



2001 State of California Department of Developmental Services

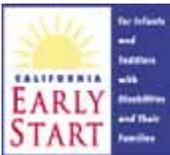
2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices

“Nearly all (97.4 percent) stated that the support and services they received enhanced their child’s quality of life....”

“...96.4 percent of respondents stated that early intervention services increased their families’ capacity to enhance their child’s development....”

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2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

User's Guide

This report provides a detailed look at Early Start program services. The report addresses the following:

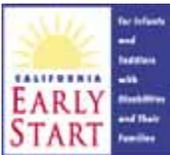
- 1) Effective communication with families;
- 2) Individualized Family Service Plan processes;
- 3) Service coordination;
- 4) Service delivery;
- 5) Quality, timeliness and quantity of services; and
- 6) Transition planning.

The report is organized as follows:

- 1) Executive Summary
- 2) Background
- 3) Detailed Results
 - a) By Ethnicity
 - b) By Age
 - c) By Regional Center
- 4) Summary of Results
- 5) Appendix
 - a) Methodology
 - b) Data Demographics
 - c) Questionnaire

The report templates are separated into three categories: ethnicity, age, and regional center. The ethnicity breakdown consists of (white, Spanish/Latin/Hispanic, African American, unknown, and all others). Age is represented from birth to 60 months in 12 month increments. Age is calculated by computing the difference between the date of birth and December 1, 2001 (when data collection was completed). Regional centers include all 21 centers located throughout California.

Each of the categories (ethnicity, age, and regional center) follow a specific order derived from the Early Start survey. Report templates begin with the Overall Satisfaction (OSAT), followed by regional center performance, Early Start services, effective communication, IFSP and personal outcomes, and analysis by ethnicity. The final template represents the number of responses by question.



2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

TABLE OF CONTENTS

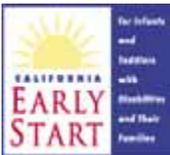
	<u>PAGE NUMBER</u>
Executive Summary	1
Background	2
The Survey	3
Population Description	3
Respondent Profile Results	4
Summary of Results	5
Conclusions	12
Background	13
Early Start Program Description	13
Purpose and Objectives	14
Detailed Results	15
Analysis by Primary Ethnicity	15
Introduction	16
Analyses	16
Summary	19
Analysis by Age	47
Introduction	48
Analyses	48
Summary	50
Analysis by Regional Center	78
Introduction	79
Analyses	81
Summary	83
Summary of Results	133
Appendix	135
Methodology	136
Data Demographics	139
Questionnaire	145

Executive Summary

“Nearly all (97.4 percent) stated that the support and services they received enhanced their child’s quality of life....”

“...96.4 percent of respondents stated that early intervention services increased their families’ capacity to enhance their child’s development....”

“...survey respondent ratings of services, the regional centers, and outcomes were above average to excellent....”



2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

Background

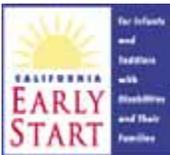
The Early Start program provides early intervention services to infants and toddlers (birth to 36 months of age) with developmental delays. The program also serves infants and toddlers that may have an established risk or high risk condition for developing substantial developmental disabilities. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) administers an interagency system of services that includes the California Early Start program. The *2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey* was designed to measure family satisfaction regarding services provided by California's 21 regional centers. Regional Centers are private not-for-profit organizations that provide services to children and families with developmental disabilities. DDS secured the services of XenologiX, an independent contractor, to conduct this survey.

The primary purpose of this satisfaction survey was to collect and analyze data on program performance not routinely or previously available. The information gathered covers:

- 1) Effective communication with families;
- 2) Individualized Family Service Plan processes;
- 3) Service coordination;
- 4) Service delivery;
- 5) Quality, timeliness and quantity of services; and
- 6) Transition planning.

Information from this survey will assist DDS in meeting three major objectives:

- 1) Ascertaining family satisfaction with Early Start program services;
- 2) Identifying technical assistance needs; and
- 3) Establishing baseline satisfaction levels for future survey efforts.



