



Report of Findings from the Community Survey September 2017

The mission of the Foundation is to devote itself to furthering and supporting operations and activities which address the short and long-term unmet needs of individuals and the Newtown community arising from the tragic events at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

This report has been prepared and released by the Distribution Committee of the Sandy Hook School Support Fund based on solicitation of public input into the current individual and community needs as it relates to the tragedy on 12/14/12.

The Distribution Committee is comprised of nine Sandy Hook/Newtown residents who represent perspectives from many different impacted groups including victims, surviving children, surviving staff, emergency responders, Sandy Hook parents, community members, and the faith community. It is the responsibility of the Distribution Committee to solicit public input in order to better understand the needs and gaps that exist in the community as well as the strengths so that they can be built upon for long-term sustainable recovery.

For background on the history and formation of the Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. and the Sandy Hook School Support Fund, or for information about funds spent to date, please visit www.nshcf.org.

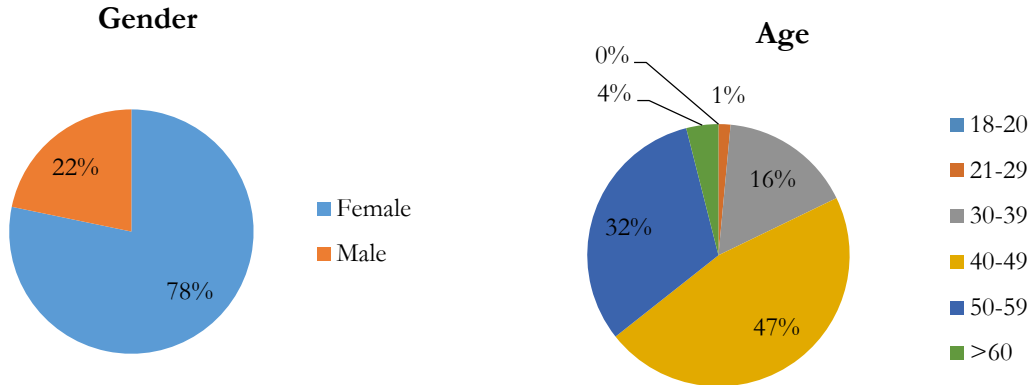
Methodology

An anonymous on-line survey was released to the public on May 19, 2017 and remained open until June 6, 2017. The survey was disseminated through the Newtown Public Schools (Superintendent's office), the Newtown Bee (May 26th), social media, and the internal distribution lists of the Foundation. The survey generated 607 responses compared to 945 in 2016, 999 in 2015, and 1,633 in 2014. It is understood by the Distribution Committee that this survey represents only a small percentage of the overall community and those most impacted. We continue to be concerned with the limited response rate of those most directly impacted (i.e. family members of those who died, children and families enrolled at SHS, and those who responded in a professional capacity). Input is continuously sought through Distribution Committee members and on-going dialogue with community groups & individuals.

Key Findings

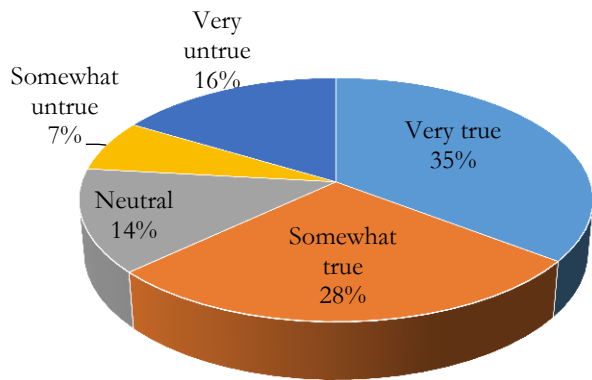
Data from the survey is presented in the following pages using charts and visual graphics to depict the results in order to help the reader get an overall sense of the responses. Some themes that emerged from qualitative analysis included; long waiting lists for services for children, the need for support for parents who have younger children in when and how to tell their children about 12/14, the desire to connect with other traumatized individuals/communities, student dysregulation and poor focus, the need for support groups and parenting programs, the concern about continued divides among groups in the community, and the concern about adequate preparation and resources as impacted students move through the school system.

