



MARCH 2021

NECZ 2020

Risk, Strength, and Resilience

PREPARED BY:

Andrea Gromoske
Gromoske Consulting

APPROVED BY:

NECZ Leadership Team

ABOUT THE NECZ



Mission

To partner with Northside families and the community to support children in meeting developmental milestones and succeeding in school through programs focused on family stability and social work home visitation programs.

Vision

The Northside community breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

Focus

- Comprehensive, integrated, place-based, and co-located services.
- A two-generation approach to providing support to caregivers and children.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

90 Families

- **63%** had incomes less than \$18,000
- **66%** had limited social support
- **33%** lived on Northport Dr.



97 Caregivers

- **48%** were 22-30 years old at enrollment
- **36%** were first-time parents

101 Children

- **68%** were prenatal to less than 1 year old at enrollment
- **90%** were Black, Indigenous, or Children of Color

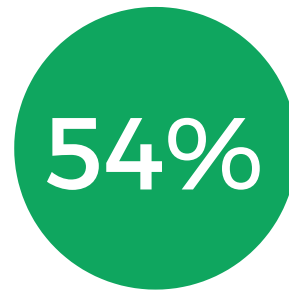
RISKS & STRENGTHS

Home Visiting Services

Families are a part of the NECZ if they are receiving home visiting services from any of the following programs - Early HeadStart, the Early Childhood Initiative, and Welcome Baby and Beyond. During the time they are receiving home visiting services, families and program staff identify strengths and risks in many important life domains. When risks are identified, home visiting staff make referrals to NECZ Integrated Services.



Received Zone services for 1-2 years



Received 4-8 home visits each quarter









Most needed integrated service, based on the number referred for services



Most used integrated service, based on the number receiving services

Risks & Strengths

Home visiting staff make referrals to NECZ Integrated Services, including Community Action Coalition (CAC) for housing, Children's Hospital Wisconsin (CHW) Education and Employment Specialists (EES), Forward Service Corporation's (FSC) Family Stabilization Program (FSP), and Anesis and The Rainbow Project for mental health services.

Risk		Strength	
Unstable housing	97%		95% Avoided eviction
Low social support	66%		20% Joined Ready, Set, Go
Family economic hardship	53%		58% Receiving FoodShare
No or unstable employment	57%		71% Obtained job
No diploma/GED; literacy issues	28%		24% Enrolled in classes or training
Reported mental health symptoms	19%		12% Working on goals with MH worker






COVID-19

Programs adapted to the new normal, although it was challenging

Programs faced a number of challenges. The number of families able to be served was reduced. It was more difficult to engage new families because there were no in-person visits. Assessment and screening was challenging because of virtual visits - this was especially true for observing caregiver-child relationships. Nevertheless, families remained engaged in services. Programs were flexible by conducting virtual and telephone visits.

Families continued to be supported by a network of services

The percent of families that screened as "at-risk" did not change drastically after COVID-19 began, although childcare was one area that saw an increase in the number of families who could use support.

	2019 (n = 19)	2020 (n = 46)
	15 %	15 %
	62 %	51 %
	32 %	28 %
	10 %	18 %
	21 %	22 %

CHILD RESILIENCE

In the face of adversity, children and families are showing positive signs

Families and Zone staff work together to build upon strengths and mitigate risks. Home visitors work on supporting caregivers as their child's first and best teacher. They work in concert with Integrated Service staff to support families in achieving and maintaining stable housing, economics, and well-being. These activities promote child development, literacy activities, and strong family relationships.

Of the children served:



60%

Are developmentally on-track in 5 core areas



49%

Have a family member read, sing songs, or tell stories to them 5 or more days a week



80%

Have overall very good to excellent caregiver-child interactions

NECZ FAMILIES

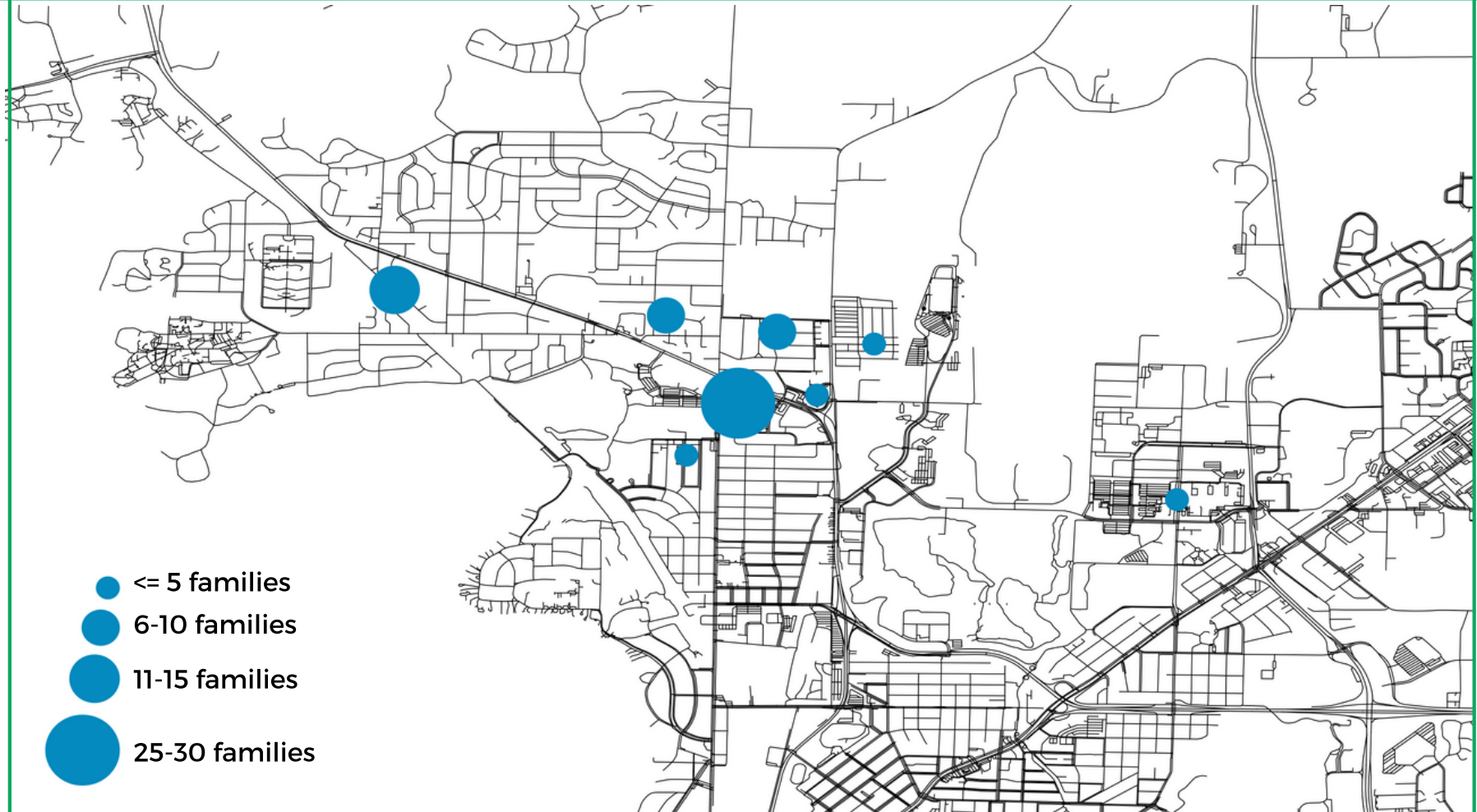
Families live in many areas within the Zone