2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

The Survey

Early Start services are based on a child's assessed developmental need and the family's concerns and priorities as determined by an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team. Early Start program services were provided to 31,585 children between September 1, 2000 and August 31, 2001.

The survey instrument was designed and reviewed by DDS program management and research staff, Family Resource Center Network, and two subcommittees of the Interagency Coordinating Council: 1) the Quality Assurance and Program Standards Subcommittee and 2) the Family Services and Supports Subcommittee, and by XenologiX.

The total number of telephone interviews conducted was 1,706. The interviews were conducted between November 5, 2001 and December 22, 2001¹. Interviews were conducted by professionally trained staff. All interviewers were monitored for quality and respondent confidentiality was maintained.

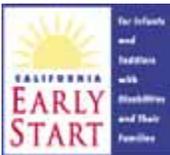
Population Description

The following illustrates, by specific category, the degree to which the demographic data for the survey respondents was similar to the demographic data for the total population of children in the California Early Start program².

- 1) Regional Center: the respondents from each regional center represented 4.5 to 5.1 percent of the total Early Start program population.
- 2) Residential Type: the respondent distribution by residential type was within 0.8 percent of the total Early Start population.
- 3) Ethnicity: the distribution by ethnicity was within 7.0 percent of the total Early Start program population's ethnic ratio, and included all ethnicities that represented at least one percent of the total Early Start population.
- 4) Primary Language: the distribution by primary language was within 4.3 percent and included all primary languages that represented at least one percent of the total Early Start population.
- 5) Status: the distribution by status code was within 18.0 percent and included all status codes that represented at least one percent of the total Early Start population.
- 6) Gender: the distribution by gender was within 2.0 percent of the total Early Start population.

¹ A more detailed discussion regarding methodology is addressed in the "Appendix" section of this report.

² For a more detailed description of the similarities of the sample and total Early Start populations, see the "Data Demographics" tables in the "Appendix."



2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

Respondent Profile Results

Relationship of Respondent to Child		
Respondent	Survey Participants	
	Count	Percent
Mother	1312	76.9%
Father	211	12.4%
Foster parent	83	4.9%
Sibling	4	0.2%
Grandparent	73	4.3%
Other family (aunt/uncle)	13	0.8%
Other	10	0.6%
Total	1,706	100%

A total of 1,706 respondents participated in the 2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey. Most respondents (76.9 percent) were the mothers of the children participating in the Early Start program.

Status of Child		
Client Status	Survey Participants	
	Count	Percent
Intake and Assessment	1	0.1%
Prevention (High Risk Infant)	1283	75.2%
Active Client	264	15.5%
Genetics (at Risk Person)	1	0.1%
Inactive	29	1.7%
Closed Transfer	5	0.3%
Closed Not DD	70	4.1%
Closed Deceased	0	0.0%
Closed Not Determined	33	1.9%
Closed Out of State	1	0.1%
Closed Other	19	1.1%
Total	1,706	100%

The vast majority (90.8 percent) of respondents reported eligibility for regional center services, while 9.2 percent of respondents reported that they were not currently receiving services: their cases were listed as "inactive" or "closed."

Number of Services Family/Child Receives		
Number of Services	Survey Participants	
	Count	Percent
1	796	46.7%
2	448	26.3%
3	244	14.3%
4	138	8.1%
5	40	2.3%
6	25	1.5%
7	11	0.6%
8	4	0.2%
Total	1,706	100%

Nearly half (46.7 percent) of respondents received only one Early Start service.

