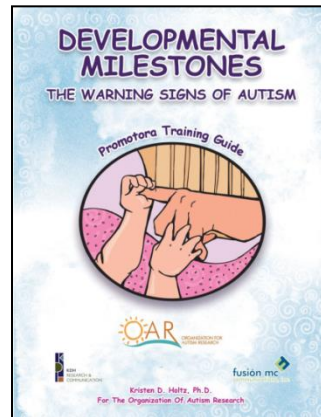


A train-the-trainer project: Equipping *promotoras* to empower Hispanic families in South Texas to recognize developmental milestones and warning signs of autism



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Goals & Objectives

Goals

- Provide *promotoras* with **culturally sensitive** educational tools for their community outreach
- **Increase knowledge** about childhood developmental milestones
- **Decrease barriers** to autism diagnosis among Hispanic families

Objectives

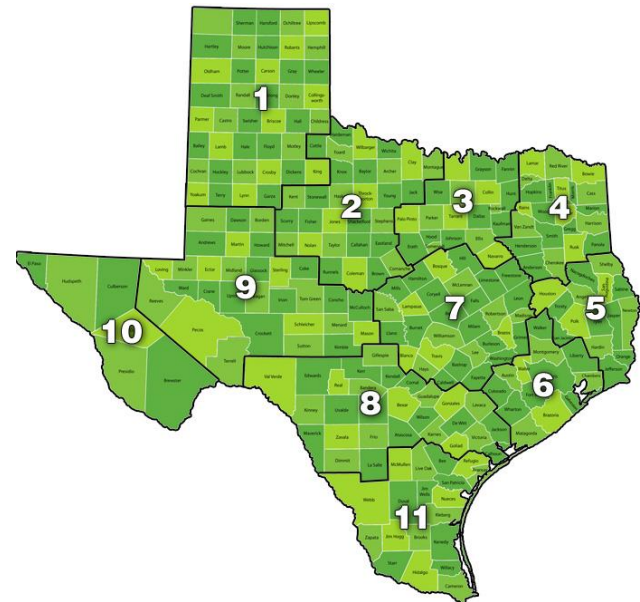
- Describe the disparity in autism diagnoses among Hispanic children
- Identify the strengths of using community health workers to raise awareness about specific health issues in target populations

Numbers

- In 2010 **1 in 68** children were diagnosed with autism³
- Between 2000 to 2006 there was a **3-fold** increase in diagnoses among Hispanic children⁶
- Hispanic children are diagnosed with autism **2.5 years** later than non-Hispanic white children⁴
- There are **fewer** autism diagnoses in Hispanic children versus non-Hispanic white children in South Texas schools⁵

Community Health Workers

- There are approximately 3000 certified *promotoras* (community health workers) in Texas and over 500 certified *promotoras* in Region 11 (Rio Grande Valley)⁷
- The *promotora* model has proven to be effective in public health interventions resulting in better health outcomes among ethnic minorities^{1,2}



Intervention

Learn the Signs.
Act Early.



