*Students will understand* ***features of model programs*** *for children and families as well as implement* ***developmentally appropriate curriculum*** *activities. Students will* ***evaluate the impact and efficacy*** *of these programs for children, families and communities.*

Throughout my higher education I have learned a lot about high quality programs for children, families and communities. When I first started my higher education I had some experience working in early childhood settings, but didn’t necessarily understand the reasons behind why the programs were set up the way they were. I worked at an in home preschool and when I compare that experience to what I have learned over the past two years it makes me think that the program wasn’t completely developmentally appropriate. While observing and working in the field through internships I have learned more about high quality programs and what they consist of.

While observing the classroom at the Child Development Lab during Observational Techniques I started to learn about developmentally appropriate curriculum and high quality programs. I was able to observe teachers and children. By observing the way that teachers handled situations with the children I was able to get an understanding of how teachers can facilitate learning even when a child is having a behavioral problem. I learned about the “Guides to Speech and Action” in this class and was able to see it put into action in the classroom. This was the first program I was able to observe that gave the children the option of what to do throughout the day. There were age appropriate activities and stations set up inside and outside. I really liked this set up and thought it was a great way to help children facilitate their own learning.

Interning at Mi Esculita Maya during my Curriculum Planning placement taught me a lot about age appropriate curriculum. I was able to watch the teacher’s interactions with the children. This program was different then the classroom in the Child Development Lab at Chico State, but still had different stations and activities that were age appropriate. During Curriculum Planning, while we were participating in our internships we were also learning about developmentally appropriate curriculum and high quality programs. While interning at this program I saw how a high quality program involves not only the children, but also the families and the communities. At Mi Esculita Maya the families are invited to participate in field trips and performances put on by the children. They also hold fundraisers that involve the community. Another way they involve the community is through bringing guest speakers into the school. This was a great experience for me because I got to see all of the aspects that go into making a high quality program work.

I also interned in the infant room for Practicum. I feel like this experience has had the most impact on my growth. I struggled at first in the infant room because there were no stations or activities set up for the children. The children were not asked to participate in-group activities very often and this was different then what I had been learning through my other internship placements and observations. However, though this experience I learned that age appropriate curriculum for infants is providing them with age appropriate toys and equipment in order to facilitate their learning. Infants learn through interacting with their environment and the people in it. During this internship I learned how to talk to infants, even if they couldn’t respond, to help facilitate their growth and learning.

As a life long learner I will continue to keep up to date on the standards of a high quality program for children, families, and the community. I appreciated my internship experiences because they offered first hand experience and gave me a better understanding of what I had been learning through textbooks and lectures.

Some assignments that would display what I have written above are from Curriculum Planning. In this class we had different assignments related to our internship experiences. Writing assignment four documents what I have learned about age appropriate curriculum. Another assignment that could document what I stated above is my weekly reading response from week four in Practicum. Lastly, assignments from Administration to Child Development Programs would document my knowledge of high quality programs for children, families, and the community. In this class I designed my own childcare center and researched and gained a lot of knowledge about these types of programs in order to create my own. My final proposal project shows that I have knowledge of what goes into making a quality childcare center run.