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Administrative Aspects of Parents Groups: Program Planning, Program Evaluation, and Grantsmanship

Mary Korpi
Lindenwood College

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF PARENTS GROUPS:
PROGRAM PLANNING, PROGRAM EVALUATION,
AND GRANTSMANSHIP

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Mary Korpi

Faculty Administrator - Bernard Lafayette

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to examine three key administrative elements as they relate to a particular type of program, i.e., parenting groups. In order to facilitate this goal, each chapter is designed to explore one aspect or component of administering a particular parents group, that is Project LINK.

This introduction provides background information and justification for the project. It also defines the scope, limitations and methodology that is utilized. Chapter 1 explains the history and development of parenting groups, and reviews a number of studies designed to examine the need for this type of program. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 look at different components of Project LINK. Project LINK acts as the medium through which various administrative concerns are studied in light of relevant research theories.

The administrative components that are examined in this report were selected because of their impact on managing an effective program. These components are: program planning, program evaluation, and grantsmanship. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 each cover one of these major components in the above-indicated sequence, which is the preferred method for program development. Therefore, the first step in designing a program is to make a detailed plan that includes methods of evaluating the program. Then program organizers can begin the process of seeking funding. All too often this procedure is reversed, whereby a grant proposal is written without a clear idea of what the program should entail.[1] Although it may appear at the outset that generating a detailed program plan and evaluation procedures prior to writing a grant proposal is too time consuming, in fact following this sequence of steps will save time as an effective grant proposal incorporates these elements.[2]

Chapter 1 discusses the history of parenting groups in this country. Reference is made to a variety of reasons for this phenomena and a number of studies are cited that indicate the need for these groups. Areas for further study are also outlined, including issues such as: when parent education is most effective; what should be included in a parenting program; and what format these programs should utilize.

The focus of Chapter 2 is on the development of a parenting program for teen-aged parents. A six-step planning model (See Appendix C, #1) is utilized as the format for developing this program. The model was developed by Barry Mastrine and is presented in his article, "How To Effectively Plan Programs."[3] The purposes for planning are discussed, along with a definition of the various types of planning processes. Each of Mastrine's six steps is outlined and applied to the development of Project LINK's teen-aged parenting program.

Chapter 3 examines another aspect of administration, that is program evaluation. The purpose of a program evaluation is to gather information in order to determine program effectiveness. The evaluation measures whether the organization is meeting its stated objectives. The content of the evaluation is determined by the objectives outlined in the program plan. The fact that the majority of parenting programs have evolved out of a need felt by the organizers, most of whom have no training in program design,[4] relatively few parenting programs are evaluated.[5] This poses a problem for people seeking guidance in setting up new programs and for researchers interested in the effects of intervention. As funding for social service programs becomes even more limited, it will be increasingly important that evaluations of parenting programs be carried out as a means of ensuring that private and public money is utilized in the most effective manner.

The process of designing an evaluation of the child care offered at Project LINK is examined in Chapter 3. A variety of resources are cited as guidelines for the evaluation. The selection of the evaluation format, as well as the design and organization of the evaluation, are discussed (See Appendix C, #2). Although the results of the evaluation are unavailable, the methods of distribution of the questionnaire and an analysis of procedures for scoring the results are included. Problems inherent in the evaluation process, as well as those unique to the LINK Child Care evaluation, are discussed along with alternative methods of dealing with them.

The next chapter deals with the third administrative component that is examined in this report. Grantsmanship is an integral part of managing most non-profit organizations. In this chapter, two aspects of grantsmanship are studied. The first is the process of researching funding sources, that is how to locate appropriate funding for a particular project. The second aspect examines the elements that make up a proposal for funding, with particular emphasis on private foundation proposals.

In order to set the information about Project LINK into perspective, a variety of supporting data is presented in the appendixes. This information includes an analysis of other parenting programs currently in operation around the United States, as well as interviews with area parent educators, as to the types of programming available locally. In addition, a review of selected literature in the field of parents' groups is examined. Particular attention is paid to the gaps that exist in this field, and suggestions for future research are offered.

Two limitations of this report are its exclusion of other administrative issues and its lack of emphasis on program content or curricula. The first concern, i.e., the exclusion of some administrative issues, is best dealt with in light of the three components that are analyzed. Although program planning, program evaluation and grantsmanship are ongoing organizational activities, they are generally of primary importance at the beginning of a project. As such, they usually demand a major portion of a new administration's time. Other administrative issues, such as budgeting, recruitment, and program management, increase in importance once the program has begun. Therefore, the emphasis of this project is limited to major administrative issues involved in starting a new project. The minimal attention payed to curricula issues is due to the fact that the primary purpose of this report is to examine administrative concerns. Although alternative curricula choices have an impact on the administrative issues discussed, it is only one of the many decisions, such as program size, location, policy, etc., that administrators make and as such cannot be covered in detail in the limited space of this report.

The parent group movement has evolved from an era of phenomenal growth for self-help organizations of all types. Self-help groups are developed in response to a need felt by individuals who join together in the hope of finding support for their problem.[6] Generally, people in these groups have found traditional programs, i.e., professionally run, ineffective or non-existent for the type of service they seek. They are often turned off by the "professionalism" upon which social service programs sometimes pride themselves.[7] This may discourage such groups from seeking professional help, even when it could benefit their program. Often the individuals involved are unaware of alternative methods and procedures that could enhance their program, such as program evaluation.[8] Therefore, one contribution this report makes is to link common concerns of organizing a parents group with appropriate research theories. It is hoped that supplying group organizers with relevant research models will assist them in the development of their program. As was mentioned earlier in this report, the continued decreases in funding for all human services programs demands that programs wishing to remain viable need to offer the most effective service for the least amount of dollars. The growing competition for funds may lead to a situation in which programs with expertise are funded, while others lose out. For this reason, it may well be to the advantage of self-help groups to seek out professional guidance in areas requiring technical knowledge such as fund-raising and evaluation.

A review of parenting programs offered around the United States adds an important dimension to this report. This examination sheds some light on where Project LINK fits into a spectrum of services. Also, parenting programs, for the most part, are still so wrapped up in their own struggle to keep going that there is little communication from one to the other. The program analysis could benefit organizers and administrators by putting them in touch with the variety of modes of service that are currently available. Some of the organizations are so new and/or are operating on such a small budget that they haven't yet put together a brochure. The more well-established programs sell books on how they developed as a source for raising funds and as a service to other groups. These how-to manuals are the primary literature in this new field of parent education and support. Appendix B reviews these books as well as a variety of literature that relates to this field, specifically information about support groups in general; early childhood education; and cooperatives. Having reviewed this information about parent groups, a number of suggestions are made concerning areas for future study; needs for program development and/or expansion; and gaps in the literature.

At this time, parenting groups are a relatively new but growing phenomenon. There are eight parent education resource centers nationally which serve the hundreds of programs that are currently evolving.[9] Resource centers could make a significant contribution to the field of parent education and support by providing technical assistance and gathering information about parenting programs. However, the combination of a lack of funds for the resource centers, along with the growing numbers of parents groups needing assistance, has led to a decrease in the effectiveness of these centers.[10] These factors make it critical that professionals concerned with this field pick up some of the slack and make a contribution through their own area of study. It is hoped that the contents of this report meets this challenge.

The procedures followed throughout this report are a combination of research theory and hands-on experience. Research models are applied and modified to meet the constraints of actual program administration. This action research methodology serves as a means of increasing program effectiveness by bringing together theory and application.

FOOTNOTES

1) "Program Planning and Proposal Writing", Voluntary Action Leadership, Winter 1976.

2) Ibid.

3) Mastrine, Barry "How To Effectively Plan Programs", The Grantsmanship Center News, pp. 21-22.

4) Joy, Lesley A., Sheena Davidson, Tannis MacBeth Williams, Susan Lee Painter, "Parent Education in the Perinatal Period: A Critical Review of the Literature", University of British Columbia, Dept. of Psychology, Vancouver, B.C.

5) Ibid.

6) Kirschenbaum, Howard, Barbara Glaser Developing Support Groups: A Manual for Facilitators and Participants. University Associates, CA 1978.

7) Zimmerman, Hope S. Mothers' Center Manual. Family Service Association, United Methodist Church, Hicksville, NY 1980.

8) "Parent Education in the Perinatal Period:...", p. 212.

9) White, Burton "A Report on a Seminar for Directors of Resource Centers in Parent Education", The Center for Parent Education Newsletter, Vol. III #2, Feb. 1981.

10) Ibid.

CHAPTER 1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARENTING GROUPS

CHAPTER 1 - The Development of Parenting Groups

History

Parent groups are a new phenomena. As recently as 20 years ago, new parents received an abundance of information, guidance, and assistance from their own families. New parents also often had experience with young children through caring or assisting with younger siblings and cousins. However, since World War II there has been a steady decline in this type of experience,[1] due to a variety of factors including: the decline in the extended family itself; increased mobility (fewer families raise their children in the same neighborhood in which parents were raised.); the 'ideal' of the suburban nuclear family, and couples have fewer children closer in age.[2] Therefore, it is not uncommon today for a new couple having a child to never have handled an infant or changed a diaper, and not to have anyone close enough in locality to help them learn these skills as well as to share some of the burden of full-time parenthood.

Research Findings

Three current trends that indicate parents' desire for assistance in learning about parenting are, "the increase in popular literature written for parents; the formation of self-help groups that allow new and expectant parents to discuss the skills and attitudes involved in parental roles; and the development by professionals of a variety of programs and approaches for parent education."[3] The need and desire for parent education has been demonstrated in several studies. A questionnaire administered to parents early in their postpartum period indicated that 82% felt that parent education classes would be helpful.[4] Phone calls received by a health care facility from new parents were surveyed by Sumner and Fritsch[5] who found that 88% of the first-time parents called the center during the first six weeks of postpartum. A sample of urban, middle-class parents indicated that fully 83% experienced a severe crisis in adjustment after the birth of their first child, whether they described their marriage as 'good' or 'bad'.[6] Mothers in this study expressed problems with chronic tiredness, confinement to home, curtailment of social contacts, giving up of satisfaction of income from outside employment, guilt at not being a 'better mother', decline in housekeeping standards, and worry over self-appearance. New fathers indicated a decline in their wife's sexual responsiveness, economic pressures, interference with social life, worry about second pregnancy, and general disenchantment with their parental role, as their primary areas of concern.[7] In a longitudinal study of 193 families in Seattle, Snyder et al[8] found that "many parents' prenatal expectations for their infants were inappropriate for the infants' capabilities, and that these expectations related to later infant development."

Areas for Future Study

In spite of these findings indicating both the need and the desire for parent education, there is as yet no clear consensus concerning what should be taught, by whom, or when. There is, however, enough evidence to suggest the direction of future work. One recurring theme in the available studies is that parents gain confidence through attending either a support group or a more formal parent education program.[9] This is borne out by this author's personal experience evaluating the Mothers' Center of St. Louis. Fully 87% of that questionnaire's respondents reported feeling "more confident as a mother" and/or "more comfortable with myself in general" since their involvement at the center.

