



*Utah's Division of Child and
Family Services*

HOME-BASED CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

JULY 2001

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Director

**Utah's Division of Child and Family Services
Home-Based Client Satisfaction Survey Results
July 2001**

Prepared for

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July 10, 2001

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*We wish to express our thanks and
appreciation to Brooklynn Gray for
her assistance in preparing, mailing
and collecting the returned surveys.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Methodology	2
Survey Results.....	4
Conclusion	10
References	11
Appendix A--Cover Letter	A-1
Appendix B--Survey Form.....	B-1

INTRODUCTION

Utah's Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) conducted a survey to measure home-based client satisfaction from July 2000 through September 2000. The purpose was to receive feedback in order to evaluate services provided to families in the home by DCFS. The results will provide a baseline for which to measure improvements in services as a result of Practice Model training, a statewide training effort to provide consistent philosophy, practice, and skill base for all DCFS employees.

Client satisfaction in human service agencies is increasing in popularity as agencies move toward an atmosphere of continuous quality improvement (Poertner, 1998). Previously it may not have been measured because child welfare agencies usually are a monopoly in their type of service, and because consumer views may be seen as influenced by their problems (Kapp and Propp, 1999). Utah's DCFS is an agency committed to continuous quality improvement. Quality Improvement Committees are functioning in every region and at the state level. These committees are comprised of both DCFS staff and members of the community who volunteer their time to help improve the work of DCFS. Additionally, DCFS personnel are currently attending Practice Model training to improve service delivery in protection, development, permanence, cultural responsiveness, partnership, organizational competence, and professional competence. DCFS is evaluating its performance in these areas through outcome measurement and special projects such as this survey.

Previously, DCFS conducted two surveys to evaluate satisfaction of foster parents. DCFS wished to begin measuring satisfaction of families with whom we had provided home-based services in order to evaluate clients' perception of service delivery by the agency and its caseworkers.

Overview of Home-Based Services Included in the Survey

There are many ways families may come to the attention of DCFS and initiate services. The most common is through a Child Protective Services (CPS) referral. A CPS caseworker may have contacted the family in order to investigate an allegation of abuse or neglect that was called into DCFS. Through their involvement it may be suggested that ongoing services are needed in order to keep the child safe and to avoid out-of-home placement. Home-based services can be initiated if the family agrees to participate. If they do not agree, home-based services may be court ordered if the child is at risk of ongoing abuse or neglect. A family may be ordered to participate in services after a court hearing for a youth that is ungovernable or delinquent. A family may also come to the attention of the F.A.C.T. committee because they are in need of services. The F.A.C.T. committee may then recommend initiation of an ongoing service.

Four types of home-based services were surveyed: Protective Family Preservation (PFP), Protective Services Supervision (PSS), Protective Services Counseling (PSC), and Children at Risk (CAR). In calendar year 2000, DCFS served 18,111 clients in 5,111 cases of PFP, PSS, PSC, and CAR. The following definitions are taken from the Child Welfare Policy Manual, which on the DCFS web site is available online at <http://www.dhs.state.ut.us/policy.htm#CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES>.

PFP is an intensive service for families where there is danger of the child having to be placed out of home. A caseworker works with the family 10 hours a week, is available 24 hours a day, and the case lasts up to 90 days. The goal is to prevent out-of-home placement of the child and to assist the family's ability to live together safely.

PSS is a court-ordered service that can include case management, counseling/therapy, education/skill building, advocacy, and/or the provision of other essential services designed to treat and supervise neglected, abused, exploited, or at-risk children in their own homes. PSC provides the same services, but participation is voluntary. The goals of PSC/PSS services are sustaining, strengthening, and enriching the capacity of parents to meet the requirements of parenting while assuring the safety and well-being of all family members.

CAR are those children defined in House Bill 39 (Utah Code Annotated §63-75-3) who "require appropriate and uniquely designed intervention to achieve literacy, advance through the schools, achieve commensurate with their abilities and participate in society in a meaningful way as competent, productive, caring, and responsible citizens." CAR services promote the well-being of children by helping parents to improve family functioning and by furthering a nurturing and stable family environment to enable the children's healthy growth and development. The program is designed to provide families any service deemed appropriate by the family and the Case Management Team to strengthen and preserve that family.

