



American Christian Academy

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Location // Ibadan, Nigeria

My global independent study project took place at an international school in Ibadan, Nigeria known as American Christian Academy (ACA) that serves preschool through high school students.

Facts //

- Population: 201.9 million
- Language: primarily English and specific tribal languages including Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, & Fula
- Common problems include: government corruption, disease, unclean water, & terrorism

Strategies for Positive Discipline //

- *Child involvement*- asking the child for input on what is the best next step.
- *Natural consequences*- allowing the child to learn from his or her own actions without involvement
- *Logical consequences*- stepping in to create an immediate consequence that is appropriate to the situation and action, being firm and calm
- *Withholding privileges*- explaining to the child that without cooperation, they will have to give up something they like and want
- *Taking a break*- allowing time for both the child and caretaker to reflect on the situation



Project Information //

I provided research to the American Christian Academy for the value behind a non-corporal punishment school policy using a growing culturally competent lens. By researching discipline techniques to use in schools, the staff of ACA has evidence-based knowledge to speak to what the school chooses to do and why; this promotes an understanding between the school body and the families. I will also serve the students and teachers by providing additional support in the classrooms and grow my own understanding of what schools look like in communities vastly different from what I have previously experienced.

Agency Partner //

The diverse school has a mission to “provide a quality education by maintaining high moral and academic standards worthy of exemplary world citizens” (American Christian Academy, 2018). By supporting the students and families with a kind and caring community, ACA’s goal is to inspire every individual to achieve their optimal potential.

Outcomes //

- Extended research on positive discipline techniques in schools and home
- Understanding the differences of the impact of trauma across different cultures
- Greater awareness of the importance of mental health professionals in school systems
- Understanding the importance of trauma informed practices and care in schools to best support the student body
- Appreciation for the research, resources, and education of mental health across developed countries and greater hopes to advance this awareness in developing communities

Skills Utilized & Developed //

- Engaged in practice-informed research and research-informed practice by presenting to the staff and families.
- Growth in relationships truly comes from collaboration, rather than simply teaching! It’s important to recognize your stance as a visitor.
- Engagement in diversity and a culture so different from my own, using adaptability skills in the uncomfortable situations.

Classroom Connections //

- SW 605: my understanding of the impact of trauma from development and infancy grew tremendously through this course
- SW 625: this course helped me understand how trauma carries into educational settings and it is in this place that trauma interventions can be so beneficial for the success of students
- SW 612: This course grew my understanding of the impact and specifications of mental health conditions in children

Lessons Learned //

- The stories heard from the people I met are the pieces of my experience that I will carry with me forever. It’s so important to take time to listen, to begin to understand a life so beautiful and different.
- As a school social worker, it was so valuable to recognize the resources that we *do* have and never take them for granted. There are communities all around the world who would be so thankful to have an ounce of the research, books, and education.
- The importance of understanding mental health across ages is vital for flourishing support to students across school systems!



Career Connections //

By growing my international knowledge and experiences, my understanding of schools and positive supports multiplied. This experience equipped me to be a school social worker who can be trusted and stands for human rights. My individual confidence as a school social worker grew immensely and encouraged me to continue finding the best practice for every student.

Advice //

- The individuals you meet are the experts on the community in which you’re visiting. Never lose sight of the heart of who people are!
- Take time to step outside of what comfortability looks like to experience something new. That “something new” may be one of your favorite experiences!

Acknowledgments //

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