



Report of Findings from the Community Survey September 2018

This report has been prepared and released by the Distribution Committee of the Sandy Hook School Support Fund (SHSSF) based on solicitation of public input into the current individual and community needs as it relates to the tragedy on 12/14/12.

The Distribution Committee is comprised of nine Sandy Hook/Newtown residents who represent perspectives from many different impacted groups including victims, surviving children, surviving staff, emergency responders, Sandy Hook parents, community members, and the faith community. It is the responsibility of the Distribution Committee to solicit public input in order to better understand the needs and gaps that exist in the community as well as the strengths so that they can be built upon for long-term sustainable recovery. The committee acknowledges the limitations of the survey and asks that those most impacted by the tragedy continue to provide feedback through both formal and informal opportunities so that it can be as responsive as possible to the needs that continue to exist. Committee members, as well as executive director Jennifer Barahona, are available to meet with individuals and groups to solicit additional feedback. If interested, please contact Ms. Barahona at 203-460-0687 or jbarahona@nshcf.org to arrange a time to meet.

Community members who are interested in learning more about the background of the Foundation, where the funding from the Sandy Hook School Support Fund has gone to date, eligibility requirements for support, and more are encouraged to visit www.nshcf.org.

Methodology

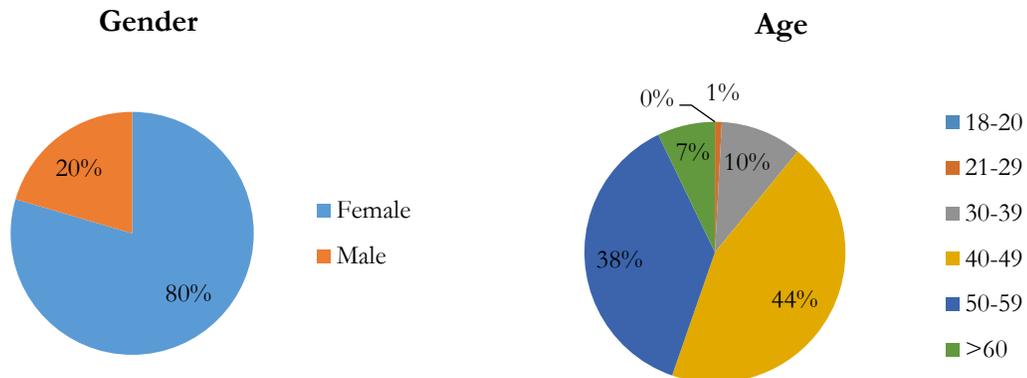
An anonymous on-line survey was released to the public on May 28, 2018 and remained open until July 9, 2018. The survey was disseminated through the Newtown Public Schools (Superintendent's office), the Newtown Bee, social media, and the internal distribution lists of the Foundation. The survey generated 474 responses compared to 607 in 2017, 945 in 2016, 999 in 2015, and 1,633 in 2014. It is understood by the Distribution Committee that this survey represents only a small percentage of the overall community and those most impacted. The survey is only one way that the committee receives input. Feedback is continuously sought through Distribution Committee members and on-going dialogue with community groups & individuals.

Key Findings

This was the fifth year that the Foundation administered this survey and many of the same themes remain. Having access to financial support for individual and family counseling continue to be the number one priority. This is followed by opportunities for connections and wellness activities. Coupled with the priority for mental health funding were comments about the number of providers who do not take insurance. There was deep appreciation for the longer-term support that has been available as needs continue to exist. Guilt and lack of awareness of support services available remain the biggest barriers in accessing care. Efficacy of the services available varied greatly and meditation was cited as the most frequent coping mechanism not previously listed. The majority of respondents

feel very connected to the community. There have been noteworthy trends in symptomatology. Levels of anger, stress, anxiety, and fear/excessive worry peaked in 2015, dropped in 2016, remained relatively stable in 2017, and increased again in 2018 to levels close to 2016. This correlates with a trend in our mental health reimbursement that saw the two highest monthly totals since February 2016 within the last nine months (December 2017 and March 2018). When asked if levels of distress, as it relates to the tragedy, have changed over the past 6-12 months, 28% of respondents reported improvement, 8% reported worsening symptoms, and 64% remained the same.

