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Boys & Girls Club

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Boys and Girls Club

The Problem

- Family income is also relevant when it comes to parental stress. Parental stress is often caused by “economic hardship, and the subsequent increased economic pressure, influence parenting behavior indirectly through parent psychological distress” (Mistry 2002).
- Also, parental involvement is also compromised. Parental involvement is important during a child’s early development into adolescence, A study done in Chicago proved how the involvement of parents increases the student’s rate of success. (Heymann 2010).
- A program established in 1965 targeted the war on poverty. This program was named “Head Start” and it “was designed to promote low-income, preschool-aged children’s early success in hopes of reducing social disparities over time” (Sabol 2015). The Head Start program provides services like dental, counseling, and healthcare to families who are financially disadvantaged. This program reminds me of the Boys and Girls club because it offers small services to help ease a parent’s stress.

Service Site Approach

The Boys and Girls club targets childhood poverty by helping the students obtain resources they may not have available at home. For example, lunches, homework help, tutoring, and family time.

My Approach

I served my community by being a temporary family figure to each student at the Boys and Girls Club. My service continued by helping parents feel at ease. Many of the kids at the center have financial hardships, single parents, or unideal living situations

Service to the Community

I served my community by being a temporary family figure to each student at the Boys and Girls Club. My service continued by helping parents feel at ease. Many of the kids at the center have financial hardships, single parents, or unideal living situations. My experience began to thrive when some kids would call me their sister or mom. I realized I was important to them and in a way, I became part of their family. Most of their parents can’t sit with them and guide them through their homework, but I could.

Semester Reflection

My service changed throughout the second month. At first, I felt a bit stuck because the kids had so much energy and they have a difficult time staying focused on their homework. My aunt was an elementary school teacher for about 20 years and she showed me ways the kids could stay focused while still having fun. I basically turned their homework into a game.

Expectations

Going into the Boys and Girls club was amazing. I went in with an open mind not knowing what to expect. I was expecting to not like working with kids but to my surprise I actually found it quite enjoyable. I helped some kids learn their ABC’s and I helped some with multiplication problems.

Pros	Cons
It was fun	Kids have a lot of Energy
I helped parents	Trouble finding time



Differences In My Views

My perspective on the world greatly changed. I became more aware of others struggles and I began to sympathize with the parents who have addictions. I noticed many stressed parents and I was able to understand why sometimes people turn to alcohol, drugs, or gambling for relief. I can’t imagine working 2 jobs, paying rent, utilities, groceries, and other costs as a single parent with multiple kids. Also, I realized many times I am not as grateful for what I have. On a more personal level, I learned to be more patient with kids.

A Change In the Future

A change in the future I would like to make would be to bring awareness to how poverty affects a child’s growth and development in school. I noticed the difference in behavior between the Boys and Girls club kids and other kids in my neighborhood. If parents were to have financial assistance the Boys and Girls club wouldn’t be as busy, and kids could spend more time with their families. With my experience, I hope I helped ease the stress many parents face when leaving their kids to go to work.

Learnings

I believe service learning is important because in a way it brings the community together. I enjoyed my time because I felt I was an active member of the community. The social issue the Boys and Girls club targets was poverty because it is an after-school program for kids who face difficulties at home. Many times, the difficulties those children face at home are caused by poverty. In the future, I would like to be a psychologist and participating at the Boys and Girls club gave me insight on being around children. My experience made me want to work with kids instead of only adults.

References

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