



Health Care Experiences of Foster Parents

Survey Report

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Introduction

Obtaining appropriate physical, behavioral and mental health for foster children is one of the many challenges facing foster parents caring for District foster children. As part of a project to develop a health training curriculum for foster and adoptive parents and advocacy agenda, funded by the Consumer Health Foundation, the Foster and Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center (FAPAC) conducted a telephone survey of foster parents during the summer of 2005 to learn about their thoughts and experiences with health care for their foster children. This survey, designed to be representative of all foster parents, was intended to provide FAPAC with background information to use for their project development and other outreach and advocacy efforts.

FAPAC also conducted a survey of foster parents on health care experiences in early 2005 using a convenience sample. Findings from this survey are presented in the Discussion section of this report.

Key Findings

- » Two-thirds (62.6%) of foster parents indicated that they had never received a Medicaid card for their foster child.
- » More than half of foster parents had never received a medical history (53.7%) or CFSA information package (58.5%).
- » Almost all children (88.4%) had a medical examination within the previous year, 59.5% a dental examination, 56.2% a vision examination, and 64.5% a mental health, developmental or behavioral examination.
- » Only 61.7% of foster parents indicated that their foster child had a “regular doctor” to go to for care.
- » While almost all foster parents (85.2%) had heard of DC KIDS, only half (48.6%) of these had used DC KIDS for care.
- » Foster parents who used DC KIDS for care report high levels of satisfaction with the quality of care, office hours, and information provided after the appointment, but many reported dissatisfaction with the process for making DC KIDS appointments and the time they had to wait for appointments. Maryland foster parents had higher levels of dissatisfaction with the location of DC KIDS providers than District foster parents.
- » The most frequent reasons cited for not using DC KIDS was not knowing about it (28.5% of the non-users), having a prior unsatisfactory experience (16.4%) and not knowing how to make appointments (10.2%).
- » Obtaining a DC Medicaid card was identified as a problem by 70.1% of respondents.
- » Over half (50.8%) of the respondents reported that their child received behavioral or mental health services, and these foster parents reported generally high levels of satisfaction with the services they received. The location of mental health services was unsatisfactory for 26.2% of mental health services recipients.
- » Almost all foster parents (85%) expressed confidence in their ability to obtain medical services for their foster child, and 84% expressed confidence in their ability to obtain behavioral/mental health services.
- » Almost all foster parents (82%) expressed confidence in their ability to address their foster children’s health care needs.
- » The majority (53.3%) indicated that the District’s foster care system is improving.
- » Frequently cited problems experienced by foster parents include: obtaining prescriptions, the need for printed resource information, the need for greater dental care resources, and the need for more convenient health care services.

Limitations of the survey findings are described in the Methodology section.

Methodology

To conduct this survey, FAPAC requested from CFSA a list of all currently licensed foster parents with their telephone numbers. Four lists were provided by CFSA to FAPAC, which signed a confidentiality agreement. Two of the lists were a selection of foster parents associated with private agencies: one list for District residents and one list for Maryland residents. Each of these lists contained approximately 50 foster parents. Two other lists were provided: one was a list of CFSA foster parents living in the District, containing 390 records, and the other was believed to be a list of CFSA foster parents living in Maryland, containing 509 records. Because the CFSA foster parent lists were believed to be the entire population of CFSA foster parents (n=899), this served as the sampling frame for the survey. A simple random sample of 369 records was selected from this list.

While all of the District foster parents interviewed indicated that they were foster parents for CFSA, 36% of the Maryland foster parents interviewed indicated that they were foster parents for a private agency. Because of the lack of clarity of contents of lists provided, the survey cannot be generalized to the entire CFSA foster parent population, as intended. Instead, the survey results can be generalized only to the initial sampling frame, which is believed to be all District CFSA foster parents and an unknown selection of Maryland CFSA and private agency foster parents. (It is possible that the Maryland list contained CFSA foster parents who were being monitored by the private agencies rather than foster parents who are contractors to the private agencies.)

The survey instrument was developed by a FAPAC survey consultant and reviewed by staff and foster parents. The draft instrument was shared with CFSA staff involved in health care services. Foster parents were notified of the survey through notification included in a routine FAPAC mailing to all foster parents. The telephone survey was conducted by four interviewers who were trained and monitored by a FAPAC survey consultant. Interviews were conducted from late July to early September 2005. A total of 124 surveys were completed. The overall response rate of the survey was 48.1%¹. Slightly more than 20% of the provided telephone numbers were either disconnected or incorrect. Thirty-one contacted foster parents did not meet the eligibility criteria of being both licensed and having a foster child in the home at the time of the interview. Table 1 shows the results of the total sample.

Table 1. Results of telephone calls

Result	Number (% of total)
Survey completed	124 (33.6%)
Phone number disconnected	58 (15.7%)
No answer/6 attempts	47 (12.7%)
Not called by interviewers	40 (10.8%)
Not eligible	31 (8.4%)
Refused	27 (7.3%)
Other	23 (6.2%)
Incorrect phone number	19 (5.1%)
Total	369 (100%)

Because of the challenges posed by the sampling frame, the margin of error for overall results is plus or minus eight percentage points (Confidence Level 95%). In addition to sampling error, there are other common potential sources of error, including survey and interviewer error. Despite these

¹ Response rate was calculated using the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standard definitions and on-line response rate calculator downloaded from http://www.aapor.org/default.asp?page=survey_methods/standards_and_best_practices .

limitations, this survey is believed to be more representative of the current foster parent population than surveys previously conducted, which generally rely on convenience sampling techniques.

