

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

Agency of Human Services, Department of Mental Health
26 Terrace Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05609

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: Emma Harrigan and Sheila Leno

DATE: January 17, 2014

RE: 2013 Consumer Evaluation of Children's Services Programs

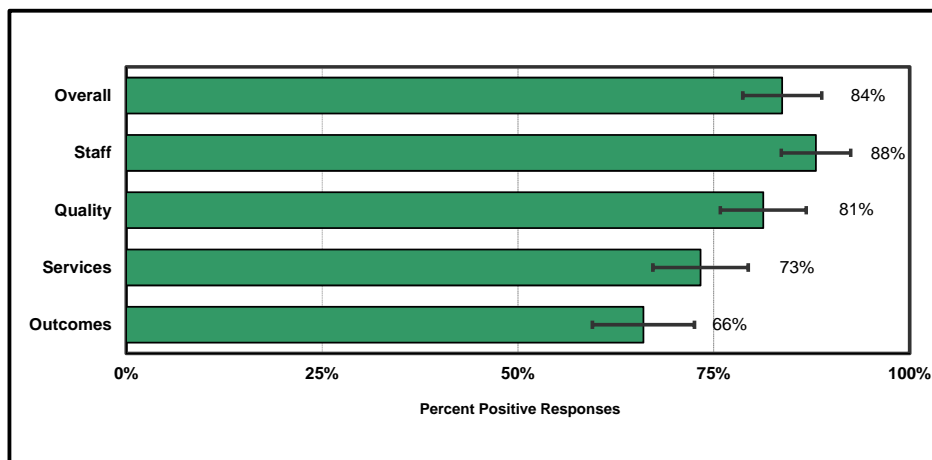
This week's report provides an overview of the results from the most recent Department of Mental Health survey regarding the performance of community mental health Children's Services programs in Vermont. This survey, administered in the spring of 2013, asked service recipients of child and adolescent programs to evaluate the Medicaid reimbursed services provided to them by the mental health programs during September through December 2012.

The attached pages describe the study, summarize the results at the regional and statewide level, and provide item-by-item rates for each region of the state. In addition, the results of this survey are compared to the results of earlier surveys administered in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2009 and 2011 to child and adolescent service recipients.

A technical report that includes detailed results and discussion of methodology is available online at <http://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/report/survey#cafu>. Reports of the findings of the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2009 and 2011 surveys of children served are available at the same website. If you have questions or comments, please email us at pip@state.vt.us.

Vermont Department of Mental Health
Evaluation of
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs
By Young People Served in Vermont
September - December 2012

TECHNICAL REPORT
Executive Summary



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December 2013

The authors of this report thank all those who contributed to this project. This work could not have been completed without the help of the staff of the Child, Adolescent and Family Unit of the Department of Mental Health, especially Alice Maynard, Quality Management Chief, and Deb Franzke, Administrative Assistant. The authors would also like to thank the young consumers who took the time to evaluate and comment on the child and adolescent mental health programs provided by the community mental health centers in Vermont.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONSUMER EVALUATION

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IN VERMONT

The 2013 survey of young people served by child and adolescent public mental health programs in Vermont is one part of a larger effort by the Department of Mental Health's Child, Adolescent and Family Unit to monitor community mental health program performance from the perspective of service recipients and other stakeholders. This survey is the sixth evaluation by adolescent consumers of youth and family services provided by community mental health centers in Vermont, following similar consumer surveys in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2009 and 2011.

These youth evaluations are used along with those of other stakeholders and with other measures of program performance from existing databases. The goal is to provide a more complete picture of the performance of local community mental health programs. The combined results of these evaluations allow consumers and stakeholders an ongoing opportunity to:

- compare the performance of community-based mental health programs in Vermont, and
- support local programs in their quality improvement process.

The results of this survey should be considered in light of previous consumer and stakeholder evaluations. These results should also be considered in light of measures of levels of access to care, service delivery patterns, service system integration, and treatment outcomes that are based on analyses of existing databases. Many of these indicators are published in the annual Department of Mental Health (DMH) Statistical Reports and weekly Performance Indicator Project (PIP) data reports. They are available online at <http://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/report>.

