

Ali xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Henry Conquers the Fort

4/09/17

Author Ali Porteous

Childspace, Ngaio

Context: Henry Starr, 18 months. Henry had been in the nursery for few months, but was beginning to transition into the toddler room, where I work. I didn't know him very well, but what I did know was that he was wary about new experiences, especially those involving physical activity. I hadn't seen him venture very far outside at all before.

Henry, over the past few weeks you have been settling into the toddler room and it has been lovely getting to know you. Today, we were outside in the playground and you crawled over to where I was sitting at the bottom of the fort. Children were going up the stairs and down the slide and you watched them intently. I could see that you really wanted to have a go as well, so I encouraged you to give it a shot. You crawled up a few steps and looked back towards me, you seemed nervous about all of the children coming past you. I came and sat with you a while and asked what you wanted to do. I indicated that you could go up or down. You sat for some time, continuing to watch the children around you and then lifted your hands up for me to pick you up. I explained that you were more than capable of doing it yourself and sat close by in case you needed some more support. Henry you slowly crawled up the stairs, pausing at each step to look around and also look back to see where I was. You made it up the steps after a lot of encouragement and about 20 minutes! You became so animated once you reached the top, clapping your hands and pointing out over the playground. I could tell that you were so proud of your achievement and so was I. You began intimating to me that you would like to go back down and I gave you the option of going down the steps or the slide. I sat back and gave you some space to decide, you moved your body towards the top of the slide and looked down. You sat there for some time and I could see that you were really unsure. I came and sat down next to you and you reached out and wanted me to pick you up. I could see that you were getting a little distressed and as it was nearing lunch and sleep time so I picked you up and carried you inside. Coming down the slide will be a challenge for another day!

Henry, you are a thoughtful young man and you seem to quite deeply consider things before doing them. You set yourself a challenge and didn't give up, even when you wanted to. You were so brave and courageous, as doing something new can be a scary experience, and I hope that I continue to see these dispositions grow in other areas of your exploration. It was amazing to see you conquer climbing up the fort after quite a long period of time and it was a great reminder to me that I need to slow down and give children the time and space to complete things in their own time.

Arohanui,

Ali x



Reflection:

This was an amazing adventure to watch as the whole experience lasted for about half an hour. Henry was really unsure about coming up the fort, but I could see that it was something that he really wanted to do. All he needed was for me to sit close by, be present and give him a few words of encouragement and he managed to do it all by himself. Sometimes this is all children really need. Through this experience I have learnt that when you think you have given a child enough time, give them just a little bit more and watch the magic unfold.

Parent feedback:

Anna

06/09/2017

Henry, we are SO proud of you. We read Ali's story with tears in our eyes. We're so proud of you for persisting and not giving up on something new. We love that you applauded yourself and shared that with everyone in the garden. That made us chuckle. We are so grateful for the love, care and very careful observation that you show for Henry. He's very lucky to have such wonderful teachers guiding him. Thank you.