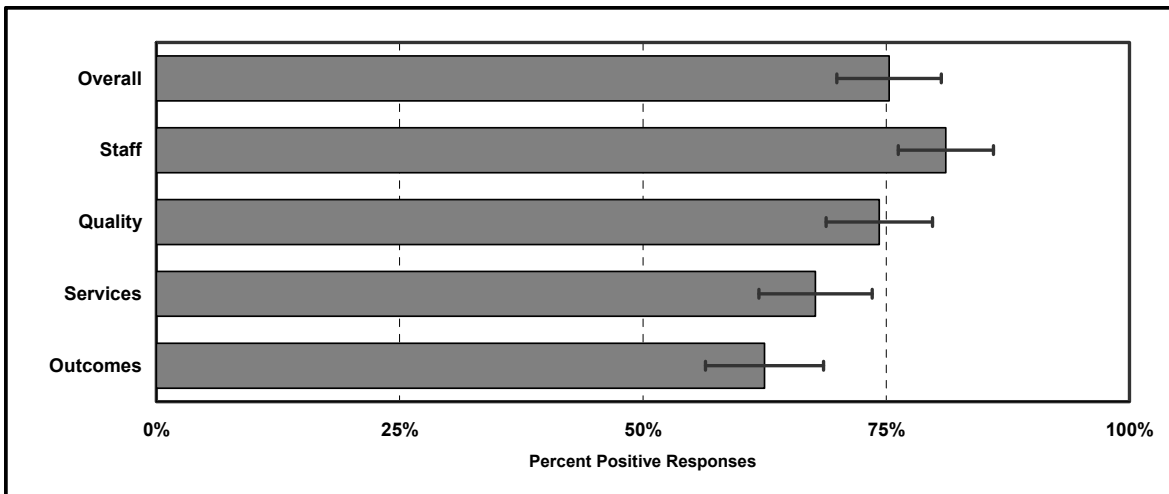


Vermont Department of Mental Health
Evaluation of
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs
By Young People Served in Vermont
July - December 2006

TECHNICAL REPORT
Executive Summary

Positive Evaluation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs
by Youth Served in Vermont July-December 2006



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONSUMER EVALUATION CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IN VERMONT

The 2007 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 third evaluation by adolescent consumers of youth and family services provided by community mental health centers in Vermont, following similar consumer surveys in 1999 and 2003.

These youth evaluations are used in conjunction with the assessments of other stakeholders and with measures of program performance based on existing databases 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 to support local programs in their quality improvement process.

The results of this survey should be considered in light of previous consumer and stakeholder evaluations of community mental health programs in Vermont, and in conjunction with the results of consumer and stakeholder surveys that will be conducted in the future. These evaluations 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, which are available online at: <http://healthvermont.gov/mh/docs/eval/research-evaluation.aspx>.

This approach to program evaluation assumes that program performance is a multidimensional phenomenon which 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 measure of the performance of Vermont's community child and adolescent mental health programs, namely the subjective evaluations of young people who were served by those programs.

Methodology

During the spring of 2007, 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). All young people aged 14 - 18 who received three or more Medicaid-reimbursed services from these centers during the period July through December of 2006 were sent questionnaires that asked for their opinion of various aspects of these services. In total, 251 (14%) of the potential pool of 1,832 deliverable surveys were returned, completed and included in the analyses.

The youth survey consists of thirty-one fixed-alternative questions 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 instrument included most items on the MHSIP Consumer Survey developed by a multi-state work group with further items added as a result of input from Vermont stakeholders.

