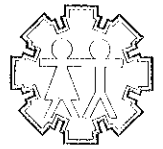




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Reducing Child Abuse/Neglect in the East Coast
Migrant Head Start Project

Resource ID#: 219

December 15, 1988

E Roberta Ryder, Executive Director
National Migrant Referral Project, Inc
2512 South IH35, Suite 220
Austin, TX 78704

Dear Roberta:

Enclosed is the abstract of a paper I presented at the VII International Congress of Child Abuse/Neglect in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, September of this year. Reading the recent issue of Migrant Health Newslines, I wondered if something like this might be of interest to include in a future issue of the Newslines. We in the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project are quite proud of the result of this program and would be glad to share it with the other migrant programs.

Success story!

One other project in which we are involved is that of providing mental health services to migrant families. As you well know, the utilization of mental health services by migrants is extremely low. Our organization was awarded a fair sized federal grant to provide mental health services and evaluate efficacy of such. That is or going, to be completed in about six months. Sister Jo Ellen Shannon, Program Director for the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, can provide information for future publication, if desired.

Please let me know if you consider this for publication in the Newslines. This has not been published anywhere other than in the abstracts of that International Congress. I think this would permit one to use it, editing it in any manner wished.

Sincerely,

James R Markello, MD
Professor of Pediatrics
Chair, Board of Directors
East Coast Migrant Head Start Project

JRM/pd

PS My wife was so pleased with the copy of the black mother/child which I was able to purchase with your assistance from the artist, while in Hollywood, Florida this spring. Many compliments have been voiced about that piece of art.

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Reducing Child Abuse/Neglect in the East Coast Migrant
Head Start Project

REDUCING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT
IN THE EAST COAST MIGRANT HEAD START PROJECT

In 1984 ECMHSP surveyed its delegate agencies to gain information referable to incidence of child abuse and neglect. Eighty one cases of abuse/neglect were reported from the 4367 children served that fiscal year. Fifty four cases, 67.7%, were substantiated for an incidence of 12.4 per 1000, well above the national norm for this age range.

The following deficiencies were uncovered by the survey. (1) States laws pertaining to child abuse/neglect identification and reporting were unknown. (2) Assistance from local Departments of Social Services was not requested appropriately. (3) Parents on head start center staffs failed to report children for fear of reprisals from parent perpetrators. (4) Parents moved immediately upon being questioned, fearing reporting. (5) Staff members were "doing their own thing"--not reporting, and trying their own counseling. (6) There was lack of understanding the multi-cultural mores and lifestyles of families served. (7) Knowledge of prevention and intervention strategies was lacking.

Pursuant to these findings, the technical and training assistance staff designed and conducted an educational program to remedy the above mentioned deficiencies and to facilitate implementation of prevention/intervention strategies. In fiscal 1987, three years post implementation of the educational program and prevention/intervention strategies, a second survey was conducted.

Of 4269 children served from February 1, 1987 to January 31, 1988 29 cases of abuse/neglect were reported. Twenty three cases, (79.3%) were substantiated for an incidence of 5.4 per 1000. No deaths were reported for either survey year.

Racial-ethnic composition of the migrant head start children served by

ECMHSP has remained fairly constant with 75% Hispanic, 10% Haitian, 10% American Black, and 5% non-Hispanic American White. The racial-ethnic composition of 1987 survey abused/neglected children was 59% Hispanic, 10% Haitian, 17% American Black, and 14% non-Hispanic American White.

Ages of 1987 survey victims are shown in the following table.

<u>Age</u>	<u>Abused</u>	<u>Neglected</u>	<u>Total</u>
0-11 mos	1	0	1
12-23 mos	1	3	4
24-35 mos	3	3	6
36-47 mos	2	2	4
48-59 mos	3	2	5
60-71 mos	1	0	1
unknown	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	13	10	23

Table 1. Age of Abuse/Neglected Victims. 2nd Survey

Whereas the number of female victims was 1.5 times the number of males in the 1984 survey, the numbers were essentially equal in the 1987 survey.

Table 2.

	Male	Female
1984 survey	22	32
1987 survey	12	11

Table 2. Sex of Victims

Female perpetrators exceeded male perpetrators. Table 3.

Mother	13
Stepfather	5
Biologic father	3
Female relative	2
Male relative	1
Non-relative	1

Table 3. Perpetrators, 2nd Survey

The reduction of abuse/neglect from 12.4 per 1000 to 5.4 per 1000 represents a 56.4% decrease, from a level above the national norm to a level well below the norm. It exemplifies a successful cooperative effort on the part of migrant parents, head start center staff, T and TA staff, and grantee administrative staff to attack a major societal problem.

SPECULATIONS

In 1986 a national survey of migrant preschool children reported 272,726 children of whom 256,203 received no head start services. Comparisons of costs to provide services for this group and potential savings from abuse/neglect costs are depicted in the following figures. These speculations are based upon the 2500 dollar per child regular head start cost vs the 2000 dollar per child ECMHSP cost, the 2000 dollar average cost per abuse/neglect case, the Cornell data of 222 per 1000 incidence of abuse/neglect in east coast migrant children, and the 1986 national survey data incidence of 16.3 per 1000.

Total number of unserved migrant preschoolers	256,203
Cost at \$2500 regular head start	\$642,507,500
Cost at \$2000 ECMHSP	\$512,406,000

Unserved Children	Estimated Neglect Cases	Cost at \$2000
Cornell data 222/1000	56,877	\$113,754,000
U S 1986 data 16.3/1000	4,176	\$ 8,352,000
ECMHSP data 5.4/1000	1,383	\$ 2,766,000

Potential Savings ? ? ? ?