

NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey

Field Test Analysis

February 2, 2005

**Katie Brandt, MM
Project Coordinator
The New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund
91-93 North State Street
Concord, NH 03301
603.224.1279
kbrandt@nhctf.org**

Executive Summary

The Outcome Accountability Project was developed in April of 2002 as a solution to New Hampshire's need to develop local and state capacity to measure the impact of community based family support programs. The New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund (NHCTF) and FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (FRIENDS) created a partnership that would support this new venture.¹

The Outcome Accountability Project was designed to look at the impact of community based family support programs and their influence on the increase of protective factors for children and families across the state. NHCTF and FRIENDS provided programs with a unique survey tool, technical assistance, and a national comparison cohort to build and sustain the project.

To attempt to understand the impacts, challenges, and successes of community based family support programs, the NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey was used to gain information from program participants. **Please see Appendix A.** A retrospective survey, it is only given to participants once, and asks them to reflect upon how they felt "before" entering the program compared with how they feel "today". Participants provided quantitative information through answers on a seven-point likert scale as well as qualitative answers through open-ended questions.

451 surveys were administered to parents in over forty primary prevention programs, in 18 agencies across the state.² Programs self-administered the surveys between April 15 and July 31, 2004.³ Surveys were then returned completed, and in original form, to the NHCTF for data analysis through an Access database created by

¹ Roberts, Paula. July 2004. The Outcome Accountability Project: NHCTF Project Evaluation Report.

² Roberts, Paula. July 2004. The Outcome Accountability Project: NHCTF Project Evaluation Report.

³ Roberts, Paula. July 2004. The Outcome Accountability Project: NHCTF Project Evaluation Report.

FRIENDS. Data indicates similar trends with national field test data and an increase in positive trends for parents after engaging in support programs.

For the final version of the NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey it is recommended that:

- A standard protocol is established with programs to prepare participants to complete the survey and for NHCTF to administer those surveys with participants.
- To elaborate and clearly explain questions that may have caused confusion during field testing, specifically questions 3, 3a, and 3b.
- A standard protocol for the collection of completed surveys and data analysis by NHCTF is established so that state-wide data may be organized and programs will still have access to program-specific data.

Methodology

The survey tool utilized in this evaluation process was the field test version of the NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey. **Please see Appendix A.** This retrospective survey provided participants with a seven-point likert scale for each retrospective question asked. Participants were asked, in one survey, to rate how much they agreed with a question “before” entering the program and how much they agreed with it “today”, ranging from 1-strongly disagree and 7-strongly agree.

The NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey was field tested with family support programs funded by NHCTF. Each program administered the survey at their own discretion and it is probable that no two programs administered the survey in exactly the same way. Programs were not restricted in the format that they administered the survey. For example, programs may have added additional questions or attached a program-specific survey to the NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey. Four hundred and fifty-one surveys were administered over the four-month period.

Programs were then asked to return original surveys to NHCTF for data analysis. Three programs conducted their own data analysis and sent the results to NHCTF. The quantitative data from these analyses were not included in the following NHCTF analysis.

Once collected, data for questions 1, 2, 3, 3a, 3b, and 5 was entered, with program specific identification, into an Access database created by FRIENDS and into Excel spreadsheets for data analysis. The following is an explanation of survey questions chosen for data analysis:

Survey Question 1

I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it.

This question was chosen for analysis due to the relationship between social isolation, lack of social support, social disconnect, and a higher level of risk for child abuse and neglect. Alternately, parents and families with social connections that reduce social isolation and increase social capital are thought to have protective factors that reduce their likelihood of instances of child abuse and neglect.⁴

Survey Question 2

I know who to contact and where to go in the community when I need help.

