

Child Observation Project

Following the American Psychological Guidelines

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Section 1

Before starting on the Child Observation Project (COP), I thought that four-year-old physical development was mainly dependent on the child and was not comparable to other four-year-old. Also, I thought that most four-year-old cognitive development was about the same as others their age. Regarding language development, I believed that most children needed speech and language therapy. Concerning social and emotional development, I thought that most children enjoyed talking and playing with other children. I need to learn more physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development. Particularly, I need to know more how children learn and how they handle certain situations.

The family interview helped me understand Joe's family culture. Joe's culture is similar to mine in that he has both a mother and a father living at home, they both speak English, he likes animals and sports and his parents give him praise when tasks are accomplished. Finally, I need learn more about Joe's religious cultural in order to be more responsive in enriching areas of development.

Section 2

Joe is four years old and I will be expecting to see some or all of the following areas of development. Preschoolers (ages 3 – 5) develop strength and stamina for sustained movement as well as speed, timing, balance and coordination (Krogh, 2001, p 136). Additionally, Joe should be able to build towers of ten or more cubes, print simple words, fold paper, use pencil with correct hand grip and string ten beads (Rathus, 2011, p 138). Regarding language and cognitive development (Rathus, 2011, p 159), he should also be able to use a variety of questions, such as: "Can I have?", "When?", and "Why?"

(Sheridan, 2002, p 31). According to Rathus, (Rathus,2011,p 160), Cognitive and Language development are intertwined. Concerning, social and emotional development, I need to observe Joe's play, interacting with other children (Sheridan, 2002, p 28) and if he needs to interact and play with adults (Sheridan, 2002, p 28).

Section 3

Joe was born on July 5, 2012 and his age is 4 years and four months old. His height is 42 inches and he weighs 38 pounds. Joe's culture is he has a mother and father living at home, they both speak English and he attends an English speaking school. The family's goal for Joe is to be happy and healthy. Joe has no special modifications. What Joe does at home is that he likes doing outdoor activities and to play with different types of balls. His parents give him praise when tasks are accomplished. They are also involved with Joe's learning by asking him to count different things at home.

Joe's height and weight charts below:

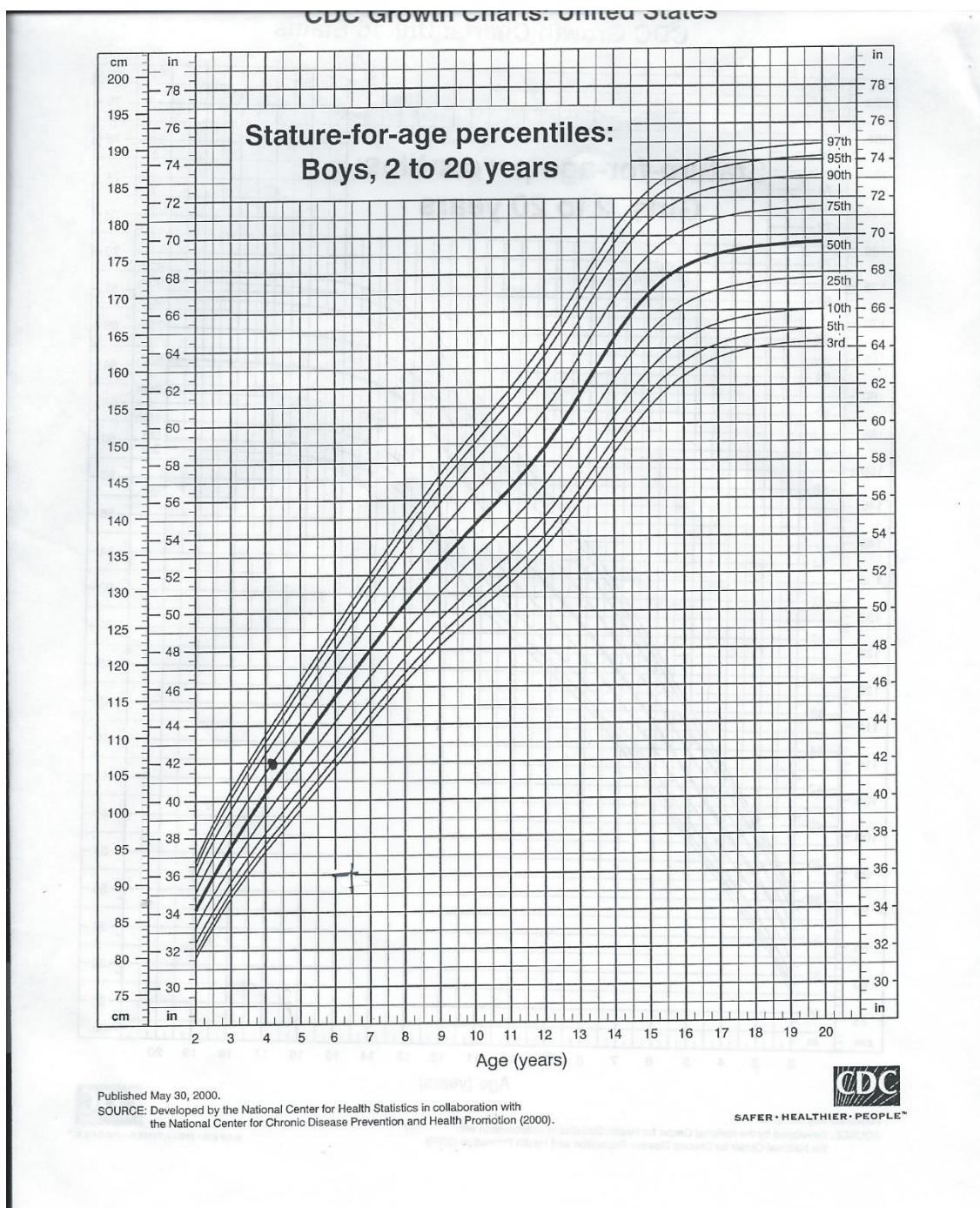


Figure 1- Height Chart

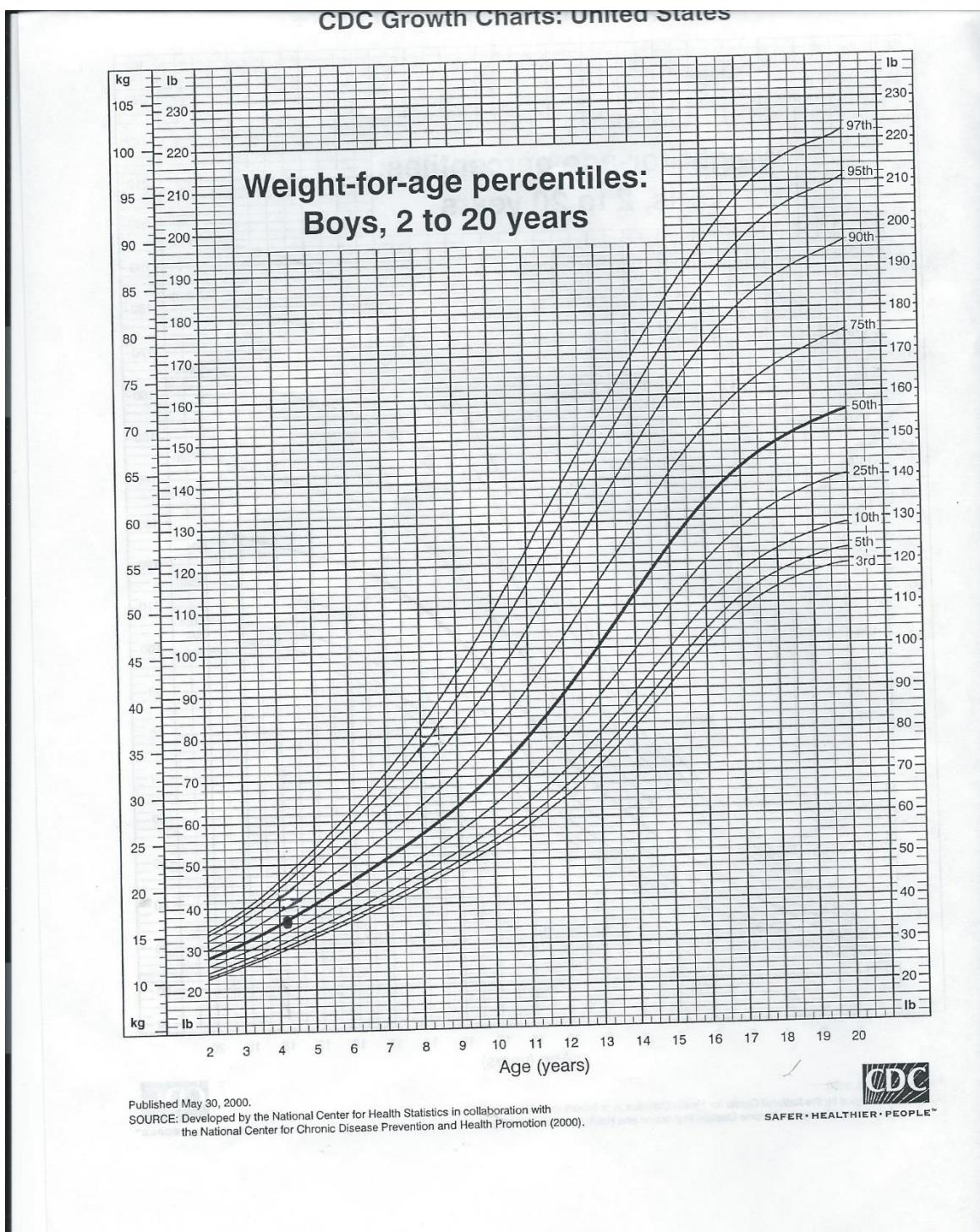


Figure 2- Weight Chart

Section 4

I observed Joe's physical, fine motor and cognitive development and used a checklist to help the observation. I chose to assess his abilities by using a checklist of developmental items in a way that would not overly disturb his normal activities. The observations were done during his outdoor and class room schedule.

During play time I observed him run and play, toss a ball into a bucket and walk a straight line. During classroom time I asked him to build a tower out of blocks and fold paper. With help from his teacher, we observed his ability to ask a variety of questions.

I tested his gross motor skills sustained movement (Krogh, 2001, p 136) and observed that his speed, balance and coordination was appropriate for a four-year-old. I also tested Joe's fine motor ability by having him fold paper and build a tower of ten cubes (Rathus, 2011, p 138). He was able to accomplish both.

Below are work samples of the tests:



Figure 3 - Running



Figure 4 - Walking a Straight Line



Figure 5- Jumping

Section 5

I observed Joe's cognitive development and used a checklist to help the observation. I chose to assess his abilities by observing his reaction and response (Sheridan, 2002, p 31) to joke appropriate for a four-year-old. The joke was, "What kind of button won't unbutton? A bellybutton!". In addition, I chose to assess his cognitive development by asking him a riddle (Sheridan, 2002, p 31). The riddle was, "What animal is gray and has a trunk?". The observations were done during his class room schedule.

During classroom time I asked him the riddle to see if he enjoyed the question and knew the answer and to see if he laughed at the joke. Lastly, with help from his teacher, we observed his ability to ask questions, such as, "Can I have?". I tested Joe's cognitive ability by asking him the riddle (Sheridan, 2002, p 31). He was able to answer the riddle easily. Next I told him the joke and he laughed (Sheridan, 2002, p 31).

Regarding Joe's language capability, I also observed that he is using a variety of questions (Sheridan, 2002, p 31), such as "Can I have?". Therefore, I concluded, that he is developing language normally as a four-year-old.

Here is the checklist I used:

Joe – Development Checklist (COP 5)

- Joe enjoys jokes and riddles (Sheridan, 2012, p 31).
 - Joke is: What kind of button won't unbutton? A bellybutton!
 - Riddle is: what animal is gray and has a trunk?
- Joe should also be able to use a variety of questions, such as: "Can I have?", (Sheridan, 2012, p 31).

Section 6

I assessed Joe's social and emotional development by observing his play with other children and interaction with adults during play. I used a checklist because it organized my thoughts, and it helps check it off to know when the tasks are finished.

I observed Joe's interaction with other children and adults actively playing outside. My checklist outlined two areas to look for: 1. Does Joe's play interact with other children (Sheridan, 2002, p 28)? 2. Does Joe need to interact and play with adults (Sheridan, 2002, p 28)?

Joe's social and emotional development appears to be normal for a four-year-old, based on observation during play. Joe played mostly with other children and did not seem to be concerned about adult interaction during play (Sheridan, 2002, p 28).

Here is the checklist I used during this section:

Joe – Development Checklist (COP 6)

- Does Joe interact with other children during play? (Sheridan, 2002, p 28).**
 - Yes
 - No

- Does Joe need to play with adults or play more with other children (Sheridan, 2002, p 28)?**
 - Play with adults?
 - Play with children?

Section 7

I have learned a great deal about how children absorb different things, such as their family culture.

Additionally, I learned how children acquire different skills or abilities depending on their age, such as the ability to ask questions at four-years-old. Also, I learned that at four-year-old children start to become capable of more language and social interaction, such as reacting to a riddle or a joke.

Furthermore, I want to learn more about children's development related to social communication areas, like dispute resolution. Lastly, I would like to further my understanding of four year-old children, related to how their brain processes math and reading skills.

Section 8

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Villarreal for giving me the opportunity to assess your son Joe's development progress. Joe is a wonderful boy that is a joy to observe. In fact, I believe he had fun. Joe was also very open and excited about all the assessment approaches that were used. He achieved all the assessment areas that were given to him. In fact, it seems that we should take the opportunity to challenge Joe and I have a few ideas for you.

Physical Development Learning Prescription**Summary of Physical Development Assessments:**

As part of the physical development learning I used several assessments that are appropriate for a four-year-old to determine his progress. I asked Joe to throw a ball in a basket and walk in a straight line. He did both of these tests very easily and I determined that his physical development was in line with the normal traits of a four-year-old. Joe also seems to accomplish these tasks so easily that his physical development appears to be above average.

Strengthening Actions or Activities for Physical Development:

In order challenge Joe, I would suggest that he consider organized sports activities such as basketball or baseball. These sports would fit his interests in playing balls and running. In fact, team sports will also help him develop his social skills as well.

Cognitive Development Learning Prescription**Summary of Cognitive/Language Development Assessments:**

As part of the cognitive development learning I used several assessments that are appropriate for a four-year-old to determine his progress. During classroom time I told Joe a joke and a riddle. Joe knew the answer to the riddle and laughed at the joke. In addition, with help from his teacher, we observed his ability to ask a variety of questions. He did all of these tests very easily and I determined that his cognitive development was in line with the normal traits of a four-year-old.

Strengthening Actions or Activities for Cognitive Development:

In order challenge Joe, I would suggest that you consider riddles and memorization. He seems to enjoy these sorts of activities.

Social Emotional Development Learning Prescription**Summary of Social/Emotional Development Assessments:**

I assessed Joe's social and emotional development by observing his play with other children and interaction with adults during play. I observed Joe's interaction with other children and adults actively playing outside. Joe plays with other children and does so without the need for adults actively participating. According to development standards, the observation suggested that he is socially and emotionally developing appropriately for his age.

Strengthening Actions or Activities for Social/Emotional Development:

In order to improve, challenge Joe to talk out any disagreement with friends. This challenge will help Joe's social development and will also challenge his language development as well.

Community Resources:

As part of the challenge recommendations above, getting involved in organized sports would be a good way to continue Joe's physical development. Joe has a great deal of energy and seems to be able to handle all physical challenges appropriate for his age. Team sports also provide an opportunity to improve social skills as well.

In the area, the Allen Sports Association has baseball development and learning leagues for four and five-year-old children. You can find them on line at www.allensports.org or call them at (972) 727-9565.

Bibliography:

Krogh, S., & Slentz, K. (2001). *Early childhood education: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Rathus, S. A. (2011). *Childhood and adolescence: Voyages in development*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Sheridan, M. D., Meldon-Smith, L., & Harding, J. (2002). *Play in early childhood: From birth to six years*. London: Routledge.