

# Montessori Center of Downriver - January Newsletter

## The Leadership Year: Why Staying for Kindergarten Is So Important

Do you remember your last year of elementary or middle school? You were finally the oldest at the school! You were, at last, the coveted "big kid" you'd been admiring for years. This is how children feel about their final year of the three-year cycle at a Montessori school.

During their first two years, children in a Montessori class work with the older kids in their class, seeing them as leaders and turning to them for help and looking to them as an example. They also look forward to the day that they get to step into that role. This final year is called the leadership year, or sometimes the capstone year or, more simply, kindergarten, and it is incredibly important. Let's talk about why!

### Reasons to Stay for Kindergarten

#### The Familiar is Family

Unlike at a traditional school, in Montessori schools, children stay with the same teachers through years-long cycles. At the preschool level, children will have the same teacher from ages 3 through 6. If you stay for kindergarten, your child will have a teacher who knows them well and with whom they have a close and comfortable relationship. They will also have many close friends and peers in their class. Children are comfortable in a familiar environment and are able to "hit the ground running"; switching to a new school for kindergarten will require an adjustment period before children can get down to work, whereas staying in the Montessori environment allows children to build on what they've spent the past two years on, leading to both mastery and rapid growth.

#### Leadership Skills for Life

It's not called the leadership year for nothing! Being the oldest in a multi-age class means children get more classroom responsibilities and privileges. They also chance to develop their leadership skills, and being able to help and care for younger children develops confidence and empathy. Not only that, but helping younger children with their work reinforces the older child's knowledge of a subject. Giving children the chance to be the oldest in a multi-age room can also increase their self-esteem--who doesn't like being looked up to and admired?

#### Formative Assessments, Not Standardized Testing

Children in a traditional kindergarten will almost certainly undergo standardized testing, which can be extremely stressful for them. It's also not a great measure of real knowledge, nor does it help children in their learning. In a Montessori school, children receive formative assessments. These are done continuously and naturally as a child receives lessons. Teachers will assess knowledge during learning, and lessons can be changed while happening to match the level the child is at. This is

much more low pressure for children, but also much more useful. This is the type of individual attention that is often missing in a traditional school.

### The Real Reason We Want Your Child to Stay

We have to be honest. We want your child to stay because...we love them! Watching children develop and grow through their three-year cycle is incredible, and it's seeing that growth that drives Montessori teachers to do what they do. If you have more questions about the leadership year, please don't hesitate to contact us.

### Dates to Remember

January 16th: No school. Parent-teacher conferences. If you have not already responded, please be sure to fill out our survey [here](#).

### In the Classroom

#### Ms Ashley's Room

In Ms Ashley's room in January, they will be learning about farms and farm animals!

#### Mrs. Dona's Room

Mrs. Dona's room will begin learning about Antarctica and the Arctic in January. They'll be learning about these habitats, along with their weather and animals and the vehicles used to explore the land.

The teachers in Mrs. Dona's class would also like to let you know that you can bring an extra pair of snow pants to leave at school. They've been practicing putting them on by themselves!

#### Ms Paula's Room

In Ms Paula's room in January, they'll begin studying North America. They'll also be learning about dinosaurs and doing winter activities. They'll also study the artist Paul Cezanne and work on still life art.

#### Mrs. Melissa's Room

In January, Mrs. Melissa's room will begin studying the solar system. They'll also learn about color mixing and primary and secondary colors.

### Local Events and Resources

Gleaners offers food boxes to anyone in need. No registration is necessary, but it is first come, first serve.

City of Wyandotte - Yack  
Arena  
3131 3rd St.

Wyandotte, MI 48192  
01/20/2023 9:00am -  
11:00am

Kennedy Building - Ecorse  
Public Schools

27225 West Outer Drive  
Ecorse, MI 48229

01/10/2023 2:00pm -  
4:00pm

01/24/2023 2:00pm -  
4:00pm

City of Woodhaven  
23101 Hall Rd  
Woodhaven, MI 48183

1/17/2023 9:00am - 11:00am  
1/31/2023 9:00am - 11:00am

1. The Southgate Library is having family PJ story time on January 19th at 7pm.
2. Winter fun at Valade continues with themed weekends! Winter Around the World Weekend is Friday, January 20 through Sunday, January 22 at Robert C. Valade Park. Winter Around the World will feature an international food truck rally and dance performances showcasing a variety of styles and genres by Detroit artists. Don't miss the Lunar New Year Celebration presented by the Michigan Taiwanese American Organization on Sunday from 1-4pm.
3. Jack Frost Jamboree is on January 27 4-9pm and Jan 28th 12-7pm. There will be vendors and crafters, food, entertainment, outdoor races, and kids' activities. Located at the Kennedy Memorial Building, 3240 Ferris Ave, in Lincoln Park.

