

# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES: CHARTING THE PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE OF THE OHIO ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE PROJECT

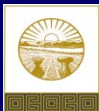


PRESENTATION BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND DEPENDENCY

Caren Kaplan, Christine Shannon and Tony Loman

AIM TEAM

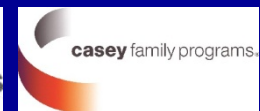
DECEMBER 10, 2008



THE SUPREME COURT of OHIO

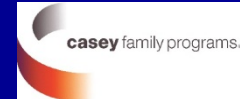
Ohio

Department of  
Job and Family Services



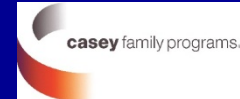
# PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

- Highlights on progress of the Ohio Alternative Response project, to date
- Successes and challenges for the state, agency, counties, and workforce
- Explanation and summary of evaluation activities
- Issues that require future consideration



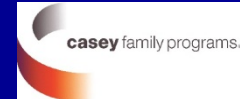
# A BIT OF PROJECT HISTORY

- January 26, 2006: Final report of Subcommittee on responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency
- December 19, 2006: RFP issued by Supreme Court of Ohio
- March 2007: AIM team selected by Supreme Court
- June 1, 2007: Ohio AR project begins
- September 12, 2007: Ten counties selected to pilot AR
- September 17-18, 2007: First meeting of Design Workgroup



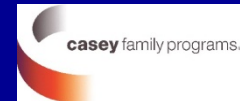
# A BIT OF PROJECT HISTORY

- Five more meetings of Design Workgroup convened prior to launch of AR
  - October 18-19, 2007
  - November 1-2, 2007
  - November 29 – 30, 2007
  - January 28 - 29, 2008
  - March 13 – 14, 2008
- July 1, 2008: Nine of ten pilot counties launch Alternative Response Systems [August 2008 – ARS launch in tenth pilot county]



## AND THE TEN COUNTIES ARE...

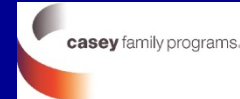
- Clark
- Fairfield
- Franklin
- Greene
- Guernsey
- Licking
- Lucas
- Ross
- Trumbull
- Tuscarawas



# THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE WORK IS...

## *Building & maintaining constructive relationships*

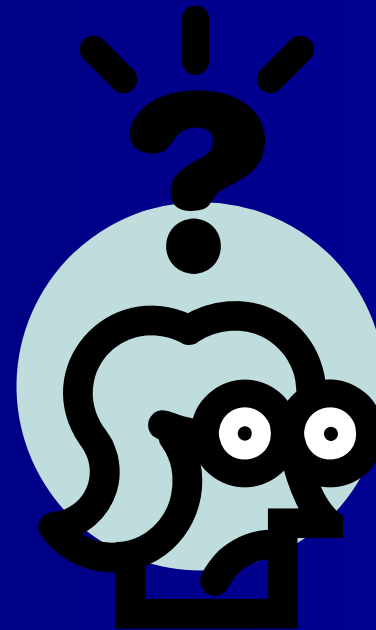
- Between and among state agencies
- Between the state agencies and the county agencies
- Between and among the counties
- Between the county agencies and their communities
- Among county agencies, community providers and line workers
- Between supervisors and workers
- Between workers and families



# 2007 DESIGN WORKGROUP MEETINGS

Characterized by:

- Distrust
- Embroiled in history
- Infighting
- Confusion
- Frustration
- Impatience
- Excitement
- County-centric



# ***WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES...*** **2008 DESIGN WORKGROUP MEETINGS**

Characterized by:

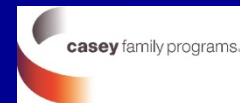
- Information sharing
- Collaboration
- Support
- Benefit of the doubt
- Desire for consensus
- Impatience [diehard]
- Broadened perspective



# OHIO DESIGN WORKGROUP: TASK TEAMS

## SEPTEMBER 2007

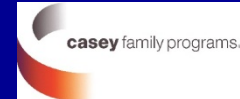
Statement of Principles	Admin and SACWIS	Training and Education	Practice Implementation #1	Practice Implementation #2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terminology &amp; Definitions</li> <li>Client participation and rights preservation</li> <li>Practice Expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidentiality</li> <li>Records Retention</li> <li>Disclosure</li> <li>Fiscal Issues*</li> <li>Community</li> <li>SACWIS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditional Assessment Support*</li> <li>Practice Expectations</li> <li>SACWIS</li> <li>Community Stakeholder education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Screening and Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workflow</li> <li>Pathway Assignment/</li> <li>Case Activities/ Timeframes</li> <li>Coordination of CAPMIS, SACWIS</li> <li>Tool Development</li> <li>Case Opening</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post Assessment to Close</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Activities &amp; Timeframes</li> <li>Core Services</li> <li>Service Coordination</li> <li>Case Closing</li> </ul>



