

MEANINGFUL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS.



OLDHAM INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

Family Child Care Assessment Study

Presentation to EEC Policy and Research
Committee, May 5, 2014



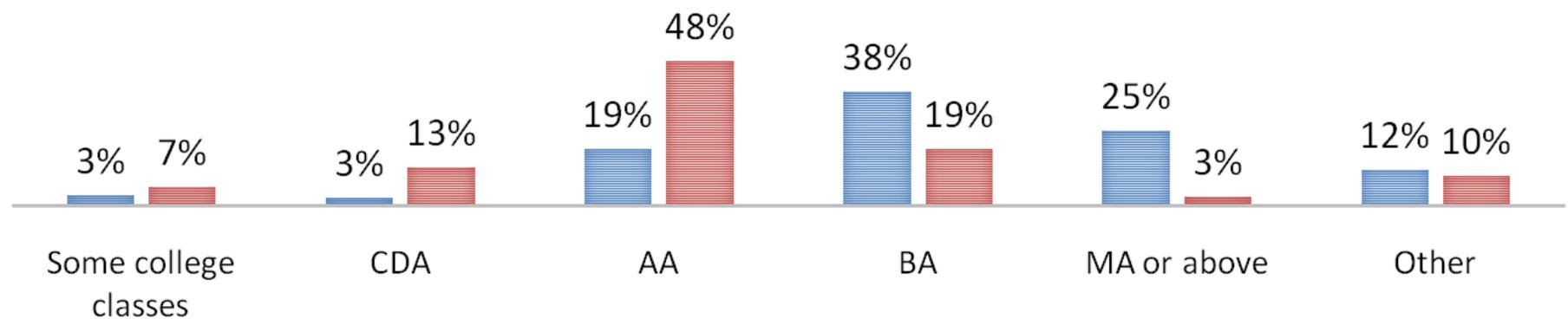
Objectives and Scope of Work

- To document current supports and services offered by Family Child Care systems to educators by focusing on how FCC systems provide support to FCC educators related to the QRIS and professional development, the role of in-home support staff and information about FCC educators; and,
- To help inform EEC's efforts to standardize expectations and procedures for Family Child Care systems supporting their affiliated member-educators.

43 Family Child Care (FCC) systems contract with EEC to ensure equal access to high quality family child care across the state. FCC systems receive an administrative fee from EEC to support FCC educators who serve subsidized children, while providing an infrastructure for billing, referrals, placement, support services and professional development. FCC Systems vary in the number of FCC educators with whom they work from less than five to over 500. FCC systems serving a large number of educators often have multiple sites or offices throughout the Commonwealth. This study focused on both FCC systems and member-educators in 41 FCC systems.

