Residential Child Care Project

Summary

The Residential Child Care Project is an international outreach, technical assistance, and training program. It was established to prevent abuse of children in residential child care. The project seeks to increase the quality of residential care by reducing the potential for physical and emotional injury to children when children pose a threat to their own and other’s safety.

Issue

By their example, child and youth care staff shape the behavior and influence the growth of the young people in their care. At no time is this issue more important than during periods of crisis and upset.

The skills, knowledge, and professional judgment of staff in reacting to crises are critical factors in helping young people learn constructive and adaptive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection, hurt, and depression. The ability of the entire organization to respond effectively to staff and young people in crisis situations is also critical in establishing not only a safe environment, but one that promotes growth and development.

Response

The Residential Child Care Project (RCCP) addresses the need to ensure safe environments for children who live in residential child care institutions, group homes, and foster care. Two major programs strive to prevent institutional child abuse and improve the quality of residential childcare.

The Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) project provides a crisis prevention and intervention model for residential child care facilities to assist an organization in:

- Preventing crises from occurring
- De-escalating potential crises
- Effectively managing acute crisis phases
- Reducing potential and actual injury to children and staff
- Learning constructive ways to handle stressful situations
- Developing a learning circle within the organization

The Institutional Child Abuse (IAB) component of the RCCP project assists local and state public agencies that are responsible for the prevention,
Investigation, and corrective action plans of reported institutional abuse. This assistance comes primarily in the form of direct training and technical support in a five-stage investigation process: reporting, initiating the investigation, conducting the ongoing investigation, making determinations, and recommending correction actions. Each of these stages has distinct actions and responsibilities for public investigatory agencies performing civil investigations.

**Impact**

- Residential agencies are able to reduce use of restraints and high risk interventions with children and young people resulting in fewer injuries to children and staff members.

- Schools are able to reduce aggressive behavior resulting in fewer injuries and suspensions.

- Residential agencies are able to create trauma-sensitive and relationship-focused environments for children in out-of-home care.


- The Residential Child Care Project received the Cornell Cooperative Extension – College of Human Ecology Team Award for Outstanding Accomplishments in Extension/Outreach.

**Contacts**

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