

Introduction & Literature Review

SITE DESCRIPTION

Walnut Street Center Inc., (WSC) is a nonprofit human services agency that provides day habilitation and community support programs for adults with intellectual disabilities.

This Capstone took place in the art and activities program.


Participating in art activities fosters cognitive, emotional, and social benefits, for individuals with cognitive impairments, and **improves creativity, independence and self awareness**.^{6,7}

Engaging in art activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing stress. It offers a non-verbal platform for exploring emotions, coping with challenges, and connecting with one's inner self.⁸

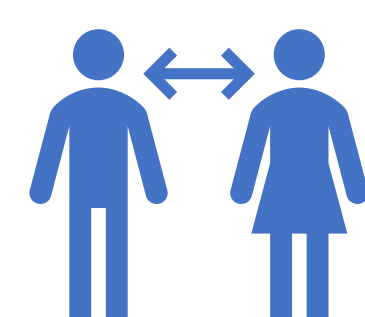
Self-determination skills are crucial for adolescents and adults with disabilities. They enhance ability to navigate challenges in education, career, and life. These skills empower individuals to make choices, solve problems, and achieve personal goals^{3,9}.

Gap & Need

WSC is currently seeking assistance in providing adequate support for staff and participants to increase participant engagement and higher staff satisfaction.



Adults with ID have difficulty expressing thoughts and feelings verbally¹.



May display as maladaptive behaviors (e.g., **agitated, aggressive, and self-injurious behaviors**) which disrupt social relationships¹.

Purpose:

To assess the development of skills learned through the long-term art project, relating to self-determination, self-confidence, and emotional regulation.

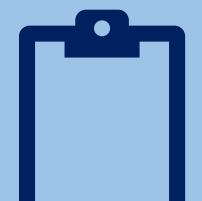
Aim 1:

To identify skills gained during a long-term collaborative art project at the WSC.


Aim 2:

To develop an Activity Book for staff facilitation of the WSC art program through an OT lens.


Methods



Participant & Staff Surveys



Long-Term Collaborative Art Project



Integrated Art Classes

6 Quantitative Items

- 2 self-determination
- 2 self-confidence
- 1 emotional regulation

Multi-Modal Mosaic

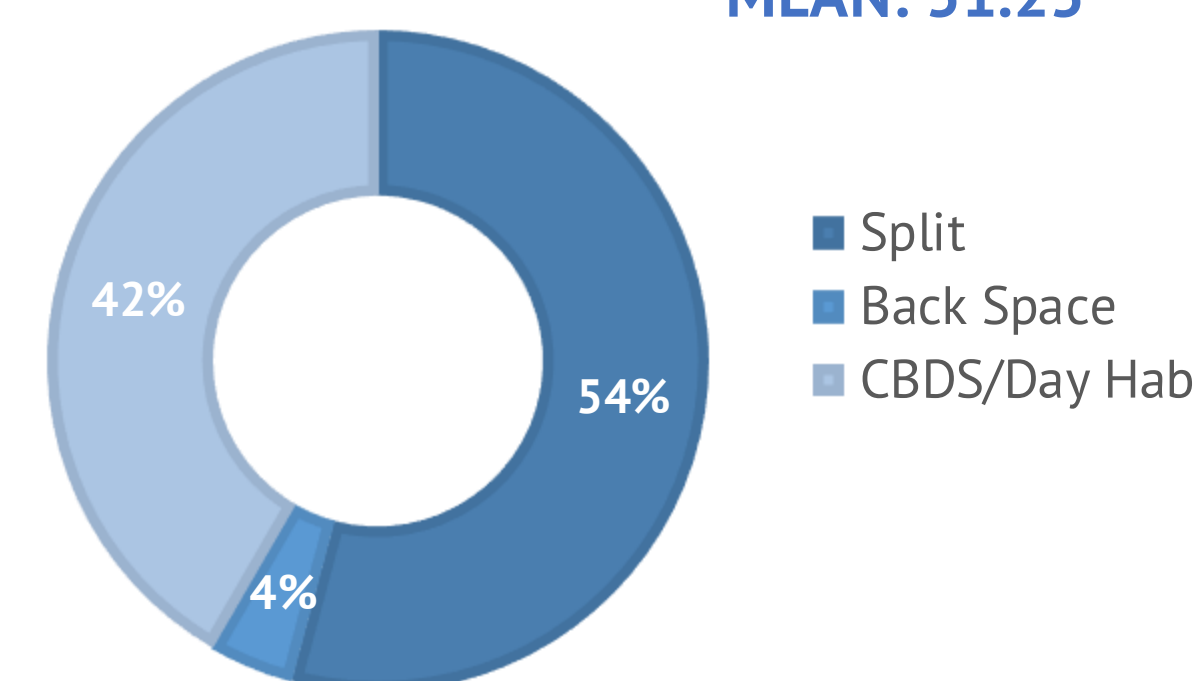
- 4 Week Project
- Small groups consisting of 4-6 individuals

