LINKING INTEGRATED SERVICES WITH SCHOOLS:
A CASE STUDY

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(ABSTRACT)

In 1989, a large suburban school district and a cluster of public service agencies initiated a pilot program to provide a multi-agency staffing to develop action plans for identified students. The purpose of this study was to describe the process that was involved in the establishment of this school-linked, integrated program. The research questions that guided data collection in this study were: (1) what was the impetus for initiating this interagency innovation and what resources were required? (2) who were the key players, how were they determined, and in what ways did they plan together to establish and implement this school-linked program? (3) in what ways was the initiation of the pilot program supported or impeded? and (4) what is the status of the pilot program today? The case study approach using qualitative methods of data collection was used in order to answer these questions of process and understanding. Before data collection began, permission was obtained from the study school district to proceed. Interviews were conducted with selected individuals who participated in the planning or implementation of the program. Documents generated at the time of its establishment were also reviewed. Analysis involved the organization of data into coded categories followed by a search for themes and patterns to provide a detailed and rich description of the process. The findings of the study are presented chronologically within two phases; planning and implementation, with themes that emerged discussed within this framework. The results of this study add additional information to the body of research that describes the linking process, from vision to implementation, that occurs when a school district and community agencies work together to address children’s needs. Conclusions from the study are presented as well as implications for future endeavors and recommendations for further research.
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