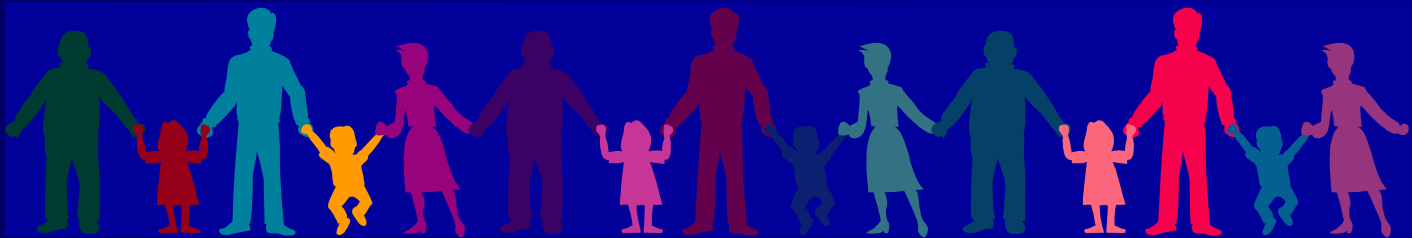


Working with Intergenerational Families to Increase Safety, Well-Being, and Permanency



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Overview

- Background & Research
- Intergenerational Family Assessment
- Comments from Grandparent Caregiver
- Group Discussion

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Unique needs of intergenerational families
- ✓ Risk and protective factors associated with child neglect in intergenerational families
- ✓ Principles and intervention strategies for working with intergenerational families to achieve increased safety, well-being, and permanency

Intergenerational Families

Why focus on intergenerational families?

- ✓ Intergenerational families represent a growing trend in child welfare. Many of these families face challenges that increase the likelihood that child maltreatment will occur.

Increasing Safety, Well-Being, Permanency

Why focus on neglect?

- ✓ Many families struggle to meet the basic needs of their children.
- ✓ Though the consequences of neglect are serious, we know less about the assessment and treatment of neglect than about other forms of child maltreatment.

Grandparent-Headed Households: A Growing Trend

- The majority of grandparents are between the ages of 55 and 64.
- 20 to 25% of grandparents are over 65.
- 4.5 million children live with their grandparents and one-third have no parent present in the home.
- Grandparents head 2.4 million households – 7% of all families with children < 18 (AARP, 2002).

A Growing Trend, Cont'd

- 82,678 Maryland children live in grandparent-headed households, an increase of 17% from 1990.
- In Baltimore City, 18% of the children are in grandparent-headed households.
- Maryland District 7 (Baltimore City and part of Baltimore Co.) has the 3rd highest % of children living in grandparent-headed households of all 435 Congressional Districts in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau).

Explaining the Trend

A number of factors have contributed to the increase in intergenerational households:

- Increase in drug abuse, especially crack cocaine
- AIDS
- Parental incarceration
- Divorce
- Teen pregnancy
- Rise in single-parent households
- Poverty
- Occurrences of child abuse and neglect

A Prevention Framework



Challenges & Stressors

Accumulation of risk factors, especially among African-American, urban grandparent caregivers:

- More likely to live in poverty (Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997; Kelley, et al., 2000).
- Providing long-term care (Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997).

Challenges & Stressors, Cont'd

- Increased psychological distress, social isolation, depression, deteriorating health (Kelley et al., 2000; Minkler & Fuller-Thomson, 1999).
- Intergenerational strain (Climo et al., 1999).
- Complex legal situations (Grant, 2000).

Challenges & Stressors, Cont'd

Grandchildren:

- Victims of abuse and neglect.
- Victims of domestic violence.
- Histories of living in unstable and chaotic households.
- Problem behaviors in school, home, and community.
- Emotional, academic difficulties and/or psychological or physical problems (e.g., Sands & Goldberg-Glen, 2000).

A Population in Need of Services

Though their needs are serious and unique, few programs assist intergenerational families. Grandparent caregivers often fall between the cracks of foster care, aging, education, and disability service systems.



Intervention Strategies for Working With Intergenerational Families

**Increasing Capacity
and
Reducing Risk**

Practice Principles

- Ecological developmental framework
- Community outreach
- Family assessment & tailored intervention
- Helping alliance with family
- Empowerment/strengths-based
- Cultural competence
- Outcome-driven service plans

Comprehensive Assessment

- Ecological perspective
- Family orientation in philosophy and practice
- Multiple sources
- Outcome driven

Family Assessment Form*

- Designed to integrate assessment, service plans, and documentation
- Subscales based on areas of family functioning
- Ecological perspective
- Assesses context
- Strengths and needs based

*Children's Bureau of Southern California, 1997.

Family Assessment Form

Family Functioning Factors

- Living Conditions
- Financial Conditions
- Supports to Caregivers
- Caregiver/Child Interaction
- Developmental Stimulation
- Interaction Between Caregivers

Family Assessment Form

Caregiver Factors

- Caregiver History
- Caregiver Personal Characteristics

Family Assessment Form

Behavioral Concerns

Observational Checklist

- Acting-Out Behaviors
- Inner-Directed Behaviors
- School Behavior Problems
- Health and Development Problems
- Temperament

Special Considerations

- Life Stage Issues
- Traumatized Children
- Attachment Challenges
- Intergenerational Conflict
- Legal Issues
- Health Care Issues

Intervention Services

- Crisis Intervention
- Emergency Assistance
- Individualized Outcomes-Based Services
- Individual and Family Counseling
- Advocacy
- Case Management
- Interdisciplinary Practice

Mrs. Robinson

Comments from a
Grandparent Caregiver

DISCUSSION

Questions?

Comments?



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