

"Don't Correct; Teach"

or

Don't tell the child what not to do....

Tell them what they may do!!

"consequences, not punishment". Montessori teachers should not be punitive nor coercive. They should not have to spend a lot of time disciplining students. Expectations and boundaries should be clear. The expectations for small kids are not taught by correcting, but by directly teaching, and also by the example older kids provide in the classroom. This is one of the big advantages of having the mixed age classrooms. One way behavior is taught is by "grace and courtesy lessons", in which behavior is acted out and practiced. For instance the teacher and an older student or assistant teacher, will act out what a child can do and say when another child takes something of theirs. Then the children take turns playing the different parts of the little drama. This is an amazingly effective way of teaching behavior.

Handy Phrases to Use when Speaking with the Child

Begin by naming the situation:

I notice that..... (name the situation simply).

- 1. This material is fragile. We must be careful when using this work.**
- 2. May I show you how to do this work?**
- 3. Do you remember how to (talk, walk, carry a rug, use this work)**
- 4. Do you remember where you found this?**
- 5. Is this work (ready/restored) for the next person?**
- 6. Invite the child to choose a work: Do you have a work in mind that you would like to work on today?**
- 7. You may sit at this table / chowki / by the prayer table while you think about what you want to do.**
- 8. Invite the child to assist you: I need you to assist me with ...**
- 9. I will show you how to do this work.**
- 10. Let me hear (You may use) your inside/atrium voice today.**
- 11. You need to (sit down, walk slowly, speak softly, place your hands in your lap...)**
- 12. Would you like for me to read the scripture booklet for you? What words did you hear that.... you like....are new...sound beautiful... ?**
- 13. People have been wondering that same question for 100's of years. We, too, can think about that same question.**
- 14. Join in celebration with the child ...I see that you seem excited about completing this work. Would you tell me about your picture? I see that you have spent a lot of time working on it today. Acknowledge the child's work: Attempt not to offer Praise.**

Guidelines for Catechists

(The adult should attempt to be inconspicuous)

1. Always walk slowly and purposefully.
2. Always speak in a soft, subdued voice...even a whisper. Your voice sets the tone for the room.
3. When helping the child, or speaking to the child: make sure your body is in a sitting or kneeling position. Your eyes need to be level with the child's.
4. When addressing the child, do not call across the classroom. Instead, walk slowly over to the child, lower your body as in #3, and quietly speak.
5. Do not make any fast moves. Even if a child spills, or is running, remain calm and walk slowly to the child. (If no blood or broken glass....watch to see if child is able to correct the situation without your assistance before moving your body.)
6. Matches are always carried in the Catechist's pocket. If you light a candle you must stay with that candle until it is extinguished. (You may move your body out of direct sight of the child)
7. Never interrupt or interfere in a child's work. If the material has been presented, do not interrupt the concentration of the child with comments or corrections. (The child is more interested in the process of doing the work; it is the adult's need to see an end product...) Only if you observe one of the 3 D's do you disrupt the work of a child.

Remember the 3 D's"

Dangerous

Destructive

Disruptive

8. Learn by observing. The child will follow your example. If every child is working or looking for work, sit down and observe while working your own work or sitting quietly out of the way.
9. Always prepare yourself before entering the atrium.
 - Leave social conversations with other adults outside the atrium.
 - Leave food and drink outside the atrium.
 - Invite the Holy Spirit to be present with you and to open your heart to be present with the child.