

An Investigation of School Resource and Safety Programs Policy and Practice in Virginia

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Overview

- **Well-structured School Resource Officer (SRO) and School Security Officer (SSO) programs with clear policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities seem more likely to achieve positive outcomes (Cray & Weiler, 2011), but there is limited empirical support for this assertion. This study explores variables related to Virginia SRO and SSO training, policy, and procedures.**

Quantitative Data

- New Surveys
 - 265 SROs (of \approx 700 invited)
 - 60 SRO Law Enforcement Supervisors (of 136 invited)
 - 45 SRO School-Based Liaisons (of 93 invited)
 - 163 SSOs (of \approx 600 invited)
 - 9 SSO Supervisors (of 57 invited)
- 2017 School Safety Audit
 - \approx 2000 schools
 - \approx 1000 schools had BOTH an SRO and/or an SSO

SRO Demographics

- Age range 24 – 70 with an average age of 43 years
- 83% Male, 17% Female
- 84% White, 7% Black, 4% Hispanic, 2% American Indian or Alaska Native, 2% Asian, 1% Multiracial

Earned GED or Equivalent	.5%
Earned a High School Diploma	12.5%
Completed Some College	35.5%
Earned an Associate's Degree	17.5%
Earned a Bachelor's Degree	25.5%
Completed some Graduate School	5.0%
Earned a Master's Degree	3.5%

SSO Demographics

- Age range 27 – 71 with an average age of 52 years
- 63% Male, 37% Female
- 53% Black, 47% White, 3% Hispanic, 2% Multiracial

Completed Some High School	2.8%
Earned a High School Diploma	13.0%
Completed Some College	28.7%
Earned an Associate's Degree	14.8%
Earned a Bachelor's Degree	29.6%
Completed Some Graduate School	3.7%
Earned a Master's Degree	7.4%

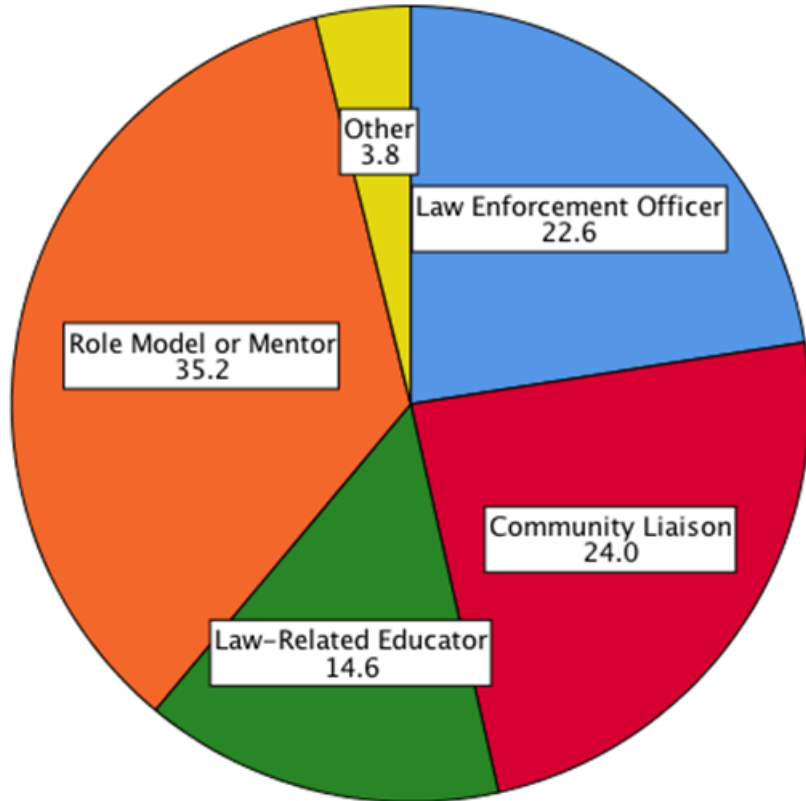
SRO and SSO Duties & Training

- **How are SROs and SSOs trained to operate in K-12 public schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia?**
- *On what topics do they receive training?*
- *How does their training compare to their actual duties?*

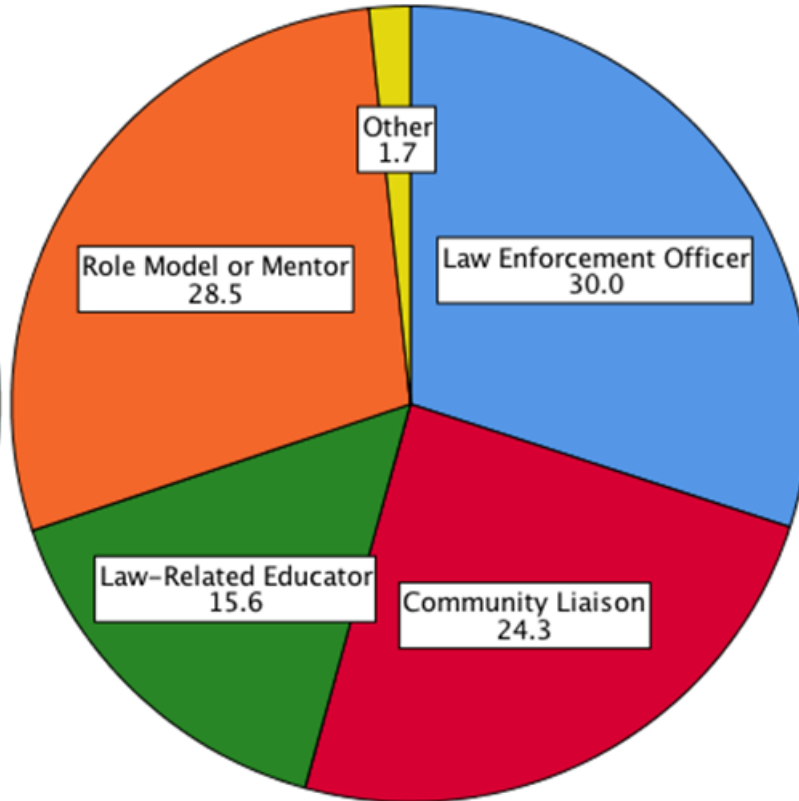
SRO Duties

What percentage of your time do you spend on each of the following tasks? (Total must sum to 100)

