

Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa (BEST) Phase II Evaluation

2023 Workforce Survey Report

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Executive Summary

The American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) is conducting the Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa (BEST) Phase II Evaluation—the BEST Study. As part of the study, AIR conducts an annual workforce survey of direct service staff and their managers who work at BEST partner organizations. This report summarizes the findings from the fourth of these annual surveys, conducted in the winter of 2023. The survey asks staff who work in BEST organizations about their knowledge, experiences, and/or perceptions on seven different topics that are important for understanding efforts to improve Tulsa’s prenatal-to-age-8 service infrastructure. Topics include staff knowledge of BEST partner services, referral practices, communication and coordination among service providers, the role of families in BEST partner agencies, staff satisfaction with their job, racial equity issues, and reflections on the service system in Tulsa.

In 2023, the survey was sent to 401 BEST direct service staff and their managers within 35 BEST partner organizations (the team reached out to 45 organizations that were part of the BEST network in 2023, and 35 provided contact information for staff to participate in the survey). Most survey respondents were direct service staff working directly with children and families (71%), and the remaining portion (29%) were managers and supervisors. The survey response rate was 80% ($n = 321$). In 2023, 51% of respondents had also completed a workforce survey in one of the previous years: 17% of respondents completed the survey in all years (2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023).

Key Findings



Frontline staff and their managers working in BEST partner organizations continue to reflect a diverse, well-educated, and highly experienced workforce.

Approximately two thirds of 2023 survey respondents (38%) identified as White, a quarter (26%) as Hispanic, and almost a fifth (18%) as Black or African American in 2023, similar to 2020. In 2023, 72% of respondents had a bachelor’s degree or higher, slightly higher than in 2020. In addition, the experience of the BEST partner workforce has increased over time. In 2023, nearly half of respondents reported they had more than 10 years of experience in relevant fields—an increase from 37% in 2020.



Knowledge of the BEST initiative among partner agency staff has grown consistently during the 4 years of the workforce survey. Seventy-seven percent of first-time survey respondents reported that they had heard of the BEST initiative, compared to 71% in 2022, 66% in 2021, and 63% in 2020.



Except for just a few programs, staff knowledge of BEST partners increased from 2020 to 2023. In some cases, the percentage of staff who reported they know a lot about individual BEST partner organizations increased by 20% or more between 2020 and 2023. Over the 4 years of the survey, staff identified WIC, Emergency Infant Services (EIS), CAP Tulsa, and Educare as the most well-known partner agencies in the BEST network.



Between 2020 and 2023, the percentage of staff who reported making referrals to services gradually decreased. The most pronounced drops in the percentage of staff who reported making referrals occurred between 2021 and 2022. Over the 4 years of the survey, the largest drops in the percentage of staff who reported making referrals occurred in the areas of domestic violence (a 25% drop between 2020 and 2023) and child care and preschool (20% and 28% reductions, respectively). Reductions in the percentage of staff who reported making referrals between 2022 and 2023 were much smaller than compared to the pandemic years, but the trend of declining referrals continued from 2022 to 2023.



Most staff make referrals as part of their jobs. As in past years, staff reported that they continued to use “warm handoffs” in 2023, personally helping a client connect with a service provider. Referral staff reported using warm handoffs most frequently when referring to mental health, family support, and health services. Other common referral strategies included providing clients with a list of resources and referring them to 211. After a drop in 2022, the percentage of staff who used warm handoffs increased for most services in 2023.



Almost three quarters of the BEST partner staff communicated regularly about shared clients to other BEST agencies—a significant increase from 2022 that continues a positive trend since 2020. In 2023, 51% of respondents were satisfied with this communication with other agencies. Staff reported that the most common challenge to service coordination was a lack of time.



Engaging families in decision making and leadership roles remains a challenge for some BEST partners. Most staff (88%) agreed with the statement that “The opinions of families are heard regardless of their race, culture, or language spoken.” However, fewer staff indicated that staff regularly get ideas from families on how to improve services (79%) or that opportunities exist for family members to serve in leadership roles (54%). Rates of family engagement were lower overall than in 2020 but have been trending up since 2021, especially in the area of leadership opportunities.



In 2023, staff reported high satisfaction with their jobs, and reported work stress is lower than past years. Almost all staff reported that their work makes a meaningful contribution, and the large majority reported that they have the support and resources they need from their respective workplaces and that it would take a lot for them to leave their jobs (99%, 87%, and 84%, respectively—all improvements compared to 2022). At the same time, work stress appears to be declining. In 2023, only 50% of respondents reported that their job was very stressful (an 11-point reduction from 2022 and the lowest level in all 4 years of the survey).



Staff feedback about most racial equity issues in Tulsa has stayed relatively constant between 2020 and 2023. In 2023, 72% of respondents stated that their clients reported that their race/ethnicity was the reason they received poor- or low-quality services occasionally or a great deal of the time. Other issues related to race/ethnicity include being stopped by the police or another official (66%) and challenges in their job (64%). In general, staff responses in 2023 were like those in 2020, with one exception: in 2023, fewer staff indicated that their adult clients talk about being paid less in their job because of their race/ethnicity compared to 2020 (a statistically significant decrease of 16%).



Staff reported that Tulsa is becoming a better place to raise children. Almost three quarters of a small subset of respondents ($n = 36$) who participated in all four workforce surveys agreed with the statement that “Tulsa is becoming a better place to raise children.” In addition, 94% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organization is paying more attention to ensuring all clients, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, have access to services. They also were very positive about their organization being better able to identify and address problems (91%). Notably, most of these experienced respondents agreed that bureaucracy and red tape were less of a problem than they had been before (75%).

TOPIC	MAIN FINDINGS	CHANGE: 2020 TO 2023
	More staff are knowledgeable about available services in Tulsa.	
	The percentage of staff who report making referrals across different service sectors gradually decreased.	
	Staff communication across agencies has improved. More staff are satisfied with their communication with other service providers and fewer staff cite “lack of permission to discuss shared clients” as a challenge.	
	Levels of family engagement have increased recently, after a decrease during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.	
	Staff satisfaction with their work has remained high and reported work stress has declined in the last year.	
	Racial inequities persist, with continued calls from staff for more community dialogue and training.	

Conclusion

The 2023 workforce survey showed modest but consistent improvements across many areas. From the perspective of BEST staff, these changes can serve as an indication that BEST is impacting the prenatal-to-age-8 service system. It is most notable that knowledge of and familiarity with BEST and the other BEST partners, cross-agency communication and collaboration, referrals, and job satisfaction show consistent improvements.

One area with a consistently downward trend is the proportion of respondents who reported referring clients to services. The reason behind this trend is unclear. It could be because staff are better able to serve clients themselves (without making referrals), because the need for different types of referrals has gone down since the pandemic, or because it is more difficult or cumbersome to make referrals. More information about referrals and the referral process could be useful to gather for the BEST Study. In addition, further understanding of workforce turnover and its impact on the service infrastructure may be also a topic for future consideration.

The annual workforce survey provides one approach to learn about the birth-to-age-eight Tulsa service infrastructure that BEST aims to change so that more children have needed supports for successful life outcomes. We greatly appreciate the time and attention that the survey respondents gave us in the fourth administration of the survey. We also want to thank the BEST partners and their staff who worked with our team to compile the survey sample.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the results from the fourth annual workforce survey of the Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa (BEST) partners. BEST provides coordinated supports in the earliest years of children’s lives to help make Tulsa a good place for all children and families to live, grow, and thrive. By convening a diverse network of community partners in Tulsa, including public agencies, health and child care providers, education institutions, and local nonprofit organizations, BEST aims to develop a seamless, multisector continuum of high-quality programs and services for young children and their families, from preconception to age 8, to increase the percentage of children who are (a) born healthy, (b) on a positive developmental trajectory by age 3, (c) ready to enter kindergarten, and (d) achieving success by third grade.

This report describes the characteristics and experiences of the BEST partners’ workforce—direct service staff and their managers who provide the pivotal services that are the cornerstone of BEST. The annual workforce survey is part of the BEST Phase II Evaluation—the BEST Study—conducted by the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®). The BEST Study is a multi-year study to learn how a comprehensive, continuous, and integrated system-change approach can build greater opportunities to improve the lives of young children and their families in Tulsa. The evaluation has three study components:

- **The process study** provides information about how the BEST initiative engages with, supports, and interacts with the preconception-to-age-8 service infrastructure in Tulsa and how it changes that infrastructure and its workforce over time.
- **The outcome/impact study** provides information from a representative sample of families about what it is like to be born and grow up in Tulsa or to be a parent of a child up to 8 years old. It includes a representative survey of four cohorts of children—two cohorts followed from birth and two cohorts followed from the start of kindergarten—and analyses of extant data from a variety of agencies that cover Tulsa and other comparison cities.
- **The ethnographic study** describes the routines and experiences of a subset of 40 families from the outcome/impact study’s survey sample in more detail.

These three study components work together to answer all the BEST evaluation research questions. The workforce survey is a component of the process study, but also informs the outcome/impact study by capturing change in the service infrastructure and workforce across time.

AIR conducts the workforce survey annually to provide an up-to-date picture and to capture change across time in BEST partners’ and other service providers’ knowledge of available

services, referrals among different agencies, and collaboration among partners, as well as other topics relevant to children and families in Tulsa and the services available to them.

The information from the workforce survey provides information about the extent to which BEST changes the prenatal-to-age-8 service system structure from the perspective of direct service staff and their managers.

In Section I, we describe the design and sample of the workforce survey. In Section II, we describe the major findings from the 2023 survey and examine how survey responses have changed over the years. Section III presents conclusions and recommendations for GKFF-BEST. The appendix includes supplemental tables that contain data referenced in the text but not included in exhibits in the main body of the report.

Section I. Survey and Sample Approach

The purpose of the annual workforce survey is to provide a ground-up perspective of how BEST partner staff experience the implementation of BEST, with an eye to documenting changes across time on eight main topics (see sidebar). The 2023 survey consisted of 143

Main Survey Topics

1. Demographic information about respondents
2. Staff knowledge of BEST and BEST partner services
3. Referral practices
4. Communication and coordination among BEST partners
5. Role of families in BEST partner agencies
6. Staff job satisfaction
7. Racial equity issues
8. Reflection on services and systems in Tulsa

items and took about 30 minutes to complete.¹ Most survey items capture descriptive data, which we present as frequencies. The survey also obtained qualitative data through open-ended responses. Using an online survey software platform, we launched the survey on November 8, 2023, and closed it on January 31, 2024. If acceptable to their organization, respondents received a \$15 gift card as a thank-you for completing the survey.

Sample

The survey was administered to 401 direct service staff and their managers within 35 BEST partner organizations (the team reached out to 45 organizations that were part of the BEST network in 2023, and 35 organizations provided contact information for staff to participate in

¹ To shorten the survey for repeat respondents, we omitted various questions in the 2023 survey if the respondent had already answered them in a survey from a previous year. For example, we did not ask respondents who said they knew about BEST in 2020, 2021, or 2022 about their knowledge of BEST in 2023. We used survey data from previous surveys data to complete 46 of the 143 survey items for repeat respondents so they did not have to answer these questions again.

the survey).² The survey response rate was 80% ($n = 321$). However, the sample size for individual survey items may be smaller because not all respondents answered all questions.

Fifty-one percent of this year's respondents ($n = 165$) also completed the survey in one of the previous years: 17% of respondents ($n = 56$) completed the survey in all years, while 34% ($n = 109$) completed the survey in one or more of the previous years, but not in all of them. Twenty-four percent of this year's sample also participated in the first workforce survey in 2020. The large share of new respondents in the 2023 sample (48%) reflects the continued growth of BEST through 2023.

In this report, we present two main types of analyses:

1. **Descriptive analyses of 2023 data.** We present survey results for the full sample of 2023 respondents, with the exception of questions that ask about knowledge of BEST and source of information about BEST, for which we limited the analysis to first-time survey respondents.
2. **Comparisons among 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 data** to show change over time.³ Most differences and trends across survey administration years were statistically significant, even though differences were often modest. Figures and tables indicate when differences or trends are statistically significant.⁴

In addition, we sometimes disaggregated results by service sector to examine if there were differences in responses across the following three sectors: Early Learning and Care (ELC) programs and related supports, Family Supports programs, and Health-related services.

The representation of respondents across agencies reflects the size of the agency workforces; larger partner agencies were more heavily represented than smaller ones. Most respondents were direct service staff working with children and families (71%), and the remaining portion (29%) were managers and supervisors. Exhibit 1 presents sample sizes by service sector, the largest sector being Family Supports (51%, $n = 163$), followed by ELC (32%, $n = 103$) and Health-related services (17%, $n = 55$).

² The George Kaiser Family Foundation BEST team provided a list of its actively funded BEST partners for the purposes of this survey.

³ Each successive annual workforce survey report is designed to stand on its own, updating results from previous reports and extending trend data from previous reports where possible. Minor changes in the survey questions, the classification of partner agencies in subcategories, how the data are summarized and presented, and other analytical decisions may cause small discrepancies in the statistics presented for the same survey year in successive reports.

⁴ t-tests were used to determine whether differences in answers between years were statistically significant or whether overall 4-year trends had a slope that was statistically significantly different from zero.

Exhibit 1. Sector, program, and parent organization for survey respondents

Sector	Program and Parent Organization
Early Learning and Care programs and related supports	CAP Tulsa
	Tulsa Educare
	Early Learning Works by Tulsa Educare
	Reading Partners
	Spot 31
	Total: 103 (32% of respondents)
Family Supports programs	Birthright Living Legacy
	Bright Beginnings, Parent Child Center of Tulsa
	ChildrenFirst Tulsa Health Department
	Domestic Violence Intervention Services
	Emergency Infant Services
	Family Advocates, Tulsa Health Department
	Front Porch Initiative, Oklahoma Human Services
	Hunger Free Oklahoma
	JAMES Inc.
	La Cosecha
	ParentPRO, Tulsa Health Department
	Parent Resource Center, Tulsa Public Schools
	South Tulsa Community House
	Strong Tomorrows
	Uma Tulsa ^a
	WIC, Tulsa Health Department
	Women in Recovery, Family & Children's Services
	Women's Justice Team, Family & Children's Services
	Met Cares Foundation ^a
	Restore Hope
	Parenting in Jail Program, Family & Children's Services
	Total: 163 (51% of respondents)

Sector	Program and Parent Organization
Health-related services	Amplify Youth Health Collective
	Be Well Community Development Corporation
	HealthySteps, Parent Child Center of Tulsa
	Family Connects, Parent Child Center
	Take Control Initiative
	Healthy Start, Tulsa Health Department
	Lactation consultant, Tulsa Health Department
	Doula program, Tulsa Birth Equity Initiative
	Outreach Services, Tulsa Health Department ^a
	Total: 55 (17% of respondents)

Source. 2023 workforce survey.

Note. N = 321.

^a A new partner in the survey in 2023.

Section II. Findings

The survey findings cover eight major topics: (a) staff demographic characteristics, education, and experience; (b) knowledge about the BEST initiative and service providers in Tulsa; (c) referral practices among BEST partners; (d) communication and coordination activities among partners; (e) the role of families in BEST partner organizations; (f) job satisfaction; (g) racial equity issues, and (h) perceptions of changes in services and systems for children and families. Topic (h) about perceptions of changes in services and systems was administered only to respondents who participated in all four workforce surveys.

Demographic Characteristics, Education, and Experience

The 2023 BEST workforce is highly educated and experienced (see Exhibit 2). The demographic characteristics of the workforce have remained similar since 2020 (2020 data not shown in exhibit). In 2023, 72% of respondents had a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly higher than in 2020 (69%). In addition, the 2023 BEST partner workforce is racially and ethnically diverse and is similar to the 2020 workforce. The largest proportion of respondents to the 2023 survey identified as White (38%). Sixty-two percent of the 2023 survey respondents identified as Black or African American; Hispanic; American Indian, Alaska Native, or Native American; multiracial; or of another race or ethnicity.

Compared with the population of Tulsa County as a whole, the 2023 BEST partner workforce is more diverse, with a lower proportion who identify as White (38% vs. 58% in the Tulsa County population), and a higher proportion who identify as Hispanic (26% compared to 14% in the Tulsa County population).⁵

The experience level of the BEST partner workforce has increased over time. In 2023, nearly half of respondents reported they had more than 10 years of experience in relevant fields—an increase from 37% in 2020. The percentage of staff reporting they had worked at their current organization for less than 3 years was 37% in 2023, compared to 42% in 2020.

Exhibit 2. The BEST workforce is diverse, educated, and experienced

Variable	Characteristic	N	Percentage
Education	High school	20	6.7%
	Vocational, some college, or associate degree	62	20.9%
	Bachelor's degree	109	36.7%
	Some graduate school	19	6.4%
	Graduate degree	87	29.3%
Total years of experience in relevant fields^a	Less than 1 year	18	6.2%
	1–2 years	28	9.7%
	3–6 years	64	22.1%
	7–10 years	37	12.8%
	More than 10 years	142	49.1%
Time at current organization	Less than 1 year	45	15.6%
	1–2 years	61	21.2%
	3–6 years	87	30.2%
	7–10 years	36	12.5%
	More than 10 years	59	20.5%
Race/ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic	6	2.0%
	Black, African American, African, Non-Hispanic	55	18.3%
	Hispanic	79	26.3%
	White, Non-Hispanic	113	37.7%
	Other, Non-Hispanic ^b	47	15.7%

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. N = 300 (2023).

^a We asked respondents to indicate their total years of professional experience in the field(s) of early childhood, education, and/or health and human services.

^b This category consists of participants who identified as multiracial, Asian, and other.

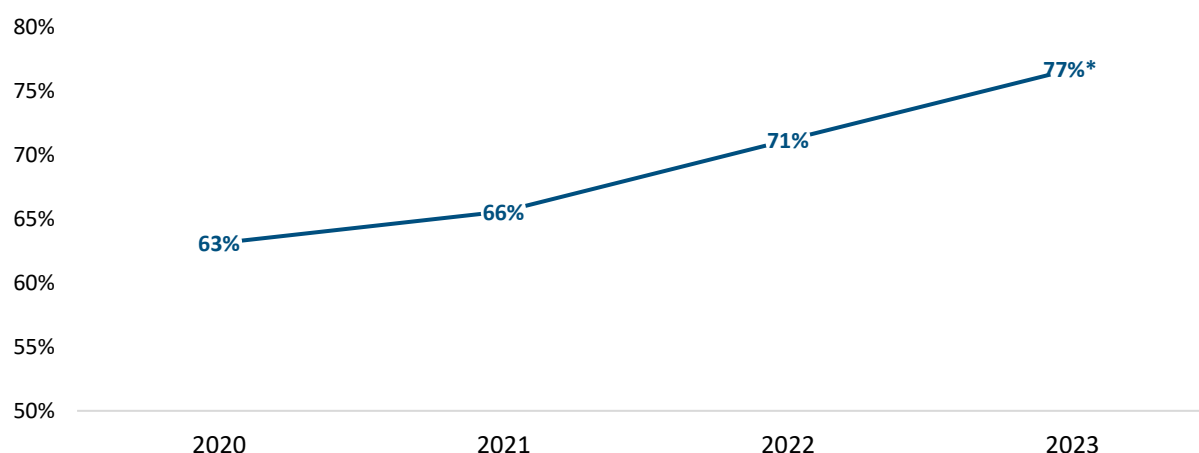
⁵ Population data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2022), [Tulsa County, OK - Profile data - Census Reporter](#).

Knowledge About the BEST Initiative and Service Providers in Tulsa

Among new 2023 respondents, 77% reported that they had heard of the BEST initiative (Exhibit 3).⁶ This represents a continuing increase in awareness of BEST over the 4 years during which we administered the survey (a significant increase of 14% from 2020 to 2023).

In 2023, this increase in awareness was particularly pronounced for respondents in the ELC sector, whose knowledge of BEST increased from 45% in 2020 to 77% in 2023. Year over year changes in awareness in the Family Supports and Health-related sectors were less consistent over time. Knowledge of BEST actually declined among Family Supports staff (from 87% in 2020 to 69% in 2023) but among respondents in the Health-related sector, knowledge of BEST was almost universal, at 97% (sector-specific findings are not shown in the exhibit; see the appendix for a detailed breakdown of these numbers).

Exhibit 3. The percentage of new respondents who have heard of the BEST initiative continues to grow



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

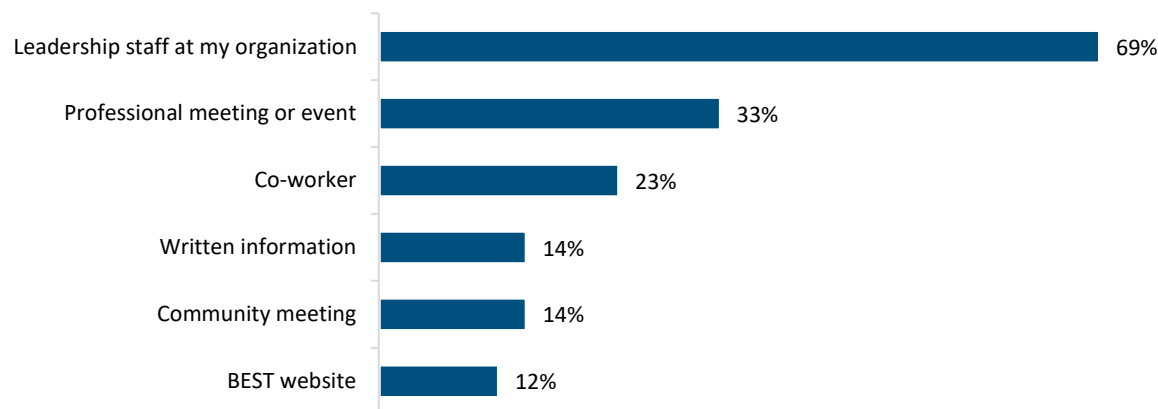
Note. $N = 146$ (2023), $N = 163$ (2022), $N = 93$ (2021), $N = 206$ (2020).

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level. The overall 2020–2023 trend was statistically significantly different from zero at the .05 level.

As shown in Exhibit 4, the most common way that new survey respondents reported learning about BEST in 2023 was from leadership at their own organization (69%), followed by a BEST professional meeting or event (33%).

⁶ Note that the numbers shown for previous years differ from earlier reports. This is because we limited the sample for this question to new respondents in 2023 and changed the results for the other years accordingly. Awareness of BEST is somewhat lower for new respondents, as expected, but has been growing over time.

Exhibit 4. Staff are most likely to learn about BEST from their organizational leaders



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. N = 146 (2023).

In addition to asking whether they knew about the BEST initiative, we asked staff to indicate their level of awareness and knowledge of other BEST partners by selecting one of the following options: (a) “I’ve never heard of these services,” (b) “I’ve heard of these services but don’t know much else,” or (c) “I’ve heard of these services and know a lot about them.”

Exhibit 5 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they heard of each BEST partner and knew a lot about their services. Exhibit 5 only shows partners that have been a part of the BEST network since 2020 or earlier—in other words, partners that were listed in the survey since it was first administered in 2020. Each year, additional partners joined the BEST network and were added to the survey (see the appendix for survey responses for all partners that have been included in the survey, from 2020 to 2023).

Compared to 2020, staff knowledge of all the partners listed in Exhibit 5 increased in 2023, with the exception of two programs (slight decreases that were not statistically significant). Among programs that showed an increase in staff knowledge between 2020 and 2023, the average increase was 12%. Increases in staff knowledge of other partners ranged from 4% (ParentPro) to 27% (the Doula program). In addition to the Doula program, other large and significant increases in staff knowledge about programs included Still She Rises (a 20% increase in staff knowledge) and the Tulsa Public Schools early childhood education (ECE) program (a 17% increase).

Exhibit 5. Between 2020 and 2023, awareness and knowledge of BEST partners increased over time

Partner	2023	Change from 2020
WIC*	86.0%	+10.9%
CAP Tulsa*	82.1%	+11.6%
Emergency Infant Services*	81.4%	+10.8%
Domestic Violence Intervention Services	72.5%	+5.9%
Educare*	75.6%	+9.1%
Women in Recovery	60.1%	+6.9%
Reading Partners	47.2%	-4.2%
Take Control Initiative*	53.3%	+7.0%
Healthy Start*	59.9%	+14.1%
Lactation consultant*	53.6%	+9.9%
Children First	48.4%	+6.9%
ECE at Tulsa Public Schools*	55.7%	+17.4%
ConnectFirst	51.0%	+14.7%
ParentPRO	36.6%	+4.4%
Bright Beginnings	39.3%	+8.1%
Family Connects*	42.2%	+12.5%
Strong Tomorrows*	43.8%	+14.7%
Healthy Steps	36.8%	+8.0%
Reach Out and Read	24.8%	-0.4%
Women's Justice Team*	36.0%	+15.0%
Still She Rises*	39.5%	+20.4%
Doula program*	45.0%	+27.4%
Little by Little	24.4%	+8.3%
Jail Visitation*	23.3%	+8.2%
Centering Pregnancy*	25.3%	+16.5%

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 310 respondents (2023), 205 respondents (2020). Percentages shown indicate the proportion of survey respondents who responded “Yes, I’ve heard of these services and know a lot about them.”

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

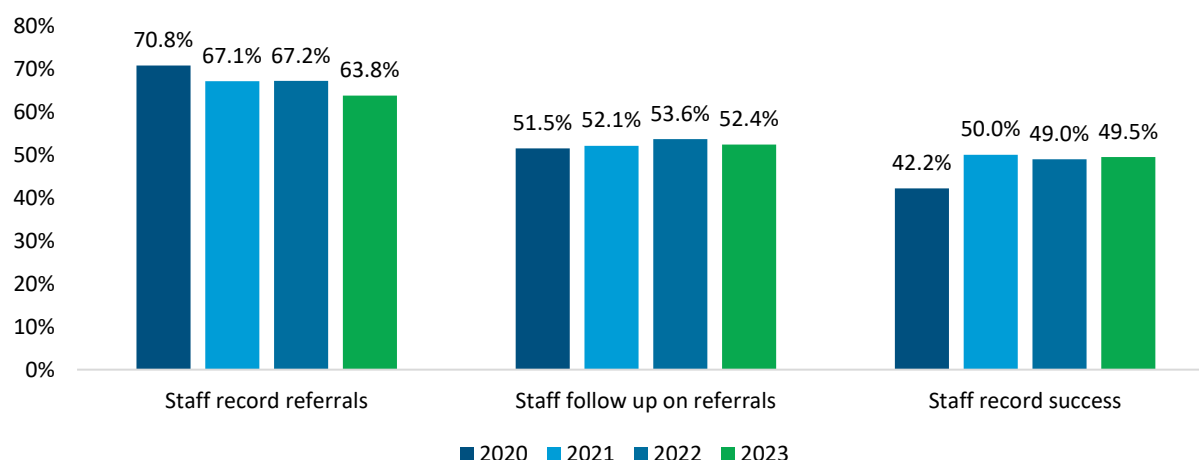
Referral Practices Among BEST Partners

The workforce survey asked about the extent to which staff referred their clients to community services outside their own programs or agencies, either formally or informally. Seventy-one percent of all staff reported that they make referrals outside of their own programs or agencies (data not shown in exhibit). This group of staff is described as “referral staff” for the purposes of this report. Only these staff were asked additional detailed questions about whether and how they tracked information about the referrals they make, their knowledge of and ability to make referrals for specific needs, and challenges they encountered related to referrals.

Documentation of Referrals and Referral Outcomes

Referral staff reported on the extent to which they recorded, followed up on, and documented the success of their referrals (Exhibit 6). Among these referral staff, 64% reported recording referrals in a client management system. Fifty-two percent of referral staff also follow up on referral outcomes and half of referral staff (50%) record if clients successfully received services as a result of the referral. None of the differences between the 2020 and 2023 survey results in Exhibit 6 were statistically significant.

Exhibit 6. About two thirds of staff who make referrals also record them, and somewhat fewer of these staff also follow up on referral outcomes and record if clients successfully received services



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

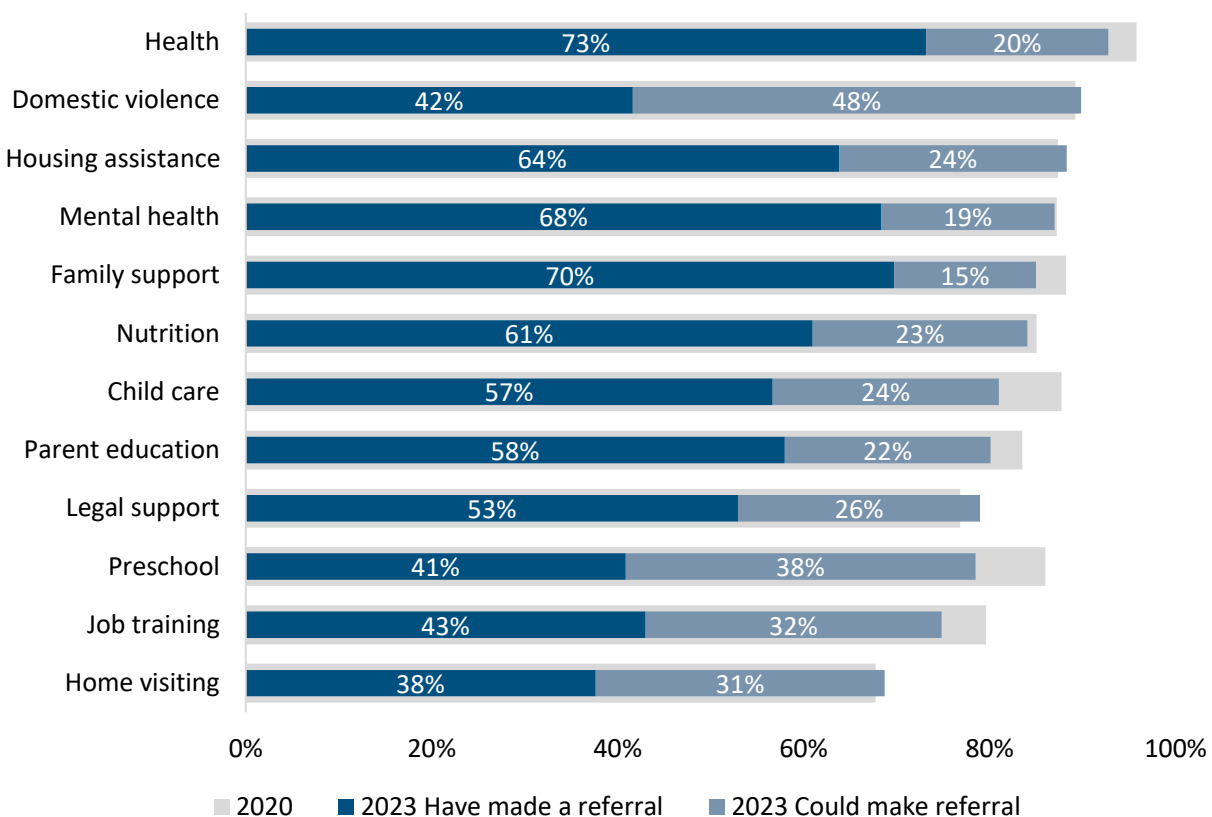
Note. N = 210 (2023), 192 (2022), 140 (2021), 130 (2020). None of the differences between 2020 and 2023 were statistically significant.

BEST “Referral Capacity”

Together the dark and light blue bars in Exhibit 7 represent the total proportion of referral staff who have made or could make a referral, by service sector; this is defined as referral capacity. The most common services for which respondents either made or could make a referral are health services (93%), domestic violence services (90%), and housing assistance (88%).

The light gray bars underneath the blue bars in Exhibit 7 show “referral capacity” for 2020, the first year of the BEST workforce survey. Over time, there have been some reductions in referral capacity, mostly in the areas of preschool/child care and job training. Otherwise, these numbers have been stable over time, showing high levels of referral capacity overall, relatively little variation across different service categories, and little year-over-year change. None of the differences between the 2020 and 2023 survey results in Exhibit 7 were statistically significant.

Exhibit 7. Most referral staff know how to refer clients to a wide range of services



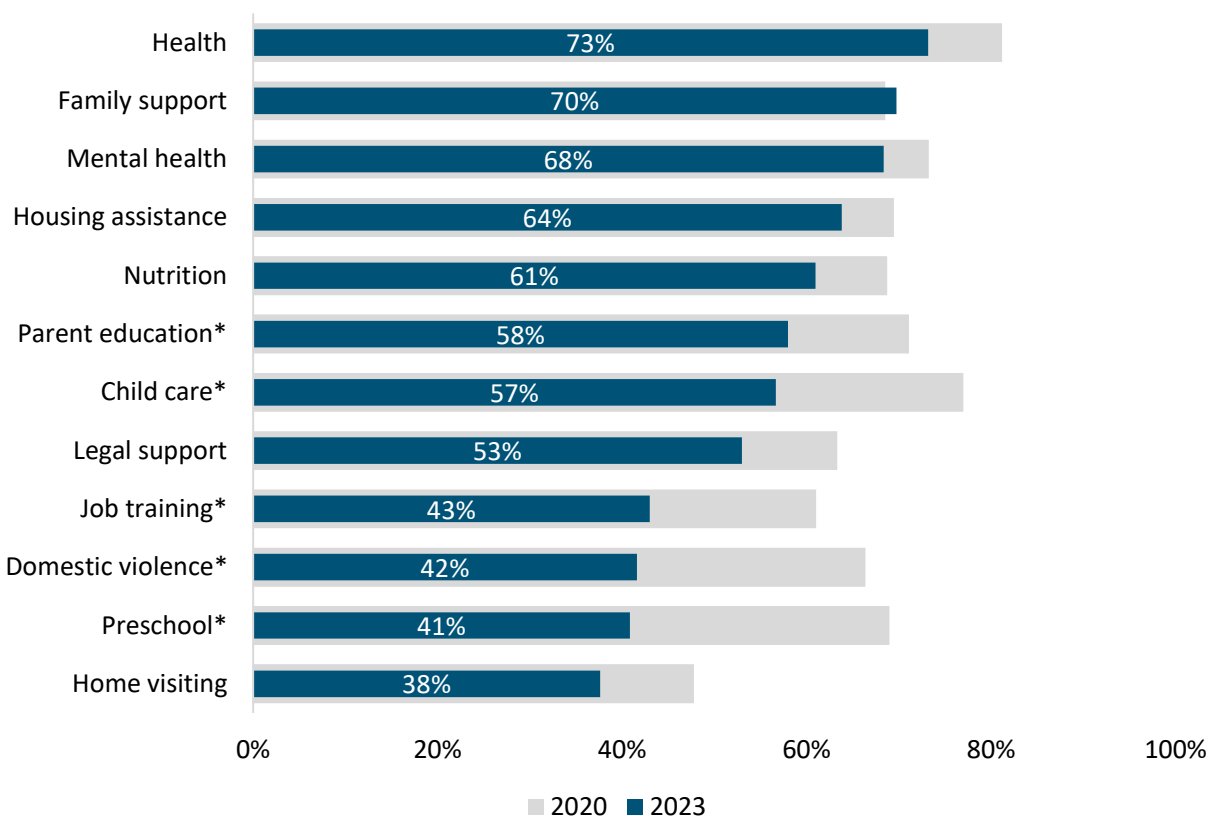
Source. AIR calculations from the 2020 and 2023 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 207 (2023), 127 (2020). None of the differences between 2020 and 2023 were statistically significant.

Exhibit 8 focuses on the percentage of staff who reported making a referral to different service sectors in the last year. As shown in Exhibit 8, the services that most staff referred to were health (73%), family support (70%), mental health (68%), and housing assistance (64%). Compared with 2020 (the gray underlying bars), the percentage of staff who reported making referrals to these services decreased by 2023.

In addition, compared to 2020, the largest drops in the percentage of staff who reported making referrals occurred in the areas of domestic violence (a 25% drop since 2020) and child care/preschool (20% and 28% reductions). Five of these reductions were statistically significant (parent education, child care, job training, domestic violence, and preschool). Some of these reductions may have been good news if they reflected a reduction in the need for services after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Exhibit 8. Fewer referral staff reported referring clients to services in 2023 compared to 2020



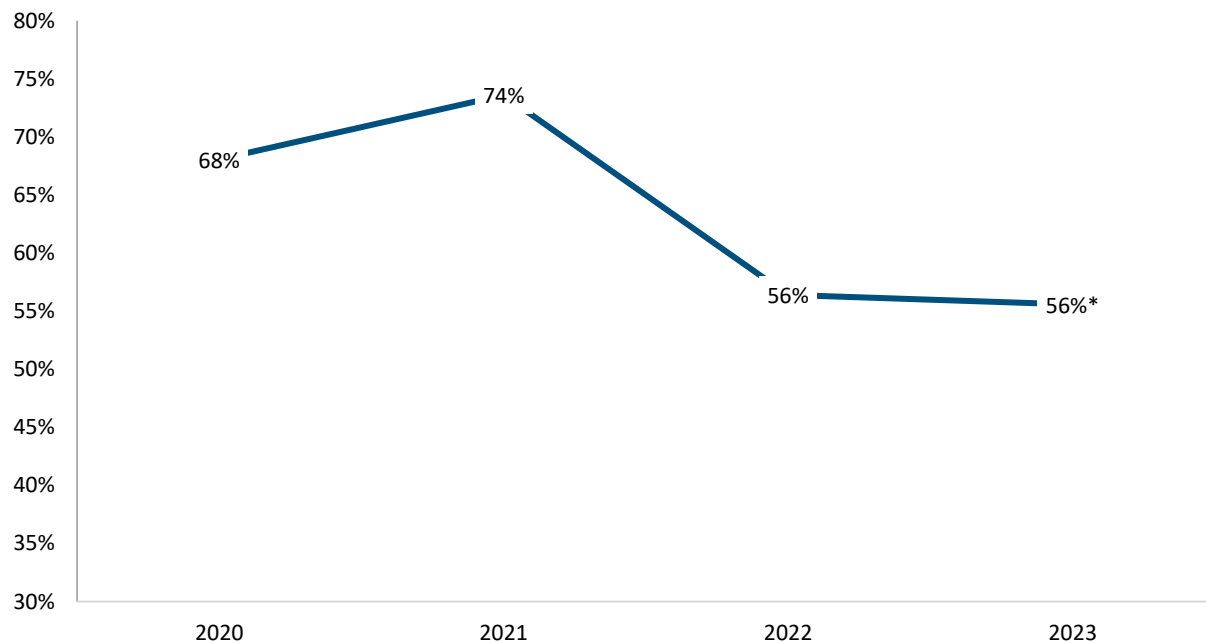
Source. AIR calculations from the 2020 and 2023 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 207 (2023), 127 (2020).

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Exhibit 9 summarizes these referral trends by presenting the average “referral rate” over time across all of the services shown in Exhibits 7 and 8. For the purposes of this report, “referral rate” refers to the percentage of staff who reported making a referral to various service sectors in the last year. Exhibit 9 shows relatively high referral rates in 2020 and 2021, a big drop in 2022, and no change since then. The difference between 2020 and 2023 is statistically significant.

Exhibit 9. The average referral rate across different services dropped after the pandemic



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. $N = 207$ (2023), 192 (2022), 142 (2021), 127 (2020). This exhibit presents an unweighted average of the rates of reported referrals to 12 services: Health, Family Support, Mental Health, Housing Assistance, Nutrition, Parent Education, Child Care, Preschool, Legal Support, Job Training, Domestic Violence, and Home Visiting.

The overall 2020–2023 trend was statistically significantly different from zero at the .05 level.

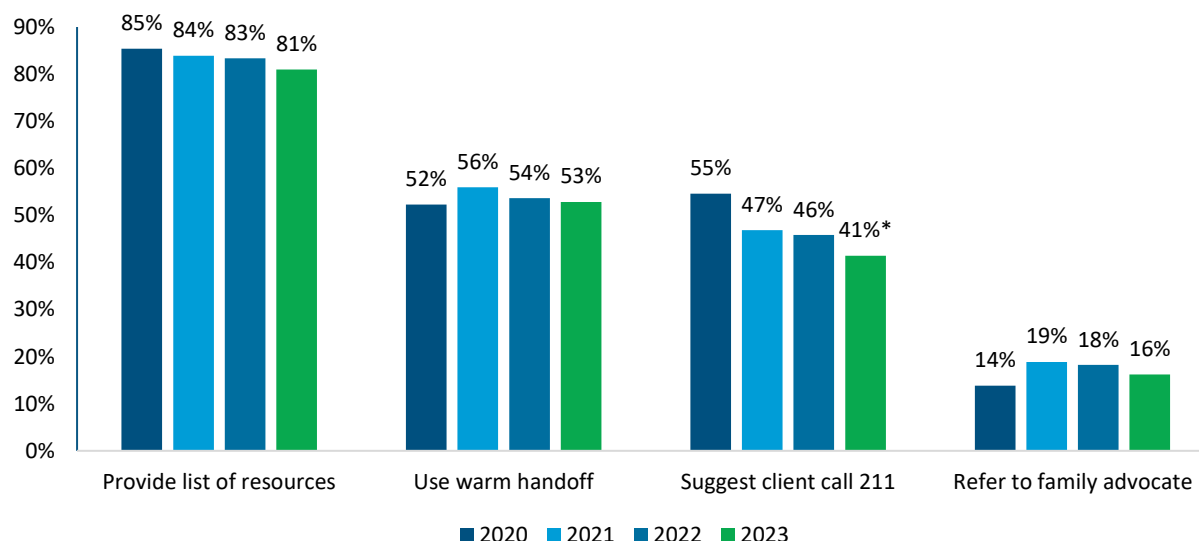
Type of Referral Practices

In the survey, referral staff were asked about what they do when they refer clients (i.e., their referral practices). Respondents indicated which strategies they used: (a) making a personal “warm handoff,”⁷ (b) referring clients to ConnectFirst family advocates, (c) giving clients a list of resources with contact information for other programs and agencies, and/or (d) suggesting clients call 211. In general, staff reported the same types of referral practices over the years between 2020 and 2023, with slight year-to-year variations (see Exhibit 10). The most common practice

⁷ We defined a “warm handoff” as when a service provider personally helps a client connect with another service provider.

remained giving clients a list of resources. There was also a significant decrease in the practice of telling clients to call 211 as a referral method between 2020 and 2023 (from 55% to 41%).

Exhibit 10. Referral staff use a range of strategies to clients, the most common being providing a list of resources and helping the client contact a service provider



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 210 (2023), 192 (2022), 143 (2021), 130 (2020). Percentages do not sum to 100%, as respondents could select “all that apply.”

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Frequency of Warm Handoff Referrals

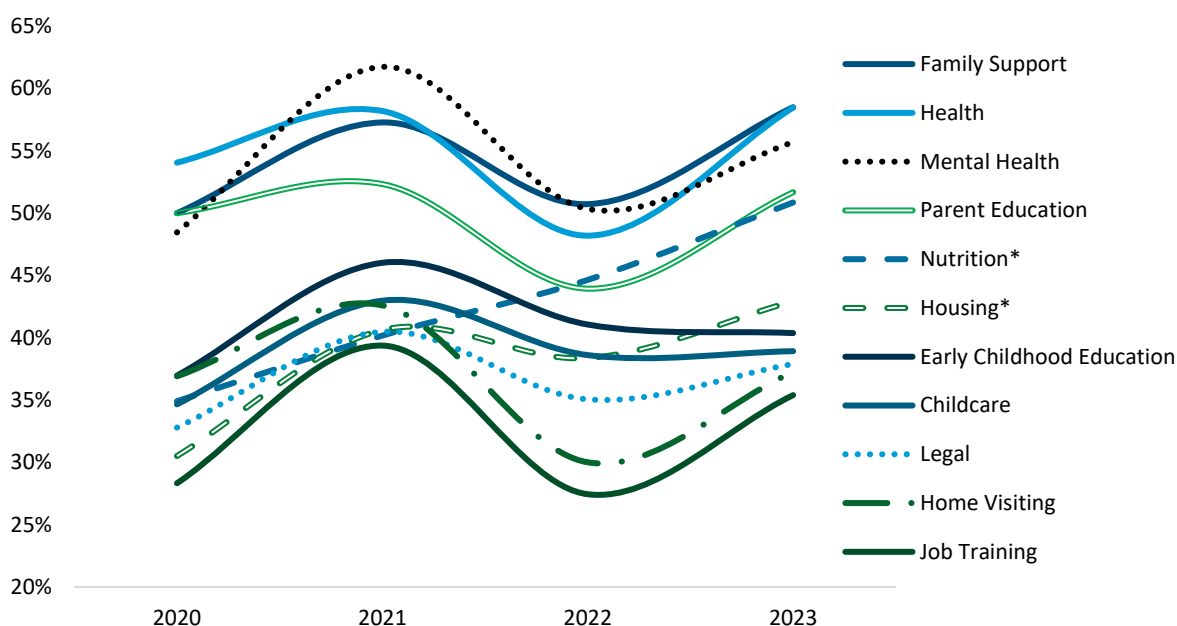
The workforce survey included follow-up questions to referral staff about *how often* they make warm handoffs. Exhibit 11 shows the percentage of referral staff who personally made warm handoffs to different service sectors “sometimes” or “often.”⁸ In 2023, staff reported using warm handoffs most frequently with family support (59%), health services (59%), and mental health services (56%).

Compared to 2020, the proportion of staff who reported using warm handoffs sometimes or often increased across service sectors in 2023 (Exhibit 11). The increases between 2020 and 2023 for the nutrition (16%) and housing (12%) service sectors were statistically significant. The average increase in the proportion of staff using warm handoffs sometimes or often across service sectors was 6%.

⁸ Exhibit 11 focuses solely on staff who reported making warm handoffs directly (not including referrals to family advocates).

Over time, the proportion of staff who reported using warm handoffs sometimes or often for most sectors increased from 2020 to 2021, decreased in 2022, and then increased in 2023, to levels slightly higher than 2020. As noted earlier, reductions in staff reporting use of warm handoffs in the 2021–2022 period may reflect a “return to normal” after the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Exhibit 11. Many referral staff use warm handoffs to make referrals “sometimes” or “often”



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. $N = 210$ (2023), 192 (2022), 143 (2021), 130 (2020). Warm handoffs are defined as when a service provider personally helps a client connect with another service provider as part of the referral process.

* The difference between 2020 and 2023 is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Challenges to Warm Handoff Referrals

Staff provided feedback on challenges to making warm handoffs to other agencies, as shown in Exhibit 12. Forty percent of staff indicated that a lack of professional connections is the biggest challenge. Eighteen percent of staff indicated they do not have enough time to make warm handoffs, an increase from 12% in 2020. (Note that these 2020 to 2023 changes are not statistically significant).

Notably, in 2023, 10% of respondents said that warm handoffs are not part of their organizational procedures—a statistically significant decline from 20% of respondents in 2020.

Exhibit 12. The most common challenge to making warm handoffs is a lack of professional connections at other service providers

Items	2020	2021	2022	2023
In general, what are the challenges in making warm handoff referrals to other agencies, if any? (Check all that apply.)				
I don't have professional connections at other service providers	45.7%	48.2%	44.1%	40.1%
Warm handoffs are not part of my organization's goals/procedures	20.2%	8.5%	10.6%	10.1%*
Other service providers I refer to don't have enough time	15.5%	14.2%	19.0%	15.9%
I don't have enough time	12.4%	13.5%	19.6%	17.9%
Warm handoffs are not part of the goals/procedures of organizations I refer clients to	10.1%	9.9%	11.7%	4.8%
Other	10.8%	7.8%	8.9%	10.6%
I experience no challenges making warm handoff referrals	21.7%	22.7%	21.6%	26.6%

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

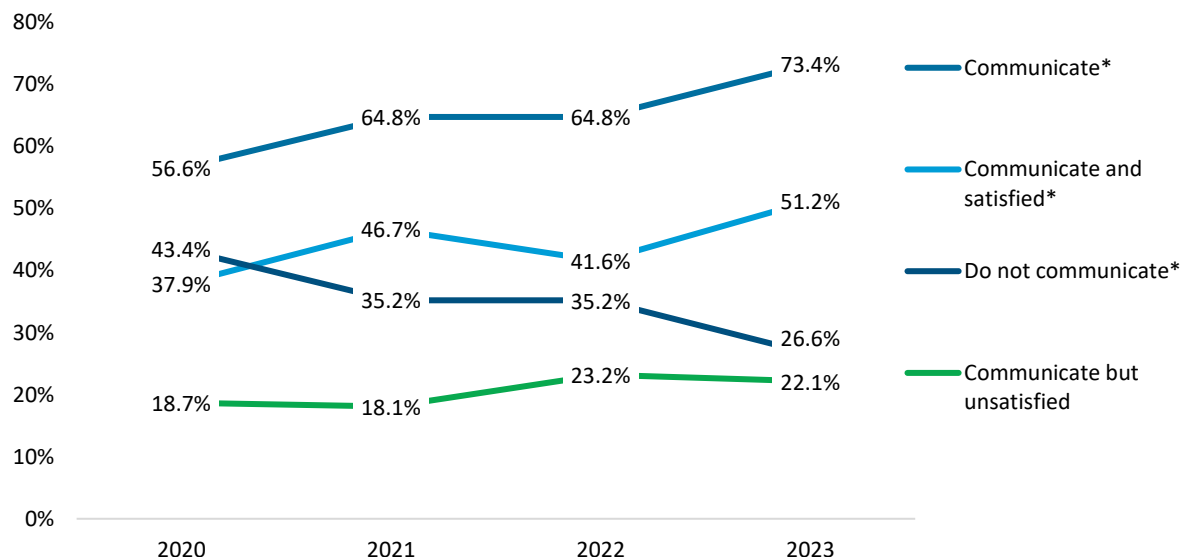
Note. N = 207 (2023), 190 (2022), 141 (2021), 129 (2020).

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Communication and Coordination

We asked survey respondents to comment on their communication and coordination efforts with other BEST partners. As shown in Exhibit 13, 73% of 2023 survey respondents reported that they communicate with staff in other agencies, and more than half of respondents (51%) were satisfied with this communication with other agencies. These 2023 results represent a significant increase compared to 2020.

Exhibit 13. Almost three quarters of respondents communicate with other agencies, and most are satisfied with this communication



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 289 (2023), 267 (2022), 210 (2021), 198 (2020).

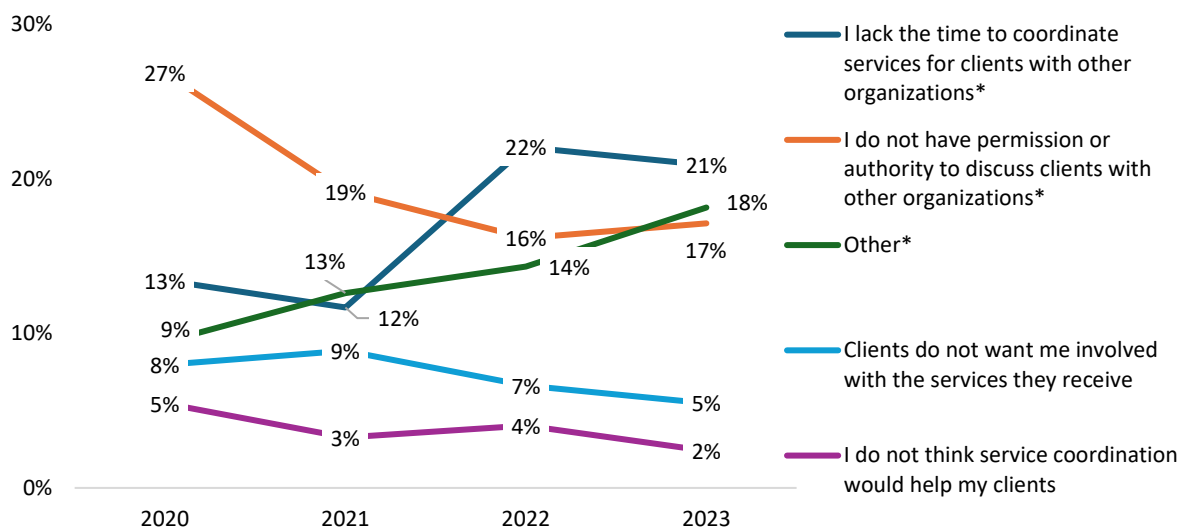
* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Staff were also asked about service coordination for clients. In 2023, more than a third of staff (39%) indicated they do not coordinate services as part of their jobs (data not shown in exhibit). This figure is similar to 2020, when 42% reported that service coordination was not part of their job.

Exhibit 14 displays other challenges that staff report about service coordination over the years. For those staff who do coordinate services, the most common challenge in 2023 (21%) was that they lacked the time to coordinate services with other organizations, a statistically significant increase from 13% in 2020. As shown in Exhibit 14, 17% of respondents in 2023 indicated “other” service coordination challenges (these, as in previous years, included a range of barriers, such as slow responses from other service providers, lack of knowledge about other service providers, the added burden of coordinating services on staff workloads, lack of client follow-through on referrals to other organizations, and related barriers).

Some barriers to service coordination appear less problematic in 2023 compared to 2020. Most notably, in 2023, 17% of respondents said that they lacked authority to discuss clients with other organizations, a statistically significant decrease from 27% in 2020.

Exhibit 14. Approximately a third of respondents indicated that service coordination was not part of their responsibilities



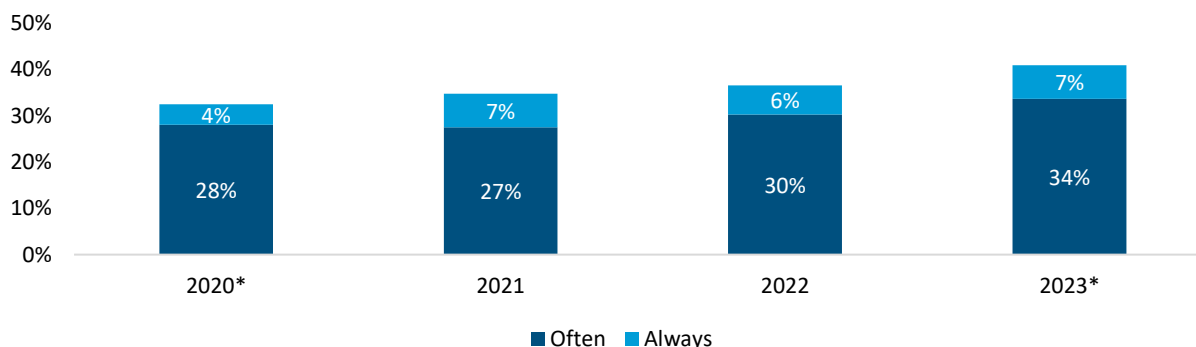
Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 292 (2023), 272 (2022), 214 (2021), 201 (2020).

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Despite these challenges in coordinating services, a lot of communication about clients' participation in services across organizations is occurring. Seventy-nine percent of staff ($n = 274$) reported always (7%), often (34%), or sometimes (38%) knowing if their clients are receiving services from other agencies. In 2023, 41% of respondents indicated they always or often have the information and data they need to do their job well, a statistically significant increase from 32% in 2020, as shown in Exhibit 15.

Exhibit 15. Approximately 40% of respondents reported that they often or always know if their clients are receiving services from other agencies



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 274 (2023), 255 (2022), 193 (2021), 182 (2020).

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE SERVICES IN TULSA

Survey respondents ($n = 234$) answered an open-ended question asking for their recommendations to improve services in Tulsa. The most common responses were:

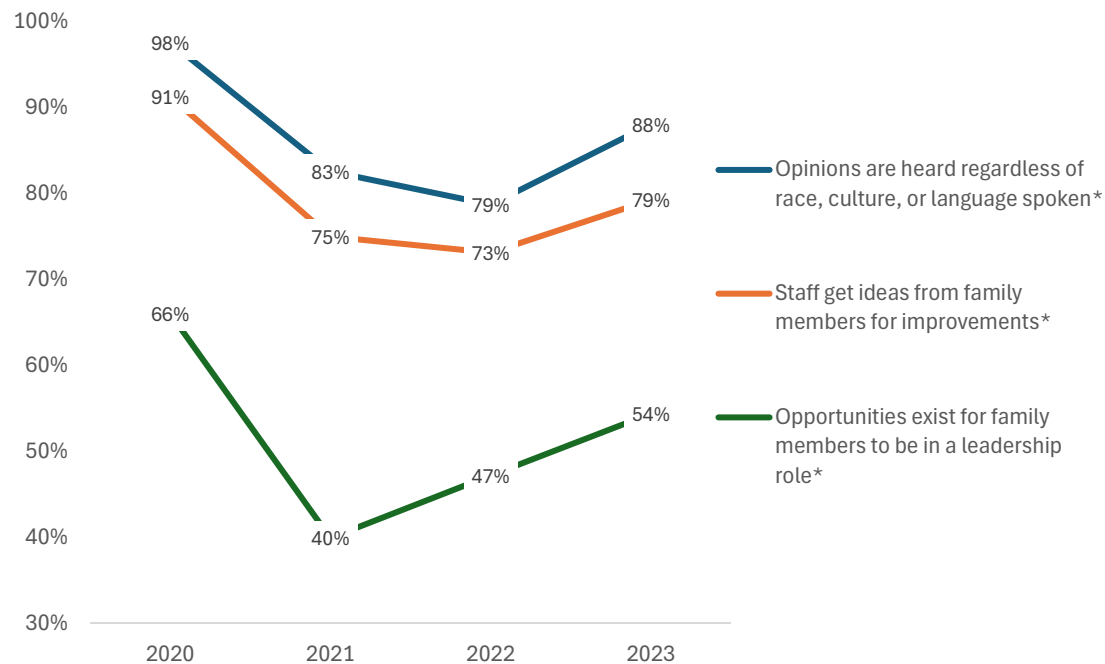
1. Increase awareness of community resources (27% of respondents).
 2. Increase the availability of services, the most common being housing, followed by ECE and childcare (23%).
 3. Strengthen partnerships between service providers to support referrals and service coordination (12%).
 4. Improve transportation to increase access to services or bring services to places where clients live (10%).
 5. Provide more bilingual supports and services (3%).
 6. Change income eligibility requirement for services to allow families with higher incomes to access them (3%).
 7. Engage in other effort (2% of respondents or fewer), such as more engagement with schools and with the community at large, the provision of training related to racial equity, efforts to strengthen the workforce, and strategies to reduce stigma related to accessing services to address needs.
-

Role of Families in BEST Partners

As shown in Exhibit 16, most respondents (88%) reported that the opinions of parents/family members are heard regardless of their race, culture, or language spoken (73% of all survey respondents indicated this was “completely true” and 15% said it was a “little true”). At the same time, fewer respondents (79%) said that staff regularly try to get ideas from parents/family members on how to improve services (48% indicated that it was “completely true” and 32% said it was a “little true”). Finally, 54% of respondents said that opportunities exist for parents or family members to serve in leadership roles (29% said this was “completely true” and 25% reported it was a “little true”).

In 2023, survey responses reversed a downward trend in some family involvement outcomes from 2020 to 2022. Despite this, there is a statistically significant difference between 2020 and 2023 in the percentage of staff who agree that opinions are heard regardless of families’ race, culture, or language (a decline from 98% in 2020 to 88% in 2023).

Exhibit 16. Most respondents agreed that the opinions of families are heard regardless of race, culture, or language spoken, but fewer agreed that leadership roles are available to families



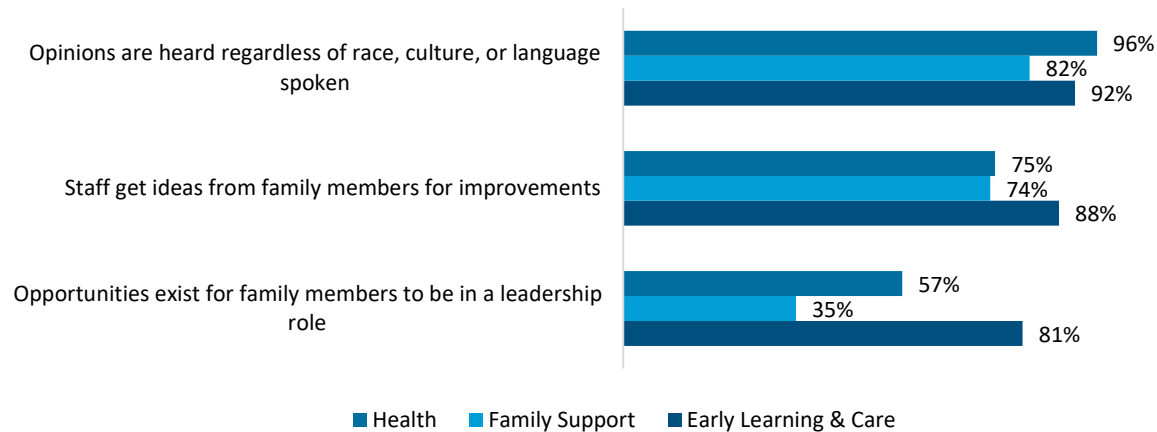
Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. *N* = 287 (2023), 268 (2022), 199 (2020), 210 (2021). Percentages include respondents who reported the statements in Exhibit 15 were “a little true” or “completely true.”

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

The level of family engagement continued to vary somewhat across the three service sectors (Exhibit 17). More ELC staff (54%) reported that it was completely true that family members are included in decisions about improving services, as compared to Family Support staff (43%) and Health staff (49%). However, these differences were much smaller than in previous years, with significant continued improvement in family engagement in the Health and Family Support sectors compared to previous years (not shown in exhibit).

Exhibit 17. Across service sectors, a higher proportion of staff described opportunities for families to share feedback, as compared to serving in leadership roles



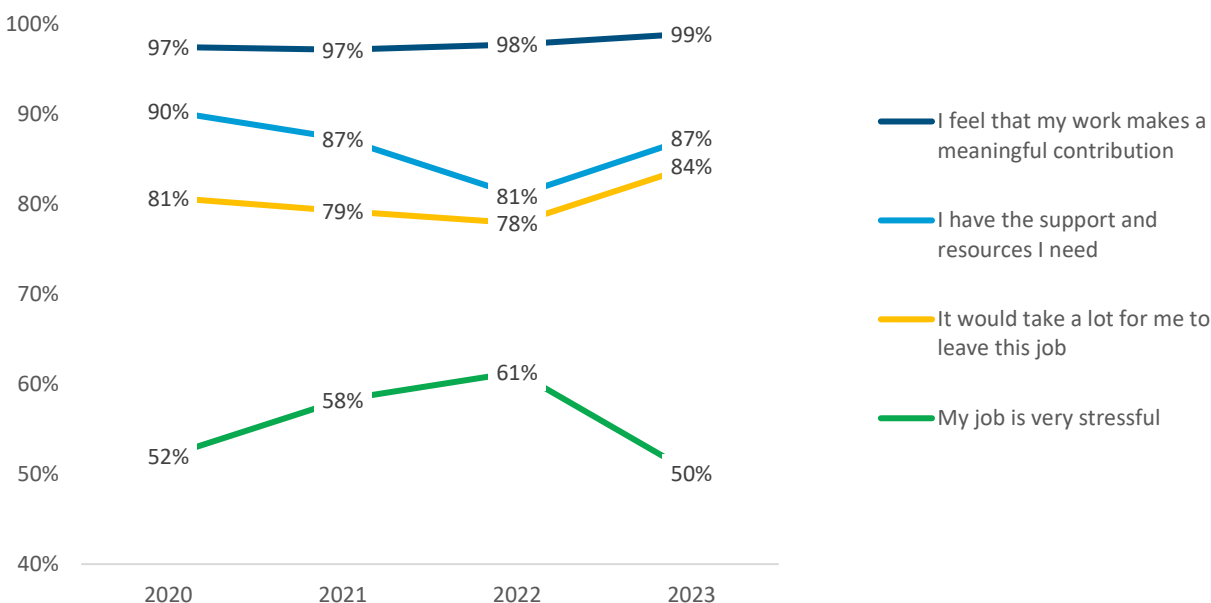
Source. AIR calculations from 2023 workforce survey.

Note. $N = 53$ (Health), $N = 137$ (Family Supports), $N = 95$ (Early Learning & Care)

Job Satisfaction

Staff responded to questions about their workplace and attitudes toward their jobs. In 2023, nearly all staff reported that their work makes a meaningful contribution (99%), and they have the support and resources they need from their workplace (87%). Eighty-four percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it would take a lot for them to leave their job. At the same time, half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their job was very stressful, but this percentage dropped significantly from 2022, returning to approximately 2020 levels (Exhibit 18). In general, over the 4 years of the survey, high initial levels of job satisfaction were mostly sustained, with a modest drop in 2022 and a bounce back in 2023.

Exhibit 18. Respondents are satisfied with their jobs (and fewer find them stressful)



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 workforce surveys.

Note. $N = 289(2023)$, $269(2022)$, $212(2021)$, $198(2020)$. None of the differences between 2020 and 2023 were statistically significant.

Racial Equity

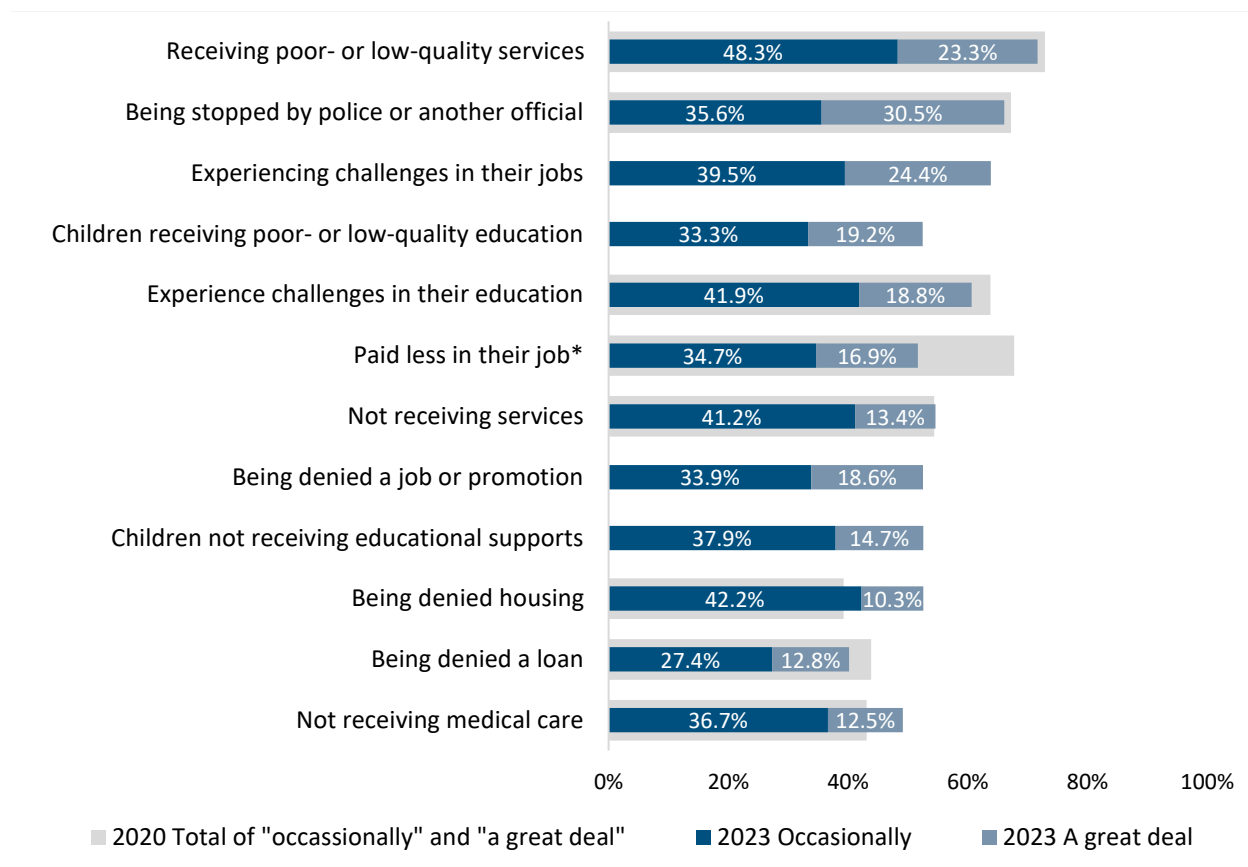
The survey also included items related to racial equity in Tulsa. Respondents were asked if they talk with their adult clients about challenges or advantages that they may face because of their race or ethnicity. Among respondents who indicated that they work with adult clients ($n = 235$), 52% reported that they have these types of discussions with their clients, which is about the same as in 2022, 2021 and 2020 (45%, 54%, and 50%, respectively).

Exhibit 19 shows the percentage of staff in 2023 that reported that their adult clients told them occasionally (orange bars) or a great deal (blue bars) that their race/ethnicity was the reason they faced various challenges in their lives. The exhibit also includes responses from 2020 (gray underlying bars). To note, several items were added to the survey in 2021, so comparable data from 2020 and 2023 are not available across all items.⁹ In 2023, 72% of respondents stated that their clients reported that their race/ethnicity was the reason they received poor- or low-quality services occasionally or a great deal of the time, followed by being stopped by the police or another official (66%) and challenges in their job (64%).

⁹ Four items were not asked in the 2020 survey: (1) experiencing challenges in their jobs, (2) children receiving poor- or low-quality education, (3) being denied a job or promotion, and (4) children not receiving educational supports.

Comparing 2023 data to 2020, many responses are similar. However, fewer staff indicated that their adult clients talk about being paid less in their job because of their race/ethnicity in 2023 compared to 2020 (a statistically significant decrease of 16%).

Exhibit 19. The most common client challenges related to race/ethnicity were receiving low-quality services and being stopped by the police or another official



Source. AIR calculations from the 2020 and 2023 workforce surveys.

Note. N = 120 (2023), 59 (2020).

* The difference between the 2020 and 2023 result is statistically significant at the .05 level.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS RACIAL INEQUITIES IN TULSA

Survey respondents responded to an open-ended question ($n = 121$) asking them how they would improve racial equity in Tulsa:

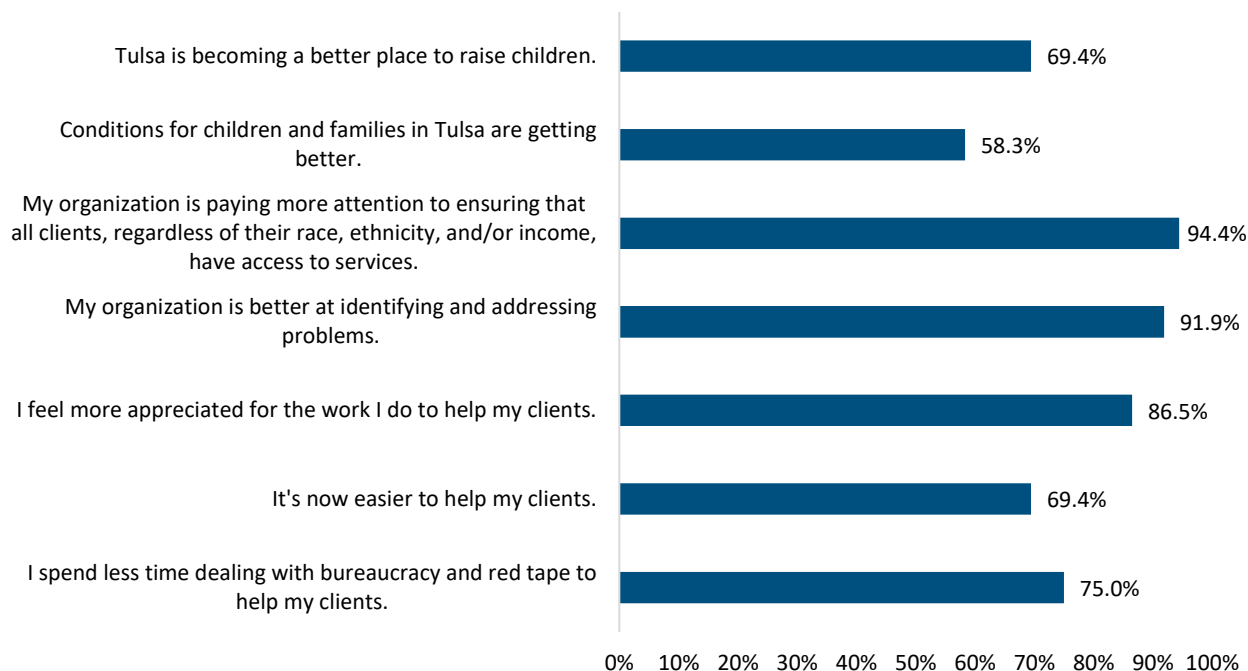
1. Provide training or other educational opportunities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (19%)
 2. Diversify the workforce, including ensuring diverse representation in leadership (10%)
 3. Promote more dialogue among community members, including through events for people to connect and share (14%)
 4. Engage community members to develop solutions to address racial inequities (9%)
 5. Improve service access, including housing (10%)
 6. Improve public education (7%)
 7. Other recommendations (reported by 5% or fewer respondents), such as reparations for descendants of victims of the Tulsa Race Massacre, more bilingual supports, media campaigns related to racial equity, services for immigrant families, bilingual services and supports, improved transportation, strategies to address racism within the police system, and strategies to combat perceived stigma among families who access services
-

Reflections on Services and Systems in Tulsa

We asked staff who had completed a survey in all four years to answer a set of special questions in 2023. This group of staff ($n = 36$) are especially well suited to provide feedback on “big picture” changes to services and systems in Tulsa in our survey over the last four years. More than half of these respondents agreed with the statements in Exhibit 20.¹⁰ In particular, 94% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organization is paying more attention to ensuring all clients, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, have access to services. They also were positive about their organization being better able to identify and address problems (92%) and their clients being more appreciative of their work (87%). Fewer of these experienced respondents found that Tulsa was becoming a better place to raise children (69%) or that conditions for children and families in Tulsa were getting better (58%). Notably, most of these experienced respondents agreed that bureaucracy and red tape were less of a problem than they had been before (75%).

¹⁰ Note that we do not present year-over-year comparisons for this special sample of respondents, since the composition of this group changes over time as individuals leave our survey panel. Also, the sample is too small to make valid statistical comparisons across years. Instead, these responses provide a retrospective view from a highly experienced subset of respondents, reflecting how the service environment has changed from their unique perspective.

Exhibit 20. The majority of the most experienced respondents agree that services and systems for children and families are improving in Tulsa



Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. N = 36 (four-time respondents—2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 surveys).

Section III. Conclusions and Recommendations

The 2023 workforce survey findings highlighted the following about the BEST initiative:

- Direct service staff and their managers working in BEST partner agencies reflect a diverse, well-educated, and highly experienced workforce.
- Most new respondents to the survey had heard of the BEST initiative (77%), a continuous upward trend from 2020. Between 2020 and 2023, the percentage of new respondents who reported knowing about BEST increased 14 percentage points.
- Except for just a few programs, staff knowledge of specific BEST partners increased from 2020 to 2023 (in some cases, 20% or more).
- In 2023, the most well-known partner was WIC (86% of respondents indicated they knew a lot about this program), followed by CAP Tulsa (82%) and Emergency Infant Services (EIS; 81%). Over four years of the survey, staff identified WIC, EIS, CAP Tulsa, and Educare as the most well-known partner organizations in the BEST initiative.

