

Learning Through Mistakes: Understanding the Control of Error

One of the foundational principles of Montessori education is the idea that children learn best through their own experiences, including making and correcting mistakes. In many Montessori materials, a built-in "control of error" allows children to immediately recognize and address any mistakes they make. For instance, in the example of the cylinder block, if a child places a cylinder incorrectly, they will notice that one cylinder doesn't fit, offering them a chance to correct it independently.

As parents and educators, it can be difficult to resist the urge to step in when we see a child struggling. However, intervening too quickly can prevent the child from developing confidence in their ability to problem-solve on their own. When you see your child facing a challenge, rather than immediately offering help, take a step back and observe. If your child truly needs assistance, they will ask for it.

By allowing your child the space to make mistakes and learn from them, you create an environment where they feel safe to take risks, try new things, and develop resilience. This approach may lead to some temporary messes or frustrations, but the long-term benefits—such as increased confidence, self-esteem, and a love for learning—are invaluable.

