

Questions

Most Often Asked About Montessori School

What is Montessori?

Maria Montessori was the first female doctor in Italy. She worked there in the early 1900's with children who had two working parents. She developed a hands-on method of education based on her observations of actual children. She determined that children have "sensitive periods" or, what we call "windows of opportunity" for learning. Her research has been further validated by the current information that has been publicized about "Brain Development."

How is a Montessori Class Structured?

Montessori is a developmental educational program allowing the children to progress at their own pace. A Montessori class is ungraded with an age span covering several years (0-6) (6-9)(9-12). There is a wide range of activities available to the children at all ages and maturity levels which reinforce and make possible the Montessori ideals of individualized work, success and independence. The combination of difference allows the children the opportunity to learn from each other and permits the older children to reinforce their knowledge by sharing their skills with the younger children. Montessori believes that the third year at the Early Childhood level(kindergarten age) is of unique importance and we encourage five-year old children to remain with the Early Childhood level class.

What is the role of the teacher in a Montessori Classroom?

Since Montessori believes that children learn best through their own efforts, the role of the Montessori teacher is that of an "objective observer". The teacher's job is to prepare an environment that teaches - constantly adding new manipulative materials for the child to learn specific concepts. The teacher's job is to help the child achieve independence and accept responsibility. Teachers are trained to identify learning challenges and recognize developmental delays early so the child will get help quickly.

What is the training Montessori teachers receive?

There are training programs for certifying teachers in Infant/Toddler, Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education. Certified teacher have a high school diploma. Certification includes two years of Montessori studies and internship. Elementary Teachers have a college degree or earn college credit during certification. Training is available through major training associations requiring private Post Secondary Education authorization. Many colleges/universities offer Montessori Certification as part of their Education Program. Qualified Montessori Teachers earn a diploma which they may display proudly in their classrooms.

Are there any group activities in a Montessori class?

Although the emphasis in Montessori is on a child's ability to grow and progress on an individual basis, there are ample opportunities for them to socialize with the other children in the class. There are regular gatherings of the class as a whole for activities such as lunch, lifetime, storytelling, music, planning for future events and for discussion of matters relating to the group as a whole. Community spirit is encouraged among each individual class and from each class to the school as a whole.

Is Montessori affiliated with a religion?

Montessori is not affiliated with any religion. The Montessori curriculum is used worldwide by church schools as well as private and public schools.

What is the Montessori concept of discipline?

Discipline is achieved by giving the child interesting challenging work, whereby the child learns to focus, concentrate and complete meaningful tasks. Dr. Maria Montessori found that many undisciplined children were really frustrated by the lack of proper stimulation for their mental mind or by inappropriate adult interference. When a child's intellectual energies are utilized in a constructive manner there is no energy left over for mischievousness or deviation. When the children are totally absorbed and happy at what they are doing, then a true "inner discipline" is achieved. There is no corporal punishment.

How will my child respond when leaving the Montessori environment for another school?

The goal of a Montessori education is that children will develop problem solving skills to help them adjust to any new situation-socially or academically. Children develop a strong self-image because of the successful accomplishments they have had every day at Montessori school. Sometimes children are more advanced in their studies compared to a traditional curriculum and will need enrichment activities to challenge them. The Montessori philosophy sets no limits on what children can achieve. Individual children learn at different rates and that is respected. Most children will miss their freedom to make choices and move freely in their environment. Peer teaching is encouraged in Montessori and they may not find this philosophy in other programs. It has been our experience that most transitions are made quickly because children are flexible and adjust. Many of our students return yearly to visit on holidays.