Education Level of In-Home Support Staff and Home Visitors

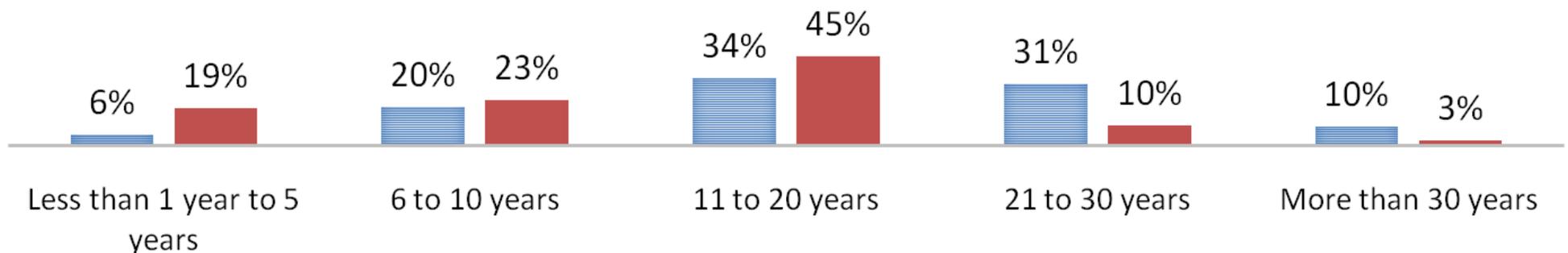
■ In-home staff ■ Home visitor



80% of Home Visitors and 94% of In-home staff have an AA degree or higher

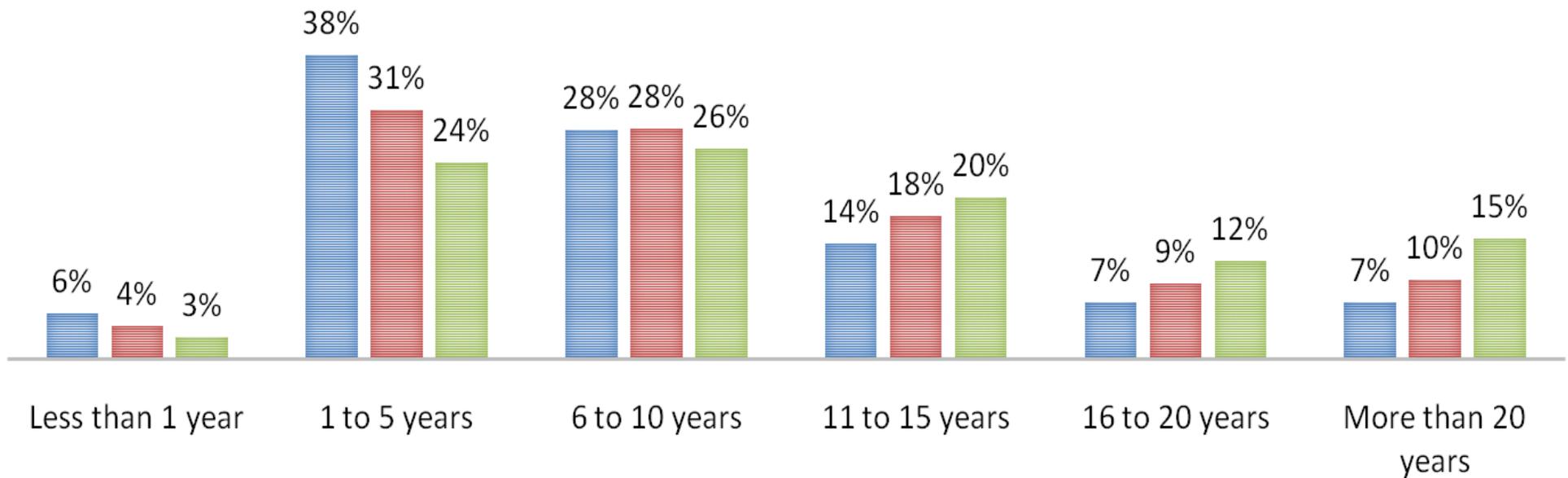
Years experience in ECE Field

■ In-home staff ■ Home visitor



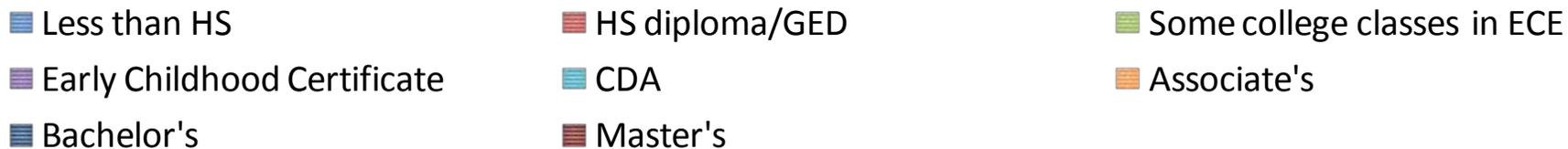
Experience in Systems and In-Home Care

■ Current system ■ Any system ■ In-home FCC educator

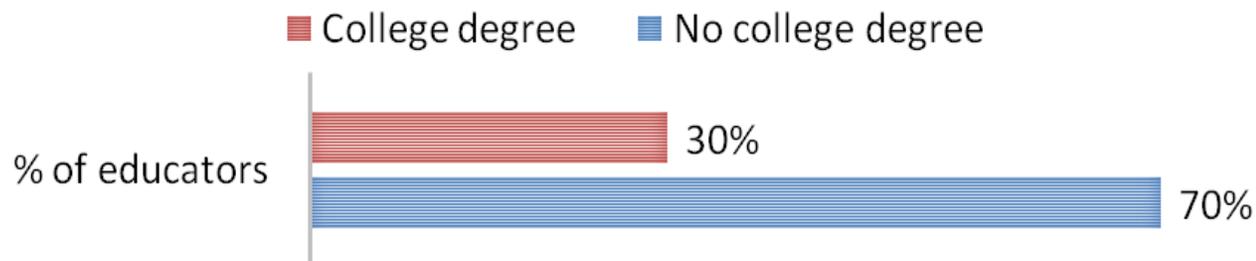


The typical FCC educator responding to this survey has been providing in-home care for almost 12 years, has been a member of a FCC system for approximately 10 of those years and has been a member of their current FCC system for over 8 years.

