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Greenfield High School Internship

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Greenfield High School

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Abstract

Greenfield High School is located in South Monterey County. The community served is primarily Latino and they are below poverty level. The majority of the residents that reside in this community are field workers. The macro-level problem that this capstone addresses is that too many high school-age students are experiencing depression and anxiety. Greenfield High School has experienced budget cuts, which make it difficult to address all students' needs. The project, named Greenfield High School Internship is designed to help students achieve their community hours needed to complete graduation requirements and gain a mentor in the process. Greenfield High School can use this project to help students gain experience in their career choice and have a mentor that would help guide them in their career path. Having a mentor could also lower the depression and anxiety that students are experiencing.

Keywords: *Internship, Community, High School, Students, Depression, Anxiety.*

I. Greenfield High School

In 1999, Greenfield High School opened its doors to students who proudly called themselves Bruins. Greenfield is located between the towns of King City and Soledad. It is one of two comprehensive high schools in the South Monterey County Joint Union High School District. Greenfield is located ten miles north of King City, accessible by the 101 Freeway. The school campus is located on El Camino Real and comprises approximately forty acres. Greenfield High School is located in the southwest corner of the town of Greenfield. The school is surrounded by vineyards, fields of vegetables and fruit, commercial buildings and residential housing (GFHS, 2019).

Greenfield High School is serving over 1,400 students. The student population is primarily Latino. The majority of the students are bilingual; they speak Spanish and English. For many students, English is a second language and some of the students are first-generation migrants in the United States. There is a high percentage of parents that are farm laborers and it makes it difficult for them to attend school functions and meetings for the students.

There are different programs and opportunities for these students at Greenfield High School. The programs that are offered are aimed at positive behavior and increasing their educational goals. The school offers after school tutoring with GEAR UP and Odyssey a program that is available for students that are falling behind. Some of these students are at the point where they may have to continue their education at another school such as Portola continuation school located in King City.

Though there are different programs and resources the students at times do not utilize the services. The high school requires that students complete 20 hours of community service before

graduation; this is done during the junior and senior years. These hours must be done and completed before the graduation date or they are not allowed to graduate from high school.

II. Community Served

The community served primarily Latino and they are below poverty level. The majority of the residents that reside in this community are field workers. They lack higher education though some of the residents do have a high school education and some college education. They are Spanish speaking and there is a majority of Oaxaca culture that resides in the community, they have different dialiques to communicate but some do understand Spanish.

III. Problem Description

Too many high school age students experience anxiety and depression. In Greenfield High School there are a number of students that are coping with anxiety and depression. Some of the students are not aware that they have anxiety. They come to the counselor's office having an anxiety attack and are unaware of what is going on with them. According to Psychology Association (2019), "Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure they may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness or a rapid heartbeat"(para1). Students that have come to the counselor's office have dealt with one of these symptoms. These students face the challenge of dealing with their feelings and emotions on a daily basis.

According to ADA (2019), "Depression is defined as decrease or increase in appetite, insomnia or hypersomnia, psychomotor agitation, constant fatigue, feelings of worthlessness or excessive and inappropriate guilt, recurrent thoughts of death and suicidal ideation with or

without specific plans for committing suicide, and cognitive difficulties, such as diminished ability to think, concentrate and make decisions” (para 3). Students that are dealing with depression have difficulties concentrating in the classroom. They come to seek help in the counselor’s office or the teachers have recognized there is a change and have made referrals to the counselor. When counselors have had to deal with a depressed student they have let them voice their concerns or issues. Then they are able to assess and provide appropriate resources to the students that are in need.

Greenfield High School has lost their onsite behavioral health specialist for students. They continue to have the child psychologist interns on-site that have been able to help with students that are in need or in crisis mode. They are only there when they intern so that is not a designated resource for the students. The counselors have also made referrals to other agencies that are able to help with these students that are seeking help from the school. Teachers are overwhelmed with the curriculum and standardized testing that they must prepare the students. They do not always have the time to communicate with their students about their well-being. The 3 counselors are having to assist 1400 students that are enrolled in GreenField High School and are anticipating the enrollment to increase next year.

