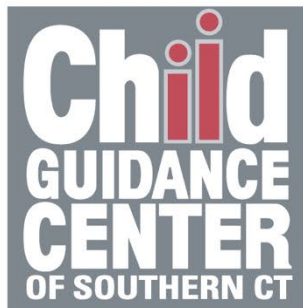




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CLC Maple Avenue
90 Maple Avenue

CLC Palmers Hill
64 Palmer Hill Road

CLC William Pitt
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Child Focused Observation
CLC William Pitt, Classroom F1
Student: Child L
Teaching Staff: Teacher J & Teacher Y
Education Coordinator:
Family Service Worker:

CGC Consultant: Jaime Baumann, LCSW, MSed

Reason for Referral:

A child-focused observation was conducted for Child L on the morning of 1/30/26 and the afternoon of 2/3/26, as recommended by teachers and CLC administrative support staff. The child-focused referral was received on 1/16/26 due to ongoing, escalating behavioral and emotional regulation difficulties primarily observed in the classroom environment. Consultant reached out to caregiver on 1/29/26 to start the focused-consultation process.

Accommodations/Strategies Currently in Place:

- Predictable routines
- Transition warnings (timer, songs, countdowns)
- Redirection to the quiet area when difficulty transitioning into the classroom or for breaks
- Multi-sensory approach for completing tasks
- Modification of tasks
- Ignoring negative attention seeking behaviors
- Close proximation to teacher during whole groups
- Differentiated seating
- First-Then directives
- Intentional positive reinforcement when he demonstrates the ability to regulate their emotions and impulses
- Meal options separate from regular lunch

1/30/26 Observation (9-10 AM):

Teachers Present: Teacher Y & Teacher J

Students Present: 7 initially with 2 more dropped off during the hour.

Child L was sitting next to child V at a table with a bin of design builders in front of them.

Child L was staring off toward two peers who were playing with counting cars at a small table in front of the block area.

Child L and V were discussing today's "activities." They discussed going to each other's houses. V made a comment about Child L being rich and living in a mansion.

Child L started playfully, but loudly, repeating "yeah, yeah, yeah;" Teacher Y told Child L to be nice and that if he screamed at V, she would not want to play with him.

Child V called child A over and directed her to sit next to Child L.

Child L narrated his pretend play with design builders in a baby voice, "this is cherry ice. I want an ice pop now!" Child V abruptly pushed in her chair and joined Teacher Y's table with peers.

A moment later, Child L pushed in his chair and went to join the same table. Teacher Y asked him, “are you okay?” and he nodded yes.

Child V and child A then went back to the design builder table and Child L followed.

Child L asked child V if she would sit next to her, she said “yes, but if you scream, I’m going to the quiet area.” She moved next to him and then commented to MHC “if I sit next to him, [child A] will get mad, but if I sit next to [child A], Child L will get mad.”

Teacher Y made a last call for breakfast to the class and Child L replied, “no thank you!”

Children started playing with the design builders, Child L said “stop [child A], I want red!” She said, “I want spiderman” and he replied, “I want spiderman, and you don’t even like spiderman!”

V said, “you only need one Child L, she’s more safe.”

Child A entered the room with Teacher J; Child L ran up to give them both a hug.

Child L asked peers, “what are we doing?” Two male peers joined the table, V announced “we’re doing activities.”

Child P reached for the bin of design builders, Teacher J reminded him to use his words, Child L pushed the bin over to him.

Child L reported to Teacher J that child T was playing by himself, she replied, “that’s okay, he likes to play by himself.”

Child A reported that her chair was missing a rubber bottom; Child L inspected his chair and said that his was not missing one and then checked the rest of the table’s chairs.

Child L sat back down and inched closer to child V and exclaimed, “I can make a hot dog!” Teacher Y softly said, “don’t put it in your mouth” as he gestured to do so.

The phone rang, Teacher J left the room, Child L followed her to gate; she reassured, “I’ll be right back” and he returned to the table.

Teacher Y asked Child L to move his chair a little bit because V didn’t have any space and then moved it over for him. He initially objected and Teacher Y reiterated that she needed more space.

Child L asked peers repeatedly, “who wants a pancake?” When peers did not respond, he brought it over to Teacher J, who was playing with child T at a small table. She complimented the “cooking” and thanked him.

The wall timer went off, Teacher J announced clean up and asked friends to push in their chairs.

