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The family unit affects so many aspects of a person's life. It comprises members of a family for one, as well as, roles, shapes how a person develops and matures, relates to socioeconomic issues, and even health history. More specifically, the structure of a family and how a person was raised can set the stage for their future. If a person has a poor upbringing, they may turn to drugs or crime. On the opposite end, even if a person was raised with every opportunity and set up for success, they can still turn to drugs and crime. There are endless factors that affect a person's outcome.

The family that I interviewed is what most people think of when you say the word "family." Marcus, the father, is forty-one years of age and his occupation is a farrier for the NYPD Mounted Unit. Additionally, he works for the Rockland County Sheriff's Department and is contracted out to shoe other client's horses. Sarah, his wife, is an owner of a barn called Garret Mountain Equestrian Center. Sarah as the owner, oversees riding lessons, those who house their horses in the barn, as well as overseeing the riding team and competitions. Sarah is also forty-one years old. Sarah and Marcus have two children together; they are both boys. Jace is eight years of age and he is in the second grade and Miles is four years of age, in preschool.

The Martinez Family is a nuclear family. Their family originates in Greece, Italy, and Puerto Rico. They do not identify with any religious background despite being raised in it. Recreational/leisure activities are slim to none for the family as the parents work seven days a week. However, the children often engage in afterschool activities, playdates, or outings when they are being babysat. The family has no history of issues or problems in their unit. In the past, Marcus, their father, had more of a role in caring for Jace due to his more regular work schedule however, once Miles was born, some health issues presented that changed the family dynamics to both parents being more involved.

To elaborate more on parental roles, the children have just returned to school for half a day due to the coronavirus restrictions. Once they return from school their maternal grandmother, Debi, usually is awaiting them. Around late afternoon, their father returns home and spends some time with them while preparing dinner. Around dinner time, their mother returns home and they eat dinner together as a family. Around 7 pm, the children take bath/showers and are put to bed at 8 pm, as they have a strict bedtime routine. Sarah and Marcus typically take turns doing housework depending on who is available. However, they do have a house cleaner who comes bi-weekly to help maintain the home.

The family would be labeled as a family with preschool/school age children. The development of their children hasn't been an easy topic. Jace would be considered to be in Erikson's industry vs inferiority stage currently. This stage consists of how things are made and run, success in personal and social tasks, increased activities outside the home, increased interactions with peers, and needs support when not successful. He would also be considered to

be in Piaget's Concrete Operational Thought stage. This is comprised of understanding concepts of time, engaging in serial ordering, addition, subtraction, and ability to reverse thought processes. With reference to developmental motor skills, at this point, a child of his age should be able to ride a two-wheeled bike, jump rope, dance, swim, have hand-eye coordination, and improvement in balance. Emotional and social development is impacted by self-esteem and how others view them, and the importance of feeling accepted by peers. At this time Jace exceeds all of these developmental milestones and more. He is also very advanced intellectually for his age. Jace's parents foster his growth and development through encouragement, learning, appropriate after school activities, social interaction, listening to his needs, and challenging him.

At this time, it would be expected for Miles to be in Erikson's initiative versus guilt stage which is when preschoolers feel a sense of accomplishment when succeeding in activities, however, they may feel guilt when extending themselves further than their capabilities. Miles would also be expected to be in Piaget's Preoperational stage: preconceptual phase. This stage is reached when the child displays egocentric thinking, short attention span, understands the concept of opposites, and has an active imagination. At this time, it would actually be expected for Miles to be reaching the intuitive phase which consists of the ability to classify and relate objects, have intuitive thought processes, tolerate others' differences, know acceptable cultural rules, use words appropriately, and begin to question parents' values. Cognitively, Miles is currently in the preconceptual phase still. In terms of motor skill development, Miles would be expected to throw a ball overhand, kick a ball forward, catch a bounced ball, hop on one foot, move backward and forward with agility, use scissors successfully, copy capital letters, lace shoes, and trace a cross or diamond. Unfortunately, Miles does not meet any of these milestones

or even any of the milestones expected of a three-year-old. Miles has very limited communication ability as well. A four-year-old should be speaking in complete sentences using adult-like grammar, tell a story that is easy to follow, seventy-five percent of speech should be understood to an outsider from the family, and the child should have a vocabulary of one thousand five hundred words. At this time, Miles does not meet any of those communication standards. Preschoolers are to cooperate, share, help, make friends, and name their feelings as part of normal emotional and social development. While Miles does cooperate at times, he does not meet any other expectations for his age. Overall, Miles is cognitively and developmentally delayed for his age. His parents intervened at an early age and Miles has been receiving behavioral, occupational, and speech services since approximately eighteen months old. It is very important to promote independence and initiative at this age of development however, Sarah, his mother, tends to baby Miles due to his delay. Miles parents try to promote proper growth and development by providing services for him and focusing on working with him when they can.

The family lives in a home that they own. Their neighborhood is extremely safe and clean. Their geographic mobility is by car. They have appropriate utilities such as water, electricity, etc. The family has two dogs, a turtle, and a gecko. The dogs are professionally trained, and the gecko and turtle are kept in cages, so safety precautions are not needed. The family is not part of any community associations. The parents have a large social network due to their jobs.

The parents have open and appropriate communication patterns with each other and with their children. They consult each other when making decisions so that they are both on board and

aware of what is occurring. Both parents play an active and equal role in their marriage as well as the family, with shared responsibilities. Their type of parenting would be classified as authoritative as they set clear standards of behavior but are also warm and nurturing. Family values consist of respect, good behavior, open communication, and always showing love for each other. At this time, the family is meeting the children's current needs for affection, love, and understanding. For a time, Jace was being pushed to the side due to Miles' ongoing health issues and lack of a diagnosis. The family realized that more of their focus was placed on Miles and they realigned. The family is very well off financially, fortunately and they have more than enough resources to provide for the needs of the family.

The health history of a family is very important because it speaks for the patterns of the family, if there are any genetic predispositions, and may indicate future diseases in children. Marcus is a very healthy and active person. He has a history of kidney stones which may stem from his mother who also suffers from kidney stones. He has no allergies. Sarah has no history of health problems or allergies. She is a smoker though. Jace has no history of health problems or allergies. Miles has a history of seizures from birth, occurring approximately every two months until one year of age. The seizures then occurred about every six months. He has no known allergies. He has been hospitalized many times for these seizures and for overnight studies of his brain activity. There have been no findings on the seizures. The seizures have caused obvious effects on his growth and development causing significant delays despite early intervention. The family has sought many doctors including a holistic doctor after receiving no diagnosis. The holistic doctor believes the seizures were caused by vaccinations as he stopped having them after stopping vaccination administration. The doctor also placed Miles on a strict gluten free and

dairy free diet as he said that his body could not process these things. Unfortunately, after two years there has been no change in the seizure pattern. The family believes the seizures are correlated to lack of sleep or driving in the car, but no official diagnosis has been given. Additionally, at this time the family has not had Miles re-evaluated for spectrum disorders as it seems they are in denial.

Nutritional intake in the family is adequate despite Miles' special diet restrictions. For the most part, they eat healthy, but they do tend to order out quite a bit as they don't have much time to cook. With reference to social interaction, Jace is a bit shy and he does not have many friends. He needs the extra push to interact with children. Miles enjoys interacting with children but proves difficult when his speech is a bit delayed for his age.

The family does not have many stressors. It would mainly be the fact that they work so much and have little time to see each other. They try to balance this out by planning weekly date nights and taking days off when possible to spend with the children. The family fortunately has a good support system to help with childcare and stressors.

If I were to create a nursing diagnosis for this family it would be: Delayed development related to abnormalities in cognitive function evidenced by delayed language skills of expression and reception, uncontrolled motor coordination, and social adaptation difficulties. The expected outcome would be that the child would experience improved development according to stages of development such as Piaget or Erikson's stages. Nursing interventions would be assessing the factors causing developmental disorders of children, identifying and educating the parents on

how to facilitate optimal child development, giving the child enough time to communicate, giving positive reinforcement on the results achieved by the child, encouraging the child to interact with other children and family members, and educating the family on the benefits of an evaluation for disorders.

The family as a whole has a strong unit together however, the lack of an evaluation for Miles places him at a great disadvantage. Early intervention is key if there is a spectrum disorder present, to give him the best possible developmental outcomes for the future. Education on the urgency of an evaluation would be beneficial to the parents.

References

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