



WESTCOAST CHILDREN'S CLINIC

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Research-to-Action: Sexually Exploited Minors Needs and Strengths

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Welcome

- ⦿ Overview of SEM Research-to-Action Project
 - ⦿ Review of Research Findings
 - ⦿ Practice Implications
 - ⦿ Policy Recommendations
 - ⦿ Q & A
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Project Background

Three core components of the SEM: Research-to Action Project:

- ⦿ Standardized Measure: CANS-CSE
 - Certification training and technical assistance
 - ⦿ Collaborative Research Effort
 - ⦿ Advocacy and Policy Recommendations
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Project Background

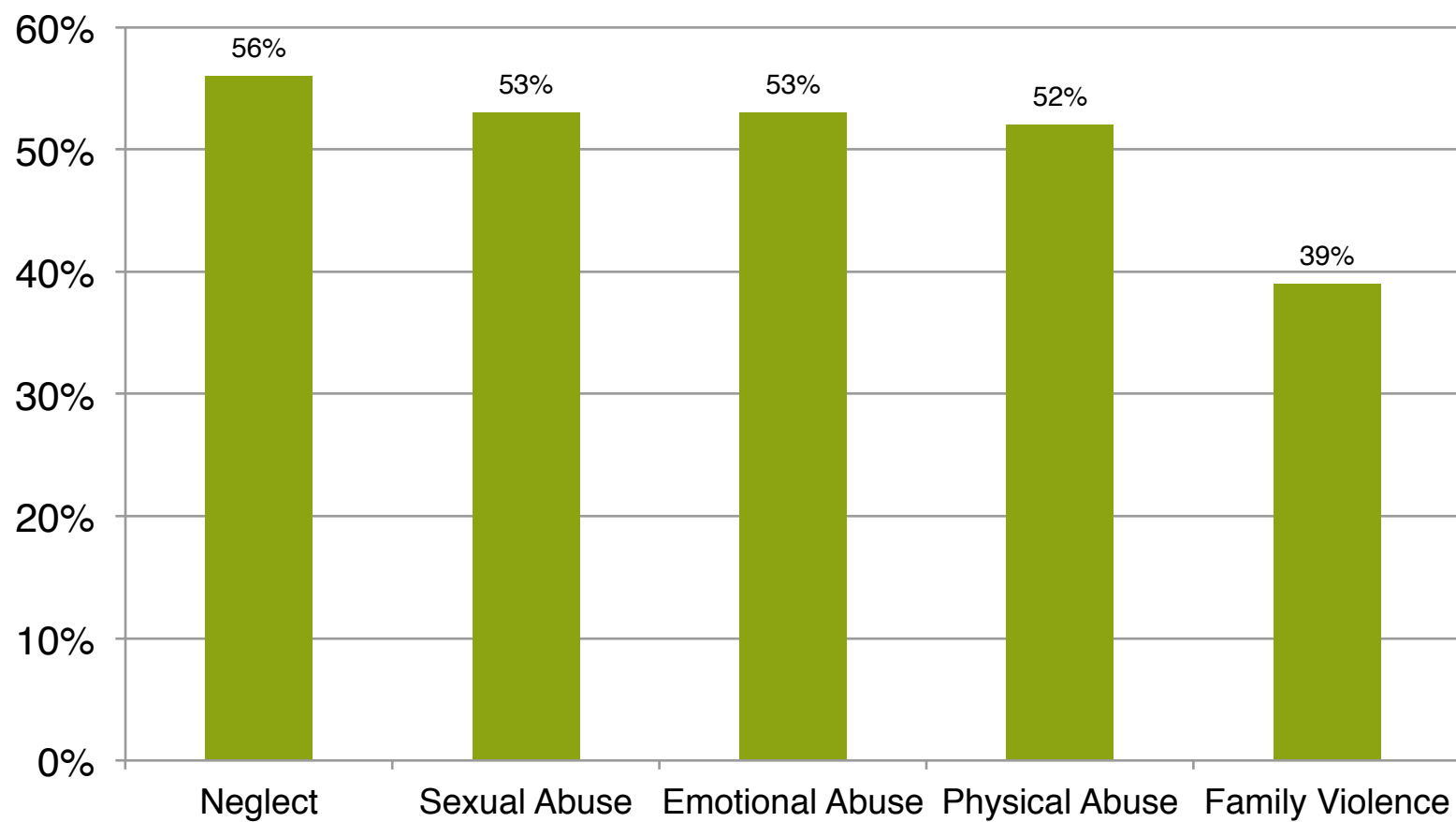
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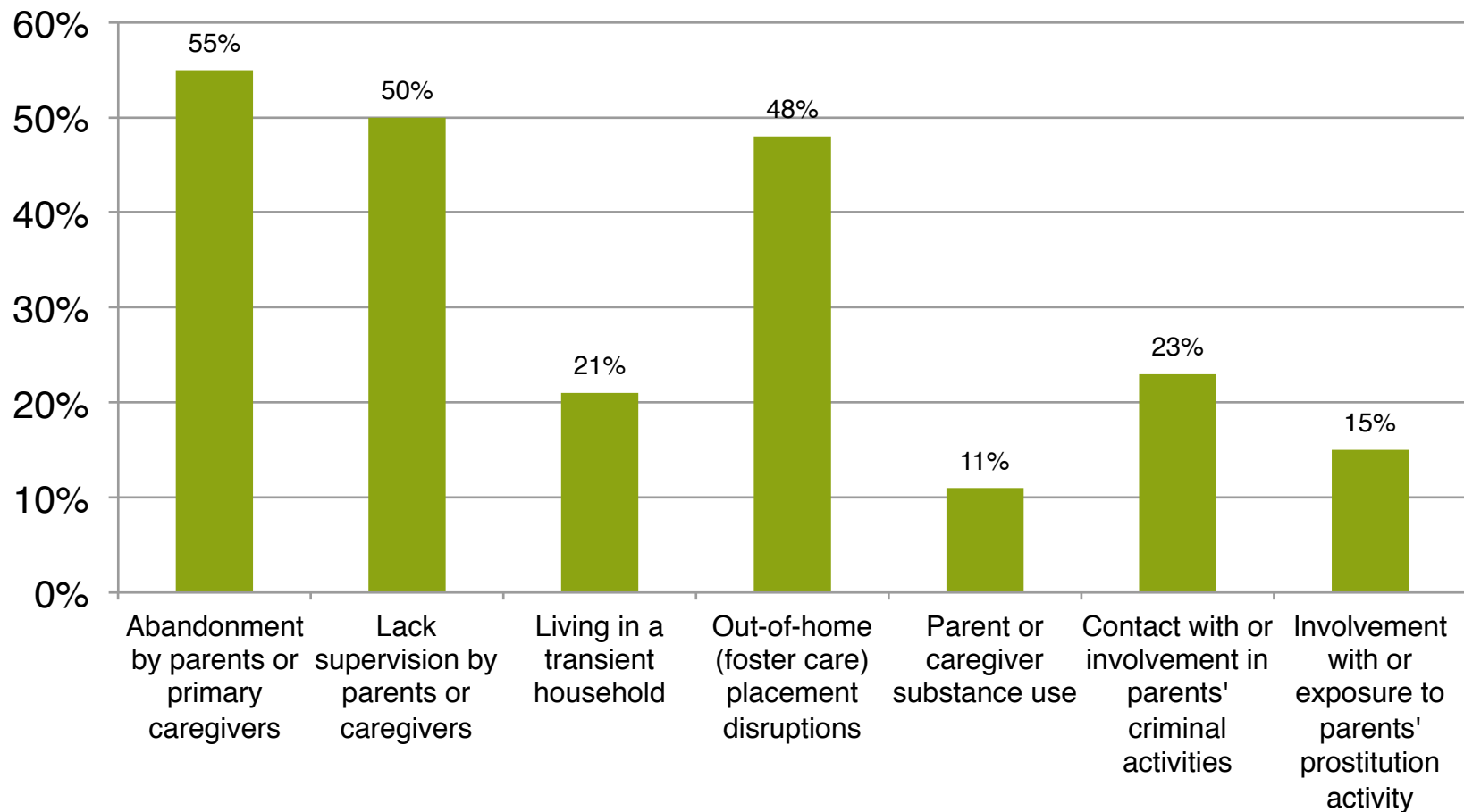
Age profile of Exploited Youth