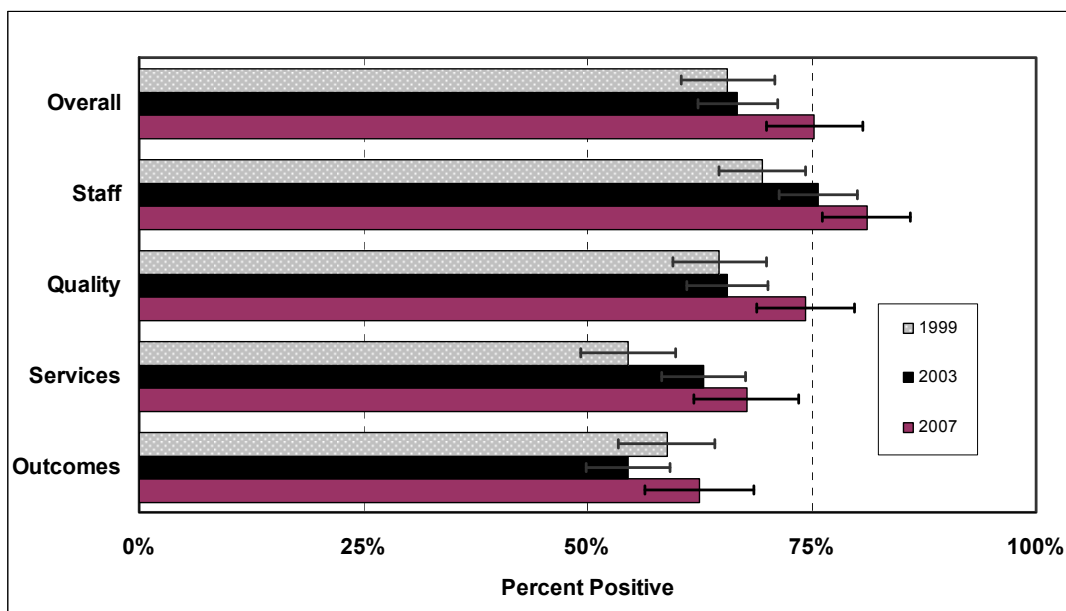
In order to facilitate comparison of Vermont's ten child and adolescent mental health programs, young consumers' responses to thirty-one fixed-alternative questions were combined into five scales. These scales focus on *Overall* consumer evaluation of program performance, and evaluation of program performance with regard to *Staff*, *Quality*, *Services*, and *Outcomes*. In order to provide an unbiased comparison across programs, survey results were analyzed to assess the effect of dissimilarities among the client populations served by different community programs. Reports of significance are at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$). Additional comments about program performance were offered by 80% of respondents. These written comments of survey respondents were reviewed by DMH staff but were not coded for analysis in this report.

Overall Results

The young people served by child and adolescent mental health programs in Vermont tended to rate their programs favorably in 2007. Statewide, on the *Overall* measure of program performance, 75% of the youth evaluated the programs positively. Some aspects of program performance, however, were rated more favorably than others. Fixed-alternative questions related to *Staff* received the most favorable responses (81% favorable), followed by *Quality* (74% favorable) and *Services* (68% favorable). Questions related to *Outcomes* (63% favorable) received the lowest ratings.

There has been incremental improvement in ratings of child and adolescent services by youth from 1999 to 2007 (see Figure 1). The ratings for *Overall* program performance increased from 66% in 1999 to 75% in 2007, and the ratings for *Quality* increased from 65% to 74% during this time period. Ratings for *Staff* increased from 70% to 81%, and the ratings for *Services* increased from 55% to 68%. There has been little change in ratings for *Outcomes* during the period covered by these surveys. In each year, *Outcomes* received the lowest ratings given by young consumers.

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



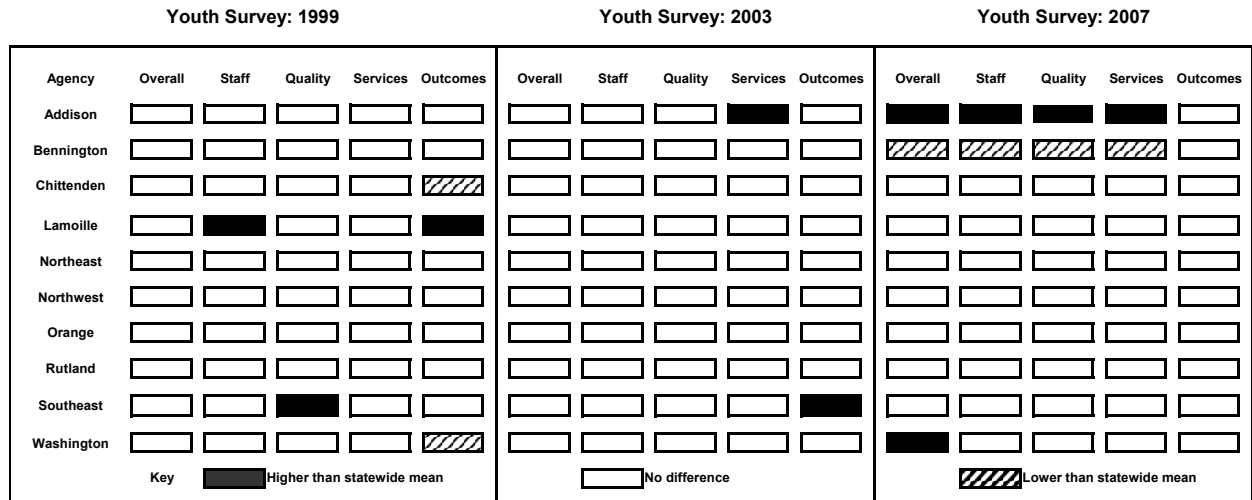
Differences among Programs

In order to compare young consumers' evaluations of child and adolescent mental health programs on a regional basis, ratings of individual programs on each of five composite scales were compared to the statewide average for each scale. The analysis of the survey responses by region indicates that there were some significant differences in young consumers' evaluations of some of the ten child and adolescent community mental health programs.

