

Summer Food Service Program in Iowa

Participation Barriers, Successful Strategies, and Community Partnerships

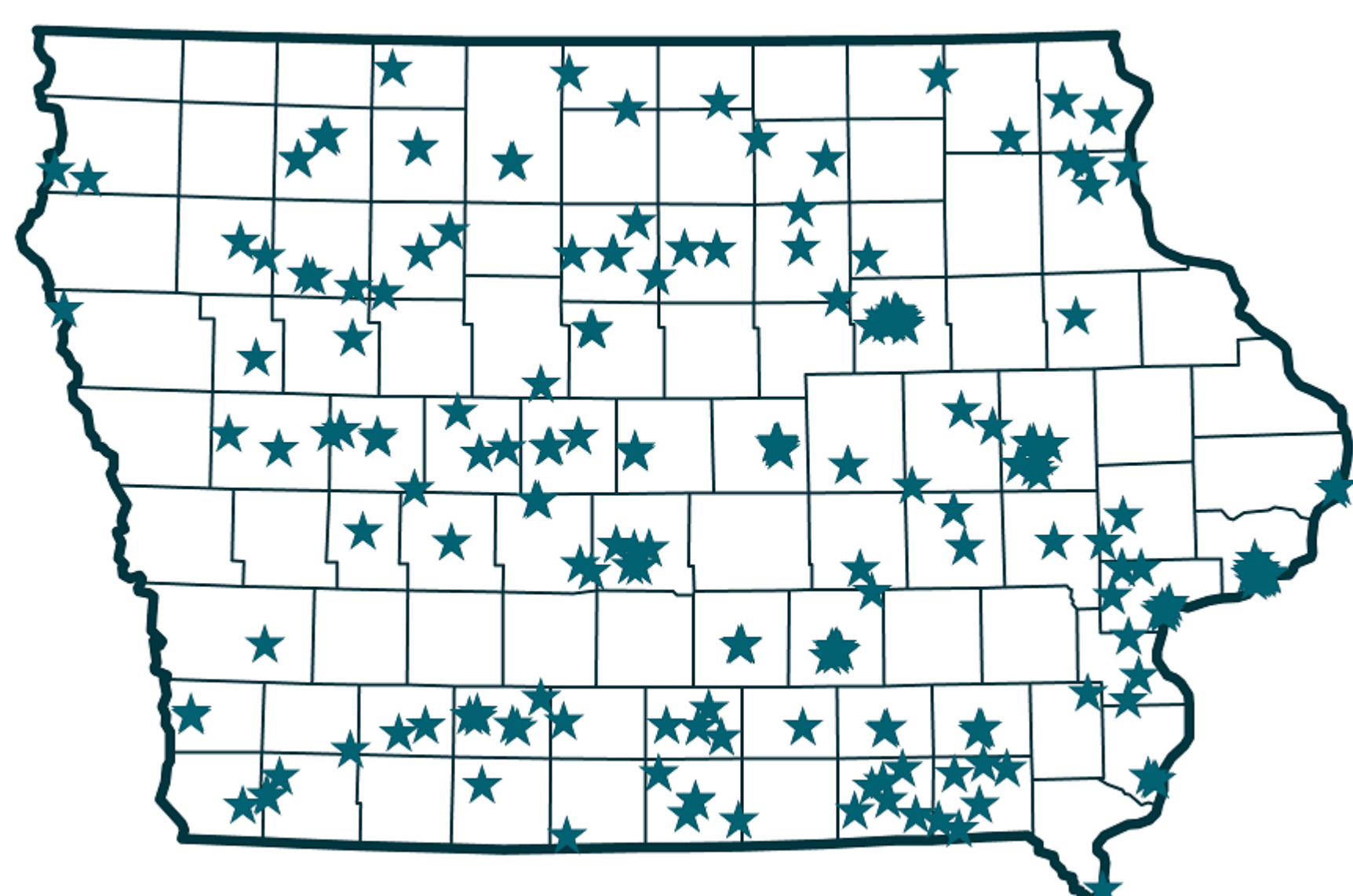
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Background

