

## MELISSA BURT-MILLER| REFLECTION #4

**1 and 2-Identify and describe each of the 5 steps of the "serve and return" interaction and explain the significance of each step on brain development.**

The 5 steps are as follows:

1. **Share the focus:** Sharing the child's focus is very important as it is key that parent, or caregiver is paying attention to what the child is focused on. This can be seen when the child for example, is pointing or looking at something. This according to the video is called a serve. The caregiver can return this serve by focusing or responding to the child's serve. This helps strengthen the bond between parent/caregiver and child, as well as helps the caregiver to understand the child's interest, needs and abilities.
2. **Support and encourage:** Providing supporting and encouraging words, rewards or a gentle hug can spark the child's interest and curiosity, this can be done when the caregiver/parent respond by returning to the child's serve. This helps the child to feel seen, heard and motivated.
3. **Name it:** Naming what a child is seeing, doing, and feeling is important for the child, to help them make connections in the brain about the items they see and their names. This also helps them develop their language, focus and vocabulary. In this "name it" process the caregiver/parent can share their focus, provide support and encouragement as they help the child understand names and language. This helps them to understand the world around them and know what to expect.
4. **Take turns, back and forth:** Taking turns helps the child to learn how to build relationships, share with others, exercise patience and develop self-control. It's imperative also that the parent/caregiver wait each time they return a serve so that the

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child can get a chance respond. This helps the child to form their response, develop independence and understand their needs.

5. **Practice endings and beginning:** According to the video, when a child is finish and is ready to move on to a new activity, they tend to make signals. For example, they may start walking away. Therefore, it is important that parents/caregiver pay attention to the child's focus as their child explore their world and surroundings.

### **3-What are some concerns for children who don't have the opportunity to experience "serve and return" interactions.**

Because the 'serve and return' interactions are so crucial for the child in their early stage of life and helps with the child's language, visual, memory, behavior, motor skills and emotions, I believe that a child who don't have the opportunity to experience this interactions may have developmental issues, such as; learning disabilities, speech delay and possibly stress.

### **4-What are some possible ways a social worker could intervene?**

A possible way social worker could intervene is through the provision of psycho-education to expecting mothers (client) about the importance and benefits of 'serve and return' interactions for the child during infancy and toddler stage. This I believe will help reduce, abnormal brain development. Also, social workers can include 'serve and return' interaction activities and training for parents as part of their intervention goal during sessions for expecting mothers.

### **5-What policies could be implemented to help families with children at this stage?**

A policy that could be implemented is a mandatory class that mothers, or expecting mothers must attend at least once during their pregnancy check up to ensure that they are educated about 'serve and return' interactions. Also, this can also be a mandate that is implemented in hospitals

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that mid-wives are mandated to explain to parents before they leave the hospital. Another policy is that daycare centers are to be certified in the area of 'serve and return' interactions, (which must be exercise with every child) in order to operate business.

### **6-What further research could be done to increase knowledge in this area?**

Further research can be done on activities that the parent and child can engage in during play times to help stimulate responses and interaction in 'serve and return'. Parents and social worker can collaborate to carry out further in-depth research on other interactions that plays a vital role in the child's brain development, as a way to do improve the child's well-being.