

Montessori Center of Downriver: October Newsletter

Building Community in the Montessori Classroom

From the outset, community has been an essential component of the Montessori classroom. Do you know why Maria Montessori called her classes “Children’s Houses”? It was because she wanted her classes to not just be a place of learning, but to also be somewhere that children felt they belonged. Dr. Montessori understood that emotional development is linked to optimal learning, and she designed her method to support the development of emotional skills. Montessori teachers continue this today, fostering social and emotional development and stressing the importance of community in the classroom. Below, we’ll discuss the ways in which community is built in a Montessori classroom.

Building Community in the Montessori Classroom: Grace and Courtesy

The principles of grace and courtesy are some of the first lessons children receive when attending a Montessori school. They are, in fact, the foundation of a Montessori classroom and the community it creates. Grace is the ability to show respect and comfort to oneself, while courtesy is showing the same to others. Children are expected to be polite and kind to everyone in their community.

Teachers model this kindness and respect through both their actions (for example, greeting children warmly when they enter the class) and lessons specific to grace and courtesy. Children also learn about community and their role in it through their everyday experiences in the class. While the Montessori Method encourages freedom of movement and choice, this must occur within the framework of grace and courtesy. For example, a child may need to wait their turn for a lesson, which not only helps develop self-control, patience, and delayed gratification but also teaches children how their actions can help, hurt, or disturb others. They learn how individual freedoms must exist alongside other people, and they also learn about civic responsibility and how to contribute to society.

Building Community in the Montessori Classroom: Care of the Environment

Caring for the environment helps children connect to their classroom and creates a sense of responsibility for it. Children can care for their room in various ways--from sweeping up after lunch to watering plants to taking out the garbage. When children work together to care for and feel a responsibility toward their classroom, they build community and a sense of belonging. Helping to care for the classroom also teaches children about the needs of others and how they can help; for example, if a child doesn’t put away materials when they’re finished a lesson, another child may not be able to find those materials later. As another example, a child may take up the task of sorting and folding the school’s laundry and delivering that folded laundry to the other classrooms, which helps them feel like a contributing member of both their classroom and the wider school community.

Building Community in the Montessori Classroom: The Three Year Cycle

There's another key component of the Montessori Method that helps build community: the mixed-age classroom. In an authentic Montessori school, children will not be separated by age, but will be in classrooms with children of multiple ages. At our school, we have the toddler rooms (ages 18 months to 3 years) and the preschool/kindergarten rooms (ages 3-6 years). Because classes are not grouped by age, children complete what is called the "three year cycle," meaning they are in the same classroom for three years. Being with the same teachers and classmates for these cycles helps form deep bonds and a strong sense of community. Children are encouraged to work together, and the idea of meeting the child where they are allows all children to be accommodated and accepted in the class--no one is separated or removed.

Community = Family

The Montessori Method provides children with many daily activities that build community. Simply preparing a snack and eating it together can make children feel like they are a part of a bigger whole. At our school, classrooms truly do become families.

In the Classroom

Ms Ashley's Room

October is "All About Me" in Ms Ashley's room. They will be learning about the five senses, different exercises, nutrition, and health. An "All About Me" project will be sent home. Please use the precut paper attached. They will also be doing pumpkin pounding and reading new spooky books!

In September, the class welcomed two new friends! They learned about reptiles, talked about the changing of the seasons, and started doing the calendar daily.

Mrs. Dona's Room

In September, Mrs. Dona's room welcomed new friends and started settling in to the new school year. They spent time learning about the differences between living and non-living things and worked on the basics of art, such as cutting and gluing

In October, they'll be learning about the different parts of trees and will be introduced to the continents. They'll also be doing leaf rubbing!

Ms Paula's Room

September in Ms Paula's room was all about settling in and learning new routines. Children were introduced to practical life and sensorial activities while getting to know new friends, new teachers,

and new spaces. Our returning kids have been wonderful about helping their new friends acclimate! The beauty of the Montessori Method and multi-age rooms in action!

Mrs. Melissa's Room

This month, Mrs. Melissa's room will be learning about transportation and safety signs!

Announcements



1. We will be holding our first-ever Trunk or Treat on Wednesday, October 26th. We hope that you will be able to join us! Further details are available in the Evite. If you'd like to donate candy (or other small goodies), we have a donation box set up in the vestibule. Donations are appreciated but not required!

2. Office staff hours are as follows:

- Ms Mary: 7:30am-4pm
- Ms April: 7:45am-12pm
- Ms Morgan: 12-5pm

3. Thank you so much for your cooperation! The drop-off line has been going well this year. For the safety of everyone involved, please remember not to line up before the cones are removed.