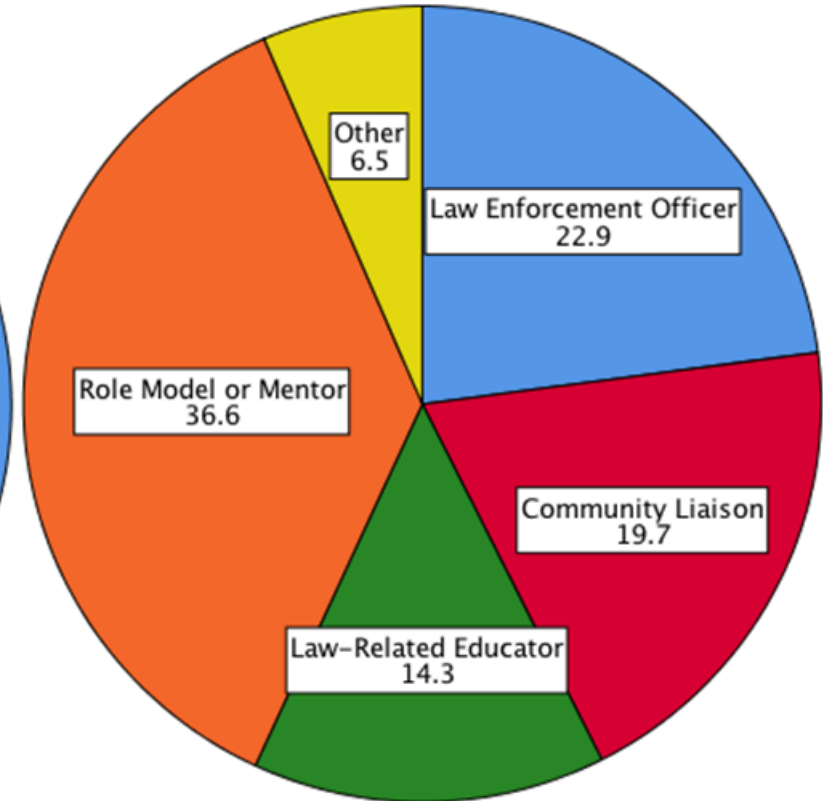
SRO



SRO Supervisor



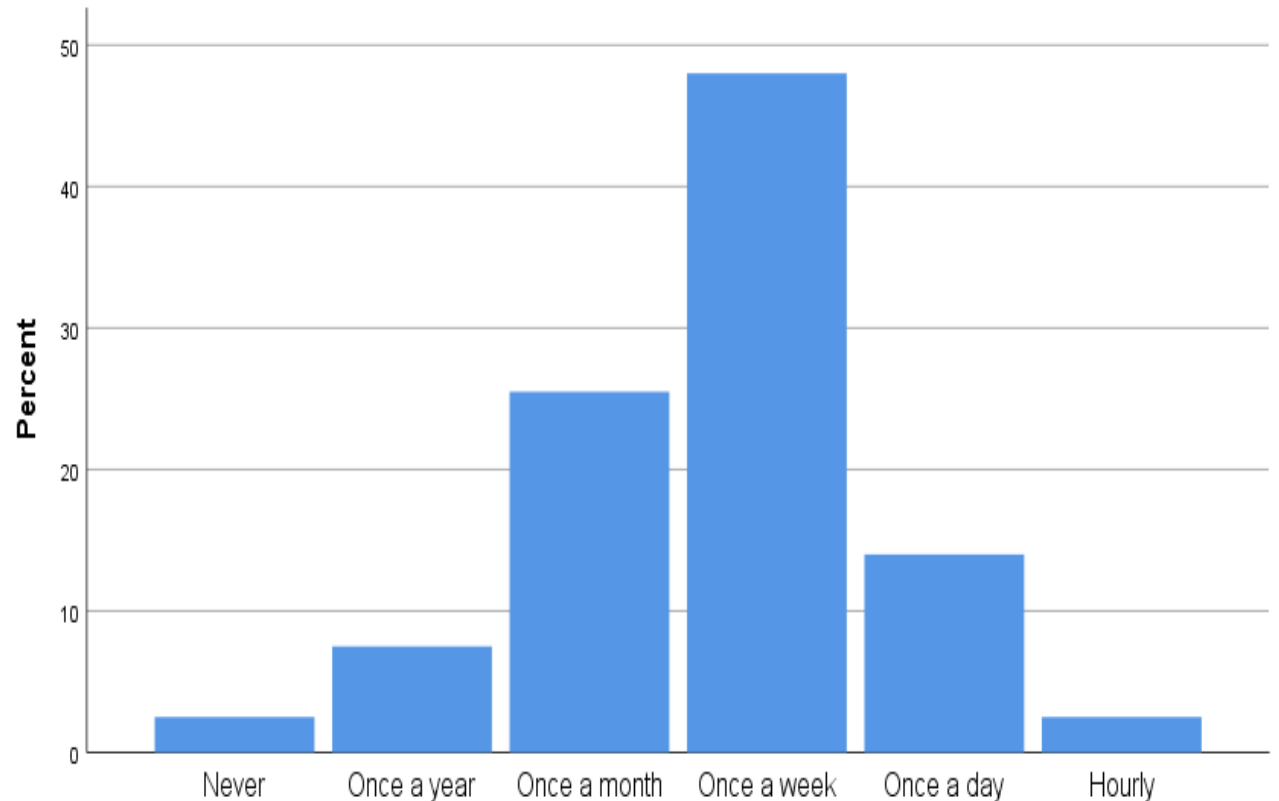
SRO Liason



SROs: Duties

- 65% of SROs said school employees request assistance related to bullying, including social media or technology-related bullying hourly, daily, or weekly.

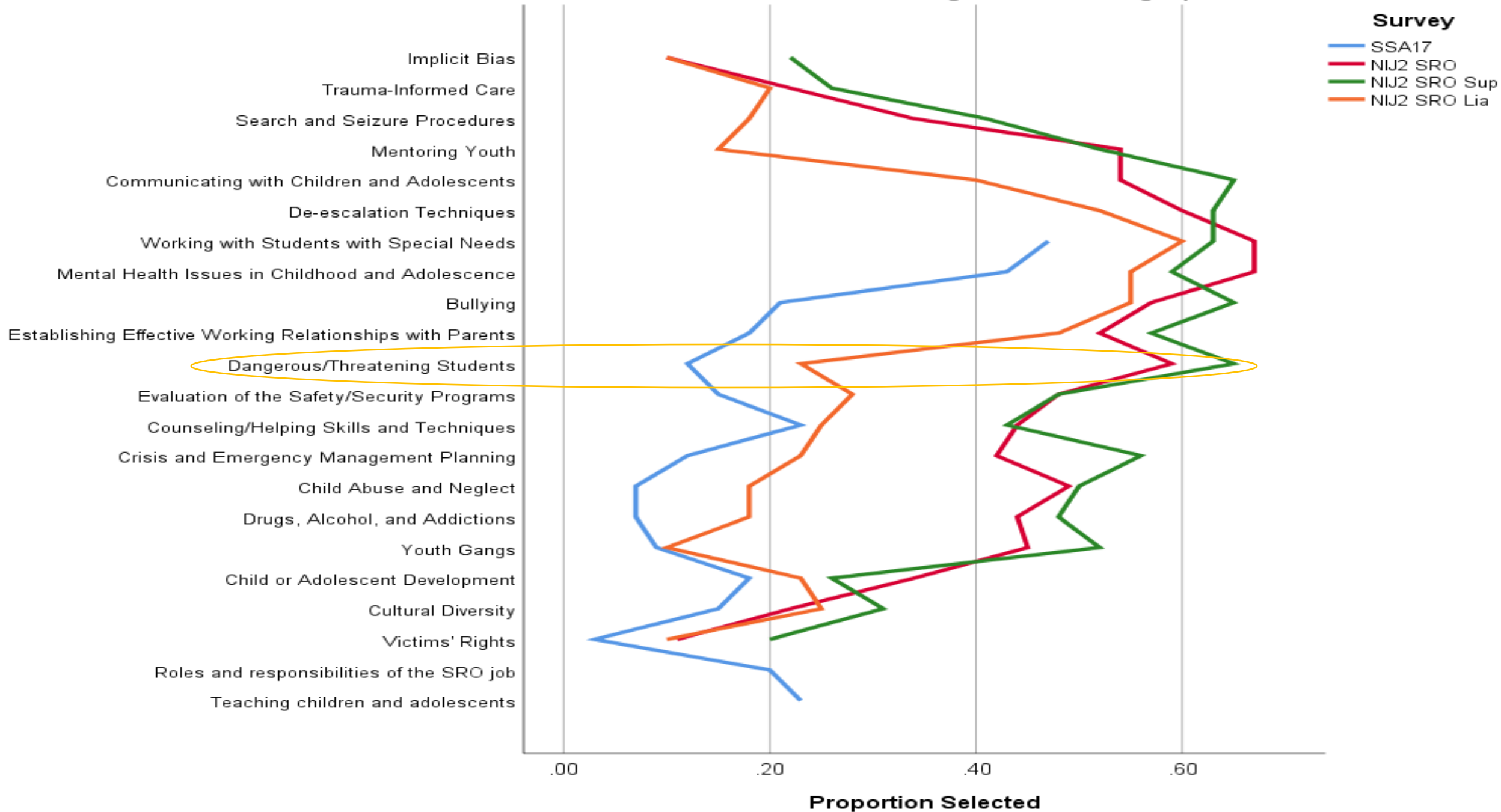
On average, how often do school employees request your assistance related to bullying, including social media or technology-related bullying?



