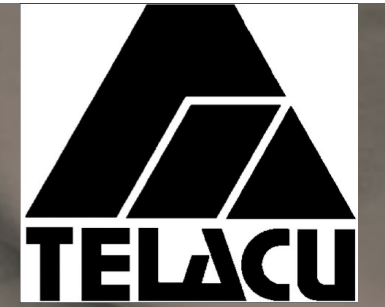

How Do Gender-Based Groups Impact Program Outcomes?

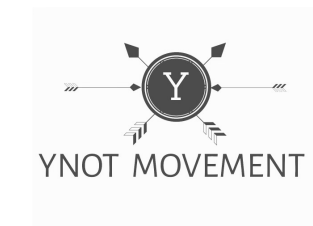
John Lewis, Urban Strategies, Project Director

Jonathan Nakamoto, WestEd, Principal Investigator

November 9, 2022



The main graphic features a large, white, stylized letter 'f' on the left. To its right, the word "futuronow" is written in a lowercase, white, sans-serif font, with "PROJECT RISE" in a smaller, uppercase, white, sans-serif font below it. The background is a photograph of two people's hands clasped together, with their arms extending from the left and right edges of the frame. The image is dimmed to allow the white text and logo to stand out.

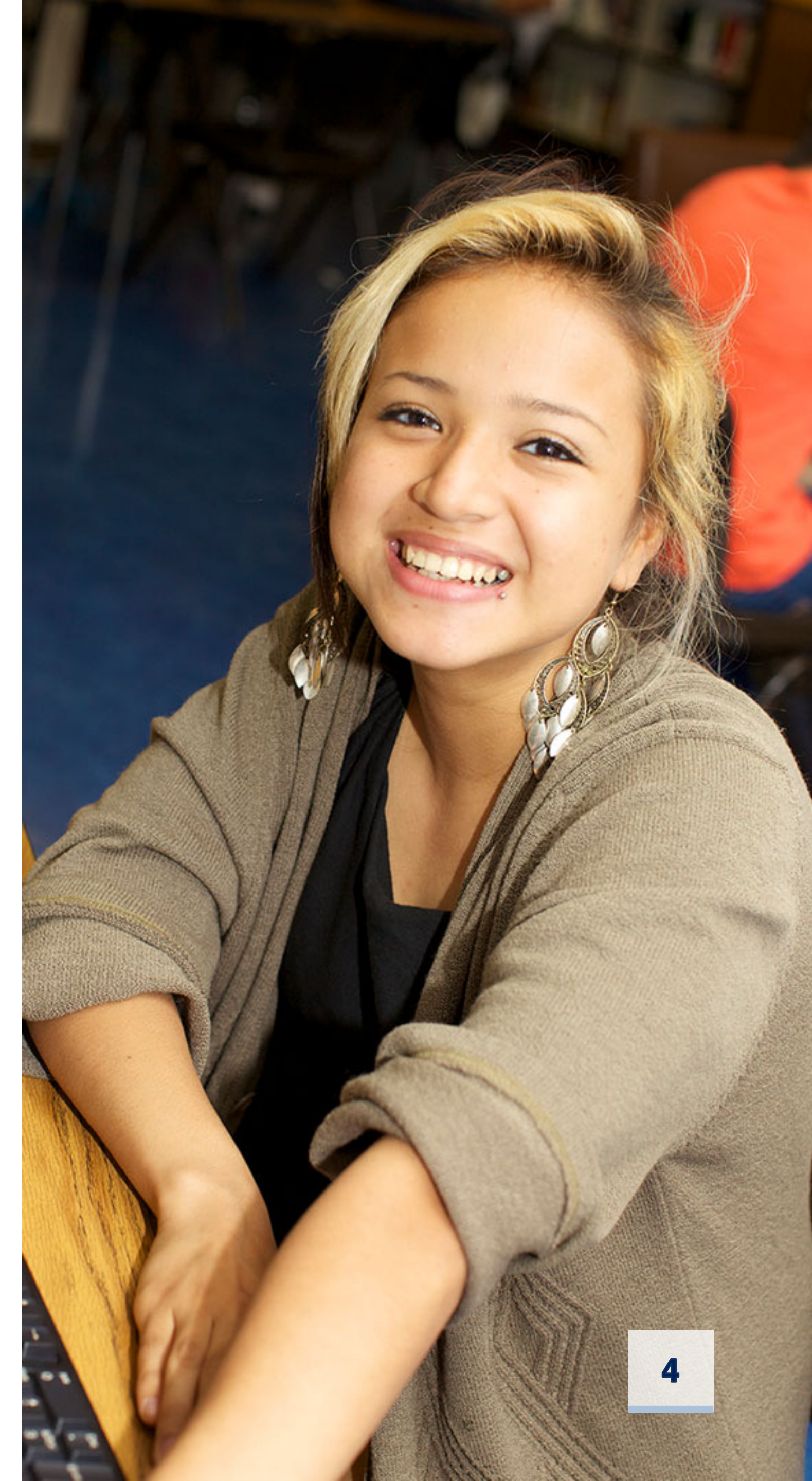


Introduction to the Evaluation of Project Rise

- **Gender-based evaluation question:**
 - Does the effect of Love Notes on sexual risk avoidance outcomes differ when the program is implemented with mixed gender classes in contrast to classes of females and males only?
- **Mixed methods study that:**
 - Conducts focus groups with youth and facilitators
 - Conducts observations of lessons
 - Analyzes survey data from the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) survey and our local evaluation survey (entry and exit surveys)
- **Feedback provided to Urban Strategies throughout their grants using:**
 - Presentations, write-ups, and data dashboards

Number of Cohorts Included in the Current Analysis

- **58 mixed gender cohorts**
 - 17.6 youth per cohort
- **19 female only cohorts**
 - 12.7 females per cohort
- **13 male only cohorts**
 - 13.6 males per cohort
- **Cohort size ranged from 2 to 58 youth**

