



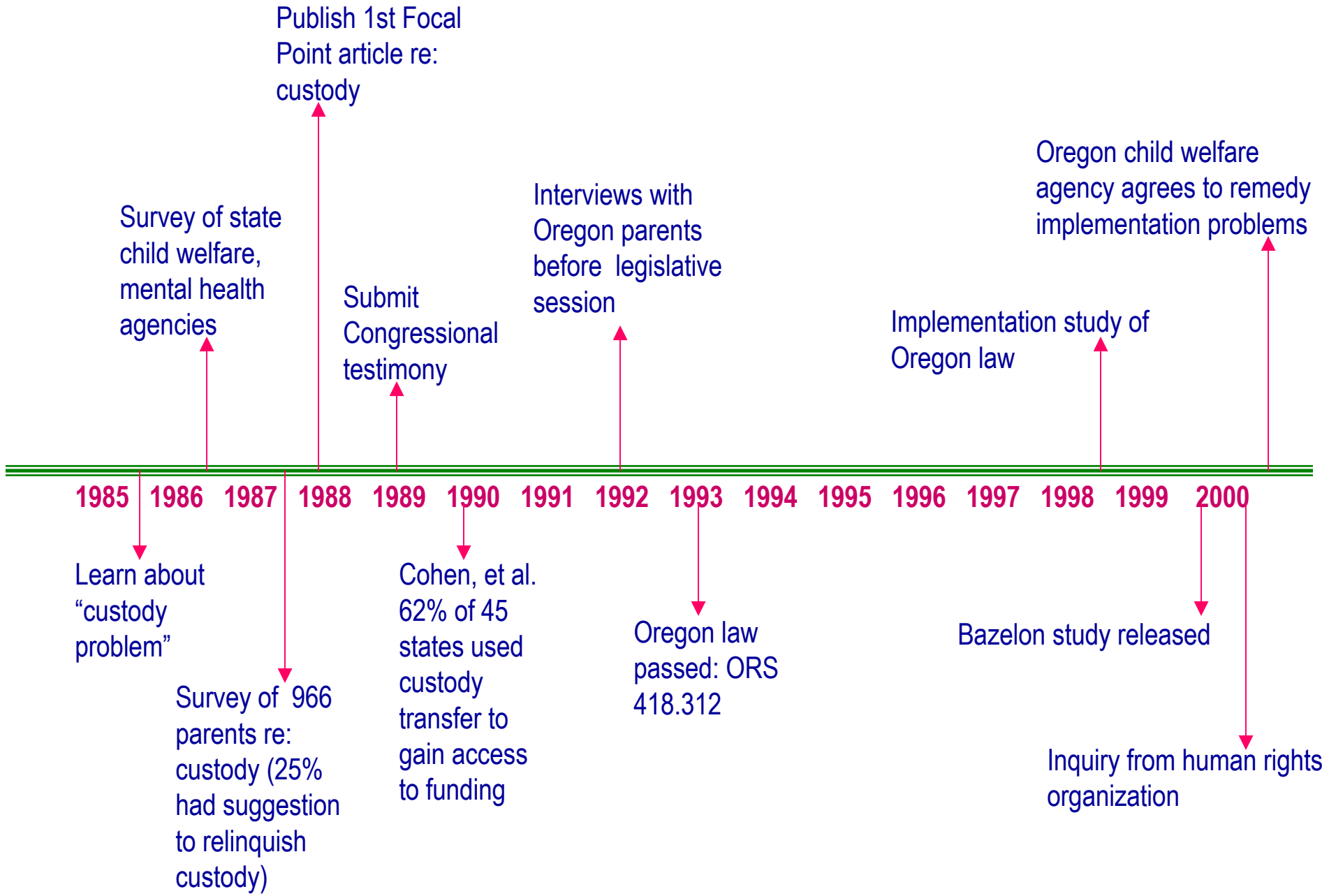
Research in the Service of Policy Change: Past Accomplishments and Current Efforts

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Publish 1st Focal Point article re: custody

Survey of state child welfare, mental health agencies

Submit Congressional testimony

Interviews with Oregon parents before legislative session

Oregon child welfare agency agrees to remedy implementation problems

Implementation study of Oregon law

1985

1986

1987

1988

1989

1990

1991

1992

1993

1994

1995

1996

1997

1998

1999

2000

Learn about "custody problem"

Survey of 966 parents re: custody (25% had suggestion to relinquish custody)

Cohen, et al. 62% of 45 states used custody transfer to gain access to funding

Oregon law passed: ORS 418.312

Bazelon study released

Inquiry from human rights organization

Recommendations and SCF Response

- Increase training to child welfare workers, treatment providers, juvenile court judges, school personnel, and other relevant persons
- All intake and screener training now includes information on voluntary placement
- Branches will designate from one to three employees as expert/resource people to assist with voluntary placement

