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The Impact of Teacher Training Concerning Recognition
of Child Abuse and Neglect

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Introduction

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010), child abuse and neglect continues to be a significant issue in our country. An estimated six million children were the subject of reports of child maltreatment in 2009. Of these six million children, 702,000 were found to be victims of child maltreatment. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010) also explained that child abuse comes in many forms, the most common form being one that is more difficult to identify: Neglect. According to the aforementioned agency, child neglect accounted for more than 75% of the maltreatment cases in the United States in 2009. Other types of abuse include physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Tingberg, Bredlove, and Ygge (2008) contend that better education on child abuse and neglect is needed for professionals, such as teachers, social workers, and those in medical professions. Walsh, Laskey, McInnes, Farrell, Mathews, and Briggs (2011) explained that many educators are not well-equipped to recognize the signs of abuse among their students. In many cases, there is little preparation provided in pre-service teacher programs. Better education for these future teachers, as well as professional development for current teachers is needed to help educators become better advocates for their students.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2012) indicated that children who are abused or neglected may be affected by their mistreatment for the rest of their lives. Abused children may suffer from depression, intimacy issues, or other health

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problems associated with living somewhat dangerously, making the prompt recognition of abuse even more important. Also adding to the need for better training is the fact that each type of abuse is revealed differently.

Purpose

Conducting a study to discover the preparedness of current and pre-service teachers to recognize when a child is being abused should identify potential gaps in the education of teachers, not only in college/university programs, but also in professional development workshops. Promoting awareness and expanding the knowledge of those in the field of education will tremendously benefit students whom these professionals will encounter in their careers.

The purpose of this study was to discover if practitioners in the field of education, whether future or current, could benefit from intensive instruction on child abuse, including characteristics of abused children, various types of abuse, and risk factors for abuse. Research in this study focused on the question: Does education about child abuse and neglect improve the ability of teachers to recognize abused and neglected children? Information revealed through this study was used as a justification for better child abuse education programs. If participants were able to improve their ability to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect in one hour, the knowledge gains over the course of a semester class or weekend workshop could be tremendous.

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Definition of Terms

The following terms are used frequently throughout this document and a definition is given to ensure better understanding and provide consistency of meaning.

1. Child abuse and neglect is defined as any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual exploitation, or any act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).
2. Child maltreatment is an umbrella term that encompasses mistreatment of children through child abuse or neglect (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).
3. A current teacher is defined, for this study, as someone who is currently employed in the teaching profession.
4. A future teacher is defined, for this study, as someone studying to become a teacher, used interchangeably with pre-service teacher and university student.
5. Intensive instruction is defined, for this study, as education provided that saturates participants with information on child abuse and neglect through the use of various media sources and instructional techniques.

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6. Effectiveness of training sessions is defined, for this study, as revealing a statistical difference in the mean scores of participants from the initial to follow-up survey.

Organization of Study

This report on the effectiveness of training sessions with members of the teaching field is organized into five sections. The sections are Introduction, Review of Literature, Methodology, Results, and Discussion. The Introduction to this report establishes the purpose for researching, provides background information on the topic, and discusses the significance of the study as a whole. The Review of Literature cites similar research that has been completed in the area of this study, child abuse and neglect. Research that can lend support or provide further rationale for investigation is included; in this case, materials on professional education are incorporated as well. The Methodology section of this report details the specific steps taken to carry out this study. Participant demographics, location of research, and assessment tool and data analysis information is included in this section. The Results section reports responses to the survey questions. The Discussion offers conclusions and implications from the results of this study. Information gleaned from the results, as well as limitations and suggestions to future researchers were supplied.

Review of Literature

The purpose of this section is to review extant research and literature on the topic of child abuse and related teacher training. This is a thorough but not exhaustive review. After searching the Education Resources Information Center databases, the EbscoHost Academic Search Complete database, and the EbscoHost Professional Development Collection database, it appears that there is limited research regarding the call for better education of teachers. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010), the annual number of abused children remains high, though few studies have been conducted to examine the effects of better education for teachers on child abuse and neglect. Tingberg, Bredlove, and Ygge (2008), as well as Balen and Masson (2007) have conducted research on improving the quality of education on child abuse and neglect for other professionals who may encounter abused children. Since the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2012) explains that children who remain in abusive situations have damage done, not only to their present, but also to their future selves, it is of the utmost importance that teachers and other professionals be better educated on how to identify the signs of abuse in order to assist them. The following information is a synthesis of the research conducted in this topic area within the last fifteen years.

Better Education Needed for Teachers

According to an Australian study conducted by Goldman & Grimbeek (2009), with collaborative research completed in Florida, there is a lack of education provided for teachers on identifying the signs of abuse. The study addressed the area of child sexual

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abuse, but the methods used could be applied to all types of child abuse. Mandatory reporting was also specifically discussed in this study, particularly the lack of education for pre-service teachers on mandatory reporting. Goldman and Grimbeek (2009) also found that training for pre-service teachers had a deficit in education on the topic of child abuse, particularly for sexual abuse. The purpose of their study was to measure the amount of teacher education on child abuse-related topics. An overwhelming majority of the student participants who were surveyed for this study, all seniors in a 4 year bachelors of education program, believed that they were less than prepared to identify children who had been abused; Goldman and Grimbeek (2009) explained that respondents also expressed feeling inadequately prepared regarding mandatory reporting.