Highest Education Level of FCC Educators



Attainment of College Degree



59% of FCC Educators report that their FCC system helped them attain their current educational level.

Key Findings:

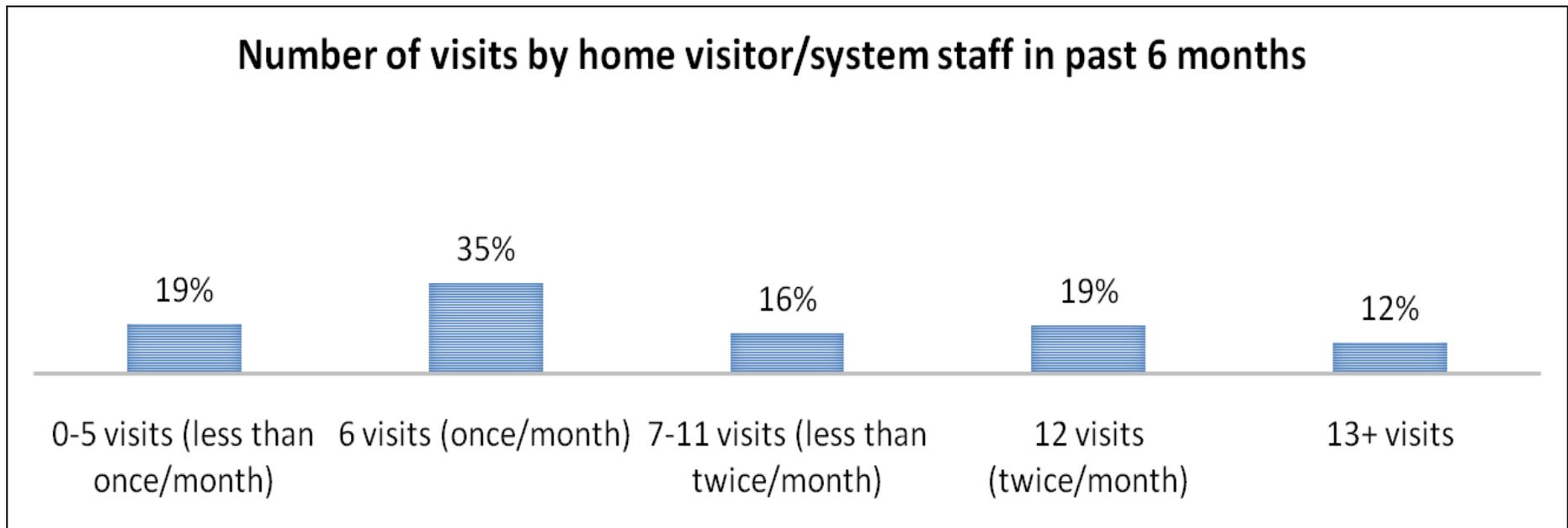
Contact between FCC Educators and FCC systems



81% of FCC educators report they have been visited by their system at least once a month over the course of the last 6 months. Of these FCC educators, 47% say visits have occurred more than once a month.

87% of educators report they are satisfied with the number of visits they received in the last 6 months from their home visitors or other FCC staff.

❖ The high level of satisfaction with the number of visits suggests this structure of the FCC systems across the Commonwealth is, in most cases, functioning efficiently.



Key Findings: FCC Educators and QRIS



According to FCC educators, FCC system support of educators around the QRIS has been crucial to educators' involvement in this quality control system, as well helping to improve the quality of child care that FCC educators provide.

78% of FCC educators believe that being involved in the QRIS has improved the quality of care they provide.

86% of FCC educators report that the supports their system offers around the QRIS are helpful.

“Having their support there when needed has improved the quality of care just by knowing that they support me.”

Although valued by FCC educators, one-on-one support is time intensive.

- ***FCC educators' lack of computer literacy requires a significant amount of one-on-one system support.***

According to FCC systems, a large amount of time is put toward helping FCC educators with IT support, since many of the QRIS requirements demand computer literacy.

