



Evaluation of the Help Me Grow Orange County List Serve

June 2014

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Executive Summary

In 2008, Help Me Grow Orange County (HMG) established a list serve to distribute program information, event and training announcements, and other information to service providers. As of 2014, list serve announcements were distributed weekly to nearly 1400 email addresses.

In January 2014, HMG conducted a survey of list serve subscribers to learn about the effectiveness and usefulness of the list serve. In addition, data was collected to report the rate at which recipients open and click on items within the list serve announcements.

From July 2013 through April 2014, on average, 375 recipients opened each list serve announcement (a 27.5% open rate) and 127 recipients clicked on an attachment within the announcement (9.3% of all recipients). A total of 221 people responded to the survey detailed in this report, a response rate of just over 16%.

Key findings from the survey include:

- 88% of respondents knew about HMG's toll free number; 68% knew about its online portal
- 76% said they refer clients to HMG's toll free number; 39% had used the portal at least once
- 96% said the list serve announcements were useful
- 78% said they have referred clients/families to services posted on the list serve
- 53.4% said when they refer clients/families to a service from the list serve, they also refer them to the Help Me Grow toll free number, 1.866.GROW.025.
- The primary reasons for not referring clients to the toll free number were:
 - They provided the client with all the information they needed
 - They didn't know about the toll free number or didn't think about offering it
- 32.1% said when they refer clients/families to a service from the list serve they also refer them to the Help Me Grow online portal.
- The primary reasons for not referring clients to the online portal were:
 - They didn't know about the online portal
 - Clients don't have access to or know how to use a computer and the Internet
- Suggestions for improving the list serve included posting events earlier; posting more events that are in Spanish or Vietnamese, free, or focused on literacy or health; attaching flyers that use less ink; allowing parents to subscribe to the list serve

The report concludes with a list of recommendations for HMG that include continuing to provide the list serve, promote its use, include a brochure about HMG as an attachment, and provide more instruction about how to use the online portal.

Help Me Grow
Evaluation of the Help Me Grow Orange County List Serve
June 2014

Introduction

Help Me Grow Orange County (HMG) was established in 2005 to connect children and their families to developmental services to enhance the development, behavior, and learning of children birth through five years. Parents, caregivers, childcare providers, early educators, and health care providers can call the toll free number, 1.866.GROW.025 or use the online portal to access information and referrals to developmental services for all young children who live in Orange County.

HMG's Community Liaisons develop ongoing relationships with community programs to help maintain an up-to-date resource inventory and share information about community-based services. Local networking events, called Connection Cafés, also help build the network of resources available to promote healthy development for young children in Orange County. In 2008, HMG established a list serve to distribute information to service providers about programs, events and trainings that are related to children and families. As of 2014, a list serve announcement was distributed weekly to nearly 1400 valid email addresses.

The list serve announcements typically include information about Help Me Grow; dates and descriptions of events and trainings; links to flyers; and contact information. The information is sorted by geographic region of the location of the event, with most announcements pertaining to activities in the North-Central region of Orange County (includes Santa Ana, Anaheim, Fullerton, and Brea). There are fewer announcements pertaining to the West region (coastal Orange County from Huntington Beach to Newport Beach and also including Garden Grove, Westminster, and Orange). South Orange County (from Irvine south to San Clemente) typically has the fewest announcements. A sample announcement is attached at the end of this report.

In January 2014, HMG conducted a survey of list serve subscribers to learn about the effectiveness and usefulness of the list serve. An underlying question was whether the subscribers were referring clients and families only to the services announced on the list serve, or also referring families to the HMG toll free line and online portal, where HMG's care coordinators conduct a thorough intake to learn about the child/family needs, have access to a more comprehensive inventory of resources and can provide follow-up to ensure families are connected to needed developmental services. The survey also offered an opportunity to gather suggestions for improvement of the list serve.

Methodology

The questionnaire was developed by one of HMG's three Community Liaisons and the HMG Program Manager. It contained 17 questions that asked about knowledge of Help Me Grow, use and value of the list serve, and referral practices. The questionnaire included Yes/No, rating scale, and open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was distributed using Constant Contact on January 21, 2014 to 1366 valid email addresses of list serve subscribers. One reminder email was sent on February 7 and the survey was closed on March 24. The survey results were collected in Constant Contact and analyzed and reported by an independent evaluation consultant. In addition, list serve statistics (number of people who opened each announcement, number of clicks on the attachments) were collected from Constant Contact.

