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Program Evaluation of Teen Parent Support Group

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PROGRAM EVALUATION OF TEEN PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

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A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

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by

Brianne Brophy

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ABSTRACT

This research study used qualitative methods to identify the specific components of a teen mother support group that participants found most helpful. The purpose of this research was to highlight the support group's unique traits that attribute to their success in aiding teen mothers in graduating from high school, obtaining higher education, obtaining stable employment, and achieving their parenting goals. The study is composed of one-on-one interviews with three teen mothers who have been connected to the support group for over eight years. The responses suggest that four components of the support group help teen mothers in achieving success in higher education, stable employment and goals related to parenting. The combination of support from leaders, support from other group members, resources and education allows members of the support group to succeed in achieving their goals. These findings contribute to social work research as it offers suggestions for future government programs to consider when working with teen mothers. The research is relevant as abortions as well as access to contraception becomes increasingly difficult.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Formulation

Teen pregnancy affects females under the age of twenty years old. There are 16.7 births per 1,000 girls ages 15-19 every year in the United States (CDC, 2021). This is the highest rate of teen pregnancies among developed nations (Pew Research Center, 2020). Teen pregnancy is an issue with long term effects that have the potential to change the course of the young mother's life. Research has shown that teen mothers are less likely to graduate high school or obtain a higher education compared to their peers who do not become teen parents (Bae, 2020).

There are several risk factors associated with teenage pregnancy. In regard to family dynamics that increase an individual's risk of teenage pregnancy, coming from a low-income family is a significant risk factor (Berry et al., 2000). Similarly, teenage girls whose parents had them when they were in high school is another risk factor (Berry et al., 2000). In regard to risk factors associated with the individual's personal actions and behaviors, having a history of substance use, and having low self-esteem are all also factors associated with teen pregnancy (Berry et al., 2000).

Research suggests certain minority groups are at a higher risk of becoming teen parents (Berry et al., 2000). Specifically, pregnancy rates among

American Indian/ Alaska Native, African American and Hispanic adolescent groups are the highest at 29.2, 25.8, and 23.5 per 1,000 females, respectively (CDC, 2021). Non-hispanic Black teens are affected by teen pregnancy two times the rate of non-hispanic white teens. However, American Indian/ Alaska Native teens are most affected by teen pregnancy compared to all ethnic groups (CDC, 2021).

High pregnancy rates among minority groups suggests there are unique risk factors. One study concluded, poverty is a specific risk factor common among teen parents who are African American and American Indian (Berry et al., 2000). Among White teens, both cigarette and marijuana use increase the likelihood of becoming a teen parent (Berry et al., 2000). However, among African American teens, only cigarette use increases the likelihood of becoming a teen parent (Berry et al., 2000). This may be due to African American teens smoking since the age of 10 or 11, without stopping once they become teenagers the way their white teen counterparts do (Mollborn et al., 2018).

Additionally, sexuality is another diversity factor to consider. Teen pregnancy is more common among teens who identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community (Rasberry et al., 2018). This is due to the lack of pregnancy prevention methods used and increased sexual risk behavior (Rasberry et al., 2018). A lack of standardized comprehensive sex education in schools negatively impacts LGBTQ students. This is due to the purposeful exclusion of discussions relating to gender and sexuality (Slater, 2013).

Furthermore, the absence of discussion around gender and sexuality highlights a heteronormative, nontransgender lifestyle that LGBTQ youth do not relate to.

On the other hand, the risks to the child of a teenage parent is also important to address. Children born to teenage parents are more likely than children born to older mothers to experience low birth weight, health problems, lower IQ and academic achievement, issues related to socio-economic status, having a fatal accident before turning a year old, and becoming a teen parent themselves (National Research Council et al., 1987). Even though teen pregnancy and birth rates have been declining, it remains a large social problem in the U.S. (Klein, 2005). Therefore, it is necessary to be aware of the risk factors for both teen mothers and their children.

The protective factors associated with teen pregnancy are high self-esteem, being involved with groups, practicing safe sex by using contraceptives, positive family relationships, and being involved with friends, school, and the community (Chung et al., 2018). Research has shown there are unique protective factors among different ethnic groups. African American and Hipanic teens are less likely to become teen parents if they experience high self-esteem (Berry et al., 2000). African American and White teens are also less likely to become teen parents if their mother received higher education (Berry et al., 2000). Similar to the association between teen mothers and their daughters becoming teen mothers themselves, mothers who obtain a higher education are less likely to have daughters who become teen mothers (East et al., 2016). By

understanding the protective factors, social workers can utilize more effective intervention tools for young parents.

In addition, there is one protective factor that all ethnicities currently lack in the U.S. The protective factor of a standardized curriculum for sexual education to be taught in schools (Rabbitte & Enriquez, 2018). Currently, most schools rely on abstinence-only education that has not been proven to be successful or unsuccessful (Rabbitte & Enriquez, 2018). However, research has shown, increasing sex education that is science based while simultaneously providing accessible resources for practicing safe sex can help lower the rate of teen pregnancy (Rabbitte & Enriquez, 2018). Therefore, providing updated and accurate sex education with obtainable resources is a step towards addressing the volume of teenage pregnancies in the U.S.

The Netherlands possesses a sex positive culture in which they do not discourage anyone from having sex, within reason, and with this comes comprehensive sex education taught in all schools (Williams-Breault 2020). In their culture they view older adolescents' sexuality as normal (Williams-Breault 2020). The curriculum includes information on how to be sexually responsible by using contraceptives, engaging teens in planning for their futures while discussing how a child can interfere with those plans and highlighting the importance of obtaining financial stability before starting a family (Williams-Breault, 2020). By adapting and mandating a standardized sexual education curriculum that is science based, comprehensive, and sex positive, the

Netherlands has successfully reduced the teen birth rate to only 4 births per 1,000 teens ages 15 to 19 (TheWorldBank, 2022). Adapting a similar curriculum can facilitate the decrease of teen pregnancy in the United States.

Additionally, other macro level policies that could create change among the population of teen mothers would target several risk factors such as poverty, the cycle of teen pregnancy among teens born to teen mothers, substance use, and self-esteem. These policies should also aim to increase protective factors such as self-esteem and encourage connectedness with friends, school and the community to promote a sense of belonging. While also considering the issue of nonstandardized sex education that lacks inclusiveness. These policies may encourage teen mothers to finish high school and obtain a higher education since teen mothers are more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who do not become pregnant (Macchia, Therriault, & Wood 2021). The proposed policies and programs should be directed towards fixing this statistic.

