

ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PARENT TRAINING PROGRAM FOR SINGLE AFRICAN AMERICAN MOTHERS: A GRANT PROPOSAL

By

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Single parent families are a prevalent trend among the African American community. Low socioeconomic and compromised maternal monitoring challenge the family structure of single African American families. These challenges produce negative psychosocial outcomes for African Americans. The purpose of this project was to design a one-year program and identify a funding source to write a grant proposal. The goal of the program was to provide psychoeducational groups to increase single African American mothers' knowledge of effective communication and conflict resolution. Additionally, the program was designed to provide emotional support. Long Beach Memorial Medical Center was selected as the host agency. The Annenberg Foundation was selected as a potential funding source. The actual submission and/or funding of this grant were not a requirement for the successful completion of this project.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scope of the Problem

In the United States, there is a large disparity for nonmarital births between African American women and non-African American women. In fact, nationwide estimates indicate that 4.1 million American women had a birth in 2011 (Shattuck & Kreider, 2011). Of these American women, “35.7% were unmarried during the time of the survey” (Shattuck & Kreider, 2011, P.5). Among those women who listed their race, 595,983 were African American women. Of these African American women, “67.8% were unmarried” during the time of the survey (Shattuck & Kreider, 2011, p. 5). In comparison to other nonmarital births reported based on race, 11.3% of Asian women were unmarried, and 26% of non-Hispanic White women were unmarried. Since the 1940s, the percentage of nonmarital births has been remarkably increasing in the United States (Shattuck & Kreider, 2011). According to the National Center for Health Statistics (2007), the percentage of nonmarital births increased by 80% during 1980 to 2007. Additionally, the percentage of nonmarital births increased by 20% during 2002 to 2007. Single parent families are an increasing trend throughout America, specifically among the African American community (Rowe, 2007; Shattuck & Kreider, 2011).

Researchers suggest that low socioeconomic status and the lack of a partner cause compromises in single African American mothers’ parenting practices (Choi & Jackson, 2011; Griffin, Botvin, Scheier, Diaz, & Miller, 2000; Taylor, Larsen-Rife, Conger,

Widaman, & Cutrona, 2010). Factors affecting single African American mothers' parenting practices include: low family functioning, low family structure, compromised maternal monitoring, and maternal stress due to balancing work-life demands. This shift from the conventional two-parent household makes researchers believe that being raised in a single-mother household is the main cause for the increased rates of negative psychosocial outcomes among African American youth (Choi & Jackson, 2011; Griffin et al., 2000; Lipman, Boyle, Dooley, & Offord, 2002; Simons, Chen, Simons, Brody, & Cutrona, 2006; Taylor et al., 2010). In fact, the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2013) states, African American adolescents are at an increased risk to externalize difficulties such as aggression and conduct problems. In addition YRBSS (CDC, 2013) indicated, that African American youth are overrepresented in the prevalence of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Specifically, African American youth are overrepresented in the prevalence of Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS). These findings emphasize the need for the development of a program to enhance single African American family functioning.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to create a grant proposal seeking funds for the development of a parent-training program. The goal of the parent-training program was to improve single African American family functioning through educating mothers on effective communication and conflict resolution interventions. In addition, the program was designed to reduce single parent stress through delivering clients a therapeutic environment with their peers.

The program was intended to enable social work employees to deliver a culturally designed parent effectiveness-training program for single African American mothers. The program incorporated the traditional methods of parent training with culturally effective interventions. This program would serve as a source to enable social workers to empower single African American mothers. The overarching goal of the program was to improve single African American family functioning through training mothers to: (a) effectively communicate to their children, (b) actively listen to their children, and (c) troubleshoot family conflicts.

Target Population

The target population for the proposed program was single mothers who identify as African American. Due to the researcher's graduation requirements the population must be categorized as adults. A potential client must identify as an adult, 18 years of age or over. In addition, the potential client must be recognized as low-income. The proposed program would aim to service single African American mothers due to the prevalence of single motherhood among the African American community. Qualified candidates (15) would be recruited via voluntary participation. Qualified candidates would also be recruited from Long Beach due to the large African American (63,372) population (United States Census Bureau, 2014). The proposed program would be available to the residents of Long Beach.

Agency Description

The proposed program would be hosted by Memorial Medical Center of Long Beach. The mission of Memorial Medical Center is to "improve the health and well being of individuals, families and the community through innovation and the pursuit of

excellence” (Memorialcare, 2014b, para.1). Memorial Medical Center includes a Maternity center and a Women’s Care service program. The Maternity center and the Women’s Care service program provide classes open to the public. The classes include: Becoming a Parent, Boot Camp for New Dads, Breastfeeding Basics, and Baby Care Basics (Memorialcare, 2014a). The purpose of these classes is to teach effective parenting skills to parents. The purpose of the proposed program was to teach single African American mother’s effective parenting skills. The proposed program is similar to the programs held by Memorial Medical Center; therefore this is a suitable host agency.

Cross-Cultural Relevance

Several studies have demonstrated that family interventions that focused on parenting styles produced positive outcomes in youth behavior (Jones, Zalot, Foster, Sterrett, & Chester, 2007; Kim & Brody, 2005; Murry et al., 2014). Studies revealed that modifications in parenting methods could positively influence youth’s perception and internalization of parental norms (Murry, McNair, Myers, Chen, & Brody, 2014). In addition, intervention-induced changes can positively affect the onset and escalation of risky behavior among youth. These findings highlight the potential for the development of a parent-training program to enhance single African American family functioning, through teaching effective communication and conflict resolution skills.

Social Work Relevance

Social workers have a duty to “pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people” (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2008, Ethical Principles section, para. 3).

Single African American mothers are a particularly vulnerable and oppressed population. This population is at-risk for various factors, such as psychosocial difficulties, compromised parenting; low socioeconomic status; low family structure; and low family functioning. According to the NASW (2008), social workers challenge social injustice through “ensuring access to needed information, services and resources” (Ethical Principles section, para. 3). The proposed program would serve as a parent-training intervention to ensure clients access to needed information, services and resources. Therefore, social workers must develop and implement positive interventions to ensure the basic human needs of single African American mothers are being met.

