

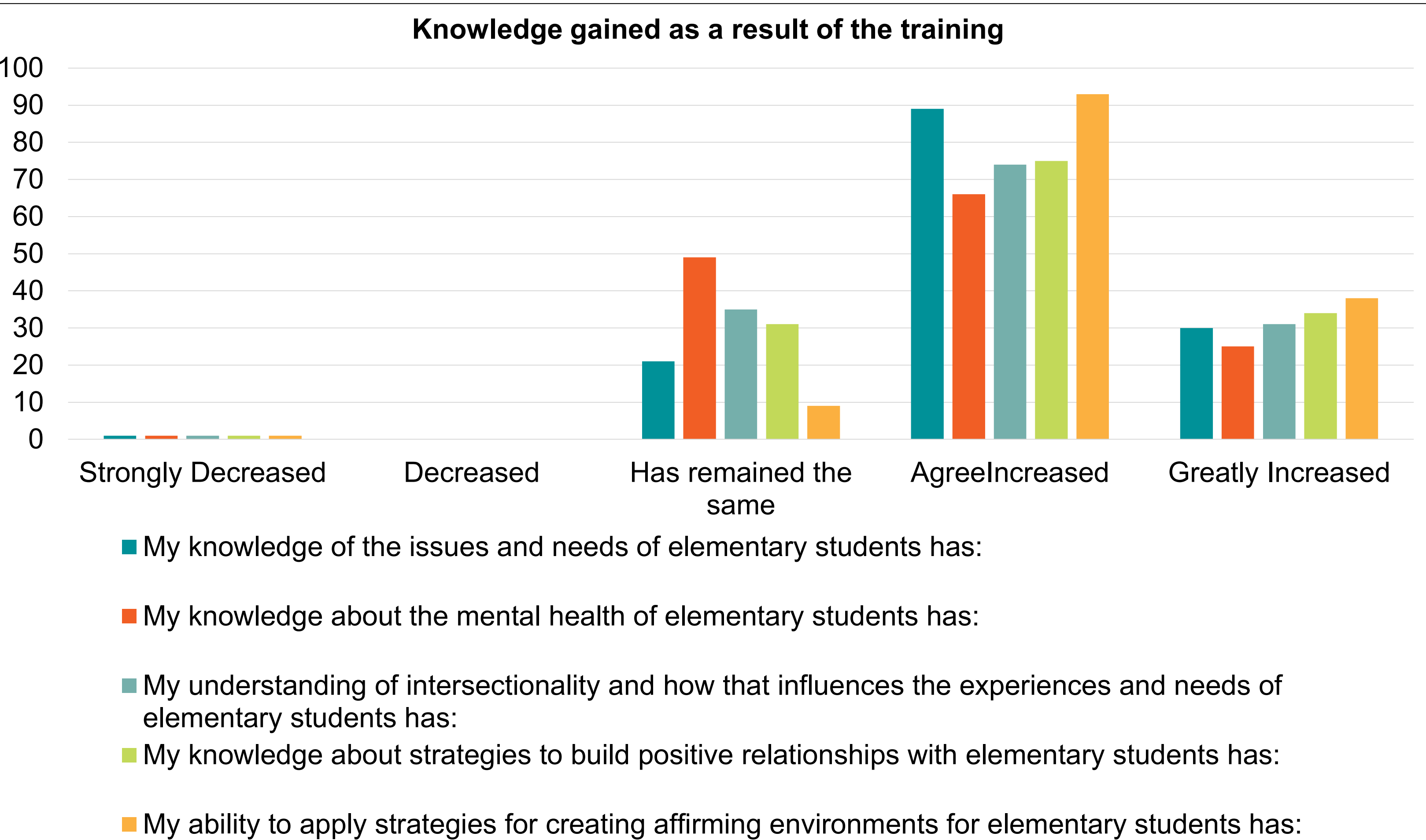
# Online Training for Executive Functioning Challenges Intervention for Implementers Working with Elementary Students with ASD/ADHD