The associated study described by Goldman and Grimbeek (2008) was completed in Florida. This study concluded that teachers, in the workforce as opposed to pre-service, were also unprepared for their roles as mandatory reporters and identifiers of child abuse. Goldman and Grimbeek (2008) explained that many of the teachers who participated in this study were unfamiliar with the signs of sexual abuse, of the reporting policy/procedure for their district, and of the mandatory reporting laws for the state of Florida. Goldman and Grimbeek (2008) compared their study to a similar study in the United Kingdom which found that teachers were underprepared for their roles as child protectors and mandatory reporters. In the same vein, Mathews (2011) determined that educators who are ill-prepared for their role as reporters were less likely to report suspected cases of abuse, as well.

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Walsh et al. (2011) suggested several reasons for developing educators with a strong understanding of "child protection." The first reason supplied by the researchers was that abused children encounter greater struggles in the classroom; teachers needed to know how to help them. The second reason given was that teachers and educational professionals have a legal responsibility to be informed, as they are required to report their suspicions. Walsh et al. (2011) supplied other reasons that included expectations of pre-service teacher programs, outlined in Australian laws, and also of educators to provide abused children with the best chance at a normal life after abuse.

Walsh et al. (2011) stated that research on pre-service teaching programs revealed ill-preparedness across the globe. The study revealed how three Australian universities attempted to better teach their Education students through differing methods. The authors explained the methods used by these universities to remedy this problem, outlined in a case study format. The study described case one, detailing the requirements of a program in which students took a class their sophomore year (of a four year degree program) on learning about diverse families. Walsh et al. (2011) explained that abuse and child protection were featured topics, and real-world assessment tasks along with a whole-day training seminar were used.

Walsh et al. (2011) also described the second case, a program in which child protection was emphasized through coursework. These researchers found that several classes at this university incorporated child protection topics, but one required class devotes a great deal of focus to it, in addition to an elective course that is offered. Walsh et

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al. (2011) also presented a third and final case; a university program that included child protection information in courses through all four years of study, though no one course was devoted to it. The study explained that students in this university program engaged in a two week learning module in which three hours a week were spent focusing on child protection; learning was evaluated based on a voluntary pre-test/post-test. This study discussed the importance of education, while highlighting the fact that there is not a right way to implement child protection information into the curriculum. Walsh et al. (2011) identified these methods as possible ways to incorporate child abuse and neglect education into pre-service learning experiences for teachers. The authors highlighted the importance of providing information on child abuse and neglect at the university level; however, the information can be presented in a myriad of ways, not only those described.

Abused Children in the Classroom

Although the effects of abuse may vary from child to child, Veltman and Browne (2003) provided information that could help teachers become better at identifying students who are victims of abuse or neglect. The authors say that children in the classroom who are delayed educationally or developmentally may warrant closer attention from teachers because children who are victims of abuse often fail to meet their full potential. Veltman and Browne (2003) also explained that students may experience intellectual delays and difficulties with language. Mathews (2011) described behaviors that could be seen in sexually abused children, such as marked differences in their socializing abilities and their behavior. Studies by Mathews (2011) have revealed that children who

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have been abused may have poor attendance records, experience depression or aggression, and/or develop learning disabilities.

Mathews (2011) said that the poor education for teachers on identifying sexual abuse has put them at a disadvantage; teachers are often not prepared to make the changes needed in their teaching practices to adequately assist abused children. Veltman and Browne (2003) explained that teachers who have been educated, and know the positive impact they can have, have the potential to sincerely improve the lives of abused children in their classrooms. These authors explain that by showing concern and attention, setting daily routines to establish some consistency, and creating developmentally stimulating environments, teachers can provide needed structure for abused children. Veltman and Browne (2003) also had some success with identifying abused and neglected children using standardized assessments and behavioral analyses. Veltman and Browne (2003) used these methods to ascertain whether abused children's performances and mannerisms would make them more identifiable. The study revealed some success, but the researchers were not able to accurately identify all children who have been abused.

Bancroft (1997) described the partial fault of school districts for the inability of teachers to recognize the signs of child abuse because assessments and keeping up with standards left little time to address the emotional needs of students. Bancroft (1997) said that children of abuse need support in schools from teachers who are not only equipped to recognize that they are in trouble, but are also trained to help them. Bancroft (1997) also

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explained that children who are being abused need environments structured to make them succeed, not academic rigor for its own sake.

