

Celeste Bailly

Independent Study and Mentorship

Mr. Speice

March 7, 2018

Type of Observation: Clinical Pediatric OT

Professional Observed: Elissa Cashman

Location: 3880 Parkwood Blvd, Frisco, TX 75034

Date of Observation: March 21, 2018

Time: 11:15am -12:45pm

Excitement in Action

Observation Assessment 2

When a child plays, their mind is filled with excitement and creativity. In Pediatric OT, this excitement is easily radiated onto the surrounding people. After watching Mrs. Cashman perform therapy with young children for an hour and a half, I felt tired even though I was only observing and not actually participating in the activities. Additionally, although the activities themselves seem very physically strenuous, it is still quite evident that they are purposeful and exciting. My observation of Mrs. Cashman was a meaningful experience in that I had the chance to witness the vast differences between procedures performed with higher and lower functioning children.

The first session I observed was with a higher functioning child of likely four or five years of age. This child's main goals were to develop typical everyday skills such as dressing themselves and maintaining balance on obstacles such as swings and squishy

surfaces. The main portion of the session involved four rounds through an obstacle course consisting of a giant bean bag that Cashman would throw on top of the child, a trampoline, colored circles to jump across, a bosu ball, a yoga ball, a paper to practice writing letters on, and a floor to “crabwalk” or “wheelbarrow” across. The obstacle course was made increasingly challenging each round, but it was not difficult to keep the child’s attention because Cashman would use creativity constantly to make the obstacles seem more entertaining and novel to the child. During the last five minutes of the session, the child’s parent came in to go over their progress during that day’s session. The greatest takeaway I had from this first session was the element of creativity that goes into designing challenges for children to complete without losing interest. I will use this takeaway to help implement more creative obstacles and components into my final product model.

The second session that I observed on the same day was with a child of about the same age as the first one, but lower functioning. This child completed a similar obstacle course for the most part, but the tasks were made a bit more simple because they did not yet have the motor skills and sensory awareness to complete the same ones the first child did. One of the things they spent the most time on was a swing that consisted of a flat surface hanging from the ceiling by several strong ropes. The child had to practice holding their head up while being spun and pushed in the swing, and they needed stable core muscles in order to remain sitting upright. This swing inspired me to implement a similar component into my final product, but I do not have a ceiling in the model so I would need to create a structure that extends from the wall and supports the theoretical weight of a child.

Ultimately, this observation was incredibly inspiring regarding how I should adjust the goals and objectives of my final product to better fit the needs of young children of all ability levels. It assured me that the padded floor I installed is definitely necessary to protect the safety of the children. In addition to the inspiration I received for my final product, this observation also instilled new excitement and enthusiasm in me regarding this field of study. I have found that it is incredibly energizing and hands-on to work with children, helping to erase any doubts I had about how interactive the profession is. I look forward to my future correspondences with Mrs. Cashman and am very excited that I took this opportunity to observe Pediatric OT in action.

PDF of Notes:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B62xocLIKbkgTHpaNV92QnRRaXZtZXJJNGZhVHV0dTNIeHo0/view?usp=sharing>