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Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

F I N A L R E P O R T

TASK FORCE ON
SOCIAL SERVICES IN
HEAD START

November 1988

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SOCIAL SERVICES IN
HEAD START
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STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN

One of the primary objectives of the Social Services component in Head Start programs is to assist families in their own efforts to improve the conditions and quality of family life. This objective is consistent with the overall goal of the Head Start program, which is to bring about a greater degree of social competence in children of low-income families. If it can be agreed that the family is the dominant socializing agent and the primary influence on a child's life, then it can be understood how important it is for a child's family to provide an environment at home that is stable, nurturing, supportive, loving and hopefully free of severe stress.

Unfortunately, today many Head Start families, as well as families outside of Head Start are being faced with a multiplicity of stress inducing problems over which these families feel they have very little control. Even more serious are the indirect consequences of these stresses on family relationships, often leading to an interference with or disruption of the positive interaction patterns necessary for healthy personal growth and development in young children and other family members.

Given these circumstances do exist today in many Head Start communities across the country, it becomes immediately apparent that the Head Start Bureau must closely examine local programs' roles in helping to reduce the levels of stress faced by many of these families. Additionally, the Head Start Bureau must be sure that local Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies are suitably staffed and trained to assist families to cope with these multiple problems that confront them, and to assist in removing barriers so that families may successfully obtain needed services.

It is the hope of every member of this task force that the findings and recommendations that result from their deliberations will serve to generate new thinking and establish needed support for strengthening Head Start's capacity to become even more effective in the delivery of social services to Head Start families. Through lengthy discussions, policy reviews, analyses, fact finding and sharing, every member of the task force was in agreement that many Head Start families facing serious multiple problems are finding it increasingly difficult to cope, and are feeling overwhelmed. Consequently, this places added pressures and demands on Head Start Social Services staff who must be supported to find new ways to successfully carry out their responsibilities.

Commissioner Dodie Truman Borup created this Task Force and charged it with the responsibility of examining the Social Services component in Head Start programs nationally, and developing a set of recommendations which could assist the Head Start Bureau to identify and implement strategies aimed at strengthening this crucial family focused component. The report and recommendations that follow represent an important beginning in stimulating an

dialogue at all levels of the national Head Start program which will ultimately lead to enhancing the delivery of services to Head Start Families.

Richard H. Johnson
Chairman

November, 1988

TASK FORCE OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Start Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families has been conducting self-assessments of the four major program components that made up the comprehensive services offered by Head Start programs. As an integral part of these assignments, a task force of knowledgeable individuals is commissioned to review each component area and submit to the agency a final report with their recommendations based on their findings. Commissioner Dodie Truman Borup created the National Head Start Social Services Task Force in September, 1987. She requested that the task force review and analyze the current status of the Social Services component in Head Start programs nation-wide, and upon completion of their deliberations, submit a final report of their findings with recommendations to her office.

Commissioner Borup named Richard H. Johnson, Chief of the Social Services, Parent Involvement, Parent and Child Centers' Branch, Program Support Division of the Head Start Bureau, to be Chairman of the task force. Because of the various responsibilities to be undertaken by the task force, it was necessary to identify individuals from the field to serve on the task force who were knowledgeable about Head Start Social Services, and who reflected a broad representation of the Head Start community. In addition to obtaining a geographical and ethnic mix, the composition of the task force included local Head Start program Social Services Coordinators, Directors, current or former Head Start parents, Resource Center and Social Work representative, ACYF Regional Office and National Head Start Bureau staff.

The Social Services Task Force was charged with reviewing and analyzing the full scope of the Social Services component in Head Start, and meeting the following objectives and responsibilities:

- (1) Identifying and analyzing the changing needs of low-income families with pre-school children;
- (2) Identifying and analyzing the multitude and types of problems facing Head Start families today, including "dysfunctional" or multi-problem families;
- (3) Identifying and reviewing the necessary skills/knowledge required to effectively meet the various needs of Head Start families with limited incomes;
- (4) Helping determine whether Head Start programs are adequately staffed to meet the work demands of this component;

- (5) Identifying and analyzing the different Social Services staffing patterns that exist in local Head Start programs;
- (6) Identifying the training needs of entry level Social Services staff in Head Start program;
- (7) Assisting to identify/develop the major elements of a new Social Services Training Manual;
- (8) Submitting to the ACYF Commissioner a final report with recommendations to support and enhance the Social Services component in Head Start programs;
- (9) Assisting in planning and carrying out the National Social Services Institute in the summer of 1989, and
- (10) Serving on a national panel at the National Head Start Association Annual Training Conference in the spring of 1989.

SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES

The task force met in Washington, D.C. a total of four times to carry out its responsibilities during the period between October, 1987 and October, 1988. Each meeting lasted an average of three days, and consisted of intensive discussions, reviews, analyses, sharing of various official documents, reports, research and evaluation data, as well as past and current literature related to Social Services in Head Start. Over the course of the four meetings the task force was visited on occasion by a number of federal officials, including Commissioner Borup, Assistant Secretary Sydey Olson, Associate Commissioner Elizabeth Strong Ussery, Deputy Associate Commissioner Clennie H. Murphy, and Tom Purvis from the Department of Health and Human Services Region IX Office of the Inspector General. In addition to these individuals, Nancy Goldsmith from the University of Maryland Resource Center National Head Start Bulletin and James Matlack, Executive Director of the National Head Start Association also visited briefly with the task force. On occasions the task force divided into three small groups for the purposes of processing and analyzing information, as well as for creating, developing and formulating specific themes/elements for inclusion in the new Social Services Training Manual, and formulating major issues and tentative recommendations. The full task force would meet to reach consensus or agreement on any final directions the task force wished to take. This entire process was enriched by the extensive knowledge and expertise reflected in the diverse backgrounds and experience of the different task force members. Although the task force spent a portion of its deliberations identifying problems and circumstances associated with undermining the delivery of social services to Head Start families, the better part of its time was focused on identifying strategies and necessary actions required to bring about the optimal delivery of social services to Head Start families.

The first meeting of the task force was held October 20, 1987 in Washington, D.C. at the ACYF, Head Start Bureau headquarters office building in the 5th floor conference room. During this first meeting the task force focused its attention on the following activities:

- receiving a clear understanding of the task force's purpose, mission, role and responsibility;
- sharing their individual views on the current status of Social Services in Head Start;
- discussing the changing needs of Head Start families, based on new and more severe problems confronting them;

- reviewing the history of training efforts for Social Services staff in Head Start;
- reviewing the Head Start Social Services Performance Standards;
- listing the desired functions, needed skills and competencies, and the required training strategies for Head Start Social Services staff, and
- reviewing the statement of work for the Fy 1989 Social Services initiative, including the development and field test of a new Social Services Training Manual, and conducting of a National Social Services Institute in the summer of 1989.

The task force held its second meeting January 20 -21, 1988 once again in the 5th floor conference room of the ACYF, Head Start Bureau headquarters building in Washington, D.C. With many of the preliminaries for getting started out of the way, the task force members were able to focus attention on completing a model matrix which reflected attributes, characteristics and minimum training requirements for Social Services staff at different levels. In addition to this task, the task force deliberated on the following activities during this second meeting:

- delineating Social Services functions in Head Start;
- identifying the major content elements to be considered for the new Social Services Training Manual, and
- identifying issues relevant to the enhancement of Head Start Social Services from which the task force would begin to formulate tentative recommendations at the next meeting.

The third task force meeting was held in Washington, D.C., April 19 - 21, 1988 at the Channel Inn Hotel. In addition to receiving an update from NYU on the development of the Social Services Training Manual and other tasks associated with their Cooperative Agreement Amendment, the major focus of this meeting was on developing a list of tentative recommendations in preparation for the fourth and last meeting of the task force. This was accomplished by dividing the task force into three groups and having each group address a sub set of the issues identified in the previous task force meeting. Following this activity the task force met as a total body to share and discuss their tentative recommendations.

The fourth and last official meeting of the task force was held September 26 - 29, 1988 once again at the Channel Inn Hotel in Washington, D.C. Commissioner Dodie Truman Borup attended the meeting on the first day to once again welcome the task force, commend them for their excellent work, and thank them for their

overall efforts toward strengthening the social services component in Head Start programs. The remainder of the fourth meeting consisted of the following activities:

- receiving a report from a representative of the Region IX Inspector General's Office concerning a Proposed study they will be conducting on Head Start families;
- hearing an update on the development of the Training Manual;
- hearing an update on the activities of the National Head Start Association from representatives of that organization, and
- developing, writing and reaching consensus on a set of recommendations with accompanying discussion to become a major part of the task force's final report to the Commissioner.