This approach to program evaluation assumes that program performance is multidimensional and is best understood on the basis of a variety of indicators that focus on different aspects of program performance. This report focuses on one very important aspect: the subjective evaluations of young people who were served by those programs.

Methodology

During the spring of 2013, the Child, Adolescent and Family Unit of the Vermont Department of Mental Health invited young people to evaluate child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont's ten regional community mental health centers (CMHCs) and one state-wide specialized service agency. All young people aged 14-18 who received six or more Medicaid-reimbursed services from these centers during the period September through December of 2012 were sent questionnaires that asked for their opinion of various aspects of these services. In total, 209 (18%) of the potential pool of 1,139 deliverable surveys were completed, returned and included in the analyses.

The youth survey consists of thirty-two fixed-alternative items and four open-ended questions designed to provide information that would help stakeholders to compare the performance of child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont. The survey included most items on the Mental Health Statistics Improvement Program (MHSIP) Consumer Survey developed by a multi-state work group; further items were added as a result of input from Vermont stakeholders.

To help compare Vermont's ten child and adolescent mental health programs and one state-wide specialized service agency, young consumers' responses to thirty-two fixed-alternative items were

combined into five scales. These scales focus on *Overall* consumer evaluation of program performance, and evaluation of program performance with regard to *Staff*, *Quality*, *Services*, and *Outcomes*.

Additional comments about program performance were offered by 69% of respondents. These written comments were reviewed by Department of Mental Health staff and were coded into positive and negative categories for analysis in this report.

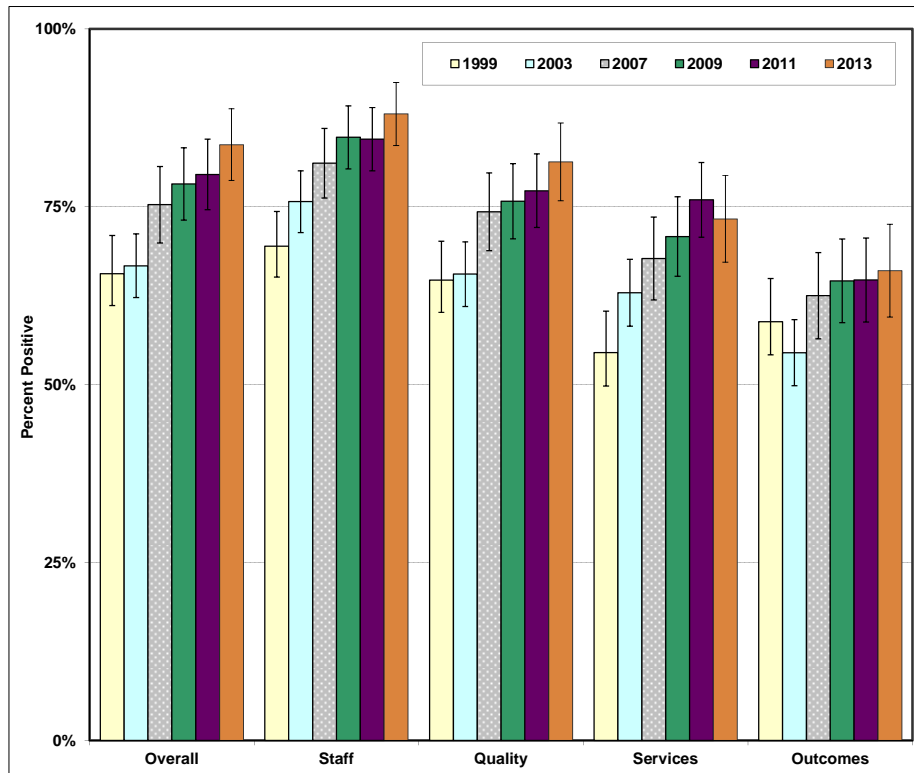
Overall Results

The young people served by child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont rated their programs favorably in 2013. Statewide, on the *Overall* measure of program performance, 84% of the youth evaluated the programs positively. Some aspects of program performance, however, were rated more favorably than others. Fixed-alternative items related to *Staff* received the most favorable responses (88% favorable), followed by *Quality* (81% favorable) and *Services* (73% favorable). Items related to *Outcomes* (66% favorable) received the lowest ratings.