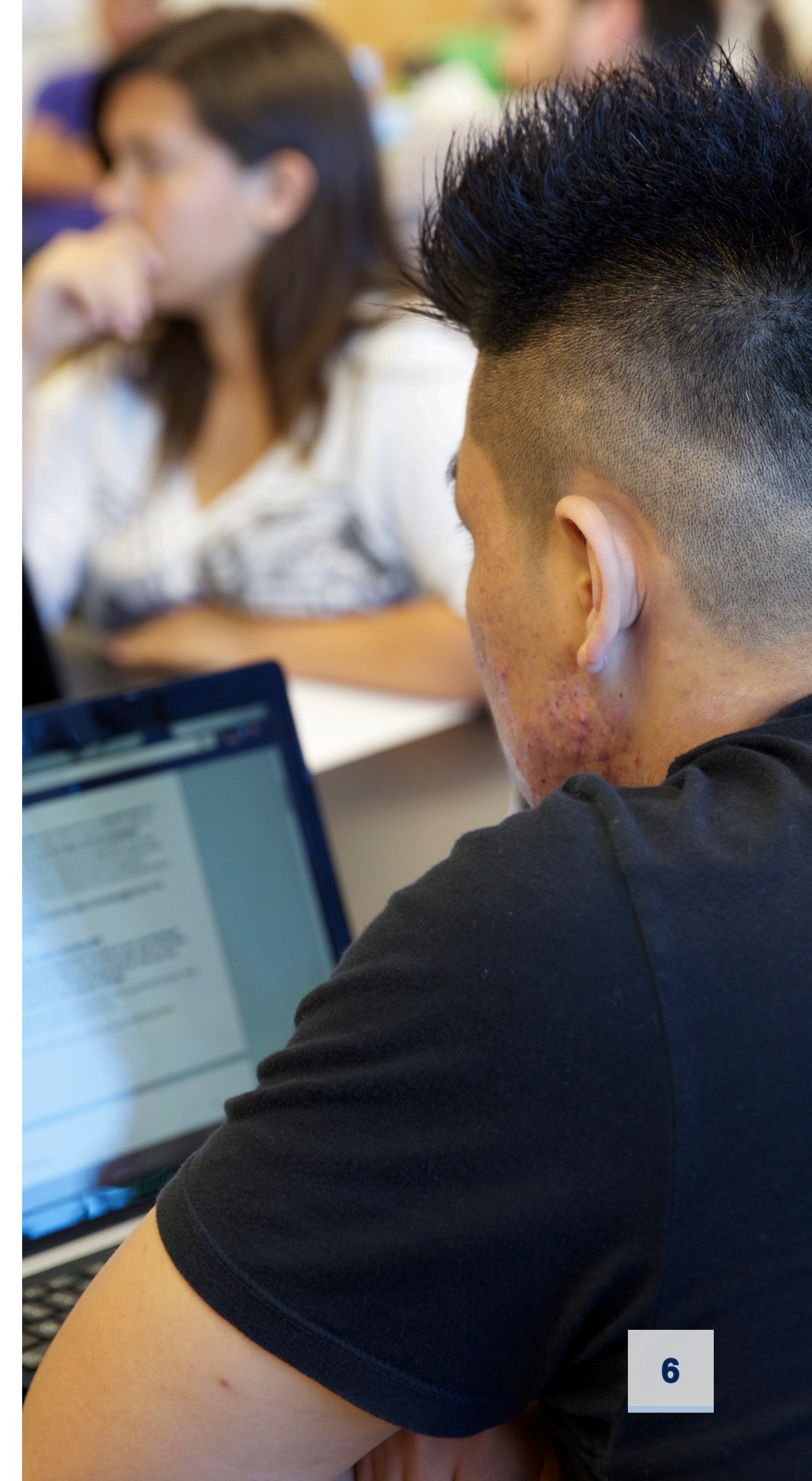


Other Implementation Factors to Consider

- **Virtual (on Zoom) vs. in-person:**
 - 72% of cohorts were virtual and 28% were in-person
- **Time to complete the program varied:**
 - 12% of cohorts were completed in 1-2 days
 - 49% of cohorts were completed in 3-5 days
 - 25% of cohorts were completed in 6-10 days
 - 14% of cohorts were completed in 11 or more days
