



DATA BRIEF

Satisfaction Kiosk Findings: Human Services Clients' Experience and Overall Satisfaction

BACKGROUND

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) regularly surveys clients to determine how well services are meeting their needs.

Traditional paper surveys, while useful for collecting a large amount of feedback at once, offer less flexibility, require staff resources to tabulate the data, and can result in clients reporting their more memorable (positive or negative) experiences only. Satisfaction kiosks are now being used in addition to traditional survey methods to gather immediate feedback about clients' responses to and perceptions of their services. The kiosk presents a single question, and clients respond using buttons with smiley faces that represent Very Positive, Positive, Negative, and Very Negative satisfaction levels.

PURPOSE

This report describes the results of six surveys of clients receiving services through DHS. Half the surveys asked about overall satisfaction, while the other half explored more specific aspects of clients' service experience. This data can inform service providers about service satisfaction on particular days of the week or times of day and give insights into clients' sense of satisfaction and well-being.

METHODOLOGY

The HappyOrNot¹ kiosk is a free-standing unit that collects data at the point of service and sends automated reports the following day. (An image of the kiosk appears at the top of this brief.) A kiosk is fitted with a single question, developed by DHS and provider staff to address the providers' need for feedback.

¹ HappyOrNot kiosks are contracted with [Xavier Solutions](#).

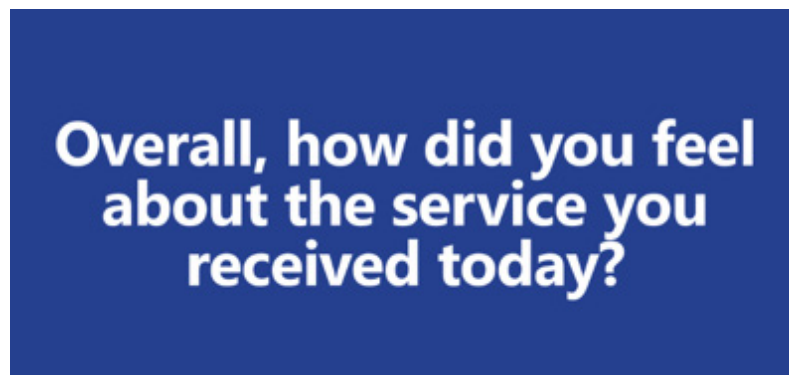
At three sites, clients were asked, “Overall, how did you feel about the service you received today?” The three sites were:

² The Allegheny Link assists County residents by providing information and referrals to people who are seniors, have a disability, are at risk of homelessness, or are parents interested in a home-visiting program. The Allegheny Link accepts walk-ins, emails and phone calls, though only walk-in clients were surveyed.

1. The [Allegheny Link](#),² where clients are connected with a variety of resources to help them stabilize their housing situation and meet related needs
2. The [Severe Weather Emergency Shelters](#)³ (both men’s and women’s locations)
3. The [412 Youth Zone](#), a downtown drop-in center where youth transitioning out of foster care or experiencing homelessness can receive a range of services that include basic needs, life skills counseling and physical/mental health treatment.

³ Severe Weather Emergency Shelters offer a sleeping area during cold winter months. One location is open every night between November 15 and March 15, while the other location is open on nights when severe weather or temperatures of 25 degrees or below are forecast.

Clients at the 412 Youth Zone were also asked questions relating to their general mood or sense of being heard by staff. Utilizing a kiosk at the entrance as well as the exit of the facility, clients were asked “How do you feel today?” (entrance) and “I feel better than when I came in” (exit). The exit kiosk was also used to ask agreement with the statement “I felt heard today by staff.”



If you have questions about DHS satisfaction surveys, please contact leslie.setlock@alleghenycountyus



FINDINGS

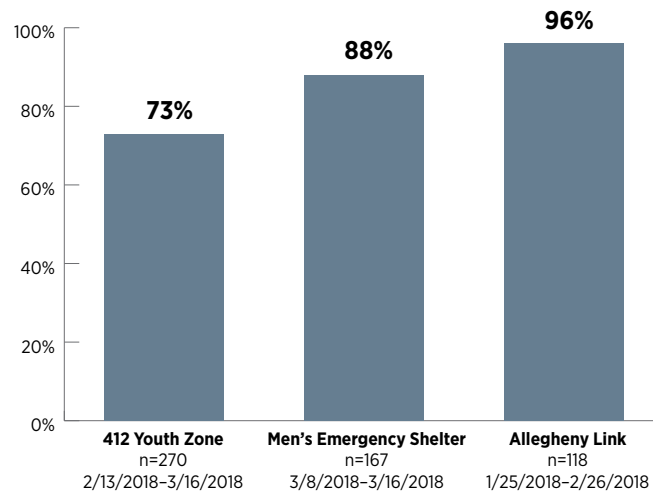
Overall Satisfaction

Clients at the three survey locations were asked, “Overall, how did you feel about the service you received today?” By frequently asking questions like this one, DHS hopes to collect more comprehensive feedback about overall satisfaction over time.

