



See me, hear me, know me

Building on the Learning Foundations for Toddlers

Trust in the Infant's Competence



We have basic trust in the infant to be an initiator, to be an explorer eager to learn what he is ready for.

Because of this trust, we provide the infant with only enough help necessary to allow the child to enjoy mastery of her own actions.

Reference: www.rie.org

Caregiving Moments: Involving the Child

During care moments (nappy changing, mealtimes, sleeptime), we encourage even the tiniest infant to become an active participant rather than a passive recipient of the activities.

(Caregivers) create opportunities for interaction, cooperation, intimacy and mutual enjoyment by being wholeheartedly with the infant during the time they spend together anyway.

“Refueled” by such unhurried, pleasurable caring experiences, infants are ready to explore their environment with only minimal intervention by adults.



Sensitive Observation



Our method, guided by respect for the infant's competence, is observation.

We observe carefully to understand the infant's communications and his needs.

The more we observe, the more we understand and appreciate the enormous amount and speed of learning that happens during the first two or three years of life.

We become more humble, we teach less, and we provide an environment for learning instead.

A Safe, Challenging, Predictable Environment

Our role is to create an environment in which the child can best do all the things that the child would do naturally.

The more predictable an environment is, the easier it is for babies to learn.

As infants become more mobile, they need safe, appropriate space in which to move.

Their natural, inborn desire to move should not be handicapped by the environment.



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Time for Uninterrupted Play and Freedom to Explore



We give the infant plenty of time for uninterrupted play.

Instead of trying to *teach* babies new skills, we appreciate and admire what babies are actually doing.

Consistency



We establish clearly defined limits
and communicate our expectations
to develop discipline.

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The Terrific Toddler

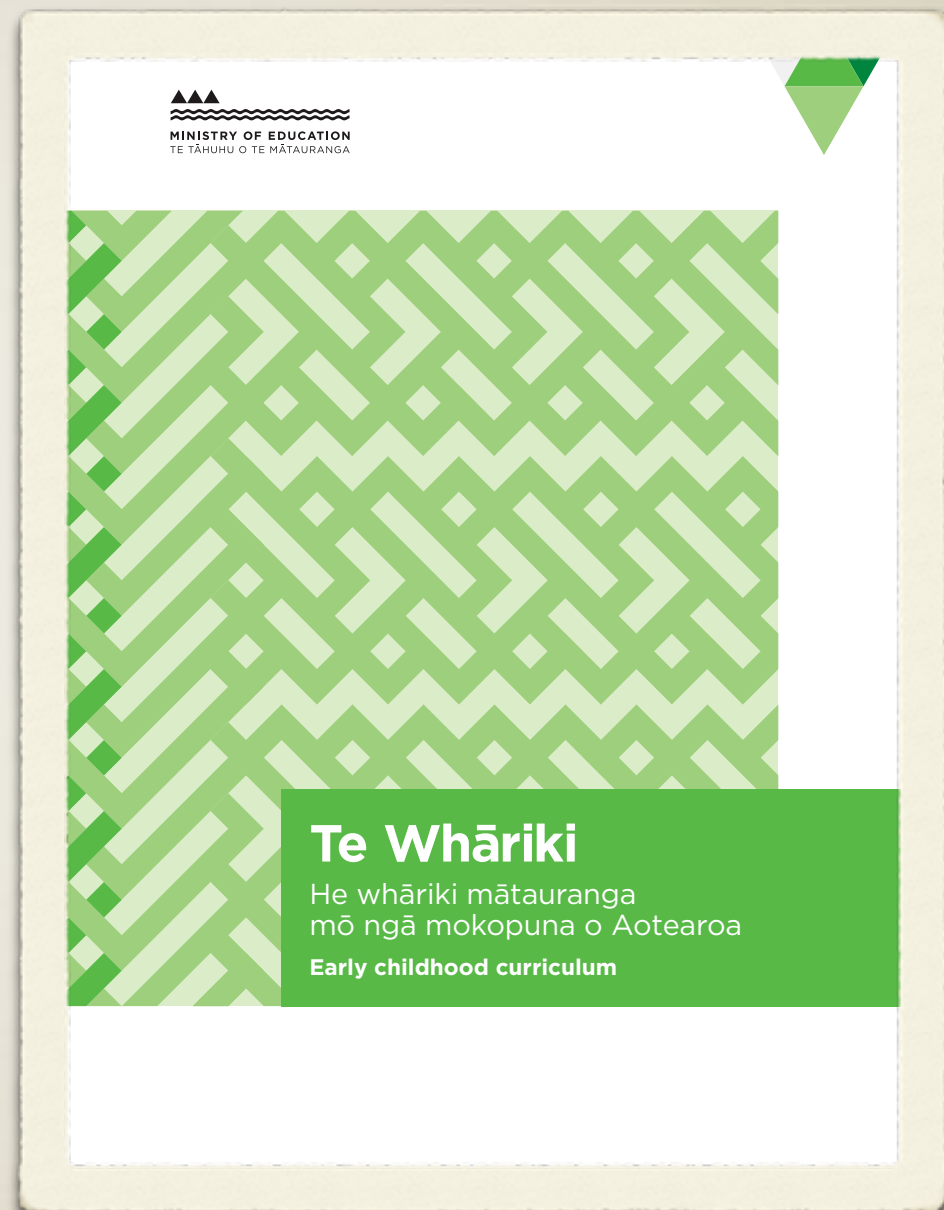
What words come to mind
when you think of toddlers?