Definition of Key Terms

The following conceptual terminologies are defined as:

Active Listening

Active Listening is referred to as the process of being attentive to what an individual is dictating and to understand the feelings and viewpoint of that individual (Education Portal, 2014a).

Adolescence

“Adolescence is defined as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19” (World Health Organization [W.H.O], 2014, para. 1).

African American

African-American is referred to as an individual who identifies as an American of Black or African descent (MedicineNet, 2012).

Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parenting style is defined as a parent who attempts to manage a child's development through strict standards (Baumrind, 1967).

Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parent styling is defined as a parent who attempts to manage a child's development through a rational approach (Baumrind, 1967).

Behavior Modification

Behavior modification is founded on the belief that an individual's adjustment is learned from their environment (Simpson, 1998).

Communication Skills

“Communication skills is the process by which information is effectively exchanged between individuals through words, tone and quality of voice, eye contact, physical closeness, visual cues, and overall body language” (Health of Children, 2014, Definition section, para. 1).

Coparenting

Coparenting is referred to as the coordination of childrearing responsibilities between two adults (Gonzalez, Jones, & Parent, 2014).

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution means a process of “problem solving or confrontation in which the two parties work together to find out a common solution” (U.S Legal, 2014a, para. 1).

Coresident Coparent

Coresident coparent is referred to as an adult or family member that resides with the single mother family and assists with childcare on a daily basis (Gonzalez et al., 2014).

Emotion Coaching

Emotion coaching is defined as the process of instructing individuals on how to express their emotions through a rationale approach (Katz & Windecker-Nelson, 2006).

Externalizing Problems

Externalizing problems is the display of expressing behaviors in which negative behaviors are directed towards the outward environment (Education Portal, 2014).

Family Functioning

Family functioning is indicated by positive ratings by family members of the fulfillment of essential expressive functions in their family (Linder-Pelz, Tamir, Spenser, Epstein, & Levy, 1984).

Family Structure

Family structure is defined as a support system that provides emotional and financial support.

Low-Income Families

Low-income families are considered working “families whose taxable income does not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level” (United States Department of Education, 2014, para. 2).

Modeling

Modeling is defined as the form of displaying appropriate behavior for children to observe and imitate (Ponzetti, 2003).

Nonresident Coparent

Nonresident coparent will be referred to as an adult or family member that does not reside with the single mother family but assists with childcare on a daily basis (Gonzalez et al., 2014).

Paternal Involvement

Paternal involvement is referred to as a father's involvement, availability and accountability for his children (Coates & Phares, 2014).

Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting style is defined as a parent who attempts to manage their child's development through an affirmative approach (Baumrind, 1967).

Punishment

Punishment is defined as the act of withholding social attention from children (Ponzetti, 2003).

Reinforcement

Reinforcement is referred to as the process of reinforces (material or social awards) given to children to promote positive behavior (Ponzetti, 2003).

Single Mother

Single mother is referred to as "an individual who is unmarried or legally separated from a spouse and has a minor child or children for which the parent has either custody or joint custody" (U.S Legal, 2014b, Single Parent Law section, para. 2).

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is defined as behavior learned from the environment through observational learning (Bandura, 1977).

Socioeconomic Status

“Socioeconomic Status is defined as the social class of an individual or group that is measured as a combination of education, income and occupation” (American Psychological Association [APA], 2014, para. 1).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This section will review previous literature pertaining to the relationship between the historical and current trends of the African American family structure. Specifically, it will examine paternal involvement and the dynamics of co-parenting. Literature will be further explored on possible explanations for single motherhood and the impact it has on African American families. Next, the chapter will include a critical analysis of effective and ineffective parent practices. Lastly, a synopsis of traditional parent education approaches will be discussed.

African American Family Structure

Historical Trends

Historically, a single-mother family has been the predominant family type among African American families with children (Hill, 2012; Nichols-Casebolt, 1988; Ruggles, 1994). Theorists have claimed that slavery is the primary reason for the disorder and instability in the African American family structure (Hill, 2012; Ruggles, 1994). The West African family is a predecessor for the extended family structures found in modern African American families (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003). Africans began to migrate to America during the early 1600s (Hill, 2012). By 1790, there were 750,000 Africans living in America, in which 90% of Africans were slaves. Africans held various traditional family practices, originated in West Africa. Some of these traditional

practices mirrored those found in American culture (e.g., economically productive roles for women, and high rates of fertility) and some practices opposed those found in American culture (e.g., early sexuality and marriage, polygamy, and extended kin relations; (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003; Hill, 2012). Slavery interfered with traditional practices through prioritizing labor roles instead of family roles (Hill, 2012). Slavery also demoralized and substituted family structures with relationships focused on the identity as slaves (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003). In addition, slavery obstructed the stability of African American families by separating family members through slave purchase (Hill, 2012).

Although few enslaved families achieved stability, marriage was more difficult to attain. During the early decades of slavery, a slanted gender ratio made it unmanageable for all men to locate female counterparts (Hill, 2012). Even on large plantations, at least one third of husbands had wives who resided elsewhere and were frequently limited to weekend visits (Hill, 2012). The affects of slavery often challenged African American's ability to generate stable families that followed mainstream standards. Slavery prevented men from having an authority role in their family because men could not control how to provide for their wives and children (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003; Hill, 2012). In addition, men could not control how to protect their wives and children from the abuse of slavery. Slavery promoted women to rely on extended kinship for childcare rather than marriage (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003; Hill, 2012). Prior to the emancipation proclamation of 1863, families of free African American people were almost likely to be headed equally by men and women (Hill, 2012). Free men would regularly leave their home area in the pursuit of work. Free men who stayed home held opportunities for

occupations and, had access to an abundance of women to choose from. These free African American families performed the same roles as other colonized families; with the added responsibility of helping friends and family members gain their freedom.

