SLO III. 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.

Some experiences that facilitated my knowledge of the multiple environmental contexts in which children grow and develop was learned through different classes and reading/watching academic materials. In my class Professional Seminar: Current Issues, it talked about the different cultural aspects that affect children today. I learned how much environment affects a child’s life through the documentary “Children of the Mountains.” This documentary examined the lives of children who live in the Appalachian Mountains and who live in poverty. Most of the parents who lived there were unemployed, on prescription drugs, and/or in jail. It showed the affects that these experiences had on the children physically and psychologically. Most of the children didn’t have meals everyday and a lot of them drank Mountain Dew, which rotted their teeth—something that is especially bad due to the lack of health and dental insurance. When a child doesn’t get proper nutrition they don’t do as well in school and have a hard time paying attention. The parents who were dealing drugs and going to jail psychologically hurt their children because it left the children with out a parent.

In the classes Professional Seminar: Current Issues and Senior Seminar in Child Development, I was taught about Brofenbrenner’s Ecological Model. This model taught us about the five environmental systems that influence an individual and their development: The microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem.

The one thing that I learned the most about is the importance of the health and safety of the children at all times. Poverty, nutrition, drug abuse and culture can play a huge part in affecting a child’s life. It can affect a child in many different ways and not just physically. Environment can affect children psychologically and make it hard for them to grow up to live a healthy life—children tend to do poorly in school, both academically and socially. I learned what kinds of help people do to help better the lives of these children as much as they can. Of all the things that I have learned in this area, the thing that surprised me the most would be that by helping parents, you are ultimately helping the children in the end. I never realized that the parents were just as important as the children. The children can’t live or support themselves without a parent.

Because I am a life-long learner, I will continue to do research on how developmental contexts affects children. I will continue to learn ways to help these children and their families. I will also continue to work with children to get a better understanding through hands on experience about what they are going through and what can be done to help them. In the end, I know that research and in depth experience will help me prepare and continue to help children throughout my life. What I have struggled with when it comes to this topic are the parents. I struggle with knowing that these parents don’t do what is best for their children and don’t make the children their first priority. Most of all, I struggle with not putting my own bias in the situation. I think in the future that will be my own struggle because my feelings toward children and their well being seems more important than the feelings of the parents. So my life-long challenge that I give myself would be to learn not to let my own feelings get in the way of my job or the people who are around me.

The first assignment that I would use for the topic above would be a paper about child anxiety. In Professional Seminar: Current Issues, This paper was written about how children can get different psychological condition passed down from their parents. I think this is important because it explain how children are affected by different things and experiences the parents are going through in their lives. Culture, family, race or even religion, play a huge part on a children’s life and this paper explains that.

The second assignment that I would use for the topic about would be a assignment on the movie “Children of the Mountains.” This assignment talked about every issue that is presented that concerns you specific to the development of children and family in the community. It also had us draw a Bronferbrenner model and we placed each of the issues that were going on in the children’s life. And at the end of the assignment it talked about what issue we would want to examine more and why. This assignment is important because it is all about issues and environmental affects on children.