Negative Attitudes of Some Teachers

Bancroft (1997) also explained the reservations some educators have had about child abuse education. Bancroft (1997) said that some teachers have rejected education based on the fear of being held responsible in some way, such as retaliation from the abuser. It was also explained that teachers objected to education because they believed in a parent's right to discipline their child, they were in denial about the occurrence of abuse, or they had personal religious or political beliefs that got in the way. Mathews (2011) explained the importance of positive attitudes of teachers regarding child abuse and neglect, saying that it is vital to child success and safety.

Professional Education Called for in Other Fields

Professionals in the fields of medicine and social services, particularly nurses and social workers, encounter children who have been abused as well. It is important that these professionals receive appropriate training. Tingberg, Bredlove, and Ygge (2008) analyzed the experience of eleven nurses in a Swedish hospital. This study analyzed nursing professionals in order to improve the education of those entering the field. Through this study, participants who had worked personally with abused children were interviewed. Tingberg, Bredlove, and Ygge (2008) analyzed interviews and three overarching concepts were identified: Uncertain emotions, difficulty maintaining professionalism, and need for support following the difficult situation. The study found that

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these professionals had difficulty controlling their emotions with suspected abusers and maintaining a professional attitude; nurses often needed to speak to a professional in the counseling field to reconcile their emotions. Tingberg, Bredlove, and Ygge (2008) also received feedback from the participants on ways training programs could be improved.

Balen and Masson (2007) also conducted analysis of social work education to improve the quality of services provided and reduce the number of children who slip through the cracks. The authors explained that education is even more important due to the realities of the social work field, particularly inadequate staffing numbers and poor access to resources. Balen and Masson (2007) described the importance of professionals being educated about the signs, risk factors, and the nature of the abuse, saying that they should be more capable of helping children before it is too late, or a situation becomes worse. The education called for by Balen and Masson (2007) is more than review of current policies; participants should be involved in reflection, role play, and emotional exploration to deepen the investment in and understanding of the importance of the social work profession.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to discover if a sample of both current and pre-service teachers could benefit from better education on recognizing the signs of child abuse and neglect. This study was inspired by an apparent lack of education on child abuse for students in teacher preparatory programs. Due to the rates of child abuse and neglect in the United States, it is important for educators, both current and future, to have the best education possible. Educators must be able to identify abuse when it is encountered in the classroom. Participants in this study were evaluated before and after taking part in a one hour educational session on child abuse and neglect, and learning to identify it. The research in this study focused on the question: Does education about child abuse and neglect improve the ability of educators to recognize abused and neglected children?

Setting

This study was conducted with a sample of current teachers from a private school district in Southwest Missouri. Teachers from both elementary and middle school grades participated. The teachers ranged in grade level of instruction from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade. University students in Northwest Arkansas were also participants in this study. These students were pursuing a bachelor's degree in education in a four year degree program.

Participants

A total of thirty-five individuals participated in this study, nineteen of these were current professionals in the field of education and sixteen participants were degree-seeking university students. The current professional teachers included in this study carried various years of teaching experience. Many of the educators included in this study had between fifteen and thirty years of teaching experience; only one of the current educators was in his/her first year of teaching. University students who took part in this study were members of the senior, junior, and sophomore classes; students in their senior year making up the largest portion of the students included. Twelve of the sixteen student participants in this study were in their senior year of study. Student participants were voluntary and were recruited through the use of fliers and word of mouth. A breakdown of participants is shown in Figure 1.

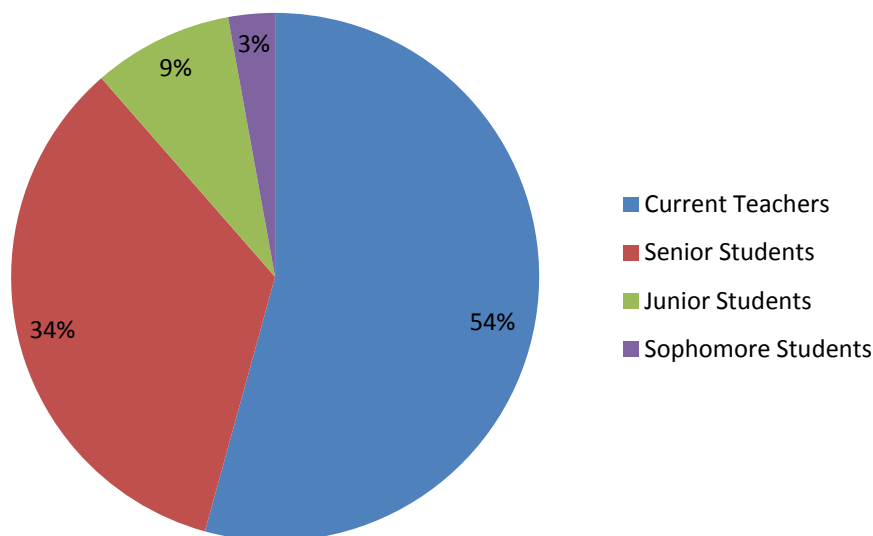


Figure 1. Participants designated into teacher or student classification.

