

Parent-child interaction observation



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In the first five years of a child's life is when the most complex development occurs. Children develop cognitively as their brain captures information and they learn to process the information. Children also develop socially and emotionally as they interact, play, and live with others (i. e. friends, family or teachers). Cognitive, social and emotional development through play is essential for a child's growth as well. The development of a child differs from person to person, depending on their temperament, learning style, and their parents parenting style.

In my observation, I observed a little girl approximately five years of age playing at our local park with her mother. Most children this age begin to develop superior individuality, self-control, and creativity. She was a vibrant and lively little girl. This little girl played with both boys and girls at the park. She seemed to be able to talk with anyone fluently, and not afraid of many things. According to Lev Vygotsky, language is the most important tool for social development.

As she ran around with her friends pretending they were princess I could tell she was wary of how far she could or couldn't go. It seemed like she was looking for her mother's approval of how far she could run off and play. This reminded me of Erikson's theory initiative versus guilt. This theory occurs in children ages three to about six. If caregivers try to create too many strict boundaries around what children can do and force too much responsibility on kids, children will feel extreme guilt for their inability to complete tasks perfectly (Oswalt, 2008).

The parenting style the mother had was an authoritative style. Authoritative parents in the parenting-styles framework, the best possible child-rearing style, in which parents rank high on both nurturance and discipline, providing both love and clear family rules (Belsky, 2010). For example, when they first got to the park the mother set a time for when they will be going home. The little girl asked why did she pick that time and if they could stay longer. The mother replied with “nope that is the time we are leaving” and sure enough they left at that specific time.

So, while the child was playing with her friends, the mother seemed to praise the child for helping the other kids, and affirm that she was playing nicely with others. The mother seemed to be very clear on what was good and acceptable behavior, and monitored her daughter carefully while playing at the park. All this confirmed her parenting style to be of an authoritative style. One can conclude that, the child I observed was a very well-mannered and polite girl.

She seemed to be developing cognitively, socially, and emotionally on target for a child at her age. By her mother’s parenting style towards the girl seems to have a positive effect on her because I did not once see the girl throw a fit or argue with her mother. I also did not hear the mother have to raise her voice or tell her child more than once to do something she asked of her. It also appeared as if the girl had reached her milestones in learning, playing, speaking, and the way she acted.