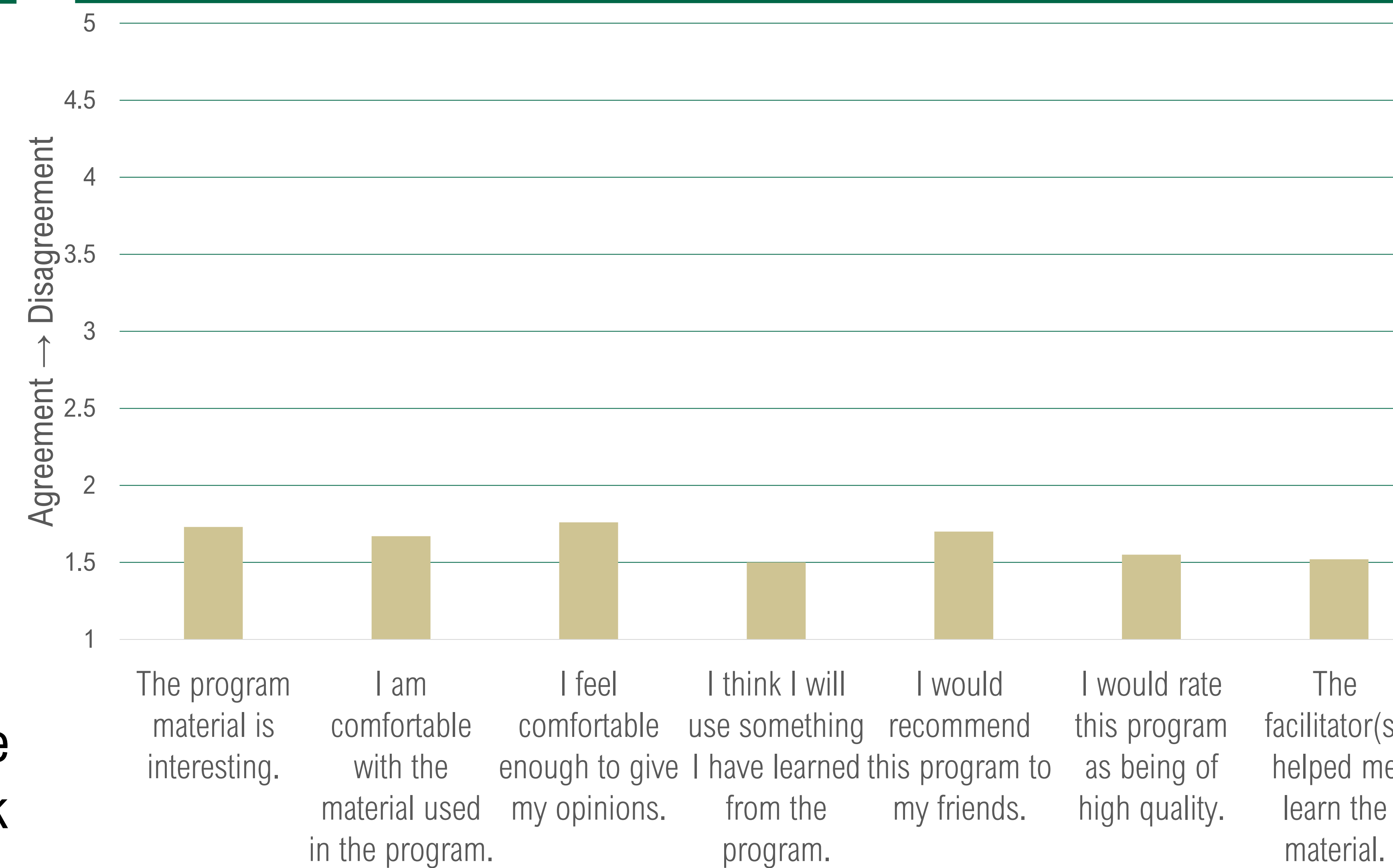


Introduction

- Risky sex, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections (HIV) are high among Florida youth (Florida Department of Health, 2023).
- Racial health disparities put black youth at increased risk for negative sex-related outcomes (Reif et al., 2014).
- Sex education programs targeting Black youth are needed.
- To address the need for sex education programs targeting Black youth, the Fabulous Relationship and Intimacy Education that Nurtures Development (FRIEND) program was created and implemented in the local community in partnership with community stakeholders.
- We delivered the evidence-based Love Notes-Sexual Risk Avoidance curriculum “camp style” over two days (typically weekends) to Black youth aged 11 to 14.
- The FRIEND program was implemented in predominantly Black neighborhoods in the Tampa Bay region of Florida.
- We used an observational design to assess anonymous data gathered as part of formative and summative program evaluation activities, such as:
 - Implementation data
 - Number of trained facilitators
 - Number of community partners
 - Number of camps
 - Number of youth served and completed
 - Number of observations
 - Observation data
 - Youth satisfaction survey data
 - Pre- and post-survey data
 - Number of trusted adult connection forms

Youth Satisfaction



Discussion

- Key Conclusions
 - The FRIEND program appears to be feasible and acceptable.
 - Black youth may benefit from community-based programs such as FRIEND.
 - Experimental research is needed to further assess the impact of the FRIEND program on behavioral outcomes among youth.
- Lessons Learned
 - Community partnerships are key to the success of community-based programming for youth.
 - Providing incentives to youth and parents can bolster recruitment.
 - The nature of community-based programming can make experimental research challenging.

Results

- 823 Black youth aged 11 to 14 living in the Tampa Bay region of Florida completed the FRIEND program from 2021 to 2023; 95% of youth completed the program
- 29 facilitators were trained; 32 community partnerships were developed; 60 camps were delivered; 34 observations completed
- Observation data suggests the FRIEND program was delivered with a high degree of fidelity.
- Average program quality rating was 4.92/5.00 with higher scores indicating higher quality
- Youth Satisfaction
 - Most youth reported satisfaction with the program. See Table 1.
- Trusted Adult Connections
 - Of the 823 youth who completed the program, 798 submitted trusted adult connection forms.
- Survey Results
 - Following FRIEND participation, most youth reported being more likely to:
 - Resist using alcohol, tobacco products, marijuana, or misusing prescription pain medicine.
 - Resist peer pressure.
 - Manage their emotions.
 - Find solutions during friendship conflicts.
 - Spend time with friends that keep them out of trouble