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Western

Community Crisis and Community Development During and Following COVID-19: Giving Voice to Low Income Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ariba, O., Oudshoorn, A., Befus, D., Baird, S., Lewkowitz, S. (May 10, 2021) Community Crisis and Community Development during and following COVID-19: Giving Voice to Low-Income Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic. London Health Research Day, London, ON.

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Resource Centers (NRCs) support low-income residents to meet basic needs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Crouch NRC in London, Ontario noted an increase in those accessing basic needs support. A significant number of those accessing supports are new to the center.

OBJECTIVE

- To understand how Covid-19 is impacting people living in low-income neighborhood in London, Ontario.
- To explore opportunities for building resilience and supporting recovery through expanding the community development network of Crouch NRC.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Perspective: Utilised Sally Thorne's Interpretive Descriptive Methodology.

Method: A mixed method research approach
Qualitative survey- Distributed through social media & email.

Interviews- Telephone interviews & interviews at point of distribution of basic needs.

The survey was completed by **54** low-income families in London Ontario.

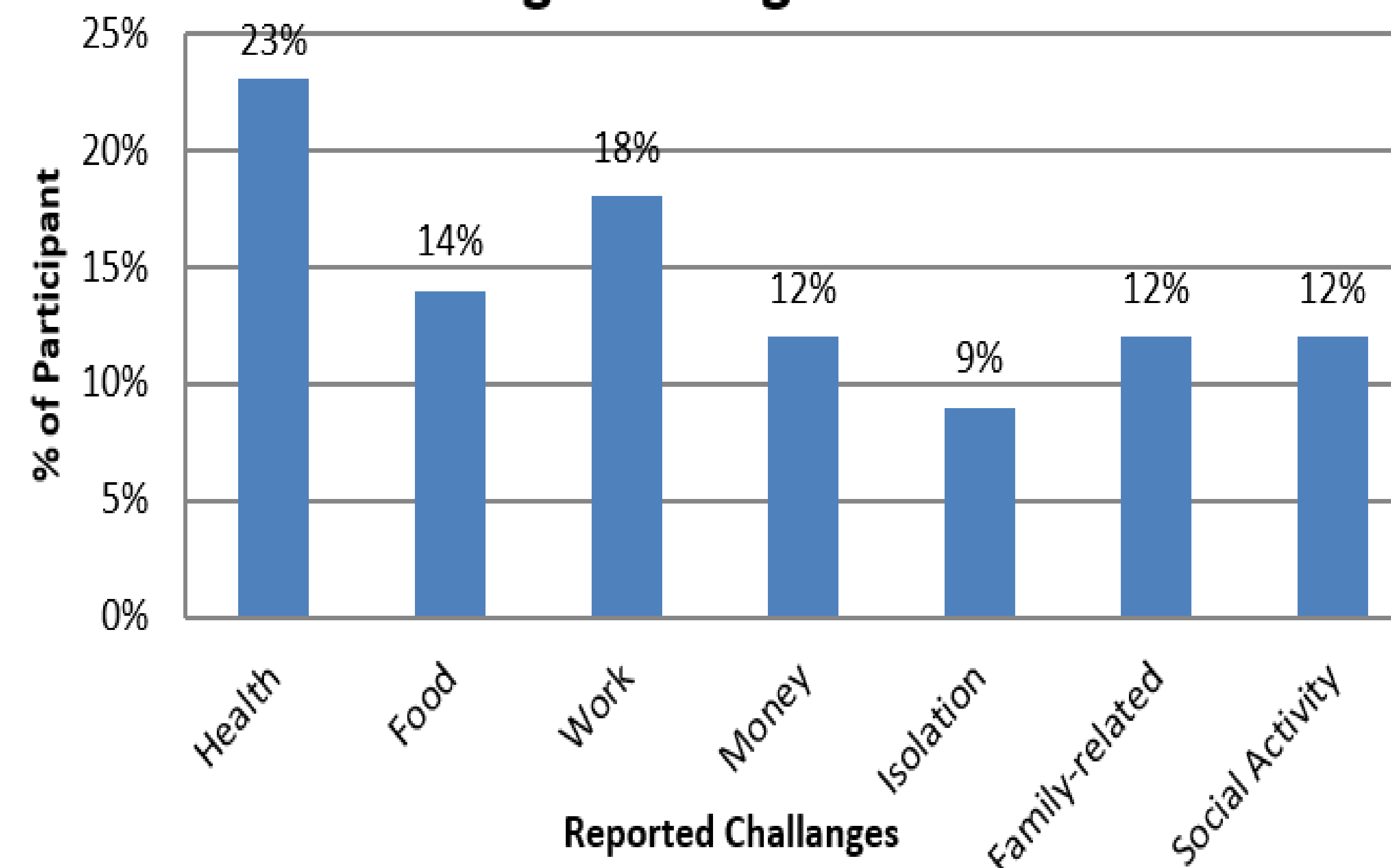


Who We Heard From

- 3 Indigenous, 1 POC
- 17 male, 29 female, 1 other
- 18 in owned accommodations, 29 renting
- 13 married and 12 partnered, 22 singles
- 24 using pandemic food supports, 23 not
- 9 fully employment income, plus 6 with

