Introduction

Purpose:

Overview of Study

• Implement a program of life and career skills training for at-risk youth to increase their self-efficacy and transition planning to help them successfully become independent adults.

Heroin in the Youth program of Offender Alumni Association (OAA):

• One-year youth initiative program for young men between the ages of 13–18 who are either violence-impacted or justice-involved, weekly 4-hour mentoring program to empower at-risk youth for independence.

Mentor Results

5 Participants:

- 100% African-American and male
- 2 = 35-49 years, 3 = 50+ years old
- All but 1 were existing mentors with OAA

Mentee Results

5 Participants:

- 100% African-American and male
- 3 = 14 years, 1 = 16 years, 1= 18 years
- None had previously participated with OAA

Methods

Steps

1. Create “Mentor Training Manual”
   - Contents of manual incorporated OT concepts, evidence-based practice, informed by mentor experiences and organization’s needs
2. Implement training with mentors
3. Implement program with mentees

Discussion Topics

• Selected based on goals of OAA

Data Collection

• Demographic and pre/post self-efficacy surveys for mentor and mentee
• Pre and Post Transition Readiness Assessment

Questionnaire and ranking of topics for mentees

• Selected based on goals of OAA

Pre and post Transition Readiness Assessment

• Mentees will express themselves in a safe environment and think about their future with this type of program.

Occupational therapy has a role within transitional services for at-risk youth.

• They express themselves and think about their future with this type of program.

• Mentees will express themselves in a safe environment and think about their future with this type of program.

Mentees will express themselves in a safe environment and think about their future with this type of program.

Discussion

• Survey results give little conclusive data due to the small population size and short-term study, therefore the Likert scale was flawed in qualifying results and limited the number of topics taught.

• Interviews may be a better way to assess self-efficacy and transition readiness with a small population size.

• Topics ranked higher were character developing and life skills, over career readiness.

• Participants may have been overconfident in the pre-surveys, then after being taught the information realize they may not know as much as they initially thought.

• It is difficult to know the endeavor and thoroughness participants used when taking the surveys.

• Results from the surveys and the interviews may be misrepresented because participants know the goal of this study and want to appease the researcher.

• Surveys and interviews have conflicting results with these items: emotional regulation & managing finances.

• Based on interview results

• It appears that having mentors provide a welcoming and safe space, using trauma-informed care aspects, allows mentors to express their emotions freely.

• Mentees are starting to think and prepare for adulthood because of this mentoring program.

• A manual may provide more structure to a program and increase the confidence of mentors when teaching mentees topics.

Limitations

• Short-term study

Further Research

• Use in depth interviews for small population size to assess self-efficacy and transition readiness.

• Instead of using a Likert scale, change the formative and summative assessments with clarifying questions.

• Complete pre and post survey after each day of the program.

• Gather a larger population size with varying demographics

• Administer post self-efficacy survey after training, assessing both knowledge and confidence of topics.

• Focus on assessing the effectiveness of the mentor training manual and program evaluation.

Conclusion

• Occupational therapy has a role within transitional services for at-risk youth.

• Mentors will express themselves and think about their future with this type of program.

• Having a guide, like the manual, can amplify the confidence of the mentors and provides structure.

References


Acknowledgement & Contact information

I would like to thank, Dr. Sarah Tucker and Ms. Dena Dickerson for their assistance and guidance throughout this study, the mentors and mentees of Heroes in the Hood for investing in this program, and everyone involved in Offenders Alumni Association for their support.

Contact Janey Armour at janey.amour@uab.edu or (205) 799-9592