During the third and fourth meetings of the task force some thirty-two (32) recommendations were processed, discussed, and eventually collapsed into twenty (20) final recommendations are categorized and presented in accordance with the established earlier in this final report. They are presented in two sections. The first set of recommendation is followed by a brief discussion providing some background related to the purpose of the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS (11) FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE
HEAD START BUREAU TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL SERVICES
COMPONENT.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Require Head Start programs to establish a family caseload ratio of 35 families to one Social Services staff person.

Discussion

In order to assist families in their own efforts to improve the conditions and quality of family life (Ref. Performance Standards 1304.4-1 (d) and (e)), and to make parents aware of community resources and their functions, the task force finds it imperative that a realistic caseload ratio be established. Conditions of the 1980's, such as drug abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, etc. place added responsibility, and require sophisticated levels of skills on the part of the Social Services worker. In addition, the Social Services in Head Start functions as outlined in "A Guide For Providing Social Services in Head Start", (i.e., Recruitment, Enrollment, Counseling, Referrals, Concrete Services, etc.) require a high degree of task involvement per family by the Head Start Social Services staff on an ongoing basis.

Current practices in relation to family caseload ratios in some Head Start programs across the country decrease the worker's ability to adequately and/or effectively address Performance Standards requirements.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Require every Head Start program to have, at minimum, a trained Social Services Coordinator, and as family caseloads increase beyond the recommended 35 to 1 ratio, additional staff, i.e., Social Services assistants, family service workers, etc, should be employed.

Discussion

In examining the Head Start staffing patterns nation-wide, the task force realized a wide variance in the assignment of personnel to the Social Services component. For example, in many programs, staff have component responsibility in several areas, i.e., Social Services/Parent Involvement; Social Services/Transportation; Social Services/Handicap or Health. The Performance Standards expectations for individual components are comprehensive to the extent that such split or multiple responsibilities do not allow for an effective provision of services in either component. In

addition, some programs require the Social Services Coordinator to have extensive family caseload responsibility, which often interferes with the task of management of the component. The term "trained" implies that the Coordinator has sufficient theoretical as well as practical background to effectively manage and give guidance to Social Services staff in the provision of quality services to families.

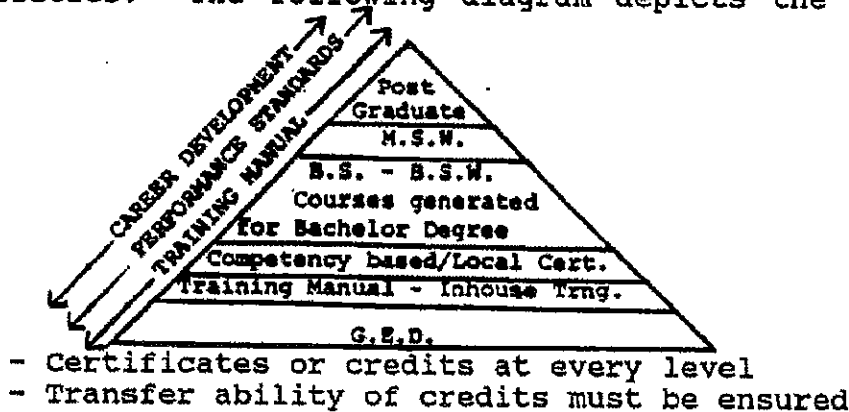
Social Services Coordinators should provide ongoing training, supervision, leadership, direction, and evaluate the performance of the Social Services staff in order to maximize the growth potential of each worker. Quarterly meetings should be held between Social Services Coordinator and staff to discuss program information, problems and other concerns. This may provide ample opportunities for direction, sharing supervision input and feedback, as well as needed support.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Develop a standardized Social Services competency-based training program and career ladder which address credits, licensing, degrees and in-service training.

