

## Introduction

The California Healthy Marriages Coalition is a pioneering non-profit organization that works throughout California to strengthen relationships through Marriage Education and Relationship Skills classes.

The major goals of our program evaluation include assessing the effectiveness of our courses based on demographic information, type of course, and marital distress.

## Methods

### Sample:

- 8,172 participants (54% female) at pretest
- M age = 42.13, SD = 11.35
- 30% Caucasian, 8% African American, 17% Asian/Pacific Islander, 42% Hispanic, 1% Native American, 2% Other
- Mean income is \$30,000 to \$49,999

### Measures:

Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS): 3 items; scores range from 3 (Dissatisfied) to 21 (Satisfied)

Dyadic Adjustment Scale-7 (DAS): 7 items; scores range from 0 (poor adjustment) to 36 (positive adjustment)

Family Problem Solving Communication (FPSC): 10 items; scores range from 0 (incendiary) to 30 (affirming)

Defective Communication Tools Inventory (DCTI): 23 items; scores range from 0 (effective) to 138 (defective); combined score for self and partner report.

### Procedure:

Participants completed surveys anonymously at pretest, post-test, 30 days post and 6 month post.

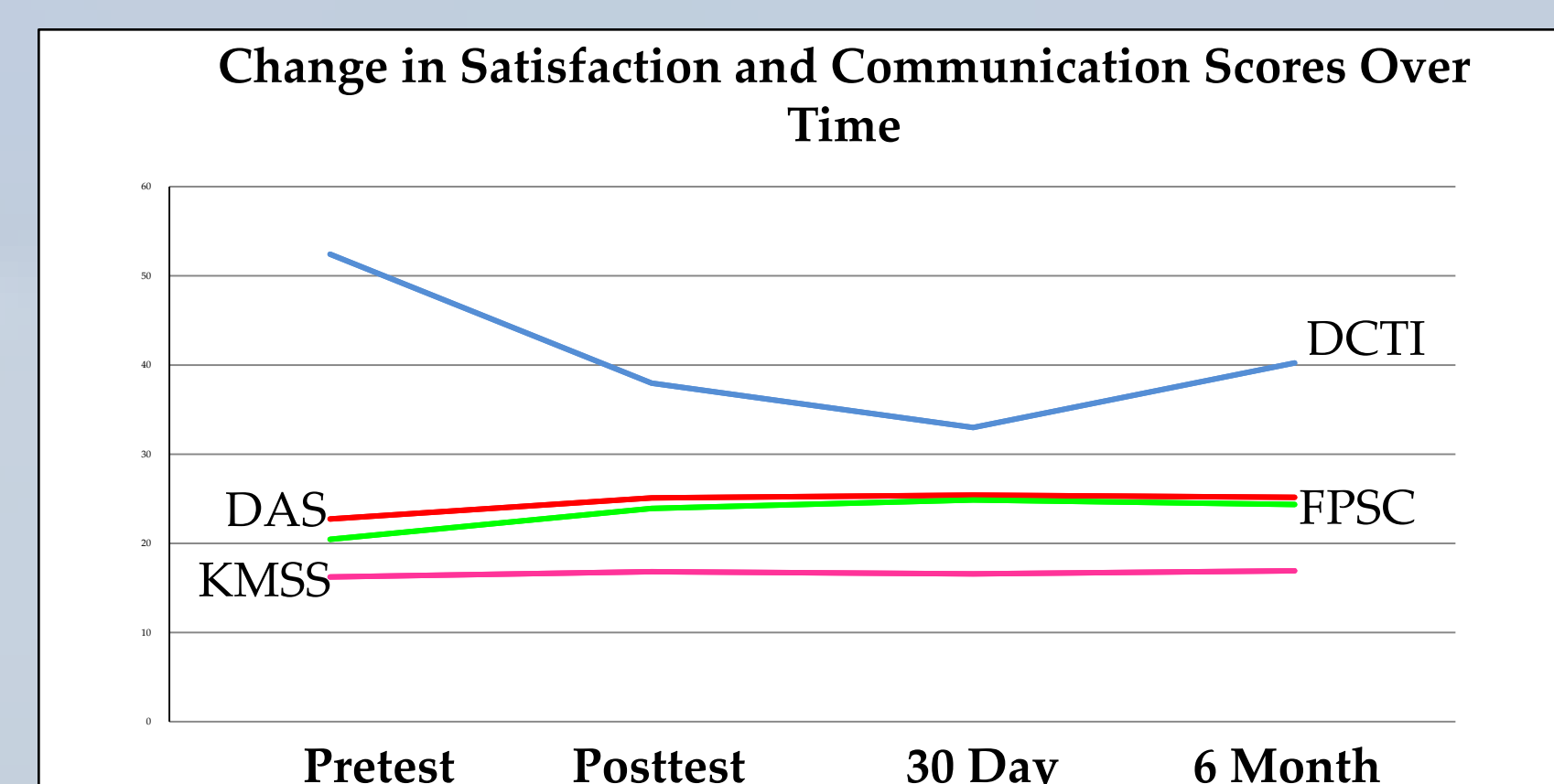
### Courses:

Facilitator-led: Mastering the Mysteries of Love, Word Class Marriage, PAIRS Essentials and Relationship Enhancement

Teach Out of the Box: 10 Great Dates and Couplehood

## Results

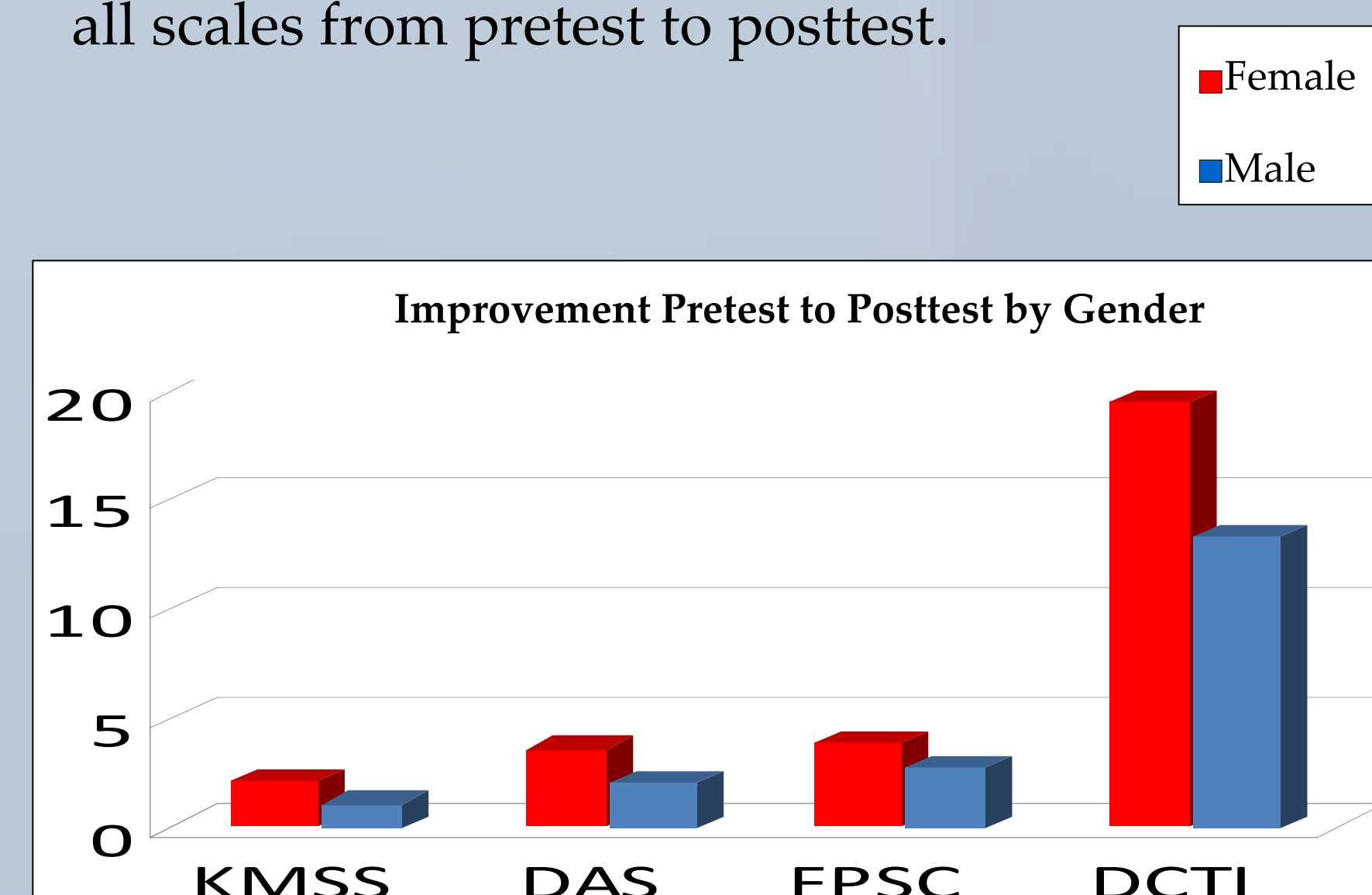
Participants significantly improved from pretest to posttest, 30 day post and 6 month post on all measures except no improvement was found from pretest to 30 days post on the KMSS.



