

FOOD

The child can only develop by means of experience in his environment. We call such experience "work."

—Maria Montessori

ADULTS AND CHILDREN WORKING TOGETHER

Practical life work provides valuable opportunities for adults and children to spend time together. We parents often wish for more excuses to be with our children, and to use our hands in the time-honored and calming traditional work of the artist and homemaker. Most of us have some talent we could share, or would like to develop - cooking, gardening, sewing, woodworking, making music. Even half an hour a week of sharing with a child is a great beginning.

This collaboration can be of great benefit to us, to our children, and to our developing relationship with each other.

FOLLOWING THE CHILD

The Montessori Assistant to Infancy is well trained in observing children and knowing just what activity to offer when.

During the training year for the Birth to Three Assistants to Infancy course, aside from 20 weeks of lectures, one carries out 300 hours of observations. This is a very special experience and teaches so much about children. Parents often have too many other responsibilities for this kind of observation in the home. But when they realize the importance of observing—in getting to know and understand the child—and build it into the schedule for even a few moments each day, the benefits are great.

It is quite a pleasure just to sit and watch, not having to do anything else, and nothing can help a parent more in getting to know his unique child.

THE CHILD'S RESEARCH

Some people call the search for limits "testing," but there is negative connotation to this word. When a child is trying to learn the rules and procedures of the society in which she lives this is a very positive undertaking. It is actually important research.

A good example is the question "What is the meaning of the word 'No'?" I remember an incident in our home between a good friend and her two-year-old daughter, Julia. The two-year-old had climbed up on the piano bench and was reaching for a bust of Mozart kept on the piano. As she reached toward it she looked expectantly at her mother,

ENAMELWARE KITCHEN BUCKET

The child's lesson how to "do lunch" in the Montessori Infant Community, or 0-3 class, ends with the leftovers being scraped into this compost bucket with the rubber scraper (see page 29). This handy, sturdy, waterproof bucket has many other uses; it can be used to carry water for scrubbing carrots, for gathering peas and beans in the garden, even for playing in the sand.

The style is the classic speckled blue enamel finish over heavy gauge steel, for beauty and endurance. The bucket is 5.5" tall 5.5" in diameter, and comes with a fitted lid.

CR024

\$10.00



VEGETABLE BRUSH

This is the smallest of the traditional European vegetable brushes, suitable for children of all ages and adults. It has a natural bristle, and wooden handle. At the end of the handle is a hook so it can be hung up near the work area. It can also be used for cleaning and scrubbing many things around the home. Total length 8.5".

(*) DR050

\$3.50



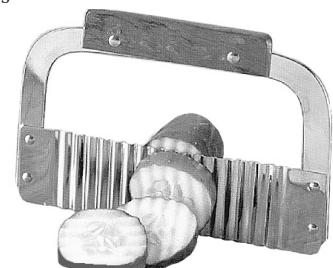
SNACK PREPARATION CUTTING BOARD AND SPREADER

Preparing a snack for the family, and for the children in an infant community, is a favorite activity for children of this age. With the cutting board and slicer-spreader a child can cut fruits and vegetables, and spread crackers and bread with nut butters and soft cheeses.

These are very special cutting boards, made of small pieces of a variety of hardwoods, so they feel like the best of adult cutting boards, and inspire an interest in the variety of woods on earth. They have that all-important groove just inside the outer edge that catches any juice and can easily pour it off. The larger cutting board is 12" x8" and the smaller 7" x 5". Both are 1.5" thick. The larger has grooves under the short end to enable ease of carrying. The slicer-spreader, which is useful for both adults and children, is made of stainless steel with a wood handle, and is 4" long. **NOTE:** wood products must NOT be left to soak in water, and should be oiled (olive oil is fine) periodically (by the child).

- (*) CR110 Large Cutting Board \$19.00
- (*) CR112 Small Cutting Board \$10.00
- CR156 Slicer/Spreader, Set/4 \$6.50

\$19.00
\$10.00
\$6.50



ZIGZAG SLICER

This stainless steel vegetable and fruit slicer/decorator is from Japan, a country world-famous for its beautiful presentation of food. It easily cuts apples, pears, carrots, and other foods into a zigzag shape. Then the child can arrange the pieces on a plate and serve them. The *zigzag slicer* has a wooden handle, and it is wide enough for the child to use two hands to push down easily, providing a careful and beautiful activity. It is 7" wide, and 5" tall.

DR44 \$7.00

obviously for some kind of a response. The mother said "No, don't touch it." Julia stopped, lowered her hand and then reached toward it again. The mother said "No" again, a little louder. Again the daughter reached and looked at her mother. This happened several times with no resolution.

