Keys to Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses

presented by

Michael J. Martin

Executive Director

National Association for Pupil Transportation

What Do We Know?

- Bullying is a significant problem among our children

- The School Bus is fertile ground for bullying

- Well-thought policies can make a difference in the lives of our children

- School transportation officials are not usually involved in creating those policies

If We Could Write the Script…

- School transportation leaders would be at the table with other school leaders

- School bus drivers and teams would be consulted and trained in line with other staff

- Lines of authority and responsibility for school bus behavioral issues would be clearly defined

- Training of administrators and drivers would be broadly based and diverse

What Did We Find?

In a recent survey of NAPT members, we:

- Learned about the extent of bullying on school buses

- Learned about the role transportation officials play in shaping policy and practice

- Learned about the extent to which school bus drivers and teams are engaged in shaping and executing policies and practices

Framework

- Who? NAPT members

- 70% identified themselves as the "transportation director or equivalent"

- What? appraisal, canvass, gauge

- When? May 2010

- Where? Online via Survey Monkey
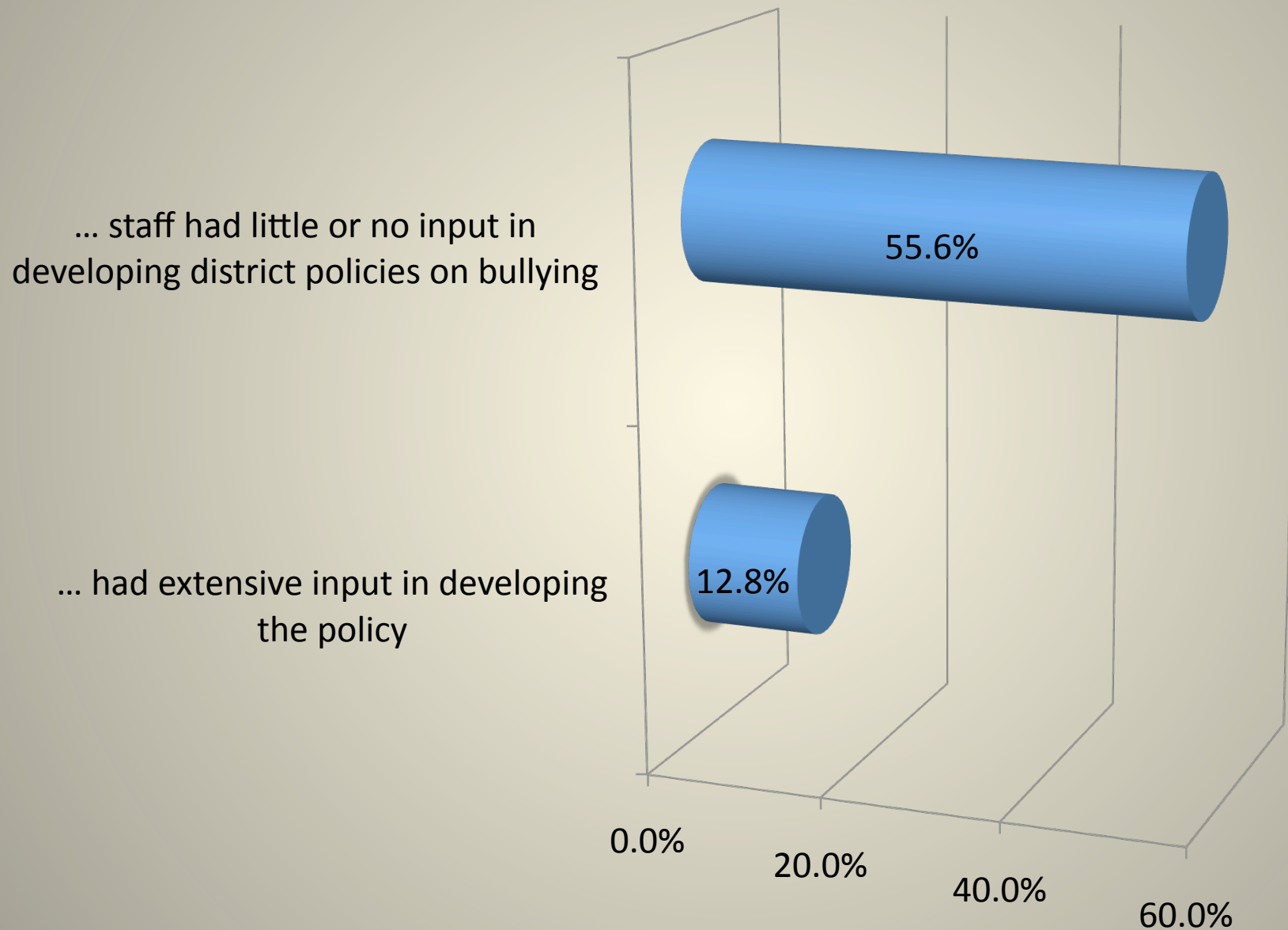
- How many? >25% response rate

What did we learn?

