If you are associated with an agency or plan to implement an intervention program (e.g. parenting program), want to conduct a small research project using primary data collections methods (e.g. a pilot study) or use an existing dataset or secondary data, you will find these guidelines helpful.

For this professional project you will include the following components

**Introduction (WHY IS THIS TOPIC IMPORTANT TO STUDY)**

**Literature Review (WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THIS TOPIC)**

When summarizing research relevant to your topic / program:

a. Be sure to give enough information about the study to demonstrate your understanding of the research and its relevancy for inclusion in your discussion

b. Use sub-headings for different areas / topics of research that you include in your “Research” section

**Theory**

After identifying the theory you will discuss:

a. An overview of the theoretical framework

b. Specifically identify the major tenets / concepts central to the particular theory

c. Include a section of how the major tenets / concepts are relevant to your particular topic/program

Be sure to use original sources whenever possible. This means citing the theorist himself or herself (e.g., Piaget) and not a textbook.

Developing the philosophy of your program: Remember to relate specific ideas of your program to some of those in the theories previously cited. Describe how the theories will provide a foundation for your study.

**Methods (HOW DID YOU CONDUCT THE STUDY)**

Remember the steps in the research process . . .

a. Statement of purpose

b. Research Question(s)

c. Method
   * Sample (ex. characteristics, criteria for selection inclusion, etc.)
   * procedure
   * instrumentation
   * research design
Results (WHAT DID YOU FIND IN YOUR STUDY?)
   a. Explain the findings of your study that you have collected using various tools (e.g. survey, interview or other measures)

Discussion (APPLICATION AND IMPLICATION)
   a. Explain your findings
      i. Cite previous research and theory used to support or refute your findings
      ii. Explain how your study informs the field of study (Implication)

on the side of giving too much information rather than not enough! However, you also want to stay focused. Don’t try to incorporate too many different components into your program! Stick to just a few specific and measure objectives.

Remember that the application and research sections should parallel each other. The research project should be designed to measure the effectiveness of your program (or at least one component of the program).

Organization/Format
   1. Keep in mind basic elements of good writing – include an introductory paragraph and a conclusion.

   2. Follow APA guidelines throughout the paper. Your APA manual is a great resource for all aspects of writing including headings, grammar, and word choice.