



Building better futures
for children with disabilities

Family Outcomes Survey- Revised (FOS-R)

REPORT August 2018



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Introduction

In 2013, Noah's Ark Inc. developed a Family Survey, based on the Office of Special Education's Family Outcomes Survey¹. In 2016, we reviewed our Quality Assurance System and replaced the Noah's Ark Family Survey with the Family Outcomes Survey-Revised (FOS-R)² (see appendix). The FOS-R along with the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) and Family Exit Interviews are used to inform Noah's Ark Quality Improvement.

The FOS-R identifies eight family outcomes:

1. Understanding your child's strengths, needs and abilities
2. Knowing your rights and advocating for your child
3. Helping your child develop and learn
4. Having support systems
5. Accessing the community
6. Knowing your child's rights
7. Communicating your child's needs
8. Helping your child develop and learn

The FOS-R has excellent psychometric properties, is available in 13 community languages and can be completed by parents in approximately 10 minutes. The survey uses a five-point rating scale which assess the extent to which families have achieved each outcome item, ranging from 1 = Not at all; 2 = A little; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Almost; and 5 = Completely. The FOS-R also uses a five-point scale to assess the helpfulness of Early Intervention, ranging from 1 = Not at all helpful; 2 = A little helpful; 3 = Somewhat helpful; 4 = Very helpful; and 5 = Extremely helpful.

¹ Office of Special Education (2013). Family Outcomes Survey.

² Office of Special Education (2013). Family Outcomes Survey- Revised

Methodology

Noah's Ark Team Leaders invited all families who were currently in receipt of Noah's Ark Early Childhood Intervention Service, and had been for over six months, to complete the FOS-R in one of three ways:

1. Online via Survey Monkey
2. Hard copy provided to families with stamped self-addressed envelope (including translated versions)
3. Completed with Key Worker and/or Translator

Response Rate

Surveys were sent to 1147 families. 930 were sent via email (Survey Monkey), 96 were sent by mail and a further 121 were provided directly by the Key Worker. Of those survey monkey questionnaires, 206 were completed online (Response rate: 22%) and a further 34 were returned by post (Response rate: 16%) The total response rate was 21%. This is slightly lower than the 2017 response rate (22%).

Two surveys were completed in Vietnamese and two surveys were completed in Arabic.