Child L put his pieces in the bin, pushed in his chair, and was the first one on the carpet.

Teacher Y asked, “Child L and [child A], why are you running on the carpet?”

Friends were pretending to use imaginary “water blasters” on each other; Child L said, “stop with the water!”

Teacher J started circle time reminding children to sit criss cross and keep volume at level 1.

Child L was seated by himself against the back wall and started pushing away a bug on the carpet.

Teacher J told him to leave it alone and that it wasn’t near him. He exclaimed that it was scary, Teacher J encouraged him to ignore it.

Child L continued to fidget and pushed himself back against the shelf next to peers. Teacher J asked him if he wanted to sit there today and reminded him to keep hands to himself.

Teacher J reviewed days of the week and month. Teacher J asked what season it was, Child L replied “winter!” and Teacher J said, “yes good job, Child L.”

Child L sang along for morning meeting songs.

Teacher J asked what the weather was, Child L stood up to look out the window.

Child L sat back down quietly and banged his head backwards against the shelving unit throughout circle time.

Child L reported to Teacher J that a newly arrived peer didn’t wash his hands, Teacher J reassured that he did.

Child A asked Child L who farted, Child L said “I don’t know, you farted!”

Teacher J started asking the class questions about winter clothing; Child L stared off for most of the conversation. When it became his turn to share, he said he liked stuffies and snow boots.

Child L then asked Teacher J what clothing she liked.

Teacher J introduced *Llama Llama Red Pajama*; Child L shared that he has read it with his mom. Teacher J replied, “aww.”

Child L was extremely attentive and responsive to Teacher J’s questions.

Teacher J asked emotional questions (“how does he feel?”) throughout story time. Child L was able to identify sadness, anger, and scared. Teacher J normalized feeling angry but also promoted practicing patience. Child L replied, “I’m patient with my momma.”

Teacher J asked, “what happens when you scream?” Child L replied, “you get in trouble.” Teacher J said, “no, we think something is wrong!”

A male peer looked at Child L, Child L pointed back at him and whispered something.

Teacher J previewed learning centers (drawing pajamas, name writing, shape puzzles).

Child L stood and hunched over in the corner as Teacher J assigned groups.

Child L directed child T to sit down next to him at their table. Child Z offered Child L shape pieces out of the bucket, and he said, “thank you.”

Teacher Y assisted the name writing table and Teacher J took pictures of the drawing table.

Child L and child Z playfully sang a song about going to sleep as they completed shape puzzles.

Child L then dropped a puzzle board on child Z’s hands and laughed. Child L started to put shapes in child T’s hair; child T placed his hands over his head.

Child L started repeatedly singing “happy birthday” to child Z, she replied “no it’s not my birthday!”

She put her hand up and said “stop!” He started playing patty cake with her hands and transitioned into pretend Spiderman play.

Child L got up and started hiding behind a shelf in the block area.

Teacher J asked both children to sit down and turn around. Child L popped up and down, dancing in place. He banged on child Z’s hands and then dumped shapes on her board while she said “no!”

He got up and pretended to spray child Z as Spiderman with his webs. Teacher J asked Child L to have a seat, moved child Z to the other side of the table, and redirected the children to find the matching shapes.

After Teacher J returned to the drawing table, Child L started dropping the shape puzzles from up high and throwing them into the bin. Several flew into child Z’s direction, and he commented, “uh oh!”

He got up again and pretended to be Spiderman casting out webs, calling out, “[child Z], over here!” She ignored him and Teacher Y asked Child L to sit back down. He destroyed child T’s pattern before the timer went off and children collaboratively worked to clean up all of the shapes.

Child L transitioned to the writing table and let out a shriek, Teacher Y responded, “why are you screaming?” He did not respond but moved over a chair.

2/3/26 Observation (4-5 PM):

Teachers Present: Teacher Y & Teacher A

Children Present: Child L, V, & K

Child L and K were playing at a table with bristle builders with Teacher A sitting at one end.

Teacher Y was sitting in a chair near the sink as V drank a cup of water.

Teacher A asked Child L and K to have a seat a couple of times, but they continued to play standing up.

Child L used toy people with bristle builders, narrating family-themed play in a baby voice.

Child L asked V why she had to leave, she said “I don’t know.” They both built on the same bristle builder structure.

K was playing by himself on the other side of the table; Child L said, “stop going by my house, K!”

When K brought his toy person closer, Child L began to whine.

V asked Teacher Y if she could color; Teacher Y provided her colored pencils and a coloring sheet at another table.

Child L expressed that he wanted to color. Adoldo asked if he wanted to color because he saw V go there. Child L said he wanted to go play with his best friend.

V exclaimed that she was K's friend too.

Child L cleaned up his pieces and approached the other table, asking "can I color?"

Teacher Y asked him to talk like a big boy. He repeated the question in a baby voice again before sitting down.

Child L picked up a dull red pencil and brought it to Teacher A; Teacher Y warned, "no sharpener, choose a different color."

Child L began asking why some weren't sharpened and narrating his coloring.

Teacher Y sat down next to V and across from Child L.

Child L sang made up songs and laughed.

When Child L quickly pulled out a pencil, Teacher Y softly said, "be careful."

Child L pulled the bin of pencils close to him, V corrected, "keep it in the middle." He whined but complied.

Child L asked V, "what's your friend's name? I want to tell my mommy." V continued to tell him details about her friend.

Child L exclaimed, "I'm going to spit on your paper!" Teacher A said, "why are you going to spit on her paper?" Teacher Y reminded, "you came here to color, so color." He started poking his pencil against his paper and quietly singing a song.

Child L exclaimed, "I don't want you to leave like Ms. J."

V replied, "Well I have to, and you're leaving too." He said, "I'm not leaving."

V discussed what dress she would wear tomorrow, Child L replied, "I want you to wear that!"

Child L asked where V lived; V said that her mom would tell him because she forgot. Child L clarified, "will you tell me tomorrow?" V replied, "if I know!"

Child L got up and put his coloring sheet in his mailbox. He returned to the table and leaned over V's paper. Teacher Y told Child L to go play. Child L replied, "I want to watch you."

Teacher A invited Child L to come play with K; Child L replied, "I don't want to." Teacher A asked why but Child L did not answer.

Child L was leaning his body against a chair and over the table; Teacher A asked him to have a seat. V reiterated, "can you sit in the seat?" Child L did so and said "okay!"

V asked Child L, "why don't you listen to your teachers?" he said, "I don't know!"

V continued to color her sheet and discuss her afterschool activities as Child L watched her.

Child L sat on his knees in the chair, leaning over the table humming tunes and making random comments.

Teacher Y said, "Child L you need to sit, that's not safe, please."

The wall timer went off; Child L jumped up and ran to the gate.

When V joined him, he flung his arms up toward her.

When K lined up behind Child L, Child L whined "K get away from me, I need space." Teacher Y reassured that he had space.

At 4:25 Teacher Y led the children into the hallway; Child L and K joined F2 while V went into F3.

When Child L joined peers on the carpet, several approached him for a hug.

Child L asked Denim where V was; she clarified that she was

Child L told Denim that he did not feel good as she was putting chairs up on the tables.

Denim asked what video the class wanted to watch; Child L yelled "Sonic!" in a baby voice and began to dance on the carpet with F2 peers.

Child M jumped on Teacher A for a hug; Child L hugged on top him. Teacher A told him not to do that and to say sorry to peer. Child L ran to the front gate and then asked Denim for a cup of water. Denim handed out cups of water and prompted, “drink your water, I need calm bodies. We’re going to the Atrium!”

Child L returned to the carpet and started jumping up and down to the video. Denim encouraged the scripted movements, “duck, jump!” She provided praise, “good job Child L!”

Denim prompted the class to line up; Child L ran to turn off the lights and let out a shriek.

Denim took him by the hand and prompted him to calm his body.

Child L stood at the gate holding Denim’s hand as a caregiver picked up a child.

Denim asked Child L to hold child F’s hand, he responded, “why?” Denim said

Child L attempted to take the hula hoops down off the wall while holding child F’s hand; Child L said “ow!” Denim assured he didn’t mean to hurt him and told him to release his hand. Child L then jumped off the mat and said, “ha ha!”

Child L started jumping up and down on a hippity hop ball, staying in proximity to Denim.

Denim took a soccer ball down, Child L exclaimed, “I want it!” Denim gave it to him and said, “here ya go.”

Child L started kicking the soccer ball across the Atrium. He stopped at the doors of cluster D peering in; Teacher A called over, “Child L.”

When Denim started helping child K push mats across the floor, Child L approached, and she encouraged him to help. Child L and K then pushed the mats together.

Child L asked Denim if she could kick the ball for him.

Child L went into the corner to retrieve his soccer ball where child F was with a hula hoop; Child L pushed child F out of the way to get his ball. Teacher A pulled Child L off his child F and repeated, “can we share?” Child L shook his head no and said, “there’s another basketball over there.”

When child F attempted to take the soccer ball from Child L, Child L said “no, F!”

Denim continued to kick the soccer ball back and forth with Denim. When child F approached again, Child L pulled his hair. Teacher A called out his name.

Denim crouched down and spoke to Child L about everyone being friends and not pulling hair. Child L nodded and returned to kicking the ball back and forth with Denim.

Child L kicked the ball hard and it flung past child K; Child L shrieked with glee. Child K exclaimed, “don’t kick my head!” Child L replied, “I didn’t! I’m sorry K!”

Child F and Child L started arguing over the soccer ball again, Child L pushed F away; Denim took the ball, acknowledged that he wanted the ball, but he can’t hit friends.

Child L tilted his head to the left and started telling a story to Denim.

Denim helped Child L set up an obstacle course with purple cones.

Child L approached child C from F3, touched his hat and gave him a hug before he left.

Child K started setting up his own course with orange cones; Child L went to take the cones from him.

Denim approached and assured K could set up his cones too.

Denim continued kicking the soccer ball back and forth with Child L.

Child F went to take one of the purple cones, Child L chased after him “no, no!” and returned it to its original spot.

Child K started kicking his ball to Denim and she reciprocated. Child L started to complain; Denim replied, “he can play with us, we’re all friends.”

Child L ran to Tina’s office door and peered his head in until Denim redirected him.

Child L started screaming waiting for his turn to kick the ball.

Child K started rearranging the cones and Child L copied.

When Teacher A put child F in a cart to push him around, Child L joined and started pushing him too. Child L then asked, “can I try?” Teacher A said, “no, you’re too heavy.” Child L returned to soccer ball play with Denim and exclaimed, “I’m ready!”

Summary:

During the observations, Child L demonstrated strong social interest, creativity, and engagement with both peers and adults. He frequently sought proximity to teachers and peers, engaged in imaginative and narrative play, and showed motivation to participate in shared activities. At the same time, Child L exhibited difficulty with impulse control, body awareness, and sustained regulation, particularly during transitions, shared materials, and highly stimulating activities.

Throughout the observation, teachers appropriately intervened to support safety, participation, and peer interactions. However, there were several instances in which interrogative or “why”-based questioning was used in response to Child L’s behaviors (e.g., asking him why he was engaging in a behavior or why he was not complying with a request). When presented with these questions, Child L often responded with baby voice, whining, avoidance, or increased dysregulation, suggesting that this approach may exceed his current capacity for reflection and verbal reasoning in the moment.

It appears Child L faces significant challenges with transitions (especially arrival, schedule changes, and late-day classroom moves after 4:00 PM), separation from caregivers, and sensory sensitivities to noise, tone of voice, and language, which often lead to shutdowns or intense behavioral escalations. These behaviors include prolonged crying/screaming, difficulty calming his body, fixation and rigid “all-or-nothing” thinking, aggression toward peers and adults (hitting, kicking, biting, inappropriate touching), throwing objects, property destruction, and repeated violations of personal space despite consistent redirection. Triggers are often unclear, though transitions, peer conflict, perceived unfairness, rejection, fatigue, hunger, and overstimulation appear to contribute. Several incidents have required removal of peers for safety and staff support (including a green-light call), with extended time needed for regulation.

Suggestions:

Sensory Regulation and Body Awareness

Child L appears sensitive to environmental stimuli including noise, peer proximity, and overall classroom activity, which can contribute to shutdowns or impulsive behaviors. Providing planned sensory input throughout the day (e.g., heavy work, movement breaks, pushing/pulling activities, or access to fidgets) and allowing flexible seating/standing may help him maintain regulation. Staff should continue offering access to a quiet or calm space before behaviors escalate, framing it as a supportive regulation strategy rather than a consequence. Teaching Child L simple, concrete body awareness language (e.g., “my body feels too busy,” “my body needs a break”) may support early intervention and self-advocacy over time.

Clear Boundaries Around Personal Space and Peer Interaction

Child L frequently seeks peer interaction but struggles with personal space, impulse control, and interpreting peer cues, which can lead to conflict. Staff should provide explicit teaching and modeling of personal space expectations using visuals, social stories, and role-play during calm moments. During peer play, close adult proximity is recommended to support positive interactions, reinforce appropriate touch, and intervene early when peers express discomfort. When redirection is needed, staff should use brief, neutral language paired with a clear alternative behavior (e.g., “Hands to yourself—roll the ball instead”).

From a developmental and early childhood mental health perspective, questioning a child who is dysregulated may inadvertently escalate behavior or reinforce attention-seeking, rather than support regulation and skill-building. Preschool-aged children, particularly when experiencing heightened arousal, benefit more from clear, neutral statements of expectations, adult narration, and concrete choices than from requests for explanation.

It is recommended that teachers reduce interrogative language during moments of dysregulation and instead prioritize supportive, directive language that focuses on safety, regulation, and participation. Effective alternatives include calmly stating expectations, narrating observed behavior, and offering brief, concrete choices.

Caregiver involvement can help reinforce these skills across settings. Mom can support boundary learning by using consistent language at home that mirrors school expectations (e.g., “hands to yourself,” “ask before touching,” “give space”). Practicing personal space through play-based activities (such as role-playing greetings, taking turns during games, or using visual cues like hula hoops or floor markers) can help make expectations concrete and predictable. When Child L respects boundaries, immediate and specific praise (e.g., “You kept your hands to yourself; that was kind”) is encouraged. If boundaries are crossed, calm redirection paired with an alternative behavior (e.g., “You can squeeze your pillow instead of touching”) can support learning while maintaining connection. Regular communication between home and school around language and strategies may further promote consistency and skill generalization.

Intentional Positive Reinforcement

Child L responds well to positive adult attention and praise, particularly when it is specific and immediate. Staff are encouraged to intentionally notice and label regulated behaviors (e.g., waiting, using words, gentle hands, staying with an activity) to reinforce success. A simple reinforcement system (verbal praise, visual check-ins, or earning preferred roles/activities) may increase motivation and help shape desired behaviors. Emphasis should be placed on reinforcing effort and regulation rather than compliance alone.

Support for Emotional Expression and Flexibility

Child L shows emerging skills in identifying emotions and demonstrates strong engagement during story time and guided discussions. Staff can build on this strength by continuing to integrate emotion labeling, validation, and coping strategies into daily routines. Using consistent language to normalize feelings while setting limits on behavior (e.g., “It’s okay to feel angry; it’s not okay to hurt”) may support emotional development. Offering limited, structured choices can also help reduce rigidity and “all-or-nothing” thinking while promoting a sense of control.

Safety Planning and Team Consistency

Given the intensity and unpredictability of some escalations, it is recommended that staff develop a clear, shared response plan outlining early warning signs, de-escalation strategies, and roles during behavioral crises. Consistent responses from staff members are critical to reducing confusion and reinforcing expectations. When safety concerns arise, the focus should remain on regulation and relationship repair, with opportunities for reconnection once Child L is calm.

CLC Crisis Response Protocol:

1. If teachers are unable to help Child L safely calm down, they will call “green light” for additional classroom support.

- *Example behaviors:* Throwing objects, hitting, kicking, screaming, biting, elopement, etc.
- 2. CLC will limit a “green light” response to **two** coordinators and/or administrators.
- 3. If necessary, teachers will evacuate the rest of the class.
- 4. One coordinator/administrator will take the lead in de-escalation/co-regulation efforts with Child L.
- 5. After approximately 20 minutes, lead coordinator/administrator will assess whether safety can be maintained, and children can return to the classroom.
 - If aggressive/destructive behavior continues, CLC will call mom to offer pick up or 211 support.

*A second “green light” call would result in pick up.

Based on observed needs and the impact on educational functioning, a comprehensive special education evaluation is recommended to determine whether Child L may be eligible for special education services. Evaluation in the areas of social-emotional functioning and occupational therapy is recommended.

It was my pleasure to observe Child L in the classroom. I can be reached at (203) 324-6127 if you have any questions or concerns that may arise from this observation or feedback.

Best,
Jaime Baumann, LCSW, MEd
Manager of Clinical & Community Partnerships
ECMHC Coordinator
Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut