Findings

Latavia Williams

Old Dominion University

**Results**

As I conducted my evaluation at The Center for Child and Family Services, there were a lot of things I obtained from the interview. Prior to the evaluation, I wanted to know more about the different programs and services that were held at this agency and if each program shared the same goals. I also wanted to know how well this agency impacts families and children that are a part of the programs. During the interview, I came up with 5 questions to ask the head of the department of Behavioral services, Mackenzie Boothe. These questions reflected the programs and services offered, challenges within the agency, and features and context of the programs.

By conducting the interview, I was able to obtain information on how well the agency impacts children and families by reunifying their relationships and on ways of connecting them to other services if needed. One of the programs at The Center for Child and Family Services that specifically helps reunify family relationships is the Safe Harbor Program. Safe Harbor is an organization that provides coaching skills and visitations for participants who are unable to be alone with their children or participants who may have court orders. Safe Harbor provides services for diverse populations and specializes in trauma that families may be facing. This was one of my favorite yet challenging programs to observe, as I was able to learn how this program helps individuals going through a crisis and ensures that children are in a safe place. I was not aware of the different programs and services that this agency provides and what each of them consists of. The Center offers 18 different services with three family of programs and over 50 service activities among the three programs.

The three departmental programs are the behavioral health services, consumer credit counseling, and mental health services. The Center for Child and Family Services offers other programs within the three departmental programs such as CAT, PATTS, CANS, TFCBT, EMI, THRIVE, and LAUNCH. The CAT program provides services and therapies that are centered around child abuse. The PATTS program provides services and therapies to children with anger issues. There are groups held every Tuesday and Thursday that allows children to discuss what may be happening at school or within their home and coping skills are discussed for them to handle problems more positively. The CANS program provides services to adults with anger issues, mental health counseling, domestic violence groups, individual counseling, and substance abuse counseling. The TFCBT program focuses on trauma and crisis that individuals and families may be facing and provides cognitive behavior therapy. I was able to learn how each of these programs impacts children and families and challenges that may occur when working in the different programs.

During the evaluation, I also gave out surveys to participants to collect information on how well the programs or services may benefit them. I made my surveys in forms of checklists, including the purposes of the survey and indicating the duration of the survey. I also made thank you letters to participants that did the surveys. I was able to know challenges that may occur when working at this agency that includes working with diverse populations, overloads of training, and financing of programs. When working with diverse populations, it is critical and important that the professional is aware of the client’s background and culture and provide specific resources that adheres to it. Financing of programs with participants may result in shifting different shifts, as several grants may start to run out.

**Conclusion**

I am interested in pursuing my career in social work with support services to help families and individuals, so this agency was an excellent source to help in preparation for my future. Conducting the interview and evaluation really taught me the value of helping individuals and families overcome difficult challenges they may be facing in life. I have also learned to offer insight, support, and advocacy when working with individuals and families. It stood out to me how The Center for Child and Family Services provides a variety of counseling programs and support services to diverse populations. As a result of my findings from the evaluation and interview, I observed that this agency has great qualities of delivering variety of programs and services that help improve individuals and families lives. The Center develops unique and useful mechanisms of developing family relationships and helping participants cope with their problems. This evaluation helped identify the needs for the agency to be more innovative when meeting the needs of individuals and families.

**Implications/Recommendations**

Since The Center for Child and Family Services provides services to diverse populations and have a variety of programs, I recommend that the center should give services that are implemented as planned to ensure that it is intended to meet the needs of participants. Stakeholders should consider this because it will allow the agency to have narrow goals and objectives so they will know what program components are beneficial to participants. They will also be able to gain competitive advantages of implementing the plans of improving the agency. I observed throughout different group services that this center develops and discusses the planning process of helping participants, but I recommend discussing ways the agency will get them to be motivated in improving and changing their behaviors. My findings can impact the program by the agency having needs of greater coordinations between programs and services. For example, did the programs have intended effects on participants? If so, what characteristics of the programs created the impact on the participants? My findings will help identify challenges that may be faced when delivering services and strategies for overcoming these challenges.

**Goals/Objectives**

A broad goal that The Center for Child and Family Services should implement is obtaining specific resources and culture to improve the qualities of services. The agency should plan ways of how they will include, communicate, and develop plans throughout the company. To do this, new assessments and large group meetings should be set up 2 to 3 times a week. The agency should also discuss ways in which they can connect employees to their mission and develop creative, positive, and negative consequences of achieving or not achieving strategies. To do this, reunifications of parents with their children will be implemented during the Safe Harbor program weekly.

**Research articles**

My research articles support my findings, goals, and recommendations by including all the purposes and functions of The Center for Child and Family Services, which include behavioral and emotional problems that affect children and their development, clinical needs for families and youth in treatment services, childhood risk factors, improving relationships between families and social workers, and young children with disabilities who live in poverty (Parish & Cloud 2006).

**References**

Parish, S. L., & Cloud, J.M. (2006). Financial well-being of young children with disabilities and their families. Social Work, 51 (3). 223-232.