

Teaming for Transition: Interprofessional Collaboration

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Abstract

The transition from youth to young adult for individuals with severe disabilities is difficult, provides few opportunities for employment, and offers less of a chance to connect with friends and engage with people. This research presents ways that speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, school counselors, and special educators can collaborate to create a successful transition process for individuals with severe disabilities.

Introduction

This research provides an in depth look into the benefits of collaboration among Occupational Therapists, Guidance Counselors, Special Education Teachers, and Speech Language Pathologists working to meet the needs of people with severe disabilities as they transition from secondary education to adulthood.

Transition is defined as **“The movement from adolescence to adulthood in all areas, including home, healthcare, education, and community.”** (Shaw and DeLaet, 2010).

The Need:

The transition from youth to adulthood for persons with severe disabilities proves to be difficult, as there are few opportunities for employment and interaction with people and community is limited.

Materials

Qualtrics - “The Most Sophisticated Survey Software Tool”

- 16-question survey that included free response and multiple choice answer opportunities
- Participants from each survey had the opportunity to be entered into a \$100 gift card raffle

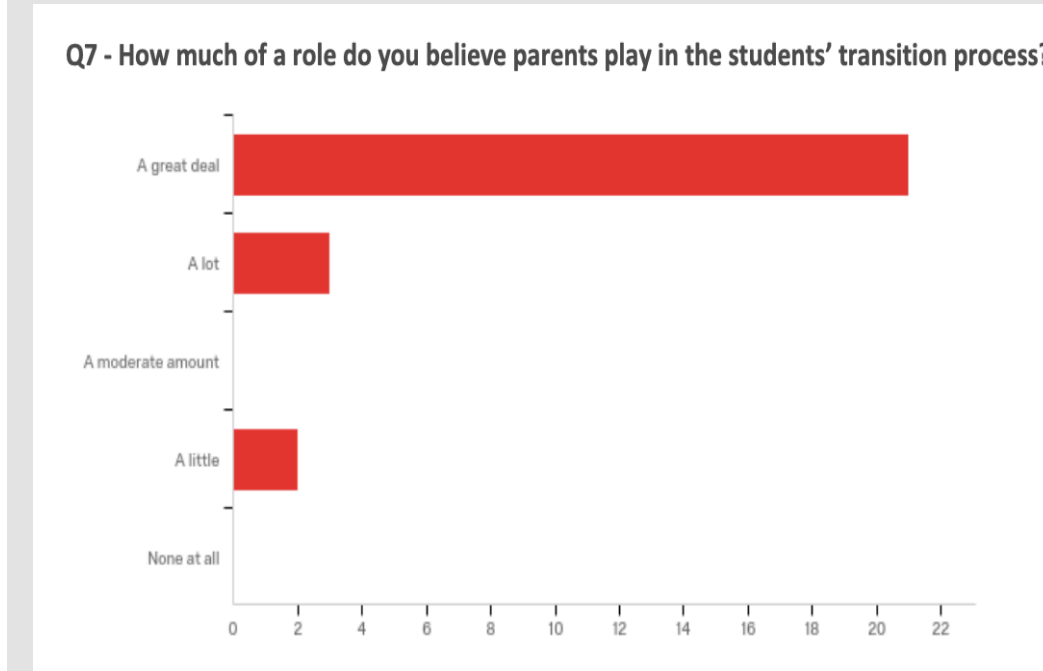
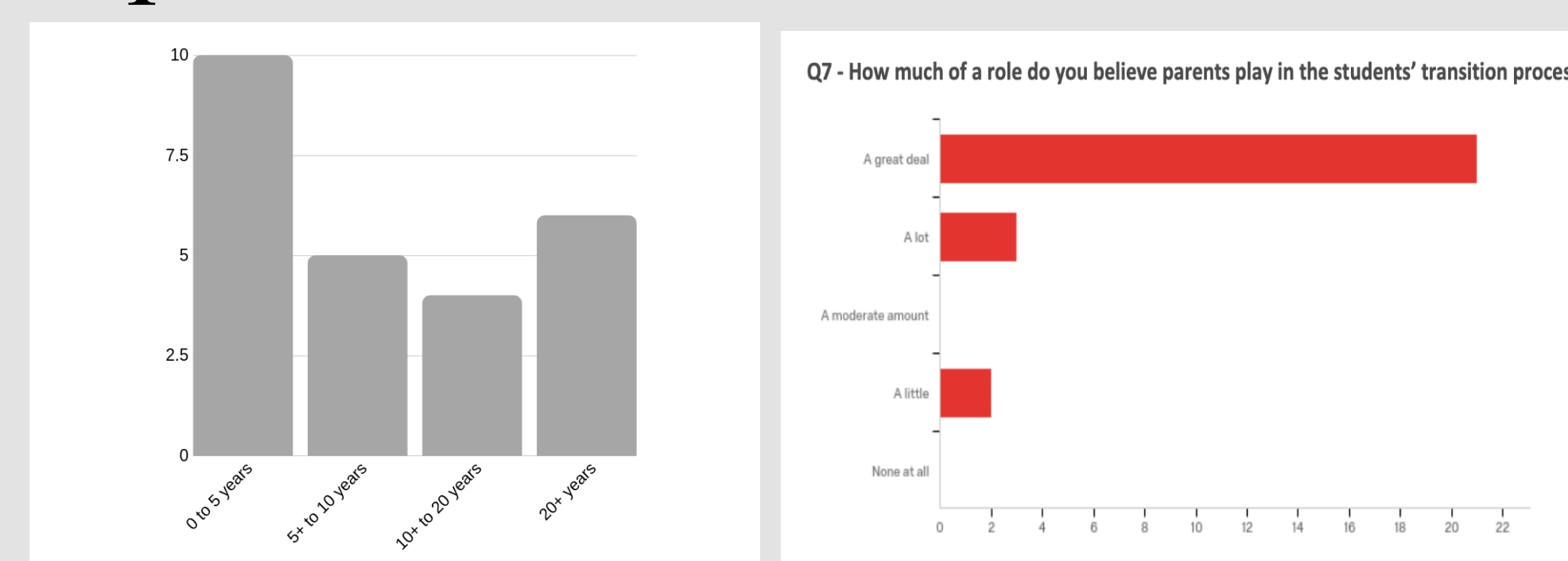
Methodology

