

Running head: effectively helping children and the youth

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Running Head: EFFECTIVLY HELPING CHILDREN AND THE YOUTH Effectively Helping Children and the Youth Cecibel Rivera Austin Peay State University

Children and the youth are the future of society. It is extremely important to learn the best skills to help children and the youth in need. There are so many misfortunes that happen to children and the youth. They can either end up in the foster care system or become physically, mentally, or sexually abused. As Social Workers is important to repeatedly maintain education in order to apply the best skills possible in helping the children and the youth. Younger children tend to gear towards their older siblings. Unfortunately some children do not have the privilege of having a family support nor older siblings. The reason why some students after completing training join as volunteers siblings is to work in the shelters to help young residents. The support systems these teens offer help smaller children get through difficult times. The Eskin (1991) talks about a teen named Whitney helping Audrey a younger girl in the foster care system. These teens learn how to manage their emotions to gain a better insight of their own experiences. Audrey is portrayed in this article as a girl coming from an abusive family. She as many other children who have few copying resources receive temporary care from these shelters. At the beginning of the article Audrey is presented as a girl with self- awareness of her situation. The Eskin cholastic update (1991) talks about Audrey's carrying a photo album of ten years with different families. She is one of the many cases where she does not have other family who was willing to take care of her and her sister. Her father remarried but did not take responsibility to take care of her. When her mother died she was placed in foster care. Whitney is one of the forty teens from River Forest

High School. Whitney says, " She knows she might not be able to prevent all cases of child abuse, ... but she can do something to help a few young victims (Eskin, 1991 p. 1)". Whitney begins to develop a friendship with Audrey. Whitney knows that Audrey needs to develop the skills to identify and express her feelings freely. Children without that family support system a lot of times lack the verbal skills to label their emotions. As simple as it sounds Whitney identifies that Audrey needs someone to talk to. Even though Audrey is in the shelter she states, " She is grateful for the shelter". Towards the end of the article it says, " Big brothers and Big sisters hope that by simply offering their friendship, they can smooth the path for the victims of abuse (Eskin 1991, p. 2)". It is amazing how something as simple as a friendship can make a difference in someone's life. More Child welfare programs should involve teenagers' help more frequent. Sexual orientation is large struggle within the youth population. Many do not know how to deal with it and many times have no one to talk to. Society imposes lesbian, gay, and bisexuals as a mental problem. Many adolescents see this and have a fear to speak out about their feelings. Research (e. g., American Academy of Pediatrics et al., 2008) recognizes that " all students have an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and supportive environment (p. 2)". It is important for lesbian, gay, and bisexual teens feel safe in their school environment. American Academy of Pediatrics e. g., et al (2008) stated that the booklet was created for " principals, educators, and school personnel with accurate information that will help them respond to a recent upsurge in promotion of efforts to change sexual orientation through therapy and religious ministries (p. 2)". Sexual orientation conversion therapy is the

attempt of individuals to try to get rid of adolescent sexual orientation through counseling and psychotherapy. Lesbians, gays, and bisexuals are a higher risk of depression because they have no one to talk to about their sexual orientation. The same article also emphasizes that the acceptance of lesbians, gays and bisexual students will lead to decrease in health related problems along with decrease in mental health and decrease in the use of drugs. Furthermore, trying to change the sexuality of adolescents through counseling and psychotherapy can increase the risk of harming to adolescents because they perceive that their sexuality is related to mental illness or disorder. Failure to change one's sexual orientation can be considered for an adolescent as a moral and personal failure (American Academy of Pediatrics e. g., et al 2008). Researchers from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) believe that social workers are mostly responsible to clients to explain the prevalence of knowledge concerning sexual orientation and to report the lack of positive outcomes with reparative therapy. NASW encourage that social workers do not provide treatments that are designed by all means to change the client sexual orientation. Also encourage them to refrain from using any references to any programs that try any reparative therapy. Consequently researchers agree that the leading professional medical, health, and mental health organizations do not agree with such claims about changing the teen sexual orientations (American Academy of Pediatrics e. g., et al 2008). American Academy of Pediatrics e. g., et al 2008, emphasis on the fourteenth amendment guaranteeing equal treatment for lesbian, gay, and bisexuals, and gives an example of a won lawsuit by lesbian, gay, and bisexuals in California for the school denying

them the help from harassment. It is important to remember as a social worker that they need to put their feelings aside and help their clients no matter their sexual preferences. Sexual abuse is an ongoing problem within the lives of children and youths. According to Handbook of Social Work in Child & Adolescent Sexual Abuse (2008) " Developed by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with State Child Protective service agencies to collect annual statistics regarding child abuse, the data from the NCANDS offer reasonably efficient information on child victimization. The 2003 report described that approximately 906, 000 children were substantiated victims of child maltreatment across forty-nine states. Of these, 9. 9 percent were sexually abused (3 percent by primary caregivers. In 2004, 9. 7 percent of the 872, 000 substantiated cases across forty-seven states were deemed sexual abuse victims revealing a very slight decrease in child victim reports (Nurcombe 2008, p. 34). " Keeping in mind that those large numbers do not include the victims who never spoke out about their abuse. Children who have a strong family support system are least likely to be sexually abuse. Versus children living with family members that are struggling in poverty are more likely to be abused. Children who have a socially supportive environment are more likely to deal with the stress factors of abuse better. Not only older women suffer in abusive intimate partner relationships, but our younger adolescent girls suffer as well. Adolescent girls are more likely to not know any resources as to where they can receive help. They tend to be more reclusive about their problems because they have no one to talk to. According to the article of National Association of Social workers 2001, (p. 1)

