

**Teacher Perceptions of Social/Emotional
Development of Children who are Deaf or
Hard of Hearing in Self-Contained
Preschool Classrooms and upon
Transition into Mainstream Kindergarten**

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Presentation Outline

- ❧ Introduction to social/emotion development of children who are DHH
- ❧ Results of survey study of preschool teachers
- ❧ Results of survey study of kindergarten teachers
- ❧ Recommendations

Consider. . .

☞ As parents, educators, early interventionists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, physicians . . .

What are our primary areas of concern?

Where do we place our strongest focus?

What do we want for the children we serve?



Social/Emotional Development

- ❧ Social/emotional development is a fundamental component of a child's overall health and well-being.
- ❧ Consider:
 - ❧ A young child's self-concept
 - ❧ The ability to exhibit self-control; manage a range of emotions in an age-appropriate way
 - ❧ Development in social play and cooperation
 - ❧ The ability to be confident, trusting, empathetic, independent, inquisitive
 - ❧ Engage in active and healthy explorations of the environment

Social/Emotional Development

- ☞ Hartup (1992) contends that, “The single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not school grades, and not classroom behavior, but rather, the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children. Children who are generally disliked, who are aggressive and disruptive, who are unable to sustain close relationships with other children, and who cannot establish a place for themselves in the peer culture are seriously at risk.”

Social/Emotional Skills

- ∞ According to ASHA, social/emotional skills are important for:
 - ∞ Using language for different purposes such as greeting, informing, and requesting
 - ∞ Changing language depending on the relationship with the listener
 - ∞ Following conversational rules, such as
 - ∞ Taking turns in conversation
 - ∞ Staying on topic
 - ∞ Using non-verbal signals
 - ∞ Maintaining appropriate body position and eye contact



Common Core Standards

- ❧ The Common Core social/emotional goals provide teachers and parents with a common framework for child development expectations. With consistent standards, benchmarks are provided for all students, regardless of where they live. These standards give a definition of the knowledge and skills students should gain in every school year of learning (NAEYC, 2012).

Children who are DHH

- ☞ Have the potential for language development and academic achievement similar to same-aged hearing peers.
 - ☞ Early identification / advanced hearing technology
 - ☞ Early intervention / specialized LSL programs
- ☞ Because mainstream is a goal of LSL programs, children who are DHH also have goals of academic and social performance as outlined in state performance expectations and within the Common Core standards.
- ☞ However, research findings are mixed concerning social/emotional development in children who are DHH as compared with peers.

Children who are DHH

- ∞ Antia et al., 2011: Social outcomes in children who are DHH in the mainstream can be positive. Children tended to view themselves as having better social skills than teacher ratings. Overall, generally positive findings.
- ∞ Goberis et al., 2012: Reported delays in social/emotional development of children who are DHH. Even at the age of 7 years, there were several skill areas not mastered by 75% of the DHH children in the study sample.
- ∞ Few studies explored outcomes in preschool-age children.

Study #1 - Preschool

The purpose of this study was to:

- ∞ Obtain an overview of teacher perceptions of the social/emotional skills of children who are DHH in specialized LSL programs (OPTION schools) compared to perceptions of teachers of typically-developing preschool-age children.
- ∞ Identify the intervention recommendations that teachers believe have contributed to social/emotional skill development of preschool-age children.

Survey Questionnaire

- ❧ An electronic survey was developed and distributed to all OPTION schools and preschools with typically-developing children in similar regions.
- ❧ Distribution began in October 2013, remained open for approximately 6 weeks. Reminder emails were sent after two weeks and four weeks.

Participants

- ❧ **Preschool teachers of children who are DHH in OPTION programs.** Teachers of children who are DHH were asked to provide feedback on **two** students in their classroom: highest/lowest.
- ❧ **Preschool teachers of children with normal hearing in typical preschool classrooms.** These teachers were asked to provide feedback on **one** student in their class: typically developing child.

Survey Instrument

- ∞ The survey contained **12 questions** on social/emotional development as aligned with Preschool Foundations in Utah's Early Childhood Common Core Standards for Social/Emotional Development.
- ∞ **An open-ended question** was included in the survey to query teacher intervention recommendations they believe contribute to the social/emotional skill development of preschool-age children.

