



Family Support Program Outcome Survey: Measuring Protective Factors



New Hampshire
Children's Trust fund

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Keeping Children Safe and Families Strong

Family Support Program Outcome Survey: Measuring Protective Factors



The 2006 Outcome Survey administration included a new cohort of programs: the Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education Exemplar Programs (SFI).

Comprised of 10 early childcare programs located in nine counties across New Hampshire, this cohort implemented a curriculum that provided childcare staff with the tools to work more effectively with families to identify risks and provide support to prevent child maltreatment.

SFI programs utilized the Outcome Survey not only to fulfill a programmatic evaluation requirement, but also to obtain a baseline of parent report of change across key protective factors. In total, 176 Outcome Surveys were returned to NHCTF, 175 surveys were suitable for data entry and analysis. Figure 1 displays the distribution of surveys received from SFI programs.

Figure 1
Survey Distribution for SFI Programs

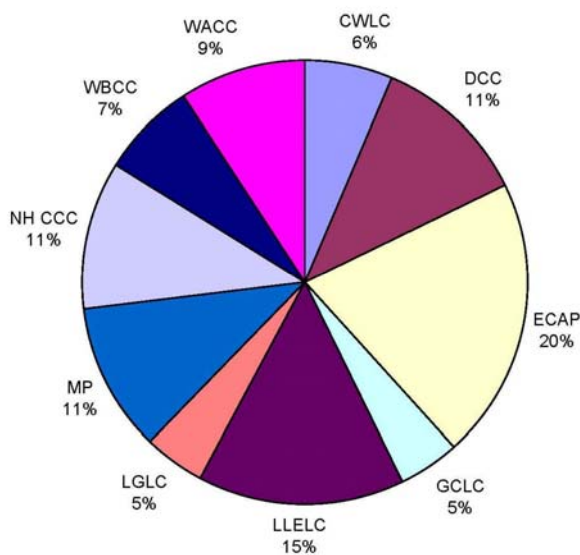


Table 1 displays information from survey administrators regarding the type of programs that participants received. 100% of the participants were categorized as receiving “other” type of programming because there was not a specified label for child care. Participants may receive more than one type of program.

Table 1
Type of Program for SFI Participants

Type of Program	Percent	Number
Parent Education	28%	49
Parent Support Group	11%	19
Parent/Child Interaction	16%	28
Home Visiting	0	0
Family Resource Center	0	0
Resource and Referral	0	0
Advocacy (self, community)	14%	25
Other	100%	175
Skill Building/Ed. for children	22%	39
Literacy Program	17%	29
School-based Skills/Readiness	21%	36
Parenting Teens	0	0
Fatherhood Program	0	0
Teen Parent Support Group	0	0
Adult Ed/GED Preparation	10%	18
Homeless/Transitional Housing	2%	4
Planned and/or Crisis Respite	2%	3
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Services	0	0
Pre-Natal Class	0	0
Employment	0	0
Couples Group	0	0

SFI DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic data from SFI Outcome Survey participants tells us that they are more likely to have completed more than 12 years of education, be married, own their own home, and less likely to have been involved with or referred by the child welfare agency than participants from family support programs. Figure 2 displays statistics for child welfare involvement. Tables 2 through 6 compare demographic data from SFI and family support program participants.

Eighty-six percent of respondents were women (N=160) and 167 out of 175 participants identified themselves as birthparents. The average number of children per household was 1.7, with 51% reported as female. Table 5 compares child age distribution for SFI and family support program participants. Eighty-six percent (N=167) of participants had participated in their program for six months or more, compared with only 51% of family support program participants that had participated for that length of time.

Figure 2
Child Welfare Involvement N=175

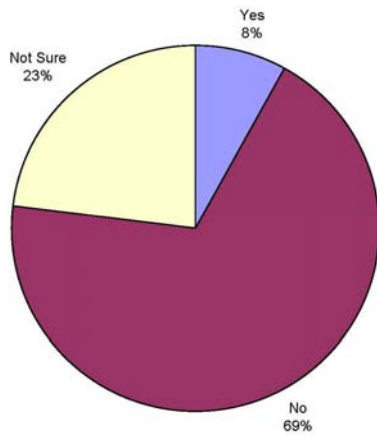


Table 2
Highest Grade in School Completed

2006	SFI N=171	Family Support N=977
Less than 12	5%	19%
12	16%	35%
More than 12	79%	46%

Table 3
Marital Status

2006	SFI N=174	Family Support N=1,010
Married	56%	50%
Partnered	6%	11%
Single	24%	24%
Divorced	11%	11%
Widowed	0%	1%
Separated	3%	4%

