Building Family Partnerships:
Family Engagement Findings from the Head Start FACES Study

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OVERVIEW

Head Start is a national program that aims to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to enrolled children and families. The program places special emphasis on helping preschoolers develop the language, reading, science, mathematics, and social and emotional skills they need to be successful in school. It also seeks to engage parents in their children's learning and to promote their progress toward their own educational, literacy, and employment goals (Administration for Children and Families 2009). The Head Start program aims to achieve these goals by providing comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families through grants to local public and private nonprofit and for-profit agencies.

Introduction

This report provides preliminary information on family engagement efforts and service provision in Head Start programs. The collected data highlight patterns in the family engagement practices currently taking place in Head Start programs; their alignment with the Head Start Parent, Family, Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework and targeted family outcomes; and parent and staff perspectives on those practices. The report also provides suggestive information on how programs engage with community partners to provide comprehensive services to families and how parents and staff (teachers and family services staff) characterize their relationships with one another. Data are drawn from the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES 2014).

FACES was first launched in 1997 as a periodic, longitudinal study of program performance. The study is conducted by Mathematica Policy Research and its partners—Educational Testing Service and Juárez and Associates—under contract to the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Primary research questions

1. What do family engagement efforts look like in Head Start?

2. How are families engaged in Head Start and in their children's learning and development at home and in the community?

3. What staff are involved in family engagement efforts, and in what ways are they involved in those efforts?

4. How are comprehensive family services provided in Head Start?

5. How do parents and staff characterize their relationships and interactions with one another?

6. How do family engagement efforts and service provision align with the Head Start PFCE Framework?

Purpose

The report highlights PFCE areas that programs are excelling in and areas where they may require more support or focus. It also seeks to highlight specific areas that could provide a better understanding of family engagement and service provision in Head Start.

Key findings and highlights

Key findings include:

- Parents and staff report a range of family engagement and service provision activities aligned with the PFCE Framework.

- Parents report programs are welcoming environments, parents and staff engage in positive relationships, and staff support family outcomes in most areas of the PFCE Framework.

- Staff at all levels engage families and individualize services.

- Staff regularly share information and resources with their colleagues.

- Based on parent and staff reports, some aspects of program functioning around family engagement may require further support.

  - Program staff may need more support for engaging with families in more collaborative ways in two areas—setting goals for themselves and their child and supporting their child's learning and development.

  - Family outcomes in the areas of parent-child relationships, transitions, and advocacy and leadership may require additional focus from program staff.

  - Some discrepancies exist between parent and staff reports of how families' culture and values are considered in service provision.

- Together, the findings suggest that programs are excelling in a number of areas but may require more support or focus in others. More data in specific areas, including program foundations (for example, program leadership, continuous improvement, and professional development), could be useful for providing a better understanding of family engagement and service provision in Head Start.

Methods

The FACES sample provides information at the national level about Head Start programs, centers, classrooms, and the children and families they serve. To provide more information on family engagement and service provision, the FACES Family Engagement Plus study collected quantitative and qualitative data from nationally representative samples of children's parents, teachers, and family services staff in spring 2015. Data collection activities for the Family Engagement Plus study took place among the 60 programs participating in child-level data collection. In total, 1,641 children's parents (as part of surveys and a subsample of 315 of those parents as part of interviews), 221 teachers, and 145 family services staff (FSS) participated in the Plus study.

The samples used for this report provide information on all Head Start teachers and FSS and on all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and who were still enrolled in spring 2015. All findings are weighted to represent these populations.

Glossary

FACES: Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey

PFCE: Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

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I.   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Although the experiences and participation of families have always played a central role in Head Start, recent years have seen a growing emphasis on developing and using strategies to make parent and family engagement activities systematic and integrated within Head Start programs. In fact, family engagement is viewed as more than just parent involvement in program activities; it also emphasizes the ongoing relationship between parents and staff. Thus, a major goal of the program is strengthening the connections between Head Start programs and families. This emphasis builds on a body of literature that recognizes the importance of (1) family engagement in children's learning and development (NCPFCE 2013a; McWayne et al. 2004), (2) the degree of "attunement" between practices in the home and the care delivered in other environments (van IJzendoorn et al. 1998), and (3) strong parent-staff relationships for supporting family engagement (Blue-Banning et al. 2004; Spielberg 2011). The literature suggests that for long-term sustainability, program practice must be supported by program leadership and involve staff at all levels (Mattera et al. 2013; U.S. Department of Education 2010).

A number of recent activities contribute to the ongoing goal of making family engagement systematic and integrated within Head Start programs. These include

- Development of Head Start's Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework;

- The provision of resources by the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE) and regional training and technical assistance (T/TA); and

- Development of instruments focused on family engagement and parent-staff relationships in Head Start for practitioner use (via the Head Start Family Voices Pilot Study [Aikens et al. 2014; Bandel et al. 2014] and the Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Questionnaire [FPTRQ; Kim et al. 2014, 2015; Ramos et al. 2014], respectively).

The Advisory Committee on Head Start Research and Evaluation (2012) also offered recommendations for supporting family engagement efforts in Head Start. These included strengthening the use of data to improve programs and guide practice; aligning PFCE practices, policies, and supports; and implementing evidence-based PFCE practices, including those beneficial to key subgroups of the population.

Using a nationally representative sample of teachers, family services staff (FSS), and children, the primary goal of the Family Engagement Plus Study is to describe family engagement practices in Head Start from the perspective of parents and Head Start staff and to examine whether the practices align with the PFCE Framework. The PFCE Framework (Figure I.1) adopts a full-program approach to family engagement. It highlights parent and program efforts related to engagement, and takes into account the communities within which families live. The framework describes the need for alignment between program strategies (program foundations column) across four key areas (program impact areas column) to achieve parent and family engagement outcomes (family outcomes column) that in turn will lead to positive child outcomes and improved school readiness (child outcomes column). The framework recognizes that strong program leadership and supportive work environments (program foundations) are

critical for supporting effective staff practices and relationships with children, families, and the community (program impact areas). The seven family outcomes targeted by the framework are family well-being, positive parent-child relationships, families as lifelong educators, families as learners, family engagement in transitions, family connections to peers and community, and families as advocates and leaders. Appendix Table A.1 lists the PFCE Framework columns, key elements, and descriptions of each of the elements.

Figure I.1. OHS PFCE Framework
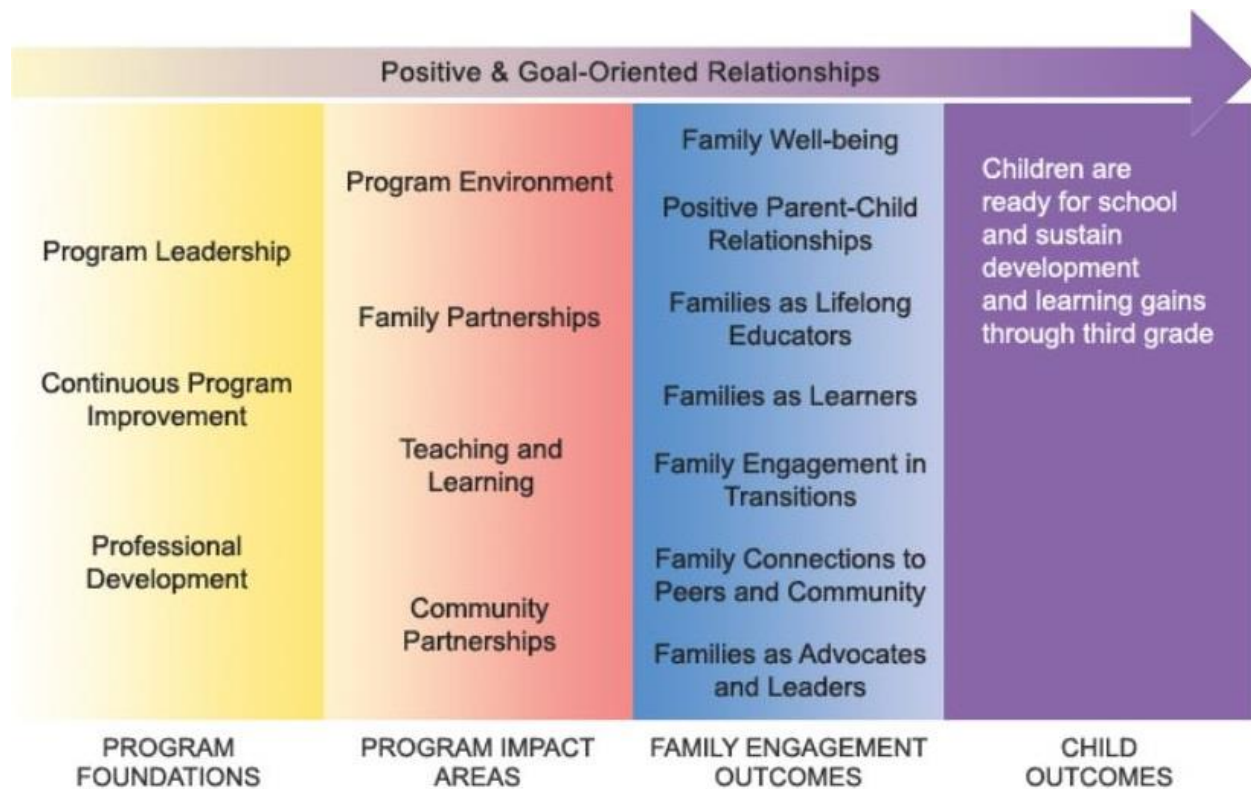
Head Start programs are expected to implement practices in alignment with the framework. However, programs have flexibility to determine how best to implement family engagement practices and how to meet the unique needs of their communities. The NCPFCE provides technical assistance and resources, aligned with performance standards, to help programs with implementation. The Framework and the NCPFCE provide guidance and define goals, but are not prescriptive in terms of the methods used to meet those goals. Because communities, Head Start programs, and the families served vary widely, the strategies implemented to support family engagement likely vary as well. In-depth (qualitative), national data has not been available to understand the family engagement experiences of both families participating in Head Start programs and the staff who provide family support services to them since the release of the PFCE Framework. The Family Engagement Plus Study, which collected data in spring 2015 as part of the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES 2014), describes family engagement practices in Head Start from the perspective of parents and Head Start staff and examines whether the practices align with the PFCE Framework. The study also explores how programs engage with community partners to provide comprehensive services to families and

how parents and staff characterize their relationships with one another. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What do family engagement efforts look like in Head Start? (Chapter III)

    a. What activities and opportunities do programs offer and encourage? How is information about these activities shared with families?

    b. What are program environments like for families? Are they welcoming? How valued and respected do families feel?

2. How are families engaged in Head Start and in their children's learning and development at home and in the community? (Chapter IV)

    a. What activities do families participate in? How do activities align with what programs encourage and offer?

    b. What are barriers to families' engagement?

    c. What child and family changes do parents attribute to Head Start?

    d. How satisfied are families with program experiences?

    e. How have families connected with other parents and with resources in the community?

3. What staff are involved in family engagement efforts, and in what ways are they involved in those efforts? (Chapter V)

    a. What are the beliefs and background characteristics of FSS?

    b. What supports do FSS receive from the program to engage families in the program and in their children's learning and development?

4. How are comprehensive family services provided in Head Start? (Chapter VI)

    a. What staff in the program are involved in helping families get needed services, and in what ways are they involved in those efforts?

    b. What does the referral and follow-up process look like?

    c. What supports do FSS receive from the program related to the service provision and referral process?

5. How do parents and staff characterize their relationships and interactions with one another? (Chapter VII)

    a. How do families and staff view and interact with each other?

    b. How often do families and staff communicate with each other? What topics do they discuss?

    c. How do families and staff work together to support the child's learning and development?

    d. What goals do families have for themselves and their children? How do staff work with families to help them meet these goals?

6. How do family engagement efforts and service provision align with the Head Start PFCE Framework? (Chapter VIII)

Appendix tables present findings across research questions and data sources. Before describing findings in each of these areas, we provide background information on the methodology of the Family Engagement Plus study (Chapter II). We conclude the report by offering a discussion of findings and implications (Chapter IX).

II. METHOD

FACES was first launched in 1997 as a periodic, longitudinal study of program performance. Successive nationally representative samples of Head Start children, their families, classrooms, and programs provide descriptive information on the population served; background of staff; classroom practices and quality measures; and child and family outcomes. FACES includes a battery of child assessments across many developmental domains; surveys with children's parents, teachers, and program managers; and observations of classroom quality. FACES 2014 uses a Core Plus study design. The study consists of a core set of data collection activities to capture key characteristics and indicators related to programs, classrooms, and child and family outcomes. These are called "Core studies." Topical modules or special studies— known as "Plus studies"—allow FACES to respond flexibly to new policy and programmatic issues and questions, and address topics in the Core with additional depth.

The two Core studies of FACES 2014 are the Classroom + Child Outcomes Core and the Classroom Core. The Classroom + Child Outcomes Core took place in fall and spring of the 2014-2015 Head Start year. At both time points, FACES assessed the school readiness skills of more than 2,000 Head Start children from 60 programs, surveyed their parents, and asked the children's teachers to rate children's social and emotional skills, approaches to learning, and problem behaviors. In spring 2015, the number of programs in the FACES sample increased from the 60 that we visited to collect data on children's school readiness outcomes to 176 programs for the purpose of conducting observations in 667 Head Start classrooms. Surveys of program directors, center directors, and teachers in all 176 programs also took place in the spring. Therefore, the Classroom + Child Outcomes Core collected child-level data along with program and classroom/teacher data from 60 programs, but only program and classroom/teacher data were collected from the additional 116 programs. Together, the program and classroom/teacher data across the 176 programs represent the Classroom Core.[1]

In this chapter, we offer background on the Family Engagement Plus study, which took place in spring 2015 within the 60 programs that participated in the child-level data collection in the Classroom + Child Outcomes Core study. It included interviews with parents and FSS as well as supplemental content in the Parent and Teacher surveys. We describe the study, data sources, and sampling and analytic approaches.

Data sources and methodology

FACES provides information at the national level about Head Start programs, centers, classrooms, and the children and families they serve. To provide more information on family engagement and service provision, FACES 2014 collected quantitative and qualitative data from nationally representative samples of staff and children in spring 2015. To do so, the study drew on: (1) supplemental items in the Parent Survey, (2) supplemental items in the Teacher Survey, (3) the Family Engagement Parent Interview, and (4) the Family Engagement Family Services Staff (FSS) Interview. Findings described in this report draw on these sources and items only.[2] Below and in Table II.1, we describe the data sources, methodology, and family engagement content included.

1. **Supplemental items in the Parent Survey**, all closed-ended survey items, were administered as part of the Parent Survey. Parents completed one of two modules: one module focused on parents' relationships and communication with teachers (using survey items from the parent-teacher version of the FPTRQ short form measure), and the other focused on families' receipt of community services and sources of social support (using survey items originally from the FACES 2009 Parent Interview).

2. **Supplemental items in the Teacher Survey** were administered as part of the Teacher Survey and included closed-ended survey items only. Teachers provided information on their relationships and communication with families (using survey items from the teacher version of the FPTRQ short form measure).

3. The **Family Engagement Parent Interview** included both open-ended and survey questions. Parents described their family engagement experiences and service provision broadly (using qualitative items from the Head Start Family Voices interviews), their relationships and communication with FSS (using survey items drawn from the parent-FSS version of the FPTRQ)[3], and Head Start experiences (using survey items originally from the FACES 2009 Parent Interview and the Strengths-Based Practices Inventory [SBPI]; Green et al. 2004).

4. The **Family Engagement FSS Interview** included both open-ended and survey questions. FSS discussed their background characteristics, family engagement experiences and service provision broadly (using qualitative and survey items from the Head Start Family Voices interviews), and relationships and communication with families (using survey items drawn from the FSS version of the FPTRQ)[4].

Table II.1. Family Engagement Plus study data sources and methodology

Data source	Sample size	Completion rate[a]	Duration	Mode	Measures/items
Supplemental items in the Parent Survey	1,641 parents (801 received short form FPTRQ, 840 received set of items from FACES 2009 Parent Interview)	74 percent	5 minutes of supplemental content administered as part of the Parent Survey	Web and CATI	FPTRQ Parent-Teacher short form FACES 2009 Parent Interview items
Supplemental items in the Teacher Survey	221 teachers	95 percent	5 minutes of supplemental content administered as part of the Teacher Survey	Web and hard copy	FPTRQ Teacher short form
Family Engagement Parent Interview	315 parents[b]	48 percent[c]	60-minute interview	Telephone	Head Start Family Voices Parent Interview FPTRQ Parent-FSS items[d] SBPI FACES 2009 Parent Interview items
Family Engagement FSS Interview	145 FSS[b, e]	80 percent[f]	60-minute interview	Telephone	Head Start Family Voices Staff Interview FPTRQ FSS items[d] Head Start Family Voices Staff Questionnaire

[a]The completion rate reflects the response rate among all released cases. In order to reach targeted sample sizes, the number of released cases may be higher than the target sample size.

[b]To address the study research questions, we used both open-ended and survey data when applicable for all cases, with one exception. At the request of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), we used open-ended data collected in the Family Engagement interviews for only a subsample of cases—120 of the 315 parents and 60 of the 145 FSS were randomly selected (approximately 2 parents and 1 FSS per program).

[c]The Family Engagement Parent Interview had a target sample size of 360 parents and an 83 percent completion rate among consented parents, resulting in a total sample size of 315 parents.

[d]As noted previously, due to an error in administration, one FPTRQ item (related to responsiveness) was not administered to parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview and eight FPTRQ items (related to family-specific knowledge and responsiveness) were not administered to FSS participating in the Family Engagement FSS Interview. As a result, we are unable to describe findings related to these missing items in the report.

[e]Given the length of the Family Engagement FSS interview, we developed two forms for the open-ended items (Forms A and B). Form A included modules one, two, and three (n = 72), and Form B included modules one, two, and four (n = 73). Module one focused on opportunities for family engagement, two focused on program supports for family engagement and service receipt, three on working with families, and four on community engagement.

[f]The Family Engagement FSS Interview had a target sample size of 180 staff and an 89 percent completion rate among consented staff, resulting in a total sample size of 145 FSS.

Key: CATI = computer-assisted telephone interview; FACES = Family and Child Experiences Survey; FPTRQ = Family Provider/Teacher Relationship Questionnaire; FSS = family services staff; SBPI = Strengths-Based Practices Inventory.

Sampling approach

As noted previously, the Family Engagement Plus study drew on four sources: (1) supplemental items in the Parent Survey, (2) supplemental items in the Teacher Survey, (3) the Family Engagement Parent Interview, and (4) the Family Engagement Family Services Staff (FSS) Interview. In this section, we describe the sampling approach for each of these sources (where it differs from the Core FACES sample). Data collection activities for the Family Engagement Plus study took place among the 60 programs participating in child-level data collection in the Classroom + Child Outcomes Core.

