



Screening and Assessment Tools

SAVES All- Grantee Meeting
December 4th, 2024

Agenda



Screening & Assessment



Past Research on Screening for Safety in Child Support



New York Family Safety Pilot Results

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be better able to:

- Explain the differences between screening & assessment
- Evaluate what type of tool works best for your community/project
- Understand the importance of screening given past research on the topic
- Learn how New York's pilot tool was developed and implemented
- Understand New York's results and broader implications for the child support community

What is screening?

A routine process for identifying a potential problem

- It's tentative (not a judgment, ruling or diagnosis)
- A way to find out if there's reason to take a closer look

What Makes for a Robust Screening Protocol?

- Systematic and universally applied
- Behaviorally-specific
- Focused on multiple forms of abuse
- Attuned to both past abuse and more recent abuse
- Alert to established risk factors
- Structured in a way that promotes safe and informed disclosure
- **On-going**



Screening is distinct from assessment

What is Assessment?

A routine process to gather information about the nature, context, and effects (of domestic abuse).

- This guides the response

Key Points

SCREENING

- Quick check to determine if a problem exists.
- Determine whether further evaluation or intervention is needed/required.
- Brief and narrow in scope.
- Identify the signs and dynamics of IPV in a relationship.

ASSESSMENT

- Provides more complete picture. (Comprehensive)
- In-depth, focused
- Looking at context (nature)
- Looking at frequency, severity, and intensity.
- Guide your response.



Not to be Confused with....

Risk/Lethality
assessments

What is a Risk/Lethality Assessment?

A tool used to assess the degree of harm that is likely to occur as a result of the domestic abuse if safety actions are not in place.



DANGER ASSESSMENT

Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Ph.D., R.N. Copyright, 2003; update 2019; www.dangerassessment.com

Several risk factors have been associated with increased risk of homicides (murders) of women and men in violent relationships. We cannot predict what will happen in your case, but we would like you to be aware of the danger of homicide in situations of abuse and for you to see how many of the risk factors apply to your situation.

Using the calendar, please mark the approximate dates during the past year when you were abused by your partner or ex-partner. Write on that date how bad the incident was according to the following scale:

1. Slapping, pushing; no injuries and/or lasting pain
2. Punching, kicking; bruises, cuts, and/or continuing pain
3. "Beating up"; severe contusions, burns, broken bones
4. Threat to use weapon; head injury, internal injury, permanent injury, miscarriage or choking* (use a © in the date to indicate choking/strangulation/cut off your breathing- example 4©)
5. Use of weapon; wounds from weapon
(If **any** of the descriptions for the higher number apply, use the higher number.)

Mark **Yes** or **No** for each of the following. ("He" refers to your husband, partner, ex-husband, ex-partner, or whoever is currently physically hurting you.)

- _____ 1. Has the physical violence increased in severity or frequency over the past year?
- _____ 2. Does he own a gun?
- _____ 3. Have you left him after living together during the past year?
3a. (If you have *never* lived with him, check here: __)
- _____ 4. Is he unemployed?
- _____ 5. Has he ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a lethal weapon? (If yes, was the weapon a gun? check here: __)

For example...

New York State SAVES:
*Family Safety Questions
Pilot Program*



Pilot Development Stage

Project Year 1: Investigative Phase

- IV-D and IV-A Mapping
- Impact Expert Advisory Group (IEAG)
- LDSS-5258, *Child Support Enrollment Form*



Pilot Implementation

LD55-5226 (Rev. 08/23)

Family Safety Questions

If you have any concerns about getting child support safely, the New York State Child Support Program is here to help you. We have resources, policies, and procedures designed to help you access our services in a safer manner. We ask everyone applying for child support these questions to help us provide the right services.

Completing this form is voluntary. If you answer yes to any of the following questions, there are options available that can make this process safer. You can talk privately with a child support worker about steps to help keep you and the children safe during this process. Any information you provide will be kept confidential, except if there is reason to believe the children are being harmed or in imminent danger.

Your answers to the questions below will not be shared with the other parent. We will not share personal details like addresses, employment information, or contact information with either parent. However, the name of the county in which you apply for services will be included in court documents or orders.

1. Would you be concerned for the safety of yourself or the children if the other parent knew your address, where you work, or how to contact you?
 Yes No
2. When we open a child support case, we contact the other parent to get information such as employment and income. Do you have any concerns we should know about before contacting them?
 Yes No
3. We may need to schedule genetic testing that could be at the same time and location for both parents. Do you have any safety concerns about meeting together with the children and the other parent?
 Yes No
4. To collect court-ordered child support, the Child Support Program will deduct money directly from a parent's paycheck. We can also take actions like suspending driver licenses, intercepting State and federal tax returns, denying passports, and suspending professional and recreational licenses (e.g., medical or law license, hunting, fishing, etc.) if the parent does not pay their support. Would any of these actions put you or the children at risk of physical, emotional and/or financial harm?
 Yes No
5. To establish or change your child support order, you may need to give testimony (share information) to a judge in court as part of a child support hearing. Do you have any concerns about appearing in court?
 Yes No
6. Do you have safety concerns about you or the children having contact with the other parent for visitation?
 Yes No

Additional information about our safety options is available in the document titled *Getting Child Support Safely: What You Should Know*. Residents of NYC, see the document titled *Information For All Potential Child Support Applicants About Getting Child Support Safely*. Situations change and your safety is always a priority. You may change your answers to these questions at any time by contacting your child support worker.

