

Learning Objective 1 Reflection

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During my internship I was able to get to know each of the children. On my first day, I had a Kindergartener tell me his name and then hug my legs. There were other students that it took until the beginning of April for me to have a solid relationship with them. It was a challenge at the beginning to find a way to connect with the students. I have many experiences working with children, but this was the closest I have worked with “at risk” youth on a regular basis. I quickly learned techniques that I had used in the past to get students to be quiet did not work with these kids. So there were many situations that I had to come up with another way to get the children to behave. Since New Hope Ministries is a Christian organization, so I was able to begin the relationships with conversations about God and Jesus which truly was a blessing.

I reviewed some literature regarding challenges that are faced by families from minority backgrounds and the “at risk” youth population. According to an article by Keating, Tomishima, Foster and Alessandri (2002), “The term ‘at risk’ is generally used to describe youth who come from single-parent homes, who show signs of emotional or behavioral problems, and who lack the support to navigate developmental tasks successfully.” There has been a rise in the number of mentoring programs designed for at-risk youth, programs similar to the after school program at New Hope Ministries. Due to the typically unstable home life, these children are at an increased risk to partake in illegal activities such as drugs, alcohol, theft, and violence. Mentoring programs provide the children with a safe environment, healthy role models, healthy social influences, and academic assistance. Based on my research, mentoring programs are not always effective, but if there is even one person that each program benefits, then it was worth it. A document regarding immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act mentions that the demographics of American schools have changed to include more non-English speaking students. The article suggested that No Child Left Behind could potentially improve the educational experience of these children. However, it can be challenging for schools and educators to cater to students who are from an immigrant family. Also, lower income families tend to live in the same area; therefore children attend primarily lower income schools with fewer resources.

To show my accomplishments for this objective, I have included a PDF document in the “Work Samples” section describing the background of each student that was useful in understanding each student’s home situation. Names have not been included to protect the identities of the students and their families. I also included an excerpt from one of the case studies I created.

References

- Keating, L. M., Tomishima, M. A., Foster, S., & Alessandri, M. (2002). The effects of a mentoring program on at-risk youth. *Adolescence*, 37, 717-734. Retrieved from <http://worthmotorcycles.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/The-Effects-of-a-Mentoring-Program-on-At-risk-Youth.pdf>
- Capps, R., Fix, M., Murray, J., Ost, J., Passel, J. S., & Herwantoro, S. (2005). The new demography of America’s schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED490924.pdf>