Families that participate in Zone services live in many areas within the Zone, including Kennedy Heights, Vera Court, East Bluff, Troy Drive, and Northport Drive. Nearly one-third of all families live on Northport Drive.

Some families end up moving outside of the Zone in order to find stable housing. Although this means that their official participation in the Zone ends, many programs are able to continue supporting the family.



Most families live near the Northside Town Center, in the Kennedy Heights or Vera Court neighborhoods.



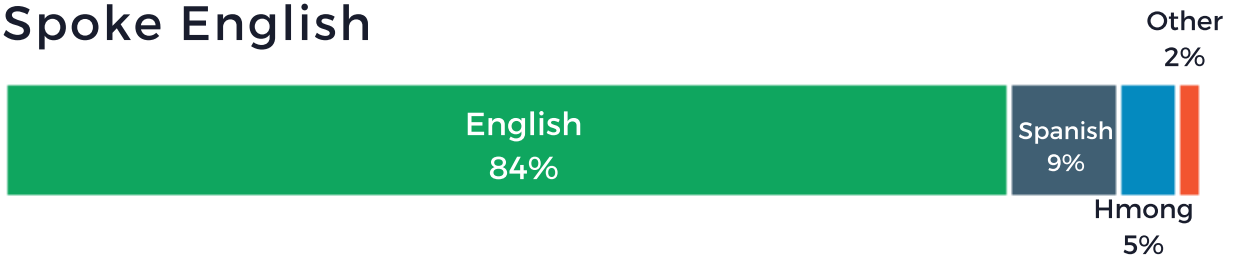
Family Demographics

Most families participating in the NECZ:

- Had incomes of less than \$18,000 per year



- Spoke English



- Had 2-3 household members



- Were not homeless



- Received FoodShare



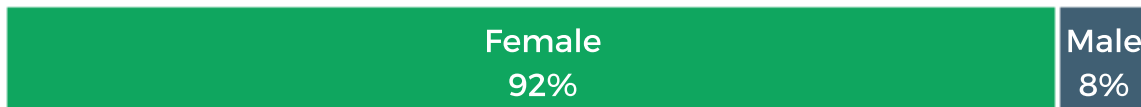
- Did not receive a childcare subsidy



Caregiver Demographics

Most caregivers participating in NECZ services:

- Were female



- Were 22-30 years old at enrollment



- Had BadgerCare for health insurance



- Were Black, Indigenous, or People of Color



- Were not a first-time parent



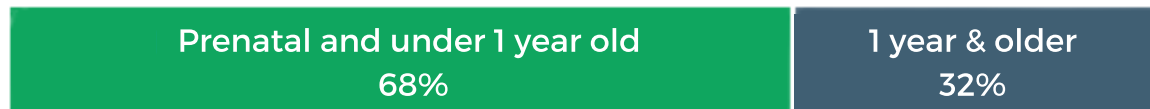
Child Demographics

Most children participating in the NECZ:

- Were male



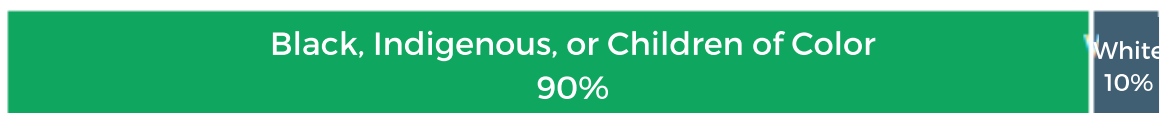
- Were prenatal to less than 1 year old at enrollment



- Had BadgerCare for health insurance



- Were Black, Indigenous, or Children of Color



RISKS & STRENGTHS

In the face of risks, families and service providers are able to build strengths

Families that decide to accept services from the NECZ can choose from three different home visiting programs - Early HeadStart (EHS), the Early Childhood Initiative (ECI), and Welcome Baby and Beyond (WBB). Depending on their goals, they may also participate in EES or FSP to work on employment or education, CAC's housing support, mental health services, or receive childcare or general flex funds.

