

At the heart of Extension's capacity to support community-based programs is a group of committed professionals who are knowledgeable and skilled in serving children, youth and families at risk.



3 COMPONENT

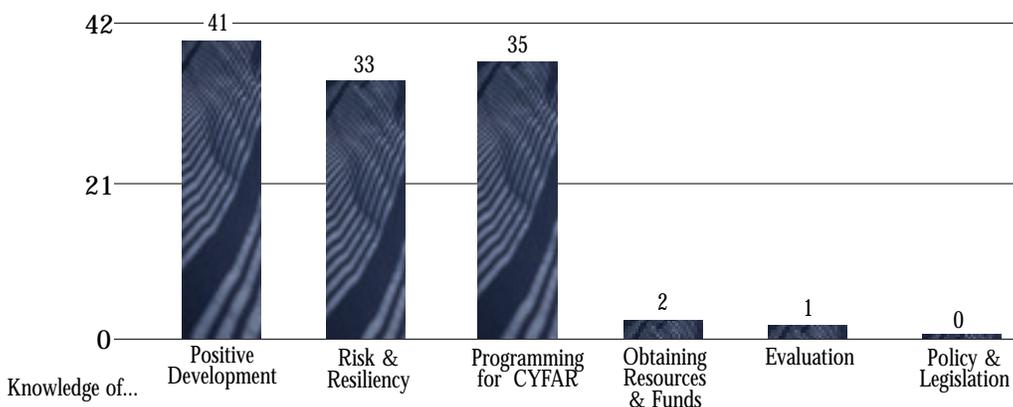
THIS COMPONENT WAS ADDRESSED BY NINE QUESTIONS ABOUT:

1. KNOWLEDGE OF PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT;
2. KNOWLEDGE OF RISK AND RESILIENCE FACTORS;
3. KNOWLEDGE OF PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK;
4. KNOWLEDGE OF OBTAINING RESOURCES AND FUNDS TO SUPPORT SUCH PROGRAMS;
5. KNOWLEDGE OF EVALUATING PROGRAMS;
6. KNOWLEDGE OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION AS IT AFFECTS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK;
7. INVOLVEMENT IN EVALUATIONS THAT DEMONSTRATE OUTCOMES TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS;
8. WHETHER ONE OF THEIR ROLES IN EXTENSION IS TO EDUCATE POLICYMAKERS AND OTHER COMMUNITY LEADERS ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY ISSUES;
9. THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THEY ARE CALLED UPON FOR EXPERTISE IN WORKING WITH AND PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK.

Recognize Extension professionals as critical resources in research and education for children, youth, families and community issues.

EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS' KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY ISSUES IN DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING PROGRAMS

Number of states in which half or more Extension professionals "agree" or "strongly agree"

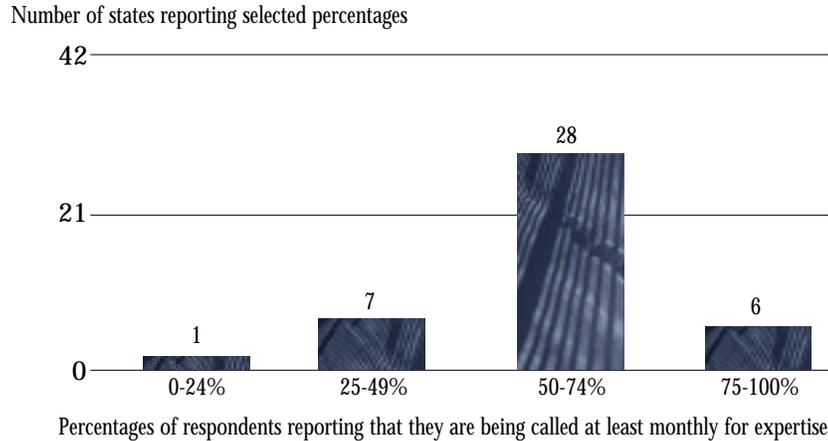


THE BIG PICTURE

Figure on previous page shows the number of states in which half or more Extension professionals reported "good" or "excellent" knowledge in six areas. The figure displays rather dramatically the areas in which Extension professionals are extremely knowledgeable and areas where future training and staff development may be needed. In most states, Extension professionals appear to be very knowledgeable of principles of positive development, risk and resilience factors, and programming for at-risk families. In contrast, most are much less knowledgeable about obtaining resources and funds to support programs, evaluation, and policy and legislation affecting lives of at-risk families.

