

Parent Centers Helping Families

Outcome Data 2009-2010



ALLIANCE National Parent
Technical Assistance Center
www.parentcenternetwork.org

Parent Centers Helping Families

Outcome Data 2009-2010

Published by the ALLIANCE National Parent Technical Assistance Center at PACER Center

8161 Normandale Boulevard

Minneapolis, MN 55437

952.838.9000

952.838.0199 (Fax)

888.248.0822 (Toll Free)

alliance@taalliance.org

ALLIANCE National Parent Technical Assistance Center website:

www.parentcenternetwork.org/national

PACER website: PACER.org

Thanks to program evaluator Susan Hasazi, University of Vermont, for her assistance in developing the forms used to collect the data in this book. Thanks also to the Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers (RPTACs).

©2011, PACER Center, Inc.



Table of Contents



2	Parent Technical Assistance Center Network Contact Information
3	Parent Centers Contact Information
4	Dear Colleagues Letter
5	The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
6	Why Parent Centers?
7	Success Story #1
8	Why Technical Assistance for Parent Centers?
9	National and Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers Map
10	About the Data
11	Parent Center Data
11	Help Parents/Professionals through Individual Assistance
12	Help Parents/Professionals through Trainings/Presentations
13	Help Children with All Disabilities
14	Help Children Ages Birth to 26
15	Help Families of Diverse Backgrounds
16	Help Families of Diverse Backgrounds through Trainings/Presentations and Individual Assistance
17	Help Parents/Professionals through Information Dissemination
18	Help Parents/Professionals through Extended Services
19	Success Story #2
20	Outcome Data
20	Children Receive More Appropriate Services
21	Parents are More Knowledgeable about How to Work with Schools
22	Parents Address Critical Needs Related to Their Child's Education
23	Parents are Provided with Information to Make Decisions
24	Parents Share Information with Others
25	Parents Receive Useful Information
26	Parents Receive High Quality Materials
27	Disagreements are Resolved with Schools
28	Success Story #3

Parent Technical Assistance Center Network

ALLIANCE National Parent Technical Assistance Center at PACER Center

8161 Normandale Boulevard, Minneapolis, MN 55437-1044
952.838.9000 | 952.838.0199 (Fax) | 888.248.0822 (Toll Free)
alliance@taalliance.org | www.parentcenternetwork.org/national

Co-Directors: Paula Goldberg, Sue Folger, and Sharman Davis Barrett

Region 1–Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)

35 Halsey Street, 4th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102
973.642.8100 | 973.642.8080 (Fax) | 800.654.7726 (Toll Free)
span@spannj.org | www.spannj.org
CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT
Co-Directors: Diana Autin and Debra Jennings

Region 2–Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)

907 Barra Row, Suite 102/103
Davidson, NC 28036
704.892.1321 | 704.892.5028 (Fax) | 800.962.6817 (Toll Free)
ecacta@ecacmail.org | www.ecac-parentcenter.org
DE, KY, MD, NC, SC, TN, VA, DC, WV
Director: Connie Hawkins

Region 3–Partners Resource Network (PRN)

1090 Longfellow Drive
Beaumont, TX 77706
409.898.4684 | 409.898.4869 (Fax) | 800.866.4726 (Toll Free)
partnersresource@sbcglobal.net | http://www.partnerstx.org
AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, Puerto Rico, TX, US Virgin Islands
Director: Janice Meyer

Region 4–Wisconsin FACETS

2714 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53212
414.374.4645 | 414.374.4655 (Fax) | 877.374.0511 (Toll Free)
region4ta@wifacets.org | www.wifacets.org
IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, PA, WI
Co-Directors: Jan Serak and Courtney Salzer

Region 5–PEAK Parent Center

611 North Weber, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719.531.9400 | 719.531.9452 (Fax) | 800.284.0251 (Toll Free)
region5ptac@peakparent.org | www.peakparent.org
AZ, CO, KS, MT, NE, ND, NM, SD, UT, WY
Director: Barbara Buswell

Region 6–Matrix Parent Network and Resource Center

94 Galli Drive, Suite C
Novato, CA 94949
415.884.3535 | 415.884.3555 (Fax) | 800.578.2592 (Toll Free)
region6@matrixparents.org | www.matrixparents.org
AK, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA, the outlying areas of the Pacific Basin and the
Freely Associated States
Director: Nora Thompson

Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs)

Region 1

CONNECTICUT
Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc.

Niantic
(860) 739-3089

AFCAMP/Hartford—New Haven Community Parent Resource Center ■
Hartford
(860) 297-4358

MAINE
Maine Parent Federation
Augusta
(207) 623-2144

MASSACHUSETTS
Federation for Children with Special Needs
Boston
(617) 236-7210

Urban Pride ■
Allston
(617) 206-2570

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Parent Information Center
Concord
(603) 224-7005

NEW JERSEY
Association for Special Children & Families ■
Hewitt
(973) 728-8744

☆ **Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)**
Newark
(800) 654-7726

NEW YORK
The Advocacy Center
Rochester
(585) 546-1700

Advocates for Children of New York
New York
(212) 947-9779

Parent Network of WNY ■
Buffalo
(716) 332-4170

Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc.
New York
(212) 677-4650

Sinergia/Metropolitan Parent Center
New York
(212) 643-2840

United We Stand ■
Brooklyn
(718) 302-4313

RHODE ISLAND
RI Parent Information Network, Inc.
Cranston
(401) 270-0101

VERMONT
Vermont Family Network
Williston
(802) 876-5315

Region 2

DELAWARE
Parent Information Center of Delaware
Wilmington
(302) 999-7394

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Advocates for Justice and Education
Washington
(202) 678-8060

KENTUCKY
Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network
Louisville
(502) 937-6894

MARYLAND
The Parents' Place of Maryland
Glen Burnie
(410) 768-9100

NORTH CAROLINA
☆ **ECAC, Inc.**
Davidson
(800) 962-6817

Hope Parent Resource Center ■
Morgantown
(828) 438-6540

SOUTH CAROLINA
Parent Training and Resource Center ■
Charleston
(843) 266-1318

PRO-PARENTS OF SC
Columbia
(803) 772-5688

TENNESSEE
Chattanooga Area Resource and Education Project ■
Chattanooga
(423) 622-4007

Support & Training for Exceptional Parents, Inc.
Greeneville
(423) 639-0125

VIRGINIA
Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center
Falls Church
(703) 923-0010

