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Leadership Academy Project

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Learning to Love Reading!

My project is to increase presence of children in the Assisted Living Community by creating opportunity for local elementary students to read to our residents. My goal for this project was to connect our seniors with young children. By giving the readers opportunity to read aloud at their own pace without pressure they will gain confidence and skill. Our residents will feel useful and needed. They will also benefit from the energy of intergenerational contact.

The benefits to our community are numerous. Tangible are related to public relations by inviting children into the community for reading activities; and the intangible caused by inviting children into the community who have difficulties reading and socialization with the residents.

In order to complete this project I needed several people to serve on this team, social activities, volunteers, resident services coordinator's, and most importantly residents who were willing to be read to by the elementary students, During the planning stages of the project I communicated with staff via email and in-person communication. The school principal, I thought would be easiest to communicate via phone. He had a very busy schedule and preferred to meet via email message.

The challenges I faced were about communication. Todd Baughman is the principal of the elementary school here Dallas. He and I talked several times to establish communication. We were not able to quite figure out a good time. Or come up with a short list of books that would be of interested to boys and girls. We currently have to set a date to meet and pick out a book to share along with us to buy the with the schools permission. We have arranged for a generous grant from Polk County Community foundation to buy the books.

The leadership behaviors I have identified as needed room for improvement are: Inspiring a shared vision, challenging the processes, and enabling others to act. I have always been on the quiet side and don't speak up when I should. Working on this project made me realize how important it is to let people share their ideas and plans for the patients. Inspiring a shared vision means how important it is to include team members in the planning and evaluation of how successful a project turns out. With this project giving the residents a voice in choosing a book to read will make the vision everyone's.