Families may have many risks present, but by capitalizing on their strengths and utilizing additional supports, families are demonstrating positive results. With the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, families faced additional struggles. But Zone staff continued to support families in the ways they could.



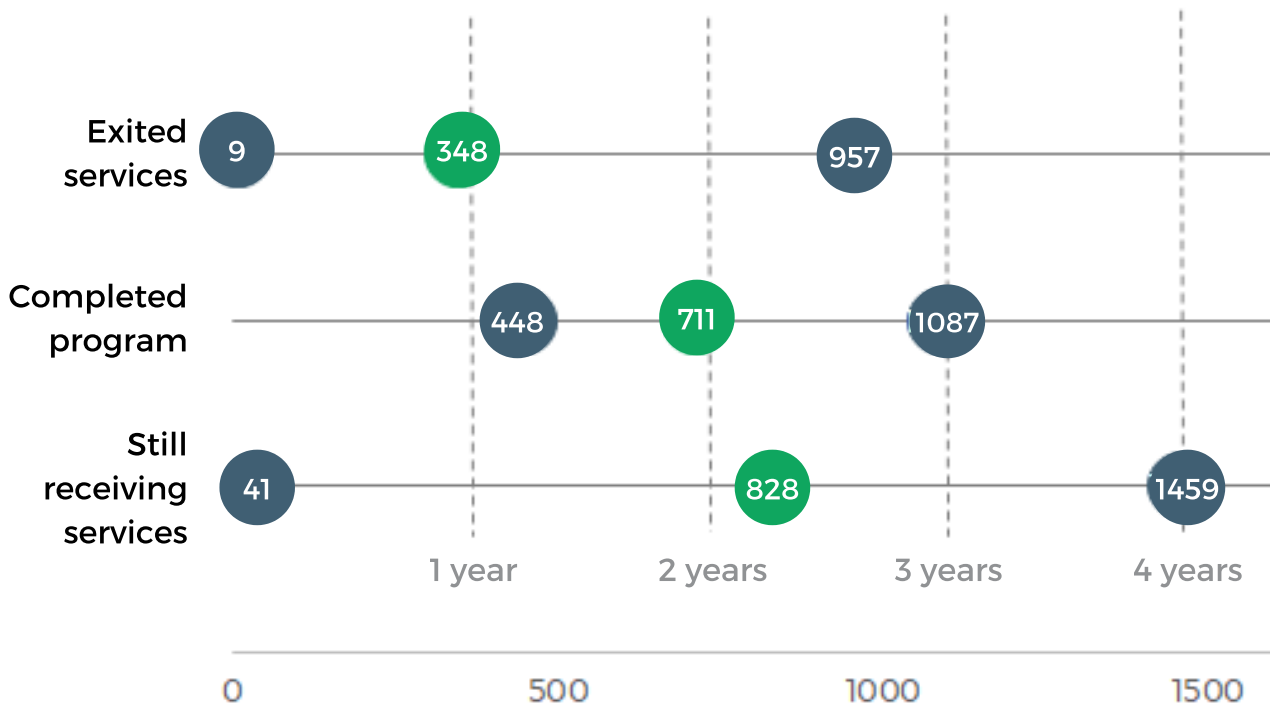
Family participation

Participation in the NECZ is voluntary, which means that as families' lives change, they may decide to continue receiving services or end services with the Zone. The NECZ's goal is to retain 75% of families that begin services, which means families are still participating or have completed services.

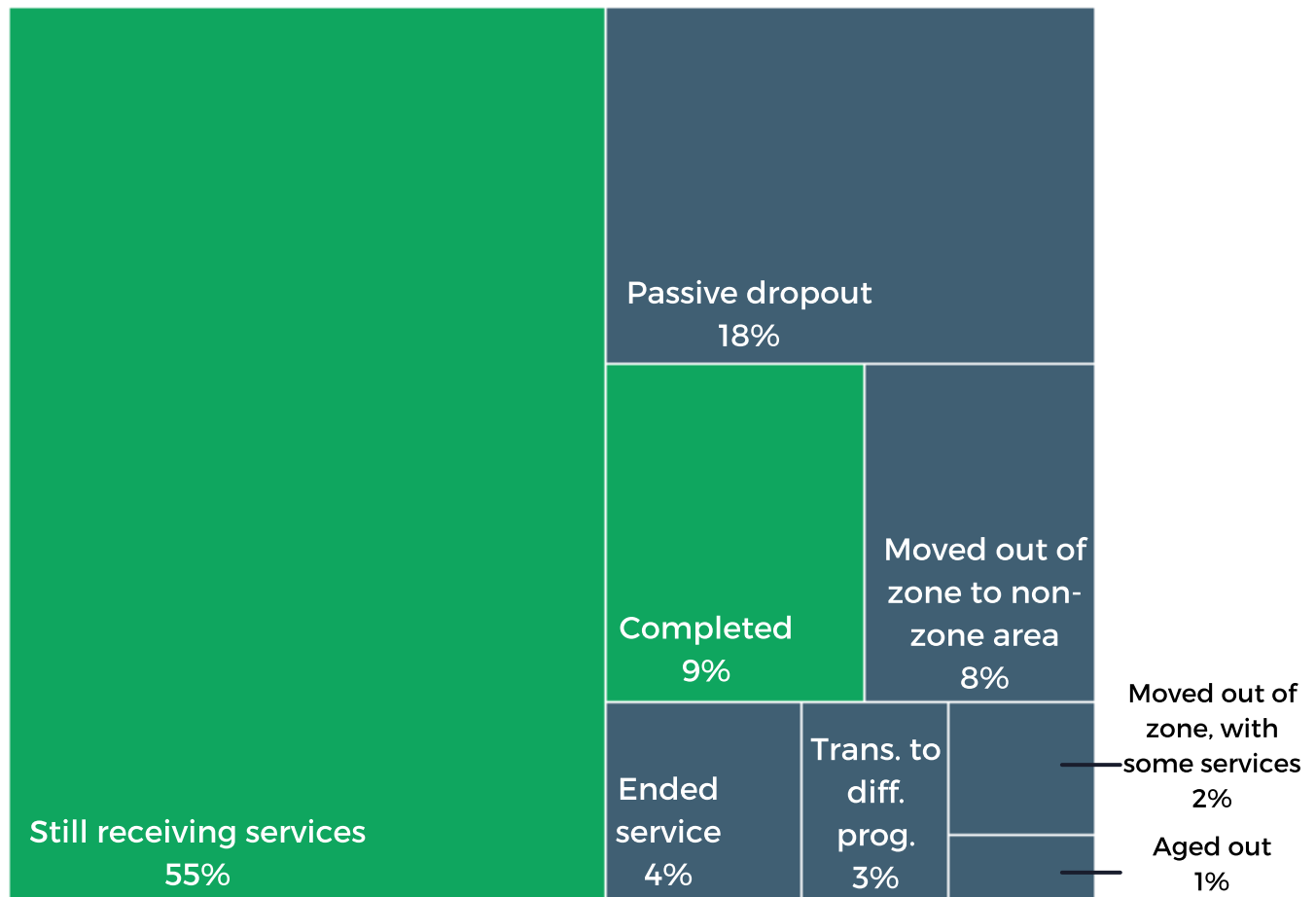
90 families have participated in Zone services