I watched this communication, and the confusion on both sides, and offered the suggestion "I don't think she knows what 'No' means and is trying to find out".

The mother laughed and said "Of course." Then she went to Julia, said "No," gently, and, as she said it, picked Julia up and moved her across the room to a pile of building blocks. Both were completely satisfied.

In the first exchange perhaps the child thought "No" meant, "I am waiting and looking and expect you to

eventually pick up that statue. And I am getting mad at you."

In the second exchange the message was clear. "No" meant, "stop doing what



you are doing and move away to another part of the room or another activity," (and, thanks to the clear and gentle way of speaking, "I am not mad at you").

Children do not understand the language of reasoning until around age six. They need clear demonstrations along with words.

It is very helpful for parents to realize that their child is not trying to be bad, but she is being a normal, intelligent human being trying to find out how to behave. She is carrying out research.

TEACH BY TEACHING, NOT BY CORRECTING

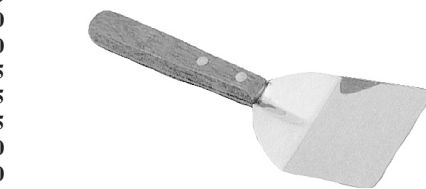
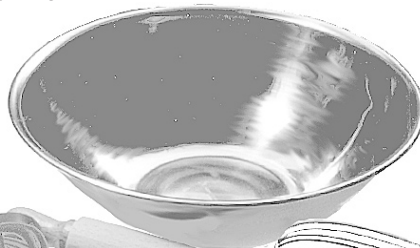
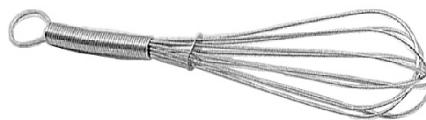
The most powerful tool parents have for sharing their way of life and their values is the example they set. In every waking moment of the child's life, especially in the first three years, she is learning and becoming more and more

MICHAEL OLAF BAKING SET

Cooking along with the adult is one of the favorite activities for a child at this age. These are not toys, but real tools from around the world suitable for the hand-size of the young child. We include the biscuit recipe used in Montessori Infant Communities as measuring, cutting butter into flour, shaping, cutting out, baking, and serving biscuits is great fun for all and a delicious treat.

The Michael Olaf *baking set* can be used by children under the age of three years, and will be good for many years as the child grows. It contains five *biscuit* or *cookie* cutters with handles (three round and two of varying shapes, depending upon the best we have found at the time you order), a pastry cutter, rolling pin, mixing bowl, a 7" stainless steel spatula, an 8" Italian whisk, a 10" wood and rubber scraper. The pastry cutter is made of stainless steel with a wooden handle, and the rolling pin is made in Italy for making ravioli, and the 9.5" x 3" bowl is made of stainless steel.

CR162	Bowl	\$6.50
CR164	Circle Cookie Cutters (3)	\$3.50
CR166	Shape Cookie Cutters (2)	\$3.50
CR168	Pastry Cutter	\$7.75
CR172	Rolling Pin	\$4.25
CR16	Spatula	\$6.25
CR24	Whisk	\$3.50
CR25	Rubber Scraper	\$2.50
CR238	Baking Set & Recipe (11 pieces)	\$37.00



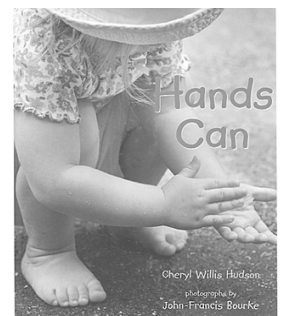
BANANA SLICER

The child can peel a banana, cut it in half, place it on a plate, place the banana slicer on top of the half banana, press down, and "voila!" a sliced banana to serve as snack with toothpicks, or use in a recipe.

Made as a butter slicer for adults, this model, perfect for children, is 7" long, stainless steel wires, made in Taiwan for a Canadian company.
(*) CR114 \$4.75

HANDS CAN

As children learn to do important work, this rhyming book with charismatic photos is ideal for encouraging exploration and mastery of tasks. *Hands can catch; and hands can throw. Hands can plant seeds; in a row. Hands can clap; while voices sing. Hands can do all kinds of things.* There are two versions, a hardcover book or board book.



CB100	Hardcover	\$16.00
(*) CB022	Board Book	\$7.99

like those people she finds around her. She will imitate the way of walking, moving and talking, the vocabulary, the handling of objects, the emotions, manners, taste, the respect and consideration (or lack of) for others, and on and on. The first important thing we can do is to surround her with the kind of people we want her to emulate. These are her first teachers.

