

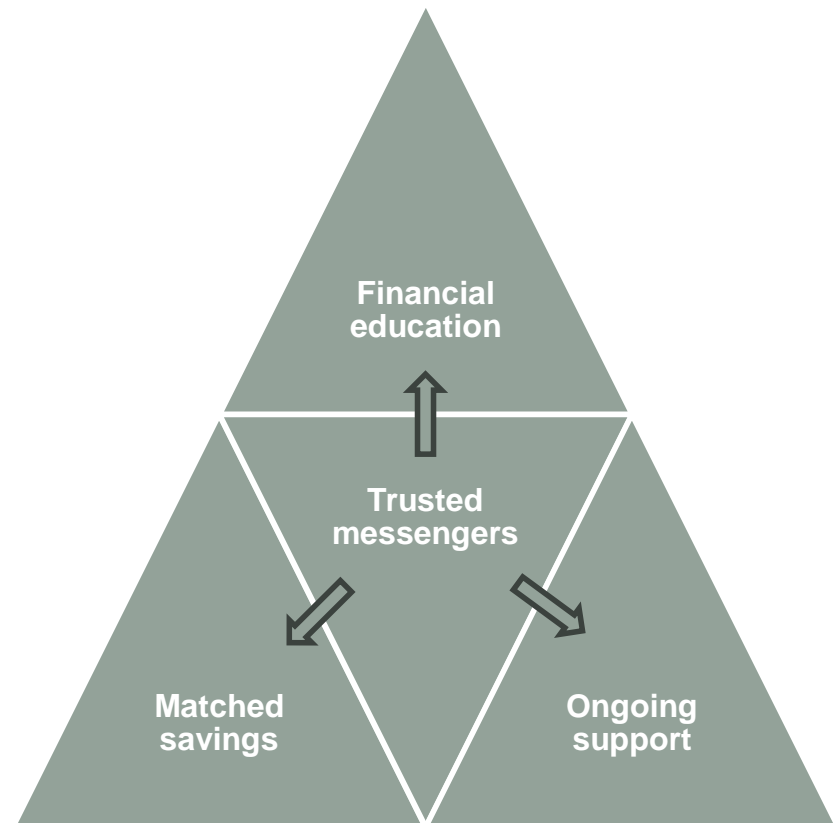
LATINAS & FINANCIAL LITERACY SUCCESS

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WISER-MANA Latina Savings Project

- Support Latinas to:
 - overcome barriers to saving
 - create achievable savings goals
 - establishing consistent savings habits
- Emergency savings as a stepping-stone to longer-term financial goals
- Partner with trusted community organizations and local banks/credit unions



Latina Savings Project with Centro Hispano of Dane County

- Project spanned 2021-2022 – 13 sessions – in Spanish and English
- 89% of participants were Hispanic women
- Average age of 36 – 10% of participants were age 50+
- Median household income of \$40,000 to \$51,000
- Two thirds (68%) had no emergency savings at outset
- One third (32%) used a budget in prior 3 months
- Debt, unexpected expenses and low earnings were top three obstacles to saving cited by participants
- Median self-rated financial knowledge was 4 out of 7

How important are savings matches?

- Evidence from retirement savings and asset building domains support the effectiveness of savings matches
- Savings matches may be especially important in motivating Latinas to participate in financial education, adopt and sustain “financially healthy” habits

