



Serra Preschool

A Parent Participation Nursery School
Where Kids and Parents Learn Together.

March 2018
Newsletter

Director's Message

~Stating what you see can help when you do not know what to do or say in difficult moments with the kids~

~3 kids are playing in the sand kitchen, another child comes over and says "can I play" one of the kids says, "you can't there isn't room, I am playing with Max not you."

~ Mary wants to use the red paint. Sue is using it. Mary wants it now.

~Henry is using cars on the race track. Johnny comes over gets in the way of Henry's road. Henry does not want to share his track and hits Johnny.

Most of the time adults witnessing these interactions will jump in full speed ahead with directions to solve the problems.

~ You need to let Sam play.

~ Let Mary have the red paint.

~ You need to share

the road with Johnny, he wants a turn.

We all want children to share and to be kind and friendly to others. There are many ways to guide children toward desired behaviors. We have all gotten very good at not saying good job and finding other ways of encouraging children. There is always more to learn though and during our end of the day meetings we often have discussions about what to say when children are misbehaving, not sharing, excluding others, etc. My usual response is

"STATE WHAT YOU SEE OR HEAR" first.

~ You only want to play with Max right now.

~ You are busy using the red paint right now.

~ You want the road all to yourself.

By stating what you see you are basically reflecting or giving back a non-

judgmental statement regarding some aspect of a child's behavior. The adult observes a child and comments to the child about his or her attributes or activities. Verbal observations such as these increase a child's awareness about what they are doing and how their words or actions might affect others. It can also buy you valuable time if you are not sure what to do or say. Each class is working on different things. The 2 day kids are practicing taking and waiting for turns giving and receiving messages. Kids in 3 day are expressing their developing social confidence. Stating what you see or hear before you do anything else can give you valuable time and give the kids a starting point to think and reflect about what to do next. About what they should and could do based on our rules at school. We take care of ourselves, each other, and our things. It takes a lot



Serra Preschool Director Mrs. Nowicki

of support and practice for kids to use their developing social competence in an appropriate way and for them to give and accept messages from others. Stating what you see and hear leads to supportive interactions.

Sometimes stating what you see is all you have to say. The other day two children were having trouble using the road track together. I stated what I saw. Max you hit John. Hitting hurts. His car was in your way and you did not like that. John your car was in Max's way.

The two boys started talking and worked it all out. I could have gone on with more in-

Director's Message Continued...

formation about why we do not hit and taking turns, but it was not necessary in this case. John was not hurt and the two boys worked it out.

It takes practice to state what we see. I think the perfect place to practice it is in the classroom. Stating what we see or behavior reflections are a powerful way to show interest in children. Verbal observations increase children's self-awareness and make them feel valued because an adult notices them and takes the time to note something aloud that they have done. As a result, children learn that their everyday actions are important enough to be noticed and that extreme behavior is not needed to gain attention.

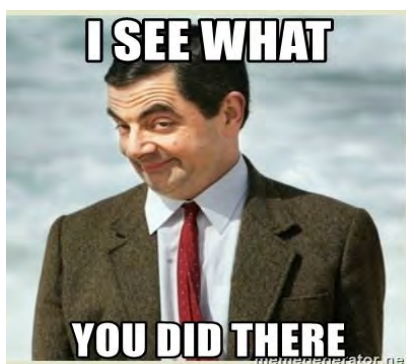
Stating what you see or hear can also increase children's receptive language skills, because children learn word meanings from hearing the words used to describe their immediate experiences. This type of contextual learning takes place when kids hear new words and new ways of putting words

together to describe day to day events.

There are so many good reasons to get into the habit of stating what you see or hear.

I invite you to go beyond the simple statements that you have been making in place of "Good Job" and use it as a starting point when you find yourself in a difficult spot with the kids. I would like to hear how stating what you saw or heard helped you and or the kids move forward in a more thoughtful reflective way.

