

Rosemary B. Hughes,¹ Susan Robinson-Whelen,² Eleanor Bailey,³ Trinity Martel,¹ Katie Arnold,⁴ and The Safety Project Consortium

¹ Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities, University of Montana; ² Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas; ³ Northwest Down Syndrome Association, Portland, Oregon; ⁴ Institute on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois at Chicago

Background

Men and women with intellectual disabilities (ID) are at high risk for abuse. Risks include:

- Perception as easy targets for victimization
- Communication barriers
- Difficulty identifying and reporting abuse and recognizing abuse as a crime
- Lack of education about safety from abuse

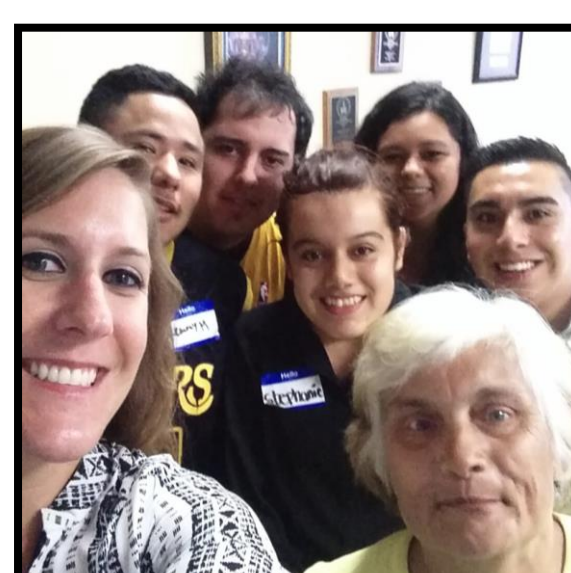
There is a need for the development and systematic evaluation of a safety program for people with ID.

Objectives of The Safety Project

- To design an accessible group safety program for adults with ID
- To use Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) in which disability partners and researchers work closely in all study phases
- To partner with Centers for Independent Living (CILs) on the implementation and evaluation of The Safety Class

The Safety Class

- An 8-session group safety education program for men and women with ID
- The Safety Class includes:
 - Mini-lectures and discussion
 - Group activities
 - Action planning, feedback, and problem-solving
 - Relaxation exercises
- Topics covered in The Safety Class include:
 - Healthy relationships and boundaries
 - Nature, types, and warning signs of abuse
 - Trauma and other effects of abuse
 - Coping and help-seeking skills
 - Safety planning skills
 - Disability rights

