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Outcome Evaluation of a School-Based Program for Pregnant and Parenting Girls

Angela Lynn Glynn
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Health Sciences

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Angela Glynn

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Walden University
2015

Abstract

Outcome Evaluation of a School-Based Program for Pregnant and Parenting Girls

by

Angela L. Glynn

MS, Texas Southern University, 2006

BS, Texas Southern University, 1990

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Health

Walden University

May 2015

Abstract

Research has indicated that effective parenting programs for pregnant and parenting teens greatly improve educational and career opportunities for teen parents. Such research underscores the need for schools to use these programs in their efforts to increase high school graduation rates for this population. The aim of this case study was to assess if a school-based parenting program was successful and, if so, how elements of this program might be useful to educators who are planning similar programs. The study included an examination of archived program data, which included end-of-year reports related to the program and participants, and interviews with 12 key program administrators and teachers. Outcome evaluation theory and a logic model served as the conceptual framework. The research design had 2 parts: a quantitative secondary analysis of archived data and qualitative interviews. The program data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The interview data were downloaded into a computer-assisted qualitative software program to organize the data, code the data, and to determine major themes. Major findings were that the program met goals and objectives due to: (a) clearly stated and specific program objectives;(b) a high level of program support from district and administrative staff; (c) a major asset of the program, its curriculum; (d) adequate resources and funding, and (e) the active participation of, and open communication between, parents/guardians of program participants, faculty, and staff. This study contributes to social change by showing educators and parents that an effective school-base parenting program can result in improved high school completion and brighter outcomes for pregnant and parenting students.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has generated a profusion of research and inquiry regarding high school dropouts and the methodology by which dropout rates are measured (Heckman & Krueger, 2003). Decades of research have made it clear that dropping out of high school is a very serious issue for students, communities, and the nation. During an average American school day, about 1,000 high school students drop out each hour (Editorial Projects in Education [EPE], 2007). The attention given to this high rate by the media, policy makers and researchers shows that it has become a crisis and needs to be dealt with aggressively (EPE, 2007; Greenberger et al., 2007).

According to EPE (2007), nationally 33% of boys, about half of them African American or Hispanic, did not receive their high school diploma as of 2007. The dropout rate for girls was also high, with 25 % of girls failing to graduate from high school, again especially those of color. Each year, about 40 % of Hispanic and Black girls, along with 25% of Native American girls, graduate without diploma, receiving a certificate of completion instead. This means that the student has completed 4 years of high school but has not met state graduation standards (EPE, 2007; Freudenberg & Ruglis, 2007; Rothenberg & Weissman, 2002).

School dropouts earn half as much as high school graduates. As of 2010, half of the United States' prison populations were dropouts, and half of all heads of households on welfare were high school dropouts (EPA Research, 2010). The completion of school is a vital part of anyone's life, especially women, for whom the level of education affects not only livelihood and finances but also marital status, socioeconomic level,

and dependence on social services (Adler, 1994). A woman's level of education also helps to dictate her outlook on life and her children's. Poor parental socioeconomic status transmits a multitude of intergenerational risks and remains a consistently strong predictor of a child's achievement and academic attainment (Caspi, 2000). Once a woman becomes a parent her level of education becomes increasingly important.

This is the rationale behind school-based parenting programs, which have become increasingly popular over the last 30 years (Clewell, Brooks-Gunn, & Benasich, 1987), even though there has been little evaluation of their long-term success. This case study comprised an outcome evaluation of one such program in an independent school district of a major Texas city over a 10-year period.

Background and Significance

Each year there are about 750,000 teenage pregnancies in the United States, with 400,000 ending in live births (EPE, 2007). Enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school are some of the barriers faced by many pregnant and parenting teens. The Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act of 2010 noted some of these barriers as follows: (a) feeling judged and unwelcomed in the traditional school setting; (b) lack of cooperation at the state and local education agencies; (c) failure to maintain passing grades; (d) balancing parenting and academic responsibilities; (e) transportation and childcare services; and (f) lack of encouragement and support to further education which can lead to lack of motivation on the part of the teen mother Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act of 2010.

The impact of early childbearing on adolescents who are still in school is nothing new to researchers. The first generation of researchers, the traditionalists who used an array of methodological techniques to determine the fundamentals of relationships, reported that there was a significant negative impact of teenage birth on years of completed schooling (Hofferth, Reid, & Mott, 2001). A second generation of researchers, the *revisionists*, who revised or favored revisions of accepted theory, looked at the impact of early first birth in a different light, claiming that the parenting experiences of adolescent mothers were totally different from those young women who chose to postpone childbearing (Hoffman, 1998). Hofferth et al. (2001) concluded that postsecondary attendance increased for mothers in general regardless of age, but early child bearers rose the least.

Many researchers have argued that giving birth during the teenage years can cause a young woman to drop out of school, thereby limiting her education. Hofferth et al. (2001) gave key reasons for this group not completing high school. One key reason was that being a parent requires time and takes precedence over other activities. Another reason was teens are not mentally ready for such a responsibility; parenting is a challenge in itself for a mature adult and proves to be a very difficult task for teens. These reasons definitely coincide with the six barriers listed earlier that were presented in the Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act, 111 H. R. 5894(2010). Teen mothers who eventually receive their high school diploma are still less likely to further their education when compared to girls their age without children (Hofferth et al., 2001). Graduation rates from high school and enrollment in college among teen

mothers have remained low when compared to those who delay parenting (Hofferth et al., 2001; Levine & Painter, 2003). Customarily, scholars and researchers have attributed educational underachievement and lower socioeconomic status to teen parenting (Scott-Jones, 1991). Scholars have been consistent in reporting that teen mothers tend to have less education and income than their cohorts who delay parenting (Hofferth & Reid, 2002). A 2001 study by Olausson, Haglund, Weitoft and Cnattingius revealed that the disadvantages faced by this population are associated to some extent to the disadvantages that the teens faced even before becoming parents. Individual, family, and neighborhood factors were responsible for these disadvantages, for example, according to Harding (2003) and Kirby, Coyle, and Gould (2001), parenting teens are more likely to attend low performing schools and live in low socioeconomic status areas.

Participation in parenting programs affords pregnant and parenting teens along with their children educational opportunities that may not have otherwise been realized (Barnet, Arroyo, Devoe & Duggan, 2004; Stephens, Wolf, & Batten, 1999). These parenting programs provide the teens with classes in child development and parenting education and essential knowledge and skills needed for gainful employment. Childcare and healthcare are two invaluable supports provided by parenting programs. This supportive and accommodating learning environment helps to motivate these young women to complete high school while providing their lives with much needed stability. There are evidence-based parenting programs that have been shown to have positive

impacts on the lives of the participants when implemented appropriately (Cooney, Huser, Small, & O'Connor, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

As a high school health teacher, I am aware of the impact of teenage pregnancy on young girls. Within the school district in a major Texas city that served as the research site for this study, educators have documented the success and positive impact of the parenting program offered: these data showed high retention and graduation rate for program participants even though most come from what is considered to be a disadvantaged background. The purpose of my study was to conduct an outcomes evaluation using a Texas program as a case study to assess which factors may be responsible for the program's success or failure. The data acquired from my research can be used by the school district and others to improve or enhance their parenting programs. The research also provided evidence that can help to strengthen other parenting programs in meeting the needs of the participants and potentially improving their future outcome.

Rationale for the Study

Parenting teens who have not completed high school possess limited earning potential, which often leads to poverty. The dropout rate for girls has been at a critical level. According to research conducted by the National Women's Law Center, 25 % of high school girls failed to graduate (Greenberger et al., 2007). Pregnancy and parenting are often cited as a reason for girls dropping out of school (Hofferth et al., 2001). One third of girls that drop out cited parenting responsibilities as a key determinant in their

decision to dropout (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006). Pregnancy and parenting responsibilities do lead to students not remaining in school (Greenberger et al., 2007).

Cognition-behavioral interventions such as skills building and mastery are often the emphasis of school-based adolescent focus groups (Harris & Franklin, 2003). This approach aims to solve problems concerning dysfunctional emotions, behaviors, and cognitions through goal-oriented systematic procedure. There has been reported success in using cognition-behavioral intervention in group interventions that include substance abuse, primary pregnancy prevention, depression, childhood sexual abuse, school dropout, and antisocial behavior (Barth, 1989). Adolescent mothers reported that it was important that they have social supports along with life coaching as they embark on their roles as mothers. Numerous researchers have identified problem-solving skills, active coping skills, educational achievement, and parenting skills as vital to adolescents for parenting and independent living (de Anda et al., 1992; McLanahan, 1985; Sanford & Hill, 1996). Parenting programs for pregnant and parenting teens offer these skills along with other needed educational opportunities that will afford the program participants opportunities that they otherwise may have thought to be unattainable. The comprehensive student supports of these parenting programs may go a long way in helping to substantially reduce the dropout rate among this population. The parenting education program evaluated provided a variety of services to pregnant and parenting teens. These services included parenting classes, daycare, transportation, and individual and group counseling. My reason for wanting to evaluate this program

was to fully gain an understanding of how the program worked in delivering interventions and support services to program participants.

The status of case study research varies among researchers and disciplines and remains unclear (Tight, 2010). There has been debate among researchers about whether case study research is a method, methodology, study, design, or approach. A case study focuses on a particular example of something, in this case a parenting program for pregnant and parenting teens. Yin (2009) described four protocols for a case study: (a) Overview of the project (project objectives and case study issues); (b) field procedures (credentials and access to sites); (c) questions (specific questions that the investigator must keep in mind during data collection; and (d) guide for the report (outline, format for the narrative). Yin also provided skills for the case study investigator: (a) A good case study investigator should be able to ask good questions and interpret the answers; (b) an investigator should be a good listener and not be trapped by his or her own ideologies or preconceptions; (c) an investigator should be adaptive and flexible, so that a newly encountered situation can be seen as an opportunity, not a threat, and (d) a person should be unbiased by preconceived notions, including those derived from theory. Thus, a person should be sensitive and responsive to contradictory evidence.

Outcome evaluation was crucial for assessing how effective the program was in meeting outcome objects, which were to reduce school dropouts, increase high school graduation rates, and enhance parenting skills for pregnant and parenting teens. The outcomes showed the benefits of the program in terms of what happened as a result of

the program. The logic model tool was used to show the program's mission, components, and sequence of activities and outcomes.

Nature of the Study

This retrospective evaluation of a school-based parenting program consisted of a quantitative secondary data analysis and a set of qualitative interviews. The study examined and evaluated program objectives of a school-based parenting program in a school district located in a major city in Texas. This program provided a variety of services to pregnant and parenting teens. This school district had a total of 21,409 students in prekindergarten through Grade 12 for the 2009-2010 school year, with 11,083 being in Grades 6 through 12. According to the district's profile, 77% of the total student population was Hispanic, and 74% of the total student population was identified as being economically disadvantaged.

I analyzed archived quantitative data downloaded from the district's database with the permission of the program's coordinator. These data included documents and records of end-of-year reports covering the school years (August to June) 2001-2010. The data were downloaded as an Excel spreadsheet and then imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, means, and percentages, from the SPSS. No participant requirement was necessary due to the use of retrospective data. Qualitative data were collected using general semi-structured interviews with 12 key faculty and staff members of the program. Prior to interviews, each participant was made aware of their rights and issues regarding confidentiality. Each participant was given a consent form

to read and sign and given a copy the day of their interview. These interviews took place at the parenting education center. The interview consisted of 13 open-ended questions. These interviews were recorded electronically along with handwritten notes. The interview data captured the thoughts of the faculty and staff about the program's success. The interviewing process took place over a 2-week period. Each interview lasted 40 to 45 minutes. A manual review and transcription of data along with computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDUS) NVivo 9 was used to analyze interview data.

Research Questions

Primary Research Questions

The two primary research questions for this study were as follows:

- To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcome goals, and objectives?
- What factors are responsible for the success or failure of the program?

Secondary Research Questions

The secondary research questions for this study are:

- What role does program support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?
- What role does administrative support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?

Limitations

The study evaluated only one specific school-based parenting program in the school district, and faculty and staff were the only interviewees. A convenience sampling approach was used. The retrospective nature of the study precluded the inclusion of students. Recruiting students would have been ideal but not practical because time has elapsed since they were in the program. The findings may not be applicable to other school-based parenting programs because of the use of a convenience samples.

Delimitations

The program participants themselves were not on hand to give their thoughts and experiences about the program. I was not able to follow up with participants to see how the program impacted their lives after graduation. An evaluation of the program's impact was therefore beyond the scope of this study.

Definition of Terms

Case study research: Focuses on specific situations, providing a description of individual or multiple cases (Cronin, 2014).

Dropout: Student in school for less than 20 days of the 180 days of a school year (unexcused absence of more than 88% of the school year); individual who has not graduated from high school (Barnet, Arroyo, Devoe, & Duggan, 2004).

Evaluation: Program evaluation is carefully collecting information about a program or some aspect of a program in order to make necessary decisions about the program (McNamara, 2008).

Logic model: A tool that is used to help describe the effectiveness components of a program. The model describes logical linkages among program resources, activities, outputs, audiences, and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes related to a specific problem or situation (McLaughlin & Jordan, 1999).

Outcome evaluation: Evaluation that focuses on the extent to which pre-determined outcomes were or were not met. The intent of outcome evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of implemented activities with respect to the benefits achieved, suggest improvements and possibly provide direction for future activities (Sonpal-Valias, 2009).

Parenting Education for School Age Parents: A course of study designed especially for high school pregnant and parenting teens. According to the school under study, units of study include parenthood responsibilities, prenatal and postnatal care, child development, special needs of children, family relationships, adult roles, job and career exploration, and decision making.

Parenting girl/teen: A person who has given birth to a child or children, who is under 20 years of age and usually has not, completed their core education (secondary school) (McGraw-Hill, 2002).

Program outputs: Units of services, that is, the number of participants who went through a program (McNamara, 2008).

Significance of Study

The analysis of the data can help to strengthen the program's effectiveness and possibly other similar programs within the district and in other school districts. The

data analysis provided documentation and dissemination of information on effectiveness of the practices of the program. Results of the evaluation serve as an incentive for the program to improve and/or continue to provide educational services and supports that will assist the program participants in progressing toward positive growth. The study also provided the school district with an evaluation of their parenting program and may lead to funding opportunities. During the last legislation session, the district lost the Parenting Education Program (PEP) grant. Luckily, the district was able to arrange an agreement with Work Source Solutions that sponsors aid with child care expenses with teen parents. Child care centers either have a contract with Work Source called Child Care Management Systems (CCMS), or they accept Neighborhood Center Inc. (NCI) funding. The school district has to pick up whatever cost is not paid for through these programs.

Summary

Research has shown an association between adolescent pregnancy and increased school dropout rates. Persistent social and economic disadvantages for pregnant and parenting teens is magnified by these increased dropout rates. School-based parenting programs have been shown to increase retention and graduation rates among pregnant and parenting teens. School-based parenting programs work to improve outcomes for these young mothers and their children. Both the mother and child are at critical points in their lives. Parenting programs can help to shape both mother and child toward healthy development, stability, and productivity by providing a number of educational, health, and social services and supports.

The current research was a retrospective outcomes evaluation study, using secondary data analysis of existing program records and materials, quantitative data accessed from the school district's database, and interviews with key program personnel including faculty and staff. This study assessed to what extent a priori program goals and outcomes were achieved, specifically retention and graduation rates of pregnant and parenting teens who participated in the program. Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive discussion of current literature on teen dropout rates, especially the rates of teenage girls, along with the elements of a successful teen parenting program and key factors that help to determine the success or failure of a parenting program. Chapter 2 also addresses literature on the use of outcomes evaluation theory and practice using a case study approach. Chapter 3 includes a detailed explanation of the methods and approach for this study.

Society and the families of teen parents have been impacted by this issue of teenage pregnancy, and it has become a serious community health problem. Graduating high school, pursuing postsecondary education, unemployment, and relying on public assistance has been linked with teen pregnancy and parenting. There are subsequent births among 30-50% of all teen mothers, with about 25% giving birth within two years of their first delivery. This research study may result in positive social change by showing that the education and support provided by a school-based parenting program results in high school completion, education beyond high school, delay of subsequent unwanted births, gainful employment, and a brighter outcome for adolescent parent and child.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There has been documentation of the poor outcomes concerning the problem of teen pregnancy in the United States (Hoyt & Broom, 2002). These outcomes include but are not limited to low birth weight, developmental delays, and poor academic performance (Hoyt & Broom, 2002). Most teens have little or no knowledge on the subject of child development and parenting and frequently romanticize the idea of childbirth (Strunk, 2008). Even though there has been some decline in teen pregnancy, those who do experience pregnancy and parenting would greatly benefit from the support and guidance that can be provided through a school-based parenting program.

This literature review examined research that showed the impact of school-based parenting programs and the factors influencing retention and graduation rates of pregnant and parenting teens. The review also included data from research that showed the need for school-based parenting programs. The literature supported the evidence I gathered from a successful school-based parenting program in a Texas school district.

The databases used for the literature review included Academic Search Complete, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL Plus), Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Elton B. Stephens Company (EBSCO), National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), National Institution of Health (NIH), Pub Med,

SAGE, Science Direct, Texas Department of State Health Services, and the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NIM).

Key terms used for the search included *adolescent, dropout, ethnicity, mentee, mentor, parenting, pregnancy, prevention programs, school-based programs, race, statistical data, teenager, teen, and outcomes evaluation*.

In this study, I used secondary data analysis of program records and materials, along with interviews with key program staff and faculty to collect data. I collected additional data from the school district's database. The research was based on a retrospective outcome evaluation case study of a school-based parenting program with retention as the main outcome variable of interest. I discuss the methodology for this study in detail in Chapter 3.

Teen Pregnancies in the United States

The United States had the highest rate of adolescents giving births among industrialized nations in 2005; 10% of adolescent girls became pregnant annually, half of whom gave birth (Child Trends, 2005). Adolescent mothers are at an increased risk of becoming high school dropouts and dependent on public assistance (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1997). School-based parenting programs for parenting and pregnant adolescents aid in preparing this group to successfully transition successfully from young teen mother to parenting adults (Scholl, 2007). Pregnant and parenting teens participating in a quality, school-based parenting program are provided support, education, and assistance in the health and development of their children (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001).