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Due to the fact that participants were both students in their undergraduate education and teachers with various years of teaching experiences, the age of participants varied greatly. However there was very little diversity when the gender of participants was considered. Of the 16 university students who participated in this study, only one was male, while three of the 19 current educators were male. The four male participants represented 11.4% of the participants and the remaining 88.6% of participants were female students and teachers (see Figure 2).

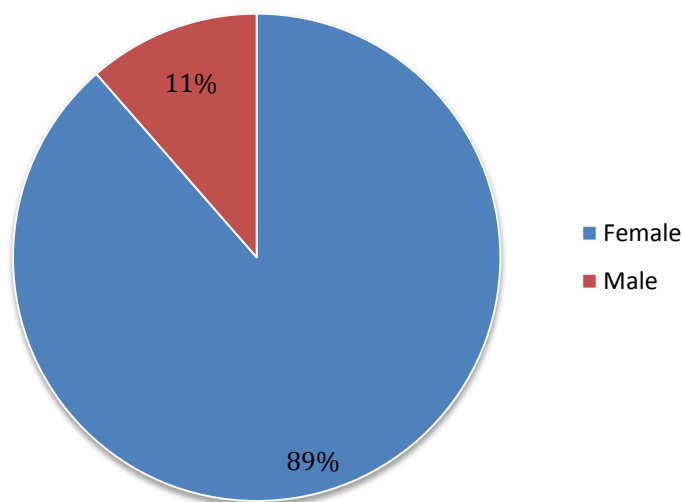


Figure 2. Demographic data based on participant gender.

Participants in this study were not a diverse group based on race, as well. Participants in this study were 97.1% Caucasian and 2.9% African American (see Figure 3). Race was not an influencing factor in this study, though the demographics were worth describing.

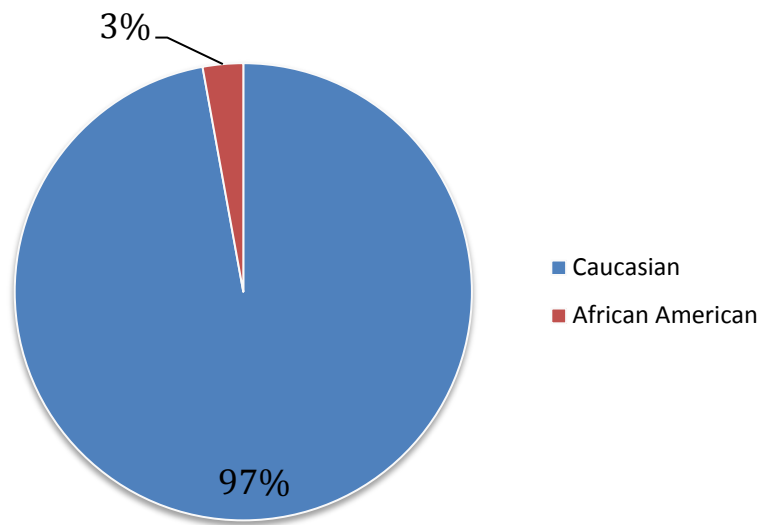


Figure 3. Demographic data based on participant race.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was given highest importance in completing this study. The identity of all participants was strictly protected, as was their place of occupation in the case of current teachers, and their school of attendance for university students. All those included in this study were expressly informed that their completion of a survey (see Appendix A) indicated their willingness to participate. At the top of each survey test was a statement saying that "by completing this survey, I grant permission for my responses to be reported anonymously."

Approval for this study was granted by the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board before educational sessions were held (see approval form in Appendix B). Participants in this study were protected by the assignment of a number and letter to each pair of surveys. Surveys given before education was provided were labeled with a number

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and the letter A, likewise, the surveys completed after education was provided were labeled with the same corresponding number and the letter B. Participant names were never collected, the number became the only means of identifying individuals.

Instrument

The instrument used to collect data from this study was a researcher-created survey designed using information acquired from various resources on child abuse and neglect, with a Likert scale to collect the data. The test consisted of seventeen statements on which participants supplied an answer one through five, five meaning that they strongly agreed with the statement and one meaning that they strongly disagreed. A response of two, three, or four indicated that the participant's view was somewhere along the spectrum of disagree to agree, not leaning strongly one way or another. The survey before education was provided was identical to the survey completed following education. The initial survey assessed perceptions and thoughts about recognizing child abuse and neglect. It was collected after completion so that participants were not able to refer to it while working on their follow-up survey.

Procedure

In order to conduct educational sessions, the researcher first had to acquire a population of participants. By communicating with contacts in the educational field, the principals of an elementary and middle school, a population of participants was identified. Both principals willingly agreed to assist with this study and gave their approval in writing (see Appendix C). The principals worked together with the researcher and one another to

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establish a time and date that would be suitable to both the elementary and middle school teachers. University participants were acquired by word of mouth, social media messaging, and fliers posted in the school of education (see Appendix D). Once a population was achieved and meeting times were established, the presentation was created.

