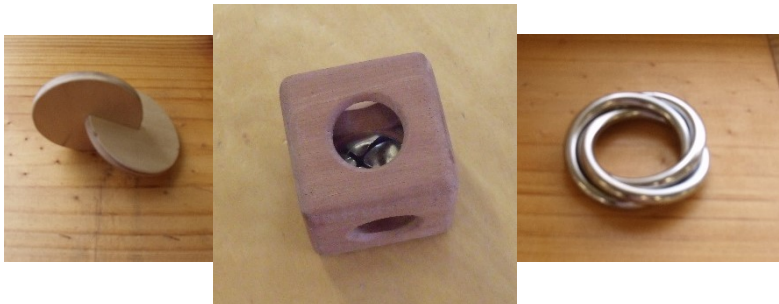
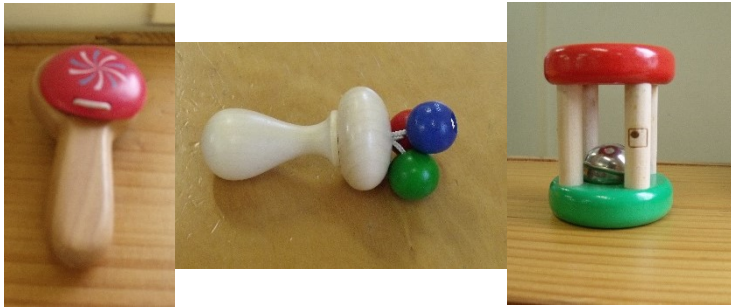
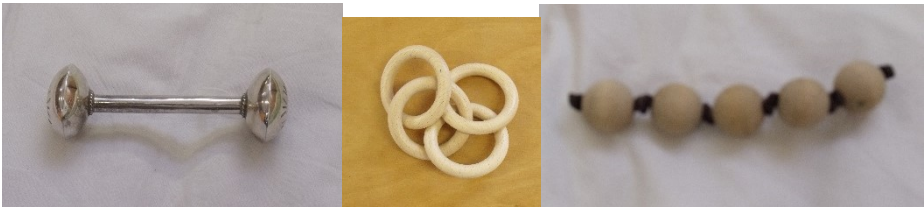


Montessori Home Environment

What can parents provide for their child under 3 years old child?



Toys for 0-6 months

Furniture and areas to develop in your home for your child

A child of 2 to 14 months

Sleeping Area: Bed (futon or mat = Square bed 3x3ft rectangular bed 2ft x 3ft, with photo/picture on wall and breast feeding adult chair. Remember sleeping occurs at any time and the room does not have to be completely silent or dark.



Eating Area: Cutlery, plates etc. for eating and weaning chair & table (stool for adults).



Physical Care area: Changing table so baby is facing you when they are being changed. Needs a safety measure, i.e. a lip around edge, or belt to secure baby. Laundry basket for undies/nappies.

Movement Area: Movement mat with mirror, a kiosk with bars and an ottoman.



Work Area: Main work is movement and language. Language materials on 1 low shelf & 1 table. Outdoor area (or indoor large movement area). Need mats, shaded, carts/wagons for baby who is beginning to walk, low climbing structures, plants (need to be edible), sandbox, different surface textures.



A child of 14 months to 3 years

Changing Area:

Sink accessible to child, some storage for undies with a low toilet or step up and a laundry basket for undies/nappies.

Work Area: Water source for around the practical life activities. Including dining equipment and food preparation exercises.



Manipulatives activities and language activities on one shelf with expressive materials (painting, clay, chalk, scribbling, music) on another shelf.



Tracker (eye hand coordination, coordinating movements of hand) attached to the wall as your baby can use it to pull to stand.

Language materials you can make or buy for your home

There are 3 sections to the language materials:

1. Classified objects including real objects & replica
2. Objects with matching cards some identical & some similar
3. Vocabulary cards & cards without replicas (e.g. weather).

Photos or paintings that are realistic.

