A Day in the Life of a Toddler

AMS Conference

Friday, March 16, 2012

2:00 – 3:30pm

Presenter: Melody Patton mapatton@att.net

Goals for the Workshop:

- Demonstrate core daily activities and routines of a toddler classroom and how they foster independence
- Discuss principles for allowing freedom of movement and exploration of the environment
- Identify a sequence of activities to support the ongoing physical, emotional and intellectual development of the toddler
- Favorite activities of toddlers

Outdoor Environment

- Outdoor play supports gross motor development and fosters social and emotional development
- Gross motor activities include:
    - Sand and water play
    - Push and riding toys: push wagon (Radio Flyer Walker Wagon from Michael Olaf/The Joyful Child 888.880.9235 or natural wooden one from www.thewoodenwagon.com), riding toys without pedals, tricycles, three wheeled scooters
    - Rocking Boat
    - Balls: kicking, throwing, catching
    - Balancing: balance beam, balance boards (like Balance Base PA02 from www.allisonmontessori.com)
    - Trucks to push
    - Watering Plants

Transitioning to the Indoor environment

- Transitioning to the Indoor environment supports development of independence with self care activities.
- Transition activities include:
    - Taking off backpacks and putting in a locker or cubby
    - Taking off coats and hanging on a hook
    - Taking off outdoor shoes and putting on slippers

Serving and Eating Snack and Washing Snack Dishes

- The snack process is the best "real life" practical life activity for Toddlers and they love it!
- Snack process includes:
    - Washing Hands
    - Pouring a cup of Water
    - Serving snack (using scoops, spoons, tongs, etc)
    - Carrying snack to the table
    - Eating Snack and Socializing with Friends
    - Washing Dishes
    - Snack Preparation

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Diapering and Toileting

- Transitioning to the use of the toilet is one of the biggest developmental milestones of this age. See my parent article "Toileting the Montessori Way"
- Diapering and Toileting process includes:
    - Child starts in diapers and brings a supply of diaper in his/her backpack
    - Stand up diapering
    - Offering the opportunity to sit on the toilet every day as a part of the diapering process
    - Washing their hands when they are done diapering or toileting

Classroom Activities

- Classroom activities support all the areas of development: physical, social, emotional, language and cognitive.

  Indoor Gross Motor Activities
  - Rocking Horse – find a wooden one
  - Sit and Spin – made by Hasbro, available online – get one without music or characters
  - Jumping Circles – IKEA
  - Pull and Push Toys – Michael Olaf/Joyful Child 888.880.9235 Caterpuller Pull Toy, Hopping Rabbit Pull toy, Lawnmower Push Toy
  - Hammering – Melissa and Doug pound a peg or pounding bench
  - Blocks – blocks should be out all year long, have lots of different varieties, and switch out periodically to generate renewed interest: wooden blocks, wedgits (available online from various sources), duplos (large legos), and other "see through" blocks (such as Rainbow Blocks BL01 from www.allisonmontessori.com)

  Work Location
  - Toddlers go through a progression of where they do their work and this evolves as they develop balance and coordination: start at the shelf, move to the floor in front of the shelf, on the floor in a "work area" and then finally moves to a table. Returning the work to the proper location on a shelf is also a cognitive skill that develops over time.

  Manipulatives – develop eye/hand coordination and fine motor skills
  - Put and Take
  - Puzzles
    - Start with large knobs and circles this is the easiest for the child to replace (like Circle Sorters i05 from www.alllisonmontessori.com)
    - Move to large knobs with other simple shapes (like Geometric Puzzle Board i06 from www.allisonmontessori.com)
    - Large knobbed individual piece puzzles (animal puzzles from Michael Olaf/Joyful Child 888.880.9235)
    - Small knobbed, individual piece puzzles – Melissa and Doug makes a lot of great knobbed puzzles with lots of different themes (transportation vehicles, animals, etc) These may also be available at Michael Olaf
    - Layered puzzles
    - Compound knobbed puzzles with a picture underneath – Melissa and Doug makes several great series, also sometimes labeled Lights, Camera, Interaction!

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    - Compound puzzles without knobs and without a picture underneath – start with just 4-5 pieces, a border is helpful (Lakeshore has a few good sets with real photographs)
- Pegboards
    - Start with just a few, large pegs (Three men in a tub or 3, 6 or 9 peg boards from Michael Olaf/Joyful Child 888.880.9235)
    - Move to multiple sizes (Depth Peg Board from www.earlyschoolmaterials.com)
    - Smaller pegs of larger quantities (Lauri Pegboard)
    - Geometric Pegs (Plan Toys)
    - Can get up to 100 very small pegs (Milton Bradley Primary Pegboard #1466)
- Posting
    - Classic Nienhuis versions or similar versions available from other Montessori suppliers such as www.allisonmontessori.com
    - Wooden Stacking Rings by Plan Toys
    - Double Stacker, Rocky Color Cone and Single Post and Try from Michael Olaf/Joyful Child 888.880.9235
    - Wooden Small Wood Stacking rings by Holgate
    - Cone Sorting Toy from www.thewoodenwagon.com
- Shape Sorters (such as Three Shape Sorting box i33 from www.allisonmontessori.com)
- Sorting Objects (by color, etc)
- Bead Stringing
    - Start with a set of large wooden beads and a string that has a short dowel on the end that is used to thread through the beads (Bead Threading from Michael Olaf/Joyful Child 888.880.9235)
    - Move to a leather lace or yarn with a plastic tip (available at Discount School Supply)
    - Most complex is lanyard or yarn with a plastic tip using pony beads to make a necklace to take home
- Nesting Boxes, Cups and Dolls
    - Natural wood nesting boxes from www.earlyschoolmaterials.com
    - Nesting boxes and nesting cups, lots of varieties, colors and sizes from www.thewoodenwagon.com (look in Toddler Toys)
    - Nesting Dolls from www.bitsandpieces.com start with a set that has just a few (maybe 3 or 4) and then progressively increase to more
- Language objects
    - Schleich animal figurines available at Target and also at high end toy stores
    - Transportation objects – wooden sets available that fit Brio or Thomas the Train sets – available at Target
- Books on Tape/CD
- Rugs – Math weave rugs from Azoka are great www.azokacompany.com
- Practical Life
    - Window washing
    - Mortar and Pestle – small size available from Montessori Services (Mortar and Pestle item Y36)
    - Nut Grinder available at Bed, Bath and Beyond

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- Pretend Play and Dressup
  - Baby – stroller, dressing, wrapping in a blanket, feeding, washing
  - Dressup as Community workers
- Art and Creativity
  - Markers, crayons and colored pencils
  - Playdoh
  - Stamps and stamp pad
  - Gluing
  - Watercolor painting
  - Do-a-Dot art markers (like bingo stampers) available at Discount School Supply

Cleaning up at the end of the day

- A song signals that it is time to put work away, take off your slippers and put on your outside shoes. Children come to the rug to read a book and wait for others. When everyone is ready, we start our circle time.
- Circle time can include:
  - Taking attendance – learning each other's names
  - Singing songs
  - Gross motor activities
  - Dismissing children one at a time to go get their coats and backpacks before going outside