

@school

Jenny's surprises are all good

BOEL ERIKSSON

@ Montessorri

PARENTS often fall into the trap of doing too much for their toddlers, not realising how much they can do for themselves, according to a Montessorri directress.

Jenny Williams helped found the Mosman Montessorri under-3s program five years ago, and up until last week worked there with the children.

The Mosman program is aimed at children aged 18 months to three years.

Parents or carers are encouraged to bring their child in once a week for a two-hour session, and stay to observe while they carry out activities such as arranging flowers, digging in the sandpit, sweeping, or playing with blocks.

Mrs Williams said she often heard them say "I didn't know my child could do that".

"They don't realise how competent their children are (at that age)," she said.



Jenny Williams is leaving the Montessorri School and heading to China. Stella 2, Kaia 4, Jenny Williams, Uma 3, Arkey 5 (rear) and Taj 7 (right).

Picture: DAVE SWIFT -PP-163549

Mrs Williams said teaching a child how to do something by breaking it down into steps and doing it slowly until they could do

it themselves not only taught them better co-ordination, but also gave them a sense of self-esteem. "They think 'I can do this

The start of Montessorri:

■ The founder of the education method was Italian physician, educator, philosopher and humanitarian Dr Maria Montessorri.

She wanted her schools to be an environment for self-education and self-realisation, with remarkable success. The Montessorri method now exists all over the world.

myself" and it makes them feel really good," she said. "It makes the child happier."

Mrs Williams said some of the favourite activities evolved around food, such as spreading a biscuit or pouring a glass of juice, and it did not differ between girls or boys.

"Some of my keenest washer-ups and flower arrangers are boys, and many girls love planting seeds and using the woodwork bench," she said.

Mrs Williams and Mosman resident Sue Birdsall, who also helped set up the program, left for China last week to assist in the Assistants to Infancy course.