1. I used the first Guide to Speech and Action by stating suggestions in a positive rather than a negative form when redirecting Child A (name changed) from playing in the drinking fountain water to playing with water at the water tables. The outside drinking fountain is for drinking water not for playing with water. When I noticed Child A was playing in the water overflowing in the drinking fountain I redirected his behavior by telling him and showing him where he could play with water. I acknowledged that he wanted to play with water by saying, “Child A I can see that you want to play in the water, let’s go over to the water table and see what we can do.” By not telling him no he didn’t hesitate to follow me to the water table and didn’t get upset because he had to stop what he was doing. I didn’t want to limit his choices because he was simply just exploring the water which is a good learning experience for him. I provided an alternative area for him to continue exploring.
2. For this situation I also used the first Guide to Speech and Action but I wasn’t successful in correcting the behavior. Child B and Child C were in the loft yelling loud, it sounded like they were roaring. I made a suggestion in a positive form by saying, “wow it’s loud over here, use inside voices please.” After I said that the boys made roaring sounds again so I repeated, “that hurts my ears, inside voices please,” and I still was unsuccessful and they continued making loud roaring sounds. I could have also used Guide to Speech and Action number 6 which says to redirect to an activity related to the child’s purpose or interests. I could have said, “It sounds like you boys want to roar like lions, let’s go outside where we can be loud like lions.” This approach would be more effective because I wouldn’t be asking them to stop their behavior, just change their location. I could have also had them walk outside from the loft like lions so it would be fun for them.
3. My strengths when working with children are playing and engaging children in activities and talking to them during to keep them interested. I can recognize when children are actively engaged and when they are losing interest. Children’s interest can change in the blink of an eye and I can be flexible and change with them. Rather than trying to pursue the game we were playing I can move with them into the next game or activity. My challenges when working with children are handling challenging behaviors that hurt others such as biting or hitting. In the Blue Room we are trying to limit “no’s” because if we use the word “no” with toddlers we would be saying it constantly. I’m finding it difficult to not say no biting when a child bites. I have to stop and think about what I need to say and when you stop and think with two year olds they have already moved on. I need to find language to use that’s firm and gets the message across without saying the word “no.” I’m trying to understand what language will be appropriate and effective.
4. I want to learn how much patience I have when working with young children. I find myself wanting to do things for children that are struggling to do it on their own. I would like to allow them more independence to accomplish tasks on their own without my help. Toddlers are at the age where they want to do things all by their self but are still lacking all the skills and knowledge to do everything without help. I need to be able to stand back and wait for them to ask for help so they can develop autonomy. In this sense toddlers are like adolescents in early childhood; they want to be big kids but still have the mindset and abilities of a toddler. It’s important for them to go through the process of trial and error so they can learn to do it themselves. When people always do it for them, they don’t develop the skills to do it for themselves. This week I’m going to work on my patience and assume the children can do something before I assume they can’t.
5. I’ve had the least amount of experience with toddlers in a group setting so it would be helpful to see how teachers from the infant room and the preschool rooms respond to the children in various situations. Toddlers are right in the middle of the two age groups so if I can see how they respond to the younger children and the older children I can determine a middle ground that is a best fit for toddlers. Of course all children are unique and have different needs and abilities but it would give me a general idea of where to start.