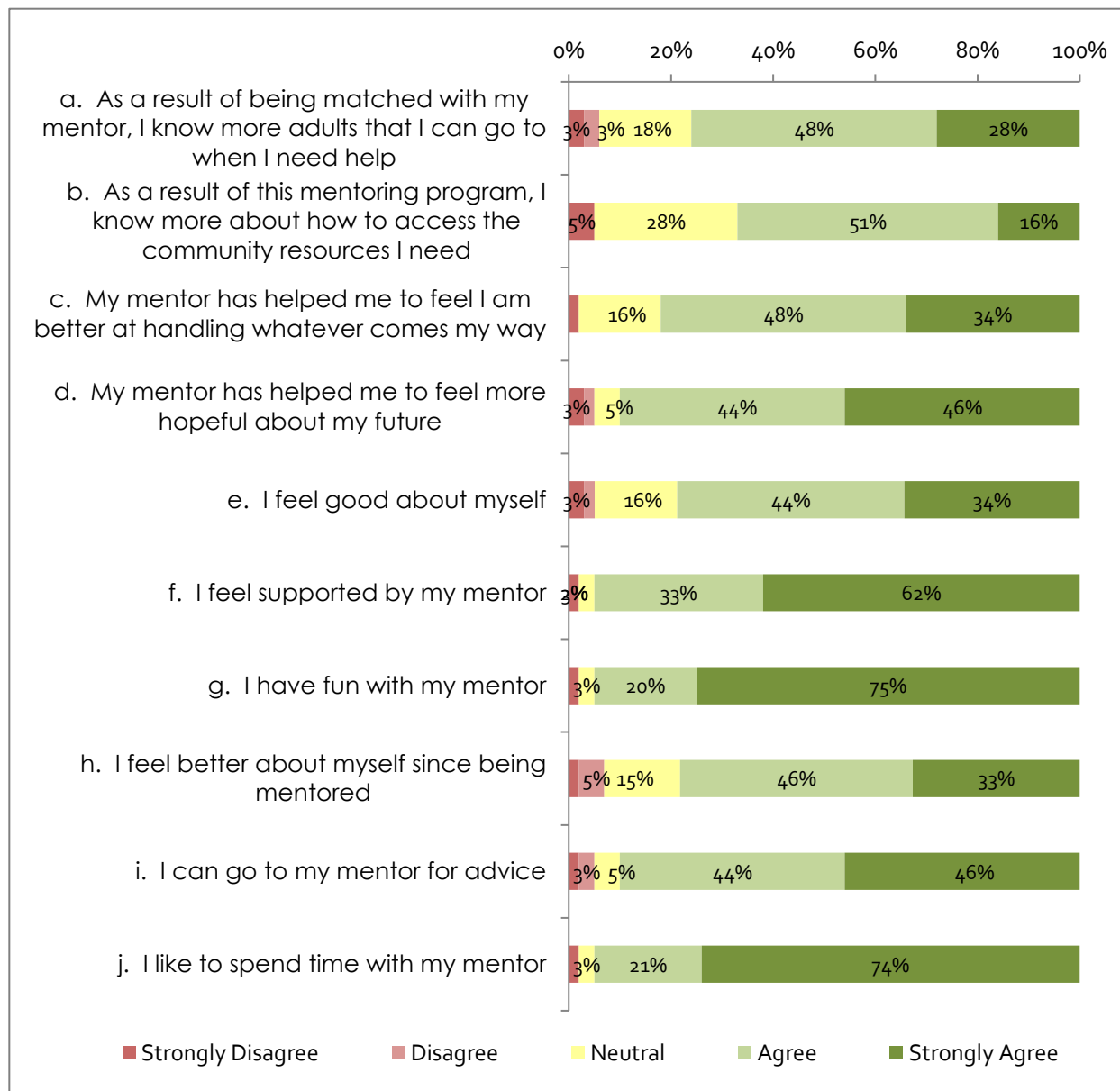
"I got to meet him a few times like the Big Brothers Big Sisters Christmas Party before matching."

Figure 6. Mentees' similarities with their mentor (n=65)



Mentees were asked if they share similar interests with their mentors and the majority noted they did (86%).

Figure 7. Mentees' agreement with program statements (n=61)

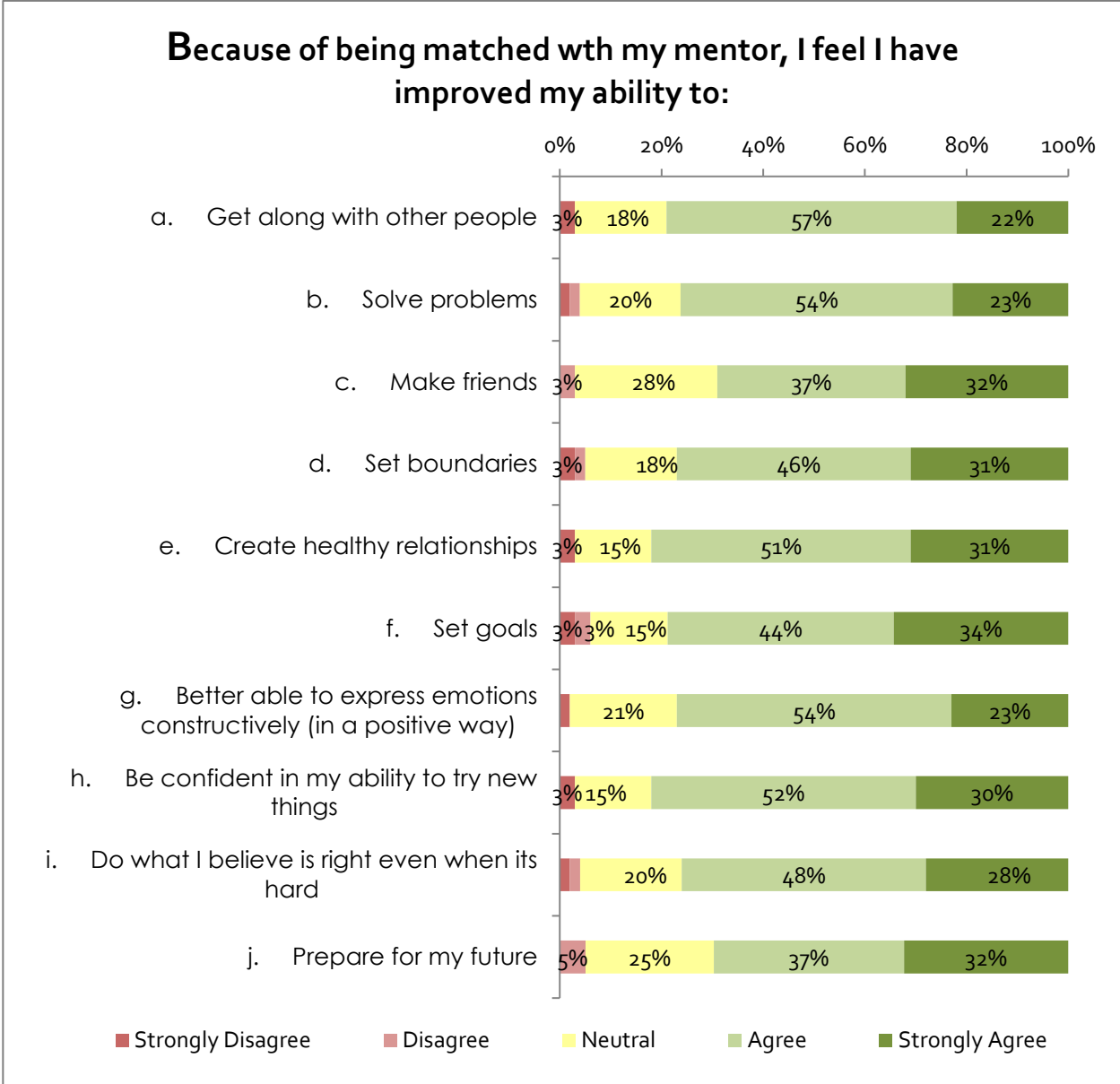


Mentees were presented a series of statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement. Overall, when combining the agree and strongly agree responses, the majority of mentees agreed they have fun with their mentor (95%); they like to spend time with their mentor (95%); they feel supported by their mentor (95%); their mentor has helped them feel hopeful about the future (90%); they can go to their mentor for advice (90%); their mentor has helped them feel they are better at handling what is coming their way (82%); they feel better about themselves since being mentored (79%); they feel good about themselves (78%); as a result of being matched with their mentor, they know more adults they can go to help with if they need to (76%); and, they know more about how to access the community resources they need (67%). For ease of viewing any category with 2% or less has had the label removed from the graph.

When compared to the 2018 survey, patterns of responding were very similar, although the current survey administration was slightly less positive. However, there are no notable deviations that could not be accounted for beyond an appropriate degree of variability from increasing sample size.

When compared to the 2016 data, mentees were asked a series of statements on a three-point scale (not very much, sometimes, a lot) about their level of agreement. The questions asked were similar, but not as comprehensive and indicated that they agreed 'a lot' their mentor really cares about them (93%); their mentor knows what is going on in their life (67%); and, they get to see their mentor as often as they would like (67%). Other questions were not as high. It appears there was a fairly marked increase in positive responding to the larger series of questions in the 2018 and current survey.

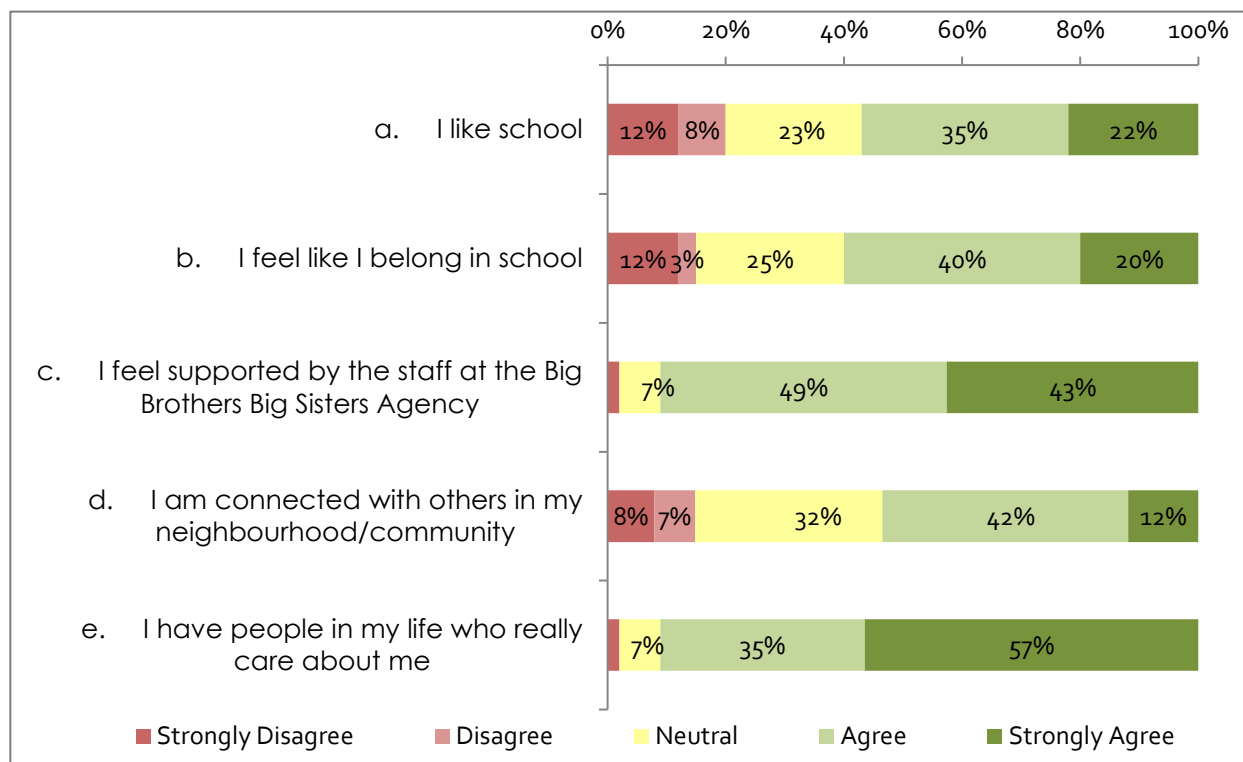
Figure 8. Mentees' agreement with program statements (n=61)



Mentees were asked their agreement with statements about improving their ability to do certain tasks as a result of being matched with their mentor. Overall, the majority of mentees, when combining the agree and strongly agree responses, agreed they have improved their ability to create healthy relationships (82%); be confident in their ability to try new things (82%); solve problems (77%); get along with other people (79%); set goals (78%); set boundaries (77%); are better able to express their emotions constructively (77%); do what they believe is right even when its hard (76%); prepare for their future (69%); and, make friends (69%).

