NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

DENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

DEN 2413 - Intro to Public Health

SELF – REFLECTION

FLUORIDE VARNISH APPLICATION PROGRAM

Student: Bushra Meraj

Section: Thurs AM

Dates of Visits: 4/11 and 4/18/19

Name of the Head Start Center: Family Headstart

Address: 3017 Glenwood Rd Brooklyn

1. How did you apply the public health didactic information into this community health

program?

I knew that children from low class families often lack a dental home. This is because the parents are either immigrants who don’t have dental insurance or they lack education so they don’t realize the need for a dentist. As a result, many such children do not get dental cleanings or fluoride applications. Realizing this, I knew many of the children would not know what fluoride was or what it would taste like. This is why before applying fluoride, I told the children it would taste funny but it would make their teeth strong. I also kept a cup nearby in case they wanted to spit it out, they could.

2. What stage(s) are you in this community health program (APIE)?

I believe we already did the assessment and planning stage of the program at school when we were deciding which center to go to, which screening tools to bring and which varnish to apply. At the center, we did the implementation stage and actually interacted with the kids, screened their teeth and gums and applied the varnish. Currently, we are in the evaluation phase of the program as we are deciding how well the treatment went, how the patients and parents took the treatment and if it was an overall success.

3. What information you obtained from DEN 2300 / DEN 2400 seminars did you

incorporate into this community health program?

From Den 2400, I learned that some children have dental anxiety and are afraid of the dentist, especially when they are not with their parents. I tried to avoid scaring the children from the dentist by keeping my mask and gloves aside and by just befriending the children first. Once they became familiar with me, I then put on the mask to apply fluoride, while still talking and singing to them.

4. Please describe a positive experience you gained from this activity?

I learned how to talk to kids and be more open with them. When they were not opening their mouth so I could check their teeth, I had to joke around with them and say let’s see if you have teeth like a lions can you roar for me. I also tickled them and tried to make them comfortable before the varnish application. Now I feel more confident in approaching and playing with kids.

5. Was there any negative experience you encountered from this activity?

The only negative experience I had was there was not enough kids to work on. Some of us only got to apply varnish to one child and we would have gained more from the experience if there were more children to work on. Regardless of this, we helped each other, even when one of us was acting as recorder, we both looked into the child’s mouth to spot carious lesions and filled teeth. Therefore we were able to get some kind of experience examining kids.

6. Will you consider working in a public health setting as a dental hygienist?

I have always wanted to work with kids and now knowing that there are some children that are deprived of basic dental services such as fluoride application and dental checkup, I will be happy to assist them in a public health setting. I would like to do screenings where I can refer children for dental services if they have caries. This program made me realize volunteering even a little bit of time can make a positive improvement in someone's oral health, so I will be happy to do it.

al: 2/2017