

Alaska's Early Intervention / Infant Learning Program

2015 FAMILY OUTCOMES SURVEY

Families of Children Enrolled

Between January 1 and December 31, 2014

A Report for the

Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program

Office of Children's Services

Department of Health & Social Services

State of Alaska

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Alaska's Early Intervention / Infant Learning Program

2013 FAMILY OUTCOMES SURVEY

Executive Summary

Alaska's Early Intervention /Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP) oversees an array of flexible early intervention services for children birth to three years of age who have or are at risk for disabilities or developmental delays. During the 2014 calendar year, services were delivered in communities across the state through 16 grantees, local Infant Learning Programs (ILPs).

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires State agencies to develop and implement outcome measures to evaluate infant and toddler programs operated under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The 2015 Family Outcomes Survey asked about family experiences based on five OSEP family outcome areas and general level of satisfaction with services received from an ILP:

1. Families understand their children's strengths, abilities, and special needs.
2. Families know their rights and advocate effectively for their children.
3. Families help their children develop and learn.
4. Families have support systems.
5. Families access desired services, programs, and activities in their communities.
6. Families are satisfied with the services they receive.

Nineteen survey items used in 2015 to measure family outcomes were essentially the same as corresponding items starting with the 2009 survey. In 2012, the EI/ILP wanted to have more information from families about access to childcare in their communities, and five items were added to the protocol covering how much ILP providers worked with childcare providers, the availability of childcare for children with special needs, the importance of childcare in the community, access to childcare providers who could follow an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and reasons people did not have regular childcare. This brought the total number of items on the survey to 24.

Families rated experiences with their children and their ILP on statements by choosing how often each statement was true for their family: none of the time, some of the time, most of the time, or all of the time. This 4-point Likert scale was recommended to the EI/ILP by a group of Alaska Native providers who had consulted as a group about making survey instruments more culturally appropriate for Alaska's indigenous cultures.

Families enrolled during the 2014 calendar year with children eligible for Part C and enrolled for at least 6 months comprised the eligible population for the 2015 Family Outcomes Survey (N = 767 families with 802 children). The survey utilized a randomly selected 20% target group of families, stratified geographically by EI/ILP grantee service area and by race of children. It was comprised of 155 families with 159 children. Survey packets were mailed to the target group of families, inviting them to complete the survey by mail, online, or over the phone. Follow-up was conducted with phone calls and mailed postcards.

There were 74 completed surveys rendering a 48% response rate. Characteristics of children in responding families were fairly similar to those in the randomly selected target group and in the

total eligible population. This included age, race/ethnicity, enrollment status, how children qualified for services, reasons they exited services, and exit placements.

It can be concluded from the results of the 2015 Family Outcomes Survey that the vast majority of families (approximately 94%) were satisfied all ($\cong 74.3\%$) or most ($\cong 19.4\%$) of the time with the ILP services they received during the 2014 calendar year. The overall survey mean on outcome items was 3.44 on a 1-4 scale ($n = 71$). Generally, caregivers tended to be confident in their knowledge and abilities, and available resources usually served their needs. Figure 1 illustrates the outcome level pattern of results in the 2015 survey, compared to 2014.

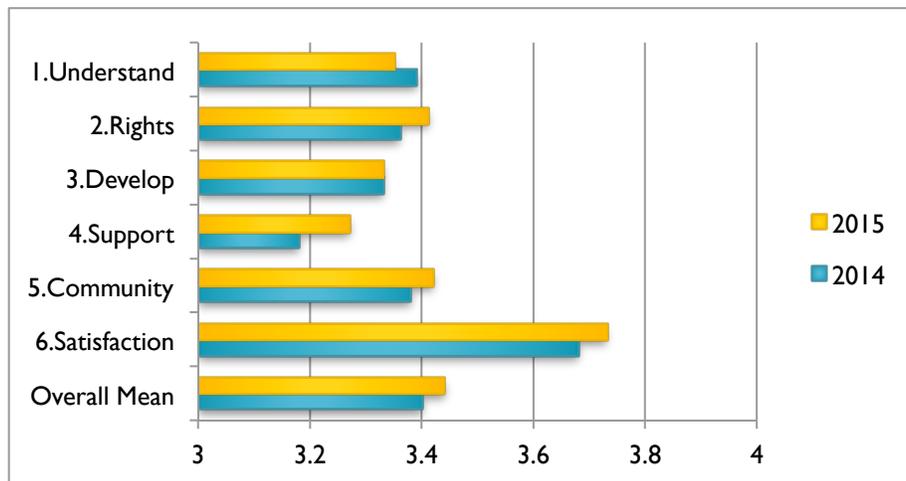


Figure 1: Relative strengths of outcome areas compared with previous year results

The strongest outcome area was Outcome 6 ($M = 3.73$, $n = 71$) regarding satisfaction with ILP services. Outcome 5 (community access, $M \cong 3.42$) and Outcome 2 (rights and advocacy, $M = 3.41$) were the next strongest, just under the overall mean. Following were Outcome 1 (parental understanding of children, $M = 3.35$) and Outcome 3 (parental ability to help children develop and learn, $M = 3.33$). The weakest was Outcome 4 (social support, $M = 3.27$). There were no statistically significant differences at the outcome level based on the race of children or region of residence. The apparent difference between 2015 and 2014 in Outcome 4 did not reach a level of statistical significance.

Outcome 1: Parental Understanding of Children

Outcome 1 was relatively weaker than usual ($M = 3.35$) in the pattern of outcome results, below the overall survey mean. The greatest strength within Outcome 1 indicated higher caregiver confidence in ability to *perceive children's progress*, and this has been a fairly consistent strength within the outcome area over time. The greatest weakness indicated lower caregiver confidence *understanding children's special needs*. The latter tends to be among weaker items on the survey. Caregivers have consistently indicated they need more help understanding their children's special needs.

Outcome 2: Rights and Advocacy

Outcome 2 was relatively stronger ($M = 3.41$), approaching the overall survey mean. This was one of the strongest outcome areas in 2010 and 2011, but started losing strength in 2012. Within Outcome 2, the pattern of strength-weakness in 2015 was similar to the past several

years, except *knowing what to do if not satisfied* with ILP services moved from one of the weakest items in 2014 to above average in 2015 among the non-satisfaction items. The greatest strength in Outcome 2 was in caregivers being *comfortable in meetings with professionals*. Among the non-satisfaction items, this was the strongest outcome item response on the 2015 survey. The greatest weakness was in caregivers *being informed about available programs and services*. Response on the latter item has declined since 2011, and it was among the weakest responses on the 2015 survey.

Outcome 3: Parental Ability to Help Children Develop and Learn

Outcome 3 was relatively weaker ($M = 3.33$), below the overall survey mean. This is an outcome-level pattern consistent with previous survey years. The greatest strength was in caregivers *working with professionals to develop a plan*, and this was among the strongest non-satisfaction items on the survey. The greatest weakness was in caregivers *knowing how to help children behave*. The latter tends to be among weakest item responses on the survey. Caregivers have consistently, across all surveyed years, indicated they needed more help in working with their children's behavior.

Outcome 4: Social Support

Outcome 4 was the weakest outcome area ($M = 3.27$), well below the overall survey mean. This is a consistent outcome-level pattern across all surveyed years. The greatest strength within Outcome 4 was in caregivers having access to *people they could talk with* any time they wanted, and this item moved up from an average response in 2014 to be among the strong responses in 2015. The greatest weakness was access to resources for *occasional childcare*. The latter tends to be among the weakest item responses on the survey, and it was the lowest rated item in 2015. Caregivers have consistently, across all surveyed years, indicated they needed more help in building social resources for occasional childcare.

Outcome 5: Community Access

Outcome 5 was a relatively stronger outcome area ($M \cong 3.42$), approaching the overall survey mean. One item in Outcome 5 is excluded from statistical tests due to a large number of "n/a" responses. Often the item mean is similar to the aggregate mean of other items in the outcome area, but this year there was a disparity. Thus the estimated mean reported here is more representative for the outcome area as a whole. The greatest strength within Outcome 5 was family access to *excellent medical care* and this tends to be among the strongest non-satisfaction items on the survey. Though access for *children to participate in activities in the community* was the greatest weakness within the outcome area, it was an average item response among non-satisfaction items. The pattern within Outcome 5 has been consistent since the 2010 survey.

Outcome 6: Satisfaction with EI Services

Outcome 6 was the strongest outcome area ($M = 3.73$, $n = 71$), well above the overall survey mean. This continues an overall trend of increasing satisfaction. All regions had high satisfaction results and statistical tests by region did not reveal any statistically significant differences. It is still worth mentioning that the Southcentral Region had the highest satisfaction by region.

In a highly unusual finding, there were statistically meaningful differences by the race of children on two items within Outcome 6. Even though there was high satisfaction for both families with

Native and White children, those with Native children felt ILP services were less effective *informing them of their rights and helping them to help their children develop and learn*. These seemed to be actual differences by race as opposed to rural-urban differences. The urban caregivers of both Native and White children felt less *informed about their rights* than the corresponding rural families.

Childcare in Communities

One item under Outcome 5 covering general access to childcare indicated about 28% of responding families always had this resource, while another 19% had it most of the time or some of the time. The survey included five items asking for more detailed information about issues and community resources relevant to childcare. Additional information gleaned from respondents included:

- ♦ 28% did not want or need regular childcare at that time
- ♦ 3% wanted childcare, but had not looked for it yet
- ♦ 24% wanted childcare, but could not find any that worked for them

Half (37 or 50%) of respondents indicated knowledge about *childcare resources for children with special needs* in their communities. Of these, 41% indicated it was more available and 59% indicated it was less available. This is a more negative pattern than the previous survey year.

The response was turned around when caregivers were asked if there was a *childcare provider who could follow their child's IFSP*. Of the 38 respondents who indicated knowledge of this resource, 58% indicated it was more available and 42% indicated less available. This was the same as the pattern in the previous year's survey results.

A majority (55 or 74%) of respondents indicated knowledge about the *importance of childcare* in their communities. Of these, 76% indicated childcare was more important, and 24% indicated it was less important. This was a somewhat more positive result than the previous year.

Regarding ILP and childcare providers working together, 47% of the 30 families who had childcare and felt this would be applicable to their circumstances said this never or only occasionally happened. This is similar to results in the previous year.

Comments

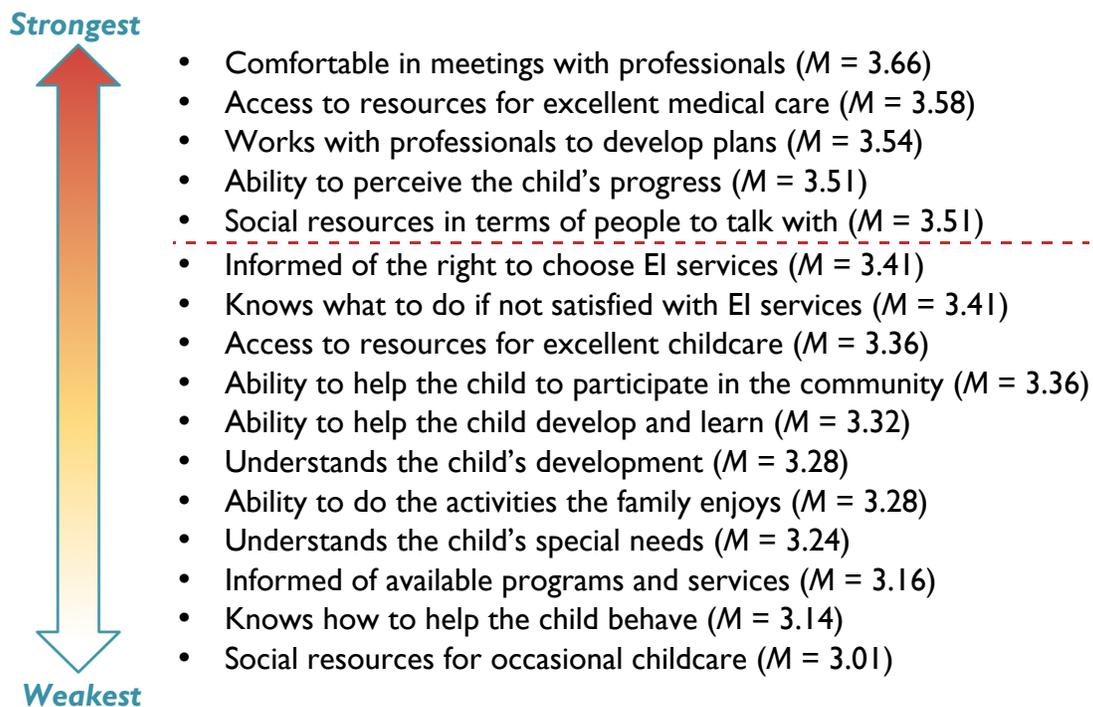
Thirty-three caregivers added comments to surveys (45% of all responders). There are survey items relevant to childcare, so it was not surprising that 10 caregivers added a comment (8) or a portion of a comment (2) about childcare. Another five comments stated circumstances that were not directly relevant to the quality of or access to ILP services.

