

or behavior problem, and a belief that they could take care of their child's issues without attending a program. These results should be viewed with caution, however, since only a few parents answered these questions.

Parents who did not receive a referral were less likely to access services. Only 13 percent of the parents who did not receive a referral enrolled their child into any new programs in the six months following the screening. These services included a range of psychiatric/psychological services. Parents learned about these services from other service staff, friends or relatives, and their insurance company.

Seventy-one percent of the families who did not receive a referral felt that their child did not need services to address emotional or behavioral issues. Other parents did not enroll their child into services for a wide range of reasons, such as the length of the waiting list, inconvenient service times, a lack of time to pursue services, a lack of understanding of services, a desire to address issues on their own, the amount of required paperwork, and the length or difficulty of the intake procedures. Caution is urged in interpreting these findings due to the low number of parents who answered these questions.

Service completion and outcomes

Most parents (94%) who enrolled their child into a program (either with or without a referral) said that their child was still attending. The one parent who said that their child was not still attending indicated that services had been successfully completed.

All of these parents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" said 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.
- Almost half of the parents (45%) did not receive referrals for services. Since all children had scores at or above the clinical cut-off, it is possible that referrals would have been beneficial for other families as well. Twenty-nine percent 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. The importance of providing referrals is supported by the finding that families who received referrals were more likely to obtain services within six months of the screening than those who did not receive referrals.
- Most parents who did not pursue services for their child felt that services were not needed. Staff should continue their efforts to explain the child's score and the potential presence of social or emotional issues to parents as appropriate.
- A wide range of potential barriers to service access were identified. However, because relatively few parents answered these questions, it is difficult to identify the most prevalent barriers. As additional surveys are completed, these issues will be examined further to identify strategies for enhancing access to service. Ensuring timely and easy access to service is especially important, given the fact that parents found services helpful for their children.

For more information

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