

Final Paper

Samantha Guzman

05/08/2021

Infant & Family Commentary Essay

Sierra was an 8-month-old infant I observed. Her hair was short, and it was a darkish brown color. She had light brown skin. She had these chunky legs. Her eyes were wide, but they had an almond shape to them. She had dark colored eyes. Sierra had thin reddish/pink lips and had a small nose. She was wearing these pink shorts with floral prints. Her shirt was white and had different colored flowers that were connected to a vine. The observation took place while Sierra was playing in a playpen. In the playpen there were a few toys. There were stacking cups. There were flashcards with images on them and the words of that image. There were also home play materials as well. There was a tin bowl and a container. There was also a black plastic spoon. There was a caregiver in the playpen with Sierra, but I only saw her legs. The caregivers had her legs crossed and had on black pants.

While observing Sierra, I noticed she moved her body forward followed by her right arm reaching out. She reached out to the floor with her right arm placing her hand on the flashcards. She extended her left arm out and put her left hand on another flashcard. I learned that Sierra had great motor skills, such as fine and gross motor. She kept moving her arms to reach out for she can move around. Sierra then had moved her body forward that she was on her hands and knees, but one leg was slightly under her bottom. She then reached out again, and she was grasping the round part of the black spoon in her right hand. Sierra was using her hands and fingers to hold/grasp the spoon. She eventually dropped the spoon as she sat on her bottom again. She extended her arm again with her left hand to grasp, the spoon in her right hand again. Her left palm, she was guiding the round part of the spoon to her mouth. She was using a lot of her motor skills gaining her physical development. She also was experiencing sensory exploration that can help influence cognitive development. Some of the sensory exploration she experienced was touch and taste as well as her sight.

After a while, I noticed Sierra with a tin bowl in her right hand. She was play with a home play material. Home play materials can help gain children development as well. The bowl was still in her right hand as she tried to get a hold on the gate. The bowl just makes a noise as it hit the gate. She slides the bowl down against the gate. She used her sensory exploration as she put the bowl in her mouth. Sierra noticed the caregiver in the corner and moves her eyes on to them. She pulled herself up but slides back down due to the bowl in her hand. She was able to pull herself up and that a great demonstration of gross motor skills. As she put the bowl in her mouth again, she was supporting the bowl with her left arm under it. She then drops the bowl on the mat. She started making gurgle and raspberries sounds with her mouth. She is exhibiting a lot of physical development as she is using sensory exploration and motor skills. She also showed physical communication skills as she noticed and acknowledged the caregiver sitting in the playpen with her. She also seems to be developing language due to her gurgling and making raspberries.

After a while Sierra was on her knees again. She had her right leg tucked under her while her left leg was out. She had extended her right arm out and place her hand on the caregiver's leg as she was showing physical communication towards the caregiver as she touched her. The caregiver reached out to Sierra to hold her right hand. As the caregiver is holding onto Sierra that shows some type of attachment Sierra has with caregiver. Mentioned in the reading *Creating Healthy Attachments to The Babies in Your Care*, "Children with secure attachments learn that their world is a safe place because the people in it are caring (Gillespie and Hunter 2011). Sierra had that attachment with the caregiver she was comfortable with the caregiver. Sierra had a sense of trust with the caregiver as well. Sierra was looking to the side of her on the mat. Then the caregiver reached out to get a wooden box with cloth sticking out. Sierra was

now sitting on her bottom with her right leg bent in front of her. Sierra began pulling different colored clothes out the box the caregiver is still holding. Sierra's eyes were shifting from the box to the caregiver as the caregiver said, "good job." The caregiver was encouraging Sierra when she said good job. Sierra seems to have a social-emotional development as she seems to have a relationship with the caregiver. The caregiver on the floor and telling Sierra good job as she pulls the clothes out the box, can influence Sierra's self-regulation. Sierra seems to have many play materials alongside her in the play pen. Play materials are important to have because it can influence a child's development. It can help with physical development such as motor skills and sensory exploration. It can also help with cognitive development because it will get the child to think. With the guide of a parent or caregiver they can influence their cognitive development as well. Some play materials can help the child with object permanence. Certain play materials can help with memory as well that can lead to language development such as puzzles or flashcards.

It is important to me to work with young children and their families because it makes me feel good to be a part of helping influence children's learning development and their physical development. It is important to work with their families to communicate on how we can work together to influence and shape children's development. Children make me happy and laugh. I love the idea of learning from my children and their families. I want to help children achieve confidence in learning. Even giving children that one on one learning to achieve their appropriate developmental growth. Some children come with challenges and that is okay because I will try my best to redirect them to a better direction. The children make me tap into my own inner child when it come to playing with them and running around for movement.

I had the opportunity to speak to a family about some cultural beliefs and practices they have. I mainly spoke the Mother of Mia and Lulu. Their mothers name is Desiree. Their fathers name is Nick. They also have this white Samoyed dog named Jax. They were extremely sweet, but quite girls. At first, they were shy, but as I spent a few hours there speaking to their mom, they started to open up more to me. Desiree is a mother of two girls. Desiree and Nick met in when they were teenagers. They both went to different high schools, but they ended up crossing paths. They are both twenty-nine now. They are both hard working parents to try and support their girls. I thought they were great people. Lulu is now three and Mia is six. Lulu was more outgoing verse Mia was quite and did not talk so much due to her being uncomfortable around you. Desiree had her first child at the age of twenty-three, which was with Mia. She had Lulu three years later. She had Lulu at the age of twenty-six.

I found out about her birthing experiences. She found out she was pregnant at the age of twenty-six with Lulu. She had not gotten her menstrual cycle and she took a couple of tests and they came back negative. A few weeks later she took another test, and it came back positive. She frequently had morning sickness. She mentioned, "I was sick for the first trimester." I learned that women have different pregnancy experiences. She barley kept any food in her stomach. Due to her being pregnant her sugar level went low. She had to be on top of her diabetes. Her mother went with her to the hospital. Her sister had to watch Mia in the meantime. Having family support is important and she definitely had that. She said she remembered being in labor for about six to seven hours. She said to me, "It was definitely much easier than my first child," meaning Mia. Lulu was born at seven in the morning on an August morning.

After giving birth to a newborn, a mother must heal. Recovery and taking care of a newborn sounded tough. Families have their own values and experiences with their children. Desiree gave me a little information on both newborn experiences. I wanted to know some of her values on taking care of her newborn. She said being a first-time mother to Mia and that the recovery after having her was hard. She did not even know what to expect. She told me, “Even though I really wanted to take care of her on my own, I needed to relay on help to recover.” Every mother wants to take care of their own child, but it is ok to ask for help or accept the support around you. Mother tend to feel overwhelmed after having a child. Desiree said that Mia did not really have a sleeping pattern, which was very exhausting for Desiree. A baby having no sleeping pattern can eventually have an affect when they start daycare or school with naptime routines. They can have a hard time transitioning to the school nap schedule. She said Lulu birthing experiences was much easier. Lulu would sleep for four to five hours at a time. She would fall fast asleep right after being fed. “She was better than my first child,” Desiree told me. Like I said pregnancy can be different because she told me that she was able to take care of Lulu as a newborn while she was still recovering from the birth.

There are families that have values and beliefs on eating and sleeping patterns. I got a look into Desiree’s values on feeding and sleep with Lulu. She mentioned having issues producing breast milk for Lulu. Due to that she had to mix half formula and half breast milk to feed Lulu. After Lulu was fed, she would fall right to sleep. She would sleep about four to five hours in between her eating schedule. Lulu always had a good appetite; she was always a good eater. From what Desiree was telling me Lulu would eat all different types of flavored food. Lulu was not very picky, until she started seeing her older sister Mia, not wanting certain foods. “She basically started following Mia’s habits,” Desiree told me. Being around children a lot

especially at work children like to mimic behavior. Especially when it come to eating, children tend to be very picky with new foods. I try to encourage them to at least try the food because I do not want them to stay hungry. As for Lulu sleeping pattern, she slept well. She did not have much trouble falling asleep. When Lulu was up, Desiree told me Mia would keep her entertained. Desiree was telling me, "I remembered one time I was taking a shower and lulu was on a baby pillow, Mia put all her dolls around Lulu, and it just look like a bunch of baby heads." She was laughing at the thought of it.

Desiree said her family is involved with her children. Her family is there to watch and interact with her children. They are always there whenever she needs them. Having family involved in children's life can influence a child's behavior and development. She told me, "I remember we went camping when Mia was around three and Lulu was a couple of months old. They probably will not remember it, but they had fun." She also mentions how her family does most of the babysitting when her and her husband need a break. "I am raising my children very differently from how I was raised," Desiree said to me. She does not think her cultural background influenced how she raises her children now. As a child she spoke on how her parents would have her and her sister sleep in the darkness and the only light was coming from the door being cracked open a bit. She also was against her children having tablets. She mentioned that both the girls have tablets now. A lot of children are using technology nowadays. Parents approach sleep time differently. She started off bad with sleep time with both girls. Desiree and her husband would work late, and the kids ended up accustomed to going to bed late. She mentioned it was different from her upbringing. As a little girl, Desiree and her sister would be in bed but eight at night, nine the latest. Her values on sleep time are different then her parent's values on sleep time. Desiree started cooking food her mom had made her at home as a

child. They would eat she said, but after a while Lulu and Mia refused to eat their mom's food. "I do not cook the same foods I was brought up eating home," she told me. She tried to cook meals that she knows they will eat. Cultural food can change throughout generations within a family. Like I said before they can have a hard transition in a school environment due to them eating only selective food that they are used to.

Families tend to have rituals and practices that they value and as caregiver we must take that into consideration. We must learn some of these practices and rituals they value to understand and learn about the children and their families. As I continued to speak with Desiree, I learned some of her rituals and practices that she valued. Being a first-time mom with Mia, she mentioned she did not really develop any traditions practices during her children's infancy stages. She did not know what to expect. She did practices that she felt comfortable with and what was easier for her. Having Lulu and having previous experience with her daughter Mis. She did not follow the same practices as she did with her first child. She had different experiences with her daughters due to them being different during their infancy stage. She thinks due to these different practices between them, Mia is more dependent on Desiree. Desiree thinks that because Mia used to sleep with her. As for Lulu, Desiree practice self-soothing methods. Desiree thinks that it why Lulu is more independent. Desiree seemed to have a natural rhythm in the being of the sleep and eating practices based on her child needs. I think then she started creating a set-schedule because of the like natural rhythm of the child's needs and flows. Putting children in a school kind of gives out a collectivism environment where the children can culturally learn one from another, verse children only knowing their own cultural values such as individualist environment.