Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project

Evaluation Report:

Quality and Impact of Transition Training

and Technical Assistance Services

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Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project Evaluation Report

Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

The Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project (KECTP) was funded in 1992 by the Kentucky Department of Education and later expanded with support from the Kentucky Early Intervention System, to provide training and technical assistance to local communities in the state of Kentucky on effective transitions. KECTP was an outgrowth of Project STEPS, an Early Education Programs for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD) project funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Project STEPS worked with the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources, Department of MH/MR (KEIS) and Head Start from 1989 - 1992 to help develop a statewide transition system using the STEPS model. As a result of the work of the National STEPS Project in the state, 19 model transition sites were established. In 1992, the goal of KECTP was to expand on the number of communities who have been trained using the STEPS model, as well as, provide training and technical assistance to existing and newly established sites across the state.

KECTP works within a community approach to training and technical assistance and provides support for transition activities from birth through entry into primary programs. The community approach includes both public and private agencies and programs including public school, early intervention, childcare, Head Start, public health, and others as appropriate.

This evaluation report provides specific information on both the perceived quality of the training and technical assistance activities supported by the project, as well as, the perceived impact of these services.

METHODS

This evaluation used a mixed methods approach to evaluate both the quality of training and technical assistance and the impact of these activities on local community programs, family members and children. Training sessions were evaluated through the use of general training evaluation forms. Technical assistance activities were evaluated through the use of a survey. The impact of the project was evaluated through individual interviews with program representatives.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings presented in this report represent trainings sessions that occurred between January 2000 through November 2001 and technical assistance events across a period from 1996 to 1999.

Evaluation data indicated that:
- Overall, training sessions were rated high, with mean rating of 4.58 on a five-point scale, with 1 being "very poor" to 5 being "excellent.

- Across trainings sessions, the opportunity for questions received the highest ratings (4.68) while the pace of the training sessions received the lowest rating (4.44).

- Technical assistance events were rated high (4.78). The highest ratings were in the areas of "*created an environment, which promoted communication, and problem solving*" and "*time was used effectively*" (4.83) and the lowest rating was in the area of "*outcome was consistent with our expectation*" (4.69).

- TA recipients were offered the opportunity to provide comments on the survey. Of the comments provided, 83.3% were positive comments. These comments related specifically to the helpfulness of the facilitator and/or process to accomplishing their goals (43.3%) and the high quality of the facilitator (40%).

- Perceptions of those interviewed indicated that the services provided by project staff were beneficial to both community agencies and families and children participating in the transition process.

- Interviewees perceived that families in their communities were better prepared and more comfortable with the transition process and entry into new programs.

- Interviewees perceived that the transition services implemented contributed to children who were better prepared and who received services in a timely fashion after the transition process. In addition, participants felt that children who received quality transition services had higher achievement levels in new programs.

- Interviewees identified several areas in which the project could enhance services: increasing the timeliness of follow-up (minutes and products) after a site visit for technical assistance purposes; offering more technical support during facilitated meetings (i.e., laptop and LCD to project agreements); and ensuring that follow-up materials are well organized and free of clerical errors.

Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project Evaluation Report

TECHNICAL REPORT

Introduction

The Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project (KECTP) was funded in 1992 by the Kentucky Department of Education and later expanded with support from the Kentucky Early Intervention System, to provide training and technical assistance to local communities in the state of Kentucky on effective transitions. KECTP was an outgrowth of Project STEPS, an Early Education Programs for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD) project funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Project STEPS worked with the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources, Department of MH/MR (KEIS) and Head Start from 1989 - 1992 to help develop a statewide transition system using the STEPS model. As a result of the work of the National STEPS Project in the state, 19 model transition sites were established. In 1992, the goal of KECTP was to expand on the number of communities who have been trained using the STEPS model, as well as, provide training and technical assistance to existing and newly established sites across the state.

KECTP training and technical assistance activities have focused on providing support and services to local communities within the following philosophical framework. First, transition planning should address the strengths, needs, and characteristics of individual children, families, and programs and should promote implementation of current recommended practices (Conn-Powers, Ross-Allen, & Holburn, 1990). Secondly, transition should be thought of as a process that needs to happen over time (Daniel, 1993; Rous, Hemmeter and Schuster, 1994). Third, transition services should be addressed on an interagency basis and are more effective when an operational interagency structure is in place to support planning (Rous, Hemmeter & Schuster, 1999). Finally, those providing transition supports must consider the resources and needs of children, families, and professionals, and must recognize that transitions do not occur in isolation from the social supports on which families and professionals normally rely (Hanline, 1993).

