

Advancing the Family Support & Strengthening Field Project

Survey Results

Submitted to the National Family Support Network and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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Executive Summary

Across the country, Family Support and Strengthening Programs work with families in a multi-generational, family-centered approach to enhance parenting skills; foster the healthy development and well-being of children, youth, and families; prevent child abuse; increase school readiness; connect families to resources; develop parent and community leadership; engage males and fathers; support healthy marital and couples relationships; and promote family economic success. In a number of states, these programs are organized by statewide Networks operating with a collective impact framework¹ to ensure coordinated quality support for families. Networks are defined as a convening body for two or more Family Support or Family Strengthening Programs such as Family Resource Centers.²

In collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the *Advancing the Family Support and Strengthening Field Project* was implemented to increase understanding and raise awareness of these critical programs for families and the Networks that support them, as well as to inform strategic directions for the Family Support and Strengthening field moving forward.

As one component of the Project, a survey was administered to representatives from backbone organizations of statewide Networks. Survey respondents provided information regarding: Network structure, history, and composition, including funding sources and the types of member organizations that serve families; Network approaches to direct-service worker training and professional development to ensure quality practice; Network service delivery areas, in particular the areas in which Networks develop intentional strategies to improve family outcomes; and Network impact, including evaluation practices and areas in which Networks have demonstrated positive outcomes for families and communities.

Key findings from the 18 statewide Networks that participated in the survey are summarized below.

NETWORK STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

Statewide Family Support and Strengthening Networks vary substantially in history, structure, staffing, size and financing. Survey data reveal a diverse makeup of statewide Networks, with some recently formed and others with origins dating back to the 1980s. Networks vary notably across almost all metrics assessed in the survey; there is no one ‘typical’ Family Support Network. The information listed below provides key highlights of the diverse nature of Networks.

- One-half of surveyed Networks operate as independent nonprofits and the rest are part of a larger organization or operate with informal or grassroots structures.

¹ For more information on the collective impact framework, see <http://www.fsg.org/approach-areas/collective-impact>.

² Family Resource Centers are known by many different names across the country, including Family Centers, Family Success Centers, Family Support Centers, and Parent Child Centers. For clarity of presentation, in this report we use the term Family Resource Center. For more information on these centers, see the publication *Family Resource Centers: Vehicles for Change* at <http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org>.

- Network annual administrative budgets range from \$0 to over \$2.7 million, with some Networks relying on funding from a single source (most typically government) and others blending funding from a variety of sources; 61% of Networks pass funding through to member organizations.
- Some Networks report no full- or part-time staff dedicated to Network activities, with others reporting the equivalent of over 10 full-time staff dedicated to the work of the Network.
- In 61% of Networks, organizations apply to be members; 44% of Networks require member dues, which may be a flat fee or based on member organizations' operating budgets.
- Within Networks, the number of member organizations ranges from six to over 800, with a median of 27.
- Direct-service Network member organizations include centers or programs that are school-based, free-standing, or embedded in other organizations (e.g., health centers, home visitation agencies, Early Childhood Education, Head Start, larger human service nonprofits with Family Resource Centers as programs, etc.).
- A few Networks consist primarily of one type of direct-service member (i.e., school-based, free-standing, or embedded); most Networks, however, have diverse membership, with a mixture of different types of centers or programs serving families throughout the state.

Strong Networks tend to have formal structures with dedicated staff and resources to support Network-level efforts. Strengths identified by Networks include formal and locally responsive structures with dedicated funding and staff. Opportunities for networking, collaboration within and across family-serving sectors, the development of learning communities, and knowledge-sharing all contribute to strong Network functioning. In addition, several Networks highlighted the dedication and commitment of their member organizations and their staff.

The majority of Networks expressed financial concerns. Financial issues were the most frequently mentioned challenges of current Networks. Financial concerns include increased demand for services in a climate of stagnant or decreasing funding for programs and centers; state deficits; locating funding for the Family Support field; and insufficient resources to support Network-level coordination and administrative activities. Member organizations often volunteer their time to support Network-level efforts and Networks may struggle to keep members active and engaged in the context of limited resources.

NETWORK APPROACHES TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The characteristics and qualifications of direct-service family-support staff vary within and across Networks. Similar to variation in Network structure and composition, there is no 'typical' Family Support workforce. Networks indicated that worker qualifications are often locally defined and set by individual communities based on the needs and characteristics of the populations served. Furthermore, qualifications will vary within a Network based on position and role within the family center or program. That is, specific positions, grants, or programs may have required qualifications and trainings whereas other positions or programs may not.

The Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework guides Network activities. All but two Networks report using the Center for the Study of Social Policy’s Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework,³ an approach that is grounded in the research literature and is designed to reduce child abuse and neglect through strengthening families, parenting, and child-development knowledge. Some Networks report that adherence to the Strengthening Families Framework is a requisite to membership, requiring staff at member organizations be trained on the Protective Factors and/or the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support,⁴ which incorporate the Protective Factors Framework.

Networks play a critical role in the professional development of the Family Support workforce. Networks support the development of the workforce by requiring or promoting training across a wide array of areas to meet the complex needs of families and communities. Trainings may be based on member needs and priorities, and many Networks implement standards of quality. Most also promote training in parent education, resource and referral, child abuse/neglect, parent leadership, and community development. Networks foster training and professional development through conferences or regional meetings, or through financial support for staff to obtain certifications and credentials.

NETWORK SERVICE DELIVERY AREAS

Across Networks, the top four primary service areas provided by member organizations are parent education, parent leadership development, resource and referral, and child development services. Most member organizations offer parent education, such as parenting classes and parent support groups; parent leadership development, including trainings and facilitated leadership activities; resource and referral— linking families to community resources and services; and child development activities, including parent-child classes and child care. Many also offer peer-to-peer supports such as support groups and mentoring; child abuse/neglect treatment services, including family support, home-visiting programs; community development, including advocacy, housing, and employment; and service coordination, including family goal setting. Most member organizations tend to refer families to other partner organizations for domestic violence and substance abuse treatment services.

Networks support member organizations to provide high-quality services. Most Networks support member capacity through training, technical assistance, and building programmatic capacity via program implementation support, quality assurance, and promotion of best practices. Just over half of Networks provide funding support to their members, and just over half support their members’ own fund development efforts. About three-quarters of Networks provide and maintain a data tracking system, whereas about one-half provide member-level and Network-level data analysis and evaluation reports. Furthermore, all Networks provide coordination for their members by supporting member connections, cooperation, and collaboration.

³ For more information on Strengthening Families, see <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies>.

⁴ For more information on the Standards of Quality, see <http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org>.

NETWORK IMPACT ON FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Networks report a wide range of positive impacts on families and communities, including strengthened parenting and the factors that protect against child abuse and neglect; improved high school graduation rates for teen parents and reduced teen pregnancies; increased family access to health coverage and health care; increased economic self-sufficiency; increased access to resources; and improved skills of the staff who work directly with families. Overall, by examining both the impacts on individual families and on the staff working directly with those families, Networks prioritized improving service quality, strengthening parenting and increasing access to services.

In the coming year, Networks plan to focus on increasing training opportunities for center-level staff; expanding programs and services for families; increasing parent leadership opportunities; and increasing Network funding and organizational capacity.

CONCLUSIONS

The *Advancing the Family Support and Strengthening Field Project* sought to assess the landscape of statewide Networks in the areas of structure and composition, workforce development, service delivery, and impacts on communities and families. Results reveal a complex array of statewide Networks that vary with respect to origin, structure, size, capacity and membership. Despite variation, Networks are generally united in their approaches as almost all adhere to the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. In addition, Networks have already, or are moving towards, implementation of quality standards, with over one-half of Networks using the Standards of Quality that have been adopted by the National Family Support Network. Common standards and trainings can help create a unifying vision and set of core practices that explicitly articulate what it means to be a Family Strengthening and Support Center or Program. Networks also highlighted the importance of family-centered, locally driven centers or programs that are responsive to the communities that they serve.

Variation in Network strengths and challenges provides opportunities for Network-to-Network sharing of lessons learned. According to survey results, Networks may benefit from knowledge-sharing in the following areas: funding structures that promote stability of ongoing resources; methods of increasing member engagement in Network-level efforts; workforce training models; implementation and monitoring of quality standards; evaluation of Network-wide activities to identify impacts on families and communities; and creating and implementing policy agendas.

There is great opportunity for systematic study, both within and across Family Support and Strengthening Networks, to identify optimal Network structures, training and supports for the workforce, and service-delivery models that will lead to intended outcomes for children and families. Based on survey responses, it is clear that centers and programs provide critical supports and services to families across the nation. Individual Networks report a range of benefits to communities, including but not limited to improved parenting, economically stronger families, healthier families, and better outcomes for teen parents. Our hope is that the Strategic Recommendations informed by this report continue to ensure that families and communities have access to quality multi-service, multi-generational, family-centered supports that will ultimately improve the lives and well-being of children and families across the country.

Introduction

Across the country, Family Support and Strengthening Programs work with families in a multi-generational, family-centered approach to enhance parenting skills; foster the healthy development and well-being of children, youth, and families; prevent child abuse; increase school readiness; connect families to resources; develop parent and community leadership; engage males and fathers; support healthy marital and couples relationships; and promote family economic success. In a number of states, these programs are organized by statewide Networks operating with a collective impact framework to ensure coordinated quality support for families. Networks are defined as a convening body for two or more Family Support or Family Strengthening Programs such as Family Resource Centers.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided support to the National Family Support Network (NFSN) to conduct the *Advancing the Family Support and Strengthening Field Project*, which was designed to increase understanding and raise awareness of Family Support and Strengthening Programs and the Networks that support them as well as to inform strategic directions for the Family Support and Strengthening field moving forward. Project partners include the NFSN, a membership-based nonprofit organization comprised of statewide networks that focus on strengthening and supporting families; Family Resource Center Association (FRCA), a nonprofit organization supporting the family resource center network in Colorado; and OMNI Institute (OMNI), a nonprofit social science research and evaluation agency.

As part of the project, a survey was administered to statewide Networks that support local Family Support and Strengthening Organizations/Programs. The purpose of the survey was to gather data from backbone Network organizations to learn about the following areas:

- Network structure, history, and composition, including funding sources and the types of member organizations in the Network.
- Network approaches to direct-service worker training and professional development to ensure quality practice.
- Network service delivery areas, in particular the areas in which Networks develop intentional strategies to improve family outcomes.
- Network impact, including evaluation practices and areas in which Networks have seen positive outcomes for families and communities.

In addition to the survey, the project gathered information via network-provided documents, such as annual reports, evaluation reports, membership lists, membership criteria, etc.; follow-up interviews that served to clarify survey responses and deepen areas of understanding, particularly around workforce development; and site visits with selected Networks to learn more about Networks that are not currently members of NFSN.

The purpose of this data report is to share survey results that will inform strategic recommendations for the Family Support and Strengthening field. Supplemental documents to this report include Network Snapshots that provide an overview of each Network with information describing the Network and highlighting key accomplishments; a diagram of 'bright spots' across the country; and a series of

strategic recommendations. Together, this information will identify next steps for the Family Support and Strengthening field to advance its work to provide the critical supports and resources for families across the nation.

Survey Methods

SAMPLING

To identify statewide Family Support Networks, defined as a convening body for two or more Family Support or Family Strengthening Programs, such as Family Resource Centers, NFSN conducted outreach to the Administration on Children, Youth and Families; the Center for the Study of Social Policy; the National Alliance of Children’s Trust and Prevention Funds; and the Children’s Trust and Prevention Funds and Prevent Child Abuse chapters of each state. Through this process, NFSN identified 19 states with Family Support and Strengthening Networks. At the time of the project, NFSN was not aware of any other statewide Family Support and Strengthening Networks in existence. Of the 19 identified Networks, 11 were members of NFSN at the time of the project and eight were not.

Each of the 19 Networks has an identified entity that serves as the backbone support for the Network. The backbone entities are working within a collective impact framework to ensure coordinated quality support for families. Although backbone entities can take many forms and levels of involvement, all play some role in supporting member organizations to provide Family Support services. The project requested that each of the 19 Network backbone organizations complete the survey on behalf of its Network and member organizations that provide direct services to families. In total, 18 of the 19 Networks (95%) completed the survey.

SURVEY DESIGN

The survey included both closed- and open-ended questions in each of the four areas of interest: Network structure and composition; Network approaches to workforce development; Network service delivery areas; and Network impact. Items were developed through a collaborative process between NFSN, FRCA, and OMNI, and were vetted with members of the NFSN. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation survey team reviewed and approved the survey prior to dissemination. See the Appendix for a list of survey items.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey was built into Survey Monkey and administered online. In the month prior to its release, NFSN reached out to Networks via meetings and email messaging announcing the upcoming survey, its purpose, and its importance. On December 9, 2015, a link to the online survey was sent to each Network contact. Participating Networks provided their responses to the survey by December 31, 2015.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

Survey responses were downloaded from Survey Monkey and imported into a statistical software package for analysis. Researchers conducted descriptive statistics on quantitative items and a qualitative, thematic analysis of open-ended responses. Network-provided, supplemental documents were used to provide additional context to findings, as appropriate.

DATA CONSIDERATIONS

Overall, there was very little missing data on closed-ended survey items; however, the amount of information provided for open-ended survey items varied across Networks, with some respondents providing more detailed responses than others. Furthermore, not all Networks provided supplemental documents, and of those that did, the number and type of documents provided varied. Thus, findings based on qualitative data or document review may over-represent those Networks that provided more thorough responses or supplemental documentation than others. Nonetheless, responses are from 95% of known Networks, which increases confidence that the findings reflect the general landscape of current statewide Family Support and Strengthening Networks. Still, there may be other statewide Networks that have not yet been identified by the NFSN.

When reporting on quantitative data, sample sizes equal 18 unless otherwise noted.