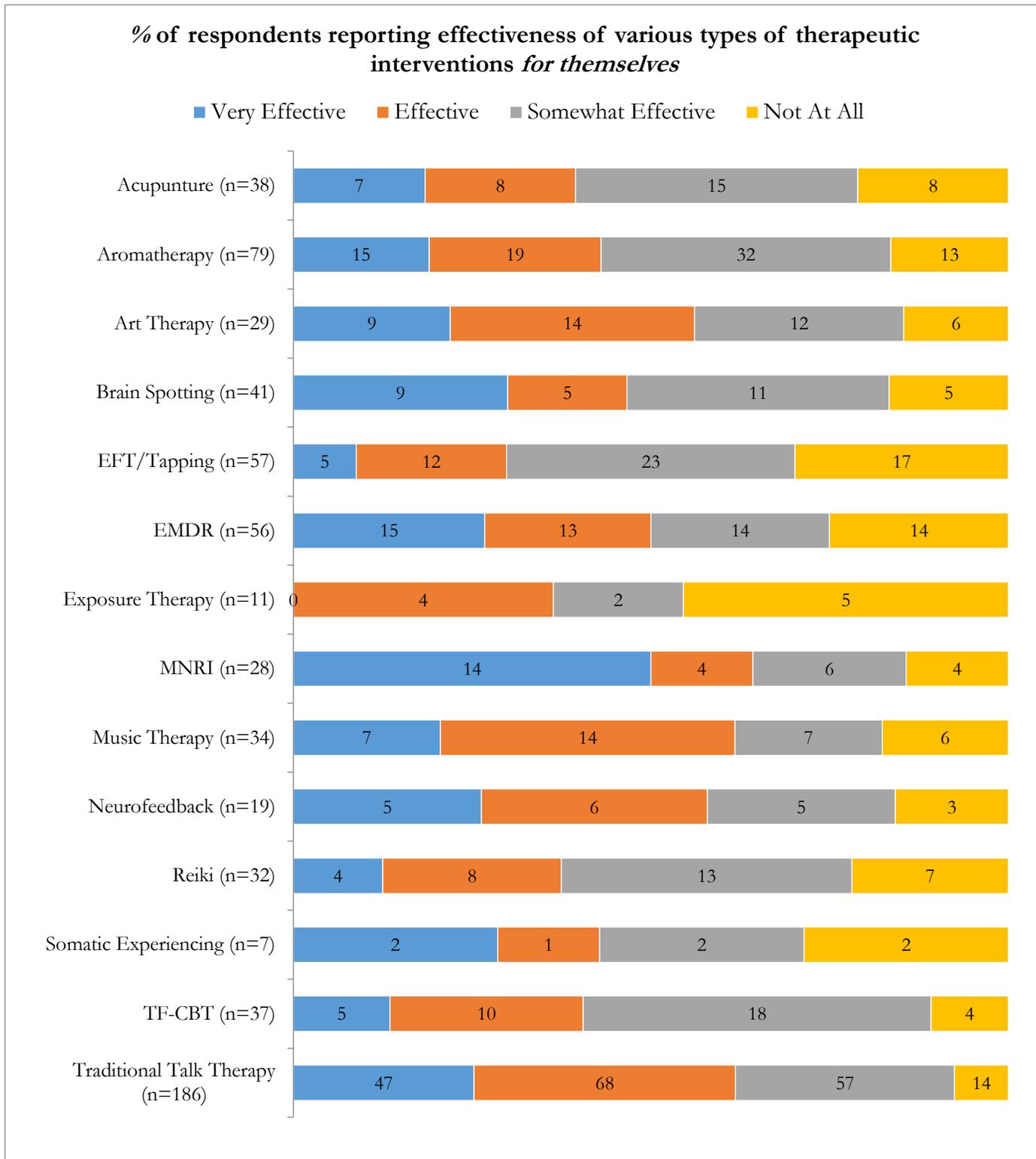
Demographics



Survey Respondents	Response Percent	Response Count
Family member of a child or adult who died on 12/14/12	1.27%	6
Parent of a child enrolled at Sandy Hook School on 12/14/12	24.68%	117
Parent of a child enrolled in another Newtown schools (public or private) on 12/14/12	29.11%	138
Parent who did not have children enrolled in a Newtown school on 12/14/12 (<i>i.e. children too young, already graduated, enrolled in a school out of district/ in another community, moved to community since 12/14, etc</i>)	11.18%	53
Teacher or staff member employed at Sandy Hook School on 12/14/12	7.38 %	35
Teacher or staff member in another Newtown school (public or private) on 12/14/12	16.88%	80
Police (Newtown PD, State, or other responding community)	1.48%	7
Fire (Newtown or other responding community)	.42%	2
EMS (Newtown Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Danbury or other responding community)	.21%	1
Other responding professional on 12/14 (medical, crisis responder)	.21%	1
Faith Community (clergy)	0%	0
Administrator, Public Official, or Town Employee	2.53%	12
Mental Health or other Community Service Provider	1.05%	5
Spouse, parent, or child of an adult witness/survivor (teacher, emergency responder)	.84%	4
Member of the Business Community (employee/employer Newtown/Sandy Hook)	0%	0
Resident of the Newtown/Sandy Hook community that does not fit any of the other criteria (<i>i.e. this is the only applicable answer for this questions</i>)	2.74%	13
answered question		474