Table 4
Housing

2006	SFI N=173	Family Support N=990
Own	54%	38%
Rent	39%	49%
Shared Housing w/friends/relatives	4%	8%
Temporary (shelter)	3%	4%
Homeless	0%	1%

Table 5
Child Age Distribution

	SFI N=300	Family Support N=1,713
Under 1 yr	8%	14%
1 - 2	25%	23%
3 - 5	35%	27%
6 - 10	21%	19%
11 - 15	9%	11%
16 - 21+	2%	5%

Table 6
Family Income

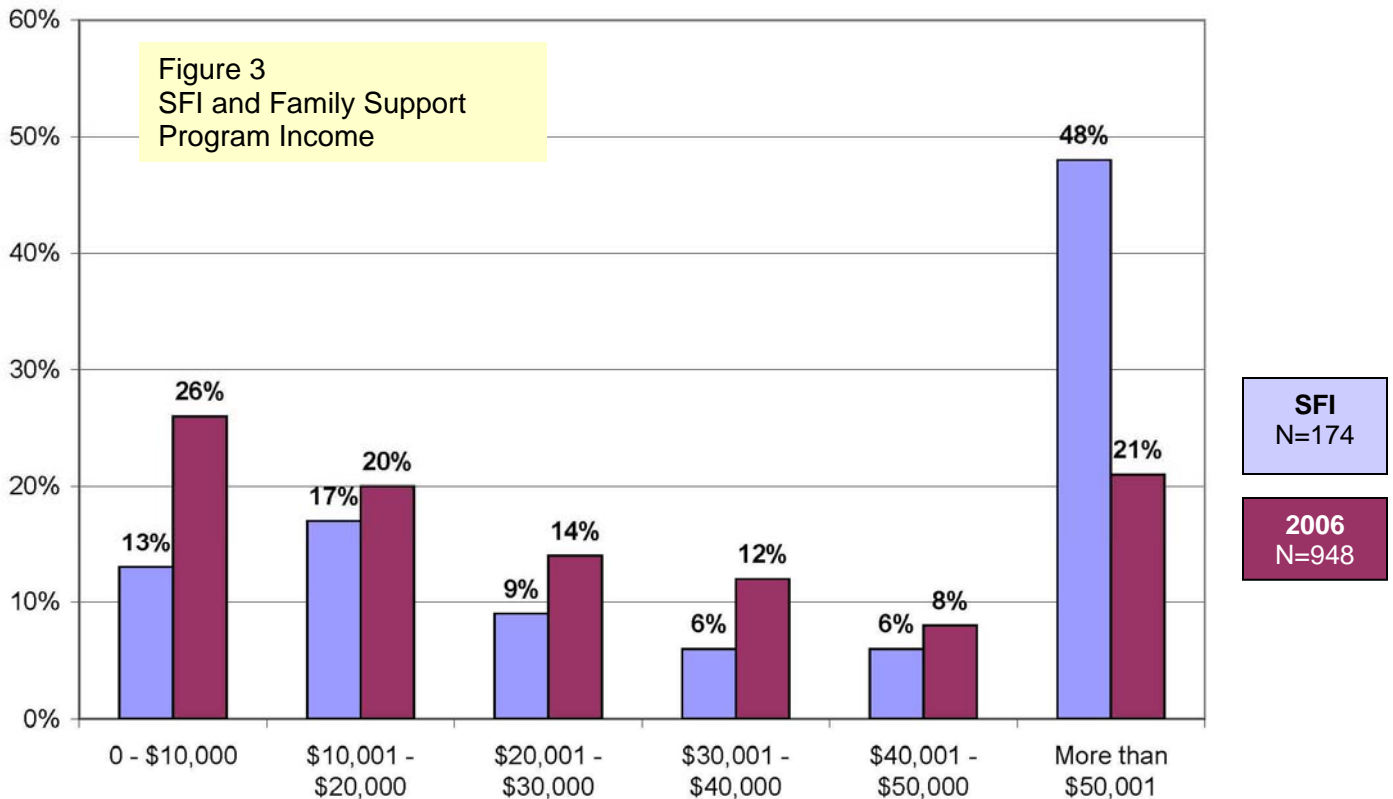
2006	SFI N=174	Family Support N=948
0 - \$10,000	13%	26%
\$10,001 - \$20,000	17%	20%
\$20,001 - \$30,000	9%	14%
\$30,001 - \$40,000	6%	12%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	6%	8%
More than \$50,001	48%	21%