Figure below indicates that Extension professionals across the country are indeed being recognized as critical resources in education for children, youth, family and community issues. In a majority of the states (34 out of 42 states), half or more respondents reported that they are called upon at least monthly for their expertise in such issues.

RESPONDENTS CALLED UPON AT LEAST MONTHLY FOR THEIR EXPERTISE IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK



A CLOSER LOOK: KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY ISSUES

Table below shows the means, standard deviations and the range of percentages for each quartile. Extension professionals across the country are very knowledgeable about issues pertinent to working with children, youth and families.

KNOWLEDGE OF ISSUES KEY TO PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK:
QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Principles of Positive Development	46-74%	75-80%	81-85%	86-93%	78.90	9.20
Risk and Resilience Factors	24-51%	52-59%	60-65%	66-88%	58.74	12.24
Programming for At-Risk Audiences	24-52%	53-63%	64-66%	67-82%	60.19	10.66
Obtaining Resources and Funds to Support Programs	16-28%	29-31%	32-39%	40-52%	32.67	7.67
Called Upon at Least Monthly for Expertise	24-50%	51-58%	59-67%	68-85%	59.33	11.77

*Percent of respondents within each state who indicated "good" or "excellent" knowledge and were called upon at least monthly for their expertise. State percentages are included in state reports.

A majority of respondents within each state reported good or excellent knowledge of principles of positive development, risk and resilience factors, and programming for at-risk audiences. Even in the bottom quartile, up to 74% of respondents reported good or excellent knowledge. Extension professionals reported less confidence in their knowledge of how to obtain resources and funds to support programs for at-risk audiences. The national average for this question was 33%. When asked how frequently they were called upon for their expertise regarding children, youth and family issues, the state percentages of respondents reporting monthly or weekly ranged broadly from 24% to 85%. However, the average national percentage was 59%, suggesting that Extension professionals are being recognized for their expertise in these issues.

Two states (Wisconsin and Massachusetts) ranked in the top quartile in at least four of the five questions. Both states ranked in the top quartile in all four knowledge areas. Unfortunately, six states ranked in the bottom quartile in at least four of the five questions.



A CLOSER LOOK: EVALUATING PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK

Evaluation is seen as a critical knowledge area by the CYFAR Initiative and continues to be a key area of training and staff development across state Extension systems. As can be seen in the table below, future work may be needed in this area.

EVALUATION: QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Knowledgeable About Evaluation	11-26%	27-33%	34-38%	39-54%	32.67	8.97
Currently Involved in Evaluation	18-33%	34-39%	40-48%	49-67%	40.83	11.05

*Percent of respondents within each state who indicated "good" or "excellent" knowledge and "agree" or "strongly agree" that they were involved in evaluation. State percentages are included in state reports.

Relatively few Extension professionals appear to be confident about their knowledge of evaluation. Only 11% to 26% of respondents in the bottom quartile and 39% to 54% in the top quartile reported good or excellent knowledge of evaluation. When asked if they were currently involved in evaluating programs for at-risk families, between 18% and 33% of respondents in the bottom quartile and between 49% and 67% in the top quartile agreed or strongly agreed that they are currently involved in such evaluation efforts.

Five states (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Nevada and Wisconsin) ranked in the top quartile in both these questions. Four states ranked in the bottom quartile in both these questions. Generally speaking, states ranking in the upper quartile in knowledge of evaluation also ranked in the upper quartiles in whether they are currently involved in evaluations. Interestingly, many states ranking in the bottom quartile in knowledge of evaluation were in the top or second quartile in whether they are involved in evaluations.



A CLOSER LOOK: KNOWLEDGE OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK

POLICY AND LEGISLATION: QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Knowledgeable About Policy and Legislation	8-20%	21-24%	25-28%	29-46%	24.21	7.51
Educating Policymakers is One of my Roles	51-67%	68-74%	75-79%	80-96%	73.95	9.05

*Percent of respondents within each state who indicated "good" or "excellent" knowledge and "agree" or "strongly agree" that it is one of their roles in Extension to educate policymakers. State percentages are included in state reports.

The results above indicate that Extension professionals were not at all confident about their knowledge of policy and legislation affecting lives of the children, youth and families they serve. However, the majority believe that it is one of their roles to educate policymakers and other community leaders on children, youth and families issues. These findings, which were consistent in every participating state, suggest a need for future work in this area.