Dissemination

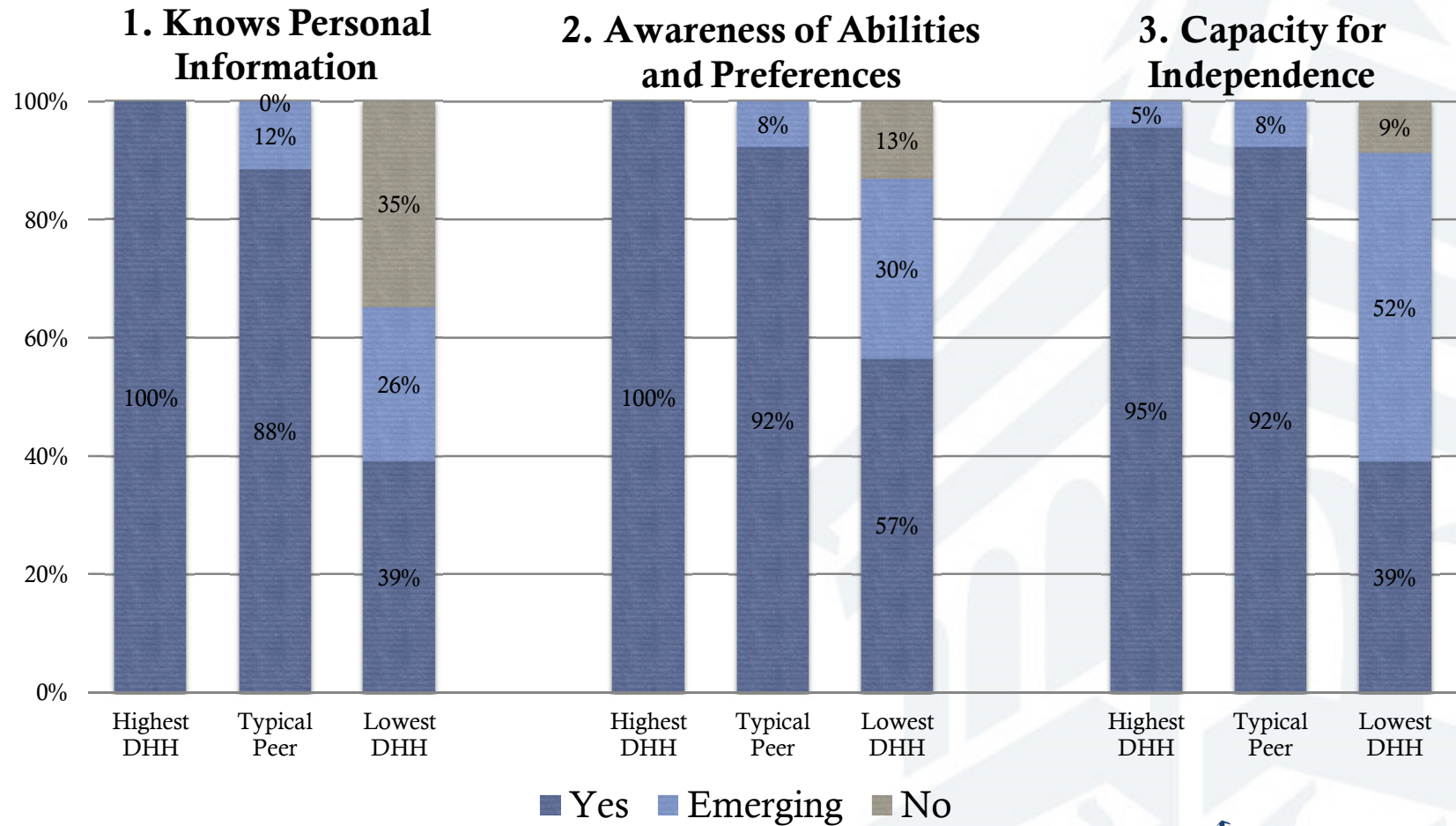
- ❧ **Email links distributed: 418**
 - ❧ 41 OPTION schools
 - ❧ 377 General education preschools
- ❧ Potential participants were identified by obtaining a list of general education preschool programs, compiled from a randomized web search of schools to encompass a broad geographic representation.