- **Nine different partner organizations implemented the program using multiple facilitators**

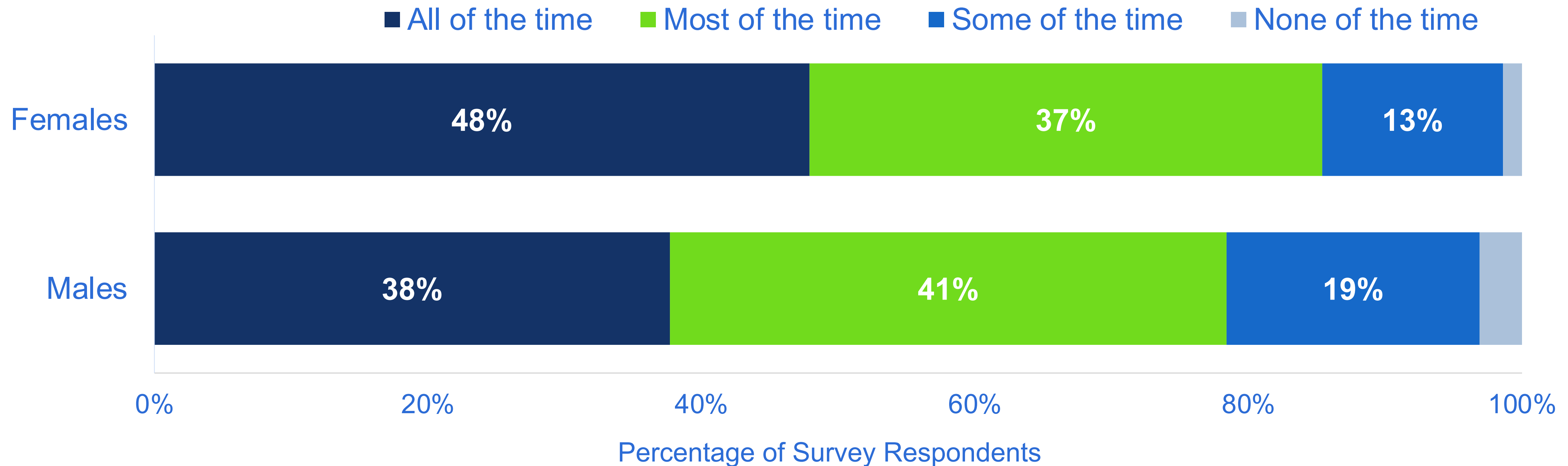
Description of the Sample (n = 1,078)

- **53% female and 47% male (self-reported on Project Rise application)**
- **Average age of 15.9**
 - Ranged from 12 to 20 years old
 - 19% completed the middle school SRAE survey
 - 81% completed the high school SRAE survey
- **Majority Latino**
 - 67% Latino/Hispanic
 - 24% Asian
 - 6% Black/African American
 - 3% Other



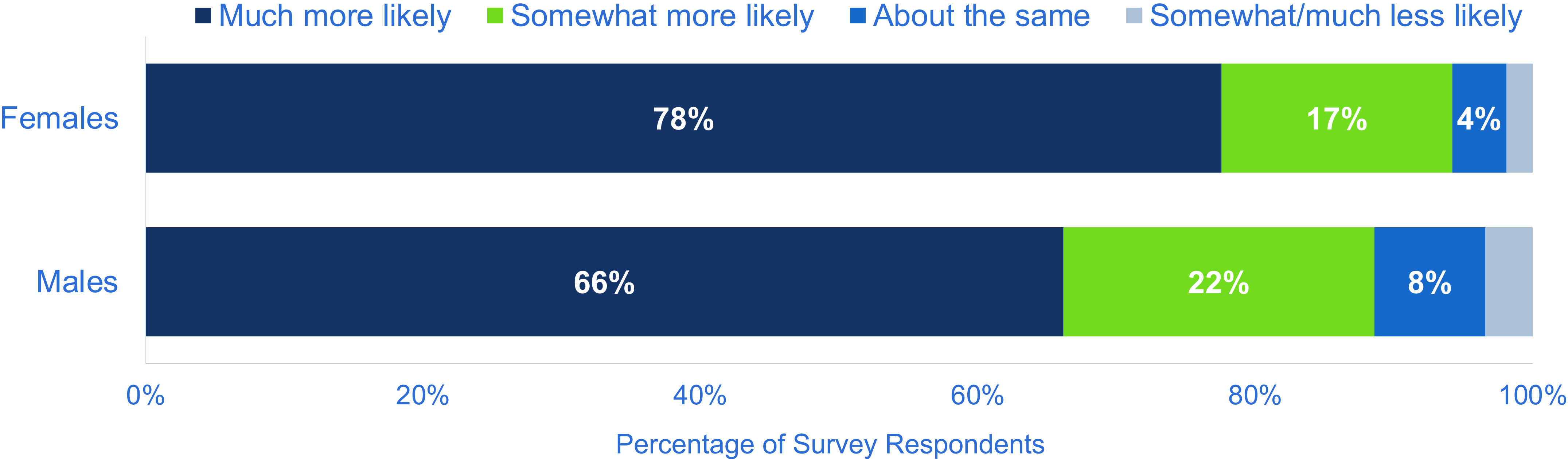
Additional Considerations for the Analysis

- Females tended to rate their experiences more positively than males
- Did you feel interested in program sessions and classes?



Additional Considerations for the Analysis

- Has being in the program made you more likely, about the same, or less likely to better understand what makes a relationship healthy?

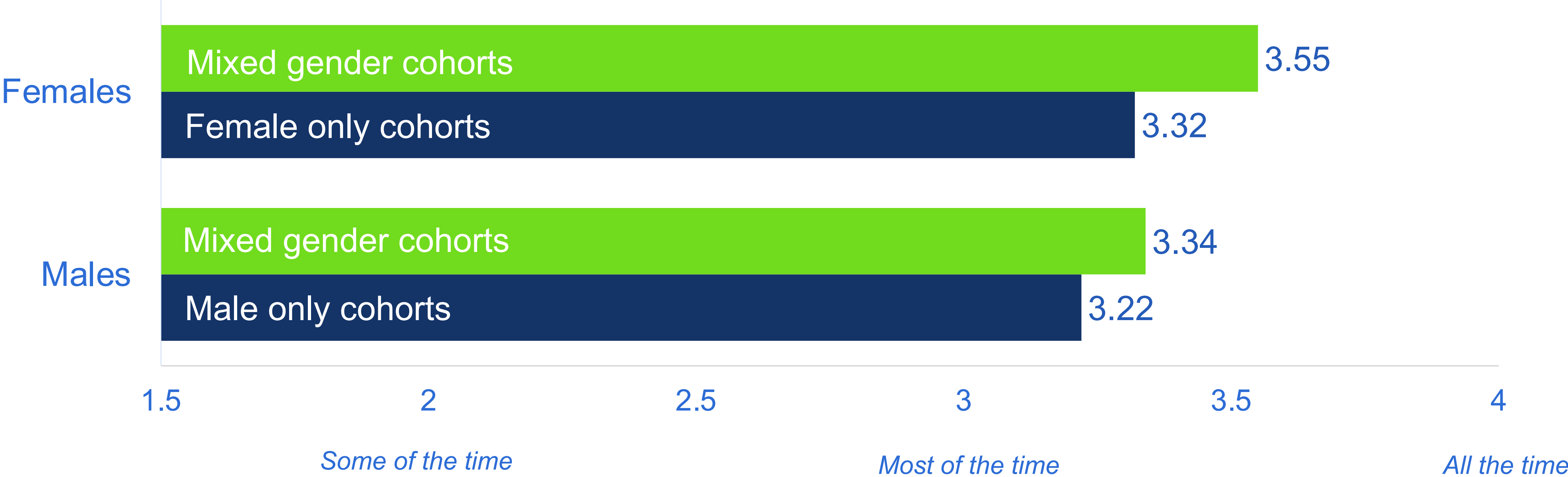


Analytic Plan

- **Outcome measures from the exit survey:**
 - Overall Perceptions of the Program; Perceptions of the Facilitators; Understanding Healthy Relationships; Planning for the Future; Plans for Abstinence
- **Regression models (that account for the clustering of youth in cohorts) that statistically control for:**
 - Youth's demographics: Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Age
 - Cohort-level factors: Virtual/in-person implementation, Program length, and Cohort size
 - Pre-test measure of outcome from the entry survey (when available)
- **Key predictors contrast:**
 - Outcomes for females in mixed-gender cohorts with females in female-only cohorts
 - Outcomes for males in mixed-gender cohorts with males in male-only cohorts

