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Special Needs Child Care Consultation: Summary of Parent Feedback

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Summary

This report summarizes the findings from surveys conducted with parents whose children had child care center-based TA consultation experiences. The data presented here indicate that the technical assistance (TA) consultation services in the Special Needs Child Care component are highly valued by parents whose children receive them. Parents commented positively on the program via their responses to questions posed at baseline (N=99) and follow-up (N=45) (for children with their first TA contact Jan-Sept 2009). Most respondents rated the consultations as successful, would recommend them to others, and through open-ended comments, emphasized how important the TA services had been to helping them feel confident in the care their special needs children were getting.

Characteristics of Parent Respondents:

- 91% were mothers; more than half were African American, and nearly half were White/non-Hispanic
- Nearly two-thirds had at least some college education.
- 45% of parents worked full-time and one-quarter of parents indicated that they worked part-time
- Children were in care outside the home an average of approximately 30 hrs per week
- Child's concern that led to consultation: Social-Emotional-Behavioral (50.5%), Developmental (32.3%), Medical/Health (28.3%), Environmental Risk (14%), More than one Concern (25%)

Parent Views of Consultation:

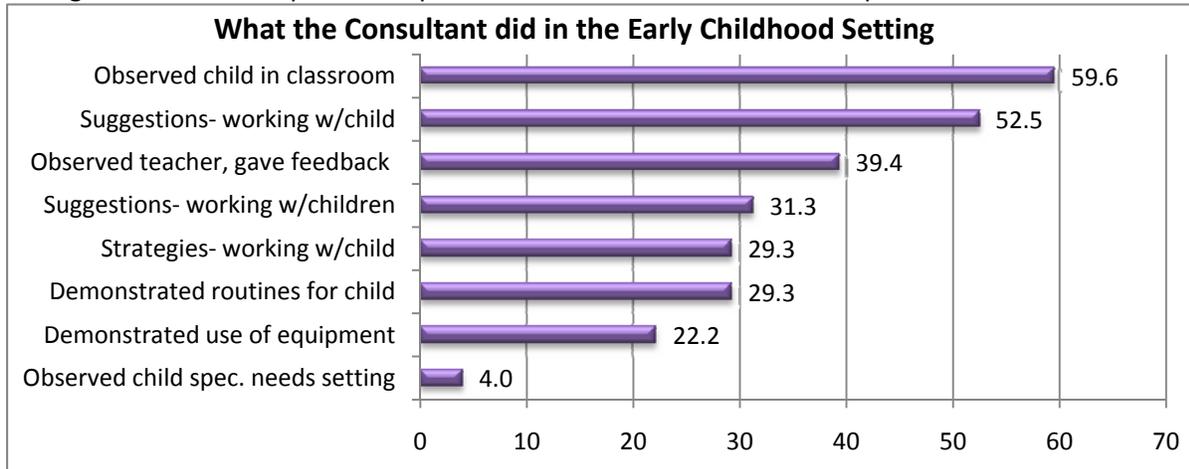
- Rated the Consultation a Success: 83% of parents at baseline and 88% of parents at follow-up felt the consultation could be rated at least moderately successful.
- Would Recommend the Consultation to Others: 82% at baseline 87% at follow-up
- Parent feelings about the consultation's success were related to the concern that led to the consultation. Parents of children who had developmental, medical/health, or environmental concerns, or had only a single concern leading to the consultation were somewhat more likely to report that the consultation was successful.

Parents' Evaluations of the Consultant and What the Consultant Did:

At baseline and follow-up, about three-quarters or more of parents agreed that the:

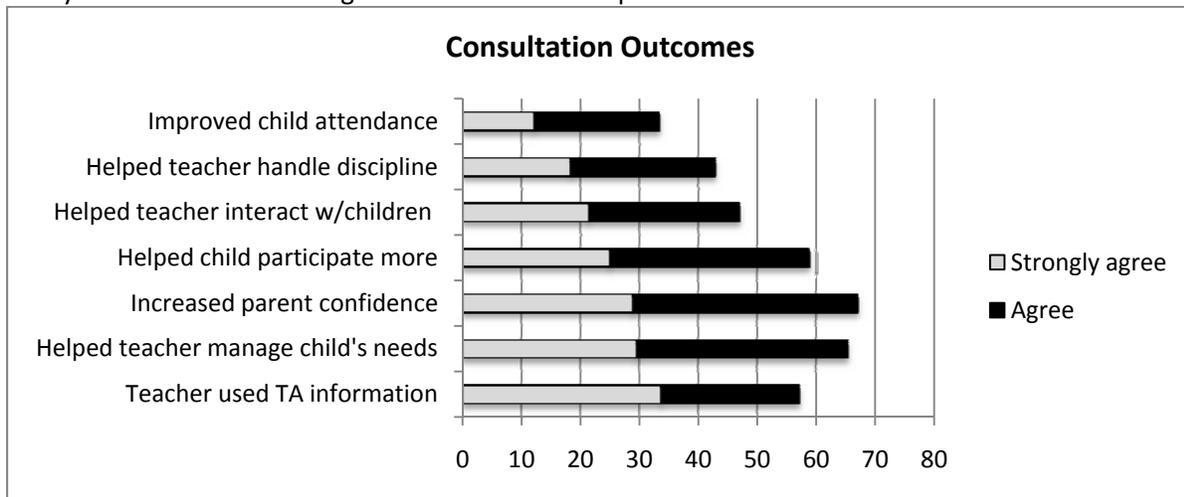
- Consultant was knowledgeable about the child's special need(s) or type of support needed at both baseline and follow-up
- Consultant tried to involve the family in helping the child
- Consultant followed up with the parent after the visit

The figure below shows parents' reports of what services the consultant provided.



Parents' Reports on Outcomes of the Consultation

Parents' reports on the outcomes of the consultation at baseline are displayed in the figure below. Parents were most likely to agree that the consultation helped increase the parent's confidence in the ability of the childcare setting to meet their child's special needs.



At follow-up:

- More than three quarters of parents agreed that the:
 - Consultation increased their confidence in the ability of the childcare setting to handle their child's special need(s) (83%).
 - Consultation helped the teacher's ability to manage their child's needs (82%)
 - Consultation helped the teacher's ability to interact well with young children in general (74%)
- More than two-thirds of parents at follow-up agreed that the:
 - Teacher used the information, suggestions and/or equipment the consultant provided, and that the consultation helped the child participate more in classroom activities.
- More than half of parents agreed that the consultation led to the child having better attendance at the center
- Less than half of parents agreed that the consultation helped the teacher's ability to handle discipline problems effectively (43.5%)