

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER PROGRAM

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Prepared for

*Seattle Public Schools, Family Support Worker Program
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Prepared by

*Organizational Research Services
Seattle, WA*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In late 2000 Organizational Research Services (ORS) was contracted by the City of Seattle Human Services Department to design and implement a comprehensive evaluation of the Seattle Public Schools' Family Support Worker (FSW) program. The FSW program was first established in 1988 and presently provides services to families with elementary-school-aged children in 59 different public elementary schools throughout the City of Seattle. The program currently receives funding from three major sources: City of Seattle General Fund, Families and Education Levy, and the United Way of King County. This evaluation is, in part, a response to the needs of these funders to understand the impact of the Family Support Worker program.

A core evaluation team of 9 individuals – 3 ORS staff members, 2 FSW management staff members, 1 City Human Services Department staff person, and 3 Family Support Workers – worked collaboratively to plan and carry out all facets of the comprehensive evaluation. This process included:

- 7 Defining program outcomes and indicators
- 7 Developing appropriate evaluation tools
- 7 Communicating findings to the entire program staff
- 7 Collecting outcome and process data from program participants, school staff and program staff
- 7 Interpreting and utilizing evaluation results in program planning efforts

There were two primary objectives in conducting this evaluation. First, the program wanted to explore the impact of its services in assisting families and children. The data collected from and about the families being served provides the basis for exploring child and family outcomes. Second, the program was interested in gathering information from different constituencies to assist in decisions about program direction, delivery of services and resource allocation.

We conducted five separate analyses intended to provide insights on the program outcomes and program needs. The full summaries of each of these analyses are presented in Sections 4-8 of the full report. These analyses include:

- 7 Analysis of Monthly Family Needs
- 7 Parent Survey Analysis
- 7 Parent Focus Groups
- 7 School Staff Survey
- 7 Family Support Worker Staff Survey and Focus Groups

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The evaluation findings serve to highlight the impact of the FSW program and the program's success in achieving many of the identified outcomes for parents, children and schools served by the program. Further, the findings allow for many insights with regard to service delivery and program capacity. This discussion will address:

1. The impact of the program on the populations served (i.e., youth, families, and schools)
2. How the program might enhance the delivery of services to these populations
3. The FSW program's improved capacity to conduct and use evaluation in program development efforts.

EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve outreach to non-English speaking families to ensure greater access for these populations to the FSW program services. The program should continue to work within the schools to connect with non-English speaking families, by designating resources that will enable FSWs to directly access translation and interpretation services so that FSWs can have more direct relationships with these families than in the past.

The program continuously needs to revisit program outcomes and evaluation methods. The current evaluation highlighted examples where previously established outcomes were somewhat unrealistic, and not reflective of the program's true accomplishments. As the program continues to grow, there is a constant need to explore outcomes that are consistent with program strategies and activities. Further, there is a need to develop evaluation tools that provide insightful information about program impacts without becoming burdensome for the Family Support Workers who are primarily responsible for data collection.

The program, in partnership with its funders, needs to reinforce the purpose of the program by clarifying the role and responsibilities of FSWs in their school buildings. In many instances the Family Support Workers are placed in a challenging position whereby they need to carry out their role as advocates while concurrently supporting activities in the school (i.e., playground/lunch room supervision or other support roles). The evaluation pointed out that while FSWs are valued in the schools, there is still some uncertainty of the roles they play in many school settings. The program as a whole must continue to work with the schools in developing a situation where the FSWs and school staff have a better understanding of each other's roles and

expectations, and in turn can continue to work collaboratively in helping children and families.

The school district needs to take into consideration the need for balance between the FSW program and the schools in future decisions about program implementation and structure. The results indicate that one of the strengths that FSWs offer is the ability to work closely with the school staff while at the same time maintaining the autonomy to work with families as required by the contractual agreement with program funders. We find that they are able to maintain such a balance even when facing challenges in the schools they work in because of the support of program management. Any decisions about the structure of the program in the future should take into account the fact that this balancing of position and responsibilities is an integral part of the success of the program efforts.

The FSW program needs to enhance its overall “marketing” and outreach efforts. The program should make it clear to the widest possible audience the services provided and the manner in which families in need can utilize these services. A centralized program awareness strategy could also serve to create a more consistent understanding of the overall purpose of the program. Finding effective ways to communicate with families for whom English is a barrier will be critical to making these efforts a success.

The FSW management staff needs to continue supporting the development of a strong FSW personnel staff. The evaluation highlights the strong connections between the management staff and FSWs that are already in place. It is essential that these feelings of collaboration and camaraderie persist so that the program can continue to effectively meet the needs of families. To that end, the management should continue to provide the FSWs with opportunities to learn, grow, and improve their professional skills and knowledge.

Improve awareness of the Medicaid component of the program and further evaluate the project to address sustainability. The FSW program should improve efforts to raise awareness about the availability of Medicaid services among teachers and other school district staff who typically have ongoing contacts with parents and families. Further evaluation should take place to address how the program will sustain Medicaid outreach and enrollment services in light of current budget constraints.

As noted the evaluation team identified a set of program outcomes. Since in many ways the program not only has an impact on the parents and children they serve, but also on the schools in which they provide services, the evaluation team worked to define three levels of outcomes – *parent/family* level, *child* level, and *school* level. The information on many of these outcomes is used to report on program success to the United Way of King County and the City of Seattle. The table below specifies the program outcomes and corresponding indicators:

FSW PROGRAM OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TOOL
Parent/Family Level		
(1) Increased Involvement in Child's Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attended more school activities ➤ Involved in child's homework needs ➤ Involved in child's regular attendance 	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post
(2) Increased knowledge of School District systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge of how to arrange bus transportation ➤ Knowledge of building support services/staff ➤ Knowledge of teachers and administrative staff ➤ Knowledge of services provided by FSW 	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post
(3) Increased knowledge of community service system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge of community agencies ➤ Knowledge of where to go for help with problems 	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post
(4) Learning new life management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Greater understanding of how to deal with crisis ➤ More comfortable in ability to get support ➤ More comfortable in ability to make decisions 	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post
(5) Willing to communicate ideas and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More willing to talk about my child's educational needs with staff 	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post
(6a) Of 4,500 Basic Needs indicated as part of student referrals, 77.77% or 3500 of the needs indicated will reflect full or partial progress made by the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Basic Needs Questions 	Monthly Reporting Form
(6b) Of 4,500 Readiness to Learn/Education Needs indicated as part of student referrals, 71.11% or 3200 of the needs indicated will reflect full or partial progress made by the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Readiness Learn/Education Needs Questions 	Monthly Reporting Form
(6c) X% of the children with stated Adult Needs will achieve full or partial progress on X% of these needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Adult Needs Questions 	Monthly Reporting Form
(6d) X% of the children with stated Health Needs will achieve full or partial progress on X% of these needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Health Needs Questions 	Monthly Reporting Form
(6e) X% of the children with stated Social Service Needs will achieve full or partial progress on X% of these needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Social Service Needs Questions 	Monthly Reporting Form

FSW Program Outcomes and Indicators (continued)

OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TOOL
Child Level		
(7) Children demonstrate increased readiness to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Arrive on time ➤ Attendance 	School Records
(8) Increased child’s connections to school and involvement in school activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Child is involved in in-school activities such as tutoring ➤ Child receives support in the classroom from teachers, counselors, and FSW, as needed 	Parent Focus Group
(9) Increased involvement in out-of-school and after school activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Child is involved in extra-curricular activities such as summer camp, Y programs and sports programs 	Parent Focus Group
School Level		
(10) School staff is aware and knowledgeable of the services provided by FSW in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School staff are aware of important services such as helping families with basic needs, finding and/or utilizing community resources, and finding and/or utilizing school resources 	School Staff Survey
(11) School staff have greater knowledge of how different social factors impact a child’s school performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School staff are aware of different social and health factors faced by students ➤ School staff know how different social and health factors impact school performance 	School Staff Survey
(12) School staff demonstrate greater collaboration with FSW program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School staff see FSW’s as part of the school team ➤ School staff communicate regularly with FSW about student, family and school issues 	School Staff Survey
(13) School staff report they spend more time teaching students and less time dealing with students’ social service needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School staff report they spend more time teaching students and less time dealing with students’ social service needs 	School Staff Survey

FSW PROGRAM IMPACT

Parent/Family Level Outcomes

Outcome 1. Increased Involvement In Child's Education.

- 7 Parents reported a significant increase in attendance at school activities during the time they were engaged with the program. Parents also increased their involvement in helping with their child's homework.
- 7 Focus groups revealed that parents appreciated how FSWs encouraged them to participate in school activities. Further, parents described that, in contrast to the school staff, the FSWs were generally accepting, welcoming and supportive of parents.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. Increased Knowledge Of School District Systems, Increased Knowledge Community Service Systems and Increased Life Management Skills.

- 7 On average, parents showed decreased knowledge of school district systems during the time they were engaged with the program
- 7 Parents further demonstrated decreased knowledge about community service systems and little change on indicators of life management skills.
- 7 Focus groups with parents and FSWs, for instance, revealed that primary FSW program services include assisting students and their families to meet basic needs such as obtaining food, shelter, clothing and school supplies. It is thus apparent that the program services are directed at helping to alleviate some of the social and health needs faced by families, rather than increase families' general knowledge or skills regarding accessing available support systems.

Outcome 5. Willingness to Communicate Ideas and Feelings.

- 7 Parents who completed baseline and post-surveys showed significant increase in their willingness to talk about their child's educational needs.
- 7 In focus groups, parents described how FSWs help them to feel supported in the school setting.
- 7 In open-ended survey comments, School staff also described how having FSWs in the school building created an important support resource for families.
- 7 The Monthly Reporting Form data reveal that over 43 percent of families served are working on at least one need from the category *Education Needs - Child Issues*

Outcome 6. Progress on Needs.

- 7 The 4,668 families served by the FSW program identified 8,184 *Basic Needs* being addressed with assistance from Family Support Workers—an average of 2.42 unique Basic Needs per family
- 7 Over 90 percent of the needs achieved Full Progress and Completion, and an additional 7.6 percent achieved Partial Progress
- 7 The levels of full progress achievement are high for needs from the categories of *Education Needs – Parent Involvement* (84.1 %) and *Health Needs* (79.5%). The levels of achievement were lower for needs from the categories of *Social Service* (66.0%) and *Education Needs – Child Issues* (69.8%).
- 7 There is some evidence of a positive relationship between the number of times a family had contact with a Family Support Worker and the level of progress achievement across the different need categories.

Child Level Outcomes

Outcomes 8 & 9. Increased Child’s Connections To School And Involvement In School Activities, and Increased Involvement In Out-Of-School Activities And After School Activities.

- 7 In focus groups, many parents described that the FSW program had helped their kids get involved in in-school activities such as tutoring, and out-of-school activities such as after-school programs, sports and recreation programs and summer day camps.

School Level Outcomes

Outcome 10. School Staff Is Aware And Knowledgeable Of The Services Provided By The FSW Program.

- 7 The vast majority (94%) of school staff stated that they were aware of FSW Program services.
- 7 Over 14 percent of respondents identified as counselors, IAs or nurses were unsure about what services FSWs provide

Outcome 11. School Staff Has Greater Knowledge Of How Different Social And Health Factors Impact A Child's School Performance.

- 7 Data from the School Staff Survey indicates that the FSW program has helped school staff become more aware of the social and health factors experienced by students within their classroom/school.
- 7 School staff indicated that the FSW program has helped them understand how the social and health factors experienced by students might impact their school performance

Outcome 12. School Staff Demonstrate Greater Collaboration With FSW Program.

- 7 According to school staff, FSWs are an important part of the elementary school environment and critical members of the school team
- 7 Further, School Staff Survey data reveal that there is frequent communication between school staff and FSWs regarding student and family needs
- 7 FSWs also indicated that they are satisfied with the supervision they receive from school principals and the level of communication they maintain with school staff
- 7 In focus groups, FSWs also indicated that they receive full support from school staff and that in most cases FSWs and school staff *“work really well as a team.”*

Outcome 13. School Staff Report They Spend More Time Teaching and Less Time Dealing With Students' Social Service Needs.

- 7 Among the teachers who completed the School Staff Survey, there was substantial agreement that having a family support worker in their school allowed them to spend more time teaching and less time focusing on students' social and health needs.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

Overall Satisfaction with the FSW Program

- 7 In general, parents and school staff expressed that they are very satisfied with the services provided through family support workers.
- 7 In focus groups, most parents expressed that the range and type of program services were helpful, though some parents felt that the program could/should do more, perhaps most especially in the area of transportation.
- 7 Additionally, many school staff expressed ways in which they had directly benefited from having a family support worker in the school building.
- 7 Overall, parents described their interaction with the FSW program as respectful and fair with regard to culture, race and ethnicity. Even non-English speaking parents, who clearly faced some language and access barriers with regard to the FSW program, seemed totally comfortable with how their families were treated.
- 7 School staff also indicated that family support workers were effective in working with the cultural, racial and linguistic diversities within their schools.

Awareness of Program Services

- 7 The majority of school staff indicated that they were aware of the services provided by the FSW program.
- 7 Many parents expressed that they were not aware of the program, or found out about the program by accident. Many parents said they had no idea what types of services the program could offer until an FSW approached them and offered specific kinds of help, or perhaps they heard about the program through another parent.
- 7 Vietnamese and Spanish-speaking parents seemed totally unsure how they would find out about FSW program services, or who they would call if they needed help or support.
- 7 The FSW program should make it evident to the widest possible audience what they can do for families, how they can assist children in need, how they can support the educational activities in schools, and how families can become engaged with program services.

Role of Family Support Workers in Schools

- 7 In focus groups, Family Support Workers expressed some belief that they are viewed in the school settings as an “additional body”, available to provide general assistance to school staff. FSW management staff and family support workers also expressed general concern about feeling valued, feeling part of the school, and working in the unique climate and structure in the school settings.
- 7 The school staff survey analysis demonstrated that the FSW program is generally viewed as an essential element of the school environment, and that school staff value the presence and contributions of the FSW staff and recognize their unique role. It is interesting to note that nearly one quarter (23%) of school staff did identify providing general support within the school building as one of the most important services FSWs provide.
- 7 The data seem to suggest that FSWs are doing a good job of balancing their need to be partners with school staff, with their need to maintain autonomy so that they can be advocates for families and provide services to families in need in a flexible and responsive way.
- 7 The FSW program, school district and individual schools need to work together in addressing and supporting each other’s needs and concerns.

Awareness of the Medicaid Services Component of the Program

- 7 Analysis of the School Staff Survey indicated that less than 30 percent of the school staff was aware of resources in the school that help families enroll in free or low-cost health insurance.
- 7 This is another opportunity to make clear to a wide audience that the FSW program is a valuable resource in addressing health insurance and medical concerns. (see **TABLES 7.14 – 7.15** on page 52.)

PROGRAM CAPACITY WITH REGARD TO CONDUCTING EVALUATION AND USING EVALUATION FINDINGS

Increased capacity to evaluate the impact of the FSW program.

- 7 Over the course of the last year, the FSW management staff has dramatically increased their understanding of evaluation concepts, of different evaluation tools and approaches, and of the importance of using evaluation to shape decisions about program delivery and allocation of resources.
- 7 The FSW management and FSWs have expressed a greater interest in collecting data from families and school staff, and have started to realize how evaluation data can enhance their ability to serve families in need.

Development of new evaluation tools to address challenges of collecting outcome data from and about families.

- 7 One of the greatest concerns about the monthly needs data collection process is that the program may in fact be collecting more information about outputs (i.e., what they do) than about outcomes (i.e., how the families are impacted by the service provided). It is not entirely clear whether the needs data describes the level of services provided or the level of progress achieved by the family on different issues.
- 7 The evaluation team has discussed the possibility of creating new tools intended to better track achievable outcomes rather than what the staff do for the family. The challenge, though, at this point is integrating such tools without increasing the burden of evaluation for the FSWs.

What are realistic program outcomes?

- 7 The parent survey analysis, in particular, suggested that some of the outcomes initially selected by the program were unrealistic given the nature of services provided.
- 7 It is essential to continue to distinguish outcomes that were attainable through a short-term, direct services model such as increased school involvement from those that were more of a stretch (e.g., increased life-management skills).
- 7 As the requirements for evaluation increase, and as the program continues to enhance and modify services, the staff should consider what are realistic accomplishments of the program that are measurable and demonstrate the program impact on families and schools.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

In late 2000 Organizational Research Services (ORS) was contracted by the City of Seattle Human Services Department to design and implement a comprehensive evaluation of the Seattle Public Schools' Family Support Worker (FSW) program. The FSW program was first established in 1988 and presently provides services to families with elementary-school aged children in 59 different public elementary schools throughout the City of Seattle. The program currently receives funding from three major sources: City of Seattle General Fund, Families and Education Levy, and the United Way of King County. This evaluation is, in part, a response to the needs of these funders to understand the impact of the Family Support Worker program.

Since October 2000, ORS staff has worked with FSW management and representatives from the school-based FSW staff to develop a comprehensive evaluation that would serve to provide insight on the outcomes of the program and provide information to the program to support program improvement efforts. A core evaluation team of 9 individuals – 3 ORS staff members, 2 FSW management staff members, 1 City Human Services Department staff person, and 3 Family Support Workers – worked collaboratively to plan and carry out all facets of the comprehensive evaluation. This process included:

- 7 Defining program outcomes and indicators
- 7 Developing appropriate evaluation tools
- 7 Communicating findings to the entire program staff
- 7 Collecting outcome and process data from program participants, school staff and program staff
- 7 Interpreting and utilizing evaluation results in program planning efforts.

There were two primary objectives in conducting this evaluation. First, the program wanted to explore the impact of its services in assisting families and children with a variety of issues related to basic needs, readiness to learn, and accessing help and resources. The data collected from and about the families being served provides the basis for exploring child and family outcomes. Data related to these outcomes is reported to the United Way and the Families and Education Levy Office. Second, the program was interested in gathering information from different constituencies to assist in decisions about program direction, delivery of services and resource allocation. To that end, we collected information from the FSW staff, parents served, and staff at a sample of participant elementary schools to get a sense of how the program is working, and what these different constituencies most need from such a program.

The FSW Program outcomes are described in Section 2, and an overall summary of evaluation findings is provided in Section 3. Detailed data summaries appear in Sections 4 through 8. In sections 4 through 8, we address the purpose of the analysis, the methods

used to collect information from parents or staff, and a summary of the results of the data collection process. Briefly, these five sections contain the following information:

Section 4. Analysis of Family Needs – a summary analysis of the needs progress information collected for each family served by the program each month. FSW staff complete forms each month summarizing the level of progress achieved in working with families on a wide range of needs including Basic Needs, Education Needs, Adult Needs, Health Needs, and Social Service Needs. The data gathered via this tool provides insights on the specified outcomes for the City of Seattle performance commitments

Section 5. Parent Survey Analysis – a summary of the survey responses provided by a sample of parents served by the FSW program over the course of the past school year (September 2000 – June 2001). The survey data was collected at Baseline (i.e., during initial sessions with the families) and at Post (i.e., at the completion of the school year). The intent was to measure possible changes in parents’ attitudes and behaviors with respect to issues such as involvement in child’s education, knowledge of school and community systems, and willingness to communicate feelings. These data were used to report on specified United Way outcomes.

Section 6. Parent Focus Groups – a summary of six focus groups conducted with parents served by the FSW program. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather information about proposed program outcomes, and to gather information about program services and parent needs that would be useful in program development and delivery efforts.

Section 7. School Staff Survey – a summary analysis of surveys collected from school staff at sixteen different elementary schools. The intent was to gather staff insights about the functions of the FSW program, and their assessments of the impact of the FSW program on the school, staff, and students.

Section 8. FSW Staff Survey and Focus Groups – a summary of information collected from FSW staff during an in-service day sponsored by the program. The intent was to gather staff perceptions with regards to issues such as satisfaction with levels of supervision, availability of different resources, workload management concerns, and ability to communicate with FSW management and others in the program. These data were particularly useful in helping the program think about program direction and service needs in the future.

SECTION 2: PROGRAM OUTCOMES

In the first few weeks of this project the evaluation team worked collaboratively to define a range of program outcomes. Since in many ways the program not only has an impact on the parents and children they serve, but also on the schools in which they provide services, the evaluation team worked to define three levels of outcomes – *parent/family* level, *child* level, and *school* level. During the process of identifying appropriate outcomes, members of the evaluation team further solicited input from FSW leads and other FSW staff. The FSW staff were guided through an exercise that asked them to think about the program activities and potential consequences of these activities. This served as the genesis for selecting our set of outcomes. The evaluation team then also worked collaboratively to identify appropriate indicators and evaluation tools for each of the outcomes.

The set of *parent/family* level of outcomes is consistent with the outcomes and indicators used in past reporting to the United Way and the City of Seattle. They tend to focus on changes in the attitudes and behaviors of parents, and on the achievement of progress on established family needs. There was some uncertainty about the target levels for some of the needs outcomes. In particular, while target levels were established for the Basic Needs and Readiness to Learn outcomes (i.e., outcomes 6a and 6b), targets were left unspecified for the Adult, Health and Social Service needs outcomes. The *child* level outcomes reflect changes in the child’s behaviors and readiness as reported by parents. The *school* level outcomes reflect changes in attitudes about and perceptions of the program among the school staff in settings served by the program.

TABLE 2.1 illustrates a summary of the outcomes, indicators, evaluation tools and data collection approaches used in the comprehensive evaluation and resulting data analysis.

TABLE 2.1: FSW Program Outcomes and Indicators

OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TOOL	SECTION OF REPORT
Parent/Family Level			
(1) Increased Involvement in Child’s Education	7 Attended more school activities 7 Involved in child’s homework needs 7 Involved in child’s regular attendance	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post	Parent Survey Analysis
(2) Increased knowledge of School District systems	7 Knowledge of how to arrange bus transportation 7 Knowledge of building support services/staff 7 Knowledge of teachers and administrative staff 7 Knowledge of services provided by FSW	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post	Parent Survey Analysis
(3) Increased knowledge of community service system	7 Knowledge of community agencies 7 Knowledge of where to go for help with problems	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post	Parent Survey Analysis
(4) Learning new life management skills	7 Greater understanding of how to deal with crisis 7 More comfortable in ability to get support 7 More comfortable in ability to make decisions	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post	Parent Survey Analysis
(5) Willing to communicate ideas and feelings	7 More willing to talk about my child’s educational needs with staff	Parent Survey – Baseline and Post	Parent Survey Analysis
(6a) Of 4,500 Basic Needs indicated as part of student referrals, 77.77% or 3500 of the needs indicated will reflect full or partial progress made by the family	7 Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Basic Needs Questions	Monthly Reporting Form	Analysis of Monthly Needs
(6b) Of 4,500 Readiness to Learn/Education Needs indicated as part of student referrals, 71.11% or 3200 of the needs indicated will reflect full or partial progress made by the family	7 Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Readiness Learn/Education Needs Questions	Monthly Reporting Form	Analysis of Monthly Needs
(6c) X% of the children with stated Adult Needs will achieve full or partial progress on X% of these needs	7 Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Adult Needs Questions	Monthly Reporting Form	Analysis of Monthly Needs
(6d) X% of the children with stated Health Needs will achieve full or partial progress on X% of these needs	7 Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Health Needs Questions	Monthly Reporting Form	Analysis of Monthly Needs
(6e) X% of the children with stated Social Service Needs will achieve full or partial progress on X% of these needs	7 Monthly Reporting Form (MRF) Social Service Needs Questions	Monthly Reporting Form	Analysis of Monthly Needs

TABLE 2.1: FSW Program Outcomes and Indicators (continued)

OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TOOL	SECTION OF REPORT
Child Level			
(7) Children demonstrate increased readiness to learn	7 Arrive on time 7 Attendance	School Records	<i>The program was unable to collect this information</i>
(8) Increased child’s connections to school and involvement in school activities	7 Child is involved in in-school activities such as tutoring 7 Child receives support in the classroom from teachers, counselors, and FSW, as needed	Parent Focus Group	Parent Focus Groups
(9) Increased involvement in out-of-school and after school activities	7 Child is involved in extra-curricular activities such as summer camp, Y programs and sports programs	Parent Focus Group	Parent Focus Groups
School Level			
(10) School staff is aware and knowledgeable of the services provided by FSW in school	7 School staff are aware of important services such as helping families with basic needs, finding and/or utilizing community resources, and finding and/or utilizing school resources	School Staff Survey	School Staff Survey
(11) School staff have greater knowledge of how different social factors impact a child’s school performance	7 School staff are aware of different social and health factors faced by students 7 School staff know how different social and health factors impact school performance	School Staff Survey	School Staff Survey
(12) School staff demonstrate greater collaboration with FSW program	7 School staff see FSW’s as part of the school team 7 School staff communicate regularly with FSW about student, family and school issues	School Staff Survey	School Staff Survey
(13) School staff report they spend more time teaching students and less time dealing with students’ social service needs	7 School staff report they spend more time teaching students and less time dealing with students’ social service needs	School Staff Survey	School Staff Survey

SECTION 3: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section presents a brief summary of evaluation findings in relationship to identified program outcomes. More detailed summaries of findings from each data collection tool are presented in Sections 4 through 8.

In general, the evaluation findings serve to highlight the impact of the FSW program and the program's success in achieving many of the identified outcomes for parents, children and schools served by the program. Further, the findings allow for many insights with regard to service delivery and program capacity. This discussion will address:

1. The impact of the program on the populations served (i.e., youth, families, and schools)
2. How the program might enhance the delivery of services to these populations
3. The FSW program's improved capacity to conduct and use evaluation in program development efforts.

FSW PROGRAM IMPACT

Parent/Family Level Outcomes

Outcome 1. Increased Involvement In Child's Education. The parents surveyed showed a significant increase in attendance at school activities during the time they were engaged with the program. Parents also increased their involvement in helping with their child's homework (see **TABLE 5.4**, page 32). Focus groups revealed that parents appreciated how FSWs encouraged them to participate in school activities. Further, parents described that, in contrast to the school staff, the FSWs were generally accepting, welcoming and supportive of parents. This helped remove some of the barriers to becoming involved in their child's education See Sections 5 – 6).

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. Increased Knowledge of School District Systems, Increased Knowledge Community Service Systems and Increased Life Management Skills. On average, parents showed decreased scores on four indicators of knowledge of school district systems during the time they were engaged with the program (see **TABLE 5.4**, page 32). Parents further demonstrated decreased scores on three indicators of knowledge about community service systems (see **TABLE 5.4**, page 32.) and little change on indicators of life management skills (see **TABLE 5.4**, page 32). Interestingly, among parents with the least amount of contact with the program (< 3 contacts with an FSW), there was a significant decrease in *comfort with ability to get support for parenting concerns* while among the overall sample, there was virtually no change in this measure over time.

While the evaluation team identified these outcomes, lack of achievement in these outcome areas may reflect the fact that these are not strong areas of program focus. Focus groups with parents and FSWs revealed that primary FSW program services include assisting students and their families to meet basic needs such as obtaining food, shelter, clothing, winter coats, shoes, school uniforms, and school supplies. In addition, data from the Monthly Reporting Form revealed that families served by the FSW program are most likely to be addressing *Basic Needs* with over 72 percent of 4,668 families served stating at least one *Basic Need* (see **TABLE 4.1**, p.26). Further, school staff ranked “helping families meet basic needs” as the most important FSW service area.

While parents and school staff did note that FSWs assist families by providing information, advocacy and connections to helpful school and community resources, it seems these services are intended to help families resolve an immediate problem or crisis, so that it does not interfere with their child’s education. Thus, the program services are directed at helping to alleviate some of the social and health needs faced by families, rather than increase families’ general knowledge or skills regarding accessing available support systems.

Outcome 5. Willingness to Communicate Ideas and Feelings. The 204 parents who completed baseline and post-surveys showed significant increase in their willingness to talk about their child’s educational needs.

In focus groups, parents described how FSWs help them to feel supported in the school setting. School staff also described how having FSWs in the school building created an important support resource for families . Further, Monthly Reporting Form data reveal that over 43 percent of families served are working on at least one need from the category *Education Needs - Child Issues*. Parents’ feeling of support is perhaps what allows them to talk about and work on their child’s educational needs with FSWs and other school staff.

Outcome 6. Progress on Needs. The 4,668 families served by the FSW program identified 8,184 *Basic Needs* being addressed with assistance from Family Support Workers—an average of 2.42 unique Basic Needs per family (see **TABLE 4.2**, p 26). Over 90 percent of the needs achieved Full Progress and Completion, and an additional 7.6 percent achieved Partial Progress (see **TABLE 4.2**, p. 26).

The levels of full progress achievement are high for needs from the categories of *Education Needs – Parent Involvement* (84.1%) and *Health Needs* (79.5%). The levels of achievement were lower for needs from the categories of *Social Service* (66.0%) and *Education Needs – Child Issues* (69.8%). In fact, No Progress was achieved on almost 10 percent of the *Education Needs – Child Issues* over the course of the school year.

There is some evidence of a positive relationship between the number of times a family had contact with FSW staff and the level of progress achievement across the different need categories. However, the levels of progress appear to dip in the population of families with 10 or more contacts (see **TABLE 4.3**, p. 27).

Child Level Outcomes

Outcome 7. Increased Readiness to Learn. In order to explore this outcome, the FSW program had intended to collect data regarding school attendance and tardiness via school records. However, the program was unable to collect this information during the past year.

Outcomes 8 & 9. Increased Child's Connections to School and Involvement In School Activities, and Increased Involvement In Out-Of-School Activities and After School Activities. In focus groups, many parents described that the FSW program had helped their kids get involved in in-school activities such as tutoring, and out-of-school activities such as after-school programs, sports and recreation programs and summer day camps.

School Level Outcomes

Outcome 10. School Staff Is Aware and Knowledgeable of The Services Provided By The FSW Program. The vast majority (94%) of school staff stated that they were aware of FSW Program services. However, 6percent of school staff surveyed indicated that they were unsure what services the FSW program provided, and 14 percent of respondents identified as counselors, IAs or nurses were unsure about what services FSWs provide (see **TABLE 7.6**, p.47).

Outcome 11. School Staff Has Greater Knowledge of How Different Social And Health Factors Impact a Child's School Performance. Data from the School Staff Survey indicates that the FSW program has helped school staff become more aware of the social and health factors experienced by students within their classroom/school. Further, school staff indicated that the FSW program has helped them understand how the social and health factors experienced by students might impact their school performance (see **TABLE 7.7**, p. 48).

Outcome 12. School Staff Demonstrate Greater Collaboration With FSW Program. Data give a "snapshot" of collaboration between FSWs and school staff. According to school staff, FSWs are an important part of the elementary school environment and critical members of the school team (see **TABLE 7.10**, p. 49, p.). Further, School Staff Survey data reveal that there is frequent communication between school staff and FSWs regarding student and family needs (see **TABLE 7.9**, p. 49). FSWs also indicated that they are satisfied with the supervision they receive from school principals and the level of communication they maintain with school staff (see **TABLES 8.2** and **8.4**, pages 54 and 55). In focus groups, FSWs also indicated that they receive full support from school staff and that in most cases FSWs and school staff "*work really well as a team.*"

Outcome 13. School Staff Report They Spend More Time Teaching and Less Time Dealing With Students' Social Service Needs. Among the teachers who completed the School Staff Survey, there was substantial agreement that having a family support worker in their school allowed them to spend more time teaching and less time focusing on students' social and health needs.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

Overall Satisfaction with the FSW Program. In general, parents and school staff expressed that they are very satisfied with the services provided through family support workers. In focus groups, most parents expressed that the range and type of program services were helpful, though some parents felt that the program could/should do more, perhaps most especially in the area of transportation (helping families, kids get bus tokens to travel to and from school, providing assistance arranging transportation to/from after-school and summertime activities, etc.). Additionally, many school staff expressed ways in which they had directly benefited from having a family support worker in the school building (see Appendix F).

Early in the evaluation planning process, members of the evaluation team expressed an interest in exploring how FSW service reflected the profound values of cultural sensitivity and cultural competence. Information collected from parents and school staff suggests that the program demonstrates strong loyalty to these values. Overall, parents described their interaction with the FSW program as respectful and fair with regard to culture, race and ethnicity. Even non-English speaking parents, who clearly faced some language and access barriers with regard to the FSW program, seemed totally comfortable with how their families were treated. School staff also indicated that family support workers were effective in working with the cultural, racial and linguistic diversities within their schools (see **TABLE 7.12**, p. 51).

Awareness of Program Services. While the majority of school staff indicated that they were aware of the services provided by the FSW program, many parents expressed that they were not aware of the program, or found out about the program by accident. Several parents mentioned that they had heard about the program and its services through outreach done at their child's school (e.g. through flyers, newsletters, or the school newspaper). However, many parents said they had no idea what types of services the program could offer until an FSW approached them and offered specific kinds of help, or perhaps they heard about the program through another parent.

Among non-English speaking parents, uncertainty about how to access the program and its services was even more apparent. Vietnamese and Hispanic parents seemed totally unsure how they would find out about FSW program services, or who they would call if they needed help or support. Most parents said they only knew of the program services when their children would come home with shoes, coats, clothes or toys. Several parents mentioned that they would like more information about what the program can offer and how to receive help/resources when needed. One parent mentioned that program access could be improved if “[my FSW] talked to me, not just to my kids.”

This information suggests that parents, and perhaps some school staff, are unsure about of the full range of services provided by FSW's and some families and school staff may be unaware of the program in general. It seems there is an opportunity for the FSW program to “market” their activities, services and skills. The program should make it evident to widest possible audience what they can do for families, how they can assist

children in need, how they can support the educational activities in schools, and how families can become engaged with program services.

Role of Family Support Workers in Schools. In focus groups, FSWs expressed some belief that they are viewed in the school settings as an “additional body”, available to provide general assistance to school staff. FSW management staff and family support workers also expressed general concern about feeling valued, feeling part of the school, and working in the unique climate and structure in the school settings. The school staff survey analysis demonstrated that the FSW program is generally viewed as an essential element of the school environment, and that school staff value the presence and contributions of the FSW staff and recognize their unique role. However, nearly one quarter (23%) of school staff did identify providing general support within the school building as one of the most important services FSWs provide.

Focus groups with FSWs and comments from school staff provide insight into the unique role that FSWs have—FSWs are both part of the school team, and separate from it. FSWs need to be partners with school staff, but they also need to maintain autonomy so that they can be advocates for families and provide services to families in need in a flexible and responsive way. The data seem to suggest that FSWs are doing a good job of maintaining this balanced role, but it is also recognized as one of the challenges FSWs regularly face. Again, this seems to be an opportunity to build the partnership with schools and it seems logical that the working environment for FSWs in elementary schools would improve as the program, school district and individual schools work together in addressing and supporting each other’s needs and concerns.

Awareness of the Medicaid services component of the program. Analysis of the School Staff Survey indicated that less than 30 percent of the school staff was aware of resources in the school that help families enroll in free or low-cost health insurance. Since this is the primary objective of the Medicaid program, it seems that this presents another opportunity to make clear to a wide audience that the FSW program is a valuable resource in addressing health insurance and medical concerns (see **TABLE 7.13**, p. 51).

PROGRAM CAPACITY WITH REGARD TO CONDUCTING EVALUATION AND USING EVALUATION FINDINGS

Increased capacity to evaluate the impact of the FSW program. Over the course of the last year, the FSW management staff has dramatically increased their understanding of evaluation concepts, of different evaluation tools and approaches, and of the importance of using evaluation to shape decisions about program delivery and allocation of resources. The FSW management and FSW staff have expressed a greater interest in collecting data from families and school staff, and have started to realize how evaluation data can enhance their ability to serve families in need. The integration of evaluation into the day-to-day work of the FSW program will undoubtedly ensure the program continues to offer high quality services to children, families and schools.

Development of new evaluation tools to address challenges of collecting outcome data from and about families. One of the greatest concerns about the monthly needs data collection process is that the program may in fact be collecting more information about outputs (i.e., what they do) than about outcomes (i.e., how the families are impacted by the service provided). It is not entirely clear whether the needs data describes the level of services provided or the level of progress achieved by the family on different issues. This is an important distinction as the program goes forward in attempts to assess the impact of different services on families. The evaluation team has discussed the possibility to creating new tools intended to better track achievable outcomes rather than what the staff do for the family. The challenge, though, at this point is integrating such tools without increasing the burden of evaluation for the FSW staff.

What are realistic program outcomes? The parent survey analysis, in particular, suggested that some of the outcomes initially selected by the program were unrealistic given the nature of services provided. Our discussions drawing from these results helped distinguish outcomes that were attainable through a short-term, direct services model (e.g., increased school involvement) from those that were more of a stretch (e.g., increased life-management skills). As the requirements for evaluation increase, and as the program continues to enhance and modify services, the staff should consider what are realistic accomplishments of the program that are measurable and demonstrate the program impact on families and schools.

SECTION 4: ANALYSIS OF FAMILY NEEDS

The purpose of the analysis of Monthly Reporting Forms completed by the FSW staff was to provide some information on families' achievement of specified needs over the course of the program. Using this information, we are able to report on some of the *parent/family* level outcomes noted in **TABLE 2.1** for the City of Seattle. FSW staff typically complete the reporting form for each month that they work with a family. An example of the Monthly Reporting Form is shown in APPENDIX A.

FSW staff are asked to assess families' progress on stated needs in each month during which they have contact with the family. The FSWs are also asked to record the number and type of contacts with the family in that month. During the 2000-2001 school year, 4,668 families stated at least one need, and the total number of stated needs was 17,664, or an average of 3.78 per family. The most frequently reported needs were classified as *Basic Needs* (8,184) followed by *Education Needs - Child Issues* (3,989).

Each month, FSW staff rate the progress achieved for a specific need on a 1 to 5 scale. They make these assessments based on their experiences and interactions with the family. In order to ensure consistency across FSW staff, the program has developed a set of guidelines that provide definitions for the 5 progress rankings.

1. No progress and ongoing
2. No progress and completed
3. Partial progress and ongoing
4. Partial progress and completed
5. Full progress and completed

TABLE 4.1 provides a summary of the needs stated by participants, and a distribution of the progress achieved on these needs. The summary presents data across the six main categories of needs:

- 7 *Basic Needs* (child care, utilities, housing, etc.)
- 7 *Education Needs – Child Issues* (attendance, homework, social skills, etc.)
- 7 *Education Needs – Parent Involvement* (attend meetings, enroll children, etc.)
- 7 *Adult Needs* (ESL, job training, parenting skills, etc.)

7 *Health Needs* (hygiene, immunizations, nutrition, etc.)

7 *Social Service Needs* (counseling, mentoring, tutoring, etc.).

As noted above, the families served by the FSW program are most likely to be addressing *Basic Needs*. Over 72 percent of the 4,668 families stated at least one *Basic Need*, and these families, on average, stated 2.42 unique *Basic Needs*. The other prominent need category is *Education Needs – Child Issues*. Over 43 percent of the families state at least one *Child Issues Need*, and these families, on average, stated almost 2 total *Child Issues Needs*. Far fewer families are working on needs from the other four categories.

This table also indicates that there are disparate levels of progress achieved across different categories of needs. We find that *Basic Needs* are not only the most commonly stated need, but also the most frequently achieved. Of the 8,184 *Basic Needs* addressed by families and FSWs, over 90 percent achieved Full Progress and Completion, and an additional 7.6 percent achieved Partial Progress. The levels of full progress achievement are also higher in the instances of *Education Needs – Parent Involvement* (84.1%) and *Health Needs* (79.5%). The levels of achievement are lower on *Social Service* (66.0%) and *Education Needs – Child Issues* (69.8%) suggesting that it may be more difficult to attain full progress on needs in these areas. In fact, No Progress was achieved on almost 10 percent of the *Education Needs – Child Issues* over the course of the school year. Nonetheless, the high levels of achievement across the need categories suggest that FSW staff are clearly assisting families in meeting their specified needs over the course of service.

The information in **TABLE 4.2** allows us to further examine the progress achieved on stated needs by families served by the program. For each family, we assessed the progress achieved on each unique need. So, for example, John Doe stated the following three needs:

7 Clothing Need –	<i>Basic Need</i> in November	Progress=4
7 Food Need –	<i>Basic Need</i> in January	Progress=5
7 Immunizations –	<i>Health Need</i> in March	Progress=5

Given the information on individual needs it was possible to compute:

- 7 whether or not the family achieved a score of 3 or more (i.e., at least Partial Progress) on ALL stated needs, and
- 7 whether or not the family achieved a score of 5 (i.e., Full Progress) on ALL stated needs.

These measures could serve as benchmarks for assessing the overall levels of achievement among families served by the program. These measures, in fact, will help the program report on specified outcomes for the City of Seattle Families and Education

Levy. It is evident that the second measure reflects a stricter criterion for achievement. In our example, John Doe would meet the criteria for a), but not for b).

Not surprisingly the percent of families in each category with 3 or more on ALL needs is very high, exceeding 95 percent in each instance. This is consistent with the needs distribution data in **TABLE 4.1** that shows very low numbers of needs with No Progress. There is greater variation in the progress achievement when we look at the second measure. While over 83 percent of the families achieved Full Progress on ALL of their stated *Basic Needs*, this percent drops to 60.1 when we consider Full Progress on ALL *Social Service Needs* and 62.6 percent for Full Progress on *Education Needs – Child Issues*. These variations indicate some of the challenges and difficulties associated with helping families address ongoing social service concerns such as alcohol and drug use, domestic violence, and counseling issues. The two measures of progress achievement are useful as we compare the experiences of families with different numbers of contacts, and from different regions of the city.

ANALYSIS BY CONTACTS

TABLE 4.3 examines the relationship between the number of contacts and levels of progress achievement. There is some evidence of a positive relationship between the number of times a family had contact with the FSW and the level of progress achievement across the different categories, though interestingly in several instances the levels of progress appear to dip in the population of families with the most contacts (i.e., the 10+ contacts group). For example, we find that the percent of families who achieve Full Progress on ALL *Adult Needs* increases as the number of contacts increases from 1 to 6-9 (i.e., from 61.9% to 79.6%). Yet, this percent declines to 71.6 percent among the families with 10 or more contacts. A similar pattern emerges for Health Needs and Parent Involvement.

There are two possible explanations for this decline at the higher levels of contact. First, since those with greater contact typically express a larger number of needs, it becomes somewhat more challenging to achieve Full Progress on all of these needs than if they stated only one or two. In other words it can be more difficult to achieve full progress on 10 stated needs than on 2 stated needs. Second, it is possible that families with higher levels of contact face greater life challenges, and perhaps are dealing with issues beyond the scope of what may be resolved as a result of contact with FSWs.

ANALYSIS BY FSW TEAM

TABLE 4.4 examines levels of progress achievement among families served by different FSW teams. The eight teams are typically organized by regions, where:

Teams 1 and 2	West Seattle
Team 3	Rainier Valley/International District
Team 4	South Seattle
Team 5	Central District/Beacon Hill
Team 6	Northeast Seattle
Team 7	Fremont/Ballard/Queen Anne
Team 8	Northwest Seattle

If we focus on our measure of Full Progress on ALL needs, we observe some interesting variations in levels of achievement in different needs categories:

- 7 Levels of achievement of *Education Needs – Child Issues* are highest among families served by Team 7 (83.0%), and substantially lower among those served by Team 8 (51.1%) and Team 5 (53.9%)
- 7 In general levels of Full Progress achievement of *Education Needs – Parent Involvement* are high across teams (i.e., 80% or above). The one exception is Team 5 where only 56.4% of the families achieved Full Progress on ALL stated needs.
- 7 Levels of achievement of *Adult Needs* are highest among families served by Team 6 (87.8%), and substantially lower among those served by Team 3 (62.3%) and Team 5 (65.2%)
- 7 Families served by Teams 4 and 6 achieve very high levels of Full Progress on *Health Needs*. In each instance over 90 percent achieved Full Progress on ALL stated needs. In contrast, levels of achievement are lower for families served by Team 8 (61.8%) and Team 1 (62.6%).
- 7 There is substantial variation in the achievement of Full Progress on *Social Service Needs*. While over 80 percent of those in Teams 6 and 7 achieve Full Progress on ALL stated needs, these percentages decline to 48.3 percent for those in Team 3 and 51.6 percent for those in Team 8

The differences across FSW teams do not necessarily reflect on the effectiveness of FSWs in each team or their abilities to help families meet needs. There are several possible ways to interpret differences across FSW teams. First, differences could be a result of how FSWs in different teams define and apply the 5 progress rankings. Second, these differences could (and likely do) reflect the fact that families in certain schools face far more needs or more challenging needs than do families in other schools.

TABLE 4.1: SUMMARY OF NEEDS (School Year 2000-2001)

CATEGORY	Total Needs Stated in Category	# of Families with 1+ Stated Need in Category	percent of 4,668 families with needs	Average Needs Stated per Family	Percent of Stated Needs that are:				
					“No Progress and Ongoing” (1)	“No Progress and Completed” (2)	“Partial Progress and Ongoing” (3)	“Partial Progress and Completed” (4)	“Full Progress and Completed” (5)
BASIC NEEDS	8184	3384	72.5%	2.42	0.7%	0.9%	4.0%	3.6%	90.7%
CHILD ISSUES	3989	2027	43.4%	1.97	1.6%	8.2%	14.4%	13.3%	69.8%
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	1918	1148	24.6%	1.67	1.3%	1.7%	7.9%	5.1%	84.1%
ADULT NEEDS	948	650	13.9%	1.46	1.2%	1.7%	12.1%	10.0%	75.0%
HEALTH NEEDS	1526	1068	22.9%	1.43	1.3%	9.7%	9.1%	9.1%	79.5%
SOCIAL SERVICE	1099	704	15.1%	1.56	1.8%	1.5%	17.2%	13.6%	66.0%

TABLE 4.2: ACHIEVEMENT OF PROGRESS (School Year 2000-2001)

CATEGORY	# of Families with 1+ Stated Need	Average Needs Stated per Family	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs
BASIC NEEDS	3384	2.42	98.3%	83.5%
CHILD ISSUES	2027	1.97	97.6%	62.6%
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	1148	1.67	97.0%	80.7%
ADULT NEEDS	650	1.46	97.0%	72.0%
HEALTH NEEDS	1068	1.43	97.7%	74.9%
SOCIAL SERVICE	704	1.56	96.7%	60.1%

TABLE 4.3: ACHIEVEMENT OF PROGRESS BY CONTACTS (School Year 2000-2001)

	BASIC NEEDS			CHILD ISSUES			PARENT INVOLVEMENT		
Contacts	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs
1 (n=249)	220	93.6%	83.5%	129	96.6%	67.6%	40	100.0%	64.0%
2-3 (n=1137)	1311	98.3%	90.8%	658	97.3%	73.1%	186	98.7%	90.5%
4-5 (n=1033)	1536	98.6%	92.2%	642	97.5%	65.4%	271	98.2%	82.7%
6-9 (n=1173)	2186	98.7%	91.2%	1015	97.9%	72.1%	506	97.2%	87.0%
10+ (n=1026)	2862	98.6%	90.5%	1527	97.7%	69.1%	913	95.7%	81.5%
	ADULT NEEDS			HEALTH NEEDS			SOCIAL SERVICE		
Contacts	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs
1 (n=249)	28	92.9%	61.9%	78	95.5%	77.5%	39	86.3%	53.0%
2-3 (n=1137)	93	98.7%	77.2%	249	97.3%	84.0%	135	100.0%	68.8%
4-5 (n=1033)	139	96.6%	77.2%	227	97.9%	83.7%	147	95.9%	63.8%
6-9 (n=1173)	237	96.4%	79.6%	373	99.0%	78.8%	270	97.7%	66.0%
10+ (n=1026)	449	97.4%	71.6%	596	97.5%	75.4%	506	96.2%	67.0%

TABLE 4.4: ACHIEVEMENT OF PROGRESS BY FSW TEAMS (School Year 2000-2001)

	BASIC NEEDS			CHILD ISSUES			PARENT INVOLVEMENT		
Team	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs
1 (n=505)	999	98.6%	89.9%	612	99.1%	70.1%	226	97.1%	81.2%
2 (n=621)	1226	98.8%	91.8%	705	99.3%	78.6%	269	99.7%	85.4%
3 (n=757)	1276	97.3%	89.6%	384	93.7%	63.1%	234	97.4%	86.2%
4 (n=672)	1191	98.4%	93.8%	363	96.9%	75.4%	123	96.5%	85.6%
5 (n=585)	786	99.6%	93.2%	455	99.3%	53.9%	65	92.2%	56.4%
6 (n=433)	657	99.0%	89.4%	330	99.4%	69.7%	118	98.1%	92.9%
7 (n=579)	950	99.7%	92.0%	681	98.5%	83.0%	474	98.3%	89.1%
8 (n=514)	1096	96.2%	85.4%	459	92.2%	51.1%	409	94.1%	79.4%
	ADULT NEEDS			HEALTH NEEDS			SOCIAL SERVICE		
Team	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs	Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 3+ on ALL Stated Needs	Percent of Families with Score = 5 on ALL Stated Needs
1 (n=505)	112	98.4%	75.1%	149	95.3%	62.6%	96	98.0%	57.2%
2 (n=621)	146	100.0%	76.9%	236	97.4%	84.4%	134	97.9%	68.2%
3 (n=757)	84	91.8%	62.3%	116	93.9%	62.7%	106	90.7%	48.3%
4 (n=672)	58	100.0%	83.3%	148	98.2%	92.4%	96	100.0%	63.8%
5 (n=585)	103	96.1%	65.2%	225	99.2%	75.8%	164	97.7%	65.3%
6 (n=433)	49	100.0%	87.8%	167	100.0%	92.8%	72	100.0%	88.8%
7 (n=579)	181	97.8%	84.1%	286	99.5%	88.1%	217	97.7%	83.0%
8 (n=514)	215	94.0%	68.3%	199	94.2%	61.8%	214	93.0%	51.6%

SECTION 5: PARENT SURVEY ANALYSIS

This component of the comprehensive program evaluation involved the administration of a survey to parents served by the FSW program. The original intent was to use the survey information to provide insight on the services offered by the program, and to satisfy the outcome reporting requirements of the United Way of King County. This data was useful in reporting on the first five *parent/family* level outcomes presented in **TABLE 5.1**. An example of the parent survey tool is shown in APPENDIX B.

TABLE 5.1: Parent/Family Level Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome	Indicators
Increased Involvement in Child’s Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased attendance at school activities 2. Increased involvement in helping with homework needs
Increased knowledge of School District systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased knowledge of how to arrange bus transportation 2. Increased knowledge of services provided by school support staff 3. Increased knowledge of what teachers, etc.. do at your school 4. Increased knowledge of services provided by FSW
Increased knowledge of community service system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased knowledge of community agencies that could help family 2. Increased knowledge of where to go for help with problems 3. Increased awareness of available resources
Learning new life management skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comfort with ability to get support for parenting concerns 2. Comfort with ability to make decisions for family
Increased willingness to communicate ideas and feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Willing to talk about child’s educational needs with school staff

Over the course of the school year the FSWs collected Baseline data from 672 parents served by the program. In total, 204, or 30.4 percent, parents completed both a Baseline and Post survey at the end of the school year. The FSWs administered the Baseline surveys during their first contact with the family in the school year. However, we should point out that since the survey development and administration process was not completed until November 2000, the first surveys were not collected until late fall, and thus in some instances the Baseline data was in fact collected from families with prior contact with the program in the school year.

At the end of the school year, a number of FSWs conducted a series of telephone survey interviews to collect the Post survey data. The interviewers attempted to contact each of the original 672 parents who completed the Baseline survey. Interpreters were used in instances where parents spoke little or no English. The 204 individuals with both Baseline and Post survey data constitute the paired sample for the analysis. The sample is geographically diverse (see **TABLE 5.2**) and consists of those with various levels of contact with the FSW program (see **TABLE 5.3**). The contact data were drawn from the Monthly Reporting Needs data that the FSWs complete for each family they serve in a month. The program contact data were missing for 27 of the families in the sample.

TABLE 5.2 Sample by FSW Team (N=204)

Team	N	Percent
1 and 2 (West Seattle)	49	24.0%
3 (Rainier/International District)	14	6.9%
4 (South Seattle)	55	27.0%
5 (Central District/Beacon Hill)	21	10.3%
6 (Northeast)	24	11.8%
7 (Queen Anne/Ballard)	28	13.7%
8 (Northwest)	13	6.4%

TABLE 5.3: Sample by Contacts with FSW Program (N=177)

Number of Contacts (2000-2001 School Year)	N	Percent
1	6	3.5%
2-3	34	19.8%
4-5	39	22.7%
6-9	40	23.3%
10+	53	30.8%

OVERALL RESULTS

The analysis of the paired sample results (N=204) indicates that there was some change over time in parent's behaviors, knowledge and abilities. We should note, though, that, in general, the averages on many items at Baseline were quite high e.g., average of 3.5 or greater on a four-point scale, and thus there was not much room for statistical improvement over time. The comparison of averages between Baseline and Post is presented in **TABLE 5.4**. In particular we find significant increases (i.e., $p < .05$ significance level) over time in:

- 7 *Attendance at school activities* (BASELINE = 2.39 to POST = 2.50)
- 7 Willingness to talk about child's educational needs with school staff (BASELINE = 3.73 to POST = 3.85)

Conversely, we observed decreases between BASELINE and POST on many of indicators of knowledge of School District Systems and knowledge of the Community Service System. In particular we find significant decreases over time in:

- 7 The average of the four "School District System knowledge" indicators (BASELINE = 2.92 to POST = 2.80)
- 7 *Knowledge of community agencies that could help my family* (BASELINE = 2.70 to POST = 2.45)
- 7 *Knowledge of where to go for help with problems* (BASELINE = 2.74 to POST = 2.54)
- 7 *Awareness of available resources* (BASELINE = 2.64 to POST = 2.43)
- 7 The average of the four "community service system knowledge" indicators (BASELINE = 2.70 to POST = 2.48)

TABLE 5.4: Comparison Of Indicators – Baseline to Post

Indicator	N	BASELINE Average	POST Average	p
Increased attendance at school activities (1-3 scale)	191	2.39	2.50	*
Increased involvement in helping with homework needs (1-4 scale)	201	3.49	3.53	
Increased knowledge of how to arrange bus transportation (1-4 scale)	167	3.07	2.92	
Increased knowledge of services provided by school support staff (1-4 scale)	202	2.78	2.73	
Increased knowledge of what teachers, etc.. do at your school (1-4 scale)	202	2.99	2.99	
Increased knowledge of services provided by FSW (1-4 scale)	203	2.85	2.71	
<i>AVERAGE of “Knowledge of School District System” Indicators</i>	<i>203</i>	<i>2.92</i>	<i>2.80</i>	<i>*</i>
Increased knowledge of community agencies that could help family (1-4 scale)	201	2.70	2.45	*
Increased knowledge of where to go for help with problems (1-4 scale)	195	2.74	2.54	*
Increased awareness of available resources (1-4 scale)	197	2.64	2.43	*
<i>AVERAGE of “Knowledge of community service system” Indicators</i>	<i>203</i>	<i>2.70</i>	<i>2.48</i>	<i>*</i>
Comfort with ability to get support for parenting concerns (1-4 scale)	197	3.23	3.22	
Comfort with ability to make decisions for family (1-4 scale)	199	3.81	3.77	
Willing to talk about child’s educational needs with school staff (1-4 scale)	201	3.73	3.85	*

* Significant change at $p < .05$ based on paired samples t-test

ANALYSIS BY CONTACTS

We further addressed the question of whether the level of change over time was related to a parent's level of contact with the FSW program. Using matched data from the Monthly Needs reports submitted by the FSWs, it was possible to compute the number of contacts a parent had with the program over the course of the school year. We then conducted a series of paired sample t-tests within different subgroups -- ≤ 3 contacts, 4-5 contacts, 6-9 contacts, and 10+ contacts – to assess whether the overall differences we observed are attributable to those parents with more or less contact with the program.

For the most part there were few significant changes over time on survey indicators across the different subgroups. In fact, in the **6-9 contacts** subgroup there were no instances of a significant increase or decrease over time. In particular we observed in the other subgroups:

≤ 3 Contacts

- 7 Significant decrease in *knowledge of community agencies that could help my family* (BASELINE = 2.85 to POST = 2.48)
- 7 Significant decrease in *comfort with ability to get support for parenting concerns* (BASELINE=3.44 to POST=3.10)

4-5 Contacts

- 7 Significant increase in *attendance at school activities* (BASELINE = 2.24 to POST = 2.55)

10+ Contacts

- 7 Significant increase in willingness to talk about child's educational needs with the school staff (BASELINE = 3.69 to POST = 3.88)

It is uncertain whether there is a true association between levels of contact and changes in outcome measures. While we do see that some of the decrease in the *knowledge of community agencies* is more apparent for those with less contact, in general the patterns observed for those with less contact are similar to those with greater program contact. The one interesting finding, though, is the significant decrease in *comfort with ability to get support for parenting concerns* among those with the least amount of contact. If you recall, in the overall sample there was virtually no change in this measure over time. This does suggest that continued work with families may assist them to find greater sources of support.

ANALYTIC ISSUES

There are some issues related to administration of the surveys and collection of the data that may have an impact on the observed results. The first concern we alluded to earlier in the discussion is the fact that for many families the first survey administration was not a true baseline. For some families they, in fact, received the survey after prior contacts with the program. It was also discovered that in many instances the survey was administered at the completion of the first session with parent rather than prior to the session. This was problematic because quite often the survey responses were collected directly after the provision of a service, potentially making respondents more reluctant to offer any “negative” assessments of their skills and capacities. In sum, it is likely that the change demonstrated over time is somewhat understated given that many families had already “improved” prior to the period of data collection.

A second concern pertained to question wording. As is the case in many surveys we relied on parent’s subjective assessments of their skills and capabilities. This particular survey asked the parents to rate their “comfort with your ability to get support for your parenting concerns” and “comfort with your ability to make decisions for your family”. There is some belief that parents would be somewhat reluctant to offer negative assessments about these skills, especially in the context of a program where they are seeking help and guidance. This may account for the high averages on many items at Baseline, and thus the inability to see substantial improvement over time.

A third concern related directly to the administration of the surveys. In concurrent evaluation assessments of the FSWs, it was apparent that many felt that administering such a survey in the midst of delivering a direct service would be considered as an imposition or intrusion by the parents being served. While the FSWs understood the purpose and importance of the survey data, many did feel that the survey took time away from working with the families and in some instances made the parents feel less comfortable during program activities.

SECTION 6: PARENT FOCUS GROUPS

As previously discussed, ORS and the FSW evaluation team identified several key *parent/family* and *child* level outcomes intended to assess the impact of the program on the families they serve. In addition to these key outcomes, FSW staff expressed their desire for information about program services that could be used for program development. Specifically, FSW staff wanted to know whether the services being provided to families were accessible, relevant and useful; whether program services were culturally appropriate and respectful, whether services were meeting families' needs, and whether there were specific ways that the program could better serve families.

In order to explore these issues, ORS and the FSW evaluation team decided to conduct focus groups with parents whose families had received services from the FSW program. In May and June 2001, ORS conducted six focus groups with parents—four focus groups with English-speaking parents and two focus groups with non-English-speaking parents. A summary of these focus groups follows.

METHODS

- 7 Four sites were selected for English-speaking parent focus groups. Sites were community centers in the North (University Heights), Central (Garfield), South (Rainier Beach) and West Seattle (High Point) regions.
- 7 Information about the focus groups and invitations to participate were mailed to a sample of approximately 1000 English-speaking families. These families were selected based on the number of contacts they had with a family support worker during the course of the school year.
- 7 Approximately 50 parents responded, and the four focus groups were filled with up to 10 individuals using a “first responded/first selected” process.
- 7 All parents received a \$25 reimbursement for their expenses.
- 7 Two ORS staff members facilitated the focus groups with English-speaking families. In each focus group, two family support workers were also present to help answer specific questions about the program. FSWs also “debriefed” with ORS staff after each focus group.
- 7 Because the FSW program also serves a significant number of non-English speaking families, two additional focus groups were arranged—one for Vietnamese-speaking families and one for Spanish-speaking families. FSWs and interpretative assistants conducted personalized outreach to recruit up to 10 Vietnamese-speaking and 10 Spanish-speaking parents for each focus group. These focus groups were conducted in Vietnamese and Spanish, respectively, and were facilitated by interpretive assistants.

- 7 Focus group discussions were guided by nine open-ended questions originally developed by the FSW evaluation team (see APPENDIX C).

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Parents' Experiences and Perceptions of the Program

In describing how they had received help from the FSW program, parents most frequently mentioned that the program provides material resources such as food, clothing, winter coats, shoes, school uniforms, holiday gifts, back packs, school supplies and some house wares. Parents stated that FSWs had offered their families specific resources such as access to Operation School Bell (clothes, shoes, coats), the Seattle Milk Fund, and gift certificates to stores such as Target and Fred Meyer. One parent stated that the FSW at her children's school helped her to get a washer and dryer.

- 7 I have received clothes, coupons for food and toys at Christmas for the last five years. [The FSW] sends food to my house. I have received lots of help.
- 7 I moved here from out of state...I was amazed at the services [my FSW] offered—food vouchers, winter coats, shoes for my kids. Christmas presents for my family. I can't think of anything that she has not offered.
- 7 I'm a foster mom...these kids came with nothing, you know and I'm just like a new mom, nervous. But [the FSW] came with food, clothing...and that made a big difference. I don't think there is anything that I have really needed for my children—except for a new house—that [my FSW] has not gotten for me.
- 7 [My FSW] will call and say 'we got shoe vouchers in. Do you need shoes for the kids? Or 'we got some coats right now, what do you need?'
- 7 I have seven kids...[my FSW] sees about my children. I'm not a parent who goes to the school...if I needed uniforms, she'd see it. I didn't even have to ask. She'll do it for me.
- 7 My daughters have been helped by receiving shoes, uniforms and backpacks. It has been very good help for them.
- 7 [My FSW] was a big help at Christmas, a big help. We got food vouchers and my kids got presents. I was so happy about that.

Several parents, especially Spanish-speaking and Vietnamese-speaking parents, mentioned that FSWs had provided help connecting them to health/medical services.

- 7 I got medical coupons for two years, when I wasn't working.

- 7 [The FSW] knew how to get coupons for medical services. Thanks to her, I've been able to get help not just for me but for my whole family.

Some parents also described how FSWs provided information and referrals to other needed services such as food banks, childcare, parenting resources, and counseling.

- 7 If [my FSW] doesn't have [something I need], she can tell me where to find it.

Several parents mentioned that FSWs had provided advocacy and support in the school setting. Parents mentioned having FSWs sit in with them at SITs, or other school staffings, and receiving help advocating for their children with special needs.

Some parents also mentioned how FSWs had provided more personal support to them or their families, such as helping with a family move, providing transportation for their children, going out of their way to come up with resources or support during a difficult time, or just being a friend.

- 7 I know not every FSW will do this, but [my FSW] bent over backwards for us...
- 7 I was laid off, and [my FSW] heard this and came up to me and asked me if I needed anything.
- 7 When I got divorced, I didn't see how this was affecting my kids. [My FSW] helped me realize how my kids were being affected and she found a counselor who came to their school and talked with them once a week.
- 7 As a foster parent, I have had an FSW pick up my child for school and drop him off, and this is so important because school is a constant.
- 7 My child has [special needs], and I can call the FSW for help or assistance...I have an open line of communication.
- 7 [My FSW] is a regular person...she's a good friend of mine.

HOW PARENTS GOT CONNECTED WITH THE PROGRAM

Several parents mentioned that they had heard about the program and its services through outreach done at their child's school (e.g. through flyers, newsletters, or the school newspaper). However, many parents said they had no idea what types of services the program could offer until an FSW approached them and offered specific kinds of help.

- 7 I really did not know what [the FSW] could offer until she called me... It was amazing. I guess they are kind of vague because they don't want everyone calling them for everything.

- 7 I didn't really know what was available...I found out by accident. [The program] isn't very well advertised.
- 7 It feels like its sort of left up to families to find out about the program on their own.
- 7 I got involved when my child got ill...otherwise, I wouldn't have known about it.

One parent talked about how the FSW at her child's school had approached her when she got laid off and asked if she needed any help or support. She said she was grateful for the assistance, but explained that she could have used some help even when she was working. However, she didn't know what services were available, or that she could call and ask for things.

For non-English speaking parents, uncertainty about how to access the program and its services is even more apparent. Vietnamese and Spanish-speaking parents seemed totally unsure how they would find out about FSW program services, or who they would call if they needed help or support. Most parents said they only knew of the program services when their children would come home with shoes, coats, clothes or toys.

- 7 No one has told me about the program. My children just come home with gifts.
- 7 I don't know who is the support worker at my child's school, but I'm happy that she can help my kids.

As parents talked within the focus groups, it became clear that there were different resources available at the different schools. Parents whose children had attended more than one school also talked about how available FSW program resources, services and supports were different depending on the school. Through conversation, it seems that these differences are most attributable to differing levels of involvement/support from within the school building (school resources, PTA, other parent volunteers), personality of the FSW ("*mine is so aggressive...she will find anything you need*"), and the overall level of need at the school.

Several parents mentioned that they would like more information about what the program can offer and how to receive help/resources when needed. One Spanish-speaking parent mentioned that program access could be improved if "[*my FSW*] talked to me, not just to my kids."

Parents' Perceptions Regarding how well the FSW Program Responds to People of Different Cultural, Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds

Overall, this did not appear to be an issue in any of the focus groups. Parents described their interaction with the FSW program as totally respectful and fair. Even non-English speaking parents, who clearly faced some language and access barriers with regard to the FSW program, seemed totally comfortable with how their families were treated.

Some Caucasian women stated that they had especially appreciated getting help from the FSW program because sometimes they "fall through the cracks" and don't qualify for certain social services.

Despite feeling good about the FSW program's cultural responsiveness, several parents commented that their children's schools were not as culturally sensitive. Some parents felt they had been negatively judged on their personal characteristics by school building staff (teachers and office staff were most frequently mentioned, but some parents had felt judged by the school principal as well). One parent mentioned that she felt that the schools' lack of cultural sensitivity had less to do with race and ethnicity and more to do with a failure to recognize/accommodate the needs of working parents—e.g. its more difficult for working parents to attend day time teacher conferences, SITs, staffings.

Parents' Perceptions Regarding Confidentiality/Trust

In general, parents perceptions about whether they would feel comfortable talking with their FSWs about personal or confidential issues seemed to depend largely on parents' relationship with the FSW. Additionally, some parents clearly saw the program's primary activity as to provide material assistance and they were not inclined to approach the FSW with personal problems and/or needs. Parents who did have strong relationships with their FSWs did say that there were totally comfortable approaching FSWs with confidential issues and many parents said that they could talk to the FSW much more comfortably than they could talk with anyone else at the school building.

Parents' Satisfaction with Program Services

In general parents expressed that they were very, very happy with program services. Many parents talked about how the FSWs they knew had gone over and above all job expectations to help them. Parents described how FSWs had helped them move, had provided money out of their own pockets at times, or had worked long hours to help a family in a time of need. Parents also described how FSWs had approached them and offered help when parents were desperate and didn't know where else to turn. While most parents felt that the range and type of services provided was helpful and satisfactory, some parents felt (and some were very adamant!) that the program could/should do more, perhaps most especially in the area of transportation (helping families, kids get bus tokens to travel to and from school, providing assistance arranging transportation to/from after-school and summertime activities, etc.)

Other ways parents thought the program could expand its services included: offering parent support groups, offering more resources/assistance, offering English classes for non-English speaking parents, offering special assistance accessing job training and/or employment.

While parents were very grateful for the program services, Some parents mentioned they felt there was a stigma attached to the program or they feel ashamed or guilty asking for help. One parent described how most of the families connected with her children's school are middle class and how that leads to many assumptions—such as the fact that families will always be able to pay for extra activities, field trips, etc. This parent described how it can be difficult and embarrassing to ask for help in those circumstances.

Some parents described how they occasionally felt guilty asking for help from the program.

- 7 I'm working, and I know I should be able to provide for my family, but sometimes I do need the help.
- 7 I hate to ask, because I've already received so much, and I know there are others who probably need it even more than me.
- 7 Sometimes I feel guilty because I get so much help. So sometimes I don't ask.

Several Vietnamese and Spanish-speaking parents, while clearly grateful for the help and support received, expressed slight discomfort that the program provided so many things they didn't have to pay for.

- 7 I asked my daughter 'where did you get [these shoes]?' She said 'from the school.' I asked 'do we have to pay?' She said 'no.' It is good, but I'm not comfortable getting things for free.
- 7 I'm not used to receiving things for free. I'm thankful for the help, but sometimes I feel guilty. I tell my children 'don't ask for things,' but if they receive them I am glad. I just don't want them to ask.

Some parents mentioned that they had different experiences in different schools—one FSW was very much aware, engaged, provided lots of services while FSW at another school was not as responsive. Differences in services seemed to be the result of different school building environments, different personalities of FSWs, and perhaps different types of resources available.

FSW Program and Child Involvement

Parents described how the FSW program has helped many kids get involved in in-school activities such as tutoring, and out-of-school activities such as after-school programs, summer day camps, sports programs.

FSW Program and Parent Involvement

While parents indicated that they were appreciative that the FSW program had encouraged them to participate in school activities, they indicated that, overall, their participation in school activities is low. The reasons parents don't participate in school activities seemed to have nothing to do with the FSW programs per se—rather parents talked about their work schedules, their need/desire to take care of other family matters, and sometimes their negative feelings about the school building environment. When asked what the FSW program could do to help parents become more involved, most parents expressed that the issue was beyond the scope of the program.

SECTION 7: SCHOOL STAFF SURVEY

Early in the evaluation process, ORS and the FSW evaluation team identified several key program outcomes, including four school level outcomes. In order to explore these outcomes, ORS and the FSW evaluation team designed a short survey to be administered with a sample of school staff. The school-level outcomes are shown in **TABLE 7.1** below

TABLE 7.1 School Level Outcomes

Outcomes	Indicators	Tools
(10) School staff is aware and knowledgeable of the services provided by FSW in school	7 School staff are aware of important services such as helping families with basic needs, finding and/or utilizing community resources, and finding and/or utilizing school resources	School Staff Survey
(11) School staff have greater knowledge of how different social factors impact a child's school performance	7 School staff are aware of different social and health factors faced by students 7 School staff know how different social and health factors impact school performance	School Staff Survey
(12) School staff demonstrate greater collaboration with FSW program	7 School staff see FSWs as part of the school team 7 School staff communicate regularly with FSW about student, family and school issues	School Staff Survey
(13) Teachers report they spend more time teaching students and less time dealing with students' social service needs	7 Teachers report they spend more time teaching students and less time dealing with students' social service needs	School Staff Survey

In addition to exploring the school-level outcomes, the FSW evaluation team expressed interest in exploring school staffs' perceptions of the FSW program so that this information could be used for program development. Specifically, FSW program staff wanted to know how school staff viewed the program, whether the services being provided to families were relevant and useful; whether program services were culturally appropriate and respectful, whether services were satisfactory to schools and whether there were specific ways that the program could better serve schools and families.

In October and November 2001, a survey was administered to staff in 16 elementary schools throughout Seattle. A brief summary of the results of this survey follows.

METHODS

In order to obtain information regarding school staffs' perceptions of the FSW Program, a survey was developed collaboratively by the FSW Evaluation Team and Organizational Research Services. The survey contained a mix of closed-ended and open-ended items designed to elicit feedback on a number of topics of interest as well as allow for more general comments regarding the FSW Program.

ORS randomly selected 16 elementary schools to participate in the survey. The 16-school sample included 4 schools from each of 4 city regions—North, South, Central and West Seattle. In October 2001, school principals at the 16 selected schools received information about the survey in the mail. ORS made follow-up phone calls to each principal to review the survey purpose and administration process, and answer any questions. All 16 schools agreed to participate in the survey. With the majority of schools, ORS made arrangements with the principal to have school staff complete surveys at an upcoming staff meeting. Completed surveys were then left in an envelope with the principal or other designated school staff person, and a representative of ORS picked up completed surveys at each school. In a few cases, principals took responsibility to distribute and collect surveys among school staff themselves and returned completed surveys to ORS by mail. By November 2001, 258 surveys were returned from staff at 16 schools.

RESULTS OF SCHOOL STAFF SURVEY

Description of Participants

The 258 surveys returned represent a variety of school staff including principals, teachers, counselors, nurses, instructional assistants, office staff and other school staff. The survey asked staff to indicate their role within the school, and **TABLE 7.2** below describes the sample in terms of job role.

TABLE 7.2 Roles of School Staff Survey Respondents

Role	N
Teacher	178
Instructional Assistant	22
Other*	19
Office Staff	17
Principal/Asst. Principal	13
Counselor	4
Nurse	3
Total	256

*includes tutors, parent coordinators, support staff, librarians

As mentioned above, the 16 schools comprising the sample included four schools from each of four city regions. **TABLE 7.3** below shows the distribution across these four regions. Relative to the other three regions, a larger percentage of survey responses came from the South region.

TABLE 7.3. Survey Responses By City Regions

Region	N	Percent
North	48	19%
South	92	36%
West	60	23%
Central	58	22%
Total	258	100%

As mentioned above, the survey was designed to explore school staffs' perceptions of the FSW Program. FSW Program staff identified several specific areas of interest. One area of interest concerned school staffs' perceptions of the most important services provided by the FSW program. School staff were asked to select the three most important FSW program service areas from a list of twelve services. **TABLE 7.4** shows how school staff ranked these service areas in order of importance. **TABLE 7.5** shows the five most important FSW service areas identified by school staff according to their job role.

Overall, 80 percent of respondents indicated that **helping families meet basic needs** was one of the most important services that FSWs provide. As shown in **TABLE 7.5**, all staff regardless of their role identified this FSW program service area as **most important**.

Nearly 60% of respondents identified **helping families find and/or utilize community resources** as one of the most important services that FSWs provide. As shown in the table, all staff regardless of their role identified this FSW program service area as **second most important**.

Overall, 30 percent of respondents identified **helping families meet health or medical needs** as one of the most important services that FSWs provide. Although apparent differences across staff roles may be exaggerated due to small samples, it is interesting to note that teachers and office staff and others identified this area as more important than did principals and IAs, counselors and nurses.

Overall, 27.8% of respondents identified **providing support to parents regarding their child's educational needs** as one of the most important services FSWs provide. Again, we must view differences across staff roles with caution because of small samples. However, it is worth noting that while approximately one quarter of teachers indicated this FSW service area was one of the most important, almost half of principals viewed this service area as one of the most important.

Nearly one quarter (23%) of respondents identified **providing general support within the school building** as one of the most important services FSWs provide. About one third of principals and office staff and others, respectively, viewed this FSW service area as important while teachers and IAs, counselors and nurses viewed it as less important.

Overall, just over 90 percent of respondents stated that **providing support to children whose families are experiencing domestic violence** is not as important as other services that FSWs provide. While no principals identified this service area as important, all other staff identified this area as at least nominally important. Further, 96% of respondents stated that **providing support to children whose families are experiencing substance abuse issues** is not as important as other services that FSWs provide. None of the principals identified this service area as important.

95 percent of respondents stated that **providing supervision in the cafeteria, at recess and during bus loading/unloading** is not as important as other services that FSW's provide.

TABLE 7.4 School Staffs' Rank of FSW Service Areas In Order Of Importance

Service Area	Percent Of Respondents Who Identified Service Area As One Of 3 Most Important
Help families meet basic needs	80.2%
Help families find/utilize community resources	58.3%
Help families meet health/medical needs	30.2%
Provide support to parents regarding child's educational needs	27.8%
Provide general support within the school building	23.0%
Help families find/utilize school resources	22.1%
Facilitate parental involvement within the school building	15.1%
Help children become involved in out-of-school time activities	14.7%
Provide support to children whose families who are experiencing domestic violence	9.5%
Provide supervision in the cafeteria, at recess, during bus loading/unloading	4.8%
Provide support to children whose families are experiencing substance use	4.4%
Provide other important services	4.4%

TABLE 7.5. Most Important FSW Service Areas Identified by Staff Role

Role	N	Most Important FSW Service Areas
Principal/Assistant Principal	13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help families meet basic needs (76.9%) 2. Help families find/utilize community resources (69.2%) 3. Provide support to parents re: their child’s educational needs (46.2%) 4. Provide general support within the school building (30.8%); Help children become involved in out-of-school time activities (30.8%)
Teacher	172	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help families meet basic needs (82.0%) 2. Help families find/utilize community resources (58.7%) 3. Help families meet health/medical needs (30.2%) 4. Provide general support within the school building (22.7%) 5. Help families find/utilize school resources (22.5%)
Office Staff/Other	36	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help families meet basic needs (72.4%) 2. Help families find/utilize community resources (61.1%) 3. Help families meet health/medical needs (44.4%) 4. Provide general support within the school building (33.3%) 5. Help families find/utilize school resources (22.2%)
IA/Counselor/Nurse	29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help families meet basic needs (80.6%) 2. Help families find/utilize community resources (51.7%) 3. Help families find/utilize school resources (31.0%) 4. Provides support to parents regarding their child’s education needs (24.1%) 5. Help families meet health/medical needs (17.2%)

Looking at the first school-level outcome, it appears that the vast majority (94%) of school staff are aware of FSW Program services. However, 6 percent of school staff surveyed indicated that they were unsure what services the FSW program provided (see **TABLE 7.6**). Among IAs, counselors and nurses, 14 percent of respondents were unsure about what services FSWs provide.

TABLE 7.6: I am unsure of what services the FSW Program provides

	N	No	Yes
Overall	252	93.7%	6.3%
By Role			
Principal/ Assistant Principal	13	100%	0%
Teacher	172	94.8%	5.2%
Office Staff/Other	36	94.4%	5.6%
Instructional Assistant/Counselor/Nurse	29	86.2%	13.8%

Overall, respondents indicated that the FSW program has helped them become at least somewhat more aware of the social and health factors experienced by students within their classroom/school (see **TABLE 7.7** below), exhibiting a mean score of 2.71 on a scale of 1 to 4 (with 1 being “not at all aware” and 4 being “very much more aware”).

Further, respondents indicated that the FSW program has helped them at least somewhat understand how the social and health factors experienced by students might impact their school performance, with a mean score of 2.60 on a scale of 1 to 4 (with 1 being “not at all” and 4 being “very much”).

There were no statistically significant differences in these items by region or by job role.

TABLE 7.7: Awareness of Students’ Social and Health Issues—Mean Scores

N	The FSW Program has helped staff become more aware of the social and health factors experienced by students within classroom/school	The FSW Program has helped staff understand how the social/health factors experienced by students might impact their school performance
245	2.71	2.60

Four-point scale defined as:

1 = not at all, 2 = somewhat, 3 = quite a bit, 4 = very much

While the third outcome is intended to look at how collaboration between school staff and FSWs in the school building might have increased or improved, it should be noted that the data presented here give a “snapshot” of school staff perceptions in this area. In the future, these data might provide a baseline against which to compare school staffs’ perceptions in the coming years.

Overall, respondents stated that it is “important” to have the FSW program as part of their school with a mean score of 3.69 on a 4-point scale (with 1 being “not important at all, and 4 being “very important”). There were no statistically significant differences in this item by region or job role.

TABLE 7.8: Perceptions Regarding Importance of FSW Program Within the School—Mean Score

N	How important is it to you to have the Family Support Worker Program as part of your school?
254	3.69

Scale: 1 – not important at all, 2 – somewhat important, 3 – important, 4 – very important

Overall, respondents indicated that they communicate somewhat often with FSW program staff with regards to students’ issues, family issues, and school issues with mean scores of 2.60, 2.46 and 2.42 respectively on a 4-point scale (with 1 being “not often at all” and 4 being “very often”). There were no statistically significant differences by region or job role.

TABLE 7.9: Frequency of Communication between FSWs and School Staff—Mean Scores

N	Regarding students' issues	Regarding family issues	Regarding school issues
248	2.60	2.46	2.42

Scale defined as:

1 = not often at all, 2 = somewhat often, 3 = often, 4 = very often

Further, respondents generally agree that the FSW is a critical part of the school team with a mean score of 3.54 on a 4-point scale (with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 4 being “strongly agree”). There are some slight differences in this item by region with the Central region showing most agreement (mean score = 3.66), but these differences are not statistically significant (see **TABLE 7.10**). There are also differences in this item by job role, with principals being most likely to view FSWs as a critical part of the school team (mean score = 3.92) and counselors, IAs and nurses being least likely to do so (mean score = 3.22). However, these differences are not statistically significant.

TABLE 7.10 : Perception Regarding FSW as Part of School Team—Mean Score

	N	The Family Support Worker at my school is a critical part of the school team
Overall	248	3.54
Region		
North	48	3.33
South	87	3.56
West	57	3.54
Central	56	3.66
Role		
Principals	13	3.92
Teacher	175	3.54
Office Staff/Other	36	3.67
Counselor/IA/Nurse	28	3.22

1 =strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = strongly agree Four point scale defined as:

FSWs also wanted to learn whether the services provided by FSWs within schools allowed teachers to spend more of their time on teaching, instead of focusing on student social and health needs.

Teachers indicated that they “somewhat agree” that having a FSW in their school allows them to spend more time teaching and less time focusing on students’ health/social needs, with a mean score of 3.10 on a 4-point scale (with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 4 being “strongly agree”).

While there were slight differences in mean scores on this item by region (see **TABLE 7.11**), with teachers in the Central region reporting the most agreement (mean score = 3.24), these differences are not statistically significant.

TABLE 7.11: Having An FSW In The School Allows Teachers To Spend More Time Teaching And Less Time Focusing On Student Social/Health Needs—Mean Score

	N	Having a family support worker in my school allows me to spend more time teaching and less time focusing on students' social/health needs
TEACHERS OVERALL	176	3.10
Region		
North	28	2.96
South	57	3.07
West	50	3.08
Central	41	3.24

Four-point scale defined as:

1 = strongly disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = strongly agree

Meeting student and family needs, and working effectively with the racial, linguistic, and cultural diversities of families have been identified by FSW program staff as strong program values. Therefore, in addition to exploring the school-level outcomes identified, the FSW evaluation team was also interested in exploring school staffs' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the FSW program and how the program was meeting the needs of students and families.

Respondents indicated that FSW's were "effective" in addressing student needs, families' needs and working with the racial, linguistic and cultural diversities of families. **TABLE 7.12** below shows mean scores for each item. There were no statistically significant differences in these items by region or job role.

Overall, respondents agree that the services FSWs provide help students and families meet important social/health needs with a mean score of 3.54 on a 4-point scale (with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 4 being "strongly agree"). There were slight differences in this item by region, with the Central region showing the most agreement, but these differences were not statistically significant. There were also slight differences in this item by job role, with principals showing most agreement (mean score = 3.92) and counselors, IAs and nurses showing least agreement (mean score = 3.41).

TABLE 7.12: Perceptions of FSW Effectiveness—Mean Scores

	N	Addressing student needs	Addressing families' needs	Working with diversities of families within your school building
Overall	248	3.25	3.21	3.16

Four-point scale defined as:

1 = not effective at all, 2 = somewhat effective, 3 = effective, 4 =very effective

TABLE 7.13: Perception of FSW Program Services as Helping Students and Families Met Important Social/Health Needs—Mean Score.

	N	The services provided by the FSW program help students and families meet important social/health needs
Overall	246	3.54
Region		
North	47	3.60
South	87	3.48
West	55	3.44
Central	57	3.70
Role		
Principals	13	3.92
Teacher	175	3.51
Office Staff/Other	36	3.72
Counselor/IA/Nurse	28	3.41

Finally, one of the objectives of the FSW Program is to help families in need obtain medical insurance and services for their children. FSW Program staff wanted to explore the extent to which school staff were aware of this program service.

Overall, the majority (73%) of respondents stated that they were unaware of resources in their school that help families enroll in free or low-cost health insurance (see **TABLE 7.14**). There were some slight differences by region, with school staff in the West region being less aware of these resources and staff in the North and Central regions being most aware. There were also differences by job role, with principals being most aware of these resources and teachers being least aware.

TABLE 7.14: Are you Aware of Resources in Your School That Help families Enroll in Free or Low-Cost Health Insurance?

	N	No	Yes
Overall	233	73.0%	27.0%
By Region			
North	45	66.7%	33.3%
South	81	71.6%	28.4%
West	53	86.8%	13.2%
Central	54	66.7%	33.3%
By Role			
Principals	10	40.0%	60.0%
Teachers	164	78.0%	22.0%
Office Staff/Other	32	68.8%	31.3%
Counselors/IAs/Nurses	25	60.0%	40.0%

Of those respondents that were aware of free or low-cost health insurance resources within the school, 38 percent stated that the FSW program provided these resources. Other resources named by school staff are shown in the table below.

TABLE 7.15. Free/Low-Cost Insurance Resources

Resource	N	Percent
FSW Program	24	38.0%
Information sent home	17	27.0%
Special programs through school	10	15.8%
Nurse	9	14.2%
Posters in building	3	4.7%
Total	63	100%

SECTION 8: STAFF SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS

While most of this project focused on an evaluation of the impact of the FSW program on parents, families and schools, there was also interest in understanding more about needs and requirements of the program and its staff. The primary focus was to assess the staff perceptions of the program, of their satisfaction with their position and role in the program and their opinions about opportunities to learn and grow in the program. This information is particularly useful for the management staff in developing and coordinating program activities and functions.

During an in-service day for the FSWs, ORS engaged in the collection of data for the FSW staff evaluation. The first part of the session consisted of administration of a survey (see APPENDIX E) developed collaboratively by ORS and the FSW evaluation team. The second part of the session included six focus groups. ORS and the FSW evaluation team developed the questions collaboratively and an ORS employee facilitated these groups. The focus groups were broken down into two sessions. The first session consisted of three groups of approximately six FSWs that were asked a set of identical questions. The second session also consisted of three groups of approximately six FSWs who were asked another set of identical questions (see APPENDIX F).

METHODS

The survey was administered to forty-two FSWs. Seven closed-ended questions asked the FSWs to rate their *level of satisfaction*¹ with regards to supervision, the Medicaid team, personal needs support and the amount and process of communication. Six closed-ended questions asked the FSWs to rate their *level of agreement*² on issues regarding availability of resources, professional growth opportunities and workload management. Six open-ended questions asked the FSWs to provide examples of supervision that were both helpful and not helpful, to describe resources used and resources needed to better serve families and to discuss possible training activities that would provide professional growth.

There were six structured questions discussed in the focus groups. Participants were encouraged to discuss issues related to their work and provide information about their work-related experiences. The questions addressed:

- 7 Levels of support from the FSW management staff and from the schools
- 7 Communication with the FSW management staff, FSW program leads and the school staff
- 7 Strategies for prioritizing and managing workload

¹ 1 = very satisfied, 2 = somewhat satisfied, 3 = a little satisfied, 4 = not at all satisfied

² 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree

- 7 Job expectations of FSW management staff, parents and school staff
- 7 Challenges or difficulties in helping families in school settings.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Most FSWs report that they are satisfied with regards to supervision and support provided by the FSW management staff, and with their level of communication with the staff. However, several FSWs report that there is a need for *more professional growth training activities and opportunities* though this may be more of a District Personnel issue than something the program can address directly. Additionally, although most FSWs report that they are satisfied with resources and support provided by the FSW management staff, many stated that there is a greater need for transportation resources and services.

Supervision (see TABLES 8.1 and 8.2)

- 7 **Over 69 percent are “very satisfied” with FSW management supervision.**

When I first began as a FSW, I was placed in a storage closet and was told this was to be my office. The FSW management team was very quick to come to my aid and secure an office which helped make the parents I serve feel comfortable.

- 7 **Two-thirds are “very satisfied” with principal supervision.**

Having full support of principal is key so that they understand your role in the school.

TABLE 8.1: How satisfied are you with the supervision provided to you by the FSW management staff?

	N	Percent
Very satisfied	27	69.2%
Somewhat satisfied	7	17.9%
A little satisfied	3	7.7%
Not at all satisfied	2	5.1%

TABLE 8.2: How satisfied are you with the supervision provided to you by the principal at your school?

	N	Percent
Very satisfied	26	66.7%
Somewhat satisfied	7	18.0%
A little satisfied	0	0.0%
Not at all satisfied	6	14.3%

Medicaid Team

- 7 Over 90 percent of those familiar with Medicaid services are “very satisfied” with the services provided by the Medicaid team.

The Medicaid team has been very helpful.

Personal Needs (see TABLE 8.3)

- 7 Almost 62 percent are “very satisfied” with personal needs support provided by FSW management staff.

My first Puberty Night I had an emergency with one of my sons. I was not able to attend and an FSW management staff person showed up at my school, served food, wiped tables – I had no idea she was there until a few days later when our nurse mentioned it.

TABLE 8.3: How satisfied are you with the support provided by the FSW management staff to help you address your own personal needs?

	N	Percent
Very satisfied	26	61.9%
Somewhat satisfied	13	31.0%
A little satisfied	1	2.4%
Not at all satisfied	2	4.8%

Communication (see TABLES 8.4 – 8.6)

- 7 Over 62 percent are “very satisfied” with the amount of communication with school staff
- 7 Over 52 percent are “very satisfied” with the amount of communication with FSW staff
- 7 Almost 43 percent are “very satisfied” with the process of communication with FSW staff

TABLE 8.4: How satisfied are you with the amount of communication you have with the staff at the school work in, including the principal, counselors and teachers?

	N	Percent
Very satisfied	25	62.5%
Somewhat satisfied	14	35.0%
A little satisfied	1	2.5%
Not at all satisfied	0	0.0%

TABLE 8.5: How satisfied are you with the Amount of Communication you have with the FSW staff, including other FSWs, team leads and the FSW management staff?

	N	Percent
Very satisfied	22	52.4%
Somewhat satisfied	14	33.3%
A little satisfied	4	9.5%
Not at all satisfied	2	4.8%

TABLE 8.6: How satisfied are you with the Process of Communication with the FSW program? (including team/lead structure)

	N	Percent
Very satisfied	18	42.9%
Somewhat satisfied	18	42.9%
A little satisfied	5	11.9%
Not at all satisfied	1	2.4%

Resources (see TABLE 8.7 – 8.9)

- 7 Over 85 percent “agree or “strongly agree” that they have necessary resources to serve families
- 7 Over 85 percent “agree or “strongly agree” that it is easy to access program resources
- 7 Over 75 percent “agree or “strongly agree” that it is easy to access community resources
- 7 The most commonly reported resources used are: “*Operation School Bell*”, “*Seattle Milk Fund*” and “*FSW program food vouchers*”
- 7 Many FSWs report they need more transportation resources and support because they do so much driving as part of their job.

We help families coordinate moves, and it would be good to have better access to a van/truck for this kind of thing.

TABLE 8.7: “I feel I have the resources necessary to help the families I serve”.

	N	Percent
Strongly agree	14	33.3%
Agree	22	52.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	7.1%
Disagree	1	2.4%
Strongly disagree	2	4.8%

TABLE 8.8: “I feel it is easy to access the program resources I need to help families”.

	N	Percent
Strongly agree	17	40.5%
Agree	19	45.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	4.8%
Disagree	3	7.1%
Strongly disagree	1	2.4%

TABLE 8.9: “I feel it is easy to access the community resources I need to help families”.

	N	Percent
Strongly agree	8	19.5%
Agree	23	56.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	9.8%
Disagree	6	14.6%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%

Professional Growth (see TABLES 8.10 and 8.11)

- 7 Over half of the Family Support Workers “agree” or “strongly agree” that growth and training opportunities offered by the program meet their professional needs.

A better understanding of the challenges in working with non-English speaking families such as citizenship issues.

- 7 Over half “agree” or “strongly agree” that they are satisfied with the opportunities for professional growth

More opportunities for financial support to pay for college tuition.

TABLE 8.10: “The current professional growth and training opportunities provided by the FSW program meet my professional needs”.

	N	Percent
Strongly agree	9	22.0%
Agree	12	29.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	29.3%
Disagree	5	12.2%
Strongly disagree	3	7.3%

TABLE 8.11: “I am satisfied with the current professional growth and training opportunities provided by the FSW program?”

	N	Percent
Strongly agree	8	19.5%
Agree	13	31.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	29.3%
Disagree	6	14.6%
Strongly disagree	2	4.9%

Workload (see TABLES 8.12 and 8.13)

- 7 About 2/3 of the staff “agree” or “strongly agree” that their current workload is manageable.
- 7 Over 85 percent feel that it is “somewhat easy” or “easy” to prioritize their workload.

I use ‘sticky notes’ for note taking because most of my work is done on the fly and there isn’t enough time to sit down and fill out a full report.

TABLE 8.12: How easy is it for you to prioritize the components of your workload?

	N	Percent
Very easy	19	45.2%
Somewhat easy	17	40.5%
Not east at all	6	14.3%

TABLE 8.13: “I feel that my current workload is manageable”.

	N	Percent
Strongly agree	11	26.2%
Agree	17	40.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	8	19.0%
Disagree	3	7.1%
Strongly disagree	3	7.1%

Additional Comments

I wish the FSW program would revisit issues related to resource allocation. We have schools with very different levels of need but are given the same resources. I believe that there may be way to allocate resources that would be more equitable (e.g. very high need school = 1.5 FSWs).

I feel that FSWs should be on a 204-day calendar and still get paid the same

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

The following is a short summary of themes that arose during the focus groups. A total of six focus groups were conducted, each facilitated by an ORS employee. The purpose of the focus groups was to provide the FSWs another outlet to state their concerns and provide experiences when working with families. In general, most FSWs reported that they were satisfied with the FSW program. However, several FSWs stated that they need more support with regards to transportation (“*We drive and move our families and students everywhere. We should get reimbursed for the wear and tear on our cars*”).

Since some of their work falls outside of their scope of work, many FSWs reported that the school staff need to be more informed about the FSW program so that they can work more effectively and directly with their families (“*Our job descriptions need to be more clearly stated so that we and school staff know what jobs we are capable of doing*”). Finally, FSWs stated that the amount of paperwork is overwhelming and thus interferes and limits their time with their families (“*You just do what needs to be done each day and somehow hope to get to it all*”).

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Support from the FSW management staff

- 7 FSWs indicated that perhaps their most supportive resources are each other.

Its easy to talk with one another. Sometimes we just call on each other for support rather than seek support from the management/main office.

- 7 Some FSWs expressed that they feel that the FSW management has a tendency to provide too much support.

It gets to the point where we rely on the office for everything and we don't develop our own resources like we should.

Support from the Staff at Your School for Your Work Serving Families

- 7 Most FSWs stated that they receive full support from the staff at their school.

We all have a good rapport – we all just work really well as a team.

How do you communicate ideas, questions, suggestions, or concerns to the FSW Management staff?

- 7 Some FSWs stated that communication is not an issue for them because the FSW staff has been supportive.

I just pick up the phone and talk with the person I need help from. If the issue requires a face-to-face conversation, we just set up a time that's convenient for all of us.

- 7 Others stated that communication can be a problem when trying to obtain information in a timely manner.

If you or your school are not in the north end and they ask you to come to the office, you have to drop whatever you're doing, drive through city traffic, only to find out that they needed you to fill out some paperwork that could have been taken care of either by fax or by e-mail.

How do you communicate ideas, questions, suggestions, or concerns to the management staff at your school?

- 7 Several FSWs stated that the location of their office poses a communication barrier between them and the school staff.

The location of an office is key. Some FSWs have offices that are in the building, while others are placed outside of the building in portables. I see our space as an afterthought...which speaks volumes about the program and our jobs.

- 7 Others stated that they have little or no concerns with communicating ideas, questions or concerns to the staff at their school.

Teachers, counselors, school psychologists and the principal, whether we're getting along or not, the communication is there.

Approaches or strategies you use to prioritize and manage your workload.

- 7 The most difficult thing reported by FSWs is all the paperwork. Most expressed that the amount of paperwork required of them is too much and it takes lots of time. This always falls to the bottom of the priority list and it tends to make the end of the month more hectic as they try to finish up all the paperwork.

I take my paperwork home with me since there is never enough time during the day to finish it.

- 7 Most FSWs stated, however, that their workload is strictly managed by the needs of their families.

Nobody sleeps on the street and nobody goes hungry – those are my top priorities – everything else gets done when I can get to it.

Are there things that Family Support Workers do on a regular basis which fall outside the scope of your job?

- 7 Several FSWs mentioned that some of what they do that falls outside the scope of their job involves listening to students and families and facilitating issues within the school. Several reported that their work is also “task-oriented” in serving school needs such as lunchroom or recess monitor.

I find that I do a lot of counseling with my students and families. Not just therapeutic counseling but just listening to them talk about issues such as domestic violence.

When there is a problem with a student, their teacher will find me to help with the problem. When the situation is taken care of, it makes me feel good that they came to me and I took care of it.

I spend a good part of my day either in the cafeteria or on the playground monitoring the kids. I wouldn't mind so much if it didn't interfere with my work so much.

FSW Management Staff expectations of your job

- 7 In terms of management expectations, several FSWs mentioned that coming back 3 weeks before school starts is unnecessary and felt that a 204-day schedule would be preferable. But in general, most FSWs reported that FSW management staff expectations are reasonable.

We need some down time so that we can catch up on our paper work. It would also allow us to check out other resources, workshops or trainings to make us better workers.

Parent's expectations of your job

- 7 It appears that parents have reasonable expectations of FSWs.

The parents are mostly just so grateful to be given resources or to have someone to talk to.

School Staff expectations of your job.

- 7 If the school staff understands and respects the true role of the FSW, the expectations are realistic. If the school staff is unaware or misinformed of the FSW role, FSWs are expected to do the “grunt work” in their school setting.

The program needs to do a face-lift to let everyone on the staff know what the program has to offer.

Are there any particular challenges or difficulties related to your school setting that you face in trying to help families at that school?

- 7 The most challenging aspect with the school setting is the lack of knowledge of the FSW role in the school setting.

Some staff are jealous of us because they see us coming and going from the school grounds and think that we're not working. The fact is that we're working very hard but I may need to leave the school in order to provide or find resources for my families.

APPENDIX A

Monthly Needs Reporting Form

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER – MONTHLY REPORTING FORM
 Month/Year _____

Student Name Student ID
 School _____ Current Referral Date _____ Current Referral _____
 Source _____

Progress/Status Statements:

- 1. No Progress and Ongoing
N=Need
- 2. No Progress and Completed
P=Progress (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5)
- 3. Partial Progress and Ongoing
- 4. Partial Progress and Completed
- 5. Full Progress and Completed

N√	BASIC NEEDS	P#
	CHILD CARE	
	Clothing	
	Food	
	Heat/Utilities	
	Housing	
	Housing Supplies	
	Community Resources	
	Transportation	

N√	HEALTH NEEDS	P#
	Child Dental	
	Child Health Care	
	Hygiene	
	Immunizations	
	Medicaid Ins. Project	
	Medical Insurance	
	Nutrition	
	Parent Dental	
	Parent Health Care	
	Vision Care	

N√	READINESS LEARN/ EDUCATION NEEDS <i>*CHILD ISSUES</i>	P#
	Academics/Grades	
	Attendance	
	Behavior/Emotional	
	Homework	
	On-Time Arrival	
	Outside Activities	
	Social Skills	
N√	<i>*PARENT INVOLVEMENT</i>	P#
	Access School Services	
	Attend School Meetings	
	Involved Homework	
	Enroll Child in School	
	Follow School Procedures/ Timelines	

N√	SOCIAL SERVICE NEEDS	P#
	Alcohol/Drug Use	
	Adopt/Foster Care	
	CPS	
	Counseling	
	Domestic Violence	
	Immigration	
	Mentoring	
	Tutoring	
	Support Group	

N√	ADULT NEEDS	P#
	Employment Assistance	
	English 2 nd Language	

Questions:

1. In the last month, excluding your FSW, how many different school staff members (i.e., teacher, principal, counselor, I.A., secretary) have you had a conversation with, spoken with, visited with?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more (Circle one)

	Job Training	
	Police/Probation/Court/ Legal Assistance	
	Parenting Skills	
	Translation/Interpreter	

2. In the last month, approximately how many times did you come to school to participate in an activity such as the parent-teacher conference, family night, parent workshop, open house, puberty night, or SIT meeting?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more (Circle one)

3. In the last month, approximately how many times did you volunteer your time for an activity or event at your child's school?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more (Circle one)

COMMENTS:

TYPE OF CONTACT								EXPLANATION
DATE	Home Visit	Phone Calls/ Letters	Parent/ School Visits	Teacher/Staff Contact	Transportation	Service Calls & Links	Child Contacts	
TOTAL								

FSW NAME

FSW SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX B

Parent Survey

Phone Call Attempts

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**Family Support Worker Program
Parent Post-Survey**

Child ID Number _____

School _____

Please take a moment to complete this survey. Your responses are important and will assist the Family Support Worker Program in improving our services to parents and families.

1. Have you had any contact with a Family Support Worker prior to this year?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know

2. How comfortable do you feel coming into the school building?

_____ Not at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

3. How often do you:

a) Attend school activities such as Parent/teacher conferences, Open Houses, Family Nights?

_____ Never _____ Sometimes _____ Often _____ N/A

b) How involved are you in helping with your child's homework needs (talking with teachers about assignments, arranging for your child to get additional help, attending conferences, etc?)

_____ Not at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

4. How much do you know about how to arrange bus transportation for your child?

_____ Nothing at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

5. How much do you know about the specific services provided by the support staff at your school (i.e., nurses, counselors, psychologists, special education staff?)

_____ Nothing at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

6. How much do you know about what teachers, administrative staff and principal do at your school?

_____ Nothing at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

7. How much do you know about the services provided by the Family Support Worker Program?

_____ Nothing at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

8. How willing are you to talk about your child's educational needs with his/her school staff, teachers, or principal?

_____ Not at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

9. How much do you know about community agencies that could help your family?

_____ Nothing at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

10. How much do you know about where to go for help with problems related to obtaining food, clothing, housing, or utilities for your family?

_____ Nothing at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

11. How aware are you of the resources available to help deal with a crisis in your family?

_____ Not at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

12. How comfortable do you feel with your ability to get support for your parenting concerns?

_____ Not at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

13. How comfortable do you feel with your ability to make decision for your family?

_____ Not at all _____ A little _____ Somewhat _____ Very

14. Approximately how many times did you have contact with the Family Support Worker program at your school in the last year?

_____ 1-2 _____ 3-4 _____ 5-7 _____ 8-10 _____ over 10

15. These final questions will help to give us a better understanding of the families we work with. How many children are in your household that:

Attend Seattle Public Schools? _____

How many are infants or in preschool? _____

How many are in elementary school? _____

Middle School? _____

High School? _____

If you have children in more than one elementary school, you may receive more than one call to complete this survey. If you do, we apologize for the inconvenience. Please let the caller know that you have already answered the questions.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THIS TIME TO ASSIST US!

APPENDIX C

Parents Focus Group Questions

FAMILIES FOCUS GROUP (draft 5/01)

1. Please describe what you know about the Family Support Worker program. What do you believe the program offers to parents, children, and families?

probe

- *Describe your family's experience with the program*

2. Do the services offered by the program help your family meet its needs? Which services have been more helpful in meeting these needs? Which services have been less helpful?

probes

- *Are there any particular family needs that are not well addressed by the FSW program staff? (note to facilitators, if need is related to culture, language, or ethnicity, probe further)*
- *What do you believe the program could do to better meet your family needs?*

3. Have you experienced any difficulties participating in the FSW program? What are some of the factors that have made it more difficult to participate? Are there any barriers to your participation related to the program setting, program facilities, or the accessibility to the program?

probes

- *Have you been able to overcome some of these barriers and difficulties? If so how?*
- *What more do you believe the FSW program could do make it easier for parents and families to participate in the program?*

4. Is the way in which the services are provided by the FSW program different from what you experienced with other social service providers? If so, how?

- *How is the relationship and/or level of trust with the FSW program different than other social service providers?*

5. Are you comfortable discussing confidential issues with your Family Support Worker? If not, what might be done to increase your comfort level?

6. How well do you think the FSW program responds to people of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds? How well do you think the FSW program responds to families that speak languages other than English? (note to facilitators: distinguish between the school itself and the FSW program)

7. Do you feel that your children have become more involved in school-based activities as a result of your participation in the Family Support Worker program?

Follow-up questions

- *If yes, what types of activities do your children participate in? What has the program done that has helped your child become more involved in these activities?*
- *If no, what could the program do to increase your child's involvement in school activities?*

8. Do you feel that your child has become more involved in after school or outside school activities as a result of your participation in the Family Support Worker program?

Follow-up questions

- If yes, what types of activities does your child/children participate in? What has the program done that has helped your child become more involved in these activities?
- If no, what could the program do to increase your child's involvement in such activities?

9. In your opinion, what could the FSW program do to help increase school participation among parents and families?

APPENDIX D

School Staff Survey

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER PROGRAM FEEDBACK

School Staff Survey

The Family Support Worker Program is interested in gathering information and direct feedback from the staff persons who work in elementary school settings. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. The information and feedback you provide will help us understand how we are doing, and will help us learn how our program can continue to effectively serve the children, families and schools we work with.

While we appreciate all feedback you are able to provide, it would be most useful if when considering these questions, ***you consider your experience with the Family Support Worker Program in general*** rather than your specific experience with one individual. Thank you for your help!

Which one of the following best describes your role? (if you have multiple roles, please check the one you spend the most time performing)

- Principal Assistant Principal Teacher Office Staff
- Instructional Assistant Counselor Nurse Other _____
(please describe)

1. Thinking about the Family Support Worker Program (FSW) at your school, what are the three most important services that FSWs provide? (check no more than 3 items)

- Help families meet basic needs (e.g. obtain clothing, food, housing, utilities assistance, transportation)
- Help families find and/or utilize community resources
- Help families find and/or utilize school resources
- Provide support to parents regarding their children's educational needs (e.g. accompany parent to SITs, accompany parent to IEP meetings, accompany parent to teacher conferences)*
- Provide general support and assistance within the school building as needed
- Provide supervision in the cafeteria, during recess and/or during bus unloading and loading
- Facilitate parental involvement within the school (e.g. organize parent workshops and family events, encourage parents to volunteer in the school/classroom)
- Help families meet health or medical needs
- Provide support to children whose families are experiencing substance abuse issues
- Provide support to children whose families experiencing domestic violence
- Help children become involved in out-of-school time activities (after-school programs, sports programs, summer programs)
- Other (please describe): _____
- I am not sure what activities/services the FSW program provides

2. How effective is the Family Support Worker Program:

	Not effective at all ▼	Somewhat effective ▼	Effective ▼	Very effective ▼
a) In addressing students' needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) In addressing families' needs?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Working with the racial, linguistic and cultural diversities of families within your school building?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. The family support worker at my school is a critical part of the school team.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

4. How important is it to you to have the Family Support Worker Program as part of your school?

Not important at all Somewhat important Important Very important

5. How much has the Family Support Worker Program helped you become more aware of the social and health factors experienced by students within your classroom/school?

Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit Very much

6. How much has the Family Support Worker Program helped you to understand how the social/health factors experienced by students might impact their school performance?

Not at all Somewhat Quite a bit Very much

7. The services provided by the Family Support Worker Program help students and families meet important social/health needs.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

8. How often do you communicate with Family Support Worker Program staff at your school setting regarding:

	Not often at all ▼	Somewhat often ▼	Often ▼	Very often ▼
a) Students' issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Family issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) School issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. **FOR TEACHERS ONLY:** Having a family support worker in my school building allows me to spend more time teaching and less time focusing on students' social/health needs.

- Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

10. Describe two (2) ways that your school has directly benefited from having a family support worker in the building.

11. Are you aware of any resources in your school that help families enroll in Medicaid free and low-cost health insurance?

- Yes No

If **YES**, what are these resources? _____

12. Is there any way the Family Support Worker Program could improve its services at your school?

13. Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

(please feel free to use the back of this page)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

APPENDIX E
FSW Staff Survey

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER SURVEY

The Family Support Worker (FSW) Program is interested in gathering information from the family support workers who work in elementary school settings. Please take the time to answer the following set of closed-ended and open-ended questions. This information, in conjunction with opinions collected through a series of focus groups, will assist the program management staff in their efforts to better serve the needs of families and the program staff. Thank for you assistance with this process!

1. How many years have you been employed in the Family Support Worker (FSW)Program? _____

2. Gender: Male Female

3. How satisfied are you with the supervision provided to you by the FSW management staff?

Very Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied A Little Satisfied Not At All Satisfied

4. Please describe 1 or 2 examples of supervision provided by a FSW management staff member that you have found to be helpful.

5. Please describe 1 or 2 examples of supervision provided by a FSW management staff member that you have found not to be very helpful.

6. How satisfied are you with the supervision provided to you by the principal at your school?

- Very Satisfied Somewhat satisfied A Little Satisfied Not At All Satisfied

7. Please note your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
a) I feel I have the resources necessary to help the families I serve.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) I feel it is easy to access the <u>program resources</u> I need to help families.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) I feel it is easy to access the <u>community resources</u> I need to help families.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Have you utilized the FSW Medicaid team as a resource in helping families?

- Yes (continue with Question 9 below)
 No (please skip to Question 10 below)
 Don't Know / Unsure (please skip to Question 10 below)

9. How satisfied are you with the services provided by the FSW Medicaid team?

- Very Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied A Little Satisfied Not At All Satisfied

10. Please identify 2 – 3 resources that you use the most in serving families.

11. What are some other resources you might need to help you in serving families?

12. How satisfied are you with the support provided by the FSW management staff to help you address your own personal needs?

- Very Satisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 A Little Satisfied
 Not At All Satisfied

13. How satisfied are you with the following:

	Very Satisfied ▼	Somewhat Satisfied ▼	A Little Satisfied ▼	Not at All Satisfied ▼
a) <u>Amount</u> of communication you have with the staff at the school you work in , including the principal, counselors and teachers?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) <u>Amount</u> of communication you have with the FSW staff , including other Family Support Workers, team leads and the FSW management staff?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) <u>Process</u> of communication within the FSW program? (i.e., communication back and forth with the FSW management staff through team leads).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Please note your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree ▼	Agree ▼	Neither Agree nor Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Strongly Disagree ▼
a) The current professional growth and training opportunities provided by the FSW program meet my professional needs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) I am satisfied with the current professional growth and training opportunities provided by the FSW program.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. In addition to the activities currently provided, are there any other professional growth and/or training activities that you feel would be desirable?

16. How easy is it for you to prioritize the components of your workload?

- Very Easy Somewhat Easy Not Easy At All

17. I feel that my current workload is manageable.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree
nor Disagree Disagree Strongly
Disagree

18. Do you have any other comments? (feel free to use the back of this page to write your comments)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!

APPENDIX F

FSW Staff Focus Group Questions

FSW STAFF Focus Group Questions

15 MINUTES

1a) Describe 1 or 2 ways that you are receiving support from the FSW management staff (*clarify, if necessary, that staff includes Audrey, Thelma, Colleen, and team leads*) for your work serving families.

1b) Describe 1 or 2 ways that you are receiving support from the staff at your school (*e.g., principal, counselors, teachers*) for your work serving families

25 MINUTES

2a) Describe how you communicate ideas, questions, suggestions, or concerns to the FSW Management staff. (*If you are not a team lead*) do you communicate with the management staff through the team leads, or conversely, do you feel that information from the management staff is communicated to you through the leads? What is your overall impression of the communication between the Family Support Workers and the management staff?

2b) Describe how you communicate ideas, questions, suggestions, or concerns to the management staff at the school you work at. What are some of the things that have helped you in communicating with the school staff? What are some of the things that have made it more difficult for you to communicate with the school staff?

20 MINUTES

3) Please describe some approaches or strategies you use to prioritize and manage your workload? In your estimation, is your workload manageable relative to what is expected of you? If not, what do you feel is not manageable? What are some ideas for alleviating or adjusting your workload to make it more manageable?

30 MINUTES

4a) Are there things that Family Support Workers do on a regular basis which fall outside the scope of your job? Are FSWs regularly being asked to do things that they feel fall outside the scope of their job? If so, what are some of these things?

4b) Are the ***FSW Management Staff*** expectations of your job reasonable and realistic? Please explain.

4c) Are the ***Parents*** expectations of your job reasonable and realistic? Please explain.

4d) Are the ***School Staff*** expectations of your job reasonable and realistic? Please explain.

30 MINUTES

5) Are there any particular challenges of difficulties related to your school setting that you face in trying to help families at that school? If so, what are they, and what are some of the ways you have tried to overcome these challenges. What else do you feel could be done to address and alleviate these challenges?