Confident Focused
Interested Involved
Cheerful Resourceful Exploring
Inner-directed Competent
Self-initiating Cooperative Peaceful
Secure Attentive Curious
Aware

Te Whāriki

Vision - "Children **are** competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge they make a valued contribution to society."

Te Whāriki (2017) p.6

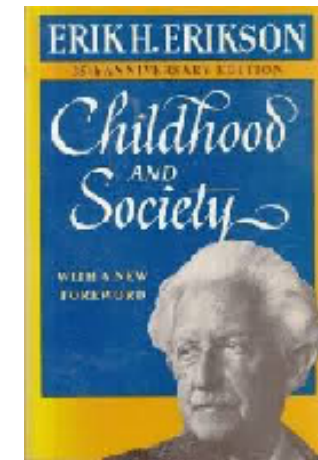


Weaving Theory...



“Life doesn’t make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, and the sooner we learn that, the better for us all”

trust
intimacy
guilt
doubt
autonomy
identity
generativity
erik
erikson
integrity
development
isolation
psychosocial
shame
stagnation
initiative
confusion
mistrust
despair



Erik Erikson The Formation of Identity

“There is in every child at every stage a new miracle of vigorous unfolding, which constitutes a new hope and a new responsibility for all.”

Infants (birth to 18 months)
Trust vs Mistrust - Relationship is key, consistency of care, establishing trust → HOPE

Toddlers (18 months to 3 years)
Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt - Working in partnership towards independence → WILL

Young Children (3 to 5 years)
Initiative vs Guilt - Supporting the child to fly → PURPOSE



I believe in you
I trust in you
I know you can handle this
You are listened to
You are cared for
You are very important to me

-Barbara Coleroso

The Terrific Toddler

The care moments are still important learning moments...

Mealtimes -

(How can we involve toddlers more in the mealtime ritual?)

Toilet Learning -

(Waiting for the signs of readiness)

Sleeptime -

(How can we involve toddlers more in settling into sleep?)

Mealtimes

How can we involve toddlers more
in the mealtime ritual?

Respectful Mealtimes

July 27th, 2017

'Mealtimes are a valuable time for learning and should be an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. When we invest time and attention to each child during mealtime, we are ensuring that they develop a healthy attitude and respect for food.'

Over the past few months, the Pepe team have been reviewing how we support the children at mealtimes. Our aim is to create a practice of mindfulness and respect, where children are able to be involved, as well as develop healthy attitudes to food. The transition has been gradual to allow the children time to learn the new process, and actually most times the children began to take the lead!!