The statistics for ethnicity were similar to family support program results; 89% of respondents identified themselves as white (non-Hispanic) (N=173). What was not similar between the two cohorts was reported family income. The median family income reported by family support program participants fell into the range of \$20,001 - \$30,000 (N=948) while SFI participants fell into the range of \$40,001 - \$50,000 (N=174). Forty-eight percent of SFI respondents (N=174) reported a family income over \$50,000 compared with 21% of family support program participants. Figure three and Table six compare income data for SFI and family support program participants.

One explanation for the gap in reported family income may be that families are more likely to utilize childcare services only if they are working compared to family support programs where full time child care is not typically provided.

A New Approach to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education (SFI) is a new, cost-effective, easily adopted strategy to reduce child abuse and neglect. It uses early childhood programs' everyday activities to build protective factors around children and their families. SFI emerged from research on what it takes to reduce child maltreatment, a national research study of exemplary early childhood programs, and a seven-state pilot of policy, funding and training to support SFI. To learn more go to www.cssp.org.



Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Supportive Relationships
SFI Protective Factor: Social Connections

Outcome Survey Question 1:
"I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it."

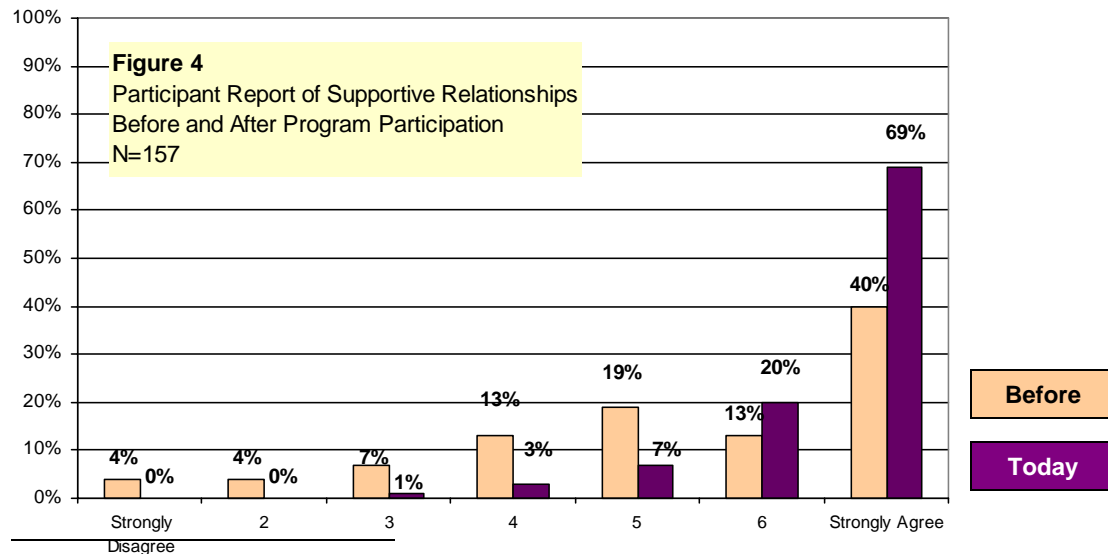
To measure the impact of family support programs on supportive relationships, SFI Outcome Survey participants responded to the statement "I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it." Figure four displays percentages of 2006 participant responses along a seven point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven). Seventy-two percent of survey respondents agreed with this statement before participating in programs, 96% reported agreement after.¹

Programs increase supportive relationships for families by providing opportunities for parents to meet each other and develop a community-based network of support. Table seven shows the percent of parents who reported experiencing decline, no change, and improvement in supportive relationships. Table seven also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified supportive relationships as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before attending a program.

Table 7
 Supportive Relationships

	SFI Total Participants N=157	SFI Filtered Data N=94
Decline	1%	0%
No Change	53%	22%
Improvement	46%	78%

"Helped me silence my self-doubt; can't say enough how valuable laughing with other parents of infants & toddlers was. Still great and chat briefly w/parents I met at the two dinners when I pick-up/drop off my child."



¹ Responded 5, 6 or 7 for Question 1.

Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Accessing Community Resources
SFI Protective Factor: Concrete Support in Times of Need
Outcome Survey Question 2:
"I know who to contact in the community when I need help."

