



Chestnut Grove

Montessori Children's House

Community Handbook

Thank you so much for being a part of Chestnut Grove Montessori Children's House. We look forward to working collaboratively with you in the coming years to create the best possible experience for child and for your family. We hope that you find the following information comprehensive, but if any questions arise, please don't hesitate to ask!

A (Very) Brief Overview of Montessori History and Pedagogy

Dr. Maria Montessori, the first Italian female physician, began her innovative approach to early childhood education in 1906. The method that resulted is based on her careful observation of the natural tendencies of young children. Dr. Montessori was not fond of the term 'Montessori Method', as it seems to imply a philosophy created by her, when in fact it was 'the child' who created the method – she simply observed it. Dr. Montessori felt education should be life promoting, life enhancing, and should enable a person to reach their personal and social potential as a human being.

Within the Montessori classroom, the 'guide' (the trained adult, or teacher) facilitates the child's development by providing a carefully prepared learning environment designed to stimulate each child's interest, in accordance to universal 'human tendencies', as well as the specific 'sensitive periods' that are present in childhood. The adult's task is to remove obstacles that may be in the way of the child's natural development, as well as connect the child to materials and learning experiences that support the child's task of self-creation.

Montessori education, at the core, is about understanding and supporting the natural process of childhood – it is a *respectful way of being with children*. By sharing this experience with other children on a daily basis, the individual child is able to develop themselves within the context of a living community. The hope is that the child will internalize a love of learning, confidence in themselves, as well as the ability and desire to function collaboratively and peacefully within a community. The principles, methods, and materials used in Montessori communities have been scientifically supported, and continue to be verified through contemporary research (see <http://www.public-montessori.org/resources/does-it-work-what->

[research-says-about-montessori-and-student-outcomes](#) for more information on current research).

For more information about Montessori education in general, please visit the following sites:

<https://montessori-nw.org/about-montessori-education>

<http://aidtolife.org/index.html>

<http://www.mariamontessori.com/learn/montessori-overview/>

as well as the Glossary of Montessori Terms that you will find at the end of this handbook.

The A-Z Guide to Chestnut Grove Montessori Children's House

Absences:

It is important that all children attend regularly. This consistency benefits the individual child, but also the community as a whole. The absence of a friend is always a source of inquiry, and can cause the other children to feel unsettled. That said, illness and family trips do happen, so please just let us know ahead of time if possible. Sending a quick email or text the day of is sufficient, though advance notice is appreciated if possible (see also Illness).

Arrival:

We will begin our time together at 8:45. If you happen to arrive before 8:45, please wait outside of the gate for a staff person to greet you at 8:45.

In keeping with Montessori Philosophy, based upon the understanding that children are driven to work towards functional independence, please allow your child to enter as independently as possible. They are expected to, are quite capable of, and after their first day, know how to hang up their own coats and put away their own belongings. Most families say goodbye at the gate or on the porch. A quick hug and kiss makes this transition easiest for your child, along with your assurance that you will return at the expected time ("Bye, I'll see you after you have lunch" or "After nap", or something else that your child will understand). Having a set routine/goodbye ritual is helpful to most children.

If your child is upset, or hesitant, you are welcome to stay with them for as long as you would like to outside, on the front porch or in the entry foyer, but please do not enter the classroom work space with them. Though we know that lengthy goodbyes can end up making your child more upset and confused, we also know first-hand how difficult it is for parents to walk away from your crying child. If you do decide that it is best to leave while your child is still upset, or if your work schedule demands it, please be assured that we will immediately comfort and reassure your child. We will also send you a text later in the morning to tell you how your child is doing, if you would like for us to do so. You are welcome to check up on your child via text throughout the day. We have experienced that most children who are upset calm down within seconds after a parent

departs (though you might not recover so quickly!). Our goal is for everyone to have said goodbye and be settled by 9:00 so that we can begin our work cycle.

Arriving on time at 8:45 allows for this all to happen as smoothly as possible, and for us to give your child as much support as they need. After 8:45 we will be involved in work with an individual child or small group (see also Late Arrival).

In order to show respect for your child, we will refrain from discussing their particulars in the presence of other families, nor will we be discussing behavior or any other specific issues in front of the child them self. If there is information that would be helpful for us to know, please send us a text or email in the morning before school starts. When casually sharing information about a child in their presence, we will use phrasing such as “Rosemary, would you like to tell your Papa about the new painting activity that you did today?” Please feel free to do the same if there is general, rather than confidential, information that you would like to share.

Birthdays:

If your child wishes to do so, we would love to celebrate their birthday with them! For several reasons, *school birthday celebrations will not include edible ‘treats’ of any kind.*

In the Montessori Primary classroom, our celebration traditionally consists of a short ritual where we light a candle (representing the sun), and have the birthday child walk around the ‘sun’ carrying a small globe. We have a special mat that shows the seasons that the children love unrolling for this special occasion. As the earth goes around the sun once each year, we sing a short song and share a photograph of the child at each age (birth, one, two, and so on...).

While many children love this ritual, and love being the center of their community’s attention for a time, of course some children do not. Thus, when your child’s birthday approaches, you can simply ask them if they would like to bring some photographs in to share with the other children or not. When the time comes to do this sharing, they will be free to choose to share in the above mentioned ‘formal’/whole group way, or if they would prefer, in a smaller group setting or just one on one with another child or adult.

If your child wishes to bring in photographs to share near their birthday, please send a photograph near birth, and one for each year after that (including or not including one representing the child’s ‘new’ age). Please also feel free to include a note telling us some personal anecdotes about your child at each age (for example, “when Phin was two, he learned to ride a balance bike”, or “Rosemary was born at home, on a Sunday”, or whatever else you and your child find relevant to share).

Clothing, shoes, and other ‘stuff’:

Please send your child in clothing and shoes each morning that allow for the greatest level of independence possible. Clothing and shoes should be free of closures (zippers, buttons, snaps) that your child has not yet mastered, pants should be open on the bottom of the legs rather than elasticized. Snug leggings and tights can be difficult for our younger children to manage, and are best avoided until they have mastery of removing or putting them on.

As we will be exploring outdoors in all weather, as well as working with various art media, and enjoying lunch together, your child’s clothing is likely to get soiled. Please do not send them in

anything that you would mind them getting dirty. Clothing that is changed out of at school is laundered here along with our other classroom laundry each evening.

In general, the following items will need to be kept at school:

A pair of 'indoor shoes'. The children will change into these shoes each morning upon arriving to school. Crocs or similar shoes that are able to be washed and dried easily make great indoor shoes.

1-2 complete changes of clothing. Please rotate these items seasonally, as well as checking to ensure proper size. You are welcome to come in and check the contents of your child's cubby basket anytime.

A raincoat.

A warmer layer (fleece) for cold days, a winter coat/mittens/hat for very cold days, a sun hat for sunny days. Please rotate these items seasonally. **Please label every item, including socks, with a fabric pen (initials are fine)**

(see also Outdoor Time)

For children who have not yet mastered toilet use:

2 full days worth of cotton underwear. Thick cotton 'training pants' do not always allow the child to feel wet, so, though they are conveniently absorbent, they don't provide that feedback. For learning purposes, regular thickness is best, but please don't feel the need to buy something special for school. Whatever you plan to use at home is fine.

Communication between Home and School:

It is vital for us to have free and open communication, so that we can work as an effective team in supporting your child. We understand that our role in your child's education is secondary to your role as the primary educator and advocate in your child's life. There are several ways that we keep you informed and also several ways that you can keep us informed about your child.

- As mentioned in 'Arrival' – please text us anytime during school hours, or send an email outside of school hours.
- Please join the Chestnut Grove Montessori Children's House invitation-only Facebook group, so that you can view photos and video of the children.
- **The best way to reach us during school hours is via text (503-281-4521). Outside of school hours, *please do NOT text*, but please do feel free to email (info@chestnutgrovemontessori.com). Emails are checked and replied to each morning.**
- You will have the opportunity to come in twice a year for fall and spring conferences, though meetings can be scheduled any time throughout the year at either party's request.
- Our community is open for you to come for a scheduled observation anytime, please come! (see also Observations).