Have only 2-3 sets of each of the area out at a time. Each set has 3-8 cards in them. You also need books; poetry and photos on walls.

When showing your child the cards use a 'Three period lesson'

1. Introductory period 'This is a" (introduce and name object).
2. Teaching or association period "show me.... Or where is the" (the longest period, needs to be dynamic and fun).
3. Testing or recall period "What's this....." (this verifies that the child knows the language).

To maximise the use of your materials: objects are used first as replicas then they can come out at a later date with objects and cards and the cards come out at a later date.

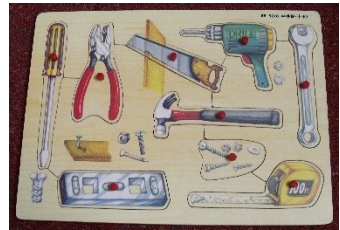
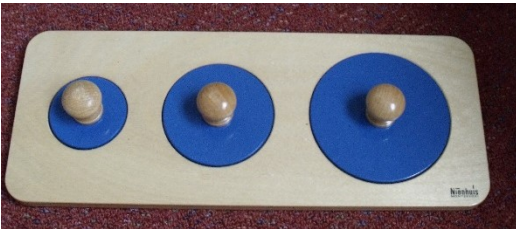
Classified sets of language objects can include: Underpants, t-shirt, socks - bowl, spoon, cup - plate, fork, glass, jug - dog, cat, goldfish, bird - car, truck, fire engine (bike, boat, motorbike) - oven, sink, fridge.

Materials to make or buy

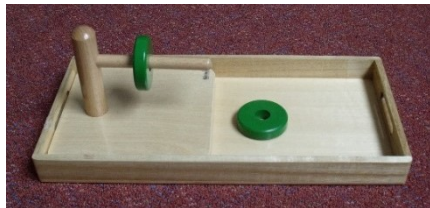
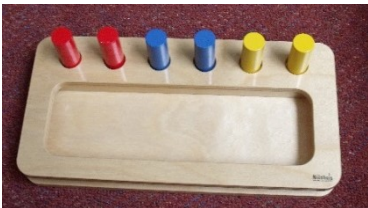
Cards and sorting shells for 18 months onwards



Simple puzzles



Manipulative activities can include:





Language Development

Neurological development of language and movement requires maturation in different parts of the brain. But it does run parallel at some stages. At 6 months in language we have babbling, whilst in movement we have crawling. Movement picks up from crawling towards walking. Meanwhile language remains level and then picks up then both language and movement run parallel. There are 4 necessities for the development of spoken language: hearing apparatus has to be healthy and functioning; vocal apparatus has to be healthy and functioning; needs to be experiencing a language environment; and child needs a desire to speak and communicate.

The first 2 necessities we cannot influence or fix but the second 2 necessities we can have a big influence on. Children have a period of time of receiving language before they can express themselves. As adults we understand more words than we use in our daily conversations, so our receptive language is greater than our spoken.

There are 2 main stages in language: pre-linguistic (before words) which occurs between 7 months in utero to about 12 months. When the vocal cords for newborn move and change shape. The child absorbs the meaning of words and having experiences so they can label later when they have control of the language. This first year is divided into 2 parts, birth to 7 months. When all children practice making universal language sounds. The child usually starts with vowel sounds, e.g. babbling, cooing, mechanical babbling. And 7 to 12 months. When children start making only the language sounds they hear, they repeat back the language sounds in the language spoken to them.

Second stage is linguistic (words) which occurs about 12 months to 2 ½ years from child's first word to when they have complete sentences at about 2 ½ years. Expression is very individual as some chatter daily whilst others have explosions and plateaus. Children start saying nouns with some personal meaning to them, e.g. milk, mum, dad. Then they add verbs, adjectives, adverbs. These single words are accompanied by lots of gestures, e.g. nod head, point. They say generalise nouns, e.g. all women are mums, all animals are dogs, and verb tenses, 'ed' is the easiest one to say. Your child might say "I goed to grandmas". (This issue will correct itself but can be corrected in positive way by saying "Great you went to Grandmas"). Grammatical mistakes will sort themselves out and just acknowledge what they are really communicating to you.