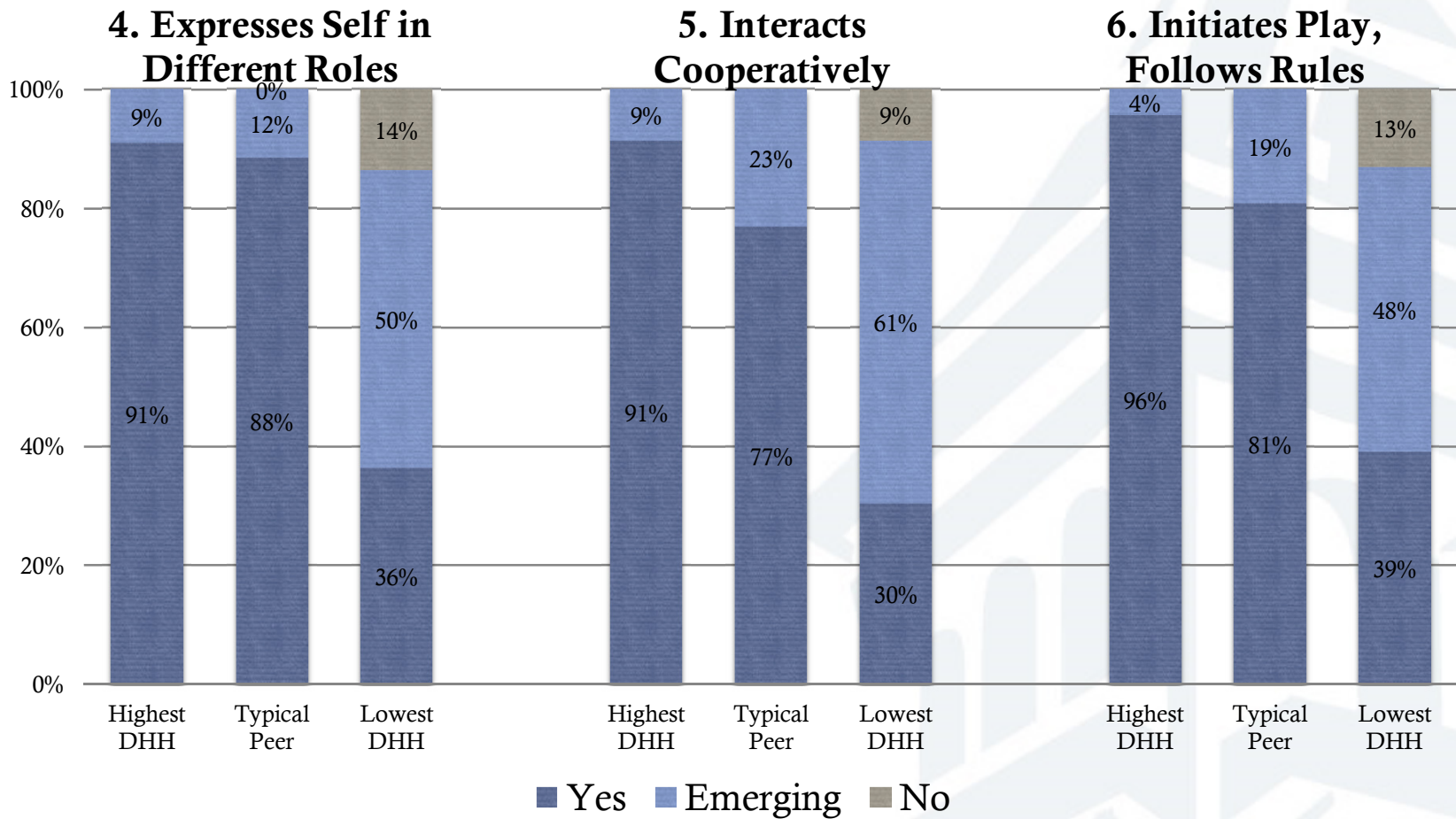
Response Format

- ☞ **Yes:** the child displays the skill consistently
- ☞ **Emerging:** the child is beginning to display the skill but is not consistent
- ☞ **No:** the child does not display the skill

