

VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

AmeriCorps VISTA: Brian Grace	
Member ID: 1338313	Effective Dates: 11/14/2016 - 11/13/2017
Title: CCS Refugee Youth VISTA	
Sponsoring Organization: Catholic Charities USA Project Name: CCUSA New Americans Project Number: 15VSANJ007 Project Period: 09/06/2015 - 05/27/2017	
Site Name (if applicable): Catholic Community Services of Utah	
Focus Area(s) Primary: Capacity Building Secondary: Education	

VISTA Assignment Objectives and Member Activities

Goal of the Project: Increase opportunities for quality early learning opportunities for refugee children by finding new community partners, streamlining enrollment processes, etc. which leads to higher rates of Kindergarten readiness (target goal of 50% of 0-5 year old refugee youth participating in programming). Track school attendance, quarter grades, and English Level gains for refugee youth participating in CCS Youth Programming. Tracking progress allows for needs-based intervention for greater success rates. Early Learning, K-12 School Success, School Readiness, and College Access. Our ultimate goal is that all refugee youth graduate from high school and enroll in higher education. Activities will be focused on school navigation/readiness, academic performance

Objective of the Assignment (*Period of Performance: Ongoing*)

Academic Performance and College Success: Support the educational and behavioral outcomes of refugee students. Strategies will include evidence-based practices such as tutoring, mentoring, after school programming, and service-learning. Increase awareness of tutoring resources in the community, assist with capacity building or outreach for CCS's Refugee Youth Mentor Program Specialist, and increase enrollment for existing after school programming. Develop systems and protocols for follow up/intervention that will address barriers that may be impeding progress.

Member Activity: Step 1: Develop strategic plan for navigator model, in coordination with Youth Program Coordinator. Step 2: Research evidence-based strategies, curriculum, and evaluation tools; adapt to meet local needs. Step 3: Create program structures and step-by-step procedures and protocols for each strategy, based on strategic plan. Step 4: Collaborate with community partners to align services and create procedures and protocols to provide mentoring, tutoring, counseling, and enrichment programming. Include communication strategies between partners to track student progress and provide updates. Step 5: Develop a system to streamline school meeting coordination and follow up protocols between school liaisons, school counselors, youth, and parents. The focus would be for students struggling with behavior or attendance issues as well as understanding the roles and responsibilities of school staff and teachers, refugee organizations, family and youth and other partnering agencies.

Objective of the Assignment (*Period of Performance: Ongoing*)

Activity 2: Evaluation and Assessment: Ensure that all strategies and interventions are data-driven, which includes monitoring and tracking student progress on an on-going basis through the CCS database system, then adjusting programming as necessary to ensure results and outcomes are met.

Member Activity: Step 1: Develop evaluations tools based on evidence-based research. Step 2: Create/revise tracking procedures to track progress of individual students as well as overall numbers. Step 3: Work closely with Youth Program Coordinator, Early Childhood Navigator, school district staff, and caseworkers to track school enrollments, FERPA forms, and academic performance for all refugee youth, among other youth related services. Step 4: Complete data entry, tracking, and reporting on a monthly basis.

Objective of the Assignment (*Period of Performance: Ongoing*)

Activity 3: Early Learning Outreach: Develop a comprehensive outreach strategy to educate refugee families about the importance of early childhood education. Work closely with CCS Early Childhood Navigator. This strategy will communicate the benefits of high-quality early learning programs to refugee families, and enroll refugee children in high-quality preschool programs. Through these connection points, the VISTA will create and share information with Early Childhood Navigator about early childhood education in a culturally relevant and appropriate way. This individual will coordinate workshops and outreach events to convene families who are interested in learning more about early childhood education.

Member Activity: Step 1: Identify refugee families with children, ages 0-5 who are being served by CCS. Step 2: Coordinate outreach efforts for CCS Early Childhood Navigator through workshops and other venues that will provide information for families about the importance of early childhood education and the benefits of attending a high-quality early learning program. Step 3: Coordinate tours of preschool sites by creating relationships with schools or community centers for families to increase their familiarity and comfort with the classroom, teachers and overall program. Step 4: Create informational materials for Early Childhood Navigator about the importance of early childhood education and the benefits of Preschool Programs. Step 5: Assist Youth Coordinator and Early Childhood Navigator with enrollments, to include, providing access to necessary paperwork, answering enrollment questions, helping return enrollment paperwork to Preschool Offices and other activities, as necessary. Step 6: Track and compile data to gauge the effectiveness of this outreach strategy. This individual will track and store the data. Data will include, but is not limited to, the following: •Number of refugee families with children under the age of five years old •Number of families who attend the outreach efforts •Number of families who attend the classroom visits •Country of origin of refugee families supported through this strategy •Language(s) spoken of refugee families supported through this strategy •Number of outreach events hosted •Number of classroom visits conducted •Number of families reached

Objective of the Assignment (*Period of Performance: Ongoing (as needed)*)

Activity 3: Resource Development: Build capacity for youth programming in order to sustain program activities and enable expansion of services in the future. Raise the profile of youth program activities through newsletters, building additional donor and community partners, and helping to find volunteers or mentors for the youth programs.

Member Activity: Step 1: Write and/or revise donation letters to seek in-kind and monetary donations to support youth programming including lesson materials, prizes, food/supplies for community events, gathering space and other equipment/supplies necessary to support the success of refugee youth. Step 2: Assist in coordinating volunteers for refugee youth, have outreach events to find potential volunteers.