Childhood food insecurity can be especially challenging during the summer months when children do not receive school meals

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides healthy, no-cost meals to children during the summer



Map: Iowa's 408 open SFSP sites in 2017

Methods & Respondents

Purpose

- Identify participation barriers & strategies to promote equitable access to sites
- Identify SFSP-community partnerships

Methods

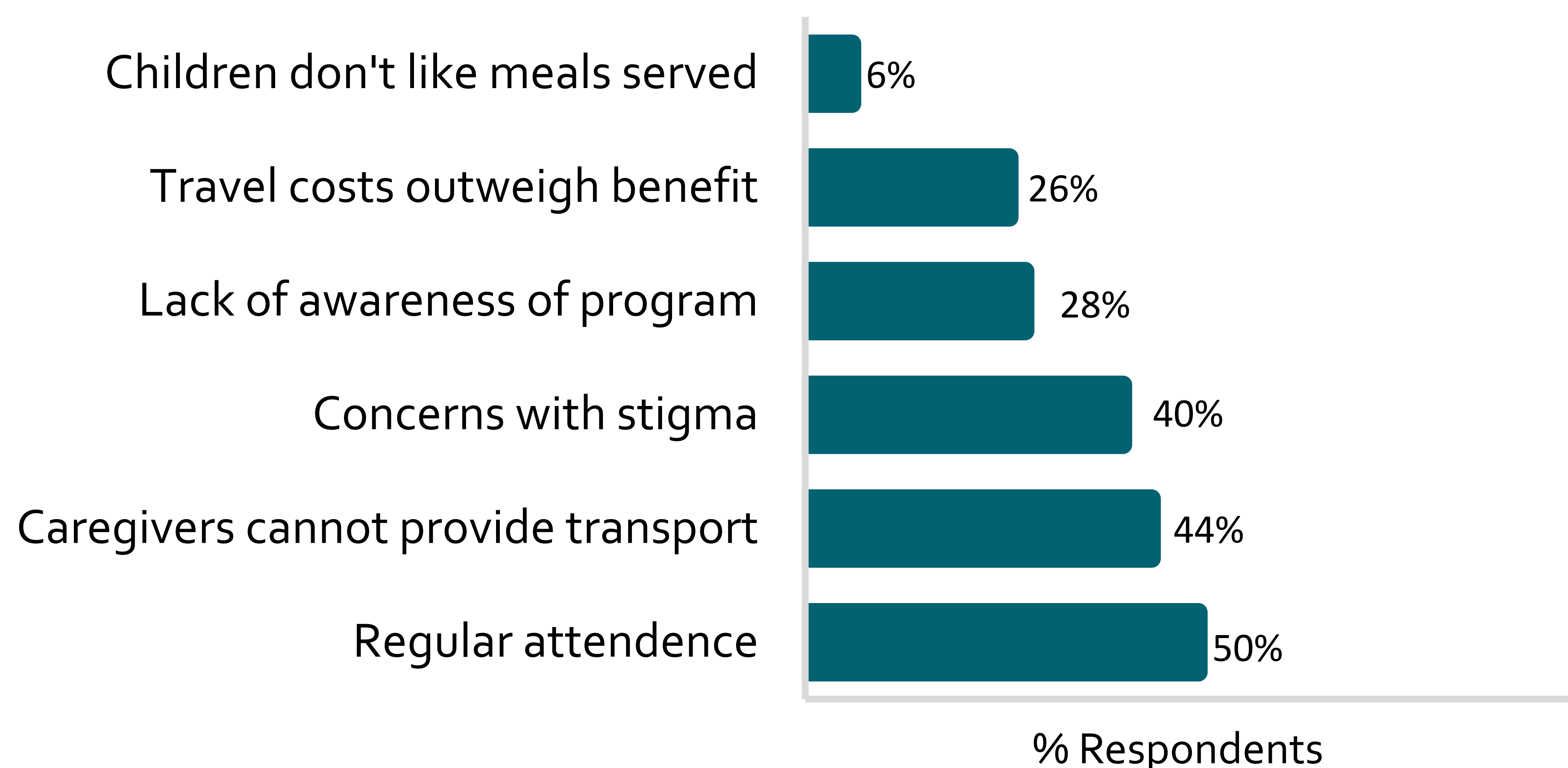
Emailed online survey to 385 SFSP site coordinators of open sites