Discussion

The task force sees Social Services staff training and education on a spiral rather than a linear continuum. Staff development and a career ladder enable and qualify Social Services component staff to effectively manage and implement component responsibilities. The following diagram depicts the competency model:



It is expected that the National Head Start Bureau will provide guidance on the selection and implementation of a particular model for competency based training. It may not be necessary to develop a new model, as several acceptable program models are currently in existence. The task force recognizes the need for a careful evaluation of the CDA model for classroom staff prior to implementation of a competency based training program for the Social Services component.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Allocate specific funds for the training of Social Services staff beginning in fiscal year 1990.

Discussion

A number of plaguing social problems continue to surface that seriously affect the delivery of social services to many Head Start families, i.e., teen pregnancies, homelessness, substance abuse, child abuse, etc. Social Services staff must be fully aware of, and capable of addressing these social problems within Head Start families. This can be accomplished through training strategies designed to increase the competency and skill levels of some Social Services staff who have limited academic and practical experience. It can also be accomplished through in-service training that is both theoretical and field based with appropriate college credit, continuing education units (CEUs) certificates of training or the appropriate measures that will indicate performance levels.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Require Head Start programs to develop a salary structure which encompasses the following factors:

- job responsibilities
- education and training
- experience
- wage comparability
- comparable worth

Discussion

With the increase in the complexity, diversity and severity of problems facing Head Start families and in turn Social Services staff of local programs, Social Services Positions must be of varying levels. It is the strong belief of the task force that the salaries for these staff persons be commensurate with each program's entire salary structure. The structure should reflect the varying degrees of responsibilities for each position. Salaries should be based on education and training required at entry levels with provisions for increases for additional services. Mechanisms to allow for salary increases for the attainment of additional relevant education and training should be established. Salary structures should also be based on comparisons of like positions in the community, with emphasis on state, county, municipal, public school social work positions to establish wage

comparability.

Comparable worth should also be considered by evaluating all job elements and weighing these elements against other positions. Elements might include degree of independent decision-making, supervisory responsibilities, and health and safety hazards.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Amend the Head Start Performance Standards for Social Services to contain guidance which states, "Social Services staff should reflect the racial and ethnic population of the target area being served. Social Services staff and/or resource people who speak the primary language(s) of the target area served must be available.

Discussion

In order for Social Services staff to effectively communicate with the families served, language and cultural requirements must be included in the Performance Standards for the Social Services component in the same manner and for the same reasons as are found in the Performance Standards for the Education component. Cross reference Performance Standards, Education 1304.2-2; C-2, page 8.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Revise and expand the Social Services Performance Standards to reflect the critical importance of the component in meeting the complex and diverse needs of the families served, and to more strongly state the need for cross component coordination.

Discussion

In viewing Social Services as the focal point of service delivery to families, it becomes paramount that the role of Social Services in each of the component areas be clearly defined. Processes for cross component coordination, communication among components, record keeping systems and confidentiality must be delineated.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

Encourage and support local programs to be innovative in meeting the unique needs of those communities they serve, and continue to fund and develop special initiatives which improve the Social Services component in Head Start programs.

The National Head Start Bureau, Regional Office staff, and especially local programs have become acutely aware of the changing needs of the families in the Head Start community. In a 1987 report from the Office of the Inspector General, it was noted that Head Start programs nation-wide were recruiting and serving many of

the neediest of the needy families. With this influx of multiple problem families, often termed "dysfunctional", programs are being faced with more severely affected families. In order to most effectively respond to these complex needs, local programs may need to use innovative designs and procedures to work with families. The Head Start Bureau should encourage and support programs to demonstrate exemplary and innovative practices. The sharing of successful projects and training approaches, and the utilization of locally designed options should be considered if a program can present solid research and documentation to support a unique design. Credible evaluation and dissemination of good replicable models should then be shared with the entire Head Start community.

The Social Services Task Force also recognizes and appreciates the special initiatives which the Head Start Bureau has funded, i.e., the model Family Needs Assessment Instrument, the handbook, A Guide for Providing Social Services in Head Start, the Economic Self-Sufficiency booklets, the new Social Services Training Manual, and the 1989 National Social Services Institute. The Head Start Bureau needs to continue securing input on the needs of local program staff, and researching new trends in the field of social work. With the knowledge gained from these efforts, the Head Start Bureau should continue to fund initiatives which will help local programs improve the quality of their services to families.