SROs: More Training is Needed

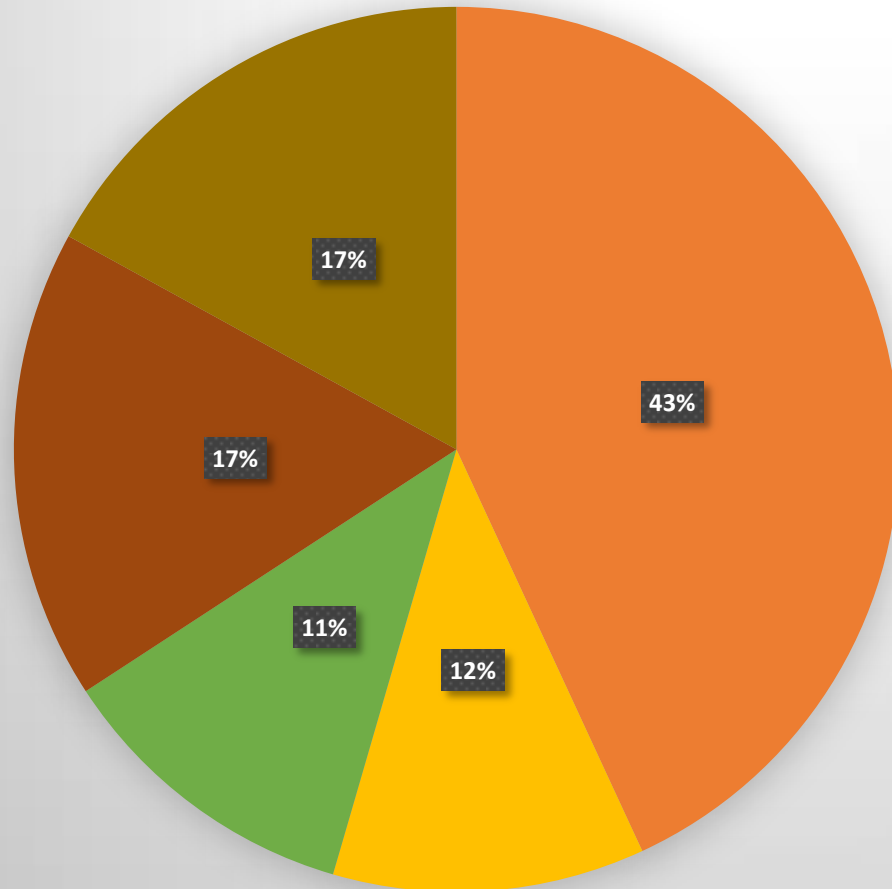
1. Working with Students with Special Needs
2. Mental Health Issues in Childhood and Adolescence
3. Dangerous/Threatening Students
4. Bullying
5. Establishing Effective Working Relationships with Parents

Would SROs benefit from more training on the following topics?



