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Promoting Child Rearing for Teen Mothers within the Foster Care System

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Promoting Child Rearing for Teen Mothers within the Foster Care System

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BACKGROUND

Teenage pregnancy in foster care is twice the national average. Insufficient education for sexual and interpersonal needs leads to teenagers lacking knowledge about family planning, sexual health, relationships, and support. Child-rearing is the biggest obstacle, and research shows a style of trauma-based parenting. Increased access to parental education and preventative programs is needed. Occupational therapy can help teen mothers adapt to their new roles and responsibilities (Beyerlein & Bloch, 2014; Rouse et al., 2021; Oshima et al., 2013; Baum et al., 2015; Font et al., 2019; Wong & Fisher, 2015; Armstrong-Heimsoth et al., 2020).

PROBLEM

Teen mothers in foster care have a desire to break the trauma cycle and create better relationships with their children; however, there are limited programs to support teen mothers in developing parenting skills and healthy parent-child relationships.

PURPOSE

To initiate and create a trauma-informed parenting program that provides necessary resources and support to teenage mothers in foster care, enabling them to develop parenting skills and a healthy parent-child relationship within the scope of practice of an occupational therapist.

Outcome objectives:

- Conduct and analyze needs assessments to identify the needs of teen mothers in foster care
- Develop the trauma-informed parenting program
- Implement the program
- Provide and share modules from the program
- Conduct post surveys to assess the effectiveness of the program

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METHODS

Setting:

- Residential maternity home

Need Assessment:

- Observation at the residential maternity home (4 weeks)
- Conducted and analyzed needs assessments (2 weeks)
 - Staff and Resident Questionnaire- Participants answered 7-15 combination of Likert scale and open-ended questions
 - Informal interviews/discussions
 - Observation and note taking

Program Implementation:

- 2x/weekly
- 8 consecutive weeks
- 2-hour sessions
- Post-session discussions

Deliverables:

- Educate and train staff on delivery

Post survey:

- Conducted 11-12 combination of Likert scale and open-ended questions
- Informal interviews /discussion
- Analyze effectiveness of program

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Assessment Tools:

- Needs Assessments
- Guidance from Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model (PEOP)

Project Modules/deliverables:

- Employment seeking & acquisition
- Leisure
- Toddler Grooming/hygiene
- Transitioning skills
- Financial management



General Program Goals:

- Increase/improve teen mothers parenting skill and relationship
- Develop program in reference to teen mother's parenting skills and promote healthy parent-child relationship while in the foster care system
- Enable child rearing in a healthy positive approach
- Promote engagement in occupations that support transitioning out the maternity home
- Promote adaptive occupational performance/participation

Theoretical Frameworks:

- Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model (PEOP): Altering one element affects the others

CONCLUSION

Trauma-informed parenting program successfully addressed parenting skills and a healthy child-parent relationship, through occupational performance/participation within the maternity home and transitioning to Supervised Independent Living (SIL).

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