2014

Impact Evaluation on the Parents Support and Outreach Program (PSOP) Olmsted County Child and Family Services

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Recommended Citation

Matos, Lucy, "Impact Evaluation on the Parents Support and Outreach Program (PSOP) Olmsted County Child and Family Services" (2014). All Theses, Dissertations, and Other Capstone Projects. 884.

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Impact Evaluation on the Parents Support and Outreach Program (PSOP)
Olmsted County Child and Family Services
Lucy Matos MSW Student, Minnesota State University, Mankato

Purpose

The purpose of this impact evaluation was to identify critical components that support the work done by PSOP by analyzing the effectiveness in serving all families, and to monitor the relative cost of providing these essential services to the at-risk population in Olmsted County. Specifically:
1) To obtain a sample of cases closed in 2011 and categorize them by type of service/determinations prior, during and after PSOP involvement.
2) To conduct a two-year follow-up on PSOP impact; including a) maltreatment report by type and finding, and b) reentry for Child and Family Services by type and intensity (voluntary/involuntary).
3) To better understand costs associated with the PSOP and to calculate an average cost per family/client or unit of service.
4) To integrate information from recent published literature.

Methodology

• Study was approved by MSU, M IRB, #...
• This impact evaluation study used secondary data already available in data sets gathered from the Social Services Information System (SSIS) on cases closed in 2011 to allow for a 2-year follow-up period.
• Cost-related data came from SSIS financial system and was pulled by Olmsted County data analyst. Data was used to compare CP and PSOP annual cost per capita from the same year.
• These existing data sets were available from the Olmsted County Community Services Senior Program Evaluator.
• Data set was organized in an excel sheet and later pulled into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis.
• Results from this study have been protected at all times and have been only reported as an aggregate.

Key Findings

• High risk children are more likely to come back into Child and Family Services for any service.
• High risk children are more likely to have a CP report after PSOP closing.
• High risk children are more likely to come back into Child and Family Services for child protective (CP) services.

Implications / Discussion

• Children who have been part of PSOP are less likely to come back for services within Olmsted County Child and Family Services, and these children are less likely to have a child protection case later in life.
• A considerable number of families returning for more services come back for PSOP, which makes us think that they see PSOP services as a resource where they can receive support and services.
• Based on this study, it is substantially accurate to state that investing in PSOP and having families participating in PSOP services would reduce the amount of children receiving involuntary services in the future with is equal to an enormous saving to Olmsted County.

Acknowledgements

Olmsted County Community Services – Child and Family Unit, Finance Department, and Data Analysis Department.
Kari Honk, BSW and Brenda Valadez, MSW, LICSW - Field Instructors;
Mariann O’Keefe, MS – Senior Program Evaluator
Laura Benesch, MSW, LGSW – Field Liaison
Robin P. Wingo, MSW, LICSW - Academic Advisor

References: Available upon request.