Summary

"Overall satisfaction ratings reported by those responding on behalf of children participating in the Early Start program were "good" to "excellent" across all 21 regional centers (7.99 - 9.21)."

"The satisfaction levels also were high across nearly all categories including: satisfaction with regional centers, meeting IFSP goals, and the quality and quantity of services received."

"The overwhelming majority (regional centers' average was 97.4 percent) of respondents stated that support, services, and resources they received enhanced their child's quality of life, and that the early intervention services increased their family's capacity to enhance their child's development (regional centers' average was 96.4 percent). "

"...the system performs well across all regional centers, age groups, and ethnicities for most families."

Summary of Results

The primary purpose of this satisfaction survey was to collect and analyze data on how well the program is performing in the following areas: communication with families, Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP), service coordination, service delivery, quality, timeliness and quantity of services, and transition planning.

Overall satisfaction ratings reported by those responding on behalf of children participating in the Early Start program were "good" to "excellent" across all 21 regional center's (7.99 - 9.21). The satisfaction levels also were high across nearly all categories including: satisfaction with regional centers, meeting IFSP goals, and the quality and quantity of services received.

Respondents reported the greatest level of satisfaction with Early Start services received (7.99 - 9.21). Families reported being least satisfied with the services when their child turned three (7.10 - 8.76), quantity of services received (7.70 - 8.72), the ease of finding information (6.81 - 8.40), and the progress regarding speech and language outcomes (7.05 - 8.10).

The overwhelming majority (regional centers' average was 97.4 percent) of respondents stated that support, services, and resources they received enhanced their child's quality of life, and that the early intervention services increased their family's capacity to enhance their child's development (regional centers' average was 96.4 percent).

The most notable difference regarding responses by ethnicity was that those responding on behalf of Spanish/Latin/Hispanic children reported a slightly higher overall satisfaction with Early Start program services compared to those responding on behalf of children categorized as "all others."

The data suggested a trend with age: respondents of children in the youngest age group (birth through 12 months) were least satisfied, each older age group showing higher satisfaction ratings until the oldest age group (49 through 60 months), where the level was lower.

The results suggest that, for the most part, ***the system performs well across all regional centers, age groups, and ethnicities for most families.*** However, there are few areas that apparently have worked less smoothly for a sizeable number of respondents. Among these areas worthy of attention are timeliness of services, transition planning and knowledge of what the family can do if they disagree with a regional center decision.