

ABSTRACT

THE FRESNO (CALIFORNIA) HEALTHY KIDS PROGRAM

This is a descriptive study of the Healthy Kids Program in Fresno County. The purpose of this study was: (a) To identify the programmatic factors that families with children enrolled in the Fresno Healthy Kids program have encountered and that inhibit the proper utilization of the services to which they are entitled; and (b) To design an intervention that could help Healthy Kids recipients understand how to better utilize the benefits that this health insurance program provides.

This study incorporated the opinions of the parents who have children enrolled in the Fresno Healthy Kids Program, as well as other stakeholders involved in the program implementation. Ten semi-structured interviews with key informants, five focus groups, and three pilot classes with Healthy Kids members were conducted between January and November of 2008.

The results of this study found that one of the most significant problems underlying the underutilization of services by the Healthy Kids recipients was the lack of understanding of the program and its benefits due to the inconsistency of the information provided, along with the fact that the majority of the focus group participants acknowledged not taking the time to read the Healthy Kids handbook. To overcome this problem, the project developed a “*plática*,” or workshop, and a fact sheet. The intervention was pilot-tested and proved to be an effective tool to educate the Healthy Kids members about the program, how to use it, and about the relevance of preventive health care.

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