

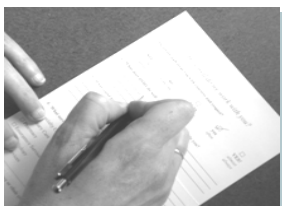
2006 ADSA-DD Provider Survey

Nancy K. Raiha, MSW, Ph.D. Monica A. Stanley Barbara A. Allard, MSW



Who Responded?

1,272 individuals and agencies who provide services to clients of DSHS Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA) responded to the 2006 Developmental Disabilities (DD) Provider Survey.



What did it ask?

This postcard-style survey asked each respondent to rate the courtesy and respect of ADSA-DD employees, and to report what ADSA-DD does well and what ADSA-DD can do better.



How was it sent?

9,998 surveys were enclosed in all Social Service Payment System (SSPS) mailings to clients of ADSA's Division of Developmental Disabilities in late May and June 2006. The response rate was above 12%.*

*Exact response rate cannot be calculated because we do not know the exact number of providers who received surveys; the SSPS mail system could not specify the number of mailings to the same provider. There were a number of cases in which a provider received more than one mailing from SSPS during the survey time frame, and thus received more than one copy of the survey.



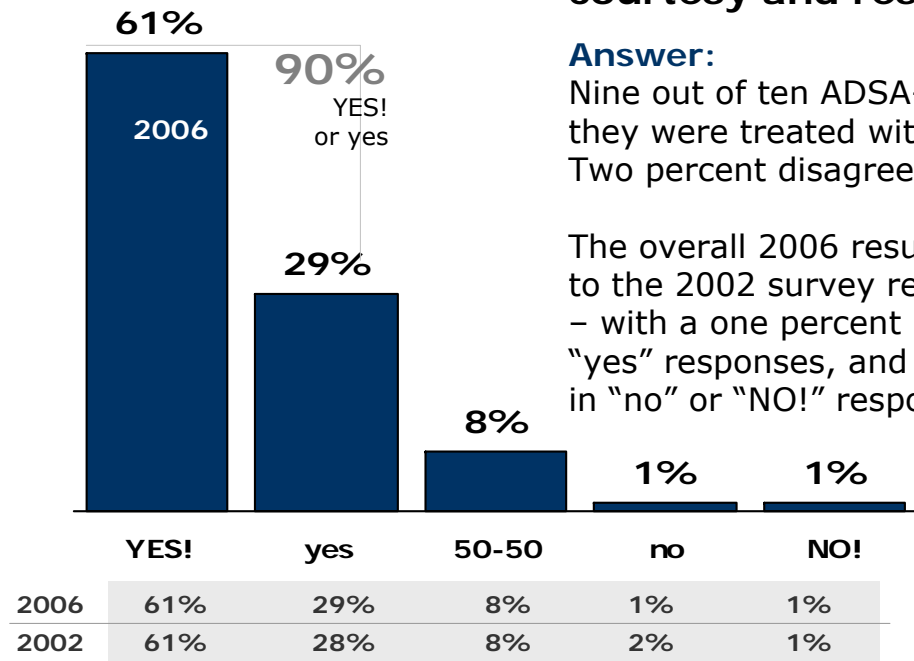
Courtesy and Respect

Do DSHS staff treat you with courtesy and respect?

Answer:

Nine out of ten ADSA-DD providers said that they were treated with courtesy and respect. Two percent disagreed.

The overall 2006 results are nearly identical to the 2002 survey responses to this question – with a one percent increase in “YES!” or “yes” responses, and a one percent decrease in “no” or “NO!” responses.



As shown in the table at right, in most ADSA-DD provider groups about nine out of ten providers answered “YES!” or “yes”, indicating they were treated with courtesy and respect.

Differences between groups were not statistically significant.

