

The Crisis Nursery: Literature Review

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Crisis nurseries play a vital role in our communities, offering a safe haven for children ages birth to six during times of family crisis. These dedicated facilities provide an essential lifeline for parents and caregivers facing challenging situations, such as domestic violence, parental stress, medical, mental health, job, school, or court-related crises. Beyond their immediate assistance, crisis nurseries also serve as pillars of support and resources for families in need, emphasizing the importance of early childhood development, family well-being, and community solidarity. While volunteering at Crisis Nursery, we cleaned toys, disinfected high-touch areas, cleaned the kitchen, made sure nothing in the fridge was expired, vacuumed, and shampooed carpets. Small tasks are easily overlooked and often take the staff much longer to complete during their shifts. This literature review focuses on the crucial role crisis nurseries play in our society, exploring their mission, services, and profound impact on families and children during times of distress.

Molly Niemerg:

“Psychological Injuries are not Visible”: Experience and Perception of Midwives and Nurses about Domestic Violence During Pregnancy.

Crisis Nursery is used to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect, increase the safety of their patients, and maintain stability in homes. Domestic violence is more common than not in pregnancy. “In Turkey, 38% of women are reported to have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by their husband/partner” (Simsek & Evrenol, 2023, p. 1115). Prenatal visits in women provide opportunities to assess if domestic violence is a possibility or to prevent further violence. In the study, women ranged from 23-42 years old. During the study, women stated the

cause of domestic violence was “due to physical and hormonal changes related to pregnancy, not fulfilling their gender roles, and unwanted pregnancies” (Simsek & Evrenol, 2023, p. 1117). In several cases discussed, the perpetrator would harm their family if the victim spoke up. There is a need to increase knowledge and awareness about domestic violence around the globe to decrease the number of cases.

Decision-Making and Abuse, What a Relationship in Victims of Violence.

Domestic violence perpetrators have common diagnoses such as depression and PTSD. "Gender-based violence includes controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading, and violent behavior, including sexual violence, which violates the individual's integrity, both from a physical and psychological point of view, regardless of its characteristics" (Lausi et al., 2023, p. 1). There are several cases where the perpetrator personally knows the victim romantically or familial. Women in poverty or areas with limited resources are often at higher risk for domestic violence. In other circumstances, "women from certain cultures may condone violence against women or view it as a private matter that should not be reported to authorities" (Lausi et al., 2023, p. 1). Being sexually assaulted takes away decision-making abilities. "Another consequence of gender-based violence and particularly domestic violence, the most immediately obvious, is physical and on-fatal injuries, with the head, neck, and face as the most affected region, followed by the musculoskeletal and genital regions" (Lausi et al., 2023, p. 3). Each domestic violence case is different in its way as long as the victim's background.

Shelby Myers:

Consequences of Parental Burnout: Its Specific Effect on Child Neglect and Violence.

Parental stress is a category that falls under the definition of a crisis. Like any other stress, parental stress is an accumulation of external stimuli that causes excessive stress for the parental figure, such as work-related stress, mental health decline, and any other stressful situation. Parental stress can lead to parental burnout, which is defined as a specific syndrome that results from exposure to chronic parenting stress (Mikolajczak et al., 2018). Parenting is challenging; without a solid support system, an overload of parental stress can have adverse effects. A study on the consequences of parental burnout from stress showed that burnt-out mothers reported incidences of lashing out at children while experiencing this parental burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2018). Stress can affect a person in many ways and cause someone to act out in a way they usually would not.

Examining the Impact of COVID-19 on Parental Stress: A Study of Foster Parents.

In today's economic climate, one factor that has increased the severity of parental stress is the COVID-19 pandemic. A journal article on the impact of COVID-19, specifically on parental stress, implied that there is evidence showing that social distancing may have a more significant impact on children and families in vulnerable populations (Miller et al., 2022). By enforcing social distancing and moving classes, meetings, and all social interactions online, the avenue for socialization was drastically changed forever. The study results in the article indicated that parents reported increased stress during the pandemic related to parental-related stressors, lack of control, and parenting satisfaction levels (Miller et al., 2022). By eliminating socialization and gatherings of people, some children and families were left without a way to connect and receive the emotions that they may be lacking at home.

Berich Mpoy:

Brief Stress Reduction Strategies Associated with Better Behavioral Climate in a Crisis

Nursery: A Pilot Study.

Crisis Nursery provides 24-hour emergency care for families with children six years old or less. A crisis can look different for every individual and can be caused by various situations. DePasquale et al. (2020) states that families are at high risk for a crisis and child abuse when financial, material, and social resources are limited. Crisis nurseries support families with increased resources to prevent abuse, neglect, and maltreatment of children in the home. Although crisis nurseries provide safe environments for children in homes experiencing crises, DePasquale et al. (2020) state that children can experience stress because of the unfamiliarity of the environment. Research has been conducted to identify ways to reduce stress for children placed in crisis nursery programs. A study conducted on crisis nursery homes found that applying mindfulness-based stress reduction strategies reduces the stress children experience during their stay at crisis nursery homes and has longer-term effects on children's mental health regulation and coping skills (DePasquale et al., 2020). Children with mental health regulation and coping skills have a decreased risk of experiencing abuse and neglect at home. DePasquale et al. (2020) concluded that mindfulness-based stress reduction strategies are required to ensure children at crisis nurseries are comfortable and prepared to integrate with other children.

Outcomes From a Randomized Controlled Trial of the Relief Nursery Program.

A 2-year randomized control study was conducted to understand the benefits families and individuals receive from nursery prevention programs. The study participants were divided into

two groups: the complete program condition and the respite care condition. The complete program condition provided all services to individuals in this group, but the respite care condition only provided respite care for individuals in this group. The group in the complete program condition reported a lower rate of experiencing stressful life events during the study than the participants in the respite care condition (Eddy et al., 2020). The complete condition program had a higher effect on the participants in the study than the respite care group. Despite the complete condition group benefiting more, according to Eddy et al. (2020), all participants of the study were satisfied with the services the relief nursery program provided. According to Eddy et al. (2020), over 4.1 million allegations of child abuse and neglect and an estimated 676,000 victims are in the US. Relief programs support families with education about community-based agencies, build good relationships between family members, and reduce the risk of abusive behaviors. Families and individuals needing support during a crisis can rely on relief programs.

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