When compared to the 2018 survey, patterns of positive responding were similar, although slightly lower. This can be explained by the slight increase in neutral responding for the 2019 iteration of the survey. This series of questions was new to the 2018 iteration of the survey and not asked in 2016.

Figure 9. Mentees' agreement with program statements (n=61)



Mentees were asked to indicate their agreement with statements about school and the program. The majority agreed they feel supported by staff at the big Brothers Big Sisters Agency (92%); they have people in their life who really care about them (92%); they feel like they belong in school (60%); they like school (57%); and, they feel connected with others in their neighborhood or community (54%).

When compared to the 2018 survey, patterns of responding were very similar. This series of questions was new to the 2018 iteration of the survey and not asked in 2016.

What are some good things that have happened because you have been matched with a mentor?

Mentees were asked to describe some good things that have happened because they have been matched with a mentor and offered the following themes of responses:

- ❖ Going to new places and trying/learning new things (x23);
- ❖ Having someone they trust that they can talk to and to help solve problems (x11);
- ❖ Having fun (x4);
- ❖ More confidence or improved self-esteem, more positive about life (x8);
- ❖ Spending time with their mentor (x4);
- ❖ Improving relationships with their friends or making new friends (x1);
- ❖ Learning to use their words more clearly, and,
- ❖ Losing weight and becoming more active (x1).

Example comments:

"I have had more opportunities to try new things and go to more events that I wouldn't have if I didn't have a mentor. My mentor has helped me grow and step out of my comfort zone but when I need to, I am able to step back in."

"I get to talk to someone I can trust."

"He taught me how to calm down when mad, and how to cook."

"I have a second family that cares about me spending time and having a healthy relationship making me feel loved and not alone."

"She has helped me be more confident in myself as a person and as a leader."

"I became more positive and realize there are good things in life."

Have there been some challenges in your match? If yes, like what?

Mentees were asked if there had been any challenges in their match and to describe them. For those that provided a response, they noted the following:

- ❖ Setting up their schedule with their mentor (x4);
- ❖ Communication challenges (x2);
- ❖ Switching matches (x1); and,
- ❖ Not enough outings (x1).

"Yes, just with going through ups and downs of a normal relationship with a friend and not fully communicating."

"Yes, we had to go through changes of moving and time schedules."

"Faced challenges together. Like sledding on steep hills and skating."

Do you have any suggestions to make this program better?

Mentees were asked if they had any suggestions for improvement and noted the following:

- ❖ Have more events (x3);
- ❖ Spending more time together (x1);
- ❖ Have more mentors so their brother can get one (x1); and,
- ❖ Making sure matches are matched correctly (x1).

Conclusion

Overall, mentees were positive about the program and their experience. The majority of mentees agreed they had made improvements in outcomes related to relationships, confidence, skill building, and their mentor is a positive role model in their life. Few challenges with the matches were identified, and the only areas for improvement suggested were around more activities and being able to spend more time with their mentors. Results were similar demographically when compared to both 2018 and 2016, however there was an increase in the number of respondents in the 2019 year of administration.

3. Survey Findings: Mentor Survey

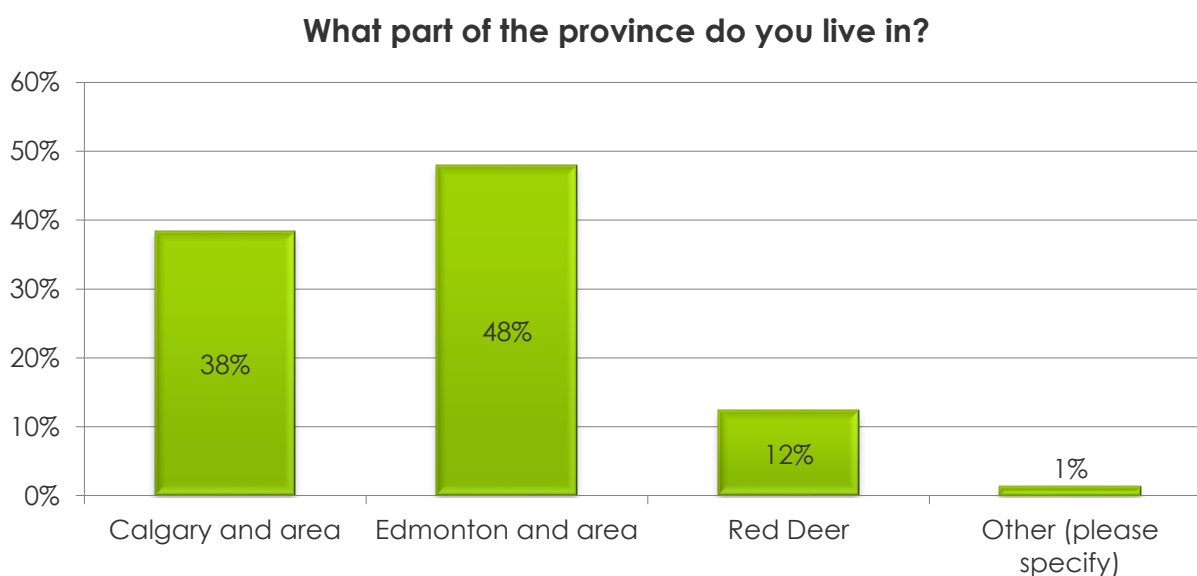
Overall, 73 mentor responses were collected from the survey administration. This is an increase from the 54 responses received in 2018 and the 33 responses received in 2016. The following represents the findings from the survey, organized by question. The number of participants who answered each particular question are provided. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic and Match Information

Respondents were asked demographic questions to contextualize their responses. Overall, mentors were primarily from Edmonton (48%) and Calgary (38%) followed by Red Deer (12%), had been mentoring for over a year, they were in their first mentoring match, had heard about the opportunity through the BBBS agency or through a friend, joined because they wanted to make a difference in someone's life, agreed to mentor wherever the need was the greatest. Not surprisingly, the match demographic information mirrors the mentee survey results. Demographic results from the 2018 and 2016 survey were similar, with slight variants, including more respondents.

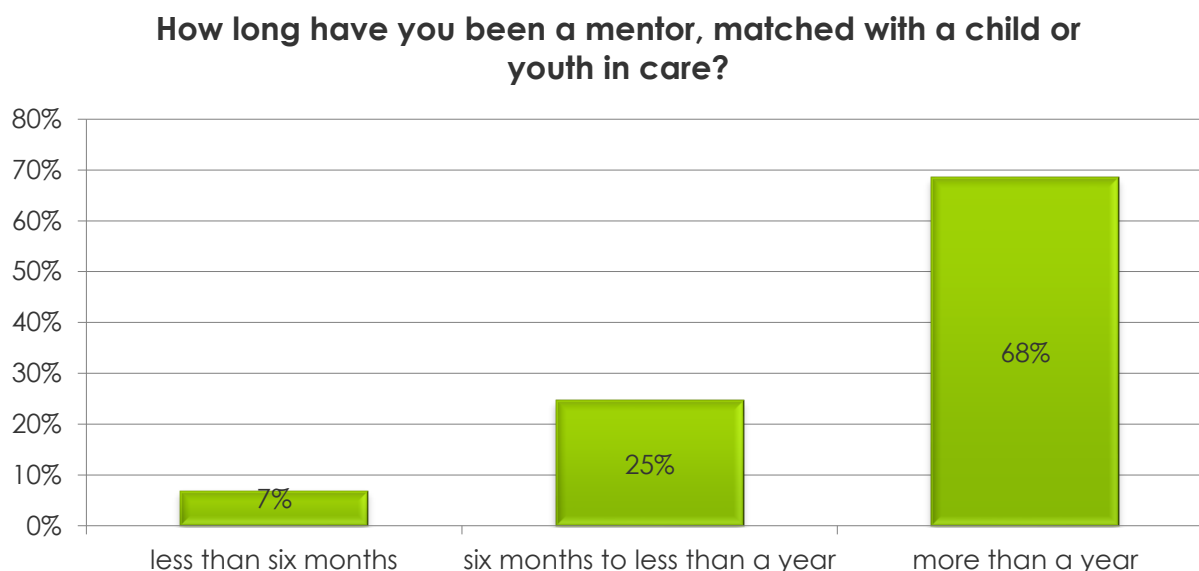
Sites were provided a summary of their individual findings in a separate report. There were no notable differences in results across the three locations as such the remainder of the report, after Figure 10, represents combined findings from the three sites.

Figure 10. Mentors' location in the province (n=73)



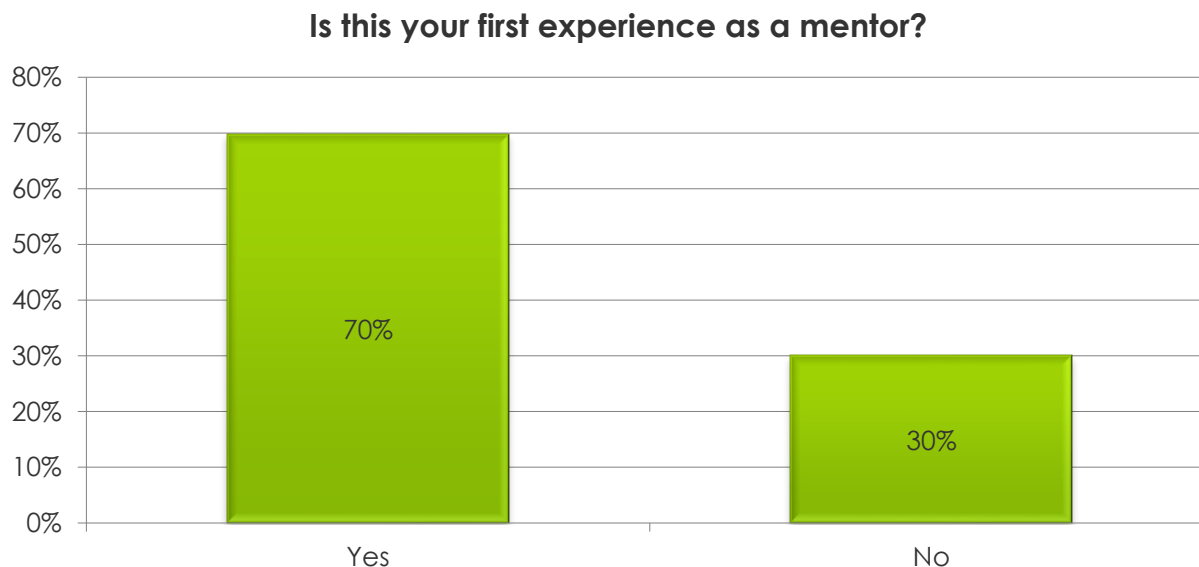
Respondents were asked what part of the province they live in. The highest percentages of responding indicated Edmonton and area (48%); followed by Calgary and area (38%), Red Deer (12%) and 'other' (1%). The individual who selected 'other' identified their location as Kelowna.

