

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

January 2012

Camas Montessori School
"Help me to help myself"

KID BITS



Homemade stationery

Writing thank-you notes is extra fun when your little one makes his own stationery. Let him decorate paper by putting stickers or stamps around the edges. He can write, "Thank you," draw a picture of himself enjoying the gift, and print his name.

Guess the job

What do grown-ups do at work? Get your child thinking about jobs with this game. Name a worker that she has seen, such as a crossing guard, and ask her to tell you the tools that person uses (whistle, yellow vest). Then, think of another job, name tools for it (ladder, paint), and have her guess what the job is (painter).

Thinking of others

When you ask your youngster to tell you about his day, try taking it a step further: ask him to tell you something good that happened to another child. Perhaps a classmate celebrated a birthday or got a nice compliment from the teacher. This will teach him to think about things from others' points of view.

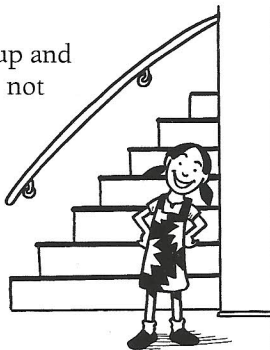
Worth quoting

"A problem is a chance for you to do your best." *Duke Ellington*

Just for fun

Q: What goes up and down but does not move?

A: Stairs.



I can do it!

If your youngster is like most children, she wants to be treated like a big kid one minute and a baby the next. In her growth toward independence, both are normal. Here are gentle ways to help her take on challenges every day at home and school.

Set expectations

Let your child know what you expect her to do by herself, such as washing her hands and clearing her plate. When she asks for help, smile and say something like, "I know you can do it! Show me when you're all done." *Tip:* If you're not sure what she should be able to do, ask the advice of her teacher or another person who works with children. Her dentist can tell you whether she's old enough to brush without supervision, for instance.

Use teamwork

Provide backup while letting your youngster do as much for herself as possible. If she's making her bed, for example, suggest that she pull up the sheet



and blanket, and then you tuck in the sides. Also, try to set aside extra time while she's learning. When that's not possible, you might meet her halfway. ("I'll pull the seat belt across your booster, and you fasten it. On the way home, you can do the whole thing, and I'll just check it.")

Talk it through

Your youngster learns by watching you. So when you do things that she isn't ready to help with (drying her hair, peeling potatoes), explain the reason for each step. *Example:* "I'm putting part of your hair up so I can dry the bottom layer faster." Later, when you expect her to do it, she'll know how. ♥

Move, do, and understand

Teachers know that most youngsters learn best when they're moving around and exploring with their hands and bodies. You can encourage "active" learning at home, too, with these ideas:

- Let your child play with a ball while he recites numbers or other things he has learned in math. He might count with each bounce or say a day of the week or a month of the year with each toss of the ball.
- Encourage him to act out vocabulary. If he's learning position words, for example, ask him to sit "under" a table, jump "over" his teddy bear, and walk "around" a chair.
- Make science happen. Explain that he can create shadows by blocking light with his hand. Together, form animal-shaped "shadow puppets" on a wall. For example, he can create a duck by keeping his fingers straight while opening and closing his hand. ♥