Summary of Results

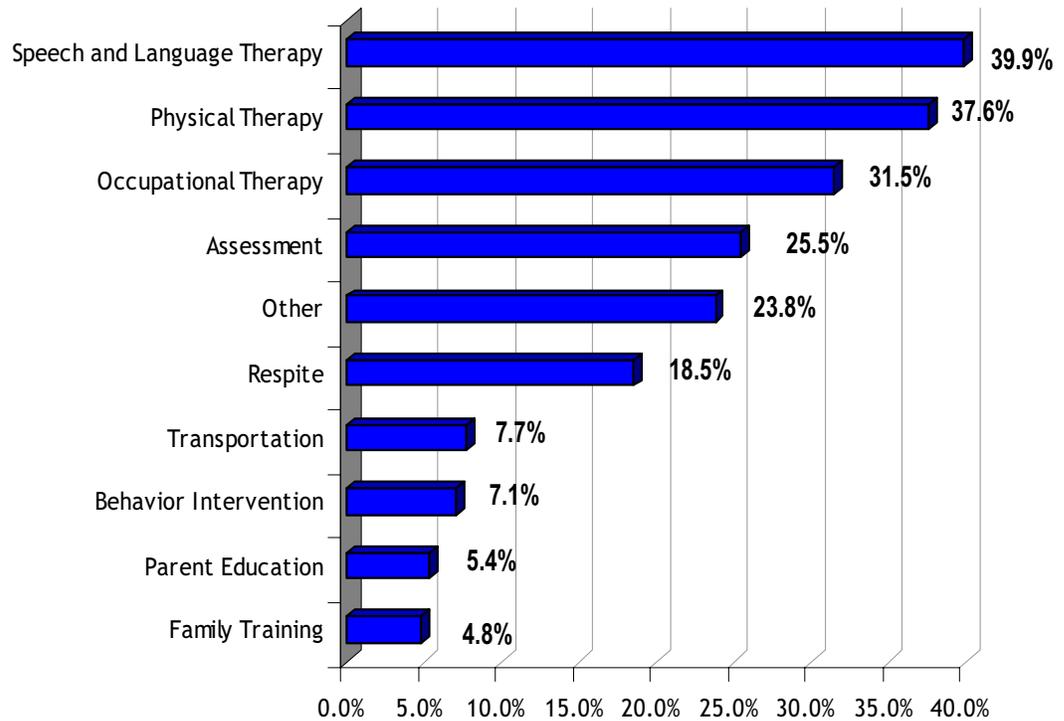
In general, *survey respondent ratings of services, the regional centers, and outcomes were above average to excellent.* This held true when subpopulations based on age and ethnicity/race were examined. As shown in the table below, levels of satisfaction with services and regional centers tended to be somewhat higher than satisfaction with outcomes¹.

RANK ORDER OF SELECTED RATINGS		
10 = OUTSTANDING	5 = AVERAGE	1 = UNACCEPTABLE
AREA RATED	AVERAGE WEIGHTED	
	RATING ¹	RANK
Overall satisfaction w ith the services you receive(d)	8.77	1
Overall satisfaction w ith the regional center	8.67	2
Cognitive outcomes	8.65	3
Services have been designed to fit into your everyday family routine	8.65	3
Overall satisfaction in meeting your IFSP outcomes	8.54	5
Overall quality of life outcomes	8.49	6
Physical/motor outcomes	8.40	7
Social and emotional outcomes	8.33	8
Overall satisfaction w ith the amount of services	8.28	9
Overall satisfaction w ith the information to plan for your child's needs	8.26	10
Cognitive outcomes	8.19	11
Adaptive skill outcomes	7.99	12
Satisfaction w ith the help from regional center w hen your child turned three years old	7.97	13

¹ The sampling method was based on having sufficient numbers to examine satisfaction at the regional center level. This resulted in overrepresentation of small centers, and under representation of large centers. To create comparable numbers would require weighting of individual respondents' data (e.g., if regional center A's white, status 1, age birth through 12 months account for two percent of the total population, but only one percent of the sample, such answers would count as if it were for two families; similarly, if they accounted for one percent of the population, but two percent of the sample each answer would count as one-half of a response). Such weighting was beyond the resources of this project. However, averaging regional centers' scores for comparing to comparable data (e.g., other such averages) can function to highlight relative strengths and weaknesses.

Summary of Results

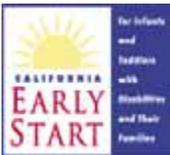
As the chart shows, the Early Start services most commonly received were speech and language, physical therapy and occupational therapy¹.



