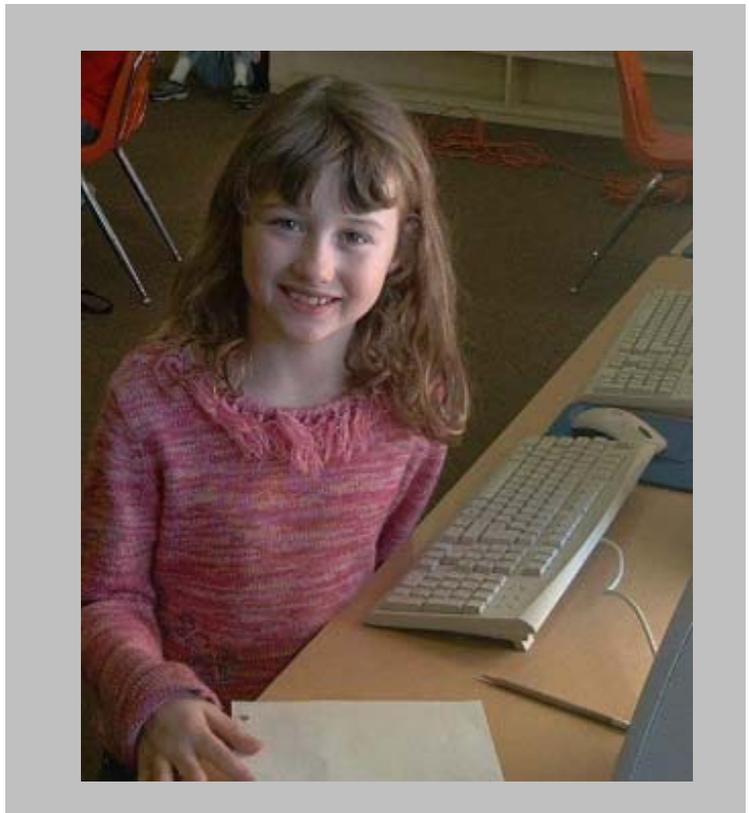


School of the 21st Century Online Mental Health Survey Report

Development of the Mental Health Program Component

21C is developing a component designed to help schools promote positive mental health.

In order to understand the current state of mental health in schools, we asked parents, teachers and other school professionals to complete an online survey to let us know their opinions.



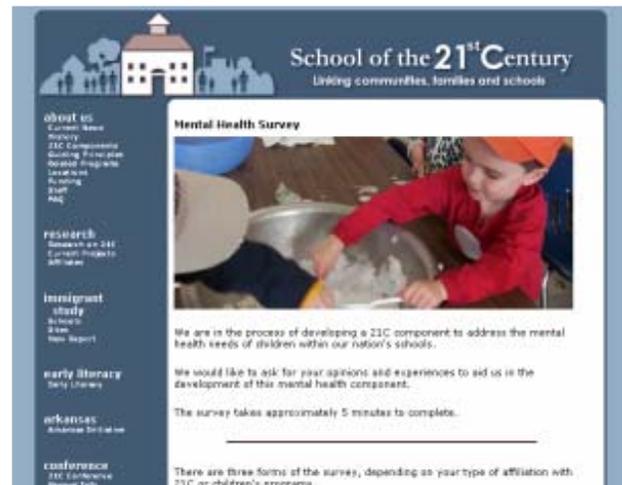
School of the 21st Century

Online Mental Health Survey

The 21C Mental Health Survey was released on September 8, 2003. The online mental health survey is located on the 21C website at <http://www.yale.edu/21c/surveymh.html>. This survey had separate forms for teachers, school administrators, parent educators, and parents. The survey was very brief and took approximately five minutes to complete.

As of the date of this report, April 12, 2005 we have received 313 surveys.

We have compiled the survey information in the following report to answer key questions related to the mental health in schools program component.



Each page of this report answers a specific question asked on the survey. Parents and school personnel sent us many useful comments, which are added in the report.

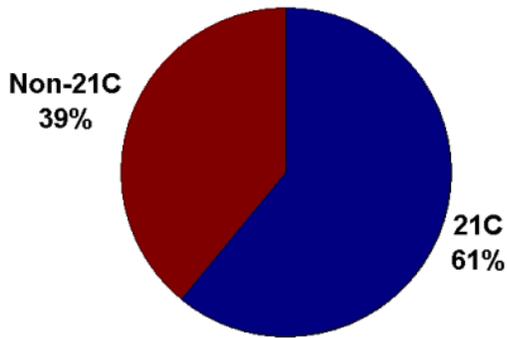
Many Thanks...

