



A Parent Empowerment and Knowledge Translation Program Supports Caregivers in an Early Intervention Program in Rural South India

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Introduction

Family-centered care is an integral component of early intervention services for children with developmental disabilities.

Sharing information, providing respectful and supportive care and developing partnerships with families contribute to parental well-being.

Family-centered programs have positive impacts on caregiver engagement & empowerment and satisfaction with care..

Objectives

(1) To provide a unique opportunity for the parents to meet and network with each other and serve as the platform for experiential sharing amongst themselves,

(2) To improve knowledge about childhood disability and the importance of early intervention of developmental delays in children in 0 -6 yrs.

Participants/Setting

This program was developed and conducted at Amar Seva Sangam (ASSA), an Indian non-government organization in the District of Tirunelveli, State of Tamil Nadu in South India.

Children aged 0-6 years and their families/caregivers, followed through the ASSAs Early Intervention (EI) program (centre- and home-based) were invited to participate.



Methods

Parent empowerment consultation and knowledge translation programs were developed as full-day events and conducted every 6 months, from September 2017 to December 2019. This program was designed to address elements of family empowerment and parental education.

Program included children cultural activities (dancing, singing, acting, wearing fancy dresses), parent cultural programs and sport activities, motivational and empowerment speeches by parents.



The knowledge translation component focused on the understanding of early intervention, life roles (spousal and parent-child relationship) and addressed issues of financial burden on the family. Individual and group parent psychological counselling were also provided to address parents stress and caregiver burden.



Results

A Parent Empowerment Consultation and Knowledge Transition Program Dates	Number of Children Participating	Number of Parent & Family Members Participating
September 10, 2017	224	292
March 18, 2018	252	303
September 22, 2018	230	278
February 3, 2019	242	314
June 23, 2019	285	389
December 28, 2019	312	604
Total # of Participants	1545	2180



Conclusions

Parent empowerment and knowledge translation are both key elements of family-centered care.

Providing programs that meets family's need to network, share knowledge and engage with other parents, influences families' ability to engage in the programme and influences parent's ability to provide care for children for developmental disabilities..



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