Most districts have clearly defined policies that involve bullying on school buses

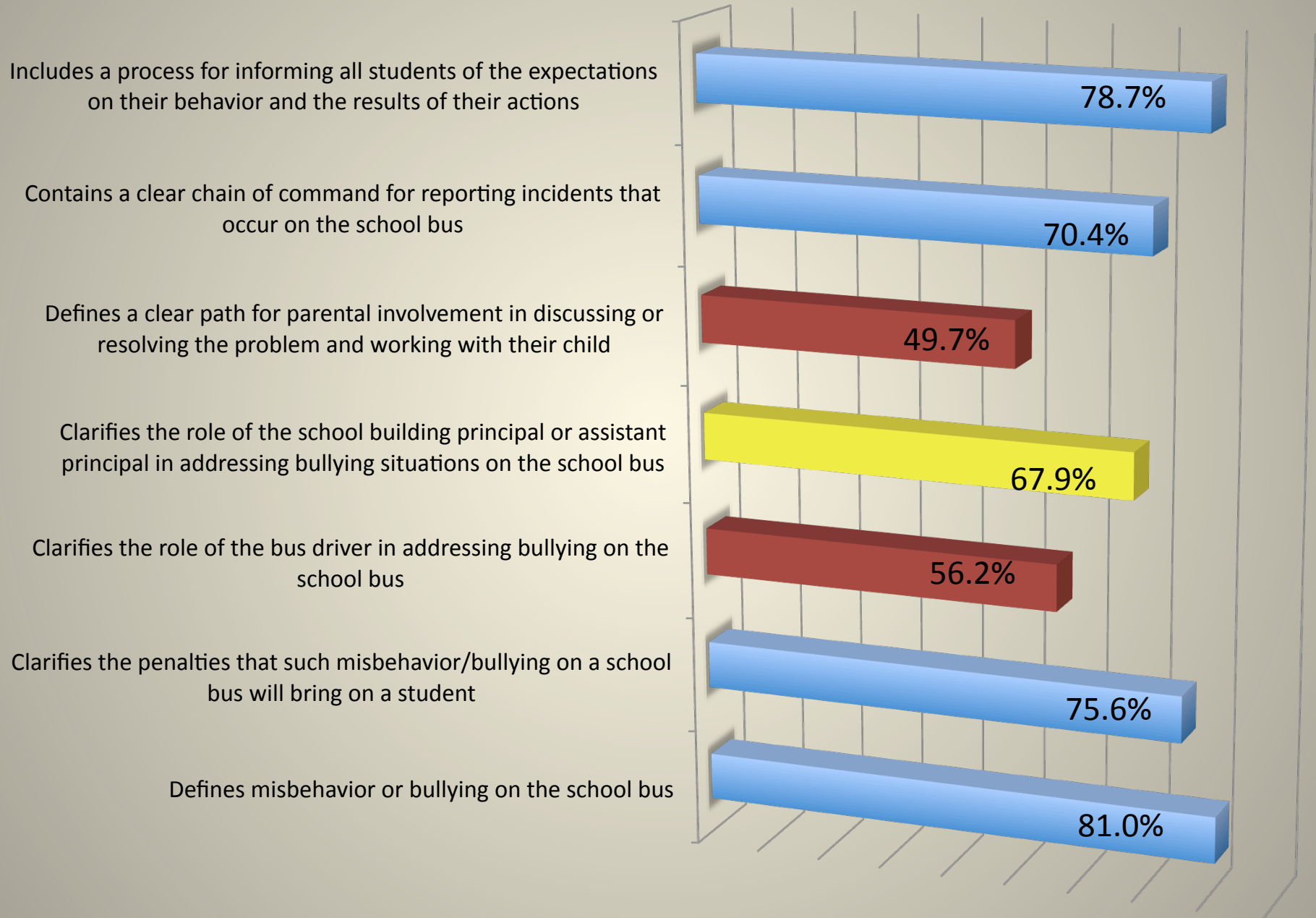But most transportation staff were not involved in developing those policies

Recommendation: all stakeholders need to be involved

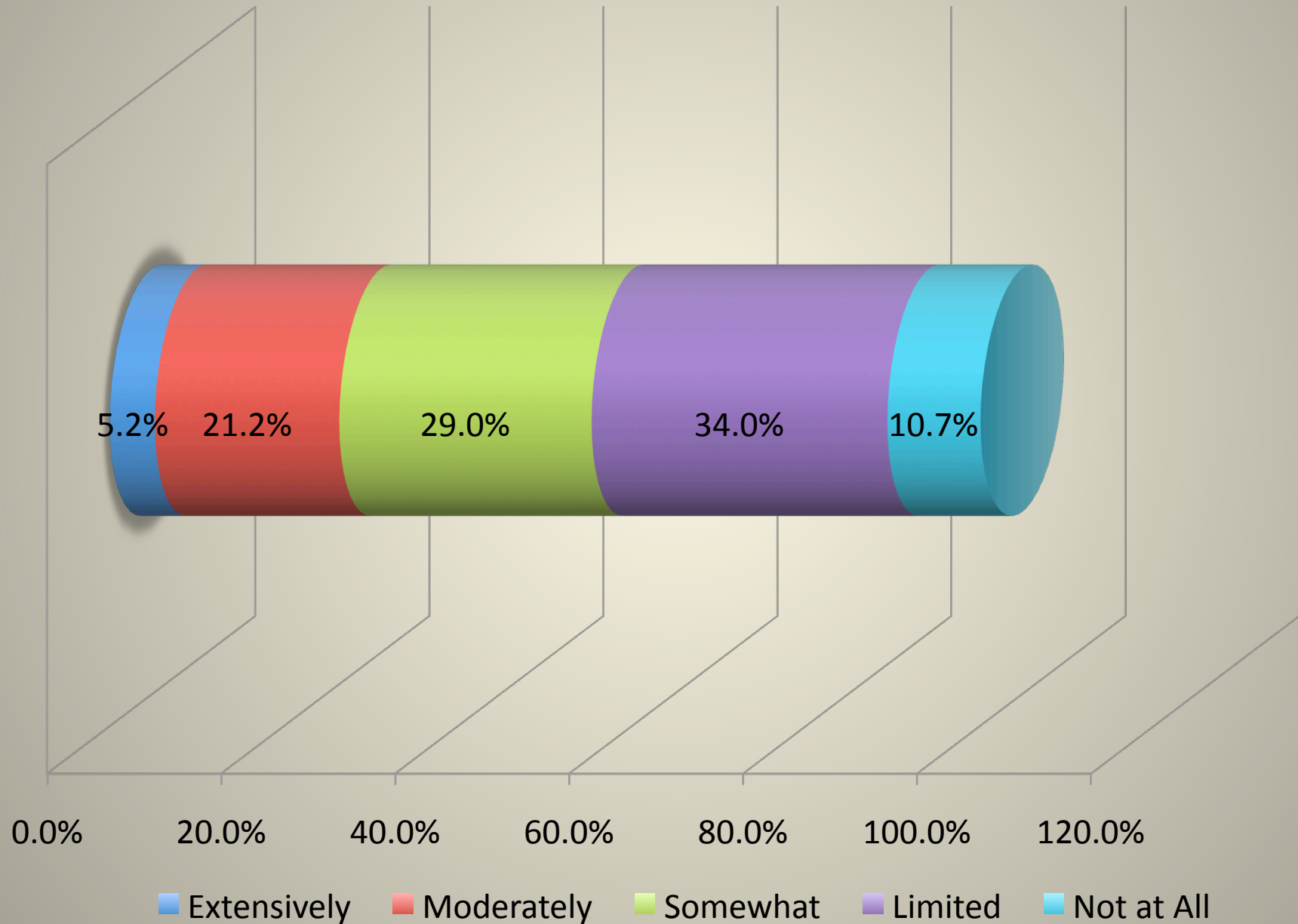# In Developing Your Districts' Bullying/Behavior Policy, the Transportation Department...