Another major area of parent education that needs further research is the question of timing. In other words, when are people most likely to benefit from this type of program. Burton White, Director of the Center for Parent Education, points out that the traditional approach of teaching parenting in the high schools is usually a case of "too little, too soon."[11] White suggests that the ideal time for this type of program is as soon as the couple is aware that they are pregnant. Although this appears to be the logical time to prepare parents, several researchers [12, 13, 14] have found that expectant parents did not assimilate information about caretaking nor materials intended to alleviate early parental stress.[15]

In sum, there is a clear need for parenting groups that provide support and/or education. The content, timing, and design of these programs may vary greatly. More research into these areas is needed to increase the effectiveness of these programs. One area that may enhance program affectiveness is how they are managed. Three important components of managing parents groups are presented in the next chapters.

FOOTNOTES

1) Taylor, Katharine Whiteside Parents and Children Learn Together. New York: Columbia Press, 1967.

2) Ibid.

3) Joy, Lesley A., Sheena Davidson, Tannis MacBeth Williams, Susan Lee Painter, "Parent Education in the Perinatal Period: A Critical Review of the Literature", University of British Columbia, Dept. of Psychology, Vancouver, B.C.

4) Williams, J. D. "Learning Needs of New Parents", American Journal of Nursing 77:1173, 1977.

5) Sumner, G. Fritsch, J. "Postnatal Parental Concerns: The First Six Weeks of Life", Journal of Obstetrical and Gynecological Nursing, 6:27-32, 1977.

6) Le Master, E. E. "Parenthood As Crises", Marriage and the Family, Vol. 19(4), 1957.

7) Ibid.

8) Snyder, C., S. J. Eyres, K. Barnard "New Findings About Mothers Antenatal Expectations and Their Relationship to Infant Development", Maternity Nursing 4:354-357, 1979.

9) "Parent Education in the Perinatal Period:...", p. 212.

10) Zimmerman, Hope S. Mothers' Center Manual. Family Service Association, United Methodist Church, Hicksville, NY 1980.

11) White, Burton L. "Education for Parenthood: When and for Whom?" The Center for Parent Education Newsletter, Vol. II #6, October 1980.

12) Williams, J. K. "Learning Needs of New Parents" American Journal of Nursing, 77:1173, 1977.

13) Kruse, D. C. "Anticipatory Guidance in Fourth Trimester Adjustment", Master's Thesis School of Nursing, Arizona State University, 1978.

14) Smith, D., H. L. Smith "Toward Improvements in Parenting: A Description of Prenatal and Postpartum Classes With Teaching Guide", Journal Obstetrical and Gynecological Nursing, 7:22-27, 1978.

15) "Parent Education in the Perinatal Period:...", p. 214.

CHAPTER 2

PROGRAM PLANNING

Chapter 2 - Program Planning

Program Background

Project LINK is a program designed by the Early Education Department of the Ferguson-Florissant School District, with the purpose of connecting parents of children under 4 years old with community resources. Originally, the program was primarily home based, whereby trained LINK representatives, who are themselves parents of young children, served as home visitors.

During the first year of operation, it became clear that parents were more interested in small group activities. In response to these interests, the LINK program was modified to offer parents a variety of activities that include: support group discussions; lectures on topics of interest; parent and child educational activities; a lending library; and a comprehensive resource center with materials from area agencies. One of the chief home-based services LINK continues to provide is the facilitation of play groups and babysitting cooperatives for interested parents. The LINK representative's job has expanded from that of home visitor to one who facilitates peer discussion groups, provides child care and assists the coordinator in planning, preparing and operating the resource center.

The LINK resource center is located at the Lee Hamilton School in what was the kindergarten classroom. Group meetings are held in the cafeteria that adjoins the resource room, which is equipped with toys appropriate for young children, as well as cribs and a padded area for babies. It is open Monday through Friday from 9 to 12 a.m.

although programs designed for both parents are offered in the evenings.

The Danforth Foundation funded Project LINK from September 1978 through December 1980. Presently, a fee of $10.00 per year is the only cost to participants. Long-term funding sources are being sought at this time. A small grant has been obtained from Monsanto Corporation to develop and implement a program for teen-aged parents. The teen parenting program will utilize the LINK resource center and will be run on the same model; that is, providing support and education to parents of children under four years old.

Introduction

Planning and developing the teen-aged parenting program for Project LINK serves as a medium for exploring program planning theory in this chapter. The primary resource for this theory is Barry Mastrine's article on "How to Effectively Plan Programs."[1] The function of planning is the first area explored in this report. This is followed by an examination of the difference between policy and implementation planning. The importance of establishing organizational objectives is analyzed and a six-step planning process (See Appendix C, #1) outlined in the Mastrine article, is the format utilized for developing the teen parenting program for Project LINK. The final component of this chapter explores the implications for managing the planning process.

One of the most important reasons for planning is to provide a cohesive base for a project; with this solid base, the focus of a program can be clearly defined. The planning process also organizes the staff, initially by defining areas of responsibility and, once the project is functioning, by acting as a guide for the course of action. The plan has a monitoring function which may be used to analyze whether the organizational activities are being conducted as they were intended. The primary purpose of planning is defined by Mastrine as "the definition and selection of program approaches that have the greatest potential for impact on a problem area, given the limitation of resources and the political/social climate of the community."[2]

The Planning Process

Since the importance of planning is defined, let's examine the planning process by defining broad goals and graduating down to specific program strategies. For example, Project LINK's general goal is to provide support and education to parents of young children. A number of program strategies were selected to attain this goal, including home visits, small group activities, and parent and child education programs. These are not the only strategies that might achieve LINK's general goal. For example, a parent support group in Minnesota[4] with the same general goal of providing support and education to parents of young children chose to establish a phone hot-line as their primary program strategy. The process of defining broad organizational goals is policy planning.[5] This takes place at the highest organizational level. Out of the policy planning, detailed program or implementation plans may be developed.

Utilizing this hierarchical process from policy to implementation planning aids in the establishment of organizational objectives which are determined during the policy planning phase, and serve as the basis for coordinating various aspects of the organization. The most important characteristic of the objectives is that they be quantifiable. Measurable objectives are the criterion used to evaluate the affectiveness of the program.[7] Mastrine suggests four other components of organizational objectives, including that "they should be expressed in terms of output; they should clearly define the client group to be served; they should be sufficiently broad in scope to encompass a variety of organizational activities; and, they should be realistic and capable of being accomplished."[8]

The Policy Planning Phase

In "How to Effectively Plan Programs"[9], a six-step planning process is outlined (See Appendix C, #1). This process begins by defining the problem. Although problem definition is often perceived as an easy task, in fact it is an important part of the planning process and, as such, demands careful consideration. A problem definition is a description of a situation requiring remedial action. It should be stated in clear, unbiased terms and be supported with data such as baseline measures that could be used to show program effectiveness during evaluation. Five common errors the Mastrine article lists are: not substantiating the problem with data; focusing on peripheral problems rather than dealing with the core problem; using ambiguous terms and stating the problem in light of your program as the solution; not stating the impact of a problem in such a way that it's applicable to various parts of the community; and not allowing the client population input into the problem definition.[10]

Problem definition is the first step in the program planning hierarchy. (See Appendix C, #1) The next two steps, organizational goals and objectives, are closely related and frequently used interchangeably. For the purposes of this report, the differentiation of these terms is that the goals are "general statements of internal values and preferences"[11], and the objectives are specific, operational aspects of the goals. Together these three steps--problem definition, organizational goals, and objectives--comprise the policy phase of the planning process.

The Implementation Planning Phase

Organizational activities during the implementation planning phase are determined by top management and should follow the guidelines set down by the board during the policy planning phase. The three steps of implementation planning are: selecting program strategies, determining operational objectives, and identifying activities that will achieve those objectives.[12]

The selection of alternative program strategies is a creative process in which consideration is given to any alternative that might have an impact on the problem. It is important that this process be conducted with an open mind, rather than settling quickly on a preconceived notion of the project. Factors such as the potential impact of a particular program on the problem, as well as the resources available to the organization, should be utilized to evaluate the various program strategies. After the various strategies are reviewed, a selection of the strategies to be implemented takes place. The program strategies are selected because they are perceived as having a better probability of achieving the organization's objectives while utilizing the resources available to the organization.

The next step involves the development of operational objectives. These objectives are the "outcome" of your activities,[13] not the activities themselves. "Program Planning and Proposal Writing" states that, "objectives are problem-related outcomes of your program."[14] Operational objectives serve as a measure of the program's effectiveness; therefore, they should be stated in measurable terms.

The last stage in Mastrine's planning process involves the identification of the program activities. This step involves a thorough analysis of what specific activities need to take place in order to achieve the program objectives. There should be a clear definition of the program's "scope, target population, performance standards, schedule, budget and staff assignments."[15]

Using the Planning Process

Applying the six-step planning process (See Appendix C, #1) to Project LINK's attempt at establishing a teen-aged parenting program, we begin by defining the problem. St. Louis area teen-aged parents receive little support in their role as parents. This information is extrapolated from the fact that older parents, who generally have more access to community resources and support, have expressed a growing need for education and support in their parenting roles, while teen-aged parents, who generally face a greater sense of isolation from their peers; a lack of availability to educational and employment opportunities; and often a loss of family support,[16] may well have a greater need for support groups and less opportunity to develop them. A measure of what types of community supports are currently available to St. Louis teen parents was taken through an informal needs assessment. Community agencies, including The Education Center of North County, Title XX Human Services social workers, and the coordinator of the Parent-Infant Interaction Program, were polled to determine the type of programming available to the teen-aged parent. This assessment showed that the focus of available programs is on providing support for the teenager to continue his or her education, obtain financial assistance, and/or receive private counseling. None of the programs currently offered in St. Louis deal directly with the teen as a parent interacting with their child.

Project LINK's interest in this type of program is consistent with their organizational goals, which are stated in the 1979 Program Report as:

"1) Building on problems, needs or interests perceived as real and important to the parents.

2) Providing parents with and informing them of a wide variety of community and LINK resources and experiences addressing their concerns.

3) Producing an atmosphere that encourages a creativity and divergent thinking.

4) Providing choice of instruction and guidance. The parent can choose from the many self-directed paths of instruction (e.g. through choosing from a selection

of reading material, group discussions, workshops, social encounters with other parents) or by conventional information-giving format (e.g. lectures, presentations or demonstrations).

5) Encouraging communication between and among parents -- in order to provide a support system for each other.

6) Valuing individuality.

7) Working closely with community agencies in order to share parenting needs and provide service."[17]

The effectiveness of Project LINK in meeting these goals is measured annually through evaluation sessions designed to ascertain members' levels of satisfaction with the program during the previous year.

LINK's organizational objectives are: "(1) to assess and evaluate parental needs; (2) to acquaint parents with other community resources; (3) to develop a cohesive working relationship with all community resources; and (4) to develop additional services within each community resource to address unmet needs of the target group."[18] The LINK Progress Report states, "It was expected that by meeting these objectives and addressing our long-term goals, Project LINK would help to maintain and enhance the health and development of both children and parents."[19] Taking these organizational goals and objectives as a framework, Project LINK is trying to develop a program for a new target population; that is, teen-aged parents.

Program Strategy Review

Returning to the model for program planning (See Appendix C, #1), we now begin the implementation planning phase. Various program strategies were reviewed in order to find the one that would have the greatest impact on the problem and lie within the guidelines of Project LINK's goals and objectives. One of the first concerns was whether to provide separate programming for the target population or to integrate them into LINK's current program. Recognizing that Project LINK is open to teen-aged parents but has not attracted any indicates the need for a special program to attract the target population. It is hoped that the teen-aged parents will, in time, feel comfortable enough to participate in any of LINK's programs in which they are interested.