Results

List serve open and click rates

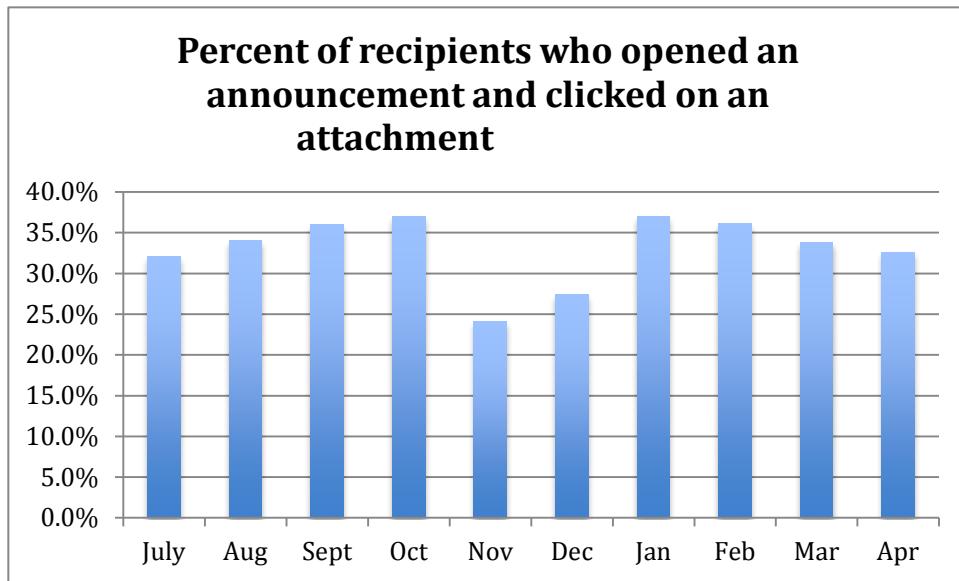
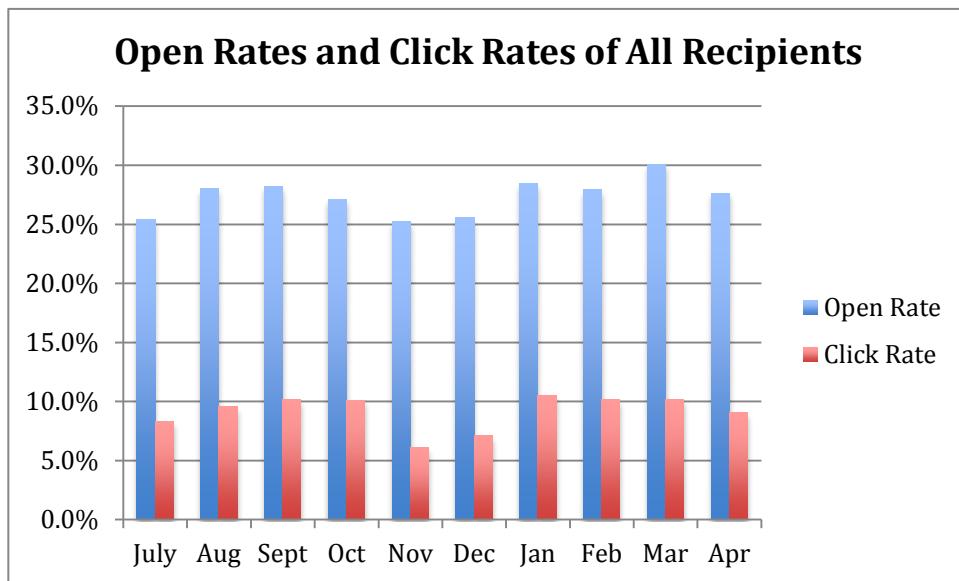
From July 2013 through April 2014, there were 40 list serve announcements. Each list serve announcement was sent to an average of 1361 valid email addresses, with a range of 1339 to 1390 as addresses were added and deleted from the distribution list. On average, 375 recipients opened the announcement for an overall open rate of 27.5%. Individual announcements were opened by as few as 320 people, and as many as 428. The open rate ranged from 23.7% to 31.1%. Among all the recipients, on average, 127 people clicked on an attachment included within the announcement. This is a click rate of 9.3% of all recipients.

| July 2013 to April 2014 | Average | Lowest | Highest |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Number of valid email addresses | 1361 | 1339 | 1390 |
| Number of opens | 375 | 320 | 428 |
| Open rate | 27.5% | 23.7% | 31.1% |
| Number of recipients who clicked on an attachment | 127 | 65 | 190 |
| Percent of all recipients who clicked on an announcement | 9.3% | 4.8% | 14.0% |
| Percent of recipients who opened the announcement and clicked on an attachment | 33.6% | 20.0% | 48.0% |
| Total number of clicks on attachments per list serve announcement | 268 | 81 | 553 |
| Average number of clicks per person who clicked on any attachment | 2.04 | 1.25 | 3.09 |

Among the people who opened the announcements, on average, 34% clicked on an attachment in the announcement. There was a wide range, likely depending on the content of the

announcement, with as few as 20% of people who opened the email clicking on an attachment and as many as 48%. People could click on more than one attachment, and on average, each person who clicked on any attachment clicked on two.