... staff had little or no input in developing district policies on bullying

55.6%

... had extensive input in developing the policy

12.8%

0.0% 20.0% 40.0% 60.0%

What elements are included in your district policy?

Includes a process for informing all students of the expectations on their behavior and the results of their actions — **78.7%**

Contains a clear chain of command for reporting incidents that occur on the school bus — **70.4%**

Defines a clear path for parental involvement in discussing or resolving the problem and working with their child — **49.7%**

Clarifies the role of the school building principal or assistant principal in addressing bullying situations on the school bus — **67.9%**

Clarifies the role of the bus driver in addressing bullying on the school bus — **56.2%**

Clarifies the penalties that such misbehavior/bullying on a school bus will bring on a student — **75.6%**

Defines misbehavior or bullying on the school bus — **81.0%**

To what degree have you had parents involved in school bus-related student behavior management efforts?

5.2%   21.2%   29.0%   34.0%   10.7%

0.0%   20.0%   40.0%   60.0%   80.0%   100.0%   120.0%

■ Extensively   ■ Moderately   ■ Somewhat   ■ Limited   ■ Not at All

Did You See This Problem?

Includes a process for informing all students of the expectations on their behavior and the results of their actions — **78.7%**

Contains a clear chain of command for reporting incidents that occur on the school bus — **70.4%**

Defines a clear path for parental involvement in discussing or resolving the problem and working with their child — **49.7%**

Clarifies the role of the school building principal or assistant principal in addressing bullying situations on the school bus — **67.9%**

Clarifies the role of the bus driver in addressing bullying on the school bus — **56.2%**

Clarifies the penalties that such misbehavior/bullying on a school bus will bring on a student — **75.6%**

Defines misbehavior or bullying on the school bus — **81.0%**

Official Code of Conduct?

97.2% of respondents have a code of conduct or behavior that applies to all students.

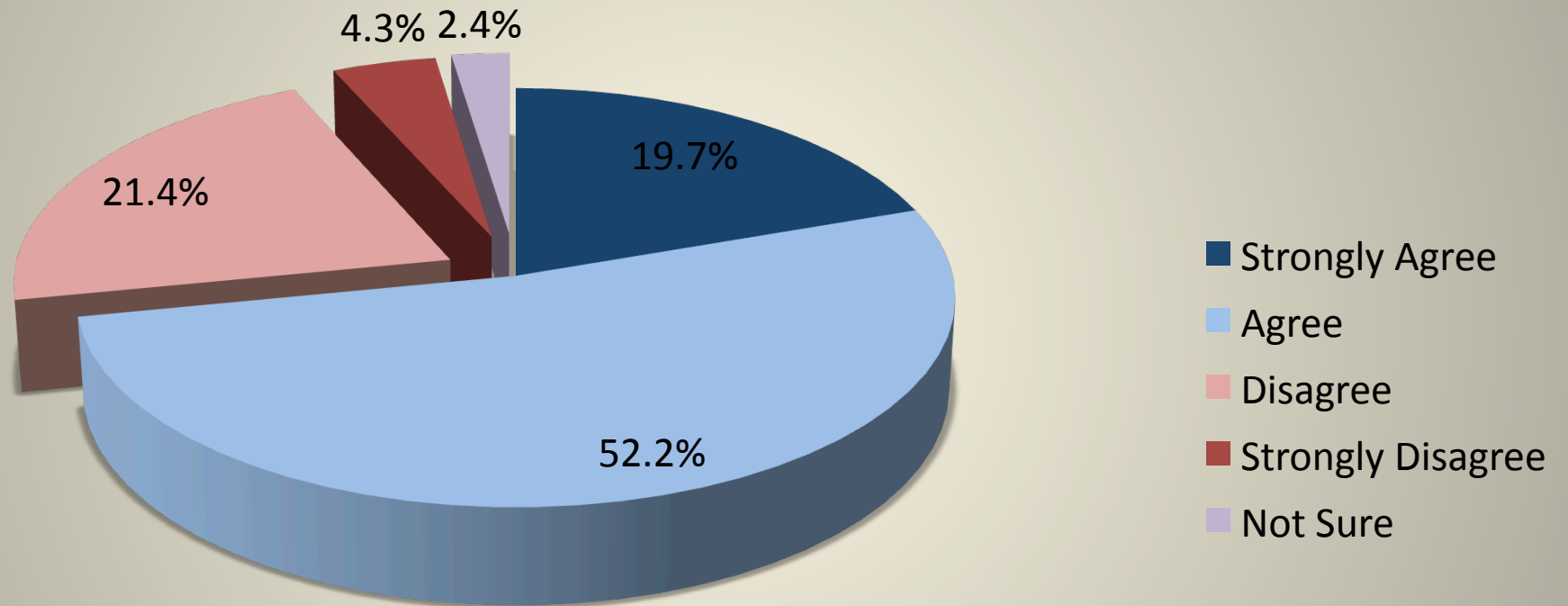Of those, only 8% does not relate to school bus.

