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**Commentary Paper Final**

\_\_\_\_\_I had interviewed and observed baby Gianna Carmona which her family and loved ones call her Gigi. Gianna was 10 months old when I had interviewed and observed her and her family. She is now 11months and will soon be 1 years old on December 15th. During the observation Gianna had on a blue t-shirt, black pants, and white socks on. Her hair was up in a ponytail with a white and blue headband on. She has curly dark brown hair, tan skin. Gianna is small built and seems healthy. During the interview both parents Jennifer and Gonzalo Carmona were present as well as her older siblings. But during the observation her mother and siblings were present because Gonzalo ( Giannas father) was at work. Gianna is the youngest of four. She has two brothers and a sister. The oldest is Elijah, he is 7 years old, then it's Egypt, she is 5 years old , then it's Eli he is 3 years old.

Gianna and her family live in Brooklyn, NY. East New York, Brooklyn to be exact. I am familiar with this neighborhood because I am from this part of Brooklyn. The Gonzalo family lives in a three bedroom apartment in Brooklyn, NY. The observation took place in the family's living room. In the living room they had a gray sectional sofa which was near their two large windows, a gray carpet in the middle of the room, they also had a center table but it was pushed to the side and Gianna was on the carpet with

her toys. They also had a dark grey television stand placed against the wall where the television is mounted up, they also had two stand up lamps, each lamp was placed on each side of the sofa. They had an ocean view painting on the wall, and family pictures up on the wall as well.

As I observed and interviewed the Gonzalo family, I learned that they believe that a child should learn on their own, being independent is very important in the Gonzalo family. Also I learned that they all support one another, and Jennifer and Gonzalo teach their kids discipline and respect. Jennifer and Gonzalo teach the older siblings to help their baby sister and interact with one another. I also observed that they are a strong unit together. Jennifer allows Gianna to explore the rooms alone and allows her to play with objects. Jennifer and Gonzalo goals and values for Gianna is to interact and get along with peers, develop self control, develop physical skills, have a sense of satisfaction with their individualism and feelings of self respect and to have a good, relaxing, loving time in a growing and helping environment. Their child rearing practices are disciplinary, unconditional love.

During the interview with Jennifer and Gonzalo I asked a few questions about their cultural background. Jennifer is African American and Gonzalo is Puerto Rican. Gonzalo states that he speaks both english and spanish to his children because that is what his mom and father taught him. Gonzalo state that growing up in a Puerto Rican home that being bilingual was very important to his mom and father because when they were growing up their parents had trouble speaking english and they had to translate for their parents constantly. Jennifer on the other hand grew up speaking english her whole life. Jennifer stated that being bilingual is important to her as well. She began learning

spanish when she and Gonzalo began dating. I asked both parents about whether they have any special celebrations and Jennifer and Gonzalo state that they have a lot of family cookouts and get togethers. Where both families come together bring food, drinks, board games and play music. They said that they love having family get togethers to celebrate, reunite and enjoy with their loved ones. Jennifer mentioned that her favorite holiday is thanksgiving because her family and Gonzalo family come together and they have both traditional foods. They mentioned pasteles, baked mac and cheese, collard greens and more.

The family's culture influences their child raising practices by allowing their child to experience both cultures. Allowing the child to have a strong bond with both families being around one another and celebrating both cultures together. It also influences the cognitions and practices and in turn, Giannas mental health from a very early age. Gianna's family began having a set schedule for Gianna when it comes to her sleeping schedule because in the interview Jennifer stated that Gianna usually sleeps a lot during the day. But in the observation Jennifer stated that she was trying to keep Gianna busy so she will not fall asleep during the day so she will be able to sleep at night. Jennifer also states that Gianna is now eating solid food so she feeds Gianna the same time she feeds her other children. But in between meals she does give her a little bit of milk or snacks. I believe that infant teachers can support the babies and families with a set schedule by simply discussing the babies schedule, trying to follow the exact time the baby eats, snacks, and when to change their diapers or even when to potty train.

### **Prenatal & Birth History**

Jennifer realized she was pregnant when she was about two months. She said she missed her period and her reaction was nervous and happy. Her family was excited and very supportive. Her pregnancy was stressed free. While being pregnant she was very active. She worked as a security guard in a hospital until she was five months pregnant which leads her to be standing for hours at a time. The activities that she had done during her pregnancy did not cause any issues while giving birth to Gianna. Jennifer stated that she had easy labor and it wasn't difficult at all.

### **Early Days**

During the first weeks of Gianna being born Jennifer stated that it was challenging in the beginning due to having three other children to attend to. She stated she had help from my husband and family members but as a mother you play a lot of roles. During Gianna's first week at home Jennifer explained that Gianna would sleep a lot to the point that she had to wake her up to eat. Gianna slept in a crib next to her parents bed.

### **Baby's Routine**

Gianna wakes up around 6am in the morning for a bottle of milk. Then she falls back to sleep and gets a solid breakfast. Jennifer also mentioned that she stays up watching coco melon but then falls asleep. But what I observed was Jennifer trying to keep her up by having her favorites shows on. She also has the carpet as a play area for Gianna to explore with her toys, crawls and walks. When I observed Gianna, Jennifer would give her snacks, for example yogurt with fruits. Then a little later she gave her dinner with her older siblings. Being an infant teacher you can use consistency, support and provide transitions, and allow long amounts of free time, including experiences that meet individual needs to individualize a baby's routine to an infant classroom.

### **Important Relationships**

Giannas spends time with her mother most of the time because her father works during the day. Gianna also spends time with her grandmothers a lot when her mom runs errands. Gianna also spends a lot of time with her older siblings playing and dancing. Giannas father is also very present in her life even though he works but they have a close bond.

### **Play and Learning**

I noticed that Gianna likes to be on the ground and she likes to bang her toys against each other to make noises. She also likes to jump up and down when her favorite show is on which is Coco melon or sesame street. While i was observing gianna her older brother Elijah was pretending he was crying and she would grab his face and hers together. That showed her emotional side and showed she recognizes her loved one is sad. Also when playing with her mom she likes to dance and move around. That showed that her mother supports her physical development.

### **Temperament**

Gianna temperament is flexible/ easy going because she reacts to things in positive moods, she is not serious, she is not sensitive to noises. Gianna shows her temperament side by always dancing and playing and enjoying herself with her loved ones.

### **Cognitive Development**

Gianna engages with her ring stacks by banging them against each other. The ring stacks have different types of colors which grasp her attention. Gianna was crawling and grabbing different toys and testing them out. This demonstrates her curiosity.

According to the Peterson 2012 article ( page 2 lines 41 to 48) infants are born with a strong desire to explore and learn. Their intrinsic motivation include curiosity and exploration, self efficacy, competence and mastery which are recognized as biologically based ( Papousek 2011).Adults can encourage curiosity in infants in two developmentally appropriate ways. In module 9 discussion we were asked about if flash cards would be a smart move for babies to learn from. My response was that flashcards can be a waste of time and money because it may not work. Babies learn at their own pace and the baby is born with billions of neurons that connect with one another to strengthen their brain. To help promote neuron connections she should engage in sensory rich activities, variety of books and toys, and use repetition.

### **Language and Communication**

Gianna uses one word sentences. She yells out of joy and excitement. She cries to have her needs met and also uses wine to communicate . At 10 months Gianna uses imitation sound games and responds to a variety of sounds . This demonstrates how she uses receptive language. In the article Kovach & Davis Rosales (2011) ( page 1 paragraph 7) states that reading aloud or just interacting with an infant can help them tremendously with reading skills or language development.

### **Emotional Development**

Gianna loves the attention from her mom. When Gianna wanted to be lifted up she started to cry for her mom. This demonstrates her emotional development.

According to the article Darling-Kuria & Bohlander (2014) “ Infants and toddlers are just beginning to develop a cognitive filter—the ability to accurately discern information from the environment to determine what is happening and what will likely happen next. This inability leads to feelings of powerlessness, which makes it difficult for young children to manage their strong emotions. Additionally they have limited coping skills and need the help of a trusted adult to assist them first in identifying those emotions, as in the opening vignette, and then in tailoring strategies to support their growing ability to return to a calm state” This refers to Gianna when she was crying to get her mothers attention.

### **Social Development**

Gianna has a supportive family that engages in many loving and positive interactions with Gianna. Her brother Elijah demonstrates his awareness of her loving side. He knows that she cares for him so he pretends to cry so she can hug him and grab his face to hers. According to Wittmer 2012 “Recent research, including brain research, informs us that young children are capable of being prosocial, caring, and loving, but need adult support to maximize these competencies.” Gianna mom demonstrates her awareness that Gianna is unique by creating a space inside her living room for her to support her social development.

### **Physical Development**

Gianna was observed to be holding on to furniture and walking. Gianna is able to crawl and walk on her own. She struggles to eat alone but with her mother's support she's able to practice to feed herself. Gianna was observed to dance and move up and down with her legs. She demonstrates that her muscles are well built and these activities foster strong gross motor skills. She can hold her own bottle to feed herself, she picks up toys. Gianna has good physical motor abilities.

### **Sensory Processing**

Gianna doesn't demonstrate any sensory exploration in my observation because she is able to play with toys. She also explores with toys and sounds. And from my knowledge from Module 7 sensory processing is a disorder in babies and toddlers can affect the way they play with toys and how they interact with others.

**In Conclusion**, the most important thing an infant teacher can keep in mind about a baby as the transition into infant class is that children approach learning in different ways, and stages because children go through different stages in life, every child has their own pace and pressuring a child to learn something new that they are not ready for can cause a infant to go into distressed. The most important thing an infant teacher can keep in mind about a family as they transition to a infant class is to give the parent enough time to check out the classroom, show them where their infant will be, explain to them



the strategies you are using to help developed their child skills, and give them that security they need to know that their child will be safe.