

BRIEF NOTES

CALLING GROUPS

In a Montessori environment, children work independently, that is they work alone with material. We also call them to work in groups. We mostly never call the entire class to a group. The whole group is gathered before the day's end. It is not a common occurrence. We usually call children who have a common need among a group of children. Usually in a group we have 3-4 children. An experienced teacher can have 4 children in a group and an inexperienced teacher can have 3 children.

When we have a large group of children, the attention of the teacher goes into managing the children, it's hard to participate and focus on the children, and some of them are very young and they are not patient. There is no fixed time in a day for a group time; the children have an inner development time table. They should be able to choose what they want; engagement comes out of their interest. We invite children to small groups to conduct the group; the adult must choose the place in the environment. We never turn our back on the whole class.

If the teacher works with another teacher coordination is important and good communication is required. Planning and flexibility is the key. The groups are spontaneous based on the need of the environment, based on that moment.

The groups must be planned every day, small group activities plan to engage the children in all group activities in all areas, several times in a day. Within a week we must be able to track and plan for the next week, based on observation. Once a group begins, another child cannot join the group, the group is offered with a plan.

The other children should learn to wait in faith that their turn will come. Groups need to be sharp, short and sweet. The groups that you call are a mixed age group, mix of abilities, interest.

Eventually if the groups are growing well in the environment, the children will try to conduct an activity. Groups can be called by the adult or teachers.

Overtime groups are naturally established, children will expect to be in a group. If there are no groups, children lose faith that turn will never come.

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MATS

Mats are an important part of the environment. It is a working surface for children. Each classroom must have varieties of mats (square, rectangular) they are kept in a container in one place, neatly arranged. It can be colorful and decorative, uniformity is important too, upkeep is important. It must be cleaned and dried, we can also have water proof mats, for children to layout materials that involving washing activities. A mat indicates a working space for a child to operate. It helps them mentally organize the activity. It is important to show children how to put down, roll and unroll the mat. It helps them to work independently. Show the child where it has to go after use. Regularly make sure that it's cleaned and stacked neatly (mat stand) the mat should not be walked on. Based on the activity they can choose from the variety of mats.

APRONS

It is a part of many of our life activities, they can be a variety of aprons that is colorful and belongs to a set. We feel psychological readiness to begin the activity and begin working. We must buy uniform measurement for all children, and it should fit properly. The fabric must be thick, and to protect their dress. They should be worn independently by the child; it can have pretty designs to make it look attractive. It should be color coded with the activity. After use they should know how to fold an apron, if it is wet they need to dry it in the clothes line. Lining can be added if required.

FOOD PREPARATION

Food preparation is an important aspect in a Montessori environment. It is a part of a practical life activity. It satisfies the aims of the practical life activities. It does not entirely belong to practical life. Children want to belong and be a part of our life and we offer them opportunities. We create sets with materials that will help them. There must be a start and an end. Food is connected to our social connections and emotional connect.

We make food for everyone, everything related to food preparation must be taught, from storage, budgeting, practical quantities, washing, peeling etc. establish a rule before starting and we must show the children how to use the supply economically. We associate love with food, memories, and we transfer the love through food.

Hygiene is the most important; we must show them how to wash hands, and how to sit at the snack corner. We must also consider the allergies if children have any. Make sure the vegetables and fruits are seasonal, the produce must not be too much. Children will enjoy eating everything since they made it.