

# **Process Evaluation of Parents Anonymous®**

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# PROCESS EVALUATION OF PARENTS ANONYMOUS®

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Juvenile delinquency prevention efforts ideally encompass a broad array of interventions. One critical strategy that deserves inclusion in this array is reduction of child maltreatment. An emerging body of research points persuasively to a strong link between the experience of abuse or neglect and subsequent delinquent behavior.

One promising program to address child abuse and neglect is Parents Anonymous®. Parents Anonymous® operates a network of parent-led, professionally facilitated, community-based groups. Numerous studies have shown that maltreating parents are often socially isolated, have smaller peer networks, and have less contact with and receive less help from their families. The extent to which interventions foster supportive social and emotional bonds between at-risk parents and others will likely increase the long-term effectiveness of any such efforts to promote more nurturing parenting (Belsky, 1993).

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention selected the National Council on Crime and Delinquency to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the Parents Anonymous® program. This document represents the findings from a one year process evaluation. The overall goals for the process evaluation were to 1) describe the Parents Anonymous® model and operation, 2) gain an understanding of variations in implementation that may exist, and 3) explore factors that may account for observed variations

### **The Parents Anonymous® Model**

The Parents Anonymous® theoretical model consists of four central precepts. The Parents Anonymous® model presumes that implementation of these four components will lead to a stronger family and a reduction in child abuse and neglect. First, “mutual support” attempts to promote positive change for parents by both providing support to others and receiving support from other parents in a reciprocal fashion. Second, “parent leadership” encourages parents to feel ownership and to participate fully in the program in an effort to enhance self esteem. Third, “shared leadership” is the extent that this ownership is held by both staff and parents. Fourth, “Parents Anonymous® ethos” is a set of beliefs, values and mores such as anonymity, confidentiality, and a commitment to bettering oneself and improving the lives of one’s children. The process evaluation described the contextual, organizational, group, facilitator, group leader, and individual characteristics and related them to these components of the model.

## **METHODS**

The process evaluation involved the following key data collection components:

- 1) Meetings with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> leaders for the purpose of gathering information on the organization's history, structure, and operation and to review and collect existing data collected by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.
- 2) Review of national materials published by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> such as materials used for training, promotion and educational as well as administrative materials.
- 3) One-week site visits to a random sample of 24 Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups within 8 of the 28 existing organizations. Site visits involved 4 key activities: 1) group observations to record and measure behavioral and verbal interaction, 2) administration of facilitator and group participant questionnaires designed to measure the theoretical underpinnings of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, 3) semi-structured interviews with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> accredited organization key staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders, and 4) review of materials and budgets.
- 4) National Census of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups mailed to 435 groups in 32 organizations designed to capture basic information on all Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups, participants, and facilitators.

## **FINDINGS**

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> functions at three discrete levels of organization: Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, the national organization; state, regional or group accredited organizations; and groups. The following description of the national Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization is presented using data collected from interviews with national staff and review of official publications. Unless otherwise noted, the characteristics of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> accredited organizations, groups, and participants were identified from both organizational-level data provided by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and group and participant-level data obtained from the census of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups.

### **Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Organizational Structure**

#### Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>

Oversees accreditation of affiliated Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations, provides training and technical assistance to organizations and groups, and works with community agencies and interested individuals to replicate programs.

Beyond scope of this research, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> operates childrens' programs, a national hotline, organizes information sessions with legislators and hold national conferences.

## Affiliated Organizations

More organizations were structured at a regional level (53%) than a state level (36%) or group-level (11%). Only one in four accredited organizations are free standing. Most (75%) operate through a related community host organization

The number of groups in an organization ranged from 1 to 96, the average was 14.

Organizations also varied substantially in the size of their operational budgets and number of funding sources.

Almost one-half (46%) of organizations had been in existence over 20 years. One third (32%) had only existed for one or two years.

Organizations provided groups with training, technical assistance, and materials, and provide support to facilitators. However, there was variation in the intensity of this interaction.

Most child protective services (CPS) supervisors interviewed knew little about the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization and rarely referred clients. Less than one in ten parents reported being referred by CPS.

## Groups

Forty-two percent of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups used affiliated community agencies to “host” the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups rather than operated directly through the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization.

Approximately, one-third of groups were less than one year old though they range in age from about 1 month to 29 years.

Most (82%) Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups were “open” to the general public (82%).

English was spoken in most (92%) responding Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups. Spanish was the primary language in 8% of groups.

Two-thirds (66%) of groups had between one to eight parents in attendance. Groups ranged in size from 1 to 45 participants.

A religious setting (e.g. church, temple) was the most common (23%) location for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups followed by a correctional facility (14%)

Childcare was provided in about 2 out of 3 Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups (65%). Among the groups offering childcare, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> children's program was available in 40%.

### *Parent Group Leader*

There was at least one parent group leader in the majority (77%) of groups. There was no parent group leader present in about one-quarter (23%) of responding groups.

### *Facilitators*

The vast majority of group facilitators were female (90%). Two-thirds were white, 22% were African American, and 10% were of Hispanic ethnicity. The average age of facilitators in responding Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups was 44. Over one-half of facilitators had at least a college degree (56%) but most were not licensed or certified (78%).

On average, the facilitators had been facilitating the current groups for 2 years, 5 months. About one-third volunteered their time as a facilitator.

### *Group Meetings*

The most common issues discussed during group meetings include financial concerns; single parenthood; living arrangements of children; court or child protective service issues; health problems; problems with children in school; relationship issues with children, divorce, separation, custody issues; problems with drugs/alcohol and incarceration.

Most (70%) comments made by parents at group meetings were those that acknowledged that they heard or understood something another parent said (e.g. I know what you mean. My kid does the same thing) or described something occurring recently in their lives (e.g. We were just evicted). About 15% of comments made during meetings offered help, advice or experience to another parent (e.g. I will help you move).

Among observed groups, 51% of all comments made during groups were from parents (other than parent group leaders) even though parents were 75% of groups' participants. Facilitators made 31% of comments but were only 13% of participants. Parent group leaders made 13% of comments and 14% of group participants.

## Participants

Most parents attending groups were female (77%). About one-half, 49%, of participants were white, 27% were African American, 17% were of Hispanic ethnicity, 2% were American Indian, .5% were Asian and 3.4% were mixed races. The average age of participants was 34, but ranged from 14 to 78.

Two in five (41%) participants had formal education beyond high school. Most families were living in low income situations – about one-half had an annual income of less than \$15,000 year.

Participants indicated most often that they came to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> to be a better parent (72%). The single most common way parents learn of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was through friends (31%).

Participants in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> were likely (53%) to face other life issues such as substance abuse, mental or physical health, or domestic violence. Almost one-third (30%) had children with special needs.

One in four (25%) were not currently living with their children and one in five (19%) had a child removed from their home at some point.

#### *Parent Attendance at Group Meetings*

Many parents attend Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> for just one or a few meetings while others engage on a weekly basis for months or years. The average number of times attended was 5. Those attending more than once attended an average of 8 times.

### **Implementation of the Key Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Precepts**

NCCD operationalized and measured the four main precepts of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model. For some components of the model there was much variability across groups, while other components showed stability across groups and individuals. The helper therapy principle is embodied in the tenets of mutual support, parent leadership, shared leadership, and within Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos and are described more fully within these constructs.

#### Mutual Support

There was substantial evidence that mutual support is both preached and practiced at Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Three-quarters of participants were “mutual supporters” (i.e. they reported both providing and giving support at least sometimes). In addition to this emotional support, parents also reported that they both received and provided instrumental support. Still, significant differences in their average scores of mutual support existed across groups.

## Parent Leadership

Parent leadership was championed, encouraged, and practiced by most Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> participants to at least some degree. Some parents assume rather substantial responsibilities within Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Across groups, there was significant variation in the average amount of parent leadership.

## Shared leadership

There was substantial evidence that staff and facilitators make an effort to empower parents and share leadership with them. In fact, the average amount of parent leadership across all groups was very similar to the average amount of staff leadership across groups. About one fourth of the groups, however, reflected low levels of shared leadership meaning that either the parents *or* the facilitator were active in leaderships but not both. Observations of groups bore this out: while parents were actively involved in responding to another parent, and while parent group leaders were somewhat more active than other parents, facilitators played a more active role than the model would prescribe. Interviews revealed instances of parents becoming facilitators after serving as parent group leaders – a practice the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model dissuades as it tends to diminish the value of the parent group leader role.

## Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Ethos

There was substantial evidence that most participants subscribe to a set of beliefs and principals that reflect Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. However, there are some differences among groups on the amount of “buy in” or ethos. In addition, self discovery or discussion of personal problems was more characteristic of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups than the self help groups on which the GES was normed. Nonjudgmental acceptance, offering support, and building a community with other parents were valued and practiced by many, if not all, participants. From the observations, it was evident that many parents had a strong commitment to improving their own lives and the lives of their children.

## **Variation in Key Components of the Model**

It is believed that many factors may influence the implementation of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model. This process evaluation also examined how the implementation of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model was affected by organizational, group, facilitator, and parent group leader, and individual characteristics.

## Organizations

Though the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> method of service delivery is straightforward, the structure at the organizational level is complex and variable. Nonetheless, none of the quantitatively evaluated differences seemed to impact the degree to which the model was implemented. Still, qualitative interviews suggests that the model could be impacted by such things as the frequency and/or nature of staff and facilitator contact and ties to certain funding streams creating pressure to dilute certain components of the model.

## Groups

There were significant variation among groups in the key constructs of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model including parent leadership, mutual support, and shared leadership, and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos. Other differences were also found. For example, groups with more officially referred parents tended to provide less support to other parents, racially heterogeneous groups were more likely to share leadership between parents and staff, groups with older participants, on average, were likely to have more formality and structure in the group, groups with more men rated their group as lower on “innovation” or propensity to change its activities, and larger groups tended to have less “buy-in” to the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos.

## Facilitator

The role and very presence of a facilitator in the group process distinguishes Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups from both self-help and therapy groups. Facilitators varied on many key characteristics such as gender, age, education level and licensure, tenure with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, and by whether they were volunteers or compensated. Groups with professionally licensed facilitators were found to provide less instrumental support to parents and encouraged less independent action or expression. In addition, it was found that groups with less facilitator control in decision-making tended to have facilitators with higher education attainment. This paradoxical relationship between licensure and education is of interest with regard to the delicate balance that exists between the presence of a facilitator and parent leadership.

## Parent Group Leader

Findings suggest that parent group leaders may be important to the camaraderie of the group in that their presence was associated with higher levels of instrumental support and cohesion. Although most groups had a parent group leader present during the observation (65%), there were some groups that seemed to emphasize parent leadership more than others. Groups with parent group leaders also had higher levels of parent and shared leadership.

## Individual

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> participants varied on many dimensions. Parents that were officially-referred to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, opposed to attending voluntarily, were found to be less likely to assume leadership tasks and provided and received less instrumental support. However, these parents were equivalent to those that were attending voluntarily in terms of assuming the parent group leadership role and had similar “dose” in terms of attendance.

From interviews with key staff, it was difficult to discern how much of a “dose” of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was thought to be enough. However, the research discovered that people attending longer were more likely to assume multiple parent leadership tasks and reported higher levels of mutual support. Another aspect of “dose” is whether or not a parent has served as a parent group leader. Parent group leaders were more likely to report experiencing mutual support, were more likely to give and receive support, and were more likely to “buy in” to the

ethos. Those who assume this responsibility may be seen as more fully experiencing the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model than those who do not, or at least experiencing it in a different way.

It was found that the amount of leadership tasks a parent took on was significantly related to race/ethnicity. Those parents reporting their race as “other” averaged nearly three times more parent leadership activities than Asian Pacific Islanders. However the sample sizes within these racial categories was small so caution should be exercised. Among larger groups (Hispanic, Caucasian and African American), differences were statistically significant but the size of the effect was modest.

It was also found that parents with higher incomes had higher scores on the “ethos” scale indicating that they were more likely to “buy in” to the child rearing and group process ideals of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

## **Conclusion**

For more than thirty years Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> has provided a unique approach to family strengthening. Its core principles – helper/therapist, mutual support, parent leadership, shared leadership, and the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos – were expressed from its beginning and remain the central tenets of its model. It is more important than ever to gain an understanding of the degree to which the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model produces desired changes. As the field of child welfare also move toward evidenced based practice, it is increasingly necessary to go beyond anecdotal support for a program’s worth. What remains to be examined is whether the benefits accrued by participants in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> translate into the impact of interest for the forthcoming outcome evaluation: reduced child maltreatment. The potential value of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> warrants every effort to document its contribution to the vital work of building and supporting strong and safe families.

# PROCESS EVALUATION OF PARENTS ANONYMOUS®

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Juvenile delinquency prevention efforts ideally encompass a broad array of interventions, from early childhood enhancements, to after-school recreation to gang crisis mediation to intensified police patrols. One critical strategy that deserves inclusion in this array is reduction of child maltreatment. An emerging body of research points persuasively to a strong link between the experience of abuse or neglect and subsequent delinquent behavior.

One promising program to address child abuse and neglect is Parents Anonymous®. Parents Anonymous® operates a network of parent-led, professionally facilitated, community-based groups. Numerous studies have shown that maltreating parents are often socially isolated, have smaller peer networks, and have less contact with and receive less help from their families. The extent to which interventions foster supportive social and emotional bonds between at-risk parents and others will likely increase the long-term effectiveness of any such efforts to promote more nurturing parenting (Belsky, 1993).

Prior evaluations of Parents Anonymous® include a Behavior Associates (1976) study utilizing self-report data. This study, involving a one-time survey of 613 Parents Anonymous® participants, identifies positive improvements in factors relating to positive parenting practices. Another study (Cohn, 1979) involving case manager assessments of changes in parental behavior and attitudes, identified that the receipt of lay services (i.e. lay counseling and Parents Anonymous®) in combination with other treatment services resulted in more positive treatment options relative to separate services.

To further explore the efficacy of the Parents Anonymous® program, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention selected the National Council on Crime and Delinquency to conduct an evaluation to update previous studies and increase methodological rigor. The evaluation will consist of both a process and outcome evaluation. This document represents the findings from a one year process evaluation. The goals for this phase of the evaluation were to: 1) describe the Parents Anonymous® model and operation, 2) gain an understanding of variations in implementation that may exist, 3) explore factors that may account for variations observed, and 4) prepare for and design an outcome evaluation.

Before describing the methods and findings of this process evaluation, it is important to lay the groundwork and summarize the current understanding of child maltreatment, its relationship to other social problems, and prevention and intervention strategies.

## **Relationship Between Being Maltreated as a Child and Future Negative Behaviors**

The following studies have shown that childhood victimization increases the likelihood of delinquency, adult criminality, and violent criminal behavior.

- Widom (1998) found that 49% of victims followed for over 20 years had been arrested, compared to 38% of a matched control group. Victims of maltreatment were also more likely than others to be arrested for violent crimes – 18% vs. 14%, respectively.
- Smith and Thornberry (1995) found that 45% of maltreated youths were subsequently arrested, compared to 32% of subjects who were not maltreated.
- Zingraff and colleagues (1993) found that maltreated children had higher rates of juvenile court referrals than either comparison group. These effects were only observed for general delinquency and status offenses, not for violent and property offenses.
- Many studies have associated men's battering (Hotaling and Sugarman, 1986) with violence in the family of origin (i.e. either observing or being the victim of violence). Though violence in the family of origin is not universal among all batterers (Gondolf, 1996), it has been reported as high as 75% (Fitch & Papantonio, 1983).

Not only is child maltreatment related to later delinquency, it also has detrimental effects on the physical, psychological, cognitive, and behavioral development of children (National Research Council, 1993). While maltreatment can profoundly and gravely impact the immediate lives of individual victims, it is also linked to long-term, negative societal impacts. In a longitudinal study of 1,000 youths, Smith and Thornberry (1995) found that youth maltreated in childhood were more likely than those who were not to experience low academic performance (33% vs. 23%), drug use (43% vs. 32%), and mental health problems (32% vs. 18%). Among females, the prevalence of teen pregnancy was greater among those who had been maltreated as children than those that had not (52% vs. 34%).

The costs of maltreatment – both in terms of the immediate and long-term trauma suffered by victims of abuse and neglect and in terms of economic societal costs are profound. Prevention programs that promote the safety and well-being of children and families hold potential for lessening the suffering experienced by children and greatly reducing these costs. The importance of such programs, like Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, speaks to the need for rigorous evaluation to measure their potential benefits.

## **Extent of Child Maltreatment**

There are almost one million abused or neglected children officially known to child protective services each year (NCCAN, 1999) and a far greater number never come to the attention of authorities. According to one survey, approximately 3 million children are reported to be the victims of maltreatment (NIS-3, 1996). Though it may be difficult to intervene in the lives of these unknown victims, prevention undoubtedly holds the key to their safety and well-being. Although the field is benefiting from increasing knowledge about the conditions that are

related to child maltreatment, more work needs to be completed to understand the possible causal relationships between key factors and child abuse.

## **Etiology of Child Abuse and Neglect**

There have been several studies examining the origins of child maltreatment. Several key risk factors have been identified, although the research is far from complete. The intergenerational hypothesis that abused children are more likely to become abusing parents has been supported by decades of research (Altemeier et al., 1984; Dubowitz et al., 1987; Gaines et al., 1978; Herrenkohl & Toedtler, 1983; Smith and Hanson, 1975; Whipple and Webster-Stratton, 1991); though methodological problems regarding this research have been noted as well (Belsky, 1980; Cicchetti and Rizley, 1981; Jayaratne, 1977; Kaufman and Zigler, 1987; Starr, 1988; Widom, 1989). This perspective suggests that physical aggression within a family provides a model for learning aggressive behavior and its appropriateness.

An ecological-transactional model explains how cultural, community, and family factors interact with characteristics of the individual to influence outcomes for maltreated children (Cicchetti and Lynch, 1993). Multicausal and interactive models emphasize the sociocultural context of child maltreatment (Belsky, 1980, 1992; Cicchetti and Carlson, 1989; Garbarino, 1977; Parke and Collmer, 1975; Wolfe, 1991) and do not rely on variables studied in isolation to discern a significant difference (Belsky, 1993). These models assume that child maltreatment occur when multiple risk factors outweigh protective factors (Cicchetti and Carlson, 1989) and that risk and protective factors are not static but change over time as the context in which they exist changes. In such cases, the following factors are viewed interactively in the context of individual characteristics, interpersonal behavior, and societal conditions:

### **Individual Factors**

#### **Parental substance abuse**

The link between substance abuse and child maltreatment is frequently cited. The strongest links are reported when professionals are asked to estimate the percentage of CPS caseloads that involve substance abuse. One such estimate suggests that 40% of confirmed child abuse cases involve substance abusers (Children of Alcoholics Foundation, 1996) and another estimates that 67% of parents involved with the child welfare system need AOD treatment (CWLA, 1997). Research conducted to develop risk assessment tools for CPS consistently find a strong relationship between substance abuse and child maltreatment recurrence. In California, for example, among families investigated by CPS at least one time in 1995, the rate of recurrence over the next two years was 14.3% when the secondary caregiver abused alcohol or drugs, compared to 8.3% when he/she was not a substance abuser (Children's Research Center, 1998).

However, research on the relationship between substance use and child maltreatment are complicated because of the presence of other social and economic variables such as poverty, that confound the analysis of the contributing role of drugs themselves. Although alcohol use is often cited as a principal risk factor in the etiology of child maltreatment, its relationship to child abuse and neglect remains uncertain (Widom, 1992). More needs to be known about the unique and

immediate effects of alcohol, its co-occurrence with other problem behaviors and drug use, the circumstances under which different types of drinking situations lead to or sustain violence against children, and cultural factors that mitigate or exacerbate connections between substance use or abuse and aggression (Abram, 1990; Fagan, 1990; Pernanen, 1991; Robins and Regier, 1991).

### **Mental Health**

Several studies suggest that depressed mothers are less likely to meet their children's basic needs (Polansky, 1981; Kotch, 1999; Zuarvin, 1988). In one retrospective risk study, the recurrence rate for child neglect was 35.6% when the primary caregiver had a current or past diagnosed mental health condition. In comparison, only 15.4% of families with no such history experienced recurrence within two years (Children's Research Center, 1998).

### **Parenting Skills**

Parents who lack basic knowledge of parenting skills, who have unrealistic expectations of developmentally appropriate behavior, or simply lack knowledge of effective child management practices may be more likely to maltreat their children. (Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect, 1993; Daro, 1994).

### **Interpersonal Factors**

#### **Social Isolation**

Social isolation and limited social ties has been well linked to increased risk of child abuse. Maltreating parents were often observed to have smaller peer networks (Disbrow et al, 1977; Polansky, Gaudin, Ammons, & Davis, 1985; Starr, 1982), have diminished relationships with relatives (Zuravin & Greif, 1989; Polansky, Chalmers, Bittenwieser & Williams, 1981), feel lonely (Milner & Wimberley, 1980; Polansky et al, 1985); be socially isolated (Kotelchuck, 1982; Whipple & Webster-Stratton, 1991); and are less likely to have a phone (Dubowitz et al., 1987).

#### **Intimate Partner Violence**

There is growing evidence that households experiencing domestic violence are more likely to experience child maltreatment as well (Daro & Cohn, 1988; Dykstra & Alsop, 1996; English, 1998; Ross, 1996). In one California risk study, households with one or more episodes of domestic violence within the past year were twice as likely (17% v. 8.7%) to experience subsequent physical abuse of children than households without a history of domestic violence. (Children's Research Center, 1998).

#### **Child Characteristics**

Research on child risk factors associated with maltreatment is sometimes criticized due to the potential for "victim-blaming." Researchers have attempted to distinguish between child

characteristics that trigger abuse and those that maintain and perpetuate maltreatment. Younger children appear more likely to experience maltreatment (American Association for Protecting Children, 1987; Benedict, White, and Cornely, 1985; Powers & Eckenrode, 1988) because physical force is used more commonly among younger children, they spend more time with their caregivers, and they are more susceptible to injury. Prematurity and low birth weight has also been associated, though inconsistently, to maltreatment (Elmer, 1977; Hunter et al, 1978; Herrenkohl & Herrenkohl, 1979; Lynch & Roberts, 1982; Starr, 1982).

## **Societal Factors**

### **Poverty**

Although child maltreatment is reported across the socioeconomic spectrum, it is disproportionately reported among poor families. Further, child maltreatment is not simply concentrated among the poor, but among the poorest of poor (Giovannoni and Billingsley, 1970; Pelton, 1981; Wolock and Horowitz, 1979, 1984). However, it is unclear whether this link is due to the fact that families living in poverty are plagued with higher amounts of stress or the result of overreporting of cases involving poor families because of greater scrutiny by social service agencies. Self-reports using the Conflict Tactics Scale have indicated that lower socio-economic status is a risk factor for violent behaviors toward children (Straus, 1980; Gelles and Straus, 1988). Despite these associations, questions still remain regarding why all poor families are not at equal risk for maltreatment and why maltreatment occurs among families that are not poor.

### **Neighborhood Safety**

Child abuse rates were found to be higher in poor neighborhoods with fewer social resources than in equally economically deprived neighborhoods where social resources were perceived to be higher. It was found that in these high risk neighborhoods, parents were more likely to use resources for crisis intervention, but not for prevention. In contrast, residents of lower risk neighborhoods, built better environments, made constructive use of resources, and perceived a higher quality of living (Garbarino and Crouter, 1978; Garbarino and Sherman, 1980).

There are many pathways to child abuse and neglect, and there appears to be no single cause. Maltreatment arises due to a transactional process of characteristics between parents and children, and the contexts in which they live. As such, the question for evaluating programs designed to prevent maltreatment is not only “what works” but “what works for whom, when, and under what conditions.”

## **Prevention and Intervention Approaches**

In the field of child maltreatment, the goals of interventions are to reduce risk factors, to increase the protective factors that could buffer children from the effects of victimization, and to improve the outcomes of individuals and families. Family strengthening programs are a major focus of research on maltreatment prevention. Strategies such as helping parents improve interactions with their children, providing parents with problem-solving skills, raising self-

esteem and emotional functioning, and increasing knowledge about child development may contribute to positive parental practices and child well-being (National Research Council, 1993). However, few programs have been evaluated in terms of these effects.

Intervention strategies fall into a range of prevention programs addressing populations at differential risk for maltreating their children. These programs can generally fit into three categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention.

Primary prevention programs are those directed to the generalized population regardless of child abuse risk (Oates, 1996). These programs include such things as providing home visits by nurses to postpartum mothers and parenting classes offered to new parents as well as programs addressing more systemic societal problems such as poverty.

Secondary prevention programs are those directed towards populations identified as being at “risk” of maltreating their children. “At-risk” individuals may be characterized by living in extreme poverty, being socially isolated and lacking support systems, and having limited parenting knowledge and skills, etc. These factors may operate either in isolation or in combination and produce a range of “risk” levels.

Tertiary programs attempt to prevent recurring abuse and, generally, involve those already known to child protective services agencies. Interventions directed toward this population may involve a range of programs, from counseling to temporary removal of victims from the home and, if necessary, termination of parental rights and criminal prosecution of the perpetrator.

The provision of mutual support is another promising intervention strategy that can be provided for primary, secondary or tertiary prevention populations. Mutual support is described as a process which “promotes a psychological sense of community; provides an ideology that serves as a philosophical antidote; provides an opportunity for confession, catharsis, and mutual criticism; provides role models; teaches effective coping strategies for day-to-day problems; and provides a network of social relationships” (Levine & Perkins, 1987). It is characterized by the reciprocating roles of participants contrasted with the subordinate position often typifying the professional helping relationship. Research suggest that strategies relying solely on costly professional therapy, unaugmented by other supportive or remedial services, will offer less opportunity for success (Cohn & Daro, 1987).

## **Objectives of the Process Evaluation**

The overall goals of the process evaluation were to describe the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model, examine how the program is implemented across affiliated organizations and groups, and to design an outcome evaluation. It was not the intention of this study to examine the operation of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc, the national organization, except as it relates to the design and implementation of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model.

**Goal #1:** Describe the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model and activities at the organizational, group, and individual level:

Document the theory of how Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> intends to produce changes in behavior and attitudes.

- Examine organizational relationships, community support, and political forces;
- Identify the extent to which partnerships have been forged between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and others;
- Document how programs are established, staffed and operated;
- Document outreach efforts, program coverage and sources of referrals;
- Identify characteristics of participants in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and circumstances behind their participation;
- Examine the factors that influence initial and continued involvement in the group;
- Identify the extent to which participants embrace leadership roles within the program and organization.

**Goal #2:** Describe the extent to which the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model is implemented across organizations, groups, and individuals, and explore factors related to differences.

- Examine differences in participant and program characteristics, level of participation and degree of participant satisfaction with regard to program setting.
- Examine how groups embrace the main components of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model across different types of groups and settings.

From these objectives a set of research questions were developed. Initial input was solicited from OJJDP, the project Advisory Board, and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. staff. Information regarding the research questions was also solicited from participants at the National Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> conference held during the early stages of the project's development. During a conference session, parents, facilitators and others involved in the national network of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups were asked what they wanted to learn from the study. Based on their input, the importance of most of the previously developed questions was validated and some new questions were added.

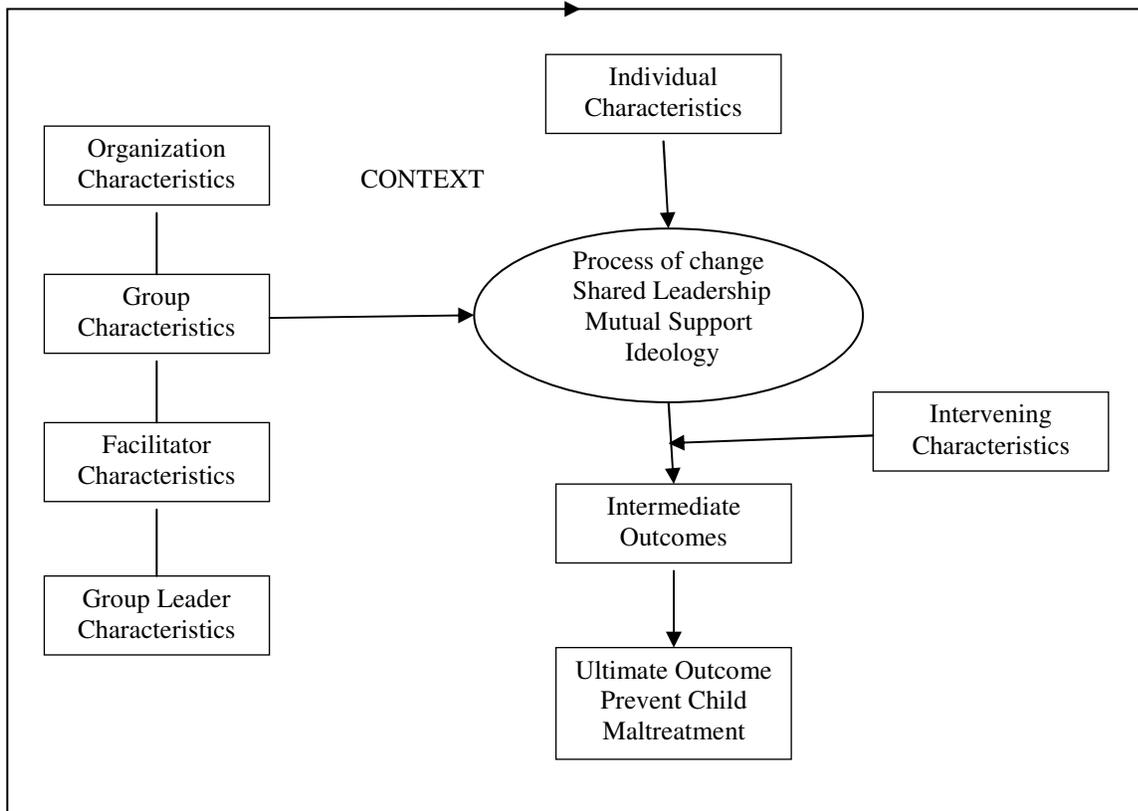
### **Evaluation Heuristic**

The research questions will be discussed in the findings section and will be organized along a heuristic developed by NCCD for understanding the process evaluation. The process evaluation assumes that implementation of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> programs are shaped by many contingencies, events and external forces as well as by explicit policy and program decisions made by the national and regional organizations and groups. As such, the theoretical model was operationalized to identify whether differences in organizational, group, facilitator, group leader, and individual characteristics influences the main constructs of parent leadership, shared leadership, mutual support and ethos, and hence, how the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model is implemented (Figure 1).