- ***A lack of clear communication from EEC about the QRIS is affecting the efficacy of systems' support of educators.***

Based on feedback from both FCC systems and FCC educators, clearer lines of communication, consistent messaging and language, and a strong foundational training for those providing support on the QRIS are necessary in order to effectively move forward with the QRIS.

Key Findings: Professional Development Supports Offered



Professional development opportunities offered and supported by FCC systems are integral to the advancement or maintenance of the quality of care FCC educators provide.

85% or more of responding educators report using the following types of professional development support offered by their FCC system in the last year:

- FCC System-offered professional development opportunities (trainings, classes, workshops, etc.) and referrals to professional development opportunities through other organizations
- Professional development supports related to child assessments and working with children with challenging behaviors
- FCC System assessments of FCC educators' professional development needs

87% of FCC educators believe that attending professional development opportunities has improved the quality of care they offer

- ❖ **FCC Educators report a need for quality supplies and materials for the classroom**, particularly those which they can put toward meeting the requirements of the QRIS to enhance their program environments.
- ❖ **There are some inconsistencies between what FCC systems report to be offering and what FCC educators report knowing about offerings.**
- ❖ **FCC Educators who do not speak English face barriers in accessing the supports their FCC system offers.**
- ❖ **Time requirement and financial reimbursement**
Both FCC educators and FCC systems report the requirements of the QRIS demand a significant amount of time and money for which some do not believe they are adequately compensated.

❖ **Balancing independence and expectations in quality family child care homes**

FCC educators are strong, self-motivating and independent. While FCC educators recognize FCC systems provide them with a range of helpful supports, a reoccurring theme revealed that many FCC educators believe the quality of care they provide is due mainly to their own efforts. It is important to find a balance between maintaining the independent nature of FCC educators and ensuring FCC educators in the Commonwealth receive the supports needed from FCC systems to provide quality care and meet state expectations.

Recommendations were developed by the OIR research team based on the findings from this study, including the survey results from the FCC system and FCC educator surveys and feedback from EEC FCC Program Supervisors and QRIS Program Specialists.

Recommendations have been categorized into the following four themes:

- 1) Role of the FCC systems**
- 2) FCC System staff**
- 3) Language supports**
- 4) Professional Development and Growth**

Recommendations: Role of the FCC Systems



- Standardize communication, coordination, training and information sharing with systems related to policy, procedures, regulations, visit reports and home visits to educators.
- Use the findings from this study to inform a comparison between system contract requirements and what educators report is currently offered as well as what they wish would be offered through their enrollment in a system.
- Findings indicate the current level of funding dedicated to FCC systems and educators does not align with the current number and scale of requirements. Conduct a financial analysis of how funds are being used by FCC systems, and review the funding structure and requirements of EEC.

Recommendations: Role of the FCC Systems, continued

- Findings indicate one-on-one support to educators is effective. Ensure systems offer monthly support group meetings where educators across the Commonwealth can communicate with and ask questions of one another.
- Encourage all systems to implement a structured mentor system. Work with systems that already utilize this method to strengthen the implementation of educator-to-educator mentorships.
- Encourage systems to clearly define what they offer to educators. Ideally, EEC would establish clear, realistic expectations for all systems and what supports are optional to provide to educators.
- Encourage systems to work together to identify any duplicative work.

Recommendations: FCC System Staff



- Languages spoken and background of FCC system staff should match the needs of the FCC educators they support.
- Ensure FCC system staff are trained and knowledgeable about professional development resources for FCC educators. Improve, expand and better communicate these opportunities to FCC educators.
- Ensure all FCC systems staff have a strong knowledge base in early childhood education, so they can support FCC educators' professional development.
- Ensure all FCC system staff working with FCC educators are fully trained and clearly comprehend the QRIS, prior to bringing information to FCC educators.
- Dedicate a consistent team of EEC staff who are available to clearly answer FCC systems' questions. Ensure FCC systems are regularly briefed by EEC about policies, procedures and regulations, so FCC system staff can clearly communicate information to FCC educators.

Recommendations: Language Supports



- EEC should provide language supports for non-English speaking educators, including ESOL courses, trainings and workshops in other languages.
- Translate state-issued documents/requirements into the primary languages of FCC educators in the Commonwealth. Alternatively, provide additional funding for translation to those FCC systems that work with populations of non-English speakers.
- Issue guidance documents outlining roles and responsibilities of EEC, FCC systems and FCC educators in training and reporting using the QRIS
- Provide QRIS materials in multiple languages in writing for FCC educators.

