*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.*

After reading the statement above I began reflecting on the education I have had and what I have learned when it comes to evaluating early childhood programs as well as the implementation of developmentally appropriate curriculum. I have learned the importance of providing high quality educational programs for children as well as what it entails to insure the program is of high quality. In the beginning of my education I would say that many of the educational settings I have seen or been in were of high quality, but that is because I did not have an educated eye.

Through my education I have come to understand that since there are so many children enrolled in childcare it is important for parents to trust that their children are in a safe place. It is critical for children’s well being to be enrolled in a high quality program. I understand that teaching a large group of children in a program can be a difficult task and one that takes a special type of person to do it well. Not only does the programs indoor and outdoor environment need to be of high quality, but the teachers and staff need to be persistent and compassionate.

I have had the opportunity to work in a couple child care programs in the Chico community. Through these experiences I am beginning to understand what is involved in the process of evaluating programs. I was enrolled at Chico State where I was given the opportunity to apply my knowledge and evaluate a classroom. It was a collaborative effort. My partner as well as myself were to fill out the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale. This scale consists of many item ‘s that are organized into subscales. It was a long and difficult task to complete, however worth it. I remember going into this evaluation thinking that it was going to be much easier than it was. It was difficult to assess a classroom that is unfamiliar. With the knowledge of high quality classrooms in mind I was able to handle the task and did so in the most professional way I could. This made me appreciate all the teachers who were striving to have high quality programs for their students.

I took a class called Administration of Child Development Programs at Chico State. In this class I learned what is involved in directing a child care center. I had the opportunity to create an indoor and outdoor environment for a child care program that I had implemented. It was difficult, but helped me appreciate how much hard work and planning is involved when creating a high quality program.

I have had the opportunity to be an intern in two completely different sites. Looking back on my first internship I would say that the program site was not a high quality program. I think at the time I felt this way, but did not really understand why. After continuing my education and learning what high quality programs look like, I see now how important it is to complete an Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale. It would be beneficial for all programs to complete the scale in order to see where there are lacking or see just how well they are doing.