From teaching to learning: Brain-based strategies for home and school

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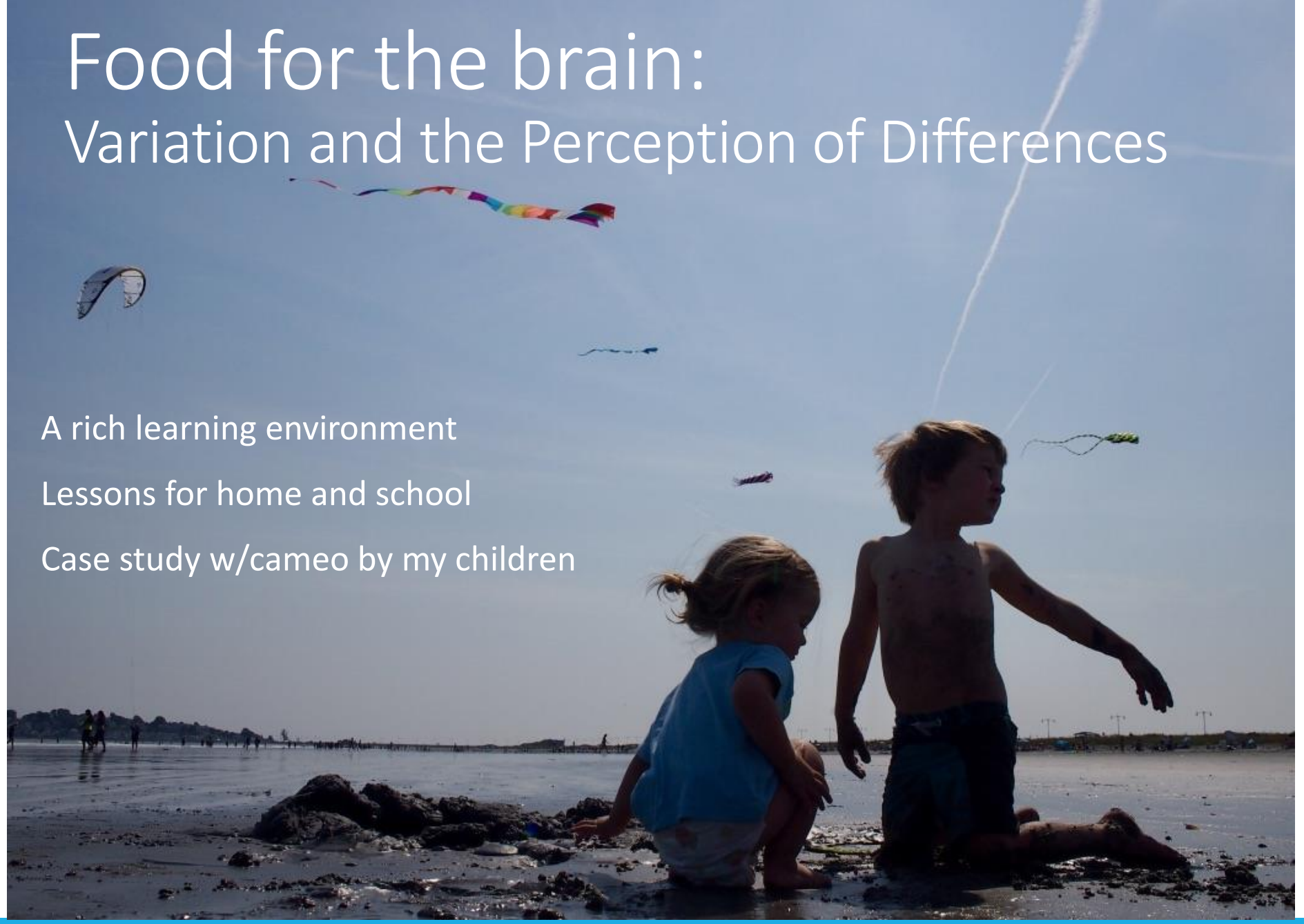
FELDENKRAIS® & ANAT BANIEL METHOD FOR CHILDREN®