Families that have continued to receive services have participated for over 2 years, **on average**; longer than those that exited services or completed the program.

The **minimum** and **maximum** amount of days spent receiving services has had a wide range.

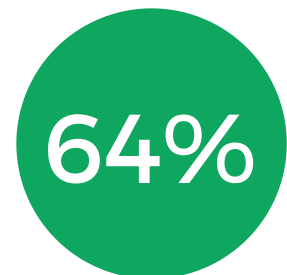


Families that exited services were mainly the result of passive dropouts - the families could not be reached or located despite multiple attempts from home visitors.



In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the widespread shut down and additional stress for families and staff, families continued to participate in services.

Families that continued with or completed services


















Home visiting services

Home visiting staff work with families to achieve their goals, build confidence in parenting skills, and help caregivers understand their child's developmental needs.



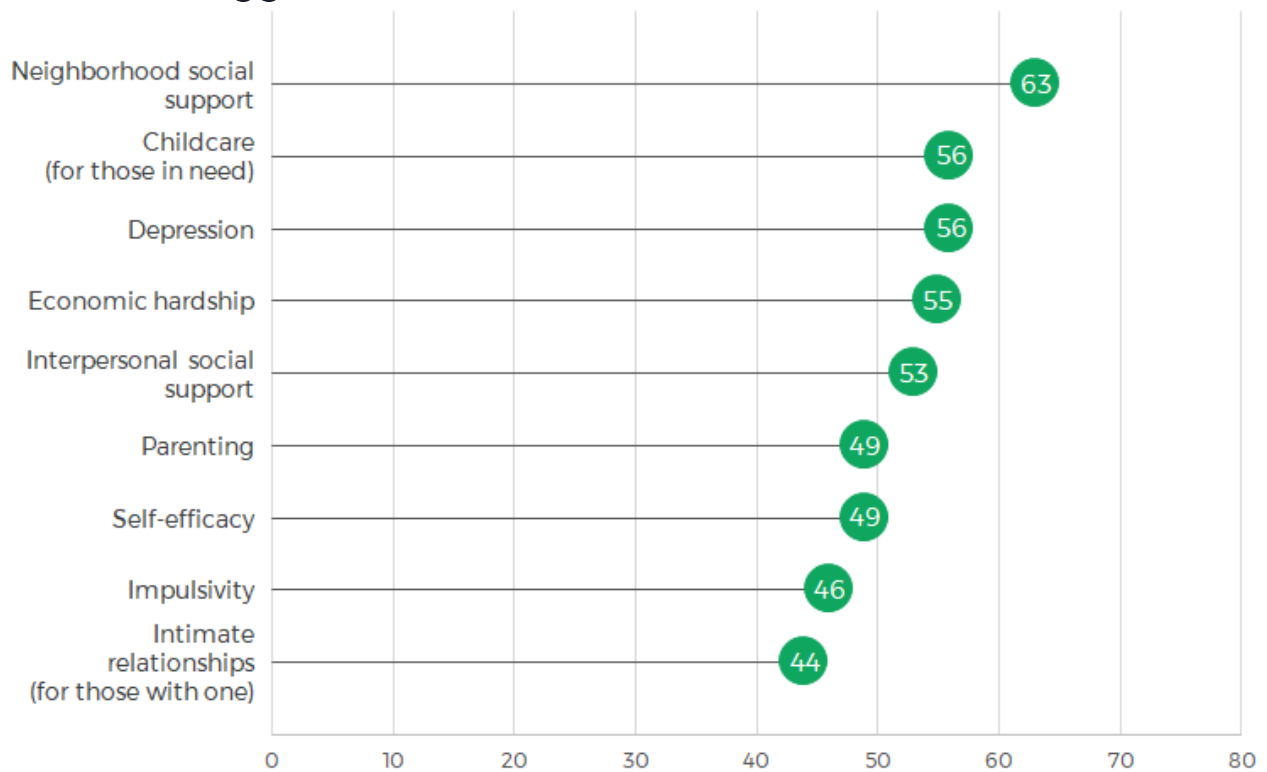
average visits per family, per quarter *averaged over all years of data

Home visiting staff also screen families in important life domains so they can connect families with additional supports. Even if a family doesn't screen as "at-risk," a home visitor may still refer the family for services.

