



# **EVALUATION BY VOLUNTEERS AND CARE RECEIVERS Fiscal 2010**

**Report Prepared By:**

**Debbie Gann  
TLC for Seniors, LLC  
July 2010**

## BACKGROUND

The Senior Connection conducts an annual satisfaction survey among its Care Receivers. The FY 2010 survey tracked questions first asked in FY 2008 to measure Care Receivers' perceptions of whether and how The Senior Connection services impacted their quality of life. The Senior Connection conducted a simultaneous survey of Volunteers in 2008, 2009, and 2010 to better understand *their* motivations and feelings about The Senior Connection organization and services.

Surveys were sent in mid-May 2010 to 530 Care Receivers who received transportation services in the fiscal year and to 142 Volunteers. As of July 1, 90 Care Receivers and 39 Volunteers completed and mailed back the survey. Profiles of survey responders are at the back of this report.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The FY 2010 survey results indicate an overwhelming majority of Care Receivers are satisfied with The Senior Connection's programs, staff, and volunteers. This has been true in previous years, too. The survey also measures the strength of the satisfaction – and it continues to be very strong.

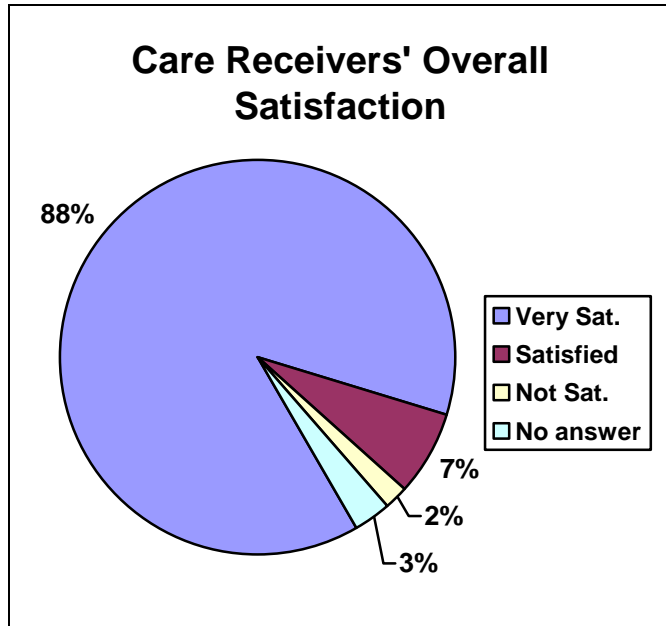
- ★ Almost 9 in 10 Care Receivers are “very” satisfied overall with the services they received from The Senior Connection, and almost 9 in 10 “strongly” agree that they would recommend the organization to friends or relatives.
- ★ Nine in ten Care Receivers “strongly” agree that volunteers treated them with respect.
- ★ Three-fourths say these services improved their quality of life.
- ★ Between one-third and two-thirds of Care Receivers “strongly” agree that these services improved their lives in *specific* ways and many others feel they did so but do not feel quite as strongly. They cite feeling better about themselves and less lonely, feeling less stressed, being better able to stay in their own home, etc.
- ★ Large majorities of Volunteers are satisfied with the appreciation and support from the program staff, and are proud to be associated with The Senior Connection.
- ★ About 8 in 10 Volunteers report that their interests are utilized well; an even higher percentage is satisfied with their volunteer placements.
- ★ Approximately 8 in 10 Volunteers report many positive outcomes such as more involvement in their community, and feeling better about themselves. About two-thirds say they feel more socially connected and active overall. One of the strongest benefits they cite is feeling it helps provide an answer to doing their civic duty.