The highest percentage of reported improvement was shown in response to the question "I know who to contact in the community when I need help." Accessing community resources may range from knowing who to contact for fuel assistance or food stamps to finding a tutor or a babysitter for your child. A parent's ability to meet family needs by accessing community resources is an identified protective factor against child maltreatment. This is not surprising, as it speaks to the ability to problem solve, meet family needs and reduce stress. Before engaging in programs 65% of respondents agreed with question two, yet after engaging 93% agreed.²

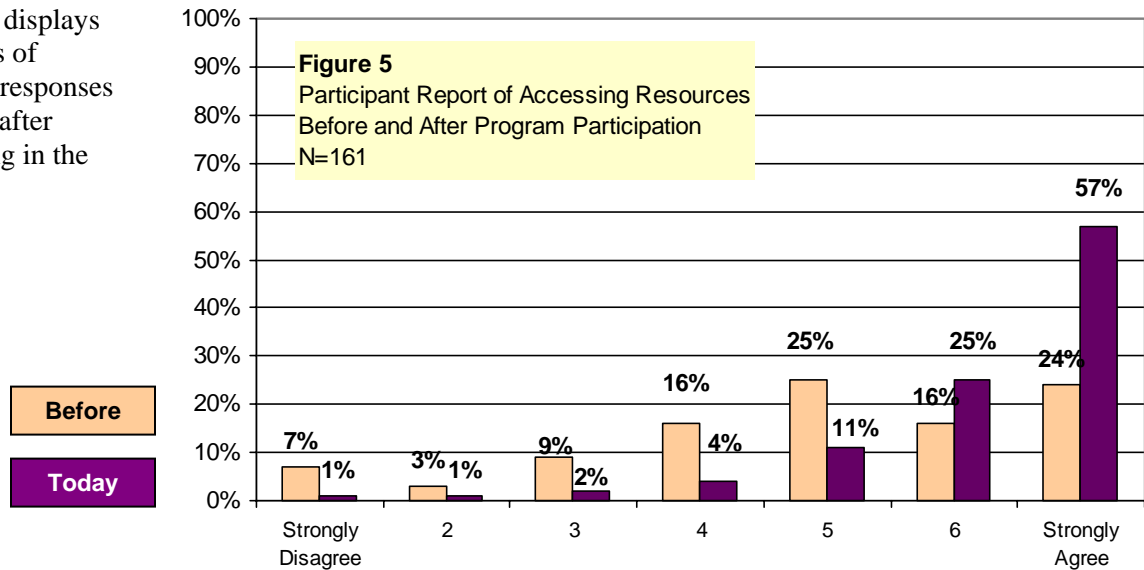
Table 8
 Accessing Community Resources

	SFI Total Participants N=161	SFI Filtered Data N=122
Decline	0%	0%
No Change	46%	29%
Improvement	54%	71%

Table eight shows the percent of parents who reported experiencing decline, no change, and improvement in accessing resources. Table eight also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified accessing resources as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before participating in the program.

"The staff always there to help + knowledge and resources are always available to me + others in the program."

Figure five displays percentages of participant responses before and after participating in the program.



² Responded 5, 6 or 7 for Question 2.

Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Parental Confidence
SFI Protective Factor: Knowledge of Parenting
Outcome Survey Question 3:
"I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children."

