

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?

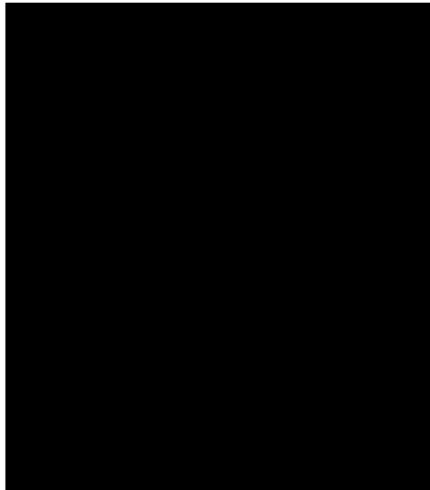
Formative Assessments, Not Standardized Testing

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



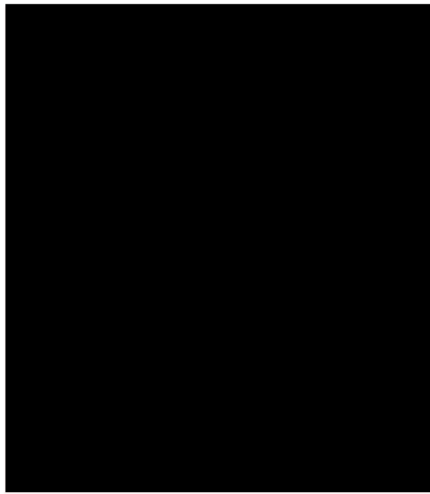
Mrs. Ashley's Class

A child is welcomed to have freedom within limits: limits of safety and what is acceptable in society. Maria Montessori tells us, "Children seem to say 'I do not mind how much you know; I want to know things for myself. I want to have experience in the world and perceive it with my own effort; you keep your knowledge and let me acquire mine.'" Children who are able to explore, make mistakes, and try again based on their own will and desire will be free and independent. We, as Montessori guides, find observation a beautiful tool as we allow the children to struggle and come for help only when asked.



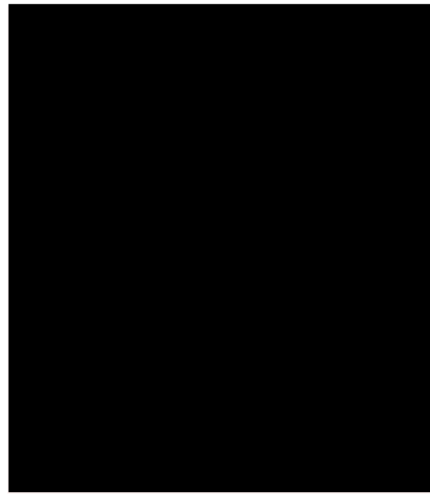
Mrs. Dona and Mrs. Stephanie's Class

In February, Mrs. Stephanie and Mrs. Dona's class will be learning about Abraham Lincoln, continuing their study of the Arctic and Antarctic, and polishing pennies. The class will also focus on kindness, caring for others, and hearts, hearts, hearts!



Ms Mandi and Ms Donnette's Class

In February, Ms Donnette and Ms Mandi's class will focus on care of self and care of the environment. Students will be introduced to many practical life lessons that have to do with taking care of themselves and the environment we're in, like watering plants, shoe polishing, hair combing, and nail polishing.



Mrs. Melissa's Class

This February, Mrs. Melissa's class will be learning about ocean life.

Local Events and Resources

Super Kids Day

Westfield Activity Center

February 8, 10am-2pm

Kids can dress up as favorite hero or princess and join the Trenton community for fun games, activities and lunch! Donate a box of cereal for St. Phillips Food Pantry if you can.

Winter Wonderland

Elizabeth Park Trenton

February 8, 1-4pm

Enjoy a Winter Wonderland at Elizabeth Park with hayrides, crafts, bonfire, outdoor dance party, ice carving demos, hikes and nature presentations! All free.

Winter Around the World

Robert C. Valade Park

February 14-16

There's no better place to experience winter celebrations from around the globe than on Detroit's international riverfront February 14 – 16. Join us for Winter Around the World featuring a Lunar New Year celebration on Sunday, February 16. There will be an international food truck rally and dance performances showcasing a variety of styles and genres by Detroit artists. [Schedule coming soon.](#)

Lincoln Park Chocolate Walk

Ikaros Hall 1677 Fort Street

Feb 15, 12pm

Visit all participating businesses and receive a sweet treat this Valentine's Day weekend. Visit all to be put in a drawing to win the Grand Prize Basket! Register on the day of at the Ikaros Hall 1677 Fort Street (next door to Park Restaurant).

Magic Show

Allen Park Community Center Gym

February 23, 1pm
Free admission!

Detroit Institute of Arts

General admission to the DIA is free for members and residents of Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne counties.

Drop-in Workshop: Wrist & Ankle Rattles

February 7, 6-8:30pm

February 8, 12-4pm

February 9, 12-4pm

Use leather, fabric, beads, wire, and metallic markers to create a whimsical & wearable musical instrument.

Drop-in Workshop: Collage Portraits

February 14, 6-8:30pm

February 15, 12-4pm

February 16, 12-4pm

Use fabric, paper, and other materials to create a unique collage portrait influenced by artists in the DIA collection like Benny Andrews, Betye Saar, and Mickalene Thomas.

Drop-in Workshop: Adinkra Cloth

February 21, 6-8:30pm

February 22, 12-4pm

February 23, 12-4pm

Adinkra cloth is hand-printed fabric made in Ghana in West Africa. Learn more about this art form and create a small banner using cloth and handmade adinkra stamps.

Wyandotte Library

Kid's Crafts

Hearts, Bears, Penguins OH MY ...and craft! Ms. Joann has a new kid's craft every Tuesday this month. Make one while supplies last.

Race the Space: Hot Wheels

February 26, 10am- 7:30pm

Turn the Multipurpose Room into the Bacon Dragway using the library's collection of Hot Wheels! Vroom

Gleaners

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

City of Woodhaven (Drive-Up Only)

23101 Hall Rd

02/04/2025 9:00am - 11:00am

02/18/2025 9:00am - 11:00am

City of Wyandotte - Yack Arena (Drive-Up Only)

3131 3rd Street

02/07/2025 9:00am - 10:30am

02/21/2025 9:00am - 10:30am

Ford Community and Performing Arts Center (Drive-Up Only)

15801 Michigan Ave

02/11/2025 9:00am - 11:00am

02/25/2025 9:00am - 11:00am

Kennedy Building - Central Office - Ecorse Public Schools (Drive-Up Only)

27225 West Outer Drive

02/11/2025 2:00pm - 4:00pm

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