The heuristic shows that during the process evaluation the contextual, organizational, group, facilitator, group leader, and individual characteristics will be described and then related

to the main processes thought to influence outcomes. The heuristic also shows that during the outcome evaluation, these processes will be related to outcomes through a set of potentially important intervening variables. Each component of the heuristic related to the process evaluation will be delineated in detail in the findings section.

**Figure 1: Evaluation Heuristic**



### **Theoretical Underpinnings of Parents Anonymous®**

Describing the theoretical underpinnings of the Parents Anonymous® model was important in order to measure the “processes of change” shown in Figure 1. With the help of leaders from the national organization of Parents Anonymous®, NCCD deduced that there are four central precepts or theoretical underpinnings to the Parents Anonymous® model. Underlying these key constructs is the notion that parents are in the best position to help parents, and in doing so, help themselves. This has been termed the “helper-therapy principle” (Riessman, 1995). The first key way Parents Anonymous® attempts to promote positive change is for parents to both provide support to others and receive support from other parents in a reciprocal fashion. This is thought of as “mutual support.” Second, parents must feel ownership of the program so that they can participate fully and enhance their self esteem. This notion is embodied in the term “parent leadership.” Third, to the extent that this ownership is held by both staff and parents, and among all parents, “shared leadership” is said to exist. Fourth, there is a set of beliefs, values, and mores such as anonymity, confidentiality, and a commitment to bettering oneself and improving the lives of one’s children. We call this “Parents Anonymous® Ethos.”

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### Sample

When this evaluation began there were twenty-eight accredited Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations in the United States. For one component of this study, the national census, an effort was made to obtain information on the entire universe of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups and participants. For the second, more in-depth component of this study, a stratified random sample of eight organizations were selected. After substantial discussion and dialogue with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. leadership it was determined that the stratification strategy should assure that sampled groups include organizations that typify key typologies within Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Key variables that distinguished organizational types included:

- extent to which participants embrace leadership roles within the program and organization.
- number of years the organization has been in existence;
- number of groups in the organization (representing organizational size);
- embedded in a larger organization or host agency or not;
- structured at a state level or not;
- percent of group facilitators that are on time release from another agency (representing buy-in from other supporting organizations).

All organizations were described in terms of these variables and a cluster analysis was performed. The result was identification of four distinct clusters of organizations. Organizations within each cluster were selected at random. Characteristics of each cluster are described in Appendix 1.

After selecting the organizations, a conformational review was conducted to assure that the selection sufficiently represented geographical areas and that several key group types could be observed within these organizations, such as Spanish speaking, correctional facility groups, or men only groups (Table 1).

**Table 1: List of Organizations by Cluster and Group and Organizational Characteristics**

Cluster	Organizational Characteristics		Group Characteristics				
	Name (alphabetical)	Geo-area	% Rural	% Span-speaking only	% Correct. Facility	% Men only	% Teenagers
1	Org 1	W	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%
1	Org 6	S	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1	Org 11	W	0%	40%	0%	0%	0%
2	Org 19	NE	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2	Org 20	NC	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2	Org 21	MW	17%	0%	17%	17%	0%
3	Org 24	NE	46%	3%	11%	5%	3%
4	Org 28	S	49%	0%	5%	3%	14%

Note: Names have been replaced with codes to protect the identity of the organization.

### Group Sample

Detailed data on the 443 groups associated with the 28 Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations was provided by research staff at Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. (current as of January 1, 2001). To ensure the sample would be based on the most recent data, NCCD contacted the executive directors of each of the eight sampled organizations prior to choosing the sample to update or confirm group data. The group sample was then chosen using detailed data from the 214 groups associated with the eight sampled organizations. The advisory board and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. staff were also consulted with regard to important characteristics to consider when choosing the individual groups. Group selection was conducted randomly but steps were taken to assure representation of groups that served specific populations. As a result, NCCD sampled groups that differed by demographics of the population (i.e., Spanish speaking) and where the meetings are held (i.e., prison, urban/suburban/rural location). Twenty-six groups were randomly sampled to participate in the group observation component of the study. Four groups were chosen from the two largest organizations and three were chosen from all others

Organizations were then contacted to seek group approval for participation<sup>1</sup>. In several instances, it was necessary to resample groups due to overlapping group meeting days, summer breaks in the meeting of groups, or groups ending.

After the sample was developed, characteristics of the group sample were compared to the complete roster of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups to determine the extent to which the sample reflected key demographics. For example, the random sample included one group (5%) with Spanish as a primary language. Among the 443 groups in the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> database at the time of the sample, 35 (8%) were identified as Spanish speaking. The random sample provided a proportional representation of all Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups for primary language. However, urban groups were over-represented in the random sample (86% in the sample verses

<sup>1</sup> NCCD requested that group participants be informed that participation of the group in the study was strictly voluntary and confidential.

45% according to Parents Anonymous®) (Table 2). However, we later concluded that the urban dimension was not defined by Parents Anonymous® during data collection and held little meaning.

**Table 2: The Characteristics of the Sampled Groups vs. Parents Anonymous® Roster**

	<b>Sampled Groups</b>	<b>Parents Anonymous® Database</b>
<b>Primary Population</b>		
General Community	56%	63%
Men Only	6%	3%
Specific Population Type	39%	35%
<b>Group Setting</b>		
DV/Homeless Shelter	5%	2%
Correctional Agency	14%	11%
Other	83%	87%
<b>Primary Language</b>		
English	95%	98%
Spanish	5%	2%
<b>Location</b>		
Rural	9%	47%
Suburban	5%	8%
Urban	86%	45%
<b>Meeting Time</b>		
Daytime	32%	49%
6 PM Plus	68%	51%
<b>Meeting Date</b>		
Monday-Thursday	91%	94%
Friday	9%	4%
Weekend	0%	2%
<p>*Total may be greater than 100% due to rounding.            See Appendix 2 for additional comparison with the Parents Anonymous® Census of Groups</p>		

## **Data Sources**

A wide array of quantitative and qualitative data was collected from a variety of sources for the process evaluation. Data collection methods included interviews with key leaders, group observations, questionnaires of participants, a national census of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups, analyses of secondary data, and review of written materials.

More specifically, major components of data collection consisted of the following activities:

### **Meetings with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. leadership**

NCCD researchers met twice with staff from Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. to discuss issues related to the organizations history and model, organizational structure, availability of existing data, potential difficulties associated with data collection, and protocols for working with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations and groups. An additional phone conference was held to discuss and clarify NCCD's operationalization of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model. As mentioned above, NCCD researchers also attended the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> National Conference during the developing stages of the evaluation. Researchers used this opportunity to gather information regarding the program as well as participants' concerns and interests in the evaluation.

### **Reviewed national materials published by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc.**

The research team reviewed various types of written material published by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. Much of this material is distributed through the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, network of organizations and groups for training, to provide outreach and to promote the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model, to educate, and to inform about Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> activities. Materials are used by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations, facilitators, parent group leaders, and group participants. Materials were reviewed for information referencing the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model, group meeting procedures, and group ethos. In addition to published materials, the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. website was reviewed for content as were other operational materials such as the budget and organizational chart.

### **Reviewed data collected, maintained, and reported by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc.**

Meetings with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> staff yielded verbal descriptions of existing data collection efforts at the organizational and group level. Documentation of these efforts (e.g. data collection forms, survey instruments, and data reports) as well as the databases themselves, were collected and studied to inform the sampling process and to provide information regarding the scope and nature of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations and groups nationwide.

### **Conducted a National Census**

While Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. was collecting some data from the groups, additional data was needed to fully describe the participants and group facilitators. The census was sent to

all organizations and groups that were in existence as of October 2001 and included 32 organizations and 435 groups. Through the national census, NCCD gathered basic demographic data on all participants and facilitators agreeing to complete the survey during the week of November 4<sup>th</sup> through November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

### **Collected primary data during site visits – included interviews with key leaders, group observations, and participant questionnaires**

NCCD research staff conducted site visits to eight Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> affiliated-organizations and 26 groups during the study year for the purpose of collecting process information.

### **Data Collection Procedures and Instruments**

Site visits required one or two research staff spending one week, on average, in each site. The following multiple methods of data collection were employed during the site visit:

#### **Group Observations**

A rich source of quantitative information was gathered through observations at group meetings. Permission to observe groups was obtained from group participants by the group facilitator several weeks prior to observing the group and then again upon arriving to observe the group. An “Informed Consent” was also provided in writing to ensure participants were aware that the information collected was to be used for research purposes, that their names would not be revealed, and that they had the option not to participate (Appendix 3). The informed consent was also read aloud for benefit of those having reading difficulties. The researcher answered questions by group participants as asked, but otherwise remained an observer.

Observations were standardized by coding participants’ verbal interactions using an observation form and detailed coding instructions (Appendix 4). The purpose of this coding was to measure the amount of interaction, the types of interaction and the content of the interaction within the groups. The coding system developed was beta tested on several non-sampled Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups. Additionally, the researchers created a videotaped role-played Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> meeting and coded the meeting and subsequently comparing coding.

#### **Group Participant Surveys**

Group member and facilitator questionnaires were administered after the group meeting (Appendices 5 and 6). These instruments were developed in both English and Spanish and were pilot tested for comprehension and duration in the five Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups mentioned above. The survey was designed to measure the theoretical underpinnings of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model and to identify variation among groups. Previously validated scales were used when possible. Scale construction and reliability analyses were done using 156 surveys returned by parents participating in groups during the site visits.

## GES

The *Group Environment Scale*, a social climate scale developed by Rudolf Moos and used in a wide variety of previous research was included in both the facilitator and participant surveys to identify group member perceptions. This scale consists of eight constructs comprised of nine items each. Construct scales were generated by cumulating the number of “true” responses on a true/false scale. Group scores were standardized according to Moos for analyses.

- *Cohesion* – the members involvement in and commitment to the group and the concern and friendship they show for one another. The reliability was equal to .67.
- *Expressiveness* – how much freedom of action and expression of feelings are encouraged in the group. The reliability was equal to .74.
- *Independence* – how much the group encourages independent action and expression among members. The reliability was equal to .78.
- *Self Discovery* – how much the group encourages members’ discussions of personal problems. The reliability was equal to .71.
- *Anger and Aggression* – the extent to which there is open expression of anger and disagreement in the group. The reliability was equal to .76.
- *Order and Organization* - the formality and structure of the group and the explicitness of rules and sanctions. The reliability was equal to .75.
- *Leader Control* – the extent to which the leader directs the group, makes decisions, and enforces rules. The reliability was equal to .78.
- *Innovation* – how much the group promotes diversity and change in its own functions and activities. The reliability was equal to .76.

## Mutual Support

A mutual support scale by Kenneth Maton was incorporated into the questionnaire (q. 73-81 in the group participant questionnaire) because its reliability and validity are well-established. Maton’s (1998) for mutual support consisted of two scales: provide support and received support. The provide support scale was comprised of four items and had a reliability of .74. The received support scale was comprised of five items and had a reliability equal to .76

To identify individuals as mutual supporters, the variables of “provides support” and “receives support” were dichotomized, i.e., individuals who indicated that, on average, they provided support at least “sometimes” were coded as “support providers.” The same process was used for received support. Using this method, participants that both provided and received support were considered to have experienced mutual support.

## Instrumental Support

Other items measuring support were developed to more fully reflect Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>’ definition of support. Based on pilot group observations and with input from Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> leaders, NCCD developed a set of questions specific to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>’ concept of mutual support (q. 82-97 in the group participant questionnaire). The pool of questions attempted to capture distinct aspects of support including instrumental support,

emotional support, and social support. Additionally, the questions incorporated potential to reflect unilateral or reciprocal support. Using these items, a factor analyses was completed and only two scales had sufficient reliability. The resulting two 3-item sub-scales were “provides instrumental support” (e.g., I have given things to another parent) and “receives instrumental support” (e.g., another parent has given me information or resources). The scale assessing the amount of instrumental support provided had reliability of .79 and for or “received instrumental support” the reliability was equal to .71.

### **Leadership Scales**

To assess the wide variety of leadership task that take place in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, preexisting scales were insufficient, and thus, leadership items were generated. Leadership was assessed using a 30 item scale of leadership activities in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> (e.g., Made coffee for the group? Opened a group meeting? Been a role model for parents?) (98-127 in the group participant questionnaire). Participants were asked to indicate the level of leadership activities within the group by choosing one or more of the following response options: I have done this, another parent has done this, a staff person has done this. This 30 item scale was used to generate three scales assessing leadership activities including individual parent leadership, parent leadership, and shared leadership.

**Individual parent leadership.** To assess individuals’ level of parent leadership, the 30 item leadership scale was used. Scale scores were generated by cumulating the number of items that the respondent indicated their own participation (i.e, I have done this). This scale’s reliability was equal to .74.

**Parent leadership.** To assess the level of parent leadership within groups, the 30 item leadership scale was used. This scale score was generated by cumulating the number of items that respondents indicated were completed by parents in the group (i.e., I have done this and/or another parent has done this). The reliability was equal to .94. To create group scores, individual scores of group members were averaged.

**Shared leadership.** To assess the level of shared leadership within groups, the 30 item leadership scale was used to first generate a scale of staff leadership. This scale was a composite of the items that respondents indicated were completed by staff in the group (i.e., a staff person has done this). The reliability was equal to .95. To create a group score for staff leadership, the staff leadership scores of individual respondents in the group were averaged.

Group scores for shared leadership were generated using the ratio of the average parent leadership over the average staff leadership. After examining the spread of the ratios of shared leadership, these scores were then re-coded to represent low, medium and high levels of shared leadership.

Basic demographic questions were asked of both the facilitator and group participant. The group participant questionnaire also collects information related to their attendance at the group and information about their children. The facilitator questionnaire requests information related to the facilitator’s work status and professional credentials.

## **Interviews**

Interviews with key leaders within the Parents Anonymous® accredited organization and community stakeholders provided rich contextual information to describe the environment in which an organization and its group(s) operate. Content analysis of these qualitative descriptions provided descriptive information about the context of organizational functioning and to explain any variation in implementation of the Parents Anonymous® model. More specifically, interviews addressed the following objectives of the evaluation:

- Examine organizational and interorganizational relationships, community support and political forces;
- Identify the extent to which partnerships have been forged between Parents Anonymous® and others;
- Document outreach efforts, program coverage and sources of referrals; and
- Document how programs are established, staffed and operated.

Interviews were semi-structured with guiding questions but flexible enough to allow participants to add additional relevant information (Appendix 7-9). With permission, these interviews were audio taped. The tapes were used by interviewers to write summaries of interviews but were not transcribed. The resulting interview summaries were coded for thematic content to facilitate review of all references to specific research questions. Rigorous qualitative methods, such as multiple coders and axial coding methods were not possible within the scope of this project. While no claim is made of rigorous qualitative methodology, it was deemed vital to this project to incorporate the voices of Parents Anonymous® staff, volunteers, and key community stakeholders in ways that quantitative data alone could not provide.

A total of 73 interviews were conducted. In most cases, interviewees were identified with the assistance of a key contact within the organization (generally the program director) and included the following:

- Parents Anonymous® accredited organization Director, Program Director, or both (8 interviews);
- Parents Anonymous® volunteer, other than facilitator (7 interviews);
- Parents Anonymous® paid staff person (5 interviews);
- Parents Anonymous® affiliated host agency (12 interviews)
- Parents Anonymous® community stakeholder (41 interviews);
  - child protective services agency (12 interviews)
  - referral source (17 interviews)
  - Parents Anonymous® outreach effort (2 interviews)
  - organization having a formal relationship with Parents Anonymous® (8 interviews)
  - individual within a relevant organization identified from phone book (2 interviews)

## **Review of Materials/Budget**

During the course of the site visit, researchers reviewed and/or collected published materials used by the organization and groups as well as operational materials such as budgets, organizational charts, job descriptions, policy and procedure manuals, and group attendance sheets. Where applicable, websites were also reviewed for content. Availability of materials were systematically accounted for and identified by source of the material and use (Appendix 10 for checklist). These qualitative data were content analyzed and structured according to the research questions.

## **National Census of Groups**

Data was also collected in a census attempting to obtain basic information from all Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups. The census was comprised of a facilitator questionnaire (Appendix 11) providing both individual- and group-level information and a participant questionnaire (Appendix 12) providing individual-level information. Both forms were designed to capture demographic information of either the facilitator or parent. The facilitator questionnaire also provides additional information on group characteristics while the participant questionnaire collects additional information on the circumstances behind their participation and involvement with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

In addition, both the facilitator and participant questionnaire includes a series of questions intended to measure ethos. The 20 item Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos scale was created to assess participant ethos (e.g., Parents who are having trouble with their children are the best teachers for other parents in the same situation. I trust people in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement using a 5 point Likert-type scale. A factor analyses was conducted revealing two factors. However, based on the reliability, only one of the factors which reflected participant ethos was used in analyses. The resulting ethos scale has reliability of .88.

Several weeks prior to the week of census implementation, pre-stamped group packets of surveys were sent to each organization who then relayed them to the affiliated host agency (if applicable to that group) or directly to the group facilitators. Though the census was to remain anonymous with regard to individual identify, group identity was desired to be able to link group attendees together and to link census responses to other data collection efforts. To this end, each postage paid return envelope provided by NCCD identified the group returning the census forms by group code.

Each census form contained an “Informed Consent,” advising parents and facilitators of voluntary participation and confidentiality provisions. Follow-up phone calls were made within 2 weeks of the mailing of census packets to organizational contacts to ensure the packets were received and that they had been forwarded to the appropriate location. At this time, it came to our attention that some packets had been held at local post offices due to postal procedures for Anthrax screening. Census forms were resent via Federal Express to ensure timely receipt.

Group members completed the census during their regularly scheduled group meeting occurring between 11/4/01 and 11/10/01. Upon completing the census, each attendee was asked to insert the census form in a plain, legal-sized envelope that was provided. The facilitator was then asked to place all envelopes in a larger, postage-paid envelope and mail to NCCD within 1 week of census implementation. Within two weeks of census implementation, NCCD initiated follow-up phone calls to each organization with groups that had not yet returned census forms. Attempts were made at this time to encourage participation in the census.

Forms were mailed to 435 groups. (Note: Because attempts were made to update the group list to reflect all active groups at the time of the census, the number of groups that received census surveys differs from the number of groups that were used to randomly select site visits). The group response rate for the census was 45% and included 223 facilitator surveys (some groups have more than one facilitator) and 1056 participant surveys. The literature cites a range of Mutual support group survey response rates cited in the literature were found to range from 33% for a mental health self-help association (Kurtz, 1990) to 73% from a female alcoholic self-help group (Kaskutas, 1994), to 90% from a problem drinkers self-help group (Humphreys and Klaw, 2000). The low completion rate among Parents Anonymous® groups may be due, in part, to hesitancy among the population surveyed to respond to surveys, the hierarchical process required for the mailing of surveys, and changes in postal procedures during this time. The response rate was likely greatly reduced due to postal delays and problems caused by the anthrax scare post-September 11, 2001. See Appendix 13 for detail on groups participating in the census by state.

## CHAPTER 3

### FINDINGS

#### Section 1

#### **Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Model and Organizational Structure**

In the following section, an overall description of the National Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization is presented using data collected from interviews with national staff and review of official publications. In the following section, a number of questions are address including:

- How did Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> originate?
- What is the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model for change?
- How is the national organization structured?
- How does the national organization support regional or state organizations?
- How are regional or state organizations structured and how does growth or changes occur?
- How do organizations support groups?
- In what ways do the regional and state organizations vary?
- What is the relationship between child protective services and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?

#### **Origins of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>**

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> began in 1970 when a parent and her social worker initiated the first group meeting. Seeking an alternative to traditional therapy, they created a group environment in which parents help each other with some guidance from a trained facilitator. Since then, the program has expanded into a national network of community-based groups with weekly meetings for parents and children. OJJDP has partnered with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. in this effort since 1994. The mission of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is to “promote mutual support and parent leadership in order to build and support strong, safe families.” Their self-described purpose includes the prevention of child abuse.

#### **The Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Model**

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> operates a network of parent-led, professionally facilitated, community-based groups to strengthen families. The key elements of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model as operationalized earlier in this report include the following:

##### **Parent Leadership**

*Assuming responsibility for problems, developing solutions both independently and with the help of the group, and serving as a role model. Parent leadership, as discussed by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> literature and national staff, embodies the concept of parents taking responsibility for their actions as parents, as well as taking responsibility for the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> group.*

### **Shared Leadership**

*The exchange between parents and professionals in sharing responsibility, expertise, and leadership roles. Shared leadership is the concept that distinguishes Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> from self-help groups that are led solely by participants (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous). Instead, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is viewed as a partnership between the leadership of parents on one hand, and the infrastructure of an organization led by professionals, with professional facilitation of groups on the other. Additionally, shared leadership implies that all participants share the roles and responsibilities for effectiveness of the groups (Best Practices for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Group Facilitators, 49).*

### **Mutual Support**

*The process of giving and receiving help from each other. Mutual support embodies the concept of reciprocity. That is, the pathway toward optimal growth as a parent involves not only receiving help from other parents, but giving help to other parents. Most staffers interviewed identified mutual support as one of the key principals of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Several, but not all, interviewees from outside of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> expressed awareness that mutual support was one concept that distinguished Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> from other parenting resources. As one Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> volunteer put it, “[In the beginning] you need someone to help you or you’ll feel like quitting. And when she’s done, she’ll need to do it for someone else.”*

### **Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Ethos**

*Norms and beliefs regarding anonymity, confidentiality, self improvement, providing support, being a leader, and child rearing practices.*

## **Structural Organization of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>**

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> functions at three discrete levels of organization: national, state or regional, and group organization.

### **Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>**

The first level of organization is national organization, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> located in Claremont, CA. To standardize practices among Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups, the national organization oversees a process of accreditation for its affiliated Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations which began in 1999. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. provides training and technical assistance and program materials to this national network of accredited organizations and groups. In addition, the office works with interested community agencies and individuals to replicate the program locally.

Beyond the scope of this evaluation, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> also operates children's programs and a national hotline, produces numerous publications promoting family strengthening and child abuse prevention, organizes informational meetings with legislators, and holds national conferences.

Total revenues for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, the national organization, exceeded \$3,000,000 in 2000, up about 1/3 from 1999<sup>2</sup>. The federal government provided the majority (93%) of funding for this program and represented all of the increase. The majority of expenditures made by the national organization were related to program services (89%). About 10% were related to management expenses and less than 1% involved fundraising.

### **Affiliation with the National Organization**

Information gathered during the qualitative interviews highlighted several ways in which the national organization benefits and supports affiliated organizations. The national organization provides services, activities and leadership that would be difficult to accomplish without a central point of focus. This structure allows the national organization to provide a variety of services including a centralized training and curriculum which were described as "essential" to the success of local groups that would not have the resources to develop these on their own. This centralization also increases the likelihood of consistent replication, provides technical assistance, and disseminates curriculum and publications.

Increasingly the national organization is the repository of essential information about the activities of groups and organizations across the country. The national organization conducts activities such as coordinating state and local leaders, meetings with legislators, and fundraising.

Respondents frequently cited leadership as an important role of the national organization. Affiliation with a Parent Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc. provides organization and individual groups with a reputation and name recognition that would be challenging to achieve on their own. Further, because the national organization oversees all accreditation, it is more likely that the principals of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> are implemented in all groups.

Although most of the organization leaders interviewed were positive about their association with the national organization, those interviewed also identified some ways in which the national organization was currently not meeting the needs of local organizations. As a whole, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> would benefit from increased communication between national and local organizations. Some difficulties were reported obtaining materials and reaching individuals at the national office. Also, there was concern that leadership is too centralized. In some instances, groups and organizations expressed concern that the national organization was occasionally "possessive" and ironically for an organization based on principals of shared leadership, "a little authoritative."

Other issues surrounded the bureaucracy involved with a large national organization. To become an affiliated regional or state organization, an organization must go through an accreditation process. Among other things this process involves agreeing to certain practices

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<sup>2</sup> "Keeping Our Promise: 1999-2000 Annual Report", Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, Inc.(2001).

involving how the groups are run, the use of the name Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, and providing data to the national organization. The process of affiliation with the national organization and the accreditation procedures were sometimes viewed as stringent. Technical requirements concerning use of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> name and logo were reported as minor dislikes, and some of those interviewed disliked the paperwork reporting requirements. In contrast to the exercise of high levels of authority regarding accreditation regulations, several local leaders observed that national had not delivered a clear and coherent picture of who they want to serve. Additionally, it was observed that national could do more to assure that all groups are “on the same page” with respect to model implementation. Increased monitoring was suggested.

Overall, those interviewed expressed far more positive than negative impressions of the national organization. Each organization that offered some negative comments concerning the national organization also made multiple positive comments. While there are suggestions for improvement, it was evident that the national organization provides vital work that is, with minimal exception, highly appreciated by local organizations and groups.

### **Accredited State and Regional Organizations**

The second level of organization included the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> accredited organizations. At the time of this study there were 28 accredited organizations. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as an organization had weathered the change and growth of their accredited organizations over the years. Interviews with organization leaders indicated that, in accordance with the principals of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, the leadership of individuals as well as the needs of the community initiated this growth. State and regional organizations were typically started by professionals. For example, in several communities, existing community organizations found that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was a good fit because it is able to operate using people from within the community to respond to community needs with culturally competent services.

On occasion, individuals took interest in starting organizations. For example in one area, the organization began when the state’s governor’s wife took an interest. This organization’s birth was further prompted by legislation that required CPS agencies provide support group services. In two other locations, organizations were initiated by the interest a wealthy patron and graduate student completing a doctoral dissertation on mutual support groups.

Several Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations and/or groups began as something else, or began as Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and became something else and recently became Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> again. These transitions tended to occur with shifts in philosophical orientation. For example, one organization was previously funded by a child protective service (CPS) agency. However, while the CPS agency provided funds, it also required strict reporting requirements, “vilified” parents, and dismissed the concept of parent leadership. When that organization disbanded, a public hearing “revealed the need for support groups like Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.” As a result, the original organization was reorganized as Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

Whoever took the first steps toward Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> rarely walked long alone. Most Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations emerged though a process of collaboration with existing community organizations, funders, government agencies and the community at large. In an

organization committed to shared leadership, the preponderance of startups initiated by professionals could be troubling. Even those groups or organizations initiated by a professional, however, quickly engaged the leadership of the parents the group is meant to serve. One staff member described this process for starting a new group: “I find an organization or a school or something and asked them to identify a couple of parents that were struggling but now [are] doing better. I meet with those parents, usually with a parent leader, get them excited, and ask them to bring others. Then it is word of mouth.”

### **Organizational Variation**

Though accreditation attempts to standardize organizational practices, the organizations vary in meaningful ways. Interviews with Parents Anonymous® staff, key stakeholders, and community organizations reveals an intricate web of interrelationships between Parents Anonymous® and other organizations.

*Host organizations.* Structural differences among organizations include whether or not they use affiliated community agencies to “host” the Parents Anonymous® groups and/or the accredited organization itself. According to data provided by Parents Anonymous®, Inc., (2001), 75% of Parents Anonymous® organizations operated through a host agency. For example, a large community organization may include a Parents Anonymous® component within its array of services. While the Parents Anonymous® accredited organizations within them provide technical assistance and support for developing and maintaining groups, “host” agencies may provide such things as financial support, office space, and/or staff to facilitate group meetings. This symbiotic relationship facilitates implementation of Parents Anonymous® even in small communities that could not support another free-standing organization; allows implementation of Parents Anonymous® in incremental steps, and brings a needed service component with a well-developed model to existing organizations who might otherwise need to “recreate the wheel” in order to provide similar services.