	% At-risk		% Referred or have service		For more on service & strength
	14 %		40 %		Go to page 19
	57 %		49 %		Go to page 18 & 21
	28 %		33 %		Go to page 18 & 21
	14 %		14 %		Go to page 22
	19 %		42 %		Go to page 20

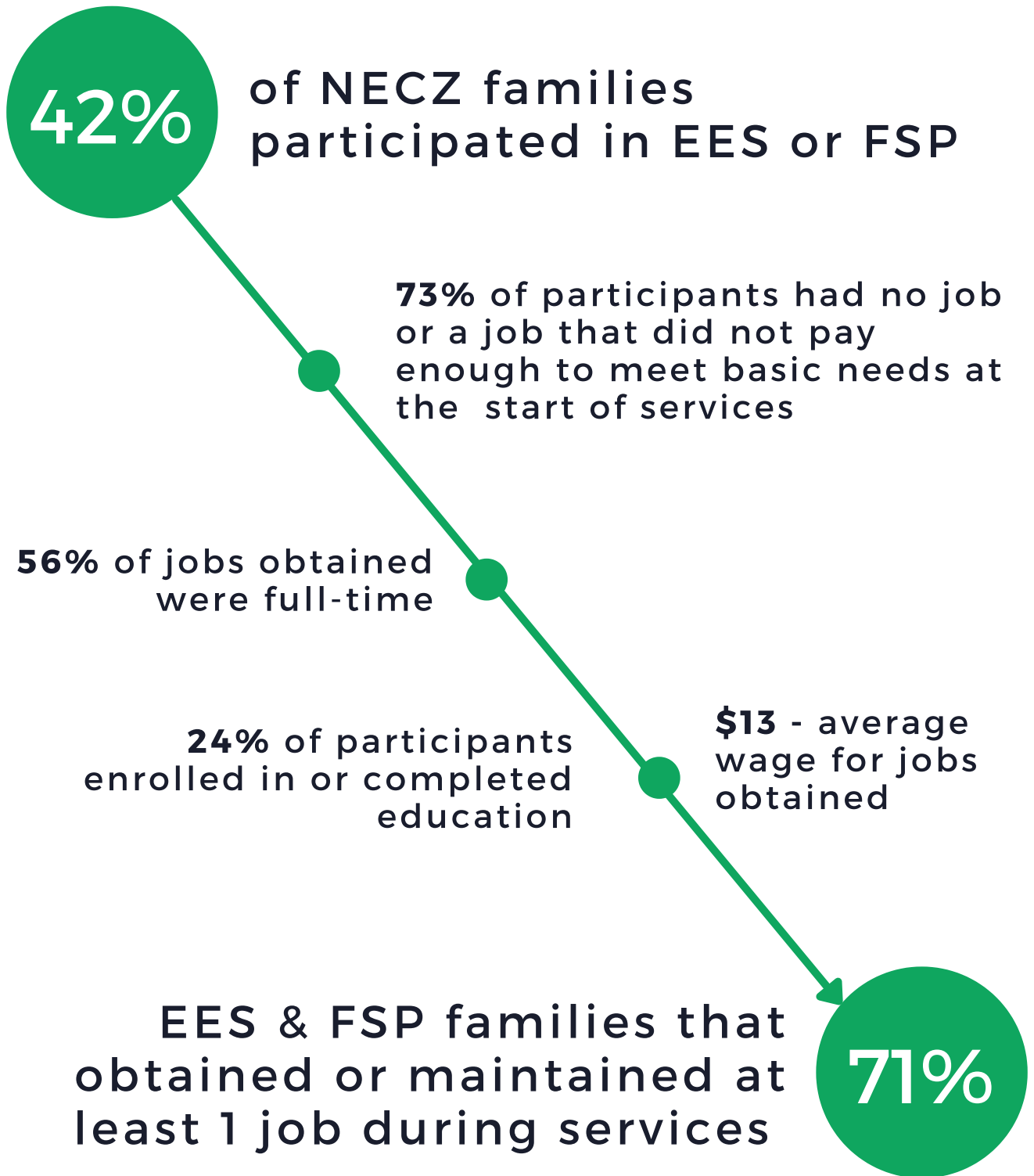
Home visiting staff also assess families using the Family Assessment of Strengths Tool (FAST) to help with case planning and understand families' risk for child maltreatment, with higher scores indicating more risk in each domain assessed. Home visitors began using this tool with families at the end of 2019.

Average FAST scores indicated that neighborhood social support, childcare concerns (for those who needed it), depression, and economic hardship were the domains that families struggled with the most.



