Project Protect & Nurture: A Grant Proposal

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Problem:

- Research identified that over 679,000 children are victims of some form of child abuse or trauma. Nationally, it is estimated among child victims that 79.5% are neglected, 18% are physically abused, 9% are sexually abused, and 8.7% are emotionally abused each year (U.S. Children’s Bureau, 2013). As a result of experiencing child abuse, children may then experience trauma, which can be complex, acute, or chronic (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2006).

- Furthermore, child abuse typically originates in the developmental years of a child. These events can be severe and pervasive (Domínguez, Cohen, & Brom, 2004) with long lasting effects for children (and their families) (Bucker et al., 2012; Heim, Shugart, Craighead, & Nemeroff, 2010) that can impact children's physical, social and emotional health, and education.

- Research also identified that in 2013, 61.6% of professionals made reports of alleged abuse and neglect. Of those professionals, legal and law enforcement personnel (17.5%), educational personnel (17.5%) and social services personnel, which includes social workers, (11.05%) were of the largest percentages to make these reports of alleged child abuse and neglect (U.S. Children’s Bureau, 2013).

Goal of the project: The goal of the project was to identify resource materials that can be used in whole or adapted for a series of workshops for K–6 school social workers and their colleagues (teachers, counselors, psychologists, and support staff). Through these workshops, school social workers and their colleagues will gain the knowledge and skills needed in order to prevent, identify, and respond to child abuse and trauma in a school setting.
Social Work Relevance

- In the social work profession, the NASW code of ethics are essential when working with child abuse and trauma victims.

- When addressing this vulnerable population, it is critical that social workers address the social problems surrounding child abuse and trauma while abiding by NASW core values and ethics. This will ensure that victims and their families are receiving the services they desperately need.

- Through this program, school social workers and their colleagues (teachers, counselors, psychologists, and support staff) will learn skills and become knowledgeable on how to educate victims and their families. In addition, they will also learn how to provide supportive services to children and their families before serious mental, behavioral, emotional, or academic disturbances occur, thus enabling students to succeed academically, socially, and developmentally.
Cross-cultural Relevance

- When addressing child abuse, it is essential to note that cultural norms and child rearing practices often differ than those practiced in the United States (Crawford, 2011).

- Research found that some immigrant and refugee families often practice corporal punishment as it is widely accepted in their culture (Crawford, 2011).

- Research also found that child abuse cases can be challenging to identify and address when the norms and expectations are different among cultures. To respond to child abuse effectively, social workers must identify and pay particular attention to the families’ race and culture (Crawford, 2011).

- Furthermore, it is critical that social workers provide services in a culturally competent and responsive manner, as cultural competency and responsiveness are a part of the multicultural practice that guides social workers’ beliefs, values, and actions (NASW, 2007).
Methods

**Target population:** The target population for this project will be school social workers and their colleagues (teachers, counselors, psychologists, and support staff) who work with K-6 children at Dr. Albert Schweitzer Elementary. This population encompasses children in the Orange County, California area served by Dr. Albert Schweitzer Elementary. This project specifically targets school social workers and their colleagues who serve children that reside in Anaheim, California, a community of 4,741 children (Orange County Social Services [SSA], 2015). The project is intended to serve these children due to the high instances of child abuse and trauma (SSA, 2015).

**Strategies used to identify and select a funding source:** Grant databases (i.e., Long Beach Nonprofit Partnership and California State University's library) and online search engines (i.e., Google) were used to search for potential funding. The Long Beach Nonprofit Partnership was unable to provide current grants that would meet the needs of the proposed program and target population. The Google search identified the Weingart Foundation and Robert M. McCormick Foundation as potential funders.

**Funding source selected:** Ultimately, the Weingart foundation was selected as the program’s potential funder. The foundation has a history of providing funding to support child abuse and trauma victims, as well as training workshops in a school setting (Weingart, 2015).
Methods cont.

Sources used for the needs assessment: An extensive review of literature and of available statistical reports of the target population and topics were used for the needs assessment. Research was focused on child abuse and trauma, early intervention and prevention programs, resource materials and workshops in school settings, education, mental health, supportive school-based services, and resources for child abuse and trauma victims and their families.

