Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parenting a Second Time Around Program, Orange County 2014

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Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) offers a variety of programs for parents and caregivers. These programs reach a wide range of families and seek to promote positive parenting and, ultimately, healthy family and child development. This research brief presents data collected from participants in the Parenting a Second Time Around (PASTA) parent education program in Orange County in July 2014.

Parenting A Second Time Around (PASTA) is a Cornell Cooperative Extension program designed for caregivers who are not the biological parents of the child in their care. PASTA consists of eight sessions which focus on topics including child development, discipline and guidance, caregiver self-care, rebuilding a family, living with teens, legal issues, and advocacy.

Demographics of Participants attending Parenting a Second Time Around (PASTA) Parent Education Program

Cornell’s Relatives as Parents Program in Orange County collaborated with the Foster Homefinding Unit of the Department of Social Services, Children’s Services Division, to provide this Parenting the Second Time Around program series. The following
summaries use data from 13 participants who completed a pre-test survey given at the first session of their class. The majority of the participants in the PASTA parent education class were grandparents (67%) and were White (69%). The majority of children being cared for by grandparents were aged 10 and older (32%) and between 2 and 5 years of age (32%). A majority of respondents were raising a grandchild while living with a spouse or partner (54%) and the majority of caregivers were female (85%). The length of time that children had been raised by the participant varied, with a majority reporting care for more than 5 years (36%).
**Present Living Situation**

- Live with spouse or partner and children: 54%
- Live alone with child(ren): 31%
- Co-parent with children's own parent(s): 7%
- Other: 8%

**Gender of Caregiver**

- Female: 85%
- Male: 15%
Results of the workshop:

The study used a pre- and post-test evaluation, in which participants were asked to fill out the same questionnaire during the first session and after the completion of the workshop. The survey consisted of 23 questions using a 1 to 5 point scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. This study design allows researchers to see if attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge change over time before and after taking part in the workshop. A causal relationship cannot be established, because changes could occur for other reasons outside of the workshop. However, the significant changes may have resulted from the program.

The survey included 23 questions about parenting attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge designed to capture some of what was taught during the PASTA class. The following evaluation is based on information provided by 11 participants who completed both a pre- and a post-test survey. Ten of the twenty-three measures tested showed significant changes. Specifically, participants who attended the Parenting a Second Time Around program reported increases in: awareness of the resources available to kinship caregivers, comfort in asking for help from their community, support networks available, ability to cope with the stresses of being a kinship caregiver, knowing how to meet emotional needs and how to guide
behavior of child(ren) in their care, the ability to talk with children about their biological parent, and to talk with the biological parents about the needs of their child(ren), understanding of legal rights as a kinship caregiver and the different types of custody and care arrangements that are available to caregivers.

A p-value generated from a paired t-test was used as a statistical measure to determine whether a change in a given survey question between the control and treatment group was significant. A p-value of .10 or less was considered statistically significant, and means that we can be 90% sure that the treatment-to-control changes in participant responses are not due to chance. In comparing participants’ pre-and post-test survey results, the following ten questions showed statistically significant changes at the 10% level or less.
Question 2: I feel comfortable asking for help from community resources.

Question 3: I have a good network of supports available to me as a kinship caregiver.
Question 4: I feel able to cope with the stresses of being a kinship caregiver.

Question 6: I know how to meet the emotional needs of the child(ren) in my care.
Question 7: I know how to guide the behavior of the child(ren) in my care.

Pre: 3.45  
Post: 4.08

Question 13: I feel comfortable talking with the children in my care about their biological parent.

Pre: 2.75  
Post: 3.67
Question 14: I am able to talk with the biological parents about the needs of their children in my care.

Question 16: I understand my legal rights as a kinship caregiver.
These results indicate that 10 out of 23 measures of parenting attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge improved significantly between the control and treatment groups, highlighting significant positive effects for caregivers participating in the Parenting a Second Time Around Program in Orange County. Refer to Appendix for a complete list of questions.
Appendix

Questions:

1. I am aware of the resources (print and supportive services) available to me as a kinship caregiver.

2. I feel comfortable asking for help from community resources.

3. I have a good network of supports available to me as a kinship caregiver.

4. I feel able to cope with the stresses of being a kinship caregiver.

5. I take the time to care for myself as a caregiver.

6. I know how to meet the emotional needs of the child(ren) in my care.

7. I know how to guide the behavior of the child(ren) in my care.

8. I take the time to explain the reasons for the rules I make.

9. If anyone can find the answer to what is troubling my child(ren), I can.

10. I try to make rules that take my child(rens) individual needs into consideration.

11. I drop a rule if my child(ren) objects to it.

12. When I am with the child(ren) in my care, I only speak positively about their biological parents.

13. I feel comfortable talking with the children in my care about their biological parent.

14. I am able to talk with the biological parents about the needs of their children in my care.

15. I am confident in my ability to speak on behalf of the child(ren) in my care (with teachers, doctors, etc.)

16. I understand my legal rights as a kinship caregiver.

17. I understand the different types of custody and care arrangements that are available to me as a caregiver.

18. I take time to enjoy the child(ren) in my care and do fun things together.

19. I show affection to my child(ren) daily.

20. As children grow older, I allow them to spend more time with friends and other activities outside of the family.

Please complete these if you have a child ten and older in your care:

21. I know who my pre-teen/teen child(ren) is with AND what they are doing when they are not at home.

22. As a family, we have talked about the rules for safe computer and internet use.

23. I feel confident talking with my pre-teen/teen child(ren) about serious issues (i.e. sex, drugs).
Visit the Parenting in Context project at:

http://www.human.cornell.edu/pam/outreach/parenting/

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