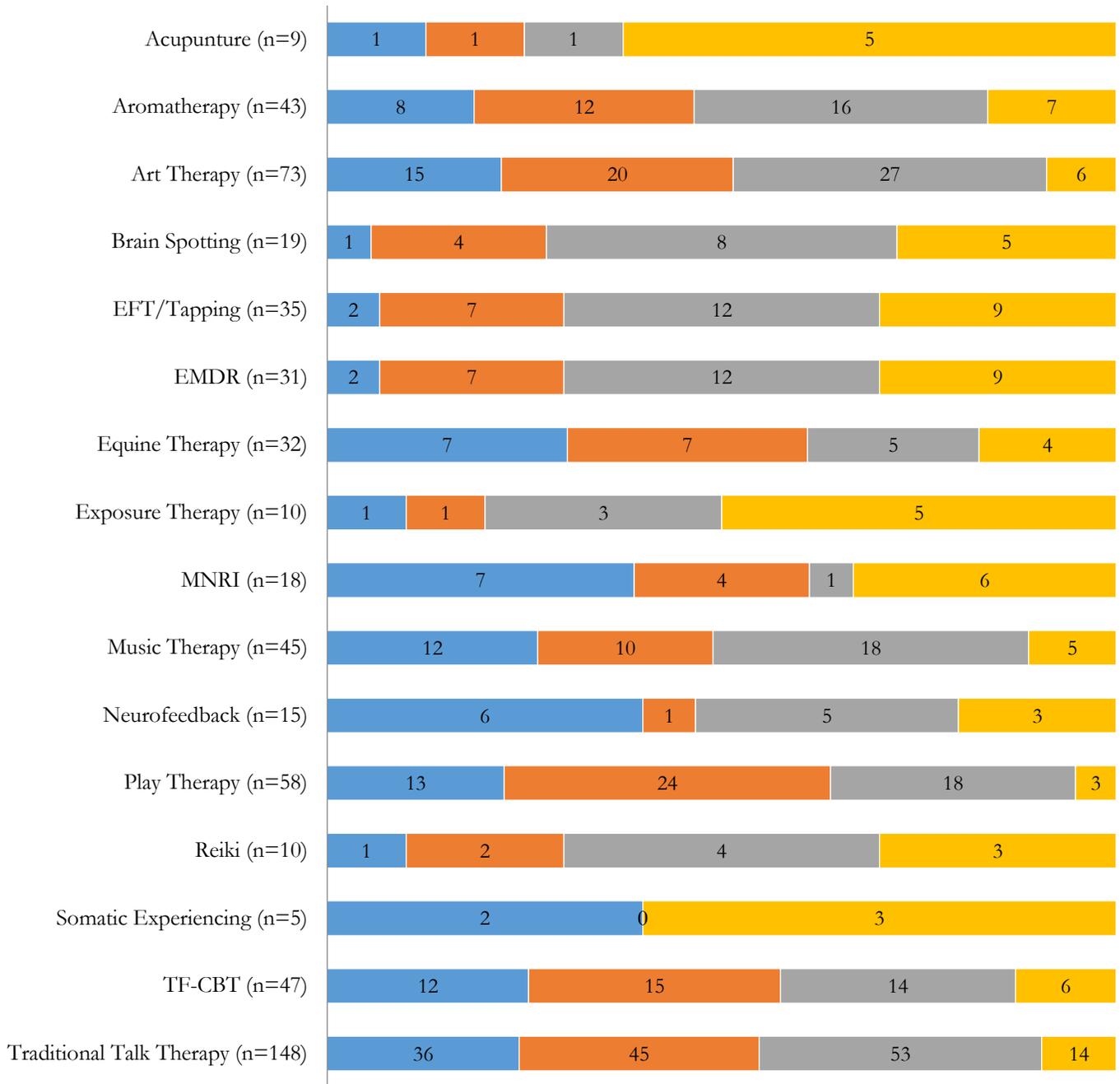
Brain Health & Wellness Services

We asked a series of questions to get a better understanding of the types of therapeutic interventions used by respondents