Compared to other Monterey County high schools. Carmel High is a school of 880 students with over 50 faculty members(Carmel High School,2019)they have 4 counselors that are assigned to help the students in high school. Greenfield High School has 3 counselors that are having to assist 1400 students that are enrolled and they are anticipating an increase in enrollment for the following year. They do their best to help and assist the students but there is a

need for help from the community and parents to help these students dealing with depression and anxiety.

Causes

Social media is one factor to contribute to students having anxiety and depression. Social media is a big part of teenagers' lives. They are constantly on the phone or another electronic device. They are not able to disconnect and let themselves have some time to relax. According to *Clinical Psychology Science* (2017), "Adolescents who spent more time on new media (including social media and electronic devices such as smartphones) were more likely to report mental health issues, and adolescents who spent more time on non-screen activities (in-person social interaction, sports/exercise, homework, print media, and attending religious services) were less likely. Since 2010, iGen adolescents have spent more time on new media screen activities and less time on non-screen activities, which may account for the increases in depression and suicide" (para 5). On social media, there are not always facts that are put on. Some students may fear they are failures due to not living up to unrealistic expectations. This could cause them to become depressed or anxious.

Peer pressure is another factor. Some students may be high achievers and may not be able to keep up with their peers. Or they may experience negative comments when they are not doing well from their fellow classmates. They may feel the pressure to compete with other classmates and that could lead to having anxiety from the pressure that they feel. They may also feel they are a failure to their parents if they do not get the grades that parents want. According to Pew Research Center (2019), "When it comes to the pressures teens face, academics tops the list: 61% of teens say they feel a lot of pressure to get good grades. By comparison, about

three-in-ten say they feel a lot of pressure to look good (29%) and to fit in socially (28%), while roughly one-in-five feel similarly pressured to be involved in extracurricular activities and to be good at sports (21% each)” (para3).

The lack of knowledge of the parents being unaware of the signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression. The parents may not recognize the signs or symptoms that their child is experiencing. They may not seek help for them due to not knowing that there is a problem. The students may not share with the parents that they are having issues for fear that they will not understand what they are experiencing. The parents may think the student is okay and not realize they need professional help. According to the CDC (2019), “ Some children may not talk about their helpless and hopeless thoughts, and may not appear sad. Depression might also cause a child to make trouble or act unmotivated, causing others not to notice that the child is depressed or to incorrectly label the child as a trouble-maker or lazy” (para 6).

Consequences

If students do not receive treatment or help this could lead to consequences that could affect the students along with the community. If a student can not focus in the classroom and complete the assignments and tasks he or she may face the chance of not graduating. They may choose to drop out of school so they are not dealing with the pressure of catching up. This may cause more anxiety for the student. Without the completion of graduating from high school the chance of them getting a good-paying job decreases. They may not be able to be productive citizens in the community. According to Edvocate (2018), The financial ramifications of dropping out of high school hurt more than the individual. It’s estimated that half of all Americans on public

assistance are dropouts. If all of the dropouts from the class of 2011 had earned diplomas, the nation would benefit from an estimated \$154 billion in income” (para4).

Another consequence is that the students may turn to drugs and alcohol to deal with depression and anxiety. According to WebMD, “Research shows that depressed kids are more likely to have problems with alcohol a few years down the road. Also, teens who've had a bout of major depression are twice as likely to start drinking as those who haven't” (2019). They may not be able to deal with it on their own. The drugs and alcohol will help them cope with the feelings and emotions that are dealing with. It will not be a positive way to deal with depression and anxiety but it may help them experience temporary relief. This could lead them to other negative factors that may inherit in their lives such as alcoholism or substance abuse.

