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Human Behavior II
Reflection #4

Identify and describe each of the 5 steps of the "serve and return" interaction.

The first step in the "serve and return" interaction is, '*Sharing the focus*' which includes recognizing what the child is focusing on, and meeting the child with a physical act that shares the focus on what they are giving their attention to. This helps build the relationship between you and the child and also encourages curiosity within the child. The next step is '*Support and Encourage*' through more physical activities, such as words of encouragement and physical gestures can help encourage certain behaviors and activities that the child is showing interest or engaging in. This helps the child to feel that their thoughts and feelings are understood. The next step is "*Name it*" you are helping the child form language connections in their brain to help them identify the things that they are giving attention to. This step includes you naming the objects, people, feelings, or actions that they are giving an eye to, to help develop that important brain connection. The fourth step is "*Take turns, back and forth*" which helps the child grow in self-control and learn to get along with others. In this step, it's important to take time to wait for the response of the child, which helps the child grow in independence and confidence. The last step is "*Practice endings and beginnings*" in this step it's important to incorporate the first step of sharing the focus, recognizing when the child goes from one activity to the next. This step helps support the child to interact and grow in the world around them.

Explain the significance of each step in brain development.

Each of the steps in the "serve and return" interaction is crucial, each step is built upon one another in helping the child develop certain parts of their brain. The first step focuses on exercising curiosity, which then leads to bridging their actions to emotions. Next, we see that the

‘Name it’ step starts to develop the language of their interactions. As you continue to go through each of the steps the child is growing in confidence and understanding more of their interactions with the world around them.

What are some concerns for children who don't have the opportunity to experience "serve and return" interactions?

Some concerns for children who aren't exercising ‘serve and return’ interactions may result in a lack of brain development. This can start to show up in different skill sets such as being unable to identify emotions, language development, behavioral problems, poor cognitive skills, and not being fully ready for more social interactions found in school and societal settings. “Serve and return” interactions are a critical part of early childhood development and children who don't have the opportunity to experience these interactions may face a range of challenges.

What are some possible ways a social worker could intervene?

Some possible ways a social worker could intervene can be play therapy, which allows children who have experienced trauma by reinstating the ‘serve and return’ interaction that can help develop the desired development results. Another possible way is through parent education, encouraging parents to grow in skills that can help aid children grow in healthy relationships and interactions. By providing these types of interventions, social workers can play a critical role in ensuring that children have the opportunities they need to experience "serve and return" interactions, which can have a positive impact on their development and overall well-being.

What policies could be implemented to help families with children at this stage?

The policies that could be implemented can help families with children at this stage can, include an increase in funding for early childhood programs, Providing increased funding for high-quality early childhood education programs, such as preschools and home-visiting

programs, can help ensure that all children have access to environments that promote "serve and return" interactions. Another policy that would be beneficial for families at this stage can also include, an increase in research, which studies more closely the impact of 'serve and return' interactions which can help develop more resources for these families and evidential backing in tools that can help them. By implementing these types of policies, governments can play a critical role in supporting families and ensuring that all children have the opportunities they need to thrive.

What further research could be done to increase knowledge in this area?

In order to increase knowledge in this area, research that is conducted long term can help track the development of a child throughout all stages of life, and how the implementation of 'serve and return interactions can result in a positive result found in adulthood. Another area is considering the cultural aspects of this interaction, which can require some changes due to cultural roots and aspects that might not necessarily work for every case. By conducting various types of research, scientists and policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of the role of "serve and return" interactions in child development, as well as the most effective strategies for promoting these interactions and supporting child development.