

Lucy Burgert Service Learning Journal

Date: 02/24/05 09:50

1. It being my second week at hilltop in the butterfly room, I was very excited to meet with the children again and really have an opportunity to interact. As I entered the room I knew this week would be different, as the children already remembered me and were excited that I was there. As I was helping them get their shoes and socks on after their naps, I caught myself looking at their clothing. There were only three girls in class today, surrounded by seven boys. One little girl was covered in pink from head-to-toe, the other in a dress, and yet the other in a purple flower outfit. While, on the other hand, the little boys were wearing shirts covered in space ships, dark colors, dinosaurs, police cars, etc. Because I worked this summer at Baby Gap, and live in the US, I realized this was very common and was not shocked-- but at the same time when I stepped back and really looked at the situation I was stunned. The lead teachers are very good at not giving the little girls and boys different tasks. The group plays "beauty shop," and then, as a group, switches to dinosaurs. But, as we were putting on our jackets to go play outside one of the lead teachers pointed out that she had put lipstick on one of the little girls. The group was amazed and as we continued to discuss it, with 3 yr olds-- mind you, it came up that only mommies wear lipstick/makeup. The lead teacher ended the conversation that anyone is capable of wearing makeup, but then under her breath (and to the grown ups in the room) said that men CAN wear lipstick but society wouldn't like it. Which is obviously true, just interesting that 2.5-3 year olds already realize that it is not right for dads to wear makeup, and have already been placed in their socially constructed roles.

Date: 03/08/05 08:28

1. I work last Thursday 3/3/2005 for two hours at Hilltop. Although all the tasks were just as general and fun as always, one of the little girls, xxx, got sick with a temp. over 100 degrees. As if this wasn't enough xxx got a splinter on the playground, and another little girl fell. Needless to say it was a long day...especially when in the end I hurt myself. Everything ended well and the kids were really excited when we decided to play with the bubble machine-- and ran through the bubbles for about 15 minutes. Other than that the day was pretty normal.

Date: 03/11/05 12:53

1. Today, March 10, I worked at Hilltop from 3-5. As I walked in the door the kids were screaming, "Happy Birthday xxx!" xxx is one of the little girls in the class and today was her third birthday. The class waited in excitement for xxx's parents to arrive with a large cake, and juice for all to enjoy. When the cake, covered in pink and purple icing flowers, made its grand entrance the screams were uncontrollable. We then briefly discussed what we would have as a decoration on our cakes for our b-days... sex differences were obvious in these answers. Following the b-day excitement the sugar highs were incredible and we immediately went outside in order to run free. xxx, the quietest boy in the class, took a liking to me at recess asked me to race back-and-forth with him. During our game several other children wanted to play-- the game xxx created-- and I think he felt really involved for once.

Date: 03/18/05 04:11

1. Yesterday while volunteering at Hilltop (3/17/05 3-5pm-- St. Patricks Day) I began to notice very specific gender roles which the children identified with, and their overall beliefs about gender. We were playing "dress up" with all sorts of ballerina, dr, princess, pumpkin, and cow costumes and the children were saying very stereotypical things about each costume- explaining why boys should wear one type of outfit, and girls should wear the other. Through these explanations it was easy to understand how children grow up believing they should act a certain way, depending on their sex, and even obtain certain careers.

Date: 04/04/05 09:49

1. At Hilltop (Thursday March 31, 2005 from 3-5) this past week one of the boy's moms had just had another little boy. During this discussion it was funny because a lot of the teachers, including myself, didn't realize the statements that were being said were shaping the way that they children view the roles of each individual parent. For example, one teacher commented that xxx' hair had not been brushed in days and was a little out of

control. The other teacher added that yes, this was true because mom was out of commission and dad had attempted to take care of xxx. As a result the children are slowly starting to understand that it is the job of the mom to care for and brush xxx' hair. It is no wonder that children, and thus society, believes what it does about the roles that men and would have.

Date: 04/18/05 08:19

1. I volunteered at Hilltop on April 7th from 3-5. We played with dolls as a group, and then played with the McDonald's toys. I began thinking about what I planned to present to the children. I thought a book would be the easiest to read to the children

Date: 04/18/05 08:31

1. April 14, 2004 I volunteered for two hours, from 3-5. I discussed my idea about reading the children a book with the lead teacher, and she said that would be fine- but that she would recommend simply showing them pictures and discussing the images with them. At recess the kids and I had a lot of fun discussing where we would travel if we could. Luke decided that he would go to Checkers, I don't think he really understood. Over all it was another great day with the kids.

Date: 04/21/05 09:17

1. Today at hilltop, from 3-5, I gave my presentation to the kids. I took simple pictures from magazines that showed gender roles either being enforced or being challenged. The kids responded well to the activity, and I received some interesting feed back that will be very useful in my presentation to the Women's Studies class next Friday. I also had the opportunity to take photos of the children while they were playing- this allowed me to take a closer look at what is considered gender roles in a single frame of a picture. Overall the experience went very well and I was very excited that my presentation to the children came off flawlessly.