

Summary of Year-One ECEAP Family Support Pilot Surveys

This summary of survey results includes responses from two surveys conducted in June, 2016 with the coordinators and direct service staff of contractors participating in the Year-One ECEAP Family Support Pilot. The agency coordinators and direct staff were asked some of the same questions as well as some different questions as described below. The numbers of respondents are noted in parentheses. Eleven agency coordinators from eleven programs¹ and 54 direct services staff from ten agencies² responded to the survey. Five of the agency coordinators and 30 direct service staff piloted the Mobility Mentoring® model. Six of the agency coordinators and 24 piloted the Family Development Matrix model (FDM).

FAMILY SUPPORT PILOT COORDINATOR AND DIRECT SERVICE STAFF ROLES AND EXPERIENCE

Each participating contractor designated a family support pilot coordinator. Of the coordinators who responded to the survey, 11 serve as coordinators/managers, 8 as supervisors, 2 in administration, and one as coach. Five have been with ECEAP five or more years, five between one and five years and one less than a year. Ten have a Bachelor's or Master's degree and one is working toward a degree. Direct service respondents serve in family support (53), eligibility and enrollment (25), program support (13), teaching (6), ECEAP coach (3) and director (4) roles. 21 have been with ECEAP five or more years, 20 between one and five years, and 13 less than a year. Most have a college degree (Master's Degree [5], Bachelor's Degree [31], Associate Degree [14]) and a few (4) are working toward their degree).

ASPECTS OF THE MODEL THAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO THE TEAM'S ABILITY TO HELP FAMILIES ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

Agency Coordinators Perspectives. All agency coordinators (11) were positive about the value of the models and tools. Two noted that the pilot process overall helped families to achieve their goals, saying that: "pilot data collection facilitated a thoughtful, focused, and individualized process to family support workers' work." One noted that it helped "staff connect better with families" and two others pointed to the value of the "clear look at outcomes" at each visit with families. Six found that the assessment tool and guided approach promoted meaningful and difficult conversations with families. Three found the model frameworks useful (FDM - 1, *Bridge to Self-Sufficiency* - 2). One person commented that the *Bridge* helped them facilitate "conversations that may not have been broached without it."

Direct Service Staff Perspectives. The 50 responses to this open-ended question about aspects of the model that contributed most to helping families achieve their goals fell into three categories.

- **Models and Tools.** Over half (30) of the direct service staff respondents pointed to the value of the models and tools in "thinking of other ways to encourage families to talk about their situations" and "learning how to ask tough personal questions." Seven people commented on the value of the *Bridge to Self-Sufficiency* in helping to "stimulate conversation" about self-sufficiency issues and "break down the steps" to reaching goals. As one noted, "many of these families taught me about resources and pathways to proceed with issues, which I was then able to share with others...Several were interested in a budget, for example."
- **Developing and Following-Up on Goals, Empowerment Plans and Resources.** Several (9) said that developing and following-up on goals and plans with families and helping families identify resources contributed most to helping families achieve their goals. As one person noted, "the FDM helped me gather resources for a variety of different areas such as schooling."
- **Relationships, Meetings and Follow-Up.** Some staff (11) called out what was likely implicit for other respondents, the value of relationships and follow-up. Of these, two noted that they believed families would have made progress without the pilot model and tools.

¹ Respondents included: Central Valley School District, Community Child Care Center, ESD 101, ESD 112, ESD 123, Kennewick School District, Lower Columbia College, Olympic Community Action Programs, PSESD, Snohomish County, South Bend School District

² Staff from the following agencies responded to the survey: Central Valley School District, Centralia College ESD 101, ESD 105, ESD 112, ESD 123, Kennewick School District, Lower Columbia College, Olympic Community Action Programs, Snohomish County

ASPECTS OF THE MODEL THAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO GROWTH OF FAMILY SUPPORT SKILLS AND CAPACITIES

Family Support Staff. The 50 responses to this open-ended question about aspects of the model that contributed most to the growth of staff skills and capacities fell into three broad categories.

- *Models and Tools.* Two-thirds (34) pointed to the value of the models and tools in “thinking of other ways to encourage families to talk about their situations” and “learning how to ask tough personal questions.” As one noted, “The *Bridge* diagram was the most helpful tool for me because it opened up discussions I would likely not have had with families.”
- *Developing and Following-Up on Goals, Empowerment Plans and Resources.* Several (9) said that developing and following-up on goals and plans with families and helped them identify resources that contributed most to their growth.
- *Did Not Contribute to Skill Growth.* Some direct services staff (6) said that the models and tools did not contribute to their professional growth. One person thought that “it opened up topics too soon in the year or for the first home visit...too broad and intrusive.”

