

Running head: CASE STUDY

Child Development Case Study

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Abstract

For this case study I decided to observe Tatum, who is a two year old girl who lives with her mom and dad. Most of the observing took place at her house and her grandma's house where she was the most comfortable. I watched her physical, cognitive and emotional developments and related them back to what we have been learning in class. She was very advanced in most of the stages but the only place where I could see she was right at the level was in her emotional development. Although I was able to observe Tatum for long periods of time when I was with her I was not able to do it as often as I would have liked.

This case study describes the development of a toddler named Tatum. The study is mainly going to take place at her house and her grandma's house. Tatum recently turned two years old on March 22. Her father's name is Pat and he works for a wireless internet company. He grew up in a household of 3 siblings and was the second oldest child. Her mother is Stacy and is the younger of two children in her family. Tatum is the only child so far, one can tell that she enjoys all of the attention from the family members. Tatum has a cousin named Preston that is 2 months older than her and another cousin named Shannon that is 5. She also has two dogs at her house named Rocky and Bogart that she enjoys playing with. Stacy is an elementary teacher so Tatum is very developed cognitively and has been talking since around 14 months of age. She goes to day care every day so she has been able to develop group social skills, but she can still be very shy at times. She enjoys running around with the dogs and throwing their ball for them. Tatum is a very active child that loves being outside and playing.

Observations of Tatum have spanned over the past year and a half. Her physical growth and motor development skills appear to be the most advanced. Her family and her surroundings have contributed the most to her development in these areas. Her parents both golf in their free time so that leads to a lot of activity and family time where she can play around and experiment with her surroundings. Like mentioned earlier she also has two cousins that are older than her so that also gives her experiences and opportunities to develop her motor skills as well.

. Tatum had a very normal birth and her mother also mention there were no complications or struggles during birth. Tatum now weighs twenty five pounds which means she falls in the twenty fifth percentile according to the CDC growth chart. She is also thirty four inches tall which puts her in the fifty percentile. Her mother also informed me that according to all of the doctor's charts she is tall and skinny for her age. Tatum has been accomplishing all of her

physical landmarks before or right at when she should be. According to Feldman (2007), an average child should be able to stand alone well around eleven and a half months. With Tatum she was able to start doing this around seven months and was walking around at ten months. This is when it started to become recognizable that she was a little ahead of the normal time frame that most children achieve certain stages of growth.

One of the recent activities that showcased her fine motor skills was her swinging a golf club. For her second birthday her parents got her a set of golf clubs and she went out in the yard and was able to swing them. Although she was not swinging them exactly the right way she was able to pick up on how her dad was swinging them and then she was doing it. She also enjoyed tearing the wrapping paper off her gifts at her birthday. She was able to tear the paper off by herself and only needed a little help with the tape. Another development Tatum has mastered is dancing and moving when she hears music. The Developmental Checklist says that is one thing that children ages 12-24 months should accomplish. There have been many times when her mom will sent a video on her phone of Tatum dancing to music from an iPod or off of the TV. Another stage off the checklist is being able to crawl down stairs backwards. She probably would be able to do this but around 12 months she fell down a couple of stairs and now she is scared, so she scoots on her bottom down the stairs. She also is starting to potty train in the past couple of months. She struggled at first but seems to be getting the idea of it now and is doing well.

In general Tatum seems to be ahead of most of the stages in the book and has accomplished most of the developments on the checklist. She has a very good understanding on what is going on in her surroundings and has learned her limitations. She has done a great job of using her fine and gross motor skills and is starting to master many of the stages. The main

reason she is so advanced in many of these areas is because her mother is a teacher so she is able to work with Tatum and help push her to grow in her physical development.

After observing Tatum for quite some time now it is very easy to see that she is very advanced in her cognitive development. She has done an excellent job of developing her language and has started to put small sentences together. Since Tatum attends day care daily during the week she has the opportunity to interact and practice her language development with many other toddlers. Having that time to play and interact with the other children can be a main reason why she has been able to be ahead of the normal advancements for her age.

One thing that Tatum loves more than anything is singing rhythm songs and repeating what her mom says. Every day on the way to school her mom plays a game where she will say “Hello Tatum” and go through her entire family’s names and then Tatum repeats the saying for each family member. There have been a couple of times where her mom will say an aunt’s name and then Tatum will say her uncle’s name instead because she probably just thinks about what she has connected with her aunt’s name. Another stage that Tatum has mastered according to the Developmental Checklist (Gober 2002), is that she really enjoys listening to the same story over and over again. Since her family loves Notre Dame her favorite book that she has her dad read is Let’s Go Irish. She will go pick up the book and sit on his lap and then when the story is over she will turn right back to the front cover and say “again, again, again.”

