

Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) Results, 2017

Solano

Prepared by The Metro Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools at NYU

The National Parent Leadership Institute exists to coordinate and increase the civic skills and impact of diverse parents to improve child and community outcomes as they build caring communities. NPLI believes that families, communities, and our democracy are strengthened when all parents have the leadership skills to maximize child outcomes at home, in the neighborhood, and in public policy. In partnership with Algorhythm, the Metro Center conducted and assessed survey results in 13 PLTI sites across the Country and created individual site reports for each of those sites, as well as a Connecticut State Report, and a National report. The parent survey measures the impact of the initiative on parents' civic skills, engagement, and knowledge, as well as their experiences with the initiative. The parent survey measures the impact of the initiative on parents' civic skills, engagement, and knowledge, as well as their experiences with the initiative. Parents completed the survey both at the beginning and at the end of the 20-session initiative. 13 parents completed the pre-test, and of those parents, 8 completed the post-test. We do not know how many of the 5 parents who did not complete the post-test did not complete the program.

This evaluation reflects a high degree of statistical rigor, for the following reasons:

- The survey consisted of *constructs*. A construct is a collection of survey questions that all measure the same underlying belief or behavior (in this case, "policy experience" or "community activism," for example). Self-reported beliefs and behaviors are difficult to measure accurately with only one question. Therefore, the most statistically rigorous surveys ask multiple questions, phrased in different ways, to more reliably capture beliefs and behaviors.
- In calculating construct scores, each question was statistically weighted, with questions that more closely measured a given construct weighted more heavily than other questions. This helps to ensure that the outcome scores capture the construct as accurately as possible.

This brief report describes the measures used and reports on the site's demographics and outcomes.

Measures

The PLTI survey measured 4 constructs at both pre and post and an additional 3 constructs at post only.¹ These additional 3 constructs measured participants' experiences with the program.

The following table shows how many questions made up each construct, and a few sample questions. For a full list of questions, please see the appendix.

Construct	# of questions	Response scale	Sample questions
Policy experience	10	1=not at all confident; 5=very confident	How confident on a scale of 1-5 do you feel doing the following? Advocating for an issue or public policy; Public speaking; Helping a group reach consensus; etc.

¹ See appendix for a full list of questions for each construct.

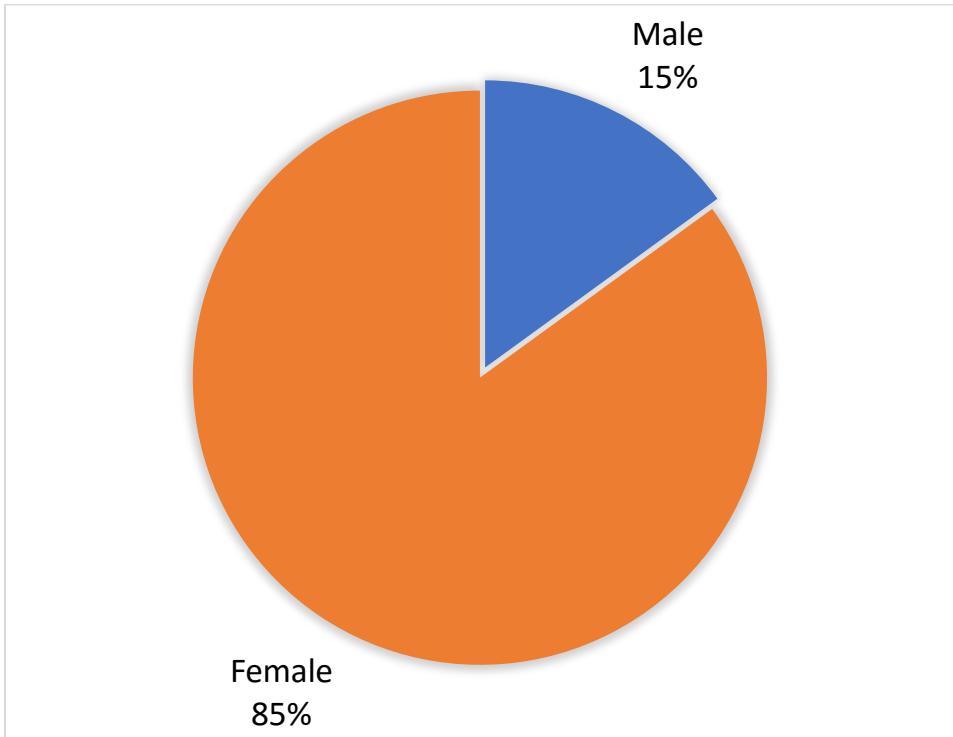
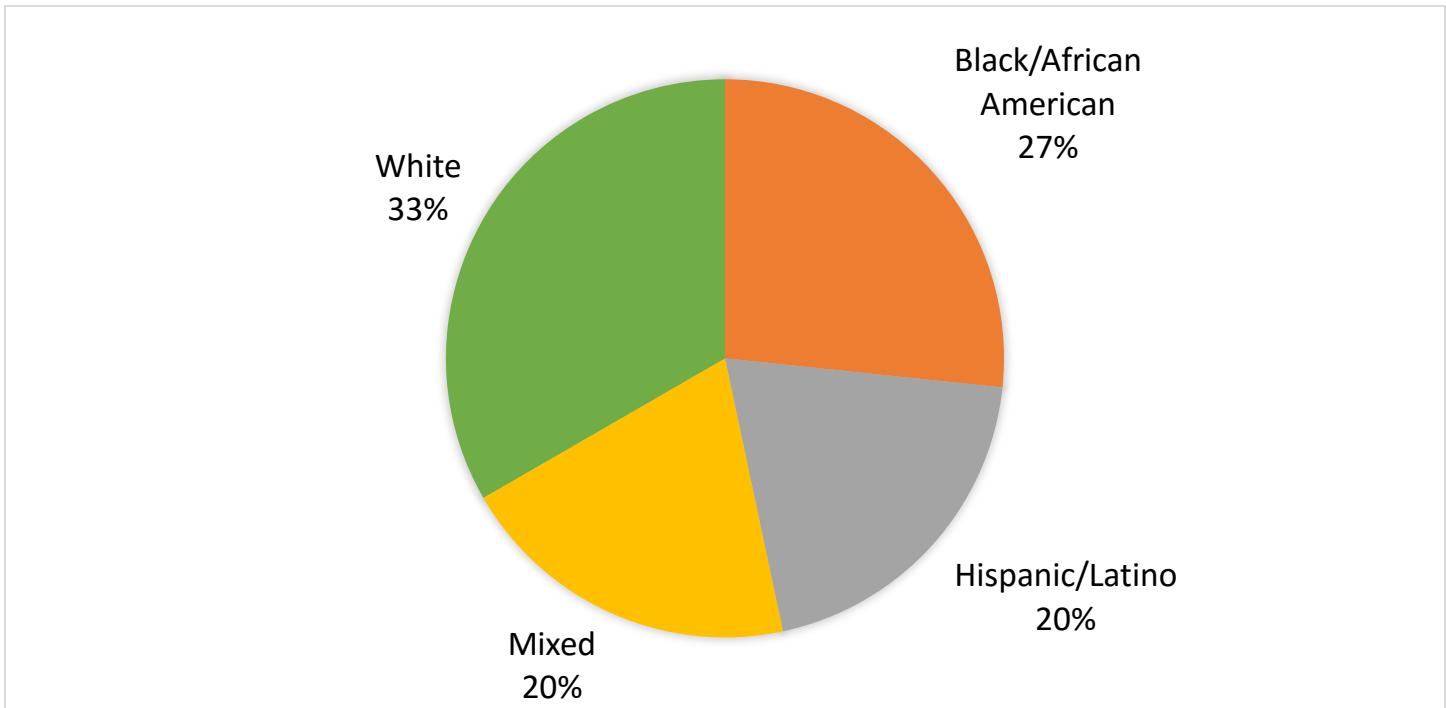
Community activism	10	1=None of the time; 4=All of the time	Please tell us how frequently you feel or do the following: I feel I can have a part in improving my community; I voice my opinions about what my community needs; I understand how public policy affects my community; etc.
Civic engagement	9	Yes or No	In the last 12 months, have you done any of the following? Attended any public meeting where there was a discussion of policy or community issues; Signed a petition; Served on a committee or as an officer of an organization; etc.
Government knowledge	5	Yes or No	Please tell us what you know about each: How state government budgets are made?; How state laws are made?; Who your elected representative for the State House of Representatives is?; etc.
Sense of community within PLTI (post-test only)	5	1=Agree strongly; 5=Disagree strongly	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? It is very important to me to be part of this PLTI community; I expect to be part of this community for a long time; I feel hopeful about the future of this community, etc.
Peer connection within PLTI (post-test only)	8		It is completely safe to take a risk in PLTI; Even in difficult situations, people in PLTI can depend on each other; etc.
Leadership within PLTI (post-test only)	4		People in PLTI are provided opportunities to assume leadership roles within the class; I believe I have an impact on decisions made at PLTI; etc.

Demographics of Participants (From Pre-Test)

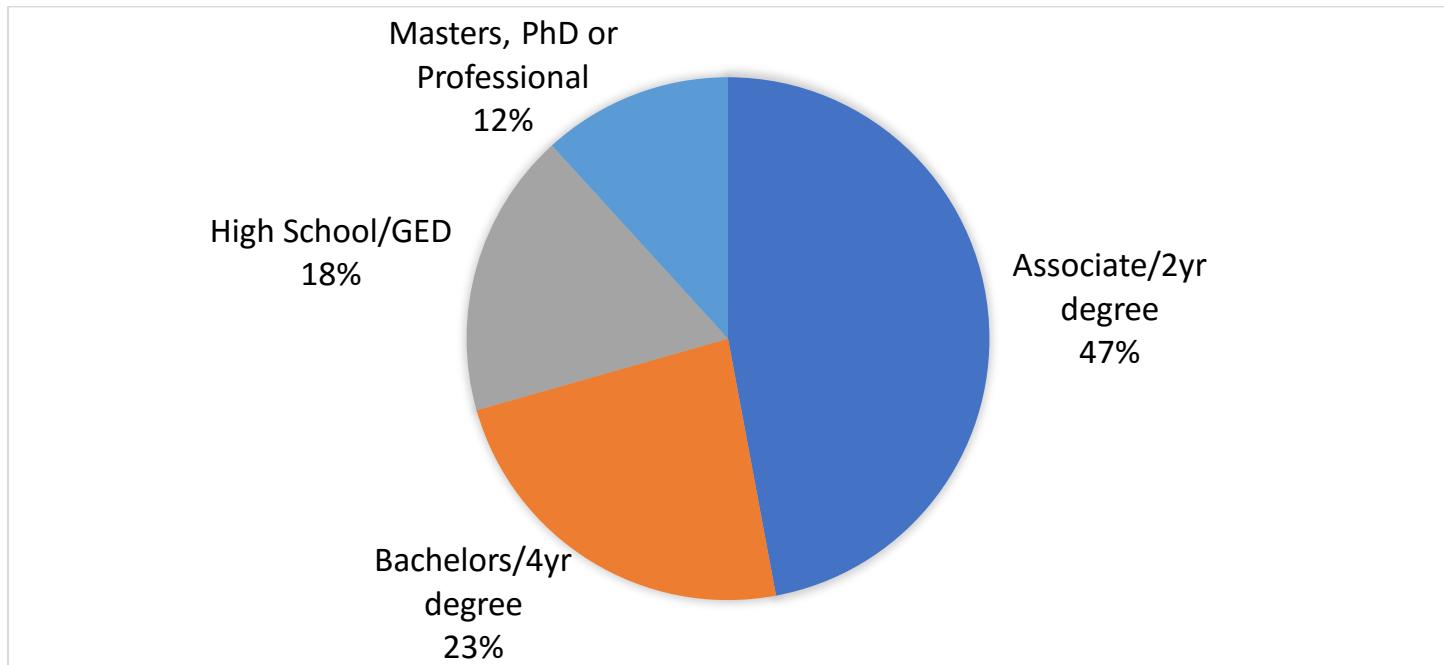
PLTI participants overwhelmingly leaned female (85%). White (33%) and Black/African American (27%) were the largest racial/ethnic groups, and the smallest were Mixed and Hispanic/Latino (20% each one). An associates/2-year degree was the most common education level (47%); the least number of participants had a Masters, Ph.D., or Professional degree (12%). The two largest income groups <\$20K (32%) and \$40K-\$59K (26%), and the smallest was \$85K+ (5%). The majority was in paid work (58%), and the remainder were retired, unemployed, in school, or managing a household. Additionally, the majority was born in the U.S. (75%) and 43% spoke a language other than English at home. The largest religious group was “other Christian,” (57%) and the smallest was “Catholic” (22%) and “I don’t identify (21%). The most common marital status was “married” (45%). The ages of participants’ children were spread from 0-17 years old.

Age

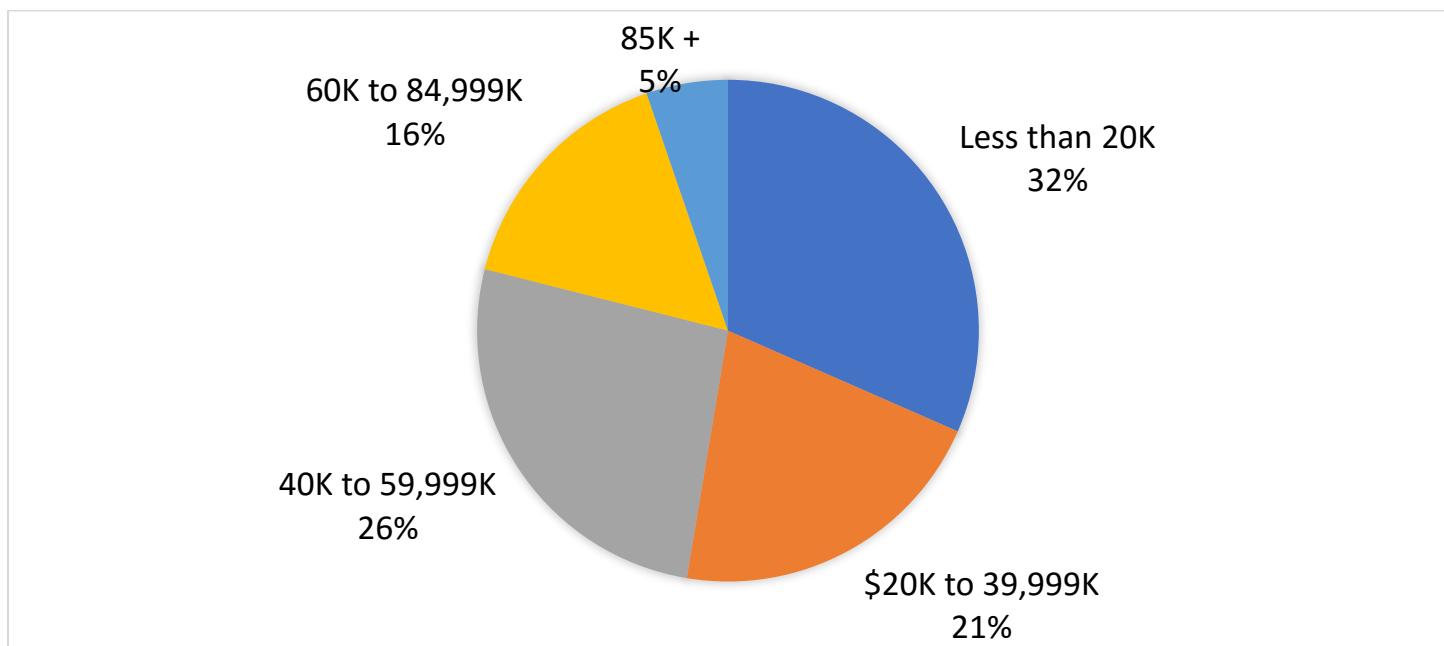
The average age was 37. The youngest participant was 28 and the oldest participant was 59.

Gender**Race/Ethnicity**

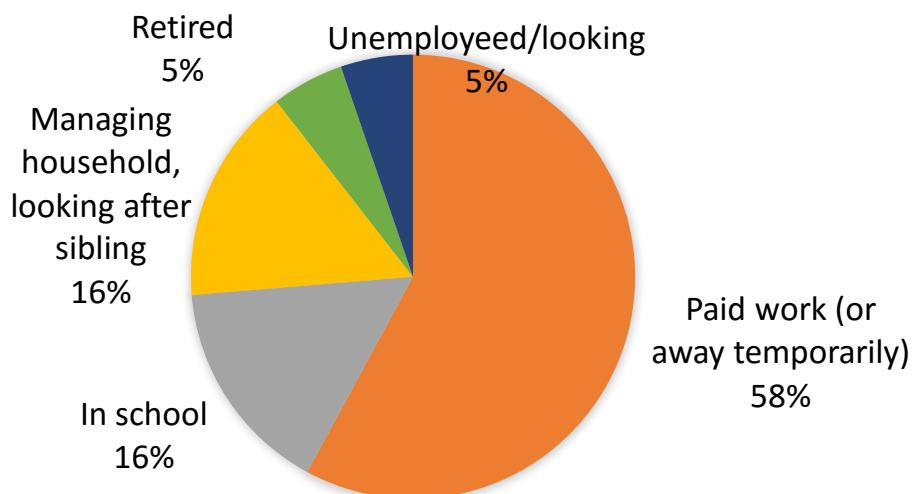
Education



Income

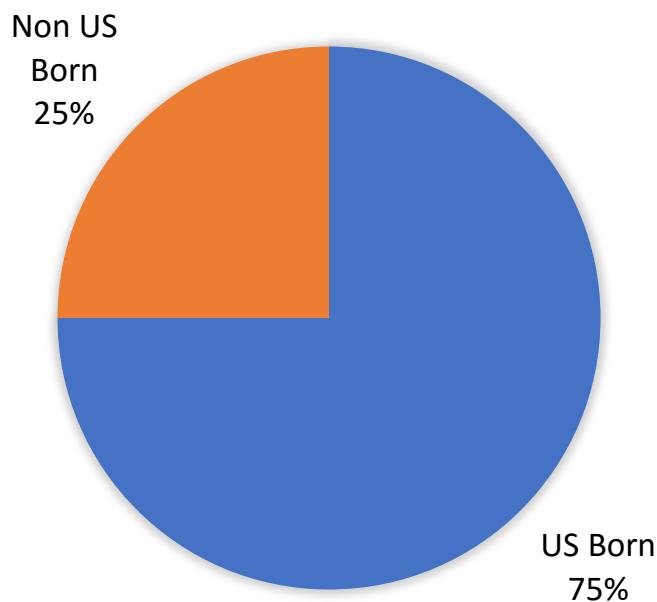


Employment

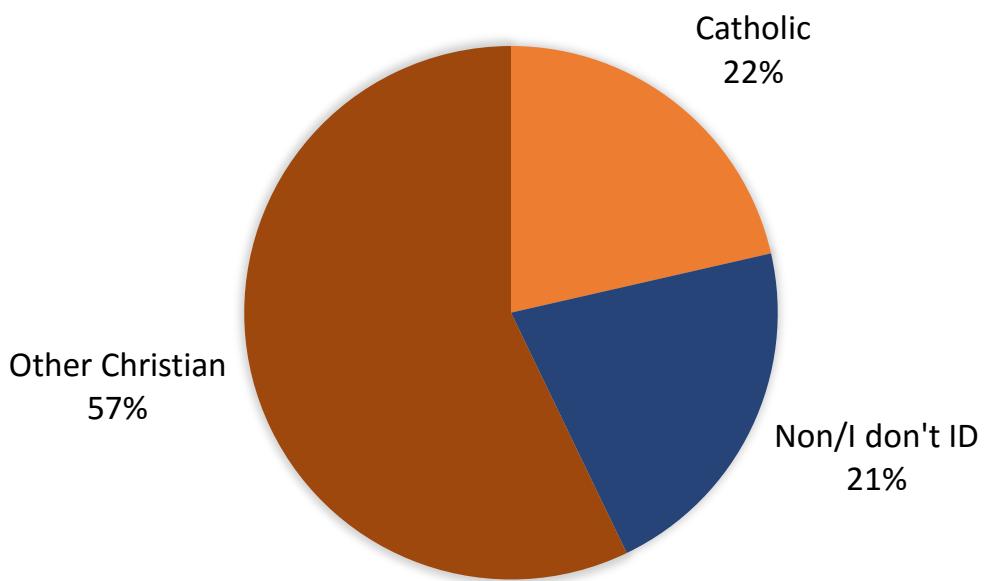


Place of Birth and Language Spoken at Home

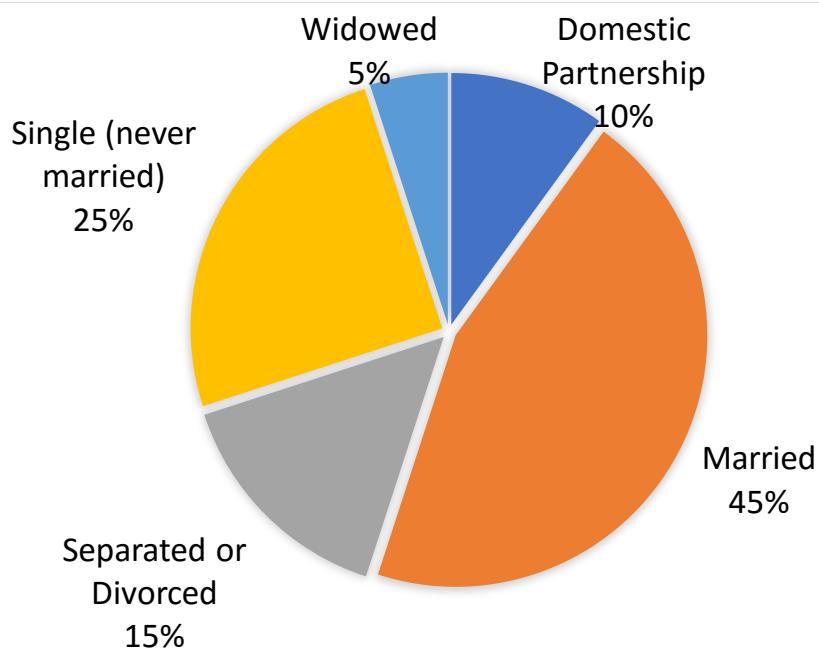
43% speak another language aside from English at home.



Religion

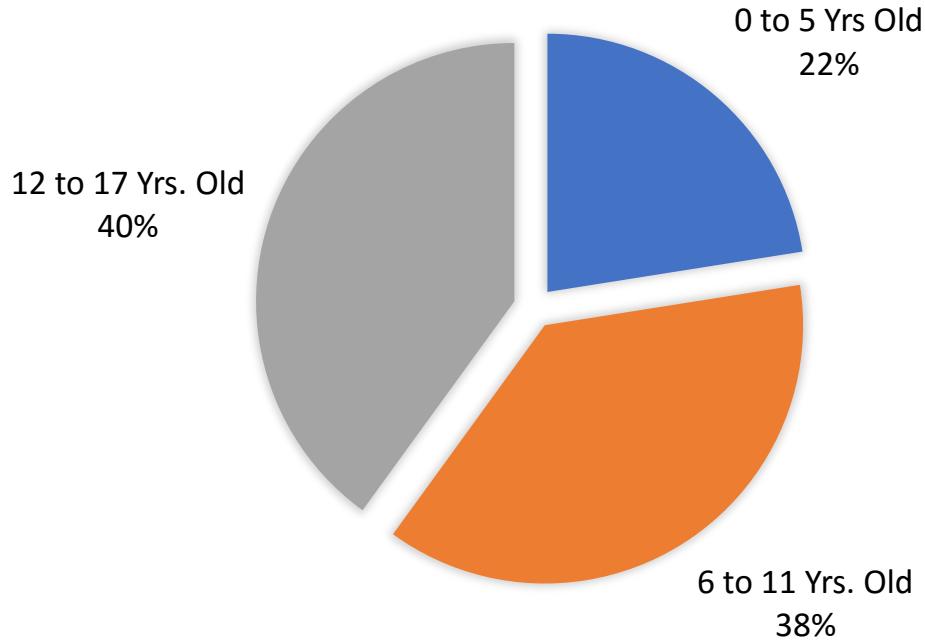


Marital Status



Number and age of participants' children

Total # of Children = 40



We did not collect data on participants with children over 18 years of age, but we know that a number of parents in sites across the country have adult aged children, in addition to those with preschool and school aged children.

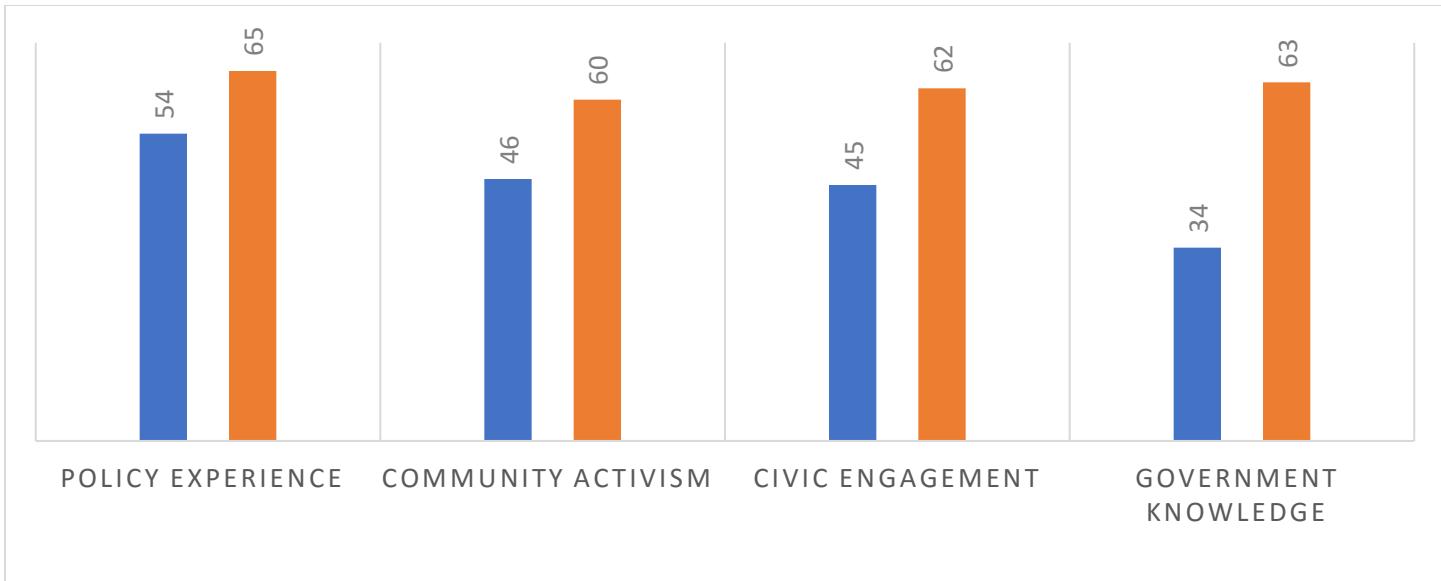
Results: Outcomes

There was growth on all four outcomes.

13 parents completed the pre-test, and 8 of these parents completed the post-test.

Changes from Pre-Post on All Constructs (N=8)

This graph shows the pre and post score for each construct. Original scores have been weighted and converted to 0-100 for easier interpretation and comparison between constructs.



Policy experience. There was a **20%** increase in the degree to which participants felt confident in skills relating to policy.

Community activism. There was a **30%** increase in how often the participants engaged in certain civic behaviors or felt a certain way about their civic abilities.

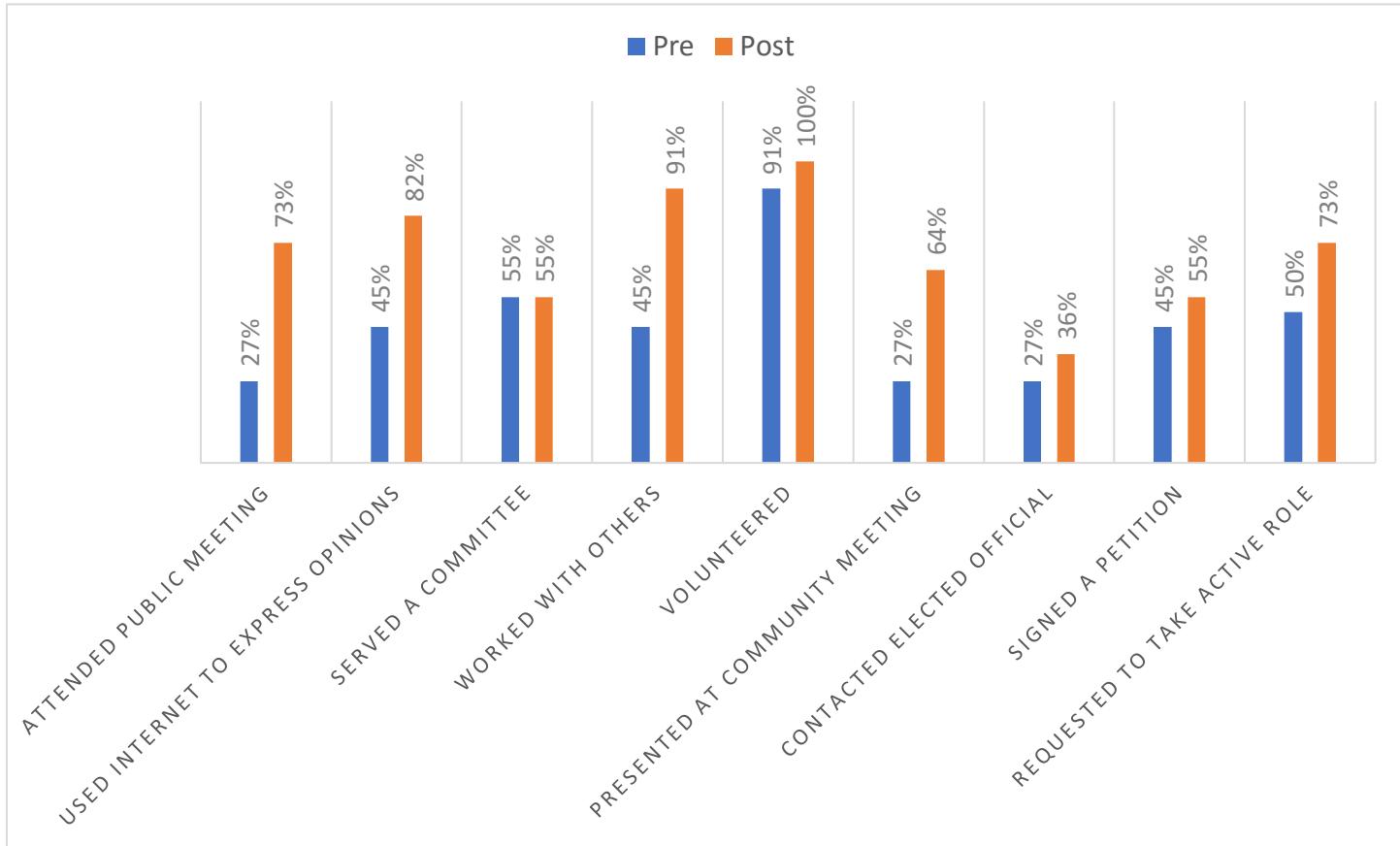
Civic engagement. There was a **38%** increase in how many of the 9 possible civic actions participants engaged in.

Government knowledge. There was a **85%** increase in how many of the answers to the 5 questions about how government works participants reported knowing.

Changes from Pre-Post on Civic Engagement Questions (N=8)

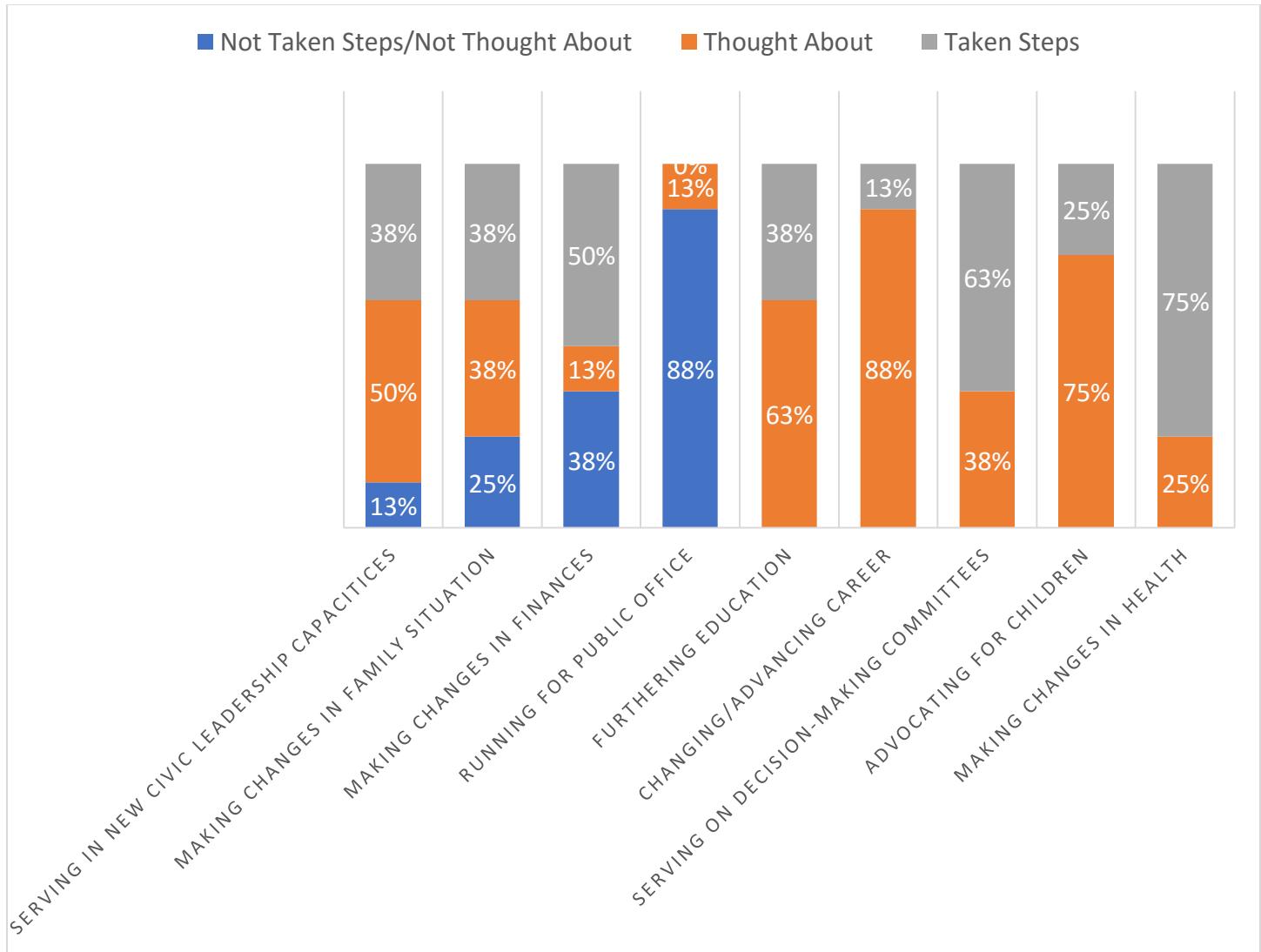
There was an increase in the percentage of parents who engaged in all civic behaviors over the past 12 months, except for one that stayed the same.

The largest changes were seen in attending a public meeting, presenting at a community meeting, and working with others in immediate neighborhood to fix or improve something.



Percent of parents who thought about or took steps toward doing the following as a direct result of their participation in PLTI (N=8)

The overwhelming majority of parents reported that PLTI inspired them to make changes in their personal and civic lives.

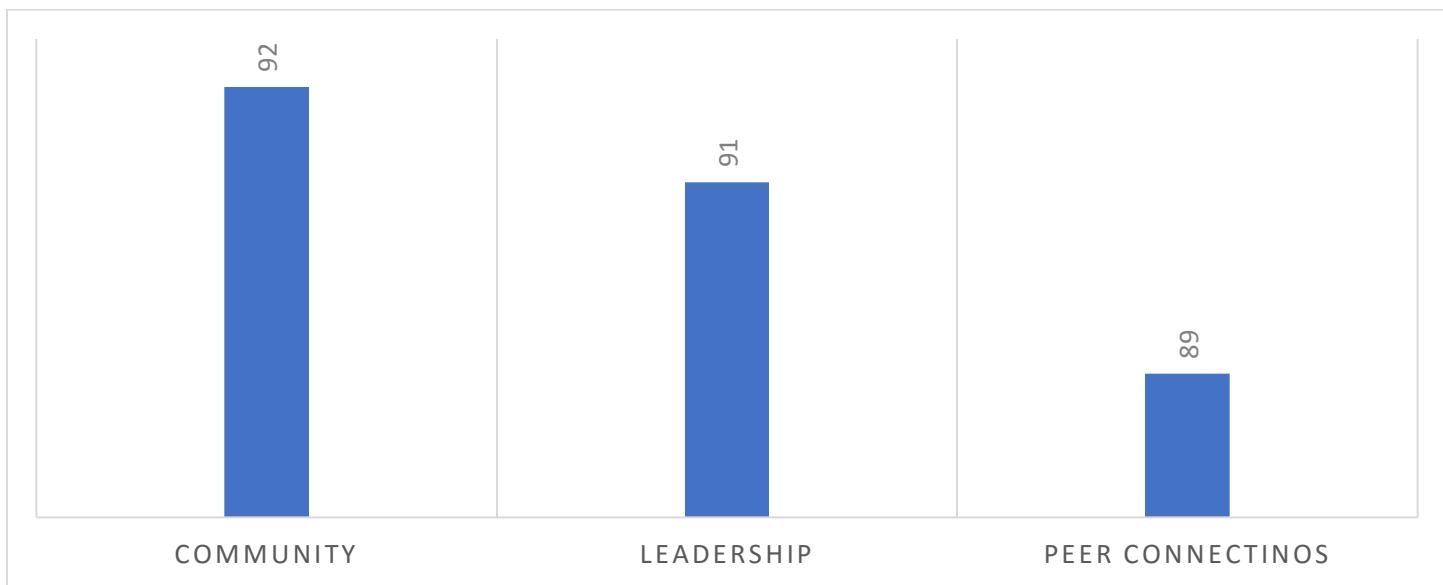


Results: PLTI Experiences

On average, PLTI participants experienced a strong sense of community, leadership opportunities, and peer connections. When asked to rate their likelihood to recommend PLTI to a friend on a scale from 0-10, 100% of PLTI participants chose 9 or 10, and none chose 6 or below.

Sense of Community, Opportunities for Leadership, and Peer Connections

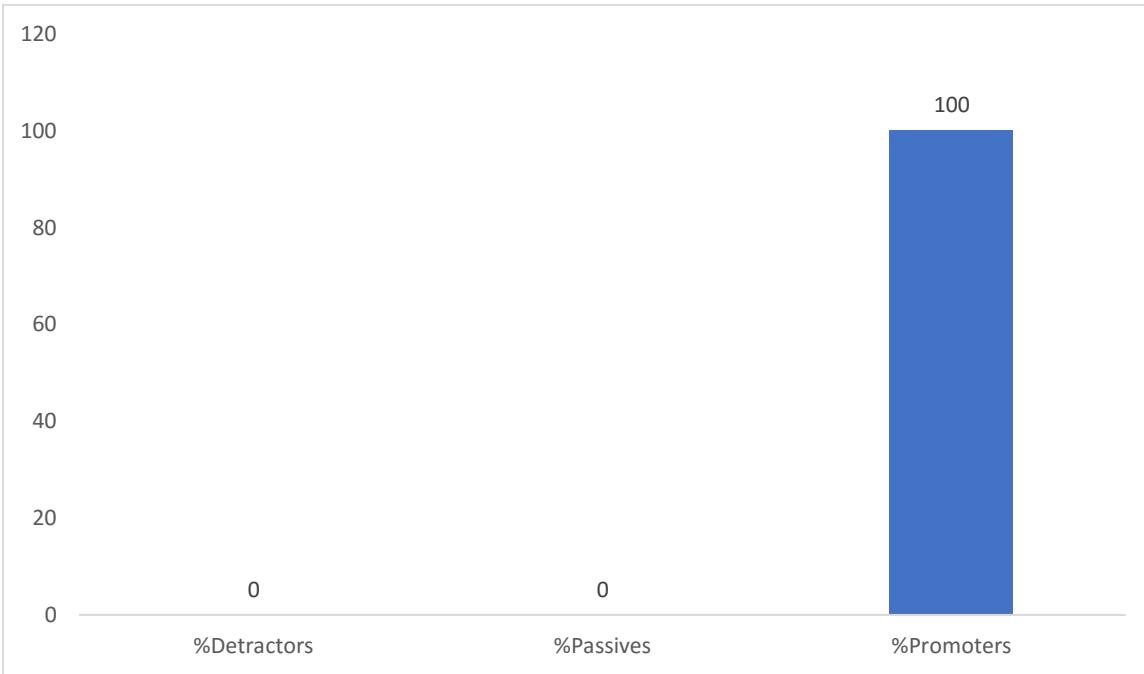
These graphs show how PLTI participants felt about the sense of community, opportunities for leadership, and peer connection within the program. Respondents originally answered on a scale from 1-5. Then, each question was weighted according to how accurately it captured the underlying construct. Scores were then converted to 0-100 scale.



Net promoter score

Many companies use a “net promoter score” to understand how loyal their customers are. Respondents answer on a scale from 0 to 10 how likely they are to recommend the company to a friend. The Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors (those who scored between 0 and 6) from the percentage of promoters or ambassadors (those who scored a 9 or 10).

This score may be applied to PLTI sites to understand the likelihood of PLTI participants talking up the program in the community or staying engaged through an alumni network, although this remains to be tested. PLTI participants were asked how likely they would be to recommend PLTI to a friend or family member, with 0 being “not at all likely” and 10 being “very likely.”



Net Promoter Score: **100% (N=8)**

Possible range = 0-100

Positive score = Good

Score over 50 = Excellent

Conclusion

This pre-post survey shows that PLTI served a diverse group of parents. Parents made gains in all outcomes that were measured, including policy experience, community activism, civic engagement, and government knowledge. By the end of the program, parents reported engaging at a higher rate in a range of civic behaviors, particularly attending a public meeting, presenting at a community meeting, and working with others in their immediate neighborhood on a problem. In addition to changes in civic attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors, the majority of parents reported that as a direct result of PLTI, they had thought about or taken steps to make changes in their personal lives, such as furthering their education, changing/advancing their careers, and making changes in their emotional, social, or physical health. Furthermore, parents reported that they had positive experiences in the program, as evidenced by high ratings when asked about perceived sense of community, opportunities for leadership, peer connection, and likelihood to recommend PLTI to a friend.

Survey Constructs – List of questions²

Policy experience

On a scale from 1-5, how confident do you feel in your ability to do the following?

1=Not at all confident, 5=Very confident

- a. Advocating for an issue or public policy
- b. Public speaking
- c. Community organizing
- d. Problem solving
- e. Helping a group reach consensus
- f. Reviewing, analyzing, and/or discussing budgets
- g. Engaging in policy development or policy improvement
- h. Assessing strengths in your community
- i. Developing projects or programs to address needs in your community
- j. Using outcome data to determine if a program or project achieved what it started out to do

Community activism

Please tell us how frequently you feel or do the following.

1=None of the time, 4=All of the time.

- a. When problems arise within my community, I do something about them.
- b. I feel I can have a part in improving my community.
- c. I feel confident in my ability to help my community grow.
- d. I voice my opinions about what my community needs.
- e. I know what to do when problems arise in my community.
- f. I get in touch with my elected officials when important legislation or ordinances affecting my community are pending.
- g. I understand how public policy affects my community.
- h. I am able to get information to help me better understand my community.
- i. It is important to vote in presidential elections.
- j. It is important to vote in local elections, for example, for mayor or school board.

Civic Behavior

In the last 12 months, have you done any of the following activities?

Yes or No

- a. Attended any public meeting where there was a discussion of policy or community issues?
- b. Used the internet to express your opinions about policy or community issues?
- c. Served on a committee or as an officer of any group or organization?
- d. Worked with others to get people in your immediate neighborhood to work together to fix or improve something?
- e. Done any volunteer activities through or for an organization?
- f. Spoke or presented at a community meeting (for example, school board, city or town council)
- g. Contacted an elected official at the local, state, or federal government?

² Italicized questions were not included in the analysis because they were not an accurate measure of any construct.

- h. Signed a petition?
- i. Received any request directed to you personally to take some active role in a local, public or political issue in your community -- perhaps to serve on a board, or to work with others on such an issue or to go to a meeting on some community issue?

Government Knowledge

Yes or No

- a. Do you know how state government budgets are made?
- b. Do you know how state laws are made?
- c. Do you know who your elected representative for the state House of Representative is?
- d. Do you know who your local representative for city government is?
- e. Do you know who your representative for the state Senate is?

PLTI Sense of Community

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1=Agree strongly, 5=Disagree strongly

- a. It is very important to me to be part of this PLTI community
- b. I enjoy being with PLTI members
- c. I expect to be a part of this community for a long time
- d. *Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, and crises*
- e. I feel hopeful about the future of this community

PLTI Sense of Leadership

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1=Agree strongly, 5=Disagree strongly

- a. People in PLTI are provided opportunities to assume leadership roles within the class
- b. People in PLTI are provided the resources and support they need to assume leadership roles within the class
- c. *I feel confident that facilitators try to understand my views and experiences before suggesting new ways to do things*
- d. I believe I have an impact on decisions made at PLTI

PLTI Peer Connection

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1=Agree strongly, 5=Disagree strongly

- a. In PLTI, it is easy to discuss difficult issues and problems.
- b. It is completely safe to take a risk in PLTI.
- c. It is easy to ask other participants in PLTI for help
- d. Participants in PLTI value and respect each others' contributions.
- e. Even in difficult situations, people in PLTI can depend on each other.
- f. People in PLTI trust each other
- g. *I understand how parents' community projects will address specific problems in their communities.*
- h. *People in PLTI have a shared understanding of PLTI's civic values and goals.*