Another problem

Although almost every school district has an official code of conduct that applies to all students . . .

20% do not define misbehavior or bullying on the school bus.

- This is also a problem.

To what degree do you agree with this statement: bullying is a serious problem on my school buses?

- 19.7%
- 52.2%
- 21.4%
- 4.3%
- 2.4%

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Not Sure

Reporting Bullying

This mirrors the findings of a report that suggested nearly 2/3 of bullying incidents are not reported to school officials. This hampers educator's ability to define the scope or frequency of bullying behavior in their schools or districts, which is the first step in addressing the problem.

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance - Petrosino, A. ,Guckenburg, S., DeVoe, J. & Hanson, T. (2010)
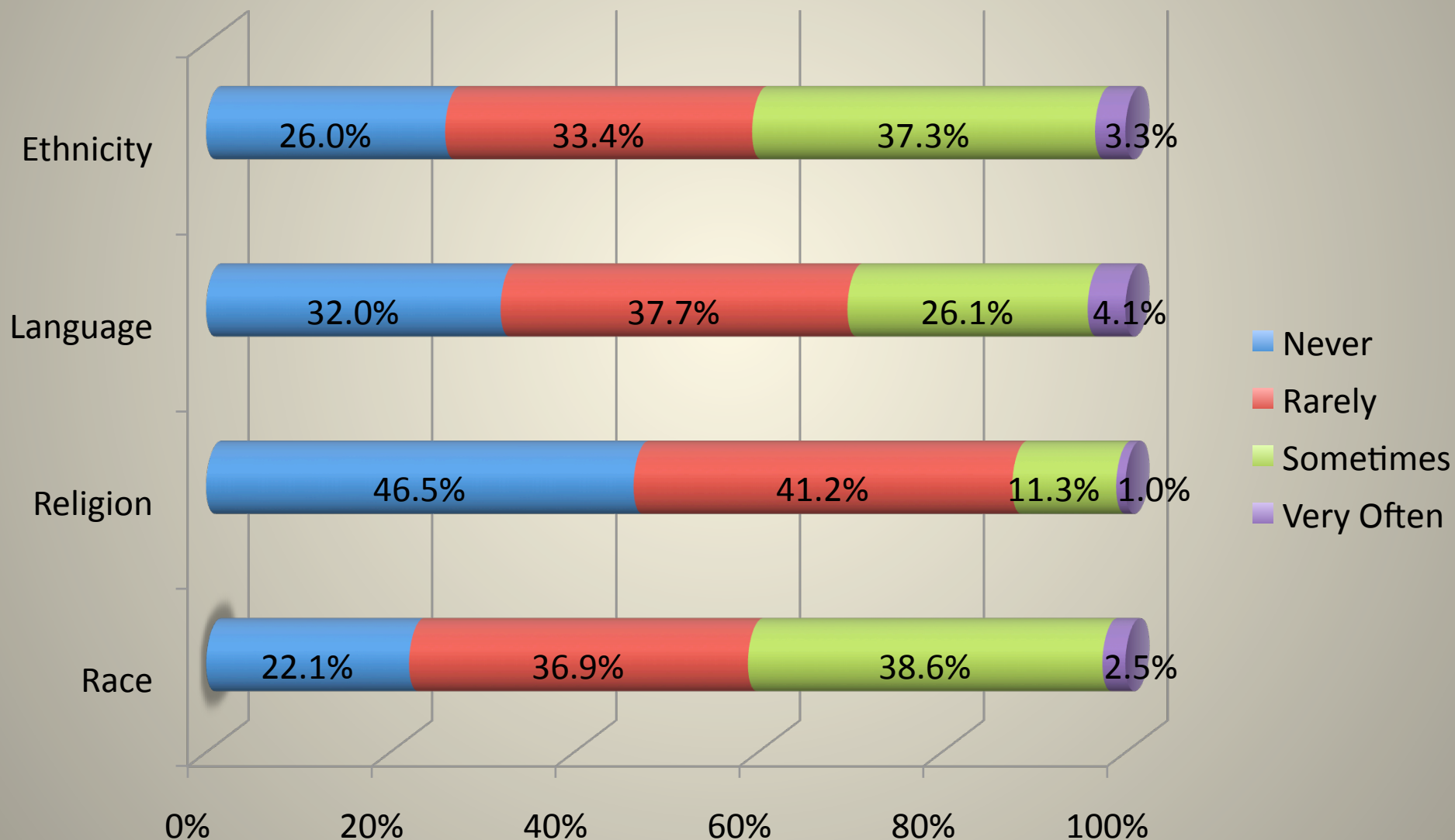
The Importance of Reporting

- Reporting is an important precursor to school response to bullying.

