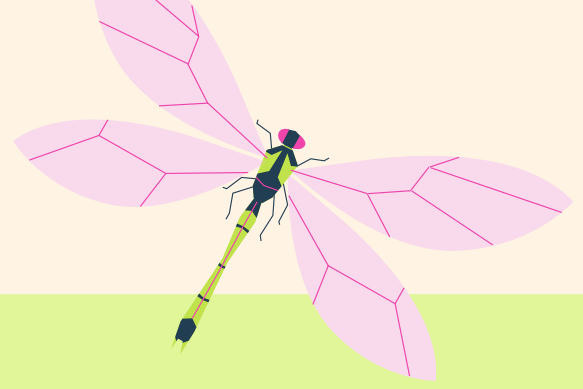


Toddler Newsletter

April 8, 2020



Dear Parents,

We Miss Our Toddler Friends!!!! This is the most important message we would like you to know! Our hearts so miss the laughter and the hum of your busy toddlers at Children's Garden! We hope that your families were able to find some peaceful or fun activities during the Spring Break! While we were on a bit of break, we continued to write Parent/Teacher conferences and work on online professional development. Children's Garden has a wonderful tradition of sending the parents a letter about their children. I am so glad that we have this tradition so that you have an idea of the picture we have in our minds of your amazing children and include some information on their development. The letters should be going out late in the week of April 13th.

Leslie, Rachel and I communicate continually on how to best meet the needs of the children and families. We have more Zoom meetings scheduled and hopefully the newsletters are providing you with a good read about knowledge on child development, Montessori philosophy and demonstrating ideas to bridge the gap between home and school. If there is a topic you would like to learn more about please let us know. Also, please feel free to share pictures or videos of any topic we share with you! It is SO fun to see the children at home! We hope that adding the Zoom meetings will be a benefit to your day as we know seeing the children brightens our days! If there are songs that your child is requesting, feel free to reach out to the teacher prior to the meeting. Please reach out to our toddler email if you have any questions or comments. We know this time at time you might find that you have a question about toileting, eating, daily schedule, sleeping or anything toddler related! As we know, all children are different and we would be happy to answer your questions about what you are experiencing with your child.

Take care and stay well,
Rachel, Leslie and Kristen



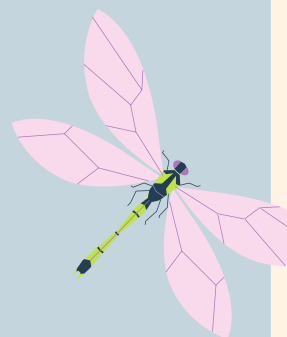
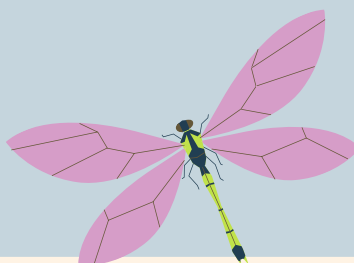
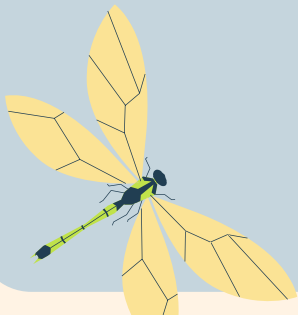
The “Practicals” of Life Care of Self – Getting Dressed *By Kristen*



“The child’s nature is to aim directly and energetically at functional independence.” (The Absorbent Mind, Montessori., 1964,p.83)

The Toddler Community at Children’s Garden is a wonderful nest for the mind. We frequently have teachers and staff from the whole school come in to take a moment and just feel the delight and contentment that we are blessed to enjoy each day with your toddlers! Golly we miss the children and our nest at CGM! Many of you are curious as to what happens day to day in the toddler community. As Maria Montessori noted, the children have in their nature to work on their independence. A huge part of toddler development is acquiring physical independence by working on care of self. Since we are all in our homes and caring for children and ourselves, we felt it would be wonderful for you to have some ideas on how we best support children at school gaining their independence to dress themselves and how there are possibilities for you to use at home.

Since times are different at the moment, and we are not venturing out in the world it is still important to get dressed! Well, most days.... I give my girls a PJ day each week! Guiding your toddler into the care of themselves with getting dressed is wonderful for the child but it also provides the parent with one less thing to do! If a child is given many opportunities to get dressed and practice the skills with different materials, he will feel confident and competent about doing it himself. The best part about this opportunity is that it is already a part of your day to get up and get dressed. However, there are also multiple times throughout the day like during diaper changing, switching wet clothes from all the hand-washing and toilet learning to practice these skills.