We would like to thank all those who took time out of their busy schedules to respond to our survey and give us their valuable thoughts and opinions.

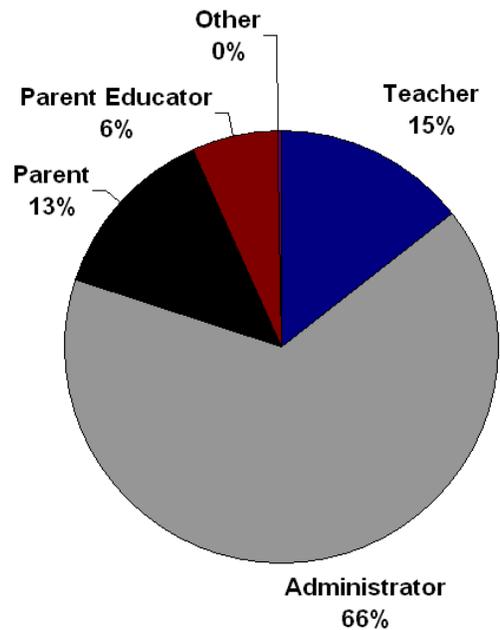
Online Mental Health Survey

Who has replied to the online survey?

Most of the respondents were 21C members, but 39% were not affiliated with 21C.



Most of our respondents were administrators, but many teachers and parents responded to the survey as well.



"It will be nice when all schools consider how important mental health is to all students."

- Parent

Are schools working with children with mental health problems?

100% of teachers, administrators and parent educators say that they do work with children with some kind of mental health problem.

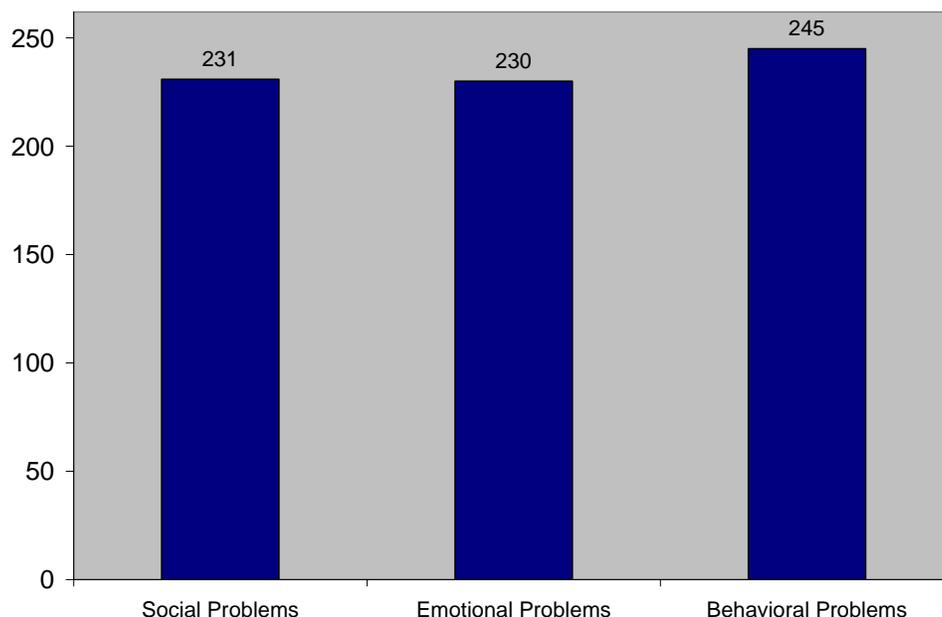


"Regarding 'type of problem,' I see all three kinds every year. Often, the behaviors which present are the result of emotional or social problems."