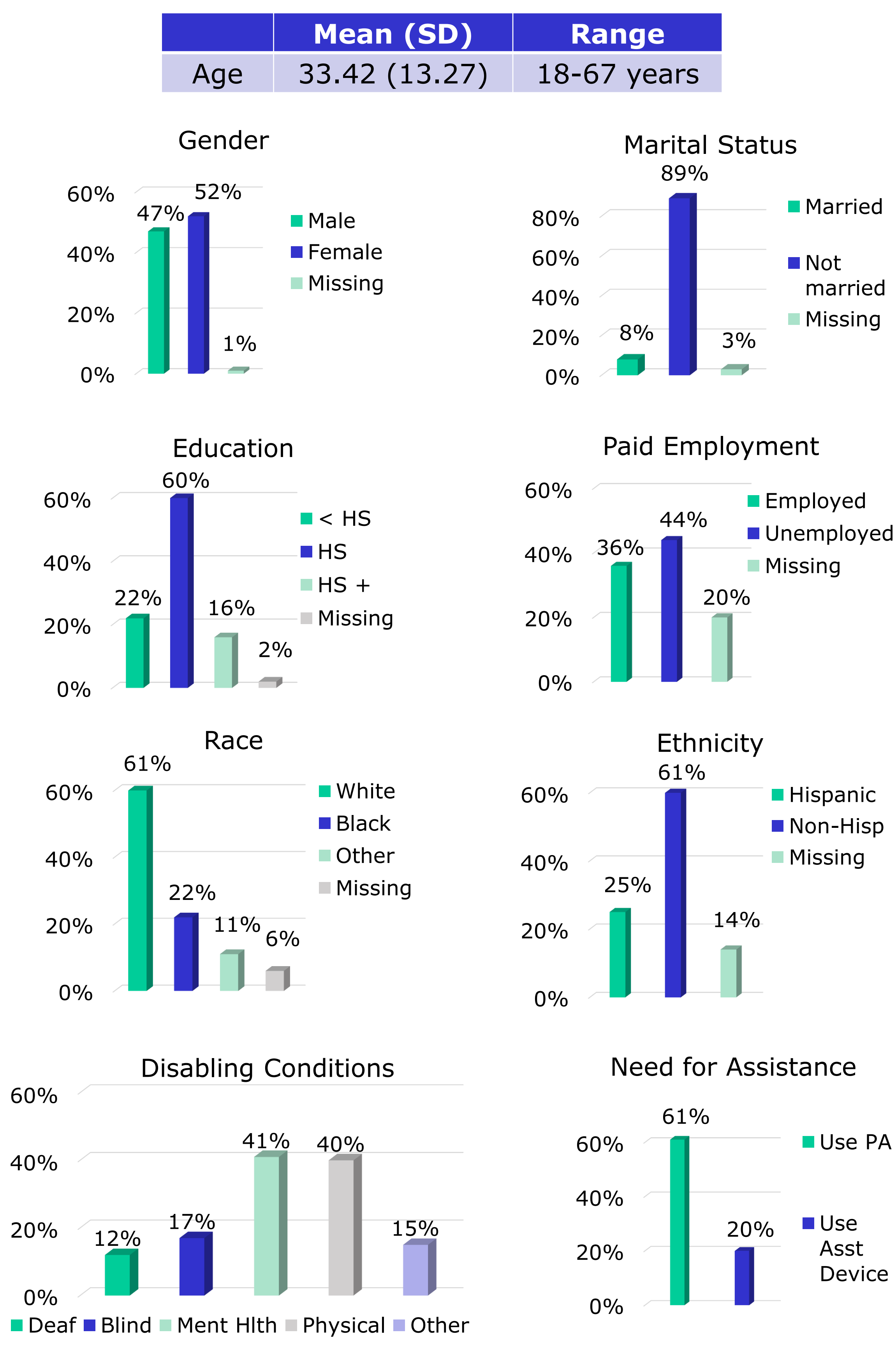


Study Design

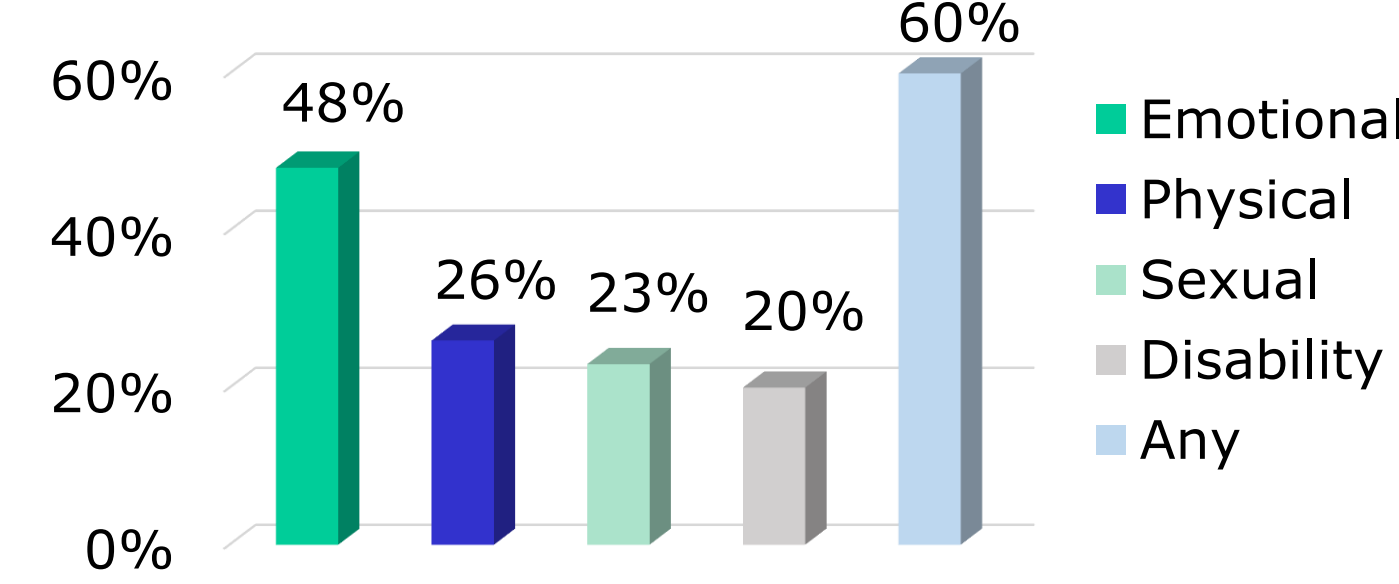
- Study was implemented at 12 CILs by staff who completed a 2-day training program.
- Participants with ID were randomly assigned to either usual CIL services or The Safety Class.
- All participants completed a pre-test, post-test, and 3-month follow-up.
- Outcomes:

Healthy Relationships	Abuse Facts
What is Abuse?	Abuse Warning Signs
Safety Skills – Do	Safety Skills – Take
Safety Self-Efficacy	

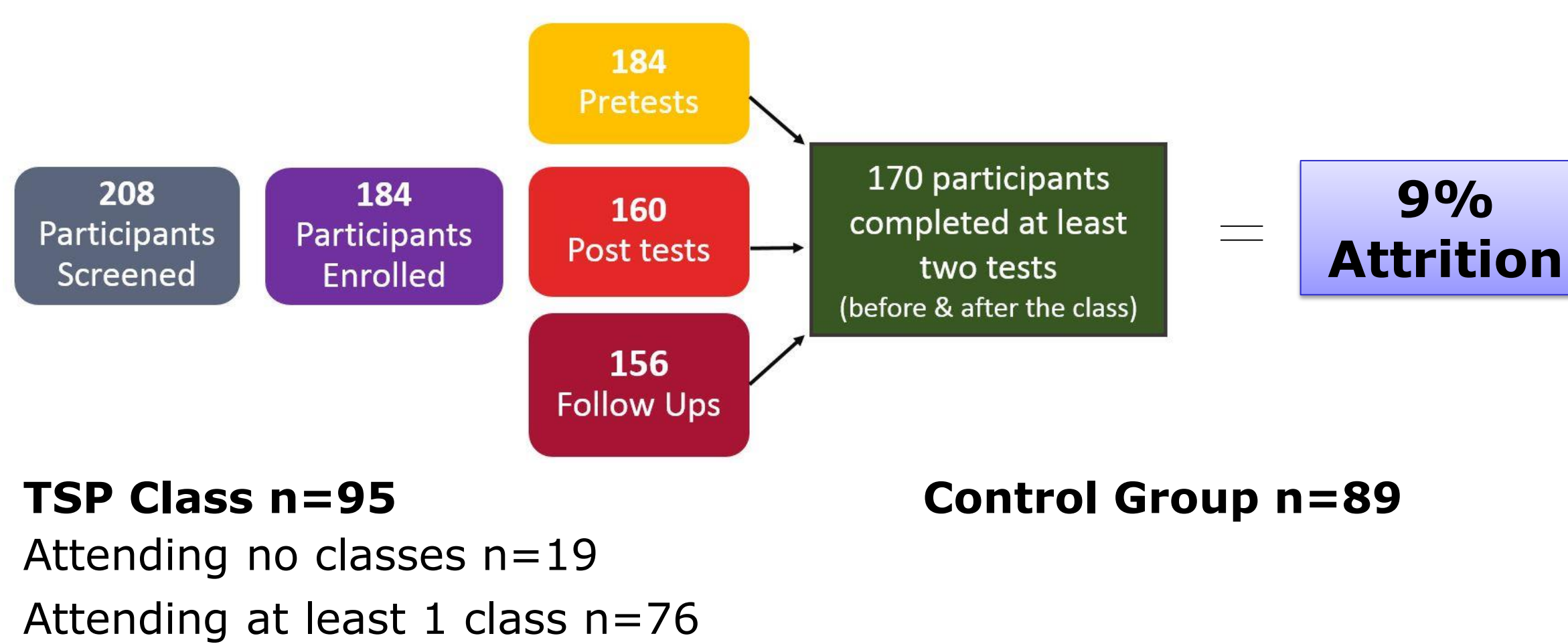
Description of the Sample (N=184)