# OHIO LEADERSHIP COUNCIL: TASK TEAMS

## SEPTEMBER 2008

Admin and SACWIS	Training and Education*	Practice Implementation	Communications	Transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SACWIS: modifications and functionality</li> <li>• Data Collection</li> <li>• Paperwork Requisites</li> <li>• Accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs Assessment related to Training Competencies (OCWTP)</li> <li>• Delivery of OCWTP trainings</li> <li>• Delivery of Advanced trainings with support from Casey</li> <li>• Draw upon county expertise whenever possible and appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess/Monitor Implementation of AR practices</li> <li>• Identify practices and practice elements that are (1) working well and (2) not working well</li> <li>• Recommend pilot and post-pilot practices that need to be amended, deleted and/or added               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Forms for adherence to practice tenets</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of , Vision and Guiding Principles</li> <li>• Public Relations</li> <li>• Community Outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Plan to Grow from 10 AR counties to 88 AR counties</li> <li>• Serve as shepherds to move forward in statewide implementation</li> <li>• Identify funding and resources needed</li> <li>• Address sustainability issues</li> </ul>

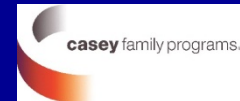


# WHAT THE PILOT COUNTIES TELL US

SEPTEMBER 2008

## What is Working Well?

- Receptivity and cooperation of families with Alternative Response approach
- Community awareness and collaboration
- Meeting families' needs with concrete services
- Access to technical support

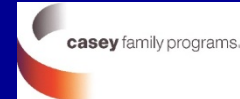


# WHAT THE PILOT COUNTIES TELL US

SEPTEMBER 2008

What are you most pleased about/proud of thus far?

- Opportunity to practice social work
- Ability to be creative and think 'outside the box'
- Support of community
- Serving families without labeling them



# WHAT THE PILOT COUNTIES TELL US

## SEPTEMBER 2008

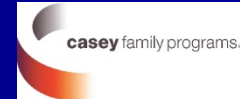
What is not working so well?

- SACWIS/paperwork process
- Workers carrying both AR and TR cases
- Process of pathway assignment



# GUIDEPOSTS FOR THE FUTURE – PRACTITIONERS UNDER DIRECTION OF COUNTY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

- Require ongoing experience in working with families in different way
- Develop interviewing, engagement and collaboration skills
- ALL workers receive foundational training in Alternative Response
- Carrying of 'mixed' caseloads [i.e., both TR and AR] should be avoided, unless requested by practitioner

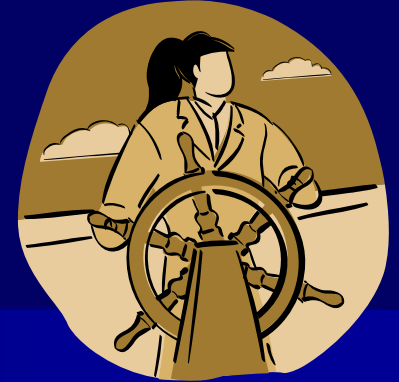


# GUIDEPOSTS FOR THE FUTURE – ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERVISORS OF COUNTY CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

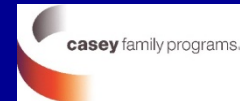
- Families' access to particular services/resources should be the same whether they receive AR or TR
- Efforts should be expended to assure that AR and TR workers are equally valued
- Supervisors must possess skills to assist workers in determining “gray zone” pathway assignments
- Partnership with providers of mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse and concrete services must be an ongoing priority
- AR is dependent upon availability of flexible funds and reallocation of existing monies



# GUIDEPOSTS FOR THE FUTURE: STATE LEVEL

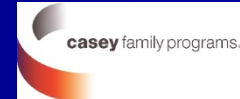


- Develop and maintain relationships
- Share responsibility – Challenges & successes
- Build political will
- Sustain momentum for the long term
- Refuse to 'Do it on the cheap'
- Keep AR a #1 priority
- Remember the economic downturn hurts families we serve more than it hurts us



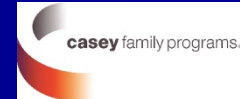
# KEEPING THE EYE ON THE BALL

- It is all about results – monitor progress and keep results before the public
- Change limiting statutory language and policy that inhibits ability to provide families with quality practice
- Create new statutory language and policy that undergirds the practice of AR
- Continuously examine and re-evaluate the utility of compliance-driven rules & practices



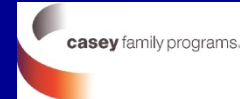
# KEEPING THE EYE ON THE BALL... STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION?