A variety of program models were reviewed and evaluated by the LINK coordinator and program administrators. Three that seemed most appropriate for the LINK setting and goals are: a support group for the parents of teen-aged parents, i.e., a grandparents program; a "model" teen LINK representative program; and a teen-infant interaction program.

The grandparents program was strongly suggested by respondents in the needs assessment. The need for this program was based on the fact that often the grandparents of teen-aged parents assume primary responsibility for child-rearing and, as such, need support in their role. Due to the fact that it would be difficult to attract participants for this program to Project LINK, it was suggested to another community agency.

The next program reviewed was the "model" teen LINK representative program. The purpose of this program is to attract teen-aged parents to LINK through other teen parents who work in the program serving in the same capacities as the LINK representatives, i.e., facilitating peer support groups; providing child care; doing home visits; and assisting in the content of program offerings. Although this program is consistent with the structure of Project LINK, it presents the problem of where to recruit the "model" teen representatives. None of the community agencies consulted could suggest a candidate for this position and some expressed doubt that such a candidate could be found.

This led to the third program strategy, i.e., a teen-aged parent-infant interaction program. The advantages of offering this type of program are that (1) it deals directly with the teen in his/her role as a parent; (2) it may enhance the quality of the teens' parenting through providing an opportunity to interact with their infant and to observe others in the same role while receiving educational information about infants; (3) it may provide an atmosphere conducive to the development of peer support; (4) it could lead to the selection of a model teen representative for future programs; (5) it serves as an introduction to local teen-aged parents of the services offered at Project LINK; and (6) participants will be eligible to receive high school credit for participating in the program. The only apparent drawback to this program is in the logistics of getting the parents and their babies to the LINK center. Assuming rides can be arranged, however, the possible benefits far outweigh this difficulty.

Defining Objectives

The objectives of the teen-aged parent-infant interaction program are (1) to increase the level of satisfaction felt by the teen-aged mom in her role as a parent; (2) to increase her knowledge of and expectations for her infant; (3) to encourage the growth of mutual support among the group participants; and (4) to increase participants' awareness of Project LINK and other community resources. Measures of these objectives will be taken through the use of a pre and post-test questionnaire on attitudes about self and parenting, knowledge of infant behavior, and awareness of community resources. The post-test evaluation will also include questions designed to solicit the participants' ideas about the program, as well as suggestions for future programs. This is consistent with Project LINK's objective of "respect for individuality and a desire to build on problems, needs, or interests which had a personal meaning to each parent."[20]

Specifying Program Activities

Having selected the program strategy that will be implemented, it is necessary to outline specific activities that must occur in order to begin operating the program. Since the coordinator of Project LINK will be the only staff person directly involved with the teen parenting program, there isn't any need to recruit and train new staff. However, it is necessary to recruit the program's participants. The target population will be restricted to teen-aged female parents with children less than 9 months old who are in their care at least part-time. Transportation for both mothers and babies must be arranged, and a day and time selected. Simultaneously, with these administrative functions, a number of program activities need to be prepared. Topics for discussion should be selected and appropriate reading materials collected. Pre and post-course evaluations should be prepared as as well. The topics to be covered are based on the infant interaction program offered regularly by Project LINK. These are: "adjusting to your new baby; infant sleeping patterns; and feeding your infant."[21] This first group will, in effect, serve as a source of information gathering so that the usefulness and relevance of these topics and format to this population can be determined. Participants' attendance will be the primary means for monitoring the program's success, while pre and post-test results will serve as the major evaluation tool. Also, notice will be taken of participants' attendance at other LINK-sponsored activities during future semesters. The option for a continuation of a similar program for this first group exists, as well as expansion into other areas of interest to teen-aged parents.

Program Rationale

The reasoning behind the scope and format of this program was developed along with the design itself. For example, the decision to offer a separate program to teen-aged parents is based on the fact that there has been no teen-aged participants at Project LINK's other program offerings. A group activity was selected in order to increase the likelihood of peer support, as well as the fact that no other program in the community allows for group parent-infant activities. This initial program is geared to teen-aged moms because they are more likely to have responsibility for the care of their children than the fathers. The age of the babies in the group is limited to nine months in order to keep the focus of the discussions narrowed in on a particular aspect of motherhood; that is, mothering an infant. Also, it is hoped that participants will continue to attend LINK activities, and, since LINK's programs are for parents of children under four, the moms with infants have the most number of years ahead of them in which to use LINK. The topics for the infant interaction series are based on a similar program offered by LINK as a basis for starting up the program. As participants' special needs are expressed, new topics will be added and the program will be modified to increase the likelihood of meeting participants' needs.

Managing the Planning Process

The management of the teen-aged parent-infant interaction program is the responsibility of LINK's coordinator. As such, she will oversee the "total management cycle."[22] The first phase of this cycle, i.e., program planning, is examined in this report. The monitoring and evaluation components will be designed and implemented by the LINK coordinator. An example of how to design a program evaluation is discussed in the next chapter of this report.

FOOTNOTES

1. Mastrine, Barry "How to Effectively Plan Programs", The Grantsmanship Center News, reprint series, p. 21-22.

2. Ibid, p. 25.

3. "LINK Progress Report - June 1979", Early Education Program, Ferguson-Florissant School District, 655 January Avenue, Ferguson, Missouri 63135, p. 5.

4. Mason, Diane, Gayle Jensen, Carolyn Ryzecwicz, How To Grow A Parents Group. International Childbirth Association, 1979, pp. 23-41.

5. "How to Effectively Plan Programs" p. 24.

6. Ibid, p. 23.

7. Kiritz, Norton J. "Program Planning and Proposal Writing", The Grantsmanship Center News, reprint series, P. 52-55.

8. "How to Effectively Plan Programs" p. 22.

9. Ibid, p. 24.

10. Ibid, p. 23.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid, p. 25.

13. "Program Planning and Proposal Writing", p. 52.

14. Ibid.

15. "How to Effectively Plan Programs", p. 26.

16. Lindsey, Jeanne Warren Pregnant Too Soon: Adoption is an Option, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979.

17. "LINK Progress Report - June 1979" pp. 2-3.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid, p. 4.

20. Ibid, p. 3.

21. "LINK - Fall 1980 Calendar", Ferguson-Florissant Early Education Program, St. Louis, Missouri.

22. "How to Effectively Plan Programs", p. 26.

CHAPTER 3

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Chapter 3 - Program Evaluation

Introduction

This chapter examines the process utilized in designing an evaluation of Project LINK's Child Care. An explanation of the LINK program is included, along with the reasons for attempting an evaluation of the child care component at this time. Reference sources are noted in connection with the use of the questionnaire format, as well as technical guidance, for effectively designing an evaluation. The rationale for the design, organization and question selection is included. Problems inherent in the evaluation format are exposed and their relationship to this questionnaire is explored. Due to the fact that the results of the questionnaire are being gathered at this time, it is not possible to include them in this report. However, a presentation of the procedures for data collection that will be used is reported. A copy of the actual questionnaire is attached to the back of this report (See Appendix C, #2).

As was indicated in Chapter 2, Project LINK is a program for parents of children from zero to three years old. Its purpose is to serve as a connection between parents and community resources and to provide a place where parents can find support. LINK offers half-day programs of an educational and supportive nature. Parents are encouraged to bring their pre-school children with them. While they attend LINK programs, the children are cared for by the trained LINK representatives. Although the focus of the LINK program is centered on parents, the children in attendance are exposed to a variety of learning situations which are designed to foster their social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Although the LINK center does both ongoing and annual evaluations of its program offerings, up to this time there has been no evaluation of the child care. Informal discussions with current and former members suggested that there are a number of concerns about the quality of the care the children receive while the parents are attending programs; the training of the LINK representatives to care for groups of young children; and the safety/appropriateness of the LINK facilities that are used for child care. These parental concerns about the child care have the potential for discouraging members' participation. This indicates the need for an evaluation of the child care offered by the LINK program.

Evaluation Design and Content

The content of the evaluation (See Appendix C, #2) is based on the concerns raised by the parents. It is designed to obtain information which will be utilized to enhance the program next year. This is consistent with Mark Thompson's statement that the purpose of an evaluation is for "marshalling information for the purpose of an of improving decisions."[1] Ray Bard in "Program and Staff Evaluation" takes this idea one step further when he refers to effective evaluations as "data collection systems."[2] He then explains that "a properly designed data collection system provides two main types of information...how well the agency accomplishes its goals...(and) the quality of the service provided."[3] In other words, both the quantity and the quality of the service must be considered. Bard suggests two approaches that may be utilized in order to implement a data collection system: evaluation and monitoring. His definition of evaluation is, "the assessment of program objectives after the program has been achieved, indicating the overall effectiveness of the program."[4] This is the approach utilized in the program evaluation presently being implemented for Project LINK.

Bard proposes six models which may be utilized for implementing evaluations and/or monitoring a program. These models are: "data collection; work monitoring; employee and performance review; on-site evaluation; recipient procedures; and the board of directors evaluation."[5] A combination of the on-site evaluation and the recipient procedure models are implemented by LINK's Child Care Evaluation because it is a yearly gathering of information, as in the on-site model, from the recipients of the service.

The design for this evaluation follows the guidelines given in "Without Tears or Bombast: A Guide to Program Evaluation"[6] by Bruce Rocheleau. This source suggests a comprehensive approach to designing an effective evaluation that begins with determining specific goals such as (1) to provide feedback regarding the quality of the child care; (2) to determine the level of satisfaction felt by members using the child care; and (3) to ascertain members' willingness to participate in fund-raising activities, which are the goals of the LINK Child Care Evaluation. Rocheleau's guide (See Appendix C, #3) is utilized as an outline for the procedure of designing the evaluation instrument. The data gathered from the evaluation will be used to decide the effectiveness of the child care; specific areas where the child care may not be satisfactory; and members' willingness to support the program financially. Information such as members' opinions of the child care, their reasons for these feelings, and their suggestions for funding sources will be useful in making the above decisions.

The next step in the procedure involves the use of Howard Davis' "AVICTORY"[8] (See Appendix C, #3) tool for analysis. Resources for designing the evaluation instrument are being provided to the program by this author. The implementation and analysis of the evaluation data will be accomplished by the project's coordinator. In view of the fact that the coordinator has effectively utilized evaluations of the programs offered at the center, as can be seen by the responsiveness of the program as it has evolved over the years,[9] it is believed that she will be adept at utilizing the child care evaluation effectively. The evaluation's contents are based on informal discussions with LINK members. Due to the larger numbers and erratic attendance of LINK's members, there is no systematic gathering of information from the total membership concerning the questionnaire. Therefore, there is a danger that the values implicit in the evaluation are not consistent with the majority of the LINK membership. One measure that is being taken to minimize this danger is the use of the LINK coordinator as an advisor for the design of the evaluation. Since she is in close contact with the total membership, her input is utilized throughout the questionnaire. Also, the evaluation instrument itself is designed to obtain information on a variety of issues and to examine these issues from different perspectives. This should also help decrease the likelihood that large numbers of LINK members will not view the evaluation as irrelevant. A final precaution is taken through the use of space left after each question for comments and/or suggestions to encourage members to express their concerns, some of which may not be directly dealt with in the evaluation itself.