*Formal relationships.* In addition to host organization arrangements, some Parents Anonymous® organizations described formal relationships with other organizations. These formal relationships were in the form of joint grant applications or memoranda of understanding. For example, one site joined with a church to develop a grant for a faith-based program to offer Parents Anonymous® in church settings. Another entered into a collaborative agreement with a University, which in turn led to establishing a connection with child protective services (CPS) because the University had been involved with CPS. Another instance illustrates both the relationship with a host organization and with an outside organization: the host organization, which provides parenting classes, co-wrote a grant with a local school system to provide parenting education. A memorandum of understanding was established between the host organization and the schools. The grant incorporated a provision to operate a Parents Anonymous® group at the school. One organization had a memorandum of understanding with a CPS agency.

*Informal relationships* Every organization interviewed described multiple relationships with community organizations.

*Outreach.* Administrators in every organization devoted substantial time establishing and maintaining relationships with related organizations within their communities. Outreach was directed to churches, schools, parenting classes, CPS agencies, foster parent associations, detention centers, welfare offices, the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC). Most of this outreach is in the form of direct personal contact. It is labor intensive, and often requires repetition due to staff turnover. Outreach is also directed to parents in the form of radio, television, and print materials. Organizations have a presence at events such as health fairs. Information about Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is placed in relevant newsletters and announcements are posted in places parents may be. One organization leader goes door-to-door in communities to tell parents about the groups. Finally, more and more organizations are developing web sites. The key to successful outreach included going into the community and identifying where Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> fits into the needs of the community.

*Referrals.* The desired outcome of the outreach efforts is generating referrals. Many of the contacted organizations do become substantial referral sources. For example, after an in-service by a Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> director, one Masters Degree social worker from a truancy program began referring to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and had been doing so for five months at the time of the interview. Others do not seem to generate referrals. For example, one organization spent six months working with staff at a welfare office (public assistance). The staff and the parents seemed to want a Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> group to help parents who were exiting the welfare system. The group was never established, however, because welfare administrators favored a curriculum-based, time-limited parent education model. The most valuable referral source, however, was thought to be word-of-mouth.

*Collaboration.* Outreach efforts generate referrals, but serve another important function as well. Through these efforts, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> joins with and contributes to a community's broader child abuse prevention efforts. One stakeholder said of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization in his community that it, "[fits] into the heart of the community's efforts to prevent child abuse."

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations also vary by factors such as size, age, and geographical location. The average-size organization had 14 groups and the number of groups ranged from 1 to 96. Almost one-half (46%) of the organizations had existed for over 20 years while a third (32%) had existed for one or two years. What was unclear was whether there is a core group of long-lasting organizations and a recent surge in new organizations, or a long-lived core coupled with a stream of fleeting organizations.

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations are dispersed throughout the country with 29% in the northeast, 25% in the Midwest, 25% in the south, and 21% in the Midwest. About two-thirds of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations utilize volunteer facilitators (68%) and/or facilitators who are program staff (64%).

## **Organizational Funding**

The total annual budget supporting Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations (not including the national organization) ranged from approximately \$55,000 at one Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> accredited organization to over \$800,000 at another. Lower annual budgets generally reflected organizations hosted by an affiliated agency while higher budgets were generally free standing organizations. The proportion of a host agency's overall budget represented by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ranged from about 25% to 63%.

According to the interviews, most Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations have diverse funding streams that include public child welfare grants, funding from the national organization, United Way, Children's Trust Fund, fundraising, and a variety of other government and private grants. While the national organization passes through some funding, most organizations obtain much of their funding independently. Likewise, most groups do not receive direct grants from state or regional organizations. Rather, funding developed within one level of the organization tends to support activities of that level. Organizations often struggle to learn fundraising skills in an increasingly competitive environment. Grants can be lost when applications are ill-prepared regardless of the viability of the concept. Several organizations were heavily dependent upon public child welfare dollars—a stream that is vulnerable in the current economic environment. Organizations with the strongest financial circumstances state that collaboration is the key: keeping connected with other organizations, keeping visible in the community gave them access to funding sources.

At the time of the interviews (summer, 2001), several Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations reported solid financial standing and increases over recent years. One organization recently hired its first statewide coordinator. One was "more secure in its funding than ever before," and one indicated that over the past five years, it "started to get enough money to move things in place and do more than just keep...alive." Other organizations were still struggling with basic survival. Most organizations indicated they could accomplish more in their communities if they were better funded. Some staffers meet funding gaps by paying for needed resources from their own pockets. Many facilitators volunteer their time, including some who received a stipend in healthier economic times. Wish lists for funding increases include offering more groups in areas that don't now have them, offering children's programming in more places than currently available, assisting parents with transportation to groups, and developing the infrastructure for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations, such as providing clerical assistance, fundraising, and computers.

Some Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations receive or received large proportions of their funding from public child welfare organizations. While this funding helped tremendously, it also subjected the organizations to conditions that were not always compatible with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> practices or philosophy. For example, there was pressure in one site to provide more reporting back to the CPS agency than groups felt comfortable with, and CPS agencies did not always support the notions of parent leadership. Additionally, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations too heavily dependent on public funding are vulnerable to major funding losses when economic or political forces lead to funding cuts.

Total revenues of each of the eight sampled, accredited organizations included funding from the Parents Anonymous® national organizations. The proportion represented a low of 13% of funding to as much as 63% of an accredited organization's revenues. Organizations also varied in their diversity of funding, ranging from two to ten funding sources. After Parents Anonymous®, Inc., the most common funding source was state government. In many cases, funding from State government accounted for a large proportion of the accredited organization's budget.

### **Group Relationships with State and Regional Organizations**

In addition to the benefits of affiliation with a national organization, the interviews also indicated that involvement with state and regional organizations provided services to groups that were important for their success. The most often cited services surrounded supporting facilitators. The most frequent and vital role of the organizations is to provide groups with training, technical assistance, and materials, as well as support for facilitators. Organization staff reported frequent contact with facilitators—as much as twice per week—to discuss problems or issues that arise and assure that facilitators are following Parents Anonymous® principals and requirements. For example, one facilitator described interaction with the organization stating, “[The program coordinator] has been very good about contacting me...asking if I have any questions, making sure everything was running OK. She came down and met with me several times, gotten me information when I needed it, brochures and flyers and things like that.” Local organization staff was also credited with providing group facilitation during absences.

In addition to supporting facilitators, state or regional staff also monitored the groups. State or regional staff periodically attend groups to observe how they are conducted. Occasionally such monitoring identifies issues that might otherwise go unchecked. Feedback was generally informal, and typically focused on the extent to which groups demonstrated key Parents Anonymous® principals.

It should be noted that there was variation in the intensity of interaction between state/regional organizations and the groups within them. For example, one organization reported attending each group every two months, another did so monthly, and another, once every year or two. Not surprisingly, organizations with fewer groups tended to have more frequent contact with the groups. Very large organizations were occasionally organized into chapters or regions. The state organization made routine contact with the chapters/regions, but not individual groups.

Concerns expressed about state/regional organizations were few, and generally reflected desire to strengthen them and increase their capacity. Some of those interviewed cited competing demands as a challenge. Parents Anonymous® organizations are often “hosted” by a larger community organization. As a result, the individual responsible for Parents Anonymous® operations often has multiple other demands on their time and attention. Also, many of those interviewed had positive comments about facilitator support, some did express a need for the state and regional organizations to have more frequent contact with groups and facilitators. Interestingly, both facilitators and organization staff mentioned an intention and a need for increased contact between them.

## **Relationship with Child Protective Services**

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> purports to serve as a child abuse prevention program. While it is likely that much child maltreatment is never known to CPS agencies, it is those agencies that are given the public trust for intervening to protect children from their parents. It is important to examine the relationship between CPS, the clients they serve, and child abuse prevention programs. Fifteen CPS supervisors working in counties served by sampled Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups were interviewed by phone. The results of their responses, information from interviews with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> leaders, and information from the census yielded the following picture of the relationship between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and CPS.

Most parents in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> are not involved with CPS. Specifically, only about 8% of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> participants responding to the census indicated that a CPS worker referred them to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. (Parents were mandated by order of a judge or probation officer, but may not have had involvement with a CPS worker). Conversely, most CPS families are not involved in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was rarely included in court ordered CPS case plans. From our interviews with CPS supervisors, there was only one instance of a court-ordered case plan that included Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was included in a court ordered case plan, but not as a required activity—just strongly encouraged. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was slightly more likely to be included in an agency case plan that was not court ordered. More often than not, however, CPS referrals to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, when made, were suggestions to parents that were outside of the case plan. Only one supervisor reported a high rate of referrals from CPS to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, and three reported occasional referrals. Three more referred clients to other agencies who subsequently would sometimes make referrals to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

Under some conditions and/or based on Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> characteristics, several CPS supervisors agreed that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was a valuable resource to CPS families:

- Immediate access. While other potential services may have waiting lists, families can get engaged in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> immediately. The fact that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is open-ended and parents can start at any time was seen by one supervisor as an asset.
- Community based. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups are often easily accessible to parents because they are located in the communities where the parents live.
- No-cost. While other potential services have fees many families cannot afford (and CPS agencies have diminishing resources to cover costs), Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is available at no cost to the family.
- Change readiness. One criterion for selecting Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> over another service delivery method was an assessment that the parent was willing and ready to accept help.
- Adjunct service. Five supervisors, including those most likely to refer to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, indicated that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is most often used in conjunction with other services. While a family is attending Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, they would

also be engaged in family preservation services, counseling, formal parent education classes, or other services.

- Client needs. One supervisor specifically targets parents with an identified low support system as being good candidates for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Teen mothers were also frequently referred.

Timing may be another important variable that CPS officials consider when referring to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Some CPS supervisors felt that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> was most appropriate as an early intervention or with less severe/complicated families. One saw Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as potentially more successful with parents of delinquent/unruly children than with issues of abuse or neglect. Another saw Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as an early prevention effort, but not for families where abuse had already occurred. Once a case rose to a level of a substantiated abuse/neglect report, this supervisor preferred other service interventions than Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. On the other hand, another supervisor viewed Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as aftercare. Once a parent completed other components of a case plan, and as the parent was being closed out as a CPS case, referrals would be made to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> to provide the parent with ongoing support.

Despite outreach efforts, most CPS supervisors had only passing knowledge of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> at best. Of fifteen CPS workers interviewed, only two reported being very familiar with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Eight were somewhat familiar and five had little or no knowledge of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Nine of those interviewed correctly identified that mutual support groups were a feature of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. Only two specifically mentioned parent leadership and three mentioned shared leadership or described characteristics consistent with shared leadership.

One issue is that CPS agencies typically have high staff turnover. Outreach efforts to inform CPS workers and supervisors of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups need to be repeated frequently. Another issue is competing services. CPS supervisors indicated that other type of services were more likely to be included in CPS case plans such as parenting classes, counseling, other support groups, or other parent-support organizations that are community based. The reasons for this varied. Some said there was a lack of evidence of success. Several supervisors commented that there was no data to demonstrate the effectiveness of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. This was not to say that it was ineffective, merely that there was no data that it achieved reduction in child maltreatment. Other CPS supervisors said that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> lacked a specific curriculum and clear objectives. While some CPS supervisors favored Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> because of its model for letting parents select the topics and being open-ended, others cited this as a major barrier to referring parents to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. As one said, the services in the case plan needed to include, “objectives to improve parenting, educational skills, and make changes; not just to reduce stress and offer support.”. Another important issue for CPS referrals is a lack of documentation. CPS workers must obtain documentation for a parent’s progress toward case plan goals. To the extent that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is unable to provide this documentation (i.e., of attendance, of progress toward change), workers will be reluctant to utilize Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as an integral component of case plans, especially those that are court ordered. Finally, CPS supervisors stated that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> had an absence of qualified service providers. One supervisor was required to make referrals only to providers with

appropriate credentials—either a bachelor or master’s degree. Related to this, one supervisor indicated a preference for counseling interventions.

## Section 2

### Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Groups

The following section provides a general description of group characteristics from information collected during site visits and the national census. Formal group leadership including group facilitator and parent group leader roles is included in this section. Specifically, the following questions are addressed:

- How are groups embedded within organizations?
- How do groups vary?
- Who are the group facilitators?
- Who are the parent group leaders? How do they become parent group leaders?

### Characteristics of Groups

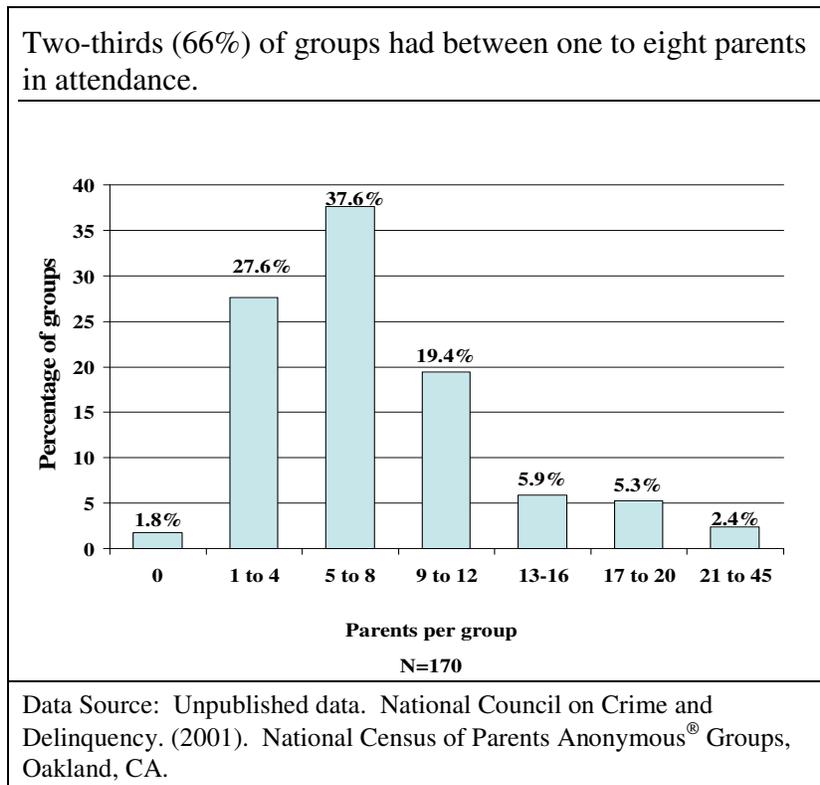
Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups are often embedded in other organizations which adds complexity to the understanding of how Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> operates. Groups meet within a vast array of sites such as community agencies, institutions, churches, shelters and more. It can become difficult for clients and/or potential referral sources or funders to understand whether Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is part of the host organization, is affiliated with the host organization, or simply uses space there. In fact, all three of these possibilities can be found. Additionally, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organizations are often situated within “affiliate” organizations. Infrastructure such as office space, administrative and clerical support, fundraising and staffing are often shared. For example, a staff person in a host organization has certain duties within that organization and becomes known to the community in that role. When that staff person assumes responsibility to facilitate a Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> group, the community may see the group as part of the affiliate organization and not identify it as Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. This can become particularly confusing when an issue arises in a group that is related to the facilitator’s other responsibilities. This arrangement also makes it difficult for those on the outside of the organization—indeed sometimes those inside of the organization—to know where Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> starts and the other organization begins. Viewed as seamless service integration, this arrangement may be highly desirable.

Similar to the accredited organizations, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups vary structurally as well. According to the Census of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups, three out of five (58%) groups operated directly through the accredited Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization rather than through a Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> host organization. The majority of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups indicated that they were “open” to the general public (82%). English was spoken in most (92%) responding Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups. Spanish was the primary language in less than one in ten groups (8%).

Many groups were longstanding (up to 29 years old), while approximately a third of groups were less than one year old. Groups were housed in a variety of settings but religious settings were the most common. Twenty-three percent of groups took place in a religious setting,

fourteen percent were in a corrections institution, and the settings of other groups were varied across domestic violence shelters, corporate or office buildings, child care settings, etc. Most of the groups (65%) offered child care and 40% had a Parents Anonymous® children’s program. Groups varied in size from a single participant to 45 although the majority of groups had fewer than ten participants (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Group Attendance**

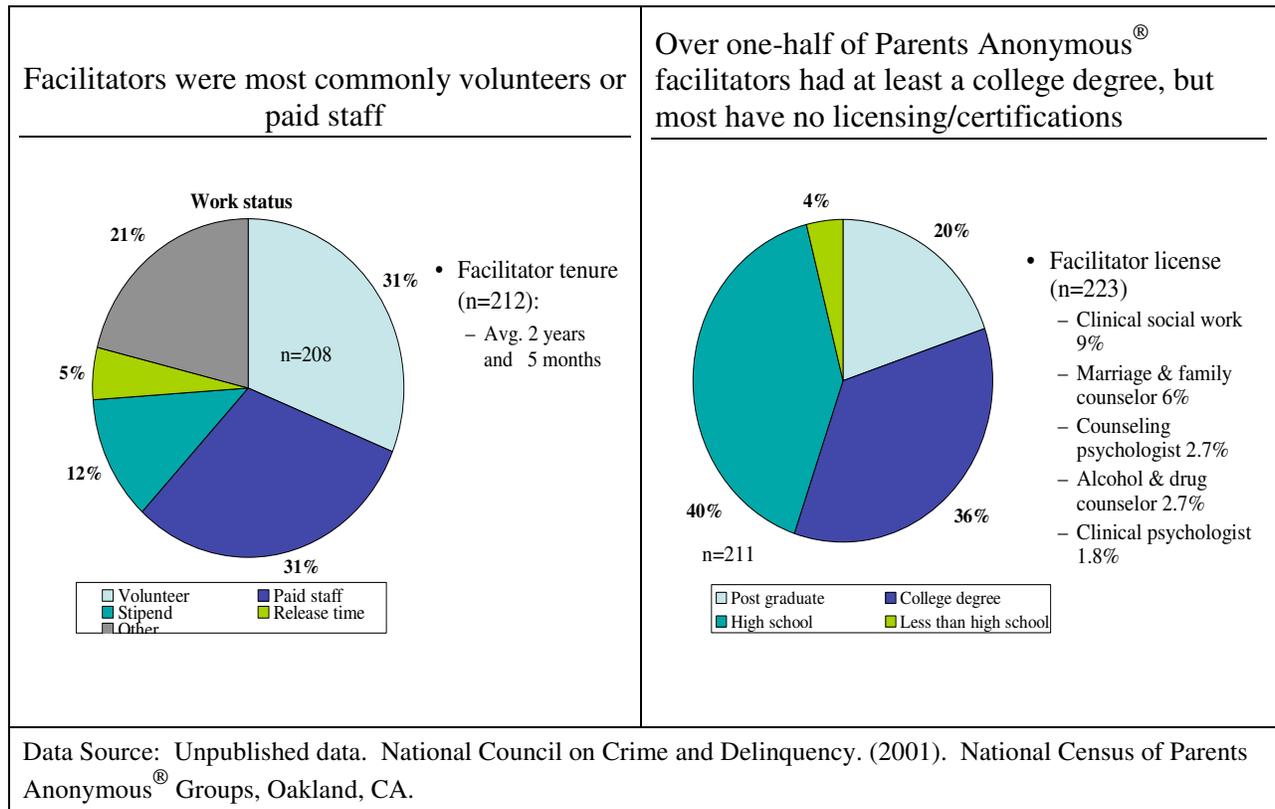


### Parents Anonymous® Group Facilitators

The role of Parents Anonymous® group facilitator differs from the role of the professional in a group therapy setting. Although Parents Anonymous® reports that their facilitators are professionals, their role is primarily to support the parent group leader and to encourage leadership within the group. They help maintain group focus without directly determining the content of the group meeting. While self-reporting of potentially abusive or neglectful actions when reported during a group meeting is encouraged, the facilitator also serves as the mandated reporter for the group, if necessary.

The vast majority of the group facilitators were female (90%), white (66%; 22% African American; 10% Hispanic) and the average age was 44. Facilitators had a variety of relationships with Parents Anonymous® but the majority were either volunteers (31%) or paid staff (31%). Most of the facilitators were college educated (56%) but were not licensed (78%) (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Facilitator Characteristics**



**Facilitators in observed groups**

Descriptive data on Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> facilitators presented above has been from the national census of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups. To examine the relationships among the scales measuring Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> precepts and other variables, both the census and the facilitator questionnaire completed during the site visits were used. Because the site visits and national census were conducted during different times, the facilitators in both surveys likely overlap but it is highly unlikely that the 22 observed facilitators are all represented in the census. However, examining the basic demographic data collected during both survey administrations indicates that the populations were similar. Both the census and observed group data indicate that 90% of facilitators were female. Observational data indicated lower proportions of white facilitators than census data (57% vs. 66%), lower proportions of Hispanic facilitators (5% vs. 15%) and higher proportions of African American (33% vs. 22%). Responding facilitators in the observed groups were somewhat younger than those in the census (36 vs. 44 years old) and had a higher proportion of licensed facilitators (35% vs. 22%) and facilitators with at least a college degree (81% vs 56%). Volunteers represented a similar proportion of facilitators observed and those responding to the census (29% vs. 31%). Paid staff were higher among those observed than those responding to the census (43% vs. 31%).

## Parents Anonymous® Group Leaders (PGL)

One of the most visible manifestations of parent leadership is the practice of having a parent group leader co-lead each group along with the facilitator. This provides evidence for parents that they can achieve leadership and will be invited and encouraged to do so. To that end, parent group leaders are designated, either by volunteering or through recruitment, and are expected to take a leadership role within the group. The role of PGL's varies by group and can range from greeting new participants and opening the group meeting to speaking to the media on behalf of Parents Anonymous®.

It should be noted that not all groups in the study had a parent group leader. Some settings prohibited designation of a parent group leader. For example, one shelter setting has by its very nature such high turnover, there is insufficient time to develop a leadership role. Prisons prohibit designation of a leader. However, there was at least one parent group leader (PGL) in the majority of groups. About one-half (48%) of groups had one PGL, there were two leaders in 18% of groups, and three or more leaders in 11% of groups. There was no PGL present in about one-quarter (23%) of responding groups. These groups were more likely than others to be held in a prison (23% vs. 12%), operated through a host agency than directly through the Parents Anonymous® organization (52% vs. 43%), more likely to be facilitated by individuals with at least a college degree (67% vs. 48%) and more likely to be licensed or certified (24% vs. 16%). Groups with no parent group leader were, on average, younger than others (26 months vs. 48 months). While this may indicate that a group's age may be related to its ability to establish a parent group leader, the absence of a parent group leader was found in 25% of well-established groups (6 years and older) and the presence of at least one parent group leader was found in 1 in 10 relatively young groups (10 months and under). Twenty-one percent of parents present during the census week reported experience as a parent group leader (i.e., either were currently the parent group leader or had been the parent group leader in the past and another 30% indicated interest in becoming the parent group leader. Ten percent of parents did not know what a parent group leader was.

In comparison to a parent group leader, all parents in Parents Anonymous® are potentially parent leaders. According to leaders of the national organization, a parent leader is one who takes responsibility for his or her own growth and development, models positive change for other parents, and assumes responsibility for the group in ways ranging from providing a kind word of encouragement to another parent to participating in meetings with legislators in Washington D.C. Interviewees from Parents Anonymous® described numerous ways in which parents participated as leaders in Parents Anonymous®. Several parents were credited with creating the impetus to start Parents Anonymous® groups in their community. Some suggested new meeting times and locations that, when adopted, increased participation. One parent was credited for doing most of the "public relations" work on behalf of Parents Anonymous®. In most groups, the parents determined the topics for discussion. Other tasks attributed to parents included making phone calls to other parents, bringing food, checking in on other parents having a hard time, attending events, being interviewed by the media. One staffer reported, "...parents do the most to engage participation. Those that have been part of the group for awhile do a lot of the legwork to get others to come to the groups and get out of their shells. Parents keep the energy of the group up. Parents appreciate the structure and take responsibility for keeping it

going.” One staffer observed that in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, “parents are invested in the process because they create the process.”

Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as an organization stresses the importance of developing parent leadership. In a cross-sectional evaluation such as this, it is difficult to know whether variation in the extent of leadership among parents, or the extent of parent leadership among groups is a function of time (i.e. newly attending parents and newer groups having lower degrees of leadership than parents who have attended for some time and/or more mature groups) or personal characteristics that will change over time (i.e., as crises resolve, parents assume more leadership; as their confidence grows, they assume more leadership) or personal characteristics that will not change over time (i.e., some parents are more likely to become leaders than others).

One facilitator explained the process of selecting a parent group leader this way: “We will first ask if anyone is interested. Not everyone is comfortable with the role of being the parent group leader. If no one is interested, then we approach people we think might be comfortable, people that are easy to talk to and have demonstrated some leadership capacity within the group.” In another site, the staffer reported, “Eventually a parent will emerge as a leader in the group and then they are formally asked to take on the role with the facilitator keeping them on track.” Another observed that sometimes leadership comes naturally to a parent while at other times it must evolve over time

### **Group Meeting Description**

For the process evaluation, it was important to examine the way groups function including the content and group interactions. The purpose of the following sections is to describe the group observations of NCCD staff in order to address the following questions:

- What happens during weekly meetings?
- What is discussed during the meetings?
- How do participants including the facilitator and group leader interact with each other?

The essential service delivery method for Parent Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is the mutual support group. Meetings occur weekly and last about an hour to an hour and a half. At each meeting, a facilitator and parent group leader share responsibility for the meeting. There is no set agenda for most meetings, but rather participants each have an opportunity to discuss an issue or issues that are important to them. Other parents may respond directly to the speaker and dialogue (or what twelve-step groups would call “cross talk”) is not only permitted, it is encouraged. Groups are open-ended, meaning that parents may begin at any time and participate in as many sessions as they choose.

As stated earlier, most meetings are held in buildings that house churches, community organizations, or other social service agencies. According to organizational staff, the location can be very significant in several ways:

- Access. Providing meetings in the community where the parents live makes them more readily accessible. Access to public transportation, and handicap accessibility was also mentioned as important.
- Site type. Some groups met within program settings where parents were located. Examples include domestic violence shelters, housing programs, and correctional facilities. The association with the location was viewed as important. For example, meetings held in buildings associated with child protective services were observed to have lower attendance. Neutral sites were said to be preferred.

## **Group Observations**

Although group observations were arranged with 26 groups, data was only successfully collected in 24 groups. One group had no attendance during the evening of the observation and another group declined to give consent to the observer. The organization leader and facilitator of this group mentioned there were a high number of mandated parents that attended this group and they may have been suspicious of outsiders observing their conversations.

Facilitators were present at all meetings, but it was not uncommon to not have a parent group leader present. Meetings varied on the extent of formality/ informality. Most, but not all, began with reading by one or more participants of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> principals and meeting rules, including confidentiality and anonymity. Some began with a formal “check-in” time, in which each participant was asked to make a brief statement about how they were doing, and how much time they wanted in the meeting. Others rather imperceptibly shifted from pre-meeting conversation to the meeting. Most meetings were characterized by one parent at a time discussing an issue they faced (see list of issues). Other parents often responded in several ways: asking for clarifying information, commenting that they had experienced similar issues, providing empathy/support, providing advice, and rarely, criticizing/judging. The extent to which this “crosstalk” occurred varied somewhat.

Across the 24 groups observed, there were some themes that emerged from parents’ discussions. From the group observations it appeared that participants were dealing with a number of challenges and were supporting each other through these challenges.

### **Discussion themes for observed Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups**

During group observations, parents shared a number of their parenting issues and other personal concerns. These issues revolved around the following themes:

- Financial problems and problems getting a job—including not having enough money for food, clothes, housing, and transportation.
- Feeling stressed and feeling overwhelmed by being a single parent.
- Several participants were not currently living with their children or their children had been placed with others previously.
- Several parents talked about problems they were having with the court or CPS agency.
- They often discussed their own health problems or the health or disability problems of their children.

- Problems with the child in school, either educational or social (e.g., getting harassed or beat up at school). The focus was on the failure of the school to provide a safe environment.
- Parents talked about the problems they are having with their children as well as the good things in their relationships with their children or grandchildren.
- Adult relationships issues were commonly discussed – including separation, divorce, blaming the other parent for negative parenting, domestic violence, custody issues.
- Some parents discussed their problems with drugs or alcohol and a couple talked about being incarcerated.

During group observations, the comments of the facilitator, parent group leader and up to six parents were coded to assess the types of comments made during the group. Here, the general types of comments will be explained but for a complete explanation of the coding options used by group observers refer to Appendix 14.

- **History** - Descriptions of incidents, situations or conditions that occurred **more than 30 days prior**. These may be given to introduce one's self to the group, to provide background information, or at times to rehearse prior history. Example: My wife used to be really good with the kids.
- **Reporting** - Statements that describe conditions or situations that are occurring in the present time (**within the most recent 30 days**). Example: We're about to be evicted.
- **Seeking** - Seeking statements/questions elicit a response from other members. Example: How should I deal with my landlord?
- **Additive** - Additive comments do more than acknowledge hearing or understanding the speaker's statements; they also offer help, advice, or experience. Example: I will help you move.
- **Reflective** - Reflective statements are mirrors of the original speaker's words. They do not advance the content in and of themselves. Example: I know what you mean. My kid does the same thing.
- **Non Responsive** - Statements that are unrelated to original speaker's issues or comments.
- **Responsive** - After other members provide help, advice, information, or other response statements to the speaker's seeking, reporting or history statements, response statements are how the original speaker reacts to the group. Example: You're right, that wasn't the best thing for me to do, and when it happens next time I'm going to let her be late.
- **Administrative** - Include organizational issues such as alerting to time limits, moving group to next speaker, asking administrative questions and commenting on the group. Example: The coffee is made, please help yourself.
- **Opening comments** - Include comments which would otherwise be marked under reporting, but are made during the official introduction period at the beginning of the group session.

Across parents, parent group leaders, and facilitators, most of the comments made during the group were comments that reflected the sentiments of another group participant. These reflective comments accounted for 38.5% of the comments made by group participants during

the observation. Another frequent category was reporting (30.8%) comments which consisted of comments made to share facts with the group such as “my child’s grades improved” (see Table 3 for category percentages).

About one-half (55.1%) of the comments made during the group were made by parents (other than the PGL). However, parents comprised 75% of the participants coded during the group visits. On average, a single parent contributed to 9.4% of the comments to the group. Facilitators, which comprised only 12.5% of participants coded, made 31.6% of the comments, while parent group leaders (14% of the participants coded) made 13.3% of the comments.

Facilitators and parent group leaders most often made reflective comments during the group, usually seeking more information. However, according to group observations parent group leaders had less input to the group than the group facilitators.

**Table 3: Percentages of Comments Made During Group Observation**

	<b>All Parents</b>	<b>Average Parent</b>	<b>Parent Leader</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Total</b>
Additive	6.9%	1.2%	2%	6.1%	15%
Reflective	17.2%	3.1%	4.4%	16.8%	38.5%
Non Responsive	.2%	0%	.1%	0%	.3%
History	3.5%	.5%	.8%	.6%	4.9%
Reporting	22%	3.9%	4.4%	4.3%	30.8%
Seeking	1.7%	.3%	.3%	.3%	2.3%
Responsive	1.7%	.3%	.1%	0%	1.8%
Administrative	1.3%	.1%	.6%	3.4%	5.3%
Opening Comments	.6%	0%	.4%	.1%	1.1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>100%</b>

When these general types of comments were broken down more specifically, a couple of themes emerged. Overall, parents focused on present issues rather than the past. The vast majority of comments were supportive and were rarely critical of other parents. Across groups, parents made 42 reflective comments offering positive reinforcement and only 5 comments that were critical. However, parents were more critical of themselves and their children. Parents made 52 comments reporting negatively about their children while they made only 32 positive comments. When reporting about themselves, parents made 44 negative comments and only 24 positive comments. In the observed groups, parents rarely commented on punishment strategies or child maltreatment (see Appendix 15 for complete Table of itemized comments).

## Section 3

### Parents Anonymous® Participants

During any given week, over two thousand individuals nation-wide attend a Parents Anonymous® groups. However, little was known about who these parents are, how often they attend, or why they attend. To that end, data was collected on participants using the national census, questionnaires to parents during group observations, and interview data with staff. The results of this data collection provide rich data on who participates in Parents Anonymous® groups. Specifically, this section examines the following questions:

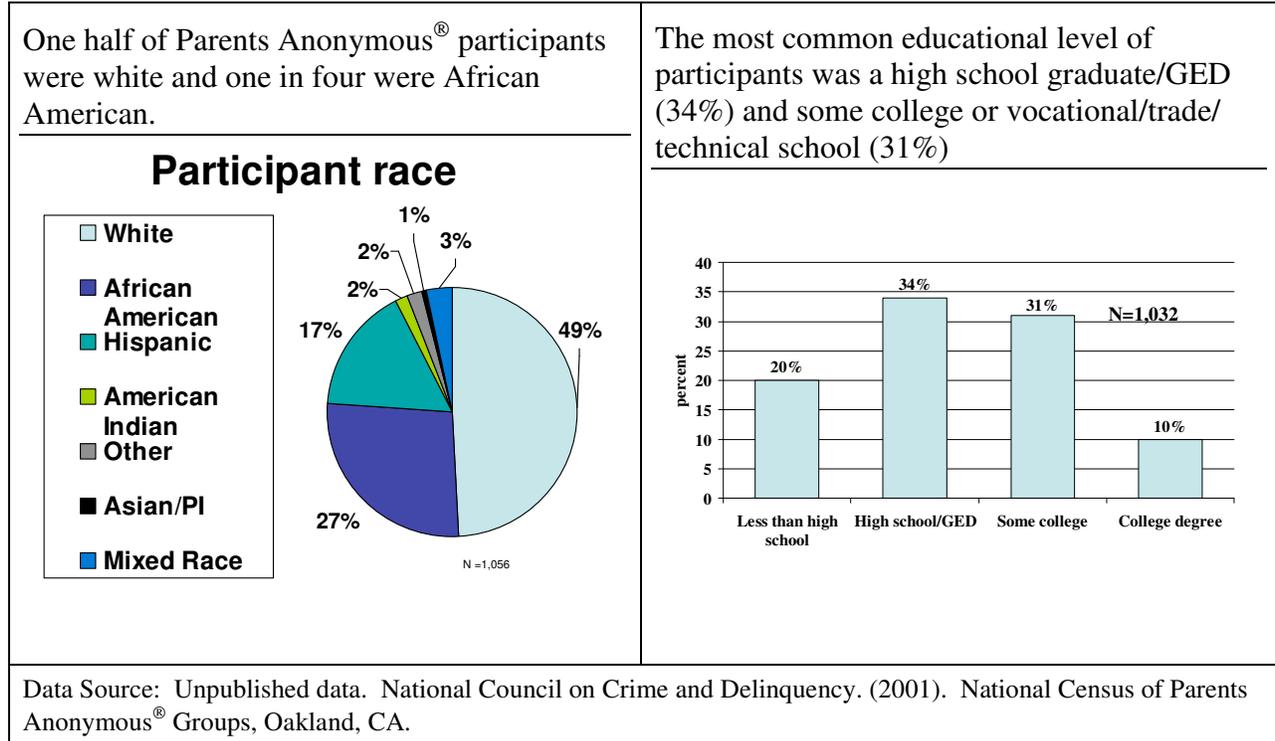
- Who are the participants in Parents Anonymous®?
- How are parents recruited?
- What kinds of concerns do parents have and how are they dealing with them?
- How often do they attend Parents Anonymous® groups?
- Why do parents attend?

#### Characteristics of Participants

Census forms were returned by 1,056 participants in Parents Anonymous®, groups. Respondents indicated that they attended with consistency. Although 18% of parents had attended Parents Anonymous® for the first time on the day of the census, 82% of those that were not attending for the first time said they attended every week. Also, Parents Anonymous® groups were racially diverse (Figure 4) and ages ranged from 14 to 78 with the average participant being 34 years old. Most of the parents were female (77%).

Forty one percent of participants had formal education beyond high school (college or vocational/trade/technical school). The majority of families were living in low income situations. Slightly over half of the respondents had an annual income of less than \$15,000 a year and another 24%'s annual income was less that \$35,000.

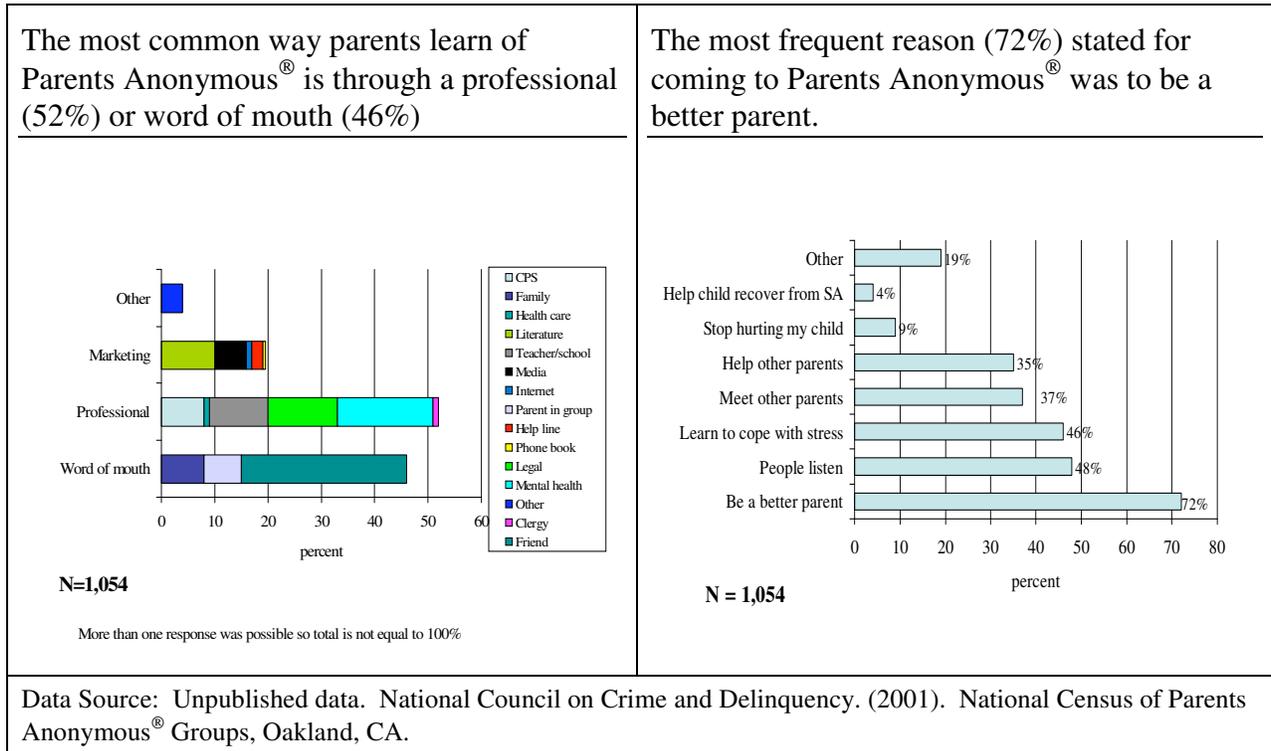
**Figure 4: Participant Characteristics**



Parents learned of Parents Anonymous® groups in a number of ways with the most common general method being through a professional. However, the most common single method was through hearing about it through a friend (31%) (Figure 5). After hearing of the groups, parents endorsed a several reasons for attending Parents Anonymous® groups. Most frequently, they wanted to become a better parent (72%), felt that people listened (48%), and wanted to learn to cope with stress (46%). Parents also used other parenting services in the community. However, parents who were told to come to Parents Anonymous® were more like to attend parenting classes than other parents. Eighty-four percent of parents who were officially referred (i.e. those parents told to attend by a judge, child protective services worker, or probation/parole officer) to Parents Anonymous® also attended parenting classes while 58% of other parents attended parenting classes.

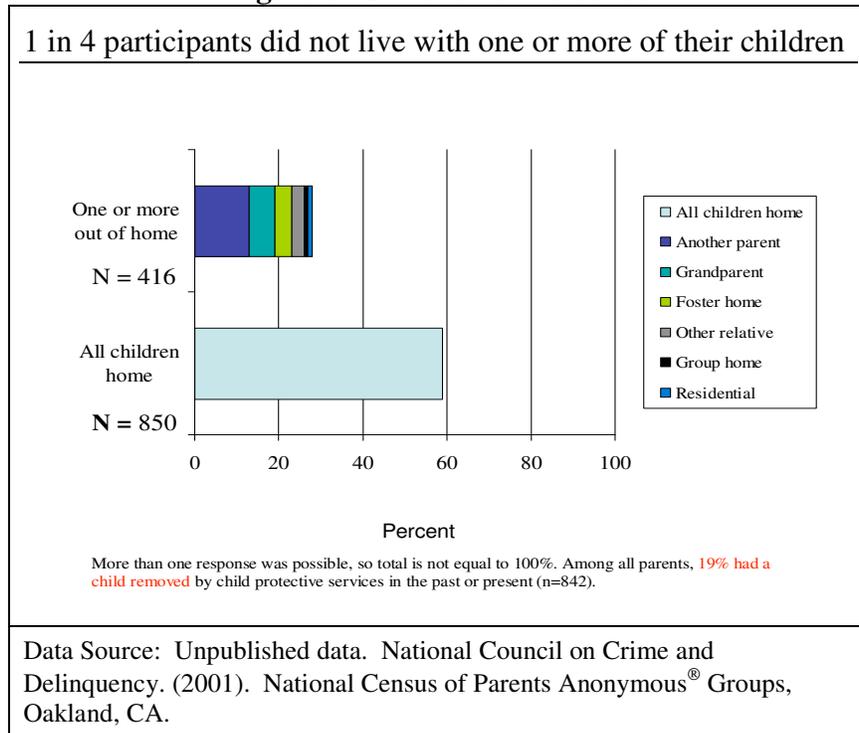
Across all participants, parents relied on the advice or help of friends and family more often than professionals. Seventy-five percent of parents indicated they relied on friends, 69% on family members while only 35% indicated that they relied on professionals.

**Figure 5: Reasons for Attendance**



Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> parents are coping with complex life issues. Fifty-three percent of parents indicated having problems with alcohol or drug use, mental or physical health, domestic violence or other issues in addition to their concerns with parenting. The majority (90%) of parents had children living with them and 30% of parents had children with special needs. In addition, almost 25% of participants were not currently living with their children (Figure 6). One in five (19%) had a child removed from their home previously or currently.

**Figure 6: Children’s Residence**



**Participants in observed groups**

Descriptive data on Parents Anonymous® participants and groups presented previously has been from the national census and/or from data collect by Parents Anonymous®. To examine the relationships among the scales measuring Parents Anonymous® precepts and other variables, both the census and the participant questionnaire completed during the site visits were used. Because the site visits and national census were conducted during different times, the participants in both surveys are likely overlap but it is highly unlikely that the 140 observed participants are all represented in the census. However, examining the basic demographic data collected during both survey administrations indicates that the populations were similar. The percent of parents officially referred to Parents Anonymous® was 19% in the census and 18% in the observed groups. The smaller sample had slightly younger parents, more women, and more African Americans than the national census of groups (see Table 4 for description of the participants completing the questionnaires for the census and during the group observations).

**Table 4: Sample of Participants Description**

	<b>Census n=1056</b>	<b>Observed Participants n=140</b>
<b>Mean Age</b>	34.68	29.47
<b>Gender</b>		
% Women	22.1	28.9
% Men	77.9	71.1
<b>Race</b>		
% Asian/Pacific Islander	0.5	3.9
% Black	26.8	42.6
% Hispanic	16.6	11.6
% Native American	1.6	0.8
% White	49.2	31
% Other	1.9	4.7
% Mixed*	3.4	5.4
<b>Percentage Officially Referred</b>	19%	18%
<b>Annual Income</b>		
Under \$15,000	44.2	45.6
\$15-24,999	17.1	23.7
\$25-34,999	13.0	9.6
\$35-49,000	7.3	7.9
\$50-75,000	4.5	10.5
Over \$75,000	1.3	2.6
No answer	12.6	
* Census: 1.3%, American Indian/White; .8%, Hispanic/White; .5%, Hispanic/Black; .3%, American Indian/Black/White; .3%, American Indian/Black; .1%, American Indian/Black/Hispanic, API. Observed Participants: 1.4%, American Indian/Black; 1.4%, American Indian/White; ¼% Black/Hispanic; 1%, Black/Hispanic/White.		

**Parent Attendance at Group Meetings**

It appears that many parents attend Parents Anonymous® for just one or a few meetings while others engage on a weekly basis for months or years. From the questionnaires administrated during site visits, 22% of parents were attending a Parents Anonymous® group for

the first time. Those that had attended more than once attended an average of 8 times. Twenty-two percent of the participants had experience as the parent group leader, i.e., either they were the current parent group leader or had been the parent group leader in the past.

This variability in attendance begs the question, what “dose” of Parents Anonymous® may be viewed as minimal or optimal? One staffer said that those attending just a couple of times may have gotten all that they need. However, reasons given by staffers for why they believe parents come only once or a few times include far more reasons that would be consistent with absence of change rather than sufficient change:

- Mandated parents or parents referred by therapist who don’t really want to be there.
- Parents who realize that what they really want/need are other type of settings. For example, parenting class or, particularly for middle and upper class parents, therapy sessions that are more private.
- Parents who attend while in a specific setting such as a shelter.
- Parents who have other pressing demands on their time or attention.
- Parents who don’t believe they have problems.
- Parents who interact with group members outside the group so don’t need to come to the group.
- Parents who reject the PA “ethos”. For example, one father insisted on his right to spank his child to the point of injury. The group kindly, but clearly responded that while there may be occasions for corporal punishment, beating is not acceptable. This father never returned.
- Parents who get what they need quickly and move on.

Some parents attend PA for longer periods. There were many ideas about what keeps a parent coming back:

- They feel they are being heard in the group.
- Facilitator skill. Specifically, facilitators who more effectively engage parents as leaders are thought to promote longer-term participation.
- Feeling needed. Consistent with both helper-therapy principle and the mutual support concept of reciprocity, an interviewee said that parents who give help stay engaged. “We’ve had moms who think the group can’t go on without them, so they keep coming.”
- Success. When parents begin to sense positive growth and when, as a result, their lives become a little easier, they will remain engaged.
- Belonging. Parents who feel a connection to others in the group; who see that they are working on similar issues.
- Nonjudgmental. Parents stay when they recognize that no one there is going to judge them.

## Section 4

### **Relationships Among Key Components of the Model and Individual Level Characteristics**

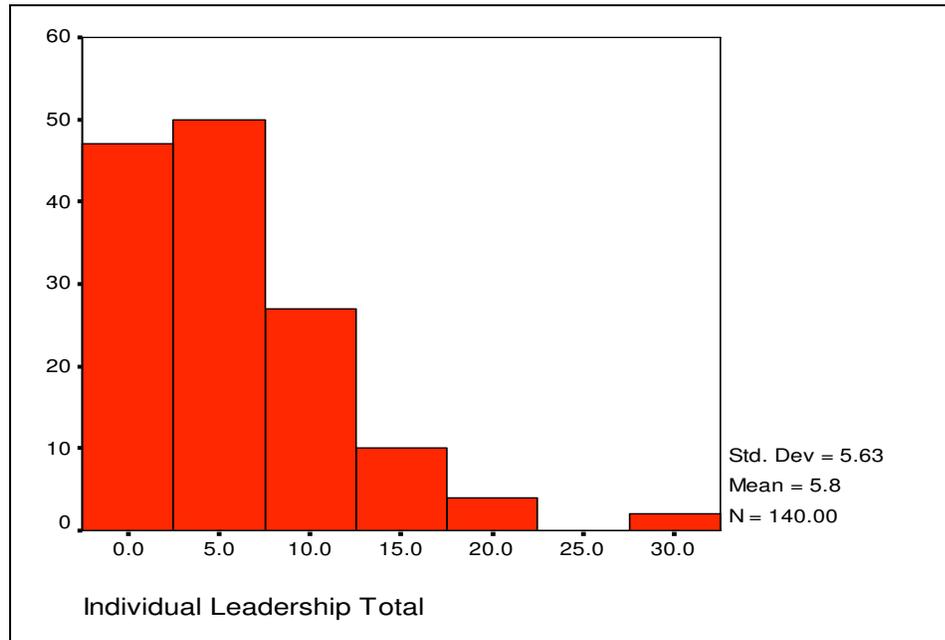
The relationships among the variables were examined on an individual level and then aggregated across groups to look at group level relationships. Data was collected in the participant questionnaires administered during the site visits unless otherwise indicated. This section addresses the following questions:

- What are the relationships between the key constructs of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model and individual characteristics?
- How do parents who are officially referred to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> differ from parents who are not officially referred on the key constructs of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?
- How do parent group leaders differ from parents who are not parent group leaders on the key constructs of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?
- What are the relationships between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos and individual variables?

#### **Individual Parent Leadership**

Parents indicated that they personally participated in a number of leadership tasks. Scale scores ranged from 0 to 29 with a mean of 5.7 and a standard deviation of 5.6. The number of leadership tasks that individuals indicated their own participation in - individual parent leadership - was related to several other individual level variables including the scales measuring mutual support and the amount of instrumental support provided (see Figure 7)

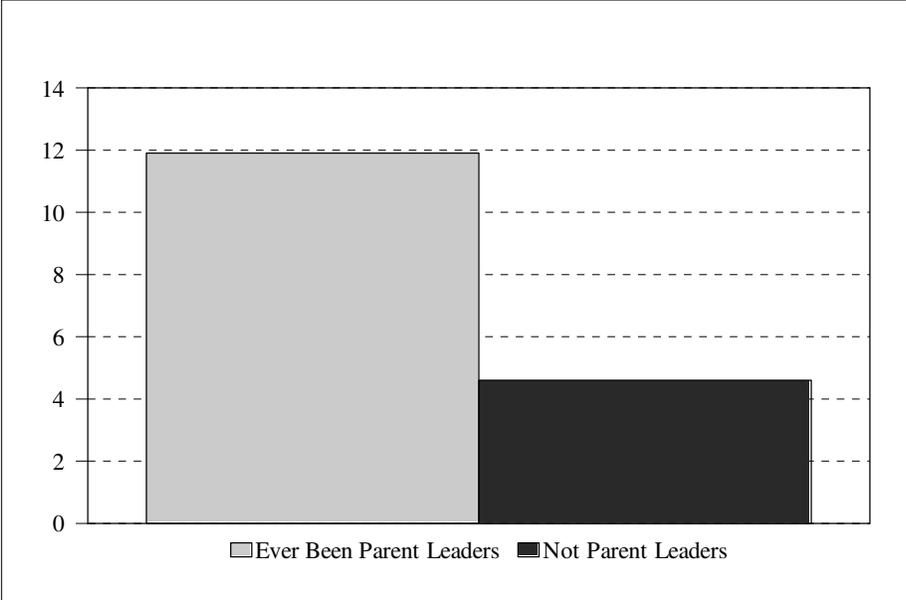
**Figure 7: Individual Parent Leadership Total**



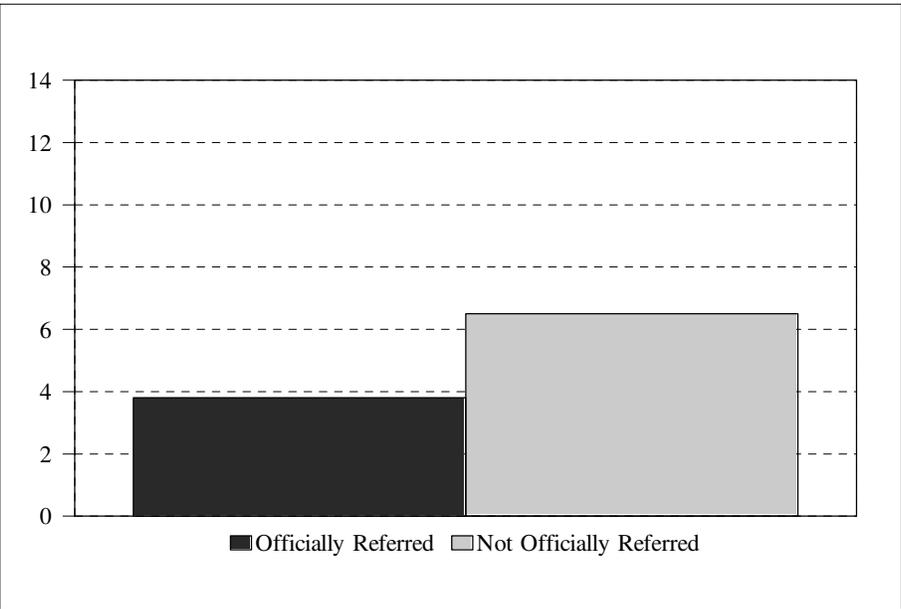
Individual parent leadership was related to mutual support and provide instrumental support in that participants that had higher scores on individual parent leadership tended to have higher scores on mutual support,  $r = .20$ ,  $p < .05$  and also on provide instrumental support ( $r = .20$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Individual parent leadership was also related to the number of times attended the group. Participants who had higher individual parent leadership scores also tended to have attended the group more times ( $r = .19$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

As expected, participants who were or had been parent group leaders had significantly higher scores on the individual parent leadership,  $F = 46.8$ ,  $p < .01$ . Participants who had experience as a parent group leader had a mean of 11.9 on the individual parent leadership scale while parents who had not been parent group leaders had a mean of 4.6 (Figure 8). Also, officially referred parents scored significantly lower on individual parent leadership than parents who were not officially referred,  $F = 4.6$ ,  $p < .05$ . Parents who were officially referred to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups averaged 3.8 on the individual parent leadership scale while parents who were not officially referred averaged 6.5 (Figure 9). Further, there was significant variation across racial groups on individual parent leadership,  $F = 2.5$ ,  $p < .05$ . Participants who identified themselves as of mixed racial heritage ( $n = 7$ ) or “other” race ( $n = 6$ ) had the highest average scores, 7.9 and 13.5 respectively, followed by Hispanic ( $n = 15$ ) with an average of 6.9, Caucasian ( $n = 40$ ) with an average of 6.0, American Indian ( $n = 1$ ) with a score of 6.0, African American ( $n = 55$ ) with an average of 5.0, and Asian Pacific Islanders ( $n = 5$ ) with the lowest average at 4.2 (Figure 10).

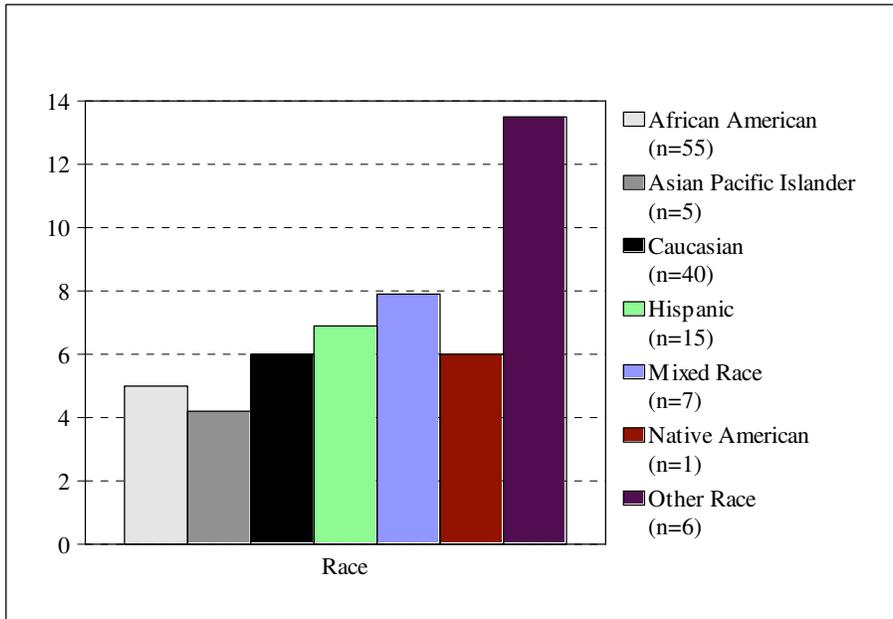
**Figure 8: Individual Parent Leadership (*Parent Group Leaders*)**



**Figure 9: Individual Parent Leadership (*Officially Referred*)**



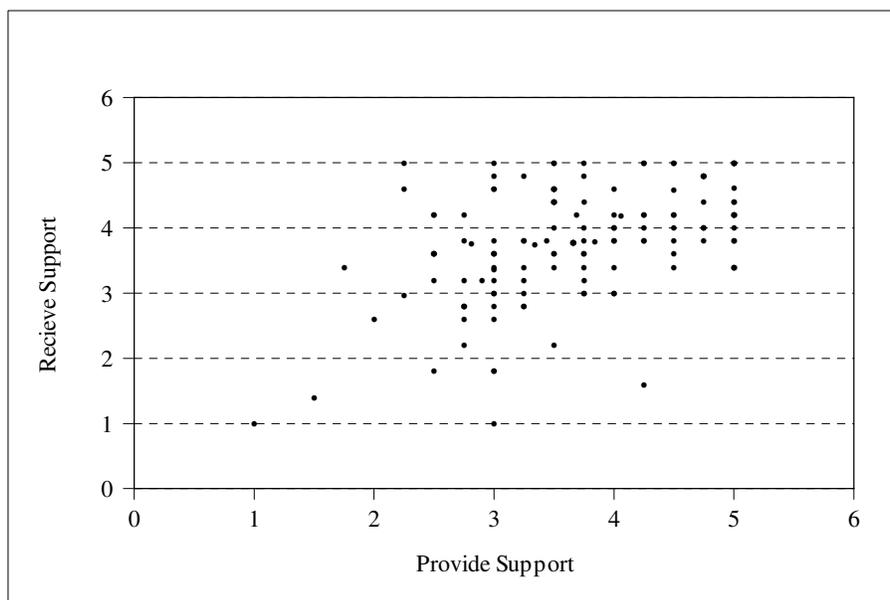
**Figure 10: Individual Parent Leadership (Race)**



**Mutual Support**

Individual participants indicated that they provided and received a high level of support. Individual’s scale scores on provide support had a mean of 3.7 and ranged from 1.4 to 5. Individual’s scale scores on received support had a mean of 3.7 and ranged from 1 to 5 (Figure 11). For item responses see Tables A & B in Appendix 16.