The second is to avoid correcting when the lesson can be taught in another way. (Of course if a child reaches for a hot pan handle we correct!) For example, if a child is continually slamming the door very loudly, the best approach is to: (1) Note that the child needs to be shown how to close a door carefully and quietly. (2) Choose a neutral moment (which means not an emotionally charged moment when the adult is upset

by the door-slamming). (3) Give an amusing, exaggerated and interesting lesson, showing the child how to close the door— turning the handle so carefully



One-year-olds in Mexico City proudly set the lunch table, carrying, stacking, sorting, and giving to others.

and slowly that there is no sound whatsoever. Try other doors, do it over and over, as long as both are enjoying it. With these lessons the adult can teach many important lessons, such as brushing teeth, putting away toys, pouring milk.

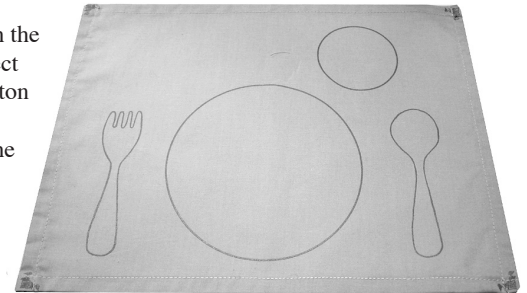
Manners lessons, like saying "please" and "thank you," come from the culture in which the child lives. We used to practice over a large bowl of popcorn, offering and thanking over and over and sometimes laughing hysterically at the end of the lesson, at the exaggerated and fun manners.

When parents and children begin to spend more active time together the need for these lessons comes up often and can be enjoyed by both adult and child. And life becomes more and more pleasant.

PLACEMATS AND NAPKINS

Children love setting their own place at a table with these special placemats decorated with the outline of a plate or bowl, a spoon and fork— which guides them to the correct placement of plates and cutlery. These small placemats are silk-screened on softly patterned cotton fabric, hemmed and ready to use. The colors are of medium blue and green, with blue-green silkscreened outlines and corner decorations. Sometimes parents and teachers embroider over the silkscreened pattern for a special gift. The placemats are 13" x 10", and the napkins 7" square, the outlines matching our silverware. They are 100% preshrunk cotton, machine washable.

CR252 Placemat, blue	\$8.75
CR254 Napkin, blue	\$2.00
CR255 Placemat/Napkin set, blue	\$10.50
CR320 Placemat, green	\$8.75
CR322 Napkin, green	\$2.00
CR324 Placemat/Napkin set, green	\$10.50



FIRST CUTLERY SET IN A GIFT BOX

This small silverware set—a spoon and a fork—is the best quality elegant stainless steel flatware. It is made in the USA by Oneida Silversmiths in the Paul Revere pattern and is the perfect size for the infant and young child. The spoon and fork exactly match the outlines on the silkscreened placemat, 4.25" in length, and come in a gift box. A favorite gift for a young child is a set of two placemats and napkins, and this cutlery.



CR34 \$16.00

STAINLESS STEEL PITCHERS

Pouring is a favorite activity for young children, and a useful skill. One of these pitchers placed on the table for milk, water, or juice, adds elegance and gives a child important practice in pouring. For older children who missed this stage of learning to pour at the meal, the tiny pitchers are used to practice pouring with raw rice or small beans. They are made of stainless steel in India. The smaller one is 2" tall and holds 2 fluid ounces. The larger pitcher is almost 3" tall and holds 4 fluid ounces.

DR51 2 oz. Pitcher	\$4.50
DR50 4 oz. Pitcher	\$5.50



NOTE: a cup with a top that prevent spills interrupts the natural development of the child's control of movement, and the development of skills of observation and logical consequence.



CUTLERY

Many infant communities are using this wonderful cutlery for their children as an alternative to plastic or fingers, so we have added a set of spoons and forks for this purpose. These utensils are made by Oneida Silversmiths, the same as our *first cutlery boxed set*, but of a slightly lighter weight, and with a different decoration.



They are also appropriate for the child at home so that there are always clean utensils for the young child to use, or to take along for meals outside the home. Sold individually or as a set of 5 spoons and 5 forks (10 pieces).

CR055 Fork	\$3.00
CR056 Spoon	\$3.00
CR057 Set/10 pieces	\$27.00

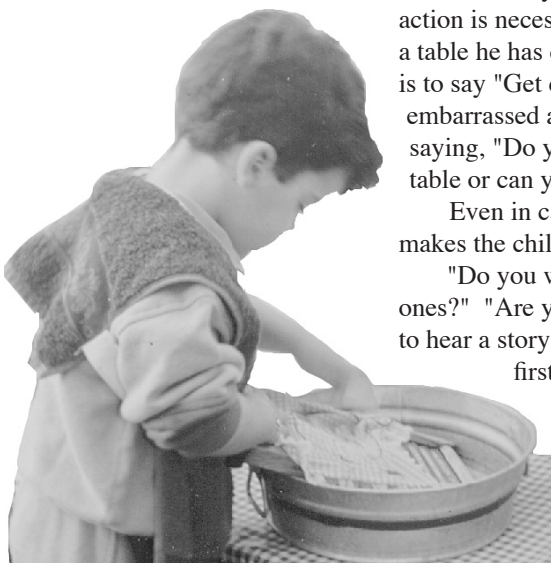
OFFERING CHOICES

Another way to show respect for a child, and at the same time exact the desired behavior, is to offer choices.