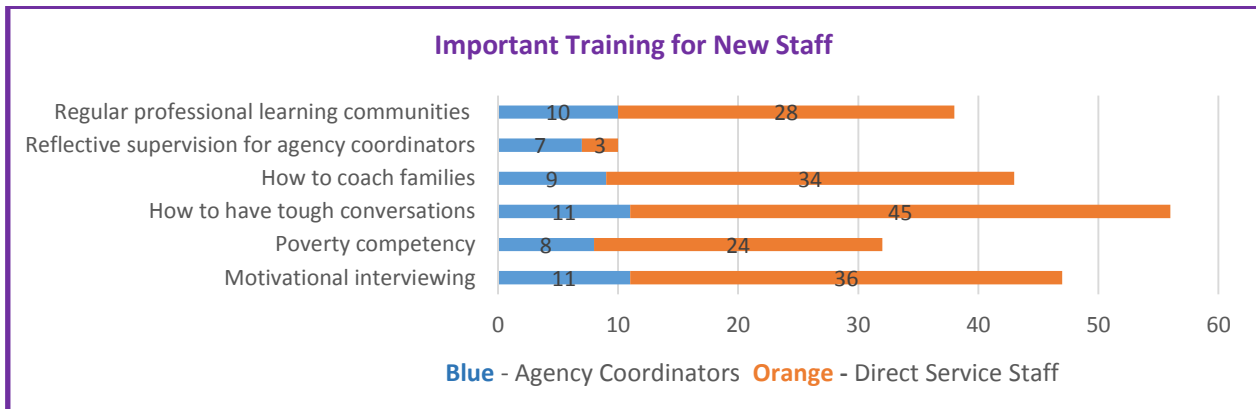
INTENSITY OF SERVICES

To explore how family support services were tailored to families who need differing levels of service, agency coordinators (11) were asked what helped family support workers decide if families needed more than three visits. Most said this decision was guided by a family request (9) or a family crisis (8). Others noted that decisions were guided by completing the family assessment (5) and family goals (2).

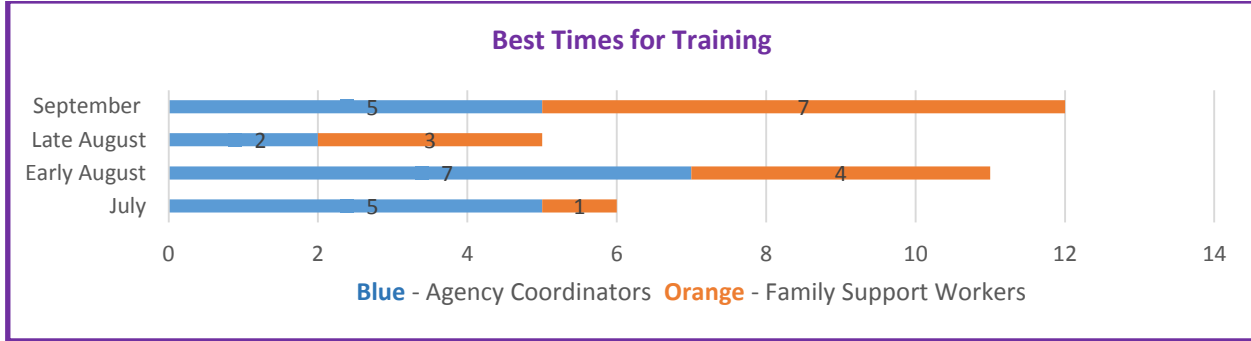
TRAINING AND SUPPORTS

Year One Training for Direct Service Staff. Seven 7 (of 10) coordinators noted that they practiced reflective supervision and met regularly with direct service staff. Topics ranged from discussion of family situations, development of internal systems to data interpretation. Three dedicated time at professional learning communities and three said they provided training (such as reflective listening and motivational interviewing). In addition to the initial training and monthly check-ins provided through DEL, six direct service staff said that they received introductions to the new models, 17 held regular meetings with supervisors and peers, and three worked on this in professional learning communities. Of note, 17 reported that they received no additional training beyond that provided by DEL.

