Promoting Physical Activity: Expanding Access for Older Oregonians via OSU Extension

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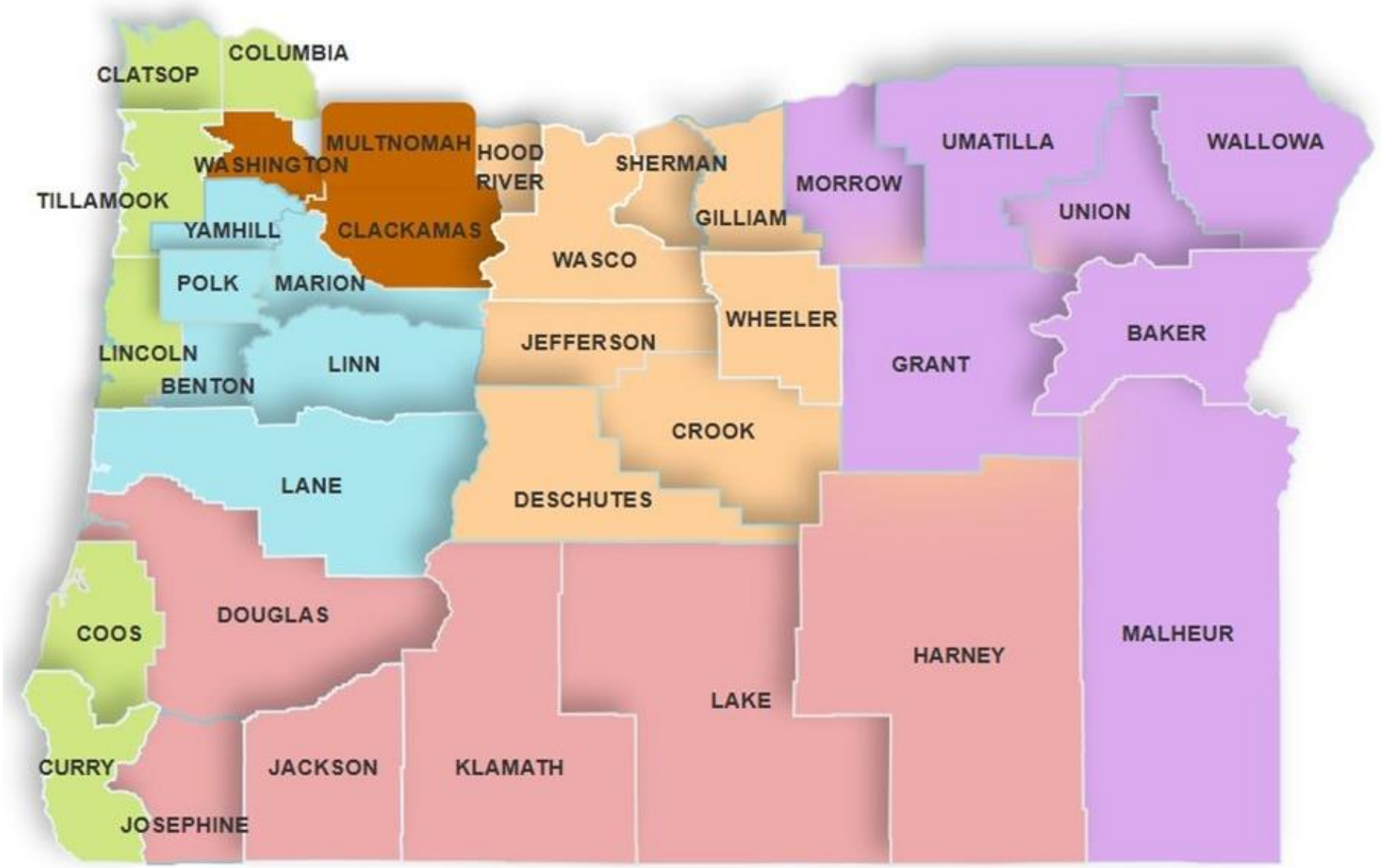
Oregon State University Extension Service

PAAL Physical Activity & Active Living

OPEN CAMPUS Supporting COMMUNITY, COLLEGE, CAREER

Extension Family & Community Health



Vision: *A future where all Oregonians, across age, ability, geography, and lived experience, have equitable access to inclusive, evidence-based opportunities for physical activity that support lifelong health, well-being, and belonging.*

Guide & inform decision making related to PAAL activities

Promote state-supported programs and initiatives

Support Extension's ability to respond to PAAL opportunities

Enable assessment of PAAL activities and outcomes

Report & communicate PAAL efforts and impacts

Extension FCH-PAAL: Older Adult PA Programs

Program Evaluation (2024)

Better Bones & Balance (BBB), Strong People (SP), Walk with Ease (WWE), Camine Con Gusto (CCG)

Aim: To describe the characteristics of program participants, including where they lived (reach), and their PA behaviors, and perceived benefits of participation.

- **PAAL Reach** (N=426; 60+)
  - 72.2 (± 7.1) years
  - 89% Non-Hispanic, White
  - 92% Female at birth
  - 78% College Graduates
  - 98% Food Secure
  - 86% Managing chronic conditions

- **Benefits of PAAL Participation**
  - 70% meet muscle-strengthening guidelines
  - 84% meet aerobic guidelines
  - 61% meet both (compared to 15% nationally)
  - 61% Improved balance
  - 65% Improved mental health
  - 40% Increased social connections