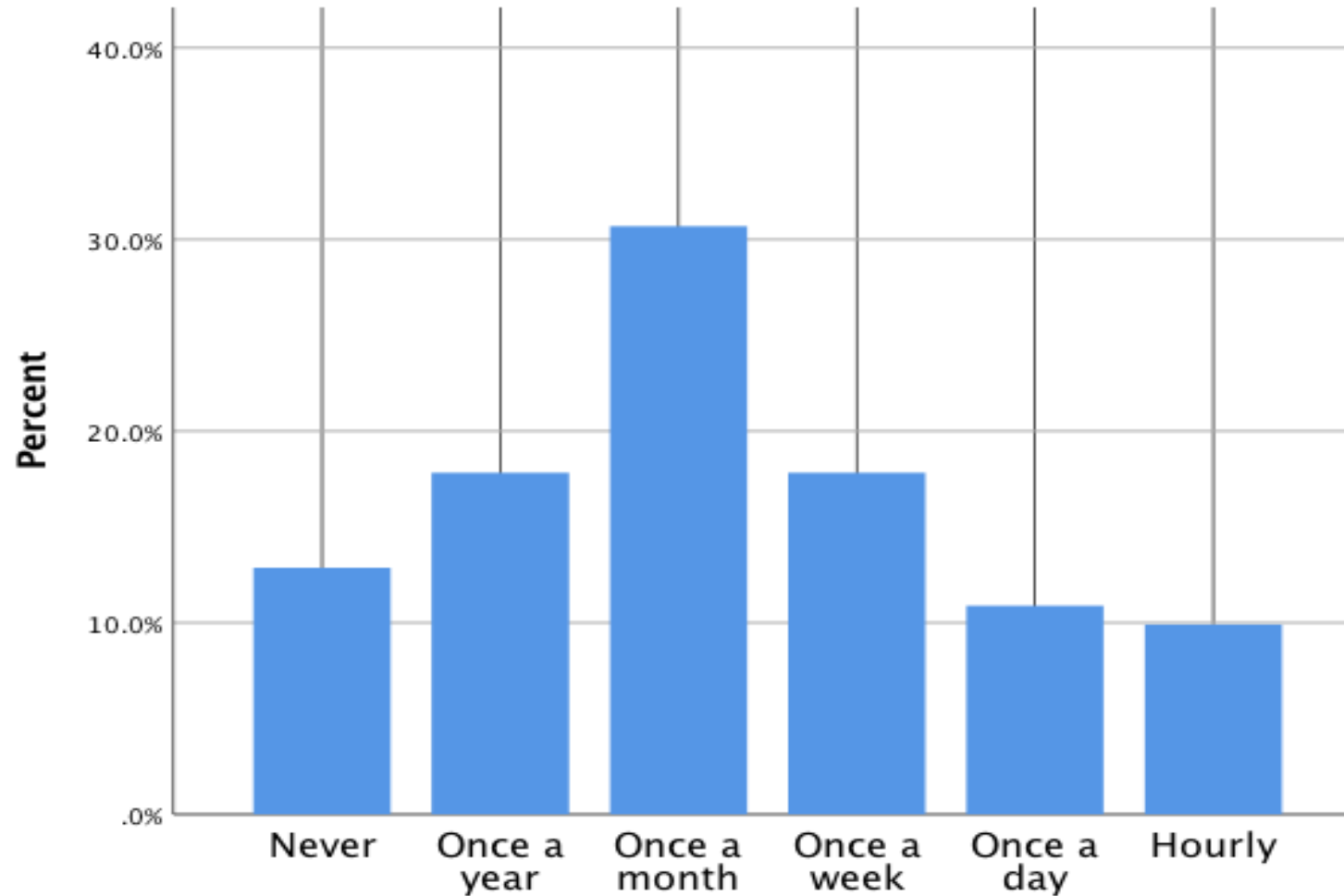
SSOs: Duties

Percentage of SSO Time



- Patrolling school areas in order to prevent crime and ensure safety
- Detaining students who are violating the law or school board policies
- Investigating violations of school board policies
- Assisting with disciplinary incidents
- Other

SSOs: Duties



On average, how often are you requested to intervene in physical altercations between students?

SSOs: More Training is Needed

1. Dangerous/Threatening Students
- 2. Mental Health Issues in Childhood and Adolescence**
3. De-escalation Techniques
- 4. Working with Students with Special Needs**
5. Bullying
6. Evaluation of the Safety/Security Programs
7. Communicating with Children and Adolescents
8. Youth Gangs
9. Counseling/Helping Skills and Techniques
10. Search and Seizure Procedures

SSOs: Other Findings about Training

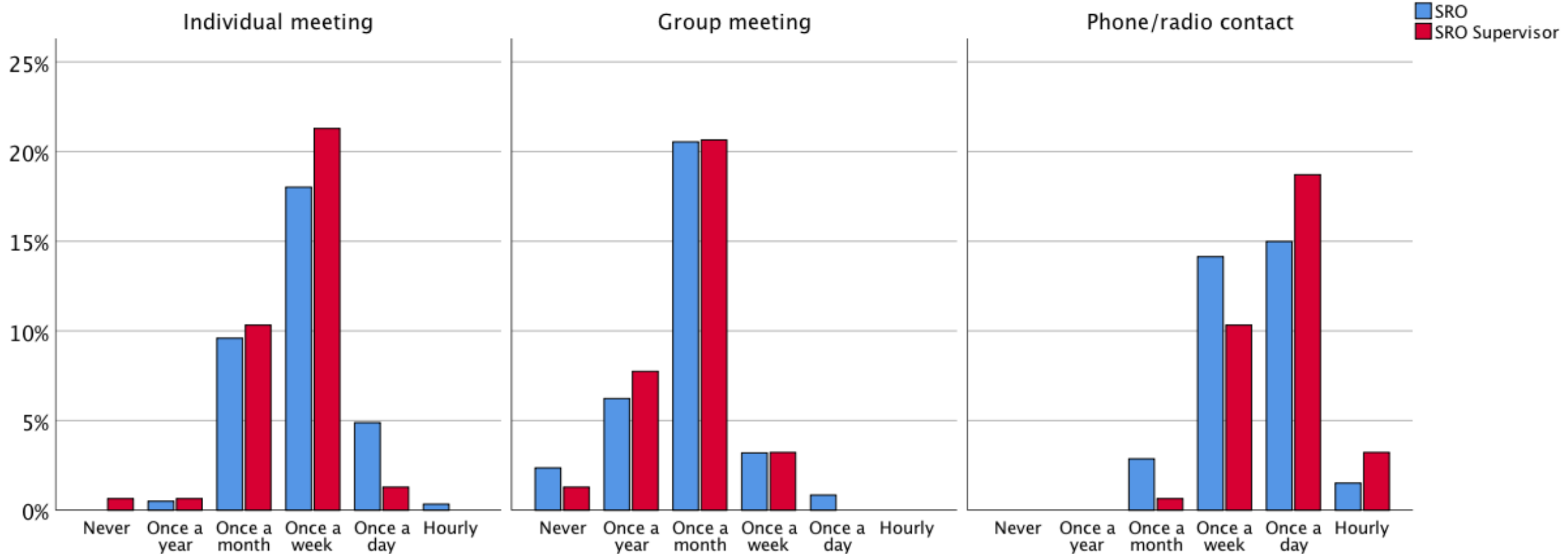
- 41% of SSO respondents reported previous experience as law enforcement officers (sheriff or police)
- 57% of SSO respondents reported training in de-escalation techniques such as Mandt or Handle With Care
- 78% of SSO respondents agreed or strongly agreed that SSOs need more training in the role of an SSO.

SRO & SSO Supervision

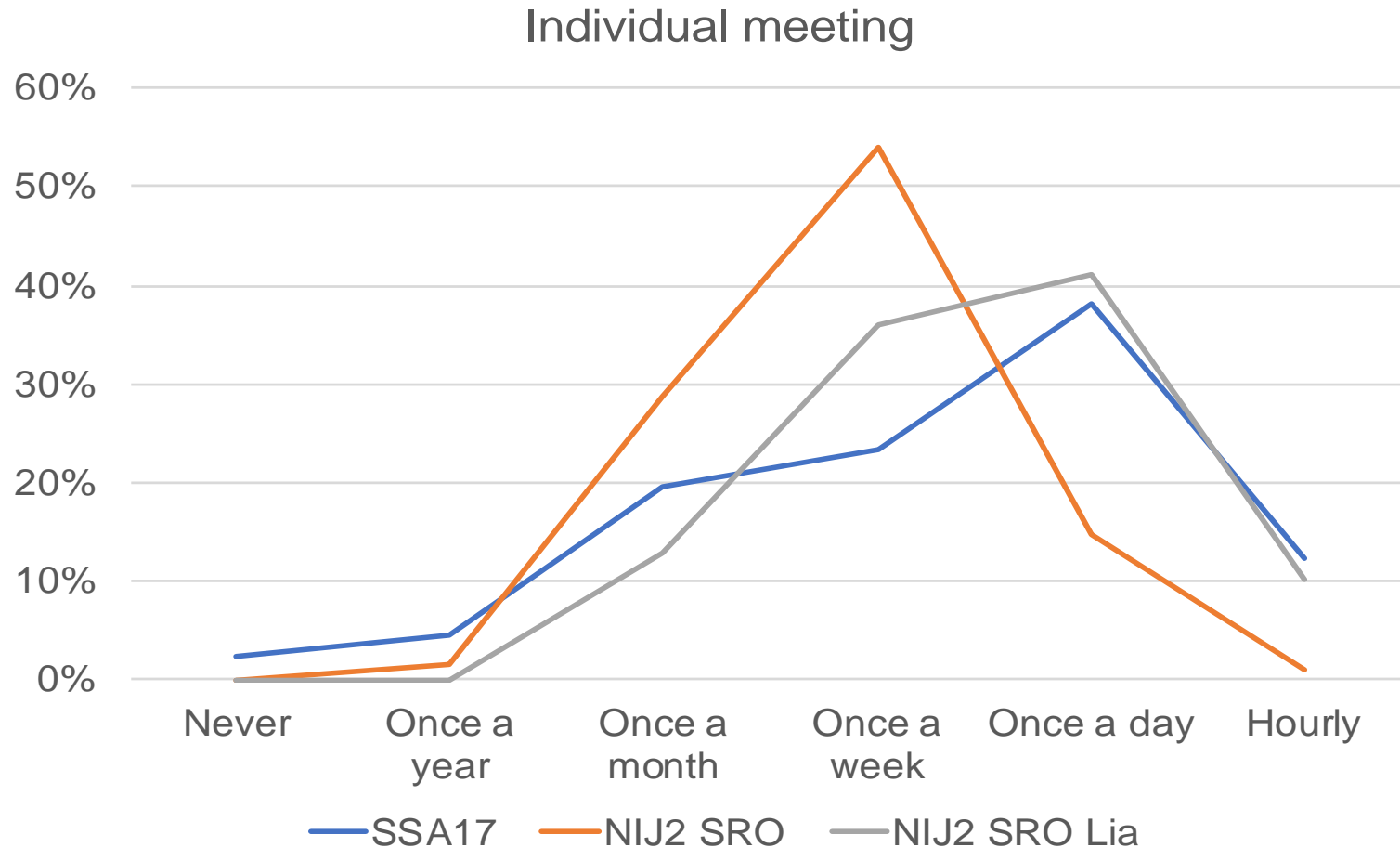
- **How are SROs and SSOs operating in schools supervised by their own department and/or by the school(s) in which they operate?**