Differences by Type of Provider

Service Provided by Respondent	# Responding	% Yes*
Respite, Attendant, or Medicaid Personal Care	809 (64%)	90%
Adult Residential Care	273 (21%)	88%
Therapy, Medical, Dental, or Nursing Services	43 (3%)	93%
Child Foster or Child Group Care	27 (2%)	81%
Other	39 (3%)	90%
More Than One Service	48 (4%)	90%
Service Not Specified	23 (2%)	87%

* Answer to “Does ADSA staff treat you with courtesy and respect?” Ten respondents did not answer this question (8 Respite, Attendant or Medicaid Personal Care providers; 1 Other; and 1 Unspecified).

Providers Speak Out

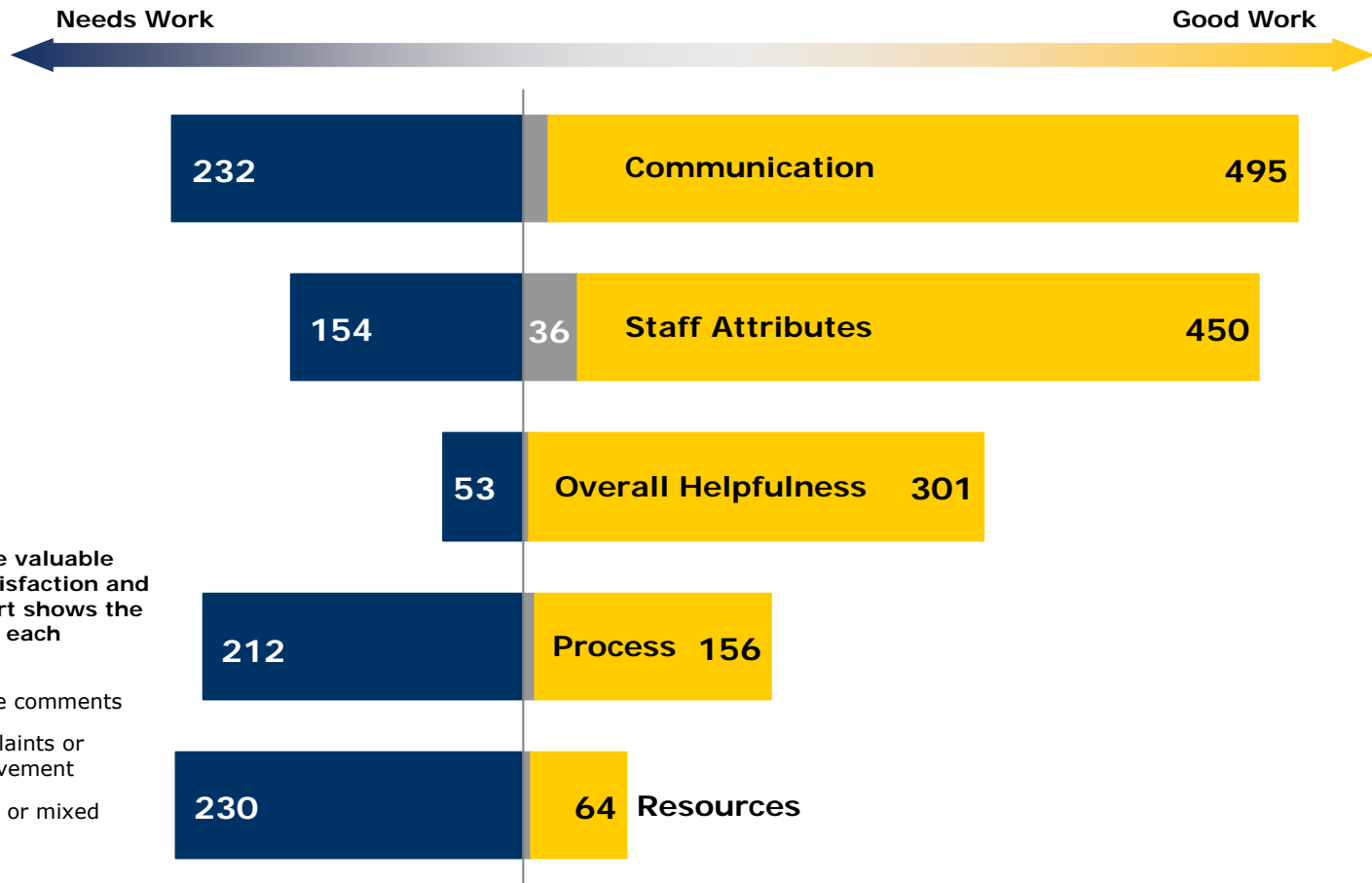
Two open-ended questions were asked:

What does DSHS do well?

