



## INTRODUCTION

### SOCIAL CIRCUS AND CIRCUS MOJO

Social Circus is an innovative intervention that utilizes circus training to help children positively cope with difficult situations (Rivard, Bourgeault, & Mercier, 2010). Research has demonstrated participation in social circus can reduce depressive symptomology and positively influence children's moods (Kinnunen et al., 2013). Circus Mojo utilizes social circus to create a multidimensional program with the intent of fostering positive social, behavioral, and cognitive development for children who have been identified as "at-risk" due to their socioeconomic status, single-parent homes, and/or a history of truancy and disruptive behavior at their schools. Circus Mojo's goal is to empower children and provide a positive environment for children to boost their morale and positive mood.

With this goal in mind, Circus Mojo decided to take their act to a local children's hospital to perform in the waiting rooms in an attempt to boost patient morale and improve the overall hospital patient experience for caregivers and children alike. Research on *Hospital Clowns*, also known as Clown Doctors, has shown that hospital clowns help pediatric patients deal with the stress of being in a hospital and the uncertainty of treatment outcomes thus aiding the healing process. Additionally, by providing a much-needed distraction, hospital clowns are helping to alleviate the feelings of helplessness, fear, and sadness. Hospital clowning impacts patients at the **physiological level**, by releasing endorphins through laughter thus boosting the immune system, the **emotional level**, by replacing negative feelings with positive emotions, at the **cognitive level**, by distracting the patient from his or her situation, and at the **social level** by creating connection through laughter and social interaction (Bennet & Lengacher, 2006; Koller & Gryski, 2007). Clown performance in the hospital by hospital clowns has been shown to brighten patients' moods, boost self-confidence, increase joy, reduce stress, improve the healing process, and boost overall patient morale (Barkmann, Siem, Wessolowski, & Schulte-Markwort, 2013).

### CIRCUS MOJO AT CINCINNATI CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Circus Mojo began performing in waiting rooms in the Orthopedics department at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Medical Center (CCHMC) in July 2010, and based on positive feedback from patients, families, and staff of CCHMC, Circus Mojo expanded their work to the Neurology and Urology departments in 2015. Beginning in November 2015, Circus Mojo, in collaboration with C.A.R.E. Consultancy, began collecting satisfaction data regarding these waiting room performances. There were a total of 773 responses collected as of February 2016. Of the respondents, 303 (39%) were a child/teenager, 382 (49%) were a parent/caregiver, 54 (7%) were a grandparent, eight marked "other relation" (1%), and 26 (3%) did not indicate a response to their identity. In Appendix A, **Table 1** outlines the number of cards collected in each department by the date they were collected and **Table 2** outlines the number of cards each performer collected.

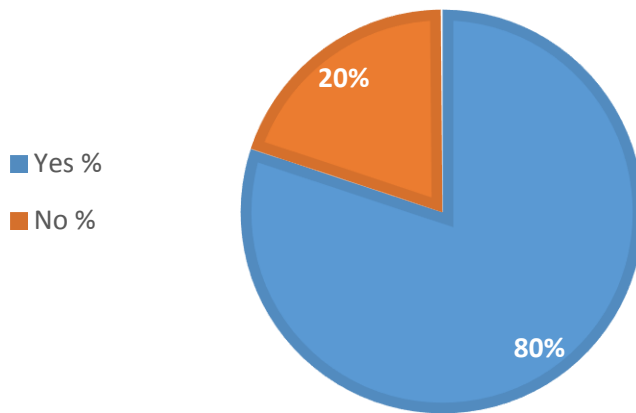
# RESULTS

## THE HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE

Each department's satisfaction survey included the following three questions:

1. Is this the first time you've heard of Circus Mojo?
2. Did you learn something new from Circus Mojo?
3. Did Circus Mojo improve the quality of your [department] experience?

### IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE HEARD OF CIRCUS MOJO?

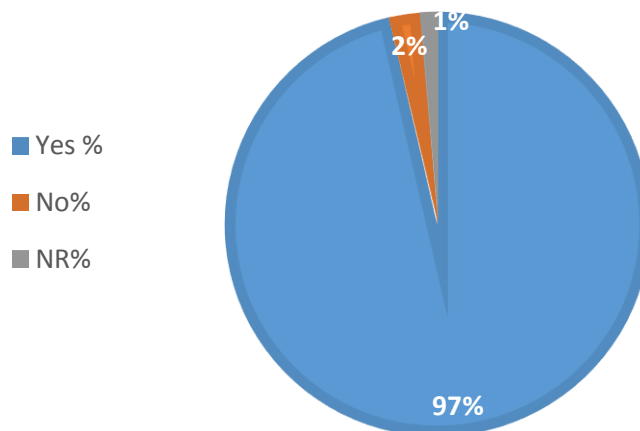


Across all departments, 80% of respondents had not heard of Circus Mojo prior to their visit on the day their satisfaction card was collected, and 20% had heard of Circus Mojo. Several respondents indicated that they had seen Circus Mojo perform at CCHMC during previous hospital visits.

*See the charts in Appendix B to see the breakdown by individual department.*

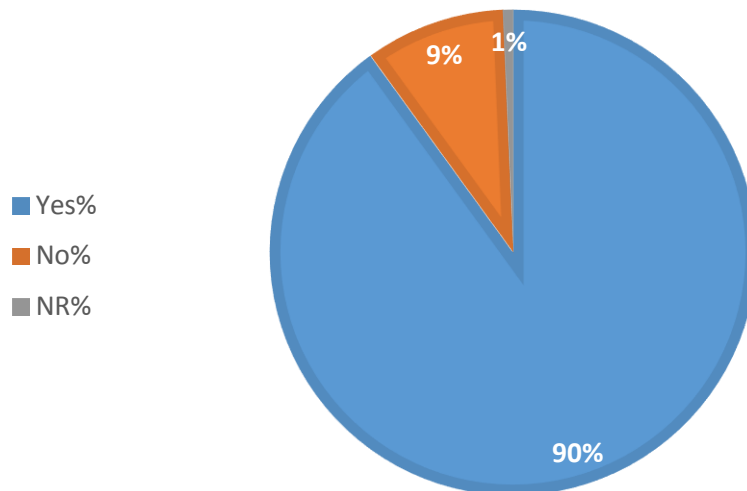
When looking at the results when respondents were asked if Circus Mojo improved the quality of their experience, 97% said "yes," 2% said "no," and 1% of respondents did not provide a response. The results indicate that Circus Mojo improved the quality of the respondents' waiting room experience. There was not a difference in the quality of experience between those who had previously heard of Circus Mojo versus those who had not. *Appendix C has a breakdown of the results by department.*

### DID CIRCUS MOJO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF YOUR EXPERIENCE?



## A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### DID YOU LEARN SOMETHING NEW FROM CIRCUS MOJO?



The respondents were asked whether or not they learned something new from Circus Mojo during their time in the waiting room. The results indicate that 90% of respondents learned something new from Circus Mojo during their visit, 9% did not learn something new, and 1% did not respond. This data reveals that not only did Circus Mojo provide entertainment during patients' waits, but it also taught them new tricks and/or skills. Additionally, Circus Mojo staff passed out feathers to the children to encourage the continued practice of these newly learned skills at home and on their own time. *See Appendix D for a breakdown of response by department.*

## RESPONDENTS' FEEDBACK

The respondents had the opportunity to provide additional comments. Some examples of comments include:

- *Learning new experiences are always great to see when I bring my daughter here. It helps keep her mind off the pain.*
- *Made [the] lobby liven up. [The] children and parents enjoyed [the show].*
- *They got my mind off the doctor.*
- *You are awesome you inspired me to try to be in the circus when I grow up.*
- *I really enjoy seeing them when we come to Children's. They brighten up the experience.*
- *What you do is great it really makes the kids relaxed. Thank you.*
- *Really helped my daughter keep her mind off her injury and made her part of the fun. Thank you guys! Greatly appreciated.*
- *Kids really enjoyed the interaction.*
- *Made my granddaughter forget about her pain.*
- *Made our wait go by much faster. Took the anxiety away for my child.*
- *So great they are at CCHMC. They made our children feel comfortable & entertained.*
- *My granddaughter had not smiled all day. But she did as soon as she came in.*
- *This made the experience for my grandson far easier and helped to occupy my granddaughter during the wait.*
- *My daughter said "I didn't know the hospital was fun!" Thanks for the distraction!*

