



**GETTING TO KNOW  
MICHAEL**

**Interview with Michael's mother:**

- I am a single mom.
- Michael is 30 months old
- Michael hits himself on his head sometimes when he gets upset.
- Michael has an older half-brother who lives with his father.
- Michael smiles.
- Michael has trouble using words to tell me what he needs.
- Michael likes to play outdoors and with trucks and balls.
- Michael sometimes spits when he gets mad.
- Michael does not get to be with other children very often. When he is not in childcare he is with our neighbor, his father or grandmother.

**Child Care History**

Michael attends a childcare right down the street from where his mother works. He has been going there for 7 months. She used to try and have lunch with him; however, it became difficult for Michael each time she would leave. Also, when Michael's challenging behaviors occur, she was often called at work and asked to walk down and help.

**Family Strengths, Resources, Supports**

My father lives out of the state. Michael does spend time with my mother who lives about 20 minutes from us. Michael's father lives in a nearby neighborhood and he gets to see him each week. We spend a lot of time with our neighbor, but she is elderly and it's hard for her to have Michael around sometimes. Michael's father and I split about a year ago as there were marital and financial difficulties and problems with an older step-brother, Robert. This is when I started working. Before starting this childcare, Michael stayed with our neighbor or my mom.

**Michael's Strengths**

He likes to play on the floor with me at home. He likes to be in control and often tells me how he wants me to play. He usually sleeps with me in my room at night because he likes to cuddle but only at bedtime. Sometimes he likes to read books and will sit on the couch with me.

**Behavior Concerns and Needs**

Michael has limited verbal skills. He smiles at home, but does not smile much at childcare with his teacher, Beth. He hits his head, throws toys and screams a lot when he gets upset. I'm not always sure how to help him.



**Interview with teacher:** Ms. Beth

**Number of children in classroom:** 7 children, 24 months to 42 months

### **Michael's Strengths**

When Michael first arrives, there are not many children here yet. He will often sit with me and read a book. He also likes to play with the balls and trucks. I wish he would read a book with me at naptime because he has a hard time settling down. Michael will play with us in the housekeeping area and watches other children.

### **Child's Daily Functioning**

When Michael first joined us, he was pretty quiet. He watched other children quite a bit, but seemed to like to play by himself.

He has always displayed self-destructive behaviors. He hits himself in the head sometimes and pulls on his ears. When it comes to the other children, he screams and sometimes singles out children and hits them. He grabs toys from them a lot. He also slaps a lot when he screams. He frowns a lot or it just seems like he rarely smiles.

He can point to things, but it's hard for us to figure out what he needs. It's like he always has to be in charge. He struggles focusing on any activities and anytime we start a new activity, he usually fusses and resists.

### **Behavior Concerns and Needs**

I watched him yesterday run across the room and knock another child down and grabbed her toy. He is pretty physical and aggressive. It wasn't always like this but the past four months or so have been hard.

Michael hits and slaps at other children who come near the area in which he is playing. The children are becoming afraid of him because he's so quick to react and hits them a lot.

TEMPERAMENT CONTINUUM

**MICHAEL'S TEMPERAMENT CHART** *Completed by Parent (mother)*

Place the initials of each of the children in your care on the continuum for each trait based on your observations and discussions with the child's family. Then, write your initials where you feel you fall on each trait in the continuum. Use this tool to analyze where your temperament is similar and different to the children you care for. Then, knowing that it is the adult who must adjust to make the "fit" good, use the suggestions above to create care strategies that provide the best possible experience for each child.

**Activity Level:** MA

**Very Active** **Not Active**  
 wiggle and squirm, difficulty sitting still sit back quietly, prefer quiet sedentary activities

**Distractibility:** MA

**Very Distractible** **Not Distractible**  
 Difficulty concentrating High degree of concentration  
 Difficulty paying attention when engaged in an activity Pays attention when engaged in an activity  
 Easily distracted by sounds or sights during activities Not easily distracted by sounds or sights during activities

**Intensity:** MA

**Very Intense** **Not Intense**  
 Intense positive and negative emotions; Strong reactions Muted emotional reactions

**Regularity:** MA

**Very Regular** **Not Regular**  
 Predictable appetite, sleep patterns, elimination Unpredictable appetite, sleep patterns, elimination

**Sensory Threshold:** MA

**High Threshold** **Low Threshold**  
 Not sensitive to physical stimuli including sounds, tastes, touch, temperature changes Sensitive to physical stimuli including sounds, tastes, touch, temperature changes  
 Falls asleep anywhere, tries new foods, wears new clothing easily Picky eater, difficulty sleeping in strange crib/bed

**Approach/Withdrawal:** MA

**Tendency to Approach** **Tendency to Withdraw**  
 Eagerly approaches new situations or people Hesitant and resistant when faced with new situations, people, or things.

**Adaptability:** MA

**Very Adaptable** **Difficulty Adapting**  
 Transitions easily to new activities and situations Has difficulty transitioning to new activities or situations

**Persistence:** MA

**Persistent Easily** **Frustrated**  
 Continues with a task or activity in the face of obstacles Moves on to a new task or activity when  
 Doesn't become frustrated easily faced with obstacles. Gets frustrated easily

**Mood:** MA

**Positive Mood** **Serious Mood**  
 Reacts to the world in a positive way, generally cheerful Reacts to situations negatively, mood is generally serious

<sup>1</sup> ZERO TO THREE, Retrieved from worldwideweb [http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=key\\_temp](http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=key_temp) June 11, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of temperament (found in several places and merged/adapted).

<sup>3</sup> WestEd. (1995). The Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers' (PITC) Trainers Manual, module 1: Social-emotional growth and socialization (p. 21). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas, Chess, Birch, Hertzog, & Korn, 1963.