**PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment**

# And the Survey Says… Best Practices for College Parent Involvement

## Barb Ziemke, Co-Director, PACER's NPCTE

# Welcome!

- **Hear** results from TPSID Family Engagement surveys
- **Learn** about current college parent involvement practices
- **Evaluate** your need for improvement
- **Exchange** ideas and share helpful resources
- **Consider** suggested strategies

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### ~A Think College Partner

Promotes:

- High expectations
- Family involvement in transition
- Building professional capacity to effectively engage and support families

Provides:

- Information, resources and referral
- Direct assistance to families
- Technical Assistance and training

# Tap into the power of parents* as partners



➕ Family involvement is a greater predictor of successful outcomes for youth than income or social status. *Transitionta.org*
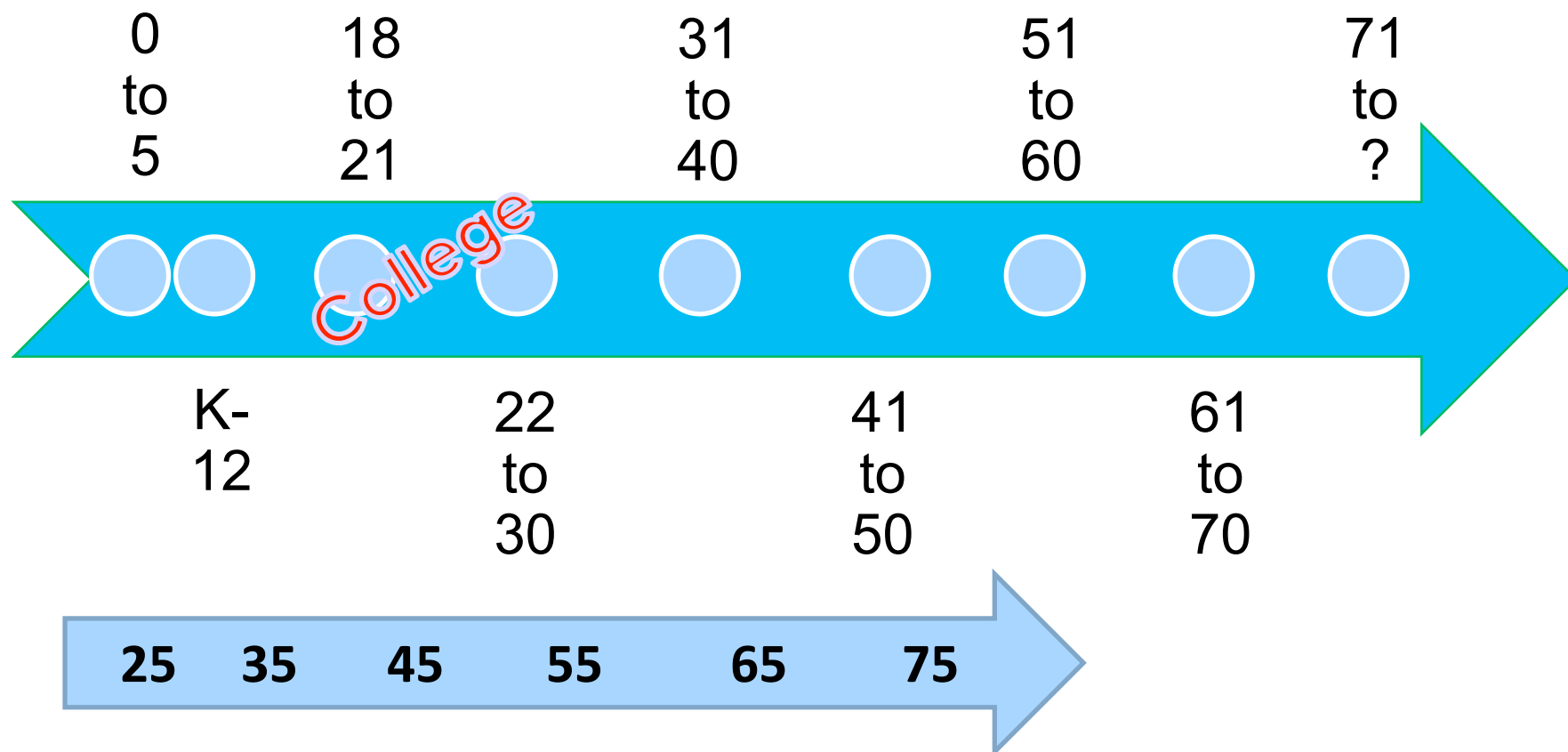
➕ "Youth with disabilities in postsecondary settings have better outcomes when they and their family members are engaged in ongoing planning, communication, and collaboration to meet their needs…" *NWCD-youth.info*

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# The Power of High Expectations and the Family & Professional Partnership

# Families are Forever

0 to 5     18 to 21     31 to 40     51 to 60     71 to ?

College

K-12     22 to 30     41 to 50     61 to 70

25    35    45    55    65    75

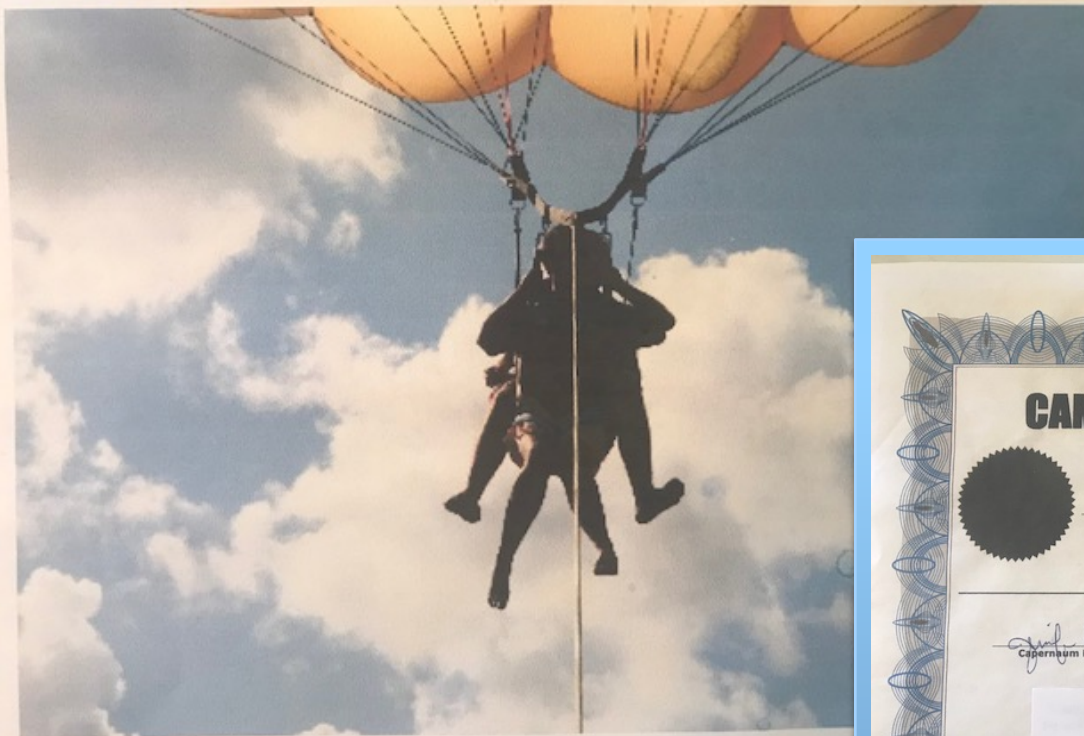# Positive Parent Involvement Can Support Self-Determination

➤ Effective parent involvement practices support families in the ongoing development of the young adult's self-determination, autonomy and interdependence.



*Self-determination and self-advocacy skills need to be built, not assumed.*

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# ➤ **Encourage parents to "let grow"**

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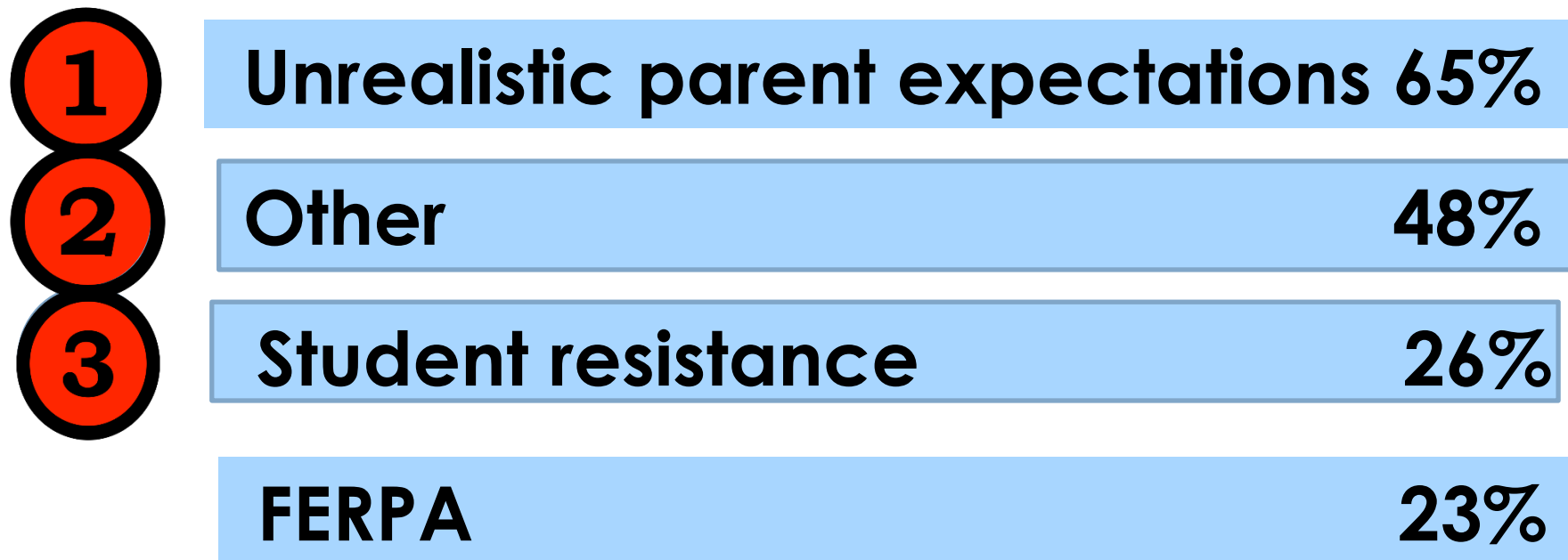**Transition and Employment**

*It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers.* ~ **James Thurber**

1. What does positive parent involvement look like in a college setting?

2. Is it possible to have Person-Centered Planning (PCP) without parent/family involvement?

3. Is there ever a time when a conversation or meeting with parent without the student present may be appropriate?

4. Are there any issues between CTP/TPSID program staff and the DSO staff regarding philosophy and approach?

5. What benefits have you seen in partnering with the families of the students in your program?

**SURVEY SAYS**

# What are your primary challenges (up to 3) in communicating with and involving families?

**1** Unrealistic parent expectations 65%

**2** Other 48%

**3** Student resistance 26%

FERPA 23%

**SURVEY SAYS**

# What are your primary challenges (up to 3) in effectively communicating with staff?

**1** Other — 50%

**2** College philosophy/expectation — 39%

**3** FERPA restrictions — 22%
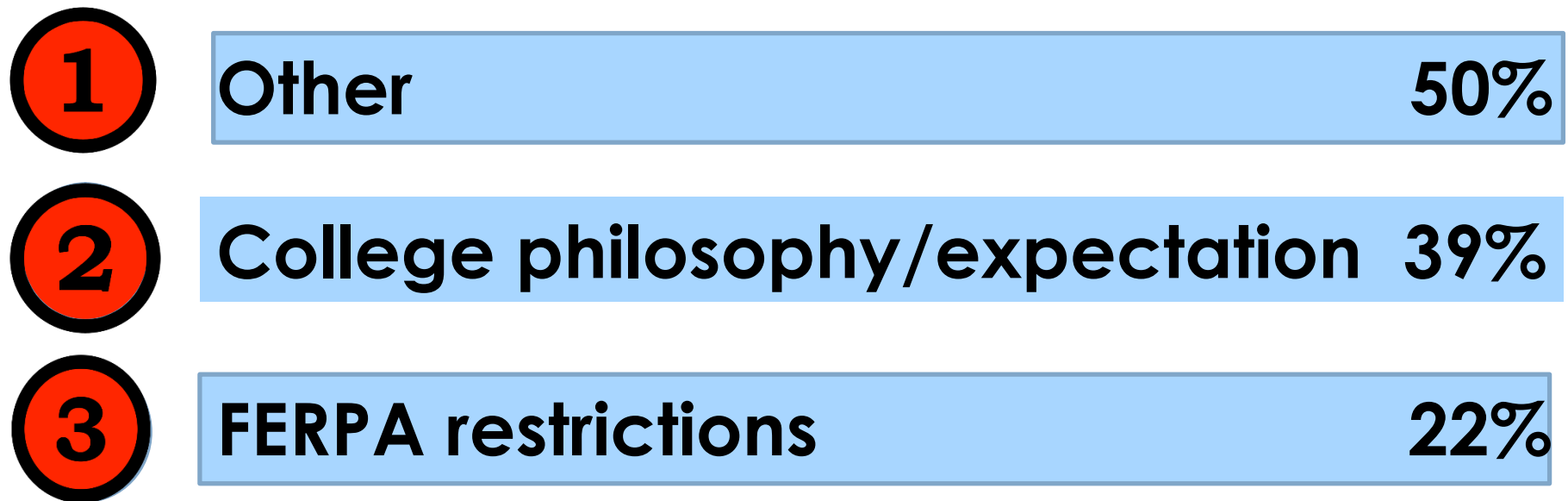
# Does the program inform parents about FERPA as they specifically apply…

|  | Parents | Staff |
|---|---|---|
| **YES** | 66% | 91% |

# Are students required to sign a FERPA waiver providing parents access…?

|  | Parents | Staff |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 45% | 11% |
| No | 26% | 17% |
| Encouraged to… | 29% | 72% |

## Parent is the legal guardian

## Application asks about guardianship

**YES** 

| | |
|---|---|
| 46% | 77% |

**NO**

| | |
|---|---|
| 54% | 23% |

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# Guardianship status is a factor in which of the following (check all that apply):

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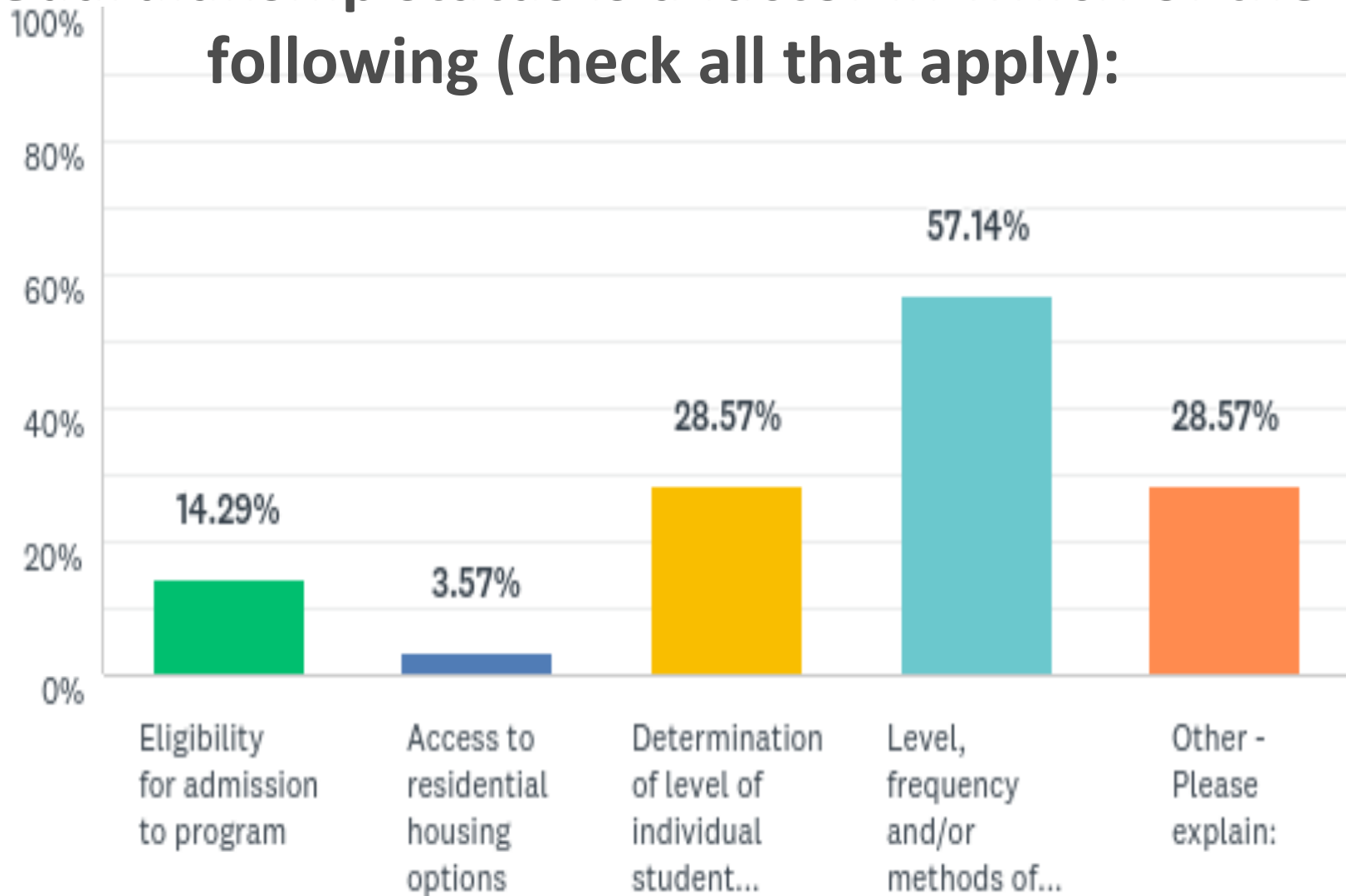
# For which of the following reasons was your child's guardianship status a factor (check all that apply):



Bar chart showing:
- Eligibility for admission to program: 26.67%
- Access to residential housing options: 6.67%
- Access to inclusive classes or student...: 3.33%
- To determine the level of...: 23.33%
- To determine the level of direc...: 30.00%
- Other: 36.67%
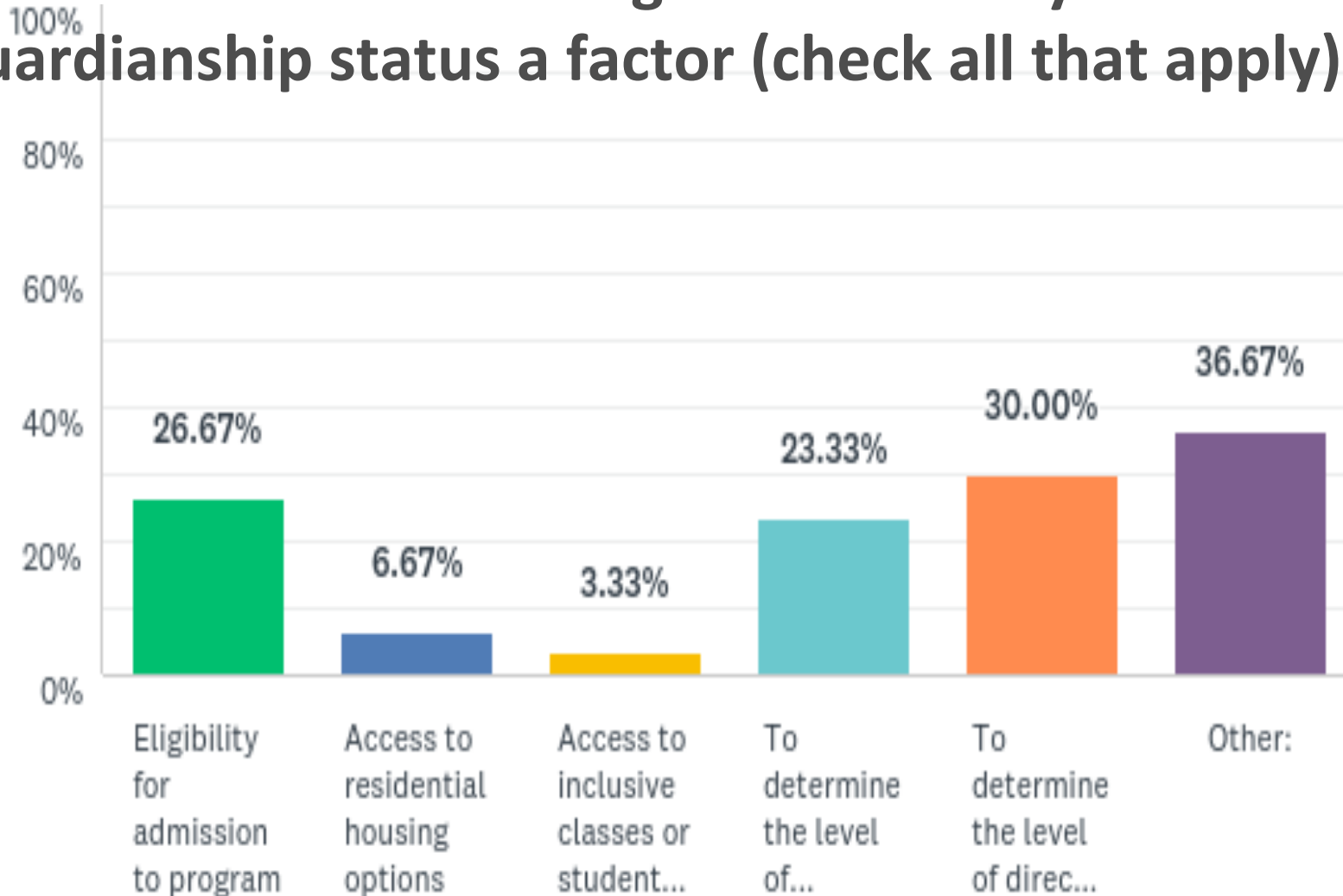
# When an adult student requires a legal guardian, which of the following are reasonable assumptions to make:

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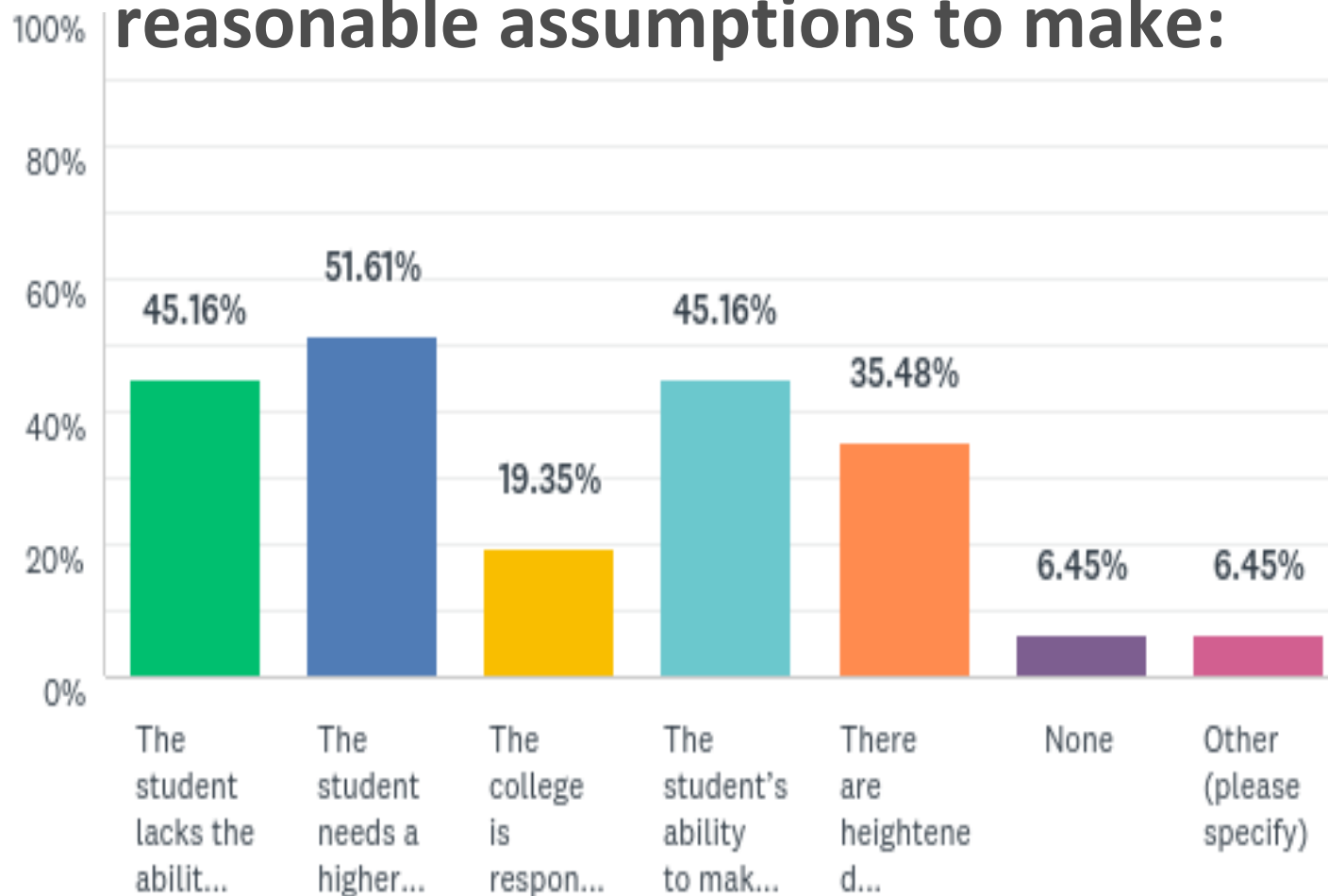
# Did the college provide you with materials that clearly describe the role of parents and expectations for parent involvement?



Staff response: 50% Yes

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Parents: Were you asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other written agreement regarding expectations, roles and responsibilities?
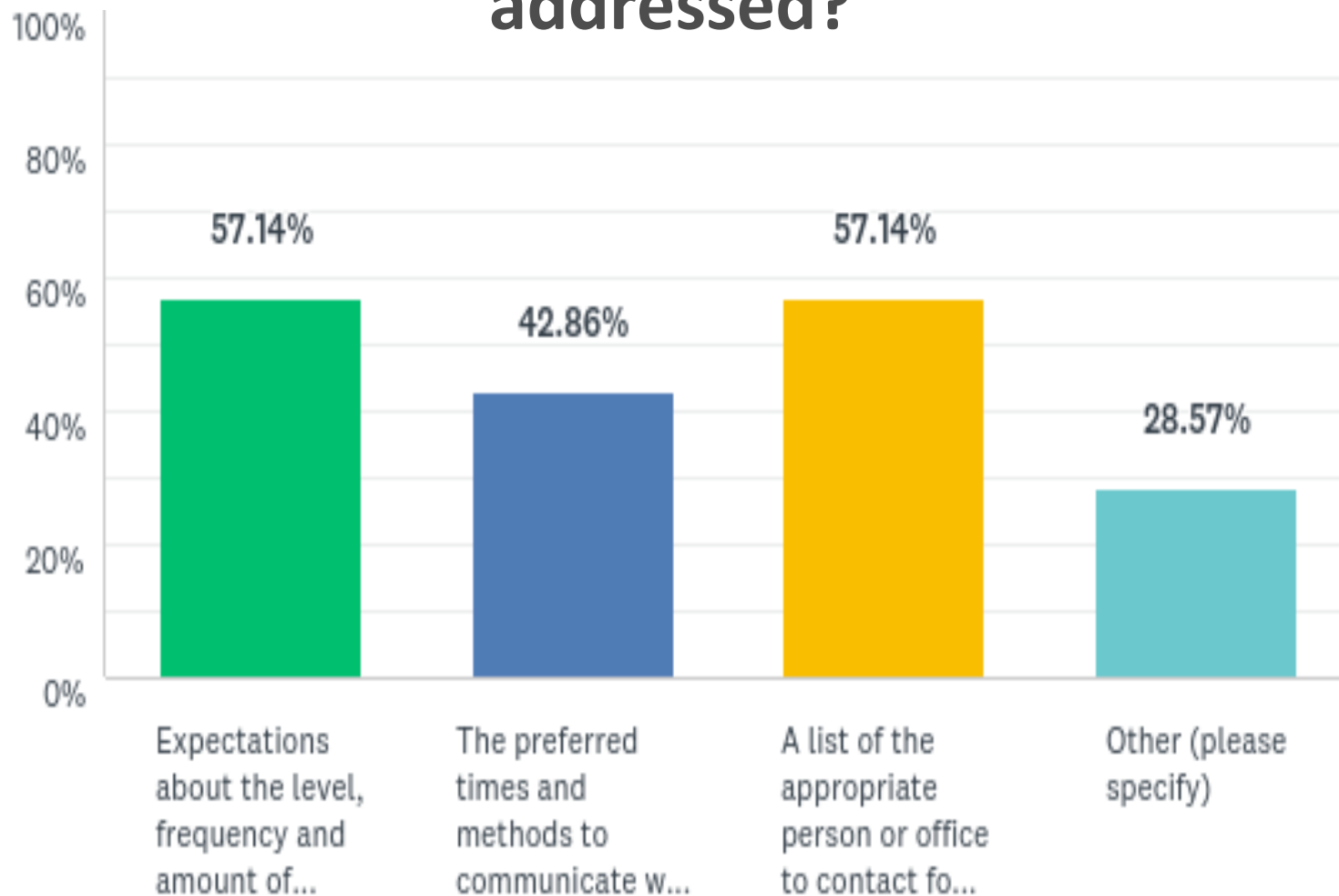
**YES** 70 %

Staff: Does your program ask the family to sign a Memorandum of Understanding or other written agreement…?
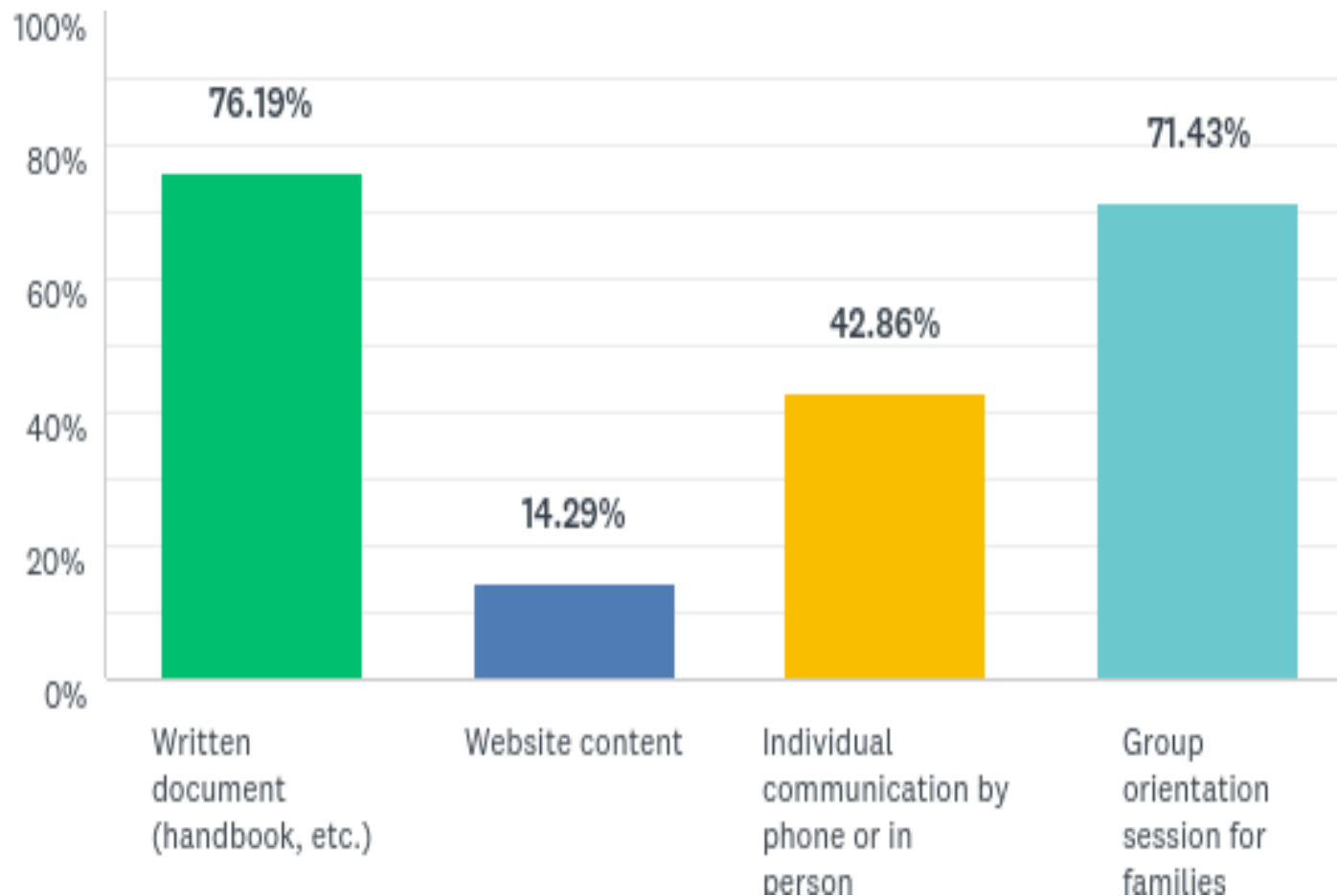
**YES** 34 %

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# If "no,"(10% of respondents) what was not addressed?

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# If "yes," how was this information provided? (Check all that apply)

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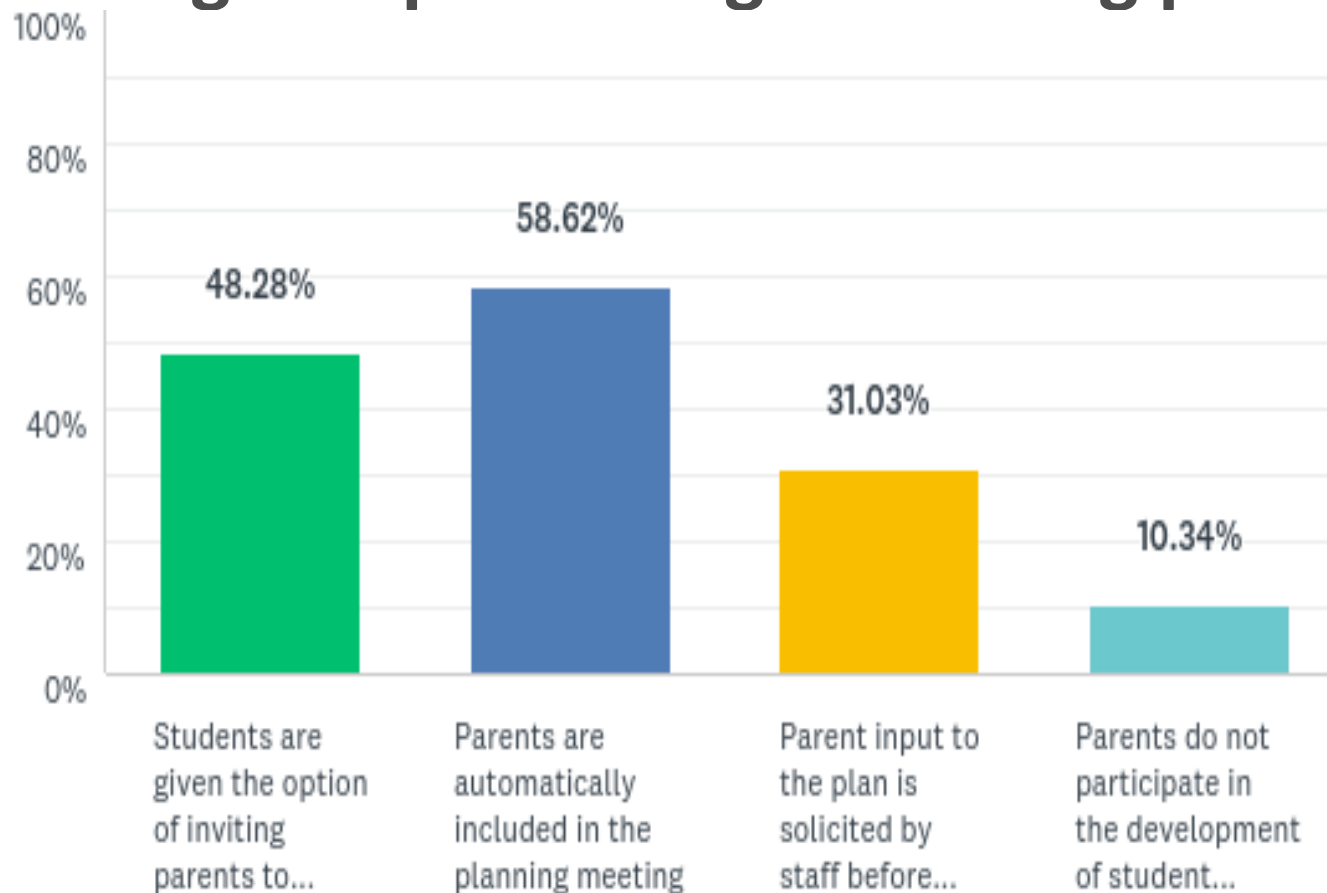National Parent Center on
Transition and Employment

# Parents: Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about your level of involvement?

- **82%** Appropriately involved and connected to the college

- **18%** Under-involved and would prefer more involvement

- **0%** More involvement required than I prefer

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Regarding involvement in their college student's day to day life, what percentage of the parents do you feel are:
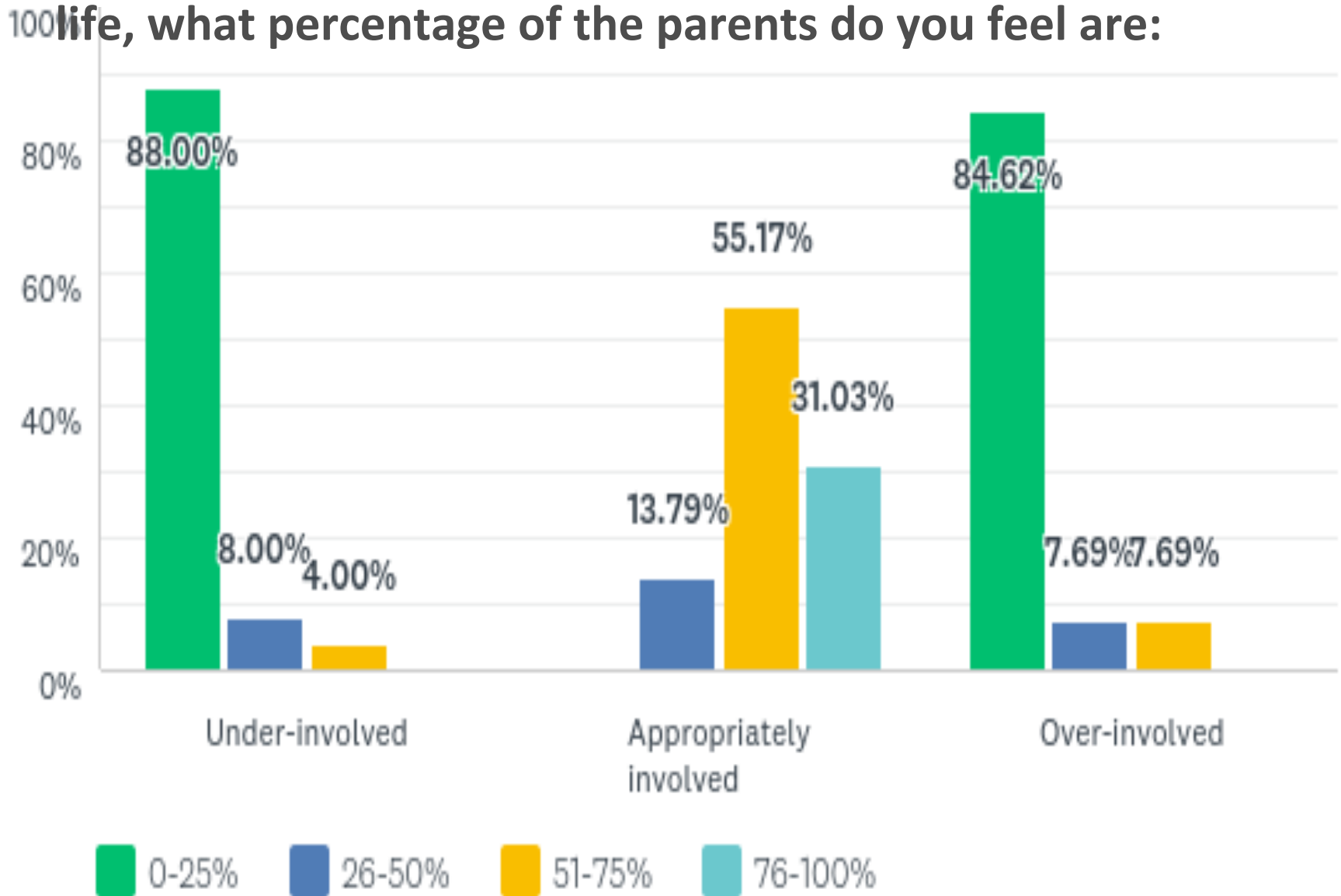
# In which of the following ways are you included in the student's person-centered future planning and personal goal-setting process?



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 48.28% | 58.62% | 31.03% | 10.34% |
| Students are given the option of inviting parents to... | Parents are automatically included in the planning meeting | Parent input to the plan is solicited by staff before... | Parents do not participate in the development of student... |

# In which of the following ways do you facilitate connections between the families of your students? (Check all that apply)

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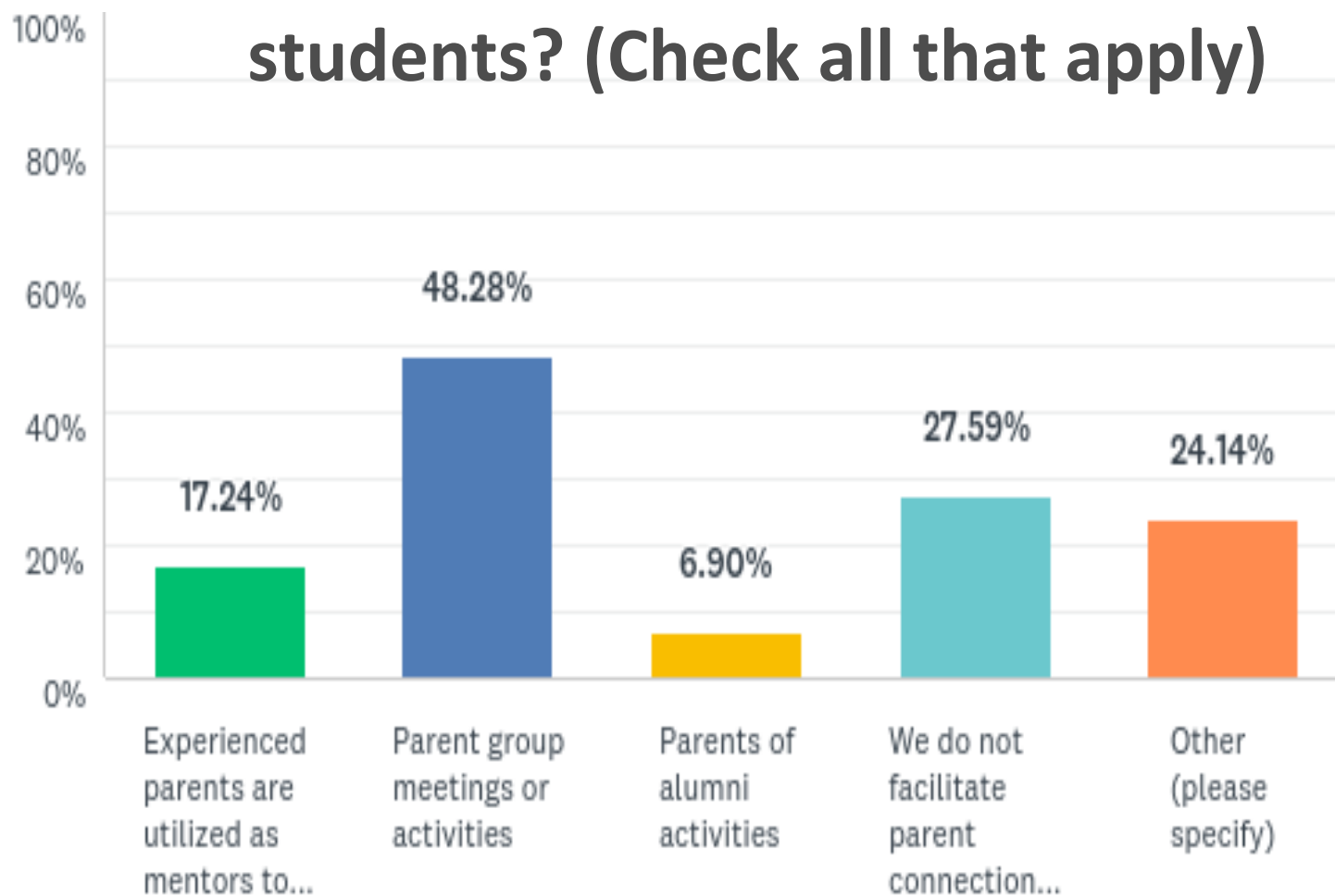
# Parents: Did the college provide you with guidance regarding effective strategies for supporting your child to engage independently in college activities?
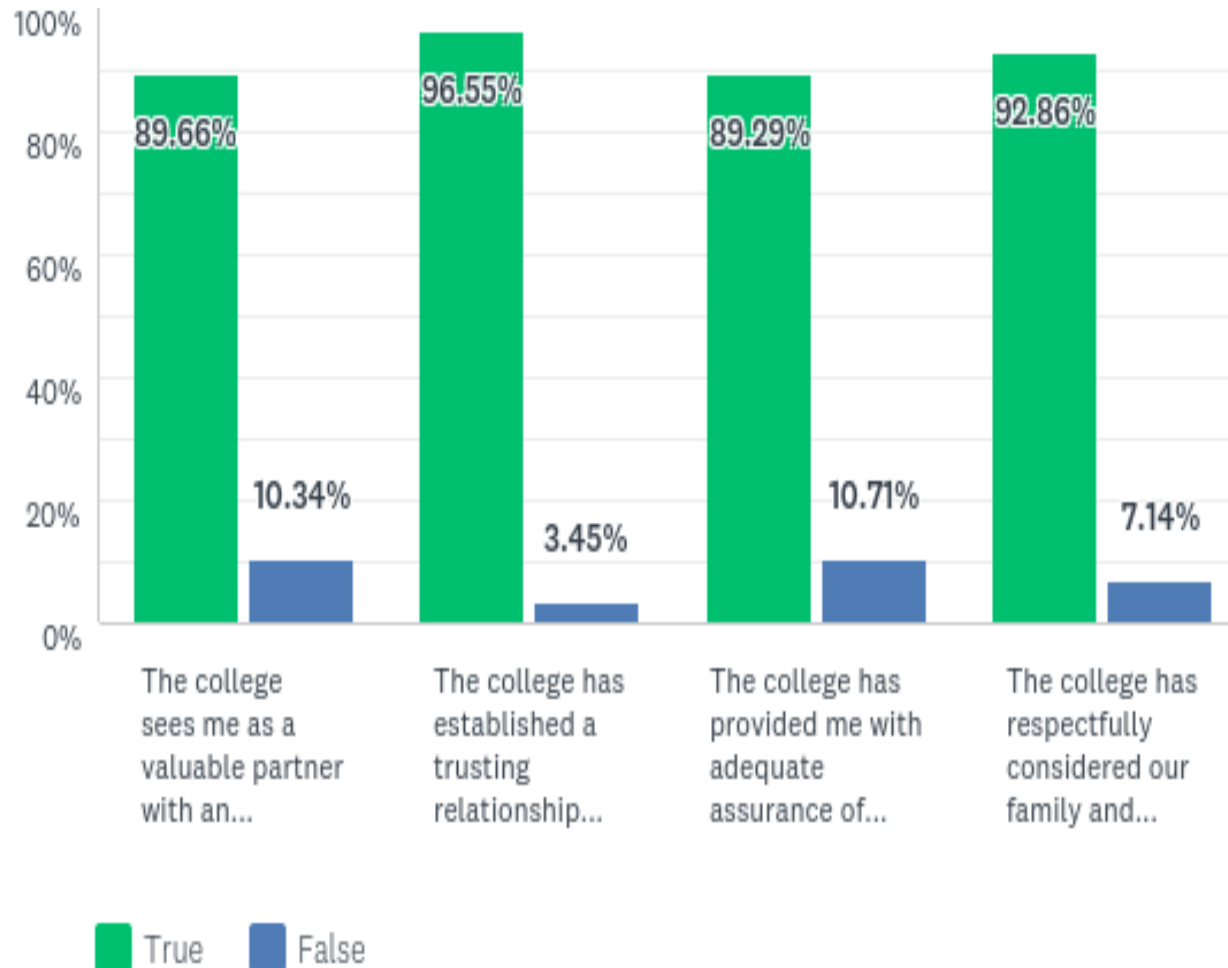


62.96%

37.04%

Yes

No
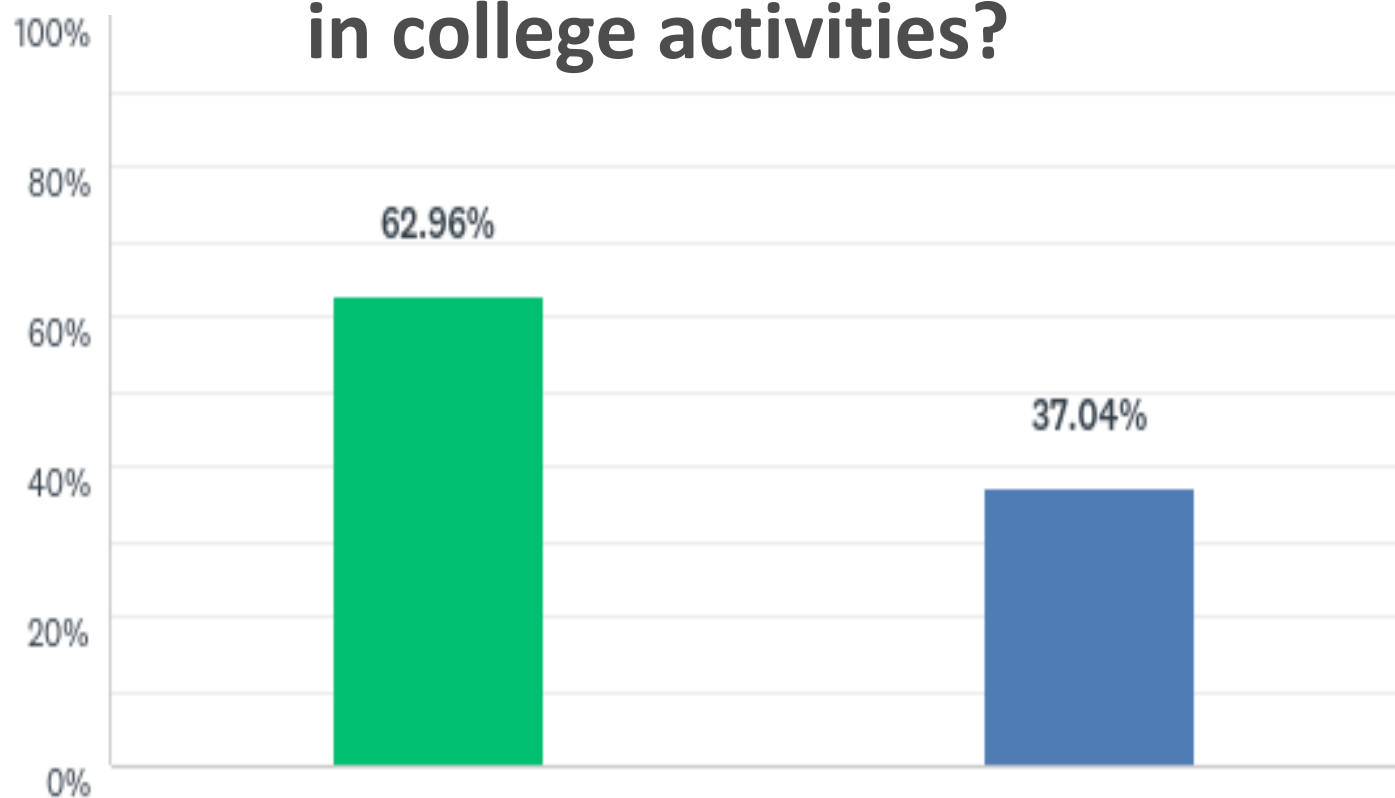
Staff response: 50% Yes

# Parents: Were you provided with information and guidance to support your son or daughter's successful transition from the college setting to living and working in the student's community?



Staff response: 69% Yes

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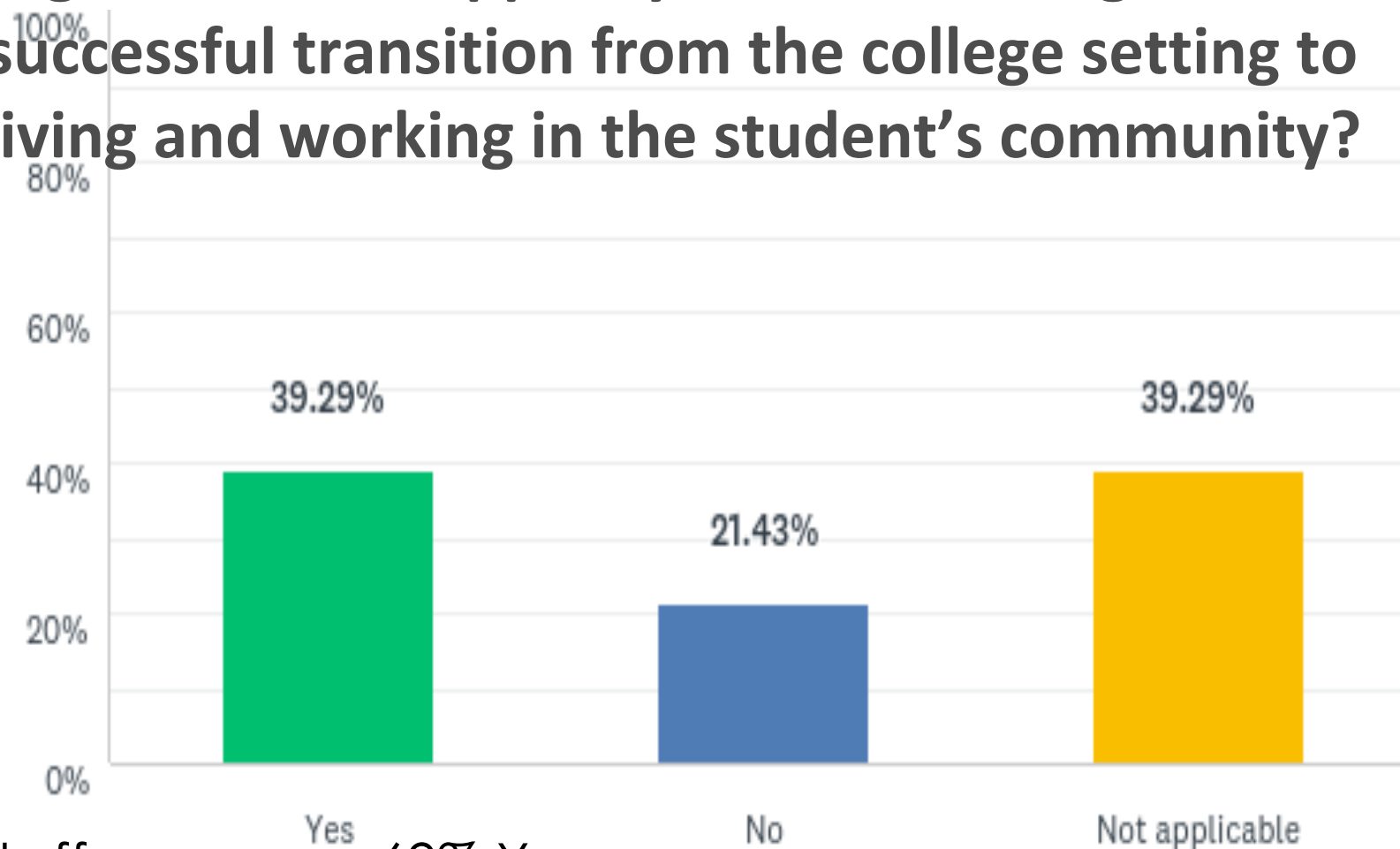
# Parents: Please indicate true or false to the following statements:

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# For which of the following program concerns have you been contacted by the college program for your input or support? (Check all that apply)

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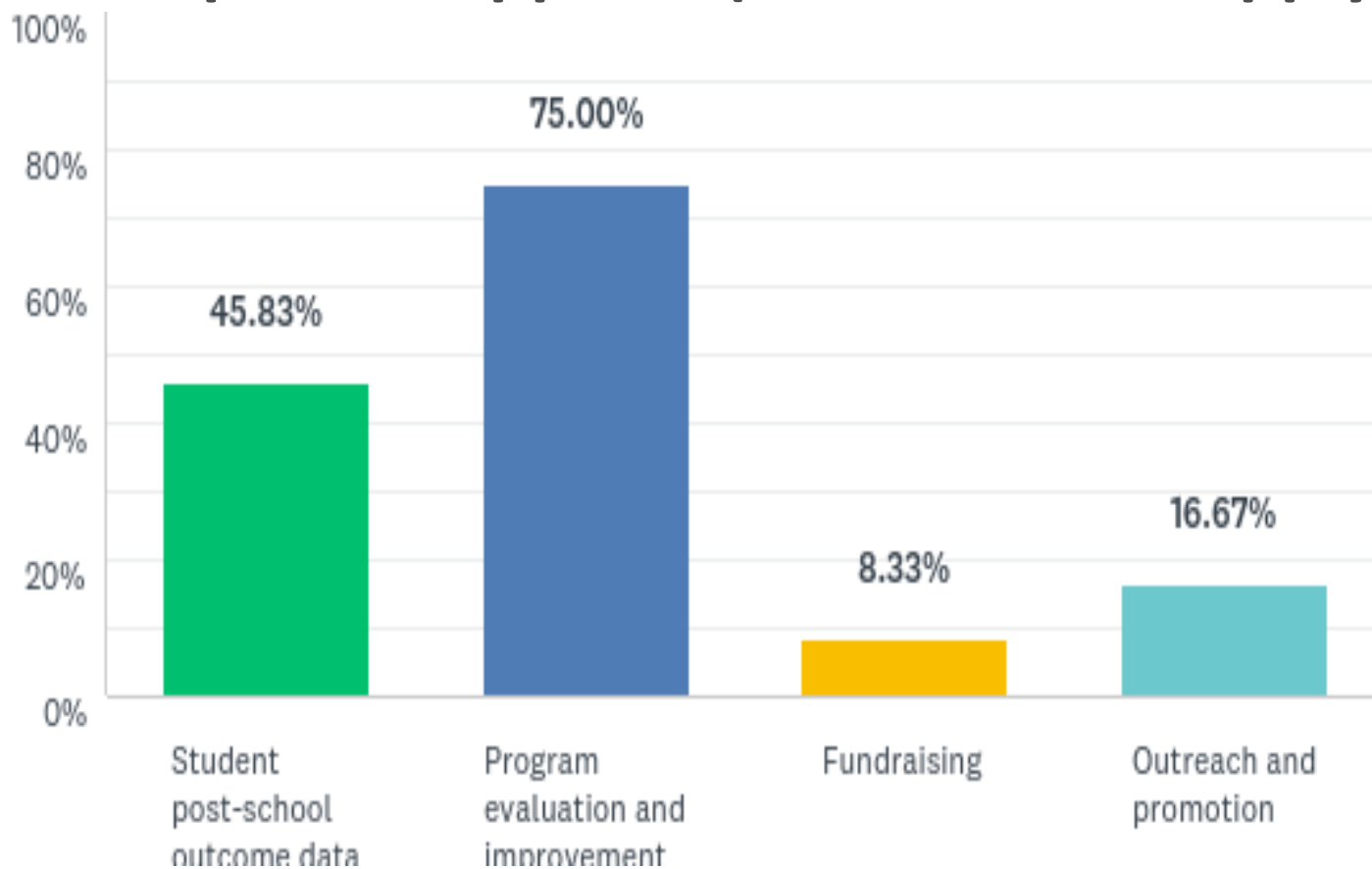
# Parents: For which student concerns have you been contacted by program for your support?

- Transportation needs  33%

- Behavior concerns including positive reinforcement  28%

- Lack of progress or engagement 28%

- Providing records and/or completing paperwork 22%

- Effective accommodations  17%

- Money management concerns  17%

- Coordinating with adult service providers 17%

- Personal hygiene or dietary concerns  11%

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# Program staff: For which of these student concerns have you contacted a parent for input or support?

- Illness/medication or mental health concerns 100%

- Behavior concerns including positive reinforcement and motivator input  81%

- Providing records and/or completing paperwork 75%

- Transportation needs  69%

- Lack of progress or engagement 69%

- Personal hygiene or dietary concerns  56%

- Effective accommodations/adaptations  44%

- Coordinating with adult service providers 31%

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# Effective Strategies to Promote Parent Support for Self-Determination

- Establish student, parent and program expectations prior to enrollment, at orientation, and in ongoing ways

- Have and communicate a clearly defined process for intentionally providing opportunities for "student growth"

- Include parents and students in proactively planning ways to address anxiety related to increased expectations and to support the student in handling "failure"

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# Benefits of Partnering with Families

- Promote the college program

- Serve as parent mentors and program advisors

- Raise funds and advocate for legislative change

- Reinforce program goals and student expectations

- Other benefits?

# Parent Involvement Strategies for Student Success

- Provide family orientation prior to enrollment

- Provide up-front, clear and adequate information

- Establish a clear chain of communication and a list with contact information

- Create parent partnerships by building trusting relationships

- Have a stated process for family involvement with defined roles and responsibilities, timeline and expectations

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# More Promising Strategies

- Use parents as parent-trainers and presenters

- Ask parents to review your materials, their understanding of the process, etc., and use the feedback for improvement

- Connect with Parent Training & Info (PTI) Centers, Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and disability -specific advocacy organizations

- Welcome family participation: Specifically invite with clear instructions on how they can be involved

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If I get to be me,
I belong.
If I have to be like you,
I fit in.
~ **Brené Brown**

Inclusion = Belonging

# www.pacer.org/transition

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Contact Us

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*Thanks for all you do. Together, we are making a difference!*

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