Turning to the next area of Davis' "AVICTORY" system (See Appendix C, #3), Project LINK is particularly adept at utilizing evaluations from other parts of their program.[10] There is no apparent reason why this responsiveness will not carry over to the use of the Child Care Evaluation. The time of the evaluation will be at the close of this school year at special evaluation sessions where other evaluations will be done concurrently. The Child Care Evaluation may have particular impact at this time due to the fact that the funds for child care ran out mid-year, and alternative sources had to be found. This crises period may have sharpened members' awareness of the importance of the child care offered by the LINK program and, hopefully, will increase their desire to carefully analyze what has been available. Evaluation following this crises period also may serve to highlight the need for examining alternatives. The major obstacles to this evaluation may lie in the lack of time to adequately prepare and analyze it and/or insignificant response from membership. These can be overcome through careful planning, distribution and analysis. Results of the evaluation may prove costly in that it is possible members will indicate needs for additional training of staff, changes in equipment, etc. The decision-maker's purpose for this evaluation is to improve the quality of the service by being responsive to the membership's needs and to determine members' willingness to take a more active part in fund-raising activities.

<u>The Evaluation Instrument</u>

Having determined the information that the evaluation is able to collect, the next step involves planning the design of the evaluation instrument. The instrument should be geared to the needs of the respondents. Since the LINK members are primarily mothers of young children, it is important that the evaluation be designed in such a way as to allow for quick responses, but also leave room for more elaborate answers for the respondent who has the desire to write in her own comments. Values are assigned to each answer. A perfect score is 38 points. This data will be utilized in planning next year's program. Project LINK's coordinator will gather and analyze the results and use it at her discretion. The evaluation will be completed in early April in order to allow time for printing and distribution during the last weeks of operation in May. The cost of designing the evaluation is donated by this author. The printing is done by the school district and the cost of administering and analyzing the results are paid out of LINK's budget.

A number of possible problems concerning the Child Care Evaluation are apparent to this author. First, a recurring question is why such a well-documented program[11] failed to evaluate this important service previously. Assuming that lack of time and funds are the reasons for this oversight, it remains to be seen how this evaluation will be accepted by the upper level administrators. The LINK Parent Survey, which is the basis for program evaluation, was designed by a professional evaluation consultant who was brought into the program at the outset. Although over the years this Parent Survey has been found to be too detailed for practical useage, there may well be an organizational bias towards that type of instrument. Even if the design of the Child Care Evaluation is accepted, there may be some problems as to whether adequate time will be available to utilize it effectively. Finally, the lack of funds faced by this program may make it impossible to implement any of the changes indicated by the evaluation results, regardless of the degree of need expressed.

Keeping the above-mentioned design outline and reservations in mind, it is determined that the evaluation instrument utilize a questionnaire format. In "Problem Analysis: Data Collection Techniques"[12] some of the advantages of this format are explored. These include the low cost and minimal time required. However, one disadvantage that should be noted is the fact that the respondents are a self-selected group in that they may choose not to pick up the available evaluations or to attend the evaluation session. Therefore, they are not necessarily representative of the entire LINK population.

This article also suggests a number of considerations for the design of the questionnaire. These include: (a) "that although open-ended questions allow for more detailed responses, they are also more difficult to standardize; (b) check phrasing of questions so that they are not biased; (c) watch that the order of the questions do not affect each other; (d) the questions should be clear and concise and need no further explanation; (e) when possible, questionnaire results should be checked against statistical records; (f) always pre-test with a small sample prior to printing."[13]

With the above guidelines in mind, the questionnaire was designed (See Appendix C #2). The opening paragraph explains briefly why the questionnaire was developed and attempts to motivate members to take the time to fill it out. The multiple choice format is used in order to encourage responses without requiring too great a time investment and for ease in quantifying results. Space for open-ended responses is given to encourage additional comments. The order of the questions begins general and graduates toward specific areas of interest in order to encourage a natural progression in the reader's mind. There are three primary foci upon which the questions are based. These foci are: (1) the quality of child care; (2) the use and arrangement of physical space at the center; (3) financial concerns. The first six questions (See Appendix C #2) deal with the quality of care at the center; members' feelings about that care, and their attitudes about the LINK representatives doing the child care. Questions six through nine are concerned with members' ideas about the appropriateness, safety and arrangement of the physical space and equipment in the LINK room. The last two questions attempt to ascertain members' ideas about fund-raising and policy changes at Project LINK. The wording for the questions is carefully selected in order to avoid giving a bias or leading a particular answer.

In the body of the questionnaire the answers are weighted toward a positive, a neutral, and a negative valence. A point system may be used in analyzing the results, whereby the positive answers are worth 4 points, neutral answers 2 points, and negative answers have no point value. Three questions that vary from this format are the first, tenth, and eleventh. Because of its generalness, the first question has four choices. The first may be valued at 6 points and the others may follow the same point scale as above. The added weight given to this question is appropriate in light of its direct impact on the purpose of the evaluation. The other two deviations from the body, questions 10 and 11, are designed to obtain information, rather than as criteria for evaluation. As such, the respondents are free to circle all of the appropriate choices. This data is not subject to the statistical analysis which the rest of the questionnaire is, but will be utilized primarily as a tool for obtaining members' ideas.

Problem Areas

Having completed the design of the LINK Child Care Evaluation, it is important to consider a few of the problems implicit in this form of information gathering. Peter Rossi's "Testing for Success and Failure in Social Action"[14] suggests three main problems of evaluation: (1) vague goals; (2) strong promises; and (3) weak effects.

Rossi proposes the use of cost-benefit analysis whenever possible. Although this type of evaluation does most clearly illustrate program effectiveness by turning it into dollars and cents, it is extremely difficult to implement in that requires reducing social change issues such as feelings and attitudes into monetary values. It is also recommended that a control group be used for data comparisons, an extremely difficult objective when dealing with a community rather than a laboratory project. However, Rossi also points out that if "no effect is shown by soft methods (such as questionnaires and surveys), it is not likely to show any effects when evaluated by a harder method (such as cost-benefit analysis)."[15] Therefore, the questionnaire method utilized should at least indicate possible trends and/or areas where further data collection may be necessary.

The pros and cons of the questionnaire type program evaluation are analyzed by Eleanor Bennett.[16] She suggests that, although it is inexpensive, not too time consuming, and may be perceptive, program evaluations may also be flawed in that the results are not replicable, precise, lacking in conclusive data, and may overemphasize a minor detail.

Keeping these potential flaws in mind, the LINK Child Care Evaluation will be utilized at the end of this school year. Without the results, it is not possible to determine whether or not this instrument will achieve its goals. It is important to note that the problems which the evaluation may uncover could be beyond the scope of rectifying at this time. The evaluation questionnaire is designed to provide information as to what problems may exist. Future questionnaires and/or other methods of information gathered may be indicated in order to enhance the effectiveness of the child care offered by Project LINK.

FOOTNOTES

1. Thompson, Mark S., Evaluation in Decision in Social Programs. Massachusettes: Lexington Books, 1975, p. 26.

2. Bard, Ray., Program and Staff Evaluation. Washington, D.C.: Education, Training and Research Sciences Corp., 1971, p. 1-12.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Rocheleau, Bruce A., Without Tears or Bombast: A Guide to Program Evaluation. Center for Governmental Studies, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, Illinois, 1975.

7. Ibid.

8. Davis, Howard. as cited by Bruce A. Rocheleau, Without Tears or Bombast: A Guide to Program Evaluation. Center for Governmental Studies, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, Illinois, 1975.

9. LINK Progress Report - June 1979, Early Education Program, Ferguson-Florissant School District.

10. Davis, Howard. Without Tears or Bombast.

11. LINK Progress Report

12. League of California Cities, "Problem Analysis: Data Collection Techniques", Planning for Social Welfare: Issues, Models and Tasks. Neil Gilber and Harry Specht, eds., Prentice-Hall, 1977, pp. 311-323.

13. Ibid.

14. Rossi, Peter and and W. Williams. "Testing for Success and Failure in Social Action", Quantitative Studies in Social Relations.

15. Ibid. "The Methodology of Evaluating Social Action Programs"

16. Bennett, Eleanor and Marvin Weisinger. "Evaluation: Alternative Models", Planning for Social Welfare: Issues, Models and Tasks.

CHAPTER 4

CRAFTSMANSHIP

Chapter 4 - Grantsmanship

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore two key aspects of grantsmanship: researching funding sources and writing a grant proposal. These two processes are important aspects of obtaining fund- for non-profit organizations. Their placement in this report follows the chapters on program planning and evaluation because this is the recommended sequence for developing a program; that is, the program plan is developed prior to requesting funds.

In any case, the first step towards obtaining funding is to locate a grant-maker. Two general categories of grant-makers are the government and private foundations. The process of obtaining funding from either of these sources is similar. A grant-seeker needs to research appropriate grant-makers prior to submitting a proposal for funding in order to determine the possiblity of being funded by a given sources and what specific information the funder requires.

Applying for Federal Grants

Most federal funding is available through state or local governments under the system of revenue-sharing.[1] Organizations seeking funding from the federal government can utilize this system by contacting the appropriate government agency and requesting information concerning their application procedures, including: deadlines for submitting an application; a description of types of programs funded; a contact person within the agency; and an application blank.

In order to determine which government agency is more likely to fund a particular type of program, a grant-seeker can refer to a number of government publications. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance[2] is a general compilation of all federal programs. Each program is described by type of assistance, the purpose for which it is available, who can apply, and application procedure.[3] More specific information can be obtained by contacting the agency responsible for the type of program for which you are seeking funding.

Parts of programs, including employment and on-the-job training, are eligible to receive funding from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). These funds are available from the Secretary of Labor through prime sponsors such as states or units of local government.[4] Community-based organizations, including parents groups, can submit proposals to the prime sponsor for receipt of CETA funds. Seven steps that are recommended for applying for CETA funds are:

"1. Find out who your prime sponsor is.
2. Find out who the prime sponsor's CETA planner is and make an appointment to talk with the planner.
3. Become familiar with CETA in your area.
4. Find out the CETA funding process for your area and the method for submitting your funding application.
5. Complete and submit your application.
6. Be visible and active on a year-round basis.
7. Find out about the CETA funding possibilities."[5]

Another resource the government provides that may be of assistance to grant-seekers is a compilation of statistical references useful for documenting proposals. The County and City Data Book[6] presents a variety of statistical information about counties, standard metropolitan statistical areas, cities, and unincorporated areas. This could be helpful, for example, to the grant writer who is interested in obtaining information about the number of new parents in a specific area in order to ascertain potential membership in a parent group.

Locating Private Grant-makers

If private sources are being sought for funding, the Foundation Center should be a grant-seeker's first reference. The Foundation Center is a network of libraries that contain f actual information on philanthropic foundations. In St. Louis, the Metropolitan Association for Philanthropy Inc. (MAP), formally the Danforth Foundation Library, is a cooperating collection of the Foundation Centers.

A primary method of obtaining information about foundations is by examining Internal Revenue Service tax returns: 990-PF and AR.[7] These forms contain grants paid and/or committed for future payment which can be used to determine the types of programs a given foundation is funding, the amount of the grants, and a contact person. MAP has the IRS forms indexed according to categories of programs. Therefore, a grant-seeker trying to start a parents groups could identify foundations who have funded similar programs in the past by checking the index under family education.[8]

Other resources available at MAP include a variety of directories that list information about non-government grant-making foundations. The foundation directories categorize entries according to size of assets, subject areas, and definition foundation and/or location.[9] Organizations' annual reports, miscellaneous publications, and computer printouts are also available at MAP, as well as a two-hour orientation session designed to familiarize the grant-seeker with

MAP's resources.