Conferences:

We have conference days every six months. You are strongly encouraged to come for an observation visit *at least* twice per year, preferably in the month preceding conferences (see also Observations). It is fine for one or all parents to attend each conference, but each family is allotted only one slot during our conference days. It is important for all interested members of the child's parenting team to attend the same conference. If you have any specific concerns or questions, please let me know ahead of time so that I can prepare and observe your child with regards to your specific concern. Likewise, if I have any concerns I will let you know as they arise. Conferences are a time to check in with one another about what is going well and to set goals for the next six months. Childcare is not provided on conference day, though I can help you arrange consecutive time slots with another family if you would like to share childcare with one another.

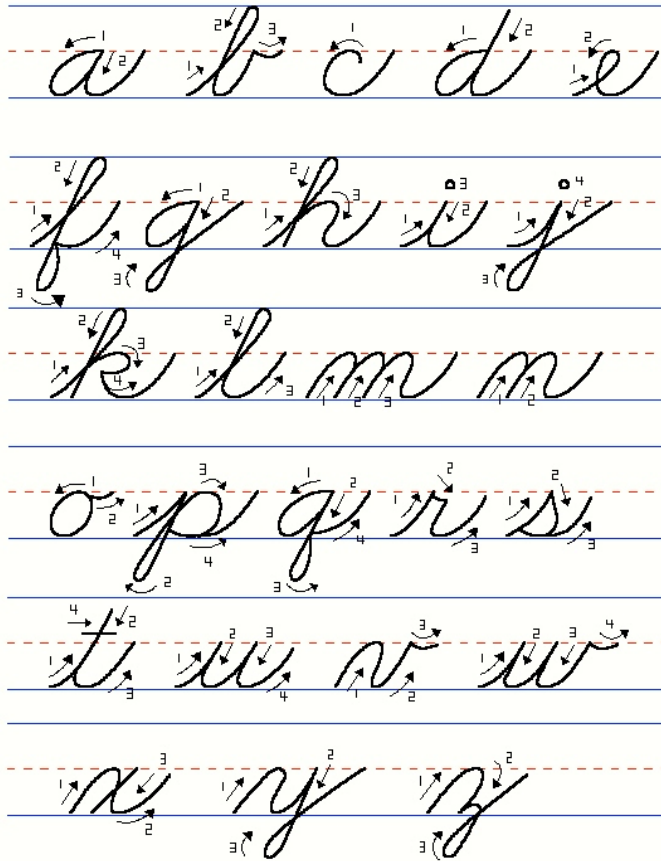
Cursive Handwriting:

We, like many other educational professionals, believe that 'cursive first' is the developmentally appropriate method of modeling writing for children under the age of six. All children starting from around the age of two-and-a-half scribble using broad, loopy, continuous motions that are similar to the motions used in cursive writing. By introducing cursive instead of print (first through the tracing of Sandpaper Letters), Montessori guides are matching the child's natural movements rather than the unnatural, straight marks needed in printing.

Cursive writing appeals to the child's innate tendency towards perfecting his/her movement as well as refining fine motor skills, manual dexterity, and hand-eye coordination. In addition, cursive letters are easy for children to learn, and difficult for them to reverse. Whereas the print letters "b" and "d" are easily confused and reversed, the cursive letters "b" and "d" are much clearer. When the time comes, children are also better able to read cursive words because they are joined together creating a clear distinction as to where a word starts and ends. Print writing does not provide this control of error.

It has also been observed that children who begin writing in cursive have little to no difficulty deciphering other forms of writing, including handwritten printing and words printed electronically. Alternatively, children who begin with printing can have a more difficult time transitioning to cursive. With a foundation in cursive, children are able to adapt to any writing style with ease. For more information please read this article: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/memory-medic/201308/biological-and-psychology-benefits-learning-cursive>

If your child is observing you writing by hand at home, or if he or she asks you to write a certain letter, please follow the following guideline (see also Phonics).



Daily Schedule:

We follow the same general pattern of activity each day, but transition times are not exact but depend more on the day/weather/mood of the group or individual children.

8:45 – 9:00 This is our arrival window. We hope that all children have arrived by 9:00 so that we can begin our work cycle. As children arrive they enter the classroom as they are ready.

9:00 – 12:00 Our Work Cycle:

Once everyone is settled, the children work independently or in small groups on various activities including: spoken language, reading, writing, math, and the development and refinement of the senses (through the use of visual, tactile, auditory, etc., sensorial materials). Children also work with various Practical Life activities that include Care of the Environment (sweeping, dusting, arranging flowers, polishing, etc.), Care of Self (sewing, food preparation, and practicing fastening buttons are examples) as well as movement activities (balancing on the line, yoga). Various art media are also available, as well as daily experience with music (singing, rhythm activities, work with the bells, listening to music).

Snack is offered throughout the morning. The children are free to work indoors or out with any of our activities. At the end of our work cycle, children help to

prepare our space for lunchtime by straightening up our room and setting their tables for lunch.

- 12:00 – 1:00 Children eat lunch, practicing various skills associated with meals including serving themselves an appropriate amount of food; and practicing table manners such as keeping ones napkin in ones lap, using a utensil, speaking with an empty mouth, having polite conversation, etc. The children eat together at group tables, with candles and flower arrangements beautifying the experience. Children wash their dishes and clean their spaces at the conclusion of lunch. Our youngest community members begin their lunch and cleanup first so that they are able to transition to rest time as needed.
- 1:00 – 3:00 Our Afternoon Work Cycle: The children who are ready to be awake all day choose activities in the same manner as the morning work cycle, working independently or in small groups indoors or out. Snack is available throughout the afternoon. Napping children are awoken by 2:30, if they have not awoken on their own. Children assist in readying the classroom for the next day at the end of our work cycle.
- 3:00 – 3:15 Children depart

Departure:

Your child will be ready to leave during a fifteen minute pick-up window, and you are welcome to come at any point during those 15 minutes. If you need to pick your child up earlier than 3:00, please let us know ahead of time so that we can ensure that they are ready. Children have end of the day clean-up activities that they are responsible for so it is helpful to know ahead of time if they need to depart early. At the end of the day, it is our expectation that everyone will have departed (left the property) by 3:15 at the latest so that the adults can prepare and plan for the next day, and depart ourselves. If you or your child enjoy a more leisurely departure experience, please take that into consideration when planning your pickup timing. We love your children but also enjoy our home as a private space outside of school hours, and deeply value our own family time, as I'm sure you do as well. Please do not remain on site after 3:15. A late pick-up fee of \$5 per minute will begin accruing at 3:16. Excessive late pick-ups will result in termination of your child's enrollment.

Discipline:

The word 'discipline' in a Montessori context refers to 'self-discipline' or the ability to control and adapt one's own behavior (see Glossary of Montessori Terms at the end of this handbook, specifically; development of the will, discipline from within, deviations, normalization, and obedience). Discipline is not something we will do *to* your child, or impose upon them. Discipline is something that we will assist your child in developing for themselves, at their own pace, by providing them with choices and allowing them to experience natural consequences.

* A note about 'consequences' – we believe in the valuable learning opportunities provided by *natural* consequences. An example is that if your child decides to wear water permeable shoes, after it has been suggested to be a day that boots are more appropriate, and then jumps in a puddle, your child will experience the feeling of wet feet. Nothing needs to be said or done by an

adult for it to become apparent to the child that they chose the 'wrong' footwear. A 'consequence' is never something that is provided or imposed upon your child by an adult.

For more on this distinction, as well as a full discussion on the reasons to avoid rewards (including verbal praise; see also Praise) as well as punishments, we encourage you to read 'Unconditional Parenting' by Alfie Kohn (we have copies you can borrow). You are also welcome to check out our school copy of a DVD of the same title. Here is a blog post briefly describing some of Kohn's suggestions for parents:

<https://www.alfiekohn.org/blogs/parents/>

Collaborative Problem Solving is also a resource/strategy that you may want to explore –

<https://thinkkids.org/parents>

<https://www.livesinthebalance.org/about-cps>

<https://www.ohsu.edu/school-of-medicine/child-and-adolescent-psychiatry/collaborative-problem-solving>

Here at Chestnut Grove, when your child would benefit from external guidance, we will rely on the following strategies:

Grace and Courtesy – In a small group of 3-5 children, at a neutral time, we role-play and practice appropriate social behaviors and graces (saying excuse me if someone is in your way, asking for a hug, how to tell if a toy/activity is available for use, walking instead of running indoors, or really any other lacking skill that is observed).