Although it is possible in CAR services that a family's involvement is totally voluntary, in most cases the family's involvement with DCFS began through an involuntary intervention. The involvement of families with DCFS against their will may influence their responses of satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Different satisfaction surveys and instruments from within Utah and from other states were reviewed. A comprehensive list of questions was compiled and a survey instrument drafted. The survey was sent to families who had participated in PFP, PSS, PSC, and CAR services. The family had to have received services for at least one month within the time period from January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2000.

A sample of 773 families was pulled from SAFE. Two hundred thirty-one were returned with bad addresses. Of the 542 remaining, 92 were completed and returned, for a response rate of 17%. This low response rate is not unusual for clients that are involuntary where there was no remuneration. Other studies of client satisfaction in child welfare have had response rates as low as 12% (Crawford and English, 1995). The low response rate limits the generalizability of the results. Due to this low response rate the responses can only be analyzed on a statewide level and are not broken down to a regional level.

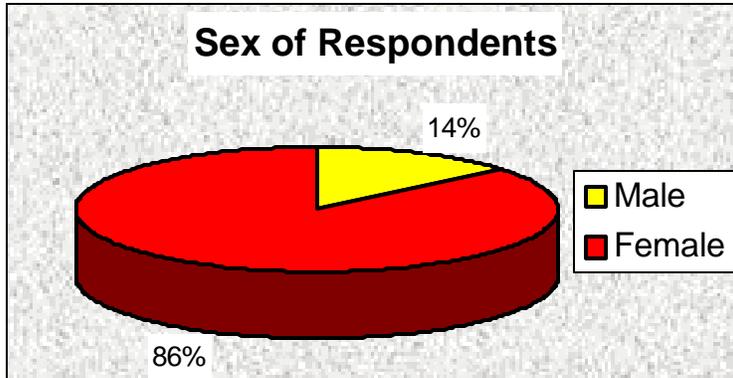
SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Information

The following demographic information was asked at the end of the survey.

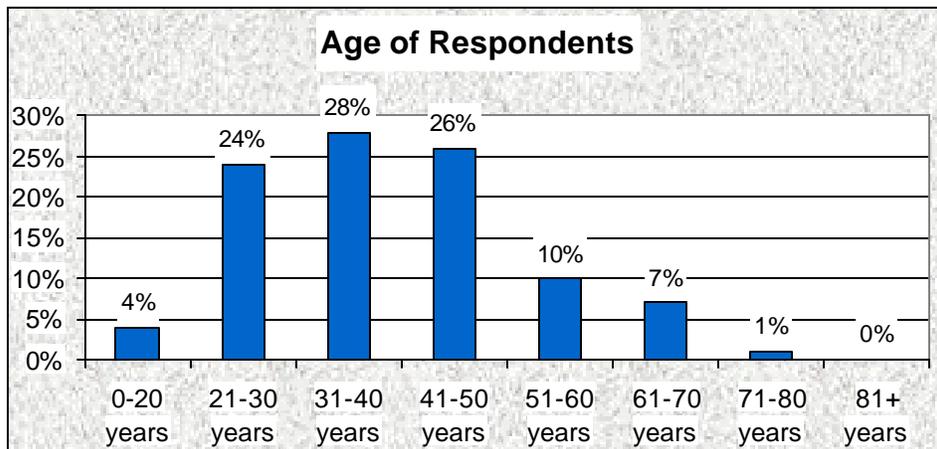
Sex of respondents

The majority of the respondents for the survey were female.