If depression and anxiety are not treated this could lead some students to negative alternatives such as cutting. Some people that have depression and anxiety turn to other resources to help ease the pain or emotion. Cutting gives temporary relief but does not get rid of anxiety and depression. According to Health University of Utah (2016), “ For some, cutting helps them deal with feelings that seem too intense to endure. From the normal teenage heartbreaks to rejections from friends, dramatic situations, or even the pressure to be perfect. Deep grief can be overwhelming for some” (para 3). This only adds another problem that will have to be addressed for the student. The consequences that affect the student could impact their future. Figure 1 presents the problem model discussed in this section.

Figure 1: Problem Model

Causes/Contributing Factors	Problem statement	Consequences
Social media	To many high school age students experience anxiety and depression	Drop out
Peer pressure		Alcohol and drugs
Lack of knowledge		Cutting/ suicide

Project Connection with the Problem:

The capstone aimed to not only help the students gain their hours for community service, but to also help them to have a mentor in their life. The expectation is that they will be able to have someone guide them in their troubles or help resolve an issue. They can get positive guidance instead of reaching out to someone or something that may have a negative impact on their life. They may have a mentor that has also gone through some anxiety or depression. That mentor will be a role model for the student.

IV. Project Description**Project Title**

Development of an Internship Program for Greenfield High School Students

Project Description

The capstone project consisted in the development of an internship program at Greenfield high that provided resources for students to utilize for their community hours through meaningful learning experiences with community partners. With this internship, the high school will provide a valuable resource for the students. They will be able to gain the community hours and experience in the career path that they have chosen. This is going to be an internship that allows students to gain knowledge and see first-hand what the career path requires on-the-job setting. The students would select which organizations they are interested in to complete their hours of community service.

In order to identify the students' career interests, this capstone project included a survey of juniors and seniors to get data on their preferences and interests of career paths. Then research was conducted in the community to determine how many hours could be allowed at different agencies. This capstone also included community outreach to community members and organizations that had interest in supporting the students. The students would get the community hours needed for completion of graduation and they would get the experience of working in the career path that they have chosen.

Project Justification

The goal of the internship program at Greenfield High is to encourage students to continue their education and obtain the community hours that are needed to complete graduation requirements. In this process, it would build a bridge of community collaboration. There has been discussion in the past to launch a program similar to this one. Though there was discussion, no initiative to start the process of the program was ever completed. The program would be

beneficial to the students by encouraging them to continue their education and give them an insight into the field of interest they have chosen. Also, they complete the community hours needed for graduation.

Benefits

The benefits of the program are that the students are receiving career awareness and community hours. Not only are they completing community service hours they are also given the opportunity to experience the work setting in the organization that they have selected, But A positive impact on the students could also be an increase in college interest. The community will benefit from collaboration with the youth in the community they serve.

V. Project Implementation

Implementation components

In order to address the demand for the project I surveyed 25 students, to see which ones would be interested. The survey consisted of 5 questions. The first question was where they were interested in doing the project. The second question was the amount of hours that they would want to invest in the program. The third question was would they have transportation for the program. The fourth one was the career choice they would like to be placed in for the program. Lastly, would they be committed to do the project.

After I got the survey I was able to narrow it down to which career path was the most popular and if there would be an interest in doing the project. The top career choice was Health Care. The students had a great interest in that career path most of them were dedicated to commit to the program. They did think that a few hours like 3 max would be what they could commit to since they are still in school and have other obligations that they would need to fulfill.

The survey that was used to reach out to community members was a simple survey that had 3 questions. The first question was if they would allow students to come to their facility or business to mentor, and gain experience in the field of career choice. The second question was what amount of time they would allow the students to be in their facility/business. The last question was if they had a certain criteria that they would require for the students to obtain prior to participating in the program.

The facility that I was able to contact and have information in regards to the program was Mee Memorial Hospital. The person that I contacted was the project coordinator and she was in agreement with the program. She did have certain criteria that the students would have to meet. They would have to have a certain grade point average and they would have to sign a contract in agreement to commit to the program. They would go through an orientation and there they would be provided with all the information that is needed to complete the program. After completing the program they would be placed in the different departments.

