

# Child care observation

[Family](#), [Children](#)



I observed children at ABC Child Development Center in the 3 year old classroom on March 1, 2010 from 8am until 11am. The classroom had a very diverse composition in the classroom, Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Native American, and Asian (Vietnamese). In addition to diversity the ABC child development focus on maintaining a child centered environment that allows children to learn at their own pace. The classroom had 2 teachers and 24 children in attendance during the observation. The classroom has blue walls and displays of the children's artwork around the room for Saint Patrick's Day and also spring.

The classroom had 8 centers for learning and activities. The centers were arranged at the children's eye level and lower to ensure easy access. The centers included art, science and sensory, music, blocks, dramatic play area, library, quiet zone, and a safe place center. The class started with breakfast which included, toast, bacon, fruit, and milk. During breakfast all of the children were allowed to pour their own milk and serve themselves one scoop of fruit. As the children were eating they talked among themselves about how their mommy would come back at the end of the day.

The girls began arguing about whose mother would return, they shouted at one another, " No my mommy is coming back! " the other child replied, " No my mommy is coming back not yours! " The teacher ended the argument, but as the debate about which mother would return ended, the boys began using pretend guns with their toast. Three of the boys had chewed their toast into the shape of guns and again the teacher had to redirect the boys because the child care center does not allow children participate in any violent activities.

As the teacher redirected the boys, they all stated, “ we are not making pow pows”. After breakfast the children began their morning hygiene routine of going to the restroom, washing hands, and brushing teeth. The boys went to the restroom first and finished within a few minutes. The girls took longer in the restroom than the boys, because many of the girls were talking to one another while they were in the restroom. While the girls were in the restroom many of them were talking about their dogs. One girl stated she was going to bring her dog “ Peetie Joe” to her ABC school for show and share.

Another student said,“ Oooh ma ma ma, you can’t bring Peetie Joe to my ABC school and I am going to tell”. As hygiene time ended the class sat around a rectangle carpet to begin circle time. Circle time lasted 20 minutes and consisted of 2 songs (Ram Sam Sam and 5 Little Monkey’s), a flannel board story (Brown Bear), and pretend play (hunters in the forest). After the circle time children were allowed to choose a center activity. Many of the children went to the dramatic play area that included a kitchen, a dress up area, and a construction table.

The kitchen had a sink, refrigerator, stove, table, and many plastic foods. Five children were in the kitchen making lunch for the day. One of the students took a baby to the kitchen table and the students began telling the baby to make a happy plate so she can have treasure box. One of the students began to pat the baby on the head as he told the baby doll, “ Eat all your food so you can be strong, okay. ” The children in the dress up area were wearing fireman uniforms that consisted of red fire hats, jackets, and pants. The girls and boys in the area pretended to stop a fire.

The children made pretend fire hoses with their hands and sprayed the walls which were the buildings that were on fire. The remainder of the children went to the art area that consisted on two cafeteria style tables and benches that would seat 30 children. One table had green paint, gold sequins, and clovers. The children were supposed to paint the clovers greens and place sequins on the clovers. All of the children at the table completed their projects very quickly, one student started painting on another student's face which angered the student.

Another student remained at the table longer because he appeared to be extremely focused on the placement of the sequins. After he completed his project he showed the teachers. He placed all of the gold sequins around the edges of the clovers which formed into a border. He placed sequins in the middle of the clover that also formed a circle. Many of the children left the paint to make shapes with the play dough, but 3 students went to the library area to read books. Two of the girls took babies with them and read stories to their babies while the boy student read alone to himself various books for about 45 minutes.

The girls would change seats and move the dolls around as well as change books, but the little boy seated in the library was not distracted by any of their activities. The class observed was in Piaget's Per-operational Stage of Development. Preoperational stage begins at age 2 and lasts until age 7. During this stage children apply new knowledge of language, use symbols to represent objects, and also personifies objects, and change in physical appearance. During the observation the children appeared to have reached the developmental milestones for a 3 year old.

Physically many of the children were about 39 to 46 inches in height (Papalia, Olds, Feldman 2007 page 251). Most of the children in the class appeared to have lost their “ baby fat” (Venice Kichura 2009) because they were slender in appearance, but two of the girls in the class were much taller than 46 inches. The two girls appeared to be 50 to 55 inches in height (the girls appeared to be the size of a 6 year old, but they were slender, not obese). Physiologically the children did not appear to have any developmental delays, most the children were able to use large and fine motor skills without any difficulty.

The children could mold the play dough into various shapes, use scissors, and glue. During the pretend play the children were able to complete the various range of movements that included squatting low on the ground to pull their bow and arrows and jumping to miss the frogs. Handedness appeared to be prevalent in most of the children during the observation. Most of the children were using their right hands during the art, but here was one student that used her left hand during the painting of the clovers. Many of the children displayed the cognitive characteristics of a 3 year old.

