SUPPORT GROUP FOR LATINO PARENTS OF YOUTH DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER: A GRANT PROPOSAL PROJECT

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Introduction

- It is estimated that 1 in every 68 children in the United States are affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder (CDC, 2014a).

- The CDC (2014a) reports that the ideal age for diagnosis is 18 months to two years old; unfortunately many children do not get diagnosed until they are much older.

- For Latino children in particular they can experience delayed diagnosis due to numerous factors such as lack of knowledge from parents on ASD and clinicians’ misdiagnosis (Mandell et al., 2009).

Goal

- The goal of the program is to increase awareness of ASD to the Latino community and improve access to services through various educational workshops for parents and youths affected by ASD.
Providing service is one of the core values of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (NASW; 2014).

It is the responsibility of social workers to provide adequate services in a respectful manner to parents and caregivers who lack ASD support and services for their youth.

By providing support and services to Latinos parents and their youth, social workers will empower Latino parents to appropriate support and advocate for their children.
Latinos families undergo many challenges when seeking support and services for their youth affected by ASD.

Latino children are being underserved during the ASD screening process. The lack of cultural and language barriers among clinician and parents make it challenging for professionals to fully address the concern of parents that can contribute to misdiagnosis or lack or services for the Latino families (Zuckerman et al., 2013).

Researches have also found that Latino children receive less ASD treatments options than white children (Magaña, Lopez, Aguinaga, & Morton, 2013).

In addition, lack of knowledge on ASD can also contribute to delayed diagnosis for their children (Magaña & Smith, 2013).
Methods

Target Population

Low income Latino parents who reside in Inglewood California and care for an adolescent from 12-18 years of age with ASD.

Identification of Funding Source

The Internet search engine Google was used to located a funding source. Key terms used to locate funding included: “special needs programs,” “funding youth,” “adolescents with special needs,” “caregiver programs,” “Latinos with disabilities,” and “ASD funding.”

Selection of Funding Source

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Foundation was selected for the proposed program.
Methods

Needs Assessment

- Peer literature was obtained from the California State University, Long Beach Library database.
- Additional information and statistics was obtained from the partner agency and websites such as the United States Census Bureau, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and California Department of Developmental Services.

Budget and Categories

- Direct Program Cost $16,250.00
- Indirect Program Cost $14,358.00
- Personnel Salary and Benefits $107,333.00
- In-Kind Contributions $20,000.00
- Total Program Requested : $137,941.00
Grant Proposal

Program Summary and Description

The support program will include educational and cognitive components that will empower Latino parents by providing them with knowledge on how to appropriately address the needs of their youth. Parents will join one of four support groups within the 12-month period. Within each group 15 parents will participate in two-hour sessions that will be held twice a week by highly skilled staff. The program will consist of educating parents on the etiology of ASD, the diagnostic process, and intervention strategies for the parents. It will also provide parents with the opportunity to share their experiences as caregivers and learn about positive coping strategies.

Population Served

The target population will be low income Latino Parents who have limited ASD resources and who care for a youth with ASD in the city of Inglewood, California.
Grant Proposal

Program Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Educate Latino parents on ASD.

- **Objective 2:** Empower Latino parents by providing them with the tools they need to appropriate advocate for their youth.

- **Objective 3:** Provide psychosocial support for Latino parents.

Sustainability

- Staff members will continue to increase community support and partnership by maintaining ongoing communication with local schools, regional centers, and clinics to provide effective support for Latino parents and their youth.

Program Evaluation

- An evaluation measure will be developed for the program. A pre and post tests will be provided that will include multiple choice questions and open ended questions related to the topics discussed. The post tests will have an additional comment section that will allow parents to give their feedback on the sessions and overall program.
Lessons Learned

- Great insight was obtained on how the process involving grant writing and how to locate potential funding sources.

- The review of literature also served as a great learning experience. It provided a better understanding as to the challenges that Latino families faced during an ASD diagnosis and when seeking services for their youth.

- Support programs improve the quality of life of children with ASD, and also help parents cope with daily stressors and gain emotional support (Mueller, Milian, & Lopez, 2009).

- There is also limited funding for ASD support programs, therefore it is crucial that social workers begin the discussion among other colleagues on the importance of new policies that will provide support for Latinos affected by ASD.

- It is only through community awareness and education that Latino parents and their youth will obtain the support they need to live more promising futures.