- Effect sizes ranged from .04 to .41

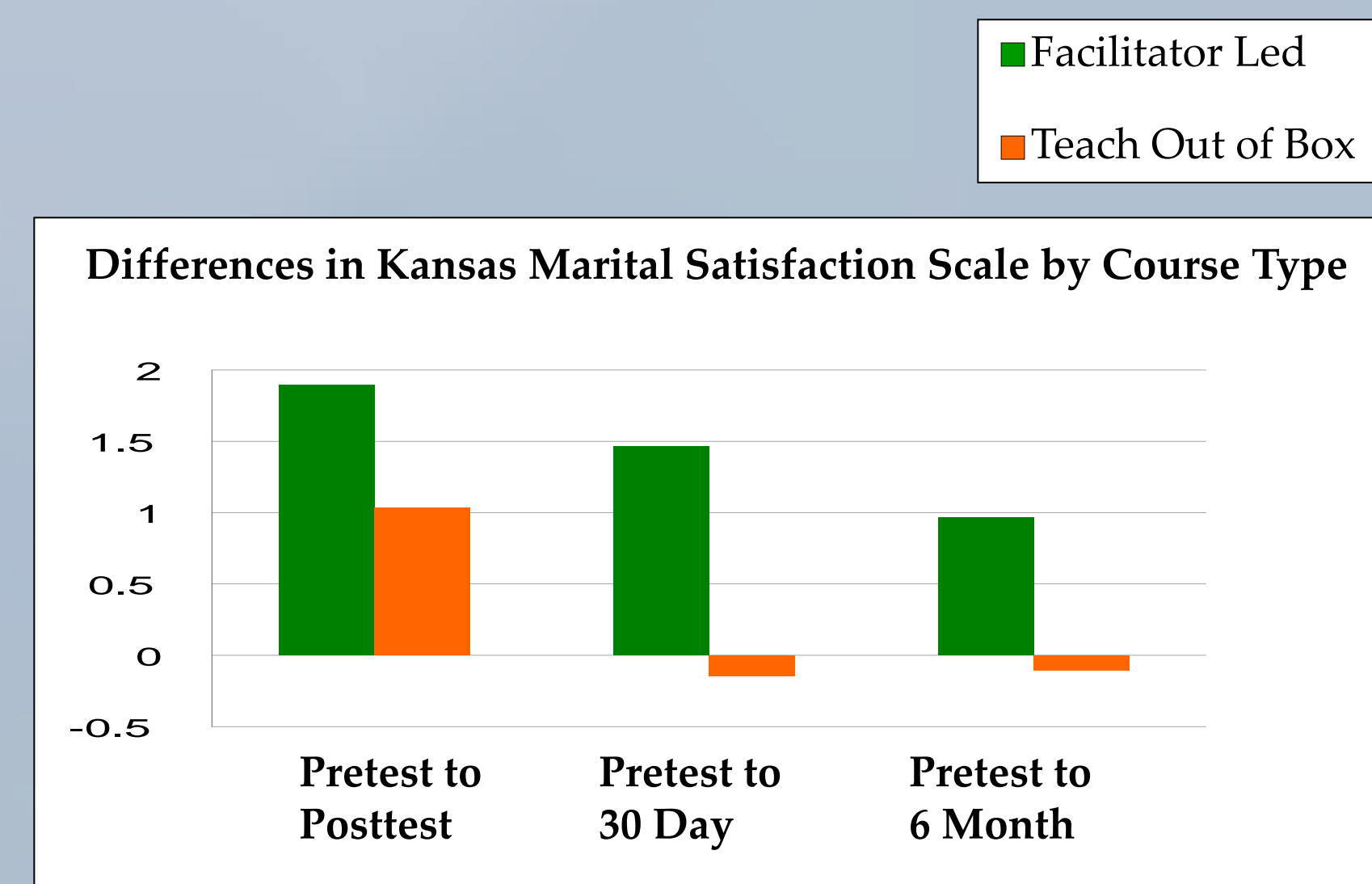
**Ethnicity:** No significant differences were found across ethnic groups.

**Gender Differences:** Females and males had significantly different scores at pretest, with females reporting lower scores on the KMSS, DAS7 and FPSC and higher scores on the DCTI. Females had greater improvement on all scales from pretest to posttest.

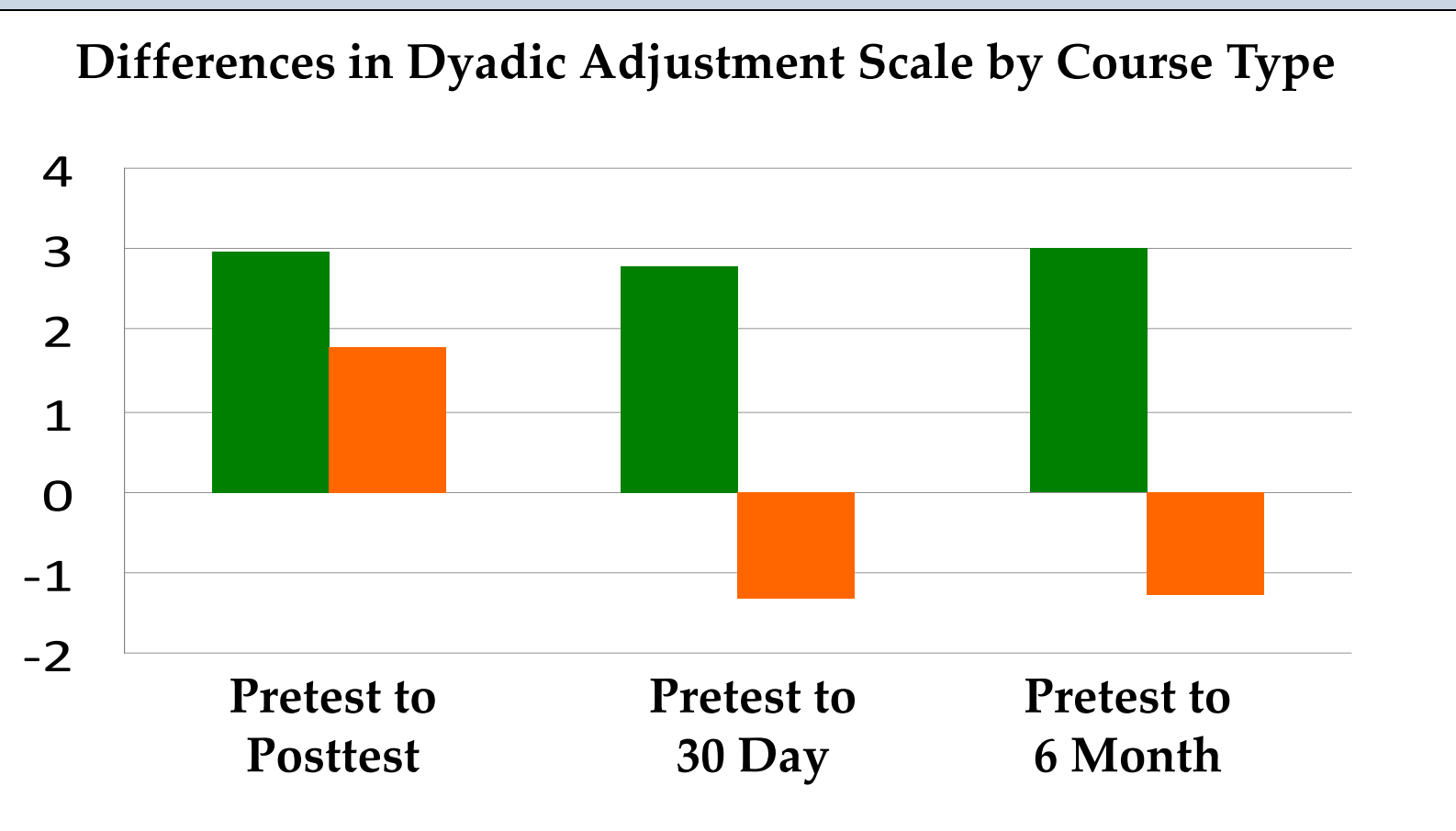


- Effect sizes ranged from .21 to .38

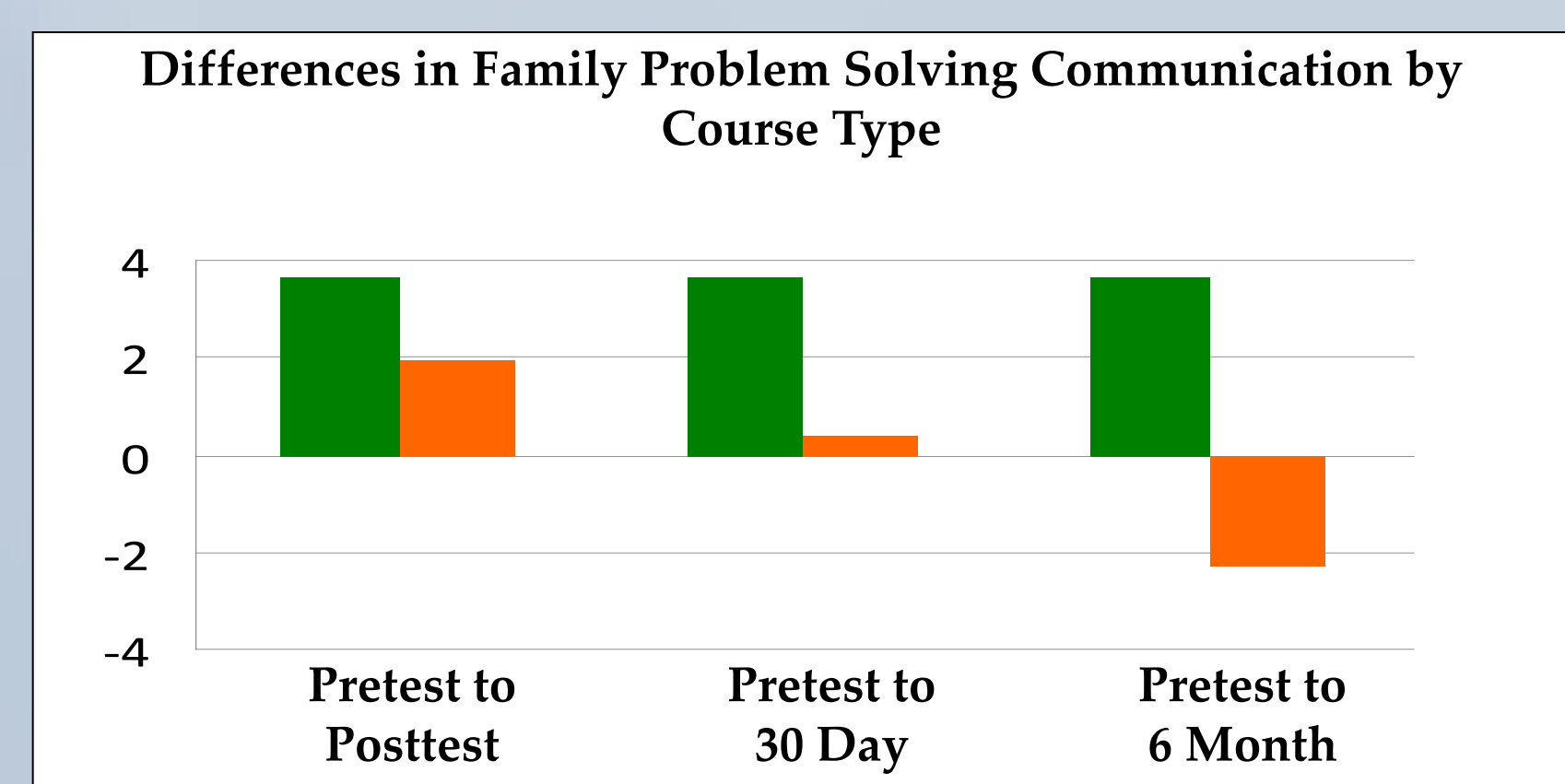
**Course:** Facilitator-led courses had significantly greater improvement than Teach Out of the Box courses.



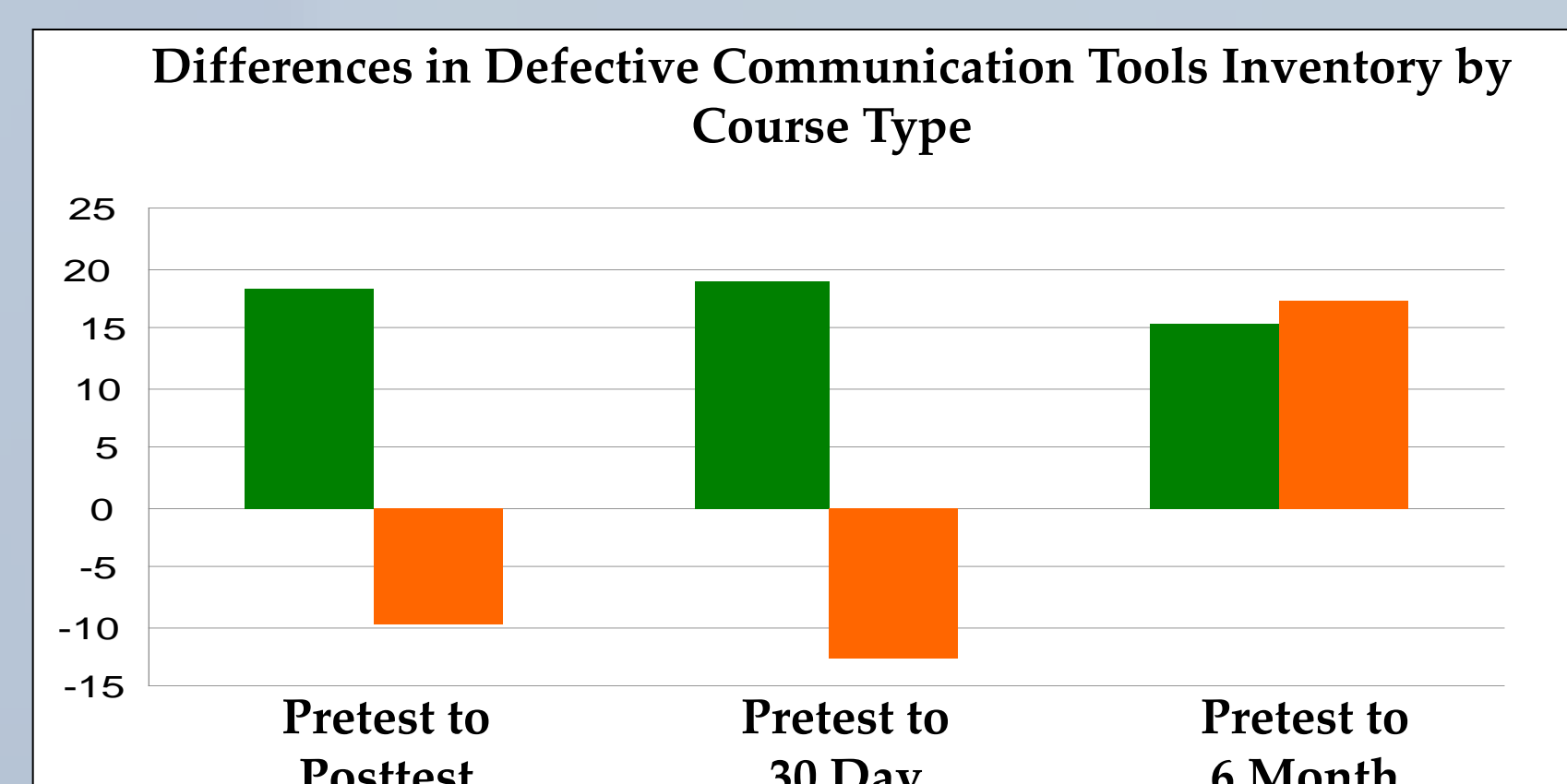
- Effect sizes ranged from .11 to .18



- Effect sizes ranged from .10 to .36

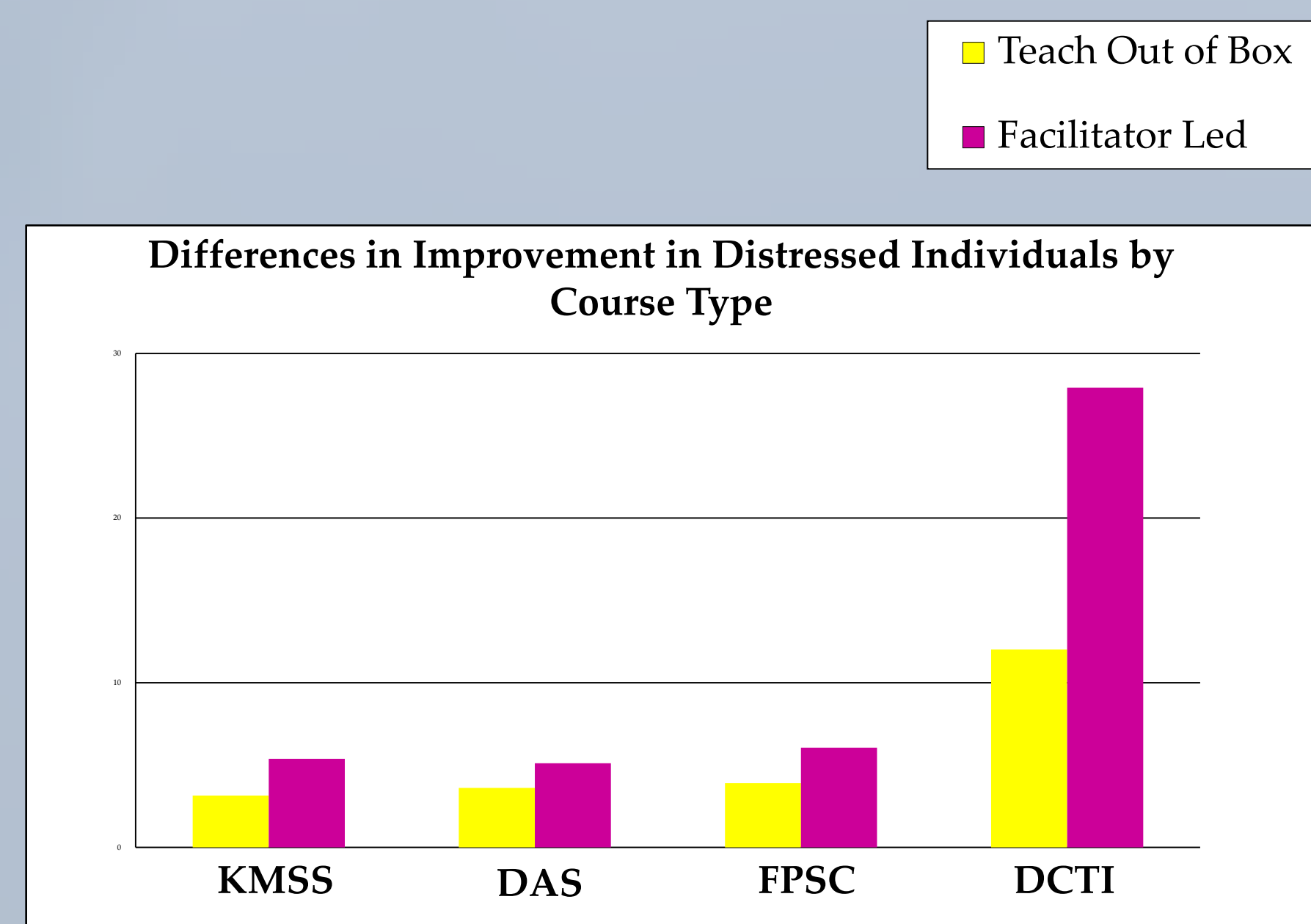


- Effect sizes ranged from .16 to .37



- Effect sizes ranged from .04 to .73

**Distress:** Scores below 12 on the KMSS were used as an indicator of relationship distress. Facilitator-led courses demonstrated significantly greater improvement for distressed couples than Teach Out of the Box courses.



- Effect sizes ranged from .03 to .72

## Conclusions

Evaluation of programs sponsored by the California Healthy Marriages Coalition suggests:

- Marriage Education and Relationship Skills courses work
- Although females enter courses with lower scores than males, they show significant improvement over time
- Facilitator-Led relationship education courses significantly outperform Teach Out of the Box courses

- The effect is greatest for relationally distressed individuals

## Implications

Prevention efforts should focus on females to avert relationship dissatisfaction and strengthen relationships. Relationally distressed individuals benefit from courses provided by trained facilitators.

## References

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## For further information

Please contact [Dannelle@CAMarriage.com](mailto:Dannelle@CAMarriage.com). More information about the California Healthy Marriages Coalition can be found at <http://www.camarriage.com>