Task Eight: ForKids’ Housing Services Evaluation Results

Claude Stanley Hamlin, Jr.

Old Dominion University

**Results**

ForKids is a no-profit organization located through various areas of Southeastern, Virginia that serves the population of Hampton Roads along with the surrounding areas. Throughout the evaluation process, the type of population the program served concluded to be clients of various needs, low socio-economic status, and of a multitude of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Although, the effectiveness of ForKids’ Housing Services evaluation generated positive feedback and outcomes, the evaluation highlighted minor limitations of the program. Since a large variety of the services offered for housing assistance are grant funded, therefore ForKids do not have the desired funds to financially assistance clients for as long as it takes the client to become self-sufficient due to the program being short term.

Within the interview with one of ForKids’ Housing Specialist, Casey Hedrick, nine months is the amount of time clients typically stay in the program. Through conducting interviews, the evaluation highlighted how ForKids monitors the success rate of their clients within the program. ForKids tracks clients’ increase and/or decrease of income, the increase and/or decrease of benefits, and reduction of housing debt. Some clients that participated in interviews attested to the fact that they did call their case managers after they left the program for mainly reassurance on if they’re doing the right thing about decisions they’ve made.

**Conclusion**

In the program evaluation, the evaluator conducted on the effectiveness of ForKids’ Housing Services the results have shown that the ForKids are living up to their own expectations set by the organization’s mission and vision statements along with the program’s stakeholders, donors, and sponsors. The results concluded that impactful steps towards breaking the cycle of homeless through providing the proper housing assistance to individuals in need. The results of the program’s services of housing assistance a positive impact on clients in need. Therefore, the evaluation concluded that the program has minimal to any negative effects of clients that are serviced throughout the program. While conducting interviews and surveys, the overall atmosphere of the staff of the program exuded the genuine concern of the welfare of all of the clients they serve.

**Implications**

The results of the program carry substantial credibility and support for the program’s efforts and strides to decreasing homelessness in an area that has individuals that affected by poverty and experiencing a need for shelter. The program efficiently provides services that will have positive impacts that consist of building community by giving those in need the tools to be stable and excel financially, academically, and mentally. The program can benefit from the findings, because the program will improve on their limitations shown in the findings. By doing so, the program will be able to serve their clients with no limitations which will generate more positive outcomes than the program already has. The positive influence that the program has on the community’s attitude towards homelessness is that individuals within communities unite when others in their community are experiencing homelessness.

**Recommendations**

ForKids’ stakeholders should start reaching out to a wide-variety of sponsors in other cities and partnering on fundraising events to boost the awareness of ForKids’ cause and community involvement. Fundraising with sponsors of higher social status can potentially increase the financial limitation of the program and provide clients with longer assistance towards stability rather than just nine months. Since every client is unique and different, not all of them will take nine months, because may need more than nine months in the program to have stable living conditions stable and financial statuses. The program can benefit from gaining more outside funding services, because that can place the program’s services as long-term instead of short-term to better help clients.

**Goals and Objectives**

1. Gain more sources of funding housing services to clients.
   1. Conduct monthly fundraisers with sponsors/donors of a high social impact with the sponsors’/donors’ own community.
   2. Place easier donation methods closer to communities for those within the community to directly donate to clients.
2. Partner with sponsors of a high social impact within the sponsors own location.
   1. Market to sponsors the perks/pros of becoming partners with the organization can benefit aspects of the sponsors’ companies.
   2. Increase the presence of the organization through advertisements that consists of billboards, radio ads, commercials, and monthly subscriptions to individuals through letter mail and email.

**Research**

Understanding the types of homelessness can help organizations, like ForKids, generate services specific to the clients’ housing needs, because not every client is experiencing the same aspect of homelessness or housing need, which was analyzed by David Belgium (2003). Since there are different types of homelessness with different durations, more funding can provide the program to assist homeless in circumstances of short housing assistance as well as long housing assistance. In 2017, research by Christopher Howard, Antonio Freeman, April Wilson, and Eboni Brown focused on community attitudes toward homelessness playing a major role in the need for housing assistance programs within a community. ForKids is aware of its presence in a community through tracking clients’ progression in the program; and more than majority of their clients have had positive responses to the services which ultimately positively impacts the people of the community and reputation.

**References**

Belgum, D. (2003). Homelessness. Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling, 57(1), 39-44.

Christopher Howard, Amirio Freeman, April Wilson, Eboni Brown; Poverty, Public Opinion

Quarterly, Volume 81, Issue 3, 7 September 2017, Pages 769–789, <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.odu.edu/10.1093/poq/nfx022>