CALIFORNIA BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING

MAY 29, 2025
PRESENTED BY: ELIZABETH TEMPLE

WELCOME!

Birchwood Solutions' CEO, Elizabeth Temple, began her collaboration with alternative-to-discipline (ATD) programs in 2011 by addressing a critical need: providing healthcare professionals with reliable, secure, and accessible care to meet monitoring requirements. At a time when online services were just emerging in healthcare, Elizabeth pioneered a model offering professionally facilitated, secure, online support groups.

Since then, Elizabeth and Birchwood Solutions have expanded these services to five state programs, supporting participants across multiple licensure types, regulatory boards, and alternative programs. Birchwood's growth reflects its role as a leader in solving complex challenges through innovative and effective program design. Our network of professionals enables us to leverage diverse skills, strengths, and expertise to drive meaningful change in this industry. By partnering with boards and programs, we have successfully enhanced, repaired, and streamlined systems and processes, creating real, sustainable improvements.

BIRCHWOOD SOLUtions

FROM OUR FOUNDER

It is an honor to address you today and reflect on our collaboration to enhance nursing support systems. As the demands on nurses continue to evolve, the need for structured, effective support programs has never been greater. Birchwood Solutions is committed to guiding programs through transitions, ensuring they have the resources and strategies needed to strengthen their nursing communities without the added burden of operational challenges.

One of my greatest joys is working with new programs, helping them navigate the complexities of change. Birchwood Solutions takes on the logistical and strategic challenges so that the board and programs can focus on their mission. Our partnership is key to driving meaningful improvements for nursing professionals across California, and I look forward to continuing this important work together.

Elizabeth Temple
Founder
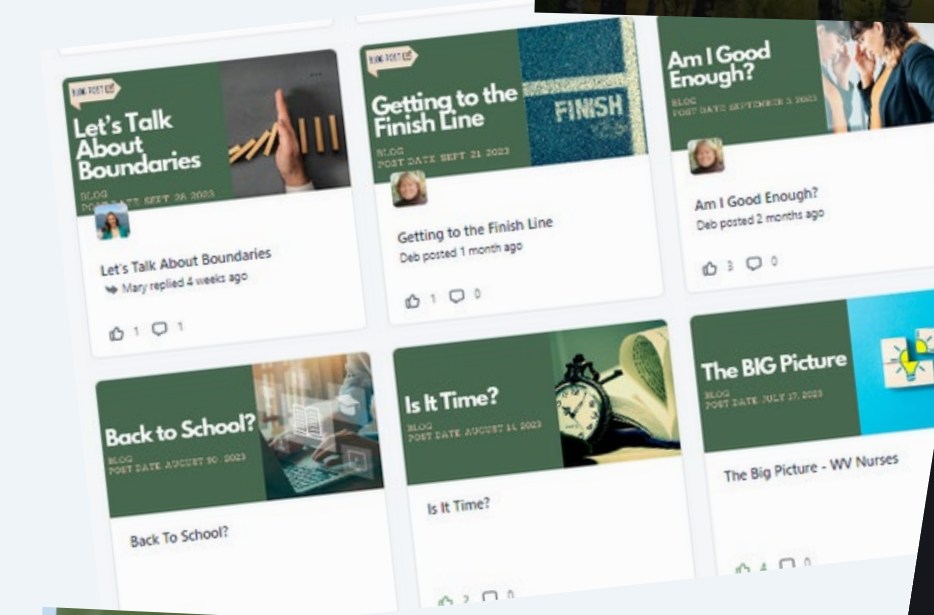
BIRCHWOOD SOLUTIONS

COMPANY OVERVIEW

At Birchwood Solutions, collaboration is at the heart of what we do. We actively listen to the needs of each organization, engage stakeholders, and build customized plans that draw on their unique strengths. This collaborative approach fosters innovative solutions and transforms organizations into true teams, united by shared goals and vision.

Organizations turn to Birchwood Solutions when they need trusted expertise, creative innovation, and measurable results. Our ability to deliver effective administrative and operational solutions has consistently exceeded expectations.

Partnering with Birchwood Solutions isn't just about solving today's challenges—it's about building a sustainable future together by driving meaningful progress, fostering innovation, and creating systems that truly support healthcare professionals and organizations alike.

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Transforming Lives.
Empowering Professionals

COMPANY OVERVIEW

We believe in fostering an environment that promotes growth to the organizations, individuals and communities that we embrace.

Company Mission

Birchwood Solutions is committed to helping transform lives by offering exceptional programs and services that will empower our clients and professionals to take root.

Company Vision

It is our Vision to provide distinguished educational support and management services that will uphold our position of respect and take root within the community of professionals that we serve.

Core Values

- Integrity with pride and confidence in our abilities and services
- Guidance with respect for our clients, professionals, and staff
- Nurturing relationships with dignity
- Initiative with distinction for quality
- Transforming lives through accountability
- Ethical business is a priority

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SUPPORT GROUP
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Bringing program communities together with support, accountability, collaboration

Professionally Facilitated Support Groups

Professionally facilitated support groups for nurses in recovery provide a structured, confidential space to share experiences, receive guidance, and build a supportive community. Led by trained professionals, these groups offer evidence-based strategies, peer support, and accountability to help nurses maintain sobriety while managing their professional and personal well-being.