Figure 11. Mentors' length of match with mentee (n=73)

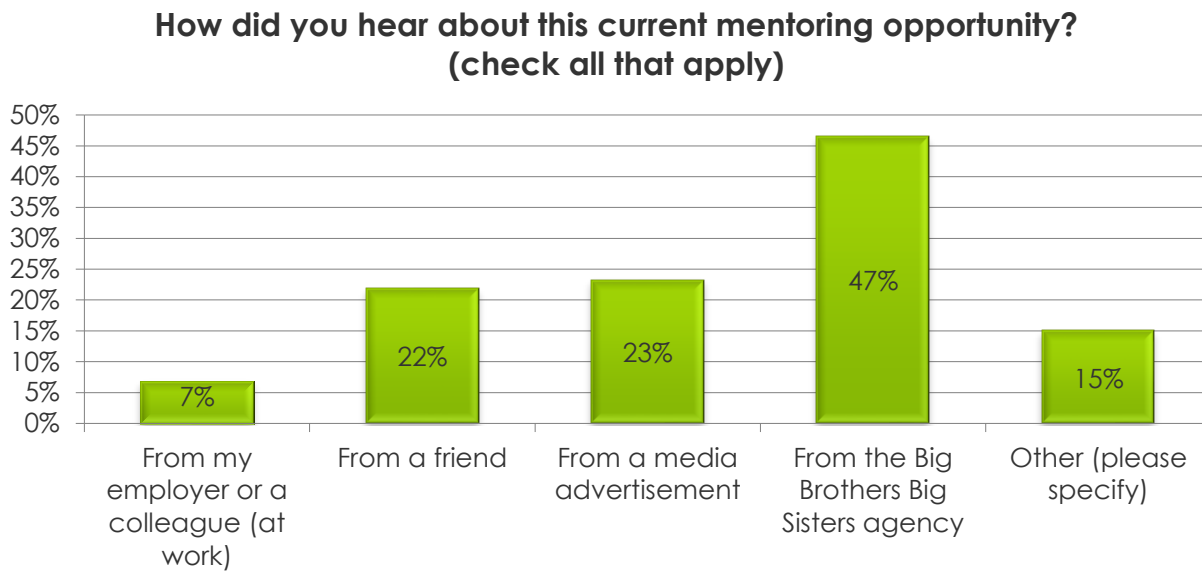


When asked how long they have been matched with their mentee, the majority of mentors indicated for longer than a year (68%) six months to less than a year (25%), followed by less than six months (7%). When compared to the 2018 and 2016 surveys, the program has advanced in duration as more respondents noted they had been matched for over a year. In 2016, the largest category provided for responses was more than six months, to which 63% of respondents noted they had been matched. Future surveys will provide additional options of one to two years, two to three years and more than three years.

Figure 12. Mentors' experience with mentoring (n=53)



Mentors were asked about their experience in a mentoring match, and the majority of mentors noted this was their first experience in a mentoring match (70%).

Figure 13. Mentors' knowledge of the opportunity (n=54)

Mentors were asked to indicate where they heard about the mentoring opportunity. Most respondents noted they had heard from the Big Brothers Big Sisters Agency (47%). This was followed by a media advertisement (23%), from a friend (22%) by 'other' (15%), or from their employer or work colleague (7%).

For those that indicated 'other' they noted the following sources:

- ❖ They have always known they wanted to (x1);
- ❖ Volunteering with the agency in another capacity (x1);
- ❖ A conference (x1);
- ❖ Their family member (x1);
- ❖ Friend (x1);
- ❖ They had a mentor when they were a youth (x1);
- ❖ A university student fair (x1);
- ❖ They already knew about the agency (x1); and,
- ❖ A volunteer page (x1).

What made you decide to become a mentor?

Mentors were asked what made them decide to become a mentor and noted the following themes:

- ❖ Wanted to make a positive impact in someone's life and be a role model (x25);
- ❖ Wanted to contribute to their community (x14);
- ❖ Previous positive experience of being mentored themselves or realizing they could have benefited from a mentor, losing someone they considered a mentor (x11);
- ❖ Had free time (x7);
- ❖ Always wanted to be a big sister or big brother (x5);
- ❖ Wanted a volunteer position (x4);
- ❖ Opportunity through work or school to be a mentor (x3);
- ❖ They were asked to be a mentor, knew how long the waitlist was (x2); and,
- ❖ Learning about the impacts mentors have (x1);

Example comments:

"A desire to be a positive friend and role model for a youth where the need was greatest using my experiences and knowledge in life."

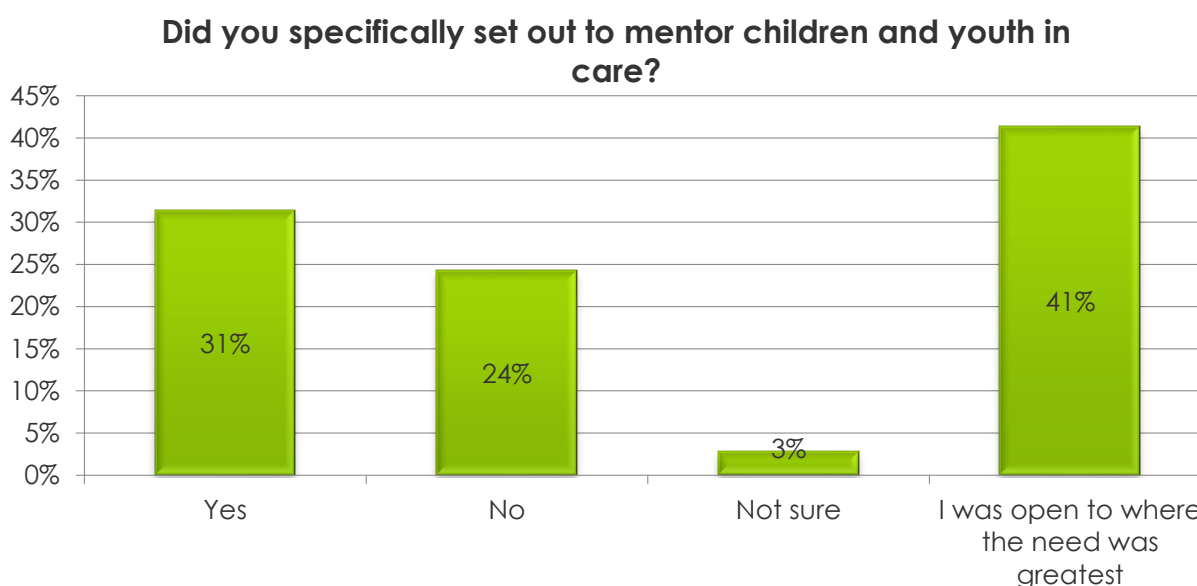
"Wanted to give back to the community and felt that a one-on-one mentorship opportunity would be a good fit."

"I have had a distinct lack of mentors in my life and I wanted to make sure this didn't happen for at least one young person."

"I volunteer a lot in the community and I just love helping people. Mentoring is something that I think is very important for everyone. We all need someone to hang out with or just talk to about your life and future aspirations."

Comments provided in this section were similar in theme to the 2018 and 2016 results.

Figure 14. Mentors' intentions to mentor children and youth in care (n=70)



When asked if they had set out specifically to mentor children and youth in care, most respondents noted they were open to where the need was the greatest (41%); followed by yes, specifically setting this intention (31%); no (24%); and, 'not sure' (3%).

Responses provided in this section were similar in theme to the 2018 and 2016 results.

How were you matched with your mentee? Please describe the matching process.

Mentors were asked to describe how they were matched with their mentee. While mentors described unique experiences in some cases, their responses could be categorized into the following themes:

- ❖ Match coordinator with the program looked for a mentee with similar interests or initiative/facilitated the match, they completed training an interview and meet and greets with their mentee (x52);
- ❖ Was sent profiles and selected the match on their own out of a select few (x9);
- ❖ Attended a session and completed the paperwork, interviewed, trained and then matched (x5);
- ❖ Through the in-school program (x4);
- ❖ They were approached and asked to mentor a child or youth in care and received additional training (x1); and,
- ❖ Went into the program already matched (x1).

Example comments:

"There were three possible matches. I chose the most challenging. Initially he didn't want to meet (was going through a tough time) but we got through that."

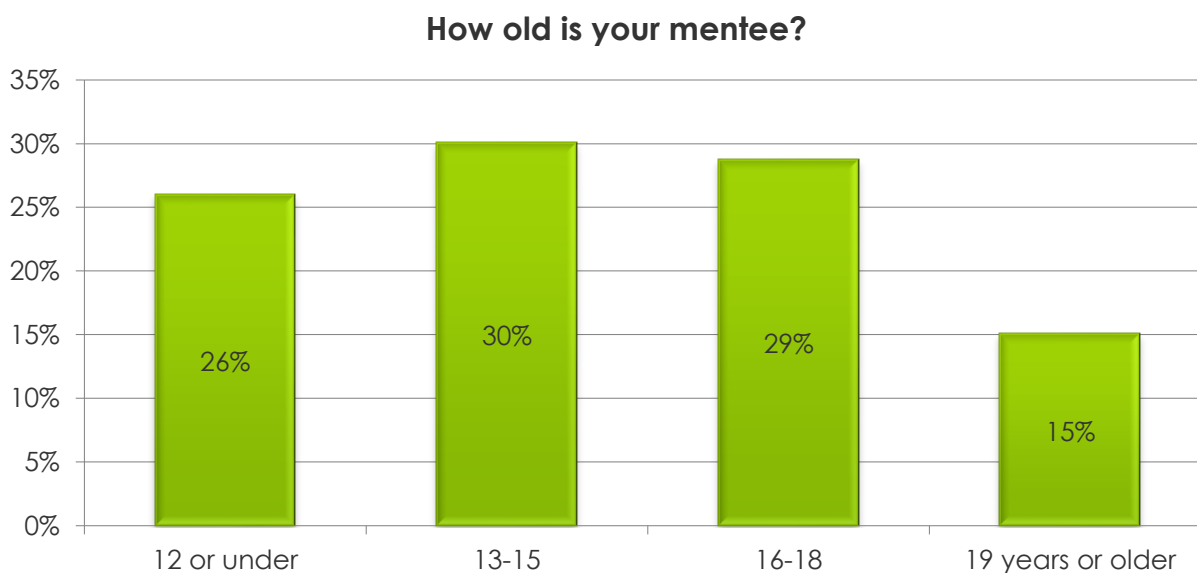
"Filled out a questionnaire, was given a couple ages/descriptions of youth based on interest and choose one to meet with. We were originally matched through the school-based program."