Materials

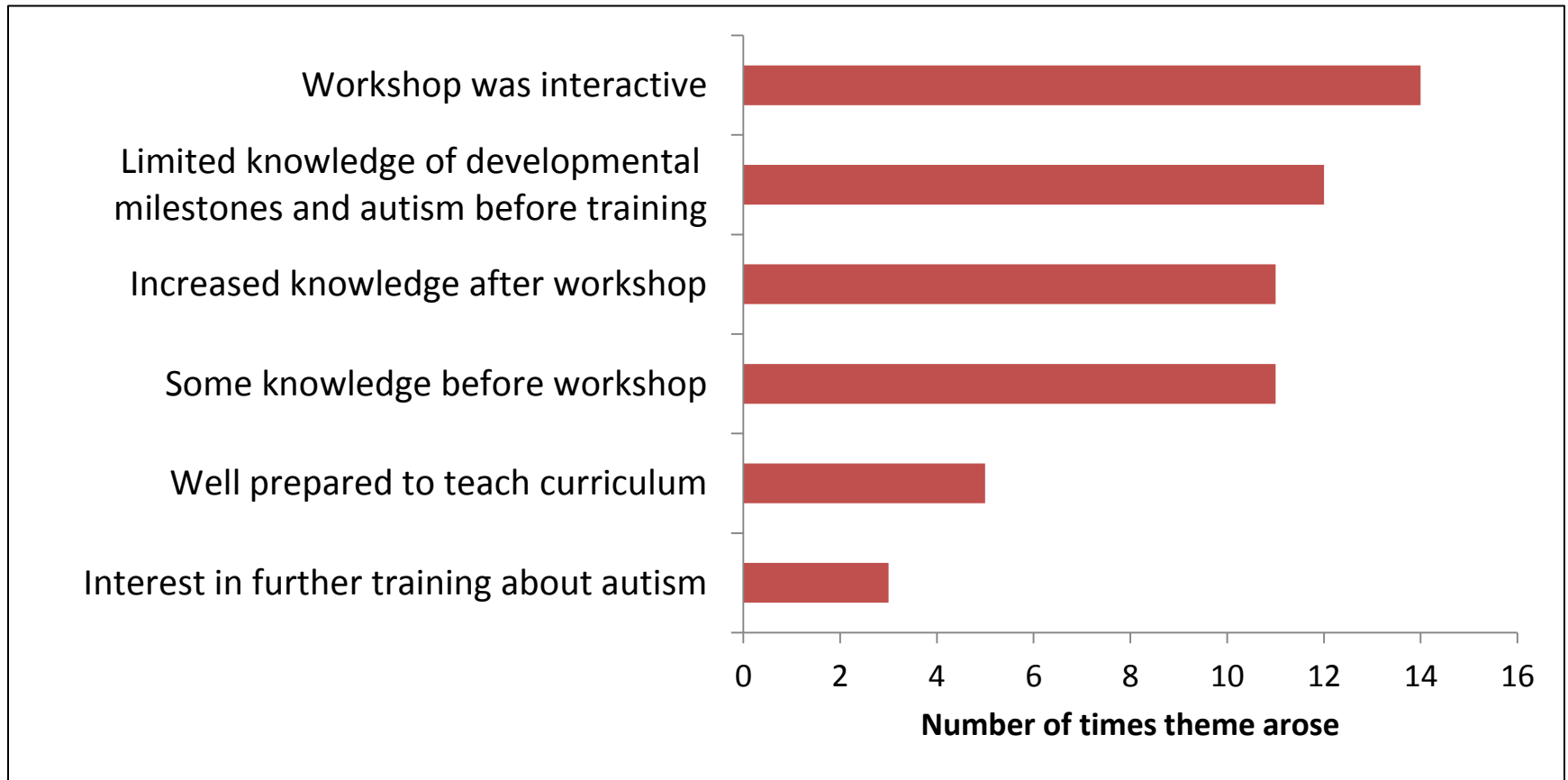
- Bilingual *promotora*-training curriculum developed by Organization of Autism Research (OAR)
- Educational materials from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) “Learn the signs. Act early.” campaign

Methods

- Phase I: Training
 - 58 *promotoras* from Cameron and Hidalgo Counties trained with OAR curriculum
- Phase II: Intervention
 - 10 trained *promotoras* did home visits; distributed OAR and CDC materials
 - Follow up visits with families 2-3 months later
- **Phase III: Focus Groups**
 - **8 *promotoras* participated who did intervention**
 - **19 *promotoras* participated who attended workshop only**