4. We have made a small addition to our parent handbook regarding constipation treatment: If you need to administer any constipation treatment to your child, they must be kept home until they have had a full bowel movement.

5. We wanted to let you know that you can see your monthly account balance and that you are welcome to make payments toward that balance at any time. All you need to do is login to myprocare.com

Events and Resources

1. If you're anything like me (April), it's a struggle to pack lunches that are varied and healthy but also easy *and* something your child will actually eat. Mine won't even eat sandwiches! If you need some inspiration, try [here](#) and [here](#).
2. [Wayne Metro's Car Seat Distribution Program](#) is a year-round resource program for individuals and families in need of a free car seat or booster seat.
3. [Gleaners](#) provides boxes of food at no cost and with no registration necessary. There are several mobile food truck locations and times
Downriver:
 1. Wyandotte, Yack Arena: October 14th and 28th from 9am-11am
 2. Woodhaven, City Hall: October 11th and 25 from 9am-11am
 3. Ecorse, Kennedy Building: October 18th from 2pm-4pm and November 1st from 2pm-4pm
 4. Dearborn, Ford Community and Performing Arts Center: October 18th from 9am-11am and November 1st from 9am-11am
4. Michigan State offers many free parenting resources, including [free webinars](#) on a variety of parenting topics.
5. CARE of Southeast Michigan offers [free virtual classes](#). They are currently offering a weekly seminar on parenting during the first five years.
6. Train rides at Heritage Park Petting Farm: 11am-4pm on October 8, 9, 15, and 16. Enjoy train rides around the campus circling the barnyard, plus a giant inflatable corn maze!
7. Great Lakes Live Steamers train rides: Free train rides at the Southgate Train Park on October 14, 15, and 16 from 5pm-8pm.
8. Cider in the City: October 15th, 1-5pm at Beacon Park in Detroit. Enjoy seasonal family fun activities, including crafts and face painting; take a horse-drawn hayride around enjoy live music; and pick out the perfect pumpkin.
9. The Detroit Institute of Arts is free to all Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland county residents. Two weekends a month, they offer a free drop-in craft for kids and families. October 8th and 9th are [paper flowers](#) and October 22nd and 23rd are [papel picado](#).

Southgate Library

- Storytime is back! There are two times: Baby Storytime is Mondays at 11am and Family Storytime is Thursdays at 11am. Children can dress up for Halloween for storytime on the 27th and 31st!
- Halloween Palooza! Saturday, October 29 at 2pm. Are you ready for spooky season? Enjoy crafts, games, books, and more at the library's Spooktacular palooza! Costumes are encouraged for young and old.
- Jack-O-Lantern Suncatcher Craft: Don't have enough decorations for spooky season yet? No problem! They've got you covered; stop by the desk and ask for a suncatcher kit. Everything but scissors is in the bag ready for you to get creative.

Trenton Library

- Pajama Storytime! October 1st and 13th, 6:30-7pm. A family story time to help relax kids before bedtime! Read some wonderful picture books all while coming to the library dressed in your pajamas! Stuffed animal friends are welcome to join too. While there will be a couple songs, the program will focus more on reading. Intended for children ages 3 to 8.

Wyandotte Library

- Baby/Toddler Storytime: Tuesdays from 10-10:20am.
- Family Storytime: Tuesdays from 11-11:30am.
- Makerspace activity: Spooky-Cute DIY Charm Pins. Monday, October 03, 2022 through Saturday, October 08, 2022. Create a spooky yet cute beaded pin with an enamel charm to show your Halloween spirit. Can be made at the library or you can take the kit home. No registration.
- Makerspace activity: Pumpkin Painting. Monday, October 10, 2022 through Saturday, October 15, 2022. Each kit will contain a styrofoam pumpkin, paint, and stickers to create your own one-of-a-kind jack-o-lantern. Can be made at the library or you can take the kit home. No registration.
- Makerspace activity: Mummy Trick-or-Treat Bag DIY. Monday, October 17, 2022 through Saturday, October 22, 2022. Make your own trick-or-treat bag that looks like a mummy then bring it back the following week to fill it with treats from the library! Can be made at the library or you can take the kit home. No registration.
- Missing Mummy Mystery: Monday, October 24, 2022 through Monday, October 31, 2022. Earn a special treat for finding the missing mummy. While on your search through the Bacon House, stop to craft four projects and select one book to keep.