

WHO ARE WE MISSING?

Characteristics and different profiles of youths with school attendance problems

WHO ARE WE?



Centre for the Psychological Treatment of Children
and Adolescents, Aarhus University Denmark

PROGRAM



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN DENMARK

Denmark:

- Registration of daily school attendance is mandatory in public schools
 - Categorized as
 - Excused absence
 - Non-Excused absence
 - Absence due to illness
- Nationally: Average of 5,6 % school absence (11 school days)

Aarhus Municipality

- Ca. 30.000 students
- 850 students with more than 30 absent days each year



BACK 2 SCHOOL

Modular trans-diagnostic Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
treating youths with School Attendance Problems

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THE RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL

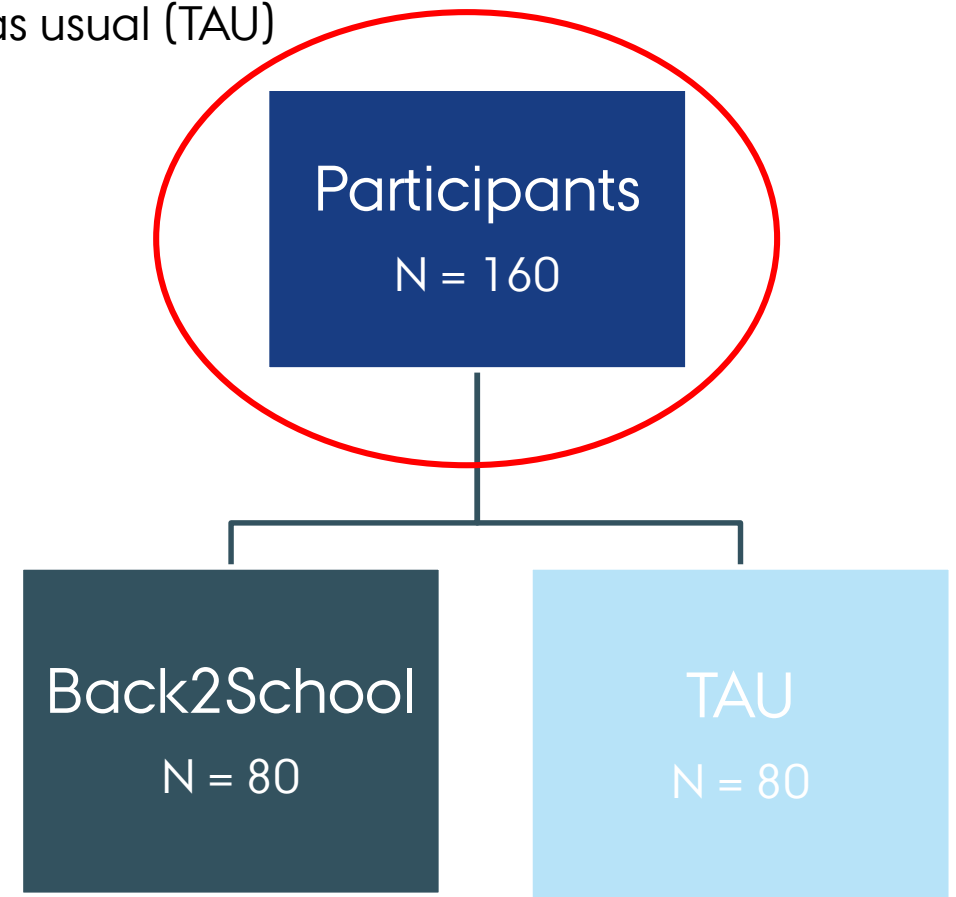
Effectiveness study, comparing (Back2School) to treatment as usual (TAU)

Trial period:

- 2 years (2017 – 2019)

Collaboration between:

- Aarhus Municipality (TAU)
- Aarhus University (Back2School)

