

Background Information

- Summer camp provides opportunities for children to **develop independence, social skills and the ability to self-regulate** by managing their emotional and behavioral responses to the environment^{1,2}
 - Counselors and staff are crucial to campers' experiences and participation³
 - **Club Rec**, the summer camp run by the Arlington Recreation Department, **aims to provide safe, fun and inclusive programming** for all campers⁴
 - Since 2021, Tufts University Department of Occupational Therapy has worked with Club Rec to support its programming, operations and inclusion practices
 - **2021:** Review of Club Rec's inclusion practices^{5,6}
 - **2022:** Club Rec Inclusion Director; Inclusion training for staff⁷
 - The 2023 project was developed from recommendations for **additional staff training** around supporting and engaging campers during **downtime and transitions** and **increased collaboration with caregivers** to ensure Club Rec is prepared to support participation of all campers
- 2023 Aims:**
1. Train staff on self-regulation practices & introduce techniques to identify & support campers' self-regulatory responses & social-emotional skills
 2. Engage campers in self-regulation & social-emotional skill development through programming and activities

Procedures



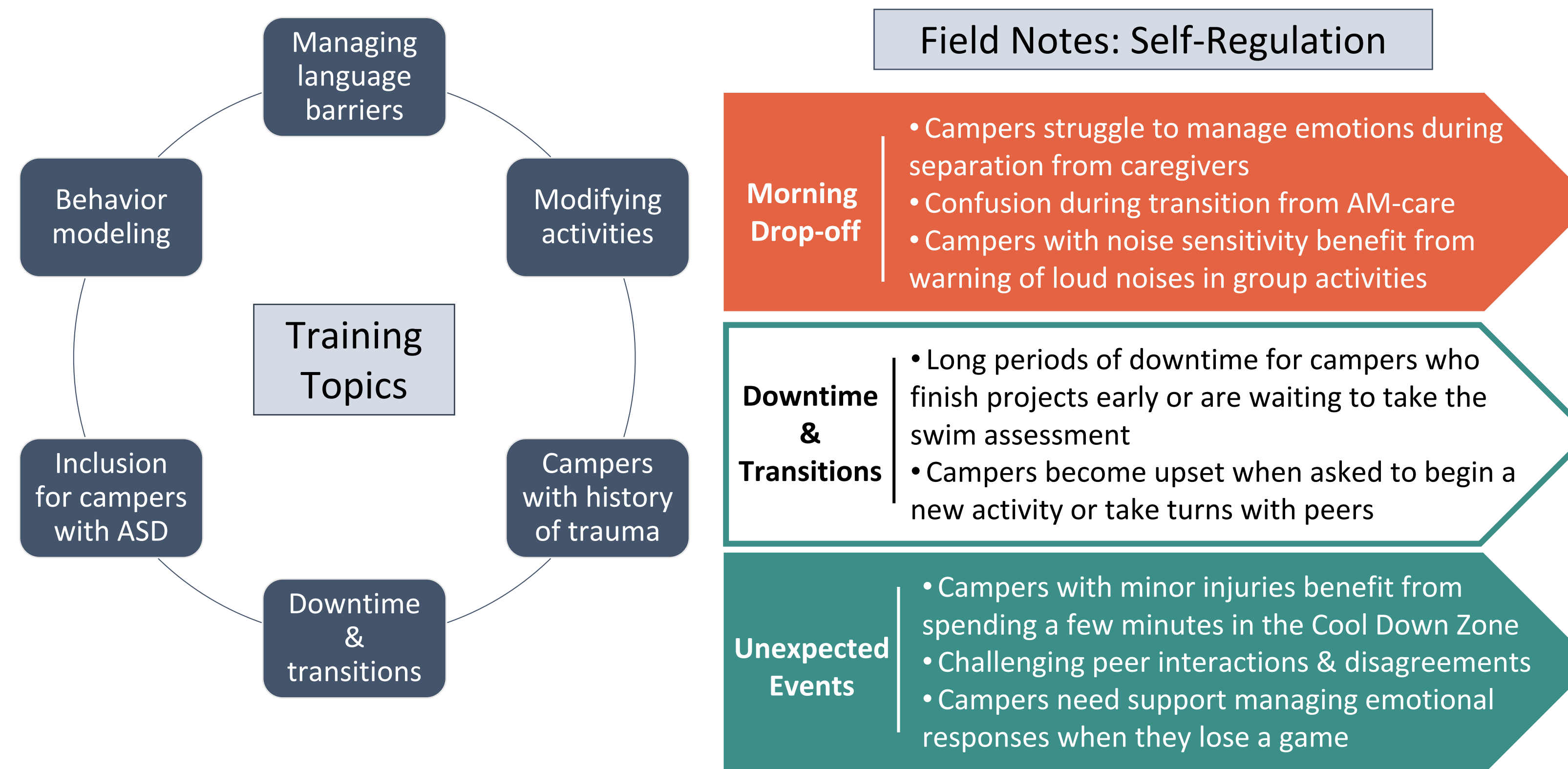
Staff surveys gathered data around knowledge of topics related to self-regulation, confidence in supporting camper participation, ability to implement new strategies, and interest in inclusive programming.