Re-direction – When a child is engaged in unsafe or disruptive behavior, we will direct the child to activities that allow him/her to be successful. For example, if we see a child wanting to climb onto a table and jump off of it, we would suggest jumping off the steps outside where there is more space for jumping safely. If we see that a child is exploring the act of throwing, we would offer them a soft ball. If a child's physical energy is 'big' and causing a disturbance in the classroom, we would invite them to play a movement game (like 'head, shoulders, knees and toes' for example), or to vigorously scrub a table, making lots of suds and using large motor skill...

Positive Phrasing – Directions and limits are modeled in a positive manner. Rather than telling a child what s/he cannot do ("don't run") we remind them of what they can do ("you can walk" or "you can run as soon as we get outside"). We strongly recommend making positive phrasing a habit when speaking to your own child. It works extremely well (it really almost feels like a magic trick!) "We can go to the park as soon as you have your shoes on", "You are welcome to have more noodles when your plate is empty (of broccoli)", "Let me know when you have your pajamas on and are ready to read books, I'll be in the kitchen".

Choices – Age-appropriate choices are essential for the development of the will and self-discipline. In the classroom, your child has the freedom to make choices as to the nature of their own activity, as well as how long to stay with their activity. For this reason, we limit 'whole group' activities such as 'circle time' (we don't assume that every child would wish to do the very same thing at the very same time) – though we do sing songs, read stories, and play games in smaller groups of 3-5 children frequently throughout the day. If it is clear that a child is resistant to doing something ('cleaning up' for example when it is getting near time to leave) we would give a choice of two or more acceptable actions "Would you like to do it by yourself or would you like help"; "Would you like to hang your painting up first or wash out the paint dishes"; "We can clean this up

together, which part would you like to do”, and so on...You can do this at home very easily as well: “Which kind of green vegetable shall we have for dinner”, “It’s chilly out today, are you going to wear your yellow sweater or the blue one”....

Consistency – Consistent actions and routines are used so that children know what to expect. We always put our work away first before choosing a new activity. We always take our new work from the shelf (rather than off someone else’s table or mat).

Modeling – Adults and older children serve as models of appropriate behavior.

Natural Consequences – Experiencing logical consequences helps a child learn from their actions. We use glass bowls for snack so that children learn to be careful and not break them (when they do inevitably break, we ask the children to remain where they are, in a neutral tone, and then carefully clean up the pieces) – At a neutral time (not right after a bowl has been broken), we would demonstrate how to carry a bowl carefully with two hands (this would be considered a ‘Grace and Courtesy’ presentation).

Early Learning Division (E.L.D.):

Chestnut Grove Montessori Children’s House is licensed through the Oregon Early Learning Division as a Certified Family Childcare Home. Rules that we are subject to can be found here:

<https://oregonearlylearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RF-Rule-Book-RF-200.pdf>

Our Licensing Specialist is Willie Davis, and can be reached at (503) 329-7726, or willie.j.davis@state.or.us)

Emergency Plan:

The following plan will be implemented in case of an emergency. Familiarization with the Emergency Plan is shared with all staff and potential substitute staff during their orientation. All caregivers and children shall practice at least one aspect of the emergency plan, as described in OAR 414-350-0050(7)(c), at least once per month.

Evacuating the home shall be practiced at least eight times per year.

Family Child Care Written Emergency Evacuation Plan

- Parents will be notified via text in the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, as soon as possible following the event.
- In the event of an evacuation due to fire, hazards, or natural disaster, we will call to the children to gather outside by shouting ‘Everyone Outside!’ as practiced during our emergency drills. We will take with us our attendance sheet, phone, and backpack containing emergency supplies (emergency contact forms, first aid kit, and other emergency supplies such as non-perishable food, water, and emergency blankets).

During school hours this backpack is kept in our entryway and the attendance roster and phone are kept on top of the cubbies.

- We will then move into the yard away from the building as needed and take attendance to ensure that everyone is present. We will assess the need to evacuate outside of the schoolyard at this time.
- If we need to evacuate outside of the schoolyard, we will walk to the Sellwood-Moreland Library on the corner of 13th and SE Bidwell, calling 911 if warranted.
- Chestnut Grove staff will stay with the children until they are reunified with their families in the event of an emergency.
- If we have to shelter in place or lockdown our facility we will: remain inside and lock the doors. We will call 911 if warranted. If further security or supplies are needed we may move the group into the O'Hern's main home across the deck, as the classroom has been purposely been created with lots of open windows and visibility for our daily use. If this happens we will bring our attendance roster, phone, and backpack containing emergency contacts and supplies.
- If we have children in the community with special needs or chronic medical condition, we will create a plan upon their enrollment as to their particular needs during an evacuation. At this time, we do not have any children with special needs or chronic medical conditions enrolled.
- **During an earthquake we will follow these guidelines:**
 - *If you are inside.....stay inside*
 - Direct children to move away from windows, shelves, and heavy objects or furniture that may tip over
 - Have children take cover under tables with their backs to windows.
 - Staff members and children should drop to knees, clasp both hands behind neck, bury face in arms, making body as small as possible, close eyes and cover with forearms. Children will be instructed to 'DROP, COVER and HOLD' as practiced during our earthquake drills.
 - Staff members should not attempt to run to children to assist them during an earthquake, instead should take immediate cover and call to the child with directions and reassurance.
 - Remain in sheltered position for at least one minute.
 - Evacuate building after shaking stops.
 - *If you are outside.....stay outside*

- Direct children clear of buildings.
 - Keep children together as a group
 - Have the children assume the same safety position as if indoors (on knees, head tucked under arms, body small as possible).
 - *After Shaking Stops*
 - Building evacuation following an earthquake is necessary due to the possibility of secondary hazards, such as explosions and fire.
 - Take first aid kit (located in latched cabinet in bathroom), emergency information (blue binder), attendance roster, and cell phone outside with you.
 - Do not return to building until it is declared safe for occupancy.
- **In the event of a fire we will follow these guidelines:**
 - Remain calm, and keep children calm.
 - Gather children quickly and quietly; ensure that everyone is accounted for (head count/check bathroom).
 - Quickly and quietly exit the building, bringing attendance roster, phone, and backpack containing emergency supplies.
 - Walk to a safe place and call 911.
 - Do not reenter the building until given authorization by the fire department.
 - In the event of a major fire we will take refuge at the Sellwood-Moreland Library on the corner of SE Bidwell St. and 13th Ave.
- **In the event of an Acute Illness of a Child, we will follow these guidelines:**
 - Isolate the child by inviting them to rest on a mat in the foyer.

- Check the child's temperature (thermometer kept in the emergency backpack in the foyer along with first aid kit and other supplies).
- If the child's temperature is within normal range (below 100), have the child rest in the designated area, and observe the child for changes. If no change in 30 minutes, text parent.
- If the child's temperature is above 100, text parent to pick child up. If parent is unable to be reached, call designated emergency contact.
- Keep child isolated, with supervision, until parent arrives.
- Do not give any medication without written permission from parent.

Emergency Contacts:

There may be occasions during the day when parents or guardians must be contacted. It is imperative that we are immediately informed of any changes in home or work addresses and phone numbers. In addition, you are required to provide contact information for at least two other adults for the school to contact when parents are unexpectedly unreachable (list of emergency contacts on your enrollment application). Please revise this list as needed. At a minimum you will be asked to revise yearly upon re-enrollment. This is also where you can designate others who are permitted to pick your child up from school on an occasional or regular basis.

Facebook:

Chestnut Grove Montessori Children's House maintains an invitation-only Facebook group. The page can only be viewed by approved members.

We find that this forum is a quick and easy way to share photos and video of what goes on here at Chestnut Grove. We hope that you enjoy using the page.

If you would prefer not to have your child's photos uploaded to the page, you are welcome to indicate that preference on your Enrollment Agreement. If you wish to change this preference at any time, please just let us know.