- Establish legislative permission for all 88 counties to participate in AR practice
- Statewide Implementation:
  - (1) Incremental (add cohorts of counties periodically over several years);
  - (2) Statewide rollout (all remaining counties at once);
  - (3) Voluntary adoption by counties, no later than .... (adopting counties must agree to follow established AR protocol)



# KEEPING THE EYE ON THE BALL... STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION?

- Funding incentives will improve voluntary implementation – more service dollars to meet needs of families
- SACWIS system must be able to support the practice and recording/paperwork burden must not increase
- Child protection training curriculum should be revised to include AR protocol & practices and pervasive change in orientation toward families





*The most important thing that changed is what we believe about families...*

Dave Thompson  
Minnesota Department of Human Services

# EVALUATION OF OHIO'S ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

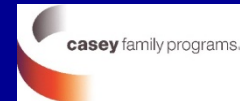


# GENERAL ISSUES BEING EVALUATED

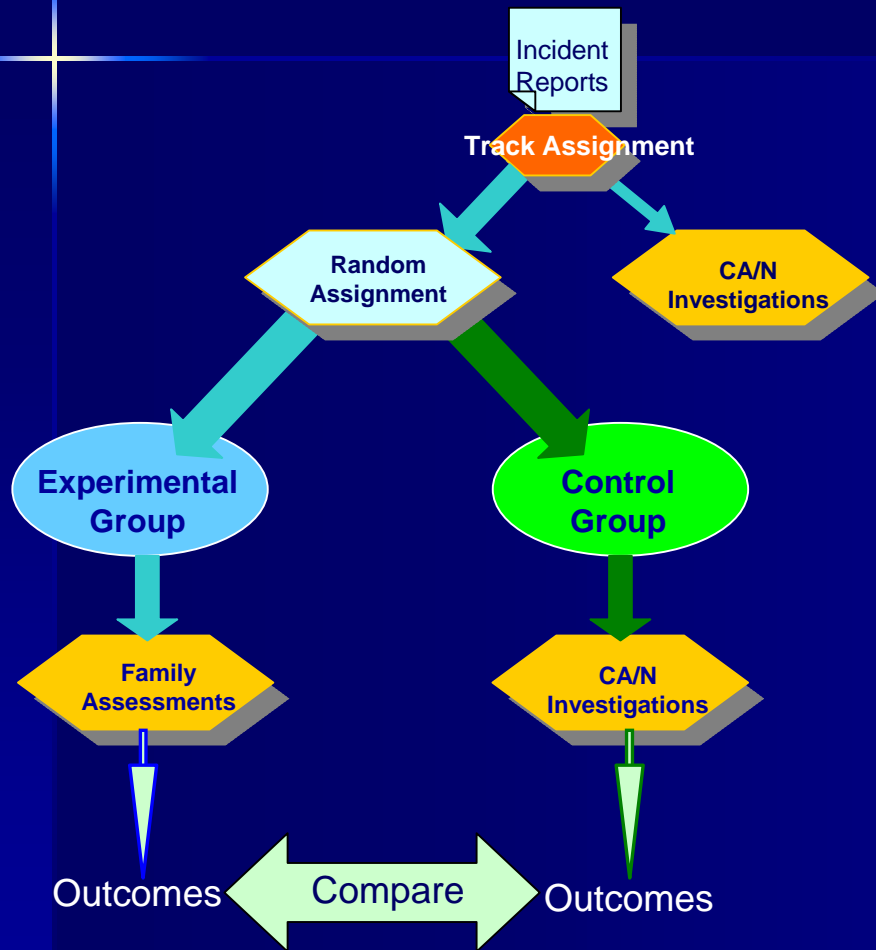
- Pathway assignment: AR assessment or traditional investigation
- Organization of AR
- Workers
- Model Fidelity
- Services
- Community development
- Child safety under AR
- Subsequent reports of child abuse and neglect
- Family and child well-being
- Subsequent removals and placement of children
- Referrals to juvenile/family court
- Cost of AR