Recommendations: Professional Development and Growth

- Determine appropriate methods of increasing access to needed curriculum supplies.
- Determine a more effective way of conducting QRIS and professional development-related in-home support related to completing required documentation and computer tasks.
- Work with FCC systems to determine effective means of increasing FCC educator computer literacy.
- Set up a clear chain of communication about the QRIS. Dedicate a consistent team of contact people at EEC who are available to clearly answer questions of FCC systems.
- Make trainings more accessible to the diversity of FCC educators across the Commonwealth.

Questions-Comments-Discussion



Appendices

Appendix A: **Sample of Systems and Educators**

Appendix B: **Methodology**

Appendix C: **Demographics of System and System Staff**

Appendix D: **Demographics of FCC Educators**

Appendix E: **Key Findings: Overview of Other Supports Offered**

Appendix F: **Key Findings: Overview of Other Supports Offered, continued**

Sample of Systems and Educators



FCC Educators: 30 FCC educators from each FCC system or 20 FCC educators from each site for those FCC systems with multiple sites were randomly selected to participate in the assessment. The sample included FCC educators who speak English, Spanish, Mandarin, Toisanese or Cantonese Chinese, Portuguese, Moroccan and Khmer.

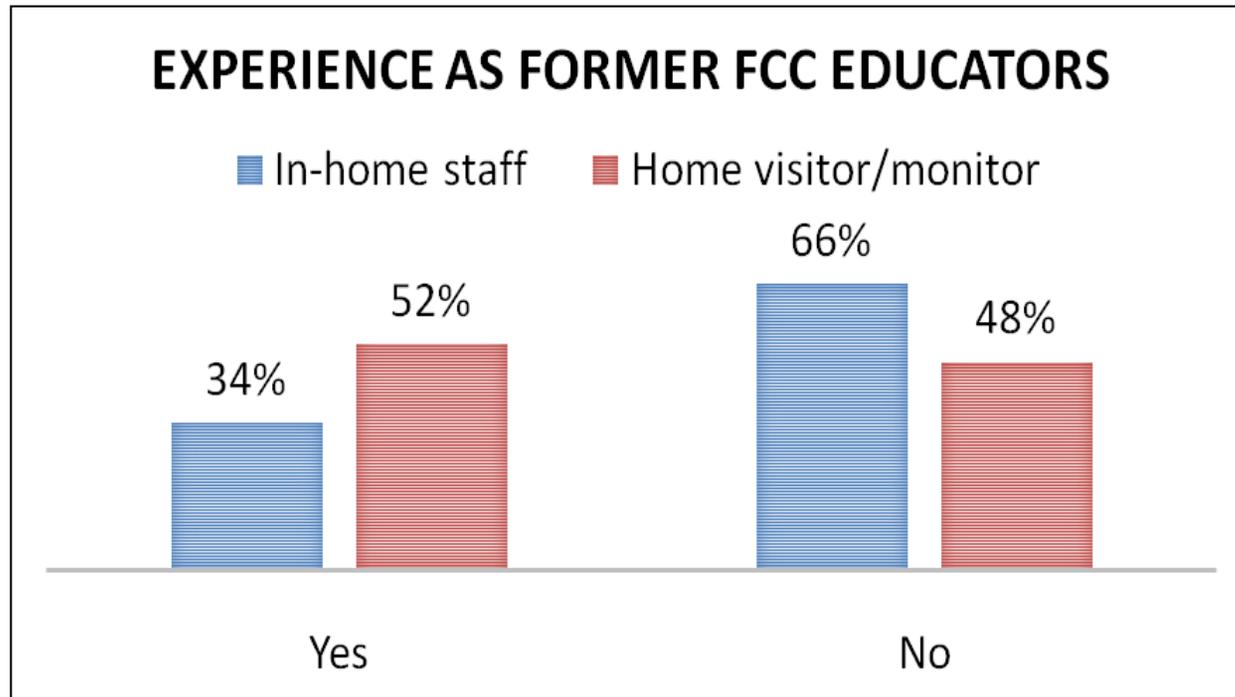
A total of 1583 emails and 907 paper surveys were sent out to active addresses.