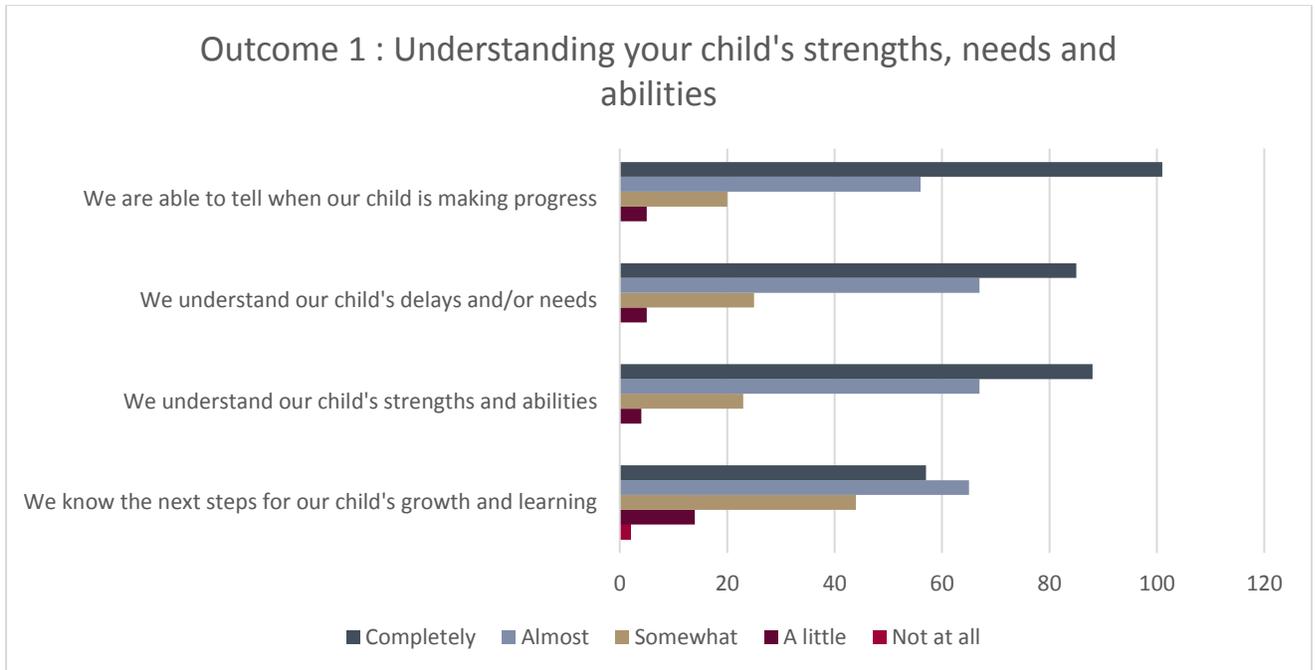
Results

The FOS-R has two sections. Section A focuses on the ways in which families support their child's needs. Section B focuses on the helpfulness of Early Intervention. Percentage and mean scores are reported for the FOS-R. A final question asking about the parent's overall satisfaction with Noah's Ark was also included to fulfil the reporting requirements of the Victorian Government's Department of Education and Training (DET). A percentage of satisfaction is reported for this final question.

SECTION A.

Section A has five outcomes with 24 questions that focus on the ways in which families support their child's needs.

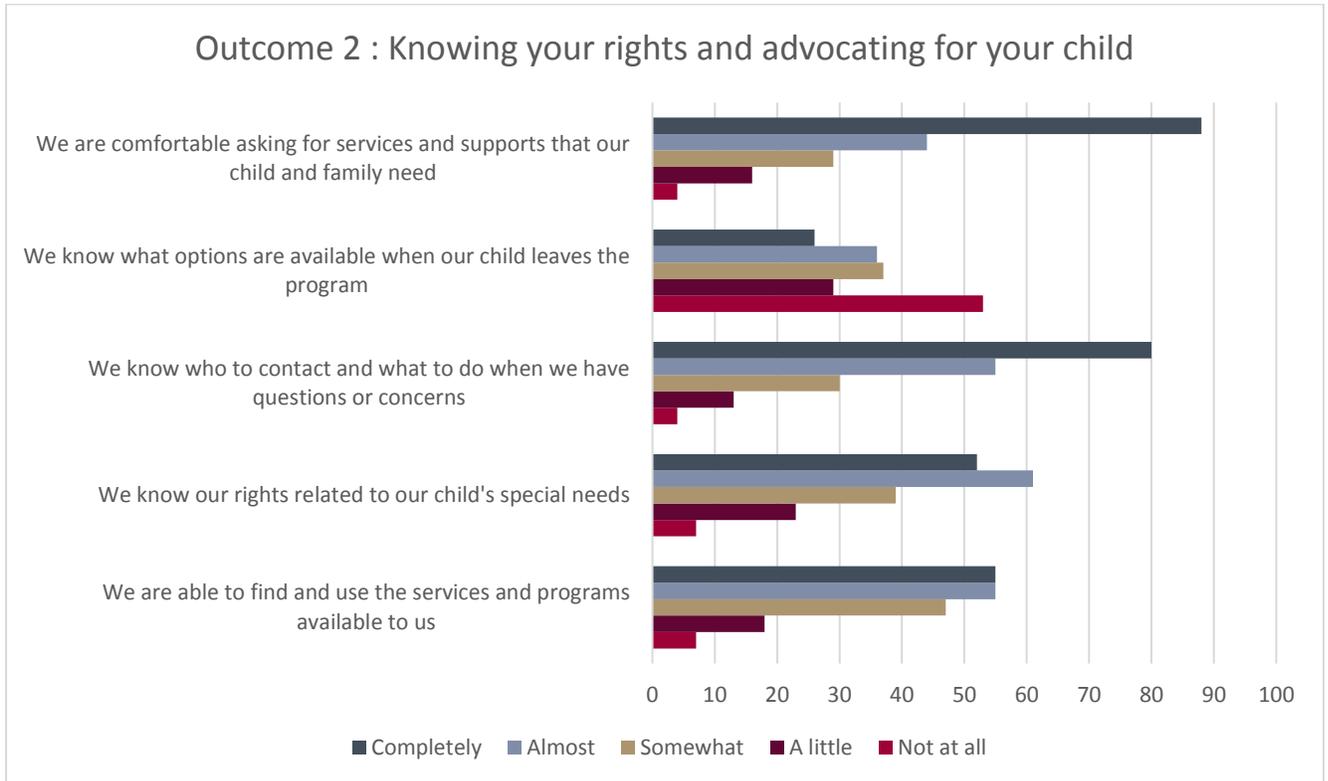
Outcome One: Understanding your child's strengths, needs and abilities



Mean score for Outcome One: 4.2

The majority of parents indicated that they were 'completely' able to tell when their child was making progress and understand their child's delays and needs. Most parents also reported that they understood their child's strengths and abilities very well. The profile for outcome one is very similar to 2017.