Surveys were distributed to occupational therapists, special education teachers, guidance counselors, and speech-language pathologists. Listed below are the questions that were included in the survey.

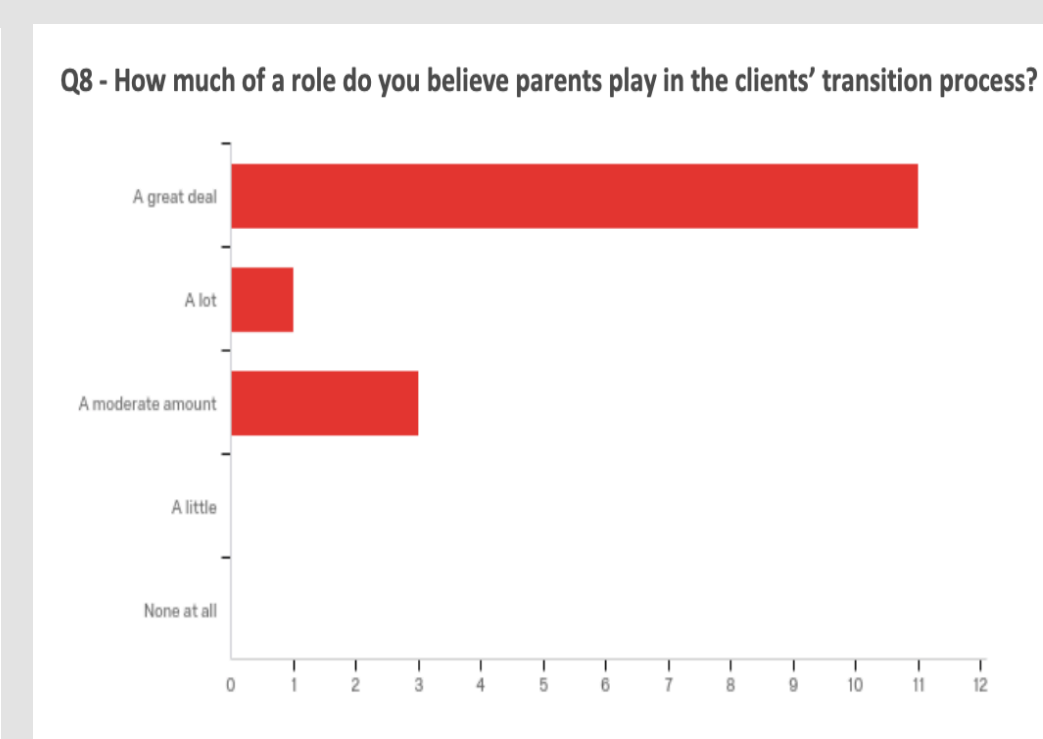
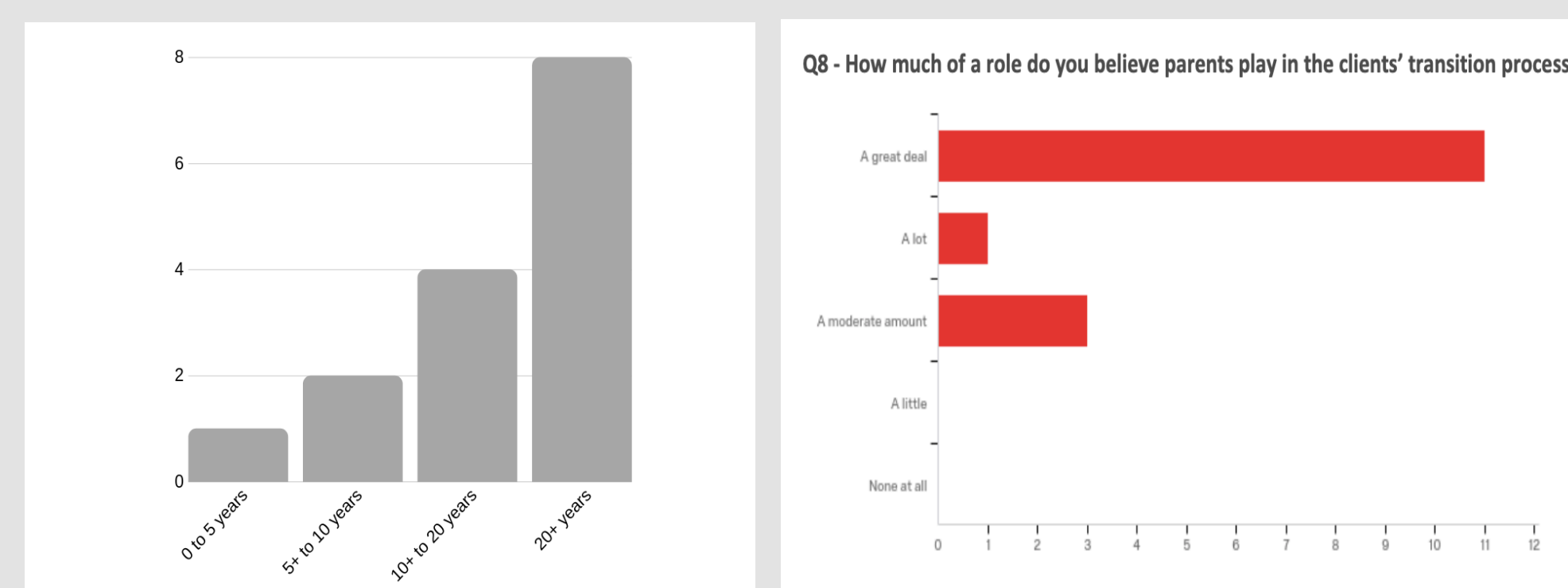
1. Did you receive transition-specific training during your graduate program?
2. How do you believe you play an important role in your students' transition from high school to adulthood?
3. What are some activities you implement for students that help with their transition from high school to adulthood? Do you use real-life scenarios (i.e. job interviews, going to the grocery store, etc.) as part of your curriculum? Give an example(s) of some of these scenarios.
4. How much of role do you believe parents play in the students' transition process? (scale [extremely important, very important, moderately important, slightly important, not important])
5. How do you work with and include parents in the transitioning process?
6. What other professionals do you feel are a vital part of the transition process?
7. How does your school utilize the Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) in the transition process and what skills do you believe the SLP contributes to help the students transition to adulthood?
8. What do you feel are some of the biggest needs of your students transitioning from high school to adulthood?
9. What are some differences between your role in transition practices versus the roles of other professionals?
10. What skills do you think students with severe disabilities should learn for a successful transition to lead a self-determined lives?
11. What resources and/or practices do you believe could help improve the transition process for students?