During the circle time, the children sang the song Ram Sam Sam. The song allowed the children to improve their memory development through the repetitive language used in Ram Sam Sam through encoding. Encoding is the process by which information is prepared for long-term storage (Papalia, Olds, Feldman 2007 pg 278). The students were able to recall the song Ram Sam Sam from memory to sing during circle time. Ram Sam Sam involved memory, but it also utilized cross lateral movements that help develop each hemisphere of the brain and corpus callosum (Schiller 1999).

There were many activities that the children participated in that illustrated Piaget's Preoperational Stage of Development and also Lev Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development that children learn best through their interactions with culture. When the three students went to the library two of the students engaged in pretend play as they read stories to their dolls. The third student engaged in parallel play, although there were other students around him playing, he focused on the book he was reading only as if he was the only one in the room.

His parallel play could also be seen as a form of egocentrism because he recognized his environment through only his point of view as he read. While the children were in the dramatic play area a child explained to the teacher that one of his peers built a fire station. The student told the teacher, "XYZ person built a firehouse." When the teacher corrected the student by using the word built, the student corrected the teacher, "No! He built a fire station." The statement could also be considered a form of egocentrism, but also an example of Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" (ZPD).

ZPD is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help (Papalia, Olds, Feldman 2007 pg 283). In addition to the views of Vygotsky and Piaget, Erik Erickson also had the theory "Initiative versus Guilt" that focused on the need to deal with conflicting feelings (Papalia, Olds, Feldman 2007 pg 300). For example, during breakfast 3 students made guns with their toast, but there was a fourth student that appeared to be interested in making a gun also with their toast.

The student bit his toast almost into the shape of the gun, but looked at the teacher and discontinued forming the toast into a gun. During the

observation the children did not make statements about gender roles, but the girls were in the kitchen and played with the dolls, while the boys were the only ones playing in the fireman's clothes. The girls nurtured the baby dolls while the boys made guns with their toast. During the observation the girls appeared to understand self regulation and control, while the boys appeared to be egocentric in their actions even when dealing with the rules.

The boys knew the rules regarding guns, but made the deliberate choice to make a gun with their toast. Throughout the observation most of the children demonstrated prosocial behavior, they interacted well with their peers and only required minimal redirection. Only one of the students appeared to be overtly aggressive. Whenever she was redirected she would use profanity at peers or the teachers. During one redirection she slumped to the floor, took off her shoes, and proceeded through her shoes at the teacher.

Overall throughout the observation the children appeared to have self confidence and trust in their caregivers. The class did not appear to be afraid to play within the class. The children appeared to enjoy the activities planned and some of them repeated the routines during their time in the various learning centers. I enjoyed early childhood or the preoperational stage of development, but had a large amount of changes in adolescence that had lasting effects into adulthood. Physically I was smaller than most of my peers (4'11 in height) and less attractive in appearance.

I weighed about 85 pounds in high during adolescence, had vision problems, and scoliosis. While some cultures are concerned with weight loss, my culture (race) during adolescence embraced weight, so I felt like an outcast at times within my own race. Despite being smaller than my peers I was very

athletic. I play volleyball, basketball, ran cross county, and was a majorette in the band. I had very advance cognitive skills for my age. Myfamilyencouraged me to try anything at least once so attempted to learn at any opportunity provided to me.

I studied Spanish, German, and Vietnamese in high school. I was enrolled in Advanced Placement courses and made honor roll throughout high school. I participated in many non-sport extracurricular activities such as teen hotline, teensuicideprevention, church, and debate club. From a psychosocial aspect I followed the rules and had many friends. I was voted most out going in high school. I had received an award from the City of Oklahoma for being the youth advocate of the year. I lobbied the City and State to re-open community centers to help curtail gangviolence.

I went as far as posting daily notes on the Councilman's cars since I worked for the police department and we all shared the same parking lot I understood rules, laws, and arespectfor authority. I also understood possible consequences for failing to follow the rules. In spite of following rules and having great interactions with peers, I lacked self esteem. Although I was encouraged to try many things, I never had self confidence. Like many adolescent girls I thought that boys would be able to provide me with the boost of self confidence that I desired.

From adolescence until about age 33 I spent time focusing on maintaining relationship with the opposite sex instead of my own personal growth. My mantra was " All I want is a good boyfriend". I gave up attending Georgetown, I turned down many great employment opportunities, and even remained in an unhealthy relationship because I thought my boyfriend would



give me the self confidence that I was missing. I believe that if more self confidence was instilled in me during adolescent and my family would have explained how relationships genuinely work I would have developed the appropriate level of self confidence.

## **Works Cited**

1. Diane E. Papalia, Sally Wendkos Olds, Ruth Duskin Feldman. " A Child's World; Infancy Thorough Adolescence Eleventh Edition". Boston, McGraw Hill, 2007
2. Pam Schiller. " Start smart! : building brain power in the early years. " New York, Gryphon House Publication, 1999
3. Venice Kichura. " Physical Development of Preschoolers. " Ehow. com March 2009, Date accessed March 17, 2010.
4. [http://www.ehow.com/about\\_5218904\\_physical-development-preschoolers.html](http://www.ehow.com/about_5218904_physical-development-preschoolers.html)