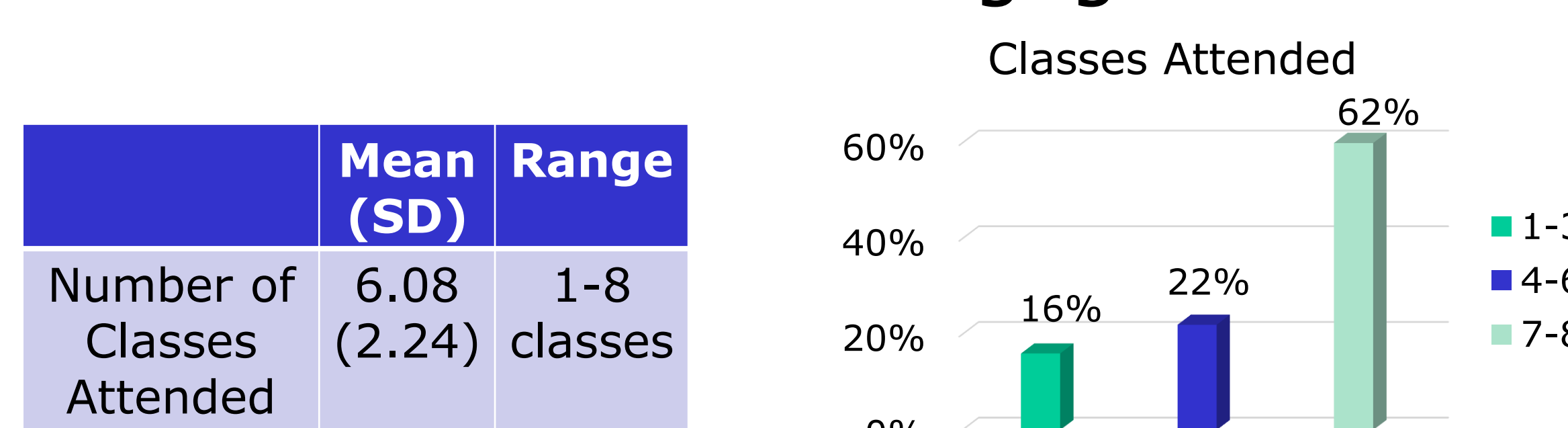
Abuse Experience



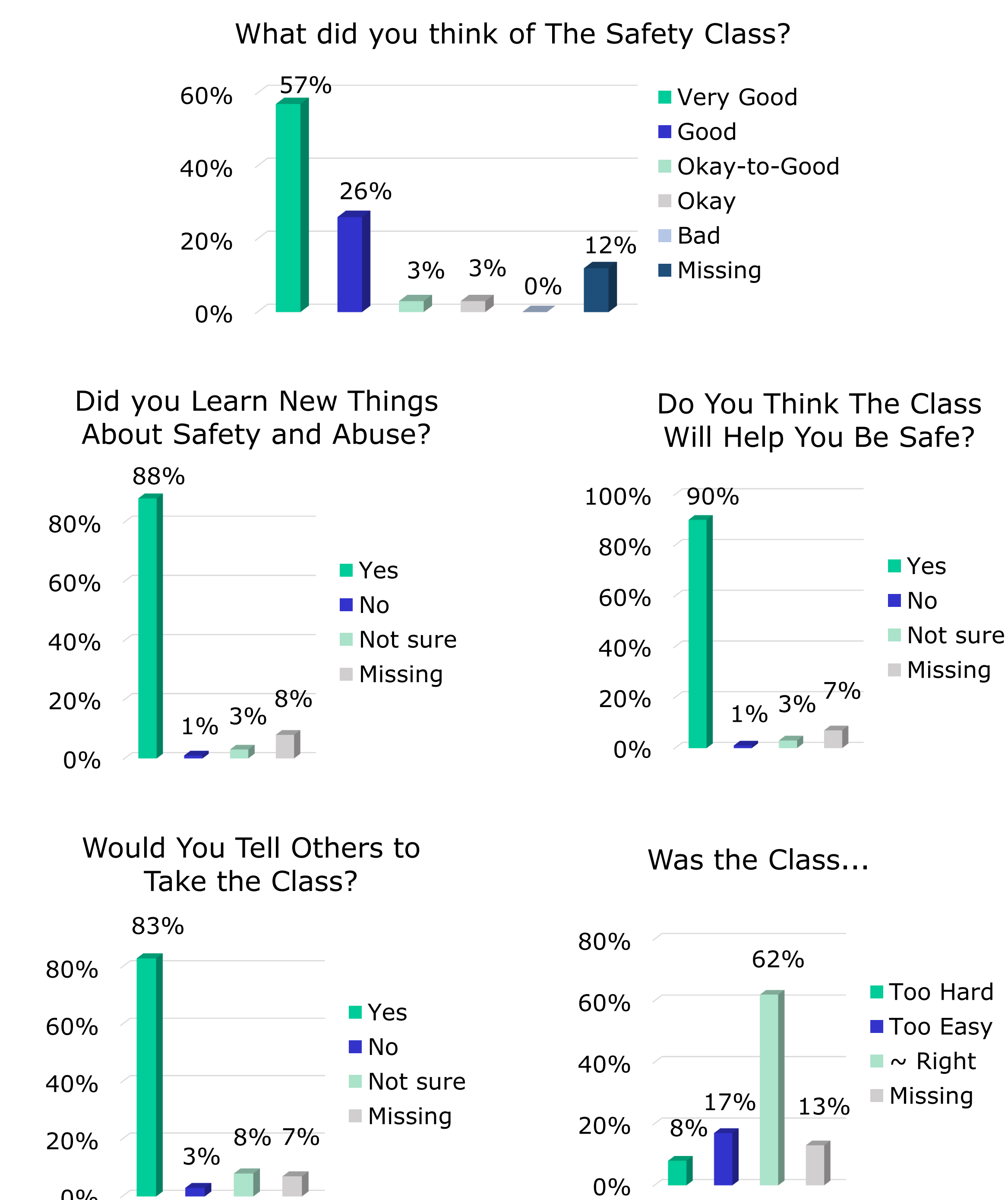
Enrollment and Study Participation



Attendance and Engagement



Feedback on The Safety Class



Qualitative Feedback

- What did they LIKE about The Safety Class?**
- Class Content (n=59)
 - Learning about safety, class activities, learning in general "[I liked] learn[ing] about standing up for yourself."
 - Relationships with class members / positive class environment (n=27)
- What was the most important thing learned...?**
- Things to help them stay safe (n=37)
 - Communication/assertiveness (n=16)
 - Relationships [boundaries, respect] (n=9)
 - New skills [relaxation, action planning] (n=4)
 - Disability and personal rights (n=4)

Efficacy of The Safety Class



Abuse Facts - The change in group over time varied by CIL

- Two CILs showed greater improvement from pre to post among those in the TSP class.
- Three CILs showed change over time from post to follow-up favoring those in the TSP Class.



Summary

- The Safety Project serves as a model for partnering with people with ID to develop programs designed for their unique needs.
- There is some evidence that the Safety Class may increase safety skills and safety awareness among people with ID.
- More work is needed to develop effective methods for assessing intervention outcomes.
- This project offers a model for one way to provide an abuse prevention and education program to a group of people with significant safety needs yet limited access to community services addressing their unique needs.

Funding

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The Safety Project Consortium

- **Community Advisory Board:** A. Heist, L. Howard, T. Hunt, O. Kinkaid, J. Billehus, and K. Valentine
- **National Advisory Board:** J. Meadours and L. A. Davis; E. Bailey and M. Bailey; L. Cesal and K. Arnold
- **Investigative Team:** R. Hughes (PI); S. Robinson-Whelen (Co-PI); R. Goe (Research Associate); K. McDonald, M. Schwartz (Consultants); M. Millan (IL Advisor); K. Gardner, T. Martel, C. Simpson, and K. Murphy (Research Assistants)

