Social Network/ Online Community

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO ENGAGE HIGH RISK FAMILIES

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Child Maltreatment

- Negative developmental trajectory toward emotional, social, and behavioral problems (Cicchetti & Valentino, 2006; Belsky & Jaffee, 2006)

- Increased probability of serious adult problems
  - Antisocial disorder (Loeber, 1998),
  - Substance abuse disorders (Holmes & Robins, 1988; Mayes and Suchman, 2006),
  - Subsequent early arrests (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992),
  - Physical illnesses throughout life and can lead to early death (Repetti, Taylor & Seeman, 2002)

- 1.25 million Children are maltreated, annually, in US;
  - one child in every 58 (Sedlak et al., 2010)

- Financial cost of responding to maltreatment annually in the U.S. is estimated at $103.8 billion (Wang & Holton, 2007)
DIFFICULTY IN REACHING THIS HIGH RISK POPULATION

- Less likely to participate in community parenting programs (Sanders, Bor & Morawska, 2007)
- More likely to drop out (Turner & Sanders, 2006)
- Stigma, “blame and shame” (Corrigan, Watson, and Miller, 2006)
- Racism (Hill, 2010) and distrust of professionals (Knott & Donovan, 2010)
- Agency barriers—costs of hiring, training, and maintaining EBP professionals (Baggett et al., 2010)
- Paucity of EBP in rural communities (Irvine, et al., 1999)
- Consumer preferences
  - MOST: television → online programs → written materials → workshops
  - LEAST: Parenting groups → individual therapist → home visits (Metzler, Sanders, Rusby, & Crowley, in press)
In Los Angeles’ poorest neighborhood, we conducted:

- Eleven focus groups ($N = 160$) of high-risk parents &
- Survey on parent’s use of the Internet ($N = 238$)

Parents’ expressed the importance of a *sense of community* and *learning through the experiences of others.*

In the survey sample, 78% of the young, high-poverty, minority parents used the internet regularly. 50% of African American youth are on social media, daily (Pew, 2010).
Rationale for social media

- Young mothers are high utilizers of social media;
- High-risk parents are stigmatized and often socially isolated;
- Vulnerable populations, may distrust professionals and thus avoid seeking help;
- Increased reach and convenience for parents;
- Engaged through social rewards i.e. belonging;
- Consistent with consumer preference and the ecology of Black and Latino populations in LA
INNOVATIVE SOLUTION: ONLINE COMMUNITY

- Invited only, moderated, and based on Online TP’s content and structure

- SNS FEATURES:
  - Portal with personal profile
  - blogs
  - discussion threads
  - reward system based on gaming mechanics
  - Personalized with (pin) boards
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