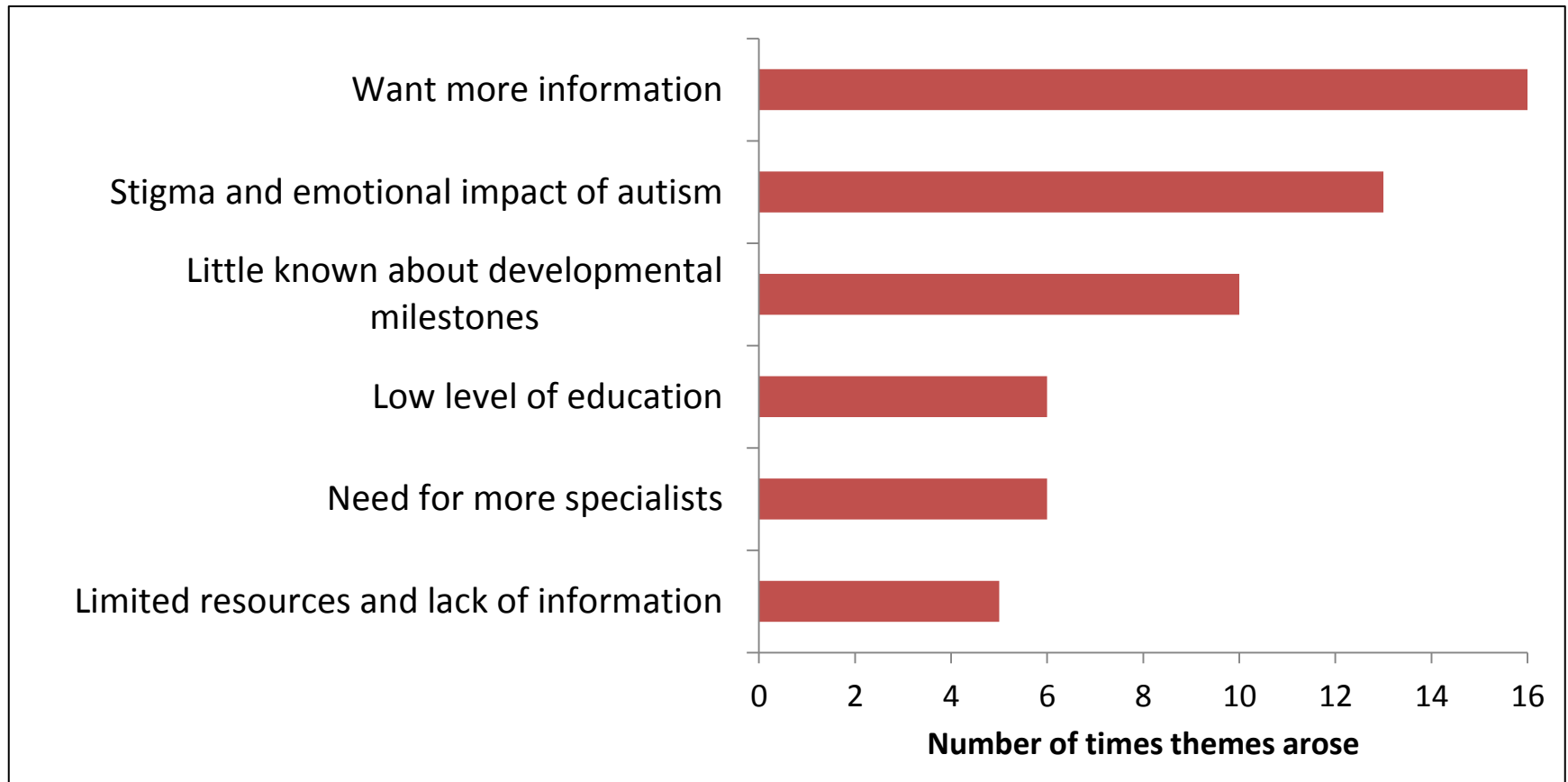
Focus Group Results

Figure 1. *Promotoras* response to training with OAR curriculum (n=27)