**Figure 11: Mutual Support**

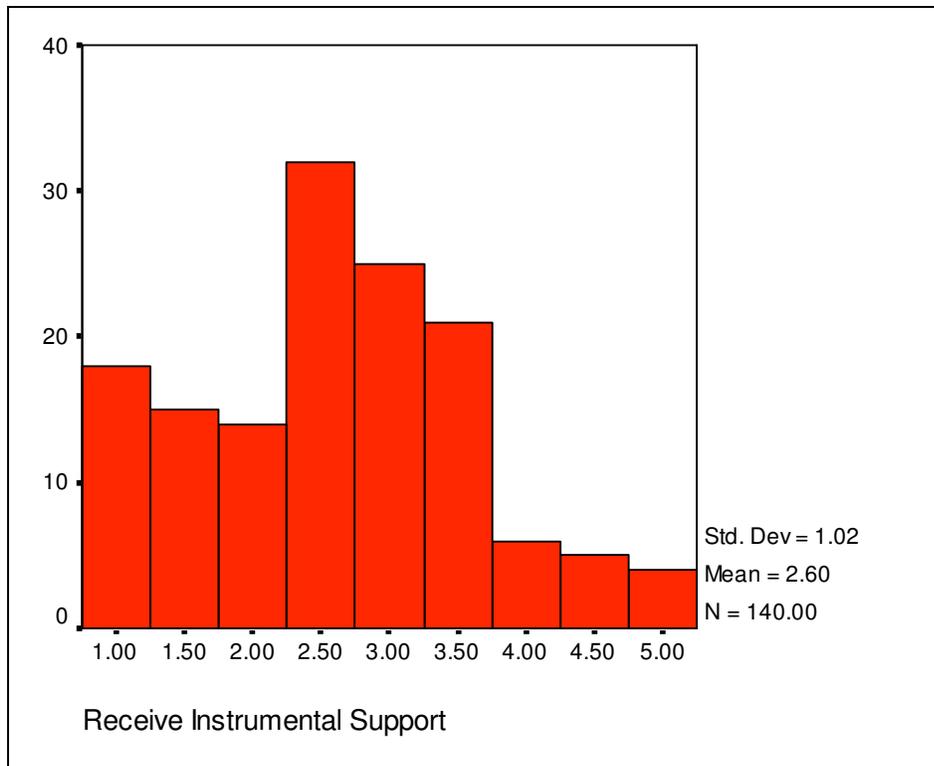


The majority (75%) of Parents Anonymous® participants were identified as mutual supporters (i.e., they averaged a 3.0 or greater on the provide and receive support scales). In addition to the relationship with individual parent leadership, mutual support was related to the number of times the parent attended the group and whether the participant had ever been a parent group leader. Participants who had attended the group more times ( $r = .17, p < .05$ ) or had been or were currently parent group leaders ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ) were more likely to be identified as mutual supporters.

### Instrumental Support

Most parents indicated that they provided and received some degree of instrumental support. For provide instrumental support, the scale had a mean 2.8 of and a standard deviation equal to 1.2 (Figure 12). The range was an ascending score from 1 to 5 for the highest level of instrumental support. For receive instrumental support, the scale had a mean of 2.6 and a standard deviation equal to 1.0. For item responses see Table C & D in Appendix 16.

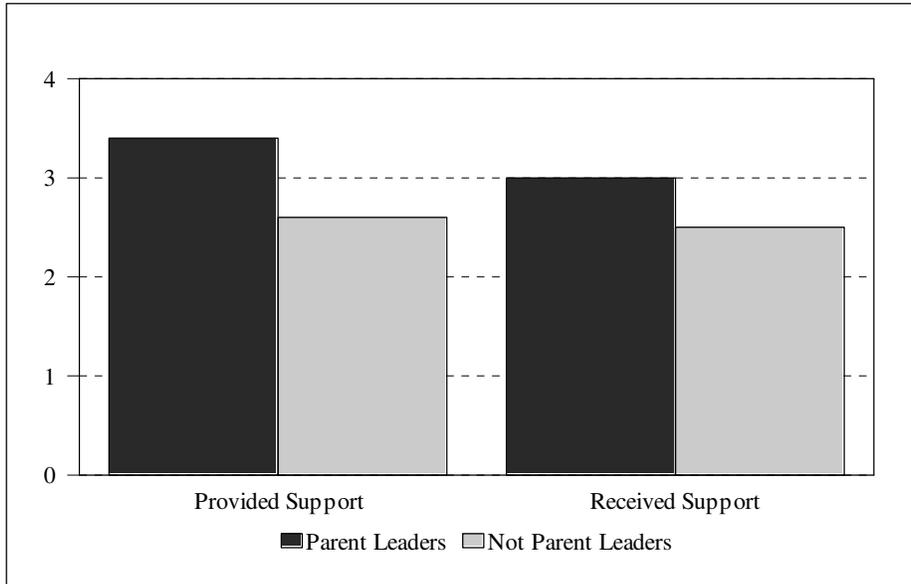
**Figure 12: Receive Instrumental Support**



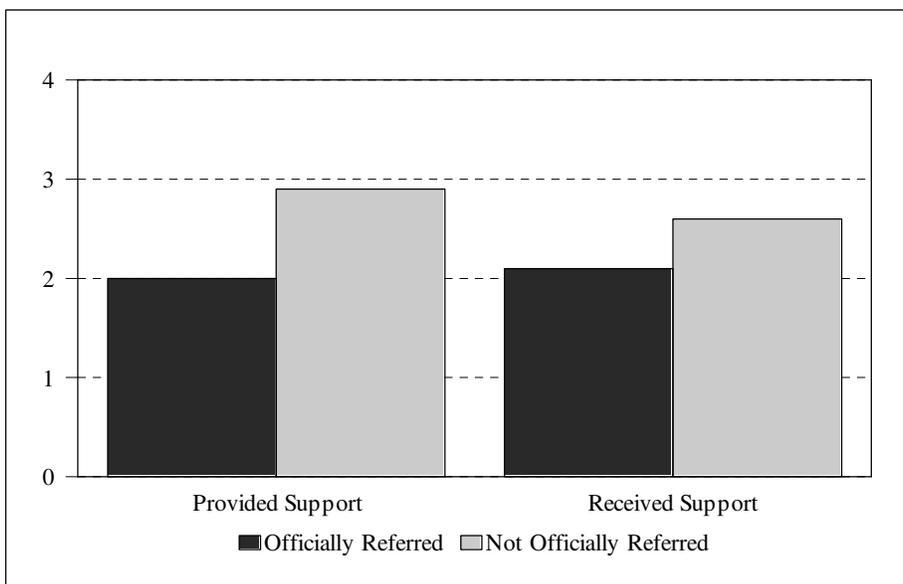
The amount of instrumental support that was provided was related to the amount of support received. Individuals that felt they provided more instrumental support also felt they received more instrumental support,  $r = .57, p < .01$ . Parents who had participated as parent group leaders indicated they both provided ( $r = .27, p < .01$ ) and received ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ) more instrumental support than parents who had not been parent group leaders. Parent group leaders

had a mean of 3.4 on provide instrumental support and a mean of 3.0 on receive instrumental support while parents who had never been parent group leaders had a mean of 2.6 on provide instrumental support and a mean of 2.5 on receive instrumental support (Figure 13). Parents who were officially referred to Parents Anonymous® groups felt they both provided and received less support than parents who were not officially referred with means equal to 2.0 and 2.9 respectively for provide support and 2.1 and 2.6 for receive instrumental support (Figure 14).

**Figure 13: Instrumental Support (*Parent Group Leaders*)**



**Figure 14: Instrumental Support (*Officially Referred*)**



### **Officially Referred Parents**

It was thought that parents who were officially referred to Parents Anonymous® might differ from other group participants. In addition to the relationship between an officially referred status and the measured scales, subsequent analyses were run to examine this issue more closely. Officially referred parents did not differ from other parents in terms of race, gender, age, income, or the number of times they attended a group. Also, officially referred parents were not more or less likely to have experience as a parent group leader. However, as stated earlier, parents who were officially referred to the group had lower scores on Individual Parent Leadership and Receiving and Providing Instrumental Support.

### **Parent Group Leaders**

Participants who served as parent group leaders might also be different from the other parents attending the group. Although parent group leaders tended to be higher on the measured scales (i.e., mutual support, individual parent leadership, instrumental support), they did not differ from other parents on age, race, gender, and income.

### **Parents Anonymous® Ethos**

In discussions with key leaders of Parents Anonymous®, the researchers learned that there was an ethos to Parents Anonymous® and that this “buy in” could be measured. NCCD used the opportunity of the census to develop the ethos scale and to see if there was variation across individuals and groups. Ethos was measured only in the national census and thus cannot be compared to scores on the other key constructs of the model. Although the correlations were small, ethos was significantly related to some of the individual characteristics measured in the census. Parents who had higher incomes ( $r = .08$ ,  $p < .01$ ) tended to score higher on the ethos scale. Also, parents who had participated as parent group leaders had slightly higher mean scores on ethos,  $F = 6.8$ ,  $p < .01$ . Parent group leaders’ average score was 4.4 while parents who had not been parent group leaders averaged 4.2.

### **Other significant relationships found only in the census data**

Parent group leaders were more likely to be female ( $r = .13$ ,  $p < .01$ ) older ( $r = .10$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and had attended Parents Anonymous® groups more frequently ( $r = .09$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Also, men were more likely to be officially referred to groups than women ( $r = -.09$ ,  $p < .01$ ). No other relationships were significant at the  $p < .01$  level. Each of these correlations is quite small and reach significance because of the large sample size and do not necessarily reflect qualitatively meaningful differences.

### **Summary**

As can be seen in the summary table (Table 5), attendance, parent group leadership experience, and whether the parent had been officially referred were significantly related to many of the key components of the Parents Anonymous® model. The second summary table,

(Table 6), also shows significant relationships among variables collected from the national census.

Parents’ attendance is especially interesting because it is one way to capture the “dosage” of the intervention. Parents who have higher exposure to Parents Anonymous® engage in more leadership activities and experience greater mutual support

These results demonstrate the importance of leadership in Parents Anonymous®. Parents who served as parent group leaders or had higher scores on the individual parent leadership scale also experienced greater mutual support and instrumental support.

**Table 5: Statistically Significant<sup>3</sup> Relationships from Sampled Participant Data**

	Mutual Support	Provide Instrmtal Support	Receive Instrmtal Support	Attend	Ever PGL	Officially Referred	Race	Gender	Age	Income
Individual Parent Leadership	+	+		+	+	-	+			
Mutual Support				+	+					
Provide Instrumental Support			+		+	-	+			
Receive Instrumental Support					+	-				
Attendance										
Ever PGL										
Officially Referred										

**Table 6: Statistically Significant<sup>4</sup> Relationships from National Census Data**

	Attendance	Ever PGL	Officially Referred	Race	Gender (being female)	Age	Income
Ethos		+					+
Attendance		+					
Ever PGL					+	+	
Officially Referred					-		

<sup>3</sup>At p<.05

<sup>4</sup>At p<.01

## Section 5

### **Relationships Among Key Components of the Model and Group Level Characteristics**

Given that the intervention happens at the group level, it is important to not only focus on individual differences, but group differences as well. As previously stated, group scores were calculated by aggregating the data across. This resulted in data for 24 groups. Unfortunately, with the small sample it is difficult to statistically detect relationships among variables. The following questions are addressed in this section:

- What were the relationships between the key components of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model and other group level relationships?
- What were the relationships between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos and other group level relationships?

#### **Mutual Support**

In order to examine mutual support on a group level, the percentage of the group that was mutual supporters was calculated. The percentages of mutual supporters in groups ranged from 25% to 100% with an average percentage of mutual supporters at 79%. Although most groups had high levels of mutual supporters, no relationships with other group variables were found. Specifically, the percentage of mutual supporters within the group was not related to the amount of shared leadership or parent leadership, the education of facilitator, whether a group leader was present, the number of group participants, race, whether the facilitator had a license, percent of officially referred parents, group setting, group type, racial heterogeneity, average age of participants, and age heterogeneity.

However, there was a relationship between the groups' average score on Maton's scale of provide support (one of the indicators of mutual support) and the percentage of officially referred parents in the group. Within groups, higher numbers of officially referred parents were associated with lower scores on provide support. Interestingly, this relationship was not found for receive support.

#### **Parent leadership**

Group scores on the parent leadership scale ranged from two to twenty-four tasks completed by parents with an average of ten leadership tasks per group. Group scores on parent group leadership were related to the presence of a group parent leader. Groups that had a parent group leader present had higher scores on the parent leadership scale,  $r = .40$ ,  $p < .10$ . However, the level of parent leadership was not related to other group variables including the amount of shared leadership, the education of facilitator, the number of group participants, race, whether the facilitator had a license, percent of officially referred parents, group setting, group type, racial heterogeneity, average age of participants, and age heterogeneity.

## **Shared leadership**

Shared leadership is a very important construct in the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model. It can only be assessed at the group level because the sharing of leadership tasks is between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> staff or the facilitator and the parents (including the parent group leader). The shared leadership score is calculated as a ratio of parent leadership to staff leadership. As stated above, the average parent leadership score for groups was 10. Similar scores were recorded for staff leadership. The scores on the staff leadership scale ranged from 2 to 22 with a mean of 10.6 and a standard deviation equal to 5.0.

Shared leadership existed in most of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups. Thirty-eight percent of groups reported high levels of shared leadership while another 38% reported medium levels of shared leadership. Only 25% of the groups reported low levels of shared leadership<sup>5</sup>. Shared leadership was related to the presence of a parent group leader. Groups with parent group leaders present had higher levels of shared leadership ( $r = .46, p < .05$ ). Also, shared leadership was related to racial heterogeneity of the groups. That is, groups that were racial heterogeneous (i.e., had more than one racial group represented) reported higher levels of shared leadership,  $r = .35, p < .10$ . Shared leadership was not related to any other group level variables including the education of facilitator, the number of group participants, race, whether the facilitator had a license, percent of officially referred parents, group setting, group type, average age of participants, and age heterogeneity.

## **Instrumental Support**

To examine group scores on the instrumental support scale, individual scores were averaged across groups to create a group score. On the group level, scores on the provide instrumental support scale ranged from 1.7 to 3.5 with a mean of 2.6. For the receive instrumental support scale, scores ranged from 1.00 to 3.5 with a mean of 2.3. Provide instrumental support was significantly related to receive instrumental support,  $r = .57, p < .01$ .

Interestingly, there was a relationship between group's scores on the provide instrumental support scale and the license status of the group facilitators (about one-third (35%) of facilitators were licensed or certified) and the percentage of officially referred participants. Groups that provided less instrumental support to their members also had licensed facilitators  $r = -.54, p < .05$ , did not have parent group leaders present,  $r = .61, p < .01$ , and a greater percentage of officially referred parents,  $r = -.48, p < .05$ .

## **GES**

To assess group characteristics the Moos Group Environment Scale (GES) was used to generate the following subscales:

- Cohesion had a mean of 6.2 and a standard deviation equal to 1.2.
- Expressiveness had a mean of 5.9 and a standard deviation equal to 1.5.
- Independence had a mean of 5.7 and a standard deviation equal to 1.5.

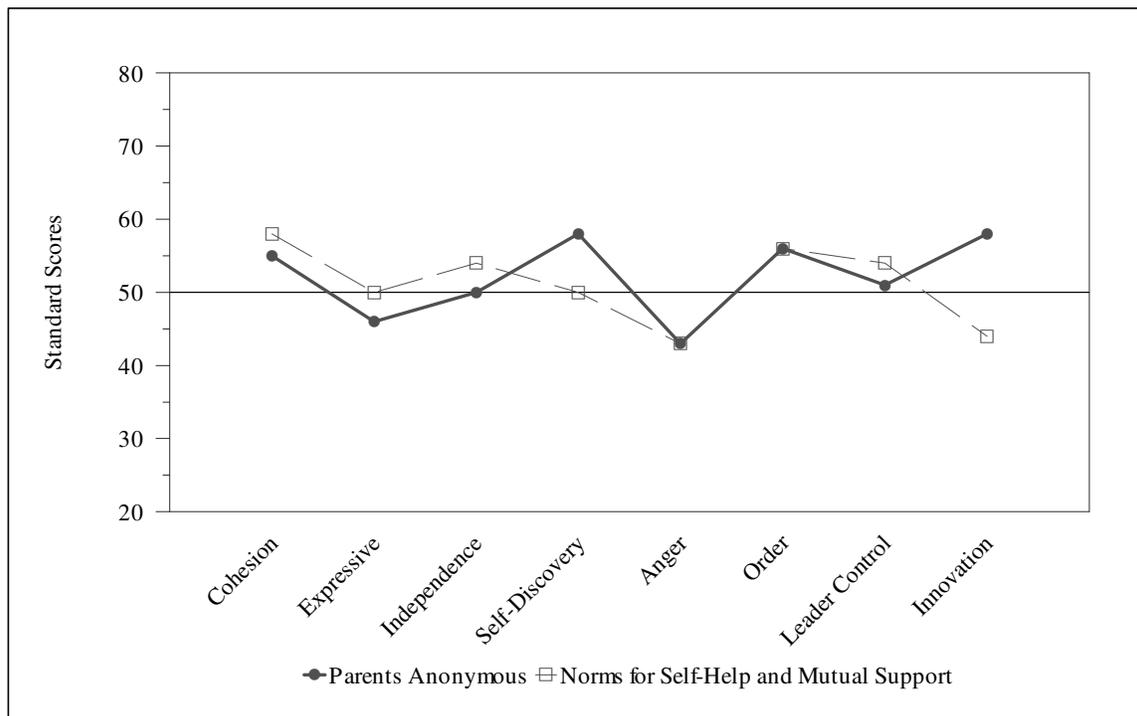
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<sup>5</sup> These numbers may total over 100%.

- Self Discovery had a mean of 6.3 and a standard deviation equal to 1.1.
- Anger and Aggression had a mean of 3.0 and a standard deviation equal to 1.5.
- Order and Organization had a mean of 5.4 and a standard deviation equal to 1.4.
- Leader control had a mean of 4.6 and a standard deviation equal to 1.8.
- Innovation had a mean of 6.0 and a standard deviation equal to 1.4.

As an organization, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> appeared to function similarly to the norms of the most similar comparison groups – self help and mutual support groups<sup>6</sup>. As illustrated by Figure 15, the scale scores for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> followed a pattern similar to other mutual support groups except on the scales for self-discovery and innovation. This might be due to the type of groups that were included in the reported norms for self help and mutual support groups. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> participants may be functioning at a higher level than mentally ill outpatients and more self-aware.

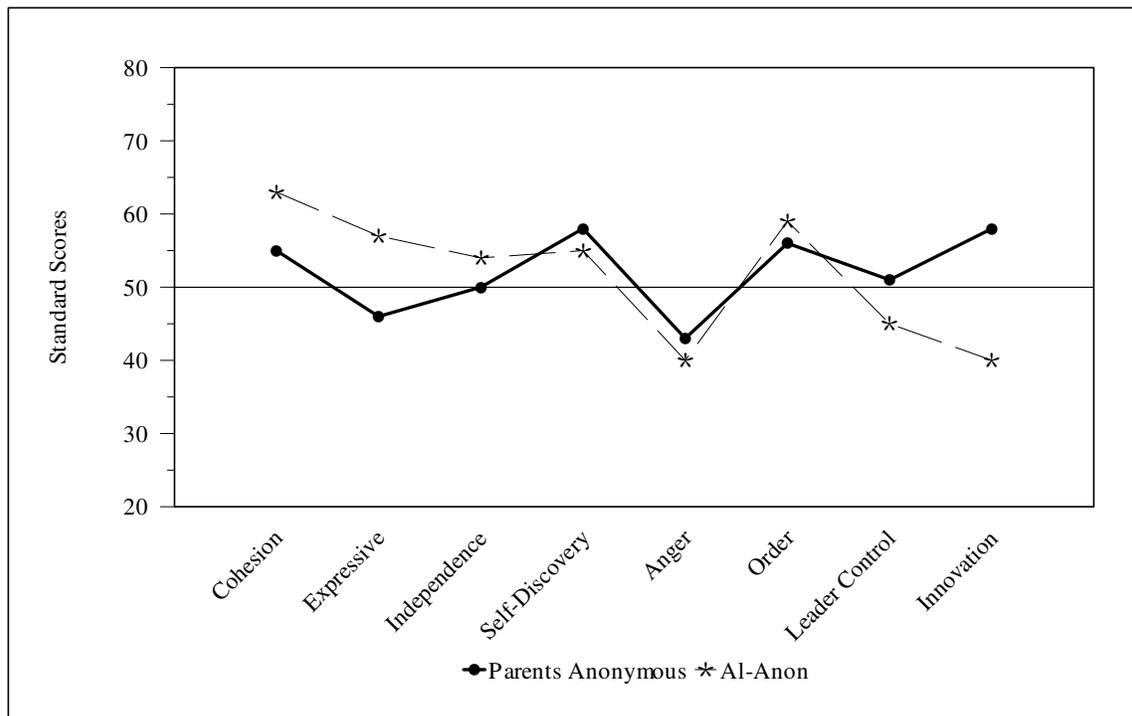
**Figure 15: GES Profiles for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and Norms for Self-Help and Mutual Support**



Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups were also compared to two other types of self-help and mutual support groups. In Figure 16, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is compared to Al-Anon family groups (Kurtz, 1992). Al-Anon family groups scores higher on Cohesion, Expressiveness, and independence but scored lower than Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups on leader control and innovation.

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that these norms were generated using groups composed of mentally ill patients residing in the community and groups composed of graduate and professional school students.

**Figure 16: GES Profiles for Parents Anonymous® and Al-Anon**



The scores on the GES sub-scales had few relationships with other variables although a few did emerge. Group cohesion ( $r = .59, p < .01$ ) and expressiveness ( $r = .6, p < .01$ ) were positively related to independence in that groups that indicated higher levels of cohesion and expressiveness also indicated higher levels of independence. Also, groups that had higher scores on cohesion also had higher scores on the receive instrumental support scale,  $r = .32, p < .10$ , and had parent group leaders present,  $r = .44, p < .05$ . However, groups that scored higher on instrumental support received had lower scores on self-discovery =  $-.55, p < .05$

Few group characteristics were associated with GES scores. Groups that had a higher mean age of participants also tended to experience more order in the group,  $r = .39, p < .10$ . Groups that had a higher percentage of men also experienced less innovation,  $r = -.39, p < .10$ . Finally, the experience level of the facilitator was related to the groups' score on independence and leader control. Specifically, groups that had licensed facilitators tended to experience less independence,  $r = -.48, p < .05$  and groups whose facilitators had higher levels of education tended to experience less leader control  $r = -.54, p < .01$ .

### **Group Parents Anonymous® Ethos**

Few relationships existed among the group level variables from the census and only one variable was related to the group's average ethos score. Larger groups tended to have lower group scores on ethos,  $r = -.15, p < .05$ . The greater the number of participants in a groups was also positively related to: the racial heterogeneity of the group,  $r = .37, p < .01$ ; the percentage of officially referred parents,  $r = .17, p < .01$ ; and the percentage of men in the group,  $r = .19, p < .01$ .

In other words, the larger groups were more likely to be racially heterogeneous and have more officially referred parents and men in the group.

## **Summary**

Despite the small sample, some significant relationships among group level variables emerged (Table 7).

On the key variables of mutual support and shared leadership, there was variability across groups. While most groups scored high on both mutual support and shared leadership, there were two that scored low on both. These groups were located in different organizations and had few similarities to each other. Both groups were racially heterogeneous and had no officially referred parents participating in the groups during our site visit. However, one group was located within a prison setting, was relatively large with 20 participants, consisted of only males, participants had attended an average of 4 times, and had a facilitator with a bachelors degree and no license. The second group was located in a youth center, had 6 participants who attended an average of 5 times, 33% of the participants were men, and had no facilitator present during the observed meeting.

**Table 7: Significant Group Level Relationships**

	<b>% Mutual Support</b>	<b>Provide Instrmtal Support</b>	<b>Receive Instrmtal Support</b>	<b>Facilitator License (y=1, n=0)</b>	<b>Facilitator Education</b>	<b>PGL Present (y=1, n=0)</b>	<b>% Officially referred</b>	<b>Average Attendance</b>	<b>Race Hetrgty</b>	<b>% of Men</b>	<b>Age</b>
GES Cohesion											
Expressiveness											
Independence				+							
Self-Discovery			+								
Anger			-								
Order											+
Leader Control					-			-			
Innovation										-	
Parent Leadership						+					
Shared Leadership						+		+			
Mutual Support											
Prov. Instr Supp			+	-		+	-				
Rec. Instr Supp.											

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

For more than thirty years Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> has provided a unique approach to family strengthening. Its core principles—helper/therapist, mutual support, parent leadership, shared leadership, and the Parent’s Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos—were expressed from its beginning and remain the central tenets of its model. What has changed in recent years is that notions of parents as partners in the solution are increasingly embraced. Across the country, child protective service practice is shifting toward less adversarial, more family-centered and community based approaches. The convergence between these emerging notions in public child welfare and the enduring principles of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> may signal opportunities for substantial growth for Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

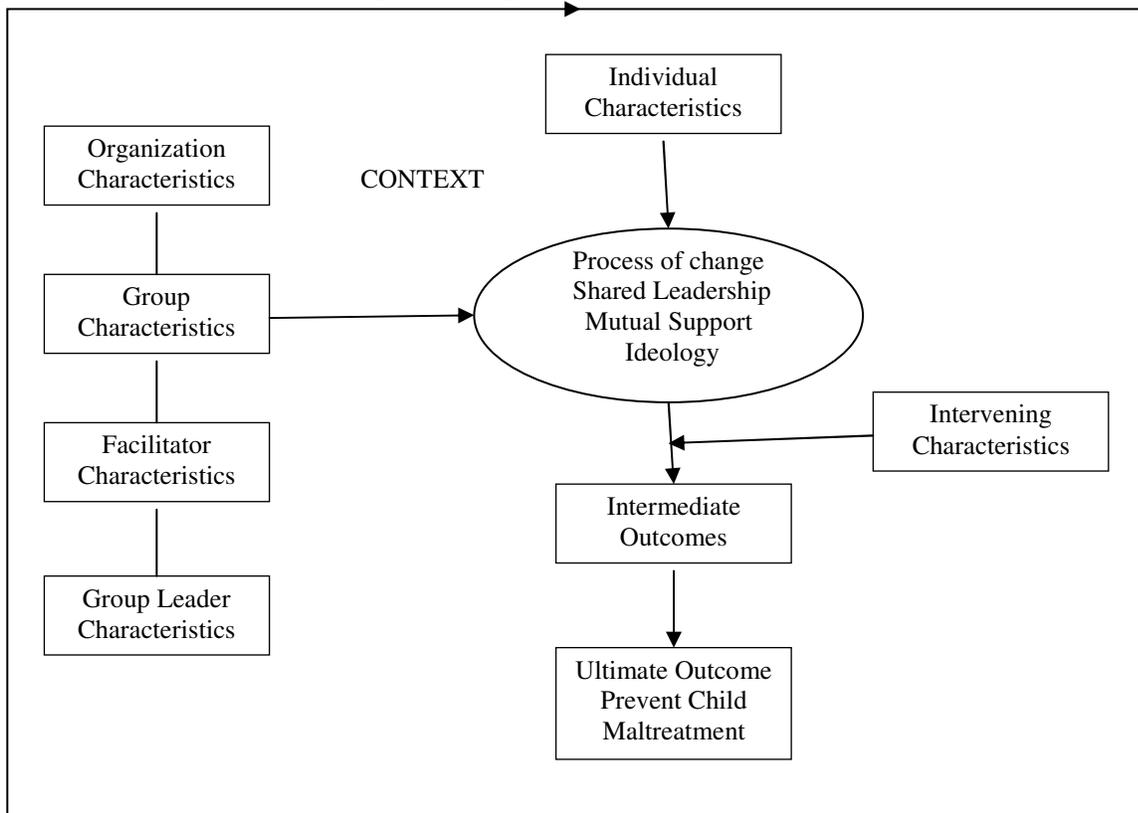
It is more important than ever to gain understanding of the degree to which the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model produces desired changes. As the field of child welfare also moves toward evidenced based practice, it is increasingly necessary to go beyond anecdotal support for a program’s worth. To the greatest extent possible, research is needed to answer key questions about any program hoping to achieve or maintain its place within the organizational field. Which outcomes are positively influenced by participation in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>? Who is helped and who is not? What conditions support uncompromised model delivery? This process evaluation begins to shed light on these vital questions and offers intriguing questions and strategies that may be incorporated into the subsequent outcome evaluation.