Of the 20 comments and portions of comments that were directly relevant to caregiver satisfaction, about 75% were either positive (14) or mostly positive (1-mixed), expressing gratitude and satisfaction. One mixed comment was evenly positive-negative. Four comments were negative (3) or mostly negative (1-mixed). Negative themes indicated a lack of quality in services families received (2 respondents) or a lack of access to services families needed or wanted (4 respondents).

Issues to Consider

Overall family satisfaction continued at a high level, and it was consistently high across regions. Even though satisfaction was high for both families with Native and White children, the significant differences by race on two satisfaction items deserve some attention. The available evidence suggests these are actual differences by race.

Even though there were no improvements that could be statistically verified in item responses between 2015 and 2014, there were more outcome items in 2015 that passed the 3.50 benchmark for strength (5 as compared to 1, excluding satisfaction items). One item moved from among the weakest in 2014 to above average among non-satisfaction items in 2015 (i.e., *knows what to do if not satisfied with EI services*). It is also true that most of the weak results in 2015 were ones that have persisted over time. Below are the aspects of family knowledge, resources, and abilities from the strongest to the weakest, as measured in the 2015 survey. The dashed line represents the 3.50 benchmark for very strong outcomes.



Regarding childcare issues, the availability of childcare in communities is beyond the scope of ILP responsibility. However, an area where ILP providers can make a difference in the quality of local childcare is in working with childcare providers to help them understand and address the special needs of young children they both serve. The evidence in this survey suggested that as a whole, fewer children and families have been receiving this benefit since the 2013 survey. Two caregivers added comments indicating how an ILP could have assisted them: informing them about childcare providers that serve children with special needs, and educating a daycare provider in dealing with a child's special needs.

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Alaska's Early Intervention / Infant Learning Program

2015 FAMILY OUTCOMES SURVEY

Introduction

Alaska's Early Intervention /Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP) is one of the three core programs supporting children, youth, and families under the administration of the Office of Children's Services (OCS), along with Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning and Child Protection and Permanency. OCS is under the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (HSS). Within its mission statement OCS states, "Services will enhance families' capacities to give their children a healthy start, to provide them with safe and permanent homes, to maintain cultural connections and to help them realize their potential" (dhss.alaska.gov/ocs).

To assist children who are at risk for disabilities or developmental delays to have a healthier start in life (birth to age 3), the EI/ILP oversees an array of flexible early intervention services. During the 2014 calendar year, services were delivered in communities across the state through 16 EI/ILP grantees. Grantees typically include school districts, mental health associations, Native organizations, parent associations, and other nonprofit organizations. ILP services include developmental screening and evaluation; individualized family service plans; home visits; physical, occupational, and speech therapies; and children's mental health services. ILP providers share assessment, development, and intervention information and strategies with families, deal with specialized equipment, and make appropriate referrals to meet child and family needs that are beyond the scope of Alaska's Infant Learning Programs.

EI/ILP funding comes from multiple sources including State general funds, federal Part C funds, Medicaid, and billing receipts from insurance and other third party payers. EI/ILP activity and progress are reported to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). OSEP requires State agencies to develop and implement outcome measures to evaluate infant and toddler programs operated under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Through a developmental process of working with experts and stakeholders, OSEP identified five family outcome areas. Guided by this framework, Alaska's annual EI/ILP Family Outcomes Survey gathers this type of information from the perspective of families in Alaska who received ILP services, along with their general level of satisfaction with services, resulting in 6 outcome areas:

1. Families understand their children's strengths, abilities, and special needs.
2. Families know their rights and advocate effectively for their children.
3. Families help their children develop and learn.
4. Families have support systems.
5. Families access desired services, programs, and activities in their communities.
6. Families are satisfied with the services they receive.

Methodology

Historical Development

Through a series of stakeholder meetings, the protocol chosen by the EI/ILP to measure OSEP outcomes in 2006 and 2007 was the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center's tool, the *ECO Family Outcomes Survey*. The method was a census approach (i.e., sending one survey per each child who received any ILP services in the targeted year). The evaluators of the 2007 survey found a number of potential problems with the quality of information gathered, and recommended greatly simplifying the 8-page instrument, but keeping the focus of each of the 18 items to match the ECO Center tool. Methodological recommendations included making the family the unit of measurement (rather than the child) and randomly selecting a segment of the population stratified by ILP service areas to receive the survey (rather than using a census approach) and concentrating efforts on striving for a high response rate ($\geq 50\%$). Proposed changes were approved by OSEP and first implemented in the 2008 survey.

For the 2009 survey, EI/ILP made several revisions to survey items. Some were the same focus, but worded more simply or succinctly. Noted problems with compound items were resolved and new items added, resulting in 21 items. In 2011, "n/a" (not applicable) was added to response options for one item regarding access to childcare to help distinguish between families who used or wanted childcare and those who did not, improving interpretation of results on this item. Methodology was also improved in 2011 to use a 20% target group rather than a static number, and to stratify the target group by race of children as well as by ILP service areas. These improvements in method were retained in subsequent years.

In 2012 two items that did not contribute meaningful information to results were eliminated, leaving 19 outcome items. The EI/ILP also wanted to receive more information from families about access to childcare, and 5 childcare items were added, bringing the total number of items to 24. Childcare items covered how much ILP providers worked with childcare providers, availability of childcare for children with special needs, importance of childcare in the community, access to childcare providers who could follow an IFSP, and reasons people did not have regular childcare.

The same 24 items were retained in the 2013, 2014, and 2015 surveys, with some slight improvements in wording in 2014 to make items more consistent. These improvements did not significantly alter the meaning of items from a respondent perspective. Overall, other than the relatively minor improvements to corresponding outcome items since 2009, a high degree of consistency lends a high level of confidence to comparisons of results across survey years.

Caregivers were asked to rate their experiences with the ILP that served them on the 19 outcome items by choosing how often each statement was true: none of the time, some of the time, most of the time, or all of the time. This 4-point Likert scale was recommended to the EI/ILP by a group of indigenous providers who had consulted about making survey instruments more culturally appropriate for Alaska's indigenous cultures.

The same scale was used on four of the childcare items, along with “n/a” or “don’t know” response options. One community childcare item was only for families who did not have regular childcare, asking them to indicate a reason why from multiple-choice options. The 2015 instrument is included with this report in Appendix A.

Participants & Selection Procedures

Families eligible for the survey needed to have at least one child who was eligible for Part C services, enrolled in the program during the 2014 calendar year, and enrolled for at least 6 months. Data about potentially eligible children and families was pulled from the EI/ILP statewide database. Seventeen families were removed for lack of sufficient information to send a survey packet by mail. Deliverable mail served as documentation for families (similar to informed consent), as well as providing an opportunity to respond by mail or online. The final eligible population consisted of 802 children in 767 families.

A target group comprised of 155 families was randomly selected from eligible families to receive the 2015 survey by mail. In order to stratify the target group by geography and by race of children, a series of random numbers were assigned to all families in the eligible population using that function in Excel. The data was sorted by the 16 ILP service areas and again by up to 6 race categories per area. Within each resulting area/race category, the 20% with the highest random numbers were selected for the target group. At least one family was included in any area where the population served was too small to have one family in the target group.

When ILP providers entered data in the field, they were allowed to select multiple options for race and an option for ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino). Typically the largest proportions of children in EI/ILP services are identified as Alaska Native or American Indian (“Native”) or White/Caucasian (“White”), with little representation on other races or ethnicity.

Children with any Native heritage were defined as Native for stratification purposes. This matches the culture in Alaska where people with partial Native heritage are recognized as members of Tribes or other indigenous groups, along with social and legal implications. Thus about 41% of the children in the eligible population and 43% in the selected target group had Native heritage by this definition.

Small differences in demographic proportions between the eligible population and the target group can be an artifact of selection procedures that avoided systematically excluding families in low incidence race categories or with missing race data. Specific to the 2015 survey, there were 28 cases where Hispanic/Latino was indicated with no corresponding race data. Rather than systematically excluding these families, they were treated as an additional stratification category within each of the six ILP service areas where this occurred. In six ILP areas there were race/ethnic categories with only one or two families in each, failing to meet the minimum threshold to include a family of that race in the target group. These families were combined within each respective ILP service area, and the 20% with the highest random numbers were selected into the target group.

Survey Procedures

A third-party evaluator, the University of Alaska Anchorage Center for Human Development (CHD), was contracted to implement the 2015 survey. Survey packets containing an invitational letter, the survey instrument, and a postage-paid return envelope were mailed to the target group families on March 12, 2015. In order to minimize undeliverable mail, the U.S. Post Office provided a service to check addresses and make corrections if newer information was entered in the USPS system (e.g., forwarding addresses). For packets returned as undeliverable by April 6, the procedure was to replace each family using the next highest random number within the same area/race category. This procedure resulted in seven replacement families in the target group. The final target group was comprised of 155 families with 159 children. The given deadline for responding was April 30. The survey was closed on May 1.

The introductory letter (in Appendix A) invited families to complete the survey by mail, online, or by using a toll-free phone number, and informed them evaluators would contact them in about two weeks if a survey had not been completed. When evaluators reached families by phone, they invited caregivers to complete the survey over the phone or online, and politely honored requests to opt out or to have the survey resent by mail.

Having a working phone number was not required for inclusion in the target group. When non-responding families could not be reached by phone, a postcard reminder was sent by mail. It included the toll-free phone number and the online address to access the survey. The postcard was also used as a reminder for families who told callers they would complete the survey online or by mail, but did not do so as the deadline approached.

Potential participants were offered the incentive of being entered into a drawing to give away ten \$25 gift cards to a choice of three popular shopping venues. The evaluator used the random number assignment feature in Excel to identify winners (10 highest random numbers) from among all those who responded to the survey.

Analyses

Analyses of data for this annual survey include descriptive statistics such as frequencies, distributions, and measures of central tendency. There are typically only enough children of Native and White heritage to test for differences in results by race, and Independent 2-tailed t-tests are used to test for these differences. A univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to examine patterns within outcome areas, and sometimes in item responses, based on regions of residence. Post hoc testing uses *Tukey* for pairwise comparisons when differences among variances are small, Levene's test is $\geq .05$, and equal variances are assumed; or *Dunnett C* when differences among variances are larger, Levene's test is $\leq .05$, and equal variances are not assumed. When an item response appears different from a previous year's response, they are compared using an independent 2-tailed t-test. In all analyses, equal variances are assumed unless indicated otherwise.

Comments added to surveys fall into general categories based on being positive, negative, or mixed positive/negative. Negative comments and negative portions of mixed comments are organized by themes. Because there are items asking about childcare, some respondents add

comments or portions of comments specific to childcare. These are reported in a separate category because ILPs are not directly responsible for the general quality or availability of childcare resources in communities. A discussion of comments is at the end of the Results section. De-identified comments are listed in Appendix B.

Results

Response Rates

Seventy-four ($n = 74$) surveys were completed by families from the target group for an overall response rate of 48%. Below are details relevant to the response rate. “No contact” refers to potential undeliverable mail returned after the cutoff date for replacing families (April 6).

Target Families (with 7 replacement families)	155
Made contact (mail and/or phone)	155
Ineligible	0
Opted out or did not respond (O)	81
Eligible completed surveys (S)	74
No contact (N)	0
<hr/>	
Response Rate = $S / (S + O + N) = 0.4774193$ or 48%	

Thirty-seven ($n = 37$) or half of the 74 respondents completed surveys by mail or online, and the other half ($n = 37$) responded by phone. Table 1 shows the number and proportion of response rates sorted by EI/ILP regional service areas. The highest regional response in 2015 was for Anchorage at 54%. Northern and Southcentral came in just under the overall response rate at 46% and 45% respectively. The lowest response was in Southeast at 41%.

Table 1: Response sorted by EI/ILP regions

	EI/ILP Region	ILP Grantee (EI/ILP Code)	Sent	Rec'd	%
1	Northern	Alaska Center for Children & Adults (ACC) Northwest Arctic Borough School District (NWA) Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSH) Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)	39	18	46%
2	Anchorage	Programs for Infants & Children (PIC) FOCUS - Family Outreach Center for Understanding Special Needs (FOC)	56	30	54%
3	Southcentral	Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBA) Kodiak Area Native Association (KAN) Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults (MSU) Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKH)	33	15	45%
4	Southeast	Center for Community (CFC) Community Connections (CCK) Frontier Community Services (FCS) REACH, Inc. (REA) SeaView Community Services (SVC) Sprout Family Services (SFS)	27	11	41%
Total Families			155	74	48%

Table 2 shows a further breakdown of response rates by ILP service areas. In three cases, there was no response from an ILP area where only one or two families were in the target group. While the numbers are small, this occurrence can pull down a regional response rate. Two areas with no response were both in the Southeast Region (CFC and SVC).