Children are not named/tagged, by us, on the Facebook page. ***Please extend the same courtesy to one another when posting your own photos from outings/gatherings/parties.***

Goodbye Ceremonies:

When a child leaves our community, the children gather to wish them well. We have a basket of special river rocks (with chestnut leaves painted on them) that the child can choose one from as a keepsake. We sit in a circle and the child who is saying goodbye can tell us a bit about what their next school community etc. might be (like birthdays, feel free to send a notecard with your child if they want to share specific information). Some children might prefer not to say very much, some

will have a lot to say. We pass the rock around so that everyone has a chance to hold it. I invite the children to 'make wishes' for the person or just think about them while they are holding a rock. Some children are moved to speak and say what they might particularly like about the child or just tell them they'll be missed, or wish them good luck. The ceremony ends when the rock makes its way all the way around.

Graduation:

Children are considered to have 'graduated' from Montessori Primary once they complete their 'kindergarten year'. The children of that cohort will be invited to plan their own activities and/or celebrations to commemorate this rite of passage into the 'second plane of development', as Montessori called the second 6 years of childhood. Physical changes and intellectual shifts take place around the child's 6th birthday, which indicates their readiness to leave the Primary environment. Activities and celebrations may include the entire school community or may just involve those particular children, and this will be at the discretion of each graduating class of 'kindergarteners'. The intention is to allow the children to pass through this milestone in ways that are most meaningful for them. (see Kindergarten).

Holiday Celebrations:

We understand that holidays are a part of our culture, and may also be very important to your family. We also acknowledge that holidays can be a time of disruption, over-excitement, confusion and anxiety for some children.

Here at Chestnut Grove, we notice seasonal changes in many ways. We experience and discuss the change in weather. We focus our snacks and lunches on seasonal foods. Our art activities often have a seasonal component (leaf rubbing in the fall, a snowflake cutting extension in the winter, sunprints in the summer, and so on). Though we are specifically asking you *not* to send your child in a costume to school on Halloween, we may carve a pumpkin together and roast the seeds for snack on that day. *Rather than each child (and parent!) being required to craft Valentine's Day cards at home, we will supply various 'themed' art media for the children to make cards for others here at school, if they wish to do so. Please do not send other Valentine's to school.*

We encourage children to share their own particular cultural holidays and festivities with us (see Sharing). You are also more than welcome to organize and host a seasonal or celebratory get-together for the school community any time! (see Social Events).

Illness:

If your child is presenting with any of the following symptoms, they are required to stay home from school:

- Diarrhea: more than 1 watery stool or 1 bloody stool, if not caused by dietary changes, medications, or passing hard stool.
- Pink or red conjunctiva (whites of the eyes) with white or yellow mucous draining from the eye.

- A fever of 100 degrees F or more.
- Body rash, especially with fever, itching, sores, or changes in behavior.
- Sore throat with fever or swollen glands in the neck.
- Severe cough.
- Difficulty breathing or abnormal wheezing.
- Complaints of severe pain.
- Sick appearance and not feeling well: unusually tired, pale, not hungry, confused or irritable, or not being able to keep up with program activities or requiring more attention than can be provided without compromising the health and safety of other children in care.

Your child may return to school once they have been well (or on prescribed medication such as antibiotics) for 24 to 48 hours. *This time begins when the last symptom disappears and extends for a full 24 - 48 hours from that time.* **For Vomiting and/or Diarrhea specifically, please keep your child home for 48 hours since the last incident.**

In addition, please notify us if your child has been diagnosed with any type of contagious illness (other than a cold), as we are required to post the illness and symptoms for other parents to look for (we will of course, not post your child's name).

Even if your child is not presenting with symptoms *requiring* exclusion, but is simply not feeling well, is beginning a cold, etc., it will benefit the community as a whole if your child stays home. The common cold is most contagious during the first 3 – 4 days when symptoms are first present, so all of us will benefit if children who are mildly ill do not attend. That said, we understand that parents have to work, and sometimes you must send your child with a runny nose. Here at school, we will focus a great deal on effective hand washing, nose blowing, as well as covering our coughs and sneezes.

* If your child displays any of the above-mentioned symptoms while they are in our care, we will call you and ask that you pick your child up. If we cannot reach you in a timely fashion, we will call one of the people designated as an emergency contact on your enrollment application. Please remember that if your child is sent home, they must not return to school until they have been well (fever and other symptom free) for a full 24 - 36 hours.

(see also Medication)

Injury:

Every effort will be made to ensure that your child is not injured in any way while in our care. That said, bumps and bruises are a natural part of childhood. If your child is injured at school, you will receive a form indicating where on your child's body they sustained injury, how it occurred, and in what way your child was treated and comforted.

Please sign this form, indicating that you have read it, and then leave it here with us to keep on file. A copy can be made for you by request.

Please also note that part of your child's Montessori experience includes the use of real and breakable objects, as well as functional tools (such as scissors or sewing needles, as the children are ready for them). There are a few reasons for using these types of objects in the classroom. First, we strive to introduce a 'control of error' within each activity so that the children can learn to monitor their own success, rather than needing to look outward for it. Seeing a broken bowl on the floor is an example of a 'control of error'. Within the classroom, the sound of something falling to the floor and breaking is, at certain parts of the year, a common occurrence. The children quickly come to understand that they are to 'freeze' when they hear this sound, and that an adult will quickly come to sweep up the broken object. Later, at a 'neutral' time, we will practice again how to carefully carry the bowl, or other fragile object, so that it stays safe (an example of a 'lesson in grace and courtesy'). Children are never shamed or scolded for breaking objects, and are thus able to develop an attitude of 'friendliness with error', while simultaneously learning to further control their movements. Secondly, we believe that children prefer to handle objects that are made of natural materials, and that they are able to further develop their aesthetic sense through the use of beautiful things. Thirdly, we feel that it is important for your child to feel that they are capable, and to develop their independence, and therefore being given tools that work properly is an essential part of their work to develop themselves.

In the classroom, we take the utmost care to ensure the safety of your child when using these objects and tools, and children are rarely injured – in part because they are not shown a 'lesson' or 'presentation' with a particular object or tool until they are felt to be ready for them. Please let us know if you have any questions at all about the tools and breakable objects that your child is currently using while in our care.

Immunizations:

We will review your child's record in January (using the Alert Immunization Information System) and contact you if there are any immunizations that are not up to date. By law, we are required to exclude children from school whose immunizations are not up to date by the third Wednesday in February.

Non-medical exemptions:

Oregon law allows for a non-medical exemption.

There are two ways to claim this exemption. You can talk to your health care provider and get a Vaccine Education Certificate. Or, you can watch an online education module and print a Vaccine Education Certificate.

1. Talk to your health care provider.

After talking with your health care provider, s/he can give you a signed Vaccine Education Certificate

OR:

2. Watch an online education module.

Watch the [Vaccine Education Module for parents](#) and print out the Vaccine Education Certificate at the end of the module.

Actively choosing not to immunize your children is a parents' right, however it carries with it the significant responsibility of not exposing others to communicable disease (including those who for medical reasons are unable to receive a particular vaccine).

In case of a disease occurrence, the local public health authority has the right to exclude unvaccinated children from school and childcare. Children who have been excluded will then need to be cared for in their homes until such time as they are readmitted to school or child care.

Immunity and medical exemptions:

Oregon law also allows both immunity and medical exemptions.

A medical exemption or immunity exemption is a written, signed document from a physician stating that a child should not receive one or more specific immunizations. They may be signed because:

Immunity exemption:

The child had a disease or had a blood test showing immunity. Children with this kind of exemption cannot get the disease, so they are considered complete for the vaccines they are exempt from. Documentation requires a letter signed by a licensed physician stating the child's name, birth date, diagnosis or lab report and physician's signature and date. Immunity exemptions can be signed for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis A and hepatitis B. They can also be signed for Hib disease that occurred at or after 2 years of age. History of chickenpox (varicella) can be signed by the parent or guardian and does not require physician documentation.