Choosing Funding Sources

The above-mentioned resources are designed to assist the grant-seeker in identifying some potential funders. The choice of who to request funds from is generally based on the grant-maker's history of giving. This is due to the fact that foundations generally have areas in which they are interested and they are more likely to fund programs that fall within the parameters of their fields. Therefore, grant-seekers can maximize their potential for receiving funding by applying to organizations who have a history of funding programs similar to theirs.

It is also valuable to determine the dollar value of funds given in the past. This information can serve as a guideline for deciding the amount of money to request from a particular organization. For example, if your parents group needs $20,000 and the foundations to which you are applying generally give grants of $5,000 to $10,000; the grant-seeker is probably better off requesting part of their budget from a few different sources. It is also helpful for grant-seekers to identify the foundation's preferences for use of funds; for example, one-time expenditures, ongoing operational costs, staff training, education, etc. This will further narrow a grant-seeker's choice from whom to request funding.

FOOTNOTES

1. U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary - Women's Bureau, Washington, D.C. 20210, "Sources of Information of Proposal Writing and Possible Funding", December 1978.

2. Office of Management and Budget, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. Washington, D.C. 20503, 1978.

3. Ibid.

4. U.S. Department of Labor, "A Guide to Seeking Funds from CETA."

5. Ibid.

6. U.S. Department of Commerce, County and City Data Book. (Statistical Abstract Supplement), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

7. Metropolitan Association for Philanthropy, Inc., "Welcome to the Funding Resource Center", February 1980.

8. "Index of Grants", (MAP), 1978.

9. Ibid.

Introduction to the Grant Proposal

The purpose of this section is to present to the reader a suggested format for writing a proposal for funding. The format is drawn from a variety of research sources and is presented only as a guideline. Although information concerning the use of government application procedures are included, the primary focus of this chapter is on preparing a proposal for funding from private sources, such as foundations and corporations. An overview of the three phases of proposal writing is presented, as well as information as to what funding sources look for when reviewing proposals. A breakdown of what is included in a proposal is followed by a Procedural Design Chart used to analyze the continuity across sections of the proposal.

The Application Process

Virginia White in her book, "Grants: How to Find Out About Them and What to do Next", points out "three phases in the process of applying for grant funds."[1] These are: the pre-application phase, the application phase, and the post-application phase. The pre-application phase consists of identifying and consulting with the officials from potential funding sources. The applicant should first research sources who have shown an interest in funding similar programs, obtain the name of the contact person, and then do an initial phone call or letter. Kim Klein, fund-raiser for the Coalition for the Medical Rights of Women in San Francisco, states that "personal contacts are crucial."[2] She suggests that the initial letter be tailored to the interests of the organization, and that it be followed up by a phone call. All of the research sources this author utilized emphasize the importance of establishing a contact person within the organization. Kathryn Szymoick, director of Chrysallis, a women's counseling center, confirms this idea. She considers networking her chief fund-raising tool. At Chrysallis "they built a strong advisory committee and they use it to get access to people who have access to the money."[3]

The application phase involves the preparation and submission of formal proposal. This is the only phase in which the applicant has full control over the outcome and, as such, it should be utilized with great care. The suggested proposal format that is presented in this report is broken into seven components. These are (1) Introduction (2) Problem Statment or Needs Assessment (3) Objectives (4) Methods or Procedures (5) Evaluation (6) Future and Other Necessary Funding and (7) Budget.[4] The purpose and content of each of these components is presented in detail later in this report.

The final phase in the process of applying for grants is post-application. During this period, the grant-makers are reviewing and processing the proposals they have received. Foundations use a wide variety of criteria. Some commonly used criteria noted in "What Makes a Good Proposal" include: "the competence of the persons involved; feasibility and realism of the proposal; importance and utility of the venture to the community and/or to society; originality and creativity of the proposed venture; appropriateness of the project to the foundation's policy and program focus; leverage of funding from other sources; need for foundation support; soundness of the budget; persistence, dedication and commitment for the proposers; and provisions for objective evaluation results where feasible."[4] These criteria point to the importance for the applicant to thoroughly research, plan and prepare a solid proposal during the earlier phasis. In an analysis of over 700 rejected applications to the Public Health Service, "thirty-nine percent were disapproved because of inadequate planning and carelessly prepared applications."[5] It is also important to emphasize here that the applicant ask why a proposal was rejected in order to improve it for resubmitting or follow-up on new sources.

Defining a Grant Proposal

What is a grant proposal? Jill Stoney in "The ABC's of Proposal Writing" states that a proposal is "an organized, clear, well-documented, rhetoric-free plan that conveys the excitement and urgency you feel for your project."[6] Each of these points are repeatedly emphasized throughout the literature. Virginia White points out that "the indispensable ingredient of a good proposal is a good idea."[7], and "Program Planning and Proposal Writing" indicates that "a proposal should reflect the thoughtful planning of an applicant seeking funding from a grant-making agencing with which to increase or improve its services to its constituency."[8] It is important to note that prior to beginning this process an agency should determine through a needs assessment that the problem does, in fact, exist in their area and that the person or group of people selected to write the proposal has a clear understanding of the problem; access to agency decision-makers; and knowledge of potential grant-makers' interests.[9]

Federal Funding Procedures

At the June 10, 1980 meeting of Health Education Update, Mrs. Paula Gardner, Sponsor Project Specialist, Washington University, explained the process of applying for federal funds. Although similar to the process for obtaining private funding, it is important to recognize some key differences. She suggests that the applicant (1) define the kind of grant needed; (2) send an abstract of the project to the appropriate government agency for review; (3) call the project's officer if you are unclear about the program's guidelines; and (4) allow 6 to 8 months for federal funding to come through.[10] Although most government agencies provide a form for proposals, the format presented in this report should cover most of the areas on the application and, therefore, it is a useful process for the applicant to go through in order to adequately prepare.

Charles Obbie of the Human Resources Department of St. Louis County points out that the federal government evaluates applications by (1) the length of time the agency has been in existence (preference is given to organizations over two years old), (2) capability of the applicant agency in meeting the purpose of the grant, (3) whether the applicant clearly addresses the priorities of the federal department, and (4) whether the goals of the applicant mesh with the goals of the agency."[11] As in the case of grant proposals, government applications for funding are judged on their clarity, preciseness and simplicity. It is also recommended when dealing with a government agency that the applicant request the score sheet used to evaluate the applications.

Private Funding Procedures

The procedure for submitting a proposal to a private foundation is explained earlier as the pre-application phase. Dr. Otis Jackson, Director of the Leadership Program of The Danforth Foundation, reconfirms the importance of establishing a contact person within the organization. If possible, set up a meeting with this person in order to present your project and ask specific questions.[12] The purpose of this meeting is to increase your chances for funding by clearing up any misconceptions about your program, as well as to encourage the foundation officer to become an advocate for your program.

However, often a personal contact cannot be made, so an initial letter is sent. This letter should briefly cover the major points of your program. It is recommended that it not exceed three pages and that it be accompanied by a brief letter from the chairperson of the board, indicating the board's support for the project.[13]

"Program Planning and Proposal Writing", published by the Grantsmanship Center, recommends five basic principles of proposal writing. These are that the proposal (1) be neat, clean, and easy to read; (2) be written in clear, concise language and that any technical terms be defined; (3) only long enough to effectively communicate your message; (4) be positive and neither beg nor point out mistakes; and (5) should support with documentation any "belief" statements.[15] They also point out three common errors in grant proposals: assuming the funding sources know all about your organization and therefore not explaining it; describing the national scope of the problem without documentation as to its existence in the community of the proposed project; and not showing a cause-and-effect relationship between the proposed program and the problem.

Sections of a Grant Proposal

The suggested procedure for writing a grant proposal includes a cover letter. The cover letter should be addressed to the appropriate foundation officer, and should briefly describe the proposal's content, commitment to follow-up contact, and should be signed by the board chairperson. The cover letter is separate from the summary section of the proposal. The summary is placed at the beginning of the proposal, but it is written last. The main points of the summary are: identification of the applicant; credibility of the agency; reasons for the grant request, i.e., the needs to be met; objectives to be achieved through funding; activities to be accomplished; total cost including other funding sources, as well as the amount requested. The summary should be no longer than half a page. It is important to include a summary because (1) it may be all that is read; (2) it will probably be read first; (3) it puts the proposal into context; and (4) it is often required.

The introduction is the next part of a proposal. In the introduction, the credibility of the agency is established. The following should be included in the introduction: history of the organization; a statement of the goals or philosophy of the organization; past accomplishments; size and characteristics of your constituency; positive comments from other funding sources, clients, public figures, or field authorities; and evaluation results, where available. The introduction is possibly the single largest section in a foundation proposal. It is important that it be interesting to read, as it is your chance to turn the reader on to your project.

From the introduction presentation of your agency's credibility, the focus narrows to your credibility to do the task at hand, which leads into the specific situation, i.e., the Problem Statement or Needs Assessment. Some basic requirements for this section are: (1) it must clearly relate to the stated purposes and goals of your organization; (2) it should be supported by evidence, either statistics or testimony from knowledgeable people; (3) the scope should be reasonable for the size of your agency and the amount of funding requested; and (4) it should be stated in terms of the client's needs, not the needs of your organization. There are two possible foci this section can take. If the situation described centers on a particular group at a particular time and place, the focus is on needs; whereas, if a broader approach is taken and an attempt is made to utilize the information gathered and apply it to other areas, the approach is that of a Problem Statement. Agency decision-makers should decide the scope of the situation they are capable of dealing with and write up this section according to that capability. Some common mistakes one could avoid when writing a Problem Statement are: that the problem is a lack of your program; not documenting the problem on a local level; not presenting a clear understanding of the problem; and, finally, not making sure the proposed methods will, in fact, have an impact on the problem.

Having established the problem or need to be dealt with, the next part of a proposal is the objectives. The objectives are the outcomes of the activities, not the activities themselves. Mary Hall defines an objective as "a statement of a precise, measurable outcome to be accomplished by the applicant agency within the time allotted for the project with the funds requested."[16] The importance of stating objectives in measurable terms cannot be overstated. Without quantifiable data, it is extremely difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Therefore, objectives should, whenever possible, be written in measurable units.

From the objectives section, it is suggested that the proposal writer go on to describe the steps to be utilized to achieve the desired results, i.e., the methods. The methods section should include the key elements of the program, a description of the program design, criteria for selection of staff and participants, organizational hierarchy, and possibly a time chart sequencing when each of these events is expected to be accomplished over the length of funding. Jill Stoney suggests that the methods section "present a solid, workable plan for getting from the problem to the solution."[17] In summary, the Problem or Needs Statement should answer why the project is necessary; the Objectives deal with what will be accomplished; and the Methods section answers how the program will be implemented.[18]

The evaluation section should come next. Its purpose is to show whether the program to be implemented is having an affect on the problem described. If the objectives have been stated in measurable terms, then the evaluation procedures should follow logically. Both program and outcome evaluation measures

should be included in your program design. Although it is common for agencies to use general statements when writing this section, it is not in the project's best interest and is likely to decrease the chances for funding. Designing a well laid out evaluation focuses the writer on the objectives; shows program weaknesses; provides concrete data for decision-makers and staff feedback; indicates to the potential funding source the sincerity of the agency to have an impact on the problem; can be used for public relations; and can act as a guideline for others in setting up similar programs. There are a number of issues which should be considered when designing the evaluation section. These include: who will do it, who will get it, how the data will be analyzed, and how the data will be reported and collected. Each of these issues should be dealt with in the planning phase of a program as they may have a significant impact on the amount of money, staff, and/or time required to carry out the evaluation.