This question was chosen for analysis due to the relationship between lack of personal and communal resources and a higher risk of child abuse and neglect. Personal resources include access to financial and childcare supports. Communal resources include access to medical care, health insurance, adequate childcare, and comprehensive social services. Alternately, parents and families with uninterrupted access to these personal and communal resources benefit from protective factors against negative outcomes occurring.⁵

Survey Questions 3, 3a, and 3b

The following series of questions were chosen for analysis due to the relationship between parental feelings of stress, distress, and insecurity surrounding their own parenting abilities, and a higher risk of child abuse or neglect occurring.

⁴ Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina Program Advisory Series Issue 3: Understanding Child Maltreatment: An Introduction to Definitions, Incidence, and Risk/Protective Factors and National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information: Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Child Abuse and Neglect.

⁵ Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina Program Advisory Series Issue 3: Understanding Child Maltreatment: An Introduction to Definitions, Incidence, and Risk/Protective Factors and National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information: Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Child Abuse and Neglect.

3. I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children.

3a. If your level of confidence as a parent has improved since you started this program, what helped the most?

3b. If your level of confidence as a parent has stayed the same or decreased since you started this program, please let us know what we can do differently to help you feel more confident as a parent.

Parents with a strong knowledge base that surrounds parenting and appropriate child development benefit from protective factors against child abuse or neglect occurring.⁶

Survey Question 5

I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have.

This question was chosen for analysis due to the relationship between low socio-economic status, concentrated poverty, and an increased risk of child abuse or neglect occurring. Alternately, families that live in mid to high socio-economic status, and have parents with consistent employment, benefit from protective factors against child abuse and neglect occurring.⁷

⁶ Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina Program Advisory Series Issue 3: Understanding Child Maltreatment: An Introduction to Definitions, Incidence, and Risk/Protective Factors and National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information: Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Child Abuse and Neglect.

⁷ Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina Program Advisory Series Issue 3: Understanding Child Maltreatment: An Introduction to Definitions, Incidence, and Risk/Protective Factors and National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information: Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Child Abuse and Neglect.

Results

Out of 451 surveys administered, 281 (62%) were completed and returned in their original form to the NHCTF for data analysis. The 281 surveys were analyzed for both quantitative and qualitative information.

Reported Participant Change

For Question 1, “I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it”; participants reported a 60% increase towards “strongly agree” after participating in the program. 35% of participants reported no change in their agreement to having supportive relationships between before participating in the program and today. Only 1% reported a decrease in their relationships today versus before participating in the program. **Please see Appendix B.**

For Question 2, “I know where to go in the community when I need help”; participants reported a 68% increase towards “strongly agree” after participating in the program. 27% of participants reported no change in their agreement to knowledge of community resources today. Less than 1% of participants reported a decrease in knowledge of community resources today, versus before entering the program. **Please see Appendix B.**

Question 3, “I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children”; elicited a 60% increase towards strongly agree for participants today compared to before they began the program. 33% of participants reported no change in their agreement before or after participation in the program. And, 2% of participants noted a

decrease towards “strongly disagree” today compared to before entering the program.

Please see Appendix B.

Question 5, “I know how to meet my family’s needs with the money and resources I have”; showed the lowest increase towards “strongly agree” when comparing how the participant felt before the program and how they feel today with 42%. 44% of participants noted no change in their agreement from before entering the program and today. And, 2% of participants noted a decrease towards “strongly disagree” today compared to before they were in the program. **Please see Appendix B.**

New Hampshire Statistics and National Trends

Survey Question 1

I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it.

Nationally, 649 individuals answered this question, compared to 270 in New Hampshire. Although New Hampshire surveyed as smaller participant pool, statistics show similarities in responses. Before participating in the program, 36% of national and New Hampshire parents answered 1, 2, or 3 to indicate that they disagreed that they had supportive relationships. Additionally, 25% of national and New Hampshire parents answered 7 to indicate strong agreement regarding supportive relationships before entering the program. **Please see Appendix C.**

Statistics were closely aligned for national and New Hampshire participants when answering the same question in the context of “today”, after becoming a part of the parent support program. Nationally, 26% of parents answered “6” compared to 21% of New

Hampshire participants. And, 56% of national participants answered “7” (Strongly Agree) compared to 61% of New Hampshire participants. **Please see Appendix C.**

Survey Question 2

I know who to contact and where to go in the community when I need help.

