
Head Start Families' Engagement with Programs: Data from FACES

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on Head Start Research and Evaluation
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FACES Study Design

- **Descriptive study of Head Start children, families and programs**
- **Regular periodicity: new cohort every 3 years (1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009)**
- **Nationally representative samples of 3- and 4-year-old children entering Head Start for the first time***
- **Longitudinal design: parent interviews, child assessments, and teacher-child reports at fall program entry, spring of 1 or 2 program years, spring kindergarten follow-up; management interviews in fall of first year**

*The FACES sample does not include children served in Migrant/Seasonal or American Indian/Alaska Native programs, or programs in Puerto Rico or U.S. Territories

Focus on Family Engagement

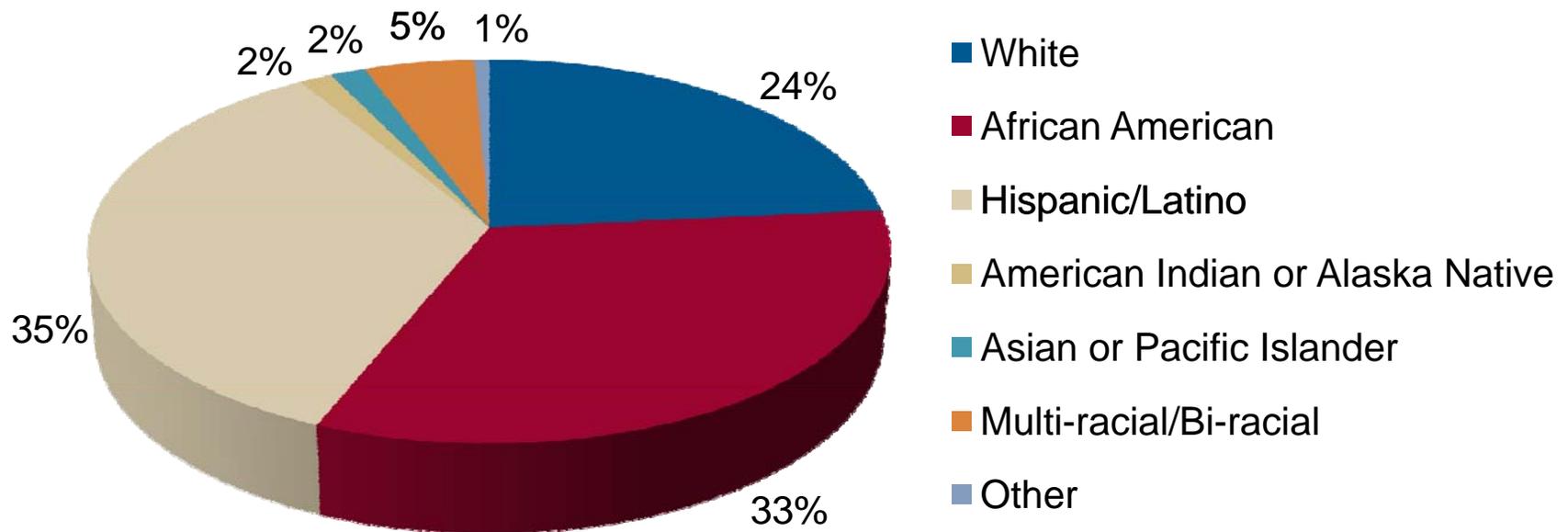
- **Family Demographics and Engagement**
 - Diversity of families served
 - Home language and immigration status
 - Parent mental health
 - Home learning activities with children
 - Involvement and satisfaction with Head Start
 - Barriers to program participation

- **Program Support for Family Engagement Staff**
 - Priorities for home visits by type of staff
 - Support for gaining credentials
 - Support for training and reflection
 - Frequency of home visits
 - Job satisfaction

Characteristics of Head Start Families

Head Start Serves A Diverse Group of Children

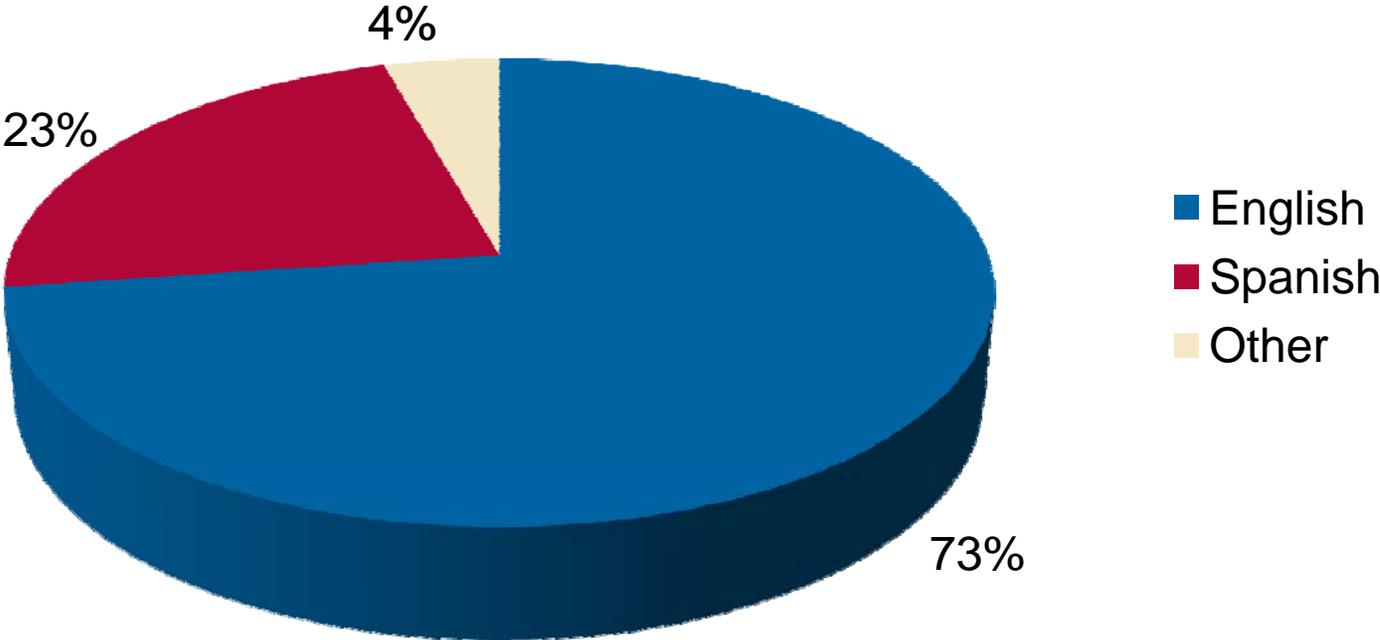
Percentage of Children



Source: FACES Fall 2006 Parent Interview

Spanish is the Primary Non-English Language

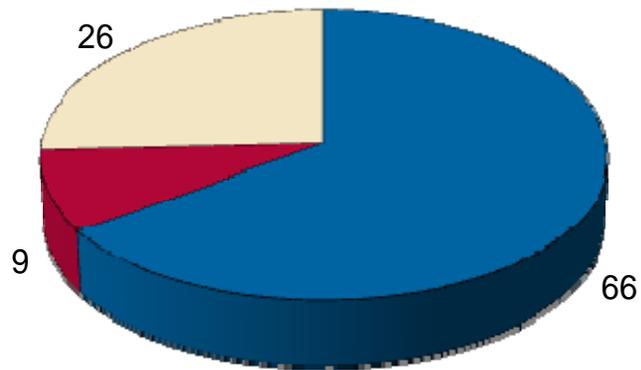
Percentage of Children



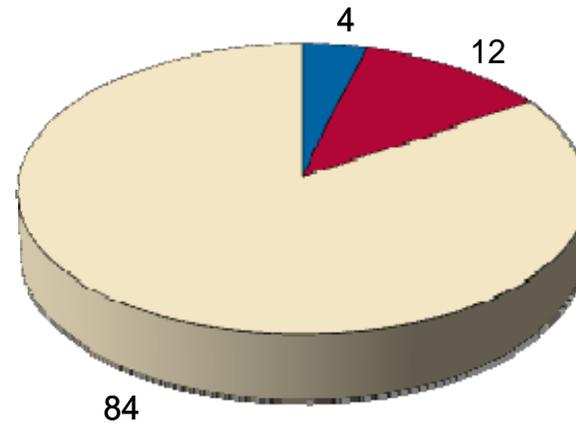
Source: FACES Fall 2006 Parent Interview

Immigration Status and Home Language

Percent of All Children

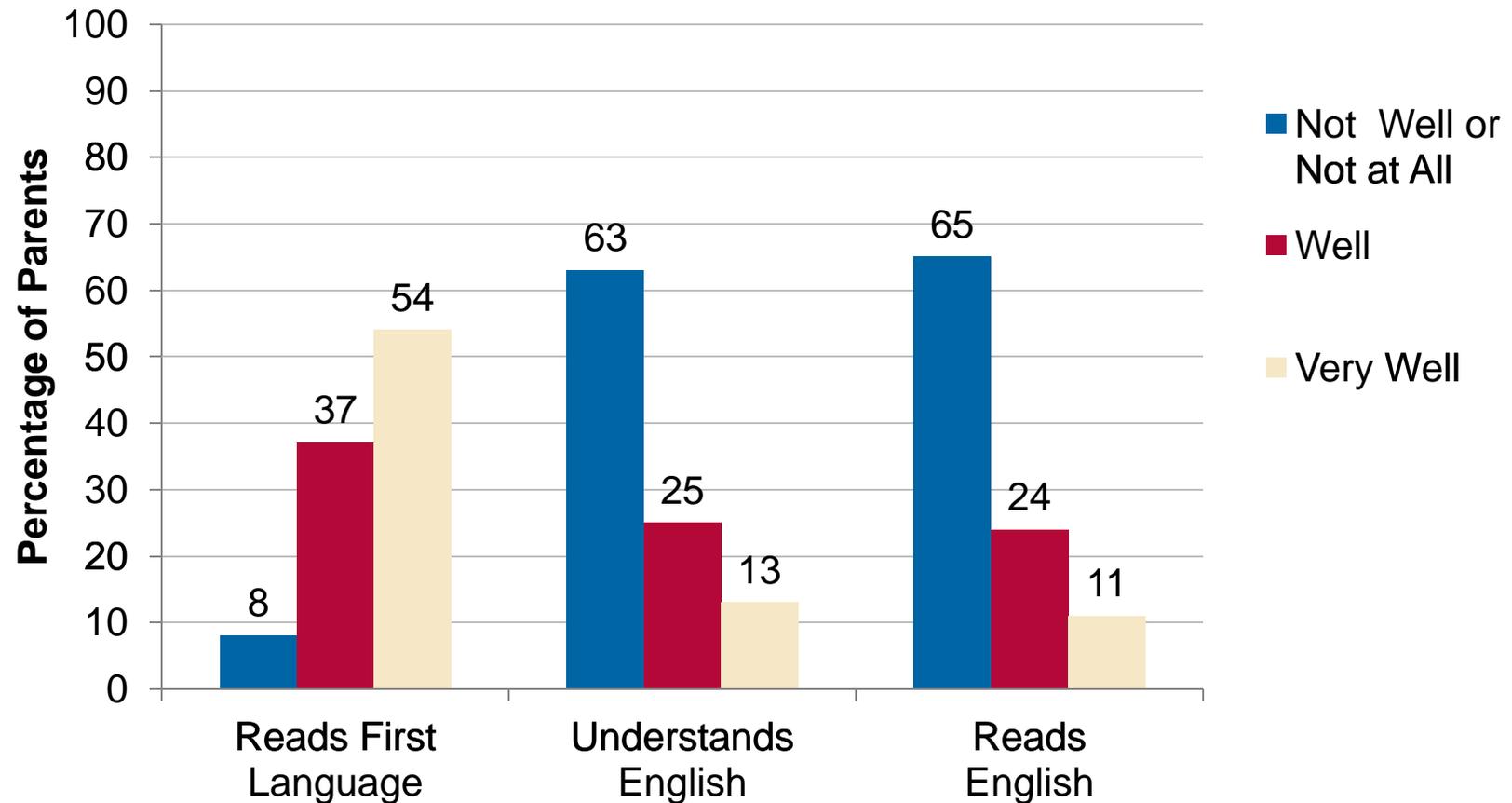


Percent of Children Spoken to in Language Other Than English



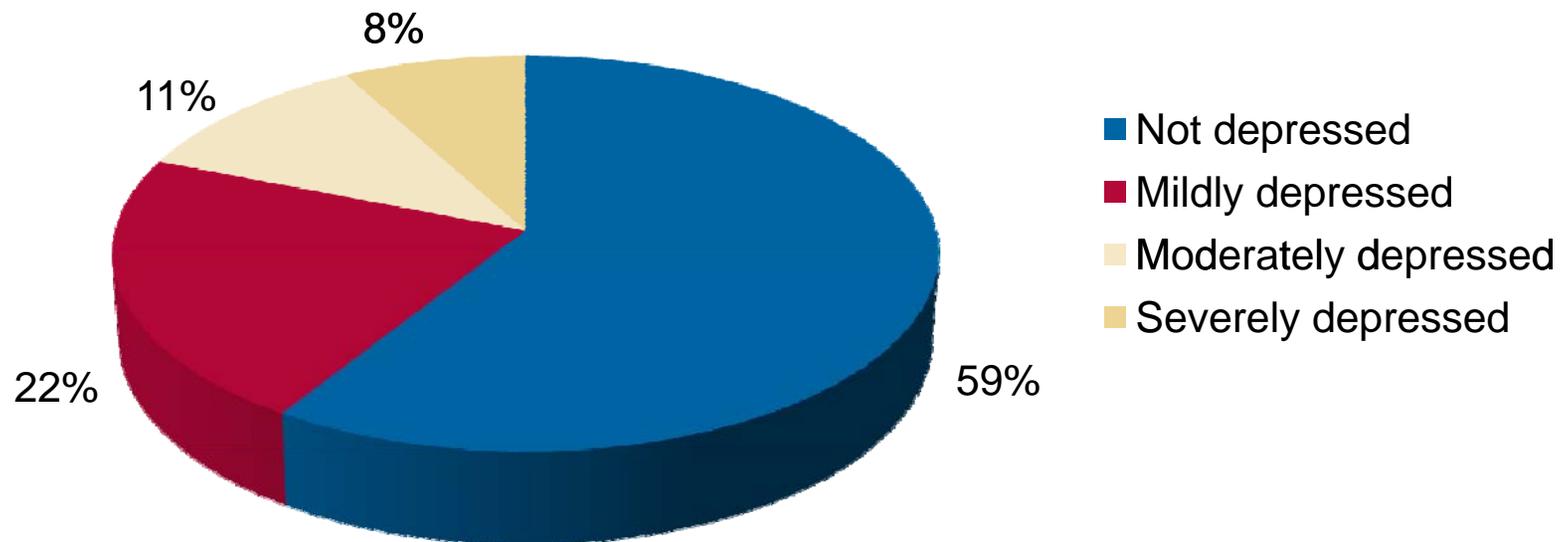
Source: FACES Fall 2006 Parent Interview

Parents of Dual Language Learners Have Varied Language Abilities



Source: FACES Fall 2006 Parent Interview

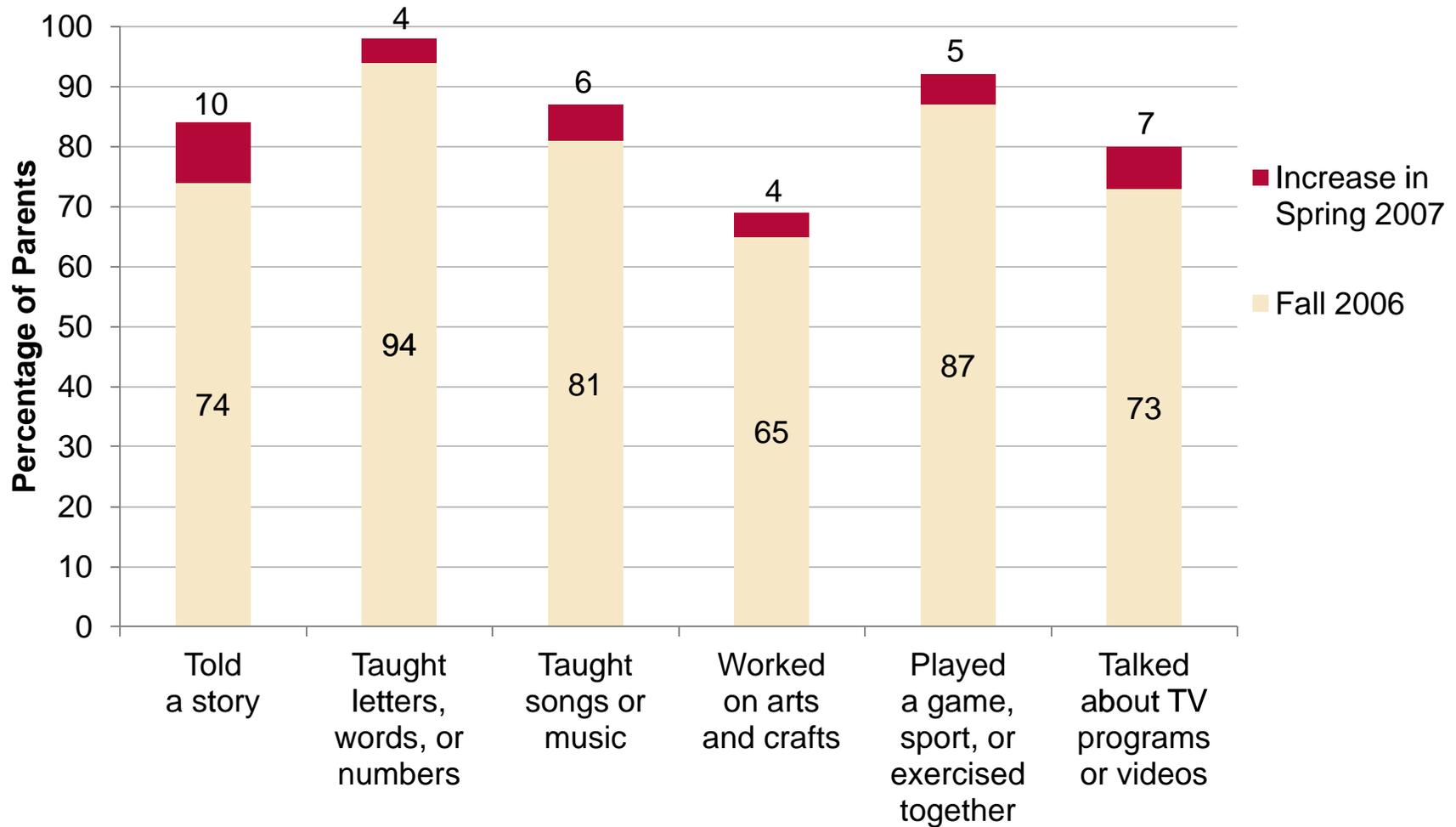
Parent Report of Depressive Symptoms



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

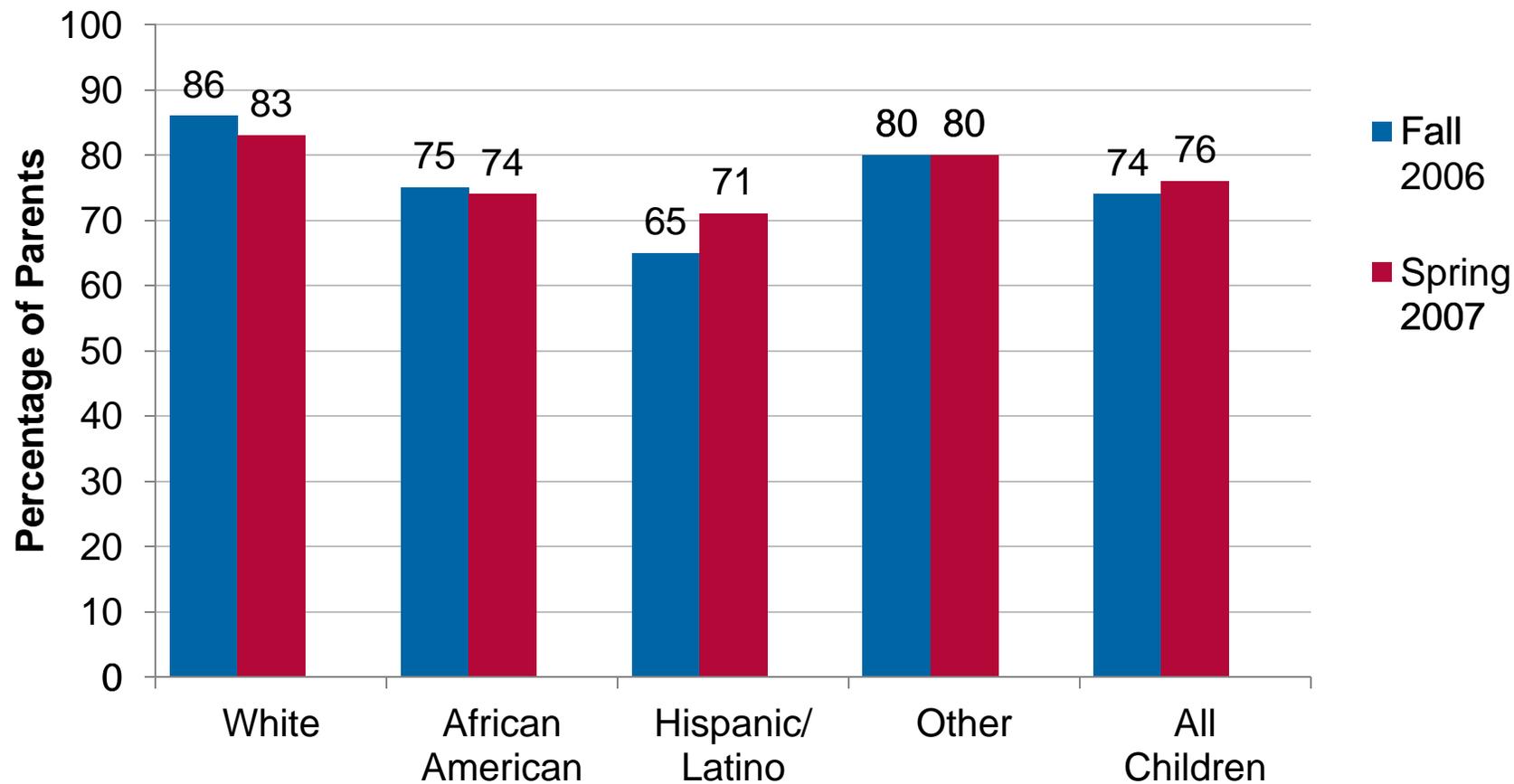
Family Engagement and Satisfaction

Family Members' Activities with Child in Past Week



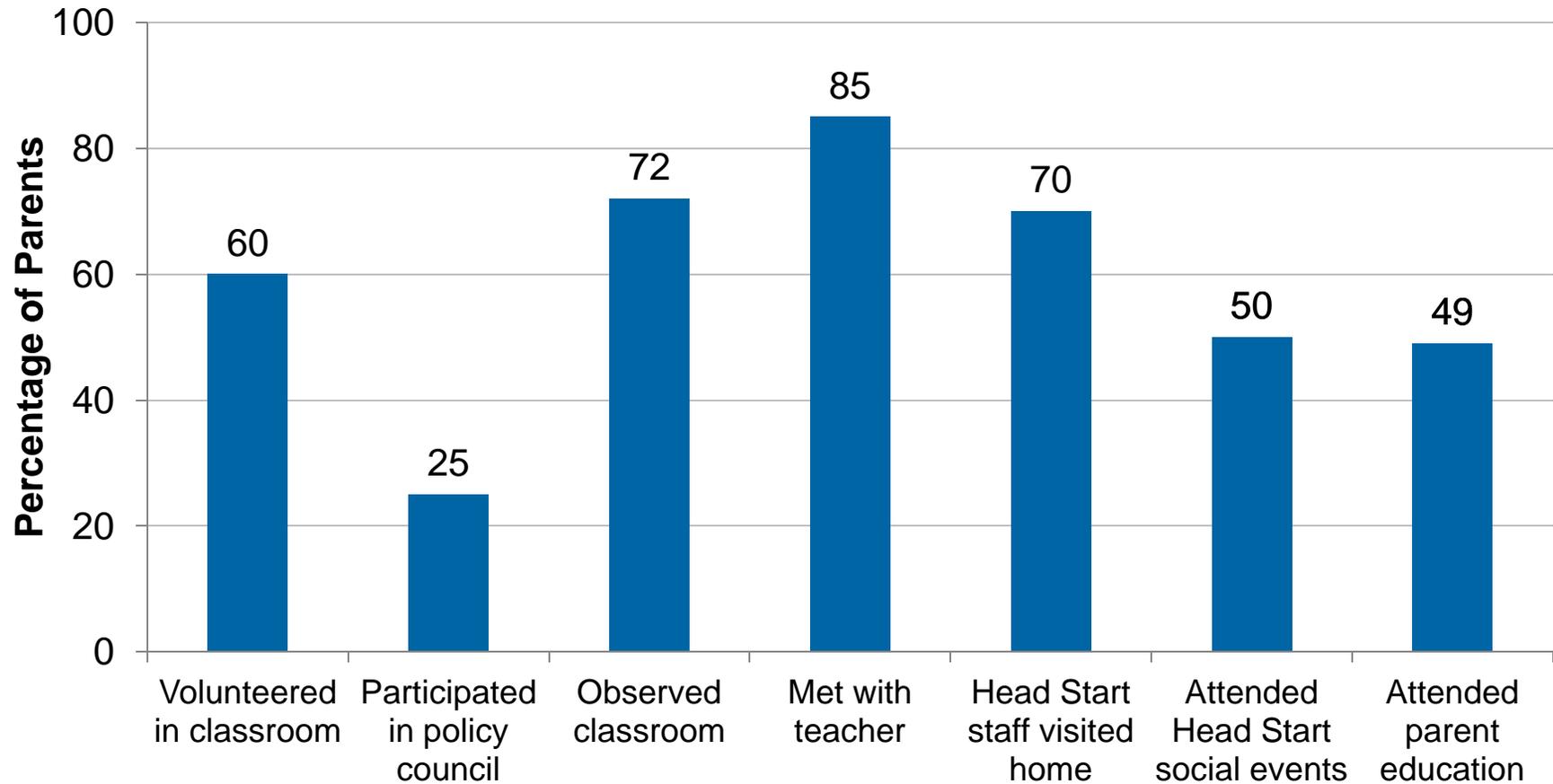
Source: FACES Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Parent Interviews

Latino Families Increase Reading to Child During Head Start Year



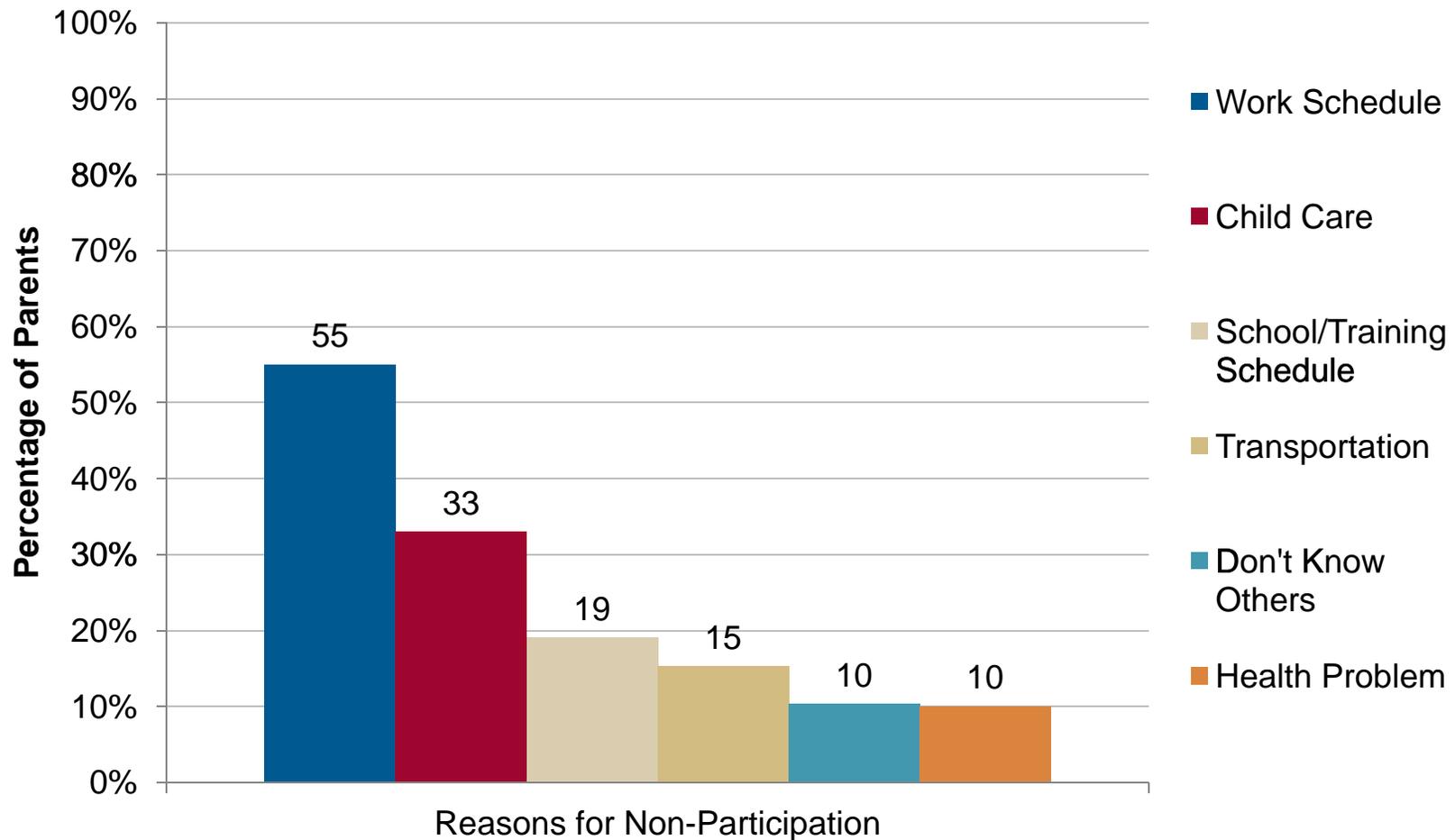
Source: FACES Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Parents are Involved with Head Start