Food for the brain:
Variation and the Perception of Differences



A rich learning environment

Lessons for home and school

Case study w/cameo by my children

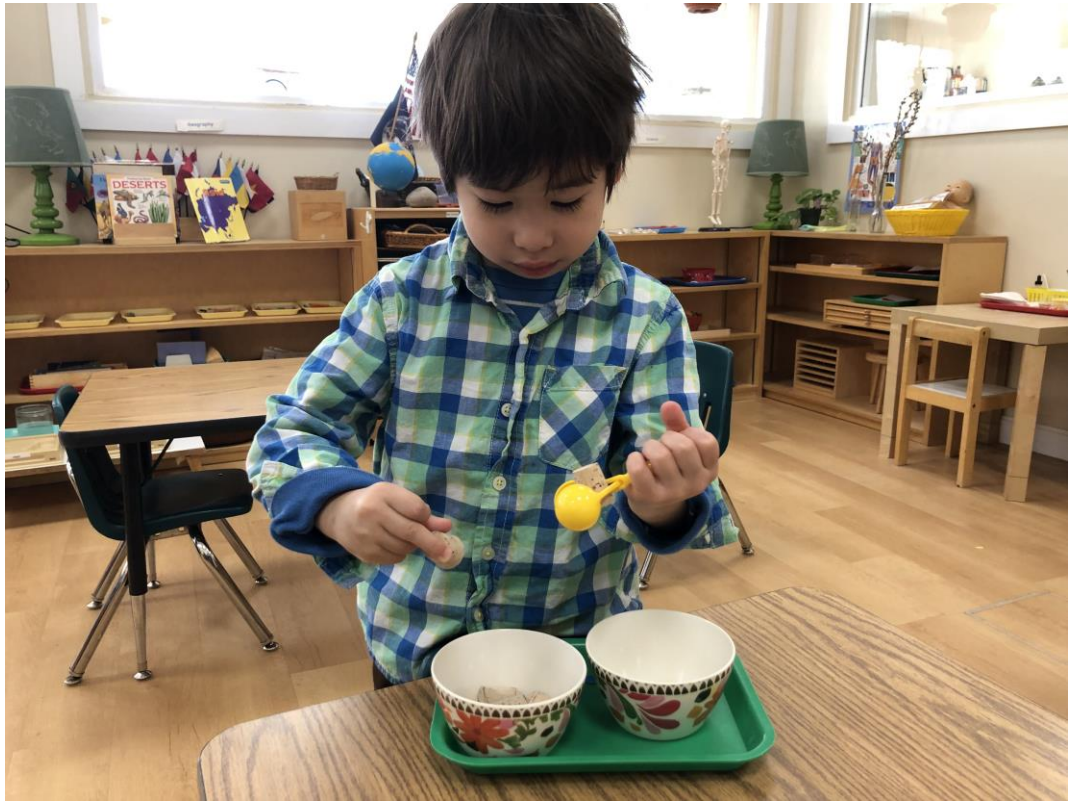
Introducing Ben

4.5 year old boy

Attends preschool

Perinatal stroke survivor

Teachers reported behavioral problems



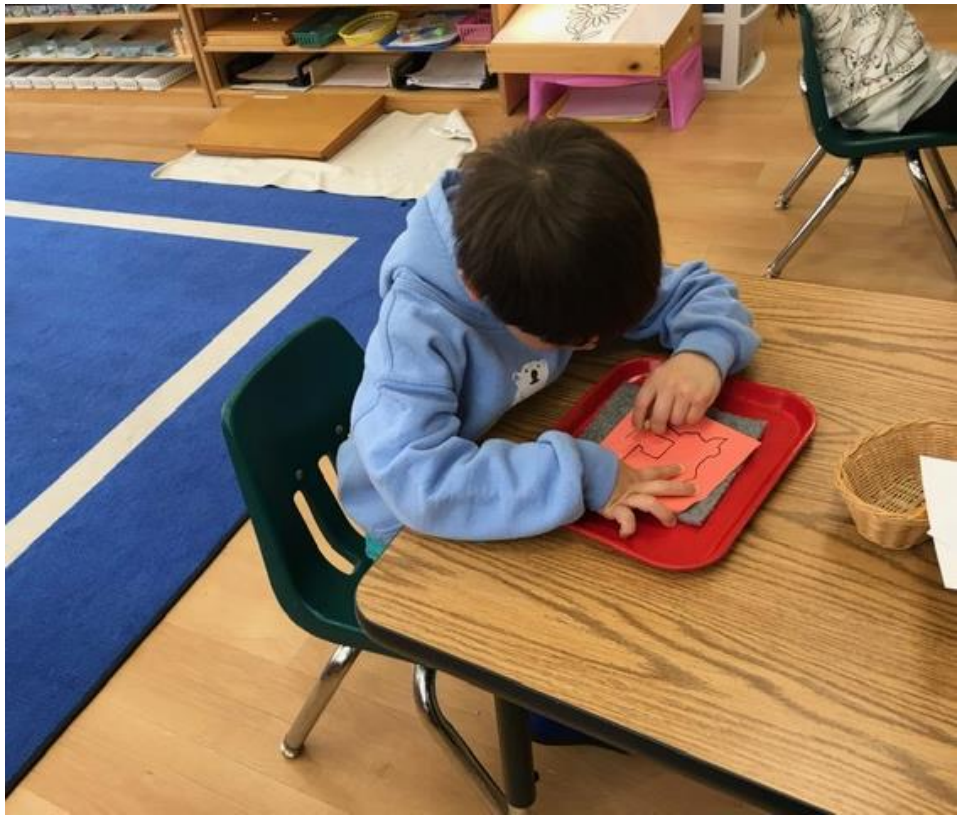
Teachers' concerns & my observation

When placing his activity tray on the table, he placed it down forcefully, knocking it into other children's trays.