Department of  
Job and Family Services

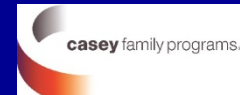
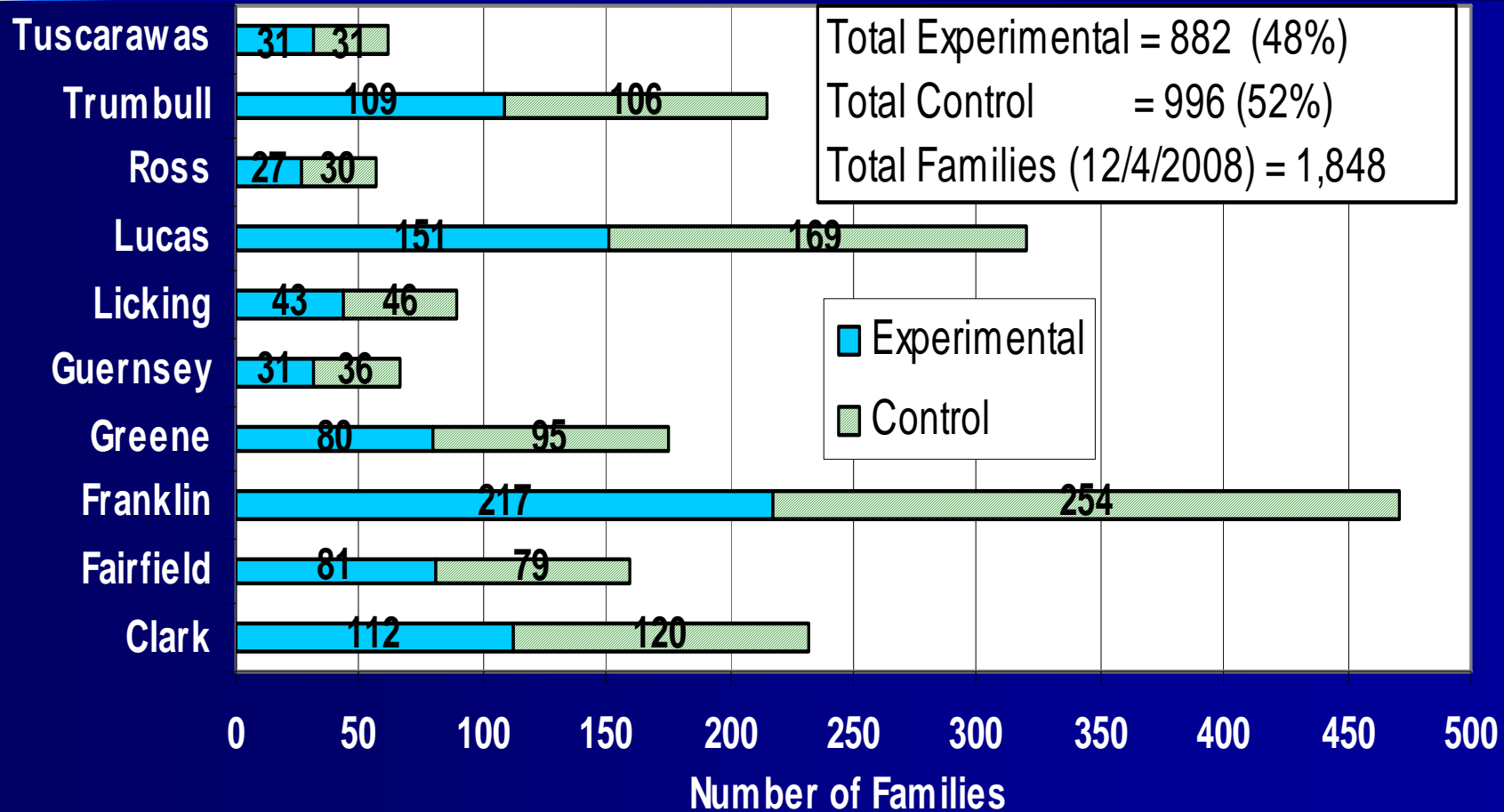


# OUTCOME EVALUATION STUDY DESIGN



- Random assignment for 13 months (7/08-8/09)
  - Half of all reports determined to be AR appropriate will be in the control group
  - No restrictions on track change from AR to TR, but evaluator must discover that family was switched