- Most staff reported making referrals, informally or formally, as part of their jobs. The sectors that the most staff referred to were health (73%), family support (70%), mental health (68%), and housing assistance (64%). These were also among the top referral sectors in 2022, 2021, and 2020.
- Between 2020 and 2023, the percentage of staff who reported making referrals to services gradually decreased, with the most pronounced drops happening between 2021 and 2022. The largest drops in the percentage of staff who reported making referrals occurred in the areas of domestic violence (a 25% drop between 2020 and 2023) and child care and preschool (20% and 28% reductions, respectively). Some of these reductions may have been good news if they reflected a reduction in the need for services after the COVID-19 pandemic. Reductions in the percentage of staff who reported making referrals between 2022 and 2023 were much smaller compared to the pandemic years, but the trend of declining referrals continued from 2022 to 2023.
- In 2023, a little more than half of the staff who make referrals reported using warm handoffs to refer clients to services, about the same as 2020. In 2023, staff reported using warm handoffs most frequently for referrals to family support, health, and mental health services. The proportion of staff who reported using warm handoffs “sometimes” or “often” increased from 2020 to 2021, decreased in 2022, and then returned to levels slightly higher than in 2020. This might reflect a “return to normal” after the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The greatest challenge to warm handoffs was a lack of professional connections at other service providers and lack of time. Notably, in 2023, we saw a significant decrease in the percentage of staff who said they did not make warm handoffs because of their organization’s policy against doing so (now 10% of respondents).
- In 2023, almost three quarters of the BEST partner staff in different programs communicated regularly about shared clients, a significant increase compared to 2022. In 2023, 51% of respondents were satisfied with these communications with other agencies, and 22% were not satisfied. These 2023 results represent a continuation of a positive trend since 2020.
- Engaging families in decision making and leadership roles remains a challenge for some BEST partners. Most staff (88%) agreed that the opinions of families are heard regardless of their race, culture, or language spoken. However, fewer staff indicated that staff regularly get ideas from families on how to improve services (79%) and that opportunities exist for family members to serve in leadership roles (54%). Rates of family engagement were lower overall than in 2020 but have been trending up since 2021, especially in the area of leadership opportunities, where we are seeing improvement in the past 2 years.

- Staff working in BEST partner agencies reported that they enjoy their work and believe that they are making a meaningful contribution in their jobs. There was a notable drop in reported job stress from 2022 to 2023.
- Staff feedback about most racial equity issues in Tulsa stayed relatively constant between 2020 and 2023. In 2023, 72% of respondents stated that their clients reported that their race/ethnicity was the reason they received poor- or low-quality services occasionally or a great deal of the time, followed by being stopped by the police or another official (66%) and challenges in their job (64%). In general, staff responses in 2020 were similar to those in 2023, with one exception: in 2023, fewer staff indicated that their adult clients talk about being paid less in their job because of their race/ethnicity compared to 2020 (a significant decrease of 16%).
- Most of a small subset of respondents ($n = 36$) who participated in all four workforce surveys agreed that Tulsa is becoming a better place to raise children; that their organization is paying more attention to ensuring all clients, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, have access to services; and that their organization is better able to identify and address problems. Notably, most of these experienced respondents agreed that bureaucracy and red tape were less of a problem than they had been before.

The survey data also suggest areas that may inform continuous quality improvement efforts for the BEST initiative, including awareness of some BEST partners and community services, family engagement, referral practices, barriers to service, and racial equity.

- **Awareness of Services.** Despite considerable increases in staff knowledge of other BEST partners, there is still room for growth, particularly increasing awareness of the newer partners and their services. GKFF-BEST may consider effective strategies to help staff become aware of and understand all the BEST partner services available in the community. Partner-specific survey data in this report can be used to target efforts to improve awareness of services among BEST partner staff.
- **Referrals.** In 2023, fewer staff reported making referrals to specific services, as compared to 2020. This decrease may reflect a return to rates that more closely reflect trends before the pandemic or it may indicate that more staff are able to meet client needs from within their own organization. Further investigation as to whether there is unmet need in the community may be important.
- **Barriers to Racial Equity.** In general, staff survey responses regarding barriers faced by their adult clients due to their race/ethnicity remained fairly constant between 2020 and 2023 (or increased, particularly in regard to housing discrimination). The consistency in survey responses among staff reflect the significant challenges in addressing racial equity issues and the need for system-level strategies to address them.

Acknowledgments

The workforce survey occurs annually as part of the BEST Study, allowing us to capture changes in the perceptions of the Tulsa service infrastructure for children from birth through age 8 over time in the early childhood workforce. These changes will reflect the impact of the BEST initiative as it continues.

We greatly appreciate the time and attention that the survey respondents gave us. Their work is critical to the families and children of Tulsa, and their input is essential for the success of our evaluation. We also want to thank the BEST partner leaders and their staff who worked with our team to compile the survey sample, and the GKFF-BEST team for their overall support for the survey effort. Finally, we want to acknowledge AIR managing director Karen Manship, for her thoughtful review of the report and beneficial feedback.

Appendix. 2023 Survey Results

Exhibit A1. Percentage of first-time respondents and repeater respondents, by service sector

	Early learning and care		Family supports		Health	
	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>
First-Time Respondents	35	36	55	90	55	30
Repeat Respondents	65	67	45	73	45	25

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. *N* = 321.

Exhibit A2. Percentage of new respondents that have heard of BEST, by service sector

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Early Learning and Care	45.4%	46.2%	71.0%	77.1%
Family Supports	86.5%	64.6%	71.8%	69.1%
Health	88.6%	94.7%	70.0%	96.7%

Note. *N* = 146 (2023), *N* = 163 (2022), *N* = 93 (2021), *N* = 206 (2020).

Exhibit A3. Percentage of respondents who indicated that they had heard of each BEST partner and knew a lot about their services, 2020–2023

Partner	2020	2021	2022	2023
WIC	75.1%	90.9%	82.6%	86.0%
CAP Tulsa	70.6%	79.5%	77.9%	82.1%
Emergency Infant Services	70.6%	80.0%	77.8%	81.4%
DVIS	66.7%	71.8%	72.2%	72.5%
Educare	66.5%	75.5%	72.6%	75.6%
Women in Recovery	53.2%	61.4%	60.5%	60.1%
Reading Partners	51.5%	50.7%	44.8%	47.2%
Take Control Initiative	46.3%	47.7%	47.3%	53.3%
Healthy Start	45.9%	57.5%	56.4%	59.9%
Lactation consultant	43.6%	50.7%	41.6%	53.6%
Children First	41.5%	48.9%	39.5%	48.4%
TPS ECE	38.2%	52.3%	52.0%	55.7%

Partner	2020	2021	2022	2023
ConnectFirst	36.3%	44.3%	38.1%	51.0%
ParentPRO	32.2%	37.9%	26.5%	36.6%
Bright Beginnings	31.2%	36.8%	35.6%	39.3%
Family Connects	29.8%	36.4%	34.5%	42.2%
Strong Tomorrows	29.1%	30.5%	31.5%	43.8%
Healthy Steps	28.8%	35.5%	31.8%	36.8%
Reach Out and Read	25.1%	28.0%	22.6%	24.8%
Women's Justice Team	21.1%	27.7%	30.1%	36.0%
Still She Rises	19.1%	31.2%	33.6%	39.5%
Doula program	17.6%	29.4%	32.5%	45.0%
Little by Little	16.1%	21.4%	17.5%	24.4%
Jail Visitation	15.1%	19.5%	21.8%	23.3%
Centering Pregnancy	8.9%	19.1%	17.6%	25.3%
Spot 31	—	—	3.9%	7.2%
Be Well	—	—	8.7%	15.1%
El Centro	—	—	6.5%	16.0%
EduRec	—	—	8.2%	11.8%
Crossover Health Services	—	—	15.5%	15.0%
Art4orms	—	—	8.6%	10.1%
Teach Not Punish	—	—	9.3%	5.6%
La Cosecha	—	—	8.3%	10.1%
Birthright	—	—	13.7%	20.7%
JAMES, Inc.	—	24.2%	20.9%	24.1%
South Tulsa Community House	—	—	18.3%	21.4%
Gaining Ground	—	7.3%	11.0%	9.3%
Amplify	—	10.6%	13.0%	28.4%
Tulsa Health Department Outreach	—	—	30.8%	31.8%
Front Porch	—	11.5%	23.5%	36.4%
TPS Parent Resource Center	—	22.9%	24.4%	42.7%
Hunger Free Oklahoma	—	—	28.2%	30.0%
MHAO	—	—	36.8%	29.6%
Restore Hope	—	49.8%	46.2%	55.0%
CREOKS	—	—	43.4%	31.7%

Note. N = 310 (2023), N = 281 (2022), N = 220 (2021), N = 205 (2020).

Exhibit A4. Percentage of respondents who refer clients to other agencies for services

Item	Percentage	<i>n</i>
As part of your job, do you refer children, youth, or adults to other agencies for services?		
Yes	70.8	211
No	22.2	66
I'm not sure	7.1	21

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. *N* = 298.

Exhibit A5. Percentage of respondents who have made or would be able to make a referral to the following service areas

	Early learning and care		Family supports		Health	
	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>
Child care	75.0	36	80.7	109	88.1	42
Domestic violence	81.3	48	91.6	107	95.2	42
Family support	89.7	29	80.4	92	92.7	41
Health	89.1	46	93.4	106	95.2	42
Home visiting	63.6	44	64.3	98	86.5	37
Housing assistance	75.6	45	91.2	102	95.1	41
Job training	72.3	47	75.5	98	76.2	42
Legal supports	69.4	49	83.5	109	78.6	42
Mental health	87.8	41	83.0	94	95.2	42
Nutrition	81.8	44	84.4	96	85.7	42
Parent education	85.0	40	75.8	91	85.0	40
Preschool	85.3	34	74.5	110	83.3	42

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. *N* = 200.

Exhibit A6. Percentage of respondents who speak to their clients about challenges related to race or ethnicity

	Percentage	<i>n</i>
Do you ever talk to your adult clients about challenges (or advantages) they may face because of their race or ethnicity?		
Yes	42.9	123
No	32.8	94
I only work with young children	18.1	52
I'm not sure	6.3	18

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. *N* = 287.

Exhibit A7. Percentage of clients citing race as a reason for the following scenarios occasionally or a great deal of the time

	Early learning and care		Family support		Health	
	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>
Not receiving services	45.5	22	50.0	68	72.4	29
Receiving poor- or low-quality services	54.5	22	72.5	69	82.8	29
Not receiving medical care	31.8	22	52.2	69	55.2	29
Children receiving poor- or low-quality education	40.9	22	56.5	69	51.7	29
Children not receiving additional education supports	42.1	19	50.0	68	65.5	29
Being denied a loan	28.6	21	41.2	68	46.4	28
Being stopped by police	47.6	21	76.8	69	53.6	28
Being denied housing	35.0	20	54.4	68	60.7	28
Being paid less at their job	40.9	22	53.6	69	55.6	27
Being denied a job or promotion	40.9	22	53.6	69	59.3	27
Experiencing challenges in their job	59.1	22	62.9	70	70.4	27
Challenges in education	57.1	21	62.3	69	59.3	27

Source. AIR calculations from the 2023 workforce survey.

Note. *N* = 120.

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