TOTAL RESPONSES		
	<i>English (non-Spanish)</i>	<i>Spanish</i>
Online surveys received	419	127
Paper surveys received	112	94
<i>Original total</i>	531	221
Total useable surveys	517	209
	= 726	

Systems: 38 of the 43 active FCC systems in the Commonwealth completed the survey . One survey from each FCC system is included in the analysis of this report. For those FCC systems with multiple offices, only one survey from the lead agency/organization is included in the analysis.

Two distinct surveys: one survey for Family Child Care systems and one survey for Family Child Care educators

- These surveys were developed by OIR in close collaboration with EEC staff and feedback from the MADCA affiliated FCC system administrators in the fall of 2013.
- Surveys were piloted with 2 FCC systems- total of 10 FCC educators.
- FCC System survey administered online in English.
- FCC Educator survey administered online and in paper format in both English and Spanish.
- Key questions submitted to the Family Child Care Licensing Supervisors and QRIS Specialists of EEC

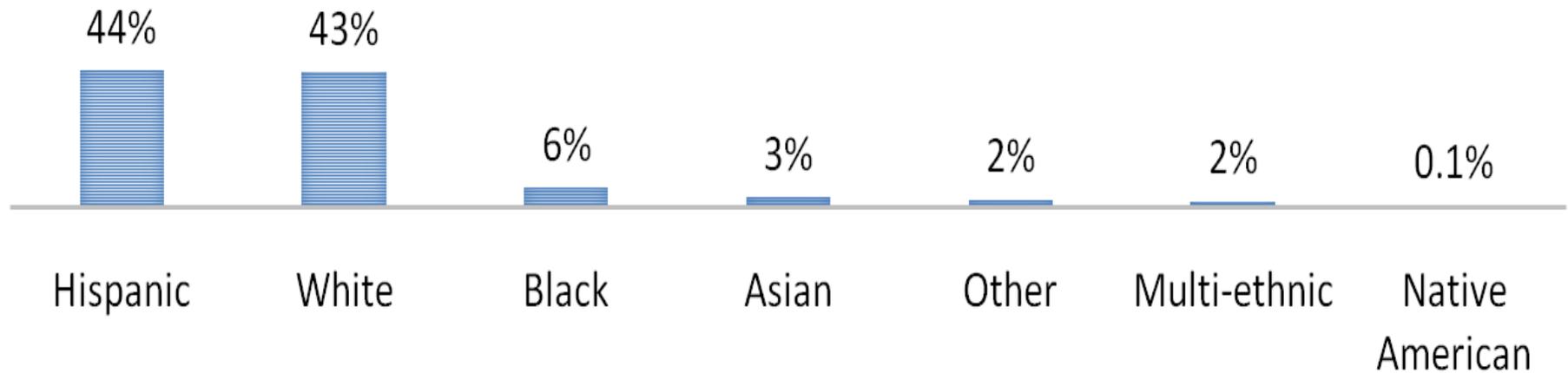


Home visitors who support educators have an average of 13 years experience in the field of early childhood education. Although they have lower education levels than other FCC system staff, home visitors are more likely to have experience as a former FCC educator, giving them a unique perspective as they interact with educators.

