

Program Evaluation: Evaluating a Social Emotional Learning Program for Youth Living Homeless

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Abstract

Background: Youth experiencing homelessness has increased in the past two decades, leading to disparities in social-emotional wellbeing and resilience among homeless youth.

Local Problem: A social-emotional learning (SEL) program was implemented at an elementary school to help students develop coping and resilience skills. An evaluation of the SEL program was needed before another SEL program is implemented.

Methods: CDC Program evaluation framework assessed process, outcomes, and impact; the resilience and socioecological theories guided the program evaluation

Intervention: Evaluation was comprised of anonymous post-intervention narrative surveys of the participating children; and mixed method surveys of the program partners (elementary school faculty, community liaisons, RN-BSN students, State university nursing faculty).

Results: Lack of communication between the program partners and lack of preparation of the RN-BSN students in understanding what/how/why they were doing in the SEL program negatively impacted the process; the RN-BSN students and the community liaison believed the experience had a positive impact to improve advocacy for vulnerable populations; and the voices of the elementary students reflected their achieving some resilience skills.

Conclusion: This program evaluation identified strengths and weaknesses of the SEL program indicating that revisions need to be made in the development, implementation, and formative evaluation processes before the next SEL implementation cycle.

