**Reflective Portfolio Assignment Objective 5**

SLO V. Critical Thinking Prompt:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply scientific methods of thinking (including logic and empirical reasoning) about children, families, and their well-being. Students will differentiate between their personal and subjective theories about children’s development and scientific theories of development rooted in empirical research and based on best practices. In addition, students will demonstrate both currency in information technology appropriate to the discipline and an understanding of the ethical use of such technology.

 I have learned a tremendous amount of information about children since I began my higher education experience. Reading the prompt for this assignment brought up a memory about the first time I took a child development class. I took a child development class at Riverside Community College and I remember thinking that I will never view children quite the same as I had before. I had learned so much in that class about developmentally appropriate stages for children to use gross and fine motor skills and start to use language. After taking that class, I saw children as so much more than just “kids.” They were developing and all going through a particular stage. Now that I am a senior and have taken many child development classes, I know that I have a vast range of knowledge and experience with children and know tremendously more than I did before.

 I have grown in this area in the sense that I can look at a child or a family and see many different factors influencing why they are the way they are, instead of simply judging them for their lifestyle. I have learned a lot about the dynamics of families and how to create a positive relationship between the home and the school. The two main experiences that I have had which have facilitated my growth in this area are what I have learned in my classes, and the hands on experiences I have received through jobs and internships. I have learned about the importance of seeing a situation both subjectively and objectively. It is obvious that everyone is going to have their own opinion about a situation. However, it is important to also view the situation objectively so that one’s personal opinions, stereotypes, and biases do not interfere with what is right and ethical for that particular situation. I have learned this skill through experiences I have had in my classes as well as in my jobs.

 Something that I would like to do better with in this area is becoming more objective in certain situations. I definitely believe that is important for everyone to be able to have their own opinion about things, but in the child development and human services field, it is a crucial skill to know how to be unbiased and objective. In my Child Development 382 Professional Seminar in Child Development class, one of my professors was discussing her experiences working with families who were struggling in many different areas. She mentioned that it was hard to completely remove all of her prejudgments and thoughts about the family before she actually worked directly with them. I think that this is a skill that would be extremely hard for me.

 When considering using technology as a means of gaining information about child development research and staying up to date, one thing that surprises me the most is how there is still so much that is being discovered. While there is already a tremendous amount of information out there for professionals in this field, there is always more to me researched and to become informed about. While I feel like I already know a lot about child development, it surprises me how much more information there is to learn.

 As a member of the child development field and a life-long learner, I can offer the ability to apply my resources and what I have learned in my higher education and experiences toward whatever child development job I may be involved with. I will continue to stay up to date on current research and information that is being discovered so that I can be more useful and have even more to offer to the children and families that I work with. I want to learn more about myself and how I can be the most successful in this field and incorporate my own creativity and style without hindering or disregarding the professional standards that must be maintained.

 One assignment that helped me gain a better understanding of the knowledge that I already had as well as realize what I needed to work on was the Self-Assessment #1 for Child Development 392 Child Development Practicum. This assignment required me to write out a few examples of difficult situations that happened in the classroom I was doing my internship in and then to write a list of goals I had for myself. Another assignment that relates to the topic of growth and critical thinking in child development was the self reflection IV assignment for CHLD 392. This assignment required me to critically evaluate the progress I was making toward my goals that I had previously assigned myself. Another assignment that relates to the topic is the web page I completed for CHLD 492. This assignment required us to work in groups to create a web page on a particular topic. We were required to learn how to use the website: yolo.com to create our web page. I learned a lot through this assignment including how to create a webpage as well as more information on ADHD, Retts Syndrome and Autism.