Nationally, 650 individuals answered this question, compared to 269 in New Hampshire. When answering the question for the time period “before” joining the parent support program, participants nationally and across the state were less in sync. 10% of national participants answered “2” to indicate disagreement to the statement. Yet, 15% of New Hampshire participants answered “2”. Similarly, 19% of national participants answered “7”, indicating strong agreement, but only 16% of New Hampshire parents answered with the same strong agreement. **Please see Appendix D.**

Post-entry into the parent support programs, national and New Hampshire participants had almost identical response trends. **Please see Appendix D.**

Survey Question 3

I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children.

Nationally, 647 individuals answered this question, compared to 265 New Hampshire individuals. Similar, but not identical, statistical trends were noted when participants answered this question for the time period “before” entering the program. Most notably, 44% of national participants answered “7” indicating strong agreement compared with only 29% of New Hampshire participants answering the same way.

Please see Appendix E.

Differences in answers became much smaller when participants answered the same question within the context of “today”. 70% of national participants answered “7”,

indicating strong agreement, with 63% of New Hampshire parents answering the same.

Please see Appendix E.

Survey Question 5

I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have.

There is no national data to confirm the number of participants that answered this question, only statistics on reporting trends. Across New Hampshire, 249 individuals answered this survey question. This question elicited the smallest amount of individuals indicating strong agreement both nationally and in New Hampshire. Before entering the program, 30% of national participants answered “7” compared with 27% of New Hampshire participants. **Please see Appendix F.**

When answering the same question in the context of “today”, 48% of national participants answered “7” compared to 46% of New Hampshire participants that answered “7”. **Please see Appendix F.**

Qualitative Results

Question 3a

If your level of confidence has improved since you started this program, what aspects of the program helped most?

This question elicited qualitative responses from participants. While participants had individualized comments, many touched upon similar themes.

- Many parents noted that it was important to talk with other parents going through the same issues and talking to other parents that shared their problems.

- Parents indicated that group leaders supplied them with valuable information and an outlet to share frustration and gain new insight.
- Parents cited specific program activities such as 1-2-3 Magic to help them problem solve.

Question 3b

If your level of confidence as a parent has stayed the same or decreased since you started this program, please let us know what we can do differently to help you feel more confident as a parent.

- Parents asked for more services because they were so happy with what they were receiving.
- Parents asked for more activities with children and for children.
- Many parents indicated that the program should keep “...doing what they are doing”.

Discussion

After reviewing original surveys and analyzing the data for the four aforementioned questions, it is believed that certain confounds and a lack of protocol and standardization in survey administration and data collection may have impacted survey results.

- Due to a lack of standard protocol from NHCTF, programs had to develop their own method of implementing the NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey. Some programs combined it with other required evaluation tools, making the survey very long. Alternately, other programs shortened the survey and omitted questions. This creates a pool of data that, when compared, is not exactly identical.
- For the final version of the survey it should be noted that question 2 has been changed to “I know where to go in the community when I need help” to avoid being interpreted as two questions in one.
- It was clear upon review of the original surveys that there was confusion surrounding question 3, 3a, and 3b. Many participants were confused, or did not read the directions, and after answering question 3 they did not correctly chose 3a or 3b to answer. Clarity in survey administration may yield clarity in results for this series of three questions.
- Only 62% of surveys returned were completed and suitable for data analysis. This was due to a lack of protocol in data return. Without specific guidelines, programs were unaware that altering the survey or sending in report summaries would make the data invalid for statewide data analysis.

Recommendations

In order to ensure that the data and information gathered throughout the survey process is accurate, the following recommendations are suggested for implementation.

