SUPPORT GROUPS FOR CHILDREN OF DEPRESSED PARENTS: A GRANT PROPOSAL

A THESIS
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Master of Social Work

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Introduction

• Research has indicated that having a parent with depression can negatively affect a child’s development and increase the risk for poor outcomes in adulthood (Goodman, Tully, Connell, Hartman, & Huh, 2011).

• Children often struggle to understand the behavior of their depressed parents and are at greater risk of developing a mental illness, including depression (Lieb, Isensee, Hofler, Pfister, & Wittchen, 2002).

• According to one study (Skerfving, Johansson, & Elgán, 2014), support groups increase self-esteem and confidence, improve coping skills, and decrease negative outcomes for children and youth who have parents with depression.

• The purpose of this project was to write a grant in order to obtain funds needed to provide support groups to children and youth who have parents with depression. The goals of this intervention are to: (a) improve overall well-being, (b) enhance coping skills, (c) increase social support, and (d) decrease the effects of stigma.
Social Work Relevance
Culturally competent social workers can provide interventions and support to improve the outcomes and well-being of children who have parents diagnosed with depression (Weissman et al., 2006).
Cross-Cultural Relevance

Women of minority ethnic groups and their children face a multitude of environmental factors that increase stress and may increase the risk of depression (Brown, Abe-Kim, & Carrio, 2003). Factors such as poverty, race, violence, and racism are often experienced by African American and Latino populations (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001); these factors can have major consequences on the functioning of mother and child. The literature suggests that maternal depression has the greatest negative effect on a child when accompanied by limited access to resources and increased levels of stress (Murry, Bynum, Brody, Willert, & Stephens, 2001).
Methods

a. The target population consists of children and youth ages 6-18 who have a parent or parents diagnosed with depression.

b. The Internet was a major tool when searching for potential funding sources. Local, state, and federal websites and databases were used to identify potential funding sources.

c. The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation was selected as the funding source for this grant.

d. The literature review identified a need for psycho educational support groups for children of depressed parents to increase the children’s social support, enhance their coping skills, and decrease the effects of stigma.
Methods Continued

e. The projected budget for this program is $49,640. The costs associated with this grant include a contracted fee for one licensed clinical social worker (LCSW; $40 per hour @ 20 hours per week) and a part-time administrative assistant ($14 per hour @ 20 hours week). An outside evaluator will also be hired at a cost of $6,000. The program will run for a total of 28 weeks, including planning, recruiting, and evaluating the 24 weeks of support groups.

The cost for traditional office supplies, such as paper, notebooks, toner, pens, and pencils will be $1,800. The cost for art materials and refreshments will be $3,000. There will also be a flexible spending account ($5,000) to pay for additional hours worked, office supplies, and/or refreshments as needed. A space currently exists for the program to be held, so there will be no additional expense for rent. The agency will need to purchase a laptop for the LCSW ($1,250), a laptop for the assistant ($1,250), one tablet ($850), and one multipurpose laser printer ($250).
Grant Proposal

a. This program will provide support groups to a unique and underserved population. There will be five support groups in total. Each support group will last 1 hour and will meet once a week for 24 weeks. The program will run for a total of 28 weeks, including planning, recruiting, conducting 24 weeks of support groups, and evaluation.

b. The population served consists of children and youth ages 6-18 who have a parent or parents diagnosed with depression, their parents, and families.

c. Grants, fundraising, private donations, and a potential fee for service.

d. Objective 1: Enhance coping skills of children and youth. Objective 2: Increase social support of children and youth. Objective 3: Decrease the effects of stigma of having a parent with a mental illness on children and youth.

e. An outside evaluator will be hired. Pre and posttests, satisfaction surveys, and an exit narrative interview will be used to measure whether the program’s objectives have been met as well as participants’ level of satisfaction with the program. The pre and posttests will include both closed- and open-ended questions. The satisfaction survey will include a Likert-type scale questionnaire format.
Lessons Learned

The biggest challenge for this writer was balancing personal, familial, and relationship responsibilities while being devoted to the grant writing process. Time management and organizational skills were strengthened during this process. It is important to develop a project plan, timeline, and goals. Being proactive and asking for assistance when needed was helpful to this writer. In order to work efficiently, limiting distractions is necessary. The grant writer learned to conduct a thorough literature review and needs assessment.
REFERENCES


