



Educating Community Members on Cardiovascular Disease and Oral Health

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Visitation Homes

Parents & Children | Housing & Homeless

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Visitation Homes is a trauma informed permanent supportive housing program located in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. Both single mothers and single fathers are enrolled in the housing program. The head of household must be 18 and older and there must be children in the household. A member of the household must have a disability. Residents are matched to Visitation Homes through the Office of Homelessness Services' Coordinated Entry System. <https://cssphiladelphia.org/services/visitation-homes/>

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

The latest report from the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services reveals that around 18% of the homeless population in the city is living in unsuitable conditions without shelter. This has been a consistent trend since 2017, with the number hovering between 16% and 18%. The report also states that on any given night, there are approximately 4,489 individuals experiencing homelessness in the city, while there are 4,938 beds available in emergency shelters, safe havens, and transitional housing. At Visitation Homes, residents are given access to an individual apartment for them and their children. They also receive supportive case management services that assist with transitioning to independent living and self-sufficiency.

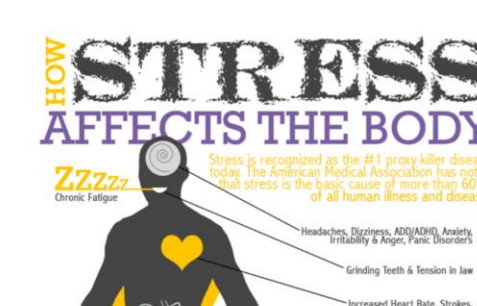
TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

Throughout the summer, I had the opportunity to lead workshops on cardiovascular and oral health, supervise some of the youth, and contribute to the grant-writing process for additional funding. Each aspect of my internship has been a rewarding and transformative journey, shaping my understanding of public health, community engagement, and the importance of collaboration.

Leading the workshops was fulfilling because it allowed me to empower the residents with valuable knowledge and resources, enabling them to take charge of their well-being and make informed decisions about their health. And contributing to the grant-writing process was a significant learning experience. Collaborating with others to secure additional funding for the organization illuminated the intricacies of resource allocation and the importance of strategic planning. It highlighted the potential for expanding the organization's reach and services, providing even more comprehensive support to the residents.

Stress Management

- What are some everyday stressors in your life? Chronic stressors?
- Chronic stress is when stress is constant and your body is in high gear off and on for days or weeks at a time
 - May lead to high blood pressure, which can increase risk for heart attack and stroke



ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ CHALLENGES/ JOYS

What's bad for your teeth?

- Sugary foods & drinks
- Tobacco products



Accomplishments:

- Supported staff in writing a grant application for additional funding
- Successfully presented workshops on oral and cardiovascular

Challenges:

- Mediating conflicts between the kids
- Engaging with the

Joys:

- Spending time with community members at the end-of-year Catholic services festival
- Attending the monthly Catholic Services luncheon

REFLECTION

My summer internship at Visitation Homes was an eye-opening and enriching journey, providing me with invaluable insights into a community that I had no previous exposure to. Working in this supportive housing organization allowed me to step into a world that I had only read about, and it opened my eyes to the challenges and resilience of the residents who call it home. Witnessing the dedication and commitment of the staff to the well-being of the residents has been truly inspiring, and it has deepened my appreciation for the importance of compassionate and empathetic care. The sense of camaraderie and mutual support among the residents was heartwarming, reminding me of the power of human connection in fostering positive change. It was evident that Visitation Homes was not merely a place to live but a home where residents felt safe, valued, and empowered to thrive.

Throughout the summer, I had the opportunity to see first-hand the challenges and rewards of working in social services. The complexities of the issues faced by the residents and staff were often daunting, yet the impact made through dedicated support and services was undeniably rewarding. It reinforced my belief in the importance of advocating for equitable opportunities and empowering individuals to overcome adversities in their lives. As I move forward in my academic and professional journey, I will continue to reflect on this experience. It has left a lasting impression on me, shaping how I plan to approach patient care and community advocacy. I am committed to applying the lessons learned from Visitation Homes in my future practice, understanding that every individual's story is unique and that true healthcare extends beyond physical treatment to encompass support, empathy, and empowerment.