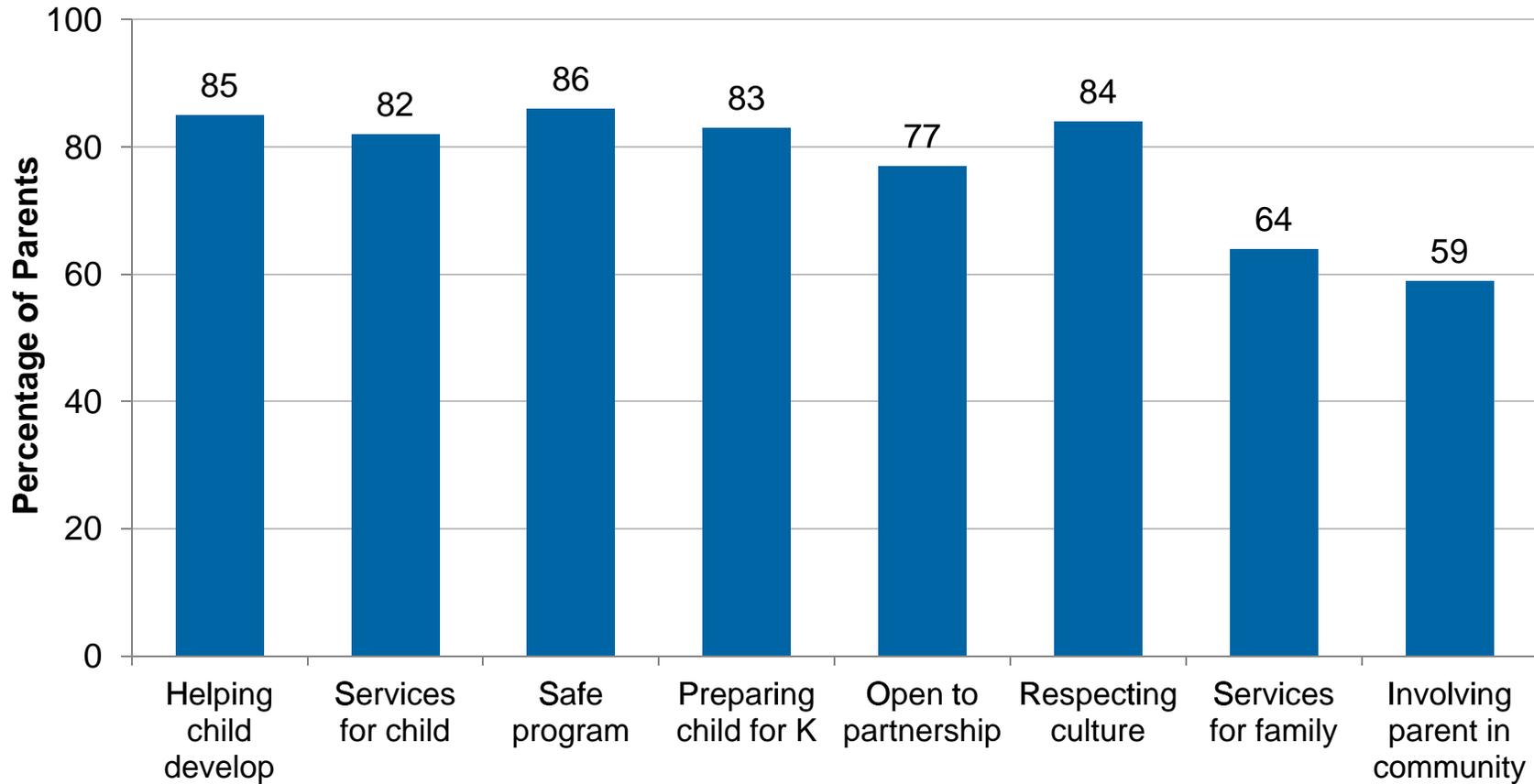
Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Parents Face Barriers to Participation



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Parents are “Very Satisfied” with Head Start Services



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Family Engagement Staff

Priorities for Home Visits Vary by Staff

- **Home visits by teachers focus primarily on**
 - providing educational opportunities to the Head Start child.
 - informing parents about child progress.
 - teaching parents about child development and activities to do with children at home.

- **Family services workers focus primarily on**
 - providing guidance to families in meeting their goals.
 - offering referrals to community services.
 - providing assistance with basic needs.

Source: Fall 2006 Center Director Interviews

Center Directors Report on Training and Support for Family Service Workers

- **Center Directors report that they help family service workers (FSWs)**
 - obtain family service credentials (73%),
 - offer support for obtaining an AA or BA degree (64%), and
 - provide weekly opportunities to reflect on their work with supervisors or peers (65%).
- **About 28% of Center Directors report that their FSWs have training and technical assistance support more than once a month.**

Source: Fall 2009 Center Director Interviews

Center Directors Report on Frequency of Home Visits

- **60% of Center Directors report that their FSWs carry out 1-2 home visits per year.**
- **Another 22% of Center Directors report that their FSWs carry out between 3-6 home visits per year,**
- **Less than 7% of Center Directors report that their FSWs make more than 6 annual home visits**

Source: Fall 2006 Center Director Interviews

Center Directors Report on Family Service Worker Satisfaction

- **96% of Center Directors agree or strongly agree that their FSWs work closely with teachers and specialists**
- **92% agree or strongly agree that their FSWs understand the Head Start goals for family literacy**
- **88% agree or strongly agree that their FSWs feel good about their jobs**

Source: Fall 2009 Center Director Interviews

Summary

- **Head Start families are diverse and face many challenges beyond their low-income status, including language issues and depression.**
- **Parents are engaged and satisfied with program services, but may face barriers to participation.**
- **Family engagement staff are reported by management to have program supports for their training and supervision.**

FACES 2006 and 2009 Reports*

- **Beginning Head Start: Children, Families and Programs in Fall 2006**
- **A Year in Head Start: Children, Families and Programs**
- **A Second Year in Head Start: Characteristics and Outcomes of Children Who Entered the Program at Age Three**
- **Head Start Children Go to Kindergarten**
- ***Head Start Children, Families and Programs: Present and Past Data from FACES (forthcoming, based on 2009 cohort)***

***A comprehensive set of data tables is also available with each report**

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/faces/index.html>