

Working together to meet family needs

Family Living Programs



Partnerships that add value and extend reach

“Family Living Programs is an agency with a rich history and it uses its expertise as it continues to lead change to meet the needs of individuals and families.”

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“Our community is truly fortunate to have such a well-respected and effective resource in our county. Family Living’s work ultimately benefits the community as a whole.”

Family Living Programs provide local and statewide leadership to promote education, resources and partnerships that create an environment where families and their communities can thrive.

To be effective, Family Living colleagues work in partnership with a variety of organizations and agencies in communities across the state.

Working with these family-serving agencies, Family Living:

- Conducts professional development trainings and workshops.
- Shares research-based ideas and information.
- Supports networks and coalitions that focus on family issues.
- Partners on a variety of programs that address family needs.

“Connecting frequently with other family-serving agencies in my county helps me keep my work focused on local needs and responsive to emerging topics.”

In 2012, Family Living Programs conducted research designed to examine the breadth and depth of its work with family-serving agencies and identify whether there is value added in working together to meet family needs.

About the survey

In all, 217 surveys were returned from family-serving agencies and 98 from Family Living staff. Respondents reported a long history of working together (the majority had worked with one another for 10 years or more) in a variety of ways, including joint programming, serving together on coalitions, and referring clients to each other for services.



Findings

1 Family Living Programs staff, programs and resources are trusted and responsive.

When asked to rate Family Living Programs on a variety of characteristics, representatives from other family-serving agencies gave very high marks on every measure.

- Over 97% of respondents said Family Living was above average in terms of being **Trustworthy/Credible, Based on Research, and Unbiased**, including over 89% of respondents who rated Family Living as **Very Good** or **Exceptional**.
- Over 95% of respondents said Family Living was above average in terms of being **Flexible, Timely/Responsive, and Accessible/Available**, including over 85% of respondents who rated it as **Very Good** or **Exceptional**.

2 Family Living Programs are highly effective.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that Family Living Programs effectively met community needs with programs that are grounded in research.

- 92% agreed that **Family Living responds effectively to community needs**.
- 91% agreed that **Family Living is a valued source for evidence-based practices**.
- 93% agreed that **Family Living makes a positive impact on the families it serves**.

3 Working together adds value and extends reach.

Respondents were asked to reflect on the value added by working together. Does working together add value to their work? Does it improve their ability to achieve their organizational goals? By working together, are they better able to serve families?

- Over 80% said that by working together, they added value to each other's work. Examples included extending their reach to intended audiences; being better able to connect with learners; and being more responsive and relevant in their programming.

4 Family Living Programs can add more value to the work of other agencies.

Respondents to both surveys identified some ways Family Living could add more value to other agencies. Suggestions included:

- Expanding existing programs and increasing staffing to reach more families.
- Bringing additional organizational development or evaluation services to the partnerships.
- Better marketing the programs that Family Living has to offer.

5 Working together helps meet the needs of families.

The ultimate question was to find out what this collaborative work means for families. Respondents were asked to what extent they believed family needs were better met because they worked together in partnership.

- Over 94% of respondents said that family needs were better met by working together.

"Working together helps fulfill my programming outcomes to help strengthen families in my county."

Family Living Programs is a trusted, responsive and effective partner that adds value and extends the reach of a variety of family-serving agencies. As a result of these partnerships, Family Living helps Wisconsin families and communities thrive.

For more information about this research project, or for a complete report, visit <http://flp.ces.uwex.edu/>

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