Future and other necessary funding section should follow the evaluation section. The information included in this section depends on the type of grant for which you are applying. For example, when requesting funds for equipment or other non-recurring costs, it is necessary to specify how the acquisition will be supported. If funding is for construction or rennovation, this section should include expected costs of maintaining the building, as well as program expansion, that will result and how this will be supported. A request for program support should describe plans for alternate funding when the grant is up, such as fee-for-service plans; third-party subsidies; fund-raising goals; possibility of another organization assuming future financial responsibility. It is important to be as specific as possible about these plans, as a funding source rarely funds a program indefinitely and doesn't like to put money into a project that will not survive. If future funding sources have yet to be identified at the time of the proposal write-up, it is possible to highlight plans by showing how another similar program has been funded over a period of time.

The final section of a proposal write-up is the budget. Mary Hall in "Developing Skills in Proposal Writing" describes budgeting as "a restatement of a project plan in which ideas are translated into expenses."[19] In this section, as in all of the previous ones, it is important to be as specific as possible when preparing the budget. A budget summary is placed in front of the budget breakdown. However, the summary is prepared after the detailed budget is designed. The format suggested for preparing the budget has two basic components: (1) Personnel Costs and (2) Non-personnel Costs. All of the listed items are broken into either a funds requested category; that is, what of the amount requested from funding source will go into this item, or funds donated, which includes funding already received, donated equipment and/or time, and any other assets the organization has or will obtain from other sources. Under Personnel Costs list: (A) salaries and wages; (B) fringe benefits; and (C) consultant and contract services, including volunteers. The Non-personnel Costs category includes: (A) space costs; (B) equipment; (C) consumable supplies; (D) travel; (E) telephone; and (F) other costs. This is one possible budget layout. The proposal writer may choose another format; however, the same major points should be included, no matter what the choice of presentation.

Now that each section of the proposal is written, it is important for the proposal writer to check for the continuity across sections. Mary Hall suggests the use of a "Procedural Design Chart."[20] The chart could simply be laid out, for example, listing: Need, Goal, Objective, Procedure, Evaluation, Staff. Then take the first stated need and match it to the organizational goal, the stated objective, the methodology that will be applied, the valuation technique that will check it, and the staffing required. This will serve as an excellent guide and should eliminate any section points that are not dealt with in all of the other sections. The Procedural Design Chart is simply a check for the proposal writer and is not included in the proposal itself. However, it is well worth the time involved in order to avoid submitting a proposal that is turned down for funding because a section needs to be rewritten.

Supporting Material

The final information the proposal writer needs to attach to the completed proposal is the letters of recommendation, IRS letter of determination, and any other information the grant-maker requests, such as annual report, brochures, etc. It is in the best interest of the project that all of this be completed and submitted well in advance of the deadline. This will allow time for rewrites and resubmission, if they are indicated, prior to the formal review. After submitting the proposal, a follow-up phone call should be made to the appropriate officer to ensure its receipt, as well as to get any suggestions he or she may be willing to make, and to determine the length of time and method of notification of receipt of the grant.

The primary source for this format was an article, published by The Grantsmanship Center, called "Program Planning and Proposal Writing." This format is suggested as a guideline for the proposal writer. Some grant-making organizations require information not mentioned here and this should always be included. As mentioned earlier, government agencies generally have application forms which are required; however, the sections in this report should assist in answering the questions these forms generally ask. References are made to a variety of sources, all of which support the information presented in "Program Planning and Proposal Writing." Therefore, it is this author's personal recommendation that anyone attempting to write a proposal for funding first obtain a copy of this article for a reference source.

FOOTNOTES

10. Virginia P. White, Grants: How to Find out about Them and What to do Next. New York: Plenum Press, 1975, p. 171.

11. Jill Stoney, "You Deserve a Grant Today", MS, April 1980, 91-4.

12. Ibid.

13. F. Lee Jacquette and Barbara L. Jacquette, "What Makes a Good Proposal", New York: The Foundation Center.

14. Virginia P. White, Grants: How to Find out about Them and What to do Next. New York: Plenum Press, 1975,

15. Jill Stoney, "The ABC's of Proposal Writing", MS, April 1980.

16. Virginia P. White, Grants: How to Find out about Them and What to do Next. New York: Plenum Press, 1975.

17. Norton J. Kiritz, "Program Planning and Proposal Writing", The Grantsmanship Center Reprint Series, 1979.

18. Ibid.

19. Paula Gardner, Health Education Update Minutes, June 10, 1980.

20. Charles Obbie, Ibid.

21. Dr. Otis Jackson, Ibid.

22. Norton J. Kiritz, "Program Planning and Proposal Writing", The Grantsmanship Center Reprint Series, 1979.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Mary Hall, Developing Skills in Proposal Writing. Office of Federal Relations, Oregon System of Higher Education, 1971, p. 90.

26. Jill Stoney, "The ABC's of Proposal Writing", MS, April 1980.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

The primary purpose of this report is to demonstrate the application of various theories to the practice of administrating parents groups. Project LINK serves as the model group in which these theories are tested. The focus of the report is on administrative issues relevant to developing a group, including program planning, program evaluation and grantsmanship. Chapters 2 through 4 cover these issues respectively.

Chapter 1 is designed to give the reader background information about the parenting group movement. This is useful for developing an understanding of the uniqueness of this movement, as well as to show some of the similarities between this and other self-help movements. The studies that are included serve as a means of exploring the need for parents groups and, as indicaters of the types of professional activity currently going on in this field. Chapter 1 also raises questions concerning the relative effectiveness of parenting programs based on the format, timing and content of various program offerings. The need for research into these issues is explored as well.

The aspects of administrating parents programs were selected because of their impact on organizing a group of this type. Program planning is the first component that is explored because it is the first step an organization should take when developing a program. A six-step planning model (See Appendix C, #1) is used to develop a teen-aged parenting program for Project LINK. The planning process described in Chapter 1 serves as an example of how to utilize a theoretically designed model for practical usage.

The chapter on program evaluation was developed from a variety of research sources. A particular type of evaluation is developed according to the guidelines suggested by these sources. The LINK Child Care Evaluation is designed to examine the effectiveness of one part of LINK's program. However, it is useful as a prototype for evaluations that should be done on each aspect of a program. Evaluation is an especially useful tool for implementing an effective program. Characteristically, parents groups have not done evaluations; therefore, Chapter 3 can be particularly useful to program organizers because of its clear explanation of the important role evaluations should have in an organization.

The final administrative component that is analyzed is grantsmanship. Chapter 4 explores the process of researching potential funding sources and a format for writing a proposal for funding. Although getting funding sources is often considered the first step in organizing a new program, in fact the sequence outlined in Chapters 2 through 4 will enhance an applicant's chances for success at being funded by utilizing the program plan and evaluation in the grant proposal itself.

Appendixes A and B are primarily incorporated into this report as avenues of communication in the field. The parents group is a relatively new and splintered phenomenon and as yet there are few channels of communication among organized groups and even less opportunity for potential organizers to learn from other program successes and failures. Even the literature that is presented in Appendix B is not readily available, but must be sought out from the groups directly. A little headway is being made by some organizations such as The Center for Parent Education and The International Childbirth Education Association. The first group is specifically geared to administrating parents programs. It offers training sessions for parent educators, consultations for new groups, and a monthly newsletter on topics of interest to people in the field. Although the primary purpose of the International Childbirth Educators Association is to train childbirth instructors, it also serves parents groups by providing assistance in organizing locally and by publishing relevant books. Their book list is the primary source for obtaining the literature outlined in Appendix B.

In summary, this report strives to incorporate relevant research to some administrative issues of organizing parents groups. It also offers an opportunity for organizers to get in touch with what various programs are doing and points out areas where research is needed.

Appendix A - Review of Alternative Programs

There are literally hundreds of parents groups currently operating around the United States. Some of these programs, such as Parent-Teacher Organizations and LaLeche League, have been in existence for over twenty years. However, in the past five years the number of parents groups has swelled. The large numbers, combined with the lack of communication across groups, make it very difficult to get an overview of what is available. In order to shed some light on a spectrum of parenting programs that are available around the country, nine groups have been selected for analysis in this report. These groups are utilized as illustrations of three important concepts: management style, focus, and size/diversification. These three concepts serve as a tool for comparing the groups.

A group's style of management may range from totally professional to a self-help model. This is an important area upon which the analysis of the programs in this report is based. Three categories of management style are defined as: the professionally run organization; the organization started because of a personally felt need by individuals with professional training in human services; and the organization that is developed in response to the organizer's needs without any professional involvement. Although both of these components are a part of all the groups under discussion, nearly all of them favor one end of the continuum. The size and diversification of the programs is presented to give the reader a feel for what each offers its membership. A variety of sources were used to obtain this information. Personal interviews were conducted by this author of one group organizer from each of the three categories. These interviews were based on the same questions that were used to obtain information from the other sources. 'How-to manuals' were the source of information for one organization in each category and brochures and annual reports provided data on the other three organizations.

Five questions were selected to review each of the programs. Question 1 asks for factual information that is useful for comparison across programs. It includes: (a) a description of the population served; (b) the number of people served; (c) format utilized; (d) how long in operation; and (3) funding sources. The second question asks how the program started, why the program started, and who started the program, in order to obtain background information that is useful for understanding the evolvement that has taken place. A major problem is discussed in the third question, as a means of examining the manner in which the program functions under pressure and to share with other programs alternative methods of conflict resolution. Question 4 deals with the organization's future and question 5 requests advice/suggestions to other organizers. This, again, serves as a comparison and exchange of ideas among the programs reviewed. Each program's answers to these five questions follow along with the name and location of each.

* * * * * * * * * *

Name and Location of Program

1) Factual information:

a. description of population served
b. number of people served
c. format utilized
d. how long in operation
e. funding sources

2) How, why and who started the program?

3) Major problem the program has faced. How was it dealt with?

4) Future plans - expansion/professionalization/technical assistance?

5) Suggestions to other program organizers.

* * * * * * * *

"Early Childhood Development Center"
(Located at New York University Medical Center, well-baby Clinic)

1) a. Population - Parents of patients at well-baby clinic.
b. Numbers - Unknown
c. Format - Once-a-week, daytime meetings for mothers with same-age babies and occasional night meetings to include fathers. "Experts" present child development information and encourage discussion. Babies tested once a month. Program runs for first two years of babies' life.
d. Length - 5 years
e. Funding - Medical School and Junior League, private donations, after 3 years sliding scale fees charged.

2) Started by the staff at the well-baby clinic because they felt that parents had needs that were not being met by the services they traditionally offered.

3) A major problem occurred when they lost their seed money funding after three years of operation. They solved this by developing a sliding scale fee.