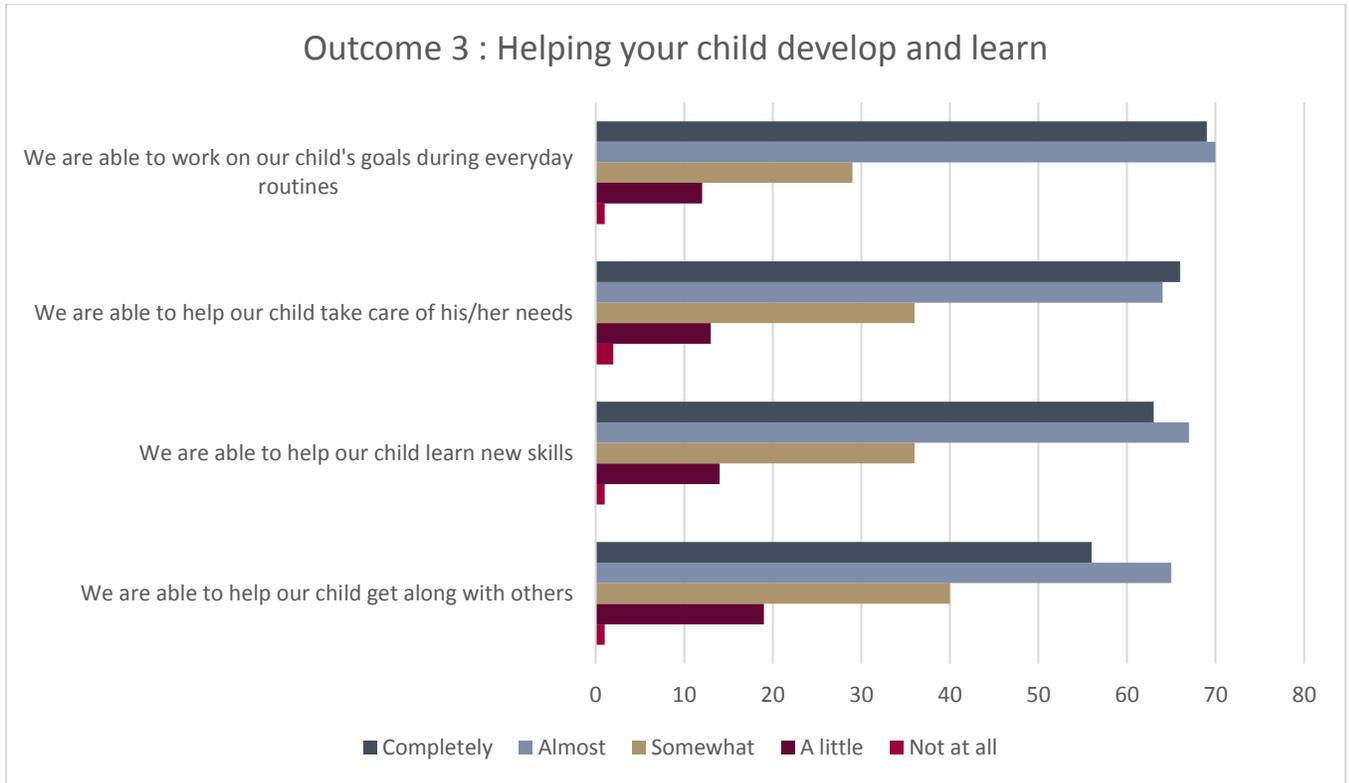
Outcome Two: Knowing your rights and advocating for your child



Mean score for Outcome Two: 3.7

The majority of parents reported feeling 'almost' or 'completely' comfortable asking for services and support for their child and family and knowing who to contact and what to do when they have concerns or questions. As in 2017, there was a scatter of responses to the final questions about parents knowing their rights and advocating for their child and being able to find and use the range of services available to them.