The open and click rates varied throughout the year, with the lowest open rates in July, November and December. November and December also had the lowest rates of recipients clicking on an attachment in the announcement as well as exceptionally low click rates among recipients who had opened the announcement.



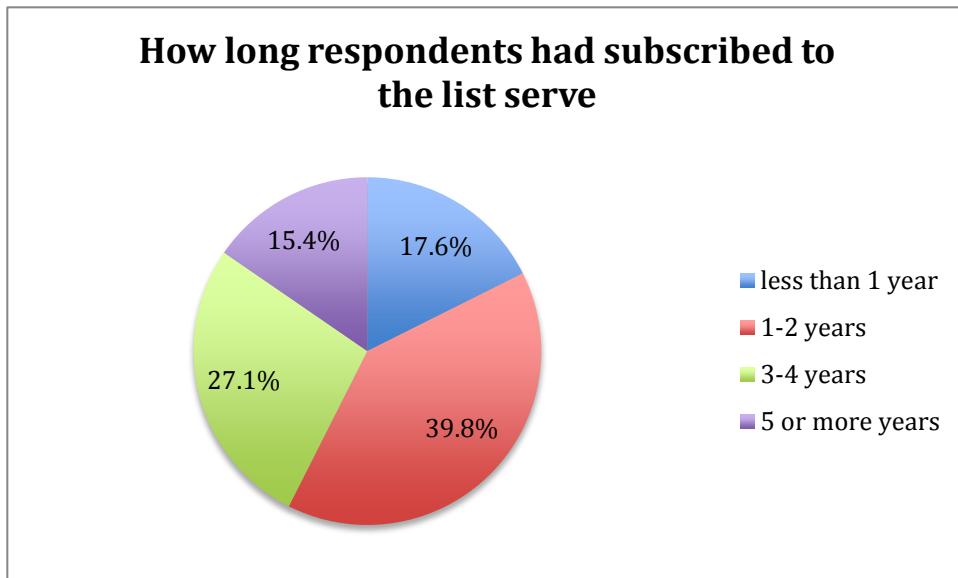
Survey open and click rates

A total of 506 recipients opened the email with the survey and 248 clicked on the survey. This is an open rate of 37% and a click rate of 18% of all recipients. Of those who opened the email, 49% clicked on the survey. These rates are higher than any single list serve announcement between July 2013 and April 2014, suggesting that the survey respondents include individuals who do not open every list serve announcement.

Survey results

A total of 221 people responded to the survey, a response rate of just over 16%.

Most respondents were relative newcomers to the list serve, which is now in its sixth year of operations. Over half of the respondents (57.4%) had been subscribers of the list serve for two years or less. Only 15% had subscribed for five years or more. (n=221)

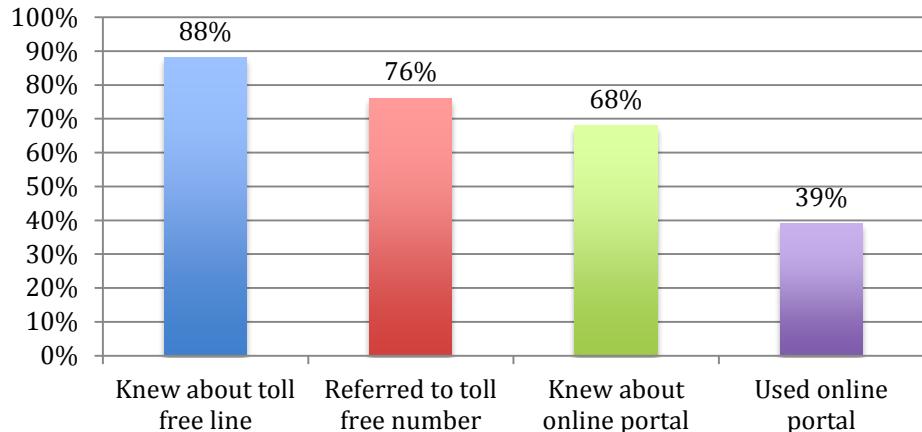


Knowledge and use of HMG's toll free line and online portal

Nearly all respondents (88.2%) knew that HMG has a toll free number (866.GROW.025) to connect children and families to resources to promote healthy development, but 11.8% said they were not aware of this service (n=221). Nearly three-quarters (75.6%) of respondents said they refer clients/families to HMG's toll free number. (n=221)