- *[Circus Mojo] helped my daughter relax before [her] labs were drawn, which she gets very anxious about. Thank you.*
- *The first time we came and they were here, my child got a feather six months ago. He loved it and continued to play with it. He was excited when he saw they were here again today!*

## SUMMARY

Overall, Circus Mojo provided entertainment for the individuals in the hospital waiting rooms, which contributes to Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Medical Center's positive patient experience. The children, parents, grandparents, and other respondents indicated that Circus Mojo lightened the mood in the waiting room, helped distract the children from their pain and anxiety regarding their visit, and provided enjoyable entertainment. At a time when children, parents, and caretakers are going through an emotional and difficult process, having a service such as Circus Mojo provides can create a welcome distraction and alleviate parents', caretakers', and patients' fears and anxieties, if only momentarily. The interaction provides a brief distraction but the newly learned skills are a long-lasting effect of the interaction and something the children can further develop on their own.

## APPENDIX A

Breakdown of the number of cards by date, departments, and performers

**Table 1**

*Number of Satisfaction Cards by Date and Department*

Date	Department			Grand Total
	Ortho	Neuro	Urology	
Unknown	45			45
11/17/2015	15			15
11/18/2015	39			39
11/23/2015	13			13
11/24/2015	11			11
11/25/2015	14			14
12/1/2015	9			9
12/2/2015	28			28
12/4/2015	21			21
12/7/2015	34			34
12/9/2015	20			20
12/11/2015	11			11
12/14/2015	2			2
12/15/2015			13	13
12/16/2015	22			22
12/21/2015	35	8	18	61
12/22/2015	17	3		20
12/23/2015	18		2	20
12/28/2015	30			30
12/29/2015		12		12
12/30/2015		3		3
12/31/2015		17		17
1/4/2016	14	31		45
1/6/2016	12	2		14
1/7/2016		4		4
1/8/2016	7	23		30
1/11/2016	14			14
1/12/2016		2	2	4
1/13/2016		7		7
1/21/2016		8	3	11
1/22/2016	13	10		23
1/25/2016	8			8
1/27/2016	22	11		33
1/28/2016		5		5
1/29/2016	10	5	4	19
2/1/2016	10			10
2/2/2016	5		9	14
2/5/2016		5	9	14
2/9/2016	2	9	2	13
2/10/2016	12			12
2/12/2016	14		19	33
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>773</b>

Table 2  
*Cards Collected by Performer*

	<b>Ortho</b>	<b>Neuro</b>	<b>Urology</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Sharon</i>	121	65	-	186
<i>Manny</i>	316	81	37	434
<i>Rachel</i>	129	56	27	212
<i>Paul</i>	149	33	34	216
<i>Rosa</i>	95	17	5	117
<i>Kira</i>	120	64	33	217