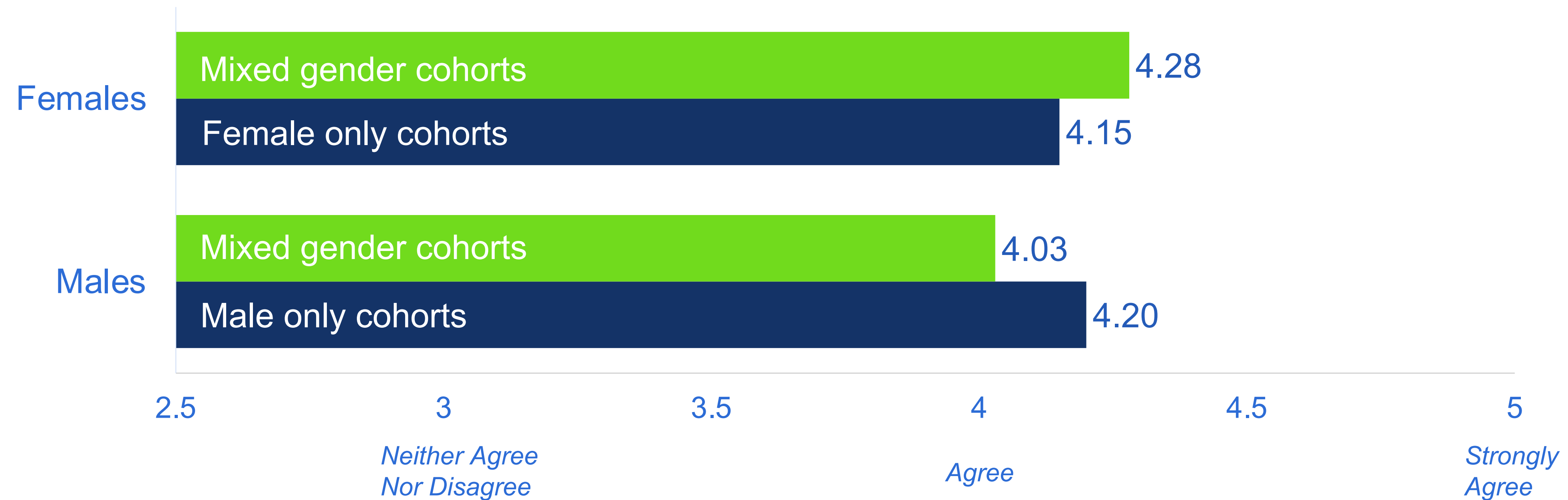
Outcome #1: Overall Perceptions of the Program

- **Composite measure based on five items:**
 - Did you feel interested in program sessions and classes?
 - Did you have a chance to ask questions about topics or issues that came up in the program?



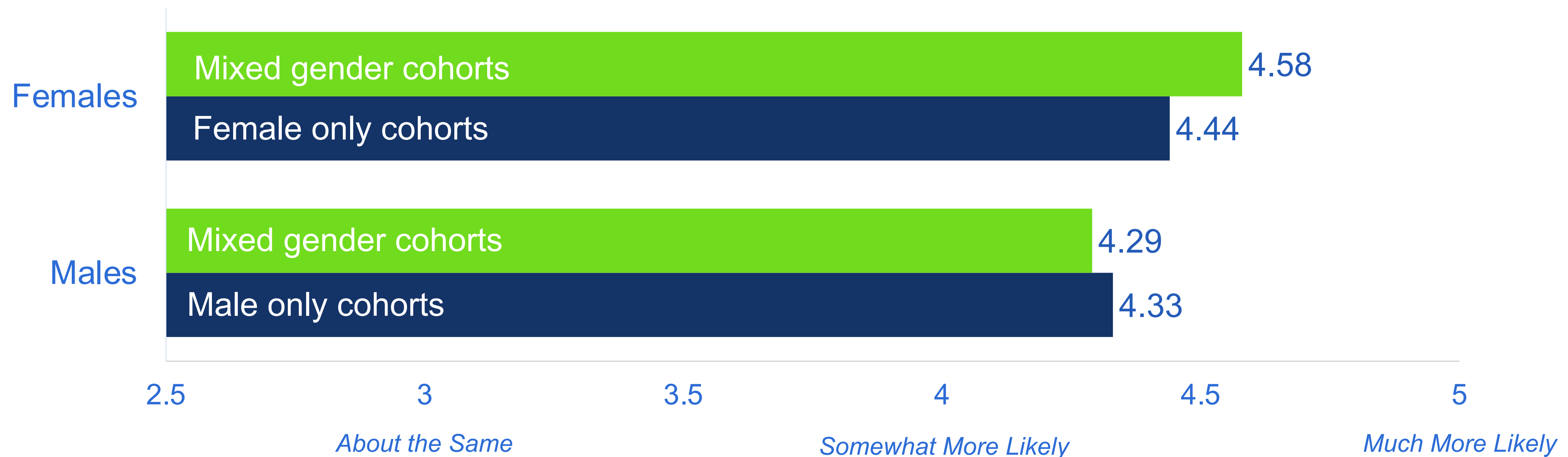
Outcome #2: Perceptions of the Facilitators

- **Composite measure based on two items:**
 - My facilitator made the class fun.
 - My facilitator was good at getting everyone in the group to actively participate.



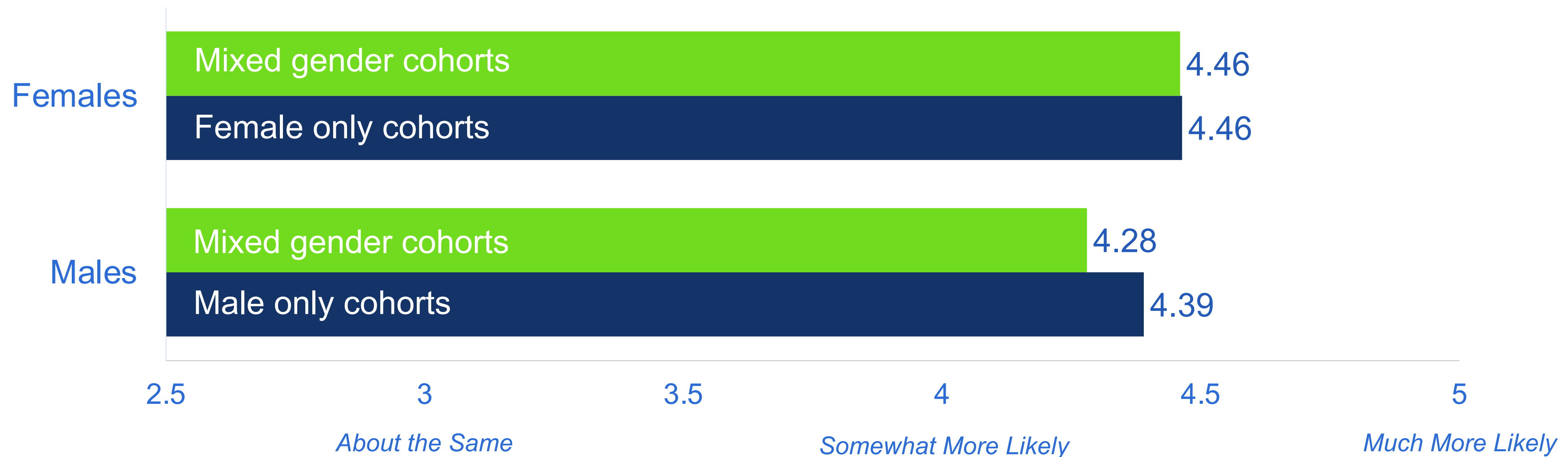
Outcome #3: Understanding Healthy Relationships

- **Composite measure based on three items:**
 - Has being in the program made you...1) better understand what makes a relationship healthy?; 2) resist or say no to someone if they pressure you to participate in sexual acts?; 3) talk to a trusted person/adult if someone makes you uncomfortable, hurts you, or pressures you to do things you don't want to do?



