



Survey of Eating Habits and Behaviors in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) and Families' Interest in Nutrition Services

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What do we know?

- 1 of every 110 children in the United States is diagnosed with ASD – CDC
- Common Nutrition Problems
 - Food selectivity (limited food repertoire, high frequency single food intake)
 - Food refusal
 - Difficulty with food texture (e.g., choking, or gagging)
 - Increased sensitivity (color, temperature, smell, etc.)
 - Difficulty with transitions or changes to mealtime routine
 - Gastrointestinal issues (constipation)

Objectives

- To perform nutrition needs assessment of families with children with ASD and investigate a model to provide nutrition services at the UW Autism Center.
 - Develop, administer, and evaluate survey based on nutrition and behavior questions
 - Review current model of care at UW Autism Center and CHDD to develop continuing model for nutrition services.

Survey

- Paper survey with pre-paid return envelope (4)
- Online survey via UW Autism Center website (29)
- Survey Promotion (Autism Awareness Month)
 - UW Autism Center website
 - Community based centers including Experimental Education Unit (EEU), Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT), and Partnerships for Action Voices for Empowerment (WA PAVE)
- Maximum of 38 questions

Survey Results

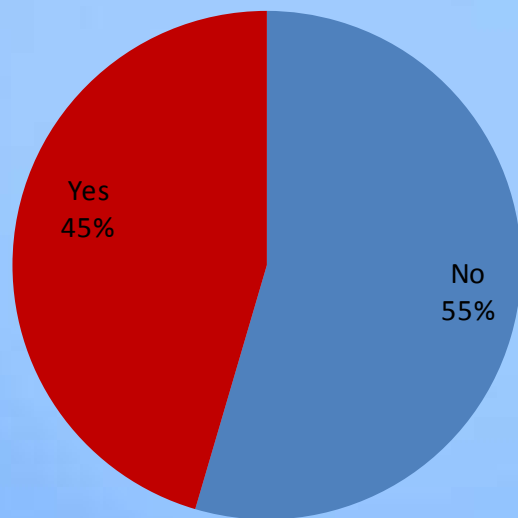
- Response: 33 surveys completed (anonymous)
- Demographics: 88% male, 12% female
- Ages: 2-15 years*



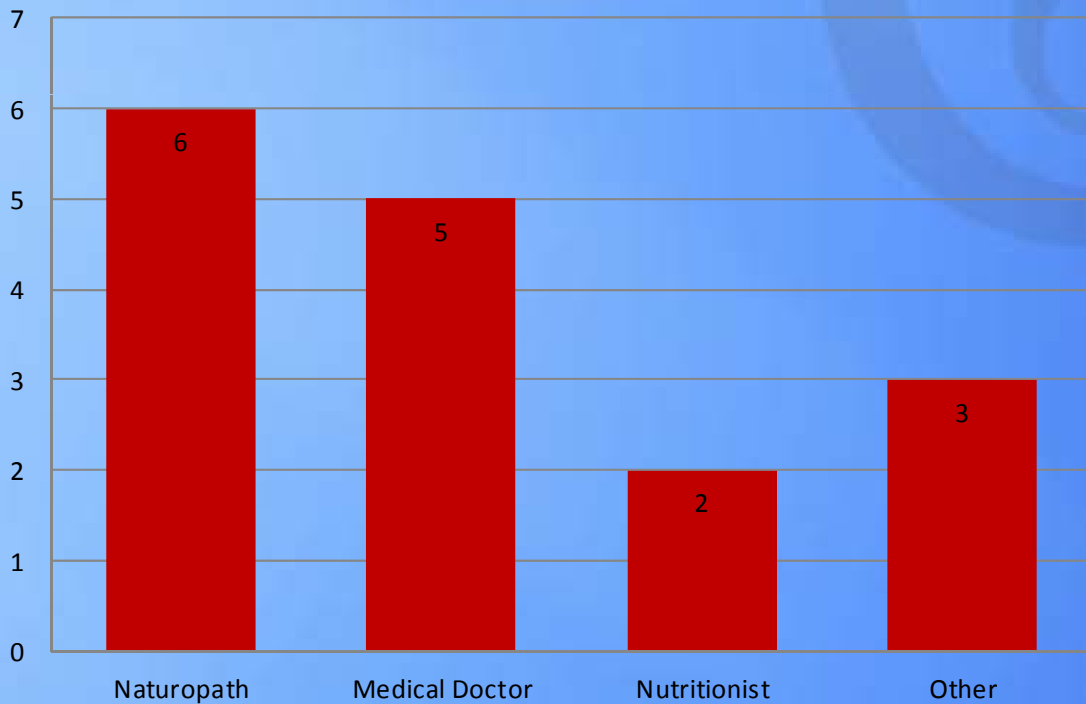


Survey Results

Does your child have food allergies, sensitivities or intolerances?