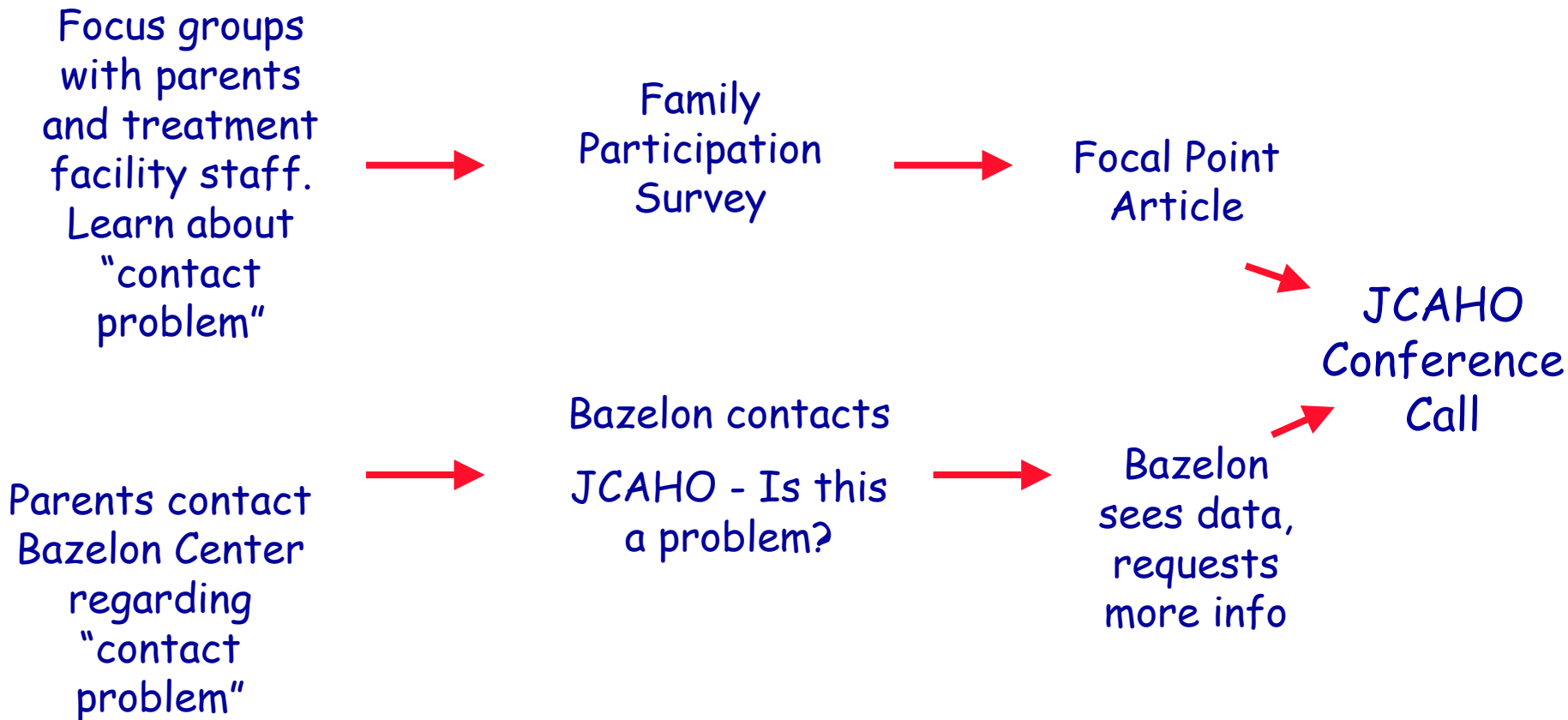
Recommendations and SCF Response

- Change the Voluntary Child Placement Agreement and Voluntary Custody Agreement forms to make them easier to understand and use
- SCF agreed to have the forms edited by the Attorney General's Office.
- All VCPA's and VCA's are now sent to the central office for tracking and monitoring fulfillment of requirements

Recommendations and SCF Response

- Review and revise SCF policy to conform with the Voluntary Child Placement Agreement Form
- SCF promised to review and make changes as needed, with input from key stakeholders.

Current Efforts



Parent-Child Contact

- Restrictions on contact
- Types of limits
- Age
- Custody
- Contingencies
- Participation

Sample

N=105

- Respondents with children receiving out-of-home treatment services
 - Residential treatment
 - Psychiatric hospital or unit
 - Group home

Demographics - Child

Race	White	80.2%		
	Black	8.9%		
	Hispanic	3.0%		
	Native American	2.0%		
	Multiracial	5.9%		
Sex	Male	73.1%		
		Mean	SD	Range
	Age	14 yrs.	3	7-21

