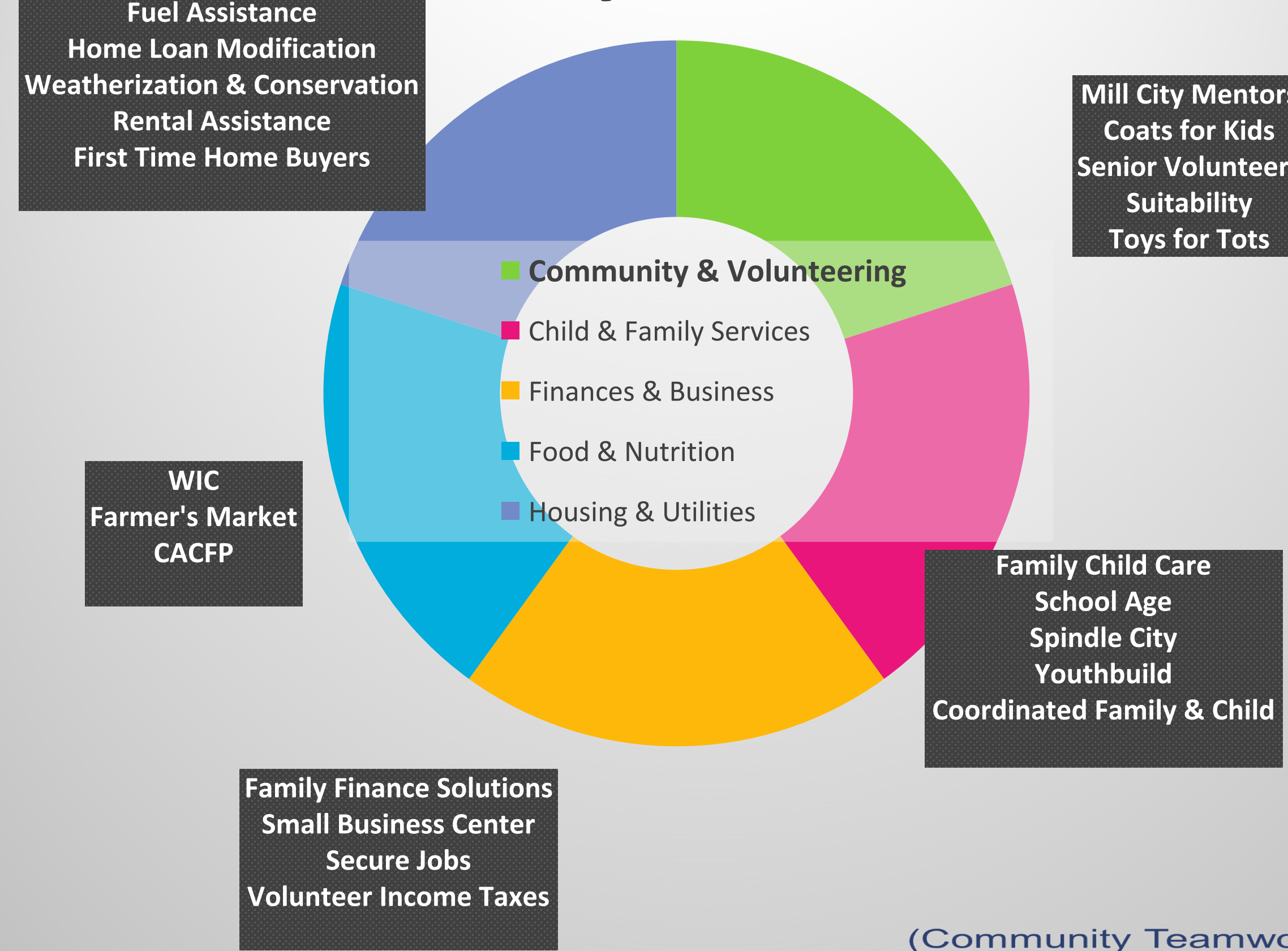


What is Community Teamwork?

- Community Action Agency
- Serves 63 cities and town in the Greater Lowell area
- One of 9 regional non-profit housing agencies serving this area.
- Current operating budget over \$70 million
- Over 400 employees

(Community Teamwork, 2020)

Community Teamwork Services



Project Objective

- To identify changes in protective factors and concerning social emotional behavior of children ages 3-5 enrolled in a Head Start program by examining pre and post DECA assessment data during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Related Literature

- "Times of hardship can also allow for creative opportunity: to build stronger relationships with our children and adolescents"(Cluver et al., 2020, p.3).
- "Research is needed to assess the implications of policies enacted to contain the pandemic on mental health of children and adolescents, and to estimate the risk/benefit ratio of measures such as home schooling, in order to be better prepared for future developments" (Fegert et al., 2020, p.1).