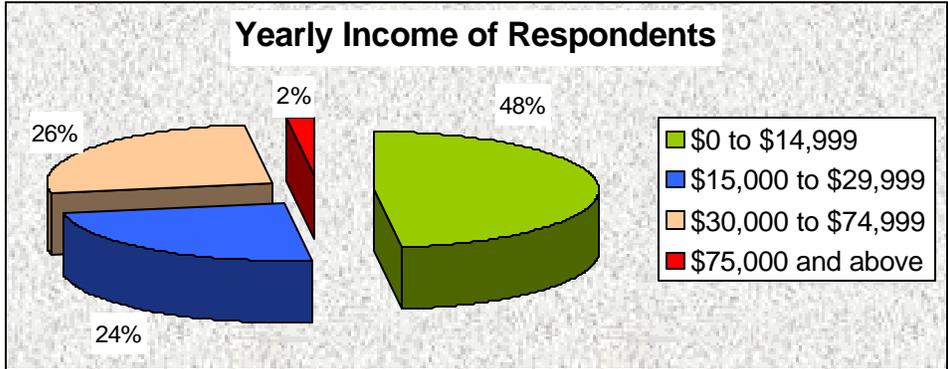
Age of respondents

Seventy-eight percent of respondents were between the ages of 21 and 50 years.



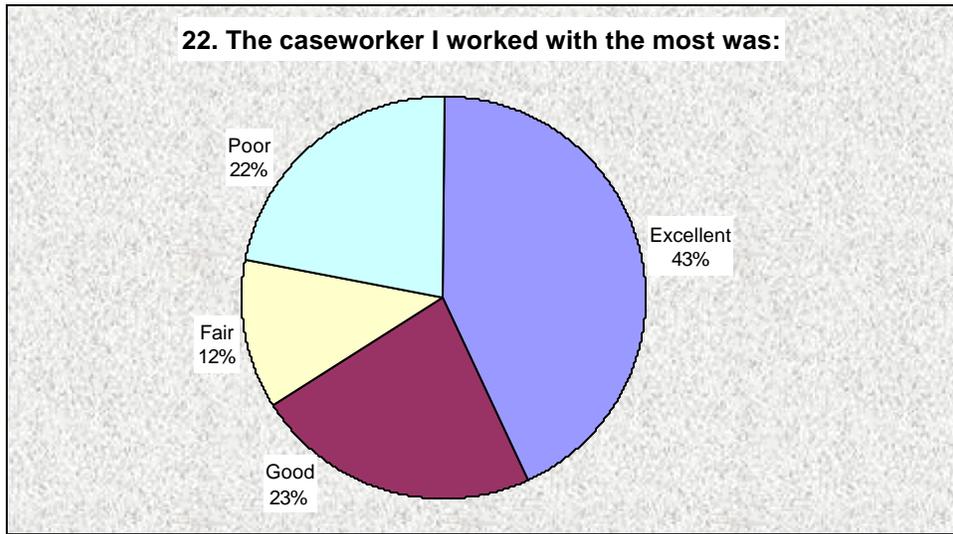
Yearly income of respondents

Forty-eight percent of respondents stated they made less than \$15,000 a year.

