

Parents who did not receive a referral at the time of the screening were much less likely to access services. Only 8 percent of these parents enrolled their child into any new programs in the six months following the screening. These services included a range of psychiatric/psychological and recreational services. Parents often learned about these services from friends, relatives, and other service staff.

Barriers to service entry

Most parents who did not pursue referrals felt that services were not needed. Overall, six in ten parents (64%) who did not follow-up on the referral felt that their child did not need services to assist with emotional or behavioral issues. Of those parents who did not receive a referral, 76 percent felt that their child did not need services. Hmong parents (6%) were significantly less likely to feel their child needed services with emotional or behavioral issues compared to parents who completed English (27%) or Spanish (30%) forms.

A few parents did not enroll their child into services for a range of other reasons, such as a lack of time to pursue services, inconvenient service times, and a belief that they could take care of their child's issues without attending a program. Overall, however, most parents did not feel that these issues presented significant barriers. Other potential barriers to access were rarely reported, such as concerns about the cultural appropriateness of services, disliking the staff person who gave the referral, and not wanting other people to know their child was in a program.

Service completion and outcomes

Most parents (79%) who enrolled their child into a program (either with or without a referral) said that their child was still attending. Two of seven parents who said that their child was not still attending indicated that services had been successfully completed.

All of these parents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that the program had helped their child. When asked how the program had helped, most parents identified opportunities for their child to socialize with other children or improvements in emotions, behavior, and speech/language.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Most parents gave positive ratings of the screening process. Staff conducting screenings should continue their efforts to answer parents' questions about the instrument and their child's score. This may be especially important for Hispanic/Latino parents, who gave somewhat less positive ratings of this process.
- Since all children had elevated screening scores, it is possible that referrals would have been beneficial for some of the 58 percent of children who did not receive them. One-quarter of the parents who did not receive referrals were concerned about their child's emotional or social well-being. Staff are encouraged to increase their efforts to provide referrals, especially since families who received referrals were more likely to obtain services within six months than those who did not receive referrals.
- Only 3 percent of the interviewed Hmong parents received referrals. The screening partners should discuss this finding to determine whether it was due to concerns about the validity of the ASQ:SE for Hmong families, a lack of appropriate service options, or other concerns.
- Most parents who did not pursue services for their child felt that services were not needed. Some others felt that they could address their child's issues on their own. While these may be accurate assessments in some cases, staff should continue their efforts to explain the child's score, the potential presence of social or emotional issues, and the potential helpfulness of services to parents as appropriate.
- A wide range of potential barriers to service access were identified. While none emerged as significant concerns, the Foundations for Success partners are encouraged to continue to monitor these issues and consider strategies for enhancing service accessibility.

For more information

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February 2008