Purpose of the Study

The support group is a non-profit organization. The organization was founded in 2008 after the director ran into a struggling teen mother at a local food drive. The support group gathers seven months of the year on four high school campuses and one church building on a weekly or biweekly basis, depending on the school. The groups consist of the program director, board president, volunteers, and teen parents. However, once a month, on Thursday nights, the groups include members who have graduated high school and other adult

mentors. The teen parents who graduated offer emotional support and inspiring stories of hope to the teen parents working to finish high school and work to support their children. The adult mentors are volunteers with no official training who have been with the organization since 2011. The adult mentors lead separate groups for teen mothers and teen fathers to address the gender specific struggles they face as teen parents.

In addition to the separate support groups, the meeting once a month on Thursday nights provides educational training from professional nurses, speech language pathologists, lawyers, and other professionals. The guest speakers provide education on how to care for children when it comes to their physical, emotional, and spiritual health. In every meeting, leaders express the importance of school attendance and address the possible barriers parents have in getting to school. The teen parents are made aware of the community resources available to help them care for their children.

The support group provides educational and emotional support to teens at their schools to increase participation and success in graduating high school. The support group is a nonprofit program. However, studying their intervention techniques can shed light on improving the effectiveness of government programs as well. Macro level policies can encourage more funding for programs that help teen mothers. Macro level social workers should be looking into policies from other developed nations to better understand why the United States is so far behind. Studying the support group provides insight into how their program has

succeeded, despite the specific risk factors their community faces. Findings from this research can be used to advocate for policy change such as allocation, model program expansion, and sex education reform.

The support group has increased the graduation rate to 80% among teens who engage in their program. Only half of teen mothers graduate high school without community intervention (CDC, 2021). This research is interested in understanding how this program has been effective in supporting teen mothers in their educational goals. The program operates on high school campuses and a nearby church for meetings. The organization serves teen parents who live in San Bernardino County where 54.4% of the population is Hispanic or Latino (Census Bureau, 2020). The Hispanic community is at a higher risk of teen pregnancy than other ethnic groups (Akella, 2018).

Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice

Findings from this research may contribute to policy ideas on how social programs can support teen mothers in finishing their high school education. Additionally, information regarding how to break generational cycles of teen parenting. The findings impact social work practice at the micro level by providing insight into working with teen mothers. These findings impact social work practice at the macro level by providing information that can be used for model program expansion. This research explores one program that may be implementing the right practices to help teen mothers achieve their educational goals.

In addition, this research provides evidence, suggesting an approach to teen pregnancy that is sex positive and highlights how this may benefit social workers in their work with youth. It is not the role of the social worker to be another authority figure in a teen's life. Instead, social workers must support teens and their decisions. By doing so, social workers must understand that being a teen mother is a choice some of the youth make purposefully, respecting that choice is key in helping them be successful parents. This research helps social workers working with teen mothers by providing them with evidence which supports the idea that teen mother support groups are a high indicator of educational success among participants.

This study aimed to address the question, what components of the support group for teen mothers contribute to the program's effectiveness in achieving success in higher education, stable employment and goals related to parenting among participants?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter examines research considering what teen mothers need to be successful in the future. The subsections discuss how teen pregnancy affects teen mothers, the effect of participation in support groups, and the rate of educational success among pregnant teens. Using social learning theory, the final subheading explores how previous researchers have studied teen pregnancy.

Support for Teen Mothers

Teen Mothers

The teen pregnancy rate has been declining since 1991 and continues to decline today (CDC, 2021). However, teen pregnancy remains an issue due to several factors. First, the lack of access to reproductive resources (Anastas, 2016). Second, the lack of standardized sex education among states also increases the likelihood of teens becoming parents (Anastas, 2016). Third, society does not have a consensus on how to support teens once they have a child in obtaining their goals (Anastas, 2016). Therefore, there are multiple factors negatively impacting teens and increasing their likelihood of becoming teen parents.

There are risk factors that contribute to young women becoming teen mothers. Some common risk factors are, coming from a low income family, being born to teen mothers, having a history of substance use, and having low self-esteem (Berry et al., 2000). Previous research has focused on how to alleviate these risk factors to protect young teen girls from becoming pregnant. However, the programs that have been researched thus far focus mainly on comprehensive sex education (Rabbitte & Enriquez, 2018). Teens who are at higher risk of becoming teen mothers are facing more challenges than improper sex education alone (Stange, 2011).

Teen mothers are fifty percent more likely to drop out of high school than their female counterparts who do not become pregnant (CDC, 2021). School based programs for parenting teens began in the 1960s, however, there is a lack of current research on their effectiveness (Roosa, 1986). Teen mothers face specific challenges when they attempt to finish school such as stigma against teen parenting held by their teachers and peers (Watson & Vogel, 2017). Therefore, teen parent support groups made up of teen mothers and adult staff is the most valuable resource for teen mothers to learn how to parent, how to utilize local resources, and to find motivation to finish school.

Support Groups

Studies have shown there are multiple factors associated with long term success for teen mothers (Pinzon etal., 2012). Completing high school before becoming pregnant is one example. Program participation has been found to aid

teen mothers in gaining success to graduate high school (Pinzon etal., 2012). Additionally, teen mothers who wait at least two years before having their next child are more likely to experience success in obtaining a job and/or higher education (Pinzon etal., 2012). Overall, when teen mothers can complete high school, receive social support, and make active decisions to wait before having their next child, they gain control over their life. These factors encourage teen mothers to reach for even more success (Pinzon et al., 2012).

The literature is not clear on how attendance correlates to positive outcomes in support groups. However, there is literature that focuses on the importance of various sources of support offered to teen mothers. One study examined who teen mothers utilize for support and which forms of support seem to be most beneficial for teen mothers. Their findings suggest teen mothers who have the support of their family, friends, partner, and older adults who care for them have been found to be more successful and report feeling more confident in their parenting abilities (Letourneau et al., 2004).Therefore, it is important for teen mothers to feel supported in order for them to be successful in the future.

Thus far, research on teen mothers in support groups is lacking. There is little information on how various levels of participation affect educational success rates of teen mothers. There is research regarding programs that helped teen mothers with graduating high school. However, these studies do not specify how the program was able to accomplish this. Furthermore, research on teen mothers attending college is scarce as most studies focus on teens graduating high

school. My research explores the importance of participation in support groups as it relates to helping teen mothers graduate from high school and continue on to college.

Support groups can be the most effective for helping teen mothers achieve their educational goals due support groups providing a comprehensive approach. In support groups teen mothers can address their social-emotional, physical, and financial needs. The risk factors teen mothers face are caused, in part, by the environments that do not change after they give birth to their child (Stange, 2011). Helping teen mothers solely with their struggles related to motherhood fails to address the other daily challenges those teens face that contributed to them becoming teen mothers. By attending a support group a mother may learn more information about how to care for her child, how to obtain financial help, and how to take steps for family planning from guest speakers and their fellow group members. Therefore, support groups offer more than one form of support at once allowing mothers to be supported from many different aspects.