Project Budget and categories: The projected amount for the community integration program was $142,400 for the following categories:

- Project Manager/Workshop Developer with fringe benefits at 18% for $94,400, a Workshop Presenter for $3,000, two MSW interns for $2,000, a Project Evaluator for $1,650, and an Administrative Assistant for $15,000.

- Indirect costs for printing materials and research cost ($5,000), refreshments ($450), office supplies and equipment ($8,900), and office space/rent ($12,000) totaled $26,350.
Program Summary and Description: This project aims to provide a series of workshops for K – 6 school social workers and their colleagues (teachers, counselors, psychologists, and support staff). Said workshops will enhance the knowledge and skills of school social workers and their colleagues in child abuse and trauma prevention and intervention. Workshops will provide education to school social workers and their colleagues on child abuse and trauma, and ways to implement learned skills to prevent and support K-6 children who exhibit child abuse and trauma-related symptoms. In addition, the project will empower school social workers and their colleagues to advocate on behalf of these children, and feel more skilled and confident in reporting cases of child abuse or maltreatment.

Population Served: The target population for this project was school social workers and their colleagues who work with K-6 children who work child abuse and/or trauma victims. Additionally, the professionals included teachers, counselors, psychologists, and support staff at Dr. Albert Schweitzer Elementary.

Sustainability: In order to maintain the proposed project, the focus will be on three specific sustainability factors: staff involvement, yearly workshops, and efficient project implementation.

Program Evaluation: A Project Evaluator, a Ph.D. or MSW social worker with research experience will be hired to oversee all aspects of the evaluation process and to provide reports to program staff. The purpose of the evaluation is to create workshops that are helpful, useful, and effective in meeting the project goal and objectives. In order to collect data, a simple satisfaction survey, post workshop evaluation survey, and post workshop survey will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the workshop.
Program Objectives: The project’s title is “Project Protect and Nurture”, and the objectives are to:
1. identify resource materials that can be used in whole or adapted for the target group of school professionals,

2. ensure the content addresses the following learning objectives:
   (a) define child abuse, emotional neglect, physical neglect, and sexual abuse,
   (b) define the three types of trauma (acute, complex, and chronic),
   (c) identify the symptoms of child abuse and trauma,
   (d) identify the effects child abuse and trauma have on K-6 children,
   (e) identify the risk and protective factors of child abuse and neglect,
   (f) identify the risk and protective factors of trauma,
   (g) demonstrate responses to child abuse and trauma by children, parents and caregivers, and schools, which include school social workers and their colleagues,
   (h) demonstrate how school social workers and their colleagues can implement prevention and intervention services for K-6 children experiencing child abuse and trauma using a collaborative approach,
   (i) demonstrate how school social workers and their colleagues can be advocates for children experiencing child abuse and trauma,
   (j) demonstrate how school social workers and their colleagues could feel more comfortable, confident, and skilled in reporting child abuse.

3. provide an array of cognitive (knowing, affective [feeling], and behavioral [doing] learning opportunities, and

4. evaluate the effectiveness of Project Protect and Nurture.
Lesson Learned/Implications for Social Work

Needs assessment: Valuable information was obtained on the (1) the impact child abuse and trauma has on children; (2) the importance of training school social workers and their colleagues on how to work with child abuse victims and their families; and (3) how to provide child abuse victims and their families with supportive services they desperately need, thus increasing their knowledge and confidence.

Grant writing process: Although challenging, the grant proposal was an incredible and productive learning experience that allowed the grant writer to gain valuable knowledge about child abuse and trauma. Furthermore, this project allowed the writer to give back to the social worker profession.

Project limitations: Even with the resource materials, workshops and trainings that this project will provide, child abuse and trauma will continue to occur, despite the knowledge, skills, training, and best efforts of school social workers and their colleagues to prevent child abuse and trauma from happening.

Social work implications: Child abuse and trauma are serious child welfare issues that affects children and families all around the world. The school social worker’s role is to (1) prevent child abuse from occurring; (2) reduce/eliminate the long lasting effects of the abuse; and (3) provide supportive services to victims and their families who are experiencing the effects of the abuse and/or trauma.
References


