

COVID-19 response in Region XI AIAN Head Start:

How children's centers and
programs faced the
pandemic

December 2020

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Lizabeth Malone
Sara Bernstein
Lana Garcia



Before we get started

- **All participants will be on mute in order to allow presenters to speak without background noise. Thank you.**
- **To ask a question, please use the “Question and Answer” option in your toolbar along the bottom of the screen.**
 - Please save your questions for the end when we open up the Q&A time.
- **Webinar recording will be made available**



In the majority of Region XI Head Start children's programs, directors thought the ability to use Head Start funds more flexibly in times of emergency was helpful to a great extent during the COVID-19 pandemic.

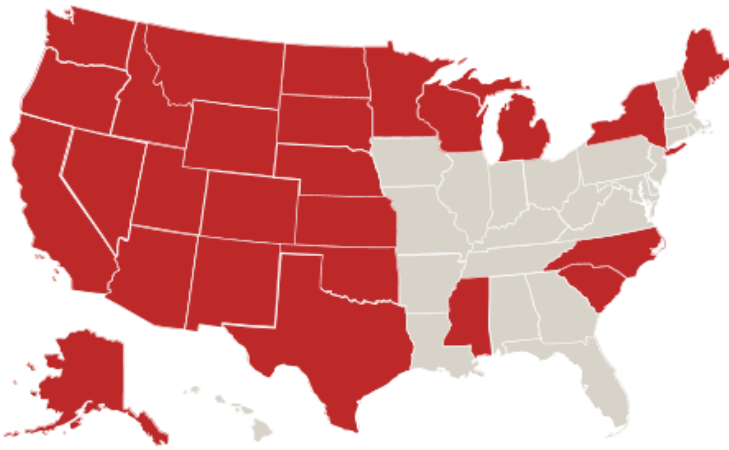


Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.12.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

Overview

States with Region XI Head Start Programs



2020 COVID and Head Start

- **January**
 - First confirmed COVID-19 case in the U.S.
- **February**
 - First U.S. COVID-19 death
- **March**
 - C.D.C. recommends no gatherings of 50 or more people
 - Shutdowns begin in the U.S.
- **April-present**
 - Pandemic continues, Head Start adapts

Presenters



Michelle Sarche
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
Colorado School of Public Health
Centers for American Indian & Alaska Native Health
Tribal Early Childhood Research Center



Lizabeth Malone and Sara Bernstein
Mathematica Policy Research



Lana Garcia
Walatowa Head Start Program



Agenda

- Brief overview of AIAN FACES
- Onset of the COVID-19 pandemic
- First findings on how Region XI programs and centers responded
- Extending the discussion



Brief overview of AIAN FACES



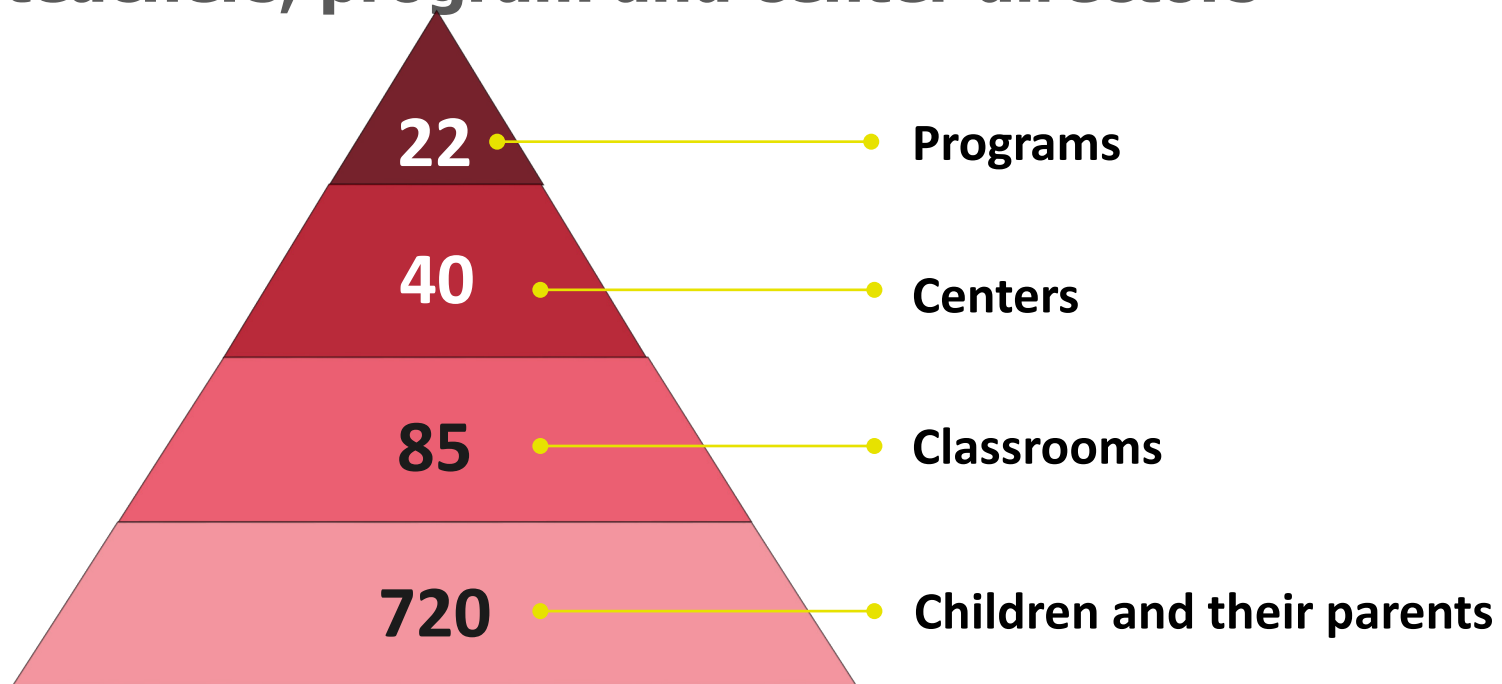
AIAN FACES 2015, the first national study of Region XI Head Start, serves as the foundation for AIAN FACES 2019

