



# 2025 Youth Survey Results

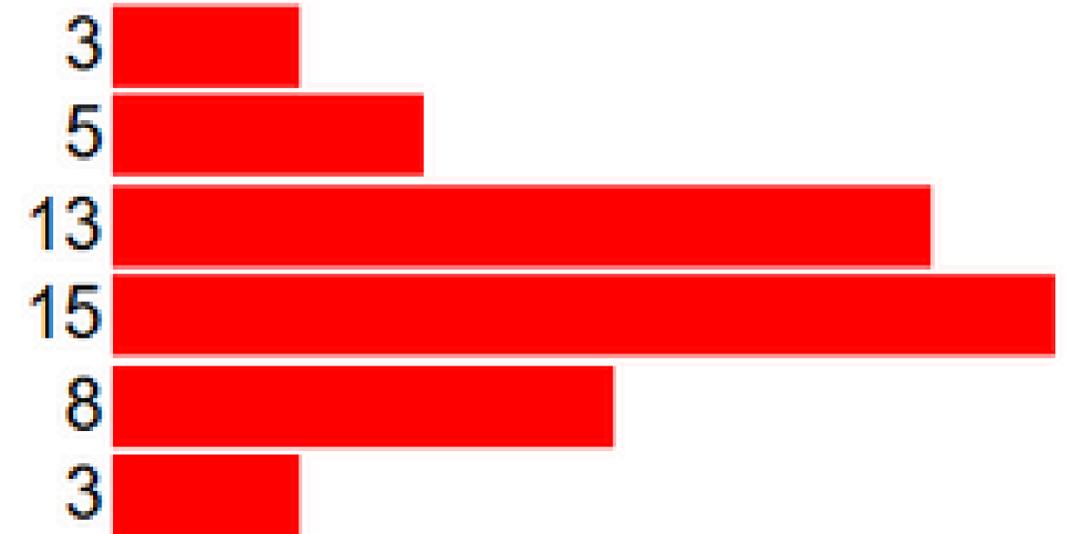
*From The Search Institute*



# Information about Youth Survey Participants:

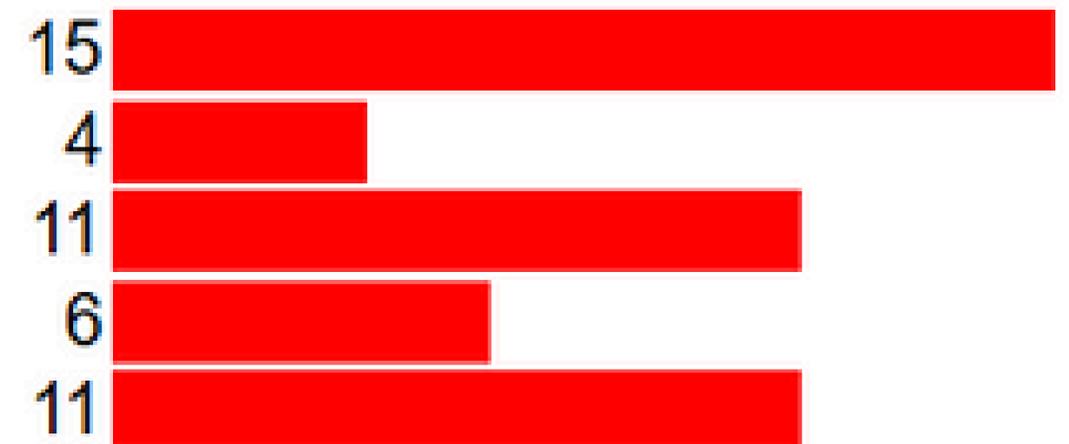
**Since becoming involved with Healing Meals, approximately how many hours have you volunteered?**

- Less than 10 hours
- 11 hours - 20 hours
- 20 hours - 50 hours
- 51 hours - 100 hours
- 100+ hours
- I don't know



**Since becoming involved with Healing Meals, approximately how many years have you volunteered?**

- Less than 1 year
- 1 year
- Between 1 and 2 years
- 2 years
- More than 2 years



**Healing Meals Community Project reached out to The Search Institute and their Developmental Relationships Framework to learn more about our youth...**



## **The Developmental Relationships Framework**

Young people are more likely to grow up successfully when they experience developmental relationships with important people in their lives. Developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. Search Institute has identified five elements—expressed in 20 specific actions—that make relationships powerful in young people's lives.

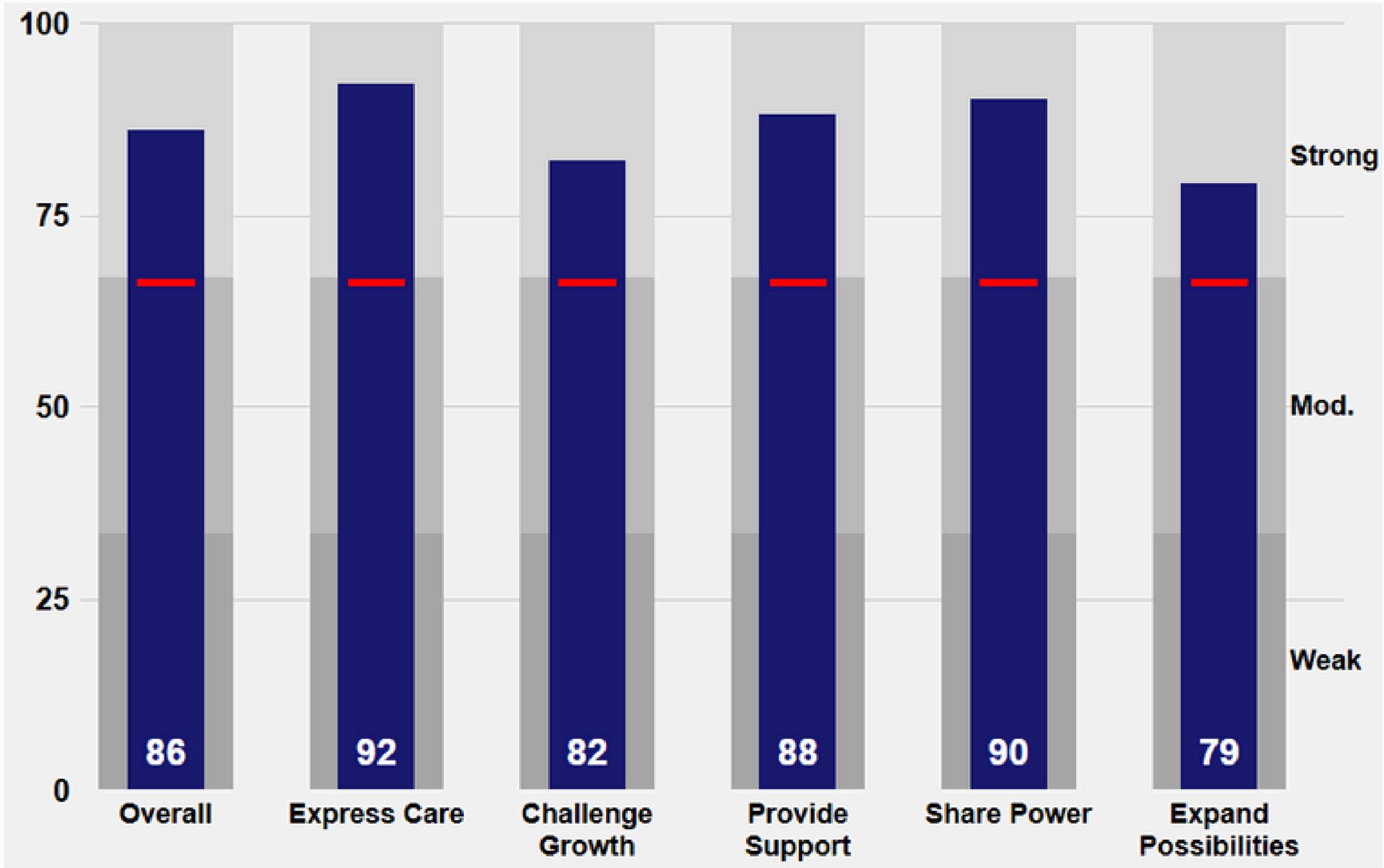
Elements	Actions	Definitions
 <p><b>Express Care</b> Show me that I matter to you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be dependable</li> <li>• Listen</li> <li>• Believe in me</li> <li>• Be warm</li> <li>• Encourage</li> </ul>	<p>Be someone I can trust. Really pay attention when we are together. Make me feel known and valued. Show me you enjoy being with me. Praise me for my efforts and achievements.</p>
 <p><b>Challenge Growth</b> Push me to keep getting better.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect my best</li> <li>• Stretch</li> <li>• Hold me accountable</li> <li>• Reflect on failures</li> </ul>	<p>Expect me to live up to my potential. Push me to go further. Insist I take responsibility for my actions. Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.</p>
 <p><b>Provide Support</b> Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigate</li> <li>• Empower</li> <li>• Advocate</li> <li>• Set boundaries</li> </ul>	<p>Guide me through hard situations and systems. Build my confidence to take charge of my life. Stand up for me when I need it. Put limits in place that keep me on track.</p>
 <p><b>Share Power</b> Treat me with respect and give me a say.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect me</li> <li>• Include me</li> <li>• Collaborate</li> <li>• Let me lead</li> </ul>	<p>Take me seriously and treat me fairly. Involve me in decisions that affect me. Work with me to solve problems and reach goals. Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.</p>
 <p><b>Expand Possibilities</b> Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspire</li> <li>• Broaden horizons</li> <li>• Connect</li> </ul>	<p>Inspire me to see possibilities for my future. Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places. Introduce me to people who can help me grow.</p>

