There are several things that I have learned over the semesters as a Child Development major. Many hands-on experiences in my college career have helped me to grow and develop into a more well-rounded individual, as well as gain a better experience of the development of children. Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding has been very helpful. It is important to provide children with a lot of help and support without doing something for them. We need to prompt and assist them, but also recognize when to step back and let them develop their skills through experimentation. I have worked with children for several years, and before going through education as a child development major, I tended to do most things for the children, rarely giving them a chance to do it on their own. Now, I feel that with the education that I have gained, I find myself doing much more observing and letting the children try to figure things out on their own, with minimal assistance from me. Modeling has proven to be a very helpful tool as well. Showing children what you expect, instead of telling them, is much more successful. Children, especially small ones, tend to mimic those around them, so it is best to continue to model positive behaviors so that they will in turn follow those behaviors. However, I feel the most helpful and effective tool that I have and will continue to utilize, is the Guides to Speech and Action. There are several that I use regularly, such as giving a child an option, only when I intend to leave the decision up to them. Another method I continuously use is stating directions in a positive way, and trying not to use “no” or “don’t do that” but instead, making it positive and easy for the child to understand. Using my voice as a teaching tool is always important. If there is no danger to the child, there is really no reason to yell. It goes back to modeling; if I were to yell every time I was flustered, I would be teaching the children around me that it’s okay to yell. These are just a few of the things that I have learned and will continue to carry with me and use throughout my professional career.

 Before learning about Bowlby’s theory of attachment, I found children that cried when their parents left, to be a bit irritating. Little did I know, it was something they could not help. It was the attachment that had been built between the child and their caregiver. I also thought that if a child could not be soothed, it might be because the caregiver had “spoiled” the child. Now, I am able to label behaviors, such as these, with a specific type of attachment. I now know that there are several factors that play into the type of attachment a child has. It is not only dependent on a child’s individual temperament, which they are born with, but also the level of attention and care that they are given by a caregiver in the early stages of life.

 There is always more to learn in order to continue ones growth in a subject. No one is an expert on anything, and I look forward to gain more knowledge on the subject of child development. I feel that going over this information several times helps me to better understand it. I always learn something new when looking at the same information. I will continue learning while finishing classes in this major. Also, I will continue to apply parts of the philosophies and theories on human behavior to my career. I will continue to further my education through trainings and certifications that will better me as a professional.

 There are several documents throughout my college career as a Child Development major, that will show growth. As my knowledge has grown over the years, my skills in documenting have also grown. Some of the best documents will come from 282 and 392, because of all the hands-on experience I received in these classes. I was able to apply all that I had been learning in the classroom over the semesters. I was finally able to put all that information to use.

 A document written for Child Development 251: Observation techniques shows my knowledge in this matter. It documents an instance where a teacher in the preschool room uses an ABC model, as well as several Guides to Speech and Action techniques. This piece documents the beginning of many observation throughout the class, as well as in further semesters.

 As well as a Behavioral Guidance assignment from Child Development 392: using the ABC model, as well as specific Guides to Speech and Action. This was an instance where I was actually in the room watching how the situation was handled. It was a learning experience for me, and was extremely helpful when it came to handling a similar situation on my own. There are several assignments that show growth throughout the semesters. I feel that my abilities in behavior guidance have grown through the experiences I have had in this major.