

Case Study on 

Jay Sheets

Child Development

Professor Stetzel

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Abstract

In this report, the observer is studying a four year old child named . While observing him,  displayed his cognitive, physical, and emotional skills in his normal setting. Throughout this report one can see where  has shown his strengths and weaknesses through various activities he has accomplished. An area where  is the strongest is in his cognitive ability. He can carry on conversations and has a high vocabulary. The area that he lacks in is his social/emotional skills, due to the fact that he is not around other children his age. This paper provides more detailed information on  personal make up in all three of these areas and can be useful for the reader for knowledge on children his age.

Introduction

For my case study I will be observing .  is four years old with a loving mother, father, and younger sister. He was the first child born, and is verbal with limited people. Physical activity is not one of his strengths, although he is advanced in his cognitive skills. He can read and learn things very quickly. His mother and father are both working parents. Mom is a doctor, while his dad works for a pharmaceutical. The parents seem to have  living a sheltered life.  is not really allowed to watch very much television. Some things he loves to do are play with sticks and play with Thomas the train. What he does not like is being told what to do and sharing. An interesting point made was that  does not have very many friends his age. When he is around people his age he tends to cry or ask for his mommy. Over the course of my case study, I have a feeling I will find out more of what  strengths and weaknesses are in life.

Physical Developments

Andrew is a child that seems to show excellent developments from a physical standpoint. Each area of his physical development might not be perfect, but he is learning to master them quickly.  has been right at the average in development from prenatal to infancy. As an infant  was a little smaller than normal, but was highly responsive to people. Now that  is four year olds he has development has been average for the most part as he is becoming older. From my own observations, I have found  can perform numerous tasks by himself. However, there are also a couple of things that  lacks in as well for his age group.

It is hard to establish whether or not  is in the norm for his age group because he is not in an environment that allows me to observe more than just  and his little sister.  showed me his sensation for certain things and also how he uses perception. Through watching him play, it interested me how  would be working on taking something apart or building it. He would carefully analyze in a sense of what his next move should be. Another important attribute to have is a good personal hygiene such as washing hands, and wiping his nose is very important in the physical development, which  performed well (iVillage 2009).  physical structure is average at this stage in his life. He is a little underweight according to his mother, but nothing to be concerned about. We talked about how nutrition and proper eating plays an important role in the full development of a child (Feldman 2007).  is limited to fast food or junk food because the mother and father do not like how harmful the food can be to his body. Fine motor skills seem to be working well for . He can do various activities for his age groups such as climbing, balancing, skipping and even jumping on the trampoline (iVillage 2009). By watching this I could relate it to the Dynamic Systems Theory where he is using his muscles, perception, cognition, and motivation to perform activities (Feldman 2007). One setback  has is how he still sucks his thumb. At this age he should be away from sucking his thumb and a method the parents are using to help him stop is by placing a plastic cone over his thumb. One other minor detail that stuck out to me was  did not know how to throw or catch a ball very well. We have been spending time on helping him with this activity.

Overall,  is physically developing properly and efficiently from my observations. Although it is hard to compare him to any other children his age, I could tell from past

experience with children and also from my readings from my child development book. Some of the weaknesses I discussed above are some of the important points I am making to help strengthen that area for . Being creative and using outdoor play,  has developed a success in mastering his physical development skills. He is on the right path for becoming a well rounded, five year-old pre-schooler next year.

Cognitive Developments

For most of  life, he has been well established in his cognitive developments.  mother explains how he has showed positive signs of early advancement from infancy to toddlerhood. Although he is by himself and not around other children most of the time, according to other observations Andrew is in the upper percentile for his age group.  does an excellent job writing his name with the right letters and also with memory.

At four years old  is starting to develop his own imagination.  has ample opportunities to develop his imagination because he lives in a diverse environment. This experience is from a great philosopher named Vygotsky, who explains it is not the teacher or the school builds the knowledge, but the environment (Feldman 2007). According to Parent and Child health, four year olds should start to be able to draw people figures (Child Health 1998). Drawing is one of  strengths, which he practices daily at home on his drawing board creating pictures of his family and pets. When his parents demonstrate how to do something simple such as putting the cap back on a pop bottle,  can repeat what they have shown him. By doing this,  is displaying his mental reasoning which is in the preoperational stage of his cognitive ability (Feldman 2007) His short term memory is outstanding; he also has

a substantial long term memory as well.  can think back to what happened the day before, and he can talk about what he is going to do the next day. This is something most children three and up should be able to achieve (Child Health 1998). At four years old,  mom estimated that he has roughly one thousand different ways he can create sentences. This is right around the average for children of this age.

Some of the cognitive limitations that  has displayed are minor, and he will eventually overcome them.  is under the impression that anything he says or thinks is always right. If someone tries to tell him otherwise he does not believe them. This concept occurs during the operational stage (Feldman 2007).  has another small problem with something called conservation. Conservation is when a child wants to get the biggest and best of anything presented to them (Feldman 2007). During an experiment,  was presented with two cups, a tall one and a fat one. As the cups were placed in front of him, the observer placed the same amount of orange juice in both. From  perspective, he thought the taller cup held more water because it looked bigger. During the experiment  was explained how they both have the same amount and the cups are just shaped different. He did not believe what was being said for quite some time.

 seems to excel more in his cognitive development than in his physical development. His mother and father are both well educated and successful at what they do. He is excelling cognitively because most of the games he plays with are ones that build knowledge. Another part that is vital to  knowledge is that his parents limit his television time.  is presenting great examples through various activities that show he is above the norm in his age group. His parents are trying to challenge him even more with higher level activities

because he is advancing so fast and is absorbing everything at this age; his cognitive skills are growing quickly.

