

Observation performed at atascadero lake park



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This paper will include observations of interactions between other children that appeared to be in his respective age group as well as children of the opposite sex and in some cases younger and older. Through the use of Piaget's theory of child development and other resources I will compare the child's development as compared to other children in his age range, as well as ascertaining and conveying the parenting style that I observed during this time.

Observation of a 3 Year Old Boy Upon arriving at the Decorator Lake Park I positioned myself at a bench close to the play area. This area included many of the usual types of equipment that one would expect to see at a park that is frequented by young children. Clearly most of the play equipment was of modern construction and design and it being a beautiful sunny day, the park was full of children of various ages and stages of development.

The child I observed primarily was a male approximately three to four years of age and was very active during the time he was at play. He appeared to be at a normal state of development upon my initial observation and this point was only confirmed as I continued to watch children between the ages of three and four typically walk more rhythmically and are able to easily go from a walk to a run, they jump and are more able to throw and catch objects much more effectively, essentially their gross motor skills advance (Beer).

Children in this age range also exhibit improvement with their fine motor skills that allow them to use zippers and eating utensils much more effectively (Beer). The young boy I was observing displayed an excellent ability to climb and run, his balance and depth perception seemed to be very

appropriate for this age range. There were many other children of various different ages and sexes at the park as well as the child that I was observing. He seemed especially adept at interacting with many of the other children.

Although there were many different toys and pieces of equipment to play on I also observed several of the children pretending that they were on a ship at sea or performing in the circus, according to Piaget this is part of the preoperational stage which represents a stage of development that usually occurs between the ages of two and seven (Piaget, 1951). One of the most prominent attributes of this stage is the extraordinary increase in representational, or symbolic, activity (Piaget, 1951). Piaget felt that make-believe play was an excellent way for children to strengthen newly acquired representational schemes (1951).

The child that I was observing seemed to have excellent manual dexterity, he was able to swing from bar to bar on the Jungle gym with ease. He was able to climb up and down the various ladders and chain ropes, crawl through the many openings of the mock tree house that had been provided by the designers of this particular park. One of the longest periods of time he spent on one task was during his time in the sand box. He focused a great deal on building what appeared to be a pyramid or some sort of castle.

The focus that he exhibited on the end result, I found to be remarkable, however once he had made the decision that it met his expectations he made it a point to not only destroy what he had been painstakingly working on for the better part of forty minutes he also smoothed over the area that he had been working, almost seeming to be concerned that there was no

visible evidence remaining. There was a great deal of interaction between the young man and his peers he seemed to have no issue with the sex of the other child, however I did observe at one point that he was holding the hand of a girl who appeared to be around the same GE as he.

He appeared to be attempting to persuade her to join him on the swings. She however was not interested in that particular activity. She actually looked as if she wanted to leave the sandy area of the playground and move onto the grass which would have involved navigating a small step up. When the girl attempted to step up she tripped, causing the boy made a valiant attempt to stop her from falling, to no avail. He was however successful in aiding her to stand back up and helped to brush off the sand. I will say from that point forward the girl was not as eager to hold his hand and as she clearly felt that was what had caused her to fall.

After observing this boy for some time it became clear that he was there with two other children. One a male that was younger than he and the other a female that looked to be approximately four to five years old. In addition after hearing some discussion I was able to ascertain that these children were there with the boy's mother and grandmother. Although I did not witness any direct disciplinary steps taken by either of the adult authority figures it was clear that both of the adults were very engaged in what the children were doing.

However they allowed the children to play on the various types of equipment and really only became involved with specific instructions if it seemed that any of the children were considering leaving the immediate play area. I

really felt that the adults were allowing the children to explore and engage in whatever activity they so choose provided it was not an activity that could potential cause harm. In this particular case on this particular day the parental figure was clearly exhibiting the authoritative method of child rearing.

According to Beer the authoritative child rearing style is the most successful approach that involves high acceptance and involvement, which includes adaptive control techniques and appropriate autonomy granting (up. 260-261). Although I had only a few opportunities to hear conversations between the adult figure and the child I was serving It was clear

Tanatcommunicationwas Tree Tooling In ten sense Tanat when the boy expressed what he wanted to do the parent was very responsive to the idea.

The youngest of the three children in this group began to have some sort of issue with being unable to navigate the low hanging swing bridge.

Subsequently he began to cry which then turned into a fully fledged protest.

The boy that I was observing immediately came to his younger peer's assistance. He was able to hold onto the younger child allowing him to make it across and back. This show of empathy which becomes an important part of proboscis and altruistic behavior, according to Beer empathy becomes more common in earlychildhoodand typically preschoolers rely more on words to communicate empathic feelings. (p. 60). In this particular case it was clear that the older boy was in fact talking the younger child through the necessary steps in order to successfully traverse this bridge. This boy seemed especially adept with social interaction and seemed able to move room situation to situation with ease and was comfortable engaging with

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children of different sexes, ages and points in development. In some instances he seemed to almost make a point to become involved with all of the groups of children. Additionally he appeared to make a point to try to include some other children that were more focused on solitary activities.

This I found to be almost deliberate, it seemed that not only was he concerned that a few of the children were playing alone, he persisted in his invitation to join the other children even when the "lone wolf" expressed no or very little desire to participate in any group activity. Comparing the child that I was observing to several of the other children that appeared to be in his approximate age range his development seemed to be at least comparable and in some cases further along than the others.

With regards to his ability to communicate with the others as well as his ability to move from group to group with a great deal of ease he exhibited an excellent ability to vacillate between appropriate energy levels and vocal volume that would be appropriate to the circumstances to which he was about to enter. This displayed to me that the child was experienced with many different types of play or social situations and was able to differentiate each situation without disrupting the other children's focus.

This was in clear contrast to several of the other children of the same approximate age that clearly felt it was necessary to make a grand entrance. The amount of time that I spent observing this child's adeptness to navigate through a fairly complicated social playing field displayed how impressive this ability truly was. During the final thirty minutes of my time at the park I

really tried to focus on pavement and physical acuity. The boy tended to focus much of his attention on the " Jungle gym " equipment.

This particular apparatus offered many types of activities, slides, rope swings, monkey bars, which this particular child seemed especially skilled in, also various ladders of different shapes and moving in multiple directions. I can assure you this was not the park toys of my younger days. The equipment at this park seemed well designed offering the children many different opportunities to discover any hidden acrobatic skills that they may be harboring.

All in all this observation made it clear that this young child, this boy of three or four years old, was agile and energetic, had clearly been exposed to many types of social solutions, Ana parents Tanat succeeded to ten autonomy tattle style Ana was developing both physically and cognitively at an appropriate level. In my opinion in many cases he was a bit advanced compared to other children that I observed during my time at Decorator Lake Park. The one thing that impressed me the most was his ability to socialize, to communicate and yet seem to really enjoy his time at the park.