

# ***Families First Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2001***

***March 2003***

***PREPARED FOR THE***

***Tennessee Department of Human Services***



***THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK  
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND PUBLIC SERVICE***



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***BY***

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The research documented in this report was funded under an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Human Services, contract # ED-02-00697-00.

Project # 03027

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## ***Executive Summary***

Under contract with the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), the University of Tennessee College of Social Work Office of Research and Public Service (SWORPS) conducted a study to assess customer satisfaction with services provided under the Families First program. Data for this study were collected from telephone interviews administered during June 2001. The telephone interviews were administered to a random sample of 425 current and 365 former Families First customers. The response rates for the current and former customer samples are 64.3% and 75.9%, respectively.

The primary objectives of this study were to identify the components of service delivery most valued by Families First current and former customers, and to assess their satisfaction with service provision by TDHS. Evaluators also sought to identify the factors that correlate most highly with customer satisfaction. The main findings of this study are listed below.

### Important Service Attributes:

- ◆ The service attributes that were most highly valued by current customers pertain to customer interactions with caseworkers: being treated with respect, seeing a caseworker familiar with their situation, and receiving explanations of what is necessary to continue receiving benefits.
- ◆ Rural and urban customers have similar attitudes about the importance of casework staff and support staff dimensions of service delivery. However, urban customers were more likely to place a higher value on procedures than were rural customers.
- ◆ The 2000 and 2001 satisfaction surveys provide similar findings about the relative importance of various service items to customers.

Experience with Service Attributes:

- ◆ The following aspects of service delivery are "well done" (i.e., these aspects of service were important to current customers and expressed levels of satisfaction are high): familiarity with customers, providing information about what is needed to continue receiving benefits, treating customers with respect and in a caring manner, and a polite lobby staff.
- ◆ The following aspects of service delivery are in "need of attention" (i.e., these aspects of service were important to current customers though expressed levels of satisfaction are relatively low): promptly returning customer telephone calls and providing information about services available to Families First customers.
- ◆ Thirty-one percent of current customers reported working with just one caseworker in the past year, while 30% reported working with two, and 39% worked with three or more. Urban customers were much more likely to have worked with three or more caseworkers than were rural customers.
- ◆ Of current customers who called their caseworker between office visits, 56% had their call returned the same day or the next day but 21% reported a caseworker never returned their call. Urban customers were more likely to wait longer or to never have their calls returned than were rural customers.
- ◆ The 2000 and 2001 satisfaction surveys provide similar findings about customer experiences with Families First.

Level of Satisfaction:

- ◆ Most Families First customers expressed high levels of overall satisfaction with caseworkers, with current customers reporting even more positive attitudes compared to former customers (current customers, 88.5%; former customers, 78.6%).
- ◆ Most customers expressed high levels of overall satisfaction with Families First services, with current customers again reporting more positive attitudes compared to former customers (current customers, 89.6%; former customers, 77.3%).
- ◆ Rural customers exhibited greater intensity in their satisfaction with caseworkers and Families First services overall than did urban customers.

- ◆ Current customers expressed a higher level of satisfaction with caseworkers and Families First overall than did former customers.

The 2000 and 2001 satisfaction surveys provide similar findings about overall customer satisfaction with caseworkers.

Determinants of Satisfaction:

- ◆ The most significant determinants of satisfaction with caseworkers pertain to the nature of the interaction between the caseworker and customer. Consistent with the findings reported in academic research on customer satisfaction, the interaction between the caseworker and the customer was the most important determinant of overall satisfaction with Families First services. Caseworkers who treat customers with respect, listen to what they have to say, and provide information about program requirements that must be met to continue receiving benefits were more likely to have highly satisfied customers.



## **Background**

Since September 1996, Families First has assisted poor and low-income residents of Tennessee work towards a lifestyle without government assistance. As a replacement for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Families First requires most customers to work or participate in work-related activities designed to help achieve self-sufficiency. Temporary cash assistance and other short-term transitional services are also provided to assist customers. In contrast to AFDC, the new program limits the time that customers can receive benefits to 18 months at a time, with a lifetime maximum of 60 months.

During the program's existence, the University of Tennessee College of Social Work, Office of Research and Public Services (UT SWORPS), under contract with the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), has performed evaluations to gauge customer satisfaction. In Spring 2000, a telephone survey of Families First customers was conducted along with a written survey of TDHS staff and other service providers.<sup>1</sup> The present study builds on the *Families First Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2000* (Houston, Hadjiharalambous, and Magda, 2000) to further gauge customer satisfaction with the Families First program.

Assessments of customer satisfaction are important tools for the management of all organizations, especially those delivering public services. According to modern management theory the primary goal of any organization is to satisfy its customers. Therefore, any program of organizational reform or quality

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<sup>1</sup> During the first two years of the *Families First* program, customer satisfaction was gauged by self-administered surveys that customers completed during their visits to TDHS. Due to low response rates, a decision was made by TDHS administrative staff and the evaluation team to switch to a different method of collecting customer input. UT SWORPS conducted a telephone survey in the Spring of 1999 to pilot a new data collection process. The 2000 study built on that pilot.

improvement must be based on a thorough understanding of both the expectations of customers and the degree to which the organization is meeting those expectations (Deming, 1982; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry, 1990; Hayes, 1998). In this way, business excellence necessitates being "close to the customer" (Peters and Waterman, 1982).

While customer-focused organizations typically are associated with the private sector, the application of quality management techniques (e.g., Total Quality Management) and the rise of the "reinvention" movement in government have created the impetus to also make public organizations more customer-focused (Krone, 1991; Hyde, 1992; Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). Such a focus was dictated at the Federal level by Executive Order #12862 that was issued by President Clinton on September 11, 1993. This order required federal government agencies to establish customer service standards that are equal to the best in business, and to create and conduct surveys of customer satisfaction. President Clinton saw a focus on customer satisfaction to be the cornerstone upon which a revolution in federal government management would be built (Myers, 1999).

Surveying customers to determine the types of services they want and their level of satisfaction with current services, thus, is an important activity in the creation of customer-focused public service organizations (Van Wart, 1995). Furthermore, surveying customer satisfaction is consistent with basic social work values of respecting customer attitudes and involving customers in the treatment process.

Customer satisfaction is a "self-assessment made by consumers concerning perceptions of how well services have fulfilled their needs" (Sanders et al., 1998:288). It is the degree to which customer expectations about an agency or service are met or exceeded (Rust and Oliver, 1994; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990; Vavra, 1997; Geron, 1998). Conversely, dissatisfaction results when experience with services falls below customer expectations. This is a concept that may provide a different picture of service delivery than do objective organizational measures of performance (e.g., number of cases closed, number of complaints filed). The key challenge that a customer orientation poses for managers and scholars is developing proper measures of customer satisfaction.

A popular strategy developed by marketing scholars in the 1980s employs a dual scaling approach (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, 1988). Because satisfaction is the difference between customer expectations and performance, it is necessary to measure both of these concepts. One variation of this approach is to ask respondents to rate the "importance" of a service attribute and their experience or satisfaction with the attribute. This leads to identifying the "importance-performance gap," or identifying those service

attributes that customers regard as important but do not characterize the actual delivery of the service as experienced by the customer.

The *Families First Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2000* employed a strategy that was initially developed to measure service quality and customer satisfaction in private service industries (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985, 1988). However, public services tend to be delivered in a less competitive environment (i.e., no choice among service providers), have goals that are less tangible, and provide less flexibility in service delivery arrangement (e.g., time limits and service options set by statute). As a result, studies of satisfaction in human service organizations in the public and non-profit sectors have identified dimensions of customer satisfaction that differ from those identified in research on private industry. For instance, the relevance of a service for recipient needs (kind/type of service), the quantity of the service provided, and the outcome of a service are dimensions that have emerged from public and non-profit studies. The following categories of service attributes have been identified as relevant to measuring customer satisfaction in public and non-profit human service organizations (Nguyen, Attkisson, and Stegner 1983; Larsen, Attkisson, Hargreaves and Nguyen 1979):

**Global Satisfaction:** general statement of overall satisfaction with service delivery experiences (e.g., In an overall, general sense, how satisfied are you with the services you received? How satisfied are you with your caseworker?)

**Kind/Type of Service:** relevance of services provided in relation to the needs of the customer (e.g., Considering your particular needs, how appropriate were the kinds of services you received?)

**Quality of Service:** the condition of services and materials customers are provided (e.g., How would you rate the quality of the services you received?)

**Amount, Length, or Quantity of Service:** appropriateness of the amount of services and personnel available to address customer needs (e.g., How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received?)

**Outcome of Service:** impact that services have on customer problems (e.g., Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?)

**Casework Staff:** possession of the competence to deliver the services, and making an effort to know customers and their needs (e.g., How competent and knowledgeable was the person with whom you worked most closely? Does your caseworker act in a caring manner?)

**Support Staff:** politeness, respect, consideration, and friendliness of contact personnel (e.g., When you first came to the office, did the receptionists and secretaries seem friendly and make you feel comfortable?)

**Procedures:** promptness and ease of access that customers experience (e.g., When you first came to the office, were you seen as promptly as you felt necessary? Does the agency give you a call in advance when an appointment needs to be re-scheduled?)

**Physical Surroundings:** appearance and adequacy of physical facilities and equipment (e.g., In general, how satisfied are you with the comfort and attractiveness of our facility?)

The present study of Families First customer satisfaction will employ a measurement strategy based on the above nine dimensions of service gleaned from research in human service organizations while at the same time preserving the wording of core survey items as asked in the 2000 study to facilitate comparisons.

Survey questions were designed to represent each of these dimensions of service. Customer expectations were tapped by questions that asked about the "importance" of individual service attributes. Similarly, agency performance was measured by questions asking Families First customers about their "experience" or "satisfaction" with these service attributes.

Studying customer satisfaction is important to TDHS for several reasons. First, it can lead to more effective and efficient programs. Because satisfied customers are more likely to continue in a program than dissatisfied ones, satisfaction is related to program participation rates (Sanders, Trinh, Sherman, & Banks, 1998). Continued participation is likely to lead to a more effective fulfillment of customer needs. Additionally, customers can provide information about the structure and process of a program that may not be obvious to organizational management and staff. In this way, customer satisfaction studies can provide administrators with useful information that can lead to a more efficient program by bringing it more in line with client needs (Sanders et al., 1998; Tower, 1994; Moore & Kelly, 1996).

Second, customer satisfaction surveys are relatively easy and inexpensive to employ (Williams & Wilkinson, 1995). Third, evaluating customer satisfaction is consistent with a re-occurring theme in social work of respecting customer attitudes and involving them in the treatment process. The right of self-determination is among the most highly regarded values in the social work profession and is included in the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics. This tenet is based on the belief that individuals who have direct experience with a particular life condition possess knowledge beyond that of professionals and that their first-hand



knowledge is useful for addressing these conditions. Furthermore, involving individuals in the treatment process leads to enhanced feelings of customer empowerment over their own lives (Tower, 1994; Geron, 1998) and facilitates moving people toward self-sufficiency, the primary goal of Families First.



## **Objectives**

The present study identifies and explains customer satisfaction with Families First services. To study customer satisfaction, it is important to assess the expectations that service recipients have about a program as well as their perceptions regarding the quality of services they receive. Both current and former customers can provide useful perspectives on satisfaction.

Specifically, this study achieves the following objectives:

- ◆ To assess attitudes held by current and former Families First customers about the expectations of services and the quality of those services provided by TDHS and community stakeholders (partnership agencies).
- ◆ To compare attitudes held by rural and urban Families First customers about the expectations of services and the quality of those services.
- ◆ To compare attitudes held by current (active cases) and former (closed cases) Families First customers about the expectations of services and the quality of those services.
- ◆ To identify customer perceptions about the ways that delivery of Families First services may be improved.
- ◆ To identify the causes of customer satisfaction with Families First services.
- ◆ To provide program administrators with useful information to plan for increased customer satisfaction.



## **Methods**

To assess customer expectations, experiences, and satisfaction with Families First services, telephone surveys were administered to current and former customers. The research methods employed to develop, administer, and analyze the data for this study are discussed below.

## **Survey Construction**

The design of the telephone survey to measure customer satisfaction was developed based on the experience provided by the *Families First Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2000*. The instrument used in the 2000 study was developed through discussions with TDHS administrators and focus groups with Families First customers. The instrument was revised based on the experience gained from the 2000 study, but these revisions were kept to a minimum to facilitate comparison in satisfaction levels across the two studies. For instance, it was found that "promptly returning customer telephone calls" is an aspect of service delivery important to customers, though expressed levels of satisfaction are not high. As a result, several questions were added to the present version of the survey to further explore this issue.

In addition, seven items from the eight-item Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ-8) developed by Larsen, Attkisson, Hargreaves, and Nguyen (1979) have been added to the survey instrument used in this study.<sup>2</sup> The advantage of utilizing questions from the CSQ-8 arises from its development in human service organizations and the fact that it has been

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<sup>2</sup> The following item from the CSQ-8 was omitted from the present survey as it was judged to be less relevant to the *Families First* program: "If you were to seek help again, would you come back to our program?"

demonstrated to be a statistically valid and reliable measure of satisfaction in several service settings.

A draft of the revised instrument was distributed to TDHS administrators for additional comments and suggestions. The result of this process was separate questionnaires designed specifically for two target groups: current customers and former customers (see Appendix A and Appendix B). These surveys have 91 and 86 items, respectively, and were administered through telephone interviews. Approximately a week before the telephone surveys were administered, customers drawn for the sample were sent a letter informing them of the interview. To make the process more convenient, this letter also provided customers the option of initiating the interview by calling a toll free telephone number.

## **Survey Sampling**

The sample of current customers was drawn from the population of active Families First cases. The pool of respondents for this group included all those customers who had visited TDHS offices in April, 2001. With a target of 400 respondents, the sample was obtained using a stratified random sampling design. To account for possible differences between service delivery in rural and urban areas, the sample was stratified by region. Based on administrative reports TDHS provided to SWORPS, it was determined that the current customer sample should be composed of approximately 40% rural and 60% urban residents from across the state. Similarly, the urban subsample was stratified to obtain a proportion of residents from each of the four urban Tennessee counties (Davidson, Hamilton, Shelby, and Knox) to reflect the population of current Families First customers. To encourage participation, a \$5.00 gift card was sent to customers who completed the telephone interview.

The pool of respondents for the former customer sample included those who, by January 2001, had not received any cash benefits for at least five months. It is important to focus on this group of former customers for two reasons. First, their experience with the Families First program is still relatively recent and will produce more valid responses in the effort to measure customer satisfaction than those with cases closed for a longer time period. Second, those who have been off the program for at least five months tend to be a more stable group (i.e., they are "long term" closed cases) than those whose cases were closed more recently.

The former customer sample was chosen in a similar fashion to that of the current customer pool, with a target of 400 respondents stratified by region to represent the proportion of rural and urban residents among the population of

closed cases (55% rural and 45% urban). The urban subsample was further stratified by county to reflect the distribution of the population of closed cases in each of the four urban counties in Tennessee. After completing the telephone interview, respondents were sent a \$5.00 gift card.

## **Data Analysis**

Survey data were analyzed separately for current and former customers. For questions with four or more ordinal response categories (e.g., "extremely unimportant," "very unimportant," "unimportant," "important," "very important," and "extremely important"), responses were collapsed into two categories. The first category is composed of the two most positive responses (e.g., "very important" and "extremely important"). The second category contains the remaining responses to the question (e.g., "extremely unimportant," "very unimportant," "unimportant," and "important"). Collapsing response categories in this manner was done due to the skewed response patterns observed for the survey questions. Typically, very few individuals offered a response that indicates a negative attitude or experience (e.g., "extremely unimportant" or "very unimportant"), a finding that is common in studies of customer satisfaction (Geron, 1998). Therefore, many of the following tables report the percentage of respondents who offered one of the two most positive responses. This approach highlights the trend that underlies the data and simplifies reporting results for the large number of questions that were asked in these surveys. In the few instances where there were a sufficient number of negative responses, the variable is collapsed in a manner that permits an analysis of these attitudes and experiences.

In addition to reporting results for the entire sample, responses were also reported separately for rural and urban residents. To compare the experiences of these two customer groups, two statistical tests were employed. First, for questions where responses were collapsed into two categories, a z-test is used to compare the difference in the proportion of cases offering the reported response to a question. The sign of the z-test can be used to quickly identify whether rural or urban residents were more likely to offer the response reported in the table. Because the responses of rural residents were reported first in each table, a positive value for a z-test indicates that rural residents were more likely to offer the response, while a negative value indicates that it is a response given more often by urban residents.

Second, for questions where three or more categories were reported, a  $\chi^2$  (chi-square) statistic is used to compare the differences in responses between rural and urban residents. Following conventional practice, the value for a test statistic that would occur by chance no more than 5 times out of 100

trials, if there is truly no difference between the groups, is labeled as measuring a statistically significant difference (i.e., probability  $\leq 0.05$  or the 95% confidence interval).

When calculating the test statistics identified above, "not sure" responses were not included. This was done for two reasons. First, only some questions offered individuals the choice of a "not sure" response. Second, even when "not sure" was offered as an option only a few individuals selected it.



## **Results**

The response rate for the combined current and former customer sample was 69.3%, which is strong for social surveys (Babbie 1990). Only 6.9% of all potentially eligible cases that were contacted refused to be interviewed. Instead of analyzing the results of the survey for the entire sample, responses were analyzed separately for the current and former customer samples.

### **Current Customers**

*Sample Characteristics:* A total of 425 current customers participated in the customer satisfaction survey. Of these, 253 or 60% live in urban areas. The overall response rate for the sample was 64.3% with a refusal rate of 4.7%.

The average age of current respondents was 38.5 years. Individuals who were neither high school graduates nor possess a GED account for 48% of the sample, while those with a high school degree (or GED) comprise 36% of the sample. The remaining 16% reported that they had formal education beyond the high school level (i.e., some college or vocational school).<sup>3</sup> Women comprise 98% of the sample respondents.

In terms of racial/ethnic composition, the majority of the current customer sample reported that they were African American (56%). Of the rest of the current customers, 42% reported to be Caucasian and 2% are of another racial/ethnic group. The rural and urban portions of this sample differed significantly in terms of racial/ethnic composition. Urban residents were far

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<sup>3</sup> These demographic characteristics are consistent with population parameters reported for current Families First customers in the 2000 case characteristics study (population parameters: 62.4% urban, average age of caretaker 33.7 years, 55.2% adults with high school diploma or GED) (Fox et al., 2001).

more likely to report that they are African American than were rural residents (76% and 28%, respectively).

Of the 425 current respondents, approximately a quarter (25.7%) had been a customer of Families First 18 months or less and 56% had been Families First customers for more than 4 years by the time of the interview. Most have experienced an interruption in their cash benefits during the period enrolled in Families First (69%), with urban residents being more likely to report an interruption. Over half of those who reported a cash benefit interruption indicated that it was due to no longer being eligible because of income, while 19% indicated their benefits were interrupted as a sanction for non-compliance with program requirements.

*Importance of Service Components:* Among the items in the satisfaction survey, a series of questions address the importance of three service components to current Families First customers: casework staff, support staff, and procedures. These items measure the importance of these service components on a 6-point scale ranging from "extremely unimportant" to "extremely important." Table 1 reports the percent of respondents who considered each service attribute to be either "very important" or "extremely important." While variation exists among responses reported in this table, all 12 of these service attributes were considered to be highly important by a majority of current customers. Ten of these items were highly valued by at least 70% of respondents.

**Table 1. Current Customers—Importance of Service Components  
(Percent Responding "Very" or "Extremely Important")**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	z-test
<b>CASEWORK STAFF</b>				
41. How important is it for you to be able to talk with a caseworker who is familiar with your situation?	83.8%	82.6%	84.6%	-0.54
42. How important is it that your caseworker provides you with information about services available under <i>Families First</i> ?	75.5%	70.9%	78.7%	-1.81
43. How important is it that your caseworker explains what you need to do in order to continue receiving all your benefits?	83.5%	82.6%	84.2%	-0.43
44. How important is it that your caseworker treats you with respect?	93.6%	91.3%	95.3%	-1.58
46. How important is it that your caseworker gives you enough time to talk about your needs when you meet?	72.9%	72.1%	73.5%	-0.32
47. How important is it that your caseworker acts in a caring manner?	76.0%	70.3%	79.8%	-2.21*
48. How important is it that your caseworker asks for your thoughts as you discuss future activities?	57.4%	54.1%	59.7%	-1.14
<b>SUPPORT STAFF</b>				
3. How important is it that the lobby staff at the Department of Human Services is polite?	79.5%	80.8%	78.7%	0.53
<b>PROCEDURES</b>				
1. How important is it that you have a short wait in the lobby when you visit the Department of Human Services?	60.2%	54.1%	64.4%	-2.12*
4. How important is it to be able to see the <i>same</i> caseworker each visit?	71.1%	70.3%	71.5%	-0.27
9. How important is it to be able to get quick referrals to those who can provide services?	72.0%	65.1%	76.7%	-2.6**
12. How important is it to have your calls returned <i>the same day</i> you try to reach someone at TDHS?	77.6%	70.3%	82.6%	-2.9**
N =	425	172	253	

*Note.* The responses categories for these questions are: "extremely unimportant," "very unimportant," "unimportant," "important," "very important," and "extremely important." The z-test is a statistical test used to compare the differences between rural and urban responses to each question.