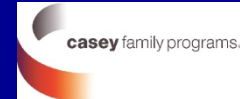
# RANDOM ASSIGNMENT TO DATE



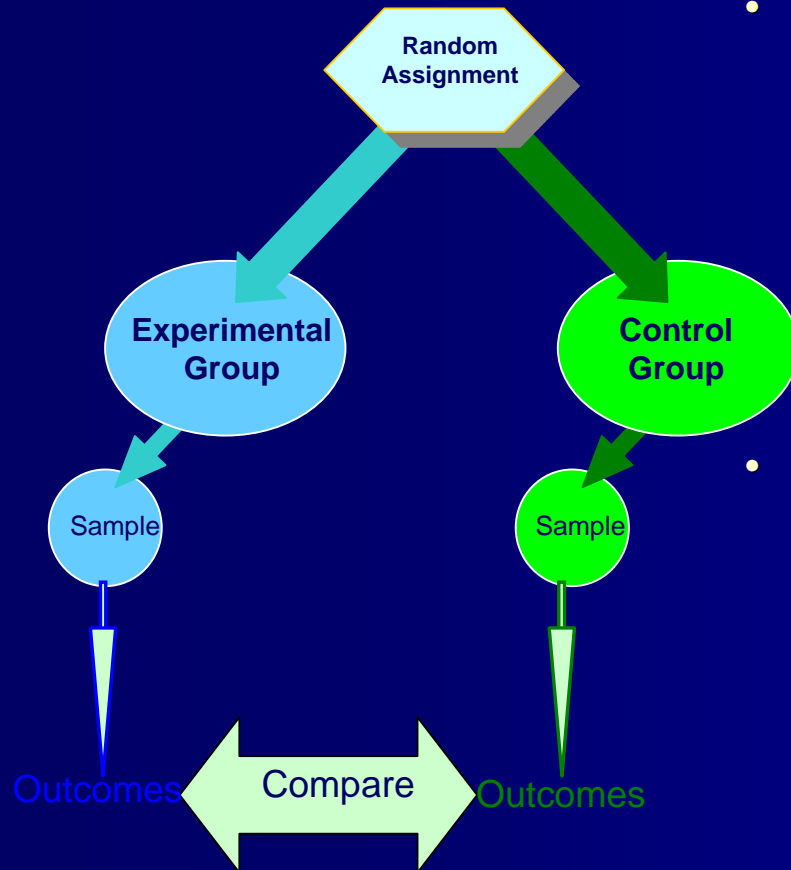
# DATA COLLECTION

## SACWIS data

- Includes, among others:
  - Report and intake information
  - Demographic data
  - Past and subsequent reports of CA/N (and agency response)
  - Child removals and placements, court involvement
  - Worker narratives
  - CAPMIS safety and family risk assessment
  - Case plans



# DATA COLLECTION: CASE SPECIFIC SURVEY



- Feedback from workers about specific samples of experimental and control cases
  - Sample cases are being randomly selected monthly
  - Workers are contacted for feedback via email and web survey form
- Purpose: to obtain systematic information that cannot be obtained in other ways.
  - Changes in child safety, worker views of family response, other needs of families, etc.

# DATA COLLECTION

- Family surveys
  - Satisfaction with AR worker or TR investigator
  - Participation in decision making
  - Services needed
  - Services received and not received
  - Information concerning financial, housing, family structure, and related characteristics
  - Welfare of children from the parent's perspective
  - School attendance and performance of children
- General worker surveys



# DATA COLLECTION: SITE VISITS AND INTERVIEWS

- Organization of AR
- Screening decisions
- Staff responses
- Family responses
- Benefits/challenges
- Services/community Resources



# SITE VISITS

## Organization of AR

- 3 main variables:
  - Number of workers (caseload capacity)
  - Dedicated (only AR) or dual caseloads (take AR and TR)
  - Continuity of worker past assessment period



# SITE VISITS

## Primarily or Exclusively

### AR Caseloads:

- Fairfield (3)
- Franklin (5)--transfer
- Greene (3)
- Trumbull (2/3)
- Tuscarawas (1)

## Dual Caseloads:

- Clark (6)
- Guernsey (3)--transfer
- Licking (2)
- Lucas (6)
- Ross (3)

# INTERVIEWS

## Screening

- Screening decision makers differ in how conservative their decisions are
- Questions exist about how to interpret guidelines like “serious” physical abuse
- Issues such as age of child, drug use, drug exposed infants and DV have become pivotal risks
- All counties except one have supervisor review before referrals are entered into the randomizer



# INTERVIEWS

## Perceived Benefits

- More freedom to focus on family needs rather than a particular incident
- Lack of “labeling” puts the family at ease
- Continuity of worker between Assessment period and Ongoing allows for better services
- Workers feel that they are doing “real social work”
- Service funding allows for more immediacy, flexibility and creativity



# INTERVIEWS

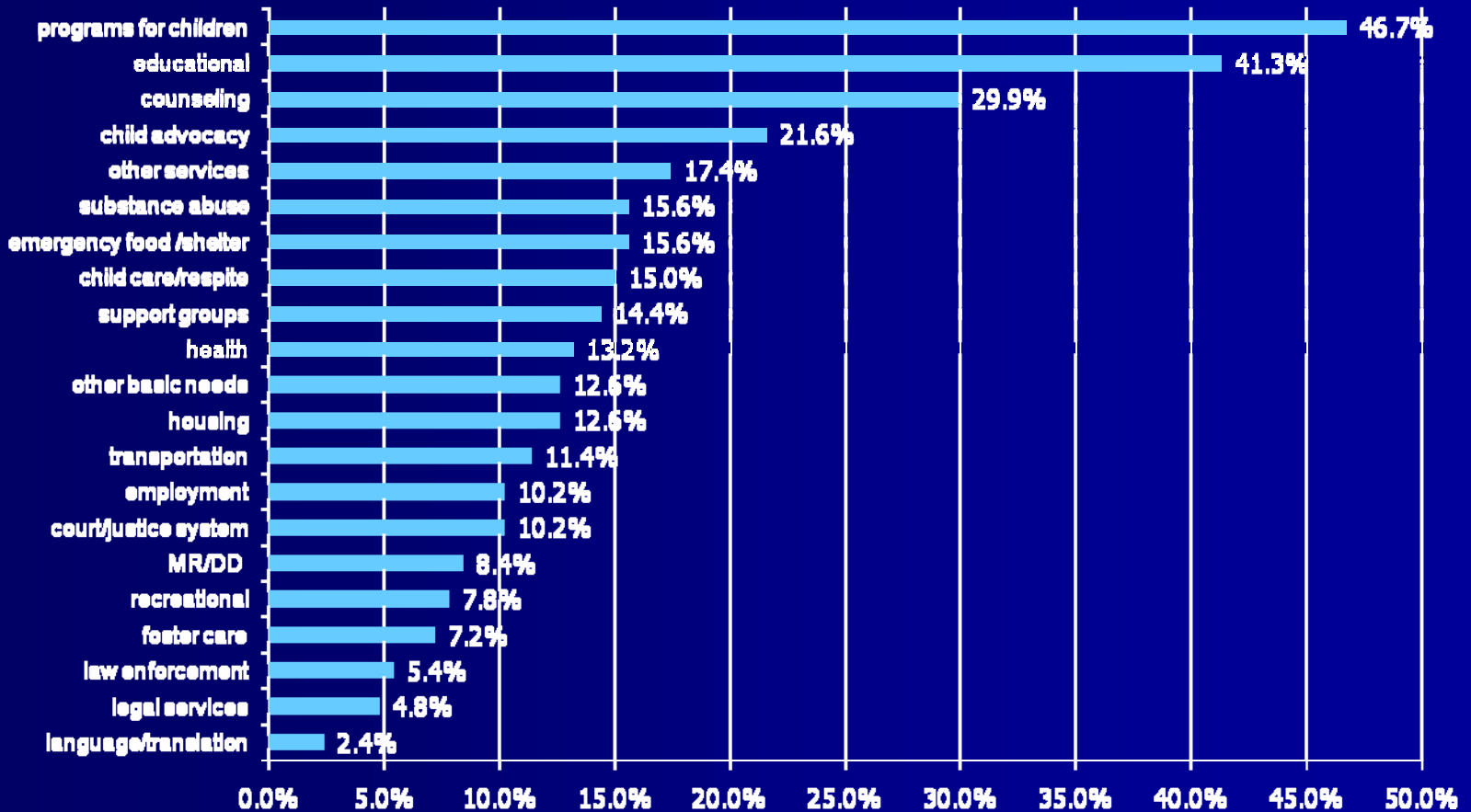
## Challenges/Frustrations

- AR workers wish that more cases could go AR
- For workers with dual caseloads—TR cases take priority and limit ability to fully address AR cases
- Some workers do not feel AR is significantly different, especially from those in traditional intake
- Some concerns about meeting the balance between family-friendly and child safety
- Limitations outside of worker control: internal issues, resource availability

