



*The environment must be
rich in motives which lead interest
to activity and invite the child
to conduct his own experiences.*
-MARIA MONTESSORI

The Prepared Environment: Setting Up for Success

When we think about the Prepared Environment, we are talking about a physical space in your home for your child to do their academic work. An area that has everything your child will need to be successful for the academic day. While this will of course be different in your home, than it is at school, I wanted to share some thoughts about the importance of the environment and some suggestions as we all settle in to this remote learning period. I encourage you to review this with your child and involve them in setting up your space and schedule.

Choosing the Space:

This is an important consideration!

- It should have available space to work on the floor comfortably, designated pillows to sit with. It should be a pleasant looking workspace, a space your child will want to work in for a period of time.
- It should not be in a high traffic area in the house, if at all possible.
- It should not have enticing toys or gadgets that might distract (including tv).

Setting up a Prepared Environment in Your Home:

My suggestion is that you designate a table, desk or flat surface where everything your child needs for school is going to be stored.

- In the classroom, each item has a container, so you might try to do something similar with your child's pencils, pens, markers, erasers.
- Please be sure the work area also has paper.
- Finally, I suggest that there be a schedule, handwritten or printed if you wish, of what the day should include. (Please see below for more ideas about the schedule.)
- Once a child has made his/her work choices for the day, it makes sense to review what will be needed and make sure those items are in the child's workspace.

The Daily Schedule:

At school the children's schedule becomes a reliable routine. Your home schedule should have some basics, but also flexibility. Why both? While routine is something the children crave, they will also have things that interest them more one day than another. And, students have different interests throughout the day, so an ideal schedule will allow them to make choices from these interests during the day, each day.

Some families have told us about their schedules. For some, creating schedules that start with a wake up time, and include household chores and break time has worked well. Others just focus on learning time. Please be sure to include the classroom meeting and chat times in the daily schedule!

Some families are using a little technical assistance to keep to the schedules like using Alexa or setting phone alarm reminders. I encourage you to use whatever works best for your crew!

Benefits of the Prepared Environment:

- Our goal is for the children to be able to focus and attend to a particular topic or task for a sustained period of time. That attention and focus can be interrupted and even lost if a child needs to wander around the house looking for something hard to find.
- Additionally, a well-positioned spot in your home, away from other people and things that might easily disturb your child, will lessen the impact of the distractions that exist when we are all working at home and in relatively close quarters.
- Finally, a prepared environment also brings a sense of normalcy and predictability which is incredibly important now, for all of us, big and small!

We hope you will continue to be in touch with us about your remote learning experience. Thank you for all you are doing to partner with us and support our children as we make our way through this time.

~ Ms. Laura, Educational Program Director | laura.wrubleski@millfalls.org