THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HOME VISITING PROGRAMS FOR PREVENTING CHILD MALTREATMENT

DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-BASED NURSING INTERVENTIONS

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The author declares that there is no conflict of interest

Learner objectives

The learner will be able to identify and discuss the importance and implications of evidence about home visiting programs in preventing child abuse and neglect.
Expanded content outline

1. Introduction. The situation of abuse and neglect child in our societies. Effective programs or interventions.

2. The Research design

3. Results

4. Conclusions and implications
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Introduction

- Child maltreatment is a great public health concern that has long-term mental and physical health consequences and can result in death” (Mejdoubi, van den Heijkant, van Leerdam, Crijnen & Hirasing, 2015, p. 1)

- So, the consequences of abuse or neglect situations and violence in general, in future, are probably negative and put the children in a problematic condition
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Introduction

- We need effective programs that could avoid the problems and protect children and young people, in a way to a proper development.

- Actually, home visit programs are interventions that foster close and reliable relationships among health professionals, families, and the community.
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Introduction

But we need more evidence about the positive impact of these programs, especially on at-risk families.

Objectives

In this context, the main objective of the research was to identify evidence of **effectiveness of the home visiting programs** in the prevention or recurrence of maltreatment of children and young people.
The research design

We proceed to an integrative review of the literature.

With the search expression Child * AND Neglect * OR Abuse*

AND Home visiting program * AND Effect *.

We searched online databases: Medline; Cinahl; MedicLatina;

Academic Search Complete.
The research design

Through the PICO strategy, we have defined criteria for inclusion and exclusion of articles. We included:

Participants - pregnant and parents of children up to 5 years old

Interventions - the home visit.

Comparisons - among participants who received home visits and participants who received usual care.

Outcomes - indicators of effectiveness of home visiting programs.
Results

We identified as indicators of the effectiveness of home visiting programs:

- Increased prenatal care
- Weight gain at birth
- Reducing preterm deliveries
- Increased use of health services (child health, family planning, vaccination) and community social services
- Improving Pregnancy Nutrition
Results

- **Reduction** of smoking habits
- **Increase** in spacing between pregnancies
- **Increase** in parental employment
- **Reduction** in the demand for emergencies
- **Reduction** of accidents and poisoning
- **Reduction** of corporal punishment practices and appropriate use of discipline in children
- **Reduction** of intra-family gender violence
Results

- Improving children's **growth and development**
- **Reduction** of criminal conduct of parents
- **Reduction** in demand for social aid
- **Reducing drug and alcohol** abuse in the mother
- In the short term, there is a significant reduction in the number of physical assaults and neglect in the recurrence of maltreatment.
Results

- More effective in preventing abusive behavior than in correcting it
- Higher prevalence of positive parental behaviors, more development of family affective bond and greater parental qualifications
- Greater potential for adjustment and use of coping strategies in generically stressful situations
  - These include the significantly more positive effects in families with socioeconomic problems and parents with preterm infants
Results

- **Early identification** of vulnerable situations, potential violence, especially if implemented in the prenatal period.

- As regards the recurrence of maltreatment, a significant reduction in the number of physical assaults and neglect is evident in the short term.

- Effectiveness is higher in **young and primiparous mothers** when compared to multiparous mothers, because their behavior may become more flexible, plastic and adjusted.
Conclusions

These programs seem to particularly benefit families with comparative disadvantages, situations of socioeconomic risk, and diverse vulnerabilities, and the effectiveness is greatest in young and primiparous mothers.

The higher prevalence of adjusted parental behaviors, adherence to positive parenting, greater expression of family affective bonds, and greater demonstration of parental empowerment may help to protect children in difficult contexts.
Conclusions

This greater potential of adaptation and recourse to coping strategies in situations that potentiate individual and family stress, such as families with socioeconomic life events and parents with premature babies.

However, there are doubts about the cost-benefit of some programs, requiring the design to be sufficiently tailored, taking into account the differences in context, culture, values, beliefs, and range of interfering factors in the functioning of each family.
Implications

It seems effective to tailor home visiting programs according to:

- Context, the real problems
- The needs of specific families
- The duration and the scope of each program

Research Limitations

- The design of some studies (RCT and other less robust studies) with a large range of situations
- The difficulties to scrutinize the contents of each program
References:


THANK YOU