Developing a live-in program for Belmont OTD students at Homeplace, Inc.

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Abstract

Developing a live-in program for Belmont OTD (Degree of Occupational Therapy) students at Homeplace, Inc. is a project devoted to creating a community-oriented housing opportunity by bringing together individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and graduate students. Through appropriate preparation of policies and procedures, the goal is for students to serve as a consistent social outlet for residents, as well as promoting participation through client-centered activities. Subsequently, the gift of friendship and reflection, students have an opportunity for personal and professional growth. The importance of this program is supported in current literature for “although people might physically live in a community home or participate in community activities, they often lack access toity of a center staff. Homeplace materials: Examples of reflection and meaning activities that occur.

What is Community Integration?

Salzer (2006) defines community integration as, “the opportunity to live in the community, and be valued for one’s uniqueness and abilities, like everyone else.” The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) states that “individuals with ID (intellectual disability) have the capacity to participate in a range of community activities when provided the opportunity and appropriate supports.” The AOTA goes on to add that community integration should occur across the lifespan, from infancy through the aging process. The stage of life an individual is in will determine the types of routines and activities that occur.

What are the Benefits for Residents?

The current residents of Homeplace, Inc. are individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and are also experiencing the transitions of the aging process. Due to this specific situation, the following evidence supports the implementation of such a program:

• It is imperative to promote an active aging experience similar to that of other aging individuals (Bouy, Aird, & Miller, 2012.)
• Frequent social contact helps to reduce the increased risk of anxiety and depression among this population (Herremus & Evenbals, 2013.)
• Among individuals with intellectual disabilities, age increases, the size of social networks decreases (Kamstra, Van de Putten, Post & Vlasakamp, 2015.)
• Individuals with intellectual disabilities need meaningful relationships and others who are willing to invest time into these relationships (Kamstra, et al., 2015.)
• Among this population, few friendships exist with individuals without disabilities (Emerson & McVilly, 2004.)
• Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities mostly name other disability service users, staff, and family members as their friends (Amado, Stancliffe, McCarron, & McCallion, 2013.)
• Through retirement and the loss of community/social networks, service providers should promote continued meaningful interactions (Fieko, Hall, Quinlan, & Kockell, 2012.)

What are the Benefits for Students?

The big picture of these relationships can also benefit the students when moving forward into their careers as occupational therapists. The following evidence supports the potential benefits of this partnership:

• Universities should develop programs that “increase knowledge, promote positive contact, and reduce fear attached with working with individuals with intellectual disabilities” (Werner & Grayman, 2013.)
• Collaborative programs are finding that non-profit organizations are able to receive valuable support while the university students are receiving valuable educational experiences (Bright & Bright, 2009.)
• Through the use of reflective writing the experience is transformed, “into genuine learning about individual values and goals and about larger social issues” (The Writing Studio at Colorado State University, n.d.)

Residency Project Learning Goals & Outcomes

GOAL 1: Demonstrate the ability to develop educational materials that facilitate volunteer skills related to client participation in areas of occupation, as well as health maintenance, health promotion and safety (B.5.18)
OUTCOMES:
• Program manual that educates students on the associated policies and procedures of the position
• Orientation agenda and activities to introduce student to the organization and associated partners
GOAL 2: Apply the principles of the teaching-learning process using educational methods to design program materials that are beneficial to incoming OTD students (B.5.19)
OUTCOMES:
• Written summary of student feedback regarding pilot use of materials
• Revised educational materials
GOAL 3: Demonstrate leadership skills in the ability to plan, develop, organize, and market the delivery of services to ensure that the program is successful among future OTD classes (B.7.5)
OUTCOMES:
• Written marketing plan that is clear to reaching incoming OTD students
• Written summary of potential funding and service resources needed to further develop this program

Program Objectives

1. The Student Resident will understand their role as a friend, and not caregiver, through reading the associated policies and procedures of the program
2. The Student Resident will intentionally engage in meaningful relationships with Homeplace residents in a manner/through capacity in order to better understand each resident as the unique individual they are
3. The Student Resident will plan and execute client-centered activities with Homeplace residents in order to enhance their knowledge and experience of client-centered care and understand the impact of each individual’s uniqueness
4. Through internships and reflection, the Student Resident will be ushered into a greater understanding of the ways we are shaped by our friendships with people living with disabilities.

Program Mission Statement:
To order to promote development and participation of residents at Homeplace, Inc. and personal and professional growth of OTD students, a live-in program for OTD students of the developed so that students and residents may form meaningful relationships and collectively participate in client-centered activities.


References

References from

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2013). Supporting community integration and participation for individuals with intellectual disabilities. (intellectual disability) have the capacity to participate in a range of community activities when provided the opportunity and appropriate supports.” The AOTA goes on to add that community integration should occur across the lifespan, from infancy through the aging process. The stage of life an individual is in will determine the types of routines and activities that occur.

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