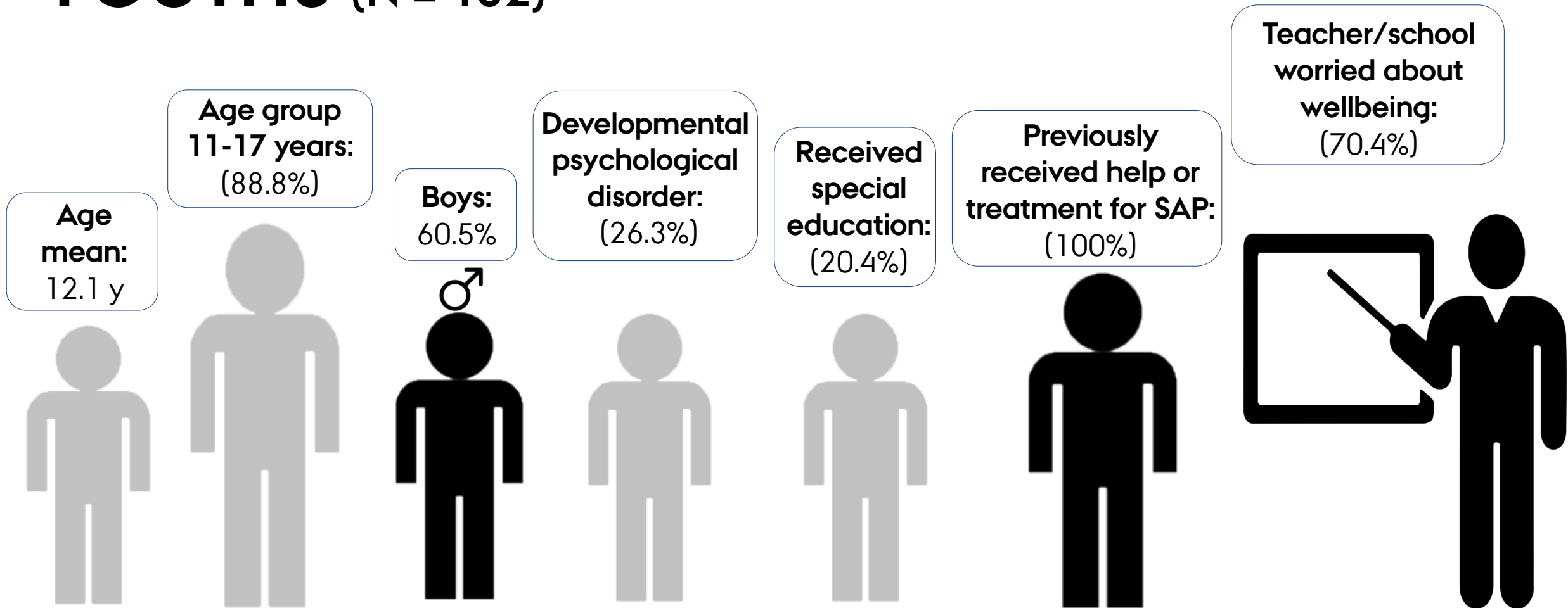


SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

- The sample consisted of 152 youths and their parents
- All youths had school attendance problems (SAP), and were seeking treatment for SAP.
- Inclusion criteria
 - Enrolled in a public school, in 0th to 9th grade.
 - Over 10% absence in the last 3 months
 - Youth and at least one parent spoke sufficient Danish to participate in treatment



YOUTHS (N = 152)



PARENTS (N = 152)

EDUCATION

Mothers completed high school: 94,7%

Fathers completed high school: 82,9%



MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health problems, mother 27.6%