- Teacher

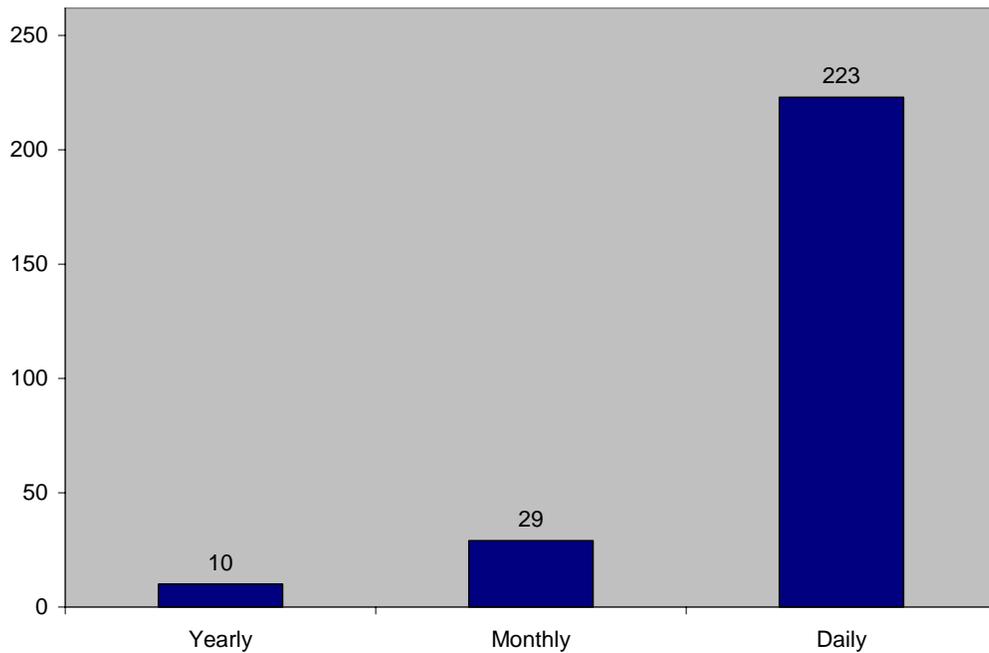
What types of mental health problems do these children have?

Out of 262 school professionals, 231 respondents stated they worked with children with social problems, 230 reported working with children with emotional problems, and 245 reported working with children with behavioral problems.



How often do these children need attention for the mental health problems?

Out of 262 school respondents, 223 (85%) reported they are working with these children on a daily basis.

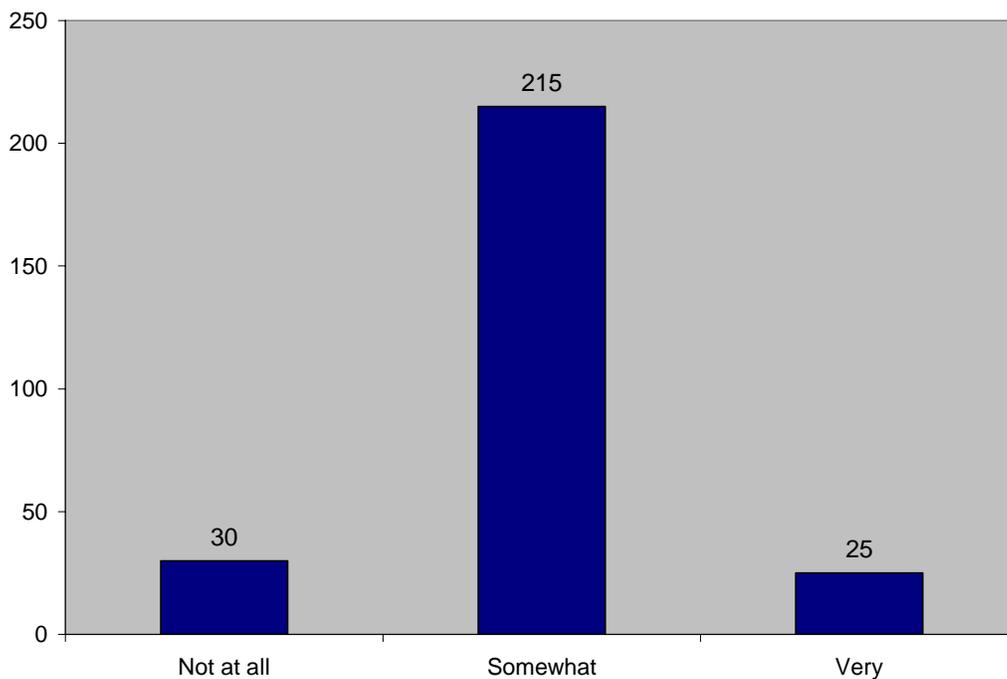


“The school has been asked to take on all of the problems in society. We need help from the community and caregivers of our children.”