Supplemental items in the Parent Survey. All parents of children participating in the Classroom + Child Outcomes Core in the spring (n = 1,641, representing 74 percent of the parents with eligible children in the spring) reported on one of two family engagement modules in the Parent Survey. This approach allowed us to collect a wider range of content related to family engagement from the larger sample of parents participating in the Plus study without overly burdening them.

Supplemental items in the Teacher Survey. We also collected Teacher Surveys for 221 teachers in the 60 programs and selected centers participating in the Classroom + Child Outcomes Core in spring 2015 (95 percent), and all received these supplemental questions.

Family Engagement Parent Interview. We also selected a subsample of 12 parents per program, or 720 parents, from those whose children were participating in FACES in fall 2014. Among these, 650 were associated with children still enrolled in Head Start in the spring (and therefore still eligible for FACES data collection), 382 consented, and 315 (48 percent of eligible parents) completed a Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Family Engagement Family Services Staff (FSS) Interview. Within each of the 60 programs with child-level data collection, we randomly selected up to 4 FSS, for a sample of 196 (preferably from those working in one of the two centers randomly selected within each program for FACES, but program-wide when needed to achieve the target number). Among the selected FSS, we found 182 to be eligible staff types; 163 consented, and we interviewed 145 (80 percent of those eligible) (Table II.1). Due to the length of the Family Engagement FSS Interview, we randomly assigned about half of the sampled FSS to complete one set of open-ended questions and the other half to complete another set.

For both the Family Engagement Parent Interview and FSS Interview samples, we selected a sample after first sorting their respective sampling frames by center within a program—known as implicit stratification[5]—to help ensure that the selected FSS and parents were representative of the program, although they were not necessarily linked to one another (that is, selected FSS may not have had selected parents on their caseloads). We also wanted sufficient sample sizes to maximize the chance that we would hear the perspectives of families and staff with varying backgrounds and experiences with Head Start. Appendix B provides demographic information about the parents (Tables B.1 and B.1a) and staff (Tables C.1 through C.4) who participated in the interviews and surveys. In some instances we used a subsample of cases for addressing study research questions. In particular, at ACF's request, when reporting findings from the open-ended data from a subsample of the cases completing the Family Engagement interviews, we used a random subsample of cases; for all other reporting we used the full sample of participating

parents/staff. For the subsample, we randomly selected 1 FSS and 2 parents from each of the 60 participating programs, for a total of approximately 180 interviews. Given sample sizes and, in some instances, responses rates, study data should be considered exploratory. Our findings can be used to help generate hypotheses about family engagement efforts and service provision, and inform future research efforts.

More information on the mode and timing of the data sources is available in the User's Manual accompanying the FACES 2014 public-use file (Kopack Klein et al. 2017).

Analytic approach

Here we describe our approach to the analyses, including a discussion of coding the open-ended data and creating constructed variables from the closed-ended survey data.

We addressed the research questions using qualitative and quantitative methods. Appendix A, Table A.2 summarizes the research questions, data sources, and approaches for answering each question.

The qualitative analysis involved coding for themes or patterns overall. To ensure that our field notes were complete and consistently prepared, we transcribed all parent and FSS interviews. To code the transcriptions, we developed an item-level coding scheme for the analysis. Given the large number of interviews conducted, we used Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software program (Scientific Software Development 1997). Once we coded the data, we retrieved and sorted the codes linked to specific research questions. We retrieved data on specific questions across all parents and FSS.

In an effort to convey the prevalence of the responses, and consistent with other reporting on qualitative data, we use the following terminology when reporting findings from the open-ended data in subsequent chapters:

- "Most" indicates that the pattern of findings is linked to a majority of responses; "many" denotes about half of responses in a given area.

- "Some" indicates that, although a pattern was not rare, it was linked to fewer than half of responses.

- "Few" and "several" refer to a minority of responses. We use "several" to indicate more than a "few" but less than "some."

The qualitative data are unweighted and are intended for exploratory and hypothesis generating purposes.

Quantitative descriptive analysis of the closed-ended survey items also highlighted patterns overall. Analysis included calculating averages (for example, average years of experience of FSS) and percentages of families and staff falling into various categories on individual survey items (for example, level of agreement with items). Given the focus of the report, we do not describe findings on summary scores; instead, we focus on individual survey items. As noted in Chapter I, the analysis focused on providing a descriptive portrait of family engagement practices in Head Start, how programs engage with community partners to provide

comprehensive services, and how families and staff interact with one another. We did not do predictive analyses or test for subgroup differences. We developed analysis weights to account for the probability of selecting the FSS and the probability of subsampling the parents of children in the FACES sample, and we used Core analysis weights for analyzing teacher survey responses. These weights also accounted for any nonresponse among those selected. [6] We used analysis weights for all quantitative descriptive analysis[7] and report weighted estimates when describing findings from these data.[8]

Teachers were not directly sampled in FACES, nor were parents. Teachers came into the study if their classroom was sampled. Parents came into the study if their child was sampled. If a parent had more than one child selected into the FACES sample, we randomly sampled one child for inclusion in the study, but then adjusted weights accordingly so that estimates were still at the child level rather than the parent level. Estimates are about the number of children in Head Start, not the number of parents who have children in Head Start (which could be one or more). The teacher weights have been adjusted in such a way that they represent teachers, not classrooms. The use of the analysis weights ensures that reported estimates are nationally representative of Head Start teachers and FSS. Weighted estimates from parent-reported data are nationally representative of children in Head Start. All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children, but for simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings in the chapters that follow.

III. WHAT DO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS LOOK LIKE IN HEAD START?

The PFCE Framework and related T/TA resources seek to support family engagement by encouraging parents to participate in program activities and their children's learning, and by providing welcoming environments that are inclusive and seek parent feedback on program activities. In this chapter, we describe the ways that families are encouraged to support their child's learning and development—at home, in the community, and in the program—and the nature of the program environment for families. Both parents and staff provide perspectives on the family engagement activities offered, while parents describe aspects of program climate. In the next chapter, we describe how families are actually engaged with their child's learning and development. Findings address the questions:

1.   What activities and opportunities do programs offer and encourage? How is information about these activities shared with families?

2.   What are program environments like for families? Are they welcoming? How valued and respected do families feel?

We draw on data from the Family Engagement Parent and FSS Interviews, and supplemental items in the Parent and Teacher Surveys (see Table III.1). Using open-ended items, we asked all parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview about activities that programs encourage, how programs share information about those activities with them, and aspects of program climate and family-staff relationships. In addition, parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview answered closed-ended items from the SBPI and FPTRQ on staff respect for families. Supplemental items in the Parent Survey also addressed family-staff relationships.

Table III.1. What do family engagement efforts look like in Head Start: Data sources and sample sizes

Data source	Sample size
Supplemental items in the Parent Survey (FPTRQ short form items)	801 parents
Supplemental items in the Teacher Survey	221 teachers
Family Engagement Parent Interview	315 parents[a]
Family Engagement FSS Interview	145 FSS[a]

[a]For all reporting from the Family Engagement interviews, we used open-ended data from a subsample of cases (120 parents and 60 FSS); otherwise, we used all other available data from the full sample of participating parents/staff.

Responding to open-ended items in the Family Engagement FSS Interview, all FSS described what engagement activities the program suggests for parents at the program and at home, how they share information with parents about those activities, and families' level of involvement. We asked about half of FSS to answer open-ended items discussing community engagement activities; the other half were asked to describe activities for engaging families in the program with one another.[9] Parents participating in the Parent Survey and the Family Engagement Parent Interview responded to different sets of items describing the program activities that support their relationships with other parents and adults. Finally, using similar closed-ended items from the FPTRQ, FSS and teachers described community engagement

activities. Box III.1 highlights key findings from the data in this area. Although we use the terms "most," "some", and "few" to describe the patterns of findings in the text, we do not always do so in the summary bullets included here and in subsequent boxes; instead, patterns in these bullets are associated with "most" parents or staff unless noted otherwise.

Box III.1. Key findings on family engagement efforts in Head Start

- Programs offer and encourage families to participate in a variety of activities, particularly leadership opportunities, such as attending parent meetings or the Policy Council and encouraging parents to volunteer at the program.

- Programs use a range of approaches to share information about program activities with families, including traditional approaches (for example, sending home flyers and posting on bulletin boards) and new electronic capabilities, such as Facebook, email, and text messaging.

- Like staff, most parents mention that programs encourage them to participate in program leadership activities, social activities with children and other parents, parent meetings, volunteer, or fundraising as part of the program.

- Parents cite the diverse community and civic engagement activities encouraged by their Head Start program. Staff also mention that they encourage involvement in community events.

- Parents also mention academic or learning activities in which the program encourages them to participate at home.

- Parent reports suggest that staff practices support their relationships with other parents, friends, family, and their communities.

- Parents report feeling welcomed and valued by program staff.

- Parents feel that staff respect their family's background and beliefs, and those of other families.

What activities and opportunities do programs offer and encourage? How is information about these activities shared with families?

Staff perspectives

Programs offer and encourage families to participate in a variety of activities. On open-ended items in the Family Engagement FSS Interview, many FSS mention leadership opportunities in which parents can participate, including attending parent meetings or the Policy Council. One FSS saw her program's Policy Council meetings as a place in which "parents are allowed to voice their opinion [and] give their input [on] the program." Most FSS also describe occasions for families to attend special program events together, including both general social events and special holiday celebrations. These family events are hosted both at Head Start centers and within the local community (for example, a night at a museum). Several FSS note that these events are sometimes planned in response to parent suggestions on questionnaires created to help the program understand families' interests. Some events are for parents to attend without their children (for example, workshops); others are targeted for fathers (for example, a fatherhood breakfast). Many events are for the entire family. In addition, most FSS encourage parents to volunteer at the program to help in their child's classrooms or come to the center to read to children. For example, one FSS said parents in her program "are more than welcome to come in and hang out with their kids anytime, they don't have to call, they just can walk in and hang out with their kids and the class."

Going beyond the program, FSS and teachers also encourage involvement in community events. In fact, on items in the Family Engagement FSS Interview and the Teacher Survey, all FSS (100 percent) and nearly all teachers report offering parents information about community events (96 percent).

In open-ended interview items, FSS describe a range of approaches to sharing information about program activities with families, including sending printed flyers home with children, displaying information on bulletin boards around Head Start centers, and communicating directly with parents in person and via telephone. Several staff also encourage parents to attend events at their child's centers using new electronic capabilities such as Facebook, email, and text messaging. Most FSS say their program uses more than one mode of communicating with parents about involvement opportunities.

> "[Although we share] information on bulletin boards around the centers and … in the kids' cubbies … social media kind of, perhaps, gets more of their attention than the old fashioned stuff."
>
> —FSS on sharing information about program activities with parents

Parent perspectives

On open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, almost all parents describe program activities encouraged by Head Start. Most parents mention program leadership activities in which the program encourages them to participate, such as parents' advisory councils or committee memberships. Most also mention that the program encourages them to participate in parent meetings, volunteer, or fundraise as part of the program. Parent meetings vary in topic and often involve incentives for parents to attend; as one parent put it:

"Every month is a different topic that they discuss. They ask all the parents 'Do you agree?' or 'Do you not agree?' They do sometimes give us tickets to different little fundraisers that they have so that [the children] can win a prize at the popcorn party or pizza party for their little classroom."

Many parents mention social activities in which they are encouraged to participate with their children and other parents. These include seasonal activities or those for specific family members or parent groups. As one parent puts it, "For Halloween, you would come in the Head Start for carving a pumpkin, doing activities together with the kids. For the dads, they have a male-oriented program where they do specific activities for the dad and the kids." Few parents mention being encouraged to participate in activities for parents transitioning from Head Start to another preschool program or to kindergarten or workshops on special topics, such as children with disabilities.

Parents also describe activities that their Head Start program staff encourages them to do at home; very few parents do not describe such activities. A few parents note that program staff encourage them to talk to their child and engage in language activities. Most, however, note that program staff encourage participation in academic or learning activities, and some describe encouragement for gross or fine motor activities or outdoor play. A few also mention nutrition-

or health-related activities. As one parent described it, the program encourages "Activities such as reading or games or puzzles. Anything with hand/eye coordination. Anything increasing their knowledge of things such as the alphabet. They want you to work with songs or playing. And then, of course, getting outside, so they always encourage getting outside, getting some exercise, doing things together as a family."

> "With the Policy Council meeting, when people say 'I think they should put a stop light here' or bring it to my attention, I will go in and I will say 'Well, I do hear a couple of parents complaining about this. So, what can we do to fix this?'"
>
> —Parent on civic engagement efforts encouraged by programs

Parents also note diverse community and civic engagement activities encouraged by their Head Start program staff. Many mention that the staff encouraged them to participate in a local activity or community event, such as a neighborhood fair or 5K run. Some mention being alerted to learning opportunities for children or adults. Some are also encouraged to volunteer in their community, participate in job training, or engage in activism or advocacy. Such community activities are often coordinated through parent meetings and leadership activities (such as the Policy Council). Several parents either cannot name a community activity that staff encourage or indicate their program staff has not encouraged any.

Parent reports in the Family Engagement Parent Interview also suggest that staff practices support their relationships with other parents, friends, family, and their communities. Eighty-six percent of children have parents who agree that staff provide opportunities to get to know other parents in the community, 75 percent agree that staff encourage them to share knowledge with other parents and go to friends and family when they need support, and 67 percent agree that staff encourage them to get involved to help improve their communities.

On open-ended interview items, parents also describe informal mechanisms that programs use to encourage support among parents, generally suggesting that parents who have had similar experiences reach out to others in need. For example, as one parent described, "they let us know if someone is having trouble or something and [if] one of us has been through it, they suggest, you know, that another parent can speak with us or they ask if it's okay. See if one of us can help with certain situations and stuff."

What are program environments like for families? Are they welcoming? How valued and respected do families feel?

On open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, almost all parents indicate that program staff make them feel comfortable and welcome. Most commonly, parents cite staff treatment of families and children as making them feel welcome. For example, some note that staff—not just the child's teacher—regularly greet them and their child with a smile and by name. Parents describe program staff as being "friendly," "inviting," and "open." Moreover, as one parent notes, staff seem satisfied with their jobs: "…They all look like they're happy and enjoy what they're doing, which is good." When specifically discussing their children's teachers, some parents note that teaching staff are respectful and nonjudgmental, and listen to them. As one parent said, "She doesn't judge. She responds. She listens." A few parents appreciate that teachers remember details about their family and regularly ask questions to check

in on the child and the family. A few also value that the teachers keep confidential those personal issues parents share with them.

On closed-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, most parents feel that FSS and other staff respect their beliefs, goals, and choices. Many parents feel that staff respect their family's background and beliefs. Ninety percent of parents agree that staff respect their family's cultural and/or religious beliefs, and 69 percent encounter program staff who share materials with children that positively reflect their parents' cultural backgrounds. On similar items, most parents report feeling that FSS show respect for different ethnic heritages (87 percent) and are respectful of their religious beliefs (92 percent). Fewer parents (54 percent) agree that staff encourage parents to learn about their family's culture and history.

The majority of children's parents also indicate that FSS and teachers are not rude (93 and 96 percent, respectively), impatient (86 and 94 percent, respectively), or judgmental (88 and 95 percent, respectively). Parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview provided their perspectives on FSS, whereas those answering the supplemental items in the Parent Survey described teachers. Most parents also feel that their FSS and teacher understand their family context. As shown in Figure III.1, parents disagree that FSS and teachers judge their family because of their financial situation (both 93 percent), culture and values (91 and 92 percent, respectively), and faith and religion (89 and 90 percent, respectively). Thus, most feel that FSS do not judge their family.

Figure III.1. Percentage of parents who report their FSS/teacher does *not* judge their family's characteristics: Spring 2015
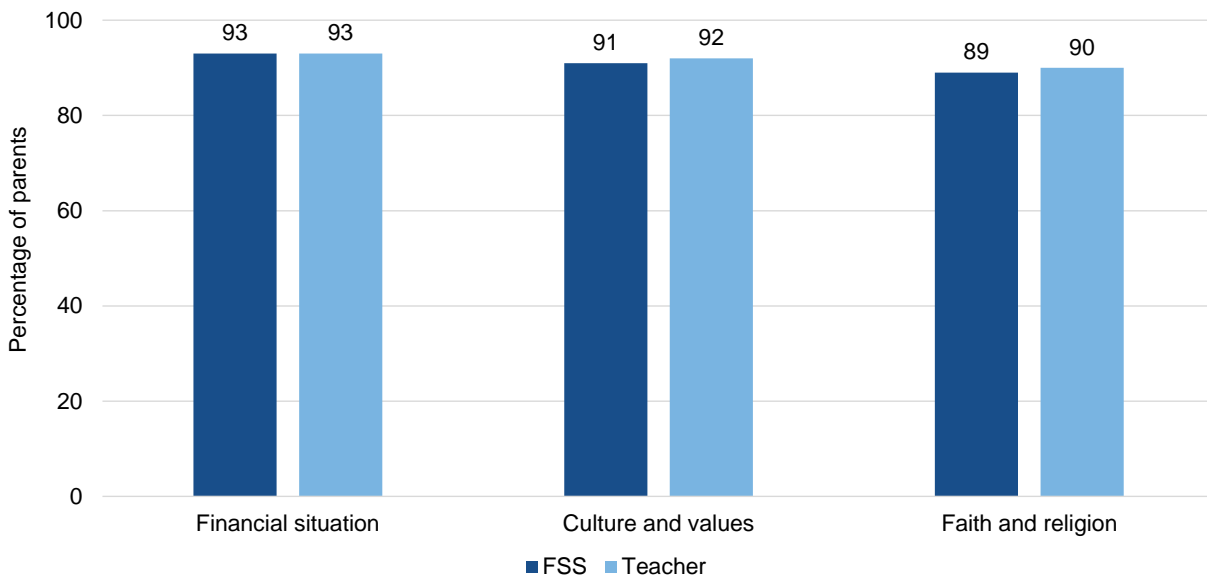
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey (n=801) and Family Engagement Parent Interview (n=315).

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

On open-ended items in in Family Engagement Parent Interview, some parents also feel that programs have an "open door policy," which supports their confidence and trust in the staff. Some note that staff regularly invite them to come to the program and participate in class activities. Some parents also report that staff are regularly available for questions, are receptive to feedback, and listen to and address any issues families may have. A few feel comfortable in the program because of the support they have received in getting needed services for their child.

