

Summary of Prevention Survey Results

October 2015

The Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) Prevention Committee researched what Prevention Programs are currently being offered in local departments of social services across Virginia in order to assess what resources are needed to further enhance prevention efforts and to assess strengths and challenges of current programs. Using the data obtained from this survey, the committee will begin working on recommendations to improve child abuse and foster care prevention programs across Virginia. The goal of the committee is to provide a comprehensive recommendations report to the full Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) by May 2016.

The survey was sent out to local department of social services directors on September 14, 2015 and data was analyzed on October 5, 2015. Thirty eight (38) responses to the survey were received which account for approximately 32% of local social services departments in Virginia. The typical response rate for surveys to local social services departments is approximately 25%. Of those departments who responded, thirty five (35) provide prevention services, two (2) do not provide prevention services and three (3) did not respond to this question.

One important question the committee asked was how agencies define Prevention. The Virginia Department of Social Services defines Prevention Services in three categories:

Prevention services are defined as services that prevent...
child abuse/neglect from ever occurring with any caretaker and/or
the recurrence of child abuse/neglect with any caretaker and/or
out of home care (including prevention of foster care)

A chart (n=38) of Prevention definitions provided by all respondents is included at the end of this reportⁱ. Aggregate data is also available upon request.

Overwhelmingly, agencies identified funding as the major barrier to providing Prevention Services:

Funding	81.58% 31
Staff shortages	60.53% 23
Lack of guidance/policy	44.74% 17
Prioritizing families (demand exceeds capacity)	42.11% 16
Lack of training	31.58% 12
Lack of community support	23.68% 9
Cooperation from community partners	18.42% 7
Lack of qualified staff	18.42% 7

Thirty two (32) agencies identified funding sources for their Prevention Programs. Six (6) agencies did not answer this question although comments were provided. The three top funding sources identified are Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), Children’s Service Act (CSA), and Department of Social Services (DSS) State and local administration funds.

Promoting Safe and Stable Family funds (PSSF)	71.88% 23
CSA funds	56.25% 18
DSS State/local admin funds	50.00% 16
DSS state/local purchase funds	28.13% 9
Local unmatched funds	34.38% 11
Grant funds	18.75% 6
DSS federal/local pass-through funds	15.63% 5

Thirty one (31) agencies responded with types of services provided in Prevention Programs. The two main services provided were home based intervention and parenting education. Seven (7) agencies did not respond, although comments were provided.

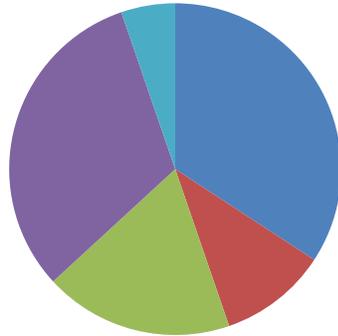
Home based intervention	90.32% 28
Parenting education	77.42% 24
Office based counseling	38.71% 12
School based intervention	38.71% 12
Group intervention	32.26% 10
Socialization or recreational activities	19.35% 6

Conclusion

Based on Local Department of Social Services responses, Prevention Programs in many local agencies are provided to prevent child abuse and/or neglect as well as foster care placement. Funding is the main barrier to enhancing current practice. The CWAC Prevention Committee will continue to examine these survey findings in order to develop recommendations to strengthen current prevention practice.

ⁱ Prevention Definitions

Prevention Definitions



- Preventing child abuse/neglect from ever occurring with any caretaker - 13
- Preventing the recurrence of child abuse/neglect with any caretaker - 4
- Preventing out of home care (including prevention of foster care) - 7
- Preventing the recurrence of abuse/neglect AND foster care placement - 12
- Other - 2