What's the Point? Why should we role model a variety of handwork around children while they play.

From their trunks no bigger than those of dolls, they produced shears almost as long as their arms, thread, needles, and snippets of blue and red cloth and went to work on silk uppers for mocassins and dolls’ dresses with all the industry of a sewing-circle. (1932 journal entry from a retired principal documenting a 5-7 year old native girl’s on their way to residential school, quoted in Thompson)

Industrial Revolution children commonly played within sight of working adults. This environment provided the opportunity to learn through imitation—our universal human heritage. Free play that lacks the opportunity to learn through the observation of elders will forever be limited. To define a Canadian Forest School pedagogy let’s learn from what First Nation people role modeled to their children when on the land.

When our grandmothers taught their children in school it was with self-sufficiency and mastery over the production of new things in mind. They did not realize that we would never be taught to carry on cooking pots from one of the thousand. Our third generation is being educated in the European system and our children know less about the production of the stuff of life than did our grandmothers. Schools have shown themselves to be ideological processing plants, turning our young people who cannot produce the means to sustain themselves, but who are full of the ideological nonsense of European culture. (Maracle, 1995, p. 58)

MIRROR neurons are richly present in the Broca’s area of the brain’s frontal lobes that is essential for speech. This area creates a close natural connection in our brain that overlaps or is triggered by mouth and hand movement.

Async Competence has been known to make a person quiet and easy.

Anna Bosum, Ouje Bouguenou, Cree Elder

“Whatever other duties they may have, they can never forget the daily need to be attuned enough to the wisdom of daily life. Everyone must work.” (law 1874)

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How do you teach children? “When children see adults doing something, they want to do it too.” Anna Bosum, Ouje Bouguenou, Cree Elder