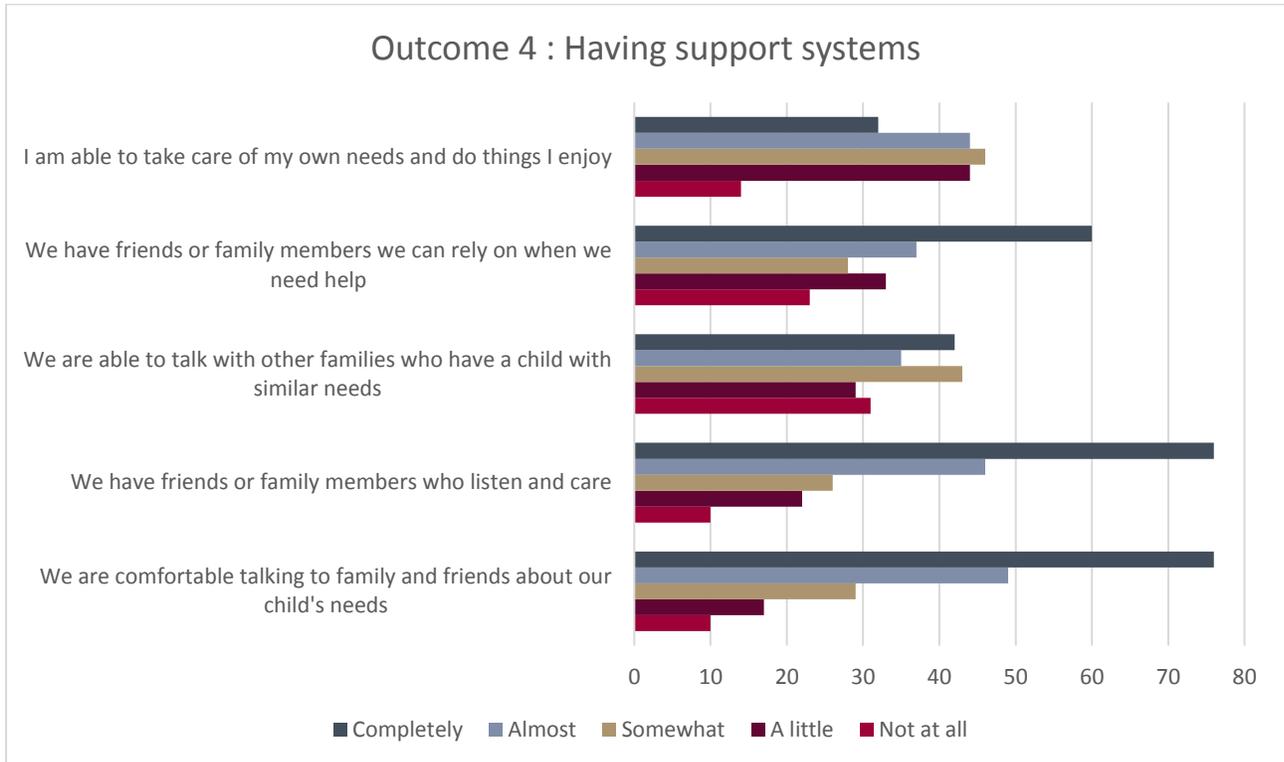
Outcome Three: Helping your child develop and learn



Mean score for Outcome Three: 4.0

Overall, parents indicated confidence in their ability to help their child develop and learn. The majority of parents indicated they were 'completely' or 'almost' able to work on their child's goals during everyday routines and help their child take care of his/her needs. Parents reported feeling able to learn new skills and help their child get along with others.