Education

Completing high school, obtaining a GED and continuing into higher education are essential tasks for teen mothers who wish to provide for their family. However, studies show that pregnant teens are less likely to graduate from high school (Diaz & Fiel, 2016). The CDC reports that only half of teen mothers graduate high school (CDC, 2021). Pregnant teens who do not graduate from high school, may take a test to receive their General Education

Development (GED). However, a diploma and the GED are not equivalent when measuring the opportunities one finds available to them upon receiving the documents (Diaz & Fiel, 2016). Therefore, not graduating from high school affects the pregnant teens' likelihood to go to college, have a well-paying job, and live comfortably in the future.

An article discussing the advantages and disadvantages of teen parent programs reports that there is research needed to show how programs help teen parents over time. The advantage of the proposed study on the support group is that most of the participants are teen mothers who have been a part of the program for many years after they graduated high school. This provides the researcher with information about the success of teen mothers who attended the support group after they graduated high school (Chrisler & Moore, 2012). The article highlights three programs that have been shown to positively affect teen mothers' educational success. However, the article does not discuss what the program did to specifically help the teen mothers with their education. As the article states, there needs to be more research on this topic for the purpose of creating programs that are proven effective in helping teen mothers obtain an education.

A study focusing on the cumulative inequalities faced by teen mothers explains that teen mothers are less likely to attend college (Bae, 2020). This may be due to lack of childcare, support from family and friends, and lack of money to pay for transportation or supplies for classes. Teenage pregnancy is found to

deprive the teen mother of certain opportunities, and for this reason studies have shown that these lead to other opportunity costs in such a way that it resembles the snowball effect (Diaz & Fiel, 2016). Teens who have children during their years in high school are less likely to go to college. Research has shown that those who do continue on to receive a college degree have higher rates of success in the future (Bae, 2020). Current literature is focused on pregnant teens graduating high school more than on attending college. There is not enough literature on the effects of teen mothers obtaining higher education.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

The theory most used in literature on adolescent pregnancy is social learning theory. This theory was created by Albert Bandura in 1977. He proposed people learn by observing the actions of others and imitating them (Bandura,1977). Researchers apply Bandura's theory to adolescent pregnancy by highlighting the importance of social support for teen mother's success. The literature defines multiple common sources of support for teen mothers and discusses how each support system positively impacts the parent's future success.

Participation in support groups increases teen's knowledge of how to care for their children and themselves through social learning theory. Teens may find support in their families, partner, and friends (Perrin & Dorman, 2003). These supports offer education on how to care for the children and increase the mother's feelings of confidence. Mentors from teen mothers support groups

encourage participants to seek employment and educational opportunities.

Mentoring and peer learning provides tremendous support to parenting teens.

Social learning theory could be used to understand how teens in support groups

fare better than those teens who do not join groups (Ledbetter, 2003).

<center>Gaps in Literature</center>

There are few articles that focus on the success of pregnant teens (Perrin

& Dorman, 2003). There are studies on how teens succeed in certain programs,

but scarce literature on how the teen mothers define their success and how being

a part of the program helped them. The group studied was not afraid to ask

questions and be advocates for themselves and their children. By asserting

themselves in this way, the parents can control their own learning experience in

the group so it can be tailored to their specific needs. Additionally, there is

currently a lack of literature discussing the importance of teen mothers attending

college. There needs to be more research done to understand how teens can be

supported in obtaining a higher education.

There is also a clear gap in the literature when discussing higher

education among pregnant teens. Going to college is one of the best ways teen

mothers can help themselves and their family live comfortably. Going to college

allows teens the opportunity to find stable employment with benefits for them and

their family (Bae, 2020). More research is needed that follows teens after they

graduate high school. This provides researchers, social workers, and program

<center>15</center>

developers with an understanding of what pregnant teens are capable of and what resources they need to help them be successful.

There is a need for research on teen mother support groups that discusses the specifics of how support groups are provided. The literature lacks clarification of different varieties and combinations including setting and frequency may affect the teen mother's educational outcomes. Lastly, the literature does not explain the difference between informal social support from friends and family and formal social support from teen parent programs that offer organized support groups made up of adults and other teen mothers.

Summary

This study explores how participation in the support group contributes to teen mother's educational success. Parenting teens require support from their family, friends, and other knowledgeable adults to be successful in life after their baby is born. This study explores how the practices of a small nonprofit support group for teen mothers is helping their members be more academically successful in the future. Most importantly, this study explores the significance of regular participation in the support group for teen mothers academic success.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

This study aimed to understand how participation in support groups can help teen mothers succeed in their education. This chapter discusses the process of how the study was conducted. The sections of this chapter are as follows, study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects, and data analysis.

Study Design

The purpose of this study is to identify how participation in support groups aids teen mothers in their academic success. This is an exploratory research project that aimed to explore how one nonprofit organization utilizes support groups to encourage young mothers to finish their education. This study explores the relationship between attending support groups and educational outcomes. Previous research on support groups for teen mothers have not focused on the mother's perspective as it relates to their educational success. Through the use of one-on-one interviews with teen mothers who have engaged in the support group since they were in high school, this researcher conducted a qualitative study.

A strength of using exploratory research is its qualitative nature. Utilizing research methods such as interviews allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the problem from an insider's perspective. This method allows the participants to share their story. The perspective of teen mothers is rarely included in research, especially in regards to education. One-on-one interviews provide the participants with a safe place to share their struggles and their successes without the pressure of possibly being judged by other participants.

A limitation of using exploratory research is that using one-on-one interviews can be time consuming. There is also a possibility the researcher may unintentionally create a bias depending on how a question is asked. In addition, interviews do not allow the participants to provide their responses anonymously. This may cause the participant to hold back on some responses out of fear the interviewer may judge them.

This study seeks to answer this question regarding educational attainment among teen mothers: How does participation in the support group for teen mothers affect their rate of success in graduating high school and obtaining a higher education?

Sampling

The researcher contacted the director of the support group for the purpose of obtaining a letter of consent to study their program and its participants. This study utilized a non-random purposive sample of teen mothers who have engaged in a teen mother support group. The researcher attended a meeting and

invited mothers who have attended the group before, have at least one child, and are 18 years or older to sign up for interviews to be taken place via zoom. The participants were selected only from the group that meets Thursday nights at the church.

This sample was chosen due to the high likelihood that the mothers attending this group have been a part of the organization longer than groups located on high school campuses. In addition, the mothers attending this group are also more likely to be 18 years or older, reaching the age to obtain higher education. The researcher also provided a flier to be posted on the support group facebook and instagram page that included a summary of the study and its purpose. The flier displayed a QR code that directed participants to a short survey made up of questions to further determine their eligibility to engage in the study. The researcher aimed to include individual interviews with 7-10 female subjects.