Results

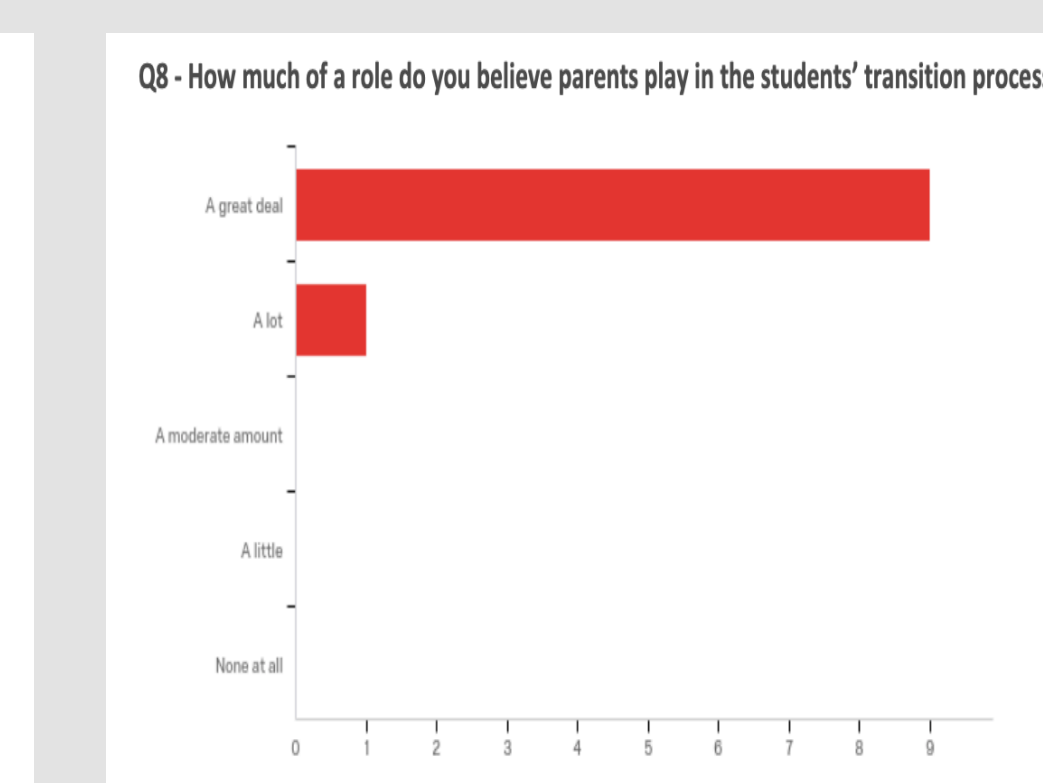
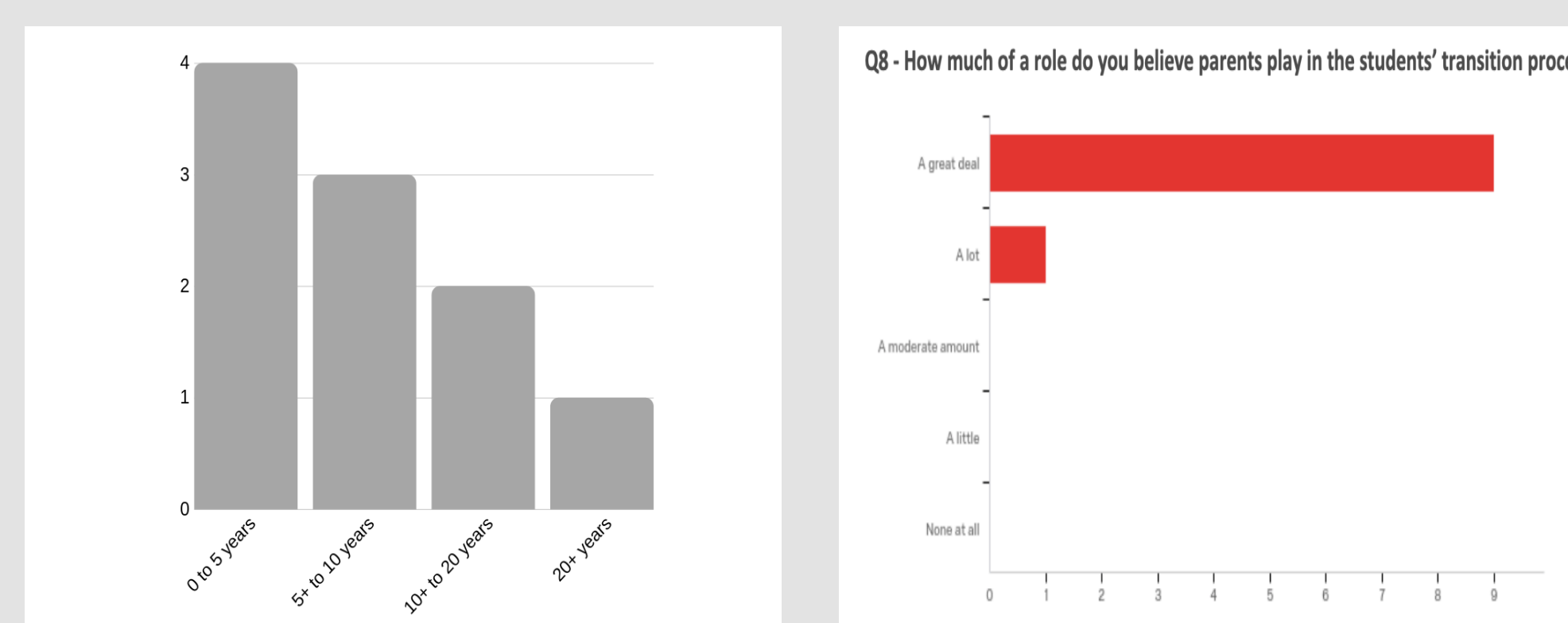
Special Education Teachers:



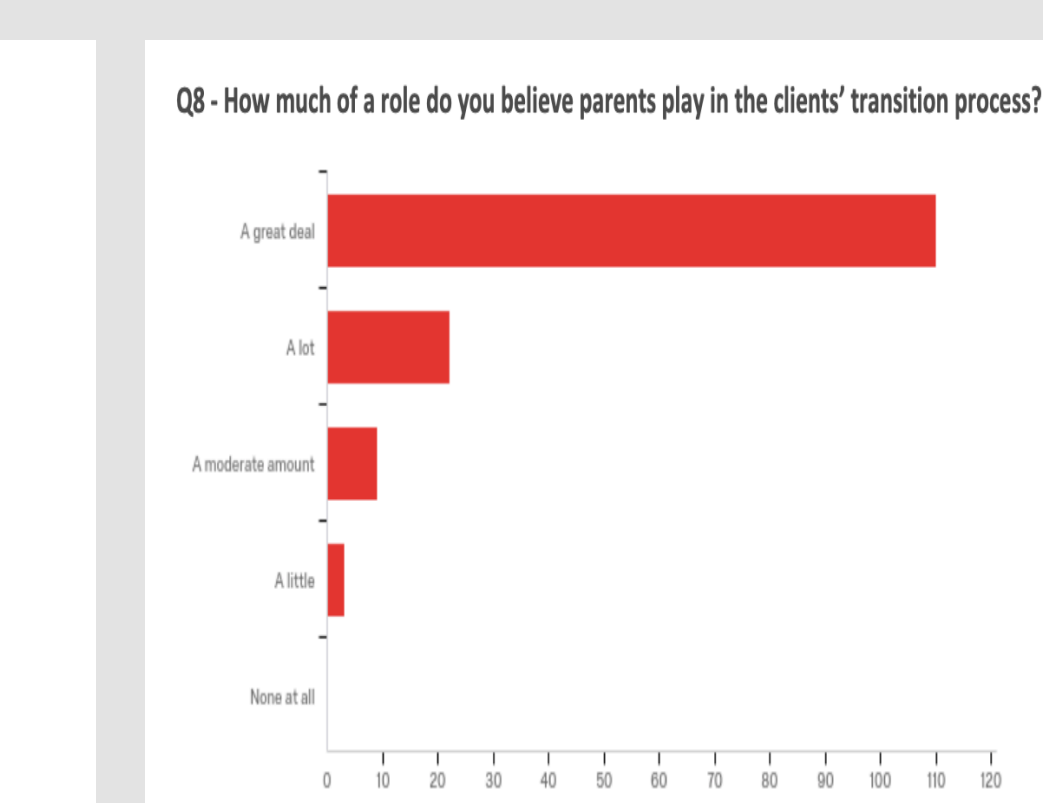
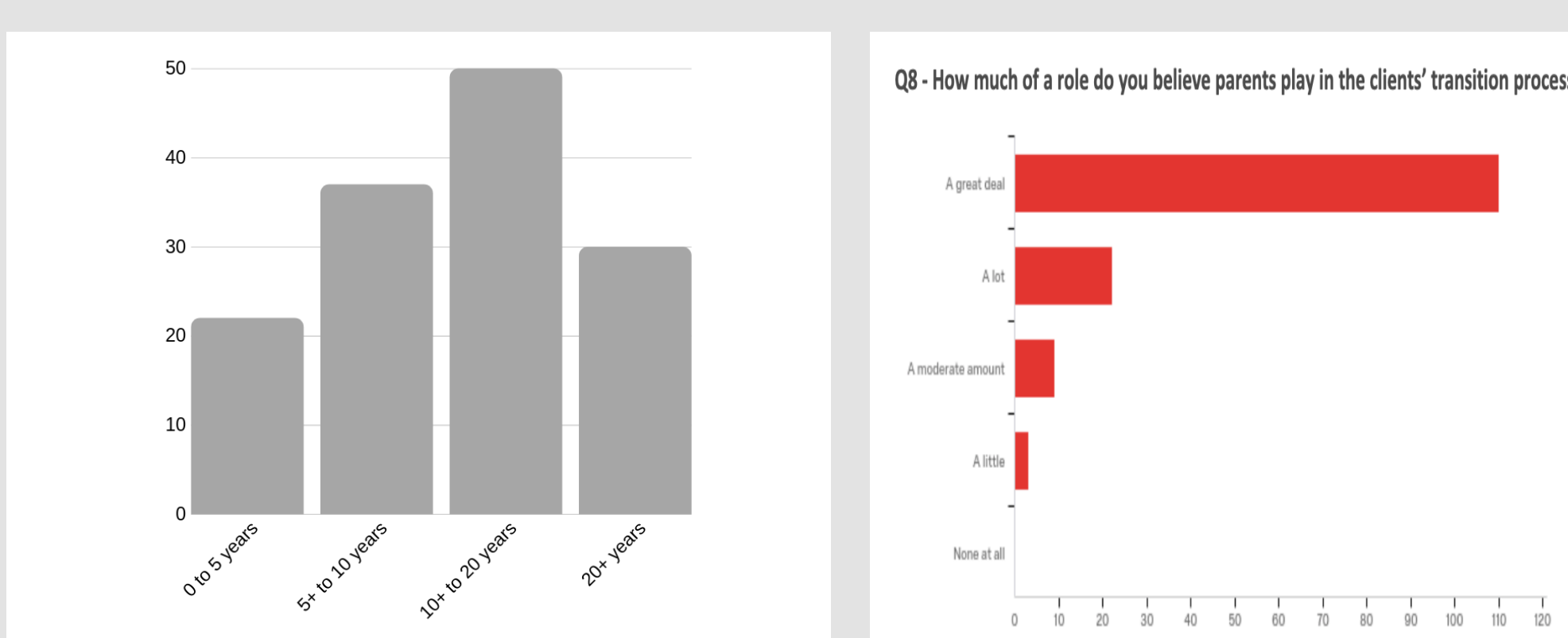
Occupational Therapists:



Guidance Counselors:



Speech-Language Pathologists



Conclusion

There remains a significant need for community support for people with severe disabilities. The responses suggest lacking job placements, mentors and parent support. Along with community support, there is a need for transition-specific training among professionals. This training has the potential of improving the process for the adolescent, their family and the community.

Continued Research

We are going to continue sending out surveys to professionals around the country to further continue and develop our research. We also have plans to write a manuscript in the hopes of publishing it in the American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology.

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Acknowledgements

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