Growing Through LEND

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Introduction

Why LEND?
Before LEND, I had heard of the concept of family-centered, interdisciplinary practice, but I never truly experienced it. Before LEND, I tended to stay within my comfort zone, and I rarely pushed myself to take risks. Before LEND, I had a sense of who I was, but I did not fully understand.

LEND gave me the opportunities to explore all of these domains.

Personal Goals for LEND

Complete reflections to further develop my sense of self as well as clinical, communication, and leadership skills.

Work in an interdisciplinary group in LEND clinic. Act as team leader for a clinical case, implementing collaboration and delegation based on member strengths.

Develop a sense of family-centered practice by learning from families of children with disabilities and involving families in their clinical management.

LEND activities

As a case leader, I communicated and worked with a family to develop family-defined goals. From these goals, I delegated roles to team members and myself based on individual strengths in order to best support the family.

I gained self insight from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which I attempt to use throughout various situations.

I learned and experienced the personal story of a family with disability through Families as Mentors.

In partnership with the Bright Spaces Project, serving homeless agencies in Allegheny County, I created a brochure to offer nutritional awareness and strategies to support fun, healthy eating.

I attended the Mid-Atlantic LEND Advocacy Day where my interest in disability advocacy was peaked. I hope to soon use the strategies I learned, such as creating a successful pitch and locating a champion for my cause, to advocate for families in both personal situations and on a larger scale.

LEND Impact

Personal Growth
• Self-Reflection
• Increased confidence and risk taking
• Leadership

Team Building
• Collaboration
• Understanding others’ strengths, motivations, and backgrounds

Perspectives on Families
• Family-Centered Practice
• Understanding the impact of disability on individual families

Wider Community
• Increased interest in advocacy work

Conclusion

LEND has helped me to develop the knowledge and skills to implement family-centered, interdisciplinary practice. These skills include leadership, which requires an understanding of others and of yourself.

By understanding myself, I know how to better myself. As an introvert, I know I am a good listener, but also that I must be conscientious to assert myself when I am ready to speak. As someone who is judging, I trust myself to be prepared but must recognize that situations can change and that flexibility is necessary.

By understanding others, I can better communicate and achieve group success. I now have a greater understanding that others’ motivations and influences may differ from my own. I work to adjust my style to achieve a better interaction and results.

I am continuing to improve myself and my abilities, and I have seen a positive personal grown through LEND.