Demographics

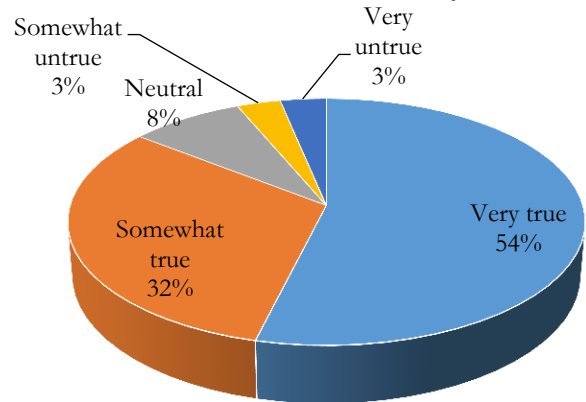


Survey Respondents	Response Percent	Response Count
Family member of a child or adult who died on 12/14/12	1.81%	11
Parent of a child enrolled at Sandy Hook School on 12/14/12	20.59%	125
Parent of a child enrolled in another Newtown schools (public or private) on 12/14/12	32.45%	197
Parent who did not have children enrolled in a Newtown school on 12/14/12 (<i>i.e. children too young, already graduated, enrolled in a school out of district/in another community, moved to community since 12/14, etc</i>)	13.34%	81
Teacher or staff member employed at Sandy Hook School on 12/14/12	5.11%	31
Teacher or staff member in another Newtown school (public or private) on 12/14/12	16.14%	98
Police (Newtown PD, State, or other responding community)	.82%	5
Fire (Newtown or other responding community)	.33%	2
EMS (Newtown Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Danbury or other responding community)	.16%	1
Other responding professional on 12/14 (medical, crisis responder)	.16%	1
Faith Community (clergy)	.16%	1
Administrator, Public Official, or Town Employee	2.64%	16
Mental Health or other Community Service Provider	1.15%	7
Spouse, parent, or child of an adult witness/survivor (teacher, emergency responder)	.99%	6
Member of the Business Community (employee/employer Newtown/Sandy Hook)	.33%	2
Resident of the Newtown/Sandy Hook community that does not fit any of the other criteria (<i>i.e. this is the only applicable answer for this questions</i>)	3.79%	23
Other (please specify)		72
answered question		607

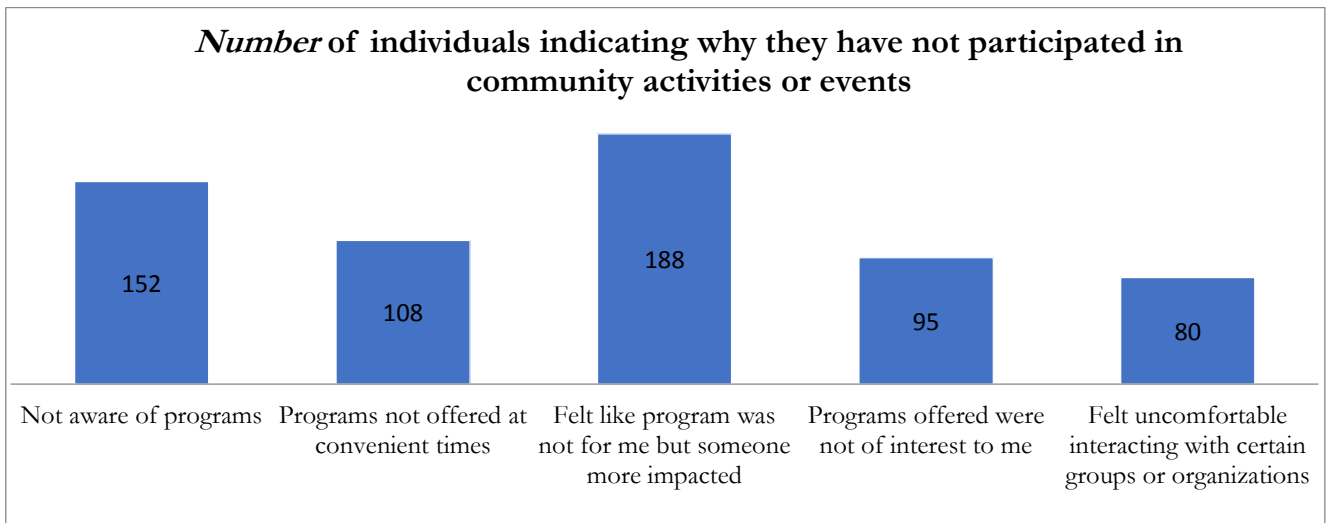
% who have participated in community events and/or activities related to 12/14 over the past year.