- School Administrator

How prepared are our teachers to deal with these mental health problems?

The majority of school professional respondents (79%, or 215 out of 271) agreed that teachers are somewhat prepared to deal with these children. Only 11% felt that teachers were not at all prepared and 10% felt that they were very prepared.

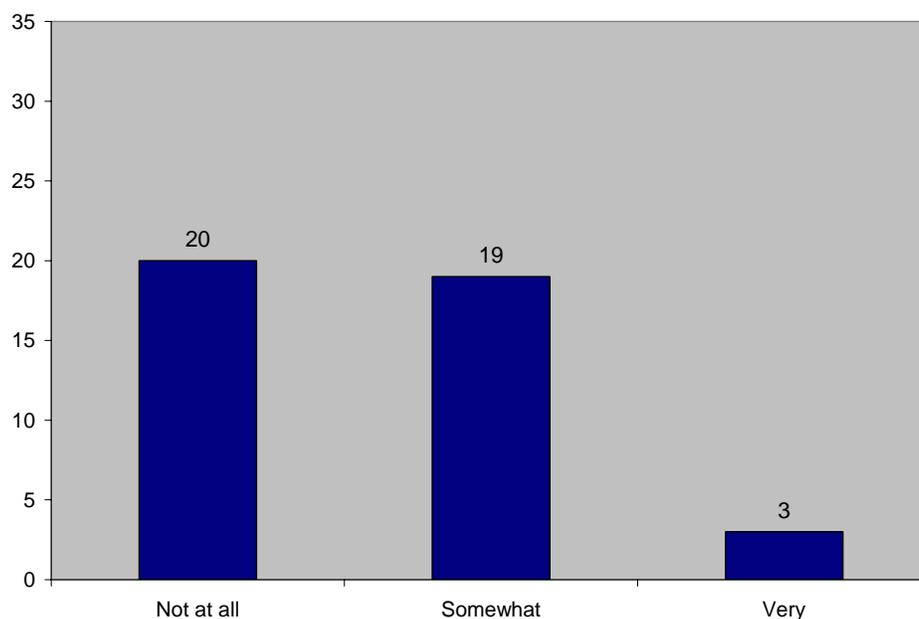


"Consultants need to be well-trained in strategies that help parents and children respond to strong feelings. This is overlooked in our schools and in our culture. The focus is often on controlling feelings rather than expressing feelings. There is an important and critical difference."

- Parent Educator

Do parents and school personnel disagree on how prepared teachers are?

Parents responded somewhat differently on this question in comparison to teachers and administrators. Similarly to the other group, approximately 7% felt that teachers were very prepared. Only 45% felt that teachers were somewhat prepared, and the majority of participants (48%) felt that teachers were not at all prepared.

