

Montessori Center of Downriver - February 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 the leadership 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.

In the Classroom



Mrs. Ashley's Class

In February, Mrs. Ashley's class will be learning about the solar system, including fun facts about each planet.



Mrs. Dona's Class

Mrs. Dona would like to thank everyone for attending parent-teacher conferences! In her class in February, children will be learning about Africa (maps, foods, the people, and animals), presidents, and Valentine's Day (including art and learning about kindness).




Ms Donnette and Ms Mandi's Class

In February, Ms Donnette and Ms Mandi's class will continue learning about South America, including its rainforests, cultures, and foods.

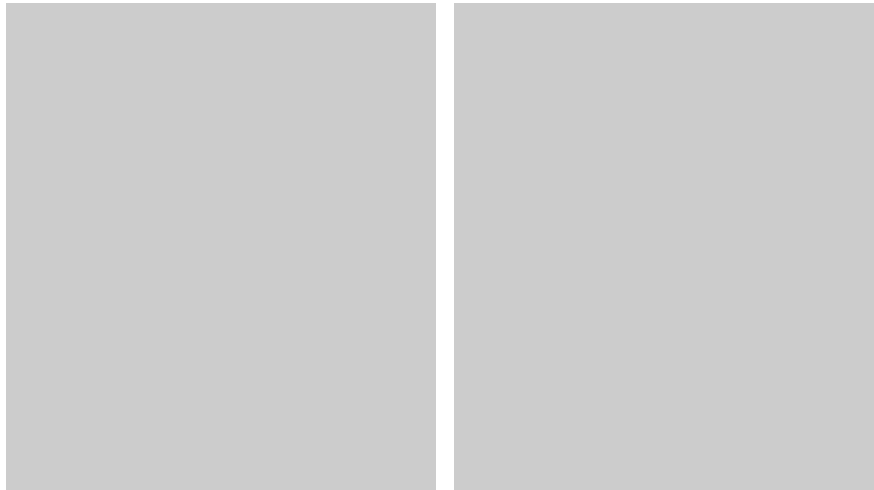


Mrs. Melissa's Class

Mrs. Melissa's class will be learning more about the Earth, exploring ocean animals, and experimenting with colors. They'll be learning how primary colors mixed together create secondary colors.



Norwegians say there's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing, and we agree!



Birthday Snack Ideas

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A FAVORITE SNACK OR MEAL
COOKIES
YOGURT (CAN EVEN BE FROZEN)
VEGGIES AND DIP



MINI CUPCAKES
MINI MUFFINS
FRUIT (WITH OR WITHOUT A DIP)
CRACKERS AND CHEESE



POPCORN
GRAHAM CRACKERS WITH FROSTING/ DIP/NUT BUTTER
MINI DONUTS
PRETZELS

PLEASE NO BIG CUPCAKES OR MUFFINS. AND REMEMBER, THE SNACK DOESN'T NEED TO BE SWEET; IT CAN BE SALTY OR SAVORY! (WE ALSO LOVE SERVING FRUIT WITH SWEET TREATS.)



We love celebrating birthdays! If you'd like to bring in something special, just let us know what and when (you can do so by adding your child's birthday snack to the classroom snack calendar).

Local Events and Resources

Winterfest

Saturday, February 3rd

10:00am-8:00pm

Downtown Trenton

We can't wait for another year of the Downtown Trenton Winterfest!

Things will be a little different than last year; it is also only a one day event but adding more businesses, fun outdoor activities, food, vendors, ice sculptures, live entertainment and more!

Winter Wonderland
Saturday, February 3
1-3pm

Enjoy a Winter Wonderland at Elizabeth Park with hayrides, crafts, bonfire, outdoor dance party, ice carving demos, hikes and nature presentations! The event is free and will be held at Elizabeth Park in Trenton.

Eco Fair
Saturday, February 3
10am-2pm

Who is ready for a free, indoor, family-fun Eco Fair? The Friends of the Detroit River, in partnership with The Detroit Historical Society, are hosting the Shiver on the River at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on
Learn about our natural resources from local organizations and enjoy free caricature drawings, a magic show, live ice carvings and more! No registration is required and admission fees to the museum are waived. It's sure to be a day of fun for the whole family!

Take Your Child to the Library Day!

Saturday, February 3
11:00am-1:00pm
Southgate Library

In celebration of take your child to the library day, we are having a party! Drop in and join us for two hours of music and crafts to kick off a new year of programs at the library!

Lowe's Monthly Craft
Saturday, February 10
10:00am

Chalkboard Message Center

Your mini-DIYer will love this special Valentine's workshop as they build a chalkboard that doubles as a vase. It's the perfect way to say I Love You all year long. [Register here.](#)

Winter at Valade Park

The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is committed to helping visitors embrace winter by extending our great riverfront programming year-round at Robert C. Valade Park with the return of Winter at Valade. Enjoy oversized fires, sleds, s'mores, games, drinks, food, and more. Join us in February for a full schedule of programs and events, including the return of our signature themed weekends, winter wellness activities, and more! View full details on the tabs to the left or scroll down to learn about the themed weekends, and stay tuned for additional updates throughout the season!

Free parking for Winter at Valade is located in the lot at the corner of Chene and Guoin (enter on Guoin). There is additional parking at the Stroh Riverplace Garage and nearby side streets. Please follow all posted parking directional signage and do not park on Atwater Street.

MARDI GRAS AT VALADE | FEB 9-11

Mardi Gras comes to the Detroit Riverfront! Enjoy the best of Caribbean Carnival and a New Orleans style Mardi Gras with Carnival outfits, big heads, steel pan drums and second line parades and more! Stay tuned for more details!

LUNAR NEW YEAR | FEB 23-25

There's no better place to experience winter celebrations from around the globe than on Detroit's international riverfront. Join us for Lunar New Year celebration, featuring an international food truck rally and dance performances showcasing a variety of styles and genres by Detroit artists. Stay tuned for more details!

FIRESIDE FRIDAYS

Join us each Friday beginning in February for a wide range of games, activities and programs for visitors of all ages! Fireside Fridays will feature open mic nights, board game events, trivia and more!

Imagine Cinemas

Don't miss our Winter Kids Series at all locations! Join us for a different movie each week January 20-March 23, 2023. Tickets are \$3 for all ages. Dates and showtimes are subject to change. Limited availability each week. See movies and showtimes [here.](#)

Gleaners

Gleaners offers boxes of food to anyone in need. No income requirements or ID necessary. First come, first serve.

City of Woodhaven

23101 Hall Rd Woodhaven, MI 48183

02/06/2024 9:00am - 11:00am

02/20/2024 9:00am - 11:00am

City of Wyandotte – Yack Arena

3131 3rd Street Wyandotte, MI 48192

02/09/2024 9:00am - 11:00am

02/23/2024 9:00am - 11:00am

Ford Community and Performing Arts Center

15801 Michigan Ave

Dearborn, MI 48126

02/13/2024 9:00am - 11:00am

02/27/2024 9:00am - 11:00am

Kennedy Building - Central Office - Ecorse Public Schools

27225 West Outer Drive

Ecorse, MI 48229

02/13/2024 2:00pm - 4:00pm

02/27/2024 2:00pm - 4:00pm