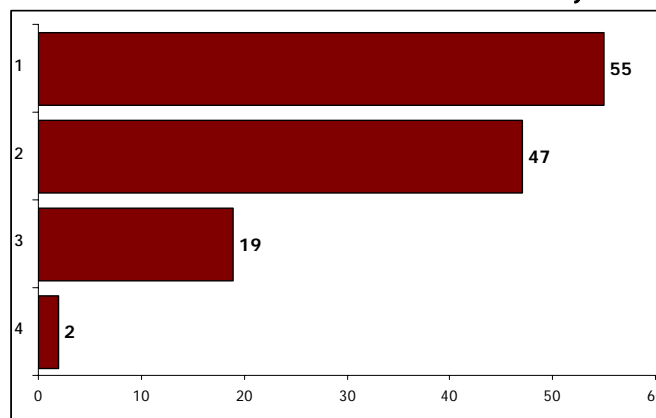
Summary of Survey Results

A. Demographics of foster parents

A total of 124 current foster parents responded to the survey. Of these, 44 (35.4%) live in the District and 80 (64.5%) live in Maryland. Fifty-eight percent (58.8%) indicated they were foster parents for CFSA and 41.1% for a private agency. All of these private agency foster parents lived in Maryland.

The surveyed foster parents had an average of 1.74 currently placed in their home. Forty-four percent (44.4%) had only one child, 37.9% two children, 15.3% three children and 1.6% four children (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of number of foster children currently in home (n=123)



Foster parents on average reported being a foster parent for 5.7 years, with private agency foster parents being foster parents slightly longer than CFSA foster parents, 6.2 years vs. 5.35 years. They reported being with their current agency, on average 4.8 years, with CFSA foster parents being with their agency on average, one year longer than private agency foster parents, 5.2 years vs. 4.2 years. Figure 2 depicts the distribution of length of foster parenting for all respondents and figure 3 is the distribution of length of being with their current agency.

Figure 2. Distribution of length of foster parenting (n=123)

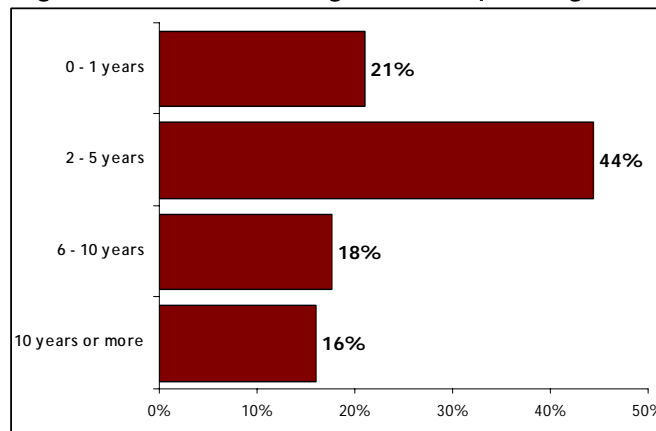
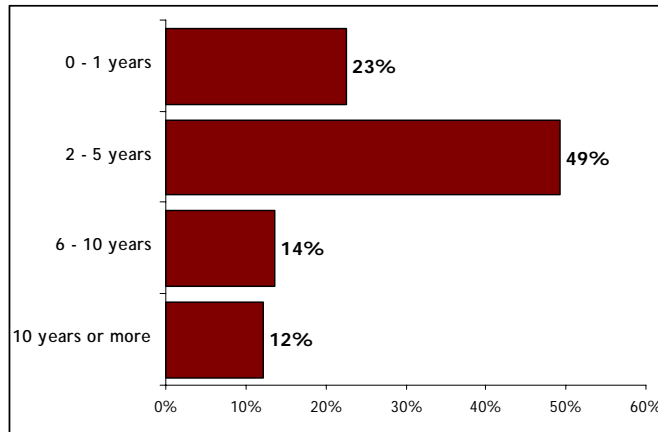


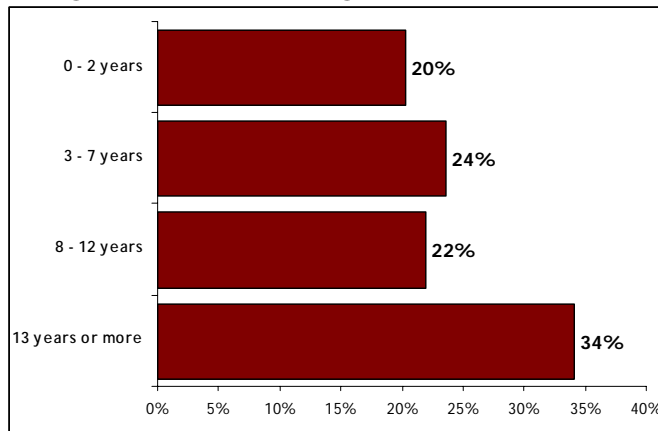
Figure 3. Distribution of length of foster parents with current agency (n=121)



B. Demographics of foster children

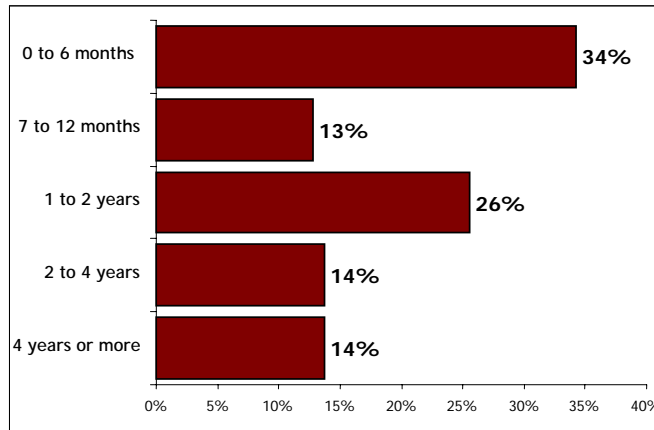
If a foster parent had more than one child in her/his home at the time of the interview, she/he was asked to respond to most of the survey questions as they pertain to the child most recently placed in their home. As indicated, 44.7% had only one child and 55.3% had more than one child. These demographics describe the child identified as the only or mostly recently placed child. Slightly more than half (51.2%) of the foster children were girls, and 48.7% boys. The average age of the girls is 9.0 years and boys 8.9 years; the youngest child was an infant, and oldest, 20 years. The average age of children in CFSA homes is 7.8 years, compared with 9.9 years for children in private agency homes. One third (34%) of children and 13 years or greater and 20% are 0 -2 years old (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Distribution of ages of foster child (n=123)



The average length of placement of the foster child was 22.8 months, and the median 13.3 months, with the shortest placement being one day and longest, 170 months (14 years). Nearly three-quarters (72.5%) of the placements were two years or less (Figure 5). Length of placement between CFSA and private agencies was comparable, 22.3 months vs. 22.1 months. Length of placement between girls and boys is also comparable, 22.8 months vs. 23.0 months.

Figure 5. Distribution of length of placement of foster child (n=117)



C. Receipt of materials and Medicaid card

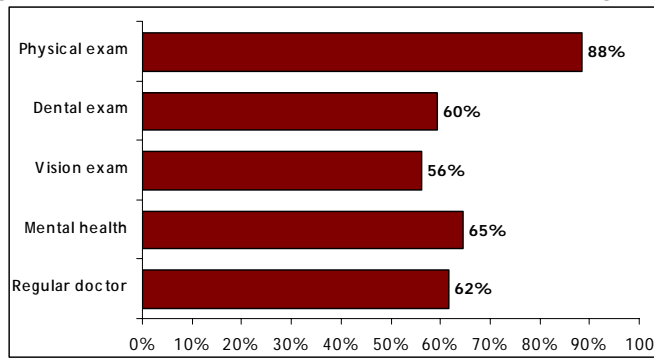
Nearly two-thirds (62.6%) of respondents indicated that they had never received a Medicaid card for their foster child, with 26% receiving the Medicaid card after the child’s placement. Foster parents with newer placements (two years or less) reported a much higher rate of never receiving a card than those with longer placements (more than two years), 70.2% vs. 43.8%.

Overall, 37.7% reported never receiving results from pre-placement medical screening, 53.7% never receiving medical history, and 58.5% never receiving the CFSA information package. Slightly more than a quarter (27.5%) of foster parents with newer placements indicated receiving the CFSA Placement Information Package.

D. Medical Care History

Overall, 88.4% of children had a medical examination within the previous year, while 59.5% had a dental examination, 56.2% a vision examination, and 64.5% a mental health, developmental or behavioral examination (Figure 6). Children in longer placements were more likely to have had an appointment. A majority (61.7%) of foster parents indicated that their foster child had a “regular doctor to go to for care to to call with medical questions”. Children in longer placements were more likely to have a regular doctor, 71.9% vs. 55.6%. Children who have used DC KIDS for care were less likely to have a regular doctor— 54.9% of children with a regular doctor have used DC KIDS compared with 68.6% who have not used DC KIDS but have a regular doctor.

Figure 6. Proportion of foster children reported receiving service

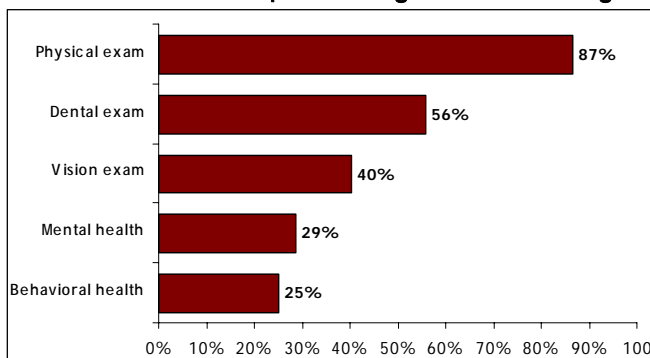


E. DC KIDS

Almost all (85.2%) of foster parents indicated that they had heard of DC KIDS. Nearly half (48.6%) of those who had heard of DC KIDS had used DC KIDS for care for their foster child, and 48.6% had not. Foster parents who had heard of DC KIDS and had a newer placement were more likely to use

DC KIDS, 55.6% vs. 37%. The most frequently used DC KIDS service was for physical health (86.5%) followed by dental care (55.7%) (Figure 7). To obtain DC KIDS services, nearly half (48.1%) indicated calling the DC KIDS office, while a third (32.7%) indicated calling her/his social worker and 15.4% called the doctor directly.

Figure 7. Proportion of foster children reported using DC KIDS receiving service from DC KIDS



Foster parents who have used DC KIDS for services reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the care, the office hours and with the information provided after the appointment. However, the areas of greatest dissatisfaction are with the process for making DC KIDS appointments and the time they had to wait for DC KIDS appointments. Foster parents in Maryland had higher levels of dissatisfaction with the location of DC KIDS providers than did District foster parents—25% of District foster parents said they were either “unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with the location of DC KIDS doctors/providers, compared with 42.1% of Maryland foster parents.

Most foster parents who have not used DC KIDS indicated locating a doctor her/himself (71.4%) or asking the social worker for help (20.4%). However, 33% of shorter placements asked the social worker for help, vs. 9.5% of longer placement foster parents. The most frequent reasons for not using DC KIDS was not knowing about it (28.5%), having a prior unsatisfactory experience (16.4%) and not knowing how to make appointments (10.2%).

F. Overall medical care

Seventy percent (70.1%) of all respondents indicated that getting an active DC Medicaid card was either a “big problem” or “little problem”. Approximately 40% of respondents indicating that finding a doctor or dentist who accepts DC Medicaid was either a “big problem” or “little problem” as was finding a doctor who was convenient. The majority (60.5%) indicated that obtaining medical information or medical history from their social worker was “not a problem at all”.