In 2007, the child and adolescent mental health program in Addison scored higher than the statewide average on four of the five scales: *Overall*, *Staff*, *Quality* and *Service*. The child and adolescent mental health program in Bennington scored lower than the statewide average on the same four scales: *Overall*, *Staff*, *Quality* and *Service*. The program in the Washington region scored higher than the statewide average on the *Overall* scale. Young consumers' 2007 evaluations of the other seven programs were not statistically different from the statewide average rating on any 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 2). Most scale scores received by the CMHCs are not significantly different from the statewide average. In 2007, however, one CMHC was rated significantly below the statewide average on four of five scales and one CMHC was rated significantly above the statewide average on four of five scales.

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



Youth Survey 2007: Positive Responses to Individual Fixed-alternative Questions by Program

	State	Addison	Bennington	Chittenden	Lamoille	Northeast	Northwest	Orange	Rutland	Southeast	Washington
24. Staff treated me with respect	89%	100%	67%	87%	91%	88%	88%	90%	96%	83%	92%
25. Staff spoke with me in a way that I understood	86%	96%	71%	83%	82%	88%	84%	81%	96%	80%	93%
23. Staff respected my wishes about who received information about me	84%	89%	87%	85%	80%	82%	80%	85%	83%	77%	93%
22. The staff listened to what I had to say	83%	89%	60%	83%	70%	82%	84%	81%	91%	83%	89%
26. Staff respected my family's religious/spiritual beliefs	83%	85%	80%	87%	91%	82%	72%	80%	83%	77%	92%
19. I liked the staff people who worked with me at [agency]	81%	93%	60%	83%	82%	82%	88%	81%	70%	74%	86%
27. Staff were sensitive to my cultural/ethnic background	80%	79%	60%	86%	100%	82%	76%	85%	78%	74%	85%
17. The location of my mental health services was convenient	79%	82%	80%	79%	82%	53%	80%	86%	87%	76%	85%
21. The staff asked me what I wanted/needed	79%	93%	53%	81%	90%	71%	80%	81%	82%	71%	86%
29. The services I received from [agency] this year were of good quality	78%	89%	47%	81%	100%	71%	72%	81%	73%	71%	93%
28. People helping me stuck with me no matter what	76%	82%	47%	81%	82%	71%	84%	71%	70%	77%	77%
12. I participated in my own treatment	76%	78%	53%	85%	82%	65%	80%	71%	82%	69%	78%
01. The services I received from [agency] were helpful to me	76%	89%	43%	81%	91%	59%	64%	81%	71%	74%	86%
31. I would recommend this mental health center to a friend who needed help	76%	96%	43%	77%	91%	82%	72%	81%	65%	71%	73%
09. Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	73%	86%	53%	77%	82%	71%	64%	76%	65%	69%	82%
18. Services were available at times convenient for me	73%	96%	53%	68%	82%	69%	68%	76%	70%	71%	74%
30. If I needed mental health services in the future, I would use this mental health center again	72%	89%	40%	70%	91%	71%	64%	80%	70%	71%	71%
10. I helped to choose my treatment goals	69%	74%	40%	71%	73%	59%	68%	71%	82%	63%	82%
04. I get along better with friends and other people	69%	81%	47%	72%	91%	59%	60%	71%	70%	66%	74%
15. I received services that were right for me	68%	79%	40%	71%	82%	59%	56%	76%	73%	63%	79%
20. The staff knew how to help me	68%	86%	40%	71%	82%	65%	52%	67%	70%	65%	75%
16. I felt I had someone to talk to when I was troubled...	68%	79%	33%	69%	91%	47%	60%	76%	78%	66%	71%
02. I am better at handling daily life	65%	86%	40%	70%	73%	71%	40%	76%	74%	54%	59%
03. I get along better with my family	64%	82%	60%	70%	73%	47%	42%	62%	70%	51%	81%
05. I am doing better in school and/or at work	63%	79%	36%	77%	55%	65%	46%	76%	73%	51%	54%
13. I got the help I wanted	63%	71%	23%	69%	73%	35%	56%	76%	68%	51%	79%
07. I am satisfied with my family life right now	62%	71%	60%	59%	73%	44%	54%	76%	48%	57%	78%
14. I got as much help as I needed	61%	61%	21%	73%	73%	53%	52%	67%	61%	57%	68%
11. I helped to choose my services	58%	68%	33%	58%	64%	35%	72%	57%	67%	49%	68%
06. I am better able to cope when things go wrong	57%	75%	33%	63%	55%	53%	44%	62%	57%	49%	67%
08. Since starting to receive services, the number of days I have been in school is ...	33%	33%	46%	43%	20%	23%	22%	30%	43%	31%	26%
Average	71%	82%	50%	74%	79%	64%	65%	75%	73%	66%	77%