

# Montessori Center of Downriver - April Newsletter

*"That humanity which is revealed in all its intellectual splendor during the sweet and tender age of childhood should be respected with a kind of religious veneration. It is like the sun which appears at dawn or a flower just beginning to bloom. Education cannot be effective unless it helps a child to open up himself to life."*

- Dr. Maria Montessori

## The Transition to Preschool: When Is Your Toddler Ready?

Toddlers are famous for their struggles with transitions: That's why they melt down when it's time to stop playing and start the bedtime routine, and it's why tools such as timers and 5-minute warnings are so useful. It's also why you may be concerned about your child moving from a toddler program into a preschool program. But don't fear! We are experts at helping children move smoothly into our preschool program, and we can also help you know when it's time to make the change.

### Signs of Readiness

Before we move a child from our toddler program into our preschool program, there are a few things our teachers monitor for:

First, the child must be completely toilet trained. This means that the child must be able to urinate and have a bowel movement in the toilet and attempt to wipe their own bottom. The child must be able to ask to use the bathroom (or be able to go on their own), and they should be able to pull their pants up and down on their own. The preschool classrooms have stalls, so children will have more autonomy over their bodies. Teachers will only enter the stall if a child requests assistance.

Second, our teachers will look to see if a child shows social and emotional maturity. These can include working well with others, communicating effectively, staying on task, developing grace and courtesy toward others, and connecting with peers. They also involve developing self-awareness and emotional control. We don't expect children to have mastered all these skills, but our teachers do look to see how they are developing.

Finally, children must be at least 33 months of age before they can transition to preschool.

### What You Can Expect In Our Preschool Program

Many things will stay the same when your child transitions to preschool: They will still be with highly trained and loving teachers, and they'll still be receiving an authentic and high quality Montessori

education. That said, there are some differences in the preschool program, aside from it being more challenging.

The ratio of caregivers to children is 1:4 in the toddler rooms and is closer to 1:10 in the preschool rooms. This means that children will not get quite as much individualized attention, and so children will work on becoming more independent. They will need to learn to communicate their needs effectively as teachers have more children they need to care for.

Children will also need to work on being self-directed and able to make choices as free-choice work-time is for a full two hours. Our preschool rooms are also larger and contain many more materials available on the shelves.

### **Ways to Ease the Transition**

Our caring teachers will work hard to make the transition to preschool as smooth and painless as they can. We are incredibly responsive and sensitive to children's emotional needs and will, of course, meet children where they are. Prior to the end of their last toddler year, our toddler and preschool teachers will work together to acclimate them to their new room. This will involve the preschool teacher visiting the child in the toddler room, and the child visiting the preschool teacher in their room.

You can help ease the transition too. Be sure to talk with your child about how they will be joining a new class and what that means for them. You can read books about starting preschool or about having a new teacher. If your child likes, try some role playing—you be the new student who is nervous and have them be the new teacher, and then you can switch roles. Let them direct you in what to do or say if they want. This will help them work through any worries or concerns they have.

Another thing you can do to help with the transition is have children attend even just one month in the summer if possible. This will give them a chance to get to know their new teachers and classmates in a slightly more relaxed environment with lots of outdoor play and summer fun. When the fall program begins, they will be ready for and comfortable with the change!

### **Still Have Questions?**

The transition to preschool is a big change for both your child and you! If you'd like to talk with us more about it, we're happy to help. Send us a message or give us a call anytime.

### **In the Classroom**

#### **Ms Ashley's Room**

The theme in Ms Ashley's room for April will be jungle animals. They will learn about different species and the continents that they live on.

#### **Mrs. Dona's Room**

In April, Mrs. Dona's room will be spinning the globe and moving from Australia to Asia. They'll be studying the people, cultures, art,

and food of Asia. They'll also be learning about Spring and Easter.

### **Ms Paula's Room**

Ms Paula's room will be learning about the continent of South America in April. They will also begin planting seeds and learning about the life cycle of plants.

### **Celebrating Kathy!**

You may have noticed a missing face in the afternoons lately. That's because after nearly 30 years with MCOD, Kathy has retired! She is dearly missed and definitely left some big shoes to fill, but we're very excited for her as she moves into this new chapter in her life. Please join us in thanking Kathy for all her hard work and dedication!

### **Local Events and Resources**

1. Catch Peter Rabbit! Scavenger Hunt at Bacon Memorial Library in Wyandotte. Children can search for Peter and turn him in at the front desk for a small prize! Runs for all of April.
2. Also at the Wyandotte library: [The maker space](#) is officially reopening! Stop by April 4th-7th for special crafts and fun.
3. Southgate's 15th Annual Easter Eggstravaganza is on April 9th. It starts promptly at noon, and no pre-registration is necessary. BYO-B(asket).
4. The Taylor Library has family story time every Saturday from 10:30-11.
5. Gleaners is doing a drive-thru food distribution in Wyandotte on 04/15/2022 and 04/29/2022 from 9:00am to 11:00am at the Yack Arena. Families can receive a box of fresh produce and shelf-stable goods. No registration necessary.
6. The Downriver YMCA is offering bundled meals for all children under 18. Pick up is 7th and 14th from 1-1:30pm. No registration necessary.

### **Montessori Philosophy**

Concrete to abstract: A logical, developmentally appropriate progression that allows the child to develop an abstract understanding of a concept by first encountering it in a concrete form, such as learning the mathematical concept of the decimal system by working with Golden Beads grouped into units, 10s, 100s, and 1,000s.

### **Mrs. Melissa's Room**

In April, Mrs. Melissa's room will be learning about reptiles and amphibians. They will also start their mystery number: they have a basket with an amount of objects and a numeral, and they try to remember the objects and number, then they count them out at group time.

## Fun at Home

While it's not quite warm enough to start a garden yet, [this indoor planting activity](#) is perfect for a rainy spring afternoon.

## For the Love of Reading

### For Parents

1. [What Your Child's Teachers Would Like You to Know](#) By P. Donohue Shortridge
2. [It's Okay to Just Stay Home and Play](#) By Jane M. Jacobs, MA

### Children's Books

1. Joys of Spring: Spring Celebrations around the World by Heather Conrad
2. Lola Plants a Garden by Anna McQuinn
3. Goodbye Winter, Hello Spring by Kenard Pak
4. The Curious Garden by Peter Brown