

Alex Little

My Experience at Family Child Care Partnerships

Over the course of the fall semester, I completed volunteer work with Family Child Care Partnerships. Family Child Care Partnerships is a grant-based organization. This organization supports the state of Alabama's goal of raising the levels of education for childcare providers and children. Family Child Care Partnerships has fifteen mentors that assist child care providers in numerous ways. They help improve the quality of care and education provided to children in the childcare provider's home. The mentors go about increasing the education standards in these home-based programs by moving toward NAFCC accreditation level. Family Child Care Partnerships provides education about the best way to help children develop particularly in family child care. The organization provides educational meetings and conferences for the providers so that they can further their knowledge of how to best provide education for the children that attend their in-home education settings. The organization provides educational materials to assist in the best practices of educating young children at the home base of the organization on Auburn University's campus, this is where I spent time volunteering with Family Child Care Partnerships.

Before working with Family Child Care Partnerships, I was unaware of everything that must take place for an organization such as this to work successfully. Educational plans must be created to help child care providers teach the children that attend their programs. With these plans, materials must be made to help further the goal of the education plan for a specific topic. For example, when a lesson plan was created about the fall season, I helped cut out leaves of different colors, laminate them, and then cut

the leaves out of the laminate. The process of getting together materials and creating them can be extremely time consuming. Another task that I helped with was putting materials together to send out to the providers via mail. This requires going through lists of items each provider will need to help further the education for the children they are teaching. The items providers typically need are the materials for lesson plans, books, markers, crayons, and first aid kits. In addition to creating items for lesson plans and sending boxes with supplies, I also had to do typical office work.

On the days when I put together boxes of supplies for the providers, I would have to create labels with the providers' addresses. This required finding their addresses in a database and then creating a Word document to put the addresses in and to be printed off on labelling paper. I also went through Excel files and made sure that the items the providers received were marked off so extra items were not ordered and dispersed. Some days I would be in charge of sorting mail and placing the mail in appropriate mailboxes in the office. On some days I would make copies of lesson plans, surveys for the providers to complete, and flyers about meetings or conferences. Other days, I would enter information from paper surveys into a database so all the information would be available in one place. The variety of tasks completed through working with Family Child Care Partnerships taught me about the backbone of organizations to run successfully and how I can better complete a job as a teacher in the future.

In the future, I want to be an Early Childhood teacher. Through my experience at Family Child Care Partnerships, I learned that creating lesson plans and the materials needed takes a large quantity of time. I also learned that being well oriented with

Microsoft Office will assist in a variety of ways. I learned that there are a multitude of things one must be aware of in order to educate children.