autism

Warm Line in Orange County

A grant proposal

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introduction

- Approximately 1 out of 88 children have been identified as having an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) (Baio, 2012)
- Prevalence is 1 in 54 boys in the United States (Baio, 2012)
- Children are being diagnosed with ASD at earlier ages with at least 18% of children being diagnosed by age 3 (Baio, 2012)
- Yet most parents had initially expressed concern to their pediatrician by time their child was 18 months (Baio, 2012)

The autism warm line would offer parents of newly diagnosed children with autism or those with a possible diagnosis of autism with support, awareness, and psychoeducation to help them gain a better understanding of the disability.
social work relevance

- Provide supportive listening to families who have concerns about their child’s development.

- Collaborate with agencies in Orange County who serve children diagnosed with ASD.

- Empower parents to be active participants in their child’s program and services.

Knowledgeable in identifying early signs of ASD and provide referrals to local autism-related resources.
cross-cultural relevance

- All communities have people with autism (APA, 2000)

  “Autism knows no racial, ethnic, or social boundaries. Family income, lifestyle, and educational levels do not affect the chance of autism occurrence” (APA, 2000 p. 3).

- Latino children, African American children and children of low socioeconomic status are often diagnosed later than other children and are less likely to access early intervention services (Mandell et al., 2002)

- 1 in 88 children in the United States had ASD, with males disproportionately affected at a rate of 1 in 54 (Baio et al., 2012).
**methods**

**Target population**
- Parents who are looking for support, information and referrals for developmental concerns associated with ASD for children ages birth through 5 years old.

**Strategy used to identify funding sources**
- Potential sources to fund the proposed project were found through the use of search engines. Key terms used to search for potential funding were: autism grants, developmental disabilities, autism grant application, special needs, and parents of children with ASD.

**Selected funding source**
- The W. K. Kellogg Foundation was identified as the most suitable funding source for this project.
methods

Sources used for needs assessment
- Interview with the program director at Help Me Grow Orange County
- CHOC/UCI Neurodevelopment Programs Evaluation Report (HMG, 2012)

Projected budget range
- The total budget for this grant is for $150,000 per fiscal year to enhance the overall development of children ages 0-5, who are suspected or have an autism diagnosis.

Project budget categories
- The fund distribution consists of two major categories, the personnel and the program budget. The bulk of the monies requested in this grant would be applied to salary as the main goal of the autism warm line is to focus on providing enhanced referrals.
An Autism Warm Line in Orange County

This proposed program would fund an autism warm line in Orange County. The autism warm line would provide counseling support, information and referrals at no charge to families of infants and children with developmental concerns associated with a possible ASD diagnosis. The warm line will connect parents with community resources to support their children, parents would be informed about services and systems.

Help Me Grow Orange County, the host agency, is one of the CHOC/UCI Neurodevelopmental Programs (NDP), which provides a continuum of developmental services for children and families, from a parent’s first concern about their child’s development or behavior to full diagnosis and intervention for those children with developmental delays (HMG, 2012).
Objective 1: To provide parents with the support, awareness, and education to help them gain a better understanding of the disability. It is expected a warm line would help empower parents to take action to connect with agencies, which provide early intervention services.

Objective 2: To provide parents with supportive listening to enhance coping with their feelings and emotions associated with having a child with a possible disability. This will be achieved by conducting friendly professional dialogue, which will serve to soothe the fears of parents.

Objective 3: To assist parents in navigating resources and fostering relationships with professionals in order to enhance the development, behavior and learning of children with ASD. Social workers will provide guidance about the types of early intervention services available or advocacy for school related services.
implications for social work

Autism is a spectrum. Each person is different.

Social workers encounter children with ASD in a range of areas, including child welfare settings, schools and child cares, social service organizations, governmental benefits offices, hospitals, clinics, and mental health treatment centers (Dababnah et al., 2010 p. 266).

Often social workers are the first to encounter and recognize the characteristics of ASD symptoms and, as result, social workers should be comfortable in identifying the early signs of ASD (Dababnah et al., 2010).

Social workers should also be cognizant of the challenges families with a newly diagnosed child with ASD face and advocate for the development of services that would best meet the needs of this client population.
References


