

# Montessori Center of Downriver - May Newsletter

## Montessori and the Whole Child

For many people, when they hear “Montessori,” they picture academic learning—golden beads, hundred boards, and other tools of learning; while they aren’t wrong, it’s also not the entire picture. You may be surprised to know that academic learning and intelligence aren’t the top values and goals of a Montessori education. The Montessori Method, instead, values the whole child. Intelligence isn’t seen as more valuable than physical and spiritual growth, and the development of emotional health is a top priority in a Montessori classroom. Children are not viewed as blank slates, waiting to be filled by all-knowing adults; rather, they are seen as fully formed humans, deserving of our respect and from whom we can also learn.

### What Is “the Whole Child”?

When we talk about the whole child, we mean seeing children in their entirety, not just their academic abilities. The philosophy of the whole child values the human spirit and the development of every aspect of a child: physical, social, emotional, and cognitive. Seeing children and their education in this way promotes their wellbeing and places value on things such as physical movement, nutrition, mindfulness, and community.

### What Does Educating the Whole Child Really Mean?

Educating the whole child means that knowledge is not compartmentalized. Children are taught to see the connections and relationships between subjects, and learning goes beyond rote memorization to internalizing the how and why of things. Learning is done by engaging the senses and through movement.

*“Till now, almost all educators have thought of movement and the muscular system as aids to respiration, or to circulation, or as a means for building up physical strength. But in our new conception the view is taken that movement has great importance in mental development itself, provided that the action which occurs is connected with the mental activity going on.” (Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind, p. 142)*

Using this view of learning, children are not confined to a desk or certain space; instead, thoughtful and purposeful movement is encouraged in the classroom. Children are seen as autonomous beings, capable of deciding for themselves how and what to learn. This type of education also engages and encourages whole brain learning; that is, it engages both the left and right brain together.



*A practical life activity such as preparing a snack for the class engages the whole child. It develops their fine motor skills, helps them practice counting, and encourages a sense of community.*

## **In the Classroom**

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

In May in Ms Ashley's room, they will be learning about reptiles and amphibians and will be planting seeds in class to watch them grow. They'll also be having a taco bar for Cinco de Mayo and making gifts for Mother's Day!

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

In April, Mrs. Dona's room studied the continent of Asia with food tasting, songs, and many artifacts from different Asian countries. In May, the class will be learning about caring for the environment, planting, and the continent of Australia. They'll also be celebrating Cinco de Mayo and Mother's Day!

## **Updated Policy**

Please note that we have updated our Parent Handbook to reflect this revised policy: Children who are sent home from school due to illness must stay home the following day. They may return to school when they are symptom free and have no other signs of a contagious illness.

## **Local Events and Resources**

1. The Wyandotte library is doing a spring scavenger hunt all month. Children can get a small prize for finding all the items and solving the riddle.
2. The Lincoln Park Spring Fling Carnival runs from May 19th through 22nd.

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

Ms Paula's room is a spring fling this month! They'll be learning about all things spring: butterflies, flowers, planting! They'll also be learning about the continent of Africa.

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

In May, Mrs. Melissa's room will be learning about insects, birds, and flowers.

3. Gleaners is doing a drive-thru food distribution in Wyandotte on 05/13/2022 and 05/27/2022 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.
4. The Downriver YMCA is offering bundled meals for all children under 18. Pick up is every Thursday from 1-1:30pm. No registration necessary.

## Important Dates

**May 5th:** Cinco de Mayo

**May 8th:** Mother's Day

**May 30th:** Memorial Day; school will be closed.

## Fun at Home

1. Spring is here and flowers are blooming! Have kids make their own [flowers using coffee filters](#). This activity is great for developing the pincer grasp.
2. Children love being outside and exploring the world around them. [Journey sticks](#) are a fun way to take the adventure home with you.

## For the Love of Reading

### For Parents

1. [Toileting for Toddlers](#)
2. [Manners, Naturally](#)

### Children's Books

1. Marco's Cinco de Mayo by Lisa Bullard
2. Memorial Day by Emma Carlson Berne