Data Collection and Instruments

Due to the research design being qualitative in nature, qualitative data collection methods such as interview guides and audio recording of the zoom meetings to later be transcribed and coded. Participants engaged in completing one-on-one interviews with the researcher via zoom where the meeting was recorded. Participants were asked demographic information for the purpose of identifying their age, highest level of education achieved, how many children they currently have, and how long they have been a member of the support group.

The participants were asked the following questions in a semi-structured manner to allow participants to share information they feel is important, but may not be asked by the interviewer.

Information about the support group:

1. How did you hear about the program?

2. How long have you been a part of the support group?

3. Have you attended every meeting?

4. What were you hoping the program would do for you?

5. In your own words, describe your experience with the support group. What has been helpful? What has not been helpful?

6. What were the specific components of the support group that helped you the most? For example, the guest speakers, group leaders, sharing among other teen mothers, etc.?

Support

7. How has the support group supported you emotionally during your pregnancy and after your baby was born?

8. How has the support group offered you assistance throughout your pregnancy and after your baby was born? Did they provide you transportation, housing, diapers, etc.?

9. How has the support group helped you learn how to care for your child?

Education:

10. Before joining the support group, what were your educational/ vocational goals? What are they now? What experiences, if any, made the most impact on your educational/ vocational goals?

11. What specific components of the support group program affected your educational/ vocational goals? Please explain more about how it affected you.

12. What experiences in the support group, if any, made an impact on your thoughts about going to college?

The goals of these questions were to understand how attending support groups helped participants achieve their goals regardless of the challenges faced as teen mothers. The researcher utilized probing questions and furthering responses to derive more information from the interviewers for the purpose of understanding the participant's personal experiences.

Procedures

The researcher attended a meeting to introduce the researcher's background and purpose of conducting such a study. The researcher informed the participants of status and role as an Master of Social Work (MSW) student conducting a research project for the purpose of completing a university requirement for graduation. Participants were handed a sign up sheet that asks for their name, email, and phone number to allow the researcher to contact them at a later date for the purpose of conducting interviews. Participation was voluntary and participants were allowed to revoke their consent at any time. Data

collection took place where the participants were most comfortable and could access their computer and internet. The researcher invited the participants to individual zoom meetings that were recorded. The researcher conducted the interviews, transcribed and coded them, with the help of one research supervisor. To further increase participation, participants were allowed to choose a time that best fits their schedule.

Protection of Human Subjects

Confidentiality of each participant was maintained. Participants had the option of keeping their cameras off and changing the name that appears on zoom to further protect their identity. In addition, the audio recordings, transcribed audio, and any documents related to coding were kept on the researcher's laptop secured with a password. The documents were kept in a google drive provided by the university that is encrypted and further protected by a multilayered password procedure using duo mobile. The researcher provided pseudo names for each participant to further protect their identity. Each participant was emailed a consent form to read prior to the scheduled interview and were asked to provide verbal consent before the interview began. Participants were provided an opportunity to debrief upon completion of each interview. Finally, it is important to note this study protocol was approved by the California State University San Bernardino Institutional Review Board.

Data Analysis

Due to the exploratory nature of this research, the best way to analyze the data from the interviews this researcher conducted, is to utilize open, axial, and selective coding techniques. This bottom up, post positivist approach of qualitative analysis allowed the generation of new ideas and concepts to be derived from the research. Allowing the research to guide theory rather than the theory to guide the research, ensured the unbiased nature of the findings. Conducting research that is not centered around a theory also removes barriers when conducting interviews.

This researcher completed the following steps of data analysis. After completing an interview, the researcher transcribed the audio and began to analyze the textual data for common themes, continuing to analyze each interview after it is completed. Once all interviews were completed, transcribed, analyzed and coded this researcher analyzed the codes for common themes. This researcher organized the themes and their corresponding textual data into a table. Once all of the themes were identified, this researcher analyzed them again to find how they may be related to each other. Finally, once all the interviews were analyzed, codes were created, and correlations were identified this researcher analyzed the data once more for the purpose of identifying how the codes relate to a theory that answers the research question.

Summary

        This study explored the correlation between attending the support group

and academic success among teen mothers. One-on-one interviews allowed

participants to share their experiences in the support groups and describe how

participation in the support group helped them achieve their academic goals.

Qualitative data collection and analysis were used to explore the effectiveness of

participation in the support group on academic achievement among teen

mothers.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of this research. The research question is, what components of the support group for teen mothers contribute to the program's effectiveness in achieving success in higher education, stable employment and goals related to parenting among participants? Due to the qualitative nature of this research, the data is made up of interviews. Recruitment for participants began in December of 2021 when this researcher attended an in-person meeting for the support group. At this time the researcher passed around a sign up sheet for anyone interested in participating. During this time seven mothers provided their contact information to be interviewed. In November 2022, this researcher contacted the director of the support group asking her to post a flier requesting more participants on the support groups instagram and facebook page. The first interview took place in October 2022. The final interview took place in November 2022. This researcher sent emails to begin interviews in November 2022 and continued to send follow up emails requesting participants until December 2022. However, many participants did not respond or follow through with scheduled meeting times.

This research consists of three one-on-one interviews conducted by the researcher with mothers who are over 18 years old and have graduated high

school or completed the GED. Each interview varied in length, the longest being 44 minutes and the shortest being 10 minutes. All participants were asked the same twelve questions, six relating to participation in the support group, three relating to support and three relating to education.

Upon completion of all three interviews, this researcher printed the transcripts and read them several times to begin identifying themes in the responses. Then, each of the printed transcripts were color coded to highlight the themes. The color coding consisted of five colors: purple, green, orange, blue and yellow. Purple indicated any section of the interview that discussed emotional support participants received or felt from leaders. Green indicated support from leaders in the form of resources. Orange indicated a section discussing group dynamics and support from other mothers. Blue indicated a section in which the participants share about the meaningful education they received from guest speakers. Lastly, yellow indicated a section discussing intrinsic motivation and breaking generational cycles.

Presentation of Findings

The following section defines themes and highlights the importance of each component as it relates to the success of teen mothers in the support group support group. There are five emerging themes compiled from the three interviews. First, the support from leaders. Second, resources provided by the support group through direct contact with leaders or from guest speakers. In addition to providing resources, the participants highlighted the importance of the

26

leaders following up to ensure the resources were helpful and providing transportation if needed. Third, group dynamics and support from the other teen mothers in the support group. Fourth, education from guest speakers. Lastly, the theme of intrinsic motivation and how the mothers were able to break generational cycles related to poverty, education, and parenting styles.

<u>Support From Leaders</u>

Participants highlighted the importance of having leaders who care about them as teen mothers and accept them. Participant 1 expanded on how the support group is different from other support groups.

> Back then I used to be completely different. I had all these face piercings, like super dark hair, that kind of alternative style. So I was used to people assuming, of course you would get pregnant. But the group leaders were actually the first people I think in my life to never judge me based on my looks. They weren't like I said, stereotyping me or judging me for being pregnant at 16.

