

## **Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project**

Agency of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Mental Health  
108 Cherry Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401

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

FROM: John Pandiani and Barbara Carroll

DATE: November 28, 2008

RE: Parents' 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 2008, asked parents of child and adolescent service recipients to evaluate the Medicaid reimbursed services provided to their children by the mental health programs during July through December 2007.

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 the surveys administered to parents of child and adolescent service recipients in 2002 and 2006.

A technical report that includes detailed results and discussion of methodology is available online at <http://www.healthvermont.gov/mh/docs/res-eval/satisfaction-report.aspx#cmh> . Reports of the findings of the 2002 and 2006 surveys of parents of children served are available at the same website. If you have questions or comments, please contact (802) 863-7249 or [pip@vdh.state.vt.us](mailto:pip@vdh.state.vt.us).

# Evaluation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs By Parents of Children Served In Vermont

## Overall Results

The parents of Vermont children and adolescents served in 2007 by public mental health programs were very likely to rate their programs favorably.

- On the *Overall* program measure, 78% of parents scored the programs positively.
- Survey items about *Staff* had the highest scores with 86% of parents rating the items favorably.
- Other ratings were
  - *Services* at 82%,
  - *Quality* at 81%, and
  - *Outcomes* at 65%.

There have been small changes in parent ratings of child and adolescent mental health programs from 2002 to 2008 (see Figure 1). During this time, favorable ratings rose for

- *Services* from 81% to 82%,
- *Quality* from 78% to 81%, and
- *Outcomes* from 61% to 65%.

During the same time, favorable ratings declined for

- *Overall* program performance from 81% to 78% and
- *Staff* from 89% to 86%.

**Figure 1**  
**Favorable Consumer Rating of**  
**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs**  
**By Parents of Children Served in Vermont: 2002, 2006 and 2008**

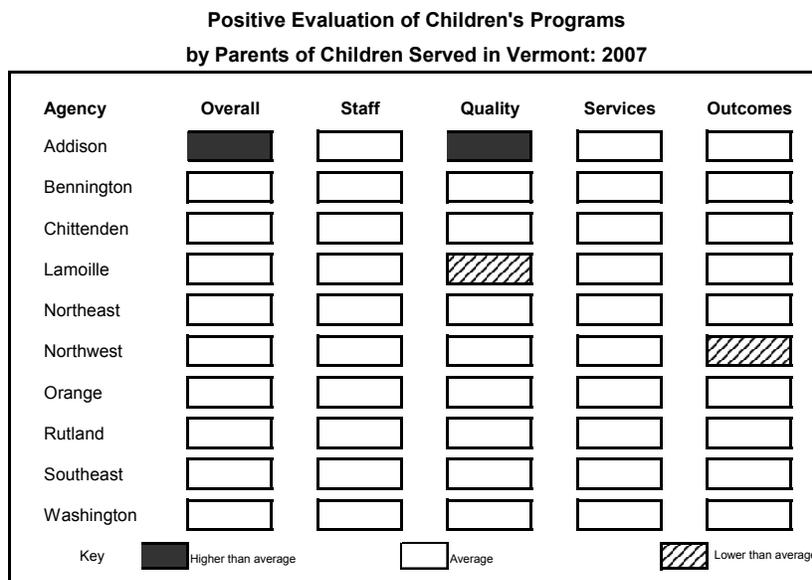


## Overview of Differences among Programs

In order to compare parents' ratings of child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont's ten Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs), scores on each of five composite scales were compared to the statewide average for each scale. The results of the 2008 survey show that there were few significant differences in parents' ratings of the programs (Figure 2).

The Addison program was rated significantly more favorably than the statewide average on two of the five scales: *Overall* and *Quality*. The Lamoille program was rated significantly less favorably than the statewide average on the *Quality* scale. The Northwest program was rated less favorably on the *Outcomes* scale. Parents' ratings of the seven other programs were not statistically different from the statewide average.

**Figure 2**  
**Favorable Rating**  
**of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs**  
**by Parents of Children Served in Vermont**



In order to have a more complete understanding of the opinions and concerns of parents of young consumers, four open questions were included in the survey. In total, 391 parents (71% of returned surveys) provided 545 written comments that were coded and grouped into positive and negative categories. Of the parents who made comments,

- 89% made positive comments,
- 51% made negative comments,
- 42% made both positive and negative comments, and
- fewer than 10% made only negative comments.

## Research Methods

During the spring of 2008, the Child, Adolescent, and Family Unit of the Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) mailed a letter to the parents of children who had recently received community mental health services. The letter invited the parents to rate the care received in Vermont's ten Community Mental Health Centers. Surveys were mailed to parents of all children up to the age of 18 who received at least three Medicaid-reimbursed services during July through December 2007. In total, 539 useable surveys (22% of deliverable surveys) were returned.

The parent survey consists of twenty-six fixed choice questions and four open questions. The purpose of the survey is:

- to understand the current level of quality in Vermont's child and adolescent mental health programs, and
- to continue to improve the level of quality.

The survey itself is based on the Mental Health Statistics Improvement Program (MHSIP) Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F) developed by a multi-state work group, with modifications as a result of input from Vermont stakeholders.

