

Annual Program Report
Programa Esperanza Para La Familia / Hope For The Family Program
April, 2004–March, 2005

High Profile Program Name: Esperanza Para La Familia/Hope For The Family Program

Program Description: The program is a partnership between the award grantee, Kansas City Missouri Health Department, and the University of Missouri Kansas City / Institute for Human Development, the Mattie Rhodes Counseling and Arts Center, McCoy Elementary School and the Primitivo Garcia World Language School.

This program is supported by a 3 year grant award from the US Department of Health and Human Services, (SAMHSA) Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health. The project period for the grant award is from September 30th, 2001 to September 29th, 2004. This program is currently operating on a no cost extension until September 29th, 2005.

The goal of the overall program is to increase the capacity of Kansas City, Missouri to build a mentally healthy community by providing prevention and early intervention services to children and families in the Latino community and developing a coalition of consumers and community-based organizations to advise regarding needs assessment, service gaps and mental health promotion.

The Esperanza program is implementing an evidence-based intervention titled PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) in two local elementary schools. The PATHS program was developed by Dr. Mark T. Greenberg, Ph.D. from the Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development at Pennsylvania State University. The intervention is designed to promote the development of emotional and social competencies of participating children in kindergarten through fifth grade. One of the model's primary goals is to reduce aggressive and problem behaviors in elementary school aged children. Other goals include improving peer relationships, teacher-student relationships and parent-child relationships. The in-school intervention is supported with child and family counseling, case-management services, parenting support groups, consumer focus groups and art classes for children and families. All services are delivered in a culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate manner to meet the needs of participating children and families.

The following section of the report will itemize Esperanza Para La Familia's primary objectives and accomplishments and align each with one of the Ten Essential Services of Public Health.

Priority Projects:

1. To develop a community-wide coalition that will address issues related to mental health. (Essential Service #4–To mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.)

The Esperanza Para La Familia and the Health Department are members of the Coalition Of Hispanic Organizations (COHO). The Esperanza Project Director has served as the chairperson of the COHO Health / Social Services Committee. The program has also convened a consumer advisory committee and leadership development group.

The COHO Health / Social Services committee and the Esperanza Program have advocated for the establishment of State certification standards for interpreter services. COHO, the Health Department and the Esperanza Program have co-sponsored a Health & Mental Health Career Fair for Latino youth for two consecutive years.

The Esperanza Project Director and the Program Evaluator, University of Missouri Kansas City/Institute for Human Development, developed and conducted a survey of mental health beliefs in the local Latino community. Fourteen recommendations were developed based on the findings of the survey. Program participants and other community members were given training on delivering and conducting the survey. Most of the persons conducting the survey were monolingual Spanish speakers or bilingual in English and Spanish.

The survey was designed to investigate Latino beliefs and values concerning mental health. The survey was administered to Caucasian respondents in order to make some comparisons. The survey included items which inquired about what factors respondents considered prerequisites for mental health; how frequently they experienced stress/depression; people who would be considered resources; and symptoms that would lead one to seek help.

The findings of the survey showed that some items differentiate Latinos and Caucasians. Latinos were more likely to report that a good education for their children was essential for mental health. Clearly the possibility of no educational opportunities for their children is experienced as a stressor. Latinos also were more likely to report that good mental health required having more family around and being able to obtain medical care. The survey was administered to Latinos who were Spanish speaking, primarily English speaking and bilingual. Spanish speaking respondents reported that feeling part of the Latino community was most important to maintaining good mental health. Latino respondents reported feeling depressed during the last three months more frequently than Caucasians. Latinos, who were primarily English speaking, reported experiencing stress more frequently than Spanish speaking respondents. Latinas reported experiencing both stress and depression more frequently than Latinos. Latinos were more likely to turn to a family member than anyone else when seeking help. Caucasians reported that they were more likely to seek help from a regular doctor or a teacher if they had a problem.

The findings of the survey led to the development of fourteen recommendations for mental health cultural competency, program development and service approaches.

2. To provide training to teachers and professionals about the program's evidence-based intervention, prevention programs and the need for culturally competent services for the Latino community.

(Essential Services #3–To inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.)

The Esperanza program has provided PATHS implementation training to over forty-five Kindergarten–fifth grade teachers, school professionals and administrators.

The Esperanza staff convened teacher focus groups to assess what teachers perceived as the benefits of the PATHS training. Teachers felt that the model provided children with an effective method of expressing their emotions and substituting positive behavioral alternatives for expressing themselves. Teachers reported several instances in which PATHS helped children learn to listen, overcome shyness, calm down and increase their vocabulary about emotions.

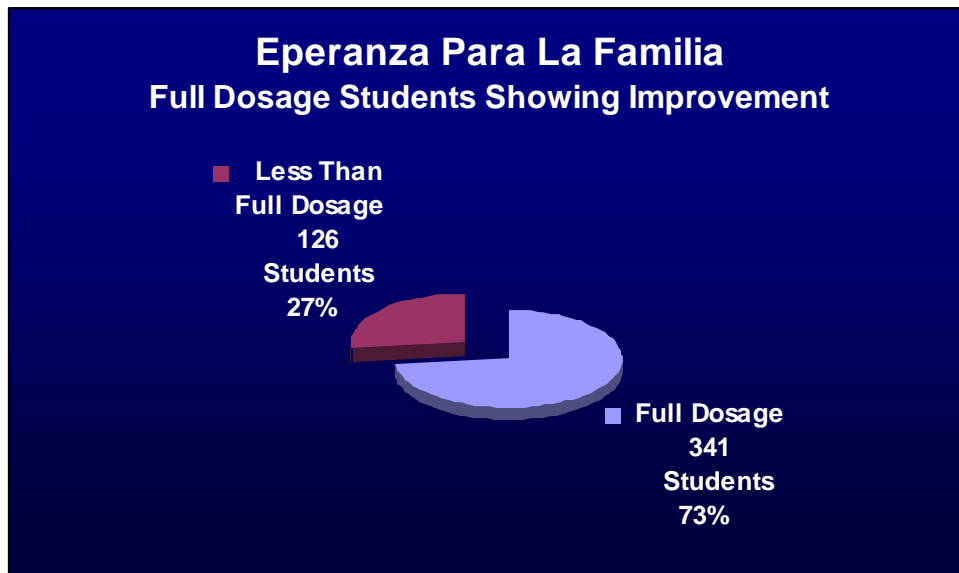
All teachers agreed that the PATHS curriculum helped the children who had mild or moderate behavior problems, but that those children with severe problems needed additional help.

3. To provide an in-classroom prevention / intervention service to all kindergarten through fifth grade students attending the two target schools.
(Essential Service #3–To inform, educate and empower people about health issues.)
The Esperanza program has monitored and supported the participation of 768 kindergarten through fifth grade children in the PATHS curriculum.

As part of the evaluation design, teacher assessment measures were conducted at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the school year. The purpose of these ratings was to determine any gains or losses in the social and academic skills of these students. The Teacher Social Competence Rating Scale measures four factors of student's social and emotional behavior: aggressive behaviors; lack of self-control; attention and concentration; social and emotional skills. The results of these ratings showed that aggressive behaviors declined during the school year. Self control, concentration and social-emotional competence increased during the school year. After participating in the program for one year, teachers described students as better able to follow classroom rules, accept adult limits, concentrate and perform at grade level. Teachers also rated students as less likely to fight, lie, tease classmates and be easily distractible.

The program was found to be effective for the majority of participants. All classrooms did not did not implement the PATHS curriculum frequently enough to reach the full dosage level. Teacher ratings indicated that those children who received the full dosage of participation in the curriculum (3 or more lessons per week) demonstrated improved outcomes from pre-test to post-test.

Of the 467 children who received the full dosage, 73% or 341 children demonstrated significant levels of improvements. Children demonstrated improvements in several areas including, identification/expression of feelings, self control and the ability to maintain concentration.



4. To provide case-management, counseling, therapy, parenting groups and art classes to participating children and their families in a culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate way.
(Essential services #7–To link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.)
During the reporting period from 9/30/2004 thru 3/31/2005, the Esperanza Para La Familia staff provided case management services to 30 families, counseling and therapy services to 29 families, parenting support groups to 34 families and culturally relevant art classes to 215 children (unduplicated count).

Evaluation data showed that families most often sought case management services because of parenting problems, employment needs, immigration concerns, low income status and the inadequacy of housing. Families most often sought counseling services because of depression, family issues and school problems of their children.

The counseling component of the program utilized the Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) evaluation instrument. The instrument tests psychological, social and occupational functioning. The therapist rated the items on the GAF scale after the first session based on their perception of the client's daily life functioning. The assessment instrument was repeated after the fourth session and again after four months. The evaluation findings showed statistically significant improvements in functioning after participation in counseling sessions. Improvements in the counselor's rating of participant functioning were observed between the first and fourth sessions and between the first session and the session of the fourth month.

Parents were interviewed before beginning the parenting group sessions and after completion of the series. Parents were offered group sessions, individual family sessions or a combination of the two. Evaluation data showed that parents reported more appropriate, positive parenting skills. In particular, parents reported explaining to their children why not to do something.

FY 05 Goals:

1) Identify funding sources which will sustain the program. The grant ends in September of 2005. All program partners are participating in the planning of marketing activities during the next several months. Both target schools have expressed interest in continuing the program.