

The Impact of COVID-19 on Family Mealtime Routines

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Background

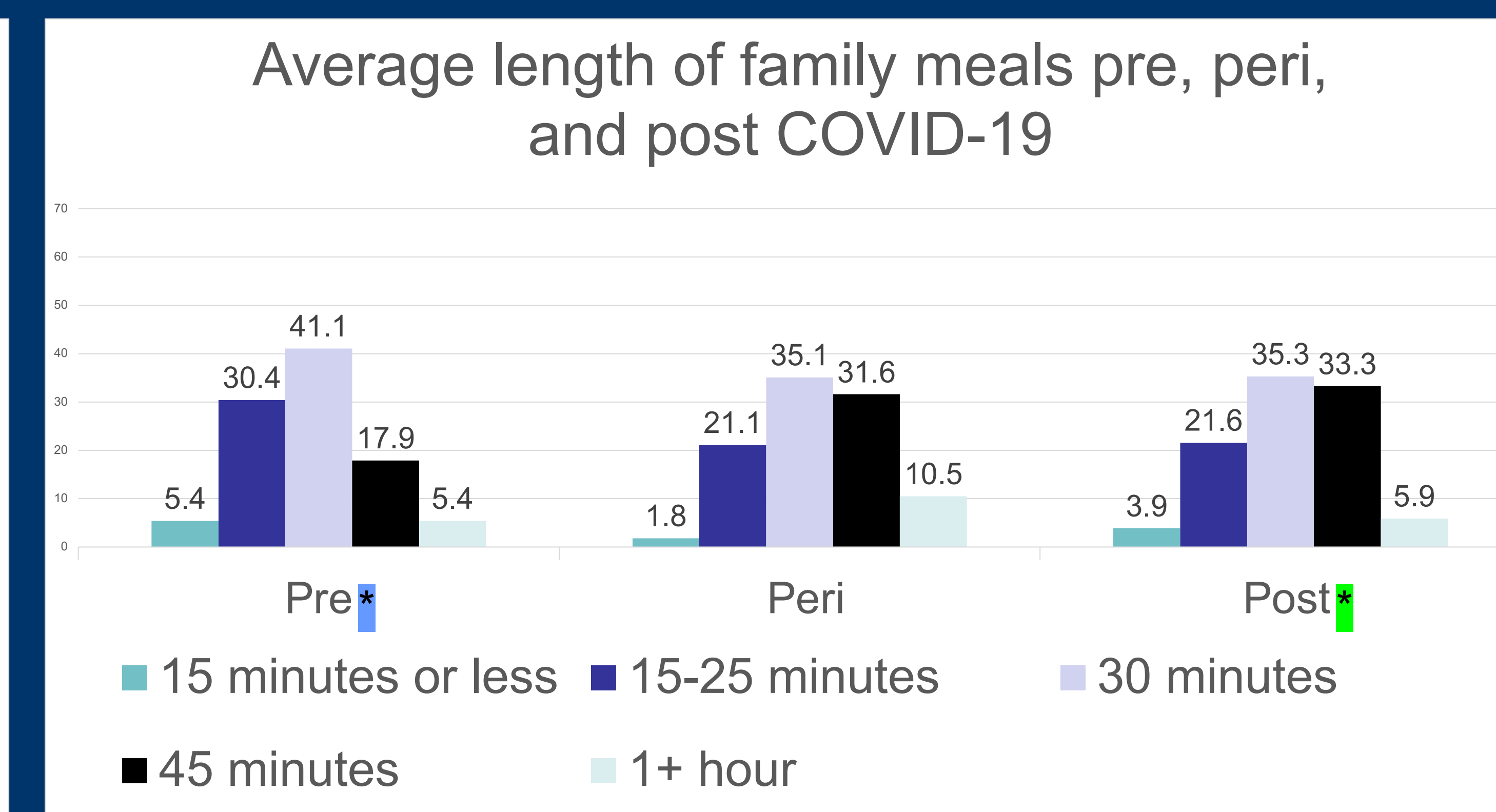
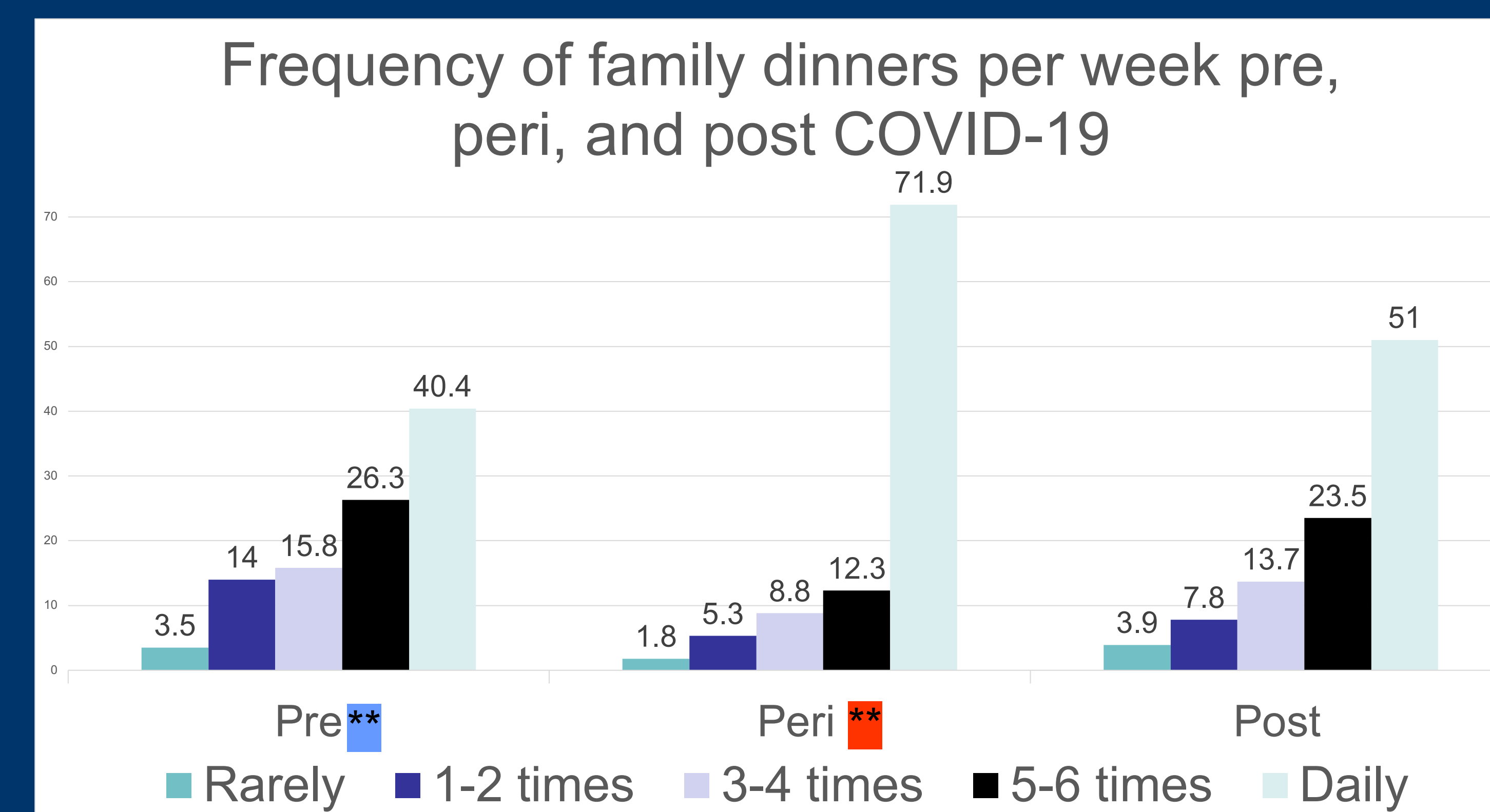