- Establish a standard protocol with programs to prepare participants to complete the survey and for NHCTF to administer those surveys with participants on-site at the program.
- Elaborate and clearly explain questions that may have caused confusion during field-testing, specifically questions 3, 3a, and 3b.
- Provide support for individuals completing the survey that may have literacy issues, or that may have English as a second language.
- Establish standard protocol for the collection of completed surveys and data analysis by NHCTF in order to enable the analysis of statewide data.
- Continue to provide technical assistance and training to programs so that they may also develop program-specific data analysis as they see fit.

Conclusion

Field test data from the NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey indicates that parents are benefiting from family support programs that provide opportunities for parents to talk with one another, receive professional support, and obtain information regarding age appropriate child development. By enhancing survey administration protocol NHCTF will strive to obtain accurate data to support community based family support programs across New Hampshire.

Appendix A

FRIENDS Outcome Evaluation Survey Cover Sheet For Staff Use Only

Program Code _____

1. Date questionnaire/interview completed: ____ / ____ / ____ 2. Date participant began program ____ / ____ / ____

3. Participant ID # (optional) _____

4. Participant was referred by or has had involvement with child protection system (optional)

NO YES NOT SURE

5. How was the survey completed? Check One:

A Questionnaire completed by face to face interview (interviewer: _____)

B Questionnaire completed by phone interview (interviewer: _____)

C Questionnaire completed by participant with program staff available to explain items as needed

D Questionnaire completed by participant without program staff present for assistance

E Questionnaire was mailed to participant, completed, and returned without program staff assistance

5a. If the survey was not administered in English, which language was used? _____ N/A

6. Type of program: Check all that apply

A Parent Education

B Parent Support Group

C Planned

Respite

D Crisis Respite

E Home Visiting

F Fatherhood

Program

G School-based Skills/Readiness

H Couples Group

I Teen Parent

Support Group

J Parent/Child Interaction

K Literacy Program

L Parenting

Teens

M Homeless/Transitional Housing

N Family Resource Center

O Pre-Natal

Class

P Advocacy (self, community)

Q Resource and Referral

R Employment

S Skill Building/Education for Children

T Other _____

FRIENDS Outcome Evaluation Survey, Page 1

1. Participant name or ID (optional): _____ 2. Sex: Male Female

3. I have participated in this program for (check one)

- A less than 1 month B between 1 & 3 months C between 3 & 6 months
D between 6 & 12 months E between 1 & 2 years F over 2 years

4. How many children live in your household? _____

Please tell us the age and sex of each of your children:

Child 1, Birth date:	Child 2, Birth date:	Child 3 Birth date:	Child 4 Birth date:	Child 5 Birth date:	Child 6 Birth date:
____/____/____	____/____/____	____/____/____	____/____/____	____/____/____	____/____/____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if Pre-natal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Pre-natal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if Pre-natal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if Pre-natal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if Pre-natal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if Pre-natal <input type="checkbox"/>
Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>

(If more than 6 children, please use a second form)

5. Your relationship to children? (check all that apply):

- A Birth Parent B Step parent C Grandparent /Great Grandparent
D Foster Parent E Adoptive Parent F Other relative G Non-relative

6. Ethnicity

- A Hispanic or Latino B Black or African American
C White (non Hispanic) Islander D Native Hawaiian other Pacific
E American Indian or Alaskan Native F Asian
G Multi-racial H Other

7. Marital Status

- A Married/partnered B Single C Divorced
D Widowed E Separated

8. Family Housing

- A Own B Rent C Shared housing with relatives/friends
D Temporary (shelter, temporarily with friends/relatives) E Homeless

9. *Family Income*

A \$0-\$10,000 B \$10,001-\$20,000 C \$20,001-\$30,000 D
\$30,001-\$40,000

E \$40,001-\$50,000 F more than \$50,001

10. Highest grade in school completed _____ (1 yr. of college, answer "13", 2 yrs, answer 14, etc.)

FRIENDS Outcome Evaluation Survey, Page 2

On a scale from 1-7, with 1 as 'strongly disagree' and 7 as 'strongly agree', please rate how much you agree with the following statements. Please rate each statement twice—how you felt before this program and how you feel today.