We started by looking at the group size at mealtimes. Research shows that the optimal group size for experiences for infants and toddlers should be no more than four to five children, so our first step was to move to rolling the mealtimes. With a lot of support and reassurance from kaiako, the children have now developed an understanding that if there is no space available, they will go off and play until a space is free. It has been lovely to see that the children feel comfortable in choosing when to come to the table, especially if they are deeply focused in their exploration and play. Having a small group of children at each table has lead to the children staying for longer, enjoying a kai and korero with their peers and the kaiako.



Our next step was then to look at how we prepare for mealtimes. Our mantra has been "be prepared in the head, heart and hands"! So there is a teacher who sits at each table, with a tray all ready to go. We are working towards reducing the amount of plastic we use with the children, not only for the environment but also thinking of respect for the food, so purchased some ceramic serving dishes. We have noticed how the children love to be able to see and choose their food; some of the older children have even taken the lead and served themselves, using the tongs with such skill and finesse.

Kai time...

Kai time...



For a while now, the children have taken the lead in clearing their plates and cups when they have finished eating, putting their dishes in the container on the trolley. We tweaked it a little bit by providing a scraps container for them to use at the table.

We are still on this journey into respectful mealtimes. Next step - REAL glasses for the children to drink from...

Trusting the children in this has shown us just how competent and capable they really are!

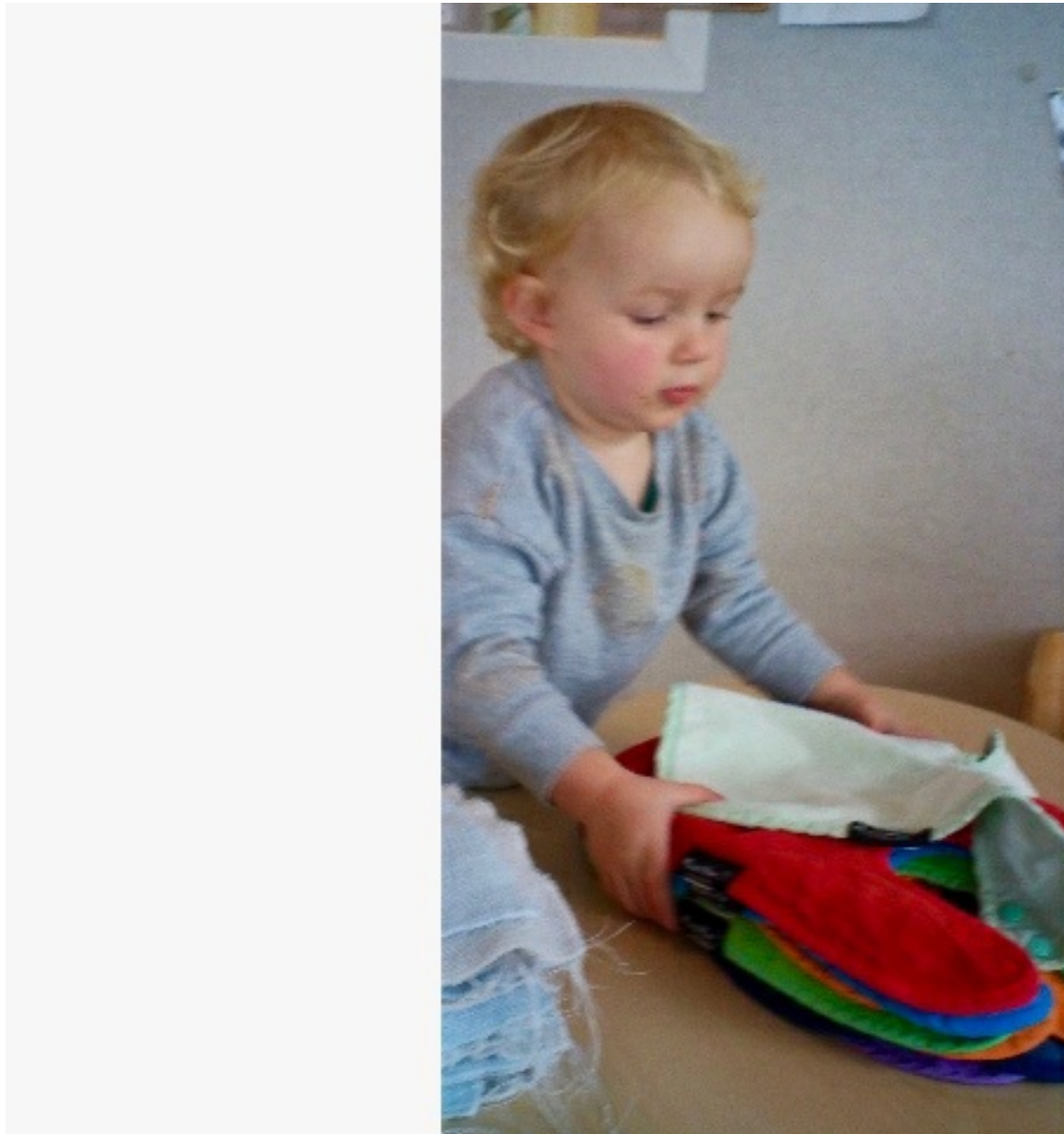
What do we know?