Most respondents reported that their family received services provided by the regional center (71.3 percent). Other providers of services reported, in order of frequency, were: private/non-profit providers (16.5 percent), other providers (10.9 percent), education agencies (8.1 percent), physician/medical staff (4.4 percent), and Family Resource Centers (1.9 percent).

The majority (86.0 percent) of respondents stated that they received all services specified in the IFSP. The majority (78.9 percent) also reported that the services were delivered on time. Of the respondents that stated that the services did not start on time, 73.3 percent reported a delay of over one month.

¹ The percents here are regional center average percents to provide an indication of relative statewide patterns.



2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

Summary of Results

Nearly all (97.4 percent) stated that the support and services they received enhanced their child's quality of life. Overall, 96.4 percent of respondents stated that early intervention services increased their families' capacity to enhance their child's development. Most respondents reported that culturally relevant information was fully available and that all important issues were discussed during their child's IFSP meeting (83.4 and 83.0 percent, respectively). Eighty-two percent of respondents also reported that family needs and wants were discussed during the planning meeting. A clear majority stated all services identified on the IFSP had been received by their child's third birthday (81.7 percent)¹.

Smaller majorities reported that all services began on time (78.9 percent), that all special education services identified on the IFSP had been received by their child's third birthday (70.9 percent), and that they had received all appropriate services identified on the IFSP by their child's third birthday (70.5 percent). The smallest majority stated they knew what to do if they disagreed with a regional center decision (68.7 percent)¹.

RANK ORDER OF SELECTED YES ANSWERS		
	Average Percent ¹	RANK
Family's support, services and resources have enhanced child's quality of life	97.4	1
Early intervention services received increased family's capacity to enhance child's development? ²	96.4	2
When first looking for assistance, culturally relevant information was fully available ²	83.4	3
All important things discussed at most recent IFSP	83.0	4
Service coordinator discussed all family's needs and wants at planning team meeting	82.1	5
Received all of the services identified on child's IFSP by his or her third birthday? ²	81.7	6
Services began on time	78.9	7
Received all of the special education services identified on child's IFSP by child's 3rd birthday? ²	70.9	8
Received all appropriate services identified on child's IFSP by child's 3rd birthday? ²	70.5	9
Know what to do if disagree with a regional center decision	68.7	10

¹The sampling method was based on having sufficient numbers to examine satisfaction at the regional center level. This resulted in over-representation of small centers, and under representation of large centers. To create comparable numbers would require weighting of individual respondents' data (e.g., if regional center A's white, status 1, age birth through 12 months account for two percent of the total population, but only one percent of the sample, such answers would count as if it were for two families; similarly, if they accounted for one percent of the population, but two percent of the sample each answer would count as one-half of a response). Such weighting was beyond the resources of this project. However, averaging regional centers' scores for comparing to comparable data (e.g., other such averages) can function to highlight relative strengths and weaknesses.

²Do not know/remember responses are not factored into the percent calculations.

Summary of Results

Ethnicity

More survey participants responded on behalf of children who were white (30.6 percent) and Spanish/Latin/Hispanic (30.5 percent) than other ethnic groups.

Child's Ethnicity	Survey Participants	
	Count	Percent
White	522	30.6%
Spanish/Latin/Hispanic	520	30.5%
African American	96	5.6%
Unknown	408	23.9%
All Others ¹	160	9.4%
Total	1,706	100%

One of the more notable differences regarding ethnicity was that while the majority of respondents were the mother of the child (76.9 percent), for African Americans only 57.3 percent of the respondents were the mother of the child. Interestingly, as compared to the total group (5.1 percent), an increased percentage of respondents (19.8 percent) were foster parents among African American children.

Can you tell me what your relationship to the child is?					
Relationship	White	Spanish/ Latin/ Hispanic	African American	Unknown	All Others ¹
Mother	75.9%	83.5%	57.3%	76.2%	72.5%
Father	15.5%	9.2%	7.3%	13.7%	11.9%
Foster Parent	3.4%	3.1%	19.8%	5.1%	5.6%
Residential Care Provider	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Sibling	0.0%	0.6%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Grandparent	3.6%	2.9%	9.4%	3.7%	9.4%
Other Family (Aunt/Uncle)	0.6%	0.8%	3.1%	0.7%	0.0%
Other	1.0%	0.0%	2.1%	0.5%	0.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

¹ All others includes Asian, Pacific Islander and Native Americans.