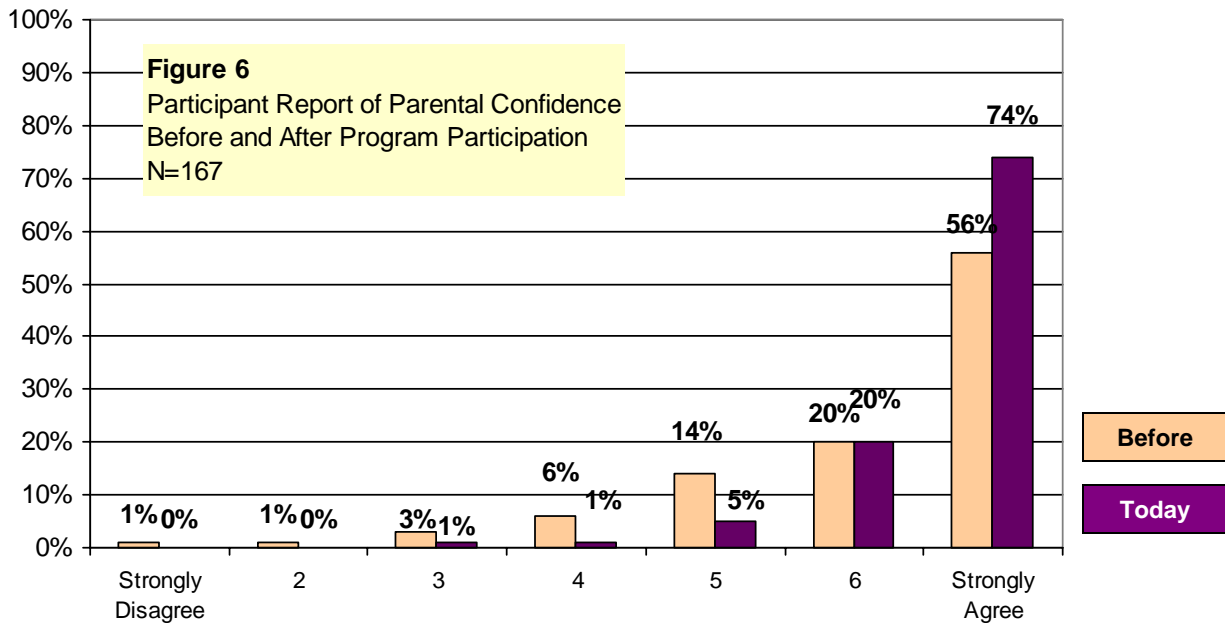
In 2006, 167 SFI participants responded to the statement "I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children," with 32% of them showing an increase in parental confidence since attendance at their SFI program. Table nine displays levels of decline, no change, and improvement for the 2006 Outcome Survey administration. Table nine also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified parental confidence as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before engaging in the program.

Table 9
Parental Confidence

	SFI Total Participants N=167	SFI Filtered Data N=74
Decline	1%	1%
No Change	67%	26%
Improvement	32%	73%

Figure six displays percentages of 2006 participant responses along a seven point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven).

"Parent confidence is a day to day challenge and having the GCL Center support and help has been so important."



Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Sharing Parental Concerns
SFI Protective Factor: Social Connections
 Outcome Survey Question 4:
"When I am worried about my child I have someone to talk to."

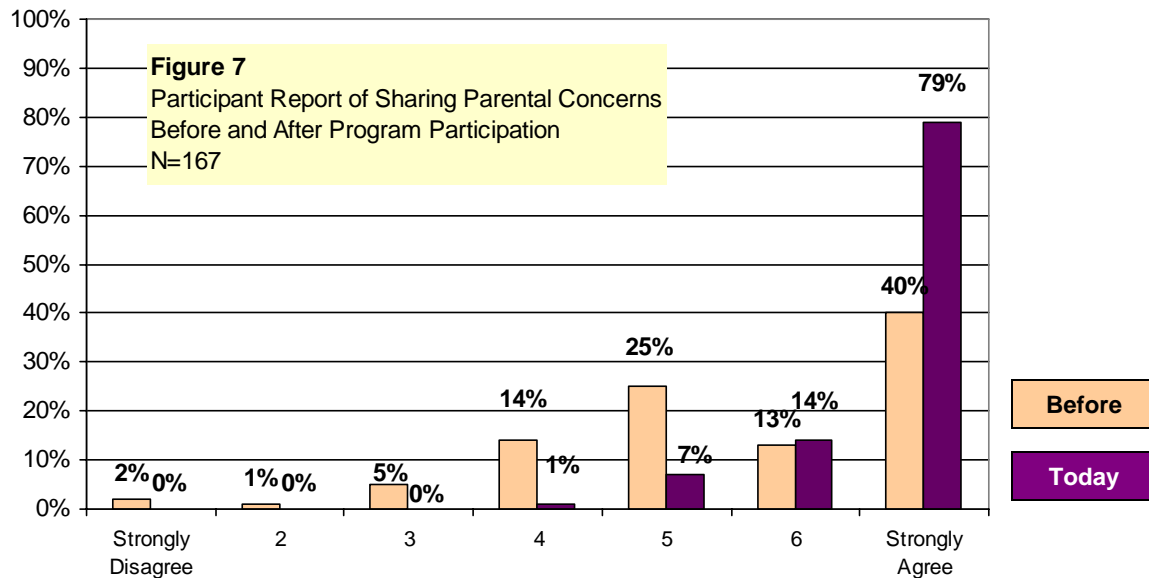
In 2006, 52% of SFI participants responding to the statement "When I am worried about my child I have someone to talk to" showed a positive increase in agreement to this statement. This question does not specify whether the person is a service provider, volunteer, or fellow participant, but may speak to the program goal of increasing social connections for parents and families. Seventy-eight percent of survey respondents agreed with this statement before participating in the program, after participation 99% showed agreement.³

Table 10
Sharing Parental Concerns

	SFI Total Participants N=167	SFI Filtered Data N=100
Decline	0%	0%
No Change	48%	13%
Improvement	52%	87%

Table 10 displays levels of decline, no change, and improvement for the 2006 Outcome Survey administration. Table 10 also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified sharing parental concerns as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before program participation. Figure seven displays percentages of participant responses before and after program participation.

"I feel that this program provides a very comfortable, supportive atmosphere to get to know other families and share parenting questions and ideas in a positive + respectful way."



³ Responded 5, 6 or 7 for Question 4.

Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Meeting Family Needs
SFI Protective Factor: Concrete Support in Times of Need
Outcome Survey Question 5:
"I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have."

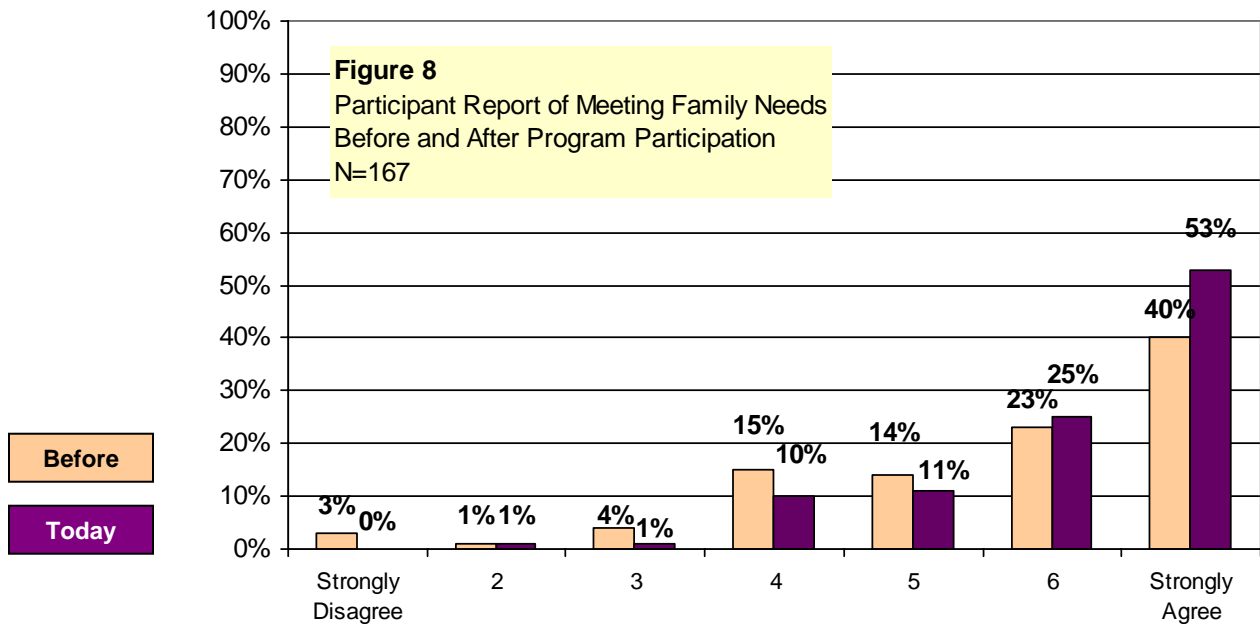
The lowest percentage of positive increase was in response to the statement "I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have." This is similar to the trends in family support program data. Poverty and the inability to meet family needs are risk factors that make the occurrence of child maltreatment more likely. This data provides program managers and funders with information that speaks to community needs.

Table 11
Meeting Family Needs

	SFI Total Participants N=167	SFI Filtered Data N=100
Decline	3%	4%
No Change	71%	52%
Improvement	26%	44%

Table 11 displays levels of decline, no change, and improvement for the 2006 Outcome Survey administration. Table 11 also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified meeting family needs as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before attending the program. Figure eight displays percentages of 2006 SFI participant responses along a seven point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven).

"[They are] willing to work with parent when in a financial bind."



Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Standing Up for Family Needs
SFI Protective Factor: Parental Resilience

*Outcome Survey Question 6:
 "I can stand up for what my family and children need."*

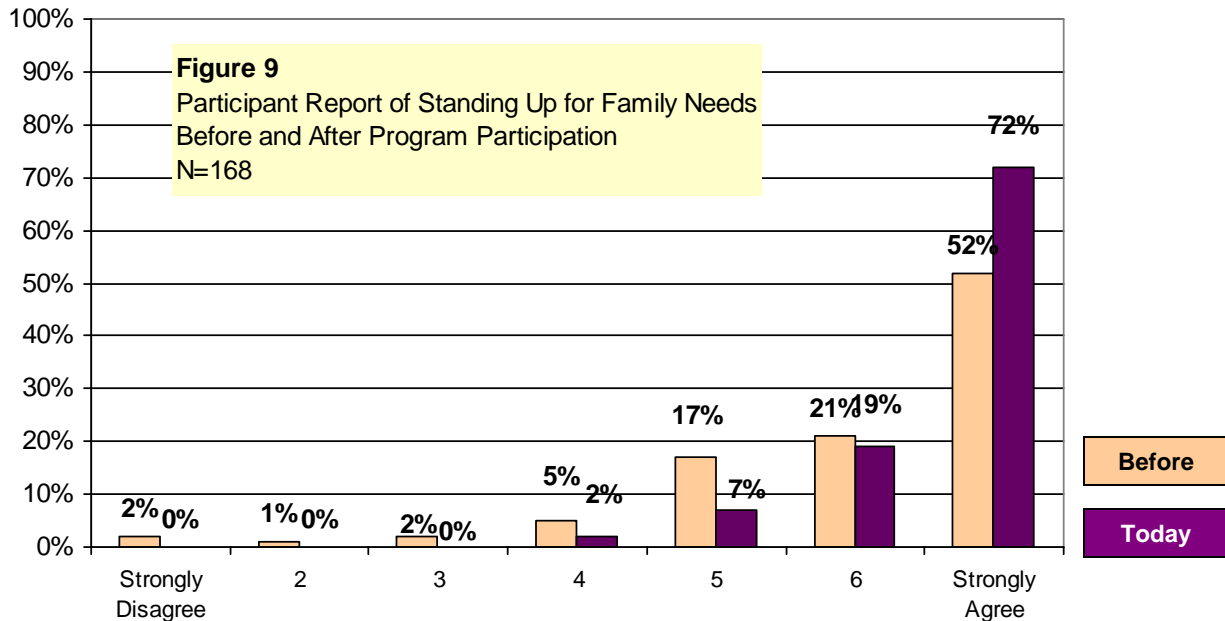
In 2006, 168 SFI participants responded to the statement "I can stand up for what my family and children need." The protective factor with the second lowest level of improvement for both SFI and family support programs, it identifies advocacy training and support as an area of need for program participants.

Table 12 displays levels of decline, no change, and improvement for the 2006 Outcome Survey administration. Table 12 also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified standing up for family needs as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before attending the program. Figure nine displays percentages of participant responses before and after program participation.

Table 12
 Standing Up for Family Needs

	SFI Total Participants N=168	SFI Filtered Data N=80
Decline	1%	1%
No Change	68%	34%
Improvement	31%	65%

"I love the way coordinator + staff help and work with me and my child to help meet our needs."



Outcome Survey Protective Factor: Reducing Family Stress
SFI Protective Factor: Parental Resilience and Healthy Social Development
Outcome Survey Question 7:
"I make choices about family schedules and activities that reduce family stress."