- * Toddlers love to be involved
- * Toddlers are always watching
- * Toddlers learn by doing
- * Toddlers learn in partnership with a knowing adult
- * Toddlers ARE capable of so much when we trust them

Toddlers love to be involved...

This is my place...





Marnie, you were such a great help this morning. You sorted the bibs out, laying them one on top of the other. Whenever it didn't look right, you would say "It is not working", to which I would respond "How can we make it work better?" You would start again, lifting the bib and working hard to lay it flat, until you felt it was as you want it.

Marnie loves to take responsibility for her space; she knows this is her place. When something is not going right, I would often say "This is not working", so I couldn't help but smile when I heard you say it. Being able to offer this type of language, enables you to work through those challenges that come your way.

We will continue to offer opportunities for you to take responsibility for your space, involving you in any of the day to day happenings at HPELC.

At the car wash...



Wednesday September 6th, 2017: It was a rainy morning and the bikes had been left out. Marnie thought it would be a great idea to give the bikes a clean, and asked for a towel. Oliver and Lewis noticed this and were inspired to join in, so all three took to giving the bikes a clean. What a lovely example of toddlers taking care of their environment; it shows that Marnie, Oliver and Lewis have a strong sense of belonging here at HPELC.

A snapshot of learning in action. captured by Anita

“Tell me and I forget,
teach me and I may remember,
involve me and I learn”

– *Benjamin Franklin*

Caregiving Moments: Involving the Child

During care moments (nappy changing, mealtimes, sleeptime), we encourage even the tiniest infant to become an active participant rather than a passive recipient of the activities.

(Caregivers) create opportunities for interaction, cooperation, intimacy and mutual enjoyment by being wholeheartedly with the infant during the time they spend together anyway.

“Refueled” by such unhurried, pleasurable caring experiences, infants are ready to explore their environment with only minimal intervention by adults.



Are there other moments in the day
where toddlers are able to be involved?