SROs: Supervision with Ranking LEO

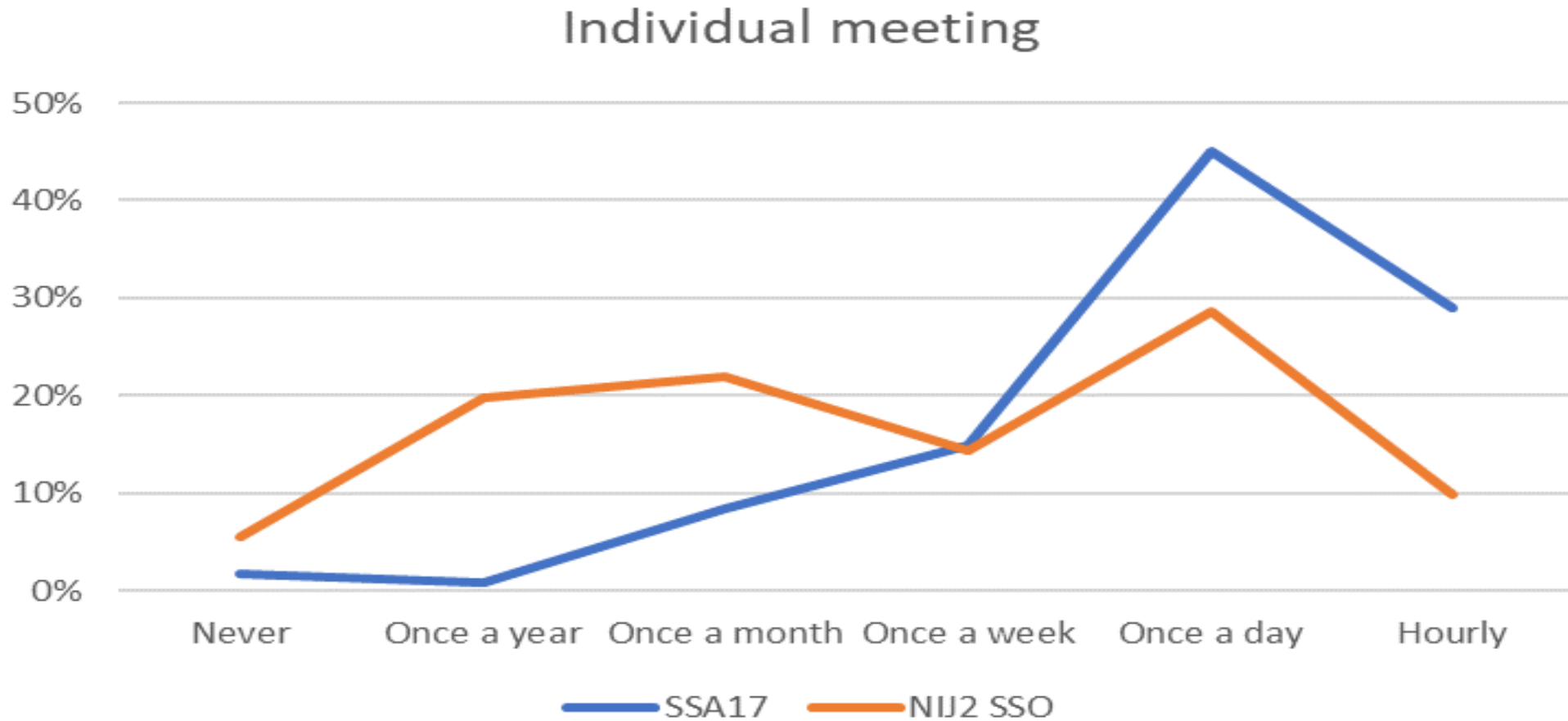
How often do you have the following types of contact?



