

SECTION II(C)
SYSTEM PROFESSIONALS AND MEDIA SURVEY
ROUND I

C. System Professionals And Media Survey-Round I

METHODOLOGY

Instrument Design

Survey instruments were designed collaboratively by the National Center for State Courts and the Minnesota Supreme Court Office of the State Court Administrator, with input from the Open Hearings Steering Committee for each of the following professional categories: judges/referees, court administrators, county attorneys, public defenders, guardians ad litem (GALs), social workers, and the news media. The instruments contained a combination of forced choice and free response questions. The instruments were pre-tested using a small group of professionals before they were finalized.

Survey Distribution

Based upon the information and mailing labels received from the Minnesota Supreme Court Office of the State Court Administrator, delivery of the surveys occurred in two manners. Questionnaires were distributed directly to judges and media. Packets of surveys ranging from 10–200 were distributed to supervisors and/or directors for court administrators, county attorneys, public defenders, GALs, and social services workers. Supervisors in these five categories were asked to distribute the surveys to those personnel who were familiar with or experienced with the open hearings Pilot Project. Therefore, the number of surveys actually distributed by the supervisors may have been less than the number provided by the NCSC. The due date for completed surveys was listed as June 30, 2000.

On June 28-29, NCSC staff placed reminder phone calls to court administrators. Phone calls and e-mails to assess distribution rates for court administrators, county attorneys, public defenders, GALs, and public defenders were made on July 25, 2000 and August 9, 2000. Response to these requests for distribution information was sporadic. Based upon the information provided by the supervisors, distribution information was established. In the event that the supervisor did not respond to the request for information, no modifications were made and the total number of surveys sent was calculated into the number of surveys distributed.

Table 2 indicates the survey response rates for each professional category and the total response for all categories.

Table 2
Survey Response Rates

Professional Category	Number of Surveys Copied and Mailed	Number of Surveys Distributed	Number of Returned Surveys	Percentage of Returned Surveys (Number of Returned Surveys/Number of Surveys Distributed)
County Attorney	150	110	24	22%
Court Administrator	149	102	19	19%
GALs	430	403	107	27%
Judges	41	41	27	66%
Media	116	107	11	10%
Public Defenders	165	121	36	30%
Social Services Workers	120	94	43	46%
Total	1171	978	267	27%

Analysis

Of the 1,171 surveys that were mailed and the 978 distributed, 267 were returned as of 6/30/2000, the specified cutoff date for return. Of the 267 returned surveys, 73 of the respondents answered that they had never participated in a child protection hearing that had been opened to the public and were subsequently eliminated from the analysis. Most of those eliminated were GALs and social workers (78%). Consequently the analysis was based on 194 useable surveys.

The responses to each question were cross tabulated with Type of Professional to detect differences in response between the different types of professionals surveyed. A Chi-square statistic was used to test for statistical significance. Since the content of the media survey was much different than the other surveys, a separate analysis was conducted for the responses to this survey. Thematic responses were collected and entered into a separate database. For a complete review of thematic responses to the Round I surveys, see *Appendix C-1*.

RESULTS

Description of Respondents

- *Distribution of respondents by type of profession*

Type of Profession	Frequency	Percent
Judge/Referee	27	13.9
County Attorney	20	10.3
Court Administrator	20	10.3
Public Defender	30	15.5
Guardian Ad Litem	56	28.9
Social Worker	41	21.1
Total	194	100

- *Average number of years of service by type of profession*

Type of Profession	Frequency	Average Number of Years of Service
Judge/Referee	27	8.2
County Attorney	20	11.8
Court Administrator	20	11.1
Public Defender	29	11.7
Guardian Ad Litem	55	4.5
Social Worker	40	8.5
Total	191	8.4

Note: Guardians Ad Litem (GALs) had (statistically) significantly fewer number of years of service in their profession than any of the other professions. No other differences were statistically significant.