Love, Mrs. Nowicki



March 2018

Dates to Know:

- Mar 3 | 6 Week Clean Up
- Mar 8 | Street Sweeping
- Mar 14 | Street Sweeping
- Mar 14 | Board Meeting
- Mar 18 | Trike-a-Thon
- Mar 21 | Field Trip
- Mar 21 | Open House No School
- Mar 22 | Street Sweeping
- Mar 28 | Street Sweeping
- Mar 28 | General Meeting
- Apr 2-6 | Spring Break No School

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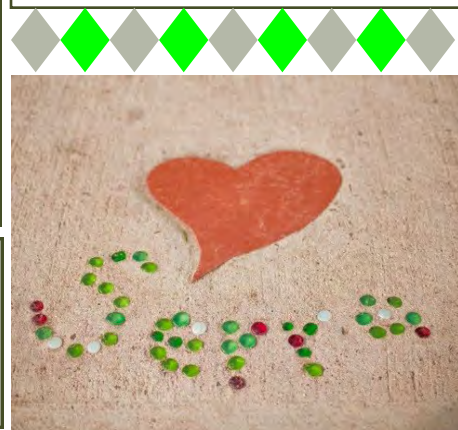
March Birthdays

- Mar 21 | Leonardo Waldner
- Mar 28 | Miller Jenkinson

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Why do children exclude others?

Children have a right to choose playmates.

They exclude because:

- They want to protect a game in progress.
- They don't know how to include another child (what role that child can play).
- They are experimenting with power.
- They feel overwhelmed with more than 1 or 2 playmates at a time.
- They are worried their play will become too out-of-their-control (loud, crowded, scary)
- They don't feel safe.
- They are temporarily in a sour mood.
- They are not excluding a child himself but are rejecting the child's suggestions on what or where they should play.



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Strategy #1: Brainstorm Roles

When a child is being excluded because roles of play are seemingly filled, come up with other "jobs" the child can do. If children are playing Family, and parents & kids are already assigned, maybe there can be a neighbor, a pet, a new baby, a visiting aunt. If children are playing baseball, maybe there can be an umpire, a cheerleader, a first aid responder, a coach. Think of how a new child can engage in play that has already commenced by adding to the play rather than replacing a role. Ask the children, "What can Danny be? What else is needed?"



What role do adults play?

The role of adults is to guide children towards inclusion while respecting their right to choose their own playmates and play space, even if that means excluding others. Adults can help children cope with their feelings and choices in a caring way.



How can you tell if the exclusion is bullying?

The hurt feeling of the excluded child is not the determining factor. The motive and language of the child doing the excluding is. Engage in conversation with Strategies listed below. When there is a larger group of children and one child is singling out another child to exclude, then that leans more towards bullying.

Strategy #2: Make an Alone Spot

Allow children to collectively determine that a certain location is the "Alone Spot" where a child can go by himself or with 1 friend. Make a poster and label that area. Monitor that area so that a group of children don't go into the Alone Spot. Trust that when 2 children are there, they need to fulfill their plan of play in a smaller, more private setting. This could be a playhouse, a tent, under the loft stairs, or any space that is appropriate for 1 or 2 children.



President's Message Continued...

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Strategy #3: Write Their Words

Empower children with their right to play with certain restrictions they place themselves. When they exclude, ask, "What are you worried about? What kind of play is allowed?" Then you can see they want to protect their play and ask if the excluded child can abide by their rules.

Pretty colors only
No loud noises
No muddy dragons
Only tea parties
No pushing
Dollies are allowed
Nice kids can play
Quiet kids can play

Strategy #5: Save for Later, Then Move On

In a world of children changing their minds often, it's typical for a child to change playmates as well. Adults can point out to children, "Today, you are friends at the sand table. Right now, you are playing cars together." It sends the message that playmates aren't set in stone. Children may play with one child for days, and then suddenly not want to play with that child. It doesn't mean they don't want to play with that child forever. It means they don't want to play with him right now. Help the children communicate in a more friendly way, "I can play with you next time. I can play with you when we go outside. I can play with you when the clay comes out." Make a date of it! Comfort, then help the excluded child move on. "What else can you play with? What do you want to do while you wait for the clay to come out?" Shumaker writes, "Be prepared to comfort the rejected child, but don't belabor the point. Offer to help, then drop it. An important part of rejection is to move on." (p. 171).

Strategy #4: Consider Both Sides

"Exclusionary play is routine, not rotten, behavior. It's ok for kids to exclude a child from play, but it's not ok to exclude that child from their listening and caring." (Davis, 1997) Just like listening to what restrictions kids want, adults also need to help the excluded child give a message. "I feel sad when you won't let me play." Children don't have to like all their classmates, but they do have to speak respectfully to all their classmates. Instead of, "I don't want to play with you," guide children to use friendlier language, "I want to play something else right now." Also, consider the stage of development each child is in. While one child may be ready to cooperatively play with others, another child may still need observational or parallel play time.