- AIAN FACES 2019 provides the latest information about Region XI and reflect the current policy and program practices
- Designed to represent children served in Region XI Head Start
- Collected data in fall 2019 with plan to return to programs in spring 2020



AIAN FACES 2019 included 22 randomly selected Region XI Head Start programs

- **Protocols for tribal review were followed in each community**
- **Data were collected from: children, parents, teachers, program and center directors**



Onset of the COVID-19 pandemic



Office of Head Start perspective on early days of the COVID-19 pandemic



Todd Lertjuntharangool
Regional Program Manager
Office of Head Start – Region XI

Program director perspective on early days of the COVID-19 pandemic



Lana Garcia
Walatowa Head Start Program



**Spring 2020
data
collection
started in
late February**

Data on the COVID-19 pandemic was collected from Program and Center Directors from June 2nd through July 17th



By mid-March many programs closed physical buildings and changed their operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic

73% of program directors and 60% of center directors responded

Questions about programs and centers responses to the COVID-19 pandemic included the following topics:

Program Director

- Program closure
- Contact with/services for enrolled families
- Changes in services/referrals for enrolled families
- Contact with/communication with staff
- Program enrollment concerns/efforts to maintain enrollment
- Professional development/support for staff
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding for summer program
- General program supports

Center Director

- Impact on staff, families, and community
- Program closure
- Contact with/services for enrolled families
- Changes in services/referrals for enrolled families

See link for all items:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/2019-faces-and-ai-an-faces-questions-from-program-and-center-director-questionnaires-about-covid-19>

First findings on how Region XI programs and centers responded to the COVID-19 pandemic



What contact did children's programs and centers have with children and families?

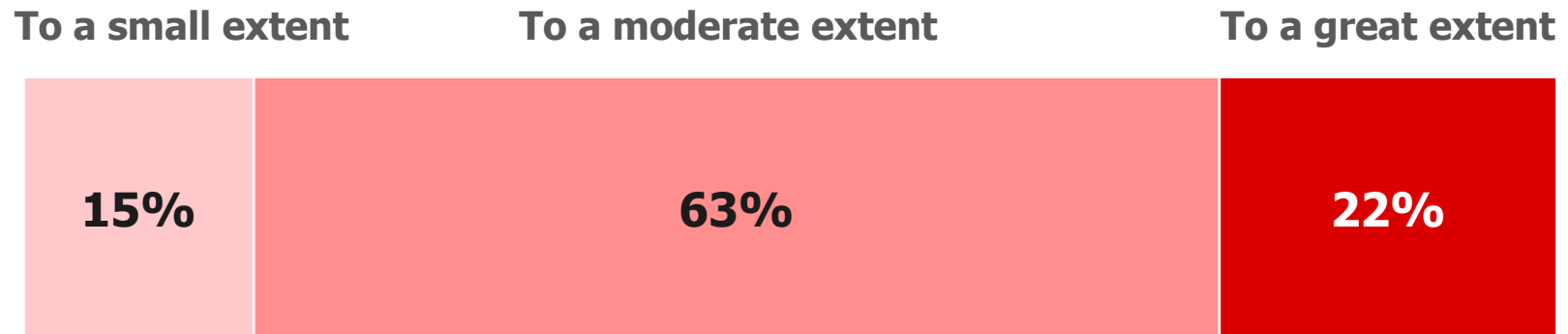




Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.20.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

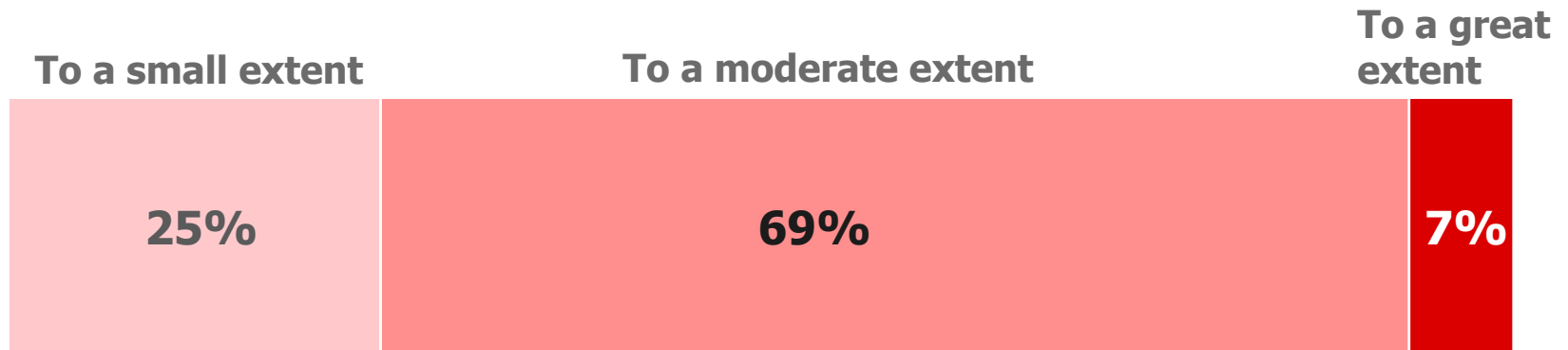
All Region XI Head Start children's programs were able to make contact with enrolled families during the COVID-19 pandemic, **to at least some extent.**



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.1.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. No program directors reported that they were not able to make contact with enrolled families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All Region XI Head Start children's programs were able to provide **at least some** services to enrolled families during the COVID-19 pandemic to some extent.