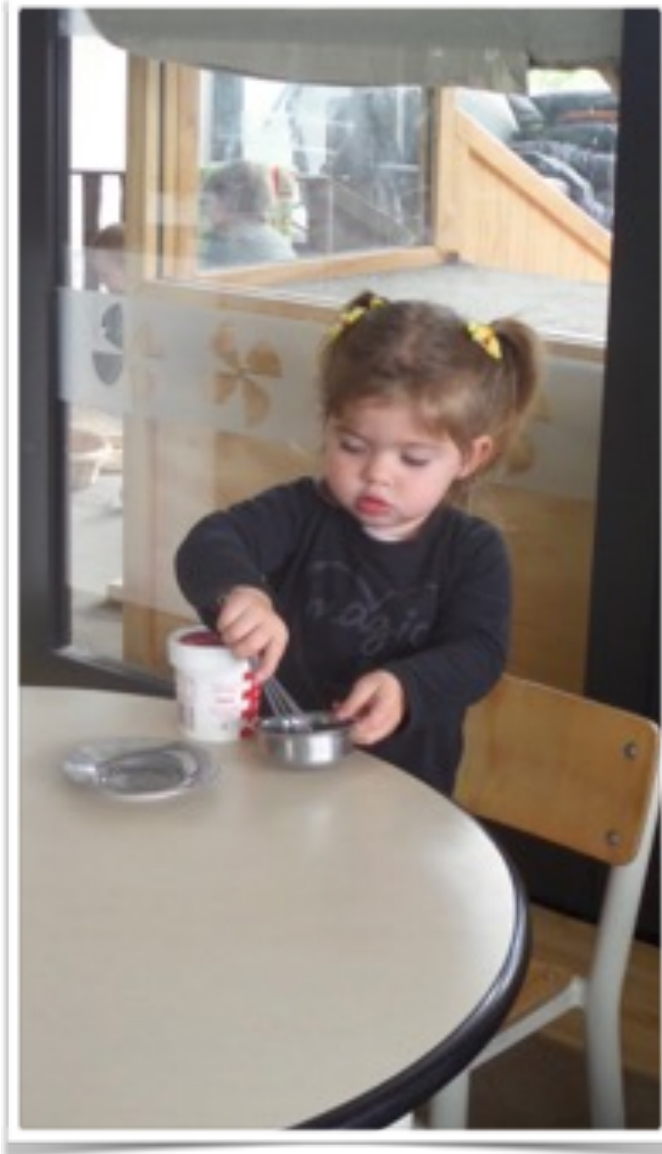
Toddlers are always watching...

Reliving the experience...



Mama Manaia, taking care of baby

Thursday September 27th, 2018



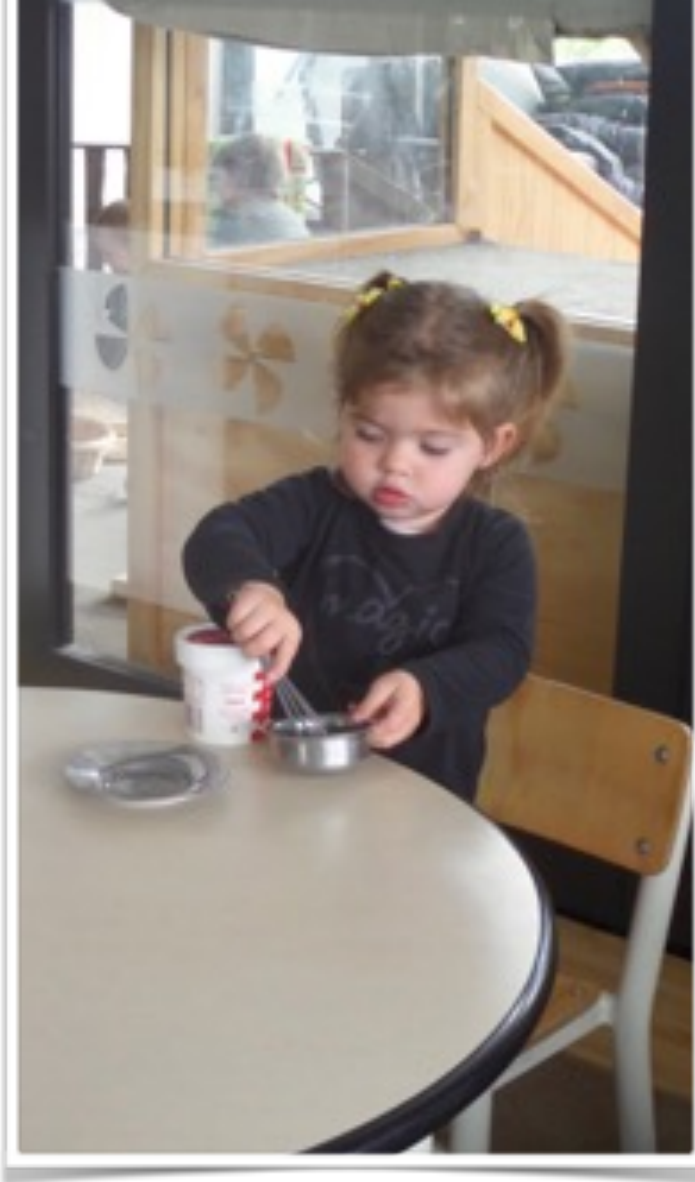
It was just before lunch, and you were busy in the kitchen space. You had your bowl, mixer and a container. You sat at the table and busied yourself mixing, mixing, mixing. You actually started this earlier in the day, as I remember you bringing all this equipment to the mat and sat with me while you mixed. You pretended to add something to your mixture from the container. I wonder what it might have been..? You continued to mix until your baby caught your attention, then you tended to her. You found her cradle and brought it over to the kitchen space. You were ever so gentle as you popped your baby into the cradle. Then you decided that baby might be better off on the chair.

