



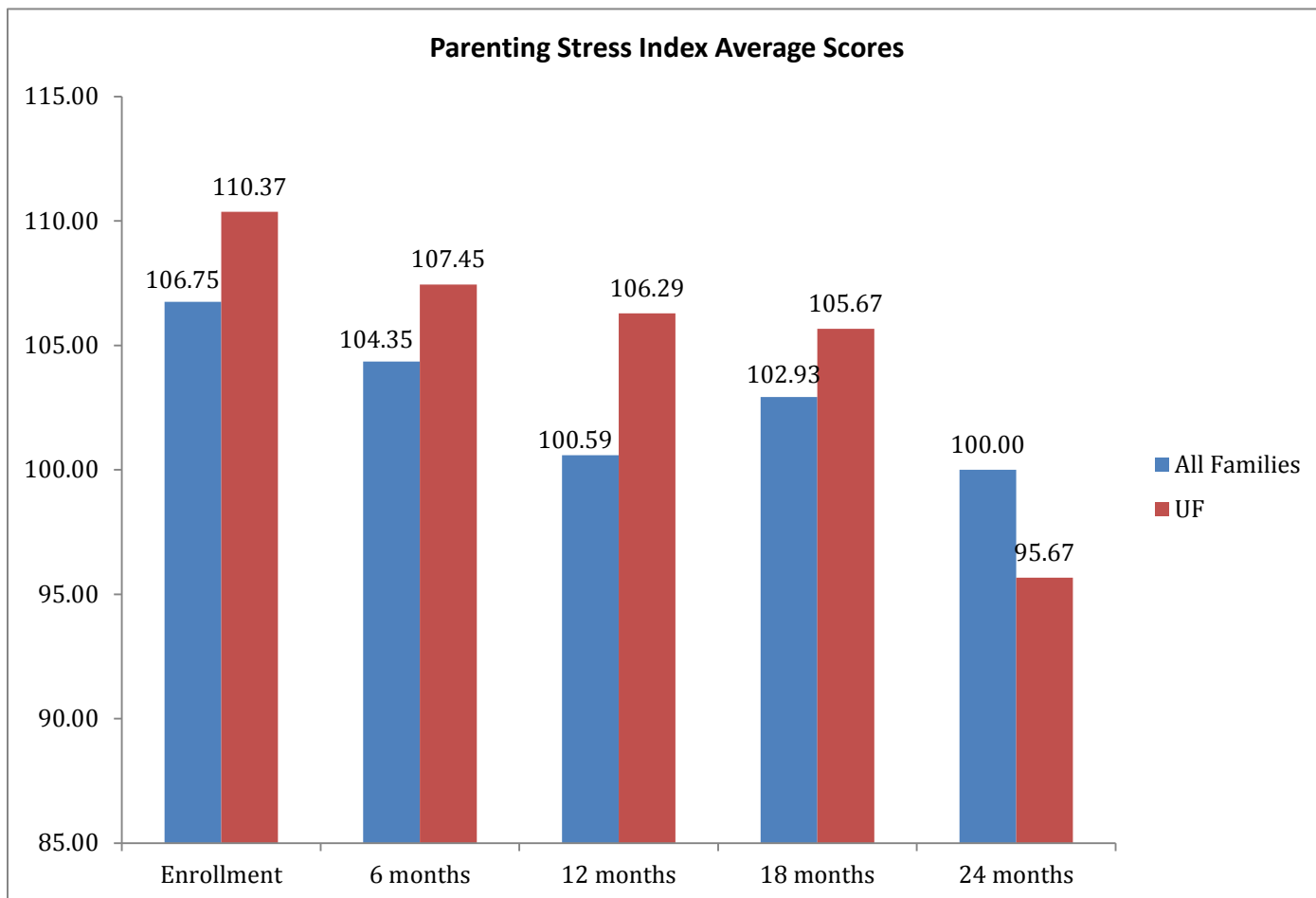
A COMPARISON OF FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN THE UNITED FAMILIES PROGRAM SERVICES

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Overview: Since 2006, United Families (UF) has been dedicated to empowering families to address the challenges of parenting/care for youth who have mental health challenges through education, support, and advocacy. This brief provides a comparison of caregivers participating in UF and all other families in OCOF on measures of *Parenting Stress Index (PSI)* and *Caregiver Strain Questionnaire (CGSQ)* over time (2009-2013).

