



**FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SECTOR SURVEY
SUMMARY OF RESULTS
October 2019**

In the summer of 2019 F5SMC issued the Family Engagement Sector Survey to F5SMC Grantees and Partners (n=21) who provide supportive services to families. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain progress-to-date in addressing the needs of families, child-serving agencies, and the family-serving system, as well as identify pressing issues. Below is a summary of the findings.

WAIT LISTS:

57% of agencies responding reported that they had wait lists for services in English, and 67% reported wait lists for services in Spanish. The average number of families on the wait list for services in English was 45; for services in Spanish it was 53. The average number of months that families waited for services in English was 10; for services in Spanish, on average families waited 9 months.

GREATEST CHALLENGES FACING FAMILIES:

When asked about the greatest challenges facing San Mateo County's expectant parents and families with young children, 90% of respondents cited housing. The second most-commonly-cited issue was access to high-quality, affordable child care (75%), followed by availability of stable jobs with decent wages (65%), immigration and other legal issues (60%), access to mental health services (55%), and challenges related to understanding and navigating service systems (45%).

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES:

When asked about the availability of specific types of services for families, the services reported as least available are those specifically targeting fathers. On average, respondents reported that father-specific services can meet 20-40% of the need. Mental and behavioral health services for young children and their parents as well as services for children and families not eligible for MediCal were cited as the second-least available, able to meet 20-60% of the need. This was followed by

services targeted to infants, toddlers, and their families, which on average were reported to meet 40-60% of the need.

GREATEST CHALLENGES FACING FAMILY-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS:

When asked about the greatest challenges facing their organizations, 80% of respondents cited the hiring and retention of qualified staff. This was followed by covering overhead and administrative expenses (55%), coordinating with other agencies to serve the same clients (40%), and engaging clients in services given the current climate around immigration (40%). About one in three respondents reported that supporting ongoing professional development for staff and holding time for reflective supervision are additional challenges.

PROVIDER TRAININGS:

When asked about training needs, respondents on average reported that training on working with children with special needs was less available. Other topics where the availability of training and support was not able to meet the need included: authentic family engagement practices, early childhood mental health and trauma-informed care, and connecting families to local resources.