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Child Development

Case Study

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At the Manchester Church of the Brethren Nursery class there is two classes. The first is Ms. Kathy's three and four year olds and there is also Ms. Linda's four and five year old class. In this case we are going to focus on Ms. Kathy's class. In this class of seven children included a three year old boy named Sam.

Sam has tight nit families that all live very close together around North Manchester, Indiana. Sam's immediate family includes a father that works out of his home as a musician. This helps when Sam is not at Nursery School he goes home to spend time with his father and little brother. Sam and his family live in the town which encourages this family to walk around town and spend time outdoors. While the boys are at home Sam's mom works as a professor at Manchester College.

Sam enjoys trees, trucks, crayons, popcorn makers, and cars. He very much enjoys building things, working with his hands. He learns on his own he needs to feel things and think for himself so that he can retain the information needed. He does not enjoy being told what to do and when to do it; he is definitely a free thinker. As mentioned above Sam is the oldest child and is very protective of his younger brother. He enjoys helping him to learn, and talking for his younger brother even though he is perfectly capable of speaking for himself.

PART III

What do the letters S-A-M spell? Just ask my little friend Sam, who will automatically tell you that these letters spell his name. Sam enjoys playing with his construction toys and is constantly solving problems that emerge during his playtime. Some of these problems include: How do you get something from the “backhoe” to the dump truck when they are different sizes; and how to get the truck from the outside of a block building he has constructed to the inside of it. During Sam’s playtime, the other children in the three-year old group tend to use objects that are at hand rather than using their imagination as Sam does. Through observing Sam, and talking with his parents about his overall growth, it clearly shows the origins of his cognitive ability at this time.

One major factor that has added to Sam’s development is his parental interaction which started before birth. He was read to and played music while he was still in the womb. After he was born his parents continued to read to him, talk with him (not using baby talk) and allowed him to enjoy music. All of these things helped him to develop his thinking ability even before he was able to convey words verbally. Ultimately this has lead to his imagination, comprehension and his desire to have books read to him.

As Sam moved into toddlerhood his infant tendencies continued. It was also at this stage that he began to watch television and movies. In addition, he began to make sounds, listen to music, and mimic reading. With the edition of television into his life he began to make connections between words and pictures. In the preschool stage he is still attracted to television, especially “Bob the Builder” and today he explains what is taking place on the show to his little brother, Calvin.

Sam's love for books has continued into yet another stage: the preschool stage. An example of this occurred when I was reading a story to another student, as soon as the story began he ran across the room to hear it. I observed that it was as though his love of books today is contributing to both turn knowing letter sounds and communicating with what seems to be long sentences. Another thing that I found interesting, that has to be a learned skill, is when you ask him a "deep" question that he does not know the answer to, he goes and finds a book to learn the answer. Like any other preschooler, his attention span is only so long, and with Sam that is very true except for with books. He seems to be more interested in books and trucks and could play with both for an hour at a time.

He is also hungry for knowledge and learning and repeats back what you say to him; I believe this is him formulating a scheme for himself within his head. He is a very practical little boy; he knows what things are supposed to be used for and that he can not use them for anything else.

Sam is the only boy in his preschool class, which leads to a variety of things going on in his head. This leads Sam to think that he plays with the trucks and the girls play with other things. Sam also does not like to share his toys with the other children and will only share with the adults in the classroom. My thoughts on this is the fact that he is forced to share at home therefore at school is his time that he does not want to have to share with anyone, which is what he has reasoned or it could be something that is going on mentally. According to the ABC news (2006) this is not uncommon behavior; boys are not afraid to take toys away from others, and they are often to start conflict with other children. This is caused by boy's having more testosterone which causes them to form social connections differently from girls in that they boys use commanding

language and tend to work alone. The article also states that in the preschool stage, children prefer to play with a person of the same sex. The reason for this is still largely unknown. Finally girls grow twenty times faster than boys both mentally and physically ('The Female Brain,' 2006). This explains many of the tendencies that have been observed in Sam.

Through my observations of Sam's backgrounds, interests, and interactions with others indicate a normal pattern of growth. His life has been affected by the world going on around him as well as gender roles that have taught him how to act in social interactions. The act of playing with others reveals and more about Sam than he realizes in the way he starts conflict, uses language, and seeks out same sex playmates. These types of observations help child developmentalists determine what is normal behavior for children in each age group in order to evaluate physical, emotional and cognitive development.

PART IV

Even the tiniest baby has it's own personality that changes as the baby grows into a toddler and continues through the other stages. From gurgles to words to sentences, it all shows the child's personality. These personalities are influenced by the interactions with others and also how they grew up. This personality shows the emotional and social interactions of that particular child.

As mentioned previously Sam talked especially early for a child his age. This happened because as an infant the people around him spoke to him as a person, not using

baby talk. He quickly picked up upon this verbal language and was able to use it in his daily life. This has helped to create the very talkative little boy that I know today.

Sam has built multiple relationships with various people. His extended family all live relatively close to him, so he has grown up with a large extended family. His parents also work within professions that include a lot of people which often times introduces their children to a lot of “strangers”. Even with all of this interaction with other people Sam is still very cautious around people that he does not know. In fact during the past few weeks Sam has at least twice had a ruff start at school, not wanting his dad to leave. This has taken place the two times that there was an unknown visitor in the classroom. Something that I find particularly interesting is the fact that Sam seems to get along better with people that are older than him rather than kids his own age.

At the preschool Sam only plays with two children in his class. The one is the only other boy in the class, Gavin and a little girl that is very active, Karissa. However these three children can not play together they can only play in pairs. And the two when they play with Sam are two very different things. When Gavin and Sam play together they make a lot of noise and run in continuous circles with some kind of a machine. Another thing that takes place when these boys play together is that they are not afraid to take the toys away from one another. This does not take the toys away from the girls in his class. However when Sam and Karissa play together they will color or build something but it is much quieter and not nearly as active.

Sam is very protective of his little brother. He has told me about how he kind of remembers the day that he became a big brother and how now he has a instant friend, his little brother Calvin. As I mentioned above he does to some degree have stranger

anxiety, however the first time I met him he was with his little brother and he was the one that convinced him that it was okay to talk to us. As mentioned in an article by Joan Newman this is completely normal and siblings are a large factor that applies to the cognitive development of children. Sometimes they have more rivalry, while others are the best of friends and playmates.

Sam has built multiple relationships with people especially the members of his immediate family. For without their influence Sam would not be the little boy that we know today. Sam is a little boy with a lot of friends in various ages and his favorite friend is his little brother.

Bibliography

Excerpt: "The Female Brain". (2006).

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Books/story?id=2274147&page=1>