The research results suggest that when Greenfield High School moves forward with the implementation of the program there are a few guidelines that must be considered for the program's success. The first one relates to having more organizations willing to participate in the program. This would help the students to have more opportunities and choices. They would not have to stick to one career path, maybe they could have one semester in their first career choice. Then they could be placed in a different one the following semester, they could go to their second career choice and have more experiences and opportunities.

Another recommendation would be for the school to assign an advisor to the program. The school would need to have an advisor that would be committed to the program, so they

could reach out to the community. The advisor would have to update the students and the organizations on any changes or requirements that may be imposed to the program. The advisor would be the main contact for the students and the organizations. This would help the program to be successful.

Recommendations are suggestions and ideas that a person may have to help a program or organization. The recommendations that I have recommended for the program are for the program to have success. Recommendations are made so that they can build the program and make it be successful for the students and the high school.

Though I have made recommendations they are not required to be implemented. They are just recommendations whether they may be used by a program or not. They are just ideas and thoughts that are given for guidance. They are not mandated but may be utilized to help make the program be a success.

The implementation of the program would incorporate the participation of the students and organizations. To obtain participation from the students a table survey will be completed during lunch hours or review the student's career path that they have selected during their senior meeting with their counselor. In order to achieve participation from the organizations, outreach would have to take place in the community. Contact the organizations and community members that might have an interest in the program would be done via telephone or face to face.

Implementation Challenges

Some of the minor challenges experienced during the implementation of the project included the lack of interest in both the students and the organizations. If the students do not express interest in the program and if the organizations do not want to participate in the program then I would not

be able to go forth with the project. This challenge may be related to trying to implement a new idea. Once the program is in place I anticipate there will be more interest.

The current situation with covid-19 posed many challenges to implement my capstone. I was unable to contact the different agencies. In return, I was unable to report which agencies would have had interest in the program. I was only able to make contact with one agency. I wanted to contact local agencies and businesses to have their participation in the program. They could have supported their local high school students in completing their community hours. They would've offered the students an opportunity to gain experience in their career choice. Another challenge that I faced was not having direct contact with the students. Due to shelter in place the schools have shut down and I am unable to continue my internship. I will no longer have contact with the students. This current situation has made it difficult and challenging for everyone.

Table 1 presents the scope of work and timeline of implementation of my capstone project.

Table 1: Scope of Work and implementation timeline

Title: Internship for Greenfield High School Students			
Project description: Reach out to community members to be mentors for Greenfield High school students			
Goal: Provide community hours and career awareness for students			
Primary objective of the project: Internship for Greenfield High School			
Activities		Deliverables	Timeline/deadlines
1	Discuss with my mentor program	Approval from my mentor on ideas for program	Nov-Dec 2019
2	Survey the Students	Distribute to a random sample of students	Nov-Dec 2019
3	Community members/organizations	Make contact with community members and organization that would like to participate	Nov-Dec 2019
4	Hours and days that students will be allowed to participate	Make a schedule with available days	Jan-Feb 2020
5	Analyze data from students/organizations	Use format that would be useful for program	Feb-March 2020
6	Discovery	Challenges and issues of the program	March-April 2020
7	Present information	Recommendation for high school	March-April 2020
9	Complete reporting requirements	Final agency and capstone reports	May 2020
10	Final preparation for Capstone Festival	Final presentation at Capstone Festival!!	May 2020

Conclusion

The program can provide a resource for the students to obtain community service hours needed to complete graduation. It will build a bridge between high school and the community. It is a great opportunity for collaboration between the community and the students. Even Though the capstone was not implemented in its entirety due to the COVID 19 pandemic measures, it laid an important foundation that can be built upon for future implementation. The program may not be implemented in its entirety this year, but it will have all components needed to start the program in the future at Greenfield High School.