Presentation. Before being able to better educate current teachers and university students on child abuse and neglect, the researcher had to acquire information on the subject. Using a variety of resources, particularly information from the American Humane Association and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, a knowledge base was gained and a presentation was created. Every effort was expended to create a presentation that would be engaging for the audience. The presentation was created using a variety of elements the researcher knew from experience to be effective for group instruction. In order to avoid presentations becoming entirely lecture-based, several activities were included to incorporate collaboration, though a PowerPoint was necessary to convey key information (see Appendix E). The PowerPoint presentation included information on the various types of abuse, possible signs for detection, risk factors for abuse, and numbers to make a report of suspected abuse or neglect. Throughout the presentation, individuals were encouraged to share pertinent comments and ask clarifying questions; however checks for understanding were incorporated frequently.

There were several collaborative activities included to engage participants during educational sessions. After taking the survey, participants wrote their definition or perception of child abuse, based on learning acquired from school, media, etc. Participants

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were invited to share their responses with the group. Some of these perceptions proved to be very accurate, others were found to be less so after education was provided. Toward the end of each session, participants were asked to listen and respond to a series of scenarios involving instances of child abuse or neglect(see Appendix F). These scenarios incorporated warning signs of abuse that were discussed throughout the presentation. Individuals were asked to share their responses with those around them, and finally, if they wished, with the entire group.

To further assist in achieving the learning goals and engage participants in this experience, additional media, aside from the PowerPoint, was incorporated. A video of images and statistics was created and shown at the beginning of each session to help set a somber tone. The statistics shown in the video were provided by *Child Maltreatment, 2009* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

During each of the four presentation sessions, one for current teachers and three for university students, a similar format was followed. The survey was taken first, followed by the discussion of participant perceptions of child abuse and neglect. The video was shown after the discussion concluded, and the PowerPoint presentation was subsequently delivered after the video. The scenario-based questions followed the presentation, to see if participants' knowledge could be applied to particular situations. Before closing with a discussion of reactions to the information and presentation itself, participants were shown several books on the subject of child abuse. The books varied in quality and appropriateness, and served as a caution to those who wanted to address child abuse-

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related topics in the classroom. The follow-up conversation led into the completion of the survey once again, and participants were finished with their role in the study.

Data Analysis

The assessments given before and after each education session were analyzed to discover any changes in understanding that could be determined. The mean scores for each statement were calculated to easily compare the initial survey and follow-up survey. Analysis was done to discover if there was any significant difference between the responses of the current teachers and the university students. Analysis of the data was also completed to discern if the changes in responses indicated that this study had a significant impact on participants. The items on the questionnaire which had a desired response on the lower end of the scale were reverse scored for better representation and understanding of the data.

Results

This section reports on information found through careful analysis of the data provided by participants' answers to statements on the survey. The data helped to answer the research question: Can education improve the ability of educators to recognize abused and neglected children? The individual samples of teachers and students were analyzed and compared, but no significant differences were noted in their responses. The two samples were then grouped together for data analysis. The results of the survey examination revealed noticeable changes in the participants' mean responses after education on child abuse and neglect was provided (see Figure 4). Reverse coding was used in the analysis of statements 11-17 which were phrased so that the desired answer was a lower number on the Likert scale. These were the results for both populations of participants: current teachers and university students.

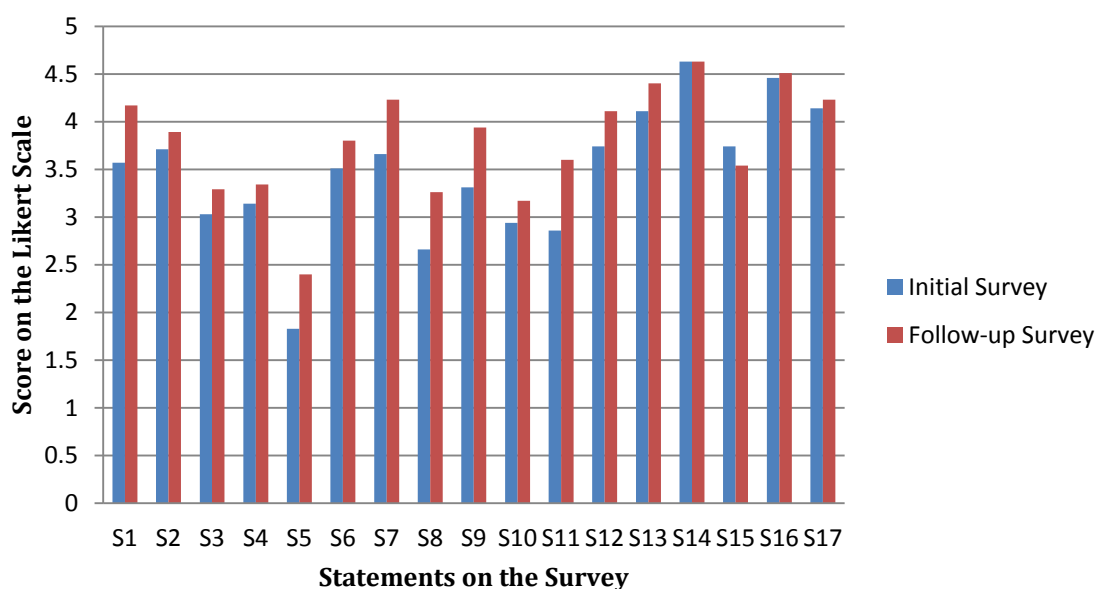


Figure 4. Mean scores of participants on initial and follow-up surveys.