WEST VIRGINIA
West Virginia PTI
Clarksburg
(304) 624-1436

Region 3

ALABAMA
Parent Education Center
Wetumpka
(334) 567-2252

ARKANSAS
Arkansas Disability Coalition
Little Rock
(501) 614-7020

Northwest Arkansas Community Parent Center ■
Springdale
(479) 927-4100

FLORIDA
Central Florida Parent Center, Inc.
Palm Harbor
(727) 789-2400

Parent to Parent of Miami, Inc. ■
Miami
(305) 271-9797

PEN Project
Dunedin
(727) 523-1130

POPIN Project
Tallahassee
(727) 523-1130

GEORGIA
Parent to Parent of Georgia, Inc.
Atlanta
(770) 451-5484

LOUISIANA
Louisiana PTI
Harahan
(504) 888-9111

Pyramid CPRC ■
New Orleans
(504) 899-1505

MISSISSIPPI
MS PTI
Jackson
(601) 969-0601

Project Empower ■
Greenville
(662) 332-4852

OKLAHOMA
Oklahoma Parents Center, Inc.
Holdenville
(405) 379-6015

PUERTO RICO
APNI
San Juan
(787) 763-4665

TEXAS
Children's Disabilities Information Coalition ■
El Paso
(915) 217-2747

☆ **Partners Resource Network—PATH Project**
Beaumont
(800) 866-4726

Partners Resource Network—PEN Project
Lubbock
(806) 762-1434

Partners Resource Network—TEAM Project
Houston
(713) 524-2147

Special Kids, Inc. (SKI) ■
Houston
(713) 734-5355

VIRGIN ISLANDS
V.I. FIND
St. Thomas
(340) 774-1662

Region 4

ILLINOIS
Family Matters
Effingham
(217) 347-5428

Family Resource Center on Disabilities
Chicago
(312) 939-3513

INDIANA
IN*SOURCE
South Bend
(574) 234-7101

IOWA
Access for Special Kids (ASK)
Johnston
(515) 243-1713

MICHIGAN
Michigan Alliance for Families—Region 1
Detroit
(313) 557-8780

Michigan Alliance for Families—Region 2
Benton Harbor
(269) 934-9471

S.P.E.A.K.S. Education ■
Newberry
(906) 293-8984

MINNESOTA
discapitados abriendo caminos ■
St. Paul
(651) 293-1748

★ **PACER Center, Inc.**
Minneapolis
(888) 248-0822

MISSOURI
Missouri Parents Act (MPACT)
Kansas City
(816) 531-7070

OHIO
OCECD—Region 1
Marion
(740) 382-5452

OCECD—Region 2
Marion
(740) 382-5452

PENNSYLVANIA
Hispanos Unidos para Niños Excepcionales ■
Philadelphia
(215) 425-6203

Mentor Parent Program ■
Clarion
(814) 226-4151

Parent Education and Advocacy Leadership Center
Pittsburgh
(412) 281-4404

Parent Education Network
York
(717) 600-0100

WISCONSIN
Alianza Latina Aplicando Soluciones ■
Milwaukee
(414) 643-0022

☆ **Wisconsin FACETS**
Milwaukee
(877) 374-0511

Region 5

ARIZONA
Raising Special Kids
Phoenix
(602) 242-4366

COLORADO
Denver Metro Community Parent Resource Center ■
Aurora
(303) 365-2772

☆ **PEAK Parent Center, Inc.**
Colorado Springs
(800) 284-0251

KANSAS
Families Together, Inc.
Wichita
(316) 945-7747

MONTANA
Parents Let's Unite for Kids
Billings
(406) 255-0540

NEBRASKA
PTI Nebraska
Omaha
(402) 346-0525

NEW MEXICO
EPICS Project ■
Albuquerque
(505) 767-6630

Parents Reaching Out
Albuquerque
(505) 247-0192

NORTH DAKOTA
ND Pathfinder PTI
Minot
(701) 837-7500

SOUTH DAKOTA
South Dakota Parent Connection
Sioux Falls
(605) 361-3171

UTAH
Utah Parent Center
Salt Lake City
(801) 272-1051

WYOMING
Parent Information Center
Buffalo
(307) 684-2277

Region 6

ALASKA
Stone Soup Group
Anchorage
(907) 561-3701

AMERICAN SAMOA
CFIDD ■
Pago Pago
(684) 699-6621

CALIFORNIA
Chinese Parents Association for the Disabled ■
San Gabriel
(626) 307-3837

DREDF
Berkeley
(510) 644-2555

Exceptional Parents Unlimited
Fresno
(559) 229-2000

Fiesta Educativa ■
Los Angeles
(323) 221-6696

Foster Youth Resources for Education (FYRE) ■
Berkeley
(510) 644-2555

Loving Your Disabled Child ■
Los Angeles
(323) 373-0323

☆ **Matrix**
Novato
(800) 578-2592

ParentsCAN ■
Napa
(707) 253-7444

Parents Helping Parents
San Jose
(408) 727-5775

Parents of Watts ■
Los Angeles
(323) 566-7556

Rowell Family Empowerment of Northern CA
Redding
(530) 226-5129

Support for Families of Children with Disabilities
San Francisco
(415) 282-7494

Support for Families of Children with Disabilities ■
San Francisco
(415) 282-7494

TASK
Anaheim
(714) 533-8275

TASK, San Diego
San Diego
(619) 282-0846

Vietnamese Parents of Disabled Children Association ■
Stanton
(949) 724-2359

GUAM
Guam's Positive Parents Together
Hagatma
(671) 477-7472

HAWAII
Hawaii Parent Training and Information Center
Honolulu
(808) 536-9684

IDAHO
Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc.
Boise
(208) 342-5884

NEVADA
Nevada PEP
Las Vegas
(702) 388-8899

OREGON
Oregon FIRST ■
Portland
(503) 215-2268

Oregon RISE Center
Salem
(503) 581-8156

PALAU
Paulau Parents Empowered ■
Koror
011-680-779-4221

WASHINGTON
Parent to Parent Power ■
Tacoma
(253) 531-2022

Washington PAVE
Tacoma
(253) 565-2266

National Parent Centers

FLORIDA
VISIONS (National Center for Native American Families)
Dunedin
(877) 205-7501

WASHINGTON
Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP)
Tacoma
(800) 5PARENT

☆ **Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers**
■ **Community Parent Resource Centers**

★ **National Parent Technical Assistance Center**
All other centers are Parent Training and Information Centers

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to share with you this publication highlighting the important work of the more than 100 Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs) funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The following report includes data on the numbers of parents and professionals served by Parent Centers, outcomes of the services provided, and success stories exemplifying Parent Centers' positive impact on families of children with disabilities.

The data show that in 2009-2010 federally funded Parent Centers collectively made more than 1.5 million contacts with parents and professionals through trainings, presentations, individual assistance, and extended services. Parent Centers also made more than 21 million contacts through newsletters and websites. Parent Centers continually engage in outreach activities to inform more people about their services so they can assist more families, including those from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds. The data indicate that Parent Centers are cost effective.

Most importantly, however, the data and success stories reveal that Parent Centers provide useful, high-quality, and relevant services to parents and professionals. Parents reported that they received useful information, are more knowledgeable about working with schools, and that their children have received more appropriate services because of information from PTIs and CPRCs.

We would like to express our appreciation to all the Parent Centers for helping produce positive outcomes for children with disabilities. We also thank the families and professionals for their collaboration and partnership.

Thank You!

Paula Goldberg, Co-Director

Sue Folger, Co-Director

Sharman Davis Barrett, Co-Director

ALLIANCE National Parent Technical
Assistance Center



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) establishes Parent Centers across the nation. They are charged with helping families and schools to understand the law and how to use it to benefit children with all disabilities.

Before IDEA:

- children and young adults with disabilities often did not receive appropriate education services
- many were excluded entirely from public schools or the general curriculum
- undiagnosed disabilities prevented children from succeeding in school
- inadequate resources in schools forced families to seek education services outside the public school

Because of IDEA:

- children and young adults with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment
- most students progress to postsecondary education, employment, independent living, and being part of the community
- families can look to the future with hope

The IDEA changed the world for American children and young adults with disabilities. Parent Centers are an integral part of its success.



“Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.”

–The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Why Parent Centers?

Parent Centers—Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs)—provide training and assistance to the families of the nation's **7 million children with disabilities**. They are funded through the U.S. Department of Education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Every state has at least one Parent Center, and those with large populations may have more. There are currently **107 Parent Centers** in the United States.

Parent Centers serve families of children of all ages (birth to 26) and all disabilities (physical, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional). Parent Centers provide a variety of services including one-on-one support and assistance, workshops, publications, and websites. The majority of Parent Center staff and boards are parents of children with disabilities, so they are able to bring **personal experience and expertise** when working with families.

Specifically, Parent Centers help families to:

- better understand their children's disabilities and education needs
- communicate more effectively with school and related professionals
- understand their rights and responsibilities under the IDEA
- obtain appropriate services for their children
- resolve disagreements with the school or other agencies
- connect with other community resources that assist children with disabilities

Parent Centers work collaboratively to **improve outcomes** for children with disabilities. They collect and share data from their work experience that leads to improved practices in serving children and youth with disabilities and their families.