Post Civil War, a significant amount of free African Americans lived in a subtle economic standing. The majority of free African Americans lived in single-mother families, as women were more likely than men to be free (Hill, 2012). Among African Americans the percentage of single-parent households was rather constant during 1880 to 1960 and then it suddenly increased (Ruggles, 1994). From 1880 through 1960, about 30% of African American children ages 0 to 14 lived with a single parent or neither parents, as compared to only 10% of Caucasian children residing with a single parent or neither parents (Ruggles, 1994). Since 1970, the percentage of single-mother families has almost doubled. In 1970, almost half (36%) of African American families were headed by a single-mother (Nichols-Casebolt, 1988). In 1984, over half (59%) of African American families were headed by a single-mother (Nichols-Casebolt, 1988). By 2011, the amount (67.8%) of single African American mother families has continued to be an increasing trend (Shattuck & Kreider, 2011). The increasing rates in nonmarital births and declining rates of marriage are the primary reasons for the escalation in the amount of single African American families (Gonzalez et al., 2014). In fact, African Americans (67.8%) predominately display nonmarital births (Shattuck & Kreider, 2011). Additionally, most African Americans (67%), compared with the general population (23%), will reside in a single-parent household at some point during their life (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011).

Paternal Involvement

Paternal involvement is referred to as a father's involvement, availability and accountability for his children (Coates & Phares, 2014). Children who are raised with positively involved nonresidential fathers demonstrate better psychosocial outcomes than children who are raised with an absent father. Children whose nonresidential fathers are involved demonstrate less criminal behavior, sexual-risk taking and substance abuse. Additionally, children whose nonresidential fathers are involved demonstrate better self-esteem, educational achievement, and intellectual reasoning. The majority of African American fathers demonstrate greater involvement during children's early stages of development. These stages include during birth, infancy, and when children were 3 years of age (Coates & Phares, 2014; Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999). In fact, fathers (87%) reported seeing their 1-year-old children since birth and other fathers (63%) reported seeing their children multiple times a month (Coates & Phares, 2014). During children's preschool years, fathers (50%) contributed monetarily, emotionally and took responsibility for childcare (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999). The other fathers (50%) were uninvolved in some or most parts of their children's lives and seemed to have detached themselves from active fathering (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999). In addition, fathers (63%) reported contact with their 5-year-old children since they were 3 and other fathers (43%) reported seeing their children multiple times a month (Coates & Phares, 2014).

Researchers, Coates and Phares (2014), revealed that paternal involvement factors include: incarceration, psychosocial status, support system and the relationship between the father and mother of the children. African American fathers that had been

incarcerated demonstrated far less parental involvement that resulted in children demonstrating significant behavioral problems (Perry & Bright, 2012). Although African American men only represent 6% of the general population, 50% of the prison population consists of African American men (Perry & Bright, 2012). A recent study (Perry & Bright, 2012) showed that 51% of African American men were incarcerated by the time their child was 5 years of age. It is possible that men who cannot fulfill the provider role choose to detach themselves completely from active parenting (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999).

Coparenting

According to Gonzalez et al., (2014), a group of very-low income, single African American families revealed that 97% of single mothers received assisted childcare through another adult or family member. Furthermore, their findings revealed those children's maternal grandmother (38.3%), maternal friends (36.2%) and maternal aunt (19.1%) provided childcare assistance. This study also revealed that the majority of nonmarital coparents identify as 50 years of age and as female (87.2%). The majority of coparents also completed at least some college (70.3%) and was employed at least part-time (63.2%). In addition, the majority of coparents (75.8%) reported that they resided in a different home from the single mother family but would visit on average five times a week.

According to researchers coparent quality differed by coparent identity (Parent, Jones, Forehand, Cuellar, & Shoulberg, 2013) and coparent participation differed in a range of childbearing activities (Gonzalez et al., 2014). The children's grandmothers, aunts and female family friends offered considerably further support than fathers (Parent

et al., 2013). Mothers generally had more conflict with both the maternal grandmothers and fathers than compared to aunts or female family friends (Gonzalez et al., 2014). Mothers reported coparents were involved in various activities such as transportation (28.5%), meal preparation (23.4%), washing clothes (21.3%), and supervising children's behavior: (19%); Parent et al., 2013). Coparents reported that they were involved in selecting clothes and/or washing clothes (17%), monitoring chores (14.9%), assisting with homework (12.8%), attending meetings with teachers (7.4%) and/or principal: (7.4%); Parent et al., 2013). Coresident coparents are less involved in child support than compared to nonresidential coparents (Gonzalez et al., 2014). This may be because mothers have more chances to help or prevent the residential coparents involvement. Consequently, this may create less motivation for the residential coparent to provide instrumental support.

Single Motherhood

Possible Explanations

There has been limited research conducted to pinpoint the reason as to why the phenomenon of single motherhood is prevalent in the African American community. However, there have been several explanations suggested as to the reason why single motherhood is common in the African American community. Theorists believe that the decreasing rates of African American marriages are due to structural and socioeconomic factors (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003; Ruggles, 1994).

There is a large disparity between the amount of African American women and the amount of African American men (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003). Thus, the opportunity for marriage may be significantly limited due to the sex-ratio disparity.

Additionally, the gap is widened due to the large percentage of men who are incarcerated, unemployed, users of narcotic drugs, or mentally ill (Barbarin & McCandies, 2003). It may be that there is only a small amount of available men to marry.

The residence of children with single parents may be a response to the historical socioeconomics conditions faced by African Americans pre and post-Civil War (Ruggles, 1994). This means that slavery may have instilled family traditions that have carried out through generations. Another plausible explanation is there may be established differences in social norms between African Americans and Caucasians (Ruggles, 1994). These social norms could have developed either through the experience of slavery or could derive from the differences between European and African cultures.

Psychosocial Outcomes of Single Mothers

- African American single mothers commonly endure psychological distress due to
- I. interpersonal and economic factors, which cause impaired functioning (Gonzalez et al., 2014). Specifically, low socioeconomic status and the absence of a partner, effect compromises in single mothers parent practices. The effects of daily financial stress and multiple incidents (e.g., crime, unemployment) experienced by low-income mothers can greatly affect their parenting skills and psychological well-being (Becker & Liddle, 2001). A large amount of single mothers receive little help from family members. However, in some cases the short-term help received from family members may accumulate to a significant amount of repayment.