This process evaluation began with a heuristic for examining the myriad factors that may influence the implementation and extent of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, impact in reducing child maltreatment.<sup>7</sup> In this final section key findings are reported for each component of the heuristic.

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<sup>7</sup> Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> goals are broader than reduction of child maltreatment alone. The outcome focus of this evaluation is focused on child abuse and neglect and its associated risk and protective factors.

**Figure 1 (repeated): Evaluation Heuristic**



*To What Extent was the Implementation of the Model Affected by Organizational, Group, Facilitator, or Parent Group Leader Characteristics?*

## **Organizations**

While the fundamental mechanism of service delivery is the straightforward relationship of parent-to-parent within a group setting with a trained facilitator, the structure at the organizational level varies. Each group exists within an organization, however the organization may be comprised of a single group, a region, or an entire state. Organizations may be free-standing or “hosted” by another agency. When hosted, Parents Anonymous® may comprise very small to very large proportions of the host organization’s operation. Groups meet in locations that house still other organizations. Linkages with other organizations include referrals from and to Parents Anonymous®, outreach efforts, and funding streams. The national organization supports Parents Anonymous® organizations and groups through training, curriculum, accreditation, advocacy, technical assistance, research, and more.

Regardless of the complexity and variability of the organizational structures, none of the quantitatively evaluated differences seemed to impact the degree to which the model was implemented. Qualitative interviews suggest the possibility that larger organizational structures and those hosted by other organizations where competing priorities impinge on Parents Anonymous® program administration may experience less frequent contact between organization staff and group facilitators. It may be valuable to examine whether the frequency and/or nature of

this contact impacts model integrity. Organizations whose funding streams are more largely tied to public child welfare agencies may experience pressure to dilute components of the model that emphasize parent leadership and confidentiality. This tension, however, may decline as public agencies adopt more family-centered practices and alternative response modalities. The accreditation process strengthens model integrity, yet comes with the cost of increased centralization.

## **Groups**

Within organizations, there were also differences among groups. There was significant variation in all the main constructs of the model including parent leadership, mutual support, and shared leadership, and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos. Also, differences were observed in terms of number of participants, age of group, setting for group, population served, and racial heterogeneity. Some of these differences were related to differences in model implementation as measured by instruments used in this evaluation.

- Groups with a higher proportion of parents officially referred by CPS or the court were less likely to provide support to other parents.
- Racially heterogeneous groups were more likely to share leadership between parents and staff.
- Groups with older participants, on average, were likely to have more formality and structure in the group.
- Groups with more men rated their group as lower on “innovation” or propensity to change its activities.
- Larger groups tended to have less “buy-in” to the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> ethos.

## **Facilitators**

Facilitators varied by gender, age, education level and licensure, tenure with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, and by whether they were volunteers or compensated. For those who were compensated, this could be in the form of a stipend from Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, employment by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, or employment by another agency that counts time facilitating the group toward their work duties (release time).

- Groups with professionally licensed facilitators provided less instrumental support to parents and encouraged less independent action or expression.
- Groups with less facilitator control in decision-making tended to have facilitators with higher educational attainment.

The paradoxical relationship between licensure and education is of interest. The presence of a facilitator in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is what distinguishes its groups from self-help groups. The circumscribed role of the facilitator differentiates Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> from group therapy. The delicate balance that Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> intends to strike between the presence of a professional facilitator and the leadership of the parents may be captured in these findings.

On one hand, facilitators with higher levels of education (though not necessarily professionally licensed) were found in groups where the facilitator control was rated lower. On the other hand, professionally licensed facilitators were found in groups where the parents as a whole were less likely to participate in providing instrumental support to one another and who reported less independence. At least two explanations are available. First, because a large proportion of facilitators had no education beyond high school, and only 20% had post-graduate degrees these two findings may reveal a curvilinear relationship between education and facilitator practice. It may be that as educational attainment of the facilitator increases the facilitator may abdicate a level of control. But among the most highly educated facilitators, who are most likely to be licensed, there may be a tendency to presume a greater role in providing “help” and to instill dependence. This would be more consistent with a therapy model.

The findings may also suggest a difference between facilitator behavior and institutionalized perceptions. Facilitators with higher levels of education may well practice skills that empower parents rather than exercising leader control. But when those facilitators are professionally licensed, group members may be disinclined to offer instrumental support themselves. Based on prior experiences with professionals, it may be difficult for parents to maintain independence despite the best efforts of a facilitator to empower them to do so.

It should be noted that while significant, the size of the effect of facilitator variables on model implementation was modest, suggesting that other variables may have greater importance.

## **Parent Group Leader**

Findings suggest that parent group leaders may be important to the camaraderie of the group in that their presence was associated with higher levels of instrumental support and cohesion. Although most groups had a parent group leader present during the observation (65%), there were some groups that seemed to emphasize parent leadership more than others. Groups with parent group leaders had higher scores on parent and shared leadership.

## ***To What Extent Did the Characteristics of Individual Participants Affect Their Experience of the Model?***

### **Individual variables**

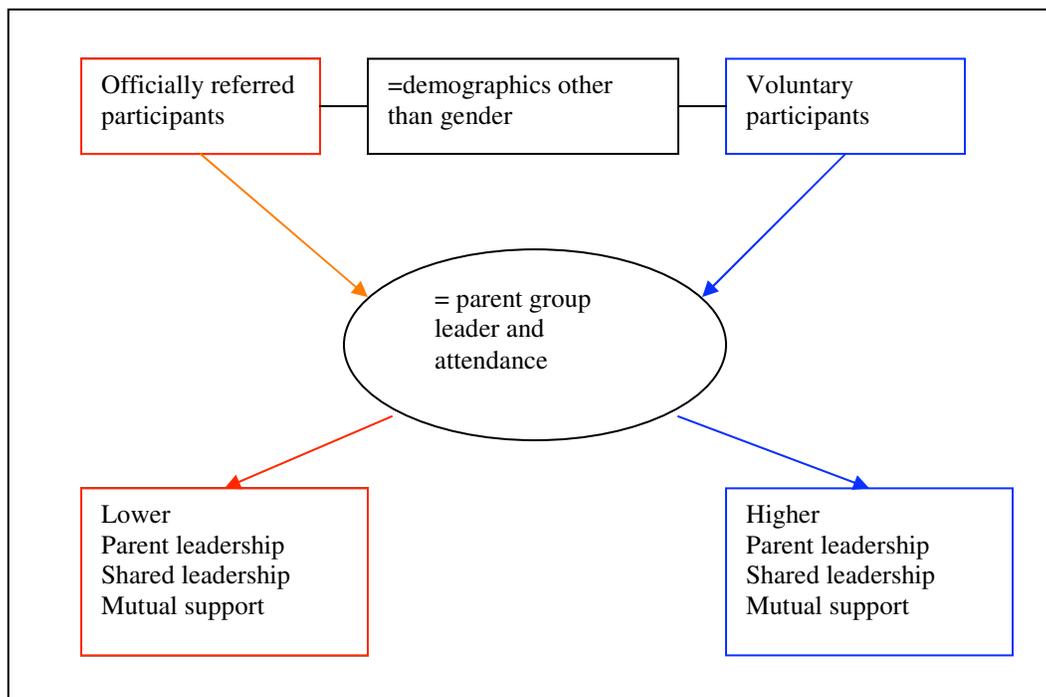
Participants varied on many dimensions including gender, age, race, educational level, income, referral source, officially referred vs. voluntary, reasons for attending Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, and presence or absence of substance abuse, mental health, physical health, or domestic violence issues.

- Officially referred parents (that is, a CPS caseworker or judge told them to attend) were less likely to assume leadership tasks and provided and received less instrumental support.
- The amount of leadership tasks a parent took on was significantly related to race/ethnicity. Those parents reporting “other” averaged nearly three times more parent leadership activities than Asian Pacific Islanders. However the N sizes within

these racial categories was small so caution should be exercised. Among larger groups (Hispanic, Caucasian and African American), differences were statistically significant but the size of the effect was modest.

- Parents with higher incomes had higher scores on the “ethos” scale indicating that they were more likely to “buy in” to the child rearing and group process ideals of Parents Anonymous®.
- Parents who were officially referred resembled those that were not in most demographic characteristics other than gender: officially referred participants were slightly more likely to be males. Officially referred parents were equivalent to those that were not in terms of assuming the parent group leadership role and had similar “dose” in terms of length of attendance. These groups look similar on characteristics that they bring into Parents Anonymous®, and external appearances suggest they receive a similar dose of Parents Anonymous®, but they have significantly different experiences in Parents Anonymous® with regard to the principal model components of parent leadership, shared leadership, and mutual support. Further comparison of the two groups may shed important light on who engages in and benefits from the Parents Anonymous® model (see Figure 17).

**Figure 17: Officially referred vs. Voluntary**



Post hoc examination of differences between officially referred participants and those that were not officially referred revealed significant patterns for co-occurring issues. Officially referred participants were more likely to have current alcohol or drug issues, domestic violence, mental health or physical health concerns. This pattern is consistent with qualitative observations by CPS supervisors and several Parents Anonymous® staff who indicated that parents in the midst of crisis may not benefit from Parents Anonymous®. In contrast, Parents Anonymous®

may be more appropriate prior to a crisis or as aftercare once these competing issues are addressed. Another construct that was not measured in this study but which would be informative is that of change readiness. It is possible that those attending voluntarily are more amenable to the change process than officially referred participants. Conversely, the very situation in which officially referred parents find themselves may create urgency for change.

### ***To What Extent was the Model Reliably Replicated Across Groups?***

#### **Implementation of the Key Parents Anonymous® Precepts**

The helper therapy principle is substantially represented in official literature and is readily expressed by staff and volunteers. It is embodied in the tenets of mutual support, parent leadership, shared leadership and within Parents Anonymous® ethos and will be more fully described within those constructs.

##### **Mutual support**

There is substantial evidence that mutual support is both preached and practiced within Parents Anonymous®. Three fourths of participants were classified as mutual supporters, meaning that they reported both providing and giving support within the group at least sometimes. This support extended beyond emotional support as well. Parents in the groups also reported both receiving and providing instrumental support to one another. However, there was still significant variation across groups in their average scores of mutual support

##### **Parent leadership**

There is substantial evidence that parent leadership is championed, encouraged, and practiced by most participants to at least some degree. Some parents assume rather substantial responsibilities within Parents Anonymous®. Across groups, there is significant variation in the average amount of parent leadership.

##### **Shared leadership**

There is substantial evidence that staff and facilitators make an effort to empower parents and share leadership with them. In fact, average amount of parent leadership across all groups was very similar to the average amount of staff leadership across groups. About one fourth of the groups, however, reflected low levels of shared leadership. Observations of groups bore this out: while parents were actively involved in responding to another parent, and while parent group leaders were somewhat more active than other parents, facilitators played a more active role than the model would prescribe. Interviews revealed instances of parents becoming facilitators after serving as parent group leaders—a practice the Parents Anonymous® model dissuades as it tends to diminish the value of the parent group leader role (Best Practices for Parents Anonymous® Group Facilitators).

## **Parents Anonymous® Ethos**

There is substantial evidence that most participants subscribe to a set of beliefs and principals that reflect Parents Anonymous®. However, there is significant variation among groups on the amount of “buy in” or ethos. In addition, self discovery or discussion of personal problems, was more characteristic of the Parents Anonymous® groups than the self help groups on which the GES was normed. Nonjudgmental acceptance, offering support, and building a community with other parents were valued and practiced by many, if not all, participants. From the observations, it was evident that many parents had a strong commitment to improving their own lives and the lives of their children.

### ***How Much Exposure to Parents Anonymous® is Necessary to Effect Change?***

In other words, what is or should be the “dose”? About 20% of all parents attending during the week of the census were there for the first time and the average number of meetings for all other parents (excluding first timers) present that week was eight. Some parents attended for substantially longer periods of time. From interviews with key leaders, it was difficult to discern how much the thought was enough of a “dose”. Most responses to this question were equivocal and depended on the needs and situation of the parent. However, the research has discovered that people attending longer were more likely to score higher on key elements of the model.

- Parents attending longer were more likely to assume multiple parent leadership tasks and reported higher levels of mutual support

Another aspect of “dose” is whether or not a parent has served as a parent group leader. Those who assume this responsibility may be seen as more fully experiencing the Parents Anonymous® model than those who do not, or at least experiencing the model in a different way.

- Parent group leaders were more likely to report experiencing mutual support, were more likely to give and receive support, and were more likely to “buy in” to the ethos.
- Parents who were now or ever had been a parent group leader were more likely to assume multiple parent leadership. These parents averaged two to three times as many tasks compared to those people with no parent group leader experience.

Because these results are correlational, we cannot make causal inferences. It is unknown whether certain parents arrive at Parents Anonymous® predisposed to or already possessing leadership capacity and these are the parents who are more likely to remain involved and to assume parent group leadership roles; or whether parents exposed to Parents Anonymous® for a longer period of time are affected in ways that develop their leadership potential, and if so, if it is this process of leadership development that enhances their experience of mutual support. It is also possible that parent group leadership masks underlying causal relationships. Parent group leaders were more likely to be older females. No other relationships were found.

## **Toward Outcomes**

What remains to examine is whether the benefits accrued by participants in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> translate into the outcome of interest: reduced child maltreatment. To tease out this particular potential value, several factors will need to be carefully defined, operationalized, and observed over time in order to clarify the causal direction of relationships between variables revealed in this process evaluation.

- 1.) The pre-treatment risk for child maltreatment must be reliably estimated. Only in this way can it be known whether an event was likely to occur with or without the delivered treatment.
- 2.) Participant's relevant pretreatment characteristics, beliefs and behaviors must be described.
- 3.) Participant's treatment "dose" must be known. This includes describing in standardized ways the extent to which the group attended by a parent reflected the core principals of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> model.
- 4.) Participant's relevant post-treatment characteristics, beliefs and behaviors must be described.
- 5.) Participant's actual behavior with respect to child abuse or neglect must be known, to the greatest degree of certainty possible, before, during and after participation in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

These requirements will not be easily achieved. By its very nature, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> is a group that values confidentiality and anonymity. The low (45%) census return rate foreshadows the difficulty of securing participation in even more intimate disclosure than the census. Human subjects concerns will be paramount and much data would need to be collected in order to statistically control for potential biases that result from self-selection.

The task ahead is formidable, but the potential value of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> warrants every effort to document its contribution to the vital work of building and supporting strong and safe families.

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# **Appendix 1**

## **Cluster Characteristics**

### Cluster Characteristics

<b>Composition of Clusters</b>				
	<b>Cluster 1</b>	<b>Cluster 2</b>	<b>Cluster 3</b>	<b>Cluster 4</b>
Age (years)	3	23	23	25
Size (number of groups)	4	7	93	42
Is there a host agency (1=yes, 0=no)	1	1	0	0
State organization 1=yes, 0=no	.00	.45	1.00	1.00
% of facilitators on time release	.17	.18	.86	.31

Clusters 1 and 2 describe relatively small organizations (4 and 7 groups) embedded in a larger organization. Organizations in Clusters 1 and 2 also had a small percentage of facilitators on time release from another organization (17% and 18%, respectively). They differ from one another, however, in that Cluster 1 organizations have operated for only 3 years, on average, while Cluster 2 organizations have operated for 23 years, on average. In addition, 100% of Cluster 1 organizations are organized at the state level while about one-half of Cluster 2 organizations are organized at the state level. The other two clusters describe older organizations, on average, which do not have a host agency and are organized at the state level. They both represent larger organizations but Cluster 3 is considerably larger than Cluster 4 (93 vs. 42 groups, on average). While Cluster 3 has a large percentage (86%) of facilitators on time-release, Cluster 4 has only about one-third of facilitators on time release (31%).

## **Appendix 2**

### **The Characteristics of Groups from Parents Anonymous® Database, Census of Parents Anonymous® Groups, and Sampled Groups**

**Appendix 2: The Characteristics of Groups from Parents Anonymous® Database, Census of Parents Anonymous® Groups and Sampled Groups**

<b>Parents Anonymous®</b>			
	<b>Database</b>	<b>Census</b>	<b>Sampled Groups</b>
<b>Primary Population</b>			
General Community	63%	36%	56%
Men Only	3%	5%	6%
Specific Population Type	35%	59%	39%
<b>Group Setting</b>			
DV/Homeless Shelter	2%	2%	5%
Correctional Agency	11%	14%	14%
Other	87%	84%	83%
<b>Primary Language</b>			
English	98%	92%	95%
Spanish	2%	8%	5%
<b>Location</b>			
Rural	47%	30%	9%
Suburban	8%	22%	5%
Urban	45%	48%	86%
<b>Meeting Time</b>			
Daytime	49%	45%	32%
6 PM Plus	51%	55%	68%
<b>Meeting Date</b>			
Monday-Thursday	94%	98%	91%
Friday	4%	2%	9%
Weekend	2%	0%	0%
*Total may be greater than 100% due to rounding.			

**Appendix 3**  
**Informed Consent**

## **Group Observation and Survey**

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), with the cooperation of the Parents Anonymous® national organization, is currently conducting an evaluation of the Parents Anonymous® process. The purpose of this evaluation is to learn more about the way in which Parents Anonymous® serves parents, children, and families. During the course of the evaluation, participants in approximately 24 Parents Anonymous® groups across the country will be asked to complete a short survey and to permit an NCCD researcher to observe the group process during one session.

It is important that you know that all of the material gathered through observations or surveys will remain anonymous and confidential. At no time will names be requested or associated to comments or observations. You do not have to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable, and you may decide not to participate at any point during the evaluation. However, complete and honest answers are important in helping us – and the people who design and fund services – understand how Parents Anonymous® works.

Your status as an anonymous member of Parents Anonymous® will remain completely in tact. The information researchers gather will be grouped with other responses. All presentations of this information will, therefore, provide a general rather than an individual description of Parents Anonymous® groups and its participants. Your name will not be requested or attached to any comments you make.

You are free to ask questions at any point during the evaluation process. You may contact NCCD Project Director, Dr. Madeline Wordes or Project Manager, Eileen Poe-Yamagata by phone at (510) 208-0500, ext 327 or by mail at 1970 Broadway #500, Oakland, CA 94612.

**Appendix 4**  
**Group Observation Codebook**

## GROUP OBSERVATION CODE BOOK

### A. General considerations

#### 1. When to begin and end

Begin coding when the meeting officially begins.

Stop coding when the meeting officially ends. This may be signaled by the facilitator or group leader making announcements, thanking those in attendance, or specifically announcing the meeting's close.

#### 2. Codeable Unit

Generally, each time the speaker changes, a new code is recorded. There are two exceptions:

If a new speaker is continuing after another group member responded, and the content would be coded the same as the last statement by the speaker, do NOT enter another code.

Example:

P1: I've been having trouble with my two year old. She just won't do what I tell her. (Reporting-C)

P2: I know what you mean...I have a two year old (Responding-S)

P1: I tell her to not pull the cat's tail and she still does it! (No new code).

If a speaker addresses more than one code able unit within a single segment of speech, code each one.

Example:

P1: When I was little my parents always used to... And now I'm finding that I do exactly the same thing and I don't like to do it. How can I do it differently? (History SC, reporting P, Request)

Do NOT enter a second code of the same type even if the content has changed. Example: P1: My oldest child played baseball and got two hits and I was so proud. My youngest child played the piano in a recital and did great. (Reporting C+)

#### 3. Exclusions

Do NOT code the following:

Conversation prior to official start of meeting

Inaudible comments

False starts (a comment is begun but the thought is not finished either due to interruption or simply discontinuing)

Private dialogues (communication between two or more parents not intended for the group)

"Boilers" (um hm, parroting, go on)

## B. Code definitions

### 1. Response Statements

Units that respond to another parent's reporting. Each responsive statement by a parent gets a code. For groups with formal structure so that one parent has designated reporting time and all others respond within that time, this will be relatively easy to distinguish: the reporting parent units will all be reporting and all other parents will be response. More informal groups may be more challenging. The coder will need to make a judgment about whether there was an expectation on the part of the original speaker that there be a response. If so, the second speaker should be coded as one of the response codes. If the

original speaker gave indication that they were finished, the next speaker may begin a new reporting sequence.

#### A. Additive

Additive units do more than acknowledge hearing or understanding the speaker's statements.

- i. *Help*: An offer of tangible assistance.

Examples:

I will help you move.

I will watch your children.

I have some clothes my kids have outgrown...would you like them?

- ii. *Experience*: Similar to advice, but includes information that the speaker had a similar situation and solved it in a particular way. Differs from "Reflective: Same issue" by going beyond stating they had a similar problem and offers the benefit of experience. May be negatively stated such as, "I tried this and it didn't work so don't try that."

Examples:

When that happened to me, I called my worker right away.

One time I tried counting to ten before doing anything and it really helped.

- iii. *Advice*: Offering ideas or suggestions.

Examples:

Why don't you try using time-outs?

I would offer a different activity to distract them.

You could try calling social services.

- iv. *Information*: If none of the above categories fit, generally code Information. If this does not fit well, reconsider whether the unit is additive. Information provides resource or referral information in response to another parent's issue.

Examples:

The number for the food pantry is XXX-XXXX.

A good book to read about that is....

You are entitled to a review of your case every six months.

#### B. Reflective

Reflective statements are mirrors of the original speaker's words. They do not advance the content in and of themselves.

- i. *Same Issues*: The second speaker relates that a similar issue or situation exists for them. Differs from experience in that it does not offer any solution. Differs from reporting in that it occurs during another parent's official time, or in informal groups, does not change direction of group to second parent's issue.

Examples:

I know what you mean. My kid does the same thing.

That's just like what happened to me last week...

- ii. *Empathy/Sympathy*: Evidence that new speaker understands original speaker's situation. Active listening. Rephrasing that conveys new speaker understands the speaker.

Examples:

That must be hard.

I would feel so proud about that if it were me.

So you're saying you get irritated when your child does that?

I hear what your saying. Even though Jim says he will do something, he doesn't seem to follow through.

- iii. *Information seeking*: Asking for clarification or additional information.

Examples:

How old is your son?

When did that happen?

How did you feel about that?

- iv. *Positive Reinforcement*: Comments that let original speaker know they did something well or comments that support the speakers' ideas.

Examples:

Great!

You really handled that well.

That was a great idea...I'll have to try that.

- v. *Criticism*: Suggesting that original speaker did not do well in some respect.

Examples:

I wouldn't have handled it that way.

That was wrong.

## C. Non-responsive.

Statements that are unrelated to original speaker's issues or comments.

Examples:

P1: So I am wondering how to handle it when my child acts up in the grocery store.  
(Reporting:Seeking:Advice )

P2: My child is having trouble in school...

OR

P2: Does someone know where I can get a bus pass?

## 2. Self-Statements

Self-statements are generally made by the parent who has asked for the time to speak. They initiate a line of conversation or resume a line already initiated by the same parent.

### A. History

Descriptions of incidents, situations or conditions that occurred **more than 30 days prior**. These may be given to introduce one's self to the group, to provide background information, or at times to rehearse prior history.

- i. *Parenting issues*: incidents, beliefs, situations, and/or feelings related to the way the speaker or their co-parent parented in the past. Does NOT refer to the way speaker or co-parent was treated as a child. If there is a circle around the (p), it signifies that particularly strong behavior such as spanking or severe yelling was indicated.

Examples:

My wife used to be really good with the kids. (p+)

I used to have a hard time knowing what to do when she got sassy. (p-)

I got so frustrated last month that I pulled down his pants and spanked him with the belt. (p-).

- ii. *Child issues*: statements about child(ren)'s past behavior, activities, personalities, experiences, characteristics, and/or feelings.

Examples:

In grade school, my son got all A's and B's. (c+)

My daughter used to come home from school, go to her room, and not come out until dinner time. (c-)

- iii. *Self issues*: statements about parent's past behaviors, activities, personality, experiences, characteristics, feelings, relationships that are unrelated to parenting behavior. Unrelated means that the speaker is not making a direct connection to parenting even though the issue raised may well impact parenting. (Does NOT refer to the way speaker or co-parent was treated as a child).

Examples:

I was married at 17 and divorced by 20 because my husband beat me. (s-) When Jenna was born, I had a job and was making good money. I used to feel like I could accomplish anything.(s+)

- iv. *Self Issues, childhood*: Statements about their own upbringing and the way speaker or co-parent was treated as a child (parental relationship and beliefs, maltreatment, AOD).

Examples:

My husband's parents believed in "spare the rod, spoil the child". (sc-)

My mother was always home when I came home from school. (sc+)

- v. *Maltreatment issues*: refers to parent's past (**more than 30 days**) maltreatment of child. An "M>" indicates that the maltreatment described resulted in the group and/or facilitator filing a CPS report or encouraging the speaker to file a report. An "M<" indicates that the maltreatment described did not result in the group and/or facilitator filing a CPS report or encouraging the speaker to file a report, but is serious enough that it may be questionable about whether it is maltreatment and should have been reported.

Example:

Hitting used to be my main form of punishment.(M<)

Last year, when they took my son away because of the beatings, I knew I needed help.(M>)

## B. Reporting

Statements that describe conditions or situations that are occurring in the present time (**within the most recent 30 days**). If describing something that occurred or existed more than 30 days prior, but discussing current efforts to resolve or come to terms with the prior situation, include it in reporting.

- i. *Parenting issues*: Descriptions of parenting behaviors, ideas, concerns, feelings or worries about parenting, either by self or a co-parent. If there is a circle around the (p) it signifies that particularly strong behavior such as spanking or excessive yelling is being reported.

Examples:

So when she refused to go to school, I told her she couldn't watch TV. (p+)

I tell them one thing, and my husband tells them another. (p-)

Sometimes I get so angry I want to hit them, but I know I shouldn't. (p)

I got so frustrated last week that I pulled down his pants and spanked him with the belt. (p-).

- ii. *Child issues*: Statements about child(ren)'s behavior, activities, personalities, experiences, characteristics and/or feelings.

Examples:

My oldest is such a great help. (c+)

So she went to school anyway and ended up having a good time. (c+)

He's so selfish. (c-)

- iii. *Self issues*: Statements about the speaker and/or co-parent's behaviors, feelings, relationships and life circumstances that are unrelated to parenting behavior. Unrelated means that the speaker is not making a direct connection to parenting even though the issue raised may well impact parenting. For example, if the speaker discusses being depressed without mentioning that depression affects their ability to parent, it is a self statement. Only if the speaker draws a direct connection, as in, "I'm so depressed I can't seem to get out of bed to get my kids up for school", would the statement be coded as a parenting statement.

Examples:

I was diagnosed with depression. (s-)

My husband was diagnosed with depression. (s-)

We're about to be evicted. (s-)

I wish I had stayed in school (s-)

(Note: the choice about staying in school may have occurred years ago, but the wishing is current).

- iv. *Maltreatment issues*: refers to parent's current (**within last 30 days**) maltreatment of child. An "M>" indicates that the maltreatment described resulted in the group and/or facilitator filing a CPS report or encouraging the speaker to file a report. An "M<" indicates that the maltreatment described did not result in the group and/or facilitator filing a CPS report or encouraging the speaker to file a report, but is serious enough that it may be questionable about whether it is maltreatment.

Example:

I whipped her with a belt just like my mother did to me. M<

---

THE FOLLOWING TWO CODES ARE OPTIONALLY ADDED TO A HISTORY OR REPORTING STATEMENT. The direction (+ or -) is from the speaker's perspective. In other words, if the speaker reports something as a positive statement, it should be coded (+) even if the coder views the statement as negative. Some statements will be neutral and would not require a (+) or (-).

EXAMPLES OF STATEMENTS NOT REQUIRING (+) or (-):

She has a new teacher this year. I haven't met her yet.

I made hot dogs for dinner.

My wife got a new job.

(Note: The context and speaker's tone and affect may make a statement neutral, positive, or negative. If unable to discern, code as neutral).

v. +: Positive experiences, beliefs, actions, observations and feelings.

C+ Examples:

She got a much better report card than last time.

He's trying so hard to remember to pick up his room.

S+ Examples:

I did a great job in that interview. They should hire me.  
I'm so much happier than before.  
My boyfriend is such a good listener.

P+ Examples:

So instead of hitting her, I counted to 10 and then calmly dealt with the situation.  
I feel like I'm really becoming a better parent.

vi. – : Negative experiences, beliefs, actions, observations and feelings.

C- Examples:

She's such a brat.  
He won't clean his room no matter how many times I ask him to.

S- Examples:

We just got evicted.  
I'm so upset about the way my mother treats me.

P- Examples:

I couldn't help myself. I just yelled and yelled, and I know it scared him.  
Sometimes I wonder if I shouldn't give them up for adoption.

vii. *Physical punishment indicated:* A circle around the history or reporting code of *Parenting* is used to indicate a generally-accepted practice of physical punishment such as spanking was used or excessive yelling. This would be used only when the action was considered non-reportable and no official maltreatment was indicated or suspected.

Ex.

My toddler was mad and hit me on the thigh so I spanked him lightly on the bottom.

viii. *Off task:* Statements that are entirely not related to the purpose of the group. Allow some leeway to determine whether the speaker will eventually tie the topic into parenting issues or issues of their own that would have some bearing on the safety and well-being of their children.

