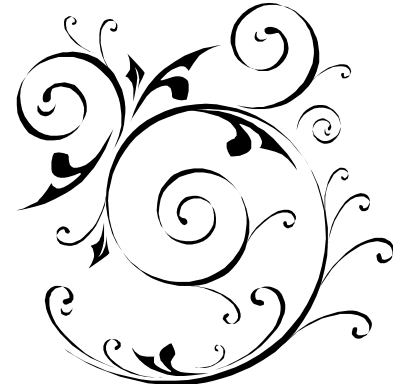


Questions Frequently Asked About Montessori



1. Why should I send my child to preschool?

Most educators and psychologists today agree that the single most important period in the development of a person's intelligence occurs between birth and age five. A child's mind is extremely absorbent and his/her curiosity is at a peak during these early years. When properly nourished and stimulated, the child's mind forms patterns for learning that serve him/her well through life. The Montessori system of preschool education has proven to be one of the most effective and fastest growing methods to guide a child through these critical years.

2. What is the difference between day care, nursery schools, and preschools?

Day care centers are generally for the purpose of caring for children on an all day basis. Nursery schools are generally experiences in socialization and play. Preschools are oriented toward education experience combined with socialization and play.

3. How is a Montessori preschool different from other preschools?

In most preschools the children are taught educational concepts in a group by a teacher. In a Montessori preschool the children learn concepts spontaneously when they work independently with the many materials in the environment.

4. What is the Montessori method of education?

The Montessori method of education is basically a unique approach to learning. Rather than "teaching" the child concepts, an environment is designed to stimulate the child's interest and facilitate his/her understanding and learning capacities spontaneously - with careful guidance from the Directress.

5. What is the purpose of the Montessori method?

The main purpose of the Montessori method is to develop an environment where the child can unfold spontaneously and manifest the greater person within. According to Maria Montessori, "the child is the father of the man." As the child begins to develop this inner self, his/her love of life and learning expands continuously.

6. Who started the Montessori method?

Dr. Maria Montessori, over 100 years ago, was Italy's first woman medical doctor. Using her scientific background, she began observing children in the children's houses of Rome. Based on her unbiased observations, she developed unique materials, a child-centered environment, and was one of the first persons to revolutionize educational thought by stressing respect for the child, freedom of expression, self-education, and training through use of movement and senses.

7. What is in a Montessori classroom?

The Montessori classroom is a child-sized world. Whatever is in the world outside can be incorporated meaningfully in the Montessori classroom. To a child, the world is unmanageable - it is too big, too complex, and too confusing. By careful selection of materials by the Directress, an environment is set up that allows the child a place to explore life on a level he/she can understand. The materials or exercises are designed to stimulate independent exploration. This

prepared environment entices the child to proceed at his/her own pace from simple activities to more complex ones. Through this process, the child's natural curiosity is satisfied and he/she begins to experience the joy of discovering the world about him/her. Materials and curriculum center around Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math, Geography, History, Science, Art, and Music.

8. How do children interact in the environment?

As the children develop their sense of pride in their work, a feeling of confidence, well being and joy begins to manifest itself in the child. A "new child" is born. A classroom of Montessori children is a joy to watch. There seems to be a spirit of respect, love and cooperation among the children that is not found too often.

9. What is the role of the Montessori teacher?

The Montessori teacher is called a Directress because she facilitates the classroom activity. She carefully plans the environment in the interests of the children and she helps the children progress from one activity to the next. She is trained to deal with each child individually, allowing the child to choose from many activities within his/ her range of ability. She stands back while a child is working and allows the child the satisfaction of discovery.

10. With all the freedom, isn't there confusion?

The concept of freedom in the classroom is a freedom within limits. A child is allowed to work freely so long as he/she does not disturb others. Actually, the children having the freedom to follow their interests are generally happy and busily involved in their work.

11. What is the best age to start a child?

Maria Montessori outlined various periods of "sensitivity". During these periods, a child is more capable of and interested in learning specific concepts. At age 2 ½- 3-½ a special sense of order, concentration, coordination, and independence begin to emerge. This time is ideal to begin a child's training in Montessori as he/she is at the perfect period to build a strong foundation for future learning. The preschool Montessori program (curriculum and environment) is designed to accommodate the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of children ages 3 to 6 years.