Exposure to Trauma and History of Abuse



Prevalence of Known Family Disruptions



Risk Behaviors

Many of our SEM clients are involved in activities that threaten their health and safety.

- ⦿ 84% have problems with judgment that place them at risk of significant physical harm.
 - ⦿ 79% are currently in unhealthy partner relationships .
 - ⦿ 35% have engaged in moderate to severe self-injuring behavior requiring medical assessment or intervention.
 - ⦿ 12% have had a suicidal gesture, attempt, or plan to commit suicide within 30 days of their assessment.
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Risk Behaviors: Substance Use Disorder

31% (35 youth) have a substance use disorder. Among these youth:

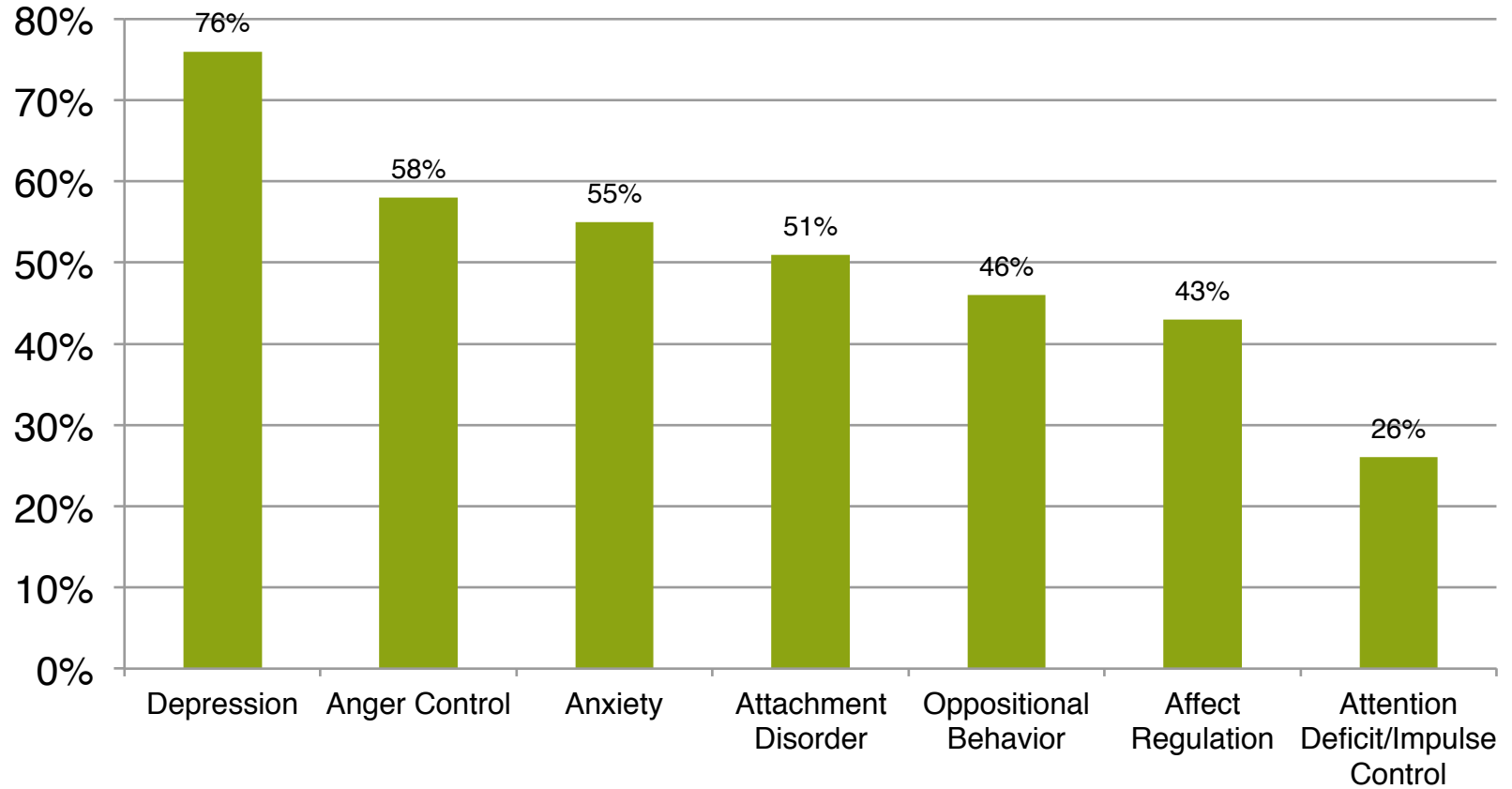
- ⊙ 94% have been using severely.
 - ⊙ 94% are in peer groups that consistently engage in alcohol or drug use.
 - ⊙ 86% have been using for over one year.
 - ⊙ 86% deny the existence of problems or need for recovery, and are in environments that encourage substance use.
 - ⊙ 83% are in environments where they are exposed to alcohol or drug use.
 - ⊙ 49% have been with or used with their parents while their parents were using drugs or alcohol.
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Risk Behaviors: Running Away

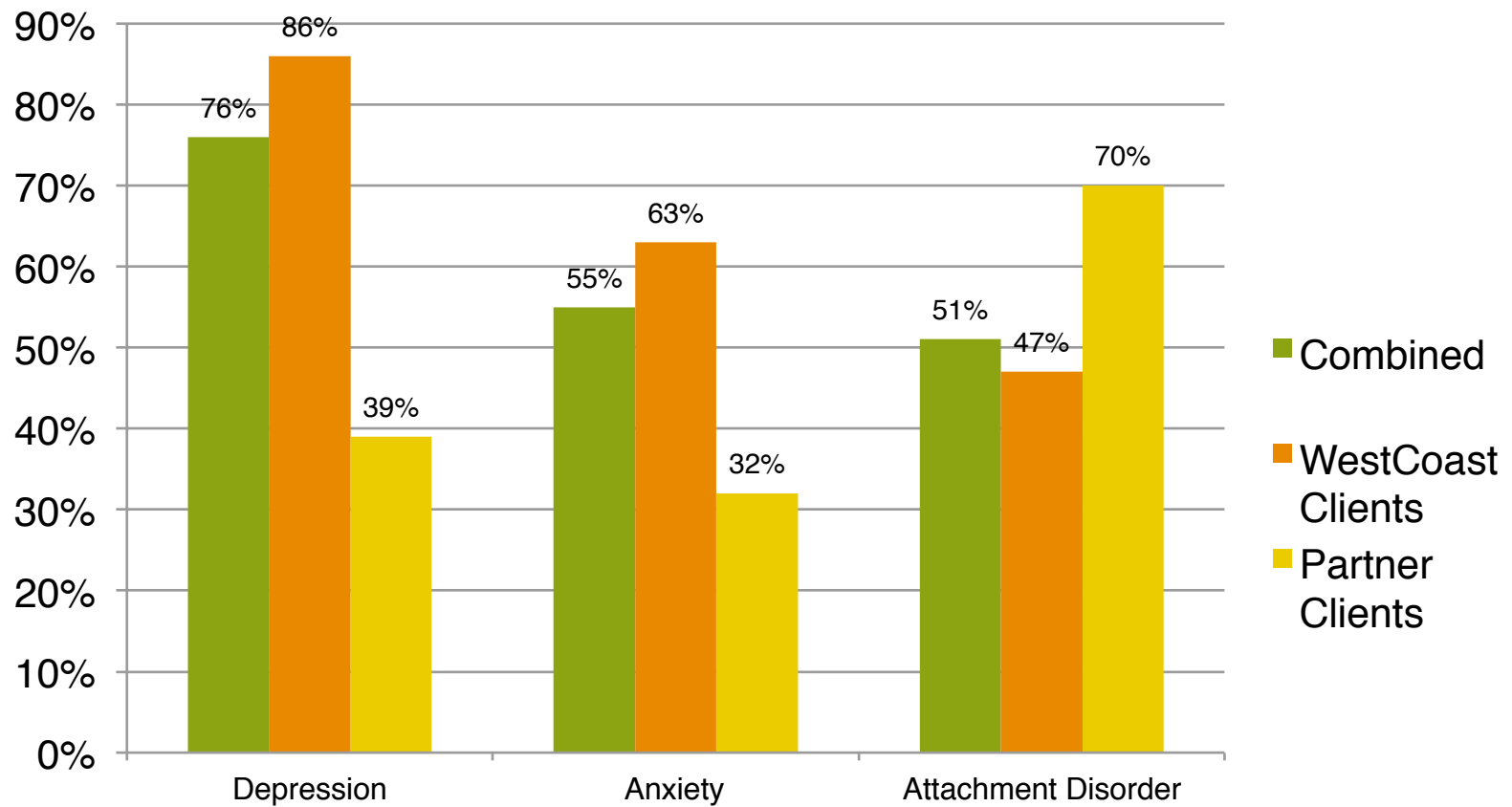
62% (70 youth) youth run away from home frequently. Among these youth:

- ⦿ 89% engage in delinquent, dangerous activities (e.g. exploitation) while on the run.
- ⦿ 87% run to unsafe environments that cannot meet their basic needs or where the likelihood of victimization is high.
- ⦿ 76% run to different locations or to no planned destination.
- ⦿ 74% have unrealistic or even delusional expectations about the implications of their running .
- ⦿ 71% are involved with others who help them hide or encourage them to run.
- ⦿ 66% make concerted efforts to hide and resist return if they are found.
- ⦿ 63% run away often or at every opportunity.

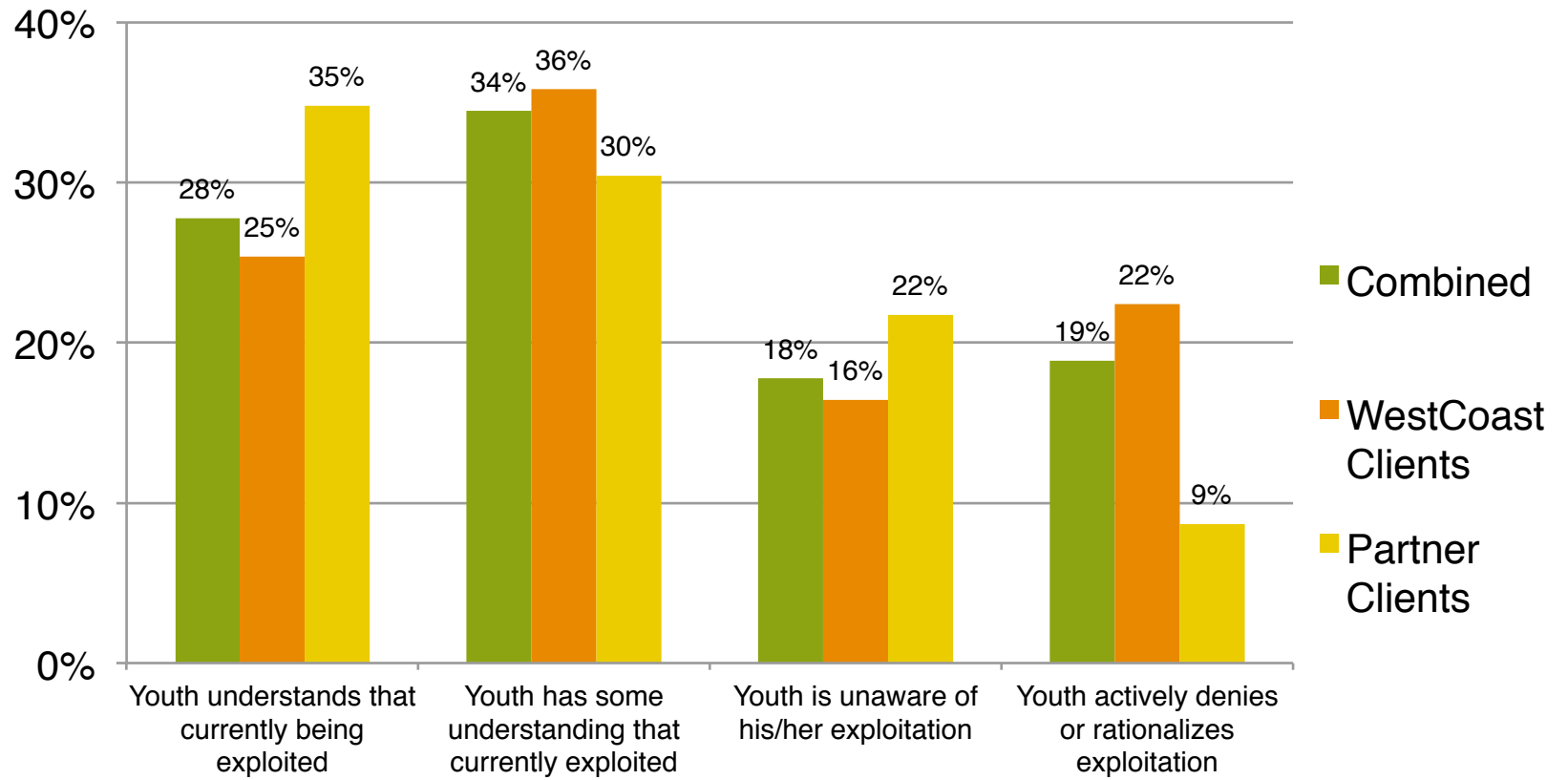
Prevalence of Mental Health Needs



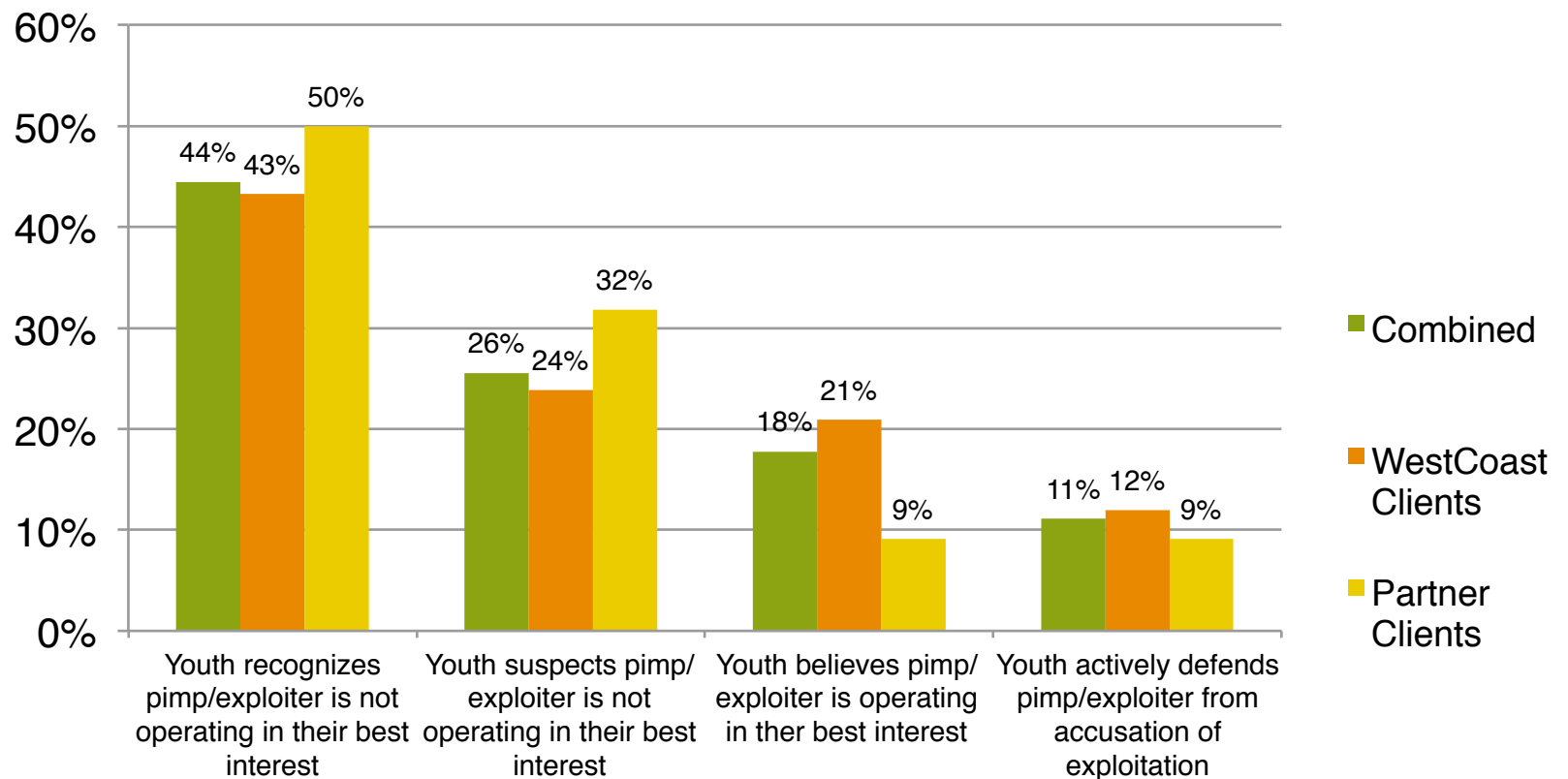