Despite different services and demographically different clientele, a majority of clients at all sites felt positive (either Very Positive or Positive) about the services they received.

FIGURE 1: Clients Responding “Positive” or “Very Positive” When Asked About Their Overall Satisfaction

“Overall, how did you feel about the service you received today?”



⁴ The Happiness Index is calculated using the formula (Very Positive x 100) + (Positive x 66.66) + (Negative x 33.33) + (Very Negative x 0)

Kiosk data allows for analysis of satisfaction at different times of day and days of the week.

A “Happiness Index,”⁴ which is a weighted average of the four survey responses, is used to calculate levels of satisfaction. Analysis of satisfaction at different times and days of the week revealed the following:

At the 412 Youth Zone:

- Highest hourly ratings at 3 p.m. (82 Happiness Index)
- Highest daily ratings on Tuesdays and Thursdays (72 Happiness Index)
- Lowest hourly ratings were at 2 p.m. (52 Happiness Index)
- Lowest daily ratings were on Saturdays (47 Happiness Index), when the Youth Zone is only open for a partial day

At the men’s **Severe Weather Emergency Shelter**, which operates overnight (7 p.m.–7 a.m.):

- Highest hourly ratings were at midnight (100 Happiness Index)
- Highest daily ratings were on Mondays (100 Happiness Index)
- Lowest hourly ratings were at 2 a.m. (67 Happiness Index)
- Lowest daily ratings were on Saturdays (67 Happiness Index)

At the **Allegheny Link**:

- Highest hourly ratings were at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. (both 100 Happiness Index)
- Highest daily ratings were on Mondays (97 Happiness Index)
- Lowest hourly ratings were at 8 a.m. (80 Happiness Index, opening time)
- Lowest daily ratings were Tuesdays (89 Happiness Index)

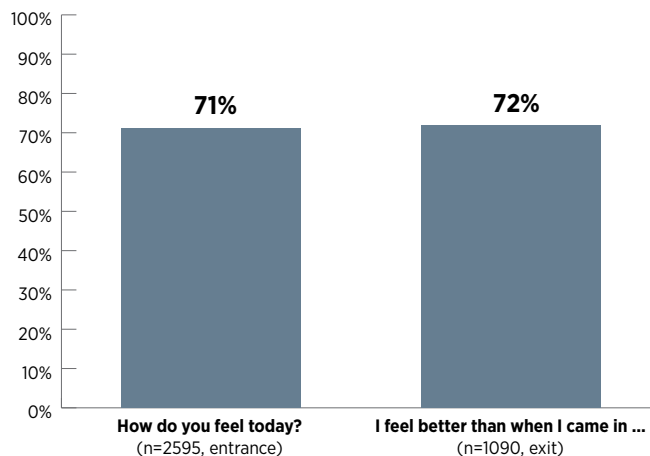
Specific Aspects of Well-Being: Youth Zone Case Study

Prior to the overall service experience question, the Youth Zone entrance and exit kiosks were used to ask clients' responses to other surveys, which featured customized questions designed with Youth Zone leadership.

Youth responded to a survey pairing. At the entrance kiosk, youth were asked "How do you feel today?" **A majority (71%) of youth identified with the positive ratings on the kiosk.** When exiting the Youth Zone, they were asked to respond to the statement "I feel better than when I came in..." **A majority of youth (72%) identified feeling better** as they were leaving the center.