Matthew Chidester

As all Boy Scouts know, it takes dedication and perseverance to attain the highest rank possible for a Scout: the Eagle rank. For Matthew Chidester, achieving this distinction didn't always seem possible – but like any Boy Scout, he and his family set high goals and continually worked to meet them.

Matthew, 25, was born with Down syndrome, and from early on, his parents, Gene and Robyn Chidester, worried about how they could become strong advocates for their son. “I felt very intimidated at first,” Robyn says. “I didn't feel comfortable speaking with professionals.”



Fortunately, when Matthew was 3 years old, a flyer came home from preschool about the Utah Parent Center (UPC). Robyn chose to attend the UPC's all-day Individualized Education Plan (IEP) workshop and learn how to advocate for her son. She carefully studied the parent center's IEP booklet, highlighting important points to bring up with Matthew's IEP team. **“That workshop helped me so much,” Robyn says. “It helped me understand that I am the professional for Matthew.”**

Over the years, Robyn worked with the Utah Parent Center to continue advocating for Matthew. She used negotiation skills to place Matthew in an inclusion setting at his neighborhood elementary school, instead of having to attend a school further away. Because of her efforts, the school district implemented appropriate services for **all** children with special needs at his school.

When Matthew was in ninth grade, the family moved to Uruguay, South America. Even abroad, Robyn continued to use the information she had learned from the Utah Parent Center to advocate for her son. She convinced the private American school in Uruguay to accept Matthew as a student, even though the school was not legally obligated to enroll him. She also helped families of children



with disabilities in Uruguay learn to advocate for their children.

Now, Matthew has graduated high school and continues to lead a rewarding life. He has a steady job, where he uses the Spanish he learned in Uruguay to communicate with many of his co-workers. He loves to ride horses and has won a blue ribbon and other recognitions in rodeos through the National Ability Center in Utah and gold medals in equestrian events at the Utah Special Olympics.

“You can't put limitations on children,” Robyn says of her son's many accomplishments. “It's a beautiful thing to watch them succeed.”

And in an especially proud moment, Matthew received his Eagle Scout rank a few years ago, something he worked hard to achieve. **With help from the Utah Parent Center and the support of his parents, Matthew lives life without limitations. Instead, he chooses to spread his wings and soar** – much like the eagle he now wears pinned to his Scout uniform.

Why Technical Assistance for Parent Centers?

The Parent Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) network is an innovative partnership of one national and six regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers, each funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. These seven projects comprise a unified technical assistance system to support the more than 100 Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Regional PTACs are Parent Centers' first source of help. The Regional PTACs conduct annual conferences and provide individualized technical assistance to Parent Centers in their region through site visits, conference calls, and other activities. The National PTAC produces high quality materials and conducts national conferences, institutes, and webinars on critical topics for Parent Centers.

Together, the National and Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers help Parent Centers improve outcomes for families of children and youth with disabilities.

Technical Assistance and Research-Based Information

- Maintain a communications infrastructure for Parent Centers, including toll-free numbers, websites, newsletters, and social networking tools
- Develop and disseminate new parent training materials and resources
- Provide individualized technical assistance, conference calls, and site visits

National Collaborations

- Partner with the U.S. Department of Education's Technical Assistance and Dissemination Network
- Initiate activities among Parent Centers and stakeholders on issues of systems change and school reform

Training Events

- Conduct national topical institutes, webinars, and Parent Strand of OSEP Mega Conference
- Conduct regional conferences, webinars, and conference calls

Technology/Business Partnerships

- Develop new Parent Center network portal (www.parentcenternetwork.org)
- Utilize online conferencing to conduct and archive trainings for Parent Center staff
- Strengthen relationships with national experts on business and the media to strengthen the effectiveness of Parent Centers

Evaluation Activities

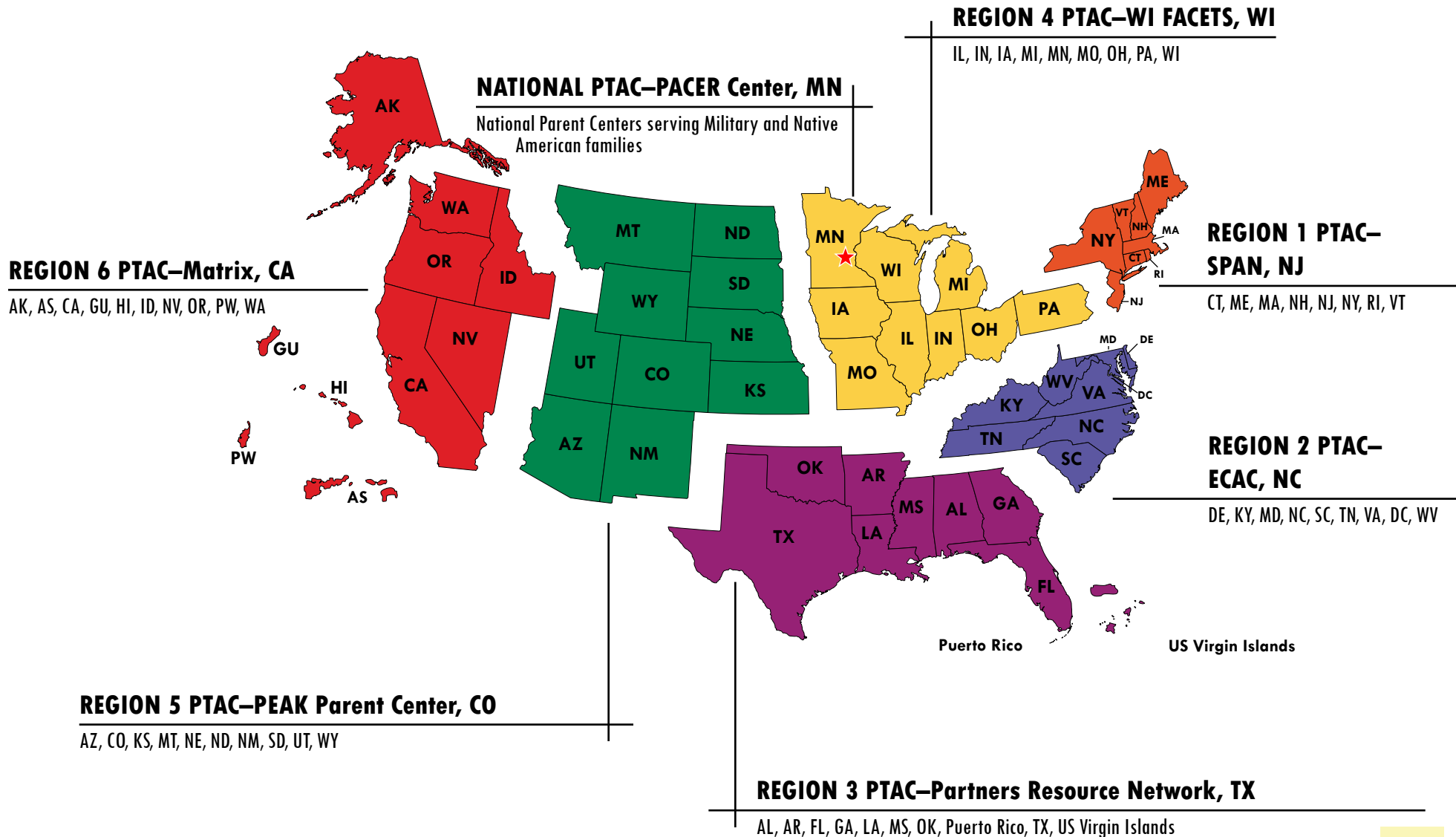
- Conduct national needs assessment
- Collect data from Parent Centers to measure effectiveness and outcomes of the parent program
- Assess effectiveness of technical assistance services through formative and summative evaluation activities



National and Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)