The U.S. teen birth rate increased in 2006, after a steady, 14-year decline (Child Trends, 2010). Given the negative consequences of teen birth, there is a need for concern. The cognitive and behavioral outcomes for children of teen mothers are not as good as the cognitive and behavioral outcomes of children with adult mothers (Perper, Peterson, & Manlove, 2010). Research by Perper et al. (2010) showed that by the age of 22, a little more than half of young women in their study who had been teen mothers received a high school diploma when compared with 89% percent of young women who had not given birth during their teen years. There are a number of negative consequences for teen mothers. These include consequences such as not completing high school, which often leads to risk of subsequent births and even poorer outcomes for the mother and child(ren). Secondly, possessing only a high school diploma or GED can reduce the chance of getting a desirable job. Lastly, having a GED does not bear the same weight as having a regular high school diploma. Research has found that those with GEDs earn less money than those with a high school diploma (Cameron & Heckman, 1993).

Teen Pregnancies in Texas

In Texas birth records and population predictions are used to estimate the pregnancy rates of those females aged 15 to 19 during 2005-2015 (Sayegh, Castrucci, Lewis, & Hobbs-Lopez, 2008). Texas teens account for 12% of the births in the United States every year with over 53,000 births (Tortolero, Johnson, Peskin, Cuccano et al. 2011). This number ranks Texas as the third highest rate of teen pregnancies in the United States (63 per 1000 women aged 15 to 19), and the second highest when

examining school-aged female girls (aged 15 to 17 years). The objective of the study conducted by Sayegh et al. (2008) was to make use of previous patterns and current data concerning the demographic population, sexual experience, along with the frequency and failure rates of certain birth control methods to estimate risks with females aged 15 to 19 in Texas during 2005-2015. The authors concluded that Texas would experience a 45% increase in the Hispanic female population, along with the expected pregnancy risk for 15- to 19-year-olds increasing 13% or 127 per 1,000 women. Sayegh et al. attributed this increase to the rise in the pregnancy risk among the growing population of Hispanic adolescents. The researchers concluded that there is a continued need for pregnancy intervention and advised the use of programs designed especially for this population of young females (Sayegh et al., 2008). They also concluded that there is a need for policy changes in pregnancy prevention and a need for customized programs due to the projected growth of adolescent Hispanic teenagers.

Harris County is the most populous county in Texas and the third most populous in the United States, with an estimated 4.1 million residents. Harris County represents 16% of teen births in Texas with over 8,000 births to teens annually (Tortolero, Johnson, Peskin, Cuccano et al. 2011).

Interventions to Prevent Teen Pregnancies

There have been numerous programs launched over the years to combat teen pregnancy. These programs have included educational programs, programs that improve access to contraception, and multicomponent programs. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS, 1999) defined teen pregnancy prevention as

activities that seek to instill teens with confidence and a sense of the future as critical elements to promote a pregnancy-free adolescence.

The problems associated with adolescent pregnancy have been widely documented. Suner, Nakamura, and Caulfield (2003) presented a conceptual framework and noted the existence of three program types in the United States servicing expecting adolescents. After providing a short synopsis of these programs, they provided a model of an alternative teen program.

The first type of program is a prevention program whose main focus is to delay or postpone the sexual activities of teens (Suner et al., 2003). The goal of this type of program includes increasing the preadolescent child's understanding of how the body develops sexually along with making the best choices when engaging in sexual relationships. The second intervention program for expecting teens and those who are already parents provides a plethora of educational and counseling services (Suner et al., 2003). The goals of this type of program includes reducing pregnancy among teens by providing supports in schools along with counseling; provision of prenatal and parenting classes with support groups; and providing information and acting as liaisons for community social services. The third type of program is the provision of shelters that provide a safe haven and home environment for those pregnant teens who have no other support. These shelters provide counseling services along with birthing and mentoring assistance. Successful assimilation of the teen back into the community and obtaining teaching her the skills to care for her newborn are the main objectives of a sheltering program.

The proposed alternative program by Suner et al. (2003) is one that would provide a home environment to pregnant adolescents and those who are already parenting but have no support from family or friends. This alternative program would teach and instill family values while offering practical life skills. This alternative program seems to be a combination of the three types of programs already mentioned but, combined offered all in one safe environment (Suner et al., 2003). The proposed program would serve teens ages 13-18. The goals of the program include providing a safe, nurturing environment; learning ways of preventing repeated pregnancies; developing self-esteem; acquiring critical parenting skills, including age-appropriate ways of disciplining children and stimulating their development; completing or continuing their education and pursuing a vocation or career; teaching life skills, breaking the cycle of domestic abuse, if any; and providing moral support and guidance in a family-oriented atmosphere.

According the CDC (2011a), one of the goals of a large school district in Texas is to provide Health Education teachers with professional development activities that will,; First, offer ongoing training and leadership development for a health education cadre who will provide training and professional development for middle and secondary school teachers; Secondly, plan, conduct, and thirdly, evaluate workshops for Health and Physical Education teachers on health-related issues, including HIV/AIDS, STD, and teen pregnancy prevention.

The research for this study was an outcomes evaluation of a school-based life skills program for student parents. This life skills program strives to reduce school

dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, and enhance parenting skills for pregnant and parenting teens. Chapter 3 will provide a detailed description of the school based parenting program.

Pregnant Teens in Schools

Those teens who are pregnant and parenting while still attending high school, represent a complex and challenging group of families (Sadler et al., 2007). Research has shown that many adolescent mothers have several difficulties that can be attributed to academics and poverty (Sadler et al., 2007). Having the ability to remain in school and graduate, positions teen mothers for continued education opportunities and gainful employment (Hofferth, Reid, & Mott, 2001). When these mothers choose to remain in and complete high school, they often are faced with the dilemma of finding suitable childcare, which in itself can be a deciding factor in their success or failure (Sadler et al., 2007). School-based programs offer essential services to both mother and child. The existing literature has not extensively reported or evaluated these programs.

Prevalence of Teen Pregnancy and Dropout Rates

Data show that the top reason for girls dropping out of school is pregnancy. About 70% of teens who give birth leave school (CDC, 2011b). Most of the girls reported that they would have stayed in school if they had received more support from the school faculty and staff. This lack of support denotes illegal discrimination, which is in a direct violation of Title IX of the 1972 Education Act. According to reviewed literature, when schools and others make an earnest effort made to support pregnant teens in their education, there is a significant decrease in the dropout rate.

Even though the teen pregnancy rate has declined over the past few decades, the fact of the matter is that the U.S. teen pregnancy rate still supersedes all others in the modern western world (Guttmacher Institute, 2011). According to the Guttmacher Institute (2011), each year almost 750,000 U.S. women ages 15-19 become pregnant, which is a decrease from the 821,810 of pregnancies for this group in 2000. Two-thirds of all teen pregnancies occur among 18-19 year olds. Guttmacher also reports that 10% of all U.S. births are to girls aged 19 or younger, with most of these births being first births. Nineteen percent are second or higher order births. In 2009, a total of 409,840 infants were born to 15-19 year olds, for a live birth rate of 39.1 per 1000 women in this age group (CDC, 2011b). Data shows that teen pregnancies cost American tax payers \$9 billion dollars a year. Girls who are born to teens have a 30% chance of becoming teen moms themselves. Statistics also show that children of teen parents often perform poorly academically which often leads to them not completing high school.

Also according to the CDC (2011b), about half of the teen mothers eventually receive their high school diploma by age 22, when compared to 90% of teen who have no children.

A longitudinal study published by Smith Battle (2007), examined the descriptions given by teen mothers concerning their educational aspirations and academic progress academically, before and after the pregnancy. Smith Battle found that no matter where they were academically before becoming pregnant, the idea of becoming a mother led them to reexamine the importance of education and a decision

to complete high school along with aspiring to attend college. Oftentimes these commitments and goals were not realized due to the challenges of employment requirements, obligations to family, and the policies and practices of the schools, work demands, family responsibilities, and school policies and practices. The results indicated that important opportunities are being missed by those who can make a difference in the lives of these young mothers in helping them to become successful through educational opportunities.

Greenberger et al. (2007) found that expectant teen mothers and those who are already parenting are often hurt by having to attend low performing schools with little or no support from the school personnel. After 6 months of investigation, the decision was made by New York's Education Department and the New York Civil Liberties Union made the decision to close New York City's alternative schools for pregnant and parenting teens. It was found that some school personnel had been coercing pregnant and/or parenting girls into the alternative schools. These Students in these inadequate facilities were shown to have had below average test scores and, poor attendance, along with inadequate facilities. One school in Brooklyn was also noted for denying a student to rides on the school bus with her baby; therefore, the child could not attend daycare and the student could not attend school. In a related situation, a lawsuit settlement between Antelope Valley Union and the Los Angeles County Office of Education ensured that pregnant and/or parenting teens would have full access to child care and assess to transportation to their home school (Greenberger et al., (2007).

School-Based Parenting Programs

In a retrospective cohort study, Barnett, Arroyo, Devoe, and Duggan (2004) examined the association between prenatal services provided by school-based programs and parenting teens not completing high school. The variables examined by researchers were included school attendance and grade level completion in relation to time of pregnancy along with prenatal services accessed by the teens. The secondary data included the student's school and medical records along with birth certificates. The researchers concluded that those teens receiving prenatal care through their schools were present at school more than those pregnant teens who did not access prenatal care through the school. The study also concluded that those participating in the school-based program had a tendency to remain in school.

In a 1997 report entitled "School-Based and School-Linked Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Teens and Their Children," (1997) sponsored by the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education, it was reported that the main objectives of early intervention programs should focus on encouraging teen parents to stay in school during and after pregnancy, while learning to become self-sufficient. This report raised a question about the efforts being made to reach pregnant and/or parenting teens: Are these girls being ignored and written off as another group of dropouts who will rely on government subsidies, have repeat births, and live a life of poverty? The report stated that if early intervention programs focus on these things, there would be increased chance that these students would graduate from high school and possibly go to college, which would improve their employment opportunities.

In response to the numerous issues faced by parenting and pregnant adolescents, Amin, Browne, Ahmed, and Sato (2006) conducted a mixed methods study of an alternative school in Baltimore, MD. The Laurence Paquin School Program which serves as a model for comprehensive services for pregnant and parenting students. This model is a separate school for pregnant students that is fully integrated into the Baltimore City Public School System and follows the regular school calendar and curriculum. The program provides counseling services, parenting education, transportation, child care, family planning health education, and social services. The study looked at quantitative data on the program's influence on a sample of 371 students who attended during in 2000 and 2001, and compared their progress with 506 students who were not enrolled in the program. The researchers also collected qualitative data from selected enrollees of the Paquin School Program who participated in focus groups. The authors concluded that the support services provided by the school were very beneficial to this group who came up against many barriers because of their unexpected pregnancy (Amin, Browne, Ahmed and Sato, 2006).

The policy implications of the study suggest that school-based programs provide services that aid in helping this group address issues concerning their situation, thereby decreasing the chances of providing effective services. Programs like the Paquin School provide a plethora of support services for its students besides the normal academic curriculum. Services offered by these comprehensive programs include insights into reproductive health, and family, and financial planning, along with other needed social support services. These are services that should be provided in all school

districts, and those teens who chose to access these services should not be treated inferiorly.

Warrick, Christianson, Walruff, and Cook (1993), found that participants in a school-based or community-linked program were more likely to complete school than those parents who did not participate in any type of program. The exception to this finding was those who enrolled in the program only during their third trimester, who were less likely to continue in school. In 1999, Weinman, Solomon and Glass studied 390 pregnant and parenting teens who participated in school-based and school-linked federally-funded programs at 10 high-risk schools. At the end of the program year, the teens' rate of passing their grade level increased. The study also provided qualitative data that indicated pregnant and parenting teens wanted to remain in school despite the struggles they encountered. Cooperation and communication between the program's staff and school nurses were key elements in the success of the program.

Some researchers have claimed that separate schools for teen mothers are most often characterized by a "remedial" approach to learning. According to Hallman (2007), knowing the academic performance of those enrolled in a program for pregnant and parenting teens is useful knowledge for those who have to identify this population. These findings by Hallman recognizes three concepts for recognizing and identifying pregnant and parenting students; first, identifying students as students and parents, secondly; visualizing the school as a learning environment and community; and thirdly having the attitude that the children of these young mothers are avenues for a better future their mothers and themselves. Hallman states that other studies on pregnant and

parenting teens have concluded that presenting this group in a negative aspect leads to a false perception of there being a correlation between teen pregnancy and educational success. The phenomenology of the goals and ambition of expectant teens and teen parents based on the concept of "possible selves" was researched by Elena Klaw (2008). Among the well documented difficulties that teens parents faced are educational success, limited employment opportunities and a low socioeconomic level; these seem to be the top negative life outcomes. There has been very little research that has explored the phenomenon of "possible selves" with teen parents and their intended goals. Most studies regarding this population leave out the point of view of the teen mothers (Klaw, 2008). In this study by Klaw addresses the gaps between existing research and statements concerning life outlooks of pregnant teens. In this study qualitative methods were used to examine how pregnant teens decide future plans with the challenges they encounter concerning educational attainment and being gainfully employed.

Brosh, Weigel and Evans (2007) conducted a study to examine the most commonly accessed social support services among 54 expectant and parenting teens in an alternative school to ascertain if the assessment of the services used vary according to educational aspirations. Childcare was listed as highest in support type, with the lowest being support of the adolescent's future career. The supports were found to be formal or informal. The formal supports included those provided professionally and informal supports included the father of the child, family and friends. The utilization of an alternative school is considered a formal support. The development of alternative

schools have resulted from worries that the traditional school setting was not set up to meet the needs of pregnant teens (Brosh, Weigel & Weigel, 2007). This study used a two data collection component approach that included a survey and three focus group sessions. To show the connection between the educational expectations and desires of this group a mixed-methods approach was utilized. The participants included 54 females who ranged in grades 6th to 12th, who were either pregnant or had at least one child and attended an alternative high school program. The results of the study showed the significance of having informal and formal relationships. Those in the study with higher educational goals fully utilized the social support services and those with lower educational aspirations goals ranked husband and boyfriend as highest sources of supports. In spite of the educational aspirations, childcare, family and teacher support were among the supports listed as most needed. The study also showed that the higher the educational aspirations were the greater the need was for the support of the school system and family and friends.

The current research involving teenage pregnancy recognizes teen pregnancies as one of the United States social crisis, affecting a tenth of teenage girls 15-19 years of age each year. A study by Rojann R. Alpers (1998), examined the most important health program elements needed to entice pregnant teens to participate. Sociodemographic information was linked to program elements to help aid in program development and marketing. This particular study used an exploratory survey methodology to analyze data in measures of central tendency, dispersion, and variance to understand the association between the sociodemographic characteristics and

program environment for this population This study included 126 adolescent females aged 14 to 19 first time expectant mothers or had a child 9months or younger.

Three conclusions drawn from this study were: first the sociodemographic of this group closely resembles the sociodemographic profile of other like groups from past studies; second the level of importance of program elements suggests enhancement of social incentives (free materials, gifts, transportation, baby sitting and reminder calls) as it relates to health programs for this population; the final conclusion suggests that those pregnant and parenting who have little education and receive subsidies from entities such as WIC, ADFC and Food Stamps consider the elements of a program to very important (Alpers, 1998).

In a randomized experimental design study about cognitive-behavior, Harris and Franklin, (2003), used a pre and posttest along with a follow-up. Eighty-five randomly selected participants were placed in a treatment group or a control group. Of the challenges faced by adolescent mothers (education, employment social relationships and parenting), education has been noted to be the one that most predicts long-term economic status. Completing high school and gaining career knowledge seems to be catalyst for positive outcomes among pregnant and parenting adolescents. The authors emphasize skill building and mastery through the use of cognitive-behavioral interventions. This study supports other literature that focuses on using cognitive-behavioral intervention. An examination of risk factors associated with adolescent mothers' mental health outcomes by Romo and Nadeem (2007), found that school administrators, counselors, and teachers are poised to make a difference. The study also

concluded that a school's responsiveness to pregnant and parenting adolescents needs go a long way in generating positive outcomes for this group.

According to the latest literature reviews, special programs for pregnant and parenting adolescents are greatly needed and have been proven to increase the retention and graduation rates of this group, when compared to those pregnant and parenting teens who did not participate in any type of school-based or community program (Philliber et al. 2003; Brosh, Weigel & Evans, 2007). School personnel play a vital role in improving the outcome for this group which, has often been written off because of the challenges that they face. The educational system should take a lead in making sure that adequate services are provided to these young ladies to help them to become successful and productive citizens. But, with all of the education budget cuts especially in Texas will these programs be able to survive. There is a great need for community partnerships and collaboration from other stakeholders that believe that with the right encouragement a difference can be made.

The Pathways Teen Mother Support Project

This was a randomized field trial of an intensive intervention for low income pregnant and parenting teens in a four-county area of rural South Carolina. The study included 107 in the treatment group and 90 control group teens. Treatment and control groups were randomly assigned to participants. Those in the treatment group had access to social services such as case management support groups, family decision making groups, life skills, and leadership development over a two year period. The control group received only those services available in their home communities for pregnant

and parenting teens with no assistance from the project. There were four goals for the project 1) reduce repeat pregnancies; 2) increase school retention and graduation; 3) reduce substance use; and 4) improve well-being. The results of the project concluded that the treatment group had less pregnancies, better academic performance and higher graduation rates, and less substance abuse than the control group, the treatment group also better at problem solving and had an increased social support (McDonell, Limber & Connor-Godbey, 2007).

Case Studies

The following studies use outcome evaluation to assess successfulness of programs.