There has been fairly consistent improvement in ratings of child and adolescent services by youth from 1999 to 2013 (see Figure 1). The ratings for *Overall* program performance increased from 66% in 1999 to 84% in 2013, and the ratings for *Staff* increased from 70% to 88% during this time period. Ratings for *Quality* increased from 65% to 81% and the ratings for *Services* increased from 55% to 73%. Ratings for *Outcomes* increased from 59% to 66% during the period covered by these surveys. In each year from 2003 to 2013, *Outcomes* received the lowest ratings given by young consumers.

In total, 69% of the survey respondents made written comments about the helpfulness of the services they received. Of the total number of comments received, 64% were positive. All but one agency received more positive than negative comments.

Figure 1. Comparative Positive Evaluations by Youth of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs



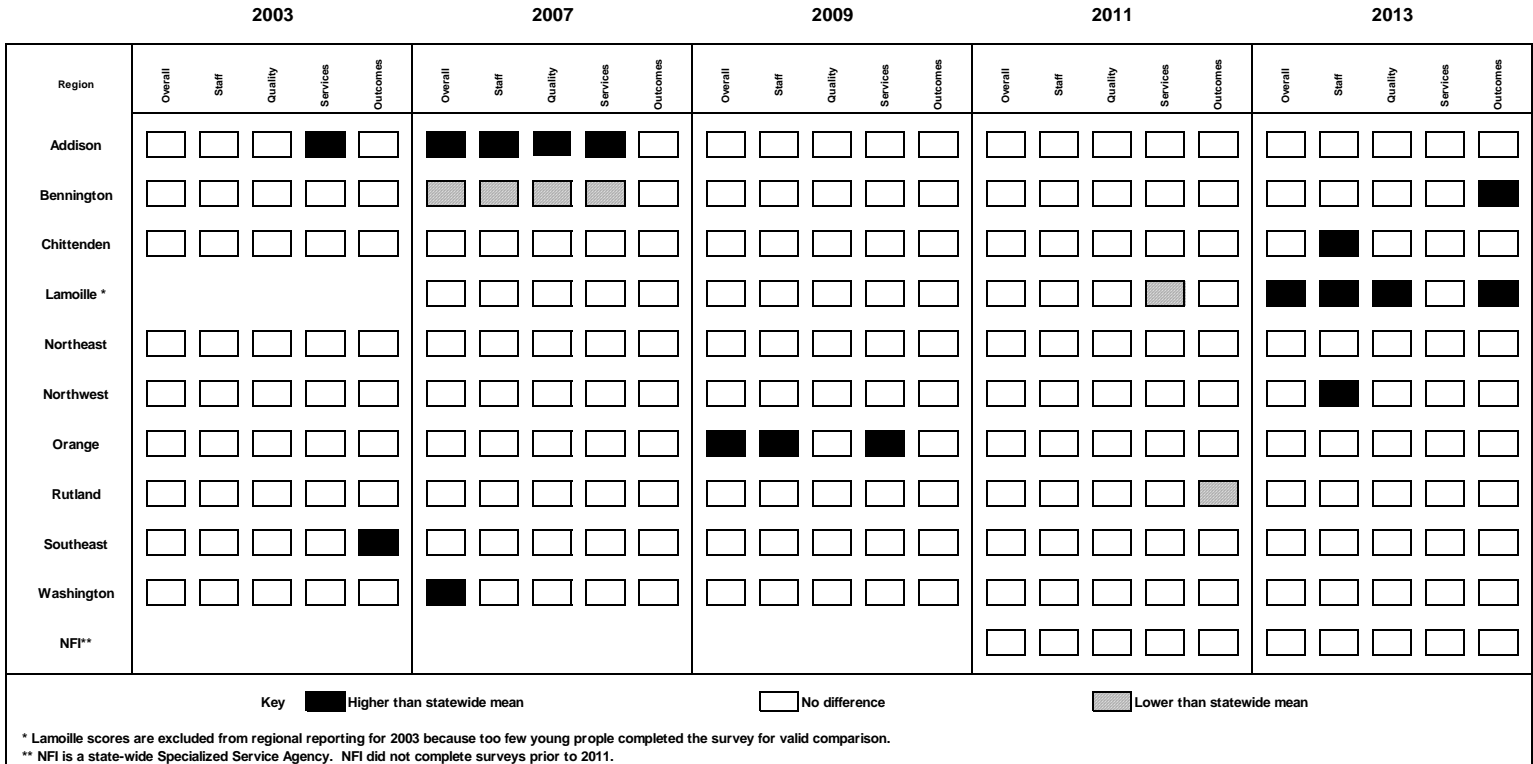
Differences among Programs

Ratings of individual programs on each of five composite scales were compared to the statewide mean for each scale. Regionally, there are few differences in evaluations of the child and adolescent community mental health programs during the time period covered by these surveys (see Figure 4). Most scale scores received by the CMHCs are not significantly different from the statewide average. In 2013, however, one CMHC was rated significantly higher than the statewide average on four of five scales and three CMHCs were rated significantly higher than the statewide average on one of five scales.

In 2013, the child and adolescent mental health program for Lamoille Community Connections (Lamoille) was rated higher than the statewide mean score on four of the five scales: *Overall, Staff, Quality, and Outcomes**. The child and adolescent mental health program for HowardCenter (Chittenden) and Northwestern Counseling and Support Services (Northwest) were also rated higher than the statewide mean score on one of the five scales: *Staff*. The child and adolescent mental health program for United Counseling Services (Bennington) was rated higher than the statewide mean score on one of the five scales: *Outcomes*. Young consumers' evaluations of the other seven programs were not statistically different from the statewide average rating on any scale.

Figure 2. Comparative Positive Evaluations by Youth of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs by Region

Youth Surveys: 2003, 2007, 2009, 2011 & 2013



*It should be noted that Lamoille's ratings are based on three returned surveys (12% response rate) and may not be a valid comparison.

Youth Survey 2013 Positive Responses to Individual Items by Region

| | State | Addison | Bennington | Chittenden | Lamoille | Northeast | Northwest | Orange | Rutland | Southeast | Washington | NFI |
|---|-------|---------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------|---------|-----------|------------|------|
| Number Responding | 209 | 26 | 14 | 51 | 3 | 18 | 25 | 12 | 17 | 15 | 13 | 15 |
| <i>Staff treated me with respect.</i> | 89% | 77% | 93% | 94% | 100% | 83% | 100% | 83% | 88% | 93% | 85% | 80% |
| <i>The staff listened to what I had to say.</i> | 88% | 81% | 93% | 86% | 100% | 83% | 92% | 83% | 88% | 93% | 85% | 100% |
| <i>Staff spoke with me in a way that I understood.</i> | 88% | 77% | 100% | 94% | 100% | 72% | 92% | 83% | 94% | 87% | 77% | 87% |
| <i>I liked the staff people who worked with me at [agency].</i> | 86% | 81% | 86% | 92% | 67% | 83% | 100% | 83% | 82% | 87% | 69% | 80% |
| <i>The services I received from [agency] this year were of good quality.</i> | 85% | 76% | 90% | 93% | 100% | 83% | 92% | 100% | 75% | 91% | 57% | 75% |
| <i>The staff asked me what I wanted/needed.</i> | 82% | 73% | 93% | 90% | 100% | 72% | 88% | 75% | 82% | 73% | 77% | 80% |
| <i>The services I received from [agency] were helpful to me.</i> | 82% | 73% | 92% | 88% | 100% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 80% | 73% | 69% | 86% |
| <i>I helped to choose my treatment goals.</i> | 82% | 77% | 93% | 90% | 33% | 83% | 92% | 75% | 81% | 73% | 62% | 80% |
| <i>People helping me stuck with me no matter what.</i> | 82% | 73% | 86% | 90% | 100% | 72% | 84% | 83% | 71% | 80% | 77% | 87% |
| <i>Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received.</i> | 81% | 73% | 86% | 90% | 100% | 83% | 88% | 75% | 65% | 73% | 77% | 80% |
| <i>Staff respected my wishes about who received information about me.</i> | 81% | 77% | 86% | 86% | 0% | 83% | 84% | 67% | 88% | 93% | 62% | 87% |
| <i>I participated in my own treatment.</i> | 81% | 72% | 79% | 90% | 67% | 72% | 84% | 67% | 88% | 73% | 62% | 100% |
| <i>Staff respected my family's religious/spiritual beliefs.</i> | 80% | 68% | 100% | 78% | 67% | 76% | 92% | 67% | 82% | 92% | 77% | 80% |
| <i>If I needed mental health services in the future, I would use this mental health center again.</i> | 80% | 72% | 93% | 84% | 100% | 78% | 79% | 92% | 75% | 79% | 69% | 73% |
| <i>Staff were sensitive to my cultural/ethnic background.</i> | 80% | 68% | 100% | 80% | 67% | 71% | 92% | 67% | 81% | 93% | 69% | 80% |
| <i>I would recommend this mental health center to a friend who needed help.</i> | 79% | 77% | 86% | 81% | 67% | 83% | 77% | 75% | 75% | 79% | 62% | 87% |
| <i>The location of my mental health services was convenient.</i> | 78% | 81% | 100% | 76% | 67% | 78% | 84% | 67% | 88% | 80% | 77% | 53% |
| <i>I felt I had someone to talk to when I was troubled.</i> | 78% | 73% | 79% | 80% | 33% | 72% | 84% | 75% | 76% | 73% | 85% | 87% |
| <i>Services were available at times convenient for me.</i> | 78% | 68% | 86% | 88% | 100% | 83% | 80% | 58% | 71% | 73% | 62% | 80% |
| <i>I received services that were right for me.</i> | 77% | 65% | 86% | 84% | 67% | 89% | 80% | 75% | 76% | 53% | 77% | 73% |
| <i>The staff knew how to help me.</i> | 76% | 69% | 93% | 84% | 67% | 78% | 80% | 75% | 65% | 67% | 62% | 73% |
| <i>I got the help I wanted.</i> | 75% | 68% | 86% | 86% | 67% | 78% | 60% | 83% | 76% | 60% | 69% | 67% |
| <i>I got as much help as I needed.</i> | 74% | 65% | 100% | 84% | 67% | 72% | 71% | 58% | 71% | 67% | 77% | 53% |
| <i>I learned a skill or approach that helps me get through the day.</i> | 74% | 60% | 79% | 84% | 100% | 67% | 72% | 67% | 76% | 60% | 54% | 93% |
| <i>I am doing better in school and/or at work.</i> | 69% | 52% | 86% | 73% | 100% | 78% | 61% | 64% | 56% | 67% | 69% | 87% |
| <i>I get along better with friends and other people.</i> | 69% | 58% | 85% | 75% | 67% | 61% | 54% | 75% | 56% | 80% | 62% | 87% |
| <i>I helped to choose my services.</i> | 68% | 62% | 86% | 78% | 0% | 67% | 63% | 75% | 65% | 60% | 54% | 67% |
| <i>I am better able to cope when things go wrong.</i> | 65% | 56% | 79% | 71% | 67% | 67% | 57% | 67% | 44% | 67% | 62% | 87% |
| <i>I am better at handling daily life.</i> | 65% | 56% | 86% | 75% | 67% | 78% | 50% | 58% | 44% | 53% | 54% | 80% |
| <i>I am satisfied with my family life right now.</i> | 64% | 57% | 79% | 73% | 33% | 72% | 58% | 42% | 63% | 67% | 54% | 67% |
| <i>I get along better with my family.</i> | 63% | 44% | 79% | 71% | 100% | 72% | 48% | 67% | 63% | 60% | 54% | 73% |
| <i>Since starting to receive services, the number of days I have been in school is [greater].</i> | 39% | 24% | 27% | 49% | 33% | 53% | 36% | 64% | 33% | 47% | 8% | 40% |
| Overall Mean | 77% | 69% | 88% | 84% | 73% | 77% | 78% | 73% | 74% | 75% | 68% | 80% |