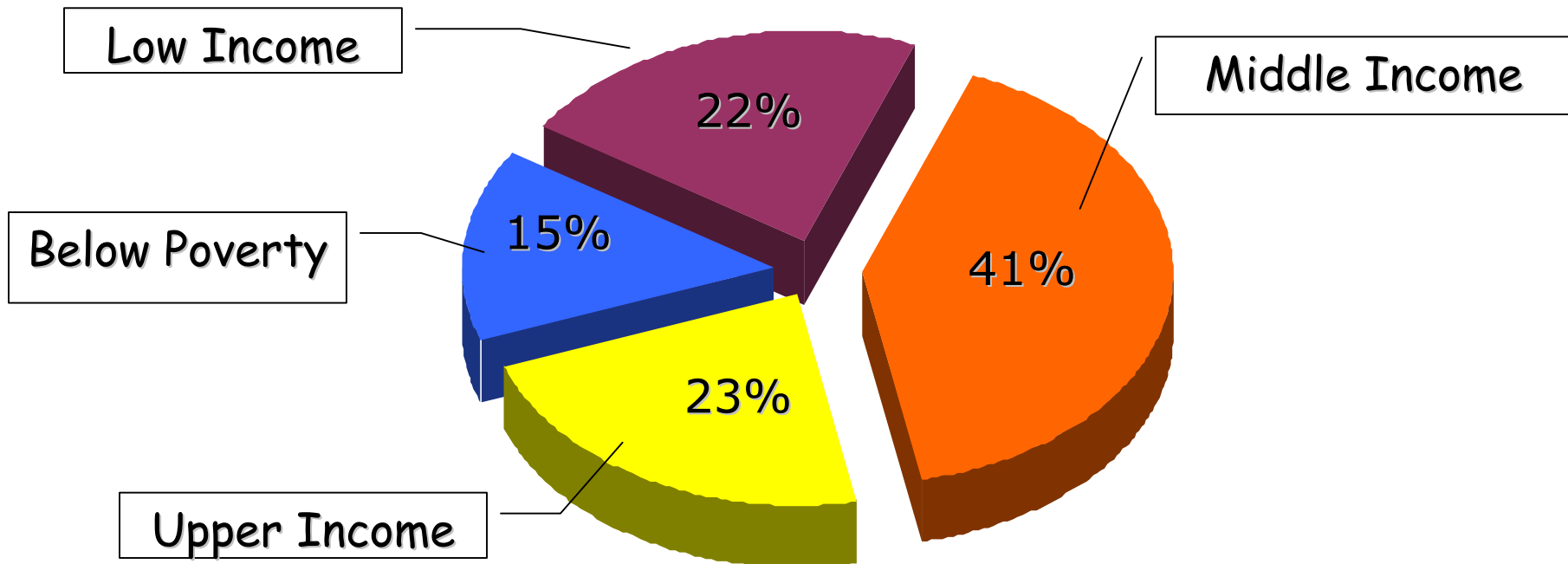
Demographics - Family

Age		Mean=45 (6.8)
Education	H.S. diploma or G.E.D	12.5%
	≥ College Degree	53%
Gender	Female	92%
Race	White	90.2%
	Black	7.8%
	Native American	2%
Marital Status	Married	62%
	Single	38%
Relatedness	Biological/Adoptive Mother	87.5%
Has Custody		79.8%
Household Size		Mean=3.4 (1.3)

Demographics - Family cont.

- **Income**

- Median \$25,000 - \$34,000
- Range: <\$5K - \$75K+



Contact and Outcomes

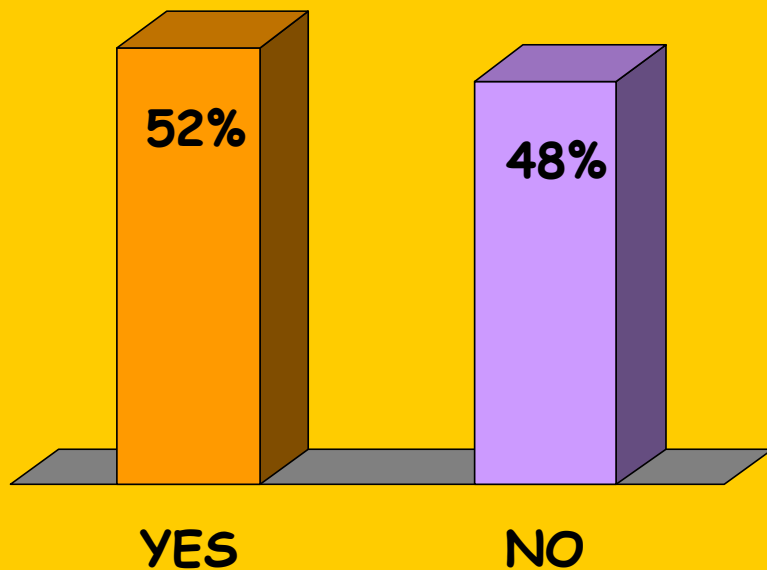
- Engagement and support of family during placement associated with:
 - Community adjustment (Carlo & Shennum, 1989)
 - Post-placement success (Whittaker, 2000)
 - Maintenance of treatment gains (Pecora, Whittaker & Maluccio, 1992)

Out-of-Home Care and Contact

- Family visits, either in the office or the home, should be planned, conducted, and monitored as a central part of the service plan. - CWLA Standards
- Every child has a right to private familial and significant other contact (face-to-face, telephonic, etc.) unless clinically contraindicated. - CWLA Standards
- The individual's family and significant other(s), regardless of their ages, are allowed to visit the individual, unless such visits are clinically contraindicated. - JCAHO Standards
 - Ex: Child and adolescent partial-hospitalization programs have mechanisms designed to invite parents to visit on a regularly scheduled basis to provide input and feedback.

Initial Contact Limited

When your child first entered this out-of-home placement, was contact limited for a period of adjustment?