Emotional Developments

When discussing the social and emotional aspects of a child at the age of four,  provides the true definition of it. At this age children become a little more independent and start to even talk back to their parents because they feel that they are old enough to not do anything (iVillage 2009). Since  is not in school or a daycare he has not developed his social skills to the maximum yet with other children. On the other hand when he is around other adults or people he knows fairly well, he seems to carry on conversations easily.

 has always been notorious for his vocabulary and speaking ability. As he grows and becomes wiser, he is starting to ask questions on certain things and then carry's on a conversation about them. By observing this  seems to be right on track for his verbal skills. As far as  playing with other children, he usually has the mentality of the Onlooker play. This is where the child sits back and observes the other children at play (Feldman 2007). As  was watching some children at play he would ask his mother what they were doing, which falls under what the Onlooker play is like.  is not someone to share for the most part, so when it comes to sharing toys with his sister he usually shows aggression towards her. This is an aggression called instrumental, where the he desires to play with the toy that his sister is playing with (Feldman 2007).  has yet developed friends his age, whether it is with other children in his church nursery, or his mother's friends children.

As  goes to the nursery, his mother says that he shows signs of stranger anxiety. When his mother leaves his view he starts to become shy and keeps to himself. Often times he acts out in crying and does not like to be around the other kids.  is not use to other children and this might be why he acts how he does when he is around other children his age. While observing  play football outside one day, he showed signs of roughness towards his sister. He would try and tackle her and act like he was a ninja.  does not show violence like in shooting or anything because he has not been placed in a setting where he can observe it.

From observing , he has shown me a multitude of differences in his emotional and social developments.  is a well behaved child, who rarely throws temper tantrums unless he is severely tired. As  is placed in an environment he tends to show signs of discomfort and wants his mother or father to come back and get him. While placed with other children  sits back and watches without associating with them. When  becomes older he will become more involved with children his age due to pre-school and other activities which will help increase his social skills.

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It is difficult to establish whether or not  is in the norm for his age group because he is not in an environment around peers, just his little sister.  demonstrated his sensation for certain things and also how he uses perception when deciding what he wants to do next in his activity. Through watching him play,  was observed working on taking something apart or building it. He would carefully analyze, in a sense, what his next move should be. Another important attribute to have is a good personal hygiene, such as washing his hands, and wiping his nose; it is very important in the physical development, which  performed well (iVillage 2009).  physical structure is average at this stage in his life. He is a little underweight, according to his mother, but nothing to be concerned about. Nutrition and proper eating habits play an important role in the full development of a child.  fast food or junk food exposure is limited because the mother and father do not like how harmful the food can be to his body. Fine motor skills seem to be working well for . He can do various activities for his age group such as climbing, balancing, skipping, and even jumping on the trampoline (iVillage 2009). This connects to the Dynamic Systems Theory where he is using his muscles, perception, cognition, and motivation to perform activities

(Feldman 2007). One observation made that  is still performing is sucking his thumb. At this age he should be pretty much done sucking his thumb, and a method the parents are using to help him stop is by placing a plastic cone over his thumb. One other minor detail that stood out was  not knowing how to throw or catch a ball very well. Time has been spent helping him with this activity.

Even though it is hard to compare  to any other children his age, the observer could tell from past experiences with children and from the readings in Feldman's 2007 *Child Development* book that he is physically developing properly. Being creative and using outdoor play,  has developed a success in mastering his physical development skills. He is on the right path for becoming a well rounded, five year-old pre-schooler next year.

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Reflection

Over the course of roughly three months, I have observed  grow emotionally, physically, and cognitively right before my eyes. Because of this experience, I have learned so much about children at this age and their tendencies in this world. It is amazing to me how

much a child like  can grow up right before my eyes, due to the fact I have been around him since birth. I was never able to have the experience of growing up with a little brother, but through this project I felt like I gained one in .

By knowing  already from before this project, he did not surprise me too much with anything he did. He is right on schedule for all three of the categories of cognitive, physical, and emotional aspects. The only part that he was lacking in was the social part. This did not surprise me because of the environment he lives in. He does perfectly fine talking to his parents or people he knows well, but when he is around other kids his age he tends to become shy. He has not had the chance to be placed in a setting with other kids his age. Once he begins school I believe this will change and he will be fine. By reading and discussing the different aspects of children  age and going out into the real world and observing them, it really allowed me to connect with what I am learning from class. It is one thing to read about how kids act or how they perform, and then it is completely different to visually see it in person.

Overall I thoroughly enjoyed spending my time with  and expanding my knowledge on how children perform cognitively, physically, and emotionally. By doing this I have obtained more information that I can use for both teaching and parenting. As a teacher, I will be aware of why a child is acting the way he or she is and what I may be able to do to help that child. Parenting is along the lines of teaching, but in my mind is much more difficult because the child is relying on you to help them develop and grow.  has provided me with the knowledge of what I can expect to experience when I become older and start to have my own kids.

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Orn, Lisa and Alex