> "They always invite us to participate in class anytime we want. We can come and sit in on a class anytime that, you know, they're in session and we can come in and read or do activities or have lunch with the kids."
>
> —Parent on feeling welcome in the Head Start program

IV. HOW ARE FAMILIES ENGAGED IN HEAD START AND IN THEIR CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY?

Prior research finds that not only is family engagement supportive of children's learning and development (NCPFCE 2013a), but parent access to positive social networks plays an important role in family engagement and children's learning and development (NCPFCE 2013b). In fact, the PFCE Framework recognizes the importance of social support to families (via friends and family, for example). Programs can provide opportunities for parents to form relationships with other parents. Whereas the prior chapter discussed the engagement activities offered by programs, this chapter describes parent reports of their participation in such activities, satisfaction with Head Start, connections with comprehensive services in the community, and sources of social support. Our focus is on understanding the ways that families participate in their children's learning and development as well as barriers to that participation, the child and family outcomes that parents attribute to Head Start participation, and how families connect with social networks and other resources. Findings address the following questions:

1. What activities do families participate in? How do activities align with what programs encourage and offer?

2. What are barriers to families' engagement?

3. What child and family changes do parents attribute to Head Start?

4. How satisfied are families with program experiences?

5. How have families connected with other parents and with resources in the community?

Findings draw on data from the Family Engagement Parent and FSS Interviews and supplemental items in the Parent Survey (see Table IV.1). All parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview answered open-ended questions about their engagement[10] and barriers to engagement in activities in the program and at home, in the community, and with other parents. FSS also answered open-ended questions about barriers to parents' engagement. As part of the Family Engagement Parent Interview, via open-ended items, parents discussed changes in child and family outcomes since enrolling in Head Start and their satisfaction with the program. Finally, parents completing the Parent Survey answered closed-ended items describing their participation in Head Start activities, satisfaction with the program, sources of social support, and receipt of community services. Box IV.1 highlights key findings in this area.

Table IV.1. How are families engaged in Head Start and in their children's learning and development: Data sources and sample sizes

Data source	Sample size
Supplemental items in the Parent Survey (FACES 2009 parent interview items)	840 parents
Family Engagement Parent Interview	315 parents[a]
Family Engagement FSS Interview	145 FSS[a]

[a]For all reporting from the Family Engagement interviews, we used open-ended data from a subsample of cases (120 parents and 60 FSS); otherwise, we used all other available data from the full sample of participating parents/staff.

**Box IV.1. Key findings on families' engagement
in Head Start and children's learning**

- Although almost all parents participate in program events, the events in which they participate do not always reflect those that staff mention as commonly encouraged.

- Almost all parents attend parent meetings; many also volunteer in the classroom, as encouraged by programs. Few participate in program leadership activities, although staff most commonly mention and encourage these activities.

- Most parents participate in learning or academic activities at home with their child, as encouraged by their Head Start program. This participation includes, for example, literacy activities and learning games.

- Many parents also participate in gross and fine motor activities (for example, playing physically active games or practicing using a pencil) and in local events in the community.

- Few parents participate in advocacy activities in the community.

- The most frequently cited barriers to families' engagement in the program are work and child care constraints, as noted by both parents and FSS.

- Almost all parents describe changes in their child's learning or academic skills that they attribute to Head Start. Many also attribute improvements in their child's social-emotional or behavioral outcomes to the program.

- Some parents describe changes in their own learning or knowledge as a result of Head Start. They receive information or resources to meet specific needs unrelated to parenting, as well as developing a warmer relationship with their child.

- Parents are generally satisfied with their program experiences and feel that the program does "very well" at providing various kinds of information that can support family engagement in children's learning.

- Most parents have engaged with other Head Start parents, generally in parent meetings and at holiday events.

- Most parents think families in the program can turn to each other for support.

- Parents generally have access to sources of social support beyond the Head Start program.

- Parents rarely access community services (for example, help with housing, job training, or entering college).

What activities do families participate in? How do activities align with what programs encourage and offer?

Participation in Head Start activities

Although almost all parents state in open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview that they participate in program events, in some instances (particularly program leadership activities), these events do not reflect those FSS mention as commonly encouraged in Family Engagement FSS Interview. FSS most frequently cite the Policy Council as a way for parents to be involved, as well as parent workshops and classroom volunteering. Parents are most commonly involved in classroom interactions (parent-teacher conferences, volunteering) and somewhat less frequently, workshops. Almost all parents attend parent meetings, but few participate in program leadership activities, such as the Policy Council. Those involved in program leadership activities often feel a sense of ownership or investment in these activities: "I work on the parent board, so of course I attend those [meetings]. Of course I spend time with the family advocate, encouraging me to be more involved in the school, as far as the Policy Council, which I'm involved in." Another parent involved in program leadership stated that "We are very involved in almost every activity that Head Start has."

According to open-ended items in Family Engagement Parent Interview, most parents volunteer in the classroom. "They have encouraged me that any time I am available to volunteer," one parent stated. "I went a few times during my lunch break, to eat lunch with [my son] or to read books." Parents also participate in social activities or classroom trips. "I went to every one [of the field trips]. I went to all [of] the little functions that they had—their Thanksgiving play, a pow-wow." Other parents take part in events at school targeted to particular family members: "we [had a] Mother's Day tea party today. It was very, very, very good. My son was happy that I was there with him, and you know his face just lit up." Only a few parents (some of whose children were not yet of age to transition to kindergarten) participate in activities focused on transitions to kindergarten—conducted through visits to their child's future school or meetings at Head Start. Few parents attend workshops on specific topics, although a few list workshops on nutrition and healthy eating they had attended.

Closed-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview also suggest that parents are involved in their child's program in a variety of ways. As shown in Figure IV.1, parents are most likely to be involved through attending parent/teacher conferences (95 percent), observing their child's classroom (87 percent), interacting with Head Start staff who visit their home (83 percent), and volunteering in their child's classroom (80 percent). Fifty percent or more of children's parents also attend Head Start social events (72 percent), attend parent education meetings or workshops (62 percent), and prepare food/materials for special events (57 percent). Activities occurring with the lowest frequency include participating in fundraising activities (35 percent), preparing or distributing newsletters (26 percent), and participating in the Head Start Policy Council (23 percent).

Figure IV.1. Most common forms of parent involvement in Head Start: Spring 2015
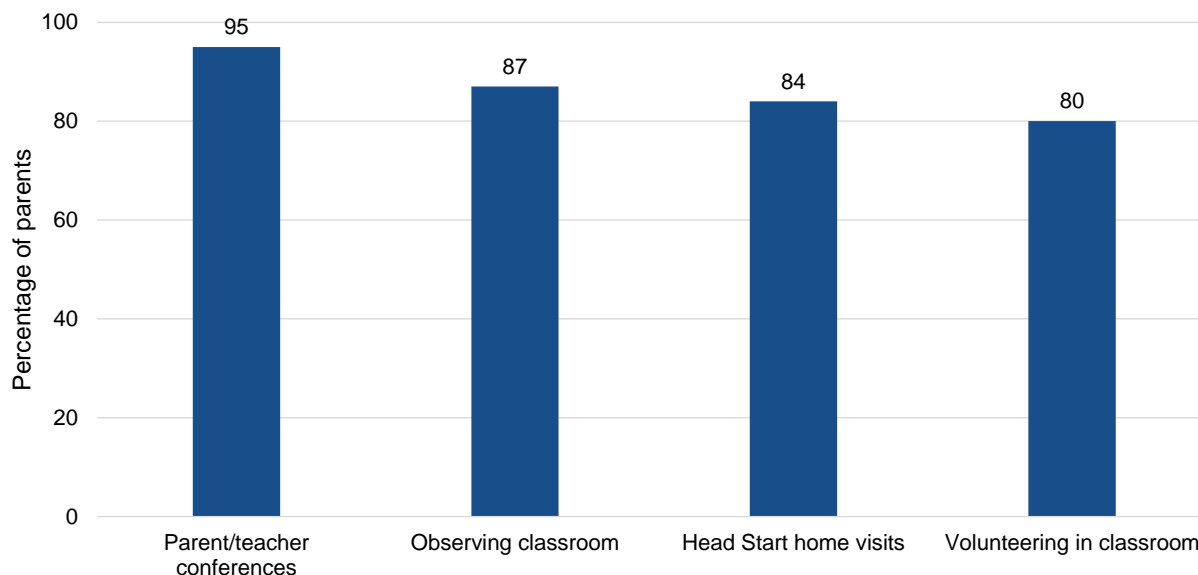
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview (n=315).

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

 All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

Participation in activities at home or in the community

 On open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, parents describe participation in a range of activities at home or as a family, as encouraged by their Head Start program. These include learning activities, physical or sports activities, community-oriented activities, and classes and workshops for parents.

 The majority of parents participate in learning, literacy, or academic activities with their child, as encouraged by their Head Start program. Staff give parents suggestions for activities to do at home with their children, many of which are academic or preparatory for kindergarten: "… we do parent activity letters … they go out weekly for the parents to do with their children at home and then they can give the teachers feedback, so basically the activities they're learning at home really impact the school readiness." Parents report similar types of activities: "I read different book activities from the little books that they sell in stores. Helping her write her name with the dry erase board. Helping her trace numbers." Other home activities take the form of games, such as pointing out shapes or looking up a different animal each day. A few parents mention nutrition-related activities, noting that they have cooked with their child after program staff encouraged them to do so. Only a few parents do not mention participating in any activities with their child at home or as a family.

> "We read every day. We try to attend, maybe not every Saturday at the library, but at least once a month so she gets an idea what a library looks like."
>
> —Parent on engagement in literacy activities with child

Roughly half of the parents also participate in gross or fine motor activities that their Head Start center staff encouraged, such as playing soccer or other games in the park, practicing holding a pencil, and going on walks together in the neighborhood.

Staff encourage parents to visit local institutions, including libraries and museums. Parents also attend events at firehouses, parks, zoos, or science centers. In addition, staff provide information about community resources (such as low-cost medical care or free baby supplies) and community events. The most common local activity parents mention attending is a community event their Head Start program has encouraged them to attend. "I know every year around May they have a convention that goes on. It involves the public schools, but the Head Start always gets involved and they pick certain parents from different areas of the schools, Head Start schools." Another parent mentioned "a Fatherhood March to recognize fathers in my community. On Martin Luther King Day, they had all the parents and the kids come out to plant gardens."

Some parents note in interviews that they participate in adult learning and job-training events sponsored by their child's Head Start center: "I attended the class or the trainings when they talked to us about going back to school, gave us information about going to the local [state] workforce, and there was a program that could help single parents get back into school."

Very few parents participate in advocacy events, except as part of their responsibility when working on a Policy Council or in a leadership position for the Head Start center.

What are barriers to families' engagement?

The largest barriers to families' engagement, according to open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, are work and child care constraints. Some parents mention scheduling conflicts, particularly with leadership activities: "It's hard for me to be a part of that committee because I can't be there for every meeting because they're on Fridays during the morning that I work, and two, it's not good to be a part of a committee when I can't really be there like I should." A few parents also note transportation as a barrier, as well as a parental disability or physical barriers affecting mobility. No parents mention language barriers to interacting with staff. None state that they are uncomfortable interacting with Head Start staff.

Some FSS discuss scheduling conflicts as potential barriers to greater participation in Head Start activities: "Most of the parents, maybe 80 percent of the families, do have employment, so it's very, very difficult for them to be more involved in the center." Another FSS stated that site directors try to work around parents' schedules:

"If they know their center consists of parents that are just not going to come back at evening hours, then they will try to make it at the end of the school day so that they can catch the parents when they're picking up their children and they can be there to get the information that's given to them."

What child and family changes do parents attribute to Head Start?

In the Family Engagement Parent Interview, almost all parents describe changes in their child's learning or academic skills that they attribute to Head Start. This includes children developing an enthusiasm for school as well as measurable literacy or numeracy skills. For example, as one parent said, "She knows her ABCs, she can count really well, she knows her shapes." Many parents also describe improvements in social-emotional or behavioral outcomes, such as making friends, learning to interact with others, or following directions.

> "The social development is the main thing. Things like, my son is an only child. So, things like sharing and taking turns. Getting along well with others. Learning how to work with other children. Learning how to sit in a structured environment. Where, before coming to Head Start, he was not in daycare or anything like that, he was at home with me. So, I think the experience allowed him the opportunity to be in a structured learning environment."
>
> —Parent on changes in child's social-emotional development

Some parents describe particular behavioral skills their child has learned, such as potty training and picking up after themselves after a meal. Only a small number of parents do not attribute changes in their child to Head Start.

Whereas most parents focus on changes for their child as opposed to family changes as a result of Head Start, some also describe changes in their own learning or knowledge as a result of the program. These changes include learning about child development, parenting, or healthy eating, as well as improving English skills as a result of interactions at the program. Some nontraditional guardians (such as foster parents or grandparents who have custody of a child) particularly appreciate additional assistance with parenting skills they receive from the program. Other parents describe learning about the importance of yearly check-ups and help with finding a dentist.

Some parents also report that they receive information or resources beyond Head Start to meet specific needs unrelated to parenting. One parent described learning about available community services for their family of which they previously were not aware:

> "We were given information about a housing program. So the housing program came in and they replaced a couple [of] windows that were—I don't know, like energy efficient, I guess. Septic tank, we got a new septic tank which you know was great. And insulation, they did—they came in and blew insulation—our house is really old, so we got insulation."

Some parents describe a warmer relationship with a child as a result of shared experiences arising from the Head Start program. These parents devote more time to their child and spend time in activities together. For example, as one parent said: "It unites us … the first year that my daughter was there a teacher came to the house and she made me—I was the one who taught her how to cut, how to paste, how—it was a time to interact with my daughter." Relatively few parents mention outcomes for a Head Start child's sibling or participation in parent networks as a significant outcome.

How satisfied are families with program experiences?

Findings from the closed-ended data in the Family Engagement Parent Interview suggest that parents are generally satisfied with their program experiences. When asked about how well they feel programs do at providing various kinds of information that can support family engagement in children's learning, the majority of children's parents feel the program does "very well". In fact, parents of most children report that Head Start does "very well" at providing workshops or advice about how to help children learn at home (83 percent), letting parents know how their child is doing in the program between conferences (82 percent), helping parents understand what children of their child's age are like (80 percent), making the parent aware of chances to volunteer with the program (80 percent), and providing information on community services (64 percent). The majority of children's parents who report a language other than English spoken at home also report that the program does "very well" at understanding the needs of families that do not speak English (72 percent).

How have families connected with other parents and resources in the community?

As described in Chapter III, parents noted that programs provide opportunities that support their relationships with other parents and adults. Looking at their actual participation in such activities, in open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, most parents mention that they have engaged with other Head Start parents, generally as a result of program activities. They describe participating in a range of program activities to let families get to know one another, with several citing parent meetings and holiday events. Several parents also arrange parent-organized play dates with parents they have met in the program. One parent shared a story: "We've had an activity in which kids went to make some clothes, and there we were, all the parents, families with them. Later, another lady didn't have a way to return home and so we offered to bring her. And so, there, during the ride, that's when I got to know a little more about that person." Another parent states that "during get-togethers, we can sit down and talk to one another while the kids play."

When asked, only a few parents do not think families in the program can turn to each other for support or that they are unsure whether that is true. As one parent noted:

> "I think as soon as you get involved in a program, you kind of become like a family.
> Sometimes people are shy to talk to someone about their needs, as in a teacher. So
> they ask a parent 'How would you feel if something happened?' Or they can ask a
> parent 'I heard you had a problem like mine and how did you overcome that?'"

Data from the Parent Survey suggests that parents have access to sources of social support beyond the Head Start program, as shown in Figure IV.2. Parents of the majority of children (62 to 68 percent) can always find support to meet various needs, with two exceptions. Only 42 percent of children's parents report it is always true that they can find someone to watch their child so they can run an errand, and 49 percent report that it is always true that friends or family can loan them cash in the event of an emergency. Parents of most children (68 percent) are always able to speak with a friend, relative, or neighbor if their child is having problems at Head Start, and most parents always have someone to talk to give them advice (68 percent). Most children have parents who can always rely on friends or family to drive their child to the doctor

(64 percent) or to call or come visit if their child is sick (62 percent). Children's parents are most likely to report they find family members very helpful (90 percent). Seventy-six percent find professionals helpful—including counselors or social workers, Head Start staff, and other child care providers—and 51 percent find friends helpful (Figure IV.3).

Figure IV.2. Social support parents receive: Spring 2015
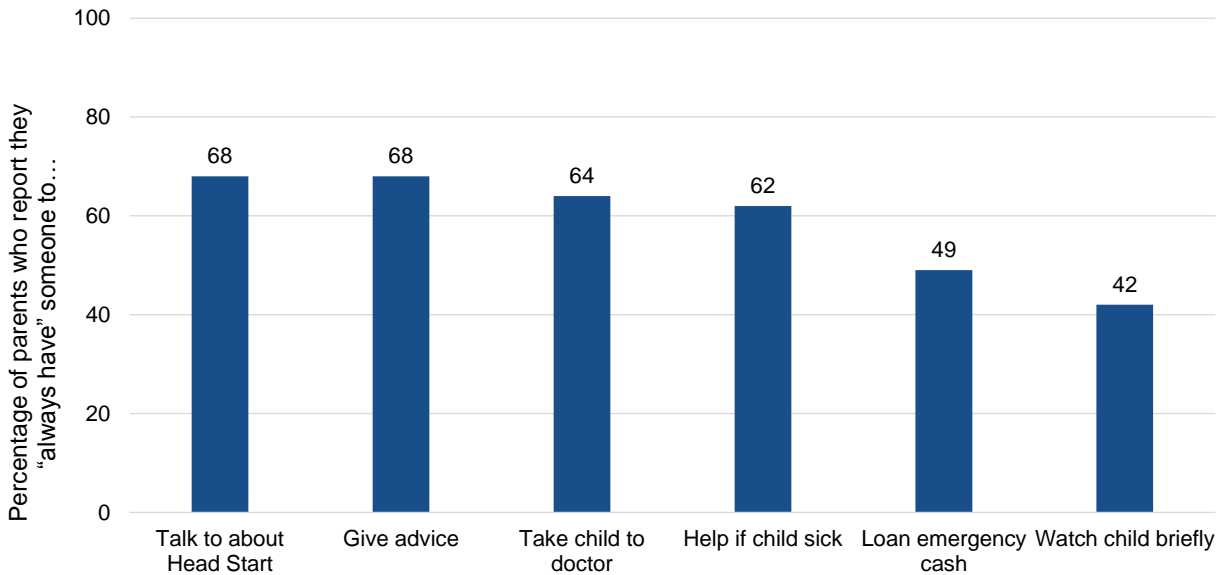
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey (n=840).

