

ALL IN TOGETHER:

A FACT SHEET ON THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER IN ACHIEVING STUDENT PARENT SUCCESS AT LAVC



APPROACH

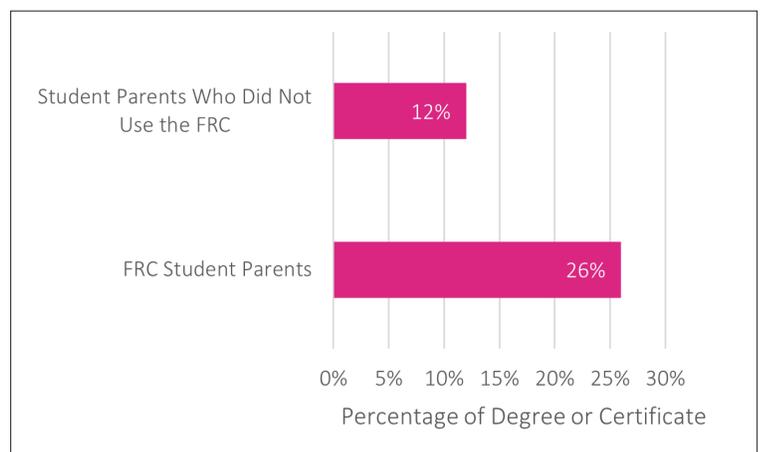
This fact sheet utilizes survey data and focus group data collected by the Los Angeles Valley College's Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Family Resource Center survey data. This data was collected in the fall of 2021. Over 200 student parents are represented in the survey and/or focus group data. In addition to the survey, the Family Resource Center (FRC) conducted in-depth focus groups to better understand the student-parent experience at Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC). Most survey respondents (85 percent) identified as female. 36

percent identified as Hispanic, 27 percent identified as White, 21 percent identified to be of multiple races, and six percent identified as Black or Asian, or Pacific Islander.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- **The FRC positively affected participating students.**
 - 36 percent of LAVC respondents strongly agreed that because of the FRC, they were able to remain enrolled in school.
 - 26 percent of FRC users earned a degree or certificate, including an associate's or career and certificate program, from Summer 2018 through Spring 2021. This is twice the rate of student parents who did not report utilizing the services or programs of the FRC.

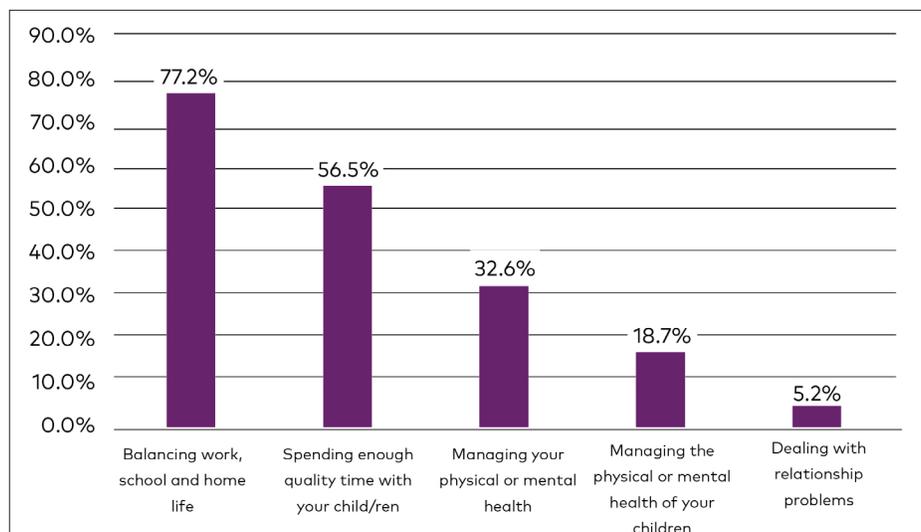
Figure 1. Student Parent Certificate/Degree Attainment Related to Engagement with FRC



Source: IWPR analysis of data from LAVC Survey of Student Parents, January 2022.