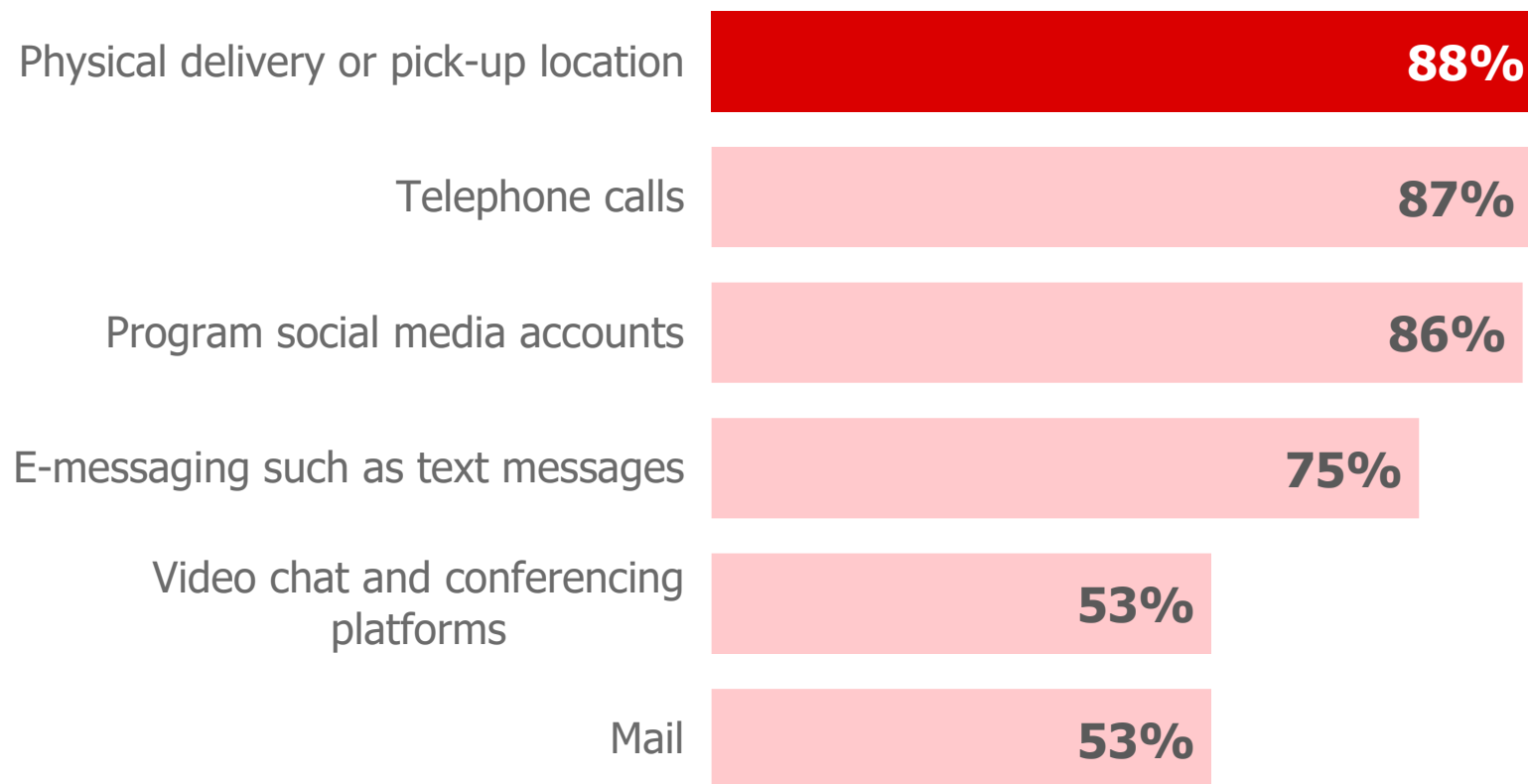


Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.1.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. No program directors reported that they were not able to provide services to enrolled families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Region XI Head Start children's center staff used a variety of strategies to contact families **as a group** during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most children's center staff used physical delivery or pick-up locations to communicate with families as a group.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.22.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Center directors could report more than one strategy, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

Region XI Head Start children's centers used a variety of strategies to provide services to children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most centers provided remote learning opportunities for children and dropped off or established family pick-up sites for distributions of materials, food, and supplies.