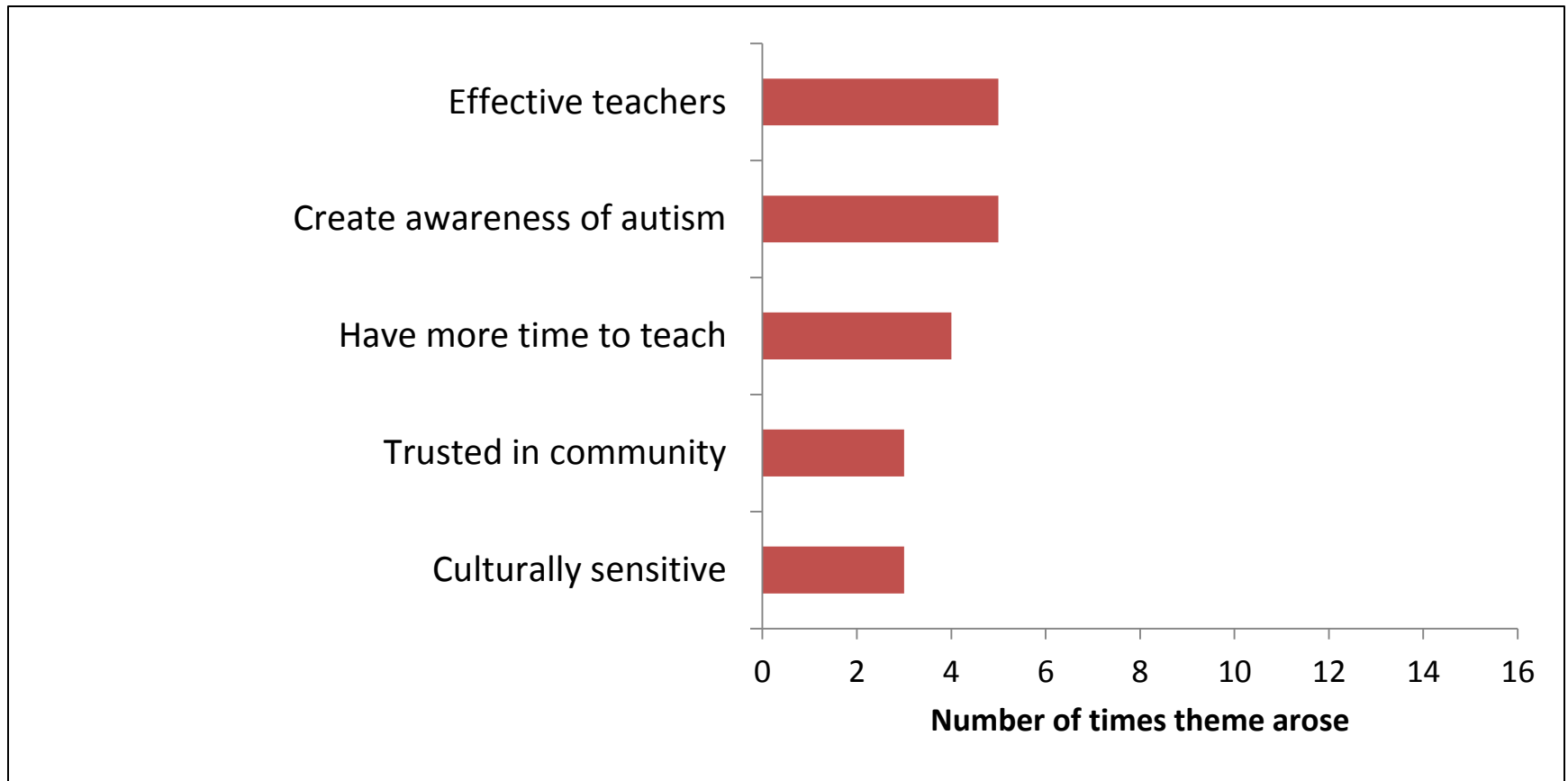
Focus Group Results

Figure 2. Target community characteristics (n=27)