1-1.5 Hour classes

- N = 10 / class
- Recruitment for project

Results

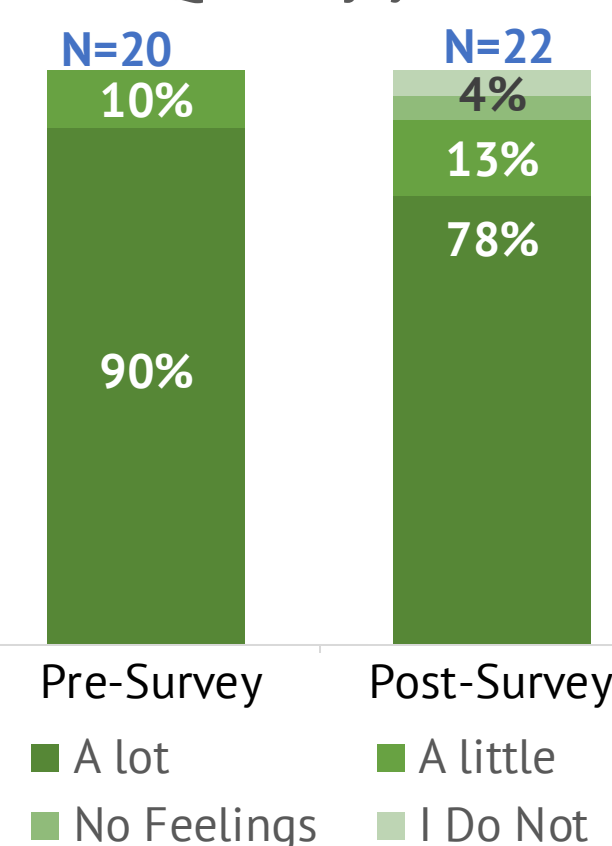
PARTICIPANTS N = 24 **AGE RANGE: 23-65**
MEAN: 51.25



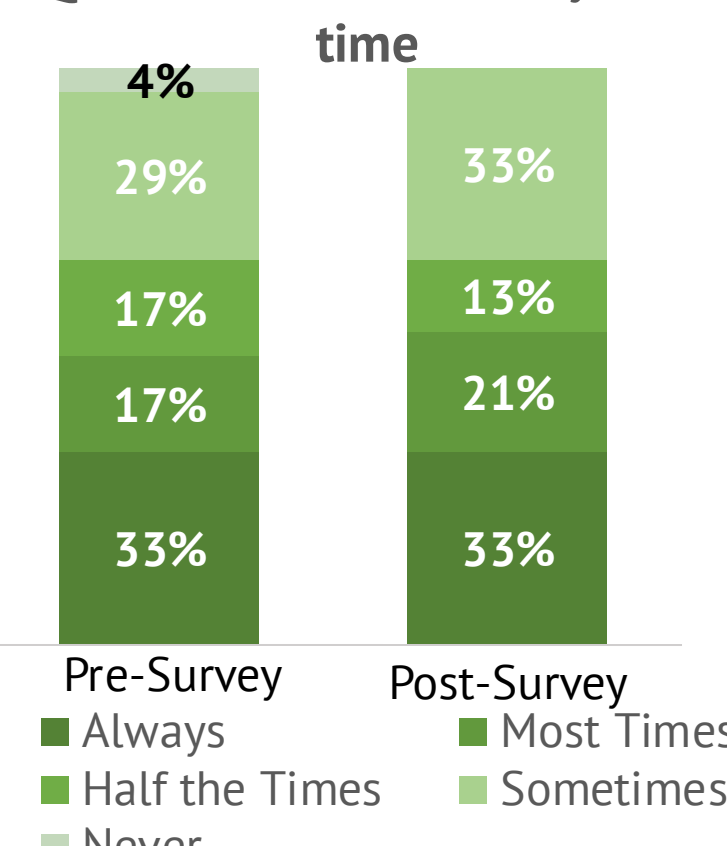
KEY FINDINGS:

- **Decreased Enjoyment:** Slight decrease in enjoyment of art, with 3% more individuals reporting "A little" of enjoyment post-survey.
- **Enhanced Confidence:** Confidence in trying new art activities increased by 13%, with more participants reporting feeling "Little Confident" post-survey.
- **Less Control:** Participants felt less control over their art choices post-survey, with a decrease in "Complete Control" and "A lot of control".
- **Consistent Engagement:** Participants maintained a consistent level of engagement in art activities, with most responding "sometimes" or "most times".
- **Positive Moods:** Moods remained largely positive, with a majority reporting being "happy".

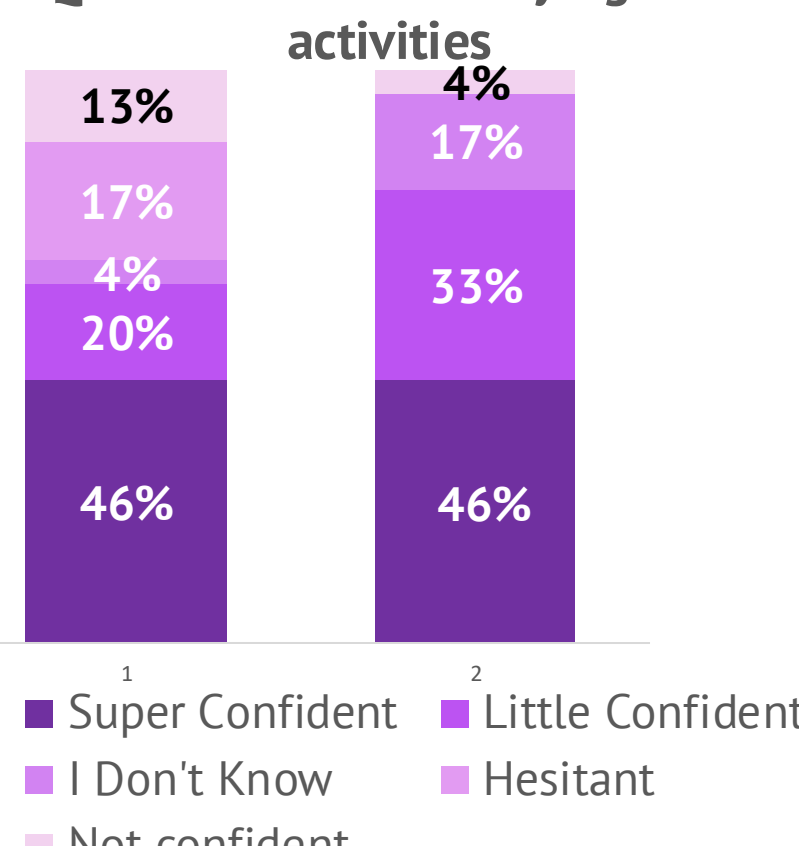
Q1: I Enjoy Art This Much:



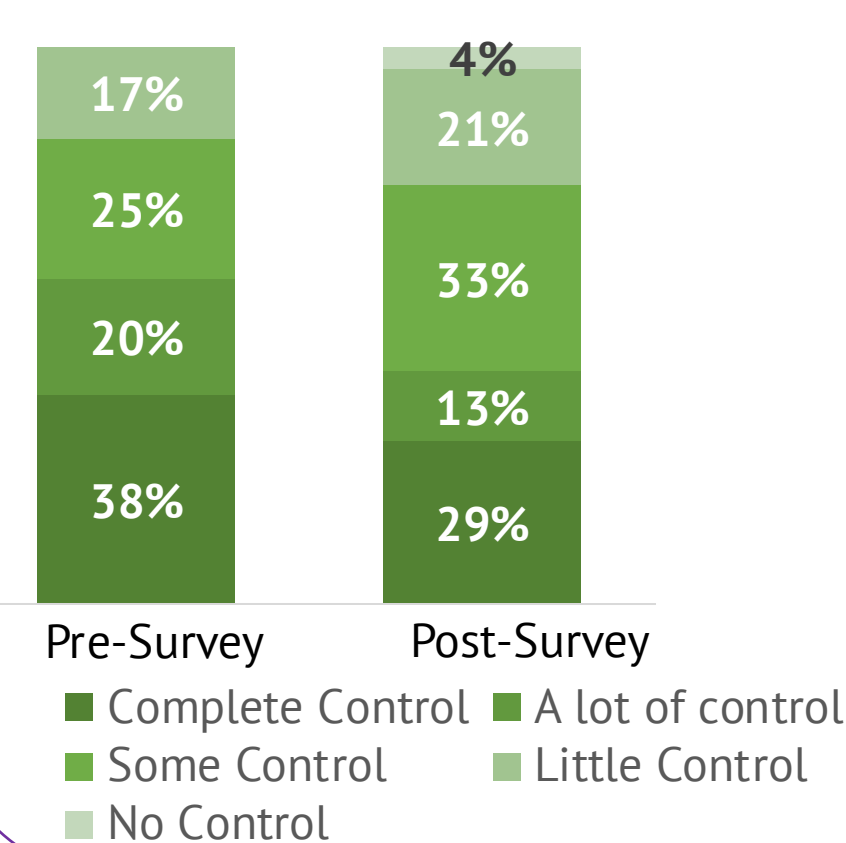
Q2: I like to do art in my free time



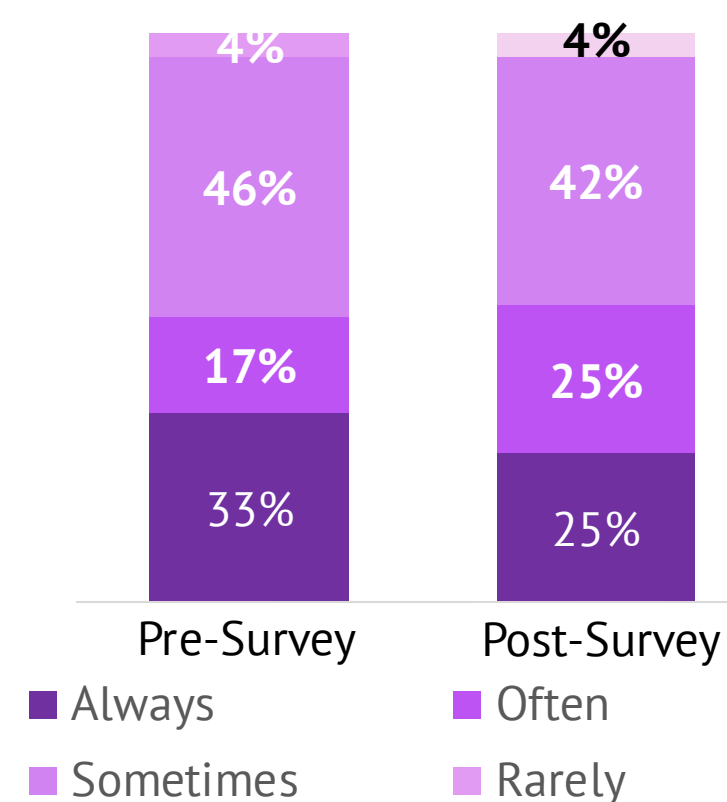
Q3: I feel confident trying new activities



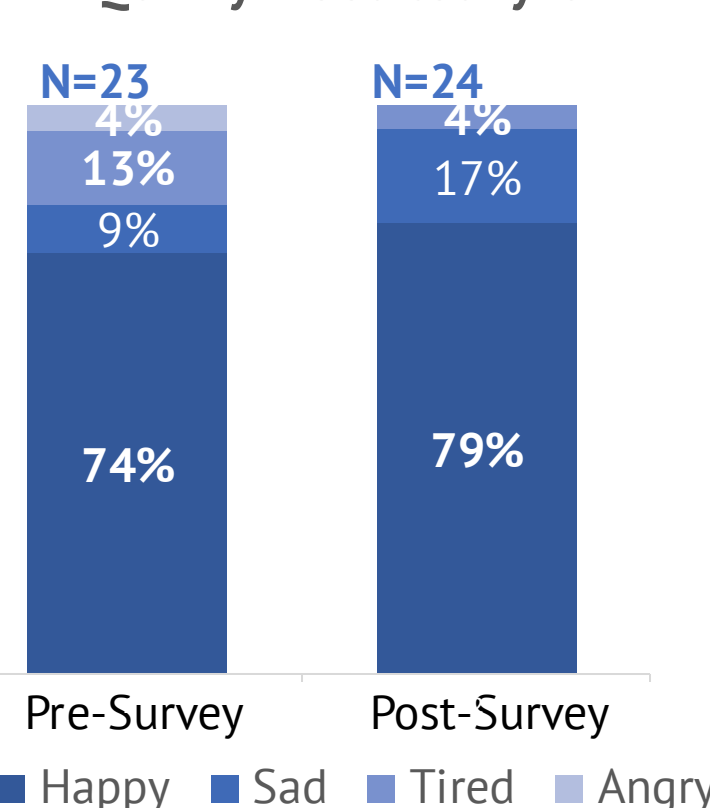
Q4: How much do I control the choices I make in art