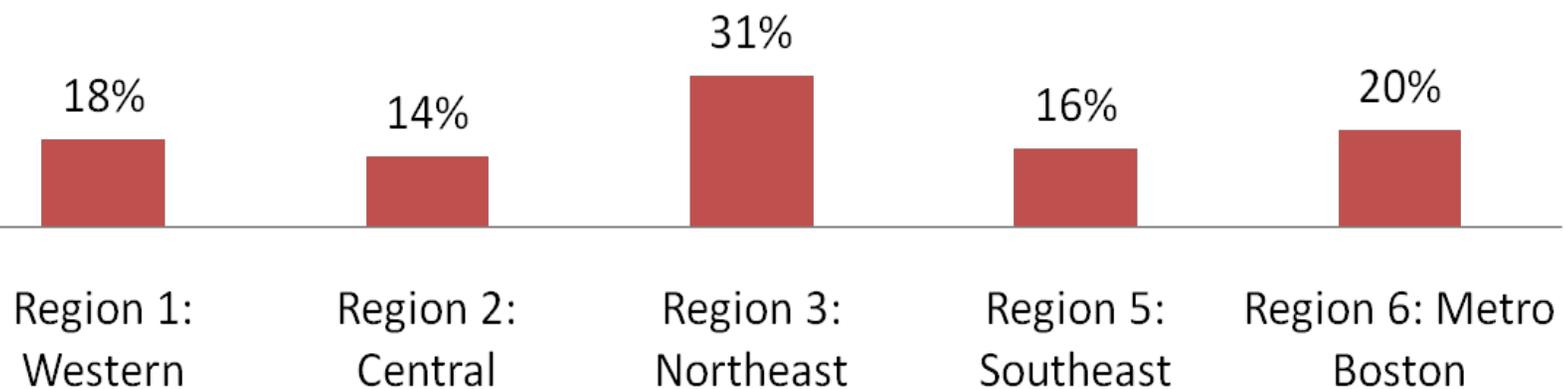
Demographics of FCC Educators



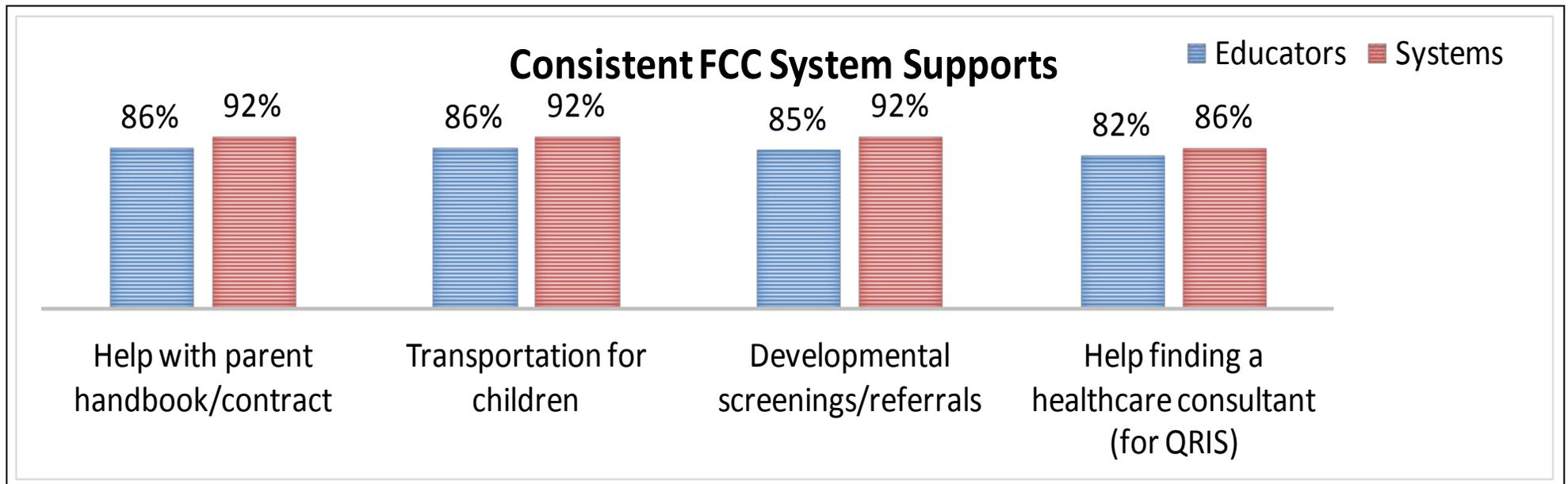
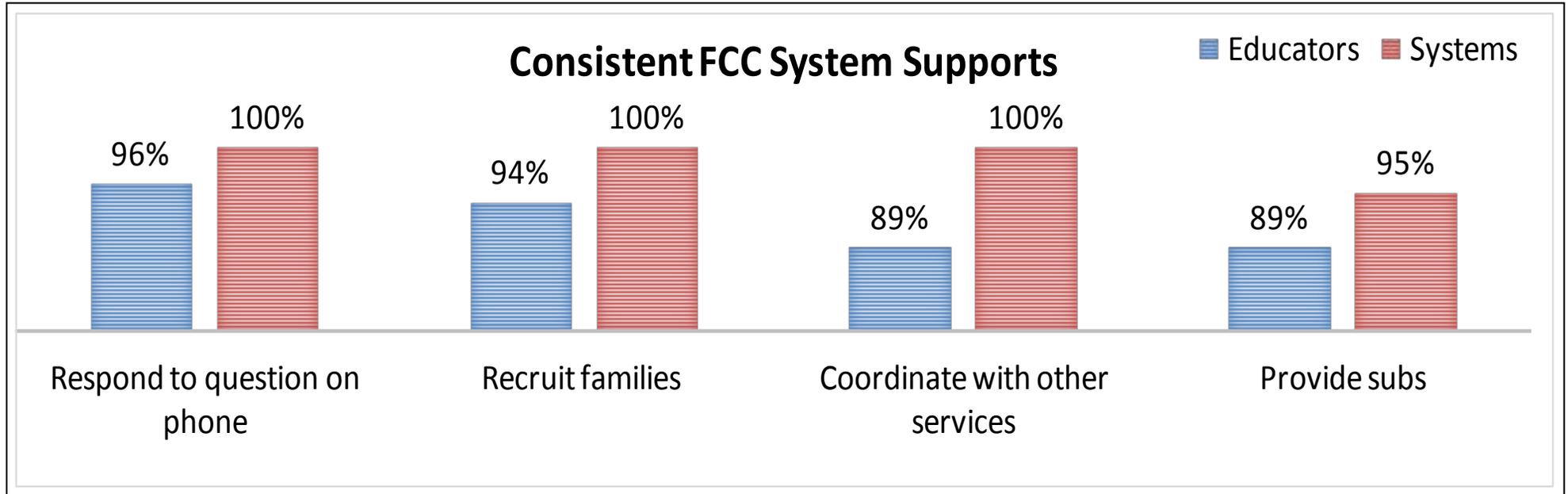
Ethnicity of Respondents