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In order to assess these data, further analysis was conducted. The mean scores on the initial survey and follow-up survey were analyzed using a t-test (see Figure 5). The results of the t-test revealed that a significant change did occur. The mean scores on the survey taken after education was provided were significantly higher than those on the survey given before the presentation.

Initial Survey		Follow-up Survey		t	t-stat	p
N	Mean	N	Mean			
35	59.23	35	64.91	2.03	-6.372	2.846E-7
* Maximum score = 85.					p= <.01	

Figure 5. Results of t-test analysis of initial and follow-up surveys response data.

Anecdotal Records

In addition to survey scores it is important to note remarks and reactions during the presentation and discussion of the educational sessions. Some statements regarding child abuse and neglect on the survey initiated discussion during presentations. Particularly statement four on the questionnaire, A child comes to school wearing long sleeves and pants, despite warmer weather. To what degree would this cause you to question?, generated a great deal of conversation. This situation was discussed extensively, as it was described in one of the scenarios, as well. Participants displayed mixed reactions to this situation and much conversation ensued. Conversation particularly revolved around the level of concern that should be associated with seeing this behavior on only one day. Participants concluded that seeing this behavior for two, three, or four days in a row would be alarming. Though the mean response to this statement on the follow-up survey was

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higher, without conversation discussing greater concern after one day of observing the behavior, it was likely to be higher than it appeared.

Statement ten on the questionnaire was also notable for the conversation it generated during presentation sessions, particularly with the current teachers. Statement ten, When a parent brings their child to class in the morning, you notice they do not have the student's younger sibling with them because they are in the car. To what degree would this cause you to question?, was interesting to many participants because they had experienced similar situations with parents of their students. One teacher described the morning routine for his/her students, explaining that parents often parked across from the school entrance and walked their child to the door where a teacher would take him or her inside. During that brief span of time, younger siblings often waited in the car alone. Neither the teacher who shared this situation, nor the group as a whole, thought this to be an instance of child neglect. It was determined that this statement was situational. It depended on the length of time parents were away from the car, the frequency of occurrence, and the distance from the car to the school entrance. Without conversation and the shared interaction with parents daily, the mean response for statement ten on the follow-up survey may have been noticeably higher. The following section of this report provides further explanation of the data that resulted from this study.

Discussion

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010), child abuse continues to be a serious concern for our country; millions of children are the subject of child abuse reports each year. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2012) also explained that children of abuse are likely to experience lingering effects through their entire lives, such as depression, difficulty with forming close relationships, or excessive risk-taking. Before reaching this stage, children of abuse are students in classrooms across the United States, making teacher ill-preparedness an appropriate concern. Walsh et al. (2011) have found that pre-service teacher programs across the globe have not adequately prepared future teachers to recognize the children in need in their classrooms. Walsh et al. (2011) also reviewed the methods designed by several Australian universities to remedy this lack of education; specific required courses, interwoven and emphasized child abuse elements, and extensive seminars were among these methods. The results of the present study indicated that learning could be achieved by a sample of current teachers and university students through one hour of intensive instruction on child abuse and neglect.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine if pre-service and current teachers' abilities to recognize potential child abuse and neglect increased from intensive instruction on recognition of child abuse and neglect. This study provided both university students and current teachers with education on how to identify the abused or neglected students in their current or future classrooms. Through conducting four presentation sessions, in the

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fashion of professional development, the results suggest that pre-service and current teachers were able to obtain greater understanding of child abuse and neglect through intensive education. The acquired knowledge of participants was measured by a survey given to assess familiarity with the subject. The anecdotal records from these presentations revealed that participants were able to learn through conversing with one another and the researcher. Becoming actively involved in their learning experience helped participants to further their knowledge.

This study is different from much of the published research on child abuse and neglect education. Much of the research focused on mandatory reporting laws, such as that by Goldman and Grimbeek (2009), while a large majority of the research highlighted the need for better teacher education without providing evidence of successful implementation. Walsh et al. (2011) drew the conclusion that there is not simply one way to implement better teacher education on child abuse and neglect. Better education can be achieved in a variety of ways, as the results of this study, using one hour presentation sessions, revealed.

Limitations

There are factors over which the research had no control that may have impacted the results of the study. The limitations are time and instrumentation. The time limitation is that there was too little time for the training. The current teachers involved in this study have an allocated hour the first Friday of every month for a staff meeting after the students have been dismissed. This was the time that was utilized to educate teachers on learning to

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recognize child abuse and neglect. In order to preserve the personal time of these educators, the time limit of one hour was strictly respected. The presentation sessions with university students were kept to the same time limit for the purpose of consistency.