Medical exemption:

A child has a medical condition that puts the child at risk of harm if he or she receives the vaccines. Children with this type of medical exemption are considered susceptible because if they are exposed to a disease they haven't been vaccinated for, they are likely to get it. Documentation requires a letter signed by a licensed physician stating the child's name, birth date, medical condition that contraindicates vaccination, list of vaccines contraindicated, approximate time until condition resolves, if applicable, and the physician's signature and date.

All medical exemptions will be reviewed by the health department.

A school, preschool or childcare cannot use a child's exemption status as a reason to deny the child enrollment.

For more information, see:

<https://public.health.oregon.gov/PreventionWellness/VaccinesImmunization/Pages/index.aspx>

Inclement Weather:

Chestnut Grove Montessori Children's House follows Portland Public Schools guidance (specifically Llewellyn Elementary) for any delays or closure due to weather.

Portland Public Schools is conservative in their decision making regarding inclement weather and we urge you to check their website before leaving your home in the morning if there is any snow or ice accumulation at all.

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/about-us/6178.htm>

Also, by texting YES to 68453 you should receive text alerts regarding PPS decisions (though this has not been 100% reliable in the past). More information can be found here -

<https://www.pps.net/Page/124>

There are three days each year that are considered 'built in' to the calendar as potential closure days. We have compared our calendar with other schools in the area and found that we have more instructional days than other many other programs already. However, if we exceed 3 weather related closure days, we will add back up to three additional days, to take the place of our winter, spring, and/or summer planning days. In the unlikely event that we exceed a total of 6 closure days, we will not be able to add any additional days back, nor will tuition be refunded.

Thank you for your patience with late openings and closure days, we hope that when they occur, you are able to enjoy the gift of time with your family.

Kindergarten:

The Kindergarten year is a child's final year in a Montessori Primary community, and is the culmination of the first two or three years of social, emotional, and intellectual development. During their kindergarten year, the child continues to benefit from freedom of movement within the environment, being able to choose where and with what to work. There is also freedom to practice socialization throughout their day, and within their chosen work if they choose to work in a pair or small group. A reliance on internal motivation, or the belief that the joy of the work itself is all the child needs lies in contrast with rewards 'systems' that are widely practiced within the conventional education system. Within the Montessori environment, we strongly believe that offering beautiful, compelling materials that draw the child's attention, without the need for unrelated rewards, is best.

The curriculum for 5 and 6 year old children in a Montessori environment is both deeper and broader than a traditional Kindergarten. The eldest children in the Montessori Primary community will, in most cases, be reading at a level equal if not higher than their traditionally schooled counterparts; they will also undoubtedly reap the rewards of working with the Montessori math materials, which are truly genius in design. That said, Dr. Montessori, in her observations of her first 'Children's House', was surprised that children so young would be so deeply interested in academics.

Though an 'explosion into literacy' or a profound understanding of math concepts can be a wonderful outcome for a child in our community, our goal is not an academic one per se. What a child chooses, at any given time, to focus on, is up to them. Of course we will work to make sure that children leaving our community are academically 'ready' for first grade (ask us more about

our math and literacy curriculums any time you like), but we will put as much importance on other topics as well. Our 'kindergarteners' might spend time learning to bake beautiful braided bread, to knit, to embroider, to compose music with the bells or play the ukulele, to master beautiful cursive handwriting, to become an origami expert, to identify a multitude of plants, or whatever else it might be that they are moved to learn. Most importantly, at the end of their time in a Montessori Primary community, the child will have developed a love of learning, as well as a deep sense of social responsibility - by living in an authentic community of children, where empathy, helpfulness, and peer learning are daily experiences.

During the first years within the community, younger children benefit daily from the presence of our eldest children, who act as leaders, helpers, and teachers to their younger companions. Each child's own kindergarten year is a time to give back to the community and to celebrate 'finally' getting their 'turn' at being the wise and kind community leaders. Our community cannot function optimally without the presence of three robust cohorts. *For this reason, we ask you to commit to allowing your child to remain within the community through the end of their kindergarten year at time of initial enrollment, and to honor that commitment.*

For more information, please watch this short, informative, if not slightly dated video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67zbYX_gVLA

and read these articles:

<http://montessori-schools.com/Articles/Montessori%20for%20the%20Kindergarten%20Year.pdf>

<http://mariamontessori.com/mm/?p=1640>

Late Arrival (and the three hour work cycle):

It is very important that you arrive promptly at 8:45 each morning with your child. Through years of observation around the world, Montessori came to understand that children, when left in freedom, displayed a distinct work cycle that was so predictable it could be consistently graphed. This cycle, with two peaks of concentration and one valley, lasted approximately three hours. In order for this cycle of work to occur, it is imperative that all children are present on time, so that the group can enjoy some unstructured time upon arrival and also settle in a timely manner. It is not only your own child who may be affected by arriving late, but the community as a whole. Please make every effort to arrive on time.

If your child must arrive late due to a doctor's appointment, or for any other reason, please let us know ahead, so that we can anticipate their arrival and help to make it as seamless as possible for the other children. When you do arrive, please remind your child that their friends are already working, and ask them to enter quietly. To minimize disruption to those children who are already focused on their activities, adults are asked not to enter the classroom upon arrival, but to say goodbye at the door.

Lost and Found:

Our lost and found basket can be found inside of the classroom under 'Em's Chair'. Your child can show you where this is at drop off or pick up time. You will also occasionally see it out on

display on the front porch of the school when it becomes quite full (of un-labeled clothing). Please take a look in it regularly. Clothing that is not claimed after conference days will be donated to a charitable organization.

Lunch and Snacks:

At Chestnut Grove, we focus on providing nutritious, seasonal, primarily organic snacks and lunches. We serve zero processed sugar, focus on serving a variety of grains, and introducing children to a wide array of local, seasonal fruits and vegetables. Our menu for snacks changes weekly (each morning snack is the same for the week, the afternoon snack is different from the morning, but also consistent for each day of that week). Lunches change daily, but each week follow the same pattern (i.e. Mondays are the same as last week). We vary the menu to reflect seasonal availability, and following the children's preferences, to a degree, while encouraging them to try new foods.

Morning snack is offered throughout the work cycle, and children choose to have snack as they are ready. Lunch is served at 12:00 (or a bit sooner for our youngest children), and afternoon snack is offered throughout the afternoon for children who do not nap, and upon waking for children who do nap.

**We ask that you refrain from sending food from home to school. Food in hand upon arrival hinders the child's ability to put their shoes and coats away, as well as being confusing to other children, as we have a specific procedure for obtaining a space at the snack table in the morning.

Our menu is available for download from our website.

We participate in the U.S.D.A food reimbursement program, and you will be asked to fill out a short form upon enrollment.

Medication:

Chestnut Grove Montessori may give non-prescription medication only as directed by the instructions on the original container and with your written consent. We have a short form that you can fill out to grant this permission.

Chestnut Grove Montessori may give prescription medication only as directed by the instructions on the authentic prescription label and with your written consent.

Medications are kept in a small lockbox.

Mabel:

Mabel is our newest fur-friend. She is a Coton de Tulear, and we look forward to getting to know her. Our hope is that she will fit right into the rhythm of our school days, but at the beginning might spend part of her school-days in our family home.

Millie:

Millie is our tiny cavapoochon (her mom is a cavalier king charles spaniel/bichon mix, and her dad is a poodle). The children adore her and she adores the children. She spends lots of time with us at school.

Mission:

Based on a comprehensive understanding of Montessori principles and pedagogy, Chestnut Grove strives to provide a nurturing environment for children ages 2 – 6, where they can experience the freedom to develop themselves to their fullest potential. Our focus is to support a community of children who learn to care mindfully and peacefully for themselves, one another, and the world around them.

Napping:

Every child has the *opportunity* to rest on a soft mat each day, whenever they wish to but most regularly between 12:30 and 2:30pm. Older children know that they can request a mat if they wish, but also are free to choose not to lay down. Younger children will take part in readying themselves and their napping space, and be encouraged to settle into sleep independently. For some children, this is a process and takes practice with the gentle support of a caring adult. Be assured that we have years of experience in guiding children to become independent in putting themselves to sleep, so this is not a requirement or expectation of any child who is new to our community.

