Student Learning Objective Four: Professionalism

Students will engage in professional behavior appropriate to the discipline in professional contexts

Clear interpretation of this standard learning objective and how my growth has occurred is referring to how child development professionals must conduct and carry themselves when they are in a professional context. There are high ethical and confidentiality standards that every child development professional must abide by in order to protect the families and children they serve. It is also important that professionals represent the field of study with a high level of professionalism in any professional context that they may encounter throughout their careers. Some good examples of professional conduct include, displaying a positive and friendly attitude, maintaining confidentiality standards (no talking about families or children inappropriately), and keeping an open and unbiased mind and heart.

Skills that a Child Development professional should possess include being an effective communicator (orally and written), leadership ability, and ability to work well with others and collaborate. Effective communication is an integral part of collaboration. If a person is not able to effectively communicate with their coworkers, collaboration between individuals becomes more difficult and miscommunication can occur. The same is true for communication with clients a professional may work with, being an effective communicator will help facilitate information sharing. Dispositions of a Child Development professional should include being non-judgmental because you never know what a co-worker or client may be experiencing. Having an open mind is also important because everyone is comes from different background and have different beliefs. Being open minded can lead to trying new things and having a deeper understanding of others.

Our understanding has grown immensely in the subject of professionalism. In the beginning our understanding was that professionalism meant being positive and friendly, having ethical and confidentiality standards, and using our repertoire of knowledge to the best of our abilities in a professional setting. Although these are all great points and essential parts of what it means to be a professional, our new understanding is that these are only surface components. Our new understanding of professionalism is that being a professional goes far beyond the obvious and includes matters such as standing up for fairness and equality, speaking up when things are being done inappropriately or unjustly, and always putting the best effort and work.

We would like to do better in the area of professionalism by owning our knowledge. We would like to have more confidence when we speak to others on issues that pertain to child development. Through our college careers we have gained a lot of knowledge and information and have transformed into experts in the field. We know our stuff and we need to work on having that shine through when we are interacting with others. We will continue to grow in our leadership skills and take more initiative in leadership situations.

As a life-long learner, we will continue to build on our professional skills so that we can be the best professional possible. We will do this by continuing to stay up to date on current issues that pertain to the field of child development. We will also participate in professional development opportunities as well, as listen to feedback from our supervisors and peers to help us grow in our abilities and knowledge.

The best we have achieved in this area was to have confidence in the knowledge that I acquired and developed from personal professional standards. Also, through relationships and connections we have created with our peers and other professionals in the field. We have created working relationships that will help us in our future career endeavors.

Katie and Selina have interned in an infant room and received individual evaluations. The head teacher spoke about our strengths and areas of growth. From our evaluations we worked on areas of growth so that we can become better educators. Glenda developed her professional skills through her membership in the Child Development Student Association (CDSA). During her time with the CDSA she participated as the chair of public relations. As a new member in charge of the position she had to learn how to navigate an already established system and worked hard to make changes and up the attendance numbers.