Another limitation of this study was that the instrument used to measure knowledge before and after the educational sessions may not have accurately represented the full extent of the knowledge gained. Through conversations, questions and answers, scenarios, etc. participants gained much more information than could have been shown by a survey.

Additionally, the participants involved in this study came into the sessions with preconceived notions about child abuse and neglect. On issues participants felt strongly about, it may have been difficult to change their minds in such a short period of time. Educators do not want to falsely identify a parent or caregiver by reporting suspected child abuse, and for that reason, many children in need are unidentified.

Implications

The results of this study revealed that education for pre-service and current teachers has been effective. During short, but intensive educational sessions, professionals in the field of education were able to acquire knowledge to help them identify children in crisis in their classrooms. The participants in this case showed increased understanding in several areas of child abuse and neglect education, as shown in the study results. The findings have shown that better education for teachers can be accomplished through simple methods. The use of various instructional techniques assisted in the education of participants in this case. Participants who learned better through the presentation of

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information visually, were able to acquire information from the PowerPoint presentation, while participants who process auditory information best were able to learn through the conversations and scenarios. The overarching understanding achieved by participants was that they simply need to pay attention to their students, get to know the families of their students, and document their concerns.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, it is highly recommended that better educational experiences be provided for professionals in the field of education. With greater amounts of time and expert information, education could be truly beneficial. Teacher preparatory programs are an obvious place to begin implementing better education. The introduction of required courses, educational seminars, or integration into coursework, as three Australian universities did, are several ways this could be accomplished (Walsh et al., 2011).

Professionals who have already begun their careers should be given better training on recognizing the signs of child abuse and neglect through professional development experiences and staff development conversations. Professional development seminars and workshops attended by teachers should be led by those who work with abused and neglected children regularly.

Representatives from the social services department, medical field, and legal community should be involved in the education of teachers. Learning to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect should be a central focus of educational experiences; however, educators should also learn about the ways they can help their students in the classroom,

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what happens after a report of child abuse is filed, and some of the adverse effects their students may experience. The better education of teachers and other professionals in the field should lead to a greater number of abused and neglected children being identified and provided with the best assistance possible.

Summary

Better education on child abuse and neglect does not have to cost thousands of dollars or indicate a redesign of university curriculum; there is not one particular method that is best, as this study shows. Education for teachers and pre-service teachers on child abuse and neglect does not have to follow an established format, it simply needs to exist. Learning can occur during a one hour presentation, but if given greater time and opportunities to apply the knowledge, many more children would be given the support they need. The importance of education should be recognized by teacher preparation programs to help educators better identify the abused and neglected children in classrooms across the globe.

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Appendix A

***By completing this survey, I grant permission for my responses to be reported anonymously.**

Survey

Please Rate the following from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest)

1) A child has become upset around school dismissal time several days in a row. To what degree would this cause you to question?

1 2 3 4 5

2) A child has explanations for all his/her many injuries. To what degree would this cause you to question?

1 2 3 4 5

3) A child comes to school wearing the same clothes he/she was wearing the previous day. To what degree would this cause you to question?

1 2 3 4 5

4) A child comes to school wearing long sleeves and pants, despite warmer weather. To what degree would this cause you to question?

1 2 3 4 5

5) A child is exceptionally out-going in school and is consistently offering to help you in any way he/she can. To what degree would this cause you to question?

1 2 3 4 5

6) A child misses school for over a week. When he/she finally returns they say they were on vacation, but the school was not informed the child would be absent. To what degree would this cause you to question?

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B

February 1, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Emily Timpe
Marcia Imbeau

FROM: Ro Windwalker
IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 12-01-434

Protocol Title: *The Impact of Teacher Training Concerning Recognition of Child Abuse and Neglect*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT ☐ EXPEDITED ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 02/01/2012 Expiration Date: 01/31/2013

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (<http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php>). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 100 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

Appendix C

***Censored for confidentiality.**

October 26, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am aware that Emily Timpe is conducting a study entitled “The Impact of Teacher Training Concerning Recognition of Child Abuse and Neglect” at my school, [REDACTED] Elementary School in [REDACTED], Missouri. This study has been approved by Dr. Marcia Imbeau, University of Arkansas professor and thesis advisor. Emily Timpe has my permission to conduct this study pending approval of the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board Committee.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Principal [REDACTED] Elementary School

Appendix C

***Censored for confidentiality.**

October 26, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am aware that Emily Timpe is conducting a study entitled “The Impact of Teacher Training Concerning Recognition of Child Abuse and Neglect” at my school, [REDACTED] Middle School in [REDACTED], Missouri. This study has been approved by Dr. Marcia Imbeau, University of Arkansas professor and thesis advisor. Emily Timpe has my permission to conduct this study pending approval of the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board Committee.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Principal [REDACTED] Middle School

Appendix D

Flier used to acquire university participants.

Attention! Important Information for Future Teachers!!!!