Findings

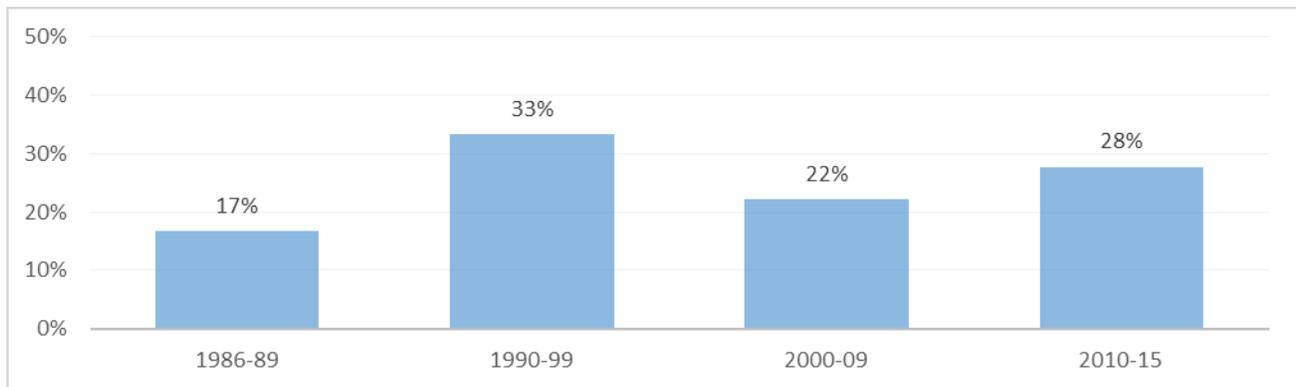
Findings are organized around the main areas of inquiry: Network structure and composition; Network approaches to workforce development; Network service delivery areas; and Network impact.

1. NETWORK STRUCTURE & COMPOSITION

Network History

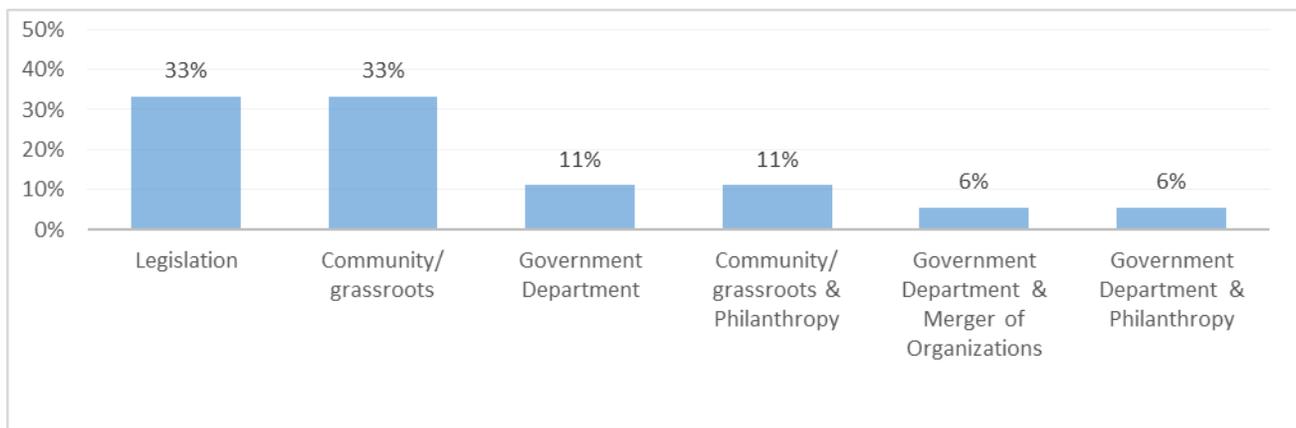
Networks were founded anywhere from about 30 years ago, in 1986, to just last year, 2015. Specifically, three Networks were founded in the 1980s, six in the 1990s, four between 2000 and 2009, and five in 2010 or later (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Percentage of Networks by Year Founded



Networks were asked to report on the impetus behind their creation. Five Networks wrote in responses that were recoded into categories. Figure 1.2 shows the percentage of Networks by creation type. About one-third was created through legislation (n=6) and another third from community and grassroots efforts (n=6). Community/grassroots efforts may have entailed Family Centers coming together to advocate for continued funding or interest among programs to band together for peer support and networking. Two Networks were created by government departments and the rest resulted from a combination of efforts as discerned from the written responses (e.g., one Network wrote its creation was a combination of interest among organizations serving families and a funder willing to provide support— this Network was coded as “creation by community/grassroots and philanthropy”).

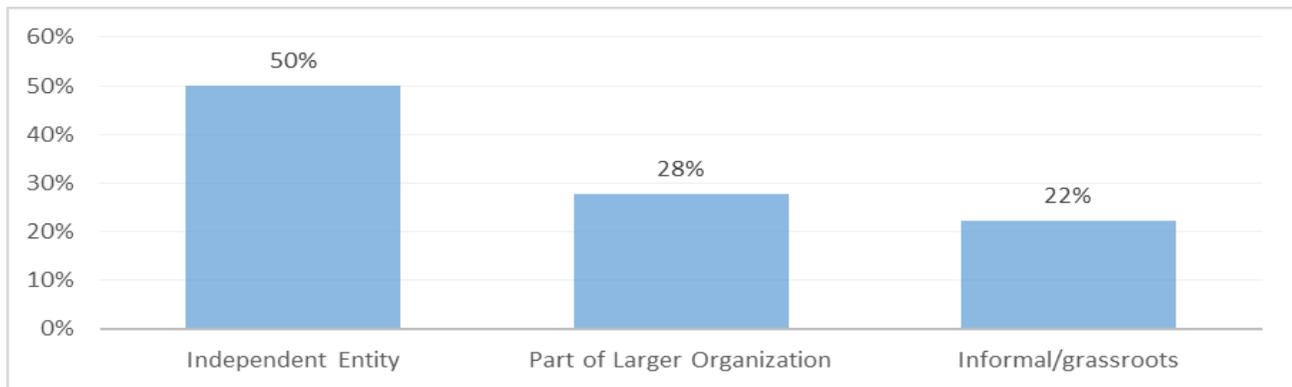
Figure 1.2: Percentage of Networks by Formation Type



Network Structure

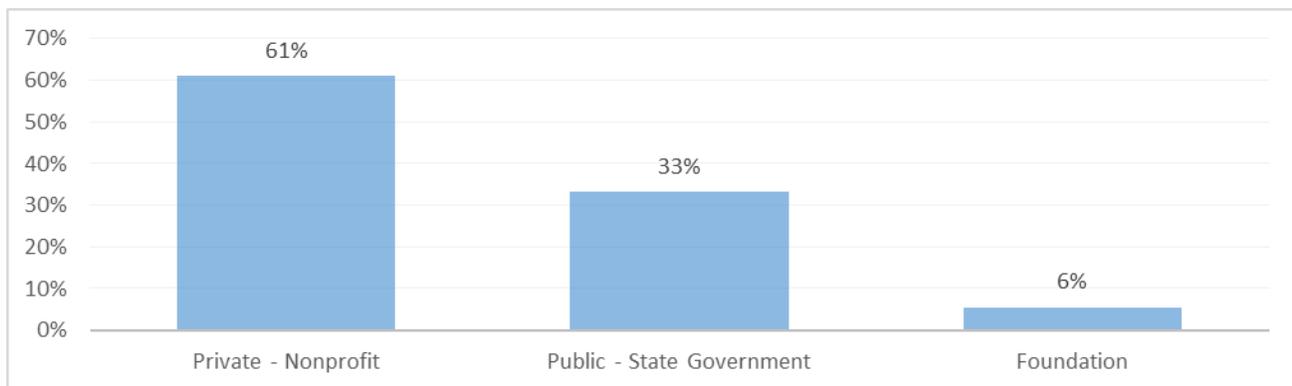
Networks indicated whether they operated as an independent entity, as a branch or department of a larger organization, or with an informal or grassroots structure. Nine Networks operate as independent entities, five as a branch or department of a larger organization, and four with an informal or grassroots structure (see Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3: Percentage of Networks by Structure Type



Networks also reported on the structure of the backbone organization. Most (n=11) were private, nonprofits; one-third (n=6) were public and part of state government; and one was a foundation (see Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4: Percentage of Networks by Backbone Organization

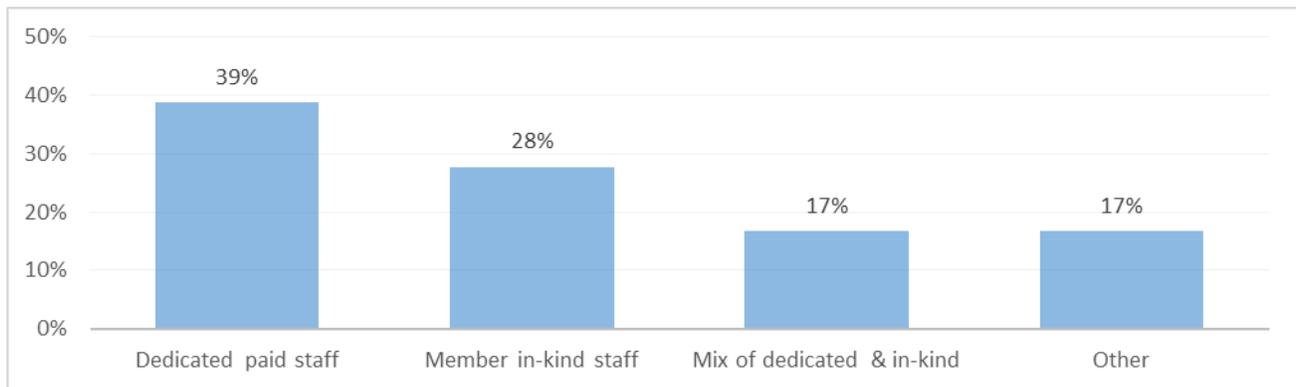


All Networks that operated as branches or parts of a larger organization had backbone organizations that were part of state government (n=5). All but one Network that operated as an independent entity had private, nonprofit backbone organizations (n=8). The other Network that operated as an independent entity had state government serve as the backbone organization. Of those with informal or grassroots structures, three had private, nonprofit backbone organizations and one had a foundation as the backbone organization.

Network Staffing

Networks described their staffing structures. Seven Networks reported that they had dedicated, paid staff of the backbone organization that are devoted to Network-level activities; five indicated that staff employed by member organizations contribute in-kind services to administer the Network; three reported a mixture of these; and three reported other staffing structures (see Figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5: Percentage of Networks by Staffing Structure

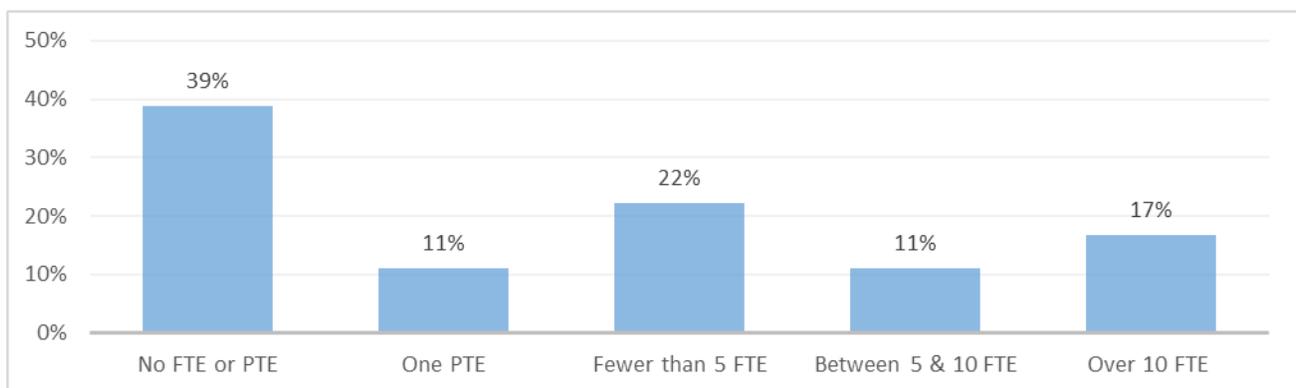


'Other' (n=3) Network staffing included the following responses.

- Foundation-funded consultant team provides 'staffing,' and there are volunteer contributions of time for leadership; the consultant team of 3 provides less than 1 FTE of support
- An agency staff person administers the program; 1 full-time Education Consultant performs shared duties among several programs.
- No paid staff— a lobbyist is hired.

Of Networks with at least some dedicated paid staff, the number of staff, including FTE and PTE, ranges from 1 to 18. Figure 1.6 provides information on the number of FTE and PTE staff dedicated to Network activities. As shown, many Networks did not have dedicated staff, and those who did had a wide variety with respect to the number of individuals devoted to Network activities.

Figure 1.6: Percentage of Networks by Number of FTE and PTE

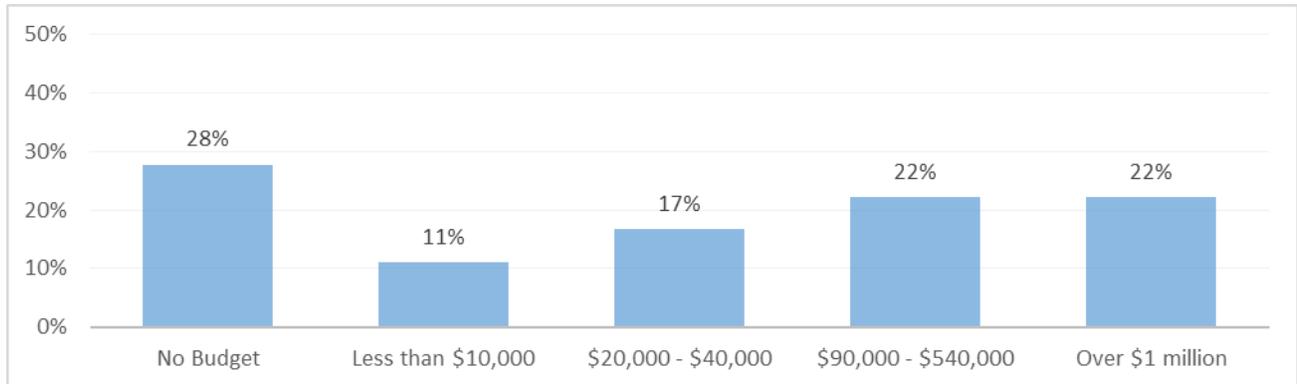


Network Financing

Networks also varied notably in the amount of financing dedicated to Network activities. Networks reported on their current fiscal-year annual administrative budget, excluding any pass-through funding to member organizations. Five Networks reported that they do not have a Network budget; of the 13 who reported annual administrative budgets, amounts ranged from \$3,100 to over 2.7 million, with a median budget of \$144,000. Figure 1.7 provides the percentage of Networks in different budget amount

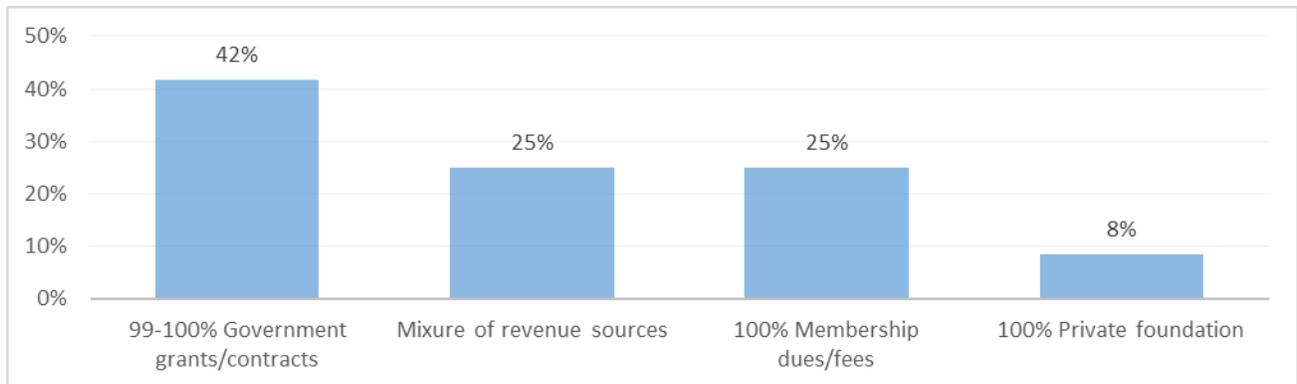
categories—note that Network budget ranges are not grouped according to equal intervals but according to how Network budgets were clustered in the data.