VI. Reflection of COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact on Agency and Population Served**Impact of COVIS-19 Pandemic on Agency**

COVID-19 Pandemic impacted all the world and Greenfield High was no exception. In result, Greenfield High School had to shut down. They did not allow students to return to class. They provided students with class work via the computer or if they did not have one, they were provided with a packet that had all assignments.

Students were able to contact the teachers through an app called Teams. If they need assistance or have questions, through the app they are able to email or text. The teachers were able to facetime the class through the app, or do one on one consultations. They continued to reach out to students and provide what resources they have to offer, it is less than what they had in school. It has been a challenge for students and staff to move forward through the pandemic and complete the school year.

Impact of COVID-19 on Agency Clients

The Greenfield community has a majority of members that are farm laborers, and they may have depended on the high school to provide lunch for their students. Greenfield High School recognizes the need and has continued to offer and provide lunch to students that may have a need. They are allowed to go to campus and pick up free lunch. Providing the students with meals has helped the families in need, as well as the community.

Impact of COVID-19 on social problem

During this difficult time students are now faced with dealing with online courses which may be difficult for some to learn. They may not know how to access all the resources and services online. This has caused many students to face and handle this crisis alone. Without having the counselor to help assist with some of the problems. They may have to resort to the community for assistance. This has increased the anxiety and depression that students are dealing with. Some students may not have an adult at home to help them cope with the anxiety and depression. There are many clinics that are offering telemedicine. This is an option that students may seek and use. The closer of the school has decreased the resources that the students once had and has increased depression and anxiety.

Impact of COVID-19 on agency's future

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many things in the world as we knew it. Many places and businesses had to close due to the pandemic. Greenfield High School along with all other schools and public buildings were impacted and had to deal with a new way of operating. It changed how they provided education and resources to students.

Greenfield High will now have to adopt a plan to provide to students should there ever be another pandemic. Some of the issues and concerns they may address are how they distribute resources to the students. Computers may be one item that they will need to make sure they have enough for those students that do not have one. Another issue is internet access some students may have relied on the school to provide them with that or another public agency as the public library.

In addition, they will have to accommodate those students that may require special needs. Provide resources for the students that are experiencing anxiety and depression. They can direct them to the appropriate agencies and programs. The pandemic has allowed the high school to see what they have in place, and figure out where they lack and build a plan that will benefit the students.

Recommendations

The Greenfield High School Internship would provide the students with an opportunity to experience the career path they have chosen. They would have a mentor to discuss and guide them towards their goal. They will also obtain the community hours needed for graduation completion. Not only would the internship be able to help the students in their career choice it would boost their self-esteem and help them to maintain a healthy life. They would have less depression and anxiety.

Advice that for colleagues, is to have dedication and time for the program. Greenfield High School would need to have an advisor to help with the internship. The advisor would be in charge of making sure that all required paperwork and criteria are met before a student is accepted. They would also work closely with the agency's mentors to address any issues that

may arise. The project would benefit the students and obtain a relationship with community members.

Broader Social Significance

Greenfield High School Internship correlates with the macro-level social problem by obtaining mentors. The mentors would not only assist in the career choice but they would be a positive role model that would help the students build their confidence. The students would build relationships with them and be able to have another adult to turn to if they are dealing with difficult situations in their lives. In return the students would have less anxiety and depression.

Reflecting on the program, has demonstrated the need for more adults in the high school to help with the students anxiety and depression. The counselors do make an effort to help and hear students in crisis. But they are consumed with daily duties that they are not always available to give the students the time to vent their problems. Implementing this program will provide the students with another adult that they may reach out to when needed.

Beyond the Greenfield High School Internship the school could advocate for Behavioral Health to return to the school. They would have professionals on hand to assist with the students that are in need. They could do an assessment to make sure that the students are not becoming suicidal. They would be able to make referrals, provide additional support, and resources for the students.

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