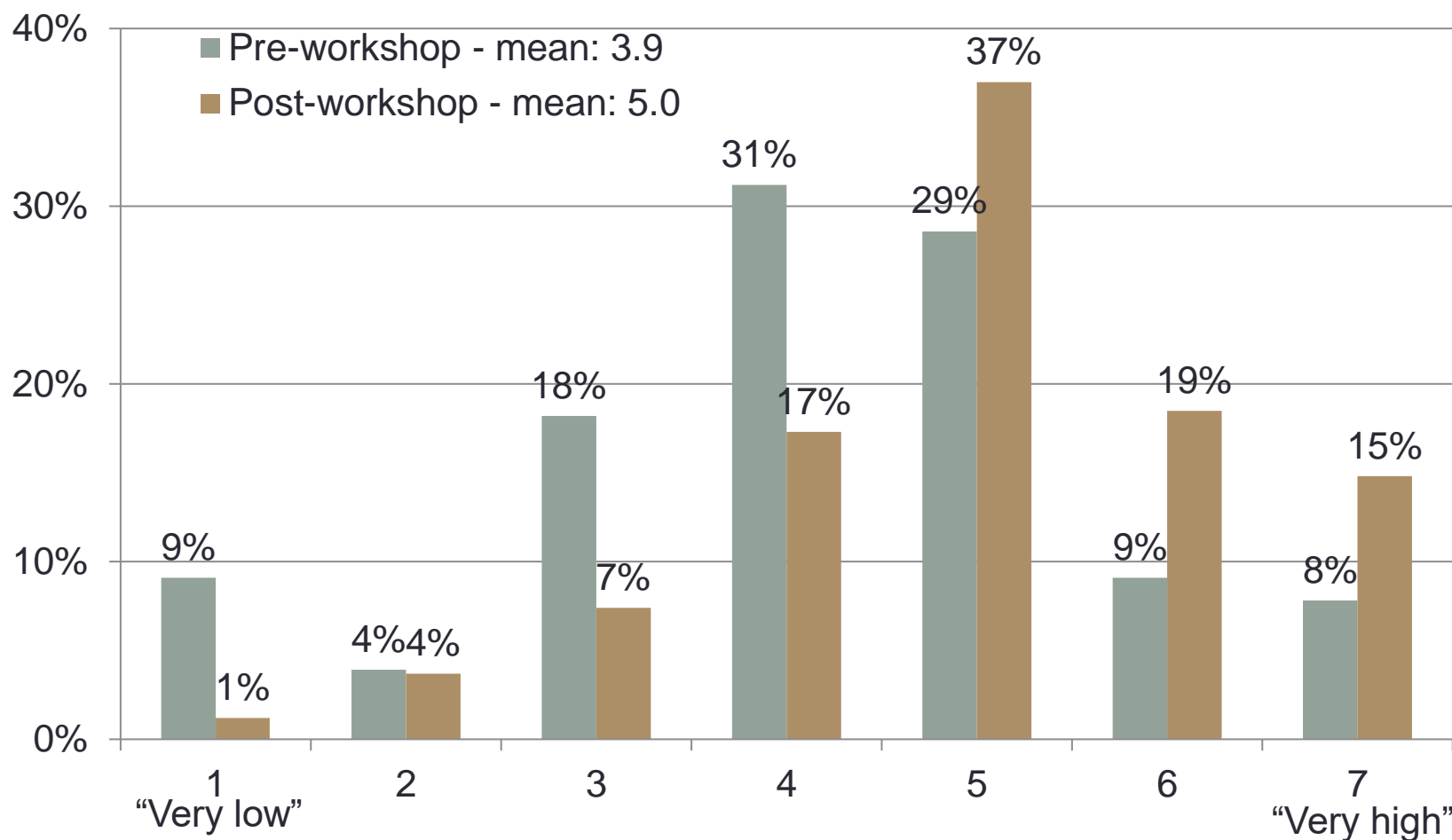
The course was the base, but the match was the prize, and that gave me the motivation to take the course and start saving. And it helped me to build up the habit, because before that, what I put in my savings account, I used to spend it.”

My husband and I decided to start using the “match method” with our daughters, too, to help them save... we even use the method when their teeth fall out and they deposit their money in the bank.

Financial education outcomes

- “I will use the information I learned today to plan for my financial future.”
98 % agreed/85 % strongly agreed
- “I learned something useful about finances by attending this session.” 95%
agreed/83% strongly agreed
- Median response of 10 (mean of 9.5) when asked to rank likelihood of
recommending the program to a friend/family member.
- All workshop attendees (100 percent) expressed an intent to adopt
specific, named behaviors in the coming year, including tracking spending,
budgeting and prioritizing saving.
- High confidence in ability to maintain their savings habits in the future
(median response of 6 on 7 point scale).

Gains in self-rated financial knowledge



Savings outcomes

- Participants were offered a dollar-for-dollar match on their savings, up to \$20 each month for 6 months.
- Three quarters (76 percent) of workshop attendees accepted the offer to enroll in a “savings challenge.”
- Seven in ten (70 percent) women who enrolled in the savings challenge consistently saved for six months and qualified for a full match, valued at \$120.
- Enrollment rates were similar to past iterations of the Latina Savings Project (76% vs 75%), but retention rates were much higher (70% vs 52%).

“Knock-on” outcomes

- “I have learned to take advantage of the retirement benefits that my job offers. I didn't care before and now I've learned not to touch it, to be able to take advantage of it in the future.” -Yari
- “I didn't know about the 401K, then I asked at work, and they increased me one hour to have that benefit and now I use it and they also do the match.” -Maria
- “In the past, I didn't know how to use a credit card and how it affected my credit score. Once I learned, it was easier to build credit. For example, if I have a \$1000 credit card and I max it out, my score will go down. So, it stuck with me to only use the 30% of the credit limit to improve my credit score.” – Latina Saver
- “The first thing I did was to review all the accounts I had and the unnecessary expenses I had, and then I put that money into my savings accounts. Then I helped my son get his own savings account.” – Latina Saver

Conclusions

- Barriers to improving Latina's retirement security are complex, systemic, but financial education can help
- WISER-MANA model demonstrates effectiveness
 - Knowledge/capability – actionable financial education that meets women where they are
 - Access – products that fit needs, low cost, trusted source
 - Matched savings and ongoing support – inspire and sustain motivation to develop new habits
- Importance of trusted messengers