Given this philosophical framework, the KECTP process works within a community approach to training and technical assistance and provides support for transition activities from birth through entry into primary programs. The community approach includes both public and private agencies and programs including public school, early intervention, childcare, Head Start, public health, and others as appropriate.

Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project Evaluation Report

The KECTP conducted a full evaluation of the training and technical assistance activities of the project in 1995 (Rous, 1995). A Before and After analysis found that all communities participating in the evaluation indicated a positive change in transition activities within their community. Change occurred most dramatically in the area of identification of specific roles and responsibilities, the development of administrative policies, increase in staff involvement and increase in local interagency council activities. In addition, increased communication between agencies and staff was also cited as a major outcome of the project activities. Overall, this evaluation indicated that the training and technical assistance provided through the KECTP had been successful in enhancing transition activities for community agencies participating in project activities.

The previous evaluation information indicated that although the training provided information and incentive for transition systems development, on-site and other forms of technical assistance were vital to implementation within the community. Therefore, over the last 6 years, KECTP has continued to grow and expand the types and processes for training, but also has concentrated on ensuring that communities have access to individualized and timely technical assistance.

This evaluation report provides specific information on both the perceived quality of the training and technical assistance activities supported by the project, as well as, the perceived impact of these services. Specific information on the methods used to conduct this evaluation, the analysis process, and the results and findings are detailed.

Methods

This evaluation used a mixed methods approach to evaluate both the quality of training and technical assistance and the impact of these activities on local community programs, family members and children. Training sessions were evaluated through the use of general training evaluation forms (Appendix A). Technical assistance activities were evaluated through the use of a survey. The impact of the project was evaluated through individual interviews with program representatives. Each process will be described in detail below.

Training

Training sessions provided through the project are generally evaluated using a post-training evaluation form. Evaluation forms are included in the training materials and participants are asked to complete the forms prior to leaving the training session.

Training evaluation forms have five sections. The first section asked for background information on participants. The second section is designed to elicit ratings of general training organization and presentation style. This includes the organization of the presentation, pace of the training, presentation style used, opportunities for questions/discussion, adequacy of written materials, and clarity of the information presented. The last rating relates to an overall workshop rating. Participants are asked to rate the training on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "very poor", 3 being "average" and 5 being "excellent."

The third section of the form is designed to rate the level at which the major objectives of the training session were met. This section of the evaluation form is individualized across each training session. The rating scale used includes a five-point scale, with 1 being "not", 3 being "somewhat" and 5 being "completely.

The fourth section of the form is designed to allow participants to provide written comments related to three areas: I really liked, the workshop could be improved by, and additional comments. The final section of the form provides an opportunity for participants to remark on their satisfaction with the training facilities.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance activities are evaluated through the use of a follow-up Technical Assistance Survey (Appendix B). Approximately one month after a TA visit, two to three participants are selected at random from the TA visit sign in sheet to receive a survey via mail. The TA survey includes a five point rating scale (with 1 being not at all or not accomplished and 5 being very much or completely accomplished) for five stems. These stems include: the technical assistance visit was helpful, the outcome was consistent with the expectation, staff created an environment which promoted communication and problem solving, time was used effectively, and we have implemented activities/outcomes generated during the TA visit. In addition, participants are asked whether they would request TA from the project in the future and allowed an opportunity to provide written comments.

Impact of Training and TA Activities

  The impact of the training and technical assistance activities supported through the project was evaluated through follow-up interviews with community members receiving services. Approximately, 20 Training and Technical Assistance Service (TTAS) recipients were contacted and asked to participate in a 20 – 30 minute interview. The interview questions (Appendix C) focused on four major areas: the type and number of TTAS activities the interviewee participated in, resources provided and benefits of these to the program or community, impact of the TTAS services on the community, program, families and children and concerns or negative experiences with the project.

Data Analysis

  Quantitative data from both the evaluation forms and TA surveys were analyzed using descriptively using SPSS$^{®}$, Version 10.0. For training sessions, data from trainings sessions from January 2000 to November 2001 were included in analyses. Data were analyzed across trainings and within specific training topics, and will be reported as such. TA survey data was analyzed across a period from 1996 to 1999.

