Voices from the Southeast Sector: Needs Assessment of Services for Women and Girls

ERIKA O. CARLSEN
CORO FELLOW

SAN FRANCISCO MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

GENDER-APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (GABHS) FOR GALS
Agenda

- Introductions
- Background Information
- Best Practices
- Needs of Women and Girls
- Activity
- Question and Answer
Background Information

- Coro

- San Francisco Mental Health Education Funds
  - Staffing and operating the Mental Health Board

- GABHS for Gals
  - Gender-Appropriate Behavioral Health Services
My Project

- Worked with GABHS for Gals to conduct a needs assessment of services for women and girls living in the Southeast sector
  - Funders
  - Best practices
  - Needs
  - Addressing Safety

- Contacted and met with over 24 organizations
Best Practices

- Building trust
- Providing stability
- Fostering self-confidence and self-esteem
- Girls’ groups
Best Practices

- Peer Mentorship
- Unconditional Care Model
- Individual and group therapy
- Meeting clients where they are
Needs

- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety Disorders
- PTSD and on-going stress
- Depression and hopelessness
Needs

- Constantly feeling unsafe
- Division of families and absent parents
- Caregiver Stress
- Youth in foster care
Needs

- Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- Abusive relationships
- Substance abuse
- Foster youth and homelessness
Needs

- Culturally specific and culturally competent services
- Access to affordable and/or free childcare
- Education around menstruation, sexual identity, and sexual health
- Transportation challenges
- Stigma surrounding mental health
How does this quote relate to the situation for women and girls in the Southeast sector?

How do you react to this quote?
Quotes

- The war is here in our community
- We are working in a disappointed community
- The population deserves a certain level of empathy and sympathy, but not so much that it becomes enabling
- Self-esteem is accrued through the mastery of the skills of living
- We still hold on to our light
- Sexually active because they’re looking for love
- Youth with natural leadership skills are using them in negative ways
Quotes

- Expected to live up to expectations when there was never a foundation
- They need “mother’s wit”
- Self-preservation becomes self-medication
- They need someone to advocate for them the way a family would
- Younger women need older sisters
- They don’t know who to blend in with and where to go
- When lacking in love, somebody can be capable of anything
- They think of themselves as ugly
Reflection and Q&A

- Reflection on my experience
- Question and Answer session