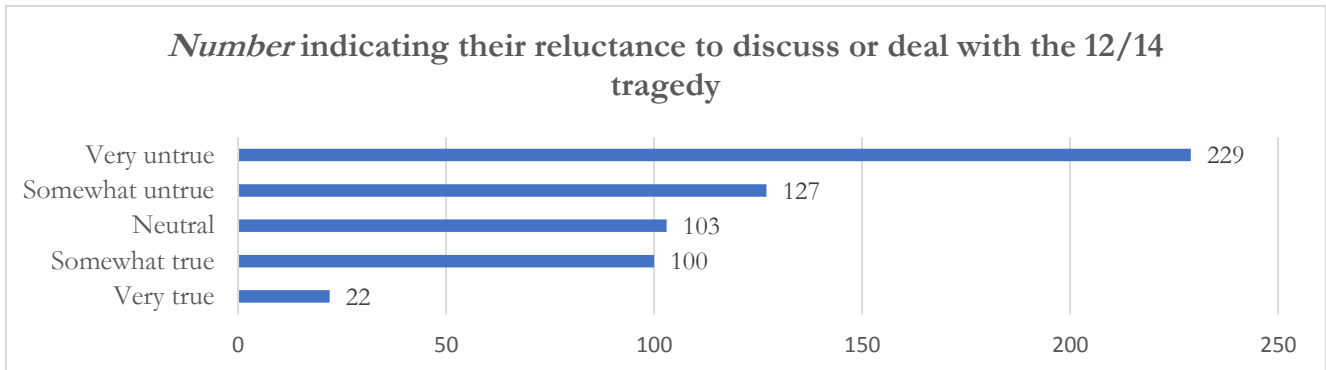
% who report feeling connected to the Newtown/Sandy Hook community.



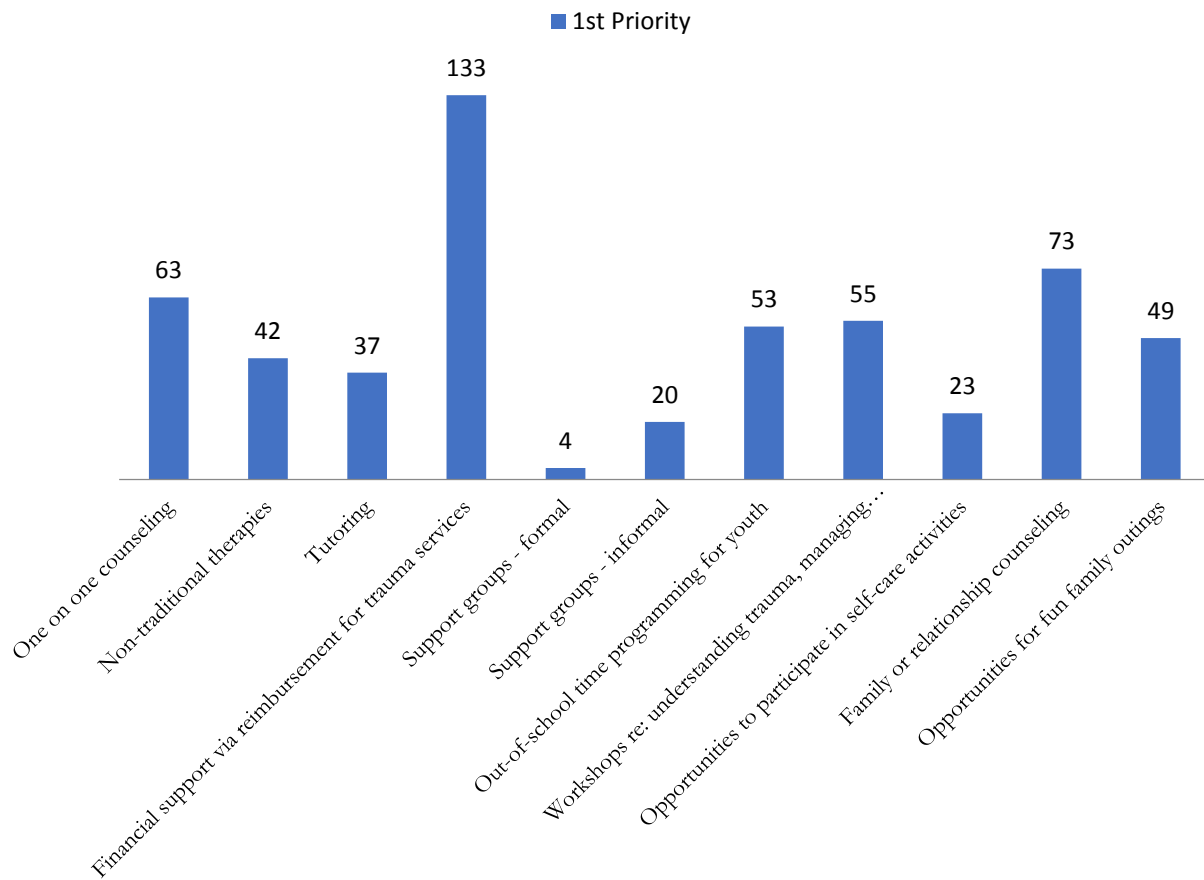
Number of individuals indicating why they have not participated in community activities or events