  Narrative data from the training sessions and TA surveys were analyzed using standard qualitative processes. These processes included transcription of all narrative data, which was reviewed to determine common themes across questions.

  Interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Narrative analysis was conducted using an inductive approach recommended and described by Strauss and Corbin (1994). Using a grounded theory approach, a systematic coding method was used by making continual comparisons of the narrative responses. Responses were explored and compared to determine if and how they fit together or how they did not fit together. To assist with the coding and retrieval process, QSR NUD*IST 4.0 (1997), a computer-aided analysis program was used.

Training Results and Findings

  From January 2000 to November 2001, the KECTP project staff and/or consultants held 23 specific training sessions. These training sessions include only those that were topical in nature and requested by local community programs. The training sessions included Curriculum

Alignment (n = 13), Leadership (n = 3), Helpful Entry Level Skills and/or Functional Assessment of Behavior and Social Supports (n = 6) and Reach for the Stars (n = 1).

Across all training session provided, the mean rating for the training was 4.58 on a five-point scale, with 1 being "very poor" to 5 being "excellent", as presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean Ratings for Training Sessions Provided

	Leadership Training	CAPS	HELS/FABSS	Reach for the Stars	Overall Mean
Organization of the presentation	4.61[a] (.49)[b]	4.80 (.42)	4.27 (.83)	4.73 (.44)	4.60 (.24)
Pace of the training	4.61 (.49)	4.74 (.49)	4.32 (.80)	4.07 (.83)	4.44 (.30)
Presentation style used	4.61 (.49)	4.72 (.49)	4.37 (.82)	4.50 (.50)	4.55 (.15)
Opportunities for questions	4.61 (.59)	4.70 (.54)	4.66 (.56)	4.73 (.44)	4.68 (.005)
Adequacy of written materials	4.63 (.53)	4.76 (.51)	4.39 (.82)	4.69 (.46)	4.62 (.16)
Clarity of information presented	4.61 (.54)	4.70 (.49)	4.35 (.82)	4.58 (.49)	4.56 (.15)
Overall workshop Rating	4.63 (.49)	4.77 (.45)	4.42 (.71)	4.54 (.63)	4.59 (.15)
Overall Mean	**4.62 (.010)**	**4.74 (.004)**	**4.40 (.13)**	**4.55 (.23)**	**4.58**

[a] Mean

[b] Standard Deviation

All training sessions were rated high, with the Curriculum Alignment Training sessions receiving the highest rating ($\underline{X}$ = 4.62, SD = .010) and the Helpful Entry Level Skills/Functional Assessment Training receiving the lowest rating ($\underline{X}$ = 4.40, SD = .13). Across trainings sessions, the opportunity for questions received the highest ratings ($\underline{X}$ = 4.68, SD = .005), while the pace of the training sessions received the lowest rating ($\underline{X}$ = 4.44, SD = .30).

The following section will provide specific information on the training session rating organized by training topic.

Specific Training Evaluation Results

In addition to the overall training organization and presentation ratings, additional information was collected on the accomplishment of the major objectives of the training

sessions. Since each training session has been individualized, this data will be reported by training session.

Leadership Training

The following results were tabulated from three Leadership Trainings held January 2000 to the present. Leadership trainings are designed to provide Preschool Interagency Planning Council (PIPC) and District Early Intervention Council (DEIC) Chairs and Co-chairs with an opportunity to build their skills around planning and implementing effective council meetings and activities. The training is held on request and consists of 6 contact hours.

A total of 42 participants provided evaluation of the Leadership training. The largest majority of participants represented early intervention (23.8%), followed by public school (21.4%), others (21.4%), Head Start (16.7%), child care (7.1%), and health (7.1%). Others included university students and faculty and represented in Table 2

Table 2   Demographic Information on Participants Completing the Leadership Evaluation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public School	9	21.4	22.0	22.0
Early Intervention	10	23.8	24.4	46.3
Head Start	7	16.7	17.1	63.4
Child Care	3	7.1	7.3	70.7
Health	3	7.1	7.3	78.0
Other	9	21.4	22.0	100.0
Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	1	2.4		
	42	100.0		

Participants were asked to rate the four major objectives of the training on a five-point scale, with 1 being "not met" to 5 being "completely met." Mean ratings for each objective are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Mean Ratings for Objectives from Leadership Training

OBJECTIVES	
Please indicate the level at which the major objectives of the training were accomplished. Participants will:	MEAN
Understand the characteristics of an effective team:	4.51[a] (.55)[b]
Understand the stages of team development:	4.34 (.57)
Understand how to effectively conduct team meetings:	4.39 (.58)

Analyze individual team roles:	4.34 (.66)

[a] Mean

[b] Standard Deviation

Based on this data, the objectives for the training received above average ratings related to accomplishment. The highest degree of accomplishment of objectives was related to the participants understanding of the characteristics of an effective team. The least likely met objective was related to the participants' ability to analyze individual team roles on the council.