- *Number of years professionally involved in child protection matters*

Number of Years		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Less than 1 year	Count	2	0	1	2	10	1	16
	%	7.4	0.0	5.0	6.7	18.2	2.4	8.3
1 to 2 years	Count	5	5	1	2	15	8	36
	%	18.5	25.0	5.0	6.7	27.3	19.5	18.7
3 to 5 years	Count	5	4	6	3	12	11	41
	%	18.5	20.0	30.0	10.0	21.8	26.8	21.2
5 or more years	Count	15	11	12	23	18	21	100
	%	55.6	55.0	60.0	76.7	32.7	51.2	51.8
Total	Count	27	20	20	30	55	41	193
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Guardians Ad Litem (GALs) had (statistically) significantly fewer numbers of years of involvement in child protection matters than any of the other professions. No other differences were statistically significant.

Impact of Open Hearings/Open Records in Child Protection Proceedings

- *Length of Hearings*

Length of Hearings		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Longer hearings	Count	0	1	0	6	0	2	9
	%	0.0	5.9	0.0	21.4	0.0	5.9	5.8
No change	Count	23	16	16	22	36	32	145
	%	100.0	94.1	100.0	78.6	100.0	94.1	94.2
Total	Count	23	17	16	28	36	34	154
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The large majority of all professionals thought that there was no change in the length of CHIPS hearings since the advent of the open hearings/records policy. However, public defenders were significantly more likely than any of the other professionals to feel that hearings had become longer.

- **Court Resources**

Use of Resources		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Increased	Count	7	3	9	11	1	3	34
	%	43.8	17.6	47.4	39.3	4.3	9.4	25.2
No change	Count	9	14	10	17	22	29	101
	%	56.3	82.4	52.6	60.7	95.7	90.6	74.8
Total	Count	16	17	19	28	23	32	135
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of every professional category thought that there had been no change in the use of resources. However, judges, court administrators, and public defenders were significantly more likely than the other professions to observe an increase in the use of court resources (staff time, court space, etc.).

- **Quality of child protection hearings (issues discussed, decisions made, respect for participants, etc.)**

	QUALITY	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Increased	17	8.8	10.7
	Decreased	32	16.5	20.1
	No change	110	56.7	69.2
	Total	159	82.0	100.0
Missing	Don't know	31	16.0	
	System	4	2.1	
	Total	35	18.0	
Total		194	100.0	

Note: There were no statistically significant differences among the professionals. The majority of respondents noted no change in the quality of hearings. Among the minority of respondents who noted change, responses that the quality of hearings had decreased were nearly twice as likely as responses that the quality had increased.

- **Services (foster care, drug and alcohol treatment, anger management classes, etc.) offered to children and families**

SERVICES	Frequency	Percent
Increased	5	3.7
No change	131	96.3
Total	136	100.0

Note: There were no statistically significant differences among the professionals. The large majority of respondents noted no change in the quality of services and the very few who noted change felt that services had improved.

- *Number of people in the courtroom “audience” for any given case*

Number of People in Courtroom Audience	Frequency	Percent
No Additional People	83	46.9
1 to 5 Additional People	85	48.0
6 or More Additional People	9	5.1
Total	177	100.0

Note: There were no statistically significant differences among the professionals. A majority of respondents noted that there were additional people in the courtroom since the advent of open hearings/records.

- *How often are “audience” members asked to identify themselves?*

How often?	Frequency	Percent
Always	58	30.9
Sometimes	64	34.0
Rarely	37	19.7
Never	29	15.4
Total	188	100.0

Note: There were no statistically significant differences among the professionals. Nearly a third of the respondents reported that members of the audience are always asked to identify themselves while another third noted that this occurs during at least some of the hearings.

- *On average, how often does the extended family attend open hearings?*

How often?		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Always	Count	1	0	1	0	0	2	4
	%	3.8	0.0	5.6	0.0	0.0	5.0	2.1
Sometimes	Count	20	18	12	29	40	29	148
	%	76.9	90.0	66.7	100.0	74.1	72.5	79.1
Rarely	Count	4	2	5	0	12	9	32
	%	15.4	10.0	27.8	0.0	22.2	22.5	17.1
Never	Count	1	0	0	0	2	0	3
	%	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7	0.0	1.6
Total	Count	26	20	18	29	54	40	187
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professionals noted that extended families always or at least sometime attend open hearings. County attorneys and public defenders were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that the extended family attends open hearings at least sometimes.