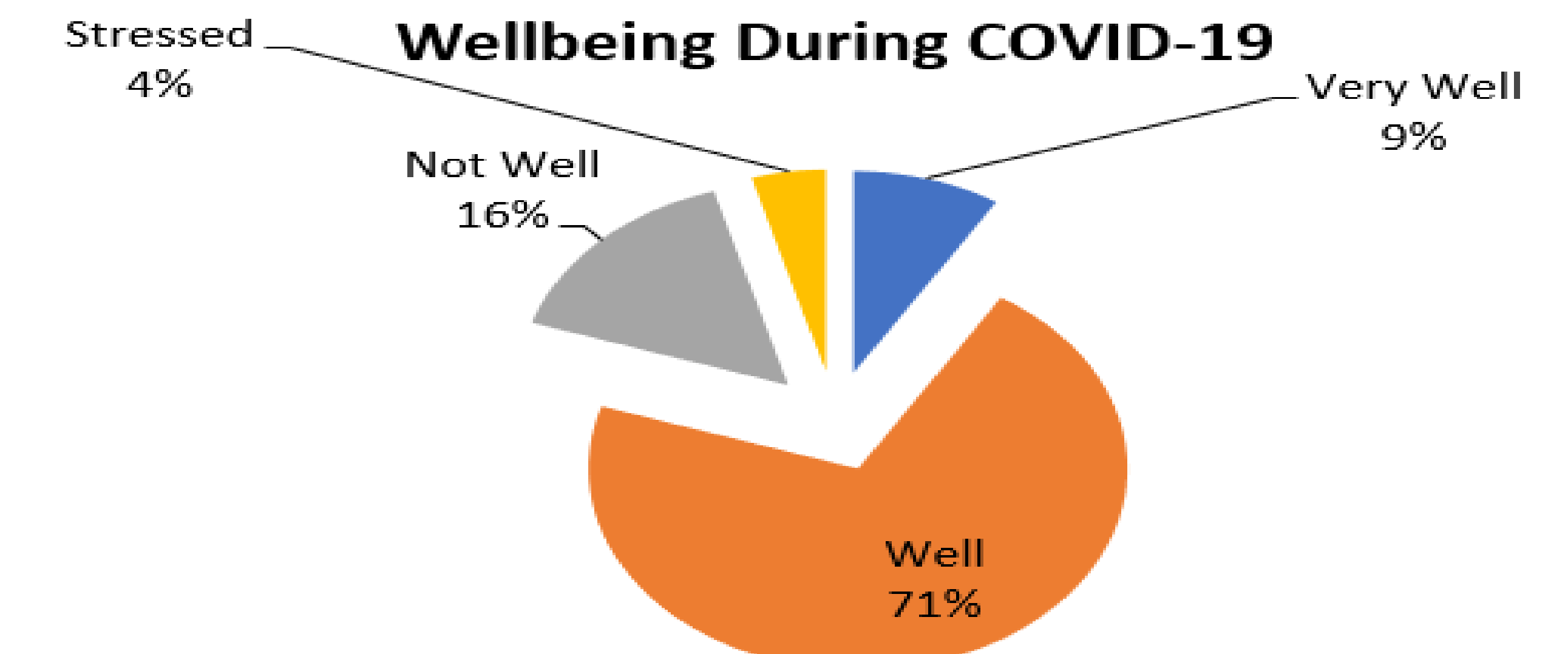
FINDINGS

Challenges during COVID-19

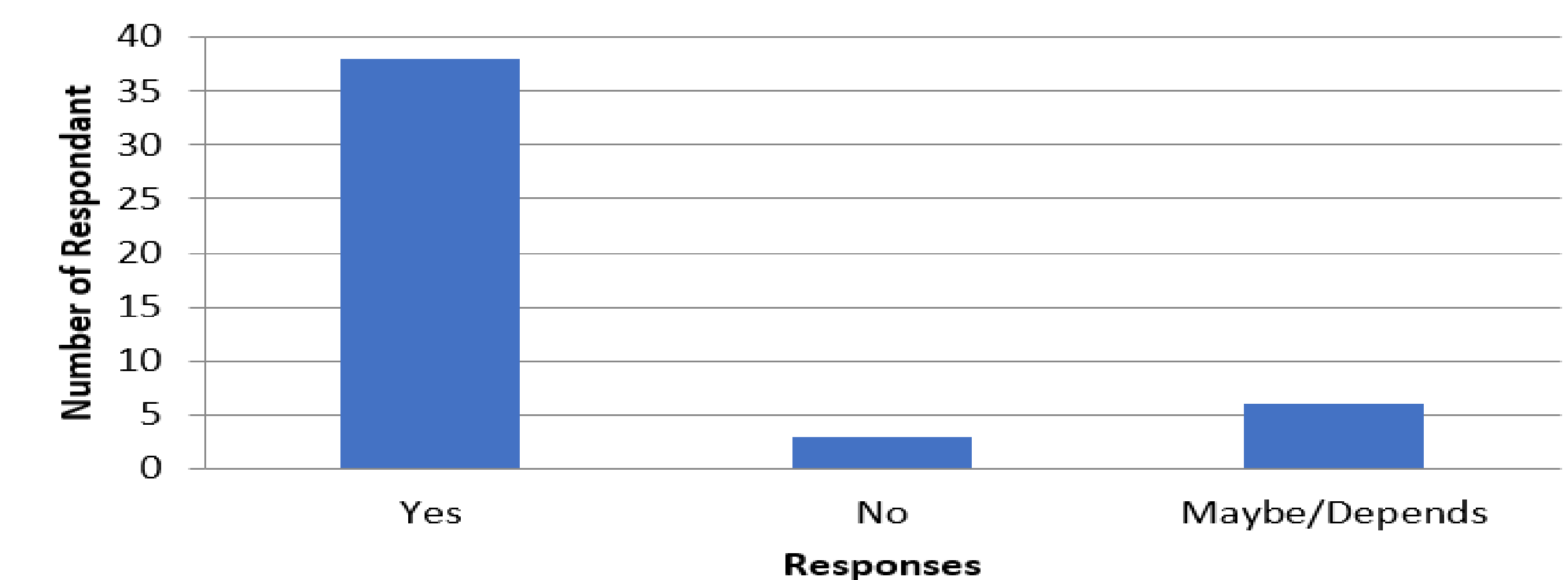


Frequency of usage of new support services

Q5 Have you used any new support services during the pandemic? (If 'yes', which ones?)	Frequency of theme-based response, n = 46	
	Response	Frequency
Yes		21
No		25



Connecting with Crouch NRC in Future



KEY FINDINGS

While participants were using more support services through crouch, we noted that overall, most were generally doing okay. Worries were related to healthcare access, food security, and what will happen to finances after pandemic supports end.

CONCLUSION

For low-income families, the primary concern has not been overall financial well-being but rather decreased access to support services to meet basic needs. To test this conclusion, we are doing a further round of qualitative interviews with families.

REFERENCES

- Thorne, S. (2016). *Interpretive description: Qualitative research for applied practice*. Routledge.
- Zautra, A., Hall, J., & Murray, K. (2008). Community development and community resilience: An integrative approach. *Community Development*, 39(3), 130-147
- Dean, H. (2007). Tipping the balance: the problematic nature of work-life balance in a low-income neighbourhood. *Journal of Social Policy*, 36(4), 519-537.