In addition to the rating scales, participants were offered an opportunity to provide written comments related to the training session. Specifically information was solicited about what they liked, what could be improved and any additional comments.

Twenty-nine participants (69%) provided comments. As it relates to what participants liked about the training, the most commonly identified area was the presenter and the visuals and materials provided. Participants also remarked on the information.

Participants also identified ways in which the training could be improved. Most often, participants identified the adding more group discussions, exercises and activities as a way to improve the training. In addition, participants indicated a need to increase the number of key players from the council or community who participate in the training. Participants provided no addition comments.

Curriculum Alignment for Preschool Skills Training

The following results were tabulated from 13 Curriculum Alignment for Preschool Skills (CAPS). The CAPS training is designed to support transition planning through continuity of curriculum. The training is provided to community teams representing Head Start, public school and childcare programs over a six-hour period.

A total of 288 participants provided evaluation information from the CAPS training from January 2000 to November 2001. Participants most often represented KERA preschool (30.9%) followed by Head Start (28.5%), Kindergarten (16.3%), public school administration (11.8%) others (10.1%) and child care (1.4%). Others included special education teachers and private preschool programs. Specific information is presented in Table 4.

Table 4   Demographic Information on Participants Completing the CAPS Evaluation

	N	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PS Administrator	31	10.8	11.0	11.0
Kindergarten	47	16.3	16.7	27.7
KERA	89	30.9	31.6	59.2
Head Start	82	28.5	29.1	88.3
Child Care	4	1.4	1.4	89.7
Other	29	10.1	10.3	100.0
Total	282	97.9	100.0	
Missing Data	6	2.1		
	288	100.0		

Participants were asked to rate the eight major objectives of the training on a five-point scale, with 1 being "not met" to 5 being "completely met." Mean ratings for each objective are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Mean Ratings for Objectives from Curriculum Alignment Training

OBJECTIVES	
Were you provided with <u>opportunity</u> to connect with other key players and discuss the Program of Studies:	4.67[a] (.61)[b]
Were you provided opportunities to identify critical skills, prioritize with an appropriate developmental sequence for your linkage tool:	4.61 (.63)
Were you provided with the <u>opportunity</u> to discuss the development of a means by which to embed essential skills:	4.71 (.50)
How would you rate your team's understanding of the process of unit development and skill implementation:	4.45 (.65)
Were you given an <u>opportunity</u> to discuss the development of a means to measure student performance outcomes and the use of data collected:	4.60 (.57)
How would you rate the team's progress in understanding and generalizing the CAPS information:	4.40 (.69)
Was your team given an <u>opportunity</u> to plan next steps for curriculum development that can be implemented within your community:	4.58 (.59)
How would you rate your team's progress in developing a plan with Kentucky Early Childhood Transition Project (KyTP) staff:	4.29 (.78)

[a] Mean

[b] Standard Deviation

Based on this data, the objectives for the training received above average ratings related to accomplishment of objectives. The highest degree of accomplishment of objectives was related to the participants' ability to discuss ways in which to embed essential skills. The least likely met objective was related to the team's progress towards developing a plan.

In addition to the rating scales, participants were offered an opportunity to provide written comments related to the training session. Specifically information was solicited about what they liked, what could be improved and any additional comments.

One hundred and thirty-seven participants (48%) provided comments. As it relates to what participants liked about the training, the most commonly identified area was the presenter and the information provided. Participants also provided positive remarks about the training as a whole, indicating they liked "everything" about the training session. Other remarks related to the presentation, materials and examples used by the presenters.

Participants also identified ways in which the training could be improved. Most often, participants identified that they felt the needed more time and that the training should be broken out over a period of days instead of one day. They also indicated that the training should be provided in every school district across the state.

Additional comments provided by participants were generally positive in nature "super job", "very good", and addressed the usefulness of the information provided.