What learning might I see happening here for you?

You were so focused on your experience, Manaia. At each point, you showed deep concentration, this is important work. It was obvious to me that this was of interest to you, as you had started this experience earlier on, and after a while playing in other areas, was ready to revisit mixing again. In the video, you showed a quiet resolve as you went about finding your baby a cradle to sleep in, then rethinking where to pop baby down to sleep. I could hear you thinking out loud, talking to yourself about what you were going to do, talking to baby...

So much learning can be seen in these experiences. Having the freedom to choose what captures your interest allows you to explore ideas and thinkings you might have about the world around you.

What stood out for me in particular was the care and respect you showed with your baby. You were ever so gentle and attentive towards your baby. This is the age where children's dramatic play begins to emerge, and often it involves moments you have experienced in your early years. I can see by the way you care for your baby, how you have experienced being cared for when you were a baby. This reminds me of a quote - 'We teach who we are' - Parker J Palmer. This is so important to



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How might we support this learning further for you?

It will be interesting to observe where you might take this exploration, Manaia. Perhaps you will continue to find ways to take of your baby..? Or perhaps you will explore the mixing again and take that further..? We will watch with eager anticipation.

From you friend,
Anita

*“Do less,
observe more,
enjoy most”*

- Magda Gerber

Toddlers learn by doing...

“I can do this”

Wednesday September 13th, 2017



This morning, Oliver found the overpants under the trolley, and decided he wanted to put some on. Oliver found a space on the mat and took his time figuring out which leg went into which hole. Once he had worked through that challenge, Oliver moved onto figuring out how to clip the top of the overalls in.

This whole process took Oliver a concerted amount of time and energy, however Oliver showed considerable determination and a quiet perseverance in facing this challenge. Oliver seemed pretty chuffed with himself when he had the outfit on, but that was not enough - next was his socks and shoes!!

What learning might I see happening for Oliver?

I have often been blown away by the determination and perseverance Oliver uses when approaching any challenge, and the quiet way Oliver practises and masters new learning. These dispositions come in handy, especially with Oliver's developing self help skills. The look on his face says it all - this is important work, and I can do it all by myself. This shows me how strong Oliver's sense of belonging is, and how he is taking responsibility for himself. It reminds me of the importance of stepping back and allowing children to have a go. This learning is just as important and valued as the traditional academic learning.

How might we support this learning further for Oliver?



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How might we support this learning further for Oliver?

I wonder where Oliver might take this learning? We will allow Oliver the opportunity to take care of himself more - dressing, etc. - perhaps involve him more during the care moments (mealtime, nappy changing and sleeptime). Of course, we will continue to be available to support him if and when he needs it, remembering that toddlers learn in partnership with the adults around them.

Time for Uninterrupted Play and Freedom to Explore



We give the infant plenty of time for uninterrupted play.

Instead of trying to *teach* babies new skills, we appreciate and admire what babies are actually doing.

“When you teach a child something,
you forever take away his chance
of discovering it for himself.”

- Jean Piaget

Toddlers learn in partnership
with a knowing adult...