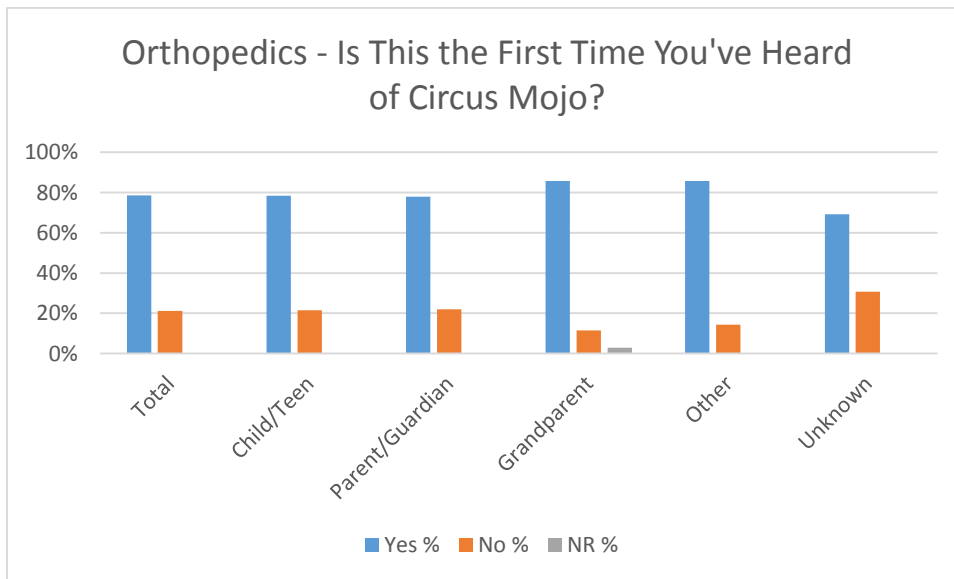
## APPENDIX B

Breakdown of “Is This the First Time You’ve Heard of Circus Mojo?” by Department

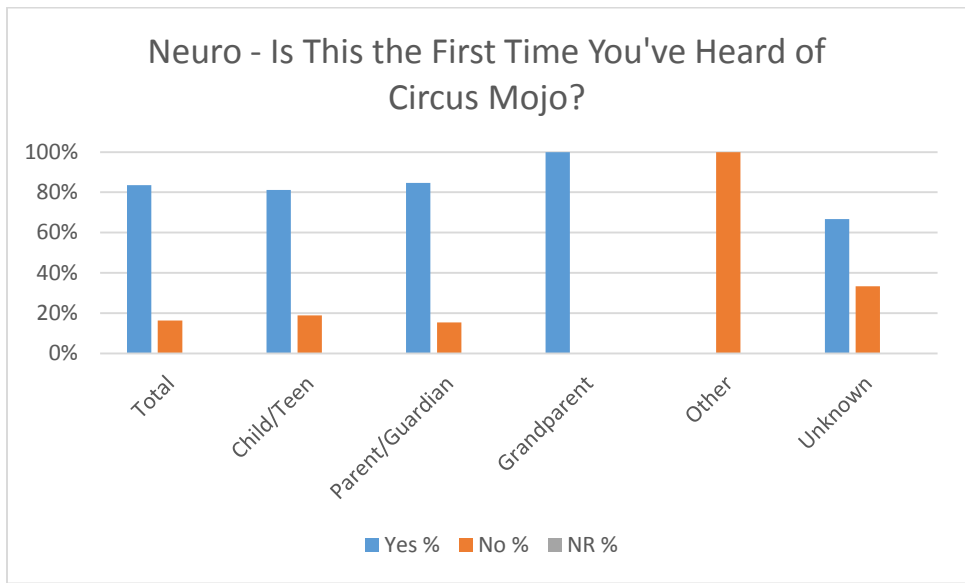
**Table 1**

Is This the First Time You’ve Heard of Circus Mojo?				
Department	Yes	No	NR	Grand Total
<b>Ortho</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>527</b>
Child/Teen	171	47		218
Parent/Guardian	198	56		254
Grandparent	30	4	1	35
Other	6	1		7
Unknown	9	4		13
<b>Neuro</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>27</b>		<b>165</b>
Child/Teen	43	10		53
Parent/Guardian	72	13		85
Grandparent	17			17
Other		1		1
Unknown	6	3		9
<b>Urology</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>81</b>
Child/Teen	26	6		32
Parent/Guardian	36	7		43
Grandparent	2			2
Unknown	3	1		4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>773</b>