LD55-5227 (Rev. 08/23)

Family Safety Questions

If you have any concerns about getting child support safely, the New York State Child Support Program is here to help you. We have resources, policies, and procedures designed to help you access our services in a safer manner. We ask everyone applying for child support these questions to help us provide the right services.

Completing this form is voluntary. If you answer yes to any of the following questions, there are options available that can make this process safer. You can talk privately with a child support worker about steps to help keep you and the children safe during this process. Any information you provide will be kept confidential, except if there is reason to believe the children are being harmed or in imminent danger.

Your answers to the questions below will not be shared with the other parent. We will not share personal details like addresses, employment information, or contact information with either parent. However, the name of the county in which you apply for services will be included in court documents or orders.

Have you, or the children for whom you seek child support services, experienced the following by the other parent?

1. Using your money or bank accounts to control you
 Yes No
2. Emotional abuse (threatening, yelling, mocking you, putting you down, making you think you are crazy, etc.)
 Yes No
3. Harassment or stalking (in-person or online)
 Yes No
4. Threats to harm you, the children, pets, or yourself
 Yes No
5. Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, etc.)
 Yes No
6. Forcing you to do things sexually that make you feel uncomfortable
 Yes No
7. Serious harm or injury
 Yes No
8. Do you believe that opening a child support case will pose a safety concern for you and/or the children with:
8a. The other parent? Yes No
8b. Someone else? (relative, friend or other) Yes No
9. Do you have concerns about you or the children having contact with the other parent for visitation?
 Yes No
10. Would requiring you to provide where you live or your contact information to the other parent or another party cause you or the children harassment, abuse, serious harm, or injury?
 Yes No

Additional information about our safety options is available in the document titled *Getting Child Support Safely: What You Should Know*. Residents of NYC, see the document titled *Information For All Potential Child Support Applicants About Getting Child Support Safely*. Situations change and your safety is always a priority. You may change your answers to these questions at any time by contacting your child support worker.



Statewide Implementation: *Family Safety Screening Form*

Family Safety Screening Form

We ask everyone enrolling in child support services these questions to help us provide safety options to people who need them. You can talk to your child support worker privately about these questions or other safety options throughout this process.

Your answers will not be shared with the other party on your child support case. Information will not be shared with anyone unless a child is being harmed or is in danger. If you are concerned about Child Protective Services involvement, please speak to your worker. More information about safety options and enforcement actions can be found on the *Getting Child Support Safely: What You Should Know* flyer.

Please respond to the following:

1. Has the other party ever done any of the following? **Check all that apply.**
 - Threatened to harm you, your children, or your pets, or threatened to harm themselves
 - Emotional abuse (examples: yelling, putting you down, making you think you are crazy)
 - Financial abuse (examples: not giving you access to money or accounts, hiding or changing passwords to stop you from accessing accounts, keeping you from working or getting you fired, taking out debt in your name)
 - Harassment or stalking (examples: repeatedly calling/texting, using social media to intimidate/monitor you, tracking your location, showing up to your job)
 - Sexual abuse (examples: making you do something sexually you did not want to do, using physical force, drugs or alcohol, intimidation, showing a weapon to threaten or pressure you)
 - Physical abuse (examples: hitting, pushing, kicking, "choking" or putting hands on your throat)
2. Do you have safety concerns if the other party knows your address, where you work, or how to contact you?
 Yes No
3. At times we contact the other party to get information such as income and employment. Do you have safety concerns if we contact the other party?
 Yes No
4. Do you have safety concerns about appearing in court and sharing information when the other party is in the room?
 Yes No
5. Are you concerned about safety if/when exchanging children for visitation or during visitation?
 Yes No
6. Do you think the other party will threaten you, retaliate, or use systems against you if you enroll in child support services?
 Yes No
7. To collect court-ordered child support, we will deduct money directly from the other party's paycheck. Actions may be taken if they do not pay, for example, suspending driver, professional, and recreational licenses, passport denial, and taking their State and federal tax refunds. Do you have any safety concerns if actions to collect support are taken against the other party?
 Yes No

You do not have to fill this out. Check here if you do not want to complete this form.



