



Outcomes Evaluation and Program Effectiveness. Family Help Line: 2007-2008

Background

What is the Live Support Line? The Live Support Line is a free, confidential, statewide telephone service for families and caregivers, provided by trained coaches, who offer parenting information, referrals to community resources, and support during the difficult times.

Who does the Live Support Line serve? The Live Support Line serves everyone in Washington state who is concerned about children and families: parents, grandparents, adoptive/foster parents, friends, educators, counselors; social service agencies, law enforcement; child care providers and community based organizations.

Why do we need a Live Support Line? The Live Support Line decreases the risk factors associated with child abuse by providing a safe place for parents/caregivers to vent, defuse anger, and receive support and coaching to deal with difficult situations or family crises. The Live Support Line provides the only statewide, toll-free phone service focused primarily on parenting and family issues. Our callers receive immediate parenting information and referrals to local community resources in all 39 counties of Washington State.

Family Help Line coaches are trained to help distressed callers by using the following process:

- **Decrease isolation by listening to the caller:** Listening carefully to the family is a critical service in and of itself. Average call length of the Live Support Line is twice as long as the average call to the community information and referral lines. It is the first rule of the Family Help Line: Always listen first.
- **Train the caller on the problem-solving method:** After careful and supportive listening, help the caller to prioritize which goal they want to work on first and then use the problem-solving method to help the caller
 - Define the problem
 - Brainstorm positive, realistic solutions
 - Choose 1-2 solutions to implement
- **Send the caller appropriate parenting materials:** Once the caller has chosen goals, Parent Trust for Washington Children has over 100 concise handouts on a full range of topics in English and Spanish. This information has been reviewed and tested by parents/caregivers -- only handouts that have consistently proven useful over the years are sent to callers.
- **Connect the caller to Community Resources:** Parent Trust for Washington Children developed and maintains a searchable web-based resource database for all 39 counties in Washington State. As a result, Family Help coaches are quickly able to refer the caller to appropriate local resources. This also allows the FHL coach more time to listen to the caller and determine if there might be additional resources available that address issues that were not initially apparent.
- **Coach the caller in self-advocacy techniques:** In order to be successful in seeking assistance, callers need skills that will help them clearly convey the problem and request appropriate services. The FHL coach can assist the caller in how to prepare and organize for a call to request services. For instance, gathering any documentation pertinent to the problem; writing a list of questions they need to ask; preparing clear and concise wording; and how to make a request for services in a manner that does not allow emotions to overcome their request.
- **Follow-up:** Family Help Line callers are encouraged to call back if they are struggling with any of the resources given or if they need further discussion or support. Some FHL callers will return for additional assistance over a brief period of time, while others may continue to call the help line for support and assistance over several years. If the caller's request for resources needs research, the FHL coach will often call back with additional information.

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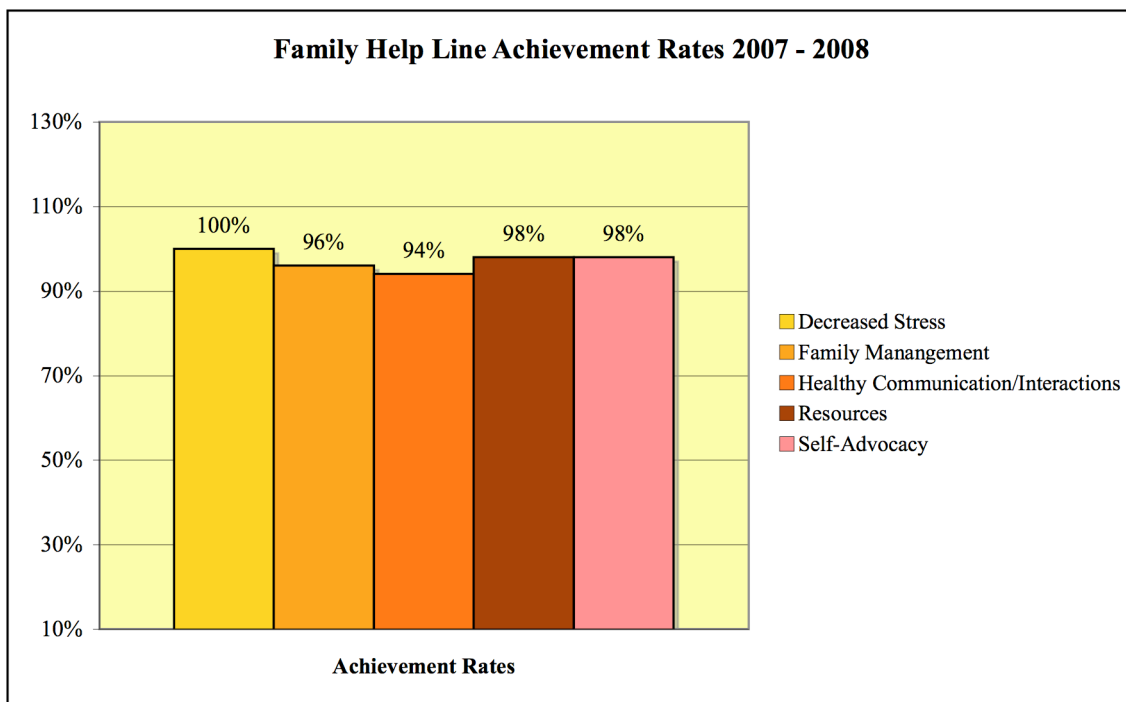
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How effective is the Live Support Line?

Achievement Rate Goal: 60% of participants will increase their new skills.

Achievement Rate Results: Participants show significant increases in risk-reducing Protective Factors:

- 100% of callers met the minimum benchmark decrease of 10% or more in reduction of stress after calling the FHL.
- 96% of callers met the minimum benchmark increase of 10% or more in knowledge of family management skills after calling the FHL.
- 94% of callers met the minimum benchmark of 10% or more in knowledge on how to improve communication and/or interaction with family members after calling the FHL
- 98% of callers met the minimum benchmark increase of 10% or more in knowledge of available resources/supports after calling the FHL.
- 98% of callers met the minimum benchmark of 10% or more in knowledge on how to advocate for themselves and/or their family after calling the FHL.





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Outcome Goal: Callers will increase knowledge by 10%.

Outcome Results: Callers participating in the evaluation reported a:

- 47% decrease in level of stress after calling the FHL.
- 30% increase in knowledge in Family Management Skills after calling the FHL.
- 27% increase in knowledge on how to improve communication and/or interaction with family members after calling the FHL
- 56% increase of 10% in knowledge of available resources/supports after calling the FHL.
- 40% increase in knowledge on how to advocate for themselves and/or their family after calling the FHL.