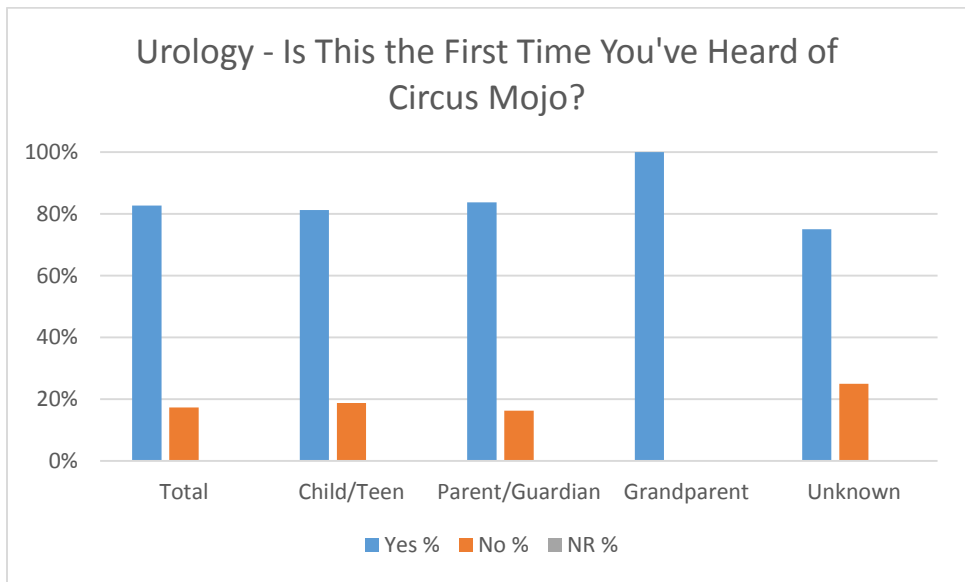
**Chart 1**



**Chart 2**



**Chart 3**





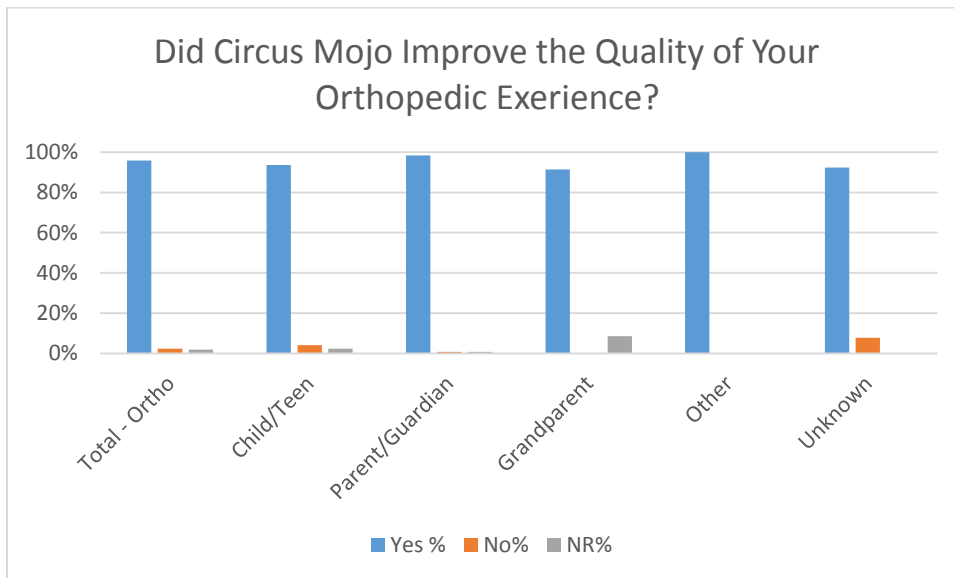
## APPENDIX C

Breakdown of “Did Circus Mojo Improve the Quality of Your Experience?” by Department