Providing remote learning opportunities for

92%

Dropping off or establishing family pick-up sites for distributions of materials, food, and supplies

92%

Partnering with other local entities

87%

Providing remote supports for parents

72%

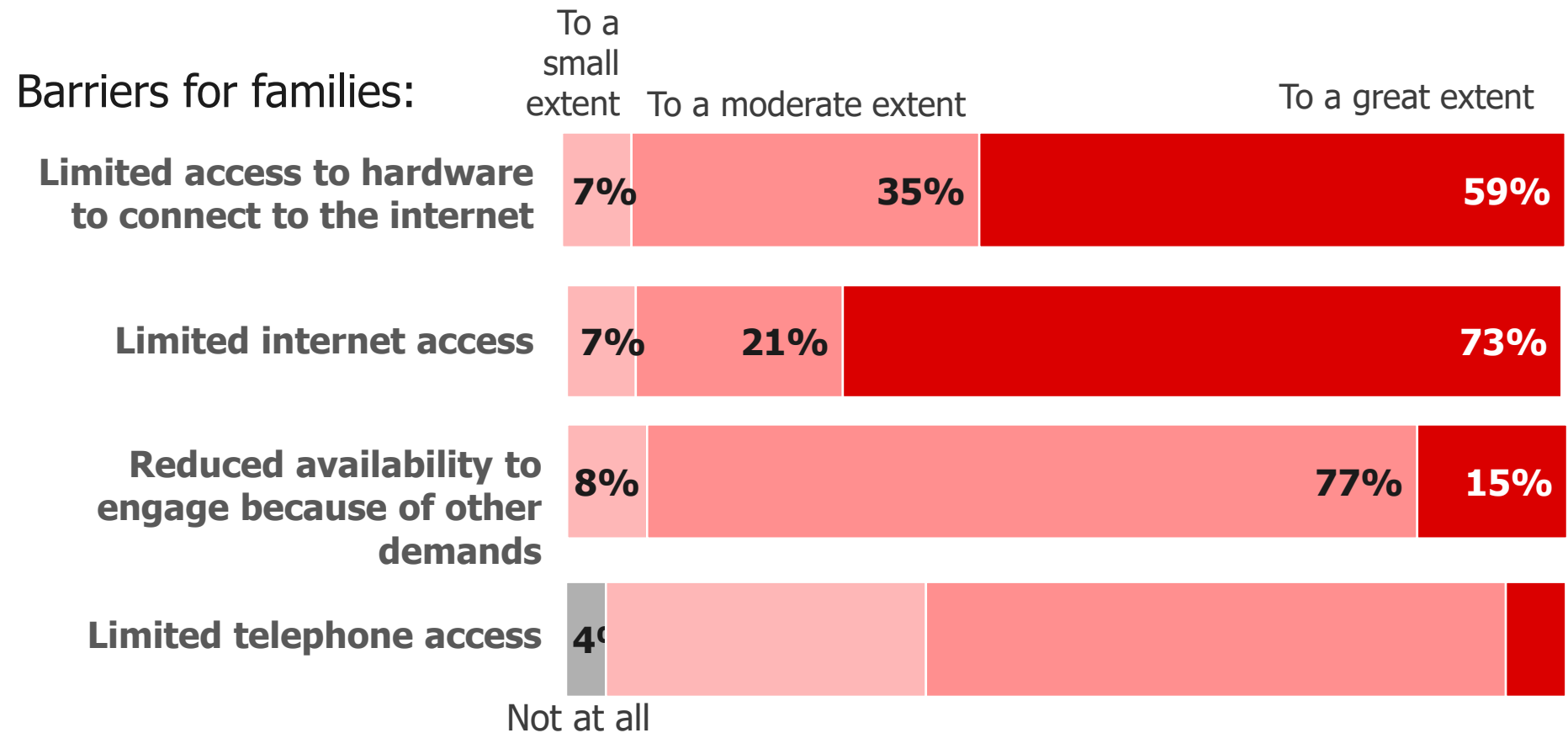
Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.24.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Center directors could report more than one strategy, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

Programs experienced both family-related and staff-related barriers to contacting or providing services to enrolled families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Directors reported more family-related barriers than staff-related barriers.



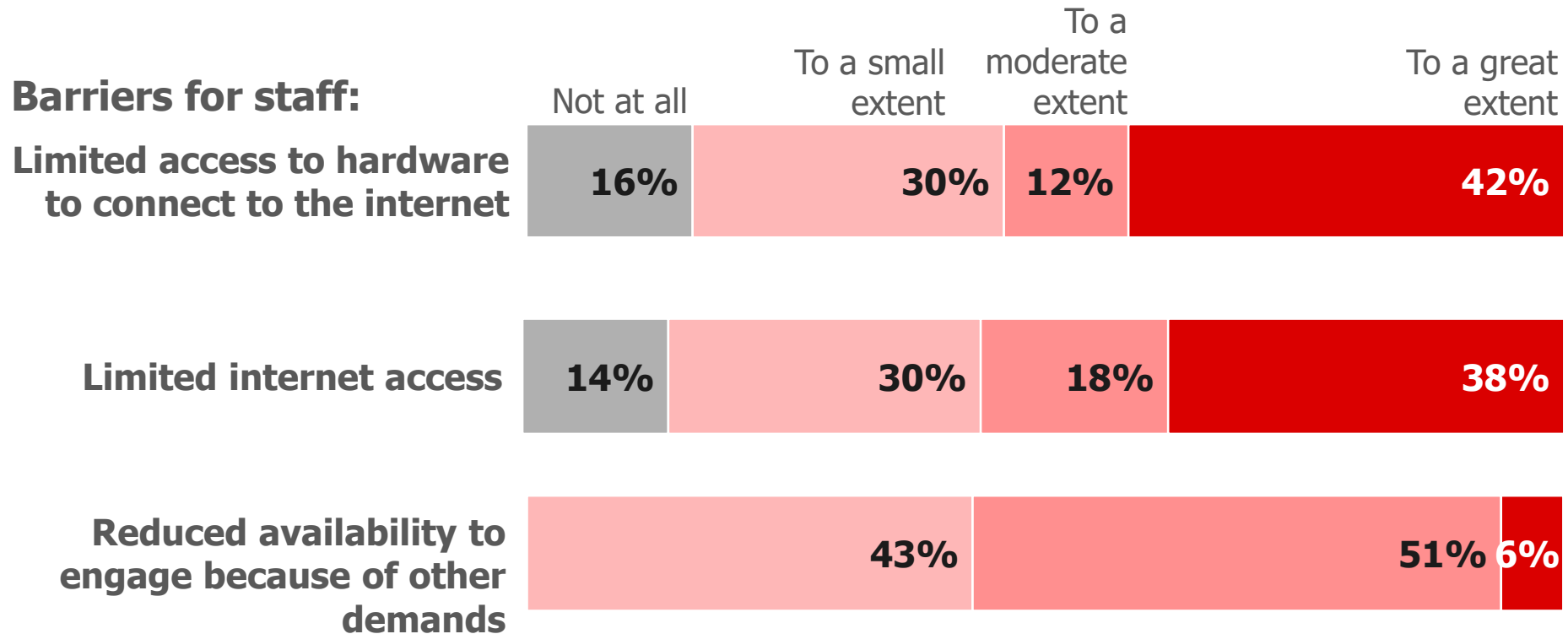
Region XI children's programs faced a variety of barriers to making contact with or providing services to families during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 AI/AN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.2.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

The biggest staff-related barriers Region XI children's programs faced were limited access to hardware to connect to the internet and limited internet access.



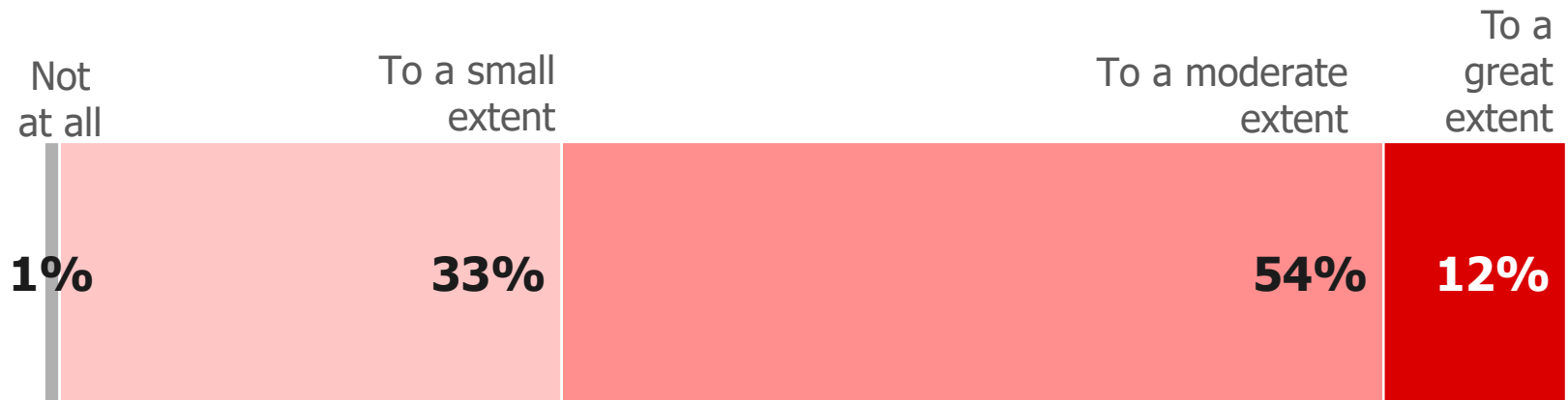
Source: Spring 2020 AI/AN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.2.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**What needs did families express
and what services did their
center provide to meet these
needs?**



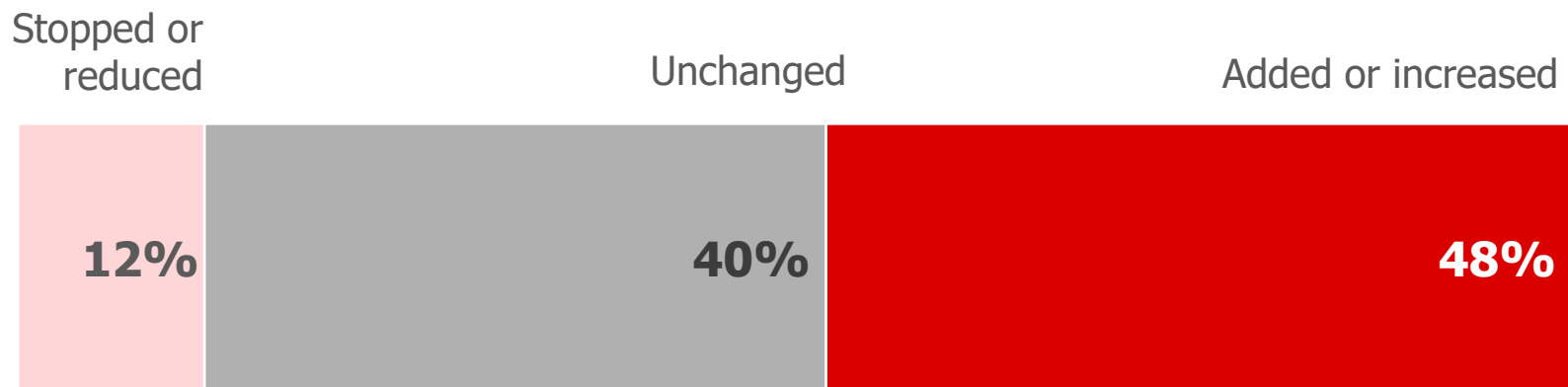
In the majority of Region XI children's centers, families told center staff that they needed educational activities to support their children's learning at home because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.25.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