Summary of Results

Age

The highest percentage of survey respondents were responding on behalf of children between 25 and 36 months of age (39.3 percent).

Age of Children		
Age of Children	Survey Participants	
	Count	Percent
0-12 Months	126	7.4%
13-24 Months	413	24.2%
25-36 Months	671	39.3%
37-48 Months	426	25.0%
49-60 Months	70	4.1%
Total	1,706	100%

All age groups showed satisfaction ratings in the “good” to “excellent” range on virtually all items. Participants responding on behalf of children ages 13 through 24 months of age reported the highest level of satisfaction with services received (8.96), with the regional center (8.90), and finding information about available services (8.02).

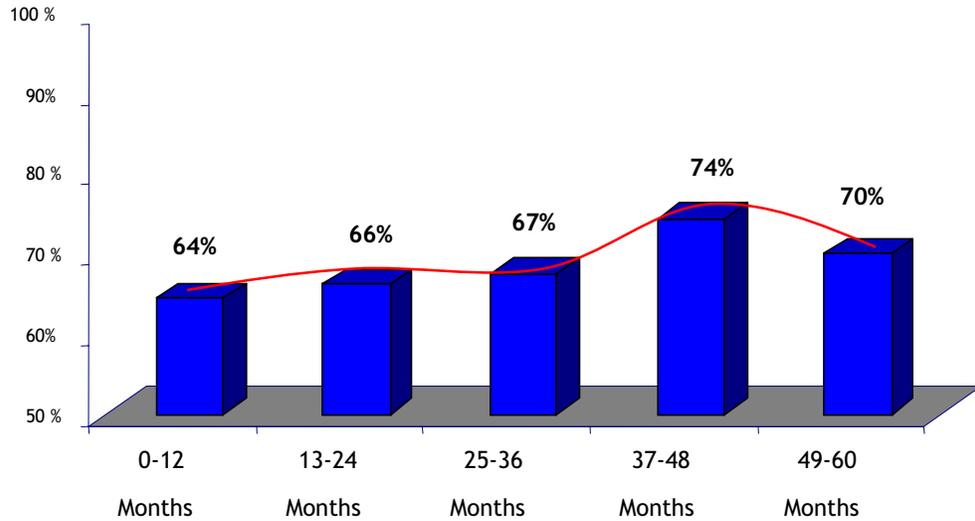
Average ratings increased with age across the age groups on some items, like “knowing whom to contact in the event of a disagreement.” However, the average ratings decreased with age across the age groups for the following items:

- Satisfaction with the amount of services
- Satisfaction with the information to plan their child’s need
- Social and emotional outcomes
- Quality of life outcomes

The proportions giving the highest ratings also varied with age group. For example, ratings tended to decrease across age groups for physical/motor and adaptive skills outcomes.

Summary of Results

Do you know what to do if you disagree with the regional center?



As compared to all the other age groups, those responding on behalf of children ages 37 through 48 months reported a greater knowledge of what to do if they disagreed with a regional center decision. The least knowledgeable in this regard were those responding on behalf of children ages birth through 12 months of age.

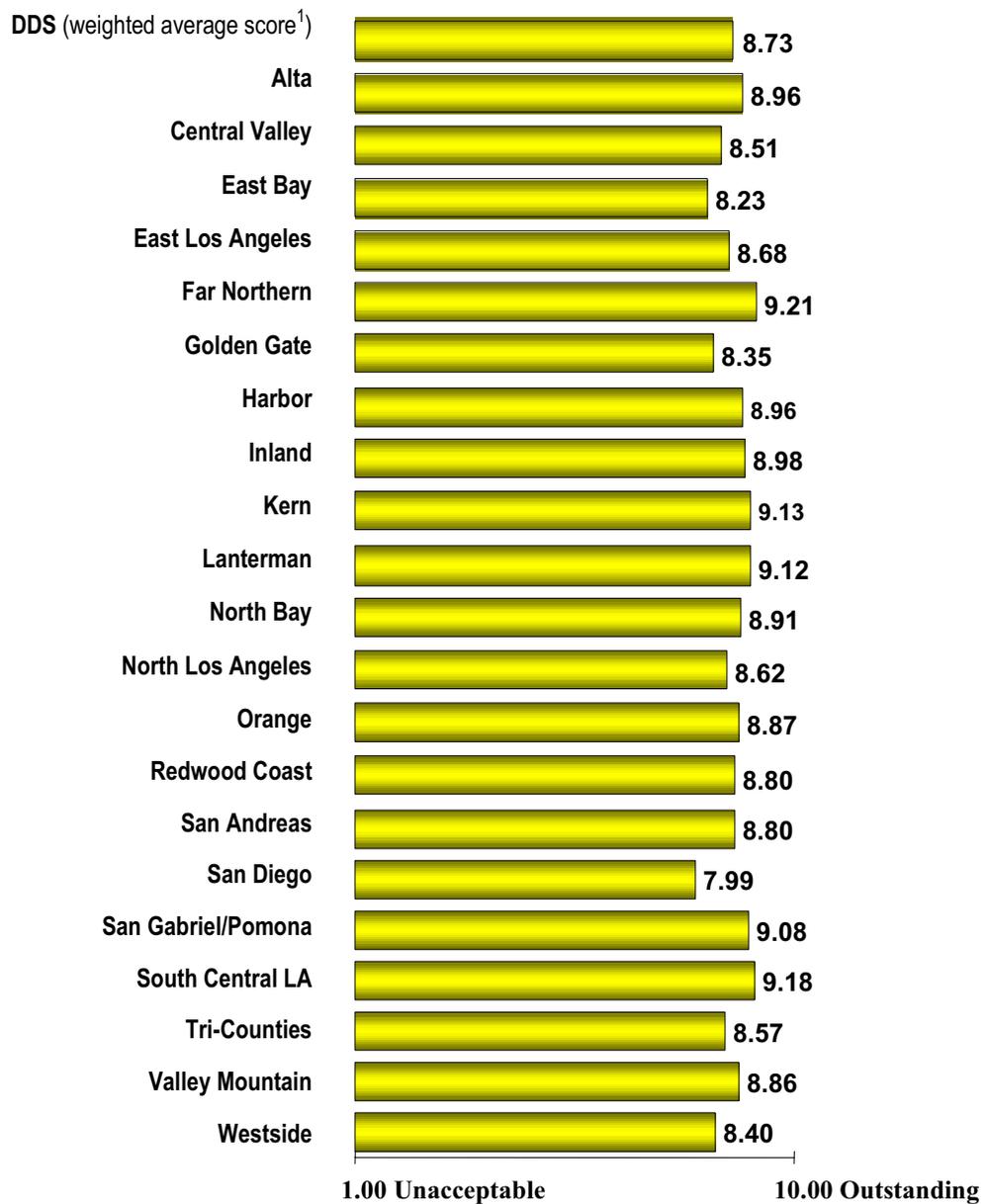
As the child of the respondent aged, the mother or primary caregiver tended to be better informed. Respondents of children in the 49 through 60 months age group reported a slight decline with regard to knowing what to do when disagreements occurred.

Summary of Results

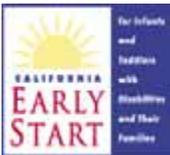
Regional Center

The average overall satisfaction rating for all regional centers was 8.73¹. The majority (62.0 percent) of regional centers were rated above the average, while more than one-third of the regional centers (38.0 percent) were rated below the average. However, the range between the highest rated center and the lowest rated center was just 1.22.

Q13 - Overall Satisfaction



¹See the methodology section in the "Appendix" for more detail about need for weighting.



2001 Early Start Program: Family Satisfaction Survey

Conclusions

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.

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.