Number indicating their reluctance to discuss or deal with the 12/14 tragedy



Number stating which of the services surveyed would they or their family benefit from OR that they believe would be most important to support through designation of funds or community efforts



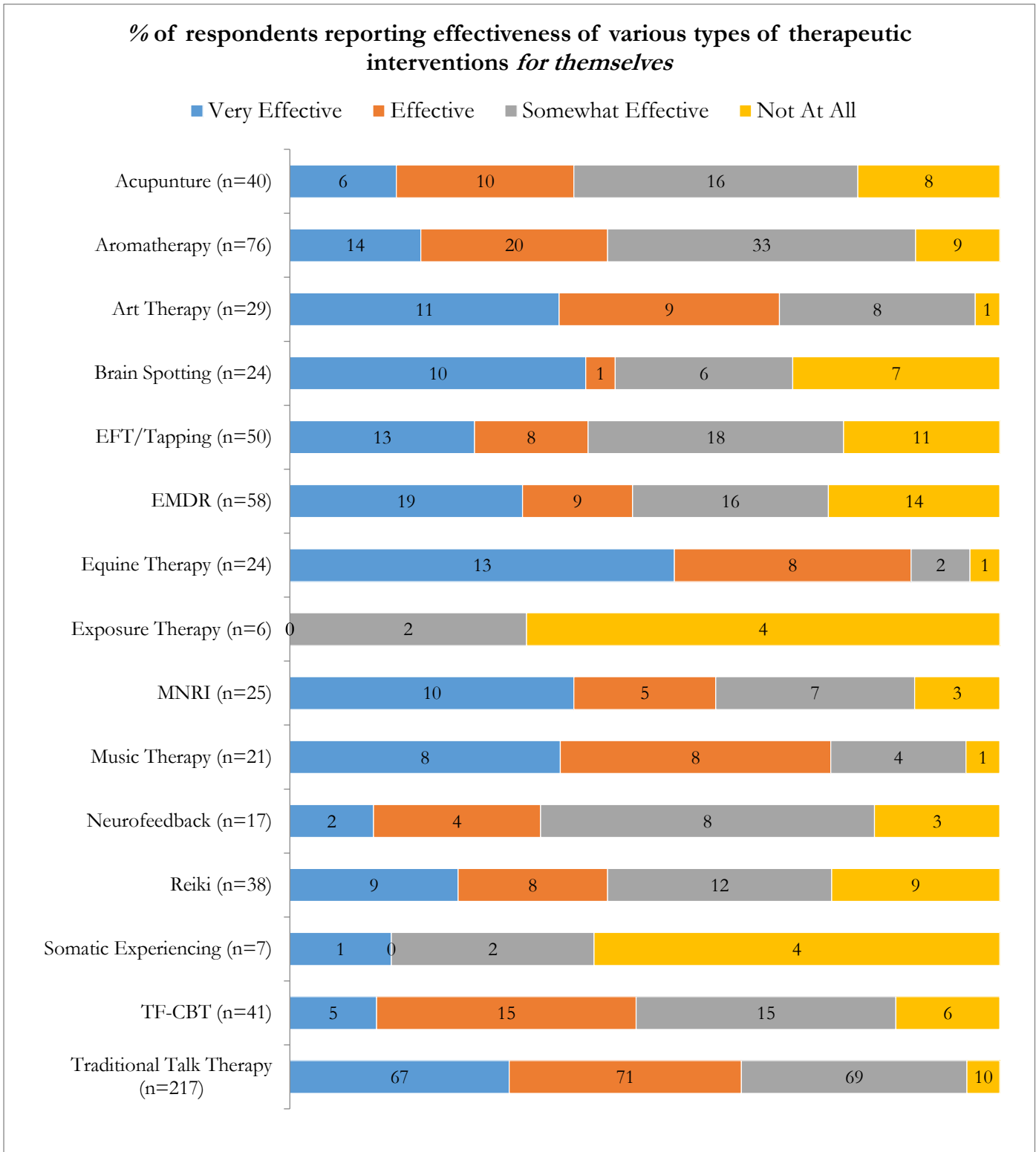
Are there services, programs, or funds (or gaps in those areas) that you would like to see available for a specific purpose that aren't listed in the previous question?

This narrative question generated 48 responses that were very diverse. The following themes emerged.

