CARECEN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

ALDANA GARCIA

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CARECEN

What did I expect from CARECEN?

- At first, I did not know what CARECEN actually did for our low-income Latino communities, but after visiting the site I had no doubt it changed many people's life.
- I learned that CARECEN goes beyond just tutoring and teaching the children during their six-week summer program.
- I see that the children are enthusiastic about spending their day at CARECEN. They are in a comfortable environment in which they can express their opinions and feelings without any worries.

What I did as an Intern at CARECEN !

- Taught the 6th grade students Mathematics
  - Played Fun Games to incentive the students
  - Quizzes
- I focused on the STAR Test concepts
- Also integrated gender, culture, race, poverty, and equality into my curriculum
- Most importantly, I provided the students with a safe environment in which they felt comfortable expressing their opinions

Throughout the weeks I realized…

- **The financial need among the students**

- **For example…**
  - Lack of nutritious lunches or no lunch at all
  - Some students could not concentrate in the classroom
  - Imperative behavior in classroom
  - Lack of self-confidence

What are the Consequences of Poverty?

- Poverty-related Stress in Parents and Children
  - Toxic stress due to economic strain
- Depressed moods and disorders
- Malnutrition
- Marital Conflicts
- Interference with high quality parenting
  - May lead to negative, parent-child interactions ("coercive, inconsistent, and harsh parenting skills.") (Mistry)

Long-term effects On ECD?

According to research conducted by Dr. Mistry (UCLA Professor)

- "It is not necessarily true that low-SES parents lack good parenting skills— they may simply be too compromised by the effects of economically-related stress to engage in it." (Mistry)

What is Toxic Stress?

- Toxic stress "is associated with strong and prolonged activation of the body's stress management systems in the absence of the buffering protection of adult support."

## What can Toxic Stress cause in ECD?

- "Toxic stress in early childhood is associated with persistent effects on the nervous system and stress hormone systems that can damage developing brain architecture and lead to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and both physical and mental health."

(Harvard University Center on the Developing Child)

Why is Early Childhood Development so important?

