

I Just Want to do What I Want to do.

*Weekly Report 03/19/18 to 03/23/18*

This week has given me amazing and unprecedented experience in the field of Pediatric Occupational Therapy. I had the incredible opportunity to observe Elissa Cashman of Speech & Occupational Therapy of North Texas while she worked with two of her younger patients. The first one was higher functioning and the second was lower functioning. While I was closely observing Cashman in the process, I also found the room we were in to be very inspiring with regards to my final product.

Primarily, I found it a very enlightening experience to watch her work with the children. It had a very different vibe from when I observed my mentor work with an older patient because children are much more active and fast-paced. For instance, one of the favorite activities of both of the children I observed was the swing. There were actually two different types of swings; The higher functioning child used the one that resembled a silk that circus acrobats use and swung much more quickly, while the lower functioning child used the swing that was simply a flat surface hanging from the ceiling. It astounded me how fearless the children were as they were not afraid to be tipped upside-down, spun around, and put through many other disorienting activities.

The light-heartedness and humor of the children also greatly stood out. For instance, when confronted with an activity that one of the children had grown tired of, they grumbled "I just want to do what I want to do." This was hilarious coming from such a young child, and both Cashman and I found this very humorous since we could definitely relate. The child had such entitlement while simultaneously displaying child-like naiveness. This was a great representation of what working with kids is like in general because they are so spontaneous that they can be very relatable on some days yet unpredictable on others.

Another main takeaway I had from this observation was the set-up of the room. I noticed that there were countless giant padded objects, some of them without a clear purpose. The children, while being given specific directions, were nevertheless encouraged to interact with their surroundings as they wished. The entire room was safety-proof. This has given me great inspiration for my final product because I realize now that structures do not have to have an obvious or familiar purpose in order to be

effective and enticing to children. Using the inspiration and experience I have gained from this observation, I plan to move forward with my final product with newfound excitement.