Nathan Mikaere Wallis



Those Challenging Moments

“an uncontrolled outburst of anger and frustration, typically in a young child”

- * everything within the child has reached an extreme; stress hormones have reached their limit; it does affect the child's brain
- * need to allow the child to reach the crescendo
- * be there for the child when they have settled down
- * talk with the child about the situation; acknowledge the child's emotions
- * be available to the child for comfort

Those challenging moments...

stay calm

be present

it takes time

it takes repeating over and over

it is done in partnership

Let's do this together...

Friday October 11th, 2019



Florence, I would like to acknowledge the journey you have been on over the past few weeks. It has been a busy time for us in the Pepe Room, with new friends settling in, and teachers being on holiday. You have approached these moments like a trooper, Florence, even pitching in to help out where you can.

There have been some moments for you, Florence, where you have been wanting or needing something, and in your own way, you let us know. Sometimes we can follow through with what you are wanting or needing; sometimes it takes a little while but we get there. It's in these moments I want to acknowledge how far you have come.

When these wants something times come up for you, we have been talking about ways you can help yourself. Often when you are having a moment, we ask "How can we help?", allowing you time to let us know what it is you need or want. Sometimes, we might make some suggestions, like "would you like a cuddle?" or "shall we find your cuddly?". In fact, I have noticed how much you love to do things on your own. So offering possibilities allows you to choose the best way for you. In doing so, you have begun to move from having your moments to seeking out a cuddle or looking for your cuddly.

What learning might I see happening here for you, Florence?

Having big feelings in such a little body can be challenging in itself, and often it comes through in behaviours or moments. With understanding and support, you are discovering ways to work through these. When these moments arise, acknowledging those big feelings with you is the beginning. Letting you know that we understand how you are feeling helps you build your language. Then following through with the offer of help through a few possibilities is creating strategies that will support you in your self-regulation. The more we can acknowledge and offer, the stronger your ability to self-regulation becomes. What is important here is that you feel heard, and that we do this together, as you learn best from the adults around you. That is what discipline is - learning how to be, from those who know and know you.

How might we support you further in this learning, Florence?

We will continue to hear you, and to journey with you as you find your way of being in this world. We will ensure that the message is consistent too, as this new learning may take some time to embed and master. As my then four year old niece used to say: Practice plus practice equals **learning**; practice plus practice plus practice equals **mastery**

Arohanui,
your friend
Anita

A note about discipline...

Discipline:

Meant to guide and help children, gives children the tools of self regulation. It builds self-esteem, respects, heals, encourages, emotionally supports and facilitates trust.

Punishment:

Adult oriented, imposes power and control, lowers self esteem, humiliates, hurts (physically &/or emotionally), angers, embarrasses, discourages, emotionally abandons, frustrates

Consistency



We establish clearly defined limits
and communicate our expectations
to develop discipline.

“When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it’s our job to share our calm, not join their chaos.”

- L R Knost

Toddlers ARE capable of so
much when we trust them!



Grant Schofield



'...the possibility for joy, struggle, risk taking, success and failure will exist when the possibility of surprise is embedded in the process of 'finding out'. Children who spend their time in a carefully constructed and often static environment encircled by rules and routines have little opportunity for choice and freedom of thought and action.'

- Greenman (1988)

Supporting gross motor learning

November 16th, 2017

By Anita



The children have been exploring experiences to support their gross motor learning, especially in the area of experiences that have an element of safe risk and challenge.

By allowing very young children to explore these experiences, children are less likely to enter into risky pursuits at an older age. This goes hand in hand with what Magda Gerber advocates - the idea that a child will do what they need to do when they are ready to do it. This means allowing the child to follow their intuition, something we are all born with, and to listen to their bodies and figure out when and what is ok for them, and of course how best for them to navigate each new experience.

What was lovely to see was the different, creative ways the children used the wobbly plank and the trapeze.

It was great to sit back and see how they approach each new experience, seeing just how capable the children are in taking the lead in their learning.



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Reference: www.rie.org

“How do we create a safe learning environment that embraces risk and challenge for toddlers”

Rethinking our practice

What is our role when working with toddlers?

Reflecting on our 'Ways of Being' with toddlers

Capturing the magic

Creating the YES environment

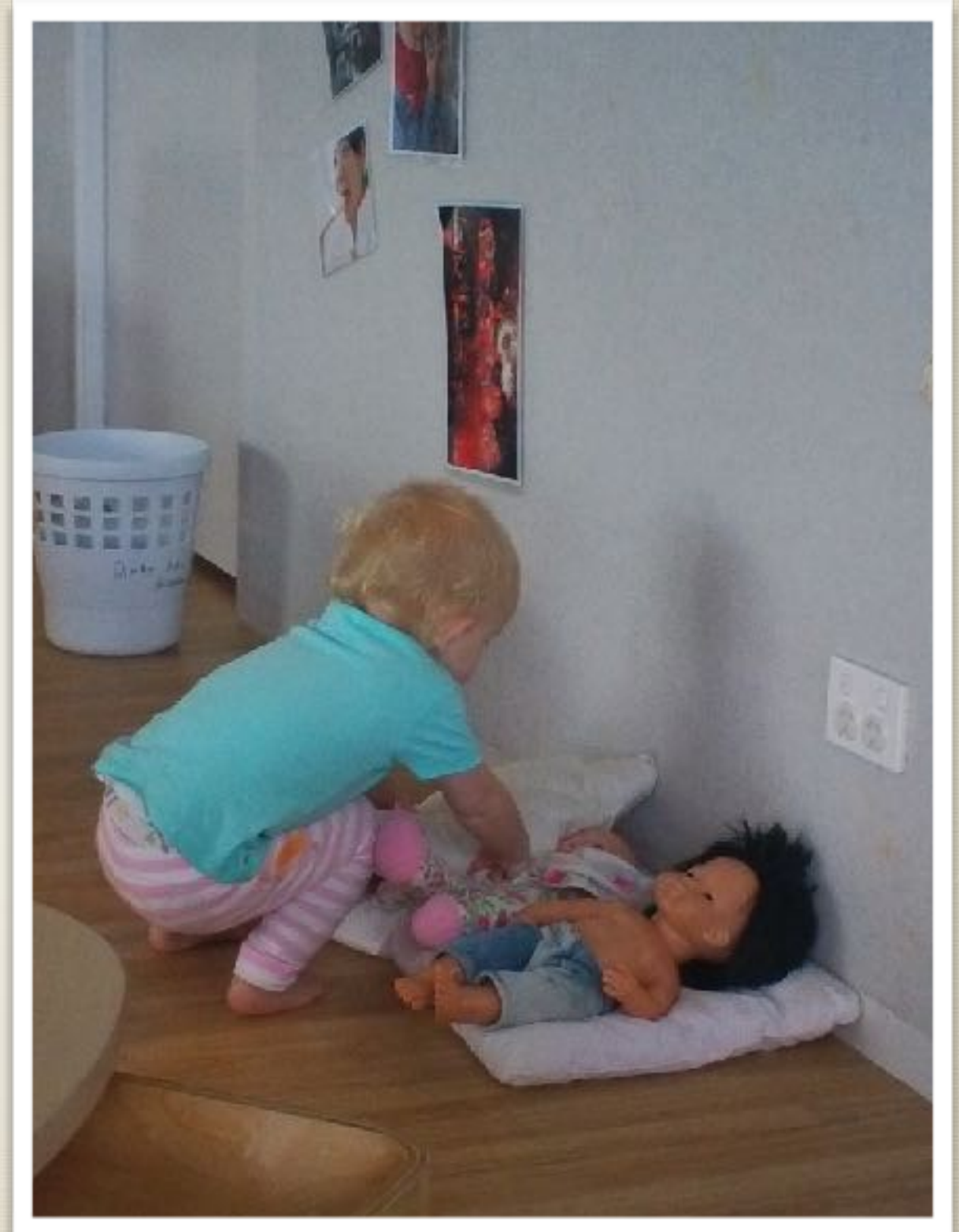
Responding in the moment

*“Be prepared in
the head, heart
and hands”*

- Kimberley Crisp

“Let the child
be the
scriptwriter,
director and
actor in his
own play”

-Magda Gerber





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