In order to compare Vermont's ten programs, parents' answers to the twenty-six fixed choice questions were combined into five scales. These scales focus on consumer ratings of *Overall* program performance and about *Staff*, *Services*, *Quality*, and *Outcomes*. In order to provide an unbiased comparison across programs, survey results were statistically adjusted to remove the effect of differences among the clients served by each community program. Reports of statistical significance are at the 95% confidence level ( $p < .05$ ).

The results of this survey should be looked at in light of previous survey results as well as data from other databases on access to care, service delivery patterns, and treatment outcomes. This data can be found in the annual Department of Mental Health (DMH) Statistical Reports and weekly Performance Indicator Project data reports (PIPs). These reports are online at <http://healthvermont.gov/mh/docs/res-eval/research-evaluation.aspx>.

**Positive Responses to Individual Questions  
About Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs  
By Parents of Children Served  
During 2007 in Vermont**

	<u>Statewide</u>	<u>Addison</u>	<u>Bennington</u>	<u>Chittenden</u>	<u>Lamoille</u>	<u>Northeast</u>	<u>Northwest</u>	<u>Orange</u>	<u>Rutland</u>	<u>Southeast</u>	<u>Washington</u>
21. <i>Staff spoke with me in a way that I understood.</i>	91%	94%	91%	88%	87%	94%	91%	93%	91%	90%	95%
19. <i>Staff treated me with respect.</i>	90%	92%	98%	93%	87%	83%	90%	87%	91%	88%	93%
14. <i>I liked the staff people who worked with me at &lt;&lt;CLINIC&gt;&gt; .</i>	89%	92%	98%	93%	79%	83%	89%	88%	94%	83%	88%
12. <i>The location of my mental health services was convenient.</i>	87%	85%	93%	79%	77%	85%	84%	87%	98%	88%	90%
22. <i>Staff were sensitive to our cultural/ethnic background.</i>	83%	92%	90%	80%	80%	69%	85%	84%	88%	76%	92%
17. <i>The staff listened to what I had to say.</i>	83%	91%	91%	85%	77%	70%	77%	83%	87%	82%	84%
20. <i>Staff respected my family's religious/spiritual beliefs.</i>	82%	83%	95%	75%	83%	76%	82%	74%	95%	78%	89%
13. <i>Services were available at times convenient for me.</i>	81%	89%	90%	72%	70%	74%	82%	83%	87%	81%	80%
16. <i>The staff asked me what I wanted/needed.</i>	81%	92%	74%	80%	83%	74%	80%	80%	79%	81%	85%
9. <i>I helped to choose my child's treatment goals.</i>	81%	87%	71%	85%	62%	82%	79%	82%	91%	76%	87%
1. <i>The services we received from «CLINIC» were helpful to my child and family.</i>	81%	87%	88%	84%	63%	79%	72%	82%	81%	84%	78%
24. <i>The services I received from «CLINIC» were of good quality.</i>	80%	94%	85%	80%	52%	80%	71%	78%	89%	83%	79%
8. <i>I liked the services we received from &lt;&lt;CLINIC&gt;&gt; .</i>	80%	89%	84%	80%	55%	80%	70%	80%	89%	85%	79%
25. <i>If I needed mental health services in the future, I would use this mental health center again.</i>	80%	88%	81%	80%	62%	80%	74%	78%	87%	82%	78%
26. <i>I would recommend this mental health center to a friend who needed help.</i>	79%	89%	79%	78%	59%	71%	77%	75%	87%	85%	80%
10. <i>I helped to choose my child's services.</i>	78%	87%	64%	81%	59%	88%	72%	81%	83%	81%	77%
23. <i>Overall, I am satisfied with the services my child received.</i>	77%	89%	80%	80%	55%	69%	67%	78%	85%	82%	75%
18. <i>The staff helping my child stuck with us no matter what.</i>	77%	87%	76%	75%	66%	74%	66%	77%	87%	80%	75%
15. <i>The staff knew how to help my child.</i>	74%	91%	83%	71%	53%	54%	70%	76%	85%	71%	78%
11. <i>The services my child and/or family received were right for us.</i>	71%	81%	74%	72%	47%	63%	61%	76%	76%	76%	68%
4. <i>My child gets along better with friends and other people.</i>	63%	76%	65%	67%	57%	53%	54%	63%	64%	66%	64%
5. <i>My child is doing better in school and/or at work.</i>	63%	74%	65%	58%	50%	59%	59%	67%	64%	63%	64%
2. <i>My child is better at handling daily life.</i>	63%	76%	70%	64%	53%	65%	46%	63%	65%	64%	65%
7. <i>I am more satisfied with our family life.</i>	62%	69%	64%	60%	50%	50%	59%	66%	64%	66%	62%
3. <i>My child gets along better with family members.</i>	60%	66%	57%	67%	50%	59%	54%	60%	62%	61%	61%
6. <i>My child is better able to cope when things go wrong.</i>	54%	65%	56%	58%	53%	53%	43%	53%	55%	54%	55%
<b>Average</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>77%</b>