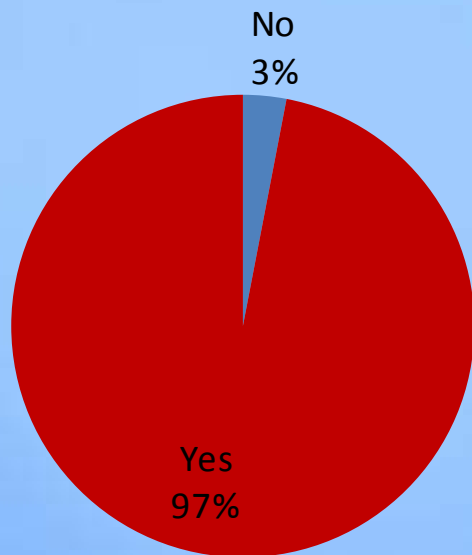
If yes, who diagnosed these?*



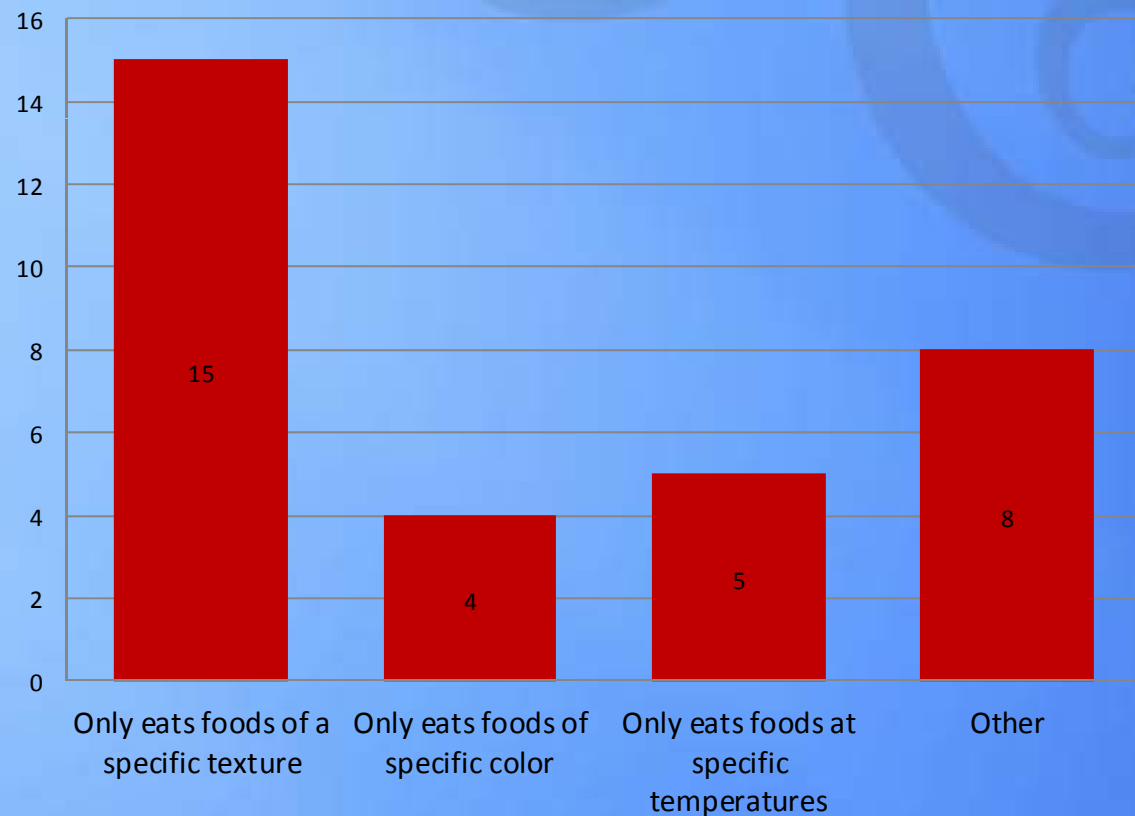
*check as many choices as apply

Food Refusal and Restriction

Does your child refuse to eat certain foods?

