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Child Neglect Awareness Educational Workshop

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Authors Note

Lizette Escobar, Department of Collaborative Health and Human Service, California State University Monterey Bay. This capstone project was created to inform parents in the Monterey County about “Child Neglect Awareness” through an educational workshop. Correspondence concerning addressing this article should be sent to Lizette Escobar, California State University, Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Seaside, CA

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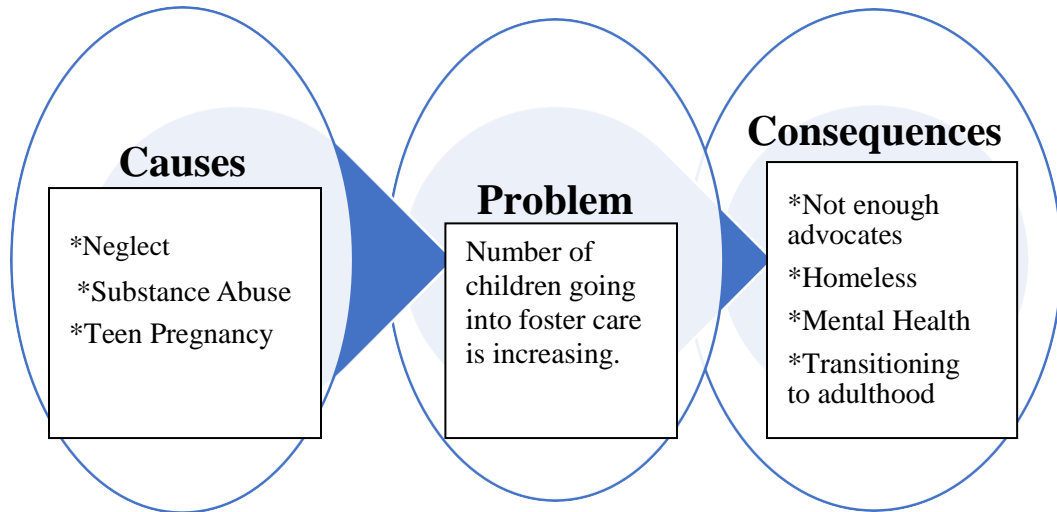
Abstract

CASA of Monterey County provides advocates to the foster children who are in the CASA program. The number of children ending up in foster care is increasing, and neglect was found to be one of the top reasons that children are placed into foster care. CASA of Monterey County recognizes this issue and implemented the “Child Neglect Awareness Educational Workshop.” This workshop taught parents about child neglect, in order to prevent them from neglecting their children. This educational workshop was held at University Park Elementary School and participants were a group of Hispanic parents, since Hispanics/Latinos have the highest rate of child neglect in Monterey County. In addition, a pre/post survey was handed out in the educational workshop. Data was collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the educational workshop. Thereby, it is recommended that CASA of Monterey County should continue implementing more educational workshops in the Monterey County to parents in the community to prevent children from going into the foster care system.

Keywords: Child Neglect, Monterey County, CASA of Monterey County, Foster Youth, Hispanics/Latino.

Agency and Community Served

CASA of Monterey County is an agency designated to support children who go into foster care system. Children are appointed to CASA from the Monterey County court. Children from the ages of 5-21 are referred to CASA. One of the main reasons why children are referred to CASA is because they were removed for neglect. CASA of Monterey County currently serves about 226 children, 136 of them have active advocates and the rest of the 90 children are currently on the waiting list to receive an advocate. According to CASA of Monterey County (2018), approximately 120 females and 91 males are in the program of CASA, about 148 of the children are Hispanic/Latinos, 19 are Caucasian, 14 Bi-Racial, 9 African-American, and 11 of them are unknown. The majority of the population served in CASA is Hispanic/Latinos. According to the United States Census Bureau (2017), 58.8% are Hispanic/Latinos who live in the Monterey County, meaning they are the majority of the population in the Monterey County. CASA helps find advocates for children who have been neglected and abused. CASA trains advocates who are volunteers from the community. These advocates give a voice to the children and take them out on social outings, so they can forget the hard times that they might be going through. These advocates are a great support system for the children who are in the foster care system since some of them don't have a reliable person who they can turn to when facing difficult situations. In addition, CASA's mission is, "To train and support community volunteers who advocate for abused and neglected children placed in foster care, upholding the children's rights while pursuing a safe and permanent home," (CASA of Monterey County, 2018).



The Problem

Many children end up in the foster care system for a variety of different reasons. For example, children can be removed from their parent or guardian and be placed in foster care for physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, incarceration, abandonment, death or be voluntarily placed. Sometimes parents are not aware that by doing this abuse, could potentially lead to having their children be placed in the foster care system. It has been reported by Kidsdata (2018), that the top three reasons why children were removed from their parent or guardian in the Monterey County were for general neglect (44.3%), physical abuse (29.4%) and sexual abuse (12.8%) in the year 2015. The rate of children going into the foster care system has also gone up in Monterey County. In the year 2014, there were 377 kids from Monterey County who were in the foster care system and 450 children in the year 2015 (Kidsdata, 2017). Children from different ages, ethnicities, and genders between 0-18 years old can end up in the system.