and the efficacy of the treatment.



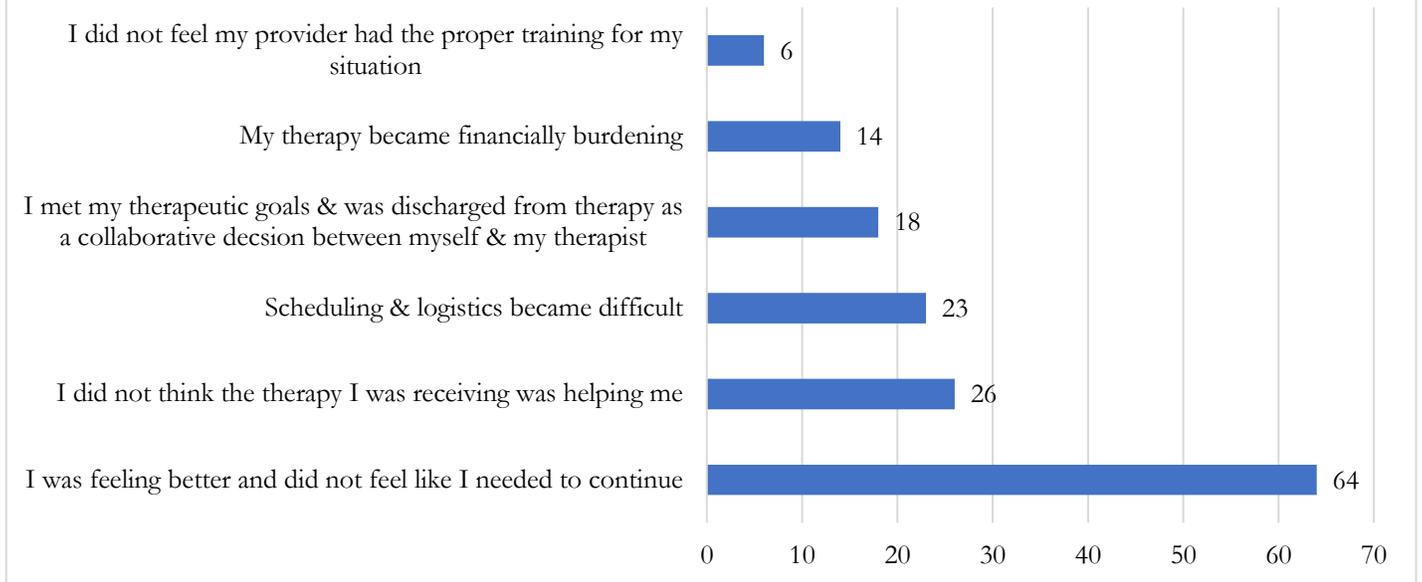
% of respondents reporting effectiveness of various types of therapeutic interventions *for their children*

