Establishing a Sustainable Evaluation Plan for the “Raising Emotionally Healthy Children” Program

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Prepared for AltaMed Health Services Corporation
Patient Centered Medical Work Group

Presented July 17, 2014
Introduction

Boyle Heights Community

• Densely populated urban community east of downtown Los Angeles
• One of the largest Latino and Mexican American populations in U.S.
• Low income working community
• Historically lagged behind other communities in education, healthcare, economic well-being, and public safety
• Community based organizations have begun interventions to eliminate social issues within community

AltaMed Boyle Heights Clinic

• The largest federally qualified health center (FQHC) in this community
• Patient population of ~14,000
• Striving to provide quality care without exception the clinic serves a largely underserved and uninsured population
Background

Identifying the Need for a Parenting Intervention

- Former AltaMed Boyle Heights pediatrician Dr. Mona Puri
- Parents having difficulty controlling and correcting children’s behavior in the waiting and exam rooms
- Parenting is especially important in underserved communities
- The quality of parenting that a child receives can affect their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development (Sanders 2008).
- “Raising Emotionally Healthy Children” program was initiated in November 2012

Importance of Evaluating the Program

- There are few studies on parenting intervention in Latino community and/or medical settings
- Evaluation of program is important for its further development and larger-scale implementation to the other communities that AltaMed serves
- The current evaluation plan has failed to yield the desired data regarding changes in parental knowledge and behavior
Methodology

The initial evaluation was based on a quasi-experimental design and included:

1. Administration of a demographics survey during the first session
2. Administration of a knowledge pre/posttest during the first and last sessions respectively
3. Administration of a parenting behavioral survey pre-, post-, and 3-months out of the class
4. A post class survey to evaluate the class as a whole

All of the test and surveys were available in both English and Spanish

A total of 25 surveys were collected from sessions that occurred in May 2013, July 2013, October 2013, December 2013, February 2014, and May 2014.

To address the issues with the evaluation of the program, this project involved:

1. Evaluating surveys from previous “Raising Emotionally Healthy Children” parenting classes
2. Analyzing the surveys to understand reasons for participants not entirely completely surveys
3. Suggesting and implementing changes to evaluation plan to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability in the future
Results

Demographics of Participants

- **Age Range**: 
  - <20: 0.00%
  - 21-30: 5.00%
  - 31-40: 10.00%
  - >40: 15.00%

- **Languages Spoken**: 
  - Spanish Only: 20.00%
  - Both Spanish and English: 40.00%
  - English Only: 60.00%

- **Gender**: 
  - Male: 0.00%
  - Female: 100.00%

- **Number of Children**: 
  - 1: 0.00%
  - 2: 5.00%
  - 3: 10.00%
  - 4: 15.00%
  - 5: 20.00%

- **Before This Class If My Child Threw a Tantrum I Ignored Him**: 
  - No: 100.00%
  - Yes: 0.00%

- **Now If My Child Throws a Tantrum I Ignore Him**: 
  - No: 100.00%
  - Yes: 0.00%

- **How Often Did You Spank Before Coming to This Class?**: 
  - Never: 50.00%
  - Once a day: 0.00%
  - Once a week: 100.00%
  - Several times a day: 0.00%

- **How Often Do You Spank Now?**: 
  - Never: 0.00%
  - Once a day: 0.00%
  - Once a week: 0.00%

- **Before This Class If My Child Threw a Tantrum I Ignored Him**: 
  - No: 100.00%
  - Yes: 0.00%
Results

Communication

Reinforcing Positive Behaviors

Preparing for Outings
Discussion

• Overall change in parental behavior to include more effective methods of parenting in regards to: discipline, communication, reinforcing positive behaviors, and preparing for outings

• Surveys were not reviewed for completeness

• Evaluation was not being conducted as intended
  • Only 3 participants completed a knowledge pre- and posttest
  • Behavior survey was administered as combined pre/posttest
  • No post class survey
Recommendations

• S.M.A.R.T objectives
  • Specific, measurable goals that are attainable, relevant, and time bound
• Respond to concerns/needs expressed by parents
  • Focus groups
  • Surveys
• Yearly evaluation
• Recruitment plan
  • Digital stories
  • Younger parents and grandparents
Conclusion

Changes were implemented to address the inconsistencies and missing data found upon evaluation of the surveys collected from previous parenting sessions:

1. Questions regarding education level, ethnicity, community, and marital status were added to the demographics survey.
2. Separate knowledge pre/posttest was created for each session with questions focused on the objectives of that respective session.
3. Participants will complete a knowledge pretest before the beginning of the session and repeat it at the end of that same session.

Establishing a reliable evaluation plan and valuable curriculum is essential for further development and larger-scale implementation of the “Raising Emotionally Healthy Children” program to the other communities that AltaMed serves.
Acknowledgements

GE-NMF Primary Care Leadership Program
Faculty and Staff at AltaMed Health Services, Inc.

Dr. Puri
Jessica Murio-Garcia
Dr. Hochman
Dr. Vega
Bessie Ramos