Recommended Training for New Staff. Eleven agency coordinators and 52 direct service staff recommended the training shown on the chart below as important for new staff. Additional topics suggested include: training on community resources; conversational assessment styles; reliability training on the assessment; adjusting the *Mobility Mentoring Bridge* rating based on family progress; and, opportunities to observe a trained family support worker.



Best Times for Training. Agency coordinators noted the following times as the best times for training for themselves and for their family support staff.



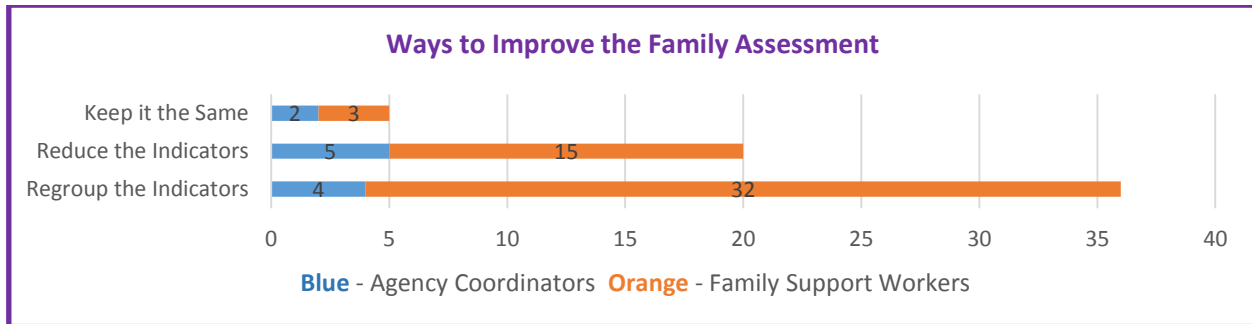
SUGGESTED SUPPORTS FOR NEW STAFF

Ten agency coordinators and 40 direct service staff who participated in the first year of the pilot said if they were mentoring a new staff person, they would suggest the following supports to help the new staff prepare to do the work well.

- *Getting to Know Families.* Build the relationship with the family first. When families feel like you care and want the best for them, they are more willing to share things with you. Start by looking for strengths to highlight and build upon.
- *Assessments.* Get familiar with the indicators before you meet with families. Practice the questions in a conversational way out loud or role play with someone as you are getting started. Know that each family is different and not all of the questions will apply. Use the assessment as a guide for the conversation rather than as a list to check off or to give to parents to fill out. Check in with parents often and relax!
- *Bridge to Self Sufficiency.* Get familiar with the Bridge pillars. Use the *Guidelines to Opening Up Conversation* and the *Bridge* pillars and keep your language simple.
- *Training.* The DEL training sessions are a good place to start. The Mobility Mentoring® training is excellent. The *Families Moving Forward Train the Trainer* training is also useful. Also, review the training resources on the model websites. More training would be helpful on: motivational interviewing and how to ask personal questions, budgeting and helping families who do not have a vision for moving forward develop motivation.
- *Community Resources.* Get to know the resources available in your community. Ask for support from others on your team about how to navigate and access community resources such as getting legal guardianship as a grandparent, reporting domestic violence, and finding ways to get out of long-term debt when it has gone to collections.
- *Time Management.* Practice your organizational skills. Give yourself time to get familiar with the paperwork and have everything ready when you meet with parents. Enter data and information as soon as possible.

SUGGESTED CHANGES TO THE FAMILY ASSESSMENT

Almost all agency coordinators (11) and direct service staff (50) who responded, suggest changes to the family assessment as shown on the chart below.



Agency Coordinators. As shown in the chart above coordinators were mixed about how to make the assessment better and more user-friendly with about the same proportion of coordinators suggesting reducing the indicators as those suggesting regrouping them. Two suggested keeping it the same. One suggested requiring two rather than three family assessments per year.

Direct Service Staff. As shown above, twice as many direct service staff suggested regrouping indicators as suggested reducing them. In addition, some suggested simplifying the assessment (2) and changing the wording of some indicators (5). One person suggested adding open-ended questions, one suggested making the assessment consistent with the pillars of the *Bridge to Self-Sufficiency*. Three recommended doing two assessments per year instead of three.

Respondents who suggested reducing or adding indicators (23) were asked which should be added or deleted. One suggested separating credit score and family debt. One to five others suggested combining the following:

- a. Budgeting and financial management with employment and basic needs.
- b. Stability of home or shelter and basic household needs.
- c. Parent involvement and quality time.
- d. Developing parenting skills and knowledge of child development.
- e. Emotional well-being and managing parent stress.