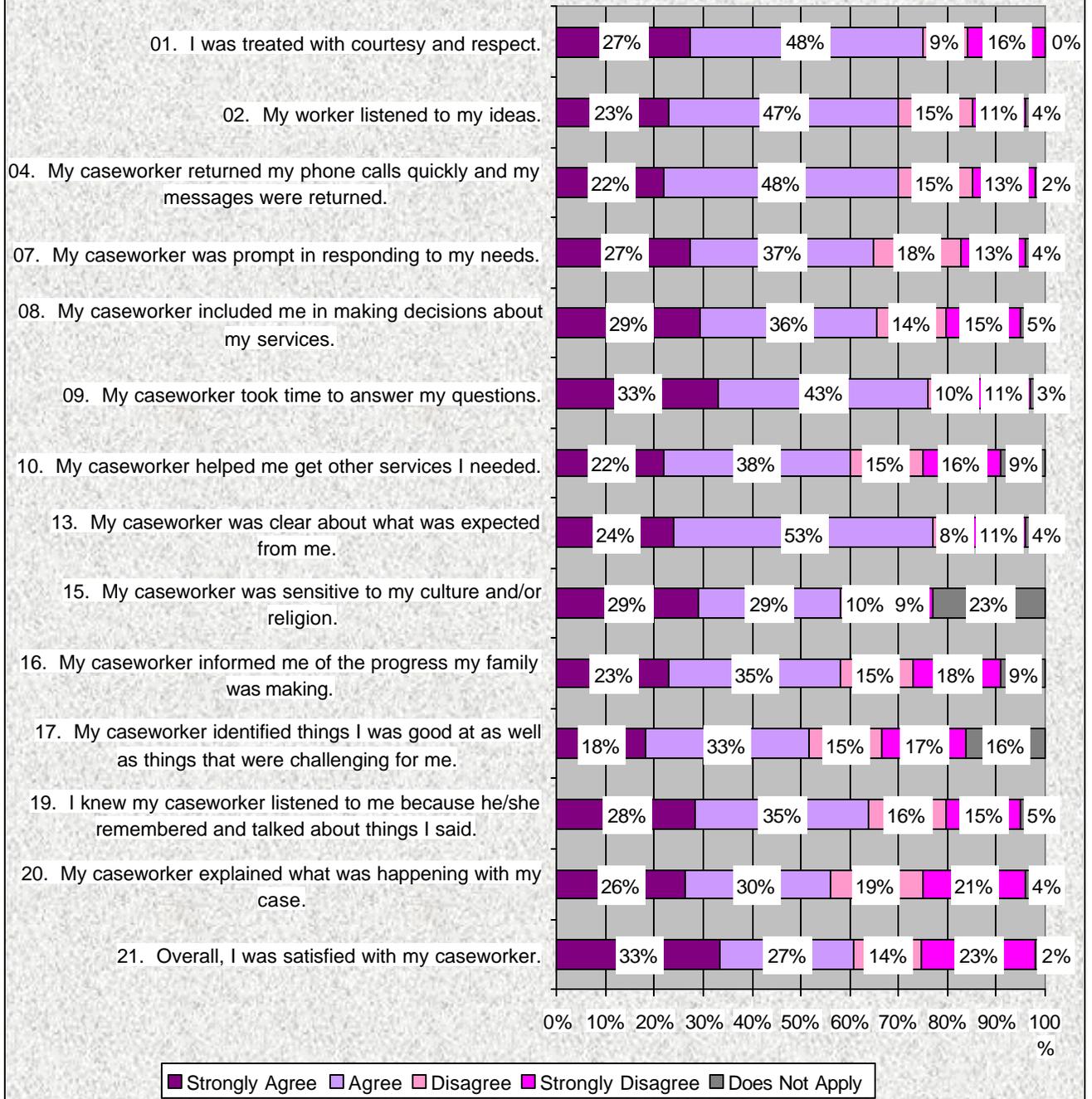


Caseworker Related Responses

The following questions assess satisfaction with caseworkers' performance in relating to and treatment of the family, providing needed services, explaining expectations of the family, keeping the family informed, and respecting cultural differences. The responses reflect the answers to questions 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 22 on the survey.