Facilitator and Participant Compliance

Birchwood ensures both facilitators and participants comply with clear expectations and consistent follow-up. This compliance fosters a safe, supportive environment where individuals are motivated to actively engage and make meaningful progress in their recovery journey.

Data Analytics & Auditing

Birchwood conducts regular data analysis and audits to ensure compliance and effectiveness by having an auditing team review all facilitator documentation against group sign-in logs. Facilitators are provided with a process to correct any documentation errors, ensuring accuracy and consistency in all records.

Reporting

Birchwood generates weekly non-compliance reports, monthly or quarterly attendance reports, and an annual report that provides comprehensive program statistics. These reports serve as a valuable resource for case managers and programs, helping to demonstrate participant compliance and address any non-compliance issues that may arise.

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EVOLUTION OF OUTSOURCED SUPPORT GROUP MANAGEMENT

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PROGRAM GROUP TYPES

Program Support groups have been in-person until 2011, when TnPAP piloted online groups.

NO SUPPORT GROUPS

The program did not require any support groups for their participants. Usually only required AA/NA or equivalent.

PEER SUPPORT GROUP

The program allowed volunteer peers (nurses or completed participants) to host a support group for program participants.

FACILITATED SUPPORT GROUP

The program maintained a list of facilitators that may be peers, mental health providers, etc. The facilitator may be a volunteer or charge a fee at their discretion.

OUTSOURCED SUPPORT GROUP MGMT

Began in 2011 with TnPAP. This structure allowed for the program to turn the management of the support group structure to the outsourced organization.

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TYPES OF CHALLENGES

Our company culture is the foundation of everything we do. It shapes our values, guides our decisions, and fosters an environment where everyone can thrive. Our culture is built on the principles of collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to making a positive impact in the world. Here are some key aspects that define our company culture:

Program Challenges

- Lack of Reporting
- Lack of Quality Data
- Facilitator Qualifications & Professionalism
- Facilitator Training & Accountability
- Management of Support Group Process was Time Consuming

Participant Challenges

- Scheduling Changes & Challenges
- Cost of gas, time off, child care, etc.
- Limited Group Options
- Quality of Group Meetings
- Group safety

Facilitator Challenges

- Responsible for finding meeting spaces
- Little to no support or supervision
- Responsible for collecting fees from participants
- Limited to no coverage options - cancel groups

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TIMELINE OF OUTSOURCED SG MANAGEMENT

This timelines show the implementation of the outsourced support group management model and the evolution of the online group enrollments.

Fall 2011

TnPAP requested a full Support Group Management option. Online groups were successful based on feedback and participation. Realized challenges existed to require all online. Management consisted of both online and local.

EOY 2013

EOY Reports show there were 25 Online groups and 20 local groups. 184 participants were online and 154 remained in local groups.

2021

All groups remained online only. Facilities were still not allowing outside non - essential individuals or groups to enter the premises.

Spring 2011

Trial of online groups with TnPAP. Was this going to be a viable option. A number of challenges were discovered surrounding the consistency of support groups.

2012

Initial Implementation of complete Support Group Management model January 2012. Participants got to choose which group they wanted to attend. By June 2012, there were 24 online groups and 25 local groups. 153 participants elected to go online and 188 chose to remain in local groups.

2019-20

By the end of 2019, there were only 3 local groups in TnPAP. We collectively made the decision to move all groups online beginning Jan 2020. By the time of the COVID -19 shutdowns, TnPAP groups had fully transitioned to online only. All other programs were moved to online groups during COVID.

Today

All groups remain online due to the surveys strongly indicating the preference.

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You can't connect to other people online.

You will lose the ability to see how a person is actually doing.

You need to be able to physically touch someone to show empathy.

Participants won't feel safe sharing online.

Sure...Online is more convenient, but what will we be losing or trading?

You will lose the personalization.

