Reflective Narrative Three: Developmental Context

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the multiple environmental contexts in which children grow and develop, and will be able to analyze systems that support children’s well-being

The environmental contexts that children grow and develop in affect their well-being and development. The courses that I have taken in child development and special education have helped me grow in my knowledge of environmental context and in analyzing the systems that affect the child. For instance, I had the opportunity to analyze the effects of food scarcity on children and their education. As well as, the opportunity to interview family members and a teacher about their relationships with children that have special needs.

The one thing I learned most about is that children are able to flourish in environments that support their development and growth in ways that are developmentally appropriate to the child. This includes the child’s family, school, neighborhood, and more. For instance, children who are affected by food scarcity at home need a school that can meet their needs for food. Also, if these needs of the child aren’t met, the child risks falling behind in school due to lack of ability to concentration on schoolwork.

Being a lifelong learner I will continue to be updated on the current research and programs that are being implemented for children. I will do this by signing up for weekly articles to be sent to me as well as researching topics to ensure that I am current on the information. It is crucial to be aware of current information, in order to give families and children the most current support that I can give them.

My education in child development and special education courses has helped me to expand my knowledge on how children are affected by their multiple environmental contexts. Professional Seminar in Child Development: Current Issues provided me the opportunity to analyze food scarcity and the effects it has on the child’s education through a paper. The paper analyzed the negative effects’ food scarcity has on children in school. The articles I found stated that children who are experiencing food scarcity lack in concentration in their school work due to their focus on when they will get to eat next. I also found information stating that the schools attempt to diminish food scarcity, such as providing children with breakfast before school. The results indicated that it benefits children in school involvement. The assignment has helped me to understand that there are multiple environmental effects that a child may be going through. It has opened my eyes to be aware of different factors that a child may have in their environment.

In Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder course, I was able to gain knowledge of what occurs in a special needs inclusive school. Through my Anchor Assignment, I interviewed a special education high school teacher who taught a class consisting of a group of special needs children, in an inclusion high school. The children also attended classes with typically developing peers. I was able to ask her about the benefits of inclusion schools, she believed that the environment provided children the opportunity to socialize with typically developing peers. She stated that for the children who attended her class she wanted to provide them with an environment that was welcoming and safe for the children. For instance, she allowed children to move around the back of the classroom, if they had difficulty sitting in one spot. The teacher aimed at creating an experience that was full of opportunities for the children not only when in her classroom, but in other classes as well. She was a resource within the school that typically developing children and children with special needs could turn to for support and she was there to meet their needs the best way she could. The interview assignment has helped me to grow in my understanding on the child’s need to have an environment that supports them. The teacher that I interviewed provided me with insight on how to create a supportive environment for a child, in order to support his or her growth and development.

With the knowledge I have obtained through my child development courses and special education courses I have gained understanding in children’s multiple environmental contexts in which they grow and develop in. Through papers and interviews that I have conducted in my courses, I had the opportunity to analyze articles and gain information about various environmental contexts that children may be a part of. I will continue to grow in knowledge of how the environment affects children by reading current articles and research studies.