- *On average, how often does the media attend open hearings?*

How often?		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Always	Count	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	%	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
Sometimes	Count	5	1	1	2	1	3	13
	%	20.0	5.0	5.3	7.1	2.0	7.5	7.2
Rarely	Count	9	10	6	18	9	16	68
	%	36.0	50.0	31.6	64.3	18.4	40.0	37.6
Never	Count	11	8	12	8	39	21	99
	%	44.0	40.0	63.2	28.6	79.6	52.5	54.7
Total	Count	25	20	19	28	49	40	181
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professionals noted that the media rarely or never attends open hearings. Judges were significantly more likely than other professionals to report that the media “sometimes” attends the hearings. Court administrators and GALs were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that media “never” attend open hearings.

- *On average, how often do foster parents attend open hearings?*

How often?		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Always	Count	4	3	0	6	1	4	18
	%	15.4	15.8	0.0	20.7	2.0	10.0	9.8
Sometimes	Count	15	11	12	14	24	23	99
	%	57.7	57.9	63.2	48.3	47.1	57.5	53.8
Rarely	Count	6	5	7	8	12	11	49
	%	23.1	26.3	36.8	27.6	23.5	27.5	26.6
Never	Count	1	0	0	1	14	2	18
	%	3.8	0.0	0.0	3.4	27.5	5.0	9.8
Total	Count	26	19	19	29	51	40	184
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories except GALs reported that foster parents always or sometimes attend open hearings. By a slim majority, GALs reported that foster parents rarely or never attend the hearings. The responses of the GALs were significantly different than the responses of the other professionals.

- *On average, how often does the faith community attend open hearings?*

How often?		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Always	Count	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.6
Sometimes	Count	6	5	1	11	2	3	28
	%	26.1	25.0	5.6	39.3	4.3	7.9	16.1
Rarely	Count	11	8	9	13	11	12	64
	%	47.8	40.0	50.0	46.4	23.4	31.6	36.8
Never	Count	6	7	8	4	34	22	81
	%	26.1	35.0	44.4	14.3	72.3	57.9	46.6
Total	Count	23	20	18	28	47	38	174
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that representatives from the faith community rarely or never attend open hearings. Public defenders were significantly more likely to report that representatives from the faith community “sometimes” attend open hearings.

- *On average, how often do service providers attend open hearings?*

How often?		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Always	Count	9	4	4	7	7	0	31
	%	37.5	20.0	23.5	25.0	13.2	0.0	17.1
Sometimes	Count	11	10	9	18	27	27	102
	%	45.8	50.0	52.9	64.3	50.9	69.2	56.4
Rarely	Count	3	5	4	3	14	8	37
	%	12.5	25.0	23.5	10.7	26.4	20.5	20.4
Never	Count	1	1	0	0	5	4	11
	%	4.2	5.0	0.0	0.0	9.4	10.3	6.1
Total	Count	24	20	17	28	53	39	181
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that service providers “sometimes” or “always” attend open hearings. Judges were significantly more likely to report that service providers “always” attend open hearings, while public defenders and social workers were significantly more likely to “sometimes” attend open hearings than the other professionals.

- *Professional's ability to work with other case participants since the advent of open hearings/record*

- *Parents*

Ability to work with Parents		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Easier	Count	2	0	1	1	2	2	8
	%	8.3	0.0	5.9	3.7	4.7	5.3	4.8
More difficult	Count	3	4	0	10	0	5	22
	%	12.5	21.1	0.0	37.0	0.0	13.2	13.1
No change	Count	19	15	16	16	41	31	138
	%	79.2	78.9	94.1	59.3	95.3	81.6	82.1
Total	Count	24	19	17	27	43	38	168
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with parents since the advent of open hearings/records. Of the minority of respondents that noted change, respondents were more than twice as likely to report that it had become more difficult to work with parents than they were to report that it had become easier. Public defenders were significantly more likely to report that it had become more difficult to work with parents.