Staff	Camp Resources	Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre/Post/Post Qualtrics survey • Inclusion & self-regulation training • 1:1 coaching & in-the-moment support • Observation notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool Down Zones (CDZ)⁸ • Downtime & transition supports • Evidence-based activities for self-regulation (i.e. DIY fidgets & calm jars)⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camper registration form prompt on supporting camper participation • Communication between staff and caregivers around camper behavior

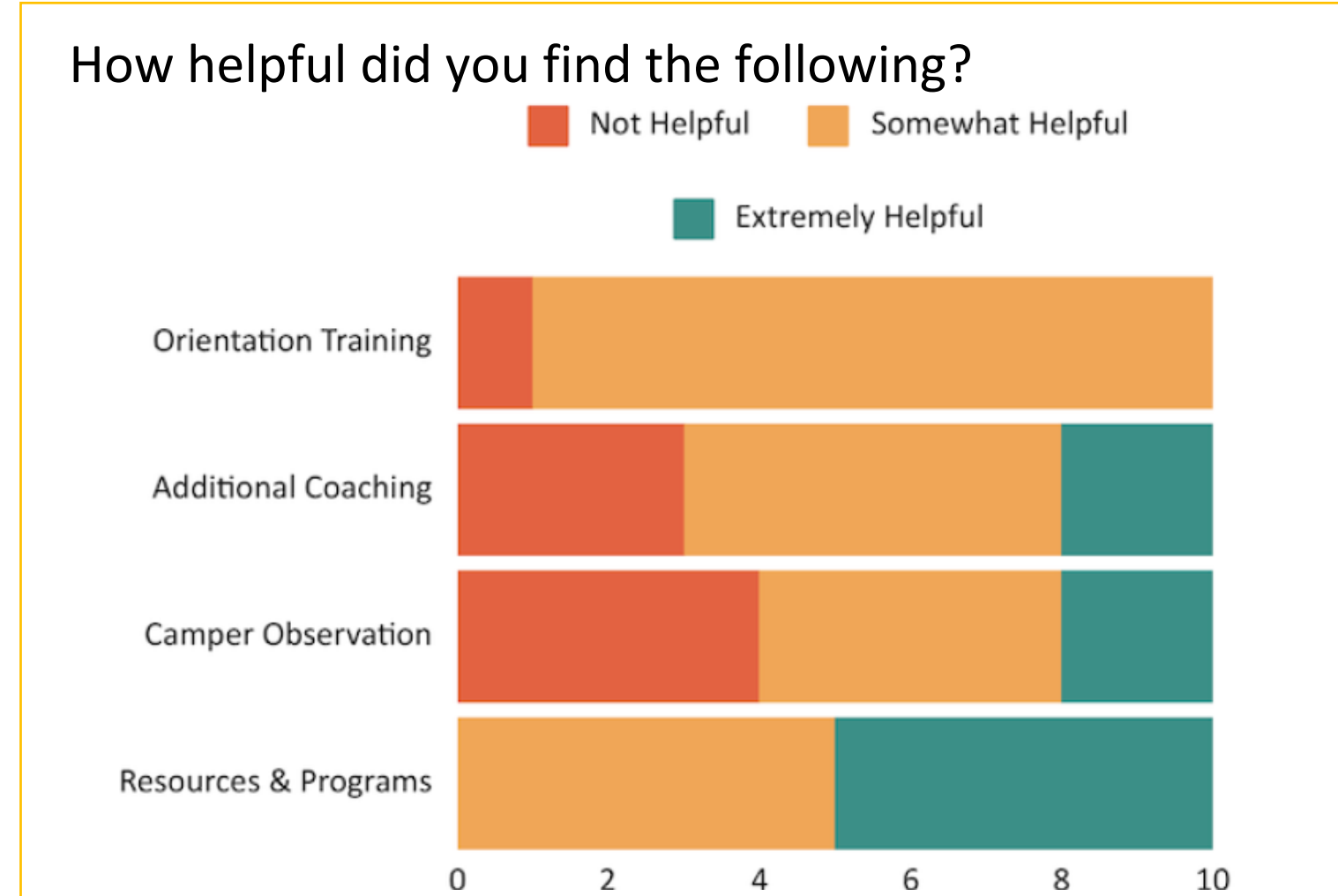
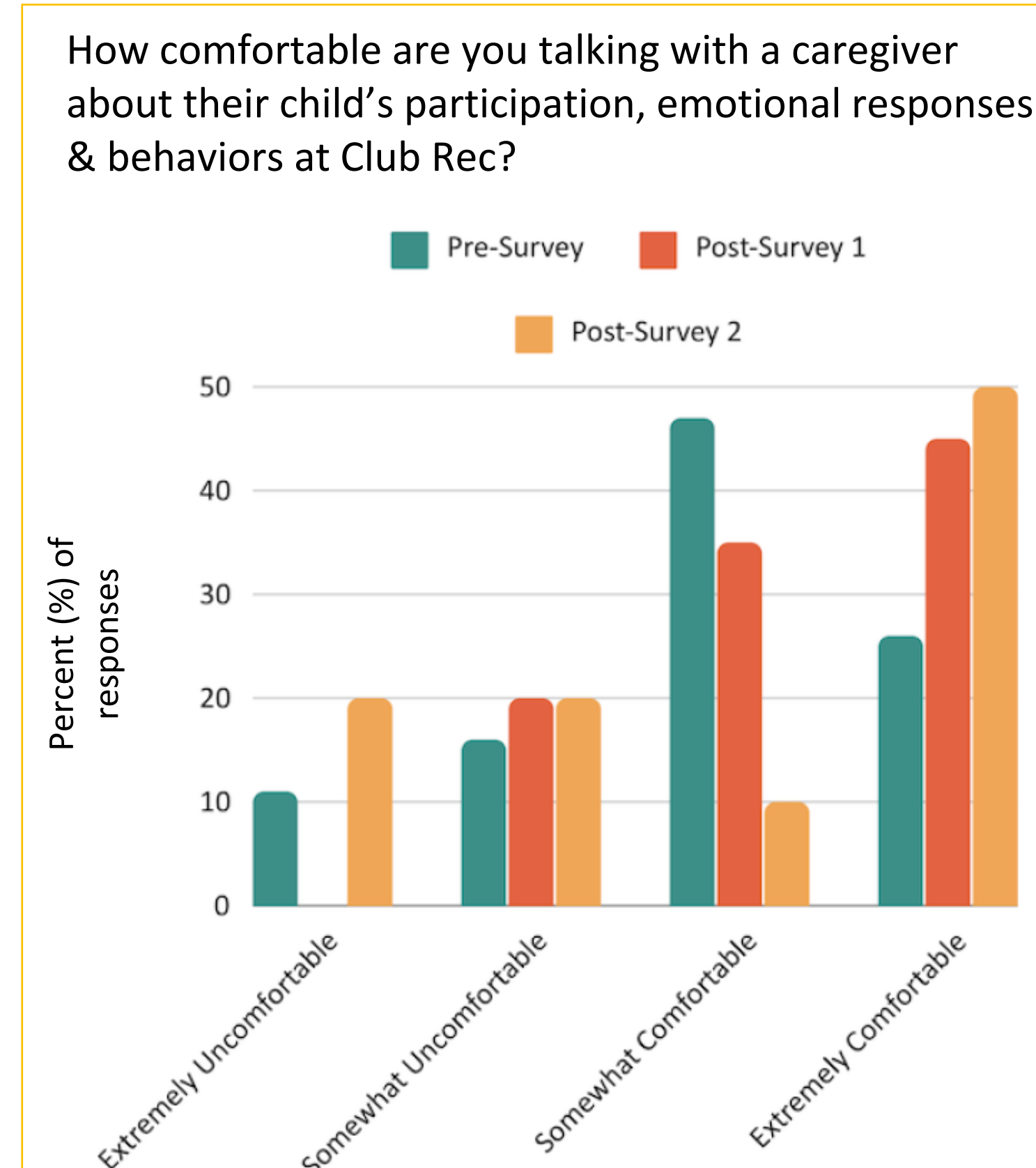
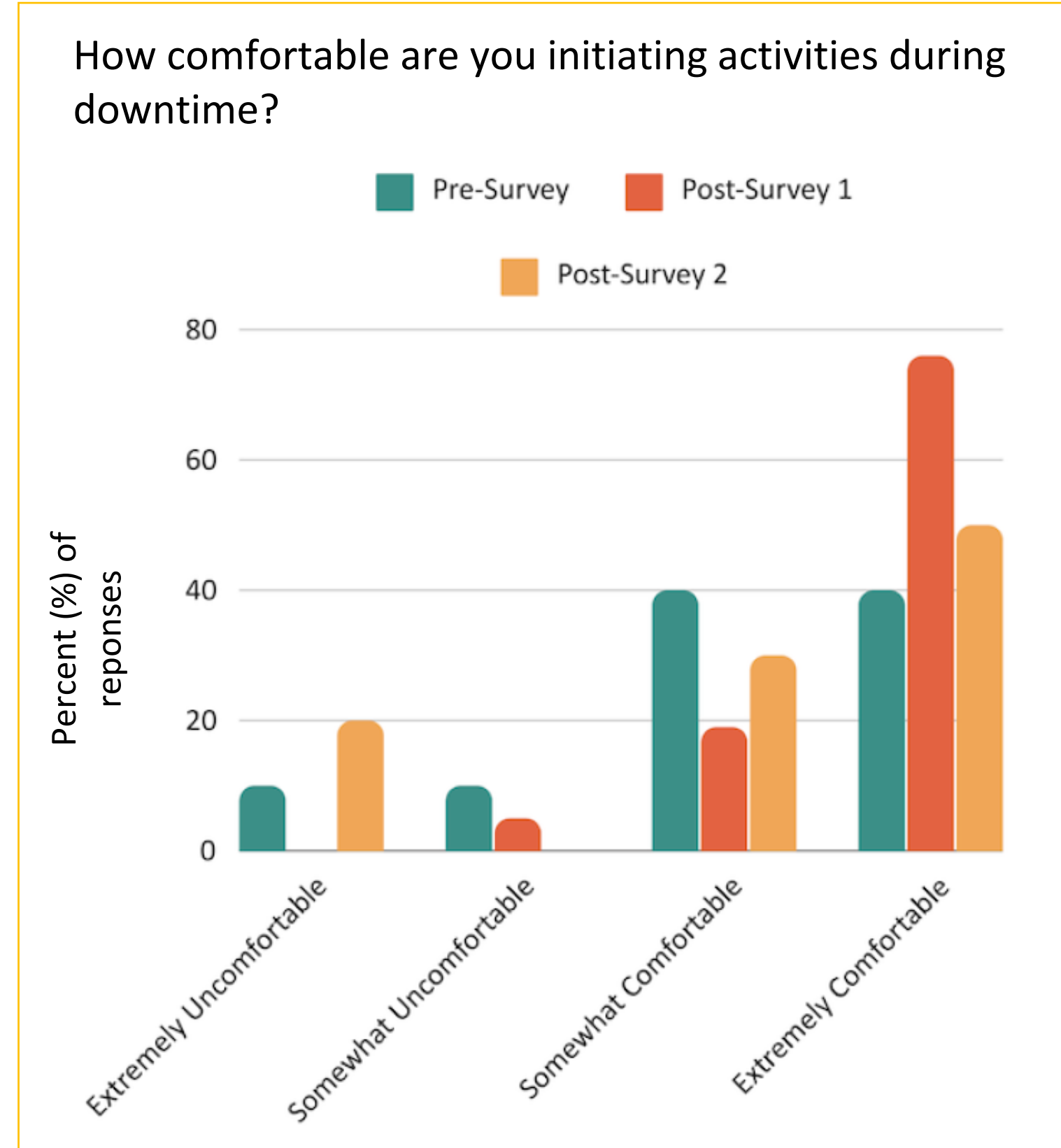
Participants