Number of Weeks

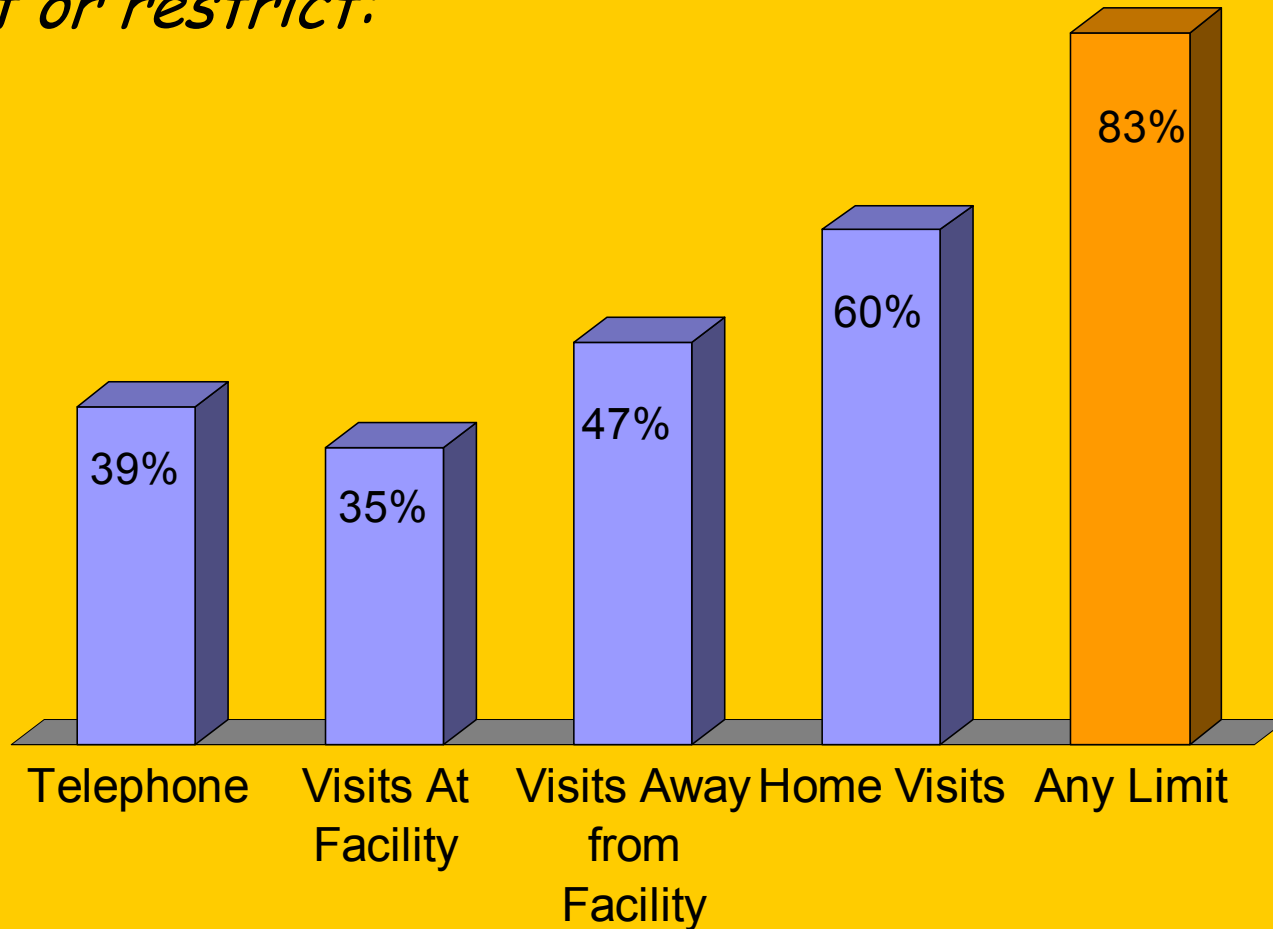
Mean = 3.8

Mode = 4

Range 1-8, 52

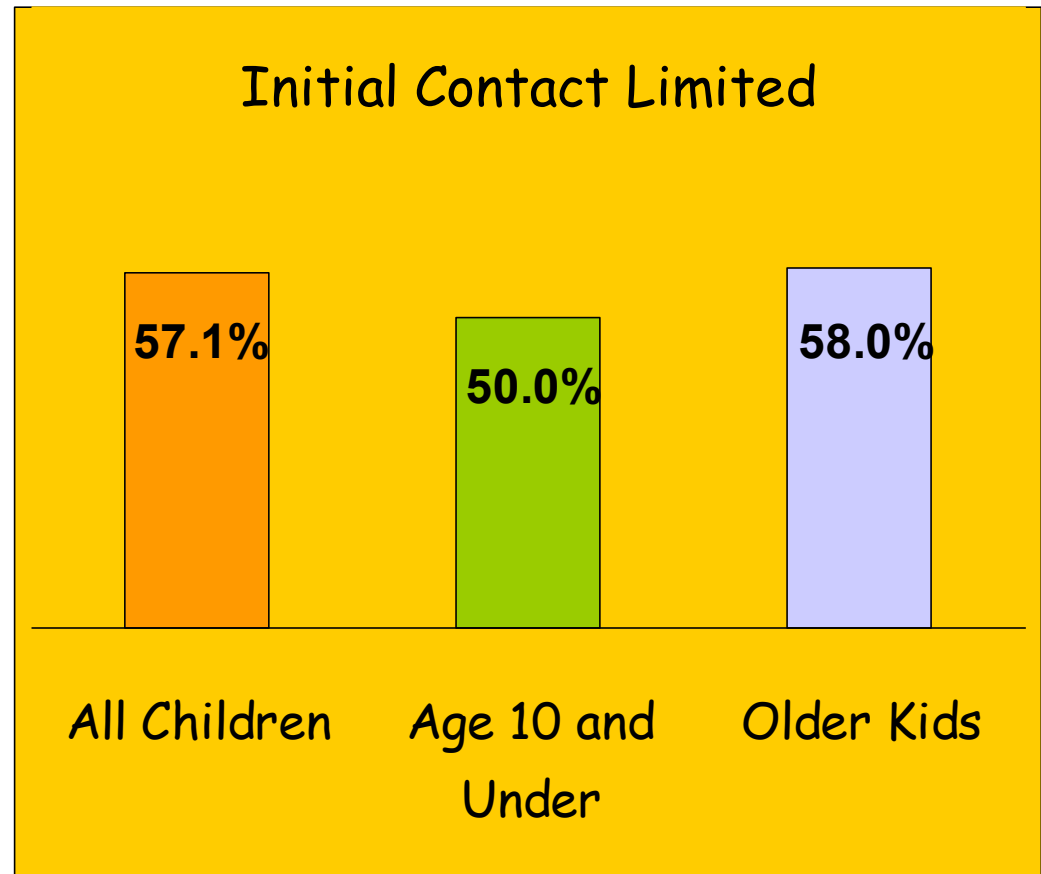
Restrictions on Frequency of Contact

After an initial period, did the staff/program limit or restrict:



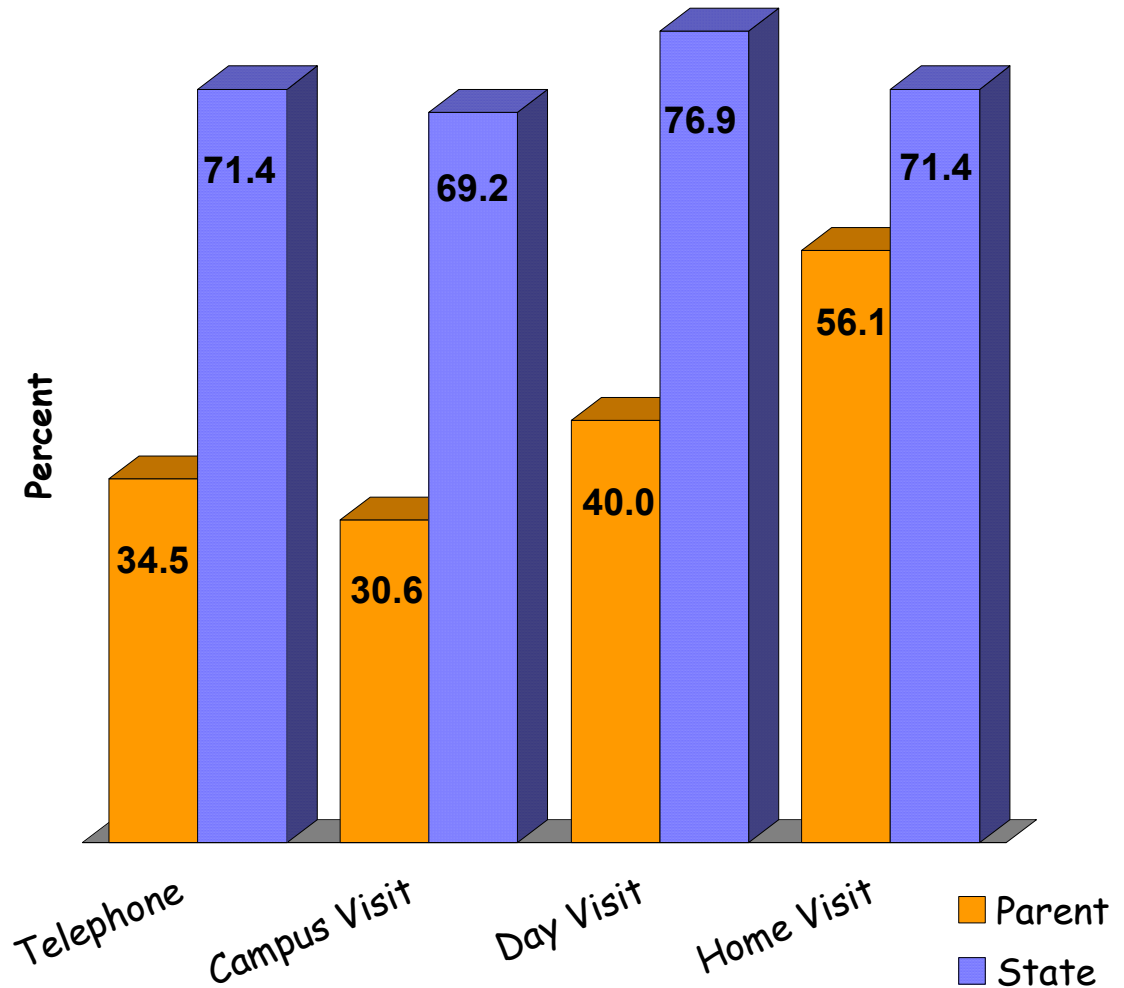
Limitations Based on the Child's Age

- Practices of limiting parent-child contact were consistent regardless of the child's age with few exceptions