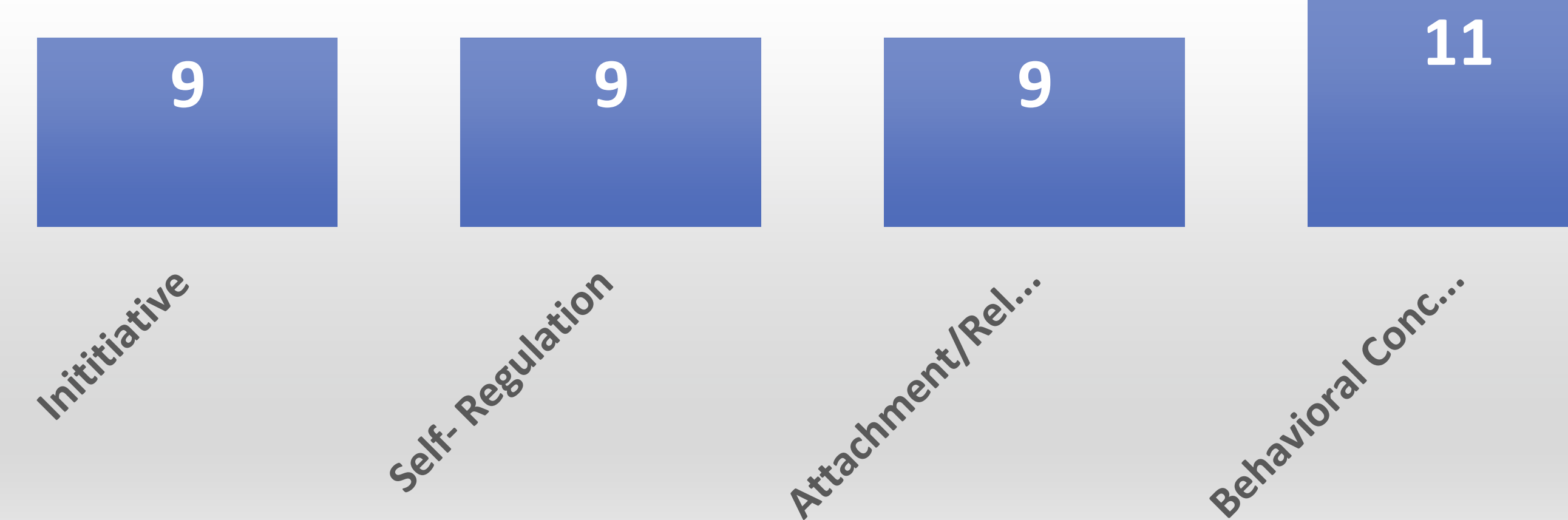
Method

- Teachers completed DECA assessments on all enrolled classroom students prior to the Covid-19 closure.
- Teachers completed post DECA assessments on 42 returning children previously enrolled in their classroom who received a pre assessment prior to the shutdown.
- Teachers entered results directly into DECA database.
- Intern compared and analyzed pre and post DECA assessment data and compiled findings.

Assessment Tool

The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment is a norm referenced behavior rating scale that evaluates the frequency of 27 positive behaviors related to 3 protective factors central to social and emotional health and resilience. It also serves as a screener for behavioral concerns (The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Preschool Program, 2018). The chart below lists each of the areas represented on the assessment and the number of questions devoted to each topic area.

DECA Protective Factor Measurements



References

- Cluver, L., Lachman, J. M., Sherr, L., Wessels, I., Krug, E., Rakotomalala, S., ... McDonald, K. (2020). Parenting in a time of COVID-19. *The Lancet*, 395(10231). [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(20\)30736-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(20)30736-4)
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- Fegert, J. M., Vitiello, B., Plener, P. L., & Clemens, V. (2020). Challenges and burden of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic for child and adolescent mental health: a narrative review to highlight clinical and research needs in the acute phase and the long return to normality. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-020-00329-3>

Data Analysis



Conclusion

This preliminary data suggests that children's 4 month experience at home during the pandemic proved to show improvements in social emotional behavior. All areas of need declined and the majority of children currently fall in the typical range for their age group. The number of total protective factors significantly increased. Initiative, self-regulation and attachment are considered to be key protective factors. In addition to this positive trend in protective factors, a decrease in behavioral concerns is evidenced by the 100% typical behaviors. The goal at Community Teamwork is to have as many children as possible within the typical range in all areas. Although a decline in areas of strength is noted, it is still considered a positive outcome by their measure. Further study recommendations include an increased sample size and additional post data collection during similar timeframe for comparison.