Table above shows that between 8% and 46% of respondents across states reported good or excellent knowledge of policy and legislation affecting the lives of children, youth and families they serve. On the other hand, between 51% and 96% of respondents across states reported that one of their roles in Extension is to educate policymakers and other community leaders on children, youth and family issues. Three states (Arkansas, Louisiana and Wisconsin) ranked in the top quartile in both these questions. Four states ranked in the bottom quartile in both these questions. The quartile rankings were consistent for most states. If a state ranked in the upper two quartiles on one question, they generally ranked in the upper two quartiles on the other question.



4 COMPONENT

Promote diversity, inclusivity and pluralism in Extension programs and staff.

Component 4 of the CYFAR Initiative recognizes that diversity, inclusivity and pluralism in Extension programs and staff will likely lead to the best possible outcomes for children, youth and families they serve.

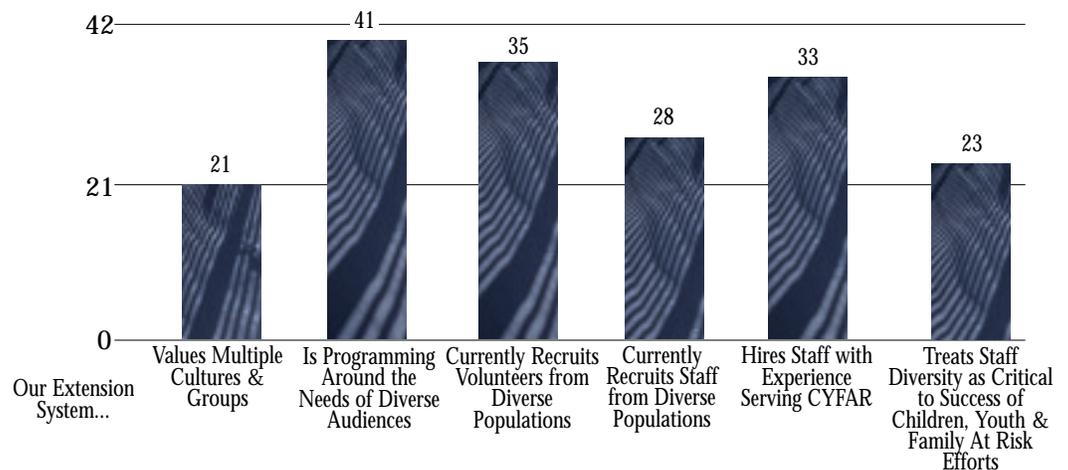


THIS COMPONENT WAS ADDRESSED BY TWELVE QUESTIONS ABOUT:

1. THE CURRENT STATUS OF DIVERSITY IN THEIR STATE EXTENSION SYSTEM;
2. PLANNING PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF DIVERSE AUDIENCES;
3. RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FROM DIVERSE POPULATIONS;
4. RECRUITING STAFF FROM DIVERSE POPULATIONS;
5. HIRING STAFF WITH EXPERIENCE SERVING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK;
6. TREATING STAFF DIVERSITY AS CRITICAL TO SUCCESS OF CYFAR EFFORTS;
7. WORK WITH DIVERSE ETHNIC POPULATIONS;
8. WORK WITH SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES;
9. WORK WITH LOW-INCOME FAMILIES;
10. WORK WITH PEOPLE AT RISK FOR PROBLEM BEHAVIOR;
11. WHETHER THEY FEEL SKILLED IN WORKING WITH DIVERSE AUDIENCES;
12. WHETHER THEY FEEL COMFORTABLE WORKING WITH DIVERSE AUDIENCES.

STATUS OF DIVERSITY AT THE SYSTEM LEVEL

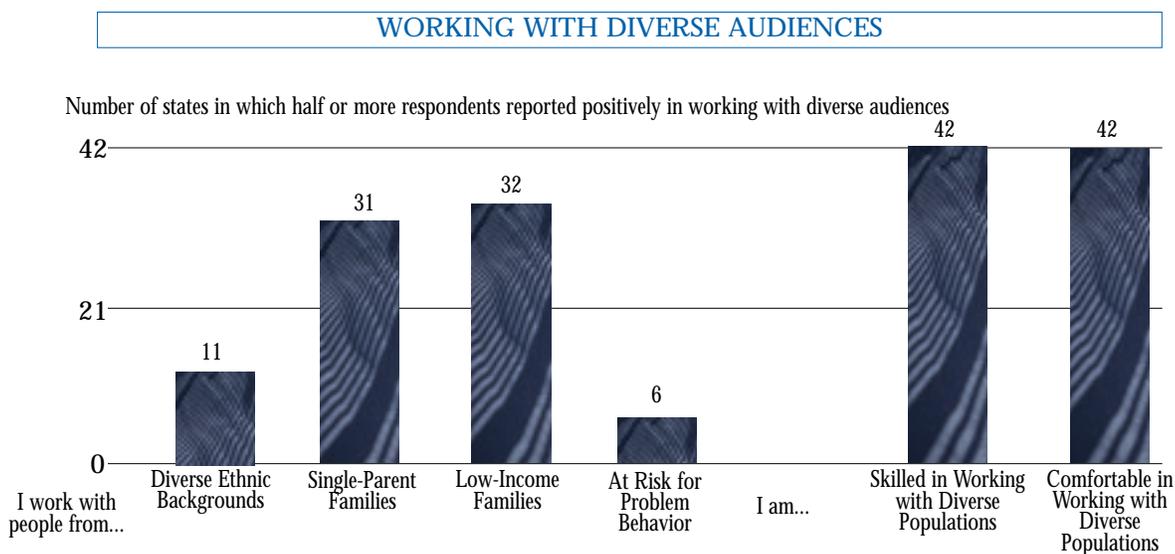
Number of states in which half or more respondents reported positively to the following question on diversity



THE BIG PICTURE

While the status of diversity varied widely across participating states, the results suggest that nationally, Cooperative Extension is fairly active in incorporating diversity in their work with children, youth and families at risk. Figure on previous page shows the number of states in which half or more respondents reported positively to multiple questions about the status of diversity of their state Extension system. Impressively, in 41 of 42 states, half or more respondents agreed that their Extension system is currently programming around the needs of diverse audiences. In addition, half or more respondents in 23 to 35 states agreed that their Extension system is incorporating diversity in recruiting and hiring volunteers and staff.

Figure below shows the number of states in which half or more respondents work with four different populations. It also shows the number of states in which at least half the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are skilled or comfortable working with diverse audiences. The results indicate that the majority of participating states are working much more with single-parent and low-income families (31 and 32 states, respectively) than with those from diverse ethnic backgrounds and those at risk for problem behavior (11 and 6 states, respectively). That every participating state had half or more respondents agreeing that they are both skilled and comfortable working with diverse audiences reflects very positively on the Cooperative Extension System and lays a solid foundation for improving Extension's work with diverse populations.



A CLOSER LOOK: THE STATUS OF DIVERSITY

STATUS OF DIVERSITY: QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
General Status of Diversity	28-43%	44-49%	50-58%	59-80%	49.98	10.60
Programming Around Needs of Diverse Audiences	33-68%	69-77%	78-81%	82-89%	73.62	11.48

*Percent of respondents within each state who indicated at least a "4" on a continuum from 1 to 5 measuring the status of diversity and "agree" or "strongly agree" that their state is currently programming for diverse audiences. State percentages are included in state reports.

When asked about the status of diversity in their Extension system, 28% to 43% of respondents in the bottom quartile and 59% to 80% of respondents in the top quartile reported that their system values multiple cultures and groups. Exactly half the participating states had at least half their respective respondents indicate that their system values multiple cultures and groups.

Extension professionals overwhelmingly agreed that their Extension system is currently programming around the needs of diverse audiences. Even in the bottom quartile, up to 68% of the respondents agreed that their state is currently addressing needs of diverse audiences. In the top quartile, an impressive 82% to 89% of respondents agreed that their state is meeting the needs of diverse audiences. Four states (Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio and Wisconsin) were in the top quartile in both these questions, while five states ranked in the bottom quartile.



A CLOSER LOOK: DIVERSITY IN HIRING AND RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

RECRUITING AND HIRING VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF FROM DIVERSE AUDIENCES:
QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Recruits Volunteers from Diverse Populations	35-54%	55-64%	65-70%	71-79%	62.14	11.31
Recruits Staff from Diverse Populations	35-44%	45-54%	55-60%	61-76%	53.21	10.12
Hires Staff with Experience Serving CYFAR	31-51%	52-59%	60-66%	67-78%	58.17	10.18
Diversity of Staff Seen as Critical	28-46%	47-51%	52-58%	59-70%	50.74	9.96

*Percent of respondents within each state who "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statements. State percentages are included in state reports.