Table 2: Response sorted by grantees

	ILP Grantee (EI/ILP Code)	Service Area	Sent	Rec'd	%
1	Alaska Center for Children & Adults (ACC)	Fairbanks, Copper River Basin, Valdez, North Slope	31	14	45%
2	Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBA)	Dillingham	6	3	50%
3	Center for Community (CFC)	Sitka	2	0	---
4	Community Connections (CCK)	Ketchikan, Craig, Prince of Wales Island	6	2	33%
5	FOCUS (FOC)	Eagle River, Chugiak, Elmendorf/Richardson, Cordova	11	7	64%
6	Frontier Community Services (FCS)	Soldotna	6	3	50%
7	Kodiak Area Native Association (KAN)	Kodiak	2	1	50%
8	Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults (MSU)	Wasilla	14	5	36%
9	Northwest Arctic Borough S.D. (NWA)	Kotzebue	3	2	67%
10	Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSH)	Nome	2	0	---
11	Programs for Infants & Children (PIC)	Anchorage	45	23	51%
12	REACH, Inc. (REA)	Juneau, Haines, Petersburg	9	4	44%
13	SeaView Community Services (SVC)	Seward	1	0	---
14	Sprout Family Services (SFS)	Homer	3	2	67%
15	Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)	Interior Alaska	3	2	67%
16	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp. (YKH)	Bethel	11	6	55%
Total Families			155	74	48%

Within regions and sometimes within agency service areas, both urban and rural populations were served. If responding families with mailing addresses in Anchorage, Eagle River, Fairbanks, and Juneau are defined as the more urban families, they represented 45.9% of all responding families, leaving 54.1% of responses from more rural families. This compares to 41.9% urban, 58.1% rural in the target group; and 44.9% urban, 55.1% rural in the eligible population. On this variable, rural residents seemed oversampled in the target group, but there was also a high proportion of non-working phone numbers in rural areas. Thus the responding sample was more similar to the eligible population. However, these differences are still very small.

As noted previously, half of this year's responses were received by mail or completed online. In some cases these were completed after people were reminded by a phone call. Phone calls to non-responders beginning March 30 were conducted during weekdays, evenings, and on weekends in attempts to reach people when they were available. However, having a working phone number was not a requirement for being included in the target group.

Of those who did not initially respond by mail or online, there were 9 cases where people answered a phone call, but either verbally declined to participate (6) or purposely hung up (3) on the caller (i.e., they did not pick up when immediately called back). There were another 16 cases where calls always went to voicemail. It is possible that with the increase in “robocalls” in recent years, more people have stopped answering non-personal calls. Messages could only be left in cases where a target person was clearly identified as a voicemail owner.

There were 41 cases (26% of the target group; 51% of non-responders) where families could not be reached by phone because of persistent problems with phone numbers. In one case, a phone number was missing from the database. In 22 cases, calls went to automatic recordings saying the numbers were not working, disconnected, or out of service. In another 9 cases calls would otherwise never connect (e.g., persistent busy signals or not accepting calls). In 9 cases, phone numbers belonged to other people (i.e., wrong numbers).

Of these 41 nonworking numbers, 10 (24%) were for urban families, and 31 (76%) were for rural families. About half (20 or 49%) were for families of children with Native heritage. Following is a breakdown of the 41 nonworking phone numbers by region:

- Northern: 10 or 26% of 39 target families in the region
- Anchorage: 10 or 18% of 56
- Southcentral: 8 or 24% of 33
- Southeast: 11 or 41% of 27

The regional distribution of the rates of nonworking numbers has not been consistent across the years these rates have been tracked. Last year, the rates were fairly evenly distributed. For two years prior, the highest rates were in the Southcentral Region. This year was the first time there was such a high rate of nonworking phone numbers in the Southeast Region, and this was likely a major factor in the low response rate for the region.

Demographics of Responding Families

Note: The State EI/ILP collects data on race/ethnicity of children, which may or may not be the same as race/ethnicity of caregivers. For example, some caregivers are foster parents. Therefore, the “race/ethnicity of families” cannot be entirely assumed from this data.

Among the 74 families who responded to the survey, there were 77 children who met the criteria for their families to be included in this sample. Children with Native heritage (as a single race or one of two or more races) accounted for 35 children (45.5%). White as a single race accounted for 36 children (46.8%). Together this represented most of the children in the responding sample of families: 71 of 77 children, or 92.2%.

Table 3 shows the data on race/ethnicity of children across the families who *responded* to the survey, those in the randomly selected *target* group, and the total population of children *eligible* for the survey. Note that more than one race could be indicated for one child, and Hispanic/Latino is an ethnicity across multiple races.

Table 3: Race/ethnicity of children in responding families compared to the randomly selected target group and the total eligible survey population

Race*/Ethnicity of Children	Responders		Target Group		Eligible	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
AK Native or Am. Indian	35	45.5	68	42.8	327	40.8
Asian	4	5.2	8	5.0	38	4.7
Black/African American	3	3.9	8	5.0	50	6.2
Pacific Islander	1	1.3	5	3.1	19	2.4
White/Caucasian	43	55.8	90	56.6	464	57.9
No race indicated	1		6		28	
Hispanic or Latino	5	6.5	13	8.2	62	7.7
Total Children	77		159		802	

*Single race or mixed race.

Children with Native heritage accounted for 45.5% of *responding* families compared to 42.8% of *target* and 40.8% of *eligible* families. Children with White as a single race accounted for 46.8% of *responding* families compared to 42.8% of *target* and 44.9% of *eligible* families. Small differences between the target and eligible populations are likely an artifact of procedures to prevent systematically leaving out low incidence families in service areas or race categories. While there seems to be proportionately higher response from families with both Native and White heritage as compared to their proportions in the target group and eligible population, the important aspect is that there does not seem to be a difference *between* the response from families with Native and White children.

The most typical age of children at the time of the 2015 survey was 27 to 28 months across responders, target families, and the eligible population. All families included in the 2015 survey had one or more children who were enrolled in an ILP and qualified for Part C services. Table 4 shows a comparison of the qualifying categories of children across the responders, target group, and eligible population. For all three, the reason the largest proportion of children qualified (58 to 60 percent) was a documented delay of over 50%. The predominance of eligibility on this criterion has been a consistent pattern in demographics across survey years.

Table 4: How children in responding families qualified for services compared to the target group and the total eligible survey population

Qualifying Category	Responders		Target Group		Eligible	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Part C Diagnosis	12	15.6	29	18.2	141	17.6
Delays > 50%	46	59.7	92	57.9	481	60.0
Clinical Opinion	19	24.7	38	23.9	179	22.3
Missing Data	0		0		1	
Total Children	77		159		802	

Within responding families, 47 (61.0%) children were still enrolled in the program at the time of the survey, and 30 (39.0%) had exited the program sometime during the year. This compares to

the *target group* with 83 (52.2%) enrolled and 76 (47.8%) exited; and the total *eligible child population* with 452 (56.4%) enrolled and 350 (43.6%) exited. Thus there seemed to be a slightly higher response from enrolled families, which is a typical pattern.

Table 5 shows reasons families exited the program. Of the children among the responders, as well as those in the target group and in the eligible population who exited during calendar year 2014, the exit reason given for the largest proportion (46 to 53 percent) was “Part B eligible,” indicating they had aged out of Part C services, and were qualified to continue receiving services under Part B of IDEA. This represents another consistent pattern in demographics across survey years. The distribution of exit reasons was fairly similar across the responders, target group, and eligible population.

Table 5: Reasons families exited the program during the service year

Exit Reason	Responders	Target Group	Eligible
Part B eligible	14 (46.7%)	40 (52.6%)	160 (45.7%)
Withdrawal by parent/guardian	6 (20.0%)	10 (13.2%)	45 (12.9%)
Completion of IFSP prior to age 3	5 (16.7%)	8 (10.5%)	44 (12.6%)
Attempts to contact unsuccessful	1	8 (10.5%)	36 (10.3%)
Moved out of state	2	5	20
Part B eligibility not determined	2	2	17
Not Part B eligible, exit with no referrals	0	1	16
Not Part B eligible, exit to other program	0	2	9
Reason not indicated	0	0	3
Total Children Exited	30	76	350

Table 6 shows placements for children after exiting an ILP. In all three groups, the exit placement was most often either in the home (37 to 50 percent) or in preschool special education (42 to 47 percent). Responders showed a relatively higher proportion of families with placements in the home.

Table 6: Exit placements of children who left the program during the service year

Exit Placement	Respondents	Target Group	Eligible
Preschool Special Education	13 (43.3%)	36 (47.4%)	148 (42.3%)
Home	15 (50.0%)	28 (36.8%)	141 (40.3%)
Head Start	1	5	13
Child Care/Preschool	0	1	12
Other Setting	0	3	17
Outpatient Therapy	0	0	1
In-State EI/ILP Transfer	0	0	3
Placement Not Indicated	1	3	15
Total Children Exited	30	76	350

Summary of Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics of children in responding families were fairly similar to those in both the target group (stratified random selection) and the total eligible population. There was a slightly higher response from families that were still enrolled. Factors of age, race/ethnicity, how children qualified for services, and reasons they exited services were more similar. The distributions of exit placements were slightly different with more placements in the home among responders. Even though there was a much higher proportion of rural versus urban nonworking phone numbers among target families who did not respond by mail/online, the responding population was still fairly similar to target and eligible populations on this variable. The biggest impact of nonworking phone numbers seemed to be a lower response rate in the Southeast Region.

Responses to Survey Items

Notes:

- All percentages reported in the tables of item responses are rounded to one decimal point, thus they do not necessarily add up to exactly 100%.
- The total number of responses can vary in the tables for each survey item because respondents could choose not to answer any item. Moreover, if a respondent circled multiple responses for an item on a paper survey, it had to be treated as missing data.
- When there is missing data on items, those cases are automatically excluded from aggregate statistical tests. When the number of cases included in an analysis is less than the total number of possible respondents, it is noted with the results.

The overall mean rating on outcome items was 3.44 ($n = 71$) on a 1-4 scale. Generally, caregivers tended to be confident in their knowledge and abilities, and available resources usually served their needs. The overall survey means cannot be statistically compared over time due to periodic modifications of items within the protocol. However, the 2015 overall mean was similar to 2014 ($M = 3.40$, $n = 75$), and most survey years since 2009.

Statistical tests indicated no statistically significant differences by region for the six outcome areas. There were no significant differences by race at the outcome level, but there were significant differences by race on two survey items (see results on items under Outcome 6). The following examination of survey results is organized first by outcome area, followed by childcare items, and an expanded look at satisfaction by region of the state.

Outcome 1: Understanding the Child

Items 1-3 on the survey asked respondents to indicate how often they understood their children's development, special needs, and progress. The mean response for Outcome 1 ($M = 3.35$) was below the overall survey mean ($M = 3.44$, $n = 71$), and slightly below the Outcome 1 result in the previous survey year.

The greatest strength was in caregivers' confidence in their ability to perceive children *making progress* ($M = 3.51$). The greatest weakness was in their confidence around *understanding children's special needs* ($M = 3.24$). This item response pattern within Outcome 1 has remained highly consistent across surveyed years.

Item 1: Our child is growing and learning, and we understand our child’s development very well.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.28 Median: 3 Mode: 3 SD: .60862
2	Some of the time	6	8.1	
3	Most of the time	41	55.4	
4	All of the time	27	36.5	
Total Responses		74	100	

The response on Item 1 indicated that a high 92% of responding families felt they understood their child’s development very well, all (37%) or most (55%) of the time. The item mean was below the overall survey mean, and below the response in 2014 ($M = 3.40, n = 80$). However, the difference between years was not statistically significant: $t(152) = 1.145, p = .335, ns$. It was among relatively weak outcome item responses on the 2015 survey.

Item 2: We know most of what we need to know about our child’s special needs.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.24 Median: 3 Mode: 3 SD: .67865
2	Some of the time	10	13.5	
3	Most of the time	36	48.6	
4	All of the time	28	37.8	
Total Responses		74	100	

The response on Item 2 indicated that 86% of responding families felt they knew what they needed to know about their children’s special needs most (49%) or all (38%) of the time. About 14% indicated they knew only some of the time. The item mean was below the overall survey mean. Response on this item has been fairly consistent over time, tending to be the weakest item response within Outcome I and among relatively weak outcome items on the survey.