Pilot District Support

- Office Hours
- Quarterly Calls
- Peer-to-peer Support
- Reference Guide
- Frequently Asked Questions





**Present Research:
New York Family Safety Pilot Results**

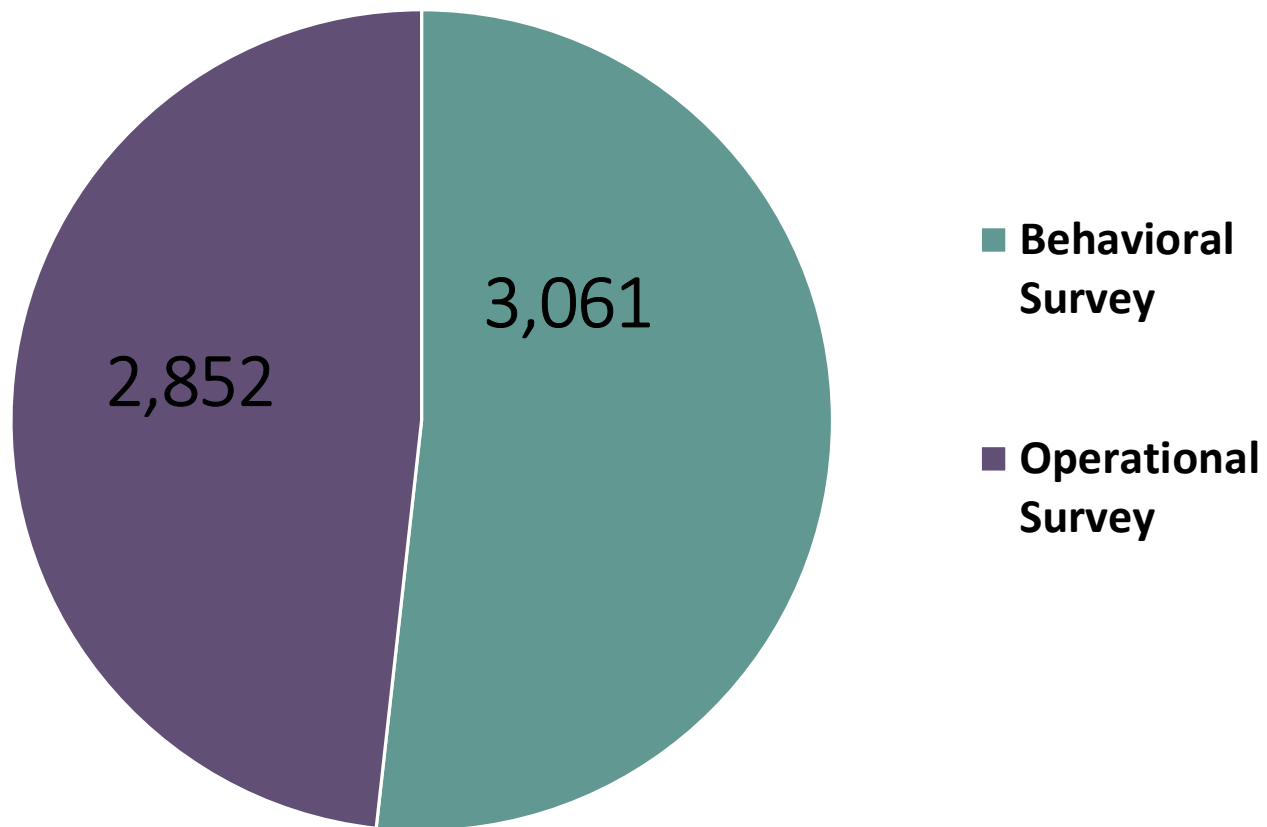
New York Family Safety Questions Pilot Overview

- **Purpose:** determine if behavioral or operational survey questions lead to more DV disclosures across 12 district sites
- **Timeline:** October 1, 2023 – July 31, 2024
 - **Phase I:** October 1, 2023 – February 29, 2024
 - **Phase II:** March 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024

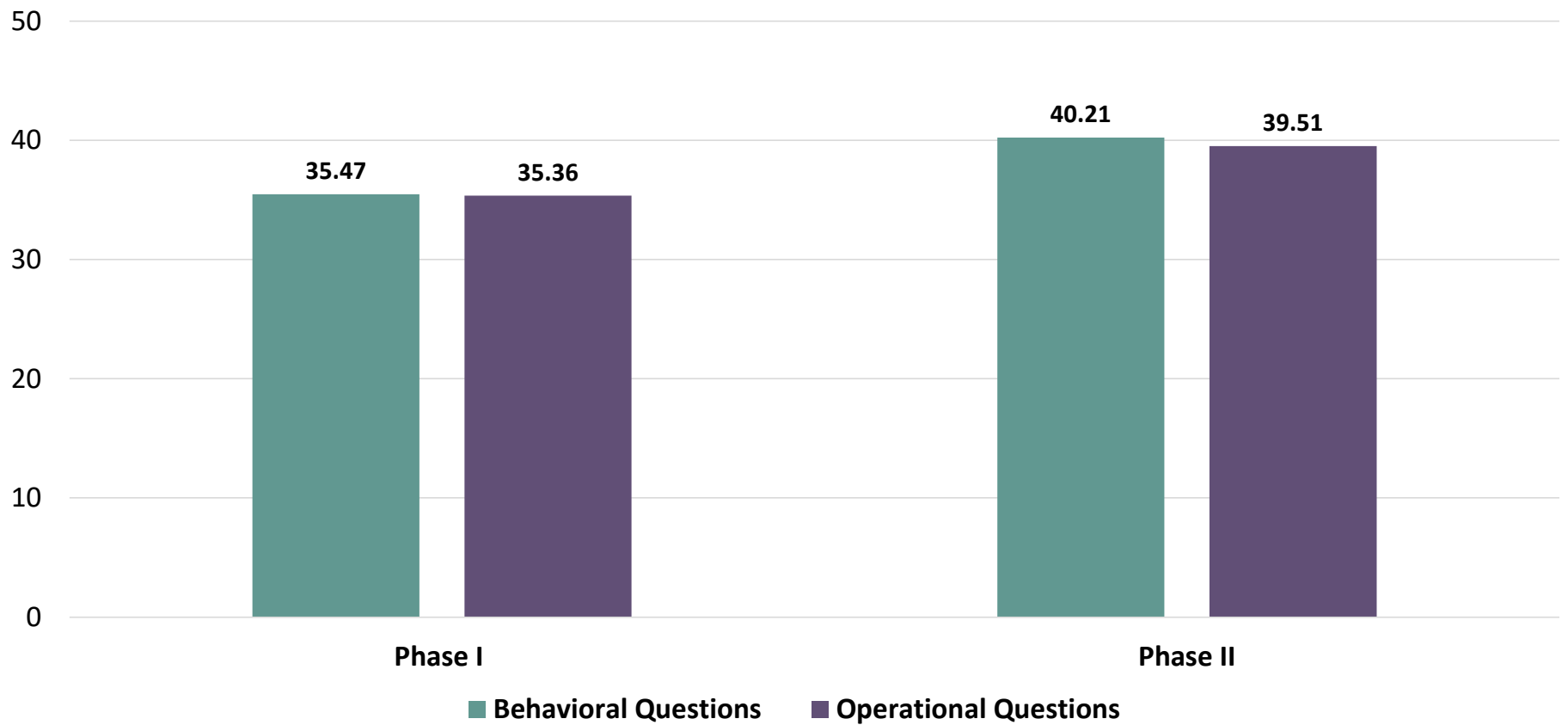
Data Collection

- Districts that were behavioral in Phase I switched to operational in Phase II and vice versa
- All scanned forms were either entered directly by districts or were sent to data@savescenter.org to be entered by SAVES Center staff

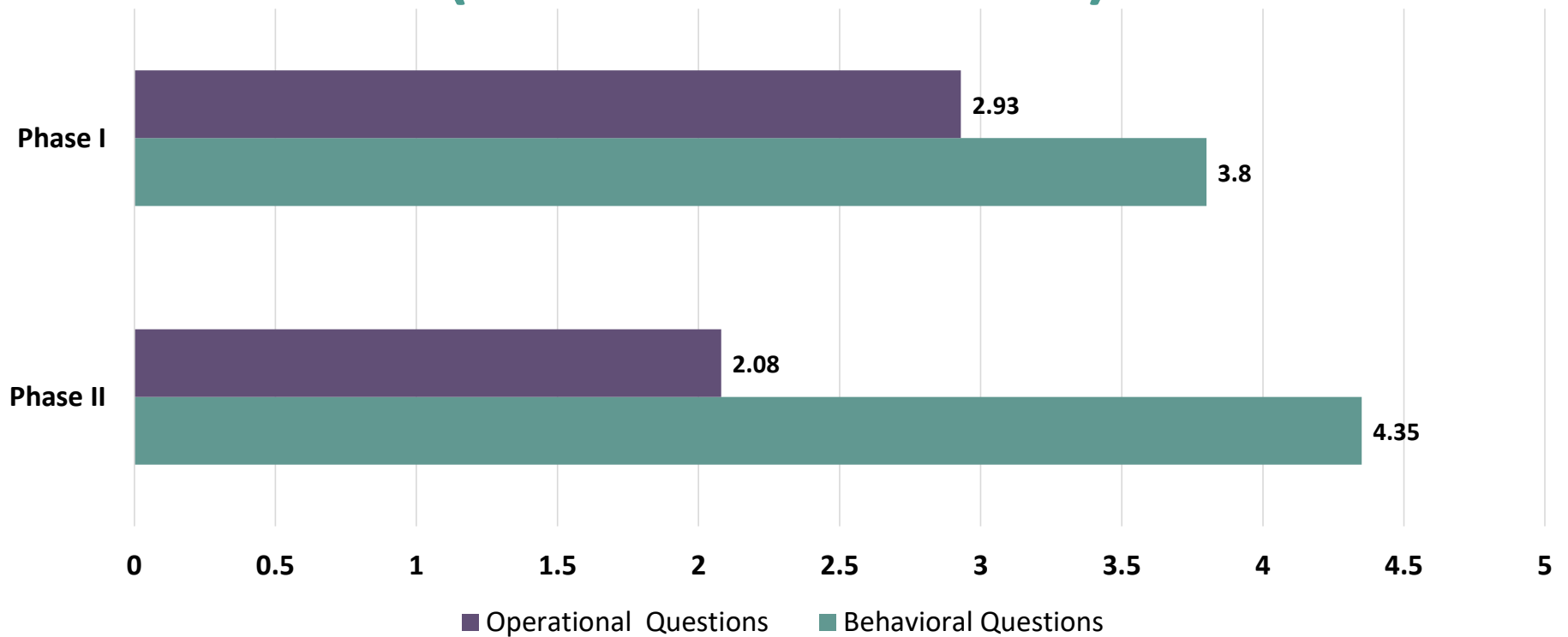
Total Screening Tools Completed (N=5,913)



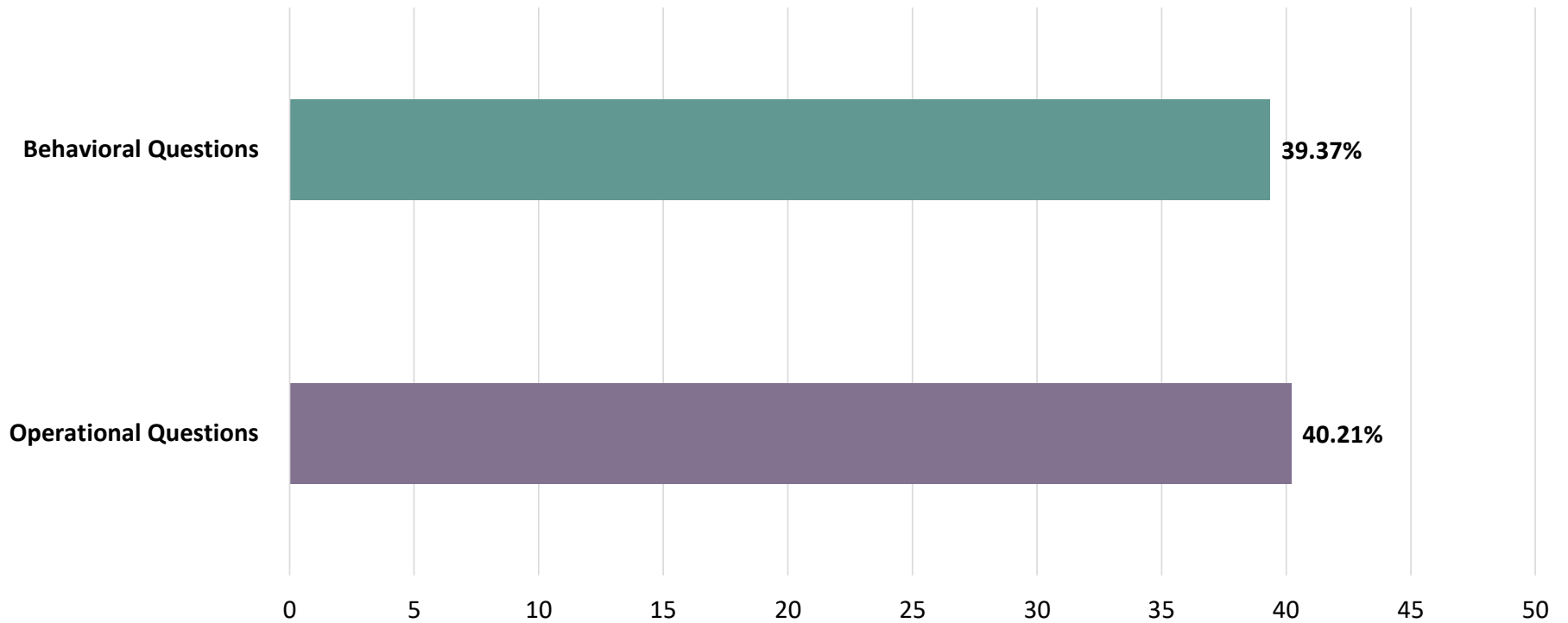
Percent of Screening Tools with at Least One “Yes” Response (Phase I and Phase II)