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Ensure that funding is earmarked for systematically strengthening the Social Services component.

Discussion

The Head Start Bureau must see strengthening the Social Services component as a high priority for funding until all programs meet the standards for best practice. Many of the recommendations contained in this final report cannot be put in place unless there is a commitment of funding at every level.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

Develop and conduct a national research/evaluation study to measure the impacts that Social Services components in local Head Start programs are having on families being served.

Discussion

Too frequently, emphasis is placed on measuring the effects that Head Start programs are having on children, without taking the time to learn how the entire family is being impacted by the Head Start program. Since the Social Services components have the major responsibility for addressing the needs of families, it would be helpful to know how effective their efforts are. Head Start

programs have developed unique and relevant strategies for addressing the many needs of families served in their programs, but here has been no systematic analysis of the effectiveness of this service since the early 1970's.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

Establish and maintain an ongoing National Social Services Advisory Committee to provide guidance and professional analytical support to the Social Services, Parent Involvement Branch of the National Head Start Bureau.

Discussion

Since this task force represented the first of its kind in the history of Head Start, members of the task force feel strongly that such a Social Services Advisory Committee could play an important supportive role in assisting the Head Start Bureau to implement the task force recommendations, as well as to address any new future issues affecting the delivery of social services to Head Start families. Such an Advisory Committee could be made up of a number of members from the Social Services Task Force who already possess a knowledge of the national issues confronting the Social Services components of Head Start programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS (9) FOR HEAD START
PROGRAMS TO CONSIDER IN IMPROVING
THEIR SOCIAL SERVICES COMPONENTS

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Implement individualized training plans for all Social Services staff.

Discussion

The task force believes that just as each Head Start family is unique, so is each staff member. Training must be provided that is individualized according to the needs and level of the person's experience, the responsibilities of the job, the competencies sought, and the staff member's evaluation. While enhancing the individual's skills, knowledge and experiences, training must also encompass the varied problem situations facing the many different Head Start populations served, i.e., (drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, child abuse, sexual molestation of children, teen pregnancies, etc.).

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Establish an outside consultative support system for the Social Services component staff.

Discussion

Head Start programs should provide for consultation by an MSW to be utilized by Social Services component staff on a regular basis when such a trained professional is not available on the local program staff. In cases where that individual is not available, the Social Services Advisory Committee could provide the same type of support. The Social Services Advisory Committee should be composed of interested representatives of the Professional Social Services Community. Consultation serves to insure quality service and "best practice." This individual should be available for expert advice in dealing with the complex issues and conditions facing the Social Services staff.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Maintain and make available to staff and families a Community Resources Directory which must be updated annually.

Discussion

All Head Start staff need to become familiar with community resources within the program's service/target area (state, Federal, and local). This information should include:

- 1) Name and address of the agency providing the service.
- 2) A description of the services.
- 3) Telephone numbers.
- 4) Hours of operation.
- 5) Procedures and eligibility requirements.
- 6) Directions for getting to the service facility.
- 7) Contact person.

Also, this information must be shared with parents and Policy Groups. Parent and family group meetings should be held where presenters from local agencies could be invited to discuss in helping to promote parents' self-sufficiency and independence.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Collaborate closely with public and private sector agencies, including state, tribal and federal agencies to assist families in locating, obtaining and using available services and resources.

Discussion

Part of the mission of Social Services is to ensure that resources and services are available to each child and their family in the Head Start program. Because of Head Start's role providers, it is crucial that Head Start coordinate its efforts with these service provider organizations. Ways to facilitate such communication with service providers includes visiting their agencies, inviting them to visit Head Start centers, putting them on the Head Start list, and requesting to be put on their mailing list to ensure pertinent information can be shared.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Assure that Social Services component staff be an integral part of the goal setting and evaluation process for the overall Head Start program's service delivery system.

Discussion

As the overall thrust of the Head Start program is centered on enabling families to be self-sufficient, the task force feels that the most effective method for designing and implementing program options which reflect the needs of the community served is to follow a structured planning process.