- Kazdin & Rotella (2009) note that teachers observe only the most flagrant and frequent bullying.

- Teacher observation occurs in only 4% of incidents, even though 85% of incidents occur in front of others, usually peers.
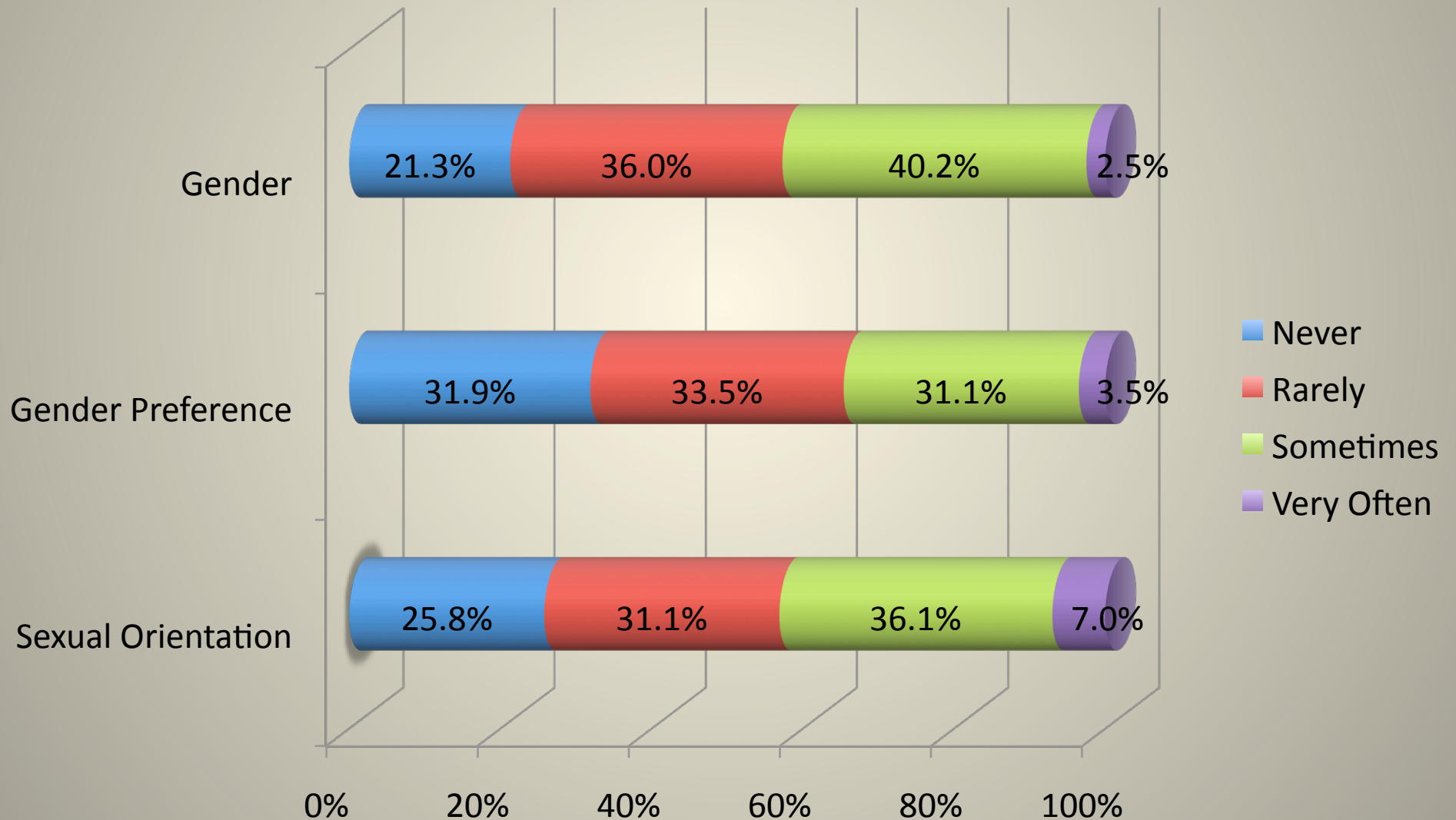
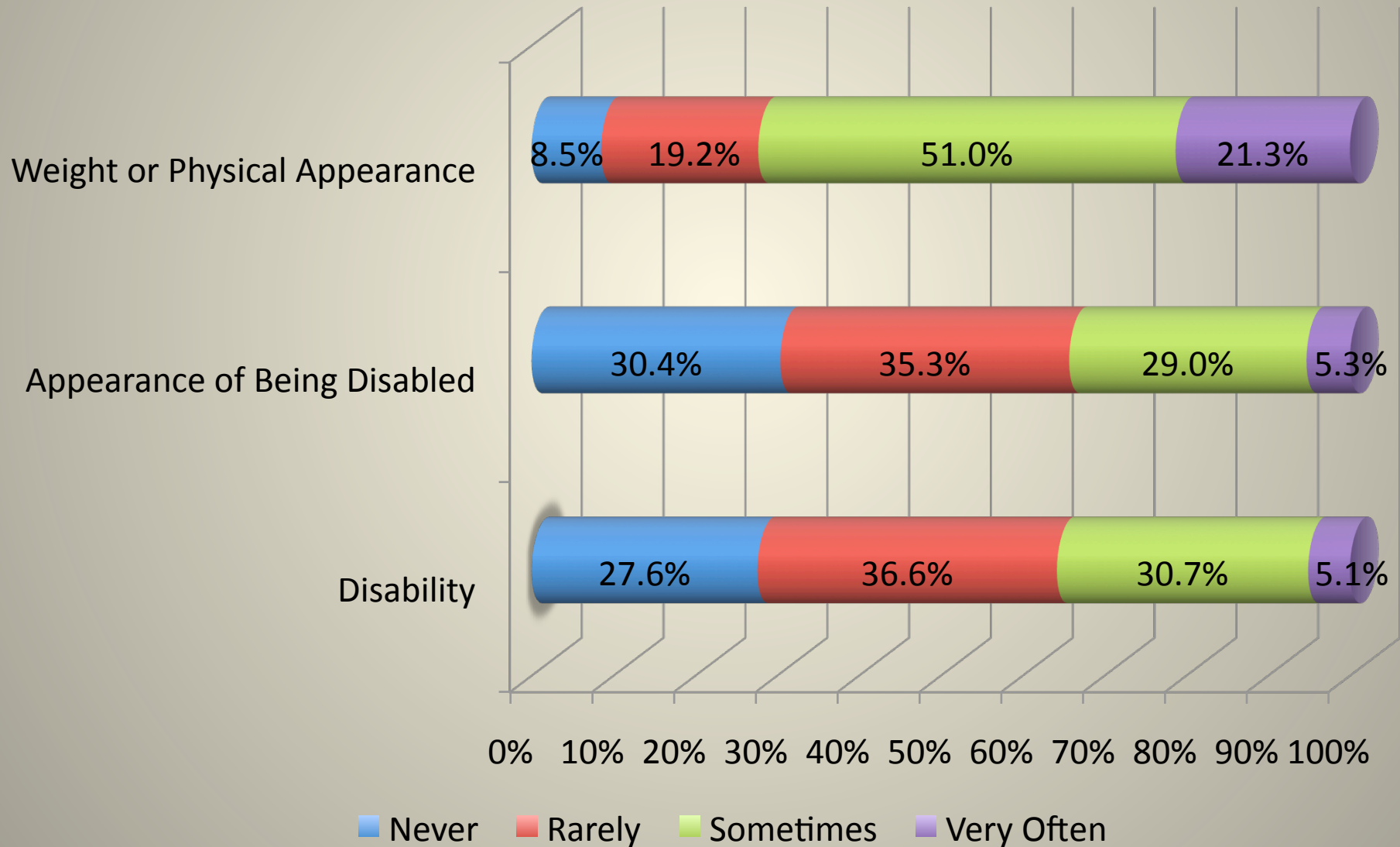# How often do you receive complaints or concerns that children are being bullied on your school buses?