Psychosocial Outcomes of Youth

Research emphasizes the stressors associated with single-mother families (e.g., poverty, neighborhood risk, compromised parenting) negatively impacts African American youth (Jones et al., 2007). In fact, this shift from the conventional two-parent household has researchers to believe that being raised in a single-mother household is the main reason for the increased rates of negative psychosocial outcomes among African American youth (Choi & Jackson, 2011; Griffin et al., 2000; Lipman et al., 2002; Simons et al. 2006; Taylor et al., 2010).

African American youth may display externalizing problems through sexual risky behavior. According to the CDC (2013), the prevalence of being currently sexually active (0-12 weeks preceding the survey) was higher among African American (42.1%) students than compared to non-Hispanic White (32.8%) students. Of these sexually active students the occurrence of not using contraceptives to prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) was more common among African American (15.9%) students than non-Hispanic White (11.1%) students. African American youth that do not use preventive methods for STDs become more susceptible to STDs. In fact, African American (57%) youth's are disproportionately represented in new cases of HIV/AIDS (health immunodeficiency virus/ acquired immune deficiency virus).

African American youth also display externalizing problems through physical misconduct. According to the CDC (2013), African American (34.7%) students were more likely to engage in a physical fight as compared to non- Hispanic White (20.9%) students. In fact, African American (12.8%) students were two times more likely to engage in a physical altercation on school property as compared to non- Hispanic White

(6.4%) students. This research suggests that African American students are high contributors to school violence and overall violence.

Parenting Practices

Social Ecological Theory

According to the Social Ecological Theory, environmental factors (e.g., interpersonal characteristics) help form the psychosocial adjustment of youth (Baumrind, 1967; Brofenbrenner, 1979; Conger, Conger, Elder, Lorenz, Simons, & Whitbeck, 1992). The parent and youth relationship is the most significant interpersonal feature that affects the psychosocial well-being of youth during early and middle childhood (Ainsworth, 1978; Amato & Fowler, 2002; Baumrind, 1989; Sterrett, Jones, & Kincaid, 2009). The parent and youth relationship, as well as parenting methods, proceed to influence the youth's psychosocial adjustment during late childhood (Smetana, Campione-Barr, & Metzger, 2006; Steinberg, 2001; Sterrett et al., 2009).

Parenting Styles

Prior studies indicate that African American single mothers use more direct assertive parent practices (Steinberg, 2001). This research suggests that African American single mothers commonly display an authoritarian parent style. The authoritarian parent struggles to manage children's development through strict standards (Baumrind, 1967). The authoritarian parent style negatively influences children to display anxious, withdrawn, and unhappy dispositions (Baumrind, 1967). In addition, these children tend to display poor reactions to frustration. In regards to gender, girls often give up while boys often display hostility (Baumrind, 1967).

Baumrind's (1967) research states that the authoritative parenting style is the most effective in promoting healthy child development (Ponzetti, 2003; Steinberg 2001). The authoritative parent attempts to manage a child's development through a rational approach (Baumrind, 1967). Authoritative parents utilize rationalizations to explain their reasoning of expected behavior (Baumrind, 1967; Ponzetti, 2003). The authoritative parent also utilizes control to resolve parent-child disagreements (Baumrind, 1967). The authoritative parent enforces her own perspective as an adult, but recognizes the child's individual interests and special ways. Additionally, the authoritative parent utilizes thought, control, and modeling to reach the goal of their children's development. Authoritative parenting steadily has been linked with positive youth outcomes. Youth outcomes include improved educational functioning, self-sufficiency, and higher morale. Additionally, youth outcomes include decrease in internalizing (e.g., anxiety, depression) problems and externalizing (e.g., deviance, misconduct) problems (Ponzetti, 2003). The proposed program shall promote the authoritative parenting style.

Parenting Methods of Control

Parenting methods of control have been separated into three types: power, love withdrawal and induction (Ponzetti, 2003). The first type of control parents utilize is power. Parents demonstrate power through forcing their children to abide to parental norms. This parent method leads children to exhibit inactive or disobedient behavior. The second type of control parents utilize is love withdrawal. Parents demonstrate love withdrawal through disapproving their children's behavior by ignoring, shaming or isolating their children. This parent method results in various effects of child behavior. When parents use guilt or manipulation as a form of love withdrawal, children are more

likely to develop mood disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression). However, when parents use reasonable monitoring and negotiation as a form of love withdrawal, children are less likely to perform externalizing problems. The third type of control parents utilize is induction. Parents demonstrate induction through reasoning with children to help children comprehend the effects of their behavior. This parent method promotes children's social competence. The proposed program shall promote effective parental control methods such as monitoring, negotiation and induction.

Communication Skills in Conflict Resolution

Children must develop the ability to resolve conflicts and negotiate interpersonal disputes to successfully engage in the social world (Baumrind, 1973; Feldman, Masalha, & Derdikman-Eiron, 2010). Conflict resolution in families is based on specific culture components such as kinship interaction, cultural attitudes in regards to gender roles, and the parent and child's gender (Feldman, Masalha, & Derdikman-Eiron, 2010). Children utilize observational learning to understand how parents engage in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, children learn inappropriate conflict behavior through their parent's display of inappropriate behavior (Gonzalez, Jones, & Parent, 2014).

Research has shown that African American mothers provide control and support to teach their child how to prevent and deescalate problems (Johnson, Finigan, Bradshaw, Hayine, & Cheng, 2013). The control strategies include: enrolling youth in extracurricular activities, behavior monitoring, conflict resolution, police involvement, nonviolent punishment and violent punishment. The support strategies include: selecting friends, modeling respect, averting conflict, verbal conflict resolution and collaborating with an additional adult. African American mothers however tend to teach their child to

fight when necessary, which counteracts with the control and support strategies. It is vital that mothers do not send mixed messages to their children because this may lead to a parent-child conflict. African American mothers display an authoritarian approach to solve parent-child conflict. Authoritarian mothers utilize an irrational approach in which their reasoning is not elaborated but rather forced upon children (Baumrind, 1967). When these parent-child conflicts are not resolved, lingering conflicts and negativity are caused (Nelson, Boyer, Sang, & Wilson, 2014). In fact, unresolved parent-child conflict is correlated with causing greater externalizing problems in children and causing the parent-child relationship to deteriorate (García- Ruiz, Rodrigo, Hernández-Cabrera, Máiquez, & Deković, 2013).