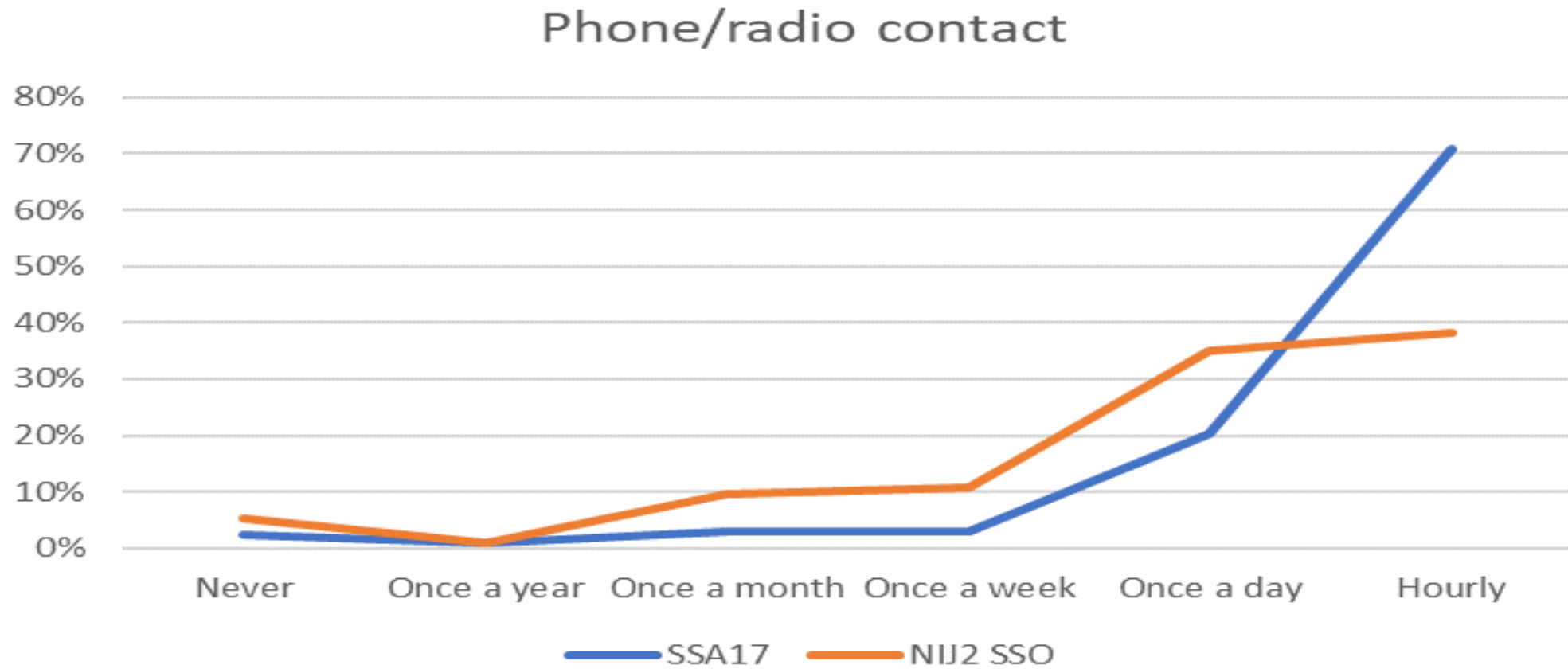
SROs: Contact with School Liaisons



SSOs: Supervision



SSOs: Supervision

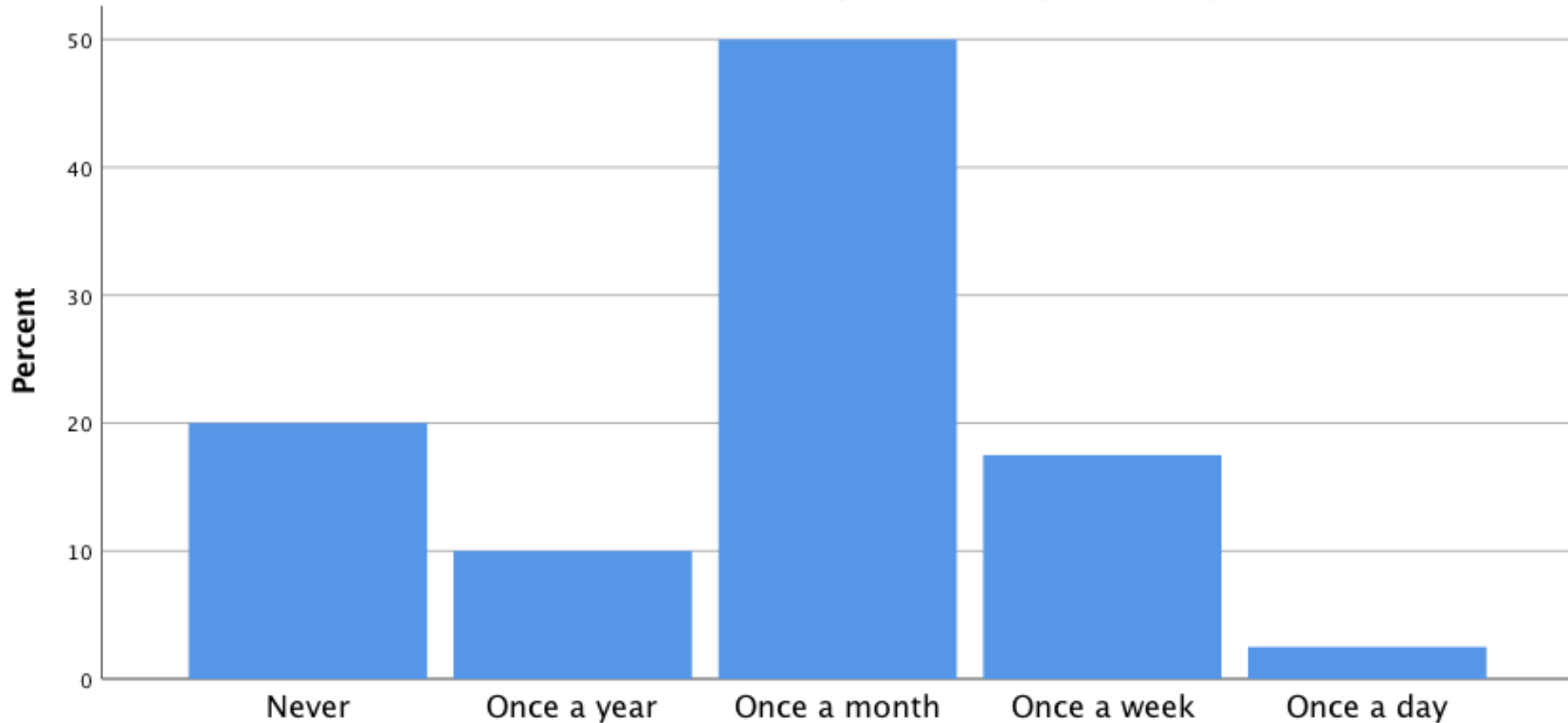


Involvement in School Discipline

- **To what extent are SROs and SSOs involved in addressing school disciplinary matters that do not rise to the level of criminal activity?**
- *How are these situations initiated and handled?*
- *What does the SRO or SSO do in these situations?*
- *Why is the SRO or SSO involved in these situations?*