Never 1.3%

Very rarely 30.9%

Frequently but not with any pattern 48.3%

Multiple times each week 15.8%

Once daily 1.8%

Multiple times daily 2.0%

0.0%   10.0%   20.0%   30.0%   40.0%   50.0%
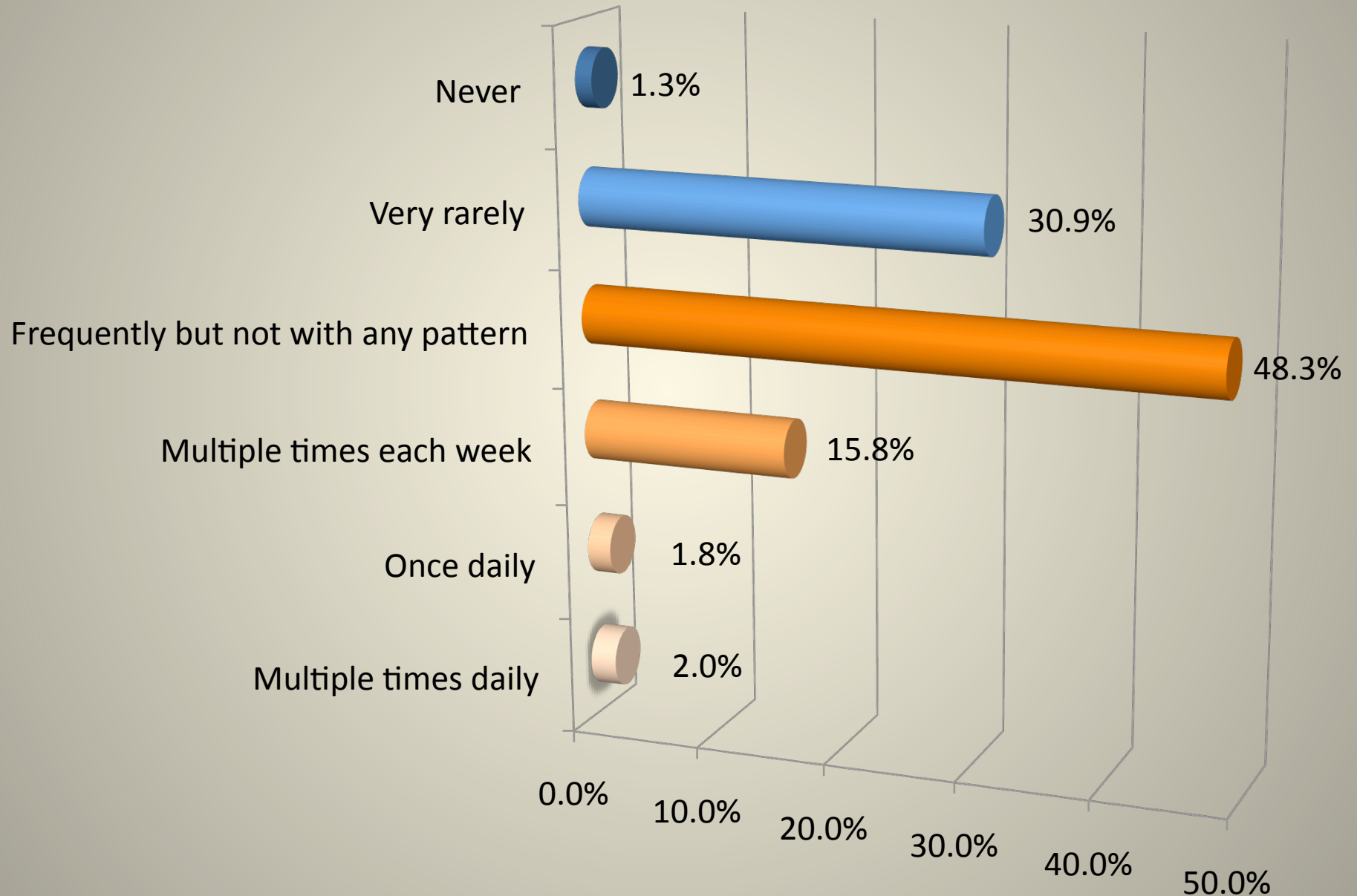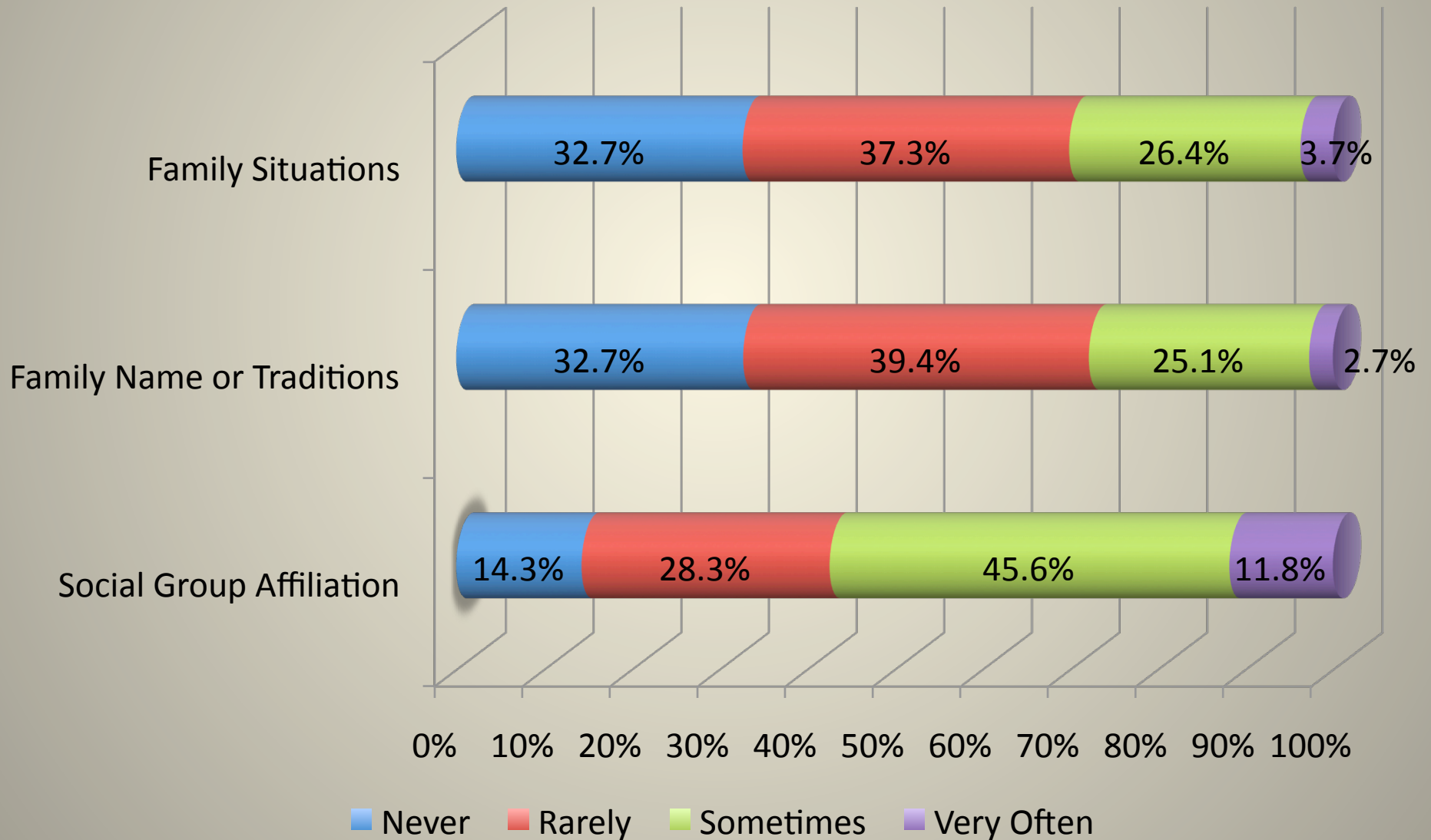
"Reason" or "Premise" for Bullying

What did we learn?