Figure 1.7: Percentage of Networks by Annual Budget



Twelve of the 13 Networks who reported network-level budgets also provided information on the proportion of the budget by source (i.e., government grants or contracts; private foundations; individual giving; earned income; and membership dues/fees). Sources of funding varied across Networks (see Figure 1.8). Of those with budgets, five relied on government grants and contracts, four reported a mixture of revenue sources, three relied on membership dues/fees; and one relied solely on a private foundation.

Figure 1.8: Percentage of Networks by Funding Source (n=12)



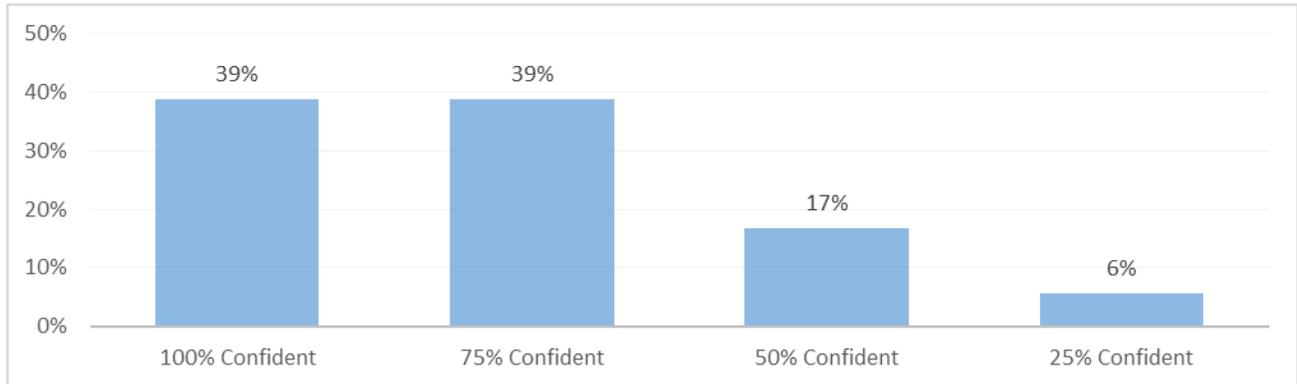
Eleven Networks (61.1%) indicated that they provide pass-through funding to member organizations. Networks could report on multiple areas for pass-through funds.

- 8 fund general operating
- 4 fund programs only
- 9 fund programs with administrative percentage
- 7 fund trainings
- 1 funds a Parent Advisory Committee (write-in response)

Networks reported on how confident they were in the Network’s financial sustainability over the next five years (see Figure 1.9). Financial sustainability was defined as the Network’s ability to maintain fiscal solvency and continue as the backbone organization for the Network. All but four networks were 75%

or 100% confident in the Network’s sustainability over the next five years. Of the three networks that were 50% confident, two relied on membership dues and one relied on a mix of income and dues. The Network that reported 25% confidence did not have an annual budget or formal structure. Despite overall confidence in financial sustainability over the next five years, Networks described several financial challenges that are described more fully in a subsequent section of this report.

Figure 1.9: Percentage of Networks by Level of Confidence in Fiscal Sustainability

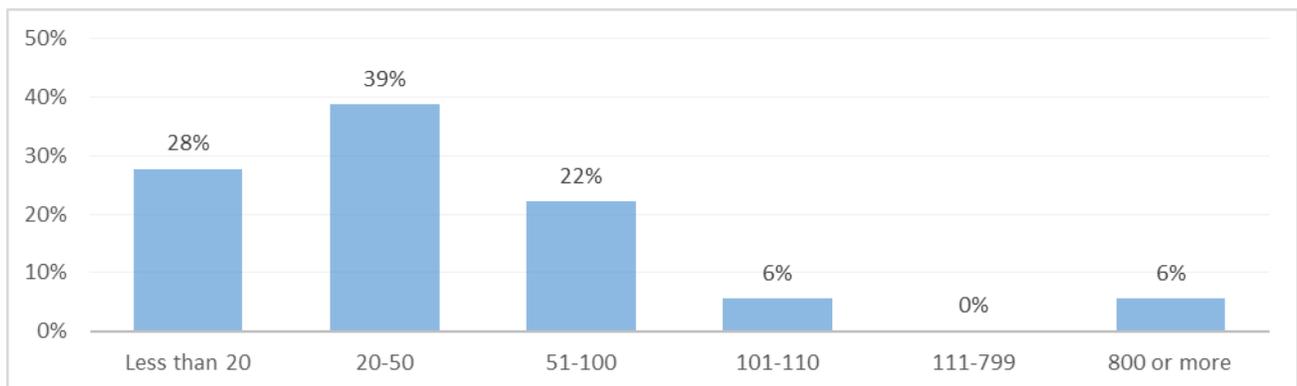


Network Membership

NETWORK SIZE AND MEMBER TYPE

Networks also varied with respect to number of members and type of member organizations. The smallest Network reported six members and the largest reported over 800. The median number of members was 27. Figure 1.10 displays the percentage of Networks by number of members. Five Networks had less than 20 members; seven had 20 to 50 members; five had between 51 and 110 members; and one had over 800 members.

Figure 1.10: Percentage of Networks by Number of Members

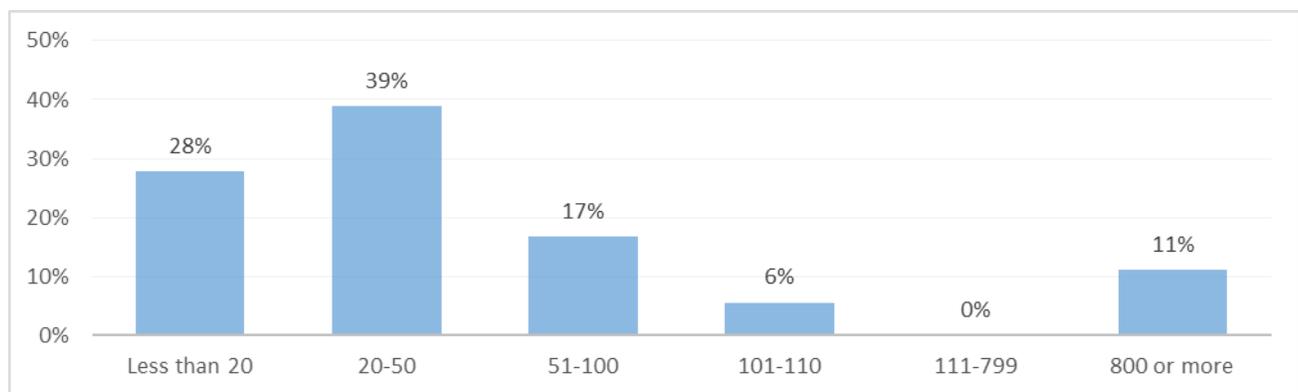


For 13 of the 18 Networks, all members are direct-service organizations. Four Networks include some members that do not provide services to families. For example, Networks may have funders as part of their membership and others may have individuals and/or affiliate members. Typically, the number of

non-direct-service members was only a small proportion of the total number of members. One Network reported a higher number of direct-service members than total members. This Network explained that some organizations that provide direct services are funded through the Network and others are funded through a state department. In addition, it is worth noting that California is a Network of Networks, with 30 Networks as members that represent approximately 1,000 organizations across the state. About 980 of the 1,000 organizations provide direct services to families, and the approximately 20 non-direct-service organizations are typically funders.

Because most Network members are direct-service providers, the number of direct-service organizations roughly mirrors the total number of members (see Figure 1.11). The number of direct-service organizations associated with Networks ranged from six to 980, with a median of 27.

Figure 1.11: Percentage of Networks by Number of Direct-Service Organizations



TYPE OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

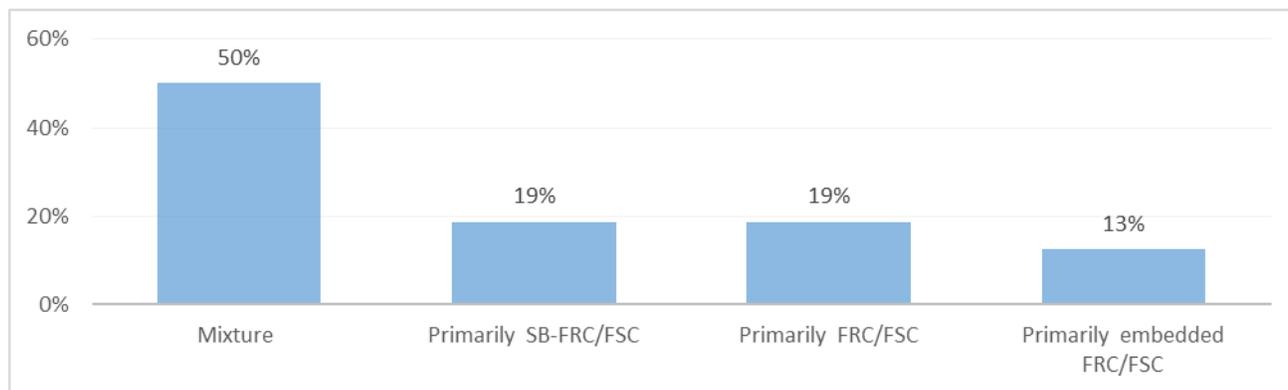
Sixteen states provided additional detail on the types of members in their Networks – in particular, states reported on the number of members by the following member types:

- School-based Family Resource or Support Centers
- Free-standing 501(c)(3) Family Resource or Support Centers
- FRC/FSC embedded in another organization— other than a school
- Non-FRC community based organizations
- Public departments/government agencies
- Private funders/foundations
- Other member type

Figure 1.12 displays the percent of Networks by the type of members. Of the 16 Networks providing data, one-half reported a mixture of member types. For example, one Network reported a 60/40 split between free-standing and embedded centers; another reported that about one-quarter were school-based, two-thirds were embedded, and 13% were free standing; and yet another reported roughly 40% each free-standing and embedded, with the remainder either joint FRC/Child Care Resource & Referral agencies or Child Care Resources and Referral agencies that provide Family Support programming.

The other half of Networks reported mostly either school-based, free-standing, or embedded centers as members (i.e., 79% to 100% of members were in one of the categories). Specifically, three Networks consisted primarily of school-based centers; three consisted primarily of free-standing centers; and two consisted primarily of embedded Family Resource or Family Support Centers.

Figure 1.12: Percentage of Networks by Type of Members (n=16)



Networks with embedded centers or programs were asked to describe the types of organizations into which they were embedded. Below, in no particular order, we list the types of organizations that were mentioned:

- Health care providers (e.g., Children’s hospital, health centers)
- Head Start
- Early Childhood Education
- Mental Health organizations
- Larger human service nonprofits with FRCs as programs
- Home visiting agencies
- After school programs (e.g., Boys and Girls Club)
- A Community Center Board (State-funded agency for individuals with disabilities)
- A prison

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Five Networks (28%) implement a tiered membership structure. Three of these have full or core members versus other types of members (e.g., associate/provisional/individual/affiliate) and the proportion of non-full/core membership is relatively small. One reported that it tailors its membership dues structure based on member organizations’ operating budgets, and another indicated a tiered structure based on Early Head Start Model Family Support Centers.

Organizations apply to be members in 11 (61%) Networks. Criteria for membership tends to include:

- Adherence to family support or guiding principles, standards, or alignment with Network mission (e.g., evidence that they meet legislative standards; agree to embrace family support principles and implement quality standards)
- Application through an RFP process

- A school that has 20% or more of its student body eligible for free or reduced lunch (1 Network)

Two additional Networks report that members do not formally apply, but criteria is established through authorized grant funding or through the State's Children's Trust.

Eight (44.4%) Networks require member dues. Two determine fees based on member organizations' annual operating budgets (ranging from about \$25 for an individual member to about \$1000 annually for organizations with larger budgets); five have flat rates that range from about \$20 to \$2000, and one reports using a percentage of pass-through dollars with a minimum of \$2000.

Network Structure Strengths and Challenges

Networks were asked to provide up to two strengths and up to two challenges about their current Network structures. Networks varied in the level and detail of qualitative responses to these questions, with some Networks providing only a word or brief phrase as a response. Below, we summarize survey responses by area. Please note that responses from Networks providing greater detail or number of responses may be over-represented.

STRENGTHS

Networks reported strengths with their current structures in several areas: formal, but flexible, organizational structures that include strong leadership; training and professional development; member collaboration; member engagement; flexibility and responsiveness to local needs; shared data system and measurement; financial systems; level of community involvement; Network-wide quality standards; and collective advocacy.

Organization, Structure and Leadership

Some Networks described the formal nature of their organizational structures as a strength. Formal structures mentioned include a governmental entity or department serving as the backbone organization of the Network; specific by-laws incorporated by the state; or a designated professional organization supporting and advocating for the Network. For example, according to one Network, "well-written and flexible" by-laws are a strength.

The collaborative nature of the structure also was mentioned repeatedly as a strength. These Networks indicated the importance of having accessible, inclusive, and diverse membership and allowing members to share one-on-one with each other. One Network indicated that it works well to have regional or local directors that come together during regularly scheduled conferences to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Another Network stated that having a committee structure encouraged collaboration.

Having strong leadership and staff members also was mentioned by some Networks as strengths. Active and involved leaders, as well as boards of directors being knowledgeable and skilled, were mentioned as components of a strong Network.