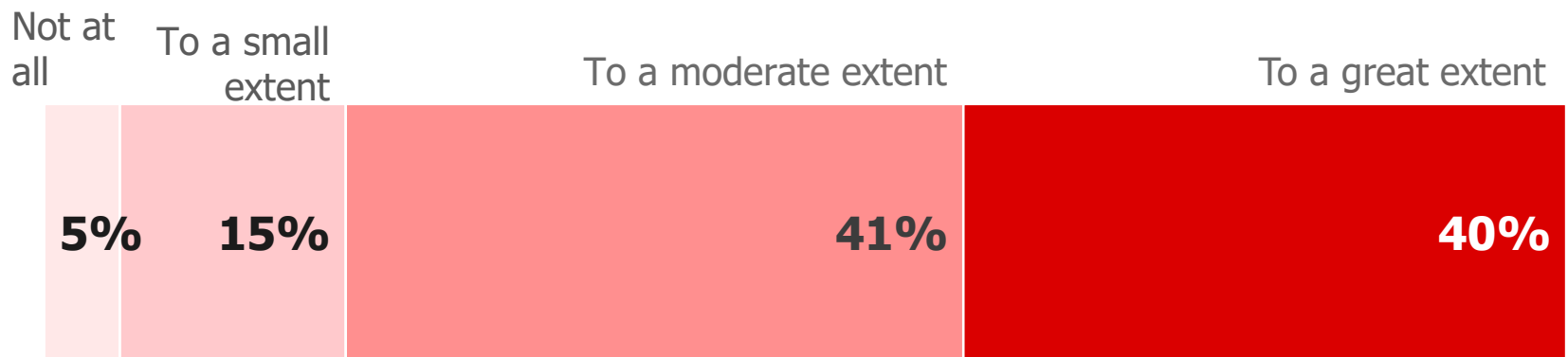
Almost 1/2 of Region XI Head Start children's centers added or increased educational activities to support children's learning at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.27.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

In the majority of children's centers, families told center staff because of the COVID-19 pandemic that they needed food and nutrition supports. For example, providing meals to families.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.25.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

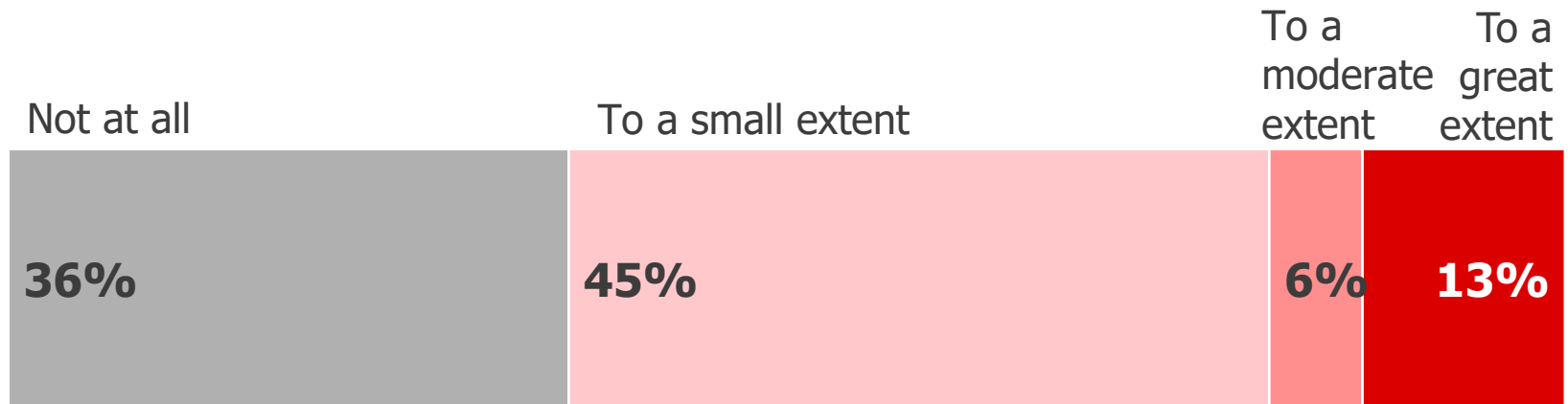
The majority of Region XI Head Start children's centers added or increased the food and nutrition services that they provided to families during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.27.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

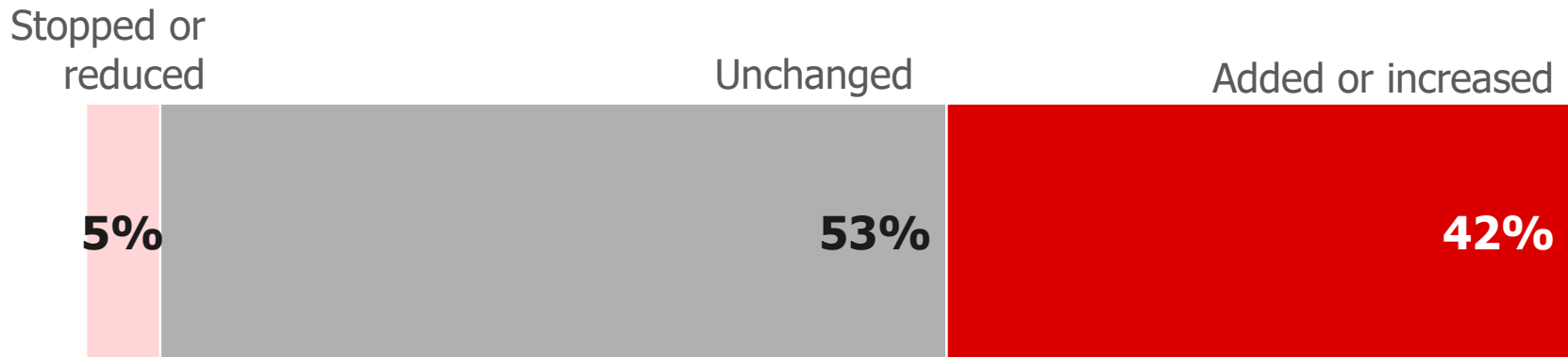
In the majority of Region XI Head Start children's centers, families told center staff that they needed virtual home visits because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.25.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages might not add up to 100 due to rounding.

