

Forging International Bonds, Clinically

A Service Learning Initiative in St. Lucia, West Indies

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Miss St. Lucia!



Vocabulary Building...

CSLP – Caribbean Service Learning Project

SLP – Speech-Language Pathologist (U.S. term)

SLT – Speech Language Therapist (U.K. term)

CDGC – Child Development and Guidance
Centre

CSLP Vision

To create a lasting and mutually beneficial service learning experience between the people of the Caribbean region of all abilities and students of speech-language therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

CSLP Mission

To create lasting therapeutic connections between students and faculty of speech-language therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy with the Caribbean communities in which they are immersed through service learning experiences.

Definition of Service Learning

Furco, 1996

- Equally benefits provider and recipient of the service.
- Equal focus on the service being provided and the learning outcomes set.
- Provided within an academic context.
- Promotes critical thinking / problem-solving.
- Reflection – debriefing meetings, 6-word memoirs
- Reciprocity
- Sense of social responsibility.

Trinidad and Tobago versus St. Lucia



SLP services in St. Lucia

- First service provided in 1997, by a British SLT out of the Dunnottar School, for 2 years.
- After 1999, SLT services offered at summer camp which lasted 3 weeks.
- Currently, SLTs are recruited, mainly from the UK to work at CDGC.
- Serve on 3 month volunteer contracts
- Week of Feb 16th – 20th, 2015 – 167 on treatment of some kind; 60+ pending initial evaluation

Why St. Lucia?

- Good review from U.S. State Department!
- Child Development and Guidance Centre
- No SLPs on island
- Large need!!!
- Well-tracked Special Education System
- Special Schools that are welcoming!

CSLP January 2015

- January 12th – 16th, 2015
- Pre-service meeting via Skype – Dec. 2014
- The University of the West Indies (St. Augustine) and Mercy College (New York)
- 6 students – 4 (Mercy); 2 (UWI-STA)
- 4 faculty members – 2 (Mercy); 2 (UWI-STA)
- 4 days of experiences

The CSLP Posse!



St. Lucia Itinerary

- Three days was spent at the two school special needs schools located in the capital, Castries:
 - 1. Lady Gordon Opportunity Centre
 - 2. Dunnottar School
- One day was spent at a joint presentation with the special needs schools located in the southern part of the island:
 - Vieux Fort and Soufriere Special Education Centre

Dunnottar

- An NGO that is run by the St. Lucia Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (SLADD).
- School began in 1973; Vocational Centre opened in 1981.



Lady Gordon Opportunity Centre

- Began, with 45 students, as a school for the hearing impaired.
- Currently educates over 100 students with varying abilities and diagnoses.



Composition of the Schools

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Down Syndrome
- Cerebral Palsy
- ADHD
- Cleft palate repair
- Hearing Impaired
- Vision Impaired
- Learning disabilities

Special Needs School in the Capital

Lady Gordon Opportunity Centre

- Days 1 and 2- observation
- Day 3- Inclusion and demonstrating how to elicit language in everyday lessons

Dunnottar

- Day 1- Observation
- Days 2 and 3- Inclusion and demonstrations

Special Needs School Visit

Soufreire / Vieux Fort

Teacher training/ workshop discussing:

- Eliciting language
- Articulation disorders
- Behaviors affecting language
- Alternative communication
- Feeding
- Individual child goals
- Literacy

Visit to Soufriere/Vieux Fort



CSLP 2016

- Compile and Report data from 2015
- 3 days at Vieux Fort and Soufriere; 1 day teacher training in Castries
- Mercy College, UWI-STA , +1
- Student/faculty ratio – 1:2
- Pre- and Post-Questionnaire about service learning.

6-word Memoirs...

“You bored? So is the child!”

“Instead, catch them being good.”

“Teach me about you. I’ll learn.”

“Do not remove who they know.”

“Lo-tech solutions for serious minded teachers.”

“*Just now* means wait a minute!”

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 - Vieux Fort Special School