Evaluation is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object (Research Methods, 2006). Outcome evaluation was used in this research. Outcome evaluation is a type of summative evaluation (Research Methods, 2006). Outcome evaluations investigate whether the program or technology caused demonstrable effects on specifically defined target outcomes (Research Methods, 2006). There are specific questions and methods addressed under summative evaluation: 1) What type of evaluation is feasible? 2) What was the effectiveness of the program or technology? and 3) What is the net impact of the program? (Trochim, 2006). An outcomes logic model (evaluation plan) is a clear, graphic representation of the links between program activities, the results these activities are intended to produce, and how the results will be measured (Fasten, n.d.). The elements of the logic model, include program inputs, activities and services,

and outputs. Each of these elements makes some contribution to the benefits or outcomes the program delivers to program participants.

The first step in a program evaluation is to determine exactly what is being evaluated: Is the total program being evaluated or an aspect of the program? Another major step is to select data collection methods: Programs can be evaluated through pre- and post testing of knowledge, attitudes and skills, or through focus groups, interviews, or telephone surveys, using satisfaction rating scales, and testimonials (DeBord, 1998).

The following study uses the term case study in the subtitle to describe the report. According to Tight (2010), the term case study is often used to signify a focus on a particular example, in this case the focus is a program for parenting teens .Tight also states that although this term is used, it is used in a more common-sense or generic fashion. I found this to be true while researching this topic, most of the research found seemed to be consistent with outcome evaluation, although their focus was on a particular program.

The Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (ReCAPP) reported on The StartRight/ Teen MOMs Program. This multifaceted program is housed in a teen center located in a large urban hospital located in Kansas City M.O. The StartRight/Teen MOMs Program works to help teen mothers delay repeat pregnancies during teen years, teach life skills, while encouraging the teens to develop and pursue education and career goals. There are also community referrals for housing, childcare, transportation, WIC, and so forth. Monthly group educational and social activities for the teens serve as incentives for program participation. This program faced the same

challenges as most social service non-profit programs, (1) sustainability, (2) limited resources, and (3) needing support of program administration and quality (ReCAPP, 2009). An annual evaluation of this program is conducted by the Institute for Human Development from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and this information is reported to entities such as ReCAPP. The repeat pregnancy rate for the geographic is 25%, but the program's rate is less than 4%. Also, more than 95% of program participants remain in school or achieve success in an alternative educational program.

In an outcomes study of one New Mexico teen parenting program it was found that even though there was a slight decline in teen pregnancy rates that teen parenting programs are still a necessity (Philliber, Brooks, Lehrer, Oakley & Waggoner, 2003). The study looks at 53 New Mexico programs serving 3,194 teens between the years 1997 and 2000. During 1997 and 2000 there were 53 programs representing 23 counties. A database was created by the New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition. A record of services provided by programs were stored in a database, along with participant characteristics and outcomes. An in-school vocational program called Graduation Reality and Dual Role skills (GRADS) is one of the 53 programs offered. Alternative schools school-based health centers along with residential and community case management programs are places where these teen parenting programs were offered.

The program outcomes included: prenatal care, financial support services, educational attainment, obtaining employment, repeat pregnancy and preventing low birth weight. The results were compared with national rates. The occurrence of teens

getting prenatal care the low birth weights of infants were below that of the state and national rates (Philliber et al., 2003). The use of WIC and Medicaid were the two services most used by teen parents. It was noted that after enrollment in the programs there was an increase in use of these services. Those in the program maintained or improved their education level. The study also noted that of the 3,194 program participants, 924 at the time of recruitment were not in school. Upon entrance into the program 777 (84%) had returned to school (Philliber et al., 2003). The programs proved to be an excellent asset in aiding these teens in being successful in completing their high school education and beyond, when compared to rates nationally. As it relates to employment, this educational success was found to occur more often with older parenting teens. The educational attainment coincided with obtaining employment. There was a low rate of repeat pregnancies. There was not a significant variation in the birth weights of the babies but, the low birth weight for teens aged 15-19 was lower among this group than the statewide and national rates. This study showed that those teens who participate in a parenting program have positive outcomes.

Roosa & Vaughn (1983), studied the Teen Age Parenting program (TAPP). They looked at 62 teen mothers (sample about 50% black, Hispanic, and white divided non-randomly into 3 groups with similar characteristics. Group 1 included 15 who had attended an alternative school and enrolled child in an infant care nursery. Group 2 included 35 who also attended an alternative school but did not enroll child in the nursery program. Group 3 included 24 who were not in any type of parenting program. The interventions for TAPP included 1) attendance at an alternative school which had

child development and parenting classes and enrollment of child in a nursery that also served as a learning center for the parenting child development curriculum at an alternative campus site. Outcome measurements included educational progress and fertility along with knowledge of human reproduction and child development, parental attitudes. The researchers found that group 1 participants were high school graduates and were enrolled in higher education. Participants in the first and second groups had considerably higher scores than the third group when tested on human reproduction. Consequently groups one and two showed an optimistic positive attitude on the acceptance scale than did group three.

The data presented by Bennett & Bardon (1977) and Roosa & Vaughn (1983) indicate that both teens and infants benefit from school based comprehensive programs. In a study by Sadler et al. (2007), findings suggested promising patterns for young mothers who choose to remain in school. The decision to remain in school while pregnant and or parenting gives teen mothers a chance to continue their engagement in their own learning endeavors and have their child(ren) near and in safe dependable childcare. These young mothers also have the security of many social and health services that are offered through the school based parenting program. Subsequent births are relatively low (6%) among those who participate in a school based parenting program (Sadler et al., 2007). These programs offer contraceptive planning which aids the participants in delaying subsequent births. Literature suggests that about 50% and 65% of adolescent mothers who did complete high school without participation in a

parenting program are less likely to further their education than those teens who are not parents (Hofferth, Reid, & Mott, 2001).

Promising outcomes were found in a 2007 cohort study of children and their adolescent mothers who attended a school with a parenting program with available on-site childcare. The purpose of a study by Sadler et al., (2007), were to describe maternal characteristics and outcomes, and child developmental and health outcomes. The study participants included 65 teen mothers registered in a parent support program. Fifty-three of the participants used the school childcare center and 12 of the participants had childcare provided by family. The maternal characteristics assessed by the study included sense of worth and symptoms of depression, social support and their stressors, parental abilities, interactions between parent and child, and repeat pregnancies and educational outcomes. The developmental outcomes of the children along with their health outcomes were assessed.

The study concluded that about 33% of the volunteer samples suffered from mild to moderate depression, and transition homelessness was suffered by 39 percent. There was little evidence social support networks, with mothers experiencing an average of 13.2 ± 11.9 negative life events (Sadler et al, 2007). There were encouraging levels of parental abilities and educational outcomes of the mothers, although 6% of the teen mothers had repeat births within a couple of years. Seven of the 65 children were identified to have developmental delays but, the median scores of the children on developmental assessments were in normal range (Sadler et al., 2007). The study concluded that parenting programs in school with on-site child care offered hopeful

opportunities for teen mothers as it relates to parenting, repeat pregnancies, and retention and graduation rates.

In an article by Clewell, Brooks-Gunn and Benasich (1989), several teen parenting programs were evaluated. The center-based or school based interventions were alternative schools for pregnant and parenting teens. These programs provide inclusive curriculum programs offering participants a general educational curriculum and course work relevant to childbearing along with counseling, health monitoring, and child care services. These programs also provide a supplementary curriculum program which provides necessary course credit and services such as child care and counseling to pregnant teenagers who attend regular classes at their regular high schools. There are also non-curricular programs that provide counseling, medical care, and referrals, but participants receive no credit for attending (Zellman, 1982).

Bennett & Bardon (1977) conducted a study of the Educational Services for School-Age Parents (ESSP) a school based parenting program. The study sample included 86 program participants and 96 children (97% minority low socioeconomic status. This sample was compared to 30 teen mother and their 34 children who did not participate in ESSP. The interventions initiated by the program included a Family Learning center where pregnant teens continue their education while receiving medical, counseling, and academic assistance along with comprehensive and supportive services before and after delivery. The ESSP, New Brunswick Public Schools, NJ, outcome measures included 1) educational progress, use of contraceptives, employment, health, and use of health facilities, and 2) child cognitive and social development. The findings

revealed that the program was related to completion of more years of schooling and greater use of health facilities. Furthermore, the findings showed that children of ESSP mothers had higher scores on the Vineland Social Maturity Scale and scored above the mean on the Preschool Inventory.

Key, Gebregziabher, Marsh and O'Rourke (2008) conducted a prospective cohort study that followed each participant over a 24 month period (or until the participant's 20th birthday, whichever was longer) to evaluate the effectiveness of a secondary teen pregnancy prevention intervention that includes school-based social work services coordinated with comprehensive health care for teen mothers and their children. This study compared subsequent births of 63 girls (mean age 16) in the intervention to a like group of propensity-matched girls randomly selected from state birth certificate data. To be eligible the girls had to be pregnant/parenting and enrolled at the participating high school. Upon entering the program 52% of the girls were pregnant and 47% already parenting and not pregnant. Major components of the program include: (a) intensive case management by a school-based social worker, including frequent home visits and continuous availability by cell phone; (b) a weekly school-based educational/support group, with incorporation of group service learning; and (c) comprehensive medical care for the teen and her child, with coordination between the physician and social worker (Key, 2008). Program participation yielded good results: (1) group meetings: 76%; (2) case management: 95%; (3) coordinated medical care: 63%. Results also concluded that effective programs that delay repeat

births to teen mothers, allowing the teen to graduate from high school before another child is born, will not only benefit the teen herself but also her future generations.

Crean, Hightower and Allan (2001), examined the effects of the school-based Early Childhood Centers for Children of Teen Parents Program. This program located in a large urban school district in New York state was designed to keep teen mothers in school by providing support to young mothers' support that consisted of on-site child care, parenting classes, and referral to other service agencies. There were 81 program participants who were chosen to participate because they were considered to be low risk due to their school attendance. There were 89 teens who applied and denied due to their low attendance. The major goal of the program was to enhance the adaption and educational level of the teen parent (Crean et al., 2001). The participants were required to attend school and all scheduled classes 80% of the time. Teen mothers were also required to be on site and in school when their children are in the centers and to participate in the care of their children during lunch and free periods. The mothers had to report to the center even if their child was not in attendance. It was believed that this would strengthen the parent-child bond and allow for staff to assess and help with parenting skills when necessary. The results of the study concluded that there was a significant difference between the graduation rates of the program participants and those denied entrance. The graduation rate for program participants was 70% and 28% for those who were denied entrance.

In a 2013 article by Asheer, Berger, Meckstroth, Kisker and Keating data from a federal Evaluation of Pregnancy Prevention Approaches (PPA) was used to discuss the

early implementation experiences of two new and innovative programs intended to delay rapid repeat pregnancy among teen mothers. One program AIM 4 Teen Moms, located in Los Angeles County, California and the other Teen Options to Prevent Pregnancy (T.O.P.P.) in Columbus, Ohio. These two programs were part of rigorous random assignment impact evaluations.

Teen Options to Prevent Pregnancy (T.O.P.P.) was designed by Ohio-Health to aid teen mothers' access and use existing pregnancy prevention and reproductive health services. The Los Angeles program, AIM 4 Teen Moms was based on the Theory of Possible Selves, which is based on the belief that youth can be motivated in their present lives by images of their possible future selves. This study discussed lessons learned from the implementation of these programs. Data analysis identified four main lessons: (1) recruitment and retention, retaining this group requires persistence and buy-in from implementing partners; (2) building and retaining staff capacity which is integral to individualized service delivery models; (3) barriers to participation, such as lack of transportation, requires practical solutions that fit local context; and (4) participants' overarching service needs that require a broad delivery network (Asheer et al., 2014). These findings show the many barriers and challenges that are faced by this population and must be considered when designing and implementing these types of programs. Researchers, policymakers and practitioners are making efforts to better serve those hard to reach teen mothers (Asheer et al., 2014).

Summary

Although there are a limited number of case studies on this topic, there are several program outcome and impact evaluations. Research does indicate that education leads better outcomes for teen parents and their children. The host of negative outcomes that often accompany childbearing by teenagers can have lifelong negative implications. Having a flexible responsive learning environment is a positive step in helping to keep this population from failing or dropping out of school which is often seen among adolescent parents. The report by the Institute For Educational Leadership recognizes that there needs to be an intensive approach to improve retention and graduation rates of pregnant and/or parenting teens; assurance pregnant adolescents have prenatal care during the first trimester, educational opportunities in alternative programs, facilitation of a timely return to school after giving birth; development of relationships with mentors who encourage completion of school. The data acquired from the proposed research will be used in an outcome evaluation. The results can be used by the school district and others to improve or enhance their parenting programs, so that the needs of program participants can be met and potentially improve their future outcome. The proposed outcome evaluation can aid in helping to strengthen other school-based parenting programs in meeting the needs of the participants and potentially improving their future outcome.

The research used outcome evaluation theory and methods. The components of the program utilized to achieve the intended outcomes were assessed. The program for the research did not have a priori-model or theory but, rather a mission statement. The

outcome evaluation was based on the components of the mission statement, and implied outcome objectives determined from a review of program materials and interviews with key staff. The program components were analyzed, interpreted and reported.

Chapter 3 includes a more detailed description and rationale for the methods and approach for this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

Adolescent parents and their children are two particularly vulnerable groups in society whose long-term life chances are interconnected (Stephens, Wolf, & Batten, 1999). Having the right supports and services available for these vulnerable groups increases their chances for a positive outcome in school, work, and parenting. Research has shown that schools can be an ideal location for providing teens and their children with services and supports essential to their long-term success (Stephens et al., 1999). However, there have been few credible evaluations of these programs available, and the evaluations that are available are riddled with methodological problems (Stahler, Ducette, & McBride, 1989). This research examined an in-school parenting program for pregnant and parenting adolescents in a high school setting.

Chapter 3 includes a description of the research design and approach along with justification of the study. My role in the data collection as the researcher, the method of data collection, and the data analysis are included in this chapter.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of my study was to investigate, examine, and evaluate the program outcome objectives of a high school parenting program for pregnant and parenting adolescents. I analyzed data provided by the school district concerning graduation and retention rates. I also interviewed key program personnel, including faculty and staff concerning their commitment, attitudes, and preparedness towards the program and how key program personnel perceived program outcomes. My primary research

question was To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcome goals, and objectives?

Study Design and Approach

This was a retrospective evaluation of a school-based program. The research design had two parts: a quantitative secondary data analysis and a set of qualitative interviews. The quantitative data were accessed from the school district's database, with retention and graduation as the main outcome variables of interest. The qualitative data were derived from a review of existing program documents and interviews with key program personnel. Using the case study research approach enabled the real-life setting to be examined. As stated in Chapter 1, the recruitment of students would have been ideal but not practical due to the fact that the data used were from the school year 2001 to 2010, and the students have since graduated or are no longer in the district.

The research was based on data collected from the school district's database, related to program participants. The data included the Life Skills Program for Student Parents (formerly PEP) end-of-year reports from 2001-2010 (Tables 1 through 10). The data showed consistency in the graduation rates of seniors who participated in the program. Given that the data are retrospective, no participant recruitment was necessary for this component of the research. I also collected data via interviews with the administrative staff and faculty to ascertain their thoughts as they related to the success of the program.

Secondary data are data that have been collected by individuals or agencies for purposes other than those of a particular research study. There are three things that the

researcher must first do before making use of the secondary data: (a) locate the data, (b) evaluate the data, and (c) verify the data. There are several reasons for using secondary data. These include the following: because it is unobtrusive research, it can be less expensive than gathering the data all over again; it may allow the researcher to cover a wider geographic or temporal range, it can allow for larger scale studies on a small budget; and it does not exhaust people's good will recollecting readily available data (California State University Long Beach, n.d.).

The research technique of in-depth interviewing involves conducting interviews with a "small number of respondents and examining their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation "(Boyce & Neale, 2006, p. 3). This process also allows the interviewer to get some idea about the participants' experiences using open-ended questions. McNamara (2005) noted six kinds of interview questions: (a) behaviors, about what a person has done or is doing; (b) opinions/values, about what a person thinks about a topic; (c) feelings, interviewer must remember that feelings may cause bias; (d) knowledge, to get facts about a topic; (e) sensory, about what people have seen, touched, heard, tasted, or smelled; and (f) background/demographics, standard background questions, such as age and, education, etc. All of these questions may be asked in terms of past, present, or future. In this research project, I asked the participants questions about their experiences and thoughts concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes. One of the primary advantages of in-depth interviews is the detailed information provided by the respondent. The atmosphere is usually relaxed and the participant may feel a sense of comfort. On the other hand,

interviews can be prone to bias, especially if program staff is out to prove that the program is working and thereby providing biased responses. Therefore, the interview should be conducted to allow for minimal bias (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Interviews can also be time intensive. The interviewer must plan for transcription and analysis of detailed data.

Outcome evaluation assesses intervention efficacy or effectiveness in producing the desired cognitive, belief, skill, and behavioral outcomes within a target population (CDC, 2008). The components of the intervention (the activities of the program) are the fundamental assumption that serves as the attributes of an outcome evaluation.

Case study research seems to be problematic because it can consist of a design and research method (Cronin, 2014). According to Tight (2010), the essence of case study is the detailed examination of a small sample, from a particular perspective. This particular study focused on the real-life experiences of one school-based parenting program. Therefore, I felt that case study was the best overall approach for the evaluation. According to Punch (2005), the basic idea is that one case will be studied in detail, using whatever methods seem appropriate. While there may be a variety of specific purposes and research questions, the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible (Punch, 2005, p. 144).

Research Questions

Primary Research Questions

The primary research questions for this study are:

- To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcome goals, and objectives?
- What are the factors that may be responsible for the success or failure of the program?

Secondary Research Questions

The secondary research questions for this study are:

- What role does program support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?
- What role does administrative support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?

Sample and Setting

This study looked at a school-based parenting program. The program participants were from the districts' two senior high schools (one campus with Grades 10 to 12 and one campus with Grades 9 to 12); ninth grade campus, four middle schools (comprising two campuses with Grades 7 to 8, and two campuses with Grades 6 to 8); and one sixth grade campus; and four district alternative schools.