Item 3: We can tell if our child is making progress.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.51 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .55501
2	Some of the time	2	2.7	
3	Most of the time	32	43.2	
4	All of the time	40	54.1	
Total Responses		74	100	

A very high 97% of respondents indicated on Item 3 that they could tell when their children were making progress, all (54%) or most (43%) of the time. The item mean was above the overall survey mean. The response on this item was similar in previous survey years. Generally, this tends to be a relatively strong item response within Outcome I, and it was among the strong outcome items on the 2015 survey.

Outcome 2: Rights and Advocacy

Items 4-7 asked respondents to indicate how much they knew about their rights and their capacity to advocate effectively on behalf of their children. The mean response for Outcome 2 ($M = 3.41$) was just under the overall survey mean ($M = 3.44, n = 71$). This was similar to Outcome 2 results in more recent survey years.

The greatest strength was in whether or not caregivers were *comfortable in meetings with professionals* ($M = 3.66$). The greatest weakness was in being *informed about programs and services available to families* ($M = 3.16$). This has been a typical item response pattern within Outcome 2 in recent survey years.

Item 4: We are fully informed about the programs and services that are available for our child and family.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	1	1.4	Mean: 3.16 Median: 3 Mode: 3 SD: .77684
2	Some of the time	14	18.9	
3	Most of the time	31	41.9	
4	All of the time	28	37.8	
Total Responses		74	100	

About 80% of responding families indicated on Item 4 that they were informed about programs and services all (38%) or most (42%) of the time. There was a notable 20% indicating they were informed some or none of the time. Response on this item began to decline in 2012, and it moved significantly down in 2013. Response has remained at this lower level through 2015. Thus after earlier gains, response on this item has definitely declined. It was the weakest item response within Outcome 2, well below the overall survey mean, and among the weakest outcome responses on the 2015 survey.

Item 5: We have been informed of our right to choose which Early Intervention services we receive.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	4	5.4	Mean: 3.41 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .85878
2	Some of the time	6	8.1	
3	Most of the time	20	27.0	
4	All of the time	44	59.5	
Total Responses		74	100	

About 86% of respondents indicated on Item 5 that they were informed of their right to choose services all (60%) or most (27%) of the time. The item mean was slightly below the overall survey mean, but excluding the highly rated satisfaction items, it was an above average response among other outcome items on the survey. There has been evident improvement in response on this item since 2013.

Item 6: We are comfortable participating in meetings with professionals to plan services or activities for our child.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	1	1.4	Mean: 3.66 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .64695
2	Some of the time	4	5.4	
3	Most of the time	14	18.9	
4	All of the time	55	74.3	
Total Responses		74	100	

On Item 6, a high 93% of respondents indicated they were comfortable participating in meetings all or most of the time, with 74% indicating all of the time. Beyond the satisfaction items, this was the strongest outcome item response on the 2015 survey, well above the overall survey mean. Response has tended to be higher on this item since the 2010 survey, and it continues to be among the strongest outcome items on the survey.

Item 7: We know what to do if we are not satisfied with any part of our child's program and services.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	2	2.7	Mean: 3.41 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .75705
2	Some of the time	6	8.1	
3	Most of the time	26	35.1	
4	All of the time	40	54.1	
Total Responses		74	100	

On Item 7, about 89% of families indicated they felt they knew what to do if they were not satisfied, all (54%) or most (35%) of the time. The remaining 11% knew what to do only some or none of the time. The item mean was slightly below the overall survey mean. In prior years response on this item tended to be relatively weak. Among the non-satisfaction items in 2015, it was an above average response. However, the difference from 2014 ($M = 3.21, n = 80$) was not statistically significant: $t(152) = 1.480, p = .346, ns$.

Outcome 3: Help Child Develop and Learn

Items 8-10 on the survey asked respondents to indicate how well they knew how to help their children develop, behave, and learn new skills. The mean response for Outcome 3 ($M = 3.33$) was below the overall survey mean ($M = 3.44, n = 71$). This was very similar to the Outcome 3 result in the previous two survey years.

The strongest item was *working with professionals to develop a plan* ($M = 3.54$). The weakness was in knowing how to *help children learn to behave* ($M = 3.14$). The weak response on this latter item is a consistent pattern within Outcome 3 across survey years.

Item 8: We are sure we know how to help our child develop and learn.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.32 Median: 3 Mode: 3 SD: .64337
2	Some of the time	7	9.5	
3	Most of the time	36	48.6	
4	All of the time	31	41.9	
Total Responses		74	100	

A high 91% of respondents indicated on Item 8 they were sure they knew how to help their children develop and learn, most (49%) or all (42%) of the time. The item mean was below the overall survey mean, but among the non-satisfaction items it was close to an average response. It was lower than the response in the previous survey year ($M = 3.41, n = 81$), but the difference was not significant: $t(153) = -.856, p = .330, ns$. Overall, response on this item has been fairly consistent across time.

Item 9: We are sure we know how to help our child learn to behave.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.14 Median: 3 Mode: 3 SD: .74621
2	Some of the time	16	21.6	
3	Most of the time	32	43.2	
4	All of the time	26	35.1	
Total Responses		74	100	

About 78% of respondents indicated on Item 9 that they were sure they knew how to help their children learn to behave, most (43%), or all (35%) of the time. A notable 22% indicated they were sure only some of the time. The item mean was far below the overall survey mean. It was the weakest item response within Outcome 3 and among the weakest outcome items on the 2015 survey. Response on this item has been consistently low since 2008.

Item 10: Our family has worked with professionals to develop a plan to help our child learn new skills.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.54 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .64509
2	Some of the time	6	8.1	
3	Most of the time	22	29.7	
4	All of the time	46	62.2	
Total Responses		74	100	

A high 92% of responding families indicated on Item 10 that they worked with professionals to develop a plan all (62%) or most (30%) of the time. Well over half indicated they did this all of the time. The item mean was higher than the overall survey mean. Since 2009, this item has tended to be the strongest item within Outcome 3 and usually among the strong outcome items on the survey, a pattern that continued in 2015.

Outcome 4: Support Systems

Items 11-13 on the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of resources for emotional support, assistance from others, and ability to do activities the families enjoyed. The mean response for Outcome 4 ($M = 3.27$) was below the overall survey mean ($M = 3.44$, $n = 71$), and it was the weakest of all outcome areas in the 2015 survey. A lower result for Outcome 4 has been a consistent pattern across survey years since 2009.

The relative strength within Outcome 4 was in families *having people to talk with* to deal with problems or celebrate ($M = 3.51$). The greatest weakness was in having resources for *occasional childcare* ($M = 3.01$). This represents a typical pattern within Outcome 4.

Item 11: There are people we can talk with any time we want to help us deal with problems or celebrate when good things happen.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	1	1.4	Mean: 3.51 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .74472
2	Some of the time	8	10.8	
3	Most of the time	17	23.0	
4	All of the time	48	64.9	
Total Responses		74	100	

About 88% of responding families indicated on Item 11 there were people they could talk with to deal with problems or celebrate good things, all (65%) or most (23%) of the time. The item mean was above the overall survey mean and it was among the strong outcome item responses on the 2015 survey. Response on this item has been fairly consistent since 2008.

Item 12: We have people we can call on for help when we need someone to watch our child for a short time.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	5	6.8	Mean: 3.01 Median: 3 Mode: 4 SD: .95793
2	Some of the time	18	24.3	
3	Most of the time	22	29.7	
4	All of the time	29	39.2	
Total Responses		74	100	

On Item 12, a low 69% of families indicated they had people to watch their children for a short time all (39%) or most (30%) of the time. Almost a third of families (31%) had this resource only some (24%) or none (7%) of the time. The item mean was far below the overall survey mean. Response on this item tends to be among the weakest items on the survey. It was the weakest outcome item response in both the 2014 and 2015 surveys.

Item 13: We are able to do the activities our family enjoys.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.28 Median: 3 Mode: 4 SD: .74980
2	Some of the time	13	17.6	
3	Most of the time	27	36.5	
4	All of the time	34	45.9	
Total Responses		74	100	

About 82% of caregivers indicated on Item 13 that they were able to do activities their families enjoyed most (37%) or all (46%) of the time. A notable 18% could do this only some of the time. The item mean was below the overall survey mean. Since 2009 this item has been among the relatively weak outcome items on the survey.

Outcome 5: Community Access

Items 14, 15, and 17 on the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of access to desired services, programs, and activities in the community. Item 17 regarding childcare is different than other outcome items on the survey because it is not applicable to a high proportion of respondents. This is problematic for aggregate statistics and analyses. The mean response for Outcome 5 excluding Item 17 ($M = 3.48, n = 73$) was above the survey mean ($M = 3.44, n = 71$). However, the mean response on Item 17 ($M = 3.36, n = 36$) would seem to pull down the result for Outcome 5 as a whole. Thus a more accurate estimate for the mean is approximately 3.42, or just below the overall survey mean.

The greatest strength in this outcome area was access to *excellent medical care* ($M = 3.58, n = 73$), and a relative weakness was access to *participate fully in the community* ($M = 3.36$), which has been a consistent pattern since the 2010 survey.

Item 14: We have excellent medical care for our child.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	1	1.4	Mean: 3.58 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .68552
2	Some of the time	5	6.8	
3	Most of the time	18	24.3	
4	All of the time	49	66.2	
Total Responses		73	98.6	
Missing		1	1.4	

A high 91% of caregivers indicated on Item 14 they had excellent medical care all (66%) or most (24%) of the time. About 8% indicated less access. The item mean was well above the overall survey mean. Response on this item tends to be the strongest within Outcome 5 and among the strongest outcome items on the survey, a pattern that continued in the 2015 survey.

Item 15: Our child has opportunities to fully participate in activities in the community (e.g., playing with others, social or religious events).

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	1	1.4	Mean: 3.36 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .76882
2	Some of the time	10	13.5	
3	Most of the time	24	32.4	
4	All of the time	39	52.7	
Total Responses		74	100	

On Item 15, about 85% of respondents indicated their children had opportunities for community inclusion most (32%) or all (53%) of the time. About 15% indicated less access. The item mean was below the overall survey mean. Response on this item dropped in 2010 and remained lower since that time. Since 2013 it has been a relatively weak item response within Outcome 5, but among non-satisfaction items on the 2015 survey it was an average response.

Item 17: We have excellent childcare for our child.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	1	2.8	Mean: 3.36 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .86694
2	Some of the time	6	16.7	
3	Most of the time	8	22.2	
4	All of the time	21	58.3	
Total Responses		36	100	
Not Applicable: 38 (51.4% of all respondents)				

To help clarify response on Item 17, “n/a” (not applicable) was added as a response option starting in in 2011. This helped to distinguish families that used or wanted childcare from those who chose not to have childcare. Prior to this improvement, “none of the time” responses could not be interpreted as a lack of access to quality childcare.

Just over half (51%) of families indicated this item was not applicable to their circumstances. Of the remaining 36 families, about 81% indicated they had excellent childcare, all (58%), or most (22%) of the time. A notable 19% indicated less access to quality childcare. The pattern of response on this item has been fairly consistent since 2011. In 2015 the mean response from this subset of families was under the overall survey mean, but among the non-satisfaction items it was an average response.

Outcome 6: Satisfaction with EI Services

Note: More detail about the regional patterns of response on satisfaction items is covered in a later section of this report, *Expanded Look at Satisfaction with EI/ILP Services*.

Item 16 on the survey consisted of the statement, “Our ILP provider has done an excellent job...” followed by three sub-items asking respondents to indicate the quality and effectiveness of services they received in three topical areas: helping us know our rights, helping us effectively

communicate our child’s needs, and helping us help our child develop and learn. The mean response for Outcome 6 ($M = 3.73, n = 71$) was far above the overall survey mean ($M = 3.44, n = 71$), which is a typical pattern for this outcome area.

As a whole, families indicated they were highly satisfied with the ILP services they had received during the 2014 calendar year. Each item result within Outcome 6 was very strong. However, there were two items with a significant difference in response based on the race of children, which is a highly unusual result for items within Outcome 6.

Item 16.1: Our ILP provider has done an excellent job helping us know our rights.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.74 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .55647
2	Some of the time	4	5.4	
3	Most of the time	11	14.9	
4	All of the time	57	77.0	
Total Responses		72	97.3	
Missing		2	2.7	

A high 92% of responding families indicated the ILP had done an excellent job helping them know their rights all (77%) or most (15%) of the time. The item mean was far above the overall survey mean. Typically there is a high response on this item.

The response on this item from families with Native children ($M = 3.61, n = 31$) was significantly lower than the response from families with White children ($M = 3.83, n = 35$): $t(64) = -1.552, p = .017$. As a follow-up, this item was tested for a rural-urban difference. Because there tends to be a higher proportion of Native families in rural areas, and a higher proportion of White families in urban areas, this is a potential confounding factor. There was a significant difference, but not in the direction one would expect for a confounding factor. The response from rural families ($M = 3.86, n = 37$) was significantly higher than the response from urban families ($M = 3.55, n = 29$): $t(37.690) = 2.114, p = .000$, equal variances not assumed.

Thus, even though the level of satisfaction on this item was high for the statewide group of responding families with Native children, they tended to feel they were less informed by an ILP about their rights as compared to families with White children. Urban caregivers of both Native and White children felt less informed than those in the corresponding rural families.

Item 16.2: Our ILP provider has done an excellent job helping us effectively communicate our child’s needs.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.71 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .48752
2	Some of the time	1	1.4	
3	Most of the time	19	25.7	
4	All of the time	52	70.3	
Total Responses		72	97.3	
Missing		2	2.7	

A very high 96% of responding families indicated the ILP had done an excellent job helping them effectively communicate their children’s needs all (70%) or most (26%) of the time. The item mean was far above the overall survey mean. Typically there is a high response on this item.

Item 16.3: Our ILP provider has done an excellent job helping us help our child develop and learn.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.76 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .49178
2	Some of the time	2	2.7	
3	Most of the time	13	17.6	
4	All of the time	56	75.7	
Total Responses		71	95.9	
Missing		3	4.1	

A high 93% of responding families indicated the ILP had done an excellent job helping them help their children develop and learn all (76%) or most (18%) of the time. The item mean was far above the overall survey mean. Typically there is a high response on this item.

Here again, there was a significant difference in response by the race of children, and again the lower response came from families with Native children ($M = 3.65, n = 31$) as compared to families with White children ($M = 3.83, n = 35$): $t(64) = -1.484, p = .003$. There was no evidence of any rural-urban difference on this item.

Thus, even though the level of satisfaction on this item was high for the group of responding families with Native children, they tended to feel that an ILP was less effective in helping them to help their children develop and learn as compared to families with White children.

Additional Items About Childcare

Prior to 2012, only Item 17 (included within Outcome 5) addressed childcare. Beginning in 2012, the EI/ILP added five more items about childcare because they wanted to gather more information from responding families about issues and community resources for childcare. In the 2015 survey instrument, all items relevant to regular childcare were presented together. Items 17-19 addressed personal experience with childcare and related issues, while items 20-22 addressed caregiver perceptions of childcare resources in the communities where they lived.

Item 18: Our ILP provider works closely with our childcare provider.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	9	30.0	Mean: 2.60 Median: 3 Mode: 4 SD: 1.27577
2	Some of the time	5	16.7	
3	Most of the time	5	16.7	
4	All of the time	11	36.7	
Total Responses		30	100	
Not Applicable: 44 (59.5% of all survey respondents)				

Guiding childcare providers is a way that ILP providers can make a direct contribution to the quality of childcare for young children with special needs. Thirty of the 74 families (41%) indicated Item 18 was applicable to their circumstances. Prior to 2014, about two-thirds of respondents indicated interaction between their ILP and childcare providers most or all of the time. In 2014, the pattern shifted with about half indicating their ILP providers never or only sometimes worked together. The pattern in 2015 was similar with 47% indicating this lack of interaction between providers.

Item 19 on the survey was addressed only to those families that did not have regular childcare at the time of the survey, and 41 caregivers responded (55% of all respondents). They were asked to indicate which one of three statements was most true for their family.

Of the 41 respondents on Item 19:

- ♦ 21 (51.2%) indicated they did not want regular childcare at that time.
- ♦ 2 (4.9%) indicated they wanted childcare, but had not looked for it yet.
- ♦ 18 (43.9%) indicated they wanted childcare, but could not find any that worked for them.

Figure 2 combines the response from families without regular childcare on Item 19 above with the response on Item 17 that indicated 21 families most likely had ongoing regular childcare at the time of the survey (responded “all of the time”). While any potential overlap in response should be minimal, it cannot be assumed the following represents an exact distribution in the sample because the data comes from two separate and different survey items.

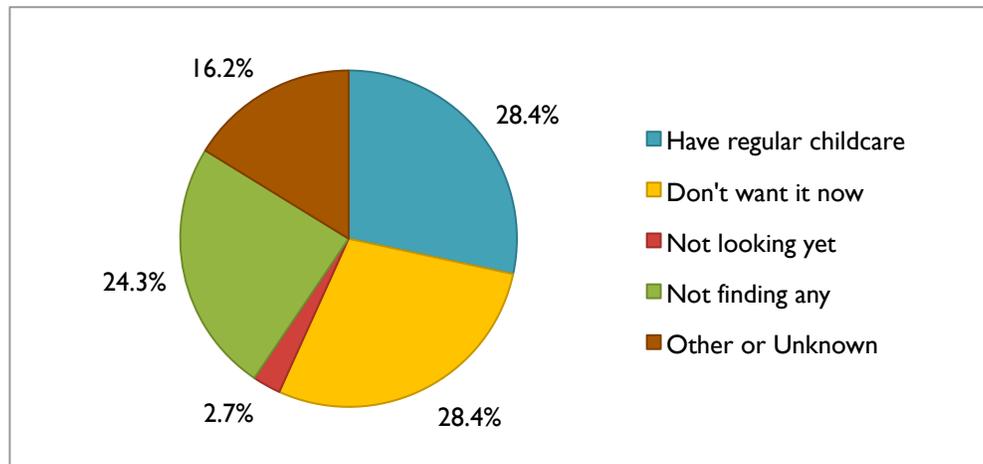


Figure 2: Status of regular childcare (estimates derived from Items 17 & 19)

It is not surprising when a large proportion of families without childcare simply do not want it. These are families with babies and toddlers, and it is not unusual for families with young children to opt for a stay-at-home caregiver if their circumstances allow for it. Using the estimates represented in Figure 2, the proportion of families indicating they had ongoing regular childcare in 2015 ($\cong 28\%$) was the same as in 2014 ($\cong 28\%$). However, the proportion of voluntary stay-at-home caregivers in 2015 ($\cong 28\%$) was much lower than the proportion in 2014 ($\cong 47\%$). Twice as many 2015 families wanted childcare and were having difficulties finding any that worked for them ($\cong 24\%$ as compared to $\cong 12\%$).

Childcare Resources in Communities

Item 20: There is childcare where we live that is able to care for children with special needs.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	15	40.5	Mean: 2.19 Median: 2 Mode: 1 SD: 1.17468
2	Some of the time	7	18.9	
3	Most of the time	8	21.6	
4	All of the time	7	18.9	
Total Responses		37	100	
I don't know: 37 (50.0% of all survey respondents)				

Half (50%) of survey respondents indicated on Item 20 that they did not know if there were childcare providers in their community who were able to care for children with special needs. Of the 37 who responded to Item 20, 41% indicated this resource was available where they lived all (19%) or most (22%) of the time. The majority (59%) indicated this resource was never (41%) or only sometimes (19%) available. Overall this is a more negative pattern of results than it was in 2014 when respondents were more evenly split on this item.

Item 21: Childcare seems to be important to our whole community.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	4	7.3	Mean: 3.18 Median: 3 Mode: 4 SD: .96400
2	Some of the time	9	16.4	
3	Most of the time	15	27.3	
4	All of the time	27	49.1	
Total Responses		55	100	
I don't know: 19 (25.7% of all survey respondents)				

Just over a quarter of respondents (19 or 26%) indicated on Item 21 that they did not know about the perception in their communities about the importance of childcare. Of the 55 who responded, about 76% indicated childcare was important all (49%) or most (27%) of the time. About 24% indicated this was sometimes (16%) or never (7%) true. This was a somewhat more positive pattern of results than the previous year.

Item 22: There is a childcare provider we can use who can follow our child's IFSP.

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	11	28.9	Mean: 2.74 Median: 3 Mode: 4 SD: 1.30869
2	Some of the time	5	13.2	
3	Most of the time	5	13.2	
4	All of the time	17	44.7	
Total Responses		38	100	
I don't know: 36 (48.6% of all respondents)				

Almost half of survey respondents (36 or 49%) indicated they did not know if there were childcare providers in their communities who could follow their children's IFSPs. Of the 38 who

responded to Item 22, more than half (58%) indicated this resource was available where they lived all (45%) or most (13%) of the time. The remaining 42% indicated this resource was never (29%) or only sometimes (13%) available. There was a similar pattern of results in the previous year, much more positive than the two prior survey years.

Expanded Look at Satisfaction with EI/ILP Services

The three items measuring satisfaction with EI services have remained exactly the same since the 2008 survey. Thus it is particularly valid to track these responses over time.

Combining responses on the three satisfaction items, the mean satisfaction response in 2015 was 3.73 ($n = 71$) on 1-4 scale. The vast majority of families (approximately 94%) were satisfied most or all of the time. Even though there was a downturn in satisfaction in 2012, the level of satisfaction in 2015 continues an overall upward trend. The pattern of satisfaction results since 2008 is illustrated in Figure 3.

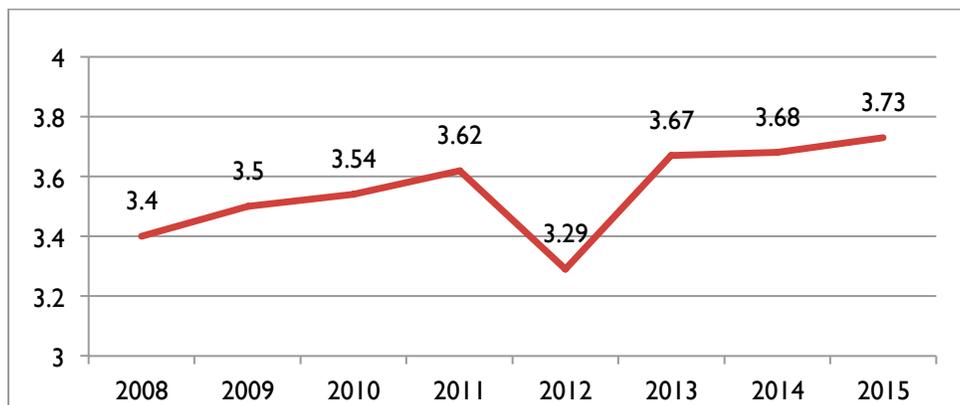


Figure 3: Overall satisfaction pattern from the 2008 through 2015 surveys

Overall Satisfaction by Region

Table 7 shows the mean responses on the combined satisfaction items in the 2015 survey for each EI/ILP region. The highest mean response was in the Southcentral Region, but there were no statistically meaningful differences in satisfaction based on region of residence. Satisfaction was very high in every region on this measure in 2015.

Table 7: Overall satisfaction by EI/ILP region (combined results on 3 satisfaction items)

Region	n^*	M
Northern Region: ACC, NSH, NWA, TCC	18	3.63
Anchorage Region: PIC, FOC	29	3.70
Southcentral Region: BBA, KAN, MSU, YKH	14	3.90
Southeast Region: CFC, CCK, FCS, REA, SFS, SVC	10	3.77
Statewide	71	3.73

*Note: Cases with missing data on individual items are excluded from aggregate analyses.

Regional and ILP Grantee Results on Satisfaction Items

Caveat: When the data is broken down by item and by region, each rating becomes a less reliable indicator on its own. When this data is further broken down by grantee, a “sample” could be a single family. Therefore, one should use some caution in making absolute judgments about ILP agencies or regions using these results, as well as how agencies or regions compare with each other. The reader is asked to keep this caveat in mind when looking at the following examination of satisfaction results.

Notes: The number of responses in the following tables varies by grantee agency and by region because the size of the service population varies proportionately. The target group was stratified by ILP service areas to be more representative of the statewide service population.

The key words used to refer to each of the three satisfaction items in subsequent tables are capped and bolded in the text from Item 16 below.

Our ILP provider has done an excellent job...

- helping us know our **RIGHTS**.
- helping us effectively communicate our child’s **NEEDS**.
- helping us help our child develop and **LEARN**.

Regional mean ratings on each of the three satisfaction items are shown in Table 8. Most often, regional means can be relatively lower or higher than others, but not dramatically different. This held true in 2015 results in that there were no statistically meaningful differences. However, it is noteworthy that the Southcentral Region results for both Need and Learn ($M = 3.93$) were exceptionally high on this measure.

Table 8: Mean satisfaction responses by EI/ILP region (Scale 1-4)

	EI/ILP Region	ILP Grantees	RIGHTS	NEED	LEARN	<i>n</i>
1	Northern	ACC, NWA, NSH, TCC	3.72	3.56	3.61	18
2	Anchorage	PIC, FOC	3.63	3.70	3.79	29-30
3	Southcentral	BBA, KAN, MSU, YKH	3.86	3.93	3.93	14
4	Southeast	CFC, CCK, FCS, REA, SFS, SVC	3.90	3.70	3.70	10
		Statewide	3.74	3.71	3.76	71-72

Note: All reported means are rounded up. An overall item mean is figured on the total number of responses, thus it may not equal an average of the other rounded means reported in the table.

Table 9 shows satisfaction item data broken down by ILP grantees. In 2015 only one result went below a strong mean of 3.50. There were no respondents from 3 grantee areas. The number of respondents in each service area is too small to statistically test for any meaningful differences among them. Sometimes the means in Table 9 represent responses of only one or two people.

Table 9: Mean satisfaction responses by ILP grantee (Scale 1-4)

	ILP Grantee (EI/ILP Code)	RIGHTS	NEED	LEARN	n
1	Alaska Center for Children & Adults (ACC)	3.79	3.57	3.71	14
2	Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBA)	3.67	4.00	4.00	3
3	Center for Community (CFC)	---	---	---	---
4	Community Connections (CCK)	4.00	3.50	3.50	2
5	FOCUS (FOC)	3.71	3.71	3.71	7
6	Frontier Community Services (FCS)	3.67	3.67	3.67	3
7	Kodiak Area Native Association (KAN)	4.00	4.00	4.00	1
8	Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults (MSU)	4.00	4.00	4.00	5
9	Northwest Arctic Borough S.D. (NWA)	3.50	3.50	3.00	2
10	Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSH)	---	---	---	---
11	Programs for Infants & Children (PIC)	3.61	3.70	3.82	22-23
12	REACH, Inc. (REA)	4.00	3.75	3.75	4
13	SeaView Community Services (SVC)	---	---	---	---
14	Sprout Family Services (SFS)	4.00	4.00	4.00	1*
15	Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)	3.50	3.50	3.50	2
16	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp. (YKH)	3.80	3.80	3.80	5*
	Statewide	3.74	3.71	3.76	71-72

Note: All reported means are rounded to two decimal points. The overall mean is figured on the total number of responses, and does not necessarily equal an average of the rounded means in the table. *Denotes missing data (1) on each of the three satisfaction items.

Regional Satisfaction Patterns

The following narrative takes a closer look at details of responses on the three satisfaction items within each region. It also looks more closely at regional proportions of respondents who indicated they were satisfied all or most of the time on each item. There is more confidence in regional level results if regional response rates were acceptable and the responding sample seems to be representative. These conditions were satisfactorily met, but there is less confidence in results for the Southeast Region due to a lower response rate. Figure 4 illustrates relative responses on the three satisfaction items across the four EI/ILP regions.

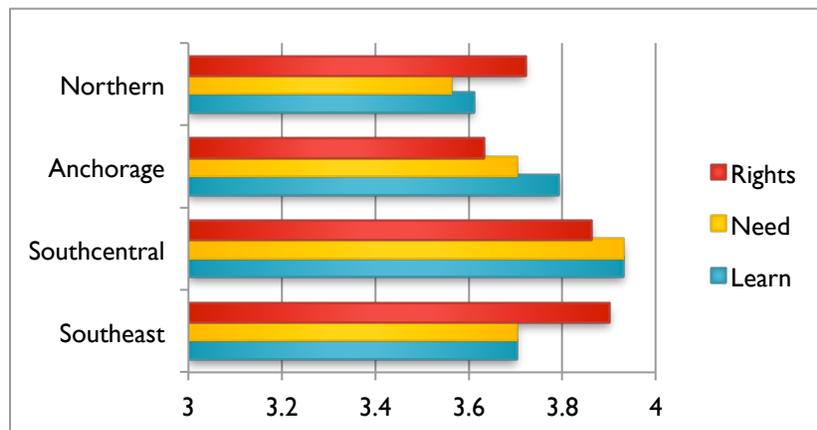


Figure 4: Mean satisfaction results in EI/ILP regions

Table 10 is a summary of the percentages of the total number of respondents in each region who indicated satisfaction on each item most or all of the time. Unlike statistical summaries of scale ratings, this measure is figured against all potential respondents. Thus missing data lowers percentages. Both Southcentral and Southeast had missing data on each satisfaction item. Results on this measure were fairly similar across regions with percentages of 90% or better.

Table 10: Summary of satisfaction percentages by EI/ILP region

	EI/ILP Region	ILP Grantees	RIGHTS%	NEED%	LEARN%	n
1	Northern	ACC, NWA, NSH, TCC	94	94	94	18
2	Anchorage	PIC, FOC	90	100	93	30
3	Southcentral	BBA, KAN, MSU, YKH	93	93	93	15
4	Southeast	CFC, CCK, FCS, REA, SFS, SVC	91	91	91	11
	Statewide		92	96	93	74

Note: Percentages in the following tables are rounded to one decimal point, and may not always add up to exactly 100%.

Northern Region

Forty-six percent (46%) of contacted families in the Northern Region responded to the 2015 survey. Of the 18 respondents, most noted an ILP did an excellent job most or all of the time helping them to know their **rights** (94%), helping them to effectively communicate their children's **needs** (94%), and helping them to help their children develop and **learn** (94%). This was a typical response for the region on this measure, and somewhat higher than last year.

The Northern Region had a high satisfaction mean ($M = 3.63$), but it was below the survey's statewide satisfaction mean ($M = 3.73$, $n = 71$). The individual item means ranged from 3.56 to 3.72. Overall, satisfaction ratings were high in the Northern Region, with a relatively weaker response on *helping families communicate their children's needs*.

Northern Region: RIGHTS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.72 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .57451
2	Some of the time	1	5.6	
3	Most of the time	3	16.7	
4	All of the time	14	77.8	
Total Responses		18	100	

Northern Region: NEEDS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.56 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .61570
2	Some of the time	1	5.6	
3	Most of the time	6	33.3	
4	All of the time	11	61.1	
Total Responses		18	100	

Northern Region: LEARN

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.61 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .60768
2	Some of the time	1	5.6	
3	Most of the time	5	27.8	
4	All of the time	12	66.7	
Total Responses		18	100	

Anchorage Region

The Anchorage Region had the highest regional response rate at 54% of contacted families in the region. Of the 30 respondents, most noted an ILP did an excellent job most or all of the time helping them to know their **rights** (90%), helping them to effectively communicate their children’s **needs** (100%), and helping them to help their children develop and **learn** (93%). This represents a sustained improvement on this measure for the region.

The satisfaction mean for the Anchorage Region ($M = 3.70, n = 29$) was very high and close to the overall satisfaction mean ($M = 3.73, n = 71$). Item means ranged from 3.63 to 3.79. Overall, satisfaction ratings were very high in the Anchorage Region.

Anchorage Region: RIGHTS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.63 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .66868
2	Some of the time	3	10.0	
3	Most of the time	5	16.7	
4	All of the time	22	73.3	
Total Responses		30	100	

Anchorage Region: NEEDS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.70 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .46609
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	9	30.0	
4	All of the time	21	70.0	
Total Responses		30	100	

Anchorage Region: LEARN

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.79 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .49130
2	Some of the time	1	3.3	
3	Most of the time	4	13.3	
4	All of the time	24	80.0	
Total Responses		29	96.7	
Missing		1	3.3	

Southcentral Region

Forty-five percent (45%) of contacted families in the Southcentral Region responded to the 2015 survey. Of the 15 respondents, most noted an ILP did an excellent job, most or all of the time, helping them to know their **rights** (93%), helping them to effectively communicate their children's **needs** (93%), and helping them to help their children develop and **learn** (93%). It is worth noting that these percentages were lowered due to missing data on all three items. Of the 14 respondents who completed each item, 100% indicated the ILP did an excellent job most or all of the time.

The satisfaction mean for the Southcentral Region ($M = 3.90$, $n = 14$) was exceptionally high, above the survey's overall satisfaction mean ($M = 3.73$, $n = 71$). Item means ranged from 3.86 to 3.93. Overall, satisfaction ratings were exceptionally high in the Southcentral Region.

Southcentral Region: RIGHTS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.86 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .36314
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	2	13.3	
4	All of the time	12	80.0	
Total Responses		14	93.3	
Missing		1	6.7	

Southcentral Region: NEEDS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.93 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .26726
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	1	6.7	
4	All of the time	13	86.7	
Total Responses		14	93.3	
Missing		1	6.7	

Southcentral Region: LEARN

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.93 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .26726
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	1	6.7	
4	All of the time	13	86.7	
Total Responses		14	93.3	
Missing		1	6.7	

Southeast Region

The Southeast Region had the lowest response rate at 41% of contacted families in the region. Of the 11 who responded, most indicated the ILP did an excellent job most or all of the time helping them to know their **rights** (91%), helping them to effectively communicate their children's **needs** (91%), and helping them to help their children develop and **learn** (91%). While any percentage at 90% or above is considered high, these results represent a lower result than what is typical for the region on this measure. Here again, these results were lowered due to missing data on all three items. Of the 10 respondents who completed each item, 100% indicated the ILP did an excellent job most or all of the time.

The satisfaction mean for the Southeast region was very high ($M = 3.77$, $n = 10$), above the survey's overall satisfaction mean ($M = 3.73$, $n = 71$). Item means ranged from 3.70 to 3.90. Overall, satisfaction ratings were very high in the Southeast Region.

Southeast Region: RIGHTS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.90 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .31623
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	1	9.1	
4	All of the time	9	81.8	
Total Responses		10	90.9	
Missing		1	9.1	

Southeast Region: NEEDS

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.70 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .48305
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	3	27.3	
4	All of the time	7	63.6	
Total Responses		10	90.9	
Missing		1	9.1	

Southeast Region: LEARN

Rating		Frequency	Percent	Central Tendency
1	None of the time	---	---	Mean: 3.70 Median: 4 Mode: 4 SD: .48305
2	Some of the time	---	---	
3	Most of the time	3	27.3	
4	All of the time	7	63.6	
Total Responses		10	90.9	
Missing		1	9.1	

Discussion of Comments Added to Surveys

The second page of the EI/ILP 2015 Family Outcomes Survey instrument invited caregivers to make comments. Thirty-three caregivers, or 45% of respondents added comments to their surveys. Some comments are included in the following text as examples or to illustrate themes. In the body of the report, long comments may be cut down or only parts of comments relevant to a theme included, but full comments are listed in Appendix B.

Notes: Because researchers at the Center for Human Development have a responsibility to take reasonable measures to protect identities of survey respondents, identifying information respondents included in comments was excluded or replaced with generic terms in brackets. This type of information included names of respondents, children, service providers, programs, areas of residence, or any contact information. If a specific disability or a lot of information relevant to a specific medical condition and/or personal circumstances seemed to make a respondent more identifiable, all or parts of the information may have been excluded or replaced with generic terms. If comments or parts of comments were clearly not at all relevant to ILP services or childcare they may have been excluded.

Expressions of Gratitude & Satisfaction

Fourteen, or 42% of the 33 respondents who added a comment clearly used it as an opportunity to express positive statements of gratitude or to further highlight their satisfaction with programs, services, or providers. Examples:

[Name] did an amazing job in helping our family. She had wonderful ideas and came up with ideas to try we had not considered. She went above and beyond to help us find the resources we needed...

What an amazing program, and we are grateful to be able to enroll our son in it.

[Name] was awesome. We still miss her and our son still talks about her even though it has been months since she left. The person who replaced her was great, too....

We have been working with [ILP] and have loved everyone there. It will be sad when our son turns 3 (soon) and we have to say goodbye to the ILP world!

...Our child's provider did an AWESOME job of building rapport with our son as well as the rest of the family. We really felt that the [ILP] program and provider helped our son transition developmentally.

[Name] worked with our daughter for almost a year.... She was a great help and support to us and did a great job teaching us different ways to help our daughter grow her skills!

Mixed Expressions of Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction

There were 3 comments (9% of the 33 commenters) where caregivers indicated positive things along with an indication there was something not as satisfying about their total experience. The following example illustrates the mixed nature of these comments.

The ILP really helped with my daughter and working with my schedule, but the [position] quit so we have not been going.

Expressions of Frustration or Other Indications of Dissatisfaction

Three respondents (3 or 9% of commenters) added comments that purely expressed frustration or dissatisfaction. These and portions of 3 mixed comments were considered negative because they indicated a lack of quality in services families received or a lack of access to services families needed or wanted. Only the comments or parts of comments that illustrate these two themes are included here. Full comments are included in Appendix B.

Theme: Lack of Quality

Two comments expressed something relevant to a lack of quality in the services families received.

...I would have liked to have had more interaction between my ILP provider and other service providers. I wish they would have shared information with us readily, instead of waiting until we asked for it. I also would have liked to connect with other parents in the same situation, like in a support group. One thing that is difficult in the current system is that there is a drop off in services at every transition point.

Entire process is very confusing. I'm not sure what ILP is - I am assuming it is [ILP]. So much information and different agencies that do different things, but no one can answer questions for another agency, so I don't understand most of the things concerning my child's special care agencies. As he grows, we are more confused by the different programs.

Theme: Lack of Access

Four comments expressed something relevant to difficulties accessing services, or limited access due to a lack of resources.

I did not feel like I could insist on more (necessary) services for my child. I know that I have the "right" to choose, but the ILP would refuse to provide anything more than "consults" and evaluations, and consistently referred us to private providers. We were told that resources weren't available.

...it would have been nice to have more one-on-one time with a speech specialist.

...it would have been nice if they had professionals in the program who could provide services while they were with us in the home rather than sending us outside the program to find other people who could provide the services.

...the [position] quit so we have not been going.

Childcare Comments

The survey has items to help ascertain community access to childcare, so it is not surprising when caregivers address childcare issues in their comments. Ten respondents added something

about childcare. In two of these cases, a portion of the respondent’s comment was about ILP services and a portion was about childcare. The portions relevant to childcare were separated out and are listed with the other childcare comments in Appendix B.

The overall availability of quality childcare resources in a community is beyond the scope of ILP responsibility. However, informing families about how to find childcare resources, or helping a childcare provider work with a child’s special needs are within the scope of ILP services. Two of the childcare comments were relevant to how an ILP could assist caregivers in this regard.

It would be interesting to know if there are any childcare resources in my community for children with special needs.

...His daycare is not educated on dealing with children with special needs....

Other Comments

There were five “Other” comments that did not fit in above categories. Four noted personal circumstances, without expressing either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with ILP services. One expressed confusion about an item on the survey that referenced the “IFSP.”

Nature of Comments by Region

The subset of respondents who voluntarily added comments to surveys cannot be considered representative of the population that received services, either statewide or regionally. Therefore, it is not appropriate to broadly judge an entire region or programs within regions based strictly on comments. With that caveat in mind, Table 11 shows the nature of comments sorted by EI/ILP regions.

Table 11: Distribution of comments by EI/ILP regions

EI/ILP Region	ILP Grantees	Positive	Mixed	Negative	Childcare*	Other	Totals
Northern	ACC, NWA, NSH, TCC	4	3	---	2	---	9
Anchorage	PIC, FOC	6	---	3	2(2)	3	14(2)
Southcentral	BBA, KAN, MSU, YKH	1	---	---	1	2	4
Southeast	CFC, CCK, FCS, REA, SFS, SVC	3	---	---	3	---	6
Statewide		14	3	3	8(2)	5	33(2)

*Numbers in parentheses represent portions of other comments that were specific to childcare.

Note: Upon request, de-identified comments are shared with the State EI/ILP office separate from this report sorted by the ILP area of origin. This information is treated as confidential for their use only. From a management standpoint, this allows the EI/ILP office to pinpoint specific problems for targeted training/intervention for ILP staff.

Conclusions

It can be concluded from the results of the 2015 Family Outcomes Survey that the vast majority of families (approximately 94%) were satisfied all ($\cong 74.3\%$) or most ($\cong 19.4\%$) of the time with the ILP services they received during the 2014 calendar year. Generally, caregivers tended to be confident in their knowledge and abilities, and available resources usually served their needs.

Overall family satisfaction continued at a high level, and it was consistently high across regions. Even though satisfaction was high for both families with Native and White children, the significant differences by race on two satisfaction items deserve some attention. The available evidence suggests these are actual differences by race.

Figure 5 shows the aspects of family knowledge, resources, and abilities from strongest to weakest, as measured in the 2015 survey (i.e., excluding satisfaction items). The dashed line represents a mean of 3.50, which can be considered a benchmark for very strong outcomes. Even though no improvements could be statistically verified in item responses between 2015 and 2014, there were more items in 2015 that passed the 3.50 benchmark for strength (5 non-satisfaction items as compared to 1 in 2014). One item moved from among the weakest in 2014 to a high average response in 2015 (i.e., *knows what to do if not satisfied with EI services*).

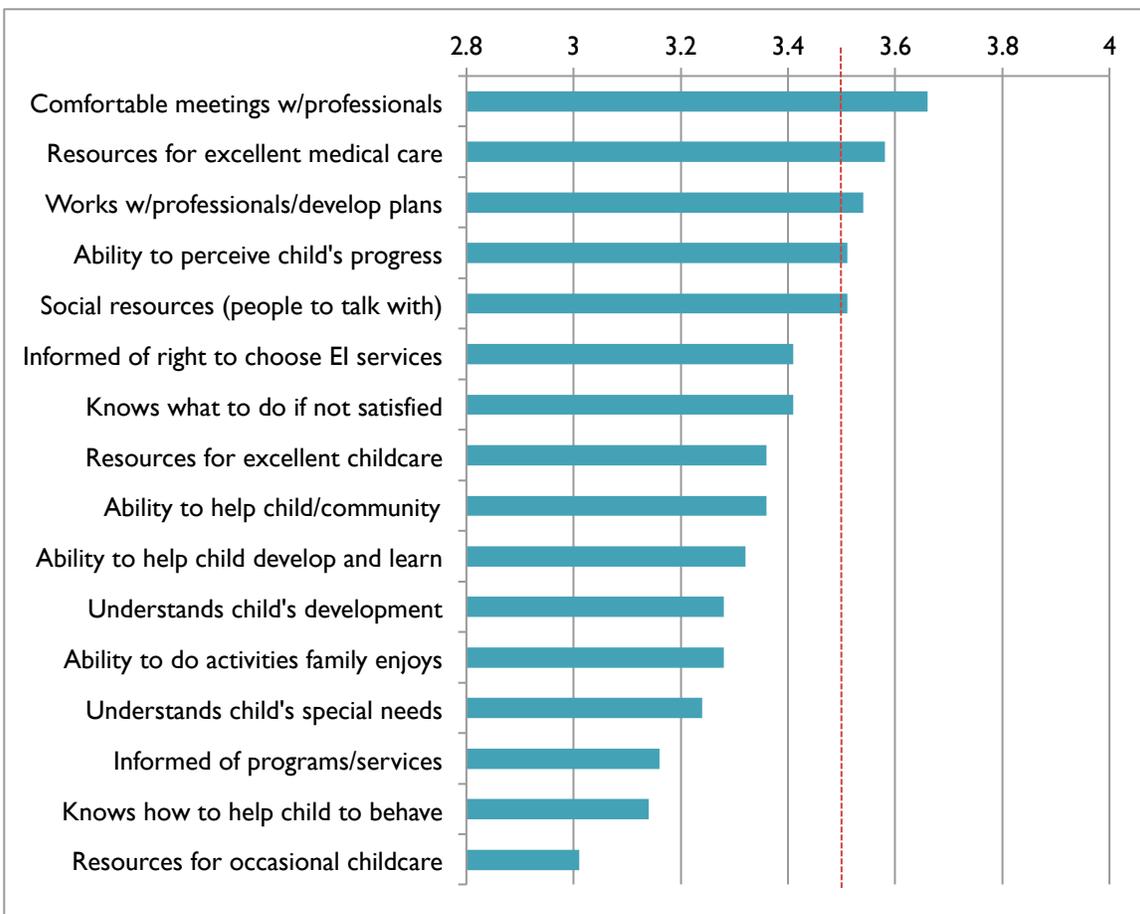


Figure 5: Relative strengths and weaknesses in family outcomes

Regarding childcare issues, the availability of childcare in communities is beyond the scope of ILP responsibility. However, an area where ILP providers can make a difference in the quality of local childcare is in working with childcare providers to help them understand and address the special needs of young children they both serve. The evidence in this survey suggested that as a whole, fewer children and families have been receiving this benefit since the 2013 survey. Two caregivers added comments indicating how an ILP could have assisted them: informing them about childcare providers that serve children with special needs, and educating a daycare provider in dealing with a child's special needs.

Recommendations for Future Survey Administration

It is recommended that the Alaska State EI/ILP office continue to use aspects of methodology that have evolved over time for its Family Outcomes Survey. This includes using a randomly selected 20% target group stratified by geography and by race of children, multiple options for responding, and follow-up by phone and reminder postcards. This is an effective balance of good science with reasonable cost.

Data entry on race/ethnicity in the field has improved immensely. However, indicating corresponding races when Hispanic/Latino is indicated continued to be an issue for data entered by 6 of the 16 grantees.

Non-working phone numbers continued to be an issue. In 2015 this was particularly evident in rural areas: 74% of non-working numbers belonged to rural residents. This was likely a factor in the low response rate in one region. The largest portion of non-working numbers tends to be those that are not working, disconnected, or out of service. It is a known phenomenon that sometimes families delay paying phone bills until they can afford it. There is also anecdotal evidence of an increasing dependence in rural areas on disposable phones with prepaid minutes.

In terms of instrumentation, one person who responded by mail noted confusion about the item that used the abbreviation "IFSP." In phone calls, there was a tendency for callers to automatically clarify this item by adding, "your plan." While it is not unreasonable to expect these families be familiar with this jargon of the field, it might be worth revising this item with terminology that is more readily understood by the public.

It has previously been recommended to consider replacing the 4-point Likert scale with one that has more points (more sensitive to change) and/or an interval scale where only the end-points are labeled (superior design for statistical analysis). There are a number of advantages to keeping the current scale. It is not only congruent with Native ways of thinking, but seems to be quickly understood by all respondents, which works well over the phone. It also makes it easier to compare results with previous years, allowing for statistical tests with past results that used the same scale. However, a 4-point scale is not very sensitive. This is problematic in terms of statistical analyses. It is likely there are meaningful differences in results that cannot be detected or confirmed because of a lack of sensitivity in the scale.

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Alaska's Early Intervention / Infant Learning Program

2015 FAMILY OUTCOMES SURVEY

Appendix A

EI/ILP Invitational Letter to Families 2015 Family Outcomes Survey Instrument

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March 2015

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Hello! The State of Alaska Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program is looking for ways to improve early services for children. You can help by completing the enclosed brief survey, which has questions about the services your child received during the previous year from one of the community Early Intervention/Infant Learning Programs. There is a map and list of those programs on the back of this letter for your reference. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and we hope you will take about 5-10 minutes to give your feedback.

The UAA Center for Human Development (CHD) is an independent contractor collecting the surveys and they will be the only ones to see completed surveys. You can use the enclosed paper copy and return it to CHD in the postage-paid envelope, or you can complete it online at this address: <http://bit.ly/1BdavUA>. You can also call CHD toll-free at 1-800-243-2199 weekdays between 9am and 4pm and ask to complete the "Family Outcomes Survey" over the phone.

You can be sure that your responses will be confidential. The staff from the State EI/ILP will not see individual surveys at any time. No individual responses will be identified. Your answers will be grouped together with those from other families. By returning a completed survey or completing it online or over the phone, you are agreeing to participate.

If you choose the online or phone option, please have this letter handy as you will need the "Survey Verification Number" printed at the bottom to begin the survey. CHD will use this number for two purposes: 1) To check it off a list so we stop contacting you for this year's survey, and 2) To enter you into a drawing for a thank you gift.

As a thank you for completing the survey, you will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift card from a choice of Amazon, Walmart, or Fred Meyers. Ten gift cards will be given out.

If CHD has not heard from you in a couple of weeks, they will give you a call or send a reminder. Please complete the survey no later than April 30. If you have any questions about this survey, you are welcome to contact me at (907) 269-3423. Thank you very much for your help!

Sincerely,

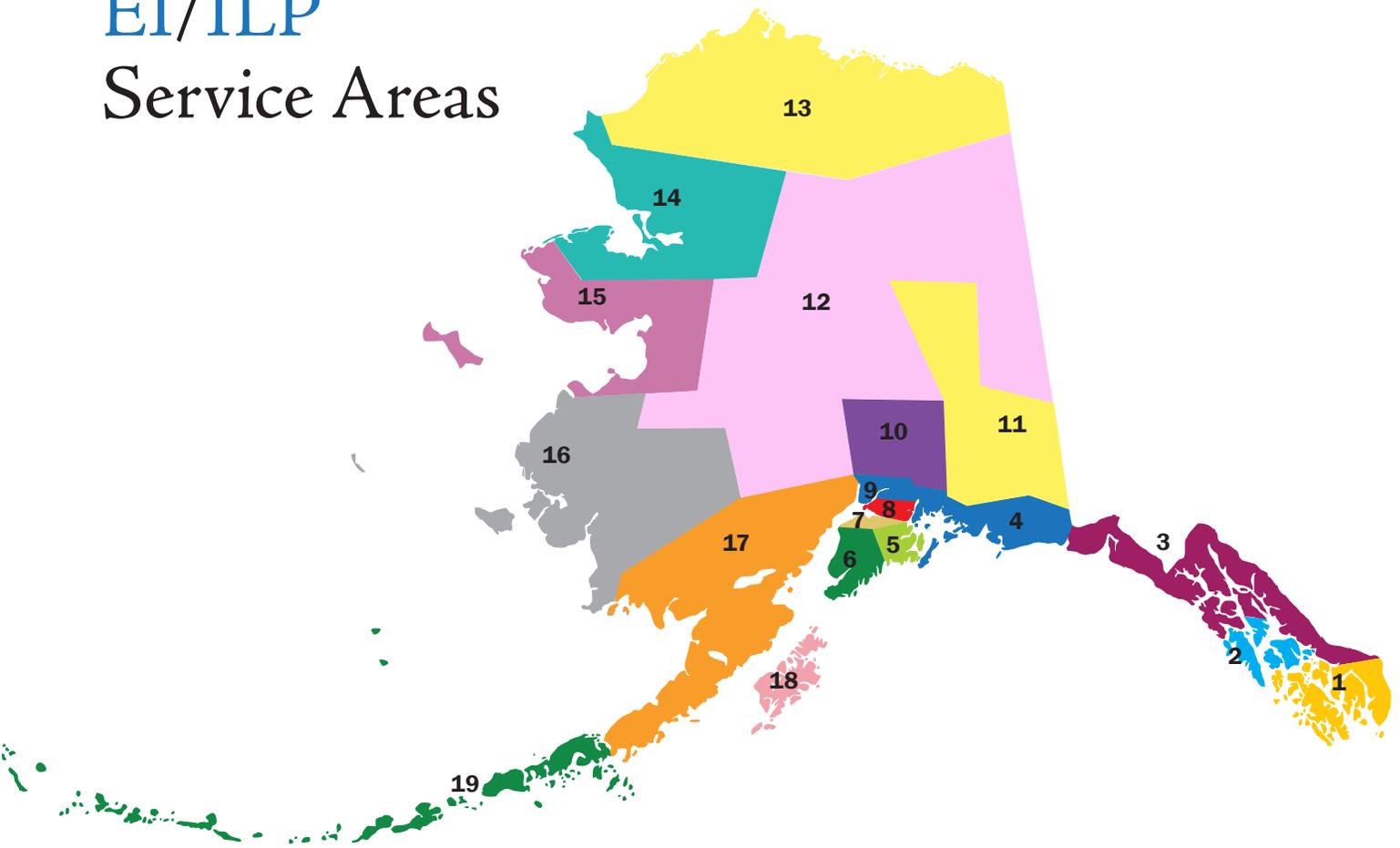
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie Thomas".

Laurie Thomas
Alaska Part C Coordinator
Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program

Survey Verification Number:

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in program evaluation, please contact
Sharilyn Mumaw, Research Integrity Compliance Officer
UAA Office of Research and Graduate Studies: (907) 786-1099

EI/ILP Service Areas



- 1** Community Connections Ketchikan
- 2** Center for Community Early Learning Program
- 3** REACH, Inc
- 4** Family Outreach Center
- 5** SeaView Community Services
- 6** Sprout Family Services - Birth to Three ILP
- 7** Frontier Community Services Early Intervention Program
- 8** PIC - Programs for Infants and Children
- 9** Family Outreach Center for Understanding Special Needs - ILP
- 10** Mat-Su Borough ILP
- 11** ACCA - Alaska Center for Children and Adults
- 12** Tanana Chiefs Conference - ILP
- 13** ACCA - Alaska Center for Children and Adults
- 14** Northwest Arctic School District - ILP
- 15** Norton Sound Health Corporation - ILP
- 16** Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation - Family Infant Toddler Program
- 17** Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation - BBAHC - ILP
- 18** Kodiak Area Native Association - ILP
- 19** Sprout Family Services - Birth to Three ILP

Family Outcomes Survey

Please circle the number that best reflects how often each statement is true for you and your family. Circle **only one number** for each answer. It is okay if you are answering just for yourself (your own opinion or experience) or as a family with shared opinions or experiences.

The statements refer to a “child” but we know some families have more than one child in the program. In those cases your answers reflect your general or averaged opinions or experiences.

None of the Time
Some of the Time
Most of the Time
All of the Time

1. Our child is growing and learning and we understand our child's development very well.	1	2	3	4
2. We know most of what we need to know about our child's special needs.	1	2	3	4
3. We can tell if our child is making progress.	1	2	3	4
4. We are fully informed about the programs and services that are available for our child and family.	1	2	3	4
5. We have been informed of our right to choose which Early Intervention services we receive.	1	2	3	4
6. We are comfortable participating in meetings with professionals to plan services or activities for our child.	1	2	3	4
7. We know what to do if we are not satisfied with any part of our child's program and services.	1	2	3	4
8. We know how to help our child develop and learn.	1	2	3	4
9. We know how to help our child learn to behave.	1	2	3	4
10. Our family has worked with professionals to develop a plan to help our child learn new skills.	1	2	3	4
11. There are people we can talk with any time we want, to help us deal with problems or celebrate when good things happen.	1	2	3	4
12. We have people we can call on for help when we need someone to watch our child for a short time.	1	2	3	4
13. We are able to do the activities our family enjoys.	1	2	3	4
14. We have excellent medical care for our child.	1	2	3	4
15. Our child has opportunities to fully participate in activities in the community (e.g., playing with others, social or religious events).	1	2	3	4
16. Our ILP provider has done an excellent job...				
-- helping us know our rights.	1	2	3	4
-- helping us effectively communicate our child's needs.	1	2	3	4
-- helping us help our child develop and learn.	1	2	3	4

The next few items are about your experience with childcare for your child. If an item is not relevant to your situation, you can say “n/a.”

17. We have excellent childcare for our child.	1	2	3	4	n/a
18. Our ILP provider works closely with our childcare provider.	1	2	3	4	n/a

Please continue on the other side...

19. If you do not have regular childcare, please check which is most true:

- We don't want regular childcare at this time
- We want childcare, but have not looked for it yet
- We want childcare, but can't find any that works for us at this time
- n/a

The next few statements are about childcare resources in your community. If you are not aware of a resource, you can say "don't know."

	None of the Time	Some of the Time	Most of the Time	All of the Time	
20. There is childcare where we live that is able to care for children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	don't know
21. Childcare seems to be important to our whole community.	1	2	3	4	don't know
22. There is a childcare provider we can use who can follow our child's IFSP.	1	2	3	4	don't know

Please note that comments written below go directly to the researcher. Your confidentiality is protected, so names or identifying information will not be included with your comments in any summaries or reports. That means that the State EI/ILP office will not be able to answer personal questions or concerns written here. You are always welcome to communicate with them directly using the contact information in the letter that accompanied this survey.

Comments:

Gift card preference (for drawing): ___Amazon ___Walmart ___Fred Meyer

Please return the completed survey in the prepaid envelope to:

UAA Center for Human Development
 2702 Gambell St., Suite 103
 Anchorage, AK 99503
 Attn: Roxy, Research/Evaluation

Thank you very much for taking your time to complete this survey!

Alaska's Early Intervention / Infant Learning Program
2015 FAMILY OUTCOMES SURVEY

Appendix B

Comments Added to the 2015 Family Outcomes Survey

Comments Added to Surveys

Notes: As comments were typed from paper surveys or notes from telephone calls, typical spell-check corrections were allowed as long as it was clear what word a respondent intended. Some shorthand notations were changed into words, but abbreviations common to the spoken language within this population were retained. For example, “w/o” would be typed as “without,” but “OT” and “PT” would be left as written or spoken.

In addition, researchers at the Center for Human Development have a responsibility to take reasonable measures to protect the identities of survey respondents. Thus any information that could reasonably be expected to lead to the identity of a respondent was either omitted from this report or replaced with generic terms in brackets. If comments or parts of comments were clearly not at all relevant to ILP services or childcare they were excluded.

There were 33 respondents (45% of all respondents) who added comments to surveys. In two cases, a portion of a comment was relevant to the ILP and a portion was specific to childcare. The portions relevant to childcare were grouped with the childcare comments.

Expressions of Gratitude & Satisfaction (14 or 42% of 33 commenters)

[Name] did an amazing job in helping our family. She had wonderful ideas and came up with ideas to try we had not considered. She went above and beyond to help us find the resources we needed. [Another Name] was also amazing with our daughter.

I am grateful for all services I have received for my daughter. Staff have gone above and beyond, and I thank them dearly.

I am very grateful for the time spent with us. We would not have known a lot of the things going on with [Child] if [ILP provider] had not come to visit us.

[Name] worked with our daughter for almost a year. (She's 3 now and in Special Ed Pre-K at [Place]). She was a great help and support to us and did a great job teaching us different ways to help our daughter grow her skills!

What an amazing program, and we are grateful to be able to enroll our son in it.

ILP has helped our son in every way imaginable! He has become more well rounded and when he has a hard day, ILP is very understanding and patient. I love the ILP program in [Community]. Thank you.

We moved to [State] in [Month]. [ILP] did a great job. He was almost two and they were wonderful setting up his services.

[Name] was awesome. We still miss her and our son still talks about her even though it has been months since she left. The person who replaced her was great, too. I wish we still lived there because the program was great.

[Child] has received excellent care and we are very happy with the services.

We have been working with [ILP] and have loved everyone there. It will be sad when our son turns 3 (soon) and we have to say goodbye to the ILP world!

[Name] has been available and very detailed with services provided.

Our child was part of the [Service] program for the [Community] area. We felt well taken care of and able to ask questions at any time. Our child's provider did an AWESOME job of building rapport with our son as well as the rest of the family. We really felt that the [ILP] program and provider helped our son transition developmentally.

I feel that the ILP program is very helpful and important for parents and children.

I am happy our daughter received services. Everything is going well.

Mixed Expressions of Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction (3 or 9% of 33 commenters)

My newborn did not quite qualify for services, but I have been using all the techniques I learned with the other child who was in the program. I am sure that's why my youngest is doing so well. I am very satisfied with the services I received, but it would have been nice to have more one-on-one time with a speech specialist.

It was awesome of them to come to our home and share a lot of information with us about what was available for our child. However, it would have been nice if they had professionals in the program who could provide services while they were with us in the home rather than sending us outside the program to find other people who could provide the services.

The ILP really helped with my daughter and working with my schedule, but the [position] quit so we have not been going.

Expressions of Dissatisfaction (3 or 9% of 33 commenters)

I am grateful for the services we received and my daughter is doing great. However, I would have liked to have had more interaction between my ILP provider and other service providers. I wish they would have shared information with us readily, instead of waiting until we asked for it. I also would have liked to connect with other parents in the same situation, like in a support group. One thing that is difficult in the current system is that there is a drop off in services at every transition point.

I did not feel like I could insist on more (necessary) services for my child. I know that I have the "right" to choose, but the ILP would refuse to provide anything more than "consults" and evaluations, and consistently referred us to private providers. We were told that resources weren't available.

Entire process is very confusing. I'm not sure what ILP is - I am assuming it is [ILP]. So much information and different agencies that do different things, but no one can answer questions for another agency, so I don't understand most of the things concerning my child's special care agencies. As he grows, we are more confused by the different programs.

Childcare Comments (10 respondents – 2 are portions of other comments)

It would be interesting to know if there are any childcare resources in my community for children with special needs.

My main concern is that I cannot find childcare for my son with special needs. His daycare is not educated on dealing with children with special needs. We are having problems with his behavior.

We have been trying to get a daycare here, but we don't know yet if it will happen. It is badly needed.

I am also a stay at home mother so we have no need of other childcare.

I am a stay at home mom that homeschools. I am not looking for childcare.

We would like childcare. Too expensive. We need a break once in awhile.

There is not enough daycare here, and not any for children with special needs. There is a preschool, but that is not the same as daycare.

We have very limited to no options for childcare.

Our situation is different, stay at home mom. She is so easy to care for I don't need extra help.

Childcare providers are scarce in some areas of the city, and most are not equipped to handle a child with special needs. Some providers are directly discriminatory in their refusal to provide care.

Other Miscellaneous Comments (5 respondents)

Our child has been finished with [ILP] since [Date], so I answered these questions based on our past experience.

He is not in any other special needs programs yet.

We do not understand what question 22 means. [Note: Item 22 refers to IFSP]

Need to set this up, just moved to new childcare center. [Note: In reference to item #18, ILP provider working with childcare provider]

Our baby has special needs and we have some DD services. It is enough for now.