PARENTAL INVESTMENT MODEL (PIM) PATHWAYS OF INFLUENCE

Standard of Living & Material Hardship

Learning Materials & Support at Home

Child Care & Schooling Experiences

ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

CHILD DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES

Economic Pressure

Parental Distress

Compromised Parenting

Parental Conflict & Withdrawal
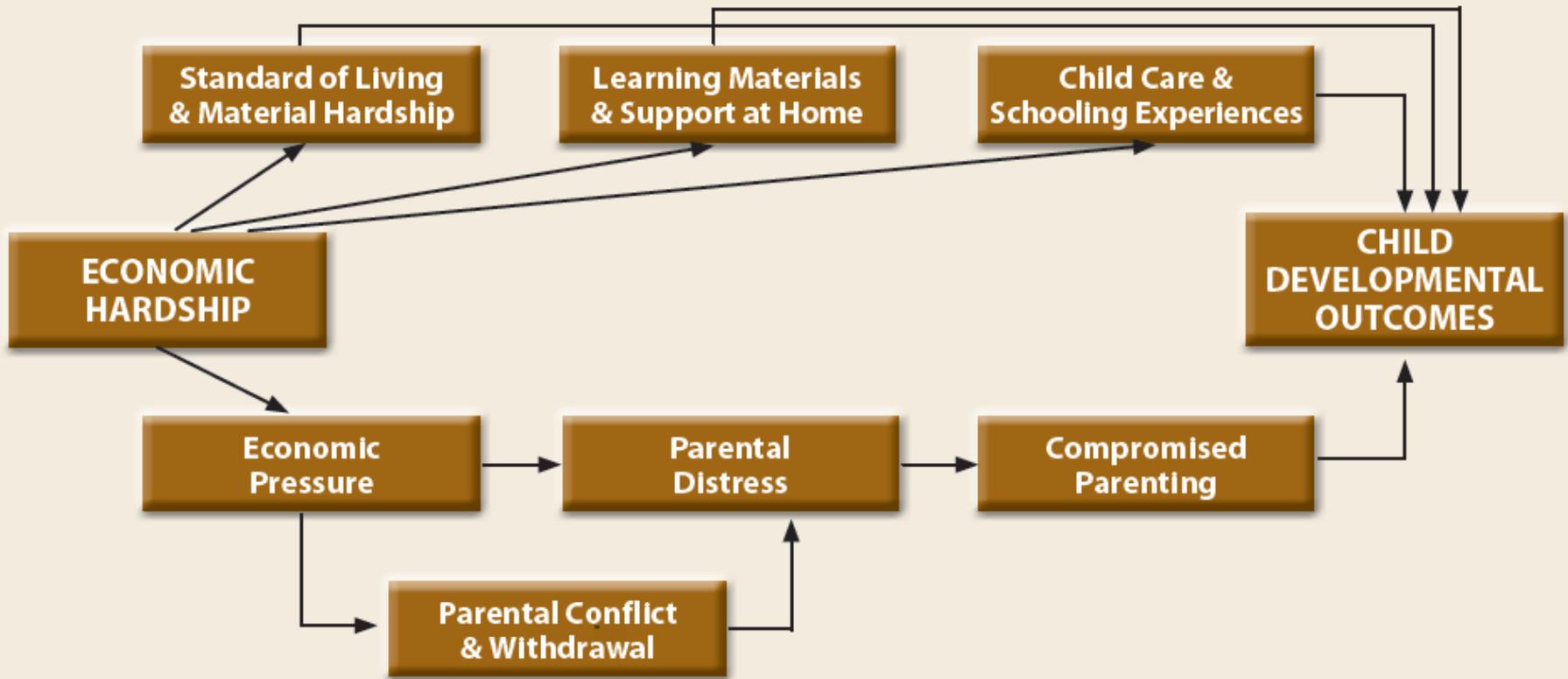
FAMILY STRESS MODEL (FSM) PATHWAYS OF INFLUENCE

Family Stress Model – Dr. Mistry

What sustainable change did I make in the community?

- Along with the rest of the CARECEN staff, we helped the students become better scholars, as well as learn how to become activists in the community

- I encouraged the children to attend college by providing them with all the necessary information about financial aid and admissions

- Most importantly, my students become more confident by the end of the program

What did I give? What did I gain?

- Comparison between CARECEN & High School tutoring programs

- I learned about the L.A. Community and the needs that our neighborhood communities have

- The social determinants of health in effect

- How important early childhood development is

- Disadvantage that the students in the community feel

- How difficult it is to evaluate a program

During the evaluation I realized…

- The CARECEN staff solely evaluated the program based on the test results from the students

- As a teacher, I knew that the students had grown up as a person both emotionally and socially

- The test results lack the importance of early childhood development and the students' empowerment
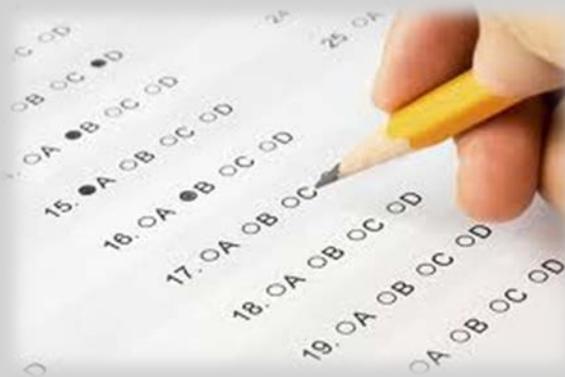
What did I give to CARECEN...

- My suggestions on a different evaluation methods

  - An evaluation that evaluated Early Childhood Development

    - Math Curriculums

- Suggestions on how to improve program based on hands-on experience