Table above indicates that on average, most states are recruiting both volunteers (62%) and staff (53%) from diverse populations. Respondents in nearly every state reported that their system is doing more to recruit volunteers than staff from diverse populations. This is congruent with the responses to questions about recruitment of staff and volunteers in an ideal system. In a majority of states (33 of 42), at least half the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their Extension system hires staff with experience serving children, youth and families at risk.

Two states (Arizona and Wisconsin) ranked in the top quartile in at least three of the four items. Both these states also ranked in the top quartile for recruiting volunteers and staff from diverse audiences and hiring professionals with experience serving children, youth and families at risk. Both ranked in the second or top quartile in whether staff diversity is seen as critical in the Extension System. In contrast, seven states ranked consistently low in at least three of the four items. Six of the seven were ranked in the bottom quartile for both recruiting volunteers and recruiting staff from diverse audiences.



A CLOSER LOOK: RESPONDENTS' OWN WORK WITH DIVERSE AUDIENCES

WORK WITH DIVERSE AUDIENCES: QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
People from Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds	12-27%	28-40%	41-56%	57-87%	42.00	18.87
People from Single-Parent Families	36-48%	49-58%	59-64%	65-79%	56.50	10.86
People in Low-Income Families	25-52%	53-62%	63-65%	66-92%	59.64	13.52
People At Risk for Problem Behavior	17-31%	32-38%	39-42%	43-66%	38.33	10.78
Skilled in Working with Diverse Audiences	39-63%	64-68%	69-77%	78-92%	69.79	11.05
Comfortable Working with Diverse Audiences	67-81%	82-86%	87-90%	91-100%	85.40	7.70

*Percent of respondents within each state who indicated at least a "4" on a continuum from 1=none to 5=a lot the extent to which they work with different populations and those who "agree" or "strongly agree" on their skill and comfort levels. State percentages are included in state reports.

With few exceptions, Extension professionals reported working extensively with people in low-income families and single-parent families. Relatively fewer respondents reported working extensively with people from diverse ethnic groups and people at risk for problem behavior.

Results above suggest that respondents across states are both skilled and comfortable working with diverse audiences. Between, 39% and 63% in the bottom quartile and between 78% and 92% in the top quartile agreed that they were skilled in working with diverse audiences. An impressive 67% to 81% of respondents in the bottom quartile and 91% to 100% in the top quartile agreed that they were comfortable working with such audiences.

Six states (Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Louisiana and Puerto Rico) ranked in the top quartile in at least four of the six questions. All six ranked in the top quartiles on questions about skill and comfort levels working with diverse audiences. These states were generally in the top two quartiles on the remaining questions. Six states ranked in the bottom quartile in at least four of the six questions. These states ranked in the third or bottom quartile on all questions but those regarding comfort level in working with diverse audiences.

Components 5 and 6 of the CYFAR Initiative acknowledge that collaborations of professionals both within and outside Extension are critical to strengthening programs and policy for children, youth and families. Because of this commonality, results for these two components are addressed together.



THIS COMPONENT WAS ADDRESSED BY NINE QUESTIONS ABOUT:

1. SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM CAMPUS-BASED FACULTY;
2. WORK WITH OTHER EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS IMPROVING PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK AUDIENCES;
3. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER COMMUNITY, STATE AND FEDERAL ORGANIZATIONS ENHANCING EXPERIENCE AND CREDIBILITY IN WORK WITH AT-RISK AUDIENCES;
4. COLLABORATION BEING WORTH THE EFFORT;
5. ENGAGING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS IN IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES IN THEIR COMMUNITY;
6. PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY TASK FORCES WORKING ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY ISSUES;
7. WORK WITH OUTSIDE GROUPS INFLUENCING HOW EXTENSION WORKS WITH AT-RISK CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES;
8. PROVISION OF RESOURCES NECESSARY TO ENGAGE IN COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS;
9. WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH VARIOUS PROFESSIONALS.