"My mentee and myself both went through an interview process and we were matched based on some similar interests and values."

"I went through an interview process where an individual asked me a series of questions. After this, I was actually sent two mentee's profiles and got to choose between the two. It was a very tough decision and took some time however, in the end I went with where I felt I was needed most as a mentor."

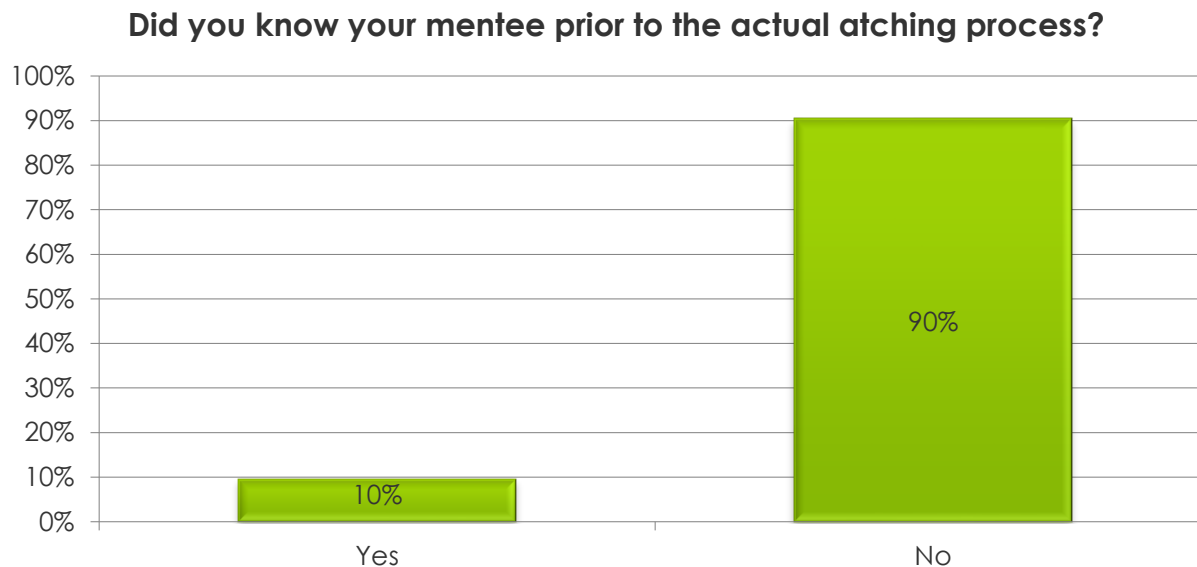
"I met with the match coordinator and talked about what I was hoping to get out of the match. She thought there would be a good match and talked to the family. I was invited to a group night where I met the potential match. Everything seemed good so we were matched. I then met the family at their home for the formal beginning of the match."

Figure 15. Mentee's age (n=73)



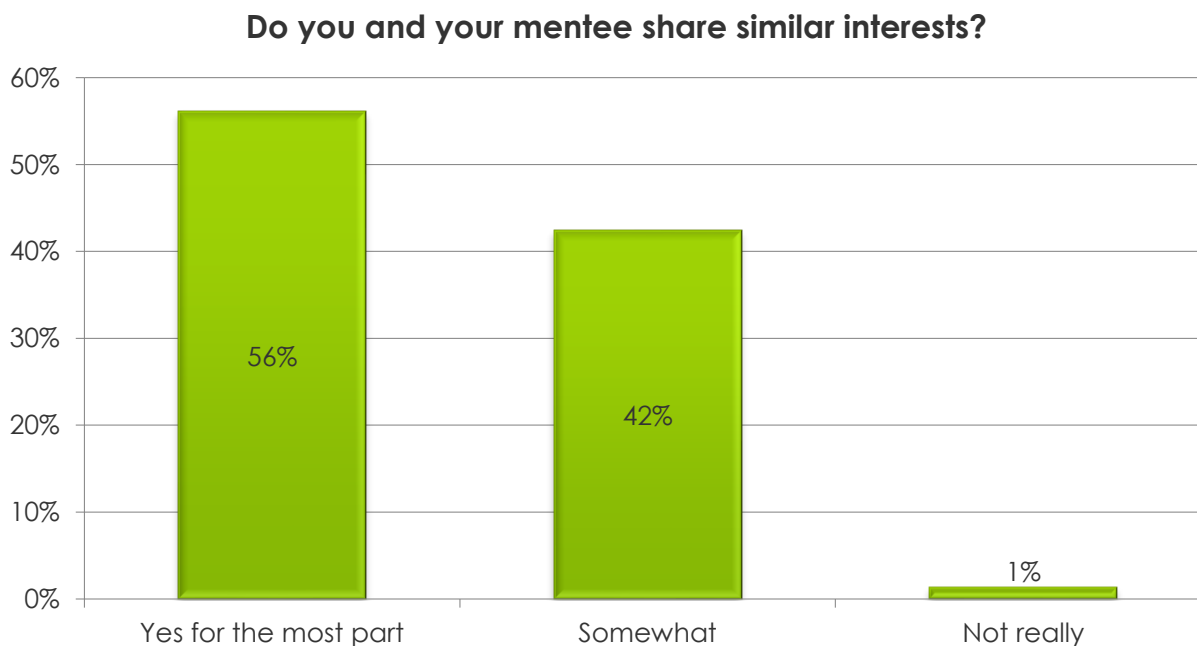
Mentors were asked the age of their mentee and noted they were 13-15 (30%); 16-18 (29%), 12 or under (26%) or 19 years or older (15%). When compared to 2018, mentees were slightly older (an increase in the 13-15 category, a decrease in the 12 or under category).

Figure 16. Mentors' prior relationship with mentee (n=73)



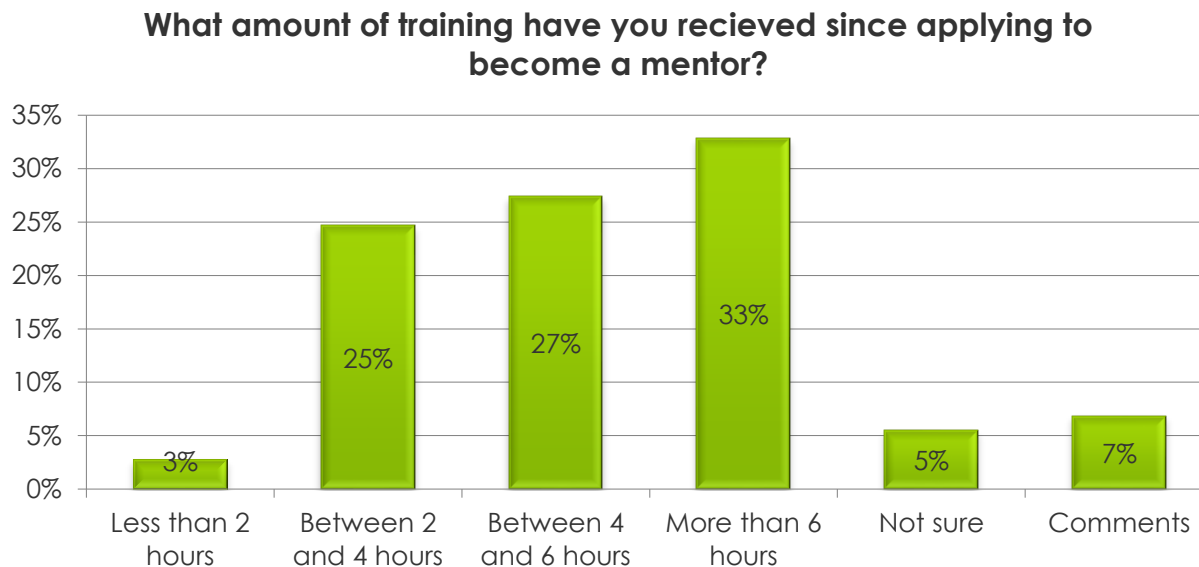
Mentors were asked if they knew their mentee prior to the matching process and most (90%) indicated they did not.

Figure 17. Mentees' similarities with their mentor (n=54)



Mentors were asked if they share similar interests with their mentees and the majority noted they did (56%); followed by somewhat (42%); and not really (1%).

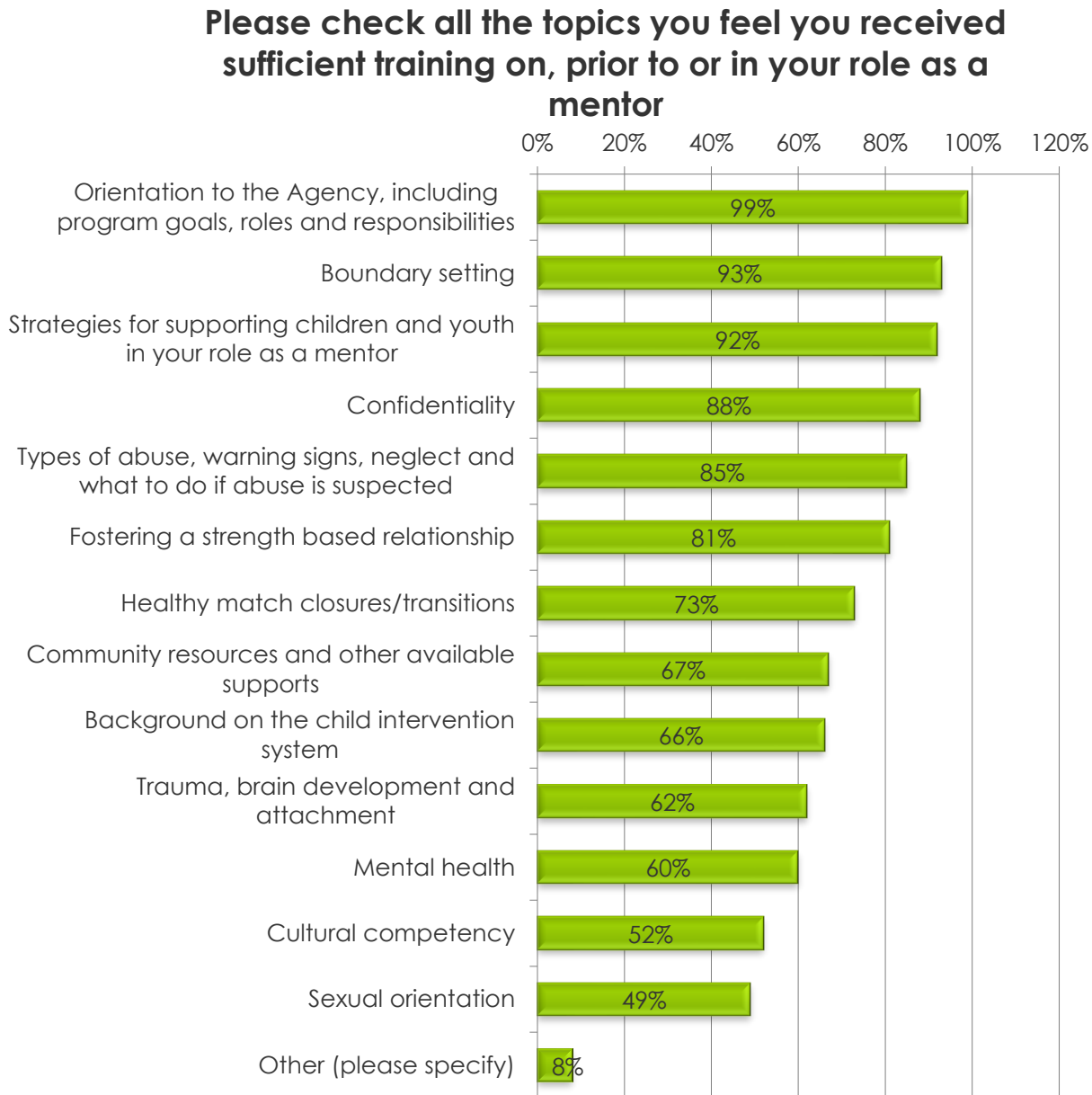
Figure 18. Amount of training received by mentors (n=73)



Mentors were asked about the amount of training they have received since applying to become a mentor. Most noted more than 6 hours of training (33%); followed by between 4 and 6 hours (27%); between two and four hours (25%); and, less than two hours (3%). Those that provided comments noted they had taken more than 6 hours because of previous involvement (x1); they were a staff member and had received more training (x1); they had received lots of training through the government of Alberta (x1); and, they did not know (x1).

