

SUPPORTING SUCCESS

A STUDY OF THE INDIGENOUS ONLINE LEARNERS EXPERIENCE

CONTACT **NORTH
NORD** Online Learning
Apprentissage en ligne



August 2, 2019

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BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Background

- ✓ On behalf of Contact North | Contact Nord, Forum Research conducted a province-wide learner experience survey and qualitative online chats in order to understand the experiences of Indigenous learners who used Contact North | Contact Nord's services to pursue their education and training over the past year.
- ✓ Contact North | Contact Nord's clients are students enrolled in online programs and courses from Ontario's public colleges, universities, Indigenous institutes, and school boards who use Contact North | Contact Nord's services to complete their programs and courses.
- ✓ Clients who used Contact North | Contact Nord's services during the period of September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018 were invited to complete the survey. At the end of the survey, they could opt-in to be considered for participation in the online chat sessions (focus groups).
- ✓ This final report focuses on respondents who completed the survey between May 30, 2019 and July 3, 2019 as well as those who participated in the online chat sessions on July 18, 2019.
- ✓ The objective of the qualitative online chats (focus groups) was to better understand:
 - Their goals in using Contact North | Contact Nord's services and how successful they were in achieving those goals
 - The impact using Contact North | Contact Nord's services had on their lives
 - The challenges they faced while using Contact North | Contact Nord's services
 - How the services could be improved to increase satisfaction
 - What other services they would like to see Contact North | Contact Nord provide
 - How current services could be enhanced.

Quantitative Methodology

496 invitations were sent via e-mail to complete the survey online.

102 responses were received by the end of the fieldwork dates.

Multiple reminder e-mails were sent to non-respondents. 280 phone numbers were dialed to complete the survey through Forum Research's call centre.

Results may not equal to 100% due to rounding or the question allowed for multiple responses.

Unless noted otherwise, all percentage callouts/commentary in this report are with respect to the top two categories (i.e. well above expectations + above expectations).

Findings regarding those who are attending and/or enrolled in Secondary, Indigenous institute and University should be taken with caution as some results have a sample size of <30.

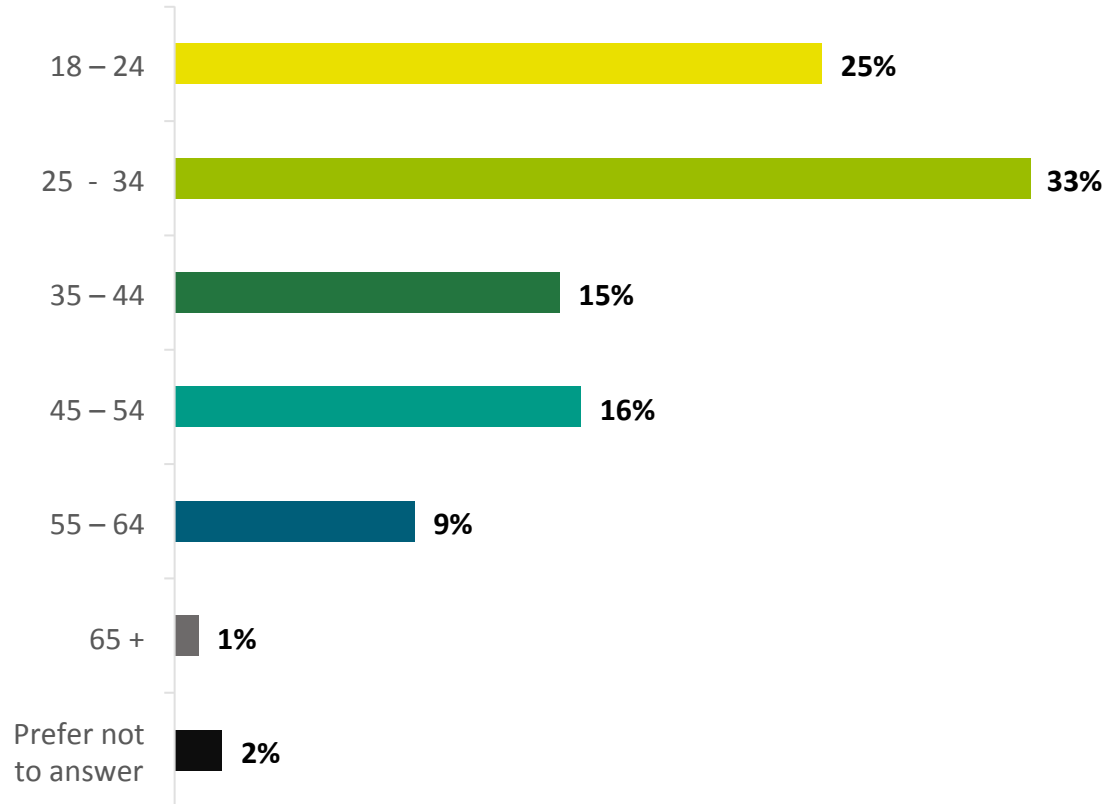
'2019 General Survey' results refers to the overall client satisfaction survey conducted between February 25 to March 13, 2019.



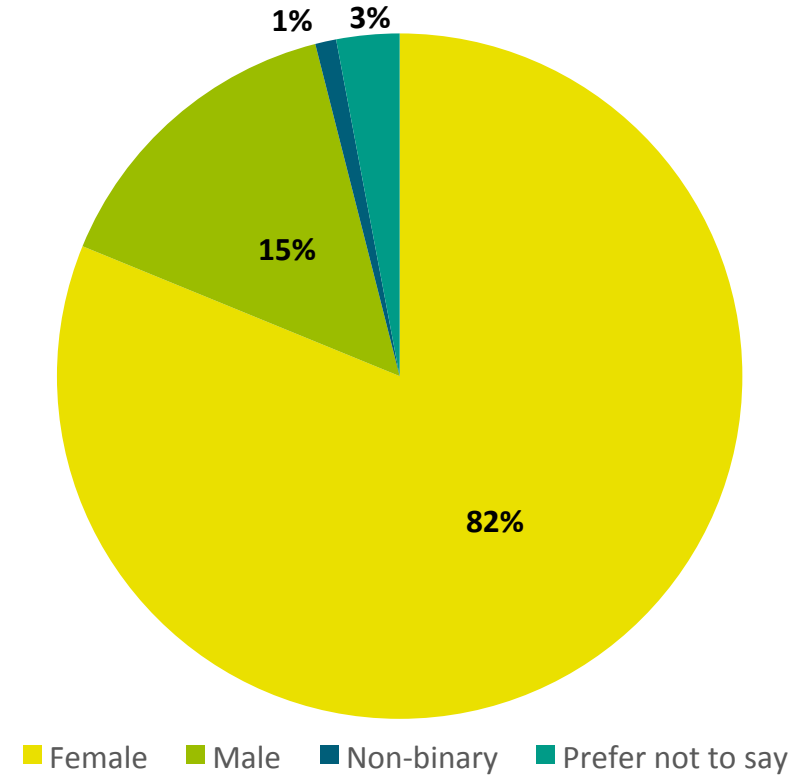
DEMOGRAPHICS

Age & Gender

Age Range



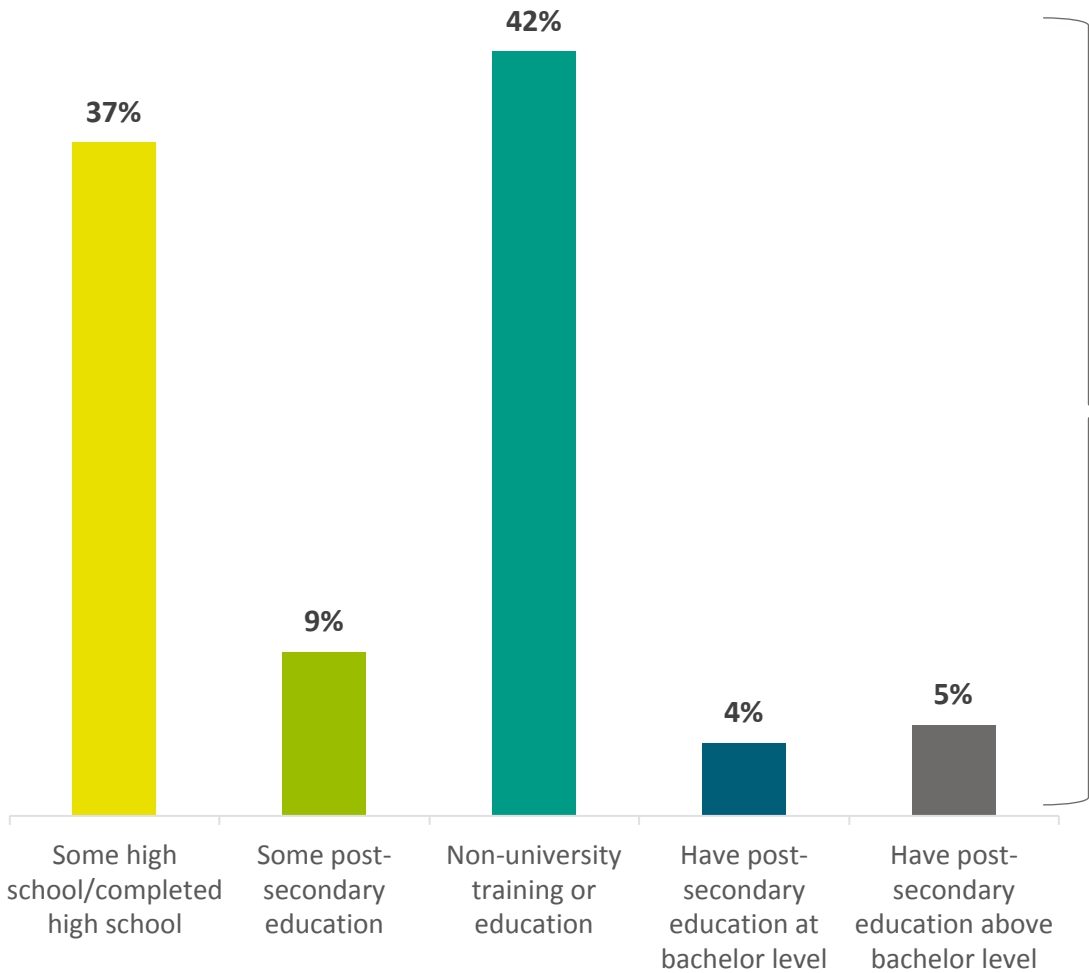
Gender



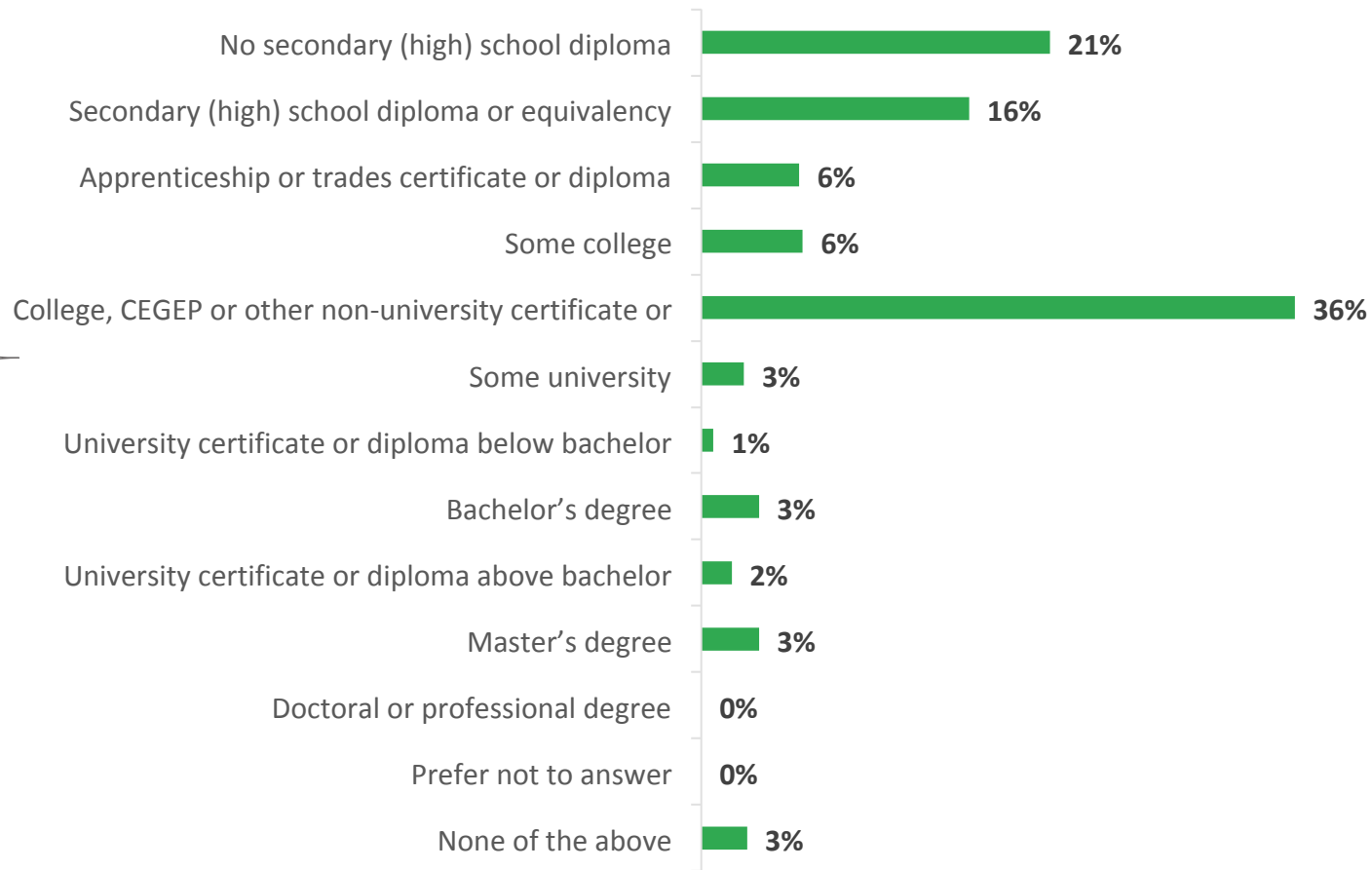
D1. How would you describe your gender? (N=102)
D2. What is your age? (N=102)

Education

Overview: Level of Education



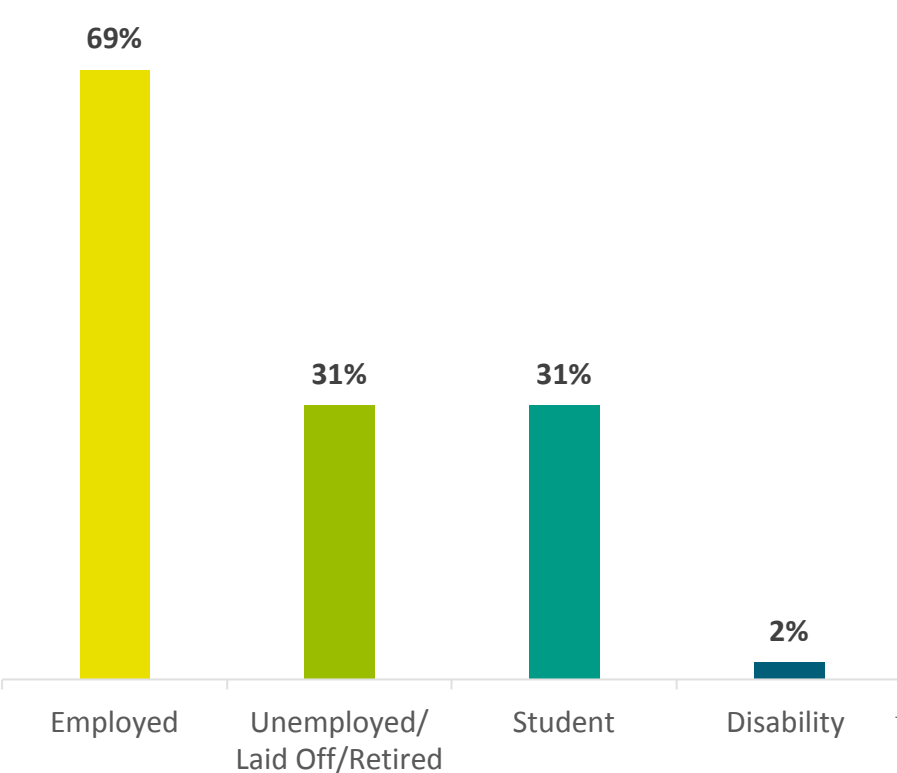
Breakdown: Level of Education



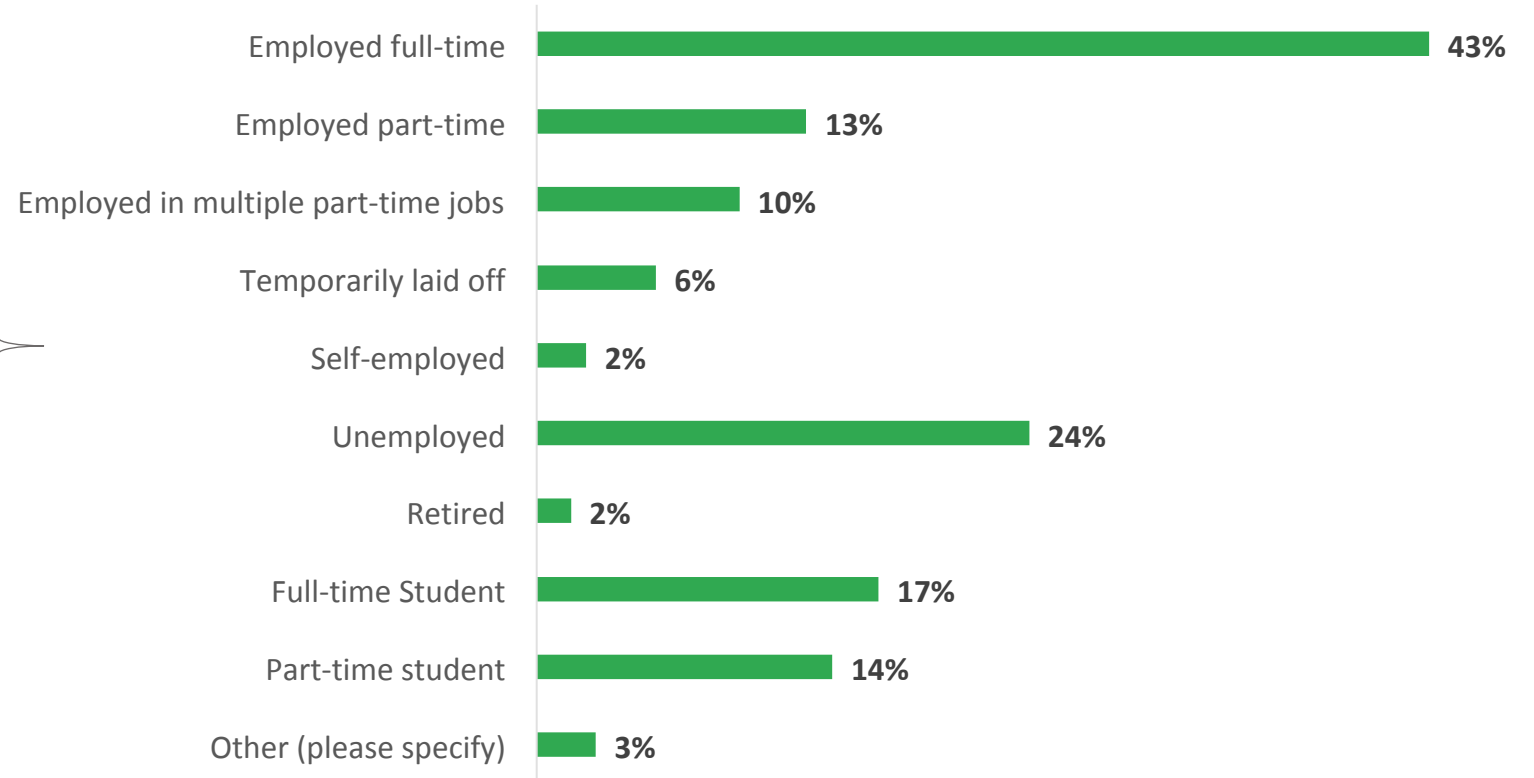
D3. What is the highest level of education or training you have completed? (N=102)

Employment

Overview: Level of Employment



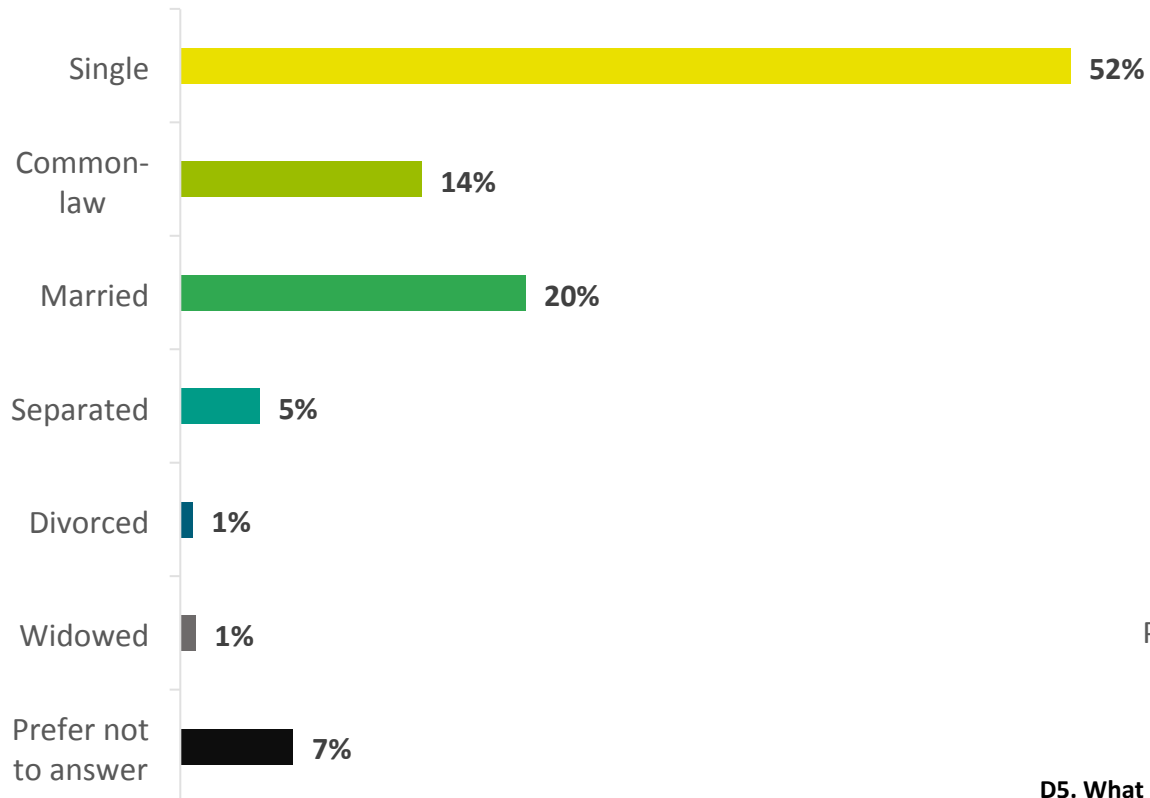
Breakdown: Level of Employment



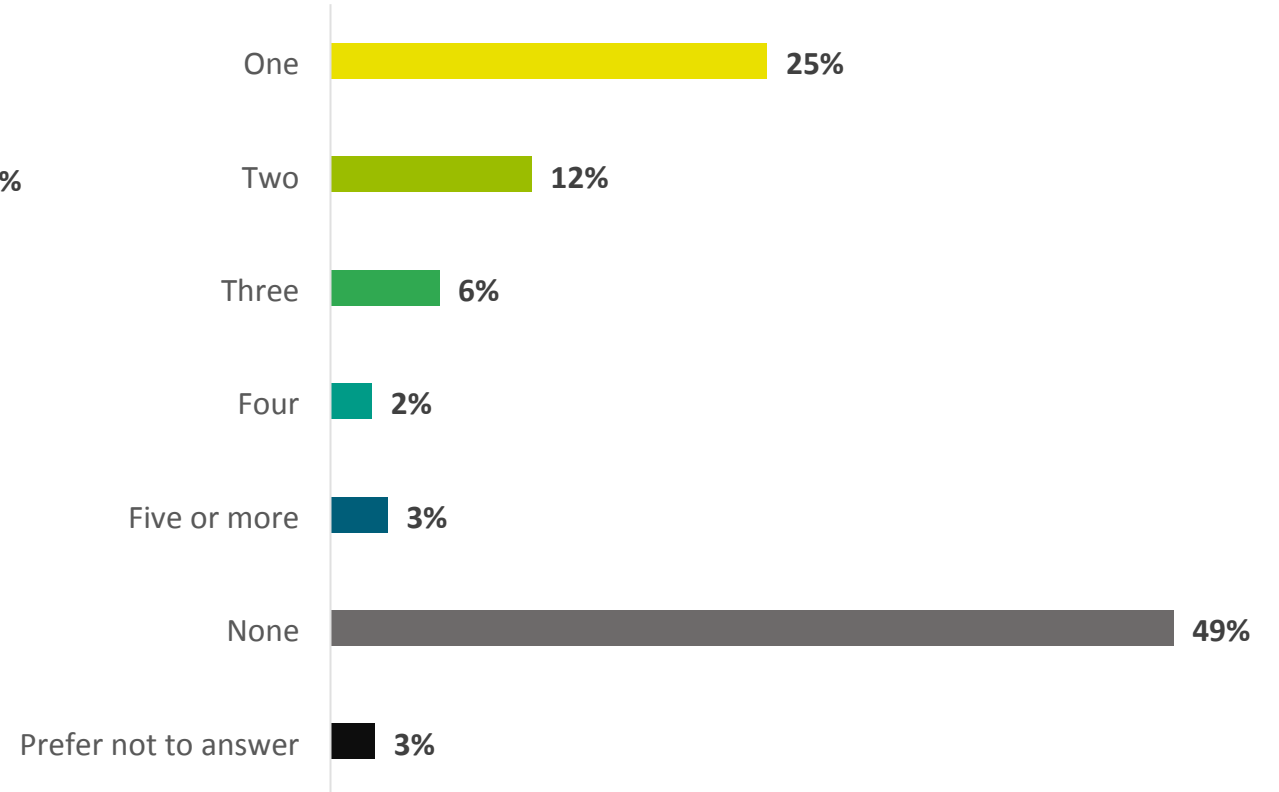
D4. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? Please select all that apply. (N=102)

Relationship Status & Number of Children

Relationship Status



Number of Children

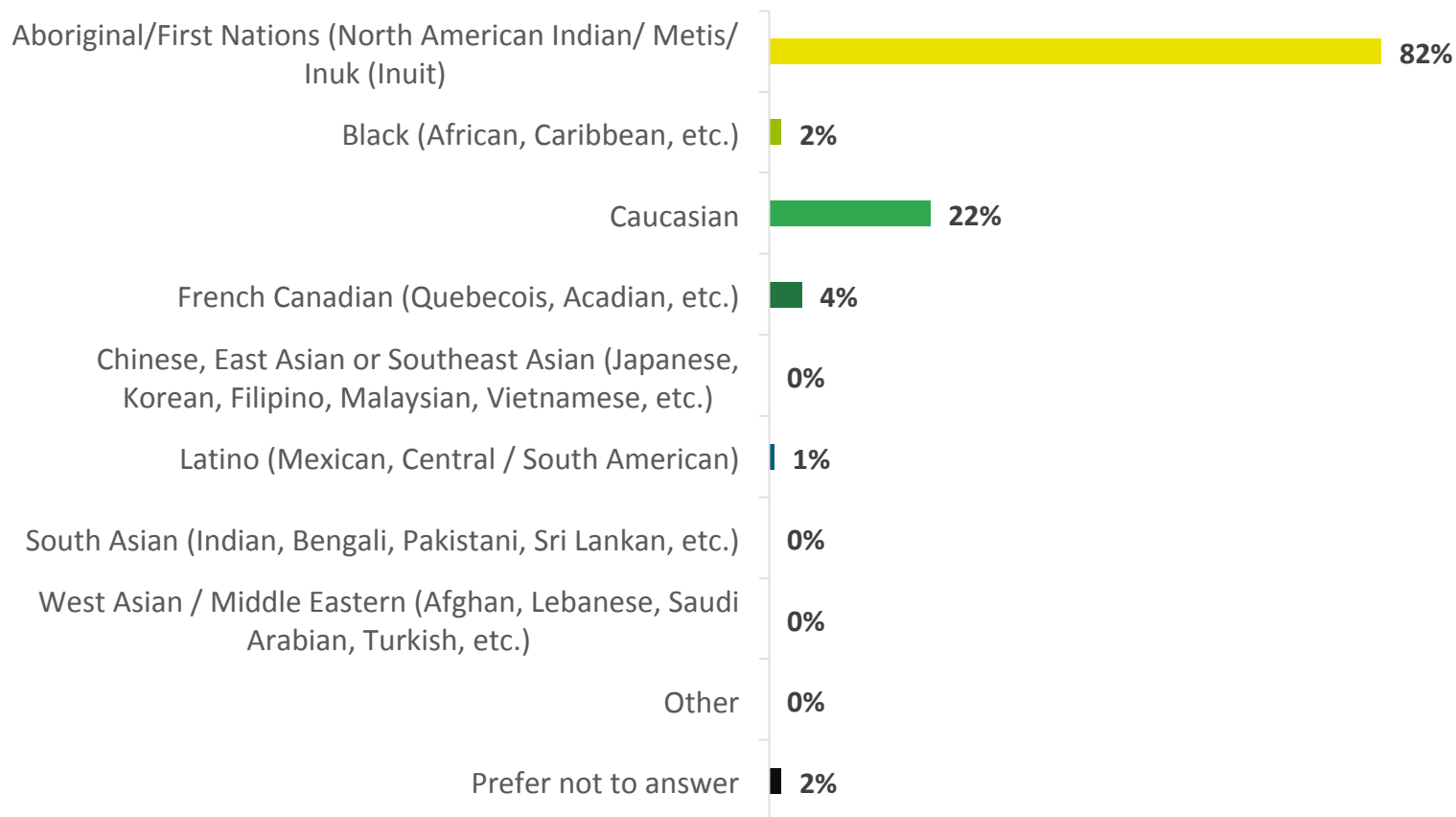


D5. What is your current relationship status? (N=102)

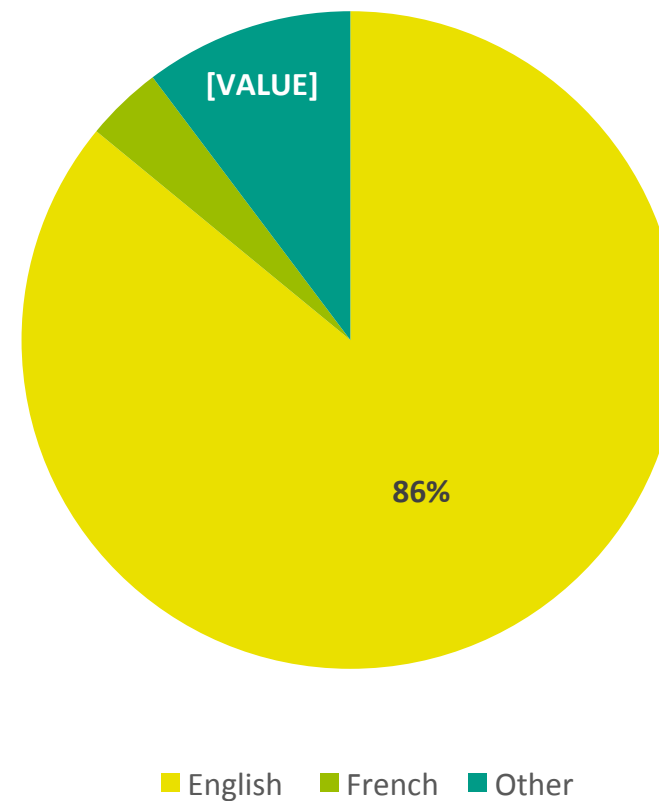
D6. How many children do you have, under the age of 18, living within your household? (N=102)

Identity and Language

Ethnic Identity

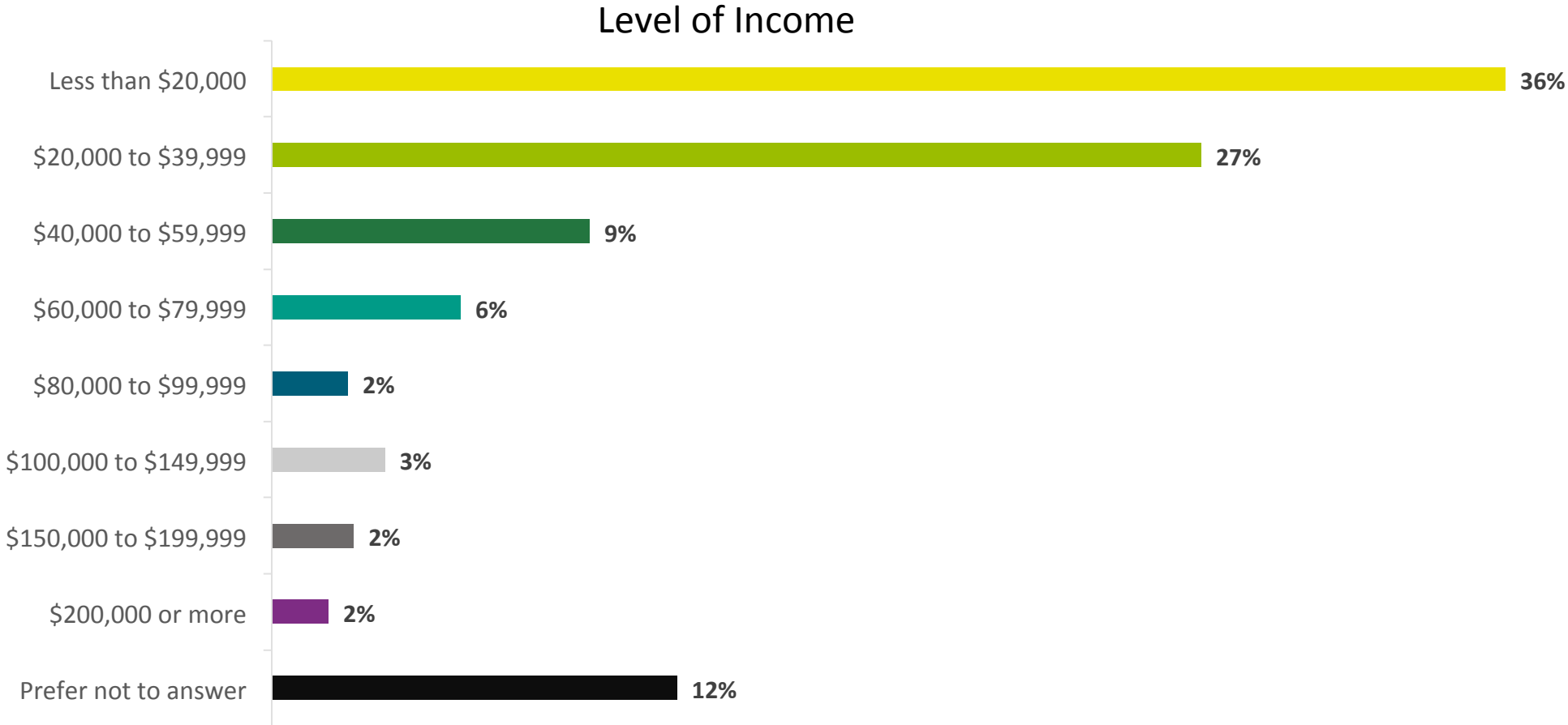


Language



D7. What was the first language you learned as a child and still understand? (N=102)
 D8. Do you identify with any of the following group(s)? Please select any that apply? (N=102)

Household Income



D9. Which of the following categories best describes your household's annual income in 2018, before taxes? (N=102)

Qualitative Methodology

DESIGN

Two chat sessions were held online with Contact North | Contact Nord clients across Ontario. Seven students were recruited for each group for 5-6 to show.

DATE & LENGTH

Both groups were held on July 18, 2019. Each group lasted 90 minutes.

PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATION

Respondents were screened to ensure they are between the ages of 18-64.

Qualitative Participants

Group 1

Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Region	Overall Experience	How Likely to recommend
F	35-44	First Nation	South East	Very Satisfied	Very likely
M	35-44	First Nation	South Central	Very Satisfied	Very likely
M	25-34	First Nation	North East	Somewhat Satisfied	Very likely
F	55-64	First Nation	South West	Very Satisfied	Very likely
F	25-34	First Nation	North East	Somewhat Satisfied	Very likely
F	35-44	First Nation	North West	Very Satisfied	Very likely

Group 2

Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Region	Overall Experience	How Likely to recommend
F	25-34	First Nation	South West	Very Satisfied	Very likely
F	45-54	First Nation	North Central	Very Satisfied	Very likely
F	18-24	First Nation	North East	Somewhat Satisfied	Very likely
F	45-54	First Nation	North Central	Very Satisfied	Very likely
F	25-34	First Nation	North East	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very likely
M	25-34	First Nation	South East	Very Satisfied	Very likely

Qualitative Limitations

The normal limitations of qualitative research discussions must be kept in mind. Respondents were selected on a non-random basis and their views cannot be regarded as quantifiably projectable to any specific population, cohort or universe.

The information obtained may be viewed as an indication of what attitudes exist, but not of the extent to which these attitudes are represented in any defined population.

Group discussions are not “unreliable surveys”. They are essentially idea-generating vehicles, where any avenue of information, which appears to evoke useful ideas or problem-solving suggestions, is pursued and reported.

For the purposes of this report, verbatims were edited for clarity.



KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings

- The primary goal across all education institutions for registering in the course(s) was to obtain a diploma/certificate/degree.
- In the qualitative discussions, the respondents note Contact North | Contact Nord had a very positive impact on their lives. As a result of their education, several were able to get jobs. They note they are more qualified for the limited jobs available in their community and/or the job they got as a result of their education are more desirable than they would have had otherwise. For example, one notes they now have “a career” not just a job, and another expressed excitement at now having benefits for her family for the first time ever. Many feel they are better able to support their family and have a positive impact in their community due to this education.
 - The respondents are also now more confident in their knowledge/abilities. They express a sense of gratefulness that Contact North | Contact Nord provided them the flexibility to be able to successfully pursue education while also working and/or caring for their family.
- 1 in 5 (21%) registered in 7 to 10 courses, likely indicating they are completing a full degree or diploma.
- 94% of respondents were satisfied with their experiences with Contact North | Contact Nord.
- 93% would likely recommend Contact North | Contact Nord to friends or family members.
- A third of respondents (32%) indicated ‘time issues’ such as working is a challenge they face in pursuing their educations and training.
 - In the qualitative discussions, the respondents note family responsibilities, college/university campuses are too far away, and financial issues were their biggest challenges. Many made sacrifices financially and in terms of time spent with family in order to pursue this education. However, they praise Contact North | Contact Nord for providing the services that helped them overcome many of their challenges. For example, they were able to study locally while maintaining their jobs and caring for their family.

Key Findings

- 7 in 10 (72%) of respondents completed their education because it was available online.
- Over half (52%) did not register in other course(s) since August 2018.
 - Of those who did not register in other courses, a third (36%) stated they did not need any further course(s)
- During the focus groups (qualitative survey), the respondents were very complimentary of the support they received from Contact North | Contact Nord staff.
- Top services used by the respondents:
 - 88% received support from staff in an online learning centre
 - 84% received help registering in courses
 - 77% used Internet access at an online learning centre
 - 76% used exam invigilation services
 - 76% used the web conferencing platform at on online learning centre or from home
 - 75% used computers at an online learning centre
- Respondents from the focus groups were asked to provide suggestions on other services they would like to see Contact North | Contact Nord provide. Some key suggestions include:
 - Provide a standard computer course to help students better understand how to use all the programs (e.g. Google Docs, Blackboard, Saba, etc.) required by the educational institutions
 - Improve the technology in the online learning centres
 - Enhance the course descriptions

Key Findings

- Provide tutors
- Support staff available outside business hours.
- They also suggest Contact North | Contact Nord focus on marketing and advertising to help create more awareness of its services.

Detailed recommendations from the focus groups (qualitative research) can be found on slide 64 of this report.

A Sample of Quotes from Respondents



I am a mother of 3 grandmother of 2. I lost my job at Canada Post because I wasn't fluent in French. I took Social Service Worker program at Northern College through Contact North. It is a two year program and I had a full course load. I am not currently enrolled in any classes. I loved Contact North because I live in a small community of 1000 people and could just go to an office in my town to do my courses. I don't believe I would have attended classes if I had to travel the hour to the nearest college.

Hi, I live in Sheguiandah First Nation, Sheguiandah, Ontario. I am a mother of 2, married and working full time. I am currently not enrolled through Contact North. I currently use the service for exam invigilator. I am attending online self study through McMaster University, working towards Accounting diploma.

No other adult education options were available in the rest of Muskoka so by the time that I found Contact North and they were able to help me I was pretty relieved.

Being able to upgrade my courses through Contact North allowed me to qualify for a degree level course rather than only a diploma level course. When I complete my degree I will have the education to back the years of work experience I have which will ideally open doors for me in the future. Studying full time and working full time has been a strain on my family but will ultimately be worth it once I'm done.

I Live in Thunder Bay Ontario, I have taken a few classes to achieve my grade 12 years back, Now I am presently working on achieving my Business Diploma, I am registered to complete my final 4 more classes in September, I am not enrolled for the summer I felt like I deserve a break.

I took the cannabis course for my field of work as an economic development officer. I wanted to learn more about the process of cannabis retail and manufacturing since Ontario approved Cannabis. I wanted to ensure I was implementing safe practices for my community and businesses.

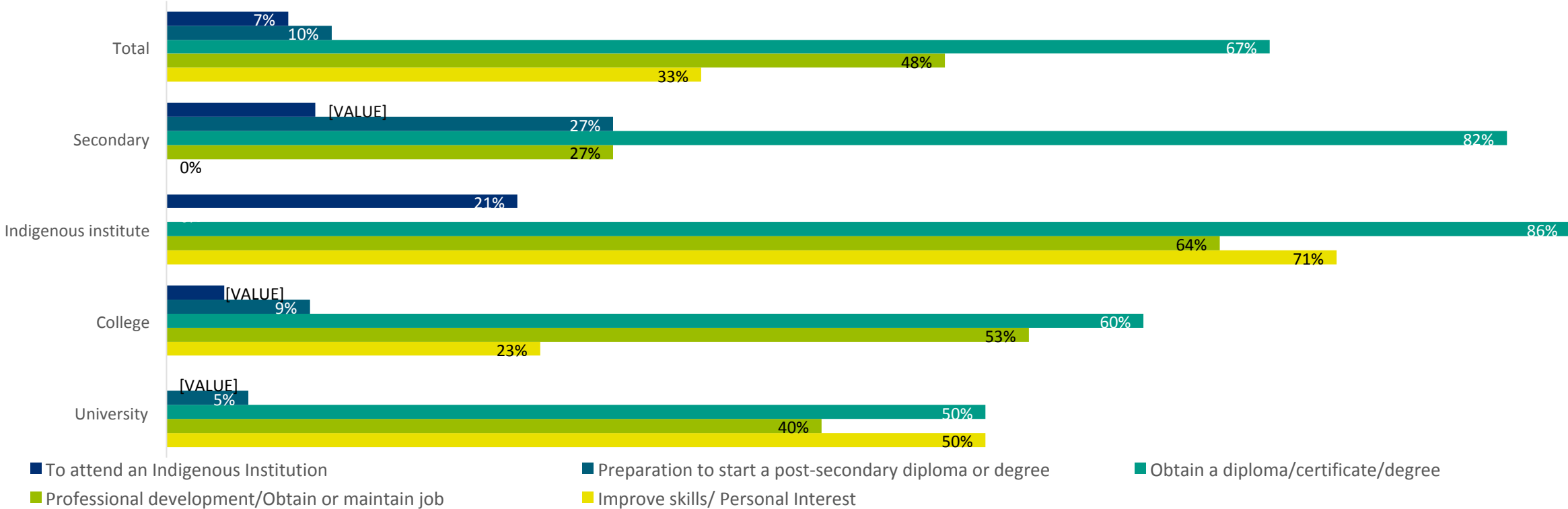
My first goal was to complete gr 12, get a office admin job, then though later on life I'll go for my Business Diploma, I find myself at a career fair, then boom started my classes for Business Fundamentals, graduated from that, now my main goal is to graduate with my Business Diploma. Them possibly consider taking further steps in my career.



GOALS

Goals When Registering

- Across all educational institutions, the primary goal for registering in the course(s) was to obtain a diploma/certificate/degree. Nearly 7 in 10 (67%) had the goal of obtaining a diploma/certificate/degree.
- 86% of those attending an Indigenous institute had the goal of obtaining a diploma/certificate/degree when registering in the course(s), compared to 50% of those attending University.



Q1. Thinking back to the course(s) you took between September 2017 to August 2018 and used Contact North | Contact Nord's services, what were your goals for registering in the course(s)? (N=102)

Goals When Registering

There are also a number of goals expressed by respondents in the qualitative discussions that go beyond simply getting a diploma/certificate/degree.

- ✓ To help create a better life for their family
- ✓ To be a good role model for their children
- ✓ To feel a sense of pride in having completed their diploma/certificate/degree.
- ✓ To gain learning/education that will allow them to help their community
- ✓ To gain enough credits to allow them to pursue post-secondary education
- ✓ To help them make a career change and/or better compete for the limited jobs available in their community. For some, this means having a career they are more passionate about, allows them to work closer to home, and/or provides benefits. Some also want to start their own business.

When discussing these goals, they express a lot of excitement.

Several note pursuing education would not have been possible without Contact North | Contact Nord. Many would not have been able to attend classes during the workday due to their jobs and/or they could not afford to commute to school due to either the cost and/or the commute time.

Goals When Registering



I took the cannabis course for my field of work as an economic development officer. I wanted to learn more about the process of cannabis retail and manufacturing since Ontario approves Cannabis. I wanted to ensure I was implementing safe practices for my community and businesses.

I said when I left the post office that I didn't want to work at Wendy's or Tim Horton's for the rest of my life. So, I needed the education to start a career that would have benefits. There are very few jobs in my area, so you must go to school to have a job.

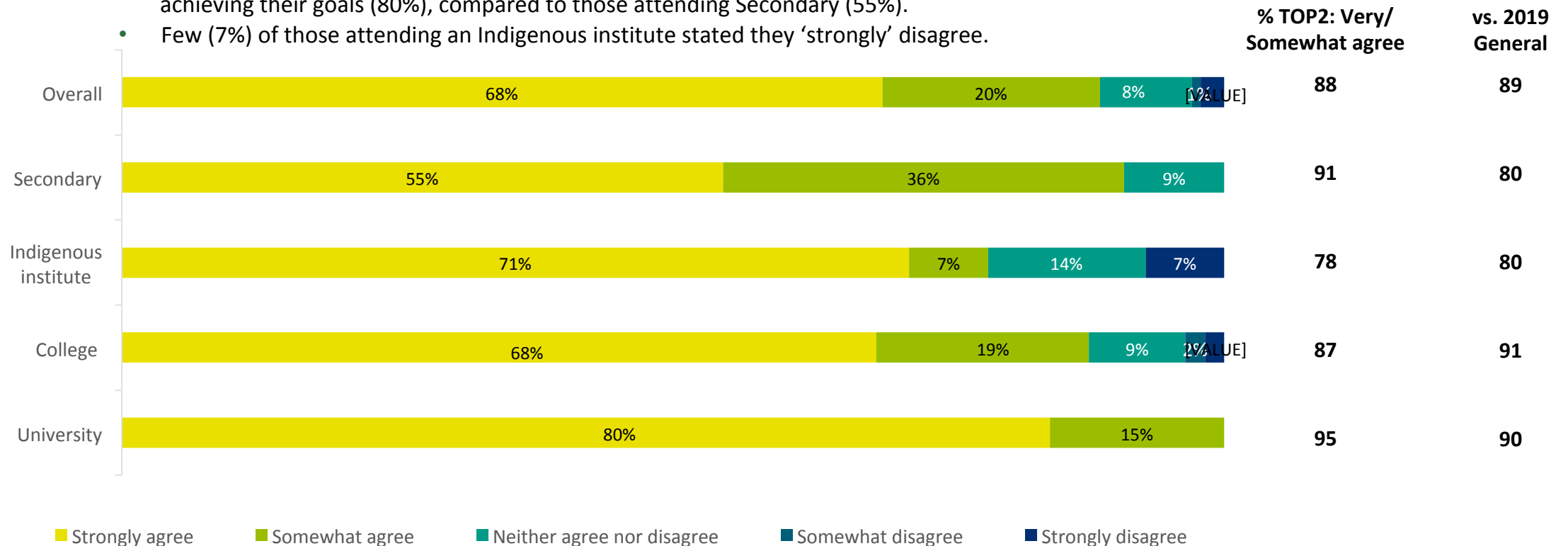
I am looking to finish my high school because I have two babies and a third one that I gave for adoption. I need to be a good role model for my kids.

I was excited to get my life back on track and I am trying to seek my dream job, which was a success.

I was ready to make a change in my career and improve my prospects, so I was excited about starting that process.

Achieving Goals

- 88% of respondents report the course(s) they took contributed to achieving their goals, which is similar to the 2019 General Survey (89%).
- Respondents in University were more likely to ‘strongly’ agree that registering in the course(s) contributed to achieving their goals (80%), compared to those attending Secondary (55%).
- Few (7%) of those attending an Indigenous institute stated they ‘strongly’ disagree.



Q7A. Thinking about the course(s) you were registered in, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements? The course(s) I took contributed to achieving my goals. (N=102)

Achieving Goals

The findings from the qualitative discussions align with the quantitative findings, in that the vast majority feel they were successful in achieving their goals. The respondents speak very candidly and positively about the impact Contact North | Contact Nord had on their lives.

- They note many ways in which they were successful in achieving their goals:
 - **They were able to get a job**
 - For some, this was their first job in their field of study, while for others they moved from one job to another that was more desirable.
 - **They are now more confident in their knowledge/abilities**
 - For several, this includes being more computer literate.
 - **They were able to successfully pursue education while also caring for their family**
 - Contact North | Contact Nord's services allowed them the flexibility to balance their responsibilities.

Only a couple indicate they were not successful in achieving their goals. However, they take responsibility for their lack of success. Their reasons for their lack of success include difficulty with transportation, time issues, and challenges with working online (e.g. needing to write essays electronically).

Achieving Goals



I was scared because I was 49, and at that age most people are thinking of retiring. I was scared I wouldn't get a job. But I finished school in April and had a job by July. I have since changed jobs, because of where I did my placement offered me a job and it was 10 minutes to work rather than the seventy minutes to my other job.

The exams that I needed to take to complete my courses are located at the main campus. This is a fair drive, which would mean I would have to schedule at least 3 days as a bare minimum to write the exam, which would be very costly in terms of funds and time. With Contact North, I can drive half an hour to an exam and pay a nominal fee. The half hour drive also allows me to be rested with more time to study beforehand instead of driving all day before the exam, spending money on hotels, etc.

I am now working for a company that I've always dreamed of working for.

I learned new software, apps, and platforms that are relevant to Social Media Marketing. This has given me the confidence to start up my own business.

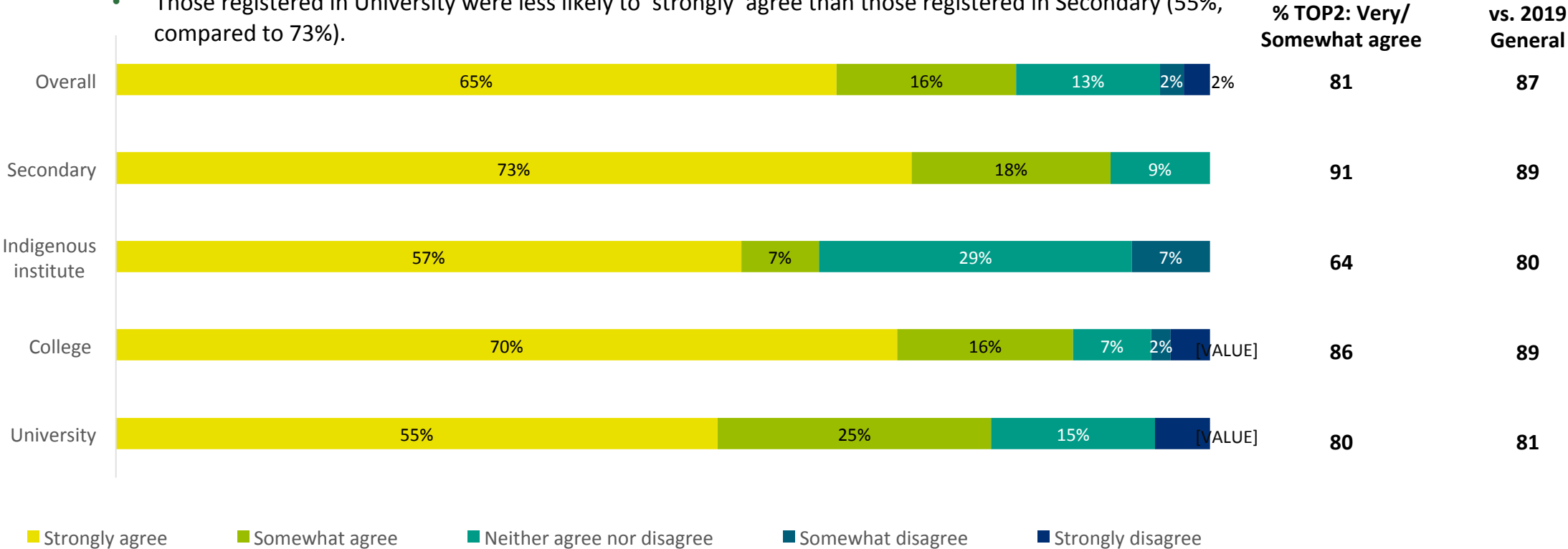
It helped me get a job by giving me the proper skills and knowledge....It also helped me to be more confident.

It had a positive impact on my life. I actually have a career now...something I've worked very hard to achieve. I struggle with anxiety and depression and went through a breakdown. But now I feel I am a successful person. I am also a great role model for my young adult daughter.

I am very proud of myself to have gone to school late in life and to have a career. My job offers benefits which my family has never had. It's amazing not having to pay for prescriptions, or glasses, or dental. I also don't have to work as hard physically as before (I worked at Wendy's one summer while going to school).

Support in Order to Achieve Goals

- Overall, 81% of respondents ‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat agree’ Contact North | Contact Nord provided support in order for them to achieve their goals.
- 9 in 10 (91%) of those attending Secondary ‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat agree’ they were provided support.
- Those registered in University were less likely to ‘strongly’ agree than those registered in Secondary (55%, compared to 73%).



Q7C. Thinking about the course(s) you were registered in, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements? Contact North | Contact Nord provided support in order for me to achieve my goals. (N=102)

Support in Order to Achieve Goals

During the qualitative discussion, the respondents were especially complimentary of the support they received from Contact North | Contact Nord staff. For the vast majority, Contact North | Contact Nord staff are described as being very helpful. In many instances, the respondents remark the staff went “above and beyond” to help and support them.

- They truly value the flexibility of being able to communicate with the staff via e-mail when they have inquiries and/or need assistance.
- Technical support is also praised for being helpful. Despite a few mentions that sometimes there were technology issues, those issues do not appear to negatively impact overall perceptions of the service provided.
 - The playback option for watching classes (e.g. if a class is missed) is appreciated.

A few note they were so satisfied they recommended Contact North | Contact Nord to others in their community.

Overall, many believe it would not have been possible for them to pursue this education without Contact North | Contact Nord. Thus, they are grateful the online learning centres and services are available in their community.

Support in Order to Achieve Goals



I was successful in my program because Contact North gave me the opportunity to stay within my community and pursue post secondary studies while I maintained a job and family. I didn't have to move away to attend post secondary studies in another city.

I probably would not have an education if it was not for Contact North. I like the flexibility.

Contact North was very supportive and went above and beyond in ensuring that I was able to get into the courses I needed. They made a few contacts and sent information to find a school that would take me.

The assistance I received from the main person I dealt with at Contact North was excellent! I can not say enough wonderful things about her ...she's been great for getting back to me via email and phone when needed. She always did so in a reasonable amount of time and she looked into various educational pathways for me and how to best apply, etc. She put in a lot of leg work so to speak.

I wouldn't be able to pursue my studies without Contact North. I have a family and a job that I use to support my family. I didn't have the means to pack up and move away.

I am very satisfied with Contact North. The support they provided was excellent - from the arrangements, to ensuring my registration, to maintaining communication, as well as follow up. I felt like an actual person, not just a number.

I'm very satisfied with the support I've received from Contact North to achieve my educational goals. I was able to attend my studies at convenient hours and even the play back options were very helpful when I couldn't make a scheduled course.

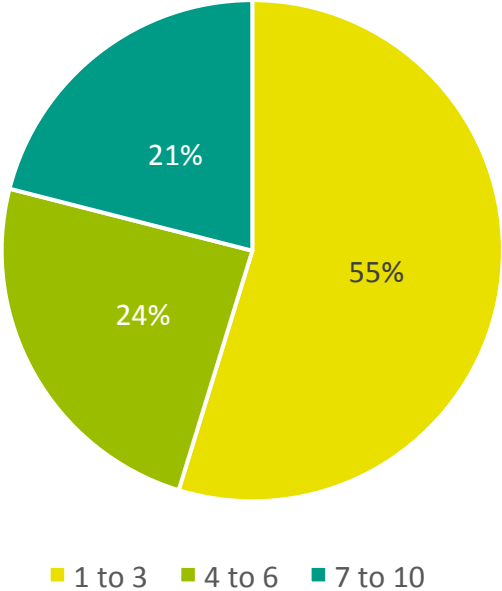
The support provided was awesome. All I had to do is send a quick email and they went out of their way to lead me in the right direction.

The ladies at the Contact North office I attended were great. One even let me tape her in a mock interview I had to do for class. The technology sometimes failed, but the staff were exemplary.

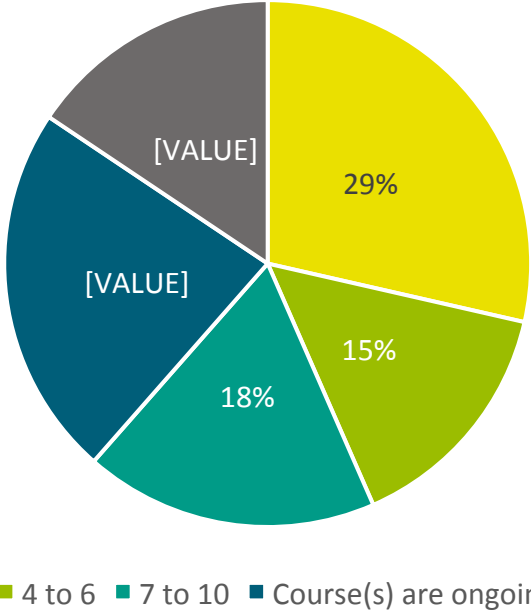
Number of Courses Registered In vs Completed

- Over half of respondents registered in 1 to 3 courses (55%), with a quarter (24%) registered in 4 to 6 courses.
- One-fifth of respondents registered in 7 to 10 courses (21%), likely indicating they are completing a full degree or diploma.
- A quarter (23%) stated their course(s) are ongoing. 1 in 6 (16%) did not complete the course(s) they are registered in.

Number of courses registered in



Number of courses completed



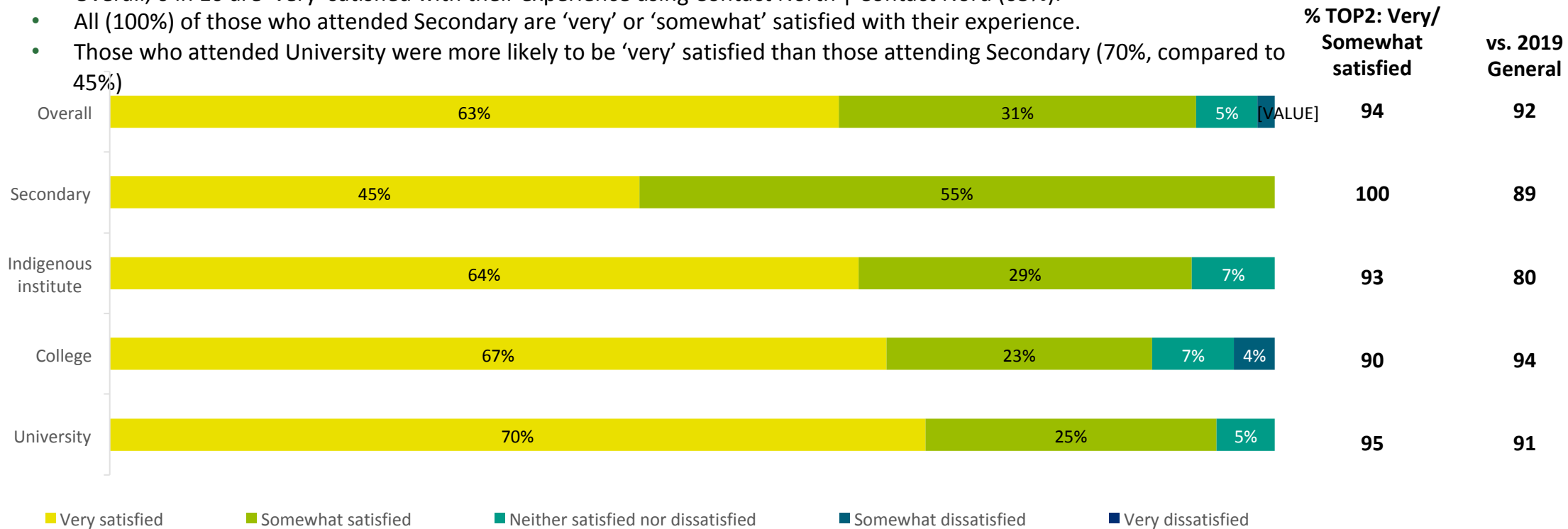
Q2 How many course(s) did you register in? (N=102)
 Q3. How many course(s) did you complete? (N=102)



SATISFACTION

Overall Satisfaction

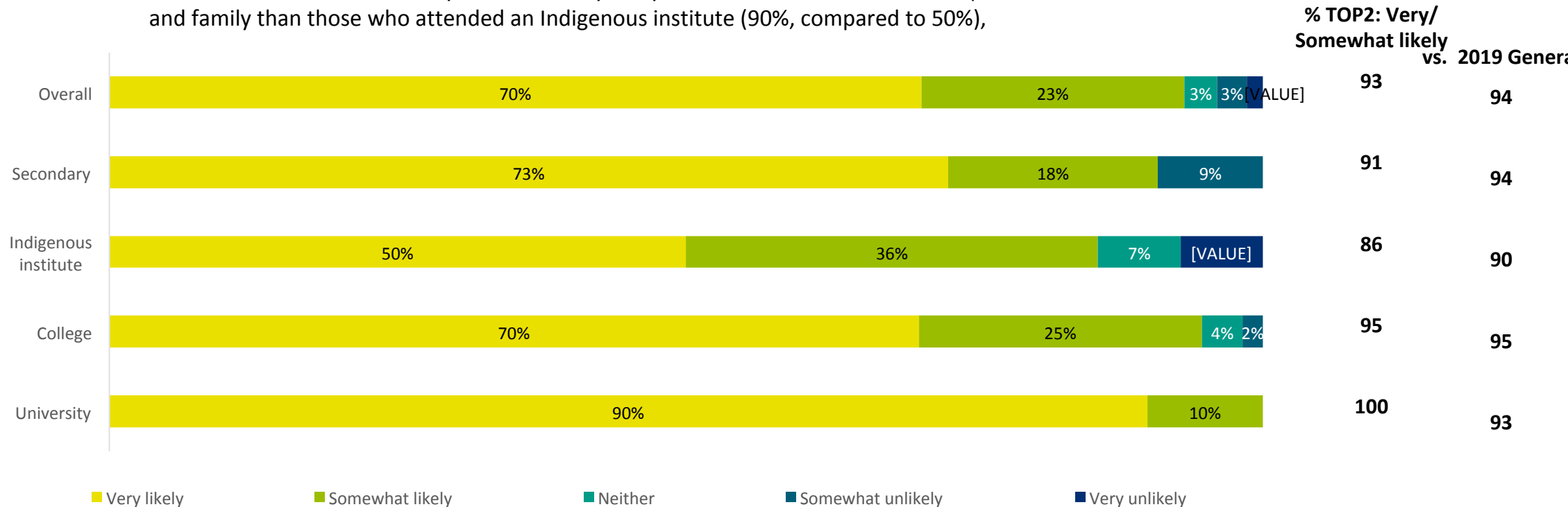
- When looking at the TOP2 score, 9 in 10 of all respondents are satisfied with their experiences with Contact North | Contact Nord (94%), an increase of 2% compared to 2019 General Survey. This satisfaction was also strongly conveyed in the qualitative discussions where the respondents praise Contact North | Contact Nord for helping them achieve their goals and for having a very positive impact on their lives.
- Overall, 6 in 10 are 'very' satisfied with their experience using Contact North | Contact Nord (63%).
- All (100%) of those who attended Secondary are 'very' or 'somewhat' satisfied with their experience.
- Those who attended University were more likely to be 'very' satisfied than those attending Secondary (70%, compared to 45%)



Q8. Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience using Contact North | Contact Nord's services? (N=102)

Likelihood to Recommend

- 93% are likely recommend Contact North | Contact Nord to friends or family members, which is a similar proportion as the 2019 General Survey.
- All (100%) attending University would recommend Contact North | Contact Nord to friends or family members.
- Those who attended University would be 'very likely' to recommend Contact North | Contact Nord to friends and family than those who attended an Indigenous institute (90%, compared to 50%),



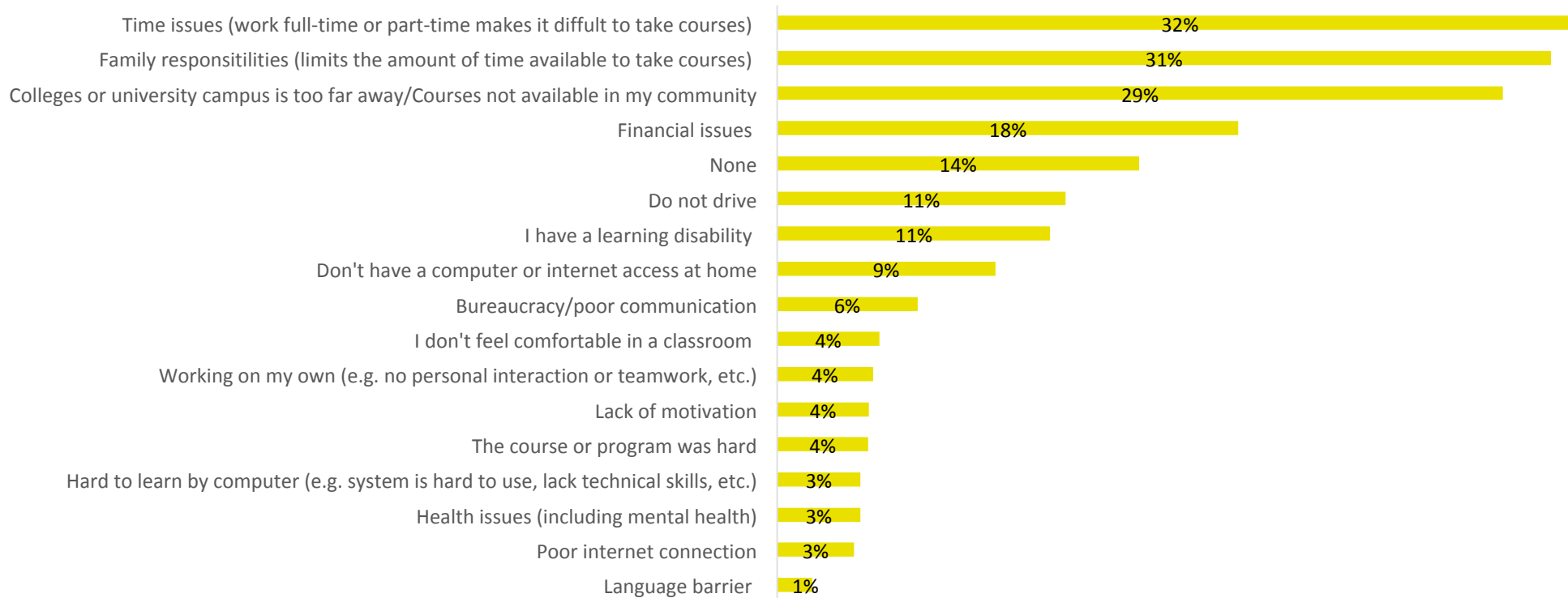
Q9. How likely are you to recommend Contact North | Contact Nord's services to a friend or family member? (N=102)



CHALLENGES

Challenges

- Nearly a third of respondents indicated ‘time issues’ such as working (32%), ‘family responsibilities’ (31%) and course availability in community (29%) as challenges they face when pursuing their education and training.
- 1 in 7 (14%) indicated they do not face any challenges in pursuing their education and training.



Q10. Which challenges have you faced, if any, in pursuing your education and training? (N=102)

Challenges

In the qualitative discussion, the respondents note the following are the biggest challenges they faced when pursuing their education and training (rank ordered):

- **Family responsibilities**
 - They have children and/or other family members that require care.
- **College or university campus is too far away/courses are not available in their community**
 - There was nowhere in the community they could take the courses of interest other than Contact North | Contact Nord.
 - For some, travelling to a college or university would mean moving to another city/community and/or being away from family for long periods. This would also mean significant expense.
- **Financial issues**
 - For most, the cost of tuition and books are a significant financial strain.
 - For all, the cost of travel was a major consideration when deciding to pursue education.
 - A few didn't initially realize their course required travel for certain assignments (e.g. mandatory labs). This requirement caused financial stress.
- **They do not drive**
- **Health issues (including mental health)**
- **Hard to learn by computer (e.g. lack computer skills)**
 - Some were not very computer literate, while others simply found it difficult to retain information when reading/studying on a computer vs. on paper.

Challenges



I have two children under the age of two who need a lot of my attention.

The concern was that the courses I needed were literally not offered anywhere else in the district. None of the adult education centres in my community had the staff or resources to offer university level math courses. The nearest option for me was an hour away and would have required me to take 2 math credits even though I've been working in accounting for years.

I have 3 children ages 9, 6, and 4. I also care for my autistic brother, as well my father (which sometimes involves admitting him into the ICU). Between getting kids to and from school, daycare activities, watching my brother, and at times, caring for my father, there was a huge strain on the times I was available for school.

My issue was the course was not available in my region. It was a university 4 hours away and it was on the weekends. I am a single mom of 2 sons, so I couldn't be gone 40+ hours for work then be gone another 24-ish hours for the weekend.

I live in Moosonee, and it isn't a drive-in community; we have 2 means of transportation that is air and train services. The nearest college close to me would be 6 hours away in Timmins, Ontario. The train ride from Moosonee to Cochrane is approximately 5 hours, with an additional 1-hour drive from Cochrane to Timmins. This would run about \$90 dollars one way without having your own means of transportation to get from Cochrane to Timmins. And, flying to Moosonee to Timmins would run you about \$450 dollars one-way.

I had to do labs out of town which was difficult financially and on my family.

Challenges

Many had to make sacrifices financially and in terms of time spent with family in order to pursue their education. However, they praise Contact North | Contact Nord for providing the services that helped them overcome many of their challenges by providing the opportunity to study remotely. For example, being able to use Contact North | Contact Nord's services allowed them to:

- Stay local and care for their children (e.g. not needing to pay for childcare) and family.
- Save money because they did not need to travel.
- Access courses from a wide variety of institutions - allowing them to take courses of interest and in some instances needed fewer prerequisites.
- Continue working while also taking courses.

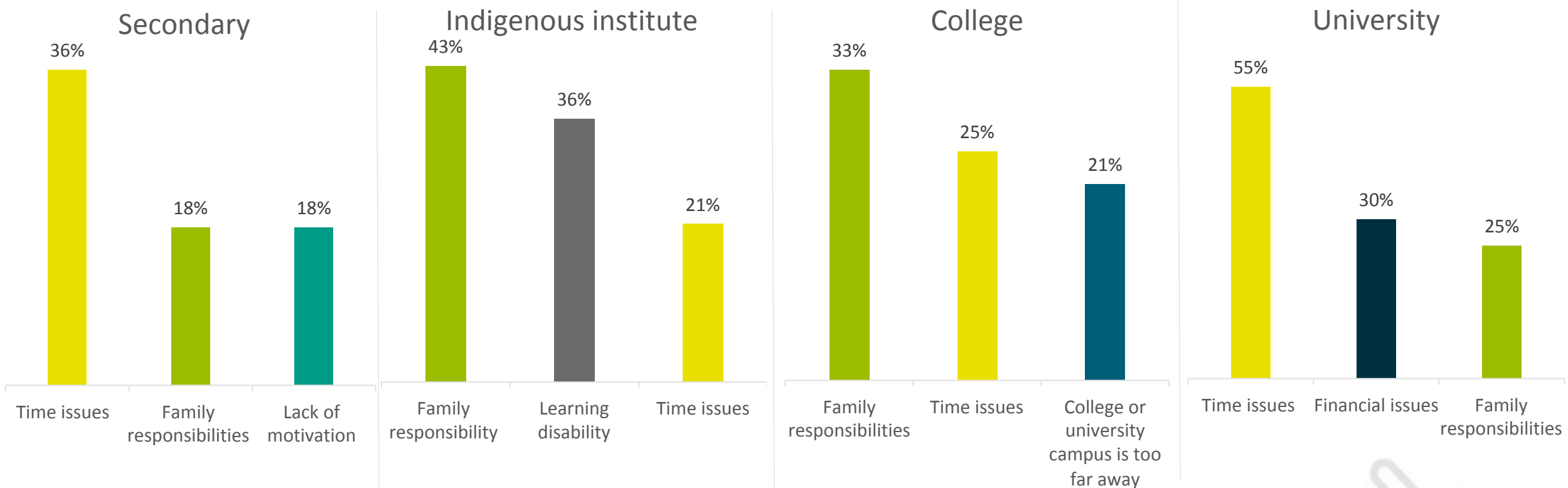
As was mentioned earlier, with the use of Contact North | Contact Nord's services, the vast majority of the respondents were successful in overcoming the challenges they faced and in meeting their goals; which in turn had a very positive impact on their lives.



Contact North was ultimately how my challenges were overcome, they connected me with a school out of Thunder Bay that allowed me to only take the courses I needed to qualify for school.

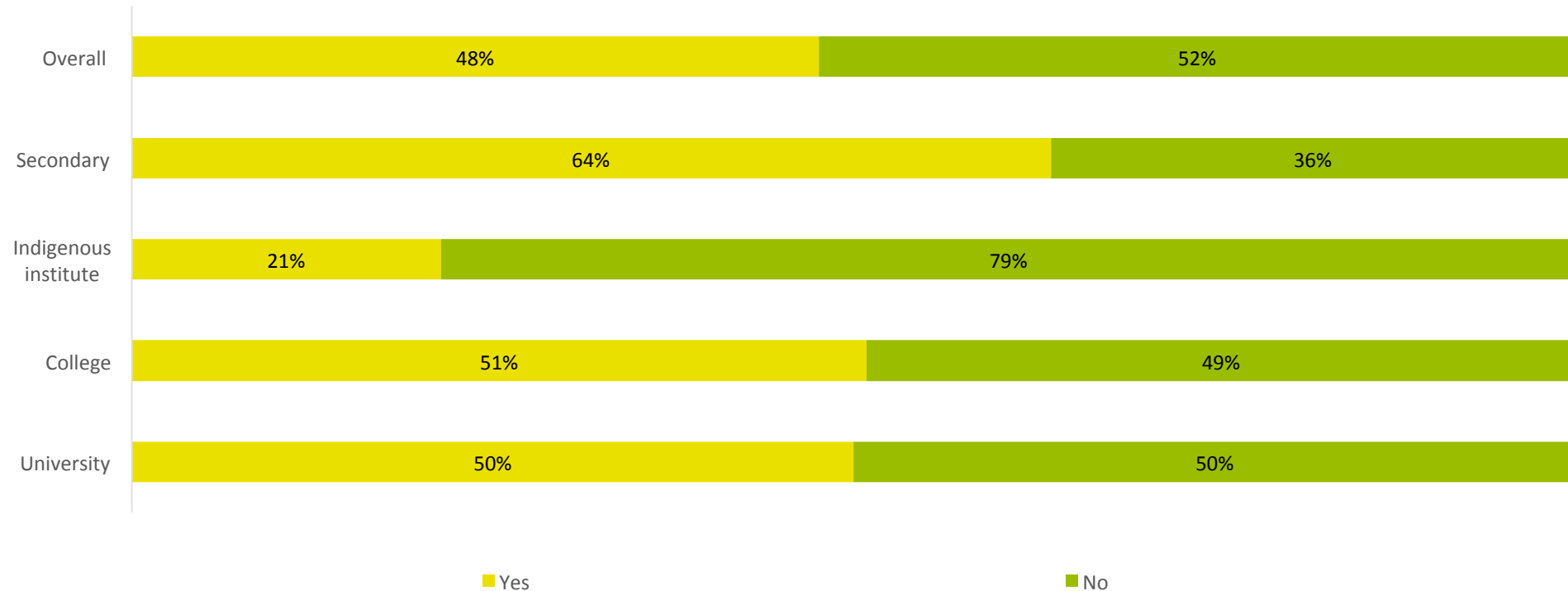
Top 3 Challenges by Institution Type

- 'Time issues' is the biggest challenge faced by respondents across all four educational institution categories (36% Secondary, 21% Indigenous institute, 25% College and 55% University).
- 'Family responsibilities' is the next common challenge faced by respondents across all four educational institution categories (18% Secondary, 43% Indigenous institute, 33% College and 25% University).
- Over a third of those attending an Indigenous institute (36%) identify a 'learning disability' as a challenge while 30% of those attending University state financial issues is a challenge.



Registering In More Courses

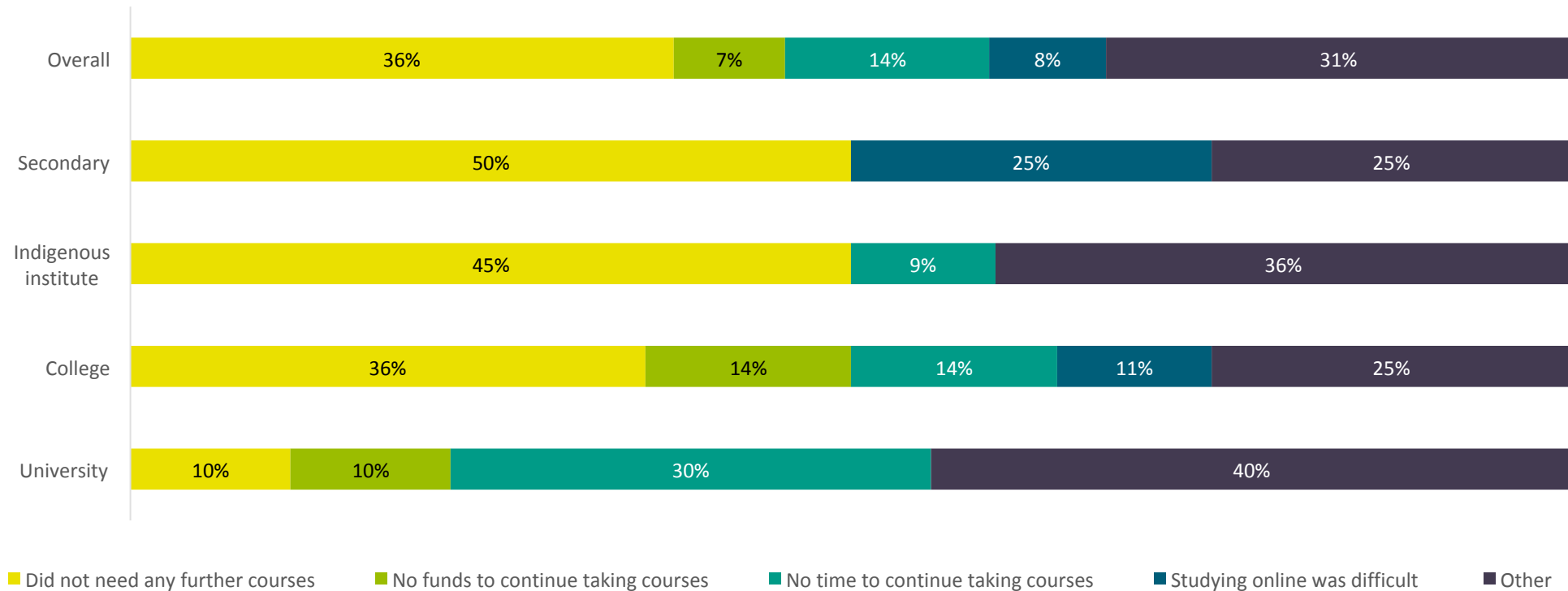
- Overall, over half of respondents did not register in other course(s) since August 2018 (52%). Several of those who participated in the qualitative study are enrolled in more courses through Contact North | Contact Nord.
- Those attending an Indigenous Institute are less likely to register for other course(s) than those who pursued a Secondary education (21%, compared to 64%).
- Half of respondents from College (51%) and University (50%) did register for additional courses since August 2018.



Q5. Have you registered for other course(s) since August 2018? (N=102)

Reasons Why Respondents Did Not Register in More Courses

- As to the reasons why respondents did not continue registering in more course(s), a third indicated they did not need any further courses (36%).
- Overall, 1 in 7 (14%) indicated they did not have time to continue taking courses.
- 1 in 10 do not have the funds to continue (7%), while a similar proportion found online learning difficult (8%).



Q6. Why did you not register in any more course(s)? Please select all that apply. (N=53)

Base: Q5. Have you registered for other course(s) since August 2018.

Reasons Why Respondents Did Not Register in More Courses

During the qualitative discussions, those who did not register for more courses through Contact North | Contact Nord noted the following reasons:

- They are finished their degree/diploma/certificate.
- They do not have enough money to pay for tuition and books.
- They are unsure about their next steps in terms of education or career.
- The Contact North | Contact Nord office closed in their community.

Note – The reason for the closure was loss of the rent-free space in the community to house on the online learning centre which is part of Contact North | Contact Nord’s operating model. The community partner providing the space required the space for its own purposes.

- They are enrolled in courses directly through a post secondary institution and do not require Contact North | Contact Nord’s services anymore.

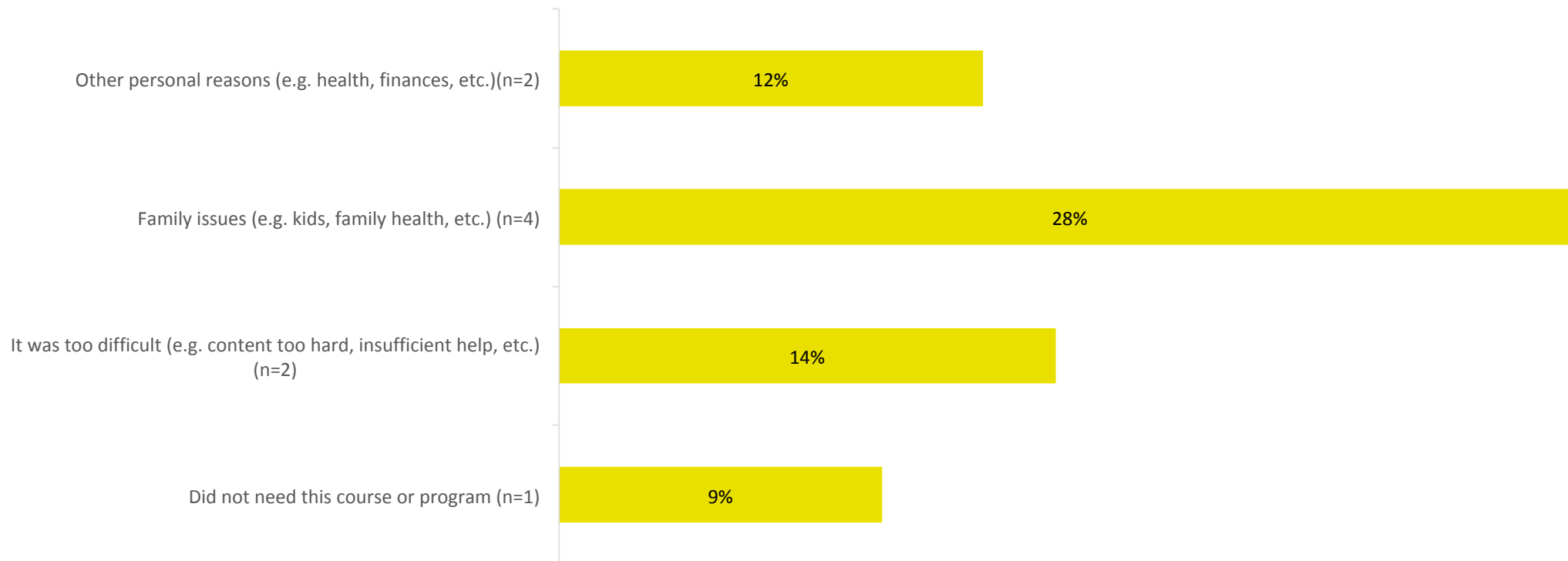


I will be done school in August and will no longer need any services. However, I may explore to what else they offer.

I have no money for school and the office closed in my community.

Reasons Why Respondents Did Not Complete the Course or Programs

- Over a quarter (28%) of respondents indicate family issues prevented them from completing the course or program they registered in.
- A few respondents indicate other personal reasons (12%), such as health and finances, prevented them from completing the course or program while others said it was too difficult (14%).



Q4. Why did you not complete the course or program that you were registered in? (N=9)*

Base: Q3. How many course(s) did you complete? (N=102)

*Caution: Small Sample Size

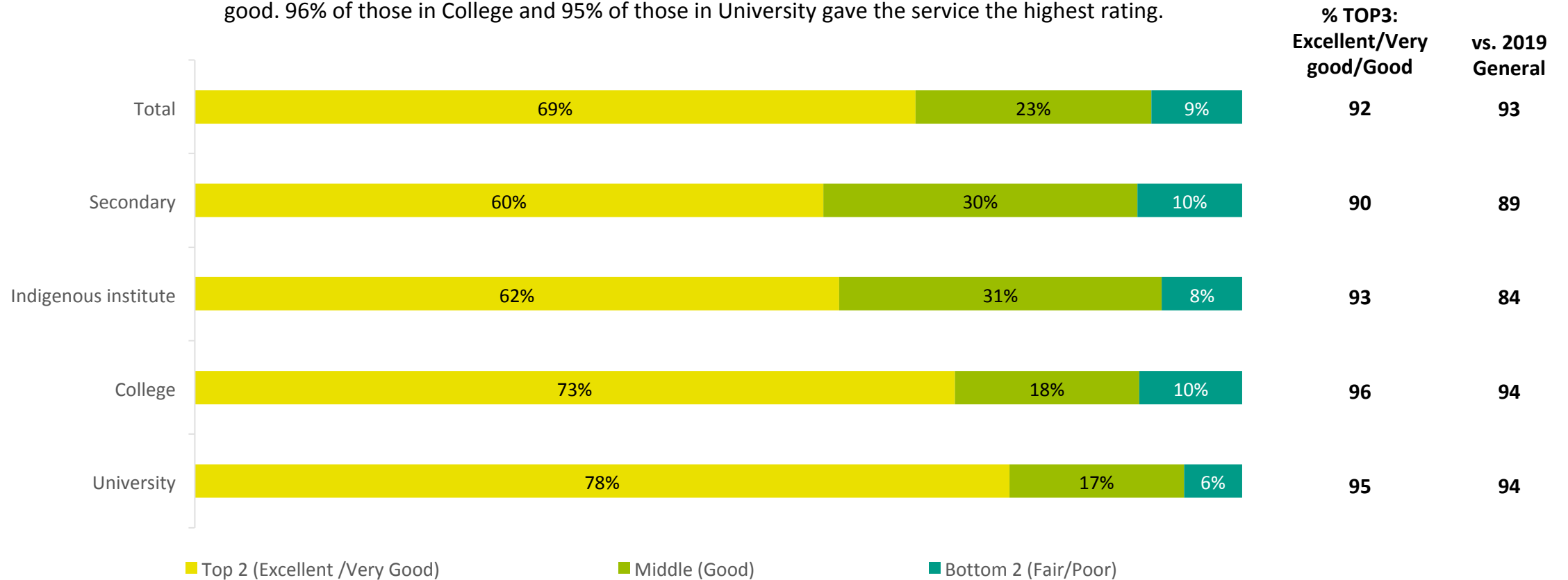
Non answer = 54%



SERVICES USED

Information on Available Online Courses and Study Options

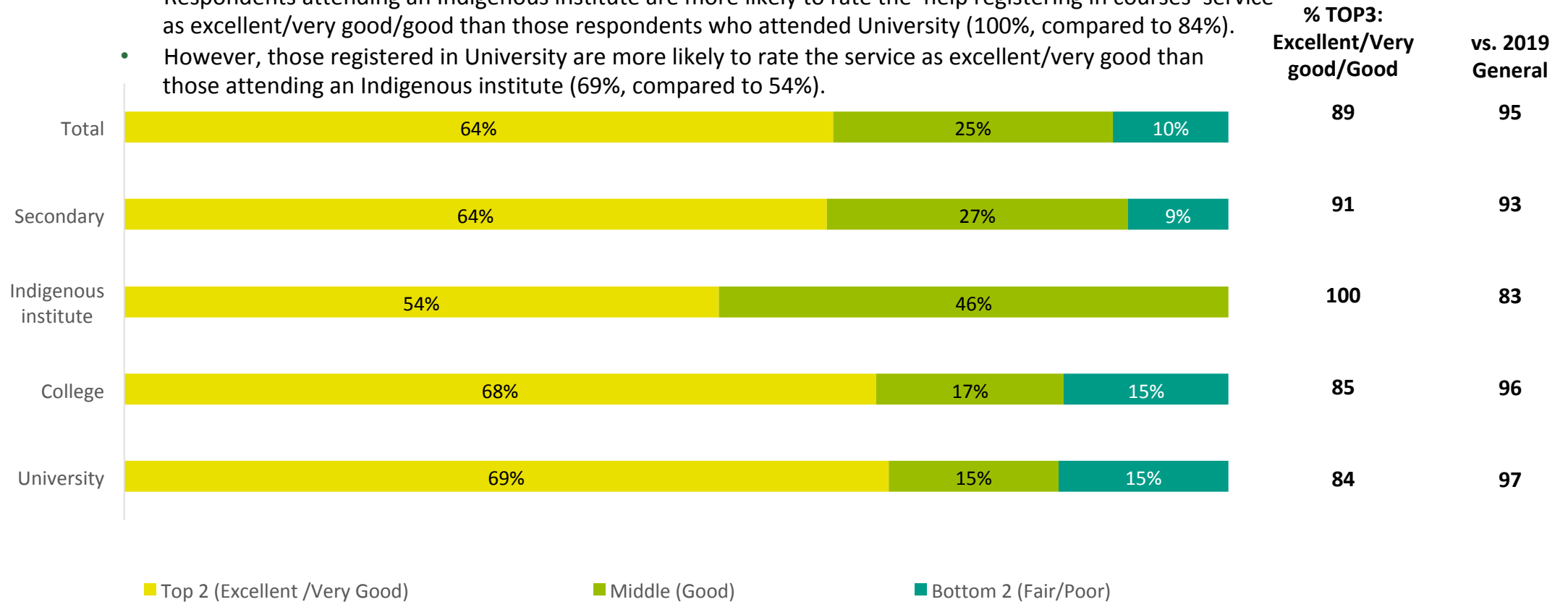
- 9-in-10 respondents rate the information available on online course/study options as excellent/very good/good (92%), which is a similar to the 2019 General Survey (93%).
- Respondents who enrolled in University or College were more likely to rate the service as excellent/very good/good. 96% of those in College and 95% of those in University gave the service the highest rating.



Q11A. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Information on available online courses and study options (N=92)*
 *Of those who used the service

Help Registering in Courses

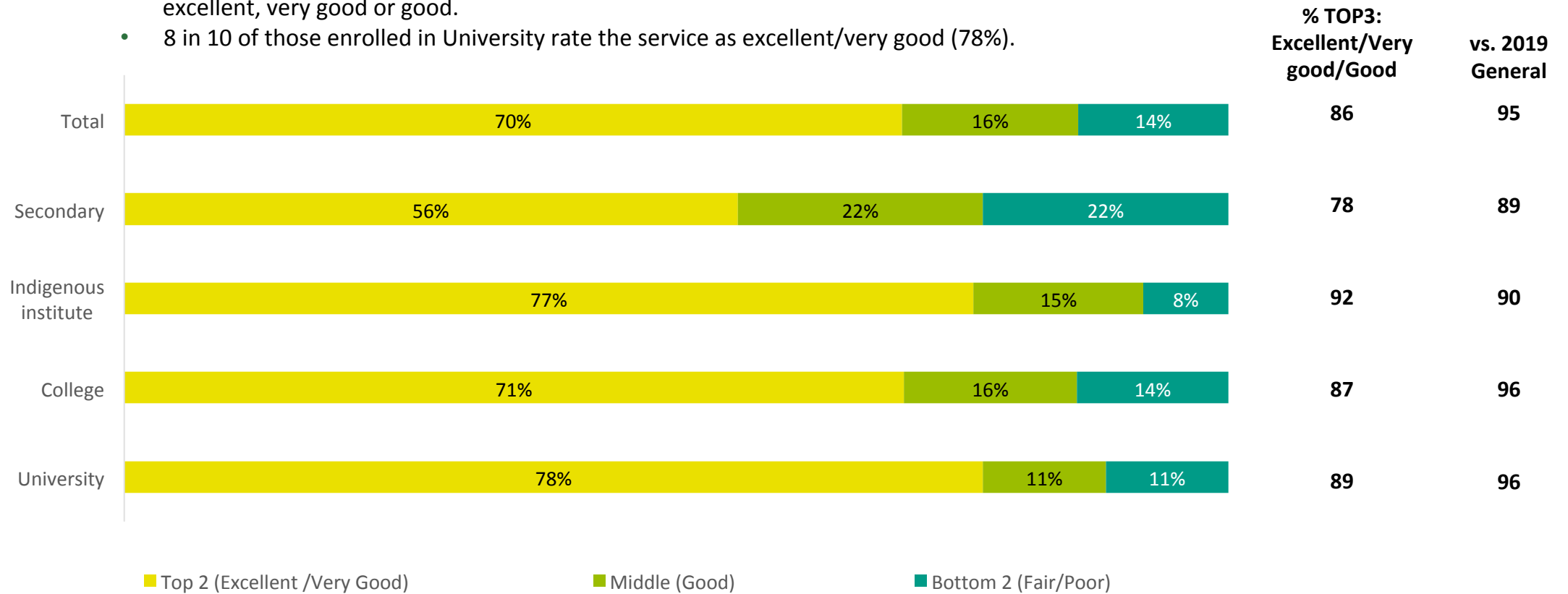
- Overall, over 9 in 10 respondents rate the ‘help registering in courses’ service as excellent/very good/good (89%).
- Respondents attending an Indigenous institute are more likely to rate the ‘help registering in courses’ service as excellent/very good/good than those respondents who attended University (100%, compared to 84%).
- However, those registered in University are more likely to rate the service as excellent/very good than those attending an Indigenous institute (69%, compared to 54%).



Q11B. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Help registering in courses? (N=86)*
 *Of those who used the service

Support from Staff in the Online Learning Centre

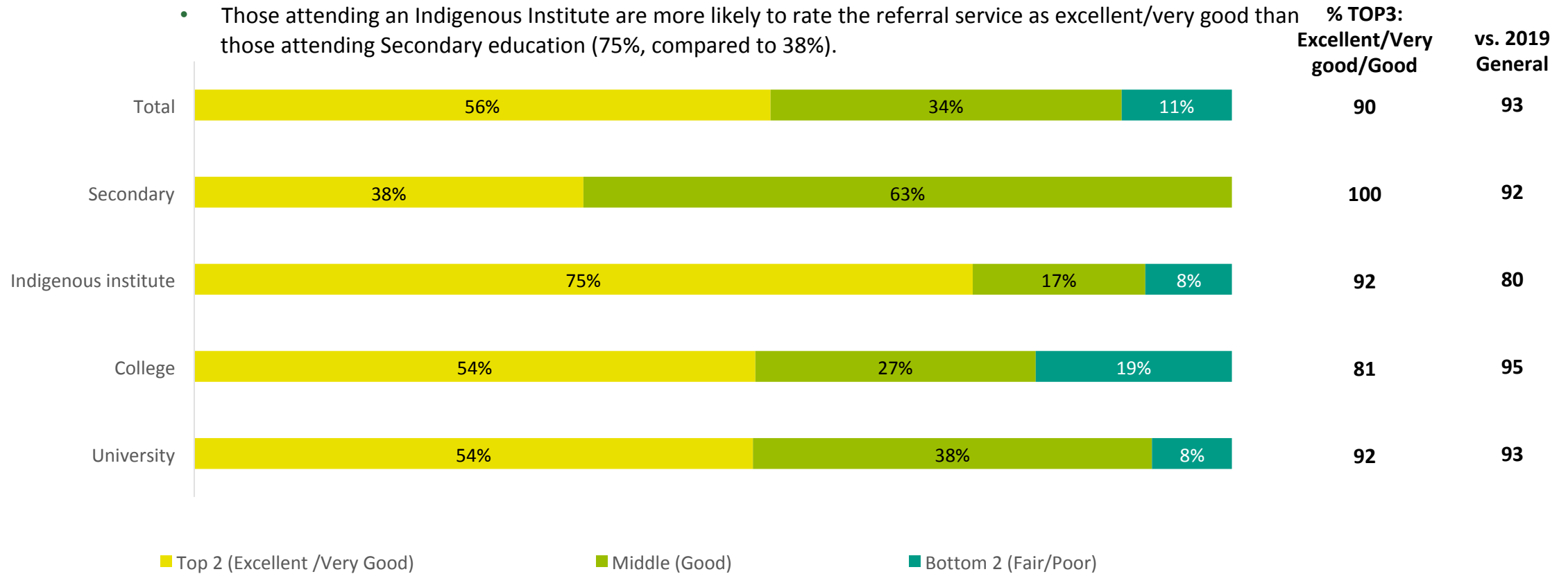
- Overall, 86% of respondents rate 'support from staff in the online learning centre' as excellent, very good or good.
- 9 in 10 (92%) those enrolled in an Indigenous institute rate 'support from staff in the online learning centre' as excellent, very good or good.
- 8 in 10 of those enrolled in University rate the service as excellent/very good (78%).



Q11C. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Support from staff in the online learning centre(N=90)*
 *Of those who used the service

Referrals for Local Support Services

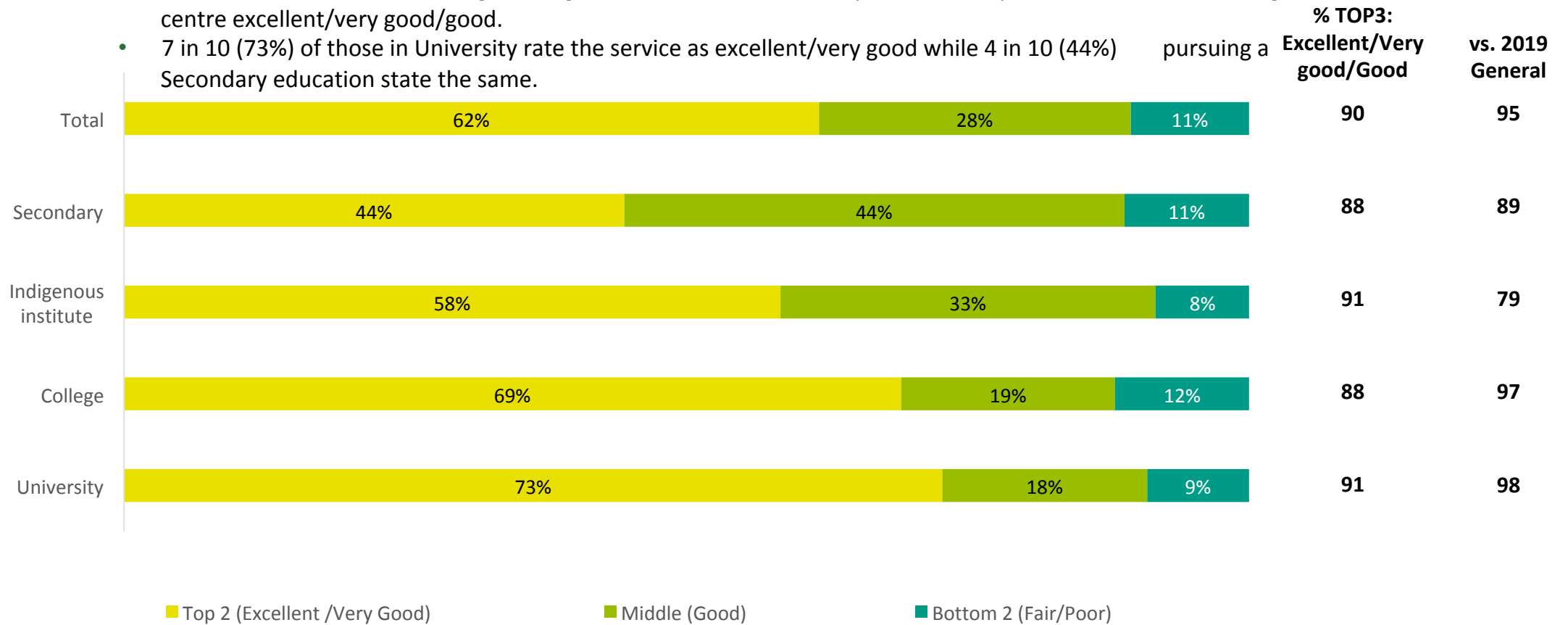
- Overall, 90% of respondents rate referrals for local support services as excellent/very good/good.
- All (100%) attending an Indigenous institute rate the service as excellent/very good/good while 8 in 10 (81%) attending College state the same.
- Those attending an Indigenous Institute are more likely to rate the referral service as excellent/very good than those attending Secondary education (75%, compared to 38%).



Q11D. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Referrals for local support services (N=72)*
 *Of those who used the service

Computers at an Online Learning Centre

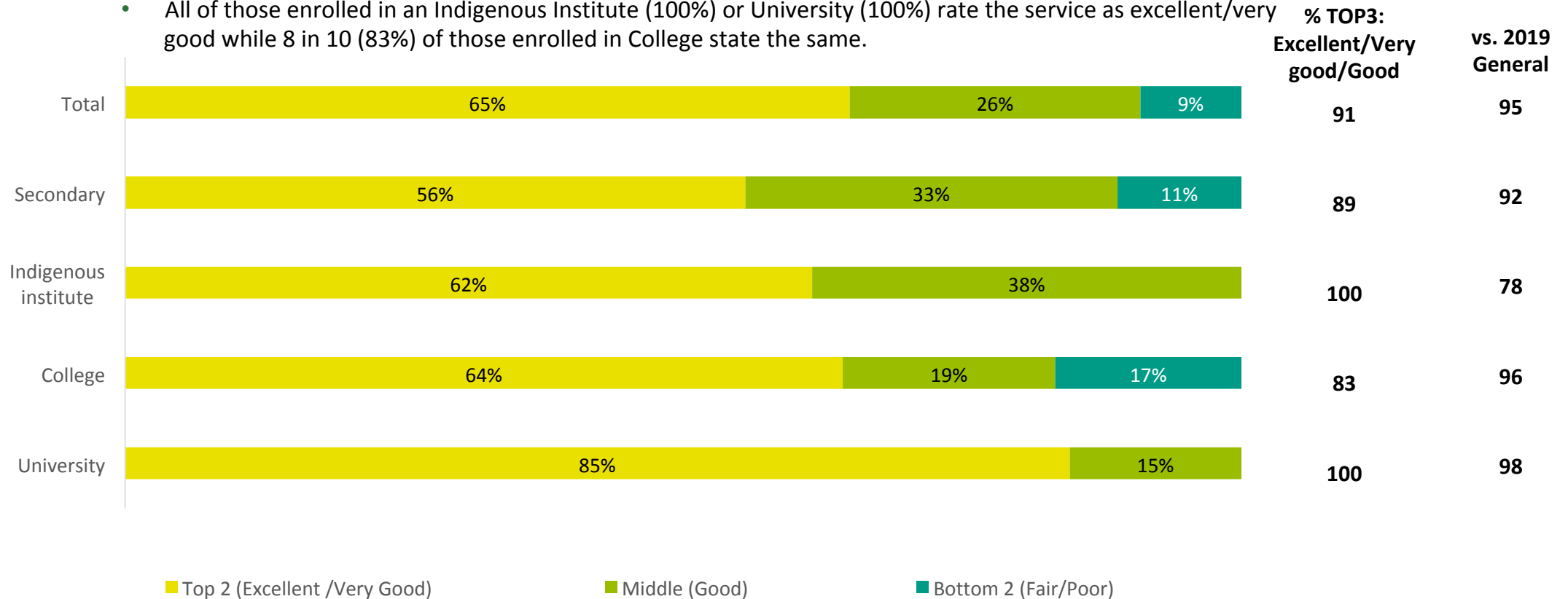
- Overall, 9 in 10 (90%) rate the computers at an online learning centre as excellent/very good/good.
- 9 in 10 (91%) of those attending an Indigenous institute or University find the computers at an online learning centre excellent/very good/good.
- 7 in 10 (73%) of those in University rate the service as excellent/very good while 4 in 10 (44%) pursuing a Secondary education state the same.



Q11E. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
Computers at an online learning centre (N=76)*
*Of those who used the service

Internet Access at an Online Learning Centre

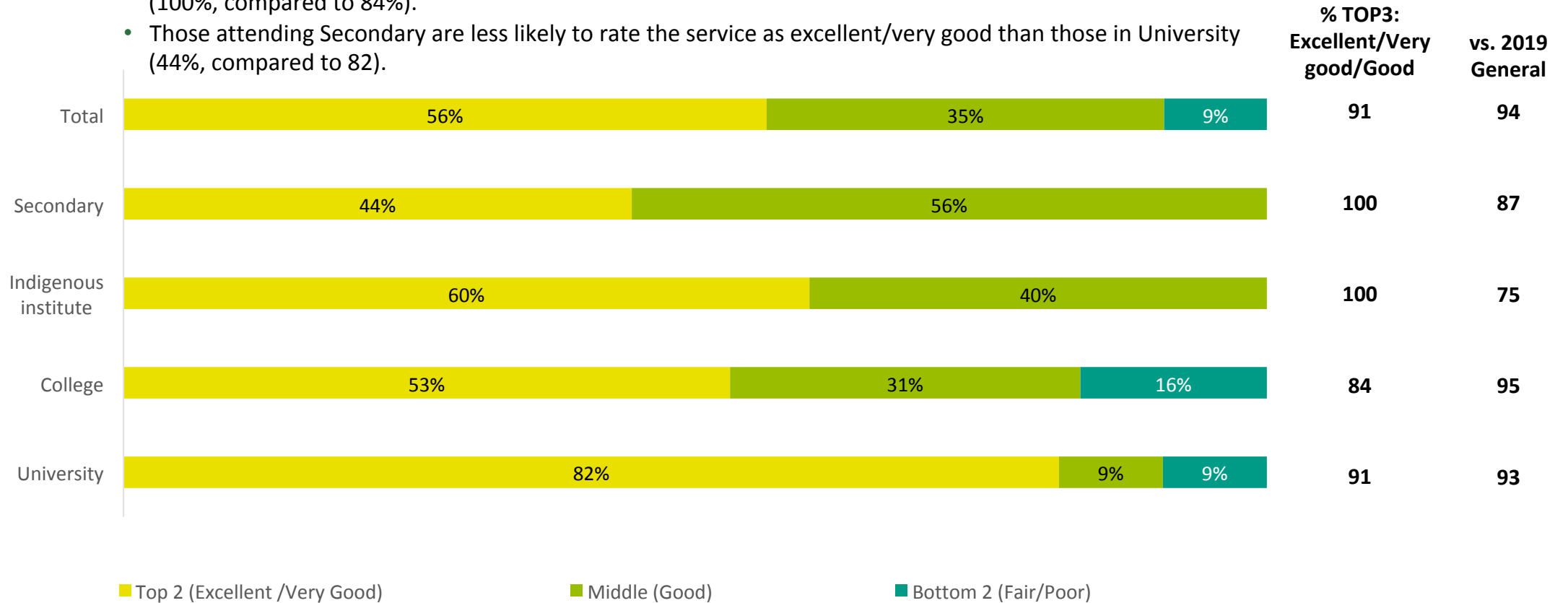
- Overall, 9 in 10 (91%) respondents who use internet access at an online learning centre rate the service as excellent/very good/good.
- All of those enrolled in an Indigenous Institute (100%) or University (100%) rate the service as excellent/very good while 8 in 10 (83%) of those enrolled in College state the same.



Q11F. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Internet access at an online learning centre (N=79)*
 *Of those who used the service

Web Conferencing Platform

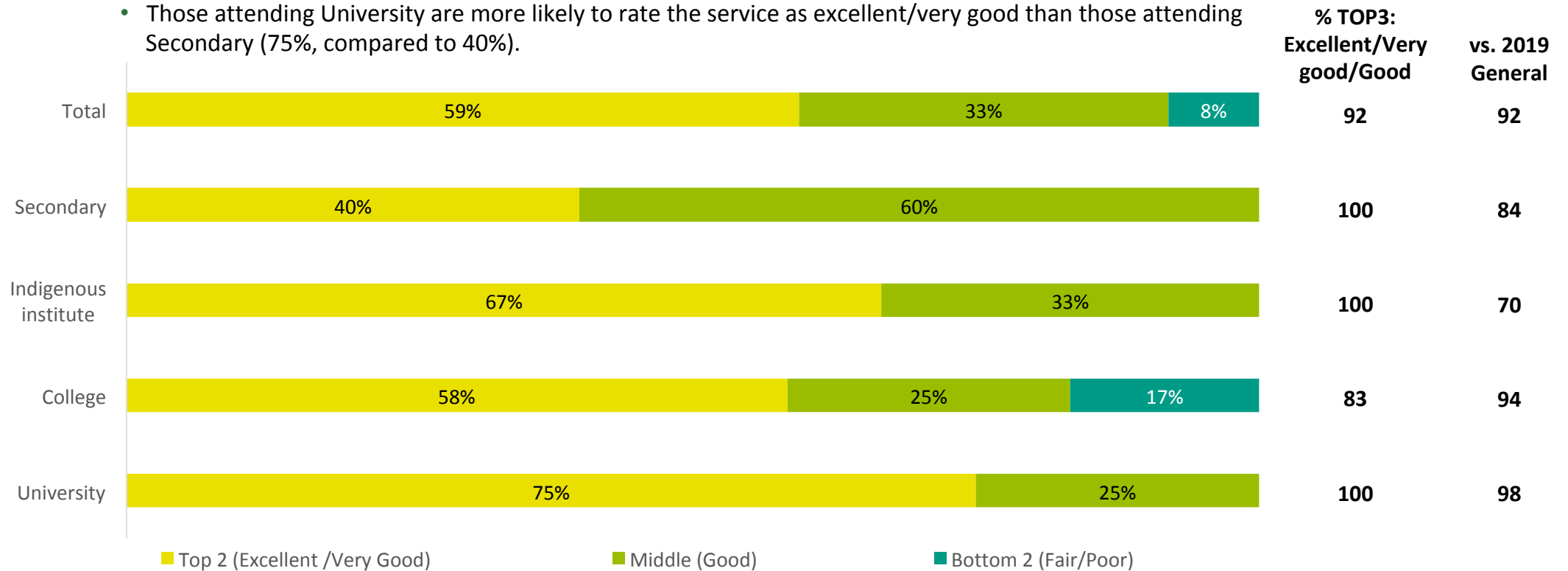
- 9 in 10 (91%) of respondents rate the web conferencing platform as excellent/very good/good.
- Those enrolled in Secondary education or an Indigenous institute are more likely to rate the web conferencing platform at an online learning centre or from home as excellent/very good/good than those attending College (100%, compared to 84%).
- Those attending Secondary are less likely to rate the service as excellent/very good than those in University (44%, compared to 82%).



Q11G. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Web conferencing platform (Saba or Adobe Connect) at an online learning centre or from home (N=78)*
 *Of those who used the service

Videoconferencing

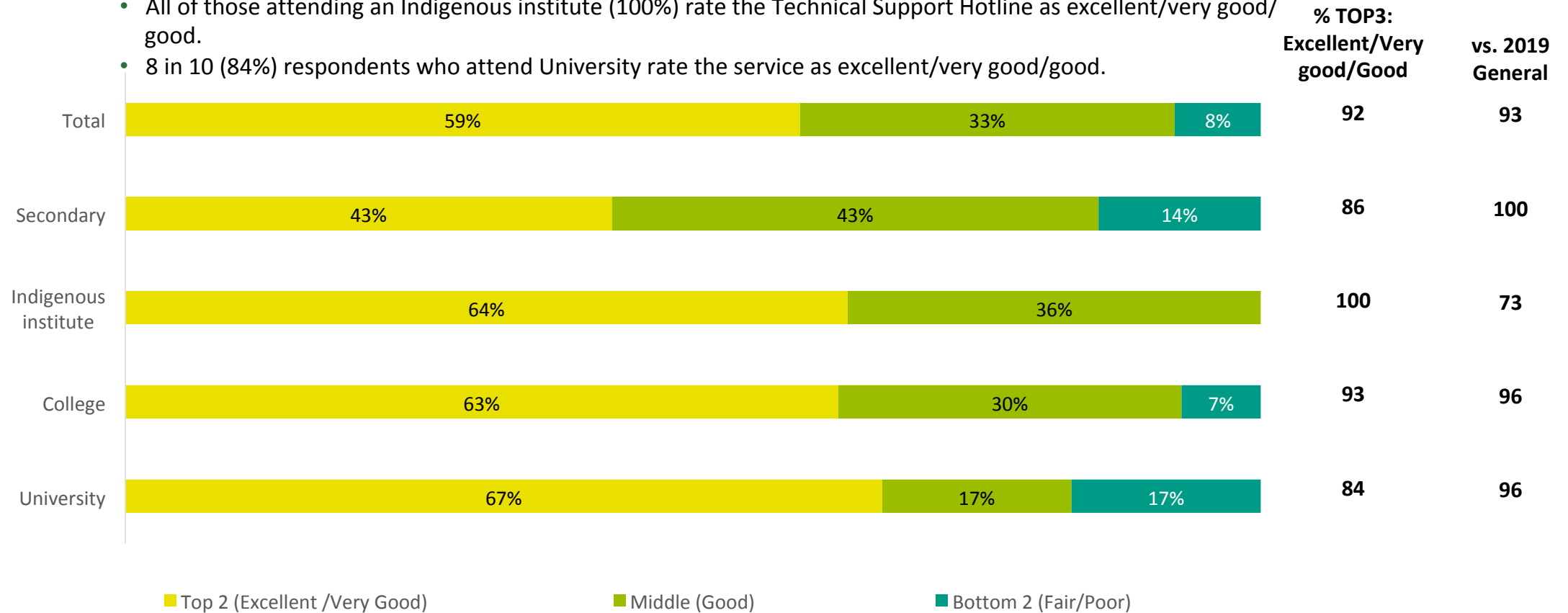
- Of those who used the service, 9 in 10 (92%) rate the videoconferencing service as excellent/very good/good, which is the same proportion as the 2019 General Survey.
- All (100%) attending Secondary, Indigenous institute or University rate the videoconferencing platform as excellent/very good/good.
- Those attending University are more likely to rate the service as excellent/very good than those attending Secondary (75%, compared to 40%).



11H. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Videoconferencing platform at an online learning (N=57)*
 *Of those who used the service

Technical Support Hotline

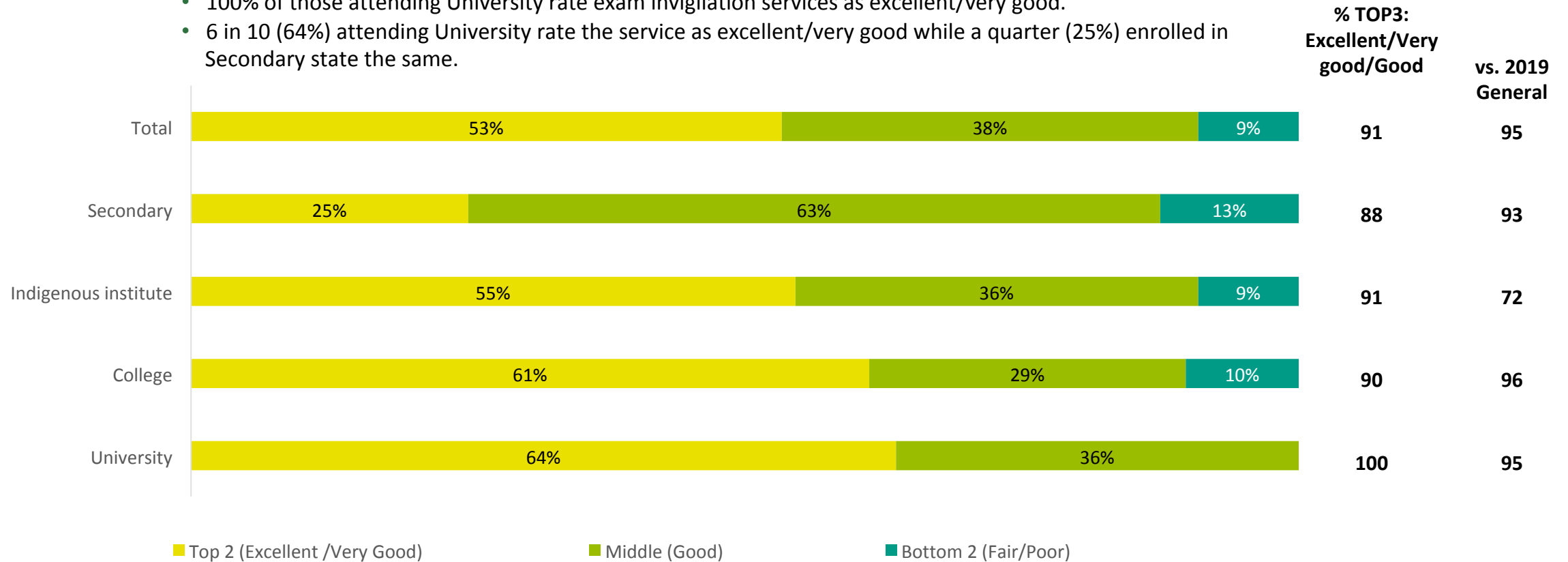
- Overall, 9 in 10 (92%) rate the service as excellent/very good/good, a similar proportion as the 2019 General Survey.
- All of those attending an Indigenous institute (100%) rate the Technical Support Hotline as excellent/very good/good.
- 8 in 10 (84%) respondents who attend University rate the service as excellent/very good/good.



Q11I. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Technical Support Hotline (N=67)*
 *Of those who used the service

Exam Invigilation Services

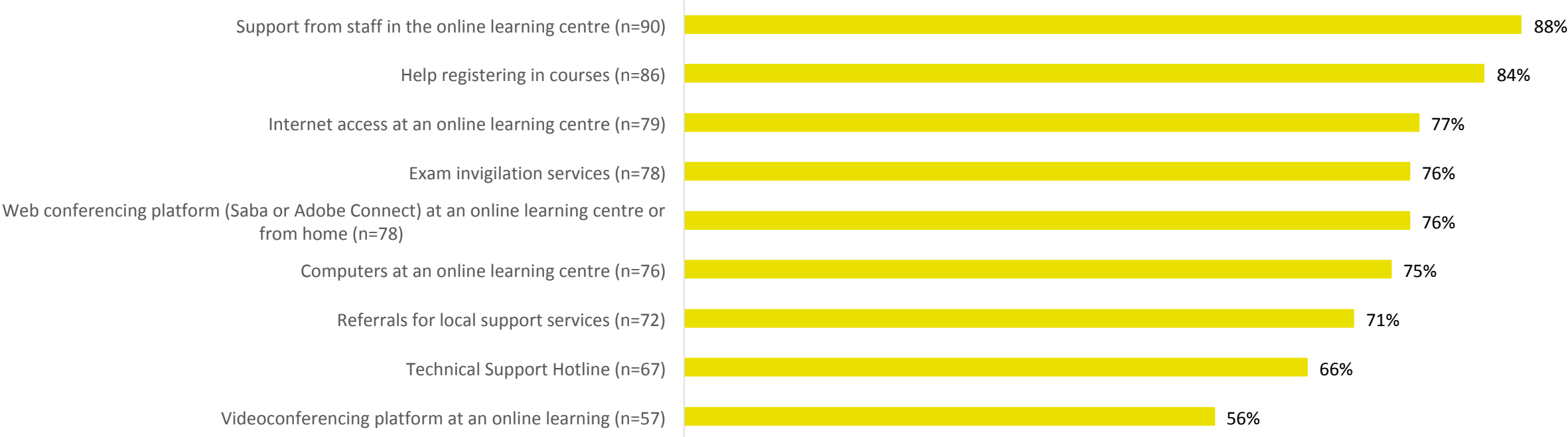
- Overall, 9 in 10 (91%) of respondents rate the service as excellent/very good/good.
- 100% of those attending University rate exam invigilation services as excellent/very good.
- 6 in 10 (64%) attending University rate the service as excellent/very good while a quarter (25%) enrolled in Secondary state the same.



Q11J. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Exam invigilation services (N=78)*
 *Of those who used the service

Services Used

- 9 in 10 (88%) of respondents received support from staff in the online learning centre while 8 in 10 (84%) received help registering in courses.
- 7 in 10 (77%) used the Internet access at an online learning centre with a similar proportion who use the exam invigilation services (76%) and the web conferencing platform (76%).
- Over half (56%) used the videoconferencing platform at an online learning centre.

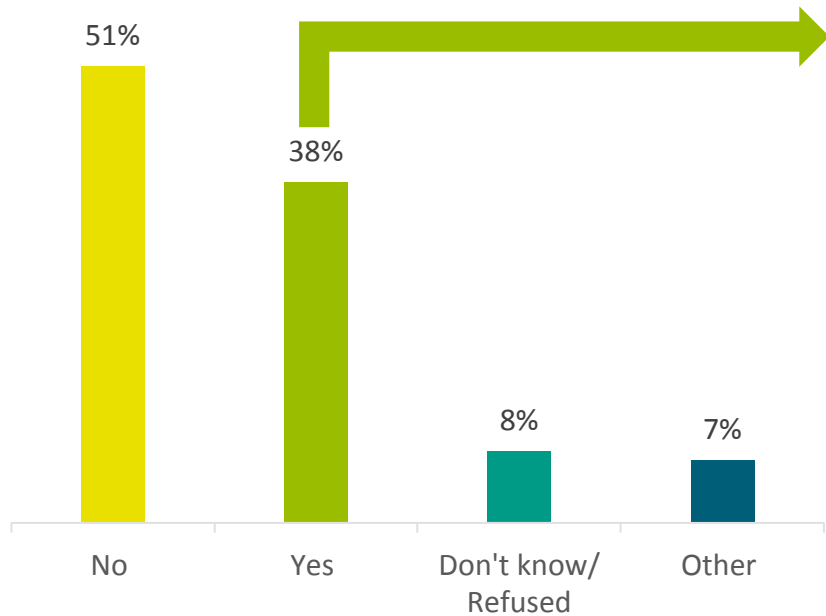


Q11A-Q11J. How would you rate the following Contact North | Contact Nord services?
 Respondents who used services (N=57-92)

Services Contact North | Contact Nord Can Provide

- 1 in 2 respondents indicated they do not have any recommendations for Contact North | Contact Nord about other services that could be provided in order to help the respondent to complete their courses (51%).
- Over a third (38%) provide a recommendation, a few indicate Contact North | Contact Nord could provide 'more/better information' regarding locations and schedules (4%).

Are there services that could be provided?



Services that could be provided*



Q13. Are there other services Contact North | Contact Nord can provide to help you when completing courses? (N=102)

*Of the services that could be provided, use caution as the sample size for each service is <30

Services Contact North | Contact Nord Can Provide

Respondents from the qualitative discussions were asked to provide suggestions on other services they would like to see Contact North | Contact Nord provide. Following are their suggestions:

- Provide a **standard computer course** to help students better understand how to use all the programs (e.g. Google Docs, Blackboard, Saba, etc.).
- **Improve the technology available at the online learning centres.** This includes improving the Internet speed to avoid lagging/connection issues.
- **Make the course descriptions more detailed** (e.g. include course syllabus).
 - This will help minimize the requests to Contact North | Contact Nord staff for more information.
 - Include an “estimated cost of the program”. This will help avoid surprise costs like travel for mandatory labs.
- Have **better communication with the educational institutions that inform Contact North | Contact Nord of the student’s class status** (e.g. course complete)
- **Provide tutors** to help students if they are struggling.
 - This could include a helpline (phone line to call when help is needed).
- **Provide a subsidy or other financial assistance** to those who would like to take classes but cannot cover all the associated costs.
- **Have support staff available by phone outside of normal business hours.**



I think having the pre-program for learning the technology would allow students to learn about the possible platforms that they may be using. I consider myself to be fairly tech savvy, but Blackboard, for example, threw me for a bit of a loop. I was still learning more about it even on the last day of class. I think that having a pre-program like this would benefit many people and would offer them a lot of exposure to the relevant platforms.

As far as improving services I would say that having a real person to talk to outside of typical business hours would likely have a major impact on student learning, especially when taking care of family takes up the majority of your typical 'business day'... feeling like there isn't support can be a huge detriment to success.

Increasing Awareness of Contact North | Contact Nord

In the qualitative discussions, several respondents insist Contact North | Contact Nord needs to focus on creating more awareness of their services. A few mention it took them some time to learn of Contact North | Contact Nord and they still do not feel fully aware of all the services available.

They recommend the following:

- Advertise more and highlight all the services available.
- Work with high schools to create more awareness.
- Several respondents found out about Contact North | Contact Nord through the high schools in their community.
- Continue to use billboards to advertise.
 - Several note the current billboard advertising made them aware of Contact North | Contact Nord initially.
- Utilize social media.
- Hold an open house within the communities.



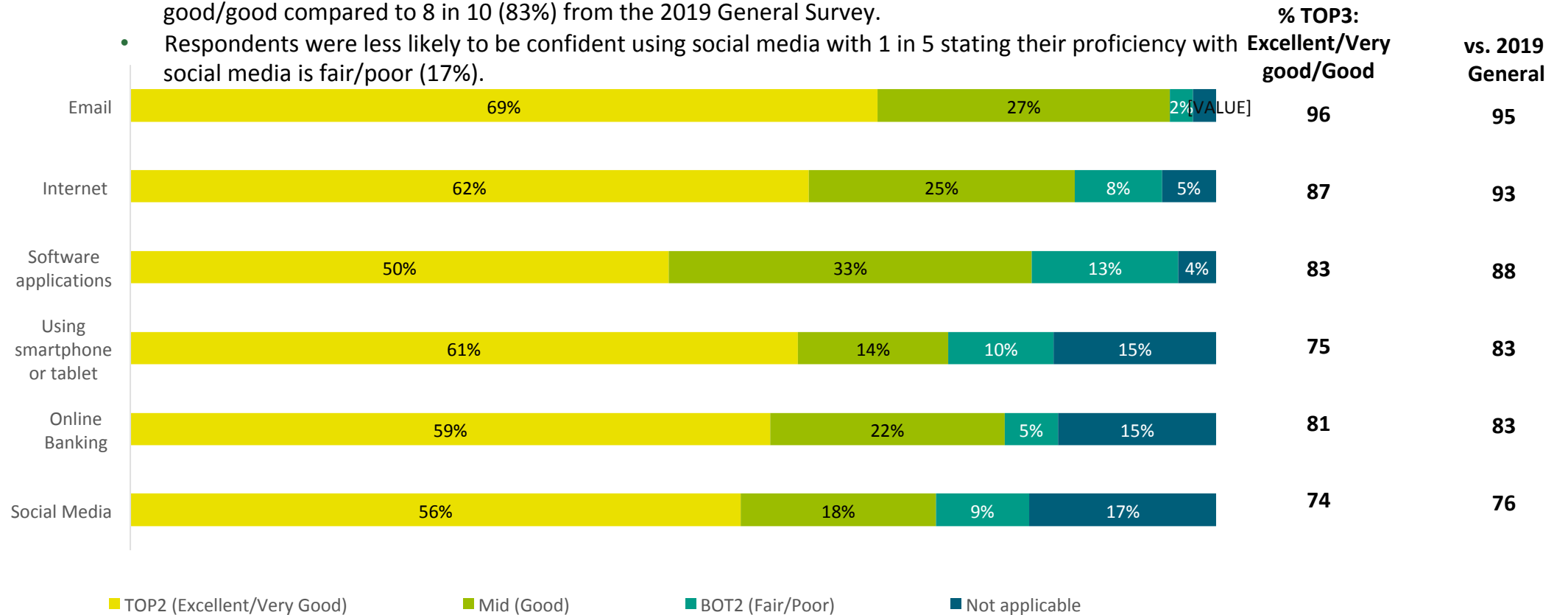
Based on my experience I would say that in my community there is a need for Contact North to be more present. It took me a long time to find them and realize that they were an option. So I'd recommend putting in place some kind of advertisement or building partnerships with other education institutions, so that referrals could be done between them.



TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY

Proficiency with Technology

- Most respondents rate their proficiency using e-mail (96%) as excellent/very good/ good, similar to the 2019 General Survey (95%).
- Three quarters (75%) of respondents state their proficiency with software applications is excellent/very good/good compared to 8 in 10 (83%) from the 2019 General Survey.
- Respondents were less likely to be confident using social media with 1 in 5 stating their proficiency with social media is fair/poor (17%).



Q12A – F. Overall, how would you rate your proficiency with the following technology and applications? (N=102)

Proficiency with Technology

A few respondents in the qualitative discussions struggled with their lack of technology proficiency. Some note they were computer illiterate prior to taking their course; thus, they struggled with some basic tasks initially (e.g. how to cut and paste). Others, despite being more computer literate, recount how they struggled with taking notes online and studying from those electronic notes (e.g. they prefer to highlight on paper).

Several note, though they are computer literate, their courses required using several programs/applications they were unfamiliar with and took a great deal of time to become proficient using. They wish they had a prep course to help them learn those programs/applications in advance of their course.



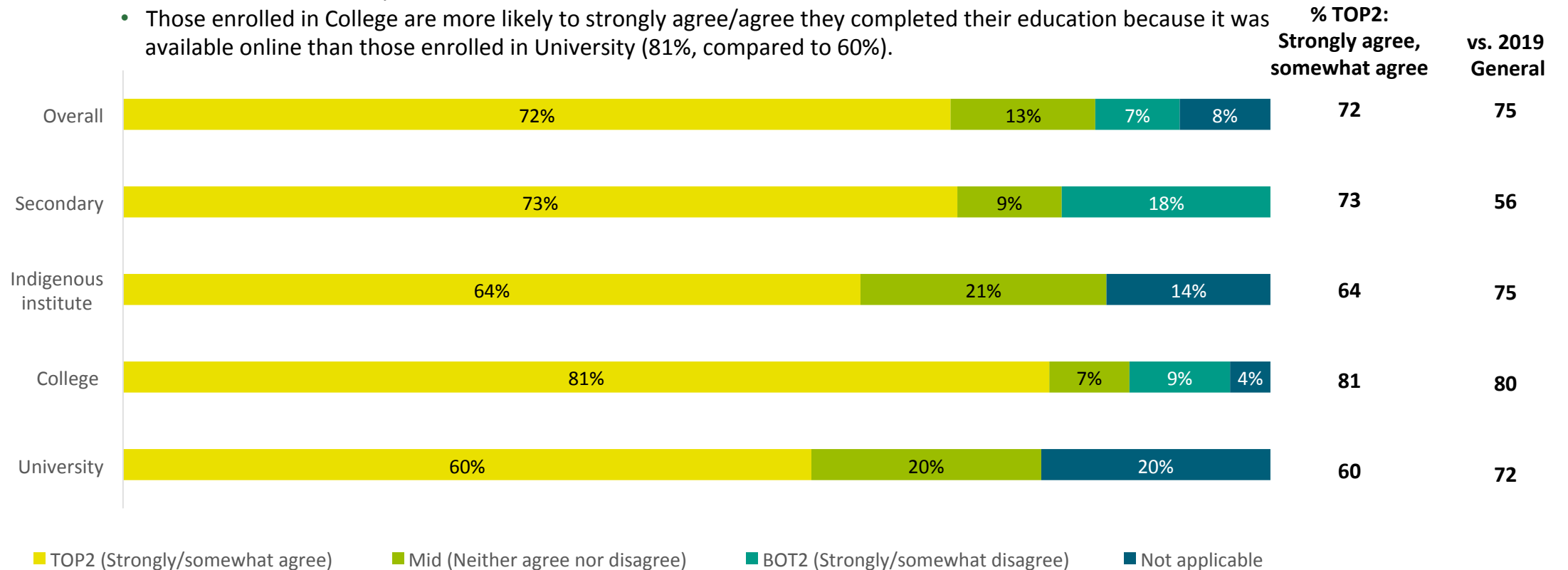
I struggle all the time with my computer. I often have my daughter assist me.

With regards to “it’s hard to learn by computer”, I found it challenging to just review the material online and read the text. I tried without taking too many notes, however I found it very hard to recall the material for quizzes and assignments. Therefore, I had to take traditional notes in my own words, which helped me be more prepared for all of that.

I’m not a big computer person, I like to hand write and be able to go back and forth and use highlighters and sticky notes. The computer is challenging for me.

Completing Education Due to Online Availability

- 7 in 10 of respondents completed their education because it was available online (72%), a similar proportion as the 2019 General Survey (75%).
- Those enrolled in College are more likely to strongly agree/agree they completed their education because it was available online than those enrolled in University (81%, compared to 60%).



Q7B. Thinking about the course(s) you were registered in, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. I completed my education because it was available online. (N=102)



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Note the recommendations from the participants address some, but not all barriers identified.

Enhancing Services

There are several opportunities for Contact North | Contact Nord to enhance the services offered to clients:

- Several of the clients would likely benefit from learning opportunities to help them feel better prepared to work on the computer in advance of their courses. It is recommended Contact North | Contact Nord consider developing, or partnering with another institution, to provide these learning opportunities. There are two topics for computer technology related prep courses Contact North | Contact Nord should consider:
 - A computer basics course – for those who have limited, or no, experience using computers.
 - A course that focuses on some of the standard programs/applications the educational institutions tend to require students to use (e. g. Word, PowerPoint, Google Docs, Blackboard, Saba).
 - If Contact North | Contact Nord is going to pursue this opportunity, it is recommended they consult several educational institutions to determine the best computer programs to focus on.
- Continue to improve to technology available in the online learning centres. This should include improving the speed of the Internet connection to help avoid lag when viewing a lecture and/or using videoconferencing.
- Provide tutoring services or point clients to reputable sources who provide those services.
 - These services could be provided remotely or over the phone to help minimize the resources required.
- Extend the hours of the Contact North | Contact Nord Student Information Hotline to ensure it is available to clients outside of business hours.

Recommendations

Enhance the Course Selection Process

There is an opportunity to help clients make more informed course selections by enhancing the course descriptions. The following enhancements should be considered:

- Where possible, include a course syllabus.
- Provide an estimated cost for the course/program that includes the cost of books and is very clear whether any travel or additional expenses are required (e.g. for labs).

Provide Information about Financial Assistance

Given there are clients who would like to take more courses, but are unable to do so because of financial limitations, Contact North | Contact Nord should provide information to students on:

- Grants, subsidies, or scholarships they may qualify for, and how to apply for them.
- The financial aid options available, and how to apply for them.
- Tips for saving for education.

Recommendations

Enhancing Contact North | Contact Nord Marketing

It is strongly recommended Contact North | Contact Nord focus on creating more awareness of their services. Some opportunities to increase awareness include:

- Continuing to encourage high schools, post secondary institutions, and career/employment services to refer students.
- Continuing to use billboards to advertise, as they appear to be effective.
- Consider offering an incentive for past students who refer new clients to Contact North | Contact Nord. This could be as simple as each referral qualifies for an entry in a prize draw and/or a discount on future Contact North | Contact Nord services.

In terms of content for the marketing...

- Ensure advertising highlights the variety of services available.
- Consider highlighting some client success stories in advertising, and on social media.