



VOLUNTEER TRAINING: DEVELOPMENT OF A PREPARATORY GUIDE OF EXPECTATIONS AND SKILLS FOR A SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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OVERVIEW OF CAPSTONE SITE

Hope Hollow Ministries (hereafter referred to as Hope Hollow) provides an inclusive camp to individuals with disabilities both after school and over school holidays. The camp places an emphasis on visual and performing arts along with recreational activities through a vacation bible school like format. (Hope Hollow Ministries, 2008)

LITERATURE SUMMARY

Theories: Model of Human Occupation was chosen to be utilized to teach volunteers how to let the campers lead their camp experience through a routine of camp stations and exploration of fun activities at their pace. Person Environment Occupation Model was chosen to be utilized in the development of the volunteer program to expose volunteers to typical characteristics of disabilities and how the camp activities can be modified to meet the needs of the individual campers. Sensory Integration frame of reference was also utilized to train volunteers in how different sensations can impact a camper's experience and how sensory areas and different techniques can be used to calm/regulate a camper to increase safety and participation in camp activities.

Relevant Evidence: Through research it was determined that to become an effective support to individuals with disabilities, volunteers need to first be provided with an overview of the disabilities and behaviors that may be displayed in the clients they work with (Van Oorsouw et al., 2010; Skinner et al., 1997; Provident and Comer, 2013). Reid (2019) found that training can be less of a time commitment for the facility and trainers if visual media and technology are utilized within the training programs. Occupational therapists can provide sensitivity training and educational programs to anyone who needs to learn strategies for how to best engage and communicate with people of various abilities (Ideishi, 2013)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Phase I: A semi-structured interview was conducted between the program directors and capstone student. It was determined that volunteer training would be the focus of the capstone project. A manual would be developed based on a volunteer training format found within a study by Provident and Comer followed by the development of volunteer training videos.

Phase II: A follow up zoom conference was held between the executive program director and the capstone student to confirm the capstone project focus of volunteer training through the development of a manual and subsequent videos to transition training into a virtual format. A survey was sent to parents for further input but with limited input it was determined that the current capstone training plan was adequate without the addition of more input from stakeholders.

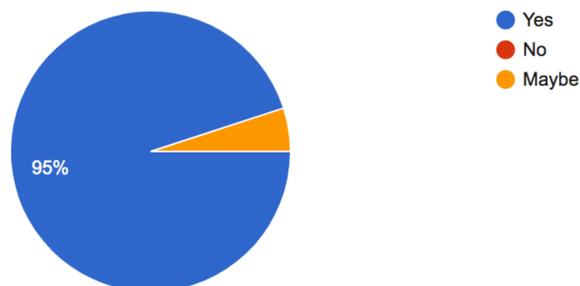
PROJECT GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- Develop and deliver a Phase II Needs Assessment
- Finalize capstone project goals and timeline
- Develop a volunteer manual
- Develop a volunteer training protocol
- Develop a tool to evaluate the prior knowledge of volunteers
- Develop a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of the volunteer training protocol
- Disseminate and pass on volunteer training protocol to Hope Hollow staff

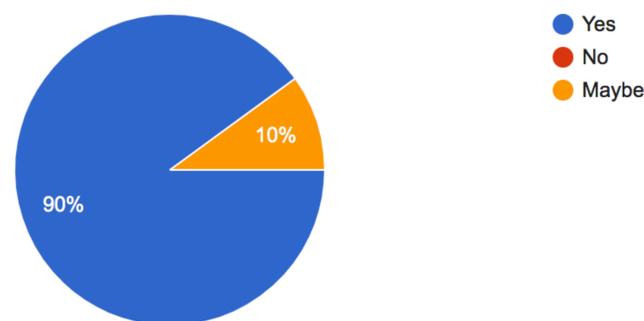
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT and/or IMPLEMENTATION

Pre-Survey Data

I would like to learn how to talk to/interact with people with disabilities better.
20 responses

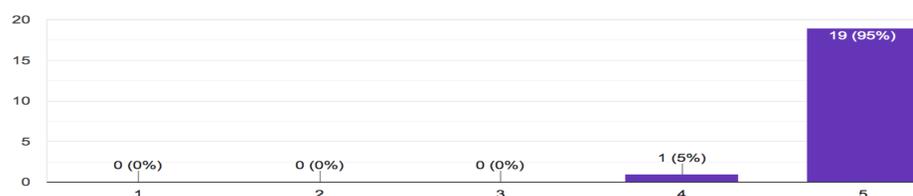


I would like to learn more about the type of disabilities my camp buddy may have?
20 responses

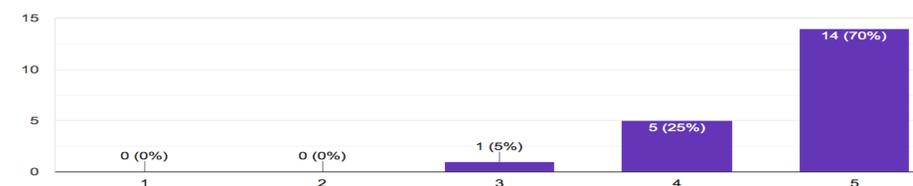


Post-Survey Data

Information about common disabilities of campers seemed helpful to me.
20 responses



I feel more prepared to work with the campers at Hope Hollow.
20 responses



- Needs assessment interviews: program directors identified a need for a virtual training that would allow them to send a training video to the volunteers prior to camp.
- A manual was determined to be the first step in gathering important for the training. Research was gathered on common disabilities and common comorbid factors that are associated with them.
- A PowerPoint was made to condense the manual before an online presentation source was used to record the capstone student presenting the information.
- During week 5 and 8 of the capstone experience, the volunteers were trained and surveyed.
 - A Pre-survey was given to the volunteers to assess their prior level of exposure to individuals with disabilities.
 - A post-survey was utilized after the training to assess comprehension and satisfaction.
- Adjustments were made to the training videos length due to not being able to finish the videos with the first trial and to the wording within the surveys due to requests for explanations from the volunteers during evaluation.
- Training videos were finalized and disseminated to the program directors of Hope Hollow.
 - The program director did request the inclusion of the post survey to be utilized for verification of training completion.
- Training videos and the post survey will be distributed to volunteers prior to their assigned summer camp week in the summer of 2021

PLAN FOR PROJECT EVALUATION

Formative Evaluation: The formative evaluation will continue into the capstone experience through a phase II needs assessment that was conducted within 3 weeks of the capstone experience. This second needs assessment will allow the capstone student to interview the directors, parents, and other stakeholders closest to the campers to make any adjustments that arose from their input.

Process Evaluation: The process evaluations surrounding the initial training program included a survey (pre-test) to assess prior knowledge of disability and training that the volunteers may have had. Another survey (post-test) was created to assess the effectiveness of the training program along with the manual. Both evaluations were administered within the 5th week (trial 1) and then again during the 8th week (trial 2).

PROJECT SUMMARY AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Project Impact: The specific focus of this project was to enhance the knowledge of volunteers to better equip them to work with children with disabilities. This project was also key in decreasing the load on the program directors and allowed for the campers to have a better experience with their volunteer due to the volunteer's increased understanding of what makes them them.

Personal Growth of the Capstone Student: The capstone student now has increased knowledge in the creation and implementation of a program to meet a facilities need.

Recommendations: The addition of role play or scenario questions could enhance the program participants comprehension of the topics as found in the research (Reid, 2019).