Chesapeake College

ECD 270 Practicum in Early Childhood Development

Self-Reflection Journal

1. **What were the ages of the children you spent time with during this half of the semester?**

The ages were from 6 months to five years old. With concentration in a two year old classroom and four to five year old classroom.

1. **Taking into account the dynamics of the group and the children’s individual interests, do you feel that the classroom arrangement was effective? Explain your answer and if you would make changes what would they be?**

Both classrooms were developmentally appropriate per the age groups. While the effectiveness can be disputed in both rooms, it seems to work for the teachers.

In the 2 year old room, the space is lacking in size, in contrast to all the toys and supplies within the classroom. It is also not the best layout, having the library, a quiet area, next to the indoor physical activity area/climber.

In the 4 and 5 year old room, it is so divided, that if you are in the back of the room, you cannot see the children in the front, blocked by a tall shelf. This is not ideal when you have all the centers open and are trying to work with others in the back (where the tables are located).

1. **Based on your interactions with the children, staff members and your experience with carrying out lesson plans, circle time, transitions, etc., identify strengths in your teaching skills, also identify areas of improvement.**

My strengths would be guiding/ teaching children through lesson plans, while also being able to adapt to changes in the “plan” when and where as needed. I do struggle sometimes in how to properly manage behaviors. This happens when children are constantly being told to stop something, or continually ignoring the rules set forth. I feel this is also a struggle because they aren’t my classrooms, with my rules and procedures in place. So, it is difficult to insert myself into those situations. I only step in when I feel it is absolutely necessary, i.e., when a teacher isn’t around or a student is potentially dangerous to others around.

1. **Reflect on your experiences in regard to behavioral management. Were there any instances where you observed or were directly involved with a child that displayed unacceptable behavior? Briefly describe the behavior what the cause was and how the situation was handled. What did you learn from this experience?**

There was one child that almost constantly pushed the limits and boundaries, up to the point of causing unsafe actions and conditions to not only himself, but to others around. When the child arrives and before he leaves (when the mother enters the room), he starts to become very physically aggressive and active by jumping, climbing, and hanging on bookshelves, steps, couches and chairs. He also uses the indoor activity areas/climbers in unsafe ways (hanging off the side). The behavior approach I used was redirection, but this only seemed to work once the mother had been gone 20-30 minutes, otherwise it was ineffective. I was able to form a pattern of when this behavior occurs, which is right after his mother leaves, is in the room or arrives. Interaction with his mother continues to be unsafe and she continually tries to manage his behavior, even at times saying “I am going to tell your daddy.” She seems very overwhelmed at times, as she is 19 years old, having 2 children under 3 and is 6-7 months pregnant. I learned that it is important to also understand a child’s home life. Maybe all the change, and the mother being overwhelmed can be sensed by the child, causing him to be overwhelmed. I would definitely try multiple behavioral management techniques to see what works best for him, as the redirection doesn’t seem to be as effective as another might be; but will not know until it is tried.

1. **How will this experience affect your teaching style when you have your own classroom?**

This shows me that you really have to work with the children and environment to determine what will work best for that group. While, with one group, your classroom may work great and the layout is perfect, another group could have a total opposite experience. This will require you to change—not just lesson plans but also the environment.