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

Figure IV.3. Sources of support that parents find very helpful for meeting various needs: Spring 2015
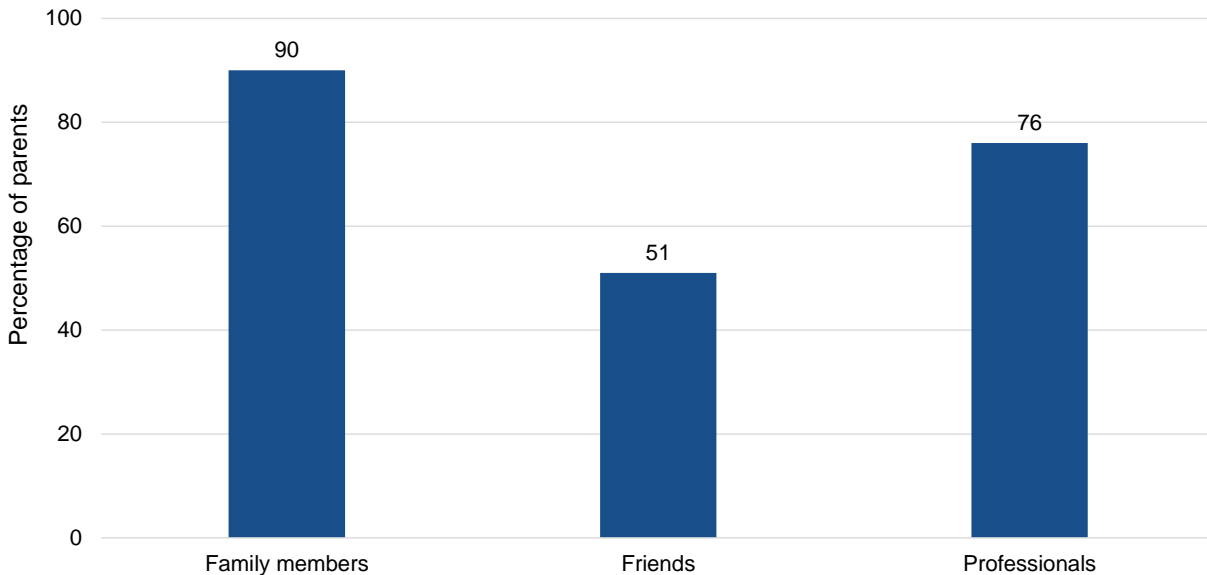
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey (n=840).

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

According to items in the Parent Survey, parents report they rarely access community services such as housing, job training, or entering college. Although not gathered in the survey, there are a variety of reasons why parents may not access services. For example, parents may not be aware of the services, do not need them, or have a need but are unable to get help accessing them. With the exception of dental, orthodontic, or medical care, parents of 15 percent or less of Head Start children obtain various community services during the 2014–2015 program year. Forty percent receive dental or orthodontic care, and 46 percent receive medical care. Parents are least likely to obtain alcohol or drug treatment or counseling (1 percent), help dealing with family violence (less than 1 percent), or transportation to or from work (3 percent).

V. WHAT STAFF ARE INVOLVED IN FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS, AND IN WHAT WAYS ARE THEY INVOLVED IN THOSE EFFORTS?

In this chapter, we use FSS reports to describe the Head Start staff involved in family engagement activities and the nature of staff involvement. We also provide additional information on FSS, including their demographic characteristics, job satisfaction and commitment, and supports received related to family engagement efforts. With regard to the latter, this includes discussing formal professional development opportunities provided by programs to FSS along with more informal supports. The PFCE Framework highlights the importance of formal professional development supports for staff, including those specific to staff's unique roles. It also notes the importance of communities of learners and efforts that encourage mutual support among staff. The current findings provide descriptive information on the nature of those supports for staff. Findings address the questions:

1. What staff are involved in family engagement efforts, and in what ways are they involved in those efforts?

2. What are the beliefs and background characteristics of FSS?

3. What supports do FSS receive from the program to engage families in the program and in their children's learning and development?

As part of the Family Engagement FSS Interview (see Table V.1), FSS answered open-ended items about the staff involved in family engagement efforts and the supports they receive from the program to engage and serve families. FSS also provided background information on themselves, including their demographic characteristics, education, and credentials. Finally, using closed-ended items from the FPTRQ, FSS described their job commitment. Box V.1 highlights key findings from the data in this area.

Table V.1. What staff are involved in family engagement efforts, and in what ways are they involved in those efforts: Data sources and sample sizes

Data source	Sample size
Family Engagement FSS Interview	145 FSS[a]

[a]For all reporting from the Family Engagement FSS Interview, we used open-ended data from a subsample of cases (60 FSS); otherwise, we used all other available data from the full sample of staff.

Box V.1. Key findings on family engagement staff in Head Start

- Programs vary in the types of staff involved in family engagement efforts. In some cases, FSS are the primary staff working to engage families, whereas in others, teachers and administrators are also responsible for such efforts.

- Many FSS believe that all staff working in their program play an important role in supporting family engagement.

- FSS are educated and experienced. Most have at least an associate's degree, and the average FSS has worked in Head Start for 11 years.

- Almost all FSS report being committed to and enjoying their job.

- FSS report various ways in which programs help them to engage families, ranging from formal trainings and meetings to informal opportunities to learn from program staff with varying expertise. Several also note that mentorship from their supervisors is particularly helpful. Others also receive resources from the program and services in the community.

What staff in the program are involved in family engagement efforts, and how do staff work together?

Programs vary in the types of staff involved in family engagement efforts. Some FSS report that they are the primary staff working to engage families, whereas others report that teachers and administrators are also responsible for such efforts. Many FSS think that all staff working in their program play an important role in family engagement efforts, including cooks and bus drivers.

"[Family engagement efforts are] everybody's job in that one particular service they're in. It's everyone's responsibility right now: the cook, the nurse, the bus driver, [it's] everybody's job, to get the families engaged and involved in their child's education."

—FSS on staff member roles in family engagement efforts

"The family engagement staff work with the teachers very close all the time … sharing updates, sharing their notes, sharing their information, and that's what this whole program is about. Because we all work like one link all together."

—FSS on the ways staff work together to engage families

FSS also describe the ways in which staff at their program work together to engage families. Some FSS report that staff work together by dividing responsibilities. One FSS described the way staff in her program do this, explaining that, "Initially, it's family services [staff]. If we plan programs, we get information out to the families. But in other aspects, [it's] the teachers, if they're going to present something or send works and things home, then they contact the parents either by notes or phone calls. As family services [staff], we follow up with this." Other FSS work directly with other types of staff in the program to engage families.

What are the beliefs and background characteristics of FSS?

FSS have diverse backgrounds. Forty-two percent of FSS are White, 30 percent are Hispanic/Latino, and 21 percent are African American (Figure V.1). Thirty-nine percent of FSS speak a language other than English. Ninety-seven percent of FSS are female. Thirty percent are

between 30 and 39 years old and 15 percent are between 40 and 49 years old. Twenty-seven percent are between the ages of 50 and 59; 14 percent are 60 or older. FSS are educated and experienced. Seventy-three percent have at least an associate's degree. The average FSS has worked in Head Start for 11 years.

Figure V.1. FSS demographic characteristics: Spring 2015
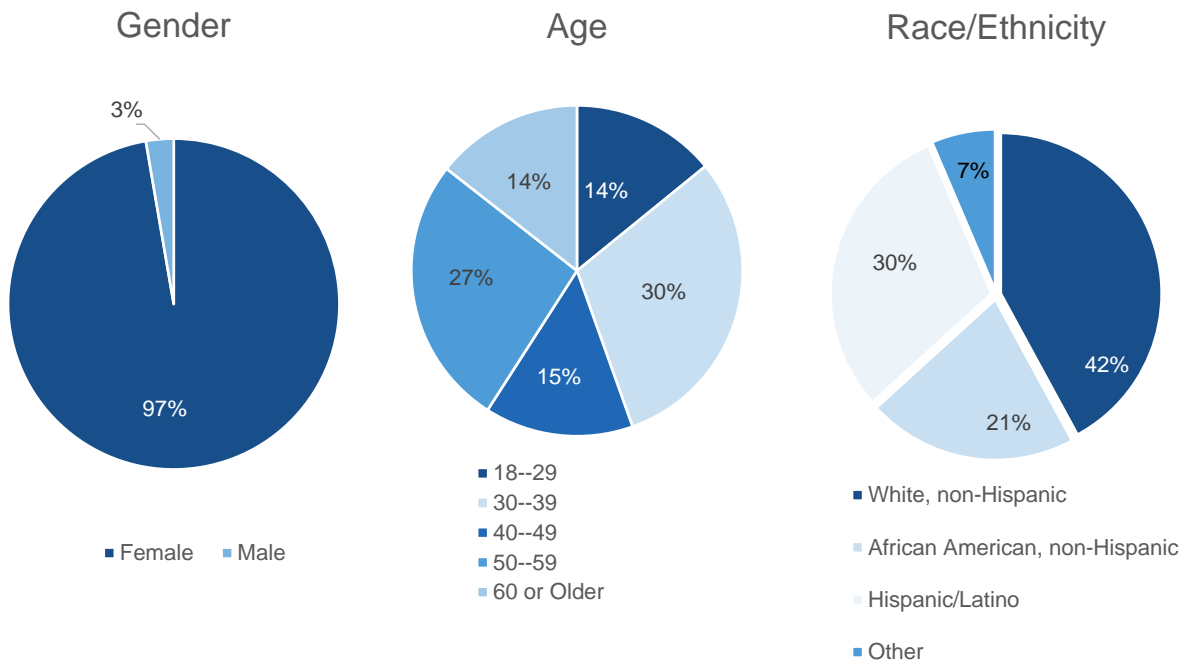
Gender

Age

Race/Ethnicity

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview (n=145).
Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start FSS.

Almost all FSS agree with positive statements and disagree with negative statements about commitment to their jobs and the families they serve. All FSS feel that they help parents to reach their job and educational goals, and work as FSS because they enjoy it, they like helping families reach their goals, and they like helping children and families get the services they need (Figure V.2). Almost all of them consider how culture shapes their approach (99 percent). No FSS see their job as just a paycheck (not shown), and few (21 percent) would choose another way to make a living.

Figure V.2. FSS job commitment: Spring 2015
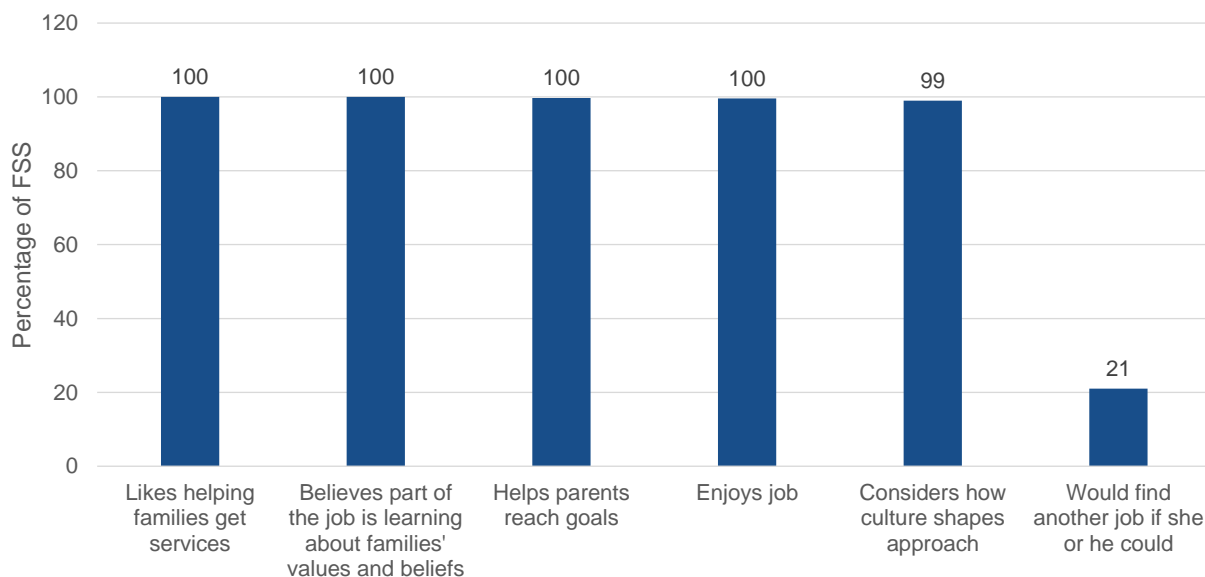
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview (n=145).

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start FSS.

What supports do FSS receive from the program to engage families in the program and in their children's learning and development?

FSS describe various ways in which programs help them to engage families in the program and their children's learning and development. Such support ranges from formal trainings and meetings to informal opportunities to learn from program staff with varying expertise. Many FSS mention multiple types of support, whereas a few have only one type. One FSS pointed out the benefits of workshops—they provided "a clear and precise understanding of the necessary and needed materials to be utilized in teaching the children in the classroom and bringing the parents in as part of it."

Several staff feel that mentorship from their supervisors is particularly helpful. Another FSS mentioned that she receives "information …from the Head Start program like books and activities for the month" which she is able to pass along to parents. In addition, many FSS have ready access to resources available in the community (for example, through a resource book that contains agency contact information FSS can use to refer families). FSS also commented on additional supports they think would be helpful in engaging families in their children's learning and development. Several FSS mention logistical supports in the form of more funding, additional staff, and reduced caseloads. A few FSS also note that additional resources and opportunities for staff trainings would be beneficial.

> "The site supervisor [at my program] is phenomenal. We can ask her, and talk to her about anything that's going on with a family and she will try to help us figure it out."
>
> —FSS on program support for engaging families

VI. HOW ARE COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY SERVICES PROVIDED IN HEAD START?

Next, we use data from FSS and teachers to describe the Head Start staff involved in helping families to get needed services and the nature of staff involvement. We also provide information on the referral and follow-up process in Head Start, challenges in that process, and the formal and informal supports provided by programs to FSS for the service provision and referral process. The Head Start Program Performance Standards recognize the importance of formal supports—such as receipt of health services and access to social service agencies—to child and family well-being. Since its inception, Head Start has provided educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to enrolled children and their families in an effort to support the well-being of the whole family. Family well-being (an outcome targeted in the PFCE Framework), including access to neighborhood resources, such as libraries and community centers, stable housing, safe neighborhoods, nutritious food, and regular health care, is supportive of healthy child development (Goldfeld et al. 2010; NCPFCE 2014). We used both open- and closed-ended data to better understand the service provision process in Head Start and the program supports provided for it. Findings address the questions:

1. What staff in the program are involved in helping families get needed services, and in what ways are they involved?

2. What does the referral and follow-up process look like?

3. What supports do FSS receive from the program related to the service provision and referral process?

We draw on data from the Family Engagement FSS Interview, and supplemental items in the Teacher Survey (see Table VI.1). Family Engagement FSS Interview open-ended items focused on which program staff help families get needed services, and how they do so. FSS also responded to open-ended items asking about (1) the referral and follow-up process and their perceptions of its effectiveness, (2) the supports they receive from the program related to service provision and referrals, and (3) specific ways they have connected families to needed services. Using closed-ended FPTRQ items, both FSS and teachers mentioned their beliefs about helping families get needed services. Box VI.1 highlights key findings from the data in this area.

Table VI.1. How are comprehensive family services provided in Head Start: Data sources and sample sizes

Data source	Sample size
Supplemental items in the Teacher Survey	221 teachers
Family Engagement FSS Interview	145 FSS[a]

[a]For all reporting from the Family Engagement FSS Interview, we used open-ended data from a subsample of cases (60 FSS); otherwise, we used all other available data from the full sample of participating staff.

Box VI.1. Key findings on service provision in Head Start

- FSS are most commonly involved in helping families get needed services, but other staff, particularly teachers, are also involved.

- FSS report that communication among staff is key to getting families the services they need. Information is shared in formal meetings and via informal conversations.

- Referrals are tracked either electronically or on paper; FSS follow up with families to ensure follow-through.

- For service provision, FSS primarily rely on handbooks with information about local resources or their managers and supervisors.

- FSS most commonly identify time and lack of updated information about available resources as barriers to helping connect families to them. FSS also cite needs for accessible technology for parents (for example, tablets, computer labs), more money for trainings, and stronger connections with the community.

What staff in the program are involved in helping families get needed services, and how do staff work together?

On closed-ended items, almost all (97 percent) FSS connect families with services and agree (99 percent) that helping families meet their basic needs is a part of their job as an FSS. Similarly, most teachers feel they help families get services available in the community (92 percent).[11]

Responses to the open-ended items also highlight that FSS have a primary role in the service provision process. In fact, most FSS report that they are the staff most commonly involved in getting families needed services; however, many report that other types of staff are involved as well. Teachers are the next most commonly reported staff involved, but a few FSS also mention involvement of nurses or health specialists and site supervisors. A few note that the staff involved sometimes depends on a particular family's need. For example, one FSS said, "It depends on the need of the family, or whatever the referral is needed, we help them get the best help they need."

FSS describe several ways in which Head Start staff work together to help families get services. Many staff note that meetings among staff —typically formal, weekly, or monthly—are a time to share information about families. Some FSS say that this information is shared informally: when a staff member becomes aware of a family need they will bring it to the attention of the FSS. Some staff also describe referrals, not only to outside agencies but internally, as a way for staff to coordinate care for a family. For example, one FSS said, "What I do is I make a referral to the disability specialist and I also give a copy to the family services content specialist and also to the health services content specialist so they can all be aware of what's going on. From there we go back and follow up with the disabilities specialist to see how services have been rendered to the children." Several staff note that information sharing among FSS is common, and that this is done through conversations about community resources or printed materials about resources that staff collect into a book or binder that others can use.

What does the referral and follow-up process look like?

Almost all FSS track referrals; most use some type of electronic or paper tracking system, with many specifically naming "ChildPlus" as the system used. Others describe more general electronic or paper systems, saying that they put notes in children's files when referrals are made and follow up in person or by phone to see whether the family has followed through. One FSS described the paper tracking system they use:

> "Every time we make a referral to an agency we fill out—if it's a health referral, a health referral sheet, or if it's a social service referral, then there's a different sheet for that. So we fill [it] out when we make the referral and then, in about a month or two months, we check back with the family to see did they contact the agency, what happened with that contact, is there any other support needed, and then that tracking information goes to our data entry specialist who compiles it for the whole agency."

In addition to internal tracking, a few FSS communicate with the agency to which they refer to see whether families have gotten involved.

What supports do FSS receive from the program related to the service provision and referral process?

In interviews, many FSS describe using a community resource handbook containing information about local community resources. Several FSS show this handbook to parents, but most who use it say they do so within their team to help identify local resources. Many FSS also discuss trainings/webinars or meetings, either within their center or across several centers, in which they learn about services available to parents. Others describe the support they receive from their supervisors or management team as well as their colleagues. For example, one FSS said, "I receive support from my managing team … if I don't know which way to turn, then my management team is there to help point me in the right direction. Or my teammates."

When citing the resources they find most helpful, many FSS talk about the trainings. One FSS said the following:

> "I think the trainings are more—are the most—because of the information they provide us. I mean there's always new things out there and we're—like I said, we're not even aware. 'Oh, I've seen this place before, I didn't know they did that.' You know I've always learned from each network training what's out there and something new [from] what they say."

A couple of FSS feel their management team or colleagues are the most helpful and a few others say they cannot choose one particular support as the most helpful.

