



Everything You Need to Know About Piccolo

Welcome to our Toddler Community! I love the term Toddler Community, because that is exactly what we are, a community of toddlers who come together to learn, grow, love and have a good time!

There is so much depth behind each aspect of our room. If you think about all of the work that the child does from 18 months to 3 years, you see the need for a very prepared environment that is suitable and ready to meet the developmental needs of the child, as well as prepared adults who know how to serve each child.

The Materials

At this stage in the development, the child has one goal: he wants to be an active participant in his family. He is learning the ways those in his culture interact with one another; movement, language, eating, development of the will, and toileting are all happening during this time. We have prepared materials to assist the child as he becomes independent in each.

Movement

We offer lots of space for controlled movement. We also offer materials that call to the child, enticing them to move. The child wants to be a part of family life; therefore, practical real life activities call to the child. We offer food preparation, cleaning, cooking, care of the environment, and care of the self because the child wants to learn these things. Through practice, the child leaves the Toddler Community with the ability to control their movement, ready for the Primary environment, which calls for more precise movement.

Language

The child comes into this environment speaking words. They leave speaking complete sentences, which are grammatically correct. In this way, the child learns the language of his culture in two years! Isn't that astonishing! To serve the child in their development of language, we offer experiences that will enrich and develop the child's language skills. You will see baskets of real objects, such as fruits and vegetables, baskets with replicas, and baskets with language cards. We use these for enriching the child's vocabulary. We give the child as much experience with the objects as possible. This deepens the child's knowledge and gives the child a better understanding of the word.

The adults in the environment are constantly giving proper names for everything in the environment and inviting each child into conversation. We consider the adult to be the main language materials and therefore, we prepare each adult for this very important task. Without someone to speak to, there is no need to speak!

Eating

The child is intensely drawn to food and its preparation. We have a formal sit down lunch with tablemats, flowers, and real plates and cups. The child feels honored by such a lovely presentation and develops great table manners as a result. There is a great deal of language and movement that goes along with eating as well.

Development of the Will

This work is so delicate and must be nurtured and treated with the upmost respect. Our goal is to allow the children to develop their will. In guiding the child through this process, we must remember that the child is in a stage of self-affirmation. The child needs to feel like he is the center of the universe. This is when the child begins to understand they have the power to change their environment. We begin to hear the words no and mine a LOT. Toddlers think:

1. What's mine is mine
2. What's yours is mine
3. What I see is mine
4. What you see is mine

We nurture the child during this time by offering him choices. "Do you want to wear the blue shirt or the red shirt?" In this way, the child feels like he has control over his environment.

How to Offer Choices

1. Offer limited choices. Only give two choices in the beginning. "You can sit down and eat or dinner is over."
2. Only offer choices that are available and true. You should avoid saying things like, "Come with me or I am leaving."
3. Offer appropriate choices. We wouldn't offer the child a long sleeve shirt as a choice if we knew it was going to be 100 degrees outside! In this way you would not have to manipulate the choice.
4. Avoid manipulating the child's choice. An example of manipulating the choice would be saying, "You can wear the blue or the red shirt, but the red shirt would look better with the pants you chose."

Toileting

This great work is done from the minute the child is walking. We know that the children can control their sphincter because they can control their legs for walking! We see the children holding their urine longer and going all at once instead of the urine trickling out all day.

We offer the children cloth underwear so that they feel the consequence of urination and the movement of the bowels. We change the children right away when they have eliminated to give them the understanding that they are supposed to be dry and clean. We offer the children much experience in the restroom with child sized toilets and sinks, so that they can access them easily. We give them the proper names of the toileting tools so that they have knowledge and language.

With all of this work, you can imagine how much time we spend in the bathroom! In the beginning we change clothes all day! We have fun flushing the toilet over and over (even when there is nothing in it) washing hands over and over and exploring toilet paper.

To keep things orderly, I would like each child to bring in 10 pair of thick cloth underwear labeled with their name or initials. Many companies make variations of these training pants and they can be bought online or purchased in most major clothing stores that carry children's underwear (Target, Walmart, Amazon). Here is an example of what we most often use;

<http://www.gerberchildrenswear.com/Gerber-Unisex-Baby-Infant-3-Pack-Training-Pant/dp/B00742VRRC>

I will be doing laundry daily. On Monday each child will return to school with the 5 pair of underwear that they went home in from the previous week, so that we can start our week back with 10 pair of underwear.

I am also asking that each child bring in 2 full packages of wipes at initial start date and 2 packages at the beginning of each month thereafter.

How You Can Contribute to the Work

Each parent will provide a homemade lunch for their child to have each day. I will be providing a morning snack, in which the children will help prepare.

What to Bring on the First Day

- 2 packages of wipes (each month)
- 10 pair of underwear
- 5 changes of clothes (seasonally appropriate)
- 1 extra pair of shoes
- 5 pair of socks
- 2 passport-sized photos
- 1 3x5 family photo
- 1 fitted crib sheet
- 1 small blanket
- 1 small hairbrush
- 1 small laundry bag
- Lunch for the day

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH CHILDS NAME OR INITIALS!

Useful links for Piccolo

All of the links below are available on the sidebar of your classroom blog:

Piccolo Blog – <http://www.bergamoschools.com/parents-categories/serrano/piccolo/>

Returning student emergency card: Coming soon!

New student emergency card: SerranoEmergencyContact.Bergamoschools.com

Medicine permission: BMSMedicalPermission.Bergamoschools.com

Parent handbook: www.bergamoschools.com/new-site/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/BMS-parent-handbook.pdf

I am looking forward to working with you all and serving you child! You have chosen a holistic approach for education and I hope your experience with Bergamo Montessori at Serrano is as fulfilling as mine has been! You can always contact me with any questions by e-mail at Maria@bergamoschools.com

Sincerely,

Maria Moreno