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Domestic violence public service announcement : the Women's Crisis Center

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Domestic Violence Public Service Announcement
The Women's Crisis Center

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Abstract:

This research project is the development of a 30 second Public Service Announcement addressing domestic violence, for the Women's Crisis Center. The purpose of the PSA is to increase awareness to the Salinas and South County communities of the agency's services so that these services can be utilized.

Executive Summary

This capstone project addresses domestic violence in the Salinas and South County communities. The Women's Crisis Center has served the community with such issues as domestic violence and sexual assault, for over 19 years. The agency services diverse groups of people such as, women, children, teens and men. The agency serves various ethnic groups, but the majority of the populations served are Latino. The problem that this project is addressing is the lack of awareness that these communities have with the Women's Crisis Center and the services that the agency provides. The project consists of a Public Service Announcement addressing domestic violence with women. It gives a brief story, based on actual events, about one woman's struggle with domestic violence. The end of the PSA includes a 1-800 phone number so that anyone experiencing domestic violence can contact the Women's Crisis Center. The purpose of this project is to increase the number of domestic violence clients with the Women's Crisis Center. This will enable the communities of Salinas and South County to utilize the services that the agency provides.

Description of Agency

The Women's Crisis Center is located in Salinas, California and has served the community of Salinas and South County for over 19 years. The mission of the agency is "To provide crisis intervention, prevention and educational services to reduce violence in the lives of women and children in Salinas and South County". The Women's Crisis Center (WCC) is a social service agency that offers a wide variety of services. Some of the services provided are, temporary restraining orders (TRO), harassment orders, parenting classes, family, individual and child counseling, self defense classes, drop TRO classes and a sexual assault response team (SART), hospital accompaniment. The WCC is a non-profit organization that is headed by a board of directors and supervised by an executive director. There are two main units throughout the agency the sexual assault unit and the domestic violence unit. In every unit there are program directors, supervisors, and community educators. In addition to the two main units there are therapists that participate in the Child and Adolescent Therapy Program. I have attached the agency's organizational chart in the Appendices, for a visual on how the agency is structured. While I interned at the WCC I was working with the advocates and volunteers. The Volunteer and SART Advocate Coordinator, Steven Yancy supervised this department.

Description of Populations

The WCC has been serving the Salinas and South County communities for over 19 years and recently the agency has built a new office in the King City area. This office was established to better serve the community of King City and its surrounding communities.

At both locations diverse groups of people are served. The agency serves women, children, teens and men. Ninety-four percent of the clients, assisted with domestic violence programs are women and 4% are teen's ages 13-17 years. About 61% of the population served is Latino, but there are other groups served such as, African Americans, Asians and Caucasians (WCC, 2003).

Description of Problem

After researching some statistics on domestic violence, the Monterey County law enforcement exhibited higher numbers of reported cases of domestic violence than the WCC. The number of reported cases in 2001, through Monterey County law enforcement, was 1,561 and the number reported to law enforcement through the WCC was 678. The number of cases involving advocacy within the justice system, for the victim through the WCC was 276. Not enough people are aware of the services that the WCC provides with domestic violence and are not able to utilize the services. If more people were aware of the WCC services for domestic violence then the services could be utilized.

Background History

Domestic violence has been a customary practice throughout the world. During the 18th century, English common law considered a woman the property of the man. It was his duty to discipline her and the children through physical beatings. The only concern for the women was related to the thickness of the stick that the law allowed for her to be

beaten with (Hoffman, 2002). According to the Prevention Institute, domestic violence is "The use of force with the intent to inflict injury or death upon another individual or group(s) and includes the threat of force to control another individual or group," and "aggressive human behavior involving the use of physical, psychological or emotional force with the intent to cause harm to others." Domestic violence is also "the abuse by one person of another in an intimate relationship. These relationships can be comprised of marriage partners, partners living together, dating relationships, and even former spouses, former partners and former boyfriends/girlfriends" (Hoffman, 2002). Domestic violence is not always physical abuse; it can be emotional, with neglect and the absence of love. It can be sexual, by the force or demand of sexual acts. It can be financial by withholding cash from the partner and it could be psychological by negative name-calling and offensive remarks. Domestic violence mainly affects the female gender. Nine out of ten cases of serious domestic violence involve a man harming a woman. In 1999, only 8% of abused women had told a doctor about the abuse, and fewer than half had told anyone (Harvard, 2004). The overall intent of domestic violence is to have control over another person or group. It was not until the 1970's that the U.S. Justice System began to view this problem with any seriousness (Hoffman, 2002).