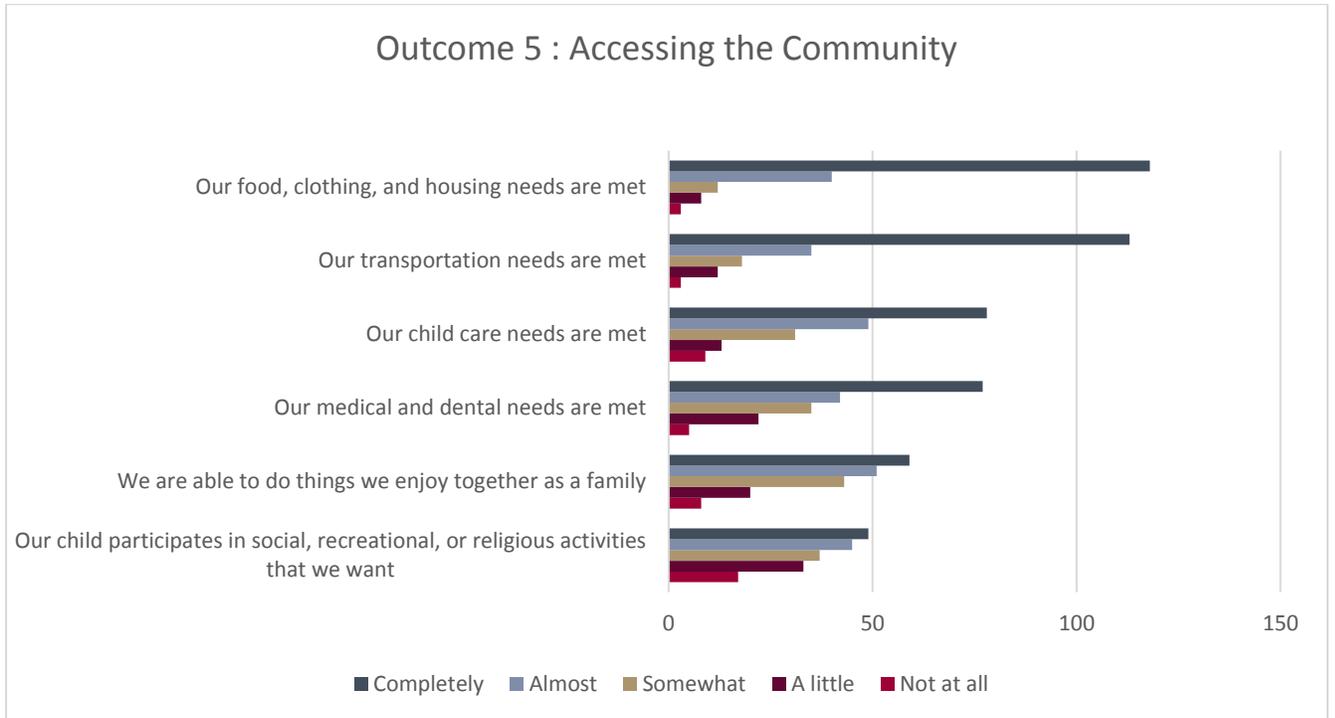
Outcome Four: Having support systems



Mean score for Outcome Four: 3.5

This outcome had the lowest mean score (3.5) and has remained consistent with 2017 data. The majority of parents indicated that they had friends and family members they can rely on, who listen and care, and they feel comfortable talking with about their child's needs. However, far fewer indicated feeling 'completely' able talk with other families who have a child with similar needs or able to take care of their own needs and do the things they enjoy.

Outcome Five: Accessing the Community



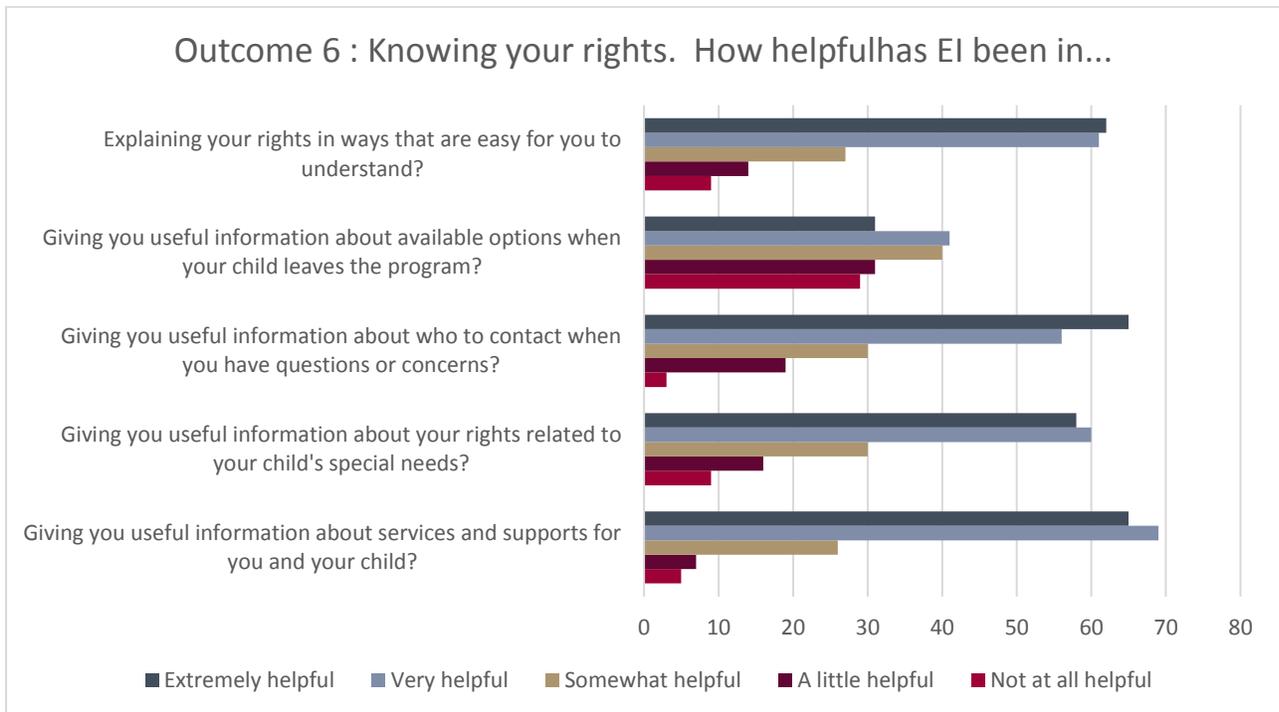
Mean score for Outcome Five: 4.0

The profile for this outcome was very similar to 2017. The clear majority of parents indicated that their basic food, clothing, housing transport, child care, medical and dental needs were met. However, a small number did report that some of these basic needs were only met 'a little' or 'not at all'. Several parents also indicated that they were unable to do things they enjoy together as a family or participate in social, recreational, or religious activities they want.