A Unified Technical Assistance System

www.ParentCenterNetwork.org



About the Data

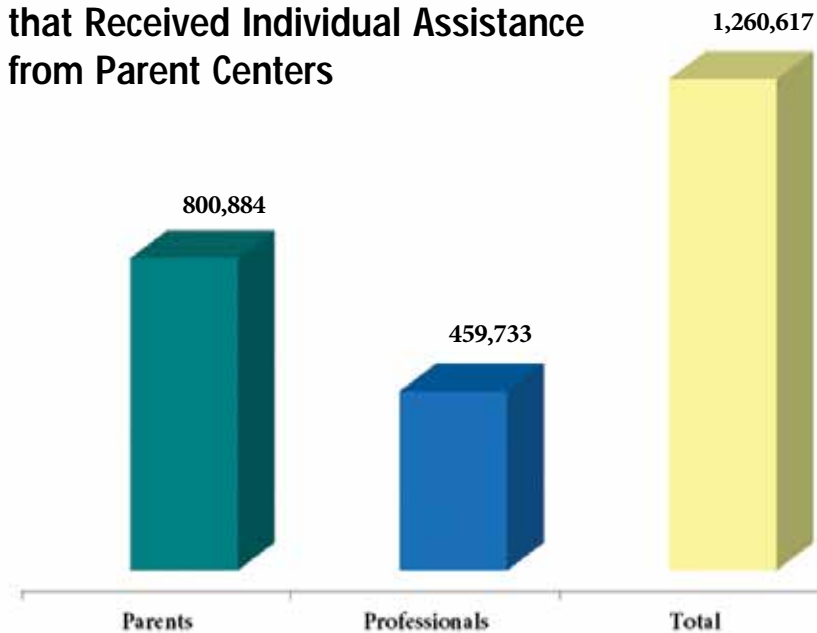
The data on the following pages were collected and compiled by the ALLIANCE National Parent Technical Assistance Center. Ninety-five percent (95%) of Parent Centers submitted reports based on data collected from October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.

Parent Centers reported the number of parents and professionals receiving various types of services, such as individual assistance, workshops, assistance at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, and information dissemination. In addition to collecting demographic data on the parents and professionals served, each Parent Center also made 50 follow-up calls to families who received their services in the previous year. A random sample of 25 parents who received individual assistance and 25 parents who attended a workshop were called and asked to respond to survey questions that reveal the impact Parent Center services had on their child and family. Therefore, **the outcome data in this book is the result of surveying over 5,000 parents across the country.** The responses remain anonymous and the calls were made by a third party who did not provide services to the parents. Online surveys were also used to collect outcome data from parents and professionals.



Parent Centers Help Parents and Professionals through Individual Assistance

Number of Parents and Professionals
that Received Individual Assistance
from Parent Centers



Parent Centers provide direct assistance to parents and professionals through telephone calls, emails, letters, home visits, and meetings.

The information helps parents learn about special education laws and procedures, find appropriate services for their children, and communicate with schools and other agencies. Professionals use information from Parent Centers to learn about specific disabilities, special education law and services, and parent-professional communication.

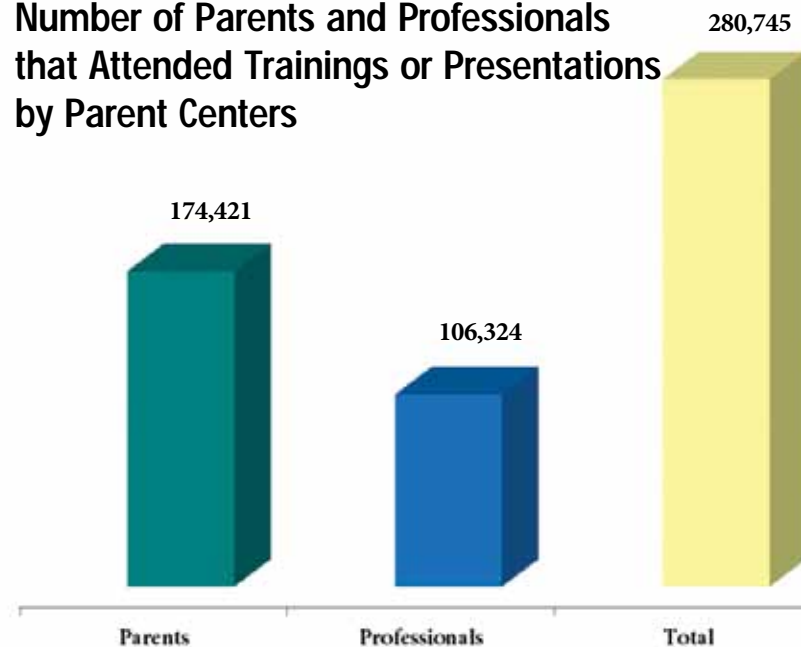
"Thanks for being with me. It was hard to hear that my son would have serious limitations and it would have been a lot harder without you."

"My daughter has begun receiving services that we did not know how to obtain until this course. It will have a lasting effect on our family."

Parent Centers Help Parents and Professionals through Trainings and Presentations

Parent Centers have been extremely successful at disseminating valuable information to parents and professionals through trainings, workshops, presentations, and conferences.

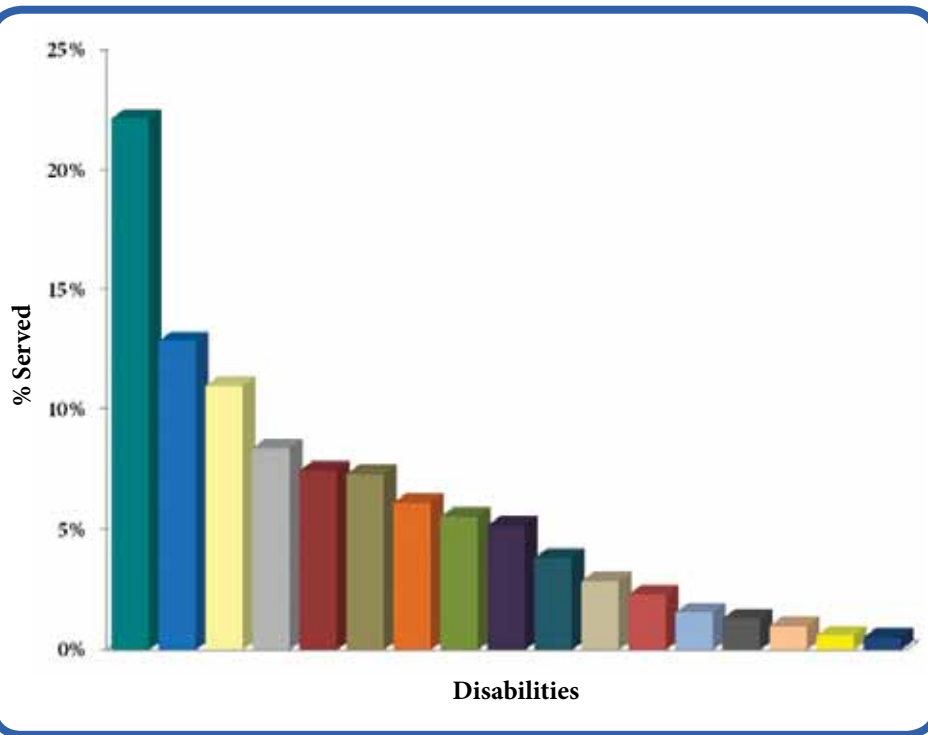
**Number of Parents and Professionals
that Attended Trainings or Presentations
by Parent Centers**



"As an educator, they have helped me to better serve my students with disabilities."

"I was able to go into an IEP meeting with the knowledge to help my daughter reach her goals."

