Project Abstract Components for Outcome Assessment

Child Health Needs of Rural Alabama Latino Families

**Project description:**
Phase 1 involved conducting 16 focus groups with 89 Latino mothers and fathers to identify their perceptions of their children’s needs for child health services. We completed these focus groups and published a paper reporting our findings (Harrison, L. & Scarinci, I. (2007). Child health needs of rural Alabama Latino families. *Journal of Community Health Nursing.* 24(1), 31-47.)

Phase 2 involved developing a Latino Health Community Partnership in rural Marshall County Alabama. Multiple partnership meetings have been held, and the partnership members have adopted formal bylaws and elected a local Catholic priest to serve as chair and a Latina county extension agent to serve as vice-chair. A total of 75 different community members representing a variety of community agencies, churches, and Latino groups have participated in these meetings. The partnership members have identified three main initial goals: (a) development of a resource manual in English and Spanish; (b) developing and implementing parent education programs (one of the main needs identified by parents in the focus groups in Phase 1); and (c) developing a lay health promoter program. During Phase 2, the PI arranged for a trainer to come to Albertville from the Washington, D. C. office of the Pan American Health Organization to provide a 3-day training for 11 Latino community volunteers so that they could serve as group facilitators for a 7-session parent/adolescent education program entitled Familias Fuertes. These volunteers plan to implement the first parenting program using this curriculum starting July 28, 2007.

**Target Population:**
Latino migrant farmworkers and poultry plant workers in rural Marshall County, Alabama

**# Participants/Subjests/Observations:**
Phase 1: 89 Latino mothers and fathers participated in the focus groups
Phase 2: A total of 75 different individuals have participated in the Latino Health Partnership, and 11 volunteers received training in the Familias Fuertes Parenting program. These volunteers plan to implement the first 7-week parenting program with 14 Latino families starting July 28, 2007.

**PROJECT BUDGET:**
$20,000.00

**Specific Aims/Objectives:**
The aims for Phase 1 were to identify the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of Latino families working in agriculture in Albertville (Marshall County), Alabama related to:
1. physical and mental health needs of children;
2. parenting issues and concerns; and
3. services needed to address child health needs and parenting concerns.
The aims for Phase II were to host a Town Hall Meeting to share findings from focus groups and discuss plans to develop the Marshall County Latino Health Empowerment Taskforce; form a Marshall County Latino Health Empowerment Taskforce (LHET) (we later changed the name to the Latino Health Community Partnership of Marshall County); promote capacity building among taskforce members related to assessment of strengths and needs of the community, identification of program priorities, and development of plans and proposals to address these priorities; and offer two community health education programs based on priority needs identified during the focus group interviews.

In September 2006, we received approval to use carryover funds from Phase 1 and 2 to continue work begun in the Phase 1 and 2 pilot study grants by: (a) continuing to strengthen the Latino Health Community Partnership of Marshall County that was initiated during Phase 2 of the pilot grant; (b) offering training in the implementation of the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) to members of the Latino Health Community Partnership who are involved with or interested in developing parenting programs for members of the Latino community in Marshall County; (c) developing instruments that can be used to assess specific needs for adolescent and parent educational programs for Latino families in Marshall County, Alabama; and (d) working with community partners to plan a parent education intervention for Latino families based on the SFT program.

**Methods:**
Phase 1: We held 8 focus groups with Latina mothers and 8 focus groups with Latina fathers. Groups were facilitated by native Spanish speakers, and each group had a co-moderator who managed tape recorders and other technical aspects. All tapes were transcribed and then data were analyzed using a qualitative software analysis program. Findings from these focus groups have been published (Harrison, L. & Scarinci, I. (2007). Child health needs of rural Alabama Latino families. *Journal of Community Health Nursing.* 24(1), 31-47.)

Phase 2: An initial meeting was held at the Albertville Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the local Hispanic American Society, inviting a wide variety of community members to hear the results of the focus group surveys. A total of 36 people attended this initial meeting, in which we presented findings from the focus groups and discussed community interest in developing a Latino Health Community Partnership. There was great interest in this idea, seven additional meetings were held with the Latino Health Community Partnership of Marshall County between September 2006-September 2006. At the meeting held on September 15, 2006, the PI invited a wide range of people who worked with parenting programs in Marshall County, to explore potential for collaborating and sharing resources in development of parenting programs for Latino families. A total of 30 people attended this meeting, representing schools, health agencies, churches, and the court system. The PI presented information about a parenting curriculum that has been very successfully implemented with Latino families and with non-Latino families (Strengthening Families Program or Familias Fuertes). The PI had selected this program after an extensive review of the literature, and has been in touch with the program developers (Lee and Virginia Molgard, at Iowa State University). This program was translated into Spanish by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 2000, and the PI was able to arrange for a PAHO consultant (Sandra Hidalgo) to come to Albertville May 18-20, 2007 to provide a 3-day workshop to 11 Latino community volunteers to prepare them to be leaders of this parent/adolescent education program.

**Results:**
Phase 1 results: The main themes that emerged from the focus groups related to (a) What children need in order to be healthy; (b) Common children’s health problems; (c) What we do when children are ill; (d) Barriers to receiving health care; (f) Parenting issues and concerns; (g) Experiences with children’s schools; and (h) Services needed. The most frequently identified service needed was support/educational programs for parents.

Phase 2 results: The Latino Health Community Partnership of Marshall County has been successfully established with formal bylaws and a structure of officers and subcommittees. The Partnership meets at least once each quarter and subcommittees meet more often. The PI (Harrison) has worked closely with the parent education subcommittee, and arranged for training in the Familias Fuertes program in May 2007 for 11 Latino community volunteers. These volunteers plan to implement a Familias Fuertes 7-week program for 14 Latino families beginning July 28, 2007. We have also utilized a variety of instruments in a needs assessment of 149 Latino parents and adolescents (with funding from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing).

Conclusions:
The funding provided for these two pilot projects has allowed us to identify specific needs and concerns of a rural Alabama Latino community, most of whom work in agriculture or poultry production jobs. Based on the initial needs assessment, we have developed a successful Latino Health Community Partnership and prepared community members to offer parent and adolescent education programs.

Products:

Future Directions:
The PI plans to continue to seek funding to make refinements and evaluate the Familias Fuertes program with a rural agricultural Latino community in the south.

Additional Grants:
1. Needs Assessment for Latino Family Education Program - $10,000 from the University of Alabama School of Nursing to Lynda Harrison
2. Strengthening Families and preventing risky Health Behaviors in Honduran Youth – $20,000 from the UAB Sparkman Center on Global Health to PI Lynda Harrison – To implement and evaluate the Familias Fuertes program in Honduras.

Center /P.I. Contact Information:
Lynda Harrison, RN, PhD, FAAN
NB G019E
1530 3rd Avenue South
The University of Alabama at Birmingham
Birmingham, AL 35294-1210
Phone: (205) 934 6787
Email: HarrisoL@uab.edu