Mental health problems, mother 14.5%

Both parents: Mental health problems: 9.1%

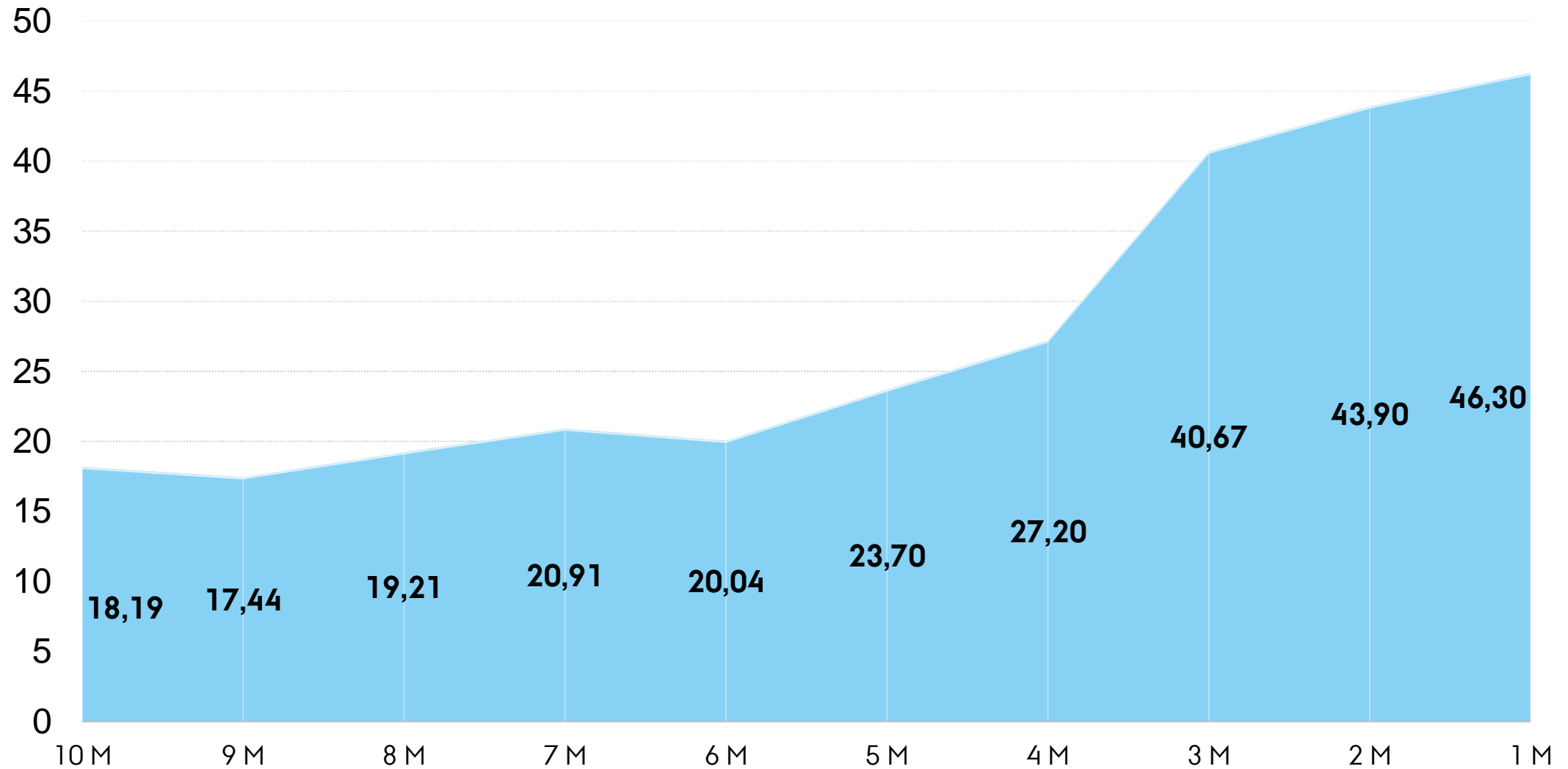


WORK

SAP affected parents work in the last month:
Arrived late - 51.3%
Left early - 43.4%
Stayed at home - 61.8%



School Absence (%) - Last academic year



SCHOOL ABSENCE

Last 3 months = Short-term school absence
Last 10 months = Long-term school absence

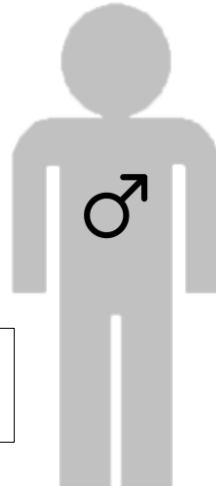
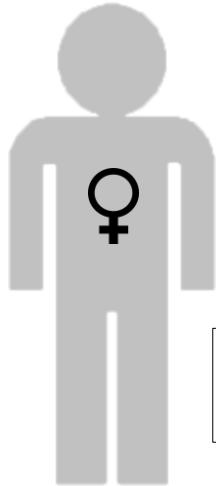
GENDER COMPARISON

Girls

3 months: 44.1%
10 months: 28.5%

Boys

3 months: 42.8%
10 months: 27.3%



3 months: ns
10 months: ns

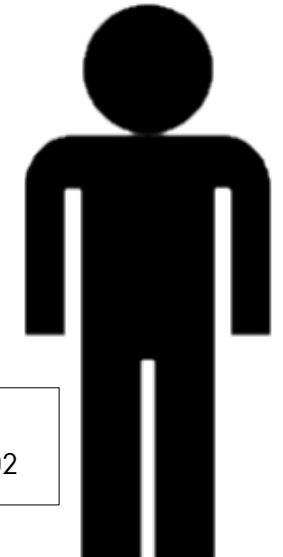
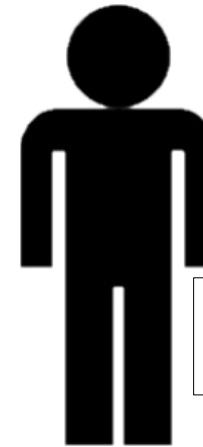
AGE COMPARISON

6-12 years

3 months: 39.0%
10 months: 22.4%

13-16 years

3 months: 47.8%
10 months: 31.3%



3 months: $r = 0.182, p = .03$
10 months: $r = 0.029, p = .02$

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

- We investigate the linear relationship between the youths short-term and long-school absence, and absence category **with:**
 - *Youth and parent demographics*
 - *Anxiety symptoms*
 - *Depressive symptoms*
 - *Behavioral problems*
 - *Self-efficacy*
 - *Self-reported bullying*

CORRELATIONS SHORT-TERM SCHOOL ABSENCE (3 MONTH)

- Living with both parents
 - ÷ Non-excused school absence
- Fathers level of education
 - ÷ Non-excused school absence
 - + Absence due to illness
- Bullying
 - ÷ Total amount of school absence

CORRELATIONS LONG-TERM SCHOOL ABSENCE (10 MONTH)

- Age
 - + Total amount of school absence
- Mental health problems
 - + Total amount of school absence
- Living with both parents
 - ÷ Non-excused school absence
- Bullying
 - ÷ Total amount of school absence

NORM-COMPARISON

We compared the SAP samples scores on symptoms of anxiety, depression, behavioral problems, and impact with Danish norm-data.