SECTION B.

Section B has three outcomes with 17 questions that focus on the helpfulness of early intervention.

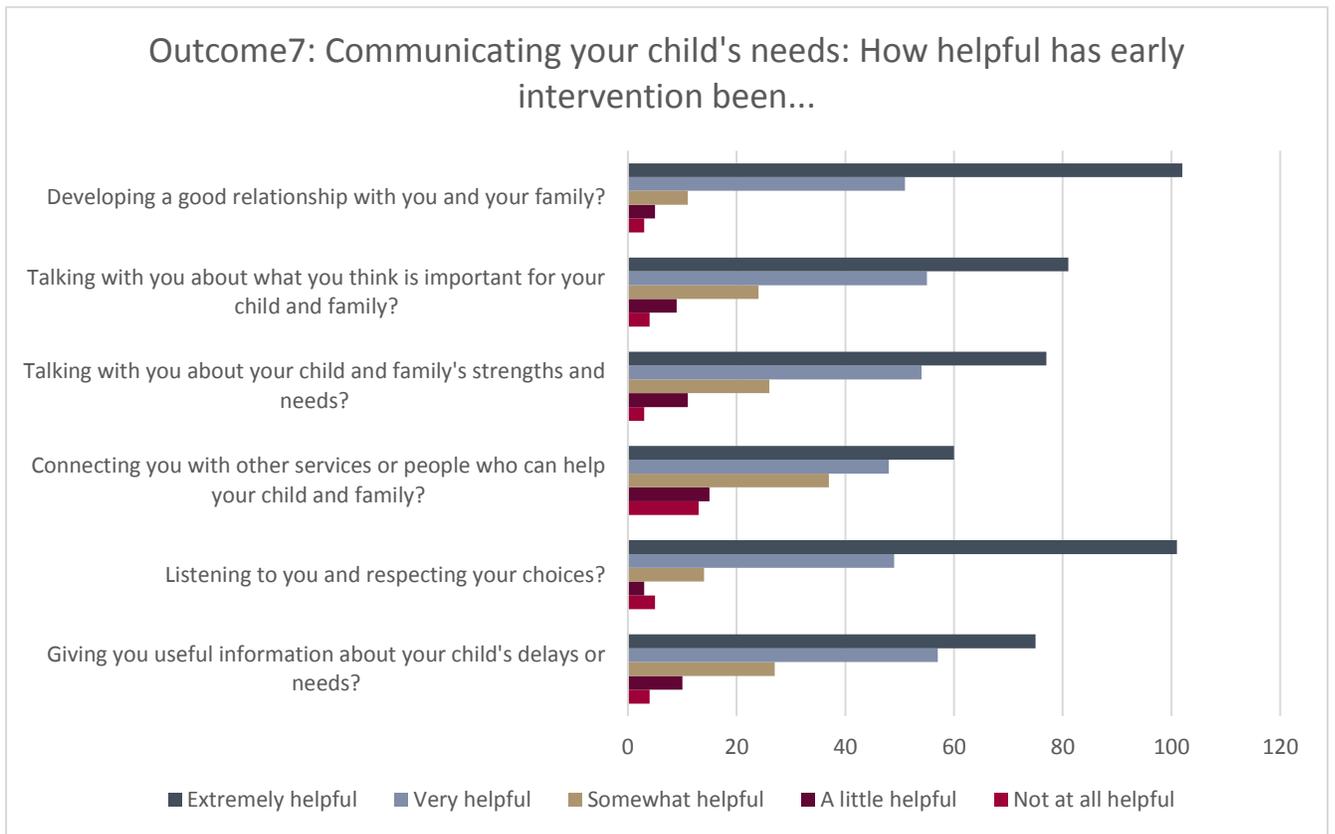
Outcome Six: Knowing your child's rights



Mean score for Outcome Six: 3.8

Parents indicated that Early Intervention was 'extremely helpful' or 'very helpful' in explaining their rights in ways that was easy for them to understand and in giving useful information about who to contact when they have questions or concerns. Results from the second question about being given useful information about available options when their child leaves Noah's Ark services were less favourable.