More than 1/2 of Region XI Head Start children's centers did not change the provision of virtual home visits during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Center Director Survey, Table G.27.

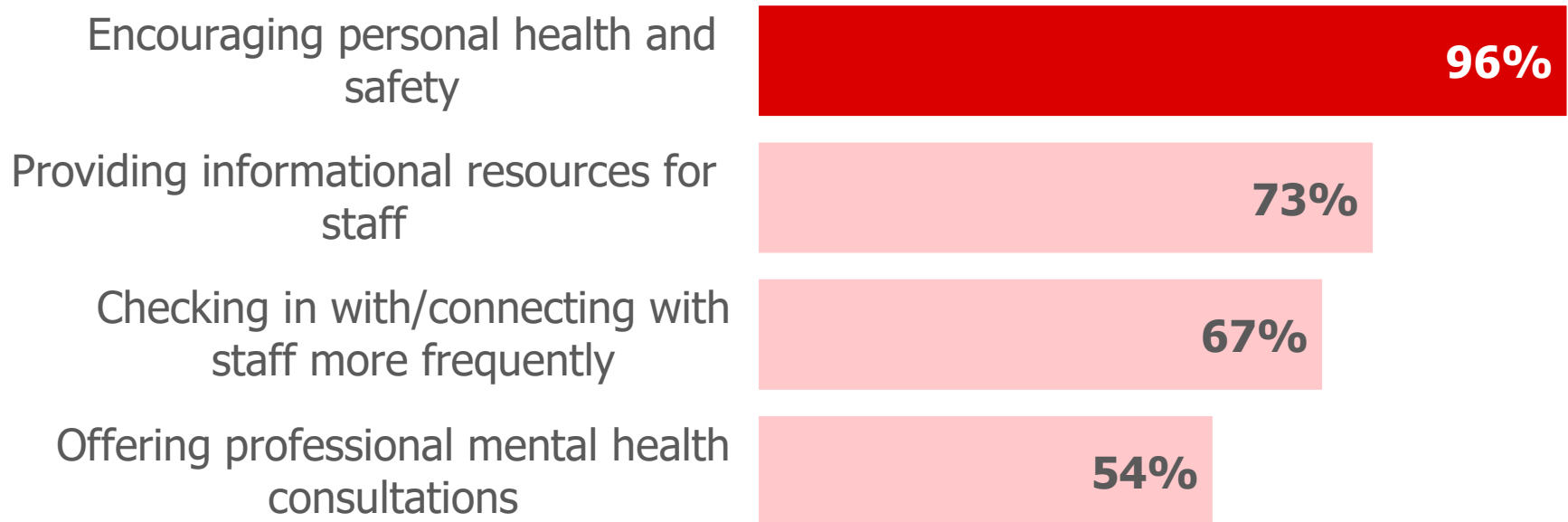
Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

What supports did children's programs find helpful, and what did they provide to staff?



Region XI Head Start children's programs encouraged staff to engage in many new or increased supports to improve their well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most programs encouraged personal health and safety (for example, social distancing, use of mask and gloves).



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.9.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

In more than 1/2 of Region XI Head Start children's programs, directors thought supports to help staff more easily access the internet were helpful to a great extent during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, hardware such as smartphones, Chromebooks, and laptops or MiFi/hotspots.



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.12.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

Region XI Head Start children's programs hoped to have many different supports to prepare for future emergencies, but especially trainings for family services staff and other staff to deliver content and services remotely.