The Social Services Coordinator should be a part of the

agency's annual planning group that reviews, identifies, and decides on the priority areas (goals) for the component. In addition to the Performance Standards goals for the Social Services component the Community Needs Assessment must be utilized to identify other priority areas. This assures that the changing and current needs of today's families are addressed.

As the planning process affects the development of budgets, consideration must be given to the needs of the Social services component in order for its tasks to be accomplished. Just as Health, Education, and Nutrition components receive guidance and financial support for such items as staffing patterns, food requirements, and optimum immunization and health standards, so should the Social Services component require the same level of guidance and financial support.

Evaluation validates the program's services delivery efforts. For this reason, programs must utilize a multifaceted component evaluation process, including, but not limited to tools such as the SAVI. Additional means of effective annual component evaluation could include a review of family Progress as outlined in the Model Family Needs Assessment Instrument.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Encourage and support Social Services staff to recognize and meet their professional obligations.

Discussion

The task force believes that the conduct and/or qualities that characterize professionalism must be the hallmark of Social Services staff. Not only are Social services staff role models and mentors for parents, they also represent a national organization....Head Start. The task force recognizes the importance of professionalism throughout the Head Start program, however, this recommendation relates to Social Services staff who carry out the day-to-day duties and responsibilities with Head Start families, community service organizations, co-workers and others.

Often times Social Services staff become the spokespersons for families and the program, hence, their behavior and attitudes must be reflective of this most important responsibility. All Head Start grantee and delegate agencies must recognize and support the role that Social Services staff play on a regular basis. In addition, Head Start Social Services staff must recognize the importance of professionalism and how it impacts upon the following obligations of individual workers:

- Being able to maintain confidentiality.
- Maintaining objectivity and holding in check one's own biases.

- Respecting families, co-workers, service providers and communities.
- Holding one's self in high esteem and self-respect.
- Maintaining a work environment that fosters productivity and creativity, as well as cooperativeness and team/partnership among staff and parents.
- Keeping pace with new trends and issues in the field of Social Work.
- Keeping up-to-date with training possibilities and educational opportunities through reading, workshops or classes.
- Showing respect for rules/regulations, policies and procedures of the Head Start program.

In addition to professionalism in behavior and attitudes, the task force also recognizes the importance of the promotion of the Social Work professional organizations, and advocating for increased recognition of the Social Work profession.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Provide adequate permanent space for Social Services staff to carry out their functions and responsibilities.

Discussion

In keeping with Head Start practice, each family's dignity must be ensured by providing for confidentiality. Head Start center offices must provide privacy, and be conducive for parents to share information with their Social Services worker without the distractions from other staff and/or parents present in the center facility. Programs must allocate adequate permanent space for Social Services staff to carry out responsibilities of the Social Services component, i.e., interviewing, recording, developing plans, and solutions, and sharing information with agencies, etc.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

Develop and implement written policies/procedures for assuring Head Start staff safety when home visiting in high risk areas/communities.

Discussion

An essential element of Head Start is the relationship between parents and staff. To foster that bond, home visits are an

integral part of the program. However, in some areas/communities of the country there is legitimate concern for the safety of staff. Head Start must plan for these circumstances and provide programmatic assurances to staff so a provision that allows staff to travel in pairs when home visiting in high risk areas. Other possible solutions to assure staff safety should be locally developed.

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Develop and implement strategies/approaches to prevent and alleviate the causes associated with high levels of stress and burnout among Social Services staff.

Discussion

It has become very fashionable to discuss stress and burnout in the workplace. The task force strongly believes that burnout is apt to be most prevalent in the Social Services component. This phenomenon is largely due to the diverse, often incompatible job tasks of social services personnel, the intensiveness of the problems they must deal with in assisting families, the low salaries of these staff persons, their physical work environment, the lack of adequate training and support, and the great many needs of the families now being served, as well as the inadequacy of resources to meet those needs.

Besides the implementation of the previous recommendations, programs can help prevent burnout by:

- fostering positive interpersonal working relationships;
 - providing adequate resources for Social Services staff to do their work;
 - sponsoring wellness programs;
 - establishing support networks for staff, e.g., quality circles, advisory groups;
 - being clear about performance expectations;
 - conducting realistic and regular performance evaluations;
 - giving recognition for work well done, and
 - allowing responsible freedom.
- These activities constitute only a partial list, but reflect factors which help to prevent burnout. All programs need to be able to identify indicators of personnel under stress and nearing or actually experiencing burnout. Symptoms include,

but are not limited to the following:

- lessened productivity;
- high absenteeism;
- tardiness;
- negativism;
- avoidance of responsibilities;
- non-professional behaviors, and
- physical ailments.

