

2013-2014 LEND

FAMILY MENTORSHIP

Information and Instructions for Trainees at WIHD

Family Visits: The Family Mentorship leadership assignment should provide a useful experience in learning more, through a first-hand visiting opportunity, how a family of a child, adolescent or young adult with special needs experiences life at home and in the community. We ask that you arrange two visits with a designated volunteer family to learn more about their perspectives on disability and special health care needs as well as some of the challenges they may face in advocating for their family member. Although you may have professional knowledge and expertise, please remember that we have asked families to participate in *your* training; they have *not* asked to be evaluated.

The goal of this activity is to learn from a family about the impact of having a child with a disability, their experiences working with professionals from various disciplines, and the responsiveness of service systems to the family's needs and desires. We hope that you will have an opportunity to hear about how families work in partnership with their school district, health providers, or other formal systems of support, and to gain insight into areas you may not have previously explored with a family.

The steps in the process:

- After receiving the family's contact information, call the family to introduce yourself.
- Review the timeframe for the visits. Determine a mutually convenient time for a first visit. Both you and the family have busy schedules and sometimes face unexpected problems so plan for the first visit relatively soon after receiving the mentor family's information.
- Review the **Family Pre-Visit Listening Guide** *prior* to your home visit as preparation for the kinds of topics you may wish to encourage the family to address while they share their personal stories and life experiences with you. Do not work directly from this form during your visit but rather use the form only as a guide, since this is not intended to be a question and answer interview. You may find it helpful to complete and retain the Family Visit Listening Guide form *after* your visit for your own use as a future reference for the group presentations and discussion on March 20, 2014 and to assist you in completing the Family Visit Impressions and Reflections Form. Be sure to note the confidentiality information included below.

- Arrange a time to accompany the family on a community outing (restaurant, shopping mall, supermarket, community event or recreation activity, church/synagogue/temple, doctor's appointment, neighborhood playground, etc.).
- Conduct the second visit.
- After your second visit, your assignment is to download, complete and submit the **Family Visit Impressions and Reflections Form** on Moodle *before* March 20, 2014. Print a copy for yourself to submit as part of your portfolio for the LEND training.
- Follow up with a thank you call or personal note to the mentor family.

Follow-up: We will meet as a group on Thursday, March 20, 2014 in order for you to have an opportunity to present and discuss the Family Mentorship experiences.

Confidentiality in the Family Mentorship Experience

Do not discuss your family mentorship experiences with your friends, family members, or anyone else not associated with the LEND program. You are, however, required by law to report any abuse or neglect. If you feel you have witnessed abuse and/or neglect within the context of your FME, notify your faculty advisor and the Training Director immediately.

When you write up a personal reflection of your visits and when you share your thoughts about the visits with the LEND group, do *not* use the last name(s) of the family members or other information that would enable identification of this family. Keep your written summary private. Outside of the group discussions, do not share personal family information with anyone other than your LEND faculty advisor, the Program and Training Directors, and the Family Faculty Coordinator.