Bibliotherapy, Citations, Additional Resources



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By, Kathryn Otoshi



Strictly No Elephants
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- <http://www.themotherco.com/2010/11/little-bullies-when-kids-leave-kids-out/>
- <https://afineparent.com/positive-parenting-faq/social-exclusion.html>

Shumaker, Heather. *It's Ok Not to Share: and Other Renegade Rules for Raising Competent and Compassionate Kids*. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2012.

Davis, Laura and Janis Keyser. *Becoming The Parent You Want to Be: A Sourcebook of Strategies for the First Five Years*. Broadway Books, New York, 1997.

3 Day Play!

March 2018



Field Trip March 21st!

amazonsmile

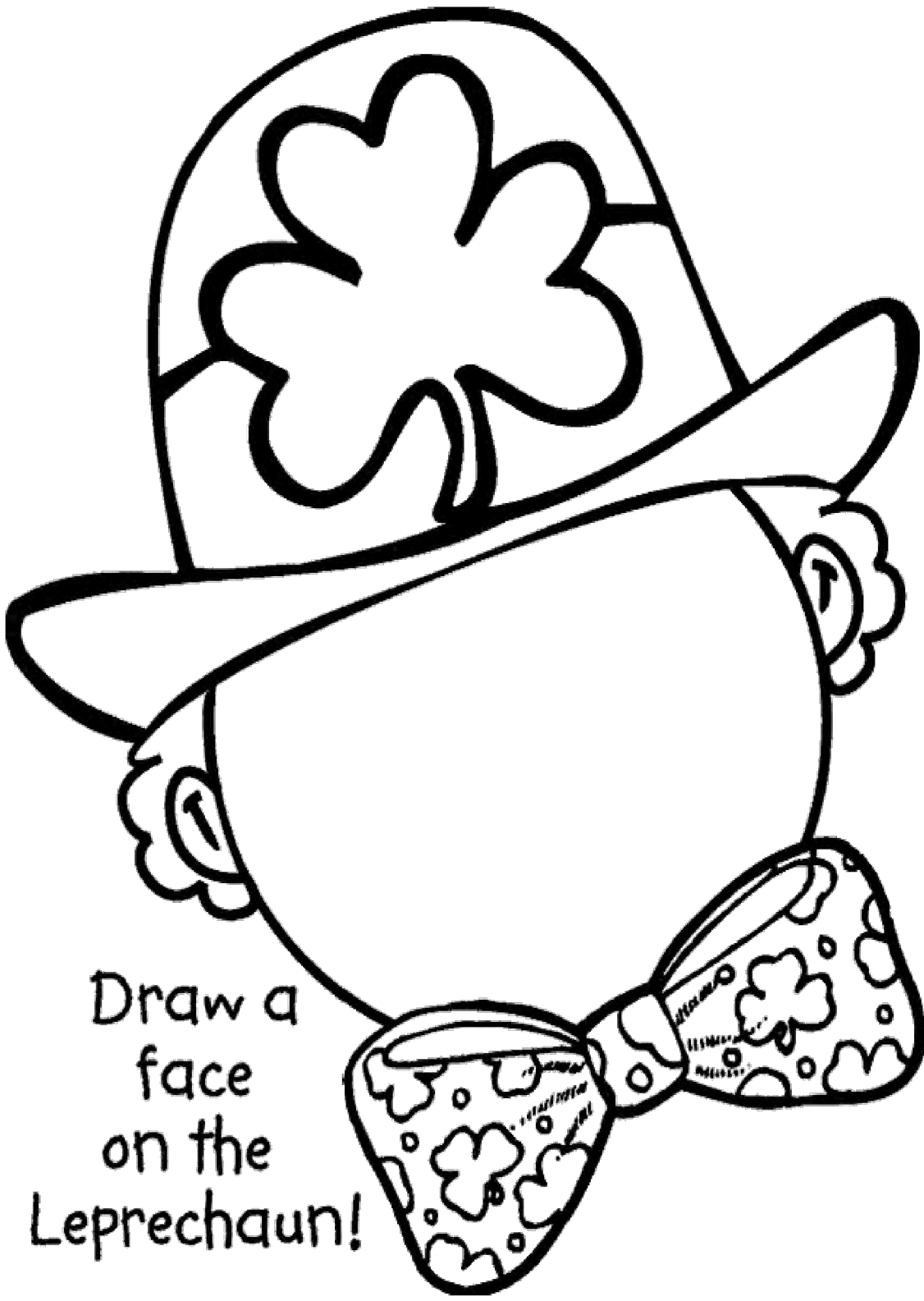


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Dad Joke of the Month

Does February March? No, but April May!

St. Patrick's Day Coloring Page



Draw a
face
on the
Leprechaun!