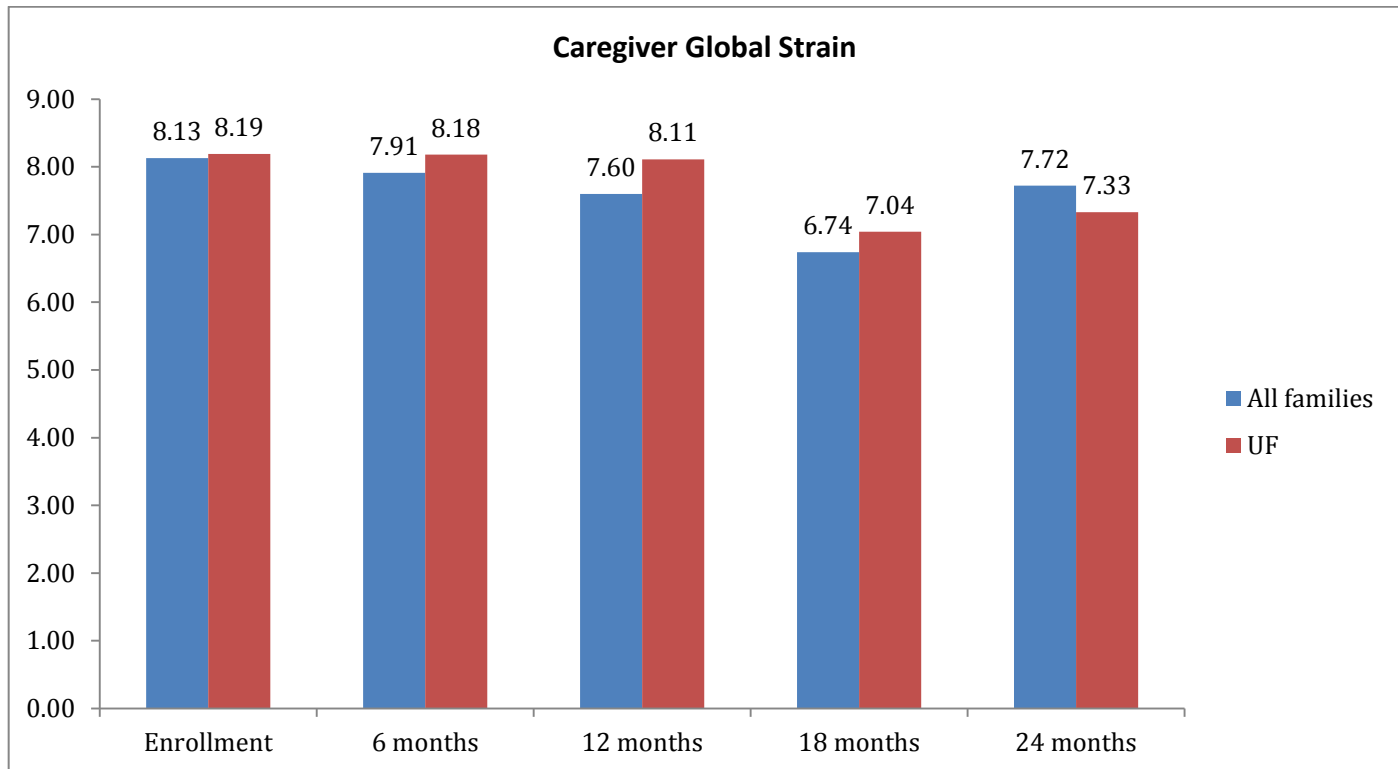
Parenting Stress Index (PSI). The Parenting Stress Index (PSI) is a tool that provide a measure of overall stress in the parent-child system. The average scores of UF Caregivers (and the sample size for each time point) who completed the PSI at enrollment into OCOF (19), 6 months (11), 12 months (7), 18 months (6), and 24 months (3) were compared to PSI average scores of all OCOF caregivers (and the sample size for each time point) at enrollment (69), 6 months (31), 12 months (17), 18 months (15), and 24 months (7). Graph 1 indicates that **caregivers participating in UF had higher stress at most time points, but also experience a greater decrease in stress scores from 110.37 (enrollment) to 95.67 (24 months)** compared to all caregivers who show a decrease from 106.75 (enrollment) to 100.00 (24 months).

Graph1. Parenting Stress Index Over Time



Caregiver Strain Questionnaire (CGSQ). The Caregiver Strain Questionnaire measures the strain that results from special demands involved in caring for a child/youth with mental health challenges. The Global Strain Score reported here indicates the impact of such strain on the entire family. The average global strain scores for UF caregivers (and the sample size at each time point) at enrollment (30), 6 months (18), 12 months (14), 18 months (10), and 24 months (8) were compared to the average global strain scores of all OCOF caregivers (and the sample size at each time point) at enrollment (120), 6 months (58), 12 months (37), 18 months (30), and 24 months (12). Similar to the caregiver stress, Graph 2 indicates **higher strain scores, but also a decrease in average strain scores for UF caregivers from 8.19 (enrollment) to 7.33 (24 months)** compared to a decrease for all OCOF caregivers from 8.13 (enrollment) to 7.72 (24 months).

Graph 2. Caregiver Global Strain Over Time



Conclusion: It appears that **caregivers participating in UF experience slightly greater decreases in caregiver strain and stress than all other OCOF caregivers**, however, these results should be interpreted with caution due to small sample sizes. More importantly, caregivers participating in UF have higher average strain and stress scores at most time points which suggests that **UF is serving the caregivers who are experiencing higher strain and stress** as the result of caring for children with mental health challenges.