- *Children*

Ability to work with Children		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Easier	Count	2	0	1	2	1	1	7
	%	8.3	0.0	5.9	7.4	2.3	2.6	4.2
More difficult	Count	3	1	0	9	2	3	18
	%	12.5	5.3	0.0	33.3	4.7	7.9	10.7
No change	Count	19	18	16	16	40	34	143
	%	79.2	94.7	94.1	59.3	93.0	89.5	85.1
Total	Count	24	19	17	27	43	38	168
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with children since the advent of open hearings/records. Of the minority of respondents that noted change, respondents were more than twice as likely to report that it had become more difficult to work with children than they were to report that it had become easier. Public defenders were significantly more likely to report that it had become more difficult to work with children.

• **Judges**

		Professional Category					
Ability to work with Judges		County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Easier	Count	0	0	0	1	2	3
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	5.4	2.1
More difficult	Count	1	1	8	1	1	12
	%	5.3	5.3	29.6	2.4	2.7	8.3
No change	Count	18	18	19	40	34	129
	%	94.7	94.7	70.4	95.2	91.9	89.6
Total	Count	19	19	27	42	37	144
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with judges since the advent of open hearings/records. Public defenders were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that it had become more difficult to work with judges.

• **County Attorneys**

		Professional Category					
Ability to work with County Attorneys		Judges	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Easier	Count	2	0	0	2	2	6
	%	8.3	0.0	0.0	4.9	5.3	4.0
More difficult	Count	2	0	6	1	0	9
	%	8.3	0.0	22.2	2.4	0.0	6.0
No change	Count	20	19	21	38	36	134
	%	83.3	100.0	77.8	92.7	94.7	89.9
Total	Count	24	19	27	41	38	149
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with county attorneys since the advent of open hearings/records. Public defenders were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that it had become more difficult to work with county attorneys.

- **Court Administrators**

Ability to work with Court Administrators	Frequency	Percent
Easier	4	2.8
More difficult	6	4.1
No change	135	93.1
Total	145	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with court administrators with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Public Defenders**

Ability to work with Public Defenders		Professional Category					
		Judges	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Easier	Count	2	0	0	1	2	5
	%	8.3	0.0	0.0	2.4	5.3	3.5
More difficult	Count	2	3	0	0	0	5
	%	8.3	15.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5
No change	Count	20	16	19	41	36	132
	%	83.3	84.2	100.0	97.6	94.7	93.0
Total	Count	24	19	19	42	38	142
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with public defenders since the advent of open hearings/records. County attorneys were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that it had become more difficult to work with public defenders.

- **Guardians Ad Litem (GALs)**

Ability to work with GALs	Frequency	Percent
Easier	4	3.3
More difficult	8	6.5
No change	111	90.2
Total	123	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with GALs with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Social Workers**

Ability to work with Social Workers	Frequency	Percent
Easier	8	6.2
More difficult	9	7.0
No change	112	86.8
Total	129	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in their ability to work with social workers with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Content changes since the advent of open hearings/records**

- **Petitions**

Content Changes?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	38	26.2
No	107	73.8
Total	145	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the content of petitions with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Answers**

		Professional Category						
Content Changes?		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Yes	Count	1	2	0	3	1	9	16
	%	6.7	16.7	0.0	13.6	3.4	28.1	13.3
No	Count	14	10	10	19	28	23	104
	%	93.3	83.3	100.0	86.4	96.6	71.9	86.7
Total	Count	15	12	10	22	29	32	120
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in the content of “answers” since the advent of open hearings/records. Social workers were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that the content of answers had changed.

- **Exhibits**

Content Changes?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	24	17.9
No	110	82.1
Total	134	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the content of exhibits with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **GAL Reports**

Content Changes?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	17.1
No	121	82.9
Total	146	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the content of GAL reports with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Social Worker Reports**

Content Changes?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	37	25.3
No	109	74.7
Total	146	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the content of social worker reports with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Courtroom Statements**

		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
Yes	Count	8	5	2	11	3	11	40
	%	36.4	27.8	18.2	45.8	9.4	31.4	28.2
No	Count	14	13	9	13	29	24	102
	%	63.6	72.2	81.8	54.2	90.6	68.6	71.8
Total	Count	22	18	11	24	32	35	142
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there was no change in the content of courtroom statements since the advent of open hearings/records. Public Defenders were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that the content of courtroom statements had changed.

- **Judge's Statements**

Content Changes?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	28	23.0
No	94	77.0
Total	122	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the content of judge's statements with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Changes in the accountability of child protection system professionals to children involved in child protection matters since the advent of open hearings/records**

- **Judge**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	21	15.1
Decrease	4	2.9
No Change	114	82.0
Total	139	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of judges with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **County Attorney**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	19	14.0
Decrease	3	2.2
No Change	114	83.8
Total	136	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of county attorneys with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Public Defender**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	15	11.1
Decrease	2	1.5
No Change	118	87.4
Total	135	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of public defenders with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Court Administrator**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	20	15.3
Decrease	2	1.5
No Change	109	83.2
Total	131	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of court administrators with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Social Workers**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	25	18.2
Decrease	3	2.2
No Change	109	79.6
Total	137	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of social workers with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **GALs**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	21	15.1
Decrease	2	1.4
No Change	116	83.5
Total	139	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of GALs with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Service Providers**

Change in Accountability?	Frequency	Percent
Increase	19	14.4
Decrease	2	1.5
No Change	111	84.1
Total	132	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there has been no change in the accountability of service providers with no significant differences between the professional categories.

- *Changes in court procedure since the advent of open hearings/records*
 - *Frequency of issuance of protective orders restricting the public's access to court file records that otherwise would have been accessible to the public under the open hearings and records*

Frequency of Protective Orders		Professional Category						Total
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	
Always	Count	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	%	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
Sometimes	Count	0	0	1	2		4	7
	%	0.0	0.0	5.6	8.7		12.5	4.7
Rarely	Count	17	11	11	14	6	18	77
	%	65.4	61.1	61.1	60.9	18.2	56.3	51.3
Never	Count	9	7	5	7	27	10	65
	%	34.6	38.9	27.8	30.4	81.8	31.3	43.3
Total	Count	26	18	18	23	33	32	150
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that courts have rarely or never issued protective orders since the advent of open hearings/records. GALs were significantly more likely than the other professionals to report that courts "never" issue protective orders.

- *Have any child protection hearings been closed to the public as a result of the open hearings Pilot Project?*

CHIPS hearings ever closed?		Professional Category						Total
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	
No	Count	19	16	8	19	51	28	141
	%	73.1	80.0	50.0	67.9	96.2	68.3	76.6
Yes	Count	7	4	8	9	2	13	43
	%	26.9	20.0	50.0	32.1	3.8	31.7	23.4
Total	Count	26	20	16	28	53	41	184
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that courts have rarely or never closed CHIPS hearings to the public since the advent of open hearings/records. Interestingly, court administrators were significantly more likely than other professionals to report that courts closed hearings. While only 27% of the judges reported having closed a hearing, court administrators split 50/50 as to whether any hearings had been closed.

- *Are there particular types of cases (such as those involving allegations of sexual abuse) that are more likely to be closed to the public than others?*

Some cases more likely to be closed than others?	Frequency	Percent
No	64	39.3
Yes	99	60.7
Total	163	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that there were particular types of cases that were more likely to be closed than others. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- *Media Treatment of Open Hearings/Records*
 - *In your geographic area, how often do you see or hear news stories regarding Minnesota child protection cases?*

		Professional Category						Total
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	
How often do you see or hear news stories about CHIPs cases?	Count							
	%							
Sometimes	Count	5	1	3	9	16	10	44
	%	20.0	5.0	15.0	32.1	30.2	24.4	23.5
Rarely	Count	12	11	14	15	34	28	114
	%	48.0	55.0	70.0	53.6	64.2	68.3	61.0
Never	Count	7	7	3	4	3	3	27
	%	28.0	35.0	15.0	14.3	5.7	7.3	14.4
None of the above	Count	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	%	4.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1
Total	Count	25	20	20	28	53	41	187
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported that they rarely or never saw or heard news stories regarding Minnesota CHIPs cases. Judges and county attorneys were significantly more likely than the other professional categories to report that they “never” saw or heard news stories about CHIPs cases.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPS cases, have you seen information presented about the types of child protection cases reported or filed in Minnesota? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPS cases.***

News stories about types of CHIPS cases?	Frequency	Percent
No	25	31.6
Yes	54	68.4
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported having seen or heard news stories that presented information about the types of CHIPS cases reported or filed in Minnesota. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPS cases, have you seen information presented about the number of child protection cases reported or filed in Minnesota? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPS cases.***

News stories about number of CHIPS cases?	Frequency	Percent
No	38	48.1
Yes	41	51.9
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of respondents reported having seen or heard news stories that presented information about the number of CHIPS cases reported or filed in Minnesota. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPS cases, have you seen information presented about the average caseload of a Minnesota child protection worker? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPS cases.***

News stories about average caseload?	Frequency	Percent
No	60	75.9
Yes	19	24.1
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported having not seen nor heard news stories that presented information about the average caseload of a Minnesota child protection worker. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPs cases, have you seen information presented about the availability and cost of foster care in Minnesota? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPs cases.***

News stories about availability and cost of foster care?	Frequency	Percent
No	53	67.1
Yes	26	32.9
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported having not seen nor heard news stories that presented information about the availability and cost of foster care in Minnesota. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPs cases, have you seen information presented about the average length of a child's stay in foster care in Minnesota? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPs cases.***

News stories about average length of stay?	Frequency	Percent
No	62	73.4
Yes	17	26.6
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported having not seen nor heard news stories that presented information about the average length of a child's stay in foster care in Minnesota. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPs cases, have you seen information presented about the availability of services (such as anger management classes or alcohol and drug abuse treatment) for children and parents in Minnesota child protection cases? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPs cases.***

News stories about availability of services?	Frequency	Percent
No	62	78.5
Yes	17	21.5
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported having not seen nor heard news stories that presented information about the availability of services for children and parents in Minnesota child protection cases. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- ***In the media coverage given to CHIPs cases, have you seen information presented about the availability of funding for services for children and parents in Minnesota child protection cases? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPs cases.***

News stories about availability of funding for services?	Frequency	Percent
No	57	72.2
Yes	22	27.8
Total	79	100.0

Note: The majority of all professional categories reported having not seen nor heard news stories that presented information about the availability of funding for services for children and parents in Minnesota child protection cases. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Have local media responsibly covered child protection stories that have been opened to the public as a result of the Open Hearings Pilot Project? Excludes respondents who reported never having heard or seen news stories about Minnesota CHIPs cases.**

Media responsibly covered CHIPs cases?	Frequency	Percent
No	54	39.7
Yes	82	60.3
Total	136	100.0

Note: The majority of respondents reported that local media responsibly covered child protection stories that have been opened to the public as a result of the Open Hearings Pilot Project. There were no significant differences between the professional categories.

- **Should greater efforts be made to inform the general public about the open child protection hearings and records policy?**

Increase efforts to inform public about open hearings/records?		Professional Category						
		Judge/Referee	County Attorney	Court Administrator	Public Defender	Guardian Ad Litem	Social Worker	Total
No, greater efforts should not be made	Count	16	8	13	21	17	16	91
	%	66.7	47.1	72.2	75.0	37.0	44.4	53.8
Yes, the media should make greater efforts	Count	5	1	4	2	8	11	31
	%	20.8	5.9	22.2	7.1	17.4	30.6	18.3
Yes, judicial system personnel should make greater efforts	Count	0	0	0	3	2	1	6
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.7	4.3	2.8	3.6
Yes, both should make greater efforts	Count	3	8	1	2	19	8	41
	%	12.5	47.1	5.6	7.1	41.3	22.2	24.3
Total	Count	24	17	18	28	46	36	169
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: A slight majority of respondents believe that greater efforts should not be made to inform the general public about the open child protection hearings and records policy but this varied by type of professional. Judges, court administrators, and public defenders felt that greater efforts should not be made by large majorities. On the other hand, most county attorneys, GALs, and social workers felt that greater efforts should be made. Of those who felt that greater efforts should be made, most felt that either the media alone or the media in collaboration with the judicial system, rather than the judicial system alone, should make greater efforts to inform the public.

Media Results

Description of Respondents

- *Distribution of respondents by type of media*

Type of Media	Frequency	Percent
TV	1	9.1
Newspaper	9	81.8
Watch	1	9.1
Total	11	100.0

Experience with Open Hearings/Records

- *Since June 1998, has your organization sent a representative to any child protection hearings that have been opened to the public as a result of the Open Hearings Pilot Project?*

Sent a representative to open hearing?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	36.4
No	4	63.6
Total	11	100.0

- *Since June 1998, approximately how many news stories or articles relating to child protection issues has your media organization published or issued?*

Number of stories/articles	Frequency	Percent
0	3	27.3
1	1	9.1
3	1	9.1
4	1	9.1
6	1	9.1
20	1	9.1
25	1	9.1
30	2	18.2
Total	11	100.0

- *Do you believe that your organization has responsibly covered child protection stories that have been opened to the public as a result of the Open Hearings Pilot Project?*

Responsible coverage by your media organization?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9	90.0
No	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

- *Do you believe that other media organizations have responsibly covered child protection stories that have been opened to the public as a result of the Open Hearings Pilot Project?*

Responsible coverage by other media organizations?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	10	100.0
Total	10	100.0

Impact of Open Hearings/Open Records in Child Protection Proceedings on the Media

- *Has opening child protection proceedings and records to the public impacted your ability to report on child protection cases?*

Impact	Frequency	Percent
Positive	6	54.5
No Change	3	27.3
Don't Know	2	18.2
Total	11	100.0

Note: The majority of the media respondents felt that open hearings/records had a positive impact on their ability to report on CHIPs cases.

- *In general, do you think that opening child protection hearings and records to the public has impacted the amount of attention that media organizations pay to child protection issues and policies, such as the level of funding for services for children involved in child protection proceedings; the types of services available to children and parents; or the nature, scope, and purpose of child protection matters, etc.?*

Impact on media attention to child protection issues	Frequency	Percent
Increased Attention	5	45.5
No Change	4	36.4
Don't Know	2	18.2
Total	11	100.0

Note: The majority of the media respondents felt that open hearings/records had either led to increased attention to child protection cases or that there had been no change since the advent of open hearings/records.

- ***Has greater access to child protection hearings and records changed how you cover your “beat” or changed the kinds of stories on which you report?***

Changed how “child protection beat” is covered?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	27.3
No	8	72.7
Total	11	100.0

Note: The majority of the media respondents felt that open hearings/records had not changed how they covered their “beat” or changed the kinds of stories on which they report.

- ***Do you believe opening child protection hearings and records to the public has impacted the quality of child protection hearings, such as issues discussed, decisions made, respect for participants, etc.?***

Impact on quality of child protection hearings	Frequency	Percent
Quality Increased	1	9.1
No Change	1	9.1
Don't Know	9	81.8
Total	11	100.0

- ***In general, do you believe the services offered or available to children and families (such as foster care, drug and alcohol treatment, or anger management classes) have been impacted by opening child protection hearings and records to the public?***

Impact on services to children and families	Frequency	Percent
Services Decreased	1	9.1
No Change	4	36.4
Don't Know	6	54.5
Total	11	100.0

- *Based upon your experience, how often do the following “audience” members attend open hearings?*

		Audience Member Category				
How often?		Extended Family	Media	Foster Parents	Faith Community	Service Providers
Always	Count	2	0	0	0	4
	%	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	36.4
Sometimes	Count	4	1	2	0	2
	%	36.4	10.0	18.2	0.0	18.2
Rarely	Count	0	5	2	3	0
	%	0.0	50.0	18.2	27.3	0.0
No Basis for Opinion	Count	5	4	7	8	5
	%	45.4	40.0	63.6	72.7	45.4
Total	Count	11	10	11	11	11
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: With such a large proportion of the already small number of media respondents answering “No basis for opinion,” it is not possible to draw conclusions about these questions.