Anxiety

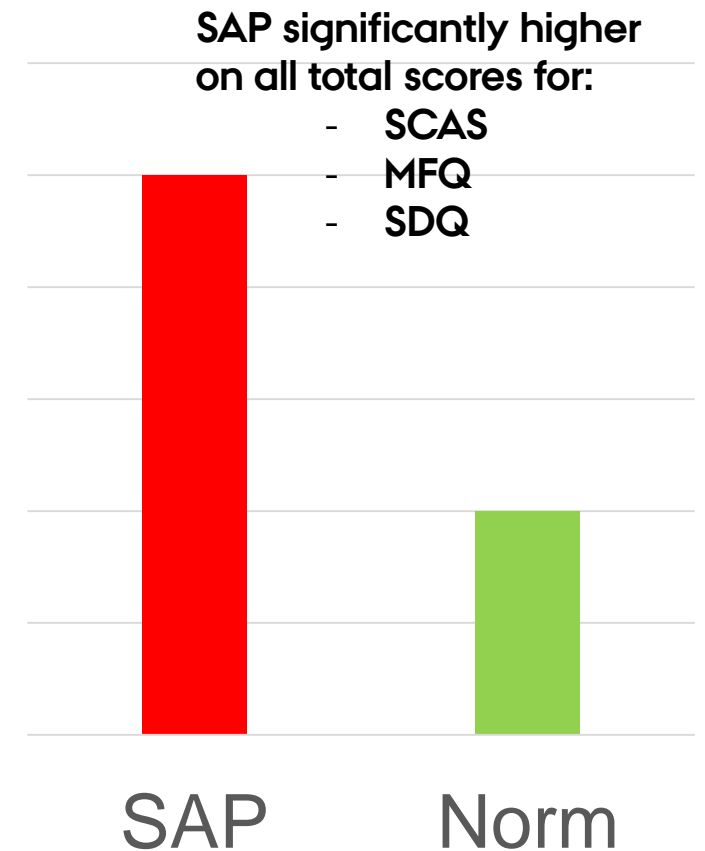
- Spence Children's Anxiety Scale (SCAS) (Arendt, et al. 2014)

Depression

- Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (MFQ) (Eg, et al. 2018)

Emotional and Behavioral problems

- Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Arnfred, et al. 2019)



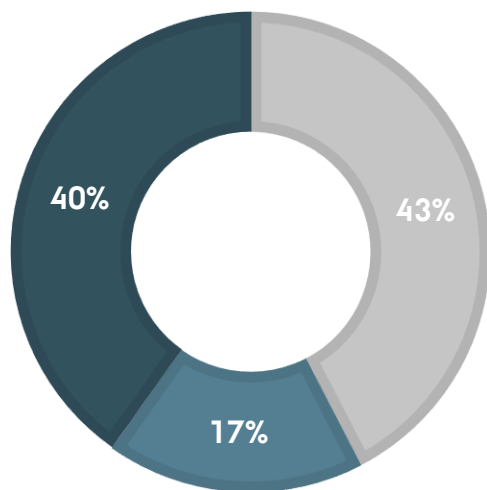
FREQUENCY OF ELEVATED SCORES

- We also assessed the samples elevated scores on:
 - Anxiety (**SCAS – Total**)
 - Depression (**MFQ – Total**)
 - Emotional and behavioral problems (**SDQ – Total**)
 - Impact (**SDQ – Impact**)
- Normal range = 0-80th percentile
- Moderate range = 80th percentile
- High range = 90th percentile

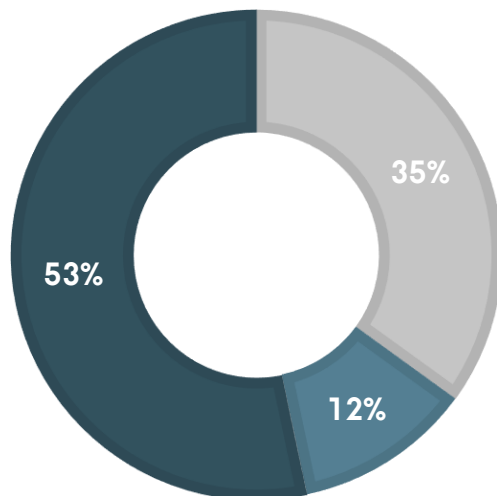


ANXIETY (SCAS – TOTAL)