THE BIG PICTURE

Figure that follows displays the number of states in which half or more Extension professionals agreed or strongly agreed with each of eight items regarding work with others. Half or more respondents in 24 of the 42 states agreed or strongly agreed that they receive support from campus-based faculty. In nearly all states (41 of 42), half or more respondents agreed that working with other Extension professionals has improved their programs for at-risk audiences. In all 42 states, at least half the respondents agreed with the following: collaboration with other community, state and federal organizations enhances their experience and credibility in work with at-risk audiences, collaboration is worth the effort; engage program participants in identifying and addressing the needs of children, youth and families in their community; participate in community task forces working on children, youth and family issues; and work with outside groups influences how Extension works with at-risk children, youth and families. While most agree that working with others is critical in serving children, youth and families at risk, in only 2 of the 42 states did half or more respondents agree that they are provided the resources (time and money) necessary to engage in collaborative efforts.

5 COMPONENT

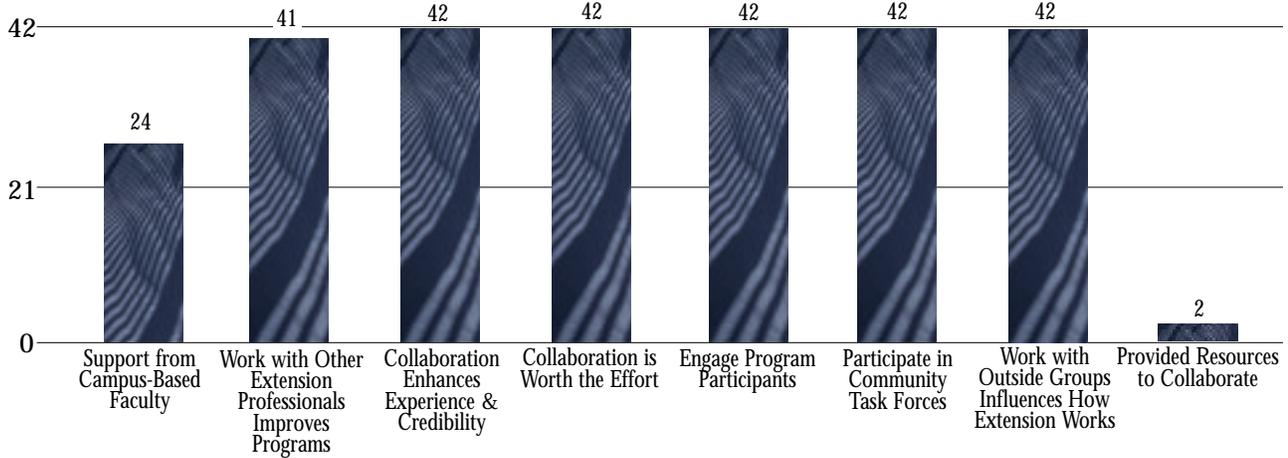
Promote (internal) collaborations of Extension 4-H, Family and Consumer Science, Agriculture, Community Development and other University departments in programming for children, youth and families at risk across the state.

6 COMPONENT

Promote and join (external) collaborations of community, county, state and federal agencies and organizations to strengthen programs and policy for children, youth and families.

WORK WITH OTHERS

Number of states in which half or more Extension professionals “agree” or “strongly agree” with each item



A CLOSER LOOK: WORK WITH OTHERS

WORK WITH OTHERS: QUARTILE RANGES OF STATE PERCENTAGES*

ITEM	BOTTOM QUARTILE	THIRD QUARTILE	SECOND QUARTILE	TOP QUARTILE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Receive Support from Campus-Based Faculty	12-36%	37-51%	52-67%	68-87%	51.76	18.58
Work with Other Extension Professionals has Improved Programs	46-72%	73-78%	79-84%	85-93%	77.07	9.80
Collaboration Enhances Experience and Credibility	67-76%	77-84%	85-89%	90-95%	82.90	7.39
Collaboration is Worth the Effort	66-79%	80-84%	85-88%	89-93%	83.19	6.56
Engage Program Participants	51-65%	66-70%	71-76%	77-94%	70.50	8.82
Participation in Community Task Forces	60-74%	75-80%	81-84%	85-94%	78.67	8.50
Work with Outside Groups Influences Extension Work	60-77%	78-83%	84-87%	88-96%	81.43	7.62
Provision of Resources Necessary to Collaborate	16-27%	28-36%	37-41%	41-60%	34.76	9.76

*Percent of respondents within each state who “agree” or “strongly agree” with each item. State percentages are included in state reports.

