

THE FAMILY CONNECTION
Westchester Institute for Human Development
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SAMPLE LETTER

Thank you for volunteering to participate in our Family Mentoring Program as part of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities Program (LEND) at the Westchester Institute for Human Development. As you know, the purpose of this program is to have interdisciplinary graduate fellows, who are professionals pursuing advanced degrees at various colleges and universities, learn about family issues and experiences by sharing time with your family at home and in the community.

We are asking you to schedule two meetings with the LEND fellow including one home visit and one typical family outing in the community such as going to a shopping mall, supermarket, restaurant, a medical appointment, a community activity or local event. These visits should be completed by the middle of February, if possible, because the LEND fellows will have an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss what they learned from their Family Mentoring experiences during the first week in March. I have enclosed an information sheet that includes the name, address, phone number and e-mail address of the LEND fellow assigned to your family. The LEND fellow will contact you during the month of November to introduce himself/herself and to set up the first home visit at a time that is mutually convenient. All LEND fellows in our program have been told that they are *not* to evaluate or assess your family, or to provide any professional services. They are visiting with you to learn about family life experiences and issues related to parenting a child with special needs. It is expected that they will write brief personal reflections about their visits with your family at home and in the community. A set of learning goals for the Family Mentoring experience is enclosed.

LEND fellows learn about family-centered practices in training sessions on Family Partnerships. We

have developed an evaluation survey for families to use to evaluate the LEND fellow for family-centered practices and competencies. Enclosed is a copy of this evaluation form for you to preview in preparation for the visits. At the completion of the Family Mentoring experience, we will be sending you a copy of this evaluation form to complete and return. We hope that you will be willing to participate in this evaluation process.

We are very appreciative of you graciously contributing your time and expertise in providing this learning experience for our graduate fellows. Should you have any problems in terms of your participation with the trainee assigned to you, please call me so that we can make any necessary changes or revisions.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Levitz

Program Director: The Family Connection

LEND Faculty Member