- *In general, how has opening child protection hearings and records to the public impacted your ability to work with the following case participants?*

		Case Participant							
Ability to work with case participant		Parents	Children	Judges	Guardian Ad Litem	Public Defender	County Attorneys	Social Workers	Court Administrator
Easier	Count	3	2	6	5	5	6	3	6
	%	27.3	18.2	54.5	45.4	45.4	54.5	27.3	54.5
More difficult	Count	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
No change	Count	3	3	1	1	1	1	4	2
	%	27.3	27.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	36.4	18.2
No basis of Opinion	Count	5	6	4	5	4	4	4	3
	%	45.4	54.5	36.4	45.4	36.4	36.4	36.4	27.3
Total	Count	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: With such a large proportion of the already small number of media respondents answering “No basis for opinion,” it is not possible to draw conclusions about these questions. However, it can be noted that most respondents that noted change thought that it had become easier to work with most case participants.

- *In your opinion, how has opening child protection hearings and records to the public impacted the following child protection system professionals' accountability to children involved in child protection matters?*

Impact on Accountability		Type of Professional						
		Judges	County Attorneys	Public Defender	Court Administrator	Social Workers	Guardians Ad Litem	Service Providers
Increased accountability	Count	5	5	5	4	3	4	4
	%	45.4	45.4	45.4	36.4	27.3	36.4	36.4
No change	Count	0	1	0	1	2	0	1
	%	0.0	1.9	0.0	1.9	18.2	0.0	1.9
Don't Know	Count	6	5	6	6	6	7	6
	%	54.5	45.4	54.5	54.5	54.5	63.6	54.5
Total	Count	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: With such a large proportion of the already small number of media respondents answering “No basis for opinion,” it is not possible to draw conclusions about these questions. However, it can be noted that most respondents that noted change thought that accountability of the professionals had increased.

- *Based upon your experience, how frequently have judges issued protective orders restricting the public's access to court file records that would otherwise have been accessible to the public under the open hearings and records Pilot Project?*

How frequently have protective orders been issued?	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	1	9.1
Rarely	6	54.5
Don't Know	4	36.4
Total	11	100.0

- *Have any child protection hearings in which you have been involved since June 1998 been closed to the public by order of the presiding judge?*

CHIPs hearings closed?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	33.3
No	6	66.7
Total	9	100.0

- *Are there particular types of cases (such as those involving allegations of sexual abuse) that you believe a judge would be more likely to close to the public than other types of cases?*

Some cases more likely to be closed than others?	Frequency	Percent
No	2	28.6
Yes	5	71.4
Total	7	100.0

- *Have you or anyone from your news organization ever had difficulty in accessing records or documents from child protection court files that are a part of the open hearings Pilot Project?*

Difficulty in accessing records or documents?	Frequency	Percent
No	5	55.6
Yes	4	44.4
Total	9	100.0

- *In your geographic area, how often do you see or hear news stories regarding Minnesota child protection cases?*

How frequently do you see or hear news stories about CHIPs cases?	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	2	18.2
Rarely	8	72.7
Never	1	9.1
Total	11	100.0

- *If in Question 17 you indicated that you have seen media coverage or news stories regarding Minnesota child protection cases, in any of those stories have you seen information about the following?*

Seen information about child protection topic in media?		Type of Child Protection Topic						
		Types of CHIPS Cases	Number of CHIPS Cases	Average Caseload of Child Protection Worker	Availability and Cost of Foster Care	Average Length-of-Stay in Foster Care	Availability of Services for Parents and Children	Availability of Funding for Services for Parents and Children
No	Count	5	4	4	3	4	4	3
	%	45.5	36.4	36.4	27.3	36.4	36.4	27.3
Yes	Count	4	5	5	6	5	5	6
	%	36.4	45.5	45.5	54.5	45.5	45.5	54.5
Missing	Count	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	%	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2
Total	Count	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

- *Should greater efforts be made to inform the general public about the open child protection hearings and records policy?*

Increase efforts to inform public about open hearings/records?	Frequency	Percent
No, greater efforts should not be made	1	9.1
Yes, the media should make greater efforts	2	18.2
Yes, judicial system personnel should make greater efforts	0	0.0
Yes, both should make greater efforts	8	72.7
Total	11	100.0