One summer I discussed this philosophy with my eight-year-old niece. The following day she and I were sitting on the lawn talking and I noticed that she was watching carefully as a mother and small child were having a verbal battle across the street because the child wouldn't let the mother put on her shoes.

Finally my niece said, "Look at that silly mother. She is doing that all wrong. She should have said 'Do you want to put your shoes on yourself, or do you want me to put your shoes on?'"

She was right. The normal healthy two-year-old who is just beginning to be able to function independently on many physical and mental levels is not



This 2-year-old is washing the lunch napkins.

interested in being told what to do, but *very* interested in being given choices.

Let us say we are in a situation where a certain action is necessary—such as a child getting down from a table he has climbed up on. The worse approach is to say "Get down from there!" The child will be embarrassed and will try to save face by refusing. Try saying, "Do you need help getting down from that table or can you do it yourself?"

Even in casual every day situations giving choices makes the child feel that you respect her opinion.

"Do you want to wear the red gloves or the blue ones?" "Are you ready for bed now or do you want to hear a story first?" "Do you want your applesauce first or your pasta?" (Rather than "Eat your food.")

I know of no behavior on the parent's part more assured of creating a peaceful atmosphere in the home of a two-year-old than that of giving choices.



WHITE PORCELAIN TABLEWARE

These pieces are **SELECTED TO FIT THE PLACEMAT** on page 30. Setting the table, eating, and washing up real porcelain dishes challenges a child to be careful. This shows respect for a child, and he will rise to the responsibility with pride. The adult fills the pitcher, and the child uses it to replenish the water, milk, or juice in the little cup as he eats.

This is high-quality, beautiful white porcelain. The lunch plate is 6.5". The small cream pitcher is 2.5", The tall juice pitcher 3.5". The porcelain bowl, for soup or cereal, is 5.5" in diameter and the "sake" cup is 2" tall.

NOTE: these real porcelain dishes and cups are not for the child to play with, but are to be used, under adult supervision, for the child's daily or special meals.

(*) DR57	Lunch Plate	\$5.50
(*) DR56	Pitcher	\$4.50
(*) CR37	Porcelain Bowl	\$5.50
(*) CR38	Porcelain "sake" Cup	\$3.00
(*) CR389	Porcelain Set/4	\$18.00

ENAMELWARE BOWLS & PLATES

These enamelware pieces can also be used with the placemat. Just as with glass or porcelain, they must be handled with care so they do not chip. When the child learns that he has been entrusted with real, instead of plastic dishes, he rises to the occasion. These dishes are used in many homes and infant communities.

Our style is the classic speckled enamel finish over heavy gauge steel, for beauty and endurance. The color is dark blue with a delicate speckling of white. It is safe to keep on low shelves in the kitchen at home for the child to get out whenever he wants to set a table or prepare a snack or meal. Because it is sturdy and unbreakable it does not have to be used under adult supervision. Made in Mexico.

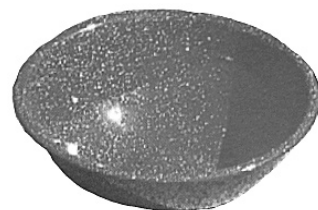
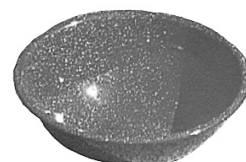
CR020	6" Bowl	\$4.50
CR022	7.5" Bowl	\$6.50
CR192	8.5" Dinner Plate	\$6.50

SMALL WOODEN BOWLS

These lovely bowls can be added to any table, formal or informal, for serving snacks. They can also be used, several on a small wooden tray, for sorting beans, shells, buttons, holding wood, glass, or metal polish, and so on. Made of maple hardwood. The *small wooden bowl* is 2.5" in diameter and comes in a set of two bowls.



DR806	Set/2	\$4.50
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ENAMELWARE CUP

This enamelware first cup, gives the child a firm grasp, but because there is no plastic lid, she learns to balance so the liquid doesn't spill. Very close in color to the enamelware from Mexico. Made in China. 2.5" tall.



CR194		\$2.50
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