I just don't see the value in online groups.
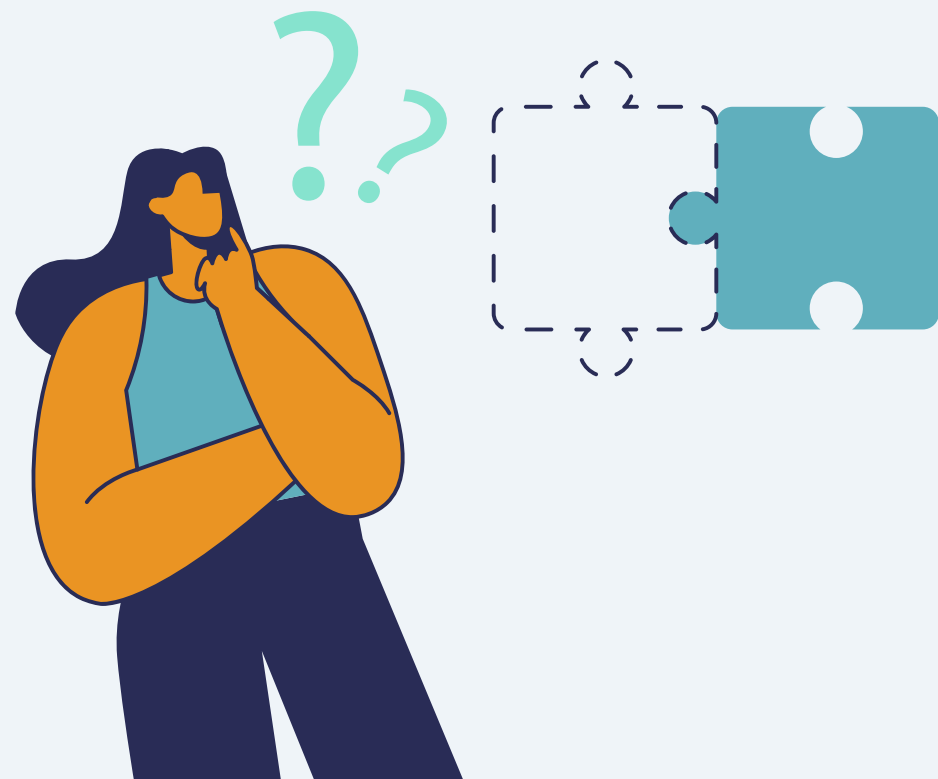
Groups will not be able to feel connected.

This just won't work.

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WHAT IS THE GOAL?

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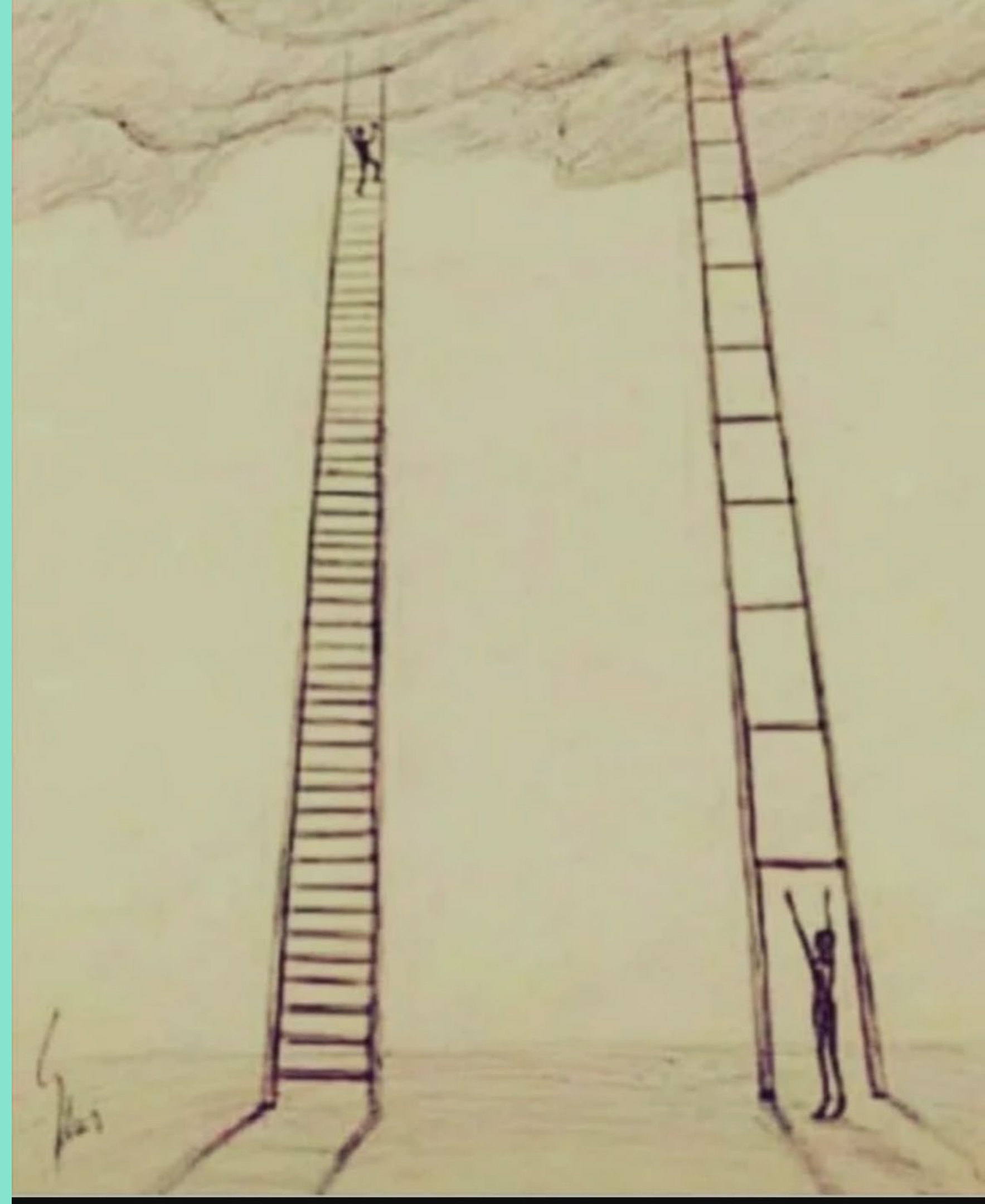
THE SURVEYS

① Rate these factors of attending In - Person Group and Online Groups

② Rank the following program requirements in order of impact on your recovery or sucessful completion (if applicable).

