

Fostering Parent Participation in a Longitudinal Study: The Miami *Legacy for Children*TM Experience

APHA 135th Annual Meeting
and Exposition

November 5, 2007 Washington D.C.
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Key Components Fostering Parent Participation

- Incentives
- Retention Strategies
- Culture of Engagement
- *Building Sense of Community*



Incentives

- Weekly intervention meetings:
 - Diapers (years 1-3)
 - Developmentally appropriate gifts related to curriculum topics
 - \$25 at first group meeting
 - \$20 childcare (non Legacy children)
 - \$5 per/meeting attended given monthly



Incentives

- Transportation
 - Provided door-to-door for all meetings
- Snacks and/or meals
 - Provided at each meeting



Retention Strategies

- Personal touch
 - Mother and child Birthday cards
 - holiday gifts
 - field trips
 - Mother's day celebration
- Curriculum
 - Party session (last session of month)
 - Mother focused sessions



Retention Strategies

- Open door policy
 - Always welcoming without any questions
 - Allowed for participants to come and go depending on life circumstances such as:
 - jobs
 - housing
 - childcare arrangements
 - School



Staff Culture of Engagement

- Supportive, nurturing and non-judgmental staff
- Weekly Staff meetings
 - Discuss group dynamics
 - Addressing participant's needs
- Continuous training for all Legacy staff



Staff Culture of Engagement

- Participants were encouraged to keep in contact with group leaders
- Participants were called prior to each meeting



Staff Culture of Engagement

- Frontline comfort zone
 - Entire Staff attends 1st group meeting
- Drivers/childcare staff
 - Consistency
 - From community
- Challenge maintaining separation between staff and friends with participants



Curriculum Components

- Tailor-made for population with repetition of topics
- *Parent Child Time Together (PCTT)*
- *Main Session Topic/Topic of the day (MST)*
- *Building Sense of Community*
 - Kept the participants coming each week



Building Sense of Community (BSOC)

- Initial component of weekly sessions
- Fostered group cohesiveness
- Assisted in creating support network among mothers
- Moved from group leader-directed to participant-led discussions
- Ice-breakers and/or getting- to- know each other activities



Building Sense of Community (*cont.*)

Group membership skills:

- Taking turns
- Being supportive and non-judgmental
- Respecting other's opinions
- Adhering to established *Legacy* Ground Rules



BSOC Discussion topics

- Feeding
- Sleeping
- Eating
- Fun things mothers have done with children
- Places they have gone
- Participant initiated conversations



Evolution of BSOC over time

- Mothers became more informed from each other on:
 - housing, government assistance, job opportunities, parenting strategies and shared these with each other
- ‘Extended BSC’ in Years 4 & 5 curriculum focused on team work skills
- Fun activities created environment for spontaneous parent discussions



Recommendations for Fostering Parent Participation

- Select staff who can wear many hats and understand the need to be flexible and open
- Support positive staff morale and team work
 - Retreats, get-togethers, family day, staff lunches
- Sustain rapport with participants throughout program
 - as children age out, mothers go to work and school



Recommendations for Fostering Parent Participation

- Maintain a welcoming attitude
- Create a Feedback loop
- Consider the project as a work in progress
- Create a two-way exchange of information and ideas
- Tracker phone calls, Home Visits
- Incentives



Thank You

More information is available at
www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/child