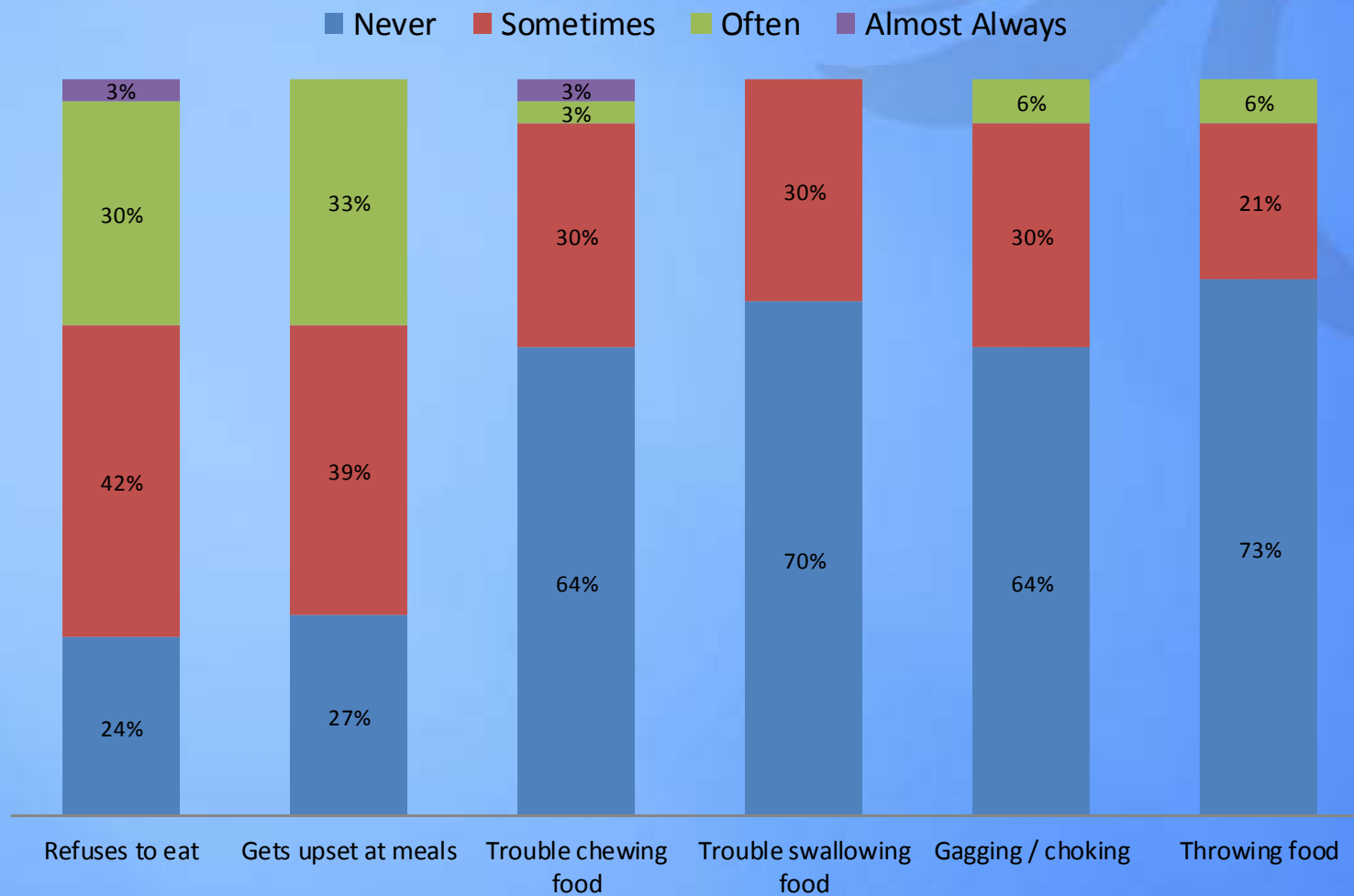


Does your child restrict food intake in any of the following ways?*

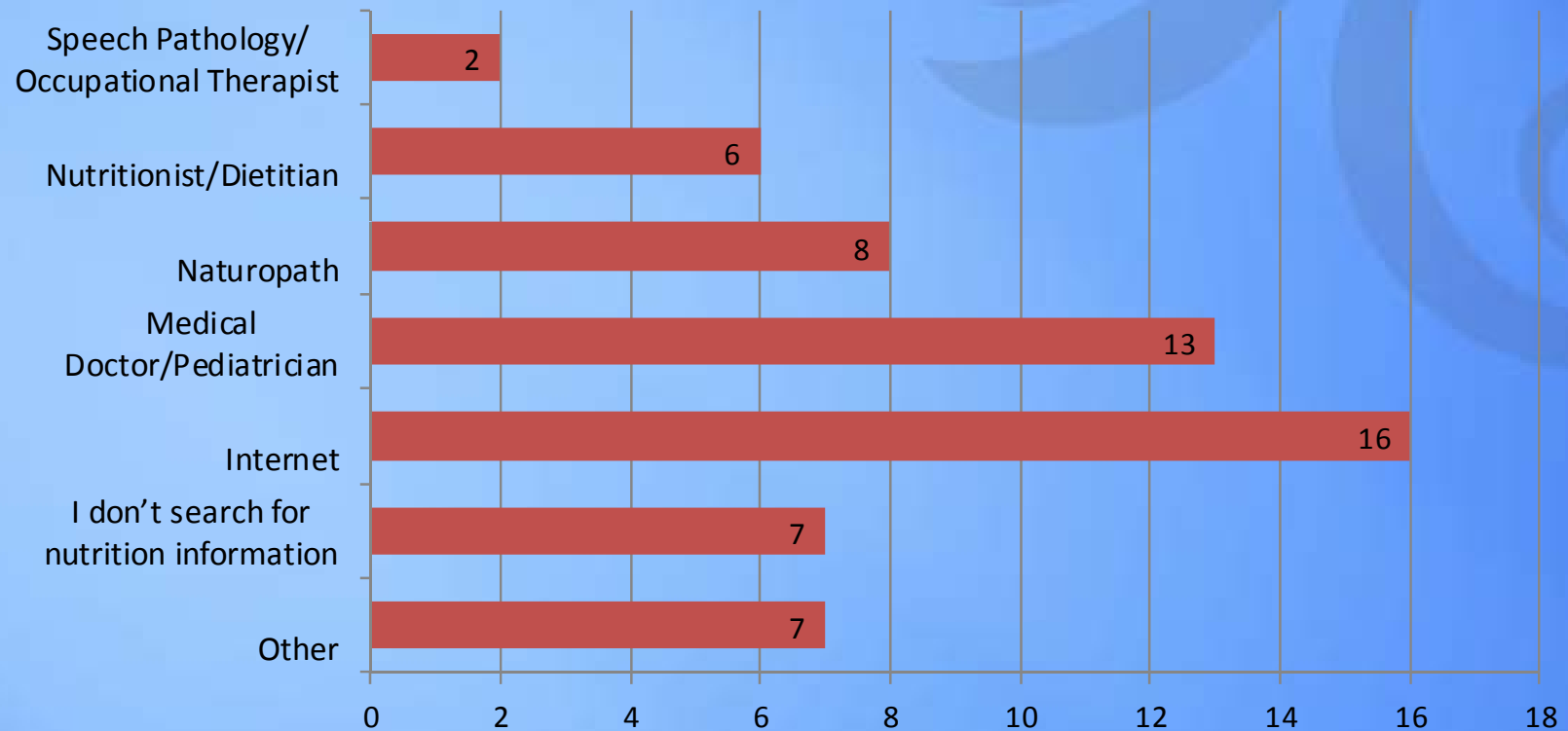


*check as many choices as apply

During meal time, how often does your child have any of the following problems:

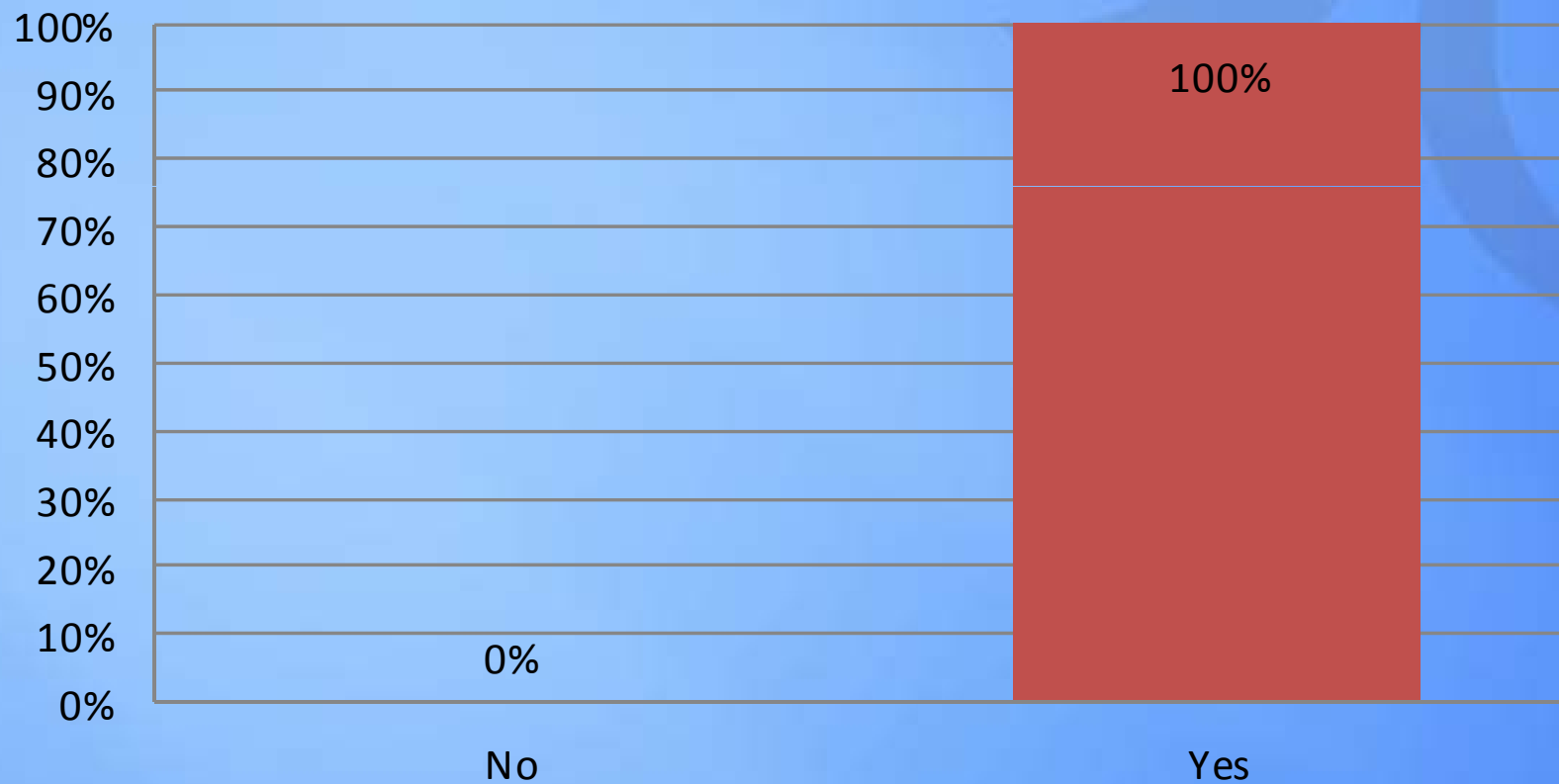


Where do you get nutrition information*?