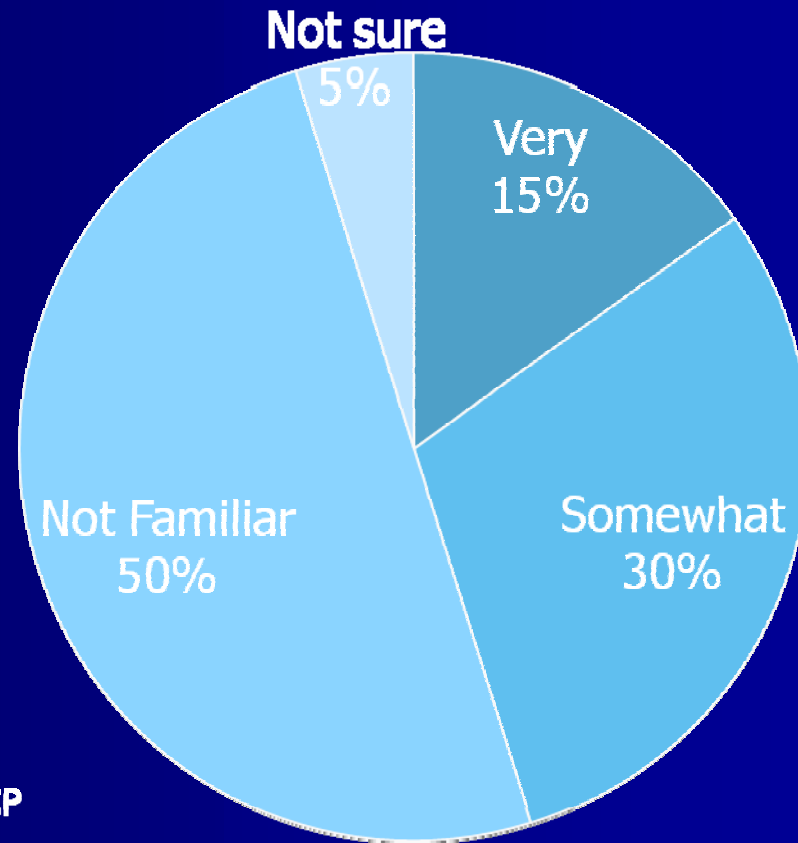


# COMMUNITY SURVEY

## Services Provided by Community Survey Respondents

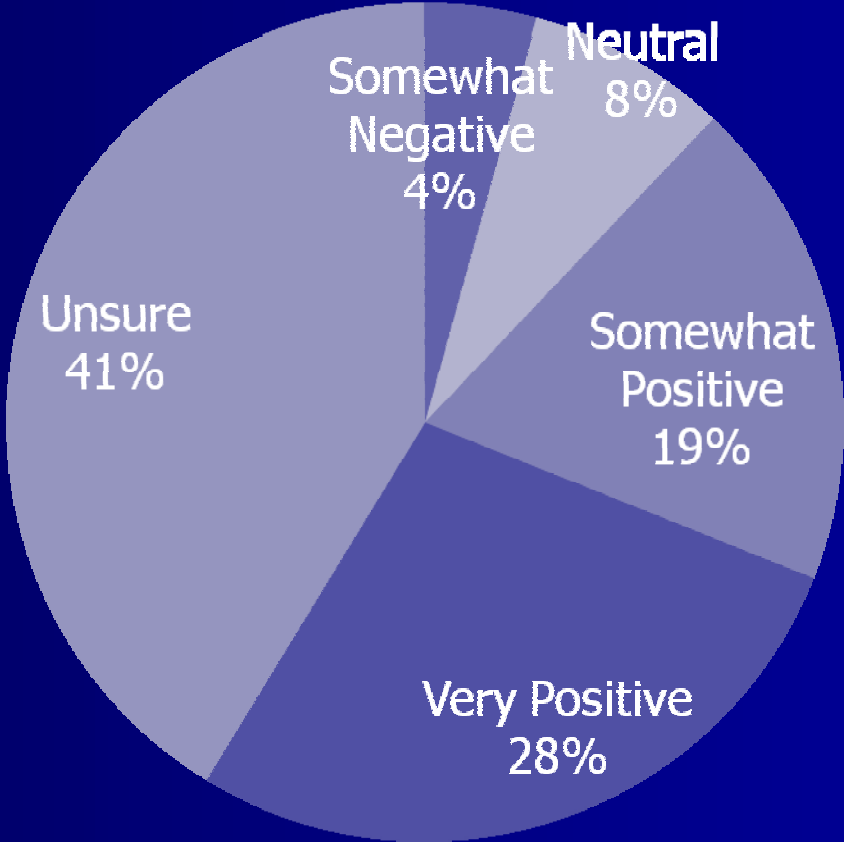


# COMMUNITY FAMILIARITY WITH AR

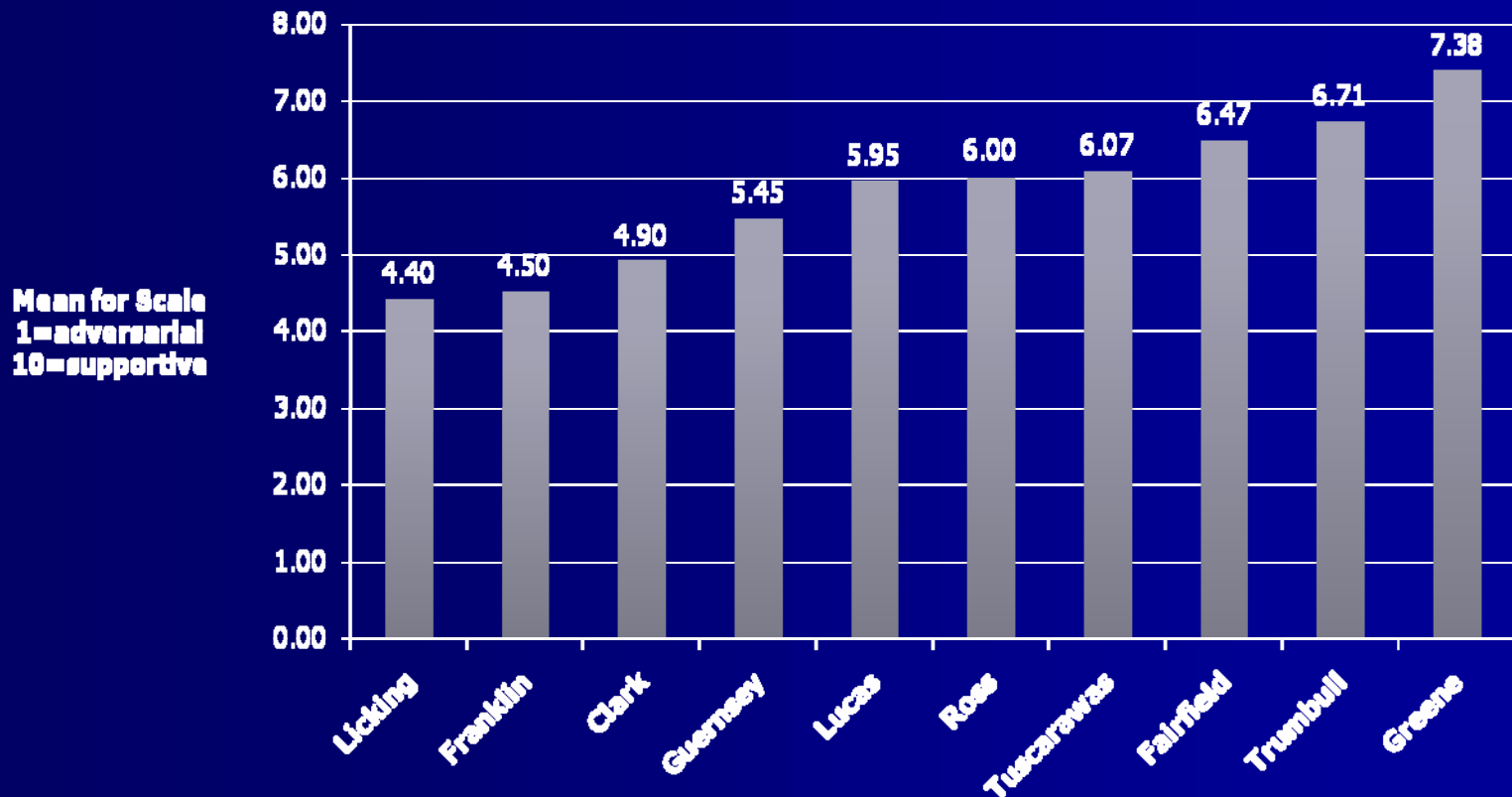


**Total Respondents: 167**  
**74% have made a report of CA/N**  
**81% have had some contact with CP**

# COMMUNITY OPINION OF AR



# CURRENT COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILD PROTECTION WORKERS AND FAMILIES



# COST STUDY

- Cost of services data will be collected on sample experimental and control cases.
- Indirect costs of workers will be estimated based on contacts with and for families.
- Costs during and after the initial case will be calculated.
- Cost effectiveness



# QUESTIONS?



# CONTACT INFORMATION

Caren Kaplan

Co-Director, AIM Team

[carenk@americanhumane.org](mailto:carenk@americanhumane.org)

[www.americanhumane.org/differential](http://www.americanhumane.org/differential)

Tony Loman

Co-Director, IAR

[laloman@iarstl.org](mailto:laloman@iarstl.org)

[www.iarstl.org](http://www.iarstl.org)