** Workshop by Senior Thesis Student on ... RECONIZING THE
SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE.*

*Child abuse continues to be a serious issue
in our country. 6 million children were the
subject of reports made during 2009.*

*Unfortunately, many teachers, though aware of their status as
mandatory reporters, lack the ability to recognize the signs of abuse. The
goal of this workshop is to change this!*

Who is welcome: ALL Education majors

Date/Time: FRIDAY 2/10 ~12:30 & WEDNESDAY 2/15 ~ 3:30

Location: [REDACTED]

PIZZA AND SNACKS PROVIDED!!!!

Appendix E

PowerPoint Presentation used in educating participants.

Learning to Recognize the Signs of Child Abuse

Common Types of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Appendix E

Physical Abuse

- **What constitutes physical abuse?**

Intentional injury inflicted by any form of violent behavior – such as beating, kicking, or burning...

- **How to identify it in children?**

Children who are being physically abused may have:

Bruises, burns, swelling, broken arms/legs – commonly with poor or unfitting explanations for injuries.

They may wear clothing that is ill-suited for the weather, seem to be chronically sore, or frequently run away from home.

Children who are being physically abused may exhibit:

Unusual behaviors, to one end of the spectrum or the other, pulling away from others, or becoming hostile.

Sexual Abuse

- **What constitutes sexual abuse?**

Forcing a child to engage in sexual acts, but also exposing oneself to a child or exposing a child to pornographic materials, involving a child in pornography or prostitution, or forcing a child to view sexual acts taking place.

- **How to identify it in children?**

Reactions to sexual abuse vary according to the age of the child:

Younger children may:

Fear particular people or situations, experience nightmares, feel guilty, become withdrawn, become an perpetrator of these offenses, regress, or have changes in eating habits.

Appendix E

Sexual Abuse

- **How to identify it in children?**

Older children and adolescent age children may:

- Become promiscuous
- Suffer academically
- Experience nightmares
- Use illegal substances
- Become aggressive or angry
- Change eating habits
- Run away from home
- Display suicidal behaviors

Emotional Abuse

- **What constitutes emotional abuse?**

Children who are ignored, isolated, terrorized, exploited, verbally assaulted, or rejected may be the victims of emotional abuse.

*Often occurs in conjunction with other types of abuse.

- **How to identify it in children?**

Can be very difficult to identify if not associated with other types of abuse. If emotional abuse is suspected, information about family practices can be obtained from the child. Providing resources and information to families can be used to help stop this abuse.

Appendix E

NEGLECT

- **What constitutes neglect?**

Not one definition, difficult to define. Definitions vary state-to-state.

Children may experience several types of neglect:

Physical, Emotional, Medical, Environmental, Educational, and
Inadequate supervision.

- **How to identify neglect in children?**

Signs you MAY see in the child: inappropriate clothing, hunger, chronic sleepiness, poor hygiene, medical problems that are untreated

Signs you may see in the parent: indifference, irrational behavior, substance abuse problems, blaming the child

3 Classifications: Mild, Moderate, Severe

Neglect cont...

- **Types of neglect:**

Physical: several types of physical neglect exist, such as nutritional, clothing, or abandonment

Emotional: being excessively permissive, exposing a child to spousal abuse, rejecting affection.

Medical: failure to provide necessary care for an ailing child, or allowing too much time to lapse before seeking medical attention.

Environmental: allowing a child to live in a potentially dangerous area or among potentially dangerous people, etc.

Educational: ignoring special needs, allowing child to miss school, etc.

Inadequate Supervision: inappropriate caregiver or inappropriate age to be left alone are included, also included are exposure to danger.

Appendix E

Risk Factors for Abuse

PARENT FACTORS:

Cycle of Abuse repeating itself
Substance Abuse
Low Self-Esteem
Ignorance of child development
Single parent households
Domestic Violence
Stress* AR 2009
Unemployment

CHILD FACTORS:

Disabilities
Age
Aggression
Behavioral problems

To make a report of child abuse:

Missouri: 1-800-392-3738

Arkansas: 1-800-482-5964

Oklahoma: 1-800-522-3511

Texas: 1-800-252-5400

Kansas: 1-800-922-5330

*** Legal action cannot result from reports made in good faith!**

Appendix E

References

- American Humane Association
- *Child Maltreatment, 2009*

Appendix F

Scenarios used in the education of participants.

- 1) A parent arrives to pick up their child and they appear to be under the effects of alcohol or drugs. What would you do? If anything...
- 2) A child around fifth grade age describes caring for two younger siblings until late in the evening the night before after mom had gotten called in to work. What would you do? If anything...
- 3) A child wears long sleeves to school on an 80 degree day. What do you do? If the behavior continues for three to four days, does that change your reaction? What would you do ? If anything...
- 4) For several days in a row, a child seems to be unusually tired, falling asleep in class and sitting down on the playground rather than playing like typically. What would you do? If anything...
- 5) A child has become more aggressive with other children and has distanced him/herself from closest friends and, seemingly, parents. What would you do? If anything...
- 6) A typically well-achieving student starts performing poorly, seems to be extraordinarily withdrawn and upset. What do you do? If anything...