A Mentoring Program For Latino High School Students To Increase Their Awareness Of Opportunities Through Higher Education

A Grant Proposal

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Introduction

- In the United States, children born of immigrant parents are the fastest growing population of children, with nearly one quarter being under the age of 18 (Nguyen, Hernandez, Saetermoe, & Suárez-Orozco, 2013).

- Greenberg (2012) reported that 35% of Latino students live in poverty, with 34% of their parents having less than a high school diploma.

- With a large Latino representation in public schools, school districts will need support from culturally sensitive programs in order to improve academic achievement (Poza, Brooks, & Valdes, 2014).

- Nationally, Latino students have the highest concentration of student dropouts of all minorities at 19.9% (Snyder & Dillow, 2013).

- Goal: The goal of this program is to improve the academic outcomes of children from Latino immigrant families through educational empowerment.
Social Work Relevance

- Latino communities, similar to social workers, mobilize for educational, political, and basic human rights (Villenas, 2012).

- The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW; 2014) stresses that social workers’ primary goal is to help people in need and to target social problems.

- Through their culturally sensitive experiences, social workers can collaborate with the Latino population to seek change in the educational system to ensure academic success for underserved Latino students.
Multicultural Relevance

- Latino students are set to become the majority in California’s public schools; therefore, it is crucial to understand and address the barriers that prevent students from graduating (Madrid, 2011).

- The number of Latino students is projected to increase from 8.6 million to 12.1 million students, with their share of public school enrollment increasing from 18% to 24 % (USDOE, NCES 2012).

- With the highest concentration of student dropouts, it follows that Latinos have the lowest representation in institutions of higher education (Ortiz, Valerio, & Lopez, 2012).
Methods

- Target population: Latino high school students actively enrolled at Youth Speak Collective and their parents.

- Strategies used to identify and select a funding source: The primary source was an internet source with keywords such as, Latino mentoring, college readiness, Latinos and higher education, mentoring parents and youth, and funding for parenting program.

- Funding source: Charles Stewart Mott Foundation was selected as the potential funder for this program. The Charles Stewart Foundation’s Pathways Out of Poverty grant provides “high quality learning beyond the classroom initiatives that increase student success by providing students with multiple ways of learning, anchored to high standards and aligned with education resources throughout community” (Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, 2013, Improving Community Education section, para. 2).
Methods

- Sources used for the needs assessment:
  - Center for Schools and Communities
  - The National Mentoring Resource Center
  - The National Mentoring Partnership
  - Youth Speak Collective

- Projected budget and categories:
  - Total projected budget amount $113,770
    - Bilingual MSW
    - In-kind Founding
    - Operations and Expenses
    - Transportation
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- Program Summary and Description:

- Population served: Latino high school students actively enrolled at Youth Speak Collective and their parents.

- Program Evaluation: To evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring program, each participant’s pretest and posttest will be statistically analyzed. The pretest and posttests will measure the progress that each student and parent have made as a result of the mentoring program. These assessments will help to measure students’ and parents’ knowledge of local institutions, costs and admission requirements, financial aid, and scholarships.
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- **Program Goals:**
  1. To increase students’ awareness of institutions of higher education and information regarding financial aid services.
  2. To increase the school involvement of students.
  3. To increase parents’ understanding of the requirements that enable students to attend universities.
  4. To increase parents’ awareness of the financial resources available to their children. Parents will also be given information regarding the success that students have if their parents are involved in their academic life.
  5. To increase parental school participation.
Lessons Learned/Implications for Social Work

- It is beneficial for social workers to develop the skills necessary to effectively write grant applications.
- Grant application writing can help well-established, evidence-based programs to increase their funding to provide further services.
- Extensive support for high school Latino students is needed.
References