When compared to the both the 2018 and 2016 results, mentors noted they had received more training in the recent version of the survey. The current information indicates participants are engaging in more training than was reported in both 2018 and 2016, indicating an upward trend of increasing training.

Figure 19. Topics of training received by mentors (n=73)



Mentors were asked to indicate which topics of training they felt they had received sufficient training in as a mentor. The highest rated topics included: orientation to the agency (99%); boundary setting (93%); strategies for supporting children and youth (92%); confidentiality (88%); types of abuse and warning signs (85%); fostering a strength-based relationship (81%); and, healthy match closures/transitions (73%). Areas that were less likely to be noted as sufficient training was experienced were: background on the child intervention system (66%); community resources (67%); trauma, brain development and attachment (62%); mental health (60%); cultural competency (52%); and, sexual orientation (49%); and, those that provided 'other' noted: they had previous training so this was review (x4); Youth in care (x2); and, FASD (x1).

When compared to the 2018 results, the top training categories identified in the current administration match the 2018 results with slight variations. In addition, there has been a slight increase in training for the lowest identified areas: community resources (59%); trauma, brain development and attachment (52%); and, cultural competency (43%). This has been an increasing trend since 2016. Future surveys will ask about training received prior to the training and during the match.

Example Comments:

"I would love more Indigenous focused training - especially because my mentee's family is very involved in our match process. My mentee's grandmother is a residential school survivor, and I would like to know how to access more indigenous based resources and know about more indigenous activities so that I can guide my mentee and myself to learn more about her rich and amazing heritage."

"I feel most mentors could be better versed on the child welfare system. It is confusing for a lot of people and additional information sessions could help further mentors understanding."

Is there any additional training and/or support that you feel would be beneficial to you in your role as a mentor?

Mentors were asked if there was any additional training that would be useful and noted the following topics:

- ❖ Mental health first aid (x1);
- ❖ Family violence training (x1);
- ❖ Suicide intervention (x1);
- ❖ More on sexuality (x1);
- ❖ Indigenous training (x1);
- ❖ More support in making events happen (x1);
- ❖ How to end a match (x1);
- ❖ More on BBBS (x1);
- ❖ Child welfare system training (x1);
- ❖ Drug abuse (x1); and,
- ❖ Sexually transmitted infections (x1).

What type of support from the Big Brothers Big Sisters Agency do you receive?

Mentors were asked what type of support from the Agency they receive and discussed the constant availability of BBBS coordinators to assist them in whatever supports they need. Respondents commented on emails and calls they received to obtain tickets to events in the city, to check in on the match or to facilitate resource referral. In particular, respondents noted the following:

- ❖ Support from the coordinator (phone, text, advice) (x56);
- ❖ Connection to free activities or suggestions for activities (x11);
- ❖ Training opportunities (x2); and,
- ❖ Events to meet other mentors/mentees (x1).

Example comments:

"I receive a ton of support from my coordinator. We work together to make sure my mentee is getting the resources and supports she needs. The agency also coordinates learning sessions, mentor meetup nights, and group activities. I find these opportunities to come together very helpful."

"I talk to my match facilitator when a follow up needs to be done. And sometimes more often, such as when issues with my match's Mom have come up."

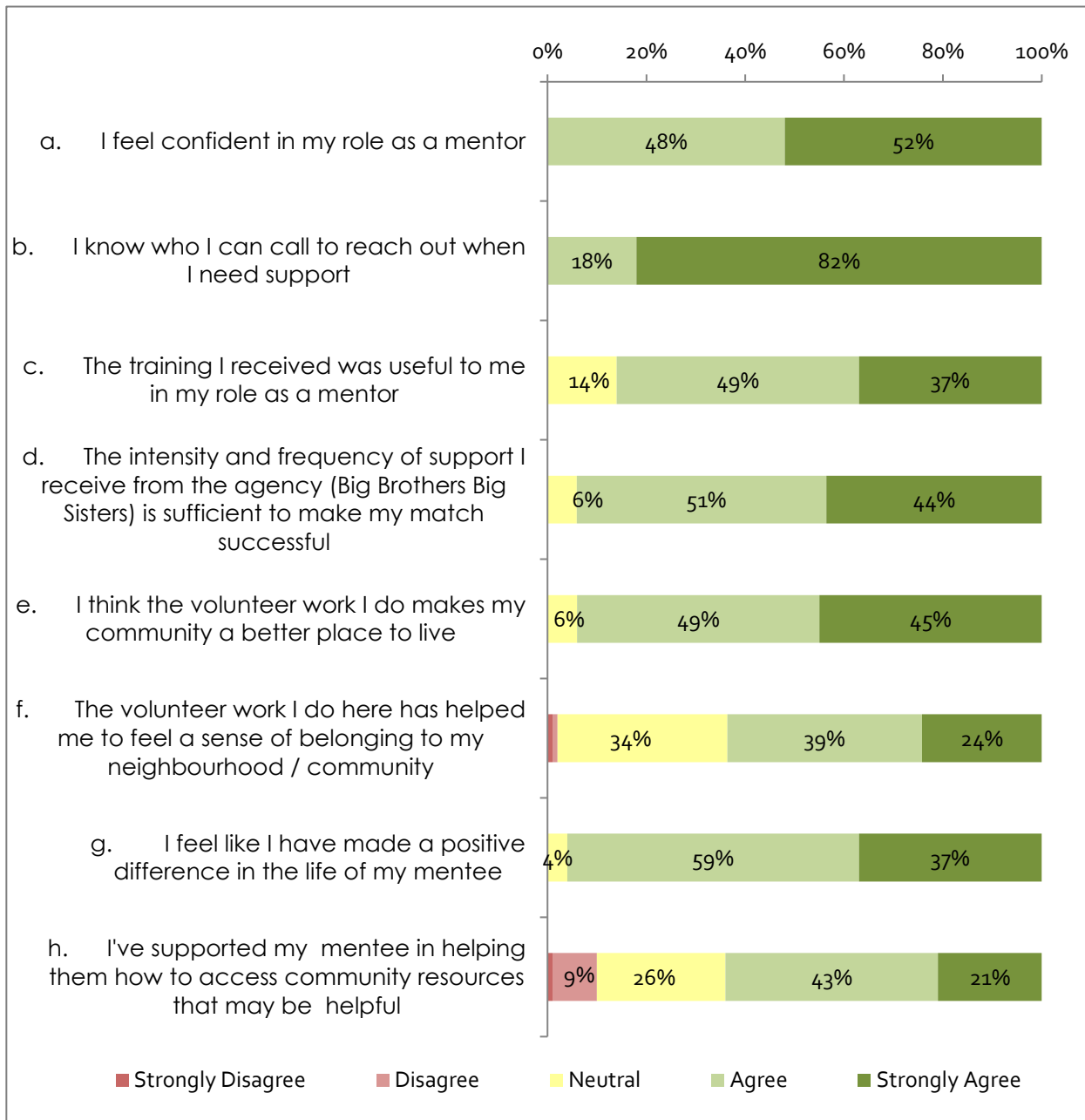
"Regular contact with our case worker and additional support as needed. All I have to do is call. My "little" has very complex issues and is high risk. [the Agency] supported us through her transition from child to adult services and are only a phone call away if needed."

"My volunteer coordinator is great. All the ones that I've had are actually wonderful. They always check-in and are there when I have any questions or concerns. The organization also offers many opportunities for my mentee and I to participate in city events/outings at little or no cost. This is a huge benefit and I can speak for my mentee and I when I say that we appreciate it!"

Program Information

Mentors were asked questions about their participation in the program, the following outlines the results, by question.

Figure 20. Mentors' agreement with program statements (n=73)



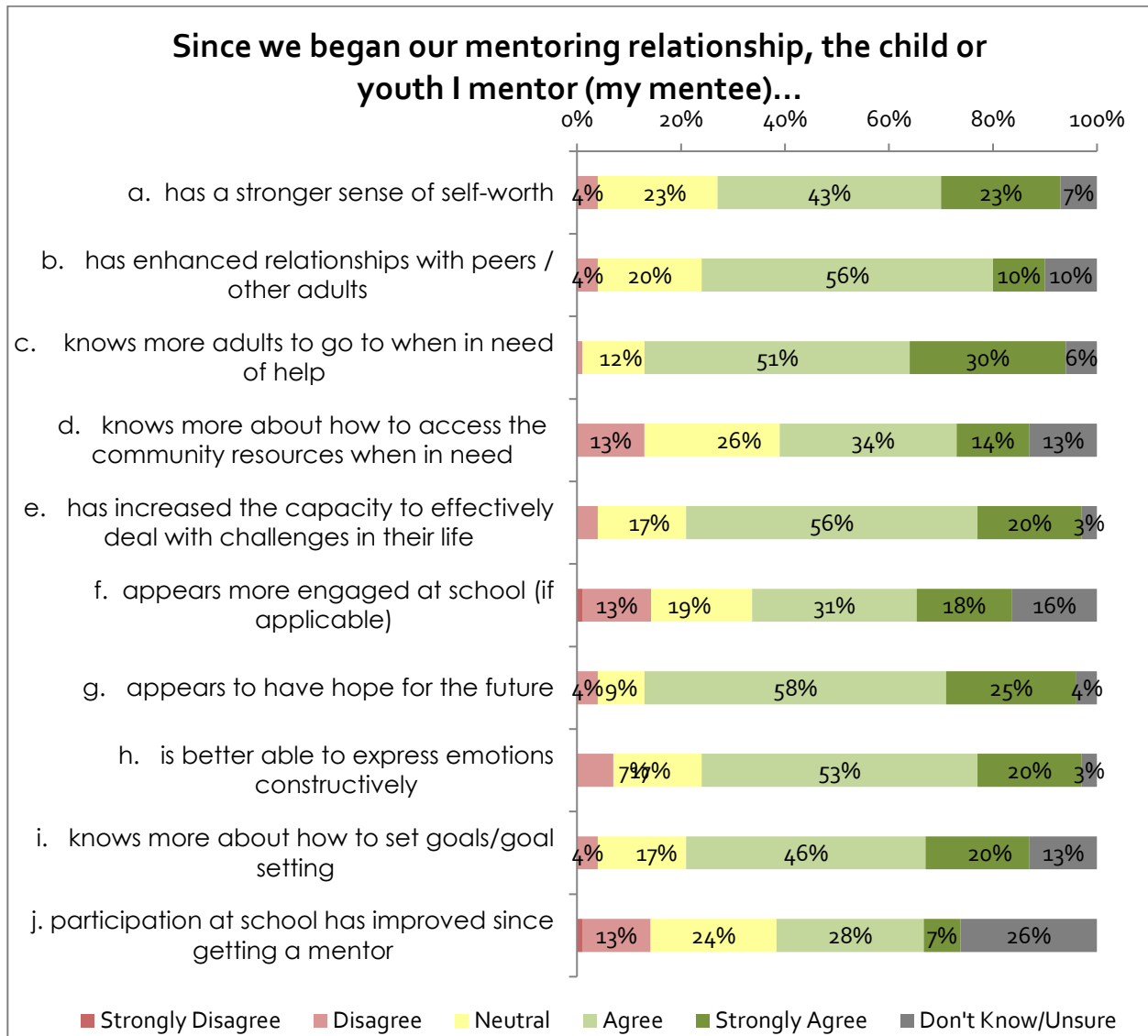
*Note the above chart has had labels of 1% or less removed for ease of viewing.

