



Creating a Yes Environment!

On a daily basis children hear the word "no" often. Sometimes what adults are saying no to are safety concerns, but other times adults are saying no because we view the activity as wasteful (such as when they are squeezing out all the glue), messy (playing in mud), do not understand the learning that is happening (throwing or dropping items repeatedly), or it is convenient for us to say no. Green Garden is a Yes Environment. But what exactly does this mean?

Being a yes environment means we find ways to say yes in situations where children are normally told no. Green Garden wants school to be a child's safe place where they are free to learn and be curious. We focus on what the children are allowed to do rather than on what they cannot do. Unless what the child is doing is a safety concern, then there is no reason to limit their learning, curiosity, and imagination. We do not use the word "don't". Green Garden teachers will tell a child what they can do instead of what they cannot do. We also will not tell a child "no" unless they are doing something that is dangerous. You may hear us ask a child who is climbing if they feel safe or asking them for ideas on how to make a situation safe. This empowers children with problem solving skills and allows for healthy risk taking and confidence building.

Different Ways We Can Say Yes

- Change the environment- This can look like flipping a table over for children to stand on when they want to climb on a table.
- Provide an alternative- If a child rips books, tell them they can rip magazines or paper instead then provide them with these materials.
- Change the location- If a child is climbing on a toy shelf offer a place they can climb such as a climber or tree.
- Give a choice- If a child does not want to finish an activity but you have to move on they can be offered the choice to set a timer for 2 more minutes or to pause the activity to come back to later.



These toddlers wanted to climb on the table so their teacher changed the environment and flipped the table over so they can safely climb.