Most respondents agree that working with others is important (see Table on previous page). With the exception of support from campus-based faculty and the provision of resources necessary for collaboration, the state percentages for the remaining items ranged from approximately 50% to over 90%, with the lowest national average being 71%. There was a wide range of responses on the issue of support from campus-based faculty, as state percentages ranged from 12% to 87%. The national average was 52%. States also showed variability in the number of respondents who agreed that they are provided the resources (time and money) necessary to engage in collaborative efforts. State percentages ranged from 16% to 60%, with a national average of 35%.

An examination of the quartile rankings showed that two states (North Carolina and Wisconsin) consistently ranked in the top quartile in seven of the eight questions. Neither ranked in the third or bottom quartiles on any question. In contrast, four states consistently ranked in the bottom quartile on five items. These four states were also in the third or bottom quartiles on the remaining three items.

A CLOSER LOOK: THE COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK

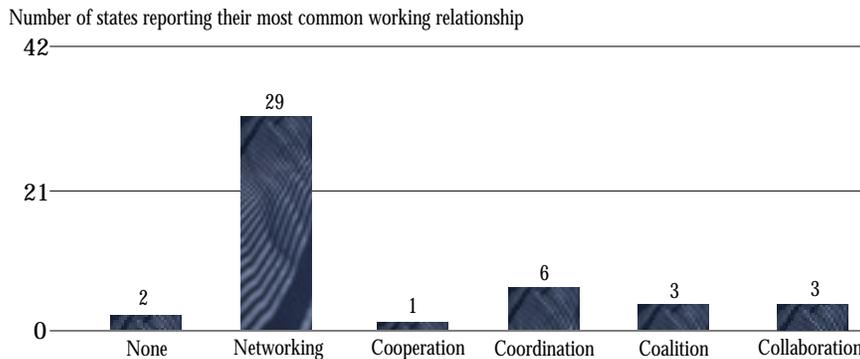
Several questions in Components 5 and 6 asked respondents about the extent to which they have built a relationship with other professionals, including Extension professionals from other counties, Extension professionals from other program areas (e.g., Agriculture, 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences), Extension professionals at the state level, community agencies and organizations, state agencies and organizations, and federal agencies and organizations. Response categories were adapted from the Collaboration Framework developed by the National Network for Collaboration. These categories and a brief description of each follows:

- NONE: no working relationship;
- NETWORKING: establish dialogue and common understanding;
- COOPERATION: match needs and coordinate efforts to avoid duplicating services;
- COORDINATION: share or merge resources to address common issues or to create something new;
- COALITION: share ideas, leadership and resources over several years;
- COLLABORATION: build an interdependent system to accomplish shared vision and outcomes.

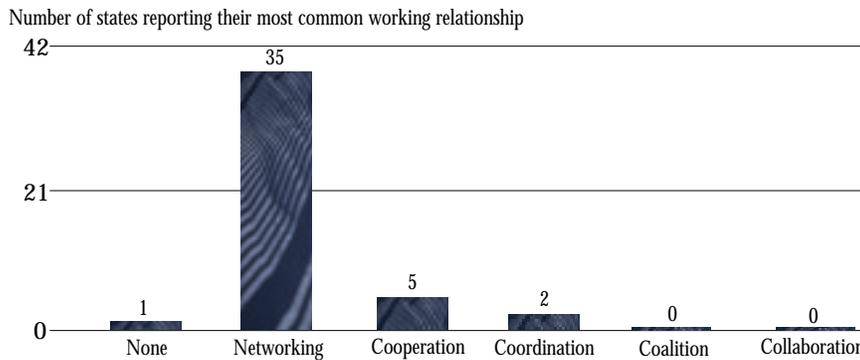
It is important to note that while these categories are hierarchical in nature (i.e., increasingly intensive working relationships), they do not necessarily imply that the more intensive levels are always more desirable or appropriate.

Component 5 focuses on collaborations of professionals within Extension. Across states, a general trend emerged (see Figures below). Networking was the most common working relationship with Extension professionals from other counties (29 states), with Extension professionals from other program areas (35 states), and with Extension professionals at the state level (34 states). However, in approximately one-fourth of the states, a more intensive working relationship was mentioned as most common with these groups of professionals.