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

The service attributes that were most highly valued pertain to customer interactions with caseworkers. Customers were most likely to value being treated with respect, seeing a caseworker familiar with their situation, and receiving explanations of what is necessary to continue benefits. Being treated with respect by lobby staff and having calls returned the same day, were the next most important service components. The items that rank the lowest on this list were: being asked for input about future activities, a short

lobby wait, and seeing the same caseworker each visit. Overall, it appears that customers regard how they were treated by caseworkers (i.e., casework staff) as more important than the procedures of TDHS. This can be seen as the three highest ranked items pertain to how caseworkers interact with customers, while three of the four attributes least likely to be perceived as highly important pertain to procedures.

Comparing attitudes of rural and urban customers, both groups have similar expectations about the importance of treatment and support staff dimensions. The only significant difference is that urban residents were more likely to perceive a caring manner by a caseworker as highly important. Expectations about procedures, however, were more likely to elicit different responses. In three of the four items pertaining to the procedures dimension of satisfaction there was a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of rural and urban residents. In each case urban residents were more likely to regard the procedures used by TDHS as more important than rural customers. These differences in attitudes are more pronounced than those reported in the *Families First Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2000*. While in the same direction, the 2000 study indicated that differences in responses between rural and urban customers on these items were not statistically significant.

Additional survey questions reported in Table 2 further explore customer expectations of services. Two questions directly compare the importance of several aspects of interactions with caseworkers. It is clear that being treated with respect is most important for current customers while being asked for input was not highly valued. Rural and urban customers share similar attitudes about the relative importance of these service attributes.

**Table 2. Current Customers—Importance of Service Components**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	$\chi^2$
<b>CASEWORK STAFF</b>				
45. When you meet with your caseworker, what would you rate as MOST important?				
Information about various services available	24.0%	22.7%	24.9%	0.28
Information about program requirements	14.4%	14.5%	14.2%	
Respectful manner	61.6%	62.8%	60.9%	
N =	425	172	253	
49. To sum things up one last time, what would you rate as MOST important?				
Adequate appointment time for scheduled interviews	37.6%	31.4%	41.9%	5.88
Caring manner from caseworker	34.8%	40.7%	30.8%	
Being asked for input	27.5%	27.9%	27.3%	
N =	425	172	253	
<b>PROCEDURES</b>				
2. About how much time is "reasonable" to wait when you visit the Department of Human Services?				
Less than 15 minutes	32.5%	37.2%	29.2%	10.3**
15 minutes to about half an hour	49.4%	51.7%	47.8%	
Half an hour to about an hour	18.1%	11.0%	22.9%	
N =	425	172	253	
5. As a <i>Families First</i> customer, why do you feel it is important to see the same caseworker each visit?				
Efficiency	47.8%	42.2%	51.6%	4.32
Relationship	24.3%	29.2%	20.9%	
Both efficiency and relationship	28.0%	28.6%	27.6%	
N =	379	154	225	

Note. The  $\chi^2$  (chi-square) is a statistical test used to compare the differences between rural and urban responses to each question. For questions 2 and 5, "other" responses were not included in the analysis.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

Regarding the two remaining questions reported in Table 2 that address attitudes about procedures, over 80% of all customers thought it was "reasonable" to wait up to 30 minutes when visiting TDHS. However, urban customers were statistically more likely to view a longer wait as "reasonable" when compared to rural residents. Lastly, of individuals who responded that it was important to see the same caseworker each visit, efficiency was offered as the most common rationale for this preference.

*Experience with TDHS:* Beyond identifying the service attributes that were most highly valued, the survey also assessed current customer experiences with TDHS staff members. Survey participants were asked to respond "yes" or "no" as to whether 12 items characterized their experience with TDHS. The responses to these questions are reported in Table 3.

**Table 3. Current Customers—Experiences with TDHS (Percent Responding Yes")**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	z-test
<b>QUALITY OF SERVICE</b>				
Q38. Has there ever been a mistake or problem with the benefits you are entitled to receive as a <i>Families First</i> customer?	19.6%	13.8%	23.4%	-2.54*
N =	419	167	252	
Q39. Was the problem solved quickly?	47.6%	56.5%	44.1%	1.02
N =	82	23	59	
<b>QUANTITY OF SERVICE</b>				
Q10. Has a caseworker ever made any arrangements for you to get...services available to <i>Families First</i> customers?	64.6%	57.0%	69.8%	-2.7**
N =	424	172	252	
<b>CASEWORK STAFF</b>				
Q51. Do you feel that your caseworker explained things in terms that are easy to understand?	91.3%	94.2%	89.3%	1.86
N =	425	172	253	
Q52. Do you feel that the information you shared with your caseworker remained confidential?	93.8%	97.0%	91.5%	2.44*
N =	400	166	234	
Q53. Did your caseworker ask for your thoughts as you discussed future activities?	56.5%	61.4%	53.2%	1.66
N =	425	166	248	
Q56. Do you feel that your caseworker gave you enough time to talk about all of your needs when you met?	87.5%	91.3%	85.0%	2.03*
N =	425	172	253	
Q58. Do you feel that your caseworker treated you with respect?	91.1%	92.4%	90.1%	0.83
N =	425	172	253	
Q59. Did your caseworker seem to know how to do his/her job?	92.2%	95.3%	90.1%	2.10*
N =	425	172	253	
Q60. Did your caseworker act in a caring manner?	88.5%	92.4%	85.8%	2.21*
N =	425	172	253	
<b>SUPPORT STAFF</b>				
Q8. During your last visit, was the lobby staff at the Department of Human Services polite?	92.3%	96.4%	89.5%	2.85**
N =	416	168	248	
Q14. Thinking back to the <i>last time</i> you called TDHS, was the person who answered the telephone polite?	87.6%	90.6%	85.6%	1.37
N =	314	127	187	

Note. The z-test is a statistical test used to compare the differences between rural and urban responses to each question. For questions 8, 10, 14, 38, 52, and 53, "not sure" responses were not included in the analysis.

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

In terms of quality of service, only 19.6% report ever experiencing a mistake in their benefits. Almost half of those experiencing a mistake (47.6%) indicate that the problem was solved quickly. It should be pointed out that urban customers were more likely than rural residents to report such an error, as almost one-quarter of urban residents responded "yes" to this question compared to only 13.8% of rural residents.

Positive experiences characterize responses to the items pertaining to the casework staff and support staff dimensions. Current customers view their caseworkers as competent, trustworthy, respectful, and caring. Similarly, support staff (e.g., lobby receptionists) are also regarded as courteous. Each of these items is characteristic of the experiences of more than 85% of respondents. The one deviation from this pattern is that only 56.5% of current customers indicate that their caseworker asked for their thoughts when discussing future activities.

Although treatment and support staff dimensions of service delivery generally are positively characterized, rural and urban customers differ in the extent to which they report positive experiences. For all nine of the items under these two dimensions, more rural individuals provided a "yes" response, and five of these differences are statistically significant. Thus, although current customers overwhelmingly characterize treatment and support staff positively, rural customers were more likely to report a positive experience than urban customers.

More pronounced differences between the experiences of rural and urban customers exist on one item related to casework staff and two items pertaining to procedures. First, the majority of current customers (74.3%) report spending "about half an hour" or less with their caseworker on the last office visit. In this case, urban residents (29.5%) were more likely to report longer visits with caseworkers than rural customers (20.1%), a difference that is statistically significant.<sup>4</sup>

Second, in terms of the length of time waiting in the lobby to see their caseworker, 38% percent report waiting "less than 15 minutes" and 29% report waiting "15 minutes to about half an hour." While urban customers generally report longer visits with caseworkers, these respondents also report longer waits. Over half of the rural respondents waited less than 15 minutes (56%) and an additional 27% waited up to 30 minutes. In contrast, of the urban respondents only 26% and 30% respectively report waiting "less than 15 minutes" and "up to 30 minutes." Forty percent of urban respondents

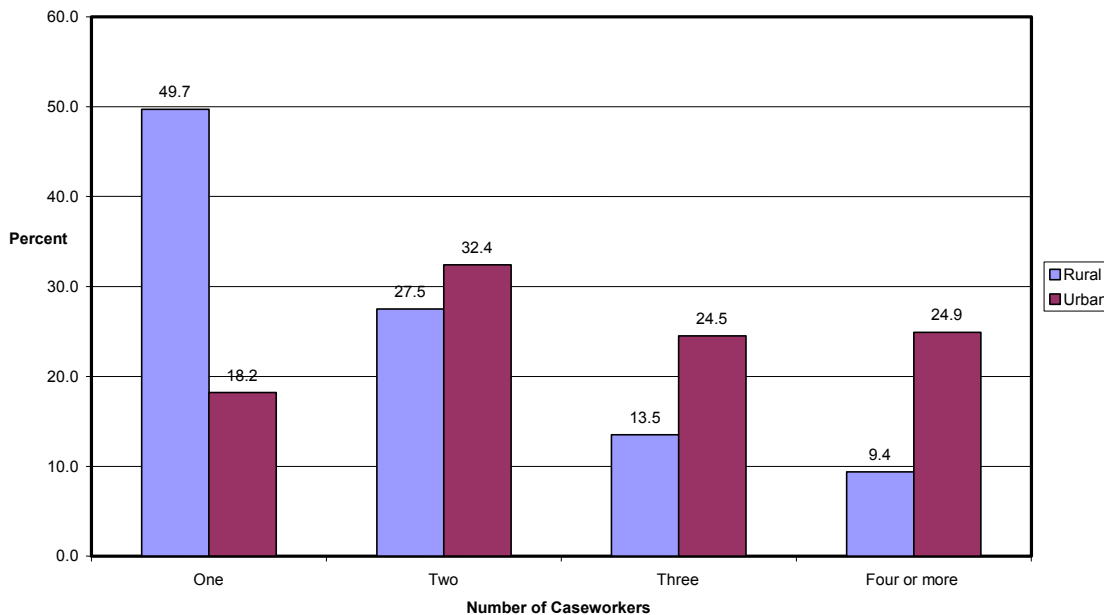
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<sup>4</sup>  $\chi^2 = 8.97$ , statistically significant at the 0.05 level.



reported waiting "half an hour" or more compared to only 16% of rural customers.<sup>5</sup>

Third, the same pattern is evident when considering the number of caseworkers that customers met with during the past year. Overall, 31% of current customers worked with only one caseworker and 30% reported working with two. Seeing three caseworkers during the year was the experience reported by 20% of current customers and the remaining 19% worked with four or more. Figure 1 indicates that the experiences of rural and urban customers were very different in this way.<sup>6</sup> While almost half of rural customers worked with one caseworker during the year, only 18% of urban residents reported such an experience. Additionally, 9% of rural residents saw four or more caseworkers compared to a quarter of urban customers. Clearly, urban customers were more likely to work with several different caseworkers throughout a year in comparison to their rural counterparts.



**Figure 1. Current Customers—Number of Caseworkers Worked with Last Year By Region of Respondent**

A last set of items examined current customer experience with contacting caseworkers between appointments. Difficulty in reaching their caseworkers

<sup>5</sup>  $\chi^2 = 50.4$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

<sup>6</sup>  $\chi^2 = 53.1$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

by telephone was identified as an area of service delivery in "need of attention" in the 2000 satisfaction study. For this reason, additional questions were added to the 2001 satisfaction survey to further explore this aspect of customer experiences. Of all current customers, 79% reported having called a caseworker between appointments. Of these individuals, 42% indicated that their calls were returned that same day while another 14% had their call returned the next day. At the other end of the continuum, 21% of current customers indicated that their caseworker never returned their telephone call.

The experience of rural and urban residents is significantly different on this item.<sup>7</sup> Of rural customers, 55% reported that their call was returned the same day as compared to 34% of urban customers. Similarly, only 13% of rural residents and 25% of urban residents never had their call returned. Thus, while rural and urban residents were equally likely to call their caseworker between visits, urban customers have to wait longer than rural customers to have their calls returned, and were more likely never to speak with their caseworker.

Individuals were also asked if they have ever called their caseworker more than once. Just over half of all current respondents said "yes," but this is more common among urban than rural customers (64% and 33%, respectively). Of these 173 individuals, the most common reason for their last call to a caseworker was to ask a question about benefits (46%). Another 10% requested child care referral and 10% reported a change in earnings.

Lastly, respondents were asked, "Is there a particular time during the month that it is more difficult to reach your caseworker by phone?" Only 56 responded "yes" to this question and of these 54% indicated that it was most difficult to reach their caseworker during the first week of the month.

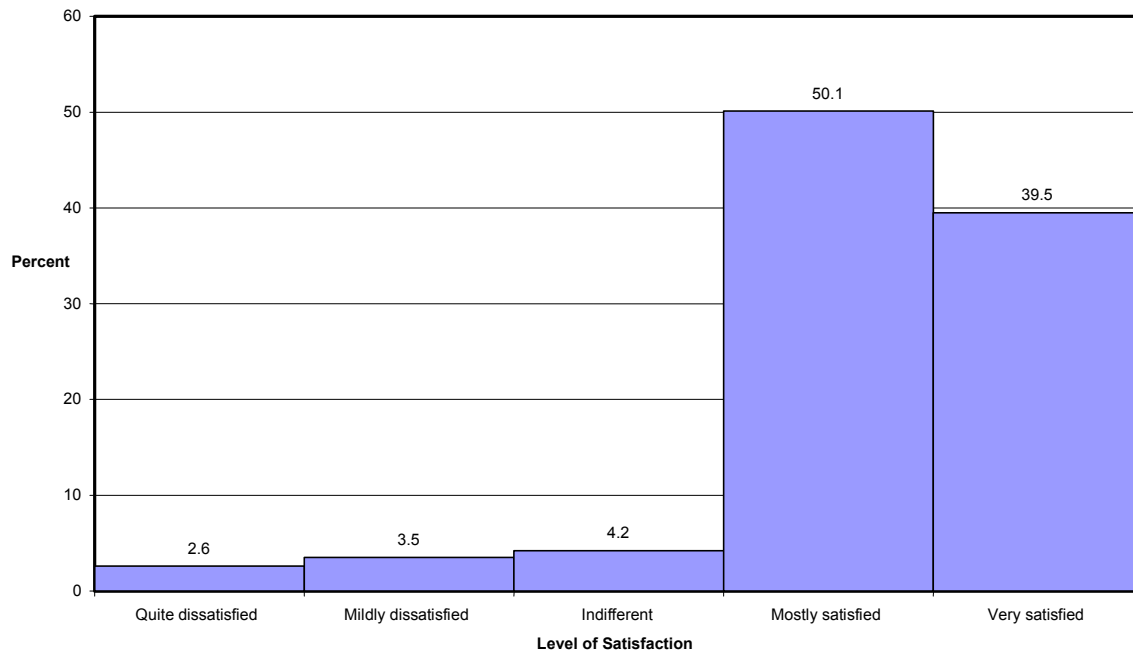
*Satisfaction—General:* The last purpose of the customer satisfaction survey is to assess overall customer satisfaction with TDHS staff and services. Several additional questions were added to the 2001 survey to further explore satisfaction with different components of TDHS services. Tables 4–6 report responses to this assessment of satisfaction questions.

Global satisfaction is the first dimension of satisfaction discussed here. It is represented in the survey by responses to two questions. Figure 2 graphs responses to the first question, "Overall, in a general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received from the Department of Human Services as a Families First customer?" It is clear that current customers generally were satisfied with the services they receive. Of all current customers, 89.6% report being either "mostly satisfied" or "very satisfied." Although the vast majority of both groups indicated they are satisfied, there is a difference in

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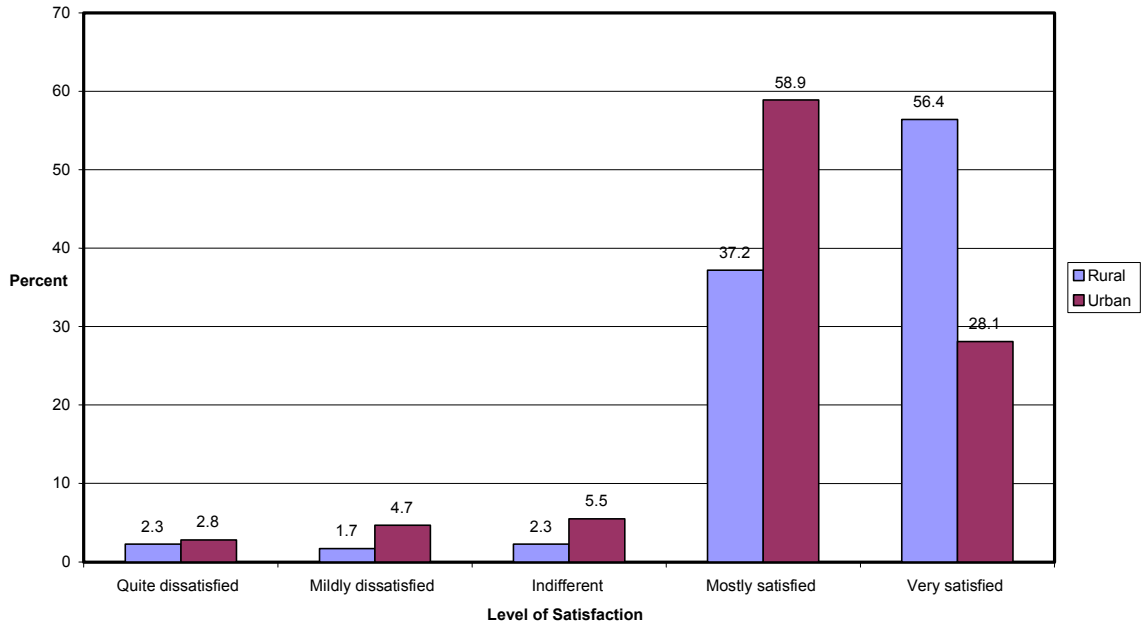
<sup>7</sup>  $\chi^2 = 29.2$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

the level of satisfaction reported.<sup>8</sup> Rural customers were much more likely to report being "very satisfied" than were urban residents (see Figure 3). A second measure of global satisfaction indicates that current customers would recommend Families First to a friend "in need of similar help" (see Table 4). While most rural and most urban customers would make this recommendation, rural customers were more enthusiastic about the helpfulness of Families First.



**Figure 2. Current Customers—Overall Satisfaction with Families First Services**

<sup>8</sup>  $\chi^2 = 35.6$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.



**Figure 3. Current Customers—Overall Satisfaction with Families First Services by Region of Respondent**

**Table 4. Current Customers—Satisfaction with Families First Services**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	$\chi^2$
<b>GLOBAL SATISFACTION</b>				
65. If a friend was in need of similar help, would you recommend the <i>Families First</i> program to him/her?				
No, definitely not	1.4%	0.6%	2.0%	11.6**
No, not really	5.4%	2.9%	7.1%	
Yes, generally	31.3%	25.6%	35.2%	
Yes, definitely	61.9%	70.9%	55.7%	
N =	425	172	253	
<b>TYPE OF SERVICE</b>				
63. Are you getting the kind of service that you want?				
No, definitely not	4.5%	1.2%	6.7%	22.4**
No, not really	10.6%	4.7%	14.6%	
Yes, generally	44.5%	44.8%	44.3%	
Yes, definitely	40.5%	49.4%	34.4%	
N =	425	172	253	
64. To what extent is the <i>Families First</i> program meeting your needs?				
None of my needs have been met	1.6%	0.6%	2.4%	10.5*
Only a few of my needs have been met	16.7%	11.0%	20.6%	
Most of my needs have been met	38.4%	38.4%	38.3%	
Almost all of my needs have been met	43.3%	50.0%	38.7%	
N =	425	172	253	
<b>QUALITY OF SERVICE</b>				
62. Overall, how would you rate the quality of service you receive as a <i>Families First</i> customer?				
Poor	4.5%	2.3%	5.9%	29.2**
Fair	19.5%	15.1%	22.5%	
Good	43.5%	35.5%	49.0%	
Excellent	32.5%	47.1%	22.5%	
N =	425	172	253	

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

A second dimension of satisfaction addresses whether customers are receiving the type of service they desire. The two relevant questions reported in Table 4 indicate that current customers were satisfied with this aspect of Families First services. A total of 85% report they were receiving the kind of services they want. In addition, customers felt that the services they received were meeting "most" or "almost all" of their needs (38.4% and 43.3%, respectively).

Addressing a third dimension of satisfaction, most respondents rate the quality of service they receive as a Families First customer as either "good" or "excellent" (see Table 4). Over three-quarters of respondents offered one of these positive responses. Thus, current customers overall were satisfied with the quality of Families First services.

Additional questions indicate current customers were satisfied with two other dimensions of service delivery. First, Table 5 reports that 45.4% were "mostly satisfied" and 40.2% were "very satisfied" with the amount of service received. Second, 92% indicate that Families First services have helped them deal more effectively with their problems. In fact, nearly 53% of customers responded that the services "helped a great deal."

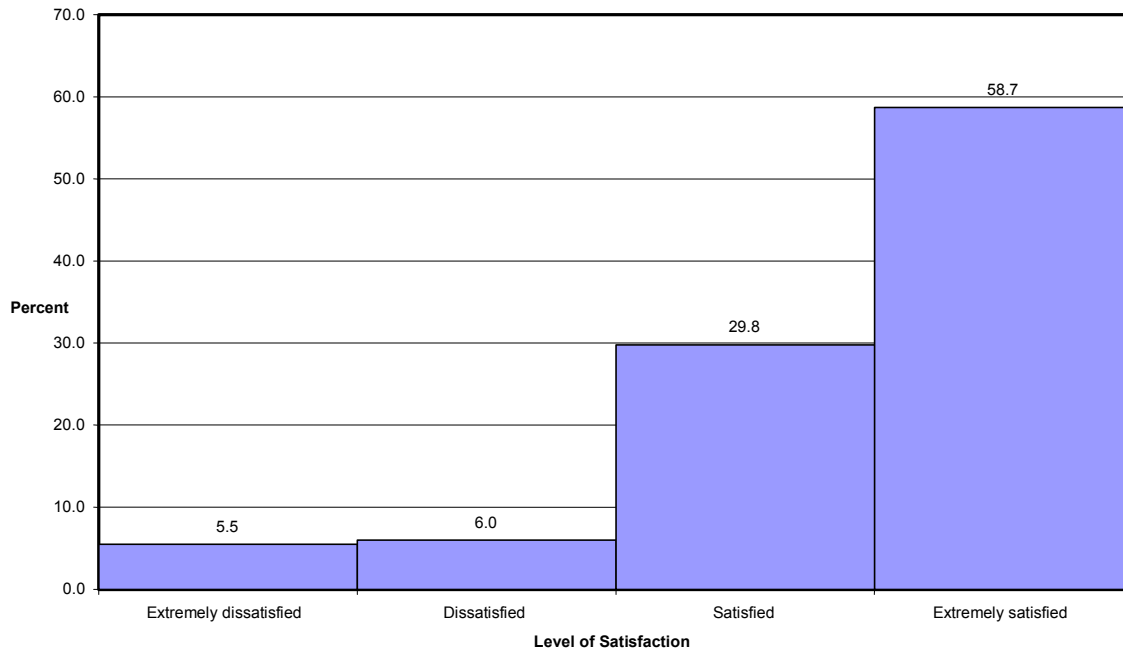
**Table 5. Current Customers—Satisfaction with Families First Services**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	$\chi^2$
<b>AMOUNT OF SERVICE</b>				
66. How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received from TDHS?				
Quite dissatisfied	2.8%	2.3%	3.2%	27.1**
Mildly dissatisfied	5.6%	2.3%	7.9%	
Indifferent	5.9%	4.7%	6.7%	
Mostly satisfied	45.4%	36.0%	51.8%	
Very satisfied	40.2%	54.7%	30.4%	
N =	425	172	253	
<b>OUTCOME OF SERVICE</b>				
67. Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?				
No, they seemed to make things worse	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	13.9**
No, they really did not help	6.4%	4.1%	7.9%	
Yes, they helped somewhat	39.3%	30.8%	45.1%	
Yes, they helped a great deal	52.7%	63.4%	45.5%	
N =	425	172	253	
<b>PROCEDURES</b>				
55. How convenient has it been to schedule an appointment with your caseworker?				
Very inconvenient	7.8%	4.1%	10.3%	16.0**
Somewhat inconvenient	8.9%	5.8%	11.1%	
Somewhat convenient	28.9%	25.0%	31.6%	
Very convenient	54.4%	65.1%	47.0%	
N =	425	172	253	
<b>PHYSICAL SURROUNDING</b>				
21. Are TDHS offices where you meet with your caseworker at a convenient location? (% responding "Yes")	91.1%	94.2%	88.9%	z-test 1.99*
N =	425	172	253	
22. If you were to assign a grade to the appearance of the local office facilities... what grade would you give?				$\chi^2$
F (terrible)	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%	25.8**
D (poor)	4.5%	4.1%	4.7%	
C (fair)	22.4%	11.6%	29.6%	
B (good)	42.4%	43.0%	41.9%	
A (excellent)	30.1%	40.7%	22.9%	
N =	425	172	253	

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

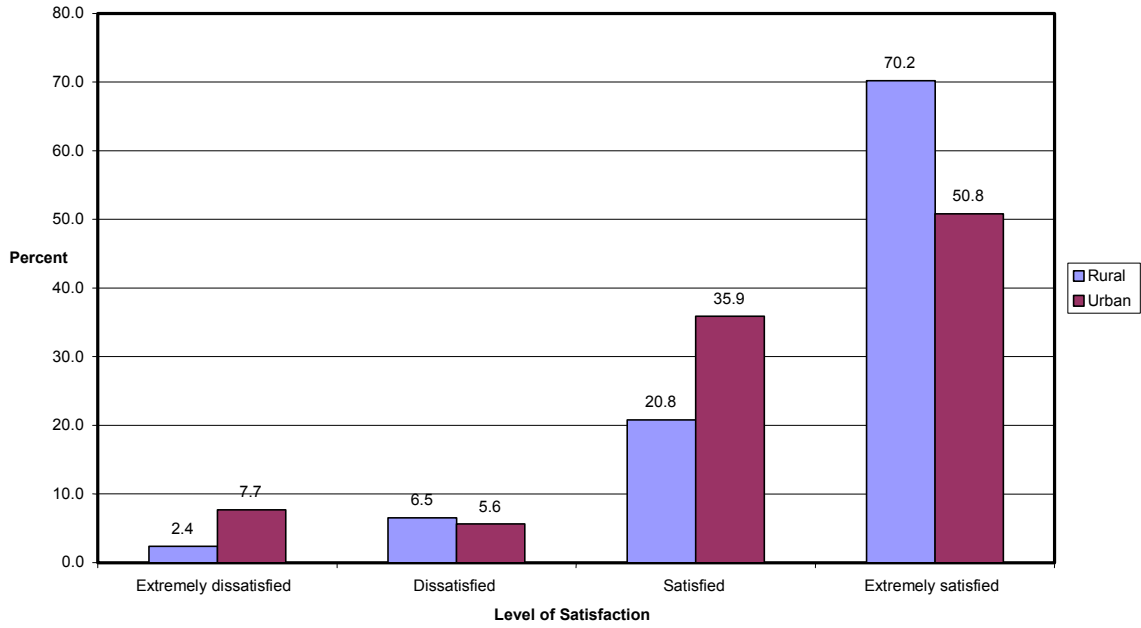
\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

As would be expected based on the experiences reported above, current customers were satisfied with their caseworkers (see Figure 4). Approximately 59% of current customers reported being "extremely satisfied." Once again rural residents were more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction (see Figure 5).<sup>9</sup> Generally, customers are highly satisfied (i.e., "pleased" or "delighted") with the familiarity the caseworker has about their situation and the explanation of what is required to continue receiving benefits (see Table 6). However, customers were less likely to be highly satisfied with the amount of information the caseworker provides about available services.



**Figure 4. Current Customers—Overall Satisfaction with Caseworkers**

<sup>9</sup>  $\chi^2 = 19.2$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.



**Figure 5. Current Customers—Overall Satisfaction with Caseworkers by Region of Respondent**



**Table 6. Current Customers—Satisfaction in Interactions with TDHS (Percent Responding "Pleased" or "Delighted")**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	z-test
<b>QUALITY OF SERVICE</b>				
40. Overall, how satisfied were you with the way TDHS staff handled the correction of your problem?	26.8%	39.1%	22.0%	-1.32
N =	82	23	59	
<b>CASEWORK STAFF</b>				
24. How satisfied are you with the amount of information your caseworker gives you about available services?	47.1%	58.1%	39.5%	3.83**
N =	425	172	253	
50. How satisfied are you that your caseworker seemed to be familiar with your case?	62.6%	69.8%	57.7%	2.59**
N =	425	172	253	
54. How satisfied are you with your caseworker's explanation of what is required so you can continue getting your benefits?	62.4%	72.1%	55.7%	3.54**
N =	425	172	253	
<b>PROCEDURES</b>				
6. How satisfied are you with the length of time you had to wait in the lobby during your <i>last visit</i> to TDHS?	48.5%	61.0%	39.9%	4.37**
N =	425	172	253	
11. How satisfied were you with the timing of the referrals for services the last time your caseworker made one for you?	62.4%	70.4%	58.0%	2.09*
N =	274	98	176	
15. How satisfied were you with the time it took your caseworker to return your call?	40.3%	50.8%	33.5%	3.16**
N =	335	132	203	

*Note.* Response categories to these questions are: "terrible," "unhappy," "mostly dissatisfied," "mostly satisfied," "pleased," and "delighted." Question 40 was asked only to those who reported experiencing a problem.

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

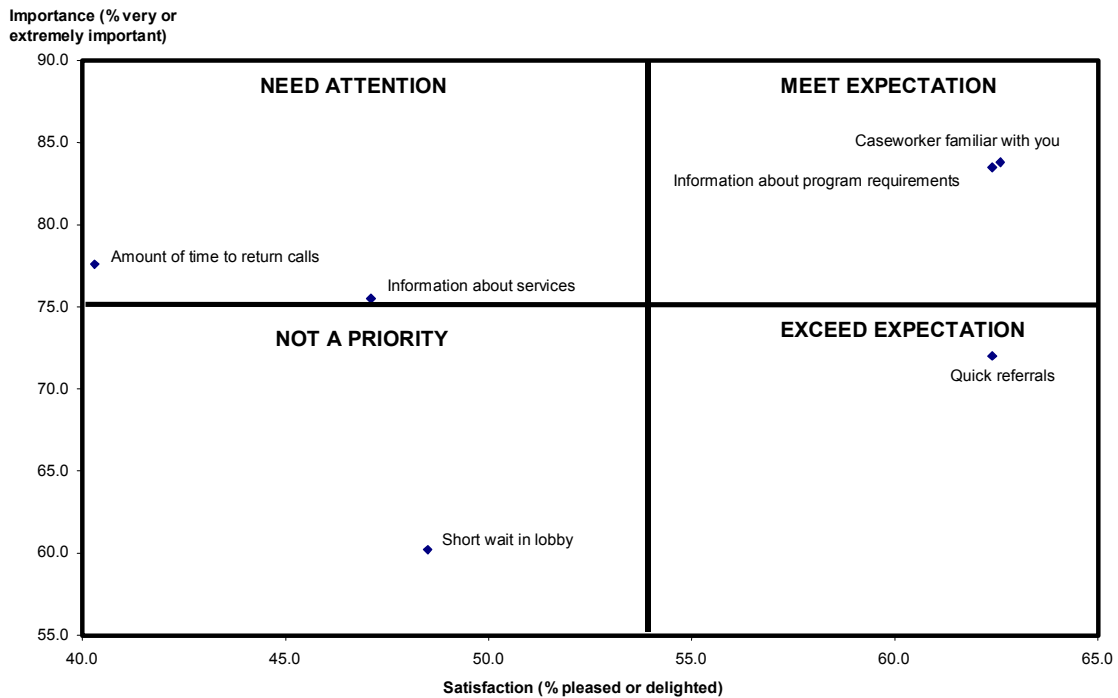
\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

Turning attention to TDHS procedures, current customers generally were satisfied with the convenience of scheduling appointments (see Table 5) and the timing of referrals made by caseworkers (see Table 6). However, current customers were less likely to be satisfied with the length of the wait in the lobby and with the time that it took caseworkers to return their calls (see Table 6). A last pair of items addresses the physical surroundings of TDHS offices. Most consider office locations to be convenient and the appearance of these local facilities to be either good or excellent (see Table 5). Of the items reported in Table 6, the following received “pleased” or “delighted” responses from less than 50% of the respondents: correction of a problem,

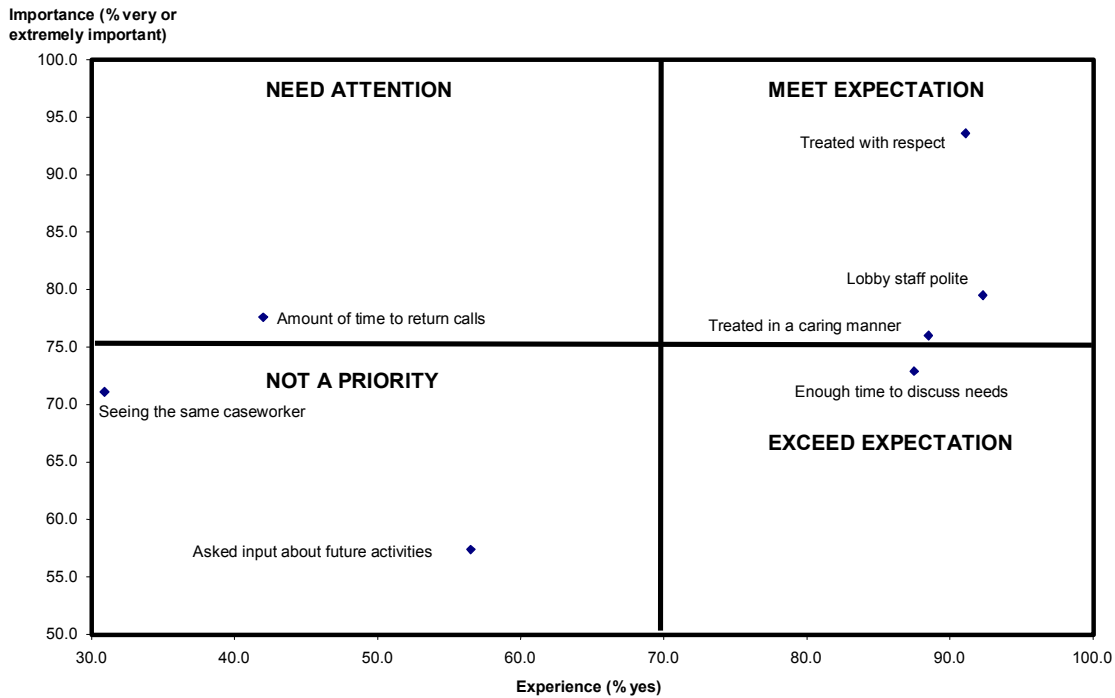
amount of information provided about available services, length of lobby wait, and time it took to have a call returned.

Although current customers generally were satisfied with each dimension of service, there is a difference in the intensity of satisfaction between rural and urban customers. For each satisfaction item in the survey, rural residents were more likely to express high levels of satisfaction than urban residents. All but one of these differences is statistically significant.

To identify where TDHS treatment and support staff are performing well and areas that need improvement, Figure 6 compares six items of service delivery in terms of the importance and satisfaction assigned by survey respondents. The importance and satisfaction customers assign to these items were each measured using six-point scales, which facilitates such a comparison. By plotting the percent of respondents who felt a particular item was "very important" or "extremely important" (see Table 1) against the percent of those who were "pleased" or "delighted" with the same item (see Table 6), it is possible to identify aspects of services that need improvement. In a similar fashion Figure 7 plots the importance of an item by customer experiences as measured by the "yes/no" questions reported above in Table 3. For both figures the quadrants are demarcated by lines representing the average percent of respondents offering a particular response for all the service items plotted.



**Figure 6. Current Customers—Comparing Importance and Satisfaction of Selected Service Items**



**Figure 7. Current Customers—Comparing Importance and Experience of Selected Service Items**

In the upper right quadrant of Figures 6 and 7 are items that current customers rated as important and with which they were the most satisfied. For this reason, this quadrant identifies aspects of service delivery for which TDHS staff "meet expectations" and can be considered "well done." These are:

- ◆ caseworker familiarity with customers,
- ◆ providing information about what is required to continue receiving benefits,
- ◆ caseworkers treating customer with respect,
- ◆ caseworkers acting in a caring manner, and
- ◆ polite lobby staff.

In contrast, the upper left quadrant of these figures identifies areas that current customers rated as relatively important, yet for which customer satisfaction ratings were relatively low. This quadrant is indicative of an "importance-satisfaction gap." These are aspects of service delivery that "need attention" by TDHS treatment and support staff. These are:

- ◆ the amount of time it takes for a caseworker to return a customer's call, and

- ◆ providing information about services available to Families First customers.

The lower right quadrants contain service items that customers rated relatively low on importance, but provide satisfaction ratings that are higher than average. These items are ones on which TDHS performance exceeds customer expectations. Two items fall into this category:

- ◆ providing quick referrals for services, and
- ◆ providing customers enough time to discuss their needs during office visits.

The last quadrant identifies service items that customers rated relatively low in importance and satisfaction. The items that were "not a priority":

- ◆ a short wait in the lobby,
- ◆ seeing the same caseworker on each visit to TDHS offices, and
- ◆ asking customers for input about future activities.

*Satisfaction—Specific Services:* The remainder of the survey assessed current customer satisfaction with specific TDHS services or programs. Table 7 reports responses to questions pertaining to Fresh Start classes. Of the 166 respondents who have participated in these classes, the majority (56.6%) expressed a high level of satisfaction (i.e., "pleased" or "delighted"). However, there is substantial variation in the degree of satisfaction that customers report. Nearly 16% offered a dissatisfied response and an additional 27.7% indicated that they were just "mostly satisfied." As to what they liked about Fresh Start classes, the three most frequent responses were that these classes helped in goal setting, enhancing self-confidence, and being assertive.

**Table 7. Current Customers—Assessment of Specific Programs**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	$\chi^2$
<b>FRESH START CLASSES</b>				
26. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Fresh Start classes you attended?				
Dissatisfied	15.7%	10.8%	18.8%	5.50
Mostly satisfied	27.7%	21.5%	31.7%	
Pleased	34.3%	40.0%	30.7%	
Delighted	22.3%	27.7%	18.8%	
N =	166	65	101	
27. In what specific ways, if any, do you feel that Fresh Start classes helped? (% responding "Yes")				<b>z-test</b>
Classes made me feel better about myself	73.5%	86.2%	65.3%	3.27**
Classes helped me become more assertive with other people	65.1%	73.8%	59.4%	1.97*
Classes taught me how to take care of my personal health	56.0%	63.1%	51.5%	1.49
Classes made me feel better about being a parent	61.4%	70.8%	55.4%	2.05*
Classes helped me set goals for my family and myself	74.7%	80.0%	71.3%	1.44
Classes helped me understand my legal rights	63.3%	72.3%	57.4%	2.01*
Classes taught me to manage my money better	59.6%	63.1%	57.4%	0.74
Classes improved my job skills to get a better job	57.8%	58.4%	57.4%	0.13
Classes provided no useful information	9.6%	9.2%	9.9%	-0.15
N =	166	65	101	
<b>JOB CLUB/JOB SEARCH CLASSES</b>				
29. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Job Club/Job Search classes you attended?				$\chi^2$
Dissatisfied	18.9%	5.9%	26.1%	8.99*
Mostly satisfied	27.3%	33.3%	23.9%	
Pleased	37.1%	43.1%	33.7%	
Delighted	15.6%	17.6%	16.3%	
N =	143	51	92	
30. In what specific ways, if any, do you feel that Job Club/Job Search classes helped? (% responding "Yes")				<b>z-test</b>
Gave me information on jobs I was interested in	63.6%	82.4%	53.3%	3.91**
Gave me information on jobs which matched my skills	60.8%	72.5%	54.3%	2.24*
Helped me complete job applications/write resume	75.5%	88.2%	68.5%	2.97**
Helped me practice job interviewing skills	74.1%	84.3%	68.5%	2.25*
Helped me learn how to dress for success	69.9%	78.4%	65.2%	1.74
Taught me what to expect from a job	72.0%	82.4%	66.3%	2.22*
Helped me get a job	39.9%	45.1%	37.0%	0.94
Taught me how to handle conflicts at work	57.3%	64.7%	53.3%	1.35
Taught me how to handle problems with child care	50.3%	68.6%	40.2%	3.43**
Provided no useful information	14.0%	7.8%	17.4%	-1.76
N =	143	51	92	

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

Attitudes about Job Club/Job Search classes are also reported in Table 7.<sup>10</sup> The level of satisfaction with these classes is slightly lower than it is for Fresh Start classes. Of the 143 current customers who have attended Job Club/Job Search classes, 52.7% expressed a high level of satisfaction (i.e., "pleased" or "delighted"). However, while 22.3% were "delighted" with Fresh Start classes, significantly fewer (15.6%) offered this response in reference to Job Club/Job Search classes. Although nearly one in five offered a dissatisfied response, urban customers were much more likely to be dissatisfied with Job Club/Job Search classes than were rural customers (26% and 6%, respectively). The most common ways that respondents felt these classes helped were: to complete job applications, practice job interviewing skills, learn what to expect from a job, and how to dress for success.