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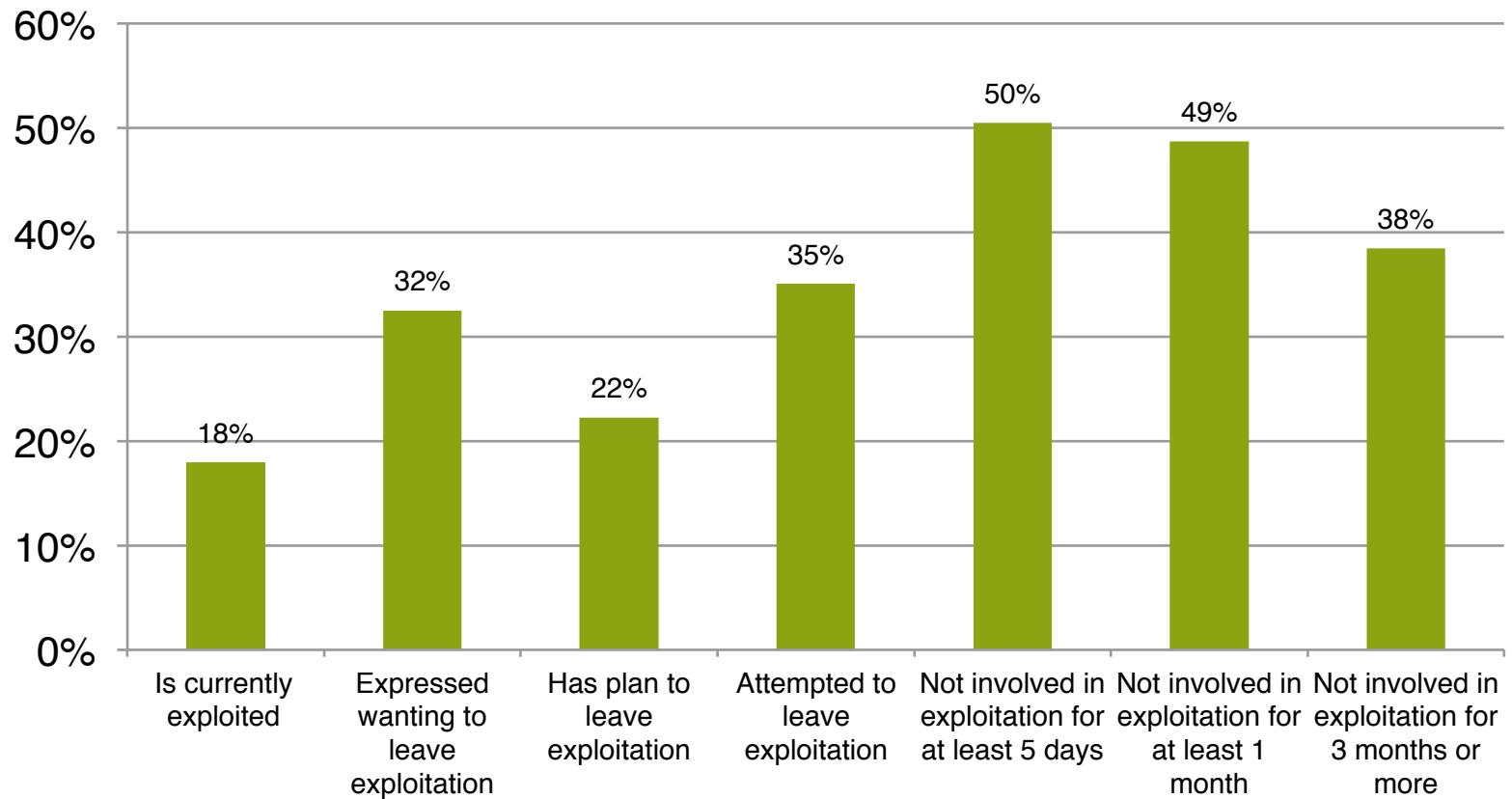
Knowledge of Exploitation



Stockholm Syndrome



Status of Exploitation



Life Domain: Health Needs

In terms of health needs:

- ⦿ 12% experience chronic physical or medical problems.
- ⦿ 10% are under- or over-weight to a degree resulting in serious or deadly health outcomes.
- ⦿ 31% have problems with sleep and are generally sleep deprived.
- ⦿ 14% are pregnant at any given time (and 56% of pregnant youth are using drugs or other substances known to cause harm).
- ⦿ 25% are parenting a biological child and another 10% are parents but not participating in their child's care (e.g. the child is in protective or non-protective custody).