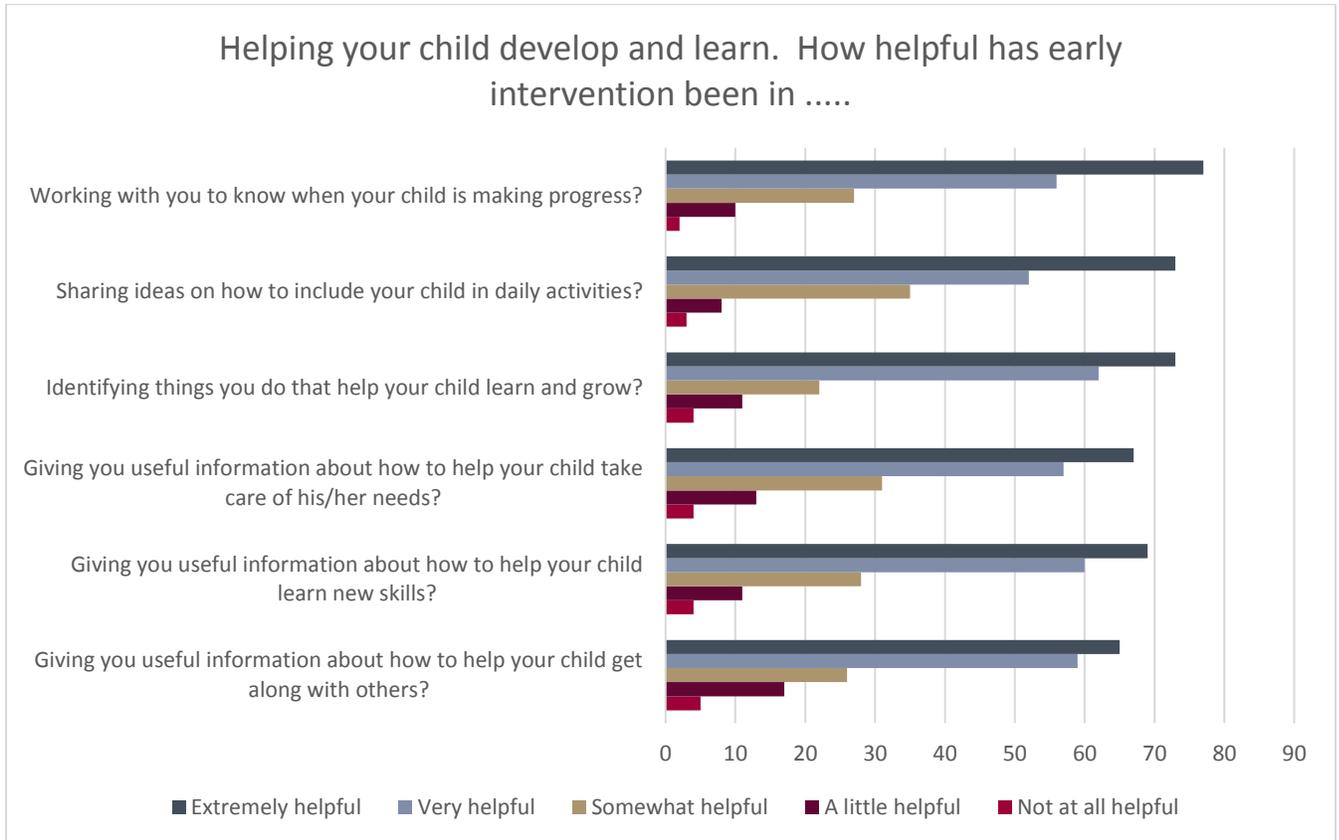
Outcome Seven: Communicating your child's needs



Mean score for Outcome Seven: 4.1

Results indicates a slight decline in mean score for Outcome seven compared to 2017 (Mean score: 4.2). Parents mostly reported finding Noah's Ark services 'extremely helpful' in developing a good relationship, talking about what is important, talking about strengths and needs, and in listening and respecting their choices. They also indicated that Early Intervention was generally 'extremely helpful, or 'very helpful' in giving useful information about their child's delays or needs.

Outcome Eight: Helping your child develop and learn



Mean score for Outcome Eight: 4.0

Parents reported that Noah's Ark was 'extremely helpful' or 'very helpful' in helping their child develop and learn. In particular, Key Workers are working with parents to know when children are making progress, sharing ideas on how to include children in daily activities and identifying things to help children learn and grow.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This is the third time Noah's Ark has used the Family Outcomes Survey-Revised to collect information from families about the ways in which they support their child's needs and the helpfulness of our Early Intervention Service.

The mean score for five of the outcomes had increased between 2016-2017 and has remained stable in this reporting period. The results generally indicate positive feedback and a very high level of satisfaction. Several families indicated that they wished to be contacted following completion of the survey to provide further feedback. Those parents will all be contacted by the appropriate Operations Manager and any issues raised were responded to through the respective Team Leader. The response rate remains poor at 21%.