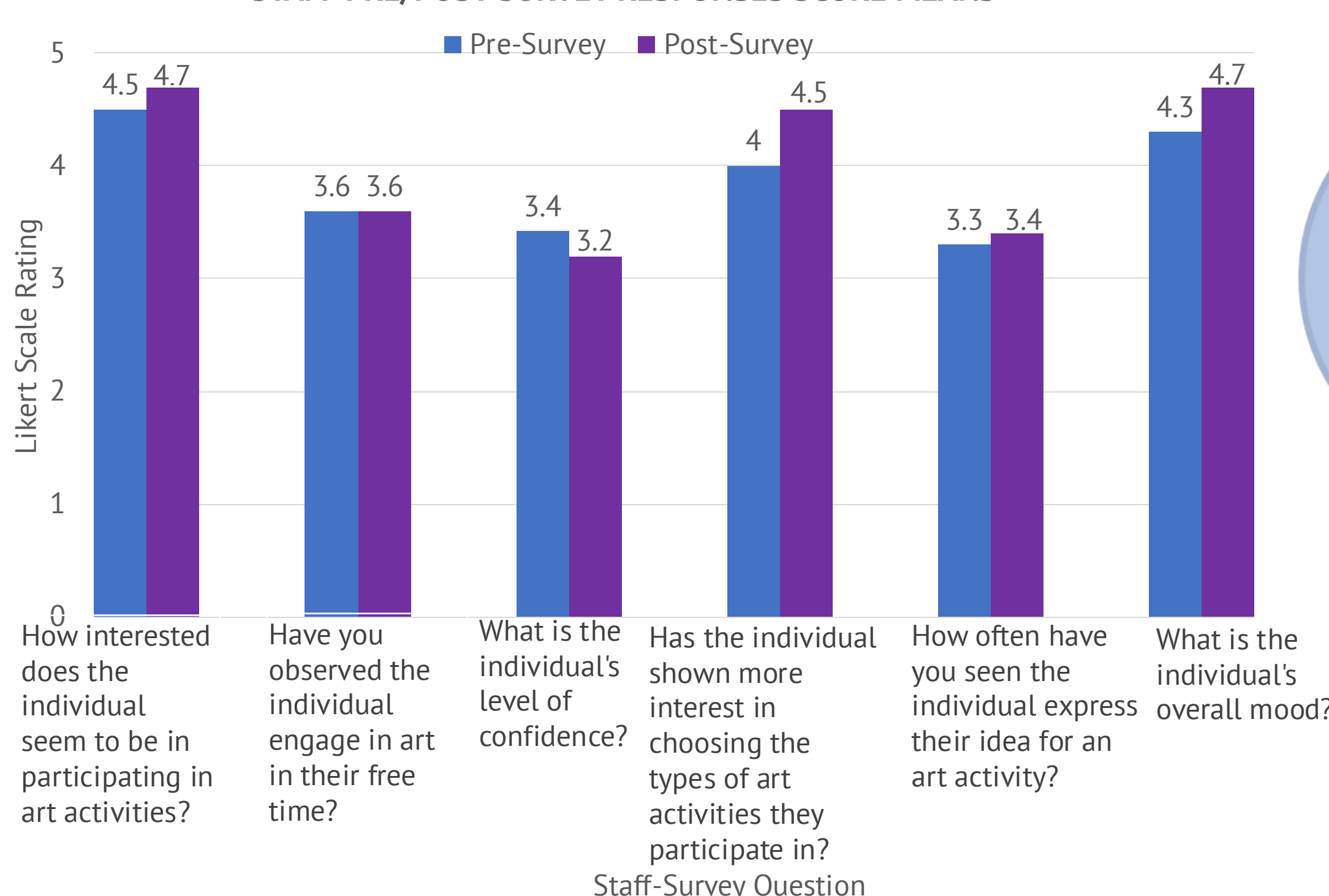
Q5: I can tell my staff my ideas for an art activity