What could DSHS do better?

Providers' answers addressed 5 major issues

Each issue is addressed in detail in pages 4 through 8

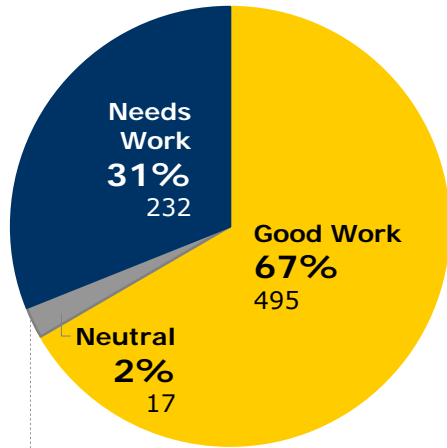


Providers' answers gave valuable insight into areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The chart shows the number of comments in each category:

- **Good Work** – Positive comments
- **Needs Work** – Complaints or suggestions for improvement
- **Gray areas** – Neutral or mixed responses

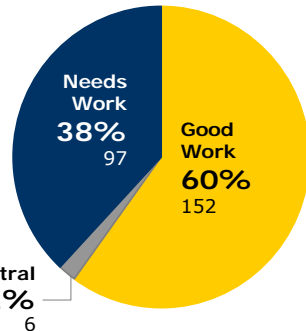
Communication

Do we communicate well?



Of the 744 comments about communication, two thirds were compliments, while nearly one third were suggestions for improvement.*

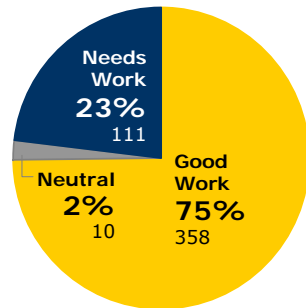
Phone or E-mail Access



248 respondents mentioned access to ADSA-DD via phone and e-mail.* Six out of ten comments were positive; nearly four out of ten comments were suggestions for improvement.

SUB-CATEGORY

Information

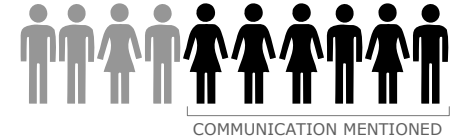


449 respondents addressed accurate and timely information/answers to questions.* Three out of four comments about information were positive.

SUB-CATEGORY

* Some providers made both positive and negative comments on communication issues. Often they also commented on both subcategories of communication. Thus, one cannot total the subcategories to calculate the total number of providers commenting on communication (662).

Nearly 60% of the 1,156 providers who made comments addressed communication.



Areas to Improve:

- Shorter response time
- Better listening skills
- Complete and clear explanations
- More initiative in providing information
- Treat providers as team members

Providers Appreciate Workers Who:

- Return calls and e-mails quickly
- Listen well
- Answer questions knowledgeably
- Supply timely and useful information
- Provide needed referrals

Providers say...

"Spends TIME when I call and ask questions – thank you!"

"Often e-mails and phone calls aren't returned and sometimes issues aren't addressed/resolved for months – if ever."

"Listen, and try to understand what I am trying to say."

"Case manager is wonderful...always calls back with information I need."

"If someone does not know an answer, they always suggest who to call."

"Sometimes they just do not explain things and when I ask it's like it's an imposition and I SHOULD know."

"Listens to my problems and helps me through them."

"Supply more information without being asked. Seems you have to ask about a specific program...DSHS doesn't volunteer information."