One of the most common types of nonprobability sampling is a convenience sample (Herek, 2009). These samples are easy to recruit and the researcher uses whatever individuals are available rather than selecting from the entire population. This type of sampling is also cost effective. This type of nonprobability sampling is also purposive sampling; the sample is predefined and chosen with a purpose in mind

(Trochim, 2006). In this study, the purpose is to show the graduation rates of teen parents participating in a school-based parenting program.

A Life Skills Program for Student Parents had a total of 1911 participants in grades 8 - 12 during the 2001 - 2010 school years. The researcher determined the number of graduating seniors during the 2001 - 2010 school years from the school district's data base.

The information gathered about the teens came from the school district's data base; no actual contact will be made with the participants. The study also included faculty and staff that who deal directly will program participants. This group will be a convenience sample of those who deal with program participants on daily basis. They were asked to share their experiences and thoughts concerning the program through a general face to face interview.

Data Collection

According to Owen and Rogers (1999), program evaluations look at 1) how good is the program, 2) did the program work, 3) what are the components of the program and how do they relate to each other, 4) what is happening in the program, 5) can it be improved and, 6) can success be repeated.

As I evaluated this program I followed the five guiding principles of the American Evaluation Association (AEA). The principles include systematic inquiry, competence, integrity/honesty, and respect for people and responsibilities for general and public welfare. (Mertens & Wilson, 2012).

Quantitative data from the participating school district were retrieved from the Life Skills Program for Parenting Students database with the permission of the Program's Coordinator. The data contained end-of-year reports covering the school years (August to June) 2001-2010, and including the number of 1) students served, 2) seniors finishing all graduation requirements, 3) seniors failing one or more parts of Exit level TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge & Skills), 4) seniors who withdrew for GED, 5) recovered dropouts, 6) dropouts withdrawn for non attendance, 7) students who failed one or more parts of TAKS, and 8) students who withdrew to attend home school. The reports also contained information on the total number of infants serviced by the program.

Qualitative data were collected using a general interview approach. This structured approach assures that data from the same general areas of information are collected from each participant, while still allowing for a degree of freedom and flexibility in getting the required information (Turner, 2010). As recommended by Boyce & Neale (2006), interviews consisted of no more than 15 open-ended questions, the questions were factual rather than opinionated and an interview guide (Appendix B) was used containing an introduction (including informed consent, Appendix A), a set of questions, and closing comments. Key program personnel were asked 13 open-ended questions. The interview sessions were tape recorded and the interviewer took notes.

Table 4

Reasons for Not Graduating

School Year	2009- 2010	2008- 2009	2007- 2008	2006- 2007	2005- 2006	2004- 2005	2003- 2004	2002- 2003	2001- 2002
Withdrew for GED									
Recovered dropout									
Dropout with non attendance									
Failed 1 or more parts of TAKS									
Withdrew to attend home school									
Totals									

Data Analysis

School Database

I downloaded end of year reports from the school district's Life Skills program database in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. The Excel spreadsheet was then imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This data included program documents and records. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, means, and percentages, from the SPSS.

Interviews with Key Personnel

Interviews took place at the Parenting Education Center. The interviews were taped and the researcher took notes. The interviewees were made aware of their rights and issues regarding confidentiality. The interview data provided context to the quantitative outcome data. After the interviews, the data were reviewed for patterns or themes among the participants (Boyce & Neale, 2006), and those themes were then meaningfully grouped together. I looked for different themes within the answers given

by respondents. The researcher made use of NVivo, computer- assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). Qualitative data- analysis software is often thought to be based on grounded theory approaches to data analysis in that theory will emerge from the data, and the software often has *memoing* tools which facilitate theory building from the data (Welsh, 2002). Memos are the theorizing write-up of ideas, this is an important tool to help refine and keep track of ideas that develop when comparing incidents to incidents and then concepts to concepts as in looking for themes in interview responses. NVivo was used to gather the materials into themes and run queries to uncover trends and related ideas. NVivo was also use to share my findings in a customized report.

Logic Model

The logic model was used to show the effectiveness of the program. The model contained logical links to the problem or situation to the intervention which includes inputs and outputs, and the impact or outcome. The logic model (Figure 1) used for this study comes directly from *The Logic Model Development Guide*, prepared for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (W.K Kellogg Foundation, 2004). The most basic logic model was used to show how the program works, specifically the various components of the program organization and how these relate to outcomes. A description of the sequence of activities of the program was linked to the results the program is expected to achieve.



*Figure 1.*Logic Model 1.

Role of the Researcher

I had a clear idea of what was being measured as I collected, analyzed and interpreted the data. Using the SPSS allowed me to remain objective during the research process. I remained emotionally separate from the research and will not insert personal bias' concerning this topic. I asked unbiased questions and not leading questions. Leading questions tend to influence participants' responses by leading them to think a certain way. Questions that lead the responses of participants also poses the risk of conveying the researchers' point of view along with their prejudices and biases.

Measures Taken for the Protection of Human Subjects

Convincing participants of confidentiality helps to earn trust and elicit accurate data (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). After receiving IRB approval, I assured participants that their confidentiality would be protected. The participants were given a written informed consent document outlining the risks if any, and benefits of their participation. The informed consent also informed participants on the uses of the collected interview data, to whom the data would be available to, and whom to contact for any questions. The names of the interviewees were not included in the study and all notes, recordings, and transcripts will be secured in a locked file cabinet for a period of 5years as required by the Institutional Review Board. I am the only individual with access to this information.

Summary

Having adequate supports and services for pregnant and parenting adolescents are critical to the future outcome of this vulnerable population. School-based parenting

programs are a promising avenue for providing a positive outcome for this group. This secondary data analysis and evaluation outcome study evaluated the program outcome objectives of a school program for those adolescents who are pregnant or parenting. The study utilized quantitative, descriptive data accessed from the school district's database a review of existing program documents. Case-study research approach was used to conduct interviews with key program personnel about their experiences with the program. The primary question for this study was: "To what extent did the program achieve its intended results?" Data from the school districts' program will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Key personnel from the program was also interviewed to gain knowledge about their experiences with the program. The logic model was used to show program effectiveness.

Chapter 4 includes a description of the findings. Chapter 5 includes interpretation of the findings and recommendations for further action and research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

Findings regarding the impact of the parenting program offered within the school district are reported in this chapter. Data from the district's parenting program showed a high retention and graduation rate for program participants even though most came from what some would consider to be disadvantaged background. The primary research questions for this study were as follows:

- To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcome goals, and objectives?
- What are the factors that may be responsible for the success or failure of the program?

Secondary research questions for this study were as follows:

- What role does program support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?
- What role does administrative support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?

Setting

The interviews for the study took place at a parenting education center in the school district under study located in a major Texas city. During the 2009-2010 school year, this school district had a total of 21,409 students, with 11,083 being in Grades 6 through 12. The demographics of this district during the 2009-10 school year were 77% Hispanic and 74% of the total student population being identified as economically

disadvantaged. The interviews took place over a 2-week period (April 16-27, 2012) in accordance with the availability of the faculty and staff. Twelve ($N = 12$) individuals were interviewed for this study.

The information gathered about the female teens came from the school district's database; no actual contact was made with program participants. Interviewing of a sample of students would have been ideal, but not practical, due to the fact that the data used were from the school years 2001 to 2010, and the students have since graduated. I was not able to follow up with the program participants, which was unfortunate. A secondary quantitative data analysis of existing program records and materials was accessed from the school district's database with permission from the program's coordinator and the district's research initiatives committee. A convenience sample was selected of faculty and staff of the parenting program who dealt with program participants on daily basis. They were asked to share their experiences and thoughts concerning the program through face-to-face interviews. The interviews included information concerning the goals and objectives of the program and whether or not these goals were being met. The interview included questions about their duties and responsibilities within the program, program support, and sources of funding.

The framework for the structure of Chapter 4 is directed by the research questions and the research method as defined in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are presented in the following primary sections: (a) demographics, (b) data collection, (c) data analysis, (d) evidence of trustworthiness, (e) results, and (f) the summary.

Demographics

The study examined a school-based parenting program that has been in place since 1991. The program's purpose is to reduce student absences and dropout rate due to teen pregnancy and parenting responsibilities. The program also works to recover teen parents who have dropped out of school and who are still below Texas's compulsory attendance age of 18. The program participants included students who were pregnant or parenting between 2001 and 2010. The program participants were from the district's two senior high schools (one campus Grades 10 through 12; one campus Grades 9 through 12), ninth grade center, four middle schools (two campuses Grades 7 and 8 and two campuses Grades 6 through 8) one six grade campus; and four district alternative schools. Data were collected from the program's database from 2001 through 2010, but the program participants were not contacted. The demographics of the program participants appear in Table 5.

Table 5

Ethnicity of Parenting Program 12th Grade Participants, 2001-2010

School Year	Ethnicity			Total
	African American	Hispanic	White	
2001 - 2002	6	45	4	55
2002 - 2003	10	50	3	63
2004 - 2005	15	78	4	97
2005 - 2006	17	77	7	101
2006 - 2007	8	78	6	92
2007 - 2008	7	108	1	116
2008 - 2009	9	89	1	99
2009 - 2010	6	116	2	124

The study also included interviews with 12 faculty and staff who worked directly with program participants on a daily basis. These employees shared their experience and thoughts concerning the program.

In this study, the purpose was to describe the graduation rates of teen parents participating in a school-based parenting program, along with perceptions of staff, faculty, and their views regarding program outcomes. The study also looked at the number of students being served, seniors finishing all graduation requirements, seniors who failed one or more parts of the TAKS Exit Level Exam for graduation, those seniors who withdrew to obtain a GED or attend home school, or seniors who failed one or more parts of the TAKS Exit Level Exam for graduation. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam measures a student's mastery of the state-mandated curriculum in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies required

under Texas Education standards. Texas high school seniors cannot graduate unless they pass exit-level TAKS exams in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. During their junior (11th grade) and senior (12th grade) years of high school, students are given five chances to pass the test (Texas Education Agency, 2003). The study also shows the total number of infants serviced by the program and interview results.

Table 6

Demographics of Parenting Program Staff Interviewed

Interviewees	Job Title	Years with Program
1	Nutrition Specialist	6 years
2	Program Administrator	10.5 years
3	Childcare Worker	3years
4	Early Childhood Development Teacher	6 months
5	Program Director	10 years
6	Registered Nurse, Health Specialist	5 years
7	Education Specialist	12 years
8	Family Service Specialist	7 years
9	Program Support Staff	1 year
10	Teacher's Assistant	3.6 years
11	Counselor	5 years
12	Translator	6 months

The following interview questions were developed to discover common themes and patterns extracted from the interviewee's responses.

1. What are the goals/objectives of the program?
2. Are these goals/objectives being met?
3. How long have you been working with the program?
4. What is your responsibility or duty within the program?
5. What experiences or background do you have in this area?
6. Do you feel that the program has district support? (in what ways/why not)
7. Does the administrative staff support the faculty? (in what ways/why not)

8. What do you believe are the major assets of the program? Major weaknesses
9. What kind of resources/funding does the program receive? (from the district, city, state, other)
10. Are appropriate instructional materials readily available for the program participants?
11. Are the parents/guardians of the program participants supportive of the program? (how)
12. Describe the communication between the parents/guardians of the program participants and the program staff.
13. Is there anything more you would like to add?

The results of the interviews are detailed in the results section.

Data Collection

Quantitative Archived Program Data

The school-based parenting program being evaluated for this study is a Life Skills Program for Student Parents in a school district located in a major Texas city. This program provides a variety of interventions and services to pregnant and parenting teens. The school district had a total of 21,409 students in prekindergarten through Grade 12 for the 2009-2010 school year, with 11,083 being in Grades 6 through 12. The total student population is 77% Hispanic and 74% of the total student population has been identified as being economically disadvantaged.

The data report contains numerical data that reflects 1) total number of students served; 2) seniors finishing all graduation requirements; 3) seniors failing one or more

parts of Exit Level TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge & Skills); 4) seniors who withdrew for GED; 5) recovered dropouts; 6) dropouts withdrawn for non-attendance; and 7) students who withdrew to attend home school (Table 9) found in the results section. The report also contains information on the total number of infants serviced by the program (Table 7).

Table 7

Summary of Life Skills Program Child Care Services for Years 2001 to 2010

Activities	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006	2006- 2007	2007- 2008	2008- 2009	2009- 2010
Total infants served @ Center	37	34	32	40	45	29	35	42	47
Total infants served @ EHS	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	13	11
Transportation provided @ Center – Teen Parents	--	--	11	35	31	22	31	36	40
Transportation provided @ Center - Infants	--	--	--	--	--	--	32	36	40
Transportation provided @ EHS – Teen Parents	--	--	--	--	--	23	14	8	10
Transportation provided @ EHS – Infants	--	--	--	--	--	--	14	6	10
# Enrolled in NCI	9	19	24	31	7	26	31	30	31

Note. EHS=Early Head Start; NCI=Neighborhood Centers Inc.; Center-Life Skills Parent Center

Qualitative Interview Data

The interview participants were initially contacted for the study via telephone and were given information concerning the study. A follow-up person to person visit was made on March 6, 2012, when I was given a tour of the facility and introduced to some of the faculty and staff. Semi-structured interviews with staff and faculty took place at the Parenting Education Center, over a 2-week period from April 16 through 27, 2012. I took notes and taped recorded each interview with lasted approximately 40 to 45 minutes. There was a time constraint due to the interviewees having to report back to their duties. An open-ended question interview protocol was used during the interviews. Each interviewee was made aware of their rights and issues regarding

confidentiality and participation was completely voluntary. They were given informed consents to read and sign. Each consent form was photocopied at the facility and each interview was given a copy of their consent form and I kept a copy for my records. The names of those interviewed were not used only their positions within the program. Three of the interviews had to be rescheduled, two due to weather conditions and another due to an unscheduled meeting. All three interviews were completed within 5 days of their original scheduled date. The descriptive statistics for the interview subject can be found in Table 6.

The results of the interviews were only reviewed by myself and are being kept in a locked file cabinet for the 5-year period required by the Institutional Review Board.

A general interview approach assured that the same general areas of information was collected from each participant, while still allowing for a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the participant. Boyce and Neale (2006), proposed that interviews should consist of no more than 15 open-ended questions. Factual questions should be asked before opinionated questions and probes should be used when needed to get a more detailed response. An interview guide was used (Appendix B). A basic interview guide contains an introduction (including informed consent), a set of questions, and closing comments (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Key program personnel were asked 13 open-ended questions. The interview sessions were audio taped and I also took notes.

I evaluated one school-based parenting program because of its success and convenience. I made use of the convenience sampling approach due to the fact that

faculty and staff were the only interviewees. The retrospective nature of the study precludes the inclusion of students. Recruiting students would have been ideal but not applicable to other school -based parenting programs because of the use of a convenience sample.

The youth participants of the program themselves were not on hand to give their thoughts and experiences about the program.

I used secondary data analysis, semi-structured interviews and evaluation outcome. The study utilized quantitative data accessed from the school district's database that was already compiled and catalogued, a review of existing program documents, and interviews with key program personnel. This retrospective outcome evaluation of a school-based program focused on the retention and graduation rates of pregnant and parenting teens participating in school based parenting program.

In this research project the participants were asked questions about their experiences and thoughts concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes. One of the primary advantages of in-depth interviews is the detailed information provided by the respondent. The atmosphere is usually relaxed and the participant may feel a sense of comfort. On the other hand interviews can be prone to bias, especially if program staff is out to prove that the program is working and thereby providing biased responses.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data

I downloaded the end of year reports from the school district's Life Skills program database. These data included program documents and descriptive statistics in an Excel spreadsheet. These data were imported to, and categorized using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data provided descriptive statistics including frequencies, means, and percentages.

Qualitative Data

Data analysis of the interviews was performed employing a manual review of data and the use of computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDUS) NVivo 9. I personally transcribed the interview responses, manually entered them into NVivo 9 and organized the data into nodes which allowed me to gather related material in one so that emerging patterns themes and relationships could be developed. The qualitative data analysis process of coding was used which includes sorting, categorizing, and organizing an understanding and meaning of collected data (Neuman, 2003). NVivo auto coding word query was used to code the interviews based on exact words, phrases or similar concepts.

To determine the effectiveness of the Life Skills Program for student parents, I used the Logic Model (See Figure 2). This model was selected because it contained logical links to the problem and to the intervention which included inputs and outputs, and the impact or outcome. The basic logic model reveals in Figure 2 how the

program works, specifically the various components of the program organization and how these relate to outcomes.

The logic model assisted in the evaluation of the program by laying out the intended steps in the program along with their sequential effects. The model contained logical links to the problem or situation to the intervention which included inputs and outputs, and the impact or outcome. The logic model (Figure 2) used for this study comes directly from The Logic Model Development Guide, prepared for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). The most basic logic model was used to show how the program worked, specifically the various components of the program organization and how these related to the outcomes. A description of the sequence of activities of the program was linked to the expected program results.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

One of the key criteria in research is credibility. Merriam (1998), states credibility, deals with the question, "How congruent are the findings with reality?" According to Lincoln and Guba (1989) ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. The particular provisions that I used concerning trustworthiness included a) the development of an early familiarity with the culture of participating organizations before the first data collection dialogues take place. This was achieved through consultation of appropriate documents and a preliminary visit to the parenting center and b) tactics to help ensure honesty in informants when contributing data, each participant was given the opportunity to refuse to participate. This provision helped to ensure genuine participation.

Convincing participants of confidentiality helped to earn trust and elicit accurate data (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). The participants were assured that their confidentiality would be protected. The participants were given a written informed consent document outlining the risks if any, and benefits of their participation. The informed consent also informed participants on the uses of the collected interview data, to whom the data would be available to and who to contact for any questions or concerns. The names of the interviewees were not included in the study and all notes, recordings, and transcripts were secured in a locked file cabinet for a period of 5 years as required by the Institutional Review Board. I am the only individual with access to information concerning study.

I had a clear idea of what was being measured and collected, analyzed and interpreted the data. Using the SPSS allowed me to remain objective during the research process. Although I am employed by the school district I was able to remain emotionally separate from the research and did not insert personal bias' concerning this topic. I asked unbiased and non leading questions which could have influence participants' responses by leading them to think a certain way. Leading questions could have posed the risk of conveying my point, prejudices and biases. I recorded and transcribed all interview data and then imported my results to NVivo for organization and analysis using the word query component of NVivo.

Results

The purpose of this study was to conduct an outcome evaluation study of a school-based parenting program and assess which factors may be responsible for the success or failure of the program. The primary research questions for this study were:

To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcome goals, i.e. to reduce the student absences and dropout rate due to teen pregnancy and parenting responsibilities by, providing a variety of specialized services.

What are the factors that may be responsible for the success or failure of the program? The factors that were found to be responsible for the success of the program are:

- a) provide education in parenting and self-sufficiency skills while allowing each student-parent to continue academic and career related instruction on a regular campus
- b) child care and transportation
- c) a specifically designed four year graduation plan that will decrease the dropout rate among teens
- d) according to the interviewees the program was successful in meeting the stated outcomes and objectives.

Logic Model

I used the Logic Model to determine the effectiveness of the Life Skills Program for Students Parents. This model was selected because it contained logical links to the problem and to the intervention which included inputs and outputs, and the impact or

outcome. The logic model in Figure 2 links the various components of the program to outcomes.

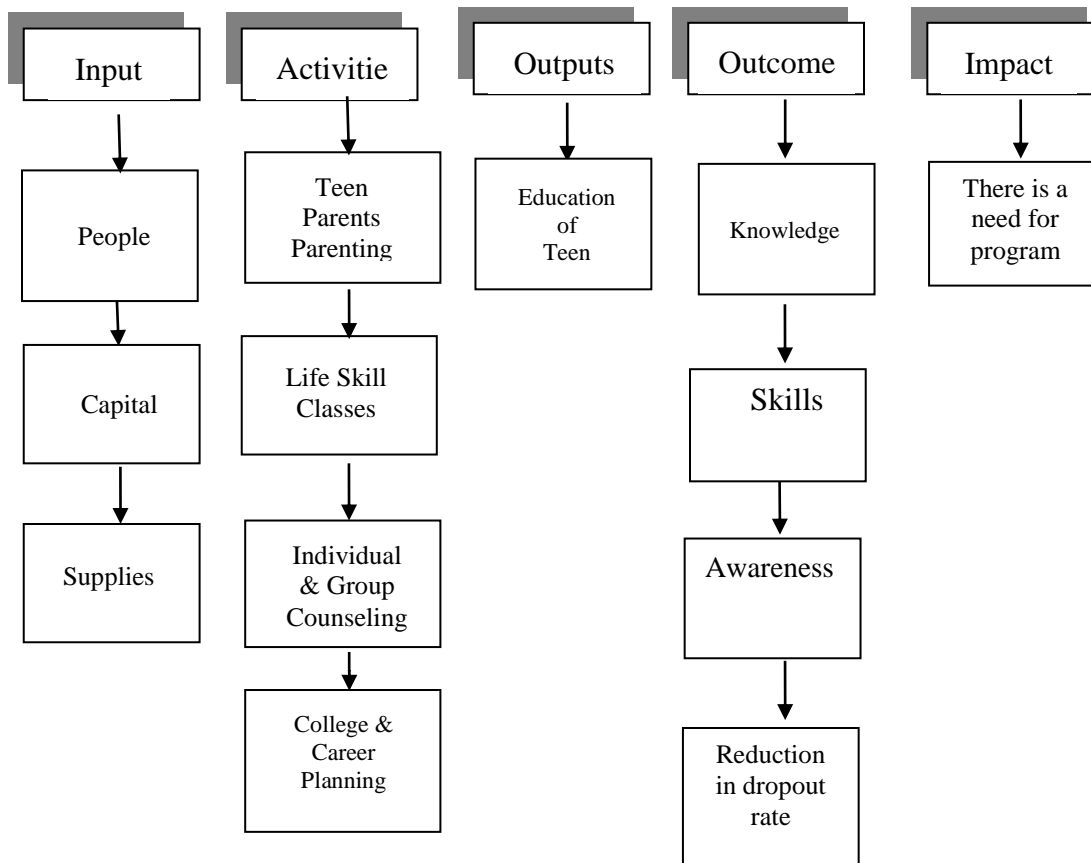


Figure 2. Logic Model 2.

The program inputs included the various resources used by the program such as the faculty, staff, state and district funding, transportation, the partnership with Work Force Solutions and other resources such as WIC. The output activities include the education of teen parents through parenting classes, life skill classes, individual and group counseling, college and career planning, child care classes and a specially designed four year graduation plan that helps to contribute to a decrease in the dropout rate among the teen population. The output activities also included the child care

program. This program provides a healthy and safe environment for the children of the program participants. The sensory motor skills of these children are developed using a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Language development is also enhanced through the child's interaction in every day experiences and language arts activities. The output audience was the program participants who included the mothers and their children. The outcome of the program is the reduction in the dropout rate among the pregnant and parenting teens.

Descriptive Statistics

Graduation rates. Table 8 shows the percentage of Seniors' participating in the Parenting Program graduation rate averages 77%. This number coincides with research mentioned in previous chapters that school-based parenting programs have been shown to increase retention and graduation rates among pregnant and parenting teens.

Table 8

Graduation Rates for seniors' Participating in Parenting Programs 2001-2010

	year	# of students	# of 12 graders	percent seniors	program graduates	% of senior grads
1	2009-2010	275.00	124	49	83	62
2	2008-2009	215.00	99	46	70	71
3	2007-2008	223.00	116	52	66	57
4	2006-2007	211.00	92	44	60	65
5	2005-2006	225.00	101	45	73	72
6	2004-2005	216.00	97	45	75	77
7	2003-2004	196.00	63	32	62	98
8	2002-2003	188.00	65	35	53	82
9	2001-2002	162.00	55	34	52	95

Reasons for failure to graduate. Archived data from the district database cited reasons for seniors' failure to graduate from parenting program are shown in (Table 9). The main categories for failure to graduate were: a) withdrawal for GED, the General Educational Development Test, a five-subject test which, when passed, certifies that the taker has high-school academic skills; b) recovered dropouts (failed to graduate on time) who dropped out the program and, after being contacted by the district representatives, decided to return to complete the program; c) withdrawal for non attendance; d) failed one or more parts of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS); and e) withdrew to attend home school.

Table 9

Reasons for Seniors' Failure to Graduate from a Parenting Program, 2001-2010

School Year	2009- 2010	2008- 2009	2007- 2008	2006- 2007	2005- 2006	2004- 2005	2003- 2004	2002- 2003	2001- 2002
Withdraw for (GED)	7	1	0	4	3	2	0	7	2
Recovered dropout	7	9	4	1	5	11	1	5	1
WD non attendance	8	1	11	7	5	9	-	-	-
Failed 1 or more parts of TAKS	10	15	18	20	15	-	-	-	-
Withdrew to attend home school	9	3	17	-	-	-	-	-	-

Graduation rates of parenting program participants. The descriptive data in Table 10 is an excerpt of data from Table 8. The descriptive data shows the overall average percentage of parenting program participants who graduated to be 77% between the years 2002 and 2010. The lowest percentage of program graduates was in 2002 with a graduation rate of 57%. In 2006 the mean number of program graduates

was 76%. The maximum number of program graduates was in 2010 with 83 of the 134 seniors graduating, resulting in a 98% graduation rate.

Table 10

Parenting Program Participants who Graduated(n = 9)

Year	# of students	# of 12 graders	Percent seniors	Program graduates	% of senior grads
Mean 2006	212.33	91.33	42	66	76
Minimum 2002	162.00	55	32	52	57
Maximum 2010	275.00	134.00	52	83	98

Program Materials

The mission of the Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting program (P.E.P), is to reduce student absences and drop outs due to teen pregnancy and parenting responsibilities. The PEP program is designed to enable pregnant and school-age parents to become educated, self-sufficient, responsible, career oriented citizens. The program also works to recover teen parents who have dropped out of school and who are still within the compulsory attendance age.

The objectives of the program are to reduce the dropout rate among pregnant and parenting teen by providing a variety of specialized services, which include: education in parenting and self-sufficiency skills while allowing each student-parent continues to receive academic and career related instruction on a regular school campus; childcare and transportation assistance; and a specially designed 4 year graduation plan. These services are designed to contribute to a decrease in the dropout rate among the teen parent population.

The referral process for admittance to the program requires a positive verification of pregnancy by a doctor's note and parent conference with the PEP Educational Specialist. After pregnancy is verified the student may remain on campus till the day they deliver unless they have a documented medical need for bed rest/home school. There is no time limit on prenatal educational services. Students are automatically eligible for a 6 weeks postpartum period after delivery where alternative educational will be provided through Community Class (this class is located at the PEP Center). The Community Class allows students to maintain their academic studies as well as be provided instruction in childbirth and parenting, 2days a week on a shortened day schedule. Students may attend Community Class for up to 10 weeks. Students may only attend Community Class by referral, otherwise students will receive parenting classes along with academic and career related instruction at their home school. Students will also receive other specialized such as childcare and transportation. Child care services and child care referrals are offered to all teen parents.

Interview Data

Interview Question 1: What are the goals/objectives of the program? NVivo auto coding word query revealed three emerging themes 1) cooperation, 2) communication, and 3) administrative/district support. The word query for Interview Question 1 (Table D1) revealed that parenting, education, providing, nurturing, school, cognitive, support, pregnant, children, resources, teen, job, prepare, services and assist were among the most top frequently used terms. Each of these terms can be categorized within one of the three themes. The three themes mentioned coincide with the

objectives of the Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting (PEP) program Child Care Services which states: "The PEP program will work to reduce the dropout rate among pregnant and parenting teens by providing a variety of specialized services".

Interviewee 1: "To have a program in place to help girls that become victims of teenage pregnancy. To have a strong force behind them to help with parenting skills, issues with being a teen parent, job skills, and being able to continue their education."

Interviewee 2: "Primarily, the goals and objectives involve providing research-based curriculum to prepare infants and toddlers for school readiness while providing support for parents to achieve their education and career goals."

Interviewee 3: "Our goals for our program are to assist teen parents with parenting skills and to be successful. We also provide quality care to the children of teen parents so they can continue their high school education."

Interview Question 2: Are these objectives being met? All interviewees responded yes to this question.

Interview Question 3: How long have you been working with the program? The average number of years of staff employment was 4, with 10 years being the most number of years and 6 months being the least time employed with the program.

Interview Question 4: What is your responsibility or duty within the program? The word frequency query noted the repeated use of words and phrases such as support assist, assistant, care, mother, promote, provide, serve, curriculum, information, translator and educate. Those interviewed held positions of teacher's

assistant, nutrition specialist, counselor, teacher, program director, administrator of federal compliance and translator.

Interview Question 5: What experiences or background do you have in this area? The interviews revealed that two of the staff members had a Master's degree. Four members of the staff had Bachelor's degrees in education. Four staff members had some community college credits and certification as teaching assistants and two staff members that worked directly with the children of the program participants had child care work experience. The nutrition specialist had 15 years of experience in the food service area.

Interviewee 1: "I am the nutrition specialist within the program. I purchase formula, cereal, and baby food for the infants, and I cook nutritious meals full meals for the toddlers. For the last 15 years, I have been in food service. I have gone from Adult (nursing homes, home health care), high school, middle school, elementary and early head start."

Interviewee 2: "Previous experience as program administrator variety of programs and populations."

Interviewee 5: "Nineteen years of education, professional development, and work experience."

Interviewee 8: "I have a degree in Early Childhood Education".

Interviewee 9: "I'm certified in Early Childhood Education and have a Master's in Child Development."

Interviewee 11: "I hold a Bachelor's in Education, Master's in Counselor Education and have 10 years' experience working with pregnant and parenting teens."

Interview Question 6: Do you feel that the program has district support?

(in what ways/why not) All those interviewed felt that the program had district support because of the funding provided. Budget, curriculum, involved, needs and motivate were the words most often used to describe the support of the district. Most stated that funding was very important and most resources are usually readily available. The district superintendent is very involved with the program and allows for guest speakers to come in and share important information with the program participants.

Interviewee 9: "Yes, the district provide curriculum and other materials needed".

Interviewee 4: "Yes, the superintendent is very involved. She often visits and attends our staff meetings."

Interviewee 8: "Yes, the district provides course materials as well as speakers to educate the parents."

Interview Question 7: Does the administrative staff support the faculty?

(in what ways/why not) The interviewees all felt that they had great support from the administrative staff. Most stated that the administrative staff would often step in to assist the instructors at various times throughout the day. Often stopping by just to see how things were going. The faculty also admired the administration for letting the faculty and staff play a role in decision making concerning the program. Teamwork was the common term used among those interviewed.

Interviewee 3: "Yes, by providing 15 minute breaks to refresh teachers and 45 minute planning time."

Interviewee 2: "Through team work and combining resources."

Interview Question 8: What do you believe are the major assets of the program? Major weaknesses? The major assets of the program included the parenting skills and child growth and development that is shared with teens, the bonding of the teens because of their similar situations, the building of self-esteem and confidence of the young parents, the knowledge and dedication of the staff, childcare services for infants and toddlers and transportation for parent and child. The major weaknesses of the program were reported to be insufficient staff, absence of teen fathers and the need of more funding to meet the needs of the growing number of program participants.

Interviewee 11: "It allows the students to bond and grow based on each others' experiences." "No weaknesses"

Interviewee 12: "The teens learn parenting skills." Weakness: "Some teens tend to get overwhelmed by all of the knowledge."

Interviewee 2: "Dedicated staff who believe in the philosophy and goals." Weakness: "Program needs to be expanded due to the increasing number participants."

Interview Question 9: What kind of resources/funding does the program receive? (from the district, city, state, other) The funds received for the program are put towards facility maintenance and education. According to those interviewed the program funding was cut at last legislation and the program is dependent on Work Source Solutions, Child Care Management Systems (CCMS) and Neighborhood Center

Inc. (NCI). The district subsequently matches the funds that are provided by these entities.

Interview Question 10: Are appropriate instructional materials readily available for the program participants? All interviewees agreed that the instructional materials were readily available for program participants.

Interview Question 11: are the parents/guardians of the program participants supportive of the program? (how) The answer to this question got a collective yes, The NVivo word query noted the words, planning, support and assist as being frequently used. The parents and some grandparents assist in the planning of various activities and also volunteer on a regular basis.

Interview Question 12: Describe the communication between the parents/guardians of the program participants and the program staff. Respondents reported that there was an open line of communication between the program participants and the faculty and staff. The customer service skills of the staff were very parent friendly. Each willing program participant attended two monthly seminars on the first Saturday of every month.

Interviewee 2: "Open communication, parents have easy access to the staff. Program staff have excellent customer service skills and are very parent friendly."

Interviewee 11: "Program staff contact parents bi-weekly to discuss program strengths and weakness."

Interviewee 9: "If face to face visit is not possible, phone and e-mail are used."

Interviewee 3: "Greeting parents arriving and leaving center and providing daily activity sheets on their child/children.

Interview Question 13: Is there anything more you would like to add? Only one of the interviewees answered this question, stating that, " the program provides sustained support and encouragement to students who would otherwise feel hopeless and dropout of school. They felt that the program is and has been a needed jewel of hope".

The factors that were identified for the success of the program are: 1) open lines of communication between program participants, faculty and staff; 2) customer service skills of staff was parent friendly; 3) district support through funding and superintendent participation in program and 4) great support from administrative staff.

Secondary research questions for this study were:

1. What role does program support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?

Program support plays a major role in the success of this parenting program. The interview responses have lead me to believe that there must be buy in from all parties involved in order for the program to work. Those interviewed stated that having the support of the district and administration demonstrated teamwork. This teamwork seemed to have a very positive impact on those who worked directly with the program participants. Each interviewee showed genuine concern for the well-being of program participants. When teens are surrounded by a range of support network members, it

helps to instill confidence in themselves and a strong desire to achieve that goals (McDonnell et al., 2007).

2. What role does administrative support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?

Having administrative support helps to achieve outcome goals and objectives because it shows the faculty and staff that they are not alone. If everyone is on one accord the main focus of the program is achieved. Everyone involved is working toward helping this vulnerable population become productive citizens.

Summary

The purpose of the Outcome Evaluation of a School-based Program for Pregnant and Parenting Girls, was to assess what factors as evidenced by program materials and perceptions of key program staff, were responsible for the success or failure of the program. The data presented in this chapter provided documentation and dissemination of the effectiveness of the practices of a school-based parenting program. Data and analysis demonstrated how the program met its intended outcome goals, and objectives and the factors responsible for the success of the program. The objective of the parenting program is to reduce the dropout rate among pregnant and parenting teens by providing a variety of specialized services. These services include education in parenting and self-sufficiency skills along with academic and career related instruction on a regular school campus. Childcare, transportation and a specially designed 4 year graduation plan also contributes to a successful program. The semi-structured interviews revealed insight and collective themes generated by revealed that

cooperation and communication along with administrative and district support played an essential role in the success of the program. The consistency in the thematic patterns exhibited through the answers to the interview questions by the interviewees suggests that having administrative support plays a major role in the success of the program. The staff interviewed overwhelmingly agreed that teamwork and support of the support of the district administration along with other community partners contributed to the success of the program. The design of the program enables pregnant and school age parents to become educated, self-sufficient, responsible, career oriented citizens.

Chapter 5 includes an analysis is of the data and implications and recommendations for action concerning the parenting program

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Texas teens account for 12% of births in the United States every year with over 53,000 births (Tortolero, Johnson, Peskin, Cuccano et al. 2011). This number ranks Texas as the third highest rate of teen pregnancies in the United States (63 per 1000 women aged 15 to 19), and the second highest when examining school-aged female girls (aged 15 to 17 years). Harris County represents 16% of teen births in Texas with 8,000 births to teens annually (Tortolero, Johnson, Peskin, Cuccano et al. 2011). The problems associated with adolescent pregnancy have been widely documented. The DHHS (1999) defined teen pregnancy prevention as activities that seek to instill teens with confidence and a sense of the future as critical elements to promote a pregnancy-free adolescence.

The literature review for this study included an examination of research that showed the impact of school-based parenting programs and the factors influencing retention and graduation rates of pregnant and parenting teens. Adolescent mothers are at an increased risk of becoming high school dropouts and dependent on public assistance (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1997). School-based parenting programs for parenting and pregnant adolescents aid in preparing this group to successfully transition from young teen mother to parenting adults (Scholl, 2007). Pregnant and parenting teens participating in a quality, school-based parenting program are provided support, education, and assistance in the health and development of their children (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001).

Additionally, the Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act of 2010 noted these barriers that lead to a lack of motivation on the part of teen mothers:

(a) feeling judged and unwelcomed in the traditional school setting; (b) lack of cooperation at the state and local education agencies; (c) failure to maintain passing grades; (d) balancing parenting and academic responsibilities; (e) transportation and child care services; and (f) lack of encouragement and support to further education.

However, adolescent mothers reported that it is important that they have social supports along with life coaching as they embark on their roles as mothers. Problem-solving skills, active coping skills, educational achievement, and parenting skills have been identified by numerous researchers as vital to adolescent for parenting and independent living (de Ands et al., 1992; McLanahan, 1985; Sanford & Hill, 1996).

School-based parenting programs have been shown to increase retention and graduation rates among pregnant and parenting teens. Parenting programs can help to shape both mother and child toward healthy development, stability, and productivity through an array of educational, health, and social services and supports (Stephens et al., 1999). Because research has shown an association between adolescent pregnancy and increased school dropout rates, this study assessed to what extent one school based program achieved a priori program goals and outcomes, specifically retention and graduation rates of pregnant and parenting teen who participated in the program

The primary focus of this case study was to examine and evaluate a high school program for pregnant and parenting adolescents to determine if the goals and outcomes of the program were met. To that end, I examined the relationship between the program

outcomes goals and objectives and factors that may be responsible for the success or failure of the program. The role of program support and administrative support in achieving outcome goals and objectives were examined.

This study realized the three advantages of case studies as described by Gomm (2000). The first advantage was the case study provided the opportunity for me to have access to and have an enriched experience of the school-based parenting program, an opportunity that otherwise might not have been realized. After getting permission from the program director, I was allowed to visit the program facility and observed daily activities. I was also given the opportunity to visit and sit in on parenting classes for the program participants (those observed were not included in the research). The second advantage was the reader has the opportunity to view the research through the unobtrusive eyes of a researcher. The final advantage was the case study is less likely to produce defensiveness and resistance to learning in the reader. The reader will feel comfortable because of the focus on one particular subject of interest that reflects real life.

This study was a retrospective outcome evaluation of a school-based program with retention and graduation as the main outcome variable of interest. Therefore, the research was based on data collected from the school district's database, related to program participants along with information gained from interviewing key program personnel.

I have an awareness of the impact of pregnancy and parenting on the lives of high school girls. I have also seen the success and positive impact of the parenting

program offered with the district. This program serves as a beacon of hope for the young ladies by decreasing absenteeism and serving as a deterrent from dropping out of school. My purpose for conducting this study was to assess the factors responsible for the success or failure of the program as perceived by program personnel. There were several factors that played a major role in the success of the program as indicated by program staff and described in the program related archived material.

Interpretation of Findings

The program under study provided a variety of interventions and services to pregnant and parenting teens. The district had a total of 21,409 students in prekindergarten through Grade 12 for the 2009-2010 school year, with 11,083 being in Grades 6 through 12. The total student population was 77% Hispanic and 74% of the total student population has been identified as being economically disadvantaged (G.P.I.S.D., 2011).

I employed an outcome evaluation to fully gain insight and understanding of how the program worked in delivering interventions and support services to program participants. An outcome evaluation is crucial for assessing how effective the program has been in meeting outcome objectives, which are to reduce school dropouts, increase high school graduation rates, and enhance parenting skills for pregnant and parenting teens. Outcome evaluations assess what has occurred because of the program and whether the program has achieved its outcome objectives (Communities in Health, 2014).

This outcome evaluation study assessed whether goals and outcomes were met and factors responsible for the success or failure of the program according to the staff interviewed. While researching literature about the district's Parenting Education Program, I found that there were several factors that played a major role in the success of the program. These factors included the clearly stated program objectives, support from district and administrative staff, the major asset of *the curriculum* resources and funding, parental support for program participants, and communication.

The intent of outcome evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of implemented activities with respect to the benefits achieved, suggest improvements, and possibly provide direction for future activities (Sonpal-Valias, 2009). Therefore, two research questions for this study guided the outcome evaluation of the school based parenting program:

1. To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcome goals, and objectives?
2. What factors are responsible for the success or failure of the program?

The program's outcome goals and objectives were to reduce the student absences and dropout rate due to teen pregnancy and parenting responsibilities by, providing a variety of specialized services.

Finding 1: Participants Considered Program Objectives Clear and Specific

Interview Question 1: What are the goals/objectives of the program? The interviewees were asked, "What the goals are and if they were met?" All interviewees answered yes and were able to clarify that the goals/objectives were being met.

Interviewees were instructed to be honest. They were also reminded that their confidentiality would be protected and they need not fear reprimand for their answers. Their honest and unbiased answers would produce an accurate insight into the program. Archived data revealed the objectives of PEP are to reduce the dropout rate among pregnant and parenting teens by providing a variety of specialized services. These specialized services included, the provision of parenting education, child care and transportation along with a four year graduation plan. The Parenting Education Program, provides education in parenting and self-sufficiency skills while allowing each student -parent to continue receiving academic and career related instruction on a regular school campus. Childcare, transportation and a specifically designed 4 year graduation plan contributed to a decrease in the dropout rate among program participants. The word query from Interview Question 1 (Table D1) revealed that parenting, education, providing, nurturing, school, cognitive, support, pregnant, children, resources, teen, job, prepare, services and assist were among the most top frequently used terms, which can be categorized into themes. This theme of cooperation, communication and support coincides with the objective of PEP and the Center for Assessment and Policy Development (CAPD). The Center for Assessment and Policy Development outcomes for pregnant and parenting teens include: 1) increased school attendance, 2) increased progression toward school completion, 3) increased graduation from high school with diploma, 4) more successful movement from school to further education and training or employment and 5) increased practice of good parenting skills, including ability to obtain needed services for one's children

and to provide developmentally appropriate nurturing and stimulation. This study assessed, increased progression toward school completion, increased graduation from high school with diploma, training or employment and increased practice of good parenting skills.

In the summary of the Expert Panel Workgroup meeting of 2012 it was noted that "pregnant and parenting teens often fail to complete or continue their education; and education needs to be a high priority for this group" (DHHS, 2012, p. 7). The Center for Assessment and Policy Development (CAPD), self-sufficiency outcomes for pregnant and parenting teens include increased school attendance and progression toward school completion. CAPD's core elements of a comprehensive service strategy to achieve successful outcomes include; flexible, quality education options, quality child care, and support services such as transportation assistance.

Sadler et al. (2007) found that teen parents drop out of school due to childcare responsibilities along with stigmatization and peer isolation. During my observation around campus I did not find any peer isolation but, I did notice some stigmatism towards the parenting students from the teachers (Please note these were not their parenting class teachers). The study found that teen parents who had support from school-based programs tend to remain in school more than those who did not receive program support. The study concluded that for at risk teen mothers that parent support programs and school-based child care setting appears to offer promising opportunities to help young mothers with parenting, avoid rapid subsequent pregnancies, and stay engaged with school, while their children are cared for in a close and safe environment.

This study of a Parenting Education Program revealed that having support services such as childcare, transportation and counseling, and access to social services along with the program flexibility seems to be associated with program completion and success.

Finding 2: District and Administrative Staff Provided a High Level of Support

Secondary research question: What role does program support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives? Program support plays a major role in the success of this parenting program. Interviews with the staff confirmed that there was buy-in from stockholders of the program. The stockholders of the program included the district, program participants, program faculty and staff and the community resources. According to Sagrestano et al. (2012), there should be a broad spectrum of stakeholders for a coordinated community response for there to be an impact on teenage pregnancy and parenting.

This is consistent with CAPD's needs assessment for programs servicing adolescent parents and their children. According to CAPD, "organizational commitments, staff and other resources to implement the identified service strategy" are needed capacities.

Interview Question 6: Do you feel that the program has district support? (In what ways/why not).All those interviewed felt that the program had district support because of the funding provided. "Budget", "curriculum", involved, needs and motivate were the terms most often used to describe the support of the district. Most stated that funding was very important and most resources are usually readily available.

The district superintendent is very involved with the program and allows for guest experts to come in and share important information with the program participants. Having support from the district and proper funding for needed resources helps the program to run smoothly. This study revealed that the school district and its leaders working collaboratively to meet the needs of the pregnant and parenting teens was vital in keeping this vulnerable population in school. According to CAPD (1997), school districts face considerable budget issues which, can lead to parenting programs struggling to maintain their funding base. During one of the last legislative sessions the district lost the Parenting Education Program grant. However with the help of community resources such as Work Source Solutions, Neighborhood Center Inc. and Child Care Management Systems and district support the program has been able keep providing their service to pregnant and parenting teens. In spite of these obstacles PEP has managed to make some progress in keeping and expanding the scope and scale of school-based parenting programs, even when faced with budget issues. Those interviewed expressed that having community support is a great asset. Community activities such as community baby showers and school supplies and clothing drives greatly benefit the program.

McDonell, Limber and Connor-Godbey (2007) in their study of the Pathways Project that the community as a whole embraced the program. The program was welcomed as a partner in the community. It was noted that the closure of the program would leave a significant gap in the service network. The stakeholders involved in the project expressed a strong desire for Pathways to continue and expand. Program

support plays a major role in the success of this parenting program. Respondents concluded that there must be buy-in from all parties involved in order for the program to work.

There is evidence in the published literature that program support is important for program success. In 1990, Weinman, Solomon and Glass studied 390 parenting teens, along with those who were expecting and participated in a school-based and school-linked federally funded program at 10 high-risk schools. At the end of the program year, the teens' rate of passing their grade level increased. The study also provided qualitative data that indicated pregnant and parenting teens wanted to remain in school despite the struggles they encountered. This study demonstrated "buy-in" by showing the cooperation and communication between the program's staff and school nurses were key elements in the success of the program.

Finding 5 of my research revealed that open communication between participants, their parents, faculty and staff as an asset. Communication was in the form of face to face conversations, newsletters, e-mails, phone calls and monthly meetings.

In 2007 Brosh, Weigel and Evans conducted a study to examine the most commonly accessed social support services among 54 expectant and parenting teens in an alternative school to ascertain if the assessment of the services used varied according to educational aspirations. Childcare was listed as a highest in support type, with the lowest being support of the adolescent's future career. The supports were found to be formal or informal. The formal supports included those provided professionally and informal supports included the father of the child, family and friends. The utilization of

an alternative school is considered a formal support. The development of alternative schools has resulted from worries that the traditional school setting was not set up to meet the needs of pregnant teens (Brosh, Weigel & Weigel, 2007). However, the PEP program offered an alternative school within the traditional school setting. Program participants were housed at their home school and attended regular classes with the addition of parenting classes at their home campus. The childcare facility houses the children and also provides additional parenting classes, counseling for program participants and other activities that include family members and any other significant others.

In response to the numerous issues faced by parenting and pregnant adolescents. Amin, Browne, Ahmed and Takanori (2006) examined a quantitative data sample of 371 Paquin School students who attended during 2000 and 2001 along with 506 samples from those not enrolled in the program. The researchers also collected qualitative data from focus groups of the Paquin School program participants. The observations were on target with corroborated results from the focus group, which revealed that the support services proved by the school were very beneficial to this group who came up against many barriers because of their unexpected pregnancy (Amin et al., 2006).

Secondary research question: What role does administrative support have in achieving outcome goals and objectives?

The interviewees said that having administrative support at the district level and site level helps to achieve outcome goals and objectives because it shows the faculty and staff that they are not alone. If everyone is on one accord the main focus of the

program is achieved. The interviews revealed that all everyone involved are working towards helping this vulnerable population become productive citizens.

Interview Question 7: Does the administrative staff support the faculty? (In what ways/why not)The interviewees all felt that they got great support from the administrative staff. Most stated that the administrative staff would often step in to assist the instructors at various times throughout the day. Often stopping by just to see how things were going. The faculty also admired the administration for letting the faculty and staff play a role in decision making concerning the program. Teamwork was the common term used among those interviewed. Having support from the district at the administrative level helps to provide positive morale among the staff, which is a quality for long term employment (DHHS, 2012). Maintaining staff morale was also one of the concrete suggestions from this expert panel workgroup of 2012, for developing high skilled staff. The research by this panel revealed that direct service staff stated that appropriate infrastructure supports helped to maintain staff morale. Furthermore the report states that program staff should be highly functioning and trained in topics relevant to their work, which leads to an effective program with positive outcomes.

Interview Question 11: Are the parent/guardians of the program participants supportive of the program? (how)The answer to this question was a collective yes. The NVivo word query noted the words, planning, support and assist as being frequently used. The parents and some grandparents assist in the planning of various activities and also volunteer on a regular basis. These answers showed that family support can be a vital in helping the program participant to complete the

program. The above findings are consistent with reviewed literature that states, "the emotional support provided by parents can play a major role in the way the teen approaches parenthood" (Rowen et al., 2005). The relationship of the parent and the pregnant teen is essential for a successful outcome for the teen and the child (DHHS, 2012).

Finding 3: The Curriculum Is a Major Asset of the Program

Interview question 8: What do you believe are the major assets of the program? The findings from the interviews revealed that major assets of the program included: classes on parenting skills and child growth and development that is shared with teens, the bonding of the teens because of their similar situations, the building of self-esteem and confidence of the young parents, the knowledge and dedication of the staff, childcare services for infants and toddlers and transportation for parent and child.

A major part of a teen's life is self-esteem. Personal growth and development classes give the pregnant and or parenting teen an opportunity to develop a positive self-worth (Rowen, et al. 2005). The provision of flexible educational programs with support services such as, case management, health services transportation, quality child care are some of the major challenges of school and community based programs (Institute for Education Leadership, 1997).

Finding 4: Adequate Resources and Funding Were Available

Interview Question 9: What kind of resources/funding does the program receive? (from the district, city, state, other) During the interviews it was noted that

although the funds are available to run the program there is always the fear of some type of budget cuts.

Interviews further revealed that district, state and federal funds received for the program are put towards facility maintenance and education. According to those interviewed the program state funding was cut at the last legislation and the program is dependent on Work Source Solution, Child Care Management Systems (CCMS) and Neighborhood Center Inc. (NCI). These programs receive funding at local, county and state levels and support schools in servicing pregnant and parenting teens. Additionally, the district subsequently matches funds that are provided by these entities. Obtaining sufficient and stable funds along with the blending of funds from a variety of resources has proven to be a barrier for comprehensive school based programs (CAPD, 1997). As stated earlier the state funding is not consistent and the resources provided by the community are a great asset. When the issue of teen pregnancy and parenting is supported by the community it can be brought to the policy level. Local health departments can then take this issue to legislation to gain funding (NACCHO, 2009). Despite the worries about funding the financial support that the program does receive benefits the program greatly.

Finding 5: Open Communication Between Participants, Their Parents, Faculty, and Staff Is an Asset

Interview Question 12: Describe the communication between the parents/guardians of the program participants and the program staff.

Parents/guardians of the program participants and staff kept open lines of

communication. This included face to face conversations, newsletters, e-mails, telephone and monthly meetings.

The interviews revealed that there is an open line of communication between the program participants and the faculty and staff. The faculty and staff held bi-weekly meetings to discuss the program participants and their progress and any other issues of concern. The customer service skills of the staff are very parent friendly. As I toured the facility I noted the friendliness of the staff and willingness to provide assistance to even when things seemed a bit busy with the day-to-day business of the center. Each participant willing attended two monthly seminars on the first Saturday of each month. These seminars are an extension of issues covered in class. Issues such as parenting skills, social resources, job training, self-esteem and future educational plans. The setting on these Saturdays are less formal than the classroom setting. Participants are allowed to bring guest and their children (childcare is provided). Guest speakers are usually invited depending on the topic. The program participants also participant in group talk to discuss any pending issues. Staff often served as mentors for the program participants. Klaw (2008) noted that the emotional support and encouragement provided by mentors plays a vital role in the pregnant or parenting teen's sense of self-efficacy and optimism about achieving future goals.

The factors that were identified for the success of the program are: 1) open lines of communication between program participants, faculty and staff; 2) customer service skills of the staff were parent friendly; 3) district superintendent support and visible participation in program; 4) great support from administrative staff; 5) support through

services such as transportation, childcare and health referrals and 6) resources and funding.

These findings regarding open lines of communication between program participants are also supported by a national report from the Office of Adolescent Health with the DHHS. This report notes that the building of relationships is an important factor in engaging youths. Youths need to feel connected to staff and program leaders (DHHS, 2012). The report also states that staff should exhibit healthy behaviors, both physically and emotionally. Thereby modeling positive ways to manage stress and conflict while interacting and addressing needs of program participants. The district superintendent along with other district administrative often visited program to check on progress and to listen to any issues and possible concerns of program leaders. The superintendent also participated in special programs presented by program staff that highlighted milestones of the program and participants. In an expert panel workgroup, it was noted that teens tend to feel connected to program and staff when there is a relationship. And celebrating milestones no matter how big or small can give teens a sense of accomplishment and also help to retain program participation and completion (DHHS, 2012)

Logic Model

I used the Logic Model to help me determine the effectiveness of the Life Skills Program for Student Parents and to construct a visual representation of the program functions and rationale for addressing the problem. This model was selected because it contained logical links to the problem and allowed me to organize efforts into main

categories such as inputs, outputs, activities, and outcomes. The model served as a sort of roadmap to the goals, activities and outcomes of the program. As noted by Millar, Simeone & Carnevale (2000), the logic model shows causal relationships as that relate to one another. The model serves as a system approach to portraying the path towards a desired reality.

The program inputs included people, capital, supplies, and other materials to meet their program goals. The various resources used by the program included faculty and staff, state and district funding/partnerships. The outputs of the program included the education of teen parents through a variety of classes and counseling with emphasis on life after high school. The activities included teen parents parenting classes, life skill classes, individual and group counseling and college and career planning. This program also provides a healthy and safe environment for the children of the program participants. The outcome of the program was the reduction in the dropout rate among the pregnant and parenting teens. Table 8 showed the average percentage of program graduates to be 77% between 2001 and 2010. This number coincides with research that parenting programs have been shown to increase retention and graduation rates. Each of the aforementioned elements make some contribution to the benefits or outcomes the program delivers to program participants. The Logic Model was helpful in describing the characteristics of the program and its relevance, quality and impact. These elements also aided in fostering buy-in from future stakeholders and others that may have interest in starting their own program. The program inputs revealed the investments in the program. Whereas the outcomes revealed the results of the program. The positive

results of the program could help facilitate increased funding new sources of funding and new stockholders. This could potentially lead to the enhancement and expansion of the program.

The inputs for the logic model included the findings for the overall program were identified in the following interview questions:

Question 1: What are the goals/objectives of the program?

100% of respondents state that the program addresses parenting issues

Question 2: Are these goals/objectives being met?

100% of respondents gave a yes answer to the effectiveness of the program

Question 8: What do you believe are the major assets of the program? Major

Weaknesses

The program benefits included, parenting skills, child growth and development for children and the knowledge and skills of the staff. Student benefits included the bonding of teen parents and the building of their self-esteem along with child-care services and transportation for both the teens and their children. Program weaknesses included insufficient staff, absence of teen fathers and the need for additional funding.

Question10: Are appropriate instructional materials readily available for the program participants?

Interview Question 10: Are appropriate instruction materials readily available for the program participants?

I found that all interviewees agreed that the instructional materials were readily available for program participants.

Question 11: Are the parents/guardians of the program participants supportive of the program? (how)

Parents were supportive and volunteer to assist with the planning various activities for them and their children.

Question 12: Describe the communication between the parents/guardians of the program participants and the program staff.

There was cooperation with open lines of communication between the parents and staff. Faculty and staff were also identified as inputs for the model in the following interview questions:

Question 3: How long have you been working with the program?

There was a four year average tenure of staff participating the program.

Question 4: What is your responsibility or duty within the program?

The faculty and staff supported the program by providing employability and job readiness skills, college readiness advisement, scheduling doctor and social service appointments and monitored attendance.

Question 5: What experiences or background do you have in this area?

The qualifications of the staff ranged from community college to bachelor's degree.

Question 7: Does the administrative staff support the faculty? (in what ways/why not)

The administrative staff supported through teamwork.

The final input for the logic model was the state and district funding and partnerships.

This input was evident in interview questions:

Question 6: Do you feel that the program has district support? (in what ways/why not)

Funding is provided for curriculum, equipment and supplies, some salaries or extra duty pay and professional development courses.

Question 9: What kind of resources/funding does the program receive? (from the district, city, state, other)

Funding is also received for facility maintenance and education. Community partners include Work Source, Neighborhood Centers and Child Care Management Services (CCMS).

The outputs for the logic model were identified as the program participants and the activities of the program. The program participants were provided with a four year graduation plan, life skill classes, individual and group counseling, college and career planning and child care classes.

The description of the sequence of activities of the program are linked to the results the program was expected to achieve. The outcomes of the logic model provides a clear, link between program activities, the results these activities produce, and how the results were measured. These outcomes are about changes, these changes may include awareness, knowledge, skill, and behavior (Knowlton & Phillips, 2013).

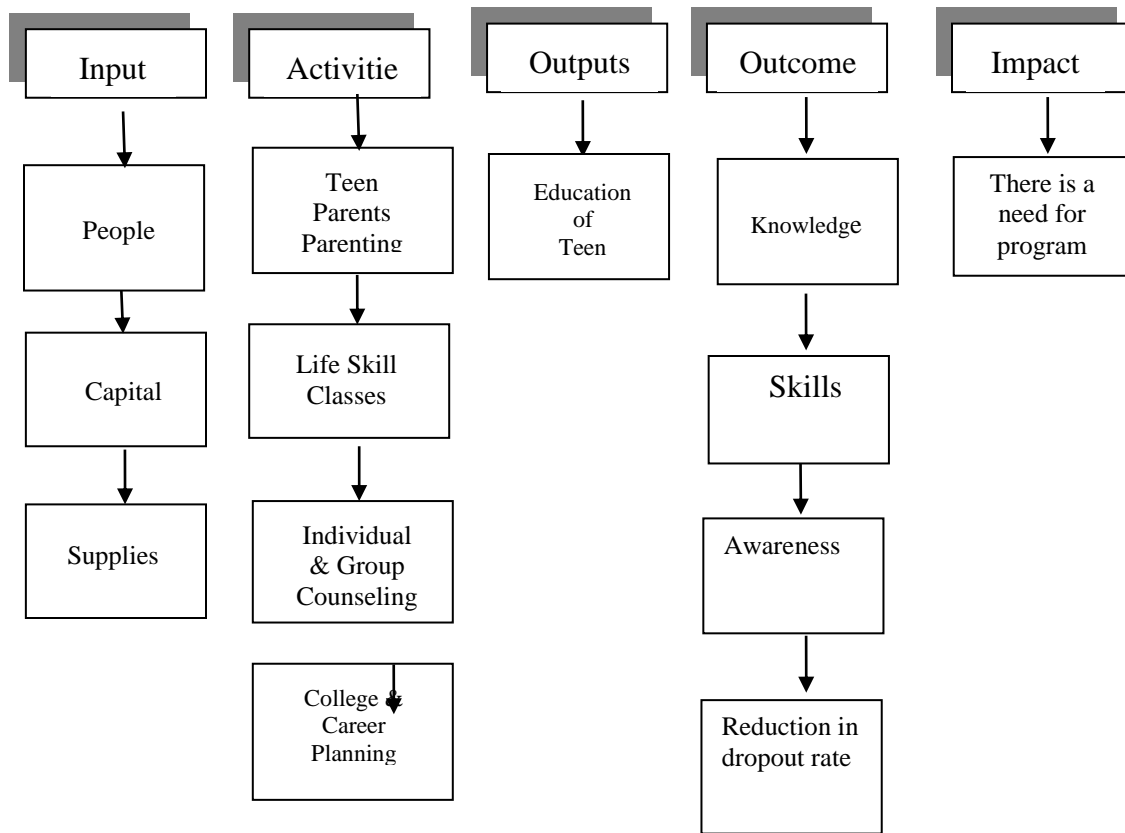


Figure 3. Logic Model 3.

Limitations of the Study

The study was a retrospective outcomes evaluation. Although the data were relatively easy to collect one major weakness is that retrospective data are often incomplete. Individual or entire series of records can be missing causing inconsistencies (WHO, 2012). In this study the records were transferred from written form to storage on a database as a result some of the records may have been inadvertently misplaced due to the fact that there were several individuals responsible for the transferring of this information.

The study was limited to a small sample of respondents that were participants in a Life Skills program for Pregnant and Parenting students within a school district. A comparison of analysis of outcome with a larger sample size by randomly selecting several high schools that have school based parenting programs to determine the effectiveness of interventions and services rendered to pregnant and parenting teens.

Another limitation of the study was the self-reported data from the interviews. This was limited due to the fact that all of the information gathered could not be independently verified. I had to take the word of the respondents. Self-reported data have the potential for bias, that includes (a) selective memory, (b) telescoping, which is recollection of events at one time as if they occurred at another time, (c) the attribution of positive events and outcomes to one's own affiliation and negative events and outcomes to others and (d) exaggerating outcomes, making them more significant than the data suggests (Brutus, Aguinis & Wassmer, 2012).

Recommendations

Special programs for pregnant and parenting adolescents are greatly needed and have been proven to increase the retention and graduation rates of this group, when compared to those pregnant and parenting teens who did not participate in any type of school based or community program (Philliber et al 2003; Brosh, Weigel & Evans, 2007). School personnel play a vital role in improving the outcome for this group which, has often been written off because of the challenges that they face. The educational system should take a lead in making sure that adequate services are provided to these young ladies to help them to become successful and productive

citizens. But, with all of the education budget cuts especially in Texas will these programs be able to survive. There is a great need for community partnerships and collaboration from other stakeholders that believe that with the right encouragement a difference can be made.

This research can be expanded to include the various types of school based pregnancy programs that are being offered to determine their effectiveness based on various sub-groups (i.e. population, demographics and grade level and etc.) of students served. Further studies employing a prospective on-going design to determine program effectiveness would greatly contribute to the knowledge base and help to design more effective teen parenting programs.

Implications for Social Change

Results of the evaluation may serve as an incentive for program improvement and continuation of educational services and supports that contribute to the positive growth of program participants. This research study may result in positive social change by showing that the education and support provided by a school based parenting program results in high school completion and a brighter outcome for pregnant and parenting adolescents.

Prior published research shows an association between adolescent pregnancy and increased school dropout rates. Persistent social and economic disadvantages pregnant and parenting teens is magnified by these increased dropout rates. School based parenting programs have been shown to increase retention and graduation rates among pregnant and parenting teens. School based parenting programs work to

improve outcomes for these young mothers and their children. Both the mother and child are at critical points in their lives. Parenting programs can help to shape both mother and child toward healthy development, stability, and productivity through an array of educational, health, and social services and supports (Stephens, Wolf, Batten, 2003). The results of the study of the PEP program revealed that the program seemed to be effective in retaining girls in school. My findings corroborate the published literature confirming that these types of programs are successful and needed. Special programs for pregnant and parenting adolescents are greatly needed and have been proven to increase the retention and graduation rates of parenting teens (Philliber et al. 2003; Brosh, Weigel & Evans, 2007).

The policy implications of the study suggest that school based programs provide services that aid in helping this group address issues concerning their situation, thereby decreasing the chances of providing effective services. Some model school programs provide a plethora of support services for its students besides the normal academic curriculum. Services offered by these comprehensive programs include insights into reproductive health, and family, and financial planning, along with other needed social support services. These are services that should be provided in all school districts, and those who chose to access these services should not be treated inferiorly.

Conclusion

The current research involving teenage pregnancy recognizes teen pregnancies as one of the United States social crisis, affecting a tenth of teenage girls 15-19 years of age each. Research has indicated that getting pregnant and parenting teens to participate

in a school-based parenting program is an important element in program success. Social service incentives were found to be major assets to these programs.

These parenting programs provide the teens with classes in child development and parenting education and essential knowledge and skills needed for gainful employment. Childcare and healthcare are two invaluable supports provided by parenting programs. This nonjudgmental learning environment helps to motivate these young women to complete high school while providing their lives with much needed stability. When these programs are implemented correctly they can have a positive impact on the lives of those who participate. The referral process for admittance to this program requires a positive verification of pregnancy by a doctor's note and parent conference with the PEP educational Specialist. After pregnancy is verified the student may remain on campus until the day of delivery unless they have a documented medical need for bed rest/home school. There is no time limit on prenatal educational services. Students are automatically eligible for a 6 weeks postpartum period after delivery where alternative educational services are provided through Community Class (this class is located at the PEP center). The Community Class allows students to maintain their academic studies as well as be provided instruction in childbirth and parenting, 2 days a week on a shortened day schedule. Students may attend Community Class for up to 10 weeks. Students may only attend Community Class by referral, otherwise students will receive parenting classes along with academic and career related instruction at their home school. Students also receive other specialized services such as childcare and transportation.

There are several successful models of parenting programs for this particular group. The common elements that these programs possess include (a) intensive supportive services, (b) flexible schedules and non-traditional educational options, (c) dedicated staff and (d) dedicated space.

Based on the findings from several strong school-based parenting and pregnancy programs that focus on academic achievement, dropout prevention and recovery options the state government should commit substantial funding to the development of school based pregnancy programs that supports systemic change and support statewide expansions of successful models.

This case-study addressed the gap concerning school-based parenting programs by confirming the elements of a successful school-based parenting program for pregnant and parenting teens as described in the published literature. The factors that were identified as having a profound impact on the success of the program were identified as (a) knowledgeable faculty and staff, (b) social service support, (c) child care, (d) transportation and (e) individual and group counseling. It is also essential that the program offer child development and parenting education classes along with essential knowledge and skill for gainful employment. Secondary factors included funding and curriculum resources. These findings were supported by current literature concerning these types of programs.

The research has identified important elements that will aid in the implementation of other school-based parenting programs. These findings include: (a) clearly stated and specific program objectives, (b) high level of program support from

district and administrative staff, (c) appropriate curriculum, (d) adequate resources and funding and (e) open communication, this vulnerable group can prove to a challenge to work with but with the proper guidance and access to needed services, these challenges can be met.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with today. My name is _____ and I would like to talk to you about your experiences with the Parenting Education Program/Life Skills Program for Student Parents. Specifically, I want to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the program. This information will aid in the enhancement of this program and others like it.

The interview should take about 30 minutes. I will be taping the session because I don't want to miss any of your comments. I also will be taking some notes during the session. Because we're on tape, please be sure to speak up so that I don't miss your comments.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will not be shared and I will ensure that any information included in my report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview at any time.

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

Interviewee Witness Date

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What are the goals/objectives of the program?
2. Are these goals/objectives being met?
3. How long have you been working with the program?
4. What is your responsibility or duty within the program?
5. What experiences or background do you have in this area?
6. Do you feel that the program has district support? (in what ways)
7. Does the administrative staff support the faculty? (in what ways)
8. What do you believe are the major assets of the program? Major weaknesses?
9. What kind of resources/funding does the program receive? (from the district, city, state, other).
10. Are appropriate instructional materials readily available for the program participants?
11. Are the parents/guardians of the program participants supportive of the program (how)
12. Describe the communication between the parents/guardians of the program participants and the program staff.
13. Is there anything more you would like to add?

Thank you for your time, I will contact you if I need any more information or clarification.

Again Thank you

Appendix C: Additional Tables and SPSS Descriptive Data

Table C1

Life Skills Program Child Care Services

Activities	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006	2006- 2007	2007- 2008	2008- 2009	2009- 2010
Total infants served @ Center	37	34	32	40	45	29	35	42	47
Total infants served @ EHS	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	13	11
Transportation provided @ Center – Teen Parents	--	--	11	35	31	22	31	36	40
Transportation provided @ Center - Infants	--	--	--	--	--	--	32	36	40
Transportation provided @ EHS – Teen Parents	--	--	--	--	--	23	14	8	10
Transportation provided @ EHS – Infants	--	--	--	--	--	--	14	6	10
# Enrolled in NCI	9	19	24	31	7	26	31	30	31

Note. EHS=Early Head Start; NCI=Neighborhood Centers Inc.; Center-Life Skills Parent Center

Table C2

Descriptive Data SPSS Case Summaries

	year	# of students	# of 12 graders	percent seniors	program graduates	% of senior grads
1	2009-2010	275	124	.49	83	.62
2	2008-2009	215	99	.46	70	.71
3	2007-2008	223	116	.52	66	.57
4	2006-2007	211	92	.44	60	.65
5	2005-2006	225	101	.45	73	.72
6	2004-2005	216	97	.45	75	.77
7	2003-2004	196	63	.32	62	.98
8	2002-2003	188	65	.35	53	.82
9	2001-2002	162	55	.34	52	.95
Total	9	9	9	9	9	9

Table C3

Reasons for Not Graduating

School Year	2009- 2010	2008- 2009	2007- 2008	2006- 2007	2005- 2006	2004- 2005	2003- 2004	2002- 2003	2001- 2002
Withdrew for GED	7	1	0	4	3	2	0	7	2
Recovered dropout	7	9	4	1	5	11	1	5	1
Dropout WD non attendance	8	1	11	7	5	9	-	-	-
Failed 1 or more parts of TAKS	10	15	18	20	15	-	-	-	-
Withdrew to attend home school	9	3	17	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table C4

Descriptive Statistics: Output Data of Grand Totals of Mean, Minimum, and Maximum Number of Program Participants, Seniors, and Graduates

Year	# of Students	# of 12 Graders	Percent Seniors	# of Senior Grads
Grand Total				
Mean	212.33	91.33	.42	66.00
2006				
Minimum	162.00	55.00	.32	52.00
2002				
Maximum	275.00	134.00	.52	83.00
2010				
N	9	9	9	9

Appendix D: NVivo Word Query Data

Table D1

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 1

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
parenting	9	20	being, nurturing, parent, parenting, parents
School	6	19	educated, education, educational, high, school
Being	5	30	balance, being, best, child, continue, help, job, life, parent, possible, self, stay, support, teen, young
education	9	20	develop, development, educated, education, educational, prepare, preparing, school
Skills	6	6	complete, skills
Provide	7	24	care, help, prepare, provide, providing, stay, support
Giving	6	21	giving, help, provide, stay, stress, support
Teen	4	10	adolescents, teen, teenage, teens, young
Support	7	26	aid, assist, based, care, help, helps, provide, stay, support
cognitive	9	14	cognitive, education, goal, life, program, system
Job	3	10	career, education, job, obligation, services
Children	8	4	Children
Them	4	4	Them
Prepare	7	13	can, prepare, preparing, provide, readiness, setting
nurturing	9	20	aid, care, nurturing, provide, support
Positive	8	8	balance, develop, importance, job, positive, putting, quality, setting
Goals	5	4	goal, goals
experiences	11	8	education, experiences, life, research
designed	8	8	designed, goal, program, system
program	7	8	curriculum, job, program, system
assist	6	18	aid, assist, care, help, helps, serves, support
pregnant	8	3	Pregnant
while	5	3	While
help	4	14	aid, available, help, helps, provide, serves, services
young	5	8	age, teen, teenage, young
increase	8	4	age, develop, enhance, increase
using	5	7	development, help, quality, using, victims
resources	9	12	aid, help, resources, support
social	6	3	prepare, social
force	5	4	force, physical, stress, strong

(table continues)

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
achieve	7	3	achieve, possible, successful
can	3	3	behind, can
guidance	8	2	guidance
emotional	9	5	care, caring, emotional
objectives	10	5	being, goal, life, objectives
quality	7	9	aid, balance, force, help, importance, quality, readiness, system
services	8	11	aid, assist, care, force, help, services, setting
mothers	7	5	care, mothers, parent
life	4	4	being, life, pep
motivate	8	3	life, motivate, needed
care	4	9	aid, assist, care, caring, help
complete	8	2	complete, completing
infants	7	3	child, infants
involve	7	2	involve, needed
issues	6	3	child, issues
toddlers	8	3	child, toddlers
obligation	10	4	force, job, obligation, responsible
development	11	4	age, develop, development
oriented	8	2	oriented, quality
sufficient	10	2	quality, sufficient
available	9	6	aid, assist, available, help
able	4	1	able
after	5	1	after
citizens	8	1	citizens
contact	7	1	contact
developmental	13	1	developmental
enable	6	1	enable
families	8	1	families
girls	5	1	girls
opportunities	13	1	opportunities
pregnancy	9	1	pregnancy
primarily	9	1	primarily
professionals	13	1	professionals
so	2	1	so
students	8	1	students
techniques	10	1	techniques
which	5	1	which

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
readiness	9	3	available, readiness, setting
adolescents	11	2	adolescents, develop
successful	10	2	goal, successful
importance	10	2	importance, stress
victims	7	2	job, victims
physical	8	2	physical, quality
responsible	11	2	quality, responsible
setting	7	3	balance, prepare, setting

Table D2

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question2

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
yes	3	12	yes
who	3	1	who
them	4	2	them
Texas	5	1	Texas
teachers	8	1	teachers
some	4	1	some
site	4	1	site
room	4	2	can, room
right	5	2	just, right
raising	7	4	advantage, make, raising, up
person	6	11	being, birth, help, part, participant, person, regular, teen
part	4	6	back, can, going, part, right
parents	7	4	being, parents, raising
most	4	1	most
met	3	1	met
make	4	10	birth, can, consider, free, help, make, program
jobs	4	2	jobs, services
interviews	10	1	interviews
however	7	1	however
help	4	6	attend, facilitating, help, services
hands	5	7	free, hands, help, right, workforce
going	5	8	back, getting, going, make, offered, school
goals	5	1	goals
girls	5	1	girls
full	4	2	full
facilitating	12	5	facilitating, help, make
extra	5	1	extra
everyday	8	1	everyday
commission	10	1	commission
class	5	3	class, classes, person
born	4	1	born
between	7	1	between
being	5	15	attend, back, being, birth, help, make, need, participant, person, regular, room, teen
before	6	2	before
babysitting	11	2	attention, babysitting
babies	6	3	babies, person
attend	6	6	attend, attention, help, participant
after	5	1	after
administrators	14	1	administrators

Table D3

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 3

Word	Length	Count
years	5	10
10	2	4
3	1	2
6	1	2
4	1	1
5	1	1
five	4	1
months	6	1
two	3	1
year	4	1

Table D4

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 4

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
who	3	1	Who
visits	6	1	Visits
toddlers	8	3	child, toddlers
them	4	2	Them
teens	5	1	Teens
teacher	7	5	teacher, teachers
support	7	15	aide, assist, assistant, care, mother, promote, provide, serve, support
student	7	2	student, students
stressors	9	1	stressors
strategies	10	1	strategies
speaking	8	3	present, speaking
Spanish	7	2	Spanish
skills	6	1	Skills
she	3	1	She
services	8	6	assist, care, childcare, services
serve	5	9	assist, assistant, provide, serve, services, staff
safe	4	1	safe
provide	7	11	care, home, provide, serve, staff, support
program	7	10	curriculum, information, program, translator
pregnancy	9	2	pregnancy
participant	11	4	center, involved, participant, participating
parenting	9	6	being, mom, mother, parenting
oversight	9	2	oversight, supervision
oversee	7	2	oversee, supervision
others	6	1	others
operations	10	6	education, operations, serve, support
once	4	1	once
nutrition	9	4	center, food, nutrition, nutritious
my	2	2	my
mother	6	7	care, make, mom, mother
met	3	1	met
medical	7	1	medical
meals	5	2	meals, nutrition
make	4	20	can, cook, expect, make, making, mother, present, program, serve, support
knows	5	1	knows
involved	8	7	include, involved, liaison, needed, needs, participant, participating
information	11	12	curriculum, daily, educate, everyday, information, present, program
infants	7	4	baby, child, infants
implementation	14	2	implementation, staff

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
identified	10	1	identified
healthy	7	1	healthy
has	3	1	has
grandparents	12	1	grandparents
full	4	1	full
food	4	4	cereal, food, formula, nutrition
federal	7	1	federal
families	8	3	families, home, present
expectant	9	3	expect, expectant
educate	7	7	educate, education, make, teacher
duties	6	2	duties, responsibility
during	6	1	during
counselor	9	1	counselor
coping	6	1	coping
concerning	10	4	center, concerning, involved
compliance	10	1	compliance
classroom	9	1	classroom
care	4	14	aide, assist, care, caring, concerning, make, mother, oversee, sure
between	7	1	between
being	5	15	assistant, baby, being, child, make, participant, present, specialist, student, support, translator
basis	5	1	basis
aspects	7	1	aspects
an	2	1	an
am	2	2	am
also	4	2	also
aide	4	13	aide, assist, assistant, care, childcare, mother, serve, support
agencies	8	2	agencies, implementation
after	5	1	after
administrative	14	4	administrative, care, oversee
about	5	2	about, some

Table D5

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 5

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
stated	6	17	childhood, degree, development, feel, health, home, last, stated, stress, support
previous	8	7	early, previous
years	5	6	classes, years
community	9	11	am, community, district, head, masters, program, service, start
knowledge	9	13	education, food, head, knowledge, program
education	9	15	development, education, head, master, professional, school, teacher
operations	10	11	education, knowledge, operations, support, working
service	7	4	childcare, daycare, none, service
working	7	6	nursing, operations, service, worked, working
certification	13	4	certification, certified, credential
program	7	5	program, programs
school	6	9	education, high, school
adults	6	5	adults, counselor, head, professional, teacher
management	10	5	administrator, certification, head, management
master	6	10	education, head, master, masters, professional
10	2	2	10
degree	6	5	am, degree, do, high
district	8	5	community, development, district
classes	7	7	classes, education
high	4	4	degree, high, last
home	4	2	home, homes
professional	12	5	counselor, head, master, professional, teacher
development	11	5	development, district, head
head	4	4	administrator, head, knowledge, master
15	2	1	15
6	1	1	6
attended	8	1	attended
bachelors	9	1	bachelors
before	6	1	before
child	5	1	child
college	7	1	college
do	2	2	do, management
elementary	10	1	elementary
excellent	9	1	excellent
gone	4	1	gone
middle	6	1	middle
nineteen	8	1	nineteen
nursing	7	2	feel, nursing
parenting	9	1	parenting
populations	11	1	Populations

(table continues)

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
pregnant	8	1	pregnant
seminars	8	1	seminars
some	4	1	some
teens	5	1	teens
three	5	1	three
variety	7	1	variety
ways	4	1	ways
why	3	1	why
cda	3	1	cda
has	3	1	has
taught	6	1	taught
you	3	1	you

Table D6

NVivoWordQueryInterviewQuestion6

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
yes	3	10	Yes
provides	8	11	breakfast, fund, help, lunch, meet, provides, providing, support
district	8	6	District
program	7	11	budget, curriculum, program
budget	6	11	budget, fund, program
needed	6	5	involved, motivate, needed, needs
funding	7	8	budget, fund, funding, funds, support
educate	7	4	educate, instructional, teacher
materials	9	3	Materials
has	3	3	Has
resources	9	6	funding, help, resources, support
cook	4	3	can, cook
available	9	4	assist, available, help
even	4	2	Even
expect	6	2	deliver, expect
may	3	2	May
other	5	2	Other
very	4	2	Very
support	7	6	assist, fund, help, support
instructional	13	3	educate, inspire, instructional
meet	4	2	meet, team
participants	12	2	involved, participants
restroom	8	2	can, restroom
continues	9	2	continues, run
cuts	4	2	cuts, run
run	3	2	break, run
trying	6	2	run, trying
along	5	1	Along
carts	5	1	Carts
entities	8	1	Entities
flourish	8	1	Flourish
generous	8	1	Generous
guest	5	1	Guest
loss	4	1	Loss
much	4	1	Much
only	4	1	Only
readily	7	1	Readily
selfish	7	1	Selfish
speakers	8	1	Speakers
students	8	1	Students
superintendent	14	1	Superintendent

(table continues)

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
survive	7	1	Survive
though	6	1	Though
usually	7	1	Usually
willing	7	1	Willing
cannot	6	1	Cannot
everyone	8	1	Everyone
you	3	1	you
inspire	7	3	inspire, support

Table D7

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 7

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
yes	3	9	yes
providing	9	15	breakfast, lunch, open, provides, providing, staff
administrative	14	6	administrative, administrators
ideas	5	10	ideas, program, teacher
working	7	14	assist, break, learning, run, staff, working
planning	8	8	planning, program, time
staff	5	11	faculty, staff
supports	8	5	assist, ensure, supports
improve	7	4	enhance, improve, up
team	4	3	team
education	9	5	education, improve, learning, teacher
teacher	7	4	teacher, teachers
cook	4	3	can, cook
minutes	7	3	minutes, time
requested	9	3	expect, question, requested
willing	7	4	faculty, willing
6	1	2	6
classroom	9	2	classroom, classrooms
deliver	7	3	deliver, expect, having
listen	6	2	listen, listening
may	3	2	may
needs	5	2	needs
participants	12	2	participants
resources	9	2	resources
run	3	4	break, come, run, working
same	4	2	same
having	6	4	breakfast, having, lunch, run
break	5	3	break, breaks, run
restroom	8	2	can, restroom
open	4	3	break, open
15	2	1	15
45	2	1	45
always	6	1	always
an	2	1	an
carts	5	1	carts
collaborative	13	1	collaborative
combining	9	1	combining
concerns	8	1	concerns
conducive	9	1	conducive
door	4	1	door
environments	12	1	environments
flourish	8	1	flourish

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
often	5	1	often
once	4	1	once
only	4	1	only
refresh	7	1	refresh
selfish	7	1	selfish
shares	6	1	shares
students	8	1	students
suggestions	11	1	suggestions
survive	7	1	survive
teamwork	8	1	teamwork
through	7	1	through
volunteers	10	1	volunteers
week	4	1	week
cannot	6	1	cannot
everyone	8	1	everyone
has	3	1	has
you	3	1	you

Table D8

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 8

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
students	8	15	major, students
knowledge	9	21	ability, concept, education, knowledge, learning, life, philosophy, program, tendency
asset	5	11	asset, assets, funding, help, loss, share
activities	10	19	activities, babysitting, building, care, career, childcare, development, duty, education, help, job, life, offer, participate, placement, service, share, works
works	5	17	babysitting, care, double, duty, help, job, learning, resolve, service, staff, still, works
program	7	13	job, program
skills	6	8	ability, complete, economy, skilled, skills
provides	8	11	care, help, lot, offer, provides, staff
parenting	9	4	parenting, parents
weakness	8	8	weakness, weaknesses
school	6	7	building, education, high, school
small	5	10	limited, small, weakness, young
serves	6	10	do, help, serves, service, staff
lot	3	7	lot, weakness
accountability	14	4	accountability, importance, job, life
motivating	10	4	do, life, motivating, needs
experiences	11	6	education, experiences, getting, life, loss
education	9	6	development, education, learning, school
an	2	2	An
believe	7	3	believe, include
concept	7	3	concept, constant, due
enough	6	2	Enough
include	7	3	embrace, include
together	8	2	Together
who	3	2	Who
complete	8	5	complete, do, skilled, works
care	4	5	babysitting, care, concerning, help, service
early	5	4	early, others, young
teen	4	4	teen, teens, young
young	5	5	early, small, teen, young
development	11	3	development, getting, growing
continuing	10	2	constant, continuing
even	4	2	even, still
population	10	2	philosophy, population
child	5	3	child, young
help	4	5	care, childcare, help, serves, service
things	6	2	small, things
fathers	7	2	fathers, getting
encouraging	11	2	encouraging, help

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
do	2	4	complete, do, help, serves
childhood	9	1	Childhood
choices	7	1	Choices
complaints	10	1	Complaints
confidence	10	1	Confidence
conflicts	9	1	Conflicts
dedicated	9	1	Dedicated
done	4	1	Done
empowering	10	1	Empowering
goals	5	1	Goals
just	4	1	Just
ladies	6	1	Ladies
natural	7	1	Natural
opportunity	11	1	opportunity
reinforcements	14	1	reinforcements
some	4	1	some
sometimes	9	1	sometimes
teachers	8	1	teachers
team	4	1	team
teamwork	8	1	teamwork
too	3	1	too
everyone	8	1	everyone
has	3	1	has
those	5	1	those
we	2	1	we
participate	11	3	participate, young
getting	7	2	getting, share

Table D9

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 9

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
funding	7	11	funding, funds, support, supporting
government	10	12	district, government
district	8	11	district, districts
Worksource	10	4	Worksource
agencies	8	3	agencies, office
some	4	3	some
head	4	3	head, knowledge, park
received	8	2	received
support	7	3	maintenance, support, supporting
know	4	2	know, knowledge
matches	7	2	matches, support
provides	8	2	provides, support
20	2	1	20
80	2	1	80
along	5	1	along
facility	8	1	facility
galena	6	1	galena
independent	11	1	independent
school	6	1	school
start	5	1	start
goes	4	1	goes
my	2	1	My
towards	7	1	towards
wic	3	1	Wic

Table D10

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 10

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
yes	3	12	100.00	Yes

Table D11

Nvivo Word Query Interview Question 11

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
planning	8	13	planning, prepare, program
yes	3	11	Yes
being	5	21	attend, being, child, day, feel, guardian, help, lot, love, parent, participant, support, teen, volunteer
parents	7	8	being, parent, parents
participants	12	7	participant, participants, participate, participating
supportive	10	13	assist, attend, help, provide, see, support, supportive
much	4	6	much, often, some
some	4	6	many, much, some
completed	9	4	completed, do, good
area	4	4	area, can, car, see
guardians	9	3	guardian, guardians
volunteer	9	4	volunteer, volunteering
attend	6	9	assist, attend, help, participant, see
prepare	7	6	can, learn, planning, prepare, provide, read
future	6	4	future, good, next
good	4	4	future, good, just
learn	5	5	learn, prepare, read, school, see
provide	7	8	help, lot, prepare, provide, staff, support
ages	4	2	ages, majority
most	4	2	Most
benefits	8	5	benefits, good, help
staff	5	3	office, provide, staff
infants	7	2	child, infants
toddlers	8	2	child, toddlers
letting	7	2	letting, support
do	2	5	do, help, prepare
ensuring	8	2	ensuring, see
aspect	6	1	Aspect
committees	10	1	Committees
every	5	1	Every
here	4	1	Here
needs	5	1	Needs
others	6	1	Others
out	3	1	Out
paperwork	9	1	Paperwork
rapport	7	1	Rapport
strive	6	1	Strive
variety	7	1	Variety
various	7	1	Various
because	7	1	Because
children	8	1	Children

(table continues)

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
them	4	1	Them
feel	4	3	feel, love, see
see	3	3	feel, read, see
lot	3	2	lot, much

Table D 12

Nvivo Word Query Question 12

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
communication	13	25	agreement, check, communication, contact, day, discuss, greeting, phone, program, report, service, sign, staff, volunteer
parents	7	8	parent, parents
activity	8	13	activity, center, check, open, part, participant, participants, participate, service
make	4	9	access, make, makes, program
daily	5	4	Daily
good	4	4	close, good, skills
reports	7	4	newsletter, report, reports
developing	10	5	check, developing, make, progress
sign	4	10	communication, part, sign, staff
child	5	3	Child
verbally	8	9	activity, communication, discuss, verbally
concerns	8	5	center, concerns, least, part, partnership
objectives	10	8	center, communication, good, objectives, part, sign
doing	5	7	activity, doing, make, makes
often	5	3	attendance, often
discuss	7	6	communication, discuss, discussed, participant
family	6	2	Family
grandparents	12	2	grandparents
very	4	2	Very
children	8	2	children
part	4	5	member, open, part, phone, sign
supportive	10	7	activity, check, part, supportive
member	6	3	member, members, part
friendly	8	2	friendly, supportive
mails	5	4	communication, mails
times	5	2	day, times
relationship	12	2	partnership, relationship
leaving	7	3	leaving, make, part
check	5	2	check, learning
customer	8	2	customer, make
wonderful	9	2	part, wonderful
access	6	3	access, agreement, make
along	5	1	Along
also	4	1	Also
any	3	1	Any
arriving	8	1	Arriving
e	1	1	E
easy	4	1	Easy
excellent	9	1	excellent
given	5	1	Given

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
guardians	9	1	guardians
includes	8	1	includes
made	4	1	Made
most	4	1	Most
other	5	1	Other
out	3	1	Out
sheets	6	1	Sheets
sure	4	1	Sure
teens	5	1	Teens
three	5	1	Three
usually	7	1	Usually
weekly	6	1	Weekly
attendance	10	2	attendance, participant
agreement	9	2	agreement, partnership

Table D13

Nvivo Word Query Question 13

Word	Length	Count	Similar Words
program	7	3	Program
break	5	3	break, giving, out
Feel	4	4	encouragement, feel, hope
school	6	3	high, school
encouragement	13	5	encouragement, hope, support, supportive
giving	6	4	drop, giving, staff, support
Has	3	2	Has
provided	8	3	provided, staff, support
substantial	11	3	substantial, support, supportive
students	8	2	graduate, students
Child	5	2	child, young
participant	11	2	participant, young
young	5	2	teen, young
college	7	1	College
cycle	5	1	Cycle
High	4	2	graduate, high
hopeless	8	1	Hopeless
Ideal	5	1	Ideal
jewel	5	1	Jewel
ladies	6	1	Ladies
needed	6	1	Needed
Often	5	1	Often
otherwise	9	1	Otherwise
parenting	9	1	Parenting
Very	4	1	Very
Who	3	1	Who
Words	5	1	Words
Children	8	1	Children
Would	5	1	Would