

**Open Doors**  
**Chapter 8 & 10: Cognition and General Knowledge, Training and Education**

Julie: So you can virtually do that with all the treasures in his drawer. And these become that – that space where he can put some meaning to one block is also one, two blocks also is two, so later on as he develops more math skills, numbers will have a lot more meaning.

Shanet Abeyta: She's just real open, shares her experiences, and allows us to share our experiences about feeling guilty if we're frustrated. So it's kind of not pointing the finger, just sharing the experience and letting us move on from there.

Julie: There's one bird. Can you find something else to go in the egg carton? Why don't you look in your drawer? Is there something else you can put in the egg carton?

Shawn: She's helped me learn that, you know, you can always – you can never give too much. Sometimes I'll get frustrated, and then like, when I – when she first started to come I'd get frustrated when he'd do something and it just helps me out a lot and gives me motivation to keep giving it a whole bunch of effort, and it pays off. It's cool.

Narrator: On weekly home visits, Julie marks Isaiah's progress as well as his parents' advancing skills.

Julie: And what I'd love to do is bring my camera, tape you with Isaiah for about six to eight minutes just playing as you normally do, and I'd love to sit down and look at that tape with you. Okay. So you guys will focus on the egg carton activity

Shanet: Yeah, yeah.

Julie: And I'll bring my camera next time and we'll videotape some play.

Shanet: Sounds good.

[Music]

Shawn: Can you say "blue socks?"

Isaiah: Blue socks.

Shawn: Yeah. There goes one. There goes two. What color shirt is this?

Shanet: Your shirt is blue.

Shawn: Where are you? Right there.

Julie: Good, yeah. Hey, and how's it been going with the – the activity that we kind of... Thank you, Isaiah. Yeah, with the egg carton. Has he showed an interest? The last time we got together, I shared with you that I'd love to have a opportunity to make a family movie.

Narrator: Julie uses videotape to focus on the parent-child relationship. She videotapes each parent individually, and then reviews their interactions with Isaiah and their parenting styles.

Isaiah: I'll get it.

Shanet: Did you get it? One.

Isaiah: I did it.

Shanet: Oh, Isaiah do it?

[Video begins] Shanet: Get it. One.

Isaiah: I did it.

Shanet: Oh, Isaiah do it? [Video ends]

Julie: You know, and that was really a nice moment. What did you see happen there? I mean...

Shanet: Oh, kind of, he – making a change, and he wanted to do it. It's like, "All right, go ahead!"

Julie: Yeah, and you know what's cool about that, Shanet, is that you honored that, you supported that, that he wanted to be independent he wanted to do it himself, you know, and exploration is a really key part of learning.

Shanet: Yeah.

Julie: And you're supporting that and you're – you're honoring that, and that's really cool. That was really fun. Let's look at some more.

[Video begins] Shanet: Can you zip your zipper?

Isaiah: [Babbling]

Shanet: Is it stuck? Can I help you? Okay. Pull it. Good job. You did it.

Isaiah: [Babbling] [Video ends]

Julie: What happened there?

Shanet: He was asking for help.

Julie: Yeah. So that's what we'd call a need – a need moment. To show both parents that moment and to raise it to their attention was one of great importance for Isaiah's emotional growth and development, because he's going to continue throughout his life to have "need me" moments. He does a really nice job...

Shawn: But I noticed that – I think is really nice that – that she does a lot more than I do. Because when he asks for help, she doesn't just do it for him. She'll say, "Okay, need help? Okay, here, we'll –" like she did on that. "Pull this. You can do it," you know?

Julie: Right, right. So once again...

Shanet: Pushing for his independence, not doing it for him. That's one of those things for me; my mom would always do it for me. Instead of helping me, she'd just do it for me. So I work hard just to do it or to help him do it.

Julie: Right. There's nothing more meaningful than learning about parenting and learning about child development than with your own – with yourself and your own child. The focus for me is to ignite, so to speak, a parent's passion and love in supporting their child. And it's a lovely example of success for this young mom with her toddler when maybe other parts of her life are a challenge and a struggle, she's doing a lovely job and it's like filling her cup so she can continue to fill her child's cup.

[Music]

Narrator: Regular weekly socializations bring Julie's families together at the center.

Julie: Hey, you found two, Isaiah. One, two. You found two bears.

Narrator: It's also valuable time for parents to share.

Shanet: So I know it's really neat to see how they're growing over

Shawn: See what pace they're at. Yeah.

Shanet: Yeah.

Julie: My hopes and my dreams for Shanet and Shawn is to stay true and strong to their goals, that they stay true to their child and their support in being there for him as he continues to need them throughout his life.

[Music]