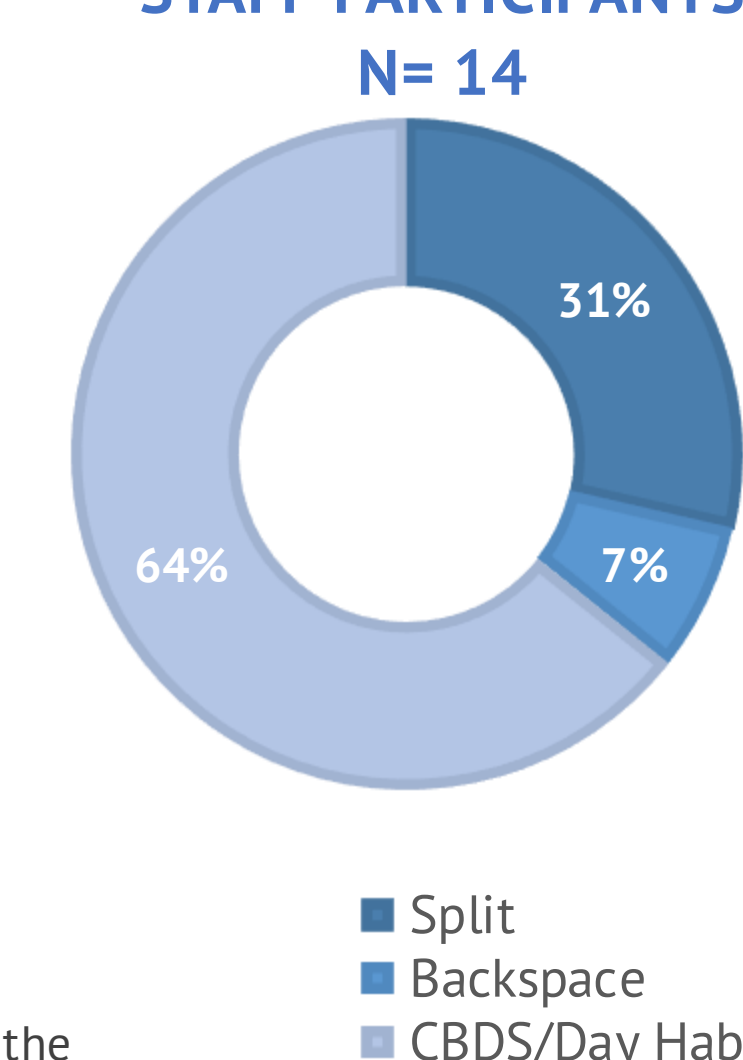
Q6: My mood today is



STAFF PRE/POST-SURVEY RESPONSES SCORE MEANS



STAFF PARTICIPANTS N = 14



Staff Pre-Survey: N = 10
Staff Post-Survey: N = 14

Discussion

Overall, the results suggests a slight increase in self-confidence and positive emotional states.

Self-Determination:

- **Mixed Results in Control:** Consistent engagement in art → Decreased Self-Control
- **Increased Communication:** Increase in participant's ability to tell staff their ideas → Increase in self-advocacy, a key component of self-determination

Self-confidence:

- **Growth:** Increase in participants feeling confident trying new art activities → project positively impacts self-confidence and willingness to try new activities.

Emotional Regulation:

- **Stable Positive Moods:** Consistent reporting of "happy" → Project support's participant's emotional stability or contribute to positive moods.
- **Decreased Enjoyment:** Slight decrease in enjoyment of art warrants attention. It's important to investigate if this is related to the perceived decrease in control and explore ways to maintain or enhance enjoyment while fostering self-determination.

Limitations

Post-test sample size may have affected results.

Changes in art schedule as well as staff leaving/retiring may have affected participant's perception of art activities.

Lack of qualitative data (e.g., interviews, observations) could offer a deeper understanding of participants' experiences, motivations, and challenges.

Future Direction

Focus Groups:

Provides rich qualitative data that complements quantitative findings and provides a deeper understanding of participant experiences.

Revise Surveys

Consider incorporating specific questions about autonomy, initiative, and decision-making within the art program.

Expand Activities

Look at conducting similar long-term collaborative projects using music, gardening or in the community.

Conclusion

Conclusion: The long-term collaborative art project may show benefits in increased self-confidence and positive emotions. Mixed results surrounding self-determination, specifically enjoyment and control in art activities requires further evaluation, with a consistent art schedule.

References & Materials:



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Acknowledgements

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