Mission:
Prevent child abuse and strengthen families.
Family and Children’s Council are the only local agency that works to prevent child abuse. Programs provide education in schools, direct services to families and community outreach.

Typical Day:
Every day at Family and Children’s Council provides a unique experience. There is no day that has the exact same schedule as the next. After all, when working with the community you have to be adaptable and flexible.

Below is a tentative schedule for Mondays:
9a: Assist with phone calls, setting up appointments, paperwork, and review weekly schedule.
10a-12p: Attend meetings with community coalitions. These meetings may serve as a check-in to determine what services are working & which need to be re-evaluated. The meetings also serve to set up community events that will be happening in the surrounding areas. These events are for clients and other community members to attend to receive information about agencies, resources, and other functions

12p-4p: This period of the day is blocked out every other week for Family Treatment Court. During court, the first few hours are spent evaluating each client’s case and what has happened in their lives in the past two weeks since the last meeting. The last two hours of court are spent in the court room, observing the judge and clients interacting and discussing the cases/next steps.

4p-7p: After Family Treatment Court my supervisor and I attend 2-3 home visits to end the day. These services are through the Parent Connection program offered by Family and Children’s Council.

Goals:
When I began my internship at Family and Children’s Council I set three learning goals for myself:
1. Learn how they provide assistance to the communities served/what makes them different
2. Learn which skills are needed to pursue a career in this field
3. Learn how Family Treatment Court works/effectiveness

Programming:

Empowering Parents is a group-based parent education program for parents. This form of parent education utilizes the Nurturing Parenting Curriculum to teach a nine week course which provides access to community resources as well as peer support.

ACE’s:
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are defined by the Trauma Informed Care Project as traumatic experiences that can dramatically upset a child’s sense of safety and well-being (2016).

There are 8 overall types of ACEs studied in Iowa: physical/ emotional/sexual abuse, substance abuse, family member with mental illness, incarcerated family member, parental separation/ divorce, and domestic violence. While interning with Family and Children’s Council I have been able to attend trainings and teach clients about the effects that early traumatic experiences have on our adult lives. Adults with higher ACEs scores are more likely to take part in risky behaviors and are at higher risk of having health problems.

Having a high ACE score does not automatically condemn a child. Resiliency of the individual plays a role in reducing the risks of traumatic experiences on the body and mind. The development of the ACE questionnaire enables professionals to assess risk and put into practice supports and hope to help raise resiliency of an individual affected.

Programming:

The Parent Connection Program also utilizes the Nurturing Parenting curriculum to provide parent education. This program provides the education, support, and access to community resources through weekly home visitation, rather than in a group setting.

References:
Trauma Informed Care Project: http://www.truainformedcareproject.org/resources/aces_execsummary2016_snglpgs.pdf
Website: https://www.fccouncil.net/
Phone: 319-234-7600

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