<u>Helpful Entry Level Skills and Assessing Social, Behavioral and Functional Skills Training</u>

The following results were tabulated from three Using the Helpful Entry Level Skills (HELS) Checklist and three Assessing Social, Behavioral and Functional Skills (FABSS) Trainings from January 2000 to present. This training is designed to provide teachers, paraprofessionals, and related services personnel in preschool programs with specific information on how to conduct functional assessments in the areas of social, behavioral and functional skills. The training is held on request and involves six contact hours.

A total of 147 participants returned evaluation forms for the HELS-FABSS training sessions. Of these participants, Head Start programs were most often represented (63.3%) followed by public school programs (20.4%), childcare programs (7.5%), Early Intervention programs (2.7%), and other programs (2.0%) such as private preschool. Specific information is provided in Table 6.

Table 6   Demographic Information on Participants Completing the HELS-FABSS Evaluation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public School	30	20.4	21.1	21.1
Early Intervention	4	2.7	2.8	23.9
Head Start	93	63.3	65.5	89.4
Child Care	11	7.5	7.7	97.2
Health	1	.7	.7	97.9
Other	3	2.0	2.1	100.0
Total	142	96.6	100.0	
Missing	5	3.4		
	147	100.0		

Participants were asked to rate the five major objectives of the training on a five-point scale, with 1 being "not met" to 5 being "completely met." Mean ratings for each objective are presented in Table 4.

Table 7 Mean Ratings for Objectives from HELS - FABSS Training

OBJECTIVES – Participants:	
Were provided with information on how to administer the FABSS and HELS:	4.53[a] (.65)[b]
Have a general understanding of how to target skills for intervention:	4.30 (.69)
Have a general understanding of how to complete a Classroom Matrix:	4.19 (.75)
Have a general understanding of how to write IEP objectives based on information gathered from the assessment:	4.03 (.88)
Have a general understanding of how to use the natural routines and activities of the classroom to facilitate skills identified through the assessment process:	4.23 (.75)

[a] Mean

[b] Standard Deviation

Based on this data, the objectives for the training were rated above average related to accomplishment. The highest degree of accomplishment of objectives was related to the provision of information about administration of the assessment tools. The least likely met objective was related to the participants understanding of writing IEP objectives based on assessment information.

In addition to the rating scales, participants were offered an opportunity to provide written comments related to the training session. Specifically information was solicited about what they liked, what could be improved and any additional comments.

One hundred and twenty-six participants (86%) provided comments. As it relates to what participants liked about the training, the most commonly identified area was the presenter and the materials provided. Participants also remarked on the ability to ask questions throughout the presentation.

Participants also identified ways in which the training could be improved. Most often, participants identified the arrangement or organization of the materials as an area of needed improvement. They also indicated that the training should be provided across a number of days versus one full day.

Additional comments provided by participants were generally positive in nature "great", "nice job", and addressed the need for follow-up training in the future.

Technical Assistance Results and Findings

Ninety-two technical assistance recipients were randomly selected and contacted via mail to solicit their perceptions of the quality and usefulness of the technical assistance provided by KECTP staff. Of the 92 participants contacted, 42.4% represented public school programs including general and special education administrators, general, special education and preschool teachers and staff, related service personnel, and family resource center staff. The remaining participants represented early intervention (17.4%), Head Start (12%), child care (5.4%), TTAS or state agencies (4.3%), parents (1.1%) and health (1.1%). Of the remaining 16.3%, the majority did not indicate the agency they represented on the sign-in sheet. Specific information is provided in Table 8.

Table 8   Technical Assistance Recipients Agency Representation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Early Intervention	16	17.4	20.5	20.5
Head Start	11	12.0	14.1	34.6
Public School	39	42.4	50.0	84.6
Child Care	5	5.4	6.4	91.0
Health	1	1.1	1.3	92.3
TTAS/State	4	4.3	5.1	97.4
Parent	1	1.1	1.3	98.7
Other	1	1.1	1.3	100.0
Total	78	84.8	100.0	
Missing	14	15.2		
	92	100.0		

A total of 52 TA recipients opted to return the survey for a response rate of 57%. Of the participants who opted not to return the TA survey, the largest number represented public schools (50%; n = 18), followed by Head Start (19%, n = 7), early intervention (17%; n = 6), child care (8%; n = 3) and TTAS/State and parent at 3% (n = 1).