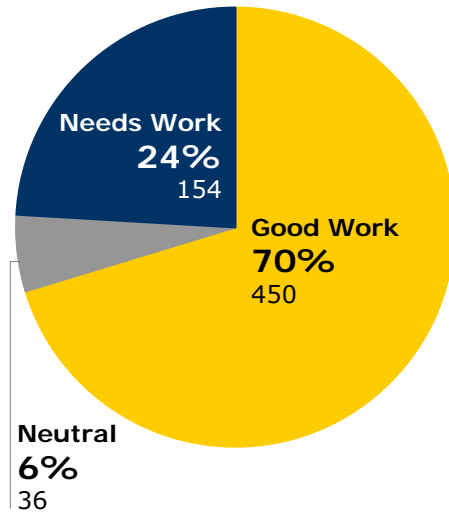
"Questions answered promptly and people take time to explain things."

"They return calls promptly, give information as needed, good referrals."

"There is less of a 'we're in this together' climate...Wish we could work more as a team."

Staff Attributes

What about our staff?



Of the 640 comments about staff attributes, seven out of ten were compliments. About one out of four comments were suggestions for improvement.*

56 providers mentioned a specific staff member by name. More than 90% of these comments were complimentary.

* Some providers made both positive and negative comments about staff attributes. Thus, one cannot total the positive and negative and neutral categories to calculate the total number of providers commenting on staff attributes (572).

Nearly half of the providers who made comments addressed staff attributes.



Areas to Improve:

- Easier access to staff
- Shorter response times
- Re-train rude and condescending staff
- More knowledgeable staff
- Providers valued as "team members"
- More client contacts

Providers Appreciate Workers Who:

- Respond promptly
- Are courteous and respectful
- Listen well
- Show caring and empathy
- Provide useful information
- Follow through with promises

Providers say...

"Make sure all case managers are as caring and thoughtful as ours."

"Some staff are ABSOLUTELY RUDE to us – accusatory and critical. Others are very helpful!"

"Our case manager is always available, courteous, helpful."

"Listen and RESPOND to our needs. Olympia DSHS staff do NOT treat me with courtesy and respect – if they respond at all."

"We have great case managers for this adult home. They work with us and the clients' families when we have difficult problems."

"There is nothing they could do better. They help me at any time and answer all my concerns."

"Case managers make verbal commitments and then don't carry through."

"They listen, seem to have empathy, and, most of all, they show true appreciation for my skills."

"DSHS needs to treat us as true partners...not just as 'resources to be assigned.'"

"Caseworkers and nurse home visits are always pleasant, and they have a relationship with my daughter and care about us."

"We are fortunate. We have a good case manager who listens."

"Improve knowledge of other departments in DSHS to direct client to proper area – it took me 20 minutes and 6 phone transfers to make a minor change to a medical coupon."

"Case manager is wonderful – very helpful – great advocate for clients."

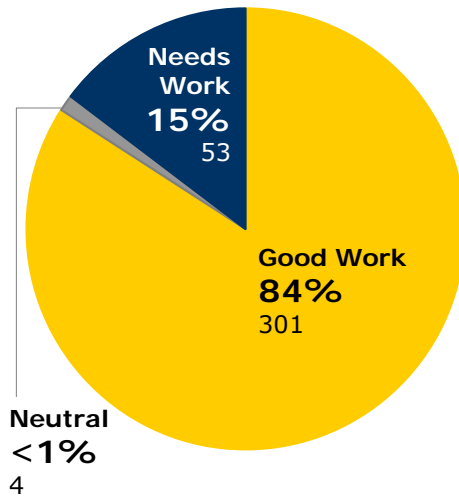
"They're polite, friendly, helpful, and always have a positive attitude."

"It would be nice if they could contact us once in awhile to see how things are going."

"The caseworker is very supportive, and always brings grants and other things to my attention that will help my child."

Overall Helpfulness

Are we helpful?



Of the 358 comments about overall helpfulness, more than eight out of ten were positive. Less than two out of ten were suggestions for improvement.*

* Some providers made both positive and negative comments about DD helpfulness. Thus, one cannot total the positive, negative, and neutral comments to calculate the total number of providers commenting on helpfulness (352).

About 30% of the providers who made comments addressed the overall helpfulness of DD services.



Areas to Improve:

When asked "What does DSHS do well to work with you and help you?", many who responded negatively simply answered, "Nothing." Comments included these specific suggestions for improvement:

- More knowledgeable staff
- More concern for clients

Providers Appreciate:

- Staff who work hard to help clients
- The various supports DSHS provides for persons with developmental disabilities, and for their families

Providers say...

"Allows me to have a roof over my head and food on the table! Thanks! While I'm caring for my child. Allows this to occur in an dignified way. Thanks for that too!"

"They have ALWAYS helped me in every situation."

"NO HELP! In fact, DSHS made mistakes that made things worse for the client and provider!"

"I think DSHS does their best to help me."

"So far I have no complaints. Any case manager I have worked with has been super to me and my client (family member)."

"I am sorry, but almost everything is inadequate. Caseworkers and DDD lack information about just about everything."

"We're treated like DSHS is doing us a favor when in reality we're doing them a favor. If it wasn't for us they wouldn't have a job."

"Just keep up the good work."

"DSHS handles immediate needs of clients, parents, organizations very well."

"I have no problems so, 'If it ain't broke don't fix it.'"

"They do not try to help; they always try to make sure we are not getting paid enough for the services we do. They should care more about the residents."

"I have no complaints – I have always been treated very well."

"DSHS is very caring and is doing a wonderful job caring for my grandson."

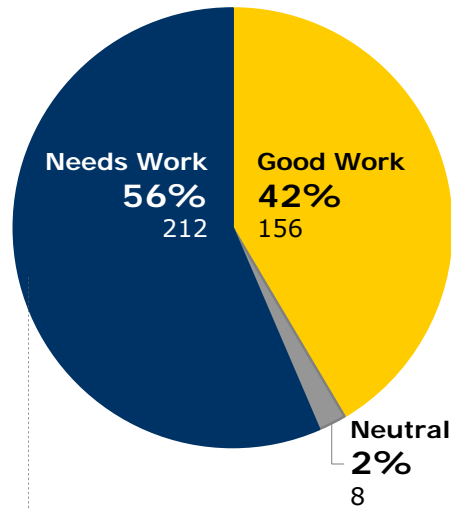
"Do things right and on time! Live and work with a DD person long enough to understand what it is like to care for them."

"Almost always helpful and nice! Thanks."

"Please! You cannot help! Why are you sending papers asking 'What does DSHS do well?'... I give up on you."

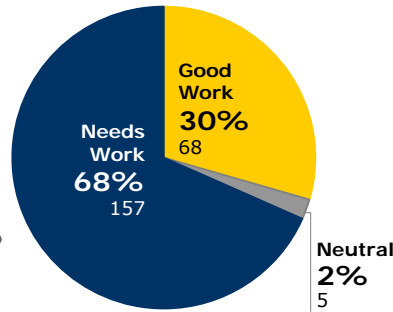
Process

Can we improve our processes?



Of of 376 comments about process, four out of ten were compliments. More than half were suggestions for improvement.*

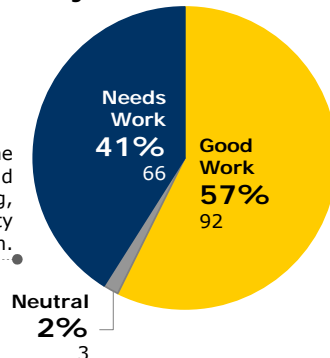
General Process



217 respondents addressed non-payment processes and procedures – including paperwork and bureaucracy.* The majority suggested process improvements

SUB-CATEGORY

Pay



153 respondents made comments about the payment process – including accuracy and timeliness, direct payment, tax withholding, and automated systems.* The majority applauded the payment system.

SUB-CATEGORY

* Some providers made both positive and negative comments on process issues. Often they also commented on both subcategories of process. Thus, one cannot total the subcategories to calculate the total number of providers commenting on process (338)

30% of the providers who made comments addressed processes and procedures.



PROCESS WAS MENTIONED

Areas to Improve:

- Fewer late payments and payment errors
- Less paperwork
- More online/email communication, information and functions
- More individualized approach to assessment
- Less caseworker turnover

Providers Appreciate:

- Prompt, consistent and accurate payments
- Efficient automated systems (telephone invoices, website, etc.)
- Timely and convenient client assessments and reviews
- Long-term association with the same caseworker

Providers say...

"Payment system works like clock work!"

"Reviews at our home – great job by our caseworker!"

"If an invoice is going to be late or not coming, providers need to be notified. This is our paycheck. We have bills and families like DSHS employees do."

"Put SPSS forms on the Internet!"

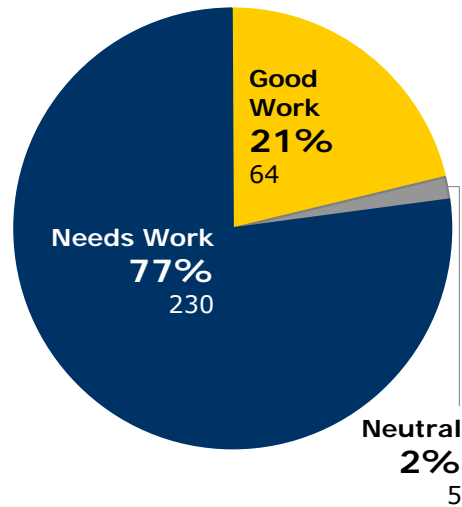
"FINALLY – we have kept the same case manager over several years. This makes life so much easier!"

"(DSHS) needs a better evaluation tool for establishing the number of hours of eligibility for the clients – the current one is inadequate."

"I love the automated express line. It's easy to use and convenient."

"Too often case managers change. I'd find out when I called with a question. I had one instance where I talked to at least 3 people before I found out who my case manager was. One person said it was 'Jane.' Jane said 'No it's not, it's John,' etc."

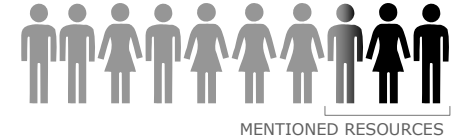
What about resources?



Of the 299 comments about the need for resources, about two out of ten comments were positive, while nearly eight out of ten comments were suggestions for improvement.*

* Some providers made both positive and negative comments about resources. Thus, one cannot total the positive, negative, and neutral comments to calculate the total number of providers commenting on resources (277).

Nearly one quarter of the providers who made comments mentioned resources.



Areas to Improve:

- Increased hours for providers; stop cutting hours
- Better pay and benefits for providers
- More, and more flexible, provider training
- Increased access to respite care
- More DSHS staff

Providers Appreciate:

- Hardworking and committed caseworkers
- High quality training
- Help with medical expenses, supplies and equipment
- Other services that assist clients

Providers say...

"Providing funding keeps my child in the home and in activities offered in the community."

"More stable caseworkers – the good ones don't seem to last long."

"Give me my hours back and some respect. I've been taking care of my people for over 3½ years and no holiday or vacation. None at all. And then you cut my hours!"

"Everything is good except cutting hours of care for disabled clients."

"Give back the 50 hours you took with one stroke of a pen...a year ago...my wife has no medical insurance now."

"We need a 'Craig's List' of respite providers and respite seekers sponsored and/or created by the state – and it must be easy to access and easy to use."

"DSHS helps me in finding doctors that will take my child...helps with transportation, too."

"The teachers/classes are wonderful. They seem knowledgeable and are willing to help and understand me!!"

"Hire more of them (caseworkers); they are overworked and wait time is too long."

"Do not cut hours already given (we work HARD); give part-time workers medical and dental."

"With so many clients...they (caseworkers) do their work very well."

"What happened to the 10 hours of classes each year? They were helpful."