Mentors were asked questions about their experience with the program and the majority agreed (combining the agree and strongly agree responses): they know who they can call to reach out when they need support (100%); they feel confident in their role as a mentor (100%); they feel like they have made a positive difference in the life of their mentee (96%); the intensity and frequency of the support they receive is sufficient (95%); the volunteer work they do makes their community a better place (94%); the training they received was useful (86%); the volunteer work has helped them feel a sense of belonging to their community (63%); and, they have supported their mentee in accessing community resources (64%). One mentor commented *"She's reluctant to access supports because she doubts they will help. A lot of barriers to community supports unfortunately."*

The following chart summarizes comparison to the questions that were asked in the 2016 survey. Overall, there was both an increase in the number of participants to the survey in both 2019 and 2018 and an increase in positive responding.

| Statement | Agreement % 2016 | Agreement % 2018 | Agreement % 2019 |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I feel confident in my role as a mentor | 94% | 96% | 100% |
| I know who I can call to reach out when I need support | 94% | 98% | 100% |
| The training I received was useful to me in my role as a mentor | 79% | 94% | 86% |
| The intensity and frequency of support I receive from the agency (Big Brothers Big Sisters) is sufficient to make my match successful | 83% | 98% | 95% |

Figure 21. Mentors' agreement with program statements (n=73)



Mentors were asked questions about the child or youth they mentor, since they began their mentoring relationship. The majority of mentors agreed that their mentee appears to have hope for the future (83%); knows more adults to go to when in need of help (81%); is better able to express emotions constructively (73%); has a stronger sense of self-worth (66%); has increased the capacity to effectively deal with challenges in their life (76%); has enhanced relationships with peers or other adults (66%); and, knows more about how to set goals (66%). Less than half agreed the child or youth they mentor appears more engaged at school (49%); knows more about how to access the community resources when in need (48%); and, participation at school has improved (35%). It should be noted that there were fairly high levels of neutral responding for the questions, indicating that perhaps mentors were not aware.

When compared to the results from 2018, there has been a slight increase in positive responding for some questions, and a slight decrease to others (no more than 5% one way or the other). These fluctuations can be explained by the variability in responses and increasing sample size. It should be noted that for the questions with the lowest % of agreement from 2018, there was an increase in positive responding for 2019. Questions in the above section were not asked in the 2016 survey.

In general terms, please describe how your match is going.

Mentors were asked to describe how their match was going and responses were fairly individual to each match, however, mentors commented in general that the matches overwhelmingly were going well. Mentors talked about seeing growth in their mentee, they are having lots of fun together, they are learning together and experiencing new things. When mentors discussed negative aspects, they commented on potential for drug and alcohol abuse, bullying at school, they are having challenges in their life that impact how frequently they can meet, and challenges with the complex family lives their mentees experience.

Example comments:

"I have had health problems recently, but I feel I have provided a positive role model in his life. There has been improvement in his life. Before the match there were concerns he would slide into alcohol/drug abuse or worse."

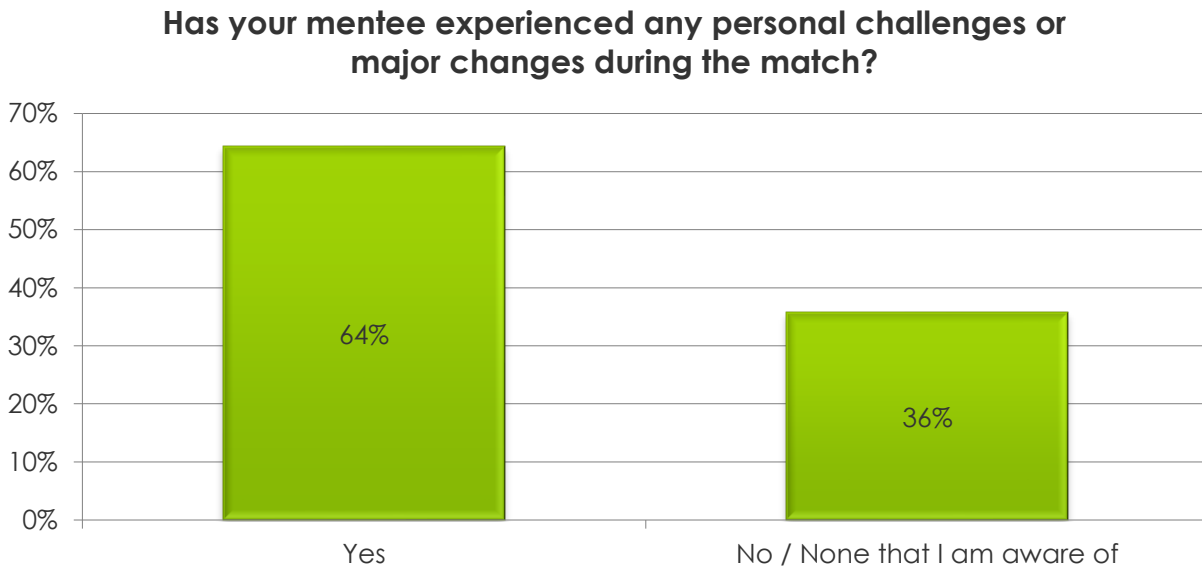
"Match is going great, we have a lot of fun hanging out. Self-confidence has gone up. Still working on the struggle with school as she gets bullied regularly."

"Very well! My mentee seems to enjoy our time together. She had come out of her shell more and shares many things about her life with me. She seems happy overall and well adjusted to the changes she is facing. I believe she feels safe with me and able to talk to me about her day to day life. We have fun together!"

"It had taken a long time for him to open up and start to trust me. But in recent month I hear a lot more from him and he is sharing about his life. We talk about situations and process the emotions surrounding them."

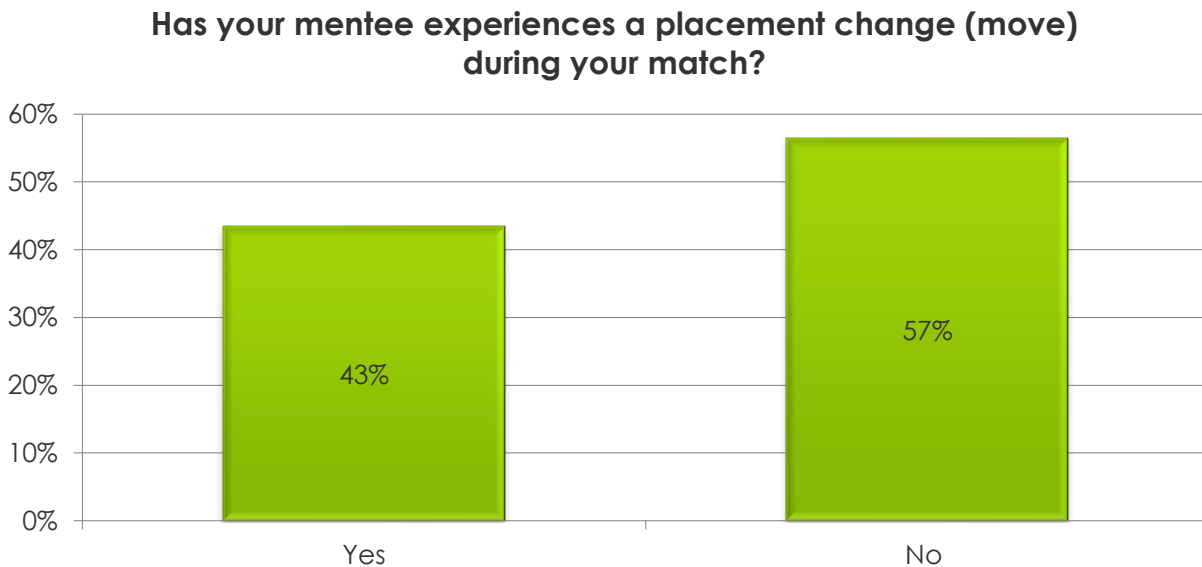
"Although her life and circumstances is a series of constant ups and downs (mostly downs), our relationship remains constant and she knows she can call me for help. She has a difficult time maintaining good friendships and doesn't really recognize when bad friends are taking advantage of her. The least I can offer is unconditional friendship. My hope is that it will eventually sink in that this is what healthy relationships should look like."

Figure 22. Mentors' indication of mentee's personal challenges (n=70)



Mentors were asked to indicate if their mentee has experienced any personal challenges or major changes during the match. The majority indicated they had (64%) and when asked to provide comments, noted: movement between group homes (x3); family challenges (x3); teen pregnancy (x1); moving (x3); and, Children’s Services involvement (x2).

Figure 23. Mentors' indication of mentee's placement change (n=69)



Mentors were asked to indicate if their mentee experienced a placement change during the match. A little less than half of respondents indicated they had (43%); and more than half had not (57%).

Example Comments:

"They moved from a women's shelter back to step dads, she switched schools."

"She has experienced numerous moves (challenges with landlords, leases, bed bugs, mice);

started new anxiety medication; deaths in the family (including challenges with lawyers/inheritance); unemployment; challenges with school/learning (being removed from the program as a result)."