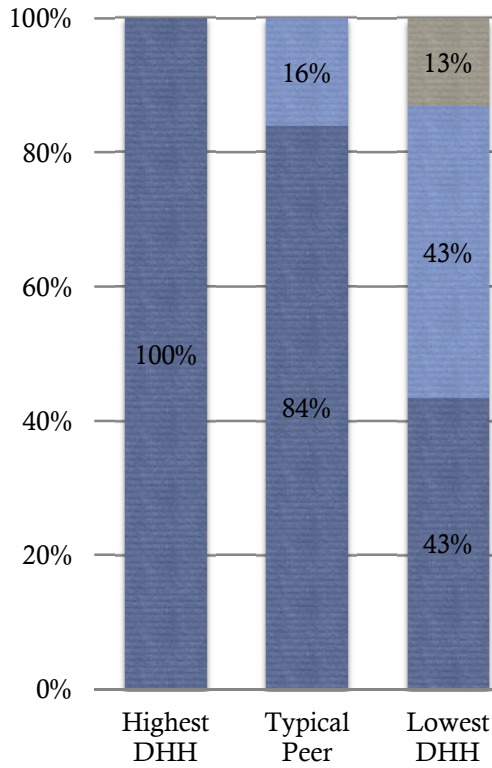
Results

- ☞ Surveys returned: 49
 - ☞ 23 OPTION Schools
 - ☞ 26 Typical Developing
- ☞ Because the teachers of children who are DHH completed survey questions concerning two children in their class, the number of survey respondents (n=49) is not equal to the number of children represented in the survey (n=72).