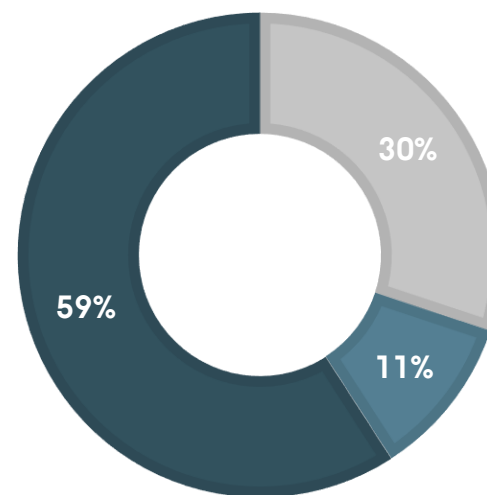
BOYS – YOUTH



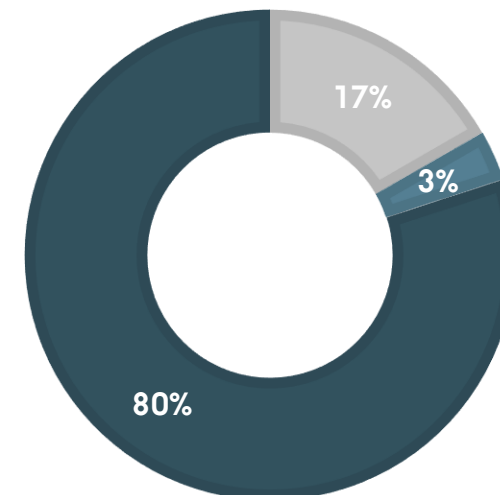
GIRLS – YOUTH



BOYS – PARENT



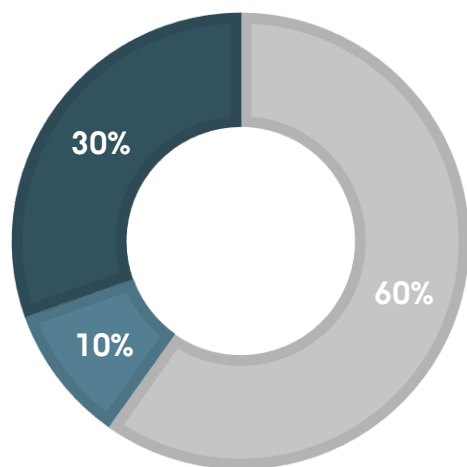
GIRLS – PARENT



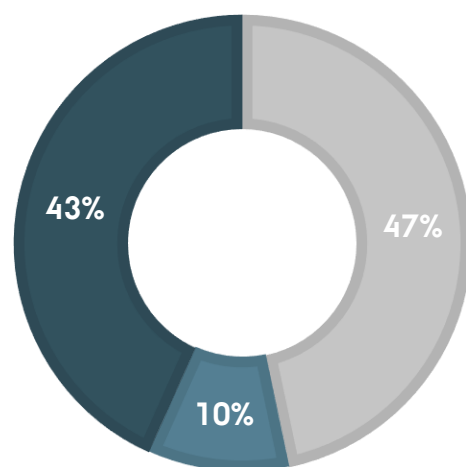
■ Normal ■ Moderate ■ High

DEPRESSION (MFQ-TOTAL)

