



The Chrysalis

February 2015



Montessori School of Johns Island



What! February Already!

It still seems like we have just gotten back from winter break and its already February. I think we all have finally gotten back into the groove of things, or at least I hope so. As adults we think we have it hard when the schedule changes, however it is always hardest on the child with there is a change in routine. And have we had changes in the school since the beginning of the year! Last week we welcomed a new member of our teaching team. Ms. Tallie is in the Infant/Toddler room and is already getting to know all the children very well. We also have brought in three new families to the Infant/Toddler Montessori Family. Welcome Austin, Louisa, Avyn and their families. It is so nice to see that environment grow. In the Primary environment we welcome Alexandra and her family. Oh wait....one more addition. We rescued a dwarf lion rabbit into the family. The children named him Cuddles and he is very loving and friendly to all.



Help Your Child Make Good Choices

You want what's best for your children – for them to grow into independent, self-reliant people who will be able to make healthy choices for themselves throughout their lives. The beginnings of that skill start as early as two years of age. It is important to talk to your child about making good decisions.

Making Choices

It is up to all of the adults in your children's daily lives, but especially in their immediate family, to know how to help support young children's growing ability in this area. Child development experts tell us that toddlers and preschoolers have the need to experience themselves as "autonomous" or having a sense of their own power in the world. This is why two-year-olds love to say "No!". They are beginning to realize that they have some control or choice over the situations they are in.

It is important for us to respect children's "no" wishes some of the time so that they have a healthy experience of their own power. Later on, when they are teens, children who have had earlier experiences of themselves as people whose choices are respected, will be the ones who are able to say "no" when a peer encourages them to do something they may not want to do.

On the other hand, contemporary American society has many examples of parents who seem to want to be their child's friends and to never say "no" themselves. This creates children who have the misguided sense that they are all-powerful, that their choices are always right and that they don't need to respect grown-ups. Child development experts (and wise, old grandmas and grandpas) know that children need boundaries and limits set by caring adults who understand the world a bit better. Some parents may feel guilty or sad if their children don't understand or agree with grown-ups decisions but these feelings should not drive our parenting choices. The effective parent should always strive to find a healthy balance between child and adult-made decisions in their children's lives.

Some healthy ways to give young children choices (and therefore a healthy sense of power) include:

- Asking which shoe they would like to put on first or which shirt they would like to wear
- Involving them in family decisions, like where to go on vacation
- Letting them help decide what's for dinner
- Letting them choose their bedtime story (even if you have read it a million times and are sick of it!)



Happy Birthday

Jacob – 2 years old

August – 4 years old

Elan – 4 years old

Harper – 3 years old

Cole – 4 years old

Avyn – 1 year old

Other Birthdays

Mr Dick, Sarah Cantrell,
Mrs Norma

*As soon as children
find something that
interests them they
lose their instability and
learn to concentrate.*

Dr. Maria Montessori

Good Choices Cont.

There are so many ways to weave opportunities for children's choice-making into your parenting. What other ways can you come up with?

Making Good Choices

Giving children the opportunity to make choices is important but how do we help them make good choices?

1. Let your preschool and school-age child make decisions even if you think they are going to make a mistake. It's okay to let your child fail sometimes. That is how we human beings learn to do better. We can't truly learn right from wrong if we don't ever experience the results of a wrong choice. Doing something just because a grown-up "said so" doesn't help us become self-reliant. Out of love, we often want to protect our children from failure but this is not always the gift it appears to be. Help your child be a "scientist" in the laboratory of Life. Scientists make predictions, test out their predictions then reflect on the results afterwards to see if they were right. Help children think through the possible results of their choices ahead-of-time without telling them which choice you think they should make. Afterwards, without saying "I told you so!" help them reflect on what happened and what they might do differently next time.

2. Model good decision-making for them. Make good choices in your own life and point out to your child when you are doing so. For example, you might say "I was going to eat that snack but, no, it will ruin my appetite" or "I was going to say a bad word just now about that driver in the car ahead of us but I won't".

Traditional Native American philosophy asks adults not to make their choices based on what they think is in the best interests of their own children but on what they think will be in the best interests of their descendents seven generations from now.

Is My Child Getting Enough Sleep?

Many children go through their days sleep-deprived. When children do not get enough sleep their actions can be wrongly classified as “behavior problems.” Due to lack of sleep, they may have trouble controlling their emotions. This happens because the part of the brain that helps us regulate our responses and actions is greatly affected by the amount of sleep we get.

Parents are sometimes unsure of actually how much sleep a child needs. The chart below was created using data from the University of Michigan Health System. It shows you a ballpark amount of sleep a child needs.

Age and Total Hours of Sleep Needed

- Infant: 16 hours, including naps
- Toddler: 14 hours, including 1 or 2 naps
- Preschool: 12 hours, including a nap
- Elementary: 11 hours a night
- Middle School: 10 hours a night

The chart lists the average amount of sleep for each age group. Some children need a bit more sleep or are able to do well with a little less sleep. The goal is to ensure that your child is getting the right amount for him/her. Ask yourself these questions to determine if your child is sleep-deprived:

- Can my child fall asleep within 15 to 30 minutes?



Above is a picture of everyone celebrating the art contest prize from the Johns Island Holiday Bazaar. Frasier and Blue came to celebrate with us from the Johns Island Farmers Market (Home Grown) and Winnie also came from the Sea Islands Chamber of Commerce. All the children enjoyed the pizza from New Moon! Thank you to everyone who was involved!

- Does he wake easily from his sleep?
- Is she awake and alert throughout the day?
- Does my child often fall asleep in the car?
- Does he seem irritable, very emotional, aggressive or hyperactive during the day?

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, your child may be sleep-deprived. Here are some tips that can help your child get that much-needed rest:

- Pick a natural bedtime when your child gets physically tired and begins to slow down.
- Create a consistent, simple bedtime ritual. Include quiet activities such as a song, a story, a bath and calm, quiet cuddling. End the routine with turning the lights down and saying, “goodnight.”
- Allow only two comfort items for sleeping – any more could be distracting.
- Be consistent and firm about the purpose of bedtime. Bedtime is for lying in the bed and falling asleep.
- Use bedtime as an enjoyable, resting, cuddling and sleeping time, never as punishment.
- Use dim lights for sleeping times and brighter lights during awake times.
- Avoid foods and drinks that contain caffeine throughout the day.

Sleep deprivation can cause behavior-related problems that affect your child’s daily interactions with others. Children who get enough sleep are better prepared to regulate their emotions, think clearer and enjoy their day.

GO TEAMWORK

Together we were able to raise over \$260 for the Johns Island Life Skills Program Through Innisbrook.

School Happenings

School Closed –
February 16th

Valentine Party –
February 13th
(during work cycle)

Party Details:

- Please bring in a small box for your child to decorate so they can put their valentines in.
- Have your child make valentines for the class.
- A small treat/candy is acceptable.
- If parents would like to make a treat for the whole class that is fine too.
- Children will hand out their valentines and decorate cookies during the party.



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