③ Participant satisfaction surveys

SIDE BY SIDE COMPARISON OF IN-PERSON AND ONLINE: ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

In-Person Groups

- Did not meet expectations
- Below expectations
- Met expectations
- Exceeded Expectations
- Superior

Online Groups

- Did not meet expectations
- Below expectations
- Met expectations
- Exceeded Expectations
- Superior

Weighted Average

	In-Person	Online
Convenience of attending groups	2.58	3.94
Ease of attending make-up groups	2.10	3.44
Comfort in participating in groups	2.52	3.98
Value of groups in supporting your program completion	2.42	3.73
How connected to your group did you feel	2.84	3.83
My facilitator understood me and my needs	2.87	4.10

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PROGRAM SURVEYS FOR
Active Participants

My facilitator demonstrates empathy to calm members who are struggling (personally or professionally).
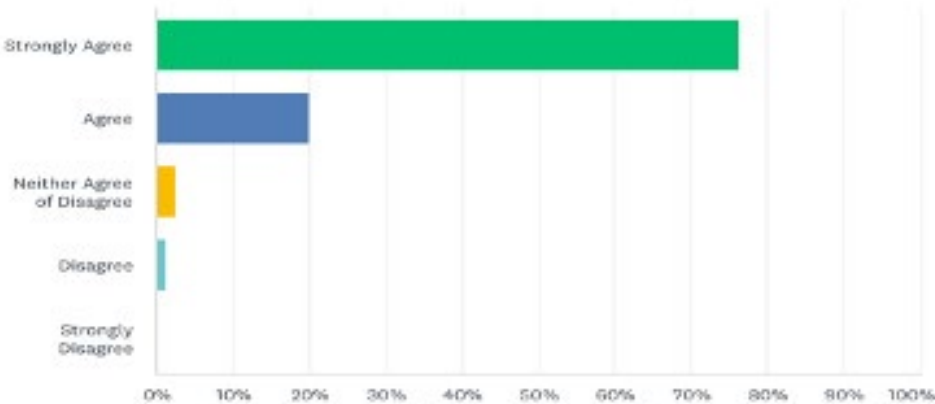
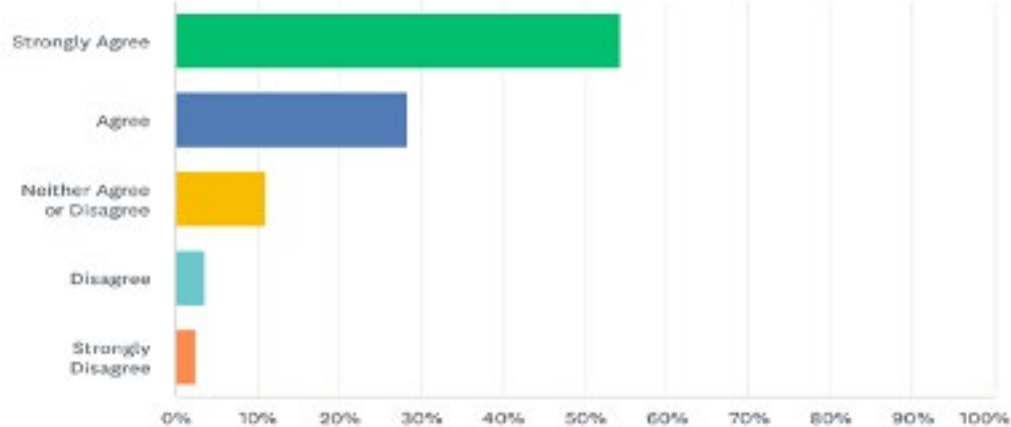I'm comfortable expressing my feelings and know the group members respect confidentiality.
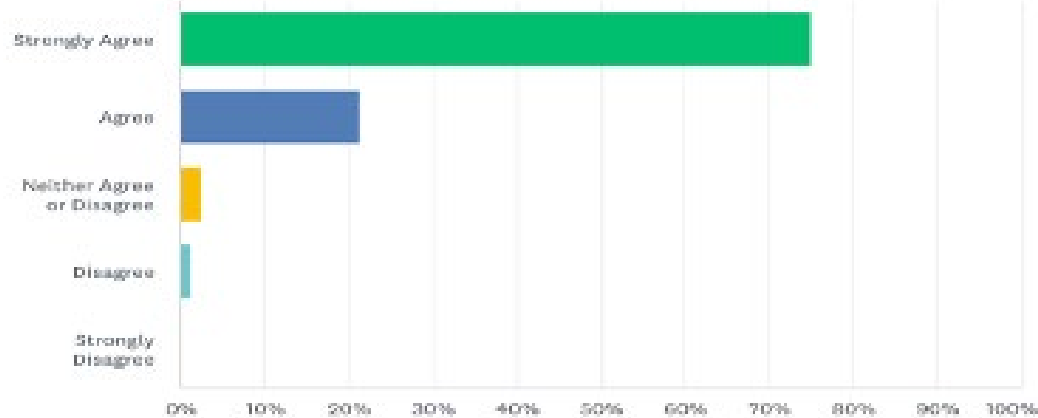
Safety
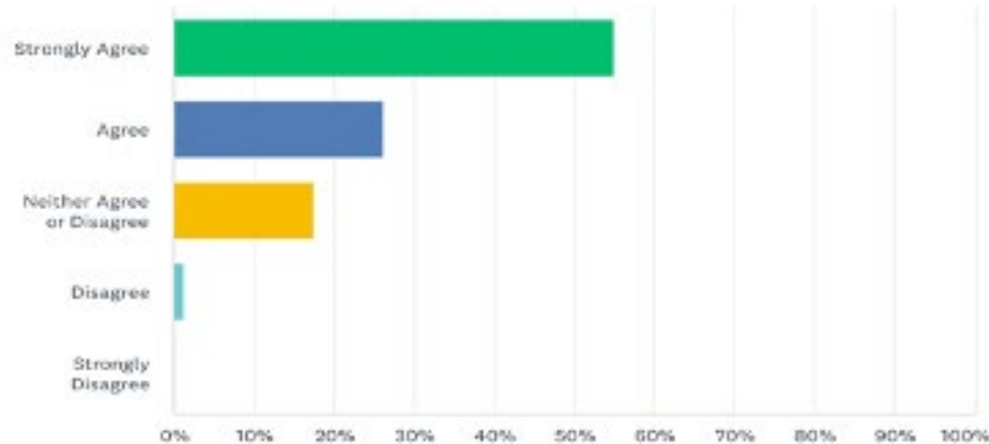
I feel support and encouragement from members of my group.
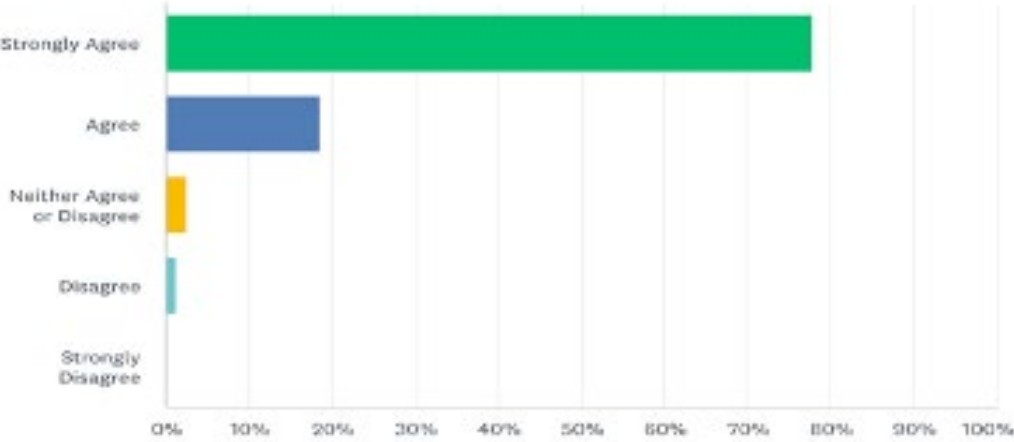
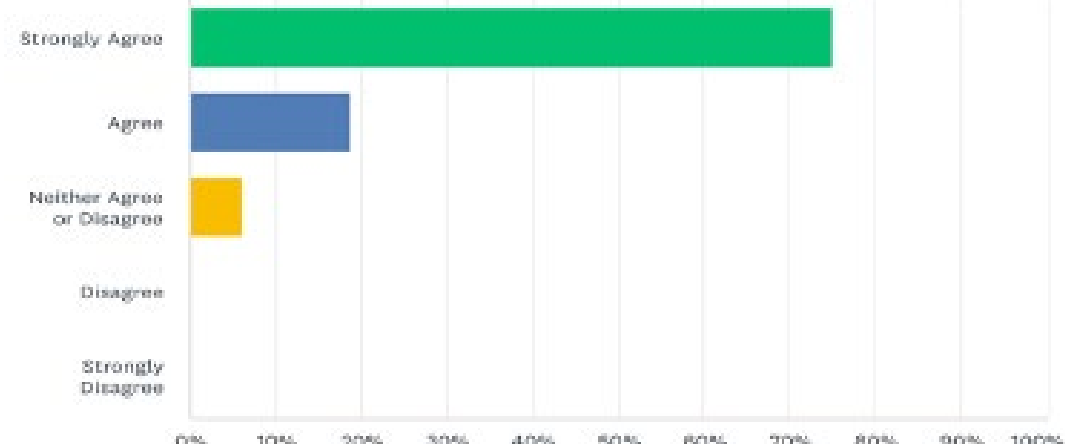My support group is enjoyable, rewarding and is an integral part of my recovery plan.

