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COUNSELING AND HUMAN
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AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF HELP EXPERIENCED BY SEVEN
CAUCASIAN PARENTS WHO COMPLETED A COURT ORDERED PARENTING
EDUCATION PROGRAM (153 pp.)

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The purpose of this study was to inquire about the nature of help experienced by parents relative to making changes to their parenting strategies after attending a court ordered parenting education program. Parents involved in this study had children who displayed disruptive behavior. The term disruptive behavior relates to status offenses, such as school truancy, breaking curfews, and failure to adhere to the rules and guidelines of their parents. Additionally, in this study, disruptive behavior relates to chemical substance abuse, negative peer involvement, and violent behavior towards others and their personal properties.

A qualitative approach was used to explore the experiences of seven Caucasian parents following their participation in the program curriculum of Parent Project. Five themes were relative to the parents' experiences in changing their parenting strategies: parents' recognition of helpful support systems, the expert help of the program facilitators, personal gains of understanding self as a parent, learning and understanding teenage behavior, and helpful parenting techniques.

The study was designed to determine the extent of help or encouragement parents experienced in making changes to their parenting of adolescent who displayed disruptive behavior. The determining design for this study related to the limited qualitative research

exploring the perceptions of parents following their attendance in a parenting education program. The study was conducted to add to the present literature relative to what parents found helpful in changing their parenting strategies.

The results of this study, based on the perceptions provided by parents, indicated that parents felt empowered and in control of their homes and their families with the help obtained in attending Parent Project. It is intended that this study supports and assists the design of future parenting education programs in extending help to parents who need support with their children.