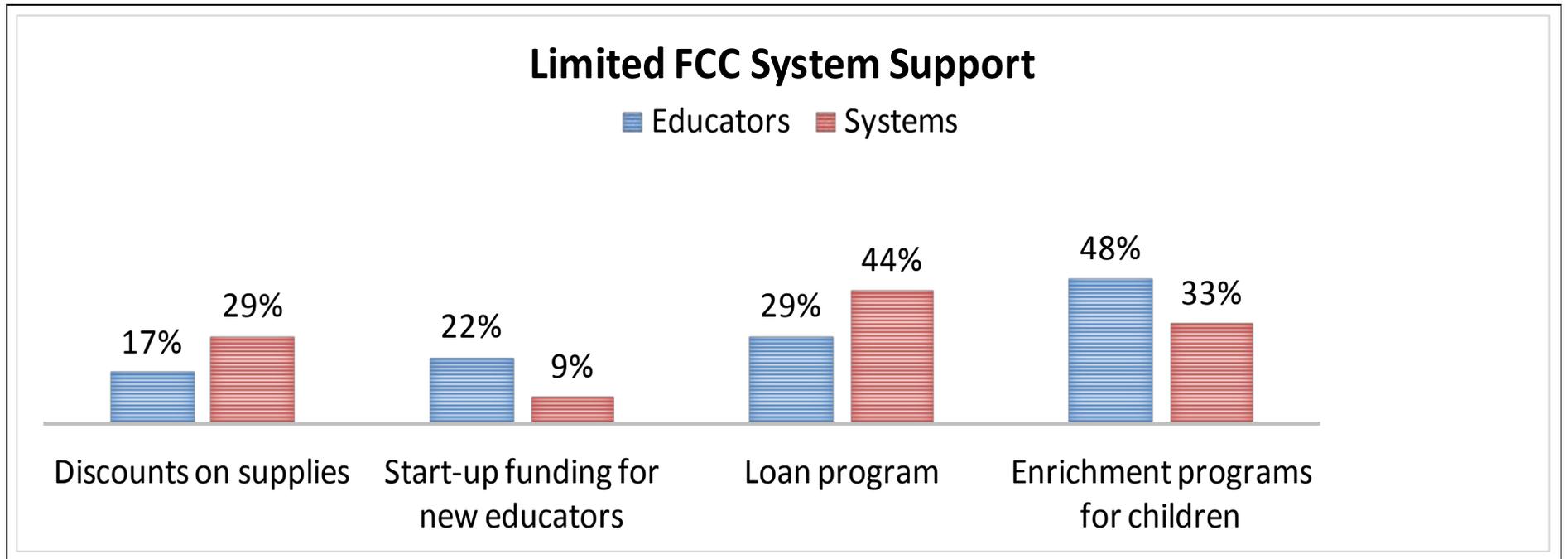
Regional Representation



Key Findings: Overview of Other Supports Offered



Key Findings: Overview of Other Supports Offered, continued



According to both FCC educators and FCC systems, the following supports are offered less consistently.