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PROGRAM SURVEYS FOR
Active Participants

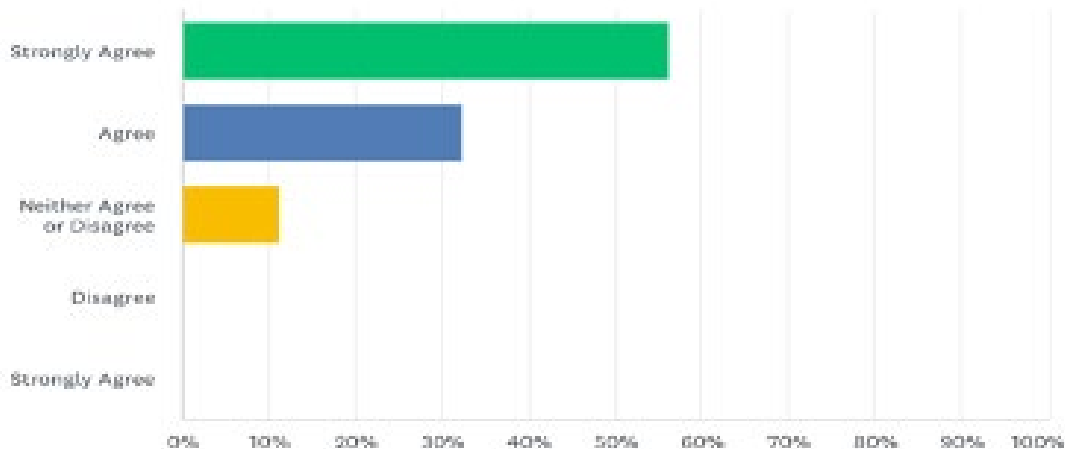My facilitator tells less and listens more.

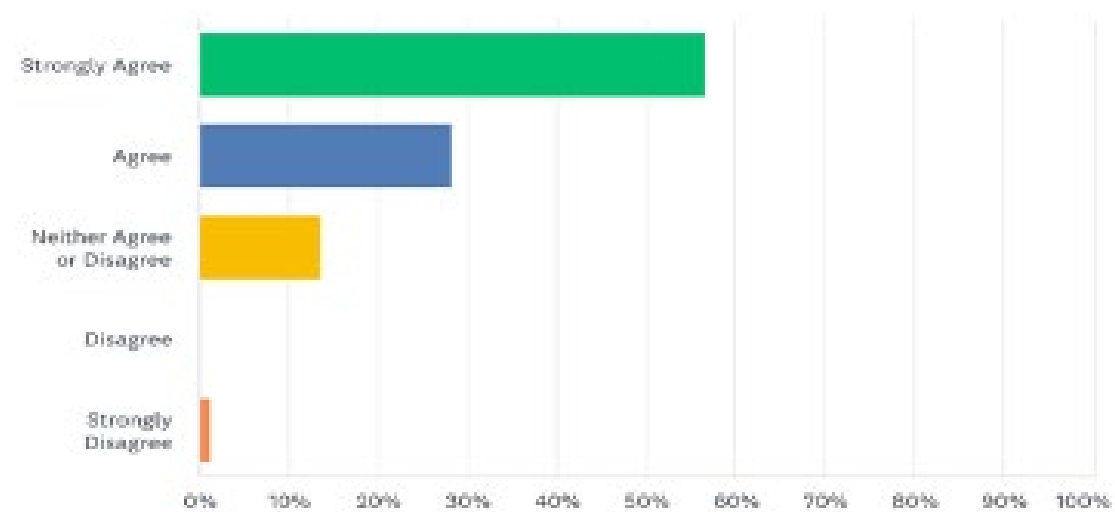My facilitator encourages members to connect.

Professionalism

In my support group, negative feelings are addressed, but the facilitator redirects, so they do not become the main focus.
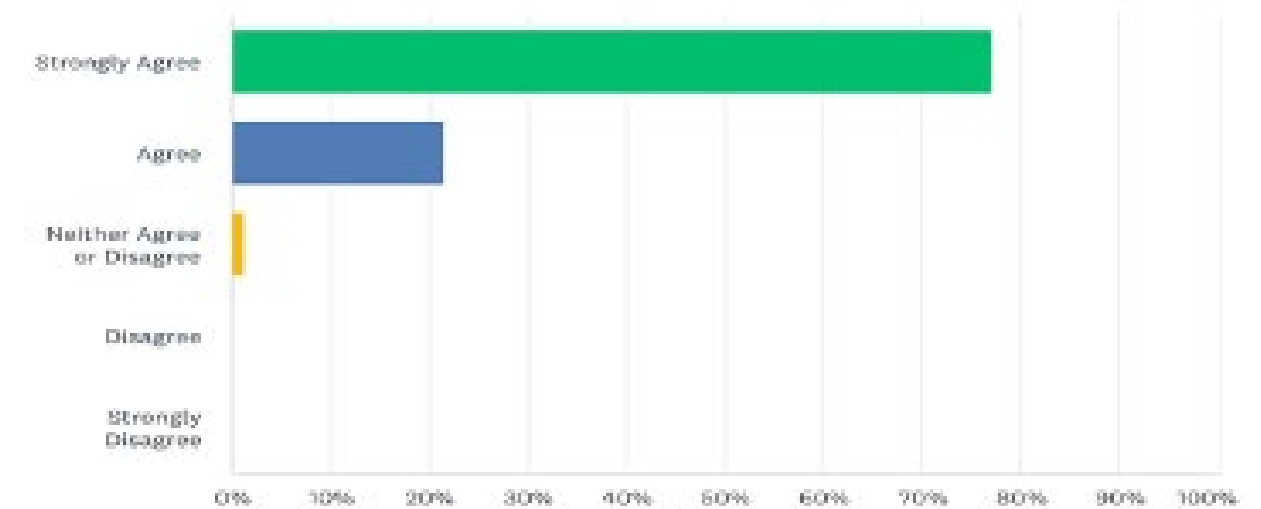
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PROGRAM SURVEYS FOR
Active Participants