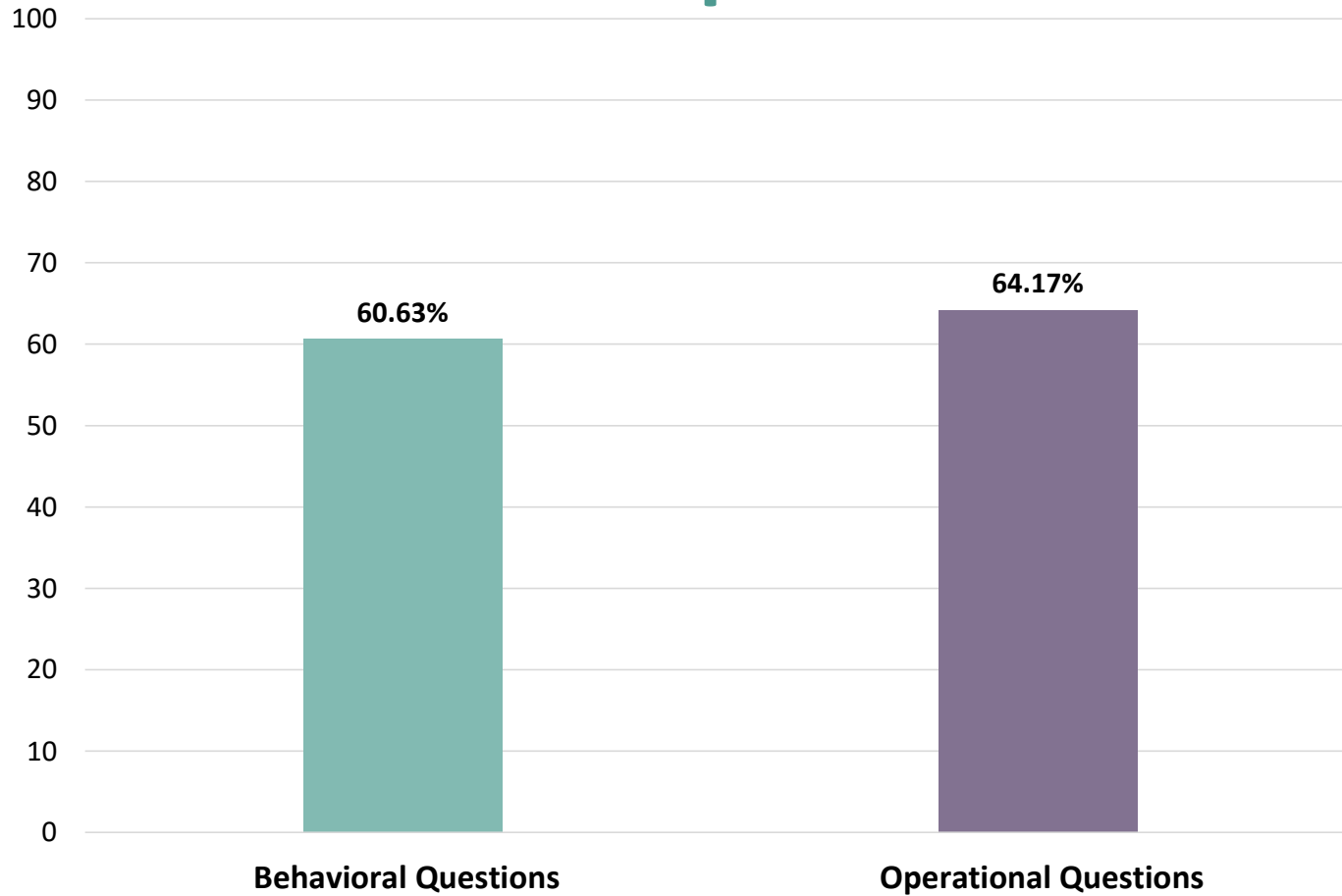
Average Number of Yes Responses Per Screening Tool for Those with at Least One Yes Response (Phase I and Phase II)



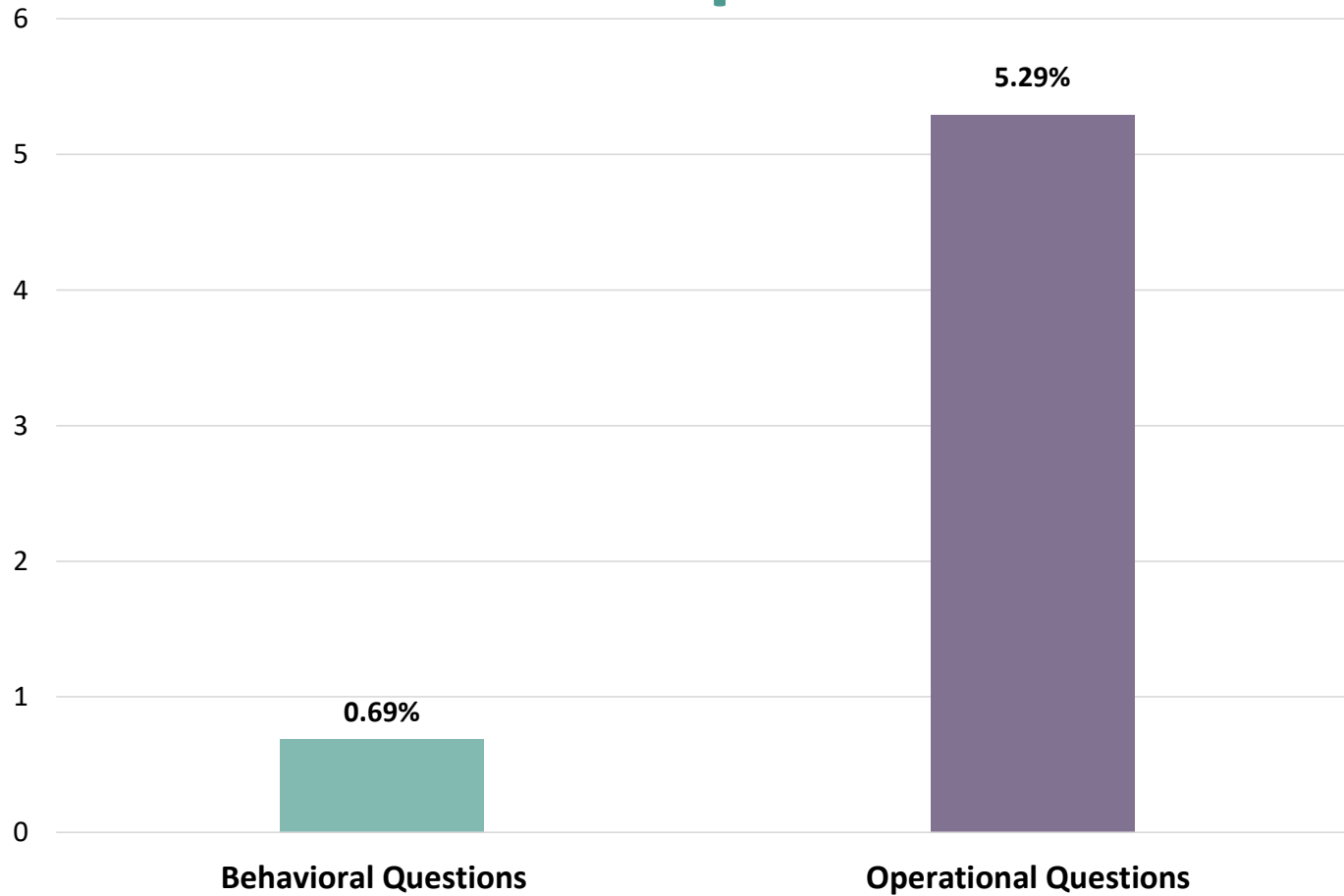
Overall Percent of Screening Tools with at Least One “Yes” Response



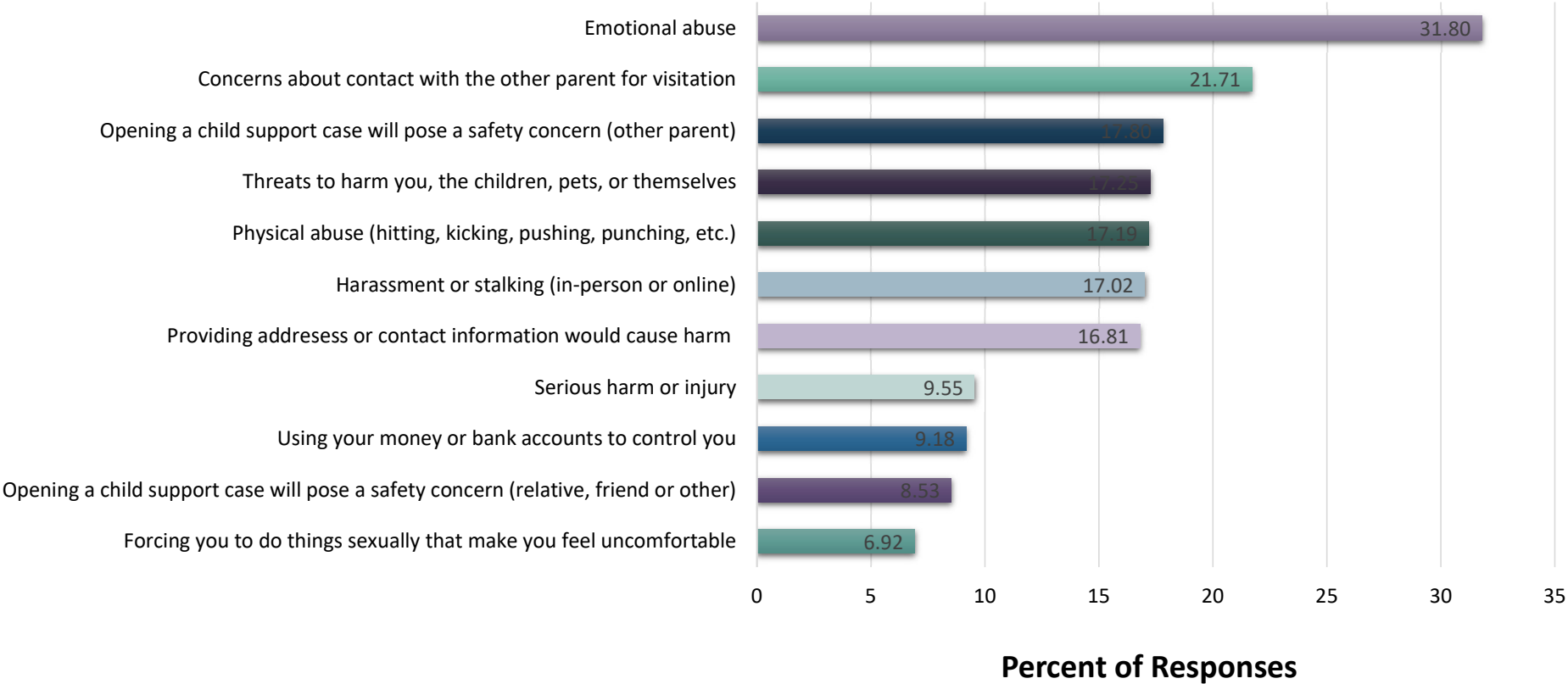
Overall Percent of Screening Tools with all “No” Responses



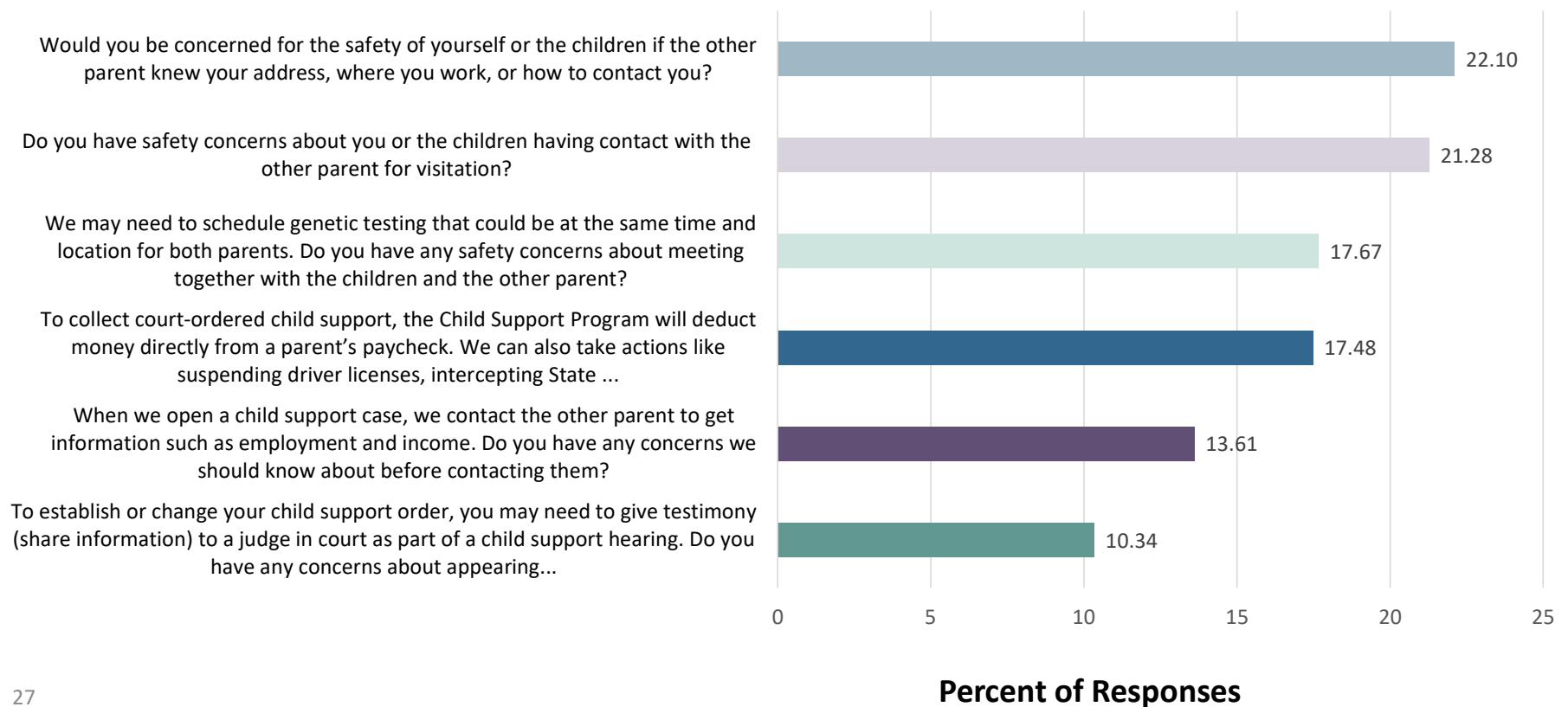
Overall Percent of Screening Tools with all “Yes” Responses



Overall Percent of “Yes” Responses for Behavioral Screening Tool by Question



Overall Percent of “Yes” Responses for Operational Screening Tool by Question



Key Take-Aways From Past and Present Research

- Conduct routine DV screenings at TANF and CS agencies using direct & specific questions
- Develop strong referral arrangements with DV programs for interested survivors and do cross-training for CS and DV workers
- Accept sworn statements from DV survivors & help those who want an exemption from cooperation to apply for good cause
- Develop procedures to ensure that DV survivors who want child support obtain orders & payments in a timely fashion
- Identify and address the additional barriers that DV survivors face with childcare and transportation
- Develop procedures to reduce safety risks in CS case processing

Important Lessons for Screening in Child Support based on Past and Present Research

- Standard CS case actions can be triggers for violence as they include notification to the other parent, court orders, automatic wage withholding and automated enforcement actions
- Screening for DV in CS is challenging
- Gathering routine information from CS customers on their safety concerns and perceived dangers of various actions can alert workers to necessary modifications to increase safety

Roundtable Discussion

- Four rotations (20 minutes at each table)
 - Table 1: NY
 - Table 2: MN
 - Table 3: MI
 - Table 4: OK
 - Table 5: LCO
 - Table 6: DV Partners
 - Table 7: GA
 - Table 8: TX



Questions to Consider Moving Forward

What are you using?

What is working?

What is not?

What's missing?

What do you like?

How are discussions going with survivors?

How are discussions going with perpetrators?



Safe Access for Victims'
Economic Security Center

Resource Sharing

Please continue emailing resources that you would like shared on the Portal or Resource Library to: info@savescenter.org

Thank you!