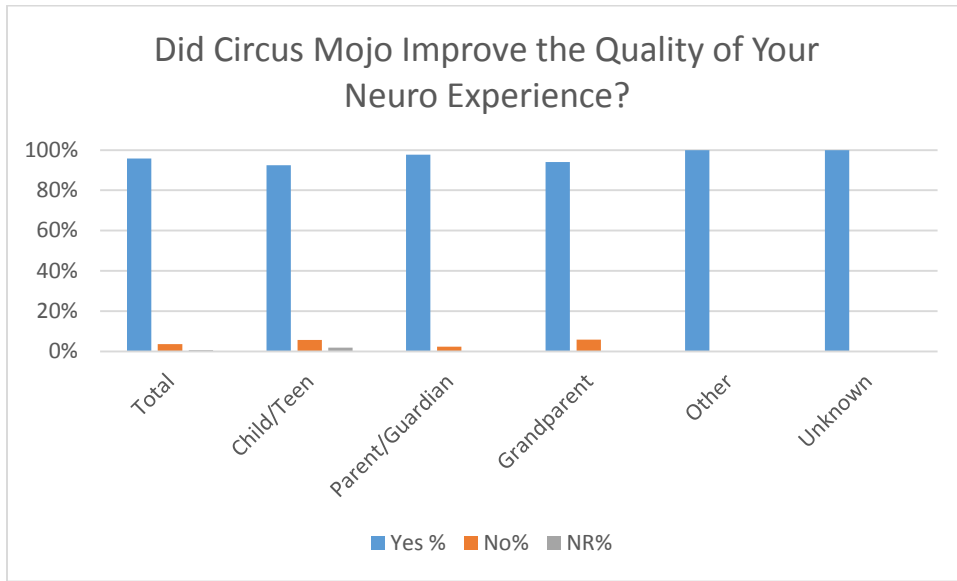
**Table 1**

<b>Did Circus Mojo Improve the Quality of Your Experience?</b>				
<b>Department</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
<b>Ortho</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>527</b>
Child/Teen	204	9	5	218
Parent/Guardian	250	2	2	254
Grandparent	32		3	35
Other	7			7
Unknown	12	1		13
<b>Neuro</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>165</b>
Child/Teen	49	3	1	53
Parent/Guardian	83	2		85
Grandparent	16	1		17
Other	1			1
Unknown	9			9
<b>Urology</b>	<b>81</b>			<b>81</b>
Child/Teen	32			32
Parent/Guardian	43			43
Grandparent	2			2
Unknown	4			4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>773</b>