Parent Centers Help Families of Children with All Disabilities: Physical, Cognitive, Learning, & Emotional



Disability	% Served
Autism	22.13%
Specific Learning Disability	12.87%
ADD/ADHD	11%
Other Health Impaired	8.41%
Intellectual Disability	7.45%
Emotional Disturbance	7.32%
Speech or Language Impairment	6.13%
Suspected	5.54%
Developmental Disability	5.18%
Multiple	3.83%
No IDEA Disability	2.86%
Orthopedic Impairment	2.30%
Visual/Blind	1.56%
Deaf/Hearing Impaired	1.30%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1%
Deaf/Blind	.60%
Gifted	.52%

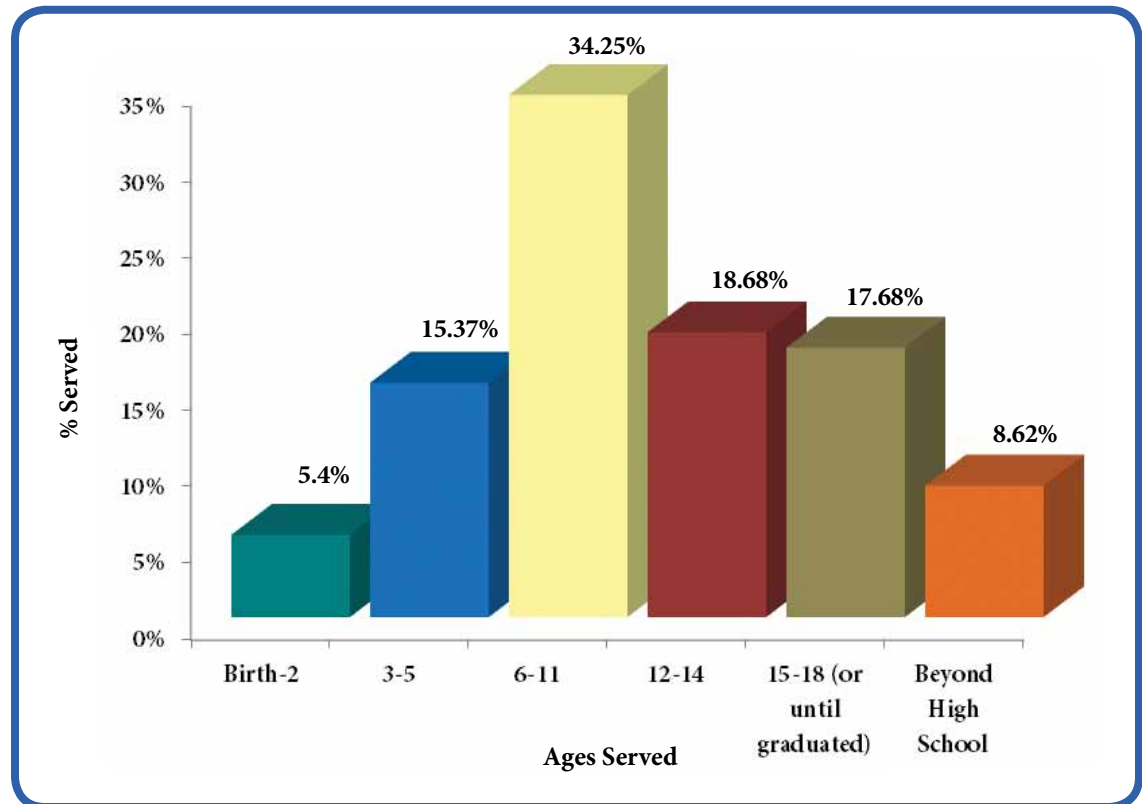
Parent Centers provided services to families of children with all disabilities.

"My child is important and thanks to the Parent Center I have learned to speak up and be the voice for my child."

"The Parent Center provided me with the support and knowledge I needed to talk with the school about my son's anxiety issues."

Parent Centers Help Families with Children Ages Birth to 26

Parent Centers help improve outcomes for children from infancy to young adulthood.

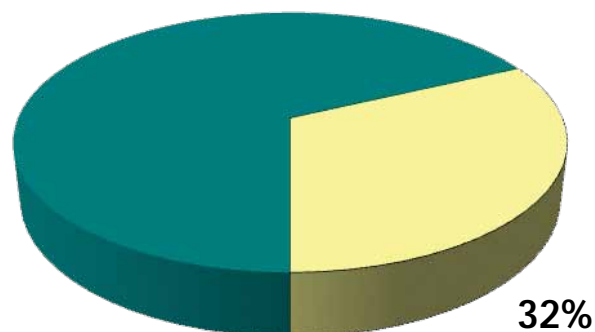


"The Parent Center has always been by my side.
My son is getting a diploma now."

"I no longer feel as lost and alone in the
special education process. I feel more
empowered to advocate for my child
effectively."

Parent Centers Help Families of Culturally and Racially Diverse Backgrounds

Percentage of People from Culturally and Racially Diverse Backgrounds Served by Parent Centers



Parent Centers provide services to parents and professionals of culturally and racially diverse background through individual assistance, trainings, and presentations. The National and Regional Parent Technical Assistance Centers disseminate translated materials and information regarding cultural diversity and competency.

The numbers of people served by Parent Centers are consistent with the numbers of racially and culturally diverse families in America.

"The Parent Center is a great resource in the Latino community."

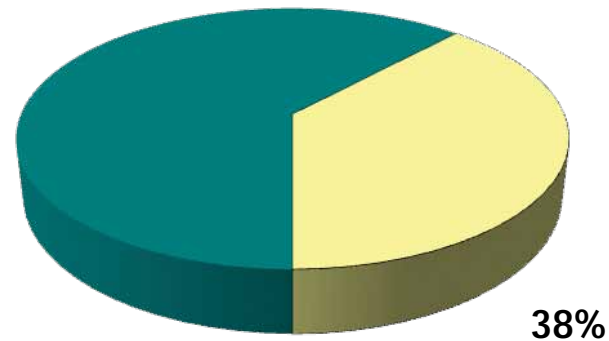
"I was informed of how to request an IEP meeting and evaluation in my language."

Parent Centers Help Families of Culturally and Racially Diverse Backgrounds through Trainings, Presentations, and Individual Assistance

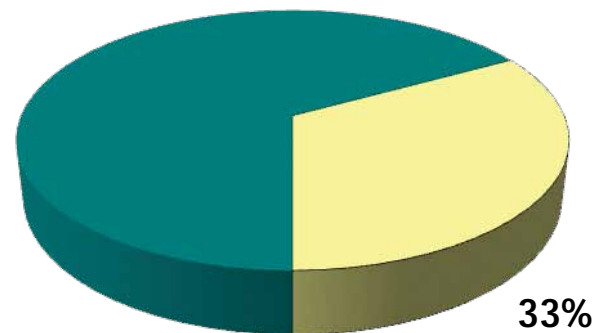
Parent Centers are committed to reaching families and professionals of culturally and racially diverse backgrounds through their trainings. Staff members create specific trainings to help families communicate with school staff, understand cultural differences, learn special education laws, and find out about different disabilities.

Parent Centers are committed to increasing individual assistance (calls, emails, letters, home visits, and meetings) to families and professionals from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds. Parent Centers conduct outreach to diverse communities by hiring staff members who speak Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Chinese, and other languages and are familiar with these cultures. Parent Centers also provide materials in families' native languages.

