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Teaching Latino Parents about Early Intervention and ASD

Teaching Latino Parents about Early Intervention and ASD

Maricela Lopez

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Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is one of the most prevalent neurodevelopmental disorders, identified by persistent impairment in reciprocal communication and social interactions and restricted, repetitive behaviors, interests, or activities (Campisi et al., 2018). The lack of awareness of early intervention has a significant setback on their children's developmental domains. Many Latino families are unaware of resources that can help young children with autism. Latinos endured many challenges, especially being underdiagnosed compared to white non-Hispanics. They face challenges such as language barriers, cultural awareness, and denial. Latino families need to learn more about ASD to support their children's development. Research confirms that early diagnosis and early interventions for autism are more likely to positively affect young children's developmental trajectory. To address these issues, I created a lesson for Latino parents of children diagnosed with Autism at Ducan Holbert school in Watsonville, California. The workshop will address three critical topics: (1) the symptoms and early diagnosis of autism, (2) explain benefits of early intervention, and (3) identify agencies that assist children with ASD.

Learning Outcomes

I intend to provide a workshop on Autism to Latino parents at Landmark Elementary school; By the end of the presentation, parents will be able to:

1. Identify three possible signs of autism in the early years.
2. Explain two benefits of early intervention for children with ASD.
3. Identify two agencies that can help them access early intervention services

Needed Statement

According to the Centers for Disease Control (2016), autism affects an estimated 1 in 54 children. Autism Spectrum Disorder comes with many barriers and challenges for

Children reflecting in preschool. The extent and severity of symptoms can range extensively. Usual symptoms include a struggle with communication, social interactions, obsessive interests, and repetitive behaviors. Unfortunately, many Latino children are not being diagnosed, which reflects in getting the necessary services they need. For example, recent studies explain that Latino children are out of proportion and underrepresented in early intervention and the education system (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeir, & Maczuga, 2012). Furthermore, Hispanics were less likely than Whites to be evaluated and diagnosed by professionals as having communication, attention, or learning problems. Due to the barriers and challenges Latino families faced, my project will address how Latino families can identify ASD and get what their child needs.

Diagnosing autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can be tricky because there is no medical test, like a blood test, to analyze the dysfunction. As a result, many experts study the child's developmental history and behavior to decide. Autism can sometimes be known as early as 18 months or younger. Yet, various children do not obtain a diagnosis until at an older age in the development. This setback indicates that children with ASD might not get the immediate help they require (CDC, 2006). The extent and severity of signs can range extensively. Usual signs of ASD include a struggle with communication with social interactions, obsessive interests, and repetitive behaviors. In autism, behavioral symptoms include unsuitable social interaction, lack of eye contact, compulsive behavior, self-harm, or persistent words or actions.

ASD children experience different development challenges than general education, and sometimes it requires special services to improve children's development. One of the determinants that hugely contribute to determining child development is the family the environment in which children live. In many cases, Latino parents of ASD children have not yet

completely understood the conditions of child development which are more likely to lead to ASD conditions. As a result, Latino parents cannot provide the best service according to their children's needs. Delays in early diagnosis impact children's development in the future, so early intervention is the first step to implementing the best service for children (Rochyadi, 2019). Early intervention programs show that Latino families identify and understand the various symptoms of autism in children and can provide the proper goals suitable to their children's needs.

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (2013), children with Autism Disorder are often egotistical and appear to exist in a private world where they have restricted ability to communicate and interact with others successfully. They also may have challenges developing language abilities and following what others say to them. They often have difficulties communicating nonverbally, such as hand gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions. The ability to communicate and use language depends on their intellectual and social development. Some children with this disability may not share speech or language, and some may have minimal speaking skills. However, others may have excellent language skills and can talk about certain things broadly.

Pre-diagnostic interference for ASD provides symptoms to be addressed as they arise, often as early as eighteen months, rather than after the full onset of the condition. Improving the identification of early ASD symptoms is a priority amongst autism researchers. Early detection allows for earlier intervention to start, which is the standard key for maximizing a child's potential and achieving successful developmental outcomes. The most meaningful Gains have been observed in children who start behavioral intervention before two years of age. Overall, early intervention is crucial for children to improve their developmental trajectory. However, one

of the most significant barriers Latino families face is early intervention and early detection(Tanner, 2021). To improve early detection, parents need to be more aware of the importance of early intervention, identify signs of ASD, and reach for help in their community. The more parents are educated in the subject, the more we break the barriers among Latino families and get what their children need.

Early intervention for children with autism today is a dilemma and a scientifically complicated topic. However, early intervention provides many resources that can help parents and their children have more successful outcomes. For example, ABA therapy is a treatment that can help with social, communication, and learning skills through positive reinforcement. For example, Discrete Trial Training(DTT) consists of a one-on-one teacher direct, systematic instructional approach that uses repeated trials of ABC (antecedent-behavior-consequences), Which prompts and delivers to ensure successful responses(Leach, 2013). For a child, this consists of a small reward. For example, when teaching color to students after they point to the proper color, you reward them for their behavior. Also, with speech therapy, a child with autism can significantly benefit from this service because speech therapists help children articulate words and teach them to speak verbally and nonverbal. The main goal is to assist the person in communicating in more practical ways. Lastly, occupational therapy helps children work on cognitive, physical, social, and motor skills. For example, occupational therapists help children with ASD improves their conversational skills, which allows them to become more independent. Such as independent dressing, eating, grooming, and using the bathroom. They also help them work on their motor skills like writing, coloring, and even learning how to cut with scissors.

For Latino Families, accessing resources can be challenging due to limited English proficiency and the disparities toward the Latino population regarding ASD diagnosis. Children

with ASD can have lower access to care due to poverty, limited English ability, and empowerment to take advantage of services. The ASD diagnostic process itself was slow, inaccessible, challenging, and distressing for the child. These circumstances drove many parents to not reach for help for their children at an early age, deny that a problem existed, and lose trust in the medical system (Zuckerman et al., 2014). Providing information in their language and guiding them to the proper resources in their area can positively impact their lives. Latino parents would be more trustworthy in the system and help them cope more with their child's ASD. Latino families can profit from early intervention by adequately meeting their children's needs from an early age and throughout their lifespan.

Parents can do several things to support a child with ASD to overcome their challenges. The most helpful thing is to start treatment right away. The sooner children with ASD get help, the higher their chance of treatment success. In addition, early intervention is the best way to promote children's development and decrease the symptoms of autism over the lifespan. There are three most valuable ways to help a child with ASD: providing structure and safety, being consistent, sticking to a schedule, rewarding good behavior, and creating a home safety zone. Second is ways not to connect non-verbally; connecting with a child with ASD can be complicated, but you won't need words to communicate and bond. Instead, you communicate with your child by the sound of a voice and body language. Third, there are many areas that families of children with ASD can turn to for guidance, a helpful hand, advocacy, and support: ADS support groups and family counseling. Lastly, free government services for children with ASD. For example, the U.S. federal law identified as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), infants with disabilities, including those with ASD, are eligible for various free or

low-cost services. In addition, families with children with disabilities may obtain medical evaluations, speech therapy, physical therapy, training, and assisted technology devices.

Preschool children with ASD need more social skill education, which often is not offered in general education classrooms. In addition, children with ASD can take more extended skills appropriate for their age. They need more support to develop social skills, communication skills, and manage behaviors that would allow them to maximize their learning environment and interact with peers. Early intervention and learning about resources in the community will enable parents to identify early signs of ASD and get the help that their children need as soon as possible. Therefore, I created a workshop for Latino parents preschoolers with ASD at Landmark Elementary School in Watsonville, California.

Theory

Erikson's model of psychosocial development stated that personality develops in eight stages of psychosocial development, from infancy to adulthood. During each phase, the individual encounters a psychosocial crisis that could positively or negatively affect personality development. Eric Erikson (1958, 1963), these crises are psychosocial because they involve the psychological needs of the individual conflicting with the requirements of society. Having a successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and the acquisition of essential characteristics. Primary attributes are characteristic strengths that the ego can use to resolve any crisis. According to Erikson's theory, preschool children are in the Initiative vs. Guilt stage of Erick Psychosocial Stages of development between the ages of three to five. During this stage, Children start to assert their authority and control over the world through directing play and other social interactions. However, children who neglect to obtain these skills are left with a sense of guilt, self-doubt, and lack of leadership. Autism(ASD) is a disorder that affects a child's

social abilities. The social challenges that Autistic face includes interpreting and communicating human emotions. Eric Erickson's model benefits us to understand how crucial it is for children with ASD to learn the appropriate social skills across the lifespan. (Stephens, 2005).

Erickson's theory has helped me develop this project and help parents assist their children with ASD. Erikson's model of psychosocial development allows us to understand how critical it is for Autistic children to learn the appropriate social skills. The theory also applies to ASD children because it can help form deep bonds for all children. Furthermore, Erickson insisted that the environment played an essential role in self-awareness, change, human development, and identity. Thus, each of Erickson's stages of psychosocial development centers on a central conflict. For example, the initiative vs. Guilt stage is especially challenging for children with autism. For this reason, my project aims to give parents information to help their children through the stages. Autism spectrum disorder can interfere with this stage; on less, they get early intervention. However, overall early intervention can assist in reaching this stage successfully with the necessary tools they will need across the lifespan. Therefore, Latino parents can significantly benefit from the workshop and 'better understand their children's developmental domains and how they can successfully reach their full potential.

Consideration of Diversity

My project will be an in-person workshop for Latino parents at Landmark Elementary school in Watsonville, California, with children with ASD. The classroom is a moderate to severe ASD classroom student. Their abilities range from non-verbal to verbal students. Children on the spectrum can have many behavioral challenges and need the appropriate environment to adapt and help decrease behavioral challenges. For example, verbal children can communicate their needs easier than non-verbal students. Still, the speech therapist allows them to

communicate in many ways non-verbally, like using visuals and communication devices.

According to the school Accountability Report Card(SARC), in the 2019-2020 school year, Landmark Elementary School had 506 students enrolled, with 90.5% of the population being Hispanic or Latino, 4% White, 1% African American. 0.8% American Indian, and 1.4% Filipino. It was also reported 11.7 % of the students were special needs students. In addition, 87.2% of the 506 were considered to be socioeconomically disadvantaged.

My project will be conducted with ten Latino parents with children diagnosed with ASD at Landmark Elementary school in Watsonville, California. My workshop will be for Spanish-speaking parents only. My presentation would be parent-appropriate with keywords that they would be able to understand. The curriculum will be more complex, so Latino parents can understand and help their children increase their development. Many of the parents I will be presenting do not have a high school diploma and come from immigrant parents. I will do the best of my knowledge to teach parents the concepts of autism, the signs of ASD, and why early intervention is essential for their child's development. I will also provide local information agencies that can help in their home language.

Method

Participants

The participants consist of ten Spanish-speaking Latino parents who have pre-school children with Autism spectrum Disorder. The population drew participants based on their high need for awareness and lack of their child's needs. Participants were not excluded based on their education level, immigration, or socioeconomic status.

Procedures and Materials

Part 1: Identifying signs of ASD

First, I will introduce myself to the parents at Landmark elementary school and tell them a little about myself. This information will include my ethical background and my educational background as well. Furthermore, I will give my years of experience working with children with special needs in the district. Then, I will provide a questionnaire on how much parents know about ASD in Spanish. See Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire. During the questionnaire, a symptom sheet for parents will be a handout to identify the signs of ASD quickly. See Appendix B for a copy of the ASD symptoms handout. Then I will interact with parents, go over the symptoms, and ask if they have noticed some of the symptoms in their child. This information will help the parents better identify and understand the signs of ASD. Finally, I will provide a youtube video called “The World of Autism” to give them a better overview of how ASD looks like daily for a child diagnosed with ASD.

Part 2: The Importance of Early Intervention

After the parents have finished the questionnaire, I will share my screen. The screen will be shared as a google slides presentation and discuss the importance of early Intervention among Latino families with children diagnosed with ASD. See Appendix E for a copy of the presentation. The google slide presentation will have information on the importance of early intervention and its benefits in their child’s development. The exhibition will also include information on what early intervention offers to their child. Services include speech therapy, occupational therapy, and ABA therapy. I will also provide information on what role each service plays in their child’s educational growth. I will provide detailed information on what their role is and what is their job that makes them play a significant role.

Part 3: Agencies and Services

Lastly, I will provide information on local agencies and services offered in Spanish to help them in the process and guide them through these challenges Latino parents endure due to a lack of English. It will be part of my google slide presentation, and I will also provide a hangout of the agencies. See Appendix C for the hangout. The hangout of the agencies will have information about the agencies and what services they offered, and information on the location and how to contact them. Finally, after I conclude my presentation, I will provide a questionnaire to parents. This questionnaire will evaluate if the learning outcome got met and what they learn from my workshop. See Appendix D for the questionnaire.

Results

Due to Covid-19, I could not execute my project; therefore, I do not have results.

Discussion

Due to Covid-19, I could not execute my project; therefore, I do not have a discussion.