"We need better pay, more of a raise. The economy isn't getting better and it's sucking us dry – we also should qualify for food stamps automatically without begging or being shamed."

"Offer continuing education classes in the evening and on weekends."

"Quit cutting hours every time we get a pay raise."

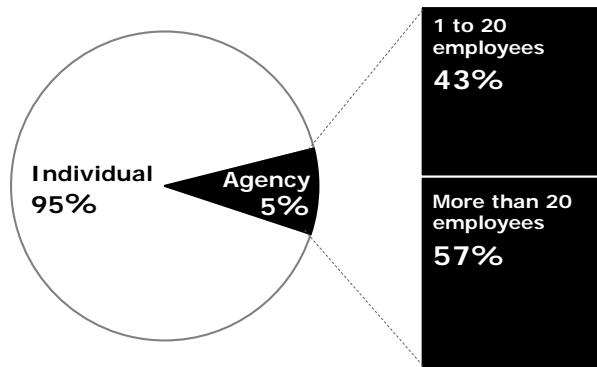
Who completed the survey?

The typical respondent is:

- A respite, attendant or personal care provider
- An individual, not part of an agency
- Located in Western Washington

PROVIDER TYPE. The largest group of providers (64%) deliver respite, attendant, or medicaid personal care. Many of these providers are family members of clients with developmental disabilities. The second largest group of providers (21%) deliver adult residential care. The table at the bottom of page 2 provides a complete list of provider services.

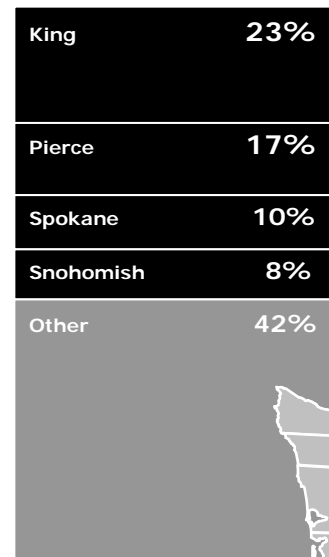
The majority of respondents were individual providers (95%). Agencies comprised 5% of the returned surveys (68); of those, 43% were small organizations with less than 20 employees and 57% were agencies with 20 or more employees.



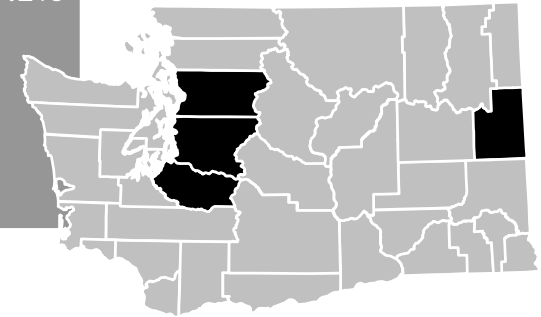
LOCATION. About 58% of completed surveys were returned by providers who delivered services in just four Washington counties: **King** (287 respondents), **Pierce** (218), **Spokane** (132), and **Snohomish** (104). Most of the remainder served ADSA-DD clients in smaller counties or in more than one county.

Seventy four percent of the responding providers (946) work in Western Washington. Twenty-four percent (311) work in Eastern Washington. Two work in both Western and Eastern Washington.

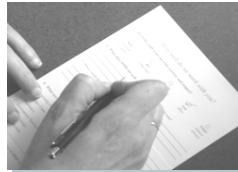
Additionally, three providers work out of state, and 10 providers did not answer the question.



Nearly 60% of the respondents reported working in one of four Washington counties



2006 ADSA Developmental Disabilities Provider Survey



For questions or comments on this report, please contact:

Nancy Raiha, PhD
Department of Social and Health Services
Research and Data Analysis Division
P.O. Box 45204
Olympia, WA 98504-5204
(360) 902-7667
raiha@dsos.wa.gov



This report, other provider survey reports, plus complete lists of provider comments are available from the *RDA website*: www1.dshs.wa.gov/rda

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