**Care Receiver: “The Senior Connection provides me with invaluable and priceless help and concern.”**

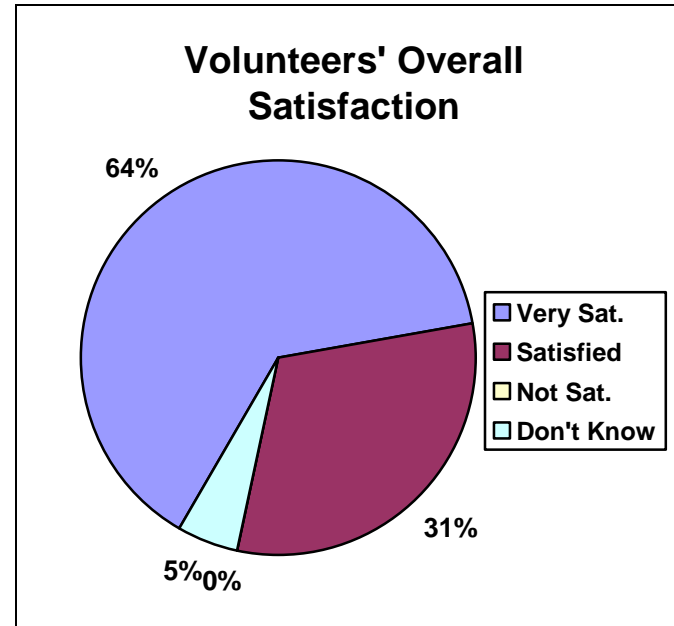
**Volunteer: “I find my experiences very meaningful and they are always appreciated and welcome.”**

**OVERALL, ALMOST 9 IN 10 CARE RECEIVERS ARE “VERY” SATISFIED WITH THE SENIOR CONNECTION SERVICES THEY RECEIVED. VOLUNTEERS ALSO EXPRESS SATISFACTION WITH THE SERVICES THEY PROVIDED.**

*“Overall, how satisfied were you with the service(s) you received?”*

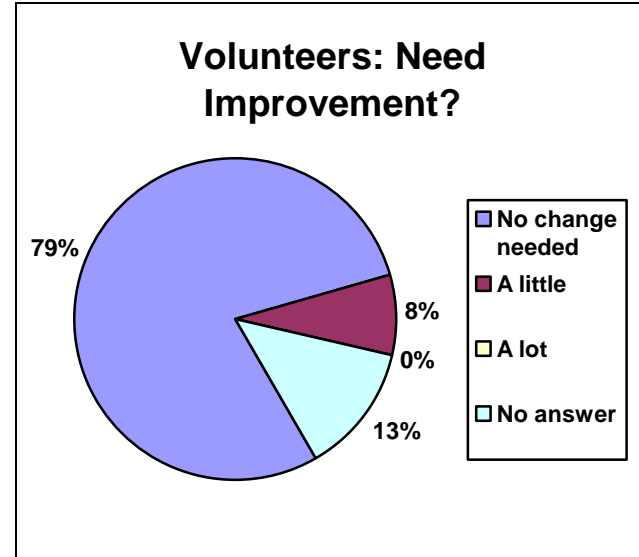
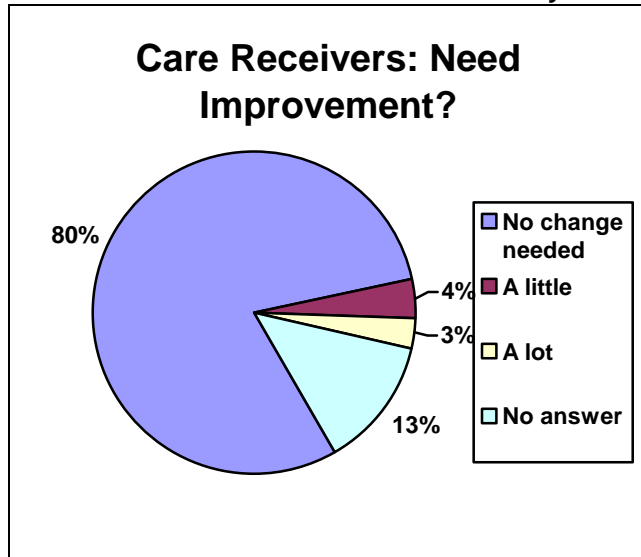


*“Overall, how satisfied were you with the service(s) you provided?”*



**THE VAST MAJORITY OF VOLUNTEERS AND CARE RECEIVERS FEEL THAT NO IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED.**

*“Do you feel that the services need improvement?”*

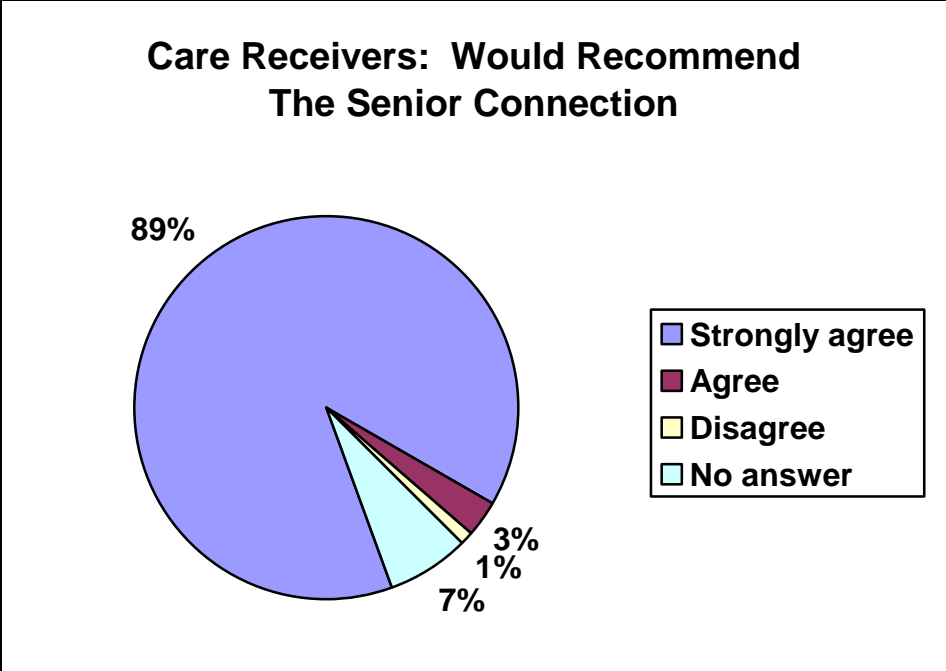


The few Care Receivers' suggestions for improvement focus on the need for more volunteers (4 comments)

Additional improvement may be needed in communicating whom to contact at The Senior Connection. “Only” 69% of Care Receivers strongly agree that they know whom to contact to receive more service(s), complain about services, or compliment staff or volunteers. Another 9% agree that they know, but 21% did not answer.

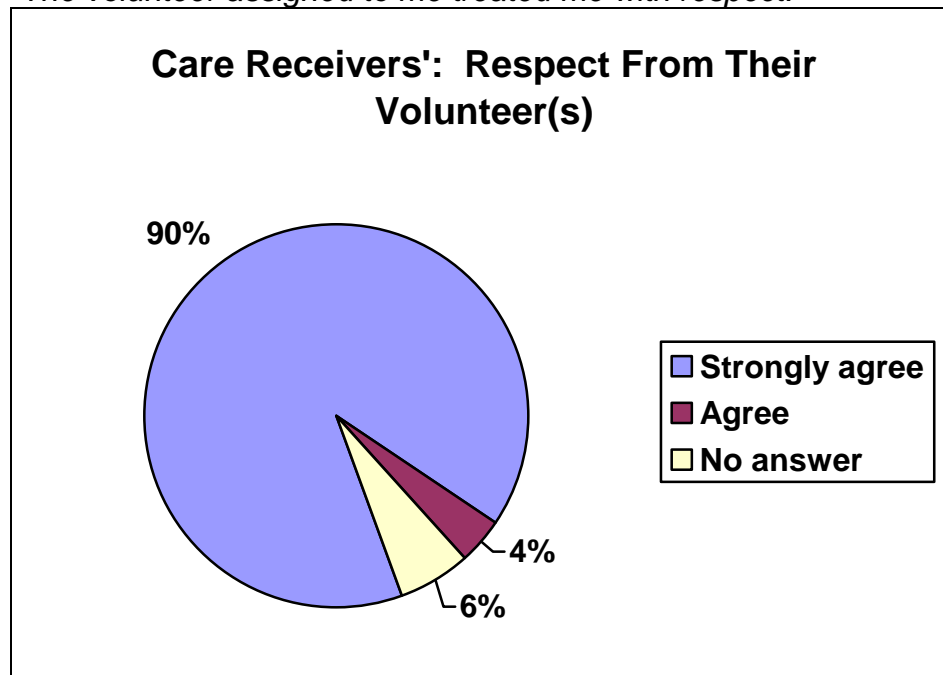
**VIRTUALLY ALL CARE RECEIVERS SAY THEY WOULD RECOMMEND THE SENIOR CONNECTION – AND MOST FEEL VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THIS.**

*“I would recommend The Senior Connection to a friend or relative.”*



**VIRTUALLY ALL CARE RECEIVERS AGREE STRONGLY THAT THEY ARE TREATED WITH RESPECT BY THEIR VOLUNTEER(S).**

*“The volunteer assigned to me treated me with respect.”*



**Examples of comments written in by Care Receivers:**

- ❖ I am very fond of my volunteer and feel grateful for all he does for me. I am very lucky!
- ❖ My deepest appreciation for (my volunteers') always cheerful, dependable and caring help.
- ❖ She is a great help to me in so many ways. We have become wonderful friends.

**ON AVERAGE, CARE RECEIVERS RATE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE FAIRLY HIGH. STILL, A LARGE MAJORITY SAY THE SENIOR CONNECTION HAS IMPROVED THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE AT LEAST A LITTLE — 1 in 4 SAY IT HAS IMPROVED IT “GREATLY.”**

Care Receivers are fairly diverse in how they self-report their quality of life on a one-to-ten scale where ‘1’ means absolutely worst and ‘10’ means absolutely best. About two-thirds of those who answered say it is 8, 9, or 10 on the 10- point scale. This is a much higher rating than in previous years, when approximately 40% to 50% rated their quality of life an eight or higher.

The mean rating is 8.4.

	Care Receivers Who Answered (71 out of 90)
<b>Quality of life rating:</b>	(%)
8-10	68
6 or 7	18
5 or lower	14

**Three in four say The Senior Connection has improved their quality of life at least a small amount.**

*“To what extent did this service improve your overall quality of life? Improved quality of life greatly... a lot ... a small amount ... No improvement on quality of life... Decreased quality of life.”*

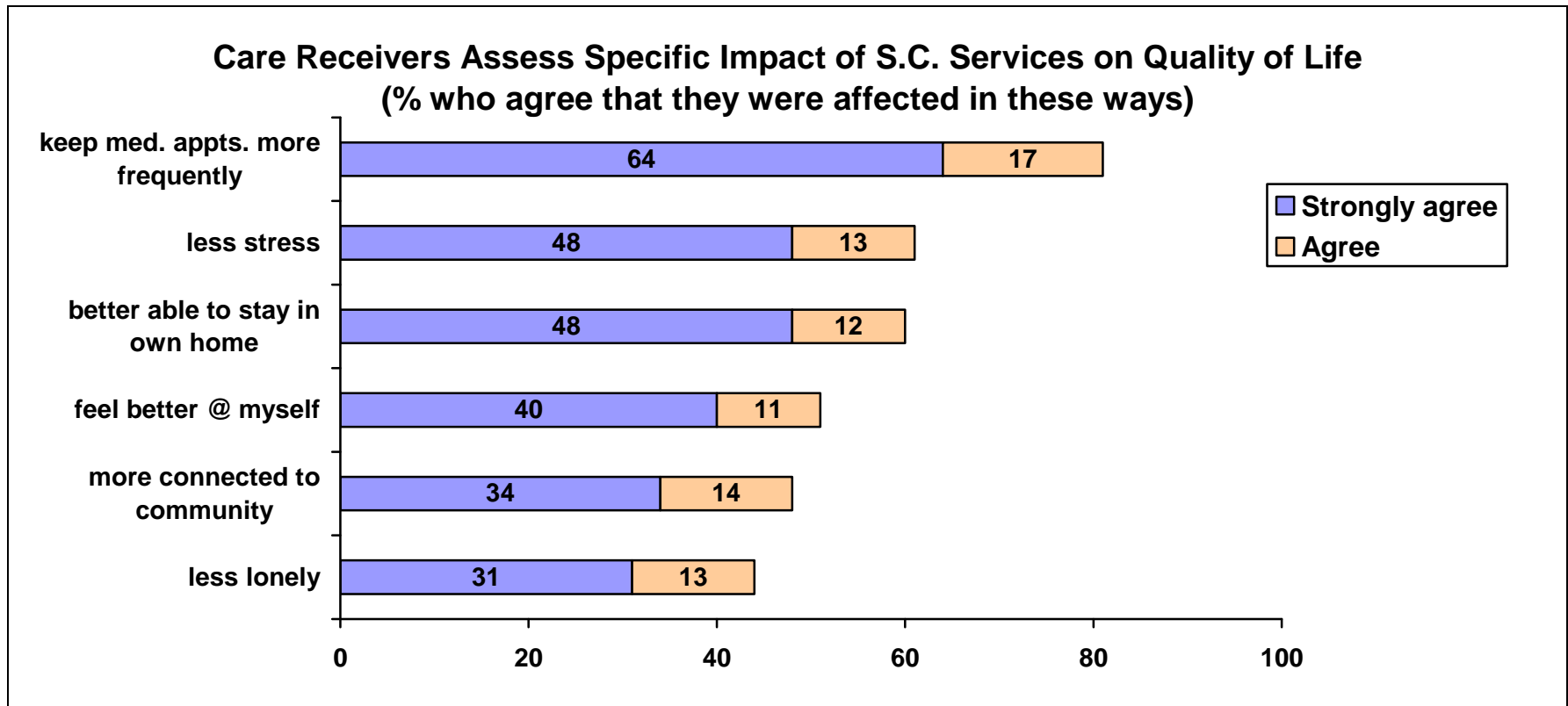
No answer	No dif.	A small amount	A lot	Greatly
13%	9%	17%	32%	25%

Quality of life can mean different things to different people. The following page shows some specific components.

**AT LEAST HALF THE CARE RECEIVERS CITE SPECIFIC WAYS THEIR LIVES ARE IMPROVED BY THE SENIOR CONNECTION SERVICES: ABILITY TO STAY IN HOME LONGER, FEELING BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES, LESS STRESS, MORE CONNECTIONS, AND LESS LONELINESS.**

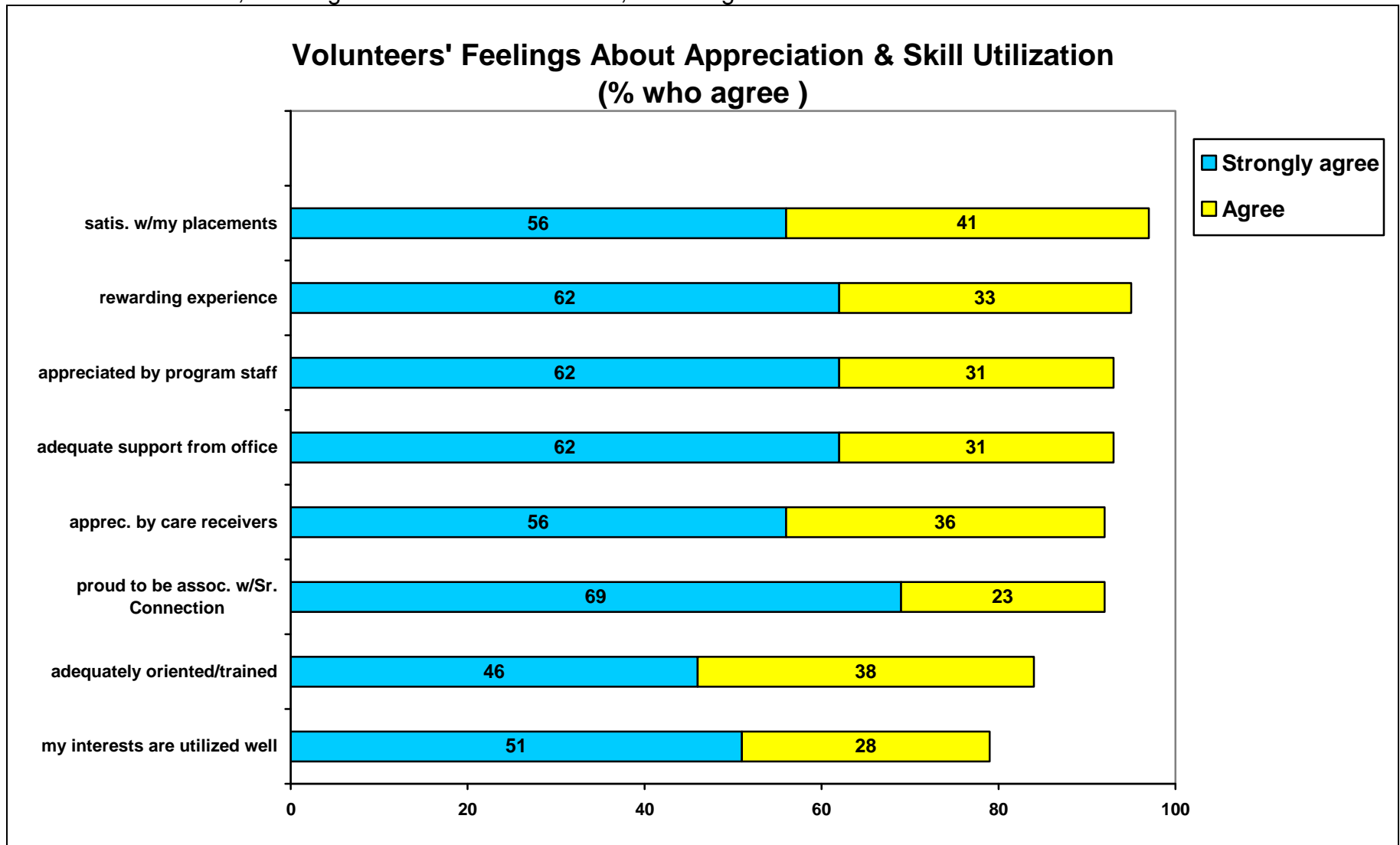
The chart below is arranged in order of the net percentage who agrees at all that these happen “as a result of the services I receive from The Senior Connection.” That is, by adding the percentage who said “strongly agree” to the percentage who said “agree,” one can see that 81% associate The Senior Connection with an ability to keep medical appointments more frequently, 61% associate it with a reduction of stress, and so forth.

Most of the rest did not check the “disagree” options, but their lack of an answer suggests that they did not associate these benefits with The Senior Connection.



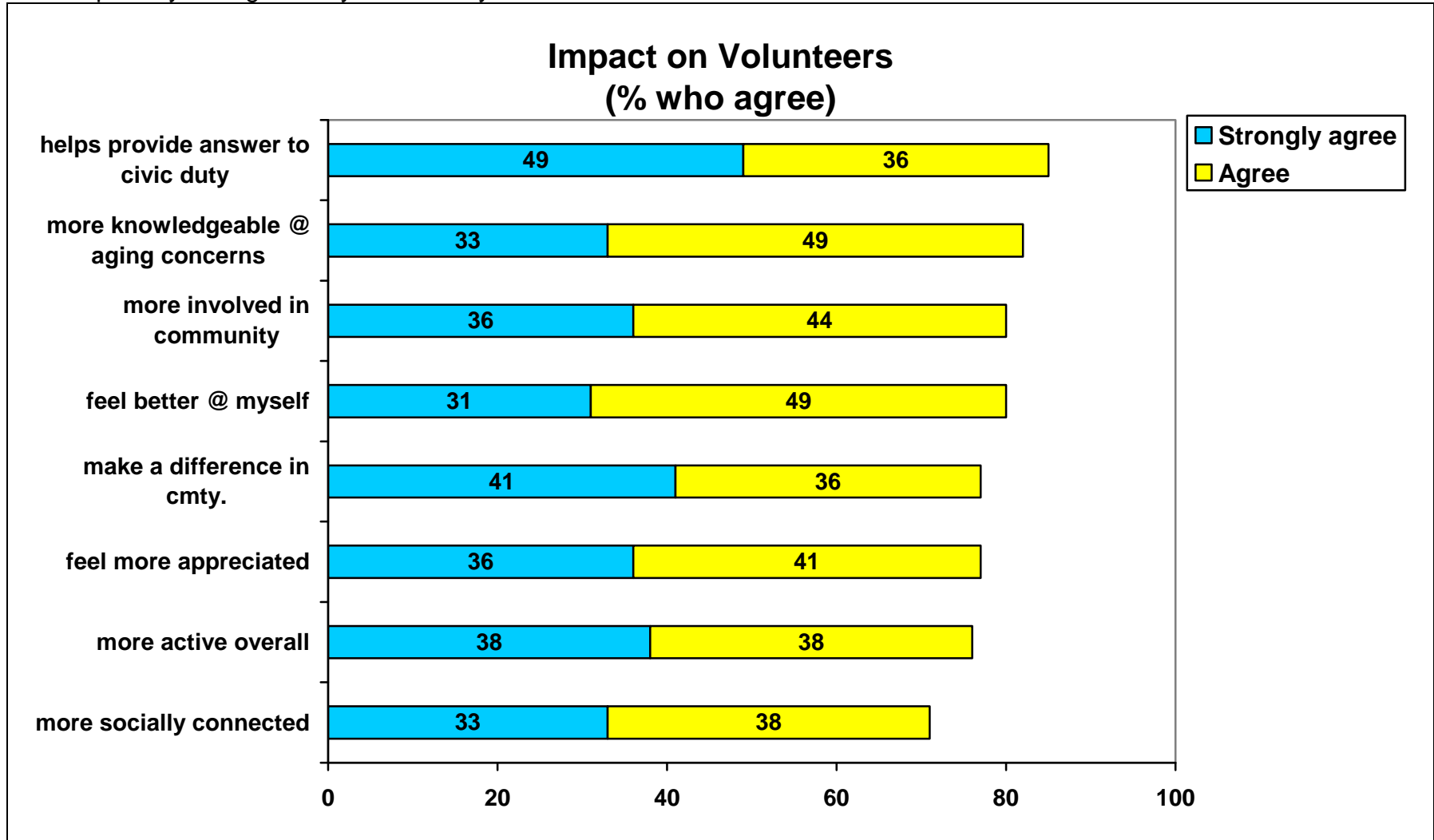
**VOLUNTEERS – WHO SAY THEY ARE APPRECIATED, SUPPORTED, AND PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE ORGANIZATION – ECHO CARE RECEIVERS’ POSITIVE FEELINGS.**

Volunteers feel even more strongly than last year that their interests are utilized well and the experience is rewarding. And though more than eight in ten say they have been adequately oriented/trained for their volunteer work, they do not feel as strongly about this as about other aspects of their work with The Senior Connection. However, only a few are interested in training in transfer assistance, listening and communication skills, or setting limitations and boundaries.



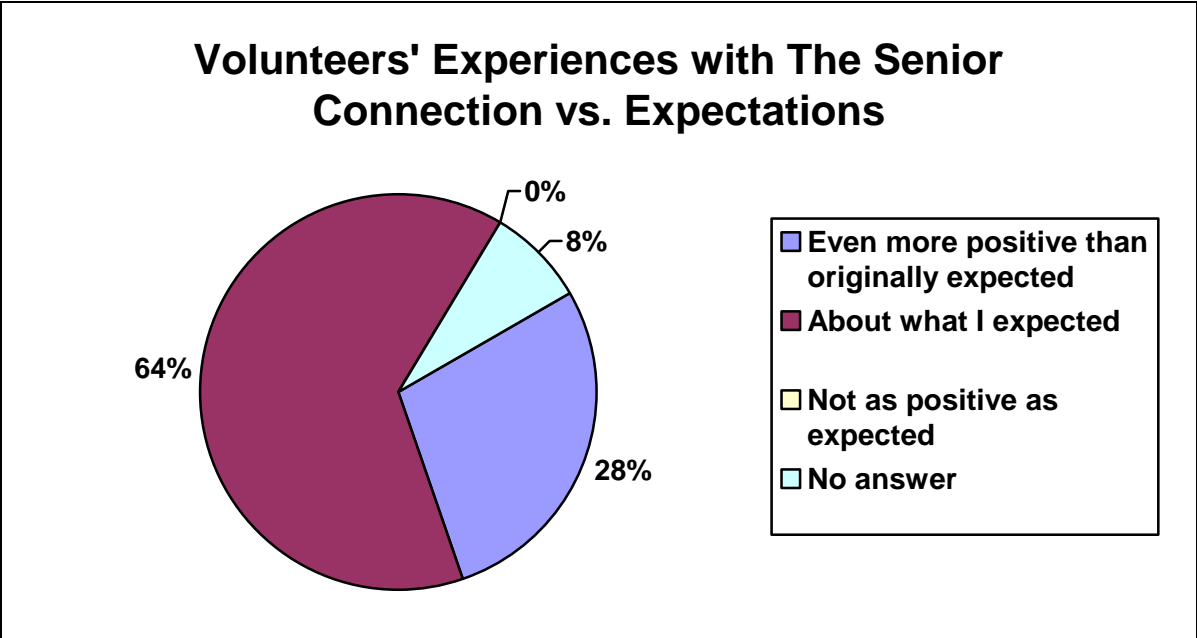
# VOLUNTEERING FOR THE SENIOR CONNECTION HELPS PEOPLE TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES IN A MULTITUDE OF WAYS.

Note that at least seven in ten volunteers agree that their volunteer experiences in the past year have contributed to each of these outcomes. The ones who did not agree did not ever “disagree,” they just checked the ‘don’t know’ answer or left it blank. In last year’s survey, volunteers were much more likely to say they “agree” than “strongly agree.” This year’s responses were more positive, in that volunteers were about as likely to “strongly agree” as to “agree” on many of the items. Feelings about civic duty were especially strong in this year’s survey.



**MORE THAN ONE IN FOUR VOLUNTEERS REPORT THAT THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH THE SENIOR CONNECTION HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE POSITIVE THAN ANTICIPATED.**

*“Please compare your initial expectations about volunteering for The Senior Connection to your actual experiences, and check one box below. Your own experiences have been...”*



## PROFILES OF SURVEY RESPONDERS

Care Receivers who responded to the survey are quite diverse in how long they have been associated with The Senior Connection: 34% say less than one year, 24% say one to two years, and 23% say more than two years. An additional 19% did not answer or were unsure.

Relatively few Care Receiver survey responders indicate that they used services other than transportation to medical appointments.

<b>CARE RECEIVERS: How Often Used These Services</b>	<b>Once</b>	<b>2-5 times</b>	<b>6-9 times</b>	<b>10+ times</b>	<b>Used but didn't specify frequency</b>
Transportation to medical appts.	24	42	13	10	4
Transp. to other places (grocery, pharmacy, bank, etc.)	3	3	1	7	-
Shopping service	-	1	2	1	-
Friendly visitation	-	-	-	1	-
Daily telephone call	-	1	1	-	1
To be read: 24% of Care Receivers who responded to the survey indicated that they used The Senior Connection for transportation to medical appts. once during the fiscal year, another 42% used it 2 to 5 times, etc.					

<b>VOLUNTEERS: How Often Provided These Services</b>	<b>Once</b>	<b>2-5 times</b>	<b>6-9 times</b>	<b>10+ times</b>
Transportation to medical appts.	2%	21%	18%	41%
Transp. to other places (grocery, pharmacy, bank, etc.)	10%	15%	8%	8%
Shopping service	8%	2%	2%	2%
Friendly visitation	5%	5%	-	5%
Daily/weekly telephone call	-	-	5%	-