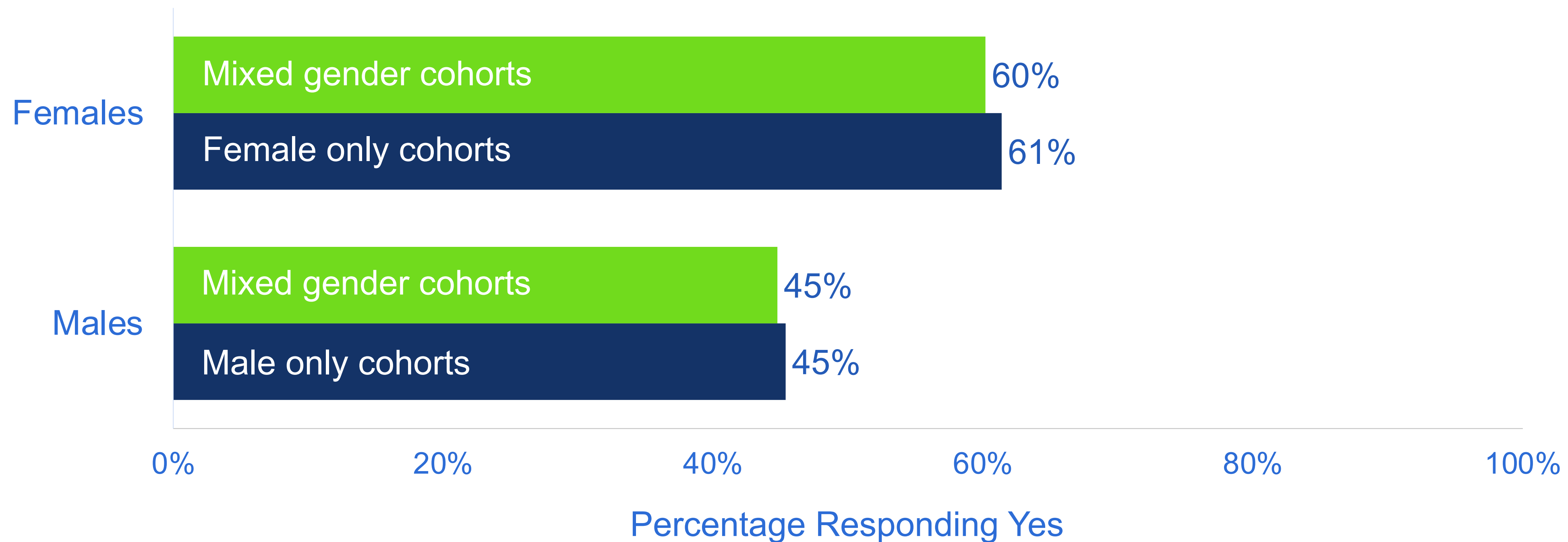
Outcome #4: Planning for the Future

- **Composite measure based on two items:**
 - Has being in the program made you...make plans to reach your goals?
 - Has being in the program made you...care about doing well in school?



Outcome #5: Plans for Abstinence

- As a result of being in the program, are you planning to abstain from sexual intercourse (choose to not have sexual intercourse)?
 - Yes, No, Not Sure



Takeaways from the Analysis of Survey Data

- **Youth's perceptions of the program were positive regardless of their cohort's gender makeup**
- **Preliminary results are mixed and inconclusive but...**
 - Trends for overall perceptions of the program favored the mixed gender cohorts for females and males
 - Trend for perceptions of facilitators favored same gender cohorts for males
 - Trend for understanding healthy relationships favored mixed gender cohorts for females
 - Trend for planning for the future favored same gender cohorts for males
- **Larger number of same gender cohorts are needed to draw stronger conclusions**
- **Some aspects of the program may be better with mixed gender cohorts and other aspects may be better with same gender cohorts**

Focus Group Findings: What Youth Liked about Same Gender Cohorts

- Greater comfort level with only female and only male cohorts
- More open to honest discussion (less filtering)
- More willingness to participate
- Did not feel judgment from the opposite gender
- Able to hear different perspectives from the same gender
- More females described liking the same gender cohorts than males

Focus Group Findings: What Youth Liked about Same Gender Cohorts

- “I think it changed the class in a good way because you’re more comfortable with what you’re saying and you don’t get judged by females or males.”
- “You feel more comfortable with just females because you don’t feel embarrassed by what the male perspectives might be.”
- “There were no arguments between the two [genders].”
- “I think it’s better [to be in only female cohorts] because if there were guys, I probably wouldn’t participate as much.”
- Facilitator: “I was teaching all guys and with them there are certain things you can lean on and be more specific as opposed to when it’s co-ed you have to think of ‘filtering’ and can’t go into much depth. For the guys you can talk about more ‘guy stuff.’”

Focus Group Findings: What Youth Disliked about Same Gender Cohorts

- Too rowdy/noisy in the male only cohorts
- Unable to hear the opposite gender's perspective in same gender cohorts
 - “Mixed would be better because of the different perspectives.”
 - “I think it would be interesting to have co-ed so we could see how [males] respond to certain things.”
- “[It would be nice to] have separate cohorts and later combine them to see their point-of-views. I was interested in that and thought that’s how the program worked and I really did want to see that.”