Parent Education

Behavior-Management Approaches

Behavior-management approaches are based on the social learning theory (Ponzetti, 2003). The social learning theory demonstrates behavior is learned from the environment through observational learning (Bandura, 1977). In addition, behavior-management approaches include behavior modification (Ponzetti, 2003). Behavior modification is founded on the belief that an individual's adjustment is learned from their environment (Simpson, 1998). Behavior modification includes reinforcement, punishment and modeling (Ponzetti, 2003). Reinforces are material or social awards given to children to promote positive behavior. Punishment is the act of withholding social attention from children. Modeling is the form of displaying appropriate behavior for children to observe and imitate. Behavior modification is an effective tool to direct particular problems due to its systematic focus on changing behavior.

There are several limitations to behavioral-management approaches (Ponzetti, 2003). Through behavioral approaches the parents demonstrate appropriate behavior and control children's exposure to ensure positive results. This may prevent children from developing mature autonomy and problem solving skills. In addition, behavioral approaches may promote children to focus on rewards rather than developing internalized moral behaviors. This may prevent children from developing overall internalized standards.

Relationship-Enhancement Approaches

Relationship-enhancement approaches emphasize a collaborative and supportive relationship between parents and their children (Ponzetti, 2003). These approaches also educate parents on how to create an open and supportive relationship with their children through active listening. Active Listening is referred to as the process of being attentive to what an individual is dictating and to understand the feelings and viewpoint of that individual (Education Portal, 2014a). The primary goal of active listening is to comprehend the viewpoint of an individual. Active listening derives from the person-centered approach and is a fundamental factor of effective communication. Parents can utilize active listening skills to respond to their children's behavior (Ponzetti, 2003). This form of supportive parent-child communication promotes positive child development.

Relationship-enhancement approaches encourage parents to demonstrate an emotion coach role (Ponzetti, 2003). Emotion coaching is the process of instructing individuals on how to express their emotions through a rationale approach (Katz & Windecker-Nelson, 2006). Additionally, emotion coaching provides children the opportunity to improve their problem solving skills through learning how to manage their

emotional behavior (Ponzetti, 2003). Research shows that children develop emotion regulation through parent-child interaction (Katz & Windecker-Nelson, 2006). Furthermore, emotion coaching has been associated with positive overall youth outcomes. Relationship-enhancement approaches emphasize the parent's use of consequences for children's misbehavior to help children understand the relationship between their behavior and outcomes (Ponzetti, 2003). In addition, parents are advised to decrease exerting their power by preventing physical punishment or criticism.

Overall, the proposed program should emphasize parental control (behavior management approaches) and a caring relationship (relationship-enhancement approaches) (Ponzetti, 2003). The proposed program might also focus interventions on improving the relationship with coparents, especially between mothers and grandmothers and/or fathers. In addition, interventions that focus on increasing father involvement may be useful (Parent et al., 2014).

Summary

This chapter provided literature demonstrating the relationship between historical and current trends of the African American family structure. Particularly, literature on paternal involvement and the dynamics of coparenting were further explored. Additionally, possible explanations of single motherhood and its impact on African American families were established. The chapter also included a critical analysis of effective and ineffective parent practices. Lastly, an outline of effective parent education approaches was reviewed. The following chapter will discuss the process of identifying and selecting a funding source for the proposed program.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

This chapter reviewed the methods for identifying and selecting a funding source for the proposed program. Firstly, it examined the target population of the proposed program. Next, the chapter explored the methods utilized in searching for the potential funding sources. Then the chapter identified the criteria for the selected grant. This section also thoroughly reviewed the needs assessment. Lastly, the grant requirements were discussed for the selected grant.

Target Population

The target population for the proposed program is single mothers who identify as African American. A potential client must meet the following criteria to qualify for services. A potential client must identify as an adult, 18 years of age or over. In addition, the potential client must be recognized as low-income. The proposed program will aim to service single African American mothers due to the prevalence of single motherhood among the African American community. Qualified candidates (15) will be recruited via voluntary participation. Qualified candidates will also be recruited from Long Beach due to the large African American (63,372) community (United States Census Bureau, 2014). The proposed program will be available to the residents of Long Beach.

Identification of Potential Funding Sources

The researcher performed a thorough search to identify possible funding sources for the proposed project. Sources that were utilized consisted of the Internet and grant funding databases. Searches were performed to identify potential federal, state and local-government funded grants. In addition, searches were performed to identify grants funded by private corporations with a history of supporting community-based programs.

The potential federal government funded grants were identified through the United States Department of Health and Human Services' financial website, www.grants.gov. The key terms "African American, Single mother and Parent training" were utilized to narrow down the search results. The potential state government funded grants were identified through the California Government financial website, www.ca.gov/Grants.html. The website displayed state government funded grants within various categories. The potential state government funded grants were further explored in the community development category. The potential local government funded grants were identified through the City of Long Beach financial website, www.longbeach.gov/cd/neighborhood_services/grants/neighborhood_grants.html. The website displayed neighborhood grants. The researcher further explored neighborhood grants.

Further potential funding sources were identified through conducting a search of private foundations, particularly ones that focus on parent-training programs. The researcher utilized Google search by inputting "grants for parent-training programs" in the research database. The researcher then explored the Women Helping Others (W.H.O) Foundation. The W.H.O foundation prioritizes programs that "serve the overlooked

needs of women and children” (Women Helping Others [W.H.O], n.d., para. 1). The W.H.O foundation also prioritizes programs that “address health and social service needs” (W.H.O, n.d., para. 1). The researcher also explored the Annenberg Foundation. The Annenberg Foundation funds programs that “advance the public well-being through improved communication” (Annenberg Foundation, n.d., Mission section, para. 1). The Annenberg Foundation also serves programs in the greater Los Angeles region. In addition, the researcher explored the Ronya and George Kozmetsky (R.G.K) Foundation. The R.G.K Foundation prioritizes human service programs that focus on “education and community” (Ronya and George Kozmetsky Foundation, n.d., Grant Program section, para. 1). The R.G.K Foundation also prioritizes hospital-based programs.

Criteria Selection

The proposed program does not fit the criteria for many of the government-funded grants. Government funded grants that support community development programs are limited to focus on developmental disabilities, rehabilitation, housing loans or neighborhood improvement programs. Contrary to the proposed program, which is a community development program that focuses on providing single African-American mothers communication skills and conflict resolution interventions. Due to this limitation, the grant must be funded through a private foundation. Many of the foundations identified in the authors search only support 501(c)(3) nonprofits, in which the host agency meets this requirement. The design of the program will serve as a parent education program to advance the community, in which this purpose fits the criteria for several private foundations. However, few foundations offer enough financial awards to

fit the proposed budget. Therefore, the Annenberg Foundation was selected as the funding agency because it is aligned with the stated criteria.

Foundation Description

The foundation identified to provide possible support for the proposed grant is the Annenberg Foundation. The mission of the Annenberg Foundation is “to advance the public well-being through improved communication” (Annenberg Foundation, n.d., Mission section, para. 1). The proposed program fits the criteria because the program is intended to provide culturally responsive communication skills and conflict resolution interventions. The Annenberg Foundation is also dedicated “to core values of responsiveness, accessibility, fairness and involvement” (Annenberg Foundation, n.d., Values section, para. 1). The proposed program fits the criteria because the program will provide accessible resources to an underserved population. In addition, the Annenberg Foundation is committed to a V.I.S.I.O.N system. In other words the Annenberg Foundation only funds organizations that exhibit “visionary leadership, impact, sustainability, innovation, organizational strength, network of partnerships plus the population being served; thus, creating the acronym VISION” (Annenberg Foundation, 2015, Vision section, para.1). The proposed program fits the criteria because the program will be hosted by Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. Memorial Medical Center demonstrates the V.I.S.I.O.N system through its mission. The mission of Memorial Medical Center is to “improve the health and well being of individuals, families and the community through innovation and the pursuit of excellence” (Memorialcare, 2014b, Mission section, para. 1).

Needs Assessment

The researcher performed a thorough evaluation of the literature to assess the needs of single African American mothers and the type of program that would best fit this population. Peer reviewed articles and government documents were reviewed to better understand the traditional African American family structure and psychosocial outcomes of African American families, due to poverty and the absence of a second parent. Additionally, the researcher read articles to analyze effective parenting styles and communication skills in conflict resolution.

A review of literature revealed that compared to the general population; the presence of single parent families is more prevalent among the African American community. After gaining a better understanding of the traditional African American family structure, the researcher focused the analysis of literature on the current psychosocial outcomes of single African American families. Poverty and the absence of a second parent in an African American family cause compromised maternal monitoring and maternal stress for single African American mothers (Gonzalez, Jones, & Parent, 2014). In addition, the absence of a father in an African American family has been noted as a possible justification for the increase of negative psychosocial outcomes among African American youth (Lipman, Boyle, Dooley, & Offord, 2002).

Furthermore, the researcher focused on effective parenting styles and communication skills in conflict resolution. African American mothers use more direct assertive parent practices to solve parent-child conflict (Steinberg, 2001). A more effective parenting style is authoritative parenting. Parents who utilize authoritative (positive) parenting have influenced youth to exhibit less externalizing symptoms (Jones,

Forehand, Brody, & Armistead, 2002; Kim & Brody, 2005; Sterrett, Jones, & Kincaid, 2009). Specific parenting practices (e.g., parental monitoring; consistent discipline) serve as an internal guide for youth when they are challenged with risky circumstances (Brody et al. 1998). Particularly, increased parent– child communication and the development of standards for internalized norms have been associated with the delayed onset of sexual initiation (Murry et al. 2009). Overall, single African American mothers demonstrate a need for a program to learn authoritative parenting techniques and effective communication skills in conflict resolution.

Grant Requirements

The Annenberg Foundation was identified as a possible support, which may have provided grants that range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. The Annenberg Foundation accepts applications on a continuous basis. Priority is given to non-profits that are in residing areas of Los Angeles County. Grants are generally awarded to programs focused in the subsequent areas: (a) arts, culture, and humanities; (b) human health and wellness; (c) civic and community; (d) environment; (e) education; (f) military veterans; and (g) animal welfare. Grants are awarded to qualified agencies that abide to the standards set by the Board of Directors. These guidelines express the V.I.S.I.O.N system. Qualified agencies must demonstrate “visionary leadership, impact, sustainability, innovation, organizational strength, network of partnerships” (Annenberg Foundation, 2015, Vision section, para.1).

In order to apply for a grant, an applicant must first create an online grant application account through the subsequent link:

https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1249?SA=SNA&FID 35015. Secondly, an applicant

must download a copy of the VISION grant making guidelines to ensure their proposal addresses each principle of VISION. Then, an applicant must download the required document list to ensure they submit the subsequent documents: (a) board give and get, (b) private income sources, (c) cost template, (d) administrative chart, (e) audited financials or compiled unaudited financial statements, (f) budget vs. actual year-to-date variance analysis; and (g) IRS form 990. Finally, an applicant must submit the online application. An applicant must complete the entire process within 45 days after making the online grant application account.

CHAPTER 4
PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Mission of Organization

The mission of Memorial Medical Center is to “improve the health and well being of individuals, families and the community through innovation and the pursuit of excellence” (Memorialcare, 2014b, Mission section, para. 1). Additionally, Memorial Medical Center’s vision is to improve health in extraordinary ways through synergy and accountability. The organization collaborates together as one thus they are more than the sum of their parts. The organization also works to meet ethical and professional integrity; assemble budget and strategic planning; and comply with legal and regulatory requirements. Overall, Memorial Medical Center is committed to meeting their commitments (Memorialcare, 2014b).

Proposal Summary

The proposed program will comply with the mission, vision, and values established by the host agency. Although the program will be open to the public, the program will be specifically geared towards single African American mothers. The program will improve family functioning through educating clients on effective communication and conflict resolution interventions. Additionally, the program will provide clients a supportive and safe group environment to decrease single parent stress. The design of the program is to have one Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) provide psychoeducational services for the duration of one year. In addition, two Master

of Social Work (MSW) interns will be responsible to collect data and perform the program evaluation. The program will also include two other MSW interns to assist in facilitating groups.

Program Description

The proposed program will provide services to increase family functioning within single African American mother families. The services provided would include psychoeducational groups for single African American mothers. The groups will focus on strengthening clients communication skills and conflict resolution skills. Additionally, the groups will serve as a support outlet to decrease single parent stress for clients. The goals of the proposed program will be carried out through a yearlong, outpatient, parent-training program. Each session will consist of approximately 15 clients. Sessions will take place Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 3pm. The sessions are intended to continue over the duration of four months. After the duration of four months clients will be graduated from the program. It is the responsibility of staff to acquire 15 new clients for the next four-month cycle.

A Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and four Master of Social Work (MSW) interns will implement the program. The social workers will implement the program as a resource to deliver a culturally designed parent effectiveness-training program for single African American mothers. The program will also serve as a resource that will enable social workers to empower single African American families.

Target Population

The proposed program aims to provide services to single African American mothers. A potential client must meet the following criteria to qualify for services. A

potential client must identify as an adult, 18 years of age or over. In addition, the potential client must be recognized as low-income. The proposed program will aim to service single African American mothers due to the prevalence of single motherhood among the African American community. Qualified candidates (15) will be recruited via voluntary participation. Qualified candidates will also be recruited from Long Beach due to the large African American (63,372) community (United States Census Bureau, 2014).

Qualifications of Key Leadership

A Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) will manage the program with the assistance of four Master of Social Work (MSW) interns. The LCSW will be responsible to perform in-take assessments and facilitate the group sessions. Additionally, the LCSW must be able to train the MSW interns on how to facilitate the group sessions. The MSW interns must have knowledge on how to record patient's progress. Staff is expected to be able to conduct monthly-standardized evaluations of clients' participation. Staff is also expected to have experience working with African American mothers and to abide to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.

Sustainability

The proposed program will be maintainable for several reasons. Long Beach Memorial Medical Center will host a graduation ceremony after the conclusion of each 4-month training session. This event will be hosted on the grounds of Memorial Medical Center. There will be an admission fee charged to guests. The event will sell food, beverages and graduation memorabilia. Money earned through this event will be utilized to continue the operations of the program. The event may also have an impact on local businesses and the community. The event may gain recognition among local

businesses that may be interested in supporting the program through donations. In addition, the event may capture the attention of residents within the community whom may be interested to participate in the program.

The proposed program may continue sustainability through the direct help of staff. Staff may collaborate with neighboring organizations to expand the program beyond Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. There are neighboring communities composed of large African American communities. If staff were to make the program accessible to other African American communities then the program may continue sustainability. Additionally, staff may directly help the program sustainability by continuing to evaluate the program. Through program evaluations staff will then be able to adjust changes to the program. Changes that are supported by evidence-based practices will increase the programs chances of sustainability.

Program Objectives

This section will outline the program objectives and the steps taken to meet the expected program outcomes.

Objective 1: An effective communication and conflict resolution curriculum for single African American mothers will be developed by May 1, 2015.

Activities: This objective will be met by the instructor developing a syllabus and instructor manual for the class.

Expected Outcome: A 4-month psychoeducational class is made accessible to outpatients of Memorial Medical Center.

Objective 2: To provide knowledge about effective communication and conflict resolution skills to 15 single African American mothers who participate in the communication and conflict resolution course by September 1, 2015.

Activities: This objective will be met through the instructor educating participants on effective communication skills and conflict resolution interventions. These activities will include lectures, handouts, individual journals, demonstration materials, group work and guest speaker presentations.

Expected Outcome: Participants will demonstrate increased knowledge about communication skills and conflict resolution interventions.

Objective 3: To reduce the stress of the single African American mothers who participate in the communication and conflict resolution course.

Activities: This objective will be met through participants engaging in group therapy. These activities will include participants discussing challenges they endure as single African American mothers. Additionally, participants will provide emotional support for their peers.

Expected Outcome: Participants will demonstrate decreased levels of single parent stress.

Timeline/Time Table

The proposed program will initially be conducted for the duration of one year. The psychoeducational groups will take place over the duration of 4-month cycles. During the duration of a 4-month cycle the groups will take place twice a week. The groups will be conducted Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 3pm. Topics will vary upon each week. Participants are expected to attend a minimum of 26 of 32 sessions to

successful graduate from the program. Upon completion of the program a graduation ceremony will be hosted one week after.

Program Evaluation

During the initial group session clients will complete a pre-test to assess their knowledge of communication and conflict resolution skills. Then, during the final group session clients will complete a post-test containing the same questions. Additionally, clients will complete a pre and post survey to measure their level of stress. These questions will inquire the client's level of stress pertaining to their relationship with their children. Through clients completing multiple pretests and posttests there will be a way to record quantitative changes and to analyze the effectiveness of the program.

During the final group session clients will complete a confidential program evaluation survey. The evaluation will entail scaling, close-ended and open-ended questions. These questions will inquire clients to rate their level of satisfaction with class content, materials and staff. Clients will also be able to make recommendations for the improvement to the overall program. Through clients evaluating the program services there will be opportunities to redevelop the services of the program. In addition, through clients evaluating staff there will be opportunities for staff trainings.

Finally, staff will help to evaluate the proposed program. Staff will be responsible to collect and evaluate quantitative data about program participants. Staff will record individual's participation and progress for each session. Staff will utilize these notes to discuss client's progress during weekly staff meetings.

Budget Narrative

The direct costs of the proposed program will include the staff wages. A part-time Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) will be the director of the program. The director will earn a yearly salary of \$58,000, with an additional 25% of the total salary assigned for benefits. Additionally, there will be four Master Social Work (MSW) interns who will contribute to the program. Each MSW intern will be awarded a \$1,000 stipend. Therefore, the cost of four MSW interns will be \$4,000. The total staff budget will account for \$76,500.

Additionally, the direct costs will include the materials needed to sustain the program. Each group training session will include 15 clients. The director will provide training materials, beverages and snacks for each client. The director will conduct the training sessions twice a week for the duration of a 4-month period. Therefore, each session will require \$30 for materials, which accumulates \$960 for a 4-month session. Since there will be three 4-month sessions available throughout the year, then the total cost of materials will be \$3,840 for the first year. Additionally, \$1,500 will be budgeted for miscellaneous expenses in case of any unforeseen expenditures. The sum of these program direct costs is approximately \$5,340. Therefore, the overall sum of direct project cost is \$80,880 for the first year of the program.

The host agency will provide in-kind donations for the programs indirect costs. Indirect costs will consist of rent/utilities, agency equipment, and agency materials. In Long Beach, the average monthly rent for a 500 square foot office is \$1,200 per month. The director will be entitled to an individual office. The annual cost of the office will be \$14,000. The host agency will also fund the utilities, which cost roughly \$210 a month.

Therefore, the utility cost will be \$2,520 a year. Office equipment will be provided as an in-kind donation through the host agency for the cost of \$1,500. Additionally, there will be a \$20 fee per month to restock basic office supplies throughout the year. Overall, the office equipment and supplies will accumulate to \$4,260 for the first year of the program. The total indirect costs for the first year are \$18,660. The overall cost of direct expenditures and indirect expenditures will be \$99,540 (see Appendix).

CHAPTER 5

LESSONS LEARNED

Barriers in Grant Writing Process

The first challenge was locating a topic that would be of continued interest to the researcher. The researcher was interested in working on a project that would focus on issues within the African American community. The researcher conducted a thorough search to explore issues prevalent within the African American community. The researcher learned that there was an increasing trend of single motherhood within the African American community. The researcher also learned about how the absence of a father could negatively impact both a mother and children. The researcher was intrigued and passionate to develop a program to help solve the issue.

The second challenge the researcher faced was trying to develop a program that would help to decrease the psychosocial stressors that single African American families experience. After conducting a needs assessment the researcher had a better understanding to what type of program would be appropriate for the population. The researcher came to the conclusion that the issue should be approached through a parent-training program. The researcher believed this approach would serve as a dual purpose to educate mothers about effective parenting methods and provide mothers a safe outlet to gain emotional support from their peers.

The third challenge that the researcher faced was managing her time efficiently. This project was ongoing throughout the duration of one academic year. The researcher

initially had difficulty to set aside a specific time to work on the project. The researcher eventually learned to prioritize time for thesis over other academic, personal and professional matters. The researcher managed time efficiently by writing portions of the thesis prior to the internal deadlines proposed by the thesis advisor. The researcher ensured to have efficient time to edit the context and the grammar of the thesis.

Identification of Funding Source

A thorough search was performed to distinguish possible funding sources for the proposed project. There was difficulty to identify a funding source that was applicable towards the proposed program. The proposed program did not fit the criteria for many of the government-funded grants. Government funded community grants were limited to focus on developmental disabilities, rehabilitation, housing loans or neighborhood improvement programs. Contrary to the proposed program, which was a community development program that focused on providing single African-American mothers communication skills and conflict resolution interventions. Due to this limitation, the grant would be funded through a private foundation.

In addition, there was difficulty to identify a funding source that would provide a sufficient amount of support. The majority of the funding sources located did not meet the proposed budget. The proposed budget was \$99,540. In which \$18,660 was funded through an in kind donation from the host agency; and \$80,880 was being requested from a potential funding source. The researcher utilized Google search by inputting “grants for parent-training programs” in the research database. Through exploring the Internet the researcher was able to locate the Annenberg Foundation, which provides aid up to \$100,000.

Needs Assessment

The researcher conducted a thorough analysis of the literature to assess the needs of single African American mothers and the type of program that would best fit this population. Peer reviewed articles and government documents were reviewed to better understand the traditional African American family structure. Additionally, the researcher reviewed the psychosocial outcomes of African American families, due to poverty and the absence of a second parent. The researcher also read articles to analyze effective parenting styles and communication skills in conflict resolution. After analyzing the literature, the researcher learned that single African American mothers need a parent-training program to learn authoritative parenting techniques and effective communication skills in conflict resolution.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Single parent families are an increasing trend in the African American community. The absence of a father has negative psychosocial consequences for African American mothers and their children. This issue needs to be addressed through providing services and interventions to decrease the negative psychosocial outcomes of African American families. This population is at risk of various factors such as: compromised parenting; low family functioning; low socioeconomic status; low family structure; and psychosocial difficulties. Therefore this population is vulnerable and oppressed.

Social works have a duty to help advance vulnerable and oppressed populations. Social workers can help this population through performing the duties of a counselor. Social workers can utilize family interventions to teach mothers effective parenting styles that will produce positive outcomes in youth behavior. In addition, social workers can

also help this population by playing the role of an advocate and/or broker. Social workers can help to spread the awareness of the needs of single African American families. Additionally, social workers can connect this population to available resources.

Through the researchers review of literature it was noted that the vast majority of studies on African American families were only focused on low-income families. There was limited research on middle-income or high-income single African American families. There is a need for qualitative and quantitative studies to focus on middle-income or high-income single African American families. Therefore, a key role a social worker may play is as a researcher.

Additionally, through the researcher's review of literature it was noted that there are parent effectiveness programs available but few are specifically geared towards meeting the needs of African American families. There is a need for programs that will incorporate cultural sensitivity into parent effectiveness training. Specifically for this population, there is a need of programs that will promote father involvement. Thus, an active position a social worker may play is a program developer.

APPENDIX
LINE-ITEM BUDGET

Line-Item Budget

Expenditures	Direct Fees	Indirect Fees
Salaries & Benefits		
LCSW Program Administrator	\$58,000	
Employee-related benefits (25%)	\$13,500	
MSW Intern Stipend (\$1,000) x4	\$4,000	
Total Salaries and Benefits	\$76,500	
Direct Program Costs		
Snacks for group sessions (\$160)	\$1,920	
Classroom Materials (\$80)	\$960	
Miscellaneous	\$1,500	
Total Direct Program Costs	\$4,380	
Total Project Direct Costs	\$80,880	
Indirect Program Costs		
Rent (\$1,200)		\$14,400
Utilities (\$210)		\$2,520
Office Supplies (\$145)		\$1,740
Total Project Indirect Costs		\$18,660
Total Program Budget	\$99,540	

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