Programs must know the clinical signs of burnout so that the employee can be assisted in an effective, positive manner.

If a staff person is "burned out", the program must work with the employee to best handle the condition. Professional assistance, such as employee advisory services, may be needed, as well as programs doing the following:

- helping to identify the source of the problem;
- supervisors and co-workers being supportive;
- supervisors and co-workers empathizing and helping develop and implement plans of action, (i.e., setting priorities other staff assuming some of the affected worker's responsibilities);
- providing for leave, and
- providing consultation time for staff.

These measures reflect only a few of the actions that must be considered by local programs to help staff persons avoid/overcome the experience of burnout, and to help them to fulfill their critical roles in the Head Start program.

CONCLUSION

Members of the National Head Start Social Services Task Force fully recognize some of the new challenges facing Head Start programs nation-wide in effectively serving families with enrolled children in the program. In the wake of new serious problems of a changing high-tech society, changing family structures and family needs, challenges are greater than at any time in the past. With the ever increasing number of multiproblem or "dysfunctional" families being seen in the country, Head Start programs have had to carefully examine their current approaches to determine if they are suitable or effective in successfully assisting many of these families to overcome those plaguing problems confronting them. Since 1965 when the Head Start Program was initially launched, Social services staff have successfully served as advocates for families and children enrolled in the program, reaching out to the hard-to-reach, helping the hard-to-help, empowering the disillusioned, and in so doing, have represented a practical solution to an urgent national problem. Stated another way, when Social Services staff are successful in assisting families to cope with various pressing problems, or resolve them, this can make a meaningful impact on the disposition of parents and how they might interact with their children or other family members. Because various health and other social services appear to be dwindling in many communities in the nation, it is becoming increasingly difficult for some Head Start Social Services staff to like families with needed services, thus making their responsibilities even more demanding.

Historically, there has been insufficient recognition of the mission and significance of the Head Start Social Services component, Social Services staff and the impact they are having on families, and on the program as a whole. The interface of Social Services staff with community-based service organizations must continue to be seen as a key element in the successful development of a comprehensive social services delivery system. For these reasons and others, the task force believes that the needed support and marketing of Social Services components must be woven throughout the fabric of the Head Start organization, including, but not limited to Head Start grantees, delegate agencies, their Boards and Policy Groups. The task force further concludes that all responsible individuals must become sensitized to the variety and quality of roles that Social Services staff play within Head Start programs.

It is the belief of the task force that Social Services has been one of the most stable components in the Head Start program since 1965, and has done an outstanding job working with families to assist them overcome many of their adversities. Unfortunately, Social Services staff have had to accomplish these objectives under adverse working conditions. Low salaries, inadequate office space, unusually heavy family caseloads, assuming unrelated tasks to their already staggering responsibilities, unsafe working conditions, and

a lack of systematic training opportunities have contributed to sagging morale among these staff persons, as well as high stress levels, stagnation, high turnover rates, and in some instances severe burnout. Many trained graduate level Social Services Coordinators, and others with supervisory responsibility have had to leave Head Start because they could not afford to work in the program due to excessively low pay, while many now degreed staff have become discouraged, or stagnated because of a lack of opportunity for upward mobility or salary enhancement.

It is for all of these reasons that the Social Services Task Force concludes that Head Start's Social Services component must receive special attention and support for the next five years. The Head Start Bureau's goal should be to develop a high quality Social Services component that is comparable to the "best practice" as defined by the Social Work profession. During this five-year period, additional standards should be set, appropriate and realistic family caseloads assigned and funded adequately, and a substantial investment should be made at the national, regional and local levels to train all current and new Social Services staff in order to bring this component nation-wide to an acceptable level of professionalism and respectability. It is toward this goal that the National Head Start Social Services Task Force has contributed its time, thinking and energies for the purpose of making all Head Start Social Services components exemplary ones.

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