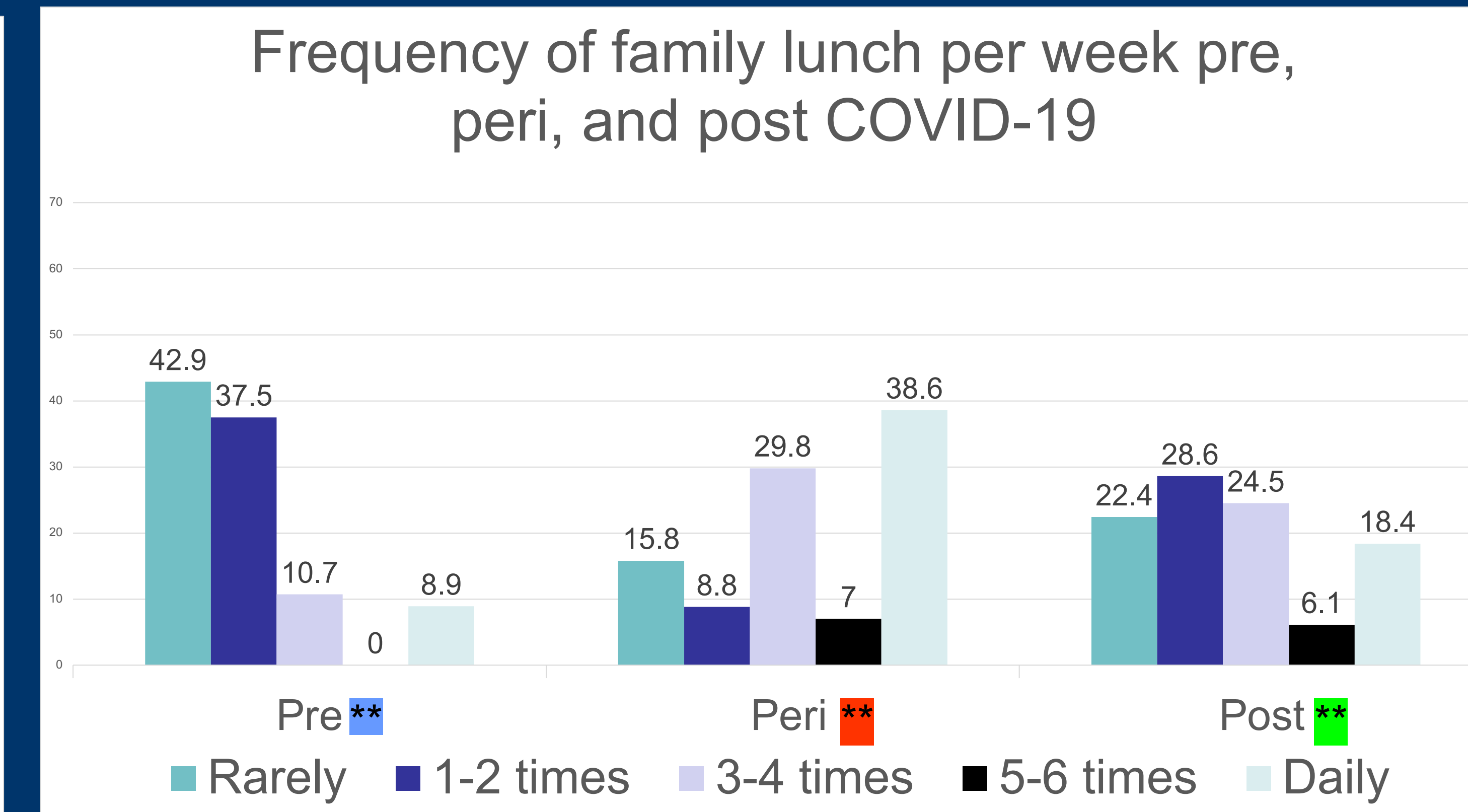
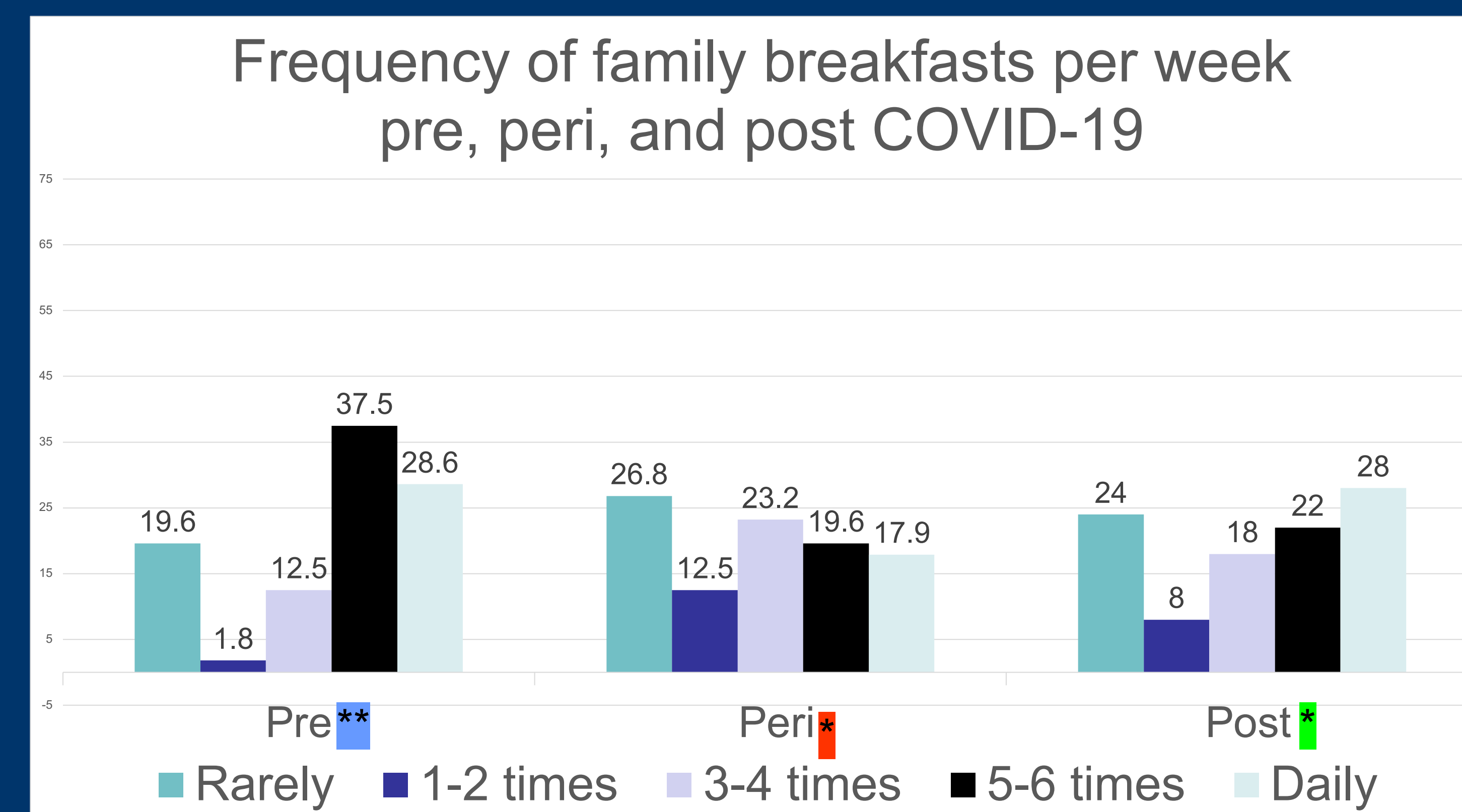
- Anecdotally, mitigation strategies impacted mealtime routines.
- Family meals promote
 - learning about food, nutrition, and health (Savage et al., 2007)
 - communication (Beals, 1997)
 - connectedness (Story & Neumark-Sztainer, 2005)
- How did the frequency and characteristics of family mealtimes change during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Methods