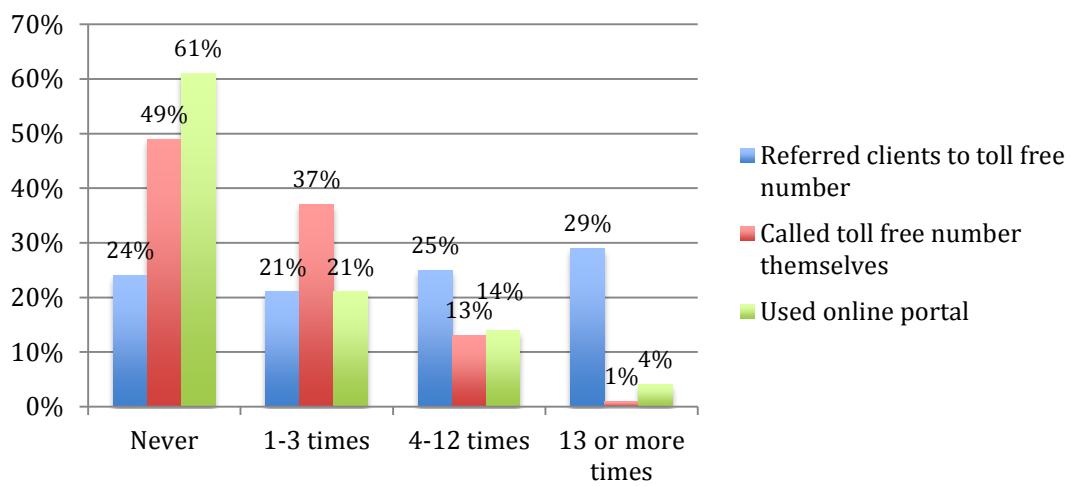
Fewer respondents (68.3%) said they are aware that HMG has an online portal to connect children and families to resources; only 39% had ever used the portal. (n=220)

Knowledge and use of toll free number and online portal



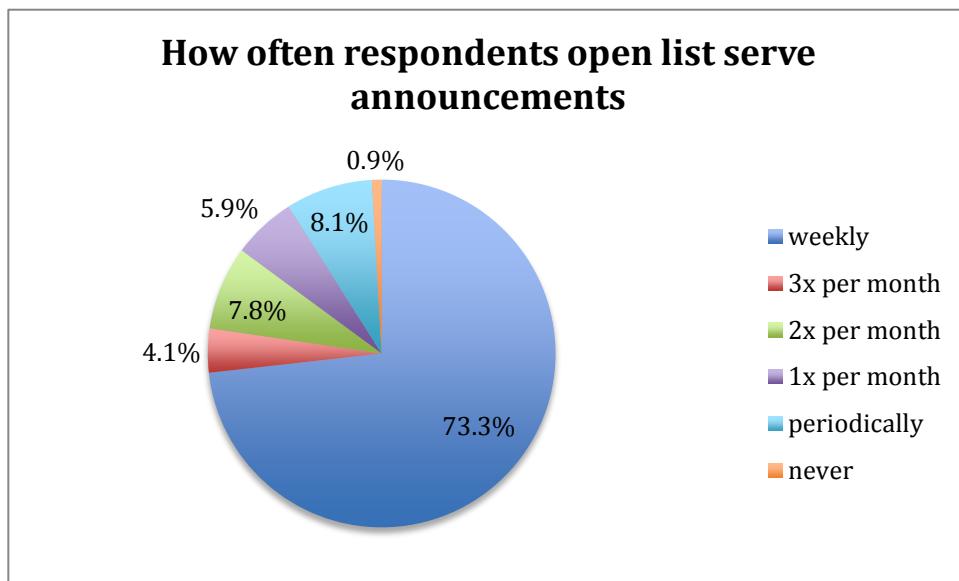
Respondents who had referred clients to the toll free number were likely to have done so multiple times, with 29% of respondents reporting that they had referred clients 13 or more times. Very few respondents said they had called the toll free number or used the online portal 13 or more times. While 37% of respondents said they had called the toll free number 1-3 times, only 14% (32 respondents) had called the number 4 or more times. Usage of the online portal showed a similar pattern, with 21% saying they had used it 1-3 times. Only 40 respondents (18%) had used the portal 4 times or more. (n=220)

How often used or referred to HMG



Use of list serve information

Nearly three quarters (73%) of the survey respondents said they open the list serve announcement weekly. Only 9% said they open the list serve announcement only periodically or never. (n=221)



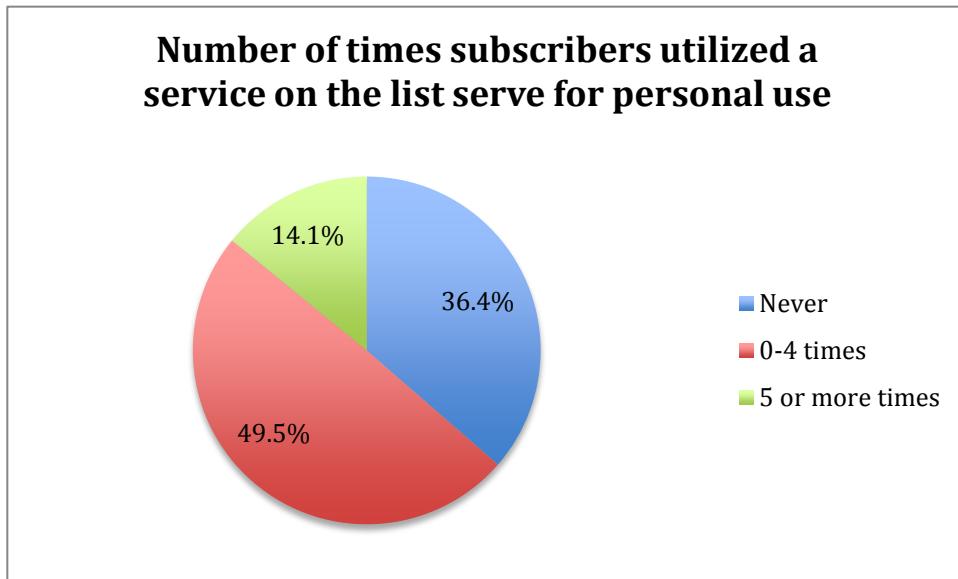
Nearly all (96%) respondents said the list serve announcements were useful, with 70% characterizing them as very or extremely useful. Only 4% of respondents said the announcements were "not very useful," and no one said they were "not useful at all." (n=200)

78% of respondents said they refer clients/families to services posted on the list serve. On a monthly basis, of those who refer clients to services announced on the list serve, over 70% said they refer 0-4 clients to list serve services and they give clients referrals for a total of 0-4 services from the list serve. Over 7% of respondents referred 15 or more clients to services they saw on the list serve; just under 5% made a total of 15 or more referrals of services they heard about on the list serve.

N=165 (answered only by those who said they refer clients to services posted on the list serve)

| Number of clients/families or services | 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-15 | 15-19 | 20 or more |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| How many clients/families do you refer on a monthly basis to services posted on the list serve? | 71.5% | 16.4% | 4.8% | 1.8% | 5.4% |
| How many total services from the list serve do you give to clients/families on a monthly basis | 73.3% | 15.1% | 6.7% | 1.8% | 3.0% |

When asked how often they have used a service on the list serve for personal use (i.e., professional training, job announcements, personal needs), 36.4% said “Never,” and 49.5% said they had utilized a service 0-4 times. Fourteen percent said they had used a list serve service for personal use five or more times. (n=198)



Connecting clients to Help Me Grow

Just over half (53.4%) of the respondents said when they refer clients/families to a service from the list serve, they also refer them to the Help Me Grow toll free number. Only 32.1% of respondents said that when they refer clients/families to a service from the list serve they also refer them to the Help Me Grow online portal.

Reasons respondents do not provide the HMG toll free number when they make a referral

Those who do not also refer to the toll free number were asked to explain why they don't include the toll free number with the referral. Explanations were provided by 63 respondents.

The most common reason, given by 15 respondents, was that they provided the clients with the information they needed and there was no need to provide them with additional information. Two specified that they did not want to overwhelm the families with too much information. Another said that sometimes families could benefit from the service in the list serve, but they did not have any concerns about their child.

“Because I've referred them to what they're asking for.”

“Most of the time families find what they need and do not need further assistance; and then there are times parents feel they are given the run around and give up. They just do not want to talk to another person.”

“I never thought to do so if I was already providing them with the direct referral.”

Thirteen respondents said that they were not aware of the toll free number and/or that parents could call the number and get connected to services. One respondent had just become aware of Help Me Grow in the last week. Another 6 respondents said they hadn’t included the toll free number because they just didn’t think of it or weren’t aware that they could. Some said they would try to remember to do so in the future.

“I wasn’t aware of this phone number and its availability for clients, from now on I plan to.”

“I did not know there was one. I’d love a flyer that I can post on my parent board.”

“It never occurred to me to do so.”

The comments of 7 respondents indicated they share the information in ways that do not include direct referrals to families, such as posting or distributing the flyers that are included with list serve announcements.