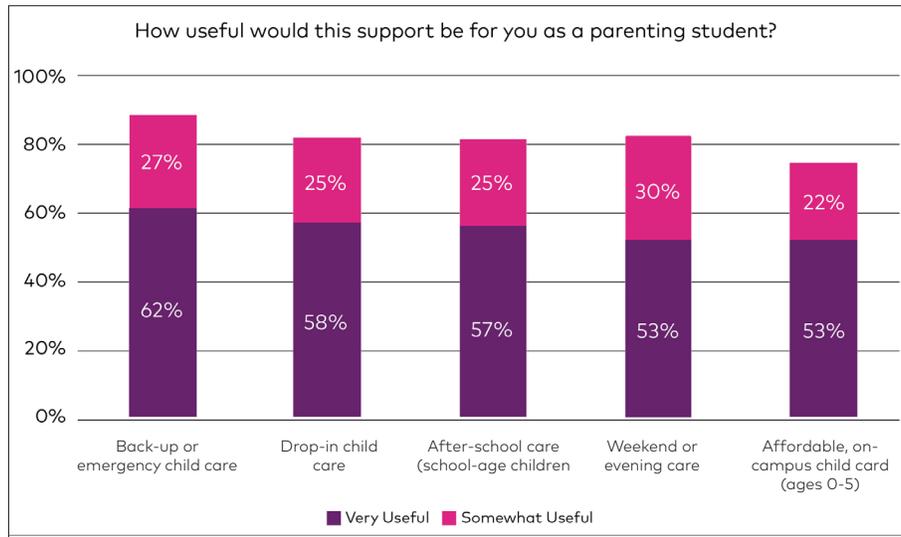
- **The FRC was clearly needed by students who expressed a variety of challenges.**
 - Balancing competing and multiple demands were the most common stressor for student parents surveyed. Just over 77 percent of student parents indicated that balancing work, school, and home life was a significant stressor (Figure 2).
 - Reliable and affordable child care was a primary barrier. Close to one-third of student parents surveyed reported that the cost of childcare was a financial burden and an impediment to degree completion. About 31 percent of survey respondents reported paying \$100 or more per week for child care, totaling more than \$5,000 each year.
 - Among the 65 percent of survey respondents who paid out-of-pocket for child care arrangements, nearly 40 percent reported losing reliable or consistent child care.
 - Nearly 90 percent of respondents said that backup or emergency child care would be useful support, and over 80 percent expressed a desire to use drop-in, after-school, or weekend child care if such services were provided (Figure 3).
 - 76 percent of student parents surveyed reported they struggled to stay on top of their course work or complete assignments. 43 percent reported challenges finding a quiet place to study.
- **These needs matched FRC services, including child-friendly study spaces, counseling services, parenting classes, a virtual support group, laptops, internet, and printing services.**

Figure 2. Family Stressors for LAVC Student Parents



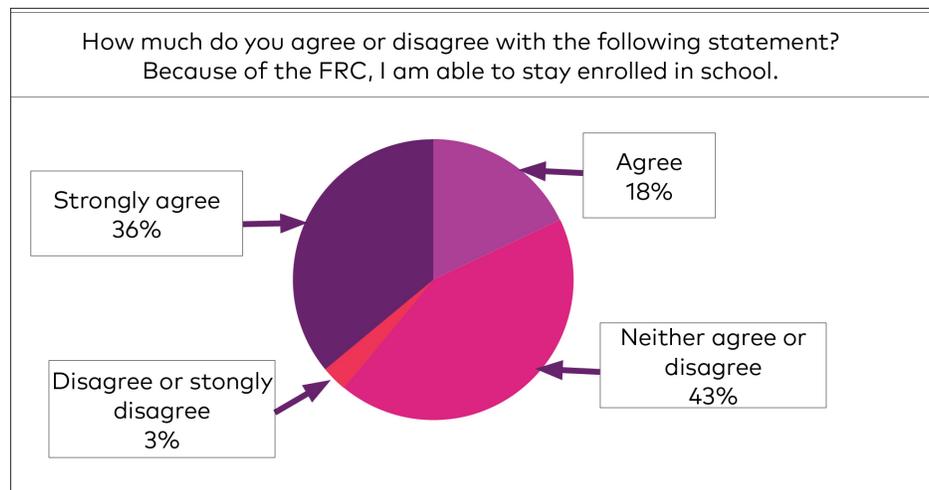
Source: IWPR analysis of data from LAVC Survey of Student Parents, January 2022.

Figure 3. Requested Child Care Supports by Student Parents



Source: IWPR analysis of data from LAVC Survey of Student Parents, January 2022.

Figure 4. Student Parent Persistence Related to Engagement with Family Resource Center



Source: IWPR analysis of data from LAVC Survey of Student Parents, January 2022

STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The greatest challenge for the FRC revealed by the IWPR analysis is low awareness among student parents at LAVC about the services the FRC provides to them and their children. Improving the visibility of the services provided by the FRC among student parents can help increase persistence and degree attainment for this group of students. Increasing student-parent representation in the decision-making process was recommended. Finally, cross-organizational coordination and increasing funding were flagged as important next steps.

This factsheet was authored by C. Nicole Mason Ph.D. and Olivia Storz with research and editorial assistance from Maureen Coffey, Felicity Hector-Bruder, Chaunté White Ph.D., and Lindsey Reichlin Cruse. The research was made possible with the support of ECMC Foundation.