



High Quality Parenting Task Force Presentation to Interim Committee

September 12, 2023

HB 21-1101

Visitation Requirements Codified and Creation of Task Force

- At shelter hearings, court is required to enter visitation orders if visitation in child's best interest.
- Visitation must occur within 72 hours unless parties consent otherwise.
- Absent emergency orders, parents are entitled to a hearing prior to an **ongoing** reduction in quantity or quality of visitation.
- If emergency orders enter, hearing must occur within 72 hours unless waived.
- Does not apply if protection order is in place that prohibits contact.

What issues will be easiest to reach consensus



**IMPACT ON
CHILDREN
OF MORE
FREQUENT
AND HIGHER
QUALITY
FAMILY TIME**

Stronger attachments

Improved well-being

Fewer behavioral problems

Lower levels of depression

Better adjustment

More likely to reunify

IMPACT ON PARENTS OF MORE FREQUENT AND HIGHER QUALITY FAMILY TIME



Increased engagement



Greater likelihood of reunification



Expedited permanency



Lower chance of disrupted reunification



Even for youth who don't return home, more meaningful connections

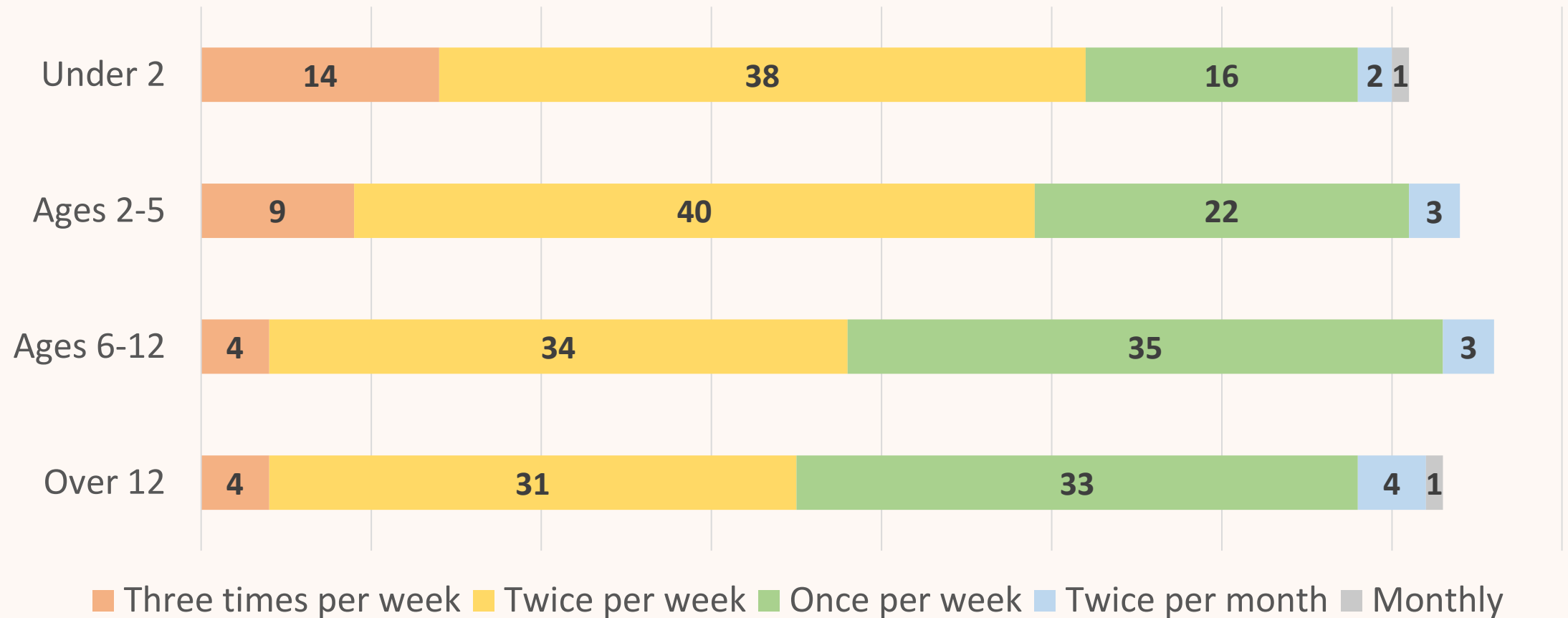


Improved emotional well-being



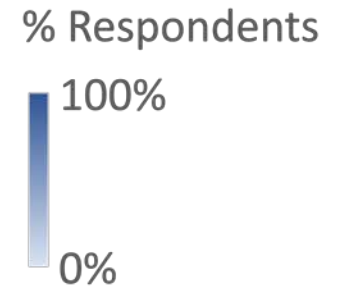
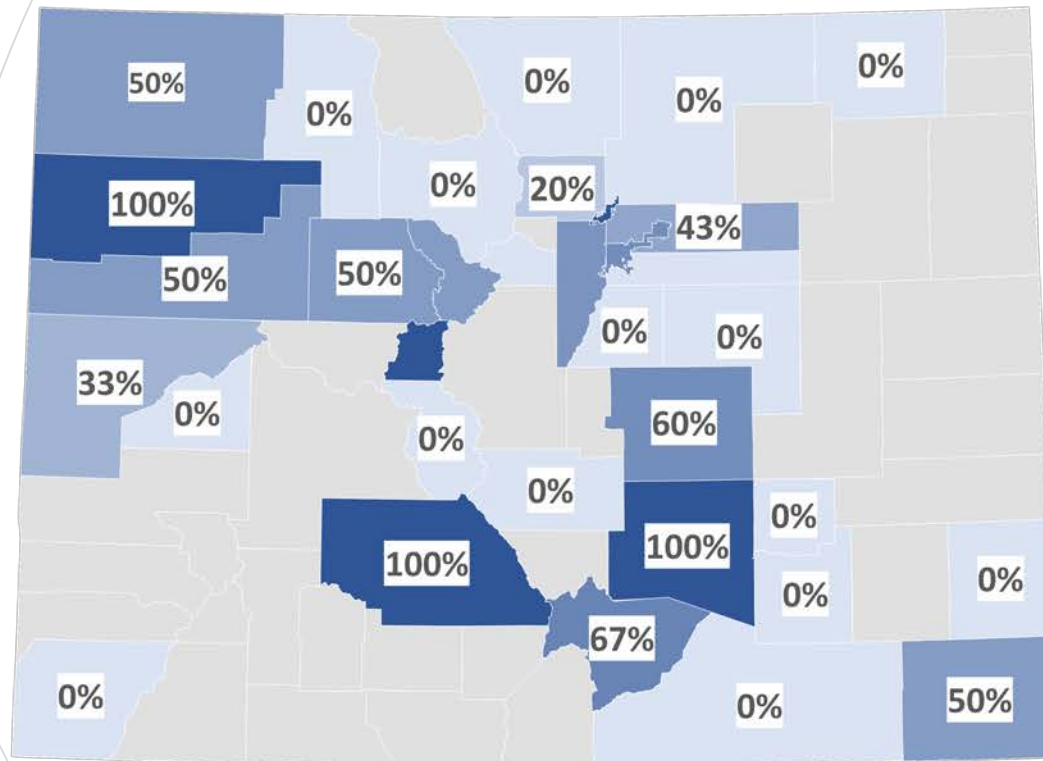
FAMILY TIME ACROSS COLORADO

In your county, in the first few months of a case, how frequently does in-person parenting time occur for children in each age group, on average?