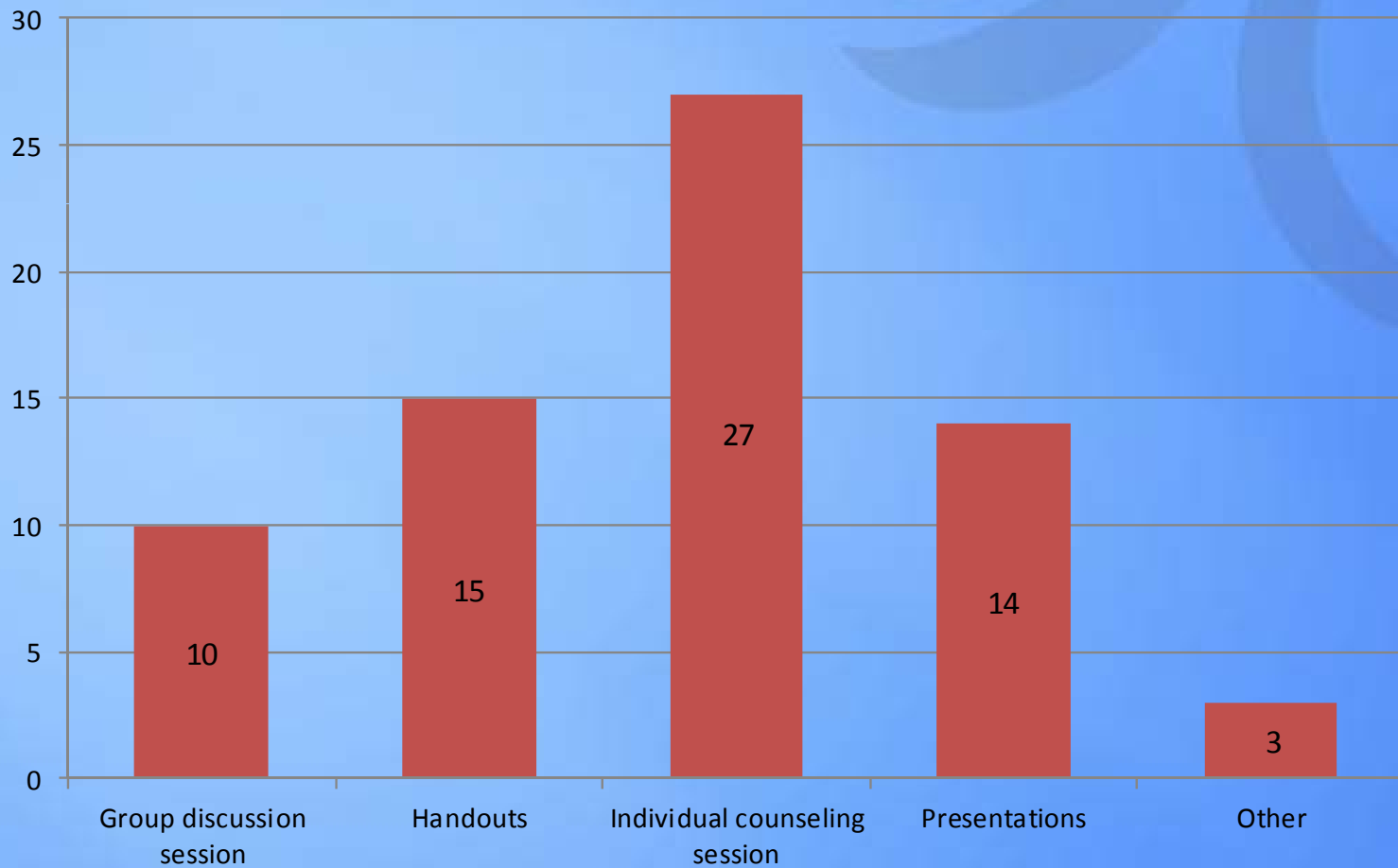


*check as many choices as apply

Are you interested in receiving nutrition services?

