

Building

emotional learning and literacy
Classroom Connections

Capital District
Child Care Council Encouraging Literacy Education and Parent Engagement (LEAPE)

The Power of Optimism: Believe in Me!

Young children love to model the things that adults do. Such as pouring, helping you carry something, brushing their teeth or washing their face. The challenge is they are still practicing these skills and sometimes miss the mark; spilling, dropping things or not doing quite as good a job as the adult would.

Skills for the adult:

1. Patience

When possible take the time and make the simple adjustment. During snack and lunch provide small pitchers for children to pour their own drink. Provide a smaller tube of toothpaste for little hands and show them the amount to put on the toothbrush.

2. Practice, Practice, Practice

Know that I may not get it right the first time, but with practice and time I will get better. The art area is a wonderful place to practice being patient. Remember children will first use too much glue! They are experimenting with cause and effect. Take advantage of this opportunity and watch to see how long it takes the paper full of glue to dry.

3. Be In Tune

There may not always be enough time during busy routines. Acknowledge the child's need to want to try. Also recognize if they suddenly don't want to help because they are too tired. This is okay. When you do have time, coach the child. Use a mirror to show them the spots they missed washing their face. When a child is pouring juice guide them saying, "a little goes a long way" or use a plastic cup and draw a line with a marker to show them where they need to stop.

How does this benefit children?

Confidence:

When you trust me to do these self-help skills I feel proud!

Attachment/Relationship:

Your child will learn that they are a partner with you as you work together. Your child will remember the time and interest you took to support them. These are life long attitudes that they will carry into their own parenting skills and/ or relationships with others.

