A TRANSITIONAL PLACEMENT CENTER FOR DETAINED CHILDREN: A GRANT PROPOSAL

PROJECT

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Introduction

- In 2013, there were 482,265 claims of child abuse and neglect in California. Of the 482,265 claims 17% were verified by the child welfare system.5

- 65% of these verified cases were due to general neglect from parents, guardians, or caregivers who failed to provide all the basic needs such as adequate food, shelter, medical care, and supervision for the child.5

- Statistics show that children find the transition from home to foster care placement very difficult in which to adjust, and as a result many negative effects may occur.1

- According to the data from NSCAW (2013), 72.6% of children who were placed out-of-home had one placement, while 18.9% had two placements. Finally, 8.5% of the children who were placed out-of-home had three or more placements. Children ages 13 to 17 years had a higher number of placements than younger children.3

Purpose

- To create a transitional placement center for detained children. This center will help children feel safe and comfortable by providing activities and nutritional meals.
This program is important to the social work profession because it helps children and youth feel more comfortable during their transition from being removed from their homes to a foster home.

This program is consistent with the ethical value of dignity and worth because it seeks to treat children in a safe, holistic environment prior to their out-of-home placement.

The program’s staff will work and interact effectively with children by being culturally sensitive and provide suitable and adequate care for all children of all ethnic backgrounds. The program will not discriminate or deny any services on care to children and youth.
Cross-Cultural Relevance

- Children of all different backgrounds and ethnicities come to the attention of the child welfare system.

- In California, African American children were more prevalent than White or Hispanic children for being removed and placed in foster care.\(^4\)

- This project will be implemented in Los Angeles County specifically in the South region of Los Angeles, which has a population of diverse ethnic backgrounds\(^2\).

- This program will seek to hire staff that will represent the diversity of children who come to the attention of the child welfare system by hiring culturally diverse staff members who are bilingual in Spanish and English.
Target Population:
The proposed project will be open to all the children who come to the attention of the foster care system ages 5 to 18 in Los Angeles County Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS) in serving planning area (SPA) 6.

Strategies Used to Find Funding Source:
Several methods for identifying potential funders were used to locate a funder for the development of a transitional placement center for detained children. Internet searches and foundation databases were used to investigate foundation, state and federal grants.
Methods

Funding Source:

- Stuart Foundation: This foundation was chosen based on its interest and commitment to helping vulnerable youth in the child welfare system.

Sources Used for Needs Assessment:

- The grant writer did extensive research using scholarly journals, books, and reports and searched for the most current data on children entering into the foster care system. The literature focused specifically on effects on children in multiple placements and the long-term effects children experience after being removed from their homes. However, there was limited research that discussed the negative impact children may experience while entering the foster care system and waiting to be placed.

Projected Budget:

- Salaries and Benefits
- Direct Program Costs
- In-Kind Expenses
- Total Amount Requested: $131,000
Grant Proposal

Program Summary and Description

- The goals of this proposed program are: (a) to reduce anxiety and/or boredom among children and youth who are waiting for placement; and (b) to increase knowledge in children and youth who are waiting for placement about foster care.

Population Served

- All the children who come to the attention of the foster care system between the ages of 5-18.

Sustainability

- The Program Director will seek potential funding sources throughout the year.
Program Objectives

- Objective 1: Provide children and youth with fun activities and toys.
- Objective 2: Provide guidance and encouragement while children and youth engage in activities.
- Objective 1: Provide children and youth with information on what to expect next.
- Objective 2: Provide children and youth with information on their rights when placed in foster care.

Program Evaluation

Children and youth will be given a pre-test survey to assess their knowledge about foster care and their rights when placed in foster care. The same survey will be administered right before they leave the center as post-tests to evaluate their knowledge gained while being in the center. In addition, the post-test will include an opportunity for children and youth who spent time at the center to provide feedback about the activities and the staff.
Lessons Learned/Implications for Social Work

Lessons Learned:

- Grant Writing process
- Learned about the importance of flexibility when it came to feedback and being open to suggestions in making adjustments to the initial proposed center.
- An intense examination of the target population helped the grant writer learn about the gaps and services that currently exist and are offered to this population.

Implications for Social Work Practice:

- Social workers should advocate for better services and programs for the most vulnerable individuals.
- When social workers have the abilities to write grants they are ensuring that funds are allocated to many agencies in the community in order to remain open.
- Social workers should have the abilities to write grants because they can contribute to further research on social conditions and issues affecting vulnerable populations.