As the child progresses through their second year the language is increasing daily. 'Telegraphic words' is where one or two words stand for a whole paragraph. In most languages we add words, articles, prepositions to fill in sentences but these come later for children.

When children reach 50 word vocabulary, they gain 5 words a day (after 18 months). 2 ½ to 3 the child is usually speaking in complete sentences. Try not to make fun of misarticulating and it does not help to repeat their linguistic mistake back to them.

You can assist your child in their language development by modelling the correct pronunciation of words; provide as rich a language environment as you can and look at your own language that you use – its speed, slang, articulation.

Movement Development

It starts from the head to toe, and from the spinal cord to the extremities of the body. At the time of birth the first wave of myelination has occurred in the brain which includes the cerebellum that helps the functioning of the survival reflex. (Sucking, swallowing, involuntary function).

2-3 months: myelination has moved down into the shoulders, and the arms.

3-4 months: myelination moves down into the core/trunk, the child can bat things with their hands.

4-5 months: myelination now moves into the children's legs.

At 5 months: the infant is crawling, which is an indication that myelination has reached their extremities, fingers and toes.

Points of Movements include voluntary movements which is having the desire and will to move various parts of the body and so act on the environment. Involuntary movement incorporates reflexes, and is done by the child without conscious thought.

Involuntary reflex sets a pattern in the neural pathways for the developments of movement. The development of muscles occurs through repetition and practice, so allowing the baby practice time during 'tummy time' is vital. There are specific movement abilities that include both the child's equilibrium and their hand for the birth to 5 months period, e.g., slithering when prone, palmar grasp.

The movement of the baby changes from supine or prone at birth and by 2 months the child can lift their head and shoulders. The child's eyes are tracking by 4 months and a baby is turning from tummy to back. They continue to slither, arch their back and push on their toes. In the next 2 month period inch worming, scooting moving from back to tummy, and sitting with support for short periods will happen.

With children's clothing we do need to provide protection from insects and sun and weather but the beautifying is an adult need at this stage. The young child needs movement ability and for the skin to be able to breathe. Some styles of clothing hamper movement and also the right size of clothing.

We should never give more to the child than the hand and eye can manage. Montessori said “the child’s intelligence can develop to a certain level without the help of their hand. But if it develops with his hand, then the level it reaches is higher, and the child’s character is stronger”. During the babies first 5 months, beginning with prehensile grasp, there are many developments of the hand. By 12 months of age the child is walking and can use the hand as a tool.

Dominant stages in the progression are:

4 months the child discovers their hands and some of what it can do. When lying down their visual field is limited and a different perspective. Sweep with the arm to bring things into the body. That ability matures into reaching and grasping.

5-7 months the child is sitting up and they now have a mature visual system and their hand can reach and grasp. Visual perspective changes the way the child uses hands.

8 months the child can cross the midline; they understand object permanence (object exists even if you cannot see it); now the child can understand that people still exist although they cannot see them; and they go through a developmental crisis of objectivation. The child can crawl, pulling to stand, experimenting in environment, act on environment. The child realises that they are a being and can act on an object and create some difference to that object (roll it, pull it, throw it). The child learns trust in their own capabilities.

10 months onwards the child is pulling up, from plies, use of one hand and then let go to walking which means their hands are free for working with.

By observing the child we can see what the next developmental step will be (or what stage they are in at present). If you observe what the child is playing with and what the child does with this piece of material you can see if they need to move onto the next developmental stage. Children are drawn to putting things into holes or slots and can make conscious choices. The child may see something, pick it up but not the thing they wanted. So the child drops it and picks up the object they actually wanted.



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First published: 2016



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Published in Australia by Montessori Progress, Canberra, Australia

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