

QEC Parenting Plus Program - Engaging Afghan, Sudanese and Indigenous Families

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LEARNING. PARENTING. TOGETHER.



Centre for Community Child Health





Queen Elizabeth Centre

- QEC is an Early Parenting Centre and provides families with children from birth to four years of age with support on a range of parenting issues including feeding, settling, early childhood routines and more. The Parenting Plus program was developed and implemented by QEC.



Outline of Presentation

- Parenting Plus Project Goals
- Program Philosophy
- Program Description
- Evaluation
 - How
 - Key Findings

Project Goals



The Parenting Plus Phase Three program sought to:

- promote QEC's home visiting program, Parenting Plus, to Afghan, Sudanese and Indigenous families,
- address parenting issues and social isolation
- enhance cultural competency of staff and
- collaborate with other agencies



Program Description

First component

- Home visiting program

Second component

- Complementary programs which focus on the broader capacity building of the program.

Program Philosophy

- Family centred
- Strength based
- Parent child relationship
- Development parenting skills
- Involve other family members
- Flexible program
- Strong support, supervision and education of staff
- Evidence based





First Component

Home visiting (core program) nine week model:

- Needs identification – strengths and weaknesses
- Initial observation, history
- Parenting strength assessment
- Skills development planning
- Intervention
- Program closure

Second Program Component

- Peer led playgroup
- Development of social networks
- Promotion of the Parenting Plus program
- Enhancing staff skills
- Broader community capacity building





Staffing

- Maternal and child health nurses and early parenting practitioners.
- Professional development program.
- Individual, group supervision and crisis debriefing.



Evaluation

- The Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) aims to support and empower communities to continually improve the health and well being of children and their families. The Centre is part of the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne and is a research centre of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute



Evaluation

- Evaluation period from 2004 to 2007
- Data collected included
 - Case notes, parent strength scale, parental satisfaction questionnaires, semi structured focus groups and interviews and analysis of documentation.

Key Findings

- Afghan and Sudanese families engaged better than Indigenous families
- Length of home visiting program needed to be flexible
- Families valued social connectedness as much as parental information



Key Findings



- Afghan mothers needed socialisation to connect with other mothers before focusing on parenting issues
- Less concerns about time constraints

Key Findings cont'

- Strategies to engage fathers were developed.
- Interpreter issues required adequate booking details
- Translation of material was not as important in providing information
- Nutrition and hygiene improvements were attained
- QEC venue local safe, clean and child friendly



Key Findings cont'

- Peer group led playgroups played a key role in socialisation, skill development and engagement
- Continuity of peer group leader and staff has contributed to outcomes.
- Transport enhanced attendance at playgroups especially for Sudanese families



Key Findings cont'



- Families formed social networks at playgroup and this expanded into the local community
- Visiting local service representatives to playgroup provided information and enhanced access to other services.
- Peer group leaders were an important link in developing social networks and were seen as community leaders

Key Findings cont'

- Organising community events, excursions and meeting local elders improved capacity building and engagement with services for families
- Collaboration with other agencies promoted QEC services and provided a sharing of knowledge, skills and referral pathways





Future Considerations

- When planning programs such as this, funding models need to include an allocation for networking, professional development and supervision of staff.
- QEC is developing further strategies to improve engagement of Indigenous families.

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