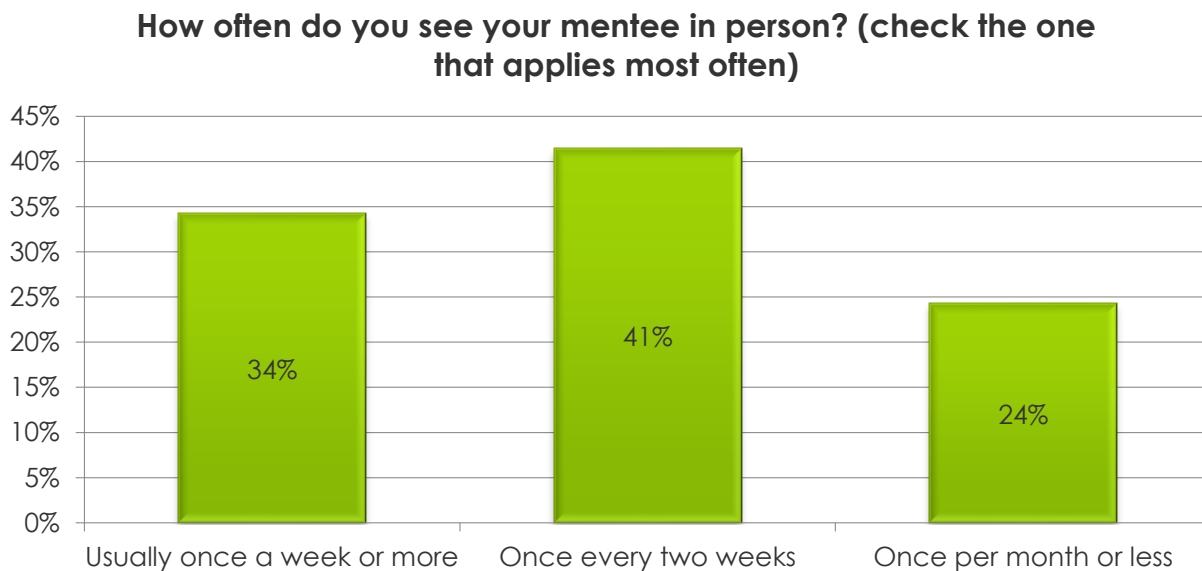
For those that had, they were asked how they were made aware of the move and noted the following:

- ❖ The mentee (x12);
- ❖ A parent or family member (x9); and,
- ❖ The coordinator or BBBS (x8).

What kinds of activities do you do with your mentee?

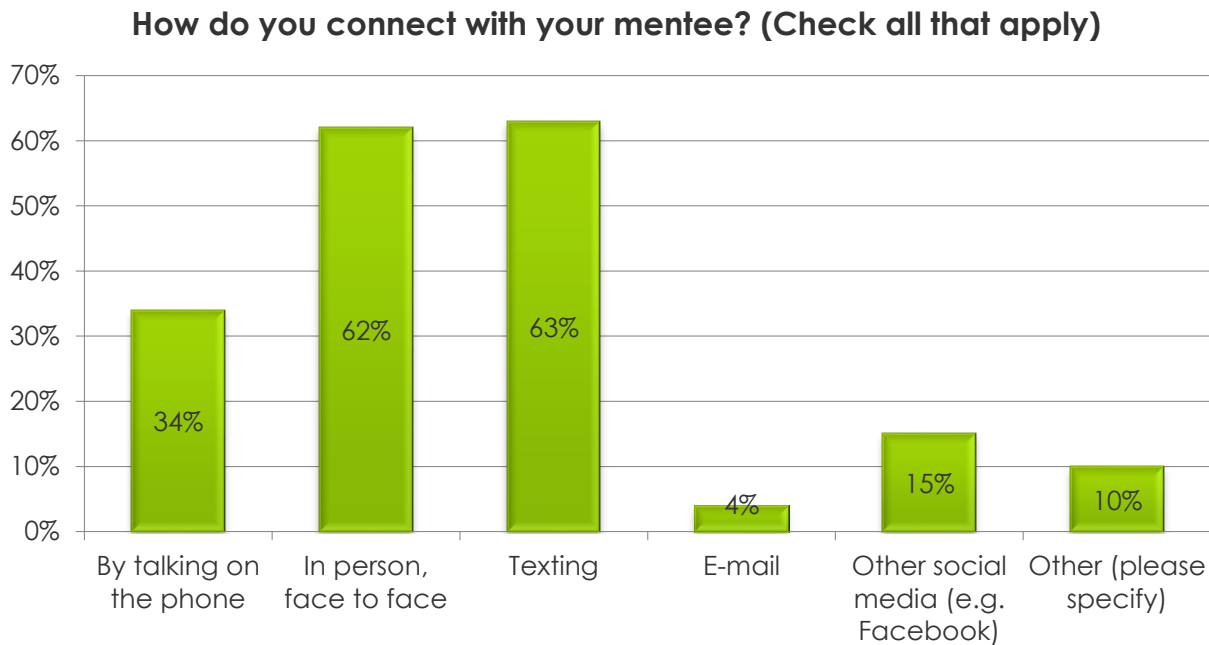
Mentors were asked what kind of activities they do with their mentees and commented a range of responses that were quite comprehensive and individual to each mentor. In general, mentors talked about doing exercise or sport activities together, going for meals and cooking together, seeing movies, doing crafts, shopping, doing errands, playing music, attending match events or family gatherings and just talking.

Figure 24. How often mentor sees mentee (n=70)



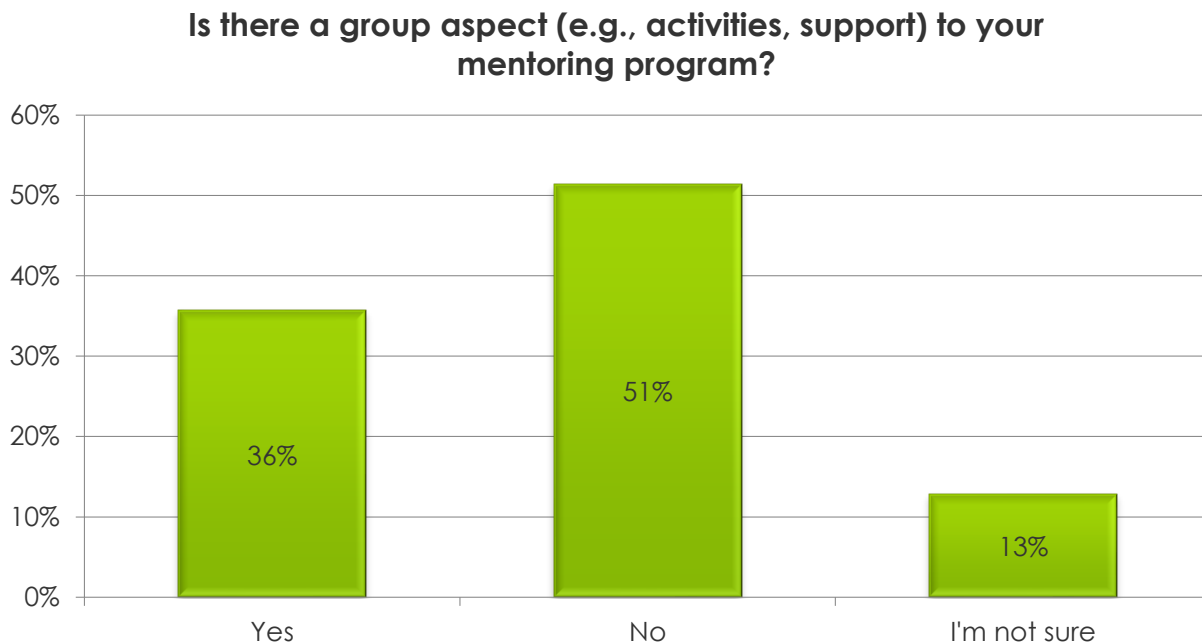
Mentors were asked how often they see their mentee in person, and the majority noted they see them once every two weeks (41%); followed by usually once a week or more (34%) and once per month or less (24%). Responses were the same trend as those in 2018.

Figure 25. How mentor connects with mentee (n=73)



Mentors were asked how they connect with their mentee. Most noted they connect by texting (63%); followed by in person (62%); talking on the phone (34%); social media (15%); 'other' (10%); and, email (4%). Those that selected 'other' noted texting the parent (x5) online video games (x1) or snapchat (x1).

Figure 26. Indication of group mentoring to support mentee (n=47)



Mentors were asked if there is a group aspect to their mentoring program. The majority (53%) noted there was not (51%) while 36% noted there was and 13% were not sure. This was a shift from 2018, when the majority noted there was a group aspect to their mentoring program (53%). Future surveys will ask "do you attend match events?".

Have you seen a change in your mentee since the start of the match? If so, what change? (n=73)

Mentors were asked if they have seen a change in their mentee since the start of the match. All participants noted they had seen a change, with the exception of six, who noted they had not really noticed a change, there had been increasing challenges in their life or it was too early to tell.

For those that specified what they had noticed, they tended to comment about their mentee trusting them more, developing a stronger relationship with them or doing more things together. They also commented on their mentee being more positive, being more open, more respectful of boundaries and learning new things. Mentors also commented on the increasing confidence they have noticed in their mentee and their ability to see a new perspective.

Example comments:

"Yes, she has become much more patient, and understanding when plans suddenly change. We have developed such a trust between each other that she knows I will always be there to support her, even if I need to cancel our plans from time to time; I'll always come back."

"Absolutely. I've seen her reach several goals (obtaining license and employment) and build healthy relationships with co-workers. Most of all I've seen her obtain some hope for her future. I'm really proud of her."

"He's more open with me about his feelings and how his family relationships are going. I could tell he seemed embarrassed at first about this situation, but I told him how similar his experience currently is to how mine was at his age. He's a lot more relaxed and more mindful about his feelings and his current situation which is nice to see."

"Yes, self-confidence is going up and she is comfortable talking to me about issues at school and what's going on in her life. Super well behaved in public spaces."

"She keeps her eye open when she talks to me, she has become more engaged in school activities, her reading has improved a ton."

"Small changes here and there; she appears to trust me more and she has just started recently telling me she loves me. She seems happier and maybe a little bit less stressed because she knows I'm here for her."

Are you experiencing any challenges in your match? If so, how have you managed those challenges? (n=73)

Mentors were asked if they were experiencing any challenges in their match and if so, how they have managed those challenges. Generally speaking, respondents commented primarily on family challenges their mentee experiences due to complexities, having emotional experiences or behavioural challenges, career changes or scheduling challenges between the mentor and mentee. One noted a challenge with the mentee's family's acceptance of the youth coming out as transgender. Mentors also commented on the challenges getting their mentee to open up, to find activities to do together that are interesting, and in some cases, the mental health status of their mentee.

Example comments:

"I would say my mentee faces a lot of challenges. I help her navigate those. It has gotten easier to do that over the years, and the help of my coordinator has been instrumental. My most recent challenge was setting boundaries on my level of interaction with her while she is high."

"Just the lack of engagement overall. I will be talking with her when I see her next."

"My mentee struggles with some severe mental health issues, so suicide ideations surfacing were very common up until a few months ago. This took a toll on me emotionally as I was always worried about her. Having a relationship with [match coordinator] has been helpful as sometimes I've needed to debrief and appreciate other perspectives."

"My little came out as transgender within the time of our match and his [parent] is not supportive of his chosen gender. I had to find a way to balance being supportive of my mentee while also respecting [parent] wishes (for example referring to my mentee by his birth name instead of his preferred name when texting his [parent]). The match coordinator was helpful in this process as she spoke to everyone separately to make sure everyone was comfortable."

"Yes. She lives far away so we don't get to connect very often. We make it up by spending the entire day together when we can connect."