Life Domain: Education Needs

In terms of educational needs:

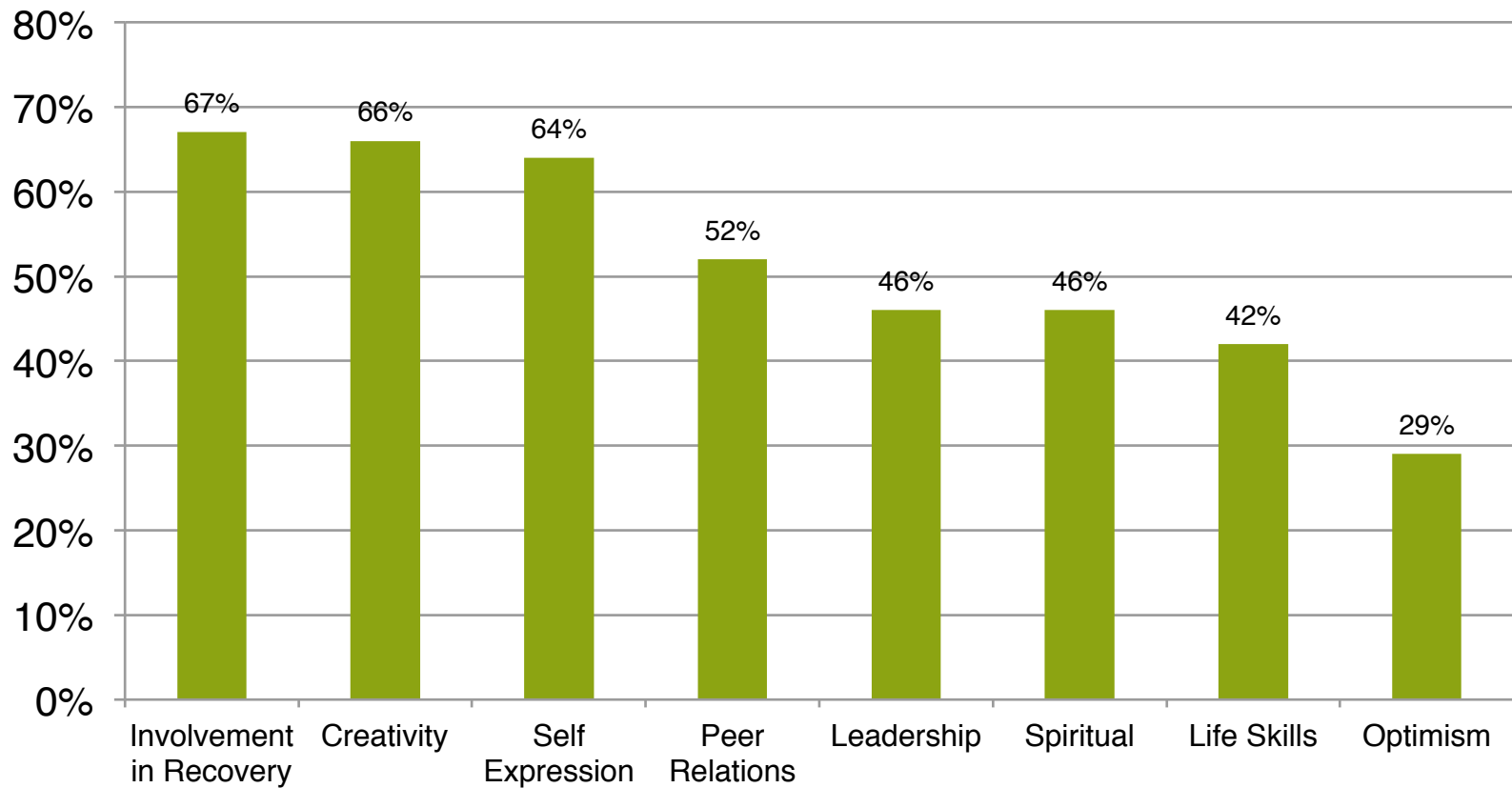
- ⦿ 50% are making no progress toward their educational goals or have no goals
 - ⦿ 21% of youth have problems with school attendance and have been out of school for one year or more
 - ⦿ When attending school 35% experienced limited or no successes at school, often due to shaming of their experience and harassment by their peers
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Improvement in Functioning