Trainings for family services staff
to deliver content and services
remotely

79%

Guidance to create a plan for
continuing operations

78%

Supports to help families more
easily access the internet

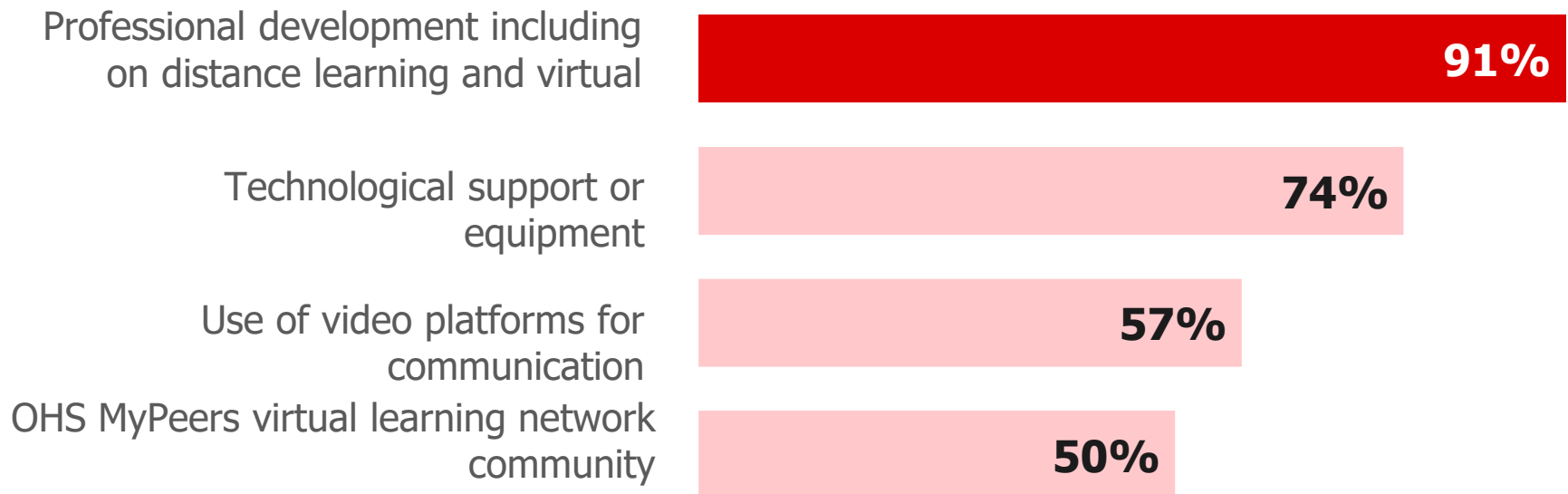
78%

Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.13.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020. Program directors could report more than one reason, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

Region XI Head Start children's programs provided many supports for professional development and day-to-day operations for their staff during the COVID-19 pandemic that were not provided before.

Most provided professional development (for example, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)) including on distance learning and virtual teaching strategies.

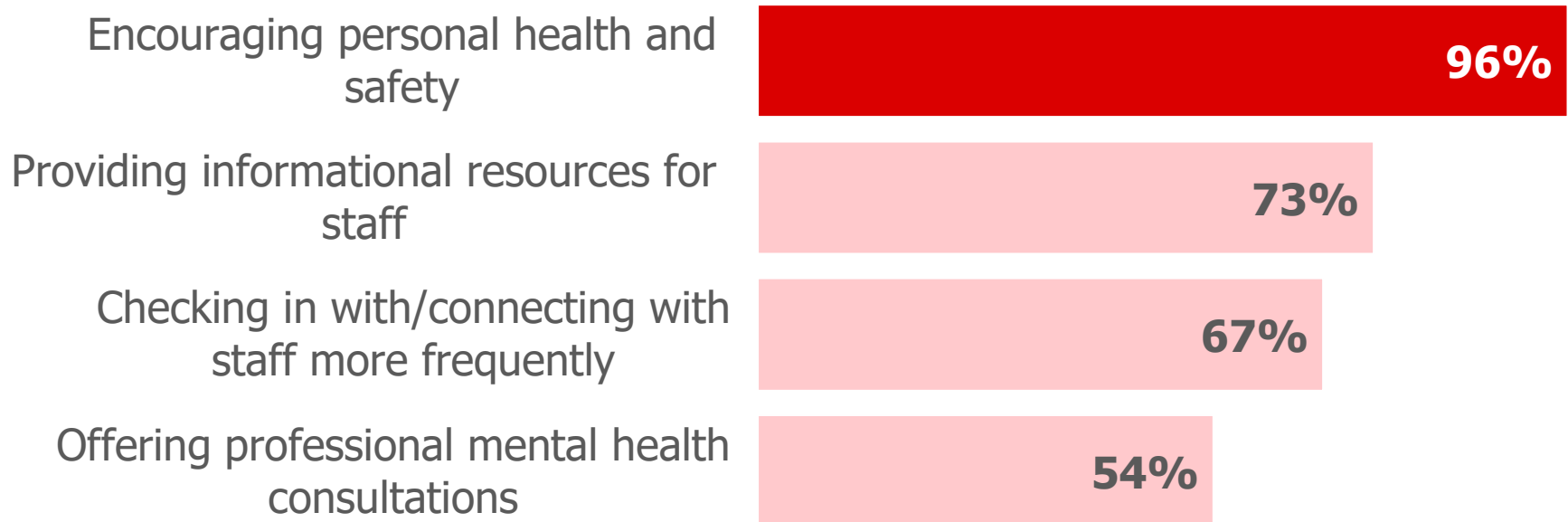


Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.8.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

Region XI Head Start children's programs encouraged staff to engage in many new or increased supports to improve their well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most programs encouraged personal health and safety (for example, social distancing, use of mask and gloves).



Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.9.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

Region XI Head Start children's programs provided many new or increased supports to improve staff retention during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most programs provided administrative leave.

Administrative leave

87%

More flexible hours

46%

Part-time/reduced work schedule

31%

Source: Spring 2020 AIAN FACES Program Director Survey, Table G.10.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children who were enrolled in Region XI Head Start in fall 2019 and were still enrolled in spring 2020.

Extending the discussion

Program director perspective on early days of the COVID-19 pandemic



Lana Garcia
Walatowa Head Start Program

Thoughts to share or questions?

- Please use the “Question and Answer” option in your toolbar along the bottom of the screen

Additional information



For more information

- To learn more about the study and study reports, see the AIAN FACES study page on the ACF website
 - <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/american-indian-and-alaska-native-head-start-family-and-child-experiences-survey-faces>
 - This webinar will be posted on the website
- To learn more about the data and apply for data access, see the study pages at the Child & Family Data Archive
 - AIAN FACES 2015 data available now:
<https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/archives/cfda/studies/36804>
 - AIAN FACES data available in 2021
 - Will include the limited set of spring 2020 child assessments and classroom observations for exploratory use



Study contacts

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Thank you and closing comments from Office of Head Start

Acknowledgments

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- AIAN FACES 2019 Workgroup