Children who remain awake after 20 – 45 minutes will be free to choose activities in the same manner as the morning work period. Parents and staff will confer throughout the year as to what extent your child will participate, or continue to participate, in naptime – we will not, however, withhold a nap from a child who displays a desire for one.

We have available soft, comfortable mats and cozy blankets. Stuffed toys, pillows, and blankets from home are not necessary. Pacifiers are not generally permitted but we will work with individual children through their weaning process if necessary.

Diapers are not worn at naptime, though mat-wetting occasionally occurs and is responded to in a friendly and matter of fact fashion (see Toilet Learning).

Observation Visits:

We recognize and respect that the children in our care are members of a community, and that their work within that community is nothing short of self-creation. Our goal as adults is to provide the link between the child and purposeful activity, and then, after concentration occurs, to protect it. The community's home is a 'prepared environment' we call the Children's House. Observers are guests of the children, and thus are respectfully asked to schedule their visit in advance (though legally you, as a parent, are allowed to enter the school at any time during business hours).

Please come and observe your child and the community as many times as you like, preferably AT LEAST twice a year prior to conferences.

We will also have observers throughout the year who may be prospective parents, community members, or student teachers. All observers are supervised during their visit, and asked to comply with the following guidelines:

- Please refrain from using your cell phone for any reason during your visit, including the taking of photographs. Please ensure that your cell phone is silenced.
- In order for you to see the community as it normally functions, *it is important for you as an observer to remain as unobtrusive and quiet as possible*. The children are, by nature, curious and will often engage a visitor in conversation. Please feel free to tell them, "I'm here to observe your work". A polite "hello" and simple introduction of who you are is fine, but please don't participate in an extended conversation or initiate a conversation. The children understand that observers come to watch them working and they will understand your response in that context.
- While you are observing, please remain seated, though please feel free to move your chair elsewhere, or outdoors if you wish. While you are moving through the classroom, please walk slowly and quietly.
- It is likely that a child will offer you a cup of tea or a glass of water. Please accept. If you'd prefer not to drink the tea, that's fine, they enjoy making it for you anyway.
- If you are here observing your own child, they may go about their work normally, but it is also fine for you and your child to spend the observation time watching the class together if s/he prefers.
- Please feel free to jot down any questions and leave them, or email me after your observation with any questions or comments. I would love to discuss what you see during your visit.

Outdoors:

Your child will spend some amount of time outdoors on a daily basis, in all types of weather. Please ensure that your child arrives with appropriate outerwear and shoes. We will not keep a particular child indoors by request. If your child is not well enough to work or play outdoors, we respectfully ask that you keep them at home. The children are free to work outdoors on the deck as they choose during our work cycles, and are also free to go into the yard for specific tasks (cutting flowers, picking berries, harvesting herbs, building with our large wooden 'blocks', hula hooping, etc.). There is usually a few minutes of less structured playtime offered at the end of the afternoon. The children at Chestnut Grove spend A LOT of time outside.

Phonics:

It is most useful in learning to read to know the sounds that the letters make (buh), rather than their names (bee). To develop phonemic awareness, we first play 'The Sound Game' with the children. It is a small group game played with three to five children at a time. Children within the group who are the least phonemically aware are asked to identify, from a selection of classroom objects, a certain one by its initial sound (or even before that, to name "something that I'm *holding in my palm* that begins with 'buh' "). As the child develops their phonemic awareness, they are challenged to identify objects by their ending, then middle sounds, and eventually to name all of the sounds that make up the name of the object sequentially. This is a game that you can absolutely replicate at home if you wish to. If you'd like a demonstration, please ask! We do not discuss the 'names of the letters' with the children until they are 5 or 6, when we introduce alphabetizing.

Praise:

Though we will absolutely be celebrating your child's discoveries and successes with them, we will not be verbally praising your child, as a practice (though occasionally it happens accidentally ☺). **If you'd like to find out why, and what we try to do instead, please consider reading this article by Alfie Kohn:** <http://www.alfiekohn.org/article/five-reasons-stop-saying-good-job/>.

Sharing:

Children love to share about their life at home and they enjoy bringing items to school as a way to bridge their life at school and at home. It is also the child's first experience with 'public speaking'. Please review the sharing guidelines below, and note that *in general* books are not included in this list, nor are 'toys', with the exception of something that your child has made/built.

1. The object could be something that your child has made.
2. A natural specimen (leaf, rock, shell, etc.) is always welcome.
3. Cultural or scientific objects (something which a cultural or scientific story can be told about). Please feel free to send an accompanying note card with a few simple facts about the object. We LOVE to hear stories about your specific family or cultural traditions.
5. Pictures (family vacation, family member, cultural event attended that your child has a story to tell about – something directly relating to your child's life)
6. Anything else really that they are able to *tell a story about*.
7. Parents or Grandparents or other family members or friends are welcome to schedule a time to come and share a special cultural story or demonstrate a skill.

Social Events:

Chestnut Grove organizes and hosts an annual community and alumni camping weekend at the Eagle Creek Overlook group campsite. Families are invited to join for all or any part of this

weekend, which traditionally occurs in August. In addition to our weekend at Eagle Creek, you are welcome to organize a social event at a park or at your home at any time!

Staff Illness/Substitute Guides and Assistants:

It is inevitable that at some point, staff (or children of staff members) may become ill, and thus require that regular staff be absent. Each year, we update a list of qualified substitute guides and assistants, and have them visit for observation and orientation prior to being called in to work. All substitute guides and assistants are current with the Central Background Registry. In the event of sudden illness, when a substitute cannot be found on short notice, we may ask for families to volunteer to stay home and lower our number of children to 10 or less, as would be suitable for one adult. You will always be notified when regular staff is absent. If for any reason we must close for a day because of multiple staff illness, this day will be counted as an inclement weather closure day would be. (See also Inclement Weather)

Toilet Learning:

It is important for all adults to understand that what is called “toilet training” is the child’s work, not the adult’s work. The adult’s role, then, is to assist the child in making this great achievement in self-control. As with all of our interactions with your child, we will abstain from the use of rewards or punishment, and we encourage you to do the same (see Discipline).

Here at Chestnut Grove, we will assist by offering a clear expectation that we all have dry pants at school. We will offer this expectation verbally, as in “here we all do our best to keep our pants dry”, “my pants are dry, are yours?” Of course, ‘accidents’ do happen, and as with all other natural and logical consequences, will simply be taken care of in a matter of fact and friendly way, assisting the child as needed.

There are various skills that must be mastered before the process of toilet learning can be completed:

- ***The child must have a general understanding of ‘wet’ and ‘dry’.***
- ***It is important that the child has opportunities to practice undressing and dressing, especially pulling pants and underpants on and off. This is practiced throughout the day: upon waking, when changing into pajamas at bedtime, etc. Adults can assist the child’s developing independence by offering the least amount of assistance required at any given time, until gradually the child relies only on verbal cues, and then the child is eventually able to be independent with dressing and undressing.***
- ***At school, we will also offer opportunities and gentle, consistent encouragement for hand washing – including being shown how to turn the taps on and off, how to avoid water that is too hot or too cold, how to dispense soap, etc.***
- ***The child will be offered opportunities to cultivate ‘friendly’ attitudes towards using the toilet.***

This includes being shown how to flush a toilet, the amount of toilet paper to use, etc., as well as familiarity with associated sounds. Along with this friendly attitude, adults help the child make the connection that using the toilet is how we keep our pants dry all day.

At school, we will help your child through their process of toilet learning in the following manner:

Periodically throughout the day an adult will check in with your child – “are your pants dry?”. If their pants are still dry, the adult will affirm with comments like “That’s great! Dry pants are comfortable; I like it when my pants are dry”; etc. The child will then be invited to use the toilet to keep them dry; if s/he declines the suggestion, s/he will be encouraged to take a tour the bathroom and discuss what goes on there; if he accepts the suggestion, the adult will assist as needed.

If the child’s clothing becomes wet, s/he will be offered an absorbent mat to sit on while changing clothes. The child will be encouraged to undress and dress independently, with assistance given as needed. Wet clothing is laundered here, though any clothing that has come in contact with feces must be bagged and sent home.

There is no expected time frame for this process to be completed.

Tuition:

Registration and Materials Fee: child’s first year only - \$300 (nonrefundable), due at time of registration.

In subsequent years, a refundable deposit of \$500 is **due by March 1st**, in order to hold your child’s space for the following fall. This \$500 will be credited towards your January tuition payment, due on December 1st.

Tuition is an annual amount and is billed in 12 equal installments, beginning August 1st.

Please note that tuition is due by the 1st of each month, and considered late on the 3rd (incurring a \$25 late fee, plus any additional bank fees).

Healthy, seasonal, primarily organic lunch and snacks are included.

Chestnut Grove does not prorate tuition. There is no refund due to child illness, vacation, holidays, school closures due to inclement weather (we follow Portland Public School’s lead for weather-related delays and closures) or any other unforeseen closure. Pre-paid tuition cannot be refunded.

Tuition will generally increase at a rate of 3-5% each year, though occasionally it might be a larger increase. Tuition rates for the following academic year will be published in the late winter prior to our March 1 re-enrollment deadline. New tuition rates go into effect with the payment due August 1.

A full sixty-days notice or equal tuition at the end of your child’s time at Chestnut Grove is kindly requested.

Volunteering:

Parents often ask if there are ways in which they can help in the classroom. Within a Montessori primary community, one of our goals is actually to minimize adult intervention, allowing the children to learn on their own or with the help of their community members. We present materials (in a very specific way, giving ‘just enough’ information) and then fade into the background to

allow the children to explore the material fully, in their own way, making their own discoveries. We are of course available to re-present something, give assistance when needed, and guide the children through their interactions with one another. All of that is to say, that the classroom is not really a place that requires adult 'helpers' for the most part, though you are welcome and encouraged to come and be our guest as an observer, or to share a story or demonstrate a skill (See Observation as well as Sharing).

We do, however, have lots of volunteer opportunities for you that don't involve direct work with the children in the classroom. We always have material preparation that you can help with, and even do at home (paper cutting, cutting fabric for sewing work, sewing aprons or cloths, repairs to materials, carpentry, and so on). If you are looking for ways to help, please ask! Alternatively, you could host a social event!

Let us know if you would like to volunteer your time, what your particular skills are, and we will gladly find something that you can help with.

Glossary of Montessori Terms

Any science has its own vocabulary and terminology and the Montessori Method is no exception. Montessorians share a very specific set of references, references which of themselves are brief and succinct, yet each one evokes the world of the child as described by Maria Montessori. Montessori language acts as a password, enabling the sender and the receiver to immediately decode the message being transmitted. A glossary is an alphabetical list of special or technical words or expressions.

The Glossary of Montessori Terms presented here relates to the theory and practice for the primary (3-6) level. It was prepared by Annette Haines at the request of Molly O'Shaughnessy to accompany her lecture at the Joint Annual Refresher Course, held in Tampa, Florida in February 2001. Annette is the Director of Training at the Montessori Training Center of St. Louis and Molly is the Director of Training at the Montessori Training Center of Minnesota.

Absorbent Mind -- A mind able to absorb knowledge quickly and effortlessly. Montessori said the child from birth to six years has an absorbent mind.

Adaptation -- Related to the idea of an absorbent mind (Haines, 1993) is a special power of the young child that can be called the power of adaptation. This power is a process whereby the young child uses the environment to develop and, in so doing, becomes a part of that environment. The young child absorbs the culture of her time and place, taking in all the spirit, the customs, the ambitions/aspirations and attitudes of a society simply by living in that society.

Analysis of Movement -- A technique used by Montessori teachers. The adult, when showing a complex action to a child, breaks it down into its parts and shows one step at a time, executing each movement slowly and exactly. The action thus becomes a sequence of simple movements and the child has a greater chance of success when 'given the liberty to make use of them.' (Montessori, 1966, p. 108)

Children's House -- The English name for Montessori's Casa dei Bambini [Italian]. A place for children from 3-6 years to live and grow. Everything necessary for optimal human development is included in a safe and secure environment.

Classification -- Sorting. Allocating or distributing according to common characteristics. The young child engages in classification activities because the process is essential for the

construction of the intellect. The Montessori classroom offers many opportunities for classification.

Concentration -- Recognising that 'the longer one does attend to a topic the more mastery of it one has,' the great American psychologist William James remarked, 'An education which should improve this faculty would be the education par excellence.' (1892/1985, p. 95) Montessori, who knew of James, set out to do just that. She believed that if environments could be prepared with 'objects which correspond to...formative tendencies' (1949/1967, p. 169) the child's energy and interest would become focused on that aspect of the environment which corresponded to the developmental need.

Concrete to Abstract -- A progression both logical and developmentally appropriate. The child is introduced first to a concrete material that embodies an abstract idea such as size or colour. Given hands-on experience, the child's mind grasps the idea inherent in the material and forms an abstraction. Only as the child develops, is she gradually able to comprehend the same idea in symbolic form.

Control of Error -- A way of providing instant feedback. Every Montessori activity provides the child with some way of assessing his own progress. This puts the control in the hands of the learner and protects the young child's self-esteem and self-motivation. Control of error is an essential aspect of auto-education.

Coordination of Movement -- One of the major accomplishments of early childhood. Through the child's own effort, she wills herself to refine her muscular coordination and consequently acquires increasingly higher levels of independent functioning. Because of this developmental need, children are drawn to activities that involve movement and especially to those which demand a certain level of exactitude and precision.

Creativity/Imagination -- Imagination involves the forming of a mental concept of what is not actually present to the senses. Creativity is a product of the imagination and results from the mental recombining of imagined ideas in new and inventive ways. Both are dependent on mental imagery formed through sensorial experience.

Cycle of Activity -- Little children, when engaged in an activity which interests them, will repeat it many times and for no apparent reason, stopping suddenly only when the inner need which compelled the child to activity has been satisfied. To allow for the possibility of long and concentrated work cycles, Montessori advocates a three-hour uninterrupted work period.

Development of the Will -- The ability to will, or choose to do something with conscious intent, develops gradually during the first phase of life and is strengthened through practice. The Montessori environment offers many opportunities for the child to choose. Willpower, or self-control, results from the many little choices of daily life in a Montessori school.

Deviations -- Behaviour commonly seen in children that is the result of some obstacle to normal development. Such behaviour may be commonly understood as negative (a timid child, a destructive child, etc.) or positive (a passive, quiet child). Both positive and negative deviations disappear once the child begins to concentrate on a piece of work freely chosen.

Discipline from Within -- Self-discipline. The discipline in a well-run Montessori classroom is not a result of the teacher's control or of rewards or punishments. Its source comes from within each individual child, who can control his or her own actions and make positive choices regarding personal behaviour. Self-discipline is directly related to development of the will.

Exercises of Practical Life -- One of the four areas of activities of the Montessori prepared environment. The exercises of Practical Life resemble the simple work of life in the home: sweeping, dusting, washing dishes, etc. These purposeful activities help the child adapt to his new community, learn self-control and begin to see himself as a contributing party of the social unit. His intellect grows as he works with his hands; his personality becomes integrated as body and mind function as a unit.

False Fatigue -- A phenomenon observed in Children's Houses around the world—often at approximately 10 a.m. The children seem to lose interest in work, their behaviour becomes disorderly and the noise level rises. It may appear as if the children are tired. However, if the directress understands this is simply false fatigue, they will return to work on their own and their work will be at an even higher level than before.

Grace and Courtesy -- An aspect of Practical Life. Little lessons which demonstrate positive social behaviour help the young child adapt to life in a group and arm her with knowledge of socially acceptable behaviour: practical information, useful both in and out of school.

Help from Periphery -- The periphery is that part of the child that comes into contact with external reality. The child takes in impressions through the senses and through movement. Help from the periphery means presenting objects and activities in such a way so as to evoke purposeful movement on the part of the child. 'We never give to the eye more than we give to the hand.' (Standing, 1957, p. 237)

Human Tendencies -- A central tenet of Montessori philosophy is that human beings exhibit certain predispositions that are universal, spanning age, cultural and racial barriers; they have existed since the dawn of the species and are probably evolutionary in origin. 'Montessori stresses the need to serve those special traits that have proved to be tendencies of Man throughout his history.' (Mario Montessori, 1966, p. 21)

Independence -- Not depending on another—'with various shades of meaning.' (OED, p. 836) Normal developmental milestones such as weaning, walking, talking, etc. can be seen as a series of events which enable the child to achieve increased individuation, autonomy and self-regulation. Throughout the four planes of development, the child and young adult continuously seek to become more independent. It is as if the child says, Help me to help myself.