A series of four questions designed to evaluate the quality and helpfulness of the technical assistance were included in the survey. All four questions included a five-point Likert scale, with 1 being "not at all" and 5 being "very much." Overall, respondents rated all four items high. The highest ratings were in the areas of *created an environment, which promoted communication, and problem solving* and *time was used effectively* (M = 4.83; SD = .51 and

M = 4.83; SD = .55, respectively). Specific results from each of these questions are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Mean Ratings for Quality Questions

	Was TA Visit Helpful	Was Outcome Consistent	Communicative Environment	Time Used Effectively
N	52	52	52	52
Mean	4.77	4.69	4.83	4.83
Std. Deviation	.58	.61	.51	.55

An analysis of the responses by agency type was conducted for the two larger groups of participants, early intervention and public school (the total N was too small to produce trustworthy data in the other areas). This analysis indicates that public school staff rated the TA slightly higher than early intervention providers as presented in Table 10.

Table 10 Comparison of Mean Rating Across Public School and Early Intervention Staff

Agency		Was TA Visit Helpful	Was Outcome Consistent	Communicative Environment	Time Used Effectively
Early Intervention	Mean	4.80	4.60	4.90	4.70
	SD	.42	.52	.32	.67
Public School	Mean	4.86	4.81	4.86	4.90
	SD	.36	.40	.36	.30

The next question on the survey focused on the ability of the TA participants to implement outcomes and activities generated through the TA visit. Overall, participants indicated that they had accomplished most of what they had planned (M = 4.02; SD = 1.2). Specific percentages of responses across the Likert scale options in presented in Table 11.

Table 11 Percent of Participants and Perceived Outcome/Activity Accomplishment Level

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Not Accomplished		2	3.8
Little Accomplished		2	3.8
Some Accomplished		13	25.0
Much Accomplished		16	30.8
Completely Accomplished		14	26.9
Did Not Answer		5	9.6
	Total	52	100.0

An analysis across agency types indicates that early intervention providers were more likely than others to indicate a lower level of accomplishment on outcomes and activities as presented in Table 12.

Table 12   Mean Ratings for Implemented Activities by Agency

Agency Code	Mean	SD
Early Intervention	3.80	.79
Head Start	4.25	.50
Public School	4.14	1.2
Child Care	4.00	1.4
Health	*	*
TTAS/State	4.67	1.5
Other	*	*
Total	4.07	1.20
* Numbers were too low to provide reliable data		

The final question on the survey related to whether TA recipients would request technical assistance from the project in the future. Of the 52 respondents, 50 indicated they would request services and 2 did not provide a response.

TA recipients were offered the opportunity to provide comments on the survey. Thirty respondents (60%) provided comments. Of these comments provided 83.3% were positive comments. These comments related specifically to the helpfulness of the facilitator and/or process to accomplishing their goals (43.3%) and the high quality of the facilitator (40%). Another 14.3% of the comments were general comments related to the participants and/or the accomplishment of the goals or outcomes (e.g., "we are in the process of finalizing the updated Transition Agreement which we worked on at the meeting").   One negative comment was provided. This comment related to the participants themselves, "Central talking among participants when presenter is speaking. Difficult to hear presenter."

Impact Results and Findings

The phone interviews that were conducted asked questions regarding motivation for initial contact and follow up requests for technical assistance. Frequently the people involved in initial request for technical assistance had moved to other positions within the community and institutional history was lost. Historical issues that were repeatedly shared: relative to lack of communication between agencies and professionals, lack of understanding regarding policy and procedures, and guarding of "turf" with respect to provider services.

Overall impact of the involvement of technical assistance from the staff at KECTP was perceived as excellent. Findings indicate that the project impact model follows the same philosophical model as the mediation process in that communities and individuals had to first understand how issues and concerns were similar across programs. Skills of project staff in the areas of facilitation and mediation were critical in their role of moving communities from positions to common goals. Communities are made of individuals with beliefs and bias that come from mental models based on previous experience. Technical assistance provided by staff at the KECTP provided a mentored, mediated opportunity that enabled communities to maintain dignity and respect for others involved in the transition process. The mediated process provided a means to directly impact children and family in that services were not interrupted, staff were prepared and better trained to accept the child coming into their system, and overall outcomes for children were more positive. Technical assistance was provided in a manner that was respectful of the members of the team involved in transition of young children as well as the diversity of the communities.