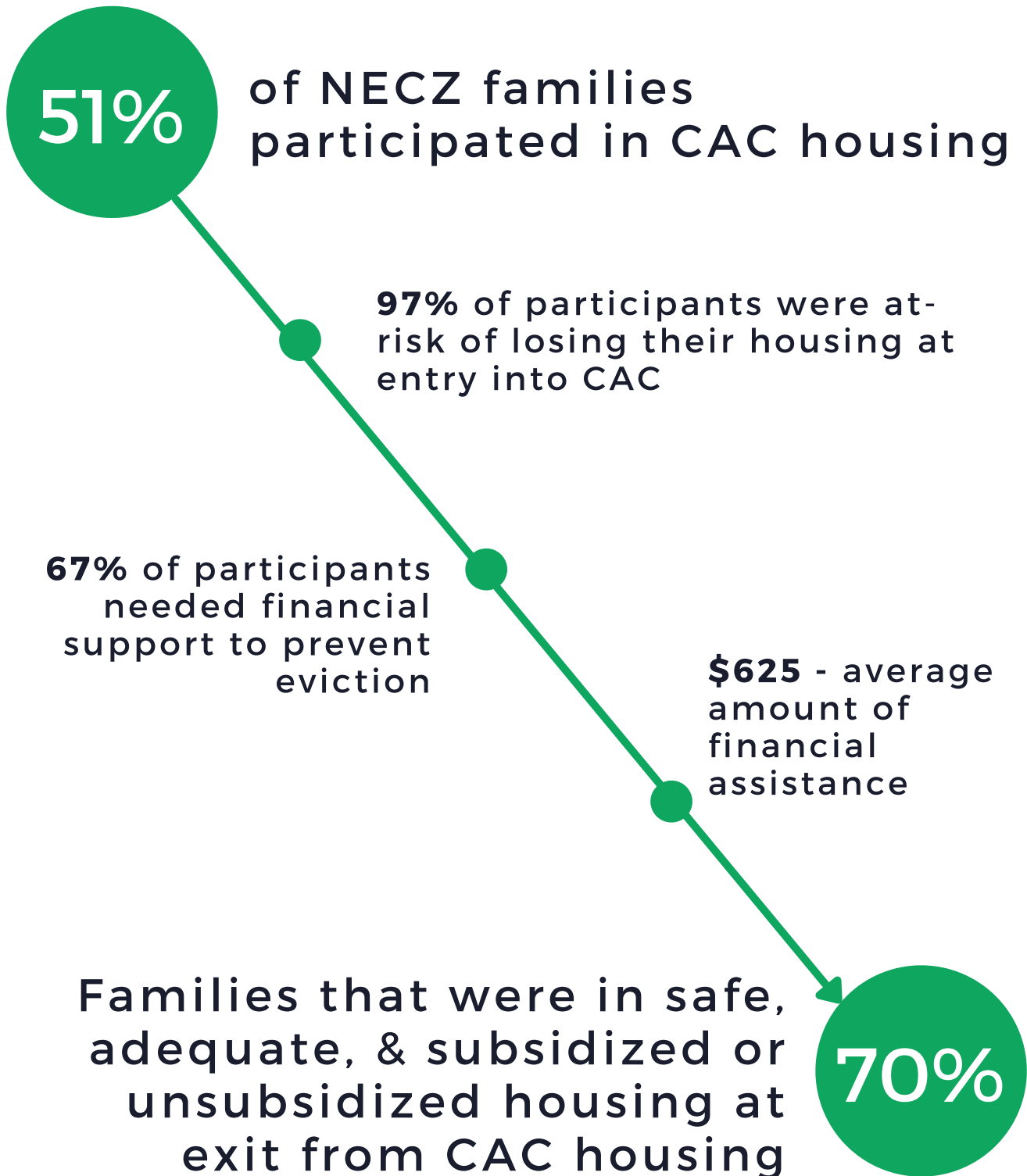
Employment and education services

CHW's EES and FSET's FSP services work with families to increase their work-readiness and ultimately help them start a career.