“ gender-based violence has tremendous impact on the health and well being of girl and the larger society as well. ” Some of the consequences that fall from gender-based violence are “ depressive symptoms, low self esteem, episodic or chronic depression, posttraumatic stress syndrome, and other mental health disorders (p. 1)”. These abused young adolescent girls not only may suffer from mental health problems, but are also traumatized for the rest of their lives. They also fall into the same pattern of abusive relationships, as they get older. Even though sexual assault may go unreported many times the National Association of Social Workers 2001, (p. 2) states that “ adolescents are at a higher risk of sexual assault”. Also girl victims of gender-based violence are “ more likely to smoke and use other drugs, and are at increased risk for pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, suicide attempts, and unhealthy weight loss (National Association of Social Workers, 2001 p. 2)”. Childhood experiences, family dynamics, social institutions and gender socialization influence gender base violence. Most girls who undergo these experiences of abuse have feelings of guiltiness and stay silent about their experiences. Social workers can provide more services to adolescents across medical disciplines by increasing awareness in within the community (National Association of Social Workers, 2001). Child rape is an ongoing problem in our society. In the article Morgan (2008) argues that the death penalty for child rape would have long-term issues hindering the victims in the state of Louisiana. They also argued that it would unconstitutional to have the death penalty for child rape. The article says, “ It violates the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment (Morgan, 2008 p. 1)”. Even though the crime itself is horrible the

victims were not killed therefore the death penalty would be an over punishment according to the article. The Supreme Court stated, " It is not all evident that the child rape victim's hurt is lessened when the law permits the death of the perpetrators (Morgan, 2008 p. 1). " The court must eliminate the death penalty for child rape because it harms the victim more than helping it. They also argued that the death penalty would only make under reporting increase rather than to help. They brought up the point that allowing the death penalty would only give the perpetrator more reason to kill the victim instead because they would not want a living eyewitness. The court argued that it is a traumatizing experience for the victim to prolong the court process. The victims may feel some kind of guilt for the possibility of the death of the perpetrator, which would leave a remaining attachment to the abuser. Some of the effects on sexually abused children are Post-traumatic stress disorder, impulsive or poorly controlled behavior, emotional distress, distorted attitudes to the self and to others, dissociation and conversion, and sometimes no symptoms (Nurcombe 2008, p. 154). According to the Handbook of Handbook of Social Work in Child & Adolescent Sexual Abuse (2008) " There is evidence that CBT and group therapy are more effective than no treatment or nonspecific treatment. However, neither kind of therapy has demonstrated superiority to a competing treatment designed specifically for abused children. Nonspecific counseling is ineffective or, at best, only weakly effective. The status of family therapy is unclear, and only one study has examined the effectiveness of psychodynamic psychotherapy. Much of this research has been conducted in somewhat artificial laboratory settings, which lack ecological validity. Despite treatment, some children

deteriorate. Other problems relate to variations in the definition of sexual abuse, the sample size needed to produce clear results, the universally problematic dropout rate, the appropriate duration of treatment, the uncertainty of whether to treat asymptomatic children, the vexed question of whether and how to involve the non-offending caregiver, clinician training, the standardization of treatment, the fidelity of treatment implementation, and the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the evaluation of treatment effectiveness (Nurcombe 2008, p. 158-159). " It is important to as a social worker to accommodate the family as well as the victim. The Family's immediate needs such as food, transportation, and income must be addressed before helping the victims. If parental support is lacking the effectiveness of the treating the victim may decrease. It is important to keep the family motivate so that the victims have a better treatment and recuperation. Over all, Social Workers should keep the well being of every child and youth in mind. Whether the children or the youth struggle from a lack of family support, rape, or simply their sexual orientation it is the Social Workers job to provide the best help possible. Every child or youth's circumstances differ but the help provided by the Social Worker should remain the same. In conclusion, Social Workers serve as helping hands to our society's future. References Eskin, L., (1991). Teens helping kids. Scholastic Update. 123-n9. 1-2. Retrieved November 8, 2008, from Academic OneFile. Just the Facts Highlight Dangers of " Reparative Therapy". (2007, February 12). Retrieved November 8, 2008, from <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/278.html> NASW Hails Supreme court Decision Protecting Victims of Child Rape and Overturning Louisiana Death

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