Custody and Limits

- Practices of limiting contact varied significantly by child custody status
- Caregivers with children in state custody were more likely to report limitations on contact

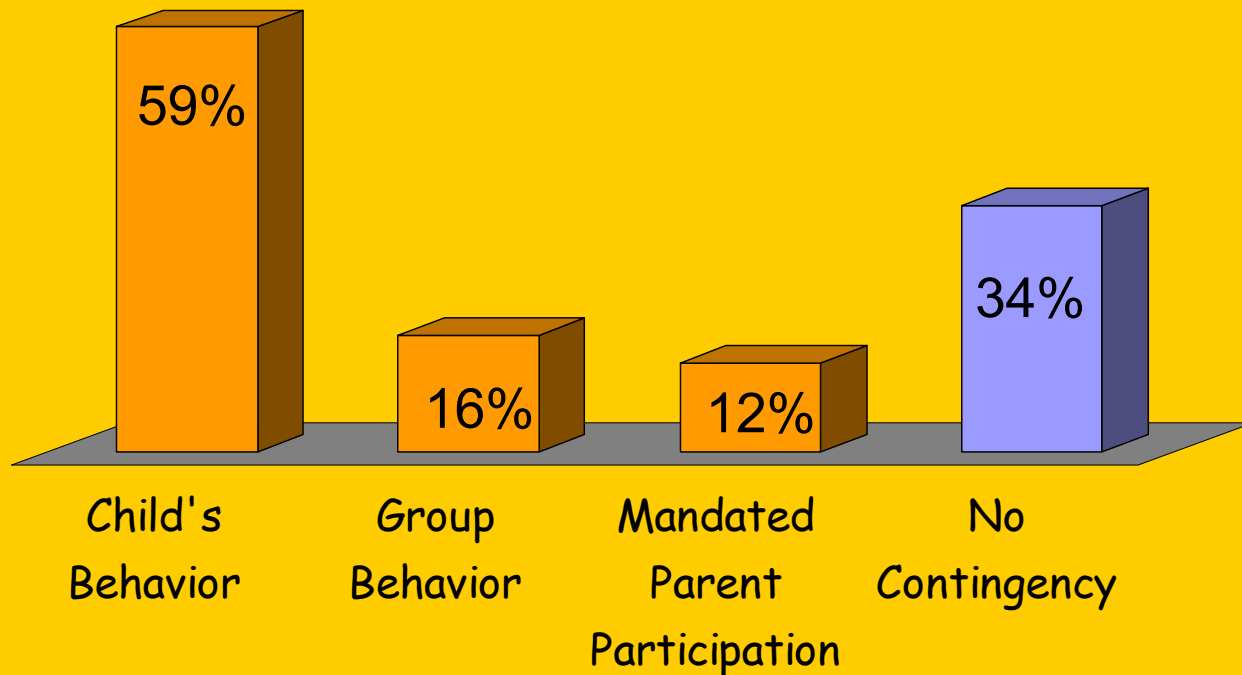


Group Contingencies

- Group punishment for misbehavior is not desirable. It can have the negative long-range effect of embittering the children who are unfairly punished, and can disturb group cohesiveness. - CWLA
- "Individualization is one criterion for child and youth care practices that makes them...suitable to the child's particular stage of development.... Point and levels systems result in practices that ignore clinical awareness and sensitivity to the needs of individual children and youth." - VanderVen, 1995

Contingencies For Contact

Did the placement or program make your contact with your child dependent on:



Out-of-Home Care and Participation

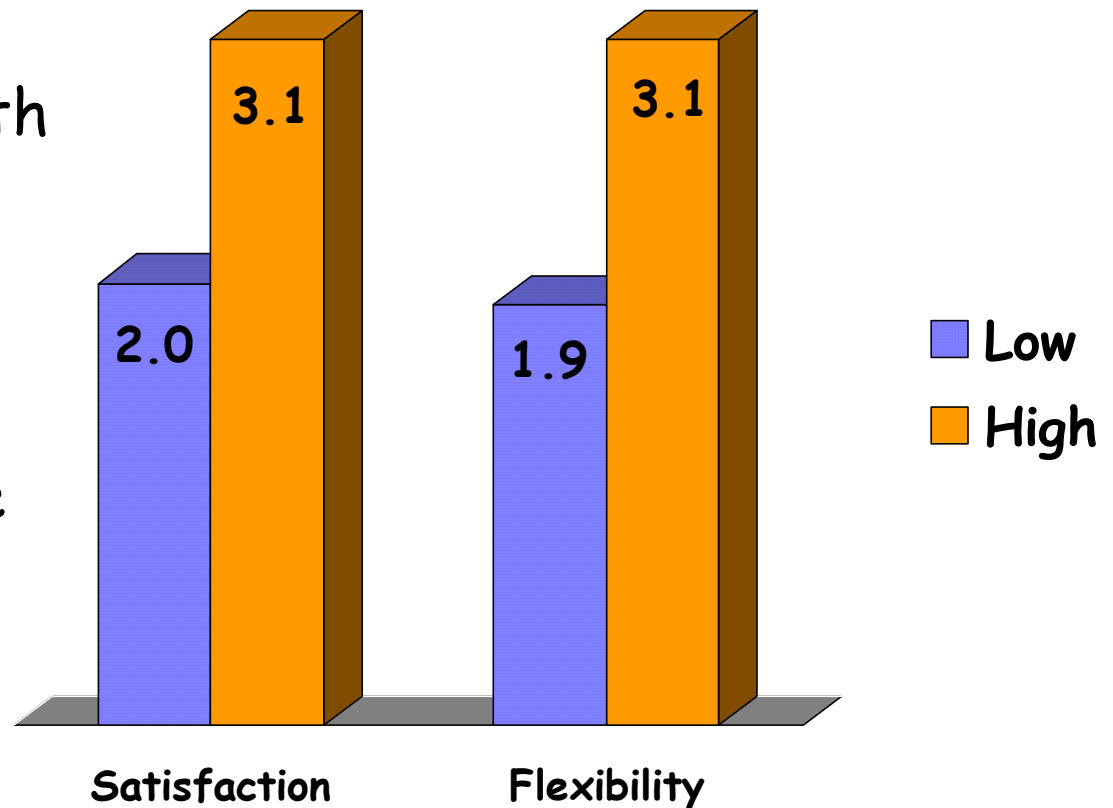
- The residential group care agency should encourage family members to participate in the service planning process whenever it is in the best interests of their child. - CWLA Standards
- One of the key elements of residential program success is involving the family in client care. - U.S. GAO Report
- Individuals or family members or advocates participate in individualized program planning, and their opinions and preferences about services, activities, and objectives are considered. - JCAHO Standards

Service Participation Measure

- To what extent:
- Were you able to influence planning for this treatment or service?
- Were your family's values and culture taken into account when planning for your child?
- Were your ideas valued in planning this service for your child?
- Did you agree with the service planning for your child?
- Were the needs/circumstances of your family considered in this planning?
- How much did staff listen to your ideas about ways to change or improve treatment or service planning?
- How much did staff make changes in the service plan for your child as a result of your suggestions?