Percentage of People from Culturally and Racially Diverse Backgrounds that Attended Trainings and Presentations by Parent Centers

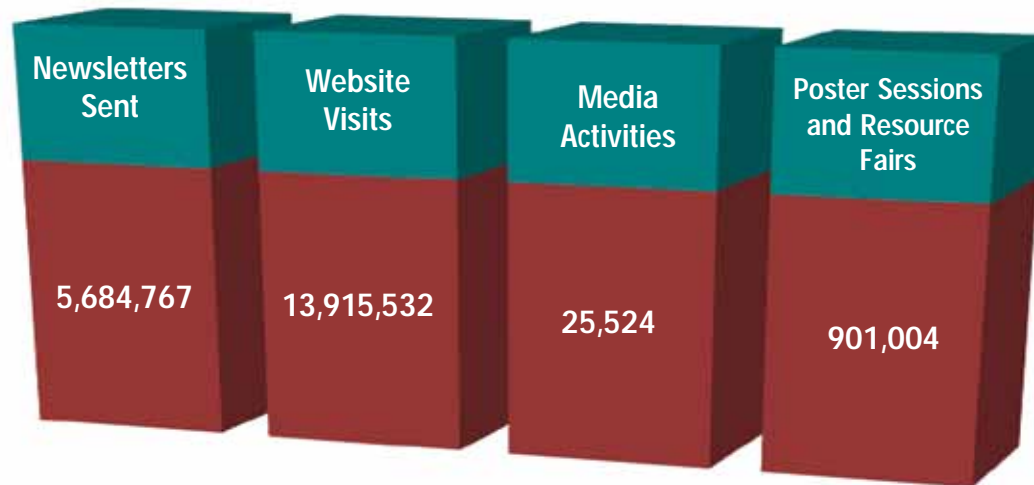


Percentage of People from Culturally and Racially Diverse Backgrounds that Received Assistance by Parent Centers



Parent Centers Help Parents through Information Dissemination

Number of Parents and Professionals Reached through Information Dissemination



Parent Centers provide indirect assistance to parents and professionals by sending informative newsletters and establishing and updating websites. The number of yearly visits to Parent Center websites has more than doubled since 2003-2004.

Parent Centers also reach people through resource fairs, poster sessions, and media events such as public service announcements and newspaper articles.

Newsletters provide readers with up-to-date research-based materials, information, family success stories, additional resources, and local news and events.

Parent Center websites provide people with a background on the Parent Center, workshop schedules, scientifically-based research, personal stories, additional resources, links to other technical assistance projects funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and information about state and national laws affecting special education. Each website is different and reflects the unique characteristics of the Parent Center and the community it serves.

"I was really impressed with the information and I'm glad I put it into good use."

"I like the idea of web interactive workshops and the fact that they use materials that are easy for me to understand."

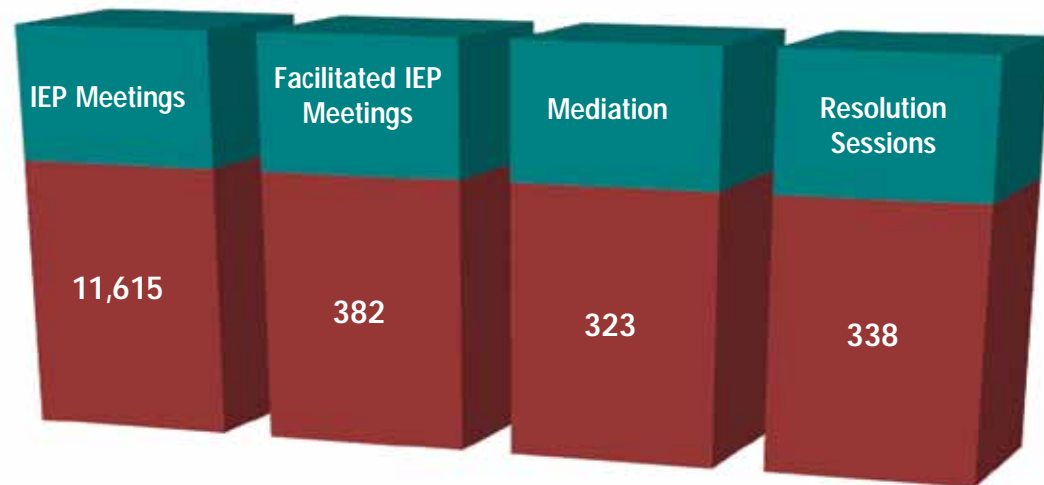
Parent Centers Help Parents and Professionals through Extended Services

Parent Centers provide extended services to parents by attending Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and helping parents understand and participate in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) options including Mediations and Facilitated IEP Meetings.

At IEP meetings, Parent Center staff help parents and school personnel understand how the special education process works, and they often facilitate communication between parents and professionals.

At Facilitated IEP Meetings, Mediations, and Resolution Sessions, Parent Center staff help families resolve disagreements with the school and give advice to find a working solution for families. Resolving disputes early helps prevent due process filings and other more adversarial and expensive processes.

Number of Parents and Professionals Receiving Extended Services



"The Parent Center attended an IEP meeting with me and was very supportive."

"During a difficult meeting I felt supported and confident with the help of my advocate."

Eliana Goldstein

In a city as busy and bustling as New York, it's easy to feel lost in the crowd. That's exactly how Bernie and Susannah Goldstein, who live in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, felt when they tried to advocate for their then 2-year-old daughter Eliana to transition from early intervention (EI) services to services through the public school system.



Bernie and Susannah's EI service coordinator had originally told them that when Eliana, who has global developmental delays, turned 3 in January 2010, she would have to be taken out of nursery school and placed in a preschool special education program. Needing information, Susannah reached out to Resources for Children with Special Needs (RCSN) for help.

"I was worried Eliana would somehow get dropped through the system or lost in the shuffle," Susannah says. "I was drowning in a sea of numbers and acronyms, and I had no idea how to get out of it."

At RCSN, Susannah met Nina Lublin, the organization's early childhood specialist. Nina informed Susannah that Eliana would not have to be taken out of nursery school and could continue receiving EI services until she started preschool in the fall. The two then worked together to prepare Susannah for the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting that would occur just before Eliana's third birthday. The meeting resulted in establishing preschool eligibility for Eliana and agreeing that her EI services would continue through the end of August.



Susannah says Nina and RCSN helped her understand what her daughter needs and how to request services in the most effective way. Eliana recently celebrated her fourth birthday and is now attending an integrated preschool, where Susannah says she's doing well. "I'm so happy she's getting all the services she needs," Susannah says. **"It's nice to see her thriving."**

Now, instead of feeling lost in the crowd, Bernie and Susannah are confident about their abilities to advocate for their daughter and her unique needs. "I have to respect that the city has hundreds of thousands of kids to work with," Susannah says, "but the city has to respect that I have one daughter, and she's my main priority."

Outcomes: Children Receive More Appropriate Services

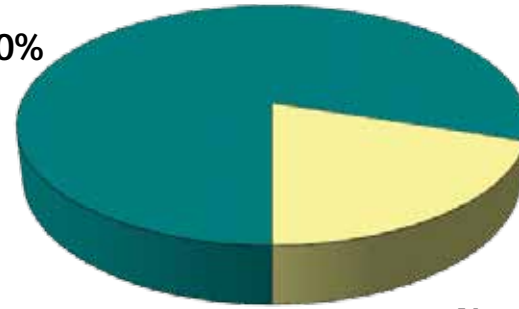
Eighty percent of parents reported that their child has received more appropriate services because they have put to use the information they have learned from the Parent Center.

Seventy-nine percent of parents reported that their child has received more appropriate services because they have put to use the information they learned at the workshop.

