Parent Conference Assignment

Participation in a parent conference is a requirement of this course. Please remember that you are a guest. If you wish to share an anecdote or story about the child, be sure to clear it with the staff member who is leading the conference before hand. You will be able to access needed information at a later point if necessary; please do not take notes during the conference. You must remain in the parent conference from beginning to end. A word of clarification: Parent conferences in the fall are mini-conferences or progress reports. Parent conferences in the spring are more extensive.

In your written report include the information listed below. If this information is not clear to you during your participation, you must acquire the information in order to receive full credit for the assignment. This assignment is due electronically within one week of the parent conference. See syllabus for specific due date.

* Date, place and time of meeting and the Time of your participation: Friday, April 25, 2014,9:30 am, Rainbow room office, 9:30-9:50 am.
* Purpose of meeting and a detailed description of items/concepts discussed. The purpose of the meeting was for the parent and head teacher to get on the same page of the child’s development, to share any concerns and to set some goals for the child. All aspects of the child’s development was discussed; this includes social and emotional development, physical development (gross motor and fine motor), language development, cognitive development and some goals set for the child such as letting her be a little more independent walking from place to place and feeding herself.
* What kinds of things were used to make the parent comfortable? Refreshments? Food? What else? It didn't seem that anything was offered, but the parent was able to pick the seat she wanted to sit and it was not along meeting so she seemed comfortable through out it. She was always given the opportunity to add her input or give examples and tell stories about the child.
* Estimate how much of the conversation was by the teacher and how much by the parent. Teacher talking : 60%, Parent talking: 40%
* What did you learn about the child, parent(s) or family? What did you learn about how the center/teachers can best help this child, parents or family? I learned that dad is not always around which makes it hard on mom because she has to do things alone a lot. This sometimes leads to “bad habits” such as letting her sleep in moms bed with older brother, as well as sleep with a bottle and take a very late nap. Mom said that she is very worn out after her school day that she falls asleep when she gets home so she doesn't go to bed till close to nine. She also must have a bottle on the way home or she will scream and cry the entire way.
* What did you learn about parent conferences? Teacher preparation? Communication skills? The emotional tenor of the conference? I learned that this time is just like normal conversation since the parent and teacher know one another and communicate on a regular basis it didn't seem awkward at all but very smooth and natural. The teacher has to be prepared with notes on each developmental aspect of the child. This means taking a lot of observation notes and taking the time to fill out the sheet as well as making personal goals for the specific child.
* If you had been the teacher, would you have changed anything? I think I would make it more of a conversation, it went smoothly but I would ask the parent how they feel, what they think about that etc. so that they had a chance to add their input in each area of the child’s development.
* If you had been the parent, would you have changed anything? No, I believe the parent was taking things in and getting another view/aspect on her child. And gaining as much knowledge as possible to better and aide her child’s development.
* Rate your ability to perform a parent conference alone at this point in your career on a scale of 1-3 with 1=not very confident to 3=very confident. Why? What strengths do you possess? What challenges do you face? 2, I believe I have the communication skills and such but I am still and always learning about the development of children and until last week had never completed a DRDP, I think as my career progresses I will gain the skills needed to gauge a child at an appropriate level.
* Use the article *Partnerships with Learning: Conferencing with Families* by Holly Seplocha (available through the Reading Based Assignments in electronic reserve) as a guide for responding to this question. What is one thing mentioned in the article, that you have **not described** in earlier prompts that either you felt was very well done or missing from the parent conference you observed. Encourage parents to share ideas and information. I don't feel that the teacher was welcoming to the parent sharing because she did share a bit though out the conference but there also was not a time where the teacher asked if the parent had anything to add or had any questions. I also would have used a more welcoming atmosphere, it was a small office it would have been nice to have a more comfortable place to hold this conference.
* What did you learn about teacher-parent relationships in programs for young children? I learned that is very important to include the parents of each child to have a relationship with the parent. It is also important to have open communication and keep on the same page about the child and their development. It is also nice to have several through out the year in order to track the child’s development.