

## **A Message from Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary Children's Administration**

### **Foster Parent and Relative Caregiver Telephone Survey Final Results - September 2007**

We want to let you know that the results of the BRAAM Foster Parent/Caregiver Benchmark Survey were released on September 20, 2007. This survey is an independent survey developed and conducted by the Washington State University's Social and Economic Sciences Research Center (SERC).

The purpose of the survey was to gather information about caregivers' experiences to ensure they are getting the training and support they need. In this large scale survey more than 1200 caregivers statewide were interviewed by telephone between April and July 2007. The questionnaire included over 150 questions and is probably one of the most comprehensive and valid survey of its kind. The survey results are considered accurate within + or - 2.7%. This is a very high confidence level.

I want to thank all the caregivers who took the time to complete this very important survey. Your information and the results of the survey give us a clear picture of our strengths and the areas where we need to continue our improvement efforts. So thank you everyone.

The results paint a strong picture of Washington's foster care program and support the direction we are moving in our relationship and partnership with you. You gave us very high marks for the support, training and information we are providing to you in your important work of caring for children. Our social workers and licensing staff received high ratings for their professionalism, their call back times, and the respectful manner in which foster parents and relative caregivers were treated. This is good news. Our efforts to support you are working.

The survey results are used to measure the Agency's performance related to 8 of the Braam Implementation Plan measures. The results indicate a high level of compliance with 5 out of the 8 measures. The survey covers more than the Braam measurements and includes many other areas important to you in your role as a caregiver and to the Children's Administration. We will use the results to keep improving and to build a top notch foster care program.

We will be discussing the survey and its results at the region and state meetings of caregivers and Children's Administration which are scheduled to begin in October. You will receive more information on these meeting shortly. In the meantime I encourage you to read the survey report. The results can be accessed by clicking on the following links:

### **2007 Foster Parent Survey**

[Benchmark Report](#)

[Appendix to Benchmark Report](#)

[Data Report](#)

[Appendix to Data Report](#)

[Foster Parent Survey Highlights](#)

## 2007 Foster Parent Survey Highlights (09/20/07 final)

### Areas of strength—caregivers report: (*Braam benchmarks are in italics*)

Received the respite care they requested in a timely manner	77% of all caregivers report receiving the respite care they need
Are treated professionally and with respect	85% of all caregivers by their social workers; 89% of all caregivers by their licensors
Children needing mental health services received it in a timely manner	86% of foster parents
Have at least monthly telephone or email contact with child's social worker	79% of foster parents; 77% of all caregivers (61% of all caregivers report social worker contact several times each month)
Return calls within the next working day most of the time	68% of all caregivers from their social workers; 76% from their licensors
Child having only one or two different social workers	75% of foster parents; 71% of all caregivers
Caregivers who accessed the CA foster parent website found it useful	81% of all caregivers
<i>Licensed caregivers receive adequate training for their roles</i>	88.6% of licensed caregivers
<i>Licensed caregivers receive adequate support for their roles and responsibilities</i>	76.3% of licensed caregivers
<i>Licensed caregivers receive adequate information about the needs of children placed with them</i>	72.8% of licensed caregivers
<i>Receive adequate support in caring for medically fragile children</i>	74.9% of all caregivers
<i>Receive behavioral health services from the same individual provider</i>	75.4% of all caregivers

### Areas for improvement—caregivers report: (*Braam benchmarks are in italics*)

Rarely or never receive the five-day notice about shared planning meetings	40% of all caregivers (51% report they are not encouraged to attend)
Unmet training needs (child development, dealing with biological families, discipline and behavior management)	45% of foster parents; 40% of all caregivers
Relative caregivers attending training in previous three years	59% of relative caregivers reported attending no training in previous three years
Dissatisfied with how CA communicates with them	33% of all caregivers
Not familiar with the after hours support line for foster parents	47% of all caregivers

Not familiar with the new educational programs to help foster children	Over 50% of all caregivers
<i>Monthly face-to-face visits of caseworker with child</i>	37.9% of all caregivers reported children received monthly visits
<i>Meeting and documenting protective measures for children with history of sexually aggressive and physically assaultive behavior</i>	44.7% of all caregivers reported all protective measures in place
<i>Children not placed with siblings have two or more visits or contacts per month</i>	48.4% of all caregivers reported children having 2 or more visits/contacts with siblings each month