NOTE: Relationships are, by definition, bidirectional, with each person giving and receiving. So each person in a strong relationship both engages in and experiences each of these actions. However, for the purpose of clarity, this framework is expressed from the perspective of one young person.



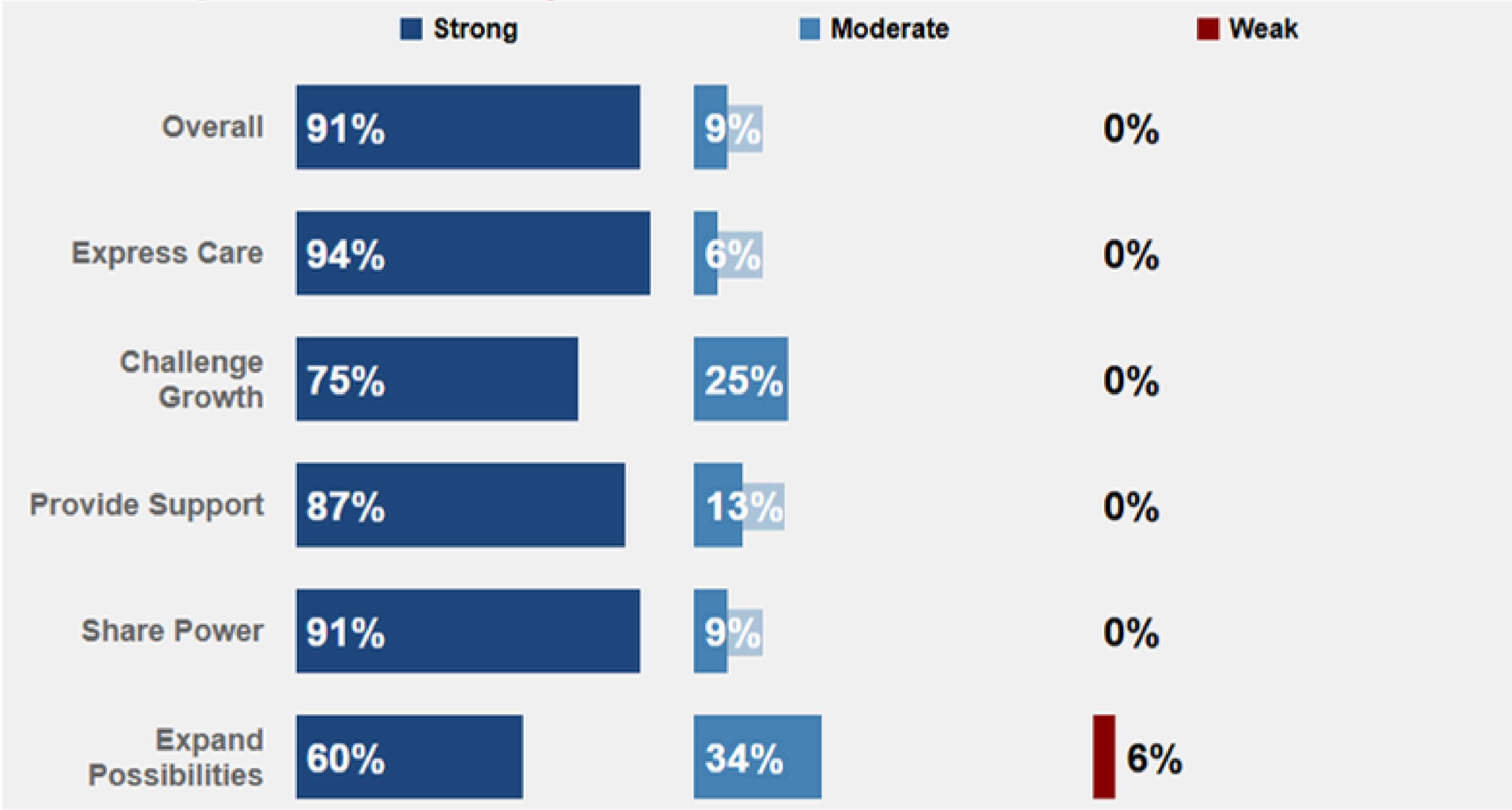
The results  
of the  
survey...

Youth generally reported experiencing **strong** developmental relationships overall.

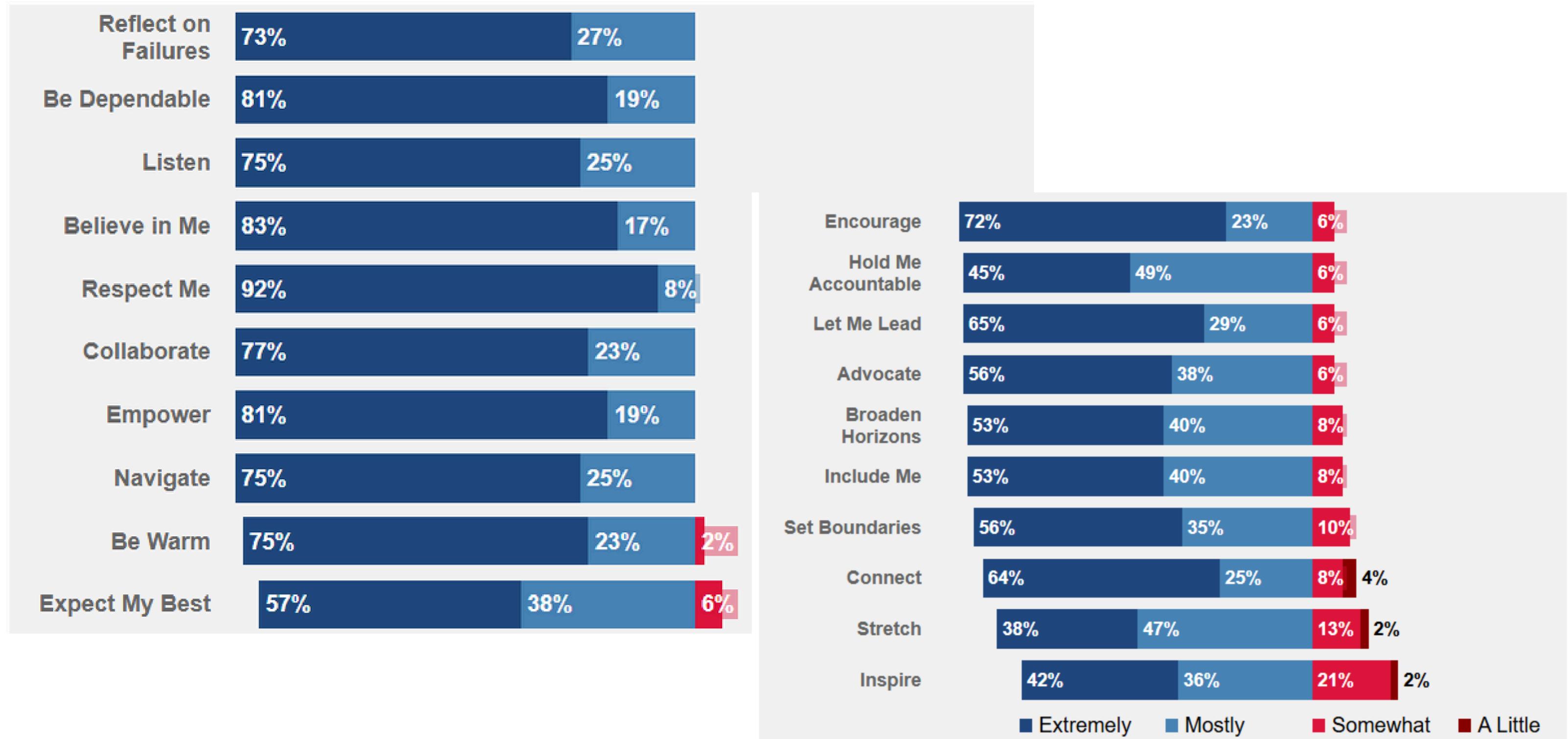


**Note:** The red bar indicates the score from your previous administration of the survey. If this is your time 1 survey, then it will reflect the minimum benchmark for a "strong" score.

Overall, **91%** of youth had strong experiences of developmental relationships. Conversely, **0%** had weak experiences.



## Youth reported different experiences of each of the 20 actions in the Developmental Relationships Framework.





## Express Care

Show me that I matter to you.

- Be dependable
- Listen
- Believe in me
- Be warm
- Encourage

Be someone I can trust.

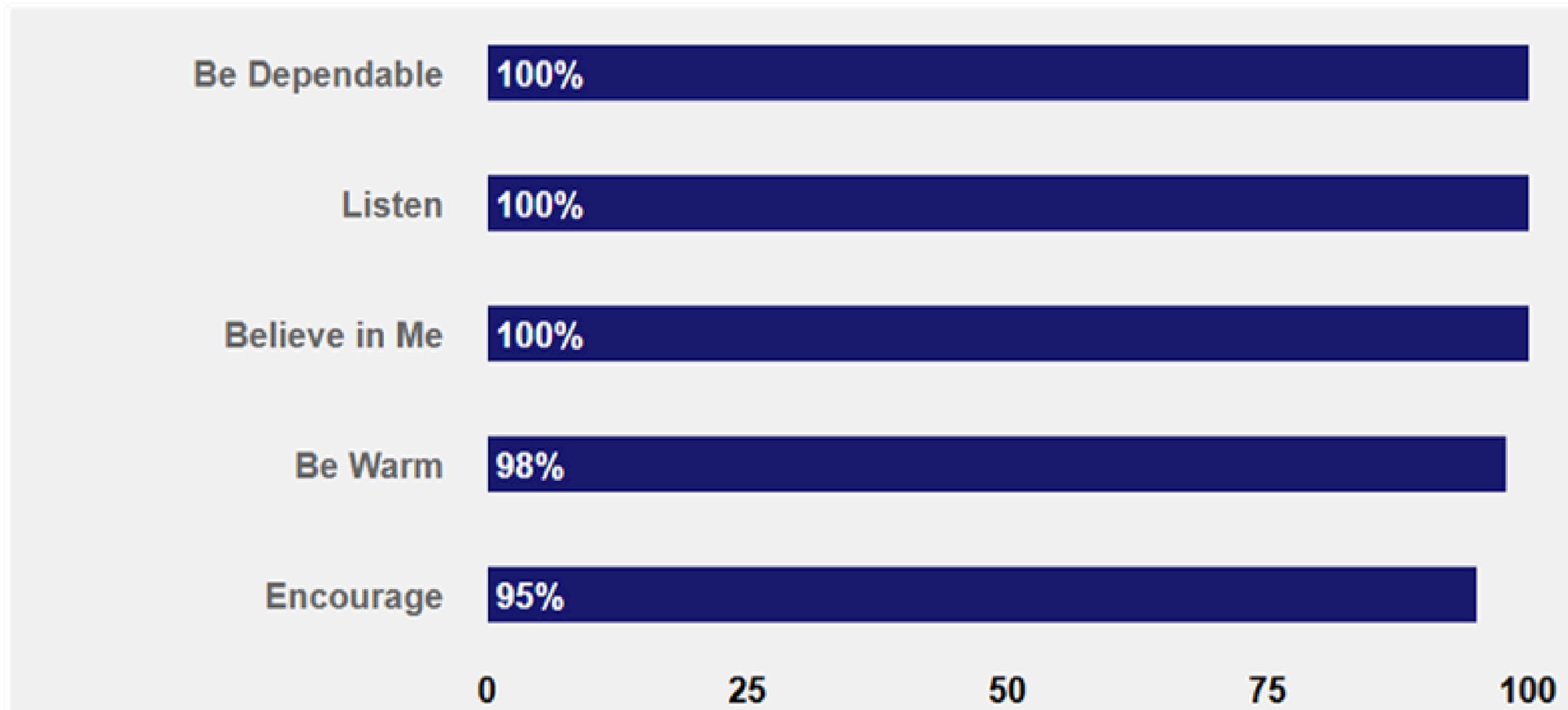
Really pay attention when we are together.

Make me feel known and valued.

Show me you enjoy being with me.

Praise me for my efforts and achievements.

The percent of youth reporting moderate/strong Express Care actions.



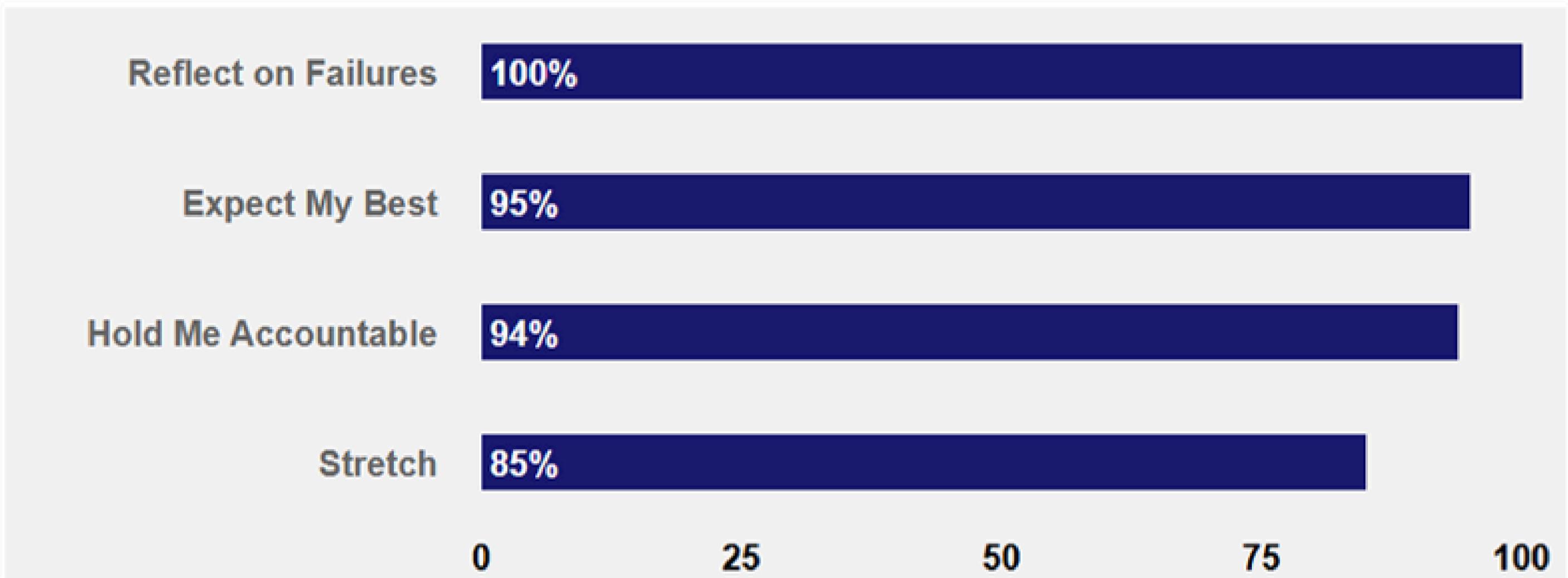


**Challenge Growth**  
Push me to keep getting better.

- Expect my best
- Stretch
- Hold me accountable
- Reflect on failures

- Expect me to live up to my potential.
- Push me to go further.
- Insist I take responsibility for my actions.
- Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.

The percent of youth reporting moderate/strong Challenge Growth actions.





### Expand Possibilities

Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

- Inspire
- Broaden horizons
- Connect

Inspire me to see possibilities for my future.  
Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places.  
Introduce me to people who can help me grow.

The percent of youth reporting moderate/strong Expand Possibilities actions.

Broaden Horizons

93%

Connect

89%

Inspire

78%

0

25

50

75

100



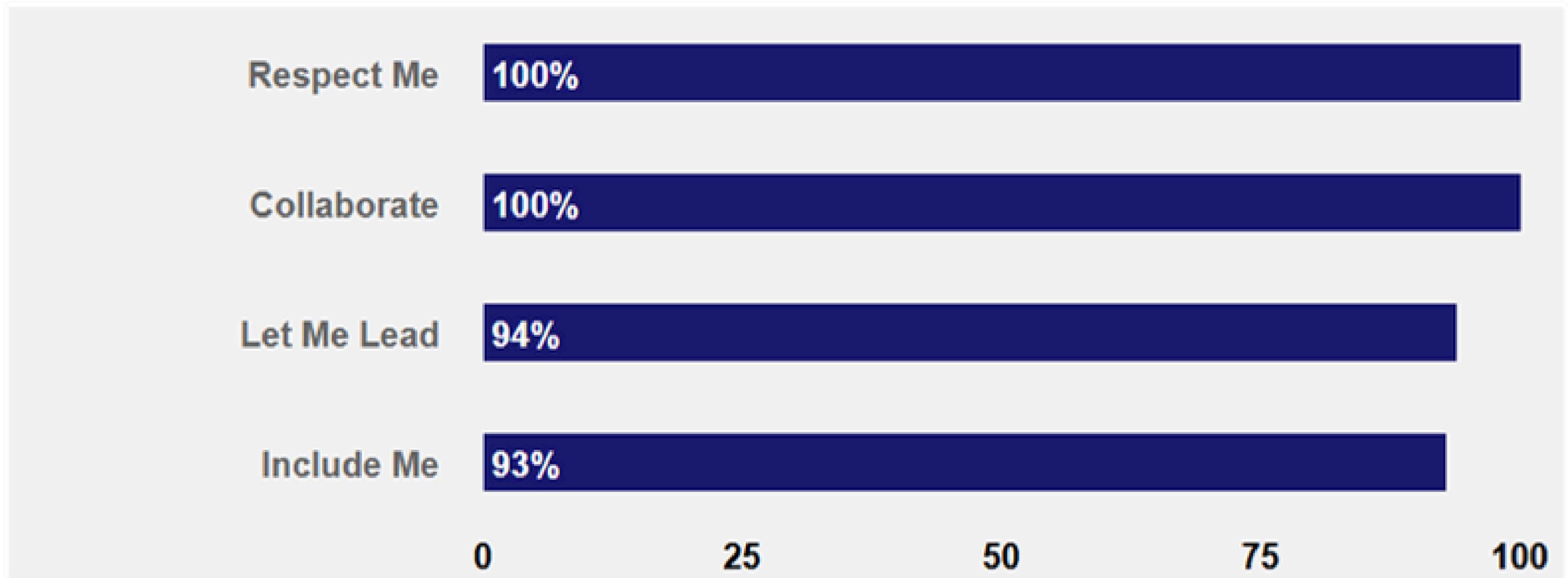
## Share Power

Treat me with respect and give me a say.

- Respect me
- Include me
- Collaborate
- Let me lead

Take me seriously and treat me fairly.  
Involve me in decisions that affect me.  
Work with me to solve problems and reach goals.  
Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.

The percent of youth reporting moderate/strong Share Power actions.