■ Very Effective ■ Effective ■ Somewhat Effective ■ Not At All

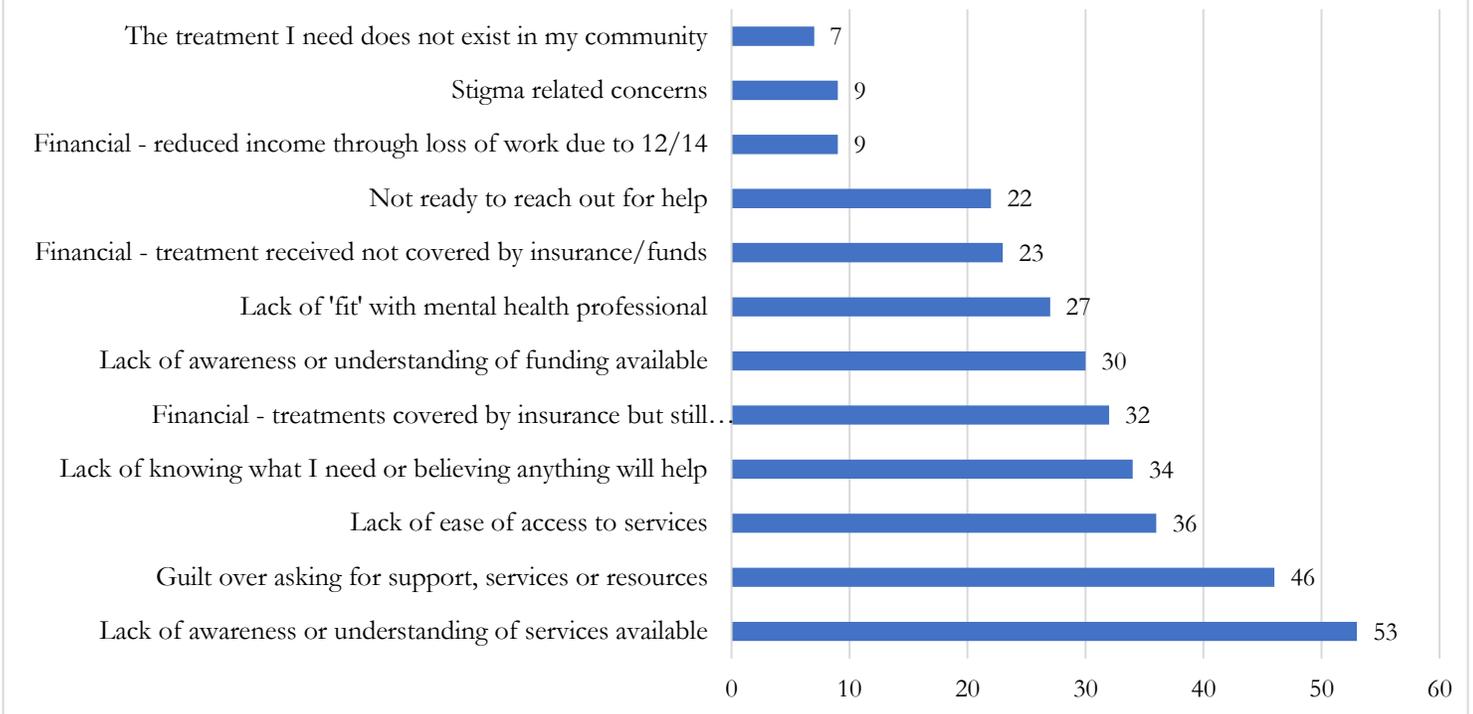


We believe that the above results support our hypothesis that there are not one-sized fits all approaches to trauma and grief treatment. We encourage individuals to make their own decisions for care and urge people still struggling to explore other treatment options if what they have done has not yet been helpful.

Number of individuals citing reasons for discontinuing therapy/treatment



Number of individuals reporting barriers to accessing services or support



Respondents were asked to rate their symptomatology directly related to 12/14. Anxiety, stress, excessive fear/worry, and anger continue to persist with the most frequency.

