

Observation Four

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CHD 166 – Infant and Toddler Programs

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Video Observation – Children Eating at Table with Caregiver

In the video, the caregiver is sitting at the table while the children are eating. While the children eat, the caregiver asks questions while assisting children. It may seem like she is not doing much, but through everyday interactions and caregiving routines, children learn many developmental skills like language, social cues, and cause and effect. There are a few ways to foster language development in young children. One-on-one interactions are the main way young children develop language skills. In the interaction observed, the caregiver is asking questions to better assist the children's needs. Questions can be useful instruments for promoting language. By asking questions, the caregiver is providing the young children with a variety of words that can be used in this social setting. It is important to encourage young children to ask questions when they need more information. Children need to learn labels, and caregivers use these labels to describe what is happening as it happens. As children repeat these interactive caregiving routines, they will become more familiar with the labels used in that setting and eventually add them to their vocabulary. Hearing the labels of known objects repeated in familiar settings is essential to a young child's development. Engaging infants and toddlers in conversation during playtimes and daily caregiving is imperative. Young children's memories develop as they accumulate labels for experiences, enabling them to apply these labels in contexts that are comparable. For example, the young children at this table are learning language appropriate for dining. Once familiar with the labels used, they will be able to remember them. As they remember the labels used at the table, they will feel comfortable using them when dining with others and eventually use them during pretend play. The amount of interaction a young child experiences has a direct impact on their vocabulary. Young children must hear words that are connected to actual occurrences. Experiences like the one observed are what form long-lasting neural connections. Providing young children with interesting experiences gives the opportunity for children to talk and caregivers to listen. During dining, you can allow children to help set the table or allow them to pour their own beverage. When labels are connected to real-life events or experiences, permanent neural connections develop. Language evolves as experiences take place, and as language evolves, young children independently acquire grammatical rules and clarify their language. Special language lessons aren't necessary with young children because they gain their vocabulary through responsive interactions. This scene is great for displaying how feeding is curriculum. Curriculum involves planning for learning, and learning is connected to attachment. Attachment is fostered through responsive interactions like the interaction in the video. Through this interaction the children at the table are not only improving their vocabulary; they are building trust and learning cause and effect. As their communication skills increase, they will learn that when they communicate their needs or wants, a caregiver will fulfill them. When a caregiver consistently meets the needs of a young child, trust is built, and attachment forms or is

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deepened. The caregiver asking questions and engaging the young children in conversation is beneficial to their language development. When young children are absorbed in responsive interactions, language rules develop naturally. Feeding is a part of the curriculum because it builds attachment, and when attachment occurs, children feel more confident in their learning abilities.

References

- Gonzalez-Mena, J. & Eyer, D. W. (2018) *Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: A Curriculum of Respectful, Responsive, Relationship-Based Care and Education*. (11th ed.) New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.
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