Leadership Training Written Assignment 3: Home Visiting

*Background Information:*

During our session, our guest presenters provided a training focused on home visiting. This is a critical element within programs that are focused on family strengthening. As part of the training, you received materials, these will be a part of this reflection assignment.

*Assignment*

Based on your learning during this session, as well as knowledge and experience you have gathered over the years, and/or original research you have read, describe the following:

* What are the costs and benefits of home visiting programs?
  + There are so many elements that home visiting provides that encourages strong family bonding. For instance, on the slide about potential benefits, it describes that it reduces criminal justice costs and beginning these trainings right after birth creates the greatest chance of reducing the risk of child abuse. It really teaches the family about children and what is important in the environment and the actions we implement in our families..
* What are the six goals presented during this workshop related to the prevention of child abuse and neglect?
  + 1. Children and youth are nurtured, safe, and engaged. Action: Early detection of health and developmental concerns. I have learned a lot in my special ed class about really early intervention with problems with health in order to keep them engaged. For instance, if a student is diagnosed with autism, it is important for us to have early detection in order to make sure they are placed in an environment that gives the proper nurture (teachers that are experienced and sensitive to the issue), safe (make sure parents and children know about how to deal with this situation so they are not likely to tease or hurt the children) and engaged (They need proper lessons to make sure they are learning the maximum amount they can.
  + 2. Families are strong and connected. Action: Support to families to strengthen parenting capacity. This really goes along with the five protective factors. We want our parents to really have the resources and understanding in child development so they can foster their children in the best environment they can. This will help them communicate and understand their children at a much greater potential.
  + 3. Identified families access services and supports. Actions: Staff who encounter families are trained in screening and referrals. This really is pushed hard with my special ed class. If staff aren’t properly educated or knowing what to look for in children, there is a chance that child will not be properly diagnosed which can put them back in school or they are not given the resources, such as a targeted IEP that will help guide that student for the rest of his or her schooling career. It is so important for the staff to know what to look for and know what they are doing.
  + 4. Families are Free from Substance abuse and Mental Illness: Action: High quality, accessible family-centered treatment services for substance abuse and mental illness. It is important for families to know they are not alone and there is a community out there that can assist them. If they are given the resources and information, they are much more likely to move towards a healthier lifestyle for their families. I have not personally experienced this, but know from classes that a community is a great way to really connect and build strong supportive connections.
  + 5. Communities are caring and responsive. Action: Neighborhoods are safe, stable, and supportive. If there is a strong community, there is likely supports. For instance, if a child grows up in a low SES area that provides crime and dangers, they are much more likely to be a part of that community. If the neighborhoods are a safe haven for these children, they know they have somewhere strong and supportive and will be less likely to encounter dangerous situations for them.
  + 6. Vulnerable communities have capacity to respond. Action: Services and supports target populations in communities with concentrated risk factors: If we know there is a danger or there is a community with dangers for children, it is our responsibility to respond and make sure the children are taken care of. These children do not have a say where they live or who they are around, so we need to make sure we are advocates for them and help provide a safe place for them to be. For instance, an after school program.
* Reflect on safety considerations within home visiting providing during this training. If you were the director of an agency which utilized home visits, what are the top five safety procedures that you would consider non-negotiable for the professionals under your guidance?

1. Avoid parking in deserted and/ or dark areas. If we park under lights, or make sure we are around lights, there is a much stronger chance someone will see what is happening and there is a chance they will be able to call for help if needed.
2. Leave itinerary in the office. This one is essential! If a person goes missing we need to be able to retrace every step. This is for safety of the person as well as the company.
3. Do not wear valuable jewelry. We are visiting houses with low money often, and it would be tempting and down right dangerous to be wearing these artifacts that may tempt the wrong actions.
4. Knock and step away from the door. Make an exit plan. Make sure you know where you can go if needed. The worst situations would be to put yourself in a situation you can’t get out of. Be prepared for anything!
5. Know the cultures of the people you are visiting: it would be awful to immediately show disrespect to a family that has likely been treated with disrespect for a long time. Make sure you do not encourage these bad habits of others and either ask or research possible cultural differences.

* What was the one most significant piece of learning you took away from this training? Did in increase or decrease your desire to engage in home visits for high risk families?

I am much more interested in home visits. The things I learned most is that it is dangerous, but we are able to give families so much support and understanding when they may not have felt like they had before. I think this is a very interesting job and I really want to learn more about it.

* For this part are we supposed to do it as a group?
* In your Leadership Cumulative Paper your group will need to explain how your home visiting program addresses the needs of your family.
  + For this assignment describe the rationale or empirical evidence of the effectiveness of home visiting programs for at-risk families (be sure to include appropriate APA citations).
* In your Leadership Cumulative Paper your group will need to describe assessments you will use in working with your family. (Part 5).
  + Using materials from this training, describe an initial assessment you might conduct with your Fragile Family and how information gained from that assessment might guide your program components (for the parent(s) and/or child(ren).
  + What referral services might you need to provide for your family (i.e., services that would be outside the scope of your program)?
* This should be a professional paper without writing errors; an example of your best work

This assignment is due one week after the training before the next class session.