G. Behavioral/Mental Health Care

One half (50.8%) of responding foster parents indicated that the foster child received behavioral or mental health care and 61.3% indicated that they called her/his social worker to obtain the services, and 21% called the doctor/provider directly.

Foster parents whose child received behavioral or mental health care generally report high levels of satisfaction with the services they received. In almost all areas, more than three-quarters responded they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the areas surveyed—quality, process of making appointments, convenience, waiting time and office hours; the area receiving the lowest ratings was the location of providers, with 26.2% indicating they were either “unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with this aspect of the services.

As with medical care, areas relating to DC Medicaid were an area of problem for foster parents. Thirty percent (29.5%) indicated that obtaining behavioral or mental health information or history from the child’s social worker was a “big problem” or “little problem”.

H. Overall experiences with medical services

Almost all foster parents (85%) expressed confidence in their ability to obtain medical services to care for their foster child, and 74% expressed confidence in their ability to obtain behavioral/mental health services. Almost all (82%) indicated their ability to address their foster children's health care needs. Nearly all (80%) expressed confidence in their social worker being able to provide assistance, if needed. The majority (53.3%) indicated that the "District's foster care system is improving". Foster parents with newer placements were more likely to agree, 85% vs. 68%. Almost all foster parents (97%) indicated that they would go to the emergency room if they needed after hours care for their foster children.

The final open-ended questions to respondents indicated that many foster parents have difficulty obtaining prescriptions for their foster children, noting that they need to go into the District for this. Other areas of need include, the need for printed resource information, for greater dental care resources, and for more convenient health care services—in terms of location and hours.

Discussion

The telephone survey provides findings which corroborate anecdotal reports about foster parents' experiences with health care services as well as provides some new information. Unfortunately, due to the limitations of the sampling frame, the generalizability of these survey findings to all foster parents is limited; however the survey is likely to represent a more diverse population of foster parents than those who participated in the convenience surveys.

This telephone survey indicates that the majority of foster parents do not have Medicaid cards for their foster children and that this lack of a card poses a barrier to obtaining services. The prior survey conducted in January 2005 by FAPAC using a convenience sample of 90 foster and adoptive parents also indicated similar concerns. While most foster children have had a medical exam in the past year, smaller proportions of children were reported receiving other routine health services (e.g., dental, vision, mental health). Foster parents also indicated difficulty in obtaining dental services. This suggests that the oral health care needs of foster children are not being adequately addressed. The lack of access to oral health care was also identified as a problem in the January study.

While CFSA has developed mechanisms to provide foster parents with health information about their foster children, many surveyed foster parents reported not receiving these materials. This topic should be explored further, for it is possible that foster parents are not aware of what information to expect from CFSA at the time of a child's placement or that this information is not being adequately provided and explained to foster parents at time of placement.

The DC KIDS program does appear to be having some beneficial effects, although only about half of the foster parents aware of the program reported using it primarily for physical health, as well as for oral health. Foster parents are satisfied with the quality of the services provided, but are unsatisfied with the process for making appointments and for the wait time for appointments. Foster parents responding to the January survey reported similar concerns.

Persons not using DC KIDS reported "not knowing about it", "having a prior unsatisfactory experience" or "not knowing how to make appointments". Many foster parents, including those who use DC KIDS, reported calling their social worker for assistance in obtaining health care services, which is no longer a requirement. Foster parents with newer placements reported asking their social worker for assistance. Over sixty percent (61.3%) of foster parents using mental health services indicated calling their social worker for assistance. Further education and clarification of policy regarding how to obtain health care services and how to make appointments may be indicated. Many foster parents also indicated the need for printed, updated resource materials.

Approximately half of the respondents in both this telephone survey and the January survey indicated that their foster children received mental health services. The level of reported satisfaction with these services was higher in this telephone survey than with the convenience sample (84% vs. 57%).

The location of providers for both physical and mental health service was a common area of dissatisfaction.

An unexpected barrier identified during the telephone survey was the difficulty many foster parents—particularly those living in Maryland—experience in filling prescriptions at pharmacies. This may be due to the lack of a Medicaid card and the lack of pharmacies in Maryland who will honor DC Medicaid as a payment source. This issue should be further explored.

Overall, foster parents indicated feeling confident in being able to obtain both medical and behavioral/mental health services for their foster children and in being assisted by their social worker in this effort. Few indicated feeling overwhelmed by their foster child’s(ren’s) health care needs, although some respondents did indicate having to spend more time than expected with addressing the child’s health care needs.

The Methodology section of this report outlines some of the difficulties experienced in conducting this survey. Prior to conducting additional surveys of this population, it is strongly recommended that the sampling frame be carefully reviewed for completeness and accuracy—including the accuracy of telephone numbers. Additionally, while the refusal rate was approximately 7%, interviewers reported that many respondents indicating feeling uncomfortable participating in the survey and in providing answers to some of the questions. Efforts should be made to inform possible respondents of the survey and its importance and to encourage participation.

Survey Questions and Responses

Sections A and B of the survey were introductory and screening questions with demographics. These data are reported above. Foster parents who had more than one child placed in their home at the time of the interview were asked to focus their responses on the child who was most recently placed in the home. Initials of the child were used to assist the respondent in focusing their response to this child. (A copy of the complete survey instrument is contained in the appendix.)