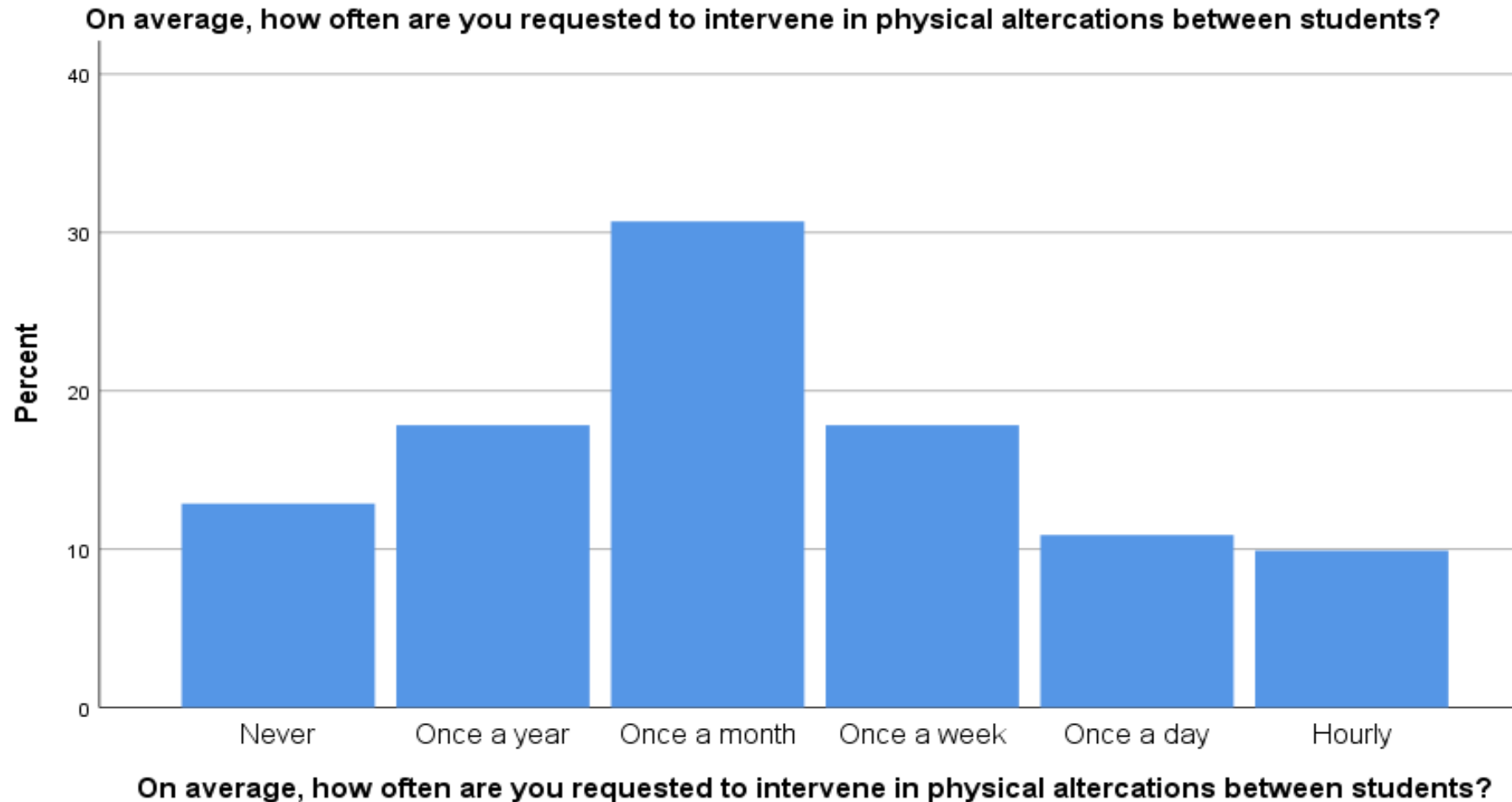
SROs: Liaisons' Perspective on School Discipline

On average, how often do school employees request SRO assistance with school disciplinary incidents that do not involve criminal activity or threaten public safety?

