

## Notes from Parent Education Night: Montessori in the Home

Children want to be trusted and respected-they want to help. They are growing into individuals, learning how to be participants in their community and you can help them!

1. Children emulate YOU! Let them practice what you do around the house
2. Dr. Montessori found that when children participate and know their place and abilities that they:
  - a. Are calmer
  - b. Are more confident
  - c. Feel as though they belong
  - d. Have self worth
  - e. Are more appreciative of others around them
  - f. Are more communicative
  - g. And a child will expand their horizons, reaching for more when they trust their abilities...
3. How you can help: Have as many real items as possible. Show the child you trust them and offer them your respect
4. We know your concern to giving your child freedom in the kitchen/bathroom is time and mess, be sure to give yourself more time for cleaning up too.

### **Kitchen**

1. Have a step stool so your child can participate in making food and cleaning dishes
  - a. They don't really have to clean dishes, even just using soapy water, a small cloth and some bowls-my son rinses and puts them in the dish drainer-we get really wet!
  - b. They can cut soft fruit with a small butter knife, they can mix ingredients too. They may make a mess-but cleaning can be a part of the process!
    1. Make toast, sandwiches, prepare cheese and crackers, help with anything like boiling eggs and peeling them...
2. A small cabinet or shelf for setting and clearing the table
  - a. A shelf for the placemat, glass, silverware and a dish basin to collect dirty dishes for toddlers. If you have a dishwasher, primary age children and up can load their own dishes into it after rinsing them.
  - b. Ask the child to set the table with above items and clear dirty dishes for every meal. Even if they only clear their own, they are participating!
3. Place the child's dishes on lower cabinet shelves
  - a. A shelf for real dishes, glasses, silverware in a basket, rolled up placemats/napkins etc.
4. In the refrigerator: place juice pitchers on the bottom shelf and kids can pour their own water and juice

### **Dining Room**

1. Provide a small table and chair for your child to eat at. My husband and I joined our son and ate together-or he would eat first with me chatting with him about his day and my husband and I would eat later
2. If you do need a high chair for a whole family-use one he can get into
  - a. He can still clamber up into a chair and get down if he needs to
3. Be sure he helps set his place and clears it when done

4. Follow eating rules-no getting up except for emergency (potty training), ask "Please" for more water etc., say "excuse me" while people are talking, using correct utensils etc.

### **Bedroom**

1. Have a bed the child can get in and out of as soon as possible. We want them to feel as though they have control
2. Can they turn their own light on/off by standing on a chair?
3. Can the play area be outside their room so they are not distracted from sleep?
4. Have many books in a book shelf elsewhere, but the child can pick just a few and put them on the bedside table-this helps with getting him into bed on time
5. Have a consistent and firm routine! We read 3 books, sing one song and lights out-make your own to help them understand when it is time to sleep
6. Getting Dressed: The child should be able to open his own drawers and pull clothes out-or give your child two choices-we want him to do as much as possible

### **Bathroom**

1. Fill a small bottle with bubble bath (once per week) that they can unscrew and pour into the bath
2. Have a small wash cloth they can use to clean themselves
3. Can they wash their own hands with soap?, Brush their own teeth?

### **Play Room/Living Room**

1. Provide low shelves (found at IKEA, lakeshorelearning.com etc.) with lots of space around each toy so it is obvious where toys go when cleaning up.
2. The child should be able to see the objects so he knows what he is picking. Every object has their one place. No jumbled boxes or bins filled with random toys, this will help with clean up later
3. Have child help you sort through old and new objects to rotate them on the shelves as they get bored
4. Clean up! Best to clean up before another toy comes out, but at least before bath/bed time. Have child be responsible for putting things away, they will care for it better too.
5. Large rug for play area, things won't be too scattered.
6. Have music area where they can control playing of music...

### **Garden/Outdoors**

1. Small watering can or spritzer (so they won't over water) for watering plants- Provide an outdoor watering source so they don't need a hose
2. There are some great gardening gloves and tools for kids too
3. Have kids plant with you, help choose what to plant and care for the plants too

### **Chores**

1. Feeding the pets: they can take a cover off a Tupperware container and scoop food into a pet bowl. Older kids can refresh water for pets
2. Kids can help with wood working, sewing, gardening,
3. Have a child sized bucket, broom and mop on hand to help you clean up spills-window washing, car washing etc.
4. Laundry: have a small hamper for your child to carry their dirty clothes to after their bath
5. Groceries: they can help choose between two brands of tomato sauce etc., push a small cart around, carry loaf of bread home in their own bag etc.