Another developmental stage that Tatum is mastering is being able to name and identify different colors. One of her toys is a ball that has different shapes cut out throughout the ball. She then has to find the shape that correlates with the hole in the ball and put the shape into the hole. One way her mom works with her cognitive development is by having Tatum name each color of

the missing piece before she puts it into the ball. According to Feldman (2007), part of the Bayley Scales of Infant Development has an infant being able to name four colors between the ages of 38-42 months. Even though Tatum is only at 25 months she is able name off more than four colors. This is another example of Tatum being advanced in her different developmental stages.

Not only is Tatum very developed cognitively but she is also very advanced in her emotional development. There have been many times when Tatum has shown her emotional side around people. Although she is a very calm child she has times where she will get upset or resist what her parents tell her to do like most children. Tatum shows her frustrations and can go through many different moods within a short period of time.

One thing that Tatum loves doing is rebelling and resisting what her parents tell her to do. Over Christmas break we were at Tatum's house and her mom told her it was time to start eating. After taking a couple of bites of her food she decided to throw her fork on the ground, she then started laughing. Her grandma picked up her fork and then she threw it on the ground again and laughed. This time her dad told her that she was not supposed to throw her fork and the next time she threw it she would get in trouble. Like any other two year old would do she threw it on the ground and starting laughing like it was the first time. According to The Developmental Checklist (Gober 2002), children around the age of two start becoming rebels. Tatum has mastered this because there have been multiple times where she will test her parents when they say no or if they tell her not to do something.

Another stage from the checklist that Tatum developed at a young age is showing her frustrations. Since around five months old Tatum has always tried to fight having to get into a car

seat. Whenever it was time to go home and they headed out to the vehicle Tatum would start fussing. But when they got her buckled in and would start driving around she would fall asleep almost every time. This is one thing that is confusing about her because you would think that children would like being somewhere they are comfortable, especially if they can fall asleep. Even today she is still the same way where she will throw a little fit when they take her out to the car but eventually she will fall asleep. Her parents said they plan to travel at night because they know that if she gets in the car seat then she will fall asleep and it makes traveling easier on them.

The other side of Tatum is a very enjoyable child that has a lot of fun and is always smiling and laughing. She enjoys being around people and has a blast playing with her toys, dogs or family members. Her mom decided to make cupcakes with bugs on top of them for her birthday. When she saw them for the first time she started jumping up and down and kept saying “ucky bugs”. Her smile never stopped from the time she started eating them until the time everyone left that day.

Working with Tatum over the past couple months has been a blast for me because I have been able to observe and watch her grow and develop many new skills. From a personal standpoint I would have to say that I feel Tatum is very advanced in many of her developments. When comparing her to the Developmental Checklist (Gober 2002), she had almost every skill developed for a two year old and was already starting to develop some of the three year old skills. One thing that surprised me about her is she did not change how she behaved whether she was at her house or her grandma’s house. She showcased the same skills in both environments because she was comfortable with both places.

One thing I wish I could change is the amount of times I got to see Tatum during the time period of creating this case study. Since she lives an hour away it was tough to just drive to her house to observe her. When I was able to monitor and see her growth it would be for 6 or 7 hours so I may not have been able to catch her in all of her moods. The good thing is that I have been around her for almost a year and a half so I have been able to remember things from the past that she did and compare them to what she does now. Another struggle that I encountered is I did not have the opportunity to have one on one time with Tatum a lot. Since she is the only niece around her grandma then it makes it hard to take her away for a little time. Almost all of the time I was able to observe her there was family so I would say that was a limitation of mine for the case study. I wish I would have been able to get on a level with her where I could test her on some skills without anybody in the room to see if her emotional development would be any different. On one specific time I got to watch Tatum throw a fit in McDonald's because her dad would not let her hold her cup. Her parents rule is she is not allowed to hold her cup unless there is a lid on it, so she started throwing a fit but her dad cooperated with her and calmed her down. The resolution was they would both hold onto the cup as she took a drink.

Tatum did a really good job of cooperating with me when I was there observing her. I have never been around her and just thought about her developments and tried to pay attention to why she does certain things so it was interesting to me to watch her play in that way. Writing the case study allowed me to monitor children in a different way and try to understand why they do the little things they do. Tatum's parents were very helpful for me because when I was not able to go observe her in person they would tell me about little stories and send videos of her doing things so I could keep up on her development.

Works Cited

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Physical Development (Able to prop herself up with her arms/gross motor skills)



Emotional Development (Showing joy in her face and her fine motor skills)



Cognitive Development (Being able to unwrap/take apart things)