4) Future plans - unknown

5) Strongly suggest other organizers develop and make use of an active, diverse advisory board.

"Parenting and Childhood Education" (PACE)
(Located through the 4-H program in California)

1) a. Population - Teenagers
   b. Numbers - 6 to 10 counties in California
   c. Format - A trained volunteer group leader meets with approximately 10 young people once or twice a week at a convenient time and location, usually for two hours, for a minimum of ten sessions (usually more).
   d. Length - 8 years
   e. Funding - Grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare to the 4-H Youth Program.

2) Initially developed by 4-H Youth Advisor in conjunction with the University of California Cooperative Extension to help ease teens through the difficult tasks of adolescence.

3) Major problem - unknown

4) Plans to expand curriculum

5) Suggestions - unknown

* * * * * * * * *

"Parent Express"
(University of California Cooperative Extension)

1) a. Population - New parents
   b. Numbers - Tested in a few California counties
   c. Format - 13 monthly newsletters, beginning with one before the baby is born and one for each month of the first year of life.
   d. Length - Pilot program, should begin this year.
   e. Funding - University of California, Cooperative Extension.

2) Started by the University of California Cooperative Extension to answer common concerns of new parents.

3) Major problem - unknown

4) After evaluation period, will be rewritten and made available for mass distribution.

5) Suggestions - unknown

"Project LINK"
(Ferguson-Florissant School District, Early Education Program)
St. Louis, Mo.

1) a. Population - Parents of children 3 years old and under.
   b. Numbers - Approximately 60 families per year.
   c. Format - Small group discussions and "expert" lectures/ activities at resource center in grade school.
   d. Length - 3 years
   e. Funding - School district plus private grants (The Danforth Foundation, Monsanto), currently charging dues of $10.00 per year.

2) Started by school district's early childhood program in response to grant offered for parenting programs. Advisory board formed from area agencies to establish what needs were not being met.

3) Faced problem in that the program was designed primarily for home-based activities, but participants expressed a desire for more group activities at center. A shift to this format has taken place.

4) Is currently expanding to new population, i.e., teen-aged parents.

5) Suggests that other organizers start with a small group who can communicate well with each other. First, get your own needs met and then try to open up to others. Get an assessment of the needs of those you are attracting.

* * * * * * * *

"Mothers' Center of New York"
(Located at Long Island, New York)

1) a. Population - Mothers of young children
   b. Numbers - Approximately 100 families per year
   c. Format - Small group discussions, peer facilitated
   d. Length - 5 years
   e. Funding - Donated space; members charged; fund-raisers; small private grants.

2) Organized by a social worker in a mental health clinic after experiencing feelings of isolation after the birth of her own child.

3) Faced a problem in attracting the first program participants. Received no response to an ad put in a local paper, so contacted La Leche League and re-advertised.

4) Plans to act as a guide to other groups trying to organize.

5) Suggestions - unknown

* * * * * * * * *

"Parents as Resources" (PAR)
(Located in Chicago, Illinois)

1) a. Population - Primarily parents plus all who are involved with young children.
   b. Numbers - unknown
   c. Format - workshops that emphasize parents' skills to maximize their limited time with their children and to increase their confidence in their role as the child's primary educator. Also, a film series "Look at Me".
   d. Length - 11 years
   e. Funding - Private foundation grants and fees.

2) Developed by four mothers, three of whom are teachers and one a social worker, in response to the needs of Chicago area parents.

3) Major problem - unknown

4) Plans to develop an innovative outreach effort in which the program can be conducted in a variety of settings to make it easy and convenient for parents to participate. Some new locations may include: parenting classes in waiting rooms of doctors' offices, clinics, welfare, lunch meetings in factories and offices.

5) Suggestions - unknown

* * * * * * * * *

"Gateway American Society for Prophylaxis in Obstetrics"
(A.S.P.O. - Parents' Division)
St. Louis, Mo.

1) a. Population - Parents of young children
   b. Numbers - 30 families
   c. Format - Monthly meetings on topics of interest; daytime "Mothers' Coffees"; support group - peer facilitated.
   d. Length - 5 months
   e. Funding - dues

2) Started by parent-educator (Lamaze Instructor) who was dissatisfied by what was available and felt a personal need following the birth of her child. Obtained names from other instructor.

3) A major problem is the lack of leadership. This may have developed because the group was formed by someone outside, i.e., the instructor, who brought everyone together, so no natural leadership developed.

4) Future plans are to work with leadership providing them with technical guidance.

5) Suggests that other organizers get together people who speak the same language and can work together.

* * * * * * * *

"Parent and Childbirth Education Society"
(PACES)

Chicago, Illinois

1) a. Population - New parents
   b. Numbers - 450 families
   c. Format - Started with mothers' help line and calling post-partum, then set up formal structure, night parents' meetings, newsletter, early pregnancy classes, and motherhood seminars.
   d. Length - 9 years since Help Line started
   e. Funding - Private foundations, dues

2) Started by three mothers who felt the need to share during their post-partum period. They attracted others at a childbirth class reunion.

3) A major problem occurred when the organizers were feeling burned out and needed to have new people take over. Called an election to formalize positions with concrete job descriptions.

4) Organizers are considering expanding to parents with older children.

5) Suggestions - unknown

* * * * * * * *

"St. Louis Mothers' Center"

St. Louis, Mo.

1) a. Population - Mothers of young children

b. Numbers - 60 families per 10-week cycle
c. Format - Peer-facilitated support groups for mothers while children are cared for by eighth grade girls.
d. Length - 4 years
e. Funding - Private grant, donated space from school district, volunteer staff, fee charged.

2) Started by a woman who relocated from New York and had been involved with that center.

3) Major problem is the decline in members who actively participate in running the center. Had an evaluation done to ascertain the degree of the problem, then presented results to membership and requested assistance.

4) Plans to change administration (all volunteer) and increase fund-raising efforts.

5) Suggestions - unknown

PARENTING PROGRAM SUMMARY

Category I. - Professionally organized programs:

> Early Childhood Development Center - parent education
> Parenting and Childhood Education (PACES) - parent education
> Parent Express - parent education
> Project LINK - education and support, interviewed coordinator

Category II. - Programs organized because a personal need was felt by an individual who has training in human services.

> Mothers' Center of New York - parent support
> Parents as Resources (PAR) - parent education
> A.S.P.O. Parents' Division - education and support; interviewed coordinator

Category III. - Self-help organizations developed by individuals who feel a need without professional assistance.

> Parent and Childbirth Education Society (PACES) - support (originally)
> St. Louis Mothers' Center - support; interviewed coordinator

The first four programs in the preceeding outlines are professionally run. These programs also share the primary focus of parent education, although support is a component of these programs as well. The means for achieving this focus varies considerably across the groups. For example, the Early Childhood Development Center is a highly structured program that requires participants to attend weekly meetings for the first two years of their child's life. This is very different from the programs offered at Project LINK in which participants choose to attend any of the programs offered, with the only requirement being that they sign up in advance. A whole other approach is utilized by the "Parent Express." This is a monthly newsletter sent to parents during the first year of their child's life. The PACE Program is the only one in the group that serves primarily teen-agers, although Project LINK has recently begun a pilot program for teens.

The next three programs--Mothers' Center of New York, PAR, and A.S.P.O.--all fit into the personal/professional category; that is, they were all founded by women who have some professional training in the human services field, but who started the program because they personally felt a need following the birth of their own children. All three of these are geared to parents with young children. However, they differ on the education versus support continuum. PAR, a primarily educational program, is the oldest of the groups under review. It has evolved from a single resource center offering workshops for

Chicago area parents, to a diverse program that utilizes a variety of creative approaches, including a film series. PaR also is unusual in its utilization of games as the primary medium for educating participants and building confidence. On the other end of the continuum is the Mothers' Center of New York. The chief focus of this organization is to develop support groups for mothers. The Mothers' Center is unique among the programs reviewed in that a group of satellite centers have evolved out of the original. These satellite programs were begun by women who had a positive experience at the New York center and developed one in their own area when they relocated. The Mothers' Center of St. Louis was begun in this manner. A.S.P.O.'s parents division is the newest group being reviewed. The programs offered by this group include both educational and support components. It is not clear at this time which of these components will dominate the program when it is in full swing. A.S.P.O. offers its members a number of formats including: a monthly evening parent education-type meetings; daytime support-type programs for mothers; and a babysitting cooperative which serves as another form of support to parents.

The third category; that is, the self-help programs, contains two organizations. Both of these focus primarily on providing support to members. The organizers of PACES has written a comprehensive book, "How to Grow a Parents Group", outlining the development of the organization. They began by offering support to new parents during the postpartum period through a telephone help line. Research cited earlier in this report (See Chapter 1) points out that this is the optimal time to reach new parents. Out of this help line a variety of programs were initiated, including: motherhood seminars, support groups for new moms, child birth education classes, a Caesarean support group, a speakers' bureau, and workshops for organizers of other parents groups. The last program under review, the Mothers' Center of St. Louis, offers support to mothers through peer-facilitated discussion groups. Although it is a satellite of the New York center, the women who started the program in St. Louis had no professional training, but simply utilized the format of the New York center. This type of self-confidence that studies indicate often comes with involvement in parenting groups may be one of the most important but unrecognized aspects of this trend.

The nine programs discussed cover a wide range of alternative formats from a highly-structured, professionally-run, parent education approach of the Early Childhood Development Center through the small support group model of the Mothers' Center. The most significant factors that are unavailable from most of these programs is hard data indicating their relative success. Although some of the programs do internal-type program evaluations, none of this data is currently being utilized in any global fashion to determine an overview composite of what components make a program successful. It is this kind of hard research that is sorely needed in the parenting education field. There is an unwritten bias among these groups that they are meeting a need or else they would not be able to continue to operate. However, this attitude does not help others to gain information about what makes a successful program nor does it provide any insight into how a given program could improve the service it offers. It also does not take into account the fact that a program may continue functioning simply because it is the only service of its type that is available, not because it is doing a good job. Therefore, it is this author's chief recommendation that systematic methods of evaluation be included in even the most informal programs and that this data be made available to parenting resource centers for overview type use. The problem is how do untrained organizers develop these evaluations or even recognize the need for these tools. This is where professionals in the field can help by providing service to groups, while allowing them to maintain their autonomy and individual style. Also, the trend of the more established organizations to write manuals can be very useful if they contain examples of how to do this type of research. Appendix B reviews the manuals currently available in this field.

Appendix B - A Review of the Literature

INTRODUCTION

This section deals with a number of the most useful writings currently available in the field of parents groups. Although this list may exclude some materials, it represents a cross section of the best work this author could uncover. Huge numbers of books have been written for parents about the various aspects of child-rearing. However, this information seldom offers the reader any ideas for establishing support from other sources. The sheer number of books on this topic that gain popularity indicates the need many people feel for support and information in their role as parents.

The books and newsletters included in this report focus on parenting groups and organizations designed to educate and/or support parents, rather than those dealing with specific aspects of child rearing. Included in this list are how-to manuals written by parents groups, as well as materials that relate to organizations of this type.

HOW-TO MANUALS

<u>Mothers' Center Manual</u>. Editor Hope S. Zimmerman, Family Service Association, United Methodist Church, Hicksville, NY, 1980.

<u>How to Grow a Parents Group</u>. Diane Mason, Gayle Jensen, Carolyn Ryzewicz, International Childbirth Association, 1979.