“The staff of the Network ... is able to provide in-depth technical assistance and professional development opportunities, as well as support connections, networking and peer sharing among members.”
– *Wisconsin Network*

Training

Many Networks indicated that their ability to provide high-quality trainings on relevant topics to their members was a strength. These trainings increase staff members' skills and help build and strengthen the workforce. Training on quality standards was specifically mentioned as was Network staff expertise to provide technical assistance.

Knowledge Sharing and Cross-Sector Collaboration

The ability to share knowledge and network with other members and organizations and the creation of strong learning communities were mentioned as strengths of several states. In addition, Networks mentioned collaborative efforts across different sectors providing services to families. Specifically, one Network described bringing Family Resource Centers together with Child Care Resource and Referral agencies as a strength. Other Networks specifically noted the level of inclusivity of their structures, allowing participation of multiple types of partners who are invested in helping families succeed.

“Network structure allows for members to provide peer-to-peer support through a variety of channels (bring, brag and borrow; peer-review activities; networking meetings) as well as input into network activities.” – *Massachusetts Network*

Member Engagement, Commitment and Passion

Several Networks described the depth of dedication and passion for families that members and staff have. Specifically, one Network mentioned the high level of buy-in from their members as a key strength, whereas another mentioned the commitment of staff at member organizations.

“Committed and passionate staff of member organizations and leadership of the Alliance.” – *Arizona Network*

Responsiveness to Local and Regional Community Needs and High Levels of Community Support

Networks reported that when member organizations are locally developed, and when the Network is responsive to individual center or community needs, it leads to support and commitment from the community. Recognizing that each community's population is unique, Networks need flexible structures to allow members to meet and serve those needs. The grassroots nature of some Network structures was seen as a positive in their ability to include and involve the community.

“Individual member agencies are products of their local communities and have strong community support.” – *Alabama Network*

Financial Systems

Two Networks mentioned securing state funding as a strength. One state also mentioned its low administrative and overhead costs.

“Network worked to get the ‘community-based family support center’ line item back in the State Budget.” – *Pennsylvania Network*

Data System and Measurement

One Network reported having a shared data management system and common assessment tool across its member organizations. The use of common measures and tracking allows the Network to examine family outcomes across the state to determine and be able to report to stakeholders on Network-wide family progress.

“Use of common assessment tool and database to track family-level outcomes” – *Colorado Network*

Advocacy

The Vermont Network mentioned ‘collective advocacy’ as a strength, and the Kentucky Network highlighted the benefits of having a separate professional organization of stakeholders and coordinators to provide legislative advocacy.

Quality Standards

The California Network wrote ‘Standards Promotion’ as a strength of its Network. As will be described in more detail below, ensuring common standards of practice and service is a key component of many Networks.

CHALLENGES

In addition to strengths, Networks were asked to describe up to two challenges about how the Network is currently structured. Responses were grouped into financial challenges; organizational and leadership challenges; difficulty with member engagement; overall capacity challenges; and measurement and evaluation.

Financial Challenges

Financial concerns were the most commonly mentioned challenges Networks reported. The impact of the larger economy on the financial resources of Networks was mentioned specifically. In particular, Networks are encountering a higher demand for services from Network members in the context of stagnant or even decreasing financial support. For example, one Network shared that the state-level governmental budget deficit has affected the amount of funding received.

Networks also reported challenges related to funding sources. Those funded solely, or at least predominantly, by a single funding source expressed concern. Other Networks described the difficulty in locating funding specifically for the Family Support field.

“[Lack of] funding specific to family support at the state network level, and limited funding to Family Resource Centers at the local level.” – *Wisconsin Network*

One Network discussed the challenges of a legislated funding structure that was designed to decrease the level of funding over the course of several years, while continuing to deliver high-quality service provision at reduced funding amounts.

Other Networks discussed the challenges involved in funding the administrative capacity of the Network. Offering competitive salaries for administrative staff, or even having a budget reserved for administrative Network staff, were cited as challenges.

“No administrative budget for a ‘network’ to operate.” – *Connecticut Network*

Not having the financial capacity for staff made it difficult for Networks to coordinate activities, as noted by two Networks that mentioned needing to rely on member organizations for this level of statewide coordination.

Organizational and Leadership Capacity Challenges

Members often have limited time to contribute towards Network-level activities, which are typically ‘in addition to’ member-level duties. Connecting this challenge to that of having limited Network financial capacity for coordination and administrative tasks, relying on members to complete these activities is challenging and requires asking the staff of member organizations to volunteer their time.

“Common challenges of these types of initiatives are that members have limited ability to engage in work that is aligned with the missions of the Alliance and their organizations but ‘in addition’ to the organizational work. Members are ‘volunteering’ their time to the [Network].” – *Arizona Network*

Other Network structure and capacity challenges mentioned include 1) having an informal organizational system; 2) balancing the needs of members in different fields such as early childhood education and Family Support; and 3) various levels of capacity existing within member organizations. Also mentioned by one state, Network-level leadership transitions and leadership development are challenges.

Member Engagement

Some Networks discussed the challenges of getting members engaged in Network-wide efforts, and keeping them engaged, in the context of limited financial resources. One Network mentioned difficulty in energizing its membership to engage in activities and undertake initiatives, outside of a handful of strong leaders. Some Networks pointed to their large geographic spread of members as a challenge in keeping those in remote locations involved and active in Network-level activities. One Network reported a challenge in managing its quickly increasing membership.

Measurement and Evaluation

Three Networks mentioned challenges related to measurement and evaluation: Quality assurance, performance management, and consistent outcome measurement to increase depth-of-evaluation activities.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Characteristics

On the survey, Networks were asked whether they set minimum education-level requirements for direct-service staff working with families at member organizations. Most Networks indicated that they do not require a minimum level of education. Of the six Networks that reported requirements, the range of minimum educational requirements varied: two require high school diploma or equivalent; two require a Bachelor's degree; one requires some college; and one requires a Master's degree for site managers (usually principals).

Networks provided quite a few qualification statements in this area. Several Networks indicated that educational minimums might vary by individual program or funding stream. One Network indicated that most positions require the minimum educational level of a Bachelor's degree, but there are a few paraprofessionals with less than a college degree that help school personnel locate basic resources for students and families. Some Networks noted that they often seek parents from the community to serve as volunteers or staff members, and parents may not always have the educational attainment of other staff. Another Network indicated different educational requirements for different positions (e.g., Center Managers and Family Resource Specialist IIs are required to have at least a Bachelor's degree, whereas Family Resource Specialist Is are required to have at least high school degree or equivalent, but an Associate's or Bachelor's is preferred). Similarly, another Network shared that whereas the site manager must have earned at least a Master's degree, and site coordinators must have at least a Bachelor's degree, Parents as Teachers® (PAT) parent educators must have completed the PAT training only and/or meet school educational requirements, which vary across schools.

On the survey, some Networks provided further description of the qualifications of the workforce. Several mentioned that qualifications are locally defined and set by communities based on local needs and considerations. One Network indicated that qualifications are set by local school districts, which allows for flexibility and locally informed decisions. Another indicated that parents and others with experience with Family Support are hired in the centers.

“Network members set the requirements and qualifications based on the needs of the community and should take into consideration cultural considerations given the community they serve.” –

Massachusetts Network

Some Networks indicated staff attendance at trainings or obtaining certifications are part of the qualifications, which were sometimes noted as ‘unofficially’ expected. For example, depending on the

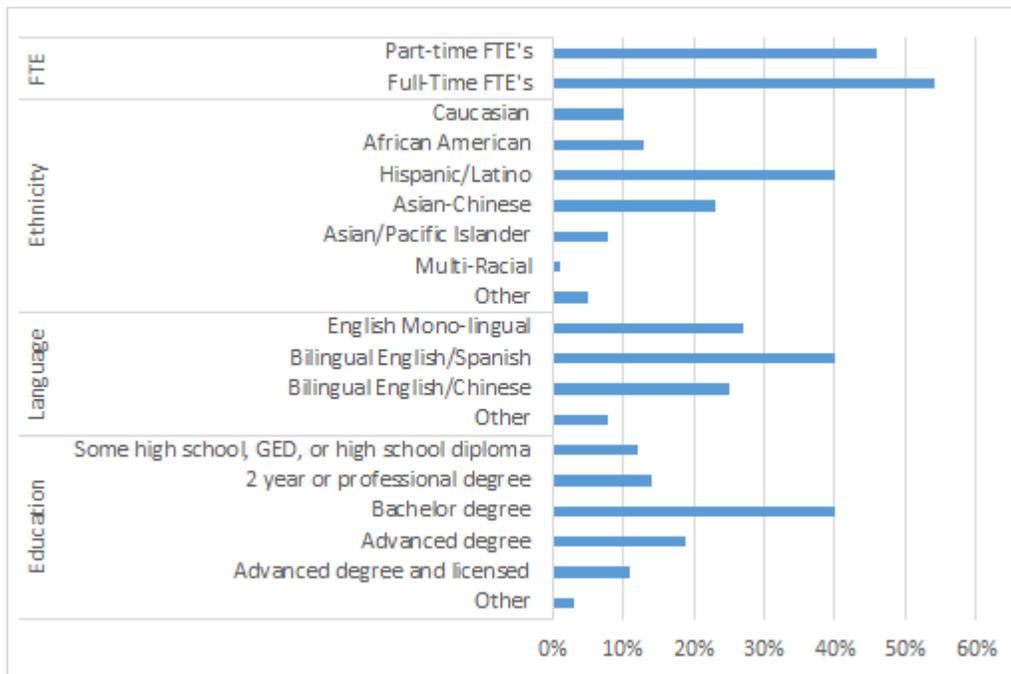
type of worker, one Network mentioned that staff working with parents or children should obtain the appropriate certification (e.g., Family Development Credential (FDC) or Child Development Associate (CDA)). Several also mentioned training on specific models or quality standards as part of staff qualifications.

Because the Family Support workforce varies across centers within Networks, and some Networks gather this information whereas others do not, Networks were asked whether they could share more specific information on the Family Support workforce via interviews, follow-up questions, or supporting documents.

Supplemental information on workforce characteristics was reported by one-half of the Networks. These nine Networks reported using many different position titles for their direct service staff (e.g., Family Development Worker, Family Advocate, Family Resource Specialist, service coordinators, home visitors, outreach worker). A majority of the nine Networks report using bilingual staff, predominantly English/Spanish but locally other languages that reflect the population served (e.g., Hmong, Chinese, Filipino). Three Networks reported compensation information spanning a wide range of wages and compensation (e.g., between minimum wage and \$32/hour) depending on position and education. Several Networks provided retention rates for their staff (e.g., one Network with nearly 1,200 staff members reports “about 10% annual turnover”; another Network with 82 staff members reported that over half have been with the network over 3 years and nearly 25% have been there over 10 years).

Although a few Networks could provide member- or agency-level workforce characteristics, only one local Network, the Family Resource Center Initiative in San Francisco (FRCI-SF) possessed readily available detailed workforce characteristics. FRCI-SF data represent 147 Family Support staff employed by 25 Network members. As shown in Figure 2.1, a slight majority of staff (55%) worked full time; staff represented a variety of ethnic backgrounds, likely reflecting the communities they serve; and many staff were bilingual. In addition, the largest share of staff had a Bachelor’s degree (40%), but there was a wide range in staff levels of education.

Figure 2.1. Workforce Characteristics of FRCI-SF Family Support Staff



The FRCI-SF Network also surveyed the educational and experience levels of its 147 direct-service staff to increase its understanding of the workforce so that, moving forward, it can focus on a quality service framework and program outcomes in three primary Service Clusters. Currently, staff characteristics in those Service Clusters are as follows:

Service Cluster	% with Bachelor or Advanced Degree	% with at least 3 years of experience
Community Connection: Community Events, One-time Workshops, Parent Leadership	69-92%	72-77%
Parent/Caregiver Capacity: Parent/Peer Support Groups, Parent/Child Interactive Groups, Curriculum-based Parent Education	75-96%	75-85%
Coordinating Formal Support: Family Advocacy/Case Management, Differential Response, Enhanced Visitation	75-84%	62-78%

Network Approaches to Workforce Training and Professional Development

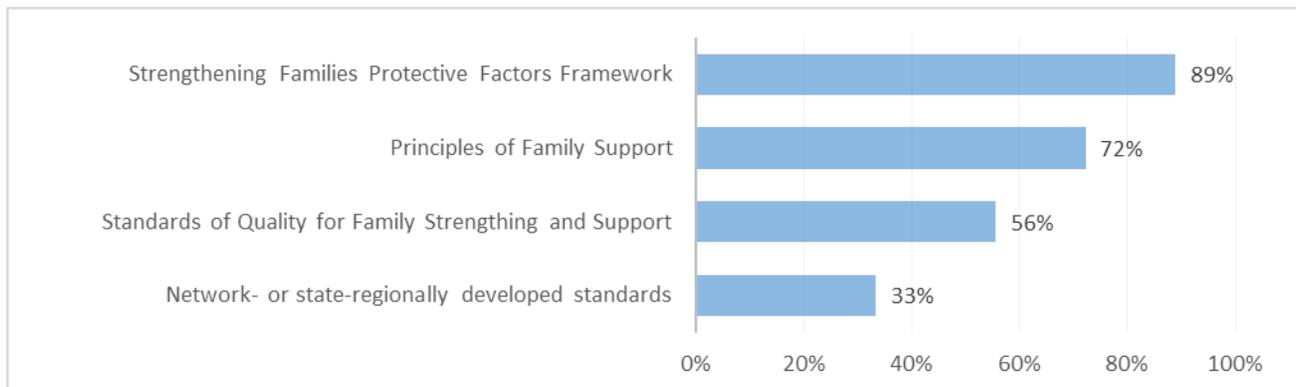
Several approaches are used to guide how Networks support the professional development of direct-service staff. Networks reported on whether or not they utilized each of the following approaches to support the workforce in providing high-quality services for families.

- **Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework**, developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (Protective Factors Framework). The approach is grounded in the research literature and designed to reduce child abuse and neglect by strengthening families, parenting, and child development; for more information, see <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies>.
- **Principles of Family Support** developed by Family Support America; for more information, see <http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org>.
- **Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support** originally developed by the California Network of Family Strengthening Networks and adopted by the National Family Support Network (Standards of Quality). The Standards can be used by multiple stakeholders for planning, providing, and assessing quality practice across different Family Strengthening and Support programs; for more information, see <http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org>.

In addition to asking about these specific approaches, Networks also were asked whether they followed their own locally developed quality standards.

All but two Networks reported utilizing the Protective Factors Framework; about three out of four were guided by the Principles of Family Support; just over half implemented the Standards of Quality; and about one-third used locally developed standards (see Figure 2.2). One Network reported that although it is not currently using the Standards of Quality, it has begun the process of convening stakeholders in discussions about how the Standards could be used.