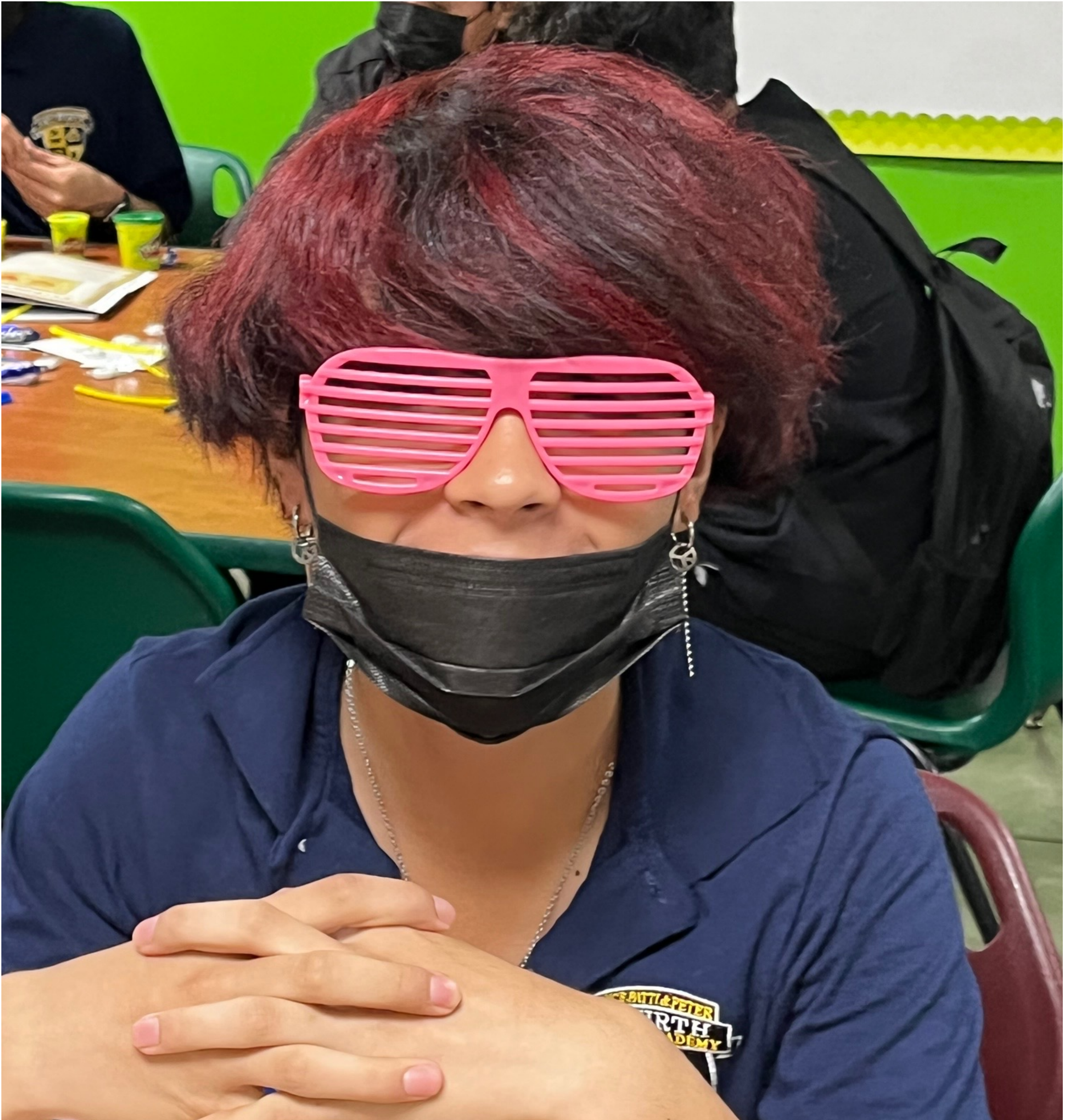
Strategies to Increase Recruitment and Retention

- Gender based groups have led to a strategy of recruiting athletic teams
- Challenges with school-based recruitment; Creating wins – you have to give them something other than a good curriculum
- Facilitators recruit at farmer's markets and focus on recruiting the PARENTS more than the youth (talk about the benefits of Love Notes for their daughters and sons)
- Retention has increased with setting an incentive that allows the youth to do something together (i.e., amusement parks like Knotts Berry Farm and Boomers)



Real-time Strategies Based on Five Years of Experience

- **Preparing the environment of the classroom: What are the youth going to experience and not just learn?**
 - Sight, Smell, Taste, Touch, Hear



Real-time Strategies Based on Five Years of Experience

- **Preparing the environment of the classroom: What are the youth going to experience and not just learn?**
 - Sight, Smell, Taste, Touch, Hear
- **Remember – You are not the most important person in the room**
- **Flexibility – Understand that youth are more of a moving target now more than ever**
- **Working smarter together and not in silos – A collaborative approach**

Concluding Thoughts

- Most of the Project Rise youth (females and males in same and mixed gender cohorts) had positive experiences with Love Notes
- Too early to tell with current survey data whether same gender cohorts lead to better outcomes
- Youth noted positives and negatives associated with the same gender cohorts
- Future research could investigate whether some lessons are better implemented with same or mixed gender cohorts
 - Challenging due to the large number of lessons
- Upcoming focus group with youth who did the first half of the program as same gender cohorts and then merged to a combined cohort

Thank You!

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