Results indicate that Noah's Ark needs to consider a range of approaches to the following:

- determining whether the FOS-R continues to be the best measure for Noah's Ark on the ways in which families support their child's needs and the helpfulness of early intervention
- increasing the overall response rate of the FOS-R
- providing parents with the opportunity to talk with other families who have a child with similar needs (e.g. My Time Playgroups)
- providing information for parents about the options available when their child leaves Noah's Ark
- developing partnerships with organisations with shared vision and values that provide services to children 12-18 years to enable Customer Care and Key Workers to provide families with information about available options when their child leaves Noah's Ark
- supporting parents in knowing their rights, advocating for their child and being able to find and use the range of services available to them.

Appendix. Family Outcomes Survey - Revised

Instructions: Section A of the Family Outcomes Survey focuses on the ways in which you support your child's needs. For each statement below, please select which option best describes your family right now: not at all, a little, somewhat, almost, or completely.

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Almost	Completely
Outcome 1: Understanding your child's strengths, needs, and abilities					
1. We know the next steps for our child's growth and learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. We understand our child's strengths and abilities.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. We understand our child's delays and/or needs.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. We are able to tell when our child is making progress.	<input type="radio"/>				
Outcome 2: Knowing your rights and advocating for your child					
5. We are able to find and use the services and programs available to us.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. We know our rights related to our child's special needs.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. We know who to contact and what to do when we have questions or concerns.	<input type="radio"/>				
8. We know what options are available when our child leaves the program.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. We are comfortable asking for services & supports that our child and family need.	<input type="radio"/>				
Outcome 3: Helping your child develop and learn					
10. We are able to help our child get along with others.	<input type="radio"/>				
11. We are able to help our child learn new skills.	<input type="radio"/>				
12. We are able to help our child take care of his/her needs.	<input type="radio"/>				
13. We are able to work on our child's goals during everyday routines.	<input type="radio"/>				
Outcome 4: Having support systems					
14. We are comfortable talking to family and friends about our child's needs.	<input type="radio"/>				
15. We have friends or family members who listen and care.	<input type="radio"/>				
16. We are able to talk with other families who have a child with similar needs.	<input type="radio"/>				
17. We have friends or family members we can rely on when we need help.	<input type="radio"/>				
18. I am able to take care of my own needs and do things I enjoy.	<input type="radio"/>				
Outcome 5: Accessing the community					
19. Our child participates in social, recreational, or religious activities that we want.	<input type="radio"/>				
20. We are able to do things we enjoy together as a family.	<input type="radio"/>				
21. Our medical and dental needs are met.	<input type="radio"/>				
22. Our child care needs are met.	<input type="radio"/>				
23. Our transportation needs are met.	<input type="radio"/>				
24. Our food, clothing, and housing needs are met.	<input type="radio"/>				

Instructions: Section B of the Family Outcomes Survey focuses on the helpfulness of early intervention. For each question below, please select how helpful early intervention has been to you and your family over the past year: Not at all helpful, a little helpful, somewhat helpful, very helpful, or extremely helpful.

Not at all helpful	A little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Extremely helpful
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Knowing your rights					
How helpful has early intervention been in...					
1. giving you useful information about services and supports for you and your child?	<input type="radio"/>				
2. giving you useful information about your rights related to your child's special needs?	<input type="radio"/>				
3. giving you useful information about who to contact when you have questions or concerns?	<input type="radio"/>				
4. giving you useful information about available options when your child leaves the program?	<input type="radio"/>				
5. explaining your rights in ways that are easy for you to understand?	<input type="radio"/>				
Communicating your child's needs					
How helpful has early intervention been in...					
6. giving you useful information about your child's delays or needs?	<input type="radio"/>				
7. listening to you and respecting your choices?	<input type="radio"/>				
8. connecting you with other services or people who can help your child and family?	<input type="radio"/>				
9. talking with you about your child and family's strengths and needs?	<input type="radio"/>				
10. talking with you about what you think is important for your child and family?	<input type="radio"/>				
11. developing a good relationship with you and your family?	<input type="radio"/>				
Helping your child develop and learn					
How helpful has early intervention been in...					
12. giving you useful information about how to help your child get along with others?	<input type="radio"/>				
13. giving you useful information about how to help your child learn new skills?	<input type="radio"/>				
14. giving you useful information about how to help your child take care of his/her needs?	<input type="radio"/>				
15. identifying things you do that help your child learn and grow?	<input type="radio"/>				
16. sharing ideas on how to include your child in daily activities?	<input type="radio"/>				
17. working with you to know when your child is making progress?	<input type="radio"/>				