



October 2009

Newsletter for Parents of SAMA Member Schools

Dear Parents

Thank you for the positive feedback on the previous newsletters, and please do keep your suggestions coming in for content that you feel would be relevant to you.

This month, I am responding to requests from parents asking for suggestions in ways in which they can support the process of developing independence in their children in a way that complements what we do in the Montessori classroom.

My thanks goes to past president Sam Streak for finding the following article from the Austin Montessori School's Community Handbook. I trust that the guidelines herein will be useful to you!

Heidi van Staden
SAMA President

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Guiding a Child's Growing Responsibility

Levels of Responsibility

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| Infant | 1. | Parent puts away alone. |
| 1 year | 2. | Parent puts away engaging child's interest and attention. |
| 2 years | 3. | Parent puts away eliciting child's assistance in minor ways. |
| 3 years | 4. | Parent puts away with child's full assistance. |
| 4 years | 5. | Parent and child put away equally. |
| | 6. | Child puts away with parent's full assistance. |
| 5 years | 7. | Child puts away with parent's minor assistance. |
| 6 years | 8. | Child puts away with parent's encouragement, acknowledgment and company. |
| 7 years | 9. | Child puts away while parent does something else but gives encouragement and minor supervision. |
| 8 years | 10. | Child puts away with reminding and parents daily awareness. |

Developing Skills and Responsibility

This is a sample pattern of involving children in responsibility for their own lives. Children develop into responsible adults slowly through gradually increasing responsibilities over their toddler, childhood and adolescent years. Cheerful, firm and consistent examples and experiences are children's teachers.

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| 2 years | 1. | Parent talks about preparing child's lunch. Parent prepares lunch while child watches. Parent prepares lunch slowly and methodically so that it makes sense to child. |
| 3-4 years | 2. | The child hands things to the parent or gets things out for the parent; cutting board, dish towel, lunch box, apple from the fridge etc. The child stays with the parent until the task is complete. |
| 4 years | 3. | The child is shown slowly and carefully how to prepare a part of the lunch; how to peel and slice the banana and mix it into a container with ½ a cup of plain yoghurt, how to rinse off the cutting board and knife and place them in the draining rack; how to place the banana peel in the compost container. |

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| 4+ years | 4. | The child prepares that part of the lunch shown. As described above, while the parent prepares the rest of the lunch. This continues for three weeks or so. |
| 4.5 years | 5. | The child is shown how to prepare another part of the lunch very slowly and carefully, how to make a yoghurt dip for raw vegetables, how to peel and slice a cucumber or how to prepare carrot sticks. |
| 5-6 years | 6. | For a period of time the child prepares some part of the lunch which has been demonstrated, while the parent prepares the rest. |
| 6-7 years | 7. | The child prepares two-thirds of the lunch, the fruit and the vegetable, while the parents prepares the sandwich. |
| 7-8 years | 8. | The child watches the parent prepare the sandwich slowly and methodically. The child sees how to assemble ingredients, how to make the sandwich and store it, and how to clean up afterwards. The parent prepares the fruit and vegetable. Emphasis is upon preparing food TOGETHER FOR THE CHILD. The parent doesn't leave the child to do it. The child doesn't leave the parent to do it. |
| 8-9 years | 9. | The child prepares the entire lunch box while the parent is close by for supervision. |
| 9-10 years | 10. | The child prepares the entire lunch box while the parent is doing another task in close proximity for company and acknowledgement. |
| 10-11 years | 11. | The child prepares entire lunch box while parent is in and out of the room. Parent gives advice, acknowledgement and reminders. |

THREE EQUAL PARTS TO ANY TASK

SETTING UP FOR THE TASK.
CARRYING OUT THE TASK.
CLEARING AWAY AFTER THE TASK.

THE COMPLETE WORK CYCLE!!

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