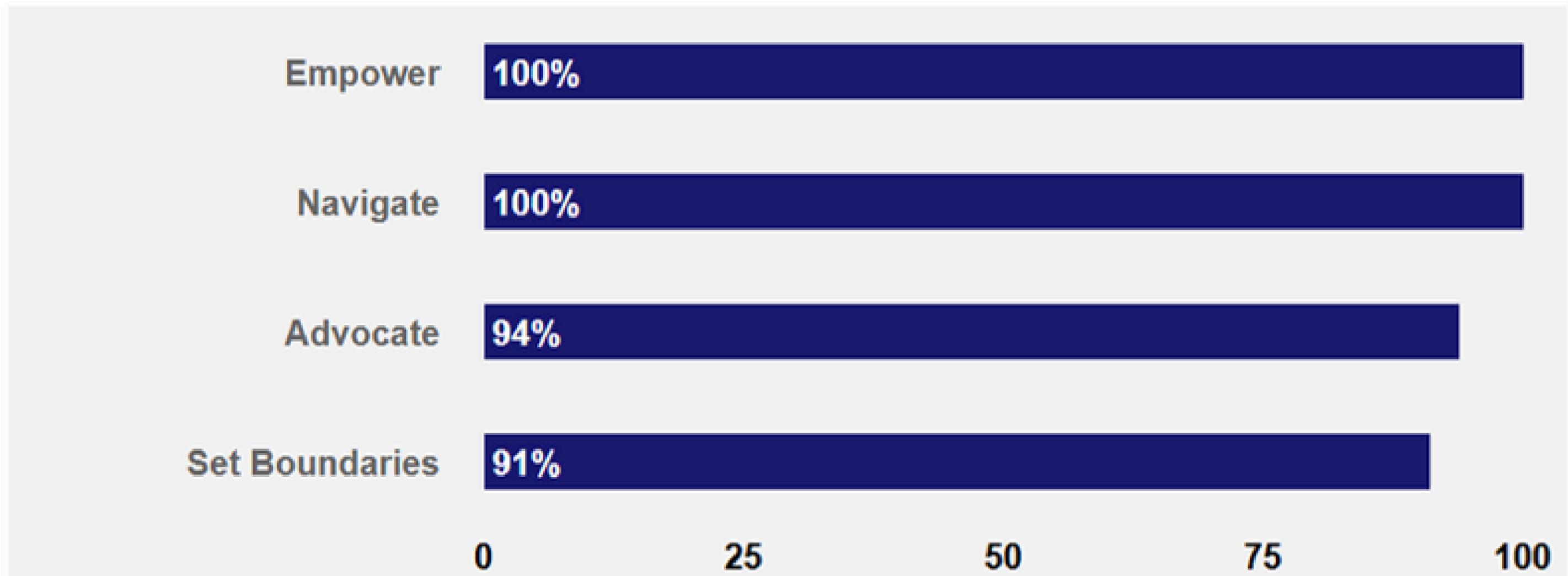
## Provide Support

Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.

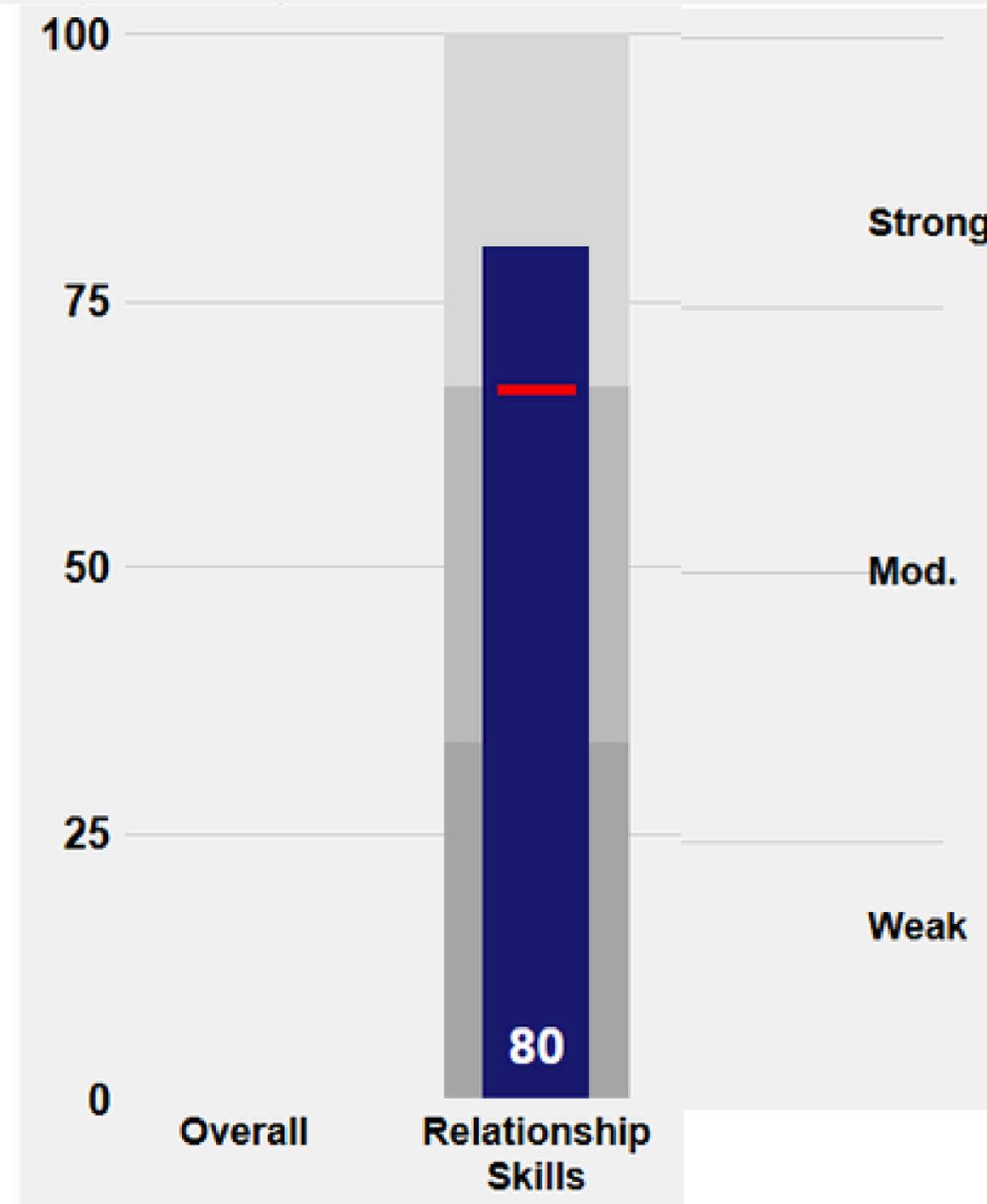
- Navigate
- Empower
- Advocate
- Set boundaries

Guide me through hard situations and systems.  
Build my confidence to take charge of my life.  
Stand up for me when I need it.  
Put limits in place that keep me on track.

The percent of youth reporting moderate/strong Provide Support actions.

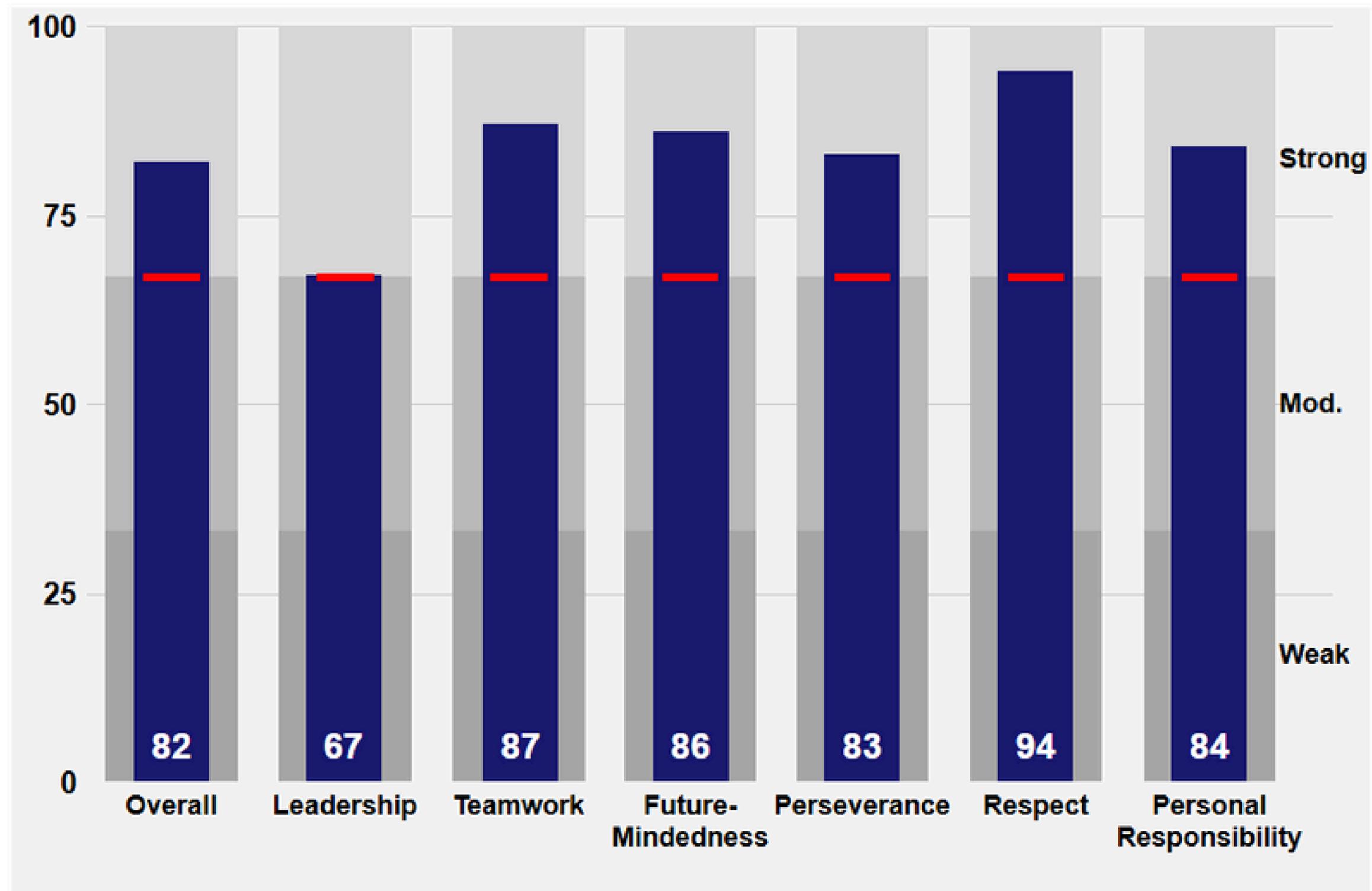


The graph below provides a summary of the social and emotional competencies that were measured on your survey.



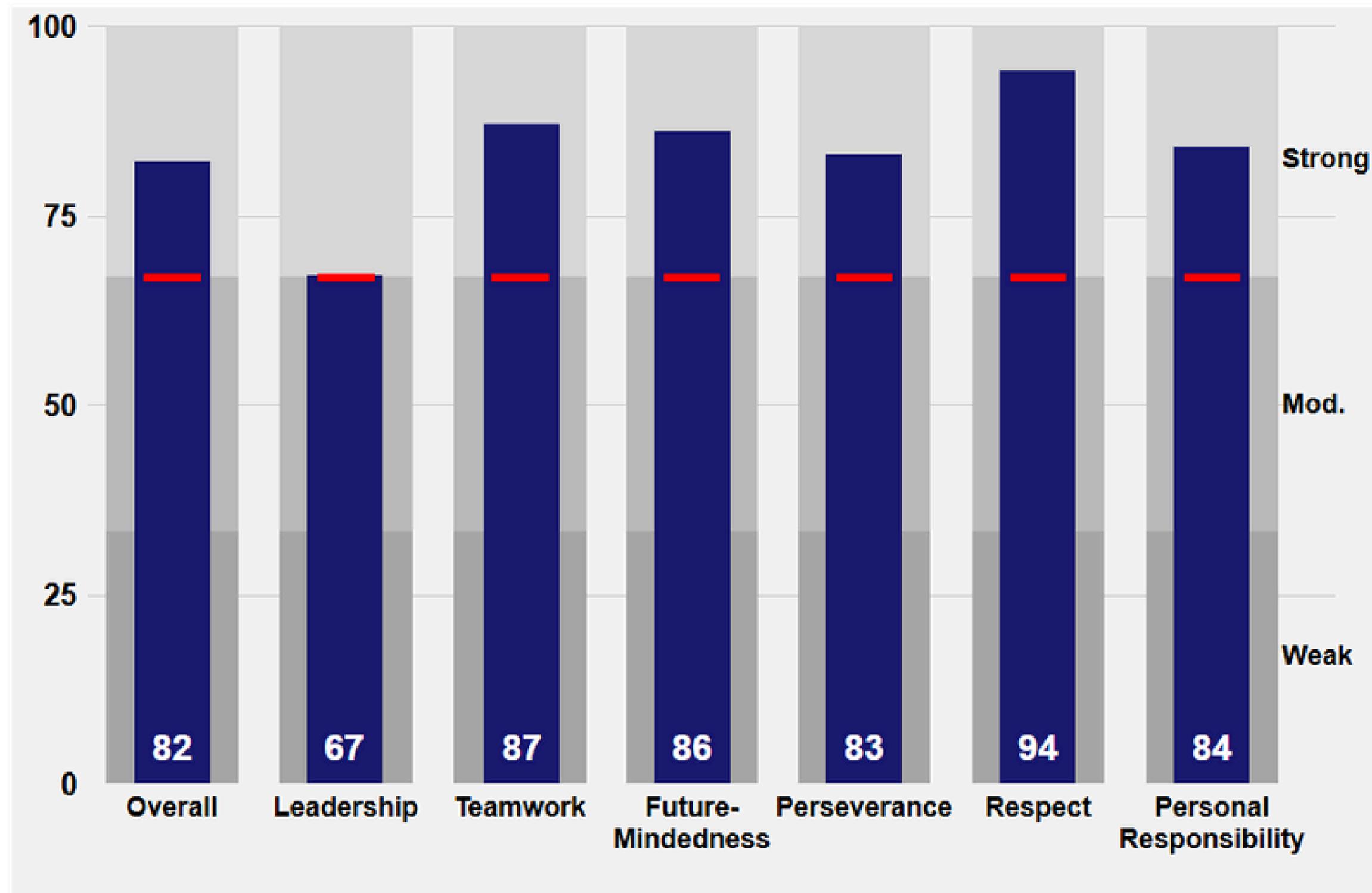
**Note:** The red bar indicates the score from your previous administration of the survey. If this is your time 1 survey, then it will reflect the minimum benchmark for a “strong” score.

## Youth generally reported experiencing strong levels of Character Strengths.



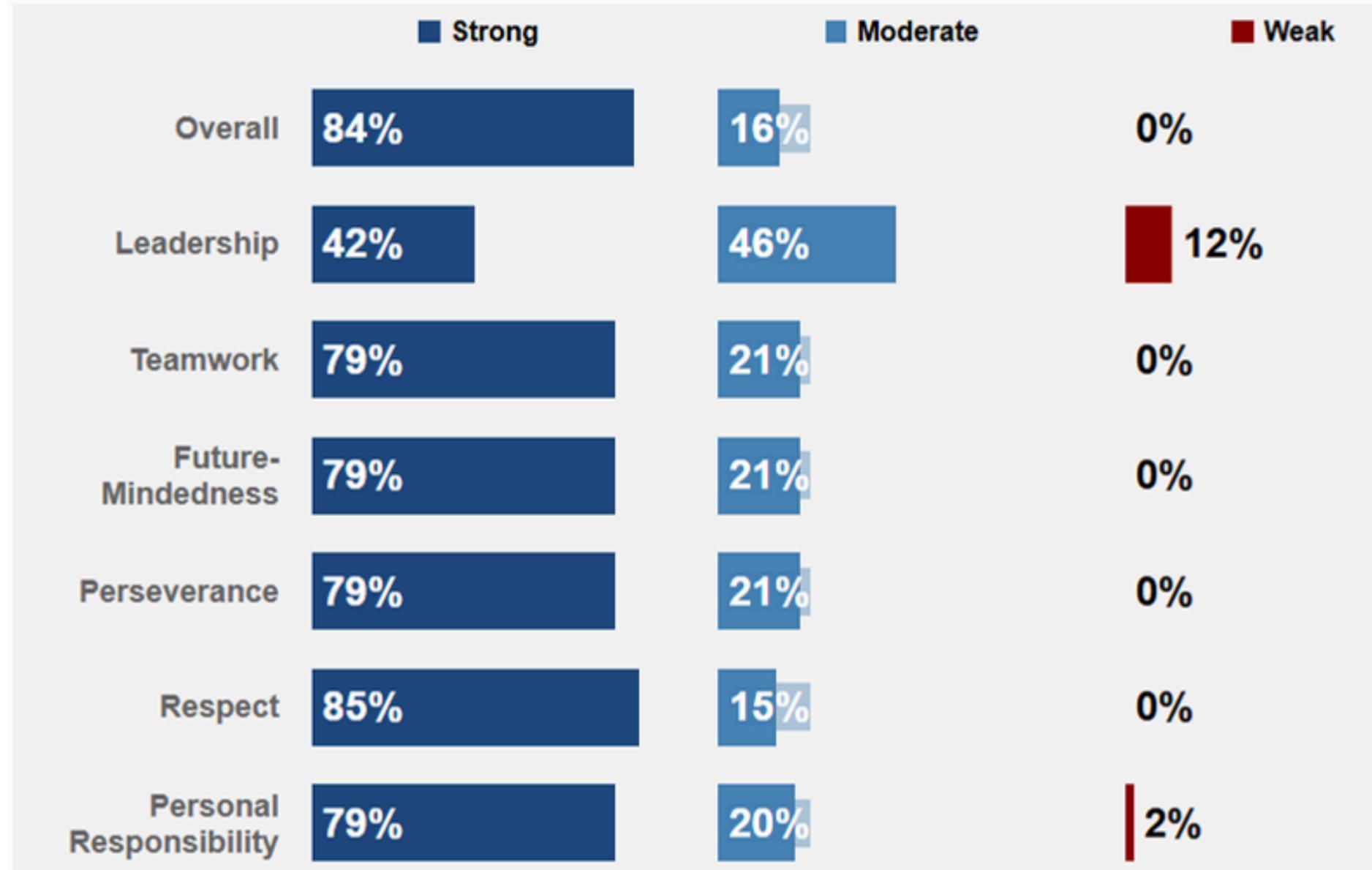
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**Note:** The red bar indicates the score from your previous administration of the survey. If this is your time 1 survey, then it will reflect the minimum benchmark for a "strong" score.

How young people reported their character strengths within the three categories of strong, moderate, and weak.



**Leadership** refers to youths' ability to inspire and empower a team to perform well while working toward a common goal. It is comprised of the following items:

I am good at leading others to reach a goal.

Other kids my age consider me to be a leader.

I am usually the one who suggests activities to my friends.

**Personal Responsibility** refers to youths' ability to maturely respond to the various challenges and circumstances in life, and to strive to live by societal standards for individual behavior. It is comprised of the following items:

If I do something wrong, I take responsibility for my actions.

When I say I am going to do something, I do it.

I am responsible



Some more  
information  
about our  
Youth Survey  
Participants...

**Please share with us why you are choosing to volunteer at Healing Meals [check all that apply]**

To help people



To volunteer



I like to cook



I want to learn to cook



I want to learn to grow food



I want to learn about food and nutrition



For school or community service hours



My parents want me to volunteer



One of my friends volunteers at Healing Meals



To meet other youth



**When I am at Healing Meals...All people are treated fairly, no matter who they are.**

Strongly Disagree

0

Disagree

0

Agree

7

Strongly Agree

38



**When I am at Healing Meals...My relationships with my program staff motivate me to keep showing up here.**

Strongly Disagree

0

Disagree

0

Agree

9

Strongly Agree

36



**Since I became a Healing Meals volunteer: I feel more comfortable cooking a meal from scratch.**

Strongly Disagree

0

Disagree

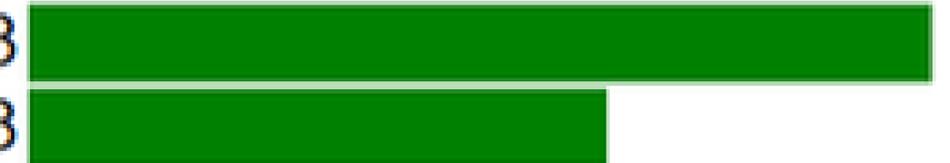
0

Agree

28

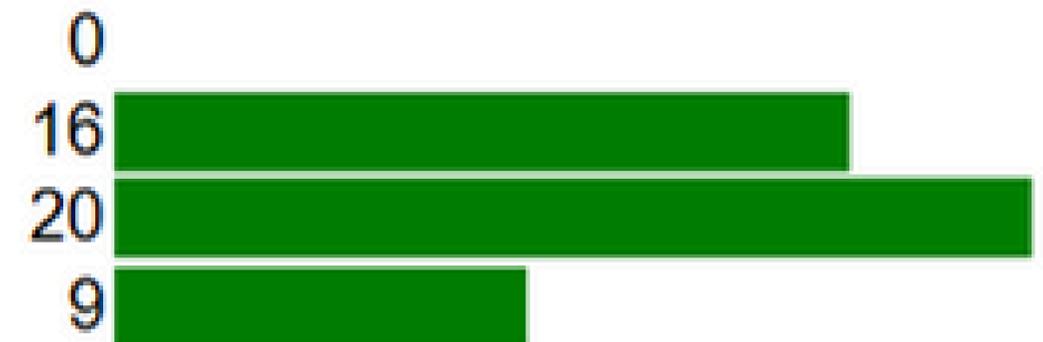
Strongly Agree

18



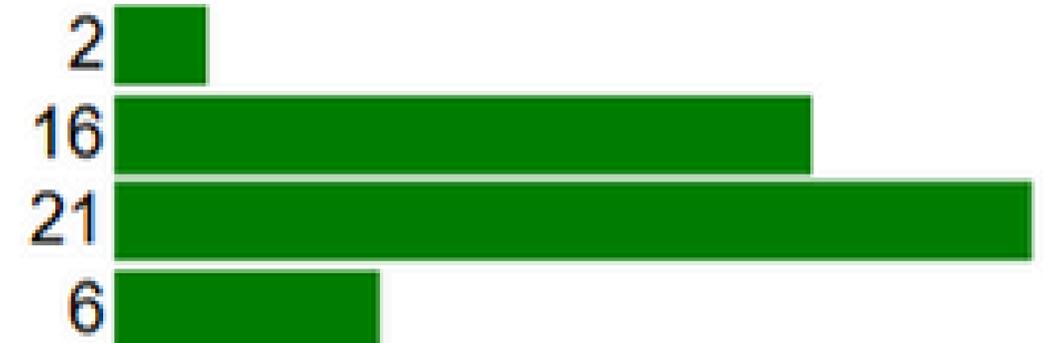
**Since I became a Healing Meals volunteer: My daily consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans has increased.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree



**Since I became a Healing Meals volunteer: My daily consumption of processed foods like fast food, sugar drinks, and pre-packaged foods has decreased.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree



**Since I became a Healing Meals volunteer: I have a greater understanding of the impact of healthy eating on my physical and mental health.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree



**On a scale of 0 to 100 (with 100 being best),  
how likely are you to recommend volunteering  
at Healing Meals to a friend?**





Here is what  
our youth  
have to say  
about  
volunteering  
at Healing  
Meals...

**On a scale of 0 to 100 (with 100 being best), how likely are you to recommend volunteering at Healing Meals to a friend?**

- **Average score: 95.6 / 100**
- **Range: 80 – 100**
- **Breakdown:**
  - **90–100 (Very High): 31 responses (84%)**
  - **80–89 (High): 6 responses (16%)**
  - **60–79 (Medium): 0**
  - **0–59 (Low): 0**

## Here are some of the reasons why...

### **A Welcoming & Supportive Community**

- “The community!!! It is so welcoming and respectful, I love everyone there!”
- “Healing Meals is a community that is like no other I have been a part of. Every time I leave, I have a smile on my face.”
- “I love volunteering at Healing Meals. Everyone is nice and it's a great learning experience.”
- “I really like the environment and the people that I work with there, and I think that it is definitely an experience that everyone should try.”
- “I love Healing Meals, it is a great environment and having new members just strengthens the community.”

## **Personal Growth & Life Skills**

- “It is a great way to learn new skills that you will need for life out of high school. Such as cooking, cleaning, collaboration, etc.”
- “Healing Meals is kind of like [home ec]. It teaches you skills, like cooking, that will help you later on.”
- “Healing Meals is a great way to interact with a bunch of new people and learn about their stories. The cooking aspect has also significantly improved my cooking skills at home.”
- “I got to learn more about cooking, help nourish sick people, meet new people my age, and build relationships with people at Healing Meals.”

## **Joy & Enjoyment**

- “Such a fun space to be in!”
- “I think Healing Meals is a great place to volunteer and it is very enjoyable!”
- “I always enjoy every shift and believe it's a great place for anyone to start volunteering.”
- “I think Healing Meals is a great place to have fun, learn about food, and be an active participant in our community.”

## **Meaningful Impact & Purpose**

- “It’s a great environment, the work is enjoyable, and you really see the impact you’re making.”
- “Healing Meals is a great place for doing something that is truly meaningful for the community and those in need.”
- “A lot of the time when I'm volunteering at different places, it’s hard to see if I'm really making an impact, but you can see how impactful you are with Healing Meals. It’s all hands-on and just a great community to work with.”

## **Personal Reflections**

- “I really enjoy coming to Healing Meals, but not everyone will have the same interest level that I do with it.”
- “I think anybody who comes to Healing Meals would love it, but I don't want too many people from my town getting involved because I want to be able to get a shift every week!”



# Our Logic Model in Action

## **Our Logic Model in Action**

Youth rated their experience 95.6/100, describing Healing Meals as welcoming, skill-building, and deeply meaningful. Their reflections mirror the outcomes in our logic model—confidence, teamwork, empathy, and lifelong wellness—showing how our program is shaping compassionate young leaders.

# Kindness Crew

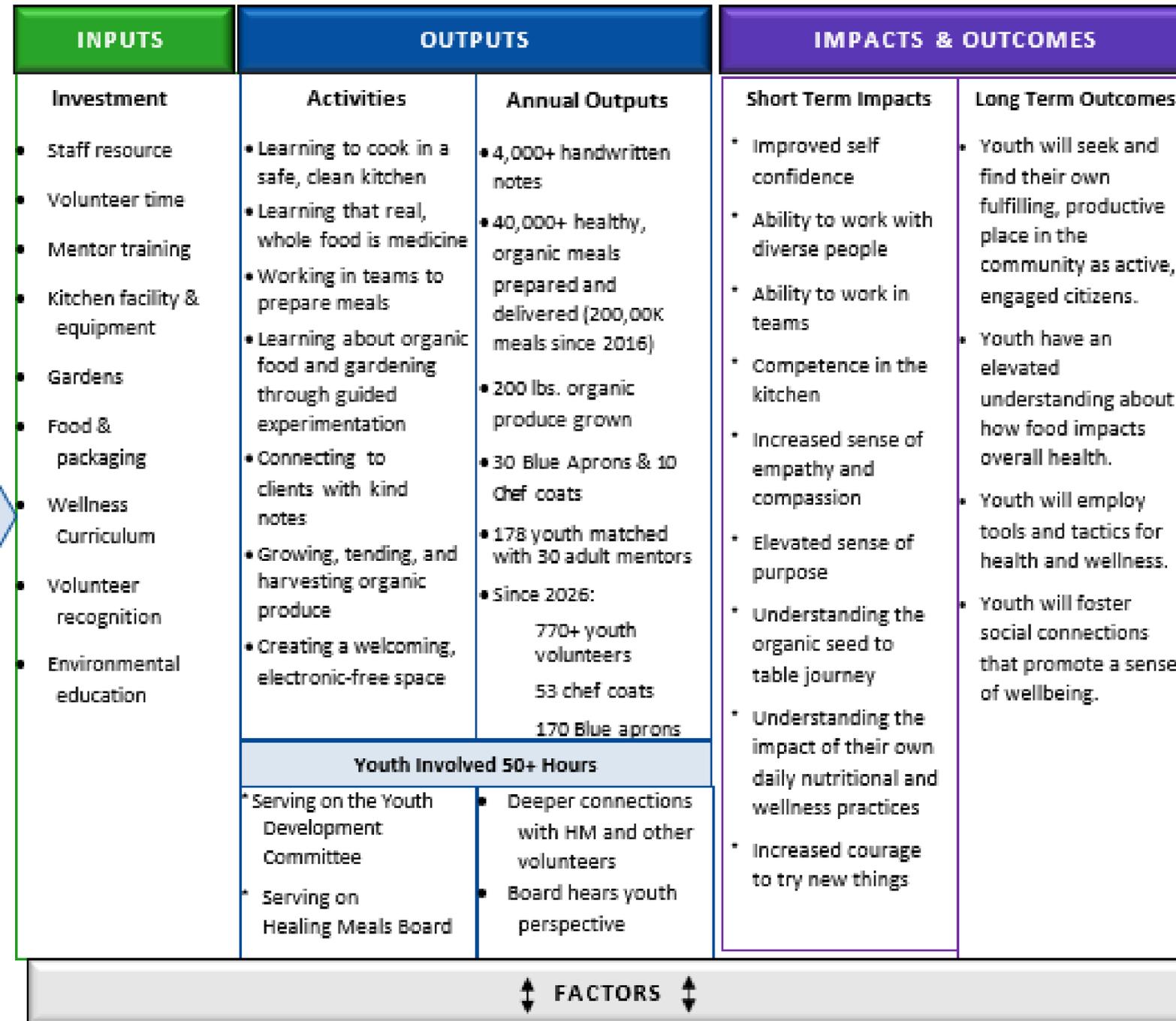
Next Gen

**Problem: The US is experiencing a teen mental health crisis.**

- Youth often have limited opportunities to develop the skills needed to cope with everyday life.
- Constant flow of unfiltered information through electronic media is overwhelming and causes heightened anxiety.
- Youth are not often supported with good nutrition and wellness practices.
- Youth often lack connections and a sense of purpose, diminishing an overall sense of wellbeing.

For more information on the health crisis including the rising rates of depression among young people please read:  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/newsletters/archive/2022/04/american-teens-sadness-depression-anxiety/629524/>  
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>

## Youth Program Logic Model



Our Youth Development Logic Model charts a clear path: cooking, gardening, and mentoring experiences lead to confidence, teamwork, empathy, and lifelong wellness. In 2025, youth gave Healing Meals an average score of 95.6/100, and their gratitude notes describe a community that is welcoming, joyful, and impactful. These voices confirm that our model is more than a plan—it is a living reality, fostering resilient, compassionate leaders for the future.