Perceived Effectiveness

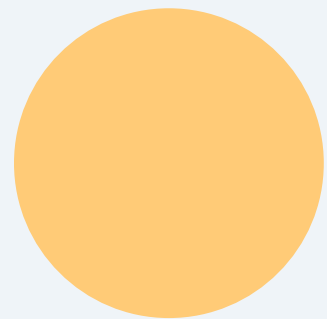BIRCHWOOD SOLUTIONS

PARTCIPANT ATTENDANCE COMPLIANCE
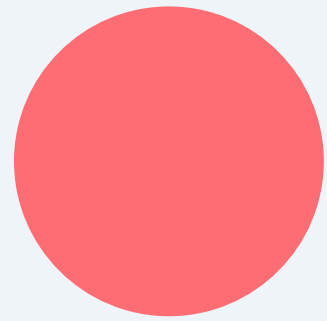
COVID-19

2020 showed an interesting parallel to moving online and compliance. It continued to increase throughout the entire year, even after shut-downs were lifted.
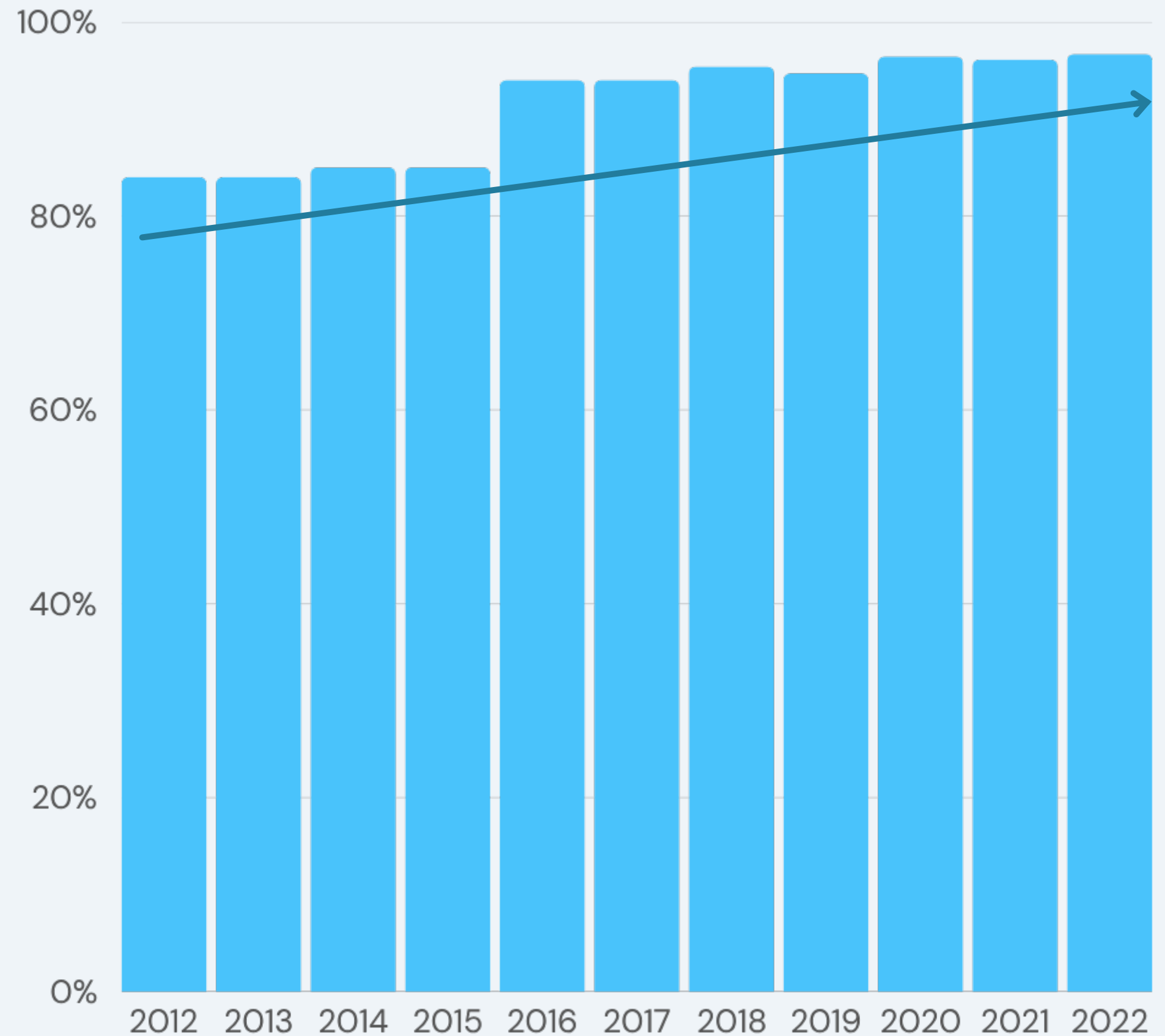
ONLINE TRENDS