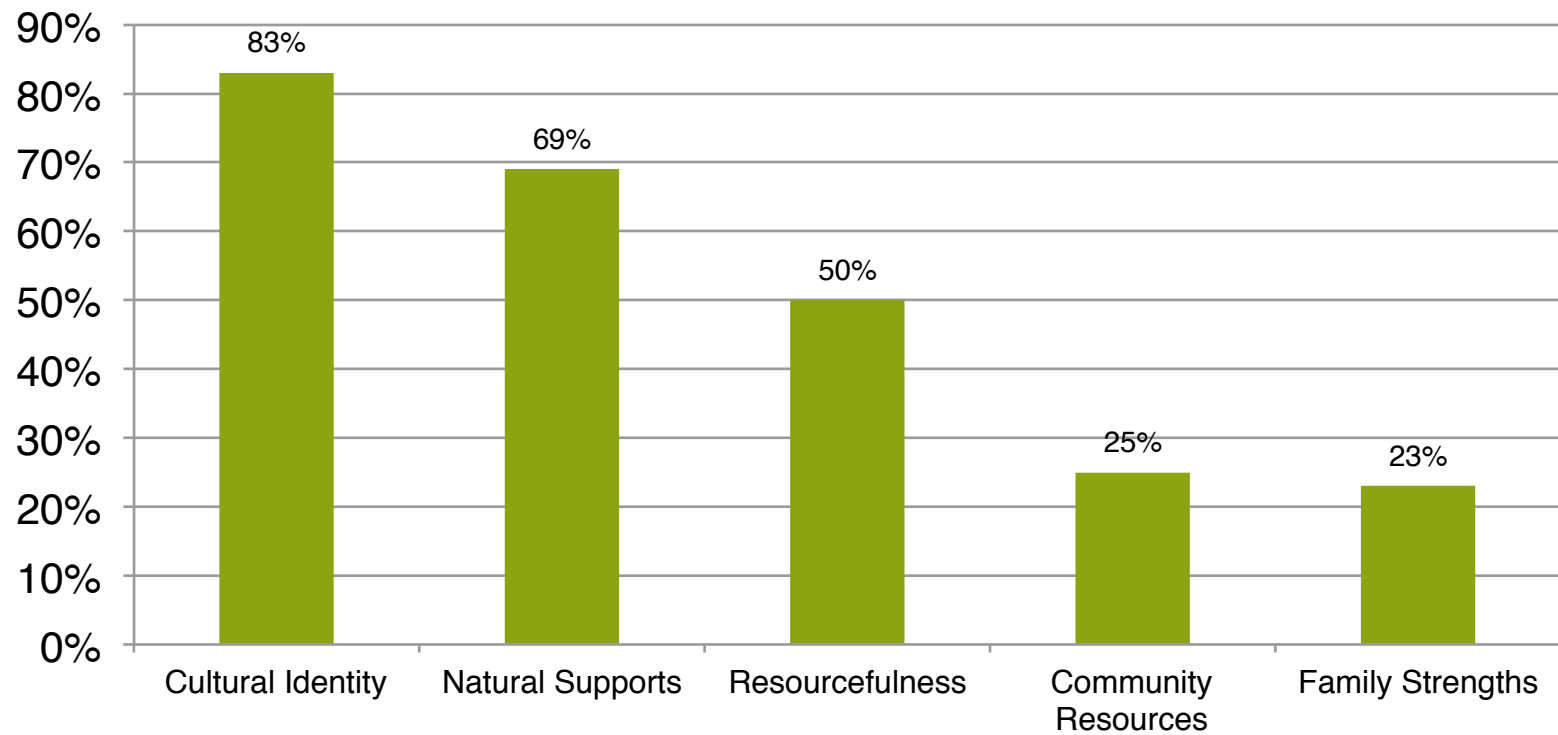
However, after six months of therapy:

- ⦿ 50% of youth with sleep problems see improvements in their ability to get a full night's sleep or have only occasional sleep interruptions
 - ⦿ 29% of those with medical impairments see improved ability to manage their medical problems
 - ⦿ 51% see improvements in their school behavior
 - ⦿ 30% see improvements in school attendance
 - ⦿ 29% see improvement in school achievement
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Internal Strengths



External Strengths



Research to Practice

Future research efforts to address the needs of youth who are exploited:

- ⦿ Expand the collaboration to include additional agencies and cities
 - ⦿ Understand the onset of exploitation
 - ⦿ Understand the impact of pregnancy and parenting
 - ⦿ Collect longitudinal data
 - ⦿ Share therapeutic strategies that are successful
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Practice Recommendations

- ⦿ Need for Intensive Engagement and Treatment
 - ⦿ Training and Support for Service Providers
 - ⦿ Collaboration and Participation of Systems Involved in Care
 - ⦿ Prevention and Early Intervention
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Intensive Engagement & Treatment

- ⦿ The intensity and complexity of the needs of SEM must inform the services and treatment provided
 - ⦿ A collaborative approach between all members of a treatment team is crucial
 - ⦿ Provide community-based services when possible
 - ⦿ Adopt a non-shaming, strength-based approach
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Training & Support

- ⦿ Enhancing providers' knowledge base on SEM specific issues
 - ⦿ Utilizing a harm reduction treatment model
 - ⦿ Process material that emerges in the treatment relationship
 - ⦿ Clinical supervision to support clinicians
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System Collaboration

- ⦿ Developing multidisciplinary treatment teams
 - ⦿ Caregivers and families as part of the treatment team
 - ⦿ Supporting caregivers
 - ⦿ Collaboration with schools
 - ⦿ Collaboration with Children and Family Services
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Prevention & Early Intervention

- ⦿ Stabilizing foster care placements
 - ⦿ Train faculty and school personnel
 - ⦿ Access to community resources
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Policy Recommendations

- ⦿ Identifying, Serving, and Protecting Victims
 - Child Welfare
 - Behavioral Healthcare
 - Juvenile Justice
 - Public Health
 - Primary Care
 - Education
 - ⦿ Decriminalization and Safe Harbor
 - ⦿ Addressing Demand
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Q&A Session

Thank You!

Hedge Funds Care for their generous support of this project, and to ...

- Alameda County Juvenile Justice Guidance Clinic
- Asian Health Services
- Banteay Srei
- Community Violence Solutions
- Contra Costa County Mental Health
- Contra Costa County Probation
- Covenant House
- DreamCatcher Youth Shelter
- Interagency Children's Policy Council
- MISSEY
- STARS Behavioral Health
- WestCoast C-Change Staff

...for making this project possible.

For More Information

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Feel free to contact us for additional copies of the **Research to Action: Sexually Exploited Minors Needs and Strengths** paper.