Section C. Placement Materials

7	A Medicaid card for the child (n=123)	Received before.....	2.4%
		Received that day	8.1%
		Received after	26.0%
		Have never received.....	62.6%
		Don't know	<1.0%
8	Results from the pre-placement medical screening conducted on the child	Received before.....	4.1%
		Received that day	40.2%
		Received after	13.9%
		Have never received.....	37.7%
		Don't know	4.1%
9	Information about the child’s medical history.	Received before.....	7.4%
		Received that day	19.0%
		Received after	18.2%
		Have never received.....	53.7%
		Don't know	1.7%

10 CFSA has recently developed a package of information to give to foster parents at the time of a child's placement. Did you receive this Placement Information Package before the child's came to your home, on the day the child came to your home, after the child came to your home, or you have never received the item?	Received before.....	2.4%
	Received that day	13.0%
	Received after	9.8%
	Have never received.....	58.5%
	Don't know	16.3%

Section D. Medical Care History

In the past year (or since the child's placement if less than one year), has <child's initials >		
11 Had a physical/medical examination? (n=121)	Yes	88.4%
	No.....	9.9%
	Not sure.....	1.7%
12 Had a dental examination? (n=121)	Yes	59.5%
	No.....	37.2%
	Not sure.....	2.5%
	Refused/Declined	<1.0%
13 Had a vision examination? (n=121)	Yes	56.2%
	No.....	40.5%
	Not sure.....	3.3%
14 Had a mental health, developmental or behavioral examination? (n=121)	Yes	64.5%
	No.....	31.4%
	Not sure	4.1%
15 Does <child's initials > have a regular doctor you go to for care or call with medical questions? (n=120)	Yes	61.7%
	No.....	35.8%
	Not sure.....	1.7%
	Refused/Declined	<1.0%

Section E. DC KIDS

16 Have you heard of DC KIDS? (n=122)	Yes	85.2%
	No.....	13.9%
	Not sure.....	<1.0%
17 Have you ever used the DC KIDS program to obtain care for <child's initials >? (n=107; includes only those responding "Yes" to previous question)	Yes	48.6%
	No.....	48.6%
	Not sure.....	2.8%
18 In the past year which of these services have you obtained through DC KIDS for <child's initials> (n=52; includes only those responding "Yes" to using DC KIDS program)	Medical/physical health.....	86.5%
	Dental care	55.7%
	Vision/Eye exam	40.3%
	Mental health.....	28.8%
	Behavioral health	25.0%
	Other	9.6%

19	How do you <u>usually</u> obtain these services from DC KIDS for <child's initials >? (n=52; includes only those responding "Yes" to using DC KIDS program)	Call his/her social worker 32.7% Call the DC KIDS office..... 48.1% Call the doctor/ provider directly 15.4% Refused/Declined..... 1.9% Services already established 1.9%
20	The quality of the care provided to your foster child by the DC KIDS doctor/provider. (n=51)	Very satisfied23.5% Satisfied.....62.7% Unsatisfied9.8% Very unsatisfied3.9%
21	The process for making DC KIDS appointments. (n=52)	Very satisfied13.5% Satisfied.....50.0% Unsatisfied13.5% Very unsatisfied23.1%
22	The time you had to wait for DC KIDS appointments. (n=50)	Very satisfied10.0% Satisfied.....48.0% Unsatisfied16.0% Very unsatisfied26.0%
23	The location of DC KIDS doctors/providers. (n=50)	Very satisfied4.0% Satisfied.....23.4% Unsatisfied16.0% Very unsatisfied22.0%
24	The office hours for DC KIDS doctors/providers. (n=50)	Very satisfied6.0% Satisfied.....74.0% Unsatisfied10.0% Very unsatisfied10.0%
25	The waiting time to see the DC KIDS doctor/provider once you're at the office. (n=50)	Very satisfied8.0% Satisfied.....62.0% Unsatisfied18.0% Very unsatisfied12.0%
26	The information provided to you about your child after a DC KIDS appointment. (n=51)	Very satisfied7.8% Satisfied.....78.4% Unsatisfied9.8% Very unsatisfied3.9%

Respondents who have not used DC KIDS

27	Since you have not used DC KIDS for medical care or for <child's initials > in the past year or are not familiar with it, how have you <u>usually</u> obtained care for your child? (n=49; includes only those responding "No" or "Not Sure" to using DC KIDS program)	Located doctor myself 71.4% Asked social worker for help 20.4% Child has not had medical care 2.0% Other 6.1%
28	How did you usually pay for this care? (n=49; includes only those responding "No" or "Not Sure" to using DC KIDS program)	Used my child's Medicaid 89.7% Paid for it myself 2.0% On foster parent's insurance 2.0% Refused/Declined..... 4.0% Other 3.0%

29 Why haven't you use DC KIDS? (n=49; includes only those responding "No" or "Not Sure" to using DC KIDS program)	Didn't know about it.....	28.5%
	Had a prior unsatisfactory experience.....	16.3%
	Didn't know how to make appointments.....	10.2%
	Couldn't get a convenient appointment.....	8.1%
	It's not convenient for me.....	8.1%
	Want to use my own doctor.....	8.1%
	Social worker/agency makes appointments.....	4.0%
	Refused/Declined.....	4.0%
Other.....	6.1%	

Section F. Overall Medical Care

30 Obtaining medical information or medical history on this child from my child's social worker. (n=119)	A big problem.....	17.6%
	A little problem.....	13.4%
	Not a problem at all.....	60.5%
	Don't know.....	8.4%
31 Getting an active DC Medicaid card (n=117)	A big problem.....	62.4%
	A little problem.....	7.7%
	Not a problem at all.....	27.4%
	Don't know.....	2.6%
32 Finding a doctor/provider who will accept DC Medicaid (n=118)	A big problem.....	31.4%
	A little problem.....	10.2%
	Not a problem at all.....	53.4%
	Don't know.....	5.1%
33 Finding a doctor/provider who is convenient for me (n=121)	A big problem.....	31.4%
	A little problem.....	9.9%
	Not a problem at all.....	57.0%
	Don't know.....	1.7%
34 Finding a dentist who will accept DC Medicaid. (n=119)	A big problem.....	31.1%
	A little problem.....	6.7%
	Not a problem at all.....	53.4%
	Don't know.....	53.4%
35 Finding a specialty medical provider for follow-up care who will accept DC Medicaid. (118)	A big problem.....	16.9%
	A little problem.....	2.5%
	Not a problem at all.....	43.2%
	Don't know.....	37.3%
36 Are there any medical services that <child's initials > needs, that you've had trouble getting? (n=119)	Yes.....	24.4%
	No.....	75.6%

Section G. Behavioral/Mental Health Care

38 During the past 12 months, did <child's initials> receive any behavioral or mental health care? (n=122)	Yes.....	50.8%
	No.....	44.4%
	Not Sure.....	3.2%
How do you <u>usually</u> obtain these services from DC KIDS for <child's initials >? (n=62; includes only those responding "Yes" to using behavioral/mental health care)	Call his/her social worker.....	61.3%
	Call the doctor/ provider directly.....	21.0%
	Other.....	17.7%

41	The quality of the behavioral/mental health care provided to your foster child. (n=62; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	Very satisfied21.0% Satisfied.....62.9% Unsatisfied12.9% Very unsatisfied3.2%
42	The process for making behavioral/mental health care appointments. (n=50; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	Very satisfied2.0% Satisfied.....90.0% Unsatisfied2.0% Very unsatisfied6.0%
43	The time you had to wait for behavioral/mental health care appointments. (n=47; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	Very satisfied8.5% Satisfied.....76.6% Unsatisfied10.6% Very unsatisfied4.3%
44	The location of behavioral/mental health care providers. (n=53; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	Very satisfied5.7% Satisfied.....67.9% Unsatisfied5.7% Very unsatisfied20.8%
45	The waiting time to see the behavioral/mental health doctor/provider once you’re at the office. (n=51; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	Very satisfied7.8% Satisfied.....88.2% Unsatisfied2.0% Very unsatisfied2.0%
46	The office hours for behavioral/mental health doctors/providers. (n=54; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	Very satisfied7.8% Satisfied.....78.4% Unsatisfied9.8% Very unsatisfied3.9%
47	Obtaining behavioral/mental health information or a behavioral/mental health history on this child from my child’s social worker. (n=61; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	A big problem21.3% A little problem8.2% Not a problem at all.....65.6% Don’t know4.9%
48	Obtaining an active DC Medicaid card. (n=61; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	A big problem73.8% A little problem9.8% Not a problem at all.....14.8% Don’t know0.0% Refused/Declined1.6%
49	Finding a behavioral/mental health provider who will accept DC Medicaid. (n=60; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	A big problem20.0% A little problem5.0% Not a problem at all.....65.0% Don’t know8.3% Refused/Declined1.7%
50	Finding a behavioral/mental health provider who is convenient for me. (n=58; includes only those responding “Yes” to using behavioral/mental health care)	A big problem27.6% A little problem5.2% Not a problem at all.....62.1% Don’t know5.2%

51	Are there any behavioral/mental health services that <child's initials> needs, that you've had trouble getting? (n=61; includes only those responding "Yes" to using behavioral/mental health care)	Yes	18.0%
		No.....	80.3%
		Not Sure	1.6%

Section H. General questions

53	I feel confident that I can obtain the <u>medical services</u> to care for my foster child (children). (n=123)	Strongly Agree	18.7%
		Agree.....	68.3%
		Disagree	8.9%
		Strongly Disagree.....	4.1%
54	I feel confident that I can obtain the <u>behavioral/mental</u> health services to care for my foster child (children). (n=121)	Strongly Agree	10.7%
		Agree.....	63.6%
		Disagree	13.2%
		Strongly Disagree.....	5.0%
55	If I have a problem with getting the care my foster child needs, I know my child's social worker will be able to help me. (n=123)	Strongly Agree	20.3%
		Agree.....	59.3%
		Disagree	12.2%
		Strongly Disagree.....	5.7%
56	The District's foster care system is improving. (n=122)	Strongly Agree	7.4%
		Agree.....	45.9%
		Disagree	15.6%
		Strongly Disagree.....	10.7%
57	Sometimes I feel that my foster child's (children's) health care needs are more than I can handle. (n=121)	Strongly Agree	3.2%
		Agree.....	14.0%
		Disagree	71.9%
		Strongly Disagree.....	9.9%
58	If my foster child needs after hours care, I would probably go to the nearest emergency room. (n=122)	Strongly Agree	14.8%
		Agree.....	82.0%
		Disagree	1.6%
		Strongly Disagree.....	1.6%

Appendix

- » **FAPAC Health Services Survey instrument | July 2005**

A. Introduction

Hello, may I speak with <foster parent's name>.

My name is <interviewer's name>. I am calling from Foster and Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center, or FAPAC. We are currently conducting a survey of DC foster parents on their thoughts and experiences with health care for their foster children. Information obtained from this survey will be used by FAPAC to develop a training program to help foster parents advocate for health care for their foster children.

Your name was randomly selected from a list of all foster parents in Washington, DC to participate in this important survey.

Your name and responses will be confidential—no one will know who participated in this survey or their responses. CFSA, your agency, or social worker will not have access to the survey responses. Your decision to participate or not participate in this survey will not affect your role as a foster parent. You may choose not to answer specific questions.

This survey will not provide you with individual help on obtaining health services for your foster child. If you need that help, please let me know and I will be able to refer you to the appropriate person or agencies.

This survey should take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Do you have any questions regarding this survey?

- ☞ If **Yes**, please answer questions. <Write question here.>
- ☞ If **No**, then proceed.

Are you willing to participate in this telephone survey?

- ☞ If **Yes**, begin survey.
- ☞ If **No**, then say “Thank you. Could you tell me why you do not want to participate?” Write response here and **✘ END SURVEY**

B. Screening Questions

1	Are you currently a licensed foster parent?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 2
		<input type="checkbox"/> No: ✘ END SURVEY
2	Are you a foster parent for CFSA (Child and Family Services Administration) or for a private agency which serves District children?	<input type="checkbox"/> CFSA ► GO TO Q 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> Private Agency ► GO TO Q 3
		<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure ✘ END SURVEY
3	What private agency are you working with?	☞ Write in agency name:
4	Do you have a District foster child placed in your home today?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 5
		<input type="checkbox"/> No: ✘ END SURVEY
5	How many District foster children are currently placed in your home at this time?	☞ Write in number:

- 6a ☞ If 1 child:
- a) What are the child's initials? _____
 - b) What is the child's age? _____ years old
 - c) Is the child a boy or girl? boy girl
 - d) What month/year was this child placed in your home? Month _____ Year _____
 - e) Is this child in traditional or therapeutic foster care? traditional therapeutic don't know

- 6b ☞ If more than 1 child:
- For this survey, I would like you to focus on the child who was most recently placed with you, or the one who is the newest child in your home.
- a) What are the child's initials? _____
 - b) What is the child's age? _____ years old
 - c) Is the child a boy or girl? boy girl
 - d) What month/year was this child placed in your home? Month _____ Year _____
 - e) Is this child in traditional or therapeutic foster care? traditional therapeutic don't know

C. Placement Materials

Please think back to when <child's initials> was placed in your home.

For each item I read, please let me know if you received that item before the child came to your home, on the day the child came to your home, after the child came to your home, or you have never received the item.

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 7 | A Medicaid card for the child | <input type="checkbox"/> Received before
<input type="checkbox"/> Received that day
<input type="checkbox"/> Received after
<input type="checkbox"/> Have never received
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined |
| 8 | Results from the pre-placement medical screening conducted on the child | <input type="checkbox"/> Received before
<input type="checkbox"/> Received that day
<input type="checkbox"/> Received after
<input type="checkbox"/> Have never received
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined |
| 9 | Information about the child's medical history. | <input type="checkbox"/> Received before
<input type="checkbox"/> Received that day
<input type="checkbox"/> Received after
<input type="checkbox"/> Have never received
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined |
| 10 | CFSA has recently developed a package of information to give to foster parents at the time of a child's placement.

Did you receive this Placement Information Package before the child's came to your home, on the day the child came to your home, after the child came to your home, or you have never received the item? | <input type="checkbox"/> Received before
<input type="checkbox"/> Received that day
<input type="checkbox"/> Received after
<input type="checkbox"/> Have never received
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined |

D. Medical Care History

In the past year (or since the child's placement if less than one year), has <child's initials >	
11 Had a physical/medical examination?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
12 Had a dental examination?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
13 Had a vision examination?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
14 Had a mental health, developmental or behavioral examination?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
15 Does <child's initials > have a regular doctor you go to for care or call with medical questions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined

E. DC KIDS

Children in foster care can receive their health care from a program called DC KIDS (District of Columbia Kid Integrated Delivery System). DC KIDS is a comprehensive health care program that delivers medical, behavioral, mental health, dental, vision and developmental services.	
16 Have you heard of DC KIDS?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 17 <input type="checkbox"/> No ► GO TO Q 27 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure ► GO TO Q 27 <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined ► GO TO Q 30
17 Have you ever used the DC KIDS program to obtain care for <child's initials >	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 18 <input type="checkbox"/> No ► GO TO Q 27 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure ► GO TO Q 27 <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined ► GO TO Q 30
18 ➡ If Yes In the past year which of these services have you obtained through DC KIDS for <child's initials> ◀ Read list. Check only if answered "Yes".▶	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical/physical health <input type="checkbox"/> Dental care <input type="checkbox"/> Vision/Eye exam <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral health <input type="checkbox"/> Other/Specify:

19 **☞ If Yes**

How do you usually obtain these services from DC KIDS for <child's initials >? Do you.... <read list>

Check only one

- Call his/her social worker
- Call the DC KIDS office
- Call the doctor/ provider directly
- Not sure
- Refused/Declined
- Other/specify:

Now I am going to ask you how satisfied or unsatisfied you are with the services you obtained through DC KIDS in the past 12 months for <child's initials >.

In the past year let me know if you are very satisfied, satisfied, unsatisfied, or very unsatisfied with...

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 20 | The quality of the care provided to your foster child by the DC KIDS doctor/provider. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |
| 21 | The process for making DC KIDS appointments. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |
| 22 | The time you had to wait for DC KIDS appointments. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |
| 23 | The location of DC KIDS doctors/providers. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |
| 24 | The office hours for DC KIDS doctors/providers. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |
| 25 | The waiting time to see the DC KIDS doctor/provider once you're at the office. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |
| 26 | The information provided to you about your child after a DC KIDS appointment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied |

▶ GO TO Q 30

➡ Ask only if respondent answered “No” or “Not Sure” to Q 16.

27 Since you have not used DC KIDS for medical care or for <child’s initials > in the past year or are not familiar with it, how have you usually obtained care for your child? Do you.... <read list>

Check only one

- I located a doctor/provider myself
- I asked the social worker for help in finding a doctor/provider
- Child has not had medical care in past year
- Don’t remember
- Refused/Declined
- Other/Specify

28 How did you usually pay for this care? <read list>

Check only one

- Used my child’s Medicaid
- Paid for it myself
- Don’t remember
- Refused/Declined
- Other/Specify:

29 Why haven’t you use DC KIDS?

<Wait for respondent to provide you a response, if no response, then use list as a probe, but choose only one response.>

Check only one

- Didn’t know about it
- Didn’t know how to make an appointment
- Couldn’t get a convenient appointment
- It’s not convenient for me
- Had a prior unsatisfactory experience with DC KIDS
- Wanted to use my own doctor
- DC KIDS doctors treat foster children differently
- Don’t remember
- Refused/Declined
- Other/Specify:

F. Overall Medical Care

<p>The next few questions ask about your overall experiences with medical care for <child's initials >. For each item, indicate whether it's been a big problem, a little problem, or not a problem at all.</p>	
30	<p>Obtaining medical information or medical history on this child from my child's social worker.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
31	<p>Getting an active DC Medicaid card</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
32	<p>Finding a doctor/provider who will accept DC Medicaid</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
33	<p>Finding a doctor/provider who is convenient for me</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
34	<p>Finding a dentist who will accept DC Medicaid.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
35	<p>Finding a specialty medical provider for follow-up care who will accept DC Medicaid.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
36	<p>Are there any medical services that <child's initials > needs, that you've had trouble getting?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 37 <input type="checkbox"/> No ► GO TO Q 38 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure ► GO TO Q 38 <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined ► GO TO Q 38 </p>
37	<p>➡ If Yes What are the medical services you've had trouble getting? <Write in.></p>

G. Behavioral/Mental Health Care

<p>The next few questions ask about behavioral or mental health care <child's initials> may have received during the past 12 months.</p>	
<p>38 During the past 12 months, did <child's initials> receive any behavioral or mental health care?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 39</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No ► GO TO Q 53</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure ► GO TO Q 53</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined ► GO TO Q 53</p>
<p>39 ➡ If Yes What type of behavioral/mental health care did your child receive? ◀ Write in.▶</p>	
<p>40 How do you <u>usually</u> obtain these services for <child's initials>? Do you... <read list></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check only one</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Call his/her social worker</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Call DC KIDS office</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Call the doctor/ provider directly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other/specify:</p>
<p>Now I am going to ask you how satisfied or unsatisfied you are with the behavioral/mental health services you <child's initials > received in the past 12 months. Again, in the past year, for each item, let me know if you are very satisfied, satisfied, unsatisfied, or very unsatisfied with...</p>	
<p>41 The quality of the behavioral/mental health care provided to your foster child.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied</p>
<p>42 The process for making behavioral/mental health care appointments.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied</p>
<p>43 The time you had to wait for behavioral/mental health care appointments.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied</p>
<p>44 The location of behavioral/mental health care providers.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied</p>
<p>45 The waiting time to see the behavioral/mental health doctor/provider once you're at the office.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied</p>
<p>46 The office hours for behavioral/mental health doctors/providers.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfied</p>

<p>The next few questions ask about your overall experiences with behavioral/mental health care for <child's initials >. For each item, indicate whether it's been a big problem, a little problem, not a problem at all.</p>	
47	<p>Obtaining behavioral/mental health information or a behavioral/mental health history on this child from my child's social worker.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
48	<p>Obtaining an active DC Medicaid card</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
49	<p>Finding a behavioral/mental health provider who will accept DC Medicaid</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
50	<p>Finding a behavioral/mental health provider who is convenient for me</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A big problem <input type="checkbox"/> A little problem <input type="checkbox"/> Not a problem at all <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>
51	<p>Are there any behavioral/mental health services that <child's initials> needs, that you've had trouble getting?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes ► GO TO Q 52 <input type="checkbox"/> No ► GO TO Q 53 <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure ► GO TO Q 53 <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined ► GO TO Q 53 </p>
52	<p>☞ If Yes What are these mental health/behavioral health services you've had trouble getting? <Write in.></p>

H. General questions

<p>I'm now going to read a series of statements relating to your overall experiences in accessing health care as a foster parent. If you have more than one foster child in your home, you can now consider your experiences with these children. For each statement, please answer if you "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", or "Strongly Disagree".</p>	
53	<p>I feel confident that I can obtain the <u>medical services</u> to care for my foster child (children).</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined </p>

54	I feel confident that I can obtain the <u>behavioral/mental</u> health services to care for my foster child (children).	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
55	If I have a problem with getting the care my foster child needs, I know my child's social worker will be able to help me.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
56	The District's foster care system is improving.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
57	Sometimes I feel that my foster child's (children's) health care needs are more than I can handle.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined
58	If my foster child needs after hours care, I would probably go to the nearest emergency room.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Refused/Declined

I. Demographics

These last set of questions provide us some information about who completed this survey.			
59	How many years have you been a foster parent for District foster children? _____ Years		
60	How many years have you been with your current agency? _____ Years		
61	Is there anything you would like to add about your experience with accessing health care services for your foster child? <Write in.>		
62	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Would you like us to keep your phone number so that we can call you about FAPAC trainings and other activities?</td> <td> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No </td> </tr> </table>	Would you like us to keep your phone number so that we can call you about FAPAC trainings and other activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Would you like us to keep your phone number so that we can call you about FAPAC trainings and other activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
<p>✘ END SURVEY</p> <p>This completes our survey. Thank you very much for your time and assistance in completing this survey. Have a good day/evening.</p>			

About FAPAC

The mission of The Foster & Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center is to improve the quality of life of children in the DC child welfare system by empowering their foster, kinship and adoptive families and by assuring the inclusion of these perspectives at “every relevant table.”

FAPAC was created in October 2000 by a collaborative effort between The Consortium for Child Welfare, DC Metropolitan Foster and Adoptive Parent’s Association, and the Freddie Mac Foundation, and was based on the concept that DC’s foster, kinship and adoptive parents were the missing elements at child welfare tables. Our staff and board fervently believe that children from the child welfare system will be best served by the inclusion of the people who love and care for them daily into the decision making about their lives.

Our guiding principles from which we formulate our policy actions are:

- Children from the DC child welfare system will be best served by the inclusion of their kinship and foster parents in decision making about their lives.
- Children from the DC child welfare system deserve quality physical and mental health care appropriate to their special needs.
- Children are best served by placements that are effectively supported to prevent disruption and by appropriate transitions when change is necessary.
- Kinship and foster parents deserve fair process when accused of wrongdoing.
- Foster, kinship and adoptive parents deserve respect for their critical role in the development and nurturing of DC’s children.



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