Original video conferencing tools were inconsistent with connectivity. 2013-14 was when the scale tipped to more online groups. 2016 signaled a move to the an improved platform.

MAKE-UP PROTOCOL & TRACKING

In 2018, a new make-up group process and tracking was implemented.

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WHAT DOES IMPLEMENTATION LOOK LIKE?

ONBOARDING
P R O C E S S

Birchwood's onboarding process for Support Group Management Services for ATD programs emphasizes the importance of collaboration to ensure a seamless integration with the program's unique vision and mission. During onboarding, Birchwood works closely with program administrators and stakeholders to gain a deep understanding of the program's objectives, culture, and participant needs.

This collaborative approach allows Birchwood to tailor their services and processes to align with the specific goals of the program, ensuring that support is personalized and effective. By capturing the essence of the program's mission, Birchwood can enhance the experience for both facilitators and participants, fostering greater success and positive outcomes for all involved.

> B I R C H W O O D   S O L U T I O N S

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

IMPLEMENTATION MEETING	FACILITATORS	PARICIPANTS	REPORTING	IMPLEMENTATION
• After both parties have completed a zero-dollar agreement outlining the responsibilities of Birchwood, there will be an implementation meeting with program directors and key stakeholders. • Birchwood will provide program with a draft implementation outline with important dates and necessary steps. Once the program has approved, BWS will get to work!	• Birchwood will provide current facilitators and/or seek out qualified facilitators in your area. • Facilitators will complete an onboarding training conducted by Birchwood.	• Participants will be provided an opportunity to attend a virtual Q&A Session with Birchwood to answer any questions they may have. • BWS will provide the program with a draft of all communication to be sent to the participants. Our goal is to reduce the workload for the program.	• Birchwood will provide the program with incremental written reports regarding the implementation progress. • Birchwood will work with the program's case management software provider to begin collaborating on streamlined reporting, if available by the provider.	• Participants will complete an online enrollment form, signup for payment plan, and be assigned to a support group based on their preferences (when at all possible). • Groups will begin by the designated start date on the implementation plan.

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COST TO PARTICIPANTS

THERE IS TYPICALLY NO COST TO THE BOARD OR PROGRAM

▶ There are options for Boards to partially or fully subsidize ◀

Birchwood is committed to keeping costs minimal for program participants. In addition, Birchwood provides an excellent financial assistance program for those who can demonstrate a need, ensuring that cost is not a barrier to receiving crucial support. This approach reflects Birchwood's dedication to making recovery resources available to as many individuals as possible, regardless of financial circumstances.

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Monthly	Quarterly	Annually
$125	$360	$1400

THIS COST IS AROUND $27 DOLLARS A WEEK!

✳ Most people spend an average of $11-20 a week on Starbucks

✳ The average cost of gas for roundtrip to a meeting is $8.40 ($33.60/mo)

✳ Smoking 10 cigarettes a day for a month could cost roughly $98 to $196

✳ The average cost of a meal eating out is between $15-20

BENEFITS OF BWS SUPPORT GROUP MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Program Benefits

- Detailed, Consistent, and Tailored Reporting
- Quality Data
- Vetted Facilitator Qualifications & Professionalism Standards
- Facilitator Training & Accountability
- Full Management reduces time required by Board Staff
- Established Policies & Procedures
- Turn-key & Tailored Program Management

Participant Benefits

- Group Availability and Flexibility with Guidelines
  - Cost of gas, time off, child care, etc.
  - Variety of Group Options
- Group Meetings Standards
- Safe Group Expectations that are monitored
- Consistent Communications
- Secure, Online Portal Access
- Quality Groups with Educational Topics
- Financial Assistance Available

Facilitator Benefits

- Competitive Compensation
- HIPPA Compliant Zoom Account Provided by BWS
- HIPPA Compliant Email Provided by BWS
- Facilitator Support & Accountability
  - Monthly Support Meetings
  - Monthly/Quarterly Administrative Meetings
  - Annual Evaluations
  - Annual Professional Development Plans
- No exchange of money with participants
- Coverage Options so groups are not cancelled

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