- Anonymous online survey
 - June 2020-September 2021
 - Living with a child (0-18)
- Before, during, and after (89.8%) mitigation efforts were lifted

<i>n</i> = 59	M(SD) or %
Female	79.7%
Age	39.52 (10.16)
White	89.8%
Bachelor's degree or greater	69.5%
Married	74.6%
Biological Parent	81.4%
Family Size (Pre)	4.4 (1.3)

Family meals occurred more often and were of longer duration during COVID-19 with many effects continuing after.



p* < .05, *p* < .01; Pre vs. Peri; Peri vs. Post; Pre vs. Post

Results

- Pre- to peri-COVID:
 - increased frequency of family meals ($d = -.43$ - -1.06) and length of family meals ($d = -.35$).
- Peri- to post-COVID:
 - decreased frequency of meals ($d = .31$ - $.63$).
- Pre- to post-COVID:
 - increased frequency of breakfast and lunch ($d = -.34$ and $-.78$) and length of meals ($d = -.34$).

Factor related to change in freq.	Percent	
	Pre to Peri (n=46)	Peri to Post (n=41)
Change in children's schooling	54.2	23.7
Change in employment location	49.2	16.9
Change in extracurricular opportunities	44.1	23.7
Change in employment hours	30.5	16.9
Change in availability of alternate options	28.8	15.3
Change in desire to cook	27.1	16.9
Change in food availability	27.1	13.6
Change in childcare	23.7	11.9
Change in employment status	18.6	10.2
Change in philosophy of importance	10.2	1.7
Change in household makeup	3.4	5.1

Conclusions

- Increased family mealtime interactions
 - Positive associations with children's physical, cognitive, and socioemotional outcomes (Eisenberg et al., 2004; Fiese et al., 2006)
- Avenue to support family wellbeing, health, and happiness.

• This poster was presented as part of the SSHD 2021-22 Conference Series on June 14, 2022.