Project Description

My capstone project is a Public Service Announcement (PSA) for the Women's Crisis Center. The PSA Aired on May 6, 2005 on the Public Access Television station AMP,

which is community media for Monterey County. The PSA stars a woman, Rosa, and she is telling her domestic violence story to the camera. The scene takes place outside on the grass. The camera shots are taken from different angles such as the face, hands, neck, legs and feet. It focuses on the body language more than the facial gestures. At the end of the PSA the 1-800 number for the WCC will be provided for anyone that would like to contact the agency. The PSA will benefit the community of Salinas and South County, by bringing awareness to the Women's Crisis Center and the services that the agency provides. This PSA will help by getting the word out to the community that there is help out there for people with this issue. Communities rely on the mass media to tell them what is going on within their area (Lorimer, 1994). According to the staff at the WCC, the agency has never had a PSA. The only means of awareness that has been utilized is through word of mouth and flyers that are passed out at different locations. The agency as a whole wanted to move ahead into the 21st century and apply mass communication by providing information to an unknown audience by broadcast media (Lorimer, 1994). The film is not going to be a commercial because a commercial is aimed at selling a product. A PSA addresses an issue and the issue that I will be addressing is domestic violence towards women. The contribution that this PSA will be making is made with the interest of the public in mind. News is something that the public has a right to know about- information that helps lead their daily lives (Korzenny, 1992). According to Korzenny, it is common to think that communication indicates both change and improvements. I want

to reach the community through awareness so that anyone that is having a domestic violence problem should have the opportunity to change their situation.

In order for me to accomplish the goal of increasing the number of domestic violence clients to the WCC, I set up an evaluation plan for the Women's Crisis Center. The evaluation plan will allow the agency to measure the amount of new clients served for domestic violence. The initial count will begin six months prior to the PSA being televised, and will continue for six months after the PSA was initially aired. Another method that will be conducted is to compare and contrast the previous years to the years after the PSA was televised. This will enable the agency to distinguish the differences with the amounts of new clients that the agency serves for domestic violence.

Application of Project to Academic Requirements

The Major Learning Outcomes that I covered in my project are Collaboration, Cross-Cultural Competency, Information Management, Knowledge of Health and Human Services, and Leadership.

The agency and I are collaborating to reach a common goal, which is to make more individuals aware of the services that the Women's Crisis Center offers and working together to bring awareness to the community about domestic violence. It demonstrates my ability to work in a team by executing decision-making methods through the PSA

process, in an interprofessional setting. I established a common mission and purpose within the agency.

I engaged between differences within myself and with others through Cross-Cultural Competencies. I built relationships with diverse populations by characterizing mutual respect and sensitivity. The PSA will touch a lot of different cultural backgrounds of people in Monterey County. I am aware of the diverse cultural groups and sensitive to those individuals.

With Information Management, I demonstrated my ability to apply computer and technology to the health and human service department. I not only taped the PSA; I directed and edited the whole process. I utilized my technology skills by presenting a televised PSA. I understand the role that technology plays in the private non-profit health and human service delivery system.

My Knowledge of Health and Human Services increased by researching literature reviews on domestic violence relating to women and the use of mass communication to inform the community. I understand the factors that play a role with domestic violence and who are at risk. My attitude toward domestic violence is that everyone should attempt to make a difference. Whether it is speaking up, volunteering time or simply donating funds, every little bit helps.

During the PSA process, I was in a leadership position. I motivated others to the same direction that I was going. I set up, taped and filmed the entire process. I engaged in risk taking and change by developing a PSA for the Women's Crisis Center. By heightening the information about the WCC, I will be able to have families and communities that are not currently being served, become aware of the services.

After reading the California State University Monterey Bay's Vision Statement, my project contains some aspects from it. The Vision Statement mentions that it serves diverse, historically uneducated and low-income people. Domestic violence victims statistically involve these same groups of individuals. I want my project to reach the multicultural and gender-equitable learning community. The agency is willing to incorporate experimental use of technologies by using the PSA to reach the communities that are unaware of these services. Many women know little about the resources available to them and do not know what to expect from their abusers or from their helpers (Harvard, 2004). This technology will increase access and enrich the quality of learning by awareness. The WCC is aimed at contributing to the well being of the community and the quality of life and development of the clients.

The format for my presentation at the May 2005 Capstone festival will go as followed; I will start by discussing background information about domestic violence. The background information will include national statistics, Monterey County statistics and the Women's Crisis Center statistics. I will then show my PSA to the audience and

discuss the goal to increase the number of domestic violence clients served. I will describe my evaluation plan for the agency and how it will be measured. I will end the presentation with what I learned through out the entire capstone process.

In addition to my display board, I will have a television and digital videodisk playing my PSA in a loop. I will have pamphlets about the agency and its services. My display board will have posters that depict domestic violence and the negative effects from its existence.

The benefit of producing a Public Service Announcement for the Women's Crisis Center is that this project will remain a part of the WCC history and continue to be utilized after I have left the agency. The PSA will continue to be aired on public access television for the community of Salinas and Monterey County for their awareness

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