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree					
1)	I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
2)	I know who to contact and where to go in the community when I need help.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
3)	My children and I enjoy spending time together.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
4)	I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				

4a) If your level of confidence has improved since you started this program, what aspects of the program helped the most?

4b) If your level of confidence has stayed the same or decreased since you started this program, please let us know what we can do differently to help you feel more confident as a parent.

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree					
5)	This program has helped me improve my parenting skills.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
6)	This program has helped me reduce stress in my life.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
7)	My ideas and opinions are welcomed and included in the program.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
8)	I feel that the program staff respect me.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
9)	This program is helping me reach my goals for my family and me.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
10)	Parents in this program learn from each other.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>

11) What do you like most about this program?

12) What suggestions do you have for program improvement?

FRIENDS Outcome Evaluation Survey, Page 3

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree				
13) When I am worried about my child I have someone to talk to.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14) I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15) I can advocate for what my family and children need.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16) I make choices about family schedules and activities that reduce family stress.	Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Does not Apply <input type="checkbox"/>
	Today	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

FRIENDS Outcome Evaluation Survey, Page 4 Participant Follow-up Questions

Thank you for assisting us by answering these questions. Please help us further by answering the following questions about your experience taking the survey.

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
1) The questions were easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

If you disagree with this statement, please give us the number of the question(s) that were hard to understand and give us suggestions for improvement.

Other comments:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
2) The survey did not take too long to complete.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Comments:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
3) I felt comfortable answering all of the questions on this survey.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

If you disagree with this statement, please give us the number of the question(s) that you felt uncomfortable answering and give us suggestions for improvement.

Other comments:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
4) The questions applied to my experiences in this program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

If you disagree with this statement, please give us the number of the question(s) that did not apply and give us suggestions for improvement.

Other comments:

Any final comments?

Appendix B

NHCTF Outcome Evaluation Survey Field Test Analysis Chart

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 5
% Increased toward “Strongly Agree”	60	68	60	42
% No Change	35	27	33	44
% Decreased toward “Strongly Disagree”	1	<1	2	2
% Does Not Apply	0	<1	1	4
% Incomplete Information	4	4	4	7

Note: Survey question 1 is “I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it”.

Note: Survey question 2 is “I know who to contact and where to go in the community when I need help”.

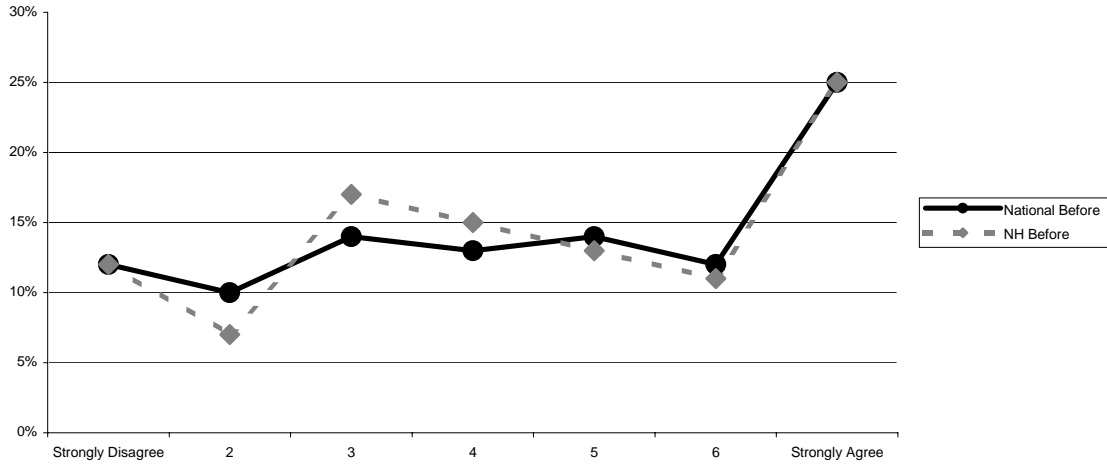
Note: Survey question 3 is “I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children”.