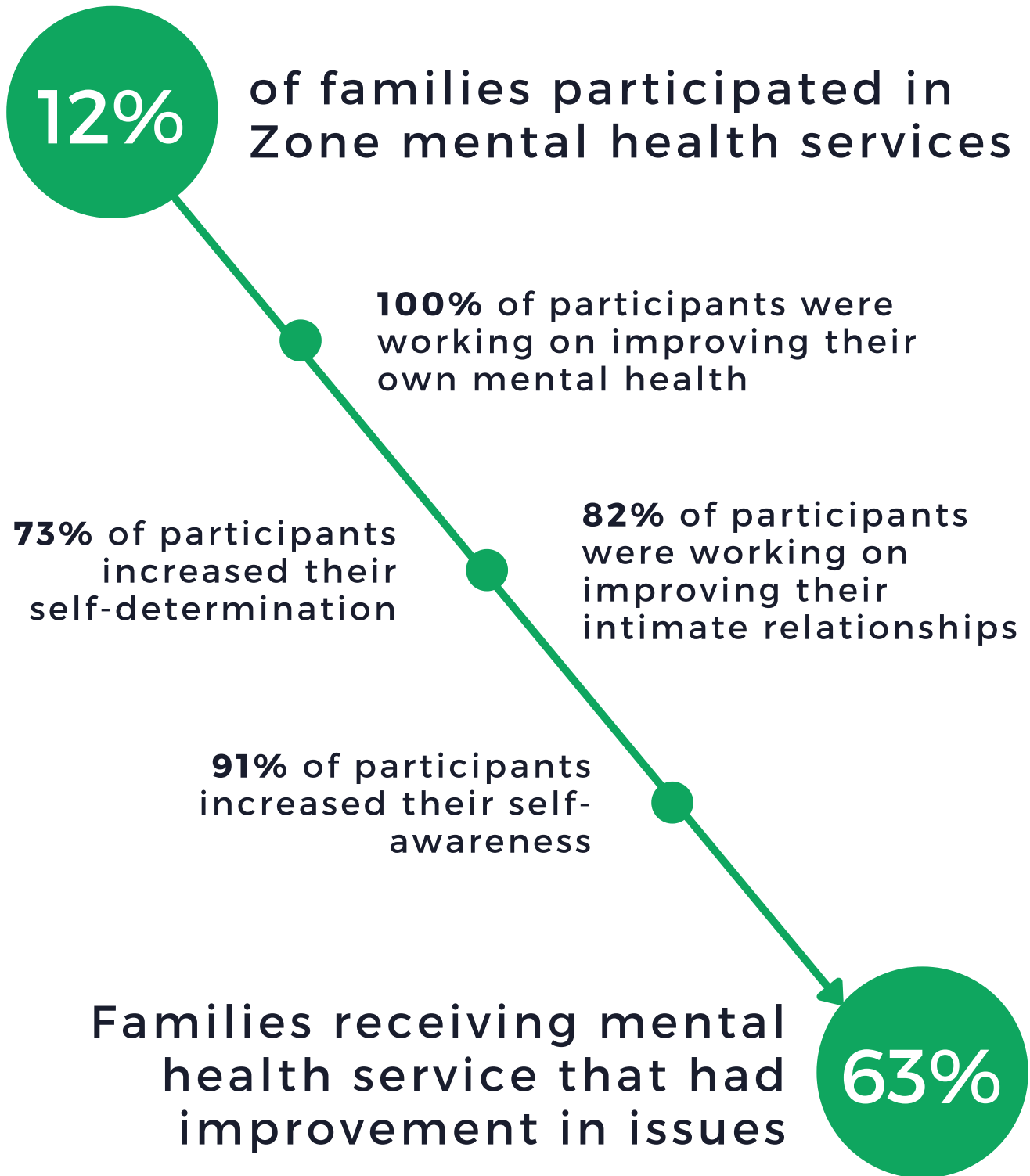
Housing services

CAC provides housing support to families that are at-risk of losing their housing. Services can range from housing search to financial support and even landlord mediation.



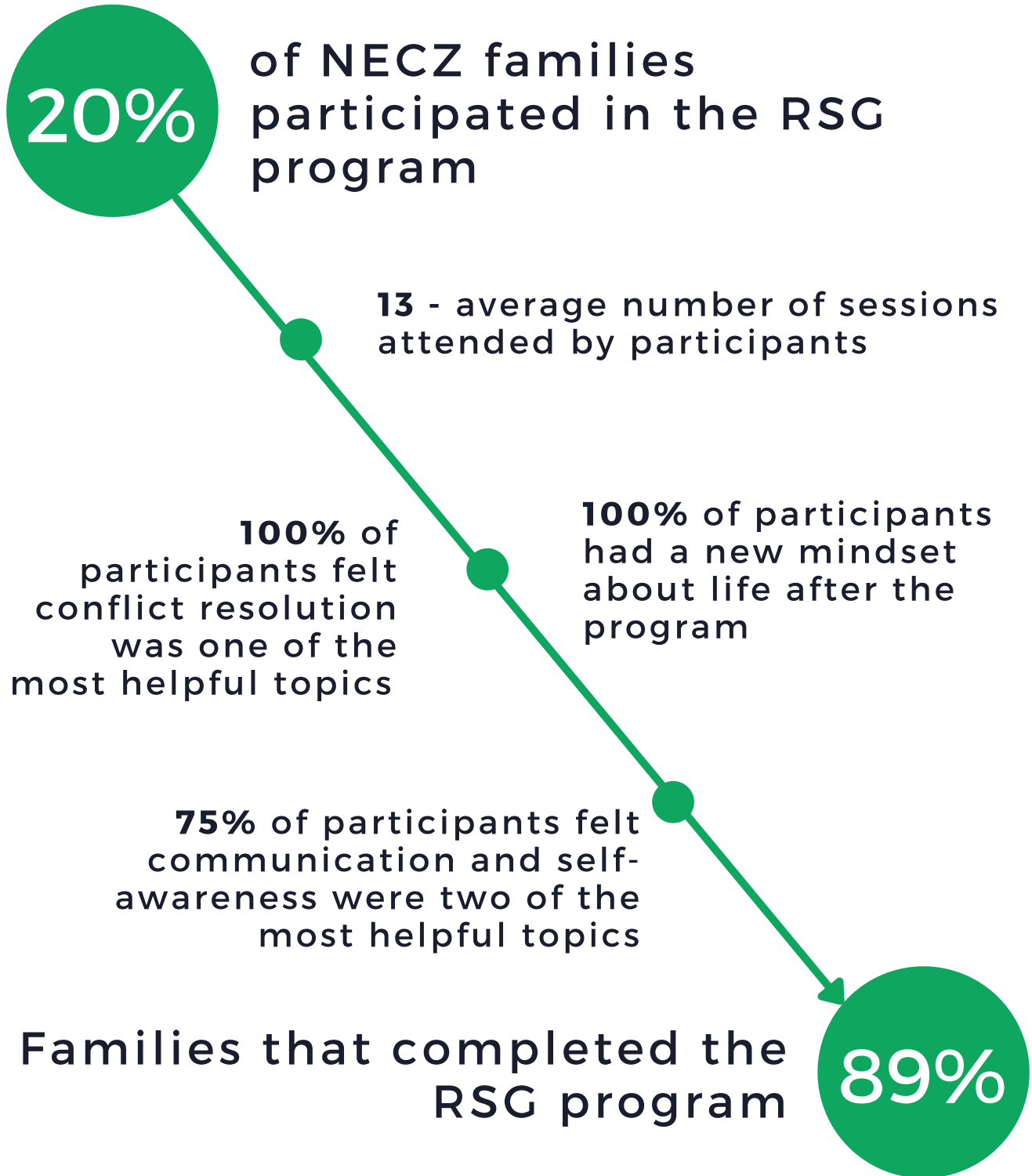
Mental health services

Some families have untreated mental health issues that prevent them from fully engaging with their children or from being work-ready.



Ready, Set, Go!

The program helps participants gain the soft skills needed to be successful in the workplace, including communication, conflict resolution, and self-confidence.



Childcare and general flex funds

Sometimes, a family could use just a little extra monetary support for things like childcare entry costs, paying unpaid balances, or fixing a broken car. These additional funds are available to families with an identified need.