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### Background

Executive function (EF) challenges, including difficulties with flexible thinking, goal setting, and planning, are common in ASD and ADHD and are related to negative outcomes, such as academic problems, oppositional-defiant symptoms, adaptive skills deficits, anxiety, and aggression. Chronic exposure to poverty is also predictive of EF challenges. School-based EF interventions provide an equitable service delivery system for children across the socio-economic spectrum, addressing the economic disparities in access to clinic-based treatment for children with ADHD or ASD. Reviewers have called for expansion of cognitive-behavioral treatment for ADHD and ASD, specifically treatments that target EF, but the evidence for them is limited in school settings. *Unstuck and On Target!* ("Unstuck" or "the curriculum") is a school-based curriculum that targets EF.



### Objectives

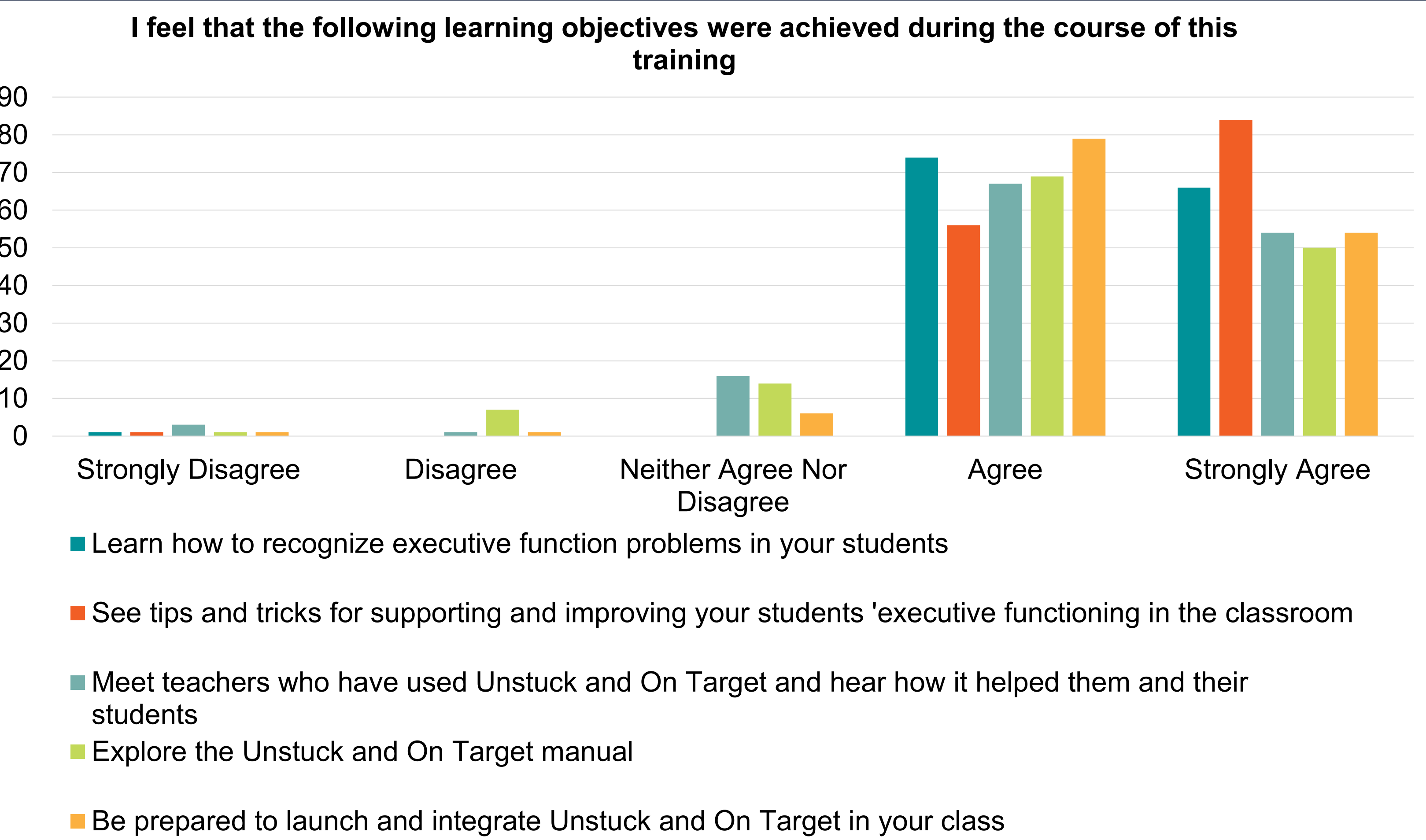
Develop and evaluate an online continuing education training for professionals who work with elementary students with EF challenges.