To this participant it was very important to not feel judged for her looks. In addition, the participant explained that she felt welcomed and accepted.

Similarly, participant 2 reported her observation of the dedication and commitment the leaders have for the members of the support group.

> I think it's the love and compassion that the mentors have, they're so genuine to, to help out of their heart, this is something that they're so passionate about, and you can feel it, you literally are so comfortable

there, you know that nothing is ever going to get judged. And I think that's

what makes it so different. They just want to help and you feel it.

This participant discussed how the leaders want to help the teen mothers and

they are able to do that by creating safe spaces where the mothers feel

comfortable sharing their needs.

In addition, participants shared that the leaders regularly check in with

them to ask how they are doing and if they are in need of any resources or

supplies for their families, but also to sincerely ask about how they are feeling as

teen mothers. "I would say the leaders because when they know something's

wrong, they don't just give up, they push to make sure that you're okay."

Participant 3 further expanded stating the leaders are always, "walking with us

like walk me through my journey side by side and seeing my improvements and

see how I am as a person and how my needs are different from another mother's

needs." For all participants, the aspect of checking in on them was an essential

component to the success of the support group.

Lastly, participant 1 shared about how the leaders are a role model for

her. The participant reflected on how one of the leader's husband is a pilot,

acknowledging, "I can live comfortably. I don't have to live, struggling to pay rent,

you know, this doesn't have to be my life, like, I can enjoy my home, my cars, my

health, my family." The majority of teen mothers in the support group are low

income and the majority of leaders are middle class. This participant shares how

the leaders inspire her to work hard in order to live like them one day.

The data suggests that emotional support from leaders was an integral component of the success of teen mothers in the support group. As evidenced by each participant discussing how the leaders of the group showed them constant support throughout their pregnancy and after their children were born. The level of support from these leaders was incredible. It is almost as if these leaders are on call for their members, ready to help at any time with no questions asked. Emotional support was provided in the form of encouragement to be consistent in attending the support group, empowerment to reach their goals, and unconditional positive regard for the mothers trying their best.

Resources

The support group provides resources by having guest speakers who present information about various topics such as car seat safety, sewing, self care, etc. However, the participants shared that the leaders would also provide them with other resources. One participant mentioned,

> They provided like baby stuff, you know, like clothing wise, they provided diapers, like you said, um, some furniture, blankets for the winter. My daughter would always get like some outfits and like some toys. And even like, with us, like we would also get like little gift cards.

By the support group providing these basic necessities, teen mothers were able to care for their children adequately.

Another participant echoed these statements,

The biggest help was diapers. They offered me volunteer work for a

certain time and you can pick out of you know, you can pick out of their

pile whatever I always did. They always offer diapers at the end of the

classes. And the classes that they referred to me, they provided a gas

card a gift card to to Target and I went to every single class during my

pregnancy so that I was able to buy my own crib. So when my daughter

was born I was able to provide something for my child either way, I wasn't

working so it felt nice. Do you need anything we can provide it for you

whether it was formula or clothes or like groceries basic necessities was

awesome to know that I had if I needed it.

Due to coming from low income backgrounds, the teen mothers struggle to afford

basic necessities for them and their children. Therefore, it is an essential

component for the support group to offer these resources to the mothers for free.

Other mothers received resources for their mental health. Whether the

mother had been struggling with mental health before becoming a teen mother or

they developed postpartum depression, all participants shared about the

resources the support group linked them to for services. One participant stated

the support group, "helped me with counseling, like postpartum counseling

finding support after having a baby." Some participants shared the reality in their

households growing up that did not believe in mental health and would disregard

their symptoms. Therefore, having support from leaders at the support group

allowed the participants to receive the help they needed.

In addition, participants shared how leaders helped them with resources such as building a resume, providing a letter of recommendation, and assistance with completing a FAFSA application for college. Participants shared that their families were not willing to help them with finding a job or applying for college and they felt comfortable asking the leaders of the support group. One participant shared,

> I've never had friends or like none of my friends at that time parents went to college, you know, they were all Like either immigrants or they all dropped out of school. My parents, you know, my mom's high just he she did on high school that was the highest she went and my dad was middle school, like, you know, so navigating all that the application process, I mean, they weren't checking in, like, they were telling me about programs that I was like, what's that? What's FAFSA? So what's this?

While not all leaders are expected to have degrees in order to volunteer to help the teen mothers, some do have degrees and others are willing to help the mother's pursue their dreams and support them however they can.

The leaders of the teen mother's support group supported members by providing resources. During the interviews, participants mentioned that they attended additional classes, worked as volunteers, engaged in behavioral health therapy, and received gas cards from the support group leaders. It is clear that the leaders were prepared to help their members with anything they needed, even if that meant referring them to a different group for additional education and

services. The willingness of group leaders to drop everything to help find a resource for group members is a component of the support group that sets them apart from other teen mother support groups.

<u>Group Dynamics</u>

Another important aspect of the support group echoed by each participant is the connection to other teen mothers. Participant 1 explained that it is specifically their shared experience of trauma that brings them together.

> I think the girls understood what I went through even though we all experienced adversities differently. I feel like in a sense, a lot of us connect because a lot of us had that trauma. You know, like, either domestic violence or abusive parents or substance use I feel like at least one thing always we always connected with something. They're a really good support system because it's like you weren't alone, they knew what it felt like to be pregnant so young or be abandoned or be judged…

To this participant, it was essential to connect with other teen mothers who not only have pregnancy in common, but also a shared experience of trauma.

On the other hand, participant 3 explained that she used the support group to learn from other teen mothers who already had multiple children or had older children, stating she learned from their experience.

> I went back to the class and the support group and they reminded me that every mom goes through different roads, and you're doing great as long

as your kids are happy. And that reminder was so awesome to have as a

support from the group.

Other teen mothers normalizing the struggles of teen parenting was helpful for this participant.

In addition to learning from each other's experiences and bonding over similar backgrounds, teen mothers empower each other to stay motivated. One participant stated during her time with the support group, "you just build a lot of friendships and great relationships with empowering women". To this participant, the older teen mothers role modeled success in a way she did not think was possible and she felt empowered by their stories. This sentiment is also echoed by another participant when she stated, "I see the resilience and I think it also makes you want to go forward and makes you want to continue and help other people". She mentions that she is empowered by the resilience of the other teen mothers.

The support group allows teen mothers to bond with each other in a unique way. Participants expressed gratitude for having a group of other teen mothers who had similar backgrounds. The participants shared about their experiences attending park days, Christmas parties, and pool parties with each other outside of the support group setting, stating it allowed them to get to know each other. Participants also shared how these events provided opportunities for their children and themselves to receive gifts. These are examples of how the support group aids in creating positive relationships between group members.

Providing opportunities for group members to meet outside of the traditional support group setting proves to be beneficial to the level of participation the group receives.

<u>Education From Guest Speakers</u>

Participants shared the classes provided by various professionals during the support group meetings that helped them learn basic skills of how to care for their child, signs to look for to help diagnose their child early with autism, as well as tips on how to practice self care. Each participant listed all the lessons that stood out to her during her time with the support group. One participant expressed,

> The speakers were very helpful. I think the resources in the classes they provide. I think the last one I went to was sewing. I can easily sew now or like it was very meditating and a good coping skill actually. And I think they do budgeting. I remember the budgeting classes and car seat safety classes, those were also very helpful because it's like, small little things can be life changing.

This participant identified that the information from the speakers was important because she knew there was no one else in her life who was willing to teach her how to be a mother or help her with her child.

Another participant expressed gratitude for the speakers who helped her identify the signs of autism in her own son. She mentioned,

We had a special speaker come from a school that shows early signs and

that kind of triggered me like, Okay, now my son is bobbing his head. He

has little tics, he has like he's retracting in his speech. If I didn't go to the

classes, if I didn't know, I don't think I would even realize that everything

put together can be on the spectrum, because individually, it could just be

his personality. That's what I'm really grateful for.

The speakers come from all backgrounds and share general information about

children and their development. However, the mothers are always given time to

ask questions if they have specific concerns for their child.

In addition to providing helpful information and resources, the

speakers themselves are often seen as role models for the mothers. Participant 1

shared about a speaker who changed her perspective. She said,

There was a speaker that I think plays at their Christmas parties. I know

he was like a recovering addict. I think that was one thing that kind of

made me keep going. Because he, in the beginning, talked about his life.

And you can tell he has all this pain in him. He's kind of like, keeping his

composure, but yet again, I keep hearing it in his voice. I think that's

something I'll always remember because it's like, people are capable of

change. You know, we have someone right here in front of us that was

using all these drugs. And yet, now it's like they spend their time in

programs like this trying to help other moms or teen moms or other

people.

The variety of speakers the support group provides allows the mothers to learn from and connect to the speakers in a way they may not connect to the leaders.

Similarly, participant 2 explained how many different speakers she has met through the support group. She explained that,

By bringing in a lot of different speakers, into the groups, you know, like doctors, like car seat safety, you know, like CHP officers, and just different leaders have been able to speak and share their experiences have helped a lot.

Therefore, the mothers find the guest speakers and the information provided to be one of the most helpful aspects of the support group.

While not all group members attend college after high school, the education provided by presenters during the weekly meetings proved to be beneficial for the participants. Presenters ranging from police officers to speech language pathologists, the participants shared how helpful the information was. Members were able to diagnose their children earlier with autism than they would if the information was never presented to them. Members are allowed to ask questions at the end of each meeting and often they do not feel nervous to ask due to the group being small and intimate. the support group goes above and beyond to link group members to the necessary resources, but also provides the opportunity for the resources to come to the members by inviting guest speakers to share their knowledge and answer questions the teen mothers may have. This is a key component to the support group's success in helping teen mothers feel

confident in their decisions to obtain stable employment, continue their education, or be a stay at home parent.

<u>Intrinsic Motivation and Resilience</u>

Two of the participants shared openly about their experiences as teen mothers who needed to advocate for themselves and work hard to provide for their children. While they explained how the support group helped them they also explained that they needed to be the ones to ultimately do the work to ensure their children had a positive future. One participant shared an experience from high school,

> Once I was in AP classes, I was receiving support from the support group. Having that connection, I think I knew I wanted to do something differently. I knew I wanted to help people, just because I was facing so many adversities in school. I was always like my own advocate… So I felt like at that moment, I was like, you know, I can be doing this and helping other people that don't have a voice or that don't know that there's other options for them. And just because they have depression, or just because they're different doesn't mean that they should not get the equal opportunities as someone who doesn't have these barriers.

This example shows how resilient teen mothers need to be in a society that dismisses them once they become pregnant.

The teen mothers also explained how they broke generational cycles in their families in regard to mental health awareness and parenting in general. One participant explained,

> The last thing I want is for the cycle to continue and for her to fall into a mental state of I'm alone. Let me find a man because that's kind of where I felt when I realized that that's why I got pregnant at 16. The first man who ever paid attention to me, I was like, Oh, he adores me because I don't have that. I've never had anybody tell me they love me until I met this man.

Not allowing her daughter to feel alone and remaining actively involved in her life is important to this participant. She further explained, "my parents both went to university, and they were both very unhappy with their careers. And they were always stressed out and coming home overwhelmed. And I knew that I didn't want that". This participant highlighted the importance of not making the same mistakes she felt her parents made with her.

In addition, teen mothers who experienced violence in their homes growing up, acknowledged that they would not allow their children to suffer from the same childhood trauma. Participant 1 shared how the support group opened her eyes to a different way of parenting,

> I know the leaders are very big on patience, listening to the children instead of right away hitting them. It's like, no, let's sit down, let's listen like, what are you dealing with? What's going on? What's making you do

this? To me when I first heard them say that I was like, hold on, hold on, like, like, this is so different. I don't hit my child. I've always wanted to break that generational cycle, you know, so I think seeing it, and then implementing it with my own children and explaining in the classes. I think that really did help my parenting I think the most, because if you come from something that's been going on for so many years, it's hard to break that cycle.

The support group provided the knowledge about parenting differently. However, the participant acknowledged that she would be the person breaking the generational cycle as she actively made the decision to not hit her child.

The majority of group members are Hispanic/Latino. The participants shared how attending the support group allowed them to break generational cycles such as having patience with their children instead of using physical punishment, obtaining higher education, and accepting help for mental health. The members of the support group are not judged for their looks or their backgrounds, each of them are accepted as they are and are encouraged to participate in the group as much as they want. The resilience of the teen mothers is a personal trait that the support group did not instill in group members. However, the support group provided the opportunities that allowed group members to achieve their goals.

Summary

The support group provides multiple services to the teen mothers in their

groups. The themes highlighted in this chapter suggest that the most beneficial

services are support from leaders, resources, group dynamics, and education

from guest speakers. In addition to the services, there was also a common theme

of intrinsic motivation in the teen mothers to provide their children with a better

childhood than they experienced growing up.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter further interprets the importance of themes described in the previous chapter. The themes of support, both emotional and in the form of resources, education, group dynamics, and intrinsic motivation to break generational cycles have been established. First, this chapter begins by interpreting the importance of the themes by describing the difference between the support provided by the support group and the support provided by government funded programs. Next, this chapter provides discussion on the relevance of the topic of supporting teen mothers and their children given the current political climate. Then, this chapter identifies limitations to this study. Finally, this chapter outlines implications for social work practice, policy and research.

Discussion

The purpose of this research is to identify the components of this specific teen mother support group that aid in their success. The research question is what components of the support group for teen mothers contribute to the

program's effectiveness in achieving success in higher education, stable

employment and goals related to parenting among participants? The first theme,

emotional support from leaders, is made clear by the data. The participants

explained the level of dedication each leader had to help them achieve their

goals. While it is understandable for employees of government funded programs

to practice healthy boundaries with support group members, the level of

dedication to help teen mothers succeed should be modeled after the leaders of

the support group.

The second theme, resources from group leaders, further outlines the

lengths to which the leaders go to support their members. However, there are

often unfortunate circumstances where government agencies only provide

resources to other agencies that they are partnered with. Government funded

programs should be more willing to provide all resources to group members

regardless of previous partnerships.

The third theme, group dynamics, highlights the importance of

unifying the group members and encouraging them to engage with each other

inside and outside of the support group. By doing so, members find they feel less

alone and learn from older group members who have experience. As previously

mentioned, boundaries are an important practice for professionals who work for

government funded programs. However, this research suggests that providing

group members the opportunity to meet with each other outside of the group

increases attendance and overall engagement with the support group.

The fourth theme, education from group leaders, highlights the fact that participants want to learn and want to be the best parents for their children. Providing access to free education is an essential component of the support group success. This may be difficult for government funded programs due to the fact that speakers may expect to be compensated by the program for their time. Regardless, the education component of the support group is highlighted by participants as one of the most important aspects of the group.

Finally, the last theme, intrinsic motivation to break generational cycles, says more about the participants than it does the support group. However, the support group provides the education and the resources to break the generational cycles. It is essential for government funded programs to be aware of how generational cycles may impact teen mothers and their ability to access and/or accept the information and resources provided by the support group.

It is important to note the differences between a for-profit and a nonprofit organization. The support group is a nonprofit group that utilizes donations from the community and the help of volunteers to keep the program running. These organizations are often more mission driven which allows them to focus on providing a service that can benefit an individual or community. For-profit organizations, on the other hand, focus on selling a product or service to their customers with the full intention of making a profit.

Limitations

This research relies heavily on the information collected from interviewing participants who have experienced the support group from when they first learned they were pregnant in high school to graduating high school and now providing for their children while working or attending college. This information requires the participants to be 18 or older and remain in communication with the support group. Due to the program mainly consisting of new teen mothers who are not 18 and have only been with the support group a short time, this contributed to this researcher only finding three willing participants. While attempts to combat this limitation were made, by meeting members who attend Thursday night meetings and posting a flier to social media, an additional barrier was discovered.

This researcher collected seven responses from interested members who saw the flier on social media. However, once emailed and asked to provide days and times for which they were available to be interviewed, there were no responses. In one example, this researcher emailed an interested member twenty-two times in attempts to schedule and reschedule for an interview. In an attempt to help this researcher, the program director offered support group members a Starbucks gift card as incentive to participate in this research. However, no additional members responded. Therefore, the largest limitation of this study is the small number of participants who engaged in an interview.

In addition, out of the three interviews conducted, only two proved substantial. The first interview took thirty-eight minutes to complete and the third took forty four minutes. The second interview totaled ten minutes and seven seconds. While the second interview was considerably shorter than the other two, the participant's responses echoed many of the same sentiments collected from the other interviews. Therefore, the second interview suggested the researcher met quota and additional participants would not be necessary, only to reiterate the same themes that the other participants identified and explained in depth.

Implications for Social Work Practice

This research has several implications for social work practice. First, in regard to support, social workers should be able and willing to provide unconditional positive regard for teen mothers. As shown in the data, teen mothers respond well to leaders who never judged them for being a young mother. This includes the decisions they make, the way they dress, and the home environment they come from. Social workers may also find success in providing resources that the teen mother expresses a need for. The data suggests that each participant received different resources based on the needs they had at the time. Instead of providing a packet of commonly used resources for teen mothers, social workers should build rapport with teen mothers and learn about their specific needs.

Additionally, in regard to group dynamics, social workers may incorporate a style of group that encourages group members to engage with each other outside of group meetings for events and to follow each other on social media. The support group facilitated healthy relationships between group members by allowing teen mothers to follow the organization on Facebook and Instagram where they could all post information about resources and upcoming events. Similarly, social workers should help facilitate networking among teen mothers and professionals who may help them. One barrier, the support group removed for teen mothers is time and distance. Instead of providing a flier for teen mothers to attend a meeting with a guest speaker, the support group brought the speakers to the teen mothers.

Finally, social workers may utilize their training to meet clients where they are at when working with teen mothers. The support group encourages their members to pursue their own goals while simultaneously providing the support necessary to ensure the mothers can achieve success. Instead of providing a road map for all teen mothers to follow, utilizing the same resources, social workers can build rapport and empower each mother to choose her own path.

Implications for Policy

In regard to policy, this research inspires a conversation about how to manage a large amount of unexpected pregnancies and children when certain states have elected to ban rights to abortion and other family planning services. This research suggests it is important for teen mothers to be involved in a

support group that validates their experience and provides necessary education and resources to help achieve their goals. Perhaps, this is true for all mothers, young and old, those who have family support and those who do not. Regardless, it is essential for policy makers and legislators to consider what is necessary to support those forced to give birth due to abortion and contraception bans across the United States.

Implications for Research

More research is needed to identify what other teen mother programs are available. The literature review section of this research suggests there are not enough support groups or resources available for teen mothers. More research may shed light upon why that is the case whether it be funding, concerns relating to boundaries, or the lack of necessity for such services due to the increasing use and distribution of contraceptives and abortions.

In addition, there are several avenues in which future research may choose to explore the need for teen mother support groups. For example, it may be beneficial for future researchers to interview the group leaders for the purpose of identifying their philosophies and where they get their motivation to work as closely as they do with teen mothers. Future researchers may also ask group leaders their thoughts about the ability to replicate the program and request suggestions on how to do so successfully. Future research may also consider

using a larger sample size perhaps comparing teen parents who attend a support group to those who do not. This research discusses the importance of obtaining a high school diploma. Future research may choose to focus on the lack of teen mothers involved in higher education.

Conclusion

This research has identified themes that highlight the essential components of the support group that aids teen mothers in achieving their educational and vocational goals. The data suggests the support group provides an extensive amount of support to the teen mothers they serve, allowing them to be extremely successful in achieving high graduation rates as well as high success rates in mothers obtaining their vocational goals upon graduation. Therefore, it begs the question whether any government funded program would be able to replicate such a program. However, given the current state of Row v. Wade and the bans on abortion and contraceptives, this research proves to be relevant. It is essential for more programs similar to the support group to be available across the nation, highlighting emotional support, group dynamics, education, and focusing on how to help teen mothers break generational cycles of mental health stigma and physical punishment.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Developed by Brianne Brophy

Information about the support group:

1. How did you hear about the program?

2. How long have you been a part of the support group?

3. Have you attended every meeting?

4. What were you hoping the program would do for you?

5. In your own words, describe your experience with the support group. What has been helpful? What has not been helpful?

6. What were the specific components in the support group that helped you the most? For example, the guest speakers, group leaders, sharing among other teen mothers, etc.?

Support

7. How has the support group supported you emotionally during your pregnancy and after your baby was born?

8. How has the support group offered you assistance throughout your pregnancy and after your baby was born? Did they provide you transportation, housing, diapers, etc.?

9. How has the support group helped you learn how to care for your child?

Education:

10. Before joining the support group, what were your educational/ vocational goals? What are they now? What experiences, if any, made the most impact on your educational/ vocational goals?

11. What specific components of the support group affected your

    educational/ vocational goals? Please explain more about how it

    affected you.

12. What experiences in the support group, if any, made an impact on your

    thoughts about going to college?

APPENDIX B

AGENCY APROVAL LETTER

April 14, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

Brianne Brophy, MSW student, has requested to conduct a research study on ████ ████ teen pregnancy support group. She will be researching the effects of attending support groups on the educational success of teen mothers. The student will be recruiting participants through ████████ social media page and by attending an in-person support group. The mothers who agree to participate will be asked to engage in one-on-one interviews.

I will be allowing the student to post her flier to ██████████ social media platforms and will facilitate her introduction to the in-person support group meeting. I understand that this research will be published and used to complete the student's Master in Social Work Studies at CSUSB. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me a██████)

Thank you

Executive Director

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH FLIER

Teen Mothers Needed

To participate in a research study exploring the relationship between attending teen parent support group, ▬▬▬▬▬ and educational success among teen mothers. Participants will be asked to engage in one-on-one interviews with the MSW student researcher via zoom to discuss their experience as a teen mother in the ▬▬▬▬ support group. The interviews should take approximately one hour, given the personal nature of the topic being discussed. Only teen mothers who are 18 years old or older, have attended ▬▬▬▬ meeting and are not currently pregnant may participate.

All interviews will be kept confidential.

Findings from this study will add to the literature in this area of research.

The QR code will take you to a survey about participating in this research study.
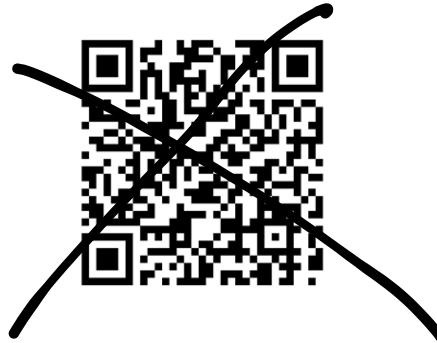
Questions/ Concerns?

Contact Brianne Brophy, MSW Student Researcher, anytime at 007724581@coyote.csusb.edu, or by phone at (909) 240-2866 or Research Supervisor, Dr. Smith, at lasmith@csusb.edu.

This study has been approved by the California State University, San Bernardino Institutional Review Board. (IRB #: IRB-FY2022-228)

APPENDIX D

QR CODE SCREENER SURVEY

Thank you for your interest in this study! We would like to confirm that you are at least 18 years old or older and have had at least one baby while you were in high school.

Yes, I am 18 or older and had at least one baby while I was in high school.

No, I am not 18 but I had at least one baby while in high school.

If you answered Yes to the previous question, we would love to interview you about your experience as teen mother who attended the support group.

Yes, I am interested in participating in an interview.

No, I am not interested in participating in an interview.

If you answered yes to the previous question, please provide either your email or phone number so we can begin setting up a date and time to meet via Zoom. We look forward to hearing from you!

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT

School of Social Work

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407

909.537.5501 | fax: 909.537.7029
http://socialwork.csusb.edu

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to explore how participation in teen mother support group, ▆▆▆ ▆▆▆ impacted participants' educational attainment. The study is being conducted by Brianne Brophy, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Laurie Smith, Professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at CSUSB.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to explore the teen mother support group, ▆▆▆ effect on teen mother's educational attainment.

DESCRIPTION: Participants will be asked to engage in one-on-one interviews with the student researcher via zoom to discuss their experience as a teen mother in the ▆▆▆ support group.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue your participation at any time without any consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your responses will remain confidential and only audio data will be kept in CSUSB's google drive that remains password protected, to ensure no identifying information is present in the audio recordings.

DURATION: It will take 15 to 30 minutes to complete the interview.

RISKS: Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort in answering some of the questions. You are not required to answer and can skip the question or end your participation.

BENEFITS: There will not be any direct benefits to the participants. However, findings from the study will contribute to our knowledge in this area of research.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Smith at lasmith@csusb.edu.

RESULTS: Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 20XX.
****

I agree to have this interview be audio recorded: _____ YES _____ NO

I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

_____   _____

Place an X mark here   Date

APPENDIX F

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

School of Social Work

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407

909.537.5501 | fax: 909.537.7029
http://socialwork.csusb.edu

The reason for this study is to explore the relationship between participation in ▓▓▓▓▓▓ teen mother support group and educational success among teen mothers. Participation in this study is voluntary. Results of the study can be obtained through Pfau Library ScholarWorks database. Additional information about the study and questions can be directed to Laurie Smith at lasmith@csusb.edu. Participants should not reveal the nature of the study to other potential participants. Some risks of this study may include discomfort in answering some of the questions. The benefit of the study would include knowledge concerning how teen mother support groups help teen mothers achieve educational success being added to this area of research.

If you experience any distress by the questions of this study additional information for emergency hotline numbers and counseling services are available below.

- Crisis Text Line: Text Home to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- You may also call the National Alliance on Mental Illness Helpline at (916) 890-5467 t6o access online support groups.

APPENDIX G

IRB APPROVAL

CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination
Status: Determined Exempt
IRB-FY2022-228

Laurie Smith Brianne Brophy
CSBS - Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino

5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Laurie Smith Brianne Brophy:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Program Evaluation of ██████ ███████Teen Parent Support Group" has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has weighed the risks and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants.

This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses. Investigators should consider the changing COVID-19 circumstances based on current CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance and submit appropriate protocol modifications to the IRB as needed. CSUSB campus and affiliate health screenings should be completed for all campus human research related activities. Human research activities conducted at off-campus sites should follow CDC, California Department of Public Health, and local guidance. See CSUSB's COVID-19 Prevention Plan for more information regarding campus requirements.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

- **Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.**
- **Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study.**
- **Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.**
- **Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.**

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be

reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillesp@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2022-228 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

King-To Yeung

King-To Yeung, Ph.D., IRB Chair
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

KY/MG

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