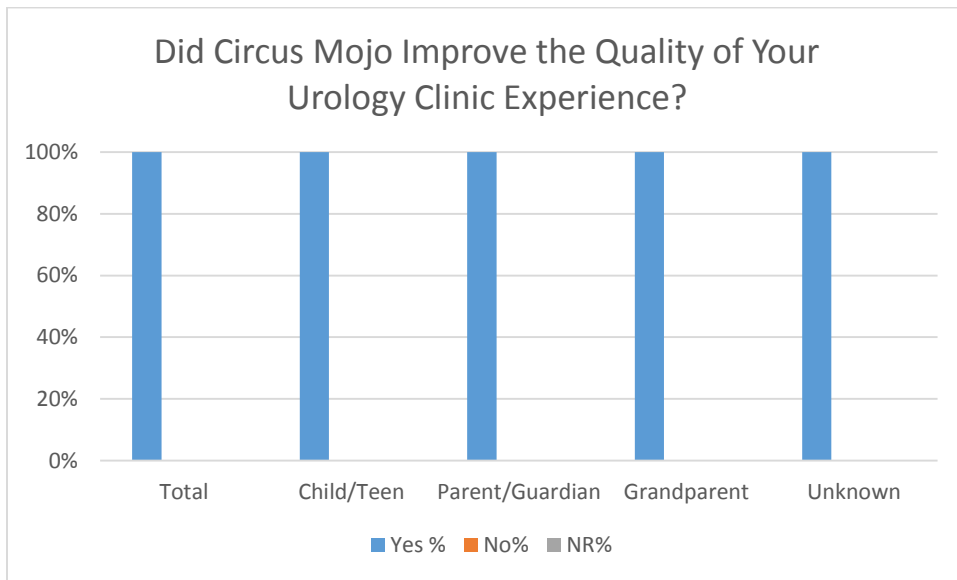
**Chart 1**



**Chart 2**



**Chart 3**



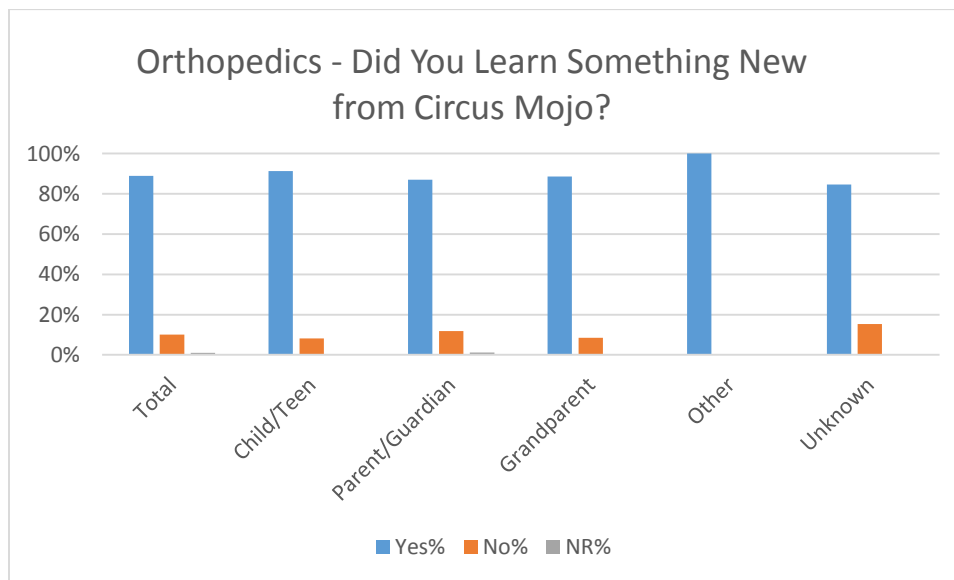
## APPENDIX D

Breakdown of “Did You Learn Something New from Circus Mojo?” by Department

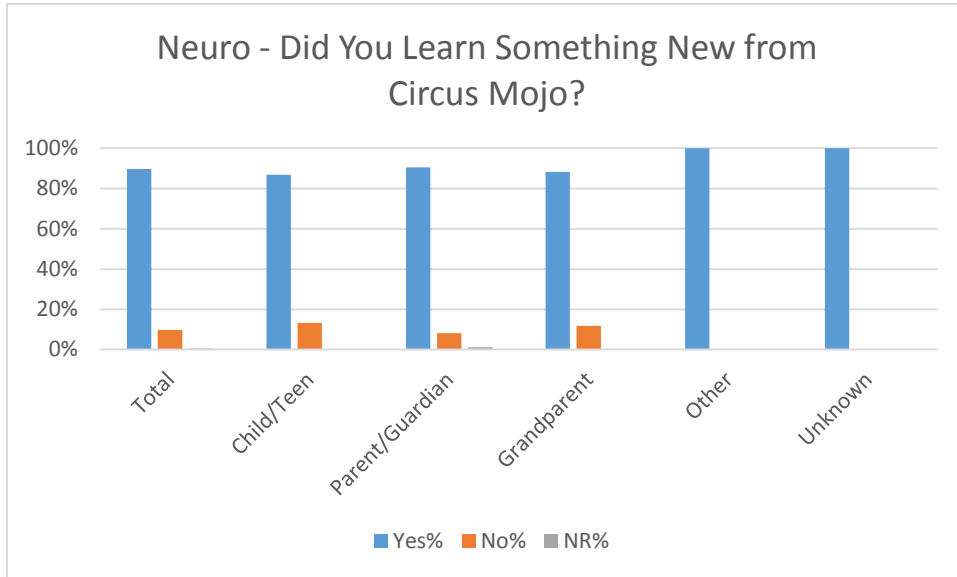
**Table 1**

<b>Did You Learn Something New from Circus Mojo?</b>				
<b>Department</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
<b>Ortho</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>527</b>
Child/Teen	199	18	1	218
Parent/Guardian	221	30	3	254
Grandparent	31	3	1	35
Other	7			7
Unknown	11	2		13
<b>Neuro</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>165</b>
Child/Teen	46	7		53
Parent/Guardian	77	7	1	85
Grandparent	15	2		17
Other	1			1
Unknown	9			9
<b>Urology</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>81</b>
Child/Teen	31	1		32
Parent/Guardian	42	1		43
Grandparent	2			2
Unknown	3	1		4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>773</b>

**Chart 1**



**Chart 2**



**Chart 3**

