SLO I Foundations of Child Development Narrative

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical and empirical foundations of the discipline.

I have grown in my understanding of theoretical and empirical foundations of the discipline in several aspects. Gaining basic knowledge, such as appropriate ways to interact with children both physically and verbally, as well as understanding the importance of attachment, have always been important in working with young children. Over the years of exploring theories through Child Development however, this importance has become much more clear and distinct to me. Along with certain theories, I also strongly believe in understanding and recognizing risk factors.

Erik Erikson’s Attachment Theory and Katherine Read Baker’s Guides to Speech and Action are critical to understanding the importance of children’s development. Before studying these, I realized that having secure attachment relationships was good for healthy development, however now it is clear that it is necessary. I am a nanny and have been for several families over the years. Knowing this information, I am more aware of intentionally forming stronger bonds with the children I care for. When their parents are not available, I want to ensure I am that steady and positive influence in their lives. In addition to applying this when I am watching other people’s children, I will make an extra effort to do so when I have my own one day. I fully understand its importance. In addition to applying attachment relationships, I am always sure to apply the concepts in Guides to Speech and Action to my work and will do so when I become a mother as well. Speaking to children in positive ways, placing one’s self where it is possible to see all areas of the room, and guiding positive behavior rather than scolding “bad” behavior, all give children the tools to become independent, well-behaved, and confident individuals. Both of these theories have influenced my thinking and actions in positive ways.

Risk factors that hinder children’s ability to thrive in development, such as a lack of education, poor health, negative cycles from generations of regression, and a lack of role models are unfortunate. However, with the correct influence and children’s resiliency, all of these risk factors can be overcome. The knowledge I have gained through classes over the years has reinforced the wonders of resiliency. Along with children’s resiliency, the adults in these situations also have the ability to overcome hard situations. All of this has given me hope for children living in unfortunate situations and makes me want to continue to help all that I can.

Observing children and family behavior has significantly changed how I think about children and their families. Over the years, there has been an abundance of different types of families. There have been families that are wealthy, families in poverty, families with parents who are together, and families with parents who are not. Within each of these families there are different morals, beliefs, religions, styles, and ethnicities. Prior to taking Child Development classes, I had a more biased outlook about how the family is portrayed and how their children are viewed. After gaining knowledge about how every human deserves and needs the same basic guidelines to flourish, regardless of their upbringing, I do not see the diversity as much as before. I do, however, see the beauty in development, and that every influence, no matter how small, makes a difference.

I would like to grow in the area of Foundations of Child Development by increasing my skills of positive reinforcement, allowing children to become confident and independent, and also become a positive attachment figure for more children. Especially when children come from difficult or negative environments, it is incredible and so meaningful to see them overcome difficult situations and show their resiliency. I believe these areas are some of the most important, and knowing children are thriving is the best feeling.