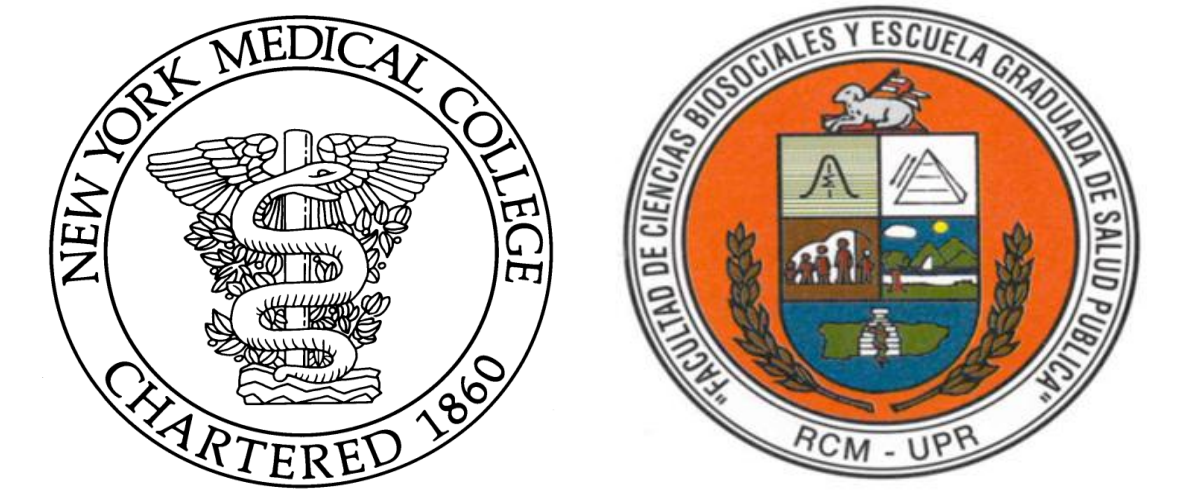




# Levels of Empowerment in the Access and Use of Health Services of Parents and Caregivers of Children with Developmental Disabilities

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## Background

- Empowerment is a process of internal and external change. Internal change is [the person's sense or belief in her/his ability to make decisions and to solve her/his own problems] and external change [the ability to act and to implement the practical knowledge, the information and the skills acquired in the course of the process] (Parsons , 1988).
- There is a relationship between the empowerment and the access and used of health services in families with children with developmental disabilities (Nageswaran,S., Parish, S., Rose, R. & Grady M., 2011).
- According to the Census Bureau in 2010, the percentage of the population with disabilities in Puerto Rico was 19.7%.
- The Family Empowerment Scale (FES) (2000), was translated and validated last year in a research conducted by Karla Davila & Erica Rexach, with an Alpha of .75.
- They found that 52.6% of the parents that provided orientation about services to other families present a high level of empowerment.

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## Methods

- Design**
  - Non-experimental transversal- descriptive design. Use a descriptive measures of frequency, central tendency and dispersion. Pearson Correlations and T- student.
- Sample**
  - 44 parents or legal caregivers of children from birth to 18 years with developmental disabilities. Selected by availability.
- Instruments**
  - Family Empowerment Scale (FES) (2000). It consists of 34 items with a Likert response scale of 5 levels. Lead author of the scale, Dr. Freinsen, authorized the back to back translation and cultural adaptation of the scale.
  - Socio-demographic information Use /Access to health services Information.

## Research Question & Objectives

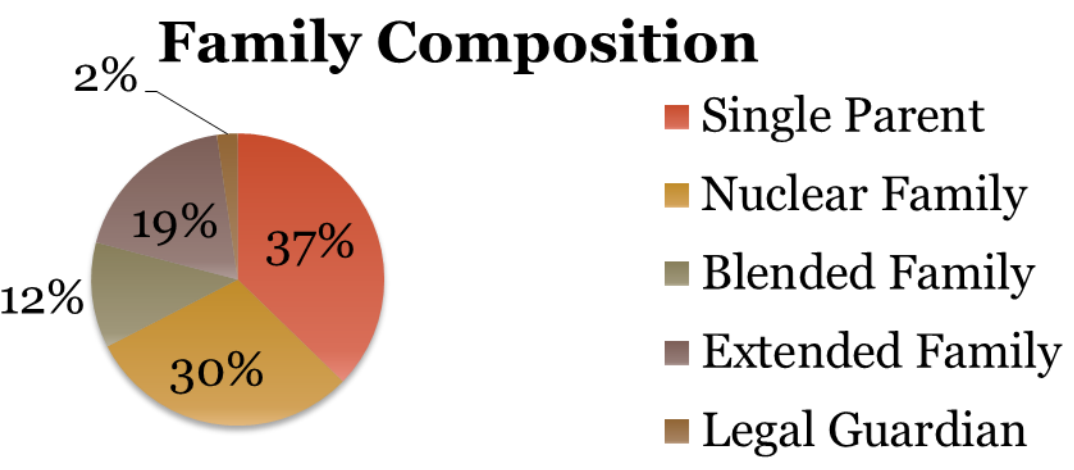
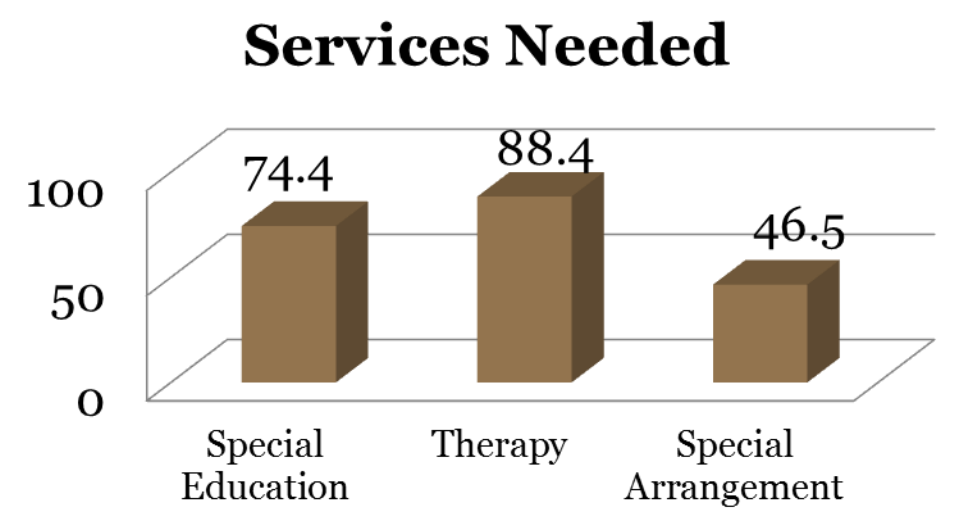
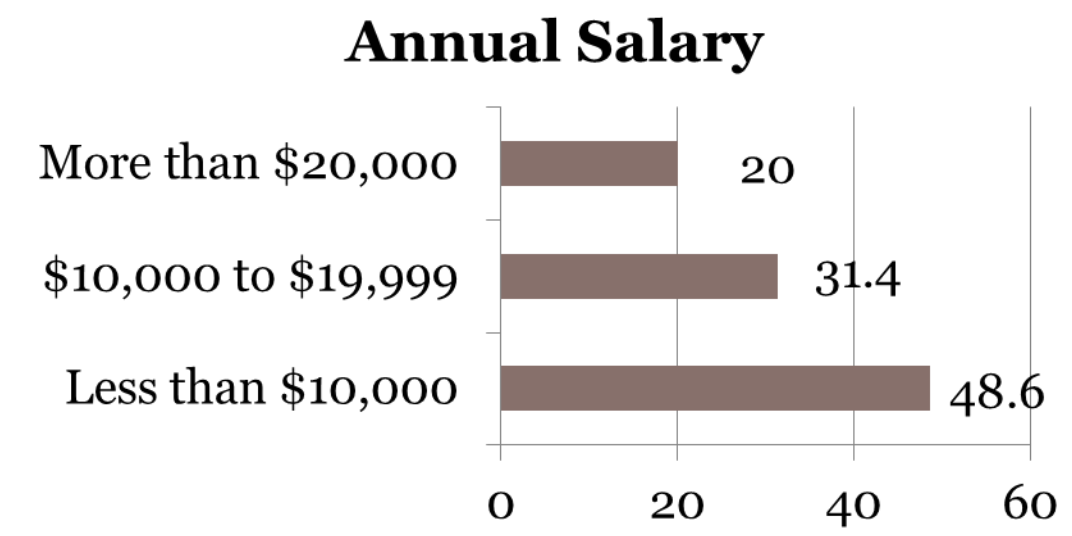
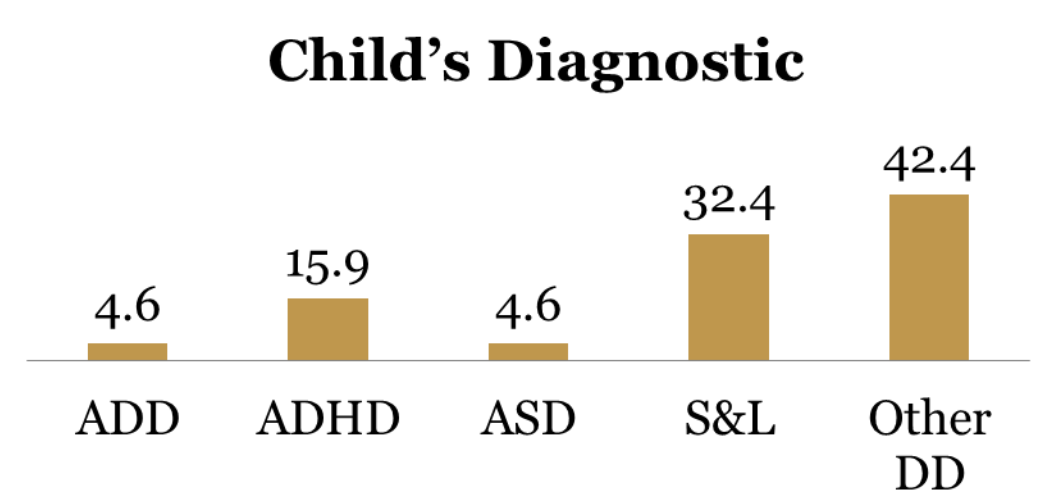
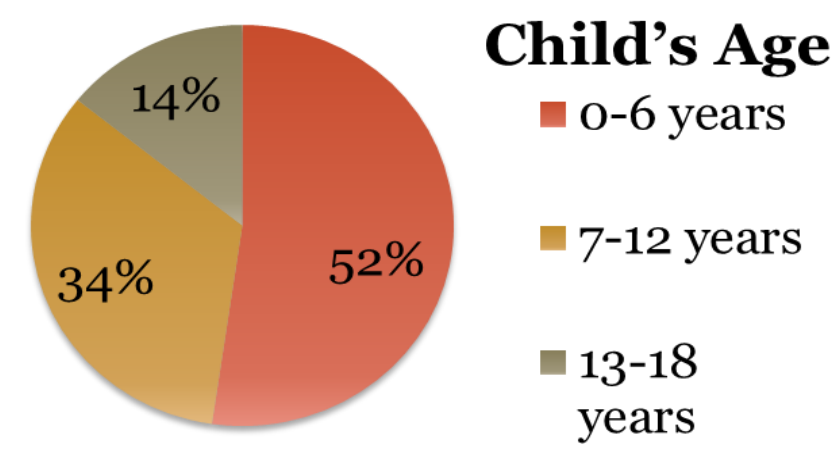
- Is empowerment important for the use and access to health services in families with children with Developmental Disabilities?**
- Identify:**
  - The levels of empowerment of parents or caregivers with children with DD/ special needs.
  - How the families access, coordinate and use health services.
- Determine the relationship between:**
  - Levels of empowerment and family composition
  - The use of services and family composition.
  - Levels of empowerment and child profile.

## Conclusions & Recommendations

- The sample (N=44) does not represent the general population of families of individuals with DD or related disabilities.
- The participants show to be highly empowered. Participants were recruited from the Island-wide IDEA Parent Training Center.
- The results show that participants use and access health services according with their child's diagnostic and needs.
- Replicate the study with families without previous experiences in family information and training centers.

## Results & Discussion

### General Socio-demographic Information :



Level of empowerment of the sample:	Health Services	Relationship between levels of empowerment and family composition
<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>Correlation</b>
Cronbach's Alpha of FES Scale: $\alpha = 93.0\%$ High Level Empowerment was found in the sample (max. possible score: 170pts).	Use: $\bar{x} = 15.08 / \sigma = 22.28$	$r = -.102 \quad p = 0.567$
$\bar{x} = 152.36 / \sigma = 15.02$	Access: $\bar{x} = 9.23 / \sigma = 15.20$	

Levels of empowerment VS. Use of services	Levels of empowerment VS. access to services	Levels of empowerment VS. child age	Levels of empowerment VS. child gender
<b>Correlation</b>			
$r = -.057 \quad p = 0.759$	$r = -.061 \quad p = 0.745$	$r = .273 \quad p = 0.168$	$t(19.147) = .894, \quad p = 0.382$
<b>T-test</b>			