<u>The First Year of Life: A Curriculum for Parent Education</u>. Nina R. Lief, M.D., Keyway Books, Inc., 1979.

Each of the books in this section describes the development of a particular parents organization. The authors of these manuals were all key people in the development of their group. A wide range of critical issues are examined, including: getting started, fund-raising; publicity; management; recruitment and training; organizational problems and solutions; and membership/population. As a practical guide, these manuals offer the reader a thorough examination of many aspects involved in organizing and managing a parents group and, as such, are excellent reference books for other organizers.

The major drawback of these manuals is that they do not provide the reader with any rationale for the methods used. The information presented is totally situational. There is no generalization of the material, nor do they cite relevant research models that might assist an organizer. It is the opinion of this author that these ommissions are due to the fact that no research data was available to the organizers. This exemplifies the biggest problem all parents groups currently face. In order to maximize the benefits groups can provide, systematic study on the most effective modes of intervention must be done and made available to potential organizers.

COOPERATIVES

Parents and Children Learn Together. Katharine (Whiteside) Taylor, New York: Columbia Press, 1967.

A cooperative is a group of people who share some resource, time-skill-money, in order to achieve a common goal. Cooperatives are organized for a variety of purposes, including to provide support and education for parents. Taylor's book is a comprehensive guide on how to develop this type of parents group. She details the need for cooperative-type parents groups, as well as the advantages members may enjoy. Even though there is no presentation of research or program effectiveness, Taylor makes a good case for the value of these groups through the use of historical information concerning changes in the structure of the American family. The reader becomes infected by Taylor's personal enthusiasm for parent cooperatives. There is an excellent balance in this book between the practicalities of organizing and administrating coops and more global concerns such as the impact such groups can have on society. Parents and Children Learn Together combines the richness of a how-to manual with objectivity not usually found in books of this type.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Developing Support Groups: A Manual for Facilitators and Participants. Howard Kirschenbaum and Barbara Glaser, CA: University Associates, 1978.

Even programs that are designed primarily to educate parents have some elements of support within their structure. The primary purpose of a support group is to assist members in the enhancement of a common goal. Although Developing Support Groups is geared to professional groups, application for individuals interested in personal groups is given as well. Therefore, this book is an excellent resource for individuals with no professional training in the human services, who are trying to organize a parents group. Kirschenbaum and Glaser offer detailed instructions on organizing and facilitating groups. Descriptions of common problems are discussed, as well as outlines for alternative methods of evaluation. Developing Support Groups stands out as a model for practical application of research design. In particular, the section on evaluation is extremely valuable to support groups who often overlook this important component. when developing a program.

NEWSLETTERS

"The Center for Parent Education Newsletter" Dr. B. White, Boston, Massachusettes.

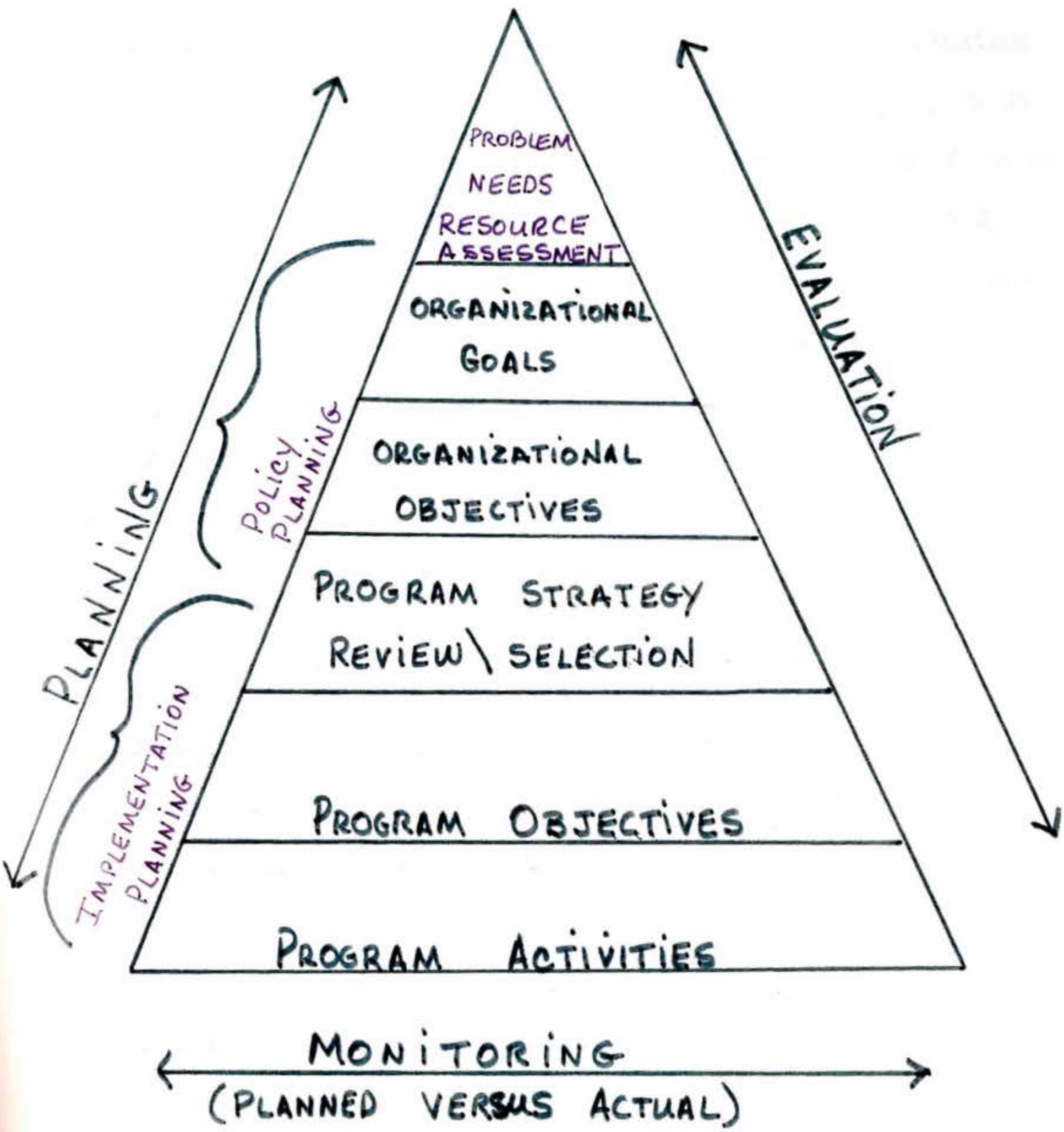
"Human Relations", University of California Cooperative Extension Program, Berkeley, California 94720.

In the emerging field of parent education/support, periodicals are the most effective way of keeping current. Since there aren't any journals devoted specifically to this field, interested individuals must seek out articles from a wide range of sources. This searching through various journals is very time consuming and haphazard. Therefore, newsletters provide a valuable service by keeping their readership current with information from a variety of sources.

"The Center for Parent Education Newsletter" is published monthly by this resource center which is headed by Dr. Burton White. It is written specifically for parent educators. It presents research relevant to parents groups, as well as attempting to collect data such as funding sources and programming from the groups who subscribe to it. Dr. White, a leader in the field of parent education, writes an authoritative article for each issue on topics relevant to this field. This newsletter is an excellent source of what is currently being done in research and programming for the professional parent/educator as well as for parents groups.

The University of California Cooperative Extension Program writes "Human Relations" primarily for its own staff, although it is available to anyone free of charge. "Human Relations" covers a broader range of topics than "The Center for Parent Education Newsletter", but its focus is within the general interest of larger parent organizations. Its review of programs, sponsored by the University of California Cooperative Extension, is particularly useful as a source of ideas for program organizers. It also presents data from relevant studies, some of which are pertinent to parenting programs. "Human Relations" may be of limited use, but it is helpful at least until more sources of up-to-date information are developed.

Appendix C #1 - Illustration of the Planning Process



LINK CHILD CARE EVALUATION

As you are probably aware, the LINK center has had a problem with funding during the 1980-81 year. In order to avoid this situation in the future, we are attempting to obtain funds from a variety of sources. We are also considering charging a fee to help defray some of the cost of running the center. This questionnaire will help us identify possible areas for improvement, as well as provide us with the information we need to apply for funds for the coming year. Your assistance is greatly appreciated. (Please circle appropriate answers and feel free to write in any comments, suggestions, etc.)

1. The overall quality of the child care at the LINK center is:

   Superior Good Fair Poor

   Comments:

2. In general, the LINK representatives cared for my child:

   Conscientiously Adequately Neglectfully

   Comments:

3. When I bring my child to a LINK program I feel:

   Pleased that they are exposed to this type of service.

   Hesitant to leave them.

   I prefer to leave them with a sitter or keep them with me.

   Comments:

4. When we attend a LINK program, my child acts:

   Happy to be there.

   Initially upset, but enjoys it once they are settled down.

Too upset to be left for any length of time.

Comments:

5. The LINK representatives deal with my child's initial sepration anxiety:

In a caring, effective manner

Efficiently

They seem disinterested/judgemental of my child's behavior

Comments:

6. The activities my child participates in at the LINK center have been:

an enriching social/emotional learning experience

Good ideas, but poorly implemented/supervised

Not suitable for my child's interests/age

Suggestions:

7. The physical arrangement of toys, etc. at the LINK center is:

Stimulating to the young child

Too open to allow for comfortable flow of activities

Potentially hazardous

Suggestions:

8. The type of equipment available to my child at the LINK center is:

Challenging to his/her social/emotional/interest development

Suitable for his/her age and interests

Inappropriate/unsafe/poorly maintained

Suggestions:

9. The overall physical space at the LINK center is:

Effectively utilized   Overcrowded   Unsafe

Comments:

10. In order for the LINK center to continue operating, I would be willing to (circle <u>all</u> acceptable choices):

Pay for child care

Be a child care volunteer

Work on fund-raising activities

Pay a fee for each program I attend

Pay a yearly fee of approximately $25.00

Suggestions:

11. If I had my "druthers", I would like to see the LINK child care policy:

Appendix C #3 - A Guide to Designing an Evaluation

A. Relate Evaluation to Decision-making

1. Decide what decisions are to be influenced by the evaluation.
2. Decide what types of information would be useful in making the decisions which are not already available.
3. Decide which of this information is able to be collected in the evaluation to be carried out.
4. Using Howard Davis' AVICTORY analysis:
   Ability - Does the organization have the necessary resources?
   Values - Is the evaluation consistent with the values of the groups affected?
   Information - Will the evaluation yield relevant information?
   Circumstances - Have evaluations been tried before?
   Timing - What is the best time to implement the evaluation?
   Obligations - Has the need been sufficiently considered?
   Resistance - What are the major obstacles to the evaluation?
   Yield - How do the possible results of the evaluation compare with the costs?
5. Discuss the decison-maker's purposes for the evaluation and the possible decisons which may result from it.

B. Planning the Design

6. Sources of information.
7. Comparions to be made.
8. Descriptive techniques that will be used.
9. Relevant outcome measures.
10. Review steps 5 through 8 with the relevant decision-makers.

C. Administration of the Evaluation

11. Schedule a target date for completion of each component.
12. Set up a budget for the evaluation.
13. Carry out an adversary discussion about anticipated problems with the evaluation.
14. Make revisions after reviewing the above steps.

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