Figure 2.2: Percentage of Networks Utilizing Family Support Approaches



Many Networks reported using multiple approaches. Specifically, just over half (10 of the 18) adhere to the Principles of Family Support, the Protective Factors Framework and the Standards of Quality, and two of those Networks also follow their own locally developed standards. All Networks that are guided by the Principles of Family Support also utilize the Protective Factors Framework, and all Networks that adopt the Standards of Quality are guided by the Principles of Family Support and Protective Factors Framework. It is worth noting that the Principles of Family Support and the Protective Factors Framework are embedded in the Standards of Quality. Only two Networks reported that they were not guided by any of the three approaches.

Networks also described how they used each approach. Several themes emerged from the qualitative responses and there was substantial overlap across each area. Thus, the themes presented below

include strategies and practices that were generally mentioned across approaches. Selected quotes illustrate the types of comments that define the theme.

- **Membership Requirement.** Some Networks indicated that adherence to an approach (or approaches) is a requirement for membership to the Network. *“All Members are contractually obligated to follow the Principles of Family Support. Members are assessed for their adherence to the principles on a regular basis by the Office of Family Support Services.”* - New Jersey Network
- **Foundational/Embedded in Culture.** Several Networks indicated that the approaches were foundational to the work that they do with families and guide everyday practice. *“It is embedded in our programming and daily operations at our...community based Family Resource Centers.”* - Florida Network
- **Training.** Several Networks mentioned training as how they utilize an approach. Some mentioned trainings for center directors, center coordinators, early educators, or other staff/stakeholders, and some mentioned a train-the-trainer approach. *“Every center coordinator has received training on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors at the regional level.”* - Kentucky Network
- **Use of Tools.** Some Networks mentioned that they use tools developed and promoted by the approaches. *“The Protective Factors Survey is embedded within the family well-being matrix that all members use to track progress toward family-driven goals that lead to economic self-sufficiency.”* - Colorado Network
- **Strategic Planning/Legislation.** A few Networks mentioned that the Protective Factors or Standards of Quality are integrated into logic models and/or used for strategic planning. Notably, the New Hampshire Network leveraged the Standards to call for legislation designating Family Resource Centers of Quality. The legislation was recently successfully passed and the designation, administered by the New Hampshire Wellness and Primary Prevention Council, includes requiring all centers who wish to be designated as a Family Resource Center of Quality, to utilize and self-assess according to the Standards of Quality and some operational standards that were developed in-state.

Survey respondents also were asked to describe any additional Family Support or other frameworks that guide the work of member organizations network-wide. Networks wrote in the following responses: Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies have to meet state purchasing standards; Parents as Teachers; locally-developed standards based on the Protective Factors; working to integrate a Parent Leadership framework; contractual requirements; Head Start Standards; and grant requirements and program guidelines.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING AREAS

Networks play a critical role in the professional development of the Family Support workforce. For example, Networks may bring Family Support workers together and offer trainings and professional development opportunities. Most Network trainings vary based on member needs and priorities and often focus on standards of quality. Three statewide Networks have developed Core Competencies for Family Support staff.

“A 3-day Core Training was developed for the direct-service workforce based on the Family Support Core Competencies.” – *Massachusetts Network*

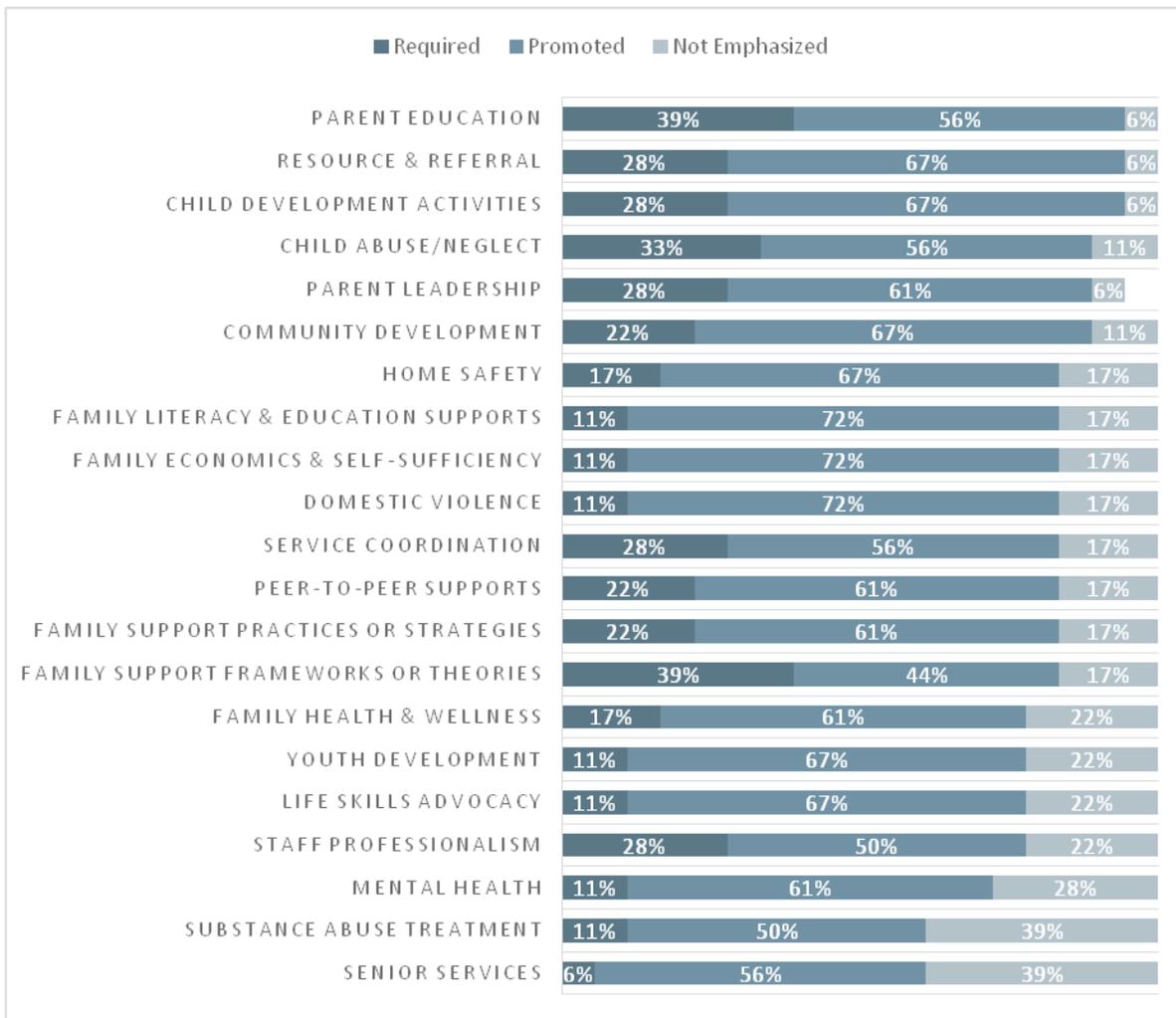
Trainings may occur at set times throughout the year (e.g., at conferences or regional meeting) or be provided ‘on a regular basis’. Networks may also provide resources to staff members working on various credentials (e.g., Family Development Credential, Parenting Educator Credentials).

To further understand the areas in which direct-service workers of member organizations receive training, the project team identified common areas of training and asked Networks to indicate whether training in each area is required, promoted, or not emphasized by the Network.

Figure 2.3 provides the percentage of Networks that require, promote, or do not emphasize training for each training area. When interpreting findings in Figure 2.3, it is important to note that not all Networks have the authority to require trainings. Some also noted that although the Network may not require trainings, specific programs within a Network may (e.g., Parents as Teachers has required trainings). Finally, others mentioned that trainings may vary depending on the type of member organization, available resources, and local needs assessments.

As shown in Figure 2.3, Networks overwhelmingly require or promote training for the Family Support workforce across a wide array of areas that meet the complex needs of families and communities. In particular, most Networks require or support training of the workforce on parent education, resource and referral, child abuse/neglect, parent leadership, and community development. Furthermore, training on Family Support frameworks or theories, such as the Protective Factors or the Standards of Quality, were required by seven Networks. Mental health, substance abuse treatment, and senior services were the least frequently mentioned training areas that were directly promoted by Networks. This may not be surprising considering that member organizations frequently refer families to other community organizations for these services (see Section 3 below).

Figure 2.3: Percentage of Networks Requiring or Promoting Trainings by Area



Note. One Network did not report on Parent Leadership trainings.

Networks also were asked to describe any additional trainings required or promoted by the Network. Networks mentioned training in two-generational approaches and collective impact. In addition, although embedded in the above categories, one Network wanted to call out the importance of social-emotional development and infant mental health as well as reflective supervision and consultation.

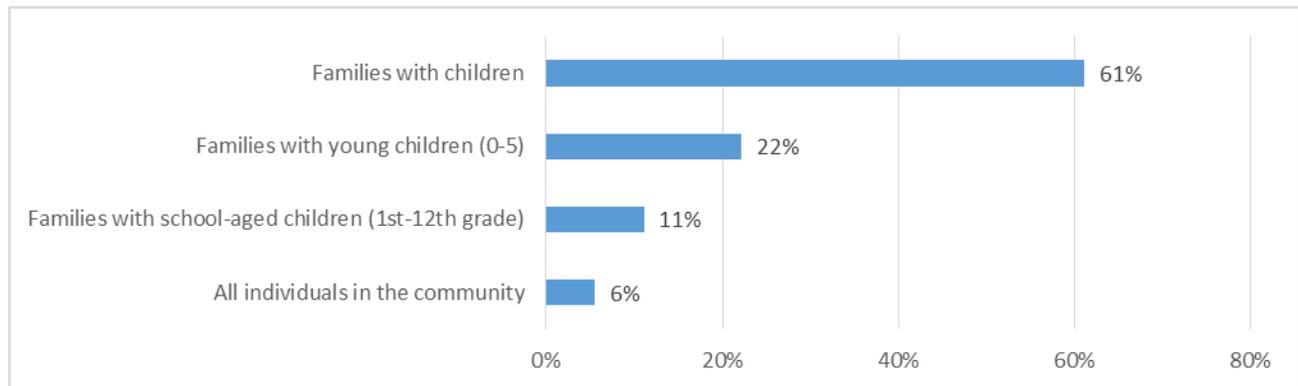
3. SERVICE DELIVERY AND APPROACH

Target Population

Networks were asked to indicate the primary population that Member organizations typically serve: all individuals in the community; families in the community with children; families with children from ages 0-5; or families with school-aged children in first through twelfth grade. As shown in Figure 3.1, most Networks reported that their Members typically serve families with children, followed by families with

young children. Two Networks reported typically serving families with school-aged children and one reported typically serving all individuals in the community.

Figure 3.1. Percentage of Networks by Target Population



Services and Programs

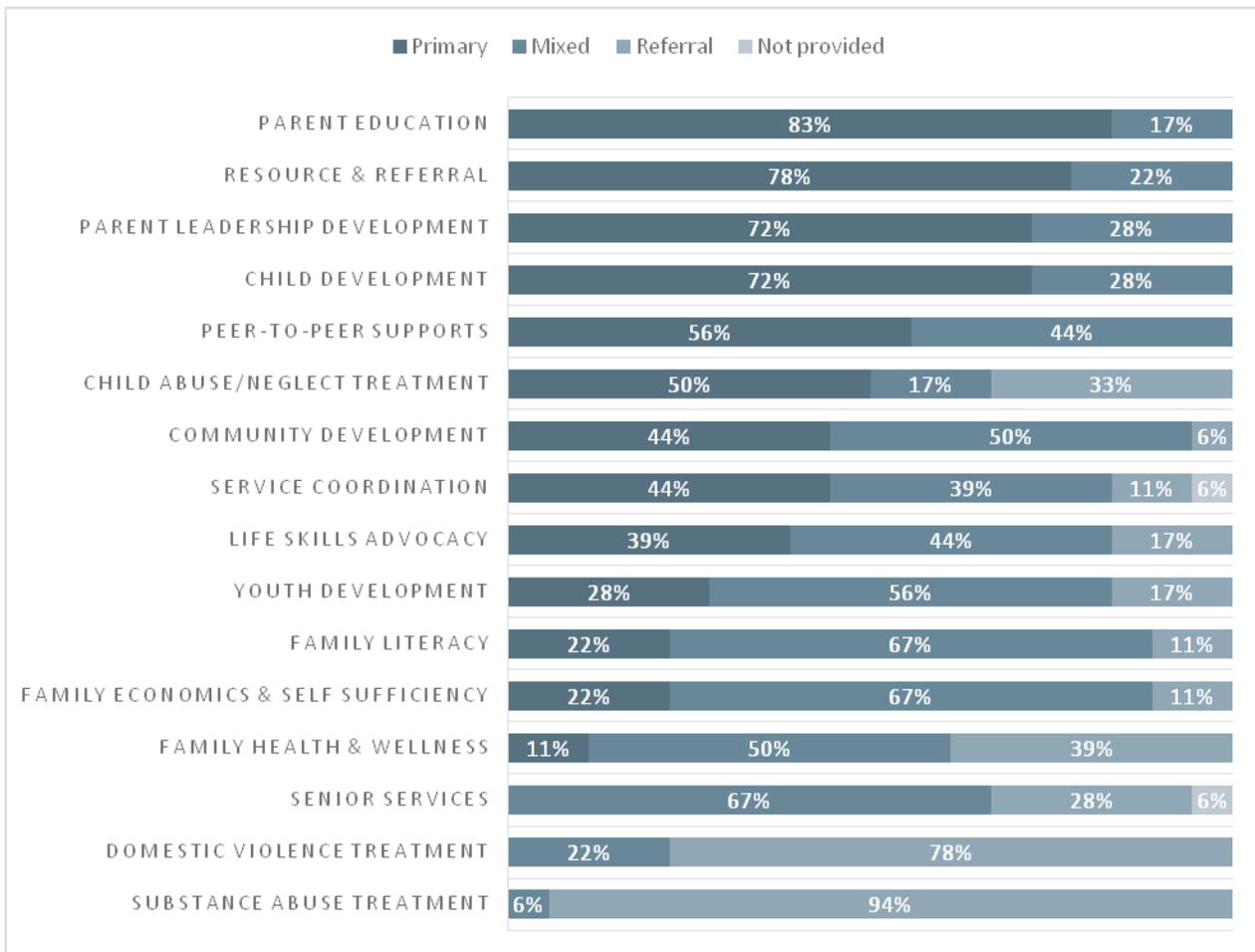
Member organizations that make up Family Support and Strengthening Networks offer a variety of programs and services to families in the community. The project team identified common service areas, including specific examples of programs/services in each area. Networks were asked to indicate which of the following options best described each service area:

- Primary Service Area: Most (80% or more) Members provide services to families in this area
- Referral Service Area: Most (80% or more) Members refer families to partner organizations to receive services in this area
- Mixed Service Area: Some Members provide services in this area and some refer to partner organizations
- Not provided: Members do not provide or refer for services in this area

For each service area, Figure 3.2 provides the percentage of Networks that reported it was primarily offered by member organizations, primarily offered through referral to another organization, a mixture of the two, or not offered.