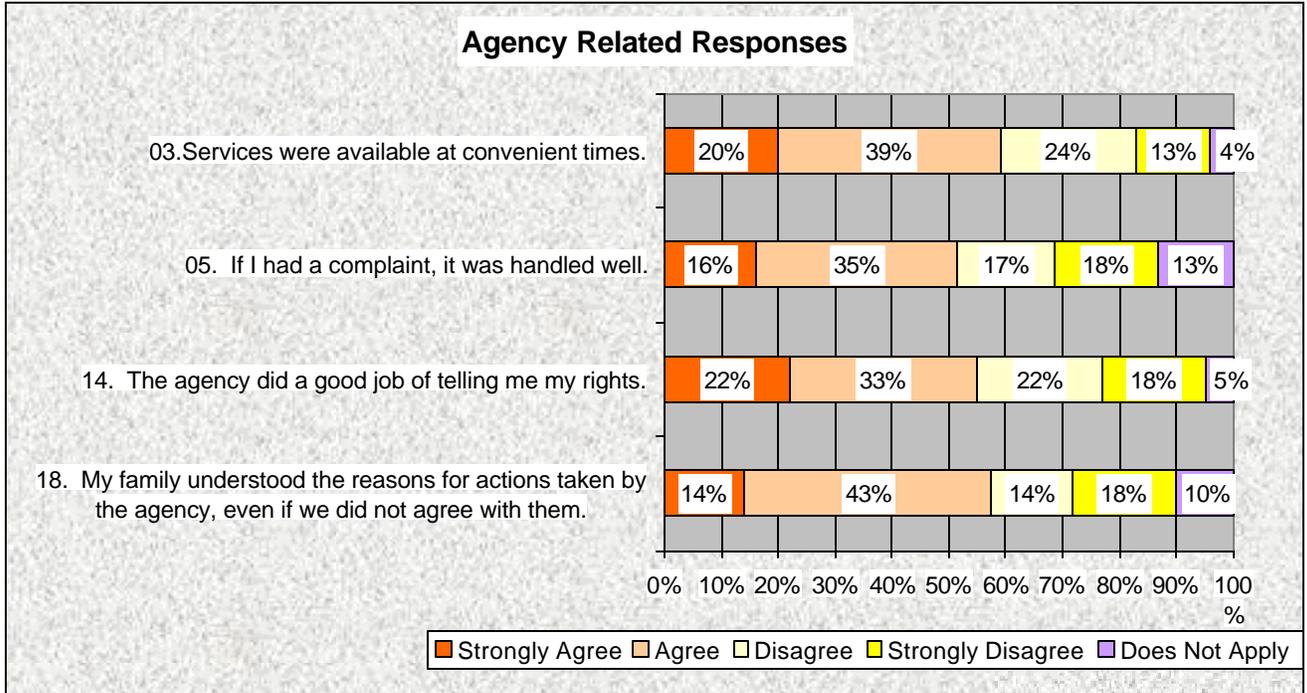


Caseworker Related Responses



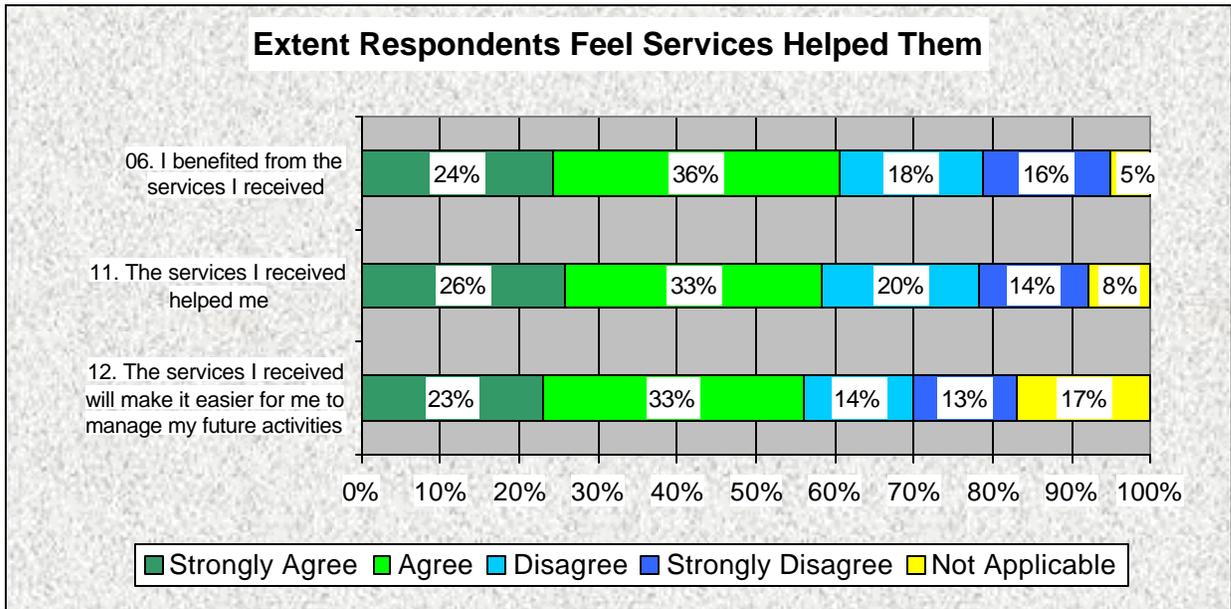
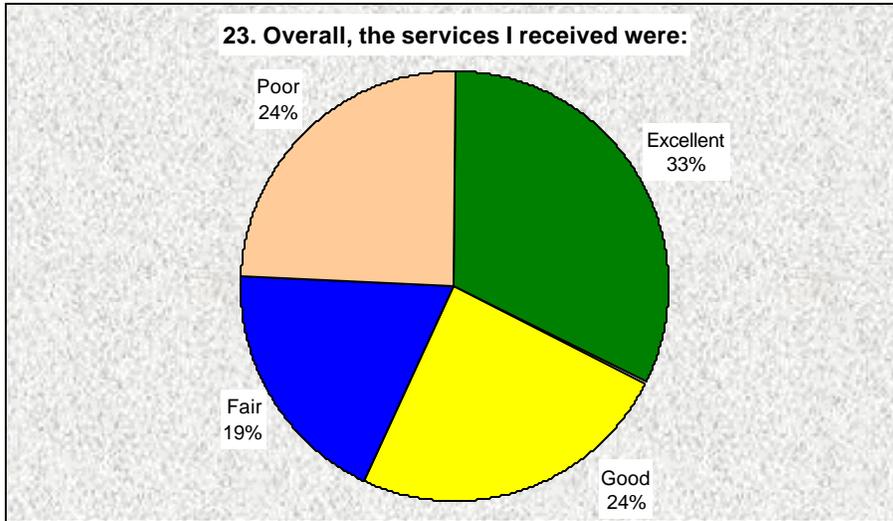
Agency Related Responses

