

Montessori Infant/Toddler Curriculum (6 weeks to 2 1/2 years of age)

Infant/Toddler Program Benefits

Our Montessori based toddler curriculum supports the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of each child. Toddlers strengthen, speech and language development and both fine and gross motor skills as they explore self, family, and the world in which they live.

Learning the Montessori way is, literally, learning for life.

The toddler program prepares the toddler class children for preschool work by exposing them to each area of Montessori curriculum. The toddlers learn concentration, coordination, language skills, responsibility, and respect all of which prepare them well for a successful transition into preschool in Inclusive Montessori.

So What Is So Special About the Montessori Classroom?

There are four main elements that distinguish it from other traditional classrooms:

1. All equipment is accessible to your child and is always available to the child.
2. Your child has freedom of movement both indoors and out as well as a choice of what to do for much of the day
3. Your child will have personal responsibility for their work; this requires an awareness of the needs of others, avoiding dangerous or hurtful actions, keeping the equipment and resources tidy, putting things away after using them, being good role models for younger children, developing a true social awareness.

4. **Beauty and Harmony:** This aspect is too often ignored by those who focus too much on the content of learning. Montessori felt strongly that the environment must be aesthetically pleasing to encourage learning and concentration. Too many displays can distract children if they are not properly related to their interests. It reflects the manner in which the Montessori classroom is calm and activities are self-directed.

Language Curriculum

The most important language materials for a toddler are the materials and experiences in the child's environment. Reinforcing the importance of verbal communication, speaking clearly and supporting the child's expanding vocabulary are a daily process in the toddler environment. For a toddler written language is experienced through the adult's oral reading and story time.

These activities revolve around four areas:

Pre-reading

- Matching cards
- Vocabulary cards
- Stories read aloud
- Size and shape discrimination exercises
- Picture-word cards

Matching

- Tracing objects
- Tracing shapes

Word Recognition

- Sandpaper letters
- Isolating initial sounds

Pre-writing

- Sandbox tracing

Math Curriculum

Maria Montessori believed that a child's mind is mathematical and based on the order and perceptual awareness found in the development of the senses. The acquisition of mathematical principals is seen as developing logically from concrete to abstract and simple to complex. The child who has experienced basic concepts involved with the practical life and sensorial materials progresses naturally to the beginning math activities. We make this enjoyable by providing these very day activities:

Counting Activities (1-4 and 1-10)

Develops the difference in dimension, width, length, and size can be found in these materials:

- Counting songs
- Counting fingers, animals, children, objects in the environment, etc.
- Spindles boxes
- Sandpaper numerals
- Numeral sandbox tracing

Concept of Time

- Daily routine
- Periods of the day (morning, afternoon, evening)
- Seasons

Science Curriculum

Science for the toddler means activities where the child can directly observe and manipulate physical properties. The tactile element is the key ingredient for learning about their world. Appropriate science activities for toddlers allow for the maximum child interaction and minimal adult intervention.

These activities make a significant contribution to the child's development because they foster autonomous functioning. When children can manipulate materials and equipment and discover on their own, they feel a great sense of mastery and positive satisfaction which helps build their self-concepts. It is extremely important to remember that it is the process not the product that is important and creates learning within the child.

Life Science

- Plant care
- Animal care
- Nature walks
- Living v. nonliving
- Life cycles

Physical Science

- Sink and float activities
- Gravity
- Magnetic v. nonmagnetic
- Color mixing
- Weight/balance

Earth Science

- Water properties
- Weather/seasons
- Oceans
- Rocks

Scientific Reasoning and Technology

- Observation
- Measures

World Language: Spanish Curriculum

The Spanish program is designed to enable students to speak and write their basic thoughts and questions in a second language. The curriculum utilizes a combination of speaking, writing, and activities that are often based on music, art or Total Physical Response. Students learn to express themselves in a second language environment that promotes confidence and creativity.

Toddler Classes

- Numbers
- Body parts
- Songs
- Animals

Cultural Studies Curriculum

Montessori schools presents a school-wide, three-year rotation of content so special events such as cultural festivals, assemblies, field trips, and reading lists can be thematically planned for the whole school. Each year, a central question is posed and each level has its own sub-questions that focus the capabilities. The toddlers, who are in that environment for one or, perhaps, two years, may touch all three subjects in the course of a year.

Year One: Ancient Civilizations

- The school-wide central question is “How and why were ancient civilizations created?”
- The toddler focus is “Where do we come from?” “Why do we tell stories?” and “Is every story about me?”

Year Two: American Civilization

- The school-wide central question is “How and why has American civilization created?”
- The toddler focus is “How have I changed?” “What is family?” “What did my grandparents do when they were children?” and “What does peace like?”

Year Three: World Civilization

- The school-wide central question is “How and why do world civilizations connect?”
- The toddler focus is “Who am I?” “How am I the same or different from others?” “How many people are in the world?” and “What do they look like?”

Practical Life Curriculum

The practical life materials and exercises are designed to contribute to the development of both small and large motor skills and assist the child in becoming self-efficient and independent.

Physical skills

- Control of movement
- Silence game
- Walking the line

Respect and care of environment

- Squeezing a sponge
- Sweeping the floor
- Pouring grains and water
- Clamping clothespins
- Rolling a rug
- Using tools such as hammers and screwdrivers
- Opening and closing jar lids
- Opening and closing latches
- Using a strainer, beater, whisk
- Scrubbing a shell, rock, doll
- Caring for animals
- Recycling

Grace, courtesy, and etiquette

- Greeting someone
- “Please” and “Thank you”
- Walking around the rug
- Shaking hands

Independence

- Care of person
- Dressing frame
- Large button frame
- Zipper frame
- Snapping frame
- Hanging up coat
- Combing hair
- Washing hands
- Health and safety
- Nutrition and food preparation

Community Service

- Collecting teddy bears for a local children’s shelter

Sensorial Curriculum

This consists of lessons and materials that educate and refine the child’s senses. The sensorial materials are designed to simplify learning and awareness of the environment by isolating difficulty; isolating the senses; encouraging mastery through repetition; possessing self-correction within the material; and presenting an attractive appearance to the child. By working with the sensorial materials, children develop the organization and patterning skills inherent in math and language concepts that build upon the sensory awareness stimulated by the sensorial materials.

These materials include:

Visual

- Pink tower
- Knobbed cylinders
- Broad stair
- Knobless cylinders
- Color tablets box 1 and 2
- Binomial cube

Tactile

- Touch boards
- Fabric-extreme textures

Stereognostic

- Geometric solids

Auditory

- Sound cylinders

Visual Arts Curriculum

The visual arts program seeks to foster creativity, problem solving, and self-expression as it relates to each child's level of development from Toddler to Middle School. Art lessons use a variety of auditory, kinesthetic, and visual components. Students are encouraged to experience the art process as each concept is presented utilizing a variety of 2-D and 3-D materials to help them truly absorb and understand the lesson's objectives. Lessons include drawing, painting, sculpture, collage making, and print making.

The Toddler curriculum focuses on the exploration of different materials.

Music Curriculum

The music curriculum combines individual and group work with lessons designed to appeal to a variety of learning styles. This directly relates to our mission of enhancing the Montessori philosophy with other innovation methods. The music curriculum also offers significant opportunities to build community through our numerous performances, field trips, and assemblies. The music curriculum combines individual and group work with lessons designed to appeal to a variety of learning styles. This directly relates to our mission of enhancing the Montessori philosophy with other innovation methods. The music curriculum also offers significant opportunities to build community through our numerous performances, field trips, and assemblies.

Toddler Classes

- Repetitive songs
- Echo songs
- Singing in unison