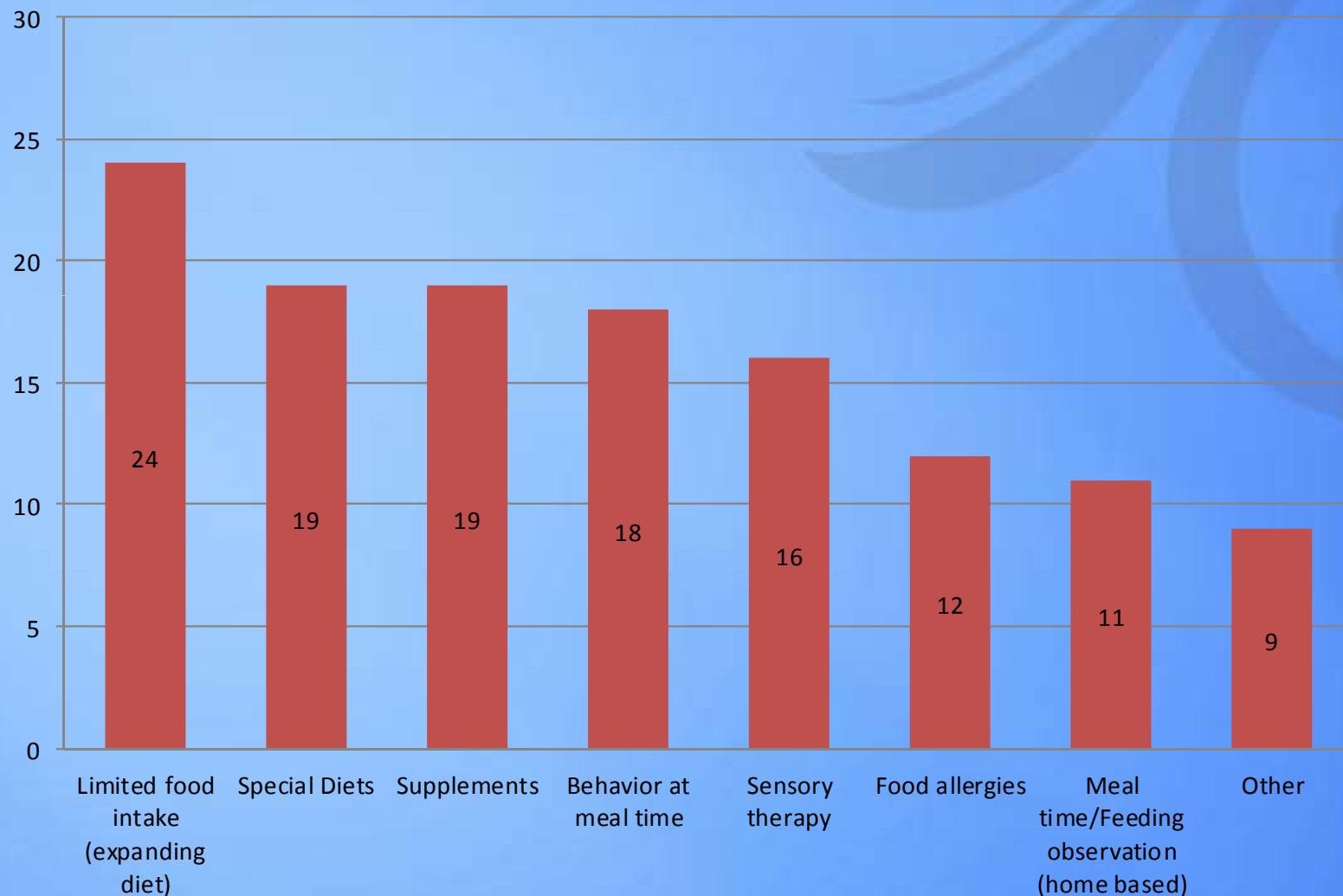


What type of nutrition services would you be interested in*?



*check as many choices as apply

What topics would you be interested in*?



*check as many choices as apply

Summary Observations

- Almost half of children had food allergies, sensitivities or intolerances
- Food texture was the reason for the majority of food refusal and restriction
- Refusal to eat and getting upset at meals were the most commonly identified problems at meal time

Summary Observations

- Nutrition information was most commonly received from internet or physician
- Families were interested in receiving nutrition services
 - Individual Counseling, Handouts, Presentations, Group Sessions
 - Expanding food intake, Special Diets, Supplements, Behavior at meal times

What's next?

- Responding to the data in the survey
 - Develop referral system for nutrition services
 - Provide individual counseling sessions, presentations, handouts, and group sessions
 - Create nutrition screening tool
 - Discuss implementation with UW Autism Center



Acknowledgements

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References

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