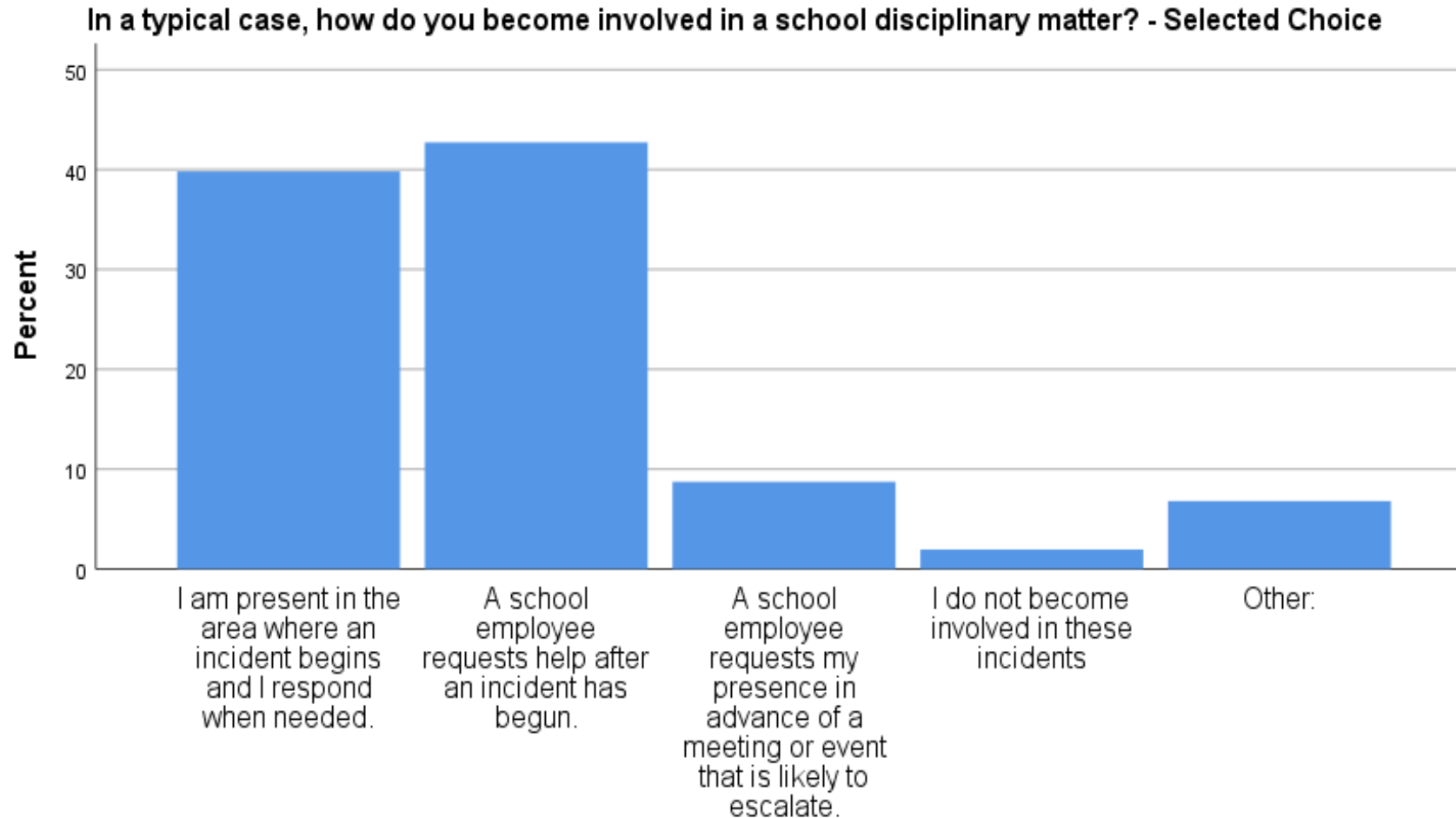


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SSOs: School Discipline



SSOs: School Discipline



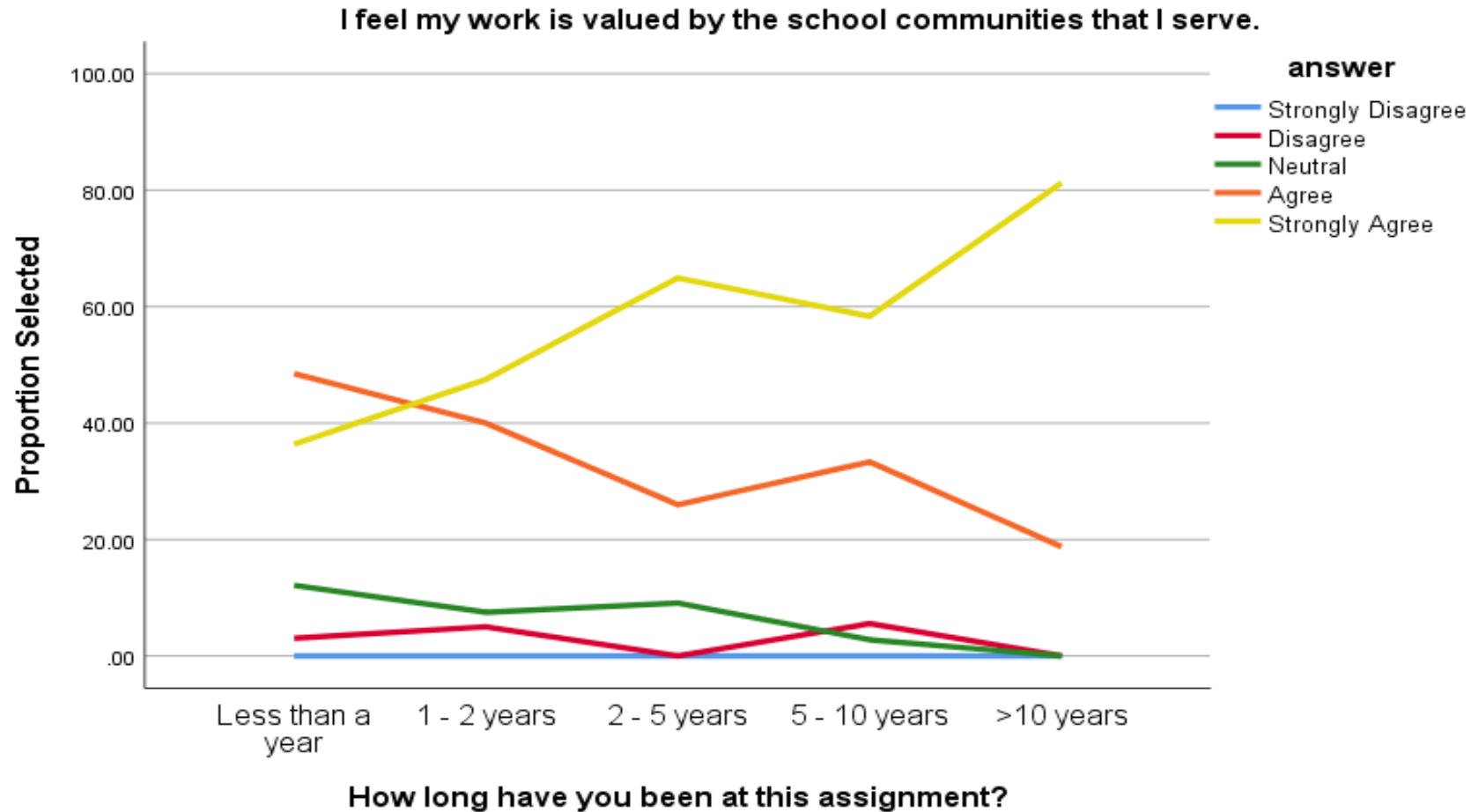
In a typical case, how do you become involved in a school disciplinary matter? - Selected Choice

Welfare, 2018

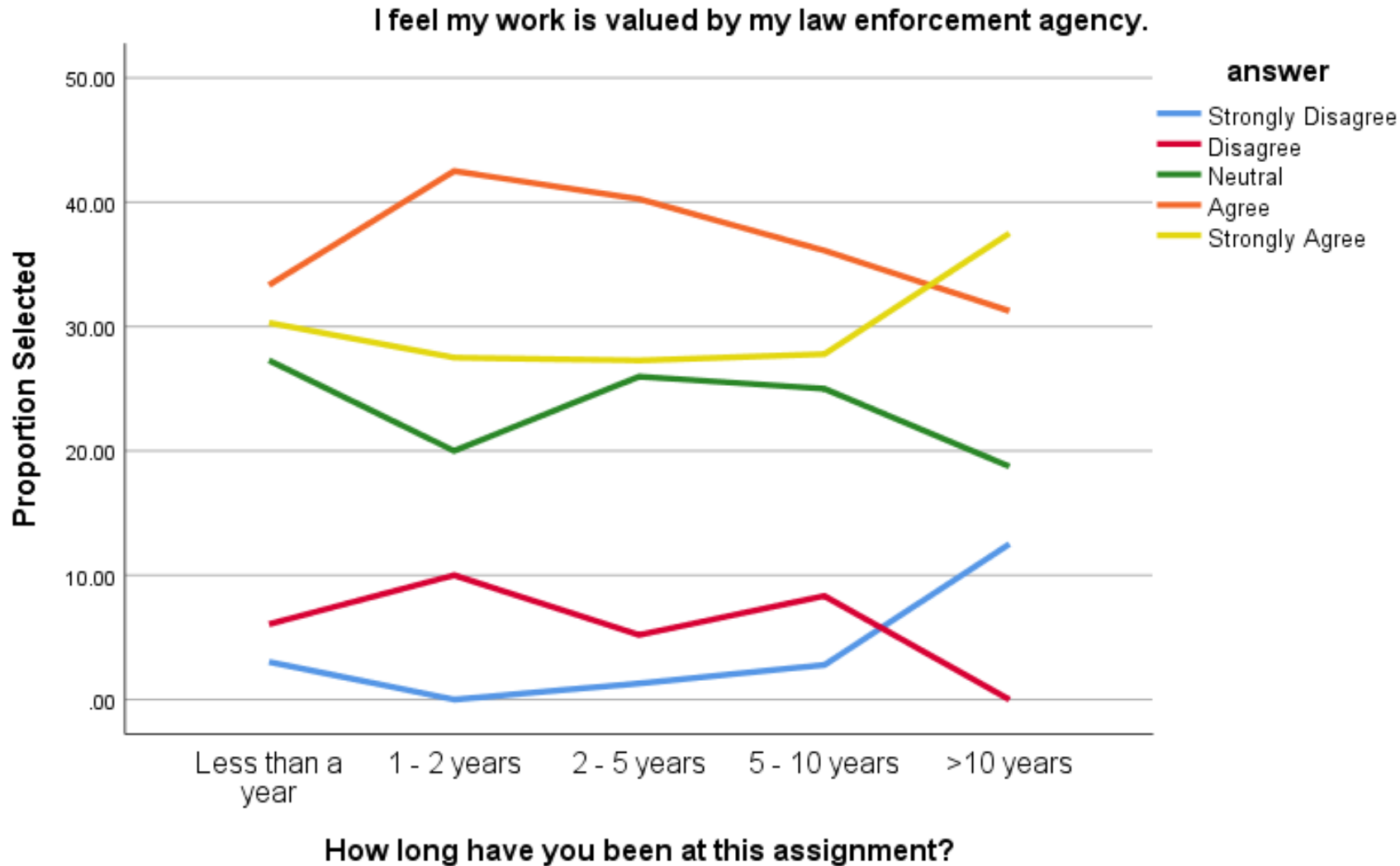
SROs Feel Valued by the School

- Do SROs believe that their work is valued by Law Enforcement and Schools?

SROs Feel Valued by the School



SROs Feel Valued by Law Enforcement





Thank you!

Any questions, comments?

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