Early Childhood Development Essay, Research Paper

Child Observation The child that I chose for my observation is a two-year-old; Caucasian, female named Crystal. While observing her in a private facility, I was able to determine if she is behind, right on target, or even advanced in many areas of development. I observed her physical, intellectual, social and emotional developments. Physical development includes the child’s body size, body proportion, normal growth, brain development, and motor skills. Intellectual development, or cognitive development, includes play patterns, reasoning, memory, attention span, and language development. Social and emotional development includes development of empathy, emotional self-regulation, peer sociability, and sex typing. The child that I observed exhibited normal growth patterns, advanced cognitive development in language especially, and normal social and emotional development. Physically, Crystal is right on target. Even though she is shorter than other children her age, she still achieves all types of activities set forth for her. The general growth curve explains that the growth and changes in the body size is slower during early and middle childhood. As far as gross and fine motor developments are concerned, she is also right on target. On the playground, Crystal is running, jumping, hopping, and riding a bike. When it comes to drawing, Crystal sits very quietly and concentrates on what she is doing. Crystal is advanced intellectually for her age. Experts say that brain development is very rapid during age’s 2-6 years of age. Crystal also has an excellent memory, a wide attention span, and a great imagination. Make-believe is a very important part of Crystal’s everyday routine, but she can distinguish between her imagination and reality. When Crystal tells a story, she tells the story so well that it sounds like the story is true. In reality, the story is fictional and she’ll let you know if the story is true. However, the best evidence of advanced cognitive thinking is in Crystal’s language development. She speaks as though she is five or six years old. Crystal has very advanced language for her age. For example, she said “I am not a baby, I just did it because I am lazy,” with a smirk on her face and her hand on her hip. Crystal’s emotional and social skills are very normal and well developed. Preschoolers often experience an emotion called empathy. Empathy is “the ability to recognize and respond sympathetically to the feeling of others.” (Beck 355-357) In one incident, a child fell down and Crystal ran to the girl and tried to help the little girl. Crystal made sure she was all right. Crystal also is very active in social relationships. During “share time” Crystal shows doesn’t show any signs of shyness. She always gets up in from of class and talks about everything and anything. She is very cooperative in her play with others. When it comes to positive discipline, she understands that what she did was wrong and sits very quietly in a “time out” until her two minutes is up. Crystal is very sociable and friendly. She can walk right up to another child, even if she doesn’t know them and have a conversation with them. In group activities Crystal “fits right in”. When she plays alone by herself, she plays quite effectively on her own. The thing that I observed about Crystal is that she expresses something called sex-stereotyping. When Crystal is told to do something, she would say “….but I’m a girl” and use this as an excuse for not wanting to do what she is told. The book stated, “As early as 2 years of age, kids start to express sex-stereotyping.” Crystal comes from a broken home, in which both parents share custody. She is loved and very well taken care of. Seeing her smile and hearing her laugh is a delight to watch. Unfortunately, I was unable to observe her over a long period of time and I couldn’t find out everything about her development. From my experience with other children her age, weather they are children of friends or family, I believe that her attendance at a preschool has helped her a lot with the majority of her development. Generally, Crystal is a well-rounded, well-developed 2-year-old. She is a smart, insightful, and a joy to be around. I have learned a lot about her development, even in such a short period of time. Even though I have learned a lot about Crystal, the only person can and should be the true observers are the parents. I often find myself watching my brothers, sister, cousins and the children that I work with. In the last couple of weeks, I have come to understand their weaknesses and strong points of development. This is something I had never taken the time to do before. By learning and understanding development, I will be able to understand and help them better.