

ECE 209-L

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### Commentary Paper

The baby's name is Athena, her nickname is Thena. Athena was born on June 7th and she is 1 years old. Athena has long brown straight hair, big brown eyes, a flat nose, she has an oval shaped face, chubby cheeks, and she has a fair skin tone. Athena is wearing a blue long sleeve shirt with pink and white leggings. She is 29 inches tall, a normal size for a 1 year old. The people in Athena's family are her mother Tayla, her father Ernesti, her older brother Damon who is 7 years old and her grandfather. Athena and her family live in the Bronx on 161st street close to the Yankee Stadium. The family's home is very big and spacious, in the living room there is a big flatscreen television on top of a brown wooden television stand, there's three gray chairs, a black sofa, a white fence guarding the fireplace, a gray doggy bed, in one corner of the room you'll see kiddie tables, and push walker strollers. In the middle of the living room floor there are toys scattered all around such as wooden spoons, stuffed animals, different colors and size balls, a wooden box with a circle opening at the top, a storage bin, and other small toys.

According to Tayla, she says that she doesn't have any strongly held family beliefs about raising Athena because she's not super religious at all. She says the most important thing that she wants to give and teach Athena is to be a loving, caring, honest, independent, and kind person. Tayla said that she wants to be an involved

mother in her children lives without being overbearing meaning that she wants to believe in her child's ability that she can achieve anything she puts her mind too, letting Athena explore the world in her own way by playing, explore nature through her eyes and explore her senses, potty training when she's ready and not force her, etc. Infant teachers can support the family's beliefs and practices by respecting the family beliefs and practices and if they have any question they should communicate with the family and create a bond/connect with them. Also infant teachers can help support the family beliefs by ensuring that the program will embrace and carry out the same beliefs and practices that the family wants for Athena.

The family identifies as being white and hispanic, the mother is White America and the father is Puerto Rican. However, despite their cultural background the mother (Tayla) shares that she doesn't know much about it but she knows that she catholic. Tayla told me that in her household they mostly speak English however, Athena's father (Ernesti) speaks both English and Spanish to her and around the house. She said she feels that her culture doesn't influence raising her child and that they only celebrate special celebrations such as Birthdays, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. With celebrating birthdays it's more low key with family members and close friends at their house. The different types of foods that they include with birthday parties are hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and dip, BBQ chicken, rice, mac & cheese. Thanksgiving they spend it with family (her sister, sister-in-laws, mother-in-law, grandfather, etc). The different types of food they have on Thanksgiving are turkey, mash potatoes, salads, corn bread, baked mac and cheese, paella, empanadas and more. Christmas morning is spent at home with just the five of them opening gifts, having breakfast, and then in the evening they go

over to the mother-in-laws house where the rest of the family meets and have an intimate dinner and enjoy each other's company. The different types of foods they have on Christmas are rice and beans, empanadas, paella, platanos, tostones, mash potatoes, fried chicken, corn bread, ham, etc. Infant teachers can help families maintain and grow their heritage and culture by playing music that represents the families culture. For example, in an infant classroom they can play nursery rhythms in both english and spanish.

The family are individualists because the mom told me that most of the time they do things separately and together. However, when it comes to Athena, she's very independent, she doesn't like asking for help, she tries to do things by herself, she feeds herself, plays by herself for the most part, she self-soothes, etc. An infant teacher can support the baby (Athena) if the family is individualist by promoting self-esteem, gain and being independent, uniqueness, feeling and being special , individual success, standing out from groups, problem solving, etc. According to Tayla, they follow Athena's natural rhythm because when she is ready to eat they feed her. They don't force her to eat when she doesn't want to. When it comes to sleeping they also follow her natural rhythm, because when she's tired she would go and lay in her mothers arms until she falls asleep. And it's the same for diaper change or using the potty they follow her cues and body language. Infant teachers should support families that follow the child's natural rhythms by tuning into the cues of the child and respond to the signals that the child demonstrates when they are hungry, sleepy, have a dirty diaper and so forth.

Tayla found out that she was pregnant in early September 2018, she was nervous and excited at the same time. She said during her pregnancy she felt

exhausted and hot all the time. She said that she didn't really do any kind of activities during her pregnancy because all she did was work and prepare for the baby. Tayla explained that her labor experience was neither easy or difficult. she said that she didn't have any cravings during her pregnancy and that her birth experience with Athena was painful and somewhat easy and joyful at the same time. Athena's mother Tayla stated that during the first couple of days bringing her home from the hospital says that both she and her husband had restless nights and zero to little sleep. After her pregnancy, she said she felt happy and very tired. Athena's routine during her first week home was that she slept during the day and was up all hours of the night. She slept in her Pack-and Play which was located in her parents room close to their bed and she slept on her back according to her mother. Tayla told me that she was breast-feeding for two week when Athena came home then switched to bottle-feeding.

Athena's typical schedule is that she wakes up and gives everyone hugs, then asks for her milk, going outside with her mother to put her brother Damon on the bus for school, then she has her breakfast, then plays with her toys and watches educational videos on TV and on youtube, Athena then naps between 12pm-1pm, when she wakes she has a snack, by time she wakes up her brother is home from school and they both play with each other using her peppa pig toys and her dolls, after that it's dinner time. Tayla said that Athena spends more time with her than anyone else. She also said that Athena is attached to her father Ernesti, her brother Damon, her grandfather, her grandmother (on her fathers mother) and her aunts. However, Athena's mother mentions that the extended family except for her mother-in-law and her sister-in-law

somewhat plays a role in Athena's life by teaching her about her hispanic culture by playing music, playing games, speaking to her in spanish as well, etc.

Athena learns new things by exploring her environment, touching everything in the house, climbing on chairs, putting her toys in her mouth, etc. Athena's favorite activity is dancing according to her mother whenever she hears music she would get up and start dancing. Athena play materials are toy drum sets, her doll house with little figurine toys, and her peppa pig toys, toy blocks, etc. she uses these materials in order to develop her cognitive skills, Language and communication skills, emotional development, etc. Athena loves to look at the dogs and loves to watch music videos such as "Baby Shark", "Johnny Johnny", etc. Athena loves to carry around her baby dolls around the house her mother said and when it came to sleeping she loves her pacifier. The types of games that the family plays with athena are peek-a-boo, pretend telephone, hide-and-seek, playing with blocks, etc. the family reads books such as The day you begin by Jacqueline Woodson, Love You Forever by Robert Munsch, Part of Your World by Lori Froeb, and many more. when reading to athena the mother uses different voices to keep her interest and attention, give her the opportunity to turn the pages of the book, letting her point to the pictures in the book and so forth.

Athena's temperament is easy going and flexible, the reason I know this is because her mother mentioned to me that Athena is very friendly and loves to give hugs to all of them when she wakes up. Athena temperaments are identify as having a high activity level (Has lots of energy & difficulty sitting still; wiggles & squirms), a low distantibility (has high degree of concentration & focus; not easily distracted), low intensity (has muted or mild emotional reactions), highly regular (has predictable

sleeping, eating & elimination patterns; likes order & routines), low sensitivity (doesn't mind sounds, touch, tastes, temperature changes), high adaptability (transitions easily to new situations, changes, or activities), high approaching (eagerly approaches new situations/ people), high persistence (high tolerance for frustration & perseveres in activities), and positive mood (generally cheerful & reacts to the world in positive way). This connects to Allard & Hunter (2010) because having a child who is easy going/ flexible are very happy, have regular sleeping and eating habits, adaptable, calm, and don't get upset easily. As a caregiver you must check in with the child to make sure that they are okay and initiate communication about their emotions.

The most important thing that infant teachers should remember when a baby is transitioning to the infant class to make them feel secure and safe in the new environment that they're going, create a bond with them, form some type of attachment when they are in your care because this will allow the infant to create a bond with you and also build some sort of trust when they are in your care. It's important that infant teachers should welcome families to their class, respect their culture, beliefs and practices, making them feel safe and worry free when their child is in your care, it's important to create a bond/partnership with the families. I think that these strategies will help Athena & her family settle into the infant classroom because a relationship will be formed between both teacher and infant and same for the family. The family wouldn't have to worry when leaving Athena at the program because she will be well taken care of and that Athena will feel secure and comfortable when she's in our care.