Contributing Factors

Children who are in the foster care system are removed due to physical abuse or neglect. Some of these parent's abuse drugs or have mental health problems which can cause them to neglect or abuse their child. According to (CASA of Monterey county, 2018), 95% of the children who have been removed are due to having a parent that has a substance abuse problem. Some of these parents have a substance abuse problem because, is their way of coping with

whatever issue that they might have such as depression or anxiety. Not being able to find the right help for their substance abuse can bring so many problems to their lives. In other cases, other parents might have had their children at a younger age which puts these children at risk since some of the parents are not well educated or can be living in poverty. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention they state,

Almost one-half of girls in foster care become pregnant by age 19. Compared to mothers age 20-21, young teen mothers were 2.2 times more likely to have a child placed in foster care during the first 5 years after a birth (2010).

Having a child at a young age can bring many obstacles and struggles. Parents might not be aware that by having your child placed in the foster care system can bring many more obstacles and issues that they will have to face. The court obligates parents to attend parenting classes, get drug tested, attend substance abuse classes, and go to therapy in order to get their child back (CASA of Monterey County, 2018). Parents must follow all the orders of the court, if not they will be at risk for not reunifying back with their child or potentially getting their parent rights taken away.

Consequences

The rate of children going in to the foster care system has been an impact on CASA of Monterey County because; the need for more advocates has gone up as well. CASA currently is serving 236 children, 136 are active cases with advocates and the other 90 are currently on the waiting list to receive an advocate (CASA of Monterey County Database, 2018). Children going into the foster care system also put the community at risk. Some important risk factors that the community can face when children are put in foster care is not having enough foster parents or group homes that the children can go to. Also, once the child is 18 years old they can possibly become homeless by not having a secure place to live. By not having enough foster parents or group homes, some of these children can be transfer out to a different county. The number of

people who are homeless has gone up and has had a huge impact in the Monterey County.

According to Marino he states,

Homelessness in Monterey County increased by 23 percent since 2015, according to the biannual point-in-time homeless count conducted on Jan. 25 by the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers. Of the total counted, 17 percent were under the age of 18, 16 percent were 18-24, and 67 percent were age 25 and above. The largest percentage age group was 41-50 years old, at 27 percent. (2017, June 26)

By the time these children turn 18 years old they can either decide to stay in the system till age 21 or be out of the foster care system. Unfortunately, for some of these young teens who do not wish to continue in the foster care system can end up homeless, since some of them won't have a stable home.

Project Title: Child Neglect Awareness Educational Workshop

Project Description

An educational workshop on child neglect is a capstone project that was implemented. The educational workshop was useful for the CASA agency and the community. Increasing child neglect awareness will be helpful for families in the community who do not know the certain types of neglect that there is. By providing this educational workshop to parents in Monterey County community, they will learn if they are neglecting their children. At the beginning of the educational workshop a pre-survey was handed out to the parents to see if they knew what child neglect is. The information that was provided in the educational workshop was; the types of neglect, what can happen if they neglect their children, how child neglect affects a child's life, signs of child neglect, and statistics on child neglect and how CASA helps children who are in the foster care system. Resources from the community were provided to the parents such as medical insurance assistance, food assistance, parenting classes, substance abuse programs and family therapy. These resources were provided to the parents during the educational workshop in case they didn't know where to go look for help. At the end of the educational workshop a post-

survey was passed out to see if the education workshop was useful for the parents.

In appendix A, gives details about the task and implementation of the project. Some of the obstacles that are being faced at the time is gathering all the information for the workshop and putting it together in a power point presentation. Another challenge was creating questions for the survey. In addition, having enough information about child neglect to provide to the parents was another concern that was faced. Hopefully enough educational information is provided, so that the participants can learn something in the workshop.

Project Results

The outcome of the “Child Neglect Awareness Workshop,” turned out to be positive. The number of the parents that were expected to come to the workshop was at least 5 parents. At the beginning of the workshop there was 6 parents and by the middle of the workshop one parent had to leave early. There were a total of 5 parents by the end of the workshop. This was a good turn out since the workshop was held at 9:45 in the morning and the majority of parents work and can’t attend workshops in the morning. During the workshop some of the parents had a lot of questions about what CASA does and how they can become a CASA advocate to a foster child. One of the parents who was in the workshop had always wanted to get more information about what CASA does and wanted to potentially become an advocate but, she stated that she has not had time to go into the agency and get information. She was happy that the workshop had information about what CASA does.

Also, parents had questions in regards to the types of neglects that were shown in the power point. Some parents were surprise with the information that was provided in the workshop. The parents were engaged during the workshop. The power point presentation for the workshop was given in Spanish since all the parents in the workshop were Hispanics/Latino. The pre/post surveys were also in Spanish (shown in Appendix B). Maria Perez who is a CASA mentor attended the

workshop to make sure the workshop had a good outcome. Having Maria in the workshop made it easier because since most of the questions that the parents had had to do with CASA, Maria was able to help in answering any questions or concerns that the parents had. After the workshop the pre/post surveys were collected and analyzed. Appendix C shows the results of the pre/post surveys that were handed out during the workshop. For the pre-survey (shown in Appendix B) there were a couple of questions that the parents did not get correct. For example, questions number 4,5,7, and 8 (Shown in Appendix C), were the question that most of the parents got incorrect in the pre-survey. For the post survey (Shown in Appendix C) questions 4,5,7, and 8 were almost answer correctly by the parents. This goes to show that the information that was provided in the power point presentation during the workshop was useful for the parents and they got to learn something during the workshop.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Overall the educational workshop turned out to be successful. It is recommended that CASA of Monterey County continues to implement educational workshop to the Hispanic community in the Monterey County. Since neglect is one of the top reasons why children end up in foster care system in Monterey County and Hispanics are also the top ethnicity that has high rates of neglect, having educational workshops would benefit the Monterey County community. The educational workshops don't have to necessarily need to be about neglect, they can be about the foster care system or the struggles that foster kids go through when put in foster care. Providing this kind of information can benefit the community since most of the community in Monterey County is Hispanic/Latino and may not be inform about what the foster care system is.

Personal Reflection

Implementing this capstone project has been a great experience and an eye opener. A lot of information was learned throughout this project. For the capstone project, one of the things that had to be done was providing resources for parents in case they needed it such as food assistance, parenting classes and substance abuse. Getting the resources from other agencies such as Door to Hope, Partners for Peace and Community Human Service was a great experience and collaboration.

Learning what each of these agencies do for the community was an eye opener because there is so much help out there that many people may not be aware of. It also made me think about the career path direction that I would like to take. For the future capstone students that will intern at CASA agency, it is recommended to always ask question to mentors or staff that is in the CASA agency. All of the staff is extremely helpful and can provide a lot of information to whatever question the student may need. Another recommendation for future capstone students is to be opened minded and have a plan about what kind of capstone project you would like to implement. Having an idea beforehand can save a lot of stress and time. Waiting the last minute to implement a capstone project can really be stressful and put more pressure on the student.

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5,366,368,265,349,361,4,273,59,370,326,333,322,341,338,350,342,329,325,359,351,363,
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Appendix A

Activity	Task	Person Responsible	Time
Research on neglect And create power presentation	Browse online on credible websites or use CASA database	Lizette & mentor Maria	09/01/2018- 09/30/2018
Make appointments with Social Workers	Look for Social workers from CASA database to get resources for food stamps, medical insurance, family therapy, drug abuse rehabilitations, parenting classes	Lizette & Maria	09/19/2018- 10/15/2018
Create surveys	Browse online to create a pre and post survey	Lizette & Maria	09/20/2018- 9/30/2018
Find a place for educational intervention	Contact University Park elementary, Contac the WIC program Look online for any community fairs	Lizette & Maria	10/01/2018- 10/15/2018
How to get incentive to the participants of the educational intervention	Talk to CASA staff about how to get incentives	Lizette & CASA staff	10/15/2018
Educational Workshop	Present the power point presentation on child neglect at University Park Elementary School	Lizette	10/23/2018 At 9:45 AM
Evaluation	Analyze & recommendations	Lizette & CASA staff	October, 2018

Appendix B

Pre/Post Survey

- 1) What is Neglect?
 - A. Keeping my child from going to school
 - B. Not taking my child to get medical attention when needed
 - C. Not feeding my child
 - D. All of the above

- 2.) How does neglect affect a child's life?
 - A. There are no affects
 - B. Child is always happy
 - C. Child development, health, behavioral

- 3.) What are signs of neglect?
 - A. Children are frequently absent from school
 - B. Begs and steals food
 - C. Does not have enough clothes for the weather
 - D. All of the above

- 4.) Do you know what ethnicity is the most at risk for neglect in the Monterey County?
 - A. Caucasian
 - B. African-American
 - C. Hispanic/Latinos
 - D. Asian

- 5.) Do you know what CASA of Monterey County is?
 - A. An agency where they help tutor the kids
 - B. An agency that helps with substance abuse
 - C. Provides advocates for foster youth children
 - D. An after-school program

- 6.) Do you know where to look for help for substance abuse?

- A. Door To Hope
- B. Community Human Service
- C. Branch of America
- D. A & B

7.) Do you know where to look for parenting classes?

- A. School district
- B. Branch of America
- C. Partners for Peace
- D. C4yoursel.com

8.) Do you know where to apply for Med-CAL or food stamps?

- A. Door To Hope
- B. Branch of America
- C. Partners for Peace
- D. C4yourself.com

Appendix C