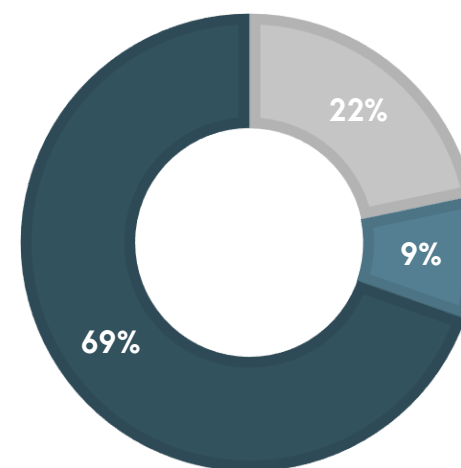
BOYS - YOUTH



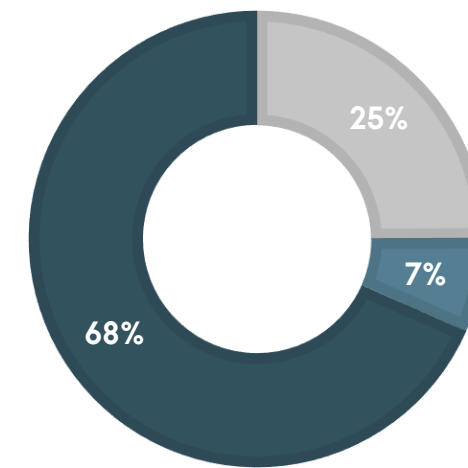
GIRLS - YOUTH



BOYS - PARENT



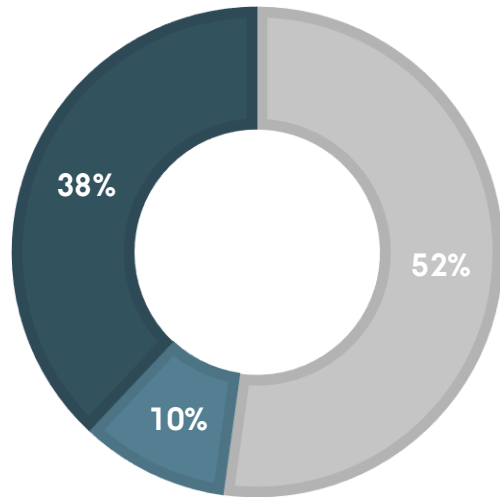
GIRLS - PARENT



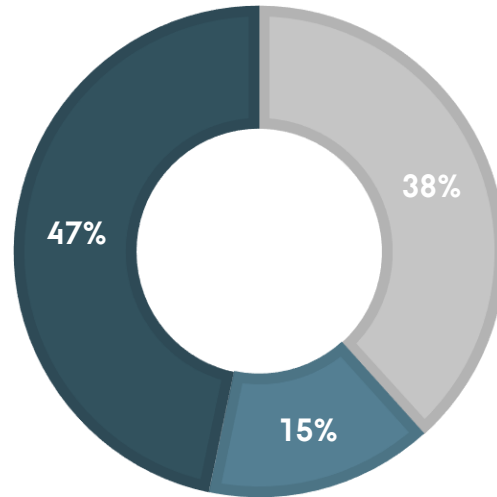
■ Normal ■ Moderate ■ High

STRENGTH AND DIFFICULTIES QUESTIONNAIRE -TOTAL

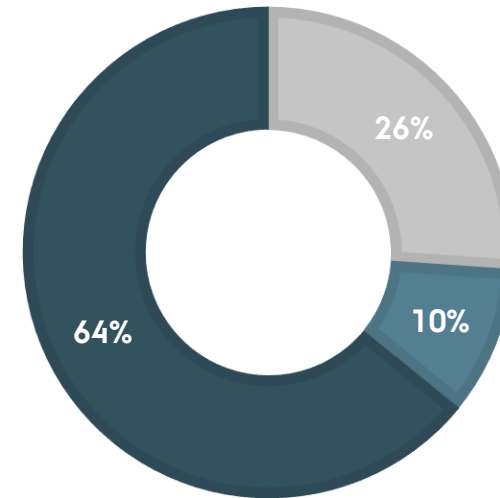
BOYS - YOUTH



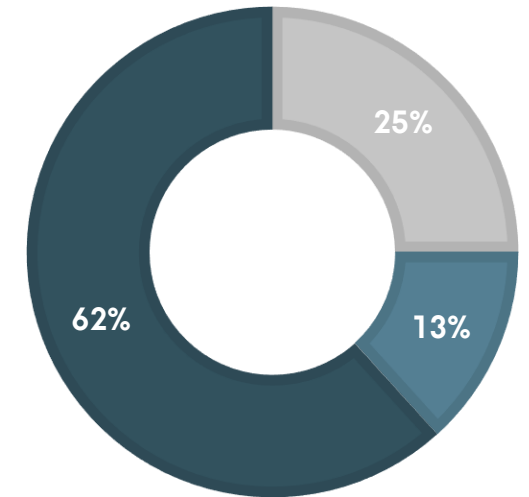
GIRLS - YOUTH



BOYS - PARENT



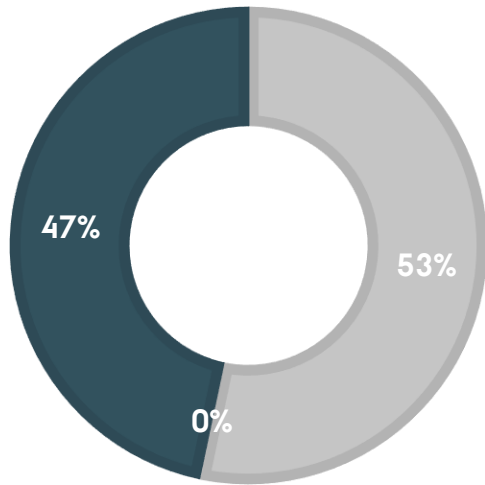
GIRLS - PARENT



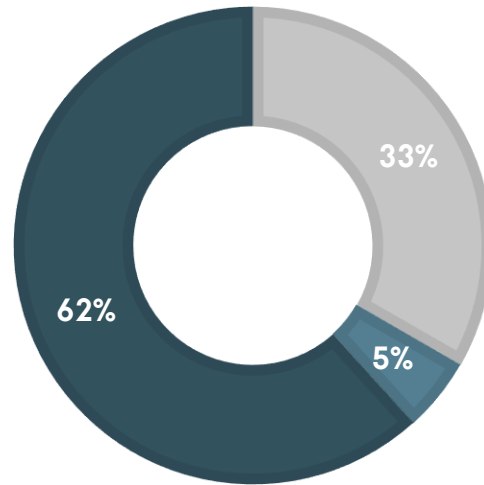
