

Montessori at Home

What Parents Really Need to Know

notes from Leanne Gray's workshop 9/16/17

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The parenting skills which have the **most positive influence** on children's academic skills, emotional intelligence, and behaviour are:

- High-quality unscripted time together, a little each day
- An assertive parenting style: warm, calm, empathetic while remaining firm and clear.
- A well-rested, relaxed, confident, and calm mental state.

How are we going to help guide our parents to be firm and kind, confident, calm, and compassionate, and full of go-to quality Montessori-at-Home activities for their child's current developmental stage, while still teaching their children everyday?

By not telling HOW to parent, but providing perspective and possibilities. Offer suggestions, provide connection to other parents in a similar situation if possible. It's the same way we approach our children.

Show, don't tell-- I find one of the best ways to help a parent gain tools and phrases is to demonstrate. Find other professionals, research, articles, that repeat similar information in a new way. Just like the children, adults need repeated presentations with highlighted points of interest.

Help parents get into their child's shoes. This goes back to providing context and perspective. Remind them of their child's developmental struggles at this age, brain function, sensitive periods, and all the other demands we are placing on them.

Meet parents where they are, on their schedule. The best resources allow parents to digest new information or support little by little, on their own time, and have a knowledgeable, supportive adult ready to answer questions as they come up.

Here's a formula to use for parent conversations:

1. Identify and **validate** the concern (theirs or yours).
2. Explain the big picture. What happens if this continues, or what else is really going on?
3. See if the parent is open to advice.
4. Present possibilities and suggestions with WHY. Show what to do if you can.
5. Offer resources. and invite a conversation.
6. Check back in! Most important!

Remember, there are resources out there to help you! We have a lot on our website, and I listed a few of my favourites on the next page.

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Where to send your parents for answers

We of course have a lot of great resources [right here on our website](#), but there's a lot else out there. These sites, groups, and programs are right in line with an Mindful Montessori Parenting approach.

For Small Hands

This is a sister site for the popular Montessori Services, and has materials specifically for parents to use at home. Check out their blog as well!

Positive Discipline

This is a series of books, training, and companion materials offering a clear method for assertive kind-yet-firm parenting. I hand this book to parents all the time, and there's even a [Montessori Positive Discipline trainer for your staff!](#)

Playful Learning

While not specifically Montessori, the activities listed here are right in line with hands-on, discovery learning. Check out their parent courses and freebies too, or [order her book](#).

how we montessori

If you haven't heard of Kylie's blog yet, you're in for a treat. She has chronicled both of her son's Montessori-at-home experience from birth through elementary, and has a lot of great information for parents just getting started. She also co-authored [Kids in the Kitchen](#), a fabulous picture cookbook for children.

R.I.E.® and Janet Lansbury

Magda Gerber is the founder of Resources for Infant Educators®, a method totally based on respect, observation, and child development. While not entirely in line with Montessori, the RIE methods are clear, easy-to-understand, and simple to put into practice for parents. I recommend [Magda's book](#) to new parents, and all of [Janet Lansbury's articles and podcasts](#) to young families.

Non-violent Communication

I used a simple version of this method in my classroom, as many of you do as well. The core principles of NVC are simple and translate well to parents communicating with their children (and their partners!). I recommend these two parent books: [Parenting from your Heart](#) and [Raising Children Compassionately](#).

Simplicity Parenting

This book is a wonderful reminder to slow down and offer quality over quantity for our children.

Montessori at Home from AMS and AMI

The [Family Resource Collection](#) from the American Montessori Society offers a jumping off point for families, as does the [Aid to Life](#) page for children under age 3.

Mindful Magazine

A collection of articles about mindful practices, including resources for parents.

AHA! Parenting

Huge resource of peaceful parenting advice and answers from birth to 18 yrs.

Find an Expert

Start with [the Professional Directory](#) that Michelle so kindly organized over at The Montessori Company.