- Participants:** Campers+, Counselors*, Activity Specialists*, Camp Director*, Camp Assistant Directors*, Parents/Guardians+ (* = surveys, observations, & interactions; + = observations & interactions)
- Inclusion criteria:**
- Counselors & staff: Ages 15-30; Work at Club Rec for the entire duration of Summer 2023; Attend the original staff orientation and training
 - Campers: Grades K-5 (Ages 4-11); Attend Club Rec for at least 1 session (of 8)
- Staff demographics:**
- 50% between 15-17 years old
 - 67% of staff are new to Club Rec in 2023
 - 50% of new staff have experience with children in a recreational setting

Results



Staff Survey Results



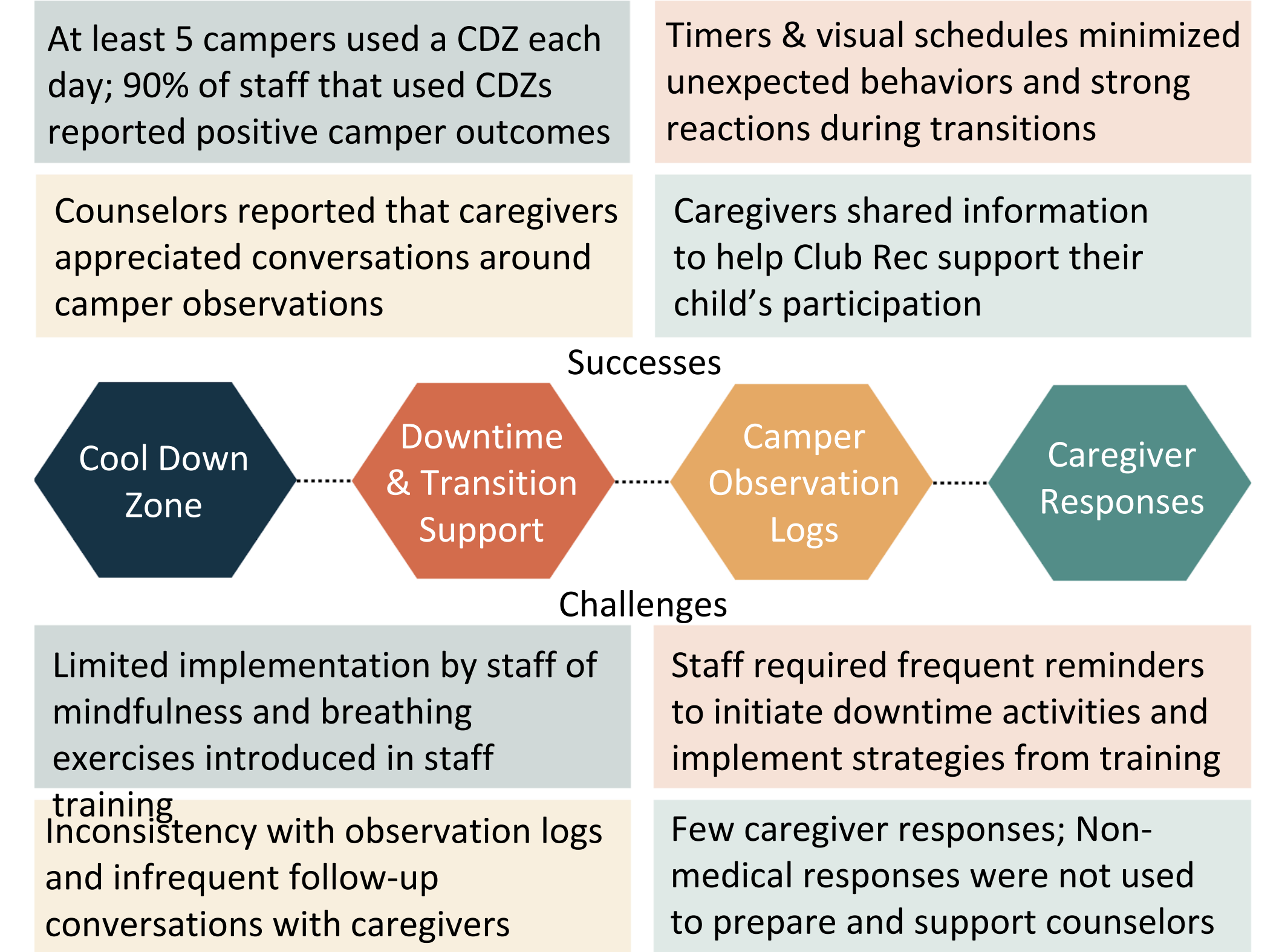
Pre-survey: 24 responses; 1st Post-survey: 19 responses; 2nd Post-survey: 10 responses (+6 incomplete responses)

- Staff and counselors demonstrated an **increase in knowledge of concepts related to self-regulation**
- **80%** of survey participants **Definitely agree** and another **10-15%** of participants **Probably agree** that **counselors and staff positively affect campers' behaviors and ability to manage their emotions**

References & Resources:



Program Development & Review



Future Considerations

- Topics for staff training:**
- Strategies for working with children with ADHD
 - Navigating conversations with caregivers
 - Additional coaching and support for new staff members
- Limitations:**
- Decrease in number of surveys completed from the 2nd to the 3rd survey may be result of staff burn-out or decrease in motivation at the end of the summer. Some of the results may not accurately depict counselor and staff views due to a smaller sample size for the final survey.
 - Some staff did not complete the initial pre-survey

Recommendations

- Staff training and development:**
1. **Counselor engagement & motivation**
 - Focus-groups around expectations of working at camp and motivations
 - Team-leads assigned for each age group to support counselors with completing observation logs and supporting team morale
 2. **Specialist coaching**
 - Activity modifications
 - Planning and leading
 3. **Leadership team training** (director, assistant directors, inclusion director)
 - Professionalism, feedback, behavior modeling, strengths-based approach
 - Prepare them to effectively lead and give feedback to counselors and staff
 - Clearly define roles and expectations
- Caregiver communication & interaction:**
1. **Questions on registration forms and caregiver survey**
 2. **Weekly updates from counselors using camper observation notes**
 3. **Club Rec welcome/introduction video for new campers**

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