He slammed drawers and doors when closing them.

He talked loudly.

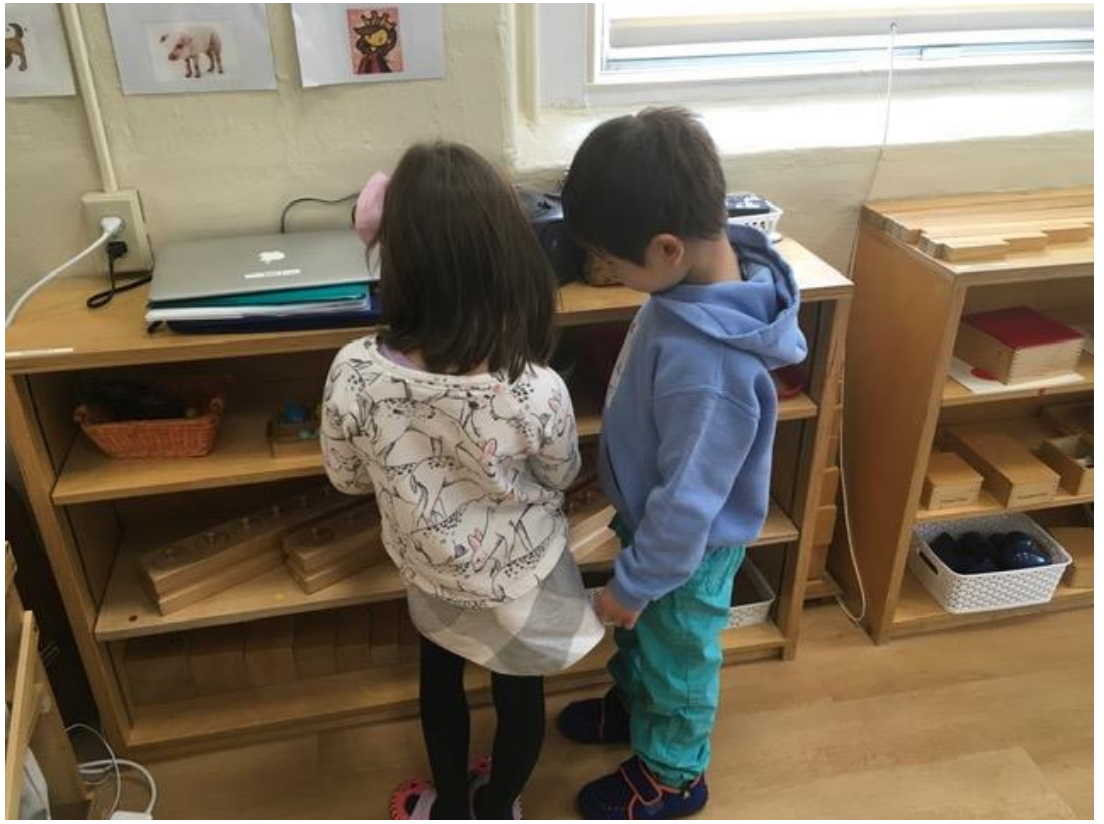
When playing tag, he sometimes tagged too hard and hurt the other children.



Teachers’ concerns & my observation

He knocked into other children who were in his path.

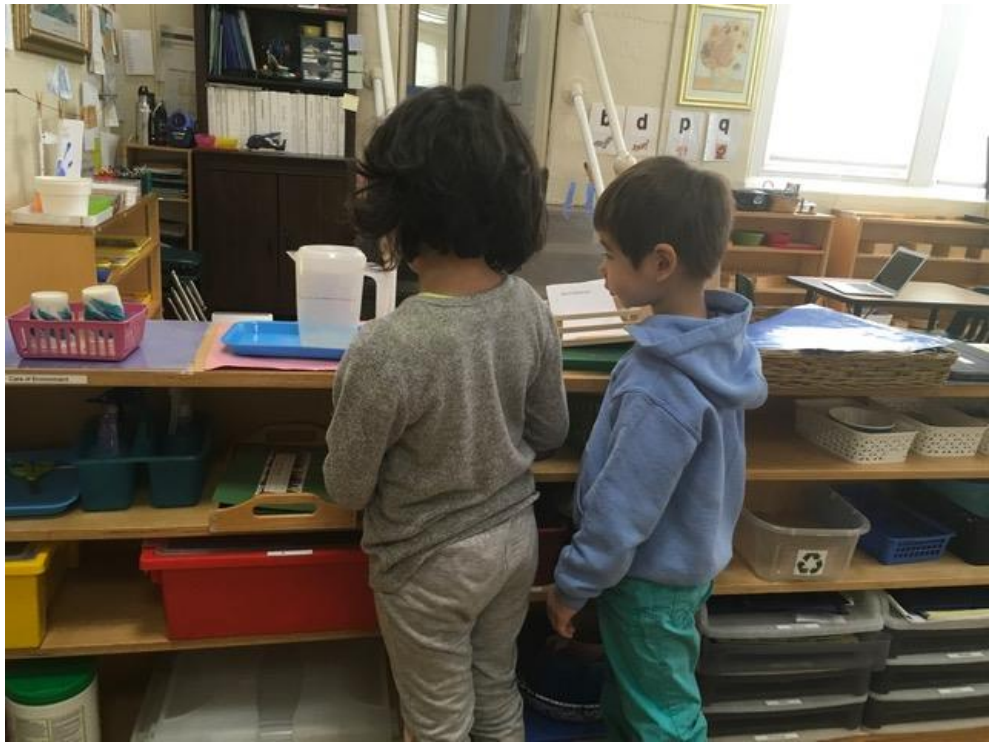
Other children complained that he stood too close to them.



Teachers’ concerns & my observation

He wandered around some areas of the classroom and did not independently choose an activity.

He sometimes started classroom tasks, like rolling up his smock, but failed to complete the process.



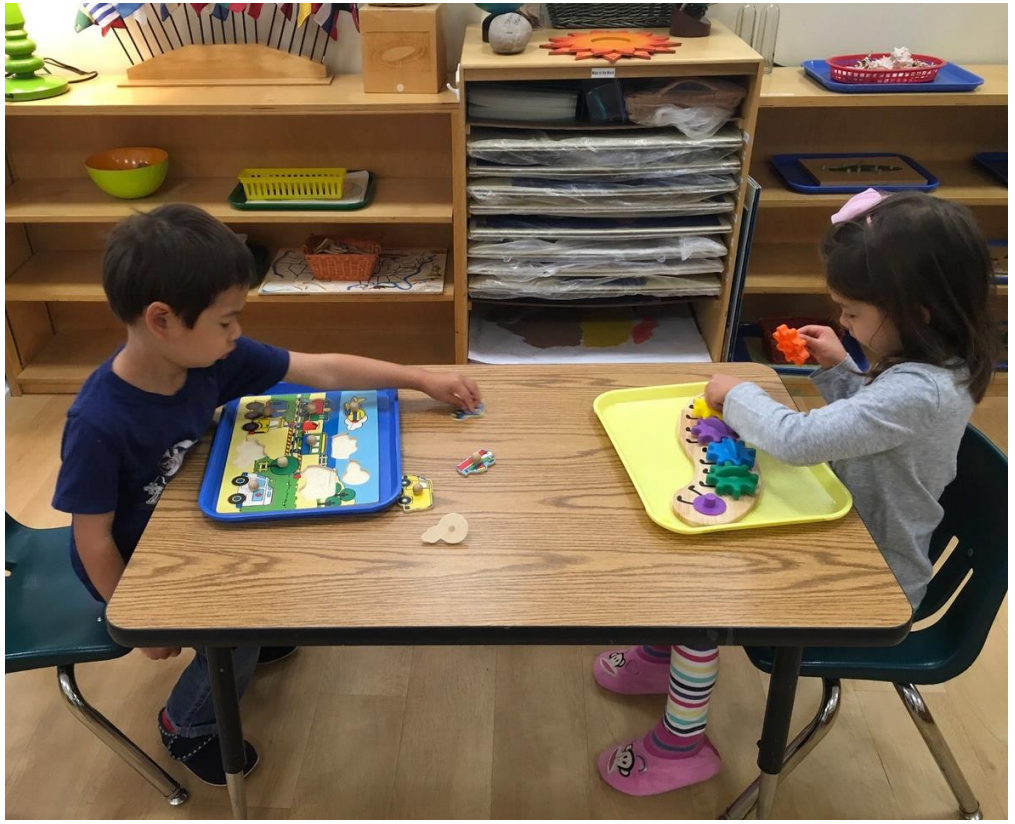
My task:

Observe Ben

Sensory and motor challenges associated with hemiplegia

Social & behavioral dynamics

Offer recommendations from a brain-based learning perspective



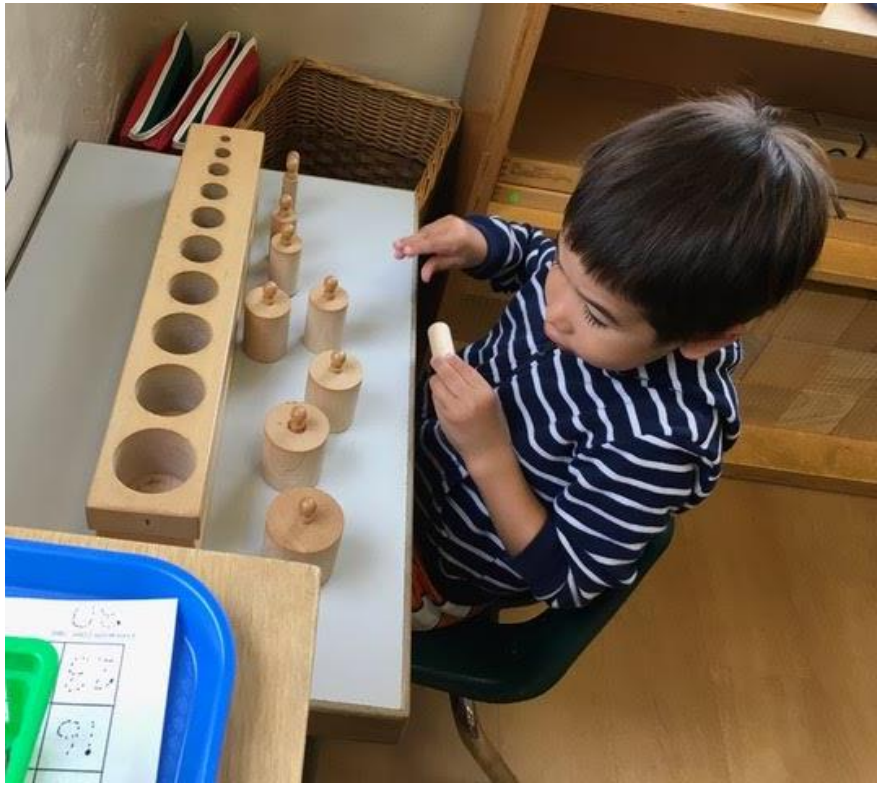
Reframing the “list”:

I got curious about:

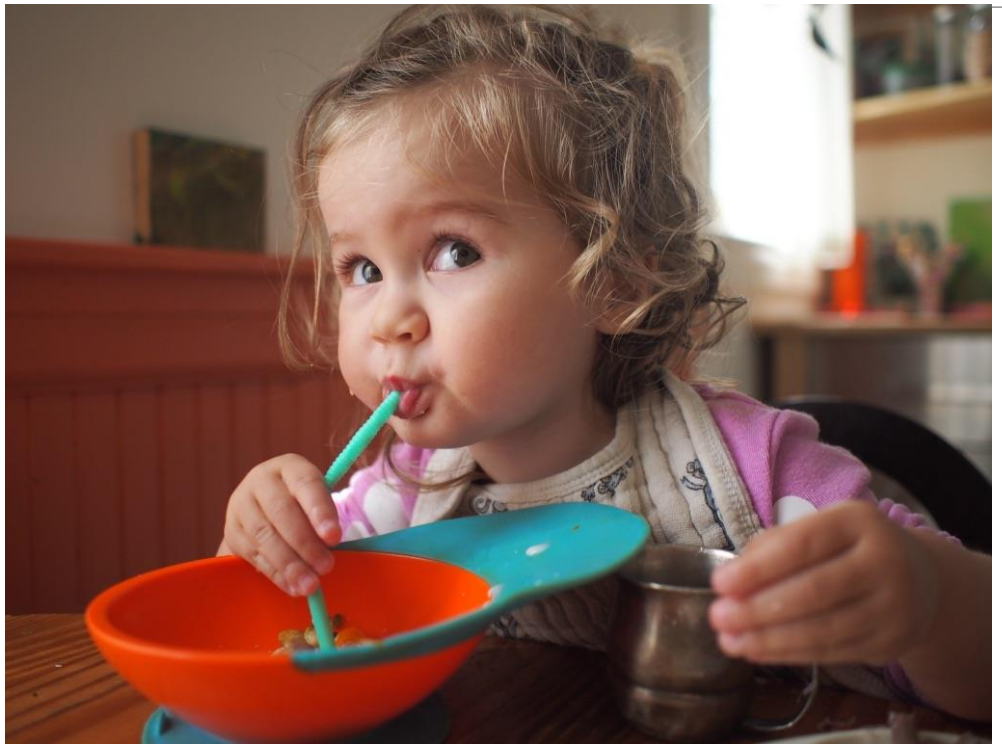
How he perceives differences

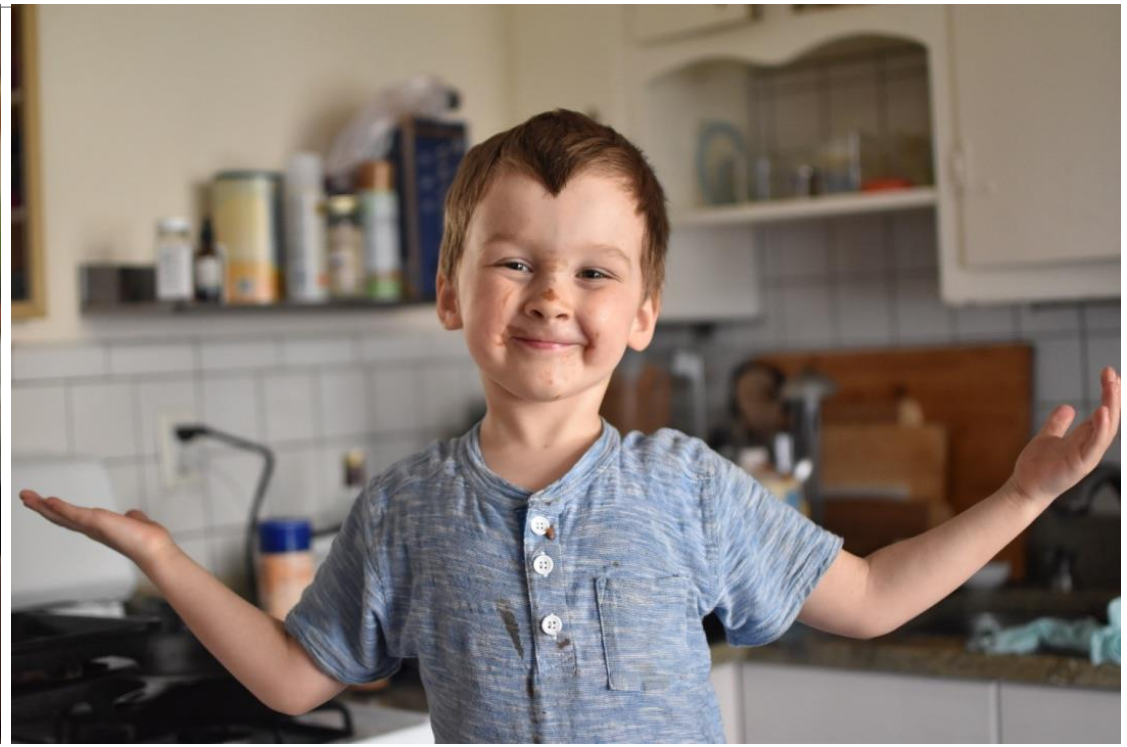
How he senses and notices what he feels, hears & sees

Helping him become more skillful in his perception of himself and his environment



Adia & Aydin





Why does this work?

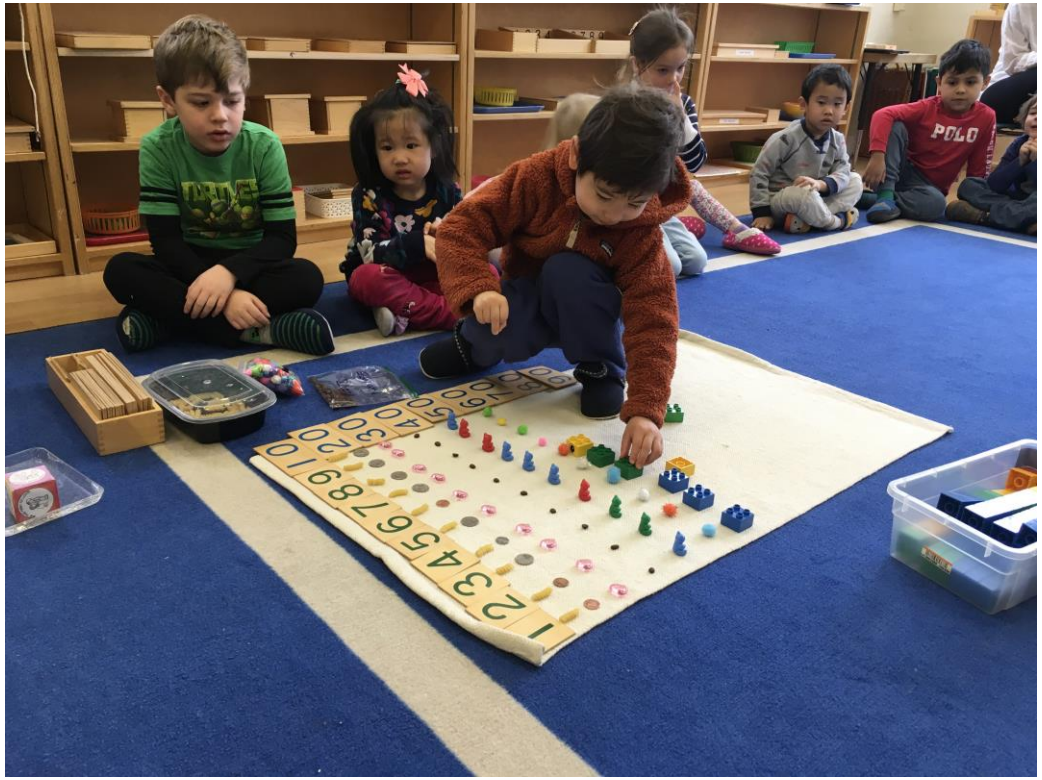
Use concrete experiences highlight and exaggerate differences

Give time for the child to sense differences

Rich variations build more connections in the brain

Become more skillful in making finer and finer sensory distinctions

From “correcting” to creating the conditions that promote learning



Ben: Banging his tray onto the table

What is the typical response?

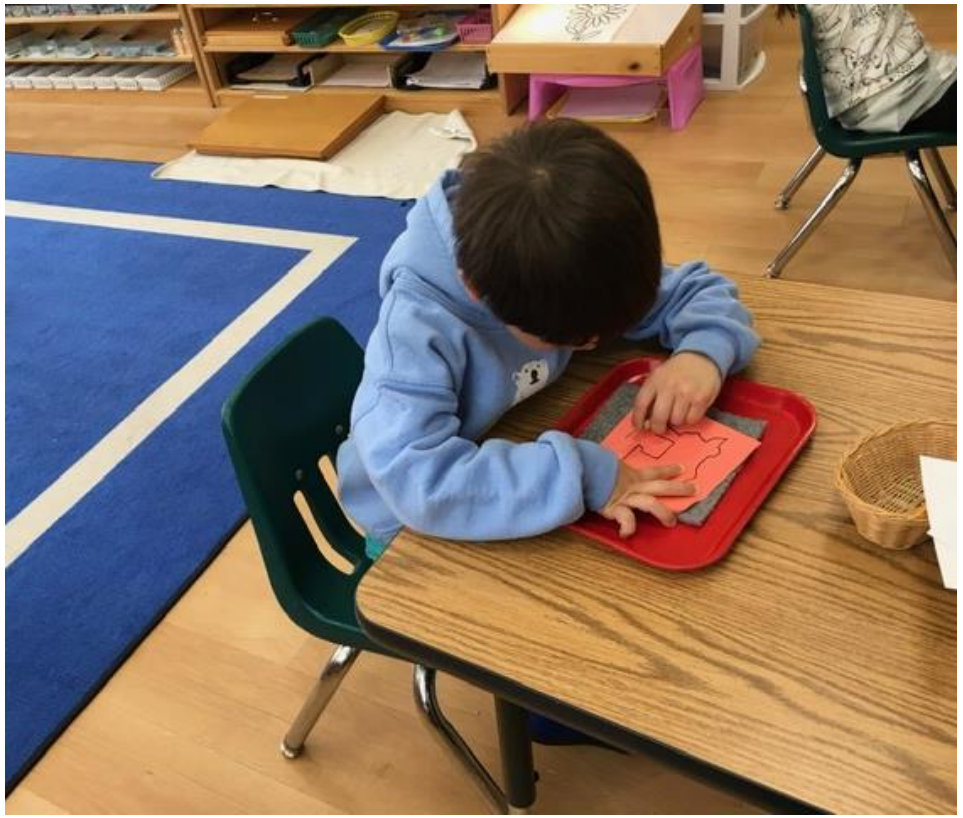
"Be careful!"

What distinctions is he not making?

How much force is necessary

Example of a learning-based response:

Variations, sensing differences, making finer & finer distinctions



Standing too close to peers and adults

What is the typical response?

