Self-Evaluation 1

1. What are your strengths and challenges as you work with the children each day? To answer this question, you may find it helpful to review your e-journals since the beginning of the semester.

One of my strengths as I work with children is my interest in working with children. I love working with them and I want to do that in my future. Especially because there are going to be good and bad days, what keeps teachers and care providers going back each day is because they want to. Another strength I learned just in the past couple weeks is the ability to be silly with the children. I love having fun with them and encouraging them to do new things each day. I want the children to feel comfortable around me and I want to feel comfortable around them.

I have notice some pretty big challenges working with children already. I do not have good discipline skills. I am not quick to think of things to redirect the children to or have the quick response to situations that I need to correct. I notice I laugh a lot which I could only imagine encourages the children to keep doing what they are doing. Another thing I need to work on is my creativity with the different things that the children can play and learn from. I realize some things that the children like to do and I stick with those rather than build on them to encourage more learning and fun experiences. I hope that these two things will come in time and practice, because they are both essential in providing a learning environment.

2. Using the Guides to Speech and Action as a framework, describe an episode based on your experience in your placement this semester where you used a specific guide effectively when working with children. Be sure to describe what happened in detail and the number of the guide you used.

The loft is a very common area that the children like to climb up and down from. Thomas tends to go head first down the stairs so following Guides to Action number 13 I need to choose the most strategic position for supervising. I need to be close enough that he knows I am there to help but not close enough to where he is overwhelmed and does not want to explore. I also need to be able to quickly be there if he slips or stumbles down the stairs or slide. I try to place myself next to the stairs and next to the mats facing the entire room so I can see many different areas but still be next to the area I want to focus on, the loft.

3. Using the Guides to Speech and Action as a framework, describe an episode this semester where you felt you were not effective in guiding a child (or children’s) behavior. In detail, describe how you could have used a specific guidance technique (using a number) from the guides in this situation.

I was not effective in guiding Nextor and Isla’s behavior when they were banging play food against the table loudly. I should have used Guides in Speech number 6 to redirect the child by suggesting an activity that is related to her own purposes or interests. Leigh Anne brought over musical instruments which worked so perfectly. Isla picked up an instrument and Nextor smiled and walked away from the table. I need to be quicker in my thinking. I also could have used Guides in Speech number 2 better by only giving the child a choice when the child should have a choice. It was clear that the children should not have been banging the toys and I should have been more clear when I told them they cannot do that and used a firmer manner and voice, Guides in Speech number 3.

4. What are you learning about yourself in terms of your strengths in working with children? What are you learning about yourself in terms of challenges? Please be specific.

A strength I learned I have with working with children is creating a comfortable environment where if a child falls or wants to do something silly it is okay. I try to always smile at the children and the staff and try to encourage the children to create relationships with each other. I like when they play together and I like to step back and see what happens rather than being part of the children’s interactions with each other. I have also learned the importance of letting the child feel independent when I did not understand that at first. I like to see the children contently playing by themselves sometimes because that is a skill just as learning how to play with others is.

Other than discipline and creativity, I have had a hard time with balancing playing and making relationships with all the children. Sometimes the children get upset when I try to do something with a different child and they get upset so I do not know if I should stay with the upset child or go with the other child. What has helped me is asking a staff member to either play with the first child I was with or help the other child with whatever she needs. I want to make relationships with all the children, but I feel comfortable with some and I sometimes just stick to those children so I need to work on branching out and finding that balance. What helps is bringing out my notepad to make notes on other children with staff members to find out what they like.

5. What else do you want to learn about yourself? Write one specific thing that you will be working on when you are in the classroom this week.

 I want to learn more of the routines this week in the Willow Room. I think if I learn the routines better and the children’s routines I can be a better asset to the classroom. This week I will also work on creating a balance between each child in the classroom. I want to be able to make any child happy and comfortable around me.

6. What would be most helpful to you right now?

 I think a check in with my class in the Willow Room to talk about our strengths and weaknesses or what is challenging for us would be helpful because we would be able to help each other. If we knew what each other were struggling with we can help each other on the floor.