One to five others suggested each of the following ideas about indicators that could be removed:

- a. Assisting adults to look at hopes and dreams for the future.
- b. Cultural respect.
- c. Income stability and credit scores.
- d. Legal issues.
- e. Delete or change answer options for conflict resolution.
- f. Community resource knowledge, basic household needs health lifestyle and quality time.

DREAMS FOR ELMS REPORTS

Agency Coordinators. Agency coordinators have a host of dreams for ELMS reports:

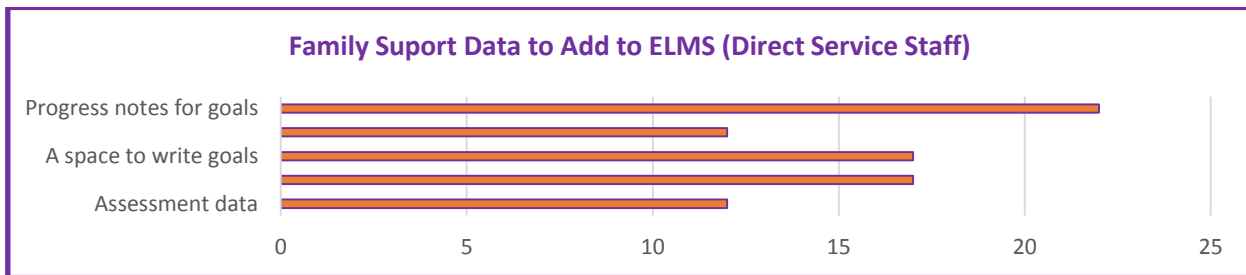
1. Data about progress toward goals (7) including “percent change over time” (1) and data about the support received from the family support worker (1).
2. A query function to allow search by family goal topic/area (2).
3. Goals sorted by category, including the *Bridge to Self-Sufficiency* pillars (2).
4. Simplified or locally-developed empowerment plans (2).
5. Ability to list family support caseload by site (1) and to include measures of parent-child relationship (1).
6. Individual family reports (1) and ability to include progress notes (1).

Direct Service Staff. Direct service staff suggested a wide array of ideas about improvements to ELMS.³ Six noted that it is working well the way it is. Four urged exploring ways to reduce data entry and duplication in multiple databases (4). One person suggested linking ELMS to Skyward so that child and family information could be accessed easily (1). Another requested: the ability to run and print the health status and child record summary and regular weekly reports without the need of a supervisor; an updated system that saves your work as you go; not doing system updates in the middle of the workday; and, easier ID #'s (1). In addition, the following new reports are requested:

- A place for data about progress toward goals (2) and a reminder when follow-up is due (1).
- A place for personal stories about families (2).
- Assessment fields that allow more open-ended descriptions of family status (1).
- Lists of students on each family support worker’s caseload by classroom (1).
- A health *Status by Child Report* that includes health screening reports and visit summaries (1) and a 90-day deadline listed for tracking purposes (1).
- Communication logs for family contacts (1).
- An updated system that saves your work as you go and does not do updates in the middle of the workday along with easier ID #'s (1).

ADDITIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT DATA TO INCORPORATE INTO ELMS

Direct Service Staff. Direct service staff were asked what family support data would be important to incorporate into ELMS (in addition to family income as children complete and exit ECEAP and parent/guardian progress on education and training, which is now being added). As shown below, half (22) of the 44 respondents to this question suggested a place to enter progress notes as an important addition to ELMS. Almost half (17 each) suggested adding space for goals and the ability to note multiple assessment times. Space for assessment data was suggested by almost as many (12). Two people commented that this would benefit from additional fieldwork. Two others suggested that having enough data in ELMS could reduce duplication among multiple databases. One suggested that ELMS include a place to note the level of family support needed.



Desire to Continue Using the FDM Database. Those using FDM were asked to rate their interest in continuing to use the FDM database on a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being high interest. The responses of six agency coordinators and 27 direct service staff are shown in the following table.

Interest in Continuing Use of the FDM Database					
Ranking	1 (Low)	2	3	4	5 (High)
Agency Coordinators	1	0	0	3	2
Direct Service Staff	2	7	8	5	5

³ Several also noted recommendations for the assessment and FDM database, which are included in relevant sections of the *Survey Summary*.