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Appendix A

Cuestionario De Autismo

* Required

Sabe que es Autismo? *

- Si
- No
- Un poco

Sabe los señales de Autismo? *

- Si
- No
- Un Poco

Sabe como pedir ayuda para su hijo/a? *

- Si
- No

Sabe sobre "Intervention Temprana ? *

- No
- Si

Sabe sobre servicios locales que puede recibir para su hijo/a? *

- No
- Si

ASD Symptoms Hangout

- No responde cuando lo tocas
- No mira cuando lo estas alimentando
- No tienen contacto visual
- No tiene expresión o sonrisa social
- No responde a su nombre cuando lo llamas
- No responde al sonido de otras personas conocido
- No sigue objetos visuales
- No señala, ni dice adiós ni realiza ningún movimiento para comunicarse
- No sigue a instrucciones cuando se lo indicas
- No hace ruido para llamar tu atención
- No imita movimientos ni expresiones faciales
- No juega con otras personas

:

Appendix C Agencies for ASD



9010 Soquel Drive Suite 1 Aptos, CA 95003 Phone: 831.684.2166



35 Penny Ln STE 5, Watsonville, CA 95076

Phone: (844) 700-9889



1110 Main Street Watsonville, CA 95076 Phone: (831) 900-3737

Parents Feedback

* Required

Cuales son unos señales de Autismo? *

Your answer _____

Cual son una de las agencias que pueda recibir servicios para su hijo/a? *

Your answer _____

Austismo es un discapacidad del desarrollo? *

- Falso
- Verdadero

Que servicios ofrece Intervencion Temprana? *

- Terapia ocupacional
- Terapia del lenguaje
- Terapia ABA
- Todas las opciones

Que areas afecta el Autismo? *

- comunicación, habilidades sociales, comportamiento repetitivo
- Caminar
- Aprender
- Ninguno



Teaching Latino Parents About ASD and Early Intervention

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Introduction

What is ASD?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental condition that involves persistent challenges in social interaction, speech and nonverbal communication, and repetitive behaviors.

Topic: The Importance of Early Intervention for Children with ASD

Project: Educating Latino Parents about ASD and Early Intervention

Why?

Needs Statement

Problem: Many Latino Parents are unaware about ASD and Services?

Why Early Intervention is Important?

1. Positively impact outcomes across developmental domains

2. Latino families can profit from early intervention by adequately meeting their children's needs from an early age and throughout their lifespan.

Key Developmental Outcomes

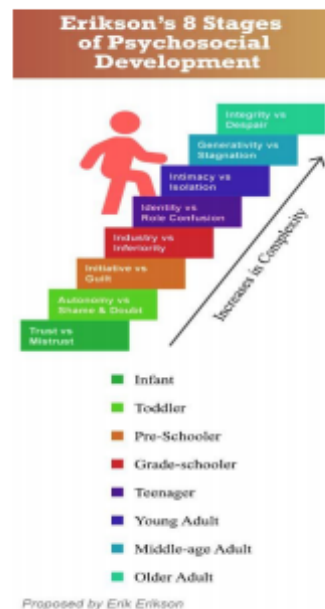
- Language and communication
- Cognitive behavior
- Social/Emotional development

Theory

Erikson's Theory of Development

Eight stages of Psychosocial development

- Third Stage (Initiative vs. Guilt)
- Preschool age (3-5 years old)
- Independence and relationship with family
- Child becomes more assertive in exploring, discovering, adventure and play



Learning Outcomes

By the end of my project, participants will be able to:

1. Identify three possible signs of autism in the early years.
2. Explain two benefits of early intervention for children with ASD.
3. Identify two agency that can help them access early intervention services



Participants

- 1 day lesson
- 10 Spanish speaking Latino Parents of Pre-school children diagnosed with ASD
- Landmark Elementary School in Watsonville, California



Landmark Elementary



Procedures and Materials

Workshop for parents

1. What are the signs of Autism?
2. What are the benefits of Early intervention?
3. Where can you reach for help?
4. Google forms questionnaire of what they learn



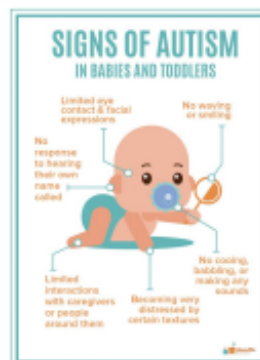
Workshop: Section 1

Identifying signs of ASD:

Social Skills

Communication Skills

Behavior Differences



Workshop: Section 2

Benefits of early Intervention for ASD

Kinds of Intervention:

Speech Therapy

Occupational Therapy

ABA Therapy



Workshop: Section 3

- Agencies that help ASD Parents:



Results & Discussion Sections

I could not execute my project due to COVID-19; therefore, I do not have results or a discussion section.

Conclusion Statement

Early Intervention Helps:

- Decrease unexpected behaviors
- Improve communication skills
- Reduce stress for themselves and their family members
- Have earlier diagnosis