O- Examples:

Did you see the Laker's game last night?

(NOTE: could be part of a reporting unit if speaker goes on to describe how she/he and their children watched it together and had such a great time doing this family activity.)

I really like bowling.

(NOTE: could be part of a self statement if speaker goes on to describe how having this outlet relaxes them and they feel better prepared to face the stresses at home.)

C. Seeking

Seeking statements/questions elicit a response from other members.

i. *Help:* Help statements are requests for concrete assistance. While generally in the form of a question, it is possible to express a need/desire for assistance in the form of a statement.

Examples:

Would someone be willing to come to my house at dinner and help me figure out how to get my kid to eat?  
I need a place to stay for about a week until I can get into my new apartment.

- ii. *Advice*: Requests for ideas, suggestions, recommendations, opinions. Advice seeking differs from help in that there is no request for someone to actually DO something. Advice seeking differs from information seeking in that information is concrete and factual.

Examples:

How should I deal with my landlord?  
Why isn't it a good idea to spank?  
At what age are kids potty trained?  
Should I spank my kids?

(Note: These last two examples may be confused with requests for information, however there is not a direct, simple fact that can be provided in response).

- iii. *Information*: Requests for concrete and factual pieces of information.

Examples:

What is the phone number for the shelter?  
What agency helps with section 8 applications?

#### D. Response

After other members provide help, advice, information, or other response statements to the speaker's seeking, reporting or history statements, response statements are how the original speaker reacts to the group.

- i. *Plan*: Indicates intention to follow through with suggestions, offers of help or some formulation of a plan to enact suggestions. May include some minor degree of planning with no specifics.

Examples:

That's a good idea, I'll try that as soon as I get home. I'll ask him to sit down for a talk.  
That makes sense. I think if I remind myself what will happen if I don't, I'll for sure do it.  
Thanks for the phone number. I'm going to call next week.  
You're right, that wasn't the best thing for me to do, and when it happens next time I'm going to let her be late.  
That's a good idea, I'll try that.  
That makes sense, I could see myself doing that.  
Thank you for offering, I think I'll take you up on that.  
You're right, that wasn't the best thing for me to do and I'll try to do something different next time.

- ii. *Accepting*: Agreeing, acknowledging, accepting with no further commitment.

Examples:

That's a good idea.  
That makes sense.  
Thank you for offering.  
Thank you, you're kind to say so.  
You're right, that wasn't the best thing for me to do.

- iii. *Rejecting*: Disagrees, deflects suggestions, offers of help, positive reinforcement, empathy or criticism.

Examples:

- You're wrong.
- Makes a humorous retort.
- No thank you.

- iv. *No response or change of subject*: Ignores or changes subject without acknowledging someone else's comment, advice, suggestions, offers of help, positive reinforcement, empathy or criticism.

### 3. Administrative

These units include organizational issues such as alerting to time limits, moving group to next speaker, asking administrative questions and commenting on the group.

Example:

- i. *Administrative issue*: Organizational comments made by group member or facilitator.

Examples:

- You have 5 minutes left.
- The coffee is made, please help yourself.
- The rules of the group are...
- We have the phone list in the office.

- ii. *Administrative question*: Administrative information seeking by a group member or potential new member of other group members or facilitator.

Examples:

- How can we get a hold of one another.
- Do we always meet at the same time.
- How do I get more involved with the national organization.

- iii. *Group comment*: Comments made by group members about the group. These can be either positive, negative or neutral—using the same negative (-) and positive signs as earlier (+).

Examples:

- This group is great—I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't come here. (g+)
- Unfortunately I don't feel I'm getting the most out of it because it's so far I can only come once a month. (g-)

### 4. Opening Comments

These units include comments which would otherwise be marked under reporting, but are made during the official introduction period at the beginning of the group session. During this opening time parents are *supposed* to introduce themselves and say something good about themselves and their children, so most comments should be positive in nature. If, however, during this opening time, the parent says nothing or a negative comment it should also be indicated.

- v. *Parenting issues*: Descriptions of parenting behaviors, ideas, concerns, feelings or worries about parenting, either by self or a co-parent. If there is a circle around the (p) it signifies that particularly strong behavior such as spanking or excessive yelling is being reported.

Examples:

This week I suggested to Mary we do role plays to show each other how we feel, it was very thoughtful. (p+)

I can't say anything good—I felt like none of us did well this week. (p-, c-, s-)

- vi. *Child issues*: Statements about child(ren)'s behavior, activities, personalities, experiences, characteristics and/or feelings.

Examples:

Tommy got straight A's. (c+)

Lisa is such a brat—so I don't feel like saying anything. (c-)

- vii. *Self issues*: Statements about the speaker and/or co-parent's behaviors, feelings, relationships and life circumstances that are unrelated to parenting behavior. Unrelated means that the speaker is not making a direct connection to parenting even though the issue raised may well impact parenting.

Examples:

I just got a promotion. (s+)

My boyfriend asked me to marry him! (s+)

I'm sorry, but I got fired this week. (s-)

## 5. Complex Units

At times, a parent will make a series of related statements containing multiple codeable units. If possible, use a single code rather than multiple codes to represent the complete thought behind the statements. The single code, therefore, trumps the other codeable units contained within it.

Example:

P1: When I was a child, my parents never paid attention to me (Reporting:Self:-)

P2: I know what you mean. (Response: Reflective: Empathy). That happened to me too. Now I find I need to remind myself to spend lots of time paying attention to my kids. (Response: Additive: Experience).

## **Appendix 5**

### **Group Member Questionnaire**

Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

# PARENTS ANONYMOUS®

## NATIONAL EVALUATION

### *GROUP PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE*

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), with the cooperation of Parents Anonymous® Inc., is currently conducting an evaluation of the Parents Anonymous® process. The purpose of this evaluation is to learn more about the way in which Parents Anonymous® serves parents, children, and families. During the course of the evaluation, participants in approximately 24 Parents Anonymous® groups across the country will be asked to complete a short survey and to permit an NCCD researcher to observe the group process during one session.

It is important that you know that all of the material gathered through observations or surveys will remain anonymous and confidential. At no time will names be requested or associated to comments or observations. You do not have to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable, and you may decide not to participate at any point during the evaluation. However, complete and honest answers are important in helping us – and the people who design and fund services – understand how Parents Anonymous® works.

Your status as an anonymous member of Parents Anonymous® will remain completely intact. The information researchers gather will be grouped with other responses. All presentations of this information will, therefore, provide a general rather than an individual description of Parents Anonymous® groups and participants. Your name will not be requested or attached to any comments you make.

You are free to ask questions at any point during the evaluation process. You may contact NCCD Project Director, Dr. Madeline Wordes or Project Manager, Eileen Poe-Yamagata by phone at (510) 208-0500 or by mail at 1970 Broadway #500, Oakland, CA 94612.

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Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parents Anonymous® National Evaluation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

### Survey Instructions

This survey is confidential; do not put your name on it. Please answer as accurately as possible. NCCD researchers are available to answer your questions.

The following statements are about groups. If you think the statement is true or mostly true of your group, check the box labeled TRUE. If you think the statement is false or mostly false of your group, check the box labeled FALSE. You are to decide which of these statements are true of your group and which are not. **There are no wrong or right answers.**

Reproduction of the Group Environment Scale (Questions 1 – 72) is prohibited by the publisher, Consulting Psychologists Press.

The following statements may describe your group. Please indicate how accurate or true each statement is for your group. Circle a “1” if a statement is **not at all accurate**, a “3” if it is **somewhat accurate**, a “5” if it is **completely accurate**.

	<b>not at all accurate</b>		<b>somewhat accurate</b>		<b>completely accurate</b>
73. I receive more support than I provide at group meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
74. At most meetings I attempt to help others with their problems.	1	2	3	4	5
75. Members regularly reach out and provide emotional support to me.	1	2	3	4	5
76. I feel understood and accepted by most group members.	1	2	3	4	5

	<b>not at all accurate</b>		<b>somewhat accurate</b>		<b>completely accurate</b>
77. I provide as much support as I receive at group meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
78. At most meetings others attempt to help me with my problems.	1	2	3	4	5
79. I receive as much support and help as I presently desire from the group.	1	2	3	4	5
80. I regularly reach out and provide emotional support to group members.	1	2	3	4	5
81. I provide as much support and help to the group as I presently desire.	1	2	3	4	5

The following is a list of things you may or may not have done with other Parents Anonymous® group members. For each statement below, circle a “1” if you have never done this, a “2” if you have rarely done this, a “3” if you have sometimes done this, a “4” if you have often done this and a “5” if you have very often done this. Remember questions 82-97 refer to Parents Anonymous® parents.

	<b>never</b>	<b>rarely</b>	<b>some- times</b>	<b>often</b>	<b>very often</b>
82. I have helped another parent (e.g., by taking care of their children or giving them a ride).	1	2	3	4	5
83. I have given things (e.g., money, clothing, or food) to another parent.	1	2	3	4	5
84. I have contacted another parent outside of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
85. When another parent did something good I told them they did good.	1	2	3	4	5
86. Another parent gave me a good idea on how to be a better parent.	1	2	3	4	5
87. Another parent contacted me outside of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
88. I have given information or resources (e.g., job notice, housing, information) to another parent.	1	2	3	4	5
89. I went with another parent to an important appointment (e.g., court, doctor, child protective services).	1	2	3	4	5
90. I have stayed overnight at the home of another parent.	1	2	3	4	5
91. Another parent has given me things (e.g., money, clothing, or food).	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>never</u>	<u>rarely</u>	<u>some- times</u>	<u>often</u>	<u>very often</u>
92. I did something good and another parent told me I did well.	1	2	3	4	5
93. Another parent has helped me (e.g., by taking care of my children or giving me a ride).	1	2	3	4	5
94. I gave another parent a good idea on how to be a better parent.	1	2	3	4	5
95. Another parent stayed overnight in my home.	1	2	3	4	5
96. Another parent has given me information or resources (e.g., job notice, housing information).	1	2	3	4	5
97. Another parent has gone with me to an important appointment. (e.g., court, doctor, child protective services).	1	2	3	4	5

The next set of questions refers to activities that some parents and Parents Anonymous® staff do. Please circle a “1” if *you have* done this, a “2” if *another Parents Anonymous® parent* that you know has ever done this, or a “3” if a *facilitator or Parents Anonymous® staff member* that you know of has ever done this. You may check more than one box (e.g., if you and another parent made coffee for the group, check the first two boxes).

	<u>I have done this</u>	<u>Another parent has done this</u>	<u>Staff person has done this</u>
98. Made coffee for your group.	1	2	3
99. Served as timekeeper for your group.	1	2	3
100. Decided where to have your group meeting.	1	2	3
101. Helped develop training materials for facilitators and parent group leaders.	1	2	3
102. Attended Parent Leadership training.	1	2	3
103. Made sure there was childcare or a children’s program.	1	2	3
104. Spoken to the media (e.g., TV, radio, newspapers) about Parents Anonymous®	1	2	3
105. Opened a group meeting	1	2	3
106. Talked to or wrote letters to politicians asking them to support Parents Anonymous®	1	2	3
107. Decided what time the group would meet.	1	2	3
108. Been a role model for parents.	1	2	3

Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents Anonymous®  
National Evaluation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

	<b>I have done this</b>	<b>Another parent has done this</b>	<b>Staff person has done this</b>
109. Contacted potential new members.	1	2	3
110. Cleaned up the room after the meeting.	1	2	3
111. Talked to members between meetings.	1	2	3
112. Set up the room for a meeting.	1	2	3
113. Helped decide on whether a new group should be started.	1	2	3
114. Developed solutions for problems I have as a parent.	1	2	3
115. Made sure there were refreshments at the meeting.	1	2	3
116. Served on the Parents Anonymous® board, parent leadership council, or other policy making group.	1	2	3
117. Contacted parents who missed the group.	1	2	3
118. Made sure there were IPAPs and other literature available at meetings.	1	2	3
119. Raised money for Parents Anonymous®.	1	2	3
120. Helped develop press releases about Parents Anonymous®.	1	2	3
121. Set goals and objectives for the organization.	1	2	3
122. Welcomed new parents to the group.	1	2	3
123. Helped plan conferences.	1	2	3
124. Provided training on Parents Anonymous®.	1	2	3
125. Written articles for a Parents Anonymous® newsletter.	1	2	3
126. Helped find solutions for another parent's problems.	1	2	3
127. Made presentations about Parents Anonymous®.	1	2	3

Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parents Anonymous® National Evaluation

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

The following questions concern general information about you and the Parents Anonymous® group you are currently attending.

1. Is this your first Parents Anonymous® meeting?       Yes       No  
If no, when did you first come to a Parents Anonymous® meeting?      \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
month/year
2. About how many times have you attended this group? \_\_\_\_\_ any group \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you ever been the parent group leader? **(please check only one)**  
 I am currently the parent group leader.  
 Yes, but not now.  
 No, but I would like to be.  
 No, I have no interest in being the parent group leader.
4. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What are their ages?  
Child #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #3 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #4 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #5 \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your gender?       Male       Female
8. How would you describe your race and ethnicity? **(you may check more than one)**  
 American Indian  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  
 Black/African American  
 Hispanic/Latino  
 White  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
9. What is your yearly family income? **(please check only one)**  
 Less than \$15,000 per year  
 \$15,000 - \$24,999 per year  
 \$25,000 - \$34,999 per year  
 \$35,000 - \$49,999 per year  
 \$50,000 - \$75,000 per year  
 Over \$75,000 per year

Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents Anonymous®  
National Evaluation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

10. Is someone telling you to attend Parents Anonymous®?

- Yes       No

*If you answered yes to Question 10, go to Question 11. If you answered no to Questions 10, go to Question 13.*

11. Who is telling you to attend Parents Anonymous®?

- Judge  
 Child Protective Services (CPS) worker  
 Probation Officer  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Would you be attending this group if not required to be here?

- Yes       No       Not sure

13. Which of the following describes your relationship with the Child Protective Services (CPS) agency? **(You may check more than one).**

- Child Protective Services (CPS) has never investigated me**  
 **I have been investigated by Child Protective Services (CPS).**  
 **I have had a Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker.**  
 **Child Protective Services (CPS) has removed a child(ren) from my home**

If CPS has removed a child(ren) from your home, are they still out of the home?

- Yes       No

**Appendix 6**  
**Facilitator Questionnaire**

Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

# PARENTS ANONYMOUS<sup>®</sup>

## NATIONAL EVALUATION

### *FACILITATOR QUESTIONNAIRE*

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), with the cooperation of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc., is currently conducting an evaluation of the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> process. The purpose of this evaluation is to learn more about the way in which Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> serves parents, children, and families. During the course of the evaluation, participants in approximately 24 Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups across the country will be asked to complete a short survey and to permit an NCCD researcher to observe the group process during one session.

It is important that you know that all of the material gathered through observations or surveys will remain anonymous and confidential. At no time will names be requested or associated to comments or observations. You do not have to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable, and you may decide not to participate at any point during the evaluation. However, complete and honest answers are important in helping us – and the people who design and fund services – understand how Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> works.

Your status as an anonymous member of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> will remain completely intact. The information researchers gather will be grouped with other responses. All presentations of this information will, therefore, provide a general rather than an individual description of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> groups and participants. Your name will not be requested or attached to any comments you make.

You are free to ask questions at any point during the evaluation process. You may contact NCCD Project Director, Dr. Madeline Wordes or Project Manager, Eileen Poe-Yamagata by phone at (510) 208-0500 or by mail at 1970 Broadway #500, Oakland, CA 94612.

**Survey Instructions**

This survey is confidential; do not put your name on it. Please answer as accurately as possible. NCCD researchers are available to answer your questions.

The following statements are about groups. If you think the statement is true or mostly true of your group, check the box labeled TRUE. If you think the statement is false or mostly false of your group, check the box labeled FALSE. You are to decide which of these statements are true of your group and which are not. **There are no wrong or right answers.**

Reproduction of the Group Environment Scale (questions 1-72) is prohibited by the publishers, Consulting Psychologists Press.

The following questions concern general information about you and the Parents Anonymous® group you are currently facilitating:

1. Does this Parents Anonymous® group provide a formal Parents Anonymous® children's program (not just childcare)?

Yes       No

2. Is your work with Parents Anonymous® under the auspices of another organization?

Yes       No

3. If yes, what is the name of that organization? \_\_\_\_\_

4. **What is your status as a Parents Anonymous® facilitator?**

- Volunteer**
- On release time from another organization**
- A staff person of a Parents Anonymous® accredited organization**
- Paid a stipend**

5. If you are a paid facilitator, what organization are you paid by? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your gender?     Male       Female

8. How would you describe your race and ethnicity? **(you may check more than one)**

- American Indian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White

Group Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents Anonymous®  
National Evaluation**

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
mm dd yy

Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is the highest educational degree you have attained?

High school diploma       Bachelors       Masters       Doctorate

10. In what field was your degree (i.e., counseling, psychology, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you licensed or certified?       Yes \_\_\_\_\_       No  
Type of license or certification

12. How did you become a facilitator for Parents Anonymous®? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 7**

### **Interview Guide Key Contact**

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

### KEY CONTACT

(Organizational Executive Director, Program Director or both)

#### ORGANIZATION HISTORY

**A. Please tell about how this organization began?**

Probing questions as needed:

- Who started it?
- When did it start?
- What was going on then?
- What made people decide to adopt Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> as opposed to other efforts?
- What did originators hope to accomplish?
- How did they get funding?
- Who supported it?
- Who opposed it?

#### CONTEXT

**A. Please think about your community (define?). How do you see Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> fitting within your community's child abuse prevention efforts?**

Probing questions as needed:

- What other organizations are involved in child abuse prevention?
  - How are they the same/different from Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?
  - How does Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> relate to them?

**B. What is your relationship with organizations involved in child abuse intervention, such as the courts, law enforcement and child protection?**

Probing questions as needed:

- Do judges include specific references to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> in court orders? Is this/would this be desirable or not, and why?
- Do CPS workers recommend Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> to their families? If so, under what conditions? What, if any, ongoing communication occurs between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and CPS regarding a specific family?

#### IDENTIFICATION

A. Please think about the participants in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. What is it that influences their decision to participate?

Probing questions as needed:

- Who refers to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> and why?
  - Who doesn't, and why not?
- Where do parents go who do not come to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?
- Who becomes parent group leaders?

#### **Who comes once, who comes a few times, and who engages long term?**

Probing questions as needed:

- What characteristics of parents are related to long-term engagement?
- What characteristics of facilitators and leaders are related to long-term engagement?

How long is long enough?

## INTERVENTION

### **Think of the newest group that formed. How did it start?**

Probing questions as needed:

Was the impetus from the organization? An individual? If so who? A group of parents? A community organization?

Was it to fill a specific need? (i.e., time/day availability, location, special population?)

How long did it take to go from idea to first meeting?

How did parents find out about its availability?

How did you find facilitators and parent group leaders?

What was the path of growth in parent participation?

Was this typical or atypical of how groups begin? In what ways was it unique?

### **Please talk about the training provided for group facilitators and parent group leaders.**

Probing questions as needed:

How is training the same/different for facilitators and parent group leaders?

What curriculum materials do you use?

What are the goals and objectives of the training?

How well does this training prepare facilitators and parent group leaders for their roles?

What do you do when a facilitator or leader is needed to begin and training isn't available for some time?

### **How does the organization support and monitor groups?**

Probing questions as needed:

How much contact is there between facilitators/parent group leaders and the organization office? What is the nature of this contact?

To what extent does someone from the organization attend/observe groups? What are you looking for?

In what other ways does the organization learn about what occurs in groups (i.e. parent satisfaction surveys, conversations with facilitators, tracking calls to organization about groups)

How do you respond when a facilitator/parent group leader encounters a struggle in their group? What kinds of struggles are encountered? (i.e., low attendance, difficult group members, handling disclosures of maltreatment)

### **What does the organization do to assure cultural competence?**

Probing questions as needed:

What are the various cultural groups served by your organization? (Include racial, ethnic, economic, religious, etc.). How does this reflect the cultures of the community? Who is present in the community but unserved by Parents Anonymous®?

How does the cultural representation of staff/facilitators/parents reflect that of the community?

What means are used to prepare staff/facilitators/parent group leaders for functioning where their culture differs from that of parents served?

### **As an organization, how do you engage parent participation?**

Probing questions as needed:

Do some groups attract parents more than others? If so, what differences are there between “attractive” groups and those less successful at attracting parents? (i.e., location, setting, day of week, facilitator characteristics, special populations served, language?)

What do facilitators/parent group leaders do that encourages and/or discourages participation? (Is this answer based on observation of actual groups?)

Without using identifying information, can you tell about a parent who began reluctantly and later participated fully? How did that change occur?

Without using identifying information, can you tell a story about a parent who began, but never engaged? What was it that prevented their engagement?

### **As an organization, how do you build parent group leadership?**

Probing questions as needed:

When do you begin to know that a parent is likely to assume leadership?

How do you nurture emerging leadership?

What leadership activities do parents other than parent group leaders do? How do they find out about those opportunities?

Think about a parent who most recently took on a leadership task/role (including parent group leader). Without using identifying information, describe their pathway from initial participation to the present. What steps did they take along the way?)

Think about the most active parent leader you know. Without using identifying information, describe their pathway from initial participation to the present. What steps did they take along the way?

## LINKAGES

### **What led to the decision of the organization to affiliate with Parents Anonymous®?**

Probing questions as needed:

What does the organization gain by its affiliation?

What are the costs of affiliation?

Was the decision to affiliate easily reached, difficult, lots of discussion?

### **How do you go about building relationships with the formal and informal groups that make up your community?**

Probing questions as needed:

With what groups have you been successful?

What groups have been difficult to reach?

On your most recent grant application, who wrote supporting letters?

Did anyone decline?

### **Please describe your funding**

Probing questions as needed:

Sources?

Sufficiency?

How much effort is required to remain funded?

What else would you do if funding were not an issue?

What is currently left undone due to absence of funding?

## GOALS

**Please explain what motivates you to continue doing this work?**

Probing questions as needed:

What do you hope to accomplish?

Why are you working/volunteering for Parents Anonymous® rather than another organization?

What changes do you hope to see as a result of your work?

What are the two-three most important things you do to achieve your goals?

Are your goals the same as the parents'?

## How do you know when you've been successful?

Probing questions as needed:

What changes do you count as success among parents?  
What would be considered a successful year for the organization?  
How would parents see success?

### **OTHER**

A. Is there anything else we have not asked about that you feel is important for us to know/understand about Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?

(GO TO "PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF")

---

**PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF:**

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Education:

- \_\_ Some High School
- \_\_ High School Graduate
- \_\_ Some College
- \_\_ College Graduate (Major: \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_ Some Graduate School
- \_\_ Graduate degree (Degree: \_\_\_\_\_)

Years with Parents Anonymous® \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_Female \_\_Male

Race/ethnicity (check all that apply)

- American Indian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 8**

### **Interview Guide Paid Staff**

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE PAID STAFF**

### **1. CONTEXT**

#### **A. What is your relationship with organizations involved in child abuse intervention, such as the courts, law enforcement and child protection?**

Probing questions as needed:

Do judges include specific references to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> in court orders? Is this/would this be desirable or not, and why?

Do CPS workers recommend Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> to their families? If so, under what conditions? What, if any, ongoing communication occurs between Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> regarding a specific family?

### **2. IDENTIFICATION**

#### **A. Please think about the participants in Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>. What is it that influences their decision to participate?**

Probing questions as needed:

Who refers to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>, and why?

Who doesn't, and why not?

Where do parents go who do not come to Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?

Who becomes parent group leaders?

#### **B. Who comes once, who comes a few times, and who engages long term?**

Probing questions as needed:

What characteristics of parents are related to long-term engagement?

What characteristics of facilitators and leaders are related to long-term engagement?

How long is long enough?

### **3. INTERVENTION**

#### **A. Think of the newest group that formed. How did it start?**

Probing questions as needed:

Was the impetus from the organization? An individual? If so who? A group of parents? A community organization?

Was it to fill a specific need (i.e. time/day availability, location, special population)?

How long did it take to go from idea to first meeting?

How did parents find out about its availability?

How did you find facilitators and parent group leaders?

What was the path of growth in parent participation?

Was this typical or atypical of how groups begin? In what ways was it unique?

#### **B. Please talk about the training provided for group facilitators and parent group leaders.**

Probing questions as needed:

How is training the same/different for facilitators and parent group leaders?

What curriculum materials do you use?

What are the goals and objectives of the training?

How well does this training prepare facilitators and parent group leaders for their roles?

What do you do when a facilitator or leader is needed to begin and training isn't available for some time?

**C. How does the organization support and monitor groups?**

Probing questions as needed:

How much contact is there between facilitators/parent group leaders and the organizational office? What is the nature of this contact?

To what extent does someone from the organization attend/observe groups? What are you looking for?

In what other ways does the organization learn about what occurs in groups (i.e. parent satisfaction surveys, conversations with facilitators, tracking calls to the organization about groups)

How do you respond when a facilitator/parent group leader encounters a struggle in their group? What kinds of struggles are encountered? (i.e., low attendance, difficult group members, handling disclosures of maltreatment)

**D. What does the organization do to assure cultural competence?**

Probing questions as needed:

What are the various cultural groups served by your organization (include racial, ethnic, economic, religious, etc.). How does this reflect the cultures of the community? Who is present in the community but unserved by Parents Anonymous®?

How does the cultural representation of staff/facilitators/parents reflect that of the community?

What means are used to prepare staff/facilitators/parent group leaders for functioning where their culture differs from that of parents served?

**E. How do you engage parent participation?**

Probing questions as needed:

Do some groups attract parents more than others? If so, what differences are there between "attractive" groups and those less successful at attracting parents? (i.e., location, setting, day of week, facilitator characteristics, special populations served, language?)

What do facilitators/parent group leaders do that encourages and/or discourages participation? (Is this answer based on observation of actual groups?)

Without using identifying information, can you tell about a parent who began reluctantly, and later participated fully? How did that change occur?

Without using identifying information, can you tell a story about a parent who began, but never engaged? What was it that prevented their engagement?

**F. How do you build parent leadership?**

Probing questions as needed:

When do you begin to know that a parent is likely to assume leadership?

How do you nurture emerging leadership?

What leadership activities do parents do other than parent group leaders? How do they find out about those opportunities?

Think about a parent who most recently took on a leadership task/role (including parent group leader). Without using identifying information, describe their pathway from initial participation to the present. What steps did they take along the way?

Think about the most active parent group leader you know. Without using identifying information, describe their pathway from initial participation to the present. What steps did they take along the way?

**4. GOALS**

**A. How do you know when you've been successful?**

Probing questions as needed:

- What changes do you count as success among parents?
- What would be considered a successful year for the organization?
- How would parents see success?

**5. OTHER**

- A. Is there anything else we have not asked about that you feel is important for us to know/understand about?**

(GO TO "PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF")

---

**PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF:**

1. Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
What do you do: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

2. Education:

- \_\_ Some High School
- \_\_ High School Graduate
- \_\_ Some College
- \_\_ College Graduate (Major: \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_ Some Graduate School
- \_\_ Graduate degree (Degree: \_\_\_\_\_)

3. Years with Parents Anonymous® \_\_\_\_\_

4. Gender:

- \_\_ Female
- \_\_ Male

5. Race/ethnicity (check all that apply)

- American Indian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 9**

### **Interview Guide Key Contact**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE  
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER**

Interviewer note: is interviewee –

CPS  phone book  outreach effort  referral source  formal relationship  affiliate

**1. Please rank your knowledge of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> on the following scale:**

- a. Never heard of it (**go to question 4**, give brief description of PA and end interview)
- b. Heard of it but did not know there was a local organization
- c. Know local organization exists but don't know much about it
- d. Somewhat familiar with local organization
- e. Very familiar with local organization

**2. What activities are you aware of that are provided by Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?**

- a. Mutual support groups  
Specialized groups for: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Children's groups
- c. Child care
- d. Hotline or Help line
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What is your understanding of the principles of Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup>?**

- a. Shared leadership
- b. Parent leadership
- c. Mutual support
- d. Other:

**4. Are there any other organizations in your community that offer support to individuals with parenting issues? If yes, please list and count:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Count

**5. (Skip if #4 did not identify other organizations) Comparing Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> with other organizations that have similar goals:**

- a. How does Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> differ?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. How does Parents Anonymous® compare in terms of success at strengthening families?

---

---

---

c. How does Parents Anonymous® compare in terms of success at reducing child maltreatment?

---

---

---

**6. Please tell me which of the following statements are true with regard to your involvement with Parents Anonymous: (interviewer circle letter for true responses)**

- a. Serve as facilitator  
Volunteer\_\_\_ Stipend \_\_\_ Release Time \_\_\_
- b. Informal cooperative working agreements with Parents Anonymous®
- c. Formal memorandum of understanding with Parents Anonymous®
- d. Host Parents Anonymous® activities within agency
- e. Partner with Parents Anonymous® in grant applications
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Aware that some of my clients participate in Parents Anonymous® (if false, go to question 11)
- h. Refer my clients to Parents Anonymous® (if false, go to question 10)  
Mandate\_\_\_ or recommend \_\_\_  
Rarely\_\_ Occasionally \_\_\_ Often \_\_\_ Nearly always \_\_\_
- i. Request documentation of attendance at Parents Anonymous, Inc.® of my clients
- j. N/A, not involved at all

**7. When you make referrals, which best describes the likelihood that you will refer to Parents Anonymous® rather than another organization?**

- a. Never refer to Parents Anonymous®
- b. Less likely to refer to Parents Anonymous®
- c. About as likely to refer to Parents Anonymous®
- d. More likely to refer to Parents Anonymous®
- e. Always to refer to Parents Anonymous®

**8. How do you decide when you will refer to Parents Anonymous® and when you won't?**

- a. Client characteristics
- b. Desired outcome
- c. Location
- d. Time
- e. Resources (cost, insurance, etc.)
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

What other services do you refer them to?

---

**9. When you refer clients to Parents Anonymous®, how often do you refer them to other services at the same time?**

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes
- d. Often

10. Among clients you know who have attended Parents Anonymous®, what changes, if any, have you seen in them over time? (check all that apply)

- a.  N/A no clients
- b. No changes
- c. knowledge of parenting skills     increase                       decrease
- d. self esteem                                       increase                       decrease
- e. confidence                                       increase                       decrease
- f. appropriate use of social support     increase                       decrease
- g. leadership                                       increase                       decrease
- h. employment                                       got job                       got better job
- i. education                                       back to school     finish school
- j. maltreatment                                       decrease                       increase
- k. other \_\_\_\_\_

11. When is the last time you had direct contact with someone from Parents Anonymous®? (other than about this interview)

---

12. What was the nature of your most recent contact?

---

11. CPS ONLY:

- a. Do judges include Parents Anonymous® in court orders?  yes  no
  - i. If yes, what is your opinion of this practice?
- b. Do you include Parents Anonymous® in case plans?  yes,  no
  - i. Why or why not?
- c. Are you aware of clients within the past two years who have participated in Parents Anonymous®?  
 yes  no
  - i. If yes, compared to other clients, are they more or less likely to maltreat their children again?
  - ii. In your opinion, to what extent does participation in Parents Anonymous® affect their likelihood to maltreat again?

(GO TO “PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF”)

**PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF:**

1. Position: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

3. Education:

\_\_ Some High School

\_\_ High School Graduate

\_\_ Some College

\_\_ College Graduate (Major: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_ Some graduate school

\_\_ Graduate degree (Degree: \_\_\_\_\_)

4. Years with Parents Anonymous® \_\_\_\_\_

5. Gender:

\_\_ Female

\_\_ Male

6. Race/ethnicity (check all that apply)

American Indian

Asian/Pacific Islander

Black/African American

Hispanic/Latino

White

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 10**  
**Materials Checklist**

## MATERIALS CHECKLIST

**STATE: PA**

### ORGANIZATION

ITEM	Present? (Y=Yes, N=No)	From (N=National, O=Organization G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Org. Chart				
Policy and Procedure Manual				
Media Guide				
Job descriptions				
Budget				

### TRAINING

ITEM	Present? (Y=Yes, N=No)	From (N=National, O=Organization G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Best Practices for Parents Anonymous Group Facilitators/ Facilitator Manual				

### GROUP RESOURCES – Group 1

ITEM GROUP ID	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
IPAP	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent group Leader	English			
	Spanish			
Group attendance Forms	English			
	Spanish			
Parent Networker Innovations				

**GROUP RESOURCES – Group 2**

ITEM GROUP ID	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
IPAP	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent group Leader	English			
	Spanish			
Group attendance Forms	English			
	Spanish			
Parent Networker				
Innovations				

**GROUP RESOURCES – Group 3**

ITEM GROUP ID	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
IPAP	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent group Leader	English			
	Spanish			
Group attendance Forms	English			
	Spanish			
Parent Networker				
Innovations				

**GROUP RESOURCES – Group 4**

ITEM GROUP ID	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
IPAP	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent group Leader	English			
	Spanish			
Group attendance Forms	English			
	Spanish			
Parent Networker				
Innovations				

**OUTREACH –Organization**

ITEM	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Strengthening Families in Partnership with Communities	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent Networker				
Innovations				
Research Profiles (2)				
Parenting is Tough				
Media guide: shared leadership and the media				
Media Guide for Parent Leaders				

ITEM GROUP ID:	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Strengthening Families in Partnership with Communities	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent Networker				
Innovations				
Research Profiles (2)				
Parenting is Tough				
Media guide: shared leadership and the media				
Media Guide for Parent Leaders				

**OUTREACH –Group 2**

ITEM GROUP ID:	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Strengthening Families in Partnership with Communities	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent Networker				
Innovations				
Research Profiles (2)				
Parenting is Tough				
Media guide: shared leadership and the media				
Media Guide for Parent Leaders				

**OUTREACH –Group 3**

ITEM GROUP ID:	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Strengthening Families in Partnership with Communities	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent Networker				
Innovations				
Research Profiles (2)				
Parenting is Tough				
Media guide: shared leadership and the media				
Media Guide for Parent Leaders				

**OUTREACH –Group 4**

ITEM GROUP ID:	PRESENT? (Y=Yes, N=No)	FROM (N=National, O=Organizational, G=Group)	Comments	Collect (organization or local)
Strengthening Families in Partnership with Communities	English			
	Spanish			
The Parent Networker				
Innovations				
Research Profiles (2)				
Parenting is Tough				
Media guide: shared leadership and the media				
Media Guide for Parent Leaders				

**Appendix 11**  
**Facilitator Census**

**NATIONAL CENSUS OF PARENTS ANONYMOUS® GROUPS**  
**November 4, 2001 through November 10, 2001**  
**Facilitator Survey**

**Informed Consent**

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), with the cooperation of the Parents Anonymous® national organization, is currently conducting an evaluation of the Parents Anonymous® process. The purpose of this evaluation is to learn more about the way in which Parents Anonymous® serves families. It will take about ten minutes to complete this survey.

Please note that your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You do not have to fill out this survey. If you choose not to complete this survey, it will not affect your participation in Parents Anonymous® in any way. Please understand that your complete and honest responses are important in helping us understand how Parents Anonymous® works. However, you do not have to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may skip questions you choose not to answer.

Please note that your completion of this survey is anonymous and confidential. The information will not be used to identify you and all presentations of this information will provide a general, rather than an individual, description of Parents Anonymous® groups and participants. The information we gather will be grouped with other responses. Again, this survey is anonymous, so please do not put your name on it.

When you are finished please seal the survey in the envelope provided and send directly to the researchers. No one but the researchers, who do not know you, will see your answers.

For further information, please feel free to contact the NCCD Project Director, Dr. Madeline Wordes or Project Manager, Eileen Poe-Yamagata by phone at (510) 208-0500, ext. 306 or by mail at 1970 Broadway #500, Oakland, CA, 94612.

**NATIONAL CENSUS OF PARENTS ANONYMOUS® GROUPS**  
November 4, 2001 through November 10, 2001  
Facilitator Survey

**Instructions:** Please do not put your name anywhere on this survey. The information you provide will not be used to identify you. When you are finished, please seal the survey in the return envelope provided and send to NCCD. Thank you for your participation.

**Please tell us some general information about the group.**

1. What day of the week does this group meet (*please check one*)?  
 Monday  Tuesday  Wednesday  Thursday  Friday  Saturday  Sunday
2. What time of day does this group meet?  
\_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_  AM or  PM
3. What month and year did this group begin?  
Month \_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_  Don't Know
4. What is the five-digit zip code of the location of the group meeting?  
Zip Code \_\_\_\_ \_
5. Is childcare provided for group participants?  
 Yes  No
- 5a) If yes, how would you describe the childcare provided?  
 Parents Anonymous® Children's Program  
 Another children's program  
 Childcare but not a children's program
6. What organization oversees the functioning of this group?  
 Directly by the PA organization  
 Through another organization  
Name of other organization \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the group setting (*please check one*)?  

<input type="checkbox"/> Boys and girls club	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Protective Services agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Child care setting	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate or office setting
<input type="checkbox"/> Incarceration facility (e.g., jail, prison)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Religious institution (e.g., church, temple)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter for homeless people
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter for survivors of domestic violence	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>please specify</i> ) _____	

8. Is the group open to everyone or limited to those served at this particular setting?

- Open       Limited

9. Which one of the following describes the group's location?

- Urban    Suburban    Rural    Native American Reservation

***Please tell us some general information about the people attending this group.***

10. On average, how many participants attend this group?

Please indicate the average number of participants \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is the primary population attending this group (*please check one*)?

- General population  
 Adult survivors of abuse  
 Foster parents  
 Grandparents  
 Men  
 Women  
 Parents of children birth to age 5  
 Parents of children with special needs  
 Parents of teens  
 Parents of youth involved in the juvenile justice system  
 Parents who are court-referred  
 Single parents  
 Teen parents  
 Other (*please describe*) \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is the primary language spoken in the group (*please check one*)?

- English     Spanish     Other (*please describe*) \_\_\_\_\_

13. Currently, how many parent group leaders are there for the group?

- 0     1     2     3     More than 3

14. Currently, how many facilitators are there for the group?

- 1     2     3     More than 3

***Now we would like to know a little about you.***

15. Approximately when did you begin facilitating this group?

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

16. Did you previously facilitate a different Parents Anonymous group?

- Yes       No

17. What is your gender?
- Female       Male
18. How would you describe your race and ethnicity? *(please check all that apply)*
- American Indian  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  
 Black/African American  
 Hispanic/Latino  
 White  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
19. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
20. What is the highest education level you have attained *(please check one)*?
- Less than high school  
 High school graduate/GED  
 Some college  
 College graduate  
 Vocational/trade/technical school  
 Post graduate  
 Other *(please describe)* \_\_\_\_\_
21. Do you have any of the following licenses or certifications *(please check all that apply)*?
- Alcohol and drug counselor  
 Marriage, family, and child counselor  
 Licensed clinical social worker  
 Counseling psychologist  
 Clinical psychologist
22. What is your work status within the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization *(please check one)*?
- Volunteer  
 On release time from another organization  
 A paid staff person within the Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> organization  
 Paid a stipend  
 None of the above
23. Would you be willing to participate in further evaluation activities (e.g., facilitate further data collection, etc.)?
- Yes       No

The following statements may describe how you feel about disciplining children and about your Parents Anonymous® group. Please circle 1 if you strongly disagree with the statement, 2 if you disagree with the statement, 3 if you neither agree nor disagree, 4 if you agree, and 5 if you strongly agree with the statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
24. I believe that spanking is sometimes necessary to discipline children.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I am honest with others in the group.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Parents who are having trouble with their children are the best teachers for other parents in the same situation.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Professionals should lead groups because they know the most about these problems.	1	2	3	4	5
28. We should not judge other parents for how they treat their children.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I trust the people in this Parents Anonymous® group.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I believe that parents should not be responsible for planning the group's activities.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I talk freely and openly with others in the group about my problems.	1	2	3	4	5
32. It is always better to give children other consequences for bad behavior rather than spanking.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I value the advice of another parent at least as much as I would a professional.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I respect the people in this Parents Anonymous® group.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I believe it is important for parents in the group to decide what we will talk about in the group.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Parents should be shamed when they talk about hurting their children.	1	2	3	4	5
37. It is important that parents in the group feel a sense of belonging to the group.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I think it is important to be part of this group because of the sense of community it brings me.	1	2	3	4	5
39. It is OK to tell others outside of this group what was said during the group meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Not having to give your name is important to getting people to come to group.	1	2	3	4	5
41. If a parent in group tells us that they are abusing or neglecting their child, they should be encouraged to self-report to child protective services. If they don't self-report someone in the group should report them.	1	2	3	4	5
42. If a parent in a group tells us that they are abusing or neglecting their child, it is confidential and no one should report them.	1	2	3	4	5
43. It is important to praise parents when they make positive changes.	1	2	3	4	5
44. Helping another parent makes me be a better parent.	1	2	3	4	5

***Thank you very much for completing this survey.***

Please seal it in the envelope provided and mail it to us with the group participant's surveys.

**Appendix 12**  
**Participant Census**

**NATIONAL CENSUS OF PARENTS ANONYMOUS® GROUPS**  
**November 4, 2001 through November 10, 2001**  
**Participant Survey**

**Informed Consent**

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), with the cooperation of the Parents Anonymous® national organization, is currently conducting an evaluation of the Parents Anonymous® process. The purpose of this evaluation is to learn more about the way in which Parents Anonymous® serves families. The following survey will be used to describe the types of people who participate in Parents Anonymous® meetings and the reasons they attend. It will take about ten minutes to complete.

Please note that your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You do not have to fill out this survey. If you choose not to complete this survey, it will not affect your participation in Parents Anonymous® in any way. Please understand that your complete and honest responses are important in helping us understand how Parents Anonymous® works. However, you do not have to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may skip questions you choose not to answer.

Please note that your completion of this survey is anonymous and confidential. The information will not be used to identify you and all presentations of this information will provide a general, rather than an individual, description of Parents Anonymous® groups and participants. The information we gather will be grouped with other responses. Again, this survey is anonymous, so please do not put your name on it.

When you are finished please give the completed form to the facilitator who will place it in a return envelope and seal it. The facilitator will send the sealed envelope to the researchers. No one but the researchers, who do not know you, will see your answers.

For further information, please feel free to contact the NCCD Project Director, Dr. Madeline Wordes or Project Manager, Eileen Poe-Yamagata by phone at (510) 208-0500 or by mail at 1970 Broadway #500, Oakland, CA, 94612.

**NATIONAL CENSUS OF PARENTS ANONYMOUS® GROUPS**  
November 4, 2001 through November 10, 2001  
Participant Survey

**Instructions:** Please do not put your name anywhere on this survey. The information you provide will not be used to identify you. When you are finished, please give the completed form to the facilitator. The group facilitator will send the completed forms to the researchers at the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. Only members of the research staff will view your anonymous responses. Thank you for your participation.

**Please tell us some information about your attendance at Parents Anonymous® and other groups.**

1. Today's date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
2. Is this your first Parents Anonymous® meeting?  
 Yes (*If yes, go to question 7*)  No
3. Approximately when did you first come to a Parents Anonymous® meeting?  
Month\_\_\_\_\_ Year\_\_\_\_\_
4. Approximately how often do you attend this group?  
 Almost every week  
 Once or twice a month  
 Less than once a month
5. Have you attended Parents Anonymous® groups other than this one?  
 Yes  No
6. Have you ever been a Parents Anonymous parent group leader? (*please check only one*)  
 Yes, I am currently the parent group leader.  
 Yes, but not now.  
 No, but I would like to be.  
 No, I have no interest in being the parent group leader.  
 I don't know what a parent group leader is.
7. How did you find out about this Parents Anonymous® group? (*please check all that apply*)

<input type="checkbox"/> Child Protective Services (CPS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Clergy (minister, priest, rabbi)
<input type="checkbox"/> Family member	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Care Provider (doctor or nurse)	<input type="checkbox"/> Internet
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents Anonymous® literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents Anonymous® parent
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/school	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone help line, hotline, 1-800#, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Media (ad on TV, radio, magazine)	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone book
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal (judge, lawyer, parole, probation office)	

- Mental health professional (counselor, psychologist, social worker)
- Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Below are listed some reasons people may come to Parents Anonymous®? Why did you first come to Parents Anonymous®? (please check all that apply)

- To have a place where people listen to my concerns
- To meet other parents
- To become a better parent
- To help other parents
- To learn ways to cope with stress
- To learn ways to stop hurting my child's feelings
- To learn ways to stop physically hurting my child
- To help my child recover from sexual abuse
- Other reasons (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Is someone telling you to attend Parents Anonymous®?

- Yes
- No (if no, go to question 10)

9a. Who is telling you to attend Parents Anonymous®?

- Judge
- Child Protective Services (CPS) worker
- Probation/Parole officer
- Spouse/partner
- Relative
- Friend
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

9b. Is there a court order that requires you to attend?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

10. Listed below are some other things parents do when they need advice or help with parenting issues. Which, if any, of the following have you done? (please check all that apply)

- |  |                              |                             |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Attended parenting classes   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Called a hotline for parenting advice  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Talked with friends  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Talked with family   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Talked with minister, priest, rabbi  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Asked for help from a professional<br>(CPS worker, case worker, doctor, mental health counselor) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Other (please describe)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
- 

11. Do you go or have you gone to other groups for any of the following issues?

- |                          |                              |  |   |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Alcohol use              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, but this is an issue for me | <input type="checkbox"/> No, not an issue |
| Drug use                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, but this is an issue for me | <input type="checkbox"/> No, not an issue |
| Mental health issues     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, but this is an issue for me | <input type="checkbox"/> No, not an issue |
| Physical health problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, but this is an issue for me | <input type="checkbox"/> No, not an issue |
| Domestic violence        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, but this is an issue for me | <input type="checkbox"/> No, not an issue |

Other

Yes (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tell us some information about your children.**

12. How many children live with you? \_\_\_\_\_ (if none, skip to question 16)

13. How old is each child?

Child #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #3 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #4 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #5 \_\_\_\_\_  
Child #6 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #7 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #8 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #9 \_\_\_\_\_ Child #10 \_\_\_\_\_

14. My relationship to the child (ren) that lives with me is: (please check all that apply)

- Biological or adoptive parent
- Step parent
- Grandparent
- Other relative (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- Foster parent, non relative
- Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

15. Do any of these children have special needs related to the following problems?  
(Please check all that apply)

- Hearing/speech
  - Learning disabilities
  - Developmentally disabled
  - Physical mobility
  - Vision (e.g., blindness)
  - Physical health
  - Mental health
  - Other (please describe)
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Questions 16-18 are only for biological, adoptive, or step parents.**

*If you are a foster parent, a grandparent, or other, please skip to question 19.*

16. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Have any of your children *ever* been removed from your care by the Child Protective Services agency or a Judge? Note: this does not refer to decisions made in divorce or separation hearings

Yes  No

18. Do all of your children currently live with you?

Yes  No

If no, where do your children live? (please check all that apply)

- Other parent
- Grandparent
- Other relative
- Foster family
- Group home
- Residential facility (juvenile justice or psychiatric)
- On their own (under 18)
- On their own (over 18)

***Please tell us a little about yourself.***

19. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

20. What is your gender?

- Male       Female

21. How would you describe your race and ethnicity? *(Please check all that apply)*

- American Indian  
 Asian or Pacific Islander  
 Black/African American  
 Hispanic/Latino  
 White  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

22. What is your current marital status? *(Please check only one)*

- Single (never married)       Living together (unmarried)  
 Married       Married, but separated  
 Divorced       Civil union

23. If you are in a relationship where you are living together, does your partner/spouse attend Parents Anonymous®?

- Yes       No       Do not live with partner/spouse

24. What is the highest education level you have attained?

- Less than high school  
 High school graduate/GED  
 Some college  
 College graduate  
 Vocational/trade/technical school  
 Post graduate  
 Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

25. What is your current employment status?

- At home parent/caregiver  
 Work full-time  
 Work part-time  
 Receiving disability benefits  
 Retired  
 Unemployed  
 Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

26. What is your yearly household income? *(Please check only one)*

- Less than \$15,000 per year       \$35,000 - \$49,000 per year  
 \$15,000 - \$24,999 per year       \$50,000 - \$75,000 per year  
 \$25,000 - \$34,999 per year       Over \$75,000 per year

The following statements may describe how you feel about disciplining children and about your Parents Anonymous® group. Please circle 1 if you strongly disagree with the statement, 2 if you disagree with the statement, 3 if you neither agree nor disagree, 4 if you agree, and 5 if you strongly agree with the statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
27. I believe that spanking is sometimes necessary to discipline children.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I am honest with others in the group.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Parents who are having trouble with their children are the best teachers for other parents in the same situation.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Professionals should lead groups because they know the most about these problems.	1	2	3	4	5
31. We should not judge other parents for how they treat their children.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I trust the people in this Parents Anonymous® group.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I believe that parents should not be responsible for planning the group's activities.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I talk freely and openly with others in the group about my problems.	1	2	3	4	5
35. It is always better to give children other consequences for bad behavior rather than spanking.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I value the advice of another parent at least as much as I would a professional.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I respect the people in this Parents Anonymous® group.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I believe it is important for parents in the group to decide what we will talk about in the group.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Parents should be shamed when they talk about hurting their children.	1	2	3	4	5
40. It is important that parents in the group feel a sense of belonging to the group.	1	2	3	4	5
41. I think it is important to be part of this group because of the sense of community it brings me.	1	2	3	4	5
42. It is OK to tell others outside of this group what was said during the group meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Not having to give your name is important to getting people come to group.	1	2	3	4	5
44. If a parent in group tells us that they are abusing or neglecting their child, they should be encouraged to self-report to child protective services. If they don't self-report someone in the group should report them.	1	2	3	4	5
45. If a parent in a group tells us that they are abusing or neglecting their child, it is confidential and no one should report them.	1	2	3	4	5
46. It is important to praise parents when they make positive changes.	1	2	3	4	5
47. Helping another parent makes me be a better parent.	1	2	3	4	5

**Thank you again for completing this survey.**

Please give it to the facilitator so that it can be sealed in the envelope and sent to NCCD.

## **Appendix 13**

### **Census Participation Rates by State or Province**

### Census Participation Rates by State or Province

State/Province	Number of Groups	Received Responses	Rate of Response
Alaska	11	2	18%
Arizona	36	26	72%
Arkansas	7	1	14%
Bermuda	2	2	100%
British Columbia	3	1	33%
California	19	12	63%
Delaware	6	5	83%
District of Columbia	6	2	33%
Idaho	3	1	33%
Iowa	14	2	14%
Kentucky	3	2	67%
Maryland	14	2	14%
Michigan	4	3	75%
Missouri	5	5	100%
North Carolina	4	4	100%
New Hampshire	6	0	0%
New Jersey	52	7	13%
New York	14	12	86%
Ohio	27	17	63%
Oregon	7	4	57%
Pennsylvania	107	55	51%
South Carolina	52	18	35%
Texas	17	6	35%
Utah	14	5	36%
Wisconsin	2	2	100%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>45%</b>

## **Appendix 14**

### **Coding Form**

Researcher	Additive	Reflective	Non-Responsive	History	Reporting	Seeking	Response	Administrative	Opening
<b>please indicate</b>	H=help	SI=same issue	Not directly responding to speaker. I.e. changing subject, interrupting, switching group focus	P=parenting (w/O=corp.)	P=parenting (w/O=corp.)	H=help	P=plan	I=administrative issue	<b>Comments</b>
<b>EPY</b>	X=experience	E=empathy		C=child,	C=child,	A=advice	AC=accepting	?=administrative question	P=parenting
<b>MW</b>	A=advice	?=information seeking		S=self	S=self	I=information	R=rejecting	G=group comment	C=child,
<b>RF</b>	I=information	+ positive reinforce		SC=self as child	M=maltreatment / ><		N=no response	group issues can be either + positive/ - negative	S=self
<b>MN</b>		- criticism		M=past maltreatment / ><	O=off-task				+ positive/ - negative
				+ positive/ - negative	+ positive/ - negative				
<b>Facilitator</b>	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				
<b>Parent Leader</b>	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				
<b>Parent 1</b>	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		P=	O=				
				M=					
<b>Parent 2</b>	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				

Researcher	Additive	Reflective	Non-Responsive	History	Reporting	Seeking	Response	Administrative	Opening
Parent 3	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				
Parent 4	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				
Parent 5	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				
Parent 6	H=	SI=		P=	P=	H=	P=	I=	P=
	X=	E=		C=	C=	A=	AC=	?=	C=
	A=	?=		S=	S=	I=	R=	G=	S=
	I=	+=		SC=	M=		O=		
		-=		M=	O=				

## **Appendix 15**

### **Comments Coded During Group Observation**

**Comments Coded During Group Observation (actual totals)**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parent Leader</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Total</b>
Additive help	1	1	15	17
Additive experience	17	4	6	27
Additive advice	61	17	46	124
Additive information	21	7	21	49
Reflective same issue	58	16	10	84
Reflective empathy	53	7	24	84
Reflective information seeking	93	32	165	290
Reflective positive reinforcement	42	9	40	91
Reflective criticism	5	0	6	11
Non-Responsive	3	2	0	5
History Parenting (w/o corp.)	6	1	0	7
History child	3	0	1	4
History self	1	3	1	5
History self as child	7	4	0	11
History past maltreatment	1	0	0	1
History parenting positive	3	0	0	3
History parenting negative	3	1	0	4
History self positive	1	0	0	1
History self negative	11	0	3	14
History child positive	2	0	0	2
History child negative	3	2	1	6
History self as child positive	5	0	2	7
History self as child negative	1	0	0	1
History parenting corporal	0	0	0	0
History self corporal	0	0	0	0
History of self as a child corporal	0	0	0	0
History maltreatment reported	4	1	0	5
History maltreatment not reported	0	0	0	0
Reporting parenting (w/o corporal)	45	10	2	57
Reporting parenting positive	39	3	12	54
Reporting parenting negative	30	10	4	44
Reporting child	22	4	10	36
Reporting child positive	32	5	7	44
Reporting child negative	52	13	14	79
Reporting self	27	11	4	42
Reporting self positive	24	4	6	34
Reporting self negative	44	5	3	52
Reporting off task	5	0	0	5
Reporting off task positive	0	0	0	0
Reporting off task negative	0	0	0	0
Reporting maltreatment	0	0	0	0
Reporting parenting corporal	0	0	0	0
Reporting self corporal	0	0	0	0

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parent Leader</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Total</b>
Reporting maltreatment reported	0	0	0	0
Reporting maltreatment not reported	0	0	0	0
Seeking help	2	2	0	4
Seeking advice	7	1	0	8
Seeking information	15	2	4	21
Response plan	5	0	0	5
Response accepting	7	1	0	8
Response rejecting	13	0	0	13
Response no response	0	0	0	0
Administrative issue	8	6	30	44
Administrative issue positive	0	0	0	0
Administrative issue negative	0	0	0	0
Administrative group question	5	2	15	22
Admin group question positive	0	0	0	0
Admin group question negative	0	0	0	0
Administrative group comment	2	0	3	5
Administrative group comment positive	1	1	0	2
Administrative group comment negative	3	0	1	4
Opening comments parent	0	2	0	2
Opening comments parent positive	0	0	0	0
Opening comments parent negative	0	0	0	0
Opening comments child	4	2	1	7
Opening comments child positive	0	0	0	0
Opening comments child negative	1	1	0	2
Opening comments self	2	1	1	4
Opening comments self positive	2	0	0	2
Opening comments self negative	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>1453</b>

## **Appendix 16**

### **Scale Items**

**Table A: Provide Support – Matron’s Scale**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Not at all Accurate</b>	<b>Between None &amp; Somewhat</b>	<b>Somewhat Accurate</b>	<b>Between Somewhat &amp; Completely</b>	<b>Completely Accurate</b>
Q74: At most meetings I attempt to help others with their problems	4.5%	9.0%	34.6%	23.3%	28.6%
Q77: I provide as much support as I receive at group meetings	5.4%	7.8%	27.9%	22.5%	36.4%
Q80: I regularly reach out and provide emotional support to group members	6.9%	7.6%	29.8%	25.2%	30.5%
Q81: I provide as much support and help to the group as I presently desire	8.6%	9.4%	31.3%	16.4%	34.4%

**Table B: Get Support – Matron’s Scale**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Not at all Accurate</b>	<b>Between None &amp; Somewhat</b>	<b>Somewhat Accurate</b>	<b>Between Somewhat &amp; Completely</b>	<b>Completely Accurate</b>
Q73: I receive more support than I provide at group meetings	21.4%	10.7%	29.8%	14.5%	23.7%
Q75: Members regularly reach out and provide emotional support to me	7.0%	9.3%	18.6%	22.5%	42.6%
Q76: I feel understood and accepted by most group members	6.1%	2.3%	13.6%	24.2%	53.8%
Q78: At most meetings others attempt to help me with my problems	5.3%	6.1%	26.0%	24.4%	38.2%
Q79: I receive as much support and help as I presently desire from the group	7.2%	7.2%	14.4%	27.2%	44.0%

**Table C: Provide Instrumental Support**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Very Often</b>
Q82: I have helped another parent (e.g., by taking care of their children or giving them a ride)	29.0%	7.6%	21.4%	22.1%	19.8%
Q83: I have given things (e.g., money, clothing, or food) to another parent	34.9%	10.1%	27.9%	14.7%	12.4%
Q88: I have given information or resources (e.g., job notice, housing, information) to another parent	33.1%	5.5%	26.0%	18.1%	17.3%

**Table D: Receive Instrumental Support**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Very Often</b>
Q91: Another parent has helped me (e.g., money, clothing, or food)	45.7%	12.4%	24.0%	11.6%	6.2%
Q93: Another parent has helped me (e.g., by taking care of my children or giving me a ride)	31.5%	13.4%	28.3%	13.4%	13.4%
Q96: Another parent has given me information or resources (e.g., job notice, housing, information)	20.5%	11.8%	34.6%	18.1%	15.0%