



## Creating a Cooperative Classroom

### Cooperative Classroom:

- **Children Working Together Towards a Common Goal**
- **Children Know What is Expected of Them**
  - The rules and boundaries are clear and consistent
- **Children Doing Things You Ask**
  - Motivate children to do what needs to be done of their own choice
- **Children Doing Things on Their Own**
  - Teaching children how to be independent and do the tasks you expect of them
- **Encouraging Children When They do What You Want**
  - Using encouragement, not praise to reinforce positive behavior

### Activity: What are the goals of your classroom?

### What is Expected:

#### For Each Classroom:

- Are rules consistent between every teacher in classroom?

#### As a Center:

- List the rules for each classroom from youngest to oldest
- Do they build on each other?
- Is the terminology the same?



**Motivate children to do what needs to be done by their own choice**

1. Say it with a word or gesture
2. Describe what you see or describe the problem
3. Give information
4. Offer a choice

The Best 'Trick' - Be playful

**Tasks Children Can Do to Learn Responsibility: 18 months – 3 years old**

Turn off lights while being carried	Dress self
Wash hands and face	Help put away or set up nap mats
Get own snack from kid-friendly containers	Wake up friends
Pick up toys	Bring recyclables to the garage
Wash tables & counters with damp sponge	Feed pets
Put wet diapers in the diaper pail	Clear dishes from table
Wash vegetables, tear lettuce, stir	Help clean up after meals
Help set the table	Wipe up a spill
Dust furniture	

**All of the above, plus: 4-6 years old**

Tidy up after themselves	Pick up trash
Help fold towels in classroom & put away	Shake area rugs
Pour things	Spot clean walls
Help measure ingredients	Empty wastebaskets
Water plants	Help weed
Help plant a garden	Help with sweeping & dusting
Wash the floor	Prepare own snack
Help younger classmates	Leave bathroom neat after use
Wipe off chairs	Wash & dry dishes or containers

**Teaching Independence**

- **Step 1:** work in small groups of children (1-3)
- **Step 2:** SHOW them what you need to do – **don't talk**
- **Step 3:** SHOW them again with minimal talking
- **Step 4:** Leave them to try it – **don't hover**



## **Encouragement**

When you describe what someone has done, they recognize the truth in the words and credit themselves.

### ▶ **Describe What you See or Hear**

- *Ex. I see clean tables, chairs pushed in and everyone ready to go.*
- *Ex. In your poem on trains you found a way to rhyme 'track' with 'clickity clack'.*
- *Ex. You concentrated on your work and didn't stop until you were finished.*

### ▶ **Focus on the Effort, not the Product**

- *Ex. You did that all by yourself*
- *Ex. Sally, you read the 1<sup>st</sup> Bob book today.*

### ▶ **Give encouragement in private**

- This avoids unintentionally comparing the children
- Children feel more able to express themselves