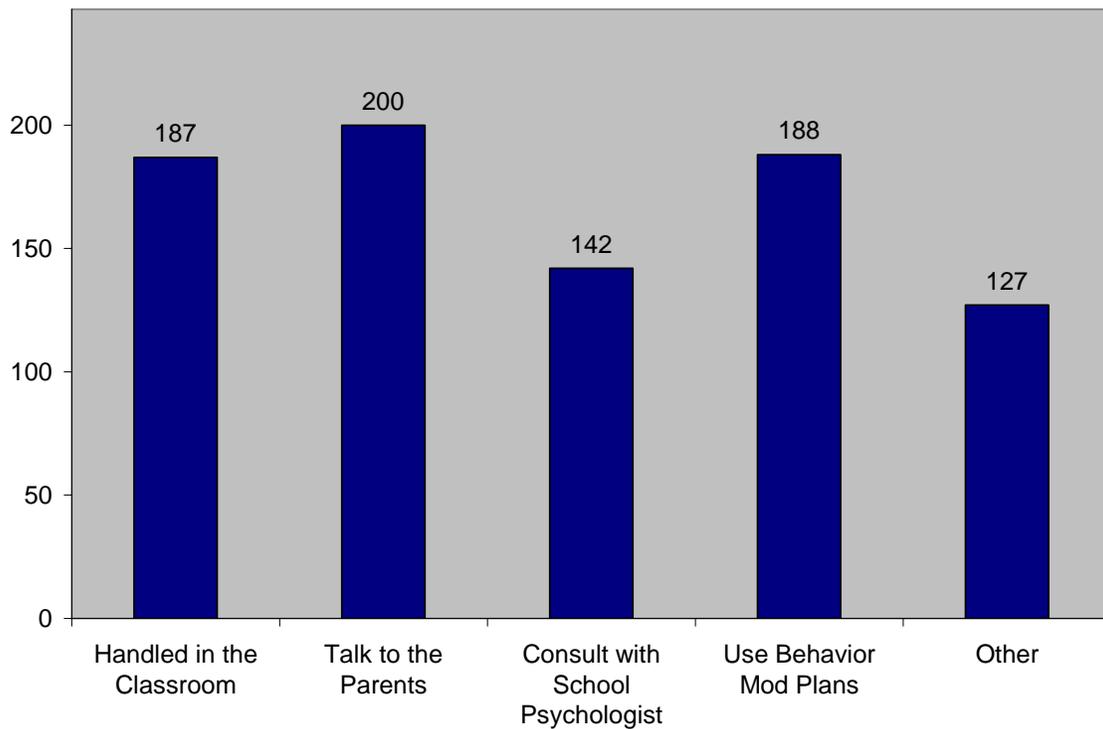


“My child has severe emotional problems... and has been at several schools... [who] wanted to be helpful, but didn’t know what to do and didn’t have the resources to devote as much time and attention as she needed.”

- Parent

What is currently being done with these children with mental health problems?

Of the 247 school respondents, several strategies are being reported. The most common response for "Other" is referral to an outside mental health agency or a networked meeting with teachers, parents and other school professionals.

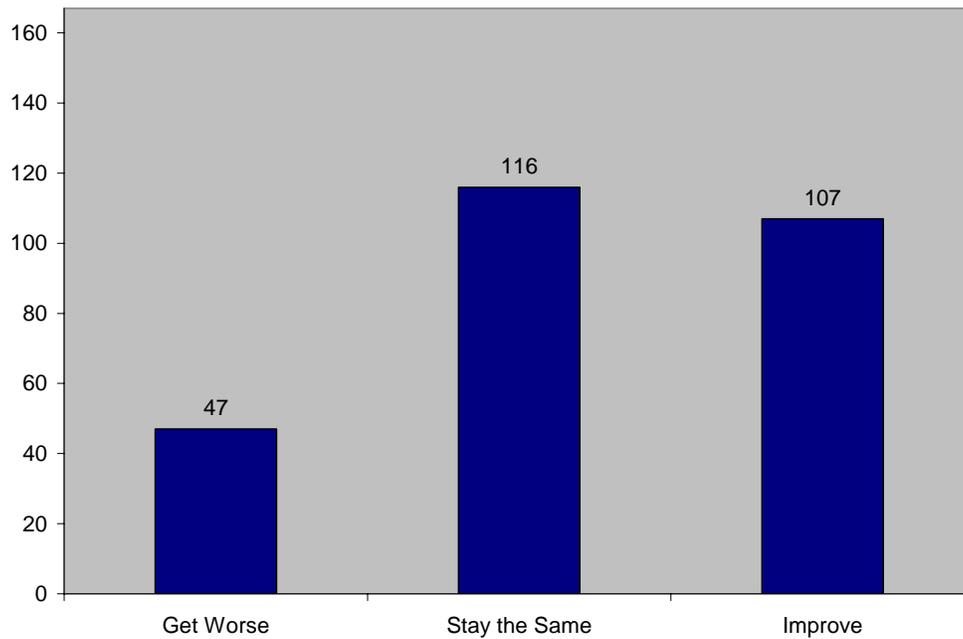


"I am very excited about the 21C Mental Health Component. I feel there is a great need for this. Being from a rural area, our resources are limited."

- Teacher

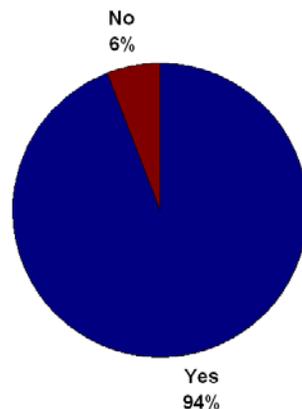
Do school personnel think the current interventions are generally helping children?

When asked what happens with most children with mental health problems, 40% felt most children did improve with the current interventions, but 60% felt that under the current interventions, the majority of children either stayed the same or experienced worsened symptoms.