The following questions assess satisfaction with the agency’s performance in providing services at convenient times, handling complaints, advising families of their rights, and explaining actions taken. The responses reflect the answers to questions 3, 5, 14, and 18 on the survey.



Efficacy Related Responses

The following questions assess the respondents' perception of the efficacy of the home-based intervention. The responses reflect the answers to questions 6, 11, 12, and 23 on the survey.



Comments Received

Included below are comments included in the completed surveys.

- <My caseworker> did a great job and we really appreciate his help. He was awesome.
- I enjoyed working with <My caseworker>. She is to be commended for working hard to help return my children, many thanks.
- <My caseworker> deserves a raise. I've been involved with social services since I was 13 and have never met or worked with a better caseworker. She was wonderful to our family, especially the kids will miss seeing her every month.
- Our caseworker was a great help to us during our need, she helped us to overcome and move on with life.
- <My caseworker> is a very compassionate and caring caseworker. She is very good with my son and she helps myself by talking with me and making suggestions to help with positive or negative aspects of my case.
- The services I received were very helpful in assisting me to overcome special circumstances and situations I was faced with at this particular time.
- They help me see my faults and get the help I needed for them. Thank you.
- <My caseworker> was excellent.
- <My caseworker> was a very understanding caring person. He was there when I needed to talk about my problems with my son.
- Some caseworkers returned calls, others didn't.
- The Guardian ad Litem never even met the kids. Never talked to them even after I asked him if he wanted to meet with them.
- Daycare for working kinship placements should be a priority. We are helping you by not placing the children in foster care, a considerable savings to you.
- Peer parenting wasn't as helpful as I would have liked it to be. Loved homemaker services.
- They tried to help as much as possible. Sometimes a child is not willing to be helped.
- You should not shuffle back and forth between workers.
- Never returned calls and left in the dark about decisions.
- Things the same when kids returned.

CONCLUSION

The results of this survey provide a baseline of clients' satisfaction with home-based services received from DCFS. A second survey should be done at the conclusion of Practice Model training to evaluate the effectiveness of the training in caseworker sensitivity, responsiveness, and efficacy of services provided.

REFERENCES

Crawford, C., English, D. (1995). Community, Agency, Referent and Client Feedback on DCFS Performance. Seattle, Washington: Office of Children's Administration Research.

