Whole Family Engagement

Supporting Children and Youth in Family Supportive Housing

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Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Purpose
3. About Us - La Casa Norte and Facing Forward
4. Defining the Two Generation Model (Whole Family Engagement)
5. Implementation - Facing Forward
   a. Reporting
   b. Success Story
6. Implementation - La Casa Norte
   a. Reporting
   b. Success Story
7. Challenges
8. Activity - Action Plan
9. Questions
Purpose

The general pattern has been to focus programs on adults or focus programs on children but rarely, if ever, on both at the same time, resulting in fragmented approaches that leave one or the other behind.

In this session, supportive housing providers will share their experiences with changing their models. Attendees will create a draft “action plan”, mapping out how they could better support families.
About Us

- Casa Corazon Drop-In Centers & Emergency Shelter
- Permanent Supportive Housing
  - Youth in College
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Housing Advocacy Program (HAP)
- Transitional Housing
- Homeless Prevention
- Nutrition Center & Community Cafe
- Howard Brown Health Center FQHC

- 479 Households with children under 18
- 719 children, 308 children are 0-5 years old
- Project and Scattered Site Locations
About Us

● Permanent Supportive Housing
  ○ Eligibility – Chronic Homelessness

● 300 Households, 700 individuals per year
  ○ About half are households with minor children
  ○ Approximately 300 children per year (a third are ages 0-5)

● Scattered Site Housing

● Supportive Service programs
  ○ Housing Location for Domestic Violence
  ○ Housing Navigation
  ○ Skilled Assessors
The Two-generation model focuses on creating opportunities for and addressing needs of both children and the adults in their lives together. The approach recognizes that families come in all different shapes and sizes and that families define themselves.
Two Generation Model - Why???

**SOCIAL CAPITAL**
- peer and family networks
- coaching
- cohort strategies

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**
- Head Start
- Early Head Start
- child care partnerships
- preK
- home visiting

**HEALTH & WELL-BEING**
- mental, physical, and behavioral health
- coverage and access to care
- adverse childhood experiences
- toxic stress

**ECONOMIC ASSETS**
- asset building
- housing and public supports
- financial capacity
- transportation

**POSTSECONDARY & EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS**
- community college
- training and certification
- workforce partnerships
Two Generation Model - Why???

- A $3,000 difference in parents’ income when their child is young is associated with a 17% increase in the child’s future earnings.

- Participation in high-quality early childhood programs increase children’s future earnings, but can contribute to improved outcomes for parents as well.
Implementation - Facing Forward - Why???

- Case Management focused on head of household
- Funder outcomes primarily focused on adults
- Assisted parents, but no systemic focus on children/youth
- We should do more, but where to start?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends all children be screened routinely between birth and age three.

The brain is 85% developed by age 3.
Implementation - Facing Forward - Started With:

- Safe sleep trainings for families with infants, childproofing and basic items for children 0-5
- Set metrics for children and youth:
  - ASQs, Pre-K enrollment, Out of School Time, and Youth Education/Employment
- ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE Train the Trainer
- Referrals to early childhood home visiting

Funding:

- State of IL, Foundations and In-Kind
Implementation - Facing Forward

Early Childhood Specialist

- Developmental screenings for children 0-5
- Home visits, parent coaching, resources
- Referrals to early childhood programs (PRe-K, Head Start, home visiting, etc.)

Education Advocate

- Supports parents of K-12 students in developing strategies to support and enhance their child’s education, including advocacy within the school, connections to academic enrichment programs

Youth Advocate

- Provides career assessment, coaching, and planning with residents 16 and up, with a special focus on adolescents and young adults 16-25.
- Using an employment navigation framework, assists residents in connecting to workforce development programs and education, provides ongoing follow up to support retention and direct support (resume assistance, etc.)
Implementation - Facing Forward - Reporting

Outcomes

% of Children 0-5 with ASQ
- Goal: 30%
- YTD: 21%

% of Children 3-4 in PreK
- Goal: 40%
- YTD: 48%

% of School Age Children in Out-of-School Time Activities
- Goal: 30%
- YTD: 17%

% of Young Adults 18-24 in School, Training, or Employment
- Goal: 70%
- YTD: 53%
Implementation - Facing Forward - Success!!!

Allison - Single mother with two school age children, pregnant

- Mental health disability, experienced domestic violence throughout pregnancy
- School age children: emotional/behavioral issues, school performance impacted

Referred to Early Childhood Specialist and Education Advocate

- ASQ, home visiting, parent coaching, Early Intervention referral, Crisis Nursery
- Assessing needs, advocacy with school, referrals for after school tutoring

Benefits

- Children’s school attendance and performance improved, mom’s stress level reduced
- Additional support helped Allison feel more confident in separation from abuser
Implementation- La Casa Norte - Why???

From Parent Focus to Whole Family Engagement

- Improve Early Childhood Education
- Reduction of systemic oppression and barriers that have generational consequences
- Create pathways to increased income and higher intergenerational education achievements.
- Improve parents overall health and well-being

Funding

- Foundations and In-Kind Donations
Implementation - La Casa Norte

- Expansion of services through a partnership with a local Early Childhood Education provider.
- Women’s Empowerment Group
- Parenting classes via evidence based curricula:
  - ACT: Raising Safe Kids Program
  - ICDP: International Child/Parenting Development Program
- We administer socio-emotional/developmental and screenings for children 0-5
- We connect children to volunteer tutors to guide them through customized literacy-building activities
- Partnerships with Early Childhood/ Head Start home visiting programs
- Case management services to youth and young adults ages 16-24 through our Drop-In Centers
Implementation - La Casa Norte - Reporting

- Parents will increase their capacity to manage stress (pre-test/post-test survey reports)
- Reduce the number of child abuse and neglect reports (Pre/Post Service Implementation)
- Increase partnerships/connections to Head Start & Early Childhood Education service providers (linkage agreements)

- Women will feel better able to identify triggers and coping strategies to address them (pre-test/post-test survey reports)
- Children 0-5 will meet developmental milestones and/or be referred to Head Start services (Ages & Stages Questionnaire and ASQ: Social Emotional)
- Children will increase their reading levels over the course of the year (Fontana & Pinnell Literacy Assessment Tool)
Charon is 23 year old single mom with a 7 month old baby. She enrolled in our program in 2018 when she was pregnant. After being housed and enrolled in the program for several months, Charon had met with her case manager once a month, and opted out of support services offered, other than bus passes and clothing donations.

Shifting toward the 2Gen model, we offered our first Women’s Empowerment Group. First session, no child and no participation. 2nd session brought her baby and asked for help with formula. She showed up for every session, and she continued on to participate in our parenting class and also frequents one of our Drop-In Centers to use our computers to look for employment and not feel isolated at home.

Post-Group survey questions showed that she felt better able to manage stress, and she reported feeling more knowledgeable about her child’s development.

She was also connected to an early head start home visiting program and has reported that her baby is on track with her development.
Challenges

● Parents have hesitations around service providers interacting with their children due to fear of child protection services becoming involved.

● In our current service delivery model, the case manager has a lot of responsibility in connecting the household to early childhood and home visiting programs.

● Administering developmental screenings and facilitating parenting groups is a lot of work, but a team effort.

● Paradigm shift for both clients and staff

● Need for additional training

● Competing priorities
Activity - Action Plan

- Identify changes and potential challenges to implementing some “Whole Family Engagement” activities or a program at your organization to improve services for children and youth
- Who could you ask for help to implement the changes?
- Why would this be beneficial?
- Translate your ideas into goals, identify:
  - What steps will you take?
  - Who will be responsible?
  - When will you implement?
  - How will you measure effectiveness?
  - Create a goal statement
Questions???
Follow-Up????

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