When identifying other supports that would help the service provision process, no general consensus emerges. Instead, staff respond in several different ways. A few FSS say that time—either in the form of a reduced caseload or more time to identify resources or work with families—would be helpful. Other staff feel that updated information about community resources would help. For example, one FSS said, "I guess just more information, because there's always—I mean it seems these resources are so ever-changing it's hard to know different

enrollment criteria or whatever for different agencies. So just continue to update the information on that." Time is also linked to this need, with one FSS saying, "It would be great if someone had time to research all the time and look up all the new [community resources] and keep track of the ones that are closed. That would be a big help but there's nobody that has the time to just do that job."

Other needs raised by FSS include accessible technology for parents (tablets, computer labs), more money for trainings, and stronger connections with the community.

VII. HOW DO PARENTS AND STAFF CHARACTERIZE THEIR RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS WITH ONE ANOTHER?

The PFCE Framework recognizes that relationships between parents and staff are an important aspect of program quality. Communication and collaboration between parents and teachers in particular support parent engagement (Spielberg 2011) and ultimately child outcomes (Blue-Banning et al. 2004). Programs can foster engagement by providing welcoming environments, promoting respectful two-way communication, and collaborating with families in decision making, among other efforts (Halgunseth et al. 2009). We used data from parents and staff to describe parent-staff relationships, including frequency and topics of communication, and collaborative efforts for supporting children's development and child and family goals. Findings address the questions:

1. How do families and staff view and interact with each other?

2. How often do families and staff communicate with each other? What topics do they discuss?

3. How do families and staff work together to support the child's learning and development?

4. What goals do families have for themselves and their children? How do staff work with families to help them meet these goals?

We draw on data from the Family Engagement Parent and FSS Interviews, and supplemental items in the Parent and Teacher Surveys (see Table VII.1). Open-ended items on the Family Engagement Parent and FSS Interviews focused on the ways that families and staff work together, the goals parents have for themselves and their children, how often parents communicate with staff, and the topics they discuss (also addressed via closed-ended items). In the Family Engagement Parent Interview and in the Parent Survey, parents also answered closed-ended FPTRQ items to discuss their relationship and interactions with FSS and teaching staff, respectively, with parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview also answering SBPI items in this area. Box VII.1 highlights key findings from the data in this area.

Table VII.1. How do parents and staff characterize their relationships and interactions with one another: Data sources and sample sizes

Data source	Sample size
Supplemental items in the Parent Survey (FPTRQ short form items)	801 parents
Supplemental items in the Teacher Survey	221 teachers
Family Engagement Parent Interview	315 parents[a]
Family Engagement FSS Interview	145 FSS[a]

[a]For all reporting from the Family Engagement interviews, we used open-ended data from a subsample of cases (120 parents and 60 FSS); otherwise, we used all other available data from the full sample of participating parents/staff.

> ## Box VII.1. Key findings on parent-staff relationships and interactions
>
> - Most parents feel that FSS and teachers respect their beliefs, goals, and choices.
>
> - Staff and parents have similar perspectives on staff respect, although staff recognize the challenges associated with respecting some parenting choices and styles they do not share.
>
> - Parents generally agree that program staff help to empower them and that staff demonstrate knowledge and sensitivity. Both parent and staff reports suggest that FSS and teachers are responsive to parents and other family members.
>
> - Most parents communicate with their child's teacher daily or nearly daily, most commonly to discuss their child's developmental needs and issues.
>
> - FSS have regular, sometimes daily, contact with families. This contact often is during informal periods, such as drop off or pick up.
>
> - Staff know the background of many families they serve, including information about parental employment and living arrangements. Staff reported knowing less about families' culture or values and parent-child interactions at home.
>
> - Parents feel comfortable sharing a range of information about their family with FSS and teachers.
>
> - FSS often provide parents with information about parenting as well as topics related to the parents' own goals or needs.
>
> - Although most FSS and teachers report regular communication on a variety of topics and frequent collaboration with the parents they serve, less than half of parents report the same experience.
>
> - When discussing goals they have for their children, parents most commonly note academic-related goals. Social-emotional and behavioral goals are also common.
>
> - Parent-related goals most commonly are directly or indirectly related to their child, or tied to achieving economic self-sufficiency (via education or job-related goals).
>
> - Parents feel that staff encourage them to think about their own personal goals or dreams and that FSS have increased their confidence in accomplishing goals for themselves. FSS also report working closely with parents, both formally and informally, to progress toward goals. However, most

How do families and staff view and interact with each another?

Staff perspectives

FSS agree with closed-ended items that indicate they support parents' beliefs and cultures, but they reported mixed agreement regarding their ability to accept parenting choices with which they disagree. There are also some discrepancies between FSS and parent interview reports of the role that culture plays in FSS-parent interactions (Figure VII.1). Most FSS agree that parents' beliefs about child care and education vary by culture (93 percent) and report "very often" considering parents' culture and values when providing services (90 percent). However, only half (51 percent) talk about culture and values with parents. Few think it is hard to support the goals parents have for their children (29 percent) or work with parents who have different beliefs than them (10 percent). However, more than half of FSS agree that it is sometimes hard to support the way parents discipline their children (74 percent) or raise them (64 percent), and accept the choices that parents make (58 percent). Similarly, whereas few teachers report that it is hard for them to work with parents who have different beliefs (19 percent), more than half agree that they sometimes find it hard to support the way parents raise (56 percent) and discipline their children (52 percent).

Figure VII.1. FSS and parent perceptions of the role of culture and values: Spring 2015
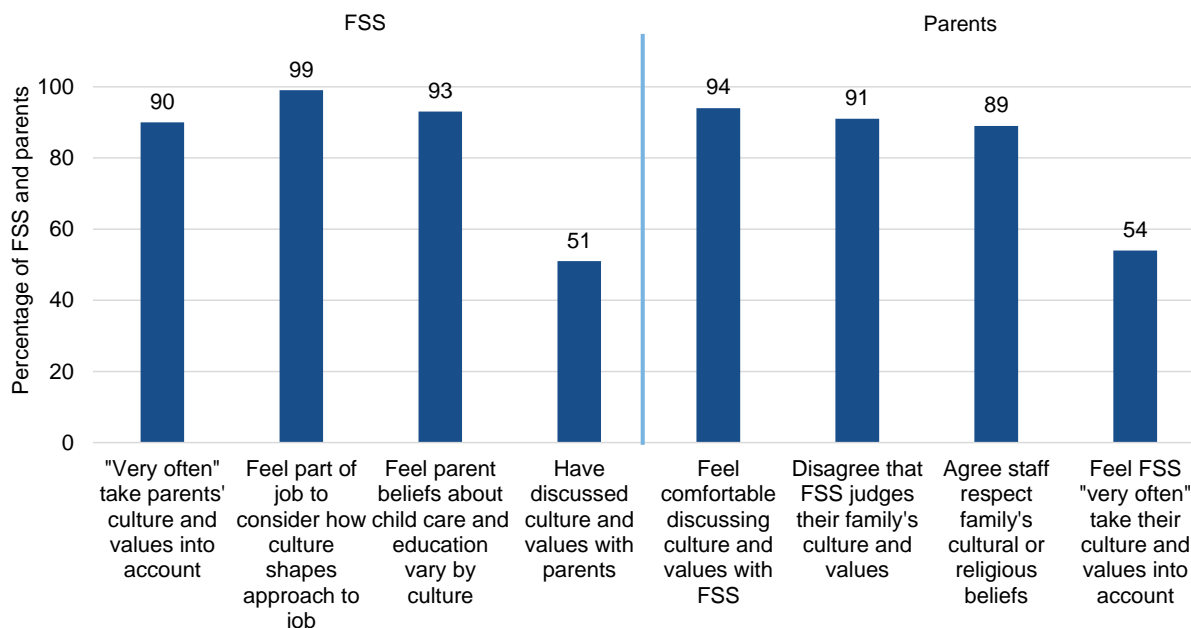
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interviews (n=145), Parent Survey (n=801), and Family Engagement Parent (n=315).

Note: FSS statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start FSS. Parent statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

Most FSS agree with statements that demonstrate responsiveness to parents or other family members. All or nearly all FSS accept that parents are the ultimate decision makers for the care of their children (100 percent) and acknowledge the need to tailor their approach when working with family members (98 percent). Only about half of FSS report that they are "very easy" for parents to reach during the day if issues arise (54 percent).

Parent perspectives

In the Family Engagement Parent Interview, parents of most children report that they feel comfortable discussing their family's culture and values with FSS (94 percent), "disagree" or "strongly disagree" that their FSS or teacher[12] judges their family because of its culture and values (91 percent and 92 percent, respectively), and agree that staff respect their cultural or religious beliefs (89 percent; Figure VII.1). Unlike FSS reports, however, only about half (54 percent) of children's parents feel that FSS "very often" take their values and culture into account.

On interview items, parents generally agree that program staff help to empower them. They agree that staff help them see that they are a good parent (89 percent), work together with parents to meet their needs (83 percent), help parents use their own skills and resources to solve problems (81 percent), encourage them to think about their own personal goals or dreams

(75 percent), and help them to see strengths in themselves they did not know they had (64 percent).

On specific items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, at least three-quarters of children have parents who somewhat or strongly agree that staff demonstrate sensitivity and knowledge. Eighty-eight percent of children's parents agree that staff provide good information about where to go for other services they need, 87 percent agree that staff know about other programs they can use if needed, 82 percent agree that staff support them in the decisions they make about their family and themselves, and 76 percent agree that staff understand when something is difficult for them.

A majority of children's parents also report that FSS (and teachers) have characteristics demonstrating commitment to their jobs and the families they serve. Between 85 and 90 percent of children have parents who report that the following characteristics are either "a lot like" or "exactly like" their FSS or teacher: understanding, dependable, and available. Only 15 percent of children's parents agree that their FSS sees his/her job as just a paycheck. Parents participating in the Family Engagement Interview described their perceptions of FSS, whereas those participating in the Parent Survey described teachers.

Similar to staff reports about themselves, on interview items, parents of most children consider FSS to have characteristics that demonstrate responsiveness to them or other family members. For example, at least three-quarters of children's parents feel that FSS respect them as a person (91 percent), are flexible and responsive (88 percent), ask caring questions about families (81 percent), and treat them as if they are experts on their children (79 percent). Similarly, parents of nearly all children agree that FSS are open to learning new ways to help parents and children (97 percent), make sure children receive the best possible care (93 percent), and work together with parents to increase their confidence (87 percent). Consistent with staff reports, however, only about half of children's parents (48 percent) report that FSS are "very easy" to reach during the day if issues arise.

When reporting on teacher responsiveness in the Parent Survey, two-thirds of children's parents report that it is like their teacher to reflect the cultural diversity of children in activities (70 percent), use parent feedback to adjust the education and care provided to the child (68 percent), and communicate the cultural values and beliefs the parent wants the child to have (67 percent).

How often do families and staff communicate with each other? What topics do they discuss?

Staff perspectives

When responding to the open-ended items, many FSS say that they interact with families daily, often at drop-off or pick-up time. Some see families less often, but still frequently, weekly, or several times a month. A few see families only at the two annual home visits or when families request an appointment.

Regardless of frequency, FSS report both formal and informal interactions with parents. Staff who see parents every day, or nearly every day, are most likely to describe informal

interactions, often when parents are dropping children off at school or spontaneously stopping by the FSS's office. Other interactions that FSS describe are more formal and planned, such as during home visits or appointments parents make to access referrals or discuss a particular challenge. A few FSS note that the frequency and type of interactions they have with parents depends on the particular family. One FSS said:

> "I mean it depends on the individual families, some of them will come in and, you know, I always see them at the required times and they'll, you know, not really want to deal with me at any other point. Then I have other people who I see, you know, weekly, or you know, they'll come in and they'll have a word with me real quick before they leave."

Some FSS indicate that teachers have the most contact with parents, and that they sometimes learn about parent needs through teachers. For example, one FSS said the following:

> "Right now I'm the supervisor, so most of the time the teachers are the ones really talking to the parents. If the teacher has questions for something that they cannot really answer from the parents when they ask them questions, that's that time they [would] refer them to me for the parents to go to the office. That's the time I help them. Most of the time it's the teacher and the parents who are really communicating. But at the same time, I know the parents and I welcome them and I tell them … do you have any further questions; we follow protocol. Then after that, if they're not satisfied with the teacher's answers, then you can come to me."

On closed-ended items, FSS report communicating "very often" with all of the parents they serve. The most common communication activities that FSS report (reported by at least half of FSS; (Figure VII.2) include following up with parents about goals they set for themselves (84 percent; not shown in figure), following up with parents about goals they set for their child (82 percent; not shown in figure), suggesting activities for parents and children to do together (80 percent), working with parents to develop strategies they can use at home to support their child's learning and development (70 percent), and offering parents ideas or suggestions about parenting (55 percent). About half of FSS frequently offer parents books and materials on parenting (49 percent). Parent reports differ, however, in how often these types of communication occur, as discussed further below.

Figure VII.2. FSS and parent-reported types of communication between FSS and parents: Spring 2015
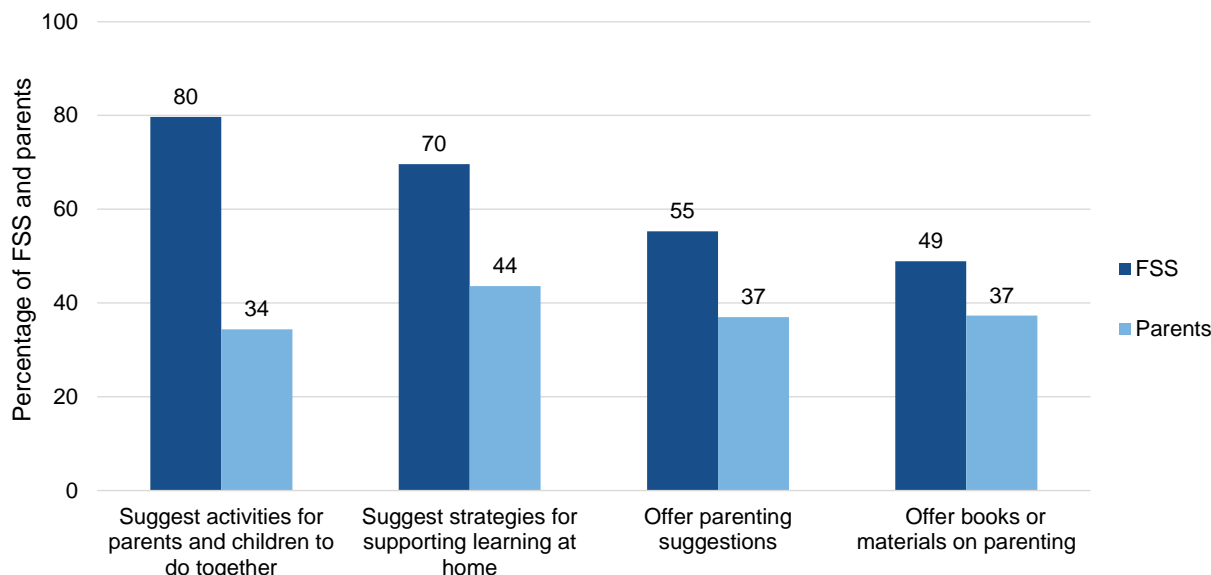
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS (n=145) and Parent Interviews (n=315).

Note: FSS statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start FSS. Parent statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

On similar closed-ended items, fewer teachers than parents report communicating "very often" with all of the parents they serve. Fifty-three percent of teachers "very often" set goals with parents for their child. Forty-eight percent frequently provide parents the opportunity to give feedback about their performance. Only 34 percent of teachers report "very often" offering parents ideas or suggestions about parenting.

FSS and families communicate about a range of topics. Almost all FSS (96 percent) say that talking to parents about parenting is part of their job. They also provide information to parents about a range of topics, including information about parent education and employment, housing or food, and health care.

On closed-ended items about their family-specific knowledge, FSS report knowing some information about "all families," including the following: parents' employment (75 percent), how many children a family has (70 percent), parents' finances (68 percent), who lives in the child's household (66 percent), parents' marital status (62 percent), and any health issues the child may have (62 percent; Figure VII.3). Less commonly, they report knowing about the family's culture and values (51 percent), parents' parenting style (39 percent), changes happening at home (38 percent), and problems the child is having at home (36 percent). In addition to knowing about family situations, about two-thirds or more of FSS report they "very often" discuss how the parent's child is doing in Head Start and their child's learning or development (75 and 64 percent, respectively), and the goals parents have for themselves and how they are progressing toward them (71 and 61 percent, respectively).

Figure VII.3. Most common information FSS know about all families served: Spring 2015
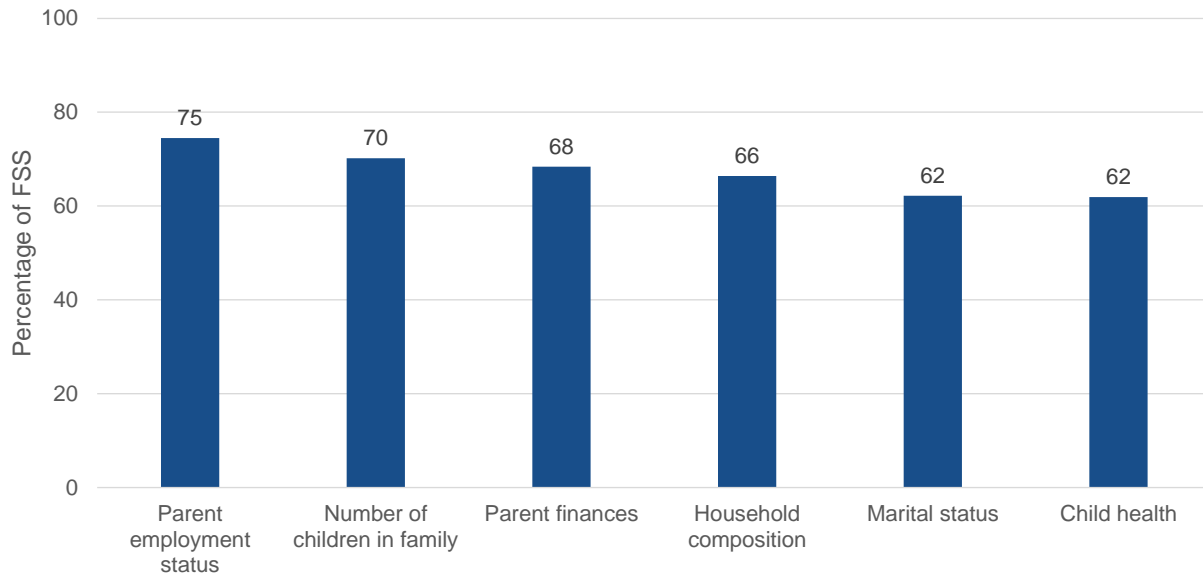
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview (n=145).
Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start FSS.

Parent perspectives

Most parents report in open-ended questions in the Family Engagement Parent Interview that they communicate with their child's teacher frequently, even though on closed-ended items most do not report that they frequently discuss a variety of specific topics with staff. In fact, most parents communicate with teachers daily or nearly daily, often during morning drop off or afternoon pick up. A few parents also interact with their child's teacher during special events, such as parent meetings or parent involvement activities.

Parents most commonly discuss their child's developmental needs and issues when interacting with teaching staff. These include, for example, how the child is behaving, areas in which the child requires growth and support, and the child's strengths. Many parents also mentioned discussing with the teacher what they can do to help support their child. Some parents discuss daily routines and lesson plans with teachers, including what the child did at the program that day and the things the child is learning. A few parents discuss upcoming Head Start activities or events with their child's teacher. A few also have discussions with teachers about family issues or service needs.

"We talk about my child. How he is developing. How he is behaving. Things he needs to work on … we talk about different things that we could do to try to help him both at school and at home."

—Parent on discussion topics with child's teacher

In contrast to FSS reports about themselves, less than half of children's parents report in interviews that FSS "very often" listen to parent ideas about ways to change or improve care the child receives (47 percent), work with the parent to develop strategies that could be used at home to support a child's learning and development (44 percent), offer books or materials on parenting

(37 percent), offer ideas or suggestions about parenting (37 percent), or suggest activities for the parent and child to do together (34 percent; Figure VII.2). More children have parents who feel that FSS "very often" answer questions when they arise (60 percent), and remember personal details about their family when speaking with the parent (54 percent).

According to items in the Parent Survey, less than half of children's parents feel that teachers "very often" communicate with them on a variety of topics. Forty-eight percent of children's parents report that teachers "very often" provide them with opportunities to give feedback on teacher performance, 35 percent report that teachers "very often" offer books or materials on parenting, and only 24 percent report that teachers ask about the cultural values and beliefs the parent wants the teacher to communicate to the child.

When asked in the Family Engagement Parent Interview about discussing their family with staff, parents of most children (more than 80 percent) feel comfortable sharing a variety of information with FSS, including the following: how many children they have (95 percent), how many adult relatives live in their household (93 percent), their work and school schedule (95 percent), their marital status (92 percent), their employment status (93 percent), their parenting style (94 percent), family life (88 percent), the role that faith and religion play in their household (88 percent), their family's culture and values (94 percent), what they do outside of Head Start to encourage their child's learning (96 percent), how they discipline their child (93 percent), problems their child is having at home (92 percent), changes happening at home (86 percent), and health issues their child may have (96 percent). As compared to other information that they share, fewer children have parents who feel comfortable sharing with FSS their own health issues or health issues other family members may have (77 percent), their financial situation (75 percent), and their personal relationship with a spouse or partner (73 percent). Based on Parent Survey items, between 84 and 86 percent of children's parents feel comfortable discussing family-specific topics with teachers, including the following: the child's family life (86 percent), the role that faith and religion play in the household (86 percent), and changes happening at home (84 percent).

What goals do families have for themselves and their children? How do staff work with families to help them meet these goals?

Staff perspectives

On open-ended items, FSS report that parents' goals for themselves span a range of areas, including education, work, gaining proficiency in English, achieving housing stability, and improving their relationships with others. Although parents' goals for themselves vary, many FSS say that parents primarily want to work toward education- or job-related goals.

Most FSS report that parents' goals for their children are primarily related to academic skills and school readiness. For example, one FSS said that parents in her program "set educational goals, for [their children] … to learn the things that they need to learn for their age. Maybe the alphabet, numbers, colors, tracing, handwriting, cutting …" A few FSS also note that parents have goals related to social and emotional development as well as their children's health and well-being. In addition, a few FSS mention that parents have more general goals for their children. For example, one FSS said that parents in her program just want their children "to

receive a quality education. For them to be in a safe environment. And just to be nurtured and loved while they are being educated."

FSS work closely with parents, both formally and informally, to create and work toward achieving the goals parents set for themselves and their children. Many FSS describe the ways in which they talk with parents to help them achieve their goals. One FSS noted that in her program staff "start where our families are. We try to let them find their way. We speak with them and work with them to kind of help them find their way on how they will accomplish this goal instead of just putting everything on the table for them." Some FSS follow up with parents to make sure they are making progress and offer help as needed. For example, one FSS explained how she might help a parent who is working toward obtaining employment: "So I provide them with information on openings that our program has for example … And also I tell the parent that I'm going to be—every time when I ask them—I'm going to be documenting all of that information. I have to keep a record." FSS also connect parents to helpful resources in the community to support progress toward goals.

FSS describe the ways in which they are able to support parents in developing goals. For example, some FSS help parents to break down larger goals into smaller, more manageable steps. In addition, FSS note formal materials their program uses to foster goal setting with parents. For example, some say that goal setting is a component of their program's Family Partnership Agreements or intake assessments that form part of the program registration process.

Parent perspectives

On open-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, parents describe similar goals as FSS. When discussing goals they have for their children, parents most commonly note academic-related goals—some specific and others more generic. For example, some parents noted that they want their child "to succeed," "to learn as much as possible," or "to be ready for school." Many cite the importance of their child knowing letters, numbers, colors, and how to write their name. Some also mention wanting their child to read, and a few want their child to learn English. Social-emotional or behavioral goals are also common, including getting along with other children, learning to share, and improving behavior (for example, paying attention, following directions). A few parents mention their children achieving milestones, such as being able to tie their shoes or potty training, and progress related to developmental conditions or delays—most commonly speech or language delays.

When describing how staff help families to meet these child-related goals, parent responses are often broad and nonspecific. That is, parents do not typically mention specific interactions or work with staff. Instead, they focus more globally on the program—with most describing classroom instruction or activities and several mentioning program-recommended parent-child activities as the means for supporting their child's progress toward goals.

When identifying goals they have for themselves, most parents typically describe goals directly or indirectly related to their child. That is, parents want to support their children's learning and development. As one parent said, "I just want to, for myself, learn any additional skills that I can do as a parent to try to support his learning." Similarly, another parent noted wanting "to be able to understand the ways that [children] learn and help as much as possible." Several parents also mention goals related to economic self-sufficiency (for example, going back

to school or getting a better job). A few have goals related to learning English, housing (for example, owning a home), or relationships with their children.

Many parents do not describe how staff specifically help them to reach their goals. Instead, they note ways in which the program frees up their time so that they can meet their goals (for example, because the child is receiving care, the parent can work or go to school). Some parents, however, receive advice, encouragement, or resources directly from staff around their goals. Only a few parents do not discuss their own goals with staff or are not receiving goal-related support.

> "When we have our family visits at the beginning of the year, we set up goals. Every time we meet, they ask how we are doing on that. If we need help, they will provide us a variety of help from the community or the program."
>
> —Parent on working with staff to reach own goals

Finally, on closed-ended items in the Family Engagement Parent Interview, parents of most children agree that FSS have increased their confidence in accomplishing goals for themselves (87 percent: Figure VII.4), and most agree that staff encourage them to think about their own personal goals or dreams (75 percent). However, less than half of children's parents discuss the goals they have for their child (40 percent) and their child's progress toward those goals (47 percent) "very often" with FSS. About one-quarter discuss the goals they have for themselves (23 percent) and their own progress toward those goals (25 percent) "very often" with FSS. Similarly, on closed-ended items in the Parent Survey, about half of children's parents report that they "very often" discuss their child's goals with the teacher (52 percent).

Figure VII.4. Parent interactions with staff about goals: Spring 2015
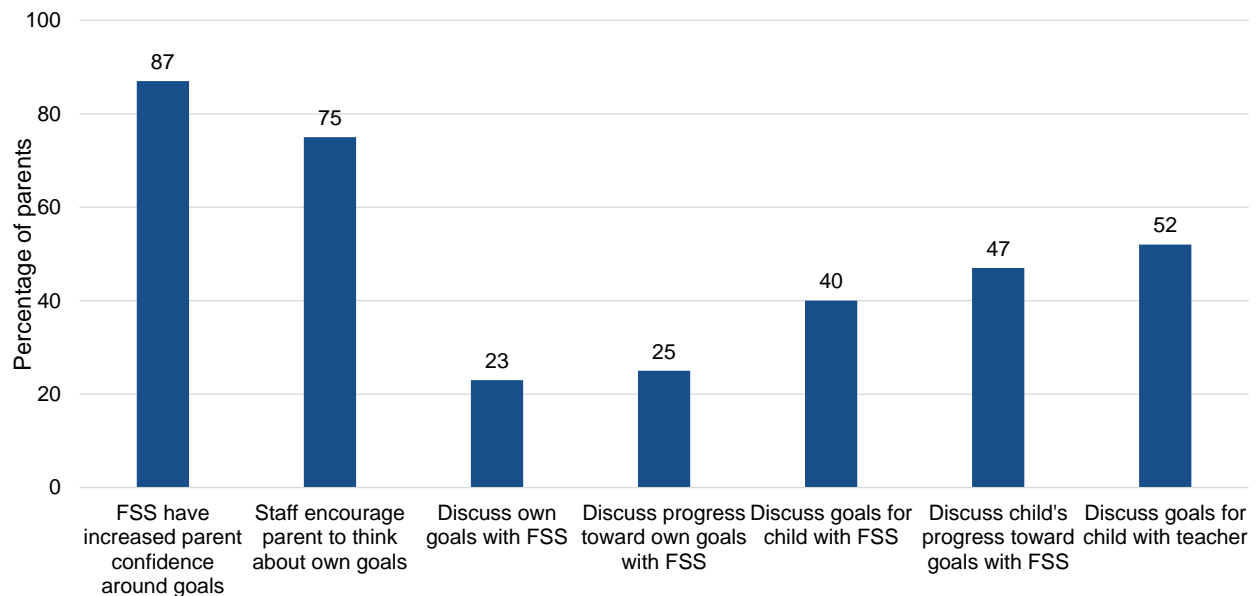
Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey (n=801) and Family Engagement Parent Interview (n=315).

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

All estimates from the parent-reported instruments are at the child level and are to be interpreted as the percentage of children. For simplicity we use the term "parents" rather than "children's parents" when describing findings.

VIII. HOW DO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS AND SERVICE PROVISION ALIGN WITH THE HEAD START PFCE FRAMEWORK?

As described in Chapter I, the Head Start PFCE Framework describes program strategies to achieve key parent and family engagement outcomes that in turn will lead to positive child outcomes and improved school readiness. While the Framework provides guidance and defines goals for programs around family engagement, it is not prescriptive and allows for variability in the strategies implemented by programs. In this chapter, we summarize whether the data presented in previous chapters suggest that family engagement efforts and service provision align with the PFCE Framework. Appendix Table A.1 shows the PFCE Framework columns, key elements, and descriptions of each of the elements. Box VIII.1 highlights key findings from the data in this area.

Box VIII.1. Key findings on alignment with the PFCE Framework

- Parent and FSS reports suggest that the PFCE family outcomes that align most closely with engagement efforts in Head Start include the following: families as advocates and leaders, family connections to peers and community, families as learners, families as lifelong educators, and family well-being.

- FSS mention fewer activities specifically aligned with two family outcomes: positive parent-child relationships and family engagement in transitions.

- Parents describe positive program environments. Almost all feel welcomed, valued, and respected by Head Start staff and describe positive relationships and interactions with staff.

- FSS reports about how they connect families to needed resources are aligned with the standards and goals outlined in the PFCE Framework.

- FSS describe an internal support system similar to the "community of learners" described in the PFCE Framework.

- FSS see a key component of their job as helping to strengthen family well-being.

Do family engagement efforts align with performance standards and/or the Head Start PFCE Framework? How so?

PFCE program impact areas

The Head Start PFCE Framework describes four program impact areas intended to support child and family outcomes. As discussed in previous chapters, findings from the open-ended data suggest that, consistent with the Framework, parents report positive *program environments*. Almost all feel welcomed, valued, and respected by Head Start staff, and these reports suggest that staff are culturally sensitive. Staff also engage in *family partnerships* to support parents in reaching goals and engaging families as equal partners in *teaching and learning*. However, parents are less likely to report frequent or collaborative efforts related to goals. Both parents and staff report efforts related to *community partnerships*, including as they relate to community resources (that is, needed services or referrals) and community activities. Perhaps most important, program activities are grounded in positive parent-staff relationships and interactions. In fact, parents describe their interactions with staff as being overwhelmingly positive, with

parents feeling comfortable with and respected by staff, and describing staff as being committed to their jobs.

The Head Start PFCE Framework targets seven engagement outcomes for families. Based on staff and parent reports, the PFCE family outcomes that appear to align most closely with engagement efforts in Head Start include the following: families as advocates and leaders, family connections to peers and community, families as learners, families as lifelong educators, and family well-being. FSS mention a range of activities targeting each of these outcomes. Both staff and parents report encouragement to participate in activities that support each of these outcomes. FSS describe fewer activities specifically aligned with the other two PFCE family outcomes: positive parent-child relationships and family engagement in transitions.

PFCE family outcome: Families as advocates and leaders

The Head Start PFCE Framework defines *families as advocates and leaders* as families participating in leadership development, decision making, program policy development, or community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences. Staff encourage involvement in activities aligned with this family outcome. Whereas most FSS encourage attendance at parent meetings, almost all encourage families to participate in program leadership activities, such as the Policy Council or a policy committee. FSS often stated a clear vision for the goals of program leadership activities:

> "On the Policy Council, the parents will be a majority so they can help participate in that. And that will provide them with skills that will help them, how to conduct meetings, and just a wealth of training that they receive while the child is in Head Start that will be beneficial to them. Even when the child moves on to public school."

Notably, however, although FSS encourage family participation in advocacy and leadership activities, few parents report they engage in such activities.

PFCE family outcome: Families as lifelong educators

The Head Start PFCE outcome of *families as lifelong educators* aims for parents and families to observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, at school, and in their communities. FSS describe a range of activities that they encourage the families to do at home, in the community, and in the program for supporting the child's development and families as lifelong educators. Some activities are targeted to particular groups of family members. For example, multiple FSS describe activities targeting greater involvement by fathers or other male figures. As one FSS said, "We engage them or encourage them to attend meetings, because we want them to develop the habit of participating or engaging [for] when the child moves on to public school."

> "We have Male Involvement once a month, so the teachers plan a day which all the dads, grandpas, uncles, whatever male is involved, to come to the center and hang out with the kids, it can be an hour or a couple hours."
>
> —FSS on engagement efforts for fathers or other male figures

PFCE family outcome: Families as learners and family well-being

According to the Head Start PFCE Framework, *families as learners* is defined as parents and families advancing their own learning interests through education, training, and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals. *Family well-being* refers to the goal of parents and families being safe, healthy, and having increased financial security. In open-ended interviews, all FSS describe community activities encouraged by the program to support family well-being and families as learners. The most common of these are learning opportunities, such as enrollment in college, vocational courses, or trainings in a skill parents may need. FSS also mention job fairs or training events that they encourage parents to attend. When such events occur, FSS described a number of strategies for engaging parents: "We may know of a job fair that may be going on. We send out letters … to every one of the families. We also may put it up on our Facebook page to let them know about it, and use word of mouth. And we also provide transportation if they need transportation to get there." FSS collaborate with adult literacy specialists and case managers in their Head Start program to encourage parents to make use of opportunities. A substantial portion of FSS also describe efforts to engage parents in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) courses, as well as assessments of the parents' adult literacy needs, current services they receive, and any efforts to obtain a General Education Development (GED) certificate.

PFCE family outcome: Family connections to peers and community

The Head Start PFCE Framework defines *family connections to peers and community* as parents and families forming connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive, educational, and enhance social well-being and community life. FSS mention efforts to connect families to peers and the community. These include community events and opportunities to volunteer in the community. Such events might include "health fairs, the bike rodeo, the Memorial Day parade we just had, a blood drive that the parents were involved in." One FSS mentioned the program's efforts to inform parents using a community calendar: "I scour high and low for everything that's going on within 20 miles of us, or even more. At the library, all those puppet shows and story times are put on that calendar and anything that the schools are doing. I even go as far as putting senior citizen activities on there because we do have a lot of grandparents that are raising children now." Whenever FSS become aware of a free activity that might appeal to families, "We encourage them to go and partake in that activity. It's free. During the summer, there are activities … in the [City] Children's Museum and science fairs. It's free. Go for it."

Parents mention other efforts to connect to peers, including having opportunities to engage with other Head Start parents through program activities and receiving encouragement from program staff to do so. They also have varied sources of social support, including support beyond Head Start.

> "Again, as far as rendering their complaints, it's helping them to know that they definitely are a voice. They're a voice at the center; they're a voice in their community."
>
> —FSS on encouraging parent's advocacy efforts

Many FSS describe advocacy-related activities or encouraging parents to change or influence what is happening in their community. These activities might include housing authority meetings for families in public housing, school board meetings for parents with older children, legal aid for parents with immigration status issues, and advocacy on specific local issues such as traffic. As noted previously, although some FSS mention these efforts, few parents report participating in such activities.

Do service provision efforts align with performance standards and/or the Head Start PFCE Framework? How so?

The Head Start PFCE Framework identifies an integrated and comprehensive approach to supporting parent-child and parent-staff relationships and involving families in Head Start and their communities. Aligned with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, which include providing families with access and connection to community resources and following up on those referrals, the PFCE Framework stresses the importance of staff at all levels engaging families and individualizing services. On closed-ended items, almost all (97 percent or more) staff say they have encouraged families to receive services, followed up with families about those services, and advocated for families; all (99 percent) see these as core responsibilities of their job. When responding to the open-ended questions, many FSS describe multiple staff members—teaching staff, family support staff, and administrative staff—involved in identifying family needs and connecting families to services. Some FSS note that the specific staff involved in helping families to access services depends on the family's particular needs, emphasizing that the area of need dictates how they approach identifying appropriate services.

The PFCE Framework also outlines the importance of supports or resources staff need to be successful, including the opportunity to join their colleagues in a "community of learners" to share information and resources. Many FSS indicate that their colleagues are a rich resource for them, particularly if they do not know exactly how to connect a family with needed services. For example, one FSS said the following:

"Staff work together usually, sometimes staff find information, you know, some of them use the Internet. If they find information, they will share with all staff members. So, if they have the same problem they will already have the material. We do have a resource file that we keep all the resources together, and if we find something new, we always put it in there."

A few FSS also note that their supervisors or managers are a good source of information and support.

Family well-being is identified as a Head Start parent and family engagement outcome. Connecting families with community resources and referrals or engaging in *community partnerships* are ways of strengthening family well-being. Many FSS spend time connecting families to needed resources as a key part of their job. Almost all FSS follow up with families to see how a referral has gone, and most track these referrals and follow-ups in families' files, either using a paper or electronic system.

> "It is who we are, as a [FSS] we are there to build that foundation of trust, respect, a positive outlook, ensure …that we're treating that family as a whole. To ensure that our families do get the needed and necessary services, whether it may be an immunization shot for the child or a bed and dresser for the bedroom, food for the table, their utilities paid, whatever that family's circumstance is, we follow through with the services that we provide."
>
> —FSS on connecting families to community resources

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IX. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Using nationally representative samples of teachers and FSS, and children, the data included in this report provide an in-depth description of family engagement in Head Start programs; while exploratory in nature, the data offer preliminary insight into possible links between program efforts and family engagement outcomes. The Family Engagement Plus study draws upon both open-ended items derived from the Head Start Family Voices Pilot Study and closed-ended items from FACES instruments used in prior cohorts, the SBPI, and the FPTRQ. According to both open- and closed-ended data, parents and staff report a range of family engagement and service provision activities aligned with the PFCE Framework. For example, programs are seen as welcoming environments, parents and staff engage in positive relationships, and staff support family outcomes in most areas (for example, families as advocates and leaders, family connections to peers and community, families as learners, families as lifelong educators, and family well-being). In addition, staff at all levels engage families and individualize services, and staff regularly share information and resources with their colleagues.

However, some aspects of program functioning around family engagement may require further support. For example, program staff may need more support for engaging with families in more collaborative ways in two areas—setting goals and supporting their child's learning and development. Given they were rarely discussed in interviews, family outcomes in the areas of parent-child relationships, transitions, and advocacy and leadership may require additional focus or attention from program staff. Additionally, some discrepancies exist between parent and staff reports of how families' culture and values are considered in service provision.

The data reported here provide important insight into the family engagement practices currently taking place in Head Start programs, their alignment with the PFCE Framework and targeted family outcomes, as well as parent and staff perspectives on those practices. Together, the findings suggest that programs are excelling in a number of areas but may require more support or focus in others.

Directions for future research

More data could be useful for better understanding family engagement and service provision in Head Start. For example, to the extent that data are available, analyses could examine the associations between parent and staff reports of engagement efforts and the nature of parent-staff relationships using scores from the closed-ended data (for example, FPTRQ scores) or quantifying the open-ended data. Correlation analyses might examine associations in constructs across columns of the PFCE Framework (Appendix Table A.1). Where the data are available, these analyses would highlight the associations among aspects of program foundations (for example, program leadership or professional development), program impact areas (for example, program environments, family partnerships, or community partnerships), and child and family outcomes, highlighting whether each has a relationship with one another. In addition, although data from the current study shed light on PFCE program impact areas and family outcomes, more information on program foundations (program leadership, continuous improvement, and professional development) could be useful. For example, more could be learned about how programs track family progress in these areas, including data collection and continuous improvement efforts. Information related to program foundations is not available systematically

in the Plus study data, but some may be available in other FACES data sources; if so, it could be linked to the current data. Such analyses would preferably involve closed-ended data.

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ENDNOTES

[1] In spring 2017, we will repeat the Classroom Core with a sample of 180 programs.

[2] This report focuses on survey items included in the data sources and does not include summary scores.

[3] Due to an error in administration, one FPTRQ item was not administered to parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview (focused on whether FSS encourage parents to provide feedback on the services they provide). This omission affects the Responsiveness subscale score. We do not describe findings related to this missing item in the report, but findings related to the other available items in this subscale are described.

[4] Due to an error in administration, eight FPTRQ items were not administered to FSS participating in the Family Engagement FSS Interview (including items focused on how often FSS take into account certain characteristics of families when providing services and whether they encourage parents to provide feedback on the services they provide). This omission affects the Family-Specific Knowledge and Responsiveness subscale scores. We do not describe findings related to these eight missing items in the report, but findings related to the other available items in these subscales are described.

[5] Implicit stratification (which means sorting the sampling frame by one or more variables before sampling) is a way to help make the resulting sample look more like the entire frame with respect to those variables. This is a way of controlling for those variables in the sample without using explicit sampling strata. For the supplemental Parent Survey items, we also selected a sample implicitly stratified by classroom within program.

[6] Given the low response rate on the Family Engagement Parent Interview, we conducted a non-response bias analysis, examining a number of variables available for both respondents and nonrespondents and thought to be associated with key family engagement outcome variables (for example, SBPI scores). We found only a few with significantly different distributions between respondents and nonrespondents, and the nonresponse adjustments to the weights either resolved or lessened these differences (to less than 7 percentage points but, on average, to less than 3 percentage points). Although there is no rule of thumb for how large of a bias is acceptable, the larger it is, the more caution is merited in analysis. In a modeling context, potential bias due to nonresponse can be mitigated by controlling for any possibly problematic variables in an analysis. For the Family Engagement parent interview, a conservative approach would be to control for: whether the family received WIC benefits in the past 6 months, received energy assistance in the past 6 months, or reported at least one financial strain (which were all more likely to be the case among respondents); the number of minutes per day the child was read to (with those reporting 15 to 25 minutes being more likely to respond), and the mode in which the parent completed the Parent Survey (with those completing either the fall or spring Parent Survey on the web being more likely to respond to the Family Engagement parent interview). This report focuses on descriptive analyses only (rather than modeling). Given the use of the

appropriate sampling weights for the analyses, we do not have concerns about using the Family Engagement parent interview responses.

[7] This report applies the following analysis weights: PRA2WT (Parent Survey; requires spring 2015 data in combination with TCR and assessment data), PE2WT (Family Engagement Parent Interview; requires fall 2014 or spring 2015 Parent Survey data in combination with Family Engagement Parent Interview data), F2WT (Family Engagement FSS Interview; requires Family Engagement FSS Interview data alone), and T2TCHWT (Teacher Survey; requires Teacher Survey data alone).

[8] An additional set of analyses explored the psychometric properties (that is, reliability and validity) of the FPTRQ as well as the distribution of scores or responses. We computed internal consistency coefficients (alphas) for all summary scores and made note of those in which the coefficient alpha did not meet the widely accepted threshold of .70 or greater. We examined correlations of summary scores with one another and with other related constructs, making note of those that were lower than expected. The current report describes findings on parent-teacher, parent-FSS, teacher, and FSS item-level data drawn from the FPTRQ. We do not describe any FPTRQ subscale or construct scores.

[9] As described in the previous chapter, we adopted this approach given time constraints. Given the length of the Family Engagement FSS Interview, we developed two forms for the open-ended items, with about half of FSS responding to each form.

[10] Parents also answered closed-ended questions about their engagement in their child's learning and development.

[11] This item asked generally about services for families and did not define the meaning of services in the community. As a result, how teachers interpreted the meaning of this item could vary. We also do not know whether any of the teachers worked in a dual teacher-FSS role.

[12] Parents participating in the Parent Survey described their perceptions of teachers.

APPENDIX A

PFCE FRAMEWORK AND STUDY RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND ANALYSES

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Table A.1. PFCE Framework columns, elements, and description

PFCE columns	PFCE elements	Description
Program foundations	Program leadership	The director, the governing board, Policy Council, parent committees, and management teams determine the ways that Head Start and Early Head Start programs engage parents, families, and the community.
	Continuous program improvement	Leadership and staff are committed to continuously improving systems and activities to engage and support parents, families, and the community
	Professional development	PFCE training is important for all staff. Professional development focuses on how staff members can contribute to program-wide PFCE efforts in their roles and how these roles fit together.
Program impact areas	Program environment	Families feel welcomed, valued, and respected by program staff, and experience themselves as essential partners in understanding and meeting the needs of children.
	Family partnerships	Families work with staff to identify and achieve their goals and aspirations. To make a positive impact in the area of family partnerships, staff and families build ongoing, respectful, and goal-oriented relationships.
	Teaching and learning	Families are engaged as equal partners in their children's learning and development.
	Community partnerships	Communities support families' interests and needs, and foster parent and family engagement in children's learning. Programs and families can also strengthen communities.
Family engagement outcomes	Family well-being	Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security.
	Positive parent-child relationships	Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.
	Families as lifelong educators	Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, at school, and in their communities.
	Families as learners	Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training, and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.
	Family engagement in transitions	Parents and families support and advocate for their child's learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including Early Head Start to Head Start, Head Start or Early Head Start to other early learning environments, and Head Start to kindergarten through elementary school.
	Family connections to peers and community	Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive, educational, and enhance social well-being and community life.
	Families as advocates and leaders	Families participate in leadership development, decision making, program policy development, or community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences.

Table A.2. Study research questions, data sources, and analytic techniques

Research questions	Data sources	Analytic techniques
What do family engagement efforts look like in Head Start?		
What activities and opportunities do programs offer and encourage? How is information about these activities shared with families?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding
Do family engagement efforts align with performance standards and/or the Head Start PFCE Framework? How so?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding
What are program environments like for families? Are they welcoming? How valued and respected do families feel?	Family Engagement Parent Interview	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
How are families engaged in Head Start and in their children's learning and development at home and in the community?		
What activities do families participate in? How do activities align with what programs encourage and offer?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
What are barriers to families' engagement?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding
What child and family changes do parents attribute to Head Start?	Family Engagement Parent Interview	Qualitative coding
How satisfied are families with program experiences?	Family Engagement Parent Interview	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
How have families connected with other parents and with resources in the community?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Parent Survey Supplement	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
What staff in the program are involved in family engagement efforts, and in what ways are they involved?		
What staff in the program are involved in family engagement efforts, and how do staff work together?	Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding
What are the beliefs and background characteristics of FSS?	Family Engagement FSS Interview	Descriptive analyses
What supports do FSS receive from the program to engage families in the program and in their children's learning and development?	Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding
How are comprehensive services provided in Head Start?		
What staff in the program are involved in helping families get needed services, and in what ways are they involved?	Family Engagement FSS Interview, Family Engagement Parent Interview, Teacher Survey	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
What does the referral and follow-up process look like?	Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding

Table A.2. (*continued*)

Research questions	Data sources	Analytic techniques
What supports do FSS receive from the program related to the service provision and referral process?	Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding
Do service provision efforts align with performance standards and/or the Head Start PFCE Framework? How so?	Family Engagement FSS Interview, Teacher Survey	Qualitative coding
How do parents and staff characterize their relationships and interactions with one another?		
How do families and staff view and interact with each other?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Parent Survey Supplement	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
How often do families and staff communicate with each other? What topics do they discuss?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Parent Survey Supplement, Family Engagement FSS Interview, Teacher Survey	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
How do families and staff work together to support the child's learning and development?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Parent Survey Supplement, Family Engagement FSS Interview, Teacher Survey	Qualitative coding, descriptive analyses
What goals do families have for themselves and their children? How do staff work with families to help them meet these goals?	Family Engagement Parent Interview, Family Engagement FSS Interview	Qualitative coding

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APPENDIX B

PARENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TABLES

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Table B.1. Child and family characteristics reported by parents participating in the Parent Survey: Spring 2015

Child and family characteristics	n	Percentage
Parent race/ethnicity	1635	
White, non-Hispanic		32.1
African American, non-Hispanic		22.4
Hispanic/Latino		38.7
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic		2.0
Asian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic		0.8
Multi-Racial/Bi-Racial, non-Hispanic		2.8
Other, non-Hispanic		1.2
Child participated in Early Head Start	1620	
Yes		33.7
No		66.3
Primary home language[a]	1641	
English		74.8
Spanish		20.5
Other language		4.6
Family household structure[b]	1641	
Biological/adoptive mother and biological/adoptive father		46.4
Biological/adoptive mother only		46.0
Biological/adoptive father only		2.7
Neither biological/adoptive mother nor biological/adoptive father		4.9
Highest level of education completed by mothers[c]	1514	
Less than high school diploma		27.2
High school diploma or GED		31.9
Some college/vocational/technical		32.5
Bachelor's degree or higher		8.4
Household income as a percentage of the federal poverty threshold[d]	1445	
50 percent or less		30.8
50 to 100 percent		36.9
101 to 130 percent		12.8
131 to 185 percent		9.8
186 to 200 percent		0.9
201 percent or above		8.8

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

1,641 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children with valid data on each of the constructs.

[a]This characteristic is based on the parent's report of whether a language other than English is spoken in the child's home and whether the child's parent/guardian primarily uses this language when speaking with the child.

[b]Household composition focuses on biological/adoptive parents and does not include other adults, such as parents' romantic partners, step-parents, foster parents, or grandparents. Thus, for example, the "Biological/adoptive mother only" category does not mean that the biological/adoptive mother is the only adult in the household, but that she is the only biological/adoptive parent in the household.

[c]Households that do not include a mother are not included in the percentage calculations for highest level of education.

[d]These data summarize household income, and therefore should not be used to estimate eligibility for Head Start. Head Start qualifying criteria are based on family (not household) income, and there are other (non-income) ways to qualify for the program The federal poverty threshold is based on 2013 thresholds set by the United States Census Bureau. The federal poverty threshold for a family of four in 2013 was $23,834.

Table B.1a. Child and family characteristics reported by parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview: Spring 2015

Child and family characteristics	n	Percentage
Parent race/ethnicity	280	
White, non-Hispanic		35.0
African American, non-Hispanic		22.1
Hispanic/Latino		36.9
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic		1.5
Asian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic		1.0
Multi-Racial/Bi-Racial, non-Hispanic		2.4
Other, non-Hispanic		1.2
Child participated in Early Head Start	283	
Yes		31.6
No		68.4
Primary home language[a]	281	
English		75.1
Spanish		20.2
Other language		4.5
Family household structure[b]	284	
Biological/adoptive mother and biological/adoptive father		48.5
Biological/adoptive mother only		42.2
Biological/adoptive father only		2.6
Neither biological/adoptive mother nor biological/adoptive father		6.7
Highest level of education completed by mothers[c]	261	
Less than high school diploma		24.8
High school diploma or GED		34.9
Some college/vocational/technical		33.8
Bachelor's degree or higher		6.6
Household income as a percentage of the federal poverty threshold[d]	261	
50 percent or less		31.2
50 to 100 percent		36.3
101 to 130 percent		13.9
131 to 185 percent		8.6
186 to 200 percent		0.0
201 percent or above		10.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview and Fall 2014 or Spring 2015 Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

       315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children with valid data on each of the constructs.

[a]This characteristic is based on the parent's report of whether a language other than English is spoken in the child's home and whether the child's parent/guardian primarily uses this language when speaking with the child.

[b]Household composition focuses on biological/adoptive parents and does not include other adults, such as parents' romantic partners, step-parents, foster parents, or grandparents. Thus, for example, the "Biological/adoptive mother only" category does not mean that the biological/adoptive mother is the only adult in the household, but that she is the only biological/adoptive parent in the household.

[c]Households that do not include a mother are not included in the percentage calculations for highest level of education.

[d]These data summarize household income, and therefore should not be used to estimate eligibility for Head Start. Head Start qualifying criteria are based on family (not household) income, and there are other (non-income) ways to qualify for the program The federal poverty threshold is based on 2013 thresholds set by the United States Census Bureau. The federal poverty threshold for a family of four in 2013 was $23,834.

Table B.2. Parent report of social support received from family members, friends, and professionals: Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Types of social support	n	Percentage
If I need to do an errand, I can easily find someone to watch my child		
Never true	111	12.9
Sometimes true	371	44.8
Always true	349	42.3
If I need a ride to get my child to the doctor, friends or family will help me		
Never true	86	10.3
Sometimes true	218	25.5
Always true	527	64.2
If my child is sick, friends or family will call or come by		
Never true	91	11.7
Sometimes true	231	26.3
Always true	512	61.9
If my child is having problems at Head Start, there is a friend, relative, or neighbor I can talk it over with		
Never true	67	7.7
Sometimes true	194	24.0
Always true	569	68.3
If I have an emergency and need cash, family or friends will loan it to me		
Never true	105	12.7
Sometimes true	316	38.4
Always true	411	48.9
If I have troubles or need advice, I have someone I can talk to		
Never true	37	4.5
Sometimes true	224	28.0
Always true	571	67.5
	n	**Mean**
Number of types of help parent can always get	832	3.5
	n	**Percentage**
Types of people parent finds very helpful		
Family member(s)[b]	738	89.0
Friend(s)[c]	430	51.4
Professional(s)[d]	645	76.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

   840 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option. Sample sizes for categories in the table may not sum to 840 due to missing item-level responses.

[b]This measure combines responses to questions about the helpfulness of the respondent's current spouse or partner; the child's mother, father, and grandparents; and other relatives

[c]This measure combines responses to questions about the helpfulness of friends, co-workers, other Head Start parents, and religious or social group members

[d]This measure combines responses to questions about the helpfulness of professional help-givers like counselors or social workers, Head Start staff, and other child care providers.

Table B.3. Parent report of the types of services members of their household receive: Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Type of service	n	Percentage
Help with housing	79	10.8
Training for a job	54	5.6
Help finding a job	56	5.4
Help to go to school or college	80	9.5
Classes in English as a Second Language	46	5.7
Transportation to or from work	24	3.2
Child care	124	15.1
Alcohol or drug treatment or counseling	14	1.4
Advice from a lawyer	51	6.4
Mental health services or counseling	55	6.5
Help dealing with family violence	5	0.3
Help or counseling for other family problems	41	4.7
Dental or orthodontic care	341	40.3
Medical care	395	45.8

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

840 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

Table B.4. Parent report of Head Start activities in which they are involved: Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Type of activity	n	Percentage
Volunteered in classroom	222	79.6
Prepared food/materials for special events	157	56.6
Helped with field trips or special events	131	47.2
Participated in Head Start Policy Council	66	23.2
Participated in parent committee or other planning group	117	41.4
Prepared or distributed Head Start newsletters or materials	73	25.6
Participated in fundraising activities	97	35.1
Observed classroom	252	86.8
Attended parent/teacher conferences	263	94.6
Head Start staff visited home	227	83.2
Attended Head Start social events	202	72.3
Attended parent education meetings or workshops	179	62.4

Source:　Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note:　Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

Table B.5. Parent report of experiences in Head Start: Activities program does "very well", Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Program experiences	n	Percentage
Letting parent know how child is doing in the program between conferences	233	81.8
Helping parent understand what children of child's age are like	226	79.7
Making parent aware of chances to volunteer at program	221	79.6
Providing workshops or advice about how to help child learn at home	238	83.2
Providing information on community services	180	64.0
Understanding needs of families who don't speak English[a]	79	71.7

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]The reported estimate is among those who indicate they are from a home where a language other than English is spoken.

Table B.6. Parent report of strengths-based staff practices in Head Start: Practices parents agree staff do,ᵃ Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Staff practices	n	Percentage
Empowerment practices		
Help me to see strengths in myself I didn't know I had	179	63.3
Help me to use my own skills and resources to solve problems	225	81.1
Work together with me to meet my needs	231	83.0
Help me to see that I am a good parent	253	89.4
Encourage me to think about my own personal goals or dreams	208	74.7
Cultural competency practices		
Respect my family's cultural and/or religious beliefs	260	89.4
Encourage me to learn about my culture and history	152	53.8
Have materials for my child that positively reflect our cultural background	202	68.5
Staff sensitivity practices		
Know about other programs I can use if I need them	241	87.0
Give me good information about where to go for other services I need	245	88.1
Understand when something is difficult for me	219	75.8
Support me in the decisions I make about myself and my family	232	82.4
Relationship supportive practices		
Encourage me to share my knowledge with other parents	206	75.0
Provide opportunities for me to get to know other parents in the community	236	85.5
Encourage me to go to friends and family when I need help or support	211	74.5
Encourage me to get involved to help improve my community	178	66.7

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

ᵃResponse options on these items include: strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table B.7. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS) family-specific knowledge: Information parents feel comfortable sharing with FSS,[a] Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Family information	n	Percentage
How many children parent has	265	94.7
How many adult relatives live in household	266	93.4
Parent's work and school schedule	264	94.8
Parent's marital status	253	92.1
Parent's personal relationship with a spouse or partner	201	72.7
Parent's employment status	254	92.5
Parent's financial situation	206	75.3
Parent's parenting style	267	93.5
Family life	250	87.8
The role that faith and religion play in household	250	87.7
The family's culture and values	263	93.5
What parent does outside of Head Start to encourage child's learning	275	95.8
How parent disciplines child	265	93.0
Problems child is having at home	262	91.7
Changes happening at home	248	86.3
Health issues child may have	271	95.8
Health issues parent or other family members may have	221	77.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: very uncomfortable, uncomfortable, comfortable, and very comfortable. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "comfortable" or "very comfortable" on the cited items.

Table B.7a. Parent report of teachers' family-specific knowledge: Information parents feel comfortable sharing with teachers,[a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Family information	n	Percentage
Family life	674	85.8
The role that faith and religion play in household	674	85.7
Changes happening at home	675	84.3

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: very uncomfortable, uncomfortable, comfortable, and very comfortable. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "comfortable" or "very comfortable" on the cited items.

Table B.8. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS)-family collaboration: Topics parents have discussed "very often" with FSS,ᵃ Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Topics	n	Percentage
How child is doing in the Head Start program	129	41.2
Child's learning or development	134	42.8
Goals parent has for child	126	39.2
Goals parent has for him/herself	72	22.0
How child is progressing towards goals parent has set for him/her	146	46.5
How parent is progressing towards goals s/he has set for him/herself	78	24.5
Problems child is having in the Head Start program	89	27.0
Problems parent may be having with work or school	39	11.0
Parent's vision for family's future	65	21.3
How parent feels about the services the FSS provides	88	29.7
Child's family	143	47.1

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

ᵃResponse options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "very often" on these items.

Table B.8a. Parent report of teacher-family collaboration: Topics parents have discussed "very often" with teachers,[a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Topics	n	Percentage
Goals parent has for child	407	51.5
What to expect at each stage of child's development	369	44.9
Parent's vision for child's future	360	45.7
How parent feels about care and education child receives	426	54.8

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

       801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "very often" on these items.

Table B.9. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS) responsiveness: FSS characteristics, activities, interactions, and accessibility, Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

FSS responsiveness	n	Percentage
Characteristics parents consider "a lot like" or "exactly like" FSS:[a]		
Encourages parent to be involved in all aspects of child's care and education in program	207	73.8
Respects them as a parent	255	91.2
Is flexible in response to parent's work or school schedule	236	87.9
Treats parent like an expert on child	224	78.7
Asks parent questions to show he/she cares about family	230	81.4
Shows respect for different ethnic heritages	244	87.4
Is respectful of religious beliefs	250	92.0
Activities FSS have done "very often":[b]		
Takes parent's values and culture into account when serving parent	158	54.3
Parent agrees FSS:[c]		
Is open to learning different ways to help parents and children	268	96.9
Works together with parent to make sure child has the best care and support	258	93.0
Has increased parent's confidence to accomplish goals for him/herself	233	87.0
Has parent's best interests at heart	256	92.5
"Very easy" for parent to reach FSS during day if issue or problem comes up[d]	127	48.3

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

Due to an error in administration, one FPTRQ item was not administered to parents participating in the Family Engagement Parent Interview. As a result, we are unable to include this missing item in this report, but we include the other available items. The omission affects items for the subscale presented in this table.

[a]Response options on these items include: not at all like, a little like, a lot like, and exactly like family services staff. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "a lot like" or "exactly like" family services staff on the cited items.

[b]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "very often" on these items.

[c]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

[d]Response options on this item include: very difficult, difficult, easy, and very easy. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very easy" on this item.

Table B.9a. Parent report of teacher responsiveness: Characteristics parents consider "a lot like" or "exactly like" teachers,[a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Teacher characteristics	n	Percentage
Uses parent feedback to adjust the education and care provided to child	530	67.7
Reflects the cultural diversity of students in activities	546	70.1
Communicates the cultural values and beliefs parent wants child to have	529	66.7

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

   801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: not at all like, a little like, a lot like, and exactly like my teacher. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "a lot like" or "exactly like" my teacher on the cited items.

Table B.10. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS)-parent communication: Activities FSS do "very often",ᵃ Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Activities	n	Percentage
Suggest activities for parent and child to do together	106	34.4
Answer questions when they come up	175	60.4
Offer books or materials on parenting	114	37.3
Work with parent to develop strategies that can be used at home to support child's learning and development	133	43.6
Listen to parent ideas about ways to change or improve the care child receives	149	46.8
Offer ideas or suggestions about parenting	116	37.0
Remember personal details about child's family when speaking with parent	156	53.7

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

ᵃResponse options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "very often" on these items.

Table B.10a. Parent report of teacher-parent communication: Activities teachers do "very often",[a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Activities	n	Percentage
Offer books or materials on parenting	288	35.1
Ask about the cultural values and beliefs parent want him/her to communicate to child	203	23.5
Provide parent with opportunities to give feedback on his or her performance	393	48.1

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "very often" on these items.

Table B.11. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS) commitment: FSS characteristics and beliefs about their job, Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

FSS characteristics and beliefs	n	Percentage
Parent reports characteristic is like their FSS[a]		
Caring	242	86.6
Understanding	249	88.9
Flexible	226	82.6
Dependable	239	86.7
Trustworthy	243	88.2
Respectful	249	90.5
Available	238	85.1
Parent agrees FSS:[b]		
Sees his/her job as just a paycheck	40	15.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: not at all like, a little like, a lot like, and exactly like family services staff. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "a lot like" or "exactly like" family services staff on the cited items.

[b]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table B.11a. Parent report of teacher commitment: Characteristics "a lot like" or "exactly like" teachers,[a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Teacher characteristics	n	Percentage
Understanding	704	90.0
Dependable	683	88.0
Available	698	88.7

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: not at all like, a little like, a lot like, and exactly like my teacher. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "a lot like" or "exactly like" my teacher on the cited items.

Table B.12. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS) respect: Characteristics "not at all like" FSS,[a] Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

FSS characteristics	n	Percentage
Rude	252	93.3
Impatient	233	86.4
Unfriendly	234	89.4
Judgmental	237	88.9

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

             315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: not at all like, a little like, a lot like, and exactly like family services staff. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "not at all like" family services staff on the cited items.

Table B.12a. Parent report of teacher respect: Characteristics "not at all like" teachers,[a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Teacher characteristics	n	Percentage
Rude	760	96.3
Impatient	739	93.9
Judgmental	745	95.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

   801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: not at all like, a little like, a lot like, and exactly like my teacher. Reported percentages focus on parents responding "not at all like" my teacher on the cited items.

Table B.13. Parent report of Family Services Staff (FSS) understanding of family context: Parent disagrees FSS judge aspects of their family context, [a] Spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview

Family context	n	Percentage
Faith and religion	241	88.5
Culture and values	248	91.1
Race/ethnicity	255	93.1
Financial situation	257	93.3

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement Parent Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

315 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement Parent Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "disagree" or "strongly disagree" on the cited items.

Table B.13a. Parent report of teacher understanding of family context: Parent disagrees teacher judges aspects of their family context, [a] Spring 2015 Parent Survey

Family context	n	Percentage
Faith and religion	707	90.2
Culture and values	716	91.7
Financial situation	730	92.9

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014 and were still enrolled in spring 2015.

801 children had parents who participated in the spring 2015 Parent Survey and received the items described in this table. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of children whose parents endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on parents responding either "disagree" or "strongly disagree" on the cited items.

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APPENDIX C

STAFF DEMOGRAPHIC AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TABLES

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Table C.1. Family Services Staff (FSS) demographic characteristics: Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS characteristics	n	Percentage
Gender	145	
Female		97.3
Male		2.7
Age	141	
18-29		14.0
30-39		30.2
40-49		14.4
50-59		26.3
60 or older		14.3
Race/ethnicity	145	
White, non-Hispanic		42.0
African American, non-Hispanic		21.1
Hispanic/Latino		30.3
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic		0.5
Asian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic		0.5
Multi-Racial/Bi-Racial, non-Hispanic		5.4
Other, non-Hispanic		0.0
Speaks a language other than English	145	
Yes		39.2
No		60.9

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff with valid data on each of the constructs.

Table C.2. Family Services Staff (FSS) education, credentials, and experience: Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS education and credentials	n	Percentage
Highest level of education	145	
High school diploma or equivalent or less		11.7
Some college		15.0
Associate's degree (AA)		13.7
Bachelor's degree (BA)		41.9
Graduate or professional degree		17.6
State-sponsored credentials		
Has a child development associate (CDA)	142	34.9
Has a family development credential	139	43.4
FSS experience	**n**	**Mean**
Years working in Head Start	145	11.4

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff with valid data on each of the constructs.

Table C.3. Lead teacher demographic characteristics: Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Teacher characteristics	n	Percentage
Gender	209	
Female		95.4
Male		4.6
Age	207	
18-29		9.9
30-39		29.1
40-49		22.5
50-59		25.4
60 or older		13.2
Race/ethnicity	210	
White, non-Hispanic		41.1
African American, non-Hispanic		23.5
Hispanic/Latino		30.8
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic		1.8
Asian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic		0.4
Multi-Racial/Bi-Racial, non-Hispanic		0.7
Other, non-Hispanic		1.6
Speaks a language other than English	189	
Yes		35.6
No		64.4

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

      221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff with valid data on each of the constructs.

Table C.4. Lead teacher education, credentials, and experience: Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Teacher education and credentials	n	Percentage
Highest level of education	210	
High school diploma or equivalent or less		1.0
Some college		1.8
Associate's degree (AA)		25.2
Bachelor's degree (BA)		56.2
Graduate or professional degree		15.8
State-sponsored credentials		
Has a state-awarded certificate	206	33.1
Has a child development associate (CDA)	208	41.7
Has a teaching certificate or license	207	54.3
Teacher experience	**n**	**Mean**
Years teaching in Head Start	210	14.4

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff with valid data on each of the constructs.

Table C.5. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of family-specific knowledge: Information FSS have discussed with all parents,[a] Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

Family information	n	Percentage
How many children family has	92	70.2
How many adult relatives live in household	83	66.4
Parent's work and school schedule	82	59.0
Parent's marital status	88	62.2
Parent's employment status	100	74.5
Parent's financial situation	90	68.4
Parent's parenting style	48	38.7
The role that faith and religion play in household	18	13.3
The family's culture and values	63	50.7
What parent does outside of Head Start to encourage child's learning	58	43.9
How parent disciplines child	39	25.7
Problems child is having at home	46	35.8
Changes happening at home	45	38.4
Health issues child may have	84	61.9
Health issues parent or other family members may have	45	34.8

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

Due to an error in administration, eight FPTRQ items were not administered to FSS participating in the Family Engagement FSS Interview. As a result, we are unable to include these eight missing items in this report, but we include the other available items. The omission affects items for the subscale presented in this table.

[a]Response options on these items include: none, some, most, and all. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "all" on these items.

Table C.5a. Teacher report of family-specific knowledge: Information teachers have discussed with all parents,[a] Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Family information	n	Percentage
Parent's parenting style	16	8.3
The role that faith and religion play in household	18	7.7
The family's culture and values	23	9.5
What parent does outside of the education and care setting to encourage child's learning	23	9.1
How parent disciplines child	17	6.4

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: none, some, most, and all. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "all" on these items.

Table C.6. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of family collaboration: Interactions, discussions, and job duties, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS-family collaboration	n	Percentage
FSS "agrees" with statement:[a]		
I work with parents to figure out the steps to reach their goals	141	98.8
I encourage parents to make decisions about their children's education and care	141	99.3
Topics FSS have discussed "very often" with parents:[b]		
How their child is doing in the Head Start program	101	75.2
Their child's learning or development	87	63.5
Goals parents have for their child	95	70.8
Goals parents have for themselves	105	71.4
How parents are progressing towards goals they have for themselves	92	61.0
Problems their child is having in the Head Start program	87	49.4
Problems parents may be having with their work or school	46	29.8
Parents' vision for their family's future	79	53.8
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[a]		
Make home visits to provide support and to work on goal setting with families	141	98.1

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

[b]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very often" on these items.

Table C.6a. Teacher report of family collaboration: Topics teachers have discussed "very often" with parents,[a] Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Topics	n	Percentage
Goals teacher has for their child	146	69.2
Expectations for children in teacher's care	145	69.0
How child is progressing towards parents' goals	145	68.1

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very often" on these items.

Table C.7. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of responsiveness: Activities, beliefs, job duties, and accessibility, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS responsiveness	n	Percentage
Activities FSS have done "very often" with parents:[a]		
Taken parent's values and culture into account when serving	126	89.5
FSS "agrees" with statement:[b]		
Even though my professional or moral viewpoints may differ, I accept that parents are the ultimate decision makers for the care and education of their children	144	99.8
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[b]		
Help families get services available in the community	144	99.8
Offer parents information about community events	145	100.0
Respond to issues or questions outside of my normal work hours	101	72.0
Tailor my approach when working with mothers, fathers, or other family members	139	98.3
"Very easy" for parent to reach FSS during day if issue or problem comes up[c]	84	54.3

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

Due to an error in administration, eight FPTRQ items were not administered to FSS participating in the Family Engagement FSS Interview. As a result, we are unable to include these eight missing items in this report, but we include the other available items.

[a]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very often" on these items.

[b]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

[c]Response options on this item include: very difficult, difficult, easy, and very easy. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very easy" on this item.

Table C.7a. Teacher report of responsiveness: Teacher agrees activity is part of job,[a] Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Activities	n	Percentage
Help families get services available in the community	192	92.0
Offer parents information about community events	197	96.4
Respond to issues or questions outside of my normal work hours	157	80.1

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

          221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.8. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of parent communication: Activities, job duties, and information provided to parents, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS-parent communication	n	Percentage
Activities FSS report doing "very often":[a]		
Suggest activities for parents and children to do together	100	79.7
Offer parents books and materials on parenting	70	48.9
Offer parents ideas or suggestions about parenting	64	55.3
Follow up with parents about goals they set for their child	108	82.0
Follow up with parents about goals they set for themselves	111	84.4
Work with parents to develop strategies that can be used at home to support their child's learning and development	87	69.6
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[b]		
Talk to parents about parenting	138	95.5
FSS provided information to parents on:		
Employment or job training	138	92.4
Food banks or pantries	137	96.6
Child care subsidies or vouchers	124	87.2
Adult education, GED classes, ESL classes, or continuing education	137	92.0
Housing assistance	129	87.4
Energy or fuel assistance	125	84.7
Parenting skills group	133	94.2
Health insurance	134	93.8

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very often" on these items.

[b]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.8a. Teacher report of parent communication: Activities teachers do "very often",ª Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Activities	n	Percentage
Set goals with parents for their child	115	53.2
Offer parents ideas or suggestions about parenting	73	34.3
Provide parents with opportunities to give feedback about your performance	102	48.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

ªResponse options on these items include: never, rarely, sometimes, and very often. Reported percentages focus on staff responding "very often" on these items.

Table C.9. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of connection to services: Activities and job duties, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

Activities	n	Percentage
Activities FSS have done with families:		
Encouraged families to seek or receive services	142	98.9
Followed up with families about whether services they have received met their needs	142	99.0
Made appointments or arrangements for families to receive services they need	134	97.6
Helped families find services they need	141	98.9
Advocated on behalf of families to ensure that outside service providers are responsive	139	98.3
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[a]		
Help families meet their basic needs	143	98.9

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

          145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.10. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of family focused concerns: Goals and job duties, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

Family-focused concerns	n	Percentage
FSS "agrees" with statement:[a]		
My goal is to help parents reach their full potential	145	100.0
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[a]		
Help parents reach their goals	143	99.4
Help parents learn skills needed to succeed	144	99.8

Source:　Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note:　Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

　　　　145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.11. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of commitment: Beliefs about their job and job duties, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS commitment	n	Percentage
FSS "agrees" with statement:[a]		
I help parents to reach their job and educational goals	143	99.7
I work as a Family Service Worker because I enjoy it	144	99.6
I see this job as just a paycheck	0	0.0
I work as a Family Service Worker because I like helping families reach their goals	145	100.0
If I could find something else to do to make a living I would	23	20.9
I work as a Family Service Worker because I like helping children and families get the services they need	145	100.0
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[a]		
Learn the values and beliefs of the families I serve	145	100.0
Consider how culture shapes the way I should approach my work with families	142	98.6

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

　　　145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.11a. Teacher report of commitment: Teacher agrees with statements on reasons why teach,[a] Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Teacher commitment	n	Percentage
I teach and care for children because I enjoy it	204	99.7
I see this job as just a paycheck	2	1.5
I teach and care for children because I like being around children	200	98.1

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.12. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of openness to change: Beliefs reflecting openness and beliefs about job duties, Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS openness to change	n	Percentage
FSS "agrees" with statement:[a]		
I am open to using information on different ways to help parents and children	144	100.0
FSS "agrees" activity is part of job:[a]		
Change my work schedule in response to parents' work or school schedules	119	83.4
Learn new ways to assist families	144	99.4
Change how services are offered to children and families in response to parent feedback	132	94.0

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

       145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "agree" or "strongly agree" on the cited items.

Table C.13. Family Services Staff (FSS) report of respect: FSS agrees with statements about family differences and difficulties working with families,[a] Spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview

FSS respect	n	Percentage
Parents' beliefs about childcare and education vary by culture	136	93.2
Sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents raise their children	86	63.5
Sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents discipline their children	104	74.1
Sometimes it is hard for me to accept the different cultural beliefs of parents	15	7.6
Sometimes it is hard for me to support the goals parents have for their children	33	28.8
Sometimes it is hard for me to work with parents who have different beliefs than me	12	9.9
Sometimes it is hard for me to accept the choices that parents make	73	57.9

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Family Engagement FSS Interview.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start family services staff.

   145 FSS participated in the spring 2015 Family Engagement FSS Interview. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "disagree" or "strongly disagree" on the cited items.

Table C.13a. Teacher report of respect: Teacher agrees with statements about family differences and difficulties working with families,[a] Spring 2015 Teacher Survey

Teacher respect	n	Percentage
Sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents raise their children	118	56.1
Sometimes it is hard for me to support the way parents discipline their children	100	52.1
Sometimes it is hard for me to work with parents who have different beliefs than me	40	19.4

Source: Spring 2015 FACES Teacher Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

221 teachers participated in the spring 2015 Teacher Survey. The n column in this table includes unweighted sample sizes to identify the number of staff who endorsed each response or response option.

[a]Response options on these items include: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Reported percentages focus on staff responding either "disagree" or "strongly disagree" on the cited items.

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