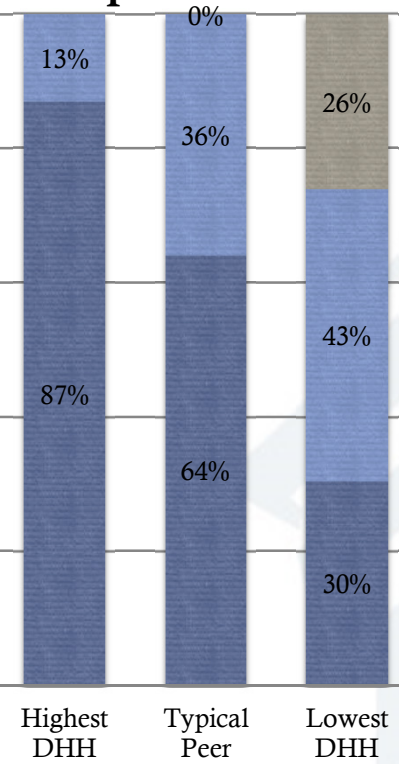




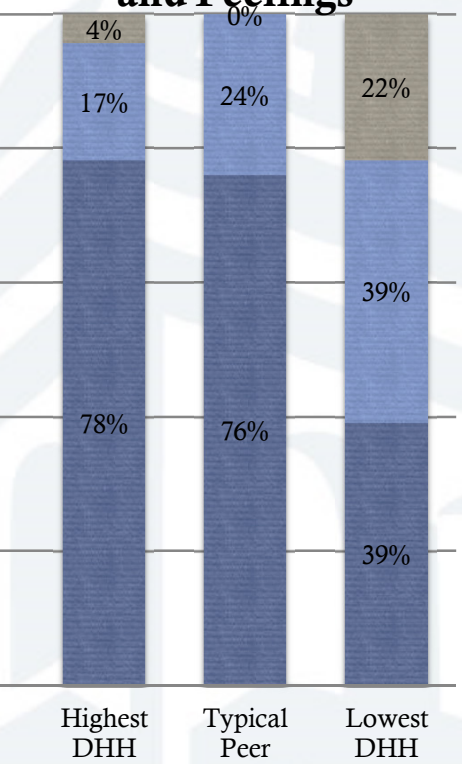
7. Develops Positive Social Behaviors



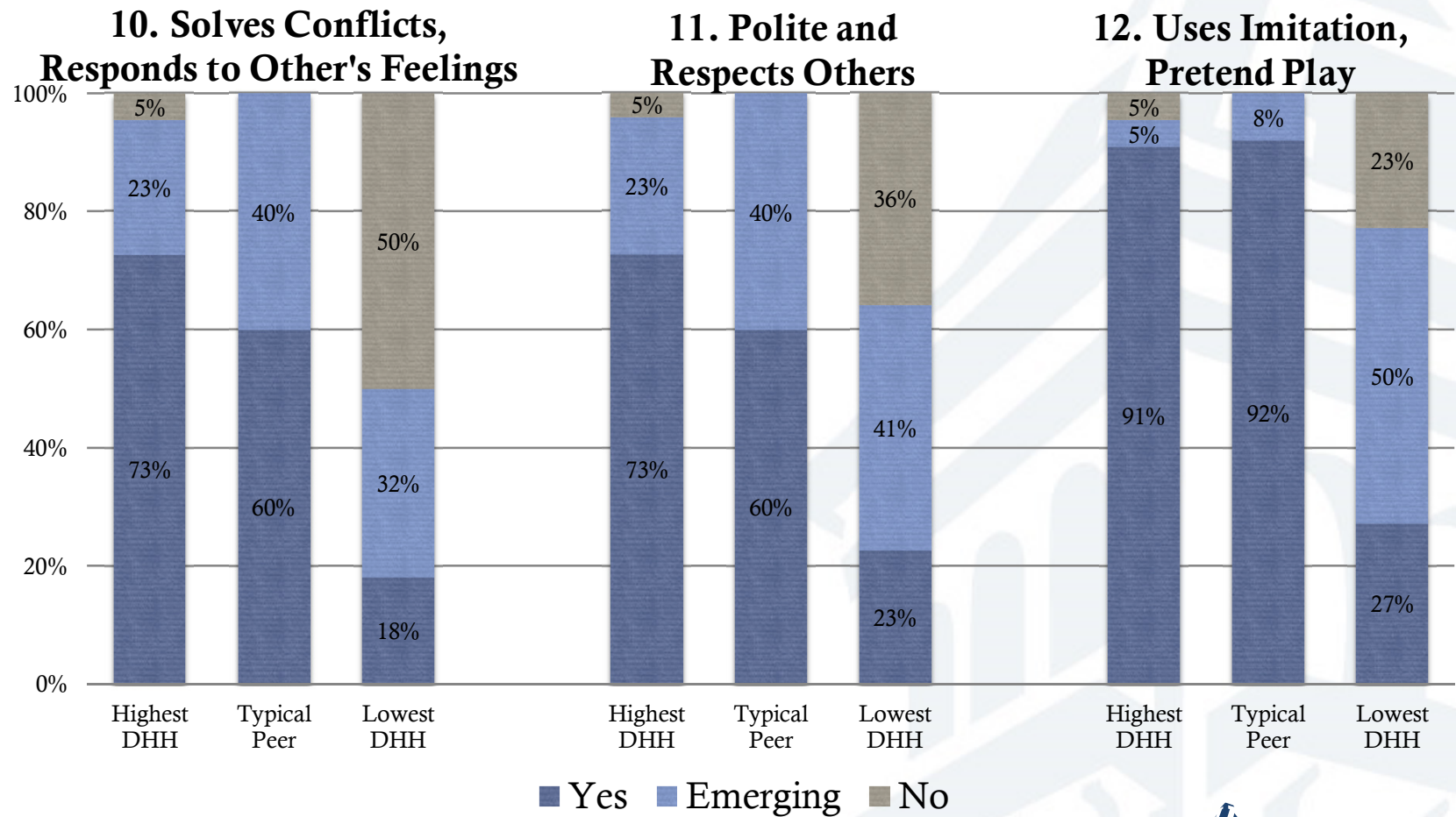
8. Self-Control, Accepts Limitations



9. Expresses Emotions and Feelings



■ Yes ■ Emerging ■ No



Teacher Recommendations

- Utilizing an open-ended response format, the survey queried intervention recommendations that respondents believe contribute to social/emotional skill development of preschool-age children.

Participant Intervention Recommendations for Promoting Social/Emotional Development (n=62)

Content Analysis Categories

- ☞ Structured Environment, Behavior Management (18%)
- ☞ Peer Interaction/Play (18%)
- ☞ Utilize a social skills curriculum or direct instruction (16%)
- ☞ Pre-teach social language (13%)
- ☞ Engage in role playing, teacher modeling (13%)
- ☞ Incorporate optimal classroom arrangements (13%)
- ☞ Collaboration with parents and other professionals (13%)
- ☞ Use literacy interventions, such as social stories (9%)

Study Limitations

- ∞ Response rate; sample size.
- ∞ As with any survey there are questions that you realize in analysis would have been appropriate to expand or include.
- ∞ Greater representation from all regions.

Discussion

- ☞ Highest performing children performed as well as typical peers and, in some cases, better.
- ☞ Lowest performing children still did quite well, better than we anticipated prior to initiating the study.
- ☞ Transition can be challenging for all children, with or without disabilities.
 - ☞ Changes occur in the number of children in the classroom, with size differences within the physical space.
 - ☞ Children must embark on the task of getting to know children with whom they have never met and must navigate a complex social network.
- ☞ Parents and preschool teachers can be instrumental in preparing children for successful mainstream transition.

Study #2 - Kindergarten

The purpose of this study was to:

- ❧ Obtain perspective of mainstream kindergarten teachers concerning social/emotional development of children who are DHH entering the mainstream setting.
- ❧ Obtain feedback from teachers concerning their recommendations as to effective strategies for facilitating social/emotional development of preschool and kindergarten children for successful mainstream experiences.

Survey Questionnaire

- ❧ Cross-Sectional Survey Design
 - ❧ Electronic Survey Questionnaire
 - ❧ Distribution began October 2013
- ❧ Email links distributed: 1,598
 - ❧ Multiple geographic regions
 - ❧ Potential participants identified by obtaining a list of general education kindergarten programs
 - ❧ Open for approximately 6 weeks
- ❧ Surveys returned: 171

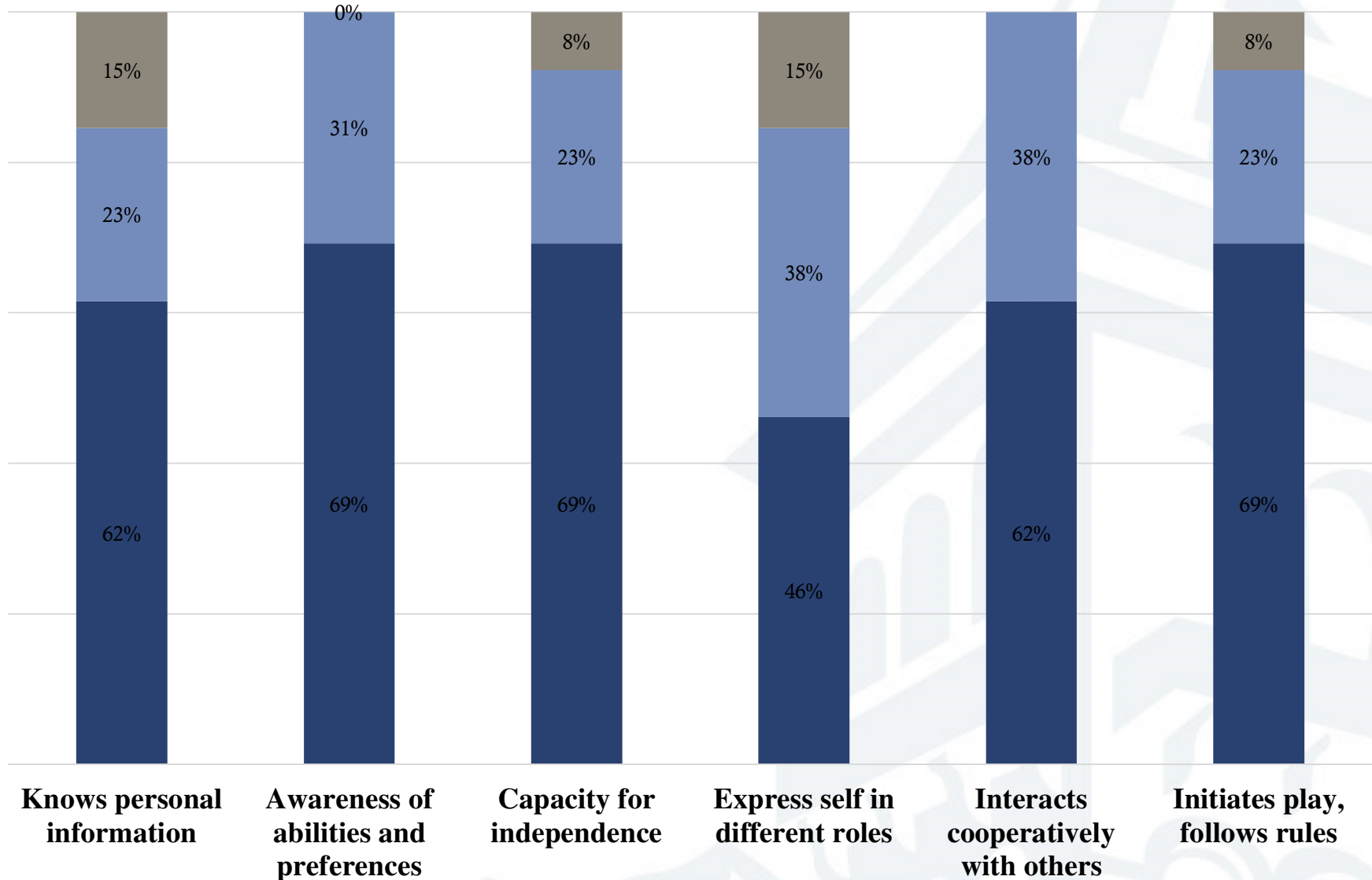
Participants

- ☞ Mainstream Kindergarten Teachers
 - ☞ Both with and without students with hearing loss in the class.
 - ☞ Qualitative feedback
 - ☞ Participants with a student who is DHH
 - ☞ Twelve questions queried social/emotional development as aligned with the Utah's Early Childhood Common Core Standards for Social/Emotional Development
 - ☞ Feedback and recommendations for improving supports for children with hearing loss.

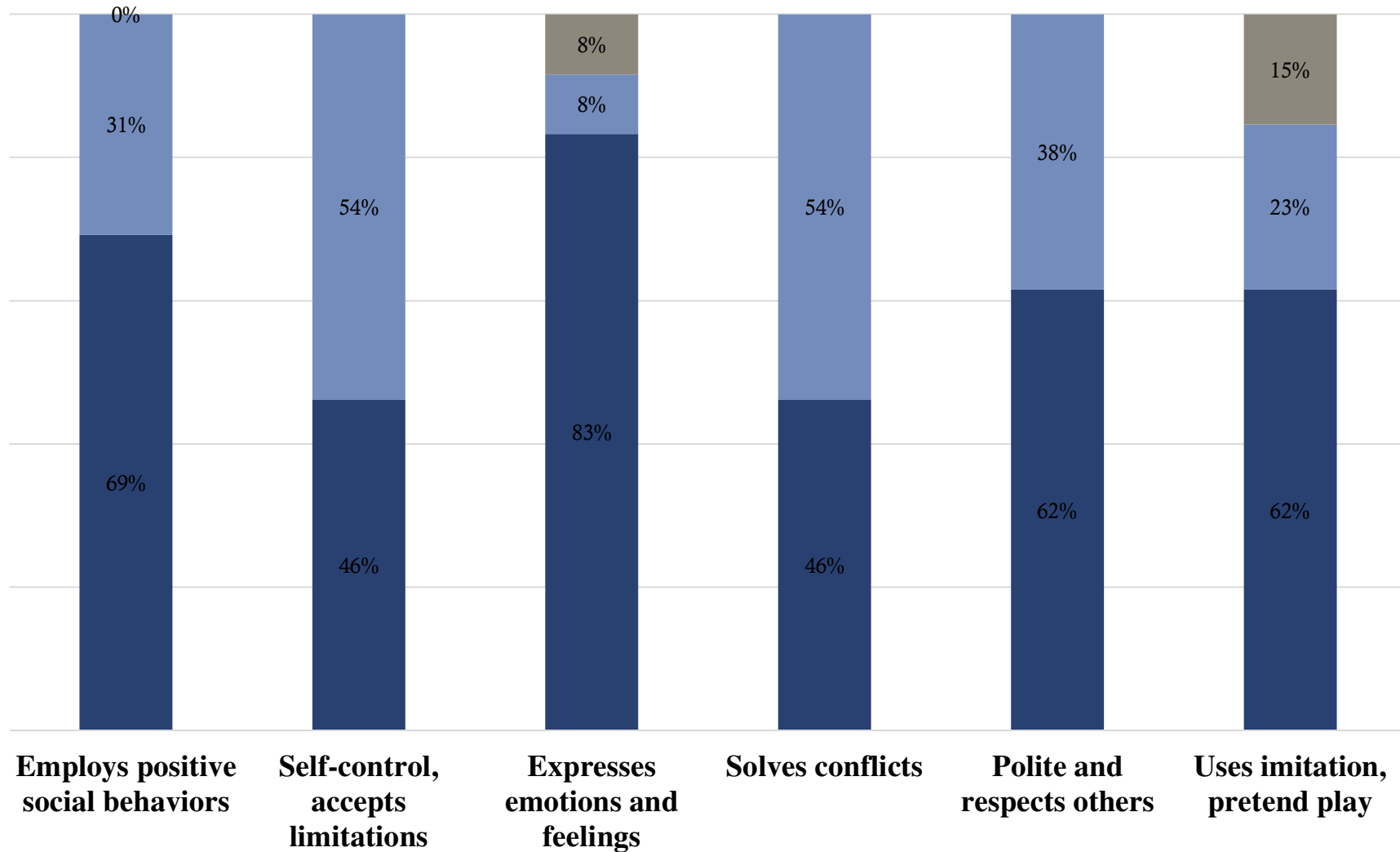
Social/Emotional Development

- ☞ Participants with a student who is DHH
- ☞ 12 questions related to social/emotional skills
- ☞ Teachers rated each skill as:
 - ☞ **Yes** – the child displays the skills consistently
 - ☞ **Emerging** – the child is beginning to display the skill but is not consistent
 - ☞ **No** – the child does not display the skill

Social/Emotional Development



Social/Emotional Development



Teacher Confidence in Serving Students who are DHH

Likert Scale to answer 6 questions

(Strongly Agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree)

- ☞ I felt ready to start the school year with my student who is DHH
- ☞ I feel confident in teaching students who are DHH
- ☞ I have adequate support from other professionals
- ☞ I know who to call if I have hearing technology questions
- ☞ ***I know and understand the features and functions of hearing aids (23% disagreed)**
- ☞ ***I know and understand the functions of cochlear implants (38% disagreed)**

Participant Concerns about Serving Children who are DHH in the Future

(n=86)

Content Analysis Categories

- ☞ Capability in meeting child's educational needs (36%)
- ☞ Need DHH training and supports (31%)
- ☞ Communication concerns/Lack of ASL knowledge (16%)
- ☞ Ability to understand technology needed in the classroom (13%)
- ☞ Ability to recognize optimal classroom arrangements (4%)

Effective Strategies in Promoting Social/Emotional Development (n=173)

Content Analysis Categories

- ☞ Guided social play with adult role modeling (21%)
- ☞ Ensuring children feel safe, comfortable, and respected (13%)
- ☞ Appropriate experiences prior to entering kindergarten (12%)
- ☞ Establishing one-on-one or small group interactions (11%)
- ☞ Utilize direct instruction or a social skills curriculum (11%)
- ☞ Use positive reinforcement, establish consistent class routine (10%)
- ☞ Encourage parental involvement (10%)
- ☞ Ensure effective accommodations are made appropriate for DHH needs (7%)
- ☞ Utilize literacy stories, visual aids (5%)

Suggestions for Early Interventionists and Preschool Teachers (n=141)

Content Analysis Categories

- ☞ Know and implement best practices in DHH services (18%)
- ☞ Prepare the child in advance of what to expect in kindergarten (17%)
- ☞ Teach child self-advocacy skills, foster self-esteem (16%)
- ☞ Utilize group instruction to teach appropriate play and social behaviors (11%)
- ☞ Ensure appropriate classroom accommodations are in place (9%)
- ☞ Use visual schedules and picture cues (9%)
- ☞ Practice positive and effective collaboration with other professionals (6%)
- ☞ Collaborate and develop relationship with family (6%)
- ☞ Have high expectations of DHH child similar to typically-developing children (4%)
- ☞ Help children in the class understand hearing loss and hearing technology (4%)

Study Limitations

A small percentage of the general population of mainstream kindergarten teachers who have a student who is DHH in their classroom.

- ∞ A larger sample size would help generalize data collected

Potential for variability in how survey respondents determined criteria for mastery of the social/emotional skills of their students who are DHH.

- ∞ For example, one teacher's interpretation of a mastered skill may be interpreted by another teacher as emerging

Discussion

- ❧ Positive findings concerning performance of children who are DHH in mainstream settings.
- ❧ There is a need for teachers to obtain more training and instruction in using and troubleshooting hearing technology.
- ❧ Age appropriate acquisition of pragmatic skills before entering the mainstream kindergarten classroom promotes child readiness for positive social interactions.
- ❧ Being mindful of social/emotional expectations of children and utilizing recommended practices can facilitate positive outcomes.

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Thank you for Listening!



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