“I print out services or events from the listserv that are near our community, and post them on our community info board—so I am “referring” families in a more passive way—the information is just posted for all to see who might be interested.”

“When things come through on the HMG listserve that I feel may benefit our families we usually print the flyer and distribute it to all families in the center.”

Six respondents indicated their job does not involve making direct referrals to clients. Another six said they do not refer from the list serve, mostly without further explanation. The only one who provided an explanation said he/she doesn’t refer to things on the list serve because most of the services are not in their geographic region or the services are too expensive.

Ten respondents said they do provide the HMG toll free number, at least sometimes, depending on the needs of the family.

“I refer clients/families to the number and/or website as appropriate”

“I tell them they can call the number to gather further information or to discuss a specific topic.”

Reasons respondents do not inform clients about the HMG online portal when they make a referral

Less than a third of the respondents said they have made a referral to HMG's online portal along with a referral to a service announced on the list serve.

In explaining why they don't refer clients to the online portal, 90 respondents provided one or more reasons. The most common reason was lack of knowledge about the existence of the online portal, mentioned by 34 respondents. Another 4 respondents said they weren't comfortable making referrals to it because they didn't know enough about it. Four more respondents said they didn't refer to the online portal because they just didn't think about it.

"I didn't know the portal existed."

"I've never used the portal myself therefore not comfortable providing it as a resource."

"Did not think of it but will start doing it."

Another factor in not referring clients to the online portal dealt with clients' lack of access to a computer and the Internet, or poor computer skills; 23 respondents mentioned this as a reason.

"Many of the families we serve do not have access to a computer."

"The clients don't have easy access to the Internet."

"Most of the parents we serve either do not have access to the Internet at home and/or have limited computer skills."

Other reasons included that the respondent provides the referral the client needs so no additional information is needed (5 respondents); the respondent does not make referrals directly to clients (6 respondents); that they provide the toll free number or share the list serve information some other way, such as posting or distributing flyers (8 respondents). Seven respondents indicated they have referred clients to the online portal, but only if there is a need and only to those with Internet access. One respondent mentioned they had provided the information about the portal, but when the families were contacted by HMG, the parents became confused.

Suggestions to improve the list serve

When asked for suggestions to improve the list serve, 14 respondents offered suggestions and another 8 commented on positive things about HMG and the list serve.

The suggestions included:

- Post events sooner; some events are announced just one or two days before they occur and it's difficult to get clients or staff to attend (3 respondents suggested this)
- Post more Spanish and Vietnamese-language programs/information
- Add parents with email addresses to the list serve so they can receive the weekly announcements
- Post more free services
- Post more information about literacy programs
- List some of the events on the HMG Facebook page in addition to the list serve
- Post more services for middle class families as well as at-risk and low-income families
- Carefully research the resources before posting them. For example, a workshop by someone who does "brain-mapping" to diagnose ADHD (or other costly treatments that are not evidence-based) is not helpful to clients
- Make sure attached flyers can be opened and are not corrupt files
- Request flyers that use less ink for those programs that print hundreds of them
- Post more services to families in the Anaheim area; many families do not have transportation to the excellent resources offered in areas like Laguna Niguel
- Post more information about health fairs and health resources

Positive comments included:

- Having a flyer to print out is better than just having the information within the list serve announcement.
- The list serve is helpful (3 respondents)
- "Thanks for this great service that connects families, providers and services to benefit them in Orange County." (similar comments from 3 other respondents)

Other comments for Help Me Grow

The final question on the survey asked respondents for any other comments they would like to share with Help Me Grow. A total of 31 respondents wrote in a comment or praise for HMG.

Seven respondents offered a comment or suggestion:

- We receive requests for free literacy tutoring services for children, many of whom are English Language Learners. We only know of one provider in the northwest region of the county.

- HMG should learn about and include services that help adults learn to read so they can be learning partners with their children
- It would be a great idea for HMG to attend a Back to School Night or Open House Night at school districts so families can learn about and benefit from the array of services that HMG offers
- There should be a way to involve parents more
- There should be a simple FAQ and steps to follow (with pictures) on how to use the online portal
- More networking opportunities!
- Families are often hesitant to contact HMG even after I explain what it is to them. They prefer that I find specific resources for them.

Twenty-five respondents took the opportunity to write a note of praise and/or thanks to Help Me Grow. Three specifically commented that they appreciate the information by regions and like that all regions are included in one list serve announcement. Another three respondents mentioned how much they like HMG's Connection Cafés as a place to share information. Examples of the comments are provided below:

"I feel this is a very informative and useful resource. I love the way it's separated by regions. With all the events listed I am very aware of what's happening in our community. THANKS!"

"Great service HMG provides is this list serve, but also truly enjoy the Connection Cafés as they too are very informational."

"We are a small agency but appreciate the support of Help Me Grow to promote our services."

"I really love having Help Me Grow as a resource for families here at our center! I give out your information almost everyday to parents who call or to our own parents. Thanks again!"

"I love Help Me Grow!"

Summary of Key Findings

List serve announcements are sent to nearly 1400 valid email addresses each week. On average, 375 recipients (27%) open the email announcement and 127 (9%) click on an attachment in the announcement. Despite some week-to-week and seasonal variation, these numbers have been quite stable for the last 10 months.

Over 200 of 1400 subscribers to the Help Me Grow list serve responded to a survey about the list serve and Help Me Grow.

Nearly all the respondents knew about HMG's toll free phone number and nearly three quarters had referred clients to it. While nearly 70% of the respondents also knew about HMG's online portal, only 39% had ever used it.

Nearly all the respondents characterized the list serve announcements as useful, with 70% saying they are extremely or very useful. 78% of the respondents said they refer clients to the services they see announced on the list serve. However, respondents were less likely to say they also referred the clients to HMG's toll free number or online portal when they made a referral to an item found on the list serve. Just over half (53%) said they included a referral to the toll free number and only 32% said they referred clients to the online portal.

The most common reason for not providing clients with the HMG toll free number, cited by 15 of the 63 respondents who provided an explanation, was that the respondent felt they were providing the information the family needed and that an additional referral was not needed. Thirteen respondents said they had not provided the toll free number because they were not aware of it and another six said they just didn't think of doing it.

The primary reason given for not referring to the online portal was lack of knowledge about the existence of the portal or how to use it (38 of 90 respondents). The second most common reason was that the clients do not have access to a computer or the Internet and/or do not have adequate computer skills, mentioned by 23 respondents. Only 5 respondents said they did not refer to the online portal because they felt they were providing all the information the client needed.

Recommendations

- Continue to provide the weekly list serve announcements – those who use them find them very useful
- Promote use of the list serve at Connection Cafés and other events
- Continue to monitor open and click rates of the list serve
- Include a brochure about Help Me Grow as an attachment to each list serve announcement; include information on how to subscribe to the list serve
- Provide more information about the online portal, including training on how it works; training could be one-on-one or written instructions with screen shots
- Provide an opportunity for people to try out the online portal at Connection Cafés or other events
- Encourage programs to submit event information for the list serve earlier so the information can be posted well in advance of the event

- Ask programs to produce flyers that use less ink so they are less expensive for other providers to print
- Actively solicit and post information about:
 - programs in Spanish and Vietnamese
 - literacy programs
 - health resources
 - free services
 - services for middle class families
- Post more events on the HMG Facebook page
- Consider including parents among the list serve subscribers
- Review and consider all the suggestions provided by respondents



List Serve Announcement

Orange County

NORTH/CENTRAL REGION

Upcoming Developmental Screening Feb. 21st

8th Annual Literacy Fair - Feb. 22nd

SLEEP for your Child & Yourself - Feb 27th

Parent Information Night - Feb. 19th

SOUTH REGION

You're invited to a Talk on Changing Behaviors

You're invited to an Open House

WEST REGION

CPR Class in Vietnamese

Pure Game 1st Annual Fundraiser, March 9th

[Follow us on **twitter**](#)

[Find us on Facebook **f**](#)



Sign up for our Quarterly Parent Newsletter, Developments!

Dear _____,

Thank you for your participation. We hope you find this information useful to the community you serve.

Inclusion on this announcement does not constitute an endorsement of any agency, organization, program, person or event.

To learn more about any of the items listed, please contact the agency directly.

The deadline to submit requests for the List serve Announcement is *Friday by 5pm*. Click here for the guidelines.

Do you need resources for a child or family? We can help!

Call Help Me Grow at 866.GROW.025 or visit our online portal at www.helpmegrowoc.org

Help Me Grow

Do You Know Help Me Grow

Did you know that Help Me Grow connects families to early literacy opportunities?

North/Central Region

FREE DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING FOR CHILDREN AGES 0-5

Family Support Network will be holding a free developmental screening for any child ages 0-5 who lives in Orange County.

This is an excellent opportunity for families to receive a comprehensive screening to see how their child is progressing cognitively, developmentally and socially.

Each screening is staffed by highly qualified early intervention specialists in the following areas:

Audiology, Dental Care, Emotional Health, Fine Motor, Gross Motor, Health,

Speech and Language, & Vision

Children are screened on a first come, first serve basis. Early arrival is recommended. The next screenings will be:

Date: Friday, February 21

Location: Buena Park Library District

7150 La Palma Ave

Buena Park CA 90620

714-447-3301

8th Annual Literacy Fair - Feb. 22nd

La Habra City School District welcomes you to the 8th Annual Literacy Fair. This event is designed for birth to 7 year olds.

Free books, story time, face painting, healthy snacks and much, much more!

Saturday, February 22, 2014 Time: 9:00am to 12:00pm

Las Lomas School

301 W. Las Lomas Drive

La Habra, CA

For additional information, please call Oralia Birakos 562.690.2353

Click [here](#) for English & Spanish flyer.

SLEEP for your Child & Yourself - Feb 27th

Comfort Connection Invites you to a presentation on SLEEP. Parents, are you always tired? Not getting enough sleep because of your child's difficult sleeping habits? Presentation by Emily Varon, MS, BCBA Sleep Consultant for ACES

This presentation will offer parents information on:

1. Average sleep needs of children, birth-18 years
2. Common sleep problems in children
3. Identifying your child's specific needs
4. Sleep-related behavior intervention and problem-solving
5. Question and Answer session

Thursday, February 27th, 2014 Time: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Regional Center of Orange County

1525 N. Tustin Avenue

Santa Ana, California 92705

(Free parking is available in parking structure across the driveway.)

RSVP to Patricia Garcia at 714-558-5400 or pgarcia@rcocdd.com

This presentation is offered at no cost. No Child Care Available.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING CHILDREN.

Click [here](#) for English flyer. Click [here](#) for Spanish flyer.

Parent Information Night - Feb. 19th

The Brea Olinda Unified School District (BOUSD) will be offering a parent information night to provide information regarding Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Childcare Programs for the 2013/14 school year.

Parents with children ages 2-5 are encouraged to attend.

February 19th, 2014 Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Community Rooms adjacent to the BOUSD offices on the second floor of the Civic Center.

Please call for additional information at 714-990-7556. We look forward to seeing you there.

Click [here](#) for flyer.

South Region

You're invited to: "How to Change Behaviors"

KIDA is pleased to welcome Dr. Doreen Granpeesheh (Founder of Center for Autism and Related Disorders) to speak at the KIDA Innovation Series, where will be continuing the discussion on "How to Change Behaviors" of individuals with autism and related disorders. This is a great opportunity for prospective parents and professionals to hear the latest advances in behavior management and ask specific questions about how these can be applied.

Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2014 from 11:45am to 1:00pm

Location: KIDA (Kids Institute for Development & Advancement): 17861 Von Karman Ave., Irvine, CA 92614

Contact Information: For more information please contact Chelsea Turner (949)222-2214 admin@kida.com

Please see attached

You're invited to an Open House

Us Too Tiny Tots Gymnastics Open House

Wednesday, February 19th

10am to 12pm

Come check out our new Tiny Tots program we will have activities set up for your little one and you. Snacks will be provided.

Come meet our Tiny Tots coach!

Classes are designed for all kids 1 to 3 years

Click [here](#) for flyer

West Region

CPR Class in Vietnamese

The American Heart Association is opening a training CPR class in Vietnamese for Adult, Child & Infant

Date: February 15, 2014 (Saturday)

Time: From 10 am until 2 pm

Location: Westminster Community Services Center

8200 Westminster Ave, Westminster, CA 92683

(Corner of Westminster and Jackson Street)

Cost: \$40 for students who need to have a CPR certificate.

\$50 for students who need to have both CPR & First Aid certificate.

All inquiries and/or to enroll, you can email for Steve Hoa Pham: mustknowcpr@yahoo.com or call 714 462-7939.

Click [here](#) for detailed flyer in English. Click [here](#) for detailed flyer in Vietnamese.

Pure Game 1st Annual Fundraiser, March 9th

The FOOTY-GOLF Classic

Pure Game announces its 1st Annual Fundraiser, The FOOTY-GOLF Classic. Join us in transforming the lives of at-risk children supporting The Footy-Golf Classic. Sponsor, attend and invite your friends and family to join us in a fun and fantastic day.

March 9, 2014 Time: 12:30pm

Costa Mesa Country Club

1701 Golf Course Drive

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

A Single Player Package \$80.00 includes: (1) Tournament Playing Spots w/Gift Bags(1) Reservations for Awards Dinner(1)

Official FOOTY-GOLF Classic commemorative soccer ball. See additional information on the flyer.

For more information on the event please contact Laura Marroquin at tony@thepuregame.org

Help Me Grow connects children and their families to services to enhance the development, behavior and learning of young children. By calling the toll free number 866.GROW.025 (866.476.9025) or through our [online portal](#), parents, caregivers, child care providers, early educators and health care providers have a single point of access to developmental services for young children who live in Orange County.