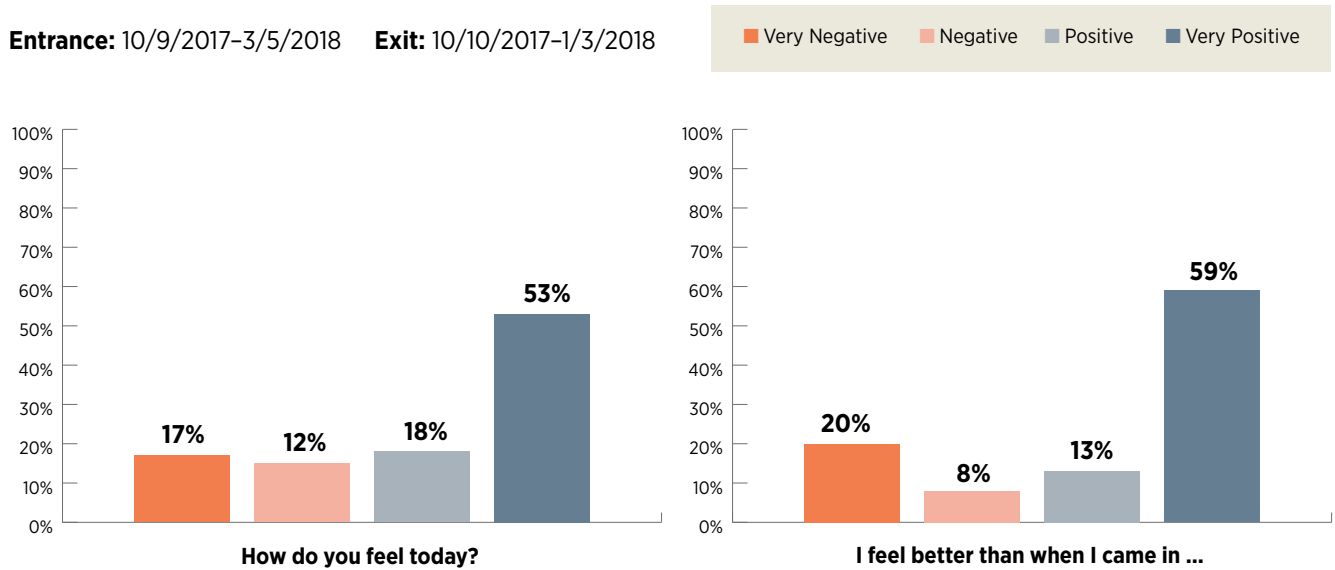
FIGURE 2: Youth Responding "Positive" or "Very Positive" to Entry and Exit Questions at the 412 Youth Zone

Entrance: 10/9/2017–3/5/2018 **Exit:** 10/10/2017–1/3/2018



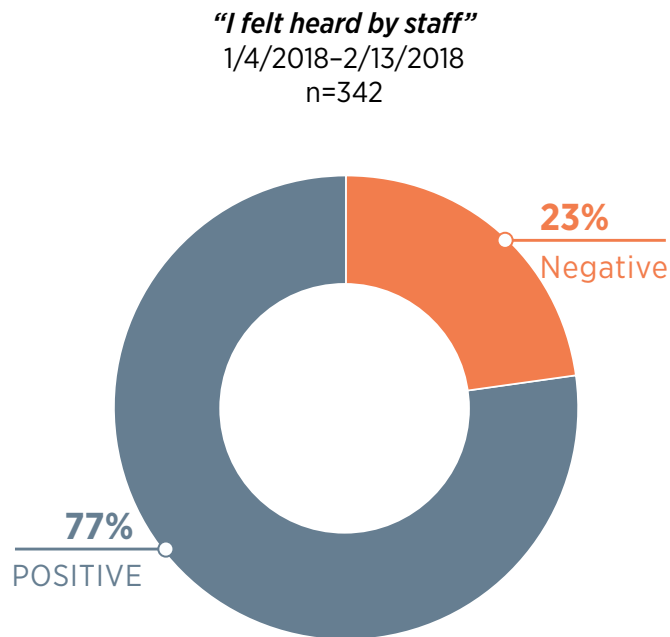
The full response distributions for the pair of youth well-being questions show similar patterns between the two questions. Youth are more likely to use the kiosks to convey strong feelings rather than more moderate ones. A little more than half the youth expressed strongly positive feelings, and about another fifth expressed strongly negative feelings, with the remainder showing less intense feelings.

FIGURE 3: Full Distribution of Youth Responses at the 412 Youth Zone



After the question above was asked, the exit kiosk question was changed to focus on a more specific aspect of the youth’s experience. Youth were asked to respond to the statement “I felt heard today by staff.” **A majority of youth (77%) identified positively** with this statement.

FIGURE 4: Youth’s Responses to an Exit Question at the 412 Youth Zone



DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

In addition to the satisfaction feedback that the kiosks provided, the presence of the kiosks provided a talking point among clients. For example, youth have mentioned their interactions with the kiosks in subsequent interactions at the 412 Youth Zone. The kiosks are durable, and clients treat them respectfully. Specific placement of the kiosks requires coordination with the staff to identify a location that is noticeable and accessible to a steady flow of traffic, but affords enough privacy to answer honestly and doesn't interfere with that same traffic flow. As DHS continues to refine the use of kiosks, these findings will inform future feedback collection.

Next steps for kiosk implementation include:

- 412 Youth Zone leadership, supported by DHS researchers, will evaluate the results of the kiosk surveys in conjunction with their own feedback/survey process, to determine how best to utilize the results.
- The question about overall satisfaction continues to be tested in various DHS program environments as part of a process to develop a more efficient way of evaluating DHS services.

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