- High demand for training about the relationship between bullying & disabilities

- Of those who have had training in bullying/discrimination based on disabilities or use of disability-related equipment, nearly HALF (more than 49%) would like <u>more training</u> to be made available

What did we learn?

- 80% of drivers and attendants have received bullying training

- Yet NAPT members want more - and more accessible - training for their staff
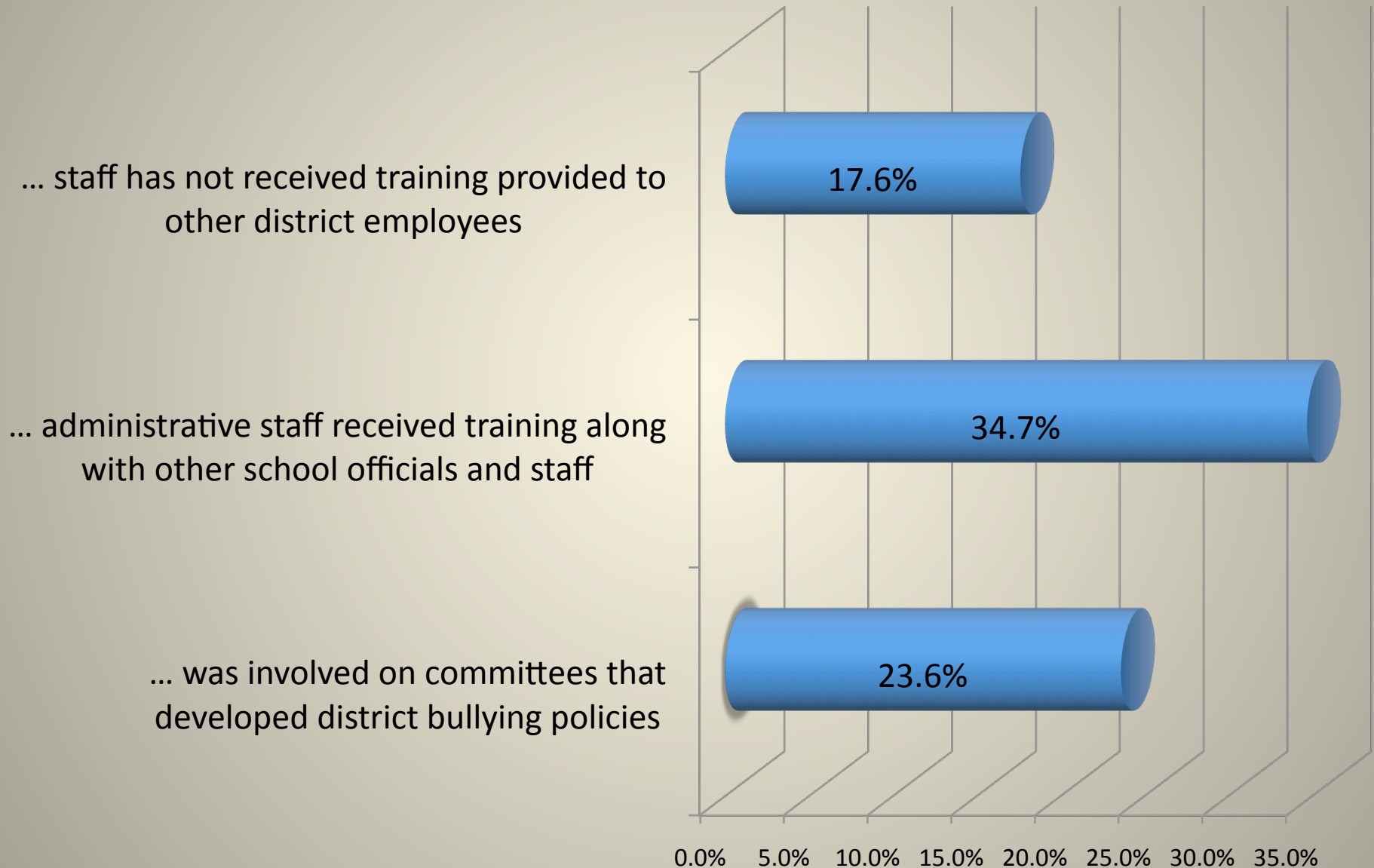
Most Requested Training Topics

1. Ideas to help bus drivers defuse crisis situations

2. Best Practices in student management & behavior

3. Reporting responsibilities, especially when an incident involves bullying or other unacceptable behavior

4. Information about the children and their problems

4. Understanding social and community issues

4. Understanding and awareness of disabilities

Why Are We Here Today?

- The US Department of Education has developed national-level bullying prevention training for school bus drivers.

- We'd like everyone, including other administrative decision-makers and especially education policy-makers, to know about, support and promote the implementation of this training.

Districts' Bullying/Behavior Policy, the Transportation Department

… staff has not received training provided to other district employees — 17.6%

… administrative staff received training along with other school officials and staff — 34.7%

… was involved on committees that developed district bullying policies — 23.6%

0.0%   5.0%   10.0%   15.0%   20.0%   25.0%   30.0%   35.0%

Why Are We Here Today?

- We'd also like everyone, including other administrative decision-makers and especially education policy-makers, to know about, and help us address strong demand for additional training

Parents in our school district will support our efforts to manage behavior and bullying on the school bus.

| 16.6% | 52.7% | 22.1% | 7.1% | 1.5% |

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Not Sure ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree