



*Dr. Bobby E. Brown, Executive Director*

# Head Start Parent Survey Results

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**2011-2012 School Year**

**2011-2012 Annual Parent Survey**  
**Conducted and Prepared by the Office of Research**  
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**Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc.**

# **Head Start Parent Satisfaction Survey**

## **2011 – 2012 School Year**

Mississippi Action for Progress (MAP), Inc Head Start is a comprehensive, child development and family services program. With its fifty-four (54) centers and eight (8) child care partnerships, MAP is committed to providing high quality services to disadvantaged children and communities in both Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Active in the community, MAP also partners with institutions of higher learning, local community colleges, State Agencies and local agencies to provide additional services to meet the needs of children and families.

Active engagement through parent and community participation is an integral part of MAP's foundation. Parent participation is pivotal to MAP's success in providing quality comprehensive services to children and families since the program's inception 46 years ago. The agency continually seeks diverse and innovative strategies to meet the needs of enrolled children and families. MAP operates on the principle belief that parents are the primary educators of their children. This belief dictates that parents have the opportunity to assess MAP's services offered to their families. Research has shown a significant correlation between parent involvement and positive outcomes in children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. This survey examined parents of enrolled children's opinions of services provided to their families during the 2011 - 2012 school year.

Providing a diverse range of programs and Head Start Services to more than six thousand (6,000) children in twenty-five (25) counties, MAP extends north to the Tennessee State line, south and west to the Louisiana State line, and east to the Alabama State line. Divided into ten (10) regions, MAP's participating counties include; to the extreme northeast corner of the State, Alcorn, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union. In the southern portion of the State, Pearl River and Hancock counties border the Louisiana State line as well as Franklin, Lincoln, and Claiborne counties in the southwest and Perry County east to the Alabama State line. Leflore and Yazoo Counties lie to the northwest in the Delta region and Warren County along the Mississippi River. To the eastern section of the state line lies Lauderdale, Neshoba, Scott and Winston Counties, which are bordered by the Alabama State line. MAP also serves Calhoun, Chickasaw, and Yalobusha Counties in the Central part of the State.

## **Methodology**

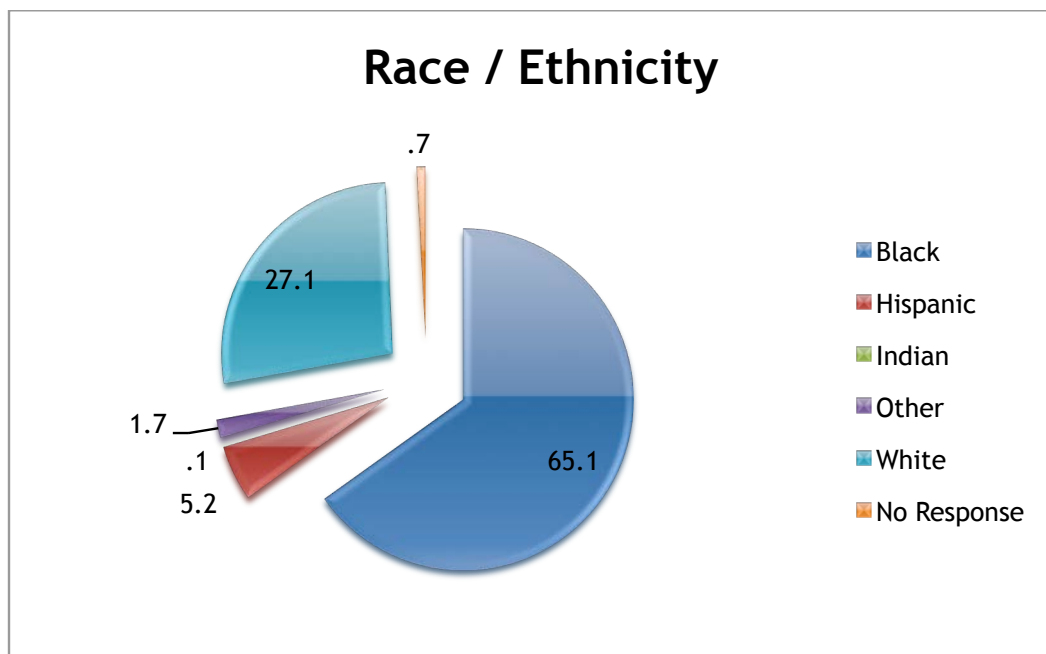
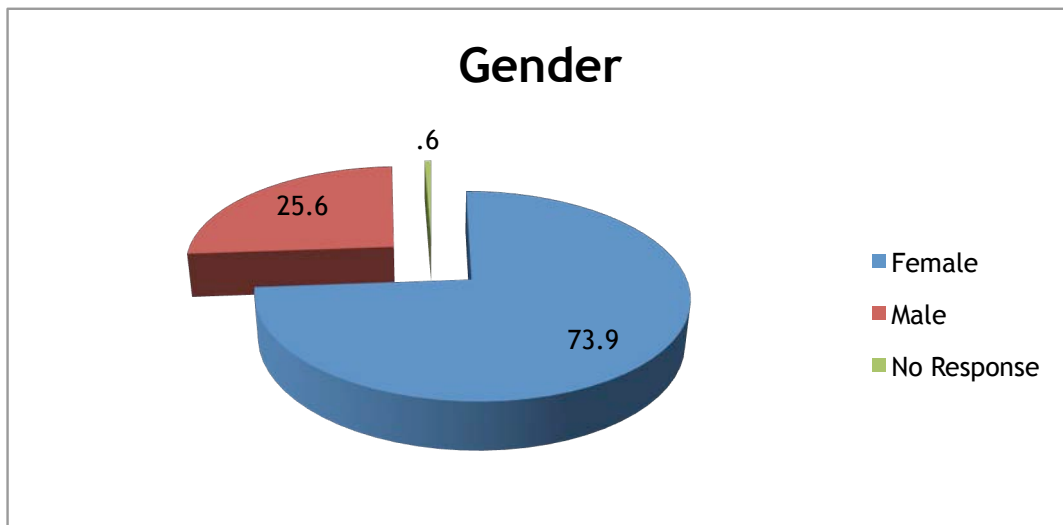
In this research study, a seventeen (17) item Likert-Scale survey instrument was developed to examine parents of enrolled children opinions of services provided by MAP Head Start Program. A total of fifteen (15) questions were asked. The possible responses were based on a yes response, “YES, I AGREE” and a no response, “NO, I DISAGREE.” In the case of an unanswered question a “NO RESPONSE” is illustrated in the results. The final two questions of the survey asked the parents, “...what type of skill development classes would you be interested in taking?” (Question # 16) and “How has the Head Start program impacted your family?” (Question # 17). Parents’ verbatim responses of questions #16 and #17 can be found in the APPENDIX section of this document.

Parents of children enrolled during the 2011-2012 school year participated in this research project. MAP’s actual number of children served at the time (April 2012) of the survey was six-thousand eighty-seven (6,087) children. Two thousand eight hundred ninety-two (2,892) completed parent surveys were returned which represents a return rate of 47.5%.

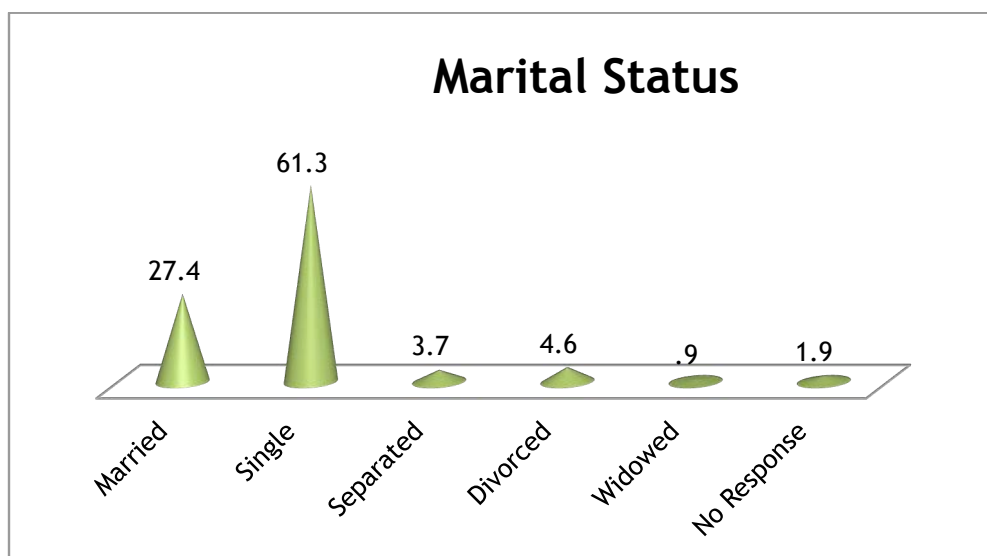
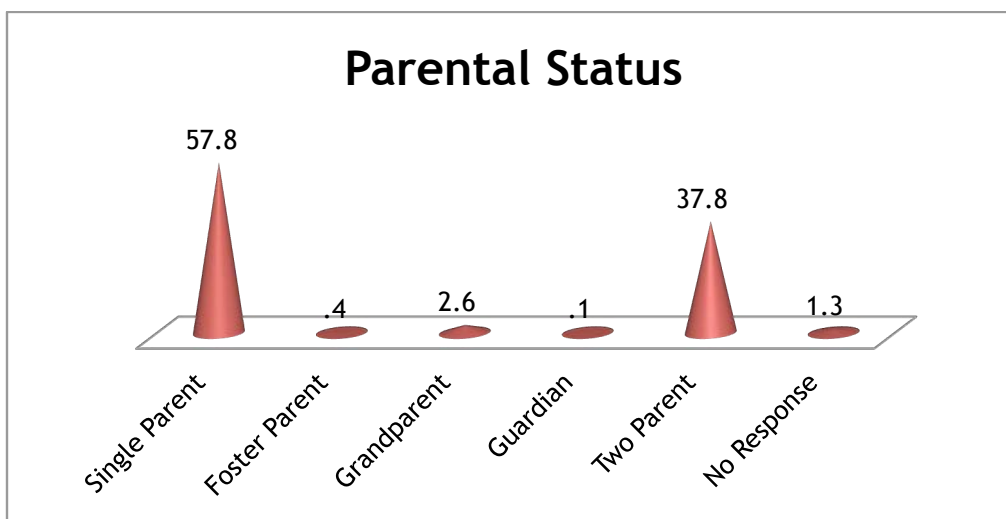
The survey along with a letter stating its purpose was distributed to all parents of currently enrolled children. Parents were instructed to call the center with any questions about the survey that they might have. The survey was voluntary and confidential. Parents were asked to return the surveys to the centers once they were completed. The Center Administrator or designee forwarded the surveys to the Office of Research and Development in a self addressed envelope identifying the Center’s name. Once the surveys were received in the Office of Research and Development, staff coded each survey, entered the date received, date entered into the system and listed the name of the data entry person.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Reflective of the State of Mississippi, MAP's families represent a diverse population. The gender make-up of this survey represents 73.9% female parents, 25.6% male parents and (0.6%) of the total respondents did not list their gender. Similarly, the racial ethnic distribution of respondents was 65.1% Black, 27.1% White, and 7% were Hispanic, Indian or Other. Twenty (20) respondents did not answer this question, which represents 0.7% of the NO RESPONSE category.



To better understand the population served, MAP asked parents about their immediate family make-up including Parental and Marital status. These factors helped MAP to better plan services for families. Of the surveys returned, 57.8% represented single parent homes while 37.8% indicated two parent homes. Survey data also indicated that 2.6% of the respondents were grandparents. Of the respondents, .4% indicated Foster Parents and smaller percentages were from other family make-up. Data showed that 1.3% of the respondents did not indicate a parental status. The majority of respondents were single parents (61.3%). A total of 27.4% of respondents were identified as married. A less significant percentage were divorced, separated, or widowed. Finally, 1.9% of the respondents did not indicate a Marital Status.



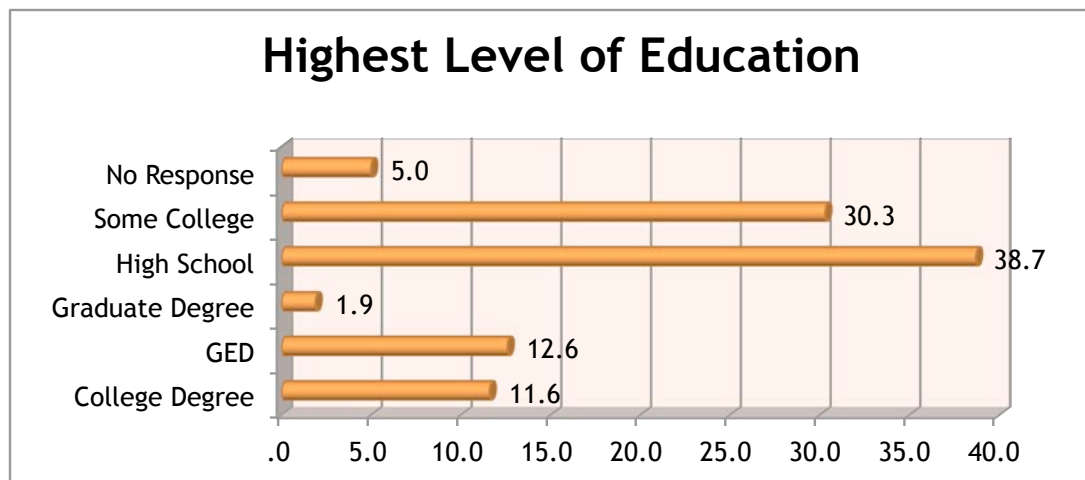
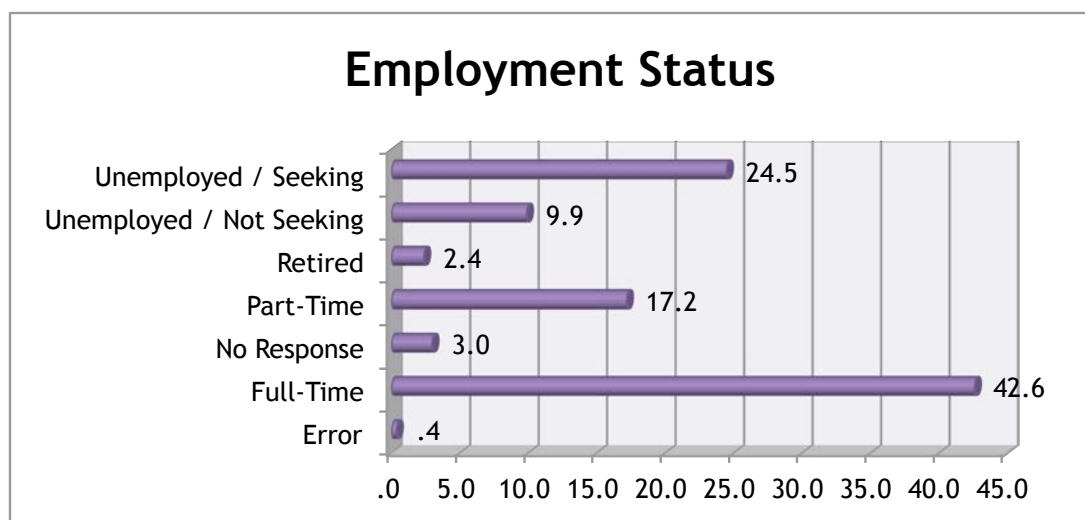
Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc (MAP) serves diverse families in its service delivery areas. Researchers were interested in the parental status of the children enrolled in the program. Studies show that a child’s parental status impacts their outcomes. Children living in two parent homes are more likely to have better outcomes when compared to children living in single parent homes. The majority of MAP’s families come from single parent homes (1434). According to data, there are a high number (101) of single parents who are divorced. The chart shows seven hundred thirteen (713) two parent families and three hundred twelve (312) single parents who identified themselves as two parent homes. However, a majority (41) of the grandparents are married. A recent trend is the increase number (72) of grandparents granted custody of their grandchildren for reasons of death, neglect, imprisonment, parent(s) who are away in school or the armed forces. The chart indicated that trend is still valid. Additionally the charts reflected that fourteen (14) children were reared by foster parent and other guardians.

**TABLE 1**

***Parental Status***

	Foster Parent	Grandparent	Other	Single Parent	Two Parent
Divorced	3	8	0	101	20
Married	1	41	3	25	713
Separated	0	3	0	75	24
Single	4	9	0	1434	312
Widowed	3	11	0	11	2
Total	11	72	3	1646	1071

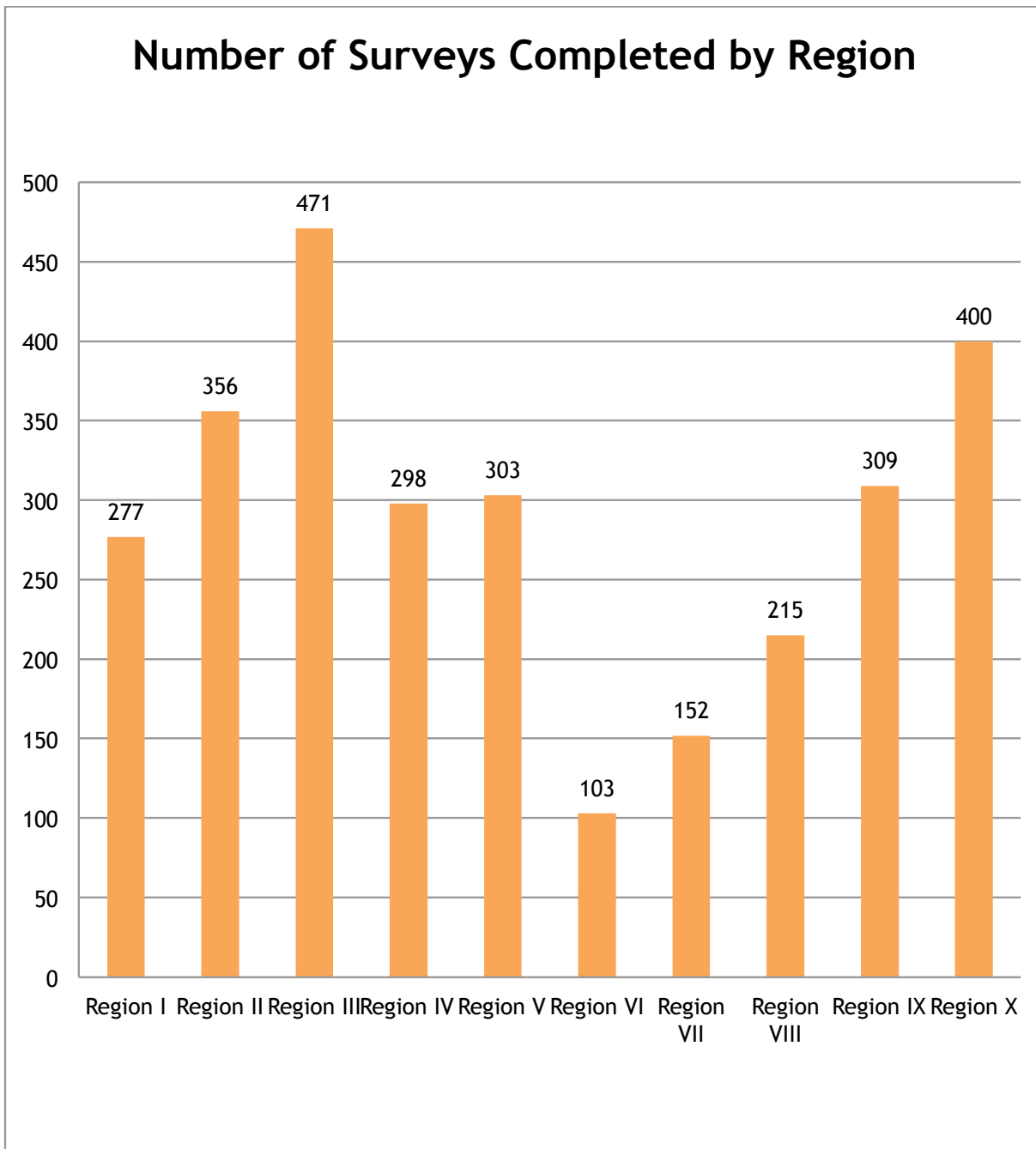
Mirroring the current economy across the nation, the employment status of MAP's parents was reflected in the data below. Survey data indicated that 42.6% of respondents were employed fulltime while 17.2% of respondents were employed part time. A total of 24.5% of the respondents were currently unemployed but were actively seeking employment. Smaller percentages were either retired or unemployed and not seeking employment. When asked what level of education parents had completed, the survey showed a range from GEDs to professional degrees. Some respondents were in the process of completing degrees. The majority of respondents indicated that they were High School Graduates at 38.7% followed by those who had completed Some College (30.3%). Additionally, 11.6% of respondents completed a College Degree. Respondents who reported having a Graduate Degree represented 1.9% and 12.6% of respondents had a GED. Survey participants who did not answer this question made up 5% of the total respondents.



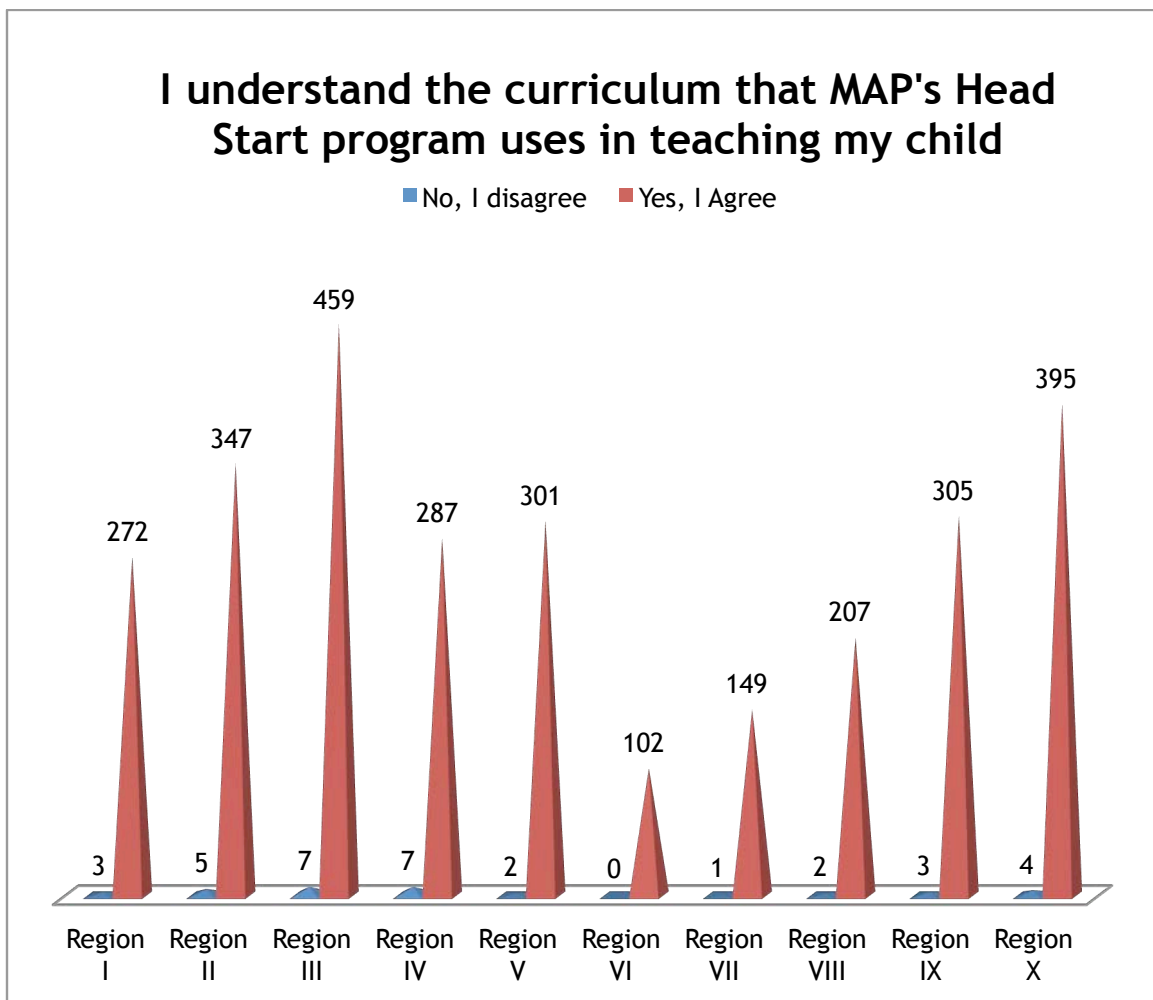


## **Results**

Parents' evaluation of program services provided to their children and families assist MAP with program planning and evaluation. The significant number of completed surveys supports family engagement in the program. Region III, which had the second highest number of assigned enrollment slots, returned 471 surveys. Region X had a return rate of 400 surveys which was the second highest return rate.

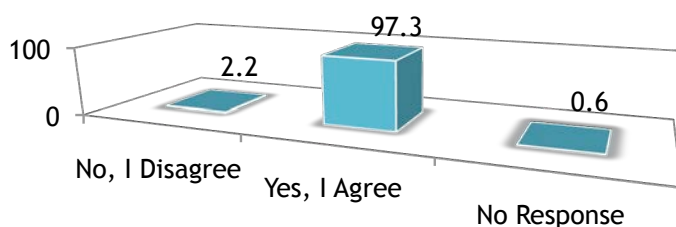


MAP promotes school readiness through FUTURE, a locally designed curriculum. This curriculum serves to prepare children for Kindergarten. Parent involvement in their child's education plays a key role in obtaining their school readiness skills. In this survey, Parents were asked if they understood the curriculum that MAP's Head Start program use in teaching their children. The locally designed, Child Progress Indication (CPI) assessment instrument, monitors the progress of the children. The CPI instrument collects data three time a year, determines children's strengths, and ultimately sets goals for each child. Regions III (459 respondents) and X (395 respondents) reported the highest number of parents who understood MAP's curriculum. Region VI showed the least amount of parents (102 respondents) who understood the curriculum.

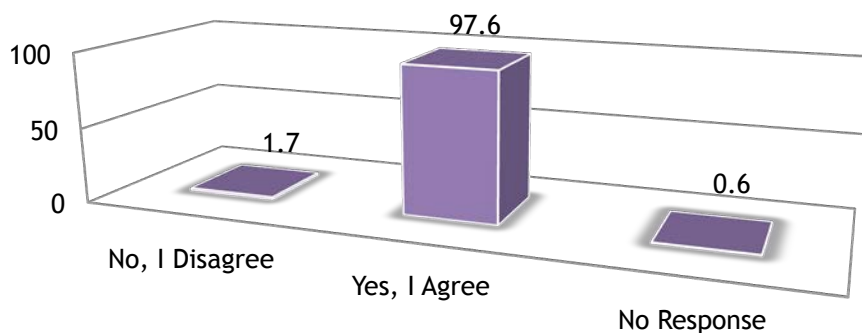


MAP's curriculum supports school readiness skills. When children graduate from MAP Head Start Program, they have the ability to write their name, recognize their alphabets and recognize their numbers. Parents were asked if they agreed or disagreed that their children needed these abilities before entering kindergarten. According to the data below, 97.3% of respondents agreed that their children needed to be able to write their name before entering Kindergarten. Also, 97.6% of respondents agreed that their children needed to recognize their alphabets and numbers before entering Kindergarten. Data indicated less significant percentages either disagreed or did not answer either question.

### **My child needs to know how to write his/her name before he/she enters kindergarten**



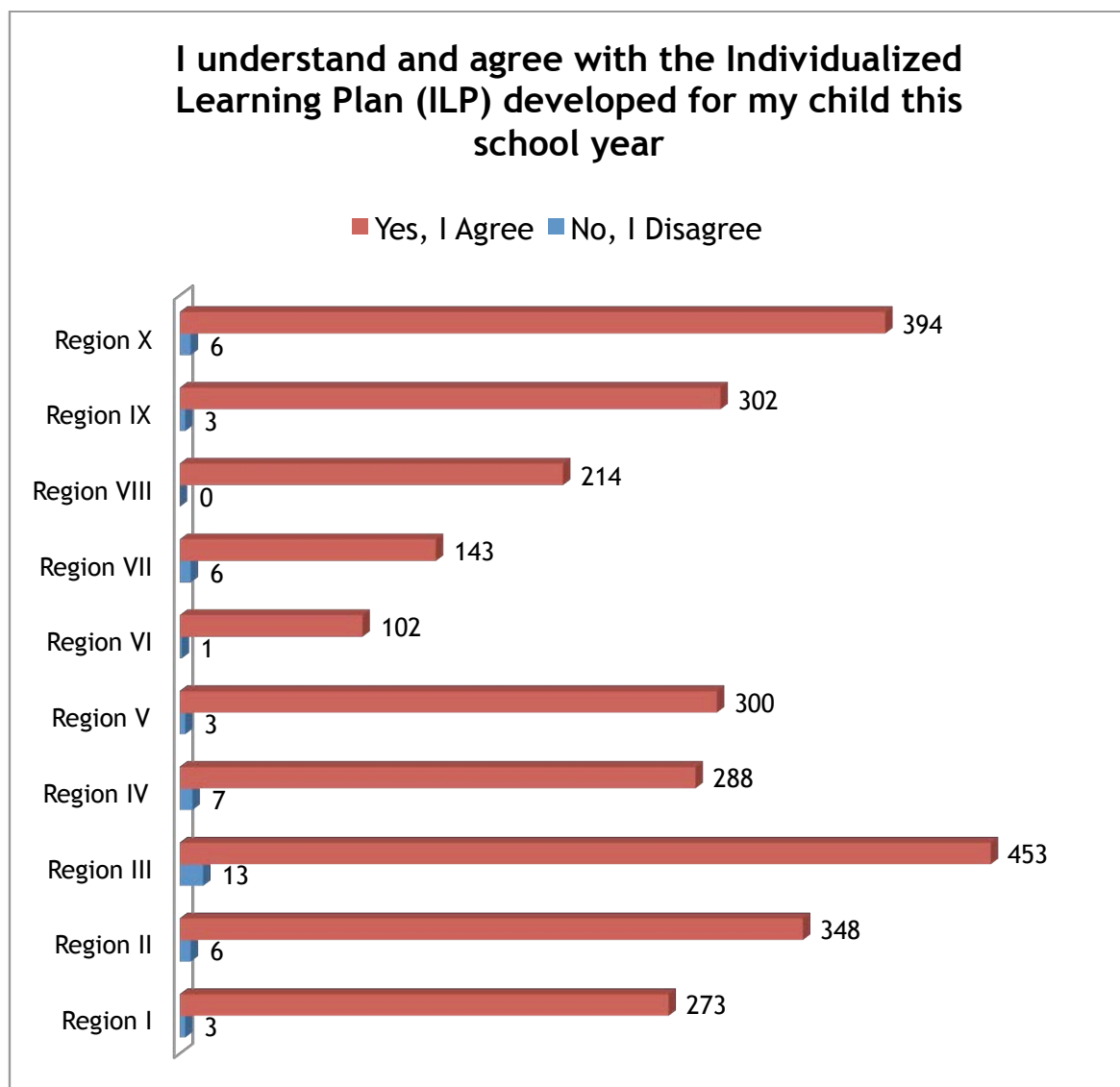
### **My child needs to know how to recognize alphabets and numbers before he/she enters kindergarten**



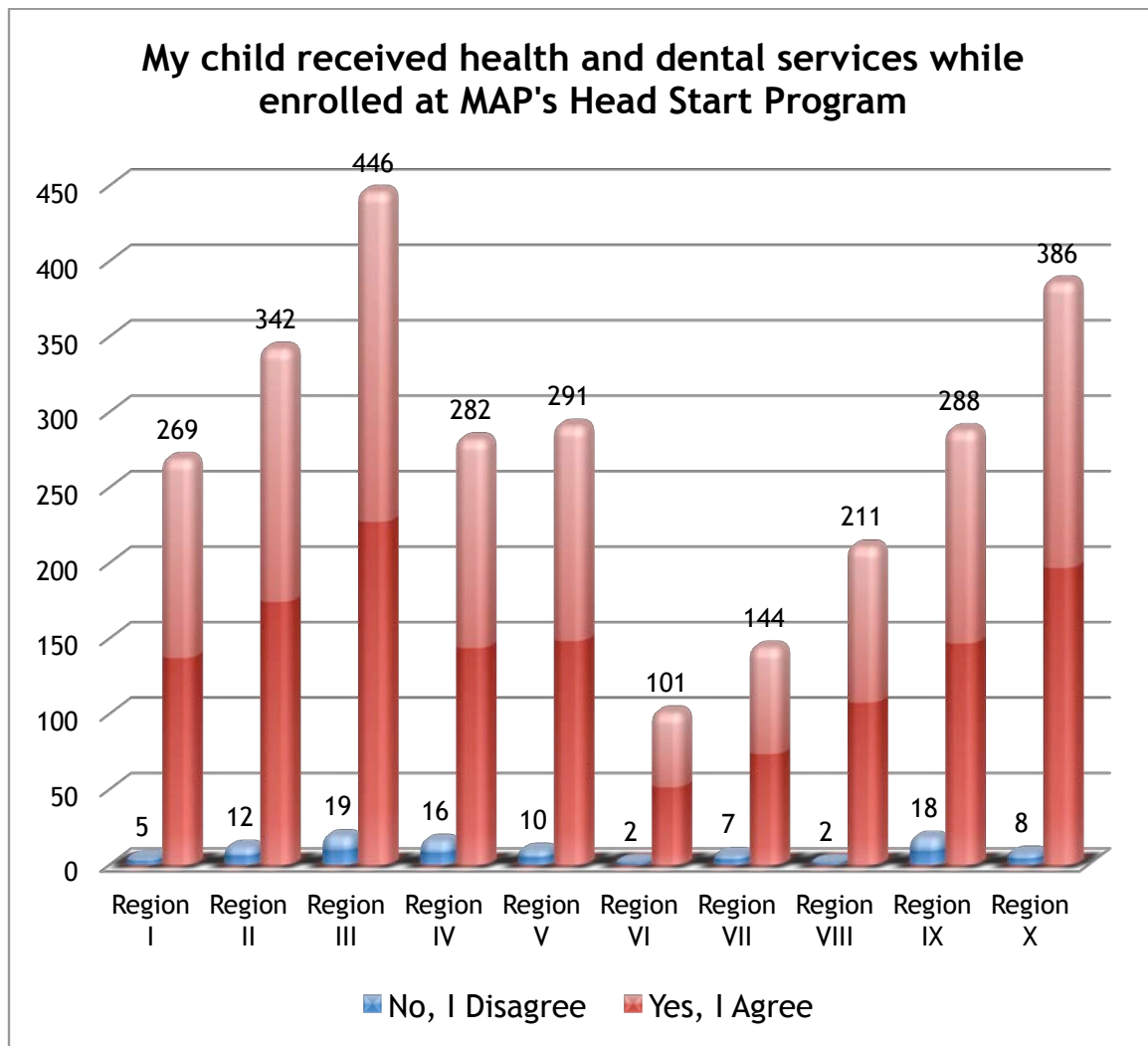
Parent involvement in the development of their child's school readiness skills is important for positive outcomes for children. Parents are their children's primary educators continuously, even after the school day has ended. This survey asked parents if they knew how to help their children with learning activities at home. Data indicated that 98.5% of respondents agreed that they knew how to help their children with learning activities at home. Of the total respondents, 1% did not feel that they knew how to help their children with learning activities at home and 0.4% did not answer the question.



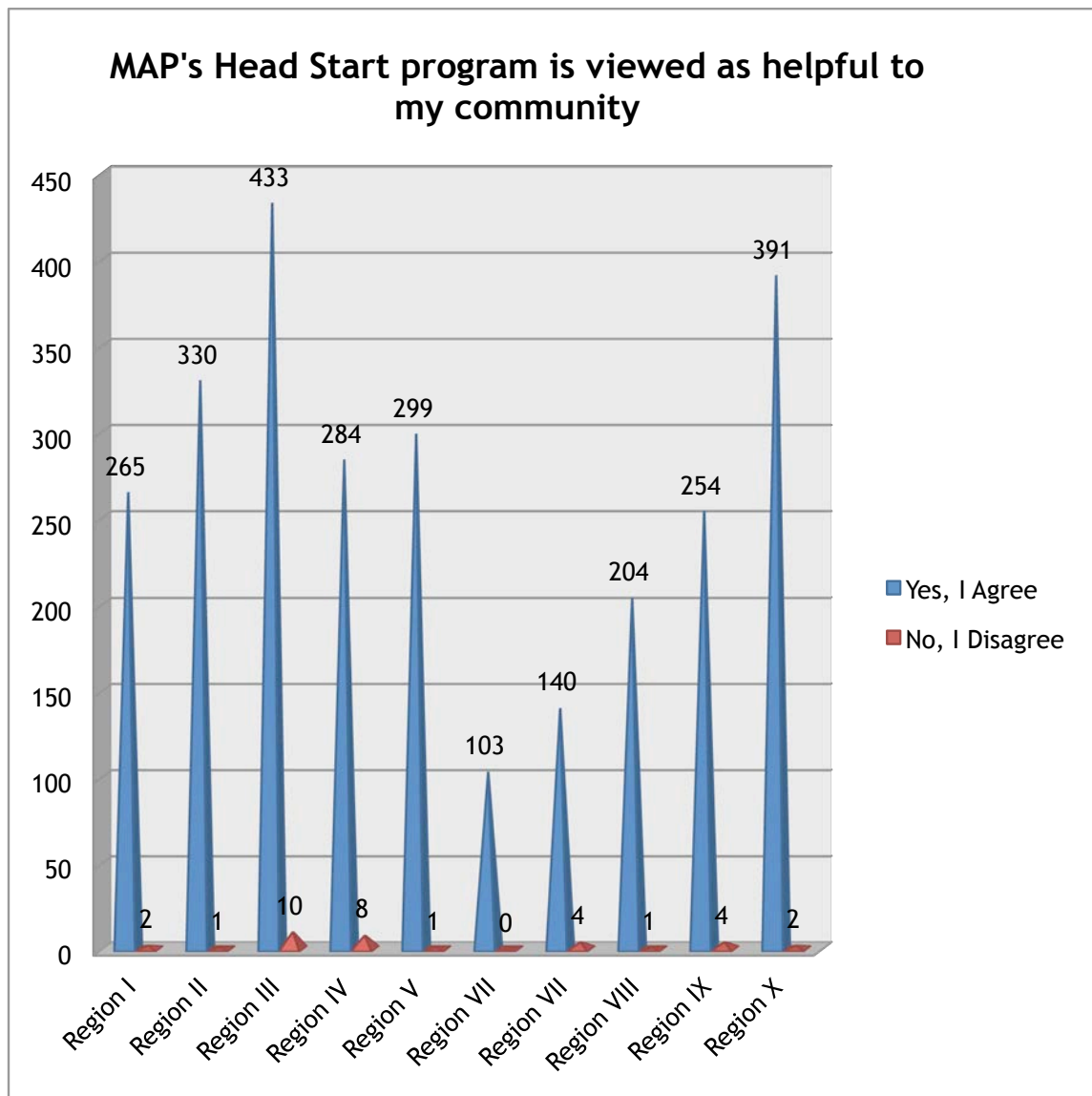
Each enrolled child has an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) to ensure that their individual learning objectives are met. These plans are reviewed and supported by parents, staff and school. Children with disabilities have learning plans referred to as an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Both the ILP and IEP serve to ensure that all of MAP's Head Start children progress academically and are ready to enter Kindergarten upon graduating from MAP Head Start program. Parents were asked if they understood the ILPs developed for their children. Data indicates that 2,817 respondents did understand the ILP for their child. Region III indicated the most parents (453 respondents) who understood and agreed with their child's ILP.



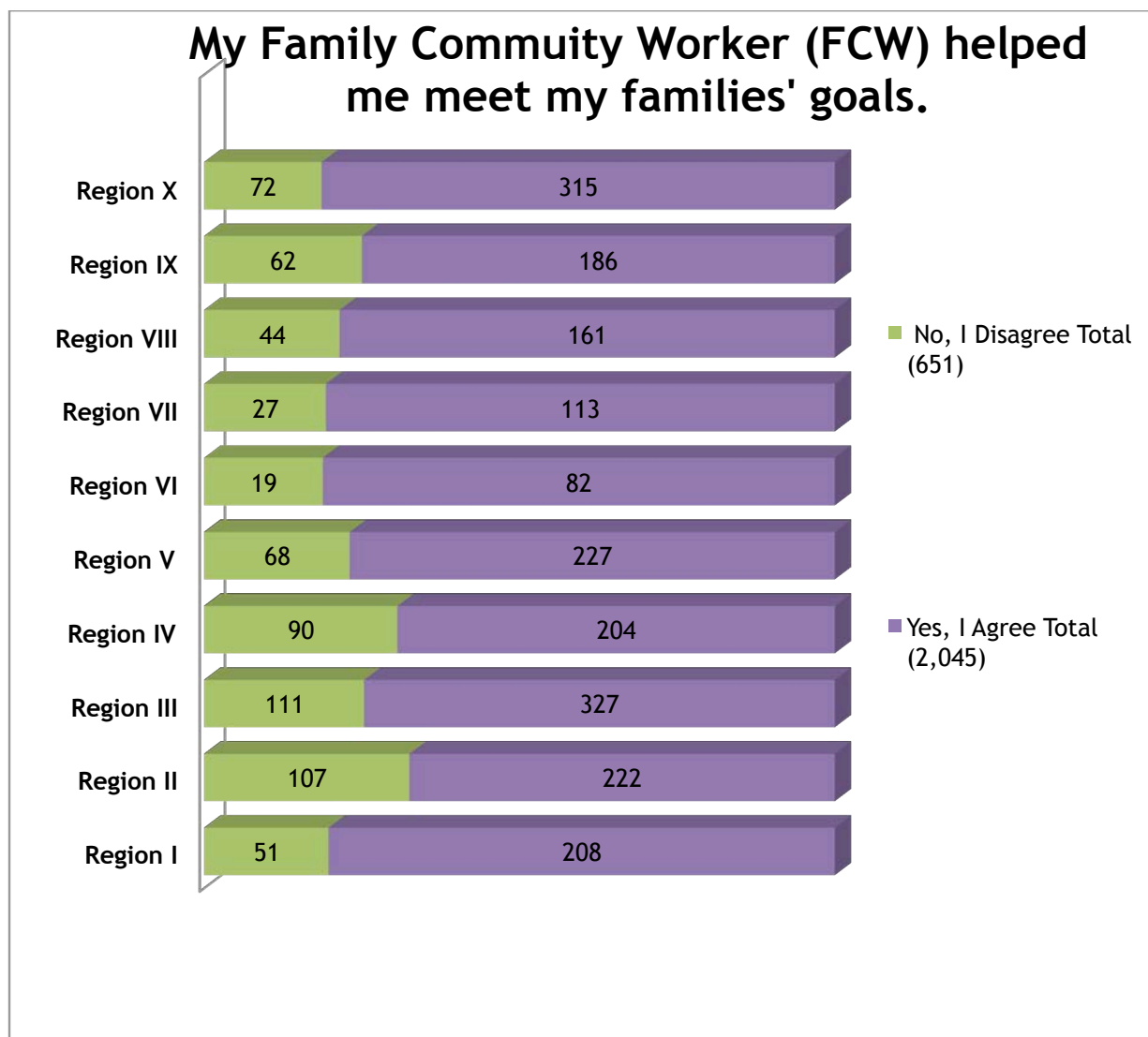
As a comprehensive program MAP offers health and dental services to its Head Start children. This survey asked parents if their children received these services. While 2,314 of respondents said their children did receive these services, a significant number, 99 respondents, said their children did not receive these services. Region III had the highest number of parents (19 respondents) who indicated that they did not receive health and dental services.



MAP's Family Service Department provides services that promote and encourage self-sufficiency in Head Start families. MAP collaborates with various community agencies to enhance services provided for families. Parents were asked if they believed that MAP's Head Start Program was viewed as helpful to their communities. The data showed that 2,703 of MAP's parents reported that MAP was viewed as helpful in their community.

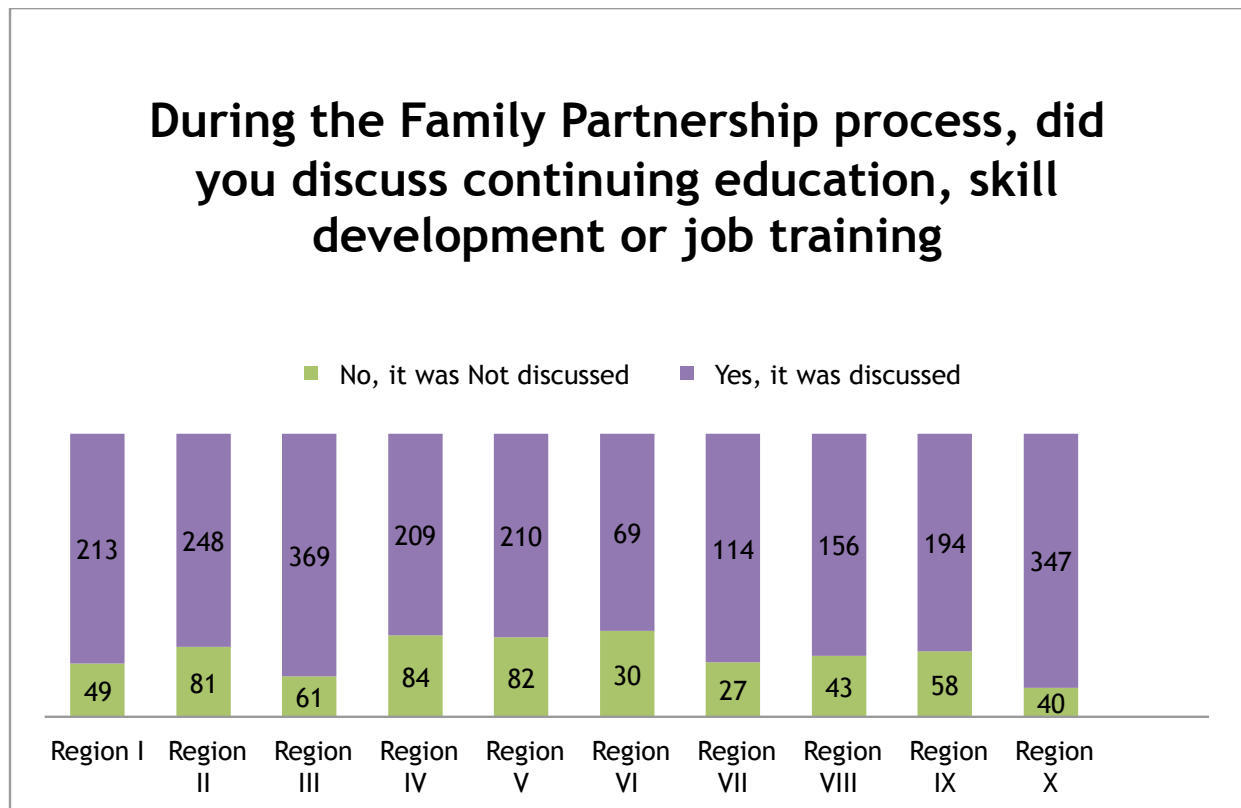


Building positive relationships with families is a central part of the Agency's family services plan. The roles of Family Community Workers are to support family well being and assist parents with parenting skills. Family Community Workers assist families with identifying strengths, needs, interests, existing skills and goals through an individualized family partnership agreement (IFP). The IFP is monitored throughout the program year to ensure that families receive necessary assistance to reach their goals. The majority (2,045) of the survey participants agreed that staff helped them to meet their goals. Agency-wide results showed that (651) participants indicated that their FCW did not help them to meet family goals.



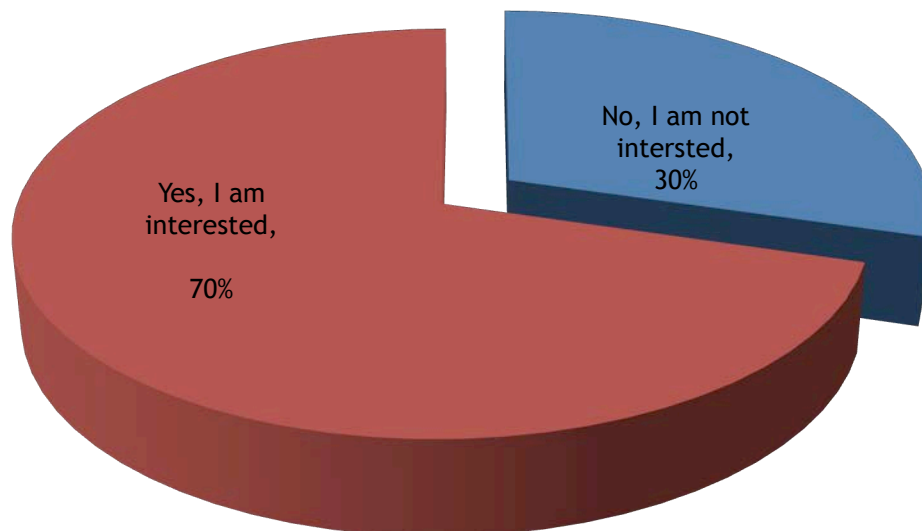


Effective engagement depends on the ability to develop meaningful relationships with parents, families, and the communities. MAP staff provides parents and families with encouragement and support to achieve their educational and career development goals. There are vocational services in all of MAP service delivery areas to assist families with career growth and development. The survey examined if Family Community Workers discussed education, skill development, and job training with parents. According to the survey data below, Family Community Workers discussed the family partnership process with respondents indicated at 2,129 “YES” responses.



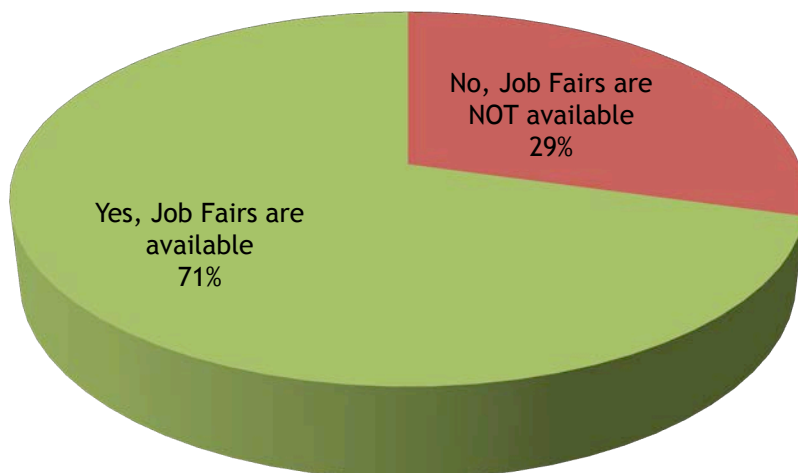
Research has shown that the level of parental education is an indication of children outcomes. Program data indicates that a significant percentage of MAP's parents obtained the level of a high school education. This data lead researchers to examine if parents were interested in continuing their education, or participating in job training programs. The survey indicated that 70% of parents were interested in job training, skill development and continuing their education. Family Community Workers assist parents through referral services and information listed on their Individualized Family Partnership Agreement.

### **Are you interested in continuing your education, skill development or job training?**

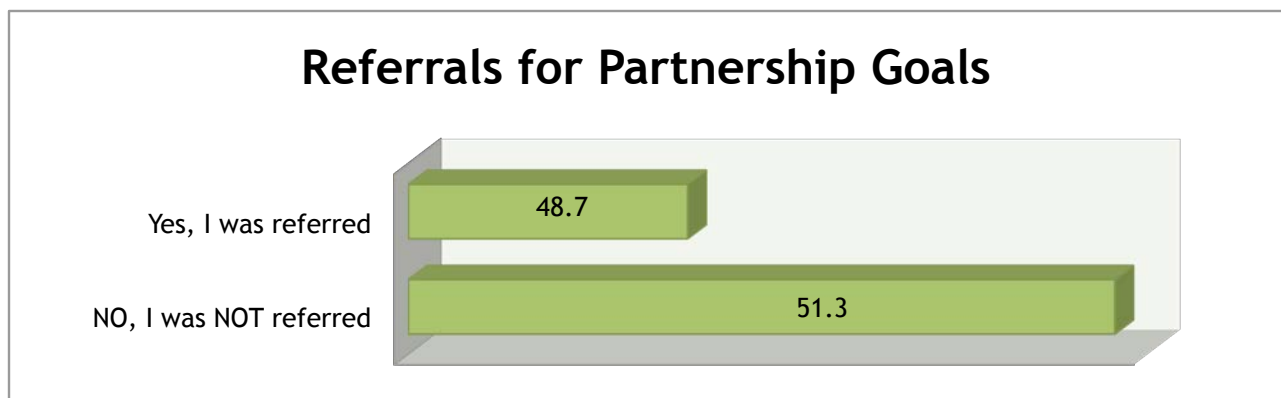


According to MAP's Community Assessment, children and families face many challenges and economic hardships throughout MAP counties. One of the contributors to economic hardship is the lack of employment opportunities. In this survey, it was asked if job fairs/ job centers were available in the community. Majority (71%) responded job fairs were available. However, 29% reported that job fairs/job centers are not available in their communities. While employment rates have decreased slightly in Mississippi, available job opportunities continue to be a concern for many families.

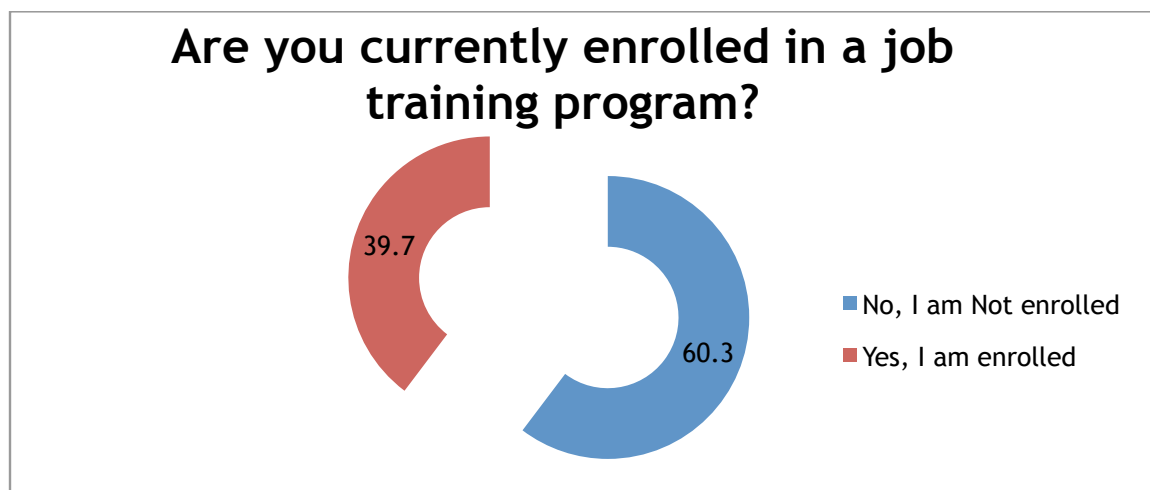
**If you were interested in looking for employment, are job fairs/job centers available in your community?**



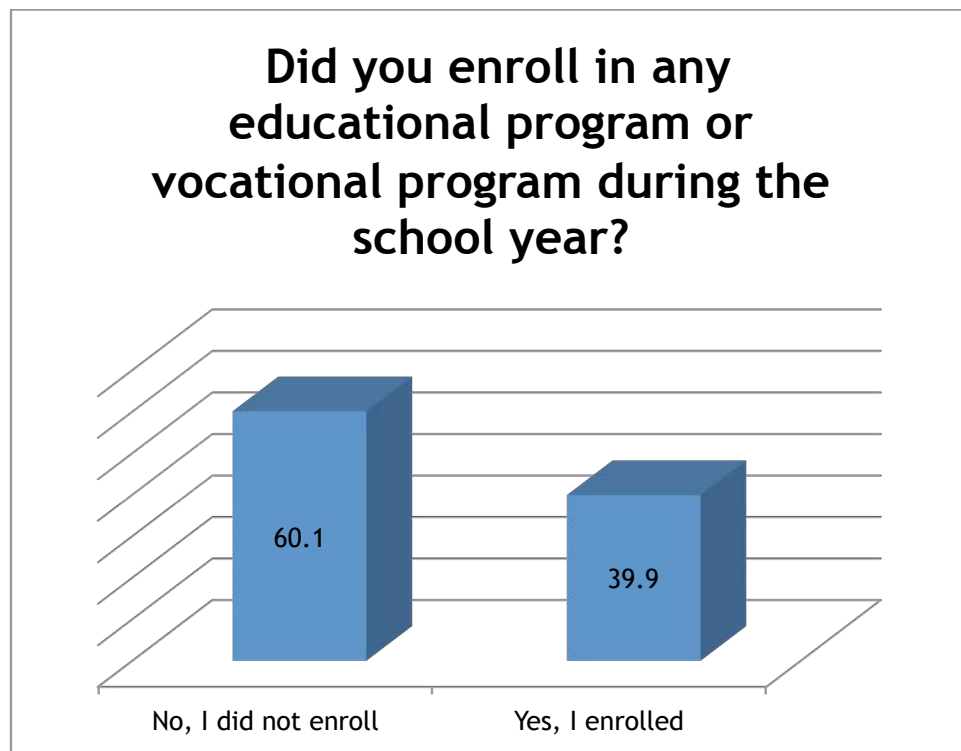
Family Community Workers assist families with identified goals and monitor the progress of the obtainment of goals throughout the program year. The survey examined if Family Community Workers referred parents for services based on their goal(s). According to the data below, 48.7% were referred to an institution of higher learning, GED program, or job training program. Data indicated that 51.3% of parents surveyed reported that no referrals were made relating to those specific goals.



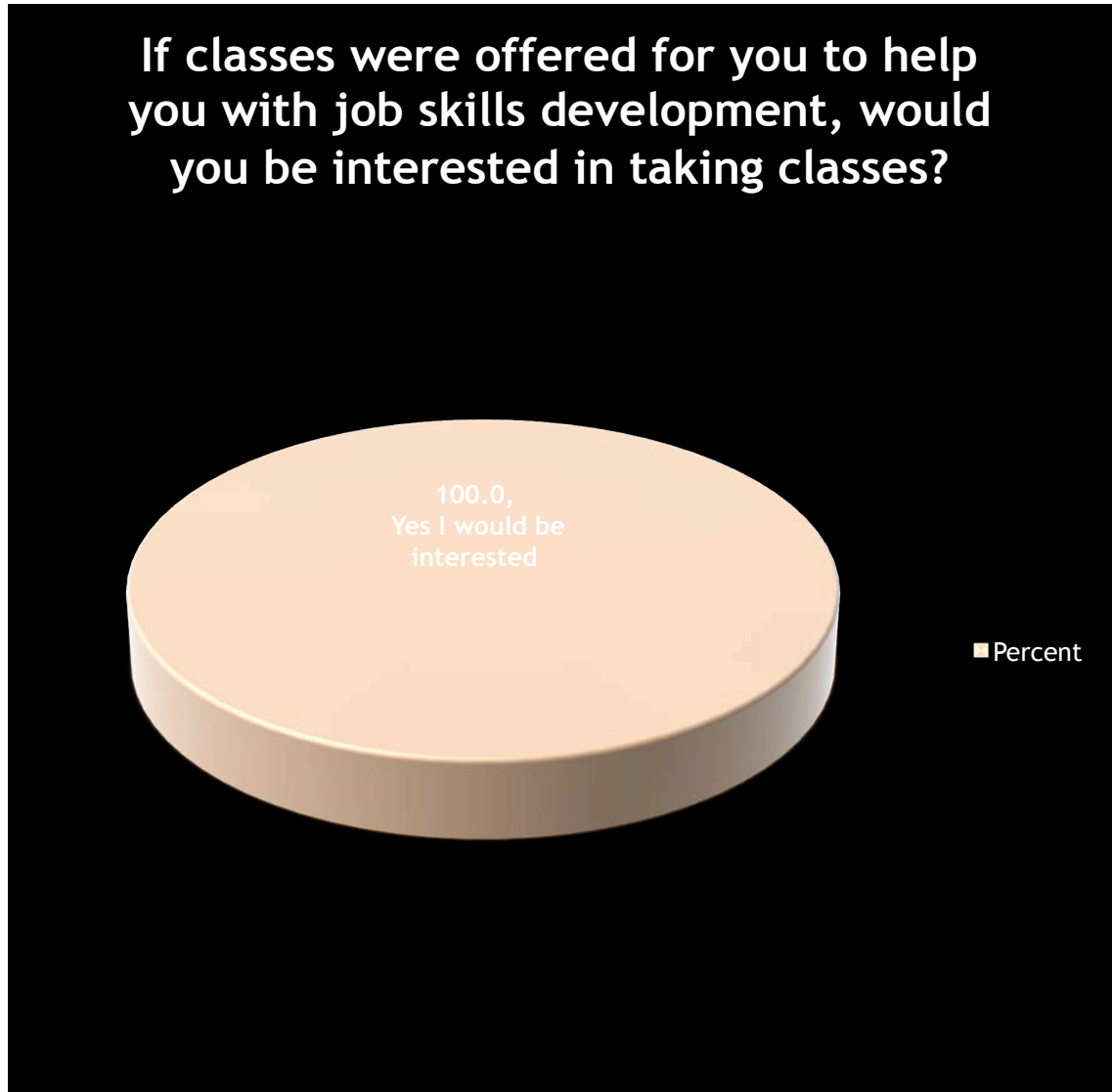
Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc provides limited sites that offer extended day services for working parents. The Full Day/Full Year option is specifically designed for those parents who are working or in a job training program. MAP staff assist parents with educational and job seeking goals. Below, data shows that 60.3% are not enrolled in a job training program. Parents are encouraged to continue their education and strive for self dependency.



The Family Community Workers monitor and evaluate the Individualized Family Partnership Agreement across the program year to ensure that families receive necessary assistance to reach their goals within a specified time frame. Parents communicate monthly with Family Community Workers in regards to the status of their goals. Recommendations and referrals are often made for any interest in educational programs or vocational programs. Data results shown below indicate that 39.9% of survey participants enrolled in a job training program and 60.1% did not enroll in a job training program during the school term.



Agency-wide 100% of parents responded that they would be interested in taking classes to help with job skill development. Parents recognize the importance of training and the positive impact it has on the future of their children and families.



## Recommendations

**1. To provide additional training and skill development for Family Community Workers.** Agency-wide 651 parents reported that their Family Community Worker did not assist with the obtainment of their family goals. Region III reported the highest number (111) of respondents who indicated that the Family Community Workers did not help them meet their goals.

**2. To ensure that parents are aware of skill development programs offered.** Agency-wide 100% will engage in job skill development classes if they were offered. However, 51.3% was not referred to a job training program or an institution of higher learning.

**3. To improve monitoring efforts to ensure that all children receive health services.** Agency-wide, one hundred six (106) survey participants responded that they did not receive health and dental services while enrolled in MAP Head Start during the 2011-2012 school years. Region III had the highest number (19) of respondents who reported that they did not receive dental and health services.

## **CONCLUSION**

MAP's 2011 – 2012 Parent Survey was designed to examine Parents' opinions of the services their children and families were given during the course of the 2011-2012 school years. Parents of enrolled children provided feedback throughout the survey on a variety of topics including School Readiness, MAP's community engagement and MAP's effort to move families toward self-sufficiency.

The demographics in this survey showed that the majority of respondents identified were female (73.9%). Most of these females (65.1%) identified as black, single parent (57.8%), who worked full-time (42.6%). The majority of respondents' highest level of education was high school (38.7%). Also included in this report are verbatim parent responses to questions #16, "...What type of skills development classes would you be interested in taking?" and #17, "How has the Head Start program impacted your family?" The parent's verbatim answers to these questions can be found in the APPENDIX section of this report.

This year's Parent Survey indicated three areas of concern. First, when parents were asked if they understood their children's Individualized Learning Plan (question #5), 1.7% of respondents answered the no response, "NO, I DISAGREE." Although this percentage is low compared to the 97.6% of respondents that did understand their children's ILP, it is still imperative to MAP that all parents understand their child's work and progress. Next, in the Demographics section of the survey, parents were asked their employment status and if they were unemployed were they seeking a job. The survey indicated that 9.9% of respondents stated that they were unemployed and not seeking a job. Finally, When parents were asked if their children had received health and dental services while at MAP (question #6), 3.5% of respondents gave the no response, "NO, I DISAGREE." Health and dental services are an important part of MAP's Health Services system; therefore every enrolled child should receive these services.

This year's Parent Survey provided MAP with information regarding parents' opinions on services provided to their families across the school year. This information will assist the Agency with future program planning and evaluation. Parents' responses to the survey in key



areas, such as school readiness, and their understanding of the Agency's curriculum assist staff with preparing children to enter kindergarten. Overall parent involvement at every level of program operation is essential in assisting families to move toward self-sufficiency.