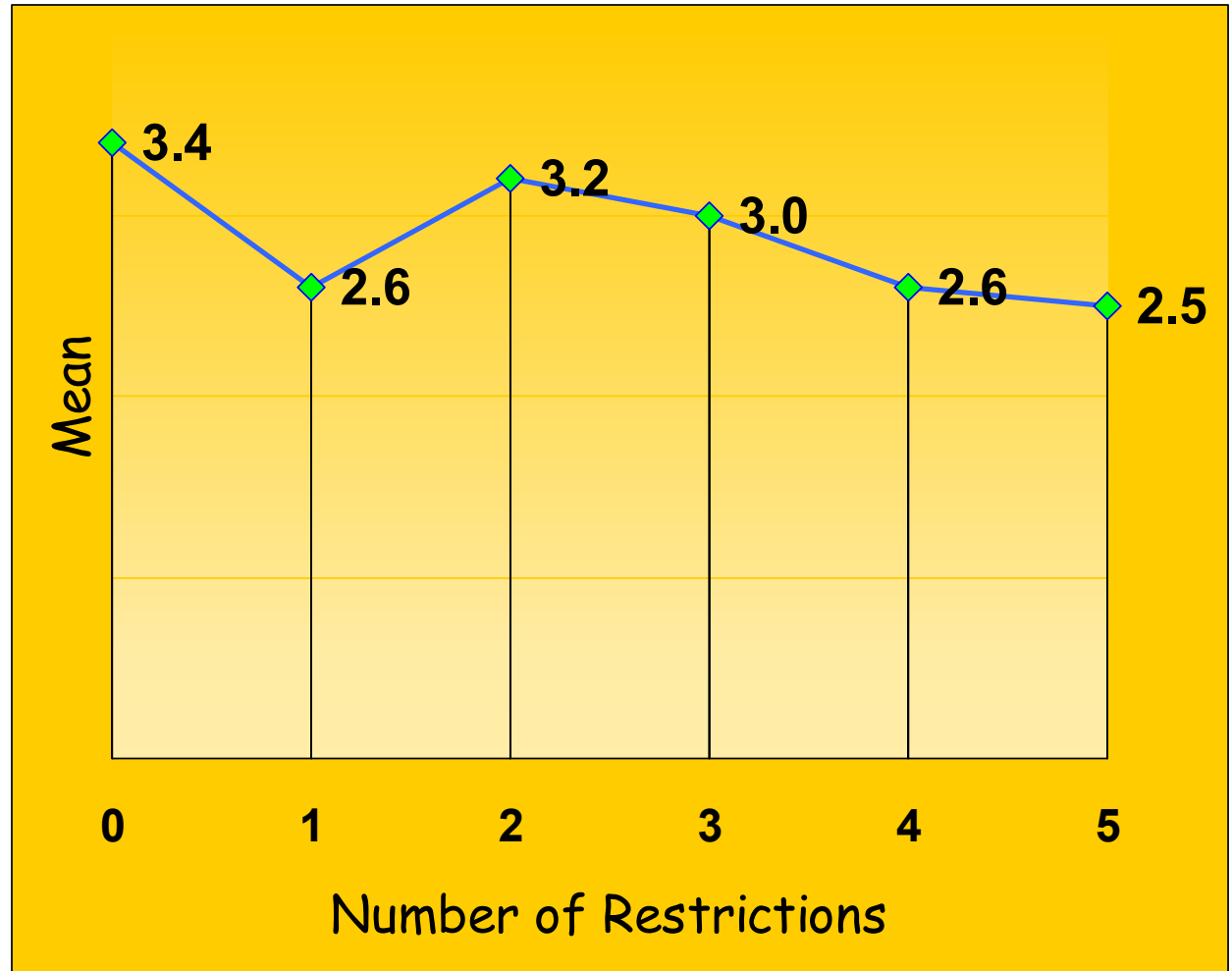
Contact and Participation

- Caregivers who were satisfied with their levels of contact, and felt that contact was flexible, participated more in their child's service planning.



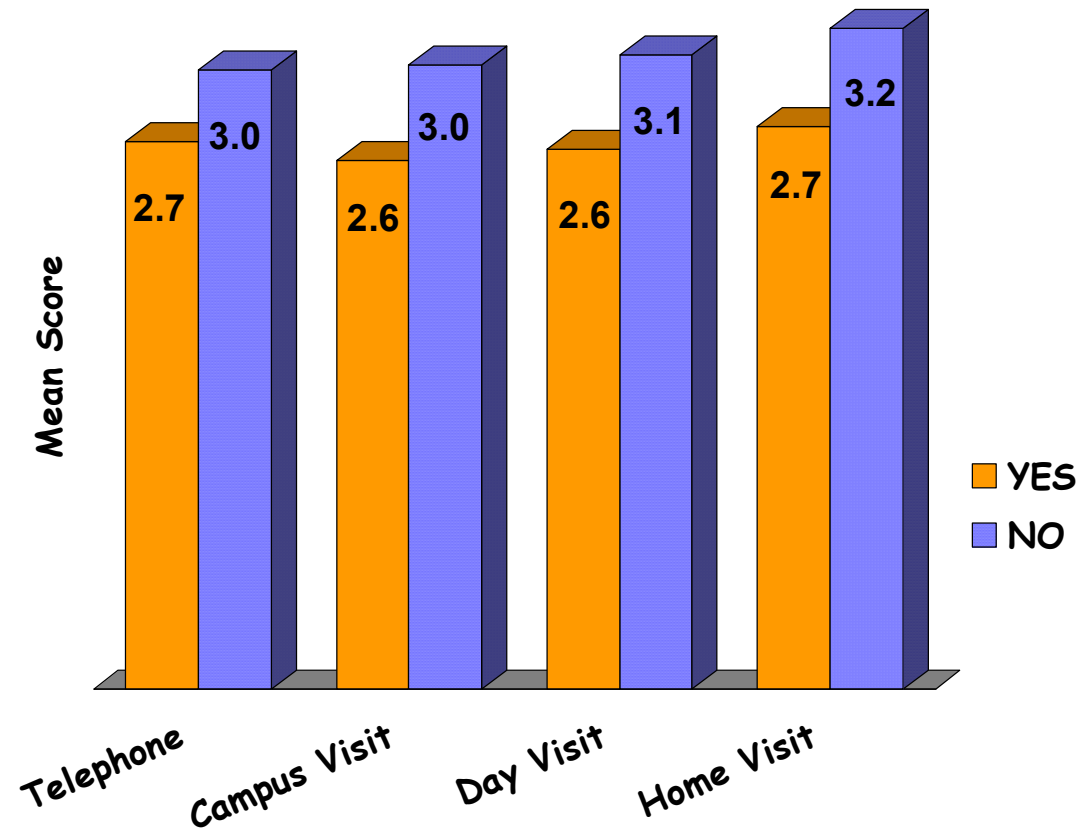
Level of Participation by Number of Limits Endorsed

- Levels of participation among parents varied significantly.
- The more restrictions reported, the lower the average level of participation.



Participation & Contact Restrictions

- Caregivers who reported different types of contact restrictions participated in treatment planning significantly less than those who did not.



Rationale for Parent-Child Contact

- Attachment & bonding research, (Bowlby, 1973; 1982)
- Contact associated with more rapid reunification from foster care (Davis, Landsverk, Newton, & Ganger, 1996)
- Contact associated with and shorter inpatient stay (Byalin, 1988; Williams, 1988)
- * Reality testing: Parental rights

Response to Findings

- Do the findings reflect your experiences?
- Are there reasons to limit contact?
- Are there any other unintended consequences that we have not thought of?
- Are there policies that we have not mentioned that influence parent-child contact?
- Are there examples of good practice?

Research In Action

- Can you help us to think about what we should do with these findings:
 - What audiences should we communicate with?
 - What is the message we need to deliver?