- The need for parents, staff, and school administrators to have continued training on the effects of trauma as well as training on how to teach coping skills to handle stress and anxiety.
- The need for education around how to speak with your children at various developmental ages about the tragedy. Parents who had young children at the time and families who have moved into the district since the tragedy need support in how and when to communicate information about 12/14/12.
- Survivors guilt and strained community relationships

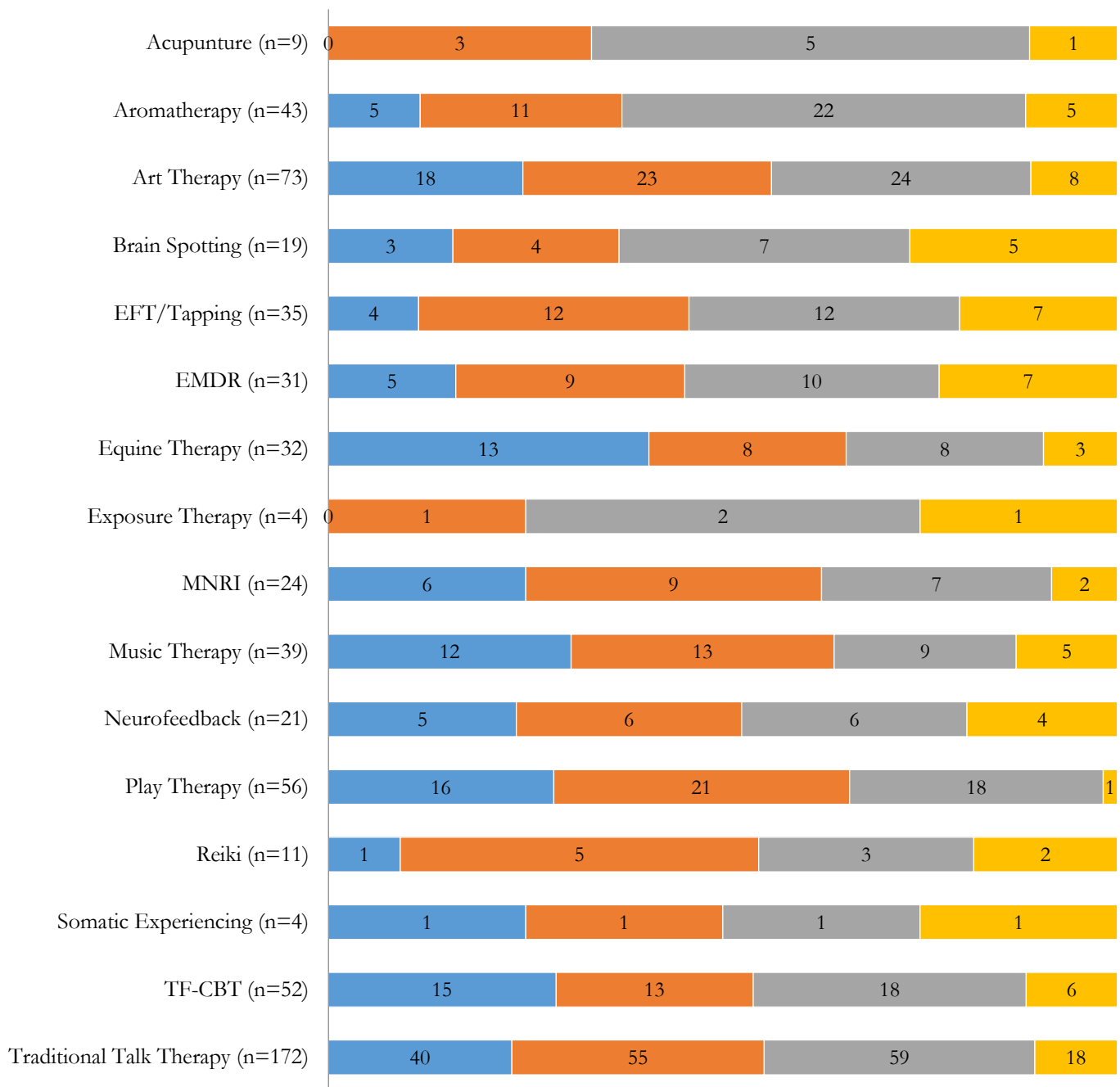
Brain Health & Wellness Services

We asked a series of questions to get a better understanding of the types of therapeutic interventions used by respondents and the efficacy of the treatment.