Parent Centers Help Children Receive More Appropriate Services

Via Individual Assistance

Yes- 80%

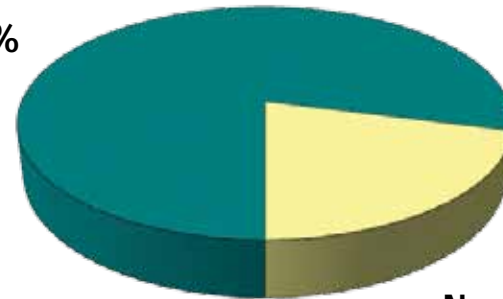


No- 20%

Parent Centers Help Children Receive More Appropriate Services

Via Workshops

Yes- 79%

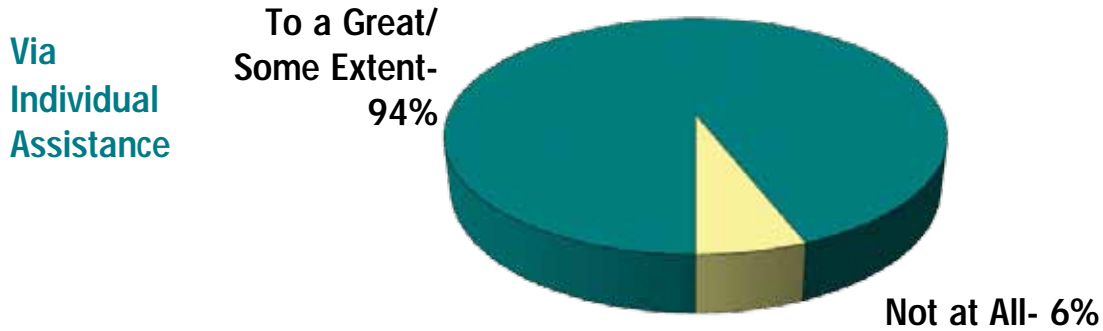


No- 21%

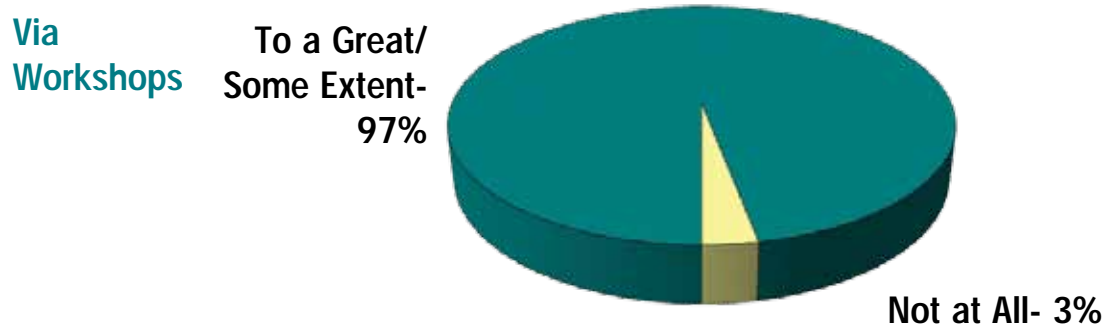
"Thanks to the Parent Center I learned how to better conduct my IEP and how to ask for the services my child needs."

"My son has been successful in school as a result of my attendance at the Parent Center training."

Parent Centers Help Parents Become More Knowledgeable about How to Work with Schools



Parent Centers Help Parents Become More Knowledgeable about How to Work with Schools



"I feel like I can go to my son's next IEP meeting with confidence."

"I feel I am more knowledgeable and am able to voice my own issues and concerns in the school."

Outcomes: Parents are More Knowledgeable about How to Work with Schools

Ninety-four percent of parents reported that because of the information they received from the Parent Center, to a great or some extent, they are more knowledgeable about how to work with schools.

Ninety-seven percent of parents reported that because of the information they received at the workshop, to a great or some extent, they are more knowledgeable about how to work with schools.

Outcomes: Parents Address Critical Needs Related to Their Child's Education

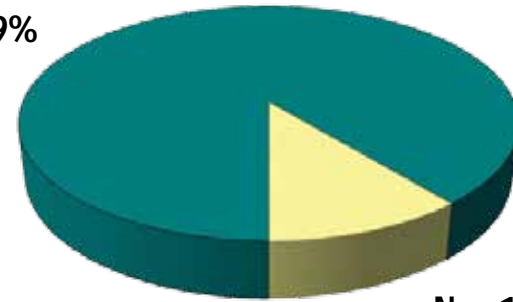
Eighty-nine percent of parents reported that because of the information they received from the Parent Center, they were able to work with the school to address a critical need related to their child's education.

Eighty-eight percent of parents reported that because of the information they received at the workshop, they were able to work with the school to address a critical need related to their child's education.

Parent Centers Help Parents Address Critical Needs Related to Their Child's Education

Via Individual Assistance

Yes- 89%

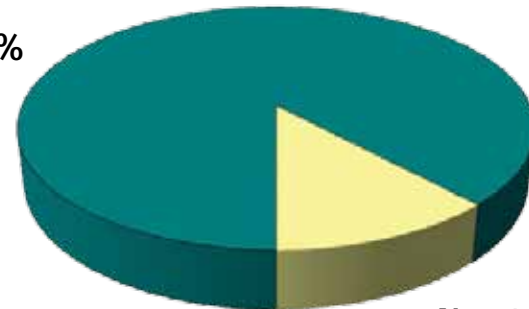


No- 11%

Parent Centers Help Parents Address Critical Needs Related to Their Child's Education

Via Workshops

Yes- 88%



No- 12%

"The workshop helped me make a positive decision for my son."

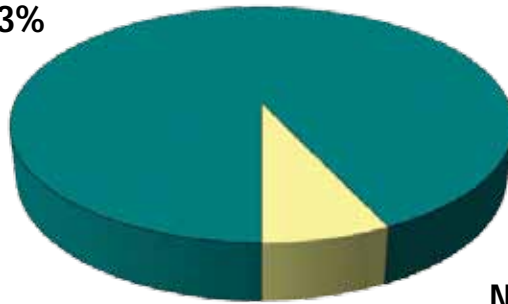
"Working with the Parent Center gave me access to information and provided the direction I need to get my own child on the right path with his education."

Outcomes: Parents are Provided with Relevant Information to Make Decisions

Parent Centers Provide Parents with Relevant Information to Make Decisions

Via Individual Assistance

Yes- 93%

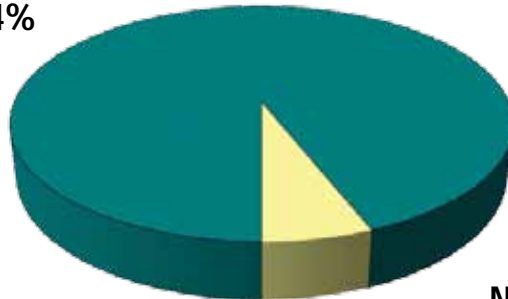


No- 7%

Parent Centers Provide Parents with Relevant Information to Make Decisions

Via Workshops

Yes- 94%



No- 6%

Ninety-three percent of parents reported that the Parent Center provided them with the relevant information they needed to make decisions about their child's education.

Ninety-four percent of parents reported that the workshop provided them with the relevant information they needed to make decisions about their child's education.

"It was a wonderful learning experience for me. I was able to take from the workshop what I learned to assist in my daughter's IEP which was two weeks later."

"I appreciate everything the Parent Center has done for my family."

Outcomes: Parents Share with Others the Information They Received from Parent Centers

Eighty-three percent of parents reported that they have shared the information they received from the Parent Center, to a great or some extent, with other families.

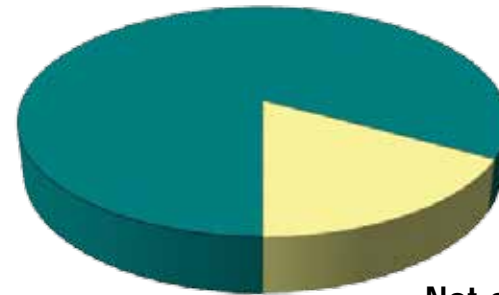
Eighty-eight percent of parents reported that they have shared the information they received at the workshop, to a great or some extent, with other families.

The impact of Parent Centers' work is multiplied exponentially through parents' sharing of information with others, making Parent Centers even more cost effective.