First of all, you can start by providing your child with clothing that they can manipulate. I know there are so many super cute outfits for toddlers, but save those for fun events and have their daily wear be simple clothing. This means pants with a waistband, shirts that pull on, and slip on shoes. Allow your child to choose what they would like to wear each day. This gives them the self-confidence to feel like they are a part of the process of getting dressed and it is not being done to them. It is much easier if you provide them with 2 outfits to choose from as a whole wardrobe can be overwhelming. Sometimes adding picking out an outfit as part of your bedtime routines can be helpful as you might have busy mornings or your child is not a morning person!

Next, show them how you pick out an outfit. Many people pick their outfits by finding out the weather for the day. My children love to ask ALEXA the weather for the day and that helps them choose their outfit. Children look to their parents for everything and if you are comfortable, have them be with you or an older child while getting dressed. Role model the steps and talk about what you are doing. Ex. "I need to pull my sock wide and put it over my toes before I pull it up." Have your child put on one of Dad's t-shirts. They love to try on Mom and Dad's clothes and they are sometimes easier to manipulate when in a bigger size. After allowing your child to be a part of the outfit process and have them help be a part of the process of doing the dressing.

During diapering, have your child push down their pants and pull up their pants. I feel writing these ideas that you might read them feeling as though it is common sense, but when you are young and learning all of this for the first time, it helps to have guidance.

At school we have wooden frames that isolate a dressing skill like buttons or snaps that the children can take to a table to tackle the skill. At home, you can have your child dress their stuffed animals. Please see the picture below. Having a stuffed animal with longer legs and arms is helpful. The dolls or animals should be in one basket and clothes in another. I managed to find some infant clothes that worked best on the animals but you could use some of your toddler's clothes too!

Speaking of your toddler's clothes, I would have a basket with outdoor gear at their level and they can practice the "up and over" method for putting on coats! Please see the video with my daughter Olivia putting on her coat. Afterwards she said, "Mom, this is a much more fun way to put on your coat!" We also provided a video of her putting on and taking off slip on shoes. As with many activities, we sing a song to make doing the skill a jovial part of learning!

Check out the pictures for more ideas on dressing. It includes using dress up with Halloween Costumes and doing a suitcase race!

A recap on ideas:

- Provide simple clothing like pants with an elastic band and slip on shoes.
- Have your child with you while dressing.
- Have your child try on your shirts.
- Practice getting dressed throughout the day.
- Provide a stuffed animal/doll and clothes for your child to put on the doll.
- Basket with old Halloween costumes.
- Have a basket with their coats, mittens, hats that they can take on and off.
- Suitcase race.

As we provide our children with opportunities to ordinary things that we do without trying or thinking about, we give them enlightenment and a joyous moment of self-discovery. Hopefully, this article will give you some ideas to live in the moment of your toddler's day while they are gaining their physical independence.



Try a suitcase race to practice dressing! Put some clothes in a suitcase and have your toddler unzip it and put them all on, then race to a finish line!

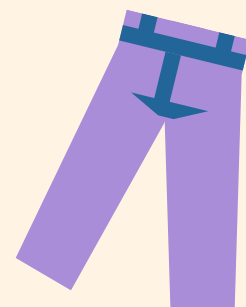


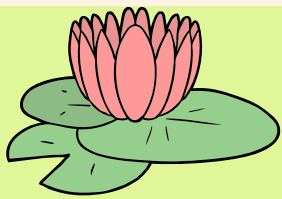


Example of a dressing
stuffed animals job

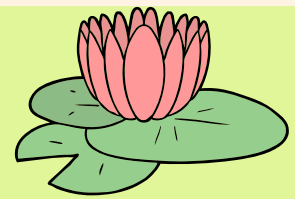


Put out a basket of
Halloween costumes
to practice dressing
too!





Montessori MacGyver by Rachel



There are some of those true Montessori materials we just cannot re-create, but if we look around our house, there are plenty of things we can turn into Montessori materials for our children! In this series, we'll walk you through a step by step process of making your own materials from items found around your house! Recycle & Reuse! Get your child involved in the making process for more at-home fun!

Streamer- Wonderful for dance parties and gross motor inside and outside.

Items You Will Need:

- 1 Ring. If you do not have a ring like this, they are available off of amazon, or you could use a scrunchie, old teething rings, or a bangle bracelet you don't mind your toddler using.
- 1 Pair of Scissors
- A Variety of Ribbons

How to Make It:

- Take your scissors and cut long strips of ribbon. The more colorful, the more fun!
- Take your ring and one strip of ribbon.
- Fold the ribbon in half and place the loop under the ring.
- Take the ends of the strip of ribbon and run through the loop and pull.
- Once you have the one loop secure on the ring, take the ends again and make a knot.
- Repeat with other ribbons.

How to use:

Turn up the tunes on a dreary afternoon, and have your toddler dance their hearts out! This is great for inside gross motor, but can also be fun outside on a beautiful day. Make a few for added dance party glamour.



**Leo using our
classroom
streamer**