As shown in Figure 3.2, parent education, such as parenting classes and parent support groups; resource and referral— linking families to community resources and services; parent leadership development, including parent leadership trainings and facilitated leadership activities; and child development activities, including child care or parent-child classes, were primary service areas offered by most member organizations. Thus, across Networks, most member organizations provided services and programs to support parents with parenting and leadership skills, and provided child care or parent-child classes. There was more variation across Networks in other service areas.

Figure 3.2. Percentage of Networks by Primary Service Area



Note: For clarity of presentation, 0% categories are not included in the figure.

Network Approach to Supporting Member Organizations to Deliver High-Quality Services

Networks indicated the ways in which they support member organizations to deliver high-quality services. Networks indicated whether or not they supported member organizations by engaging in the following areas: coordination, representation, funding, evaluation, and capacity building. Figures 3.3 – 3.7 display the percentage of Networks that engage in activities in each area.

In brief, all Networks serve as member connectors and most act as a coordinating body for the state. In addition, most Networks provide representation through advocacy and policy and legislation. Most also support member capacity through training and technical assistance and by building programmatic capacity via program implementation support, quality assurance, and promotion of best practices. Just over half of Networks provide funding support to their members and just over half support their members' fund development efforts. Finally, about three-quarters of Networks provide and maintain a data tracking system, whereas about half provide member-level and Network-level data analysis and evaluation reports.

Figure 3.3. Percentage of Networks Supporting Coordination

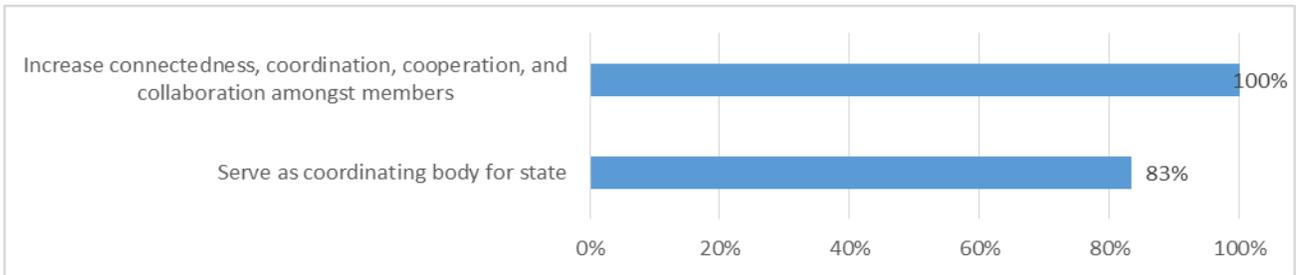


Figure 3.4. Percentage of Networks Supporting Representation

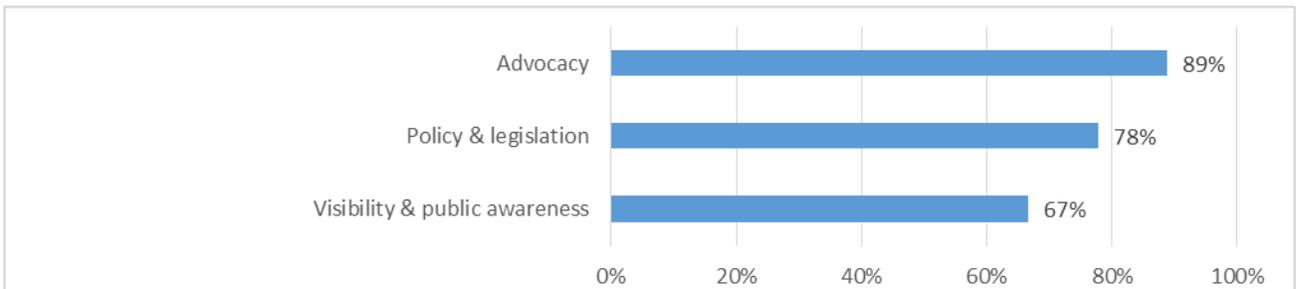


Figure 3.5. Percentage of Networks Supporting Funding

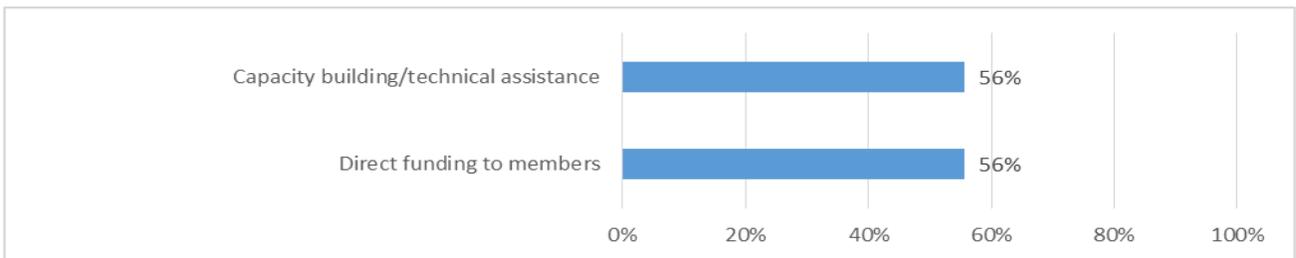


Figure 3.6. Percentage of Networks Supporting Evaluation

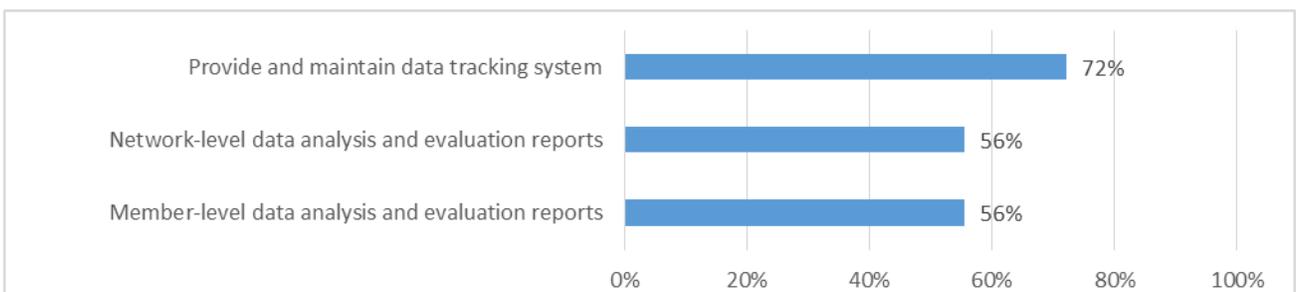
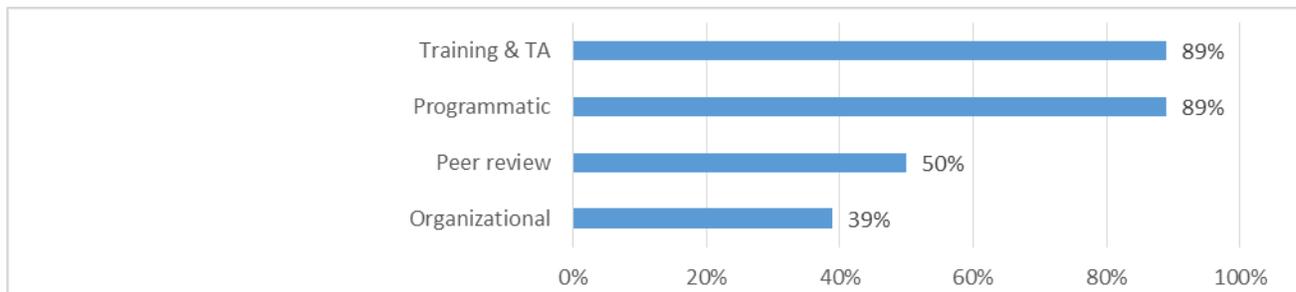


Figure 3.7 Percentage of Networks Supporting Capacity Building



4. NETWORK IMPACT ON FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Network Evaluations

Networks varied in their evaluation capacity and focus, and the tools that they use to assess impact on families and communities. On the survey, Networks were asked to report on an area of Network impact, and the data sources used to determine that impact. In addition, eight Networks provided evaluation reports that the research team reviewed to obtain a deeper understanding of evaluation methods and outcomes for those Networks conducting formal evaluations. Below, we discuss the varying levels of evaluations Networks demonstrated, followed by a summary of Network-reported areas of impact on families and communities.

EVALUATION CAPACITY & FOCUS

Some Networks devote resources to evaluation of Network-wide efforts, with a few contracting with outside firms to conduct evaluation studies, and one Network reported a partnership with a university to provide ongoing support. Notably, Alabama, in partnership with an external evaluator, conducted a social return on investment study of their Network of Family Resource Centers. In addition, some Networks, such as in Connecticut and Colorado, provide and maintain a shared data system.

Some Networks have yet to evaluate statewide impact, but have robust evaluations occurring within regions of the Network. The California Network, for example, relies on regional and local networks to inform their picture of Family Support service impact. In-depth regional evaluations in California have examined, for example, 1) the effects of the Birth & Beyond Program in Sacramento County on child welfare referrals and 2) the impact of FIRST 5 Santa Clara's Family Support programs on families with young children.

Furthermore, in Pennsylvania, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services undertook an evaluation of the twenty five family support centers that was completed in September 2015. The evaluation was designed to incorporate quantitative and qualitative data on a number of domains related to the work of the Centers, including school readiness, birth outcomes, referrals for other services, parent engagement and leadership. Given the role Family Support plays in DHS's child abuse prevention strategy, particular attention was focused on the question of whether the centers were able to prevent families from being involved in child welfare services. That portion of the evaluation was

conducted by the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall Center for Children. Results from this analysis showed that on average communities in the Pittsburgh region that had a Family Support Center had lower child welfare investigation rates than what would be expected given community characteristics.⁵ This finding is particularly promising for child abuse prevention.

Other Networks, in particular ones with more informal, grassroots infrastructures, have less robust evaluation systems. Several rely on the measurement of individual services that are cornerstones of their Networks' Family Resource Centers, such as Parents as Teachers or Head Start, to gather information on service delivery outputs and outcomes. Others limit evaluation to measuring outputs that are provided in annual or quarterly reports and typically include counts of participating families or amount of specific services delivered, such as number of parenting workshops given or home visits conducted.

Networks also vary in evaluation goals and the types of evaluation questions that they have explored. For example, some Networks were interested in learning more about implementation of a particular program or set of activities whereas others examined the impact of their initiatives on individuals directly providing services to families. Still others gather common outcome data from member organizations to examine Network-wide impact on families served by family centers.

MEASUREMENT

Networks also reported a variety of measurement tools used for evaluation efforts. Several Networks reported using tools developed by the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework to capture changes in positive parenting practices, which also is not surprising considering most Networks use the Protective Factors as a guiding framework. The Protective Factors Survey is a widely researched and nationally vetted tool that measures family strengths in key areas shown to reduce child abuse and neglect.

Many Networks reported using measurement tools specifically created for their members and/or for their services. Networks reported utilizing event or class evaluations, or parent satisfaction surveys, to measure the impact member services are having on families. For example, The Vermont Network created a "Learning and Employability Profile" tool to allow staff members to record parents' job readiness and monitor their progress over time. The West Virginia Network uses the West Virginia Family Survey to assess program impacts, whereas the Colorado Network administers the Colorado Family Support Assessment to capture information on family self-reliance, economic and family well-being, and readiness to change. Many Networks, including Maryland and regional California and Pennsylvania Networks, administer the Ages and Stage Questionnaire (ASQ) to assess whether a child's developmental milestones are on track.

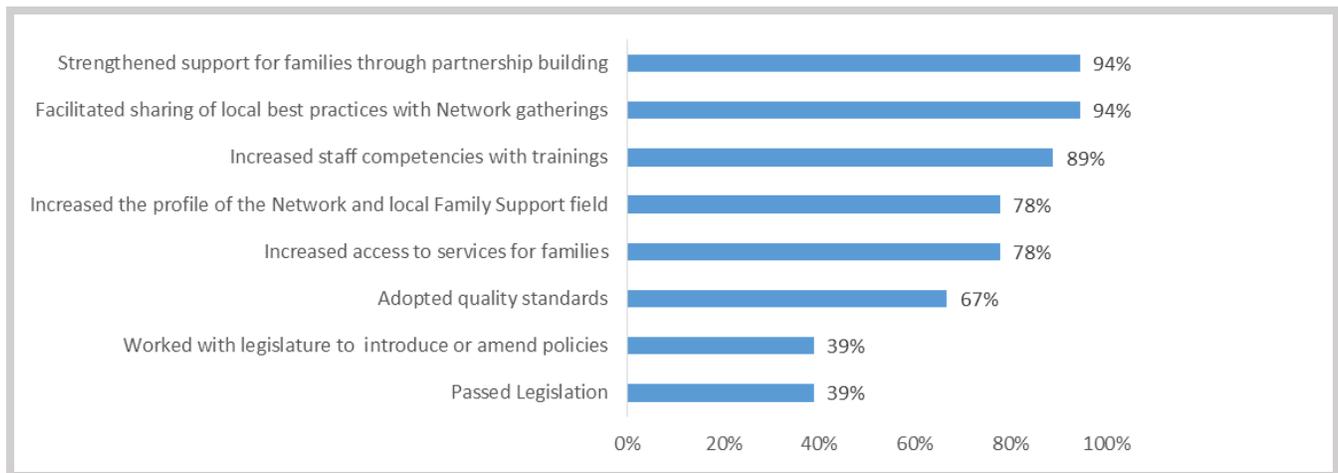
Networks also reported using training attendance, county-level data, and monthly/quarterly center-level reports for evaluation purposes.

⁵ The Pennsylvania Network provided this summary as the report has not yet been released.

Areas of Network Impact

Networks were asked to report whether or not they achieved a series of outcomes over the past five years. Figure 4.1 shows that most Networks reported system-level outcomes that include partnership building; sharing of best practices; and increasing Network profiles. In addition, most Networks further developed the workforce through staff trainings and adoption of quality standards. Most also reported increasing access to much-needed services for families. Finally, although fewer in numbers, some Networks were engaged in policy work, with seven working to pass legislation.