### Methods

The Unstuck authors partnered with an instructional design (ID) team to create an asynchronous online training based on their existing, in-person training. The ID team, using best practices in adult learning and cybergogy, adapted the curriculum into an interactive course, featuring voiceover, images, videos, animations, reflection questions, and resources. The ID team engaged the authors, stakeholders, and cultural competence experts in multiple rounds of feedback. Section 508 and WCAG AA compliance requirements were incorporated into the training. Implementers (N=281) from Virginia (n=138) and Colorado (n=143) were recruited. Participants were 93.6% female, 90% White, 20-80 years old (M = 40.48, SD = 10.88). They had 0-35 years of experience (M = 11.35, SD = 8.28) as General (10%) or Special Ed teachers (34%), School Psychologists (19%), School/Guidance Counselors (17%). Public and private schools were included.

### Results

After completing the online training, participants overall felt the five learning objectives were achieved (M=4.32, SD=0.692, range: 1-5), approved of the e-learning format (M=4.51, SD=0.63, range: 1-5), and indicated that their knowledge of the issues/needs of their students had increased (M=3.99, SD=0.688, range: 1-5). Qualitative feedback (examples below) was overwhelmingly positive. Participants specifically identified the case studies, resources they were able to print and use, and use of the GWPDC framework as useful. Participants requested handouts on which they could take notes and more videos of teachers implementing Unstuck.



### Conclusions

Overall, participants found the curriculum to be useful. Despite occasional technological issues, participants approved of an online training because they could complete it at their own pace and on their own schedule. Where possible, participant feedback was incorporated into an update of the training (released to the public following the pilot), including fixing technical glitches and the addition of page citations where tools in the Unstuck manual were referenced. Online training adaptations of the curricula for high school students are currently being produced.

### Qualitative Feedback

*This is one of the first trainings where I feel like the creators truly practice what they preach - you made things paced, checked for understanding, were clear in learning targets, acknowledged roadblocks, made the materials fun, relevant and engaging, and overall rocked the whole process. I wish more of my trainings were this user friendly and relevant.*

*It was nice to be able to reflect on my current students while completing the training. I was able to connect in the scenarios and reflect on future situations that will arise and how I can handle them differently. This was a much easier reflection than it would have been should the training not be in an online environment.*

*It is much easier to find chunks of time throughout the day to complete an asynchronous training than to block out a large chunk for an in-person training. I much prefer this format.*

*[I liked] the interactive parts where we were asked to type our thoughts really made us think instead of just watching a training. Just as we are expected to engage our students, this training kept the student engaged in the lessons throughout the module.*

*The scenarios/student vignettes were detailed, diverse, and really well done.*

*For the length of the course, it was easier to access it online at my convenience. I live in a very rural area and would probably have to drive 2-3 hours to get to a training.*

*[I] just don't have time to attend an in-person training. With the sub shortage, I can't miss my teaching time with students. The ability to do this online at my own pace was easier.*

**For More Information**

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