Indirect Preparation -- The way nature has of preparing the intelligence. In every action, there is a conscious interest. Through this interest, the mind is being prepared for something in the future. For example, a young child will enjoy the putting together of various triangular shapes, totally unaware that because of this work his mind will later be more accepting of geometry. Also called remote preparation, the deeper educational purpose of many Montessori activities is remote in time.

Indirect Presentation -- Because of the absorbent nature of the young child's mind, every action or event can be seen as a lesson. It is understood that children learn by watching other children work or by overseeing a lesson given to another. In the same way, they quickly absorb the behaviour patterns and the language used by the family, the neighborhood children and even TV.

Isolation of a Difficulty -- Before giving a presentation, the Montessori teacher analyses the activity she wants to show to the child. Procedures or movements that might prove troublesome are isolated and taught to the child separately. For example, holding and snipping with scissors, a simple movement, is shown before cutting curved or zigzag lines; folding cloths is shown before table washing, an activity requiring folding. A task should neither be so hard that it is overwhelming, nor so easy that it is boring.

Language Appreciation -- From the very first days in the Montessori classroom, children are given the opportunity to listen to true stories about known subjects, told with great expression. Songs, poems and rhymes are a part of the daily life of the class. The teacher models the art of conversation and respectfully listens to her young students. Looking at beautiful books with lovely, realistic pictures is also a part of language appreciation.

Learning Explosions -- Human development is often not slow and steady; acquisitions seem to arrive suddenly, almost overnight, and with explosive impact. Such learning explosions are the sudden outward manifestation of a long process of internal growth. For example, the explosion of spoken language around two years of age is the result of many months of inner preparation and mental development.

Mathematical Mind -- All babies are born with mathematical minds, that is, they have a propensity to learn things which enhance their ability to be exact and orderly, to observe, compare, and classify. Humans naturally tend to calculate, measure, reason, abstract, imagine and create. But this vital part of intelligence must be given help and direction for it to develop and function. If mathematics is not part of the young child's experience, his subconscious mind will not be accepting of it at a later date.

Maximum Effort -- Children seem to enjoy difficult work, work which tests their abilities and provides a sense of their growing power. They exult in giving their maximum effort. For example, a tiny child will struggle to carry a tray with juice glasses or push a heavy wheelbarrow whereas school-age children, if allowed to make up their own problems will prefer to sink their teeth into a challenging equation ($1+2+3+4\dots+10$) rather than drill on $3+5=...$ and $6+2=...$

Mixed Ages -- One of the hallmarks of the Montessori method is that children of mixed ages work together in the same class. Age groupings are based on developmental planes. Children from 3-6 years of age are together in the Children's House; 6-9 year olds share the lower elementary and the upper elementary is made up of 9-12 year olds. Because the work is individual, children progress at their own pace; there is cooperation rather than competition between the ages.

Normalisation -- If young children are repeatedly able to experience periods of spontaneous concentration on a piece of work freely chosen, they will begin to display the characteristics of normal development: a love of work, an attachment to reality, and a love of silence and working alone. Normalised children are happier children: enthusiastic, generous, and helpful to others. They make constructive work choices and their work reflects their level of development.

Obedience -- Obedience is an act of will and develops gradually, showing itself 'unexpectedly at the end of a long process of maturation.' (Montessori, 1967, p. 257) While this inner development is going on, little children may obey occasionally, but be completely unable to obey consistently. As their will develops through the exercise of free choice, children begin to have the self-discipline or self-control necessary for obedience.

Points of Interest -- Montessori realised that if children spent too long a time on a complex task or failed to master the necessary details, the exercise would cease to interest them. Therefore she suggested that points of interest be interspersed throughout each activity. These points guide the child toward his or her goal and stimulate repetition and interest by offering immediate feedback, or what Montessori called control of error. The child's performance becomes refined through trial and error, the points of interest acting as signposts along the path to success.

Prepared Environment -- The Montessori classroom is an environment prepared by the adult for children. It contains all the essentials for optimal development but nothing superfluous. Attributes of a prepared environment include order and reality, beauty and simplicity. Everything is child-

sized to enhance the children's independent functioning. A trained adult and a large enough group of children of mixed ages make up a vital part of the prepared environment.

Presentation -- The adult in a Montessori environment does not teach in the traditional sense. Rather she shows the child how to use the various objects and then leaves her free to explore and experiment. This act of showing is called a presentation. To be effective, it must be done slowly and exactly, step by step, and with a minimum of words.

Psychic Embryo -- The first three years of life is a period of mental creation, just as the 9 months in utero is a period of physical creation. The brain awaits experience in the environment to flesh out the genetic blueprint. Since so much mental development occurs after birth, Montessori called the human infant a psychic embryo.

Repetition --The young child's work is very different from the adult's. When an adult works, he sets out to accomplish some goal and stops working when the object has been achieved. A child, however, does not work to accomplish an external goal but rather an internal one. Consequently, she will repeat an activity until the inner goal is accomplished. The unconscious urge to repeat helps the child to coordinate a movement or acquire some ability.

Sensitive Periods --Young children experience transient periods of sensibility, and are intrinsically motivated or urged to activity by specific sensitivities. A child in a sensitive period is believed to exhibit spontaneous concentration when engaged in an activity that matches a particular sensitivity. For example, children in a sensitive period for order will be drawn to activities that involve ordering. They will be observed choosing such activities and becoming deeply concentrated, sometimes repeating the activity over and over, without external reward or encouragement. Young children are naturally drawn towards those specific aspects of the environment which meet their developmental needs.

Sensorial Materials -- The sensorial materials were created to help young children in the process of creating and organising their intelligence. Each scientifically designed material isolates a quality found in the world such as colour, size, shape, etc. and this isolation focuses the attention on this one aspect. The child, through repeated manipulation of these objects, comes to form clear ideas or abstractions. What could not be explained by words, the child learns by experience working with the sensorial materials.

Simple to Complex -- A principle used in the sequence of presentations in a Montessori classroom. Children are first introduced to a concept or idea in its simplest form. As they progress and become capable of making more complex connections, they are eventually able to handle information that is less isolated.

Socialisation -- 'The process by which the individual acquires the knowledge and dispositions that enable him to participate as an effective member of a social group and a given social order.' (Osterkorn, 1980, p. 12) 'Optimal social learning takes place when the children are at different ages.' (Hellbrügge, 1979, p. 14)

Sound Games -- Many children know the alphabet but have not analysed the sounds in words nor are they aware that words are made up of separate sounds (phonemic awareness). From the age of two (or as soon as the child is speaking fluently), sound games can make them aware of the sounds in words. In England, they use the nursery game "I Spy." The sound of the letter and not the letter name is pronounced.

Three-Hour Work Cycle -- Through years of observation around the world, Montessori came to understand that children, when left in freedom, displayed a distinct work cycle which was so predictable it could even be graphed. This cycle, with two peaks and one valley, lasted

approximately three hours. In Montessori schools children have three hours of open, uninterrupted time to choose independent work, become deeply engaged, and repeat to their own satisfaction.

Vocabulary Enrichment --The young child's vocabulary increases exponentially in the years from 3-6. To feed this natural hunger for words, vocabulary is given: the names of biology, geometry, geography, and so forth, can be learned as well as the names of qualities found in the Sensorial Material. The child's absorbent mind takes in all these new words 'rapidly and brilliantly.' (Montessori, 1946, p. 10)

Work --From an evolutionary perspective, the long period of childhood exists so children can learn and experiment in a relatively pressure-free environment. Most social scientists refer to this pressure-free experimentation as play (e.g., see Groos, 1901), although Montessori preferred to call this activity the work of childhood. Children certainly are serious when engaged in the kind of play that meets developmental needs and, given freedom and time, will choose purposeful activities over frivolous make-believe ones.

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