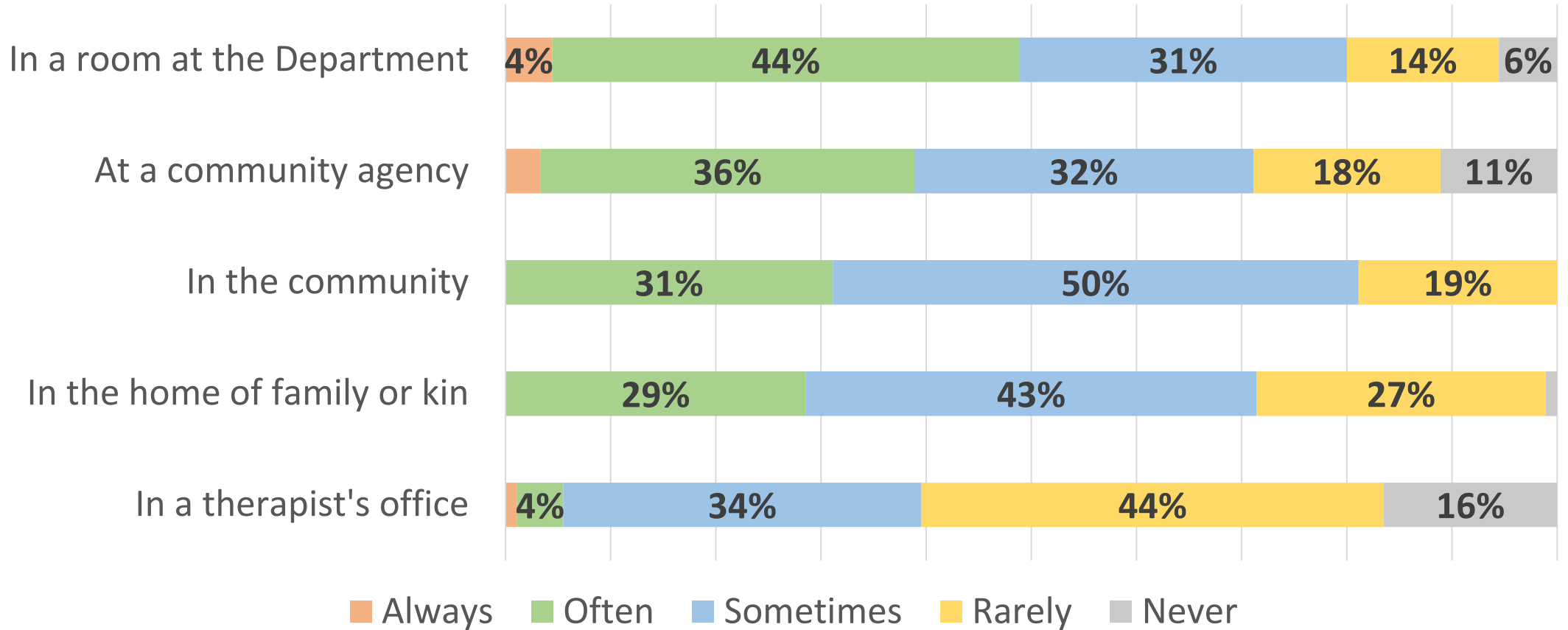


In your county, how often do kin and/or family members or other non-professional third parties supervise visits?

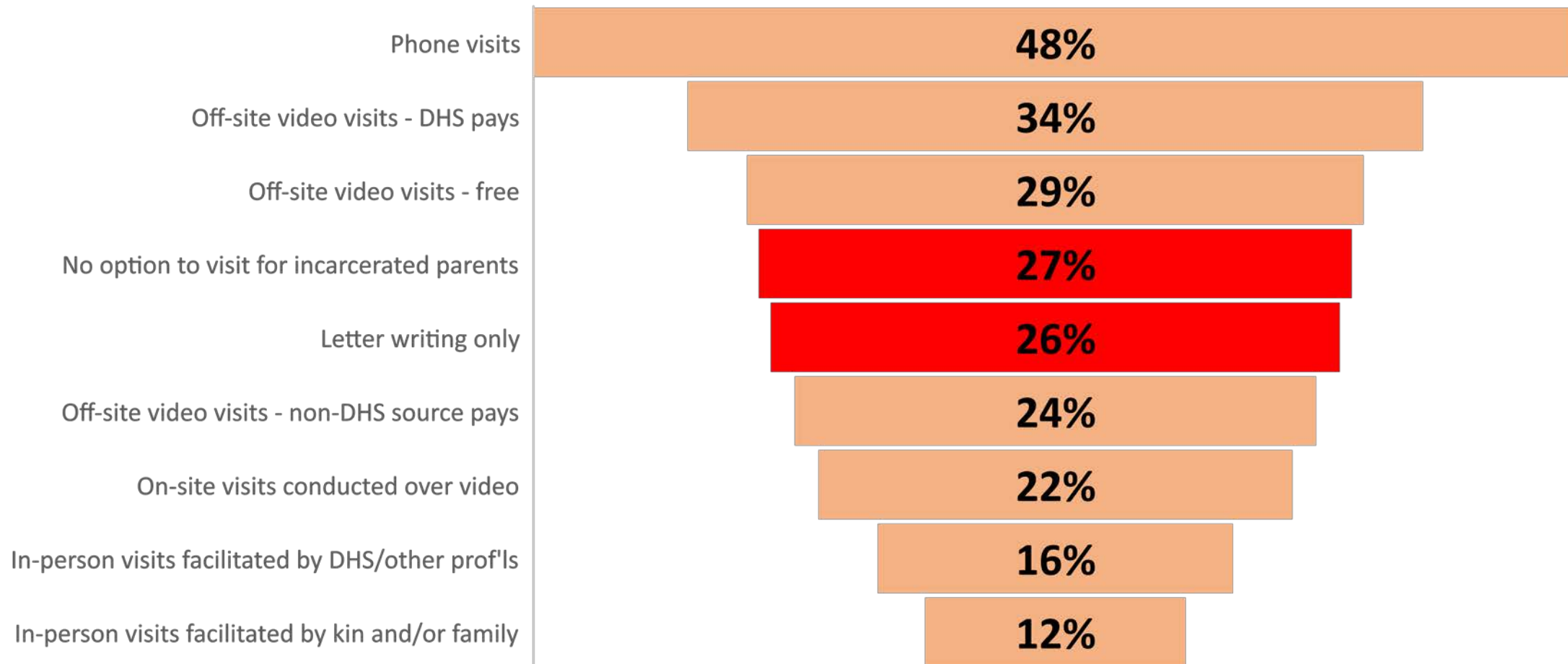
Often



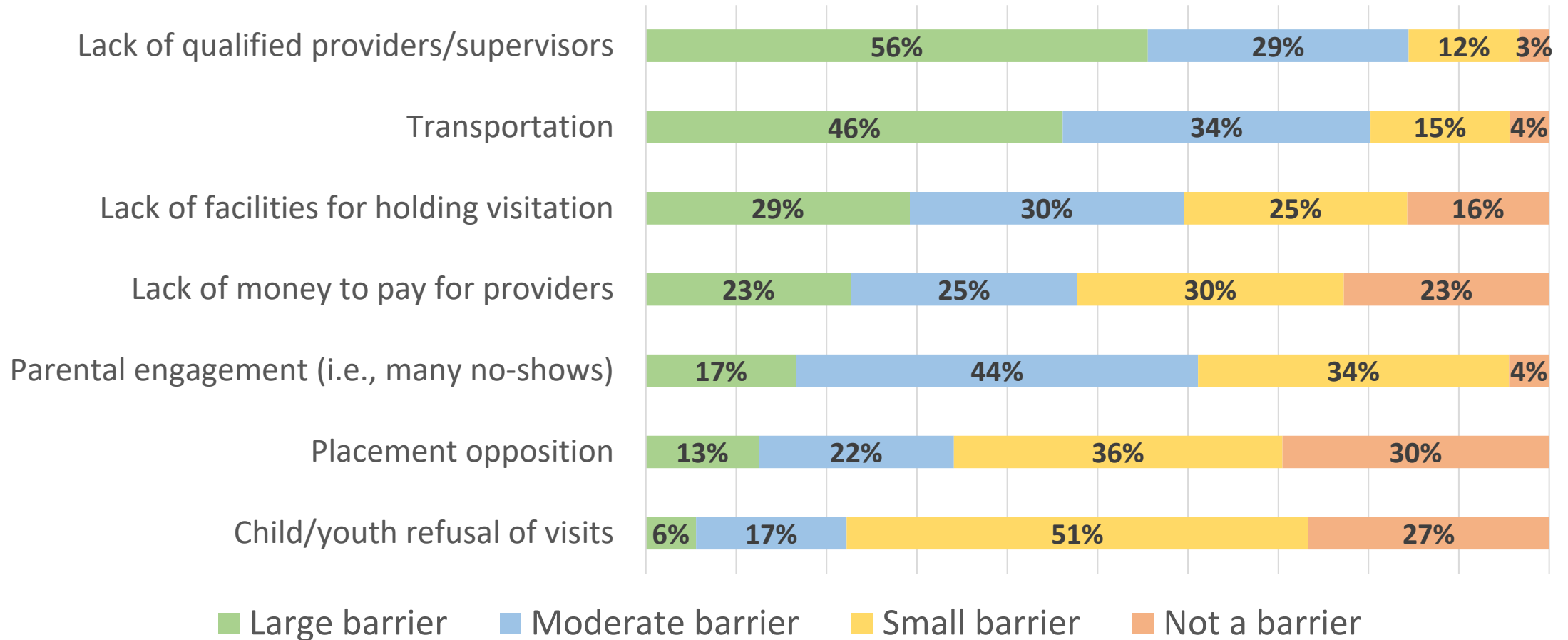
In your county, when children are placed out of the home, how often does parenting time occur in each of the following settings?



In your county, how are visits with incarcerated parents handled? Select all that apply.



Please rate the extent to which each of the following is a barrier to providing high quality and frequent parenting time in your county.



Other Answers about Barriers

Hours in facilities are limited to normal working hours – working parents cannot attend.

Children placed far from parents due to lack of placements

Other activities of children – school schedule, therapy, extra curriculars

Incarceration

Waitlists are common

Only one provider

“This depends entirely on whether the child is placed with kin or foster care. With kin, attempts are made to assess kin’s ability to monitor or supervise parenting time (“PT”). If in foster care, a referral to a 3rd party agency is made and I often hear “the visits haven’t started yet because the referral has not been picked up yet”. I am now frequently requesting the Court to order that PT be provided by the Department at a minimum of 2x per week for 2 hrs each visit regardless of whether a 3rd party has picked up the referral. This is usually complied with by a mishmash of case aides with no consistency in supervisor or schedule. Department is severely understaffed, social workers are quitting, many are seeking CC positions with GALs, and those who are staying are being required to work OT as Intake workers. **It is a dire situation.**”

– Adams County GAL

FAMILY TIME HB 23-1027

changes to 19-3-217 go into effect 1/1/24

Plan for visits

30 days from removal - county must provide plan for who can be present at visits, frequency and length, and other opportunities to communicate

Family time does not be an incentive or sanction

Cannot limit family time for failure to comply unless child's mental, emotional or physical health is at risk.

Maximum contact possible where in best interest of child

encourage attendance at school, extracurricular, and medical appointments when in best interests of child.

Legislates when family time can be restricted or denied

Can only be restricted or denied if necessary to protect child's safety or mental, emotional, or physical health





Presumption

1. Supervised family time should be supervised by informal supports identified by the family who volunteer to supervise family time.
2. Family time should occur in the community or homelike environment.

Rebutting Presumption

- Court must find child's safety or mental, emotional, or physical health requires professional supervision or that informal supports are unavailable to provide supervision.
- County can supplement with coached family time to improve skills.

Bottom line

Family time must occur in the least restrictive setting and at the least restrictive level of supervision to satisfy the child's or youth's safety or mental, emotional, or physical health needs.