111
Site coordinators

Most sites were less than **5** years old

Results: Participation Barriers

About 70% of sites struggle with at least one of these participation barriers



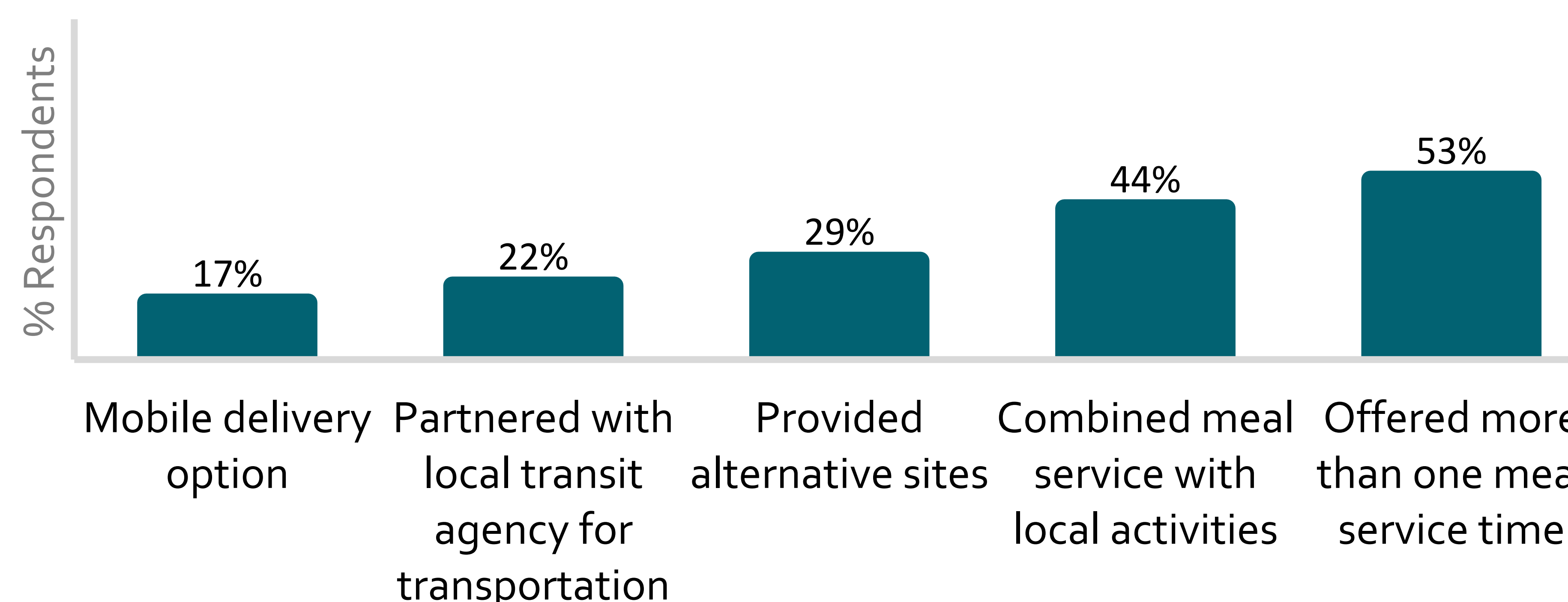
Results: Partnerships

Many sites benefited from partnerships with local businesses, parents, churches, service groups, daycare providers, and school staff. Partners helped provide:

- Activities
- Incentives
- Transportation
- Funding
- Advertisement & Advocacy

Results: Strategies to Increase Access

SFSP only reimburses sponsors for meals served, but some sites have implemented creative strategies to improve access



Future Directions

Since many sites struggle with transportation-related participation barriers, future work should strive to make SFSP sites more accessible

- Funding for more than meals served
- Develop community partnerships

Future work should strive to reduce stigma associated with attendance

- Coordinate with existing summer programs
- Make sites fun environments for kids



College of Public Health