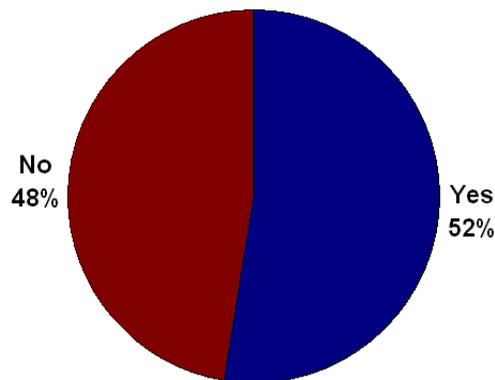
Do school personnel feel comfortable asking others for help with children that have mental health problems?

The majority indicated that, "Yes," they do feel comfortable asking for help.



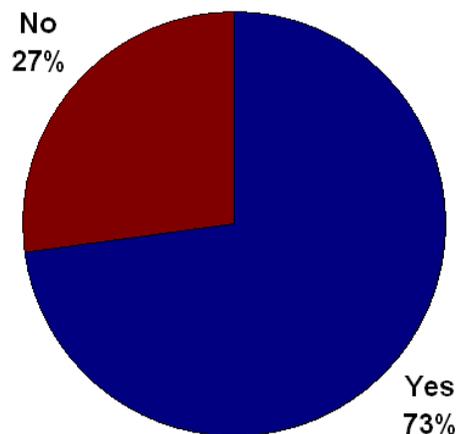
Do parents feel comfortable asking the school for help?

Approximately half of parents feel comfortable with their schools, half of them do not. The most common reasons parents cited for not feeling comfortable was that school professionals did not demonstrate knowledge regarding specific mental health problems, or the parents felt they themselves were blamed for their child's disorder.



Do parents at 21C schools feel comfortable asking the school for help?

The majority of parents at 21C schools do feel comfortable asking their school for help with their children.

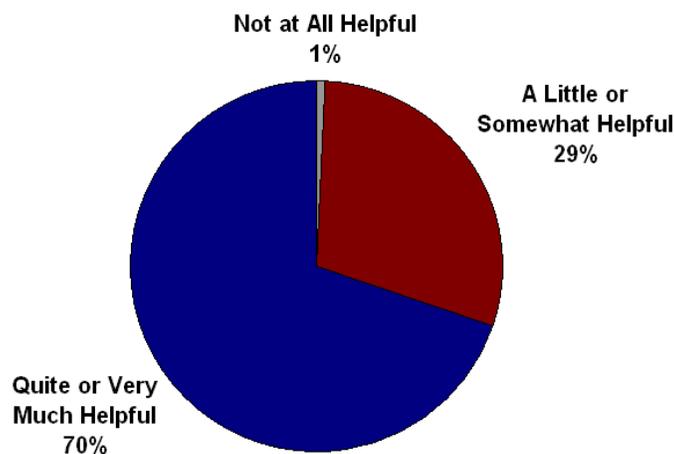


Would the proposed 21C intervention programs be helpful to these respondent's schools?

All respondents agreed that all four components would be quite useful (rated a 3 on a 0 to 4 scale).

What do the respondents think about the preventative mental health programs?

The majority of respondents feel that the preventative programs would be very useful.

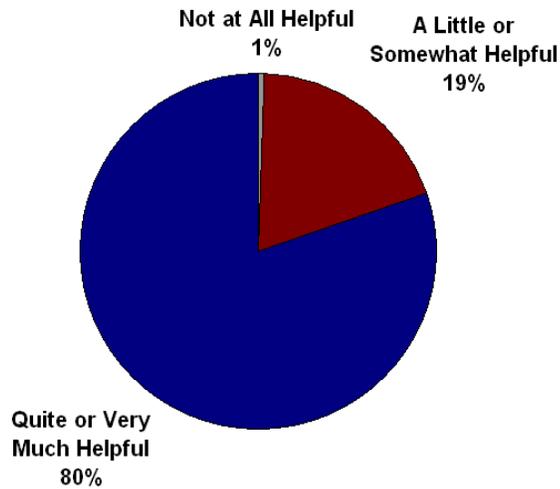


“I think it would be a fantastic addition to the program, particularly for preschool aged programs and children...We need to be more proactive in identifying children with potential mental health problems and supporting our teachers and administrators in having the proper resources to assist these children.”