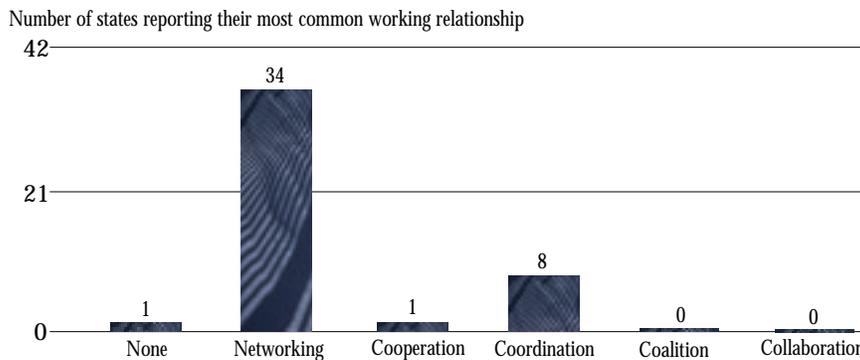
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS FROM OTHER COUNTIES



WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS FROM OTHER PROGRAM AREAS



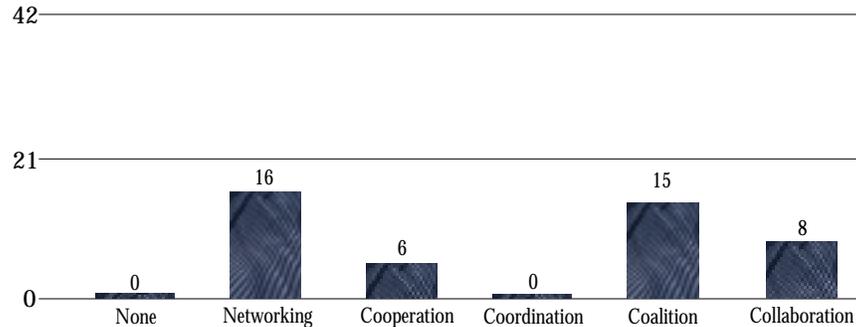
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS AT THE STATE LEVEL



Component 6 focuses on collaborations with professionals outside Extension – community, state and federal agencies and organizations. The most common working relationship varied by level of organization (see Figures below). An approximately equal number reported networking (16 states) or coalition (15 states) with community agencies. Networking was overwhelmingly listed as the most common relationship with state organizations (37 states). Most respondents indicated that they had no relationship with federal agencies (29 states).

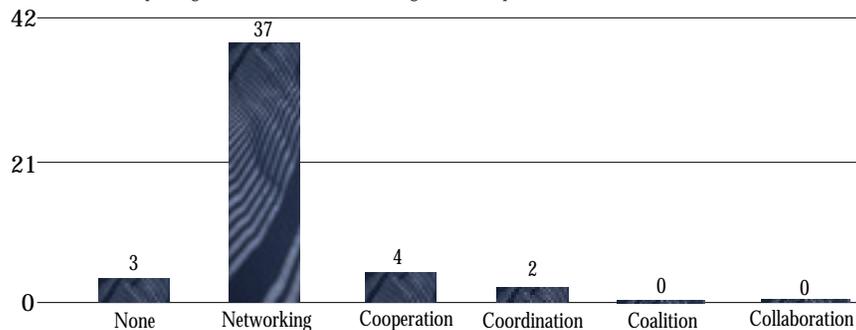
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Number of states reporting their most common working relationship



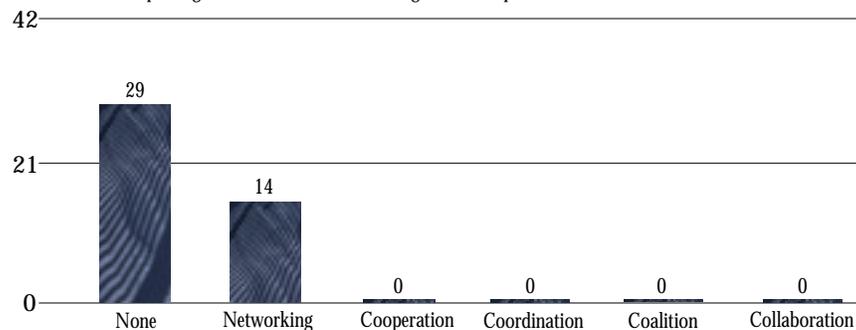
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH STATE AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Number of states reporting their most common working relationship



WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Number of states reporting their most common working relationship



As expected, respondents worked the least intensively with Extension and non-Extension professionals at state or federal levels and were more involved with those at a community level. Extension professionals worked more intensively with community agencies and organizations than they did with Extension professionals from other counties. Respondents were also asked to indicate the types of working relationships they ideally would like to have with these six groups. Most indicated that in an ideal system they would work more intensively with others.