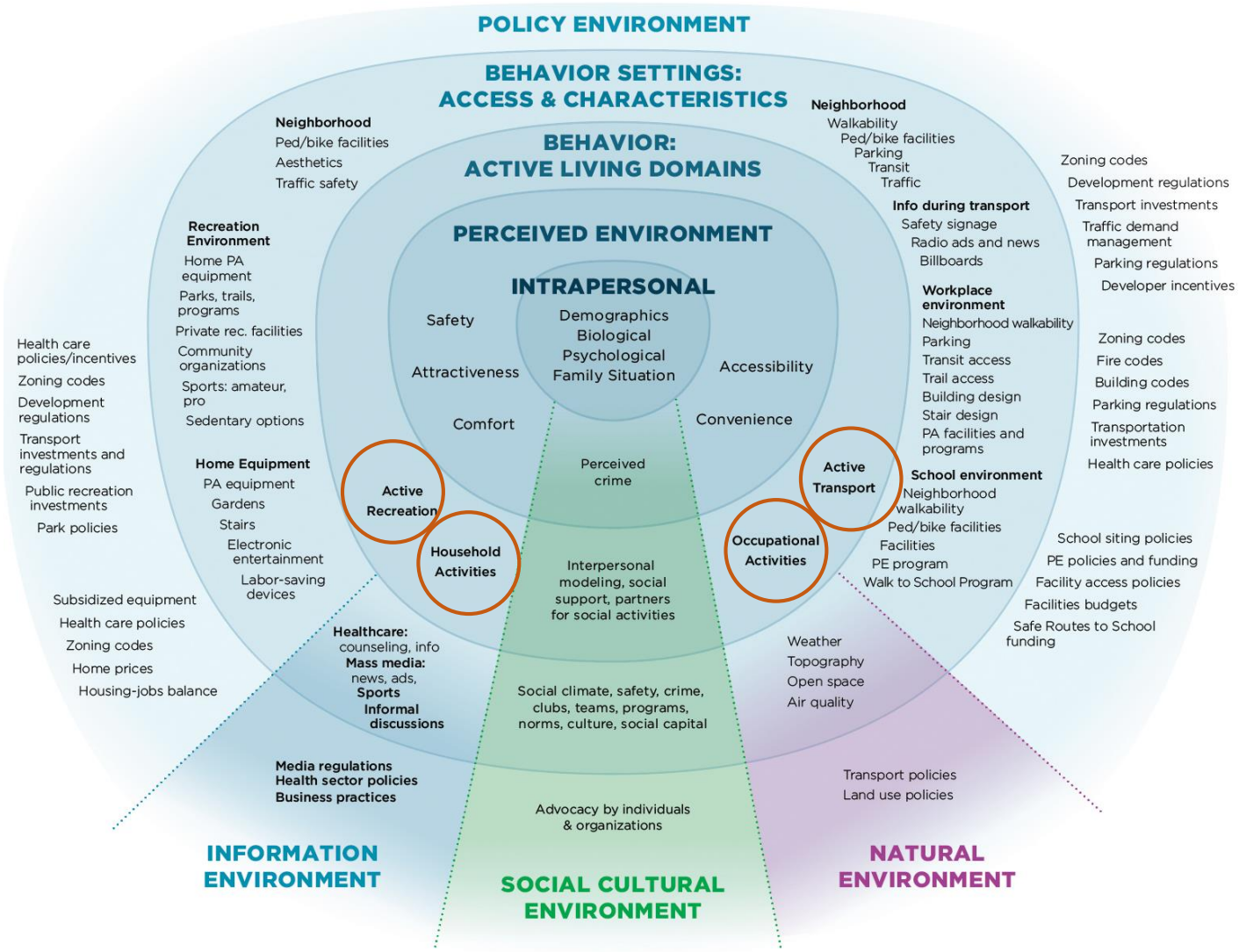
Issue: Based on our sample, PAAL programs are not serving all older Oregonians.

Project Aims

- **Primary Aims**
  - Understand the **physical activity behaviors** of older Oregonians.
    - PA levels and patterns
    - PA Preferences
  - Understand the **barriers to being physically active** perceived by older Oregonians.

- **Secondary Aim (post hoc)**
  - Examine whether barriers or PA levels differ between older Oregonians engaged in group exercise programs, compared to those who do not participate in group exercise.
    - **Hypothesis:** Group exercisers would report fewer barriers and be more likely to meet PA guidelines.

Theoretical Approach



- Social-Ecological Model of Physical Activity
  - Conceptual framework
  - Action framework
- Specifically, survey questions asked about
  - Physical activity (PA) across the predominant PA behavior settings.
  - Barriers across individual, social cultural environment, and environmental levels –with a focus on accessibility

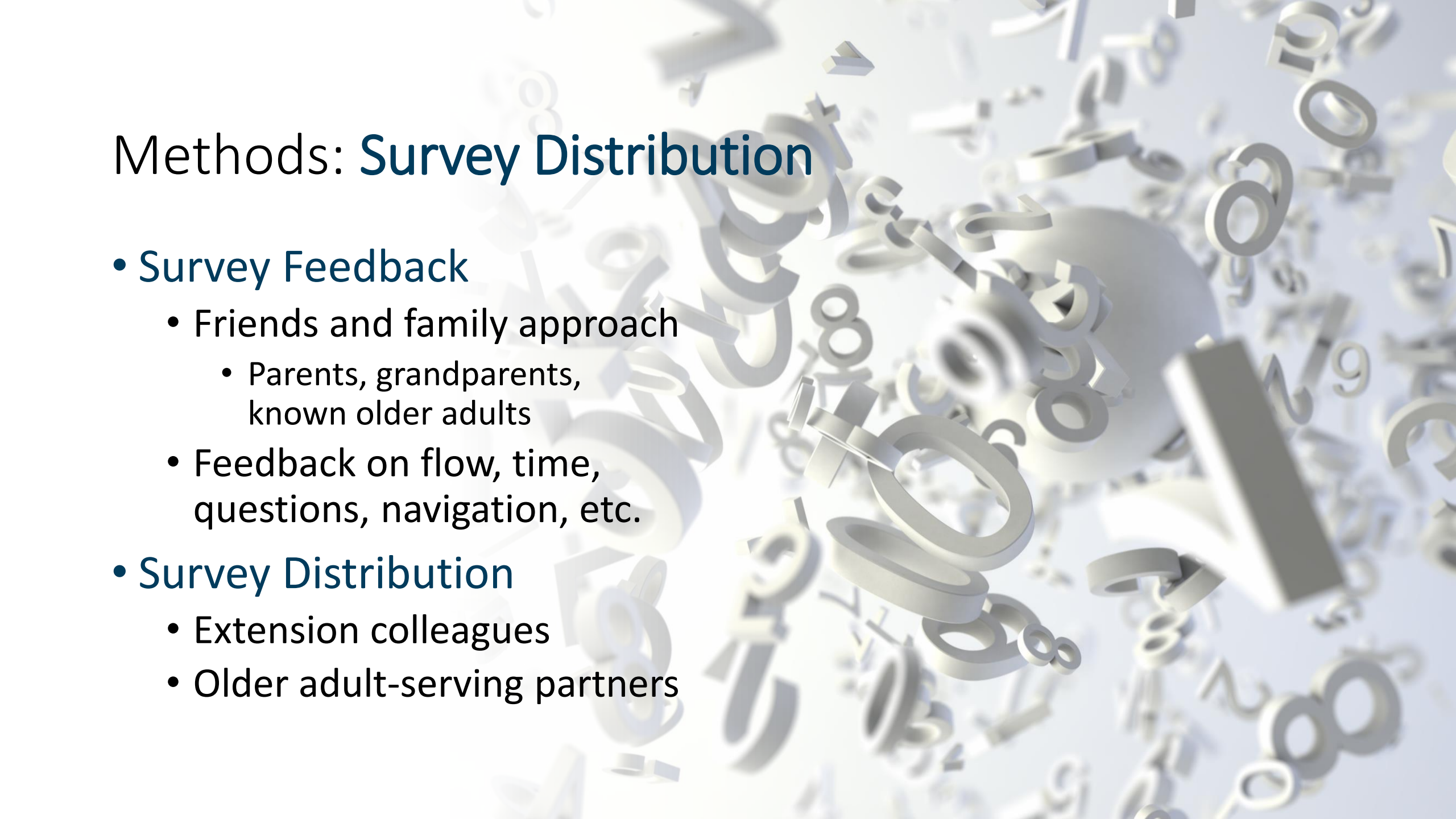
Methods: Survey Development

- Multi-part questionnaire
  - PA behaviors and preferences
  - PA barriers, Demographics
  - Available in English and Spanish
- Survey items drawn from validated instruments
  - International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ)
  - Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
- Question Structure
  - 7-day recall, asked about different activity behavioral settings
  - Time and intensity (breathing harder than normal)
  - Muscle strengthening and balance
  - Intentional messaging about the importance of being active and context about WHY questions were being asked

Did you know that when you do physical activity that has health benefits, your heart rate may increase, causing you to breathe a little harder, but not to the point of feeling overly winded or tired? We want to learn about how much of your total physical activity gets your heart rate up and makes you breathe harder and deeper than usual.

Methods: Survey Distribution

- Survey Feedback
  - Friends and family approach
    - Parents, grandparents, known older adults
  - Feedback on flow, time, questions, navigation, etc.
- Survey Distribution
  - Extension colleagues
  - Older adult-serving partners



Methods: Data Analyses

- Analysis
  - Exploratory
  - Validate participant eligibility
  - Self-report data with minimal transformation
    - For calculating "meeting guidelines," used midpoint of range selected or "0" or "150 minutes" for minimum and maximum options
  - Smaller sample size led to challenges with statistical analyses beyond descriptives

Thinking about all the ways you are active and like to be active, do you face barriers that make it hard for you to do them?

Which of the following types of barriers limit your ability to be active?

Which of the following <u>personal barriers</u> do you experience?

87.9% listed at least one **Personal** barrier

Characteristics of Survey Responders

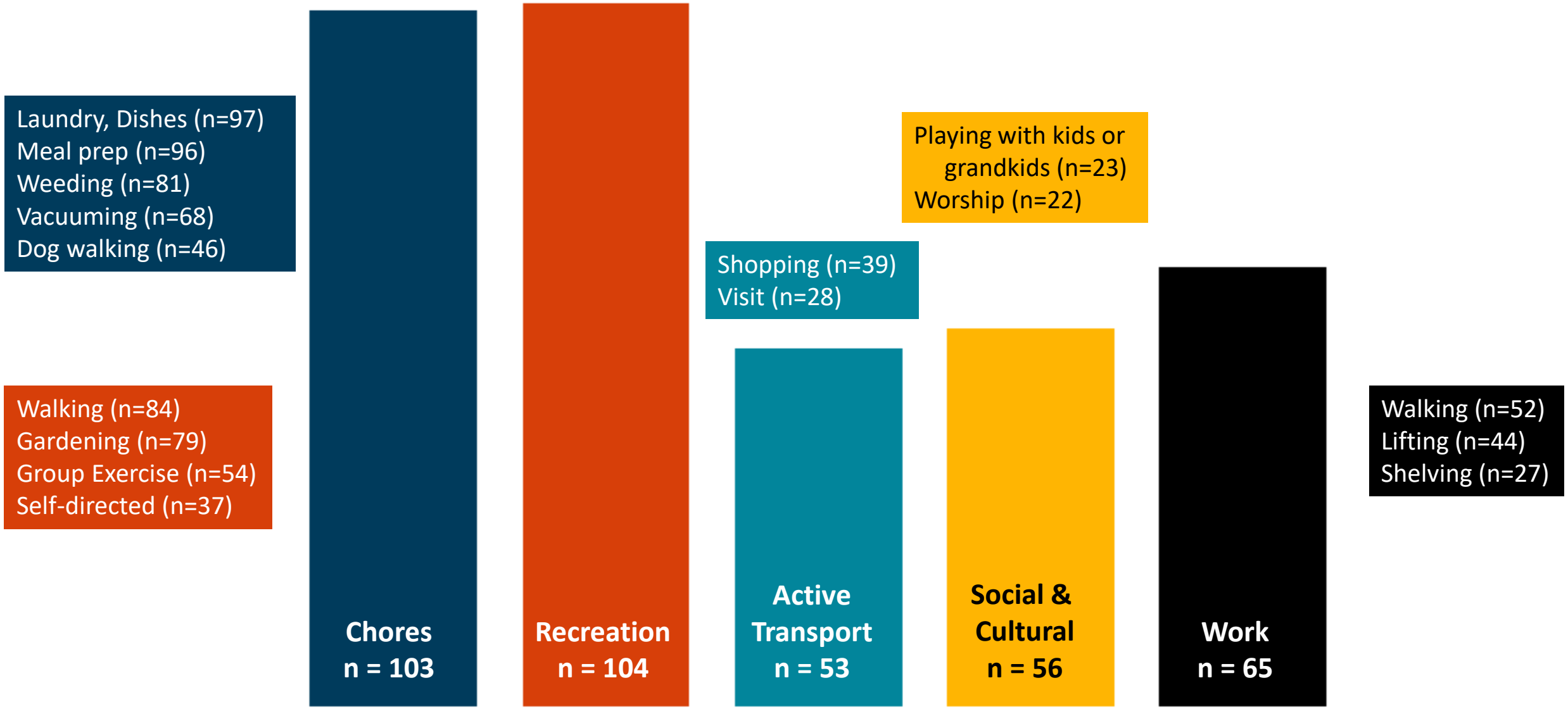
Participant Characteristics (N=104)
Age (mean, SD): 70.7 years old, 5.5
Woman Gender (%): 84.6%
Race/Ethnicity (%) • 88.5% White, Non-Hispanic or Latino
Living Situation • Alone, independently (%): 26.9% • With others (family, spouse) (%): 72.1% • Other situation (%): 1.0%
Education Level • < HS (%): 0% • Some college (%): 17.3% • College graduate (%): 82.7%
Experiences Food Insecurity • Yes (%): 3.8% • No (%): 89.4% • Unknown (%): 6.7%

Aim 1 Results: Physical Activity

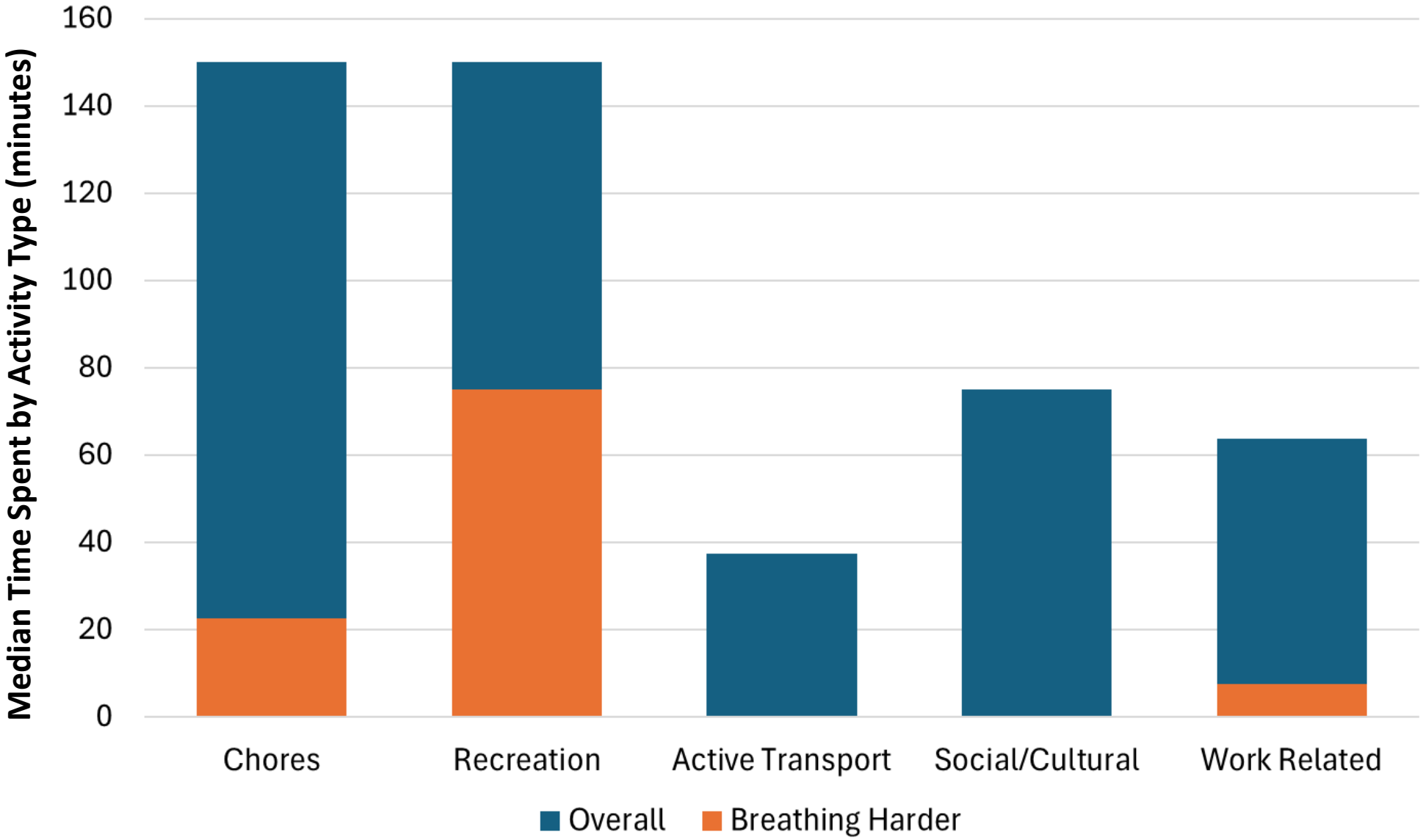
Physical Activity Behaviors: Current Activity and Preferences

Meeting PA Guidelines: Aerobic and Muscle-strengthening Activity

How Respondents Report Being Active

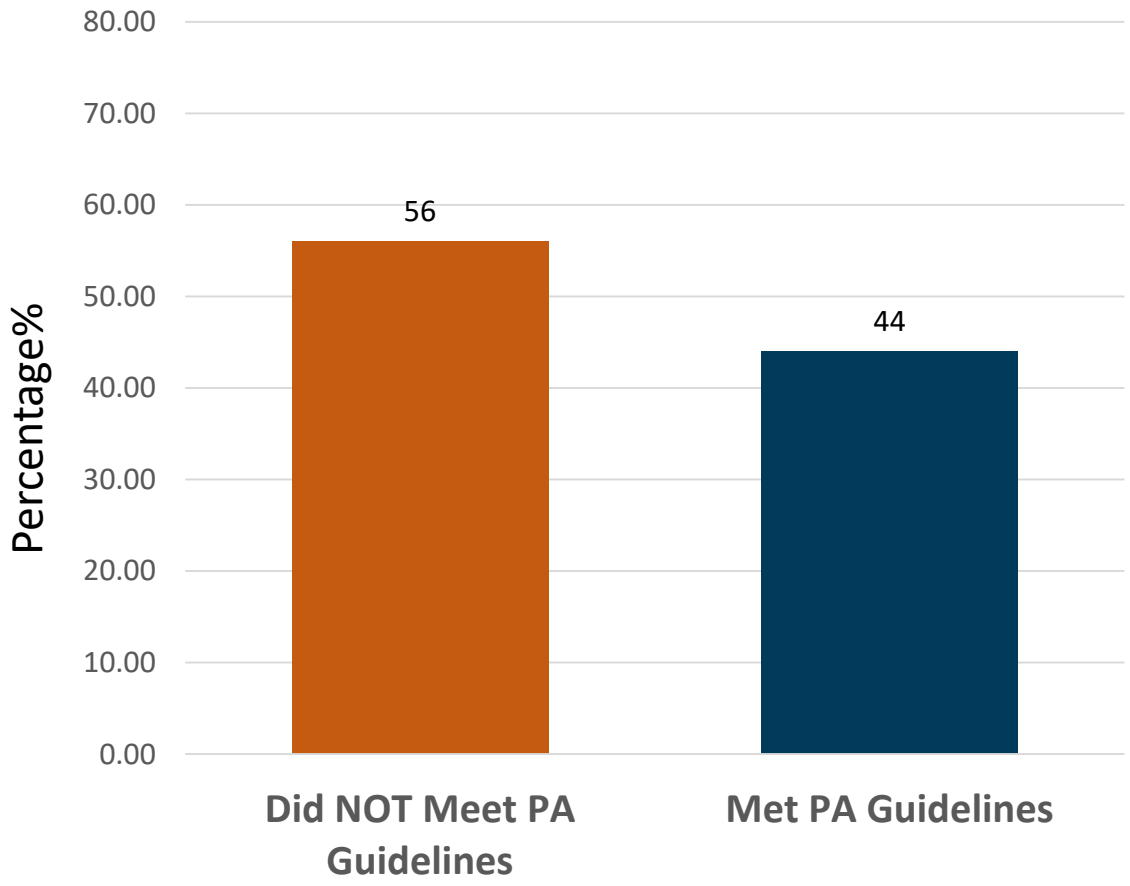


Time in (at least) Moderate Intensity Activities

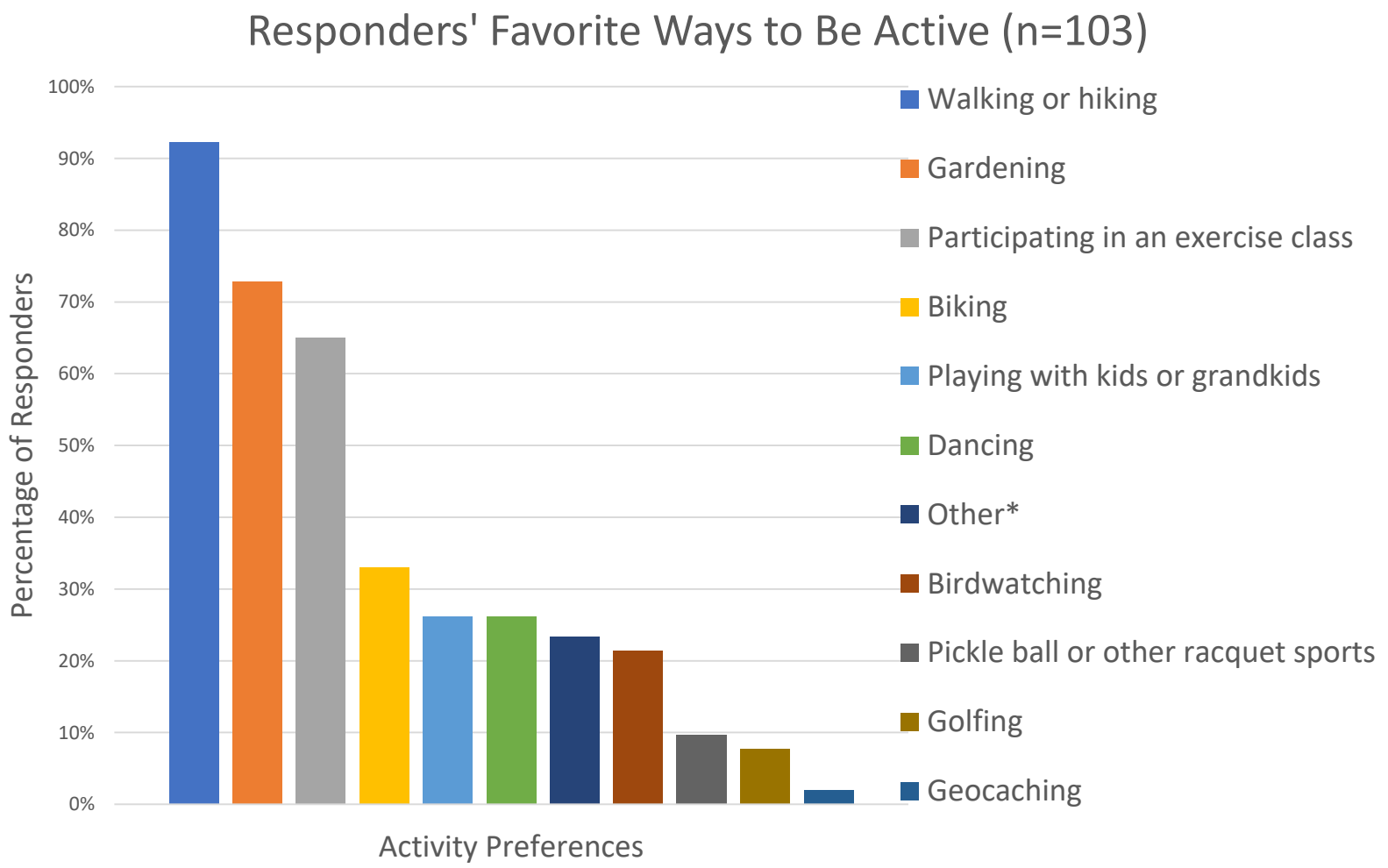


Meeting Physical Activity Guidelines

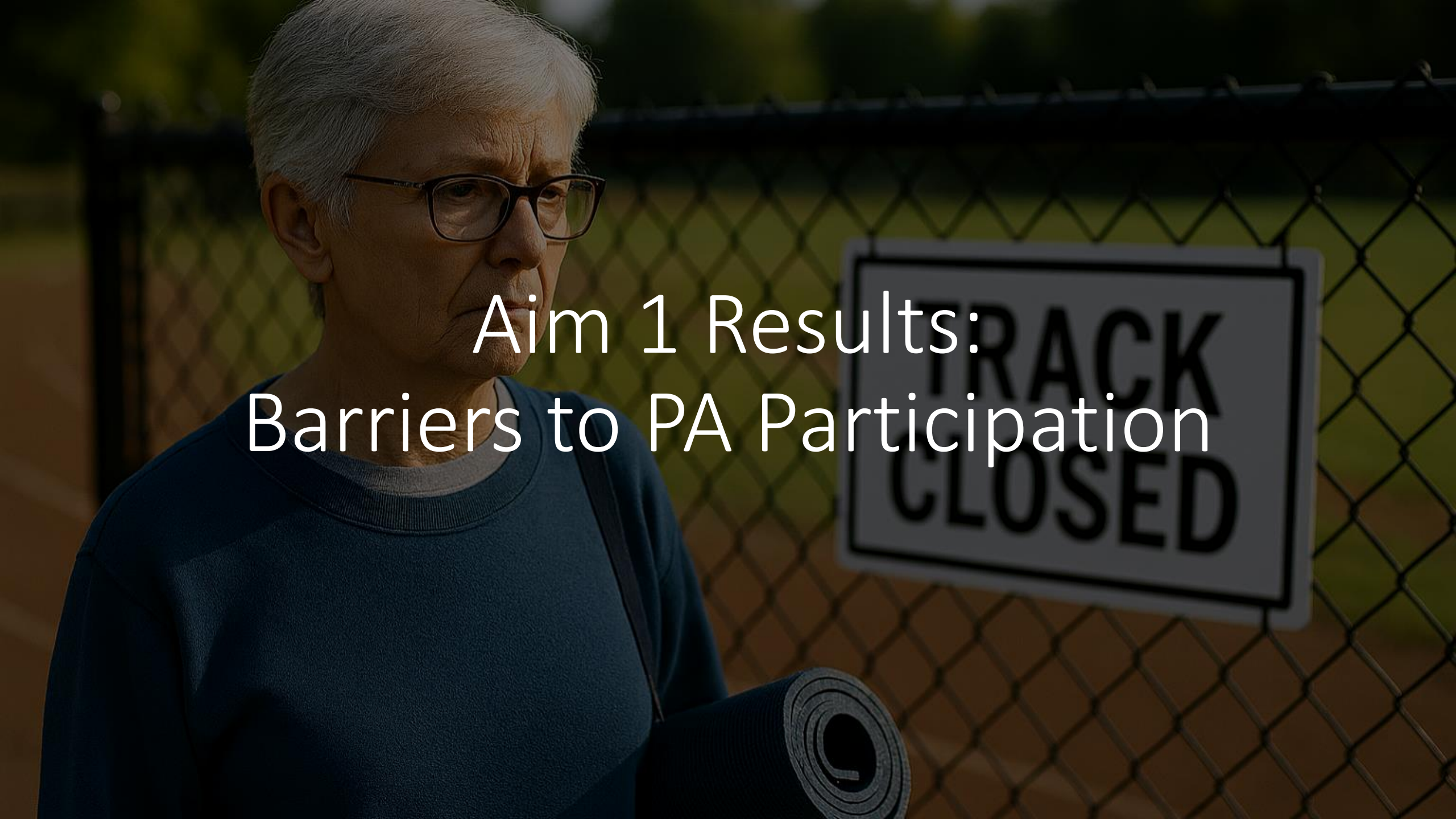
- Meeting the Guidelines
  - At least 150 minutes per week of physical activity spent “breathing harder than normal” **and**,
  - Participating in muscle-strengthening activities on at least two days per week
- Of the total sample, 44% MET the PA Guidelines; 56% did NOT MEET the guidelines



Alignment of PA Preferences and Behaviors



- Walking, Gardening, and Group Exercise were the three most often cited activities regarding how respondents were getting their recreational PA.



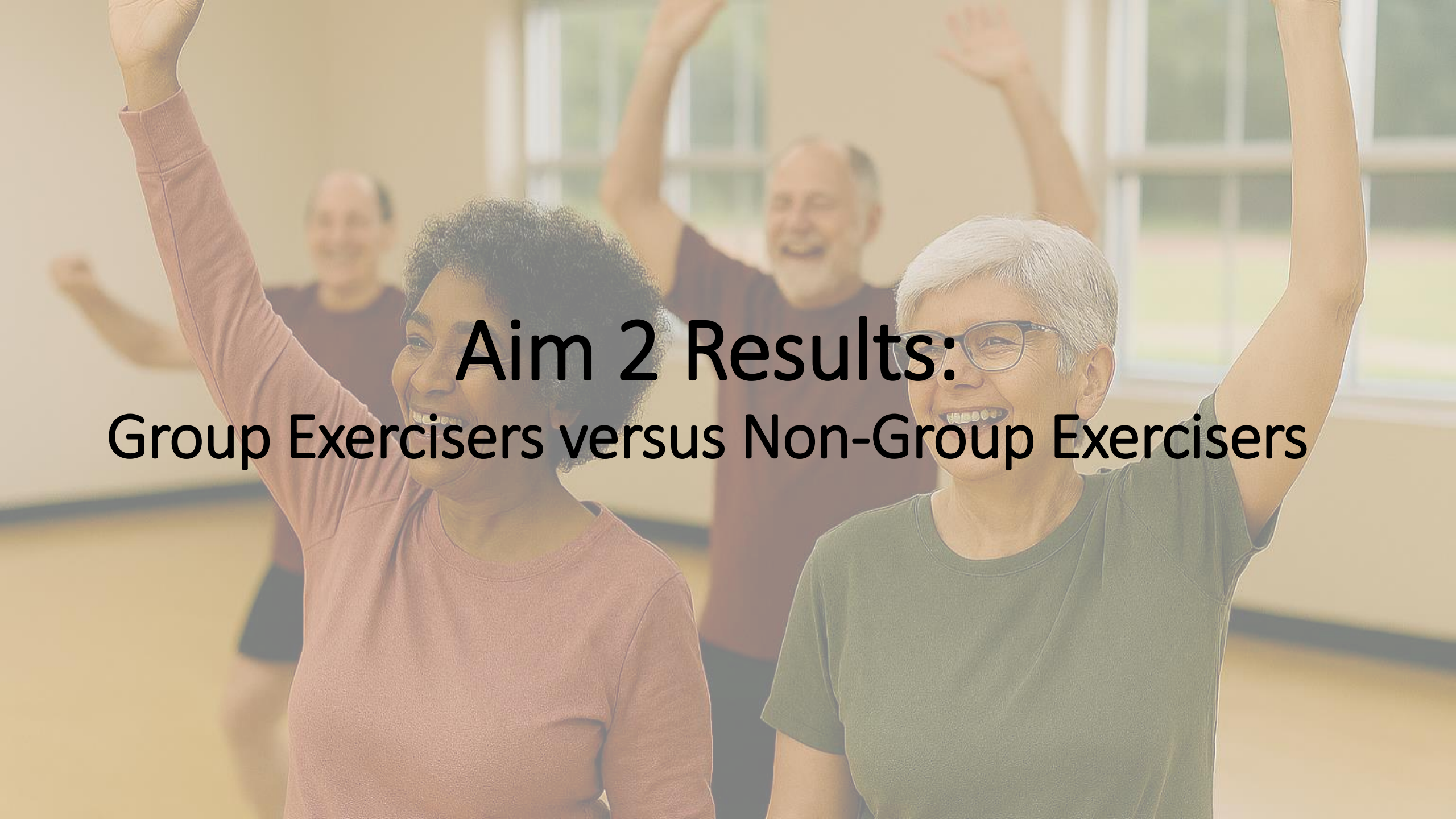
Aim 1 Results: Barriers to PA Participation

Barriers

- **55%** of responders shared they face barriers that make it hard to be active
- Among those reporting barrier types that limit their ability to be active:
  - **49.1% Personal** ("How I feel about the activity or things about me that affect my ability to do the activity")
  - **21.1% Accessibility** ("How easy or hard it is to access")
  - **5.3% Social** ("Support from others")
  - **54.8% Other** (open-ended)
- Only participants who did not select "I am not limited by any barriers" were probed on specific barriers within each category. Of those:
  - **87.9%** listed at least one **Personal** barrier
  - **56.9%** listed at least one **Accessibility** barrier
  - **25.8%** listed at least one **Social** barrier

PA Preferences: Disconnect with Behaviors

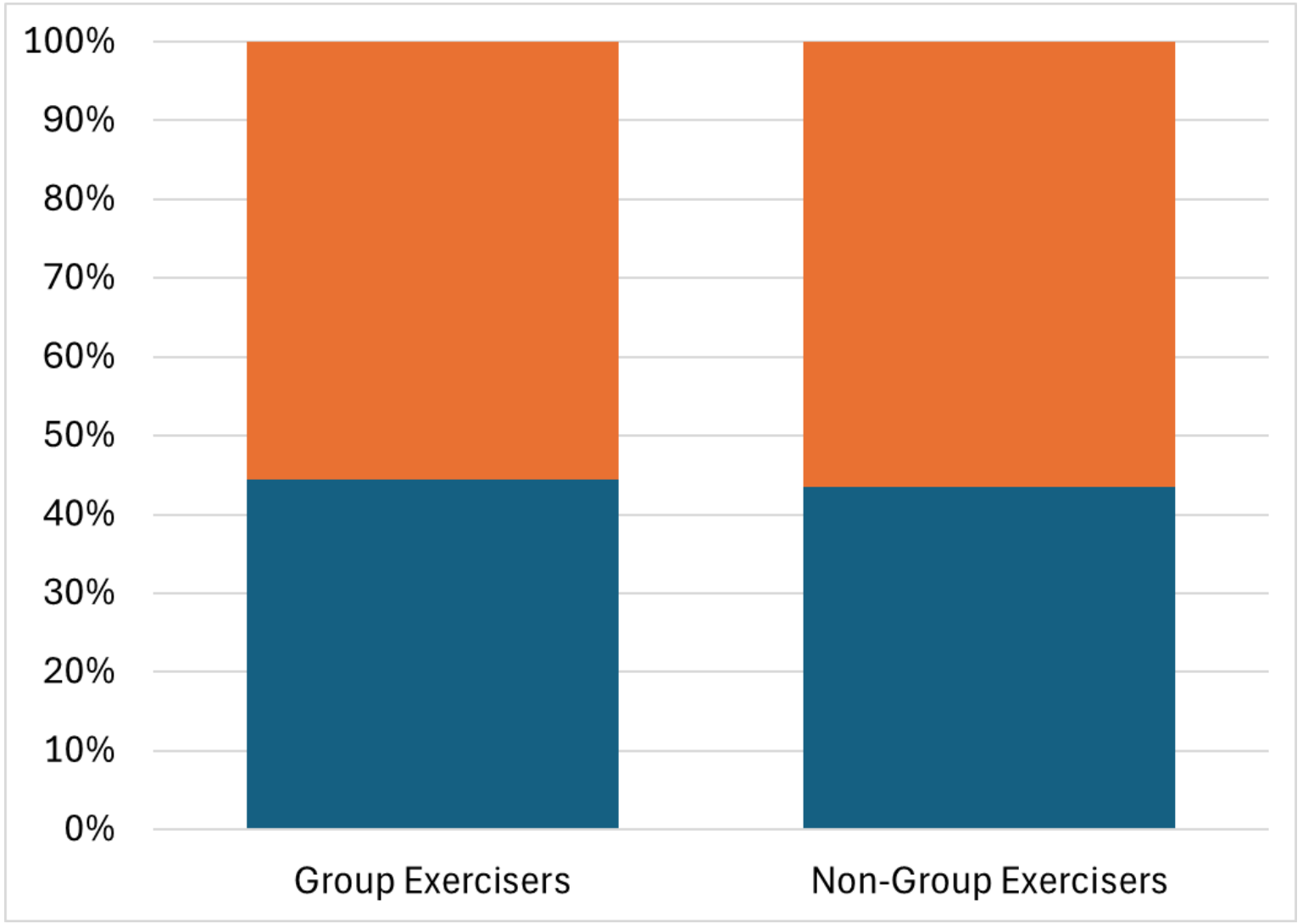
- Nearly 1/3 of people who said group exercise is a favorite way to be active did not participate in group exercise in the last 7 days.
- Common barriers reported in this sub-group include
  - scheduling issues
  - barriers related to a sense of belonging (e.g., being self-conscious, not knowing others who participate, uneasy attending with others)



Aim 2 Results:

Group Exercisers versus Non-Group Exercisers

Meeting PA Guidelines:
No difference between GE and non-GE respondents



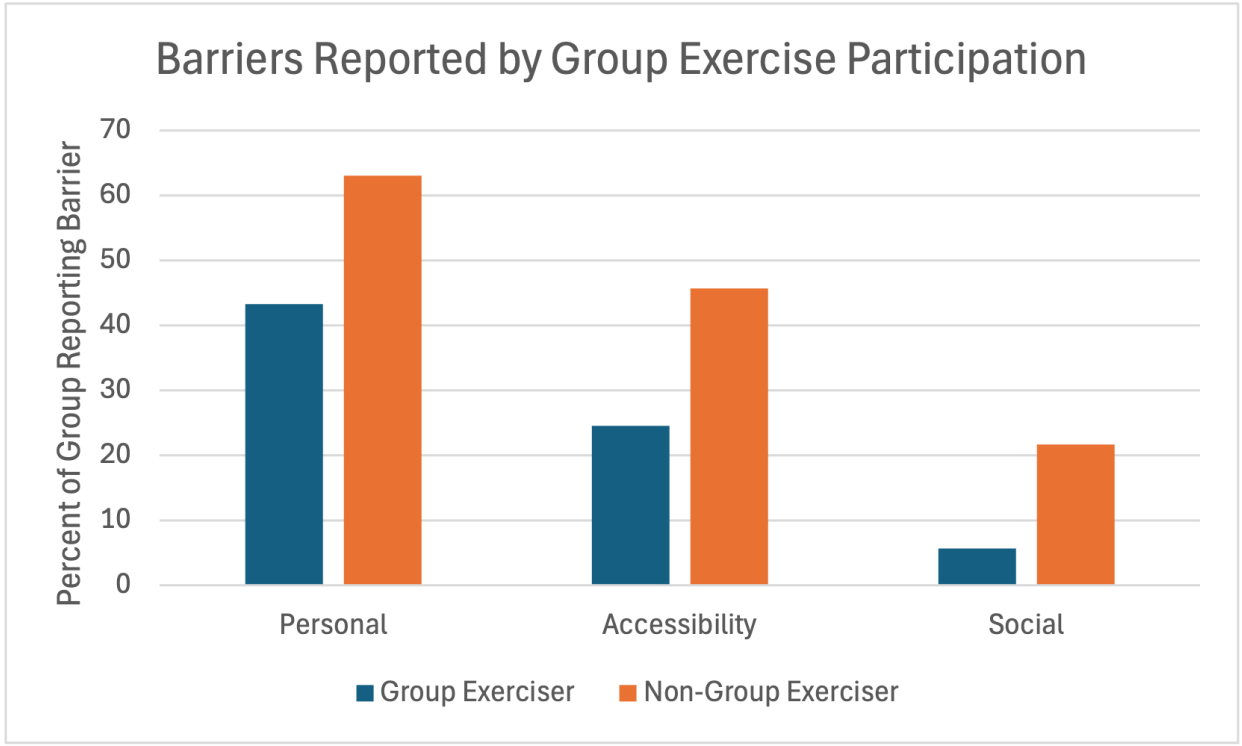
Did not Meet Guidelines

- **Chi-square ≈ 0.009**
- **p-value ≈ 0.92**

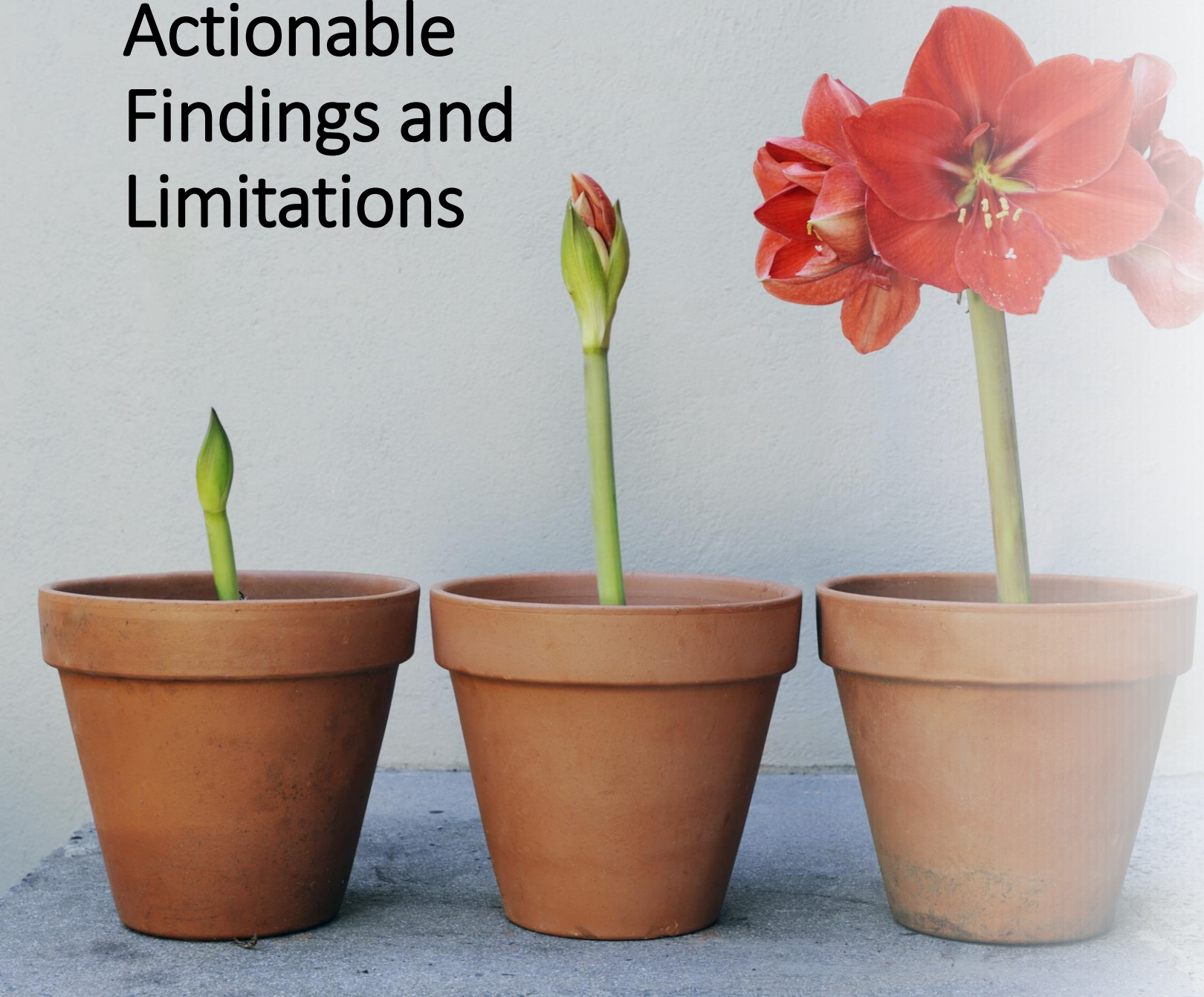
Met Guidelines

Experience of Barriers: Group Exercisers report fewer barriers

- Non-group exercise participants reported more total barriers than those who participated in group exercise (2.15 versus 1.15, respectively; p=0.015).
- Group exercise participants reported fewer barriers across all categories compared to non-group exercise participants, the small sample size makes it harder to explain by each type of barrier.



Actionable Findings and Limitations



- Reach is still narrow
- Older Oregonians in this sample are more active than older adults generally (based on meeting the PA Guidelines), but less active than PAAL program participants.
- Most respondents reported barriers;
  - group exercisers report fewer barriers than those active in other ways
- Data will inform program design and implementation

- Limitations
  - Small sample size
  - Survey design
    - Skip logic
    - Comprehensive and complex

Next Steps

- Continue the work!
- Collect more data
  - Help us gather data by disseminating our survey through your networks.
- Help identify strategies to reach and serve more older Oregonians based on what we learn.

https://beav.es/fUU

Thank You!

Credit: Getty Images

Walk With Ease (WWE)

Community-based program

Adults and older adults

Research and practice tested

Reduce pain, improve PA confidence and health

In-person and online training or participant self-directed

StrongPeople™ (formerly StrongWomen™)

Community-based program

Adults and older adults

Practice tested

Promotes strength, function, & independence

Annual+ in-person or

Remote training

Better Bones & Balance® (BBB)

Community-based program

Adults and older adults

Research and practice tested

Improves balance, strength, mobility; reduces fall and fracture risk

Annual hybrid training