

PURPOSE OF STUDY

To examine whether families in the Delta Region of Arkansas are experiencing consumer driven and culturally competent care by child-serving agencies, including a regional system of care.

Specifically, we wanted to know the following:

- Do caregivers believe they are respected by agency personnel?
- Are the services that are provided consumer driven?
- Are families included in the development of services?
- Are service providers attempting to understand the cultural beliefs and values of families?

BACKGROUND

Systems of Care should be consumer driven and culturally competent.

They should promote...

“consumer and family as the most important participants in the service-providing process,”

and

“the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable administrators and practitioners within systems of care to provide effective care for diverse populations, i.e., to work within the person's values and reality conditions“

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA00-3457/ch1.asp>

METHOD

THE PARTICIPANTS...

- Families in 4 Arkansas counties were interviewed by Cultural Brokers
 - 200 participants were interviewed in all
- The majority were African American (76%), 16% identified themselves as White, and 7% said they were Hispanic.
- About 40% of participants evaluated service providers from Mental Health, and 30% of caregivers evaluated service providers from School-Based Services. The remainder were from Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare.

THE INTERVIEW...

- Interviews assessed whether caregivers believed that *family-based* and *culturally competent* practices exist among four child-serving agencies (Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, Schools, and Child Welfare)
- 18 questions were asked.

RESULTS

Do caregivers believe they are respected by agency personnel?

Respect for families and caregivers is more common than might have been anticipated based on anecdotal accounts.

- 91% of respondents said they felt respected most of the time. *See graph at right.*
- 86% said their families' values and customs were respected most of the time.

Are the services provided driven by the consumer?

Families often view the care as consumer-driven, but a meaningful minority do not.

- 74% of families said that they are included in decisions about their child's care “most of the time”
- 78% said that they are accepted as important members of the team helping their child.

Are families included in the development of services?

Only about 1/3 (63%) of providers appear to consider the families' background when selecting treatment materials (“most of the time”).

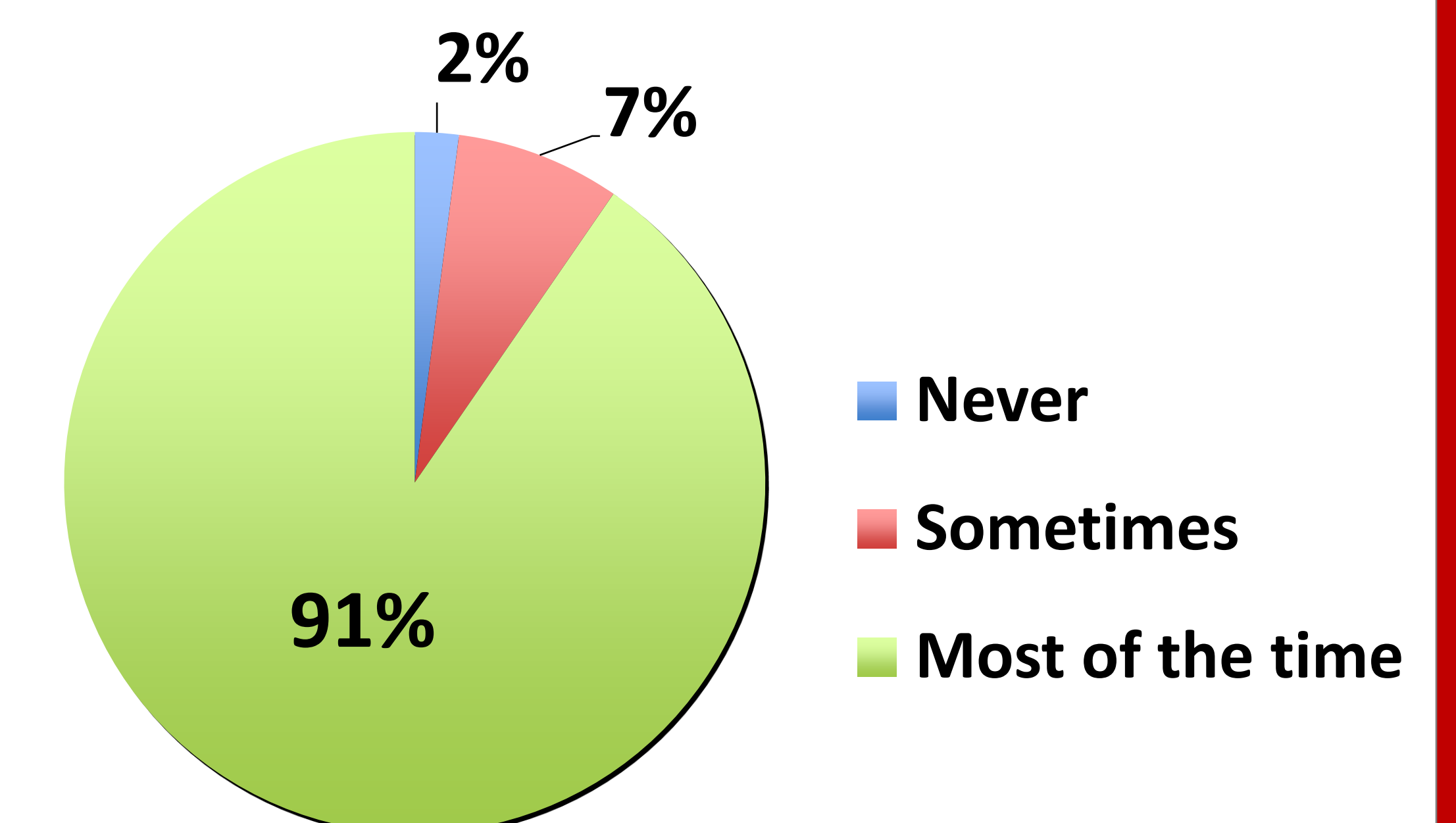
Are service providers attempting to understand the cultural beliefs and values of families?

Only about 54% bother to take time to learn about the culture of the family (35% of caregivers report that providers *never* take the time). *See graph at right.*

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

- Agency representatives have embraced at least some tenets of consumer driven care.
- Acceptance of families as partners in the care process is not yet universal.
- The cultural competence component of care appears to be lacking.
- The range of variation in cultural competence among communities is great. *However, this may be a function of provider culture.* For example...
 - In one county, 62% of participants said child serving providers NEVER took time to learn about their culture. That number in another county was only 12%.
- Assessments of cultural competence need to be specific so that communities know where to focus their energy on improvement efforts.

... I feel respected.



...takes time to learn about our culture.

