When first approaching this assignment, I was skeptical of how much of an impact that it could have on me as an educator. My skepticism was a complete afterthought within minutes of arriving at Ladoga Elementary School and spending time with my case study, 5 year old Josh. Upon completion of the 20+ hours that I spent with him, I now wonder how I could have had any doubts in my mind. Although my previous knowledge of Josh and his attributes were, and still relatively are limited, I feel that he has made a big impact on me as an educator.

The main thing that Josh showed me in our time together was that it is completely fine for children, and people in general not to be “normal” in all aspects of their lives. I never have really liked the term “normal” in the first place because it seems somewhat stereotypical, but now after spending time with Josh, I realize even more that people can be excellent members of our society even if they are not considered “normal” in the developmental sense. In fact, the only level that Josh would have been considered “normal” in would have been his physical development. This lack of “normalcy” however in no way stopped Josh from being an excellent hard working student.

I have mentioned in the past that I feel one of the main reasons that Josh is able to overcome his faults and be successful is because of his excellent teacher, Miss Powers. Although it was evident that Josh was a little behind the average child cognitively and emotionally, this did not stop Miss Powers from helping him to success just like everybody else. Through conversations with her, but also from mere observations, it was clear to me just how drastic the strides Josh had made in Miss Power’s class were. This serves as a motivational tool to me as well, as it shows me just how big of a difference a teacher can make in a child’s life.
Whenever someone asks me what my goals are in life, the only answer that I can give them is; “I want to make a difference to someone, I want something that I do to change a person’s life in a positive manner.” Often times, I question the validity of this statement. However, after spending time with Josh and seeing the way that he interacted with me, and more importantly in this case, his teacher Miss Powers, it reminded me of why this is my goal in life. It showed me that my goal is truly attainable. After seeing the impact that a great teacher can have on a student, it revived my motivation to continue on in this profession. Josh has made drastic strides since the beginning of Kindergarten, but I have no doubts that these are nothing compared to what he is truly capable of. With the proper help and caring environment, I am fully confident that Josh will be able to attain the title of a perfectly “normal” child.