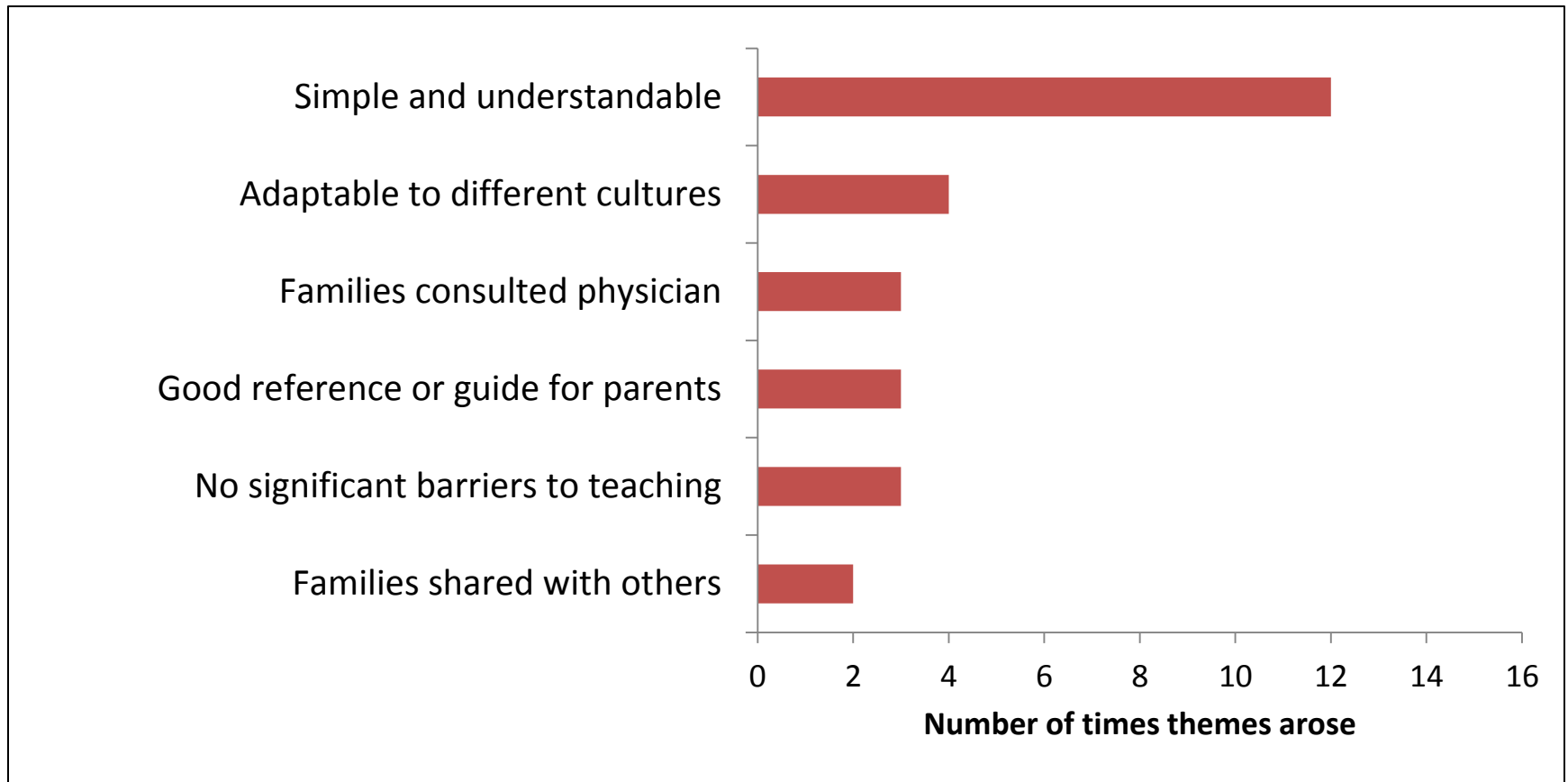
Focus Group Results

Figure 3. *Promotores* self-perceived role in the community (n=27)



Focus Group Results

Figure 4. Effectiveness of curriculum for community outreach (n=27)



Focus Group Results

- Limitations of curriculum
 - Not enough time to master the material
 - Difficult to distinguish between similar developmental milestones
- Recommendations for curriculum modification
 - Health fair intervention
 - Cultural sensitivity – asking age of child is inappropriate
 - Adaptability – need flexibility for each individual encounter, following guidelines may not be applicable

Discussion Questions

- How can other **community partnerships** meet the needs of parents with children with developmental delays?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using a ***promotora* model** to educate families about this topic?
- What methods can be used to decrease **stigmatization** of an autism diagnosis among Hispanics?

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