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Human Behavior in the Social Environment II

Professor Philbert

Reflection #4

Review: Five Steps for Brain-Building from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

Serve and return is a form of brain building through transactional communication between a baby or child and usually their parent or adult. The first point is share and focus. Share the focus is to react and show interest in something a child is showing interest in. This encourages the child to explore their surroundings more and show interest. The second point is support and encourage. Support and encourage is to in an encouraging way when a child is handing you something or dancing. You can do this by thanking them for the toy, or dancing with them, or using words of affirmation like “thank you, good job!” Thirdly, always “name it!” Naming things the child is pointing at, holding, or doing helps the child make sense of his surroundings and have a better understanding of their world. Next, take turns back and forth. Interacting with the child by taking turns back and forth such as allowing them to finish something up or you help them with an activity and allowing them to do some of it themselves, you’re helping the child build confidence and independence. Lastly, practice endings and beginnings. Allowing the child to be done with one activity and moving onto the next. This allows the child to explore the world around him and gives them more opportunity for “Serve and return” interactions.

Serve and return is especially important for babies and young children. It allows their brain to develop in such a way where they will feel confident, independent, and have better communications skills. If a child does not get to experience “serve and return” interactions, it can prolong their brain

development making is difficult to communicate and express needs and wants in a healthy way. It can also make them feel less confident and more dependent on others for their needs. A coworker could help educate the parents on this so they can understand the importance and prioritize these interactions more. They can also recommend good daycares if the parents are too busy or have a disability that prohibits them from really interacting with the child that will allow the child to have more of these experiences. The video was educational and gave practical examples of how parents and teachers can serve and return with a baby or child. However, I am interested to know if serve and return skills can also come from child to child or baby to baby.