32%

of families received
childcare flex funds

\$311

average amount of childcare
flex funds received

49%

of families received general
flex funds

\$220

average amount of general
flex funds received

CHILD RESILIENCE

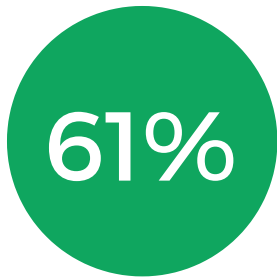
In the face of adversity, children and families are showing positive signs

The well-being of children and their readiness to enter school is at the heart of what the NECZ hopes to achieve with families. There are three core metrics that the NECZ has agreed to collectively track in order to give an indication of children's well-being - developmental screening, the number of days a child has someone read, tell stories, or sing songs to them, and caregiver-child interaction.



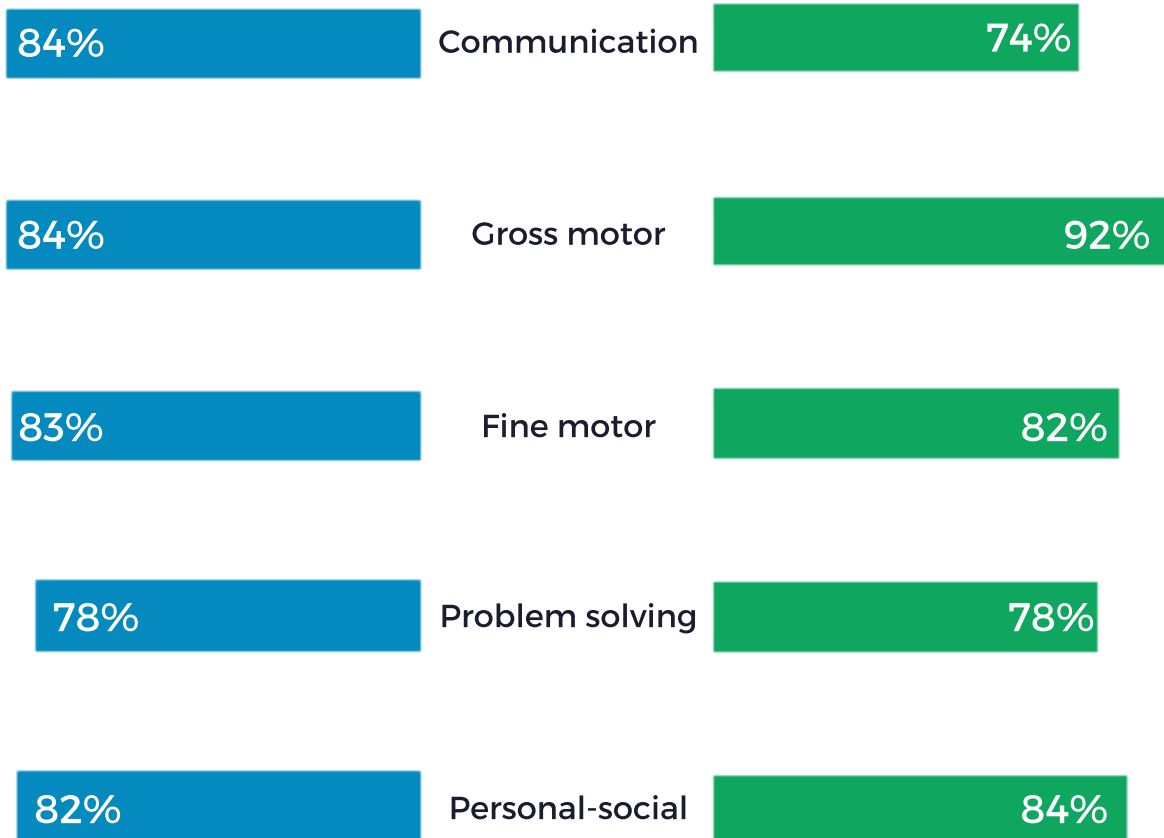
Developmental screening

Developmental screening is designed to look for signs that a child may be delayed in areas of development. The screening allows for early intervention.



of children screened were developmentally on-track in all 5 core areas

The **percent of children on-target** in each of five developmental domains was similar for those screened during **infancy** and those screened during **toddlerhood**.



Literacy activities & caregiver-child interactions

49%

of children had a family member read stories, sing songs, or tell stories to them 5 or more days a week

80%

of families had very good to excellent caregiver-child interactions



NECZ IN 2021

In 2021, the NECZ will continue to work with families with an emphasis on:

- Family support, service coordination, and resource linkage through the COVID-19 pandemic
- Increased use of the FAST tool for more robust tracking of child neglect concerns, to show increases in strengths over time, and to identify child maltreatment risk through a scoring system
- Creation and support of a Parent-Resident Advisory Board



THANK YOU

A special thank you goes out to our families, stakeholders, and funders

NECZ families, past and present

Anesis

Children's Hospital Wisconsin

City of Madison

Community Action Coalition

Dane County Department of Human Services

Forward Service Corporation

Northside Planning Council

Oscar Rennebohm Foundation

The Rainbow Project

Reach Dane

RISE

United Way of Dane County

We also thank the NECZ Leadership Team

Jen Bailey

Connie Bettin

Ron Chance

Sara Flugum

Jenny Grether

Gwen Hannes

Sheryl Kato

Brooke Luebke

Lauren Martin

Katy Petershack

Scott Strong

Abha Thakkar

Nathan Stahl

Nicole Van Abel

DATA NOTES

Data for this report:

- came from the NECZ's shared measurement data system contained within REDCap, which the NECZ started using in the 4th quarter of 2019
- included data from the beginning of 2019 through the end of 2020, although there were some data that went back to 2017 and 2018
- did not include longitudinal analyses of how families' situations or outcomes have changed since the start of their participation because there are not enough families with longitudinal data to make accurate statements about the results
- had slightly higher rates of missing values for the following items:
 - household income
 - childcare subsidy receipt
 - average number of home visits per quarter