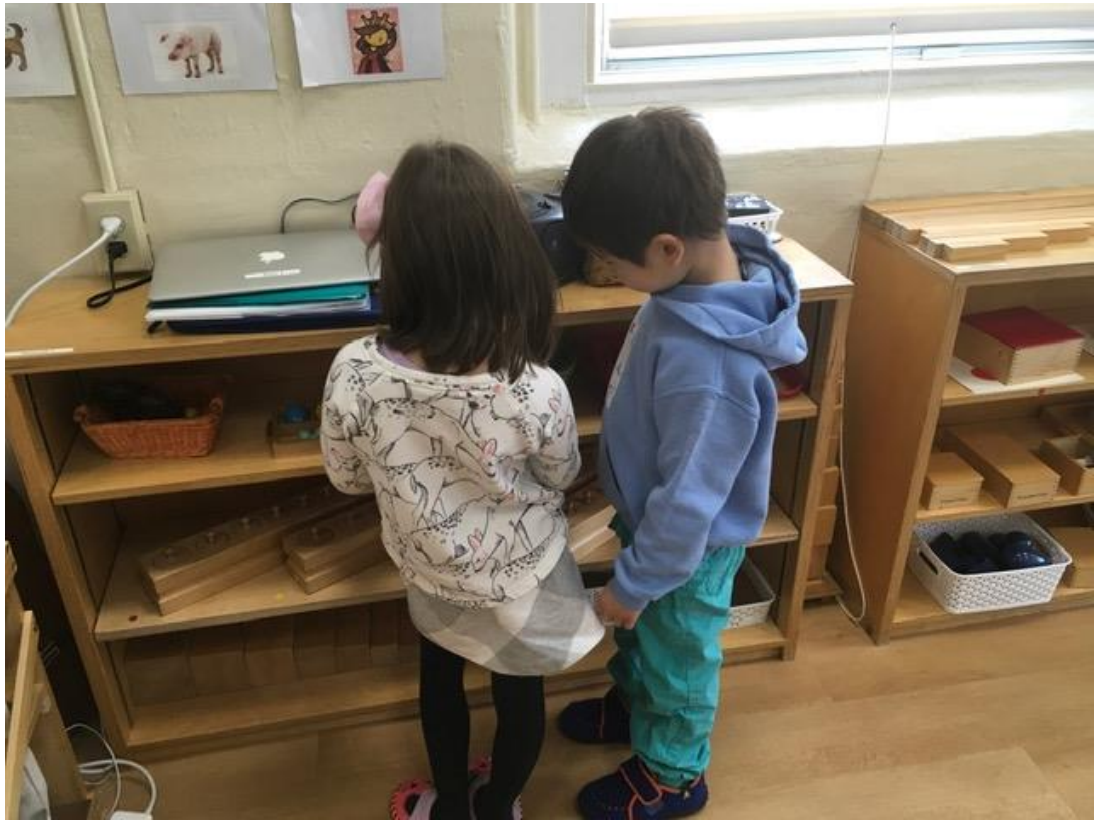
"I need space!"

What distinctions is he not making?

Perception of space/body awareness

Example of a learning-based response:

Variations, sensing differences, making finer & finer distinctions



Impact of the environment:

Typical response:

"Choose an activity, don't just wander around?"

"You didn't roll up your smock!"

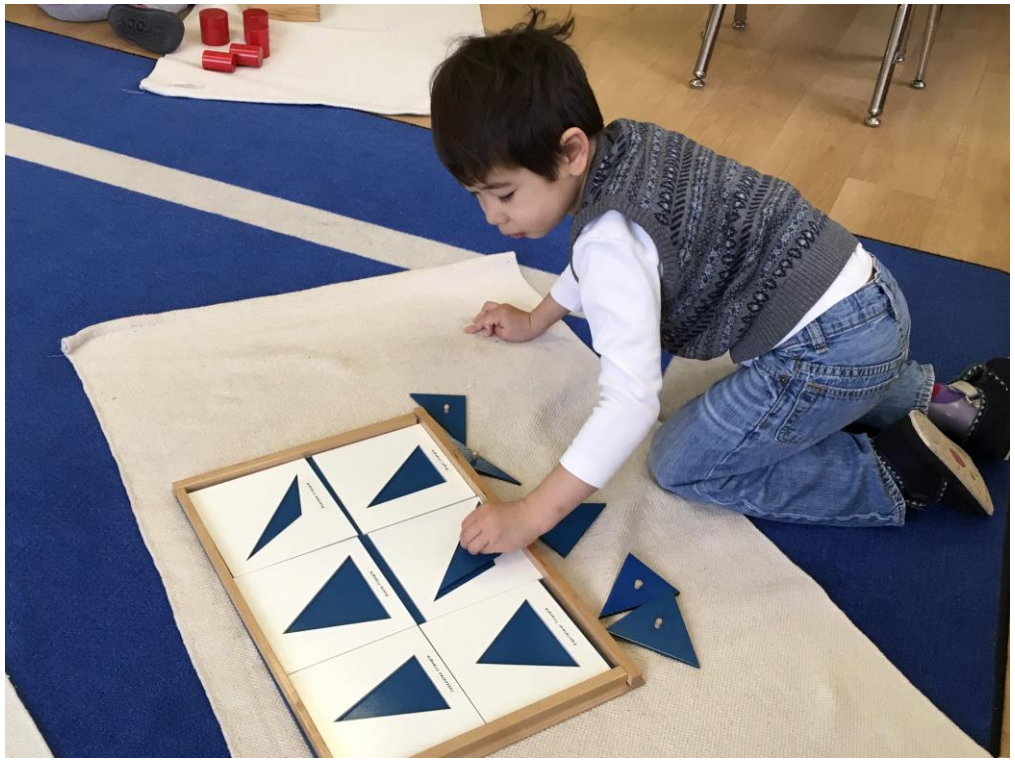
What distinctions can the ADULTS make?

He did not choose floor materials

Falling from side sitting

Floor activities and AFOs

Scaffolding before a process breaks down



Conclusion

Respect for parents and educators!

How we understand a challenge impacts what responses we can imagine

Variation & sensing and noticing differences are keys to learning in childhood and beyond