TODDLER OBSERVATION

Purpose: To see toddlers at work and play in a developmental setting
To connect observed toddler behavior with data from the text
To practice careful, descriptive, objective observation

Directions:

- Plan on spending an hour in the observation room (1501A) of Cabrillo’s Toddler Center (Monday - Friday 8:45am - 1:00pm)
- During the hour use the first 15 minutes to watch and enjoy the little ones and their parents. Notice the differences from the infants you watched last week. Ask yourself, how do these toddlers move? Communicate? Interact? What do they appear to be interested in? After 15 minutes, select one child to focus upon.
- During the next half hour, using your notebooks, take notes on examples of behavior in each of the developmental domains (cognitive/language, psychosocial, physical). These are your observation notes.
- You are done with the observation portion of the assignment. Exit the booth and find a quiet place to complete the remainder of the assignment (down the hallway is room 1507 which is a student room available to ECE students). Use the 3 Infant/Toddler Observation forms provided and choose your 3 best examples of cognitive, physical and psychosocial development and note in the Data section. *Your descriptions should be detailed, objective and descriptive and should include enough information to clearly represent the area of development indicated.*
- Be sure to complete the analysis section as well.
- In class... we will use an assessment tool called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) and its' categories on the opposite side of the form to indicate which measures are represented in each of your examples. Remember that although your example may represent one area of development, the areas do overlap. That is to say, that your example for cognitive/language development may also represent some measures listed under psychosocial or physical development (the child was placing puzzles pieces using a pincer grasp while an adult described their actions).

Note: Your observation notes are not required to be submitted with your final project.
**Examples**

1- **Data:** Elijah stops pounding on the toy and pounds the hammer on the table using both hands. The T. says, "Pound on the toy Elijah, it’s too noisy on the table." E. gazes at his toy then begins to pound on the toy again.

**Analysis:**
E. understands what is being said and follows the teacher’s instructions

2- **Data:** Carlos sits at a small table, arms stretched out, hands limp. The T. places a chunk of banana with the skin on it in front of him. C. looks up at the T. then picks up the banana in his fist. Using his right hand, index finger and thumb, he slowly peels the banana, and then with a flat hand, shoves the whole piece into his mouth

**Analysis:** Carlos alternates between pincer grasp and ulnar grasp

**Be sure to avoid the generalizations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>plays with,</th>
<th>tries to,</th>
<th>starts to,</th>
<th>seems to</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Below is a very good, but still flawed example of an observation. Can you find examples of clear, detailed description in the observation? What about places where the observer has skipped some key behavior? Are there places where the observer passes judgment? evaluates? presumes s/he knows the child’s motivation? generalizes? Read this carefully and mark the places the observation is accurate, and where it has problems.

Marisa sits on the floor, legs out in a V, rocking slowly back and forth while holding a blanket(?) clutched in her arms. One hand softly rubs her cheek as she gazes around the room. She suddenly sits very still staring in the direction of two children who are shoving and crying over a toy truck. M. is very interested! She leans forward (can’t see what happened to the blanket), puts her hands flat on the floor, pushes up her bottom (like an upside down V), bends her knees and stands up. She hurries over to see what is going on. M. stands still, hands at sides, focusing on the teacher and the two children. When one of the children begins to laugh, M’s face relaxes and she smiles. She wants the truck too! So she walks closer, squats down and reaches for the truck with her right hand. The other child yells “NOOOOOO”, and M looks up with a startled expression and then begins to cry. She turns to the teacher for comfort and cries in the teacher’s arms.