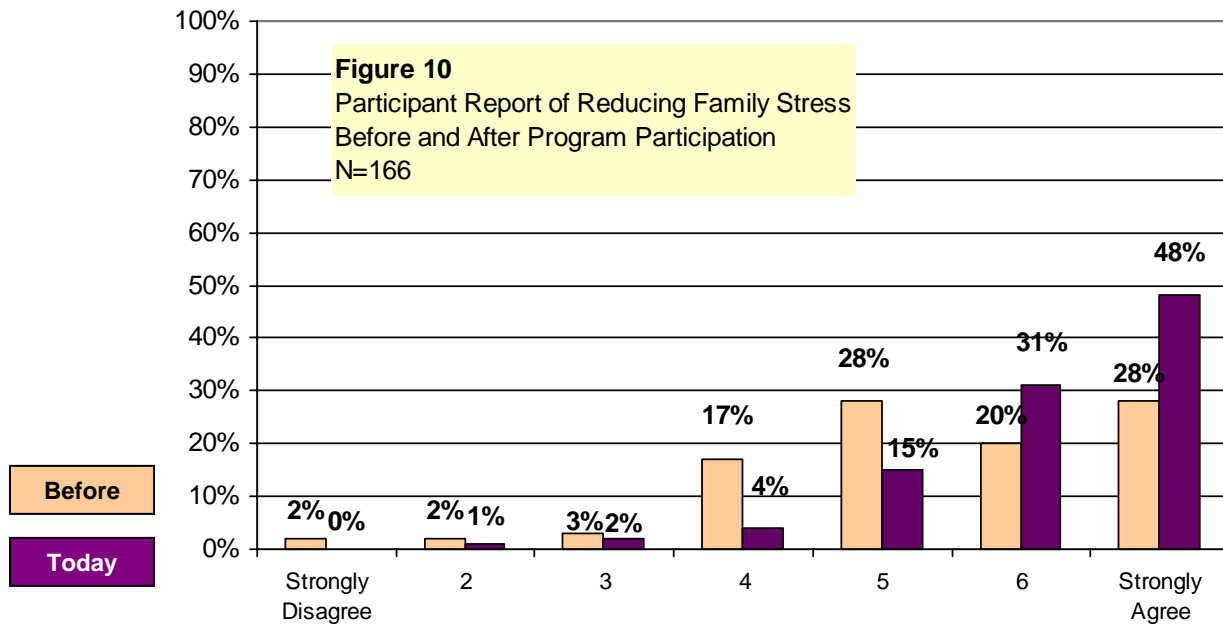
In 2006, 166 SFI participants responded to the statement "I make choices about family schedules and activities that reduce family stress," with 45% of them showing an increase in reducing family stress since participation in their SFI program.

Table 13 displays levels of decline, no change, and improvement for the 2006 Outcome Survey administration. Table 13 also displays filtered data that has removed participants who have self-identified reducing family stress as an area of strength by responding with a "7" before attending the program. Figure 10 displays percentages of 2006 participant responses along a seven point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven).

Table 13
Reducing Family Stress

	SFI Total Participants N=166	SFI Filtered Data N=119
Decline	2%	1%
No Change	52%	36%
Improvement	45%	63%

"How everyone is so warm + open to you makes you feel like you have know everyone for yrs, they also help you in believing in your self."



PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Outcome Survey gathered information about participant satisfaction with statements about program staff and agency environment. Page three of the Outcome Survey asked participants to respond on a seven point Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree).

Overwhelmingly, participants reported high levels of agreement with questions about staff respect, program impact on the reduction of stress, the increase of parenting skills, and inclusion of parents:⁴

- 81% of participants (N=168) agree that the program helped reduce stress in their life
- 80% of participants (N=168) agree that the program helped increase their parenting skills
- 91% of participants (N=168) agree that their ideas and opinions are welcomed and included in the program
- 98% of participants (N=170) agree that the program staff respects them
- 92% of participants (N=168) agree that the program is helping them reach family goals
- 77% of participants (N=143) agree that parents in the program learn from each other

These statements do not measure participant change after engaging in programs, but they speak to an agency's ability to offer programs in accordance with the principles of family support.

Participant Recommendations for Program Improvement

"A little more feedback would probably be helpful, but really I can't think of anything I would change. I trust the staff completely & know they are adding a wonderful dimension to my daughter's childhood."

"At this point, the programs are fantastic. They track children's progress, they interact with parents, they show growth of skill level while teaching the children good, strong manners + behavior skills."

"Better pay and benefits to retain high quality staff and (therefore) consistency for children. (These people work HARD!)"

"I have not felt the need to participate in the offered programs through Live & Learn. It is comforting to know they exist, as I see them advertised via posters, the weekly newsletter, etc. I would not hesitate to participate if one day I find I am in need. Thanks for making them available to all."

"It would be nice to find a daycare that took kids up till 8pm for us mothers that sometimes work late."

"Like to have more occasions to meet other families."

"My concerns have been addressed. I think this is a fantastic program and I feel fortunate to take part in it. My daughter's life probably would have been more difficult if it wasn't for the support there. It's like this program is my right arm. Thank you."

"More family events. Family volunteering"

⁴ Responded 5, 6 or 7 for Questions 8 - 13.