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Occupation Based Program for African American Crossover Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

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BACKGROUND

- Services for crossover youth are more catered to the younger youth ages rather than the older youth (Cutuli et al., 2016; Greeson et al., 2020).
- About 57% of Young adults who have experienced homelessness have been involved in the foster care, juvenile justice, or both systems during their upbringing because they age out without having a plan of action or being independently self-sufficient (Narendorf et al., 2020; Kelly, 2020)
- Transitional services for children aging out of the foster care system are limited in implementing person-centered programs to promote adulthood independence (Armstrong-Heimsoth et al., 2020; Paul-Ward & Lambdin-Pattavina, 2016; Shumard & Schultz-Krohn, 2017)

PROBLEM

African American crossover youth aging out of the foster care system, are not receiving occupation-based transitional services focusing on IADLs required for adulthood independence resulting in increased prevalence of homelessness (Armstrong-Heimsoth et al., 2020; Flores et al., 2018; Kelly, 2020; Paul-Ward & Lambdin-Pattavina, 2016; Pérez et al., 2019).

PURPOSE

To develop and implement an occupation-based transitional program for African American crossover youth aging out of the foster care system focused on IADLs required for adulthood independence, decreasing the prevalence of homelessness.

METHODS

Theoretical Frameworks:

1. Occupational Justice
2. Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP)

Evaluation Process

The program was evaluated by pre-program and post activity questionnaires made through Google forms. These questionnaires were given at the beginning of the program and at the end of each activity.

- **Pre-Program Questionnaire:** The 4 questions of the pre-program questionnaire asked participants what they wish to gain from the program and their importance ratings on the activity topics and categories of IADLs and health management to baseline what the program activities should emphasize during the sessions.

- **Post Activity Questionnaire:** There was a 5 question post activity questionnaire on a Likert scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree with one open-ended question. The post activity questionnaire gained feedback on the program activities that were delivered. This feedback helped acquire information on the activity, how well it was delivered, and whether it was meaningful towards self-sufficiency in adulthood independence.

Implementation Process

The program met 2 times a week for seven weeks of a duration of 1-2 hours. Each day was presented with a different activity with its objectives and materials needed for the activity to be implemented with various spacing requirements. The program activity was limited in participation size, in order to keep it small and client-centered. The activity modules focused on IADLs and health management that will improve independent living skills to increase self-sufficiency in upcoming adulthood.

American Occupational Therapy Association (2020) OTPF-4th edition Topics:

- **Financial Management**
- **Home Establishment and Management**
- **Shopping**
- **Driving and Community Mobility**
- **Safety and Emergency Management**
- **Meal Preparation and Clean Up**
- **Medication Management**
- **Social and Emotional Health Promotion and Maintenance**
- **Physical Activity**
- **Nutrition Management**
- **Communication Management**

OUTCOMES

Program Outcomes:

1. Confirmation that an occupation-based program can create a fun and interactive environment that is engaging and meaningful
2. Depicted that occupational therapists are equipped to create a program that will increase occupational participation and performance with youth as they enter adulthood
3. Increased self-sufficiency in independent living skills by increasing exposure and enhance decision-making and problem-solving skills for adulthood independence
4. Increased their occupational participation and occupational performance in IADLs and health management

Recommendations:

1. **Complete the activities more than once to combat the transient nature of the youth and the facility**
2. **Increase field trip opportunities**
3. **IRB Approval**
4. **COPM**
5. **Advertise for individual sessions**
6. **Advocate for the role of OT at the facility**
7. **Research funding options**

SCAN ME

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