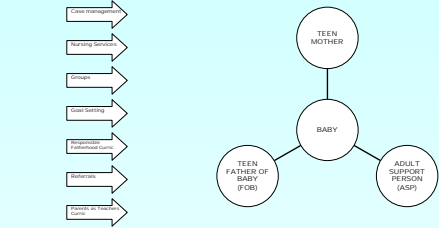


Supporting Teen Families Program

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Background/Objectives

Supporting Teen Families (STF) is a home visitation program that assists teen parents in developing assets to form safe, healthy families and avoid repeat pregnancies.

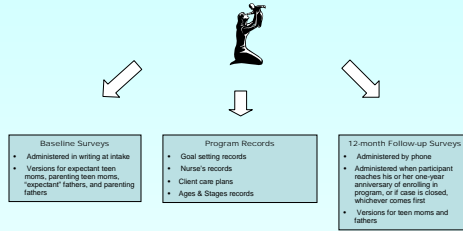


Hypothesis: that teen mothers who participate in a home-visitation program with an adult support person and the father of the baby (treatment group) will have better outcomes than those who participate in the program without the involvement of these support people (comparison group). The outcomes being tested are:

- *Family relationships will be strengthened;
- *Families will learn strategies to become self-sufficient;
- *Families will learn strategies to stay safe and healthy; and
- *Teen mothers and fathers of the baby will demonstrate responsible family planning.

Methods

All teen mothers and their babies in the program receive similar services from a caseworker and nurse, but for mothers in the treatment group, caseworkers endeavor to also recruit the father of the baby and an adult support person, both of whom receive additional services. Assignment to the treatment or control group is done randomly at time of intake.



By the end of the five-year study, evaluators will assess for statistically significant differences between the treatment and control group on all four outcome objectives.

Conclusions

Years one and two have primarily focused on process evaluation measures, revealing some flaws in the process of program implementation.

- Due to the extremely low numbers of FOB, ASP and comparison subjects recruited, there will be inadequate statistical power for analysis, even after five full years of program implementation.
- After low FOB and ASP recruitment in Year One, evaluators and staff held several meetings to discuss the problem and determine solutions. STF staff suggestions to improve the situation included having a male staff person attend all mother recruitment meetings and explaining the need for ASPs and FOBs to complete registration paperwork as being for the good of the baby.
- Recruitment into the comparison group did not begin until the end of year two and has been slow. The intake worker needs to be periodically monitored to ensure participants are being randomly assigned to the treatment and comparison groups.

Funding for the Supporting Teen Families program is provided by:

- ATAT
- Catholic Community Fund
- Elizabeth A. Brinn Foundation
- Joy Global Foundation
- Kwans Foundation of Wauwatosa
- Knights of Columbus
- M&I Corporation Foundation
- Northwestern Mutual Foundation
- Park Bank Foundation
- Potawatomi Miracle on Canal Street
- Rosally's Foundation
- St. William Parish
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services – Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
- Windhover Foundation

Implications

- Participant recruitment and retention is key.** The need to recruit significantly more fathers and adult support people into the program during program Years Three and Four cannot be understated. If STF can find a way to recruit and retain more of these individuals, the methods used could be helpful to other programs across the nation.
- Randomized Comparison Group.** Evaluators are concerned that a community-based program with the level of resources that the STF program currently has cannot recruit and retain enough members in a comparison group to make an RCT study feasible. Requiring a program at the developmental level of STF to rise to this "gold standard" might be a case of trying to run before walking.
- Staff importance to program success.** The question of what makes a strong staff person for a program like STF is not directly addressed by this evaluation, but is revealed in participant focus groups as being an important element in program success, and could be another avenue for continued study.

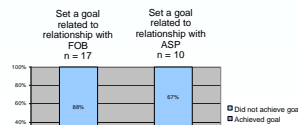
Results

Family relationships strengthened

Low percentage of referrals to child protective services

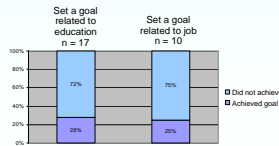


Goal attainment for treatment mothers who . . .

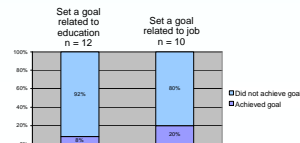


Families learn strategies to become self-sufficient

Goal attainment for treatment mothers who . . .

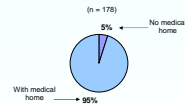


Goal attainment for FOBs who . . .

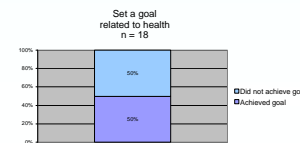


Families learn strategies to be safe and healthy

High percentage of treatment mothers with medical home



Goal attainment for treatment mothers who . . .

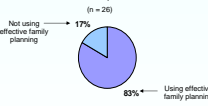


Teen mothers and fathers demonstrate responsible family planning

Percentage of treatment mothers who report using effective family planning techniques



Percentage of FOBs who report using effective family planning techniques



Low percentage of repeat pregnancies for treatment mothers