Regarding child care certificates, 36% of the current customers reported that they had used these certificates to cover some of their expenses. Overall, 68% of the 150 customers who have used child care services offered a highly satisfied response (i.e., "pleased" or "delighted"), with more than 30% indicating that they were "delighted" with these services. Conversely, only 7% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with child care services (i.e., "terrible," "unhappy," or "mostly dissatisfied"). Although there is a significant difference in the extent to which urban and rural customers have used child care certificates (42% and 28%, respectively),<sup>11</sup> there is no difference in their satisfaction with child care services. The most common child care arrangements used by current customers were community/church-based and privately operated child care centers (40% and 44%, respectively). The only significant difference in the type of service used is that rural residents were more likely to have a child cared for by a relative (15%) than were urban residents (3%).<sup>12</sup>

Finally, problems securing child care or transportation have led 14% of current customers to turn down or quit a job. The most common child care concerns that caused trouble for a job were: having no place to take children during evening or night hours (n=14) and lack of affordable child care provider (n=11).

Of the 60 customers that reported transportation problems related to a job, the concerns that most often led to turning down or quitting a job were: lack of a reliable car (n=31) and no public transportation in area needed (n=9). Although rural and urban customers report similar experiences with child

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<sup>10</sup> Job Club/Job Search evolved to Employment Career Services (ECS) in July 2001.

Subsequent studies will compare customer experiences across these two models.

<sup>11</sup> z-test = 2.94, statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

<sup>12</sup> z-test = 2.20, statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

care problems, urban respondents were more likely to indicate transportation problems caused such a difficulty (18% and 9%, respectively).<sup>13</sup> This finding is consistent with that reported by Fisher and Weber (2002) who state that “entry-level jobs are increasingly located in the suburbs, often at great distance from welfare recipients in the inner city” (p. 2). Transportation is a significant barrier to employment for inner city residents because they often do not have access to an automobile and must rely on public transportation systems that are not well suited for off-peak commutes.

Of the 15 rural residents reporting such a problem, 6.7% indicated that it was due to no available public transportation and 80% did not have a reliable car. In contrast, of the 45 urban residents reporting this problem, 17.8% indicated that it was due to no available public transportation and 42.2% do not have a reliable car.

*Explaining the Importance of Service Items:* A last focus in the analysis of the current customer satisfaction is to explore the relationship between the importance that respondents assign to different service items and customer experience with these items. To what extent is the importance of a service item related to what customers experience?<sup>14</sup>

For instance, the importance that customers assign to seeing the same caseworker on successive visits to TDHS is unrelated to the actual number of caseworkers that a customer worked with during the past year. Individuals who worked with four or more caseworkers were not more likely than those who worked with just one caseworker to view seeing the same individual as highly important. Instead, it was found that the more positive a customer's experience with the last caseworker they worked with, the more likely they are to want to see the same caseworker on following visits.

Although customers reported that efficiency is a major reason for this desire, specific items that tap customer assessments of the technical aspects of service delivery generally are unrelated to its importance (e.g., explanation of benefits, time spent with customer, knowledge of their job). The only exception to this pattern is that customers who report receiving quick

<sup>13</sup> z-test = 2.82, statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

<sup>14</sup> Bivariate crosstabs were constructed and analyzed to determine whether a statistical relationship exists between the importance of a service item and relevant questions that tap customer experiences with those items in their interactions with TDHS. These crosstabs are not presented in this report. A  $\chi^2$  value that is statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level was used as the criteria to indicate the presence of a statistical relationship between the importance of a service item and customer experiences or satisfaction with that item.

referrals are more likely to view seeing the same caseworker as highly important.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast, it appears that the manner in which a caseworker treats a customer is more closely related to the importance of seeing the same caseworker. Individuals who report that the last caseworker they met with treated them in a caring manner, asked for their thoughts about future activities, or was familiar with their situation, were more likely to view seeing the same caseworker as important. Similarly, current customers who were satisfied overall with their caseworker and with the familiarity the caseworker showed for their situation, were more likely to state that seeing the same caseworker is highly important to them.

Thus, customer experiences do seem to influence the importance of this service attribute. Negative experiences that result from working with several different caseworkers do not make it more important for a customer to work with just one. Instead positive experiences with the last caseworker leave customers feeling it is important to see the same caseworker in the future. Although efficiency was identified above as a significant reason for this attitude, the bivariate analysis suggests that the nature of the relationship between the caseworker and customer was a more important factor.

Among these other items, the only statistically significant relationships between item importance and customer experience were found for: the amount of time a caseworker spent with a customer, the length of lobby wait, and having calls returned the same day. Unlike the pattern observed above, negative experiences were correlated with the increased importance of these service items. First, individuals who felt their caseworker did not spend enough time with them to discuss their needs were more likely to view this item as highly important. Second, a short lobby wait is highly important to those who experienced longer waits on their last visit to TDHS. Third, those who reported that a caseworker took over a week to return a telephone call or did not return their last telephone call were more likely to view this item as highly important.

## **Former Customers**

*Sample Characteristics:* A total of 365 former customers participated in the customer satisfaction survey. Of these, 217 or 59% live in urban areas. The overall response rate for the sample was 75.9%. The 10.2% refusal rate for

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<sup>15</sup> Alternatively, it could be that the questions do not tap the dimension as expected. For instance, efficiency might not be a function of customer perception of caseworker's competence but familiarity with a case instead. Future studies will explore this possibility.



the former customer sample was significantly higher than that reported for the current customer sample.<sup>16</sup>

The average age of former customer respondents was 34.3 years. Individuals who were neither high school graduates nor possess a GED account for 23.8% of the sample, while those with a high school degree (or GED) comprise 44% of the sample. The remaining 16% reported that they had formal education beyond the high school level (i.e., some college or vocational school). Women comprise 96% percent of the sample.

In terms of racial/ethnic composition, the majority of the former customer sample reported that they were African American (57%). Of the rest of these individuals, 43% reported to be Caucasian and 1% were of another racial/ethnic group. The rural and urban portions of this sample differed significantly in terms of racial/ethnic composition. Urban residents were far more likely to report that they are African American than were rural residents (78% and 25%, respectively).

Ninety-seven percent of former Families First customers have children under the age of 18 living with them. Thirty percent of these have only one child, 32% have two, and 35% have three or more children. Regarding their employment status, 58% were currently employed.<sup>17</sup> Of these, 63% worked 40 hours or more per week, 27% worked between 20 and 40 hours; and 10% worked 20 hours or less.

In terms of the length of time they received benefits, over half (55%) were a customer of Families First for 18 months or less, and just over half of these were customers for only 6 months or less. Only 24% of respondents were Families First customers for more than 4 years. However, urban customers reported receiving TDHS assistance for a longer period of time than rural customers.<sup>18</sup>

The sample was diverse regarding the amount of time it had been since an individual had been a customer of Families First. Respondents were most likely to report they had not received any cash benefits for more than 18 months (41%). However, an additional 29.5% reported that it has been about a year since their last cash benefits. Most former customers stopped receiving benefits because they were no longer eligible due to income (67%). The remainder of former customers stopped receiving benefits for the following reasons: requested closure, 12%; child no longer 18 or in the

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<sup>16</sup> The higher response rate for former customers was also unexpected because contact information maintained by TDHS gets outdated as customers move off assistance and traditionally, welfare families are very mobile.

<sup>17</sup> Perkins and Homer (2002) similarly report 57% of former customers employed in an independent study of Families First leavers.

<sup>18</sup>  $\chi^2 = 18.1$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

home, 6.6%; were sanctioned for a lack of compliance, 5%; exhausted their time limit; 1.4%; and other, 8.5%.

Finally, less than a third (29%) experienced an interruption in their cash benefits during the period they were enrolled in Families First, with urban residents being more likely to report an interruption.<sup>19</sup>

*Importance of Seeing the Same Caseworker:* Table 8 reports responses to survey questions that address the perceived importance of working with just one caseworker. Most former customers valued this practice, as 65.5% considered it to be "very important" or "extremely important."

**Table 8. Former Customers—Importance of Seeing the Same Caseworker**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	$\chi^2$
<b>PROCEDURES</b>				
1. How important was it for you to see the <i>same</i> caseworker every time you visited TDHS?				
Unimportant	11.5%	12.8%	10.6%	0.58
Important	23.0%	23.6%	22.6%	
Very important	47.1%	45.9%	47.9%	
Extremely important	18.4%	17.6%	18.9%	
N =	365	148	217	
2. Why did you feel it was important to see the same caseworker from one visit to the next?				
Efficiency	52.4%	48.0%	55.2%	1.67
Relationship	21.0%	23.6%	19.3%	
Both efficiency and relationship	26.6%	28.3%	25.5%	
N =	365	127	192	
70. During the last year you were with <i>Families First</i> , approximately how many caseworkers did you work with?				
One	30.1%	43.9%	20.7%	33.9**
Two	29.3%	31.1%	28.1%	
Three	19.5%	15.5%	22.1%	
Four or more	21.1%	9.5%	29.0%	
N =	365	148	217	

Note. For Question 1 the response categories "extremely unimportant," "very unimportant," and "unimportant" were collapsed to create the category "unimportant."

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

Whereas both the perceptions of increased efficiency and improved relationships are frequently cited reasons for seeing the same caseworker, efficiency was reported as the more common justification by former customers.<sup>20</sup> However, over a fourth of respondents cited both as reasons. As with the current customer sample, efficiency and improved relationships were perceived by some former customers as compatible values.

<sup>19</sup> z-test=-2.28, statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

<sup>20</sup> Interviewers did not read response choices for this question. Instead, interviewers coded responses after hearing respondents' opinions as to why it was important to see the same caseworker.

In terms of their actual experience, however, former customers generally did not see the same caseworker on each visit. Only 30% reported working with only one caseworker during their last year as a Families First customer. About 41% reported working with three or more caseworkers. However, this overall pattern masks the different experiences of the rural and urban subsamples. Rural respondents were much more likely to have worked with only one caseworker in comparison to urban residents (44% to 21%, respectively).<sup>21</sup> Conversely, 10% of rural customers reported working with four or more caseworkers as compared to 29% of urban residents. Thus, although rural and urban customers attached similar value to working with just one caseworker, the experience of these groups differs substantially.

*Experiences with TDHS:* Former customers were also asked questions about their experiences related to the casework staff dimension of satisfaction. Individuals were asked to indicate if an item characterized their experiences "never," "occasionally," "most of the time," or "always." Table 9 reports responses to these questions by collapsing the two most positive categories (i.e., "most of the time" and "always"). Based on these questions, most former customers indicated that typically caseworkers provided adequate time, treated them with respect, and acted in a caring manner. The one item that least characterizes the experience of former customers was "being asked by caseworker for their thoughts about future activities."

**Table 9. Former Customers—Experience with Service Components (Percent Responding "Most of the Time" or "Always")**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	z-test
<b>CASEWORK STAFF</b>				
3. How often do you feel that caseworkers gave you enough time to talk about all your needs when you met?	79.1%	81.8%	77.3%	1.05
N =	364	148	216	
4. How often do you feel that caseworkers treated you with respect?	77.5%	79.7%	75.9%	0.73
N =	364	148	216	
5. How often do you feel caseworkers acted in a caring manner?	69.0%	77.7%	63.0%	8.91**
N =	364	148	216	
6. How often did caseworkers you worked with ask for your thoughts as you discussed future activities?	43.5%	54.8%	35.9%	12.6**
N =	363	146	217	

*Note.* For questions 3, 4, 5, and 6, "not sure" responses were not included in the analysis. Response categories for these questions are "never," "occasionally," "most of the time," "always," and "not sure."

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

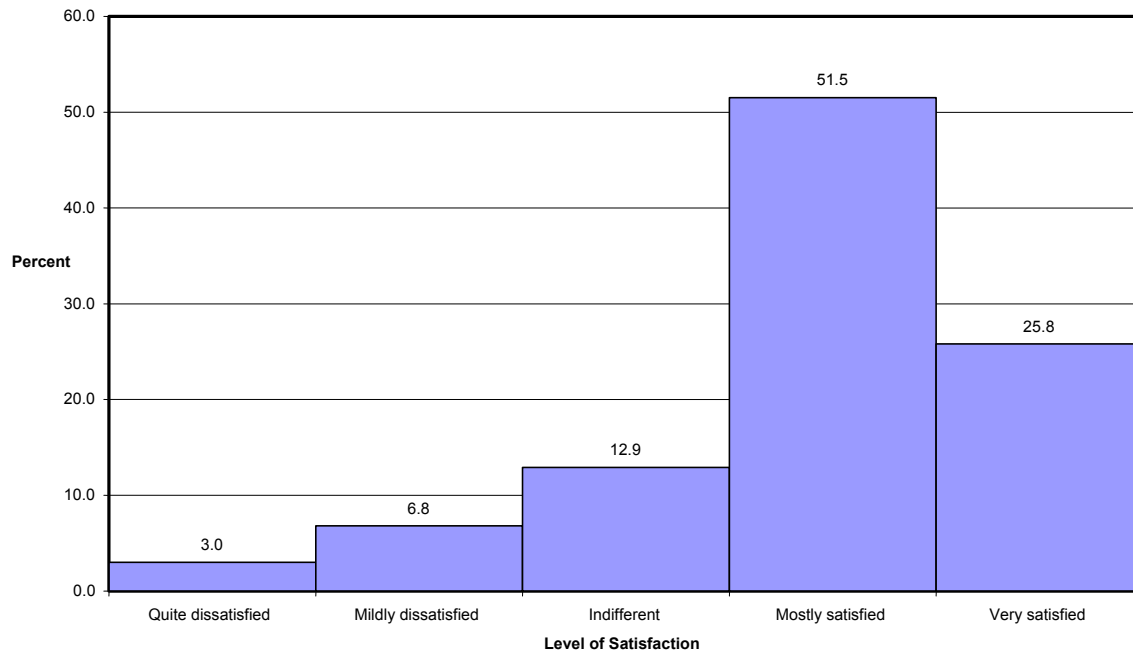
<sup>21</sup>  $\chi^2 = 33.9$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

While rural and urban experiences were comparable on two of these items (time and respect), these groups had different experiences on the other two items. Rural customers were more likely than urban ones to report that their caseworkers "most of the time" or "always" acted in a caring manner or asked for their input, differences that both are statistically significant.

*Satisfaction--General:* The last purpose of the customer satisfaction survey is to assess overall customer satisfaction with TDHS staff and services. Global satisfaction, or a customer's overall satisfaction with Families First services, is the first dimension of satisfaction discussed here. It is represented in the survey by responses to two questions. First, Figure 8 graphs responses to the question: "Overall, in a general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received from the Department of Human Services as a *Families First* customer?" In general, former customers were satisfied with the services they received. Of all former customers, 77.3% reported being either "mostly satisfied" or "very satisfied." Only 9.8% offered one of the two most dissatisfied responses. While a majority of both rural and urban customers indicated satisfaction, there was a statistically significant difference in the level of satisfaction reported. Rural customers were more likely to report being "very satisfied" than were urban residents (37.2% and 18.0%, respectively).<sup>22</sup> A second measure of global satisfaction indicates that former customers would recommend Families First to a friend "in need of similar help" (see Table 10).

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<sup>22</sup>  $\chi^2 = 18.8$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.



**Figure 8. Former Customers—Overall Satisfaction with Families First Services**

**Table 10. Former Customers—Satisfaction with Families First Services**

Question	All	Rural	Urban	z-test
<b>GLOBAL SATISFACTION</b>				
78. If a friend was in need of similar help, would you recommend the <i>Families First</i> program to him/her?				
No, definitely not	5.5%	4.7%	6.0%	3.27
No, not really	5.8%	5.4%	6.0%	
Yes, generally	39.7%	35.1%	42.9%	
Yes, definitely	49.0%	54.7%	45.2%	
N =	365	148	217	
<b>TYPE OF SERVICE</b>				
76. Do you feel that you got the kind of service that you wanted?				
No, definitely not	6.6%	3.4%	8.8%	15.8**
No, not really	17.8%	13.5%	20.7%	
Yes, generally	46.0%	43.2%	47.9%	
Yes, definitely	29.6%	39.9%	22.6%	
N =	365	148	217	
77. To what extent did the <i>Families First</i> program meet your needs?				
None of my needs have been met	1.9%	2.0%	1.8%	18.5**
Only a few of my needs have been met	27.7%	19.6%	33.2%	
Most of my needs have been met	38.6%	34.5%	41.5%	
Almost all of my needs have been met	31.8%	43.9%	23.5%	
N =	365	148	217	
<b>QUALITY OF SERVICE</b>				
75. Overall, how would you rate the quality of service you receive as a <i>Families First</i> customer?				
Poor	7.4%	4.7%	9.2%	39.6**
Fair	35.9%	19.6%	47.0%	
Good	35.9%	43.9%	30.4%	
Excellent	20.8%	31.8%	13.4%	
N =	365	148	217	

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

A second dimension of satisfaction addresses whether customers received the type of service they desired. The two relevant questions reported in Table 10 indicate that former customers were generally satisfied with this aspect of Families First services. A total of 75.5% indicated that they did receive the type of services they wanted (i.e., responding "yes, generally" or "yes, definitely"). In addition, most feel that the services they received met "most" or "almost all" of their needs (38.6% and 31.8%, respectively).

Addressing a third dimension of satisfaction, most former customers rated the quality of the services they received as either "good" or "excellent" (35.9% and 20.8%, respectively). However, a sizable portion of respondents (43.3%) rated services as only "fair" or "poor."

Additional questions indicate that former customers were generally satisfied with two additional dimensions of service delivery. First, Table 11 reports that 49.6% were "mostly satisfied" and 23.3% were "very satisfied" with the amount of service received. Second, 84% indicate that Families First services have helped them deal more effectively with their problems. One third of former customers responded that the services "helped a great deal." However, only a quarter of respondents indicated being a Families First customer helped them to get the kind of job they wanted.

**Table 11. Former Customers—Satisfaction with Families First Services**

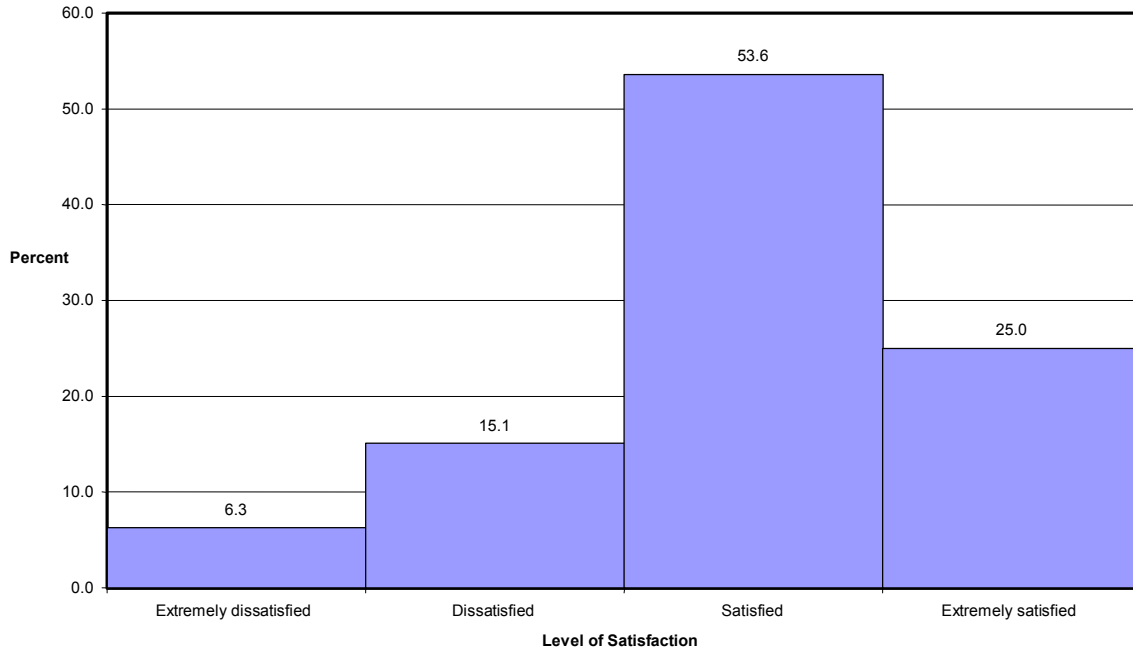
Question	All	Rural	Urban	z-test
<b>AMOUNT OF SERVICE</b>				
79. How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received from TDHS?				
Quite dissatisfied	3.6%	2.0%	4.6%	9.80*
Mildly dissatisfied	7.9%	8.1%	7.8%	
Indifferent	15.6%	16.9%	14.7%	
Mostly satisfied	49.6%	42.6%	54.4%	
Very satisfied	23.3%	30.4%	18.4%	
N =	365	148	217	
<b>OUTCOME OF SERVICE</b>				
80. Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?				
No, they seemed to make things worse	3.3%	3.4%	3.2%	14.2**
No, they really did not help	12.6%	6.8%	16.6%	
Yes, they helped somewhat	50.4%	46.4%	53.0%	
Yes, they helped a great deal	33.7%	43.2%	27.2%	
N =	365	148	217	
60. Do you feel that being a Families First customer helped you to get or find the kind of job you wanted? (% "Yes")	25.6%	25.3%	25.8%	0.01
N =	211	79	132	
<b>CASEWORK STAFF</b>				
7. How satisfied are you with the caseworker's explanation of what was required to continue getting all your benefits?				
Dissatisfied	26.0%	22.3%	28.6%	11.20*
Mostly satisfied	38.9%	33.8%	42.4%	
Pleased	29.3%	34.5%	25.8%	
Delighted	5.8%	9.5%	3.2%	
N =	365	148	217	

Note. For question 7 the response categories "terrible," "unhappy," and "mostly dissatisfied" were collapsed to create the category "dissatisfied."

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

Finally, additional questions tap satisfaction on the casework staff dimension. Consistent with the pattern of responses reported above, most former customers overall were satisfied with their caseworkers (see Figure 9).<sup>23</sup> They were less likely, however, to be highly satisfied ("pleased" or "delighted") with caseworker explanations about what is required to continue receiving benefits (see Table 11).



**Figure 9. Former Customers—Overall Satisfaction with Caseworkers**

When respondents were asked to identify "the one thing that you liked best about working with TDHS caseworkers," 287 individuals offered responses. The most common responses were respect/care (41%), familiarity with my situation (15%), and responsiveness (11%). In contrast, only 79 former customers offered responses when asked for the "one thing that did not work very well" when they met with their caseworkers. Interestingly, for these few individuals respect/care was also the most common response for what they did not like (38%). The small number of responses to this latter question was consistent with the high number of satisfied responses identified above. While both rural and urban customers were likely to report being satisfied

<sup>23</sup> Rural customers are much more likely to report being "extremely satisfied" than are urban customers (37.2% and 16.7%, respectively), a difference that is statistically significant ( $\chi^2=20.5$ , statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level).



with Families First services, the level of satisfaction differs between these groups.

Regardless of service dimension, rural customers were more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction than urban customers. The responses to all items reported in Tables 10 and 11, as well as Figures 6 and 7, exhibit a similar pattern, one that is statistically significant for all but two of these questions. The largest difference in rural and urban attitudes appears in the quality of service dimension, where over 75% of rural respondents rate the overall quality of service to be "good" or "excellent" as compared to only 43.8% of urban respondents.

*Satisfaction—Specific Services:* Forty percent of the former customers surveyed were required to attend Fresh Start classes. Of these individuals, 80% stated they did attend and the vast majority of these (87%) indicated they were satisfied with the classes. In fact, almost half (48%) expressed a high level of satisfaction (either "pleased" or "delighted"). When asked what they got out of these classes, the most frequently cited responses were: enhanced self-confidence (72%), being more assertive (70%), and goal setting (65%). Rural and urban residents expressed similar levels of satisfaction towards these classes. Of the 29 respondents who did not attend Fresh Start classes as required, the most frequently cited reasons were: wanted to go to work (n=12), inconvenient class time (n=6), and inconvenient location (n=3).<sup>24</sup>

Fewer former customers were required to attend Job Club/Job Search classes (33%), with 78% of these indicating that they did attend. Of attendees, 39% expressed a high level of satisfaction (either "pleased" or "delighted") with these classes and an additional 46% were "mostly satisfied." When asked what they got out of the classes, the most common responses were: help completing job applications (70%), how to dress for success (66%), and interviewing skills (65%). Of the 26 respondents who did not attend Job Club/Job Search classes as required, the most frequently cited reasons were: inconvenient class time (n=4) and lack of adequate transportation (n=3).

Additional questions assessed the role that child care and transportation problems posed for gaining employment. Sixty respondents stated they had at one point turned down or quit a job due to child care problems. The primary concerns about child care that caused such a decision were: no child care during evenings or nights (n=24) and lack of affordable child care (n=9).

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<sup>24</sup> Rural residents were statistically more likely to attend Fresh Start classes than urban residents (89% and 74%, respectively) (z-test = 2.41, statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level).

A similar percent of respondents (17% or 61 individuals) stated they had turned down or quit a job due to transportation problems. Of these, the following concerns with transportation were identified: no reliable car (n=34), no public transportation where needed (n=18), and working a shift when buses do not operate (n=9).

### ***Comparison of Rural and Urban Customers***

When comparing rural and urban respondents in both the current and former customer samples, it is apparent that the two subgroups differ demographically only in terms of their racial background. Urban residents were far more likely to be African American than are rural residents.

Similar attitudes were expressed about the importance of casework staff and support staff dimensions of service delivery, but differences appear in the importance assigned to procedures. In general, urban residents were more likely to state that a short lobby wait, quick referrals, and having telephone calls returned the same day are highly important. When asked about what is a reasonable time to wait to see a caseworker, urban customers generally indicated a longer time than did rural customers.

Overall, both rural and urban customers reported that their experiences with TDHS staff were positive. However, positive responses were more likely to be expressed by rural customers. The item that shows the biggest difference between rural and urban customer experiences is the number of caseworkers that a customer worked with during the past year. Urban respondents were much more likely to report working with three or more caseworkers than were rural customers.

In terms of satisfaction, generally both rural and urban customers indicated that they were satisfied with the Families First services they received and their interactions with TDHS staff. However, similar to experiences, rural customers were more likely to express high levels of satisfaction than were urban customers. Thus, the intensity of satisfaction differed between these two groups with rural customers indicating higher levels of satisfaction with Families First services.

### ***Comparison of Current and Former Customers***

Demographically, the current and former customer samples were comparable in terms of gender, area of residence (i.e., rural or urban), and racial background. However, former customer respondents reported higher levels of education and a slightly higher average age.

Due to differences in the current and former customer surveys, it is difficult to directly compare their attitudes toward Families First services. However, some general comments can be made. First, it appears that there is little difference between current and former customers on the importance they assign to seeing the same caseworker on repeated visits to TDHS. Most respondents in both groups regard working with the same caseworker as "very" or "extremely important" and offer efficiency as the primary reason. Each group reported similar experiences as in both samples about 30% reported working with one caseworker, and about 40% reported working with three or more.

Second, both groups of customers shared similar experiences in their interactions with TDHS casework staff. In general, caseworkers were given high marks for their respectful and caring manner, as well as the amount of time spent with customers. Both groups, however, indicated that generally they were not asked for their thoughts when discussing future activities.

Third, while both groups generally were satisfied with Families First services, current customers expressed a higher level of satisfaction than did former customers. This difference can be clearly seen on three satisfaction items. First, 75% of current customers rated the overall quality of Families First services as "good" or "excellent" compared to 57% of former customers. Second, current customers were more likely than former customers to indicate that services they received "helped a great deal" (53% and 34%, respectively). Third, 59% of current customers were "extremely satisfied" with their caseworker compared to only 25% of former customers.

This latter finding is consistent with previous research that has found recent users of services to offer more favorable evaluations (Katz et al., 1975; Poister & Henry, 1994). Individuals who have received program services tend to offer positive assessments of these services and the public servants that provided assistance. But general images held by citizens typically portray public services and those who provide them in a much more negative light (Kahn et al., 1975; Goodsell, 1994). Thus, in time the specific positive experiences are likely to become more distant and the general anti-bureaucratic attitudes that characterize American public opinion will have a larger impact on individual perceptions of public programs and employees.

## ***Understanding the Causes of Customer Satisfaction***

The research literature in human services has focused attention on two categories of variables as important in explaining customer satisfaction. The first category consists of demographic attributes of the customer, such as age,

education, income, gender, and area of residence (urban versus rural). Whereas a correlation at times has been found between satisfaction and customer attributes, the majority of research indicates that customer characteristics are not important determinants of satisfaction (Gaston & Sabourin, 1992; Godley, Fiedler, & Funk, 1998; Grella & Grusky, 1989; Linder-Pelz et al., 1983; Roberts & Attkisson, 1983).

The second category of variables pertains to attributes of the service delivery system and the service provider. The amount and nature of the interaction between the service providers and the customer have been found to be strong predictors of satisfaction. Customers who perceive their caseworkers to be caring, respectful, and take client concerns seriously are likely to have higher levels of satisfaction (Baronet & Gerber, 1997; Glass, 1995). Similarly, when service providers take more time to listen to customers and value customer involvement during service provision, the satisfaction of the customer is further enhanced (Baronet & Gerber, 1997; Glass, 1995; Grella & Grusky, 1989). For instance, in a study of the impact that the mode of service delivery has on satisfaction, Harkness and Hensley (1991) report that the adoption by caseworkers of a client-focused approach to social work resulted in increased levels of satisfaction among customers. Thus, Grella and Grusky (1989) conclude that the interaction with the caseworker is the key variable in explaining these attitudes.

The importance of customer and service provider attributes for explaining satisfaction with Families First is examined in this section. Two levels of satisfaction are studied here: satisfaction with the caseworker and overall satisfaction with Families First services. Separate multivariate analyses are reported for the current and former customer samples.

Responses to the following question were used in the first set of models: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your caseworker?"<sup>25</sup> Individuals responding that they are "extremely satisfied" were assigned a value of "1" while all others were assigned a value of "0."

To measure overall satisfaction with Families First services, responses to the following 4-point items from the CSQ-8 questions were used:

- ◆ How would you rate the quality of the service you received?
- ◆ Did you get the kind of service you wanted?
- ◆ To what extent has our program met your needs?
- ◆ If a friend were in need of similar help, would you recommend our program to him/her?

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<sup>25</sup> Question 61 in the current customer survey and question 8 in the former customer survey.

- ◆ How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received?
- ◆ Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?
- ◆ In an overall, general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received?

Factor analysis was used to combine the above seven items into a single index of overall customer satisfaction.<sup>26</sup> Overall satisfaction scores for current customers ranged from a high of 1.20 to a low of -3.72, with a mean of 0.0 and a skewness value of -1.24. For former customers, overall satisfaction varied between 1.48 and -3.29, with a mean of 0.0 and a skewness of -0.69.

Because of the non-normal shape of each distribution, the resulting satisfaction indices were collapsed into a dichotomous variable using the cutoff value of 0.5. Those individuals with a factor score greater than 0.5 were assigned a value of "1" and all others were assigned a value of "0."<sup>27</sup> This cutoff value was chosen because it resulted in sufficient variation to permit meaningful multivariate analysis and it identified those with high levels of satisfaction as different from all others. For both the current and former customer samples, approximately one-third of respondents were assigned a value of "1."

Thus, the resulting dichotomous variables classify survey respondents as either "overall highly satisfied with Families First services" or "overall not highly satisfied with Families First services." Logistic regression analysis was used to estimate the multivariate models explaining customer satisfaction.<sup>28</sup> Each of the independent variables in the models below are also dichotomous, indicating the presence ("1") or absence ("0") of the attribute or attitude represented by the variable label.

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<sup>26</sup> For both the current and former customer samples, an examination of screen plots and eigenvalues indicated that the seven items loaded on one factor. This single factor accounts for 58% and 62% of total variance, respectively. The resulting indices are internally reliable as indicated by Cronbach alpha's of 0.88 for the current customer sample and 0.90 for the former customer sample.

<sup>27</sup> Several cutoff values were tested for collapsing the satisfaction index. The logistic regression results reported in the tables below did not significantly change when cutoff values other than 0.5 were used for creating the dichotomous dependent variables measuring overall satisfaction with Families First services.

<sup>28</sup> Although factor analysis generates a composite factor score for each observation that can be treated as a continuous variable, in this case a significant negative skew characterizes the distribution of each composite variable. Coupled with the fact that all the independent variables in the estimated models are created from questions with discrete response categories, the assumption of normality at the base of ordinary least squares regression makes this estimation technique inappropriate for the present data. For this reason, the satisfaction indices are collapsed into dichotomous variables and entered as dependent variables in logistic regressions.

The results of the logistic regression analysis explaining a current customer's satisfaction with their caseworker are presented in Table 12. Of all current customer respondents, 58% indicated that they were "extremely satisfied" with their caseworker. The logistic regression results indicate that customer demographic attributes do not contribute much to explaining a customer's satisfaction with their caseworker. Only the coefficient for the region of residence is statistically significant. It indicates that urban customers were half as likely as rural customers to be "extremely satisfied."<sup>29</sup>

**Table 12. Logistic Regression Analysis for Current Customers Overall Satisfaction with Caseworkers**

	Coefficients	Wald $\chi^2$	Odds Ratios
Urban resident	-0.621*	4.234	0.537
White	-0.132	0.196	0.877
Education beyond high school degree	-0.236	0.435	0.790
Caseworker treated you with respect	2.818*	6.123	16.74
Caseworker gave adequate time to discuss needs	2.484**	9.924	11.99
Caseworker asked for input on future activities	0.875**	11.294	2.398
Caseworker explained things in easy to understand way	2.613*	5.678	13.64
Pleased/delighted with caseworker explanation of benefit requirements	0.988**	13.574	2.687
Caseworker knows his/her job	7.978	0.308	2917.0
Constant	-15.751	1.183	---
Sample size	405		
-2 Log L	377.096		
Model $\chi^2$	173.876		
Probability of Model $\chi^2$	0.000		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.349		
Correctly Predicted	77.5%		

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

In contrast, casework staff variables were much more likely to be statistically related to high customer satisfaction. Individuals who respond that their caseworker was respectful were about 17 times more likely to be highly

<sup>29</sup> This finding should be interpreted with caution, as the variables urban resident and white are collinear. The presence of collinearity between these variables may explain why the sign of the variable white is different in this model than the other models reported.

satisfied and those who were given adequate time to discuss their needs were 12 times more likely to be highly satisfied. Earlier it was found that being asked for input on future activities by caseworkers was not among the most important service attributes according to current customers. However, the logistic regression model indicates that this variable is statistically related to satisfaction with a caseworker. Additionally, caseworkers that provide good explanations of services and requirements were more likely to have an extremely satisfied customer than caseworkers who do not. However, satisfaction is not statistically related to customer assessments of a caseworker's overall competence.

The findings for the former customer model reinforce those reported above. Unlike the current customers, only 25% of former customers were "extremely satisfied" with the caseworkers with whom they worked. This is consistent with the results reported earlier that indicate former customers do not express the same high level of satisfaction as current customers. The logistic regression results reported in Table 13 indicate that being treated with respect and in a caring manner, and being asked for input, are statistically related to high satisfaction with caseworkers.<sup>30</sup> Customers that are treated with respect are 12.5 times more likely to be extremely satisfied and a caseworker's caring manner makes a customer 4 times more likely to be highly satisfied. Similar to the current customer model, former customers are more likely (about 4 times) to be extremely satisfied if they are pleased with the caseworker's explanation of program requirements.

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<sup>30</sup> Due to differences in the current and former customer samples, the variables in this model are not identical to the ones in the above model.

**Table 13. Logistic Regression Analysis for Former Customers Overall Satisfaction with Caseworkers**

	Coefficients	Wald $\chi^2$	Odds Ratios
Urban resident	-0.121	0.100	0.886
White	1.027**	7.275	2.793
Education beyond high school degree	0.280	0.575	1.324
Caseworker always treated you with respect	2.529**	13.610	12.543
Caseworker always acted in a caring manner	1.397**	8.598	4.041
Caseworker always asked for your input when discussing future activities	0.787*	5.118	2.197
Caseworker always gave adequate time to discuss your needs	0.147	0.134	1.158
Pleased/delighted with caseworker explanation of benefit requirements	1.303**	15.097	3.679
Constant	-5.417**	48.732	---
Sample size	360		
-2 Log L	232.663		
Model $\chi^2$	172.219		
Probability of Model $\chi^2$	0.000		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.563		
Correctly Predicted	83.9%		

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

Based on the above results, the most significant determinants of customer satisfaction with caseworkers pertain to the nature of the interaction between the caseworker and the customer. Customers who perceive that a caseworker treated them in a positive manner, were more likely to be highly satisfied. The competence of a caseworker was not as important to customer satisfaction. Although good explanations of programs and benefit requirements enhance satisfaction, overall caseworker competence was unrelated to satisfaction in the current customer sample.

The second set of models examines overall satisfaction with Families First services. In these models the dependent variable is whether an individual is highly satisfied or not. Tables 14 and 15 report the results of logistic regressions for the current and former customer samples. Several aspects of customer satisfaction are represented by the variables in these models: casework staff, support staff, procedures, and physical surroundings.



**Table 14. Logistic Regression Analysis for Current Customers Overall Satisfaction with Families First Services**

	Coefficients	Wald $\chi^2$	Odds Ratios
Education beyond high school degree	0.148	0.190	1.160
Families First customer for 48+ months	0.049	0.041	1.050
Extremely satisfied with caseworker	1.429**	28.264	4.175
Lobby staff was polite	0.781	1.925	2.185
Worked with 3+ caseworkers past year	-0.339	1.673	0.713
Very convenient to schedule an appointment	0.710**	7.990	2.034
Waited 30+ minutes to see a caseworker on last visit to DHS	-0.560*	3.954	0.571
Office appearance was excellent	1.034**	17.451	2.812
Constant	-2.730**	18.007	---
Sample size	408		
-2 Log L	432.075		
Model $\chi^2$	107.760		
Probability of Model $\chi^2$	0.000		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.316		
Correctly Predicted	7.3.5%		

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

**Table 15. Logistic Regression Analysis for Former Customers Overall Satisfaction with Families First Services**

	Coefficients	Wald $\chi^2$	Odds Ratios
Urban resident	-0.442	1.975	0.643
White	0.607*	3.864	1.835
Education beyond high school degree	0.049	0.028	1.050
Families First customer 48+ months	0.088	0.076	1.092
Extremely satisfied with your caseworker	2.145**	53.778	8.544
Worked with 3+ caseworkers in last year	-0.745*	6.236	0.475
Constant	-1.246**	13.940	---
Sample size	364		
-2 Log L	346.179		
Model $\chi^2$	106.365		
Probability of Model $\chi^2$	0.000		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.356		
Correctly Predicted	78.8%		

\* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level.

The only variable that was statistically significant in both of these models was satisfaction with the caseworker. For the current customer sample, individuals who were extremely satisfied with their caseworker were more than 4 times as likely to be highly satisfied with Families First services than those who were not extremely satisfied with their caseworker. Similarly, former customers who were extremely satisfied with their caseworkers were over 8 times more likely to be highly satisfied overall than others. Such a finding is consistent with previous research on satisfaction with human services that reports the interaction between the caseworker and the customer as the most important factor explaining these attitudes.

Procedures of TDHS in part explain different levels of overall satisfaction. For current customers, individuals who find it very convenient to schedule an appointment were twice as likely than others to report a high level of satisfaction with services. Also, a longer lobby wait was correlated with a lower level of satisfaction as those who reported waiting 30 minutes or more to see their caseworker on the last visit to TDHS were only about half as likely to be highly satisfied.<sup>31</sup> The only procedural variable that was included in both models is whether the individual reported working with three or more

<sup>31</sup> These questions were not included in the former customer survey so their relationship to satisfaction among these customers could not be tested.

caseworkers during the past year.<sup>32</sup> Working with several caseworkers was unrelated to satisfaction among current customers but does statistically correlate with a lower level of satisfaction among former customers. Lastly, the physical appearance of TDHS offices was statistically related to satisfaction for current customers as those who regarded offices as "excellent" in appearance were almost 3 times more likely than others to be highly satisfied overall.<sup>33</sup>

In contrast, the length of time an individual has been a Families First customer and having polite lobby staff were unrelated to high overall satisfaction. Similarly, demographic attributes do not appear to be important determinants of satisfaction as the statistical significant of these coefficients varies between the two models.<sup>34</sup>

In sum, customer satisfaction with caseworkers was largely a function of their interactions with these TDHS workers and the quality of information about services and program requirements that caseworkers provide. Beyond these items satisfaction with a caseworker does not appear to be related to an individual's demographic attributes nor to a perception of the caseworker's overall competence. As reported in previous research on customer satisfaction in human services, satisfaction with Families First services overall is best explained by customer satisfaction with caseworkers. While the findings are mixed for demographics and procedures, the procedures employed by TDHS in part account for different levels of satisfaction. Thus, high levels of overall satisfaction with Families First services were largely a function of customer interactions with their caseworkers. Caseworkers who are caring, respectful, good listeners, and involve customers in the treatment process, were likely to enhance customer satisfaction with Families First services overall.

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<sup>32</sup> For the former customer survey this question referred to the individual's last year as a Families First customer.

<sup>33</sup> This question was not asked in the former customer survey.

<sup>34</sup> The variables "urban resident" and "white" are not included in the current customer model estimation due to their high correlation with "waited 30+ minutes to see a caseworker on last visit." The descriptive analysis presented earlier indicates that rural customers are predominantly white while urban customers are predominantly African-American. Also, it was reported that urban customers are more likely to report a longer wait to see a caseworker when visiting TDHS than do rural customers. Because the length of the wait in part explains the different experiences of rural and urban customers it is more theoretically interesting than explaining satisfaction as a function of racial or regional attributes, it was included in the current customer model. In general, findings related to the importance of the variables urban resident and white should be interpreted with caution due to the presence of collinearity between these two variables.

## **Comparison of 2000 and 2001 Surveys**

The similarity between the 2000 and 2001 versions of the customer satisfaction survey permits a general comparison of the results from these two surveys. Because observed differences between two studies may be a function of sample variability or other factors, caution must be paid to any general conclusions that are drawn from this comparison. Before any conclusions about changing trends in customer satisfaction can be drawn, attitudes and experiences must be studied at several more points in time.

When comparing the 2000 and 2001 surveys, the similarity in the pattern of responses reported in the two studies is the most striking observation. When considering the importance that current customers assign to aspects of service delivery, in both years the most highly valued items pertain to the casework staff dimension of satisfaction. For instance, respondents in both surveys ranked the following service items as most important: being treated with respect, working with a caseworker familiar with their situation, and being provided information about what is need to continue receiving benefits. Similarly, the three service items ranked lowest in importance in both studies are: a short lobby wait, being asked for input about future activities, and seeing the same caseworker each visit. Apparently individuals do not expect to see the caseworker each time they visit TDHS, but do expect that whomever they see will have an understanding of their particular needs. It can be concluded that in both surveys customers place a higher value on the casework staff dimension of service delivery than they do on the organization's procedures.

The experiences reported by respondents in 2000 and 2001 were also similar. The distributions for overall satisfaction with caseworkers were similar in these two studies, for both the current and former customer samples. The following two trends were also present in each. First, rural customers report more positive experiences and exhibit a higher level of satisfaction than did urban customers. Second, current customers indicated a greater intensity in their satisfaction with caseworkers than did former customers.

Respondents in both studies identify the same service items that were "well done" and "need attention." In the "well done" category for both studies were: providing information needed to satisfy program requirements in order to continue receiving benefits and caseworker familiarity with customers. The service items identified in both studies as in "need of attention" were: promptly returning customer telephone calls and providing information about available services for Families First customers.

A final comparison between the two reports focuses on the factors that most likely influence customer satisfaction. Although the multivariate analysis

presented in the 2000 study is less detailed than that presented above, the message for TDHS caseworkers was the same. Caseworkers who treat customers with respect, listen to what they have to say, and provide information about program requirements that must be met to continue receiving benefits were more likely to have highly satisfied customers. Thus, it was the interaction with the caseworker that was the most important determinant of customer satisfaction.



## ***Study Limitations***

As with any research, several limitations of this study can be identified. First, the concept "customer satisfaction" was measured in slightly different ways within the survey. In some questions it was measured using a 6-point response scale ("terrible," "unhappy," "mostly dissatisfied," "mostly satisfied," "pleased," "delighted") and in other questions it was measured using a 4-point response scale ("extremely dissatisfied," "dissatisfied," "satisfied," "extremely satisfied"). While each set of responses had advantages, the use of different responses in the same survey complicates comparison of attitudes across questions. Second, question wording varies across the surveys used in this study, making it difficult to compare current customer and former customer attitudes.

Third, a basic assumption that underlies many of the questions in these surveys was that customers are able to distinguish between TDHS caseworkers and others whom they may come into contact with while receiving services under Families First. It would be useful for future surveys to either clarify for respondents which service providers were TDHS staff or to ascertain whether customers distinguish between TDHS staff and other service providers. It would also be useful to collect information on customer attitudes and experiences with non-TDHS staff, and to determine whether customer interactions with these individuals influence customer attitudes.

Fourth, because of survey time limitations there was variation in the number of questions contained in the survey measuring the importance, experience, and satisfaction for each of the nine dimensions of customer satisfaction. For instance, there were more questions in the survey pertaining to the casework staff dimension of satisfaction than any other dimension. This limits the ability to conclude which dimensions of satisfaction were least met by Families First programs and where weaknesses in service delivery may exist.

Fifth, only some of the questions in each survey offered the respondents a "not sure" response category. Without this response option, it was possible that individuals would choose one of the given responses to a question even though they did not have an opinion about the issue. However, when it was offered, only a few respondents typically selected the "not sure" response. This suggests the presence of non-attitudes was not a significant issue for this study.

Sixth, customer attitudes were surveyed but not service provider attitudes. It is also useful to study service provider perceptions of customer satisfaction. "Dialogue between service providers and evaluators about customers' perceptions can provide a wealth of information concerning potential causes of service quality shortfalls" (Zeithaml et al., 1990). When service providers possess an inaccurate understanding of what customers expect and what really matters to them, the result is likely to be program performance that does not meet customer expectations. While not a part of the present study, service provider attitudes have been examined in a previous report (Houston, Hadjiharalambous, and Magda, 2000). Additionally, staff perceptions about the adequacy of transitional services are addressed in another evaluation report (Houston and Hadjiharalambous, 2002).

Seventh, the reliance on closed-ended questions as the primary means of measuring attitudes in these surveys may generate more positive responses than would be the case with the use of open-ended questions (Godley, Fiedler, & Funk, 1998; Perreault & Leichner, 1993). However, it would be unfeasible to rely primarily on open-ended questions, because these are much more difficult to answer and analyze. For this reason, one open-ended question is used to solicit respondent attitudes in each of the customer surveys.



## **Conclusion**

Customer satisfaction refers to the degree to which customer expectations about an agency or service is met or exceeded. It is a concept that may provide a different picture of service delivery than do objective organizational measures of performance. Satisfaction is important to study for three reasons: it can lead to more efficient and effective programs; it is relatively easy and inexpensive to assess; and it is consistent with basic social work values of respecting customer attitudes and involving them in the treatment process.

The results of the customer telephone interviews indicate that being treated with respect, seeing a caseworker familiar with their situation, and receiving explanations of what is needed to continue receiving benefits are among the most valued components of service delivery. Customers generally value the casework staff dimension of services more highly than other dimensions. Furthermore, current and former Families First customers were generally pleased with the quality of their interactions with TDHS. More than 75% of each group expressed overall satisfaction with caseworkers, although current customers were more likely to indicate that they were "extremely satisfied." Additionally, customers report being satisfied overall with Families First services. Once again, current customers were more likely to indicate a higher level of satisfaction than former customers.

However, the following aspects of service delivery "need attention": promptly returning customer telephone calls and providing information about services available to Families First customers. While respondents indicate that having telephone calls returned quickly is important to them, they are not satisfied with time it takes for a caseworker to respond.

The comparison of rural and urban customers revealed that they have similar attitudes about the importance of casework staff and support staff dimensions of service delivery. In contrast, urban customers were more likely to place a higher value on procedures than are rural customers. Furthermore, while both rural and urban customers generally were satisfied with their caseworkers and services overall, rural customers exhibited a greater intensity in their satisfaction than did urban customers.

Finally, a multivariate analysis was performed to identify service delivery items that correlate with overall satisfaction with caseworkers and Families First services. The most significant determinants of satisfaction with caseworkers pertain to the nature of the interactions between the caseworker and the customers. Caseworkers who treat their customers with respect, provide adequate time for customers to discuss their needs, and ask customers for input when discussing future activities are more likely to have highly satisfied customers. Additionally, consistent with the findings reported in academic research on customer satisfaction, the interaction between the caseworker and the customer was the most important predictor of overall satisfaction with Families First services.

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## ***Appendix A***

### ***Current Customer Survey***





***FAMILIES FIRST* CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY  
(Current Customers Only)**

**INTERVIEWER:** READ THE FOLLOWING: “Hello, may I speak with [RESPONDENT’S NAME]? My name is [YOUR FIRST NAME] and I am a staff member at the University of Tennessee’s College of Social Work.”

- 1       RESPONDENT NOT AVAILABLE [**PROBE:** “When would be a good time to call back to talk with [RESPONDENT’S NAME]?”  
**RECORD CALL BACK ON LOG SHEET]**
- 2       RESPONDENT AVAILABLE

“A week ago we sent you a letter saying that we would be calling to talk to you about your experiences with the Department of Human Services and the services it provides. Do you remember receiving this letter?”

- 1       YES    [READ INTRO “B”]
- 2       NO     [**PROBE:** “The letter offers a \$5 Wal-Mart gift certificate for completing this interview. The letter came in a University of Tennessee envelope. Do you remember receiving such a letter?”]
- 1       YES    [READ INTRO “B”]
- 2       NO    [**READ INTRO “A”]**
- 3       NOT SURE   [READ INTRO “A”]

**INTRO A:**

“The letter explained that we are doing a study of *Families First* services across the state of Tennessee. The Department of Human Services has given us your name as a *Families First* customer who recently had an appointment. We’d like to ask you about your experiences with services from the Department of Human Services. The interview will last about 15 minutes. It is very important that we hear your opinions so we can make better recommendations on how to improve services for all *Families First* customers. Your answers will be confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers you give. Also, your participation will not affect your benefits. After the interview is completed, we will send you a \$5 gift certificate for Wal-Mart to thank you for your time.”

First, I’d like to confirm that you are currently receiving benefits from the Department of Human Services” [**INTERVIEWER: READ CHOICES]**

- 1       CASH ASSISTANCE ONLY       [BEGIN SURVEY]
- 2       BOTH CASH AND SERVICES     [BEGIN SURVEY]
- 3       SERVICES ONLY (NON-CASH)   [**POLITELY TERMINATE INTERVIEW**
- 4       NO     [**POLITELY TERMINATE INTERVIEW BY SAYING:**  
“I apologize for bothering you this evening. For this study we are supposed to contact only *Families First* customers who are currently receiving benefits from the Department of Human Services.” **PLEASE NOTE “NOT ELIGIBLE” IN YOUR LOG]**

**INTRO B:**

“Good! As we mentioned in the letter, we’re doing a study of *Families First* services in the state of Tennessee. The Department of Human Services has given us your name as a *Families First* customer who recently had an appointment. We’d like to ask you about your experiences with services from the Department of Human Services. The interview will last about 15 minutes. It is very important that we hear your opinions so we can make better recommendations on how to improve services for all *Families*

*First* customers. Your answers will be confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers you give. Also, your participation will not affect your benefits. After the interview is completed, we will send you a \$5 gift certificate for Wal-Mart to thank you for your time.”

“First, I’d like to confirm that you are currently receiving benefits from the Department of Human Services.” [INTERVIEWER: READ CHOICE]

- 1 CASH ASSISTANCE ONLY [BEGIN SURVEY]
- 2 BOTH CASH AND SERVICES [BEGIN SURVEY]
- 3 SERVICES ONLY (NON-CASH) [POLITELY TERMINATE INTERVIEW]
- 4 NO [POLITELY TERMINATE INTERVIEW BY SAYING:  
“I apologize for bothering you this evening. For this study we are supposed to contact only *Families First* customers who are currently receiving benefits from the Department of Human Services.” PLEASE NOTE  
“NOT ELIGIBLE” IN YOUR LOG]

## SECTION I

“To begin, I’d like to ask you some questions about what you think is most important for customer service. Different people value different things, so keep in mind that there is no right or wrong answer. We are just asking for your opinions. When answering the questions about your caseworker, please keep in mind this is the person you meet with at the Department of Human Services for re-determination or to discuss your benefits”.

1. “How important is it that you have a short wait in the lobby when you visit the Department of Human Services?” [READ CHOICES]
  - 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
2. “About how much time is “reasonable” to wait when you visit the Department of Human Services?” [READ CHOICES]
  - 1 LESS THAN 15 MINUTES
  - 2 15 MINUTES TO ABOUT HALF AN HOUR
  - 3 HALF AN HOUR TO ABOUT AN HOUR
  - 4 ABOUT TWO HOURS
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
3. “How important is it that the lobby staff at the Department of Human Services is polite?” [READ CHOICES]
  - 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

4. "How important is it to be able to see the *same* caseworker, for re-determining or discussing your benefits, from one visit to the next?"
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT [SKIP TO QUESTION 6]
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT [SKIP TO QUESTION 6]
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT [SKIP TO QUESTION 6]
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
5. "As a *Families First* customer, *why* do you feel it is important to see the *same* caseworker at each visit?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSE CHOICES! SELECT MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AFTER HEARING RESPONDENT'S OPINION]
- 1 EFFICIENCY (e.g., caseworker is familiar with my case and I don't have to explain everything from the start every time I visit)
  - 2 RELATIONSHIP (e.g., caseworker gets to know my needs better over time and make better recommendations)
  - 3 BOTH EFFICIENCY AND RELATIONSHIP
  - 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
6. "How satisfied are you with the length of time you had to wait in the lobby during your *last visit* to the Department of Human Services?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
7. "About how long did you have to wait in the lobby the *last time* you went to meet with your caseworker, for re-determining or discussing your benefits?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 LESS THAN 15 MINUTES
  - 2 15 MINUTES TO ABOUT HALF AN HOUR
  - 3 HALF AN HOUR TO ABOUT AN HOUR
  - 4 ABOUT TWO HOURS
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6 NOT SURE
8. "During your last visit, was the lobby staff at the Department of Human Services polite?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE

9. "How important is it to be able to get quick referrals to those who can provide services such as child care, job training, and assistance with transportation?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
10. "Has a caseworker ever made any arrangements for you to get help with child care, attend a job training class, get assistance with transportation, or for other services available to *Families First* customers?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 12]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 12]
11. "Thinking back to the *last* time such arrangements were made by a caseworker, how satisfied were you with the timing of the referrals for services such as training, employment, child care, etc.?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
12. "How important is it to have your calls returned *the same day* you try to reach someone at the Department of Human Services?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
13. "Have you ever tried to call a caseworker between appointments to talk about a concern or to ask for help?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO SECTION II]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO SECTION II]
14. "Thinking back to the *last time* you called the Department of Human Services, was the person who answered the telephone polite?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE

15. "How satisfied were you with the time it took your caseworker to return your call?"  
[READ CHOICES]  
1 TERRIBLE  
2 UNHAPPY  
3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED  
4 MOSTLY SATISFIED  
5 PLEASED  
6 DELIGHTED
16. "About how long did you have to wait for your caseworker to call you back the *last time* you tried to call?" [READ CHOICES]  
1 SAME DAY  
2 NEXT DAY  
3 TWO-THREE DAYS  
4 ABOUT A WEEK LATER  
5 MORE THAN A WEEK LATER  
6 MY CASEWORKER NEVER RETURNED MY CALL  
7 NOT SURE
17. "Did you ever have to call your caseworker more than once to discuss specific issues or problems?"  
1 NO [SKIP TO SECTION II]  
2 YES
18. "Now please think of the most recent time you called your caseworker, what was the reason for your call?" [DO NOT READ CHOICES - CHECK **ALL** THAT APPLY]  
1 HAD QUESTIONS REGARDING BENEFITS  
2 REPORT CHANGE IN ADDRESS  
3 REPORT CHANGE IN EARNINGS  
4 NEEDED REFERRAL FOR CHILDCARE  
5 NEEDED REFERRAL FOR TRANSPORTATION  
6 NEEDED REFERRAL FOR FAMILY SERVICES COUNSELING  
7 OTHER (SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_)
19. "Is there a particular time during the month that it is more difficult to reach your caseworker by phone?"  
1 NO [SKIP TO NEXT SECTION II]  
2 YES
20. "What time of the month have you experienced more difficulties?"  
1 FIRST WEEK OF THE MONTH  
2 SECOND WEEK OF THE MONTH  
3 THIRD WEEK OF THE MONTH  
4 LAST WEEK OF THE MONTH  
5 OTHER (SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_)

## SECTION II

“Before we talk about your experiences with specific services, I would like to ask you a couple of questions about the Department of Human Services offices that you have visited in the past.

21. “Are the Department of Human Services offices where you meet with your caseworker at a convenient location?”
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
22. “As you answer the next questions, please think of the outside appearance, the waiting area, the area where you meet with your caseworker, the restrooms, etc. If you were to assign a grade to the appearance of the local office facilities –like teachers grade students-, what grade would you give?”
- [READ CHOICES]
- 1 F (TERRIBLE)
  - 2 D (POOR)
  - 3 C (FAIR)
  - 4 B (GOOD) [SKIP TO SECTION III]
  - 5 A (EXCELLENT) [SKIP TO SECTION III]
23. “In your opinion, what needs to be done to improve local office facilities?”

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## SECTION III

“Next I would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences with specific services available to *Families First* customers. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. We are just trying to get a sense of how things are working out for customers.”

24. “How satisfied are you with the amount of information your caseworker gives you about training, employment, child care, and other services available to *Families First* customers?”
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
25. “Have you ever attended any Fresh Start classes?” (**INTERVIEWER** ---IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE, MENTION THAT EMPOWERMENT 101 IS THE NEW CLASS THAT REPLACED FRESH START.)
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 28]
  - 2 YES

26. "Overall, how satisfied are you with the Fresh Start classes you attended?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
27. "In what specific ways, if any, do you feel that Fresh Start classes helped? I will read a number of statements. Please tell me which ones describe your views and which ones do not."  
[INTERVIEWER: READ ALL CHOICES ONE AT A TIME AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CLASSES MADE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT MYSELF
  - 2 CLASSES HELPED ME BECOME MORE ASSERTIVE WITH OTHER PEOPLE
  - 3 CLASSES TAUGHT ME HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MY PERSONAL HEALTH
  - 4 CLASSES MADE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT BEING A PARENT
  - 5 CLASSES HELPED ME SET GOALS FOR MY FAMILY AND MYSELF
  - 6 CLASSES HELPED ME UNDERSTAND MY LEGAL RIGHTS
  - 7 CLASSES TAUGHT ME TO MANAGE MY MONEY BETTER
  - 8 CLASSES IMPROVED MY JOB SKILLS TO GET A BETTER JOB
  - 9 CLASSES PROVIDED NO USEFUL INFORMATION
28. "Have you ever attended any Job Club/Job Search classes?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 31]
  - 2 YES
29. "Overall, how satisfied are you with the Job Club/Job Search classes you attended?"  
[READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
30. "In what specific ways, if any, do you feel that Job Club/Job Search classes helped? I will read a number of statements. Please tell me which ones describe your views and which ones do not."  
[INTERVIEWER: READ ALL CHOICES ONE AT A TIME AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CLASSES GAVE ME INFORMATION ON JOBS I WAS INTERESTED IN
  - 2 CLASSES GAVE ME INFORMATION ON JOBS WHICH MATCHED MY SKILLS
  - 3 CLASSES HELPED ME COMPLETE JOB APPLICATIONS/WRITE RESUME
  - 4 CLASSES HELPED ME PRACTICE JOB INTERVIEWING SKILLS
  - 5 CLASSES HELPED ME LEARN HOW TO DRESS FOR SUCCESS
  - 6 CLASSES TAUGHT ME WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A JOB
  - 7 CLASSES HELPED ME GET A JOB
  - 8 CLASSES TAUGHT ME HOW TO HANDLE CONFLICTS AT WORK
  - 9 CLASSES TAUGHT ME HOW TO HANDLE PROBLEMS WITH CHILD CARE
  - 10 CLASSES PROVIDED NO USEFUL INFORMATION

31. "As a *Families First* customer, have you ever used child care certificates to cover some of your child care expenses?"

- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 34]
- 2 YES
- 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 34]
- 4 NO CHILDREN [SKIP TO QUESTION 36]

32. "What type of child care services do you use?" [SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]

- 1 PRIVATELY OPERATED CHILD CARE CENTER
- 2 COMMUNITY/CHURCH BASED CHILD CARE CENTER
- 3 FAMILY HOME DAY CARE (E.G. SOMEONE TAKES CARE OF A FEW CHILDREN IN THEIR HOME)
- 4 PAY SOMEONE TO PROVIDE CARE FOR A CHILD IN YOUR HOME
- 5 FRIEND
- 6 RELATIVE
- 7 SIBLING
- 8 OTHER [SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_]

33. "Overall, how satisfied are you with child care services?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 TERRIBLE
- 2 UNHAPPY
- 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
- 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
- 5 PLEASED
- 6 DELIGHTED

34. "Since you've been with the *Families First* program have you ever turned down or quit a job because of problems with child care?"

- 1 NO [SKIP QUESTION 36]
- 2 YES

35. "What concerns about child care made you turn down or quit a job?"

**INTERVIEWER:** [DO NOT READ CHOICES]

- 1 NOT ABLE TO FIND AN AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER
- 2 NOWHERE TO TAKE CHILDREN (NO EVENING OR NIGHT HOURS)
- 3 NOWHERE TO TAKE CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE SICK
- 4 NOT HAPPY WITH QUALITY OF SERVICES AVAILABLE
- 5 PERSON KEEPING CHILD WAS NOT RELIABLE
- 6 CHILD CARE WAS STOPPED BY CARE GIVER
- 7 HELP WITH COST STOPPED
- 8 OTHER (SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_)



36. "Since you became a *Families First* customer, have you ever turned down or quit a job because of problems with transportation?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 38]
  - 2 YES
37. "What concerns about transportation made you turn down or quit a job?"
- INTERVIEWER:** [DO NOT READ CHOICES]
- 1 NO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE IN AREA NEEDED
  - 2 I WORK A SHIFT WHEN BUSES DO NOT RUN
  - 3 DO NOT HAVE RELIABLE CAR
  - 4 I CAN'T GET TO AND FROM CHILD CARE
  - 5 ASSISTANCE WITH TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ENDED
  - 6 TOO FAR TO DRIVE TO THE JOB
  - 7 OTHER (SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_)
38. "Has there ever been a mistake or problem with the benefits you are entitled to receive as a *Families First* customer?" (**INTERVIEWER** ---IF NECESSARY, GIVE EXAMPLES SUCH AS THE AMOUNT OF A CHECK OR ELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER BENEFITS SUCH AS TENNCARE, CHILD CARE, TRANSPORTATION, ETC.)
- 1 NO [SKIP TO SECTION IV]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO SECTION IV]
39. "Was the problem solved quickly?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
40. "Overall, how satisfied were you with the way the Department of Human Services staff handled the correction of your problem?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED

## SECTION IV

"Next I would like to ask some questions about what you expect from the meetings with your caseworker. As you answer these questions, please keep in mind that the Department of Human Services has *limited* resources, and tell me what you think is MOST valuable/important and what is somewhat LESS important or maybe even NOT important at all to you. Again, remember there are no right or wrong answers. We are just looking for your opinions."

41. "How important is it for you to be able to talk with a caseworker who is familiar with your situation when you call or visit the Department of Human Services?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
42. "How important is it that your caseworker provides you with information about training, employment, child care, and other services available to *Families First* customers?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
43. "How important is it that your caseworker explains what you need to do in order to continue receiving all your benefits?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
44. "How important is it that your caseworker treats you with respect?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
45. "To sum up things for a minute, out of all the things we discussed so far about your expectations when you meet with your caseworker, what would you rate as MOST important?" [READ CHOICES]  
[INTERVIEWER ---"FORCE" CHOICE]
- 1 INFORMATION ABOUT VARIOUS SERVICES AVAILABLE
  - 2 INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
  - 3 RESPECTFUL MANNER
46. "How important is it that your caseworker gives you enough time to talk about your needs when you meet?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

47. "How important is it that your caseworker acts in a caring manner?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
48. "How important is it that your caseworker asks for your thoughts as you discuss future activities?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT
  - 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT
  - 3 UNIMPORTANT
  - 4 IMPORTANT
  - 5 VERY IMPORTANT
  - 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
49. "To sum up things one last time, what would you rate as MOST important?" [READ CHOICES]  
[INTERVIEWER ---"FORCE" CHOICE]
- 1 ADEQUATE APPOINTMENT TIME FOR SCHEDULED INTERVIEWS
  - 2 CARING MANNER FROM CASEWORKER
  - 3 BEING ASKED FOR INPUT

## SECTION V

"Finally, I would like to ask you a few questions about how satisfied you have been with your caseworker. Please remember that all your answers are confidential. As you answer these questions, please think in terms of the caseworker you met with during your last visit to the Department of Human Services."

50. "How satisfied are you that your caseworker seemed to be familiar with your case?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
51. "Do you feel that your caseworker explained things in terms that are easy to understand?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
52. "Do you feel that the information you shared with your caseworker remained confidential?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE

53. "Did your caseworker ask for your thoughts as you discussed future activities?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE
54. "How satisfied are you with your caseworker's explanation of what is required from you so you can continue getting all your benefits?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
55. "How convenient has it been to schedule an appointment with your caseworker?"  
[READ CHOICES] [INTERVIEWER PROBE: IF RESPONDENT SAYS SHE/HE HAS NEVER HAD TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, ASK ABOUT THE CONVENIENCE OF THE ASSIGNED APPOINTMENT TIME IN THE LETTER RECEIVED FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.]
- 1 VERY INCONVENIENT
  - 2 SOMEWHAT INCONVENIENT
  - 3 SOMEWHAT CONVENIENT
  - 4 VERY CONVENIENT
56. "Do you feel that your caseworker gave you enough time to talk about all of your needs when you met?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
57. "Approximately, how long did you spend with your caseworker last time you met?"
- 1 LESS THAN 30 MINUTES
  - 2 ABOUT HALF AN HOUR
  - 3 ABOUT 45 MINUTES
  - 4 ABOUT AN HOUR
  - 5 MORE THAN AN HOUR
  - 6 NOT SURE
58. "Do you feel that your caseworker treated you with respect?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
59. "Did your caseworker seem to know how to do his/her job?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
60. "Did your caseworker act in a caring manner?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES

61. "Overall, how satisfied are you with your caseworker?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED
  - 2 DISSATISFIED
  - 3 SATISFIED
  - 4 EXTREMELY SATISFIED
  - 5 NOT SURE

## SECTION VI

"Finally, we would like to ask you some questions about your overall satisfaction with the Department of Human Services. Please put aside your personal experiences with a specific caseworker and answer the following questions for the Department of Human Services office in general."

62. "Overall, how would you rate the quality of service you receive as a *Families First* customer?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 POOR
  - 2 FAIR
  - 3 GOOD
  - 4 EXCELLENT
63. "Are you getting the kind of service that you want?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 NO, DEFINITELY NOT
  - 2 NO, NOT REALLY
  - 3 YES, GENERALLY
  - 4 YES, DEFINITELY
64. "To what extent is the *Families First* program meeting your needs?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 NONE OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET
  - 2 ONLY A FEW OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET
  - 3 MOST OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET
  - 4 ALMOST ALL OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET
65. "If a friend was in need of similar help, would you recommend the *Families First* program to him/her?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 NO, DEFINITELY NOT
  - 2 NO, NOT REALLY
  - 3 YES, GENERALLY
  - 4 YES, DEFINITELY
66. "How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received from the Department of Human Services?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 QUITE DISSATISFIED
  - 2 MILDLY DISSATISFIED
  - 3 INDIFFERENT
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 VERY SATISFIED

67. "Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?"

[READ CHOICES]

- 1 NO, THEY SEEMED TO MAKE THINGS WORSE
- 2 NO, THEY REALLY DID NOT HELP
- 3 YES, THEY HELPED SOMEWHAT
- 4 YES, THEY HELPED A GREAT DEAL

68. "Overall, in a general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received from the

1 Department of Human Services as a *Families First* customer?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 QUITE DISSATISFIED
- 2 MILDLY DISSATISFIED
- 3 INDIFFERENT
- 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
- 5 VERY SATISFIED

## SECTION VII

"Thank you for helping us! Your thoughts are very important to us as we prepare recommendations for improving the *Families First* program. Now I have just a few last questions so we can compare your responses with those of other *Families First* customers. Again, your answers will be confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers you give."

69. "Approximately how long have you received assistance from the Department of Human Services?"

[**INTERVIEWER PROBE:** THIS INCLUDES ALL TIME ON ASSISTANCE. COMBINE SPELLS/CYCLES IF NECESSARY] [READ CHOICES]

- 1 1-6 MONTHS
- 2 7-18 MONTHS
- 3 19-23 MONTHS
- 4 24-35 MONTHS
- 5 36-47 MONTHS
- 6 4 YEARS OR MORE

70. "Have there been any times that there was an interruption in your cash benefits during this time?"

[**INTERVIEWER PROBE:** FOR DISRUPTION OF BENEFITS DUE TO INELIGIBILITY BECAUSE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY, LACK OF COMPLIANCE WITH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, OR ANY OTHER REASON.]

- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 86]
- 2 YES
- 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 86]

71. "Why were your Families *First* cash benefits interrupted?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER AND SELECT **ONE**]
- 1 NO LONGER ELIGIBLE BECAUSE OF INCOME
  - 2 REQUESTED CLOSURE
  - 3 CHILD NOW 18 OR NO LONGER IN HOME
  - 4 EXHAUSTED TIME LIMIT
  - 5 SANCTION FOR LACK OF COMPLIANCE (e.g., MISSED APPOINTMENTS)
  - 6 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
72. "After your Families *First* cash benefits were interrupted, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive assistance with childcare?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 76]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 76]
73. "How did you learn about DHS being able to help with childcare even after Families First cash benefits were interrupted?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
74. "Did you actually receive help with childcare after your cash benefits were interrupted?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 80]
  - 2 YES
75. "Did concerns about child care benefits ending make you decide to return to the *Families First* program?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
76. "After your Families *First* cash benefits were interrupted, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive help with transportation?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 80]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 80]
77. "How did you learn about DHS being able to help with transportation even after cash benefits were interrupted?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

78. "Have you actually received any help with transportation since your cash benefits were interrupted?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 80]
  - 2 YES
79. "Did concerns about transportation benefits being interrupted make you decide to return to the *Families First* program?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
80. "After your *Families First* cash benefits were interrupted, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive assistance with TennCare?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 83]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 83]
81. "How did you learn about DHS being able to help with TennCare even after cash benefits were interrupted?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
82. "Did you actually remain enrolled in TennCare when your cash benefits were interrupted?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
  - 3 CHILDREN ONLY
83. "After your *Families First* cash benefits were interrupted, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive Family Services Counseling?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 86]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE [SKIP TO QUESTION 86]
84. "How did you learn about DHS being able to receive Family Services Counseling even after cash benefits were interrupted?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
85. "Did you actually receive Family Services Counseling when your cash benefits were interrupted?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
86. "Finally, how many caseworkers have you worked with in the past year?" \_\_\_\_\_



87. "What is the highest grade of school you have completed?"

- 1 NOT HS GRADUATE
- 2 HS GRADUATE / GED
- 3 SOME COLLEGE / COLLEGE GRADUATE / VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

88. "What year were you born?" \_\_\_\_\_

89. "What is your race or ethnicity?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 BLACK / AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 2 WHITE
- 3 AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKAN NATIVE
- 4 ASIAN
- 5 NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 6 HISPANIC/LATINO
- 7 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

"Please let me read the address we have to mail you your Wal-Mart gift certificate." [INTERVIEWER: READ ADDRESS TO THE RESPONDENT TO VERIFY THAT IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN CORRECTLY]

90. "What county is that in?" \_\_\_\_\_

"Once again thank you for sharing your thoughts with us! It's been really helpful. We will put your gift certificate in the mail tomorrow!"

91. **INTERVIEWER:** [RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER]

- 1 FEMALE
- 2 MALE

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Appendix B***

### ***Former Customer Survey***



**FAMILIES FIRST CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY  
(Former Customers Only)**

**INTERVIEWER:** READ THE FOLLOWING: “Hello, may I speak with [RESPONDENT’S NAME]? My name is [YOUR FIRST NAME] and I am a staff member at the University of Tennessee’s College of Social Work.”

- 1   RESPONDENT NOT AVAILABLE      **[PROBE: “When would be a good time to call back to talk with [RESPONDENT’S NAME]?”  
RECORD CALL BACK ON LOG SHEET]**
  
- 2   RESPONDENT AVAILABLE

“A week ago we sent you a letter saying that we would be calling to talk to you about your experiences with the Department of Human Services and the services it provides. Do you remember receiving this letter?”

- 1    YES    [READ INTRO “B”]
- 2    NO    **[PROBE: “The letter offered a \$5 Wal-Mart gift certificate for completing this interview. The letter came in a University of Tennessee envelope. Do you remember receiving such a letter?”]**
  - 1    YES    [READ INTRO “B”]
  - 2    NO    [READ INTRO “A”]
  - 3    NOT SURE    [READ INTRO “A”]

**INTRO A:**

“The letter explained that we are doing a study of *Families First* services across the state of Tennessee. The Department of Human Services has given us your name as someone who used to receive *Families First* benefits. We’d like to ask you about your experiences with services from the Department of Human Services. The interview will last about 15 minutes. It is very important that we hear the views of previous customers so we can make better recommendations on how to improve services for future participants. Your answers will be confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers you give. After the interview is completed, we will send you a \$5 gift certificate for Wal-Mart to thank you for your time.”

“First, I’d like to confirm that at least since the end of last year you are no longer receiving *Families First* cash benefits.” **[INTERVIEWER:** This includes CASH benefits only. Individuals receiving transitional non-cash benefits are eligible to participate in the survey].

- 1    YES    [BEGIN SURVEY]
- 2    NO    **[POLITELY TERMINATE INTERVIEW BY SAYING:  
“I apologize for bothering you this evening. For this study we are supposed to contact only former *Families First* customers who have not been receiving cash benefits for at least five months.” PLEASE NOTE “NOT ELIGIBLE” IN YOUR LOG]**

**INTRO B:**

“Good! As we mentioned in the letter, we’re doing a study of *Families First* services in the state of Tennessee. The Department of Human Services has given us your name as someone who used to receive *Families First* benefits. We’d like to ask you about your experiences with services from the Department of Human Services. The interview will last about 15 minutes. It is very important that we hear the views of previous customers so we can make better recommendations on how to improve services for future participants. Your answers will be confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers

you give. After the interview is completed, we will send you a \$5 gift certificate for Wal-Mart to thank you for your time.”

“First, I’d like to confirm that at least since the end of last year you are no longer receiving *Families First* cash benefits.” [INTERVIEWER: This includes CASH benefits only. Individuals receiving transitional non-cash benefits are eligible to participate in the survey].

1 YES [BEGIN SURVEY]

2 NO [POLITELY TERMINATE INTERVIEW BY SAYING:

“I apologize for bothering you this evening. For this study we are supposed to contact only former *Families First* customers who have not been receiving cash benefits for at least five months now.” PLEASE NOTE “NOT ELIGIBLE” IN YOUR LOG]

## SECTION I:

“First, I’d like to ask you some questions about what you think is most important for customer service. Different people value different things, so keep in mind that there is no right or wrong answer. We are just asking for your opinions. When answering questions about your caseworker, please keep in mind the person you used to meet with for re-determination or to discuss your benefits.”

1. “As a *Families First* customer, how important was it for you to see the *same* caseworker for re-determining or discussing your benefits, every time you visited the Department of Human Services?”

[READ CHOICES]

- 1 EXTREMELY UNIMPORTANT [SKIP TO QUESTION 3]
- 2 VERY UNIMPORTANT [SKIP TO QUESTION 3]
- 3 UNIMPORTANT [SKIP TO QUESTION 3]
- 4 IMPORTANT
- 5 VERY IMPORTANT
- 6 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

2. “Why did you feel it was important to see the same caseworker from one visit to the next?”

[INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSE CHOICES! SELECT THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AFTER HEARING RESPONDENT’S OPINION]

- 1 EFFICIENCY (e.g., Caseworker was familiar with my case and I didn’t have to explain everything from the start every time I visited)
- 2 RELATIONSHIP (e.g., Caseworker got to know my needs better over time and made better recommendations)
- 3 BOTH EFFICIENCY AND RELATIONSHIP
- 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

3. “How often do you feel that caseworkers gave you enough time to talk about all your needs when you met?”

- 1 NEVER
- 2 OCCASIONALLY
- 3 MOST OF THE TIME
- 4 ALWAYS
- 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]

4. "How often do you feel that caseworkers treated you with respect?"
- 1 NEVER
  - 2 OCCASIONALLY
  - 3 MOST OF THE TIME
  - 4 ALWAYS
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
5. "How often do you feel caseworkers acted in a caring manner?"
- 1 NEVER
  - 2 OCCASIONALLY
  - 3 MOST OF THE TIME
  - 4 ALWAYS
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
6. "How often did caseworkers you worked with ask for your thoughts as you discussed future activities?"
- 1 NEVER
  - 2 OCCASIONALLY
  - 3 MOST OF THE TIME
  - 4 ALWAYS
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
7. "How satisfied are you with the caseworker's explanation of what was required from you so you can continue getting all your benefits?"
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
  - 5 PLEASED
  - 6 DELIGHTED
8. "Overall, how satisfied are you with the DHS caseworkers you worked with?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED [ASK QUESTION 9 THEN SKIP TO SECTION II]
  - 2 DISSATISFIED [ASK QUESTION 9 THEN SKIP TO SECTION II]
  - 3 SATISFIED [SKIP TO QUESTION 10]
  - 4 EXTREMELY SATISFIED [SKIP TO QUESTION 10]
  - 5 NOT SURE

9. “Thinking back for a moment to specific meetings, what is the *one thing that did NOT work very well as you met* with DHS caseworkers?” [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR ISSUES THAT RELATE TO CUSTOMER-CASEWORKER INTERACTION. **DO NOT READ OUT** RESPONSE CHOICES! **SELECT MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AFTER** HEARING RESPONDENT’S OPINION]
- 1 LACK OF RESPECT / CARE
  - 2 CASEWORKERS NOT FAMILIAR WITH MY SITUATION
  - 3 LACK OF RESPONSIVENESS (e.g., return calls, make timely referrals, etc.)
  - 4 CASEWORKERS WERE NOT KNOWLEDGEABLE
  - 5 CASEWORKERS DID NOT EXPLAIN WELL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
  - 6 CASEWORKERS DID NOT EXPLAIN WELL AVAILABLE SERVICES
  - 7 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
10. “Thinking back for a moment again to specific meetings, what is the *one thing that you liked best* about working with DHS caseworkers?” [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR ISSUES THAT RELATE TO CUSTOMER-CASEWORKER INTERACTION. **DO NOT READ OUT** RESPONSE CHOICES! **SELECT MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AFTER** HEARING RESPONDENT’S OPINION]
- 1 RESPECT / CARE
  - 2 CASEWORKERS’ FAMILIARITY WITH MY SITUATION
  - 3 RESPONSIVENESS (e.g., return calls, make timely referrals, etc.)
  - 4 CASEWORKERS’ WORK KNOWLEDGE
  - 5 CASEWORKERS EXPLAINED PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS WELL
  - 6 CASEWORKERS EXPLAINED AVAILABLE SERVICES WELL
  - 7 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II:

“Next I would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences with specific services available to *Families First* customers. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. We are just trying to get a sense of what activities customers find most useful.”

11. “As a *Families First* customer, were you ever required to attend Fresh Start classes?”
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 16]
  - 2 YES
12. “Did you attend any Fresh Start classes?”
- 1 NO [ASK QUESTION 13 THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 16]
  - 2 YES [SKIP TO QUESTION 14]



13. "People don't go to these classes for different reasons. Some people cannot attend classes because the time they are scheduled is not very convenient. Others feel that the location is out of the way. In your case, what kept you from attending Fresh Start classes?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]

- 1 INCONVENIENT CLASS TIME
- 2 INCONVENIENT LOCATION
- 3 LACK OF ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION
- 4 LACK OF ADEQUATE CHILD CARE
- 5 WANTED TO DO A DIFFERENT ACTIVITY
- 6 WANTED TO GO TO WORK
- 7 HEARD THAT CLASSES ARE NOT USEFUL
- 8 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

14. "Overall, how satisfied were you with the Fresh Start classes you attended?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 TERRIBLE
- 2 UNHAPPY
- 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
- 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
- 5 PLEASED
- 6 DELIGHTED

15. "In what specific ways, if any, do you feel that Fresh Start classes helped? I will read a number of statements and you can tell me which ones describe your views." [INTERVIEWER: READ ALL CHOICES ONE AT A TIME AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]

- 1 CLASSES MADE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT MYSELF
- 2 CLASSES HELPED ME BECOME MORE ASSERTIVE WITH OTHER PEOPLE
- 3 CLASSES TAUGHT ME HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MY PERSONAL HEALTH
- 4 CLASSES MADE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT BEING A PARENT
- 5 CLASSES HELPED ME SET GOALS FOR MY FAMILY AND MYSELF
- 6 CLASSES HELPED ME UNDERSTAND MY LEGAL RIGHTS
- 7 CLASSES TAUGHT ME TO MANAGE MY MONEY BETTER
- 8 CLASSES IMPROVED MY JOB SKILLS TO GET A BETTER JOB
- 9 CLASSES PROVIDED NO USEFUL INFORMATION

16. "As a *Families First* customer, were you ever required to attend Job Club/Job Search classes?"

- 1 NO [SKIP TO SECTION III]
- 2 YES

17. "Did you attend any Job Club/Job Search classes?"

- 1 NO [ASK QUESTION 18 THEN SKIP TO SECTION III]
- 2 YES [SKIP TO QUESTION 19]

18. "People don't attend these classes for different reasons. Some people cannot attend classes because the time they are scheduled is not very convenient. Others feel that the location is out of the way. In your case, what kept you from attending Job Club/Job Search classes?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER AND SELECT **ALL THAT APPLY**]

- 1 INCONVENIENT CLASS TIME
- 2 INCONVENIENT LOCATION
- 3 LACK OF ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION
- 4 LACK OF ADEQUATE CHILD CARE
- 5 HEARD THAT CLASSES ARE NOT USEFUL
- 6 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

19. "Overall, how satisfied were you with Job Club/Job Search classes you attended?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 TERRIBLE
- 2 UNHAPPY
- 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
- 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
- 5 PLEASED
- 6 DELIGHTED

20. "In what specific ways, if any, do you think that Job Search/Job Club classes helped? I will read a number of statements and you can tell me which ones describe your views." [INTERVIEWER: READ **ALL CHOICES ONE AT A TIME AND** SELECT **ALL THAT APPLY**]

- 1 CLASSES GAVE ME INFORMATION ON JOBS I WAS INTERESTED IN
- 2 CLASSES GAVE ME INFORMATION ON JOBS WHICH MATCHED MY SKILLS
- 3 CLASSES HELPED ME COMPLETE JOB APPLICATIONS
- 4 CLASSES HELPED ME PRACTICE JOB INTERVIEWING SKILLS
- 5 CLASSES HELPED ME WITH HOW TO DRESS FOR SUCCESS
- 6 CLASSES TAUGHT ME WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A JOB
- 7 CLASSES HELPED ME GET A JOB
- 8 CLASSES TAUGHT ME HOW TO HANDLE CONFLICTS AT WORK
- 9 CLASSES TAUGHT ME HOW TO HANDLE PROBLEMS WITH CHILD CARE
- 10 CLASSES PROVIDED NO USEFUL INFORMATION

### SECTION III:

"Next I would like to ask you a few question about your experiences with specific services available to *Families First* customers even after they stop receiving cash benefits. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. We are just trying to get a sense of what activities customers find most useful as they move toward self-sufficiency."

21. "The last time you met with your caseworker before Families First cash benefits ended, do you remember discussing possible help with childcare, transportation and/or health insurance after cash benefits end?"

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

22. "How many children do you have?"
- 1 NONE [SKIP TO QUESTION 34]
  - 2 ONE
  - 3 TWO
  - 4 THREE OR MORE
23. "After you stopped getting *Families First* cash benefits, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive assistance with childcare?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 25]
  - 2 YES
24. "How did you learn about DHS being able to help with childcare even after Families First cash benefits stopped?"
- [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
25. "Have you actually received help with childcare since your cash benefits stopped?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 32]
  - 2 YES
26. "After your cash benefits ended, for approximately how long have you actually received help with childcare?"
- 1 6 MONTHS OR LESS
  - 2 7 MONTH TO 12 MONTHS
  - 3 13 MONTHS TO 18 MONTHS
  - 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
27. "How satisfied were you with the childcare assistance that you received after cash benefits ended?"
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED [SKIP TO QUESTION 29]
  - 5 PLEASED [SKIP TO QUESTION 29]
  - 6 DELIGHTED [SKIP TO QUESTION 29]

28. "What was it that you did not like about the child care services?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READOUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT - SELECT **ALL** THAT APPLY]
- 1 NOT ABLE TO FIND AN AFFORDABLE LICENSED/REGISTERED CHILD CARE CENTER
  - 2 CENTERS ARE NOT EASY TO GET TO
  - 3 CENTERS ARE NOT OPEN WHEN I NEED THEM TO BE (NO EVENING HOURS/NIGHT HOURS)
  - 4 CENTERS DO NOT PROVIDE SICK CHILD CARE
  - 5 CENTERS DO NOT PROVIDE GOOD SERVICE (TOO MANY CHILDREN, NOT CLEAN, SAFE)
  - 6 CENTERS DO NOT TAKE CARE OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
  - 7 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
29. "Are you currently receiving help with childcare from DHS?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 32]
  - 2 YES
30. "Given your present situation, do you feel you can continue to take care of your child care needs once benefits end?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
31. "How will you take care of your childcare needs when DHS assistance stops?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 WHILE I WORK, A FAMILY MEMBER WILL CARE FOR MY CHILDREN FOR FREE
  - 2 I WILL PAY A FAMILY MEMBER TO CARE FOR MY CHILDREN
  - 3 I WILL PAY FOR CHILDCARE AT A DAYCARE CENTER
  - 4 MY CHILDREN WILL CARE FOR THEMSELVES
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6 NOT SURE
32. "As a *Families First* customer, did you ever have to turn down or quit a job because of problems with child care?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 34]
  - 2 YES
33. "What concerns about childcare caused you to turn down or quit a job?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 NOT ABLE TO FIND AN AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER
  - 2 NOWHERE TO TAKE CHILDREN (NO EVENING OR NIGHT HOURS)
  - 3 NOWHERE TO TAKE CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE SICK
  - 4 NOT HAPPY WITH QUALITY OF SERVICES AVAILABLE
  - 5 PERSON KEEPING CHILD WAS NOT RELIABLE
  - 6 CHILD CARE WAS STOPPED BY CARE GIVER
  - 7 HELP WITH COST WAS STOPPED
  - 8 OTHER (SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_)

34. "After you stopped getting *Families First* cash benefits, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive help with transportation?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 43]
  - 2 YES
35. "How did you learn about DHS being able to help with transportation even after cash benefits stopped?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
36. "Have you actually received any help with transportation since your cash benefits stopped?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 43]
  - 2 YES
37. "After your cash benefits ended, approximately how long have you actually received help with transportation?"
- 1 MONTHS OR LESS
  - 2 MONTH TO 12 MONTHS
  - 3 13 MONTHS TO 18 MONTHS
  - 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
38. "How satisfied were you with the transportation assistance that you received after cash benefits ended?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 VERY UNHAPPY
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED [SKIP TO QUESTION 40]
  - 5 PLEASED [SKIP TO QUESTION 40]
  - 6 DELIGHTED [SKIP TO QUESTION 40]
39. "What was it that you did not like about the transportation services?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 NO ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
  - 2 I WORK A SHIFT WHEN BUSES DO NOT RUN
  - 3 MY WORK IS LOCATED IN AN AREA THAT BUSES DO NOT RUN
  - 4 I CAN'T GET TRANSPORTATION TO MY CHILD'S DAYCARE
  - 5 TRANSPORTATION MONEY DOES NOT COVER MY DRIVING EXPENSE
  - 6 IT TAKES TOO LONG TO GET TRANSPORTATION MONEY
  - 7 IT IS TOO HARD TO GET BUS PASSES/VOUCHERS
  - 8 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

40. "Are you currently receiving help with transportation from DHS?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 43]
  - 2 YES
41. "Given your present situation, do you feel you can continue to take care of transportation needs once benefits end?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
42. "How will you take care of your transportation when DHS assistance stops?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 DRIVE MY OWN CAR AND PAY FOR GAS
  - 2 RIDE THE BUS
  - 3 ASK FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS TO TAKE ME WHERE I NEED TO GO
  - 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
43. "As a *Families First* customer, did you ever have to turn down or quit a job because of problems with transportation?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 45]
  - 2 YES
44. "What concerns about transportation caused you to turn down or quit a job?"
- 1 NO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE IN AREA NEED
  - 2 I WORK A SHIFT WHEN BUSES DO NOT RUN
  - 3 DO NOT HAVE RELIABLE CAR
  - 4 I CAN'T GET TO AND FROM CHILD CARE
  - 5 ASSISTANCE WITH TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ENDED
  - 6 TOO FAR TO DRIVE TO THE JOB
  - 7 OTHER (SPECIFY \_\_\_\_\_)
45. "After you stopped getting *Families First* cash benefits, were you ever told you could still qualify to be enrolled in TennCare?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 49]
  - 2 YES
46. "How did you learn about DHS being able to help with TennCare enrollment even after cash benefits stopped?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
47. "Have you actually continued to be enrolled in TennCare since your cash benefits stopped?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 49]
  - 2 YES
  - 3 CHILDREN ONLY

48. "After your cash benefits ended, for approximately how long have you actually continued to enrolled in TennCare?"
- 1 6 MONTHS OR LESS
  - 2 7 MONTH TO 12 MONTHS
  - 3 13 MONTHS TO 18 MONTHS
  - 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
49. "After you stopped getting *Families First* cash benefits, were you ever told you could still qualify to receive Family Services Counseling?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 57]
  - 2 YES
50. "How did you learn about DHS being able to provide Family Services Counseling even after cash benefits stopped?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES! PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 CASEWORKER
  - 2 CASE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
  - 3 ABE/FRESH START/JOB CLUB INSTRUCTOR
  - 4 FRIEND/RELATIVE
  - 5 CUSTOMER SERVICE REVIEWER
  - 6 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
51. "Have you actually received any Family Services Counseling since your cash benefits stopped?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 57]
  - 2 YES
52. "After your cash benefits ended, for approximately how long have you actually received help with Family Services Counseling?"
- 1 6 MONTHS OR LESS
  - 2 7 MONTH TO 12 MONTHS
  - 3 13 MONTHS TO 18 MONTHS
  - 4 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5 NOT SURE [DO NOT READ]
53. "How satisfied were you with the Family Services Counseling you received after cash benefits ended?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED [SKIP TO QUESTION 55]
  - 5 PLEASED [SKIP TO QUESTION 55]
  - 6 DELIGHTED [SKIP TO QUESTION 55]

54. "What did you not like about the Family Services Counseling Program?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 I DID NOT LIKE THE SCHEDULING
  - 2 I DID NOT LIKE NOT HAVING A PRIVATE PLACE TO MEET WITH COUNSELOR
  - 3 I DID NOT LIKE THE COUNSELOR
  - 4 I DID NOT LIKE THE QUESTIONS THEY ASKED
  - 5 I DID NOT LIKE NOT BEING ABLE TO HAVE INPUT
  - 6 I DID NOT TRUST MY COUNSELOR
  - 7 I DID NOT FEEL ANYTHING WAS WRONG
  - 8 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
55. "Given your present situation, do you feel you can continue without Family Services Counseling once benefits end?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
56. "After you stopped receiving cash benefits did you ever receive any other type of help from DHS that we have not discussed?" [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR HELP BEYOND TRANSPORTATION, CHILD CARE, TENNCARE OR FAMILY SERVICES COUNSELING]
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
57. "As a Families First customer, were there some needs you had or problems you faced that the program was not addressing?"
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION IV:**

58. "Are you currently employed?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 63]
  - 2 YES
59. "How many hours do you work per week?" \_\_\_\_\_
60. "Do you feel that being a Families First customer helped you to get or find the kind of job you wanted?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
61. "Does your employer offer any health insurance benefits?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 63]
  - 2 YES



62. "Are you enrolled in your employer's health insurance plan?"
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES [SKIP TO QUESTION 64]
63. "Do you currently have health insurance?"
- 1 NO [ANSWER QUESTION 64 THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 67]
  - 2 YES
64. "Do your children currently have health insurance?"
- 1 NO [SKIP TO QUESTION 67]
  - 2 YES
65. "How satisfied are you with your health care insurance coverage?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 TERRIBLE
  - 2 UNHAPPY
  - 3 MOSTLY DISSATISFIED
  - 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED [SKIP TO QUESTION 67]
  - 5 PLEASED [SKIP TO QUESTION 67]
  - 6 DELIGHTED [SKIP TO QUESTION 67]
66. "What is it that you do not like about your health care coverage?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ ANSWERS, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 I DO NOT LIKE MY ASSIGNED DOCTOR/HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL
  - 2 I DO NOT LIKE THE TYPE OF TENNCARE COVERAGE, (JOHN DEERE, ACCESS MEDPLUS, ETC.)
  - 3 I CANNOT GET AN APPOINTMENT WHEN NEEDED
  - 4 I CANNOT GET THE SERVICES NEEDED
  - 5 I CANNOT AFFORD MY PRESCRIPTIONS
  - 6 I HAVE TO DRIVE TOO FAR TO SEE MY ASSIGNED DOCTOR
  - 7 MY DOCTOR WILL NOT ANSWER MY QUESTIONS
  - 8 INSURANCE PREMIUMS/PAYMENTS ARE TOO EXPENSIVE
  - 9 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_
67. "Where are you most likely to go for treatment if you are sick?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CHOICES - SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 GO WITHOUT NEEDED MEDICAL CARE
  - 2 GO TO THE DOCTOR/HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL WHEN I AM SICK
  - 3 GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM
  - 4 GO TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT
  - 5 GO TO AN HERBALIST
  - 6 GO TALK TO THE PHARMACIST AND USE OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS
  - 7 GO BACK TO DHS AND GET SOME ASSISTANCE
  - 8 I DON'T DO ANYTHING
  - 9 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

68. "What other efforts do you take to stay healthy?" [INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR ANNUAL CHECK-UPS, DENTIST VISITS - SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]
- 1 GO TO THE DOCTOR FOR SCREENINGS (CHECK-UPS, PAP SMEARS, BREAST EXAMS, ETC.)
  - 2 GO TO A DENTIST
  - 3 GO TO A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL
  - 4 I DON'T DO ANYTHING
  - 5 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION V:**

69. "Next I would like to ask for approximately how long you received cash benefits from DHS?"  
[INTERVIEWER PROBE: THIS INCLUDES ALL TIME ON ASSISTANCE. COMBINE SPELLS/CYCLES IF NECESSARY [READ CHOICES]
- 1 1-6 MONTHS
  - 2 7-18 MONTHS
  - 3 19-23 MONTHS
  - 4 24-35 MONTHS
  - 5 36-47 MONTHS
  - 6 4 YEARS OR MORE

70. "During the last year you were with *Families First*, approximately how many caseworkers did you work with?" \_\_\_\_\_

71. "Why did you stop receiving *Families First* cash benefits?" [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES! LISTEN TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER AND SELECT **ONE**. IF RESPONDENT OFF MORE THAN ONCE, MARK THE REASON FOR LAST CLOSURE]
- 1 NO LONGER ELIGIBLE BECAUSE OF INCOME
  - 2 REQUESTED CLOSURE
  - 3 CHILD NOW 18 OR NO LONGER IN HOME
  - 4 EXHAUSTED TIME LIMIT
  - 5 SANCTION FOR LACK OF COMPLIANCE (e.g., MISSED APPOINTMENTS)
  - 6 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

72. "While you were with *Families First*, were there ever times that your cash benefits stopped and started again?"  
[INTERVIEWER PROBE FOR DISRUPTION OF BENEFITS DUE TO INELIGIBILITY BECAUSE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY, LACK OF COMPLIANCE WITH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, OR ANY OTHER REASON.]
- 1 NO
  - 2 YES
  - 3 NOT SURE

73. "How long has it been since you last received cash benefits?" [READ CHOICES]
- 1 6 MONTHS OR LESS
  - 2 7-12 MONTH
  - 3 13-18 MONTHS
  - 4 MORE THAN 18 MONTHS

74. "Do you foresee having to return to DHS for cash benefits in the near future?"

1 NO

2 YES, SPECIFY REASON \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION VI

"Next, we would like to ask you some questions about your overall satisfaction with the Department of Human Services. Please put aside your experiences with a specific case worker and answer the following questions for the Department of Human Services office in general."

75. "Overall, how would you rate the quality of service you received as a *Families First* customer?"

[READ CHOICES]

1 POOR

2 FAIR

3 GOOD

4 EXCELLENT

76. "Do you feel that you got the kind of service that you wanted?" [READ CHOICES]

1 NO, DEFINITELY NOT

2 NO, NOT REALLY

3 YES, GENERALLY

4 YES, DEFINITELY

77. "To what extent did the *Families First* program meet your needs?" [READ CHOICES]

1 NONE OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET

2 ONLY A FEW OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET

3 MOST OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET

4 ALMOST ALL OF MY NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET

78. "If a friend was in need of similar help, would you recommend the *Families First* program to him/her?"

[READ CHOICES]

1 NO, DEFINITELY NOT

2 NO, NOT REALLY

3 YES, GENERALLY

4 YES, DEFINITELY

79. "How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received from the Department of Human Services?" [READ CHOICES]

1 QUITE DISSATISFIED

2 MILDLY DISSATISFIED

3 INDIFFERENT [MIDDLE OF THE ROAD]

4 MOSTLY SATISFIED

5 VERY SATISFIED

80. "Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?"

[READ CHOICES]

- 1 NO, THEY SEEMED TO MAKE THINGS WORSE
- 2 NO, THEY REALLY DID NOT HELP
- 3 YES, THEY HELPED SOMEWHAT
- 4 YES, THEY HELPED A GREAT DEAL

81. "Overall, in a general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received from the Department of Human Services as a *Families First* customer?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 QUITE DISSATISFIED
- 2 MILDLY DISSATISFIED
- 3 INDIFFERENT [MIDDLE OF THE ROAD]
- 4 MOSTLY SATISFIED
- 5 VERY SATISFIED

## SECTION VII

"Last, I would like to ask you a few questions so we can compare your responses to other *Families First* customers. Again, your answers will remain confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers that you give."

82. "What is your race or ethnicity?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 BLACK / AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 2 WHITE
- 3 AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE
- 4 ASIAN
- 5 NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 6 HISPANIC/LATINO
- 7 OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_

83. "What is the highest grade of school you have completed?" [READ CHOICES]

- 1 NOT HS GRADUATE
- 2 HS GRADUATE
- 3 SOME COLLEGE / COLLEGE GRADUATE / VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

84. "What year were you born?" \_\_\_\_\_

"And now, let me read the address we have for mailing you your Wal-Mart gift certificate. "

[INTERVIEWER: READ ADDRESS TO THE RESPONDENT TO VERIFY THAT IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN CORRECTLY]

85. "What county is that?" \_\_\_\_\_

"Once again thank you for sharing your thoughts with us! It's been really helpful. We will put your gift certificate in the mail tomorrow!"

86. **INTERVIEWER:** [RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER]

1 FEMALE

2 MALE

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_