Parents Share with Others the Information They Received from Parent Centers

Via Individual Assistance

To a Great/Some Extent- 83%

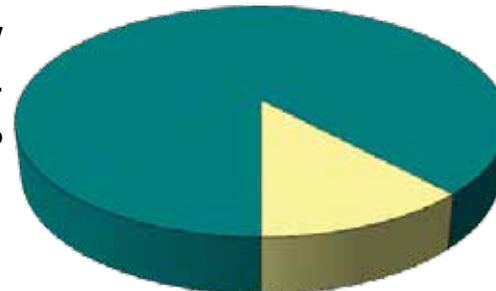


Not at All- 17%

Parents Share with Others the Information They Received from Parent Centers

Via Workshops

To a Great/Some Extent- 88%



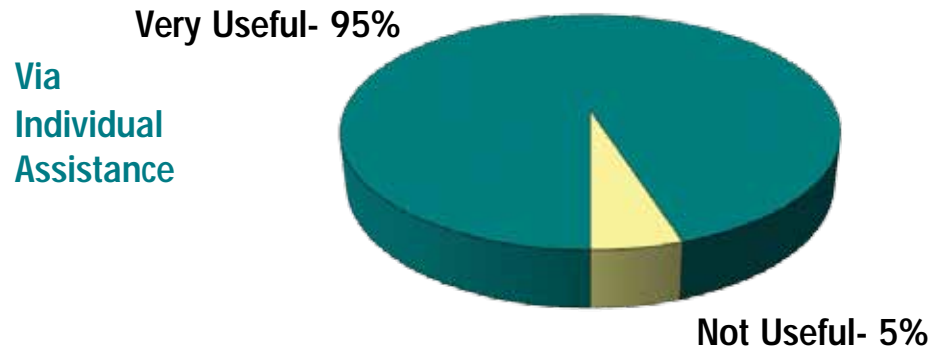
Not at All- 12%

The Parent Center is doing a great job, and I am definitely getting the word out!

I tell anyone willing to listen about the wonderful information I received from the Parent Center.

Outcomes: Parents Receive Useful Information

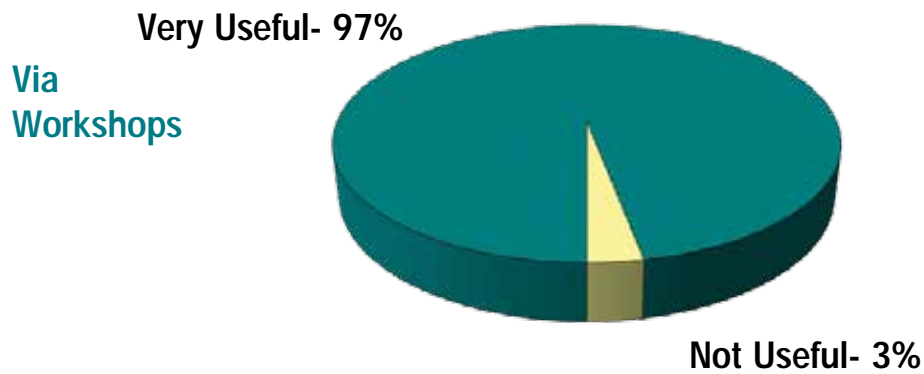
Parent Centers Provide Useful Information to Parents



Ninety-five percent of parents reported that the information they received from their contact with the Parent Center was very useful.

Ninety-seven percent of parents reported that the information they received from the workshop was very useful.

Parent Centers Provide Useful Information to Parents



"I have a much better understanding of inclusion, IDEA, and special education services."

"I feel I am a better advocate for my child."

Outcomes: Parents Receive High Quality Materials

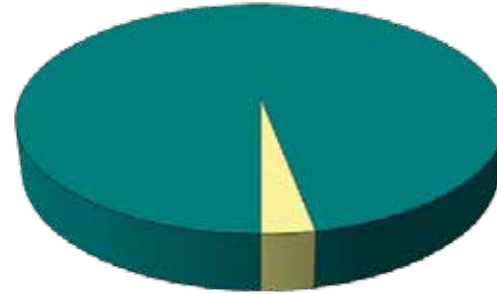
Ninety-seven percent of parents reported that the materials available from the Parent Center were of high quality.

Ninety-seven percent of parents reported that the materials used at the workshop were of high quality.

The Materials Available from the Parent Center Are of High Quality

Via Individual Assistance

Yes- 97%

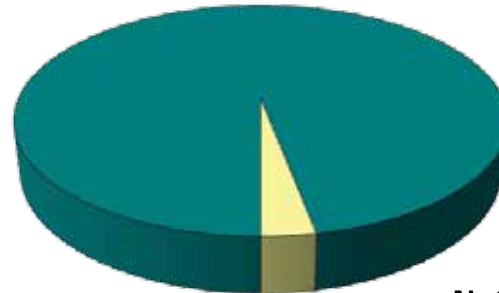


Not at All- 3%

The Materials Available from the Parent Center Are of High Quality

Via Workshops

Yes- 97%



Not at All- 3%

"I used the materials and passed them along to others."

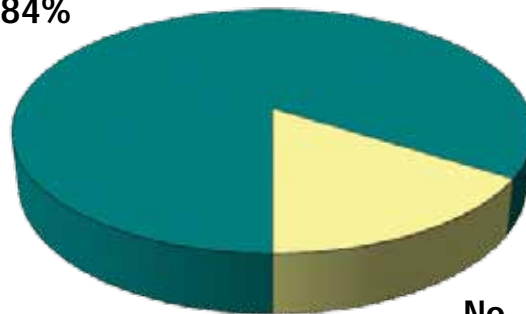
"I went home and reviewed the booklet which helped me figure out what I needed to do next."

Outcomes: Disagreements are Resolved with Schools

Parent Centers Help Parents Resolve Disagreements
with Schools

Via Individual Assistance

Yes- 84%



No- 16%

Eighty-four percent of parents reported that the information and support they received from the Parent Center helped them to resolve a disagreement with the school.

"I couldn't have been the advocate I've become without the help of the Parent Center."

"With only one call from the Parent Center I was able to solve the problem."

Jemarcus Thomas

Jemarcus Thomas is a typical, bouncy 9-year-old boy. He loves eating Happy Meals from McDonald's so he can play with the toys inside, and he goes through coloring books so fast that his mother, Jennifer, is constantly buying him new ones. But life for Jemarcus, especially at school, hasn't always been so carefree.

Jemarcus, who has autism, had relatively few problems at school until he entered third grade, when his teacher began reporting aggressive and unpredictable behavior. Because of the outbursts, the school started calling Jennifer almost every day to take him home early.

"I had to keep putting down whatever I was doing to come pick him up from school," Jennifer says. "I even had to quit my job."

The situation became so serious that the school asked Jennifer to consider placing Jemarcus in a residential setting 200 miles away from where her family lived.

Frustrated and unwilling to move her child away from home, Jennifer made the decision to call EMPOWER Community Resource Center in Greenville, Mississippi.

She began working closely with EMPOWER's executive director, Agnes Johnson, who told Jennifer that every child, regardless of his or her disability, has the right to a free and public education. The two started meeting weekly with school staff and an independent behavioral specialist to design a successful behavior plan for Jemarcus. Now in the fourth grade, **Jemarcus's academic work has greatly improved.** He's able to stay in school all day, and Jennifer has even found a new job that she enjoys.

"He's doing better in all areas," Jennifer says. "It's been a tremendous turnaround for him. It's also a lot of weight lifted off me."

Jennifer and Agnes are now starting to plan for Jemarcus' transition to middle school in two years. Although the thought of



transition scares her, **Jennifer knows that with EMPOWER's help, she and Jemarcus can handle what the future brings.**

"The most important thing Agnes has taught me is to be patient," Jennifer says. "Be patient, and everything will work out – and it did."

This document was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of other organizations imply endorsement by those organizations or the U.S. Government.

On request, this publication is available in alternate formats, such as Braille, large print, or audiotape.