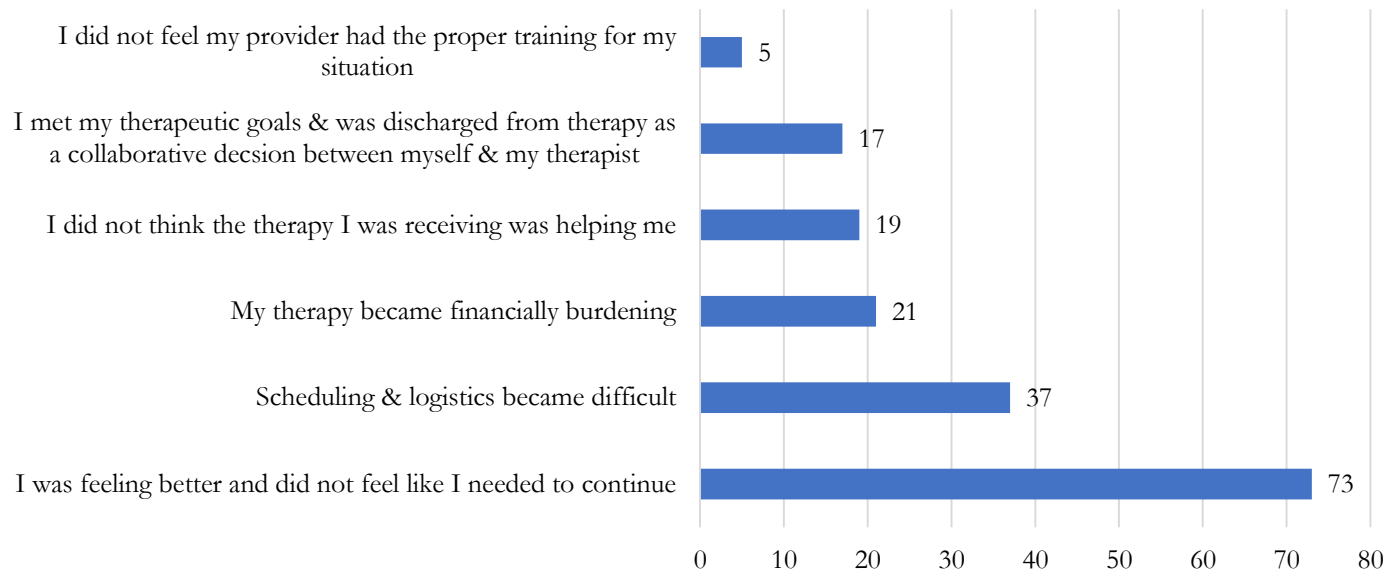
% of respondents reporting effectiveness of various types of therapeutic interventions *for their children*

■ Very Effective ■ Effective ■ Somewhat Effective ■ Not At All



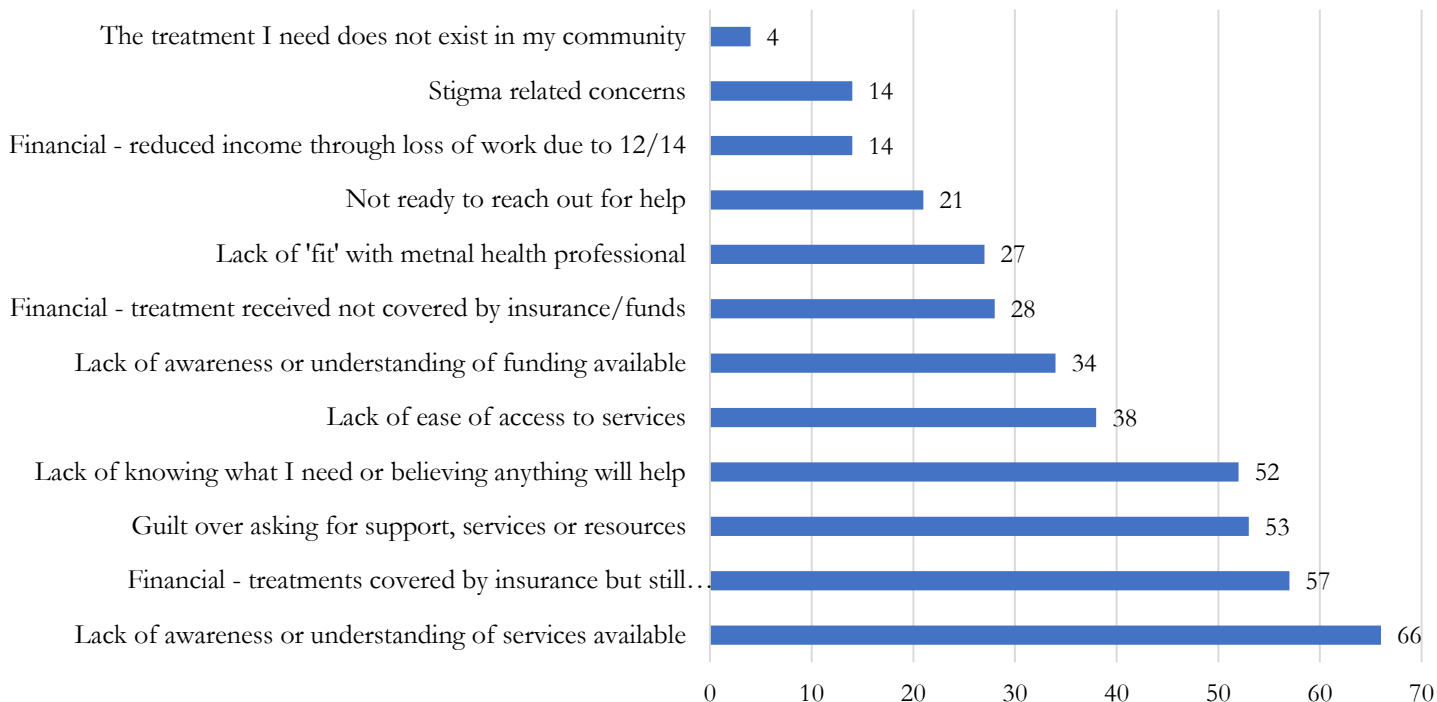
We believe that the above results support our hypothesis that there is not a one-sized fits all approach to trauma and grief treatment. We encourage individuals to make their own decisions for care and urge people still struggling to explore other treatment options if what they have done has not yet been helpful.

Number of individuals citing reasons for discontinuing therapy/treatment

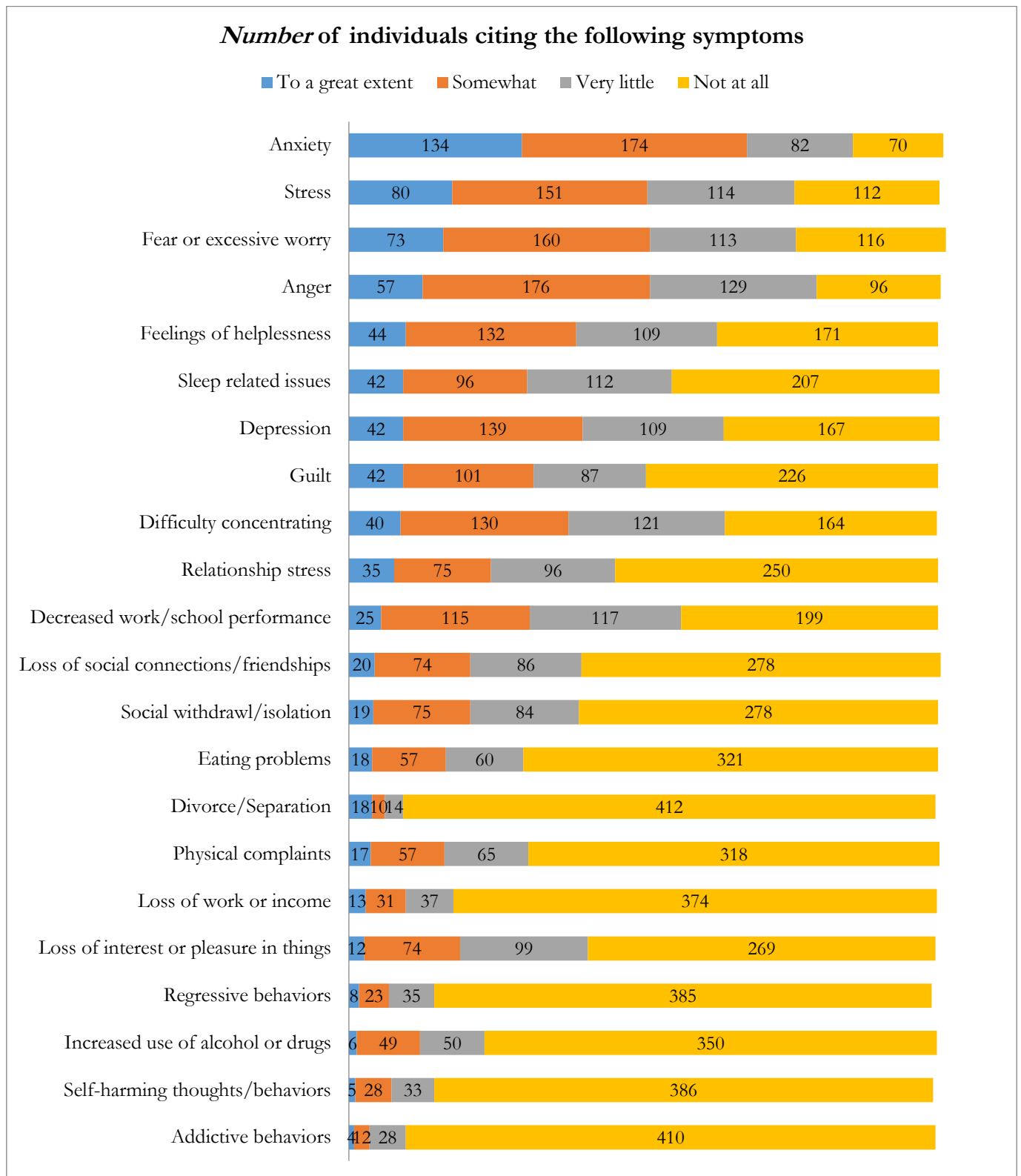


Of those that reported discontinuing treatment, 9% (42 individuals), re-engaged in treatment mostly because psychological supports became necessary again. We wish to remind people impacted by the tragedy that funds remain available to support out-of-pocket costs for treatment. Please visit www.nshcf.org/resources-2 for further information on how to access support.

Number of individuals reporting barriers to accessing services or support



Respondents were asked to rate their symptomatology directly related to 12/14. Anxiety, stress, excessive fear/worry, and anger continue to persist with the most frequency. These symptoms were also reported by clinicians of their clients in a separate survey.



Conclusion & Next Steps

This marks the fourth year we have conducted the community survey. This winter we anticipate releasing a report that examines trends over the past five years from our surveys as well as other data and activities of the Foundation since inception. We are actively working with others in the community to look at as many different data sets as possible to try to best understand the needs and trends and work to develop a cohesive framework of long-term support. The Foundation continues to convene a community leadership group, as well as a data sub-committee, to examine trends and work collaboratively towards solutions. We continue to push for data driven decision making at all levels.

The Distribution Committee will use the information in this survey along with continued research into best practices to make the best decisions possible while always upholding donor intent, the mission of the Foundation, and being compliant with IRS regulations governing non-profit organizations. The Foundation also shares the findings of the survey with community partners who are best able to respond to specific areas. For instance, the Foundation recently shared information with the leadership group on concerns reported about the lack of resources available to assist parents in discussing the tragedy with younger children, or children who were not in the district at the time. As a result, the Resiliency Center of Newtown has created resources and groups to address this very issue.

To date the Distribution Committee has been focused on using the resources of the SHSSF to assist individuals and the community as a whole based on continuous public input and on-going research. That has included the following;

- **Individual Brain Health & Wellness** – providing direct financial support for treatment related expenses for those most impacted by the tragedy.
- **Grants Program** – providing grants into the community to build capacity for long term recovery, expand access to alternative trauma treatments, host conferences and workshops to build knowledge and tools for helping, and develop opportunities to build compassionate and caring connections throughout the community.
- **Community Events** – supporting and sponsoring events in the community that provide opportunities to learn, share, and connect with one another.

All of the funds in each of these areas are accounted for each month and posted to our website www.nshcf.org.

We want to take this opportunity to clear up a few misconceptions evident in some of the responses regarding eligibility for funds and the mission of the Foundation. The Sandy Hook School Support Fund (SHSSF) continues to cover out-of-pocket costs for treatment related to the shooting for victim family members, children enrolled at the school and their family members, emergency responders and their family members, and others who are directly connected in another way and verified through a review process. The former Recovery & Resiliency Team (RRT) partnered with the Foundation for 18 months to assist people in getting paperwork in for reimbursement but the funding has always come through the SHSSF, in partnership with other organizations such as the Newtown Lions Club, Newtown Rotary Club, Newtown Memorial Fund, and the Sandy Hook 5k. The funding did not end when the RRT closed in March 2016. We encourage those interested in receiving support for treatment related costs to visit www.nshcf.org/resources-2 for further information on how to access support.

In addition, the Foundation has a sunset plan and will spend down the resources from the SHSSF and close by the end of 2025. We continue to get new requests for support each year and research from other

communities clearly indicates that individuals will continue to come forward for assistance for the first time for many years to come. The Foundation is actively working to establish a strong community infrastructure that will be able to support and sustain any needs that emerge in the long term, beyond the life of the Foundation. This includes leading efforts to support capacity building for the Town and non-profit organizations.

We appreciate the time that so many members of the community have taken to reflect on what has been helpful in the on-going recovery from 12/14 and how we can continue to support those most impacted now and for years to come. We again acknowledge the limitations of the survey given the number of respondents and ask that you continue to provide feedback through both formal and informal opportunities so that we can be as responsive as possible to the needs that exist in our community. Committee members, as well as executive director Jennifer Barahona, are available to meet with individuals and groups on an on-going basis to solicit additional feedback. If interested, please contact Ms. Barahona at 203-460-0687 or jbarahona@nshcf.org to arrange a time to meet.

Respectfully,

Members of the Sandy Hook School Support Fund Distribution Committee

Dr. Robert Bazuro
Kevin Cragin
Rev. Rob Morris

Anka Roberto
Bob Schmidt (Chair)
Curtis Urbina

James Viadero
Janet Vollmer
Cheyanne Wyatt