What have been some of the successes in your match? (n=73)

Mentors were asked to identify some of the successes of their match and most mentors commented on items related to building a trusting relationship with their mentee that allows them to be comfortable and to share experiences. Mentors also talked about increasing confidence of their mentee, having increased communication, seeing a change in attitude of their mentee and setting and achieving goals.

Example comments:

"My mentee never wanted to go to high school and now she talks about one day going to post-secondary. She also has stopped allowing her friends to bully her."

"I think I've helped her have some consistency and stability in a relationship. She has a hard time with developing and maintaining relationships, so I've been trying to role model a positive and healthy relationship"

"The fact that he was ok with opening up about his parents. I could tell it was hard for him but once he realized he could trust me and knowing that my experiences were similar, he opened up a lot."

"Just watching her have fun and be happy every time they hang out."

"Although I believe mental health will continue to be a struggle for my mentee, I do feel like she has built trust in adults and has felt cared for, listened to and supported. I think this contributes to a healthier emotional state for her overall."

What would you tell other potential mentors who would like to mentor a child or youth in care? (n=46)

Mentors were asked what they would tell potential mentors who would like to mentor a child or youth in care and provided fairly individual comments. Mentors talked about being committed and involved to the child or youth, it's worth giving back to the community, it makes a difference in the life of the child or youth, it is a mutually beneficial relationship and that overall it is a great experience.

Example comments:

"That it is a great experience and they should do it if they have the chance to and are passionate about making a difference in a youth's life."

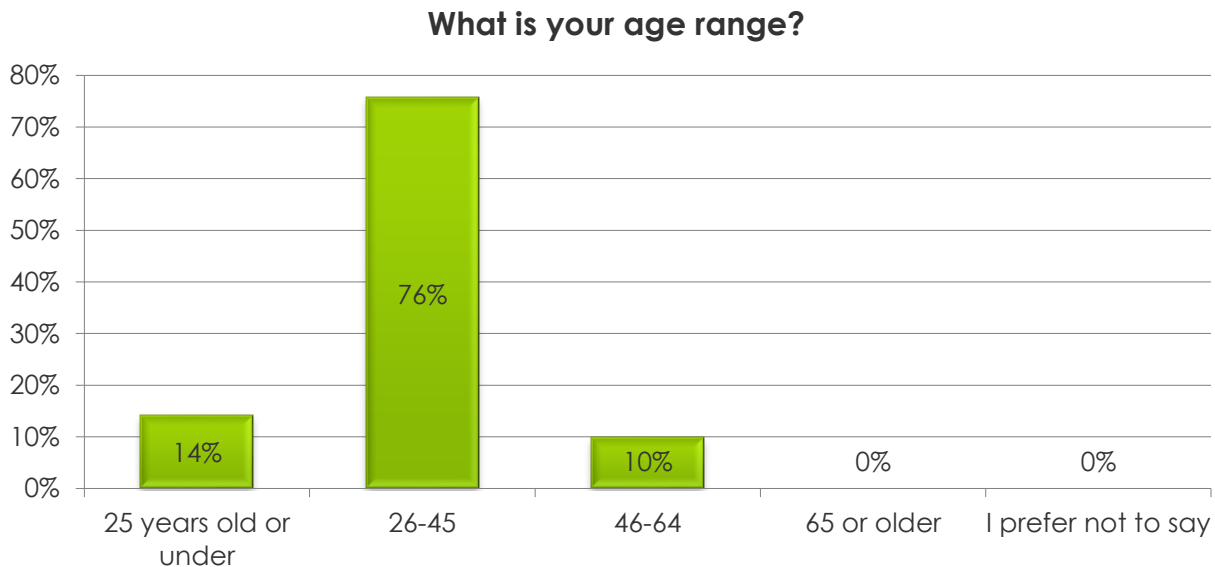
"DO IT!!!! I have received far more from my little than I ever imagined. She's taught me about resiliency, strength, her culture and the true meaning of unconditional love."

"It's a lot to navigate so it's important you participate in the training and keep in touch with your facilitator. Kids often have a lot of trauma so it's important to be trauma-informed and be consistent, honest and hopeful. Call out their goodness and don't give up on them."

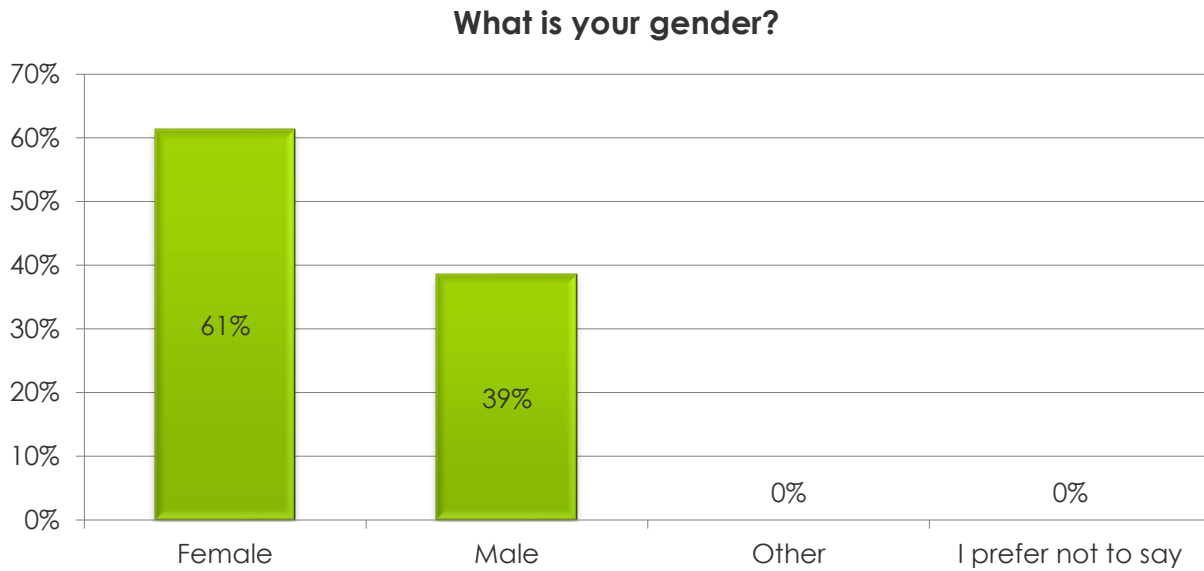
"I think that the hardest part is getting started but if you trust the process and go in looking to help you will be amazed at what you have to offer."

Mentor Demographic Information

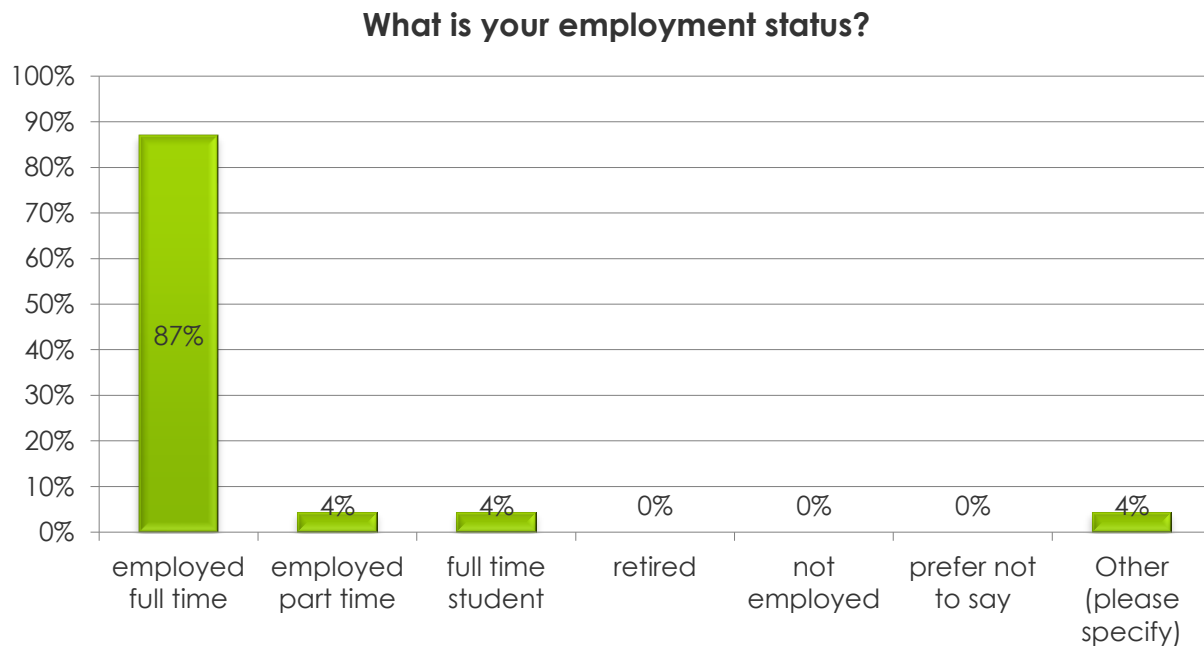
Figure 27. Mentors' age (n=70)



The majority of mentors noted they were between the ages of 26 to 65 (76%).

Figure 28. Mentors' gender (n=70)

The majority of mentors noted they were female (61%), while 39% were male.

Figure 29. Mentors' employment status (n=50)

When asked their employment status, the majority of mentors noted they were employed fulltime (87%); followed by employed part time (4%), fulltime student (4%); and, 'other' (12%). For those that indicated 'other' they noted: full time student and part time work (x2); and, casual employee (x1).

What is your profession?

Mentors were asked about the specific professions they have. Participants provided a huge variation of responses, demonstrating the reach of the program. Responses could not be themed, so examples are

provided here: Mentors noted they were electricians, nurses, police officers, engineers, managers, social workers, administrative support, dentists, teachers and specialists.

4. Conclusion

Overall, the mentors noted strong support of the program and reported successes in their matches. The challenges that were identified were often caveated that the agency had been very supportive. The mentor survey results demonstrate mentors believe the program makes a difference for their mentees, and their time is well spent making improvement in outcomes related to building trusting relationships, improvements in confidence and skill and in improving school or behavioural outcomes. Results were similar demographically when compared to both 2018 and 2016, however there was an increase in the number of respondents in 2019. There were several additional questions added to the 2018 survey from 2016 and this was duplicated in 2019. The results for this administration of the survey demonstrate the increasing trend of positive responses and increased attainment of outcomes.

5. Next Steps

1. Revise Survey:

Some survey questions will be revised for future use. Specifically, mentees agreement with program statements (figure 9) will include a “don’t know” or “not applicable” statement for those not currently in school. Both the mentee and mentor questions of “how long have you been matched” will have additional options added to demonstrate the increased length of matches (e.g. one to two year, two to three years and three or more years). The mentor training question (figure 21) will be split to ask what training was received prior to being matched and since being matched. The question “Is there a group aspect to your mentoring program?” (figure 26) will be changed to “Do you attend match events?”.

2. Update Summaries:

The snapshot summary of findings prepared in 2018 will be updated and distributed to the Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Advisory Committee, the Alberta Mentoring Partnership Leadership Team and to sites for sharing with mentors and mentees.

3. Explore Photo Voice:

The Chair of the Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Advisory Committee and the Evaluator will explore using Photo Voice as a way to gain more in-depth qualitative data that further illustrate outcomes to do with well-being.