Note: Survey question 5 is “I know how to meet my family’s needs with the money and resources I have”.

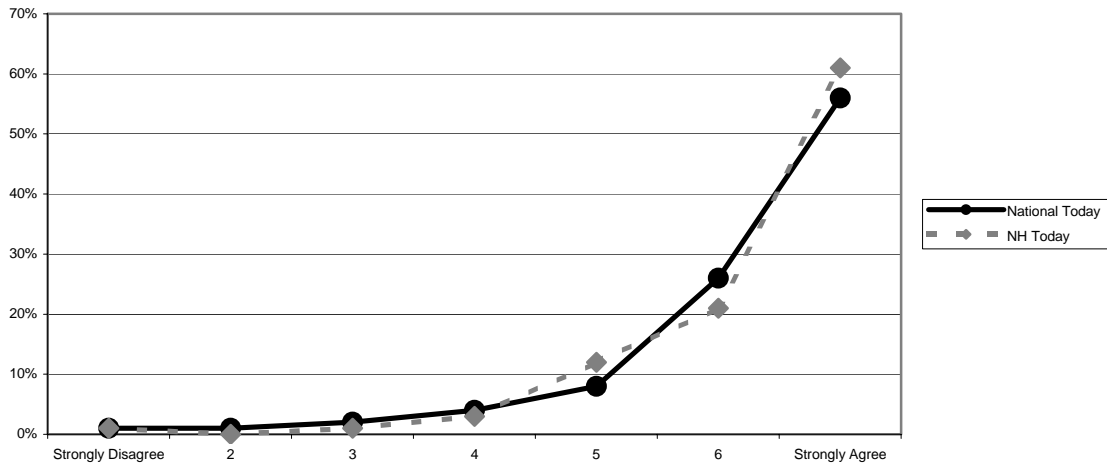
Note: Total number of surveys was 281.

Appendix C

Question 1: I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it.
National N=649 NH N=270

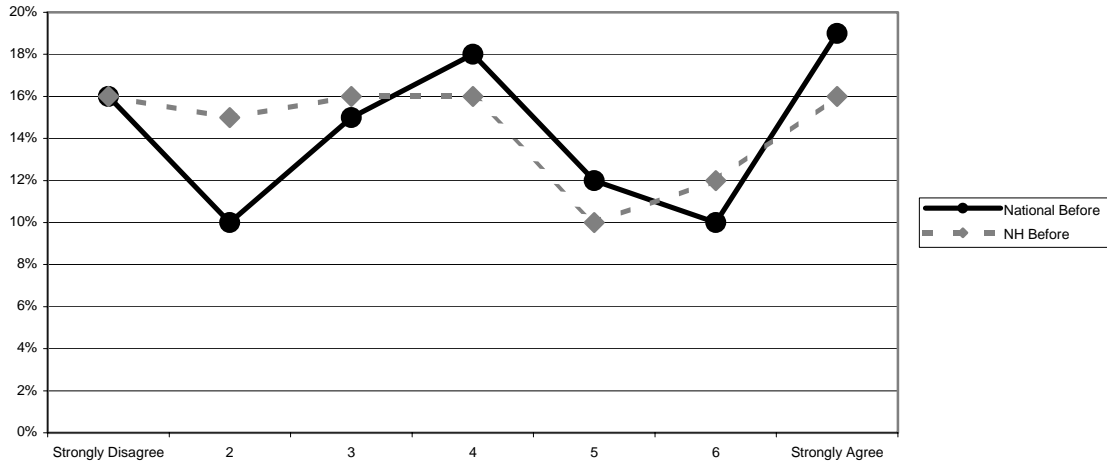


Question 1: I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it.
National N=649 NH N=270

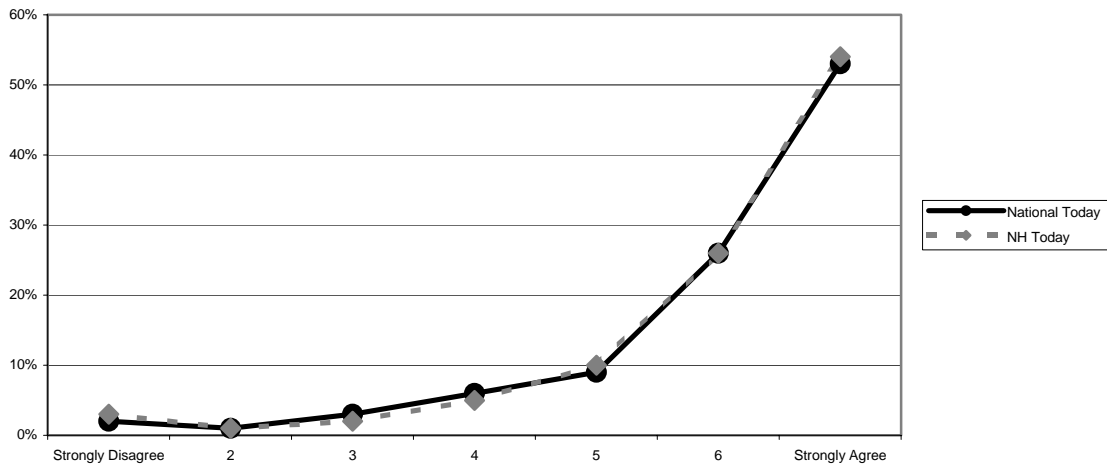


Appendix D

**Question 2: I know who to contact and where to go
in the community when I need help.**
National N=650 NH N=269

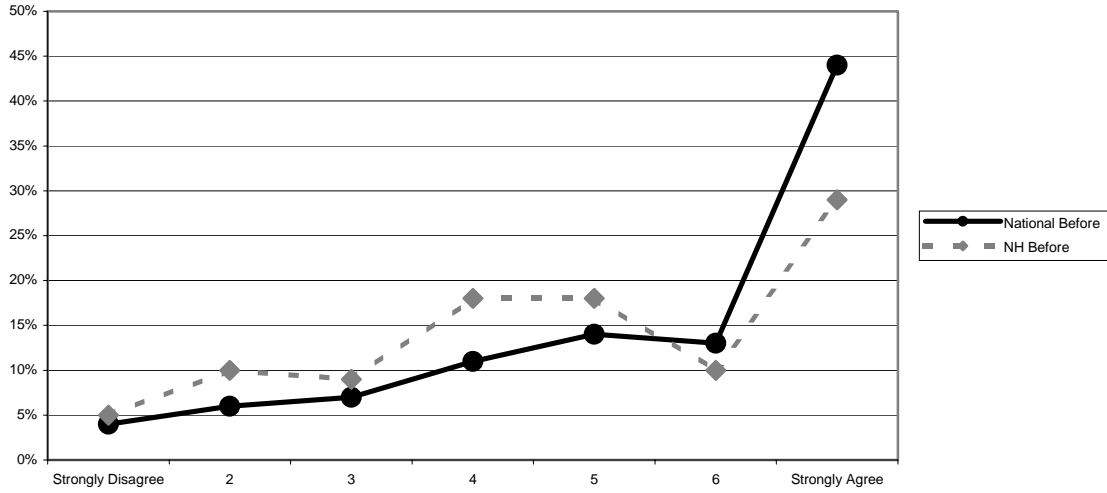


**Question 2: I know who to contact and where to go
in the community when I need help.**
National N=650 NH N=269

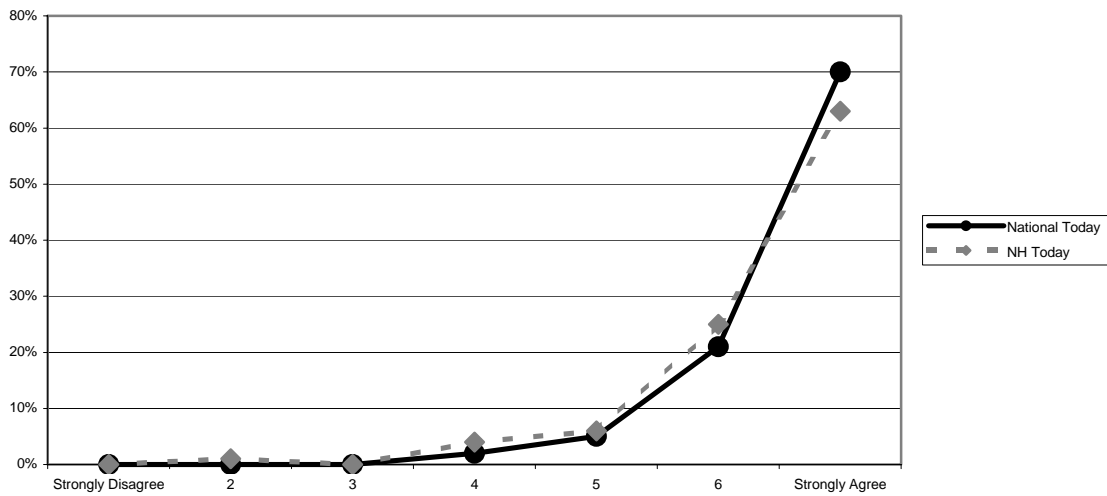


Appendix E

Question 3: I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children.
National N=647 NH N=265

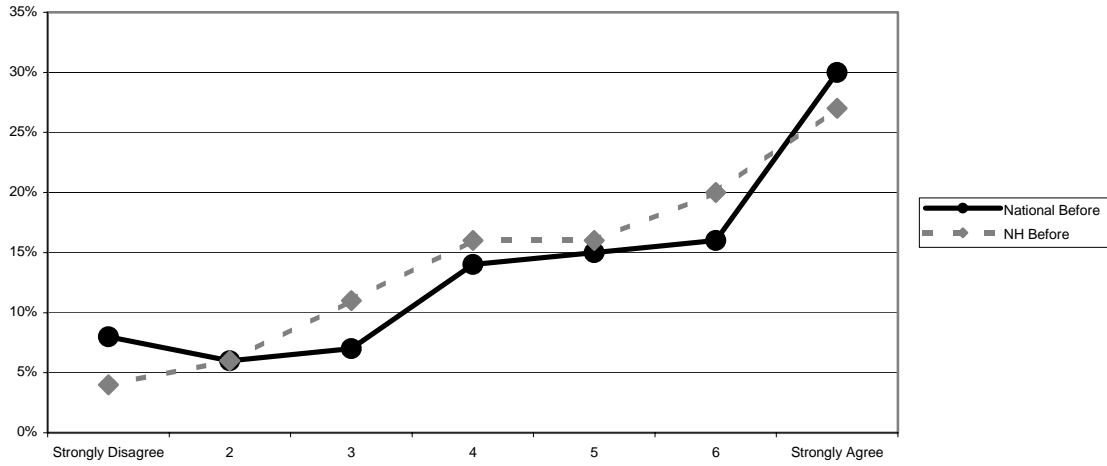


Question 3: I have confidence in my ability to parent and take care of my children.
National N=647 NH N=265



Appendix F

Question 5: I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have.
NH N=249



Question 5: I know how to meet my family's needs with the money and resources I have.
NH N=249