Figure 4.1. Percentage of Networks Achieving Specific Outcomes in the Past Five Years



Survey respondents also described an area in which the Network had made a measureable impact on families in the past five years. Researchers examined survey responses to this question as well as Network-provided evaluation reports, as available, to identify commonalities and unique areas of Network impact. Figure 4.2 provides a word graphic that highlights areas of impact that were mentioned by Networks, with larger font size corresponding to more frequent mentions by Networks. Please note that Networks may not have reported all of the areas in which they have achieved measureable outcomes and, therefore, this report does not reflect a comprehensive assessment of Network impacts; nonetheless, the graphic provides a visual of the areas that Networks are focusing efforts and in which they see themselves as ‘moving the needle’.

Figure 4.2. Highlighted Areas of Network Impact



Below, we provide information on several of the areas in which Networks reported making a measureable impact on families and communities. We include key quotes to illustrate the impact. Quotes with citations are from evaluation or annual reports; quotes without citations are from survey responses or follow-up communications with survey participants.

STRONGER PARENTING

The Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut and West Virginia Networks reported a focus and impact on parenting, including strengthening parenting skills and knowledge. Using the Strengthening Families Protective Factor Survey, some Networks report overall improvements in parenting aspects that protect against child abuse and neglect.

“Forty-two percent of caregivers who scored four or below in two or more protective factors when they began services improved their scores to pass that benchmark after the conclusion of services.”⁶ –
New York Network

Wisconsin, Massachusetts and other states have instituted Parent Cafés and other groups to build social connections while increasing parents’ education on child development and other topics, and ultimately fostering parent leadership. Parent Cafés offer parents a place to learn from each other while receiving and providing support to each other. Parent Cafés are unique in that they are based on the Protective Factors, and teach the framework directly to parents to actively incorporate into their parenting.

⁶ The 2014 New York State William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund Annual Report.

“Program participants consistently report improvement in parenting knowledge and skills which help to strengthen their families.” – *Massachusetts Network*

After launching Parent Cafés in 2015, the Wisconsin Network is continuing to learn from their centers and facilitators how to improve these sessions and will be evaluating the impact Parent Café participation has had on parents and their children in 2016. Since July 2015, 382 parents and caregivers attended sessions and 76 parents have been recruited as parent hosts.

Professional development

Survey respondents reported making a positive impact in their communities by offering opportunities to increase the professional knowledge and skills of Family Support workers and the broader workforce that serves children and families. By strengthening staff abilities to work and engage with families using a Family Support framework, Networks can promote positive family and community outcomes. In surveying member agencies, the Arizona Network found that 74% of respondents saw great benefit for their agencies' capacity to provide Family Support services due to trainings offered by the Network. Furthermore, as the Family Support workforce often comes from the communities in which they live, communities and families benefit from the professional development of community members.

In addition, the Wisconsin Network enhanced staff capacity and expertise by providing trainings and technical assistance in the early care and education sector. They reported 1,279 individuals participated in over 60 Strengthening Families Protective Factors trainings over the course of two years. Throughout 2015, the Wisconsin Network focused on improving parent interactions by offering early care and education program staff the *Family Engagement: Partnering with Families for Children's Success* training, which teaches staff members best practices on developing stronger relationships with families. Training participants reported an increase in content knowledge based on the training objectives.

“The overall score of the knowledge pertaining to each objective prior to the training was 2.8 out of 5 points and the overall score after the trainings was 4.3 out of 5 points. This shows a 52% increase of content knowledge based on the family engagement objectives from the training.” – *Wisconsin Network*

QUALITY STANDARDS

Many Networks emphasized creating and monitoring quality standards for Family Support services and training direct service staff on them. For example, the California Network established and adopted standards of quality in 2012 that combined the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework and the Principles of Family Support into one coherent application framework meant to inform and inspire Family Support programs towards excellence. The Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support include the five practice areas of family-centeredness, family strengthening, embracing diversity, community building, and evaluation. As a Network, California's efforts have

included offering extensive trainings in the standards as a whole, and also leveraging other trainings on components of the standards (e.g., the Protective Factors).

“Increasing awareness of what quality work with families looks like through promotion of and certification training on the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support. More than 1,500 people in California, in 79% of the 58 counties, have been certified on the Standards to date.” – *California Network*

The New Hampshire Network also reported an impact on families and the community through the adoption of quality standards in the state. New Hampshire worked on policy changes to ensure the quality of Family Support services.

The Network “advocated to expand the role of the state's Wellness and Primary Prevention Council (WPPC) by amending the legislation that created it so that the WPPC could become the body that designated Family Resource Centers of Quality.” – *New Hampshire Network*

In doing so, the Network established quality standards for the Family Support and Strengthening work being done in its state, both affirming the quality work being done throughout the state by Network members and making important strides towards ensuring strong Family Support and Strengthening services are available from Network members into the future.

NETWORK FOCUS ON TEEN PARENTING

The Tennessee and Vermont Networks both reported outcomes for a specific population— teen parents. While each Network made a measurable impact on teen parents, they had different focus areas.

In Tennessee, Family Resource Centers provide programs aimed at not only helping adolescent mothers and fathers navigate parenthood, but also continue with their education and graduate from high school. The Tennessee Network reported strong improvements with attendance and graduation rates for teens participating in their services.

“Teen parents who participated in the Memphis Carver FRC had a 98% graduation rate. The Henry County Teen Pregnancy program yielded 81% improvement in attendance and 71% improvement in grades. In Scott County, the students who participated in the FRC pregnant teen and teen mom program had 100% attendance and a 100% graduation rate for seniors.” – *Tennessee Network*

Vermont's Parent Child Center Network focuses on breaking the generational cycle of teen parenting. Offering services “...to empower young parents who have grown up in poverty to build the skills,

attitudes, and self-esteems they need to be good parents and succeed in careers- then we can create positive impacts that can widen, deepen, and keep growing through new generations.”

“Among 170 participating parents on whom we have follow-up data, only two became pregnant again while enrolled in a Learning Together program.”⁷ - *Vermont Network*

Similar to Tennessee, Vermont’s Learning Together programs also report improvements in participants’ academic outcomes, including improved graduation rates for teens without a high school diploma at the time of program entry.

INCREASED FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The Colorado Network reported an increase in families’ economic situations, with families served by Family Resource Centers moving closer to self-sufficiency. Using the Colorado Family Support Assessment to track family progress across multiple domains (e.g., financial, food, employment, housing, transportation), families across the state demonstrated statistically significant increases in economic self-reliance as well as on other domains that contribute to self-reliance.

“In addition to the strong gains in economic self-reliance, children’s education, employment, financial, health care access, legal, parenting skills, and transportation also showed significant changes from baseline to each follow-up time period assessed.”⁸ - *Colorado Network*

The Maryland Network also saw gains in family self-sufficiency, most notably around parent employment status. Almost twice as many parents (43%) were employed one year after participating in services from Maryland Family Resource Centers than at their initial enrollment in programs (27%).

COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Kentucky and Alabama have developed strong Networks across their respective states over the last two decades, and each describes broad impact across communities.

Originally established as part of education reform legislation, the Kentucky Network has integrated Family Resource Centers into the educational system as a student- and family-level support, reporting that its program “...*touches everything that happens in the school and community.*” Although the Network reports it has been challenging to isolate the impact of Kentucky’s Family Resource and Youth Services Centers on changes in their communities, the state has seen vast improvements in children’s educational success and attainment. Kentucky has moved from 45th place in 1990 to into the top 10 school systems in the country. A large survey conducted in 2014 with over 16,000 respondents showed

⁷ Healthy Families, Hopeful Futures. The 2012 Report of the Vermont Parent Child Network.

⁸ Colorado Family Resource Center Association, Family Development Report. OMNI Institute. August, 2015.

that over 93% of teachers surveyed value Family Support services and centers, and they indicated that these centers meet relevant needs that are not able to be met inside the classroom.

Alabama's Network of Family Resource Centers is located throughout the state and provides a range of services that meet its 25 standards of quality. Alabama contracted with an outside evaluator to examine services provided by Family Resource Centers and determine costs associated with both providing services and the long-term outcomes of those services. Researchers found a positive return on investment from investing in Family Support services and Family Resource Centers. Alabama's parenting programs saw the largest fiscal impact, with a return of almost \$29 million after initial program delivery costs just over \$2.1 million.

“For every \$1 invested in the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers during the year, the State of Alabama receives \$4.70 of immediate and long-term financial benefits.”⁹ – *Alabama Network*

IMPROVED ACCESS TO HEALTH COVERAGE AND CARE

The Colorado and Florida Networks reported increasing families' access to health care and coverage. In Colorado, an evaluation of families with baseline and follow-up assessments showed that 76% of families who did not have access to healthcare at baseline reported having access at follow-up.¹⁰ Florida also reported assisting families with health care access and increases in the number of children receiving developmental screenings according to local county-level data sources. Networks also reported that member organizations support families by assisting parents with applications for Medicaid or Medicare or offering health navigation to direct families to free or reduced-cost health resources, such as immunization clinics.

IMPROVED COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Linking families to resources is a cornerstone of Family Support services and is often included in quality standards.

Network members in Massachusetts “...have provided over 15,000 instances of information and referral and concrete support, annually - connecting families to much needed services and supports.” The New Jersey Network reported engaging the community to increase the reach and presence of its programs.

Areas of Network Focus in the Next Year

In addition to describing past successes, Networks listed new areas of focus for the coming year. Networks mentioned increasing training opportunities for center-level staff; growing programs and

⁹ The Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers, Social Return on Investment Analysis for the Year ended June 30, 2014. Community Services Analysis, LLC.

¹⁰ Colorado Family Resource Center Association, Family Development Report. OMNI Institute. August, 2015.

services for families; increasing parent leadership opportunities; and increasing Network funding and organizational capacity.

Two Networks will increase efforts to train the workforce in quality standards. One Network reported that although it had not yet decided on one area for training, it would focus on either coached visitation, motivational interviewing techniques, or the Protective Factors Framework. Another will increase training of staff on substance abuse issues and treatment and trauma informed care practices.

The Network will focus on “promoting Protective Factors in organizations to then impact families to reduce child abuse and neglect” – *Utah Network*

Specific programs and services mentioned by Networks as a future focus area include financial literacy; healthy relationships; engaging fathers; kindergarten readiness; college and career readiness; parent cafés centered on developing parent leadership; additional parent leadership initiatives; and increasing offerings of playing and learning curricula.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Networks were asked to provide any additional information about the Network, its member organizations, staff, or impact on families that they would like to share. Several Networks expressed willingness to share information, successes, or coordinate site visits. Networks also reported that they hope to continue to grow and advance their Networks, and mentioned that completing the survey was helpful in reflecting on areas in which Networks could be strengthened.

“The questions help me reflect on areas where we could strengthen the Network. Human Resource capacity is needed to implement new, expanded and enhanced supports and services to the Network” – *Vermont Network*

Several Networks further highlighted strong components of their Networks, whether it be in the area of providing quality Family Support services to the community; development of training centers or professional development opportunities for the Family Support workforce; the ability to overcome and survive changes and threats to the Network; or strong representation at all-member meetings or annual meetings with legislators.

“Family Centers are very advanced and embrace the concept of partnering with parents to guide their work, engage community members, and advocate for the work. We're interested in sharing the successes of our member organizations and also learning about the successes throughout the country.” – *Massachusetts Network*

Conclusions

The *Advancing the Family Support and Strengthening Field Project* sought to assess the landscape of statewide Family Support and Strengthening Networks in the areas of structure and composition, workforce development, service delivery, and impact on communities and families. Eighteen statewide Networks, defined as a convening body for two or more Family Support or Family Strengthening Programs such as Family Resource Centers, responded to the survey. Results reveal a complex array of statewide Networks, with substantial variation in Network structure, size, history, composition, and membership. Despite variation, Networks are generally united in their approaches as almost all adhere to the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. Furthermore, Networks frequently reported the importance of family-centered, locally driven centers or programs that are responsive to the communities that they serve. In addition, Networks have already, or are moving towards, implementation of quality standards, with over one-half of Networks using the Standards of Quality that have been adopted by the National Family Support Network. Common standards and trainings can help create a unifying vision and set of core practices that explicitly articulate what it means to be a Family Strengthening and Support Center or Program. Finally, although additional robust and rigorous studies are needed, existing evaluations find that Family Support programs lead to one or more of the following outcomes: a positive return on investment, increased parenting skills and knowledge, reduced subsequent teen pregnancies and improved educational outcomes, increased access to health care, and greater family self-sufficiency.

Findings presented in this data report suggest several areas of consideration for the Family Support and Strengthening field as it works to increase understanding, raise awareness, and further advance its work to provide families with access to multi-generational, family-centered services and supports. Below, we identify areas that were mentioned in the survey as challenges for some Networks but may be strengths of others, and areas where some Networks report high levels of success. These areas may serve as focal points to bring Networks together to share lessons learned and best practices that can be adapted to multiple Network contexts. Or, these areas may serve as the basis of further inquiry to develop research studies that will help tease out the complexities and further identify best practices moving forward.

- *Funding*- Several Networks report funding challenges, including insufficient budgets for member centers or for Network-level operations. Further, some Networks rely on a single funding source and some Networks do not have an administrative budget at all. Other Networks have managed to obtain diversity in funding sources or have established more stable funding structures.
- *Member engagement in Network-level efforts* – Related to funding and staffing, several Networks reported struggles to keep members actively engaged since they are often ‘volunteering’ time. Other Networks have highlighted the strength of member engagement and strong attendance at Network-wide events.
- *Training* – Several Networks reported strong training models or training centers that may benefit the field.

- *Quality Standards* – Similarly, several Networks have made strides in adopting standards to promote quality practices and consistency across member organizations.
- *Evaluation* – Networks vary on evaluation capacity and infrastructure. Many rely on reporting outputs of services provided or program-specific outcomes. Others have developed robust data systems to track activities and outcomes across members, and some have commissioned advanced evaluation studies.
- *Policy* – Some Networks have seen successes in creating and implementing policy agendas, with about 40% reporting that they advocated for legislation that passed during the past five years.

There is great opportunity for systematic study, both within and across Family Support and Strengthening Networks, to identify optimal Network structures, training and supports for the workforce, and service-delivery models that will lead to intended outcomes for children and families. Based on survey responses, it is clear that centers and programs provide critical supports and services to families across the nation. Our hope is that the Strategic Recommendations informed by this report continue to ensure that families and communities have access to quality multi-service, multi-generational, family-centered supports that will ultimately improve the lives and well-being of children and families across the country.

Appendix

National Network of Family Support and Strengthening Networks National Study of Member and Non-Member Networks Survey

December 2015

Survey Definitions:

- **Network** = the state-level **backbone organization** that coordinates/oversees member's efforts and/or provides organizational/program level support (e.g., funding, training, common data base, evaluation tools, data analysis, etc.) to local Family Support organizations/programs.
- **Members or Membership** = Local Family Support organizations who belong to the Network, and are providing direct family services
- **Direct-Service Family Support Staff** = Staff at Member organizations who are working directly with families to strengthen the parent-child relationship, increase the parent's ability to provide, care and support their family, and improve the community in supporting families.

Requested documents: If available, we would like to request from Networks electronic copies of the following documents:

- Most recent evaluation report
- Most recent annual report
- Organizational chart
- Membership lists
- Membership agreements/criteria/policies/application forms
- Training Calendar
- Network overview documents, including organizational mission and vision
- List of required/recommended trainings for direct-service family support staff

Introductory Questions:

- Network name
- State
- Date of survey
- Name of person completing survey
- Contact information for follow-up, if needed
- Email address

Section 1: Network Structure & Composition

Section 1.1: Network Structure & History: Please respond to the following questions about the history and structure of the Network.

Question	Response Type/Options
1. What year was the Network founded?	Numeric Field (YYYY)
2. What was the impetus in creating the Network?	Choose one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legislation ● Creation by government department ● Funding available ● Community/grass roots effort ● Merger of organizations ● Philanthropy ● Other: _____
3. Are you a Network of Networks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
4. If yes, how many local or regional networks are in the Network?	Numeric Field.
5. How many Member organizations are in your Network	Numeric Field.
6. What types of members are in your Network? Please provide the number of organizations by member type. Be sure the total adds to the total number of members identified in the above question.	Number by type of Member. ___ School-based Family Resource or Support Centers ___ Free-standing 501(c)(3) Family Resource or Support Centers ___ FRC/FSC-embedded within another organization – other than a school (specify) ___ Non-FRC community based organizations ___ Public departments/government agencies ___ Private funders/Foundations ___ Other: _____ ___ Other: _____
7. Please describe how the Network is structured.	Choose one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Network is an independent entity ● Network operates as branch or department of larger organization, including the government ● Network operates with an informal or grassroots structure ● Other: _____
8. Which of the following options best describes the backbone Network organization?	Choose one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public – State Government ● Public – Local Government ● Public – Education/School District ● Private – Nonprofit ● Foundation ● Other: _____
9. If the Network is considered part of a Public entity, please specify which public department or division to which the Network belongs.	Text field.

Question	Response Type/Options
10. Please select the option that best describes the staffing situation of the Network.	Choose one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated paid staff of the back-bone organization that are devoted to Network-level activities • Staff employed by Member organizations contribute in-kind services to administer the Network • Mixture of paid staff from Network and in-kind staffing from Member organizations • Other: _____
11. If there are paid staff at the Network level (i.e., back-bone organizational level), how many are there?	Numeric Field. # of FTE: _____ # of PTE: _____
12. Provide any further comments to explain how the Network is staffed.	Text field.

Section 1.2: Network financing: Please respond to the following questions about the Network’s finances.

Question	Response Type/Options
13. What is your Network’s current fiscal year annual administrative operating budget, excluding any pass-through funding to Members?	Numeric field.
14. Please indicate the proportion of Network funding (i.e., for the backbone organization) that comes from each of the following sources. Be sure the percentages total to 100%. If a source does not contribute, enter 0%.	Table of source by % <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government grants or contracts ___% • Private foundations ___% • Individual giving ___% • Earned income ___% • Membership Fees/Dues ___% • Other _____% (if other, specify) • Total <u>100%</u>
15. Does your network provide funding (including pass-through funding) to its Members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
16. If yes, in which areas does the Network provide funding to its Members?	Yes/no for each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General operating • Programs only • Programs with administrative percentage • Training • Other, please specify _____
17. How confident are you in the Network’s financial sustainability over the next five years? Financial sustainability refers to the Network’s ability to maintain fiscal solvency and continue as the backbone organization for the Network.	Choose one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% Confident • 75% Confident • 50% Confident • 25% Confident • 0% Confident

Section 1.3. Network Membership. For the following questions, consider **Member organizations that are providing direct services to families.** If you are a Network of Networks, be sure to respond about the direct-service organizations across your sub-networks.

Question	Response Type/Options
18. Is your Network open to Member organizations across the state?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
19. If No, please describe geographic boundaries of network (e.g., county-based).	Text field.
20. Do you have categories/tiers of membership?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
21. If yes, please describe the categories/tiers and how many Members are in each category/tier.	Text field.
22. How many direct-service Member organizations are currently in your Network?	Numeric field.
23. Do organizations apply to be members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
24. Does the Network have specific criteria for organizations to become Members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
25. If yes, please describe the criteria used by the Network.	Text field.
26. Are membership dues or fees paid by individual Member organizations to the Network?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
27. If yes, please describe the fee amounts & structure? For example, \$500 annually per Member.	Text field.

Section 1.4. Network structure strengths and challenges. For the following questions, please think about what works well and what is challenging with the way the Network is structured.

Question	Response Type/Options
28. Provide up to two strengths of the Network structure as it exists now?	Strength 1: Text field. Strength 2: Text field.
29. Provide at least one challenge of the Network structure as it exists now?	Challenge 1: Text field. Challenge 2: Text field.
30. Please provide any additional information that will help us understand your Network Structure and Composition.	Text field.

Section 2. Network Approach to Family-Support Worker Training and Professional Development

Section 2.1. Workforce Characteristics. Please respond to the following questions about the background, experiences, and qualifications of staff at Member organizations providing family-support services directly to families.

Question	Response Type/Options
31. Please indicate whether or not you collect, or could access from Member organizations by January 15, 2016, the following information on staff who are working directly with families. If you can access information for a subset of staff (e.g., parent educators) or a subset of Member organizations (e.g., one county), please indicate 'yes' for the area.	<p>Respondents will indicate yes or no on whether the information is collected or available. If the information is available, respondents will be asked whether they are willing to share the information by providing it in a report or via a follow-up interview.</p> <p>Information Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● # paid staff (FTE & PTE) ● Position/title ● Education level

Question	Response Type/Options
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional background ● Wages & compensation ● Languages spoken ● Years of experience ● Retention rates ● Other qualifications/experiences_____
32. Does the Network set minimum education level requirements for direct-service staff at Member organizations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No
33. If yes, what is the minimum education level required for direct-service staff at Member organizations?	Choose one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High School or equivalent ● Some college ● Associate's degree ● Bachelor's degree ● Master's degree ● Doctoral degree ● Other: _____
34. Please describe any additional background experiences and qualifications that were not captured in the above questions, but are required or expected by the Network when hiring direct-service family-support workers.	Text field.

Section 2.2: Network Approach: Please respond to the following questions about the Network's approach to Member organizations' delivery of family support and strengthening services.

Question	Response Type/Options
35. Does the Network utilize the Principles of Family Support developed by Family Support America?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No ● Don't Know
36. If yes, please describe how.	Text field.
37. Does the Network utilize the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No ● Don't know
38. If yes, please describe how.	Text field.
39. Does the Network utilize the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No ● Don't know
40. If yes, please describe how.	Text field.
41. Does the Network follow its own Network- or state/regionally-created quality standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● No ● Don't know
42. Please describe any additional Family Support or other frameworks or regulations that guide your work Network-wide.	Text field.

Section 2.3. Training of Direct-Service Workers. In this section, we ask about training in the following areas:

- **Child Development Activities** (e.g. Developmental Stages)
- **Child Abuse/Neglect** (e.g. Recognizing and Reporting Child Neglect/Abuse)
- **Community Development Activities** (e.g. Advocacy, Community Engagement)
- **Domestic Violence** (e.g. Screening and Support)
- **Family Economics and Self-Sufficiency** (e.g. Job Searching and Job Retention Skills; Education on Financial Management, Asset Building, and/or Savings)
- **Family Health & Wellness** (e.g. Healthcare Coverage Navigation)
- **Family Literacy and Education Supports** (e.g. Early Literacy and Early Childhood Curriculum, Family Engagement)
- **Family Support frameworks or theories** (e.g. Strengthening Families Protective Factors, Standards of Quality)
- **Family Support practices or strategies** (e.g. Motivational Interviewing, Trauma-Informed Care)
- **Home Safety** (e.g. First/Aid/CPR, Home Safety with Toddlers)
- **Life Skills Advocacy** (e.g. Anger Management, Communication, Budgeting, Cooking)
- **Mental Health** (e.g. Mental Health Screening, Risk Assessment)
- **Parent Education** (e.g. Home Visiting Parent Education Curriculum, Parenting Class Curriculum)
- **Parent Leadership** (e.g. Leadership Development and Skill Building)
- **Peer to Peer Supports** (e.g. Support Group Facilitation, Mentor Programs)
- **Resource and Referral** (e.g. Resource Navigation)
- **Staff Professionalism** (e.g. Staff/Client Boundaries, Staff Self-Care, Diversity, Supervision)
- **Senior Services** (e.g. Grandparent Support)
- **Service Coordination** (e.g. Integrated Multidisciplinary Team Approaches, Family Goal Setting)
- **Substance Abuse Treatment** (e.g. Substance Abuse Screenings and Assessments)
- **Youth Development** (e.g. Facilitating Youth Mentoring or Out of School Time Activities)

For each training area listed above, please let us know whether the training is required, promoted, or not emphasized by the Network.

Question	Response Type/Options
43. Is training in [name of training listed above]...?	Select one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required by Network • Promoted but not required by Network • Not emphasized by the Network or its Members
44. What other trainings are required or promoted by the Network?	Text field.

Section 2.4. Additional Professional Development of Direct-Service Staff. Please answer the next questions about the Network’s role in supporting the professional development of direct-service family-support staff at Member organizations.

45. Does the Network have a specified Professional Development pathway or model for family-support workers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
46. If yes, are you willing to share information in a follow-up interview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
47. Please provide any additional information that will help us understand the Network’s role in supporting the Member organizations’ direct-service workforce.	Text field.

Section 3. Network Impact on Families and Communities

Please respond to the following questions about the impact the Network has had on families and the larger community.

Question	Response Type/Options
48. Describe one area in which your Network has made a measurable impact on families in the past 5 years (e.g., improved parenting; decreased childhood obesity; improved third-grade reading scores; increased economic self-sufficiency).	Text field.
49. Please elaborate on which data sources the Network relied upon to determine the level of its impact.	Text field.
50. Describe the partnerships that were involved in achieving the impact?	Text field.
51. Please list any new areas that you know the Network will focus on during the next year?	Text field.
52. Please indicate whether or not your Network has achieved any the following outcomes in the past 5 years.	Yes/No responses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Passed legislation ● Worked with legislatures to introduce or amend policies ● Adopted quality standards ● Increased staff competencies with trainings ● Facilitated sharing of local best practices with Network gatherings ● Increased the profile of the Network and local Family Support field ● Increased access to services for families ● Strengthened support for families through partnership building

Section 4. Family Support Network Approach to Service Delivery

Section 4.1. Service Areas. Please answer the following questions about who the Network serves and its approach to service delivery.

Question	Response Type/Options
53. Who do Member organizations typically serve?	Select the option that is the best fit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All individuals in the community ● Families in the community with children ● Families with children from ages 0-5 ● Families with school-aged children in grades 1st-12th ● Other: _____

Question	Response Type/Options
<p>54. Please select the most appropriate option to describe service areas provided by Member organizations.</p>	<p>Response options for each service area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Service Area: Most (80% or more) Members provide in-house services to families in this area • Referral Service Area: Most (80% or more) Members refer families to partner organizations to receive services in this area • Mixed Services Area: Some Members provide services in this area and some refer to partner organizations • Not provided: Members do not provide or refer for services in this area. <p>Service Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Development Activities (e.g., Play & Grow, Mommy & Me, Child Care) • Child Abuse/Neglect Treatment Services (e.g., Family Support Home Visiting, Emergency Resources, Counseling, Respite Child Care) • Community Development Activities (e.g., Advocacy, Housing, Employment, Capacity Building, Community Celebrations) • Domestic Violence Treatment Services (e.g. DV Screening, Assessment, Counseling) • Family Economics and Self Sufficiency (e.g., Job Searching and Job Retention Skills; Education on Financial Management, Asset Building, and/or Savings) • Family Health & Wellness (e.g., Health & Dental Services, Medical Home, Onsite Outreach, Mental Health Programs) • Family Literacy and Education Supports (e.g., ESL, Tutoring, GED Prep, Technology Center) • Life Skills Advocacy (e.g., Classes in Anger Management, Communication Skills, Budgeting, Cooking) • Parent Education (e.g., Classes, Support Groups, Peer-to-Peer) • Parent Leadership (e.g. Parent Leadership Training, Facilitated Leadership Activities) • Peer-to-Peer Supports (e.g., Support Groups, Mentoring) • Resource and Referral (e.g., Links to Community Resources & Services) • Senior Services (e.g., Grandparent Support, In Home Care Services) • Service Coordination (e.g., Integrated Multidisciplinary Team Approach, Family Goal Setting) • Substance Abuse Treatment (e.g., Counseling, Self-Help Groups) • Youth Development (e.g., Mentoring, Out of School Time Activities, Community Service, Family Fun Activities) • Other: _____

Section 4.2. Network approach to supporting member organizations to provide high-quality services. In this section, please describe how the Network supports its Member organizations to provide services in the core areas identified in the section above.

Question	Response Type/Options
<p>55. Please specify whether the Network engages in each of the activities listed below.</p>	<p>Yes/No response option for each activity.</p> <p>Activities</p> <p>Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as coordinating body for state • Increase connectedness, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration amongst members. <p>Representation</p> <p>Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and Legislation (e.g., Local, State, or National Level) • Visibility and Public Awareness (e.g., Marketing & Branding Activities for Members) <p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct funding to Members • Capacity building/technical assistance to support Members' own fund development efforts <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member-level data analysis and evaluation reports • Network-level data analysis and evaluation reports • Provide and maintain data tracking system <p>Capacity Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Capacity building (e.g., Financial Management Systems, HR Policies) • Programmatic Capacity building (e.g., Program Implementation Support, Quality Assurance, Promotion of best practice) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and Technical Assistance • Peer review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other: _____

Section 5. Final Reflections on the Network's Structure, Approach, Direct-service Workforce, Services and Impact.

<p>56. Please provide any additional information about the Network, the Member organizations, staff, or the impact on families you would like to share.</p>	<p>Text field.</p>
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