-Administrator

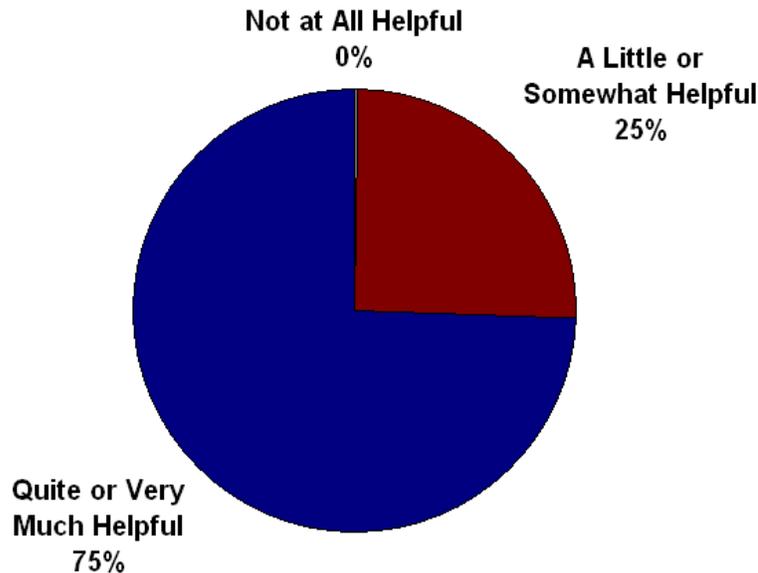
What do the respondents think about the parent and teacher mental health training programs?

The majority of respondents feel that the parent and teacher trainings would be very useful.



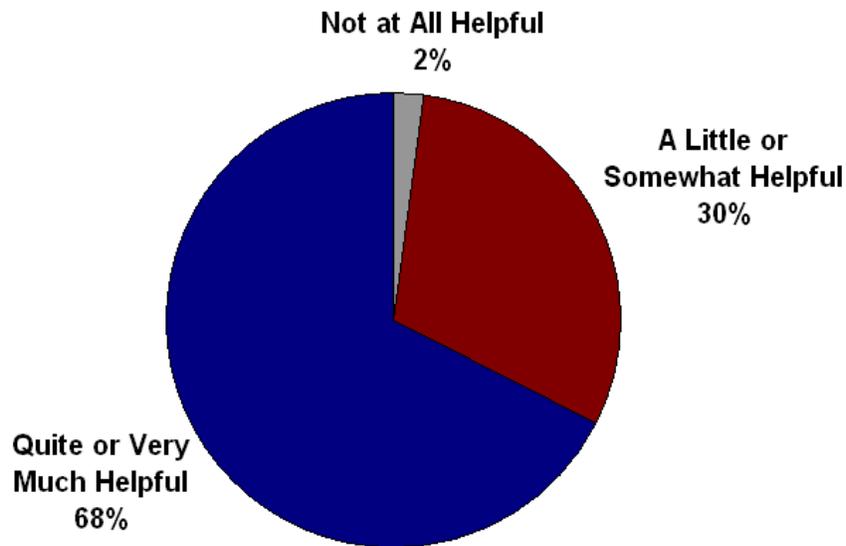
What do the respondents think about having 21C resource mental health materials available?

The majority of respondents feel that the resource materials would be very useful.



What do the respondents think about having a 21C mental health consultant available?

The majority of respondents feel that having a 21C mental health consultant available would be very useful.



“I think this type of program is long overdue... I hope the schools can make this type of program available to the students and community. With the stigma of mental illness being so strong, education is the key to understanding and helping these families dealing with mental disorders.”

-Parent

Conclusions:

In conclusion, our rudimentary survey reveals that mental health is a very important issue in today's schools. The sub-components proposed appear to be well-received by parents, parent educators, teachers and school administrators.

From this data, we know:

- 1) Mental Health issues are prevalent in schools.
- 2) The majority of teachers and school professionals do not feel well equipped to deal with these issues.
- 3) Parents, teachers, and school professionals may have great difficulty working as a team to help children with mental health issues.
- 4) Current interventions need to be updated as the majority of respondents felt children are still in need of considerable help.



"We need to be more proactive in identifying children with potential mental health problems and supporting our teachers and administrators in having the proper resources to assist these children."

- School Administrator



School of the 21st Century

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