■ Normal ■ Moderate ■ High

STRENGTH AND DIFFICULTIES QUESTIONNAIRE -IMPACT

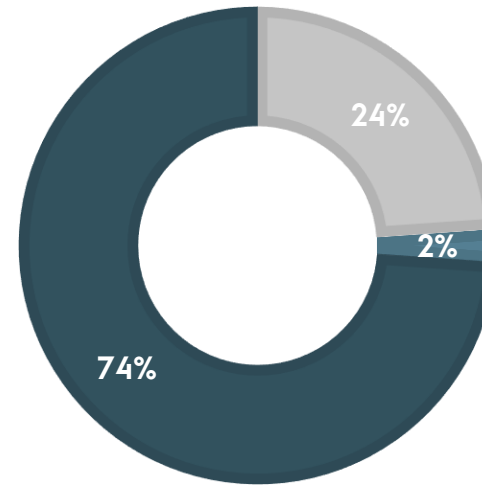
BOYS - YOUTH



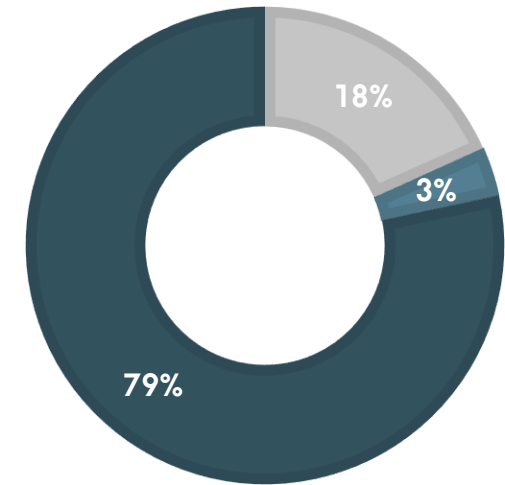
GIRLS - YOUTH



BOYS - PARENT



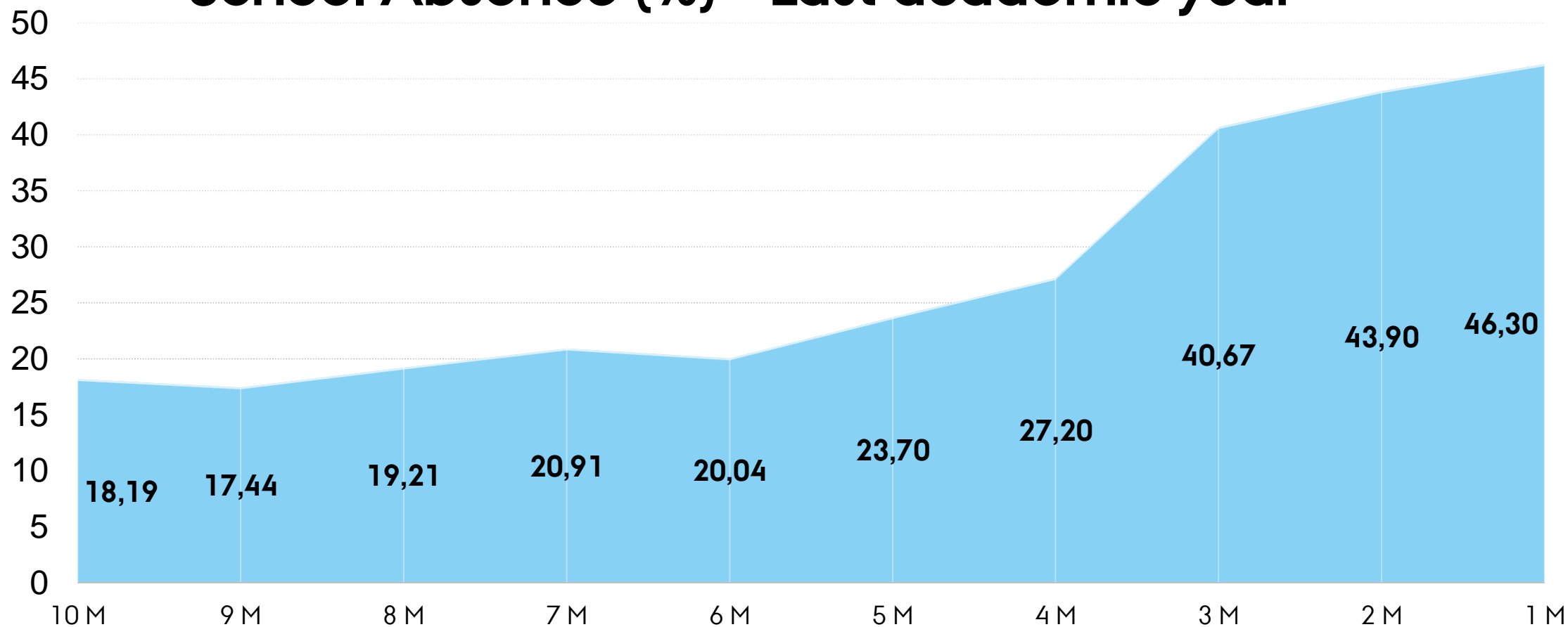
GIRLS - PARENT



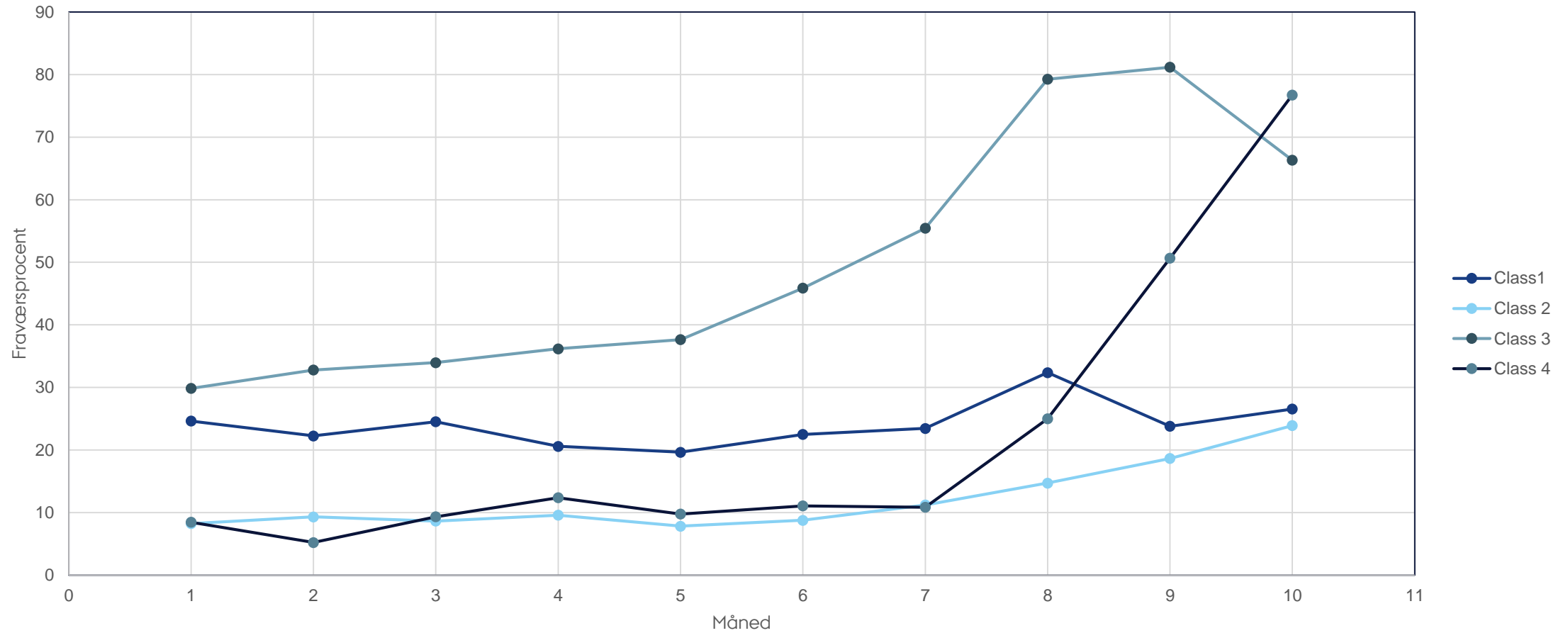
■ Normal ■ Moderate ■ High

PROFILES?

School Absence (%) - Last academic year



GROWTH CURVE MODELS



TO SUM UP – WHO WERE THEY?

Sample:

- They were 152 school aged children with school attendance problems

School absence:

- No difference in amount of school absence based on **gender**.
- The **older** age groups had higher levels of school absence



Correlations:

- Education
- Age
- Mental health
- Bullying

Norm-comparison:

- Anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems significantly higher than normal population.
- High number of youths with SAP were within the **moderate** to **high** range

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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