Kapp, S.A., Propp, J. (1999). The Development of an Instrument and Process for Measuring Satisfaction Among Consumers of STS Children and Family Services. Lawrence, Kansas: The University of Kansas School of Social Welfare.

Poertner, J. (1998). Measurement of Client Satisfaction. Urbana, Illinois: Children and Family Research Center, School of Social Work, University of Illinois.

APPENDIX A

This section contains the cover letter that was mailed with the survey on the following page.



DIVISION OF
Child & Family Services

June 30, 2000

«NAME»
«address1»
«address2»
«city», «state_abrv» «zip»

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is to ask you for feedback on services you are receiving from the Utah Division of Child and Family Services. This survey is being conducted in an attempt to evaluate services being provided, and to identify areas for improvement. Please complete the enclosed survey and return it in the envelope provided by July 31, 2000.

Your responses to this survey are confidential. Responses will be combined with answers from other survey recipients. No identifying information will be recorded or disclosed.

If you have any questions regarding this survey you can contact Navina Forsythe at 801-538-4045. Returning the survey is voluntary; however, we would appreciate your honest responses so that we can effectively evaluate our service delivery.

Sincerely,

Ken Patterson
Director
Division of Child and Family Services



Ken R. Patterson, Director
120 North 200 West #225 Salt Lake City, Utah 84103 | Phone 801.538.4100 | Fax 801.538.3993 email dcfsdir@mail.state.ut.us
STATE OF UTAH | Michael O. Leavitt, Governor | DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES | Robin Arnold-Williams, Executive Director
Deputy Director, Douglas E. West

APPENDIX B

This section contains the survey that was sent, along with the percentage breakdown of responses.

**Division of Child and Family Services
Client Satisfaction Survey Results**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. I was treated with courtesy and respect.	27%	48%	9%	16%	0%
2. My worker listened to my ideas.	23%	47%	15%	11%	4%
3. Services were available at convenient times.	20%	39%	24%	13%	4%
4. My caseworker returned my phone calls quickly and my messages were returned.	22%	48%	15%	13%	2%
5. If I had a complaint, it was handled well.	16%	35%	17%	18%	13%
6. I benefited from the services I received.	24%	36%	18%	16%	5%
7. My caseworker was prompt in responding to my needs.	27%	37%	18%	13%	4%
8. My caseworker included me in making decisions about my services.	29%	36%	14%	15%	5%
9. My caseworker took time to answer my questions.	33%	43%	10%	11%	3%
10. My caseworker helped me get other services I needed.	22%	38%	15%	16%	9%
11. The services I received helped me.	26%	33%	20%	14%	8%
12. The services I received will make it easier for me to manage my future activities.	23%	33%	14%	13%	17%
13. My caseworker was clear about what was expected from me.	24%	53%	8%	11%	4%
14. The agency did a good job of telling me my rights.	22%	33%	22%	18%	5%
15. My caseworker was sensitive to my culture and/or religion.	29%	29%	10%	9%	23%
16. My caseworker informed me of the progress my family was making.	23%	35%	15%	18%	9%
17. My caseworker identified things I was good at as well as things that were challenging for me.	18%	33%	15%	17%	16%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
18. My family understood the reasons for actions taken by the agency, even if we did not agree with them.	14%	43%	14%	18%	10%
19. I knew my caseworker listened to me because he/she remembered and talked about things I said.	28%	35%	16%	15%	5%
20. My caseworker explained what was happening with my case.	26%	30%	19%	21%	4%
21. Overall, I was satisfied with my caseworker.	33%	27%	14%	23%	2%

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
22. The caseworker I worked with the most was:	43%	23%	12%	22%
23. Overall, the services I received were:	31%	23%	18%	23%

Comments:

Please include:

	Male	Female
Sex	14%	86%

	0-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51-60 years	61-70 years	71-80 years	81 or older
Age	4%	24%	28%	26%	10%	7%	1%	0%

	\$0 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$29,999	\$30,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 and above
Yearly Income	48%	24%	26%	2%