**Reading Based Assignment Response Due on Week Four**

**Reading available on course webpage:**

**Blaustein, M. (2005). See, hear, touch! The basics of learning readiness. Beyond the Journal, Young Children on the Web.**

**Carlson, F. M. (2005). Significance of touch in young children’s lives. Young Children, 60(4), 79-85.**

**Be sure to answer the following questions and post electronically in your appropriate discussion area. Be sure that the subject line in your messages says Week 4 Reading Response.**

**Read both articles thoroughly and form your responses using both articles.**

**1. As noted in the readings, young children are expected to enter kindergarten today with a higher level of academic skills that have been expected previously. Respond to this scenario: Your friend, who is not a child development major, is discussing with you her plan to order some materials on the internet that are guaranteed to prepare her three year old for the academic rigor of kindergarten. She states “I really think the most important thing I can do for my daughter over the next two years before kindergarten is to do everything I can to get her reading.” Using both readings, please form a response to your friend that is based on research and that is sensitive to her concerns as a parent.**

**2. You are in your third week of your practicum. Offer two examples of a situation you have observed where adults provided children an academic/cognitive experience while attending at the same time to the need for the experience to be sensory in nature. In what way were these activities developmentally appropriate?**

**3. Using the book, NAEYC Accreditation Criteria and Procedures, create a list of criteria that addresses academic issues in accredited centers. Create a second list of criteria that addresses the issues identified by both of your readings as important components to learning readiness. List criteria numbers in addition to the criteria.**

1.) In a situation where my friend, who isn’t a child development major, discussed purchasing materials off of the Internet in order to prepare her three-year-old daughter for kindergarten I would tell her about the positives and negatives of her plan. For instance, Blaustein (2005) states that early focus on academics rather than play can be forever detrimental to the way the brain develops. I would discuss with my friend the importance of play and how she can help her daughter become ready for kindergarten without purchasing anything, but rather spending quality time with her and providing enriching environments for her to explore. I would also discuss the importance of finding a preschool program that focuses on developmentally appropriate curriculum. I would inform her of what this means and why it is important. Children learn through play and experiences. They need enriching environments in order to develop. By providing them with bookwork, pen-and-pencil work, and worksheets you aren’t catering to their development. Children need to interact with their environment and the peers and adults in it in order to get the most out of learning. I would also tell my friend that it is great that she is thinking ahead about preparing her daughter for kindergarten, but she doesn’t need to purchase any materials.

Another important aspect to inhibit positive development is touch. According to Carlson (2005) touch is important from the moment a child is born. A simple hug or pat on the back is extremely important for children. It helps them form attachments, grow cognitively, physically, and emotionally, and allows the release of the stress hormone cortisol. I would discuss with my friend the importance of touch and that she should make time to cuddle her daughter and give her hugs everyday. It is also important to give your child self help skills such as dressing themselves or brushing their teeth. These simple things can lead to further development of the child and in the end ready them for kindergarten and the primary grades.

2.) The first example of an academic/cognitive activity that was offered to the children was when we were outside one afternoon Sherrie was blowing bubbles and some of the children were catching the bubbles, while others were running along the bushes. Sherrie told me that I could encourage the children to look at this particular plant that smelled good. I asked the children who were running behind the bushes (Joey, Jacob, and Lorelai) and asked them if they could smell the plant. They all put their noses to the plant. I then asked them what it smelled like and how it felt in their hands. This activity was developmentally appropriate because it focuses on the children’s senses and instead of telling them to stop running in the bushes we redirected them to a new activity that they could learn from.

Another example of an academic/cognitive activity that is offered to the children is the sticky contact paper that is set up on the ground in the classroom. Sometimes there is also some textured paper that is set up also. When the children stick their body parts and objects around the classroom onto the sticky paper they are learning cause and effect. They are also learning through their senses about how things feel. This is developmentally appropriate practice because it meets their needs (sensory) for their age group.

3. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria and Procedures that address academic issues in accredited centers:

2.A.01: The program has a written statement of philosophy and uses one or more written curricula or curriculum frameworks consistent with its philosophy that address central aspects of child development.

2.A.02: A clearly stated curriculum or curriculum framework provides a coherent focus for planning children’s experiences. It allows for adaption’s and modification to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.

2.A.03-The curriculum is used to guide teachers’ development learning is intentional and is consistent with the goals/objectives of the program.

2.A.04: Curriculum is reflected in responsiveness to family values, beliefs, experiences, and language.

2.A.06: The curriculum guides teachers to use assessment information along with curriculum goals to support individualized learning.

2.A.08: Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum

a. Reflect the lives of the children and families

b. Reflect the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language, and abilities.

c. Provide for children’s safety while being appropriately challenging.

d. Encourage exploration, experimentation, and discovery.

e. Promote action and interaction.

f. Are organized to support independent use.

2.A.10: The curriculum guides teachers to incorporate content concepts and activities that foster social emotional, physical’ language, cognitive development and that integrate key content including: literacy, math, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety and social studies.

NAEYC Accreditation Criteria and Procedures that address the issues identified in the articles:

2.B.01 Children have varied opportunities to engage throughout the day with teaching staff that are attentive and responsive to them, and facilitate their social competence and their ability to learn through interacting with others.

2.B.03: Children have varied opportunities to learn the skills needed to regulate their emotions, behavior, and attention.

2.B.04: Children have opportunities to develop a sense of competence and positive attitudes toward learning, such as persistence, engagement, curiosity, and mastery.

2.C.01: Infants and toddlers/twos are provided an environment that allows them to move freely and achieve mastery of their bodies through self-initiated movement. Are given multiple opportunities to practice emerging skills in coordination, movement, and balance, as well as perceptual-motor integration.

2.D.03: Children have varied opportunities to develop competence in verbal and nonverbal communication by responding to questions; communicating needs, thoughts, and experiences; and describing things and events.